

Santander General Assembly: Malta, 2005

In May 2005, the Santander Group - a European Universities' Network aimed at establishing special academic, cultural and socio-economic ties amongst its members - held its General Assembly in Malta with the theme: *Europe and Beyond: Mobility, research and partnerships in higher education*. The Assembly was opened by Professor Roger Ellul-Micallef, Rector, University of Malta, Professor Stefan Jurga, President, Santander Group and Dr Joseph Mifsud, Director, European Unit.

Commenting on various aspects of the theme was a number of speakers including Nicholas Newman, Adviser, coordination of international aspects of mobility, DG Research, International Fellowships; H.E. Dr Joseph Cassar, Ambassador of Malta to Libya; Professor Michael Woolf, President, Foundation of Education Abroad and Dr Ettore Deodato, DG Education and Culture.

During his talk, Nicholas Newman stated that 'Mobility of researchers and the attractiveness of Europe for them are amongst the keys of the European Research Area and the Framework Programme.' 'Mobility of researchers', he said 'is essential for the advancement of Science.'

The participants were received by the President of Malta, H.E. Dr Edward Fenech Adami at the Grandmaster's Palace in Valletta. At this meeting, Professor Jurga emphasised 'the role of University of Malta, its Rector and all its academic community in building and developing the best academic values in research, teaching and serving the society.' He expressed his 'joy that the University became a member of the Santander Group, almost at the same time as Republic of Malta joined the EU.'

One of the Group's primary current projects is the Alban Programme which covers High level Scholarships in the EU offered to Latin America students who wish to continue their studies at European universities. The Santander Group also participates in many other European and International projects. Further details about the Group can be accessed at: <http://sgroup.be/>



Dr J. Mifsud, Director European Unit (*far left*) with participants of the Santander Group General Assembly

