Disabled activist and academic co-present paper on inclusive research presented in Lancaster

Isabel Bonello and Anne-Marie Callus presented a paper about inclusive research at the Disability Studies Conference held at Lancaster University earlier this month.

Ms Bonello, is an office support worker at Kunmissjoni Nazzjonali Persuni b'Dizabilità (KNPD) and is a member of the KNPD Committee of Persons with Intellectual Disability. Dr Callus is a lecturer at the Disability Studies Unit, Faculty for Social Wellbeing, University of Malta and support member of the self-advocacy group Grupp Flinkie Nasilu. They were joined in the conference by Disability Studies Unit coordinator Vickie Gauci and Master of Arts in Disability Studies student Elvira Psaila.

The Disability Studies Conference is a biennial event which brings together disability activists and academics working in disability studies. The experiences and voices of disabled people are at the heart of disability studies and inclusive research is a means of enabling people with intellectual disability to be researchers in their own right and make their voice heard, with the necessary support.

Ms Bonello and Dr Callus's paper, entitled Inclusive Research: a stepping stone on the road to empowerment, explored the developments in Malta over the past decade in enabling people with intellectual disability to speak up for themselves in their everyday life as well as in formal settings such as seminars and conferences, lectures and talks, newspaper interviews and radio and television programmes, as well as conducting research themselves on topics that affect them in their daily lives.

The paper looks forward to more opportunities for people with intellectual disability in Malta to speak up for themselves and to recognition of their ability to do so. The text of the paper can be downloaded from the Disability Studies Unit website: www.um.edu.mt/socialwellbeing/disabilitystudies.