



**L-Università ta' Malta**  
Institute for European Studies

## **Institute for European Studies Newsletter** **October 2024 | Issue 25**

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## Welcome Note

Dr Moira Catania – Incoming Director



**As I take the responsibility for the Directorship of the Institute for European Studies, I want to wish a warm welcome to all our students for the academic year 2024/25.**

I have been a member of the Institute's academic staff since 2010 and I am also an alumnus of the Institute, having graduated with a Masters in European Studies. I am proud of the current standing of the Institute, which has established itself as a reputable teaching and research institute within the University of Malta, as regards the study of the European Union, European integration and Malta in the EU. These past achievements reflect the work carried out by the Institute's founder, Prof Roderick Pace, who led the Institute up to 2016 and Prof Mark Harwood, who has been the Institute's Director for the past eight years.

Looking forward, as the new Director of the Institute, my aim is to further strengthen the Institute's position and to continue to provide high quality teaching and research on European Studies, focusing on the economic, political and legal aspects of European integration and Malta in the EU. To achieve this aim, past efforts will be consolidated, whilst certain aspects will be improved and new initiatives introduced. These actions will involve the Institute's three main areas of activity, namely teaching, research and outreach and events, as well as effective management of the Institute's human and financial resources.

I look forward to work with the Institute's academic and administrative staff to achieve this aim, whilst continuing to collaborate with other entities within the University of Malta and also other external stakeholders and institutions in Malta and abroad.

## Welcome Note

Prof Mark Harwood – Outgoing Director



**The past academic year was always going to be a busy period for the Institute as Malta marked the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its membership of the European Union. The Institute invested heavily in marking this event, including holding a conference, an exhibition and publishing a paper series in May 2024. Besides our work to mark this important anniversary, the Institute continued to deliver in all areas of its work, namely teaching, research and events. All programmes ran, a series of events were held throughout the year, outreach in secondary schools was intensified with the organisation of our first *Europe Day Quiz* for Secondary School students while new advertising material was published for outreach. We should be justly proud of our output (whether teaching, research, events or publications) and the dedicated work of all the staff, administrative and academic.**

### Academic Year 2023/24

Reflecting on this year, the following points are of note;

- Our student numbers continue to be strong and the Institute remains one of the largest academic entities at the University of Malta. To maintain these numbers the Institute continues to invest in outreach, especially through social media with an equal focus on the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. The Institute has followed a two-pronged approach to outreach (for prospective students) which focuses, first, upon visits to secondary schools and sixth forms, undertaken by Dr Cachia, the Outreach Coordinator. This

approach is then complemented by a series of online media clips targeting Instagram and Facebook. These clips are constantly modified and updated with the focus this year being upon graduates explaining how their degree helped them get to where they are in their careers. Our latest clip includes Mr Roderick Zerafa, an alumnus of the Institute, who was appointed CEO of *Servizzi Ewropej Malta* in May 2024.

- The Placement programme and Erasmus continue to be popular elements in the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. Nine undergraduate students and four postgraduate students followed the placement programme during this academic year while two students went on Erasmus (the latter figure is low but represents the fact that this academic year saw a switch in the programme whereby only third year students were eligible to travel on Erasmus). In addition to our Erasmus partners, the Institute continues to develop strong ties with the NHLStenden University of Applied Sciences in The Netherlands. In 2023/24 academic staff from Stenden visited the Institute and held a Skills Week, a new initiative which seeks to bolster the teaching of soft skills.
- Another core element of our programme, the annual 'Thesis Workshop'. was held in March 2024 and saw 22 students present an overview of their dissertations. As in the pre-COVID period, the workshop takes place in Gozo over 2 days.
- In March 2024, Dr Alan Cordina became the second student to graduate from our PhD programme. Working under the supervision of Prof Pace, Dr Cordina's thesis focused on the role of neutral states in the development of the EU's CFSP.
- As stated, in May 2024 the Institute held a series of events to mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Malta's membership of the EU. At the core of these events were the launch of the Institute's paper series. Sixteen papers were published in total and focused on diverse elements of Malta's membership of the EU, amongst other

topics. The paper series was launched at the Institute's conference held to mark the anniversary. In addition to the conference, the anniversary was marked by the inauguration of an exhibition. The exhibition, comprising 10 pull-up banners, will be on display in various schools and libraries until the end of the year.

- In 2023/24 the Institute was able to negotiate additional funds for the Institute library. An additional 1000 euro has been allocated for the library and books can now be purchased from these funds. These funds are recurrent and will be available on an annual basis.
- In addition to our outreach work with prospective students, the Institute continues to organise a long list of events to raise awareness of our work, developments in European Studies and the research output of our academics. As part of these events, annual events now include the visit to the European Union's Asylum Agency as well as the annual Europe Day Quiz Night. The Quiz Night has always been very popular and this year did not disappoint. Over 80 students attended and the event was generously financed by the European Commission's Representation in Malta.
- A central priority of the Institute continues to be collaboration. In addition to our *Ideas in Brown Bag* seminar series with the Department of International Relations, we cooperated closely with the Department of European and Comparative Law, the Faculty for Social Wellbeing, the European Commission's Representation to Malta, the European Parliament's Office in Malta, the European Studies Organisation and JEF. Through collaboration we are better placed to achieve our strategic goals.
- The Director would like to conclude this review of the academic year with a note of thanks to the staff of the Institute who have been extraordinary in their commitment and hard work during the academic year 2023/2024. I believe we should be justly proud of our record of work, as seen in this report.

## Directorship 2016-2024

October 2024 marks the end of my directorship of the Institute which covered eight years or two terms.

In reflecting on these past eight years, the following points are of note:

- At the core of our work remains our programmes and the teaching of our degrees. Over 1000 students have graduated from the Institute and contributed to making Malta's membership of the EU a success. To ensure that we deliver the best type of programmes we have reviewed our programmes on a regular basis, we have been audited by the UM and we have engaged with our External Examiners. We have introduced new study units (as with the simulation unit in the second year), added practical elements to established courses (as with the teaching of EU funds by the PPCD as part of the second-year cohesion course), diversified the assessment methods (as with the use of posters in various third year units) as well as consolidated the placement programme. To help students joining the course, we have published student handbooks for both the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. These handbooks provide students with the core information they need during their time with us.
- Collaboration was an integral part of the directorship. The Institute had a close working relationship with the Faculty of Law and complemented that by establishing a close working relationship with the Department of International Relations, with the Faculty of Social Wellbeing, with the Department of Translation, Terminology and Interpretation, with the ESO student organisation as well as entities outside the UM, especially the European Commission's Representation to Malta and the European Parliament's Office. Emblematic of this spirit of collaboration, the Institute is now entering its ninth year of collaboration with the Department of International Relations in terms of the *Ideas in Brown Bags* seminar series. The Institute has also held several events on vocational education, with the Faculty of Education, while also collaborating with the Faculty of Social Wellbeing in the LGBTIQ Research Symposium, having supported all three symposiums held until now.
- In terms of outreach and the organisation of events, the last eight years have seen some notable guests visit the Institute, including: the President of the Eurogroup, Jeroen Dijsselbloem in 2016; the Deputy Foreign Minister of Lithuania, Arnoldas Pranckevičius, in 2021; the European Commissioner for Justice, Didier Reynders, in 2021; and the French Secretary of State for European Affairs, Laurence Boone, in 2022. In addition, the Institute has hosted various Maltese members of the EU institutions, including MEPs, Commissioners and public servants. Further, the Institute has worked closely with the embassies of various EU member states, in particular France, Germany and Ireland, in the organisation of events.
- Research remains at the core of our work and during this period a Research Coordinator was designated with the task of overseeing our collective research output. During this period this focused on the publication of three initiatives, the first relating to Malta's Presidency of the Council of the EU, the second to the Future of Europe debate and the third being the 16 papers published as part of the paper series marking the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of EU membership. During this period the Institute also concluded its participation in several research projects, namely that relating to Erasmus+ and the health sector in small states, as well as the Erasmus+ project on small states in Europe, navigating the storm. In addition to events to mark the Institute's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, in 2016, the Institute regularly organises exhibitions to mark important events as with its exhibition to commemorate 25 years of the Single Market, held in 2019, or the exhibition to mark 25 years of the Barcelona Process, held in 2020.
- In promoting outreach, the Institute developed a wide array of material to help it support its work and promote its courses. During this period, the Institute published brochures for its undergraduate and

postgraduate courses as well as the doctoral degree. In addition, it developed handbooks for both the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes as well as created leaflets to advertise its courses, targeted at secondary school students. The importance of outreach was seen by the designation of a member of staff as Outreach Coordinator. The Institute has tried to improve its outreach efforts over the years and has now started to target potential students by promoting an online series of adverts complemented by visits to secondary schools.

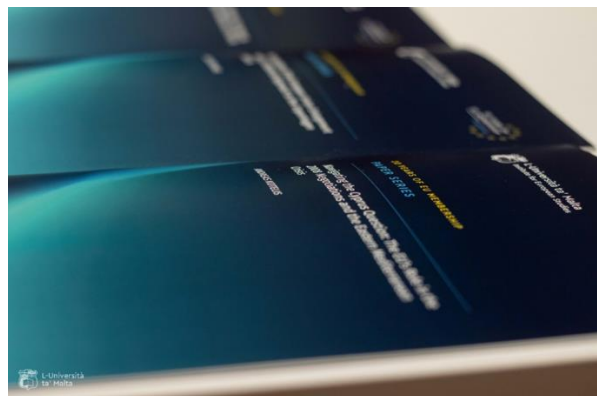
- The Institute hosted a Europe Direct Information Centre from 2017 until 2020. The EDIC network is an information point with three centres designated in Malta. The EDIC was an important injection of funds, which allowed the Institute to invest in upgrading the building, producing printed material, organising events and collaborating with various student organisations. The EDIC also allowed us to consolidate our work with the European Commission's Representation in Malta which continues to support the Institute's work, primarily through the funding of the Europe Day quiz.
- The Institute invested in an upgrade of its building over the last eight years. Nearly every element of the building has been improved, from flooring to internal furnishing to IT support and IT equipment. As part of this upgrade, the Institute's library has been transformed as well as fully integrated into the UM's library system. Signage outside the building now means that the Institute is fully visible on all sides of the building and can be seen by those entering or leaving Campus Hub.

It should be stressed that none of this would have been possible without the full support of all the Institute's staff. The Director would like to express his sincere and heartfelt thanks to all those who have worked at the Institute, past and present, and wishes the new Director, Dr Moira Catania, well. The Institute's strong reputation is a reflection of our collective work and we should all be justly proud of that reputation.

## Malta's 20 Years as an EU Member State

The Institute spent much of the academic year preparing for the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Malta's membership of the European Union, which took place on 1 May 2024. A series of events were planned which focused on an exhibition, a conference and a paper series. All events were hugely labour intensive and the Institute had to dedicate much of its resources to preparing these events. In particular, Dr Jean Claude Cachia and Mr Stefan Bezzina helped with the core work, alongside the Director, while Prof Pace and Dr Catania formed part of the editorial board that oversaw the paper series. Dr Marta Migliorati had overall control of the paper series. All the academic staff helped with the formulation of the exhibition while the administrative staff were crucial, in particular with the conference. The Events team and the Communications Office were also of great help and the visuals created by Nicole Pace were a real asset for the branding of the event. The general consensus is that all events were a success and represented the only major national event which marked this anniversary.

## Paper series - 20 years of EU Membership: Taking Stock of the 2004 Enlargement



*Print cover of the paper series*

On 2 May 2024, during the conference commemorating Malta's 20 Years in the EU, the Institute launched its paper series to mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of EU membership. The series was presented by Dr Marta Migliorati, who was part of the editorial team and oversaw the entire publication series, as the Institute's Research Coordinator. During the conference she introduced the panel which discussed the paper series, the panel being composed of Professor

Fulvio Attina, Dr Moira Catania, Dr Valentina Cassar, Professor Mark Harwood and Professor Roderick Pace.

The call for papers had been opened for submissions on 4 May 2022. The aim of the series was to relaunch the Institute's inhouse publications and to also prepare for this important milestone in Maltese history. As stated at the launch 'in 2004, ten countries from Eastern and Southern Europe joined the European Union. This collection of papers has been launched by the Institute for European Studies to take stock of the last two decades since the accomplishment of the biggest EU enlargement'.

All papers underwent double-blind peer review. The selection of abstracts and coordination of the peer review process were conducted by the members of the editorial board.

#### **Editorial Board**

Prof. Fulvio Attinà (University of Catania)  
Dr. Moira Catania (University of Malta)  
Prof. Michelle Cini (University of Bristol)  
Prof. Mark Harwood (University of Malta)  
Dr. Marta Migliorati (University of Malta)  
Prof. Edward Moxone-Brown (University of Limerick)  
Prof. Neill Nugent (Manchester Metropolitan University)  
Prof. Roderick Pace (University of Malta)  
Prof. Ivan Sammut (University of Malta)

The papers were assigned a one collective ISSN (by the The International Centre for the registration of serial publications – CIEPS) numbered 3006-8983 and sixteen research papers were published and copies were also printed at Progress Press, who also helped with the graphic design and the layout. Hard copies were given to the National Libraries of Gozo and Malta and the Melitensia Department at the University of Malta, as per Legal Depository guidelines. Soft copies were also uploaded on the Institute's Online Access Repository (OAR) and are also available from:

<https://www.um.edu.mt/events/20yearseumembers/20yearsofeumembershippaperseries/>

The full list of papers is the following:

Twenty years of Malta's EU membership: the impact on Maltese environmental NGOs -

Briguglio, Michael

Twenty years of Czech EU membership: between the pragmatic bandwagoning and the 'Visegrad-effect' - Cabada, Ladislav

The framing of European values and Malta's membership in the European Union - Cachia, Jean Claude

Neutral yet aligned? Malta's security and defence identity as an EU member state - Cassar, Valentina

The evolution of budgetary institutions in Malta since EU membership: what role for the delegation approach in the EU's rules-based fiscal governance framework? - Catania, Moira

The effectiveness of the EU's post-accession conditionality in the case of Hungary - Czina, Veronika

Patterns of differentiated integration in the EU: explaining variation among post-2004 enlargement countries in the post-accession process - Falcucci, Sarah; Saviolo, Luca

The impact of EU membership on Malta's climate action - Galdies, Charles; Galdies, Clara

Small states and EU-level priorities: the continuing relevance of LGBTIQ rights for Malta as an EU priority - Harwood, Mark

Navigating the Cyprus question: the EU's role in the 2008 negotiations and the Eastern Mediterranean crisis - Kotelis, Andreas

Malta's rule of law in crisis: perspectives from a captured member state - Lobina, Benedetta

The evolution of the European Union enlargement policy: a historical approach to the Copenhagen criteria - Lorca Arce, Aida

Malta's foreign and security policy in twenty years of EU membership: a Small State's strengths and weaknesses in world politics - Pace, Roderick

Commonality with national meaning: national sovereignty and the boundaries to EU identity in the Baltic States - Putinaitė, Nerija

Post - accession compliance and the environmental acquis in Poland: putting the EU enforcement mechanisms to the test? - Tla da Silva, Erriketi

Informing and implementing European cultural policy: citizenship, society and subsidiarity in Malta - Xuereb, Karsten



*The printed copies of the 16 papers*



*Photo above: Dr Marta Migliorati introducing the paper series*



*Photo below: The first panel discussing the papers*

## 20 Years in the EU Conference – 2 May 2024

The second event to mark the anniversary was the half-day conference held on 2 May 2024. The conference was entitled 'Taking Stock and Moving Forward' and took place at the Aula Magna, Valletta Campus. The conference had a full house and attracted the participation and attention of many industry practitioners, academics and politicians.

The conference was opened by: the Chairperson of the Board of the Institute for European Studies and UM Pro-Rector for Student & Staff Affairs and Outreach, Prof. Carmen Sammut; the Rector of the University of Malta, Professor Alfred J. Vella; and by the Minister for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade, the Hon. Ian Borg. The overall conference was moderated by Keith Demicoli, an alumnus of the Institute. The central aim of the conference was to take stock of the first 20 years of EU membership before discussing the next 20 years. At the centre of the conference was the launch of the Institute's Paper Series, a paper series which analyses and discusses various elements of the 20th anniversary, as discussed above.

As referenced, the first panel comprised academics from the Institute, the department of International Relations and from overseas, who discussed the paper series and the themes covered in the paper series. The second panel sought to gather feedback on Malta's experience as an institutional actor within the EU and brought together the four actors who had been Maltese Commissioners over the last twenty years. The panel comprised the current European Commissioner for Equality, Helena Dalli, as well as Malta's first Commissioner, Dr Joe Borg, Prof Tonio Borg as well as UM pro-chancellor, Perit Karmenu Vella, who was also Commissioner from 2014 to 2019.



*Photos from the opening of the conference*



*The third panel with the former and current students*

## 20 Years in the EU Exhibition – 22 April 2024 – 11 May 2024

The third event held to mark this important anniversary was an exhibition showcasing the pre-accession period, the negotiations and important post-membership events, including when Malta adopted the euro in 2008 and the 2017 presidency of the Council of the EU. The exhibition comprised 10 panels and was first exhibited at the Valletta campus from 22 April until 3 May. After then it was hosted by the UM Msida Campus Library (6 May - 11 May). This exhibition will then proceed to be hosted across Malta and Gozo in various libraries and school foyers until the end of the year.



*Image from the second panel with the current and former EU Commissioners*

A third panel, seeking to discuss the future of Malta-EU relations, was composed of former and current European Studies students namely: Rebecca Azzopardi, the Hon. Bernice Theresa Bonello, Daniela Marotta, Miirko Sant, Emanuel Zammit, Rebecca Zammit. As part of this panel a short media presentation was given which gathered the feedback of young people on Malta's membership of the EU, areas for improvement as well as feedback on what membership has brought to Malta in general.

The conference was closed by the leader of the Opposition, the Hon. Dr Bernard Grech, and by Professor Mark Harwood, Director of the Institute for European Studies.



*Prof Mark Harwood and Mr Stefan Bezzina at the exhibition at the Valletta Campus*

## Graduation Ceremonies in 2023/2024

In December 2023, the graduation was held for the Bachelor students who finished their degree in June and September 2023.



Photo of 2023 Graduates, B. European Studies (Gen) & (Hons.)



Photo of PhD Graduate Alan Cordina with Prof Harwood & Prof Pace

In March 2024 graduation was held for the MA students who completed their degree in October 2023.



Photo of 2023 Graduates, Masters in European Politics, Economics and Law

Also, the Institute extends its warmest congratulations to Dr Alan Cordina on graduating Doctor of Philosophy. Dr Cordina's thesis examined the role of neutral states like Ireland and Malta in the development of the Union's CFSP. Dr Cordina's supervisor was Prof Roderick Pace.

## 2023/2024 Best Dissertation Award

Yana Cremona and Kata Toth are the recipients of the Bachelors (Hons) Dissertation award for the academic year 2022/23. Yana's dissertation was on *The Trade Effects of the EU South Korea Free Trade Agreement*. Kata's dissertation was on the *De-Europeanisation and Hungary*. Yana and Kata were presented with their awards by Institute Director, Prof Mark Harwood, on 5 January 2024.



Photos of the two students who won the best dissertation prize on the undergraduate programme

In September 2024 the Institute presented the best dissertation award for the Masters programme to Piera Xuereb who scored the highest mark in the postgraduate dissertations for 2022/23. Piera's thesis was titled 'Tertiary Education and Employment in the European Union: a Case Study of Malta'.



*Piera Xuereb being presented with her prize*

### **Dissertation Events** **15th Gozo Thesis Workshop (5/6 March 2024)**

The Gozo Workshop has become an integral part of the Institute's academic calendar. Normally held in February, 3<sup>rd</sup> year students on the Bachelor's programme travel to Gozo with the academic staff for 2/3 days of intensive discussions regarding their dissertations. Students present to their classmates and the assembled academics their research proposal and discuss any difficulties they have encountered.

The Undergraduate Thesis Workshop was held on 5-6 March 2024 at Dar Manresa in Gozo. Twenty-one final year (Honours) students on the undergraduate course presented their ongoing research to their fellow students and the Institute's academic staff with the latter providing feedback. The Workshop went well and student feedback was very positive.



*Presentation during the workshop*



*Photo of students and staff at the Thesis Workshop*



*Photo of academic staff*



*Photo of students and staff at the Dissertation Workshop*

## Placements

European Studies students can choose to carry out a placement as part of their programme of studies. This opportunity is offered both to undergraduate and postgraduate students. The Institute has agreements in place with various entities in the public and private sectors, which provide students with different placement opportunities providing exposure to a wide range of work experiences in the area of European Studies.

During the academic year 2023/24, there was considerable interest from students to participate in the Institute's placement programme, with nine undergraduate and four postgraduate students carrying out placements in diverse entities. These included the EU Coordination Department within the Government of Malta, the European Parliament Office in Malta, Ernst and Young, Malta Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Malta Chamber of SMEs, Malta Enterprise, the Malta Business Bureau, the Planning and Priorities Coordination Division (Managing Authority for EU Funds) and *Servizzi Ewropej f'Malta*. The students carried out diverse tasks during the placements, reflecting the different core activities of the entity where they were assigned. These included research activities and report writing on EU topics, work related to EU funded projects, providing support in the organisation of events, assisting in the compilation of Government positions, public relations and communication on EU issues. The placements thus enabled the students to gain important skills and work experience which are relevant to their future careers.

## Placement Experience at Ernst and Young – Jade England

During my second year of the Bachelor of European Studies (Hons) course, I chose the EST2223 Placements in European Studies study unit. After a selection interview with the unit coordinators, I was placed at EY Malta under the supervision of Mr. Simon Barberi, EY Malta's EU Consulting Director. My main tasks involved researching various financial schemes funded by the EU, the Malta Development Bank, and Malta Enterprise. Additionally, I documented key details of projects financed by the EU's Recovery and Resilience Fund and the European Regional Development Fund. This coincided well with the EU Cohesion Policy Implementation and Management study unit which I was following during the same period.

The placement allowed flexibility to work remotely. However, I preferred to work from the office as I got to learn more about what it is like to work in a private company, which is different from what I was used to. I also got to interact with my colleagues, many of whom were around my age. This hands-on experience was invaluable, offering insights into the professional environment and enhancing my understanding of financial schemes and project documentation. Overall, this placement was an excellent opportunity to gain practical experience and knowledge relevant to my studies and future career.



*Jade England*

## Placement Experience at Malta Enterprise – Karl Pirotta

Between February and May 2024, I conducted a placement at Malta Enterprise, Malta's economic development agency. Throughout my time there, I learned many new things and I could apply parts of what I learned during lectures into practice. I formed part of the Economic Intelligence, Research and EU Affairs Department, where my main contributions related to compiling reports and briefs on EU policies.

I was also involved in organising several events, with the most prominent being an info session about the potential implications of a planned revision of the REACH Regulation. Through this event, we informed public and private stakeholders about how a planned ban of certain chemicals could impact their supply chains.

Through this placement I learned how to compile formal reports and policy briefs and how to work in a public administration office environment.

My time at Malta Enterprise has played an important role in my development, both in personal terms and in terms of skills-building. With the new skills that I have learned, I am now better prepared for an eventual career in public administration or in private research institutions.

I truly recommend registering for the Placements in European Studies study-unit as you will not only enhance your knowledge in the areas you are studying, but you will also learn how an office functions and how decisions in some important entities are made.



*Karl Pirotta*

## Erasmus

The Institute holds Erasmus agreements with a number of Universities across Europe, including Tallinn (2 UG) in Estonia, Tampere (2UG) in Finland; Paris (2 UG) in France; Konstanz (2 UG), Mannheim (2 UG) and Regensburg (6 UG/PG) in Germany; Limerick (2 UG) in Ireland; Bologna (2 UG), Calabria (2 UG) and Milan (2 UG) in Italy; the Hague (2 UG) and NHL Stenden (2 UG) in The Netherlands; Wroclaw (2 UG) in Poland; and Istanbul Bilgi (2 UG/PG) in Turkey.

The academic year 2023/24 was the first year when the Erasmus student mobility was only offered in Semester I of the third year of the Bachelor in European Studies programme. Previously, two mobility periods were offered, covering Semester II of the second year and Semester I of the third year. The aim of this change was to streamline the process and to enhance the exchange experience for the students, who will be more academically settled. In view of the transition to the new system, during 2023/24, only two third year students went on an Erasmus exchange (a considerable number of students from the same cohort had pursued their mobility period during their second year). One student completed her Erasmus learning agreement at Wroclaw University in Poland and another student completed her Erasmus learning agreement at the Università degli studi di Milano in Italy.

The Institute encourages students to participate in Erasmus+ student mobility and provides the necessary support to the participating students, before their departure and during their mobility, as required. In January 2024, a meeting was organised to assist students interested in pursuing an Erasmus exchange during academic year 2024/25, before they submit their applications. This meeting was organised by the Institute's Erasmus co-ordinator, Dr Moira Catania, and outreach co-ordinator Dr Jean Claude Cachia, in collaboration with the ESO student organisation. During this meeting, information about the different mobility opportunities was provided to assist students when making their Erasmus university choices. European studies students who have been on an Erasmus exchange also shared their experiences, providing useful and relevant information and advice.

Another information meeting was held in May 2024 for the students who had been offered an Erasmus+ mobility opportunity for academic year 2024/25. The aim of this meeting was to provide students with academic advice on the choice of study units during their Erasmus semester and to guide them in the preparation of the academic documents that are required prior to their departure. This meeting was addressed by Dr Moira Catania, the Institute's Erasmus co-ordinator and Ms Sarah Darmanin, from the University's International Office.

### **Erasmus Experience at the University of Milano Statale – Alexia Farrugia**

As the first European Studies student to go on Erasmus in Milan, my experience was a vibrant blend of academic enrichment and cultural immersion. Milan, with its rich historical heritage and modern dynamism, provided the perfect backdrop for my studies.

The University of Milano Statale offered a diverse curriculum that deepened my understanding of European politics, history, and culture. Engaging with professors and peers from various European and international backgrounds expanded my perspectives and fostered a sense of unity and diversity within my studies. Outside the classroom, Milan's artistic legacy and contemporary lifestyle were a constant source of inspiration. Weekends

were filled with visits to renowned museums like the Novecento Museum in the heart of Milan, strolls through the Navigli district, and enjoying the local cuisine. The Milanese way of life, with its blend of tradition and modernity, became a part of my daily routine. Moreover, the friendships I formed with fellow Erasmus students were invaluable. Together, we navigated the challenges of living abroad, celebrated our successes and created lasting memories. This experience not only enhanced my academic knowledge but also my personal growth, making me more adaptable and open-minded.

Studying in Milan through the Erasmus program was a transformative journey that I will cherish forever.



*Alexia Farrugia*

### **Erasmus Experience at Wroclaw University – Zuzanna Pasterny**

Studying at Wroclaw University on my Erasmus+ exchange was an amazing experience. I joined the European Studies and International Relations programmes, where I found the lecturers to be fantastic. Their knowledge and passion made the classes really interesting and engaging. I knew Wroclaw was popular with international students, but I was still surprised by how many there were. This diversity made my time there even better, and I made lots of friends from different countries.

The study methods at Wrocław University were very dynamic and interactive. Many courses included group projects, which encouraged teamwork and collaboration. I also appreciated the frequent presentations, as they helped me improve my public speaking. The lecturers were always approachable and eager to support students, making the learning experience both challenging and rewarding.

Wrocław, often called the "Venice of the North" because of its many islands and bridges, quickly became one of my favourite cities. The city's rich history, vibrant culture, and beautiful architecture provided a great backdrop for my studies. I loved exploring the Market Square, visiting museums, trying local food, and experiencing the beautiful Christmas market. One of the best things about Wrocław is how easy it is to travel to other parts of Europe. The city's central location and excellent transportation links made it convenient to visit other countries and explore different cultures during weekends and holidays.

### Summary of Administrative Staff Erasmus+ Work Experiences

#### Stefan Bezzina

On 15-19 April 2024, Stefan Bezzina participated in a Library Staff Week at the National and University Library of Iceland. Librarians from various University libraries across the EU participated in this training week, funded by the Erasmus+ Staff Mobility Programme.

Staff were given a tour of the library and the programme also included presentations on the work produced by the National and University Library of Iceland's various departments and also an overview was given on its work in the Consortium of Icelandic Libraries.

Topics included information services, digitization, metadata quality control and cataloguing and acquisitions policies. Participating librarians had the opportunity to discuss and exchange work practices with the overall aim of improving library services at their host universities.



*Mr Bezzina at the National & University Library of Iceland*

On 13-15 May 2024, Stefan Bezzina completed a three days Erasmus+ Staff Mobility exchange at the Istanbul Bilgi University Library. During this exchange, Stefan visited three different campuses namely: santralistanbul, Dolapdere & Kustepe.

Stefan met various librarians and exchanged work practices on various library areas including referencing, acquisitions and cataloguing, electronic databases and Radio Frequency Identification (RFID). Stefan also gave a presentation on the EDC, the Institute and the UM.



*Mr Bezzina at the Istanbul Bilgi University Library*

## Corinne Fenech

On 25-27 October 2023, Corinne Fenech went on Erasmus Staff Training Mobility at Wroclaw University of Economics and Business, Poland. Ms Fenech was warmly greeted by the International Office Staff at Wroclaw, namely Iwona Przyłętka, Kamila Tworek and Joanna Tyburczy. Various meetings were held, including with the Student Affairs staff where various administrative procedures were discussed. Ms Fenech was also given an interesting campus tour by Julia Majewska (International Cooperation Center, Wroclaw University).



*Ms Fenech with Wroclaw University staff*



*Ms Fenech at Wroclaw University*

## Stephania Vella

On 4-8 December 2023, Stephanica Vella went on an Erasmus Staff Training Mobility at Mykolas Romeris University in Vilnius, Lithuania. Ms Vella was warmly greeted by the Erasmus + Co-ordinator at the Law School, Prof. Dr. Dovile Gailiute - Janusone and by the Head of International Office, Ms Audra Dargyte Burokiene. Various meetings were held, including with the Co-ordinator of Incoming Students, Ms Paulina Diniute and with the International Students Support Manager, Ms Simona Bariseviciute. Ms Vella also job shadowed the Academic Assistant at the Law School, Ms Monika Klimaviciute and the Assistant in the Institute of International and EU Law, Ms Zaneta Garliene. Ms Vella was also given an interesting campus tour by Prof. Dr. Gailiute - Janusone.



*Ms Vella at Mykolas Romeris University in Vilnius*

On 2-5 April 2024, Stephanica Vella went on an Erasmus Staff Training Mobility at the University of Limerick (Institute for European Studies). Ms Vella was warmly greeted by one of the Erasmus Projects Team, Mr Jordan MacQuarrie. Various meetings were held, including with: the UL Global Partnerships, Mr James Sergeant; with the UL Global Engagement Team, Ms Adele and Ms Suzi; with the BA European Studies Course Director, Dr Xose Boan; with the UL Global Meeting Recruitment, Mr Niamh Kavanagh; with the GPS Admissions Team led by Mr Joachim Barnett; with the Customer Service Manager Mr Marc Poole; with the Student Records Officer, Ms Katie Daly; and with the Undergraduate Recruitment Manager, Mr Liam Ryan. She had also job

shadowed the admin staff at the School of Modern Languages & Applied Linguistics, Ms Mary Hurley and Ms Mary Ryan, as well as the Erasmus Projects Team and the admin staff working on Incoming Admissions Erasmus. Ms Vella was also given an interesting campus tour by Mr Jordan MacQuarrie.



Ms Vella at the University of Limerick

### **Eighth Year of the Research Seminar Series – Ideas in Brown Bags**

The Institute for European Studies in cooperation with the Department of International Relations continued to organise the *Ideas in Brown Bag* seminar series. The central aim of the series is to present cutting-edge research in the area of European and international politics and economics as well as to serve as a platform for doctoral students to present their ongoing research. The IBB is also structured in a way to enhance cross-departmental collaboration with the aim to extend this cooperation to other departments.

The seminar series is coordinated by Dr Jean Claude Cachia on behalf of the Institute. In the academic year 2023/4, the following seminars were presented:

- Analysing (the lack of) democratic responsiveness in Tunisia 2011-2021: theoretical and methodological Considerations – 25 October 2023 - Joe Debono
- Bridging the Gap: Exploring the Spectrum of Coloniality in Conceptual Perspectives

on the Anthropocene - A Case Study of East Africa – 15 November 2023 - Dr Anna Cichecka (University of Wroclaw)

- EU Democracy Support in its Southern Neighbourhood – 6 December 2023 - Professor Michelle Pace (Roskilde University)
- Golden Passports" and Their (In)compatibility Under EU law – 21 February 2024 - Dr Nils Seidel (University of Leipzig)
- Between Norm Localization and Strategic Culture – 13 March 2024 - Dr Kateřina Fridrichová (Masaryk University)

### **Events – IES and EDC**

Throughout the academic year a series of events and research initiatives were undertaken by the Institute. Each event was designed to target a varied audience and allowed an opportunity for the Institute to collaborate with a wide and diverse group of academic and student organisations. In particular, the Institute continued to work closely with the European Studies Organisation, JEF as well as the European Commission's Representation in Malta and the European Parliament's Malta Office. The events are presented in chronological order.

### **50 years of Irish Membership of the EU: Enlargement going Forward: with an opening address (online) by the European Ombudsman Emily O'Reilly – 31 October 2023**

On the 31 October in collaboration with the Embassy of Ireland in Malta, the Institute for European Studies - University of Malta, held a panel discussion on the subject of Ireland's 50 years of membership and EU enlargement. Moderated by Prof Anna Khakee, the panel included HE Ambassador Whelan, Prof Mark Harwood, Mr Lorenzo Vella (Head of the EC Representation) and Dr Leandro Borg (DG of the EU Coordination Department). The event was opened with a message from the European Ombudsman, Emily O'Reilly who offered valuable insights into the intricacies of EU governance as

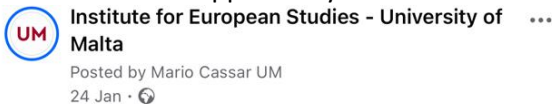
well as personal reflection on Ireland's journey towards membership.



Photos above: A picture of the audience and the panel  
Photo below: Ambassador Whelan addressing the audience

### Deloitte Annual Forum – 24 January 2024

Dr Moira Catania, Senior Lecturer at the Institute, participated in the Deloitte Annual Forum in January 2024. Over 150 delegates joined the event to hear exclusive insights into key topics that focussed on the challenges arising from Malta’s existing economic model and to explore ways to unlock value and opportunity.



Last week, Dr Moira Catania, lecturer at the Institute for European Studies and chairperson of the Malta Fiscal Advisory Council, participated in Deloitte Annual Forum 2024 - Connect today. Impact tomorrow. Together with other esteemed speakers, she contributed to the panel discussion about Malta's Economic Model: Taking stock.



Screenshot from the event as reported on the Institute's facebook page.

### JC Careers Expo – 5-9 February 2024

The aim of this event was to give a first-hand opportunity to students to discover and start exploring different study routes and career paths. The Expo was composed of a number of stands set up in the JC Foyer that hosted representatives from the University of Malta Faculties, Institutes, Centres and Schools who then promoted their courses.



The Institute's stand at the fair

### JA Malta Foundation Think Tank – 27 February 2024

Professor Harwood was one of the panelists in the 2024 JA Malta Foundation Think Tank, held on 27 February at Storeroom, Ta' Xbiex. The focus of this year's edition was on 'European Elections: Youth and Female Participation', a critical discussion for shaping the future of European governance.



*Ambassador Whelan and Prof Harwood's during the discussion*

### 34<sup>th</sup> edition of the National Student Travel Organisation (NSTF) Mini European Assembly – 22 March 2024

On 22 March 2024, Professor Pace delivered a keynote speech to the NSTF Mini European Assembly session chaired by Her Excellency Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca President Emeritus of Malta. The discussion centred about the influx of migration to Europe and border control.



*Photos from the Assembly*

### ConSIMium 8-9 April 2024

A number of students from the Institute for European Studies along with other UM students, including an alumna from the Institute, Faith Spearing, participated in the "Consimium". ConSIMium is a Council simulation experience in which 27 teams of students from all EU member states experience first-hand the negotiations between member states and the decision-making process at European level. ConSIMium is organised by the General Secretariat of the Council. The students were coached by Dr Andreas Kotelis of the Institute.



*Dr Kotelis with the students*

### Twin Publications Book Launch – 12 April 2024

Andre Debattista was co-editor in two new publications, published by the Department of Public Policy (FEMA). These peer-reviewed publications were launched on Friday 12 April 2024 at the Sir Robert Samut Hall, Floriana. The twin books "The Different Faces of Politics in Literature and Music" and "The Different Faces of Politics in the Visual and Performative Arts", edited by Prof. Mario Thomas Vassallo and Mr André P. DeBattista and published by Routledge. The books attempt to bring together different contributions from the fields of the visual arts, literature, cinematography, dance, and music to demonstrate the other side to

politics which is often overlooked in the field of political science.

The audience was addressed by the two co-editors; Prof. Mario Thomas Vassallo spoke about the nine-year process which led to these publication and Mr André P. DeBattista spoke about the different themes discussed in the book. These speeches were followed by Prof. Joe Friggieri's exposition on politics and the arts. The evening ended with a panel discussion on "The beauty of transdisciplinarity in the study of politics and the arts". The panel was moderated by Dr Marie Louise Mangion and consisted of Dr Myrna Azzopardi, Prof Mark Harwood, Prof Emanuel Said and Dr Charles Xuereb.



*Prof Harwood with students at the EUAA*

### **Book Launch Participation**

Prof Mark Harwood formed part of the panel for the event to mark the book launch of 'A Journey Towards Europe: a biography of Joe Borg' by Omar Grech. The event was held on 16<sup>th</sup> April at 5:30pm at the Valletta Campus. The panel event was moderated by Dr Valentina Cassar and included Prof Joe Pirota, Dr Louis Galea, Prof Stephen Calleja and Prof Harwood. Prof Harwood spoke about Dr Borg's career at an EU level.



*Photos of the book covers and the event*



*Book launch of 'A Journey Towards Europe'*

### **EUAA visit – 15 April 2024**

Students from the Institute visited the offices of the European Union Agency for Asylum – EUAA in April 2024. Mr Anis Cassar (Head of Communication and Public Relations) gave an overview of EUAA's work and internships with the agency. The visit was coordinated by Prof Mark Harwood.

### **EU Cohesion Policy implementation and management – 24 April 2024**

Second year students visited the Planning and Priorities Coordination Division (PPCD) on 24<sup>th</sup> April to participate in a full-day seminar on EU Cohesion policy from an EU project management perspective. They returned on 29<sup>th</sup> May to present group project funding applications to experts at the entity.

The PPCD, which provides the administrative foundation to ensure the efficient absorption and

management of EU Cohesion Policy in Malta, assists the Institute in providing the practical component of the compulsory second year study unit. Learning outcomes include identifying relevant project information from a management perspective, placing a project in context vis-à-vis funding criteria and giving an overview of the mechanisms used to implement, monitor and verify projects. The study unit is coordinated by Professor Susanna Thede, who also teaches its academic component.



Students during the visit to PPCD

### 'Europe Day' Quiz for Secondary Schools – 3 May 2024

For the first time, the Institute held a Secondary School Quiz to mark Europe Day. The Quiz was held on 3 May at Campus Hub. The event was opened by Ms Julia Abid, of the Representation, alongside Prof Mark Harwood. While organised by the Institute for European Studies, with the help of the European Studies Organisation (ESO), the event was funded by the European Commission's Representation in Malta. The event was compered by Matthew Zammit and Alexia Farrugia, third year students at the Institute for European Studies.

Thirteen schools participated:

- Bishop's Conservatory Secondary School Gozo
- Maria Regina Secondary School
- Sacred Heart Minor Seminary Gozo
- Saint Joseph Sliema
- St Albert the Great College
- St Benedict College
- St Clare College Pembroke Secondary
- St Ignatius College Handaq
- St Ignatius Secondary School Handaq
- St Thomas More secondary Zejtun
- St. Martin's College
- St. Nicholas College Dingli Secondary School
- Verdala Secondary School

The winning team was Saint Benedict College with Saint Claire's College placing second and Saint Martin's College placing third. The plan is to hold the quiz on an annual basis, as a way to stimulate interest in the course and to help ES teachers in their efforts to consolidate interest in ES.



Photos from the Schools Quiz

### 'Europe Day' Quiz Night – 8 May 2024

To mark the 9 May, Europe Day, the Institute for European Studies organises a Quiz Night. The Quiz has become an annual event and is generously funded by the European Commission's Representation in Malta. Compered by Ronald Briffa, this year, the quiz took place on 8 May at the Vivaldi Hotel, St Julian's and was opened by Mr Mark Vella of the Representation and Prof. Mark Harwood, Director of the Institute. Sixteen teams participated with the winning team being *Fondi f'idejna*, with *Tuna l-ewwel post u niefqu niġu* and *eurhopeless* placing second and third respectively.



Photos from the Quiz Night



Photos from the Quiz Night



The Institute and ESO's stand

### Academic staff as part of the ESO awareness campaign for the 2024 EP election

The Institute's academic staff participated in a series of promotional clips created by the ESO as a means to raise awareness for the 2024 EO elections. All academic members of staff participated.

### European Village – 10 May 2024

The Institute for European Studies and ESO took part in the European Village event organised by JEF Malta. The event was originally planned for 9 May but had to be rescheduled due to poor weather conditions. These events are an important opportunity for outreach on campus and as a means to raise the profile of the Institute in terms of its postgraduates degree programmes.

 Institute for European Studies - University of Malta — with European Commission Representation in Malta and ESO - European Studies Organisation.

Posted by Jean Claude Cachia  
Reels · 13 May · 

Dr Moira Catania shared her opinion on the Europe Day Quiz organised by the Institute for European Studies in collaboration with the @euinmalta #universityo... See more



Screenshot of media clip, featuring Dr Catania, created by the ESO

**4th Workshop on Security & Stability In The Mediterranean And The Middle East – 30 May to 2 June 2024**

Prof Pace and Dr Kotelis participated in a workshop On the Security and Stability in the Mediterranean and the Middle East workshop in Athens. The Institute was one of the organisers of the workshop.

As a member of the International Advisory Committee of the event, Prof Pace was asked to co-introduce the workshop in the first session together with the Institute for International Economic Relations Professor Charalampos Tsardinidis.

During the workshop, Prof Pace presented a paper on "The end of Tunisia's flirtation with Democracy: EU Democracy Promotion, the European Parliament and Parliamentary Diplomacy" whilst Dr Andreas Kotelis presented a paper on "Epistemic Communities and Innovation.



Workshop poster



Dr Kotelis (above) and Prof. Pace (below) during the conference

This Workshop was organized by the **Institute of International Economic Relations (IIER/IDOS)** of Athens in collaboration with:

- ARAID/Universidad de Zaragoza, Spain
- Center for Mediterranean Studies, Yasar University, Turkey
- Institute for European Studies, University of Malta, Malta
- Neapolis University Pafos, Cyprus
- Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) Cyprus Centre, Cyprus
- University of Catania, Italy

**I Choose Fair – 19-20 July 2024**

The Institute participated in the annual *I Choose Fair*, organised by the the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation (MEYR). The event was held on the 19 and the 20 July at the Grand Hotel Excelsior in Floriana and attracted around 3,000 students who completed compulsory education. The fair provided the attendees with the perfect opportunity to explore further career and educational options. Exhibitors from Post-Secondary Institutions and representatives of various employment sectors met with students

and their parents to provide them with the latest qualifications and information on diverse sectors. Talks by industry professionals from various industrial sectors were also held during the event.



*Photos from the fair*

### Guest Speakers and Visiting Lecturers in 2023/4

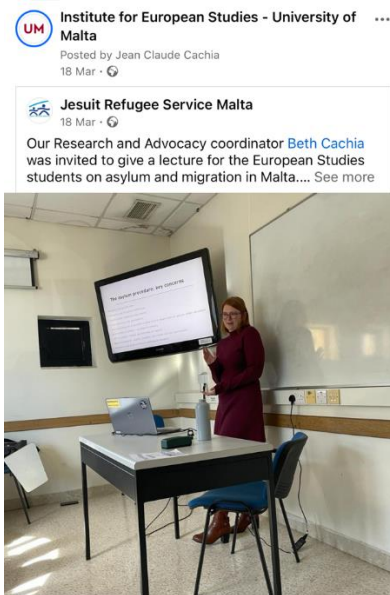
On 23 April 2024, H.E. Ambassador Caroline Whelan delivered a guest lecture to the Institute's second year students. Speaking on the subject of Ireland within a European context, H.E. discussed the demographic, historical and contemporary contexts which shape Ireland into the country we know today. Also, a presentation on the use of EU funding in Ireland was delivered by students Sharon Cilia and Afnan Belqsm Gnijiwah.



*Dr Cachia and Ambassador Whelan with students*

As part of our units and as a means to provide practical insights into the topics we teach, many of

our study units include guest speakers. As an example, Beth Cachia of the Jesuit Refugee Service came and spoke as part of the undergraduate unit on migration.



*Ms Beth Cachia speaking to second year students*

At the end of April, the Institute for European Studies organised a Skills Week for its undergraduate students. This initiative was organised in collaboration with Baudina Vassallo Baarsma and Rocio Ruiz Mendez of NHL Stenden, in the Netherlands. The workshops covered a range of essential skills, including: Personal Leadership; Debating Skills; Presentation Skills; and Interview Skills.

As an example, the leadership and teamwork workshop began with the students being divided into four teams to construct a tower using only spaghetti sticks and three marshmallows. The objective was to create the tallest and most stable tower, revealing different leadership qualities within the groups. Some members emerged as leaders, while others took on more supportive roles. Following the tower-building activity, participants engaged in a colour chart exercise where they identified themselves as red (competitive, strong-willed), blue (precise, cautious), yellow (enthusiastic, sociable), or green (patient, caring). Teams were then formed with members of contrasting colours to emphasise diverse characteristics within a group. In the subsequent activity, "Protect the Egg," teams collaborated to design a safety basket to safeguard an egg from breaking when dropped from a height. By working with teammates of different colour

profiles, participants learned the value of diverse personalities and how they contribute to effective teamwork.

The workshops were a great success and the plan is to repeat these in the future.



Photos above: Rocio Ruiz Mendez delivering her lecture in the EDC

Photo below: Dr Baudina Vassallo Baarsma, Dr Cachia, Dr Catania & students during the classes

### Institute for European Studies Library (EDC)

Academic year 2023/24 was a milestone for the EDC. An agreement was reached with the Finance Office for an annual financial allocation of €1,000 for the purchase of new books (EUSSUPP-03). Furthermore, the EDC Manager managed to obtain a sponsorship from the EC Rep for the purchase of 30 new books.

The Institute for European Studies library (EDC) is part of the Europe Direct Network, and participates in quarterly coordination meetings organized between the Europe Direct Information Centres and the European Commission Representation in Malta. The EDC also assists in the organization of events organized by the Europe Direct Information Centres and the European Commission. The EDC also organizes the events hosted by the Institute for European Studies, both in the library itself and in various locations on and off campus. The EDC also assists the Institute in the publication of research papers and books. In 2023/24, the EDC Manager assisted in the publication of 16 research

papers which commemorated Malta's 20 Years in the EU (see section 6.1).

Also, collaboration with the Main Library has increased. The Main Library disseminates information on the EDC throughout its social networks and the EDC regularly features in the Main Library's newsletter. Moreover, the Online Access Repository is regularly populated with material related to the Institute such as publications and event information. The Main Library also promotes the EDC as an alternative study space for all University students.



Poster of the campaign

Moreover, the EDC Manager is regularly in contact with various departments within the Main Library including Outreach, Melitensia and Cataloguing and donates various EU publications to the library itself and its branch libraries. Also, the EDC Manager gives his input in the upkeep of the Main Library's catalogue and authority listing, apart from cataloguing all the EDC's books.

The Institute for European Studies library (EDC) regularly informs patrons about its recent additions and service updates on Facebook and social media and SIMS. Due to the UM's new social media policy, the library's Facebook page was merged with the Institute's main page. Furthermore, a new Facebook group entitled Institute for European Studies Library - EDC - University of Malta was created and it currently has 260 members (an increase of 35 members from 2022/23).

In 2023/24, in order to aid reader service, the EDC invested in signage explaining the various subject classification class marks which are assigned by the Library of Congress.



*Updated opening hours as from 17 June 2024*

### Events in the library in 2023/24

A series of events were hosted within the library during 2023/24. Some of the events feature in the report in section 6 but are being listed separately here as part of the Institute Library's work.

To bolster the quality of events, in December 2024, the Institute invested in a 75 inches screen and a mobile trolley (see below photo). This upgraded the library's facilities further and the library is now more suitable for lectures, seminars, meetings and presentations.

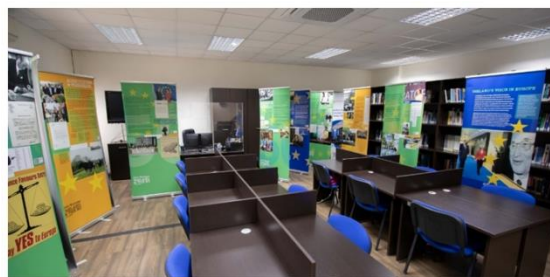


### IBB Seminar – Analysing (the lack of) democratic responsiveness in Tunisia 2011-2021: theoretical and methodological Considerations – 25 October 2023

Joe Debono gave a presentation on his Ph.D. dissertation entitled "Analysing (the lack of) democratic responsiveness in Tunisia 2011-2021: theoretical and methodological Considerations"

### Exhibition: 50 Years of the Irish Membership of the EU – 30 October – 16 November 2023

On November 6, 2023, the Irish Ambassador, Caroline S Whelan, launched Ireland's EU50 exhibition at the University Library. The ambassador referred to the key milestones of Ireland's membership. H.E. Caroline S Whelan made reference to the relationship between Malta and Ireland and how the EU was important for both countries given the opportunities linked to membership, including the Erasmus exchange program. Ireland's EU50 exhibition marked key milestones towards its membership including fifty years since Ireland voted by referendum to join the EEC in 1972. The exhibition was displayed in the Main Library till 10 November, The exhibition was afterwards hosted in the Institute Library till 16 November. Prior to this, the exhibition was hosted at the Valletta Campus (30 October – 3 November).



*Above photo: The exhibition being displayed in the Main Library*

*Below photo: The Irish Ambassador H.E. Caroline Whelan and Kevin Ellul (Director, University Library) inaugurating the exhibition*

## Meeting with University of Zagreb Academics – 31 October 2023

The Institute for European Studies hosted a group of academics from the University of Zagreb in Croatia. During the meeting, the visitors discussed their project on smart cities and possibilities for future cooperation were explored.



*Photo after the meeting*

## IBB Seminar– Bridging the Gap: Exploring the Spectrum of Coloniality in Conceptual Perspectives on the Anthropocene - A Case Study of East Africa –Seminar by Dr Anna Cichecka (University of Wroclaw) – 15 November 2023

The presentation delved into the multifaceted relationship between the Anthropocene and coloniality, with a specific focus on the East African region. The Anthropocene, an epoch characterized by profound human-induced environmental changes, triggered considerable academic discourse. However, this discourse often overlooks the critical lens of coloniality. The author seeks to bridge this gap by analyzing how the Anthropocene is conceptualized within the context of East Africa, a region marked by a complex history of colonialism. Drawing on interdisciplinary perspectives, the study explores how colonial legacies, such as resource exploitation, environmental degradation, and knowledge hierarchies, continue to shape contemporary environmental narratives in the Anthropocene era. By examining local perspectives, indigenous knowledge, and postcolonial critiques, this aims to shed light on the nuances of environmental change and governance in East Africa, offering a more comprehensive understanding of the Anthropocene that accounts for colonial legacies and their implications.

## Visit by Gozitan Sixth Form Students – 15 November 2023

The Institute for European Studies met with a number of students from the Sir M.A. Refalo sixth form in Gozo. Dr. Jean Claude Cachia gave a presentation on the courses offered by the Institute for European Studies and discussed the various job opportunities that the students can aspire to.



*Dr Cachia delivering a presentation to Gozitan sixth form students*

## Visit by Head of Outreach & Promotion – 17 November 2023

On 17 November, the EDC hosted Mr Luis Loureiro De Amorim, Head of Outreach and External Relations at the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) who visited Malta to further promote EU Career opportunities in Malta. This visit was organised in collaboration with the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade. The aim of these meetings was to provide academic staff with more information on EU Careers to be then relayed to students accordingly.



*Mr Luis Loureiro De Amorim, Head of EPSO at the EDC*

## IBB Seminar - EU Democracy Support in its Southern Neighbourhood – 6 December 2023

Professor Michelle Pace from Roskilde University presented one of her studies on EU Democracy Support in its Southern Neighbourhood: Non-Learning within a Constellation of Communities of Practice. The presentation was part of the IBB seminars organized by the Institute for European Studies and the Department of International Relations.



*Photo of the seminar*

## Information Session on the Erasmus+ Program – 5 January 2024

An information meeting about Erasmus+ student mobility was organised by ESO and the Institute for European Studies for second year students. During the meeting, students, who have been on Erasmus in different Universities across Europe, presented their personal experiences. Dr Moira Catania, the Institute's Erasmus co-ordinator, also provided students with relevant information and guidance



*Photo above: the event poster  
Photo below: Dr Catania explaining the Erasmus+ student mobility programme*

## Visit by St. Aloysius Sixth Form Students – 26 January 2024

A group of Sixth Form students from Saint Aloysius College visited the Institute for European Studies. Dr Jean Claude Cachia gave a presentation to them about the courses offered by the Institute.



*Dr Cachia during his presentation*

## **Donation of books by the European Commission Representation in Malta – 31 January 2024**

On Wednesday 31 January, the European Commission Representation in Malta represented by Mark Vella (Head of Communications) donated 27 academic books to the Institute for European Studies' Director, Professor Mark Harwood, and to the Institute's Librarian, Stefan Bezzina.

Ranging from foreign policy, law, climate, European integration and economy, among other topics, these books will add to the growing collection of specialized academic books that are housed at the Institute's Library. In recent years, the Institute has invested wholeheartedly in its effort to build a specialized European Studies academic library. The books donated will soon be available to the public.

This donation is part of a continuous collaboration between the Institute and the European Commission. The Institute would like to thank the European Commission Representation in Malta for its generous sponsorship.



*Mark Vella from the European Commission presenting the books to Prof Harwood and Mr Bezzina*

## **IBB Seminar – Golden Passports" and Their (In)compatibility Under EU law – Dr Nils Seidel (University of Leipzig) – 21 February 2024**

This seminar focused on the Citizenship-by-investment scheme, which encompasses a variety of practices (adopted by, but not limited to, Malta) conferring nationality on individuals for the primary purpose of securing a financial or economic contribution. Within the European Union, naturalizations of this type necessarily confer Union citizenship. This raises questions of their compatibility with EU law.

## **IBB Seminar – Between Norm Localization and Strategic Culture – Dr Kateřina Fridrichová (Masaryk University, Czech Republic) – 13 March 2024**

Despite the declaratory success of R2P introduction into the discourse, it has never been fully realized in practice. Even the famous usage by UN SC during the Libya crisis referred to the responsibility of the state to protect its population, not the responsibility of the international society to help the state fulfill its duty. Yet the states of P5 had agreed to the principle and had used the language since its inception. Each of them makes use of the language when useful, albeit differing from one another. In this seminar, the presenter stated that she was looking for a way how to describe these differences through the strategic culture that informs the use of force of the state. However, the strategic culture is difficult to operationalize and the mechanisms are not easily identifiable. On the other hand, the R2P has been studied as a part of the norm diffusion by constructivist scholars. Through this lens, the R2P tried to supplant a functional norm – humanitarian intervention. It was contested and the states differed on its use, but it was vital (as in strong norm) and therefore inevitably, the successor took in many ways the shape of the localized „old norm“, instead of the universalist meaning formulated by the R2P advocates.

## **Visit by Student from St. Margaret College Verdala Secondary – 12 April 2024**

The Institute for European Studies welcomed a number of students from St. Margaret College Verdala Secondary in Cospicua. Dr Cachia gave a presentation on the courses offered by the Institute whilst the President of ESO - European Studies Organisation, Daniela Marotta, discussed the role of student organisations at University. The students were given a tour of the university including the main library.



*Dr Cachia & the admin staff with school students*

### Events attended by the EDC Manager in 2023/24

#### Meeting at the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) – 16 October 2023

The Network of Networks brings together, every quarter, the network of EU-related information offices and entities in Malta and Gozo entrusted with relaying the European Union’s message and the diverse facilities afforded by its policies. A meeting was held at the EU Agency for Asylum - EUAA - for an overview of the Agency’s work and mission. National stakeholders involved in relaying the EU’s message were brought up to steam with the objectives and initiatives of this important entity.



*EU Info Providers at the EUAA*

#### European Direct Plenary meeting and the PAXA Europe Symposium, Tours, 8-11 November 2023

The European Union was created as a result of post-war cooperation in Europe to ensure peace and to mark the 60th anniversary of the European Documentation Centres, the Permanent

Representation of the European Commission in France and the Tours EDC organised a major symposium on Peace in Europe which was held from 9 to 10 November. The PAXA Europe symposium was entitled ‘The European Union, an area of peace on borrowed time?’.

The symposium was divided into several themes including: regional tensions, peace in the Arctic Region, peace as seen by the UN and Japan, and international law aspects in relation to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The symposium was split into two days and was presented by lawyers, politicians and high-ranking military officials. The event took place at the Thèleme room at the University of Tours. Also, on 8 November, the European Commission hosted the annual Plenary Meeting of the EUROPE DIRECT Network - EUROPE DIRECT Centres (ED) and European Documentation Centres (EDC). This was also held in Tours, France.



*Mr Bezzina in Tours, France*

#### Annual EU Information Providers Networking – 1 December 2024

The EDC Manager attended the Annual Networking meeting for EU information providers. Entitled ‘Cultivating a Growth Mindset for Professional Success’, the event was held at the Waterfront Hotel and the training session was given by Dr. Natalie Kenely.

The diverse training techniques shared with our National Contact Points and local EU-Information

Providers from Malta and Gozo were greatly received and appreciated. The high attendance and enthusiastic participation is proof of the value of these communication training and networking events organised by the EC Representation, providing participants the opportunity for personal and professional growth as well as opportunity to connect and foster improved collaboration and synergy.



*Group photo of EU Info Providers with Dr Kenely*

### **Summer Camp training – 1 March 2024**

Rita Fortunato Baptista (European Commission Representation in Portugal) delivered an engaging training session to the EC Representation's Press, Political and Communication Officials and Europe Direct Managers on Summer Camp.

Rita's insights and personal experiences in the organisation of a large scale event for future leaders were invaluable to develop the concept locally for Maltese and Gozitan youth - identifying future leaders, politicians, influencers and opinion makers who can transmit the EU's ideals and policies.



*EU Info Providers group photo*

### **ED Network of Networks Meeting - 7 March 2024**

The EDC Manager participated in the Network of Networks meeting organised by Europe Direct Valletta.

During the meeting, participants discussed preparations for Europe Day 2024 on May 9, the 20th anniversary of Malta's accession to the EU on May 1, and the upcoming European Elections on June 8.

Joe Sciberras, Manager of Europe Direct Valletta gave an overview of the previous events held on Europe Day in Valletta in 2023. This was then used as a springboard to discuss the preparations for these celebrations for May 9 2024, including the logistical aspects and the programme of activities. This programme includes performances by the Malta Visual and Performing Arts School and a quiz for students. Information stands will also be set up by different entities to promote their work in EU-related fields. The themes of collective European identity and active democratic participation were also presented as the core messages chosen for this year, which marks the 20th anniversary of Malta's accession to the EU. After this presentation, Europe Direct Gozo then explained the preparations for a public event to be held in Villa Rundle in Victoria, for Europe Day, which will take place on May 11.

Europe Direct CORE then followed up with a brief overview of their celebrations for Europe Day on May 1, using the Sustainable Development Goals as inspiration for their activities.

Mr Mario Sammut, Head of the European Parliament Liaison Office in Malta, briefed participants on the visual campaigns, debates and other public events being held to promote a higher voter turnout during the upcoming 2024 European Elections. Joining the platform together.eu was also highly encouraged as a way for European citizens to make their voices heard.

Representatives from the following entities were present: Servizzi Ewropej f'Malta, Europe Direct Valletta, Europe Direct Gozo, Europe Direct CORE, European Parliament Liaison Office in Malta (EPLO), European Documentation Centre, European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), European Employment Services (EURES), EU Programmes Agency (EUPA), Strategy & Implementation Division (Ministry for European Funds), SOLVIT Malta, Entitlement Unit – Ministry for Health, Euroguidance, Creative Europe and the Social Security Coordination Unit of the Ministry for Social Policy.

Network of Networks meetings are organised on a quarterly basis with the aim of fostering stronger collaboration between the participating EU information providers and national contact points in the provision of several different EU related services to EU citizens in Malta.



*Photo of the meeting*

## **Publications and Activities of Institute Academics**



### **Professor Mark Harwood**

Prof Mark Harwood is the outgoing Director of the Institute for European Studies and Professor in European Comparative Politics. As part of his work as Director, Prof Harwood oversees all degree programmes and chairs all internal boards of the Institute including the Boards of Study and the PhD Committee. Prof Harwood coordinates the undergraduate degrees directly and coordinates the various elements that constitute these programmes, in conjunction with Dr Kotelis (exam and theses coordinators), Dr Catania (Placement and Erasmus coordinator), Mr Debattista (MA Coordinator) as well as other colleagues. He teaches EST 1030, EST 2140 and EST 2234 on the undergraduate programme and EST 5334 and EST 5335 on the MA programme. In 2023/2024 he supervised 3 undergraduate students and 2 MA students.

Prof Harwood is also supervisor of the following MPhil/PhD students:

- Adrian Ellul (EU Council Coordination Systems and Small States: a comparative analysis with Malta) – Institute for European Studies
- Silvio Galea (The Influence of the European Parliament and its Political Groups on the process of European Integration) – Institute for European Studies

During the academic year 2023/2024 Prof Harwood published the following articles/chapters:

Harwood, M (2023) 'Malta and Enlargement: Supportive but not Engaged' in *Enlargement and the Future of Europe: Views from the Capitals*. M. Kaeding, J. Pollak & P. Schmidt (eds.). Springer, Cham.

Harwood, M (2024) 'Small States and EU-Level Priorities: the continuing relevance of LGBTIQ rights for Malta as an EU priority', *20 Years of EU Membership Paper Series*, Institute for European Studies. ISSN: 3006-8983

Harwood, Mark (2024) 'Malta' in *The UK and its Neighbours: views across Europe*. Kassim, H and Davies, C. Available online at [21379-UOW-UK-and-its-Neighbours-Report-Final.pdf \(ukandeu.ac.uk\)](https://ukandeu.ac.uk/21379-UOW-UK-and-its-Neighbours-Report-Final.pdf)

Small States & Territories Journal – 7(1), 2024 - Book Reviews Section Ieva Grumbinaite (2024). The rotating European Union Council Presidency and small member states. Abingdon: Routledge (Small State Studies Series), 112pp. ISBN: 978-1 032-26926-9 (hbk).

During the academic year 2023/24 Prof Harwood also co-edited the following book:

Harwood, M; Azzopardi Lane, C; Naudi, M (eds.) (2024) *Mapping the Rainbow Volume III*, Ministry for Home Affairs, Security, Reforms and Equality, Malta.

The following articles/chapters are under review:

Harwood, M. 'The Continuing Significance of the Council of the EU Presidency for Small States: Agenda Setting or Painting by Numbers?', *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*

Harwood, M 'Malta and the USA – a Common Interest in Mediterranean Security' in *Enlargement and the Future of Europe: Views from the Capitals*. M. Kaeding, J. Pollak & P. Schmidt (eds.). Springer, Cham.

Harwood, M & Cordina, E. 'Malta's Uncertain Road to EU Membership and its Impact on the Pre-Accession Period' in *The Palgrave Handbook of EU Enlargement and Pre-Accession Assistance*, Alice Cunha (ed.), Palgrave, UK.

In terms of research networks and academic collaboration:

Prof Harwood is the MC member of the Cost Action CA20123 which studies the Intergovernmental Coordination from Local to European Governance. The action should finish in late 2024.

Prof Harwood is the Maltese delegate of the BLUE's Scientific Council. Blue is a publication by the Groupe d'études géopolitiques, the independent research centre and think tank behind the journal [Le Grand Continent](https://www.legrandcontinent.com). BLUE is designed as a new publication providing the public with open-access, high-quality analyses of electoral and political dynamics at regional, national and EU levels.

Prof Harwood is a reviewer for the *Journal of Politics and Law*, the Canadian Centre of Science and Education and *Politics and Gender*.

In 2023/2024 Prof Harwood participated in the following conferences/events:

Prof Harwood participated in the Institute's event marking 50 years of Irish Membership of the EU. The event was entitled '50 Years of Irish Membership of the EU: Enlargement going Forward' and was held on 31 October 2023. Prof Harwood was part of a panel comprising the Irish Ambassador, Caroline Whelan, as well as Leandro Borg (Director General EU Coordination Department) and Lorenzo Vella (Head, European Commission Representation to the EU).

Prof Harwood attended the German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP), the Mercator Institute for China Studies (MERICS), and the Flemish Peace Institute's Think Tank Lab Lunch Talk: Building and Sustaining Effective Think Tank Networks. The event was held on December 6, 2023.

Prof Harwood participated in 'Managing the Tenure Track process' on 24 November 2023. Prof Harwood was part of workshop F with Prof Brockdorf. Prof Harwood continued to participate in the training being provided for directors with staff under the tenure track.

In December 2023 Prof Harwood was an examiner on the doctoral board for the examination of Alan Cordina's thesis on the role of neutral states like Ireland and Malta in the development of the Union's CFSP. The board was chaired by Prof John Berry and the External Examiner was Prof Kenneth McDonagh of Dublin City University.

On 12 January Prof Harwood formed part of the examination board of a PhD submitted within the History Department of the Faculty of Arts. The thesis dealt with economic development in Iceland and Malta after WWII. The student was Sigfus Jonsson and the board was chaired by Prof Emanuel Buttigieg.

Prof Harwood was a guest speaker at a training programme organised by EPLO in Malta. The event was a European Parliament Training Programme for Young Journalists in collaboration with the Maltese-Italian Chamber of Commerce, Gazzetta de Malta, WILL and European Parliament. Held on 2 February 2024, Prof Harwood spoke about second order elections in Malta.

Prof Harwood was invited to speak at a public event organised by the JA Foundation on 27 February at Storeroom in Ta Xbiex. Entitled, 'European elections: youth and female participation', Prof Harwood formed part of a panel with the Irish Ambassador, Hon. Caroline Whelar.

Agenzija Zghazagh and More in 24 EYCA campaign held an event at Junior College on 29 February 2024 to discuss EP elections and Malta's place in the EU. Prof Harwood formed part of a panel discussion alongside Ms Elaine Cordina of EPLO.

Prof Harwood formed part of the book launch event for 'The Many Faces of Politics in Literature and Music' by Mario Thomas Vassallo and Andre DeBattista. The book launch was held on 12 April at the Robert Sammut Hall, Floriana. Prof Harwood formed part of the panel discussing 'the beauty of transdisciplinarity in the study of politics and the art'.

Prof Harwood formed part of the panel for the event to mark the book launch of 'A Journey Towards Europe: a biography of Joe Borg' by Omar Grech. The event was held on 16th April at the Valletta Campus. The panel event was moderated by Dr Valentina Cassar and included Prof Joe Pirota, Dr Louis Galea, Prof Stephen Calleja in addition to Prof Harwood.

Prof Harwood was interviewed by Czech radio on Tuesday 16th April. The interview, by Martin Balucha of Czech radio, the national radio station in Czechia, discussed Malta's membership of the EU.

In April 2024, Prof Harwood was appointed to the REACH HIGH II BOARD and designated as the International Relations expert of the board when dealing with scholarship requests from that area. The Board is constituted under the Ministry for Education, Sport and Youth and is chaired by Prof Mark Borg. The Board met throughout June and July.

In April Prof Harwood participated in two panel discussions regarding the 20th anniversary of EU membership. Held at the Hyatt in St Julians, the business breakfast took place within the framework of the Labour Party's annual conference. The panel comprised former Commissioner Karmenu Vella and fellow academic Prof Marie Briguglio.

On 26 April 2024, Prof Harwood participated in a radio show, 'Kafe Ewropa', moderated by Sandro Mangion. Prof Harwood spoke about 'one size fits all' with MEP Josianne Cutajar and Foreign Minister Ian Borg.

In addition to overseeing the events to mark 20 years of EU membership, Prof Harwood participated in the second panel of the Institute's conference to mark the anniversary, on 2 May.

On May 10<sup>th</sup>, Council approved Prof Harwood's promotion to professor.

On 28 May 2024, Prof Harwood spoke to EU ambassadors at a HOM meeting in Valletta organised by the Belgium Presidency. Alongside Dr Mario Sammut of the EP Office, Prof Harwood spoke about the 2024 elections and expectations in terms of voter participation. The event was held at Casino Maltese in Valletta.

In June, Prof Harwood was interviewed as part of Think Magazine's article on 20 years of EU membership, published in June in Issue 44.

In August, Prof Harwood formed part of a panel organised by the Executive Bureau of the European Democrats Students, entitled "In-depth Analysis of the European Election Results". The panel took place as part of the Summer University in Malta and discussed the 2024 EP elections.

In September, Prof Harwood participated in the 17<sup>th</sup> Conference of Presidents of Parliament of Small European States, which took place between 26 and 27 September in Malta. Prof Harwood moderated the second session of the conference, which delved into the importance of multilateralism and the role of small states.

### Professor Roderick Pace



In the academic year 2023-2024, Professor Pace continued to lead the Institute's Ph.D. programme. The Institute now has three students pursuing doctoral studies. Dr Alan Cordina, who was supervised by Professor Pace, successfully defended his doctoral thesis on 1 December 2023 and graduated on 1 March 2024. The title of his thesis was "Implementing and Strengthening the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy: The role of Neutral Member States Ireland and Malta."

Professor Pace also served as a member of the Board of the Institute for European Studies and the Board of the Islands and Small States Institute (ISSI). He continued as a member of the editorial team of the *Journal South European Society and Politics* published by Routledge and was a member of the editorial board of the opensource *Journal Small States & Territories (SST)* published by the Islands and Small States Institute of the University of Malta. He is also a member of the Institute's editorial board.

Professor Pace has taught a number of study-units and supervised dissertations on the Bachelor and Master's degrees in European Studies courses offered by the Institute. Prof Pace sat on examining boards of other faculties/institutes as requested. He maintained links with Euromesco, the network of EuroMediterranean Security Institutes of which

the Institute has been a member since its inception and with the Trans-European Policy Studies Association (TEPSA) of which the Institute is also a member.

He blind refereed several academic articles for international academic journals.

On the 14-16 September 2023, Professor Pace participated in a workshop organized by the Athens-based Institute of International Economic Relations (IIER), which was co-sponsored by the Institute for European Studies of the University of Malta and other institutions. The theme of the workshop was "Europe in an Uncertain World: Openness, Resilience and Vulnerabilities of Small States and Middle Powers". Professor Pace participated in all the panel discussions and chaired one of them. He presented a paper entitled: "The Parliamentary Diplomacy of Small European States: Ordained to Remain Peripheral?" which has been accepted for publication.

At the September IIER workshop it was decided to shift the next seminar to May 2024. The 4th workshop on "Security & Stability in the Mediterranean and the Middle East" was held between the 30 May and 1 June 2024 in Athens. It was co-organized by ARAID/Universidad de Zaragoza, Spain; Center for Mediterranean Studies, Yasar University, Turkey; Institute for European Studies, University of Malta, Malta; Neapolis University Pafos, Cyprus; Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) Cyprus Centre, Cyprus; University of Catania, Italy. In this workshop, Professor Pace was invited to address the opening stages of the workshop on the first day and to chair PANEL 3 on Refugees, Displacement, Migration on the second day. He presented a paper "The End of Tunisia's Flirt with Democracy: EU Democracy Promotion, the European Parliament and Parliamentary Diplomacy" in PANEL 6 on parliamentary diplomacy.

Professor Pace presented a paper in a panel at the International Political Science Association (IPSA), 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference, held in Lisbon on the 11-13 September 2024 on the theme of "Democratization and Autocratization". Prof Pace's paper was presented in the panel "*What international impact for parliamentary actors? Findings from empirical studies*".

In 2023-24, Professor Pace has **published** the following:

"The Parliamentary Diplomacy of Small European States: Ordained to Remain Peripheral?" paper presented at a workshop, Institute of International Economic Relations (IIER), Athens, 14-16 September 2023.

"Malta's Foreign and Security Policy in Twenty Years of EU Membership: A Small State's Strengths and Weaknesses in World Politics", Paper Series 20 Years of EU Membership published by the Institute for European Studies. May 2024.

"The End of Tunisia's Flirt with Democracy: EU Democracy Promotion, the European Parliament and Parliamentary Diplomacy." Paper presented at the 4th workshop on "Security & Stability in the Mediterranean and the Middle East" organised by the IIER, Athens between the 30 May and 1 June 2024.

Review of Dermot Hodson's (2023) book, *Circle of stars: A history of the EU and the people who made it*, Yale University Press. Hbk. 444pp, in *Small States & Territories*, 7(1), 2024 – Book Reviews Section.

### Work in Progress

Presently working on a number of papers and journal articles on the 2024 European elections as well as a couple of blog posts for the LSE and University of Nottingham in the UK.

He is a co-author in a book on Cyprus and Malta to be published in 2024.

### Prof Susanna Thede



Professor Susanna Thede is a full-time resident academic member of staff at the Institute for European studies (IES) and a research affiliate at Department of Economics, Örebro University School of Business (Sweden) since 2019. She is a member of the IES PhD and BoS boards, teaches on the IES BA and MA programs and supervises at BA, MA and PhD level. She also carries the role of academic network coordinator.

### Teaching Allocation:

Advances in European Union Trade Policy (MA)  
European Union Cohesion Policy (MA)  
European Union Trade Policy (BA 3<sup>rd</sup> yr)  
EU Cohesion Policy Implementation and Management (BA, 2 yr)  
Research Methodology and Writing Skills (BA, 2yr)  
The Economics of EU policies (BA, 3<sup>rd</sup> yr).  
Political and Economic Approaches to European Integration (MA, post-grad.)  
Placements (BA/MA)

Professor Thede performs research in International Economics, Institutional Economics and Political Economy. She has a broad international network in this field with ongoing collaborations at University of Malta and beyond. She has primarily been working to progress and complete the following research projects this academic year:

Lorz, O., Thede., S., (2024) Tariff Overhang and Aid: Theory and Empirics, *Journal of Development Economics* 166. Published in January.

Thede, S., Gravino, D., (2023) *Foreign Direct Investment and Corruption - Multinational Enterprises' Behavior in Corrupt Environments*, Palgrave/Macmillan (subject to peer-review, at completion stage).

Thede, S., Evidence on the Civilizing Effect of Trade (work in progress). Supported by the University of Malta 2024 seed fund. Presented at the European Trade Study Group annual conference in September 2024.

Thede, S., The Trade Effect of Brexit: A Scoping Analysis (work in progress).

It can be noted that *Journal of Development Economics* is academic journals of high standing (at second rank in the Academic Journal Guide – formally AJG=3 where 4 is max - used to classify the quality of academic output in UK academic research institutions) and that Palgrave/Macmillan is a publishing house of strong repute.

Professor Thede is currently working on initiating several new projects at University of Malta in collaboration with European academic research institutions.

#### **Referee Activities:**

- Journal of Comparative Economics (AJG=3)
- International Review of Economics and Finance (AJG=2)
- World Economy (AJG=2).

#### **Grants:**

University of Malta research seed fund (EUR 1,100)  
Jan Wallander & Tom Hedelius and Tore Browaldh foundations (EUR 7000)

#### **Networking/Dissemination Activities:**

Department of Economics, Lund University, Sweden, August 2023 (research visit).

European Trade Study Group Annual Conference, University of Surrey, United Kingdom, September 2023.

Department of Economics, Örebro University School of Business, Sweden (seminar presentation), November 2023.

Professor Thede is a member of the European Economic Association (EEA) and the Forum for Research in International Trade (FREIT).

#### **Dr Jean Claude Cachia**



During the academic year 2023/2024, Dr. Cachia taught five modules which were: European Security, Political Parties in Europe, Small States and the EU, Research Methodology and Writing Skills (Undergrad level), and Research Methods (at Masters Level).

As part of his administrative duties, Dr. Cachia organized the annual dissertation seminar for the third-year students which was held in March 2024 at Manresa Retreat House in Gozo. As part of his outreach coordination, Dr. Cachia visited a number of secondary, post-secondary schools and sixth forms to promote European Studies and the courses offered by the Institute. He also worked closely with the Embassy of Ireland in Malta to organise a seminar on Ireland's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of EU membership, which was held on 31 October 2023 at the Valletta Campus, and to promote Ireland's and Malta's membership in the European Union in secondary schools.

As part of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of EU membership, Dr Cachia collaborated with Mr Stefan Bezzina and Prof Harwood to organise a conference on Malta's EU membership. This was held on 2 May 2024 at the Valletta Campus. Dr Jean Claude Cachia, Mr Stefan Bezzina and Prof Harwood collaborated with the European Commission Representation in Malta to organise a Quiz for secondary school students. Thirteen secondary schools and fifteen groups participated in the quiz. This was held on 3 May 2024 at Campus Hub. Dr Cachia, Mr Bezzina and Prof Harwood also collaborated with the European Commission Representation in Malta on the organisation of the annual quiz night which took place on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at the Vivaldi Hotel. Dr Cachia organised a skills week for the European Studies Students. Ms Baudina Vassallo and Ms Rocio Mendez from the NHL Stenden University visited Malta to give several workshops on

debating, interview and presentation skills amongst others.

Dr. Cachia has collaborated with Prof Anna Khakee and Dr Valentina Cassar from the Department of International Relations in the organisation of the IBB seminars. This year, several lecturers presented part of their research, with feedback provided by their members of the Institute and Department of International Relations.

As part of his research, Dr. Jean Claude Cachia published an article on the influence of European values in Malta with a focus on human rights and press freedom. This was included in a book on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of EU membership published by the Higher School of Justice in Warsaw. He has also contributed to the latest publication of the Department of Public Policy, 'Public Life in Malta' with a paper on the politicisation of Neutrality in Malta. He published an article in the paper series published by the Institute for European Studies on the framing of European Values by Malta's Political Parties. He also wrote a blog for LSE on Malta's 2024 EU Elections.

#### **Research during the academic year 2023/2024:**

Cachia, J. C. (2024). European values and Malta's approach towards irregular migration, press freedom and rule of law. In P. Bajda (Ed.), *Small states within the European Union* (pp. 333-360). CBPE.

Cachia, J. C. (2024). The politicisation of neutrality and Malta's membership in the European Union. In M. Vassallo, Tabone, C (Ed.), *Public Life in Malta IV* (pp. 41-67). Department of Public Policy.

Cachia, J. C. (2024). The Framing of European Values and Malta's Membership in the European Union. *20 Years of EU Membership: Paper Series 1-18*.

Cachia, J. C. (2024, 29 April). Malta: the 2024 European Parliament elections – another polarised campaign?  
<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/euoppblog/2024/04/29/malta-the-2024-european-parliament-elections-another-polarised-campaign/>

#### **Dr Moira Catania**



Dr Moira Catania was appointed as Senior Lecturer in September 2023. Her lecturing duties and research activities focus on the economic aspect of European studies.

During the academic year 2023/24, she lectured the following study units at undergraduate level: EST1040 Introductory Micro-Economics for European Studies and EST1041 Introductory Macro-Economics for European Studies to first year undergraduate students; EST3010 Economics of European Integration to second year students and EST3192 European Economic and Monetary Union to third year students. She also lectured EST5344 Economic and Financial Issues in the Euro Zone to the Institute's postgraduate students. She supervised two students for their undergraduate dissertation, with the respective topics being gender segregation in tertiary education in the EU with a focus on Malta and the impact of the war in Ukraine on the economies of selected EU member states. She is also currently supervising two students for their postgraduate dissertation, with the topics being the use of the Euro as an international currency and its determinants and the development of Malta's online gaming industry from an EU perspective.

Moira Catania is also the co-ordinator for the Institute's placement programme. During the academic year, 13 students carried out placements with different entities in the public and private sector as part of their academic programme, thus gaining relevant work experience in the area of European studies. She is also the Institute's outgoing Erasmus student exchange co-ordinator. During 2023/24, two undergraduate students completed their Erasmus mobility. Preparatory work for the students who will be pursuing their Erasmus mobility during the next academic year was also carried out. As Erasmus coordinator, Dr Catania provides the required academic support to

students especially before the mobility, when students choose study units for their Erasmus

semester, and also during the mobility, as required. Information meetings were held to assist students during the application phase, when they are selecting the Universities for their Erasmus exchange and during the pre-departure phase, to guide them when they are selecting the study units that they will be pursuing during their mobility period.

Moira Catania is the Institute Board member representing the Institute for European Studies' academic staff. Moira Catania is also a member, appointed by Senate, in the University's Committee for Students' Requests.

In terms of research, during the academic year, Moira Catania's work focused mostly on the area of EU fiscal governance and budgetary policy and issues. She contributed to a chapter titled: An assessment of Malta's fiscal policy stance during 2008-2022: a narrative evidence approach, in the fourth volume of the book series – "Public Life in Malta: Papers on Governance, Politics and Public Affairs in the EU's smallest member state". This was published by the Department of Public Policy, at the Faculty of Economics, Management and Accountancy in February 2024. Furthermore, she also contributed to the Institute's paper series "20 years of EU Membership: taking stock of the 2004 enlargement." with a paper titled: The evolution of budgetary institutions in Malta since EU membership: what role for the delegation approach in the EU's rules-based fiscal governance framework? Moira Catania was also a member of the editorial board for this paper series. She also participated in one of the panel discussions during the Institute's 20 years of EU Membership Conference: Taking Stock and Moving Forward, which was held in May 2024.

Moira Catania has also acted as a reviewer for articles submitted to the *Economic Modelling* journal. During the year, she also participated in a number of TV and radio programmes discussing EU issues.

On a professional level, Moira Catania is the Chairperson of the Malta Fiscal Advisory Council (MFAC), an independent institution which reviews and assesses the extent to which the objectives of

Maltese Government's fiscal and economic policy are being achieved. As Chairperson of the MFAC, in September 2023, she attended the 4th joint workshop of European independent fiscal institutions and the European System of Central Banks, on European fiscal policy and governance reform in uncertain times. In June 2024, she attended a conference on the challenges for a stability-oriented fiscal policy and also participated in the EU Independent Fiscal Institutions Network meeting, both held in Berlin, Germany.

### Dr Andreas Kotelis



Dr Andreas Kotelis has been a lecturer at the Institute for European Studies since January 2022. Apart from his previous collaboration with the University of Malta as visiting Senior Lecturer, Dr Kotelis has, in the past, also taught at the State University of New York (SUNY) – Cortland, and was an Assistant Professor in Turkey, from 2013 to 2016. During the Fall 2023 semester Dr Kotelis offered a course on Development Studies and the European Union for the BA program, and a course on EU Development Policy for the MA, while during the Spring 2024 semester, he taught three study-units, one on climate change for the Institute's MA students, one on sustainable development for the BA students and the EU simulation unit for the BA students. Dr Kotelis also offered a course for the Masters in Humanitarian Action (NOHA), which is also offered at the University of Malta. As part of his administrative duties at the Institute for European Studies, Dr Kotelis is the MA thesis coordinator, the Institute's representative at the FEMA research ethics committee, as well as the Chair of the Board of Exams for the BA program.

Dr Kotelis was the national coordinator for the ConSIMium, a 3-day simulation workshop

organized by the Council of the European Union, which took place in Brussels in April 2024 with the participation of over 160 students from all 27 Member States of the European Union. Specifically, Dr Kotelis was involved in the selection of the Maltese delegation formed by 6 UM students and the coaching of the students before and during the simulation exercise.

In September 2023, Dr Kotelis visited the University of Tampere, as part of the Erasmus Mobility Programme. During his time in Finland, Dr Kotelis had the opportunity to teach Finnish as well as international undergraduate and graduate students, observe the lectures of a number of study-units, and exchange views with several academics from the University of Tampere.

Furthermore, Dr Kotelis is a member of the Scientific Committee for the 14<sup>th</sup> Rhodes Model Regional Co-operation 2024, which will take place between 9-13 October (university edition). He also participated in three international conferences, where he presented his research; the Political Science Association Annual Conference in Glasgow (PSA 24) in April, the 4<sup>th</sup> workshop on Security and Stability in the Mediterranean and the Middle East, which was held between 30 May and 1 June in Athens, and the CEEISA-ISA Joint International Conference in June, which took place in Rijeka, Croatia.

With regard to academic publications, Dr Kotelis published an article on the Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies titled "National Role Conceptions of Greek and Turkish Foreign Policies: A Bilateral Assessment". Furthermore, Dr Kotelis' paper titled "Navigating the Cyprus Question: EU's Roles in the 2008 negotiations and the Eastern Mediterranean Crisis" was included in a paper series published by the Institute for European Studies at the University of Malta, on the celebration of 20 years since the 2004 enlargement. Finally, in collaboration with the European Parliament Liaison Office in Malta and the European Commission Representation in Malta, Dr Kotelis published a booklet that includes a guide for playing a simulation game in Maltese schools. The booklet titled "Guidebook for Conducting the Malta: Back to the F(EU)ture Simulation Game", has been used in several schools across Malta since its publication.

## Dr Marta Migliorati



Dr Marta Migliorati is Lecturer of European Studies and research coordinator at the Institute for European Studies since January 2022. She is currently teaching 5 study units at the Institute and currently co-supervising a PhD student with Susanna Thede. Between September 2023 and January 2024, she successfully completed the Fundamentals of Teaching and Learning Course for promotion to Senior Lecturer.

She is actively engaged in the international research community in her field of specialization, i.e., European Union politics and policy making, and during the academic year she delivered several talks and seminars. In February 2024 she was instructor for an annual workshop on EU policy making in occasion of the FuturEU competition. In May, she acted as presenter in a talk on the future of EU enlargement organised by the European Studies Organisation (ESO) in Malta. In June 2024 she presented her research and acted as chair and discussant in the ECPR Standing Group on the European Union in Lisbon.

In 2024, she published one peer-reviewed article in the Journal of European Public Policy and is about to publish one article on European Union Politics. Together with the other members of the institute she has coordinated the publication of a paper series on the 20th anniversary of the 2004 enlargement of the European Union. The paper series was launched during a conference held in Valletta in May 2024.

Dr Migliorati works in several collaborative projects. Together with Adina Akbik (University of Leiden) and Christian Freudlsperger (ETH), she is working on a new paper project focusing on the work of the European Public Prosecutor Office. Furthermore, in collaboration with Fabio Franchino, Valerio Vignoli and Giovanni Pagano (University of Milan), she is about to submit the

first article of a project addressing delegation of executive tasks to EU and national administrations from 1958 to 2019 through machine-learning techniques. Finally, Dr Migliorati is working on a paper project and a book chapter with Prof. Roderick Pace focusing on the EP elections results in Malta. In March, with Andreas Kotelis and Jean Claude Cachia, she applied for an Erasmus+ project focusing on the promotion of diversity in European Studies Curricula.

Dr Migliorati is a research associate at the Hertie School in Berlin. She regularly acts as a referee for international academic outlets including the British Journal of Political Science, the Journal of Common Market Studies, West European Politics, the Journal of European Public Policy, European Union Politics, the Italian Political Science Review.

### Publications

Migliorati, M. (2024). New Nordic pathways? Explaining Nordic countries' defence policy choices in the wake of the Ukrainian war. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 1-26.

Akbik, Adina, Migliorati, M (forthcoming). Understanding Oversight Through Parliamentary Questions: The European Parliament in the Economic and Monetary Union. *European Union Politics*

### Mr Andre Debattista



Throughout the academic year 2023/24, Mr Debattista was MA coordinator, thus coordinating various administrative tasks in relation to the two MA programmes offered at the Institute for European Studies. In addition to this, he also delivered lectures in connection with three study units EST2234 - Malta in the European Union, EST3207 - Agenda-Setting in the European Union, and EST3213 - Identity and Culture in Europe. Mr

Debattista also supervised / examined a number of dissertations at post-graduate (1 MA student) and undergraduate (2 BA students) level. Throughout this time, Andre has also concluded his Doctorate. The viva-voce examination of the latter is expected to be held in July.

During 2023/24, Mr Debattista presented two papers on different perspectives of Europe at the National University of Public Service in Budapest (October 2023 and June 2024). Together with Prof Mario Thomas Vassallo, he also edited two volumes titled "The Different Faces of Politics in Literature and Music" and "The Different Faces of Politics in the Visual and Performative Arts." These were published by Routledge and launched in April 2024. Other papers were published throughout the year and are listed below. Mr Debattista also took part in several panels organised by different organisations in Malta.

### Publications – Books and Research Monographs

Vassallo, M.T. & DeBattista, A.P. (eds.) *The Different Faces of Politics in Literature and Music*, Routledge, 2024, pp. 288

Vassallo, M.T. & DeBattista, A.P. (eds.) *The Different Faces of Politics in the Visual and Performative Arts*, Routledge, 2024, pp. 250

### Publications – Papers

DeBattista, A.P., *Il-Kuncett tal-Ġid Komuni fl-Enciklika Laudato Si* in *Knisja* 2000, no 148, April – June 2024, Malta: Pubblikazzjonijiet Dumnikani, 2024, pp. 69 – 76

DeBattista, A.P., *Il-Knisja u n-Narrattiva Reliġjuża fil-Kitba u d-Diskors ta' Duminku Mintoff*, in Vassallo, M.T. & Spagnol, M. (eds.) (2024) *Proceedings of the National Conference 'Il-Qawwa tal-Kelma: ir-Retorika Politika'*, Malta: University of Malta: 22.IV.2023

DeBattista, A.P., *The symbolic power of currency: A case study of Maltese banknotes (1967 – 2008)* in Vassallo M & Tabone C. (Eds.) *Public Life in Malta IV: Essays on Governance, Politics and Public Affairs in the EU's Smallest Member State*, Malta: Department of Public Policy, University of Malta, 2024, pp. 147 – 171

DeBattista, A.P., *Ukraine as a Locus of Identity: Why History and Culture Matter*, Brussels: Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies, 2023, pp. 20

DeBattista, A.P., *The Birth-Pangs of Sovereign Statehood: Self-Government and Dominion Status in the British Empire (1919 – 1926)* in Camilleri, M. & Spiteri, M. (eds.) (2023) *Malta's Road to Autonomy: 100 years on from the 1921 Self-Government*, Malta: Malta Libraries, pp. 76 – 99

DeBattista, A.P., *L-għaqda li ma ġiet qatt: il-Prezidenza ta' Anton Buttigieg (1976 – 1981)* in Grech S. (Ed.) *Anton Buttigieg: Bejn Storja u Miti – Ġabra ta' Kitbiet*, Malta: Horizons, 2023, pp. 185 – 206 (Unity that never came: the Presidency of Anton Buttigieg (1976 – 1981))

DeBattista, A.P., *In-nazzjonalizmu għal Friggieri fil-kumplessità globalizzata*, in Vassallo, M.T. & Spagnol, M. (eds.) (2023) *Proceedings of the Conference Il-Poter tal-Kelma: Politika u Letteratura f'Oliver Friggieri*, Malta: Parlament ta' Malta, 30.IV.2022

## Undergraduate and Postgraduate Dissertations submitted in 2023/2024 by IES Students

### Undergraduate

Azzopardi, Marie  
Gender Segregation in Tertiary Education in the European Union with a Focus on Malta

Battaglia, Giuseppe  
Italian Influence on the Cultural Policies of the European Union

Bulteel, Julia  
EU Nationals in Malta: Pull Factors and Keeping Their Culture Alive

Busuttil, Mariah  
Gender Equality Promotion within the European Union Institutions

Curmi, Kevin  
The Nationalist Party and the Framing of the European Union in Electoral Manifestoes Since 2003

Cutajar, Nathan  
The Maltese and Italian Responses to Irregular Immigration Through the Central Mediterranean Route

Farrugia, Alexia  
Malta's Citizenship by Investment Scheme and the European Union Institutions

Fenech, Kelsey  
The Conditionality of EU Accession and Turkey's Response

Knerich, Holly  
The Exclusion of Women in the Jordanian Labour Force and the EU's Response

Lia, Isaac  
The Role of Human Rights in Turkey's EU Accession Application Process

Magro, Kylie  
An Assessment of the EU's Restrictive Measures Against the Russian Federation

Meli, Mariah

The Impact of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027 on the Maltese Youth Policy towards 2030

Pasterny, Zuzanna

The EU's Anti-terrorist Strategy and the Return of Foreign Fighters in Europe

Pirotta, Karl

The EU's Technocracy Model: The Interplay between Unelected Experts and Elected Representatives

Piscopo, Emma

A Historical Account of the Evolution of the Powers of the European Parliament from 1979 to 2009

Sant, Miirko

Malta's Political Parties and their European Parliament Political Groups: A Comparison of Policy Positions since 2004

Sciberras Bray, Nicole

The Russian-Ukrainian War and its Effects on the European Green Deal

Scicluna Cascun, Luke

Malta's Political Parties and the Politicisation of Irregular Migration

Tonna, Glenn

The War in Ukraine and its Impact on the Economies of Selected EU Member States

Vella, Mariah

Evaluating the Gender Inequality Situation in Malta: A Sustainable Development Approach

Xuereb, Miguel

Trade Effects of the Turkiye-EU Customs Union

Zammit, Matthew

The Politicisation of Irregular Migration by the Far-Right in the European Union

## Postgraduate

Agius, Marie Elise

Strengthening Governance and the Rule of Law in Malta and Romania Post-Membership

Aoun, Amina

The Paradox of Female Leadership in Right-Wing Populist Parties in Europe

Attard, Maya

The Limits of the Right to be Forgotten in the Context of Court of Justice of the European Union Case Law on Search Engines

Azzopardi, Rebecca

The EU's Migration Crisis following the 'Arab Spring'

Buttigieg, Raphael

The EU for 55 Package and Malta's Maritime Industry

Camilleri, Kyle Patrick

Malta's Compliance with the Common European Asylum System

Curmi, Neil

The EU's Quest for Strategic Autonomy and Transatlantic Relations

Falzon, Kieran Corporate Tax Harmonization and Malta Based Firms

Haines, Michaela Jessica

The Use of the Euro as an International Currency and its Determinants

Luise, Matteo

The Development of EU-India Trade Relations

Montebello, Amber

The Principle of Solidarity in the Context of the Common European Asylum System

Pisani, Vincent

The European Union's Emissions Trading System and the 'Fit for 55' Package

Portelli, Mark-Anthony

Ukraine's Pursuit of European Union Membership: The Russian Factor

Pullicino, Thea

The Development of European Defence Integration since 2017

Richter, Denise

The European Union's Legal Framework and Human Trafficking: The Case of Malta

Tabone, Francesco  
Long-Term Sustainability of Gozo's Agroecosystem:  
The Strategic Plan to Support SDG 15

Tockarszewsky, Kelly  
The Impact of Brexit on Ireland and its Place in the  
EU