



L-Università ta' Malta
Institute for European Studies

Institute for European Studies Newsletter **October 2025 | Issue 26**

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Welcome Note

Dr Moira Catania – Director

On behalf of the academic and administrative staff at the Institute, I would like to welcome you to the start of a new academic year. During this year, we will continue to consolidate the Institute's areas of strength, improve certain aspects and also introduce new initiatives, to further strengthen the Institute's position as a reputable multidisciplinary institute, providing high quality teaching and research on European Studies.

The academic year 2024-25 marked the start of my directorship. Thanks to Prof Mark Harwood, who held the position of director for the previous eight years, the transition was smooth as he provided a detailed academic and administrative handover and was also available for any queries. During the year, all the Institute's programmes ran, various events were held, outreach continued in post-secondary as well as secondary schools and new marketing material was created using student testimonials to promote the Institute's courses. These achievements reflect the dedicated work of all the Institute's academic and administrative staff.

Reflecting on the past year, the following points are of note:

- The Institute's student numbers continue to be strong and the Institute remains one of the largest academic entities at the University of Malta. The Institute has 72 undergraduate students and 35 students enrolled in its taught Masters programme. Additionally, three students are pursuing a Masters by research and the Institute presently has four doctoral students. 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 continues to follow a two-pronged approach for its outreach (for prospective students). The first approach involves visits to secondary schools and post-secondary

institutions, undertaken by Dr Jean Claude Cachia, the Institute's Outreach Coordinator. During this academic year, these visits were complemented with showcasing the 20th EU membership anniversary exhibition in various schools around Malta and Gozo. The second approach involves a series of online media clips targeting Instagram and Facebook. These clips are constantly modified and updated and during this academic year, new marketing material was created, involving testimonials by alumni and current students. A set of clips, involving alumni describing their educational journey and current careers, was used to promote European Studies both as an option at secondary school level as well as at the University. Another set of clips involved current undergraduate, MA and doctoral students describing the research topic of their theses.

- Following the success of the first quiz for secondary school students to celebrate Europe Day during academic year 2023-24, this quiz was held again during this academic year. The European Commission's Representation in Malta again generously sponsored this event, which saw six secondary schools participating.
- During academic year 2024-25, the Institute continued to strengthen its links with European Studies secondary school teachers. A number of meetings with the Heads of Department for European Studies were held during the year and the Institute also hosted the European Studies secondary school teachers' COPE (Community of Professional Educators) session at the University of Malta. This provided an opportunity to discuss the challenges faced in teaching European Studies at secondary level and to exchange ideas on how to promote this subject as an option among secondary school students. Furthermore, the Institute also provided promotional material, including clips with testimonials by

alumni, for the secondary schools' options fair.

- The Placement programme offers a unique opportunity to the Institute's students to gain relevant work experience. During academic year 2024-25, four undergraduate students and three postgraduate students followed the placement programme. During this academic year, the Institute offered, for the first time, placements with the Malta Communications Authority, thus providing further diverse work experiences to students.
- Erasmus mobility is popular among the Institute's undergraduate students. During this academic year, twelve students went on Erasmus in various European universities with which the Institute has an agreement. In terms of staff mobility and Erasmus, the administrative staff went on a number of visits. Furthermore, as part of its internationalisation strategy, the Institute continued to develop strong ties with the NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences in The Netherlands, through visits by the respective academic staff.
- Another core element in the Institute's annual calendar of events is the annual 'Dissertation Workshop', held in Gozo in March 2025. 22 students presented an overview of their dissertation and received comments and suggestions from the Institute's academic staff. The student feedback was positive and they found the academic feedback received useful and the event also provided an opportunity for them to socialise as a group.
- Graduation is another highlight during the academic year. In November 2024, 22 students graduated with Bachelor of European Studies (Honours), whilst 7 students graduated with Master of Arts in European Politics, Economics and Law in March 2025.
- In addition to the outreach work with prospective students, the Institute continued to organise and participate in various events involving different EU issues. A key event is the annual Europe Day Quiz Night, sponsored by the European Commission's Representation in Malta. This year's quiz was again well attended with 79 students and alumni participating. The annual visit to the European Union's Asylum Agency was also held during this academic year. Furthermore, the Institute also participated in a number of events organised by the European Parliament Liaison Office in Malta, the French and German Embassies and also supported the LGBTIQ Symposium 2025, organised by the Department of Gender and Sexualities at the Faculty for Social Wellbeing, in May 2025.
- Collaboration with other academic entities within the University of Malta continues to be a central priority of the Institute. In particular, the Institute collaborates closely with the Department of International Relations, through the joint organisation of the Ideas in Brown Bag seminar series, as well as through other initiatives. The Institute also cooperates closely with the Department of European and Comparative Law, the Faculty for Social Wellbeing and the Department of Translation, Terminology and Interpretation. During this academic year, the Institute has strengthened its collaboration with the French Department. In particular, as from academic year 2025-26, European Studies students can choose to take French language study units as part of their undergraduate programme of studies. It is planned to extend this option to other European languages in the future and preparatory work has already been carried out with other language departments within the Faculty of Arts. During this academic year, the Institute has also cooperated with the French Department in its outreach activities to promote its

academic programmes among post-secondary and secondary students.

- Outside University, the Institute continued to cooperate closely with various stakeholders, including the European Commission's Representation to Malta, the European Parliament's Office in Malta and Servizzi Ewropej f'Malta. It also continued to collaborate with student organisations, in particular the European Studies Organisation (ESO) and Young European Federalists (JEF).
- Finally, this academic year saw a number of changes within the Institute. Dr Andre Debattista was promoted to Lecturer in February 2025. Dr Marta Migliorati resigned in February 2025. The new academic replacing her - Dr Ragnar Weilandt, joined the Institute in September 2025. Furthermore, Ms Carmen Zammit retired in August 2025. Whilst wishing her well for her retirement, we would like to thank Carmen for all her hard work and dedication over the past years.
- The Director would like to conclude this introduction by thanking the academic and administrative staff of the Institute for their support during this first year of her term, and for continuing to show commitment and hard work during the academic year 2024-25. Despite a number of challenges, the Institute has managed to continue to achieve positive results, as detailed in this report, and this reflects the collective effort of all the Institute's staff.

Carmen Zammit – A Note of Appreciation



In August 2025, the Institute bid farewell to Ms Carmen Zammit, who retired after ten years of dedicated service. Carmen was an integral part of the Institute's administrative team, offering invaluable support to the Institute's directors over the years and all the members of the academic staff. Her commitment to the Institute and its students was truly exemplary. She was diligent and proactive in her work, consistently going above and beyond her role. She always placed students' welfare at the forefront and was always ready to help and guide them. She provided students a warm welcome to the Institute and her positive attitude uplifted the entire atmosphere at the Institute, even during demanding times. Whilst Carmen will be deeply missed by colleagues, current students and alumni, we extend our heartfelt thanks and wish her all the very best in her retirement.

Graduation Ceremonies in 2024/2025



Photo of 2024 Graduates, B. European Studies



Photo of 2025 Graduates, Masters in European Politics, Economics and Law

In December 2024, the graduation was held for the Bachelor students who finished their degree in June and September 2024.

In March 2025 graduation was held for MA students who completed their degree in October 2024 and January 2025.

2024/2025 Best Dissertation Awards

Kelsey Fenech and Holly Ann Knerich are the recipients of the Bachelors (Hons) Dissertation award for the academic year 2024/25. Kelsey's dissertation was on The Conditionality of EU Accession and Turkey's Response. Holly's dissertation was on The Exclusion of Women in the Jordanian Labour Force and the EU's Response. Kelsey Fenech was presented with her award by Institute Director, Dr Moira Catania, on 24 January 2025. Since Holly has relocated abroad, her award was sent via international mail.



Holly Ann Knerich (left) and Kelsey Fenech (right) the winners of the Best Dissertation prize on the undergraduate programme

On 16 May 2025 the Institute was proud to present the best dissertation award for the Masters programme to Kieran Falzon who scored the highest mark in the dissertation among the postgraduate students graduating in March 2025. Kieran's dissertation was entitled *Corporate Tax Harmonization and Malta Based Firms*.



Keiran Falzon receiving the Best Dissertation winner for the Masters programme

16th Gozo Thesis Workshop (4-5 March 2025)

The Gozo Workshop has become an integral part of the Institute's academic calendar. The Undergraduate Dissertation Workshop was held on 4-5 March 2025 at Dar Manresa in Gozo. Twenty-two 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.

A full list of the dissertation titles can be found at the back of this newsletter.



Presentations during the workshop



Photo of students and staff at the dissertation workshop

EU Trade Policy and Sustainability: Changing the Goalposts? – 9 April 2025

On 9th April, the Institute for European Studies hosted an afternoon conference on EU Trade Policy at Europe House, Valletta. The current policy direction and response was jointly examined in relation to the EU's overarching policy aims and current events (i.e., US tariff positioning) by academic, government and business community experts with the engagement of an active audience of academics, students, government officials, business community representatives and NGOs among others. Special thanks go to Professor Lars Nilsson from the Trade Analysis and Evaluation Unit at the European Commission's Directorate General for Trade, who enabled a highly informed discussion as tariff events were unfolding (in real time). Local contributors were Professor Godfrey Baldacchino, Dr Moira Catania and Professor Susanna Thede from the University of Malta, Mr David Sammut from the Ministry of Finance and Mr Daniel Debono from the Malta Business Bureau.



Photos from the conference

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. As from academic year 2024/25, Dr Andre Debattista is the coordinator for the Institute's placements programme.

During the academic year 2024/25, four undergraduate and three postgraduate students carried out placements in diverse entities. Also, a new agreement was signed with the Malta Communications Authority to host students as from academic year 2024/25. The following students were registered on the Placement Programme during 2024/25.

Placement Experience at Malta Communication Authority – Afnan Gnijawah

My placement at the Malta Communications Authority (MCA) was an enriching and transformative experience that allowed me to bridge academic knowledge with practical policy work at both the national and European levels. During my placement, I had the opportunity to learn about the foundations of telecommunications regulation in Malta and

gain insight into the Authority's crucial role within the EU's wider digital landscape. Throughout my time at the MCA, I engaged in diverse tasks that deepened my understanding of regulatory frameworks and digital policy. I studied and presented on the European Commission's work programmes (2024 & 2025), analysed the European Electronic Communications Code (EECC), reviewed key documents such as the EU Action Plan on Cable Security and the EU Toolbox for Safe and Sustainable E-Commerce, and ultimately developed a comprehensive report on Malta's role within the Digital Decade Programme 2030. Alongside this, I explored the workings of BEREC, the Digital Services Act, and global perspectives through the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). This placement strengthened my research, analytical, and presentation skills while offering valuable exposure to EU policymaking. I highly recommend this experience to students seeking practical engagement in digital and regulatory affairs—it is both challenging and rewarding.



Afnan Gnijiwah

Placement Experience at *Servizzi Ewropej f'Malta (SEM)* – Miguel Xuereb

My placement at *Servizzi Ewropej f'Malta (SEM)* between February and May 2025 was an enriching and rewarding experience that allowed me to gain both practical skills and a deeper understanding of EU affairs. Throughout my time there, I had the

opportunity to work within SEM's two main areas: Project Support, and Communications and Outreach.

With the Project Support division, I attended meetings with clients seeking EU funds, reviewed several funding proposals, and participated in a training session delivered by SEM's Projects division to NGOs on how to apply for EU funding. This gave me valuable insight into how funding mechanisms work and how they impact people and businesses.

On the other hand, with the Communications and Outreach division, I worked on several translations and articles, some of which were published on the TVM News portal and SEM's social media. I also attended a live TV interview, and participated in the Europe Day 2025 Expo representing SEM at their stand. Moreover, I prepared the groundwork for a major proposal for Europe Direct Valletta 2026-2030.

Special thanks go to Dr Jean Claude Cachia for encouraging me to take the placement study unit, Dr Andre DeBattista and the Institute for European Studies for the opportunity, and Mr Joe Sciberras together with his Communications and Outreach team at SEM for an unforgettable experience.



Miguel Xuereb

Erasmus+ for Students

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.

The Institute holds Erasmus agreements with the following universities, across Europe: Istanbul Bilgi University, Turkey; NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences, Netherlands; The Hague University of Applied Sciences, Netherlands; TalTech – Tallinn University of Technology, Estonia; Università degli Studi di Milano, Italy; Università di Bologna – Forlì Campus, Italy; Università della Calabria, Italy; Université Paris 8 Vincennes–Saint Denis, France; University of Konstanz, Germany; University of Mannheim, Germany; University of Regensburg, Germany; University of Limerick, Ireland; University of Tampere, Finland; Wrocław University, Poland; and the SEA-EU Universities network.

During academic year 2024/25, twelve European Studies students went on an Erasmus+ student mobility experiences.

Erasmus Experience at The Hague University of Applied Sciences, The Netherlands– Ylenia Duncan

Last summer, I had the opportunity to travel to the Netherlands to spend the first semester of my third year of studies at The Hague University of Applied Sciences, as a part of the Erasmus+ Program. This university was my first preference, having heard good things about the units they offered as a part of the European Studies course. I was also drawn in by the location of the university, situated in the center of a bustling city, Den Haag, famous for its vibrant student life and for being the seat of the International Court of Justice. I found my time at The Hague University of Applied Sciences to be deeply enriching, particularly due to the drastically different teaching style adopted by the faculty of European Studies, and the University as a whole. Lectures were centered around discussions, and grades were based upon participation and group work. The environment encouraged healthy debates, and allowed me and other students to voice our opinions freely, even when we were hesitant.

The academic aspect of my Erasmus+ experience complimented the social aspect very well, giving me the opportunity to socialise with classmates and create connections.



Ylenia Duncan

Erasmus Experience at the University of Mannheim, Germany – Lucienne Gafa

During the first semester of my third year, I took the opportunity to go on Erasmus at the University of Mannheim in Germany. Since my dissertation focused on the relationship between the Turkish Government and the Kurdish minority, and how the conflict between the two affected EU accession, I chose Germany due to its large Turkish minority population and the possibility of finding additional literature for my dissertation. Academically, the Erasmus experience helped me compile a number of sources that were beneficial for my dissertation. Moreover, the

study units I selected deepened my knowledge in areas I had not been fully aware of before. These included study-units such as Climate Conflicts, Politics of Humanitarian Aid, and Coalition Governments and National Parliaments, which provided me with valuable understanding beyond what I had gained at the University of Malta. Additionally, my pre-existing knowledge regarding public attitudes towards European integration was further enhanced at the University of Mannheim. Many lecturers had hands-on experience, which made the lectures both interesting and engaging. I also developed important academic skills in research, reading, and writing that built upon those I had already obtained. Interacting with other peers broadened my perspective, especially in European Studies. My presentation skills, which I acquired at the University of Malta, served me well during my Erasmus period and were further developed throughout this journey. Although the transition from University of Malta to the University of Mannheim was challenging at first, it turned out to be the best decision I ever made, contributing significantly to both my academic and personal growth.



Lucienne Gafa

Administrative Staff Erasmus+ Work Experiences

Stefan Bezzina

On 21-22 February 2025, Stefan Bezzina underwent a two-day Erasmus+ work exchange at The Hague University of Applied Sciences Library. Mr Bezzina exchanged work practices on various library services including e-journal databases, information literacy, data management and search tools. He was also given a library tour and a tour of the Sports Campus. He also donated various publications published by the Institute for European Studies - University of Malta.



Stefan Bezzina at The Hague University library

Corinne Fenech & Stephania Vella

On 25-27 March 2025, Corinne Fenech and Stephania Vella, spent three days on an Erasmus+ Staff Training Mobility at the University of Latvia in Riga. They met with the Vice-Dean of Studies Prof. Indra Karapetjana, Prof. Inna Romanova and Ms Aleksandra Kjakste from the Mobility Division. A very interesting tour of the Old University Campus was also organised.



Ms Fenech & Ms Vella at Riga University, Latvia

Eight 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. All seminars are held at the Institute's library.

The seminar series is coordinated by Dr Jean Claude Cachia on behalf of the Institute. In the academic year 2024/25, the following seminars were presented:

- Is the European Union Founded by Official Statistics? – 16 October 2024 – Dr Luca Di Gennaro Splendore
- 'Power to the Creditors? Odious Debt and Tunisia's Democratic Responsiveness – 18 December 2024 – Joe Debono
- Proposed methodology - The influence of the EP and its political groups on European integration – 15 January 2025 – Silvio Galea

- We exist - LGBTIQ Movements in the Arab world – 26 March 2025 – Professor James Sater
- Industrial disasters and conditions for peaceful protest: A qualitative comparative analysis – 30 April 2025 – Dr Miriam Matejova



Silvio Galea delivering an overview of his research

Guest Speakers and Visiting Lecturers in 2024/25

On 28 November 2024, the Institute hosted a public lecture by Professor Spyros Economides (London School of Economics) entitled *Ukraine and the Persistence of the West in World Politics: The EU Dimension*. Professor Economides visited the Institute as part of the Visiting Lecturer's programme for 2024/25.

On 1 April 2025, H.E. Ambassador Caroline Whelan (Ambassador of Ireland to Malta) delivered a guest lecture to the Institute's second year students. The lecture discussed the importance of neutrality for Ireland and its approach to the conflict in Ukraine.

On 7-8 April, Mr. Reiner Duvenage delivered a series of engaging lectures on climate change and the relationship between South Africa and the EU. Mr Duvenage was visiting Malta as a Visiting Lecturer for 2024-25.

On 9 April, Dr Josianne Cutajar met with our second-year students to share her experience as a former Member of the European Parliament. She discussed the strategies that small states adopt to maximize their limited resources, and highlighted the importance of digitalization for small states such as Malta.

On 6 May, Professor Charalampos Tsardanidis, Director of the Athens-based Institute of International Economic Relations, and Dr. Valentina Cassar from the Department of International Relations, took part in a two-hour discussion titled “The EU, the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict and the Wider Middle East: Challenges for the EU in the Midst of Global Uncertainties.” The event was hosted by Professor Roderick Pace as part of the study-unit EST3090 Euro-Mediterranean Relations. Chaired by the European Studies Students’ Organization (ESO), who supported the event, the session was open to all students and staff.

In EST3090, students explore various themes, including the EU’s stance on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its broader engagement in the Middle East. The insights shared by Professor Tsardanidis and Dr. Cassar were highly appreciated by attendees.

On 7 May, Professor Tsardanidis also contributed to the Master’s programme in European Economics, Politics and Law, participating in the EST5341 study-unit on The EU’s Mediterranean Diplomacy. He led a discussion on the EU’s involvement in two “frozen conflicts”: the Western Sahara dispute and the Cyprus issue.

Events – IES and EDC

Throughout the academic year a series of events (many of which were organized by and held the Institute Library), 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.

Visit of the President of the European Parliament, Dr Roberta Metsola, to the Archbishop's Minor Seminary – 29 October 2024

The Director of the Institute for European Studies, Dr Moira Catania, and Dr Jean Claude Cachia were present for the visit of the President of the European Parliament, Dr Roberta Metsola, to the Archbishop's Minor Seminary. The visit coincided with the exhibition on the 20th anniversary of Malta’s EU membership which was on display in this school.



Dr Metsola with Dr Catania, Dr Cachia and staff from the European Parliament in Malta Liaison Office and the European Commission Representation in Malta.

From Candidate to MEP – 30 October 2024

The "From Candidate to MEP" event took place at Floriani Hall in the Excelsior Hotel, gathering Maltese citizens, youth, and stakeholders to explore the journey of European Parliament representatives from candidacy to active service. The event was organised by the European Parliament Liaison Office in Malta (EPLO).

Following the welcome, the agenda introduced the European Direct CORE Platform, represented by Dr. Roberta Lepre, and Junior Chamber International Malta, with David Bartolo. The event was then opened by European Parliament President Dr Roberta Metsola. This was followed by a unique “reverse panel” aimed at young people and volunteers, where youth representatives voiced their views on democracy, voting, and political engagement. Panelists Marelaine Formosa, David Bartolo, Michael Gatt, Isaac

Rizzo, and Kyle Vella (a student from the Institute for European Studies) shared their perspectives, with MEPs listening and responding to their concerns.

The second panel, titled "From Candidate to MEP," featured MEPs Agius, Agius Saliba, Attard, and Bajada. Moderated by Claire Agius Ordway, the discussion provided insight into the transition from campaigning to legislative responsibilities, reflecting on whether pre-election expectations aligned with the realities of serving in the European Parliament. The event concluded with remarks by Dr. Mario Sammut, Head of EPLO Valletta.



Panel of youth representatives

EUAA visit – 3 December 2024

24 students from the Institute attended a visit to the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA). This visit was coordinated by Professor Mark Harwood. During the visit members of the Communications and Press Relations Unit explained the work of the agency as well as the internship opportunities on offer.



Prof Harwood with students at the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA)

Meeting on the Erasmus+ Programme – 11 December 2024

The Institute for European Studies, the UM Erasmus Office and ESO - European Studies Organisation organised a meeting for our second-year students to provide information on the Erasmus exchange. The Institute's Erasmus Coordinator, Mr. Andre Debattista, gave an outline of the Erasmus programme, highlighting the numerous opportunities available for studying abroad, the application process, and the many academic, cultural, and personal benefits of participating in an exchange.



Dr Debattista and representatives from ESO addressing the audience

Participation in the Junior College Career Expo – 13- 17 January 2025

In January 2023 the Institute participated in the Junior College Careers Expo, held between 13 - 17 January 2025. The aim of this activity was to give a first-hand opportunity to students to discover and start exploring different study routes and career paths.



The Institute's stand at the fair

Franco-German Report 'Sailing on High Seas: Reforming and Enlarging the EU for the 21st Century' – 7 March 2025

Students taking the study unit EST3211 'The Future of the European Union' attended an event on the Franco-German Report 'Sailing on High Seas: Reforming and Enlarging the EU for the 21st Century'. They had the opportunity to follow presentations on proposals for EU institutional reforms by two experts from the Group of Twelve authors of the Report - Prof Franz Mayer and Prof Gaëlle Marti.

The event was moderated by the Institute's Director, Dr Moira Catania. Prof Roderick Pace also participated in this event.



Photos from the event

Danish students visit – 3 April 2025

The Institute hosted a group of Danish students from Allsundgymnasiet Sønderborg. They were given a presentation on Malta-EU relations by resident academic Dr Andre Debattista.



Dr Debattista delivering his presentation to Danish students

COPE Session - European Studies teachers - 29 April 2025

The European Studies secondary school teachers held their COPE (Community of Professional Educators) session at the University of Malta. This session was tailored for European Studies secondary school educators, with the primary aim of laying the groundwork for collaborative initiatives in the upcoming academic year. Challenges being faced in the teaching of European Studies at secondary level were identified, together with possible solutions to make European Studies a more attractive subject option as well as to make the subject more relevant and link it better to European Studies at University level. The meeting was also attended by JEF officer Andrea Pisani, the CEO of SEM Rodrick Zerafa and SEM's Head of Policy Charlene Caruana.



Group photo of the participants

Europe Day Quizzes – 5 & 7 May 2025

To celebrate Europe Day, the Institute (in collaboration with the European Commission Representation in Malta) organized two quizzes. Both quizzes were mainly sponsored by the European Commission Representation in Malta with the other sponsors being: Agenda Bookshop; Klabb Kotba Maltin; Costa Coffee Malta; Fort Fitness; Gemma Joe's; GCS Malta; McDonald's; Nectar & AMSM - Alf. Mizzi & Sons Marketing Group.

On 5 May, the Institute for European Studies organised a quiz for secondary school students (at Campus Hub) as part of the annual Europe Day celebrations. Six secondary schools participated in the Quiz. SCC Team 1 JCIM from Sir Adrian Dingli Pembroke Secondary School won first place, followed by SMC Group from SMC Secondary Verdala, and SCC Team 2 from Sir Adrian Dingli Pembroke Secondary School.



Photos from the Schools Quiz

On 7 May, the Institute for European Studies in organised the annual Europe Day Quiz Night at Hospice Malta. 79 participants competed in the quiz (in teams of three and four) and these included current students, alumni as well as other students from University of Malta. The quiz was won by the 'Retirement Home' group, followed by 'Kant believe we're still here', 'Miggy's Angels', 'Jefers' and 'Schenigenn'. Also, during the event, funds were collected for Hospice Malta, with the total donation amounting to EUR205.



Photos from the Quiz Night

The 4th LGBTIQ+ Research Symposium – 19 May 2025

Organised by the Department of Gender and Sexualities at the Faculty for Social Wellbeing - University of Malta, with the support of the Institute for European Studies, as well as the Human Rights Directorate, the event brought together researchers, activists, students, and members of the community for meaningful discussion, critical reflection, and shared knowledge around LGBTIQ issues in Malta and beyond.

The Institute's Director Dr Moira Catania addressed the audience with an opening address. Professor Mark Harwood moderated one of the panels. Board member Prof Marceline Naudi presented the event.



Professor Naudi presenting the event

I Choose Fair – 18 July 2025

The Institute participated in the I Choose Post Secondary Education Fair, 2025. The Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation (MEYR) once again embarked in the 'I Choose' event, targeting all Year 11s. This was another opportunity whereby students can explore further career and educational options as they leave compulsory education.



Dr Cachia at the fair.

Outreach in secondary schools

To mark the 20th anniversary of Malta's membership of the European Union in May 2024, the Institute for European Studies created an exhibition that commemorates this important date in Malta's post-independence history. Comprising ten panels, the exhibition begins by detailing the EU's enlargement policy. It then transitions to Malta's pre-membership journey, covering key milestones such as the signing of the 1970 Association Agreement, the submission of Malta's application to join in 1990, and its eventual membership in 2004. The exhibition concludes by outlining Malta's experience as an EU Member State. During 2024-25, the exhibition was on display in various schools across Malta and Gozo with the intent of promoting the studying of European Studies in secondary schools. To aid in this outreach campaign, the Institute's academics organised a series of talks in these schools to promote European Studies but also, to explain the role of Malta in the European Union. In some occasions, these talks were supported by the European Parliament Office in Malta who organised an EU simulation game for students.



Exhibition panels & outreach in various schools

Also, during 2024-2025, the Institute hosted several schools in the Institute's library. During these visits, students were given a presentation on the courses offered by the Institute and possible career paths.



School students at the Institute's Library

New Academic Staff Member: Dr Ragnar Weilandt



Ragnar Weilandt joined the Institute for European Studies in September 2025. Before coming to Malta, he was a postdoc at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) in Trondheim, a postdoc at KU Leuven and an adjunct professor at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel. He obtained his PhD in Politics and International Studies from the Université libre de Bruxelles and the University of Warwick. Prior to embarking on his doctoral research, he completed degrees in International Relations and European Politics at Royal Holloway and the London School of Economics.

Ragnar's main research interests are the European Union's external relations, with a special focus on the EU's Eastern and Southern neighbourhoods, as well as these two regions' history and politics. He is especially interested in democratisation and autocratisation processes, and focuses on corresponding developments in Georgia and Tunisia in particular. In his previous positions, he has taught a range of undergraduate and postgraduate courses on the European Union, comparative regionalism as well as Middle Eastern history and politics. His research and teaching are complemented by non-academic writings that have appeared in various media outlets including POLITICO Europe, The Guardian and Der Spiegel.

Publications and Activities of Institute Academics

Dr Moira Catania - Institute's Director



Dr Moira Catania was appointed as Director of the Institute for European Studies with effect from 1 October 2024. Consequently, her main activities during the academic year 2024/25 focused on her administrative responsibilities in this new role. This included meetings with various stakeholders both within UM, as well as outside University, with entities with which the Institute collaborates closely.

During the academic year 2024/25, Dr Catania continued to carry out her previous lecturing duties and taught 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 EU financial instruments in crisis management and pension sustainability and active ageing in the EU with a focus on Malta. She is also currently supervising three students for their postgraduate dissertation, with the topics being the development of Malta's online gaming industry from an EU perspective; economic security and semiconductors: a comparison on the EU and US approaches; and digital transformation in the EU and the Recovery and Resilience Fund (a comparative analysis of Italy and Portugal).

In her capacity of Director of the Institute, Moira Catania serves as the vice-chair of the Institute Board. She also chairs the MA and Bachelor Board of Studies, the Classification Boards and the Institute's PhD Committee. 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 on the political determinants of the fiscal response to the covid-19 pandemic in EU and OECD countries. Her empirical paper entitled 'Domestic politics and the fiscal response to the COVID-19 pandemic in EU and OECD countries' was accepted for presentation at the 1st International Conference on Applied Economics and Financial Issues (AEFI), which took place at the Aristotle University, Thessaloniki, Greece on 28-29 August 2025. Besides presenting this paper, Dr Catania also chaired one of the sessions on 'Fiscal Response, Financial Safety and Resilience in Crisis and Sustainability Contexts'. This conference, which was jointly organised by the School of Economics, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and the Department of Economic Science, University of Piraeus, involved around 80 presentations by established economists as well as PhD students and included various keynote speeches by world renowned economists, which contributed to a high level of academic debate.

During the year, Moira Catania also participated in a number of TV programmes discussing EU issues and other topics in her area of expertise. She also provided interviews to the media and contributed to the Malta Business Bureau's Strategic Outlook 2025 through an article on 'Open Strategic Autonomy in the EU: Trade policy and implications for Malta'. Furthermore, on 7 March 2025, she moderated the discussion by two experts from the Group of Twelve – Prof Franz Mayer and Prof Gaëlle Marti, on the Franco-German Report 'Sailing on High Seas: Reforming and Enlarging the EU for the 21st Century'.

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, she participated in meetings of the EU Independent Fiscal Institutions Network, held in Brussels (December 2024) and Madrid (June 2025).

Professor Mark Harwood



Professor Mark Harwood was Director of the Institute for European Studies for 8 years with his term ending in September 2024. Prof Harwood applied for a sabbatical to begin midway during the 2024-2025 academic year so as to facilitate the handover to the new Director. Prof Harwood's sabbatical runs from February 2025 to August 2026. During this academic year he taught EST 1030 and EST 2140 on the undergraduate programme and EST 5334 on the MA programme. In 2024/2025 he supervised 2 undergraduate students and continued with his supervision of 1 MA student.

Prof Harwood also supervised the following MPhil/PhD students:

Jennifer Azzopardi - Gender Inequality and Intersectionality: EU Policy Implementation (Institute for European Studies)

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 2024/2025 Prof Harwood published the following articles/chapters:

Harwood, M. (2024). The continuing significance of the council of the EU presidency for small states: agenda setting or painting-by-

numbers? *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14782804.2024.2411633>

Harwood, M. (2025). Malta and the United States: A Common Interest in Mediterranean Security. In: Kaeding, M., Pollak, J., Schmidt, P. (eds) *The United States and the Future of Europe*. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-83350-2_18

The following articles/chapters are under review:

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.

Harwood, M 'Malta and European Defence Cooperation – the utility of remaining neutral' in *Security, Defence and the Future of Europe: Views from the Capitals*. M. Kaeding, J. Pollak & P. Schmidt (eds.). Springer, Cham.

In terms of research networks and academic collaboration:

Prof Harwood was the MC member of the Cost Action CA20123 which studied the Intergovernmental Coordination from Local to European Governance. The action finished 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*. 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 2024/2025 Prof Harwood participated in the following conferences/events:

Towards the beginning of the academic year, on 26th September, Prof Harwood participated in the 17th Conference of Presidents of Parliament of Small European States. Prof Harwood chaired the second session of the conference, on Multilateralism and Small States. The conference was held at the House of Representatives in Valletta and comprised the Speakers (or their delegates) of the

parliaments of Andorra, Cyprus, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Montenegro and San Marino.

In October 2024 Prof Harwood undertook a teaching visit to NHL Stenden from 7 to 11 October. In addition to attending lectures given by the European Studies staff, Prof Harwood delivered 3 lectures, one on Malta as a small state in the EU, one on interest representation within the EU and one on Lobbying and the EU. Prof Harwood also held a meeting with the administrative staff at Stenden to discuss the auditing procedure in The Netherlands as well as the checks and balances they use to ensure that follow-up after audits proceeds smoothly.

On 3 December Prof Harwood coordinated a visit to EUAA for the second year students. 24 students attended (including an MA student). During the visit members of the Communications and Press Relations Unit explained the work of the agency as well as the internship opportunities on offer.

In December 2024 Prof Harwood was appointed to the University's Committee to consider Extension of Appointments of Academic Staff. The appointment covers the period 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025. During the academic year 2024-2025, Prof Harwood formed part of the editorial board and organising committee of the 4th Research Symposium for LGBTIQ Research at the UM. Organised by the Department of Gender and Sexualities (Faculty of Social Wellbeing) with the collaboration of the Institute, MGRM and the Human Rights Directorate within the OPM, the symposium began with the vetting the abstracts submitted in February 2025. The fourth symposium was held on May 19th with 12 papers being presented.

In February 2025 Prof Harwood formed part of the PhD Upgrade Board for Silvio Galea's thesis 'The Influence of the European Parliament and its Political Groups on the Process of European Integration'. The Board consisted of Prof Harwood, Dr Jean Claude Cachia and was chaired by Prof Emanuel Buttigieg.

In 2024/2025, Senate approved the registration of Ms Jennifer Azzopardi to the PhD programme with Prof Harwood as her supervisor. Her thesis will analyse the implementation of the EU's gender equality policy with a focus on intersectionality.

On 20 May 2025 Prof Harwood participated in the European IDAHOT+ Forum 2025, organised by the Maltese Presidency of the Council of Europe where he moderated the panel 'Intergovernmental Cooperation for Lasting LGBTIQ+ Equality'. The panel comprised of: the French Ambassador for LGBTI Rights; the Head of SOGIESC Unit at the Council of Europe; the Executive Director of the Global Equality Caucus; the Advocacy Coordinator of the Equal Rights Association for the Western Balkans and Turkiye; policy officers from the Commission's Non-Discrimination DG; as well as representatives of the Equal Rights Coalition

Prof Harwood attended the European Union Agency for Asylum's first *State of Asylum Conference 2025* which was held on 18 June 2025 at the Mediterranean Conference Centre.

Professor Roderick Pace



Teaching

In the academic year 2024-25, Professor Pace continued to lead the Institute's Ph.D. programme. The Institute now has four students pursuing doctoral studies.

In June 2025, Professor Pace chaired the Board of Examiners for the doctoral thesis submitted for examination by Ms Angelique Pouponneau, who completed her doctoral research under the aegis of the Islands and Small States Institute.

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. His teaching tasks are as follows: EST5331 The EU in World Politics, the politics half of EST5603 Political and Economic Approaches to European Integration; EST 5341 The EU and Mediterranean Diplomacy; EST 5342 Southern EU Societies and Politics; EST 3200 The EU's External Policy and the CFSP; EST3090 Euro-Mediterranean Relations; and EST 3211 The Future of the European Union.

Research and Publications

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 open-source 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 blind refereed several academic articles for international academic journals.

International Conferences

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

On January 23-24, 2025, Professor Pace participated, on invitation, in a conference on "The Multi-lingual Story of EU enlargement" held in Luxembourg. He participated in the opening panel "The Historical Context of European Integration and Enlargements". His contribution is being prepared for publication by DG Trade.

International Co-operation

In March and April 2025, Professor Pace gave two lectures to the students from Luther College, Iowa. The first lecture on 12 March

was on "Malta's EU Experience and Future Prospects and Challenges". On 9 April, the title of the lecture was "Malta's Mediterranean Relations in the context of EU Membership"

Professor Charalampos Tsardanidis Director of the Athens based Institute of International Economic Relations and Dr Valentina Cassar from the Department of International Relations participated in a two-hour discussion on "The EU, the Israeli Palestinian Conflict and the Wider Middle East: Challenges for the EU in the Midst of Global Uncertainties" as guests of Professor Pace in the study-unit EST 3090 Euro-Mediterranean Relations. The discussion was chaired by the European Studies Students' Organization (ESO) and was open to all staff members and students. The next day, Professor Tsardanidis participated in the Master's class on the EU's Mediterranean Diplomacy he led the discussion on the EU's role in two "frozen conflicts: the EU and the Western Sahara Conflict and the EU and the Cyprus problem. Publications

Roderick Pace (2025). "Die Neutralität Maltas Vom Neutralismus zur (prekären) Balance mit der EU-Mitgliedschaft" in Martin Senn & Jodok Troy (Hg.) (2025) *Österreichs Neutralität Recht, Politik und Gesellschaft – Eine Debatte*. [print: ISBN 978-3-8376-7452-1; e-book: ISBN 978-3-8394-2445-2 Open Access]/

"Malta's Foreign and Security Policy in 20 Years of EU: Membership: A small state's Strengths and Weaknesses in World Politics", 20 Years of EU Membership, paper series, Institute for European Studies, 2024. <https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/121972>

"The Positives and negatives of Malta's EU Membership", 16 December 2024. <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/2024/12/16/the-positives-and-negatives-of-maltas-eu-experience/>

Several other works in progress will be announced as soon as they are published.

Associate Professor 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 administrative duties of IES BA exam coordinator, IES BA dissertation coordinator and IES academic network coordinator.

Professor Thede organized the IES main conference event this year. The theme was aligned with her field of expertise and incorporated into specialized study units at BA and MA level. She is actively engaged in a broad international network working on several research projects in her field of expertise. She is a member of the European Economic Association (EEA) and the Forum for Research in International Trade (FREIT). In the 2024/2025 academic year, she has worked to finalize a book project, progress several research projects and initiate new project proposals. Her research involvement included acquiring UM seed funds to initiate work linked to the broad theme of the conference, seminar participation and managing the IFES academic networks. A more detailed description follows below.

CONFERENCE ORGANISER

EU Trade Policy and Sustainability: Changing the Goalposts? Valletta (9th April)

Main speaker: Professor Lars Nilsson, Trade Analysis and Evaluation Unit, Directorate General for Trade, European Commission.

Other contributors: Professor Godfrey Baldacchino, Sociology, Faculty of Arts; Dr Moira Catania, Director, Institute for European

Studies; Professor Susanna Thede, Institute for European Studies; Mr David Sammut, Director; International Economic Policy, Economic Policy Department, Ministry of Finance; Mr Daniel Debono, EU Affairs Manager and Head of Business Operations, Malta Business Bureau. Manager: Mr Stefan Bezzina, Institute for European Studies, University of Malta.

TEACHING ACTIVITIES:

- Advances in European Union Trade Policy (MA).
- European Union Cohesion Policy (MA)
- Political and Economic Approaches to European Integration (MA, post-grad.)
- European Union Trade Policy (BA 3rd yr)
- The Economics of EU policies (BA, 3rd yr).
- EU Cohesion Policy Implementation and Management (BA, 2 yr);
Course coordinator (joint with the managing authority for EU Cohesion Policy in Malta, PPCD).
- Research Methodology and Writing Skills (BA, 2yr).

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES:

The primary focus this year has been to finalize a book on the multinational enterprise's investment behavior in corrupt environments. This is an important contribution in its field, which provides an analytical foundation linking a theoretical core model and empirical evidence (systematic enterprise-level patterns across markets). A key part of the publication is to ascertain that it reaches a wide readership, and external financing to strengthen this outreach has been obtained.

Thede, S. (2025) Foreign Direct Investment and Corruption - Multinational Enterprises' Behavior in Corrupt Environments, Palgrave/Macmillan (subject to peer-review, forthcoming). International outreach arrangements funded by Jan Wallander & Tom Hedelius and Tore Browaldh foundations.

Other projects have been progressed, deepening the research and addressing issues relating to feedback in international research fora. These are at an advanced stage to result in working papers (that will be submitted to academic outlets at the next stage).

Thede, S., Evidence on the Civilizing Effect of Trade (work in progress). Supported by the University of Malta seed fund. Presented at the

European Trade Study Group annual conference.

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

A couple of project ideas are underway, including offspring of the conference event relating to research on trade policy, investment and sustainability (broadly interpreted including resilience to trade policy shocks), in communication with other scholars. These will be concretized, and framed in conferences and visits to research institutions, the coming fall.

REFEREE ACTIVITIES:

- Journal of Comparative Economics
- Review of World Economics
- World Economy

GRANTS:

University of Malta research seed fund (EUR 1,100)

Dr Jean Claude Cachia – Senior Lecturer



During the academic year 2024/2025, 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 2025 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 coordinated with secondary and post-secondary schools to exhibit the Malta's 20th anniversary of EU membership

exhibition set up by the Institute for European Studies. Twelve schools around Malta and Gozo hosted the exhibition. On the latter, the Institute collaborated with the EP office in Malta to organise a simulation for students and raise more awareness on the role of Malta in the EU.

Dr Jean Claude Cachia, Mr Stefan Bezzina and Dr Moira Catania collaborated with the European Commission Representation in Malta to organise a Quiz for secondary school students. Six secondary schools participated in the quiz. This was held on 2 May 2025 at Campus Hub. Dr Cachia, Mr Bezzina and Dr Catania also collaborated with the European Commission Representation in Malta on the organisation of the annual quiz night which took place on 7th May 2025 at the Saint Michael's Hospice in Santa Venera .

Dr. Cachia has collaborated with Prof Anna Khakee 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 for European Studies and Department of International Relations.

Dr. Jean Claude Cachia has published two articles in this academic year: one on the 2025 European Elections in Malta, featured in *Politique européenne*, and another on the 20th anniversary of EU membership and Malta's rule of law, which appeared in *Current History* journal. Additionally, as part of the CamforS project, he is collaborating with Dr. Debattista to code European Election campaigns on social media, with completion anticipated in October 2025. He is also completing a chapter with Ms Kailyze Attard on the coordination between the EU and Malta. This publication will be finalised in 2026.

Research during the academic year 2024/2025
Cachia, J. C. (2024). Navigating Polarisation Malta's two-party dynamics in the 2024 EU elections. *Politique européenne*, 86(4), 184-191.

Cachia, J. C. (2025). Scandals and Malta's Rule of Law. *Current History*, 124(860), 107-112.

Dr Andre Debattista – Lecturer



Dr Andre Debattista was MA coordinator until October 2024. He then took over the role of Placement and Erasmus Coordinator for the rest of the academic year 2024/25. In terms of the Placement Programme, the Institute had 7 applicants; 4 from the Bachelor stream and 3 from the MA stream. All have concluded their placements successfully. In terms of the placements, this year the Institute also managed to successfully commence its collaboration with the Malta Communications Authority. With regards to the Erasmus Programme, this proved to be very popular with the students and there were 12 applicants; 11 of which will be travelling during the first semester of the forthcoming academic year.

In addition to this, Dr Debattista 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. He also supervised / examined a number of dissertations at post-graduate (7 MA students) and undergraduate (3 BA students) level.

Dr Debattista was awarded his doctorate at the March 2025 graduation ceremonies. In May 2025, he was nominated by the European Studies Organisation for a KSU Kokka Award. Dr Debattista also delivered two public lectures in November 2024 at the National Library, Valletta and in May 2025 at the National Archives in Rabat. Both lectures will eventually be published. Two other papers were published throughout the year and are listed below.

Dr Debattista also took part in several panels and initiatives organised by different organisations in Malta and was interviewed on a number of programmes on current affairs issues.

Publications – Papers

DeBattista, A.P. (tr. Kálmán Tóth) (2024), *Európa eszméje Joseph Ratzinger munkásságában in Politikatudományi Szemle*, 2024, Vol. 33, No. 4, pp. 63 – 77

DeBattista, A.P. (2025) *The Idea of Europe in the Work of Popes John Paul II, Benedict XVI, and Francis in Religions (Special Issue Continuity and Discontinuity: From Pope John Paul II to Pope Francis and Beyond)*, 2025, Vol. 16, No. 3

Dr Andreas Kotelis – Lecturer



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 Bachelor 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 Bachelor students and the EU simulation unit for the Bachelor students. Dr Kotelis also supervised 2 students from 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, as of October 2024 Dr Kotelis is the MA coordinator of the Institute, as well as, the Institute's representative at the FEMA research ethics committee.

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 February 2025 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 UM students and the coaching of the students before and during the simulation exercise.

In October 2024, Dr Kotelis visited the NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands, as a visiting lecturer. During his time in the Netherlands, Dr Kotelis had the opportunity to teach Dutch 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 NHL Stenden.

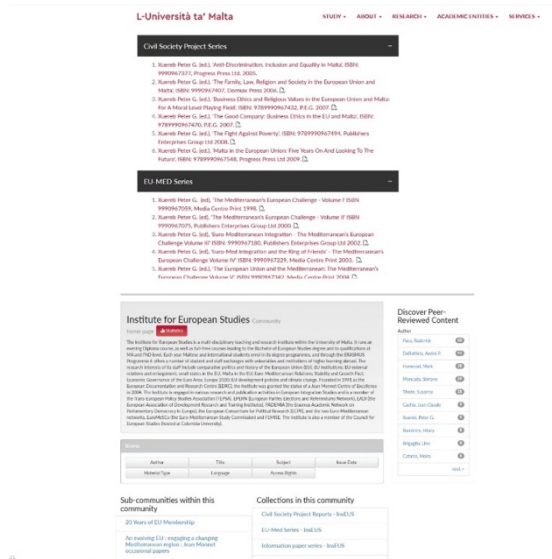
Furthermore, Dr Kotelis is a member of the Scientific Committee for the 15th Rhodes Model Regional Co-operation 2025 (RhodesMRC), which will take place between Oct 30 – Nov 2 (university edition). Dr Kotelis also represented the Institute for European Studies at the 2025 Transatlantic Periscope Summit on May 7-11 in Warsaw and Torun, Poland. The participation in the Periscope offers a significant opportunity for the Institute to become a part of an expanded network of actors from all over the European Union and participate in discussions on a range of economic, security and political issues. During his time in Poland, Dr Kotelis also participated in the Think Tank Forum organized by the Polish Presidency of the EU Council.

With regards to international projects Dr Kotelis is part of a consortium that successfully secured funding for the Erasmus project "Inclusivity in European Studies" (INES). The consortium is led by the Catholic University of Lille, and includes the participation of several other Universities from a number of EU member states. The University of Malta will receive €58,000 over three years, with our Institute being responsible for Work Package 2,

while we will also participate in all 5 Work Packages that comprise the project. Furthermore, he is part of a team that submitted a Cluster Funding Application in December 2024. The project titled "Intelligence and Security Research Cluster – INSIGHTS" aims at exploring the multi-dimensional and crosscutting security challenges and examine, among others, the ways emerging technologies may be exploited to address these challenges. The championing faculty for this proposal is MAKs.

Institute Library (EDC) news

During the academic year 2024/25, the Institute Library started a digitization project in which the Institute's publications are being scanned and made available online. This task includes research on the Institute's publications, scanning and uploading material both on the website and on the Online Access Repository (OAR) where they are also catalogued as per the guidelines and rules issued by the Library of Congress. These are then submitted to the Main Library for final review and acceptance. The project is still ongoing.



Screenshots from the Institute's website publications section and the OAR profile

Also, during the academic year 2024/25, the EDC published hardcopies of the 10 Years of EU Membership and the Jean Monnet Paper Series which thus far were only available online.

As per legal depository requirements, two copies of each research paper were donated to the Central Public Library in Floriana for cataloguing and eventually housing at the National Library of Malta and the National Library (Gozo Annexe).

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.



One of the meetings organized between the Europe Direct Information Centres and the European Commission Representation in Malta

Undergraduate and Postgraduate Dissertations submitted in 2024/2025 by IES Students

Undergraduate

Bondin Isaac

Far-Right Parties and the 2024 European Elections

Carabott Leanne

Pension Sustainability and Active Ageing in the European Union with a Focus on Malta

Carbone Jake John

The Implications of Brexit on Trade between Malta and the UK

Caruana Martina

EU Poverty Alleviation Measures in Malta

Cilia Sharon

The EU's Normative Power and Enlargement to the Balkans

Dolce Giorgio

Small EU Member States and Sports Diplomacy

Duncan Ylenia

European Union Financial Instruments in Crisis Management

El-Burawi Rubine

The European Union's Approach towards Combatting Organised Crime in Post-Ghaddafi Libya

England Jade

The Single Transferable Voting System in European Elections in Ireland and Malta

Farrugia Mikela

The Growth in Cryptocurrency and its Challenge to EU Anti-Money Laundering Legislation

Gafa Lucienne

The Implications of the Kurdish Question on Turkey's Path to European Union Membership

Gellel Francesco

EU-China Trade Relations and Human Rights

Gnijiwah Afnan Belqsm

The EU's Strategic Approach towards Internal Security and Intelligence Sharing

Gravino Josielle

The European Union's Smart Power in the Context of the Russia-Ukrainian War

Micallef Kurt

NATO and European Security Cooperation since the Invasion of Ukraine

Micallef Matthew George

European Defence Cooperation and the Russo-Ukrainian Conflict since 2014

Muscat Nick

An Assessment of the EU's Approach to Combat Human Trafficking

Pace Kylie

Palestinian Displacement in the West Bank and the EU

Saber Mohammed
The EU's Digital Agenda and Malta's Digital Framework

Sapiano Giuseppe Alfred
The Digital Single Market and the Harmonization of E-Commerce Laws across the EU

Tanti Gianluca
The 2024 European Elections and the Second-Order Model

Ymeri Desyllas Emmanouil
The Challenge of Adult Online Platforms for the European Union

Postgraduate – M.A. taught

Curmi Kevin
The Principle of Subsidiarity in the EU and Malta's Local Councils

Cutajar Nathan
The PiS and Fidesz Approaches toward the European Union

Micallef Charlene
Towards a Digital Economy in the European Union: the Digital Transformation in Sweden over the Past Decade

Muscat Preca Norbert
Analysing Malta-Libya Relations in the Context of European Mediterranean Policy between 2011-2022

Sciberras Bray Nicole
Economic Security and Semiconductors: A Comparison of the EU and US Approaches

Scicluna Cascun Luke
The EU and Local Traditions: The Case of the Maltese 'Festa'

Xuereb Miguel
The EU and Football: EU Values in UEFA Competitions

Zammit Andrew
The Europe à la carte Approach: The Cases of Hungary and Poland

Postgraduate – M.A. by Research

Agius Michele
The EU's Policy on the Arab-Israeli Conflict and the Effects of the Trump Administration