

# Extra-curricular Activities at the University Gozo Centre - 2005

JOSEPH CALLEJA

## International Workshop

Between 7 and 9 March 2005, twenty-five experts from different countries attended a workshop on economic resilience of small states. The workshop was organized by the Commonwealth Secretariat and the University of Malta and was held at the University of Malta Gozo Centre, Xewkija.

The objectives of the workshop were to identify economic, social, environmental, and governance aspects that help to build economic resilience in small states.

During the first day, the experts delivered a number of presentations on themes related to economic resilience-building in small states, focusing on different aspects of resilience-building. The second day was mostly dedicated to the conceptual and methodological issues involved in measuring economic resilience, while the third day was dedicated to the drafting and approval of a final statement and a discussion on the publication of the workshop proceedings.



A session of the International Workshop in progress.

## The Gozo Lace Day

On 10 April, the Lace-Making Programme at

the University of Malta Gozo Centre organized the annual event 'Gozo Lace Day' for the ninth consecutive year. The event was held at the University Gozo Centre premises and consisted of a number of exhibitions and demonstrations of Maltese lace and a number of talks on matters related to lace-making. Present for the event were Hon. Giovanna Debono, Minister for Gozo, Hon. Anton Tabone, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Ms Consiglia Azzopardi, coordinator of the Lace-Making Programme.

In her introductory talk, Ms Consiglia Azzopardi stated that, for the first time last year, lace studies have not only been approved by the University of Malta as a certificate course but also as a diploma. A certificate course in lace studies has already been offered in 2004, and a diploma course is scheduled to commence in October 2005, subject to there being a sufficient number of applicants.



Lace-makers during the Lace Day.

In his talk the Hon. Anton Tabone praised the initiative taken by the University of Malta to approve the diploma course in lace studies. He expressed his wish that the next step would be that of upgrading this unique course to a degree.

The Hon. Giovanna Debono mentioned a number of EU-funded projects related to Gozo crafts in general which the Ministry for Gozo has embarked on. One such project has the aim to set up an organization to verify the authenticity of Gozitan craft products including lace. The Hon. Debono also praised Prof. Lino Briguglio, Director of the University Gozo Centre, the staff of the Centre, as well as Ms Consiglia Azzopardi for their work and the efforts in offering such courses in Gozo.

The event continued with the award of certificates by the Hon. Giovanna Debono to a number of students. Those present were then invited to visit the exhibitions of Lace Programme projects and textile crafts. Other exhibitions were mounted by the International Organization of Needle and Bobbin Lace (OIDFA), and by the Malta Lace Guild. There were also demonstrations of pillow-covering, card-weaving, cord-making by ATC, and information about short courses in different aspects of Maltese lace. A number of stands were mounted by the Koperattiva Ghawdxija tal-Bizzilla u Artigjanat with lace-making materials.



The Hon. Giovanna Debono awards a certificate to a participant who successfully completed a course in lace-making.

## Publications

On 30 April, the 12th edition of the *Gozo Observer* was published. It contained a number of interesting articles. One article shows how some of the graduates of the University Gozo Centre made their way into important positions in the civil service. An interesting article was on banking in Gozo analysing the perceptions of Gozitans regarding the commercial banks. Ms Lorraine Vella, a pharmacist, wrote an article on Salmonella Gozo, a serovar she discovered in Gozo. Other articles relate to the natural environment in Gozo, sustainable development in Gozo, projects submitted for the lace studies course, and an interview with Ann Monsarrat.



## International Course in Lace-Making

Lace-makers from Australia and England attended the International Summer Lace Course which was the fifth in sequence. The course was held at the University Gozo Centre between 6 and 11 June. It covered 24 hours of tuition in making Maltese lace by the Maltese technique using Maltese pillow and bobbins. The programme of the course also included various activities and excursions. The participants had also the opportunity to meet local students attending lace classes at the University Gozo Centre and with them they discussed old pieces of Maltese lace from private collections.





Some participants at the International Course in Lace-making, together with Ms Consiglia Azzopardi (3rd from left)

The group was taken round the island to visit interesting nooks that may be hidden to the eye of the tourist. The programme included also visits to various villages. Moreover, the parish church displayed for the annual festa provided an insight to the environment of Maltese lace.

## The Summer Activity

On 3rd September the Centre organised its annual summer activity entitled 'An Evening of Traditional Maltese Music... and Beyond with NAFRA'.

Mr Ruben Zahra who is the leader of the ensemble, acted as compere, explaining to the audience the origins of a number of traditional musical instruments, including the bag-pipes, the friction drum and the reed pipe, which he himself played. The other members of the band were Daniel Cauchi (frame drum), Mario Frendo (Viola), Andrew Micallef (Accordion), Tricia Dawn Williams (Piano), and Paul Borg (Tuba).



NAFRA performing live one of their songs during the activity.

The band played several innovative and thought provoking pieces including 'Loghba', 'Harba', 'Raghaj', and 'Dawl ta' Qamar'. The concert was received with great enthusiasm by the large audience present. Among the guests were the Hon. Anton Tabone, Speaker of the House of Representatives and Professor Lino Briguglio, Director of the Centre.

## University Gozo Centre Graduates

During November, 11 students were awarded with a Diploma in Commerce after having successfully completed the course offered at the University Gozo Centre between October 2003 and July 2005. The graduation ceremony was held at the University of Malta.

## Courses Co-financed by the EU

Four new courses were inaugurated at the University Gozo Centre on 2nd December 2005. The courses form part of a project which is being carried out under the European Union's Structural Funds for Malta 2004-2006 and had been submitted for funding by the Ministry for Gozo, under the Gozo-Priority. The courses are: Introduction to Agricultural studies, Introduction to Business studies, Introduction to E-commerce and IT, and Introduction to Environmental Planning and Management.

During her inauguration speech, the Hon. Giovanna Debono, Minister for Gozo, stated that she was very glad with the number of persons who applied to follow these courses. She said that this is a very unique opportunity which among other things, will allow Gozitans to improve their employability.

The other speakers were Professor Lino Briguglio, coordinator of the course in Business Studies, Prof Albert Leone Ganado, coordinator of the course in E-commerce and IT, Dr George Attard, coordinator of the course in Agriculture and Mr George Said, coordinator of the course in Environmental Studies. In their speech they gave a general description of the structure of each course and the regulations governing them.



The Hon. Giovanna Debono addressing the participants during the inauguration.

## Award of Certificates Event

On 30th December 2005, the 'Award of Certificates' event was held. The Hon. Giovanna Debono, distributed certificates to 149 candidates who were eligible after they had followed courses at the University Gozo Centre during 2005.

Minister Debono, commenting on the activities

of the Gozo Centre, said that the partnership between the Ministry for Gozo and the University Gozo Centre is bearing fruit. Referring to the short courses being offered at the Gozo Centre, she said that she is very pleased that these courses are attracting participants from all walks of life and of different age group.



Students who attended short courses at the University Gozo Centre during the 'Award of Certificate' event.

Mr Joseph Calleja is the administrator of the University Gozo Centre.