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Foreword

Nighat Urpani (President, Ceratonia Foundation) and Claude Weinber
(Secretary General, Green European Foundation)

The economic turmoil and the financial crisis faced by most of the European Union Member States can represent an opportunity to address the needs of the time by embarking on the ecological transformation of current production and consumption models in our societies. This transformation of the economy will entail a transformation of Europe's employment strategies. Many of the jobs which are likely to be in demand in the future may involve tasks and require abilities different from those being demanded today. This is why we have to discuss the needed changes to the labour force and to analyse the prerequisites for the creation of green jobs, as well as the characteristics of these jobs.

The European Commission's "Europe 2020" strategy to create a smart, green, inclusive and high employment economy in the next decade is an ambitious project that could be successful if certain conditions are fulfilled. The competences of Europe's workforce must be enhanced through the appropriate educational measures. At the same time, the new impetus to produce higher quality, more innovative and sustainable products has to be embedded in a regulatory and supportive framework to remain competitive in the globalised market economy.

The Green European Foundation (GEF) has been working extensively for the past three years on a Green New Deal for Europe – a comprehensive response to the current economic, financial, social and environmental crisis. The Green New Deal puts forward a set of reforms at micro- and macro-economic levels aimed at ensuring high levels of prosperity and well-being. The creation of decent employment and re-thinking the role work plays in our societies are central parts of this response, and thus need to be thoroughly addressed. This is how the project "Green Jobs from a Small State Perspective" developed by GEF with the support of Ceratonia Foundation in Malta came about. The project discusses the

nature of work in European societies, focusing on the nature and quality of the green jobs that are created in sustainable economies. Questions such as how to create employment strategies that foster a better work-life balance, increased gender equality and allow for more emphasis on leisure time, community participation and family life are a central part of this endeavour.

This collection of articles focuses on the Europe 2020 Strategy to create new skills and employment opportunities and its relevance for Malta, as one of the smallest Member States of the EU. The publication was preceded by a conference on the topic with academia and civil society organisations, and thus it constituted a good opportunity to start discussions about green employment strategies. As reforming the labour market, as well as creating new green jobs is a resource intensive process, Malta was chosen as an example of a small state, without extensive financial, or natural resources that would facilitate this transformation. We find it a worthwhile case study that constitutes an example for other Member States.

One of the basic ideas of Green policy is that an efficient use and a sustainable production of energy are key elements for securing our common future as they will restructure our economy and guarantee social inclusion and security. These new, renewable energy sectors are also labour intensive. If Europe is to retain a strong economy and to remain competitive and innovative in the global market, it needs to ensure that its education and training structures provide training in key competences. Ongoing dialogue between training providers and industry representatives must be created and maintained. Not claiming to have found any ultimate responses to the above indicated issues, the Green European Foundation and Ceratonia Foundation are happy to have raised some questions to help steer the discussions around the type of jobs that need to be created to facilitate a sustainable future.

List of Contributors

Diana Aquilina lectures Sociology at the Lifelong Learning Centre in Blata l-Bajda. Her main research interests are environmental issues including environmental politics. She has carried out research as part of her B.A. (Hons.) and M.A. thesis on the ecological impact of the introduction of plastic bottles on Maltese society and on the controversy of the Sant'Antnin Recycling Plant in Marsaskala.

Leonie Baldacchino is currently reading for a PhD in Entrepreneurship at Warwick Business School (UK), as well as lecturing on entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation at The Edward de Bono Institute, University of Malta. She is involved in the coordination and organisation of various entrepreneurship-related incentives at the University.

Michael Briguglio lectures at the Department of Sociology of the University of Malta. He is currently reading for a Doctorate in Sociology on EU Accession and Civil Society Empowerment: the case of Environmental NGOs in Malta. His research interests include Environment, Social Policy and Politics, and he has published work in these areas. Michael is also the chairperson of Malta's Green Party, Alternattiva Demokratika.

Maria Brown lectures in Sociology at the University of Malta, as well as Systems of Knowledge at Giovanni Curmi Higher Secondary School. She is pursuing her studies at doctoral level with a dissertation on community empowerment and critical education. She contributed with her research work to the EU FP6 Includ-ED Project. Research interests include education, work, social policy and research methods and she has published in these areas.

Christine Cutajar studied at the Universities of Malta and Padova in Italy, where she obtained her first degree in Psychology. Recently she has completed an EDE (Ecovillage Design Education) course in Findhorn Foundation in Scotland, which incorporates the principles of sustainable development for transition towns and design for sustainability. She is currently following a Master

Degree at the University of Malta in Creativity and Innovation. Recognising the beauty of nature and the impact of our society she is determined to promote sustainable development as a way for the future. Her present focus is on artisans and their unique role in the economic sustainability of societies.

Andre Damato is a computer scientist by profession. He holds a Bachelors degree in Information Technology and a Masters degree in Creativity and Innovation. He currently works within the local private educational sector as a school coordinator. He is active in Żminijietna, Lehen ix-Xellug, a local left-oriented think tank focusing on economic, environmental and political affairs.

Marvin Formosa lectures in social gerontology and sociology at the University of Malta and is a visiting lecturer at the United Nations International Institute of Ageing. His primary research interests are older adult learning, social class dynamics and social exclusion on which he has contributed to many edited books and journals.

Saviour Rizzo (Editor) as a former director of the Centre for Labour Studies at the University of Malta has been involved in various programmes and projects related to employment relations. His publications include the National Background Paper on the Restructuring Process in Malta which was submitted to European Commission Employment, Social Affairs, "Evolving Industrial Relations in Malta" (Agenda 2003 – co-authored) "The Dual Worker Family in Malta" (CLS-FES 2006) and peer reviewed articles related to the world of work.

Vivan Storlund studied law at the University of Finland. She is an independent researcher and freelance journalist. Her main fields of research are working life and civil society especially in relation to economic, social and cultural rights as well as social justice. With regards to work, her focus is on work that does not fit the narrow premises of labour law, mainly artistic work.

Chapter 1. The Parameters of a Green Sustainable Economy

Saviour Rizzo

At the polls the Greens may not have succeeded in getting the necessary quota of votes to allow them to share power with the major political parties. Nevertheless they can be heartened by the fact that the principles underlying the policy of a green economy, which they have been vocally espousing since their inception, have seeped in mainstream politics. Indeed the focus on this issue marks a paradigm shift in the political scenario.

In their public speeches politicians and policy makers speak very favourably about the green sustainable policy. They may even express their commitment to the principles underlying its implementation such as the de-carbonization of the economy, the protection of the eco system and biodiversity and the preservation and/or restoration of environmental quality. In their eagerness to convince us of the genuineness of their beliefs or to substantiate their argument they make a number of statements which by and large express the following sentiments:

- the state of the environment is linked to the quality of life;
- a healthy and sustainable environment is considered to be crucial to development and competitiveness;
- we have to put our society on the path which is cleaner and more energy efficient.

If serious efforts have been made to take concrete measures aimed at translating these statements and their underlying principles into viable strategies we would by now have been experiencing green collar job inflation. This has not happened and even the most ardent supporter of green energy will admit that it is very unlikely to happen in the near future. In spite of the wide consensus which the principles underlying the green economy have generated, the deep structural and systematic reform which is needed for their implementation has still not been made. Rather than being perceived as the ideological tools to a restructuring of the economy in a socially responsible way, these principles, to many politicians, smacks more of tokenism and political correctness. Indeed a review of green policy, on a micro and macro level of the economy, reveals a wide gap between rhetoric and reality. This can be confirmed by the way labour statistics are com-

plied on a national and international basis. Green jobs still do not feature in any of the categories of the jobs listed in the Statistical Classification of Economic Activities in the European Community, referred to as NACE (*Nomenclature des activités économiques*) wherein jobs are categorized into 99 different codes each of which comprises various sub-sections of economic activities.

From the foregoing one may conclude that there is a lack of a political will to address the issue. But blaming the political class for their failure to invest in the green economy and/or to promote its underlying principles raises the question about the role of civil society. It has to be emphasized that environmental governance promotes collaboration among diverse parties in order to develop creative and effective solutions to environmental problems, as well to generate commitment to the outcomes that are achieved. The engagement of civil society actors, primarily NGOs, has become an accepted aspect of environmental governance in democratic society. In some areas related to environmental issues such those “not in my backyard” type, environmental activism takes the form of opposition to activities which are believed to be harmful to society.

In the area of green policy there is no scope for this type of opposition. The promotion of green jobs tends to be proactive in nature and hence the activism in this regard by environmentalist groups has to be collaborative in spirit rather than confrontational. The green party in Malta, Alternattiva Demokratika (AD), has been engaging in this type of environmental activism aimed at creating green jobs. The same cannot be said about the other environmentalist movements. This does not of course imply that they are insensitive to the promotion of green jobs. What it does however imply is that in their lobbying they have not shown the same level of sensitivity and have not been vocal about this issue to the same extent as AD. I would even dare say it is not very high on their agenda.

Of course they are not being accused of being in a total state of oblivion about the issue of green jobs and its correlation to sustainable development. The data emanating from the qualitative survey conducted by Briguglio, Brown and Aquilina (*Chapter 2*) reveals that the key persons

involved in the Maltese civil society are aware of and knowledgeable about the potential of a green policy to create jobs and improve the quality of life. They are also aware of the constraints, such as the diseconomies of scale, inherent in a small, island, sovereign state that can pose problems to the implementation of green policy. However they do not believe that these constraints should act as a deterrent. In other words if our political class really believes in the implementation of an economic sustainable policy they have to look for innovative means and exploit the material and human resources available in the island. Consultative and participative process, in which as active players in Maltese civil society they should be actively involved, would, according to these key persons, make the implementation of this policy more effective and successful.

The paper by Baldacchino and Cutajar (*Chapter 3*) tends to corroborate this view since they maintain that these constraints rather than acting as a deterrent could act as a stimulus for craftsmanship and sustainable entrepreneurship. This assertion is made in the context of the valuable contribution which can be made by the artisan to the holistic values of sustainable development. As a small island lacking natural resources Malta depends on the importation of raw material. By using the material available, the local artisan would contribute to the reduction of the products which are imported and in so doing could act as a model of a sustainable entrepreneur. The authors argue that craftsmanship can “increase the resilience of a society by preserving and enhancing the pool of local knowledge and skills”. By engaging in a lively debate about this issue and providing some very insightful perceptions, the two authors drive home the point that we should not let ourselves be subsumed by the forces of globalisation. While acknowledging the impact of these forces and the need to cope with them to maintain the viability of our economy we should also think and act locally. This is not simply an exercise to protect our indigenous culture but should also be an integral part of the sustainable green policy. In a highly liberalised, economic market characterized by mass production and cut-throat competition the survival and sustenance of craftsmanship call for some protective measures. That is one of the policy options recommended to our policy makers by the two authors.

Another valuable human resource which through its proper utilization can give a valid contribution to the goals of a green policy is the elderly. Formosa (*Chapter 4*), on the basis of an in depth interview of five older persons active in voluntary work with environmentalist organisations, argues that Maltese society is not making proper use of this resource. At a time when the demographic statistics show that in Malta the persons aged 60 and over in 2010 represents 23 per cent of the total population and the projections clearly indicate an increasing trend for the next fifty years, this mismanagement of human resources is a searing indictment of contemporary society. The policy options and strategies to address this issue being recommended by Formosa can go a long way to improve the utilization of this human resource.

What these three papers imply is that we have to be resourceful and innovative in the formulation and implementation of a sustainable green policy. Damato (*Chapter 5*) goes to the core of this issue by looking at the possibilities of the Maltese economy through innovative measures and practices to generate green jobs in the manufacturing industry. Damato’s paper focuses on the various facets and sectors within this industry which can contribute to value added economic activities and at same time generate green jobs. It is argued that the limited economies of scale can be a serious constraint to the manufacturing industry of a small country in the sense that it sets limits to the room of manoeuvrability which is needed for eco-innovative initiatives. To provide more space for an innovative entrepreneurial climate, that is so vital for the creation of green jobs, we need to remove or simplify the compliance regulations that entail high operating costs.

But green jobs, Storlund argues in her paper (*Chapter 6*), is not just about innovation but also about the challenges to the conventional economic theory of pay. Whether by default or design this knowledge-based economy operating in a globalised market has increased rather than decreased the number of low-paid jobs. Drawing on the work of Joseph Stiglitz, Storlund argues that a green policy has to be built on the principles of equity and fairness. The thread of the argument in this paper is that if green is the qualifying criterion for work in a sustainable economy, a policy of a basic income could attract more people to work in the green industry.

As contemporary society is grappling with new problems and challenges related to its habitat and environment these five papers enable us to reflect and look critically at ourselves. The analyses and the recommendations made by the authors of these five papers do not offer a patented solution to the contradictions of this society. They however enable us to engage in a lively debate that offers us practical insights of how society ought to be. This ideal can serve to show the terrain which needs to be covered to achieve the aims of a green sustainable economy. The more the policy approximates to that ideal the more effective and successful it is judged to be. The ideals expressed in these five papers may thus offer some parameters for this ongoing debate about the feasibility of policy options related to a sustainable economic development.

Given that these parameters are based on the experiences of the smallest country among the EU member states, doubts may be cast about their relevance to European countries. Such doubts may not turn out to be well founded. It should be stressed that however small in size and population Malta may be, it qualifies as a mature exponent of development in the global village. Indeed it has all the trappings and characteristics of large nation states. Like other developed and developing countries it managed to build a thriving manufacturing base consisting of a clutch of foreign-based, export-oriented firms. In line with the trends in Europe this sector has been registering a continuous decline. To make up for the loss of jobs in this sector efforts

have been made to expand the service industry notably in the Financial Intermediation sector which has been registering significant increases in gainful employment. To make this shift to the service industry and high value economic activity the Maltese economy had to go through a restructuring process which brought changes in the occupational structure. What this implies is that although the external and internal drivers for economic change in Malta may have some peculiar features, by and large they are not dissimilar to those found in other European countries. In other words in the Maltese economic and political scenario there are more forces of convergence rather than divergence from that of the European mainland. Thus the road map that has to be designed and followed towards a green economy need not be much different from that of other European countries.

In constructing self reliant models of development the necessary variables among different economies tend to be more general rather than idiosyncratic. The challenge is to delineate which functions and capacities are necessary and adapt the lessons in the context of the pre-existing conditions and the economic and political exigencies. This is what the papers attempted to do. By highlighting the contradictions inherent in Malta, they may make a valid contribution to the stimulation of awareness of important current trends that offer opportunities for a new approach to the policy of sustainable development and economic restructuring across Europe.