

# GESDC Report 2021-22

## Meetings

| Date            | Description  | Members         |
|-----------------|--|-----------------|
| <b>January</b>  |  |                 |
| 06              | Equity Policy Data Collection - Registrar's Office, Audit Office, HRMD   | JAC             |
| 12              | Equity Policy Data Collection – APQRU  | JAC             |
| 14              | Pre-interview meeting of Equity Officer selection committee  | JAC, RV         |
| 18              | Equity Policy Data Collection - Pro-Rector Research and Knowledge Transfer                                       | JAC             |
| 20              | Presented Equity Plan Preamble to Senate   | JAC, RV         |
| 27              | GESDC Meeting  |                 |
| <b>February</b> |  |                 |
| 01              | Campus Hub inspection visit  | JAC, RV         |
| 16              | Equity Plan training - HRMD and OPAD   | JAC             |
| 17              | MATSEC on Gender Identity Policy and Guidelines  | JAC, RV, MN     |
| 21              | Equity Plan Promotion – included Marketing, Communications and Alumni Office                                     | JAC, RV         |
| <b>March</b>    |  |                 |
| 3               | Campus Hub UM board  | JAC, RV         |
| 3               | International's Women's Day Event with Foreign Ministry – Women  | JAC, RV, SV, JM |
| 8               | UM Strategic Implementation Forum – preparation meeting  | JAC, RV         |
| 9               | Participated in UM Strategic Implementation Forum - Societal Factors and Impact                                  | JAC, RV         |
| 11              | Meeting in preparation for training/presentation to MATSEC on Gender Identity                                    | RV, MN          |
| 16              | Equity Plan Promotion  | JAC, RV         |
| 17              | Training to MATSEC Exam Chairpersons, Paper Setters and Markers entitled: Gender Identity and Inclusive Language | RV              |
| 24              | Equity Plan – Pro- Rector Students, Staff and Outreach   | JAC             |
| <b>April</b>    |  |                 |
| 14              | Susan Healey, <i>Inclusio</i> – data collection software   | JAC             |
| 28              | GESDC Meeting  |                 |
| <b>May</b>      |  |                 |
| 12              | GESDC Meeting  |                 |
| 13              | Equity Officer and Pro-Rector Students, Staff and Outreach   | JAC, RV         |
| 23              | Equity Plan meeting with Pro Rector Students, Staff and Outreach and Equity Officer                              | JAC, RV         |
| 24              | GEP Alliance workshop meeting, SEA-EU Alliance   | JAC             |

|                  |   |         |
|------------------|---|---------|
| <b>June</b>      |   |         |
| <b>06</b>        | Meeting with Equity Officer   | JAC     |
| <b>13</b>        | Pro-Rector Students, Staff and Outreach on Equity Plan  | JAC, RV |
| <b>21</b>        | Promotion of Equity Plan – MCAO, Equity Officers, Pro-Rector Students, Staff and Outreach   | JAC, RV |
| <b>July</b>      |   |         |
| <b>01</b>        | Meeting with Equity Officer   | JAC     |
| <b>08</b>        | GESDC meeting with Hon Rebecca Buttigieg, Parliamentary Secretary<br><br>for Reforms and Equality within the Ministry for Home Affairs, Security and Reforms. |         |
| <b>September</b> |   |         |
| <b>07</b>        | Equity Committee Meeting  | JAC, RV |
| <b>14-16</b>     | The Annual International Multi-Disciplinary Conference at Junior College  | JAC, RV |
| <b>23</b>        | Equity Committee Meeting  | JAC, RV |
| <b>November</b>  |   |         |
| <b>12</b>        | HRS4R Committee. Spoke about key areas in Equity Plan   | JAC     |
| <b>15</b>        | Equity Committee Meeting  | JAC, RV |
| <b>23</b>        | GESDC Meeting   |         |
| <b>23</b>        | Meeting with Quality Assurance on collaboration on data analysis  | JAC, RV |
| <b>23</b>        | HRS4R meeting on Training for Principle Investigators   | JAC     |
| <b>29</b>        | Bernice Cassar memorial meeting   | JAC, RV |
| <b>December</b>  |   |         |
| <b>15</b>        | GESDC <i>ad hoc</i> Meeting   |         |

### Finalisation of Equity Plan

This year was devoted to the finalization of the Equity Plan. A number of meetings were undertaken with Rector, HRMD, MCAO, APQRU, Quality Assurance, CREA, ADSU, Registrar's Office, Equality Office and diverse pro-Rectors to inform them of the objectives and the actions found within each key area. Constant feedback led to a number of changes. The final plan was shared with GESDC members in May 2022. The Equity Plan proper was uploaded on UM website in September 2022. <https://www.um.edu.mt/about/equity/timeframes/>

### Finalizing Gender Audit

The 2018-2020 gender audit was finalized in this academic year. It was eventually uploaded on the Equity Plan website.

<https://www.um.edu.mt/media/um/docs/about/equity/genderauditreport2018-2020.pdf>

### Presentation of Equity Plan to Senate and other UM entities

The chair and co-chair presented the Equity Plan preamble to Senate. This was endorsed on the 20 January 2022.

### Data collection for Equity Plan

JAC drew up templates to help UM entities collect data to help evaluate whether UM policies and Equity Plan were helping in improving the state of affairs where equality, diversity and inclusion. JAC and Pro-Rector Student and Staff Affairs and Outreach met with various UM entities to discuss with them what data was needed for UM equity audit, who was to collect it and how. The main issue was to see which office was in charge of collecting and analyzing such data. Eventually it transpired that the Quality Insurance Office was doing a similar exercise, using software recently acquired by UM. It was decided that the Equity Office and Quality Assurance can work together on data collection.

### **Familiarisation of different UM entities with content of Equity Plan**

A number of meetings were undertaken with different UM entities in order to explain why the Equity Plan was designed, and the role different entities had in its enactment. Initially the chair and co-chair were working with Pro-Rector Student and Staff Affairs and Outreach. When the Equity Officer was hired, this role was passed on to her.

### **Finalizing and presenting of Study of Sexual Harassment**

The data collected for the 2021 Sexual Harassment Study was analyzed in depth in 2022. This data was presented during the Annual International Multi-Disciplinary Conference which took place at the Junior College. Roderick Vassallo analyzed the quantitative data, while JosAnn Cutajar and Anna Zammit analyzed the qualitative part. Cutajar came up with recommendations on the measures that can be enacted to prevent and deal with sexual harassment.

### **Women and Peace Seminar, Women's Day International 3 March 2022**

GESDC organized this forum on Women and Peace to commemorate International Women's Day in collaboration with Women's Day. A number of undergraduate and post-graduate students took part, including KSU representatives. Pro-Rector Student and Staff Affairs and Outreach gave the introductory speech.

### **UM Strategy Plan – Strategic Implementation Fora (9 March) 2022**

GESDC was asked to give a short presentation of what it does on this Forum. RV presented and JAC led the workshop session.

### **GEPARD - Gender Equality Programme in Academia – Raising Diversity**

JAC, RV and JM are taking part of this international Erasmus+ project. The consortium is composed of higher education institutions from Poland, Austria, Hungary, Cyprus, Malta and an academic entity from Italy. The objective is to come up with a universal gender equality plan to help in the elimination of gender discrimination in the academic environment (both among employees and students) and, to increase diversity in the academic sphere. The Maltese group are working on all Intellectual Outputs <https://us.edu.pl/en/uczelnia/rowne-traktowanie/gepard/>

### **Queries**

GESDC received a number of queries:

- a. Students and staff to ask whether UM has a gender identity policy. They were informed that this was a work in process.
- b. Telework – there were queries on how the telework system for administrator works. HR were informed.
- c. A number of staff contacted GESDC to find out whether UM had a gender equality plan since they were applying for EU funds.

# TIMES MAI

Tuesday, November 29, 2022 | No. 27,078

W7



Women write messages in a guest book at a memorial event at the University of Malta for Bernice Cassar, who was murdered last week in the year's third femicide. The painting is by Ġorġ Mallia, who used to lecture her in communications.

PHOTO: CHRIS SANT FOURNIER

SEE STORY ON PAGE 5



# remembered at university

GIULIA MAGRI

The devastated family of Bernice Cassar joined students and staff at the University of Malta yesterday for a memorial service in remembrance of the mother-of-two who was shot dead on her way to work in Corradino last week.

Her estranged husband, Roderick Cassar, has been charged with the murder and is pleading not guilty.

Cassar is the first murder victim since Malta introduced the concept of femicide into the criminal code and the third woman murdered this year.

Yesterday marked 17 years since Cassar celebrated her own graduation.

A portrait by Gorg Mallia, one of Cassar's former lecturers, was set up at the event alongside a guest book for people to write a message to the family.

"How happy you must have been, all those years ago, celebrating your graduation," proctor Carmen Sammut said in her address before the crowd gathered for the memorial held a minute of silence.

Cassar studied at the University of Malta between 2002 and 2005 and graduated with a Bachelor's in communications.

For her dissertation, titled *Policewomen in Reality and Media Representation*, Cassar interviewed six female inspectors.

She also focused on how the now-discontinued Maltese series *Undercover* impacted the public's impression of a woman's place in the police force.

Chair of Gender Equality and Sexual Diversity Committee Josann Cutajar said she had the "honour" of being Cassar's supervisor for her dissertation.

"I recall the long conversations we had and how happy she was when she got a distinction. Very few students get a distinction," Cutajar remarked.

Family members nodded, smiled and cried as Cutajar recounted memories of Cassar.

She said that campaigning against violence was still seen as a woman's job.

"Where was the prime minister when the 16-day campaign against violence was launched? Where was the leader of the op-



President Emeritus Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca speaking at the event yesterday. PHOTO: CHRIS SANT FOURNIER

position when people marched on Friday," Cutajar asked.

"They both sent their wives instead."



## Where was PM when campaign against violence was launched?

Popular singer Ira Losco said she had thought that things would change following the brutal murder of Pauline Dembska, which was also followed with vigils and protests.

"Yet, history repeats itself over and over again," Losco said breaking into tears.

"I will encourage women to speak up about violence and to not remain silent. We have witnessed one femicide after another."

Three Maltese students – Bradley Cachia, Klara Vasallo and Maria Christine Mallia –

read out poems and prose written in Cassar's memory.

One of the many speakers at the event, President Emeritus Marie Louise Colerio Preca, said society did not fail Cassar.

"The institutions and system which were meant to protect her failed and society paid for those failures," she said.

"I cannot stop thinking about her children – about her family," she added.

"Bernice Cassar needed protection, her children needed protection and now they are orphans."

She referred to government research on domestic violence that has been gathering dust for over a year.

"We could have safeguarded Bernice and her children – there is no excuse for this delay," she said.

Meanwhile, Cassar's name has been added to the KSU bench outside the library, which stands as a reminder of all the victims who have been killed through gender-based violence in Malta.

# firms set to raise prices due to CO2

The increase in the CO2 allowance will force half of Gozo tourism businesses to raise prices for their customers, according to a new survey.

The government announced last month that workers will receive an extra €9.90 from January as part of a new automatically-set adjustment which is intended to counter the impact of inflation.

This is the largest raise in 2021, COLA stood at €1.75 while, in 2020, it was €3.49 a week.

According to an online survey carried out over the past few weeks by the Gozo Tourism Association, 14 per cent of members believe the increase is a tough measure for their establishment.

Forty-five per cent of respondents would definitely raise prices to make up for the cost and another 45 per cent said they would not.

**Just 10 per cent report a drop in business**

Answering questions to the government's budget 2023, more than one-third of participants said the measures would be positive for the state's energy bills.

Thirty-one per cent of respondents said the budget lacked measures that would have a direct impact on tourism.

The survey focused on the performance of the tourism establishment over the first nine months of the year. Around 69 per cent of

# Dead diver 'may have