

**University of Malta**  
**Gender Issues Committee**  
**Annual Progress Report**  
**Academic Year 2015-2016**

Members

During the academic year 2015-16 there were little changes to the composition of the Gender Issues Committee (GIC). The Committee Secretary, Ms Colette Caruana resigned and was replaced by Ms Isabelle Camilleri. Ms Rebecca Micallef was nominated as KSU Representative on the GIC.

The members on the GIC were:

Prof. M.T. Camilleri Podestà – Chairperson (Faculty of Medicine & Surgery)  
Dr Andrew Azzopardi – Member (Faculty of Education)  
Dr Ruben Paul Borg – Member (Faculty for the Build Environment)  
Ms Patricia Camilleri – Member (Communications and Alumni Relations Office)  
Dr Josette Farrugia – Member (Faculty of Education)  
Dr Ruth Farrugia – Member (Faculty of Law)  
Dr Gorg Mallia – Member (Faculty of Media & Knowledge Science)  
Ms Carmen Borg – Member (Department of IT, Junior College)  
Prof Janet Mifsud – Member (Faculty of Medicine & Surgery)  
Prof Emmanuel Sinagra – Member (Faculty of Science)  
Ms Colette Caruana – Secretary (resigned November 2015)  
Ms Isabelle Camilleri- Secretary (started 1<sup>ST</sup> December 2015)  
Ms Rebecca Micallef- Student representative (From KSU)

A short profile of the incumbent members has been included in the Appendix of this document.

Meetings During the academic year 2015-16 were held on the following dates:

- October 7, 2015
- November 11 2015
- December 15, 2015
- January 26, 2016
- March 1, 2016
- May 19, 2016

Committee meetings start with the reading of the minutes of the previous GIC meeting, followed by a discussion of the items on the meeting's agenda. Salient items on the agenda were:

1. Research on gender
2. The GIC seminar in celebration of International Women's Day 2016;
3. The Wellbeing Clinic on campus for students and staff;
4. The GIC study on work-life balance and career advancement among support staff;
5. Women in the STEM Sciences

Other issues that were touched upon were the idea of celebrating other pertinent international days besides Women's Day, involving students more in gender related issues and the possibility of organizing a radio programme.

Apart from the monthly Committee meetings, the Chairperson and the Secretary met for several informal meetings so as to discuss the progress of the initiatives and events organised by the GIC.

## Events & Initiatives

The following is a succinct description of the main activities and initiatives undertaken by the GIC during the academic year 2015-16.

### 1. GIC Slides in Rector's presentation during Freshers' Week (October 2015)

In this presentation it was explained the set up of the GIC:

- The fact that the GIC receives sexual harassment complaints,
- That there is a Wellbeing Clinic available for students and staff to use in Students' House (they need to collect the key from the KSU office)
- That we run a mentoring scheme
- Link to website [www.um.edu.mt/gender](http://www.um.edu.mt/gender) and email contact [gender@um.edu.mt](mailto:gender@um.edu.mt)

### 2. GIC Seminar in celebration of International Women's Day 2016

The GIC Seminar in celebration of International Women's Day 2016 was held on the Thursday 17th March 2016 in Gateway Hall D2. The event was entitled "Symposium: Women in the STEM Sciences". The event was a great success.

#### **Programme: Symposium: Women in the STEM Sciences**

A seminar organised by the Gender Issues Committee (GIC) on the occasion of International Women's Day 2016

*1130hrs* Registration and Coffee

*1200hrs* Opening address by **Prof. M.T. Camilleri Podestà**, Chairperson, GIC

*1205hrs* "**Gender, Science and Technology**" by Dr JosAnn Cutajar, Senior Lecturer, Department of Gender Studies, Faculty for Social Wellbeing, University of Malta & Director University of Malta- Cottonera Resource Centre

*1225hrs* "**Mainstreaming gender into research, policy and practice**" by Prof. Marilyn Clark, Department of Psychology, Faculty for Social Wellbeing, University of Malta

*1245hrs* "**A river runs through it**" by Prof. Josanne Vassallo, Dept. of Medicine, Faculty of Medicine & Surgery, University of Malta

*1305hrs* "**Women in Materials Engineering- Breaking the Stereotype**" by Dr Ann Zammit Department of Metallurgy & Materials Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, University of Malta

*1325hrs* "**A Contribution to Gender Mainstreaming**" by Prof. Irene Sciriha Aquilina, Department of Mathematics, Faculty of Science, University of Malta

*1345hrs* "**The first 100 cycles-IVF in Malta**" by Prof. Jean Calleja Agius, Department of Anatomy, Faculty of Medicine & Surgery, University of Malta

## *1400hrs* Closing speech by **Prof. M.T. Camilleri Podestà**

### 3. Setting up a Wellbeing Clinic on Campus

the Wellbeing Clinic in Students' House was launched on 13th April 2015. As a result, the GIC's vision for Wellbeing Centre to be a place where students and staff could receive information and be advised and referred to specialists in specific fields had to be limited to offering services as a breastfeeding and showering facility. The GIC is very grateful to KSU and MMSA for their help in this initiative as, without them, the launching of this room would have been impossible. The room is available at all times between 08:00 and 17:00 and the key for its use can be retrieved from the KSU Office in Students' House. The Committee has been informed that the room is currently in use further promotion of the facility is planned for next year.

### 4. GIC Study on Work-life Balance and Career Development among Support Staff

The GIC continued working on this questionnaire.

### 5. "Integrating gender equality in Research Performing Organisations (RPOs) and universities

GIC helped in this research project. The general objective of the project is "to enhance, gender equality in the EU policy area of research by providing policy makers with information on implementing gender sensitive policies in research institutions and by supporting them with sound methodological guidelines for mainstreaming gender in administration, achieving structural transformation, including the change of organisational culture."

### 6. Prof Chardie Baird Research Proposal

The Gender Issues Committee helped her in conducting her research. The purpose of this project was to explore how academics working in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) disciplines in Malta make sense of and attempt to negotiate their society's, university's, college's, and department's dominant beliefs about gender and maths and science ability.

## **Participation at Meetings & Seminars / Conferences**

The following is a list of initiatives undertaken and seminars / conferences attended by members on the GIC:

- Meeting with Joanna Maycock

The Gender Issues Committee had a meeting with Ms Joanna Maycock, Secretary General of the European Women's Lobby. The meeting took place on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November 2015.

- Radio Programme

The Chairperson of the GIC had participated on a radio programme on Radju Malta 2. The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) produced a half-hour weekly radio programme. The second part of each radio programme is dedicated to the work that is being carried out by NGOs and/or other institutions in Malta. The recording of this radio programme was held on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2015.

- Meeting with Gender Equality Malta

Ms Isabelle Camilleri (secretary) attended a meeting with the members of Gender Equality Malta. This meeting took place on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

- Launch of Gender Equality Malta

Ms Isabelle Camilleri attended the launch and press conference of Gender Equality Malta. The launch took place on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

- “Gender equality and knowledge”

The Director of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), Virginija Langbakk, visited Malta to hold a set of high level meetings, and public events with different stakeholders on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> June 2016. The Chairperson of the GIC was a panel member discussing covering the domain of “gender, equality and knowledge”. This discussion took place on 14<sup>th</sup> June.

- Equality Certificate Mark

Various meetings were held in order that the University of Malta will gain the Equality Certificate Mark.

- Equality Beyond Gender Roles

Ms Isabelle Camilleri has attended a conference organized by NCPE entitled “Equality beyond Gender Roles”.

#### Appendix Profiles:

**Prof. Marie Therese Camilleri Podestà** is the Chairperson of the Gender Issues Committee. She has been working in the Department of Anatomy for the past 40 years, starting as a research assistant and currently occupying the post of professor. She has also held the post of head of department for several years. She has conducted numerous studies both locally and abroad, which have contributed to the knowledge on diverticular disease of the colon, bile acid secretion, as well the effects of plant products on cancer cell lines. Her work includes collaboration with other faculties within the University of Malta and the University of Pisa. She has also supervised several M.Phil. and Ph.D. students. She was Chairperson of the National Commission of Mental Health. She is also a member on various other committees, including the ACCESS Committee and the University Research Ethics Committee, and is chairperson of the Faculty Admissions Committee. She also carries out forensic autopsies as requested by the courts.

**Dr Andrew Azzopardi** is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Malta. His lecturing & research focus on inclusive education, sociology, critical pedagogy, disability politics, youth & community studies. He has published extensively in the field of disability studies and inclusive education. He is a Member of the Editorial Panel of the highly acclaimed International Journal of Inclusive Education and has edited a special edition called Creating Inclusive Communities. He has contributed extensively in a number of other applauded journals. Azzopardi has published the following texts; Career guidance for persons with disability (2008) (JP Advertising), Reading stories of inclusion – Engaging with different perspectives towards an agenda for inclusion (2009), Understanding disability politics in Malta (2009) (VDM Verlag Dr. Müller),

Young people in Gozo – A study 2 (2011) (Artwork Publications) and Roots to Inclusive Education – A Question of Wellbeing (2012) (LAP Lambert Academic Publishing, Germany). He is the Co-Editor of Inclusive communities: A critical reader (2012) (Sense Publishers). Azzopardi has also edited Youth: Responding to lives - An international reader (2013) (Sense Publishers).

**Dr. Ruben Paul Borg** is Senior Lecturer at the Faculty for the Built Environment, University of Malta. He studied Architecture and Civil Engineering at the University of Malta and read for a Specialisation in Structural Engineering and Reinforced Concrete Structures at the Politecnico di Milano, Italy and a Ph.D. in Materials Engineering and Sustainable Concrete at the University of Sheffield, UK. He has also been collaborating on research and lecturing as a visiting academic at the Technical University of Milan (Politecnico di Milano) Italy since 2004. Dr. Borg has participated in and coordinated a number of European funded and International Research Projects on materials engineering, sustainable construction, structural vulnerability and disaster resilience. He was appointed chairman of the European Council of Civil Engineers for Knowledge and Technology; board member of the International Initiative for a Sustainable Built Environment; member of the European CEN TC350: Sustainable Construction. He was appointed as Malta's representative of the Institution of Civil Engineers, UK in 2013. He is also a member of the Scientific Committee for the Conservation of the Megalithic Temples of Malta, member of the Executive Board of the Building Industry Consultative Council (BICC) Malta and Coordinator for Research and Innovation in Construction, and member of the Structural Eurocodes Technical Committee, MCCA Malta. He is co-founder and President of Sustainable Built Environment (SBE) Malta, which aims at promoting sustainable development. Dr Borg participates in international research fora on materials engineering, sustainable construction and structural vulnerability and resilience of cultural heritage, and has published widely in these fields.

**Ms Patricia Camilleri** was born and brought up in the UK and lived in Italy for two years before coming to live in Malta. In 1991 she graduated B.A. in Italian, Communications Studies & Archaeology and immediately joined the University of Malta with the task of setting up the new Communications Office. The Office has grown over the last twenty years to include a team of eight - each with his/her area of expertise in the field of Communications. Alumni Relations was added to Patricia's remit as Director and in the last years the University's Alumni Online Community database has been set up in collaboration with other strategic areas of the University. Patricia has hosted several different radio programmes on campusFM and currently presents 'University Matters' in which she interviews academics about their research as well as Administration staff and students concerning events held on campus. In 2001, Patricia graduated M.A. with a dissertation on museum theory.

**Dr Josette Farrugia** holds a B.Ed (Hons) from the University of Malta and a Ph.D from the University of York. She has taught Chemistry at secondary and postsecondary level for a number of years. She has also worked as Principal Subject Area Officer for Sciences with the Matriculation and Secondary Education Certificate Examinations Board of the University of Malta (MATSEC) and is currently a Senior Lecturer in Science Education with the Department of Mathematics, Science and Technical Education of the Faculty of Education at the University of Malta. Her research interests are related to various aspects of science education and educational

assessment and include problem solving; practical work and investigations; school-based assessment; students' understanding of scientific ideas and concepts especially those related to chemistry; and inquiry-based learning. She has participated in conferences and published work related to science education and educational assessment.

**Dr Ruth Farrugia** is an advocate and senior lecturer in the Faculty of Laws at the University of Malta. She studied at the University of Malta, University of Strasbourg and Metropolitan Ecclesiastical Tribunal. She is a former consultant to the deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Social Policy, the Social Affairs Committee in Parliament and United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). She has been chairperson of the Children Care Orders Board and drafted the Children Act, Commissioner for Children Act and Gender Equality Act. Dr Farrugia is currently expert to the Council of Europe Human Rights and Legal Affairs Division, legal advisor to the Malta Commissioner for Children, country expert to the Comparative European Family Law Commission and the Common Core in Family Law Group and has recently been appointed to the PRMIII Experts Group of the European Commission. She has published widely in the field of family law, child law, asylum and human rights.

**Dr Gorg Mallia** is a senior lecturer at the Faculty of Media and Knowledge Sciences, University of Malta. He has a B.A.(Hons) in English Literature and an M.A. in Communications, both from the University of Malta, and a Ph.D. in Instructional Technology, from the University of Sheffield, UK. He specialises in Print and Presentation Media, Personal Communications, Personal Branding, and Instructional Design and Technology (particularly Transfer of Learning). He has recently also been researching the use of Social Networking in education (The Social Classroom: Integrating Social Network Use in Education, that he edited, was published by IGI Global, of Hershey, PA, USA, in 2014). He is also researching and lecturing in graphic narrative and storytelling. Dr Mallia is also a children's book writer, illustrator and cartoonist. He was the chairman of the National Book Council between 2005 and 2013.

**Ms Carmen Borg** is a senior lecturer in the Department of Computing and IT at the Junior College Msida and has been teaching computing and IT since 1995. She studied Computer Science at the University of the State of New York, USA. In 1985 she co-founded the first courses in Computing at Gian Frangisk Abela, New Lyceum, and two years later was given approval by the University of Oxford Delegacy of Local Examinations to prepare and present candidates for 'O' level Computer Studies and 'A' level Computer Science. She was subsequently appointed examiner by the Director of Education to conduct the Final Examination in Office Practice at the then Secretarial School. She developed and conducted Computing in-service courses for Teachers organised by the Department of Education and was involved in the development and lecturing of courses in Computer Applications organised by the Faculty of Education of the University of Malta. On various occasions she provided consultancy and training to local companies, on how to set up Information Systems for their organisation

**Prof Janet Mifsud** B. Pharm. (Hons), Ph.D. (QUB) is a member of the Department of Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics, University of Malta. She was appointed

the Commissioner, National Commission for the Promotion of Equality for Men and Women between 2004 and 2010 and has represented Malta at several gender EU, UN and EuroMed policy meetings. She has been active in the gender and science field for several years. She has been invited by EU DG Research to attend Women in Science Fora held in Brussels, and she has also been appointed several times expert evaluator for proposals submitted under the Quality of Life and Marie Curie Actions FP5, FP6 key actions and FP7 calls. Locally, she has chaired the Gender Issues Committee for the University of Malta and was previously a member of the Public Service Commission. Dr Mifsud has published extensively in the area of the therapeutic management of neurological disorders especially epilepsy. She was Secretary for the European Epilepsy Academy and is presently Vice-President for the International Bureau for Epilepsy.

**Dr Marceline Naudi** received her first degree from University of Malta (1980), her Master's Degree in Women's Studies from University of Bradford (U.K.) (1990) and her Doctorate (in Social Work) from Manchester University (U.K.) (2004). A social worker by profession, her years of practice (in England, Ireland and Malta) has included work with children and young people in care and their families, exoffenders, homeless people, persons with mental health support needs and survivors of domestic violence. She is currently Head of the Department of Gender Studies. Dr Naudi also contributes to teaching within several other University departments and Faculties on gender issues, violence against women and other anti-oppressive issues (sexual orientation, race, disabilities) at both Bachelor and Master level. She is also active in the issues of women's rights, and domestic violence, as well as wider equal opportunity issues, and as such has convened, chaired and presented at many conferences, seminars and meetings, both locally and abroad. She represented Malta at the Council of Europe ad Hoc Committee on Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (CAHVIO) which drafted the Istanbul Convention, and has recently been elected onto its monitoring body, the GREVIO. In a voluntary capacity she has supported and acted as consultant to various agencies in the field of violence against women, gender, LGBTIQ, racism and ethnicity. She also sits on the Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE) Network Board, and the European Women's Lobby (EWL) Observatory on Violence against Women Strategy Group.

**Prof Emmanuel Sinagra** graduated from the University of Kent at Canterbury in 1986 with a B.Sc. (Hons) degree in Chemistry with Environmental Science. In the same year he was awarded a Science and Engineering Research Council grant to enable him to do a M.Sc. course in Surfaces and Colloids. After obtaining his M.Sc. in 1987, he was awarded a studentship by Exxon Chemicals to assist him in his studies for a Ph.D. which he obtained in December 1992. During 1992, Prof. Sinagra was employed with the University of Bristol as a Research Associate on a project supported by British Nuclear Fuels. In 1993, Prof. Sinagra joined the Department of Chemistry at the University of Malta as lecturer in 1993, became senior lecturer in 1998 and recently became associate professor in 2011. His teaching interests have been in the areas of physical chemistry, polymer chemistry as well as environmental chemistry. Prof. Sinagra has tutored a number of students doing research at undergraduate and postgraduate level. He has been head of the Department of Chemistry since 2008 and deputy dean of the Faculty of Science since 2009. Prof. Sinagra is also Chairman of the Faculty of Science M.Sc. Committee as well as the Faculty's Doctoral Committee.

**Isabelle Camilleri** has a B. A. (Hons.) in Geography and a Post Graduate Diploma in Youth and Community Studies from the University of Malta. Isabelle has occupied the roles of Deputy Secretary General and President within Kunsill Nazzjonali Zghazagh (KNZ). She was the refounder and President of the Arts' Students Association (ASA) and was one of the founders of ASA's magazine Agora. She was one of the founders of the Youth for the Environment (Y4TE) where she occupied the role of Public Relations Officer and KPS Representative. She was involved in other organizations like Studenti Demokristjani Maltin (SDM), Malta University Film Club (MUFC), Centru Alcide De Gasperi and YEL. She has occupied the role of Social Policy Commissioner within Kunsill Studenti Univeritarji (KSU) and was the KSU representative on the Gender Issues Committee. She has participated three times in the National Youth Parliament and in the Mini European Assembly representing Spain (2009-2010), where she was part of the winning team and later went to the MEA Prize tour to the European Institutions. Isabelle was also active on international level. Her interests are current affairs, environment, sustainable development and politics.