

Gender Issues Committee: Annual Report 2000

The new committee was appointed in April 2000. In addition to the members appointed by Council, Ms Patricia Camilleri, Communications Officer and a representative of the KSU were co-opted on the Committee. Funds were also allocated to the Committee for the first time under the University Budget.

The committee met for 5 times from April to December 2001. The main tasks addressed by the Committee in this term were:

1. Monitoring Of Gender Dissegregated Data With Respect To Students And Staff.

The Committee felt that it was very important to monitor data with respect to gender, at the University. A database was set up by the Students Admissions Office in order to facilitate the collection of statistics for all students by course, year, part and full time, segregated by gender. This data will be collected regularly by the kind permission of the Registrar. So far two sets have been collected, in April 2000 and November 2000.

The data with respect to academic members of staff, by faculty and department, full and part timers, was submitted by the SDRO in October 2000, after kind permission of Rector. This data had a number of inaccuracies, which were pointed out to the SDRO Office, who explained that this was an arduous task, as such data had never been collected in this way, and the database would be improved. It is envisaged that this data would be updated every 6 months.

2. The setting up of a website

A website which would include the Terms of Reference and the Policy of the Gender Issues Committee was set up on the University's Official Website to in order to promote and publicize the Committee. The temporary website address was <http://www.um.edu.mt/noticeboard/gender>. This website is still in the draft stage. It is also hoped that leaflets will also be produced, in conjunction with CCT, for more publicity of the Gender Issues Policy as approved by Council.

3. Links with other relevant organizations.

Links with the Commission for the Advancement of Women and Department of Women in Society were reinforced and invitation to meetings and activities organised by these entities were now being received. The two groups had a conjoint meeting at the Department of Women in Society premises in June 2000, where areas of common interest were discussed. These included implementation of gender mainstreaming in Malta, availability of gender-disaggregated data, and areas of co-operation.

The Committee also met Professor Patricia Leighton, Consultant to the Department of Women in Society in Malta on invitation to SDO in December 2000.

Meetings also took place with the Council of Women. Dr Mifsud was also invited to address one of their meetings on in May 2000 on Gender Mainstreaming In Science. The Department of Consumer Affairs also invited the Committee to attend a meeting at its premises on World Consumer Rights Day in April 2000. The Chairperson was also invited to attend the opening workshop on Democracy and Small states of the Commonwealth at the Palace on 9th May 2000.

4. Graduate Potential Seminar

The University organised a Graduate Potential Seminar in May 2000. The Committee had written to each speaker taking part, in order to highlight the fact that no women speakers had been invited to participate in this seminar when over 50% of graduands are female. During the seminar, in fact, several speakers made reference to this issue and presented gender data.

5. International meetings

The European Women's Management Development organization had their annual conference in Malta in November 2000. EWMD contacted the chairperson, through a contact in Brussels, regarding the conference in Malta. Dr Mifsud was in fact invited to address the meeting on gender issues in Malta. EWMD also extended their invitation to the university staff to attend this meeting free of charge.

The Chairperson also attended a meeting organized by the European Commission in Brussels on the 4th and 5th of April, 2000 on Promoting Excellence Through Mainstreaming Gender Equality.

6. Invited Lectures

Dr Dorane Fredland from Indiana University was invited to talk about Gender and Power on 4th December 2000.

The Committee also supported the Women's Study Group initiative in organizing regular talks on gender matters and in fact several members of the committee form part of this group.