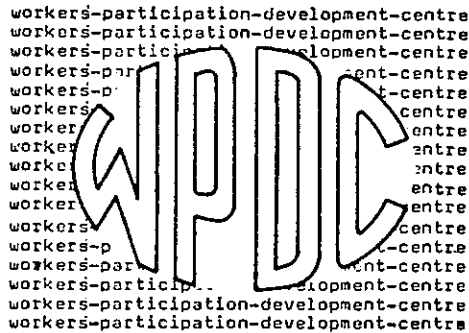


THE UNIVERSITY OF MALTA
WORKERS' PARTICIPATION
DEVELOPMENT CENTRE



SECOND ANNUAL REPORT
1982

UNIVERSITY OF MALTA
WORKERS' PARTICIPATION DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

SECOND ANNUAL REPORT



With the Compliments of the
Workers' Participation
Development Centre
University of Malta

THE UNIVERSITY OF MALTA
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Second Annual Report
1982

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THE UNIVERSITY OF MALTA
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Second Annual Report - 1982

1. INTRODUCTION

The Workers' Participation Development Centre of the University of Malta aims at supporting, promoting and coordinating the further development of workers' participation. In line with the objectives stated in the Malta Development Plan 1981-85⁽¹⁾ workers' participation is envisaged as providing an alternative strategy and an important goal for national development. It implies the social and economic development of working men and women within industrial enterprises and within society as a whole.

The Centre operates within the broad area of industrial relations and helps to integrate the University with the world of work by bringing together workers, managers, trade unionists, researchers and others. This is possible because the principle of workers' participation is now firmly established and accepted by all the major political, economic and social forces in Malta.

The Centre also collaborates with other public and private agencies and institutions who pursue similar aims and objectives. Prominent among these are the already established participatory enterprises like Malta Drydocks - which provides a living example of the advantages of participation for others to follow.

There is an increasing international interest in the process of workers' participation in both the developed and developing countries. Many developing countries perceive this as an alternative road towards industrialization which involves a departure from capitalism whether private or state-owned. In this context, the Centre maintains an active link with

(1) Development Plan for Malta 1981-85, Valletta, OPM 1981. See especially p.136, p.170, p.190-2

similar international institutions with the aim of learning from and contributing towards these developments.

In pursuit of these goals, the WPDC has during the year under review continued to organize educational, consultancy and research activities under the general direction of its organizing committee.

1.1 The WPDC Committee

The WPDC Committee is composed as follows:

Dr E.L. Zammit (Chairman, University of Malta)
Mr G. Agius (General Workers Union)
Mr A. Busuttil (General Workers Union)
Mr J. Buttigieg (Malta Drydocks Corporation)
Dr E.E. Camilleri (Finance Officer, University)
Mr D. Darmanin (A/Head, Dept. of Management Studies, University)
Dr G. Kester (Institute of Social Studies, The Hague)
Mr J. Magro (Malta Development Corporation)
Dr E.J. Scicluna (Division of Public Administration, Faculty of Management Studies, University)
Mr F. Selvatico (Malta Drydocks Corporation)
Mr S. Spiteri (Confederation of Trade Unions)

In accordance with the Statutes, Committee meetings were held regularly throughout the year at the University. The minutes of each meeting were kept and approved at the beginning of each successive meeting. During these meetings various proposals for activities were made, discussed and decided upon as well as matters relating to the organization of the WPDC. The members of the Committee also assisted in carrying out these activities - particularly when their own respective organizations were directly involved in them. The members normally encourage the other members of their organizations to participate in the activities of the Centre and to contribute towards it financially or otherwise.

2. THE WORKERS' EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME

2.1 Short Courses

Workers' Education is one of the main objectives of the WPDC as it is considered an indispensable means for meaningful participation. A policy of short intensive courses aimed specifically for workers, was begun in 1981 and continued throughout 1982. These courses introduce workers to fundamental concepts in economics, law, sociology, psychology and political science in order to increase their understanding of the world around them and of their own work experience.

Two series of courses for workers were held along these lines. The first series, entitled The Maltese Worker at Work and in Society draws participants from all levels of employment and education, both in the public and private sector. Four such courses have been held to date:

1st course	19 May	1981 - 14 July	1981
2nd course	26 October	1981 - 31 January	1982
3rd course	15 February	1982 - 10 May	1982
4th course	1 November	1982 - 10 February	1983

The Educational Background of the participants of the above series of courses may be summarized as follows:

Less than Secondary level	- 17%
Secondary level but without 'O' level passes or equivalent	- 12%
Reached G.C.E. 'O' level Standard in at least 5 subjects	- 40%
'A' Level Standard	- 19%
Tertiary Level	- 12%

Most of these participants had never attended or participated in any educational courses after they had left school. Almost half of the participants were manual workers while another third had a professional status.

The second series of courses was aimed at the specific needs and experiences of workers at Malta Drydocks. Due to the system of self-management

operated at this enterprise, emphasis was laid on the Sociology of Work and on the Practice of Participation. This series bears the title Applied Social Science for Workers at Malta Drydocks. Two such courses have been held to date:

1st course	14 April	1982	-	16 June	1982
2nd course	8 November	1982	-	31 January	1983

The selected applicants for each of these courses were drawn as follows: 18 from the Workers Committees, 6 from the Metal Workers' Section (G.W.U.) 3 from the S.T.P.S.A. (G.W.U.) and 3 from the Drydocks Managerial Staff.

2.2 Seminars

The following seminars were held in 1982:

- (a) At the University of Malta (Tal-Qroqq) on 21st June, 1982. This served as a conclusion to the first course in Applied Social Science for Workers at Malta Drydocks. At the end of the seminar, certificates of attendance for the course were presented by the Rector of the University.
- (b) At the Concorde Hotel (Bugibba) on 26th June, 1982 as a conclusion to the first three courses in the series 'The Maltese Worker at Work and in Society'. On this occasion the participants were presented with the certificates of attendance for their respective course by the Hon. Mr Justice Wallace Ph. Gulia who had been the lecturer responsible for the legal content of these courses prior to his judiciary appointment.

2.3 Workers' Response

The total number of participants for the above six courses was an encouraging 192. Of these, 145 qualified for the certificates by virtue of their regular attendance. All the participants were also

presented with a questionnaire in order to determine their opinions regarding the layout, quality, organization and progress of the course, together with suggestions for future improvements. The overall impressions based on these responses are summarized below.

Sources of Information and Aims for Enrolment

Most of the participants got to know about the course from advertisements in newspapers (45%) or from their trade union (25%). Another 15% learned about the course from a circular at their place of work. The rest got to know about it through a friend (10%) or through other channels (4%).

The main aim of the participants for taking part in this course was to develop their educational and cultural experience and particularly their understanding of the world in which they live. Most of them stated that they had always been interested in the subject matter dealt with; some stressed the fact that they had never had such an opportunity because these subjects did not form part of their school curriculum. At the Drydocks a third of the participants looked at the instrumental value of this course. They hoped that this kind of learning would help them to further develop their effectiveness in the various social roles they play at the place of work or in the trade union.

Opinions about the Courses

The participants expressed a general satisfaction with the presentation of the lectures and with the choice of lecturers.

Sociology proved to be a popular subject among the participants. It was found to be relevant to daily life and to lend itself to topical discussion. The knowledge they acquired led them to a better understanding of social problems and was thus conducive to open mindedness.

The overall impression about Economics is that it actually managed to provide them with better

tools of analysis. Some of the participants contended that they were now able to evaluate better what was happening about them. A few complained about the complexity of the subject and certain theoretical details apparently proved to be difficult to grasp.

The lectures about Political Science occasionally gave rise to heated debates. Some of the participants desired to probe deeper into local political issues. However most of them found the lectures in Political Science informative. These provided a new perspective and a wider dimension of politics in general and its historical development in Malta.

Law was introduced in the second course at the request of the participants attending the previous course. These were then invited to attend the law lectures as well. These lectures provided the participants with a new insight in the mechanics of law. Indeed many participants realized that certain views which they had previously held were veiled with obscurity. On the other hand some of the deficiencies in the administration of legal justice were highlighted.

Psychology was only introduced in one of the later courses. Yet the participants soon whetted their appetite and expressed a desire for systematic training in this subject.

Sessions about the Practice of Participation were only offered in the courses at the Malta Drydocks. The workers commented that these lectures made them more aware of the nature of their enterprise and of their roles within it.

Many participants also felt that they have acquired a better understanding of the ways in which they might improve their situation for a better one. As one worker stated: "I can now look at my work life with a more optimistic view".

Many participants desired courses of longer duration. Somehow they felt that they ought to have probed deeper into certain topics. They also suggested that such courses should be offered to more categories

of workers. All were interested in participating in similar courses in future.

3. RESEARCH, PUBLICATIONS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

3.1 Survey at Malta Drydocks

Malta Drydocks is to date the most advanced living example of the participatory system in Malta. It is also a leading industry. As such the WPDC took upon itself the task of probing into the perceptions of Drydocks workers to explore their opinions regarding participation, productivity, union role and other aspects of their work experience. A survey to this intent was held in December 1982 on a 7% random sample of workers representing the entire workforce.

The objectives of this survey were generally speaking to determine with scientific objectivity how the Drydocks worker feels about the functioning of the participatory system and how any existing defects can be remedied. The results can thus provide a basis for policy formulation.

A similar survey had been undertaken earlier when the participatory system was still new at Malta Drydocks. This first survey was directed by Dr G. Kester of the Institute of Social Studies, The Hague. This expert was once again in Malta to assist the WPDC in the preparation of the 1982 survey which was, in a sense, a restudy of the previous research. The WPDC also organized this study in active collaboration with the international research project "Workers' Self-Management and Participation in Decision Making as a Factor of Social Change and Economic Progress in Developing Countries" which is carried out by the International Centre for Public Enterprises (ICPE) in Ljubljana, Yugoslavia.

A questionnaire was drafted, pretested and amended accordingly during October, 1982.

The actual survey was carried out in December 1982 at the Drydocks. The WPDC survey team was assisted by a group of ten students of Economics at the New Lyceum. The respondents were asked to report at one

of three different centres to fill in the questionnaire in booklet form - containing a total of 109 questions. The anonymity of responses was assured. The response was very satisfactory as the non-response rate was negligible.

All responses were subsequently coded and fed into a computer with the assistance of management and staff of the Government Computer Centre (Dingli). Eventually the complete set of data was reduced to a series of digits, and recorded on a magnetic disk. A print-out of all the responses to each question in percentages was produced in January, 1983.

The preliminary results were interpreted and communicated to the Council of Malta Drydocks, the G.W.U., the WPDC Committee, members of the KTX and to the general public.

The following main trends are emerging from this initial stage of analysis:

- (a) Drydocks' workers are strongly in favour of Participation and the way it is being implemented, though certain improvements are desirable.
- (b) Participation is perceived to contribute to harmonious industrial relations, industrial peace, national development and productivity at the Drydocks.
- (c) The workers approve of the Union's involvement in the running of their firm. Meanwhile most are of the opinion that a Shop Steward should not form part of a Works' Committee to be able to safeguard the Workers' interests.
- (d) Workers express a keen desire for a greater flow of information to the shop floor.

The next important stage in the analysis consists of delving deeper into the data. This involves examining patterns of worker behaviour and attitudes, developing sociological profiles of workers who consistently express certain opinions on the participatory system, and statistical testing

for the significance of such factors as age, education, political ideology, and union activism on the perceptions of the workers regarding various aspects of their work experience. Such analysis - based on SPSS computer programme - is expected to be completed towards the end of 1983.

3.2 International Conference on Corporate Planning for Public Enterprises in Developing Countries

An international meeting of experts on 'Corporate Planning for Public Enterprises in Developing Countries' was organized jointly by the International Centre for Public Enterprises (Ljubljana, Yugoslavia), the Malta Development Corporation and the WPDC at the University of Malta from the 29th November to the 3rd December, 1982. The conference was opened by the Rector of the University. The participants included 12 experts from 9 developing countries including Malta. They discussed a wide range of subjects including: approaches to corporate planning, interlinkages, component elements of corporate plans, participatory processes and performance evaluation.

A public forum was also organized at the University as a conclusion to this conference on Saturday, 4th December, 1982. On this occasion the local and foreign experts present at this conference took part in a panel discussion on the roles of public enterprises in their respective developing countries.

3.3 International Linkages

The WPDC continued taking an active part in the international research project entitled 'Workers' Self-Management and Participation in Decision Making as a factor for Social Change and Economic Progress in Developing Countries' which is coordinated by ICPE (Ljubljana, Yugoslavia). The Malta contact point for all ICPE activities is the MDC while the WPDC is entrusted with this particular project. The following countries are taking part in this project: Algeria, Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Guyana, India, Peru, Sri Lanka, Yugoslavia, Zambia and Malta. The aim of the project is to study the different forms of participation in theory and practice, taking into account the different historical, ideological and political conditions prevailing in each of these countries. This is in

order to get a picture as complete as possible of this important sociological phenomenon.

The first stage of the project consists of the historical and descriptive analysis of the political, economic, legal and cultural circumstances in which the concept of workers' participation was introduced. This phase has now been completed.

The second phase, which is currently in progress, consists of experimental field research on the functioning of participation within enterprises and other spheres of social life.

A series of case studies are being studied including that of Malta Drydocks. Apart from the survey of workers' attitudes which is referred to above (3.1), research into the economic performance and other aspects of the participatory experience is also in progress.

A follow-up of these case reports is an international comparative study on chosen aspects of workers' participation and self-management. This will constitute the third phase of this project which is planned to follow the current one.

Active links and cooperation were also maintained with the following international organizations specializing in workers' participation:

Association of Workplace Democracy (AWD)
Washington DC, USA
Centre International de Coordination des
Recherches sur l'Autogestion (CICRA)
Paris, France
Consejo Latinoamericano y del Caribe para
la Autogestion (CLA) Lima, Peru
Institute of Social Studies (ISS), The Hague,
Netherlands.
International Industrial Relations Association
(IIRA), c/o I.L.O., Geneva, Switzerland

3.4 Information and Consultancy

One of the main aims of the WPDC is to provide a regular consultation service for participatory enter-

prises, researchers and others involved in the participatory process. This requires the systematic building of up-to-date information which is made available to interested parties. For this purpose, regular monitoring of data concerning the whole industrial relations area is being compiled and filed at the WPDC Office on the basis of newspaper cuttings and other sources of information. A summary of the data - along with other information relating to the WPDC, its activities and to participation in general - is regularly published in the Newsletter of the WPDC Association (See Item 3.6 below).

Another important basis for consultation is the research on the various aspects of the participatory process which is directly carried out by the WPDC.

The outcome of this research is divulged through publications and other reports. The following publications were made during the year under review by members of the WPDC and others:-

- (a) Transition to Workers' Self Management: Malta 1982 (An enlarged and up-dated edition of the study for the Workers' Educational Series which was originally presented at ISS, The Hague in 1981)
- (b) 'Los Sindicatos y la Autogestion - La Experiencia en Malta' in Mesa Redonda sobre autogestion y Participacion Laboral en paises en desarrollo, OFIPLAN, San Jose Costa Rica 1982 p.186-213.
- (c) 'Recent Trends and Developments in Workers' Participation and Self-Management', International Conference on Workers' Self Management and Participation, Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi, India 1982.
- (d) 'Participacion Laboral en Malta' in Autogestion y Participacion (Numero 10) C.L.A., Lima, Peru.
- (e) Il-Mixja Lejn il-Participazzjoni tal-Haddiema: WPDC, sensiela ghall-Edukazzjoni tal-Haddiema Numru 2 (In Print)

3.5 WPDC Association

The participants of WPDC activities are invited to become members of the WPDC Association which aims at fostering mutual contact between members and the Centre. Members are kept regularly informed of the Centre's activities through the Association Newsletter and other publications. In this way, they are encouraged to maintain an interest in workers' participation.

The Association started functioning during 1982 and there are 67 members enrolled at present who come from all walks of life. A nominal membership fee of £M1 per annum is required.

4. CONCLUSION

This short review of the WPDC activities during 1982 indicates that significant progress has been continued over the previous year. This is evident in all major areas of activity carried out according to the WPDC Statutes. This progress is even more encouraging considering the modest human and practical resources placed at the Centre's disposal.

Nevertheless it is felt that new, imaginative initiatives are urgently needed in view of the ambitious goals in the field of workers' participation expressed in the Malta Development Plan (1981-85) and the role which the WPDC is expected to play in the realization of these goals. It is also felt that there should be a corresponding commitment to the Centre in terms of human and practical resources. The specific requirements of the WPDC for the next two years are indicated in a separate document*.

Here it is simply noted that the manpower base of the WPDC tends to be too narrow - as indicated in the First Annual Report for 1981. There it was observed that "most persons associated with the Centre

* Note: Draft Estimates for 1984 and 1985,
approved by the WPDC Committee on 18.3.83

in one way or another can only devote a minor part of their time to it". In this respect, Dr G. Kester, while on a consultation visit, had strongly expressed the opinion that there was the need of more staff to enable the Centre to fulfil better its aims and activities.

More adequate practical facilities for the WPDC are also necessary. More office space is needed and there is an urgent need of audio-visual, and other facilities which are indispensable for the workers' educational and research activities. It should be recognised that all the activities, functions and work to be done call for a major allocation of resources both in terms of manpower and of material support. What is ultimately envisaged is a new type of society based on participatory work experience. No efforts or resources should be spared in the pursuit of such an ideal.

ANNEXE

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Income and Expenditure Account - 1982

INCOME

1. University Funds	LM 4,295.11
2. Institute of Social Studies (The Hague)	376.00
3. Miscellaneous	438.00 ^(a)
TOTAL	LM 5,109.11 =====

EXPENDITURE

1. Workers' Educational Programmes	LM 1,197.12 ^(b)
2. Personal Emoluments	2,197.67 ^(c)
3. Consultation fees	366.00 ^(d)
4. Publications	845.00 ^(e)
5. Equipment and books	350.83 ^(f)
6. Miscellaneous	564.12 ^(g)
TOTAL	LM 5,520.74 =====
Surplus of Expenditure over Income	LM 411.63 ^(h) =====

NOTES:

- (a) Represents Registration and Membership Fees (LM 308) and transferred interest (LM 130).
- (b) Courses amounted to LM 978.98 and seminars amounted to LM 218.14. In addition, other expenses towards the holding of the International Conference on Corporate Planning for Public Enterprises in Developing Countries

were incurred by ICPE and MDC, the joint sponsors of this conference with the WPDC.

- (c) Includes Salaries of Research and Secretarial Assistance + N.I. Contributions.
- (d) Total Cost of consultation visit by Dr G. Kester of ISS (The Hague)
- (e) Costs of Printing of books in the Workers' Educational Series and other material.
- (f) Subscriptions to journals, books and office equipment.
- (g) Represents stationery, newspaper adverts, telephone and postal charges and other minor expenses.
- (h) Amount charged to balance brought forward from previous year. Vide First Annual Report of the WPDC p.7 (2).