

University of Malta

WPDC

Workers' Participation Development Centre

Biennial Report

1999-2000

UNIVERSITY OF MALTA



Workers' Participation Development Centre
(WPDC)

1999 - 2000
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1. Twenty Years After: 20 Years of Worker Participation

Edward. L. Zammit

In this day and age, characterised by free trade, privatisation and neo-liberalism, any talk of workers' participation may appear as remote from reality as the dinosaurs of a bygone era. Indeed, a look at the way the level of public interest and discussion on workers' participation has evolved during the past century shows sequential periods of ups and downs.

Workers' Participation is generally promoted for two main reasons:

- (a) As an integral part of human and social development. From such an evolutionary perspective, human dignity demands that workers should have a say in all the decisions affecting their lives. Workers' participation is therefore seen as a natural progression of democracy from the political to the industrial sphere of social life.
- (b) As a more effective and practical way of managing human resources in work organizations.

Ever since the beginning of the industrial era and the need to 'fit people' into the disciplined production routine, the management of human resources has been problematic. Following the abolition of slave labour and later on the liberation of workers from the struggle for basic necessities, the management of production came to rely increasingly on the willing compliance of employees. This was obtained through a package of incentives which included both extrinsic factors (pay, conditions, status, etc) and intrinsic factors (challenge, creativity, autonomy). The emphasis varied from time to time between one set of incentives and the other. Workers' participation systems were seen as contributing both towards making the job more interesting and towards improving the extrinsic work aspects without the need on the employees' part to resort to harmful industrial actions. When the company is doing well, management can afford to improve working conditions and so 'buy off' industrial peace. During recession periods, however, or when the enterprise is facing

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economic difficulties, efforts are often made by management to invoke the workers' sense of responsibility through their involvement in decision making processes. In other words, the appeal to the employees' sense of responsibility is more credible and likely to convince if accompanied by information, consultation and involvement in decision-making.

Current Forms of Participation

The various forms of workers' participation include those at the top level of the organisational hierarchy, such as employee share ownership or worker directors, those at the middle level such as works councils and those at the shopfloor level, such as quality circles or information and consultation methods. When these are introduced under the right circumstances, they can go beyond collective bargaining which is based on conflictual industrial relations and on the assumption of a constant improvement in pay and conditions which is not always realistic. These are the reasons why today - no less than in the past - the interest in various forms of workers' participation is very much alive. The terms used today are often those of 'employee empowerment' and 'involvement' and are presented as part of 'human resource development' and 'European works councils.' Thus European employment ministers have recently agreed that firms which employ more than 50 workers will have to grant information and consultation rights to their employees. These rights are partly modelled on the existing participation laws in France and Germany. Furthermore, today's interest is as likely to emanate from managerial sources as from those of the workers. Finally it should be noted that in reality, the traditional collective bargaining system, which like ours is modelled on the British one, is also a form of indirect participation by workers through their union representatives in the organisation of work. However, the adversarial relationship in which it is carried out tends to overshadow the shared interest and responsibility which inevitably binds the social partners to each other. This is why the social partnership model is yet another form of participation which is currently high on the agenda. All this goes to show that the role of the WPDC is evidently as relevant today as it was twenty years ago. Yet it is beneficial for any organisation to look back at the original intention of its promoters and to assess the extent to which this is being fulfilled.

Setting up a University Centre

The original idea was to establish a University Centre which – in addition to the teaching and research normally carried out in a university department – also aims at ‘getting involved’ in the world of labour relations. It would also have a special commitment to promote workers’ participation. It was argued that it is not enough for the University to cater for the professional training of managers, administrators, economists, accountants and engineers. It was also necessary to cater for the professional training of labour leaders. Much lip service is paid to the importance of human resources in our country but there is little investment in the development of our work culture and in the resultant social relations.

I was recently asked to explain what actually led the University of Malta to establish a semi-autonomous Centre within its ranks which caters for a clientele which is not normally found in the University environment. The WPDC and its statute provided a model for the various other institutes which were eventually established at the University.

There is very little resemblance between today’s University of Malta and that of 20 years ago. The students and staff were much fewer in number (only 12% of what they are now!) and the whole atmosphere was not conducive to innovative ideas. The University was still undergoing a period of acute uncertainty, following the suppression of old faculties, the limitation of student intake and its amalgamation with the former Polytechnic. Many prominent staff members had left. Above all, the existing resources and facilities were severely limited. As always, the University reflected Maltese society. It should be remembered that Malta’s economy was undergoing a state of recession. Particularly after the anomalous result of the 1981 election, political polarisation had reached a new peak. Under those circumstances, new initiatives were difficult to introduce without them being instrumentalised in the political tug of war. It was necessary to secure at least the tacit consent of both the people in government and opposition in order to succeed.

A Convergence on Participation

The concept of workers’ participation formed part of the socialist repertoire. Likewise, the ‘reformed’ Nationalist Party had inserted this principle into its own statute and it was upheld by its workers’ secretariat

– under the leadership of the late Furtu Selvatico, then also a prominent member of the Drydocks' Council. The trade unions, under the leadership of George Agius (GWU) on the one hand, and the late Salvino Spiteri (CMTU/UHM) on the other, were enthusiastically in favour. These two persons, who were respected both within their own and in the opposite camps, played a crucial role in setting up the WPDC. This cooperation set an example of what could be achieved through trade union solidarity. How could it be otherwise when the principle of workers' participation was upheld by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and the World Confederation of Labour (WCL) to which they were affiliated? Even the Employers Association (MEA) at that time described workers' participation as 'desirable', with some reservations. Naturally, those who opposed the Labour Government were also critical of the participation policy which they claimed was merely 'window dressing'. At one time, every political, professional, social and even religious institution proposed its own idealised version of workers' participation.

Simultaneously there were some academics who identified certain shortcomings in the system. Chief among these was Dr Gerard Kester, the Dutch sociologist, visiting lecturer and researcher on industrial relations at the University of Malta. Kester had established himself both as an authority on workers' participation and as a friend of the unions, genuinely concerned with their development. Kester's research in Malta was carried out in the light of comparative international experience and it showed that for participative processes to develop, there was an urgent need of a 'support structure'. The idea was to provide professional consultancy, monitoring, independent research and educational services. This was envisaged as a long-term investment – undoubtedly secure – and with a guaranteed interest. Indeed the greater the investment in human and material resources, the greater the expected outcome. This was the rationale behind the establishment of the Workers' Participation Development Centre. The need for its services had become urgent because already, in 1981, the participation process was losing momentum. There was much lip service paid to the principle. No one was against; yet few were matching their words with deeds.

As a result, there was a certain convergence among the few academics, trade unionists and like-minded politicians who agreed to support – through their respective organisations – the establishment of the WPDC.

They became convinced that their own organisation would derive some benefits through this new venture. The unions were interested in professional training for their cadres and the academics were looking for opportunities for involvement in policy-making and action research. The University authorities saw the venture as contributing towards the University's own revival. In fact, the University was chosen as the WPDC's host organisation because of its long tradition of autonomy and independent, quality research. All the protagonists believed that workers' participation was an ideal whose realisation depended heavily on workers' education. Accordingly, all agreed to contribute towards this aim.

Main Achievements

The Centre's stated mission was to provide educational activities for workers' leaders, research and consultancy services in the field of industrial relations towards the development of worker participation within enterprises and in the wider society. For this aim, however, only very few human, financial and other material resources were placed at the Centre's disposal. Being part of the University it could benefit from some of that institution's infrastructural facilities. Otherwise there was little space for it, not even in a physical sense and it had to struggle almost literally for every inch. Even today, the Centre's staff only consist of 4 full time staff equivalent – including the administrative and clerical assistance.

Under these circumstances, the Centre's main achievements, during the first decade were (1) in the field of training, particularly trade union education for participation; and (2) that of raising national consciousness: keeping the issue of workers' participation on the national agenda. Additionally, the Centre has placed its research, consultancy and educational resources at the disposal of the Drydocks, Malta's main participative enterprise during that epoch. However, it must be stated that, regrettably, its advice often went unheeded – and this is well documented in the Centre's publications over the years. Over the years, the Centre has also established itself internationally through the participation in conferences, the publication of numerous academic papers and membership in like-minded organisations on industrial relations and worker participation.

During the second decade of its existence, the WPDC has significantly expanded its educational and research activities thanks to the cooperation

established with bodies like the Commission for the Advancement of Women, the Commission (now the Authority) for Occupational Health and Safety, the Foundation for Human Resources Development and particularly the generous assistance of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. In recent years, the latter Foundation has also sponsored several of the Centre's research projects and publications. As a result of the cooperation, the Centre is now running diplomas on industrial relations, gender and development and occupational health and safety. Since 1990, it has also run two series of residential tripartite seminars on Current Issues in Labour Relations and on Training Trade Union Trainers. Though earmarked mainly for trade union leaders, these are carried out in dialogue with the other social partners as well.

Meeting New Challenges

During this period the Centre has undergone a further development of its policy. It was during the rectorship of Professor Peter Serracino Inglott, - and as a direct result of his assistance -- that, in addition to its educational and research activities, the Centre was given the opportunity to become actively involved in the development of one main form of participation: that of cooperatives. As a result, some of the Centre's staff have played a central role in supporting the revitalisation of the local cooperative movement, setting new directions and embarking on new initiatives. Now that these efforts are bearing fruit, it is proposed to consolidate this work through further educational ventures in conjunction with the Apex Organisation and the Committee of the Central Cooperative Fund.

Many visitors to the Centre are impressed that so much is being done with so few resources. Undoubtedly one of the strengths of the WPDC has been its tiny size because -- as any SME -- it has retained the ability to respond to new challenges and adapt itself to changing circumstances, unhindered by bureaucratic procedures. Being fully integrated within the University structure, the Centre has established a special working relationship with the Faculty of Economics, Management and Accountancy. It also draws upon the specialised resources of other University faculties and departments. Yet it avoids being bogged down by heavy bureaucratic procedures of large organisations. Its performance also owes much to the part played by the members of its Board who invariably serve as animators and facilitators -- linking up the WPDC directly with the world of work -- rather than simply as another bureaucratic structure.

If the Centre is to retain its character during the succeeding decades it should definitely strive to retain these qualities.

Nevertheless, there is still, I believe, a strong case for a significant increase in the Centre's resources in order to enhance its effectiveness. Such an investment would enable it to confront better the challenges it faces – ranging from occupational health and safety to gender and development and, of course, to industrial relations. There are clear indications that in future the demand for the Centre's services will remain undiminished. The ultimate long-term goal remains that of empowering the workforce for a more active participation at work and in the other spheres of social life.

(Amended versions of this article appeared in the local press on the occasion of the 20th anniversary celebrations of the WPDC, on 26th June 2001.)

2. The People who make it Happen

2.1 The WPDC Board

The composition of the WPDC Board has been reconstituted following a streamlining exercise by the University Council. The members of the WPDC Board as at October 2001 are the following:

Prof. Roger Ellul Micallef	Rector and Chairperson
Prof. Edward L Zammit	Vice-Chairperson & WPDC Director
Mr George Agius	Honorary Member
Prof. Godfrey Baldacchino	(appointed by Senate)
Mr Alfred Buhagiar	(appointed by the CMTU)
Mr Anthony Busuttil	Honorary Member
Ms Frances Camilleri	Staff Representative
Mr Mario Cutajar	(appointed by the GWU)
Mr George Trevor Ebejer	Student Representative
Ms Ebba von Fersen Balzan	Observer
Ms Joan Antida Grima	Student Representative
Dr Gerard Kester	Honorary Member
Mr Michael Parnis	(appointed by the GWU)
Ms Angela Callus	(appointed by University Council)

Mr Frank Pullicino	(appointed by Ministry responsible for Labour)
Mr Saviour Rizzo	Staff Representative
Mr Joseph Vella	(appointed by CMTU)
Dr Carmel Tabone OP	(appointed by FEMA)
Ms Nerissa Sultana	Secretary

2.2 Core Executive Staff

Prof. Edward L. Zammit, D.Phil.(Oxon), B.A., Ph.L.(Chicago), M.Litt. (Oxon) is the Executive Director of the WPDC since its establishment in 1981. He also heads the Department of Public Policy of the Faculty of Economics, Management & Accountancy at the University of Malta.

Prof Godfrey Baldacchino, Ph.D.(Warwick), B.A.(Gen.), PGCE, M.A.(The Hague) is the full-time research officer and lecturer at the WPDC. He is also lecturer within the Department of Sociology at the University of Malta.

Ms Nerissa Sultana, B.A. (Hons.), M.A. (Sussex) is the full time research assistant at the WPDC since March 2001. Her duties include project management and the monitoring of developments in European Union social policy. She is also visiting lecturer in International Relations at the University of Malta.

Mr Saviour Rizzo, B.A.(Gen.), M.Ed., oversees the WPDC's educational programmes and coordinates the WPDC's diploma in industrial relations. He is an assistant lecturer in sociology at the Junior College and lectures part-time at the University of Malta's Faculty of Education.

Ms Frances Camilleri, B.A. (Hons.) (Econ.), M.A. (Social Studies), serves as a part-time research assistant and coordinator of the WPDC's Gender and Development programme.

Mr Silvio Farrugia, Dip. (OHS) is responsible for the coordination of the WPDC's diploma programme in occupational health and safety(OHS).

Mr Victor Aquilina, B.A. (Hons.) was the beneficiary of a research fellowship at the WPDC while undertaking his M.A studies under WPDC staff supervision.

Ms Anna Vella is part-time executive officer at the WPDC, responsible for administrative, general office and clerical duties.

Ms Josephine Agius, a clerk, organizes the printing output of the WPDC, as well as the regular updating of materials and records at its documentation centre.

Ms Isabelle Calleja, B.A.(Hons.), M.Sc.(LSE), lecturer in International Relations at the University, served as WPDC part-time research assistant during the period under review.

2.3 Supporting Institutions

A circle of institutional and individual support is crucial to permit the WPDC to extend its influence far beyond its glaringly limited human resource base. Such a network of assistance and expert service provision includes the following:

- The additional staff involved as tutors and long essay supervisors in the diploma course in industrial relations: Ms Antoinette Caruana, Mr Benny Borg Bonello, Mr Vince Cassar, Mr Reno Camilleri, Dr Martin Fenech, Mr Alfred Grixti, Prof. Godfrey A. Pirotta, Ms Jennifer Zammit.
- The additional staff involved as tutors and long essay supervisors in the diploma course in gender and development: Ms Jacqueline Azzopardi, Ms Sina Bugeja, Dr Ruth Farrugia, Ms Jackie Fenech, Ms Rose Lapira, Ms Brenda Murphy, Ms Marceline Naudi, Ms Suzanne Piscopo, Ms Marlene Saliba.
- The additional staff involved as tutors and long essay supervisors in the diploma course in occupational health and safety: Dr Andrew Amato Gauci, Mr Alan Camilleri, Ms Sina Bugeja, Mr Silvio De Bono, Ms Maria Ellul, Ms Michelle Ellul, Ing. Chris Farrugia, Prof. Frederick Fenech, Dr Mark Gauci, Mr Malcolm Leatherbarrow, Dr Lucianne Licari, Dr Julian Mamo, Mr Joe Saliba, Dr Noel Vella, Dr Joseph Zammit McKeon.
- The supporting staff of the University of Malta's various faculties, departments, institutes, centres, specialist services and administrative offices.

- The officials and activists of various local organizations. These include the Confederation of Maltese Trade Unions (CMTU), the General Workers' Union (GWU); the Malta Union of Midwives and Nurses (MUMN); the *Unjon Haddiema Maghqudin* (UHM), the Malta Employers Association (MEA); the Board of Cooperatives; the Committee of the Central Cooperatives Fund (CCF); the Foundation for Human Resources Development (FHRD), EneMalta Corporation; Water Services Corporation; Maltacom plc; Air Malta plc; Malta Drydocks; Malta Shipbuilding Co. Ltd.; the Employment & Training Corporation (ETC); the Department of Industrial and Employment Relations; the Department for Women in Society; the Authority – formerly the Commission - for Occupational Health and Safety; the Commission for the Advancement of Women; the Laferla Foundation; the Education Division; the Ministries of Education and Social Policy.

Since 1990, the WPDC has been collaborating very closely with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES). The FES has been kindly sponsoring various research and education programmes run by the WPDC. This supportive role is continuing through the current FES appointee in Malta, Ms Ebba von Fersen Balzan.

Other organizations, both local and foreign, continued to utilize the WPDC's wide ranging services in the spheres of labour relations and worker participation, as well as the WPDC's specialist library and documentation unit.

3. Diploma Programmes

3.1 Diploma in Social Studies (Industrial Relations)

Since its inception, the WPDC has been organizing diploma courses for persons involved in industrial relations including trade union leaders and activists, managers, supervisors, labour officers and other officials involved in human resources and the labour market. During the University Graduation Ceremony (November 2001) the Diploma was conferred upon the sixth intake of such students.

This Diploma – originally focussing on Labour Studies - has become established as an important tool in the field of labour relations. It has

attracted a large number of adult workers with different experiences in social leadership and activism, some of whom are today among the protagonists in Malta's industrial relations scene.

Through this Diploma, the Centre seeks to train those persons who wish to increase their awareness or broaden their knowledge of a wide range of issues related to the labour market. The course work is covered over a period of two years of part time studies. Its main objectives are briefly the following:

- To impart knowledge, skills and awareness about those factors which influence employment relations and conditions of work;
- To facilitate the effective participation of workers in decisions which invariably affect their lives;
- To facilitate co-operative labour-management relations based on mutual recognition and understanding.

The Diploma course has been structured in the following manner:

Course Work

Basic Programme

WPR 0101: Introduction (Induction Programme) -	1 credit
WPR 0102: Sociology of Work -	2 credits
WPR 0103: Psychology of Communication -	2 credits
WPR 0104: Political Science -	2 credits
WPR 0105: Labour Economics -	2 credits

Core Programme

WPR 0121: Industrial Relations -	2 credits
WPR 0122: Public Speaking & Communication -	1 credit
WPR 0123: Occupational Psychology -	1 credit
WPR 0124: Industrial & Labour Law -	2 credits
WPR 0125: Current Issues in Labour Relations -	1 credit
WPR 0126: Gender Issues at Work -	1 credit
WPR 0127: Research Methods & Design -	1 credit
WPR 0128: Human Resource Development -	1 credit
WPR 0129: Official Statistics & the Labour Market -	1 credit
WPR 0130: Workplace Representation & Negotiation -	1 credit
WPR 0131: The Practice of Worker Participation -	1 credit
WPR 0190: Independent Study Unit/Extra Curricular Credit-	1 credit

Long Essay

Final Examinations

In October 1999 a new intake of students started their evening Diploma course in Social Studies (Industrial Relations). The course consists of two levels. Level one incorporates basic Social Science units from a labour perspective including; Labour Economics, Sociology of Work, Political Science and Psychology of Interpersonal Behaviour. Level two incorporates the core programme which concentrates on Human Resources Development, Labour Relations and Labour Law, Worker Participation, and Leadership and Communication Skills.

The Board of Studies which administered this diploma consisted of Prof. Godfrey Baldacchino (Chair); Prof. Edward L. Zammit, Mr Saviour Rizzo, Mr Paul A. Borg and Mr David Magro (members).

During the course of their studies, the students have benefited from a number of tutorial and revision seminars. These include a role playing exercise at Paradise Bay Hotel during March 2000 and a revision session held at the Forum Hotel during May 2001.

Furthermore, the students benefited from invitations to guest speakers and lecturers. These include Prof. Ivor L. Roberts, visiting Professor of European Social Policy at the University of Leeds; and Mr Neil Kearney, Secretary of the International Garments, Textiles and Leather Workers' Union (IGTLWU), both during May 2001.

Long Essays of Participants registered for the Diploma in Social Studies (Industrial Relations) 1999-2001

Abela Claire	Inroads made by Women in a Career Oriented Job
Azzopardi Carren	Coping with Stress – A Case Study of an Enterprise in the Manufacturing Sector
Azzopardi Saviour	Trade Unions: The Political Perspective
Borda David	Inter Union Relationship in the Banking Sector- from Antagonism to Collaboration?
Borg Albert	Transfer of Department of Civil Aviation Workers to Malta International Airport plc – The Effects
Camilleri Kevin	Participation of Youths in Trade Unionism
Gambin Ismay	Multi-Skilling – Its Impact on the Organisation and Employees
Grech Aloysio k/a Louis	New Technology introduced in a pre-historic site: A case study of its Impact upon Industrial Relations

Magro David	Privatisation in Mid-Med - HSBC. A year later: A case study
Mercieca Margaret	In-Nisa fil-Forzi Armata ta' Malta
Micallef Antoinette	Flexitime and its effect on employees
Mizzi Andrew	The Effect of Shift Work on Young Workers
Mizzi James Anthony	The Extension of the E.U. Working Time Directive to Air Transport Workers. What are the implications on Maltese Workers?
Rogers Lilian Rose	Options of a Working Mother
Rossi Arthur	Orientation to Work of a Commission Agent – The Case of the Lotto Receivers
Sammut Saviour	MCED – Socjeta ta' Dibattitu jew Shubija Socjali Tassew
Spiteri Michael	Industrial Relations at the Port with Special Reference to Port Delivery Clerks
Vassallo Angelo k/a Lino	The Effect of the Working Time Directive in the Catering Industry.
Vella Janet	Għaliex il-Haddiema ma jissieħbux f'Union –Għadd ta' Profili
Vella Victor	The Impact of Information and Communication Technology on Industry
Zarb Darmanin Sylvana	Part-Time Bank Employees on a one-year definite contract

3.2 Diploma in Social Studies (Gender & Development)

The diploma in Gender and Development – launched as the diploma in women and development in 1995 - has been a successful follow-up to short, certificate courses organised by the WPDC on gender issues throughout the years. The course's validity has been recognized by the Malta civil service (through its Staff Development Organisation and the Department for Women in Society) which has kindly supported the participation of civil servants in this course during their working time. The Commission for the Advancement of Women has co-financed the diploma for the second time in succession.

The course objectives can be briefly described as follows:

- To instil gender sensitivity in appreciating social, cultural, economic and political behaviour;
- To facilitate the effective participation of men and women in decisions which invariably affect their lives;
- To empower men and women to request, develop and maintain gender friendly and gender-sensitive policies at home, work and society.

The Diploma course has been structured in the following manner:

Course Work

Basic Programme

WPR 0201	Introduction (Induction Programme) -	1 credit
WPR 0202	Political Science and Gender -	2 credits
WPR 0203	Sociology of Gender -	2 credits
WPR 0204	Economics and Gender -	2 credits
WPR 0205	Psychology of Gender -	2 credits

Core Programme

WPR 0221	Gender, Law and Social Policy -	1 credit
WPR 0222	Gender and Literature -	1 credit
WPR 0223	Gender & Health Issues -	1 credit
WPR 0224	Gender, Public Speaking & Assertiveness -	1 credit
WPR 0225	Sociology of the Family -	1 credit
WPR 0226	Gender in the Media -	1 credit
WPR 0227	Gender, Education & Training -	1 credit
WPR 0228	Research Methods & Design -	1 credit
WPR 0229	Gender, Work & the Economy -	1 credit
WPR 0230	Gender and Crime -	1 credit
WPR 0231	Gender Issues in Psychology -	1 credit
WPR 0232	Gender Perspectives on Art History -	1 credit
WPR 0290	Independent Study Unit/Extra Curricular Credit -	1 credit

Long Essay

Final Examinations

The Board of Studies which administered this diploma consisted of Prof. Godfrey Baldacchino (Chair); Ms Marceline Naudi, Ms Angela Callus, Ms Renee Laiviera, Ms Frances Camilleri, Mr Keith Caruana and Ms Joan Antida Grima (members).

During the course of their studies, the students have benefited from a number of tutorial and revision seminars. These include a seminar on gender and inter-personal communication at the Institute of Tourism Studies, moderated by Mr K. Zimmermann-Vogel in March 2000; a seminar at the New Paradise Bay Hotel on gender and industrial relations with Dr Esther Quinn, education organiser for the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers (USDAW), U.K., in December 2000; and a revision seminar at the Forum Hotel in May 2001.

Long Essays of Participants registered for the Diploma in Social Studies
(Gender and Development) 1999-2001

Abela Joseph	A Critical Assessment of the Parenting Skills Courses run at Dar Bina, Cospicua: Do they have a gender perspective?
Attard Trevisan Edel	The Quality of Life of Unmarried Mothers: A Comparative Study
Attard Mariella	The Local Councils and their impact on Society
Aquilina Mariella	Sehem In-Nisa fil-Hajja tal-Kaccaturi Rgħiel
Azzopardi Lorraine	Status Passage: A Study in Status Trends in Malta
Azzopardi Nadette	Women's Participation as Local Councillors
Azzopardi Raymond	Gender and Development in the Maltese Public Service
Bartolo Manuel	Women's Pursuit of Sports Activities: A Deliberate Choice?
Borg Christine	Mothers' Lives as effected by breast and/or bottle feeding their baby
Camilleri Joseph	Motivation of Women living in Domestic Violence
Caruana Keith	Gender Issues in the Police Force
Coppola Vinnie	Job Satisfaction of a Residential Care Worker

Falzon Stella	Maltese Women in Singing Careers: A Case Study of Mezzo Soprano Marie Therese Vassallo
Farrugia Marisa	The Impact of Domestic Violence on Children: Behavioral and Emotional Perspectives
Farrugia Mary Rose	Modelling: The Art, The Dedication, The Career, from a Gender Perspective
Galea Paul	A Study of Abusive Men: A Therapeutic Approach
Gambin M'Maxine	The Role of Women in the Contemporary Maltese Family
Gatt Hector James	Monitoring the Changes in the Role of Males within the Family
Gili Jacqueline	The Impact of Domestic Violence on Children
Grima Joan Antida	A Preliminary Study of Women in Agriculture in the locality of Mgarr
Hili Joyce	Sharing of Domestic Roles – Fact or Fantasy? A Case Study
Mallia Stephen	Violence Against Women in Malta and the Problems Encountered by Victims in relation to Police Attitudes and Sensitisation
Micallef Liliana Grace	The Dedication towards Drug Addicts: A Biography of Dr Mary Sciberras
Micallef Marilyn	The Divorce Debate: Where does the Maltese Woman Stand?

Pace-Balzan Roberta	Is Community Pharmacy in Malta a Female-Dominated Profession?
Podda Connor Marika	Women's Attitudes to Physical Screening
Scerri Frances	Body Image and Teenage Dieting Practices in Males and Females
Schembri Jacqueline	Women's Perceptions of Housework and of themselves as Housewives
Schembri Janette	Headship Positions within the Public Sector (General Service Grad Employees)
Scicluna Romina	Recruitment Policies in the Hotel Industry: A Gender Perspective

3.3 Diploma in Social Studies (Occupational Health and Safety)

This is the latest diploma programme put together and organized by the WPDC, launched in 1997. It responds to an urgent need for an investment in expertise and skills connected to health and safety at the place of work. The initiative has met the support of the Department of Industrial and Employment Relations, the University's Institute of Health Care (IHC) and the Commission (now Authority) for Occupational Health and Safety. These bodies have also contributed generously to co-finance the diploma. Malta's main crop of occupational health and safety inspectors has been derived primarily from the graduates of this diploma programme.

The course objectives can be briefly described as follows:

- To introduce the concepts and skills involved in the promotion and effective pursuit of health and safety at work;
- To develop investigative and analytic skills so that workplace hazards can be recognised, evaluated and minimised;
- To inculcate the principle of risk reduction of workplace hazards and practices.



WPDC activities promote a participative approach to learning wherever possible. Workshop sessions in small groups, discussions and presentations are common.



Highlights from the Evening Commemorating the 20th Anniversary of the WPDC
- June 2001

The Diploma course has been structured in the following manner:

Course Work

General

WPR 0301: Introduction to OHS (Induction Programme)	1 credit
WPR 0302: Research Methods in OHS	1 credit
WPR 0321: Legal Framework to OHS	2 credits

Organisational

WPR 0303: People, Work, Industrial Relations & OHS	$\frac{1}{2}$ credit
WPR 0304: Occupational Psychology, Worker Behaviour & OHS	$\frac{1}{2}$ credit
WPR 0305: Problem Solving & Decision Making for OHS	1 credit

Occupational Health

WPR 0306: Introduction to the Physical Sciences	2 credits
WPR 0322: Elements of Toxicology	1 credit
WPR 0323: Occupational Health & Substance Abuse Awareness	1 credit
WPR 0324: Elements of Effective Health Promotion	1 credit
WPR 0325: Environmental Health Management	1 credit
WPR 0326: Principles of Occupational Hygiene	1 credit

Technical

WPR 0327: Occupational Safety Principles	3 credits
WPR 0328: Management of First Aid at Work	1 credit
WPR 0329: Ergonomics	1 credit
WPR 0330: Techniques of Fire Prevention	1 credit
WPR 0331: Current Issues in OHS	1 credit

Risk Management

WPR 0332: Monitoring, Review and Audit Systems	1 credit
WPR 0333: Developing Safety Supervisory Skills	$\frac{1}{2}$ credit
WPR 0334: Implementing Risk Control Measures	$\frac{1}{2}$ credit
WPR 0335: Worksite Inspection and Gathering Evidence	1 credit
WPR 0336: Hazard Recognition & Evaluation	$\frac{1}{2}$ credit

WPR 0390: Independent Study Unit / Extra-Curricular Credit 1 credit

Long Essay

Final Examinations

The Board of Studies which administered this diploma consisted of Prof. Godfrey Baldacchino (Chair); Mr Anthony Busuttil, Dr Mark Gauci, Dr Frank La Ferla, Dr Joseph Zammit McKeon, Mr George Trevor Ebejer; Mr Silvio Farrugia, Ing. Henriette Vassallo (members).

During the course of their studies, the students have benefited from exposure to expert resource persons and from a number of tutorial and revision seminars. These include a weekend seminar on ergonomics coordinated by Prof. Tom Cook and Dr John Rosecrance from the College of Medicine, University of Iowa, USA, held at the Halland Hotel in April 1999; a seminar with Mr Chris Hudson, lecturer on occupational health and safety management from the University of Portsmouth, U.K., also at the Halland Hotel in May 2000; a seminar on risk assessment at work with Dr David Wenham, Lecturer at the Centre for Hazard and Risk Management at the University of Loughborough, U.K. at the Forum Hotel in March 2001; as well as a revision seminar, also at the Forum Hotel, in May 2001.

Long Essays of Participants registered for the Diploma in Social Studies (Occupational Health and Safety) 1999-2001

Bonello Karen	Identifying Risks and Assessing Hazards in a Factory Tool Shop: A Case Study in Risk Assessment
Sylvan Borg	A Study in Potential Workplace Hazards in LPG/LNG Tankers entering Malta Drydocks
Darmanin George Steve	The Relationship between Occupational Health and Safety and ISO Standards: A Case Study of Malta Freeport
Ebejer George Trevor	A Risk Assessment of Blasting and Painting Operations in the Vicinity of Liquid Oxygen Storage at Marsa Shipbuilding
Fabri Anthony	An Overview of Preventive Health and Safety Measures at the Ricasoli Tank Cleaning Facility (RTCF)

Farrugia Martin	The Implications of recent OHS Legislation on the Works Division
Gauci Kevin	A Comparative Study of Back Injury at Malta Drydocks
Vassallo Henriette	Analysis of Absenteeism from Work -A Case Study amongst Engineering Department Personnel At Freeport Terminals (Malta)
Zarb Christopher	Stress levels related to Computer Work: A Case Study

4. Other Educational Initiatives

4.1 Tripartite Seminars

The series of weekend tripartite seminars which was initiated in 1990 with the full financial support of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES) continued throughout the years under review.

In April 1999 a weekend seminar was held on 'The Future of Trade Unions: Beyond Tripartism.' The key speaker was Dr Gerard Kester, a former lecturer of Sociology at the Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, Netherlands and an established researcher in the field of industrial relations. The seminar dealt with three main issues: '*Rapid Changing Industrial Relations: Trade Unions as Trend Setters or Trend Followers?*'; '*Investigating the Future of Trade Unionism*' and '*Preparing the Trade Union Agenda of the 21st Century*'.

'Inter Trade Union Relations' was the theme of the second weekend seminar held in November 1999. The guest speaker was Mr. Brian Ward from the Organization and Industrial Relations Department of the Trade Union Council (TUC) in Britain where he is responsible for inter-union relations, conciliation and arbitration services. The three presentations by this speaker dealt with the following themes: '*The Machinery for Settlements of Inter-Union Disputes and Problems*'; '*Conciliation and*

Arbitration of Inter Union Disputes' and 'Development of Inter Union Relationship for the Future'. During these presentations the speaker explained the procedures, norms and mechanism for resolution of inter union conflict (such as competition for membership) and outlined guidelines for establishing bargaining limits within national economic constraints.

'Managing Occupational Health and Safety' was the subject discussed during the third seminar held in May 2000. The key speaker was Mr. Chris Hudson, Senior Lecturer in Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) at the University of Portsmouth, U.K. This seminar dealt with various issues related to Occupational Health and Safety such as: Health and Safety as a Strategic Function; The Health and Safety Professional; Risk Management; Creating a Positive Culture; Measuring Health and Safety Performance; Monitoring and Auditing Health and Safety.

In November 2000 , another seminar was held with the theme 'The Perceptions of Maltese Trade Unions by their Members'. The discussion of this seminar centred on the data emanating from a survey conducted by the WPDC between July and October 1999. The data was presented under three headings : '*The Rationale of Trade Unions*'; '*The Trade Union at the place of work*' and '*Future Agenda for Trade Unions*.' For the first time in this series of seminars there was no foreign guest speaker. The presentations were made by members of the WPDC academic staff, particularly by Saviour Rizzo, Victor Aquilina and Joseph Vancell.

4.2 Women Returners' Programme

In collaboration with the Employment and Training Corporation (ETC), the Workers' Participation Development Centre organised a seven-week empowerment programme for women returning to the job market which was launched in April 1999. The programme is the first of its kind in Malta in that it is designed specifically for women actively seeking employment after a time engaged in familial responsibilities.

Ms Monica Beutel from the Women Returners' Network (WRN) in London was invited by the ETC to visit Malta. WPDC and ETC personnel shared WRN's extensive experience in designing and running courses for women returnees while a group of prospective trainers were trained to develop and lead these courses.

4.3 Profili ta' Hidma

Another initiative of the WPDC has been the co-production of a series of Maltese educational television programmes on Channel 22 (the Media Education Broadcasting Channel) titled Profiles of Work, and screened twice over (on both Channel 22 and PBS Channel 02) during 1999. The series of thirteen, 30-minute programmes brought viewers in touch with a worker through whose eyes the peculiar features and idiosyncrasies of a specific job environment could be appreciated. Prof. Godfrey Baldacchino served as the 'resident expert' in this programme which was filmed at the MEBC studios in Hamrun and ably hosted by Ms Tanya Mallia.

4.4 Training Trade Union Trainers

In May 1998 the WPDC in collaboration with Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) launched a trade union educational project in order to help trade unions establish a cadre of trainers from and for their own organizations. Called *Training Trade Union Trainers*, this educational project consists of a series of seminars for a small group of trade union activists specifically aimed at:

- fostering information, awareness and knowledge about relevant issues;
- developing competence in communication, negotiation, report writing and information technology;
- enhancing ability to organize educational activities.

During the years 1999/2000 six weekend residential seminars were held in connection with this project 'Training Trade Union Trainers'. These seminars consisted of a series of exercises, mini lectures, discussions and questionnaires that enable participants to practise the concept and skills presented to them. The six seminars were the following:

20 th - 21 st February 1999	Negotiation Skills
12 th -13 June 1999	Trade Union Education in the Context of Labour and Adult Education
13 th - 14 th November 1999	Communication and Body Language
3 rd - 5 th March 2000	Public Speaking
9 th - 11 th June 2000	Conflict Management and Feedback
16 th - 17 th December 2000	Training for Action

4.5 European Union Social Policy

Given Malta's progressing application towards eventual membership of the European Union (EU), the WPDC organised a series of evening lectures on a variety of themes related to the social policy dimension of the European Union. The course, which ran between March and May 1999, was heavily oversubscribed and commanded an attentive and high-powered audience.

The overall aims of the course were to:

- familiarise trade unions, their members and their officials with policy making and decision making at EU level;
- update them on current issues and developments as they impact on social policy;
- acquaint them with any information that would be useful in their trade union work; and
- upgrade their skills in accessing resources at EU level.

Lecturers included Dr Roderick Pace, Prof. Peter G. Xuereb, Dr Lorraine Conti, Ms Helga Ellul, Mr Mario Brincat, Mr Gordon Cordina, as well as WPDC academic staff.

5. Research & Publications

5.1 Trade Union Perceptions by their Members

Trade Unions have been forced to develop new strategies in order to meet and accommodate the wide range of challenges in the working life of this globalised economic market. As democratic organisations in their response to these new demands they have to operate within a framework set by their members. Trade union members, on the basis of their work experience and aspirations, tend to develop a set of assumptions that provide a paradigm within which they expect their organisation to function. The survey conducted by the WPDC sought to reveal how trade unions are perceived by their members. Its specific objective was to help the trade unions make a self evaluation exercise to enable them to respond in an effective way to the new challenges.

The data emanating from this survey suggest that the value of solidarity as a unifying force is not highly esteemed *per se* among Maltese trade union members. Rather than pursued as an intrinsic value, solidarity tends to be seen as a means for securing instrumental values. The two pronged aims of trade unionism, namely the 'sword of justice' model and the pursuit of 'vested interest', emerge as complementary rather than mutually exclusive. Likewise the survey data suggest a strong support for resistance by union members on issues like the reduction of social security benefits and the introduction of functional flexibility - particularly among manual workers. Among the growing heterogeneity of trade union constituents there is core group of workers who uphold a traditional and ideal vision of trade unionism. This is much more diffused among skilled manual workers. One main conclusion of the survey indicates that while undergoing renewal, trade unions should hold on to the principles of worker representation upon which they were founded. Nevertheless, the changes taking place in the labour market require that new recruitment initiatives be undertaken. Short of these, the trade union movement may end up representing merely a 'labour aristocracy' rather than a wide section of the contemporary workforce.

5.2 A Day in Her Life

With the support of the Commission for the Advancement of Women and the Department for Women in Society, the WPDC undertook a qualitative research study to investigate the hidden social and economic role of Maltese women, which did not feature in economic statistics. Using face-to-face interviews carried out by Gender & Development Diploma students, a cross sectional survey of 800 Maltese and Gozitan women was effected during November 2000. An excellent response rate of 74% was obtained. The study, which was directed by Frances Camilleri and which has since been published by the Commission, identifies and acknowledges women's contribution to the wealth of the Maltese economy and society and provides a useful and timely celebration of non-market, non-monetized work in Malta.

5.3 Scenario 21

Since 1992, the Centre has played an active part - through its Director - in an international, comparative, research project on trade union development, better known as Scenario 21. It started as a project of the

Confederation Française Democratique du Travail (C.F.D.T.) sponsored by the European Commission. A small group of academics who have a long established track record of working closely with trade unions established a scientific network based on the following main premise: "That a new élan for workers' participation is needed which could only be given by the trade union movement. This movement is ideally placed to take the leadership in this field in order to render participation more democratic; effective and meaningful".

A number of academic papers and two books (in English and French editions) have so far emerged from this project. The first phase of the project was concluded in 1994 with a Colloquium bringing together academics and researchers on the one hand and trade unionists on the other discussing forms of cooperation on workers' participation which are mutually beneficial.

Currently the project is at an advanced stage of concluding its second phase. It is being hosted by the European Trade Union Institute of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and is in the process of publishing the third volume on the same subject (2001). The following are the main hypotheses/propositions being explored in various cross-cultural and organisational settings:

- Different forms of participation (traditional collective bargaining, concentration, co-determination, social dialogue, organisational and financial participation) are neither mutually exclusive or incompatible with each other. On the contrary, their effect can be cumulative and they can reinforce each other. Implemented separately they lose their meaning and effectiveness. Implemented in synergy they assume a dynamic force.
- Rapid and major shifts in the labour market, in the nature of employment contracts, in technology, in forms of work organisation, globalisation, in culture and ideology, demand an innovative approach to democratic participation. They increase the need to link problems of the shop-floor to the enterprise, to local/regional or branch levels (meso levels), and to national and international (macro) levels and to regulate these with possibly new forms of democratic participation.
- A sustained spread of democratic participation is only possible under appropriate conditions, including a framework to provide facilities

for research, information, education, training, publication, media, consultancy and legal advice, as well as an institutionalised framework of trade union --university/research cooperation.

- An innovative approach to democratic participation at the workplace level and beyond, poses a particular challenge to the trade union movement to provide the necessary support. In recent years trade unions have lost the initiative in the development of some important forms of participation. A comprehensive hold over labour issues and all forms of workers' participation can only be achieved by the trade unions. These also have to promote a democratic culture of solidarity in which workers strive for their own rights and the rights of others, and in the process, building solid democratic institutions in the economy.

5.4 Publications

By Godfrey Baldacchino:

Introducing Social Studies: A Maltese Reader, Malta, PEG (2000).
ISBN: 99909-0-246-1

Malta and the European Union: A Comparative Study on Social Policy, Employment and Industrial Relations, Malta, Malta Employers' Association (2000) - ISBN: 99932-24-00-6

Co-editor (with David Milne): *Lessons from the Political Economy of Small Islands: The Resourcefulness of Jurisdiction*, Basingstoke, UK, Macmillan / New York, St Martin's Press, 2000. ISBN: 0-333-77817-0

'Smallness is Back', North: Scandinavian Journal of Regional Policy, Vol. 10, No.2/3, 1999, pp.21-26.

'A Double Dose of Unitarism: Employment Relations in a small firm in a small island state', International Journal of Employment Studies, Vol. 7, No. 2, 1999, pp. 103-121.

'Small Business in Small Island Nations: A Case Study from Fiji', Journal of Small Business Management, Vol. 37, No.4, 1999, pp.80-84.

'Recent Developments in Higher Education in Malta', Mediterranean Journal of Educational Studies, special issue, Vol. 4, No.2, 1999, 205-214.

‘The Challenge of Hypothermia: A Six-Proposition Manifesto for Small Island Territories’, The Round Table, No.353, 2000, pp.65-79.

‘An Exceptional Success: the case study of an export oriented, locally owned, small scale manufacturing firm in a small island country’, Journal of Pacific Studies, Vol. 23, No. 1, 1999, pp. 27-47.

‘Human Resource Management in Malta: Hospitality insights from a small island territory’, in S.M. Hoffman, C. Johnson & M.M. Lefever eds. International Human Resource Management in the Hospitality Industry, Lansing MI, Educational Institute of the American Hotels and Motels Association, 2000, pp.183-194.

‘Competitiveness versus Social Cohesion: Employment-Creation Policies in Malta & the European Union’, paper presented at the Annual EDRC Conference, May 1999. Published in P.G. Xuereb, ed. Getting Down to Gearing Up for Europe, Malta, EDRC, pp. 259-269.

(with David Milne) ‘Introduction’ and ‘Conclusion’ in: Lessons from the Political Economy of Small Islands: The Resourcefulness of Jurisdiction, Basingstoke, UK, Macmillan/ New York, St Martin’s Press, 2000.

Regular articles on industrial relations issues in the local press.

By Frances Camilleri:

‘New training for women returning to work’ Interview by *The Malta Independent*, November 7, 2000

‘Budget 2000 and the Part-time Workforce: suggestions and recommendations for protective legislation’, *Sunday Times*, 12th November 2000.

‘An Empowerment Programme for Women Returners: a gender mainstreaming approach’, *Sunday Times*, 29th October 2000.

Book review ‘Introducing Social Studies –A Maltese Reader’, by Godfrey Baldacchino, In *Mediterranean Journal of Educational Studies*, Vol 5. No.2, PEG Publications.

‘Just where is a Woman’s Place? Trends and Policies in the Job Market’ In C. Vella (ed.) *The Maltese Islands on the Move: A Mosaic of Contributions Marking Malta’s Entry into the 21st Century*, Central Office of Statistics, Malta, 2000.

‘L’identite des femmes enseignantes maltaises: existe-t-il une discrimination par le genre? In Le Feuvre N., Membrado M., Rieu A. (eds.) *Les femmes et l’Universite en Mediterranee*, Universite de Toulouse-Le Mirail:Presses Universitaires du Mirail, 1999

‘An Empowerment Programme for Women Returners: A Tool for Transformation? *The Sunday Times*, 2nd May 1999.

‘We want to have our Say: Malta’s National Minimum Curriculum’, *The Sunday Times*, 18th April 1999.

‘Statistics can only tell part of the Story’ *The Times*, 8th March 1999.

Paper on part-timers’ role in Maltese trade unions at a tripartite seminar organised for trade union activists by the Workers’ Participation Development Centre, University of Malta and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung – 11th November 2000.

Paper on ‘Assessing Malta’s Equal Opportunities’ at a National Conference on *Malta & the European Union Employment Guidelines* organised by the Employment and Training Corporation in collaboration with the Foundation for Human Resources Development and the Malta-EU Information Centre, 27th October 2000.

Paper on ‘Statistics can only tell part of the Story’ at a Seminar organised by the Department for Women’s Rights in collaboration with the Committee for Gender Issues and the Department of Sociology, University of Malta.

Co-keynote speaker “Who Stands on the Poverty Line?” at a Seminar on Women in Poverty organised by the Centru Fidi u Gustizzja, February 1999.

By Saviour Rizzo:

Book Review of Baldacchino, G. & Greenwood, R. (eds) ‘*Competing Strategies of Socio-Economic Development for Small Islands*’ Institute of Island Studies, University of Prince Edward Island. Canada. 1998, in *The Sunday Times*, 1st March 1999.

‘*Trade Union Agenda in the 21st Century*’ in *The Times*, 1st May 2000
‘*Setting Performance Standards in the Classroom*’ in *The Teacher* No 78 Malta Union of Teachers (MUT) Publication.

Co authored with Zammit E.L. *'How are Trade Unions Perceived by their members? A Survey Report on Trade Unions in Malta'* in South Eastern Europe Review, Vol. 3 No. 3, October 2000, pp. 137 - 149.

By Edward L. Zammit:

“Trade Union Education and Democratic Participation – A Case Study of the Maltese Experience.” (with Saviour Rizzo). Paper presented at the 34th World Congress of the International Institute of Sociology. Israel, Tel-Aviv University, July 1999.

“Ir-Riforma tal-Ligijiet Industrijali f’Malta.” Report presented to the Ministry for Social Policy. Malta: December 1999.

‘A Reader on E.U. Enlargement: Malta Country Report’ (Editor: Hortense Horburger). Hans Bockler Stiftung. Dusseldorf (1999).

“Industrial Relations in Malta.” (assisted by Isabelle Calleja). A Report prepared for the European Trade Union Institute. Brussels 2000.

Leonardo da Vinci-Programme for Malta: Operational Plan 2000 – 2002. European Union Programmes Unit, Education Division, Malta 2000

“Social Dialogue in Malta.” A Study for the European Social Partners and the European Commission. (assisted by Saviour Rizzo and Godwin Mifsud). November 2000.

“Efficiency vs Democracy in the Workplace: A Postscript on Self-Management at Malta Drydocs.” Paper presented at the 12th World Congress of the International Industrial Relations Association. Tokyo, Japan, June 2000.

“Lifelong Learning, Flexibility and the University: Adult Worker and Trade Union Education for Democratic Participation.” Paper presented at The 7th International Conference of the Society for the Study of European Ideas (ISSEI). University of Bergen, Norway. August 2000.

“Background study on Employment and Labour Market in Malta” (with Felix Borg and Sue Vella). Malta, Employment and Training Corporation, October 2000.

“How are Trade Unions Perceived by their Members? – A Survey Report on Trade Unions in Malta.” (with Saviour Rizzo) in South East Europe Review. Vol 3 (No. 3), October 2000, pp 137-149.

“New Frontiers of Democratic Participation” (with Gerard Kester). The Netherlands, Leusden/Malta, WPDC November 2000.

“Trade Union Education and Democratic Participation -- A Malta Case Study.” (with S. Rizzo and J. Vancell) Paper prepared as part of the project ‘Scenario 21.’ European Trade Union Institute (ETUI), December 2000.

6. A Showcase: Our Graduates & their Career Movements

The WPDC has carried out an exercise, to review the career movements of its graduates. The ‘output’ of its three diplomas are reviewed in turn.

Diploma in Social Studies (Industrial Relations)

The Diploma in Social Studies (Industrial Relations), formerly known as the Diploma in Labour Studies, was launched in September 1983. It immediately attracted a substantial amount of students: predominantly active trade union officials, workers in participatory enterprises and general worker representatives. Since then, this Diploma has been regularly offered to a wide range of persons involved in industrial relations, coming from a cross section of the public and private sector including areas such as Education, Health, Maltapost, Enemalta, Air Malta, Malta DryDocks, Tourism, Banking, Manufacturing and Journalism.

To date, there have been 6 intakes and the number of students being awarded the Diploma totals 128. 5 Certificates were also obtained.

WPDC is pleased to note that former students have made significant career moves since the completion of the diploma. A former student who was a postperson at the time of the diploma is now the Head of an Adult Training Centre; another postperson is now Senior Administrator in Human Resources at Maltapost. A Works technical officer at Scale 14 progressed to Scale 6 as Head of Health and Safety at his corporation. A former student is now the Co-operatives’ Board Secretary, whilst another is a Senior Manager at the Employment & Training Corporation. Several students today hold strategic and decision-making posts within their sphere of work.

A large number of students pursued further education by following various Master’s programmes and a considerable number of post-graduate

diplomas in different areas such as Human Resource Management, Health Care Management, Environmental Management, Marketing, Employment Relations, Political Studies and Planning & Development. Such courses were either followed locally or abroad, mainly at British Universities such as Birmingham, Leicester and Cardiff, but also as far away as New Delhi in India.

Diploma in Social Studies (Gender and Development)

WPDC had been organising short courses on gender for some time, when the need was felt, due to the increasing demand, to launch the diploma in gender and development in October 1995. The course was welcomed positively by those who wished to increase their knowledge of the influence and effects of gender on equity and opportunity. The course has attracted persons from various aspects of social life: from home, from the world of work, and from society at large. The former students' occupations ranged from housewives to police officers, teachers to nurses and sports administrators to business persons.

Since 1995, there have been only 3 intakes, but the number of students has grown from 12 in the first intake, to 29 in the last intake. In total, 58 students have been awarded the Diploma in Gender and Development.

The Centre is proud to remark that the Gender and Development students have made visible improvements in their careers. One student who was a Sports Administrator at the time of the course is now the Director of the Malta Olympic Committee. Another student, who was unemployed until completion of the course, is now the Project Coordinator of Outlook Cooperative, as well as a member of the Gender Advisory Group of the Broadcasting Authority. Yet another is the Executive Secretary to the Leonardo da Vinci Coordinating Committee, involved in vocational training as part of an EU supported programme. The course has also impacted differently on the students' careers by raising their awareness and by encouraging them to develop and implement gender and equality opportunities at the workplace.

Most Gender and Development students were determined to proceed onto other educational programmes. A few students are now reading a Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of Malta. Others followed such international Diplomas as in Probation Services or Basic Counselling. One student took Gender issues one step further and successfully

completed a course on Gendering Cyberspace at the University of Utrecht, the Netherlands.

Diploma in Social Studies (Occupational Health and Safety)

The most recent Diploma to be launched by the WPDC is that of Occupational Health and Safety. This diploma is especially relevant to those who have already been working in the area of health and safety; and those who wanted to increase their knowledge and include this dimension at their workplace. Former students' had an employment background at Maltapost, Enemalta, Water Services Corporation, Parliament and the caring professions, amongst others.

The Diploma was launched in 1997 with a strong intake of 31 students. Such an encouraging response led to the Diploma being offered once again in 1999.

The first intake of students (1997-1999) have already made considerable changes in their careers; contributed to raising awareness; and incorporated health and safety in policy making and implementing. Amongst others, one student who was a mechanical fitter at the time of the diploma is now a compliance officer and a tutor on occupational health and safety. A principal foreman at the Water Services Corporation is now Health and Safety Manager at the same corporation. A present Chairperson of a Health and Safety Committee was working as a lab technologist when she was following the Diploma. The Centre is proud to note that a number of students have decided to change occupation upon completion of this Diploma, to become Health and Safety Enforcement Officers or Occupational Health and Safety Inspectors.

Former students who successfully completed the Diploma continued their education by following various short courses and longer ones such as the BA (Hons.) in Social Work at the University of Malta as well as post-graduate courses overseas such as the M.Sc. in Biomedical Science at Ulster University.

The above information was obtained from returned 'questionnaires' sent to former students in May 2001.

7. Epilogue: Democratic Participation in the 21st century

*Speech by Dr Gerard Kester at the
20th Anniversary Celebrations of the WPDC - University of Malta,
Tuesday, 26th June 2001*

Thirty years ago I arrived in Malta for the first time. A country under construction. Political independence had been gained. Economic independence was rapidly being achieved and its first phase was cleverly financed, by making the former colonizer pay dearly for a few extra years use of the military base. Indeed, the 1970s in Malta were energetic and exciting years.

I feel privileged that precisely in that period of time, I was invited by the University of Malta to set up education and research in industrial relations. Looking back in my agenda's I found I was more than 30 times in Malta between 1971 and 1980. I enjoyed those shorter and longer stays immensely. Humanly and professionally. Humanly, because you Maltese are masters in relaxed hospitality and friendship. I felt at home in Malta from day one.

Professionally, Malta was indeed full of challenges. The 1970s were thrilling years in the field of industrial relations. A nine-months strike at the Drydocks was followed by co-determination, then workers' self-management. There were marches of workers in the streets and frequent extra-ordinary trade union meetings. Workers were taking over enterprises and trying to run them themselves. These were controversial policies by trade unions and other actors in industrial relations. And so much more of the unexpected and the almost impossible. It was a researchers' delight!

Later I realised that that particular episode in Malta had been an important learning experience: for the country itself, internationally, and for me personally.

The most important experience for Malta was perhaps that the events demonstrated for once how undemocratic, authoritarian and exploitative traditional labour relations had been. That was also a colonial heritage, as Edward Zammit has so brilliantly shown in his 1984 publication.

The far-reaching worker participation, worker take-over and self-management experiments in the 1970 had a shock-effect, even if they

failed to achieve their immediate objectives which were far too ambitious. They set in motion a new way of thinking on labour relations. They showed that workers are not just a cog in the industrial wheel, but are human beings. Who, if respected in their full potential of creativity and democracy, and if given a due share in the income of the company and of the country, can be true partners in economic and social development. There is no doubt in my mind: the events in the 1970s, however controversial they may have been, have resulted in a new agenda for democratic industrial relations in Malta.

The founding of the Workers' Participation Development Centre in 1981 has been invaluable in that respect. When that new path of democratic labour relations was discovered and accepted by all social partners, it was of foremost importance to learn the lessons of accumulated experience in an objective way, and to make that knowledge available to those who wanted to use it. The Centre soon became a think-tank on democratic labour relations, conducting independent research and feeding its results back to education, publication and consultancy. Not from an ivory tower position as many universities do. But with open doors, and available to precisely those organisations, groups and individuals who seek to improve the position of the workers by democratic means. Not only many university students who are now, or will be, the social, political and economic leaders of the country, but also - and that is unique - many trade union leaders at all levels, and other representatives of workers, have been prompted by the Centre to take democracy seriously as a way of life.

Also internationally Malta has been and still is a learning ground in democratic labour relations. And this is mainly due to the Centre. Because of its quality research, the Centre is a highly valued partner on all main international platforms of industrial relations, where university researchers but also trade union leaders, employer organisations, government officials and other social partners appear eager to learn about developments in Malta. I have personally witnessed the keen interest shown in Malta during Conferences of the International Industrial Relations Association (which is also the main intellectual platform of the International Labour Organisation), of the Research Committee on Organisational Participation of the International Sociological Association, and of the International Association for the Economics of Participation. The Centre has played one of the leading roles in a comparative European research project on labour relations in the 21st century, under auspices of the European Trade Union Institute and with generous support of the European Union.

Malta was a learning experience also for myself. After the 1970s, my association to the University of Malta continued but on a more incidental basis. My work brought me to Africa, and the many lessons Malta had taught me were very useful in that continent. Many African countries were going through the same birth pangs of political and economic independence after centuries of colonisation and its people were groping for democracy. It was very important for me to have had the experience in Malta that under unavoidable political partisanship, independent university research and education can be indispensable catalysts. Eventually, a framework as it was developed in Malta, emerged in many African countries: a close co-operation between the university on the one hand, and the social partners in industrial relations on the other.

This resulted in the African Workers' Participation Development Programme with projects in many countries: Cape Verde, Senegal, Guinea, Guine-Bissau, Mali, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Togo, Sudan, Tanzania, Zambia, Mauritius, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and South Africa. The interest of these countries in the Malta experience maybe eloquently demonstrated by the fact that the cream of the African programme, famous trade union leaders as well as distinguished university scholars, came to Malta a few years ago for three long weeks to learn, at the Workers' Participation Development Centre, how to set up a diploma programme in democratic labour relations in Africa.

But the international significance of the Workers' Participation Development Centre is felt mostly at the European level. Malta is a member of the European community. And in Europe, democratic worker participation is the distinct trademark of its industrial relations. Indeed, democratic participation is a European tradition.

Various forms of worker participation in Europe have developed into more democratic, meaningful and effective instruments of worker representation. But democratic participation is a dynamic process which has to be constantly proposed, learned and defended. The momentum to develop democratic participation, which had long been sustained by trade unions, was slipping away in the 1980s and 1990s, the combined result of the farewell to traditional socialism and the embracement of neo-liberalism also by social-democrat forces.

Today, there are many new initiatives and innovative formats of democratic participation, including financial participation, participative methods of

human resource management, European Works Councils, etc. There is also an important change in the underlying philosophy. Participation was long seen as an integral component of the workers' struggle, with often strong support of trade unions and leftist governments. But today, democratic participation is no longer just a battleground between capital and labour, but a common challenge, that forces all parties to reconsider the rules of the game and the roles of the actors.

Partnership rather than unilateral imposition is more likely to be a feasible strategy: developing participation as a win-win game for the different actors. The role of capital is not eliminated but put under more democratic control. Democracy is about accountability. Those who take decisions must be answerable to those who are affected by these decisions. The challenge of the 21st century will be how to strengthen that accountability in all spheres of life, including in the economy and at the workplace.

This nature of this challenge is becoming increasingly clear in today's industrial relations in Europe. Individualism and decentralisation, higher levels of education, almost unlimited access to information, are rapidly creating another type of worker, and thereby necessitate new forms of worker representation. Trade unions were since long structured to deal with representation of interests of workers in large scale organisations and on broader sectoral or national levels, and have acquired professional expertise and infrastructure for that. They put more emphasis on 'quantitative' demands to attract massive worker support, and this at the cost of 'qualitative' demands.

The workers recognise the need for trade unionism to tackle collective questions under solidarity, but they also feel that their qualitative and individual needs are not or not adequately represented by trade unions. The trade union, by actively involving itself in the entire spectrum of direct and indirect participation, may gain back legitimacy in a triple role: defending material interests of workers through collective bargaining, as well as promoting individual and qualitative worker interests through various forms of participation, as well as defending interests and solidarity of workers in general, through social dialogue.

Trade unions are in a strategic position to give leadership to such a dynamic process of change. They can link grass-root experience and expectations to other levels of decision making, they can be 'brokers' of workers interests by putting these in perspective of broader issues of social and economic justice and solidarity.

This may well be the most important mission for the trade union movement in the 21st century. If it fails, group egoism and corporatism may lead to social disintegration and will eventually put democracy in danger. If it succeeds, a new partnership can create benefits for all thanks to democracy.

It is in this perspective that the Workers' Participation Development Centre has to be seen. The Centre was set up primarily as a project of trade union - university cooperation, strengthening the democratic dynamic by creating a link between research on the one hand, and policy development, education, and training on the other. Involving researchers in extension education and policy development, and trade unionists and other activists in university research, creates continuity. Continuous interaction allows building research agendas jointly proposed and implemented, as a real-life basis for extension courses and policy development.

This is not only of advantage to the trade union movement and its social partners, but also to the university: it leads to improved quality of scientific research and education and is thus an important contribution to the development of building up social science.

The track record of the Workers' Participation Development Centre is impressive in this respect. A large number of high quality research projects constitute its foundation. The results are put to academic use as well as to practical use. A unique documentation centre on industrial relations in Malta is available and is connected to similar data banks in Europe. Theoretical insights gained through research are incorporated in the curricula of university teaching and find their way to academic publication. That is, in many countries, at many universities, what university research is about. But at the Workers' Participation Development Centre the lemon is squeezed to the last drop. The same research knowledge is used in Diploma Courses where many hundreds of practitioners of all walks of life improve their skills and understanding. It is used in seminars, workshops, conferences, consultancies, radio talks, TV programmes... the Centre is a bulwark of democracy.

This rich experience is a European asset. It is not surprising that staff members of the Centre are contemplating important roles in projects and programmes of the European Union. The philosophy, approach and method of the Centre have had a demonstration effect: the WPDC has become an international reference point for democratic industrial relations.

Financial Statement (1)

Income and Expenditure account for the Calendar Year 1999

A	Income	Lm
	(i) University allocation	25,333
	(ii) Internal Sources	2,303 ¹
	(iii) External Sponsorships	6,891 ²
		Total 34,527
B	Expenditure	
	(i) Salaries of Staff	20,669 ³
	(ii) General Expenses	5,500 ⁴
	(iii) External Sponsorships	6,891 ⁵
		Total 33,060⁶

¹ Includes income from the organisation of research and educational activities, and interest on reserve funds.

² Amount paid directly by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation as the external sponsor of various educational activities and research assistance (2047).

³ Includes academic and non-academic.

⁴ Includes: Office Equipment (1313), Computing Services (93), Memberships (216), Books (103), Subscriptions and Periodicals (516), Hospitality (31), Transport (103), Repairs and Maintenance (164), Communications (391), Office Supplies (244), Postage (389), Advertising (286), Extramural Activities (174), Sundries (293), Printing (376), International Activities (808).

⁵ Corresponds with item A(iii) above.

⁶ The balance of Lm1,467 is reserved for use in successive years.

Financial Statement (2)

Income and Expenditure account for the Calendar Year 2000

A	Income (i) University allocation (ii) Internal Sources (iii) External Sponsorships	Lm 23,732 5,618 ¹ 10,823 ²
Total 40,173		
B	Expenditure (i) Salaries of Staff (ii) General Expenses (iii) External Sponsorships	19,303 ³ 5,568 ⁴ 10,823 ⁵
Total 35,694⁶		

¹ Includes income from the organisation of research and educational activities, and interest on reserve fund.

² Amount paid directly by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation as the external sponsor of various educational activities and research fellowships (1750).

³ Includes academic and non-academic and research fellowships (500).

⁴ Includes: Office Equipment (899), Computing Services (227), Memberships (113), Books (713), Subscriptions and Periodicals (1011), Transport (37), Repairs and Maintenance (12), Communications (527), Office Supplies (565), Postage (179), Advertising (147), Travel and Accommodation (109), Extramural Activities (66), Sundries (286), Printing (38), International Activities (639).

⁵ Corresponds with item A(iii) above.

⁶The balance of Lm4,479 is reserved for use in successive years.



Mission Statement

The aims of the WPDC are:

To organise educational activities which support the development of participation at the workplace and society at large.

To undertake research on labour relations and particularly on issues concerning participatory developments locally and abroad.

To provide consultancy and other services in connection with participatory issues.

To compile and disseminate select information through the issuing of books, journals, articles and other publications as well as through the media of mass communication.