



University
of Malta

Centre for Labour Studies

Biennial Report

2007 - 2008



**University
of Malta**

Centre for Labour Studies

Biennial Report

2007 - 2008

Published in March 2009

Centre for Labour Studies
New Humanities Building, Block B
University of Malta
Msida MSD 2080 Malta
Tel: 2340 2727 / 2340 2731
www.um.edu.mt/cls

General Editor: Saviour Rizzo
Typist: Charmaine Pace, Josephine Agius

All rights reserved. No part of this publication
may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system
or transmitted in any form or by any means without
prior permission in writing of the author,
and of the publisher, which must be obtained beforehand.

ISBN 978-99932-0-709-2

Design & Layout Outlook Coop

Contents

Foreword	4
Malta Shipyards - The Last Chapter <i>Saviour Rizzo</i>	6
Fresh Snapshots at Malta's Evolving Labour Market: Looking at Sectional Membership Trends within the GWU and the UHM <i>Godfrey Baldacchino</i>	11
Anticipating Malta's Labour Market and Skills Requirements <i>Manwel Debono</i>	17
Gender Differences in the Maltese Labour Market <i>Anna Borg</i>	23
Atypical Occupations and Social Dialogue <i>Edward. L. Zammit</i>	28
Organisation and Staff	36
Ebba von Fersen Balzan – An Appreciation	39
Diploma Programmes	40
Other Educational Activities	48
Monitoring and Research about Industrial and Employment Relations	51
Research Work and Publications	57
Conferences and Other Academic Activities attended by Staff	61
Financial Statements	67

The ideas expressed in the articles contained in this report represent the views of the respective authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the University of Malta, the Centre for Labour Studies, or the Centre's Board.

This biennial report covers the activities of the Centre for Labour Studies at the University of Malta for the period 2007 and 2008. It also provides an opportunity for the reader to reflect on some of the contemporary issues in labour relations as well as on the work of the Centre. As Malta's main research and monitoring agency on industrial and employment relations for European Union institutions, the Centre has continued in its work of reporting the main events that have occurred in the field of Maltese Industrial and Employment Relations throughout the years under review.

Foreword

The Centre's reports are submitted to the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions in Dublin. They provide a critical description and analysis of ongoing and unfolding issues relating to restructuring, mass redundancies and closures of firms, the trade disputes in the transport sector, immigration and the protracted negotiations between government and unions about the water and electricity tariffs announced by the Minister of Finance in October 2008. In addition to these reports, the Centre provides a dispassionate and objective review of developments in the Maltese socio-economic scenario.

The Centre also continues to maintain its high profile in the field of adult education through its string of education programmes intended to benefit the actors involved in the world of work. These programmes have been organised since the inception of the Centre in 1981. The validity of the Centre's four diploma programmes have become firmly and widely acknowledged. So have the seminars and discussion groups which the Centre has been organising for the past 18 years, with the generous support of Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES). The focus on these activities in the report is to highlight the Centre's commitment to its ideals as espoused in its mission statement which is reproduced on the back page of this report.

This biennial report is being complemented by five articles written by the academic staff of the Centre. While dwelling on different themes, the articles stress the key point that in dealing with issues in the labour market one has to navigate between the ideals of the past and the bitter realities of the present and maybe even of the future. Some of the key challenges that need to be addressed in the near future are highlighted. The privatization process of the Malta Shipyards is the theme of the first article by Saviour Rizzo. This gives a brief description of the events that unfolded during this process and looks at the challenges ahead for the new operators of this enterprise. The second article by Godfrey Baldacchino traces the origins of the two leading Maltese trade unions - the General Workers' Union (GWU) and the Union Haddiema Maghqudin (UHM) - and invites them to look at the new realities beckoning in the Maltese labour market. The third article, penned by Manwel Debono, provides an evaluation of the available tools needed to forestall the looming skill shortages in the Maltese labour market. In the fourth contribution, Anna Borg argues that the developments in Malta related to gender issues fall short of the targets set by the Lisbon Agenda. In the fifth and final article, Edward Zammit engages in the ongoing debate about the precariousness of the working conditions inherent in most atypical occupations and the implications to the process of social dialogue and the amendments needed to be made to industrial law.

Saviour Rizzo
February 2009

His Majesty Dockyard, Malta Drydocks, 'It-Tarzna', and since 2003 Malta Shipyards, one particular enterprise has always been highly visible in the Maltese economic and political scenario. Since the year 2008 was an appointment with destiny for Malta Shipyards, this review focuses exclusively on the events unfolding in this enterprise that led to its privatization.

Malta Shipyards

The Last Chapter

Saviour Rizzo

Once the Dockyard ceased to be part of Britain's naval facility in Malta and became a commercial enterprise, it had always been beset by economic problems that unnerved every successive Maltese Government since independence. In 1975, Prime Minister Dom Mintoff offered full worker self-management to the Drydocks workforce and, coinciding with the reopening of the Suez Canal in 1973, the enterprise registered six years of modest profits in the period 1975-1980. But this performance in the black could not be sustained. Since 1981, the enterprise has had to be heavily subsidised by the state in order to survive. According to the Malta-European Union Accession Agreement, this subsidy had to be stopped by the end of 2008. Once this agreement was signed and Malta became an EU member state, this enterprise was bound to either become economically viable by the end of 2008, or else face closure.

In 2003, prior to Malta's EU accession, the Malta Drydocks Corporation and Malta Shipbuilding Company Ltd, were merged into one enterprise: Malta Shipyards Ltd. The newly set up company started its operations after a downsizing exercise was conducted in which 900 employees in the two parent companies were declared redundant. The trimming of the workforce to 1,700, was in line with the 'fitness exercise' recommended by the Appledore Report commissioned by the Maltese Government in 1997. This downsizing exercise was complemented by a collective agreement signed in November 2003 by the Government and the General Workers' Union (GWU) which contained clauses prescribing new working time arrangements aimed at cutting overtime cost, reorganisation of work practices to increase productivity and financial rewards to encourage worker flexibility and multi-skilling.

With a change in the substantive and procedural rules ushering a new work ethic, a leaner outfit and a new sense of directorship, the enterprise seemed to be well geared towards achieving economic viability by the end of 2008. Even industrial relations became more consensual as the trade union representing the workers, often perceived to be very militant, adopted the prudent policy of trying to be part of the solution. Hopes were running high that this formula would get this debt-ridden and subsidy-addicted enterprise out of the red.

Judging by the statements made in the first two years following this restructuring exercise and complemented by the details of the latest collective agreement, the prospects for recovery appeared to be encouraging. Indeed, in 2005, in accordance with the collective agreement which made provisions for a scheme of Performance Related Pay, the employees received a performance bonus after the company's financial performance exceeded budget targets, during the first three months of the year. The then Minister for Investment, Dr Austin Gatt, was quoted as saying that rewarding workers had its desired effect in increasing productivity.

Two years later, the same Minister, together with the CEO of the enterprise, expressed his dissatisfaction at the level of productivity in spite of the higher turnover registered in 2006. The veiled threats of a closure became more real once the end of 2008 was in sight. In June 2008, the government announced its intention of privatizing Malta Shipyards after the end of 2008. Following prolonged discussions and negotiations between the Government and the GWU, the great majority of workers took up the option of an early retirement scheme and severance pay package offered by government. This was simply a downsizing exercise to make the enterprise more attractive to the bidders.

Of course, different explanations can be given for this chain of events depending on one's experience and interpretation. To the commentators who have had strong beliefs in the inevitability of this event, the closure of Malta Shipyards is perceived to be the final chapter of a protracted process. Even the workers, maybe together with the union representing them, seemed to have been resigned to the inevitable. When the actual day of reckoning arrived, a general sense of helplessness prevailed. Evidence of this resignation may perhaps be found in the muted response to the statement made by Neelie Kroes, the EU Commissioner responsible for Competition Policy. During her brief visit to Malta, after the negotiations between the Government and the GWU had been concluded, she expressed her disagreement about this settlement and stated that Malta Shipyards should be declared bankrupt and liquidated. A similar statement in relation to the yards in Poland had spurred the Polish workers to protest even outside her offices in Brussels. There was

no such reaction in Malta. The lack of public support together with the doom and gloom that had prevailed must have made it clear to one and all that the writing was on the wall.

Other commentators, pointed out the ingredients of success which this enterprise possesses, including strategic location, good infrastructure and skilled workforce. They argued that such closure could have been avoided. It is a truism that the issues inherent in this enterprise are complex. It is equally true that there was no simple solution to these complex problems. What however the latter commentators maintain is that no real attempts were ever made to confront this complexity or to redefine the problem.

The responses to market-led, financial and manpower problems have been redundancies and increased work demands, rather than longer-term market and innovation strategies. The policies emanating from these strategies might have brought about an economic, institutional and cultural shift, but the quantum leap necessary to bring about a real change geared towards full recovery was never attempted, let alone achieved. The ideas and practices that were put into place to replace the old ones, developed along patterns and work arrangements that maintained a stubborn continuity with the past.

Though I may be inclined to concur more to the latter view, one has to acknowledge that the issues were left to fester uselessly for too long, scarce resources were sacrificed; the web had become too entangled to unravel. In the various conferences and seminars, organised by Centre for Labour Studies, as part of its ongoing monitoring and evaluation exercises of the Drydocks situation, the black spots of the system in operation at this enterprise have long been identified. One such seminar, held in January 1995, and whose proceedings have been published, was attended by managers, shop stewards, workers' committee, members of the Drydocks Council and GWU officials. The guest speaker was Dr Gerard Kester, one of the founding members of the Centre, and who in the early 1980's had undertaken an in-depth study of the worker self management system at the enterprise. He emphasized that industrial democracy does not mean giving in to all the wishes of the workers. In an enterprise there is work to be done, and management still has a crucial part to play. Some of the managers attending this seminar complained that some workers were subverting their authority.

On looking back, Kester could not see any evidence to prove that the self management system in operation at Malta Drydocks for the previous twenty years had been used to make this enterprise come to terms with such issues as wages, economic growth, flexibility, overtime and productivity. The continuous losses registered by the enterprise since 1981 and its heavy dependence on government subsidies were giving it a very bad public image since the wages which the workers were earning were not the fruit of their performance but part of a political game. In unequivocal terms Kester pointed to the dangers of this policy: "The political game is a very dangerous frame of reference and that game may suddenly have other rules and then you could be the loser".

His prophecy started to come true two years later in 1997, when following two reports commissioned by government – one on the financial situation and the other on the management system – government moved an amendment to the Drydocks Act by means of which the composition of the Board of Directors of Malta Drydocks was changed to have four government representatives among the eight officials of the board. The chairperson was to be appointed by the government. This amendment culminated in a series of actions which eventually led to the total dismantling of the workers' participation scheme in order to restore or perhaps strengthen managerial authority and accountability. The way to the privatization, which was officially announced in June of 2008, had been well paved.

The events that unfolded towards the second half of 2008 may indeed be interpreted as the final chapter of a long process for the Dockyard. Nevertheless its infrastructure and prime location will be attractive to its new owners. Its high physical visibility will still be present to the observer at the Upper Barrakka Gardens in Valletta enjoying a panoramic view of the Grand Harbour. Perhaps it will also retain significant visibility in the economic field. Presumably, the enterprise will still maintain the tradition of acting as a main source of manpower with proven engineering and industrial skills. In 2009, the social actors who will be involved in the Dockyard, presumably bearing yet once more another new name, will be writing either a new script or the epilogue to the final chapter.

Postscript

As this saga unfolds, a parallel epilogue is also being drawn up for the Centre for Labour Studies (CLS). This was set up as the Workers' Participation Development Centre (WPDC) in 1981 as the first centre at the University of Malta, and its mandate was then essentially to monitor and support the fledgling experiments in workplace democracy in Malta, and mainly at Malta Drydocks. The WPDC's first empirical study was undertaken at Malta Drydocks in 1982. Various members of the academic staff of the WPDC cut their teeth at Malta Drydocks: giving lectures, writing reports, providing advice and engaging in media interviews, and other consultations. The CLS (also with its new name) has not been privatized; but it has realigned its objectives to take cognizance of the evolving scenario in the field of industrial and employment relations.

We are used to interpreting economic and labour trends from such indicators as employment or unemployment rates, economic growth, job vacancies and redundancies, and foreign direct investment. This paper suggests an additional, as yet under-appreciated, source of data for understanding Malta's unfolding economic development, and its impact on employment.

Fresh Snapshots at Malta's Evolving Labour Market: *Looking at Sectional Membership Trends within the GWU and the UHM¹*

Godfrey Baldacchino

An Additional Source of Data

Ever since the Trade Unions and Trade Disputes Ordinance came into effect in Malta in 1945, we have accumulated a rich database of published annual reports of trade union membership. These were first made available as part of the annual reports by the Director of Labour, Employment and Social Welfare (in 1946); subsequently as submitted by the Director responsible for Labour and Emigration in the Annual Abstract of Statistics (1947 to 1970); and after that in the annual reports submitted to the Minister responsible for Labour and published in the Malta Government Gazette by the Registrar of Trade Unions in terms of the relevant legislation (since 1971).

I am here reviewing economic and job market trends on the basis of just one feature that has been present in the annual trade union membership reports. This relates to the sectional membership reported by the General Workers' Union (GWU) and the Union Haddiema Maghqudin (UHM).

1 Acknowledgements: My thanks go to Manwel Debono (Centre for Labour Studies) for comments on an earlier draft. Collecting historic trade union data has been a task accomplished successfully thanks also to the assiduous efforts of Louis B. Grech at the Department of Industrial and Employment Relations, Valletta. The usual disclaimers apply.

Reporting Section Membership

Even before the GWU was set up in 1943, some unions were organising their members in sections. The Civil Service Clerical Association (CSCA), set up in Malta before the 1930s, had been organising its members in terms of their employment with the Army, the Admiralty, the Air Force and Air Force (Works). It reported these 4 sections in May 1946; the last two were consolidated as the Air Ministry section by the end of 1946. This three-section arrangement was maintained until the CSCA was wound up in 1968.

I am here reproducing just one aspect of the long history of the sections of the GWU, whose establishment, changes and closures are a faithful mirror of the radical changes that Malta has undergone in its recent economic and labour market transformation. These pertain to the major significance of the defence establishment in the Maltese labour market, and how this sector was wound down totally by 1979, what Prime Minister Dom Mintoff called: “the year of destiny”.

The GWU

Spawned when Malta’s economy was still totally dependent on servicing the British military base, the Union had its main base amongst military service personnel. The GWU hit the Maltese socio-economic and political scene with a bang: with 29,660 members organised in 3 sections (Army, Air Force, Admiralty) out of a total national figure of 33,309, it comprised almost 90% of all trade union members reported in May 1946. However, and largely unknown to contemporary observers, the Union’s membership fell just as spectacularly in the immediate post-war period: peace time ushered in massive redundancies. The lowest number of trade union members recorded in Malta since the start of compulsory registration in 1946 was achieved in 1951, when just 16,468 members were reported, half the amount on the register just 5 years earlier. Of these, the GWU held on to 10,653 – still a massive figure (almost one-eighth of the national labour force), but only a third of its declared membership in 1946. The situation changed again however: with the onset of tensions and military build-up in the Middle East, the colonial administration once again invested in its “fortress economy” in Malta, culminating in the Suez Crisis of 1956. The GWU’s Army, Air Force and Admiralty Sections achieved their highest membership figures, not coincidentally, in the same year: 1956. During the following years, over 12,000 persons, or some 14.2% of the total working population of Malta at that time, were employed at Malta Drydocks alone.

However, this situation was not to last long. The United Kingdom's review of its global defensive role led to a contraction of its interests. Malta was suddenly expendable. And so, the stage was set for Malta to wean itself gradually off the fortress economy that had sustained it for centuries, and invest instead in private industry, with construction, tourism and manufacturing leading the way, in the run up to eventual independence in 1964. Bailey's Industries Malta (BIM) was initially seen as a major corporate investor, taking over the commercial arm of the Dockyard in 1961 and setting up a number of allied metal and light engineering industries, of which only one (BIM Ltd., with 46 employees, in Marsa: (www.bim.com.mt) survives to this day. The British Military Base was wound down completely in March 1979, as was the applicable GWU UK Government Section, which had (since 1964) been consolidated into just one section from its previous three. That cradle of local trade unionism, the Malta Drydocks industrial workforce, was meanwhile organised into its own GWU section since 1964, as it would remain until 2002. (See Table A)

The UHM

Meanwhile, a different picture is provided by our second snapshot: this time focusing on the recent evolution of the UHM. Of course, the history of the UHM is shorter than that of the GWU. The UHM's arrival on the local industrial relations scene was, unlike that of the GWU, hardly spectacular. The trade union had already gone through two changes of identity by the time it started functioning as the UHM in 1978. The union has expanded its membership base, by first starting off as the Malta Government Clerical Union (MGCU) - a union for clerical grade employees in the public service - in 1966 with just 12 members, and then expanding to become a multi grade union for all state employees - the Malta Government Employees Union (MGEU) - in 1974, before opening up to become the second (after the GWU) 'catch all' trade union in Malta, as the UHM, in 1978. At that point, many smaller trade unions felt that a strong general union was necessary to act as a counterpoint to the GWU: there were no less than 33 trade union cancellations in the period 1978-1982, with the UHM as the main beneficiary. The union submitted a basic two-section, private-public division of its membership to the Registrar of Trade Unions for the first time in 1980, and this structure was maintained until a major reorganisation in 1999, and then again in 2003.

The neat 'public-private' division in the membership data of the UHM could not, however be maintained, especially after 2003. The Health Services Section, which started off as an offshoot of the 'Government and Public Corporations' Section, today includes both state and private sector employees. This is an outcome of the expansion of private health services in Malta, inclusive of two private hospitals and a private clinic. The Section dates back to 1980, when the then Malta Union of Nurses was wound up and its membership amalgamated with that of the UHM.

A similar slippage has affected the UHM's Port and Aviation Sector. In its case, it was the privatization of such public entities as Malta Freeport and Malta International Airport which has led this section to now represent both public and private sector workers (See Table B).

Conclusion

The restructuring of the economy and privatisation (along with any redundancies that each of the two might cause) remain two of the main challenges facing trade unions in Malta. In both cases, employees lose jobs or occupational cultures that had been conducive to mass trade unionism. The unemployment and private sector management styles which may result are not strong inducers to trade union affiliation. There are other demotivators to lack of trade union affiliation or sympathy: they include individual work contracts, a preference towards subcontracting and self-employment, and both atypical and precarious employment. With the looming emergence of *Smart City*, and its jobs concentrated mainly in the IT sector – one that is not typically easily unionized – both the GWU and the UHM may find themselves with a major challenge on their hands.

As indicated from the outset, these are just two snapshots pertaining to two particular epochs in the histories of these two general trade unions in Malta. A fuller picture, based on details pertaining to all their sections for each calendar year, is being developed as part of an international comparative project on trade union membership trends, supported by the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI). This will permit a much more detailed appraisal of the evolution of trade unions, and their membership, since the local branch of the UK's Amalgamated Engineering Union was set up in Malta in 1855.

The Maltese economy has been going through a process of restructuring facing the challenges of a globalised economy and the modernization of the labour market. Faced with the closure of practically all the local textile and garment firms together with that of other export-oriented manufacturing firms, Maltese policy makers had to seek higher value added investment in order to offset the job losses caused by this downturn.

Anticipating Malta's Labour Market and Skills Requirements¹

Manwel Debono

In line with this strategy, growth has been registered in pharmaceuticals, financial services, call centres and ICT. The construction and real estate sectors also increased their employment levels. A major challenge posed by this shift was the matching of the repertoire of skills of the Maltese workers with the new demands of the market. During the period 2004 and 2008, the number of persons in gainful employment increased by nearly 14,000. However, the inactivity rate registered only a slight decrease (standing at 41.2%) due mainly to a persistent high rate of women who are not in the economically active population. Of particular significance is the fact that the number of unemployed during this four year period decreased from 11,529 to 10,254, reducing the overall unemployed rate from 3.6% to 3% (NSO, 2004 and 2008).

Matching Supply with Demand

These figures suggest that the mismatch between the demand and supply of skills which may exist is not substantial. National Statistics Office (NSO) data also indicate that the percentage of persons registering for management, professional and technical jobs has been increasing notably, whereas the number of persons seeking elementary occupations is decreasing drastically (NSO, 2008). Nevertheless, the number of qualified persons is still not considered to be adequate to meet the human resource needs projected for the near future. It is estimated that to reach an activity rate of 70% by 2020, at least

¹ A longer version of this article was submitted to the European Employment Observatory.

30,000 skilled persons need to be trained to take up the new jobs created while another 30,000 skilled persons will be needed to replace retirees in existing jobs (Sciberras, 2008). This target has to be reached within the context of an aging population and a low female participation rate, both of which will exacerbate the dependency ratio which at present is of around one retired person for every two persons employed. A net influx of workers in the labour market and higher productivity are needed to solve part of the equation. Another policy option is a substantial increase in the participation rates in education, translated into a higher level of intake beyond the school leaving age. By 2020, about 50,000 students are expected to join the workforce. Sciberras (2008) argues that, assuming Malta reaches its target of 85% participation rates in post-secondary education, 40,000 qualified young persons will enter the labour market between now and 2020. This would mean that at least 20,000 persons, who at present are inactive, will be integrated into the labour market in order to fill the 60,000 jobs which are being projected to be created. Foreign workers might also fill some gaps inherent in the Maltese economy. Finally, the lifelong learning policy has to be redesigned to attract a greater number of participants into continuous education. The percentage of adult persons participating in education and training at 5.5% in 2006 is much lower than the EU 27 average of 9.6% (European Commission, 2008).

Instruments for Labour Forecasting

The targets being set by these projections call for a refinement of our labour forecasting tools. The labour market statistics produced by the NSO provides useful instruments for analysing labour trends at national level. The NSO data, derived from scientific surveys based on international methodologies and criteria, is complemented by figures collected by the Employment Training Corporation (ETC) related to the prevailing employment situation. However this information tends to produce a snapshot of the present rather than a viable and reliable forecast of future skills needs. Every six months, the ETC used to publish *Employment Barometer* which provided a six-month forecast of possible skill gaps or occupations that reflected employers' needs. The utility of this tool was limited, as the six months prediction could only provide time to train persons for low skilled jobs, a sector, which is on the decrease. The barometer was discontinued in 2006.

Another exercise aimed at forecasting short-term employment needs in industry is carried by the Central Bank of Malta in its *Quarterly Surveys* among employers within the various economic sectors. Similarly, the Malta Federation of Industry (FOI) in collaboration with Pricewaterhouse Coopers compiles a monthly *Industry Trends Survey* based on a selected sample of local operators in the manufacturing industry. Respondents express their short-term expectations

on topics including their labour force needs. The FOI plans to start carrying out two other surveys, one about the construction industry and another one about the service sector.

The data provided by these initiatives can help towards a smoother transition to the new model of the labour market which is being envisaged. Malta's small size can facilitate its adaptation to the changing economic circumstances. However, small size also leads to fewer specialised resources. In contrast to larger countries, in Malta there are no publicly funded institutions set up specifically to anticipate economic change and monitor subsequent labour needs.

The forecasting of labour needs in particular sectors is often based on one-time *ad hoc* studies, sometimes forming part of new policy and strategy documents about a specific sector. The *Scoping Study on the Demand and Supply of ICT Skills in Malta* (published in April 2007) and the "*Study on Job Creation and Job Training in the Environment Sector*" (launched in June 2008) are cases in point. In November 2008, the Chamber for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (GRTU) published the results of a survey forecasting the labour needs of the construction industry in the near future.

A clearer picture of the existing skills is needed to improve the forecasting of future labour demands. The Malta Qualifications Council (MQC) is working towards the validation and certification of the previously non-certified informal and non-formal education and training. This process should lead to the clarification of the skills gaps often faced by employers (MQC, 2008). Similarly, the Management Efficiency Unit has also prepared a skills profiling manual in order to serve as a guideline in profiling skills across the Public Service (Government of Malta, 2008, p.3).

However valid the collected data may be, it can hardly be used to extrapolate on long-term future needs. In an economic scenario where developments and unpredictable changes tend to occur at a fast rate, instruments for forecasting may not be highly reliable. Having said that, in recent years, in line with the EU policy of focusing on medium and long-term goals, attempts are being made to formulate and implement policies based on forecasts of future needs and challenges. The targets set by the Lisbon agenda and the proactive approach which it advocates have acted as an impetus for government to set longer terms objectives. Government's *Vision 2015* outlining Malta's goals, including the labour market ones, falls within this proactive approach. For example, investment in ICT skills has been increased with the realization that the present number of qualified persons in the ICT field would fall short of the number of jobs being projected as an outcome of the Smart City Project.

The European Social Fund (ESF) is being used by government in its proactive policy to anticipate labour market and future skill needs. Indeed, the *Operational Programme 2007-2013* co-financed by the ESF, refers to addressing skills mismatches as one of the areas of intervention under the priority “Invest in human capital to raise the employment rate”. This programme focuses on the need to strengthen career guidance services to address skills mismatches. A number of ESF-funded projects are already in progress. One example is the *Employability Programme* organised by the ETC, which mainly consists of initiatives aimed at strengthening the skills assessment system. Some ESF funds are also being used to address skills mismatches on the island of Gozo. Other substantial funds have been allocated to train career guidance officers, an important step in capacity building to anticipate future labour market and skill needs. The ETC is also collaborating with CEDEFOP, the European Agency that promotes the development of vocational education and training, on a project about *Systems for Anticipation of Skill Needs in the EU Member States*.

Capacity to Anticipate Skills Needs

Of course, whether these initiatives will improve the capacity to anticipate labour market and skills needs is a moot point. The size of the country affects the dynamics of the educational system and its links with the labour market. It is relatively easy to shift the interest of a large number of students to particular topics, as word travels fast, the demonstration effect acts as powerful incentive, and advertising campaigns can easily reach the whole population. This flexibility inherent in its small size is viewed as an important asset of Malta. However, such dynamics can also create difficulties in the capacity of educational institutions. This flexibility can also result in a surplus of people trained in one particular field, exceeding its labour market demand while creating undersupply in other fields (Borg, 2008). Such dynamics demand a more strategic approach and the use of more sophisticated tools for the forecast of future skills needs. The volatility of the current international economic system compounded by the recent global financial crisis has made such an exercise more problematic.

In such a scenario, the emphasis from the compulsory school stage up to the tertiary level of education should be on generic, transferable skills. Employers' associations agree on the need for “balancing vocational and higher general skills to improve investment climate and productivity” (Mizzi, 2008). On the other hand the Rector of the University of Malta recently expressed his wish of seeing students exposed more to creative arts and performance, science and technology, critical thinking and problem solving, entrepreneurship, and domestic and international current affairs (Camilleri, 2008). It is worthwhile noting that the amount of transition courses which can help one move from and into different jobs is still very low at university level.

Capacity building has to be translated in more investment in resources at the higher level of education, in lifelong learning and in continuous professional development. On its part, by cutting down on its own bureaucratic procedures, the Maltese Government would facilitate the uptake of European funds by non-state entities.

One-off studies whose brief is to anticipate labour market needs should be replaced by a multi-institutional framework, involving educational authorities, NSO, ETC and social partners. Single institutions, operating on their own, tend to lack the necessary material and human resources. The need for all stakeholders to “show a concerted effort to work together” to be in a better position to meet future skills requirements was recently highlighted by the Federation of Industry (Ellul, 2008). Social partners can contribute towards skills forecasting by helping to analyse better the impact of global changes on future skills needs (Mizzi, 2008). On its part the University can show a greater commitment and involvement in related research and development initiatives.

Trained career guidance professionals can also play a vital role in gathering and interpreting research, and subsequently provide valuable guidance to individuals. Towards this end the existing career guidance policy for compulsory schooling needs to be fully implemented. The last part in this jigsaw is the drafting and implementation of a lifelong career guidance policy.

Bibliography

Borg, F. (2008). “Future Skills Requirements”. Paper presented during a conference entitled “Skills for the Future” organised by the National Commission for Higher Education (NCHE) on the 19 September 2008. Weblink: <http://www.nche.org.mt/attachments/File/10%20Felix%20Borg.pdf>

Camilleri, H. (2008). “Skills for the future – towards ‘Smart Malta’”. Presentation during a conference entitled “Skills for the Future” organised by the National Commission for Higher Education (NCHE) on the 19 September 2008. Weblink: <http://www.nche.org.mt/attachments/File/06%20Juanito%20Camilleri.pdf>

Ellul, H. (2008). “Fast Growth Sectors – Trends and Directions”. Paper presented during a conference entitled “Skills for the Future” organised by the National Commission for Higher Education (NCHE) on the 19 September 2008. Weblink: <http://www.nche.org.mt/attachments/File/03%20Helga%20Ellul.pdf>

European Commission (2008). "Indicators for monitoring the Employment Guidelines including indicators for additional employment analysis – 2008 Compendium". Weblink: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/employment_strategy/pdf/2008compendium_en.pdf

Government of Malta (2007). "Operational Programme 2 – Cohesion Policy 2007-2013". Weblink: <http://www.ppcd.gov.mt/file.aspx?f=18>

Government of Malta (2008). "Malta's National Reform Programme 2008-2010". Malta: Government of Malta.

Malta Qualifications Council (2008). "Valuing all learning: Frameworks for the validation of informal and non-formal learning in Malta". Weblink: [http://www.mqc.gov.mt/files/uploaded/MQCBook4\(lowres\).pdf](http://www.mqc.gov.mt/files/uploaded/MQCBook4(lowres).pdf)

Ministry of Industry, Investment and Information Technology (2007). "Scoping Study on the Demand and Supply of ICT Skills in Malta". Weblink: <https://secure2.gov.mt/mitc>.

Mizzi, L. (2008). "Future Skills Requirements". Paper presented during a conference entitled "Skills for the Future" organised by the National Commission for Higher Education (NCHE) on the 19 September 2008. Weblink: <http://www.nche.org.mt/attchments/File/08%20Lawrence%20Mizzi.pdf>

National Statistics Office (2004). "Labour Force Survey – April-June 2004". Weblink: http://www.nso.gov.mt/statdoc/document_file.aspx?id=557

National Statistics Office (2008). "Labour Force Survey – Q2 2008". Weblink: http://www.nso.gov.mt/statdoc/document_file.aspx?id=2333

Sciberras, J. (2008). "Addressing Malta's future skill needs", The Times of Malta, 5 October 2008. Weblink: <http://www.timesofmalta.com>

Scicluna, E. (2008). "Presentation on: Study on job creation and job training in the environment sector". Weblink: <http://www.greenjobsmalta.info/downloads/Microsoft%20PowerPoint%20-%20Prof.%20Edward%20Scicluna.ppt.pdf>

In 2008, the female employment rate in Malta registered an increase of 2.3% over the previous year (from 36.3% to 38.5%) whereas the male employment rate decreased slightly from 73.5% to 71.6%. In spite of these changes, the employment gender gap in Malta, with a marked difference of 33.1%, is still high and makes it difficult to reach target set by the Lisbon Agenda of a 60% of female participation rate in the labour market by 2010.

Gender Differences in the Maltese Labour Market

Anna Borg

Why is the participation rate of women in the labour market so low in Malta? Is it due to the persistence of traditional norms in Maltese culture which assign the role of caring to women and the bread-winner role to men? Or are there unsolved logistical problems which limit choices for spouses wishing to adopt the dual-earner family mode? In addressing these questions in this short paper, I will argue that there is a combination of factors that may lead to this situation.

Inactivity Rates

The Labour Force Survey by NSO reveals that 66.5% of females aged 15 and over are inactive which means that they are not employed and not actively looking for work. Among the same age group of men only 34% are inactive. This discrepancy between the inactive women and men is probably due to the withdrawal of women from the labour market in order to deal with family responsibilities. In fact according to the responses in this NSO survey, 54.5% of the inactive women, in contrast to 3% to men, were not active in the labour market because of personal and family reasons (Table 1).

This data provides tangible evidence that the marked difference between the activity rate of women and men in the labour market is mainly due to gender stereotypes and the logistical problems inherent in such roles. One of these personal and family reasons may be child care. A report issued by the EU shows that Malta has a low provision of childcare for children less than three years of age.

Table 1: Inactive population by reason for inactivity in April-June 2006

Reason	Sex				Total	
	Males		Females		No	%
	No	%	No	%		
Personal or family responsibility	1,470*	3.0	62,136	54.5	63,606	39.0
Own illness or disability	6,060	12.4	3,050	2.7	9,110	5.6
Education or training	12,736	26.1	14,774	12.9	27,510	16.9
Retirement	25,547	52.3	15,484	13.6	41,031	25.2
Other reasons	2,153	4.4	17,807	15.6	19,960	12.2
Has already found a job which will start later	692*	1.4	539	0.5	1,231*	0.8

Adapted from NSO Labour Force Survey 2006

The married spouses lacking the support of the grand parents and access to a conveniently located child care centre will have to face serious difficulties for both of them to join the labour market. Once the child starts school the problem of child care is not solved. Schools finish early in the afternoon, very often at 2.00pm and some even at 1.00pm. To compound the issue there are the long Christmas, Easter and summer holidays. The compromises which have to be made in order to solve these problems generally result in a decision by the mother to give up her job to look after the needs of the children. The fact that no measures have been taken and neither any policy adopted to help the working parents solve these problems shows our lack of sensitivity to this issue.

Work-Life Balance

This lack of support structure, which may be conducive to high level of stress among the spouses of the dual earner families as well as to the single parent families, is pushing some mothers out of full time employment. To reduce these pressures and at the same time conform to the culturally mandated role of mother and housewife, women may opt to work part time. The majority of part timers are women (69%) in contrast to 31% men. However a closer look at the figures (Table 2) shows that the vast majority of female employees (75.2%) actually have a full time job. This may be an indicator of the unavailability of attractive part time jobs for women.

Table 2: Type of employment by gender for main occupations

Type of Employment	Sex				Total	
	Males		Females		No	%
	No	%	No	%		
April-June 2008						
Full-time job	99,782	95.1	41,340	75.2	141,122	88.3
Full-time with reduced hours job	412	0.4	3,186	5.8	3,598	2.2
Part-time job	4,700	4.5	10,455	19.0	15,155	9.5
Total	104,894	100	54,981	100	159,875	100
April-June 2007						
Full-time job	102,465	95.9	38,199	75.0	140,664	89.2
Full-time with reduced hours job	209	0.2	2,452	4.8	2,661	1.7
Part-time job	4,187	3.9	10,256	20.2	14,443	9.1
Total	106,861	100	50,907	100	157,768	100

Source: National Statistics Office: Labour Force Survey, 2nd Quarter, 2008

It is also pertinent to point out that there is a marked difference in the working conditions of the employees in the public sector and those in the private. Family friendly measures in the public sector include a 12 month career break, an option to work on a reduced time-table until the child reaches the age of 12 years and possibility of telework. The employees in the private sector do not have access to these benefits and have to content themselves with the minimum standards set in the Employment and Industrial Relations Act (EIRA). The provisions in this Act lay down that mothers have to return to work after 14 weeks of a maternity leave, they are entitled to an additional three months, unpaid parental leave which is also available to the father. These conditions of work do not go a long way in enabling the spouses to reconcile family life with work.

The privatisation process of public utilities is still ongoing which means that employment in the public sector may be further reduced whilst that of the private sector is likely to increase. Since employers in the private sector are wary of the generous family friendly measures enjoyed by employees in the public sector, this means that there will be fewer workers enjoying favourable family friendly conditions of work. Thus the problems of the dual worker family are likely to be accentuated.

The announcement by the Prime Minister in the budget speech for 2007, of government's intention to extend these favourable family friendly conditions of work to all the employees in the public sector was not met favourably by the employers. The president of the Malta Employers' Association (MEA) in an article in the press stated that "this is another instance where provisions in the collective agreement have been bypassed, and any plans to extend such measures to the private sectors will be a mistake" (Fava, 2007). The concern of the employers is that the additional cost which these measures may involve will render the enterprises in the private sector less competitive.

Nevertheless the denial of an opportunity to parents to reconcile work with care is not cost neutral. The country may be already paying a hefty price in economic terms because of the overall low employment rate. This situation is decreasing government revenue, hampering economic growth and may adversely affect the sustainability

Table 3: Total employed persons classified by economic sector and gender

Economic Sector	Sex				Total	
	Males		Females		No	%
	No	%	No	%		
April-June 2008						
Private	75,876	72.3	37,010	67.3	112,886	70.6
Public majority	2,372	2.3	721	1.3	3,093	2.0
Independent statutory bodies	8,678	8.3	2,880	5.3	11,558	7.2
Government departments and ministries	17,968	17.1	14,370	26.1	32,338	20.2
Total	104,894	100	54,981	100	159,875	100
April-June 2007						
Private	76,283	71.4	34,429	67.7	110,712	70.2
Public majority	2,214	2.1	1,134	2.2	3,348	2.1
Independent statutory bodies	9,088	8.5	3,114	6.1	12,202	7.7
Government departments and ministries	19,276	18.0	12,230	24.0	31,506	20.0
Total	106,861	100	50,907	100	157,768	100

Source: National Statistics Office: Labour Force Survey, 2nd Quarter, 2008

of pensions. Generous family friendly measures may mitigate the problem of the demographic deficit. There is tangible evidence that countries with more women in employment and with better work-life reconciliation packages, are registering the highest birth rates. France, for example, with its generous maternity leave, tax credits for large families and other family related benefits, has one of the highest birth rates in Europe. Its high female participation rate in the labour market, with 81% of women, aged between 25 and 49 in gainful employment (Wyatt, 2007), may be taken as a clear indication that favourable family friendly measures are enabling French women to reconcile family and work obligations. On the other hand, in the Mediterranean countries, where family friendly measures are not so favourable, the birth rate has been decreasing in spite of the low employment rate of women (Letabier, 2003). Malta with a 38.5% of women in the labour market and with the second lowest birth rate in Europe (Eurostat, 2007) is a typical example of the latter group of countries.

Conclusion

These figures and trends suggest that work-life reconciliation is likely to be elusive to great number of Maltese workers especially to mothers who are still expected to carry the bulk of the non-remunerated work load. The data and statistics that have been presented indicate that the stereotyped gender roles and the male bread winner family model are still dominant in the Maltese culture. The gap between the ideal and reality is still as wide as ever. A clear and bold policy is needed to enable Maltese families to strike a more ideal work-life balance.

References

Eurostat, 2007 Population in Europe: First results 81/2008

Fava, P. 2007. 'Family Friendly Measures at the Workplace', *Times of Malta*, Business Section , January 18, p.7.

Letabier, M.T. 2003. 'Fertility and Family Policies in France'. *Journal of Population and Social Security*, Vol.1, pp.245-261.

National Statistics Office 2008. Labour Force Survey Q2/2008, News Release 173/2008. Website: http://www.nso.gov.mt/statdoc/document_file.aspx?id=2333

National Statistics Office 2006. Labour Force Survey 2006. Website: http://www.nso.gov.mt/statdoc/document_file.aspx?id=2108

Wyatt C. (2007) 'France claims EU fertility crown'. *BBC News*
Web Site: <http://new.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-2hi/europe/626851.stm>

One main challenge for the European social partners, as portrayed in the Lisbon Strategy, is to develop the labour market in such a way as to promote greater managerial flexibility while ensuring the workers' security. The situation is becoming complicated by the widespread emergence of new atypical forms of occupations. The reform of labour law and public administrative structures through social dialogue are perceived as necessary requirements for the emergence of a fairer, more inclusive labour market.

Atypical Occupations and Social Dialogue¹

Edward L. Zammit

The vast majority of Malta's labour force is engaged in standard, open-ended, full-time occupations and the existing legal and administrative structures are generally regarded as providing an adequate framework for effective industrial relations. The social partners, as the main protagonists, are agreed that no effort should be spared to ensure that the established, minimum conditions of employment and standard of living are maintained and safeguarded for all. Hence the need for constant update of these provisions is acknowledged in order to confront adequately the challenges presented by the introduction of various forms of atypical, non-standard, occupations which are recently emerging in Malta as in other countries. These cover a wide range of activities and include part-time work as a main occupation, definite and occasional contracts, telework, agency work, home working, flexible working time arrangements, camouflaged self-employment under civil contracts, home working, and above all, informal work.

The critical question about these 'new' forms of work is whether the workers are constrained to perform them by their employers and/or the force of circumstances or whether they do so as a matter of choice. It should be noted, for instance, that there are circumstances where the benefits of definite contracts may outweigh those of indefinite contracts. Likewise, part-time work may be very suitable for some persons, generally women, who are burdened with additional

¹ This paper is based on a more elaborate study by the same author entitled *The Impact of New Forms of Labour on Industrial Relations and on the Evolution of Labour Law in Malta* (2008).

responsibilities in the family or elsewhere. In most cases, however, occupational flexibility is being introduced at the expense of job security.

Normally, the solution to such situations may be sought through collective bargaining. However, for various reasons, this solution is not always feasible. The vast majority of the employees engaged in the new, non-standard forms of work, are not covered by collective agreements and are not even trade union members. Nor do the current regulations regarding *Employee Information and Consultation* provide adequate protection for them. These deficiencies apply not only to workers engaged in the informal sector, but also to others who work as independent workers or who have purely economic relations with their employers.

In recent years, the number of fixed term employees and of part-time employees has been rising and 95.7% of those whose part-time work is their main occupation are women. Other workers are occupied as economically dependent workers. There are also casual workers, home workers, temporary agency workers and others who have to contend with precarious conditions of employment. Above all, there is a sizeable informal sector which includes both irregular migrants from nearby African countries and others who are neither protected by the country's employment laws nor covered by the provisions of social security.

The exact number of independent or home workers is unknown. Traditionally a number of companies used to 'farm out' part of their production processes to individuals - very often women - who would perform their tasks independently, in their homes and paid by piece rates. Similar opportunities are now provided by telework, some kinds of which are also performed from homes. According to the 'Employment Barometer' carried out by the Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) during 2004 - 2005, only about 3.8% of employers made use of some form of telework. However, the rate in the larger companies, with over 200 employees, is double that figure. In fact, another study carried out by the National Statistics Office (NSO) revealed that 11.4% of all employees regularly use telework. It is also known that the number of employees in call centres is on the increase. Indeed, a major bank increased the workforce in its call centre to 600 at the end of 2007.

The practice of temporary agency work in Malta, though real, is still not widespread. It tends not to be advertised and, to date, it is not covered by any specific regulatory framework. However, one of the measures introduced in the 2008 Government Budget aims at promoting temporary employment by making it possible for unemployed persons to continue registering for work if they only have a short term occupation.

In the opinion of the social partners,² the employment categories where flexibility characteristics predominate in Malta tend to be those of *self-employed persons who are engaged in informal activities on a part-time basis*. The sectors where most of these persons are engaged tend to be those of construction, hospitality (particularly in small, independent, catering establishments), cleaning and security.

According to the trade unions, in these last two sectors some bidders for public contracts are submitting quotations with computations for wages which are even below the legal minimum requirement for employees in these sectors. In some cases call centres and in the 'on line betting' centres located in Malta, employees are reportedly being employed on a week-to-week basis and paid according to the number of calls actually made. The construction industry is increasingly being manned by illegal immigrants, under conditions which are far below the legal minimum and with little regard for occupational health and safety.

On the other hand, the employers pointed out that the decision to do part-time work as a main occupation might be a viable option for some employees. Some such employees may be females who may also have to perform other household duties. The recent legal amendment prescribing *pro rata* conditions for part-time work was intended to reduce sources of discrimination against part-timers. It was pointed out that employees on a definite contract may actually have certain legal safeguards which exceed those of employees on an indefinite contract. One such example may be a case of dismissal of an employee before the end of the contractual period who is obliged to pay the full amount under the contract. The crucial issue in all such cases is whether the employees concerned are constrained to engage in such 'non-standard' forms of work or whether they do so as a matter of their own choice.

The conditions of employment of persons performing non-standard work are varied but are generally sub-standard. This applies particularly to workers in the informal sector due to lack of regulations. In the case of irregular migrants, the conditions are very poor due to the lack of regulation. Many of these who work in the construction industry are recruited by the day, are often paid one half of what the local workers in the sector receive, and expected to give little regard for established health and safety standards. Some employers, particularly in the small hotels and catering industry, are said to be resorting to various schemes in order to avoid having to pay overtime rates to their employees. One way is that of hiring the employees of another company as part-timers.

2 *Senior representatives of the social partners were interviewed for the purposes of this paper.*

The Role of Labour Law

A degree of protection for some of those employed in the new forms of labour is offered by Malta's labour laws. These include part-timers, casual employees and those on a definite employment contract.

A *part timer*, under Maltese Employment Law, is an employee who works less hours of work weekly when compared to a full time or a whole time employee. Broadly speaking, part timers are not to be treated less favourably than full timers in so far as remuneration and benefits are concerned. Essentially therefore, *pro rata* calculations and payments as compared to whole timers or full timers are usually applicable to part timers. Part timers are currently regulated by the Part Time Employees Regulations 2002, under which part timers are entitled *pro rata* entitlements.³

The notion of *casual employee* is not regulated by statute. A casual worker as it is locally understood is an employee who does not work a number of fixed or pre-determined hours and the employer may call the employee to work when the employee's services are required. On the other hand, the employee is obliged to go to work when his employer calls him. This category of worker is often found in industries such as tourism where the work is seasonal and unpredictable. For many years such workers were unregulated but today this position has changed to some extent. An employer, who wishes to employ a casual worker, has to register such workers with the ETC and that worker has to be afforded all the rights as would be available to a part time employee working the same hours as the casual worker.

Maltese labour law provides for *definite service contracts to be automatically converted* into ones for an *indefinite period under certain conditions*. It also legislates against discrimination between employees under other forms of contracts of service and those with a contract for an indefinite duration. In this way, the law promotes the security afforded to employees under a contract for an indefinite duration.

In order to protect an employee from potential abuse by his or her employer, the law lays down the conditions for the conversion from a definite term contract into an indefinite term contract. Article 7 of the Contracts of Service for a Fixed Term Regulations 2002.⁴ in fact says that if an employee is continuously employed on a fixed term contract or contracts for more than four cumulative years, the employee is considered to be on a contract of indefinite duration.

3 As amended by LN 140 on 1st July, 2007. In practice, it is only those part-time employees who pay social security contributions who are entitled to *pro rata* benefits – that is, with a minimum of 8 hours per week as their main employment.

4 Legal Notice 429 of 2002

The protection of employees on a definite term contract is also reflected in the anti-discrimination provisions⁵ that specifically lay down that the conditions of employment in a fixed term contract may not be less favourable than those for an indefinite term in the same place of work, unless different treatment is justified on objective grounds.

Economically dependent workers do not have an employment contract but are dependent on a single employer for their source of income. Despite their ambiguous status, they are legally classified as self employed. Due to the relatively small numbers of workers involved, they are not yet perceived as an important category in Malta and no official figures are published about them. Nevertheless, research⁶ has revealed that they are present in the following sectors: gas cylinder distributors, port haulers, lotto agents, beverage salesmen, installers of cable television and teachers of English in foreign language schools. Some of these categories have been operating on a commission basis for many years. However, following the recent amendment to the legislation extending *pro rata* conditions to all part-time employees, some employers are now believed to be exerting pressures on their employees to adopt such a fictitious status of self-employed workers. Such a move eliminates many legal obligations on the part of 'employers' towards their employees such as in cases of dismissal, if required. It would also avoid having to grant the employees *pro rata* benefits equivalent to vacation leave (one month's pay) and sick leave (2 months) - even if the employers may agree to fork out the National Insurance contributions liable as self-employed persons. For instance, in some small hotels, 'self-employed' chambermaids are said to be paid a flat rate according to the number of guest rooms cleaned. In view of the possible increase in the numbers of such workers in future, it is expected that the matter will be put on the national agenda for discussion among the social partners.

Nevertheless, despite the recent advances in legislation, many of the workers engaged in the new forms of work have little or no access to the protection offered by the provisions of labour law. This particularly applies to the formally self-employed and to those in the informal sector. And, as already noted, one of the unintended by-products of the recent extension of pro-rata benefits to part-time workers has been an increase of 'fictitious self employment'.

Administrative Measures

During recent years, various measures have been implemented by government to enforce labour laws and to curb abuses, particularly in the informal sector.

⁵ Section 34 (1) of EIRA.

⁶ Manwel Debono & Sue-Ann Scott, *Situation of Economically Dependent Workers*. Centre for Labour Studies, University of Malta, EIROnline, 2006.

The issue of undeclared work also tends to be closely associated with those of social security. The Employment and Training Corporation, the Department of Industrial and Employment Relations and the Occupational Health and Safety Authority are being actively involved in these measures. Yet, despite the recent positive results, it is generally acknowledged that there still exist considerable abuses particularly by persons doing undeclared work while receiving unemployment benefits. While such abuses are censured by the government and social partners alike, many believe that the existing efforts to curb undeclared work should be intensified.

In such situations, the social partners emphasize the need for the intervention of labour law as a minimum safety net and for the law to be accompanied by the necessary administrative and enforcement apparatus. This need is particularly evident in the case of the sizeable informal sector. The difficulties which the unions face in their efforts to organise the 'new' kind of workers, with the consequent lack of collective agreements, highlight the need to ensure that minimum standards are legally safeguarded at both the national and sectorial levels.

The Role of the Social Partners

In the employers' opinion, at this point in time, it is important to avoid adding more labour legislation. They argue that if the existing laws are not being observed by a small minority of employers, it should be ensured that these laws are observed and enforced, instead of introducing new ones. On the other hand, the trade unions argue that as new forms of employment contracts are cropping up, such as the case of new 'self employed people' who depend on a particular employer for their earnings, some sort of legislation should be introduced to protect such employees. The Government, as an employer, was among the first to introduce family friendly measures such as reduced, flexible hours. Through such measures, a number of women workers are no longer leaving employment.

It is generally agreed that flexibility needs to be introduced so that existing family friendly measures could be accommodated. However, labour law should ensure that the minimum standards are met and leave room for collective bargaining. One should also consider allowing more flexibility when negotiating collective agreements. For example, an agreement may be reached to lower the number of sick leave entitlements in lieu of other benefits.

Some employers further argue that labour market segmentation should not necessarily be regarded negatively. They feel that certain European directives go beyond the minimum labour standards. While agreeing that a minimum “floor of rights” should be established, one should see that such rights are not inflated. While collective agreements stimulate productivity, legislation may stifle productivity. They feel that sometimes the EU Commission tends to adopt a paternalistic attitude and insist that free collective bargaining between an employer and a union should not be stifled. They argue that whilst ensuring adequate standards of employment, labour legislation should always allow an element of flexibility, and the employers generally agree that Maltese legislation has achieved the right balance in this regard.

On their part, trade unions face particular difficulties when trying to recruit members from among the employees engaged in the new, atypical occupations. These employees often work in small batches and are not in contact with one other. There are cases, like that of a major cleaning company and of a large security firm, both employing up to 500 employees, who never actually meet as a group. Furthermore, when employees try to join a trade union, they are often dissuaded from so doing by their employers who may even confront them with various threats. Reflecting on the situation, one leading trade unionist complained: ‘As a result of the shifts currently taking place in the labour market, we are losing much of our strength.’ He further noted that in most instances, the sectors where the new forms of work are emerging are those where traditionally trade unions are not strong. Hence, most of the new, atypical occupations present a further challenge to the trade unions. As a result of their lack of union representation, not only do these workers have inferior working conditions but they are also deprived of standard conditions regarding occupational safety and health.

It is known that approximately 21,000 workers (14.3% of the total labour force) are covered neither by a collective agreement nor by a Wage Regulation Order (WRO). There are 29 sectors of workers not covered by a WRO and some of them include important areas in Malta’s labour market, where the new forms of work are emerging. Among others, these sectors include: information technology, banking, telecommunications, betting companies,

financial services, entertainment / recreational centres, casinos, social work, postal services, local authorities, offshore companies, employment agencies, veterinary services and yacht yards. Thus, apart from the national legal provisions regarding wages, etc., these employees have no rights to sickness leave, bereavement leave, marriage leave, injury leave, birth leave, and jury service leave entitlements. There is agreement among the social partners that this matter ought to be rectified and it is expected that a recommendation will be made to government through the proper channels in the near future.

Beyond this, there is little ongoing discussion regarding the impact of the new forms of work on national labour law, apart from the need to regularise the position of such workers regarding the payment of income tax, national insurance contributions and the maintenance of established standards regarding occupational safety and health.

In response to the EU Commission's green paper issued in 2006, Malta's social partners, both individually and collectively, made a number of suggestions on how labour law may be reformed both at the European and national levels in order to cope effectively with the new, emerging situations. It should be noted, however, that the part actually played by the social partners is limited. There is a recognised need to develop further the process of structured consultation among the social partners - particularly at the *Malta Council for Economic and Social Development*. In spite of a determined attempt by government to reform this council, the social partners often complain that it is still ineffective. Some even claim that in place of real discussion and consultation, they are often confronted with preconceived ideas and political bias. Clearly a lack of trust prevails among them and this situation renders active collaboration difficult. In practice, the social partners are also hampered by limited resources at their disposal and this makes it even more difficult for them to make a valid contribution.

The ultimate aim of these initiatives is to liberalise the labour market as much as possible without threatening job security, thus extending the principle of *flexicurity* throughout all the sectors of Malta's labour market - as envisaged by the European Employment Strategy.

Organisation and Staff

Centre for Labour Studies Board

Chairman: Professor Edward L. Zammit

Vice-Chairman: Director: Professor Godfrey Baldacchino*
A/Director: Mr Saviour Rizzo

Members: *Appointed by Council*
Ms Angela Callus

Appointed by Senate
Professor Peter Mayo

*Appointed by the Faculty
of Economics, Management and Accountancy*
Mr Peter Baldacchino**

Appointed by the GWU
Mr Michael Parnis
Mr Gaetano Mercieca

*Appointed by the Confederation of Malta Trade Unions
(of whom one by the Union Haddiema Maghqudin)*
Mr William Portelli
Mr Joseph Vella

Representatives of the Academic Staff
Dr Martin Fenech
Dr Manwel Debono

Representatives of the Students 2006-2008
Mr Aldo Busuttil
Ms Stephanie Abood

*Appointed by the Ministry responsible
for Labour Relations*
Dr Noel Vella

Secretary to the Board
Dr Manwel Debono

Honorary Members: Mr George Agius
Mr Anthony Busuttil
Dr Gerard Kester

* (Professor Godfrey Baldacchino, appointed Director of the CLS in 2002, is currently on leave of absence from the University of Malta). ** During 2008: Mr Peter Baldacchino replaced Rev. Dr Charles Tabone, O.P.

CLS Executive Staff (Academic & Administrative)

Full-time Staff:



Prof. Edward L. Zammit, D.Phil. (Oxon.), M.Litt., B.A. (Chicago), Ph.L., founding Director of the Centre (1981 – 2002). Installed as the Chairman of the Centre as Rector's Delegate in 2002.



Prof. Godfrey Baldacchino, Ph.D. (Warwick), B.A.(Gen.), PGCE, M.A. (The Hague) is the Director of the Centre and Professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Malta. (Currently on leave of absence as Canada Research Chair in Island Studies at the University of Prince Edward Island, Canada.)



Saviour Rizzo, B.A.(Gen.), M.Ed. has been associated with the Centre since its establishment in 1981. In 2003 he was appointed Acting Director of the Centre. He lectures in Industrial Sociology and Sociology of Education



Dr Manwel Debono, B.Psy.(Hons) M.Sc.(Hull) C.Psychol, Ph.D. Lecturer. He is in charge of various projects of the Centre. He also lectures in organisational psychology, human resource management and career guidance.



Anna Borg M.Sc (Manchester), Dip. Soc. Studies (Gender and Dev.), joined the Centre's academic staff in October 2008. She coordinates the Diploma in Social Studies (Gender and Development) and lectures in the area of equality and the labour market. She is also involved in the various research projects of the Centre.



Christine Farrugia B.Psy. (Hons) was employed as a full time post graduate trainee with the Centre. She terminated her employment in October 2007. Her responsibilities consisted of carrying out research and writing reports about the Maltese labour market.



Josephine Agius has been employed at the University of Malta since November 1995 and has joined the Centre's staff in January 2000. As the Executive Officer of the Centre she supports the administrative, documentation and clerical work of the Centre.

Part-time Staff:



Dr Frances Camilleri-Cassar, B.A. (Hons.) (Econ.), M.A. (Soc. Studies), Ph.D. (Nottingham) is a Part-time Lecturer at the Centre.



Dr Martin Fenech, LL.D, is a practising lawyer and an Assistant Lecturer on a permanent part-time appointment with the Centre.



Charmaine Pace has been employed at the University of Malta since August 2002 and has joined the Centre's staff as a part-time clerk in October 2003. She is now a full-time University employee as an Executive Officer. She performs half of her working day at the Centre.



Charles Tabone B.Psy. P.G.C.E. (PSD). He serves as a part-time research assistant with the Centre.

Visiting Staff:



Dr Francis La Ferla, MOM, FFOM (Lond), MScOccMed (Lond), DIC (Lond), MScEnvScs (Lond), DSM (Lond), FFOM (Dub), FIOSH, FRSA is an internationally recognised expert in the field of Occupational Health and Safety. He is the academic consultant, examiner and lecturer in the Diploma in Social Studies (Occupational Health and Safety).



Joseph Montebello, Dip (Labour Studies), MBA (Leicester) is the secretary of Malta Council for Economics and Social Development (MCESD). He has conducted research work for the Centre on *ad hoc* basis.



William Powney, Dip (Labour Studies), Dip (Occupational Health & Safety), is an Administration Coordinator with a private firm. He has supported the CLS's research effort since 2003 in connection an EU funded Project on Repetitive Strain Injuries (RSI). He has conducted other research work for the Centre on *ad hoc* basis.



Ebba von Fersen Balzan

The Centre for Labour Studies, with whose staff Ebba had collaborated generously for the past two decades in the organization of various educational activities, would like to pay tribute to Ebba von Fersen Balzana who passed away on 16 March 2008. The staff at the Centre for Labour Studies who collaborated in the organization of these activities can vouch for Ebba's considerable passion and enthusiasm, having spent many hours discussing with her innovative ways to make the structure of these programmes more appealing and effective.



George Agius

The Centre for Labour Studies also pays tribute to George Agius who passed away on 6 March 2009. George Agius, together with the late Salvinu Spiteri, played a highly instrumental role in the setting up of the Centre at the University of Malta. As one of the founding members of the Centre, he served as a Member on its board from the year of its inception in 1981 until his retirement as Secretary-General of the General Workers' Union (GWU) in 1985. As an appreciation of his work in setting up of the Centre, he was made Honorary Member of the board. His support to the ideals and activities of the Centre was unwavering.

Diploma Programmes

One of the core mandates of CLS has been carving out many spheres for education – work linkage. The Centre is probably best known for the series of attractive, two-year, part-time educational programmes that lead to a diploma in applied social studies. The CLS has been the first to provide adult-oriented courses at the University of Malta leading the participants to awards that have traditionally been targeted at younger students.

The CLS has developed a four-semester course template which allows participants to combine study with other commitments. The courses organised by the Centre in 2007/2008 were the following:

- i Diploma in Social Studies (Industrial Relations) formerly ‘Labour Studies’ offered since 1983.
- ii Diploma in Social Studies (Occupational Health and Safety) offered since 1997.
- iii Post-graduate Diploma in Lifelong Career Guidance and Development organised in conjunction with the Faculty of Education, started in February 2006. This course replaced the Diploma in Occupational Guidance and Career Counselling which was offered in 2003.

An outline of the objectives of these diploma streams, the regulations governing their administration, course structure, and details concerning the specific credits offered in part fulfilment of each course are available in the course prospectus. Further details or clarifications may be obtained by:

Visiting the CLS web-pages at the University of Malta website
<http://www.um.edu.mt/cls>

Contacting the specific diploma course co-ordinator (see below)

Contacting the Centre’s Office on:
Telephone: (356) 2340 2731/2727
Fax: (356) 2134 0251
Email: cls@um.edu.mt

Diploma in Industrial Relations

Course Coordinator:

Mr Saviour Rizzo: saviour.rizzo@um.edu.mt

Course Objectives:

- 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.

Client Base:

Actual and prospective worker leaders and trade union activists, human resource managers, middle-level administrators, labour officers. Institutional beneficiaries have included the General Workers' Union (GWU), the Union Haddiema Magħqudin UHM) and the Department of Industrial & Employment Relations (DIER).

Study-Units Include:

Sociology of Work; Psychology of Communication; Political Science; Labour Economics; Industrial Relations; Structure and Change in Malta's Economic History; Public Speaking & Communication; Occupational Psychology; Industrial & Labour Law; Current Issues in Labour Relations; Gender Issues at Work; Research Methods & Design; Human Resource Development; Official Statistics & the Labour Market; Workplace Representation & Negotiation; Principles of Occupational Health & Safety; Long Essay.



The secretary generals of the GWU, Tony Zarb and of the UHM, Gaetan Vella together with Professor Zammit and Saviour Rizzo addressing the students of Diploma course in Industrial Relations (2008-2010) during the inauguration of the course

Diploma in Occupational Health & Safety

Academic Consultant:

Dr Francis La Ferla: flafferla@onvol.net

Course Coordinator:

Dr Manwel Debono: manwel.debono@um.edu.mt

Course Objectives:

- To introduce the concepts and skills involved in the promotion and effective pursuit of health and safety at work;
- To develop the basic investigative and analytic competences necessary so that workplace hazards can be recognised, evaluated and minimised;
- To inculcate the principle of risk reduction of workplace hazards and practices;
- To identify and appreciate the psycho-social features of workers and working environments which have a bearing on the nature and incidence of occupational hazards and diseases.

Client Base:

Occupational health and safety (OHS) officers, safety managers, human resource personnel, supervisors, health and safety representatives, worker representatives and other H&S practitioners.

Study Units Include:

Introduction, Familiarisation & Physical Science; People, Work, Industrial Relations & OHS; Business Management & Occupational Psychology; Epidemiology, Statistics & Research Methods; Elements of Toxicology & Management of First Aid; Occupational Safety Principles; Occupational Hygiene & Occupational Health; Health Promotion at Work & Ergonomics; Environmental Health Management & Supervisory Skills; The Legal Framework; Risk Assessment; Long Essay; Synoptic Examinations.

IOSH

The Diploma Course in Social Studies (Occupational Health and Safety) is accredited by the Institution of Occupational Health and Safety (IOSH) based in UK. IOSH is Europe's leading body for health and safety professionals with over 30,000 members across the world which include 10,000 Chartered Safety and Health Practitioners. IOSH is also the secretariat to the European Network of Safety and Health Practitioner Organisation (ENSHPO) whose members are safety Practitioner Associations from EU member states, and candidate countries to EU accession. It is also supported by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work. As part of its initiative to share its expertise with

new accession countries, in April 2008 IOSH held its annual conference in Malta. This conference was organised in collaboration with the Centre for Labour Studies and the Malta Occupational Safety and Health Practitioners Organization (MOSHPA). The students following the diploma in Social Studies (Occupational and Health) participated in the sessions and workshops of this conference. Among the guest speakers for this conference was Dr Jukka Takala, director of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work.

Fulbright Professor

The students of the Diploma in Social Studies (Occupational and Health) also benefited from a visit by Dr Mary Newman, a visiting Associate Professor at Ohio University–Athens in USA. This visit, as part of the Fulbright Senior Specialist Project, was made possible following the approval of a grant by the United States Bureau of Educational Affairs and the Council for the International Exchange of Scholars. During her six week stay (17th April-28th May 2007) in Malta, Dr Newman specializing in Occupational Hygiene, delivered a number of lectures to the students of this diploma during which she focused on control banding which is a complementary strategy to the current occupational hygiene exposure limit paradigm assessing health risks of workplace chemicals.



Dr Mary Newman in the middle of the first row (standing) with the students of the Diploma course in Occupational Health and Safety (2006-2008)

Post-Graduate Diploma in Lifelong Career Guidance & Development

Course Coordinator:

Dr Manwel Debono: manwel.debono@um.edu.mt

Course Objectives:

Employment is becoming always more flexible and careers are nowadays less predictable. The problem of unemployment is a national priority debated at the highest levels of our society. At the same time, there has been an expansion of education with a particular focus on lifelong learning. People are thus seeking increasing amounts of career-related assistance throughout their whole lives. The Postgraduate Diploma in Lifelong Career Guidance and Development seeks to enhance professional career guidance services in Malta.

Client Base:

The course is designed for applicants in possession of a graduate level of education who wish to work at a professional level in the career guidance field.

Study Units Include:

Sociology of Work (Sociology of Work and Maltese Work Ethics; Critical Perspectives on the Transition to Work); Helping Skills for Career Guidance Practitioners; Guidance Theories, Models and Strategies; The Labour Market (Evolving Labour Markets; Sourcing, Using & Analyzing Labour Market Data); Research Methods (Research Methods; Basic Statistical Notions); Professional Development (Professional Issues; Sensitivity Training); Group Skills; Placement in Career Guidance Settings; Career Guidance Tools; Career Guidance Management (Management & Delivery of Career Guidance Services; Programme Evaluation); Dealing With Particular Groups; Labour Law and Economics; Career Information Systems; Career Management & Lifelong Learning; The Workplace (Work Design and Job Classification; Organizational Behaviour); Career Guidance Policy Developments Across Europe; Issues Relating to Specific Sectors; Long Essay/ Project.

External Visiting Lecturers

The visit of four external visiting lecturers, who shared their expertise with the students during their presentation, proved to be a very valid contribution to the course. The four lecturers were the following:

Dr Raimo Vuorinen from the Finnish Institute for Educational Research at the University of Jyväskylä, delivered two lectures about “The use of ICT in guidance”.

Professor Richard Sweet from the University of Melbourne, who occupied various important posts throughout his distinguished career, including principal policy analyst in the OECD’s Education and Training Policy Division, delivered a lecture on “Understanding youth transitions: Lessons from four research traditions”.

Dr Andreas Walther from the University of Tübingen lectured on “Integration policies for young people in Europe”.

Professor Salvatore Soresi a leading Italian expert on career guidance and disability issues from the University of Padova, gave presentations about the activities being carried out in Italy on the promotion of career guidance among persons with disability.

Graduated in 2007

Diploma in Industrial Relations (2005-2007)

(19 students)

Abela Franklin; Abela Saviour; Abood Stephanie; Bartolo Mary; Bezzina Joellson; Bonnici Joseph; Casaru Marcelle; Cilia Dorianne; Deguara Emanuel; Gafa Amanda; Gauci Maria Dolores; Gauci Mary; Grech Antoine; Grima Falzon Janet; Mercieca Gaetano; Mizzi Alfred; Schembri Josianne; Scicluna Marion; Vella Elaine.



The students of the Diploma in Social Studies (Industrial Relations) on Graduation day held on 4th December 2007

Graduated in 2008

Post-Graduate Diploma in Lifelong Career Guidance and Development (2006-2008)

(16 students)

Agius David; Attard George; Bezzina Maria; Bonanno Carmen; Borg Saliba Ritianna; Camilleri Emanuel; Cassar Robert; Chircop Jacqueline; Cuschieri Stephania; Garzia Christine; Pule` Marcette; Theuma Claudia; Unah Katya; Xerri Stephanie; Xuereb Grech Claire; Zammit Norma.

Diploma in Occupational Health and Safety (2006-2008)

(25 students)

Agius Svetlik; Attard Christopher; Attard Darin; Attard Norman; Azzopardi Stanley James; Barbara Elton; Bonello Arthemese; Bonello Owen; Borg Lawrence; Cassar Roderick; Farrugia Angelo; Farrugia Mariella; Farrugia Yvette; Grima Peter; Magri Joseph; Mangion Sandro; Micallef Darren; Micallef Konrad; Micallef Valhmo; Mifsud Alan; Pace Frenzo Vladimir; Saliba David; Spiteri Norman; Zammit Jason; Zammit Joseph.

New Intakes in 2008

Diploma in Industrial Relations (February 2008 – February 2010)

(14 students)

Briffa Manuel; Callus Nicolina; Camilleri Jeremy James; Caruana Edmea; Cassar Fiona Anne; Cauchi Charlot; Debono Caruana Maria Regina; Deguara Jason; Fenech Carmen; Graham James; Micallef Elizabeth; Pisani David; Quintano Margaret; Saliba Jonathan.

Diploma in Occupational Health and Safety (October 2008 – October 2010)

(33 students)

Armeni Remi; Aufieri Massimo; Axisa Krist; Borg Rita Edith; Sorg Simon; Brincat Charlon; Brincat Silvio; Calleja Pierre; Callus Jonathan; Callus Lorna; Camilleri Alexia Marie; Camilleri Vincent; Conti Pierre ; Cremona Joseph ; Farrugia Maris Galdes; Fenech Alfred; Grech William; Mallia Trevor; Mamo Hector; Martin Peter; Mifsud Dolerita; Palmier Audrey; Saliba Elizabeth Sharon; Salomone Stefan C.; Scerri Godfrey; Schembri Sue Ellen; Sghendo Elke; Spiteri Andrew; Vassallo Stephen; Vella Edmond; Vella Victor; Wightman James Craig; Zahra Ivan.

Other Educational Activities

The Centre in line with its policy of integrating the world of work continued with its policy of organising educational activities during the two years being review. All these activities were supported by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES).

Think-Tank Discussion Groups

In 2007 the Centre resumed its discussion groups. A core group of a think tank was selected and invited to engage in a critical debate about issues related to the socio-political scenarion in Malta.

Two of these discussions held on 2nd March and 25th April 2007 centred on **“Overdevelopment and Tourism: Opportunities and Challenges to Marketing Sustainable Development”**. The developments in the tourist sector were discussed in the context of the environmental issues and the cultural heritage of Malta, the north-south divide and the contribution of tourism to the viability of the Maltese economy.

Another two discussions groups held on 30th May 2007 and 27th June 2007 focused on **Immigration**. The debate that ensued during these discussions developed into a research project which the Centre agreed to undertake in conjunction with the Department of International Relations at the University of Malta. These two discussion sessions were complemented by a half day seminar held later in the year (see below) in order to establish the parameters of the research project.

The last think tank group discussion was held on 21st November 2007. The topic for discussion was “**Developments in Education: Marketisation and Centralisation**”. A critical evaluation was made of the role of the state in the light of the neo-Liberal ideology whose advocates are pointing out the perceived problems of a centralized system of education provided and regulated by the state. The proceedings of this discussion session are reported in an article in ‘The Teacher’ (MUT Number 94 1/2008).

Half Day Tripartite Seminars

On 9th May 2007, the Centre organised a half day tripartite seminar with a view of **submitting proposals concerning labour relations** to the political parties contesting the general elections which was due in a year’s time. Following some of the proposals made during this seminar, the Centre submitted a memorandum to the political parties. Following is an executive summary of this memorandum.

- Government and public corporations should in their sub contracting and outsourcing operations ensure that a call for tenders would include clauses about the conditions of work which the bidder should comply with, if awarded the tender.
- A reduction in non-wage costs to employers can prove more effective towards competitiveness than the lowering of wages.
- There should be further reflection before going ahead with more privatisation of public utilities.
- Rather than specialising in sectors of low technology and skill, Maltese policy makers should strive to create sectors that are more research and knowledge driven.
- Employee involvement in decision making needs to be actively secured rather than passively assumed.
- The tripartite national bodies of social dialogue, and notably the Malta Council for Social and Economic Development (MCESD), need to be supported by an institutional framework that embraces a number of advisory and consultative bodies.
- Amendments to labour law are required to make trade union recognition at the place of work unambiguous.

- The implementation of more family friendly measures at the place of work, including child care support, can go a long way in raising the female participation rate in the labour market.
- Creating a culture that supports the values of an ideal work-life balance should be one of the priorities of social policy.
- Ways and means should be devised to regularise the position of immigrants already in Malta for some time.
- The employers and trade union organisations should become part of the sustainable support that is essential for occupational safety and health educational practical skill strategies.
- A reconstitution of employment relations has to be founded on a holistic, realist and transparent approach.

Another tripartite seminar was organised on 5th December 2007 dealing with “**Irregular Immigrants and the Maltese Labour Market**” This seminar, held in conjunction with the Department of International Relations at the University of Malta, provided an analysis of the level of integration of the irregular immigrants in Maltese society and their impact on the Maltese labour market.

Public Debate

On 19th November 2008, the Centre organised a public debate on “**Workers’ Participation**”. The seminar focused on the role of the employee board level representation. In a span of five years (2003-2008) the posts of employee board level representatives have been abolished either following the privatization process of state run or owned enterprise or by a unilateral decision of the minister. During the discussion, chaired by the ex rector of the University of Malta, Rev Prof. Peter Seraccino Inglott, it was noted that the abolition of this post goes contrary to the Christian Democratic ideology as espoused by the political party which is in office. The panel for this discussion included the Chairperson of Alternattiva Demokratika, the worker director of Bank of Valletta whose post was abolished in December 2008, and officials representing the General Workers’ Union (GWU) and the Union Haddiema Maghqudin (UHM).

Monitoring and Research on Industrial and Employment Relations

Following is a list of the reports submitted in 2007 and 2008 to the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions in Dublin www.eurofund.europa.eu and the European Commission www.eu-employment-observatory.net/, a project coordinated by GHK Consulting Ltd. These reports, forming part of EU funded projects, are perused by officials of the European Commission. The coordinator of the Centre for these projects is Manwel Debono who either wrote or edited these reports. Christine Farrugia and Anna Borg have contributed to a number of these reports.

European Industrial Relations Observatory Brief reports on topical issues

Abolition the post of worker director at Bank of Valletta	Dec 08
Maltese social partners protest against new energy tariffs	Dec 08
Nurses' union at loggerheads with the government over several issues	Dec 08
Skills for the future: the vision of employers' associations	Oct 08
The GWU's stance on immigrant workers	Oct 08
Public Transport strike leads to widespread disruption	Sep 08
Collective agreement signed at MCAST after months of industrial unrest	Sep 08
Complaint by social partners about lack of consultation on increased surcharge	Jul 08
The privatisation of Malta Shipyards	Jul 08
Trade union clashes with microelectronics company over suspended pay increases	May 08
Trade unions push for better health and safety at work	Apr 08
General Workers Union proposes reform of Industrial Tribunal	Apr 08
Pilots association and Air Malta sign collective agreement	Apr 08
Telework in Malta	Dec 07
Nursing aides dispute reveals inter-union rivalry	Oct 07
Opposition party calls for upgrading of economic and social council	Oct 07
New collective agreement for port workers signed	Aug 07
New agreement gives go-ahead for reform of education sector	Aug 07
Further layoffs predicted in textiles industry	Jul 07
Trade unions clash over representation of telecommunications workers	Jul 07

Agreement reached at Maltapost in wake of industrial action	Jun 07
Valletta hawkers in dispute with government over market's relocation	Jun 07
Industrial dispute between the General Workers Union and the Health Division	Jun 07
Industrial dispute at Bank of Valletta	Apr 07
Shipyard workers protest in support of suspended colleagues	Apr 07
Social partners present proposals for reform of economic and social council	Apr 07
Industrial action due to restructuring averted at Maltacom	Apr 07
Workers threaten industrial action at Maltapost	Feb 07
Employers oppose plan to extend family-friendly measures to public service	Feb 07
New rescue plan for Air Malta	Jan 07
Malta rejects revision of working time directive	Jan 07
Teachers' union threatens industrial action over suspension of new posts	Jan 07
Industrial Tribunal rules on union representation at University of Malta	Jan 07

National contributions on topics selected by the Foundation

Malta: The representativeness of trade unions and employer associations in the tanning and leather sector	Nov 08
Union strategies for recruiting new groups of workers	Nov 08
Malta: The representativeness of trade unions and employer associations in the steel sector	Sep 08
Malta: The representativeness of trade unions and employer associations in the civil aviation sector	Jul 08
Collective bargaining and continuous vocational training in Europe	May 08
Wage formation in the EU	May 08
Temporary agency work and collective bargaining in the EU	May 08
Mapping of employee representation structures at the establishment level	May 08
Annual update on Industrial action	Feb 08
Annual update on working time developments	Feb 08
EIRO Annual Update on pay developments	Jan 08

EIRO Annual Review	Jan 08
Flexisecurity	Jan 08
Malta: Wage flexibility and collective bargaining	Jan 08
Representativeness of the social partners: Hospitals - Malta	Dec 07
Malta: The representativeness of the European social partner organisations: Post and courier services	Oct 07
Information and Consultation	Aug 07
Malta: representativeness of the European social partner organisations: Sea and coastal water transport	May 07
Eiro Annual Report-Working Time Developments	Mar 07
Eiro Annual Report on Pay	Feb 07
Impact of the working time directive on collective bargaining in the road transport sector — Malta	Feb 07
Industrial relations in the postal sector — Malta	Feb 07
Industrial relations developments 2006 – Malta	Jan 07

European Working Conditions Observatory

Brief reports on topical issues

Gender Pay Gap	Dec 08
Factors determining early exit from employment	May 08
Factors motivating women to work	Dec 07
Gender differences in the Maltese labour market (double report)	Oct 08
Situation of workplace health and safety representatives	Oct 07
Main drivers and obstacles in job mobility	Jul 07
School-to-work transition of young people	May 07
Barriers to women's participation in decision-making positions	Apr 07
Towards gender equality in information technology jobs	Feb 07

National contributions on topics selected by the Foundation

Very atypical forms of employment	Oct 08
Quality of work and employment of low qualified workers	Aug 08
Malta: The occupational promotion of migrant workers	May 08
Comparative analysis of working time in the European Union-Case of Malta	Jan 08
The employment and working conditions of young workers	Dec 07

European Restructuring Monitor

Brief reports highlighting important restructuring cases in Malta

Toly Products Ltd	Dec 08
Malta Shopyards Ltd	Oct 08
Brief Quarterly Report on restructuring in Malta (Q3 08)	Oct 08
Brief Quarterly Report on restructuring in Malta (Q2 08)	Jul 08
Food Chain (Holdings) Limited	May 08
Hilton Malta	Apr 08
Besedo	Apr 08
Brief Quarterly Report on restructuring in Malta (Q1 08)	Apr 08
Aurobindo Pharma	Mar 08
Banif Bank Malta	Feb 08
Malta Freeport Terminals Limited	Feb 08
Brief Quarterly Report on restructuring in Malta (Q4 07)	Jan 08
Brief Quarterly Report on restructuring in Malta (Q3 07)	Oct 07
Brief Quarterly Report on restructuring in Malta (Q2 07)	Jul 08
Maltacom Dial-It Call Centre	Jun 07
VF Corporation	Jun 07
Bortex	Jun 07
HSBC	May 07
Methode Electronics Inc.	May 07
Availacall	Apr 07
Health Division	Apr 07
Brief Quarterly Report on restructuring in Malta (Q1 07)	Apr 07
McDonald's Malta	Mar 07
Brief Quarterly Report on restructuring in Malta (Q4 06)	Jan 07

National contributions on topics selected by the Foundation

Initiatives to tackle undeclared work	Nov 08
The location of job creation and job destruction in multinational companies across the EU - Lufthansa	Aug 08
The consequences of mergers and acquisitions for companies and employees	Jun 08
The location of job creation and job destruction in multinational companies across the EU	Aug 08
Perceptions of globalisation: attitudes and responses in the EU — Malta	Jun 08
Relocation cases in manufacturing and services	Jan 08
National evidence of the employment impact of the relocation of enterprises	May 07

European Employment Observatory

(Project of the European Commission, Coordinated by GHK Consulting Limited)

Quarterly Report on Labour Market Developments in Malta (Q2 08)	Jul 08
Quarterly Report on Labour Market Developments in Malta (Q1 08)	May 08
Ad Hoc Request on Internships in Malta	Apr 08
Quarterly Report on Labour Market Developments in Malta (Q4 07)	Jan 08
Feedback by SYSDM experts on National Reform Programme assessment methodology – Case of Malta	Jan 08
Lifelong learning and skills development: a review of trends and policies with a particular focus on gender and age	Dec 07
Post-Assessment of the National Reform Programme Progress Report - Case of Malta	Nov 07

Quarterly Report on Labour Market Developments in Malta (Q3 07)	Oct 07
Pre-assessment of the National Reform Programme Progress Report	Sep 07
Quarterly Report on Labour Market Developments in Malta (Q2 07)	Jul 07
Spring Review 2007 - "Two years of the renewed Lisbon process: did the European Employment Strategy (EES) gain or not?" Case of Malta	Jun 07
Quarterly Report on Labour Market Developments in Malta (Q1 07)	May 07
Thematic article on Undeclared Work	May 07
Ad Hoc request on National implementation	Jan 07
Feedback by SYSDM experts on National Reform Programme assessment methodology – Case of Malta	Jan 07

Research Work and Publications

Godfrey Baldacchino

Bridging Islands: The Impact of Fixed Links, Charlottetown, Acorn Press, 2007, 284pp. ISBN-13: 978-1-894838-24-5.

Co-edited Books:

(with David Milne) ***The Case for Non-Sovereignty: Lessons from Sub-National Island Jurisdictions***, London, Routledge, 2008, 174pp, ISBN: 978-0-415-45550-3.

(with Kathleen Stuart) ***Pulling Strings: Lessons for Prince Edward Island from other Sub-National Island Jurisdictions***, Charlottetown, Canada, Island Studies Press, 2008, 198pp, ISBN: 978-0-919013-54-4.

Co-Authored Monographs:

(with Crystal MacAndrew Fall) ***Immigrant Entrepreneurs on Prince Edward Island*** Charlottetown, Canada, for the Population Secretariat, PEI Provincial Government, 2008, 40pp, ISBN: 978-0-9810620-0-6.

(with Matt Funk) ***A Search for a Measure of the Quality of Life on Prince Edward Island***, Charlottetown, Canada: an indicative study for the Department of Innovation and Advanced Learning, PEI Provincial Government, 2008, 24pp, ISBN: 978-0-919013-58-2.

(with Michelle Hood) ***Challenges faced by Internationally Educated Health Professionals on Prince Edward Island: Stories and Voices. A Research Report***, Charlottetown, the authors for IEHP Atlantic Connection, 2008, 69pp, ISBN: 978-0-919013-55-1.

Journal Papers and Book Chapters:

The Internationalization of SMEs in Malta: A Critical Assessment in the Context of Five European Island Regions' in *The Handbook of International Entrepreneurship: European Perspectives*, UK, Edward Elgar, 2008, pp. 431-450.
Trains of Thought: Railways as Small Island Antitheses, *Shima: The International Journal of Research into Island Cultures*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 2008, pp. 29-40.

Entrepreneurship in Smaller Jurisdictions: Appraising a Glocal Elite', *Comparative Education*, Vol. 44, No. 2, 2008, pp. 187-201.

The Bridging Experience of Trans-Migration: Reflexive Sociology/ies from a Migrating Sociologist, in Sanda Nemeth-Badescu (ed.) *From One Shore to Another: Reflections on the Symbolism of the Bridge*, Cambridge, Cambridge Scholars Press, 2007, pp. 88-103.

Jurisdictional Capacity and Landscape Heritage: A Case Study of Malta & Gozo', *Journal of Mediterranean Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 1, 2007, pp. 95-114.

Islands as Novelty Sites', *Geographical Review*, Vol. 97, No. 2, 2007, pp. 165-174.

The Power of Jurisdiction and the Social Policies of Small States, position paper commissioned by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, 2007, 30pp.

Serving Sustainable Island Tourism: Hot or Cold?', *INSULA: International Journal of Island Affairs* (Paris, UNESCO), 2007, pp. 15-22.

Manwel Debono

Writing and editing of reports submitted to the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions in connection with the three projects under its auspices namely:

European Industrial Relations Observatory (EIRO)

European Working Conditions Observatory (EWCO)

European Restructuring Monitor (ERM)

See list above – Monitoring and Research of Industrial and Employment Relations.

Writing and/or editing reports on policies and developments in the Maltese labour market to the European Employment Observatory (EEO).

See list above on Monitoring and Research of Industrial and Employment Relations.

Drafting the report on “Career Guidance Policy for Schools” published by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Employment (October 2007) as chair of the study group dealing with this issue.

Ph.D. Thesis “Occupational choice among Maltese university graduates” (Unpublished).

The introductory chapter “Economic and Social Context” as part of a report on “Employee Representation in Enlarged Europe – Malta Report” authored by Saviour Rizzo. European Commission. Volume 2. pp.57-71. 2008

“Study on Equal Treatment of Men and Women in Self-Employment” for GHK Consulting Ltd., UK (April 2008).

“Consumer Credit Benchmarking Study: Survey Questionnaire” for GHK Consulting Ltd., UK (March 2008).

Saviour Rizzo

Centre for Labour Studies Biennial Report 2005/2006, *Editor*.

‘Memorandum to Political Parties’ September 2007 by the Centre for Labour Studies.

‘Study on Child Labour and Protection of Young Workers in the European Union’ (Co-authored). EU Commission Project coordinated by Labour Asociados in Madrid.

‘Towards a Sustainable European Company: Malta Report’. An ETUI-Hans Bockler Stiftung Project.

‘Employee Representatives in Enlarged Europe: Malta Report’ Brussels. European Commission. Volume 2. pp.57-71. 2008.

‘Structures of Workers Representatives at Establishment Level’ EIRO
www.eurofund.europa.eu

‘Trade Unionism in Malta’ Institute for Social Movements of the Ruhr Universitat Bochum (forthcoming).

‘Flexicurity’ EWCO www.eurofund.europa.eu

Report on ‘The Transposition into Maltese law of the 10th Directive on Cross Border Mergers of Companies with Share Capital’ in
www.seeurope-network.org

Articles

'Women's Dilemma: Valuing Family and Work and Work' *The Times* 10th March 2007.

'Trade Unions – Opening up to New Realities', *The Times*, 28th April 2008.

'Marketization of Education', *The Teacher* MUT, No 94, 1/2008.

'Flexicurity: Seeking Short Fixes?', *The Times*, 18th June 2008.

'MCESD: Twenty Years After', *The Times*, 22nd October 2008.

Edward Zammit

From Pluralism to Social Dialogue – The Case of Industrial Relations in Malta. Paper presented at the International Political Studies Association Conference, San Francisco, USA, September, 2007.

Trade Union Approaches to Competence Development (icw European Trade Union Institute, Brussels; National Institute for Working Life, Stockholm; and Centre de Recherche pour l'Emploi et les Ressources Humaines, Toulouse), 2007.) (20 pp). This paper has been accepted as a forthcoming publication in 2008 by Routledge (London) under the title *An Emerging Island of Social Dialogue over Competence Development?* (General Editor: Prof. J. Winterton).

'*The Impact of New Forms of Labour on Industrial Relations and the Evolution of Labour Law – Malta National Report*' (31pp). This paper forms part of an external study for the European Parliament coordinated by the Labor Asociados (Madrid) and Universite` Europeenne du Travail (Brussels) 2007/8.

'*Adult Education in Micro States – The Case of Malta*' (with. P. Mayo and P. Pace) (36pp). Published in *Comparative International Education and Society*, 2008.

'*Religious Faith and the World of Work*' Paper prepared for publication in the forthcoming book by the Moviment Kattoliku Studenti Universitarji, Universita ta' Malta.

Participant as a member of the group of experts in the Foresight Project on the Future of Industrial Relations. The project was organized by the European Foundation and meetings of the Research Group were held in Geneva, Rome, Paris and Helsinki.

Conferences and other Academic Activities attended by Staff

Godfrey Baldacchino **Guest and/or Keynote Presenter**

2007

January: at First International Development Conference of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States – Rodney Bay, St Lucia.

March: at ‘Ten Days on the Island’ Festival – Hobart, Tasmania, Australia.

April: at Seminar organized by University of Strathclyde discussing the process of Europeanization - Ross Priory, Loch Lomond, Scotland, UK.

May: guest of European Commission as independent peer reviewer for the Employment & Training Corporation, Malta – St Julian’s, Malta.

June: guest of the Åland Institute of Comparative Island Studies, Inaugural Meeting of Academic Board and National Conference – Mariehamn, Åland Islands, Finland.

September: at International Conference on Islands and Postcolonialism, Queen’s University Belfast, Northern Ireland.

September: on Population and Labour Market Dynamics, North Atlantic Forum – Lerwick, Shetland Islands, Scotland.

October: at United Nations Research Institute for Social Development/ Commonwealth Secretariat Workshop on Social Policy in Small States - Geneva, Switzerland.

October: at Seminar on the Impact of Bridges on Islands, Japan-Canada Project and Department of International Relations, International University of Kagoshima - Kyushu, Japan.

November: at Inaugural International Conference of the Islands Commission of the International Geographical Union, Taiwan Normal University - Taipei, Taiwan.

2008

February: at Workshop on small states organized by the Centre for International Governance and Innovation (Canada) and the Institute for International Relations, University of the West Indies, St Augustine - Trinidad & Tobago.

April: at student workshop, member of plenary panel discussion and workshop moderator at National Metropolis Conference - Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

May: at conference on migration and island spaces, directed by Geography Department, University of Lisbon – Angra do Heroísmo, Azores, Portugal.

June: at international conference on island branding, organized by Åland International Institute for Comparative Island Studies – Mariehamn, Åland Islands, Finland.

August: Lecture and Visit to University of San Carlos - Cebu City, Cebu, Philippines: August 2008.

August: at 11th International Small Islands Studies Association Conference – Seogwipo City, Jeju Island, South Korea.

September: at international conference on Art and Islands - Castle Cornet, St Peter Port, Guernsey, British Isles.

September: Academic Coordinator, international conference on Heritage Management and Land Use Conflict on Island Jurisdictions, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada.

October: on the theme: Economic versus Ecological Development: Lessons from Islands, Japan-Canada Project and Department of International Relations, International University of Kagoshima, Kyushu, Japan.

October: at international conference on The Futurability of Islands, Research Institute for Humanity and Nature (RIHN), Kyoto, Japan.

October: at Public Discussion on the theme 'Bringing the Public into Public Policy' as part of Knowledge in Motion Conference, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St John's, Newfoundland, Canada.

Manwel Debono

Network for European Observatories (NEOs) organised by the Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions in Dublin - November 2007.

Consultancy services to the DG Employment and Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities on specific employment issues. Meetings held with Philippe Hatt, Head of Division responsible for Malta and Andrea Mancini, Desk Officer for Malta.

Guest speaker during a discussion programme on TOPIC on the university radio station (April 2008).

Participated in a Leonardo da Vinci project called: European Accreditation Scheme for Careers Guidance Counsellors (EAS), organised by COREP Laboratorio FRAME, Italia. Coordinated the trial scheme among Maltese guidance practitioners (ended May 08).

Consultant for: ESTEEM PROJECT - Empowerment through Study Teaching Enabling Education and Mentoring (This Leonardo da Vinci Project is managed by the Department of Social Policy and Social Work at the University of Malta) (*In Progress*).

Member on the Extracurricular Credits Board.

Represented CLS on Member on the Board of the Master in Counselling offered by the Faculty of Education as CLS representative.

Member of the Career Guidance Forum (hosted within the Ministry of Education).

Saviour Rizzo

'Towards a Knowledge Society: Is Knowledge a Public Good?' organised by the Enlargement of Social Science Research Agenda (ESRA) on 11th and 12th June 2007.

'Towards Transnational Trade Union Representation ' organised by the Institute of for Social Movement of the Ruhr –Universität in Bochum Germany, on 5th -6th December 2007.

'Developments in Employee Involvement' in workshop organised by ETUI-REHS in Brussels on 11th -12th March 2008.

Network of European Observatories Coordination Meeting 13-14th November 2008 at the European Foundation for the Improvement of Working and Living Conditions Dublin.

'Workshop on Flexicurity' organised by Forum Malta fl-Ewropa on 18th June 2008.

'Youth Employment Strategy' organised by Employment & Training Corporation on 15th February 2008.

'Involving Men in Gender Equality – Think Tank' organised by ETC 23rd October 2007.

'Dealing with Labour Shortages' organised by Malta Employers Association on 28th November 2007.

'Il-Politika Nazzjonali Dwar L-Impjieg u l-Persuni b'Dizabilita' organised by National Commission Persons with Disability on 17th October 2007.

'Lejn Hajja Attiva fit-tul: Flimkien x'Nistghu Naghmlu' organized by ETC on 11th December 2007.

'Is-Sahha u S-Sigurta fuq Il-Post tax-Xoghol' organized by the General Workers Union (GWU) on 25th January 2008.

'Social Capital' organized by The Social Capital Foundation 21st September-23rd September.

Guest speaker in a conference on "The European Commission's Green Paper:

Modernising Labour Law to meet the Challenges of the 21st Century organised by the Malta Employers' Association (MEA) on 15th February 2007.

Speaker in a conference on 'Promoting the Values of Occupational Health and Safety' – held in Malta on 20th April 2007 by the Institution of Occupational Health and Safety (IOSH) based in UK. The Centre was one of the organizers.

Guest Speaker in conference on 'Il-Haddiema u L-Elezzjoni Generali' organised by Zmienijietna on 16th February 2008.

Keynote Presenter in 'Valuing All Learning: Framework for the Validation of informal and non-formal learning in Malta' organised by Malta Qualification Council on 27th June 2008.

A discussant in a Conference on 'Social Capital' organized by The Social Capital Foundation in Malta on 21st to 23rd September 2008.

Keynote Presenter on 'Trends in the Labour Market and Changes in the World of Work' during two seminars organised by the Malta Qualification Council to guidance teachers on 8th and 29th October 2008.

Edward Zammit

- Presented paper entitled 'Malta: An Emerging Island of Social Dialogue over Competence Development?' at the Ninth International Conference on Human Resource Development, Research and Practice across Europe, University of Lille, France.
- Presented paper entitled 'From Pluralism to Social Dialogue: the Case of Industrial Relations in Malta' at the ISA Conference held at the University of San Francisco, California
- Keynote speaker at conference organised by the Malta Institute of Management in collaboration with the European Management Association on 'The European Manager: A Comparative Project carried out in Germany, Lithuania, Malta, Spain and the UK.
- Delivered lecture on 'Social Change in Malta' as part of a course on Catholic Social Thought at The Catholic Institute, Floriana.
- Interviewed on Super One Radio, Campus FM Radio and Malta Today regarding developments in the world of work and on the current state of trade unions in Malta.
- Deputy Dean, Faculty of Economics, Management & Accountancy.
- Head, Department of Tourism Studies.
- Member of Faculty Board, FEMA.
- FEMA Representative on the University's M.Phil / Ph.D. Committee.
- Chairman, Employment Relations Board.

- Deputy Chairman, Employment and Training Corporation (2007).
- Board Member, Malta Statistics Authority.
- Member, Editorial Board, *South East Europe Review*.
- Panel Member, Malta Arbitration Tribunal.
- Board Member, Foundation for Human Resources Development.
- Examiner of PhD thesis in the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts.
- Chairman of PhD thesis in the Department of Social Policy and Social Work, FEMA.

Financial Statements

Financial Statement (1) for 2007

University Budget Vote 52

Academic Staff	€58,362
Support Staff	€15,236
Operational	€3,714

Total €77,312

Income

Internal Sources¹ €28,277

Total €28,277

Expenditure

Salaries of Staff €73,598

General Expenses² €24,000

Total €97,598

¹ Income generated by the Centre through its participation in EU funded projects

² **Out of Vote 52-000 €3,714:** Membership (129); Books (207); Hospitality (63); Repairs & Maintenance (275); Office Equipment (175); Communications (393); Office Supplies and Stationery (1,416); Postage (220); Cleaning and Sanitation (69); Petty Cash (510); Printing (199); Computing Licence (58).

Out of Reserve Fund of Centre (Vote 73.221) €20,286: Salaries and Additional Staff (16,899); Hospitality, Travel and Accommodation (1,415); CCT – Computer Equipment and Services (211); Transport (310); Consultancy (207), Printing (1058); Hire of Audio Equipment (186).

Financial Statement (2) for 2008

University Budget Vote 52

Academic Staff	€60,476
Support Staff	€21,017
Operational	€3,974
Total	€85,467

Income

Internal Sources ³	€35,913
Total	€35,913

Expenditure

Salaries of Staff	€81,493
General Expenses ⁴	€25,687
Total	€107.180

³ *Income generated by the Centre through its participation in EU funded projects*

⁴ **Out of Vote 52-000 €3,974:** *Computer Equipment (80); Computer Software (58); Membership (208); Books (270); Subscriptions (839); Hospitality (100); Office Equipment (199); Office Supplies (925); Postage (234); Petty cash (422); Printing (54); Staff Development (412); Shipping Postage / VAT (50); New Printing Unit (85); Communications (38).*

Out of Reserve Fund (Vote 52-800) €21,713: *Salaries and Additional Staff (17,532); Hospitality (1,537); Consultancy (96); Conference (1,395); Furniture (1,153).*