



UNIVERSITY OF MALTA  
L-Università ta' Malta

**CENTRE FOR LABOUR STUDIES**

# Biennial Report

**2015-2016**

# Contents



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L-Università ta' Malta

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**Centre for Labour Studies**  
New Humanities Building, Block B  
University of Malta  
Msida MSD 2080 Malta  
Tel: 2340 3766 / 2340 2731  
[www.um.edu.mt/cls](http://www.um.edu.mt/cls)

 [www.facebook.com/uom.cls](https://www.facebook.com/uom.cls)

**General Editor:** Anna Borg

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## SECTION 1

### PROFESSOR GODFREY BALDACCHINO

*Chairperson,  
Board of the Centre  
for Labour Studies  
(as Rector's Delegate)*



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## Introduction

Being reminded to pen an introduction to the Biennial Report of the Centre for Labour Studies is a stark reminder that two years have elapsed since the previous request.

In these last two years, we have seen the completion of the transformation of all the CLS taught courses as part of an ambitious strategic plan. We now have a revamped programme that permits a smooth transitioning, if required by students, from an undergraduate diploma to a postgraduate master's degree. The revamped suite of courses has also benefitted from feedback secured following quality assurance exercises.

In these last two years, we have also seen the full suite of four taught programmes of the CLS being made available to students. With the entry of students following the (now revamped) Diploma in Gender, Work and Society, the student complement at the CLS has grown to 130: an all-time record in the history of the CLS.

In the last two years, we have also witnessed the continued support offered by the CLS to the Forum Nazzjonali tat-Trade Unions (the National Forum for Trade Unions), set up under the auspices of the Office of the President of the Republic of Malta in 2014. The CLS has organised educational seminars for and with the FNTU, and has also coordinated discussions on strategic directions for local trade union membership drives in the near future.

In the last two years, the CLS continued its work as the national clearinghouse for information relating to industrial relations and conditions of employment in Malta. Data collected and research undertaken by the CLS feeds into the repository of the European Foundation for Living and Working Conditions (mercifully shortened to Eurofound) and which, in turn, guides and helps mould European Commission opinions about Malta and its socio-economic development.

And, again in the last two years, we have seen Dr Anna Borg take over the Directorship of the CLS – the first woman to do so – while we have thanked Dr Manwel Debono for his valuable service as CLS Director. (Dr Debono has meanwhile got married and is now a proud father.) Our 3<sup>rd</sup> full-time academic, Mr Luke Fiorini, is continuing his PhD studies (and become a proud father of a second son just before the period under review). The Centre was also glad to witness the arrival of Caroline Chetcuti as Clerk and Board Secretary at the CLS; and we have seen off Ms Jessica Cilia Custò, who is now studying nursing.

As usual, this booklet is testimony to the wide assortment of teaching, research and outreach performed by the small yet indefatigable team at the CLS, whom I sincerely thank. I also thank the members of the CLS Board who have guided and supported the Centre in its important work.

I will not keep you from the contents of this booklet any longer. We continue this tradition of publicising the achievements of the Centre in order to disseminate information about its goals and services, hopefully attracting notice from those who might find its courses, its research output and its outreach programme of interest. As the earliest adult education outfit at the University of Malta, The CLS certainly 'walks the talk' when arguing that it is never too late to become a student.



## SECTION 2

**DR ANNA BORG**

*CLS Director*



# Foreword

During the past two years, the Centre for Labour Studies (CLS) continued to consolidate its position as a dynamic teaching and research centre within the University of Malta. For the first time in its history, the Centre started offering courses at multiple levels ranging from Master to Diploma level. These include our first Master level course in Lifelong Career Guidance and Development; two bachelor degree courses - one in Work and Human Resources and the other in Occupational Health and Safety, and our revised Diploma Course in Gender, Work and Society. These courses attracted well over a hundred students, the majority of whom work and study with us on a part time basis.

In parallel to its teaching vocation, the Centre kept up its strong research role by acting as the main national research agency for the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound). The research work carried out for this European Union agency, which is based in Dublin, allows us to remain *au courant* with what is happening in the Maltese labour market and to undertake a comparative analysis with other EU states on issues related to working conditions, industrial relations and restructuring.

In the last two years, the Centre also continued to collaborate with the National Trade Union Forum (FNTU) which falls under the auspices of the office of the President of Malta. During this period, the Centre was

commissioned to conduct a National Survey on Trade Unions in Malta. This research, which was carried out by the CLS member of staff Dr Manwel Debono, had the aim of investigating the attitudes of the general adult population on trade unionism in Malta. The results of this survey showed a declining interest in trade unions and this strengthens our resolve to continue assisting trade unions in any way possible through this forum.

For the first time in 2016, CLS students studying Work and Human Resources were given the opportunity to participate in an event held in Brussels called 'Europe Social Days'. This yearly event is a platform which offers students the opportunity to meet, discuss and reflect about current themes that are affecting us all. A CLS student, Lizzianne Pace Frendo, won the award for the best debater during the 'House of Common Debate' held during this event.

This biennial report captures the work that was carried out by the Centre for Labour Studies (CLS) during 2015 and 2016; it highlights the not insignificant contribution that the Centre has carried out through its complement of three full time academic members of staff, three administrative members of staff, 55 part time lecturers plus various guest speakers.

This biennial report is being complemented with five interesting articles written by the academic staff of the Centre. Here, Professor Godfrey Baldacchino ponders about the current trend of a labour importing economy in a context of full employment. In his article on change and continuity, Professor Edward L. Zammit provides an overview of the recently published book, *The Sociology of the Maltese Islands*, edited by Michael Briguglio and Maria Brown (2016). Dr Manwel Debono takes a closer look at the skills gap between labour supply and demand in his article on skills governance in Malta while, in his article on the aging workforce, Mr Luke Fiorini uses the ergonomic lens to explore how workplaces could be modified to cater for older adults. Finally, in my article on work-life balance and measures for persons of working age with long-term care dependent relatives, I explore the 'work family measures' available for these families and discuss how the lack of policies may be leading more women to experience higher risks of poverty and social exclusion.

For the first time we are also publishing a synthesis of the dissertations presented by four students who obtained a First Class in the Honours Degree Course in Work and Human Resources. Likewise, we are including a synthesis of the Long Essays presented by two students who obtained a Distinction in the Diploma in Social Studies (Gender and Development). We thought to fit to recognize and showcase the work of our brightest students in this way.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all my colleagues at the Centre for Labour Studies for their support and the hard work they have put in throughout these two years. The motto of our Centre is: *Academic Excellence at Work*. May we continue to collaborate and to strive for excellence in order to provide the best for our students and for our society, while consolidating the positive reputation of the Centre and the University of Malta.

#### **May 2015**



## SECTION 3.1



# Malta and the 'New Normal'

## THE LABOUR IMPORTING ECONOMY

**Godfrey Baldacchino**

### ABSTRACT

*This brief article is a 'wake-up call' to Malta's recently discovered predicament as a labour importing economy. The country is in the process of coming to terms with the diversity and complexity of the consequences of such a condition, and for which history has not offered much preparatory experience.*

### INTRODUCTION

Visit a home for senior citizens, and you are likely to meet Filipino and Indian care givers. Go out for a meal at a restaurant, and the chances are that the waiter/waitress, or even the owner, is Italian. Visit one of the many on-line betting companies with offices in the Gzira and Sliema area: there is a strong likelihood that you will meet a British 'trader' or a Polish 'bet settlement executive'. Walk by a construction site, and your ears may very well pick up Bulgarian or Serbian being spoken. Finally, note who is collecting your garbage daily from outside your door: it could very well be that an Eritrean or Somali refugee now domiciled in Malta is performing that job.

Foreign labour is the 'new normal' in 21<sup>st</sup> century Malta. Even where, at face value tasks involve Maltese workers or contractors, these would in turn readily utilise and subcontract immigrants to do much of the work.

### SECTION 3

# Articles

There were some 23,000 EU nationals officially working in Malta in April 2016, with another 8,500 from non-EU (third) countries. Most of these – around 27,500 – are engaged in full-time employment or self-employment. Italians top the list with 5,180 workers, followed by workers from the United Kingdom (3,985), Bulgaria (2,044), Hungary (1,308), Romania (1,262), Spain (1,119) and Sweden (1,085). At 1,470, citizens of the Philippines top the 'third country' (non-EU) nationals list, followed by Serbians (1,246). These immigrants in Malta are economically active, with very few actually looking for work. According to Jobsplus, at the end of August 2016, 74 EU nationals were registering for work; the highest number of these by nationality was Italians at a meagre 20, followed by those from the UK at just 14 (Times of Malta, 2016).

## CONTEXT

The phenomenon of migration will continue to be debated as: (1) either a response to a failed domestic economy, political turmoil or social unrest, or (2) a constructive adjustment to changing conditions from which both sending and receiving societies gain.

In the early 1980s, I remember reading a set of papers by economist Lino Delia (1982, 1984, 1985) which basically engaged in a debate amongst Maltese scholars which was typical amongst academics discussing labour *exporting* countries. On one hand, was the argument that sending off adult Maltese, often trained and educated, to seek their fortune overseas because there were no (or not enough) suitable employment opportunities at home was a net and tragic loss and drain to the local economy and society. In a small country like Malta, emigration would have a fast and negative impact due to the limited size of the skilled workforce, the members of which were the most likely to both want, and be able, to emigrate; as well as to be attractive to potential host countries (Balogh and Seers, 1955). Talent, enterprise and acumen were being squandered, only to be exploited by receiving destinations: mainly Australia, Canada, the UK and the US, who accepted tens of thousands of Maltese, exiled from their island home in the immediate post-second world war period.

The second and counter-argument was that the heavy out-migration figures were a blessing in disguise to an already overcrowded island bereft

of both natural resources and employment opportunities. Indeed, mass emigration was then deemed as "the only feasible solution in the long run" for the economic development of Malta (Stolper et al., 1964). This reduced the pressure on the local labour (and housing) market, allowed many to secure jobs and open businesses overseas and thus earn salaries which were much higher than would have ever been possible at home. Thus, these emigrants could still support the Maltese economy, first by their regular transfer of funds (remittances) to their family members left behind, by their gifts, by their travels to (and spending in) Malta as tourists over many years, and eventually by the investment of their savings if and when they retired in Malta. Had such mass migration not happened, Malta today may have to be grappling with a resident domestic population of over 700,000 (and this figure would exclude immigrants).

## DRAMATIC REVERSAL

The situation has changed, and changed quickly and dramatically (although not necessarily irreversibly), as tends to happen in a small island state. The Maltese Islands have been historically a place for sending people away: willingly (as with the 'assisted passage' schemes that financially supported migrants, and where the state grant had to be refunded if the migrant returned to Malta within 24 months of departure) or unwillingly (as a result of piracy). But, since 1974, the country has welcomed more immigrants than it has sent off to other countries. The trend became even more sustained first, in the mid-1990s, when Malta officially 'graduated' from the ranks of developing countries; then after European Union (EU) accession in 2004 (which sent strong signals of stability); and then again after the financial crisis of 2008, which Malta weathered better than most of its southern Mediterranean neighbours. We now have a resident Maltese population of close to 420,000; along with some 32,000 foreign workers officially resident in Malta, most accompanied by family members. National minority groups are now large enough to constitute communities: see and hear them go out together during weekends. The influx is not restricted to EU nationals: there are (as noted above), more than 1,000 Filipino workers, mostly female, engaged in the health and social care sectors; and various Libyans, who escaped to Malta with the collapse of the Gaddafi regime. Localities

like Marsa, Birżebbuġa and Qawra/Buġibba have been morphing into concentrations of non-Maltese residents, who have been attracted to these areas by relatively low rents; while St Julians (in the north) and Marsaskala (in the south) are the property magnets for immigrants operating at the top end of the labour market. The state schools that serve these localities are dealing with considerable ethnic, religious and linguistic diversity. Indeed, no locality in Malta is exempt from these new demographic challenges, for which Maltese history has not prepared us.

### LABOUR MARKET REPERCUSSIONS

With this dramatic reversal, the concerns and issues have shifted as well. What have been some of the repercussions of this demographic switch on the local labour market and labour relations?

Some of the consequences are indirect. Whereas Malta's property market has been traditionally dominated by sales, rental contracts have picked up speed of late. The demand for (especially quality) accommodation – from Maltese and non-Maltese residents – has made the already hot real estate market even hotter, with prices at historically dizzy heights. This will have consequences on the spending power of families, especially those who choose not to, or cannot afford to, buy their own house. The other side of the coin is the potential bonanza for those who make supplementary income from property sales or rentals.

Other consequences are more direct and closely related to the labour market structure. As one would expect, foreign workers are quite heterogeneous in terms of their occupational profile. However, as a general rule, "foreign workers are employed at either end of the labour market: the higher end where skills are scarce and the lower end where jobs are no longer that attractive for Maltese workers" (Grech, 2016: 40). And so, for extreme examples of this, look at the electronic gambling sector in Malta, where non-Maltese EU nationals predominate; then look at the waste collection services, where a different set of non-Maltese, non-EU nationals are conspicuous. In both sectors, Maltese workers are a minority, and for markedly different reasons.

### TIGHT LABOUR SUPPLY

In terms of wages, one could postulate that an influx of foreign workers, particularly in relation to unskilled, elementary occupations, can have a measurable dampening effect on wages as long as labour supply is so tight. Indeed, the per capita annual growth of emoluments to Maltese employees reached 3.6% in 2001-4, then peaked at 4.1% for the period 2005-9, but then declined back to 3.3% for the period 2010-14 (Grech, 2016: 41). (Indeed, inflation rates are stable at below 2%, so there has not been any strong higher wage push.) With Malta's economy growing at very healthy rates in recent years, one could argue that the presence of foreign workers may have staved off stronger demands by the Maltese workforce for higher wages. In other words, without the labour immigration that has been witnessed, there would have been a relative scarcity of labour in Malta. This, in turn, would have resulted in stronger bargaining positions for workers (individually and collectively) and result in higher wages which, however – given our invariably open economy – may have challenged or compromised Malta's export competitiveness.

And yet, if there ever was a good time to revise the indexation mechanism – based on the cost of living adjustment (COLA) while taking into account the Retail Price Index – which sets the national minimum wage – at €169.76 a week in 2017 – *the time is now*. First of all, only some 3.4% of all full-time employees received the minimum wage in 2015. Secondly, the increase in the net statutory minimum wage has lagged behind the stronger increase in net average wages in Malta in recent years. In France and Malta, the minimum wage rose only by about 1% in both 2015 and 2016: this is the lowest increase recorded in the whole of the EU 28, with the exception of Greece (where the minimum wage has remained unchanged since 2012). Thirdly, the minimum wage in Malta has actually *decreased* in real terms by 1.4% between 2010 and 2017 (Eurofound, 2017: 4-5). It is therefore consoling and comforting to hear that an agreement to revise the mechanism which determines the National Minimum Wage was indeed hammered out within the MCESD, and accepted both by the Prime Minister on behalf of the Maltese Government as well as the Leader of the Opposition, on April 26th 2017.

We have now reached a situation where *any* major new investment starting operations in Malta – such as US specialist printer Crane Currency (2017) – must seriously consider its recruitment strategy. For specialist jobs, the recruitment of foreign workers may be inevitable; while any Maltese personnel may have to be poached from other employers by the offer of enticing ‘sweet deals’, effectively transferring the recruitment problem to another employer. The Association of General Retailers and Traders (GRTU) declared that there is a proper “human resource crisis” in the Maltese private sector, due to a general inability to find desperately needed staff (Schembri Orland, 2016).

The influx of so many foreign workers is also likely to have disturbed the national industrial relations landscape. The majority of foreign workers now in Malta are located at the very top or very bottom of the labour market hierarchy; these are the two labour market segments that are least disposed towards trade union consciousness and affiliation. The fact that most of these foreign workers are engaged in the private sector compounds their likely overall disenchantment and disinterest with trade union membership and with collective bargaining: after all, the bulk of such foreign workers are engaged in such economic sectors – construction, catering, gaming, personal care – where trade union membership and representation in Malta is at very low levels. Such foreign workers are also likely to follow the industry trend, preferring to engage in individual negotiations with employers, boosted by the current tight labour supply; or else are gratefully accepting what their employer offers (which is always so much better than the long term unemployment prospects in their country of origin). There is also probably a general lack of awareness of the potential utility of trade unions – many of these immigrants might not be as well integrated in the Maltese social fabric and so would have a lower or partial knowledge of local institutions. Besides, for those foreigners doing undeclared work; they would have their suspicions from getting involved with any institution such as a trade union adding further to the overall reticence.

## FUTURE SCENARIOS

In the short term, it is likely that local employers will resist the continuation of tight labour markets which play into the hands of workers, the latter exploiting their commanding situation as the recipients of rare skills and human capital to secure better conditions of employment. Already, there are clear instances of specific high-skill domains, like information technology, where employees – especially those with work experience – are in such high demand that government institutions are witnessing a significant loss of their manpower to the better paying pockets of the private sector, jeopardising their operations in the outcome. Staving off the HR haemorrhage may only be possible by sweetening the conditions of employment.

Employers have lobbied, and will continue to apply pressure on Government, to permit even more ‘third country’ nationals to secure work permits. They will also support measures that would allow *bona fide* full-time foreign students studying in tertiary education institutions in Malta to secure work permits for a limited time period after their graduation from the University of Malta, MCAST or the Institute of Tourism Studies.

## CONCLUSION

Finally, and more soberly, what of medium-to-long term labour market prognostications for Malta? Years of plenty may morph into years of drought. For all its current show of dazzling resilience and robustness, Malta’s economy is necessarily exposed and open to external shocks, an observation confirmed most recently by credit rating agency DBRS (Times of Malta, 2017). Strong economic growth does not last forever; when the crunch comes, foreign workers in Malta, being inherently mobile, are likely to be disposed to pack up their bags, leave and seek other pastures. This is especially so in economically potentially volatile sectors like tourism and electronic gaming. In this way, the clutch of foreigners now working in Malta could be seen as a cushion, protecting local workers from the consequences of eventual redundancy and job loss. In spite of its small size, let us hope that our fairly diversified economy will be able to weather the shocks that it will inevitably face.

Until then, we need to wake up to the myriad implications of Malta as a labour importing economy, bucking the historical trend.

## Acknowledgements

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## SECTION 3.2



# Work-Life Balance Measures for Persons of Working Age

## WITH DEPENDENT RELATIVES\*

**Anna Borg**

*Care for disabled and chronically ill family members with Long-Term Care (LTC) needs, is still largely provided informally by women. Yet, in spite of the increasing number of women in the labour market, Malta does not have any legal provisions to facilitate their work-life balance. As a result, women may face a higher risk of poverty or social exclusion and situations may be worse for workers in the private sector where family friendly measures are scant. This gendered issue is not cost neutral and requires immediate attention to ensure that all workers can afford a decent living as they strive to care and work.*

### DESCRIPTION OF MAIN FEATURES OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE MEASURES FOR WORKING-AGE PEOPLE WITH DEPENDENT RELATIVES

'Working age persons with dependent relatives' refers to workers who assume the main responsibility for members of their families who require

consistent care over a long period of time. These can be their children, their elderly parents, or their spouse or partner, who are chronically ill, or are disabled and/or frail and who require substantial care and attention. In the absence of formal care, workers who find themselves in these situations may have limited options. For example, they can stay in the job but reduce their working hours; switch to part time work in order to cope with the new demands, or at worst quit their job in order to take care of their dependent relative. These arrangements may be of a temporary or a full time nature and can affect their income and their pensions accordingly.

Informal care for those who require long term care is provided largely by women (European Foundation, 2013). Men, on the other hand, tend to give a lending hand. However, they generally do so in ways which do not disrupt their paid work. In the more affluent families, paid carers from the Philippines are increasingly being recruited especially to help with the elderly relatives. However, long-term care is largely dependent on the benevolence of female family members, who may do so at the expense of their paid work and their career progression (Tolu, 2014).

No legal provisions exist *per se* to facilitate the work-life balance of these workers. This is especially problematic for workers in the private sector. Employers in this sector can voluntarily grant special concessions to accommodate such workers in order to help them balance their paid work with their caring obligations. In 2013 it was reported that 5.9% of private sector employers provided flexible work arrangements to those caring for elderly parents (Borg, 2013).

Workers in the public sector and the public service may be in a better position in that a number of carer-related entitlements are available under the family friendly arrangements offered by government (Public Administration HR Office, 2014). These measures are not strictly reserved for those with long-term care dependent relatives, but are available to a wider category of employees with the aim of creating a mutually beneficial work environment. Workers with long term care dependents in the public sector and public administration may indirectly use such measures to balance their paid work with their long term caring obligations. Depending on the nature of the measures, these are not cost neutral and may have negative implications on the income and career progression of the workers who use them. These measures are discussed in more detail below:

## REDUCED HOURS

Workers in the public sector/public administration, who work on a 40 hour week, may reduce their working time by working between 20 and 35 hours weekly instead. In general, this measure is targeted at parents with children up to 16. However, reduced working hours are also made available to workers who for *"medical or serious humanitarian and/or family reasons, cannot attend their duties on a full-time basis"*. Workers may also ask to work on reduced hours for "other reasons". These cases are assessed on a case by case basis taking into consideration both the personal and the organisational needs.

Reduced working hours may allow workers with long term care needs to balance work and care, but this comes at a price in that the income is also slashed and pegged to the number of hours worked.

## TELEWORK

Workers in the public sector/public administration who have at least one year of service may ask to work through telework if their "job performance, traits and skills as well as the nature of their job" are considered to be suitable for Telework. Whilst telework may be ideal for workers with long term care needs, not all jobs can be done from home and this means that a large category of workers, whose work is location bound, cannot use spatial flexibility in order to handle long term care needs within their family.

## FLEXI-TIME

Workers in the public sector/public administration who have at least one year of service may apply to work on a flexi-time schedule as long as the service is not affected negatively and no extra costs are incurred to accede to such a request. The approval to such requests is at the discretion of the applicant's Head of Department or Director and may be suspended for a valid reason. Flexi-time is unlikely to be sufficient for workers with long term care needs, although it may be useful in cases where care is shared with others or when they can access care services for part of the working day.

## RESPONSIBILITY LEAVE

Unpaid responsibility leave may be availed of by workers in the public sector/public administration in order to take care of 'dependent elderly

parents, sons and daughters, or spouses/partners in a civil union' who do not have other means of care during the day. Workers who apply for this leave must have completed at least one year of service. The leave is typically granted for one year, but can be renewed. Employees who resume their duties are not normally allowed to apply for responsibility leave again before 12 months, except in special circumstances. This form of leave is unpaid and so whilst it may be useful in the short term, it does not offer long term solutions to workers with long term care needs. Furthermore, this type of leave is only applicable to those persons who have other means of income and who can afford to stay away from work.

### CAREER BREAK

Parents and legal guardians of children under the age of eight (including those who may require long term care) are allowed a total of five years unpaid career break. This unpaid leave may be taken in whole or in multiples of at least three months. This type of leave is restricted to working parents and leaves out a larger category of workers whose care needs may be related to elderly relatives or members of their family who are over the age of eight. Furthermore, like responsibility leave this is unpaid and may pose problems to those workers without an alternative source of income.

### CARERS' LEAVE

Workers who operate in the public sector/public administration in Malta can benefit from carers' leave. This is also unpaid and could raise difficulties for persons with no other income.

Apart from various forms of family friendly measures and family related leaves, carers may also be entitled to cash benefits and a pension, which are discussed below:

### CARERS' CASH BENEFITS AND PENSION

Cash benefits are available to carers involved in Long Term Care in Malta. However, these are only available to single persons and to widows because they are assumed to be without a 'partner' who can provide for them. Single and widowed carers can only qualify for either a carer's pension or a carer's social assistance if they pass a very stringent means test (Borg & Vassallo, 2016). It is often claimed that this is necessary because too generous

provisions may keep persons away from seeking gainful employment. The overall result is that very few Maltese actually derive these benefits and there is clear discrimination against women who are married (Borg & Vassallo, 2016).

Persons who are caring for an elderly or disabled family member on a full time basis may also be entitled to the carer's pension (better known as *il-Pensjoni tal-Wens*). Likewise, the pension is only payable to single or widowed citizens of Malta who are taking care of a bed-ridden or wheelchair bound near relative. The pension is means tested, and the financial income of the carer from this pension is less than the minimum wage (Borg & Vassallo, 2016).

### ASSESSMENT OF OVERALL PACKAGE OF MEASURES AND INTERACTIONS BETWEEN MEASURES

As can be seen from the above, the measures that are specifically intended to assist persons with dependent relatives who require long-term care to achieve work-life balance are limited – although workers in the public sector and public administration have more entitlements when compared to workers in the private sector. This suggests that, to a large extent, Malta's social policy regime still assumes that care will primarily be given by the direct family members and especially by women. This is evident from the fact that there is scant provision for carers to at least make up for their potential income when they care for a dependent relative. The little that exists is linked to a very stringent means test, through which only a few can go through.

In view of this, the push towards institutionalisation of persons requiring LTC in cases where the family cannot cope, is fast increasing. As a result, the waiting lists, especially the number of elderly waiting to be admitted to institutional care, is constantly increasing as Malta's population ages, and most people, of both genders, now prefer to remain in the labour market rather than stay at home and look after their relatives (LFS, 2017).

In order to encourage more people to retain their relatives requiring LTC at home, government has introduced a pilot scheme in January 2016 which allows families to reclaim part of the cost of employing a carer. This scheme, which is still in its early stages, may in the long run be useful to enable more persons to remain in the labour market rather than forcing

them out if they do not find long term residential care for their relatives. However, this scheme only covers part of the cost and hence it may be discriminatory against poorer families who cannot afford it.

### POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the dire lack of consideration in Malta's social policy regime in favour of the services provided by long-term carers, the following recommendations are appropriate:

- a) There needs to be a holistic examination of LTC policies applicable in Malta and it can no longer be assumed that women will continue to provide most of the informal long term care to their detriment.
- b) A complete revision of the Carer's Pension and Social Assistance is required to give value to care regardless whether the person is single or widowed.
- c) Family friendly measures which are at present open only to persons engaged in the public service and public administration ought to be open to all workers in the private sector. Unions can play a major role in bringing about this change which can be introduced over a number of years.
- d) Caring responsibilities should be equally shared between women and men. Hence, an educational campaign in this regard would be extremely useful. Furthermore, in order to ensure long term change, children should be taught early at school about gender equality, and about the importance of equal rights and equal burdens.

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## SECTION 3.3



## Skills Governance in Malta

**Manwel Debono**

*The changing sectors of employment, together with the low unemployment rate, are creating substantial gaps between labour supply and demand, indicating the rising need to focus on skills governance in Malta. Several policies, strategies and measures are being implemented to steer the education and training provision. However, the current production of labour market and skills intelligence is not sufficiently geared to anticipate skills needs. While career guidance plays a significant role in reducing labour market friction, the field is still fragmented and insufficiently professionalised. Major stakeholders are involved in steering education and training at various levels and in different ways. Skills governance in Malta could improve through a greater focus on quality of services, better intelligence and more collaboration among stakeholders.*

### INTRODUCTION - IMBALANCES IN THE LABOUR MARKET

Malta's employment rate increased by almost eight percentage points from 56.2% in 2010 to 63.9% in 2015 (Eurostat), reflecting a rapidly growing economy. Low-tech labour-intensive manufacturing has given way to more high-tech manufacturing and services, especially, tourism, finance

and online gaming. Such structural changes are reflected in a general shift towards jobs requiring higher qualifications and skills.

Meanwhile, the historically low unemployment rate, shrinking from 6.9% in 2010 to 5.4% in 2015 to 4.1% in February 2017 – the latter being the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest in the EU28 (Eurostat) – is resulting in an unprecedented human resources crisis among SMEs which are experiencing major difficulties in finding sufficient recruits (Orland, 2016). "The greatest recruitment difficulties in Malta appear within the health care, the financial and the ICT sectors" (European Commission, 2014, p.1). Major bottlenecks within highly-skilled jobs concern medical practitioners, nurses, and various specialisations in IT and in the financial sector. On the other hand, bottlenecks in the low-skilled jobs are often related to the hospitality industry (European Commission, 2014). The main reasons for skills imbalances leading to the above-mentioned bottlenecks vary from sector to sector. Malta's ageing population and the widening of the healthcare sector boosted the demand for related professions. The supply of new graduates has been insufficient to meet demand – many young doctors migrate, whereas the capping of the intake in the university nursing course was also limiting the number of graduates. The rapid growth of the ICT and financial services, thanks to government incentives directed towards foreign direct investment, was quicker than the growth of graduates in the respective fields. On the other side of the qualifications and skills spectrum, the difficult working conditions in the hospitality industry appear to scare off potential workers (European Commission, 2014).

An adequate skills governance system is required to manage the imbalances in Malta's labour market. The following sections discuss four important aspects of skills governance in Malta, namely the steering of education and training, the production of labour market and skills intelligence, the availability of career guidance, and the role of stakeholders in skills governance.

### STEERING THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVISION

The current government regards addressing skills shortages and skills gaps among its top priorities (Ministry for Finance, 2014) and launched several policies, strategies and measures aimed at better aligning

education and training to the world of work. These initiatives are guided by the 'Framework for the Education Strategy for Malta for 2014 to 2024', meant to provide everyone with the opportunity to obtain the skills and attitudes to succeed at work and in society (Ministry for Education and Employment, MEDE, 2014b). The 'Malta National Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020' (MEDE, 2014c) acknowledges the need to align lifelong learning with employment needs in a bid to improve individuals' employment flexibility and consequently their life chances. The document 'A strategic Plan for the Prevention of Early School Leaving in Malta' (MEDE, 2014a) includes measures to increase literacy levels and introduce vocational education and training (VET) subjects in secondary schools. As part of the 'Youth Guarantee' initiative, the government is increasing the employment skills of young persons who are not in education, employment or training (NEETs). An alternative learning programme is being carried out "to provide alternative learning pathways for form 5 students not sitting for any SEC examinations" (Ministry for Finance, 2014, Annex 1). The 'Higher Education Strategy for Malta' (NCFHE, 2014) and the 'National Vocational Education and Training Policy' (MEDE, 2015) both focus on research as a means of steering the education and training provision.

Government policies and strategies led to diverse projects and initiatives aiming at boosting higher qualifications, promoting particular subjects within the educational system, and encouraging the training of specific social groups. Apart from the substantial investments channelled to improve the educational infrastructure, financial incentives were set up to train particular social groups, such as single parents and old unemployed persons. Incentives also target the growth of skills in specific disciplines. The 'maintenance grant system' aims to encourage more students to further their education beyond compulsory schooling. By assigning higher grants to specific courses, the government aims to attract more students towards sciences and healthcare. Further education in specific areas of study is also promoted through various scholarship schemes such as the new 'Endeavour' programme. Jobsplus recently organised two similar schemes for its clients, namely, the Training Subsidy Scheme (TSS) and the Training Subsidy Scheme for Academic Training (TSSA) (Jobsplus Website). The apprenticeship system passed under the responsibility of

the Malta College of Arts, Science and technology (MCAST) in 2014 and was revamped in order to better address skills gaps, increase the labour market relevance of VET, and make apprenticeships more attractive to students and employers.

The financial incentives associated with maintenance grants, scholarships and apprenticeships served to increase the uptake of higher education (HE) and VET courses. But is the government getting the best value for money through these financial incentives? There needs to be a thorough evaluation of the maintenance grants, as the dead weight of the system appears to have increased considerably over the years. Similarly, scholarship schemes should be evaluated against their results, while the applicants' financial means should be considered as part of the selection criteria.

## PRODUCTION OF LABOUR MARKET AND SKILLS INTELLIGENCE

"There is no particular institutional mechanism dedicated specifically for the anticipation of skills needs in Malta" (National Commission for Further and Higher Education, NCFHE, 2013, p.19) and no coherent labour market and skills forecasting system is in place.

A number of institutions produce and disseminate statistics on trends in education and work. The National Statistics Office (NSO) regularly publishes data about education and labour market trends. The NCFHE and the Student Services Department within the MEDE publish education statistics and tracer studies. Other tracer studies have also been carried out by the University of Malta (e.g. Debono, 2013) and MCAST (2014). These instruments establish trends, but are not particularly accurate in predicting future labour market or skills needs.

Few forecasting mechanisms of labour market or skills needs exist. The Central Bank of Malta (CBM) publishes short-term forecasts regarding business confidence and employment prospects, and longer term macroeconomic projections. EY (2014) issues an annual 'Attractiveness Survey' with the projections of existing foreign investors for the next years. A main problem with this data is that it is too generic and does not shed sufficient light on specific future skill needs. More precise forecasting of labour market and skills intelligence continues to be carried out mostly through

uncoordinated ad hoc one-off studies. While these often deal with the skills required in particular economic sectors (Debono, 2008), some studies are more general in nature, like the National Employee Skills Survey (NCFHE, Malta Enterprise, & Jobsplus, 2016). Other studies focus on the supply side, shedding light on the skills of specific social groups, such as the 'Unlocking the Female Potential Report' (National Commission for the Promotion of Equality, NCPE, 2012).

The government recently started implementing plans to improve the production of labour market and skills intelligence in a bid to "identify emerging trends at sectoral level and anticipate the corresponding skills that are required" (MEDE, 2014d, p.51). As part of this strategy, an 'Employability Index', meant to guide students on the types of jobs available for different qualifications, was launched in 2015. Besides, a National Skills Council with broad stakeholder representation was set up in 2016 to "direct studies, propose and plan strategies and training aimed at reducing labour shortages, improving skills and meeting market demands" (MEDE, 2016).

It appears that policy makers make regular use of the existing skills forecasting instruments; yet, such information is scarcely consulted in the development of education and training courses or by career practitioners.

## CAREER GUIDANCE

Within compulsory education, career guidance is offered on a one-to-one basis or in groups mainly by guidance teachers and career advisors. Contact with representatives of employers, HE, VET and other important stakeholders is maintained through career exhibitions, seminars, fairs and conventions that are organised regularly at school, college and national level. These stakeholders are also invited by schools to give talks to students. Besides, career orientation visits and job shadowing are organised for students in Forms 4 and 5, the last two years of secondary education. Career guidance within compulsory schools is complemented by career education which forms part of the Personal, Social and Career Development (PSCD) subject. Career assistance is also offered in the main post-secondary, vocational and tertiary educational institutions.

While Malta's employment services have traditionally prioritised immediate job placement rather than lifelong career development, employment advisors within Jobsplus, Malta's public and largest

employment services organisation, impart career guidance while dealing with their clients. Jobsplus has recently started imparting more career guidance to specific social groups such as those not in education, employment or training (NEETs). Besides, it has a number of initiatives, some of which are expected to initiate in 2017, targeted at the skills-development of working adults. An increasing amount of employment services is being carried out by the over 70 registered private employment agencies in Malta. However, the type and quality of the services offered in these agencies is unknown and probably varies considerably, as the sector is not sufficiently monitored and regulated.

Many persons who work in the career guidance field in Malta completed specialised career guidance courses at undergraduate or postgraduate level at the University of Malta, while some others completed courses with foreign universities. The 'Career Guidance Capacity Building' scheme offered a few years ago assisted several practitioners to further their studies in the field. Qualified practitioners are normally trained to interpret data deriving from forecasting instruments. However, many practitioners in the field do not have formal qualifications in career guidance. The latter might be less able and willing to use labour market and skills intelligence. Having said that, career practitioners within both compulsory education and employment services participate in continuous professional development activities offered by government and the Malta Career Guidance Association.

Considerable career guidance work is being carried out in Malta, but there needs to be a more cohesive approach, aided by better labour market and skills intelligence, so that high quality services are consistently provided to satisfy the lifelong career needs of clients.

## THE ROLE OF STAKEHOLDERS

HE and VET providers, social partners, Jobsplus, policy makers and other stakeholders are involved in shaping the education and training provisions in line with Malta's labour market needs.

Plenty of opportunities exist for stakeholders to discuss such themes at a national level in conferences and in other fora. The major HE and VET providers in Malta, namely the University of Malta and MCAST, together with Jobsplus, over the years included representatives of social partners on their Boards. Thus, stakeholders are directly involved in the formulation

of these institutions' policies and strategies. At the level of planning and reviewing specific courses, the above-mentioned institutions involve other stakeholders in different ways and to varying extents. Jobsplus holds meetings with employers to ensure that its courses are in line with labour market needs, and many of its courses were prompted by and developed with the help of employers (Debono, 2015). MCAST also gives considerable importance to fostering links with employers and regularly signs cooperation agreements with both public and private sector organisations, besides keeping links with hundreds of employers who offer apprenticeship placements. Malta Enterprise has recently collaborated on the development of new courses with ETC, MCAST, and the Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS) (Ministry for Finance, 2015).

Several social partners carry out training courses for their members according to the arising needs. For example, the General Workers Union (GWU) has an educational branch called Reggie Miller Foundation which organises training courses in collaboration with stakeholders such as the ETC and the University of Malta. The *Union Haddiema Magħqudin* (UHM) organises courses through its Salvinu Spiteri Foundation. The Malta Employers' Association also organises regular courses for their members.

At a macro policy level, social partners and other stakeholders publish policy proposals from time to time. For example, they submit annual pre-budget proposals to government and pre-elections proposals every five years. These documents often include recommendations on education and training. The major social partners are also represented on the Malta Council for Economic and Social Development (MCESD), where issues relating to education and training are among the topics discussed. In 2013, social partners represented on the MCESD together with the main political parties signed a labour market policy document drafted by the UHM (2012) in which they agreed to a number of measures focusing among others on the improvement of existing skills and the anticipation of future skills needs.

The major stakeholders are strongly involved in steering education and training in Malta at various levels and in different ways. However, it is clear that the different stakeholders (including government ministries, entities and departments) should collaborate more together to achieve a greater synergy in the field of skills governance.

## CONCLUSION

While considerable work is being carried out to improve skills governance in Malta, the arising skills gaps indicate that such efforts might not be sufficient. Despite the multitude of well-meaning policies, strategies and measures, some other important elements are required to bring about further progress. There needs to be regular thorough evaluation of all actions that are carried out, whether they are incentives, training programmes or career guidance services. This would lead to more focused efforts and an enhanced quality of the services offered. Skills forecasting exercises should be carried out on a regular basis and their results should be more intelligible to career practitioners and other stakeholders. There also need to be greater cohesion among stakeholders in order to ensure a smoother and more thorough implementation of relevant policies and strategies, resulting in a greater responsiveness to the arising labour market needs.

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## SECTION 3.4



# The Aging Workforce

## AN ERGONOMIC APPROACH AND THE SITUATION IN MALTA

**Luke Fiorini**

Europe and Malta are experiencing slowed population growth and accelerated population aging. Malta has one of the lowest employment rates for older adults in Europe. The current article explores how workplaces should be modified to cater for older adults whilst also exploring the current situation in Malta.

### INTRODUCTION

Increased longevity and reduced fertility rates, often well below replacement levels, have resulted in the slowing of population growth and accelerated population ageing throughout Europe. In particular, the aging of the post-war baby boomer demographic is expected to result in rapid increases in the frequency of older adults in the coming decades (European Commission [EC], 2014). Malta is no exception, population projections indicate that the Maltese population will become increasingly aged in the coming decades (National Statistics Office [NSO], 2011). Amongst the challenges posed by an aging population is the shrinking labour force. In fact, Malta and the EU are projected to move from having four working-age

people for every person aged 65-plus in 2008, to a ratio of two working aged people for every person aged 65 or over in 2060 (Formosa, 2013), however this ratio may be influenced by other external issues such as migration. Only three out of every ten individuals in the 'pre-retirement' age cohort (60-64) in the EU27 are in employment. Additionally, Malta has one of the lowest employment rates for older workers (aged 55-64) amongst the European member states (Eurofound, 2012) but is expected to see amongst the largest increase in older individuals in the workforce (Millar & Culpin, 2014).

The aging European population is expected to have huge economic ramifications including the greater need for long-term care facilities, difficulty in sustaining pensions and increasing public debt (EC, 2014). In view of this, the European Union has been urging the need for improved employment opportunities for older workers as far back as the 1994 EU summit. Additionally, the European Commission published a number of recommendations in 2012 which included: linking retirement age to increased life expectancy; restricting early retirement schemes; supporting longer working lives via improved access to lifelong learning; adapting the workplace to a more diverse workforce; developing employment opportunities for older workers and supporting healthy aging (EC, 2014). An integrated policy in order to deal with the challenges posed by an aging workforce is thus called for (Belin, Dupont, Oules, & Kuipers, 2016).

One approach to engaging older workers is via the development of national policies and interventions. Eurofound (2012) identified a number of such policies that had been implemented around Europe. These included: raising the statutory pension age; pension reform; reducing incentives for early retirement; anti-discrimination and diversity policy; promoting lifelong learning and skills development; financial incentives to employers to maintain and/or assist the re-entry of, older workers into employment; financial incentives which encouraged employees to remain in employment for longer; phased retirement schemes; and awareness and information campaigns to challenge age-related negative stereotypes and ageism. Such policies however, need to be coupled with organisation-level policy and interventions. For employers, this holds a number of benefits including: preventing the loss of expertise and skills; offsetting labour shortages in view

of the shrinking labour market; improving employee health and wellbeing; maintaining/improving work productivity; preventing the costs associated with absenteeism and early retirement; and boosting corporate image (Belin et al., 2016). In-view of the benefits of organisation-level policies and interventions, the following section deals with the development of such interventions and is followed by a discussion of the situation in Malta.

### AGE-RELATED CHANGES AND ERGONOMICS

Ergonomics is the study of understanding the interactions among humans and the other elements of a system in order to enhance human well-being and performance (International Ergonomics Association, 2017). Proponents of this applied science advocate that work tasks, the work environment and wider organisational factors should be matched to individuals' physical, cognitive and psychological attributes. An ergonomic approach is thus useful to ensure that older workers can continue contributing to the world of work. The application of a holistic approach in order to tackle the aging workforce is not a new concept, Ilmarinen (2007 in EC, 2014) for example, noted that the employability of older workers depended in-part on their workability and stated that this depended on health and functional levels (physical), levels of competence including knowledge and skills (cognitive), values which included work attitudes and motivation (psychological) and work related factors such as the work tasks, environment and leadership. In view of this holistic approach, the common changes associated with aging are now considered in turn, along with some brief considerations of how the work system could be moulded to either minimise the negative changes, whilst also taking advantage of the positive aspects of aging. Positive modification of the individual however, such as through exercise, is also considered where possible.

### PERCEPTUAL ABILITIES

Perceptual abilities tend to degrade with age, with visual and auditory changes amongst the most relevant in work settings. Visual changes can include deteriorating ability to resolve detail, to focus on close objects, and to adapt to poor lighting conditions such as glare and darkness amongst others. These can however be largely countered by corrective personal

aids and medical procedures as well as work design considerations. For example, in an office environment consideration could be given to the position of display screens, the size of the text, and the provision of a correctly lit work environment.

Auditory abilities are also affected by age, with auditory acuity and localisation, particularly for higher frequency sounds, and the ability to perceive speech deteriorating. Hearing aids and design considerations however can largely reduce the impact of these changes. For example, the use of high frequency sounds, such as in alarms and auditory notifications, should be avoided, whilst interventions to reduce background noise can be particularly useful (Boot, Nichols, Rogers, & Fisk, 2012).

### COGNITIVE ABILITIES

Two important cognitive aspects which are negatively affected by ageing are selective attention and attentional capacity. Selective attention refers to the ability to be able to focus on different goal-relevant stimuli whilst ignoring those considered irrelevant. Attentional capacity on the other hand, refers to the amount of information individuals can cognitively process at a time. Decrement in both aspect of attention however can be attenuated by task-relevant training, as well as design measures such as the removal of task-irrelevant stimuli (Boot et al., 2012).

Changes in memory have also been illustrated with age. Memory used to process information that is currently being attended to (working memory) often deteriorates with age, as does the ability to remember events (episodic memory) and the ability to remember to carry out future tasks (prospective memory) (Boot et al., 2012; Zacks et al., 2000). Work design considerations however can aid in attenuating these changes. For example, tasks can be re-designed to reduce the need to remember information during task performance, importance should also be given to ensure that workers are not overburdened and cues could be provided to remind workers of upcoming appointments (Boot et al., 2012). Whilst certain cognitive processes do often slow down with age, this does not necessarily have to impact work performance as they are often offset by greater levels of experience and knowledge (Crawford, Graveling, Cowie, Dixon, MacCalman, 2009). In fact, minimal age-related changes occur in the

memory of facts (semantic memory) and skills (procedural memory) (Zacks et al., 2000). Additionally, some individuals, such as those who are more healthy, have higher levels of education and have complex challenging jobs, are more resilient to cognitive aging (Bosma, van Boxtel, Ponds, Houw & Jolles, 2003). This suggests that encouraging older adults to engage in physical activity (Barnes, 2015) as well as cognitive exercise (Morgan, 2004) via workplace health promotion interventions may aid in preventing cognitive decline. Older adults' greater levels of knowledge also highlights that they are a valuable source of experience that should be harnessed to educate less experienced employees.

### PSYCHOLOGICAL ABILITIES

Research findings indicate that with increased age, individuals are calmer and experience less negative emotions (Scheibe & Zacher, 2013), whilst older employees also report lower levels of burnout and interpersonal conflict. It has been suggested that this may be due to older employees focusing on positive work experiences and avoiding or ignoring negative ones (Ng & Feldman, 2010). Additionally, whilst personality traits were traditionally viewed as stable and unchanging patterns of thoughts, feelings and behaviours (McCrae & Costa, 1994), recent cross-sectional and longitudinal aging research challenges this and illustrates that personality traits continue to change in adulthood. Social vitality and social dominance, two aspects of extraversion, show opposing changes: whilst social vitality appears to decrease slowly with age, social dominance appears to increase over time, particularly in young adulthood. On average, individuals become increasingly agreeable with age, with the largest gains seen in late adulthood. Conscientiousness also appears to increase steadily from adolescence until late adulthood, emotional stability shows the greatest gains in adolescence and mid-life, but continues to increase until late adulthood, whilst openness to experience shows great increases in adolescence and then demonstrates similar falls in old age (Roberts & Mroczek, 2009). The results have since been largely replicated (Willie, Hofmans, Feys, & De Fruyt, 2014) and this suggests that older workers are generally more pleasant, self-disciplined, and stable individuals. Consistent with negative changes in openness to experience, older

employees have also been found to be less open to training and career development opportunities (e.g. Ng & Feldman, 2012), however conflicting evidence does exist (Crawford et al., 2009). Older individuals learn more slowly than younger ones and when developing training, it is important to ensure that both the type and methods of learning are relevant (Crawford et al., 2009). Lundberg and Marshallsay (2007) for example found that older individuals preferred practical and one-to-one learning, as well as mentorship by older individuals. Additionally they viewed 'train the trainer' courses positively in order to assist them in passing on their knowledge when mentoring younger individuals.

### PHYSICAL ABILITIES

Physical changes also occur with age. Commonly, increasing age negatively impacts upon movement speed, control, strength, balance and aerobic capacity (Boot et al., 2012; Truxillo, Cadiz & Hammer, 2015). Morgan (2004) however noted that whilst older adults have slower reaction speed, they monitor their actions more closely in order to achieve higher accuracy rates. This increased rate of accuracy however could be lost when employers impose excessively high work rates on older workers with little autonomy for adjustment and thus should be avoided. The impact that age-related physical changes could have in the workplace also depends on the design of one's tasks. For example, software controls can easily minimise the impact of speed and control decrements in computer users, such as by increasing the size of icons (to compensate for less accurate movements) and by adjusting the speed of the cursor and the speed by which one needs to double click. Adjustments to the indoor and outdoor work environment, such as maintenance, choice of flooring materials and correct lighting, can minimise the chance of falls. Consideration to the products purchased, such as tools, and their maintenance as well as introducing technology to limit manual handling can minimise the impact of reducing levels of strength in a variety of workers. The introduction of health promotion initiatives should also be considered however as physical activity can prevent or reduce many of the physical changes attributed to aging such as reductions in strength and balance (Crawford et al., 2009).

Older individuals have a greater need for recovery; this is particularly true for those exposed to high physical and psychological demands, as

well as those engaging in monotonous work and working longer hours (Crawford, Graveling, Cowie, & Dixon, 2010). Considerations should therefore be given to providing adequate breaks, job rotation, flexible working hours as well as reducing the demands workers are exposed to. Older workers are also generally more susceptible to heat stress. Rather than age per se, it is likely that this intolerance to heat at work is secondary to states common in older adults such as certain diseases, such as diabetes, decreased cardiovascular capabilities and decreased physical ability. In fact, healthy and well acclimatised older adults perform similarly to younger individuals when subjected to hot conditions (Crawford et al., 2010; Pandolf, 1997). Despite this, interventions should be carried out to avoid work in excessively hot conditions and can be achieved via a number of methods such as cooling environments, providing shading or carrying out work at less hot times of day. Consideration however should also be given to conducting medical screening of employees to ensure that older individuals are medically fit to work in hotter environments.

### THE SITUATION AND ORGANISATION-LEVEL INTERVENTIONS IN MALTA

A Eurobarometer report (EC, 2012) probed the state of active aging in Europe. The report suggested that Maltese individuals considered themselves as 'old' at 65.2 years, which was above the EU average of 63.9. Additionally, the percentage of the Maltese cohort who considered themselves as 'very satisfied' with their health, functional ability, life in general, personal relationships and living conditions was greater than the EU average, suggesting that the Maltese in general enjoy above average health and quality of life. Despite this however, the report also highlighted that the Maltese cohort felt that they could continue in their current job until the age of 57.3, which was not only lower than the EU average of 61.7, but was the lowest age in the EU. In view of the better than average health and perceived favourable aging reported by the same cohort, this result suggests that Maltese workplaces may not be providing an environment conducive for older workers to continue contributing and suggests the need for relevant ergonomic interventions. Additionally, the 6<sup>th</sup> European Working Conditions Survey (Eurofound, 2015) indicated that Maltese participants scored lower than the EU average on both the 'self-reported

ability to work until the age of 60 by respondents aged 55 and under', as well as the 'self-reported ability to work in five years' time by respondents aged 56 and over', further emphasising this point.

The same Eurobarometer study (EC, 2012) also analysed European individuals' perceptions of older workers. Overall the Maltese sample demonstrated favourable perceptions of older workers: 71% of individuals felt that people 55 years and over played a major role in the economy; 76% felt that individuals in this age group contributed as workers. Both of these scores were greater than the EU average. Additionally, compared to the EU average, a greater percentage of Maltese felt that compared to younger individuals, those aged 55 and above were more likely to be: experienced; reliable; find it easier to take decisions on their own; able to find solutions to problems; able to work well with other people; able to get on with people from different cultural backgrounds; and open to new ideas. However, the Maltese cohort scored below the EU average in their opinion of older workers' ability to: handle stress; productivity; flexibility; creativity; and up to date with technology, when compared to younger individuals (EC, 2012).

Twenty per cent of Maltese and EU respondents reported experiencing or saw age discrimination at work. When questioned on why individuals aged 55 and over may stop working, 75% felt that exclusion from workplace training was a reason (greater than EU average) whilst 70% stated that employers did not view older workers positively (equal to EU average). Furthermore, less Maltese than the EU average wanted to continue working once they reached pensionable age (23% versus 33%) and found a part-time job with a partial pension instead of full retirement appealing (47% versus 65%) (EC, 2012).

The findings of the Eurobarometer study indicate that older workers were thus generally perceived positively by the Maltese sample in terms of workplace contribution, experience and camaraderie. This mirrors the positive age-related changes previously discussed which included increased knowledge and positive changes in character. Negative stereotypes however were also evident with views that older workers were less able to handle stress, less up to date and less open. In a study of older aviation workers in Malta, Agius (2005) found that most felt that they did not lose their abilities, were not harder to train, and were not less productive. Most however, agreed that they were slower to adapt to change.

The low percentage of individuals who felt that they wished to continue working beyond pensionable age is interesting in view that Aristovnik and Jaklic (2013) found that Maltese older workers had the highest level of job satisfaction of all EU older workers, whilst a study of pharmaceutical workers in Malta identified that it was the older workers who were most work engaged (Jones, 2015). This negative view of working in older age may be linked to the perceived difficulty of doing so, in view that many did not feel capable of carrying out their current job beyond the age of 57.3, highlighting the need for workplace interventions, however it may also be due to perceptions that older adults were not well regarded by employers and were excluded from training. In fact, in a study of Maltese manufacturing employers, Spiteri (2012) reported that older employees were less likely to be trained in health and safety because employers felt they were already experienced or because they felt training was not suitable for them as they preferred hands-on training. Additionally employers felt that older employees were resistant to training. However a study of older aviation workers in Malta found that they were positive about undertaking training, however 76% did not feel that this was held at their pace (Agius, 2005). This is consistent with findings that older adults learn at a slower pace and thus training needs to be adapted to the learner. It appears that Maltese employers may not be giving this importance, resulting in older learners who are disappointed by learning events, whilst employers develop negative perceptions about older individuals' ability to learn.

Very few studies appear to have been carried out that analysed age-related organisational-level changes in Malta. Principi and Lamura (2009) found that Maltese companies that aimed to attract older workers primarily promoted flexible work practices and fostered positive cultural change by implementing training programmes including those which involved skill transfer programmes from older to younger individuals. The study however concluded that little had been done in terms of ergonomics, job re-design and health and safety. Spiteri (2012), who analysed how a small sample of manufacturing organisations tackled health and safety for older workers reported that older workers were sometimes offered reduced or part-time hours, whilst also reporting some examples of modified job equipment and job rotation.

## CONCLUSION

Aging often presents older workers and their employers with some challenges, such as decrements in perceptual abilities, physical capabilities and certain aspects of attention and memory. These challenges however can be largely negated via holistic organisational-level interventions which match the capabilities of individuals with those of their tasks, environment and wider organisational factors. An effort should also be made to encourage employees to maintain and improve their level of health so as to minimise negative age-related changes as much as possible. Consideration should therefore be given to: the introduction of health promotional activities, such as exercise; the provision of personal aids such as spectacles; and the implementation of interventions which analyse and introduce task, environmental and wider organisational modification. Aging however is also associated with a number of advantages such as positive changes in personality, enhanced work experience and increased task accuracy. Employing and retaining older adults therefore may benefit organisations via the provision of skills which can be passed on to younger and less experienced employees, may aid in fostering a positive organisational climate, and may assist an organisation in boosting its performance and image.

Many of the modifications that benefit older workers benefit workers of all ages. All employees benefit from better lighting, the re-design of unnecessarily complex tasks, the avoidance of excessive heat, the provision of adequate breaks, the maintenance of tools and the environment amongst others. Engaging in holistic ergonomic changes therefore may not only allow older employees to continue contributing to a company, but may also boost general organisational performance, employee retention and make the organisation a more attractive employer.

Whilst studies suggest that the Maltese enjoy above average levels of health and quality of life, below average amounts of Maltese chose to continue working in older age. This may in-part be due to the need for organisation-level change. Few examples could be found of ergonomic change in Maltese workplaces and it is evident that in-view of Malta's aging population, the country as a whole would benefit from more consideration being given to age-related workplace modifications. These must not be

limited to the provision of equipment but must also include the re-design of work tasks in-view of age-related changes, the provision of a healthy work environment, relevant organisational policies such as flexible working, the provision of age- relevant training, and the introduction of anti-ageism policies and health promotion initiatives.

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## SECTION 3.5



# The Major Issues in the Maltese Industrial Relations Scenario

DURING 2015 AND 2016

**Saviour Rizzo**

Between 2015 and 2016, the Maltese Industrial Relations scene was active on many fronts. Amongst the main disputes which were raised during this period, was the issue of the national airlines - Air Malta. Another issue that featured prominently was the push to increase the statutory minimum pay. A campaign, led by Caritas Malta and supported and sustained by a number of NGOs, intensified during this period. The reform of the industrial tribunal was another dominant issue. This issue, was raised after a court ruling stated that the provisions in the law related to the appointment of chairpersons of the tribunal, did not guarantee impartiality and independence as proclaimed in the Maltese constitution. What follows is an account of the events and debates related to these three issues.

## TURBULENCE AT AIR MALTA

Industrial relations at Air Malta were rather tense as the Maltese government, under pressure from the EU Commission, was seeking to find a strategic partner to inject the necessary capital and make the national company economically viable. The government adopted a placatory tone by assuring the four unions representing various categories of the company workforce that the employees would not lose their job. The unions had to walk a very delicate line as they had to defend the plight of their members without appearing to be destructive forces that could derail the rescue plan of the government.

In one of its cost-cutting exercises to balance its books, Air Malta decided that, as from 1st January 2015, the in-flight meal to passengers would no longer be served. As passengers were to be served with a snack it introduced a trolley service against payment. Following this decision the cabin crew was denied a warm meal. In retaliation to this decision, the Union of Cabin Crew ordered its members not to offer the trolley service. Sensing an escalation of this partial industrial action, Air Malta officials held meeting with the union which resulted in an amicable solution and the cabin crew was offered a commission of the sales of the trolley service.

To the social analysts of industrial relations this dispute may seem to be just a quibble. And yet, in spite of its apparent insignificance, this dispute proved to be a fore shadow of the events that were to occur in the industrial relations scenario during 2015 and 2016. Indeed the issue about the restructuring exercise of Air Malta took centre stage in this scenario.

Since 2004, Air Malta has been facing a serious threat to its financial stability through its accumulated losses; it has been struggling to regain economic viability. Towards this end in 2004 a memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed between the Air Malta Management and the four trade unions representing the different categories of the employees of the company. The austerity measures included in this MOU did not however help Air Malta to regain economic viability. In 2011 the EU Commission authorised a €52 million loan to enable the company overcome its cash flow problem on condition that a restructuring exercise was to be designed aimed at making the company economically viable within five years. At the end of 2016 the enterprise was still registering losses. Throughout the year 2016 the Tourism Minister, Edward Zammit

Lewis, together with the Air Malta management conducted negotiations with a strategic partner who would be willing to inject the necessary capital in the enterprise. While these negotiations were going on the four trade unions representing the different categories of employees, aware that some painful changes had to be made, started making vocal protests in which they asked to be given more information about the plight of their members.

The most vociferous of these four unions was the Airline Pilots Association – Malta (ALPA). As a sign of protest over the delays for the renewal of the collective agreement this association directed the pilots not to wear caps and jackets. This symbolic action was to be followed by industrial action which would cause flight delays and suspension of services. The Chairperson of Air Malta, Maria Micallef, stated that this threat of industrial action by ALPA was jeopardising the deal which could enable the company to become profitable and economically viable. She defined the threat of this industrial action during the peak tourist season as "callous behaviour that makes it difficult to stay silent at a time when the company is in the middle of the most sensitive talks with our potential strategic partner" (Micallef, 2016). The CEO of Air Malta, Philip Micallef, pointed out that the enterprise was "still in a loss making situation" and was striving to break even. The Tourism Minister, Edward Zammit Lewis, accused ALPA of holding Air Malta to ransom by threatening industrial action at the peak tourist season. The Malta Hotels and Restaurant Association (MHRA) expressed its approval to the appeal made by the minister to the union "to act with prudence and refrain from short-sighted actions or threats that cause damage to the tourism industry" (Sansone, 2016).

In view of this a plea to the civil court was filed by Air Malta to stop ALPA from taking industrial action. The court provisionally upheld a warrant of an injunction filed by the company. The Prime Minister endorsed this action taken by Air Malta as he said that the industrial action the pilots' union was contemplating was "disproportionate industrial action that could jeopardise the future of the airline" (Diacono, 2016).

The ALPA president, Domenic Azzopardi, lambasted this court ruling and defined it as a clear threat to the right of free association of workers, as well as to their entitlement to resort to industrial action. The union contested this ruling by filing an appeal in court. In its ruling the court of

appeal revoked the prohibition of injunction. Mr. Justice Meli sitting in the court of appeal stated that the airline had no right to stop a union from taking legitimate action in the best interest of its members, noting that this right was guaranteed by the Constitution. The judge said that the union's right to order industrial action, as guaranteed by the European Convention, could not in any way depend on the company's financial situations, especially since the precarious situation had not been brought about by the pilots. He agreed with the argument brought forward by the representatives of ALPA that the fundamental right to take industrial action could never be temporarily suspended pending talks. The two main trade union organisations in Malta, the General Workers Union (GWU) and the Union Haddiema Magħqudin (UHM) welcomed the ruling of the court of appeal as it unequivocally asserts and at the same time safeguards the absolute right to strike (Xuereb, 2016).

Dr Andrew Borg Cardona, a lawyer with particular interest in employment relations, referring to the first ruling of the court stated that the right to strike was not *per se* denied. The company was seeking protection in particular circumstances. The judge had to decide between two options: allowing an unfettered right to take industrial action even if this was likely to endanger the viability of the company as the management of Air Malta was asserting or restricting the right to strike when the company was facing crucial moments. The implication of this argument is that industrial action should, either explicitly or tacitly, pass the test of proportionality (Borg Cardona, 2016a). In this case proportionality would have been tested in the context of the vulnerability of the enterprise to changing forces and wholesale competitiveness, its precarious financial state and the pressure from the EU Commission. On the other hand, the lack of reconciliation among the social partners during the negotiation process, the lack of information about the plight of their members and the renewal of the collective agreement would also be part of this proportionality scenario.

Following the ruling of the appeal court the parties returned to the negotiation table. A peace deal was reached between the government and ALPA. The details that were given about this agreement were that the employment of pilots is guaranteed in return for higher productivity. This peace deal with pilots seemed to have solved only part of the problem as two days after this agreement, the Union of Cabin Crew (UCC) instructed its

members to work to rule by sticking to their roster and not accepting any flights that encroach on their leave day. The UCC president, Noel Mercieca, stated that that his union had requested written assurances that all cabin crew members would keep their jobs and present salaries. In the meantime the GWU was in discussion with government over a proposal that the ground staff would be transferred to a newly set up public company that will be servicing the national airline. The airline company which will be formed following the merger between Air Malta and Alitalia would buy the ground floor service such as passenger handlers and loader from this newly set up public company.

As the drama was nearing its end there seemed to be bewilderment about the outcome that would be unfold once the final curtain would go down.

### MINIMUM WAGE REVISITED

The minimum wage has been an ongoing topical issue since 2012 when the report published by Caritas pointed out that the standard of living of the minimum wage earners was below subsistence level. The same NGO in a report 'A Minimum Essential Budget for Decent Living' published in May 2016 noted that even though the number of families living below subsistence level has decreased there was still a substantial number of families whose earnings simply did not allow them to meet their basic needs. This publication by Caritas Malta re-ignited the issue of the minimum wage. On 29 October 2016, a number of social justice NGOs launched a joint campaign in which they called for a 3.5 % increase in minimum wage for three consecutive years (Ganado, 2016).

Low pay and in-work poverty have always been major policy challenges. Lately, these challenges have become more acute as there seem to be glaring signs that the gaps among the disadvantaged and advantaged groups have become wider. While minimum wage is intended to support low-wage workers, the cost of employing them can be at the heart of concerns that legal minimum wage might reduce employment, or damage the international competitiveness of labour intensive firms relying on low-skilled labour.

Rather than increasing the minimum wage, the Maltese government had opted to address this issue by giving in-work benefits and reduce

income tax burdens to low wage earners. This policy was being adopted as government feared that an increase in the minimum wage would cause a wage rise spiral that might have an adverse effect on the competitiveness of many firms. However, following this new pressure and overwhelming evidence of the widening gaps of inequalities, the Prime Minister has effectively decided that the minimum wage needs to rise. He called on the social partners to find consensus about how and when this should happen.

In response to this invitation, the Malta Council for Economic and Social Development (MCESD), Malta's tripartite national social dialogue institution, commissioned two economists to conduct a study on this issue. These two reports which were submitted to MCESD, recommended that the minimum pay should be pegged to a ratio related either to the basic average wage or the median wage. The employers' associations accused the government and NGOs of populism and warned the government of the damages this wage increase is likely to cause to industrial firms and the business community (Macdonald, 2016). The debate at MCESD is to continue in the first half of 2017.

### THE INDUSTRIAL TRIBUNAL

The Employment and Industrial Relations Act (EIRA: Chapter 452 of Malta Law) which regulates employment and industrial relations in Malta, makes provisions for the setting up of an Industrial Tribunal. The parties involved in a trade dispute have the right to request the government minister to refer the dispute to this Tribunal for settlement. The Minister is obliged to refer any disputes to the tribunal within 21 days of the date of notification or request. The Tribunal's decision is binding on both parties. During the proceedings the tribunal has the same judicial powers as a civil court which means that it has the right to summon witnesses and ask those involved to take the oath.

A ruling by the Constitutional Court in the form of Civil Court (i.e. not in the appeal jurisdiction) related to a case filed by the General Workers' Union (GWU) against the Attorney General stated that the Industrial Tribunal is anti-constitutional since it does not guarantee independence and impartiality. Article 75(2) of EIRA gives power to the Minister to appoint a person representing the government to sit on the Industrial Tribunal.

According to EIRA, Article 73 (3c) one of the three members comprising this tribunal shall be

"a member representing the Government or other body or company involved in the trade dispute who shall be appointed *ad hoc* by the Minister".

According to the provisions laid down in EIRA the minister in making appointments to the Industrial Tribunal has to consult MCESD. But there is no definition of consultation in the law. Indeed, MEA was not satisfied with this consultation and was very critical of the appointments of Industrial tribunal chairpersons made by the minister. The logic of the argument of this court ruling is that, even though being obliged to consult MCESD, this discretionary power of the Minister does not guarantee independence and impartiality as laid down in the Constitution of Malta which, in article 39(2), states that:

"Any court or other adjudicating authority prescribed by law for the determination of the existence of the extent of civil rights or obligations shall be independent and impartial; and where proceedings for such a determination are instituted by an any person before such a court or other adjudicating authority, the case shall be given a fair hearing within a reasonable time."

The ad hoc appointment by the Minister according to the Judge impinges on the independence and impartiality of this tribunal. The court ruling also states that the lack of security of tenure of the persons sitting on the tribunal may undermine the impartiality and independence of the tribunal. The court ruling also rejected the provision in the law which imposes on the Tribunal to "take into consideration the social policies of the government based on the principle of social justice and the requirements of any national development plan" (Xuereb, 2016). The Court views this provision an imposition of outside pressure which may prejudice the decision of the Tribunal. The judge in one of key remarks said "Not only

does the law fail to guarantee the tribunal is not prejudiced by outside pressures, but it is the law itself that imposes such outside pressures" (ibid).

In order to address this issue of impartiality and independence of the Industrial tribunal raised by the judge, the Minister responsible for Social Dialogue, Dr Helena Dalli, published a set of amendments which included the following changes:

- Appointment of chairs to the tribunal is for five years instead of three.
- The chairperson can be removed by the Prime Minister while the simple members can be removed by the minister. In both cases of dismissal the Employment Relations Board (ERB) may be consulted.
- Both decisions or removal can be appealed on a point of law by being referred to the Court of Appeal
- The reappointment of a chairperson shall not be made if two thirds of the members of the ERB are against such appointment.
- The persons appointed by the trade unions and those appointed by the Employers' Associations need the approval of fifty per cent of the members of the ERB in order to be reappointed.

*(Act No. XXXIII of 2016 – Government Gazette 28 June 2016, A1028-1034).*

Some of the actors involved in the field of industrial relations were not completely satisfied with these amendments. Andrew Borg Cardona, an advocate who has been practising in the proceedings of Industrial Tribunal since 1998 when advocates were given right of audience defined these changes as cosmetic. The Union Haddiema Magħqhudin (UHM) through its CEO, Josef Vella, stated that the amendments did not give the chairperson security of tenure and it reconfirmed its stand that the chairperson should be a magistrate. The General Workers' Union (GWU) Secretary General, Josef Bugeja, stated that further changes which are due to be discussed at the ERB will eventually overhaul the system which governs the operations of the Industrial Tribunal. The Government did not seem

to be very favourable to the proposal about appointing a magistrate as a chairperson to the industrial tribunal. A correspondent in the Times of Malta, as if to affirm the stand taken by the minister, stated that "pushing the issues and problems upwards does not necessarily provide assurance of better decisions, improved efficiency, more practical handling of issues at their core levels"). Moreover, the overburdened courts in Malta may not guarantee swift action to remedy matters (Consiglio, 2016).

### COMMENTARY

The Air Malta case bears some similarity with that of the Malta Shipyards (formerly Malta Drydocks). Over a prolonged period of time these two state owned enterprises had to depend on state subsidies in order to survive. In both cases the Maltese Government, bound to be in line with the EU Competition policy, was forced to conduct a restructuring exercise aimed at making the two enterprises economically viable. At the end of five year period granted to Malta Shipyards the enterprise failed to register profits and in 2008 was forced to close down.

When the final day of reckoning arrived for the Malta Shipyards, the then EU Commissioner responsible for the EU Competition policy, Neelie Kroes, stated that there was no way out for the enterprise and it had to be declared bankrupt. Judging by the lack of reaction to this statement by the Maltese government and social partners, it can be reasonably assumed that there was a tacit approval about the inevitable closure of Malta Shipyards.

In the case of Air Malta, such resignation to the inevitable was not manifest as the Maltese Government persisted in looking for a solution, even after the deadline set by the EU Commission had elapsed. As a national carrier, Air Malta is much more vital to the Maltese economy than the Malta Shipyards. One of the pillars of the Maltese economy is tourism – an industry which is highly nourished and sustained by the national airline. While the EU Commission is not expected to bend its rules, its sensitivity to the legacy of a national carrier in a small sovereign island state would presumably make it exercise more caution and be more flexible.

As regards the issue of the minimum wage the political considerations, economic constraints and public pressures that impinge on government's policy to adjust and moderate wages were very visible. To the government

minimum wage increases as an element of poverty-reduction packages entail lower direct budgetary cost than direct government intervention. Still in spite of this government may still opt to adopt alternative measures such as government transfers and lower tax burdens in order to refrain from adding extra cost to employers. The lowering of tax burden has implications for how well the minimum wage performs at supporting low wage workers and low-income families, while guarding against the possibility of job losses.

Taking measures aimed at reducing the gap between the amounts an employer pays and the take-home pay that the worker receives can be a viable alternative to employers. Measures aimed at ensuring a greater share of a given minimum wage and consequently adding to household income can be very effective in making work pay. However these balancing acts do not tally with the belief in the virtuous circle which correlates economic growth with higher productivity and hence higher wages. The absence of such correlation can result in more income inequality or its solidification. While acknowledging that the review of the minimum pay should be made in the context of the changing labour market conditions backed by valid and reliable data the decision by the Prime minister to raise minimum wage marks a departure from the neo-classical theory, according to which minimum wage adjustments have negative effects on employment.

In the case of the industrial tribunal, the different views and interests of the social partners came to the fore. Perhaps the 'root and branch' change which some actors were expecting did not materialise. What these amendments might have accomplished was the enhancement of the institutionalization of social dialogue by giving the power and control to the Employment Relations Board over the appointment of chairpersons to the Industrial Tribunal. The ERB, established according to the provisions laid down in EIRA, is tripartite institution at national level. The new role given to ERB by these amendments has given this tripartite institution a higher profile and at the same time enhanced the legitimacy of the process of social dialogue.

## CONCLUSION

These three cases have tested the nerves of the trade unions. In the case of Air Malta, the trade unions were acting according to the principles of their foundation, by voicing the concerns of their members and defending their rights. They had however to be wary not to appear as being part of the destructive forces that could derail the strategy being followed by the company in order to survive. In the other two cases, they were asked to be part of the solution. Consensus about the outcome of these two issues was far from consensual. Nevertheless, in spite of this lack of consensus, the platform where the different interests of the actors are recognized still served as a source of integrative and collaborative spirit among the social partners.

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## SECTION 3.6



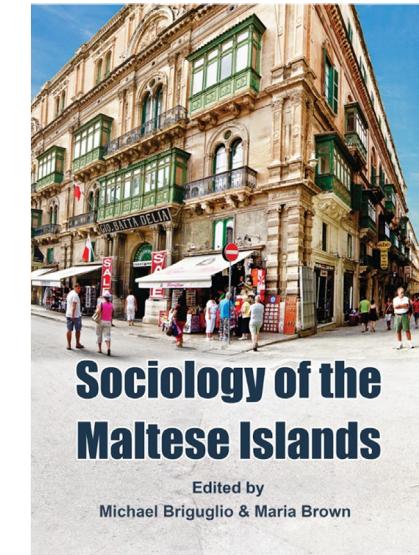
## Change and Continuity

**Review article by Edward L. Zammit**

of 'Sociology of the Maltese Islands', edited by Michael Briguglio & Maria Brown (Luqa, Malta: Miller Distributors, 2016)

*If there is anything about Malta which strikes any observer, local or foreign, it is the rate of change which the country has undergone in recent years. Changes are visible on all fronts: physical, economic, political and above all social. It is no wonder, then, that the subject of change is the one common denominator which underscores all the essays in the volume edited by Michael Briguglio and Maria Brown, entitled *Sociology of the Maltese Islands* (2016). One cannot help wondering what someone like Herbert Ganado would write if he were to update his famous books, aptly entitled '*Rajt Malta Tinbidel*' (I have watched Malta change).*

According to the editors, this book is intended 'to provide a broad sociological introduction to the various areas of Maltese society in public and scholarly debate and research'. It is directed at a wide readership including students, researchers, policy makers, journalists and the general public. This broad spectrum partly explains the different levels and styles adopted by the different contributors – ranging from scholarly essays which may appeal to students of sociology and other social scientists to others adopting a journalistic style which may appeal to the general public. All the papers are well documented



and – apart from a few, rare exceptions – there is little overlap or repetition in the arguments and observations made by the various authors.

In his perceptive and thought provoking 'prologue' to this new book, Godfrey Baldacchino presents some interesting hypotheses which may well provide a paradigm for a balanced analysis of Malta's social changes which are illustrated by the various writers and are also personally experienced by one and all. He argues that, rather than seeing traditional Maltese culture and way of life as giving way to modernity and globalisation, it makes more sense to see Malta's role as being that of serving as a 'cosmopolitan hub' for its coastal neighbourhood. This has been indeed Malta's 'geographical destiny' throughout the ages. Baldacchino states that the essays in this book illustrate Malta's dual role characterised by *both* tradition and modernity as it has lately become 'a hub' or 'a base' for international business interests for their global corporate operations. In the process, he sees the modern trends and lifestyles as 'unsettling' the current markers of social class, gender, family, ethnicity and particularly 'environmental sustainability'. Hence, it makes more sense to speak of 'Maltese societies' where the old ways often coexist with the new.

There is a wide range of subjects covered by the various authors of papers in this volume. Some of these deal with topics which have traditionally been the focus of sociological analysis. These include social class, family life, work, education, religion and development. To these, a number of other subjects are included not merely because of their sociological interest but also because of their contemporary relevance such as consumerism, gender, leisure, demography, ethnic or race relations, environment and the media. The subject of politics is explored from various angles not merely reflecting the editors' centre of interest but also the Maltese people's obsession with it. There are essays on political parties, governance, policy making and social control. As noted above, the majority present a useful descriptive, factual and historical account of events and developments which have been implemented over the years in each field. There are also five or six papers which, in addition to factual information, present an analysis of trends and events which is well grounded in established sociological literature. I will now focus on these papers in the following paragraphs.

Angela Abela's comprehensive and incisive account of family life in Malta is a good illustration of Baldacchino's (above) hypothesis. She starts her paper by noting the 'dramatic and unprecedented changes' which Maltese families have undergone over the years in the context of the much publicised secularisation. However, she also states that despite the increasing participation of women in the workforce, the people's increased prosperity, the introduction of civil marriages, divorce, and single parent families, marriage is still considered as an important stage in the family lifecycle for young Maltese adults. She sees the process of globalisation as accelerated by Malta's accession to the European Union as well as by the widespread use of communication technology, internet, and social networking. Yet she firmly believes that people's 'yearning for safety, love and a meaningful connection with significant others as being so vital for our existence that we will continue to hold on to the family as a special place from where all members expect warmth, care, nourishment and support'.

Abela's paper presents a well-documented account of the impact of economic and demographic changes on families. This is followed by an explanation of gender roles and the impact of 'gender re-shifting' within families. The new courting practices, the status of marriage, and divorce are discussed in the context of the waning influence of the Catholic Church.

But she also points out that since the introduction of divorce in 2011, very few remarriages involving a Maltese bride and / or groom have taken place. She further argues that, given the relatively small numbers, the majority in the divorce referendum had actually voted 'in support of the rights of the minority'. Additionally, the author raises some important questions about caring responsibilities for the young, the elderly and the needy which traditionally were catered for within families. She is concerned about the way these responsibilities are nowadays being compromised by the pressures of work, consumption and recreation.

Abela further discusses a number of other challenges which are confronting today's families in Malta, including the low rate of fertility, the unprecedented rise of births outside marriage and the new form of poverty which is often connected to the breakdown of the traditional family. She also presents data which confirm the importance of education towards effectively meeting these challenges.

The question of secularisation and the diminishing influence of the Church in social and political life are also tackled by other contributors to this volume and this is not surprising considering that, arguably, this is one area where change is most evident. In their paper on the media, Brenda Murphy and Carmen Sammut state that the years following EU membership saw the rise of an assertive civil society challenging the hegemony of traditional power holders, including that of the Catholic Church. The issue of secularisation is directly tackled by Mario Vassallo who states that, whereas for centuries the Church gave Malta's life and identity a definite character, this is no longer the case. He cites a number of studies which confirm that people are not as interested in the afterlife as in the past but rather in the 'here and now' issues. This change is also evidenced in the decline in weekly Mass attendance over recent decades – though the figure now seems to have settled at around 50% of the population. He concludes that, while the Maltese generally still cherish the church and affirm their adherence to it, their participation in the liturgy and religious functions has become more of a 'pick and choose' practice. The Church and its teaching are constantly being evaluated by individuals and are much more prone to being challenged.

Clearly the concepts of work, social class and development are as relevant for sociological analysis today as they have always been. The science of sociology in the nineteenth century emerged in response to the dramatic

social and economic changes which were taking place at that time in the context of the industrial revolution. To a large extent, the issues which were raised by the founding fathers of the discipline are still relevant in today's post-industrial society. The centrality of work and the way work is organised were among the main concerns of the classical sociologists, principally Marx and Durkheim. In their paper on work in Malta, Manwel Debano and Saviour Rizzo draw upon the established sociological concepts and theories in order to analyse Malta's industrialisation process and work patterns since the middle of the twentieth century. They state that, as a result of the efforts of the trade union movement, the workers' attitudes and preoccupations have shifted from those about basic survival and security to those about the attainment of consumer goods and services. These shifts reflect the successive and successful economic restructuring of Malta's economy - from one based on the presence of the UK military services to routine manufacturing and more recently to new technology and the services' sector. Of particular interest is the authors' account of the way in which Malta's government – in conjunction with the trade unions - dealt with the recent (2008) global financial crisis. An active labour market policy was adopted 'by offering a stimulus package to the industries in distress to help them regain their economic viability'. As a result, unemployment in Malta has remained among the lowest in the EU both throughout the crisis and since then. The authors also discuss the presence of undeclared work which is seen as significant, the importance of labour law and of a vigilant trade union movement for the maintenance of adequate labour standards.

Yet a number of challenges still abound in Malta's labour market. These include the relatively low level of highly qualified and highly skilled workers required to meet the current demands of employers and to fill the new vacancies available - a problem which is further accentuated by the low level of skills which do not match the demand. Additionally, the notable segment of the population who are described as being 'at risk of poverty', the resurgence of atypical and precarious occupations, and the problem of 'undocumented migrants' are among the challenges currently faced by Malta's government and trade unions.

As Noel Agius shows in this paper on Development, despite the economic progress achieved over the years, Malta's GDP per person in purchasing

power terms still ranks in the 15<sup>th</sup> place among EU member states. He claims that the current challenge for Malta's economy is how to attract and maintain sustainable, high value added investment. Simultaneously, it has to provide decent employment to vulnerable groups, narrow the gaps in income disparities and keep check on social exclusion and poverty. The question therefore which arises is whether there is, imperceptibly the development of a new underclass in Malta.

As noted above, the study of social class is as old as sociology itself. In their paper on this subject, Maria Brown and Marvin Formosa, present a critical review of the studies of social class in Malta which, they contend, may be classified as falling either within the Weberian or the Marxist tradition. The former emphasises the wide distribution of wealth, the increasing number of professionals, the allocation of privileges based on the meritocracy of educational capital and occupational prestige. All this suggests the existence of a stratification system based on status and political patronage which is buttressed by the fact that most Maltese workers tend to perceive class structuring in harmonious rather than conflicting views. Brown and Formosa point out that the 'Weberian' analysis of Malta fails to explain 'the reproduction of class differences by education or how power holders also possess high levels of economic resources'. On the other hand, the Marxist approach provides a sharp distinction between the different classes. It shows how particular class formations are engendered by the economy and offers the reasons for conflict among them. Brown and Formosa are also critical of this approach as it fails to account adequately for gender differences which permeate all classes. Furthermore, it overlooks both the influence of political parties and of the Catholic Church with their networks and alliances which overshadow all social classes in Malta. For these reasons, the authors adopt a sceptical view of both these 'orthodox' approaches to Malta's class analysis as they fail to explain the *unique nuances* and *idiosyncrasies* characterising Maltese society. The shortcomings are mainly attributed to Malta's long established service economy, its sizeable underground economy (including a reluctance on the part of many workers to fully declare their income), the persistence of parochialism, patronage and political tribalism and a lack of adequate statistical data particularly on the interplay between education and social mobility. In this context, their paper suggests that future studies

of Maltese class dynamics should explore how cultural processes are embedded within socio-economic practices and how inequality is produced and reproduced in both economic and social practices. Such an approach would enable class cultures to be viewed simply as modes of differentiation rather than of collective mobilisation.

Along with family, work and social class, education is another major field of enquiry to which sociologists have always paid particular attention. The paper by Maria Brown and Peter Mayo present a comprehensive review of education in Malta in the light of both local and international sociological studies. In addition to a detailed description of Malta's educational setup at all levels, the paper presents a critical analysis of recent policies and policy documents adopted by Malta's education authorities. The authors are particularly concerned with the not so hidden agenda to associate education almost exclusively with employability and economic growth. They argue strongly that 'unless economic growth is coupled with a strong politics of social justice and equitable resource redistribution it remains a problematic goal.'

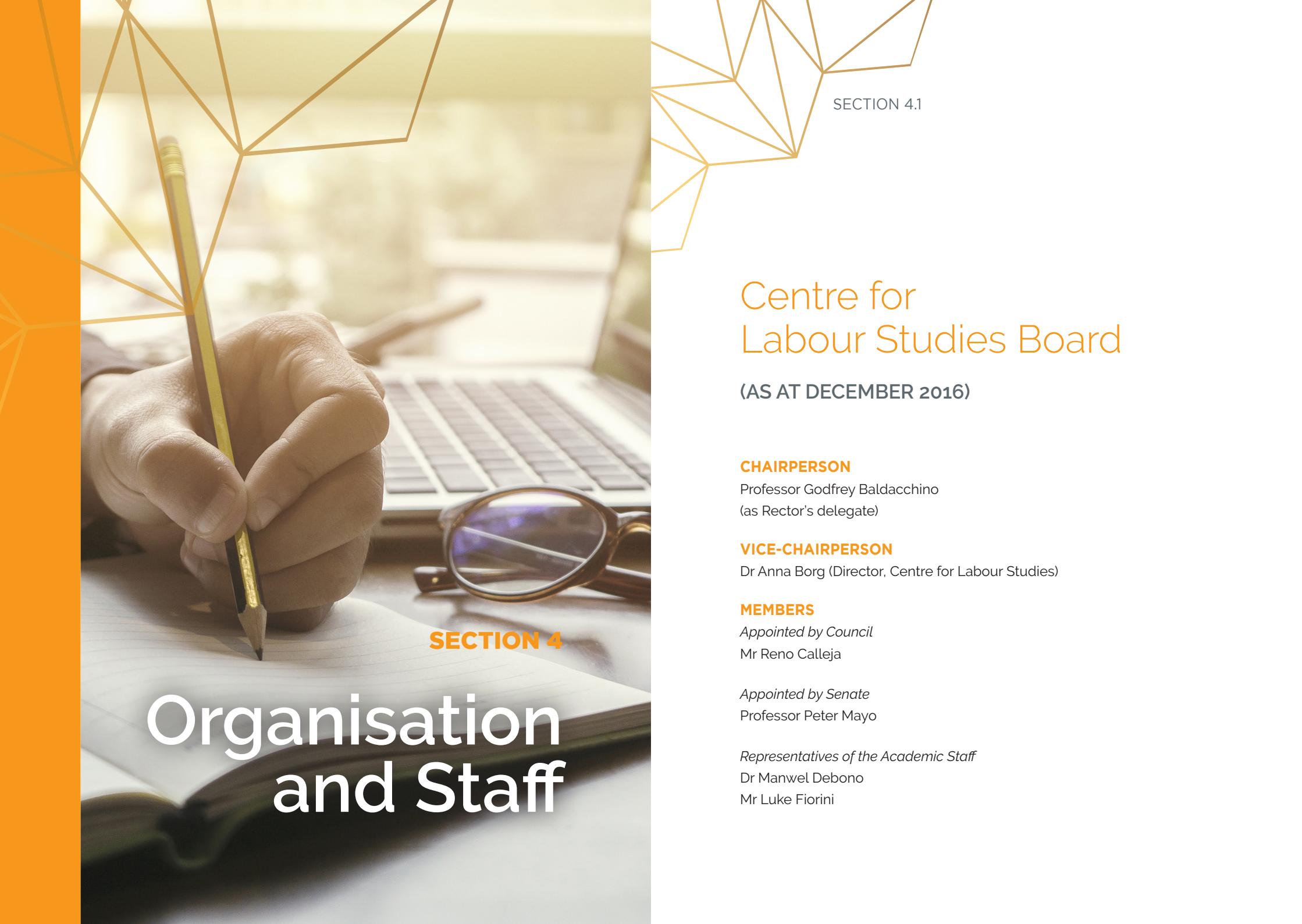
The book also contains two fresh and original papers by Valerie Visanich, one on the Arts and the other on Consumption and Leisure. Both are explicitly grounded in sociological theory and throw interesting insights on the local scene. As an example of the way that the arts reflect the structure of society, she refers to the active participation in the village *festa* by individuals in middle-class and professional occupations. She explains this partly in terms of the multi layered 'omnivore theory'. For such persons, the *festa* – in addition to other factors – produces a feeling of belonging to their community and a place of informal familiarity and sociability. Furthermore, the author shows how Maltese artists also play an active role in shaping and redefining social structures, as exemplified by the recent relaxation of censorship laws partly in response to their pressures. Likewise, in her paper on consumption and leisure patterns in Malta, Visanich argues that Maltese individuals do not passively adopt Western trends without adapting them to local socio-economic and cultural conditions. She refers to the most widespread practices of leisure and consumption in contemporary Malta, such as regularly eating out, holidaying abroad, the use of smart phones and other 'cool' symbols, especially by the young. While associating these trends with the recent growth in GDP and in

average disposable incomes, she also notices an increase in the number of individuals living in a dire financial situation. Nevertheless, despite the similarities with 'Western' trends in leisure and consumption practices, by contrast in Malta there are many individuals who value saving and who hold substantial financial assets. In fact, the author points out that the value of these financial assets correlates positively with educational attainment and work status. Therefore once again, these observations seem to confirm the hypothesis proposed by Baldacchino, Abela, Vassallo, myself and others that in Malta traditional values and lifestyles often coexist with the new modern forms of behaviour. This also explains why the conscious efforts by Dom Mintoff, at the height of his political power, to turn the grass roots of his own party into a fully-fledged working class movement had such a limited and short-lasting impact. The only lasting vestiges of his efforts which persist are side-lined within the confines of 'old labour'.

As noted above, there are other chapters in this volume which, despite their interesting and informative content, could not be reviewed in this brief account due to space limitations. There are chapters about the different life stages (childhood, youth, ageing), politics (parties, elections, and governance), social policy (gender, sexuality, crime, social exclusion and social control) and other contemporary issues (tourism, demography, race relations and the environment). They all include a wealth of objective data which is highly relevant for anyone interested in Malta. Most of the papers were written by sociologists working in different departments at the University of Malta.

On a personal note: since change is the leitmotif of this volume, I would like to note the remarkable change which sociology has undergone since I started lecturing in it many years ago. It is deeply gratifying to witness its development in our university from a relatively unknown subject – often confused with social philosophy – into a fully-fledged academic discipline. The editors of this volume, along with the authors of its papers (including some of my former students) deserve praise for rendering such a valuable service to sociology and to Maltese society.

\* An earlier, amended version of this article was published in the *Escape* magazine of *The Sunday Times of Malta* (16<sup>th</sup> October 2016).



## SECTION 4.1

# Organisation and Staff

## SECTION 4

### Centre for Labour Studies Board

(AS AT DECEMBER 2016)

#### **CHAIRPERSON**

Professor Godfrey Baldacchino  
(as Rector's delegate)

#### **VICE-CHAIRPERSON**

Dr Anna Borg (Director, Centre for Labour Studies)

#### **MEMBERS**

*Appointed by Council*  
Mr Reno Calleja

*Appointed by Senate*  
Professor Peter Mayo

*Representatives of the Academic Staff*

Dr Manwel Debono  
Mr Luke Fiorini

*Representatives of the Students*

Ms Maria Azzopardi

Ms Gabriella Calamatta

*Appointed by the Faculty of Economics, Management and Accountancy*

Mr Peter J. Baldacchino

*Appointed by the Confederation of Malta Trade Unions*

*(of whom one is by the Union Haddiema Magħqudin)*

Mr William Portelli

Mr Josef Vella

*Appointed by the Forum Unions Maltin*

Mr Kevin Bonello

*Appointed by the General Workers' Union*

Mr Josef Bugeja

Mr Victor Carachi

*Appointed by the Malta Employers' Association*

Mr Joe Farrugia

*Appointed by the Ministry responsible for Labour Relations*

Ms Sandra Gatt

*Secretary to the Board*

Ms Caroline Chetcuti

**HONOURARY MEMBERS**

Mr Anthony Busuttil

Professor Gerard Kester

Dr Francis La Ferla

Mr Saviour Rizzo

Professor Edward L. Zammit



SECTION 4.2

## Centre for Labour Studies Staff

### FULL-TIME LECTURING STAFF WITH THE CENTRE FOR LABOUR STUDIES



**DR ANNA BORG** PhD (MDX), (MSc Manchester Met.), Dip.Soc.St.(Melit.) joined the Centre's academic staff in 2008 and became the Director of the Centre in October 2014. She coordinates the Diploma in Social Studies (Gender, Work and Society) and the Bachelor in Work and Human Resources (Cohort 2012-2017). She lectures in the area of equality and diversity in the labour market, HR-related topics, work-life issues, and qualitative research methods.



**DR MANWEL DEBONO** PhD, MSc(Hull), B.Psy.(Hons), C.Psychol. joined the Centre in 2003 and served as Director of the Centre between 2009 and 2014. An organisational psychologist by profession, Dr Debono coordinates the Master in Lifelong Career Guidance and Development. Dr Debono lectures in organisational psychology, human resource management and career guidance, and oversees the Centre's research projects.



**MR LUKE FIORINI** MSc (Derby), P.G.Dip., B.Sc (Hons), S.R.P joined the Centre's academic staff in 2012. He coordinates the Bachelor (Honours) Degree Course in Occupational Health and Safety. Mr Fiorini lectures in areas related to occupational health and safety, work performance and ergonomics. He has been involved in a number of the Centre's projects and is currently reading for a PhD with the University of Nottingham, UK.

#### Part-time Lecturing Staff with the Centre for Labour Studies



**PROF GODFREY BALDACCHINO** PhD (Warwick), BA(Gen.), PGCE(Malta), MA (The Hague) is a Professor of Sociology at the University of Malta and the Chair of the Board of the Centre (as Rector's Delegate) since 2010. He spent ten years (2003-2013) as Canada Research Chair (Island Studies) at the University of Prince Edward Island, Canada. He lectures in Globalisation, Work and Development; Employee Involvement and Participation; Organisational Design; Work Design and Job Classification.

#### Part-time Research Staff with the Centre for Labour Studies



**MR SAVIOUR RIZZO** M.Ed. (Melit), B.A.(Gen.) has been associated with the Centre since its establishment in 1981. He served as the Director of the Centre between 2003 and 2009. He lectures in Sociology of Work, Education and the Labour Market; and Gender and Sociology. He is also a part-time research support officer with the Centre.

The following persons served as visiting lecturers for the following academic programmes during 2015-2016:

#### **Bachelor in Occupational Health and Safety (Honours)**

Prof Godfrey Baldacchino, Mr Alan Calleja, Mr Bernard Chetcuti, Mr Silvio Farrugia, Ms Tessa Fiorini Cohen, Ms Maryanne Massa, Mr Kirk Pace Bonnici Mompalao, Ms Elaine Schembri, Ms Ingrid Schembri, Mr Joseph Schiavone.

#### **Bachelor in Work and Human Resources (Honours)**

Mr Peter J. Baldacchino, Dr Leonie Baldacchino, Mr Daniel Borg, Mr Etienne Borg Cardona, Dr Charlotte Camilleri, Mr Clyde Caruana, Mr Gottfried Catania, Mr Christopher Cutajar, Mr Robert Delia, Ms Christine Garzia, Ms Rebecca Maria Gatt, Mr David Parnis, Prof Suzanne Piscopo, Ms Petra Sant, Dr Maria Sciriha, Dr Mary Grace Vella.

#### **Diploma in Social Studies (Gender and Development)**

Dr Josephine Ann Cutajar, Dr Lara Maria Dimitrijevic, Dr Brenda Murphy, Dr Valeska Padovese.

#### **Research Contributors**

Apart from the full-time and part-time staff of the Centre, the following persons contributed to the Centre's research projects during 2015 and 2016:

Ms Dulcie Brincat Peplow, Dr Charlotte Camilleri, Ms Christine Faruggia, Ms Christine Garzia, Mr Louis Grech, Mr Vincent Marmara, Mr Charles Tabone, Ms Jeanine Vassallo.

## ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF



**Ms Josephine Agius** has been employed at the University of Malta since 1995 and joined the Centre's staff in January 2000. She works as an Administrative Assistant and is in charge of the Diploma in Social Studies (Gender and Development), Bachelor in Work and Human Resources (Cohort 2016-2021) and the Master in Lifelong Career Guidance and Development (2016-2018).



**Ms Caroline Chetcuti** B.Comms (Melit.) has been employed at the University of Malta since 2015. She handles the administrative work related to the Bachelor in Occupational Health and Safety (Cohort 2016-2021) and the Bachelor in Work and Human Resources (Cohort 2014-2019).

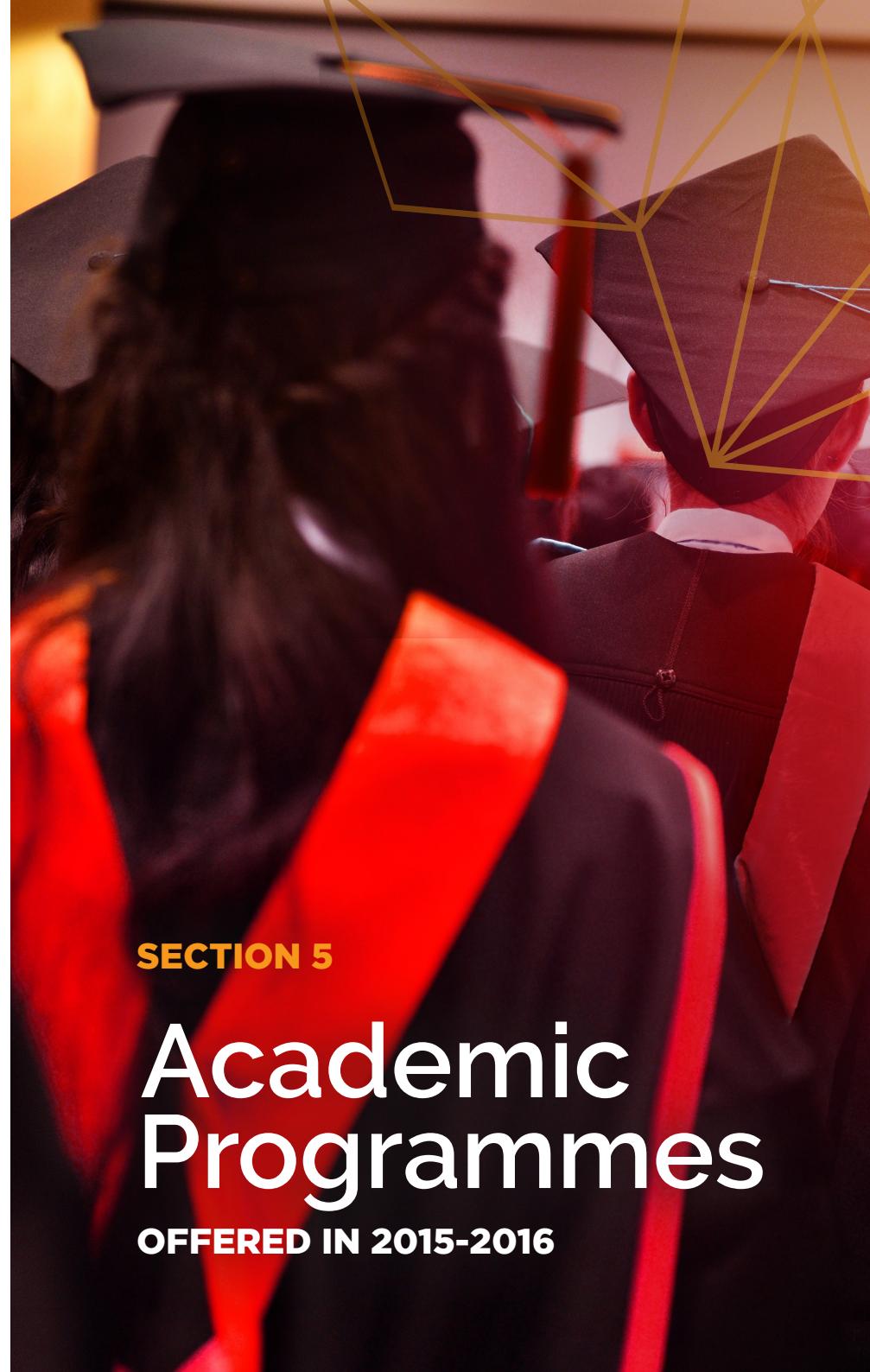


**Ms Stephanie Muscat** Dip. Soc. St. (Melit.), has been employed at the University of Malta since 1995. She worked for almost nine years at the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies. After a career break, she joined the staff of the Centre for Labour Studies in March 2011. Ms Muscat works as an Executive Officer and is in charge of the administrative work related to the Bachelor in Work and Human Resources (Cohort 2012-2017). She successfully completed the CLS' own Diploma in Gender and Development and is currently reading for a B.A (Hons) in Social Wellbeing at the University of Malta.

## SECTION 5

# Academic Programmes

OFFERED IN 2015-2016



## SECTION 5.1



# Bachelor in Work and Human Resources

## (HONOURS)

**Course Coordinator: Dr Anna Borg**

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

As organisations strive to adapt to the ever increasing challenges of globalisation, the need for skilled and qualified human resource professionals increases. This course, offered in collaboration with the Faculty of Economics, Management and Accountancy, aims to fill a gap in this much needed area of specialisation. The curriculum provides students with sound underpinning knowledge and the necessary skills that will enable them to work professionally in settings related to human resources.

### COURSE PROGRAMME

#### Year1

- CLS1102 Equality at the Place of Work
- CLS1103 Employment Law in the Maltese and European Contexts
- CLS1107 Sociology of Work
- CLS1108 Occupational Psychology
- CLS1111 Introduction to Social Science
- CLS1112 Academic Skills in Work and Human Resources
- ECN1200 Introductory Economics for Work and Human Resources

#### Year2

- CLS1104 Organisational Communication
- CLS1105 Introduction to Occupational Health and Safety
- CLS1106 The Evolving Labour Market
- CLS1109 Industrial Relations
- CLS1110 Labour Economics
- CLS1206 Research Methods and Design
- MGT1944 Human Resources Management

#### Year3

- CLS2100 Globalisation, Work and Development
- CLS2101 The Recruitment Process
- CLS2102 Group Behaviour
- CLS2103 Performance Management
- CLS2104 Social Policy and the Labour Market
- CLS2105 Education and the Labour Market
- CLS2106 Motivation and Compensation
- CLS2107 Collective Bargaining
- ACC2941 Elements of Financial Management
- ECN2213 Economic Growth and Development

#### Year4

- CLS2108 Training and Development
- CLS2109 Work-Life Issues
- CLS2111 Career Choice and Development
- CLS3103 Topics in Occupational Health and Safety
- CLS3104 Employee Involvement and Participation
- CLS3112 Organisational Design
- CLS3113 Topics in Employment and Industrial Relations Regulations
- CLS3101 Applied Quantitative Research Techniques (elective)
- CLS3102 Applied Qualitative Research Techniques (elective)
- IOT2301 Ideas and Entrepreneurship
- PPL3091 Public Management

**Year5**

CLS3106 Personality at Work  
 CLS3109 Managing Abuse at the Work Place  
 CLS3110 Workplace Design and Ergonomics  
 CLS3111 Dissertation  
 CLS3114 Applied Topics in Work and Human Resources  
 CLS3115 Research Process in Work and Human Resources  
 MGT3210 Human Resources Development and Practice

**INTAKE: BACHELOR IN WORK AND HUMAN RESOURCES  
(COHORT YEAR 2016-2021)**

Agius Martina, Atanasio Antonella, Attard Yasmin, Blake Claire, Bonello Sarah Jane, Borg Carmen Marie, Brincat Lucienne, Buhagiar Antonio, Buttigieg Claudette, Buttigieg Ritianne, Cachia Philip, Camilleri George Alexander, Camilleri Isabella, Cassar Greta, Cilia Roberta, Esposito Roderick Ryan, Farrugia Adrian, Fenech Soler Emma, Lia Ryan, Magro Kristine, Mallan Katya Louise, Micallef Raisa, Montebello Juanita, Muscat Anabel, Naudi Karly May, Saliba Roseanne, Sammut Daniel, Simeonova Vasya Georgieva.

**INTAKE: BACHELOR IN WORK AND HUMAN RESOURCES  
(COHORT YEAR 2014-2019)**

Ameen Zara, Attard Joanna, Azzopardi Krista Maria, Azzopardi Maria, Azzopardi Maria Gaetana, Baldacchino Kirsten Fae, Baldacchino Mary Rose, Bezzina Yanika, Borg Deborah Ann, Briffa Romina, Calamatta Gabriella, Calleja Shirley Angie, Camilleri Ruth, Camilleri Steven Terence, Cardona Marie Therese, Cordina Alexia, Cutajar Rebecca, Darmanin Sara, De Giorgio Michelle, Genovese Nadine, Lia Marco, Mamo Janice Kay, Micallef Trigona Stephanie, Mifsud Kirsten, Pisani Frankie, Pisani Scalpello Daniela, Powney Arthur, Prato Carlo, Sansone Alessia, Schembri Odette, Spiteri Roselyn, Tabone Alan, Tinchett Antonella, Vella Antoinette, Vella Danica Ann, Vella Philip, Vella Azzopardi Elena, Walker Nadia.

**INTAKE BACHELOR IN WORK AND HUMAN RESOURCES  
(COHORT YEAR 2012-2017)**

Abela Franklin, Apap Lisa, Attard Tara, Brincat Franklyn, Camilleri Marie Jacqueline, Camilleri Tessabelle, Farrugia Gabriella, Fenech Rowena, Micallef Mandy, Muscat Michelle, Pace Frendo Lizianne, Rizzo Raisa, Spiteri Natalino Andrew, Vella Maria Francesca, Zammit Caroline, Zammit Maruska.

**NOVEMBER 2015: FIRST-EVER COHORT OF UNIVERSITY OF MALTA STUDENTS TO GRADUATE WITH A BACHELOR'S (HONOURS) DEGREE (WORK AND HUMAN RESOURCES) WITH THE CLS STAFF**

Agius Donna, Alakkad Massimo, Aquilina Joanne, Attard Tania, Azzopardi Joseph, Borg Angela Jo, Borg Zammit Doreen, Briffa Manuel, Brincat Herbert, Brincat Peplow Dulcie, Bugeja Joseph, Buttigieg Michael, Cachia Enzo, Camilleri Franky, Camilleri Shirley, Camilleri Scerri Gayle, Campbell Dorianne, Cardona Doreen, Cauchi D'Anastasi Charlot, Dingli Scicluna Madion, Falzon Karl, Fenech Eveline, Grech Antoine, Grech Elizabeth Joan, Muscat David, Muscat Ryan, Scerri Godfrey, Schembri Alexia Sue, Sciberras Marlies, Scicluna Francelle, Sciriha Ivan, Sultana Kennaugh Victoria, Vella Stella, Zahra Emanuel, Zammit Loranne.

## LIST OF DISSERTATIONS FOR THE BACHELOR IN WORK AND HUMAN RESOURCES (COHORT 2010-2015)

Name of Student	Title of Dissertation
Aguis Donna	Career Trajectories and Gender Differences in the Maltese Public Service
Alakkad Massimo	The Creation of Government Quasi-Temping Agencies and the Impact on Workers: The IPSL (Industrial Projects Services Limited) Experience
Attard Tania	Career Barriers faced by People from Cospicua: The Case of Higher Status Jobs
Aquilina Joanne	Equal Roles, Equal Responsibilities in Childcare?
Azzopardi Joseph	An Analysis on the Impact of the Human Resource Management on Employee Practices in the Maltese Manufacturing Sector
Borg Angela Jo	Apprenticeships within the Manufacturing Sector – A Strategic Way Forward – A Case Study of Apprenticeship at Methode Electronics Malta Ltd
Borg Zammit Doreen	Human Resource Management in the Public Sector
Briffa Manuel	The Relationship Between Lifelong Learning and Standard of Living Among Maltese Workers
Brincat Herbert	Exploring Aspects of Service in the Maltese Hospitality Industry – Focusing on the Personal Interaction between Frontline Staff and Customers
Brincat Peplow Dulcie	An Analysis of Motivation within the Postal Sector from the Perspective of Management and Employees
Bugeja Josef	The Changing Role of Maltese Trade Unions in a Globalised Economy
Buttigieg Michael	The Impact of Flexible Work Arrangements on the Outcome of Individual Performance
Cachia Enzo	Developmental Changes in Industrial Relations and Industry: Their Impact on Human Resources Management
Camilleri Franky	Outsourcing in the Mental Health Setting

Camilleri Shirley	Work Values and Needs Between Generations: A Case Study within Malta's Public Employment Organisation
Camilleri Scerri Gayle	Improving the Employment Prospects of Former Inmates - The Way Forward
Campbell Dorianne	Investigating the Need for an Employee Assistance Programme: A Case Study
Cardona Doreen	The Impact of the Working Time Directive on Malta. The Legal Framework and the Policy Making Process
Cauchi D'Anastasi Charlot	An Investigation into the Relationship Between Absenteeism and Job Related Attitudes
Dingli Scicluna Madion	Learning and Developmental Needs of Health Assistants and Nursing Aides - An Explanatory Study
Falzon Karl	Work-Life Challenges through the Eyes of Single Fathers
Fenech Eveline	Social Media as a Recruitment Tool Used by Organisations to Reach Out the Right Talent – A Case Study within the Five Star Hotels in the Maltese Islands
Grech Antoine	Precarious Employment in the Maltese Scenario. A Challenge to Regulations
Grech Elizabeth	Games at Work – Employee Engagement through Gamification Techniques at the University of Malta
Muscat David	Creativity and Innovation in an ICT Organisation
Muscat Ryan	Multiculturalism in the ICT and iGaming Sectors in Malta: An Asset, Liability or Utopian Concept?
Scerri Godfrey	Employment Law in Malta. To What Extent are Workers in the Cleaning Sector Protected?
Sciberras Marlies	Employee Loyalty at the Workplace: A Case Study in a Local Manufacturing Company
Schembri Alexia Sue	The Impact of Childcare on a Parent's Career
Sciriha Ivan	Organisational Culture – The Effects of Cultural Differences on the Integration Process of Mergers and Acquisitions

Scicluna Francelle	Employee Attitudes Towards Contractual Employments in the ICT Industry
Sultana Kennaugh Victoria	The Effects of Restructuring on Employees' Wellbeing in a Manufacturing Company – A Managerial Perspective
Vella Stella	Economically Inactive Mothers and the Use of Free Childcare Services in Malta
Zahra Emanuel	The Issue of Age Discrimination: The Difficulties Encountered in the Re-Employment of the 50+ Workers
Zammit Loranne	Exploring Flexible Work Arrangements in Relation to the Notion of the 'Ideal' Worker - A Case Study in a Maltese ICT Organisation

### 2016 GRADUATES - DIPLOMA IN WORK AND HUMAN RESOURCES (WITH CLS DIRECTOR DR ANNA BORG)



Bonnici Clinton, Borg Kirsten, Debbattista Gilbert, Gatt Claire, Gatt Jason Joseph, Piscopo Rutzen Dorothy, Scicluna Leslie, Tabone Clayton.

## SECTION 5.2

# Diploma in Social Studies – Gender and Development

**Course Coordinator: Dr Anna Borg**

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

The course offers an introductory overview on gender issues and how these impact on the individual within social, cultural, economic and political contexts. Its objectives are:

- to sensitise participants to the importance of gender as a transversal theme in appreciating social, cultural, economic and political behaviour
- to facilitate the effective participation of men and women in decisions which invariably affect their lives
- to empower women and men to request, develop and maintain gender friendly and gender sensitive policies in the home, at work and in society.

### COURSE PROGRAMME

#### Year1

CLS1202 Gender and Sociology

CLS1203 Gender and Economics

CLS1208 Introduction to Gender Studies and Public Speaking

CLS1204 Gender and Psychology

CLS1205 Gender and Political Science

CLS1206 Research Methods and Design

**Year2**

CLS1211 Gender and Social Policy  
 CLS1215 Gender and Development  
 CLS1223 Gender Law and Crime  
 CLS1225 Gender and the World of Work  
 CLS1224 Gender and Culture  
 CLS1226 Gender and Health: Local and Global Perspectives  
 CLS1222 Long Essay

**LIST OF LONG ESSAYS FOR THE DIPLOMA IN SOCIAL STUDIES  
 - GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT (COHORT 2014-2016)**

<b>Name of Student</b>	<b>Long Essay Title</b>
Baldacchino Mary N	The Catholic Church's Outlook regarding Women since <i>Mulieris Dignitatem</i>
Bezzina Maria Theresa	The Challenges Faced by Female Air Traffic Controllers in a Male Dominated Workplace
Borg Julienne	'Able Lives' Women and Disability
Calleja Portelli Sandy	Mapping the Discourse Surrounding the Gendered Portrayals In Contemporary Popular Television Programming – A Comparative Case Study of Crime Drama Series
Cassar Julie	Perceptions of Anorexia by Professionals Working with Anorexic Clients
Catania Claudia	Lack of Female Students Taking Computer Studies as an Option at Secondary Level of Education
Cilia Michelle	The Current Situation of Intersex Persons in Malta – Shifting Away from the Medical Paradigm Towards Social Justice
Compagno Elaine	Don't You Want Me, Baby? The Single Man's Expectations, Rejection and Entitlement
Debono Judith	Entrepreneurs - Does Gender make a Difference?
Del Bene Agius Sharon	Altered Body Image - The Effects of Mastectomy in Young Women

Galea Helenio	The Impact of Correctional Facility Officers' Duty on Socio-Personal Wellbeing – An Analysis Through the Gender Lens
Mifsud Carmelina	The Impact of Family Friendly Uptake on the Career Progression of Women Working in the Health Department of Malta
Muscat Stephanie and Pace Simone	Examining the Route to the Maltese Presidency Through a Gender Lens
Scicluna Charmaine	The Experiences of Inactive Women in the Local Context: A Qualitative Study
Valentino Angela	Gearing up to 62 and Over. Challenges Women Face on Reaching Retirement Age
Xiberras Fleur Marie	Uncovering Gender Differences in Violence Between Intimate Partners
Xuereb Ingrid	Women Who Choose to Go Back to Work After a Career Break
Zammit Carmen	The Maltese Local Councils Gender Divide: What is the Cause for the Female Under-Representation in our Local Councils?
Zammit Margaret	Invisible Voice in Transition - Bargaining With Binary

**2016 GRADUATES - DIPLOMA IN SOCIAL STUDIES, GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT (WITH CLS DIRECTOR DR ANNA BORG)**



Baldacchino Mary, Bezzina Maria Theresa, Borg Julienne, Calleja Portelli Sandy, Cassar Julie, Catania Claudia, Cilia Michelle, Compagno Elaine, Debono Judith, Del Bene Agius Sharon, Galea Helenio, Mifsud Carmelina, Muscat Stephanie, Pace Simone, Scicluna Charmaine, Valentino Angela, Xiberras Fleur, Xuereb Ingrid, Zammit Carmen and Zammit Margaret

SECTION 5.3

## Bachelor in Occupational Health and Safety

**Course Coordinator: Mr Luke Fiorini**

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The course objectives are:

- 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.

## COURSE PROGRAMME

### Year1

- CLS1314 Academic Skills in Occupational Health and Safety
- CLS1315 Physical Sciences in Safety, Health and the Environment
- CLS1316 Organisational Behaviour
- CLS1317 Work, Industrial Relations and the Business Environment
- CLS1318 Promotion of Health and Wellbeing at Work
- CLS1319 Biological Principles in Health, Safety and Occupational Toxicology
- CLS1320 Risk Management and Principles of Control

### Year2

- CLS1206 Research Methods and Design
- CLS1321 Occupational Safety
- CLS1322 Health and Safety Statistics and Epidemiology
- CLS1323 Ergonomics and Human Factors
- CLS1324 Fire Safety and the Management of First Aid
- CLS1325 Investigative Skills and Occupational Safety Practice
- PBL1020 Health and Safety Legal Framework

### Year3

- CLS2301 Gender, Age, Race and Disability
- CLS2302 Occupational Hygiene
- CLS2303 Occupational Health
- CLS2304 Environmental Health Management: Policy and Legislation
- CLS2305 Health and Safety Management and Supervisory Skills
- CLS2306 Practical Skills and Application
- PBL2016 Topics in Health and Safety Law

### Year4

- CLS2307 Properties of Material, New Technologies and Technical Drawing
- CLS2308 Health and Safety Adults
- CLS2309 Applied Occupational Safety and Health
- CLS3101 Applied Quantitative Research Techniques (elective)
- CLS3102 Applied Qualitative Research Techniques (elective)

- CLS3301 Supported Study-Unit in Occupational Health and Safety
- CLS3302 Personal Development, Ethics and the Ability to Train Others
- CLS3303 Advanced Practical Skills and Application

### Year5

- CLS3304 Topics in Applied Occupational Safety and Health
- CLS3305 Occupational Incident and Accident Investigation
- CLS3306 Occupational Health and Work Performance
- CLS3307 Synoptic Unit
- CLS3308 Dissertation
- IOT3100 Creative Thinking and Innovation

## INTAKE BACHELOR IN OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY (COHORT 2016-2021)

Abela Christian, Agius Rachel, Anastasi Derrick, Bartolo Johan, Borg Bjorn Charles, Busuttil Aaron, Caruana Montaldo Kevin, Cutajar Clinton, Debattista Derian, Delicata Mario, Fenech Brian, Kyrtsidou Konstantina, Mifsud Brian, Paris Neville, Tonna Marvic, Vassallo Maria Stella.

## SECTION 5.4

# Master in Lifelong Career Guidance and Development

**Course Coordinator: Dr Manwel Debono**

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

Employment is becoming more flexible and careers 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, offered jointly by the Centre for Labour Studies and the Faculty of Education, seeks to enhance professional career guidance services in Malta. 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.

## COURSE PROGRAMME

### Year1

- CLS5101 Sociology of Work
- CLS5102 The Labour Market
- COU5401 Skills in Vocational Guidance and Counselling for Career Guidance Practitioners
- EDS5602 Guidance Theories, Models and Strategies
- CLS1206 Research Methods and Design
- CLS5103 Placement in Career Guidance Settings
- CLS5104 Career Guidance Tools
- CLS5110 Service Provision for Different Client Groups

### Year2

- EDS5608 Career Guidance Practice
- EDS5603 Professional Development
- EDS5604 Career Guidance Management
- EDS5606 Career Development and Lifelong Learning
- CLS5107 The Workplace (elective)
- EDS5605 Career Information Systems
- CLS5111 Applied Quantitative Techniques for Career Guidance
- CLS5112 Applied Qualitative Techniques for Career Guidance

### Year3

- EDS5609 Dissertation

## INTAKE MASTER IN LIFELONG CAREER GUIDANCE AND DEVELOPMENT (COHORT 2016-2021)

Azzopardi Wayne, Borg Jessica, Camilleri Thomas, Cascun Glen, Formosa Justine, Giordmaina Tania, Portelli Catherine, Saliba Roberto, Vassallo Sara.

## SECTION 6

### DISSERTATION SYNTHESIS

# Bachelor in Work and Human Resources (Honours)

Four students obtained a First Class Honours Bachelor's Degree in Work and Human Resources. They were congratulated for their splendid academic achievement and presented with a financial award by the CLS Board on 26 November 2015. What follows is a synthesis of the dissertation presented by each of these students.



Photo: Dr Anna Borg (CLS Director, extreme left) with our top performing students in the B(Work & Human Resources): Madion Dingli Scicluna, Dulcie Brincat Peplow, Loranne Zammit and Ivan Sciriha, with CLS Board Chair Prof Godfrey Baldacchino and Emeritus CLS Director Prof Edward L. Zammit (sitting).

## SECTION 6.1



# Dulcie Brincat Peplow

### TITLE

An Analysis of Motivation within the Postal Sector from the Perspective of Management and Employees.

### THE AIM OF THE STUDY

The study sought to explore the differences between what managers perceive to be important motivating factors, in comparison to their employees' expectations. The study offers a better understanding of employee motivation in a medium-sized privately owned postal service provider.

### METHODOLOGY

This quantitative research adopted the quantitative approach using printed questionnaires which were in turn statistically analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The studied organisation employed over 600 employees in both Malta and Gozo. Participants came from all the different departments, and participation was strictly on a voluntary basis.

For this study, a short and simply designed questionnaire was administered. The design and length were both intended to encourage a greater level of participation and a higher response accuracy. The challenge with this study was to identify if employee motivation depends on different variables. Thus, the following hypotheses were derived:

**Hypothesis 1:** There is a significant difference in perception between management/supervisory levels and other employees regarding the relative importance of motivating factors.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is a significant difference in work motivation priorities based on employees' age.

**Hypothesis 3:** Significant differences exist in motivational preferences based on the employees' gender.

### KEY FINDINGS

**Hypothesis 1:** The results indicated that employees were motivated primarily by interesting work, job security and good working conditions. Thus the motivating factors most important to them were all extrinsic, mainly due to the fact that all factors could be manipulated by a third party. The results achieved were not in line with those of Catania and Randall (2013) who found that Maltese employees were satisfied mainly by intrinsic rewards. The difference in the results could be attributed to the different definition of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. However, these findings were in line with Maslow's theory. Moreover, since 'good wages' was rated amongst the first five factors, this study revealed that pay is not such an important factor and that there are other, more influential incentives. However, wages might not have been an important motivational factor for these employees as wages were previously set by a collective agreement. Management were of the opinion that employees were mainly motivated by Maslow's lower level needs and that they did not value the importance of providing individuals with the opportunity to achieve: indeed, they placed the motivational factor 'interesting work' sixth in their rating. Meanwhile, the motivational factor 'career growth and promotion' was given greater importance by managers/supervisors than by employees themselves: the latter rated it last amongst the ten motivational factors. Such a low rating could have been associated with the basic level of education that the employees possessed and thus linked to low self-efficacy. However, this could also be due to the company's career advancement system which is latched to the employee's seniority.

**Hypothesis 2:** The overall relationship between employee's age and work motivators revealed that there is no statistical significance between the

three age groups. However, the mean scores of each age group in relation to the ten motivational factors revealed that individual's preferences did differ slightly. The youngest age group was more concerned with their financial burdens: thus, their primary motivator was 'good wages' followed by 'interesting work' and 'personal and company loyalty to employees'. However, results also showed that today's young employees are also trying to fulfil their social and self-actualisation needs. Both older age groups rated job security as their number one motivator. Safety and esteem needs were also valued by the older age group. However, since results were not shown to be statistically significantly different, the above considerations need to be treated with caution.

**Hypothesis 3:** This study did not find a statistical difference between males and females. It was noted that both rated the motivator 'job security' as the most important factor; while discrepancies emerged in the rating of the factors 'good working conditions', 'knowing what is going on in the company', 'finding sympathetic help with personal problems', and 'interesting work'. The first factor was given more importance by males whilst the last three factors were rated higher by females. The motivating factor 'finding sympathetic help with personal problems' was rated higher by women than men. However, the differences between the ratings were actually very small.

### CONCLUSION

The factors that motivate employees are volatile and can change in accordance with the external and internal stimuli influencing the individual. Job enrichment is important in order for an organisation to be able to enhance the motivation of its current and future employees. The knowledge attained from this study could be utilised by organisations to integrate various motivational factors in their reward system, with the intention of helping in the identification, recruitment, employment, training and retaining of a productive workforce.

Managers and supervisors need to take note of the needs of the employees they supervise in order to be able to adequately motivate them. McGregor's theory presents employees as being naturally active

and non-resistant to change, thus are all motivated, capable of assuming responsibility, and to direct their behaviour for the achievement of set goals. Moreover, management is responsible for recognising and developing these characteristics and to help employees achieve their own goals by directing their efforts towards the organisation's objectives. The success of one party comes in tandem with the success of the other, and neither can succeed without the input of the other. An organisation can directly benefit from the understanding of what motivates employees primarily through the metrics of lower absenteeism rates, a reduced job turnover and an increased rate of productivity.

#### Reference

Catania, G., & Randall, R. (2013). The relationship between age and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in workers in a Maltese cultural context. *International Journal of Arts and Sciences*, 6(2), 31-45.



## SECTION 6.2



# Madion Dingli Scicluna

#### TITLE

Learning and Developmental Needs of Health Assistants and Nursing Aides: An Explanatory Study

#### THE AIM OF THE STUDY

A health care system depends on the individuals working within it. It is the health sector labour force that determines the quality and success of any health organisation. Patients and the general public expect high standards of care from whoever delivers it. To date in Malta, most of the health care professions have received support for further training, education and ongoing professional development to ensure high quality standard of care. However, minimal attention has been given to the unregulated category of health care support staff. Over the past 20 years, this category of health care workers has been assigned a variety of titles, including health assistants, nursing aides, carers and care workers.

This research study focuses on the Health Assistants and Nursing Aides because these types of workers are engaged directly within the public sector.

Forming part of a health care team is a very sensitive role. Whoever is involved in attending the patients' bedside care requires the necessary knowledge, skills and training in doing the job in a safe and efficient manner. Health support workers working alongside nurses and other allied

health care professionals are of great support to the professional staff in any healthcare setting.

This qualitative study investigates the learning and developmental needs of Health Assistants and Nursing Aides working at a public residential entity for the elderly in Malta.

The research study sought to explore:

- (i) whether there are any skills gaps amongst the health assistants and nursing aides working at a residential home for older adults,
- (ii) what skills and competencies are needed to improve the current performance levels of these nursing aides and health assistants, and
- (iii) what learning and developmental activities are prevalent amongst health assistants and nursing aides.

The demand for healthcare provision, especially among the elderly, is increasing, and this makes the role of all the support workers all the more vital to meet client needs. Therefore, having adequately trained personnel enriched with the best knowledge, skills and abilities to be able to carry out their job for the benefit and safety of the patient is crucial. The literature advocates that the role of the health assistants and the nursing aides is not defined, and it suggests that they may be performing tasks for which are not qualified and neither skilled to do (Brain & Roberts, 2008). Thus, learning and development needs should be identified, and adequate training should be given in order to bridge any emerging skills gaps.

## METHODOLOGY

A public residential home for the elderly in Malta was chosen as the research site because the number of nursing aides and health assistants working within this residence was the largest within any entity in Malta. Nine employees from six different wards were interviewed for this study. The sample consisted of five males and four females, with an average age of 49 years.

The Chief Nursing Manager leading the entity, six charge nurses and two deputy charge nurses, all working in the entity, were interviewed using a semi-structured interview schedule which was developed for the purpose of this research study.

After the interviews were completed and transcribed, a thematic analysis was used to analyse the data, suggesting a number of findings.

## FINDINGS

There are gaps in the health assistants' and nursing aides' knowledge, skills and abilities. A thematic analysis of the gathered data suggested categorisation under five main themes:

### 1. The job of the health assistants and the nursing aides

This theme presented an outline of the job of the health assistants and the nursing aides and highlighted the role and the tasks that they perform as viewed by the participants.

### 2. Gaps identified in the performance of health assistants and nursing aides

Here, the interviewees discussed the lack of knowledge, skills and abilities amongst the health assistants and nursing aides and it was found out that the nursing aides often held a less adequate knowledge base than the health assistants. The charge nurses also criticised the working attitudes of these workers and their level of education; they thought that it was often very low.

### 3. Learning and developmental needs

In the third theme, the participants emphasised the need for appropriate training opportunities that are currently available to the health assistants and the nursing aides. They also argued that these support workers attend these lectures because it is something that it is imposed on them and not because they wish to further their personal development. This may jeopardise the outcomes of such training.

### 4. Registration and reregularisation of health assistants and nursing aides

Adequately qualified personnel need to be sourced and secured, and they need to be formally registered and regularised. This was strongly emphasised by all participants.

## 5. Challenges identified amongst carers who are supplied through a private contractor.

Interviewees are not very keen on the workers being supplied by the private sector through government tenders. The participants perceived these workers as having limited knowledge, skills and abilities, and this jeopardises the working environment and quality of overall care through unfavourable behaviour and their lack of adequate knowledge and skills.

These findings suggest the need for regulating these health care support workers upon which this study is focused. This is a much needed milestone in care because it will help in identifying and regulating individuals who are employed in such roles.

## CONCLUSION

In revealing the unclear job descriptions and role commitments and the inconsistent training pathways of these workers, it is hoped that the findings of my research study will indeed translate into a valid contribution towards the enhancement of the level of care delivery given by these workers.

## Reference

Brain, L., & Roberts, M. (2008). How to assess competence levels of healthcare assistants. *Primary Health Care*, 18(4), 36-40.



## SECTION 6.3



# Ivan Sciriha

## TITLE

Organisational Culture: The Effects of Cultural Differences during the Integration Process of Mergers and Acquisitions.

## THE AIM OF THE STUDY

Mergers and acquisitions (M&As) are a source of business transformation solutions. The intended strategies behind M&As can include corporate growth, increase in market share, combined synergies, economies of scale, diversification and shared resources. Nevertheless, history shows that most of the time these combinations fail to reach the intended preliminary aims for various motives (Weber & Camerer, 2003). Research suggests that approximately fifty to seventy-five per cent of M&As fail to live up to expectations. The post-performance has been vastly researched whilst the post-integration process in relation to cultural differences has been the least investigated (Kroon, Noorderhaven, & Leufkens, 2009).

Within the local scene, M&As have become common across a number of market sectors in these last couple of decades. This study sought to explore whether cultural differences between the two companies during a merger or acquisition have an effect on the integration process which ultimately makes the combination a success or a failure. Cultural disparities during the integration process have a number of detrimental factors such as synergies realisation and communication. In a report compiled by Schuler

and Jackson (2001) on Human Resources issues and activities during M&As, it is evident that most of the time the human capital aspect is neglected, giving rise to an amount of uncertainty, lack of employee awareness and also loss of key employees. The financial and legal aspects are addressed with prominence whilst the workforce is left helpless in such situations.

This research study was conducted amongst four sets of organisations that have gone through a merger or acquisition in Malta, and was mainly focussed on the human capital aspect. The study investigated that if organisational cultural differences are not tackled appropriately before any business takeover, the integration process will encounter several stumbling blocks, such as organisational cultural dissonance, job-role ambiguities and confusion in work practices.

## METHODOLOGY

The type of methodology used to determine the form of employees' integration during a merger or acquisition, was a qualitative data analysis with an epistemological interpretivist approach using the mono-method technique as a research choice. Local organisations that have gone through either a merger or acquisition were identified, together with the interview process as the main research instrument. Two mergers and two acquisitions were investigated.

The sample was composed of nine employees coming from various strata of the private sector and who had experienced in these past five years either a merger or an acquisition. Nine interview questions were prepared to represent certain themes which were deemed to have a considerable amount of weight on the research study. Therefore, they represented a significant nuance in particular to data sets and in relation to the main scope of the study. The sample was captured through semi-structured interviews held at the interviewees' offices. The structure of the data analysis, after the data was captured and compiled, provided the main themes on which the findings were based. The four themes that emerged from the thematic analysis were integration, organisational culture, synergy realization and communication. The findings and the appropriate analysis for every theme with the relevant sub-themes have been split into Mergers and Acquisitions separately, in order to give a clearer picture of each situation.

## FINDINGS

The results suggest that, in two acquisitions and one merger, there were similar shortages of lack of communication and synergy realisation which prevented a successful integration process. Organisational culture gaps have also been identified. The interviewees have all stressed the importance of getting employees prepared in all phases before the integration takes place.

Factors attributed to organisational culture such as work practices, the host and guest scenario, the 'us versus them', the lack of communication before the integration process commenced, unfamiliarity with new colleagues, culture imposition and the lack of synergy realization proved to be significant challenges leading to friction and conflict. When the human capital aspect is neglected during the negotiations, the integration of two different cultures takes longer than expected. There was full agreement amongst the interviewees that what constitutes a successful integration depends particularly on the approach taken by the major stakeholders before the business takeover or amalgamation actually takes place. Particular attention needs to be given to organisational cultures and the subsequent levels of integration because the greater the level of integration, the higher the degree of assimilation that ultimately affect the emotions and attitudes of employees.

Conversely, the other merger has had a successful integration process attributed to well-planned strategies combined with constant communication with all stakeholders.

The interviewees were glad to declare a synergy and a smooth operational flow without any glitches which provided the desired business continuity.

## CONCLUSION

Due to contemporary business trends, mergers and acquisitions are gaining more popularity with the scope of consolidating resources, especially where the line of business is homogenous. However, in order to have the desired return for which the combination is intended, the human capital aspect and the amalgamation of both sets of organisational cultures have to be addressed well ahead of the business takeover and ideally during

the due diligence process. A failure to address such element may result in flaws that slow down and threaten the integration process. Finding the right pattern for M&As to ripe the desired outcomes is the primary concern which unfortunately still persists.

Various reports from financial institutions such as KPMG (KPMG International, 2013) have in these past thirty years indicated incompatible cultures as the main reason M&As can and do fail. The underlying fundamental principle is for the change agents to own the process and understand entirely the importance of involving the human capital aspect, addressing any cultural differences before the integration process takes place.

## References

KPMG International (2013). *Conquering Global Markets*. Available at: <http://www.kpmg.com/Global/en/IssuesAndInsights/ArticlesPublications/Documents/conquering-global-markets.pdf>

Kroon, D.P., Noorderhaven, N.G., & Leufkens, A.S. (2009). Organizational identification and cultural differences: Explaining employee attitudes and behavioural intentions during post-merger integration. In S. Finkelstein & C.L. Cooper (Eds.), *Advances in Mergers and Acquisitions* (pp. 19-42). Bingley: Emerald.

Schuler, R., & Jackson, S. (2001). HR issues and activities in mergers and acquisitions. *European Management Journal*, 19(3), 239-253.

Weber, R. A., & Camerer, F. C. (2003). Cultural conflict and merger failure: An experimental approach. *Management Science*, 49(4), 400-415.



## SECTION 6.4



# Loranne Zammit

## TITLE

Exploring Flexible Work Arrangements in Relation to the Notion of the 'Ideal Worker': A Case Study in a Maltese ICT Organisation

## THE AIM OF THE STUDY

The main aim of this qualitative study, which is set in a Maltese ICT organisation, is to explore the attitudes of senior management towards flexible work arrangements (FWAs) and how these are applied in the case study organisation. The study uses the gendered lens to examine issue related to FWAs and builds on Acker's Theory of Gendered Organisations (Acker, 1990).

## METHODOLOGY

An interpretivist approach was adopted to carry out the research, which is based on eight one-to-one, in-depth interviews with male informants, who are at senior management level positions. The themes emerging from the interviews were analysed using Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and were compared to the framework of Adaptability of Work Arrangements (Gareis & Korte, 2002).

## Key Findings

The research shows that the managers' attitudes towards FWAs vary and this is reflected in the different ways that FWAs are practised in the studied Maltese ICT organisation. Such differences are related to the managers'

perceptions, values and past experiences in managing work on flexible schedules. In the studied context, the higher ranked employees at senior management level had less access to FWAs, and because of the sensitivity and nature of certain ICT jobs, not all workers could make use of telework. Furthermore, due to inherited organisational culture, FWAs were generally associated with mothers who have a family and caring commitments. Ultimately, this creates a glass ceiling, which hinders women with caring responsibilities who use FWAs, from occupying top management positions in the organisation.

### Conclusion

Overall, the findings that emerged from this research study correspond to the arguments presented in the Theory of Gendered Organisations (Acker, 1990). This theory claims that organisations are not gender neutral and are still built around the notion of the unencumbered male worker and masculine norms which reward those who devote their time exclusively to paid work without resorting to FWAs. Essentially, this happens because of gendered values trickling down from society at large, which directly and indirectly shape the assumptions that are adopted in organisations.

The research suggests that as long as family and care responsibilities continue to be associated primarily with women, gender inequality in organisations is likely to prevail (Williams, 2000) thus reinforcing Acker's (1990) notion of the ideal worker.

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## SECTION 7

# Long Essay Synthesis

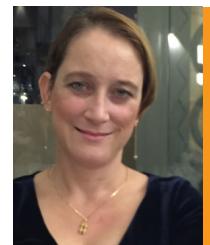
## DIPLOMA IN SOCIAL STUDIES (GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT)

Two students who followed the Diploma in Social Studies (Gender and Development) obtained a Pass with Distinction. They were congratulated for their academic achievement and were presented with a financial award by the CLS Board on 25 November 2016. What follows is a synthesis of the dissertation presented by each of these students.



Dr Anna Borg (CLS Director, left) with our top performing students in the Diploma in Social Studies: Sandy Calleja Portelli and Michelle Cilia, with CLS Board Chair Prof. Godfrey Baldacchino.

## SECTION 7.1



# Sandy Calleja Portelli

## TITLE

Mapping the Discourses Surrounding the Gendered Portrayals in Contemporary Popular Television Programming: A Comparative Case Study of Crime Drama Series

## THE AIM OF THE STUDY

This study explores the portrayal of gender in crime drama series broadcast on prime-time television (TV). It does so by comparing two long-running, crime drama series in the United States to highlight best practices in terms of gendered discourse as portrayed in this genre.

This study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are the discourses surrounding gender portrayal in TV crime drama series?
2. How may these gendered discourses impact society's view of men and women?
3. Do the gendered portrayals mirror gender roles prevalent in today's Western society?

## METHODOLOGY

A qualitative method was deemed to provide the best opportunity for focusing on the subtle use of language, narratives and types of information. A comparative analysis of two popular TV series through discourse analysis

enabled a focused and detailed approach to coding and analysis including consensual and thematic procedures.

## CHOICE OF TV SERIES

The programmes analysed needed to be comparable over a long term viewing and the relative uniform narrative and structure of crime drama made this genre ideal. The shows needed to originate from the same country at around the same time and had to offer similar but opposing gender portrayals, be series that have been on air for a considerable length of time, with a relatively stable core of main characters providing viewers with a three dimensional perception of the characters.

The dramas chosen for comparison also needed to use similar methods to solve crime thus avoiding difficulties that could arise when comparing investigators who employed different investigative techniques. The two chosen series – *Bones* and *Criminal Minds* – depicted American police procedures, portrayed mixed gender investigative teams, and utilised scientific investigative techniques.



Photo credit: FOX



Photo credit: CBS

## DATA ANALYSIS

To build an in-depth understanding of both shows, I watched several episodes starting from Episode One of each series, through to the episodes being broadcast when the study was conducted. However, I conducted critical discourse analysis (CDA) only on the final episode of the last complete season of each drama namely Season 10, Episode 22 of *Bones* and Season 10, Episode 23 of *Criminal Minds*.

I searched each episode for instances of power and dominance in the text, then analysed each instance using semiotics to analyse the discourse, later interpreting my findings using thematic analyses in accordance to Braun and Clarke (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

## KEY FINDINGS

The comparison highlighted numerous differences in the portrayal of individual team members throughout the two shows.

## PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

The series *Criminal Minds* appears to portray gender in a more balanced, nuanced manner than the series *Bones*. *Criminal Minds* does not conform to the stereotypical portrayal of successful women needing to sacrifice their femininity, although warmth and affection appear to be connoted as a weakness in the hard-nosed world of the FBI. In contrast, the naiveté and lack of emotion displayed by *Bones*'s Brennan perpetuates the stereotype of the successful woman deficient in feminine aspects of her character.

## Relationships

The two shows portray interpersonal relationships within the teams very differently. Whilst *Criminal Minds*, depicts men and women successfully conducting platonic relationships, *Bones* cements the theory that friendships between single men and single women are eventually destined to morph into romances.

Both programmes emphasise the close, almost familial, ties between team members; ties which are shown as being important to people irrespective of gender. However male and female characters acknowledge these ties differently meaning that, according to these shows, family ties carry different connotations for men and women.

## Gender roles

Both *Bones* and *Criminal Minds* show pregnancy as posing a temporary physical liability on women without diminishing their value or ability to contribute to the work at hand. In *Bones* domesticity is consigned to the realm of female responsibility whilst *Criminal Minds* does not feature domesticity for either gender.

## Parenthood

The parents in *Criminal Minds* share childcare responsibilities with their partners or paid carers, possibly due to the team's frequent travel whilst in *Bones* parenthood is primarily the mother's responsibility. Nevertheless, both series presents expectant mothers and fathers as being equally anxious about parenthood.

The maternal instinct appears in both programmes as Callahan and Brennan take decisions with their children in mind. *Criminal Minds* accepts the individual woman's decision without imposing an 'acceptable' term of maternity leave.

## Physical appearance

Physical appearance goes a long way to determine gendered portrayals in the media as it speaks to the level of sexual attractiveness expected of the characters.

The profilers in *Criminal Minds* are generally portrayed dressed in 'office wear' and it would be reasonable to conclude that the women of *Criminal Minds* are not overtly sexualised. *Bones* appears to sexualise its lead female characters more. Brennan's chin and neck are emphasised with dangly earrings whilst Sorayan and Angela's clothes emphasise their beauty and physical attractiveness. Interestingly, *Criminal Minds*'s Morgan wears sweatshirts emphasising his physique and attractiveness which is unusual in this genre.

### Dealing with suspects - Criminal Minds

A key feature of *Criminal Minds* is the team's direct involvement in apprehending and questioning the suspect at the end of the episode. The show depicts both male and female investigators involved in the hunt, taking risks and being injured in the line of duty. They all seem to take their injuries in their stride, although Morgan appears to list his injuries proudly.

The series portrays the female characters as consciously using their femininity to apprehend suspects and to establish a rapport with female suspects during interviews.

### Conclusion

This study has demonstrated a shift in gender portrayals from those of previous series of the same genre. The modern crime drama features strong, assertive men and women who juggle their work and family commitments. Female investigators are accepted and respected by their male colleagues on the basis of their expertise and professionalism. However, the genre still has some way to go to portray complete gender equality; the appearance of female lead characters is still a major part of their on-screen persona and women are still more likely to be assigned 'caring' roles.

## SECTION 7.2



# Michelle Cilia

### TITLE

The Current Situation of Intersex Persons in Malta: Shifting away from the Medical Paradigm towards Social Justice.

### AIM AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

An intersex person is born with physiological variation/s in the reproductive and sexual characteristics that typically fit within the archetypal normative male-female classification of human anatomy. These include people with atypical external or internal reproductive organs and/or having different sex chromosomes or hormones, which may be either apparent at birth or else manifest themselves later in life, usually around time of puberty.

Traditionally, intersex persons' management was based on a concealment-centred medical model, comprising of a range of medical and surgical procedures aimed at immediate reconstruction of the perceived anatomical abnormality. Hence, medical personnel advocated these non-therapeutic interventions as corrective measures required to achieve cosmetic and aesthetic alignment with the normative sex binary. It was not until the early 1990s that activists, through international networking and political lobbying, heightened public and professional consciousness and stirred discussion. The provision of new knowledge exposed the lived experiences of intersex persons who underwent these traditional unconsented normalisation medical and surgical procedures at a young age. Apart from enduring a series of physical and sexual irreversible negative short and long-term consequences, the overarching reality of

these testimonies was a deep sense of humiliation, violation of their person and intense psychological scarring. Other issues unveiled by these lived testimonials included the authenticity of the parental informed consent; the realm of deceitful information giving; difficulties faced when attempting to access one's childhood medical records; stigmatization and secrecy of the experience; as well as the rejection of the sex assigned at birth.

In light of this new data, the traditional medical approach has been questioned on bases of human rights, ethical issues, and psychological and physical abuse. On a global level, there is currently exponential awareness calling for the movement away from the physical aspects of diagnosis and alternatively look at the realm of intersex in all its complexity. The way forward proposed is a person-centred social model that views intersex conditions as merely an anatomical variation, and not a medical problem. This paradigm shift emphasizes on the discontinuation of conventional practices of uninformed, non-consensual, unnecessary, irreversible sex-altering medical interventions and treatment. It focuses on truthful information giving and informed choices, the provision of interdisciplinary psychosocial support and counselling, full access to medical records, legislative changes and increased societal awareness.

In March 2015, Malta was the first nation to outlaw unnecessary normalization procedures on intersex babies, in the passage of the Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics (GIGESC) Act. This Act also implies that an interdisciplinary team will be appointed to ensure decision-making is based on the child's best interests, as well as a working group to review the existing medical treatment protocols. Moreover, this legislation states that expert psychosocial support should initiate from time of the child's diagnosis and extended as required. Apart from medical aspects of the intersex persons' management, this law furthermore allows parents to postpone the inclusion of a sex marker on the birth certificate until gender identity is determined and includes simplification of administrative procedures to amend gender identity, if necessary.

Despite having such progressive law in place, locally, the topic of intersex is quite novel and intersex persons' experiences are still hardly ever heard of. Moreover, no studies were previously carried out to explore this issue within the Maltese society. In view of this, this small-scale qualitative study aimed to yield practical knowledge regarding the current paradigm and to increase further understanding and dialogue about the situation

of intersex persons' management in Malta, following such historical legal reform.

## METHODOLOGY

Data was obtained through six in-depth face-to-face audio-recorded semi-structured interviews. A self-constructed interview guide comprising of set of open-ended guided questions was used to steer the conversation and frame discussion. Expert sampling method was employed to recruit with six experts from the local medical and social field, whilst thematic analysis was employed to analyse the raw data.

## KEY FINDINGS

One overarching theme emerged being '*In limbo*'. A number of intertwined concepts emerged from this main theme and these were further classified under four sub-themes and their respective sub-headings, as per table below.

**Table: Theme, sub-themes & sub-headings**

<b>In Limbo</b>	In the Abstract
1. Being Invisible	In Absentia In Hiding
2. Being in Between	Inconceivable Indistinct In Evolution
3. Being in Divergence	In Variation to In Deviation from In Silos
4. Being in Suspense	In Stasis Indeterminate In a Vacuum

Primarily, this study brought into light the fact that intersex is not an abstract concept or simply a rare physiological condition in isolation. Indeed, it is a tangible, multi-dimensional, emotionally and socially challenging lived experience of human-beings and their loved ones. A two-sexed selective cultural context left this cohort of people in hiding, shrouding this experience

with secrecy, stigma and shame. Locally, this social invisibility reflects in the lack of existing data indicating prevalence, the nil contribution from intersex persons in the legislative development process, and the challenges faced by health care professionals who have direct contact with these persons and their families in relation to confidentiality and data protection issues.

Moreover, this study revealed that a major challenge faced by intersex persons and their families is that of being in-between the two opposing and extreme poles of biological determinism. It put into light the social, practical and psychological struggles which may be experienced when an intersex child is born in a rigid two sexed culture, which may often render the concept of gender neutrality to become an idealistic notion. Findings also showed that two divergent perspectives -of whether intersex is a merely a normal variation to, or an abnormal deviation from, the standard biological norm- affect how arguments are positioned and as such, influence decision-making.

In addition, findings of this study put into light the urgent need for the appointment of the interdisciplinary team and working group, as required by the new legislation, so that this law is transferred from paper into practice. It also identified a gap between different bodies who are currently working in silos with no reciprocity.

## CONCLUSION

In order to put this new law into motion, this study recommended a collective effort by all stakeholders so as to break down barriers – by moving away from their diverse standpoints and keeping the holistic needs of the growing child as the focal point at all times. Further recommendations for practice and research were put forward, which included measures to eradicate silence and increase visibility of intersex persons both in research and in society, as well as the importance of conveying optimistic messages in support provision.

Ultimately, it was concluded that legal change cannot occur in a vacuum. It requires a broader social and cultural shift. Hence, it was advocated that in order for intersex persons to fully embrace their fundamental rights, humankind must strive to eradicate heteronormative, divisive, conventional norms. This will only happen when society moves beyond the gender binary – becoming a society that truly accepts diversity of any kind.



## SECTION 8

# MONITORING AND RESEARCH ON Industrial Relations and the Maltese Labour Market

## EUROFOUND CONTRACT 2015-2016

Title	Author	Date
Quarterly report 4 (Oct-Dec)	Saviour Rizzo	Jan-15
Information and communication quarterly report	Charles Tabone	Jan-15
Annual update: Pay	Manwel Debono	Jan-15
Start-up support for young people	Christine Garzia	Jan-15
Annual update: Working time	Manwel Debono	Jan-15
Maternity leave directive	Charlotte Camilleri	Jan-15
Agriculture	Vincent Marmara	Feb-15
Role of social partners in the National Reform Programmes and in the European semester	Saviour Rizzo	Feb 15
Furniture	Jeannine Vassallo	Feb-15
Working life country profiles update	Louis Grech	Feb-15

Representativeness studies at EU level and concept of representativeness at national and EU level	Saviour Rizzo	Feb-15
Combatting precarious employment	Saviour Rizzo	Feb-15
Mapping key dimensions of industrial relations in Europe	Vincent Marmara	Mar-15
Temporary agency work	Louis Grech	Mar-15
Maritime transport	Vincent Marmara	Mar-15
Quarterly report 1 (Jan-Mar)	Saviour Rizzo	Apr-15
Information and communication quarterly report 1	Charles Tabone	Apr-15
Housing in Europe - the consequences of poor accommodation	Jeannine Vassallo	May-15
Extractive industries	Louis Grech	May-15
Postal services	Vincent Marmara	Jun-15
Do reduced non-wage labour costs lead to more sustainable jobs	Christine Garzia	Jun-15
Increase in industrial dispute	Saviour Rizzo	Jun-15
The role of the institutions for social dialogue at national level	Saviour Rizzo	Jun-15
Quarterly report 2 (Apr-Jun)	Saviour Rizzo	Jul-15
Information and communication quarterly report 2	Charles Tabone	Jul-15
ERM database on restructuring related legislation	Louis Grech	Jul-15
Extending working lives through flexible retirement schemes	Charles Tabone	Aug-15
The independence and impartiality of the industrial tribunal	Saviour Rizzo	Aug-15
Changes in remuneration and reward systems	Christine Garzia	Sep-15

Changing patterns of working time for sustainable work	Saviour Rizzo	Oct-15
Quarterly report 3 (Jul-Sep)	Saviour Rizzo	Oct-15
Information and communication quarterly report 3	Charles Tabone	Oct-15
Inequalities in working conditions (fraudulent forms of contracting work and self-employment)	Dulcie Brincat Peplow	Nov-15
Shipbuilding	Louis Grech	Nov-15
Railways and urban public transport	Louis Grech	Dec-15
Spotlight - Malta: Trust fund for payment of maternity leave set up to eliminate discrimination	Saviour Rizzo	Dec-15
Quarterly report 4 (Oct-Dec)	Saviour Rizzo	Jan-16
Information and communication quarterly report 4	Charles Tabone	Jan-16
Annual update: Pay	Manwel Debono	Jan-16
Progress report (EU-level and national correspondents)	Manwel Debono	Feb-16
National media sources update for the restructuring events	Charles Tabone	Feb-16
Industrial relations data – update	Louis Grech	Feb-16
Social mobility in Europe	Anna Borg	Feb-16
Hairdressing	Vincent Marmara	Apr-16
Quarterly report 1 (Jan-Mar)	Saviour Rizzo	Apr-16
Information consultation quarterly report 1	Charles Tabone	Apr-16
Europe refugee crisis - evidence on approaches to labour market integration of refugees	Christine Garzia	May-16
Support instruments database	Charles Tabone	Jun-16

Delivering public services - a greater role for the private sector	Dulcie Brincat Peplow	Jun-16
Exploring self-employment in Europe	Jeannine Vassallo	Jul-16
Quarterly report 2 (Apr-Jun)	Saviour Rizzo	Jul-16
Information and communication quarterly report	Charles Tabone	Jul-16
Involvement of the SPS in the EU semester	Charlotte Camilleri	Aug-16
Reactivate, return to work of long-term excluded	Charles Tabone	Sep-16
Steel and metal	Louis Grech	Oct-16
Quarterly report 3 (Jul-Sep)	Saviour Rizzo	Oct-16
Information and communication quarterly	Charles Tabone	Oct-16
The right to strike: Is it absolute?	Saviour Rizzo	Oct-16
Policies addressing in-work poverty in the EU	Christine Garzia	Oct-16
Progress report	Manwel Debono	Dec-16



## SECTION 9

# Research Work and Publications of the CLS staff: 2015-2016

### PROFESSOR GODFREY BALDACCHINO

#### As Sole Book Editor

*Entrepreneurship in Small Island States and Territories*. New York: Routledge, 2015. 312pp.  
ISBN-13: 978-1-138-78998-2  
*Archipelago Tourism: Policies and Practices*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2015. 248pp. ISBN-13: 978-1-4724-2430-3.

#### As Guest Journal Issue Co-Editor

(with Gudrun Helgadottir & Reidar J. Mykletun) – *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*. Special double issue on rural tourism (Vol. 15, Nos 1-2, 2015).

#### As Supporting Book Co-Editor

(with Ilan Kelman): *Routledge Major Works Series: Island Studies*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2016. (A four-volume anthology, 1,630 pages). ISBN: 978-1-1380-1459-6.  
(with Kelly Vodden and Ryan Gibson). *Place Peripheral: Place-Based Development in Rural, Island and Remote Regions*. St John's NL: ISER Press, 2015. 340pp. ISBN: 978-1-894725-25-5.

#### Peer Reviewed Journal Articles and Book Chapters

Prologue. In M. Bruguglio and M. Brown (Eds.), *A Sociology of the Maltese Islands*. Luqa, Malta: Mireva, 2016, pp. 4-10.

Diaoyu Dao, Diaoyutai or Senkaku? Creative solutions to a festering dispute in the East China Sea from an 'island studies' perspective. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, Vol. 57, No. 1, 2016, pp. 16-26.

Small island states: vulnerable, resilient, doggedly perseverant or cleverly opportunistic? In J.-M. Breton, O. Dehoorne & J.-M. Furt (Eds.), *Espaces et environnements littoraux et insulaires: Accessibilité, vulnérabilité, résilience*. Paris: Karthala, 2015, pp. 217-238.

Smallness and islandness: ever the twain shall meet? In R. Heimrath & A. Kremer (Eds.), *Insularity: Small worlds in cultural and linguistic perspectives*. Würzburg, Germany: Königshausen & Neumann, 2015, pp. 31-44.

Capital and port cities on small islands sallying forth beyond their walls: a Mediterranean exercise, *Journal of Mediterranean Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 2, 2015, pp. 137-151.

Placing identity: a critical assessment of the political economy of rebounding peripheries.

In K. Vodden, R. Gibson & G. Baldacchino (Eds.), *Place peripheral: Place-based development in rural, island and remote regions*. St John's NL: ISER Press, 2015, pp. 41-62.

Lingering colonial outlier yet miniature continent: Notes from the Sicilian archipelago. *Shima: International Journal of Small Island Cultures*, Vol. 9, No. 2, 2015, pp. 89-102.

(with C.S. Mellor) Tuvalu: entrepreneurship and the Dot TV phenomenon. In G. Baldacchino (Ed.), *Entrepreneurship in small island states and territories*. New York: Routledge, 2015, pp. 268-281.

Editorial Introduction: Small island states and territories: Vulnerable, resilient, but also doggedly perseverant and cleverly opportunistic. In G. Baldacchino (Ed.), *Entrepreneurship in small island states and territories*. New York: Routledge, 2015, pp. 1-28.

A 'stopover place' at best? Recent trends in immigration attraction and retention on Prince Edward Island. In E. Tatsoglou, A. Dobrovolsky & B. Cottrell (Eds.), *The warmth of the welcome: Is Atlantic Canada a home away from home for immigrants?* Sydney NS: Cape Breton University Press, 2015, pp. 208-232.

(with G. Helgadottir & R. J. Mykletun) Rural tourism: insights from the North Atlantic. Guest editorial introduction. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality & Tourism*, 15(1-2), 2015, pp. 1-7.

Feeding the rural tourism strategy? Food and notions of place and identity. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality & Tourism*, 15(1-2), 2015, pp. 223-238.

Going missing? Islands, incarceration and disappearance. Guest editorial, *Political Geography*. Vol. 51, March 2016, pp. 97-99.

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On the branding and reputation of islands, *Place Brand Observer* (On-Line), 27 September 2016: Available at: <http://placebrandobserver.com/branding-islands/>

Rising above the rocks in the East China Sea. *Policy Forum* (Asia & The Pacific Policy Society), 15 September 2016. Available at: <http://www.policyforum.net/rising-rocks-east-china-sea/>

(with C. Galdies) Global environmental change: economic and labour market implications for small island territories. *Xjenza On-line*, 3, 2015, 81-85.

There is so much more to sea: the myriad aquatic engagements of humankind. *Etnofoor: Anthropological Journal*, 27(2), 2015, 179-184.

Society and economy. Guest contribution to *Vision 2016*, publication of Malta Chamber of Commerce.

CHOGM returns to Malta: EU and Commonwealth membership in the Mediterranean. *The Round Table: Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs*, 104(4), 2015, 493-494.

Extreme tourism. In S.M. Dahlgard-Park (Ed.) *Encyclopaedia of Quality and the Service Sector*. (pp. 231-233). Thousand Oaks CA: Sage, 2015.

Employee involvement. In S.M. Dahlgard-Park (Ed.) *Encyclopaedia of Quality and the Service Sector*(pp. 197-200). Thousand Oaks CA: Sage, 2015.

Islands of the world and the European touch. *Occasional Paper 03/2015*. Msida, Malta: Islands and Small States Institute, University of Malta. Available at: [http://www.um.edu.mt/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0013/243220/Islands\\_of\\_the\\_World\\_and\\_the\\_European\\_Touch.pdf](http://www.um.edu.mt/_data/assets/pdf_file/0013/243220/Islands_of_the_World_and_the_European_Touch.pdf)

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Mifsud, A., & Borg, A. (In Press). Challenging sexism: Promoting the rights of men and women in contemporary societies. In C.C. Lee (Ed.), *Counselling for Social Justice*. Alexandria, VA: American Counselling Association.

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### DR MANWEL DEBONO

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Debono, M. (2015). *National survey on trade unions in Malta*. Attard, Malta: President's Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society and Centre for Labour Studies.

Zammit, E., Debono, M., & Brincat, M. (2015). National monograph – Malta. In R. Blanpain & M. Colucci (Eds.), *International Encyclopaedia for Labour Law and Industrial Relations* (pp. 1-302). The Netherlands: Kluwer Law International.

Abela, A., Casha, C., Debono, M., & Lauri, M.A. (2015). Attitudes about remarriage in Malta. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 56(5), 369-387.

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### LUKE FIORINI

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Fiorini, L., Griffiths, A., & Houdmont, J. (2016, April). Predictors and Consequences of Presenteeism: A Qualitative Study of Nurses in Geriatric Settings. In K. Teoh, V. Dediu, N.S. Saade, & J. Hassard. *Proceedings of the 12th European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology Conference: OHP in Times of Change: Society and the workplace*. Paper presented at the 12th European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology conference: Occupational health psychology in times of change: society and the workplace, Athens (246-247). Nottingham: EAOHP.

Dimech, D., & Fiorini, L. (2016). *The role of private providers in nursing homes and residential care*. Unpublished report for Eurofound: Dublin

Fiorini, L. (2015, March 5). The safer the workplace ... *Times of Malta*. Available at: <http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20150305/opinion/The-safer-the-workplace-.558562>

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## SECTION 10

# Other Activities and Conferences

## ORGANISED BY THE CENTRE FOR LABOUR STUDIES DURING 2015-2016

### 50/50 BOARDROOMS? – GENDER BALANCE

The Centre for Labour Studies collaborated with KPMG (Malta) to carry out a survey about gender balance in senior management positions in Malta. The results of the survey were presented during a business breakfast organised in collaboration with the Times of Malta in April 2016.



The panel from left to right: Ms Ariadne Massa - Journalist - Times of Malta; Mr Mark Bamber - Advisory Partner, KPMG; Ms Isabelle Engsted-Maquet - Policy Officer, European Commission; and Dr Anna Borg - Director, Centre for Labour Studies.

## WORK-LIFE ISSUES

Students studying Work and Human Resources explored Work-life Issues and presented their findings during a seminar held in Attard. During this seminar, Dr Esther Baarda and Ms Cecile Oosting from Hanze University of Applied Sciences in Groningen, The Netherlands, gave a presentation as part of their Erasmus Exchange visit.



From left to right front row: Ms Cecile Oosting and Dr Esther Baarda from Hanze University of Applied Sciences in Groningen, The Netherlands, together with a selection of CLS Students following the Work and Human Resources degree programme during the seminar held in April 2016.

## EUROPE SOCIAL DAYS

Work and HR students studying with the Centre for Labour Studies participated in the annual activity called *Europe Social Days*. During this event, Maltese students met other HR students coming from other European universities. This event enabled the students to meet and reflect



Maltese and other European students during a visit to SD Worx in Brussels in May 2016. SD Worx provides Payroll, HR and Tax and Legal services to 60,000 large and small organisations across the world.



Delegates from the European Universities participating in the preparatory meeting held at the University of Malta. Photo includes Dr Anna Borg (CLS Director) (4th from right) and Dr Maureen Cole (Faculty of Social Wellbeing) (4th from left) from the University of Malta.

about important issues which are affecting Europe in relation to Human Resources.

In November 2016, the Centre for Labour Studies hosted delegates from the Universities of Groningen (the Netherlands), Leuven (Belgium), Malaga (Spain), Munich (Germany) and Zurich (Switzerland) who met for a preparatory meeting in Malta for the forthcoming *Europe Social Days* event.

### INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS TRAINING PROGRAMME

The Centre organised an intensive, four day training programme in Industrial Relations. The training was specific to Permanent Secretaries and Senior Managers within the Public Sector. The training sessions were delivered by a variety of academics, administrators and practitioners; the various sessions were held off campus in B'Kara between April and May 2016.



Professor Godfrey Baldacchino opening the Industrial Relations Training Programme

### ISLAND TOURISM: ECONOMIC AND LABOUR MARKET IMPLICATIONS

Organised by the Centre for Labour Studies and the Institute of Tourism, Travel and Culture, RETI – the global network of island universities – held its annual symposium and school at the University of Malta's Valletta Campus in November, 2016. The event was coordinated by Professor Godfrey Baldacchino. The University of Malta is a founder member of the RETI network.



Prof Baldacchino addressing participants at the Island Tourism Symposium



Participants from 10 countries who attended the Tourism Symposium and School.

## FNTU SEMINAR ON FAMILY FRIENDLY MEASURES

The Centre for Labour Studies, in collaboration with the Office of the President of Malta, held a seminar for trade unions as an initiative of the National Forum for Trade Unions (FNTU). During this seminar, held in October 2016, unions discussed what can be done to close the difference between the workers' rights to Family Friendly Measures in the public and private sector.



Her Excellency The President of Malta, Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, at the opening of the FNTU seminar.



Dr Anna Borg delivering the keynote speech during the FNTU seminar which discussed the differences in Family Friendly measures offered in the private and the public sector.

## SECTION 11

# Financial Statements

## 2015 & 2016

### GENERAL EXPENSES

General Expenses CLSSUPP-01	Year 2015	Year 2016
Salaries Academic Staff	€131,270	€138,170
Salaries Support Staff	€55,105	€48,797
Operational	€2,808	€3,714
<b>Total</b>	<b>€189,184</b>	<b>€190,682</b>

### Breakdown of Operational Expenses

Breakdown of Operational Expenses	Year 2015	Year 2016
Memberships	€19	-
Stationery	€749	€560
Printing	€614	€112
Postage	€195	€84
Advertising	€244	€1,669
Hospitality	-	€187
Event Catering	€197	€76

Petty Cash	€674	€425
Transport	€41	-
Computer Software	€75	-
Office Equipment	-	€370
Furniture	-	€230
<b>Total</b>	<b>€2,808</b>	<b>€2,624</b>

### RESERVE FUND

#### Reserve Fund CLSIN01-01

	Year 2015	Year 2016
Income		
Consultancy	-	€8,065
Sponsorships	-	€150
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>€8,215</b>

Expenditure	Year 2015	Year 2016
Academic Supplements	€7,980	€1,416
Travelling & Accommodation	€456	-
Hospitality	-	€1,336
Meeting Catering	-	€597
Transport	-	€2,042
Course Venue	-	€4,400
Student Subsidies	-	€1,468
Student Awards	€800	€300
Office Supplies	€432	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>€9,668</b>	<b>€11,657</b>

### EUROFOUND CONTRACT

#### Fund (88-207) E10LE12-01

	Year 2015	Year 2016
Income	€ 48,555.00	€42,957.50
Expenditure	Year 2015	Year 2016
Support Basic Salary	€21,405.12	€6,396.66
Support Others (Extra/Occasional Salaries)	€15,132.00	€15,392.00
Professional Fees	-	-€4720
Furniture	€5,332.09	-
Travel	€1,275.60	-€2,101.61
Remaining Total	€5,410.19	€19,020.03



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