



L-Università ta' Malta
Faculty for Social Wellbeing

Department of
Gender & Sexualities

HUMAN
RiRIGHTS
DIRECTORATE

 **Astarte**
Mediterranean Journal on Gender & Sexualities



Gender and Sexualities Conference 2026

6 & 7 May 2026

Conference Programme

Department of Gender and Sexualities, University of Malta

Human Rights Directorate

Astarte: Mediterranean Journal on Gender and Sexualities



Day 1

09:30–10:00

Registration

10:00–10:30

Welcome

Carmen Sammut

Rebecca Buttigieg

JosAnn Cutajar

10:30–11:15

Keynote Speakers

Yazdanpanah, Soheyla

*Femonationalism and Anti-Gender Politics in
Europe: Two Sexual Regimes, One
Ethnonationalist Logic, with Insights from Sweden*

Scerri, Josianne

*Targeting the Beast along my illness trajectory:
coping strategies of women with triple-negative
breast cancer*

11:15 - 12:15

Parallel Sessions 1

12:15 - 13:15

Lunch Break

13:15 - 14:15

Parallel Sessions 2

14:15 - 15:15

Parallel Sessions 3

15:15 - 16:15

Coffee Break

16:15 - 17:00

Keynote Speaker

Buckley, Fiona

Reflecting on Legislative Gender Quotas in Ireland

Attard, Simone

Assisted Reproductive technology (ART) in Malta



Day 1 — Opening Keynote (10:30–11:15)

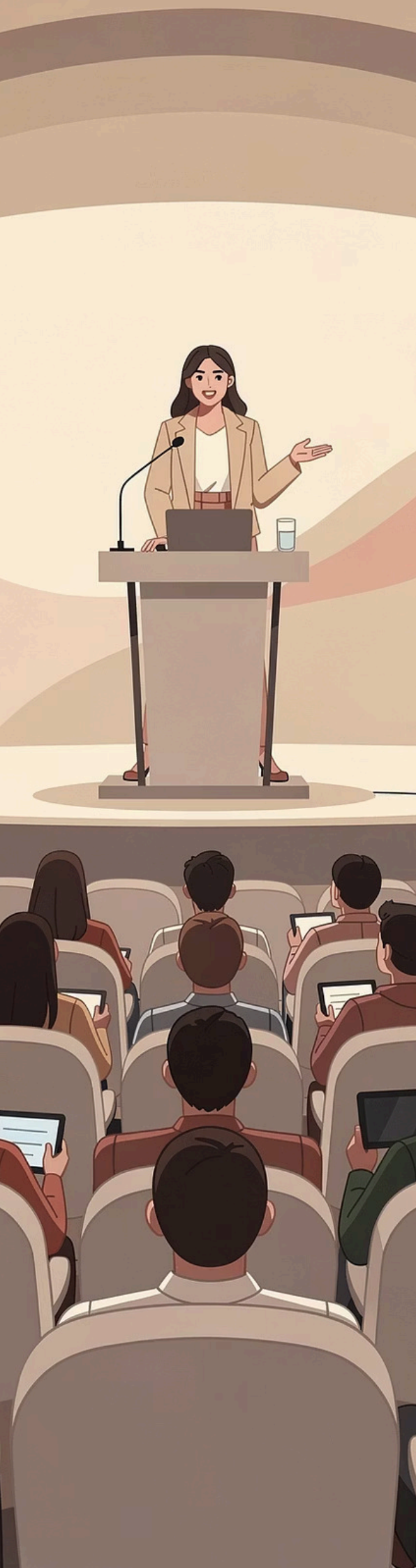
ALL PARTICIPANTS

Yazdanpanah, Soheyla

Femonationalism and Anti-Gender Politics in Europe:
Two Sexual Regimes, One Ethnonationalist Logic, with
Insights from Sweden

Scerri, Josianne

*Targeting the Beast along my illness trajectory: coping
strategies of women with triple-negative breast cancer*





Day 1 — Parallel Sessions 1 (11:15–12:15)

Three concurrent rooms running simultaneously. Each session: **10 min presentation + 5 min Q&A.**

Room A — Theme 1: Sexual Health, Consent, and Care

Chair: Galea, Emily

- Queering Consent in Irish Sexual Healthcare Services — Mark Doyle and Jennifer O'Mahoney
- Intersex Experiences with Fertility and Healthcare — Bartolo Tabone, Claudia
- The human cost of HIV Stigma: The experience of gay men living with HIV in Malta — Deguara, Angele
- Lesbian Couples' Experiences of Maternity Care — Bajada, Maria

Room B — Theme 2: Law, Policy, and Institutional Equality

Chair: Camilleri, Franica


- Same-sex families' perceptions of (in)equality and legal frameworks in Greece — Mara, Athina
- A Critical Policy Analysis of the National Sexual Health Strategy for Malta and Gozo — Baldacchino, Matthew
- Gender Adjustment in Legislature: Highlights, Successes and Challenges in the Maltese Context — Makhbuba Dekhkankhodjaeva, John Charles Fenech, and Danica Tonna
- Everyone (not) invited: Gender, family, and childhood in Greek parliamentary debates on civil partnerships for same-sex couples — Boviatsis, Spyros



Room C — Theme 3: Queer Citizenship, Space, and Belonging

Chair: Vassallo, Louiselle

- Queer-Feminist Counterplaces in Times of Polycrisis: Cultural Production between Local Space and Digital Publics — Seewald, Maria Alexandra
- Beyond the City: LGBTQ+ Inclusion in Rural Regions — Nijmeijer, Henk and Odijk, Michiel
- "A Place to Be Ourselves": A Qualitative Exploration of Identity, Community, and Safety for LGBTIQ+ Amateur Athletes at European Sport Events - Lengyel, Artúr
- 'Il-Mararagel' & 'In-Nanna': Expressions of the Maltese Queer Identity — Zammit, Nikolas

 12:15–13:15 — **Lunch Break**



Day 1 — Parallel Sessions 2 (13:15–14:15)

Three concurrent rooms running simultaneously. Each session: **10 min presentation + 5 min Q&A.**

Room A — Theme 4: Reproductive Justice, Diagnosis, and Embodied Vulnerability

Chair: Bugeja, Carmenrita

- "I didn't feel safe discussing it with absolutely anyone": Maltese Women's Experiences with Abortion Stigma — Psaila Stabile, Natalie and De Zordo, Silvia
- Disrupted Expectations: Gendered Norms and the "Good Pregnancy" Following Fetal Anomaly Diagnosis — Bonello, Solange
- Changing trajectories of traditional postnatal care in Kerala: Rise of ayurvedic postnatal care — Vishnupriya, Mankuzhi
- "Just because I'm able to, should I do it?" Why do women in Buenos Aires City choose not to have children: A Critical Discourse Analysis - Vissicchio, Florencia Noel

Room B — Theme 5: Masculinities, Backlash, and Public Discourse


Chair: Sciberras, Ryan

- The case of male rape: underfunded, undermanned, and under-resourced organisations helping survivors of male rape — Mallia, Vince
- Reframing Victimhood: How Italian MRAs Construct Public Discourse on Gender Violence — Vingelli, Giovanna
- DEI Frameworks and the Persistent Deprioritization of Gender in HR - Cutajar, JosAnn and Thake, Ann Marie
- Young Maltese men's understandings and experiences of masculinity and toxic masculinity — Sant, Marta and Chetcuti Dimech, Chiara

Room C — Theme 6: Education, Curriculum, and Inclusion

Chair: Arvanitidou, Zoi

- A Conceptualisation of a STEM-history pedagogical approach towards the teaching of the construction and performance of gender — Dalli, Nicholas and Vassallo, Diane
- Gender, Curriculum, and Change: Rethinking Fashion and Home Economics Education in Malta — Portelli, Lorraine
- DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN THE MALTESE FASHION INDUSTRY — A Gatekeeper and Producer Perspective — Lorraine Portelli and Fiona Vella
- Reimagining Identity through Contemporary Art Education — Zammit, Charmaine

 14:15–15:15 — **Coffee Break**



Day 1 — Parallel Sessions 3 (15:15–16:15)

Three concurrent rooms running simultaneously. Each session: **10 min presentation + 5 min Q&A.**

Room A — Theme 7: The Work of Equality: Gender Equality and Institutional Life

Chair: Murphy, Brenda

- The Work of Equality: Stories of Labour, Resistance and Solidarity in University Life - Finlay, Hazel
- From Formation to Flashpoint: Gender Identity Policy in a New University - Daly, Carla
- Gender Equality through an Intersectional Framework: QMUL's Gender Impact Plan (2022–2027) - Moissidou, Despina and Grech, Deborah
- The IfE Culture Blueprint: Integrating Gender Equality, Wellbeing, and Talent Retention - Nadine Genovese

Room B — Theme 8: Re configuring Power, Identity, and the Post-Human - Video Presentations and Zoom Participation

Chair: Cutajar, JosAnn

- Redefining crisis of masculinity: Institutional Reconfiguration and Gender Regimes in Latin America - Castillo, Tatiana and Alvarez, Miguel
- Beyond the Anthropological Machine: A Biopolitical Reading of the Intersection Between Woman and Animal - Argun, Melike Gül Mürdük
- Muslim lesbian activism to decolonize “political lesbianism”. On the intersectional struggles of racialized lesbian activists in France - Sadeghipouya, Mahdis



Day 1 — Parallel Sessions 3 (15:15–16:15)

Three concurrent rooms running simultaneously. Each session: **10 min presentation + 5 min Q&A.**

Room C — Theme 9: Intersectional Frontiers: Navigating Gender, Identity, and Equity in Global Contexts - Video Presentations and Zoom Participation

Chair: TBA

- Exploring the Challenges of Sexual Diversities and Gender Identities in Southeast Asia - Sadruddin, Munir Moosa
- Women in Greek sports journalism: Persistent inequalities in a traditionally male domain - Tsalkatidou, Eleni
- Decolonizing Queer Citizenship: Tongzhi (Un)Belonging in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Mainland China - O'Doherty, Desmond
- Materialities of Attraction: Gender, Attraction, and Ace Philosophy - Przybyło, Ela



Day 1 — Closing Keynote (16:15–17:00)

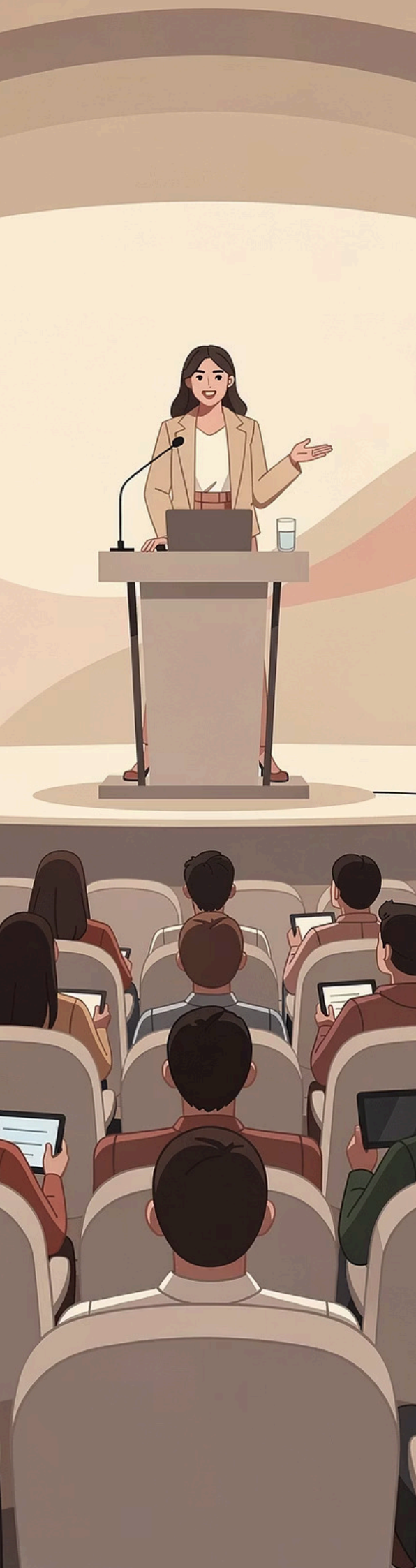
ALL PARTICIPANTS

Buckley, Fiona

Reflecting on Legislative Gender Quotas in Ireland

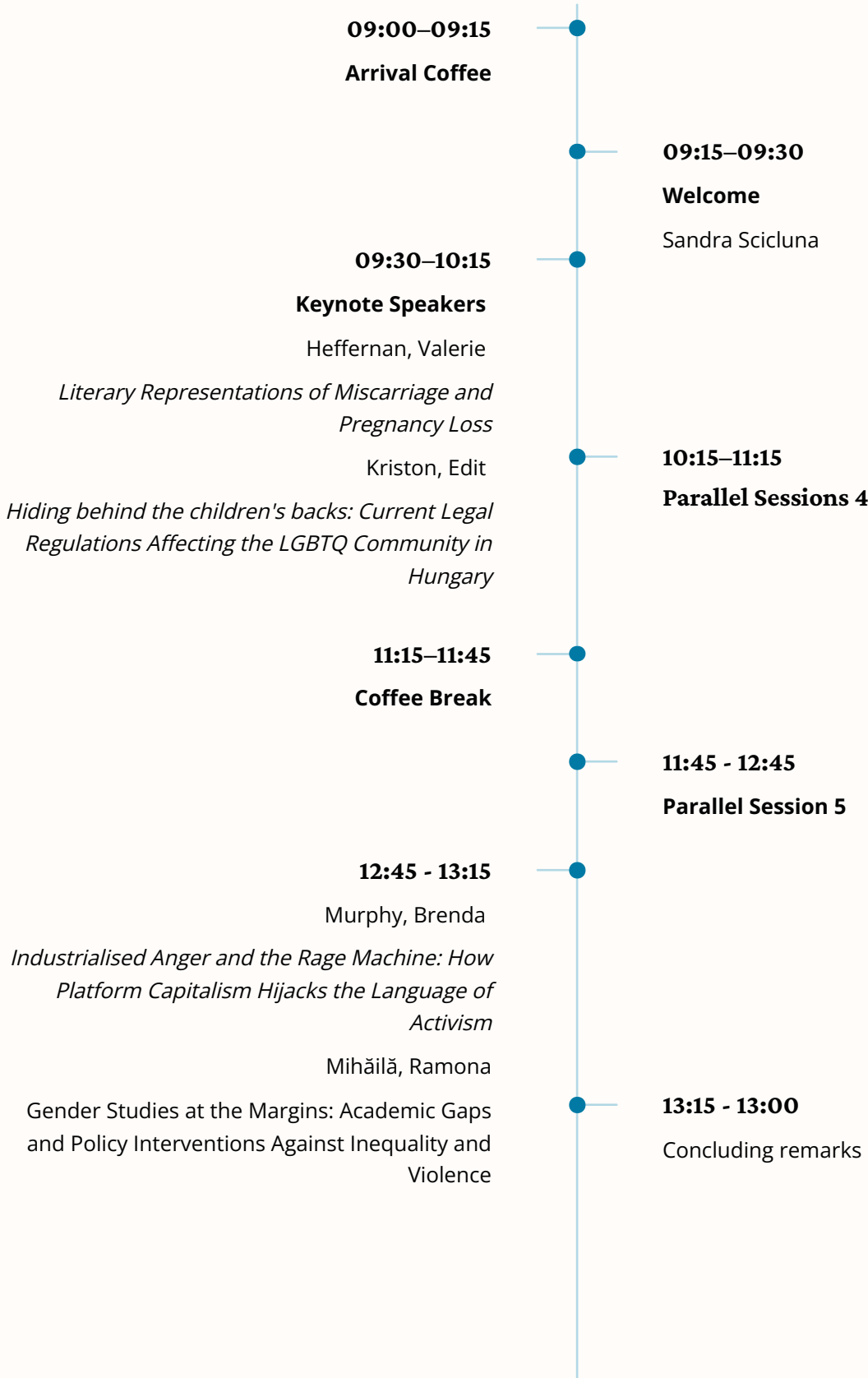
Attard, Simone

Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) in Malta





Day 2





Day 2 — Opening Keynote (09:30–10:15)

ALL PARTICIPANTS

Heffernan, Valerie

Literary Representations of Miscarriage and Pregnancy Loss

Kriston, Edit

Hiding behind the children's backs: Current Legal Regulations Affecting the LGBTQ Community in Hungary





Day 2 — Parallel Sessions 4 (10:15–11:15)

Three concurrent rooms running simultaneously. Each session: **10 min presentation + 5 min Q&A.**

Room A — Theme 10: Violence, Survival, and Justice

Chair: Kisberi, Fanni

- Like a Wildflower: The Lived Experience of Women, Survivors of Domestic Violence, Who Battled Separation in Court — Camilleri, Franica
- Femicide fatality reviews in Malta: An Action Research Study — Galea, Emily
- The impact of physical violence on female labour force participation: The case of Morocco — Noure, Chraike; Hninou, Sanaa; Aomar Ibourk
- Victims of political violence; recognition of harm - Lynch, Orla

Room B — Theme 11: Governance, Activism, and Structural Violence

Chair: Grima, Ryan

- Small-Island as Method: Decolonial Feminist Queer Governance — Baldacchino, Ruth
- Online LGBTQ+ activism in Eastern Europe — Buyantueva, Radzhana
- Lingering colonialism in the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda — LeBlanc, Jillian and Nasri, Raounak
- The Politics of Temporal Displacement and Social Reproduction: Aging Women under Neoliberal Restructuring in Postwar Kosovo — Sijarina, Liridona



Room C — Theme 12: Postcolonial Publics, Language, and Mobilisation

Chair: Vella Aquilina, Claire

- Borma Tbaqbaq – Il-Lingwa tal-Kċina: Postcolonialism and the oppression of women — Grima, Tyrone
- From Ripple to Wave: The Genesis of Malta's Pro-Choice Movement (2016–2019) — Dibben, Andreana
- Deconstructing Gender and Power: A Feminist Post-Structuralist Discourse Analysis of "Il-Każin tal-Imqarbin" (Misbehaved Club) — Abela Gatt, Beverley

 11:15 - 11:45 - **Coffee Break**



Day 2 — Parallel Sessions 5 (11:45–12:45)

Three concurrent rooms running simultaneously. Each session: **10 min presentation + 5 min Q&A.**

Room A — Panel 13: Bodies, Species, and Neoliberal Embodiment

Chair: Dali, Amanda

- The Fragility of Binary Referential Gender — Müllenmeister, Clara
- Performing 'Successful Ageing': How Hollywood's Geriaction Films Repackage Gendered Power and Sexualised Embodiment for a Neoliberal Era — Bühring, Lisa
- Barbells, Bulking and Bourdieu: The Social Transmission of Transformation in Powerlifting — Doyle, Mark
- The Role of AI in Beauty Standards and the Commodification of the Female Body in Fashion — Zoi Arvanitidou

Room B — Panel 14: Labour, Money, and Relational Support

Chair: Micallef, Mariella

- "Dejjem ninkwieta fuq il-flus..." The gendered dimensions of emotional inequalities in managing household money in Malta — Abdilla, Nadia
- Resilient Intimacies: Comparing the Support Networks of Senegalese and Syrian Women in Malta — Grima, Nathalie
- Perceptions and Attitudes towards non-Maltese Live-in Care Workers in Malta — Vella Aquilina, Claire
- Institutional Contradictions and Gendered Realities: A Feminist Reworking of New Institutional Theory in Higher Education - Agius Tabone, Vania



Room C — Panel 15: Intimacy, Ethics, and Life Choices

Chair: Prasadis, Achilleas Georgios

- Queer Intimacies: Space, Relationality, and Identity in One Day in a Life - Muñoz, María Emilia
- Sex Work, BDSM, and the Power of Belonging: Between Anti-Capitalist Subversion and Neoliberal "Being Your Own Boss" — Doležalová, Barbora Skalická
- RETHINKING PROFESSIONALISM: How non-binary and gender non-conforming employees navigate Heteroprofessionalism in Denmark – Theodoros Vlachos
- Caught in Between: Insights from Young Men's Experiences of Evolving Gender Roles — Dalli, Amanda



Day 2 — Closing Keynote (12:45–13:15)

ALL PARTICIPANTS

Murphy, Brenda

Industrialised Anger and the Rage Machine: How Platform Capitalism Hijacks the Language of Activism

Mihăilă, Ramona

Gender Studies at the Margins: Academic Gaps and Policy Interventions Against Inequality and Violence





Artistic Installations

Four artistic installations accompany the conference programme, offering participatory and visual engagements with queer-feminist themes.

1

**ANDERSRUMportrait — Participatory
Queer-Feminist Artist Photshoot**

Seewald, Maria Alexandra (*A photshoot*)

2

**Queering the Gaze:
ANDERSRUMportrait and 15 Years of
Queer-Feminist Art Activism in Times
of Backlash**

Seewald, Maria Alexandra

3

Displacement

Phillips-Cachia, Andrea

4

Fid-Dar tan-Nanna

Zammit, Nikolas

- ☐ All artistic installations are presented alongside the conference sessions and are open to all participants throughout the event.



A Special Thank You

This conference would not have been possible without the invaluable dedication and hard work of our amazing team of enthusiastic support from students of the University of Malta. Your commitment ensured the smooth running of all sessions and activities, contributing significantly to the success and welcoming atmosphere of the event.

- Registration & Welcome Desk
- Session Facilitation & Timekeeping
- Information & Direction
- Event Logistics & Setup
- Audience Engagement
- Material Distribution
- Post-Event Assistance

Your collective enthusiasm and commitment were truly inspiring. We extend our deepest gratitude for your vital contributions to making the Gender and Sexualities Conference 2026 a memorable and impactful experience for all:

- Cepil, Anastazja
- Chmielewska, Inga Maria
- Duca, Michaela
- Kadema Hina
- Kisberi, Fanni
- Kuziak, Helena
- Muscat Rowan
- Prasadis Achilleas Georgios