

## Women, Politics, and Violence

A Seminar organized by the Gender Equality & Sexual Diversity Committee (GESDC) in collaboration with the Gender and Sexualities Department (Faculty for Social Wellbeing).

**Date:** 10 April 2025

**Time:** 10:00 – 12:00 hrs

**Venue:** Arts Lecture Theatre, University of Malta

### Programme

#### 1. Welcome Address

**Prof. JosAnn Cutajar**, Head of Department of Gender and Sexualities, Faculty for Social Wellbeing, University of Malta and GESDC Chair.

#### 2. Opening Speech

Her Excellency President **Myriam Spiteri Debono** shall open the seminar with her speech *Violence Against Women in Politics: What Does It Look Like?*

#### 3. Speakers

- **Hon. Rebecca Buttigieg**, Parliamentary Secretary for Equality and Reform will talk on *The Role of Social Media Regulations on Political Online Discourse*
- **Prof. Carmen Sammut**, Pro-Rector, Student & Staff Affairs and Outreach, Rectorate, University of Malta
- **Dr Sandra Scicluna**, Dean, Faculty of Social Wellbeing, University of Malta
- **Dr Fiona Buckley**, Department of Government & Politics, University College Cork, Ireland will talk on *The cost of doing politics. Violence against politicians : what does it look like and how is it gendered? Drawing from the Irish case-study.*<sup>1</sup>

#### 4. Panel Discussion: Ensuring Safety for Female Politicians

Following the presentations, a distinguished panel of political leaders and advocates will share their experiences and propose strategies for improving safety for women in politics. Moderated by **Mr Roderick Vassallo**, Vice-Principal, Junior College, University of Malta and GESC Co-Chair.

##### Panelists

- **Hon Rebekah Borg**, Member of Parliament, Nationalist Party
- **Dr Therese Comodini Cachia**, Lawyer & Former MEP & MP, Nationalist Party
- **Hon Dr Katya De Giovanni**, Member of Parliament, Labour Party
- **Ms Sandra Gauci**, Councillor, St Paul's Bay Local Council; Party Leader, ADPD

##### Panel Discussion Topics

- **Political Parties:** How can internal party policies safeguard women in politics?
- **Parliament:** What reforms can make parliamentary settings safer and more inclusive?

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<sup>1</sup> Dr Fiona Buckley's research was conducted in collaboration with Dr Lisa Keenan (Trinity College Dublin) & Prof Mack Mariani, PhD (Xavier University, Cincinnati) as part of the [The Cost of Doing Politics: Gender Aspects of Political Violence Project](#) which is funded by the Research Council of Norway (Project No: 300618).

- **Journalists:** How can media practices be more responsible when covering female politicians?
- **Social Media Platforms:** What role should social media companies play in preventing the harassment and abuse of politicians?

#### **5. Closing Remarks**

- **Dr Helena Dalli**, Former European Commissioner for Equality on *Addressing Violence Against Women in Politics – From Party Level to the EU*

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