

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.*¹

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?

¹ 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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