



Founded 1964

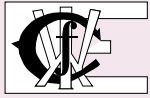
# *N-Mara*

Newsletter of the National Council of Women - Malta

## *Bice Mizzi Vassallo Music Competition 2023*



Members of



## International Council of Women

Founded 1888

Motto: "Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you."



## European Centre of the International Council of Women

Founded 1961

In Special Consultative Status with the Economic & Social Council of the UN

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#### Front Cover Photos

"Winners of the BMV Music Competition: String section was awarded to Lucas Garcia Conrad (viola) & Pianoforte section was awarded to Daphne Delicata."

#### Office Hours

Monday to Friday  
8.30am- 12.30pm

#### Membership Subscription Rates

New individual membership	€14.50
Annual renewal	€12.00
Affiliated Organisations	€20.00
Associated Organisations	€20.00
Life membership	€95.00

Members and affiliated organisations are requested to keep their subscription fees up to date.



Founded 1964

# Il-Mara

NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN - MALTA

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## EDITORIAL

Dear Members,

I hope this newsletter finds you sun-kissed, refreshed, and ready to take on new challenges after the summer holidays.

The National Council of Women has busy months ahead. Autumn is conference season, and our Executive Committee (Ex-Co) will be busy attending various meetings to ensure that women's rights are sufficiently represented. The Ex-Co is dedicated to discussing the very real issues that continue to impact women today, both individually and collectively, in the relevant forums.

Our Council's passion for policies, healthcare, education and economic opportunities, and gender-based violence drive our hard work. Because there's a lot to be done, we are always looking for more members to take an active role in our committees. Get in touch to see how you can do this!

**"Women don't need to find a voice, they have a voice, and they need to feel empowered to use it, and people need to be encouraged to listen."**

Meghan Markle

I wish you a pleasant read of our newsletter and we hope to see you in our upcoming events; whether it's at our yearly Gozo Outing, the Christmas party, our courses, or all of these!



Sincerely  
Lara Gail Dougall  
Editorial Board

## NCW Malta Christmas Celebrations Save the Date

Join us for our Melodic Christmas celebration on the evening of the 12<sup>th</sup> of December 2023. We promise you a merry evening, full of cheer as we close off our year. More details to follow soon.



NCW President Doreen Borg Zammit and  
NCW Executive Committee Members wish all  
NCW Members a very Happy and Holy Christmas  
and a Prosperous New Year 2024!



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# President's Message

Dear Ladies and Friends,

It is time for another newsletter which will be issued before another event that the National Council of Women will be celebrating in due course. This edition of Il Mara will appear during the autumn season which traditionally marks a period of transition, when people leave behind the more carefree joys of summer and embrace the discipline of a more hectic but ordered routine.

Towards the end of last summer, natural disasters struck two North African countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea. The major earthquake in Morocco and catastrophic floods caused by Storm Daniel in Libya were cataclysmic events triggering unimaginable loss of life and hardship. Our islands were lucky to be spared a direct hit by this storm, but more questions now need to be raised more urgently than ever. The ruinous effects of climate change are drawing ever closer to us, and we all have a responsibility to do our part to ensure everyone's safety regarding weather and climate. In fact, the Sustainable Development Goal no. 13 calls for urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

NCW continues to work hard on its agenda and especially on the most important issues facing our society. The Council has always sought to raise social awareness, and to this end, it participates in the pre-Budget document to ensure that the needs and concerns raised by our members and affiliated associations will reach the authorities and institutions which will benefit the community at large. We are determined to keep working on these issues.

NCW continues to encourage more children, specifically girls, to take up the study of STEM subjects, which signal the core of the future job market. The Council has been consistently at the forefront to inspire more women and girls to enter this essential sphere. Several resolutions were already passed in previous years on this matter. This summer, NCW took the opportunity to organise a STEM course for children and parents/legal guardians at our Centre in Blata l-Bajda. The 'ScienceTicTac' course was very interesting and interactive. For the last session the NCW organised a visit to the Head Offices of Heritage Malta in Villa Bighi in Kalkara. All the participants were given the opportunity

to witness the work that is being done to restore the valuable gifts that form part of our National Heritage. We visited the painting, fashion, metal, and other material labs.

Education remains at the top of our agenda with the aim to improve people's skills and contribute to the enrichment of our nation's font of knowledge. This year, once again, we will be organising various courses on our premises in collaboration with the Lifelong Learning Centre and Primary HealthCare. The courses will start in October 2023, with some ending in May 2024.

Education is one of the most important factors that helps people to achieve their goals and move forward in life and it provides opportunities for a better quality of life for individuals as well as the general community. Education has no boundaries or gender. Our work is in line with Sustainable Development Goal no. 4 entitled Quality Education, which seeks to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

In July, the NCW once again organised the Foundation Day Dinner and I wish to thank the members and friends who attended this event as well as our sponsors, who all helped make this event a success.

Finally, another event which was held during the month of September was the Bice Mizzi Vassallo music competition. This event saw young talented musicians compete to win a short course abroad. Both the piano and the strings were very interesting and offered the audience a very enjoyable finale. The music committee did a great job to ensure that the level of participants and the judges were of a high level. The NCW is delighted to see the return of this competition after twelve years.

I encourage all NCW members and friends to participate in our activities which we organise from time to time. Your support provides us with courage to continue working and it makes all the difference in meeting today's challenges.

**Doreen Borg Zammit**  
*President*



*On the occasion of the 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector (MCVS), NCW Ex Officio Doris Bingley was given an award for her very valid work as a member of MCVS for many years.*



# ScienceTicTac Project STEM Course for Children

July – September 2023





# ScienceTicTac Report

## Introduction

The Science TICTAC summer science programme, designed for young minds aged 4 to 11, was an exhilarating exploration of the world of science and discovery. Rooted in the philosophy of 'learning by doing,' the programme aimed to ignite children's curiosity and enthusiasm for science while fostering a hands-on approach to learning. Budding scientists were split into two age groups, Group 1 (4–7-year-olds) and Group 2 (8–11-year-olds), the programme delivered a series of captivating activities and experiments that not only entertained but also enriched the young participants' understanding of the natural world. This immersive experience aimed to deepen their understanding of various scientific disciplines while nurturing a sense of curiosity and exploration. Divided into carefully crafted modules, each centred around exciting themes, the programme offered a mix of hands-on experiments, interactive learning, and captivating challenges.

## Group 1 Curriculum: Age 4–7

### 1. Lifecycles – Frogs and Butterflies

The children delved into the captivating lifecycles of frogs and butterflies. They engaged in a range of activities, such as using a party blower with sticky tape at the end to simulate a frog's tongue catching paper bugs, which fostered their understanding of how frogs catch prey. Additionally, they learned to distinguish between male and female cabbage white butterflies, a common species in Malta.

### 2. My Body – Sensational Senses

The youngsters explored the wonders of their own bodies and senses. Through sensory experiments, like taste tests to identify sweet, sour, bitter, salty, and umami flavours, and feely bags that challenged them to guess the contents using touch alone, the children gained deeper insights into their senses. For homework, they crafted ingenious models of lungs using straws and plastic bags, enhancing their understanding of human anatomy.

### 3. Light and Shadow

The world of light and shadow came alive as the children indulged in activities such as creating a shadow puppet theatre and manipulating shadows to change their size. Through hands-on experiences, they grasped fundamental concepts of light and its interaction with objects.

### 4. Penguins and Polar Bears

The children embarked on an Arctic adventure, simulating the lives of penguins and polar bears. From carefully passing a penguin egg among themselves to mimic the protective nature of penguins, to constructing a polar bear's den, they explored the challenges of surviving in extreme environments.

### 5. Bubbles and Rainbows

The magic of bubbles and rainbows unfolded through activities like bouncing bubbles on their hands, blowing bubble snakes, and using CDs to create vibrant rainbows. The

children also made their own Newton's disc brought to life the spectrum of colours that make up white light.

## 6. Making Things Move

The children learned about forces and motion through creativity and play. They designed and constructed roly-poly toys and explored how pushes, pulls, and twists shape objects. They even crafted paper helicopters, for homework, to understand the principles of flight.

## Group 2 Curriculum: Age 8–11

The Group 2 curriculum was tailored to challenge the older children with more complex scientific concepts while maintaining the emphasis on hands-on engagement and experimentation.

### 1. Secret Spies – Forensic Science

In this intriguing module, the participants were introduced to the captivating world of forensic science. Engaging in activities such as investigating fingerprints to find the imaginary robber, the children unravelled the mysteries hidden in their own unique prints. Through this, they learned about the distinctive patterns and features of fingerprints that make them an invaluable tool in solving crimes. Additionally, they explored the realm of secret messages, writing with invisible ink (lemon juice) and honing their skills in deciphering codes.

### 2. Magnetism

The magic of magnetism took centre stage in this module. Through creative activities involving simple materials like boxes, paper clips, pompoms, and magnets, the young scientists explored the captivating forces of attraction and repulsion. They harnessed magnetism to design and play games, cementing their understanding of this fundamental force.

### 3. Green Energy

The importance of sustainable energy sources came alive as the participants dived into the realm of green energy. Through activities such as constructing solar ovens and using magnifying glasses to harness the sun's energy for lighting fires, the children developed an appreciation for harnessing natural resources for practical applications.

### 4. Simple Machines

The fascinating world of simple machines captivated the young minds as they designed and experimented with levers, ramps, and pulleys. Through engaging activities like constructing their own pulleys, using levers to lift heavy books, and racing cars down ramps whilst figuring out how to make their cars go faster, they grasped the fundamental concepts of mechanics and how simple machines can amplify their efforts.

### 5. Magic Potions

The world of chemistry and magical potions intertwined in this enchanting module. Children had a blast creating reactions that inflated balloons using bicarbonate of soda

and vinegar, formed mesmerising lava lamp-like displays using bicarbonate of soda, oil and vinegar mixed with food colouring, and concocted bubbly, foamy brews that resembled magical potions. Alongside these captivating experiments, they also engaged with a non-Newtonian fluid by mixing cornflour and water, experiencing its unique properties by cautiously inserting their hand or even playfully punching it. This module not only entertained but also offered a captivating glimpse into the world of chemical reactions and their fascinating effects.

## 6. Investigating Nature

This module delved into the realm of biology and nature exploration. The participants learned about classification and the renowned scientist Carl Linnaeus. Through hands-on activities like investigating leaves and using dichotomous keys to classify them, the children developed skills in sorting and grouping. The highlight of this module was the 'Escape the Museum' challenge, where the children tackled riddles and tasks to unlock locks and ultimately reap the rewards of their scientific prowess.

## End-of-Course Outing

Concluding the programme on a high note, both groups had the privilege of visiting the Heritage Malta – Conservation Labs in Bighi, Kalkara. This enriching experience provided a firsthand look at the meticulous conservation efforts. Expert conservators from various departments showcased their work on artefacts within the National Collection. Participants toured the Paintings, Textile, Paper, and Inorganics/Metal Labs, where conservators explained the intricacies of restoration and conservation. These restored artefacts would eventually find their place in museums, exhibitions, or the Reserve collection.

## Engagement and Fun

Throughout the programme, children from both groups were fully immersed in the activities. Their eyes sparkled with wonder as they witnessed science unfold before them. The hands-on nature of the programme kept them engaged and encouraged active participation. Their excitement was palpable as they discovered the mysteries of the natural world through their own experiments.

## Parent/Guardian Involvement

One of the programme's standout features was the active involvement of parents/guardians. Parents/guardians attended sessions where they not only observed their children's learning but were also able to take part in the activities themselves. This engagement bridged the gap between classroom and home, allowing parents/guardians to become partners in their child's scientific journey.

## Take-Home Skills

A core objective of the Science TICTAC programme was to ensure that children left with more than just fond memories. They took home a toolkit of scientific understanding and tangible skills. Whether it was the ability to distinguish butterfly genders, deciphering fingerprints, or harnessing magnetism, the children carried their newfound knowledge and skills with them, empowering them to see science all around them.

## Feedback

Overwhelmingly positive feedback was obtained from parents/guardians in terms of their overall satisfaction, programme structure and organization, educational content, hands-on experiments and activities, instructor's competence and engagement, impact on the child's interest in science, communication and engagement with parents/guardians, social interaction and teamwork, and parent/guardian involvement. The responses, gathered through a Likert scale, revealed a strong consensus among participants and parents regarding the effectiveness and success of the Science TICTAC summer science programme.

Specific observations and changes in children's attitudes towards science were shared, demonstrating the programme's success in kindling curiosity, boosting confidence, and encouraging proactive scientific exploration e.g.

*"She is [asking] a lot of questions about science, what is that, what is this";*

*"The content that she learned every Tuesday, she still remembers and every now and then repeats what she has learned. Very well done!"*

This resoundingly positive feedback affirms the Science TICTAC programme's achievement in not only igniting curiosity and fostering learning but also in creating an enjoyable and interactive educational experience that resonated positively with both children and their families.

## Conclusion

The Science TICTAC summer science programme proved to be an inspiring and engaging experience for children aged 4 to 11. Through hands-on experiments, captivating challenges, and interactive learning, the young participants deepened their understanding of various scientific disciplines. With engagement at its core and an emphasis on skill-building, the programme empowered children to view the world through a scientific lens, fostering a lifelong love for exploration and discovery.

**Dr. Daniela Cassola**

**B.Sc. (Hons.) (Melit.), GTC (VET), P.Q. Dip. (Melit.),  
M.Sc. (Plymouth), Ph.D. (Plymouth)**



Malta Council for the  
VOLUNTARY SECTOR



Small Initiatives  
Support Scheme



**GOVERNMENT OF MALTA**  
MINISTRY FOR INCLUSION,  
VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS  
AND CONSUMER RIGHTS

*This project has been funded by the Small Initiatives Support Scheme (SIS) managed by the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector (MCVS) supported by the Ministry for Inclusion, Voluntary Organisations and Consumer Rights (MIVC)*

# Bice Mizzi Vassallo Music Competition

## Malta Society of Arts, Palazzo de la Salle, Valletta

### 16<sup>th</sup> September 2023





# BMV Music Competition 16<sup>th</sup> September 2023

February 1985: Jane Spiteri, a leading figure in the National Council of Women, and myself, just an ordinary member of the Council, met in the church of St. Paul in Valletta to honour a leading personality in the sphere of Maltese politics and music by attending her funeral. As we got talking, the idea came up that the best way to keep alive the memory of this "woman of steel with a heart of gold, who dedicated her life entirely to her family" and to the piano that she taught to so many students, was to set up a piano competition named after her. The indomitable Jane Spiteri immediately presented the idea to the NCW who gladly adopted the project.

We got together a group of musicians that included pianists Cynthia Turner and Mary Farrugia and violinist/teacher Helen Degabriele and so the NCW's Bice Mizzi Vassallo music competition was born. This was a very important step for Malta for, unlike the situation now, music students had very few incentives to improve their musical talents except for exams. In order to widen the scope of the competition and to reach more students, it was decided that the competition would also include a string section, besides the piano section, for as a little girl Bice Vassallo played the violin as well as the piano.

The competition was held regularly every two years and the list of awardees includes many of today's prominent musicians in Malta: Carmine Lauri, Sarah Spiteri, Rosetta Debattista, Tatjana Chircop, Maria Blanco, Gabi Sultana, Charlene Farrugia, Maria Elena Farrugia, just to name a few. Lack of support stopped the competition in 2011, until last year when the Council decided to resuscitate it. Under the leadership of Corinne Bowman Briffa, together with Tatjana Chircop, Rosette Fenech and Therese Cassola the project

materialised and last Saturday I attended the final session of the 14th edition of the National Council of Women's Bice Mizzi Vassallo Competition.

There were eight finalists: three in the string section and five in the piano section. The overall standard was very good, though I think that the two winners were outstanding. Lucas Garcia Conrad performed Weber's Andante e Rondo Ongarese op.35 for viola and was awarded a short music course in Italy in collaboration with the Honorary Consul for Malta and Professor Marco Besutti.

The prize for the piano section went to Daphne Delicata who performed two Preludes (nos 14 and 15) and a Polonaise (op.71 no.1) by Chopin. Daphne won a short music course in Poland given in collaboration with the Chopin Society in Warsaw and Maria Gabrys-Heyke, professor at the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music in Warsaw, who was also on the panel of judges, which included leading personalities in Malta's music world Tatjana Chircop, Rosetta DeBattista, Carmine Lauri and Christopher Muscat.

Both awards included flights and accommodation that were offered by NSTF who have supported the competition from its early stages.

The judges could not but have been impressed by the performances of the two prize winners, both of whom are in their teens. Apart from their technical ability and the poise with which they projected the music, the two performers displayed a variety of shading, a beautiful tonal quality and an intellectual grasp of the works they were performing.

**Cecilia Xuereb**  
*NCW Honorary Life Member*

On Sunday September 17 Maria Gabrys Heyke, from the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music in Warsaw, gave a piano recital in the concert hall of the Malta Society of Arts in Valletta. Ms Gabrys Heyke was in Malta to form part of the adjudicating panel of the 14th edition of the National Council of Women Bice Mizzi Vassallo Music Competition. Coming from such a prestigious Chopin Institution it was only to be expected that the pianist would focus on the works of the great Polish composer – his Nocturnes, Polonaises as well as the Ballade in G minor and his Fantasie-Impromptu. This turned out to be an evening of sheer poetry. Ms Gabrys-Heyke is a brilliant pianist equipped with an extraordinary technique. However in her performance she was not out to dazzle with brilliance, although this was still there. On the contrary she played to the music's inner strength rather than to its spectacle. The quieter and more poetic passages stood out for their lyricism and beautiful cantabile. The more forceful passages retained the beautiful tones of the former. Under her deft fingerwork the Palazzo de la Salle Steinway which is a rather loud instrument sang with the most beautiful tones. While not lacking emotion hers were deep interpretations that made the audience listen to the music on her own terms. All the works she performed were taken out of the salon into a higher world.

The inclusion of other composers like Maria Szymanowska, and Adolphe Gutman only served to highlight the greatness of

Chopin, The former was a Polish composer who first brought the Polonaise based on Polish folk music to the concert hall, and influenced to a degree Chopin's early compositions. The latter was Chopin's favourite pupil who composed in the style of Chopin. But what was heard of their music on Sunday in no way compared with the rest of the programme.

**Cecilia Xuereb**  
*NCW Honorary Life Member*



# Seminar dwar 'Il-Pensjonijiet: Qabel 1962'

Il-Kunsill Nazzjonali tal-Anzjani organizza Seminar fis-27 ta' Lulju 2023, Istitut Kattoliku, il-Furjana dwar materja li qajmet hafna interess fost il-pensjonanti. Il-kwestjoni għandha l-origini tagħha sittax-il sena ilu meta r-rapport tal-Pensions Working Group kien ippropona li ssir distinzjoni fil-pensjoni bejn dawk li twieldu qabel u dawk li twieldu fl-1962 u wara. Din id-diskriminazzjoni nġhatat prominenza fil-ġurnali issa li l-ewwel haddiema li twieldu fl-1962 bdew jirtiraw.

Is-Sur Peter Paul Bonnici, Il-President tal-KNA ta merhba lill-pubbliku li attendenza numeruża filwaqt li introduċa s-sugġett billi qal li l-Kunsill xtaq jisma' l-esperti, il-politiċi, il-unions u soċjetà ċivili dwar din il-materja halli jkun jista' jiffirma l-pożizzjoni infurmata tiegħu.

Is-Sur George Sultana qal li wiehed irid jara l-pensjonijiet f'kuntast u semma erba' xenarji: 1) is-sistema soċjali nnifisha 2) it-tibdil demografiku, 3) persuni f'riskju ta' faqar b'rata akbar fost l-anzjani u 4) iż-żieda fil-prezzijiet. Spjega li sistema tal-pensjonijiet hija 'pay as you go'. Riforma tal-pensjonijiet mhix ta' darba iżda tkun aġġornata minn żmien għal żmien biex tirrifletti l-bdil fiċ-ċirkustanzi. Kull 5 snin jitpoġġa rapport fil-Parlament li jipproponi miżuri bħaż-żieda gradwali fl-età tal-irtirar jew incentivi għal second u third pillar pensions. Kull riforma tolqot hafna nies, min tajjeb u min hażin speċjalment f'kaz ta' cut-off dates li jiddiskriminaw skont l-età. F'dal-każ inholqot sistema fuq żewġ binarji fejn dawk li twieldu qabel fl-1962 ikunu assessjati mod u dawk ta' wara l-1962 assessjati mod ieħor. Dan għab reazzjoni, partikolarment minn dawk li twieldu qabel l-1962.

L-Onorevoli, Dr. Michael Falzon MP, Ministru għas-Solidarjetà u l-Ġustizzja Soċjali, il-Familja u d-Drittijiet tat-Tfal, qal li l-pensjonijiet m'għandhomx ikunu ballun politiku. Huwa qal li s-sena d-dieħla 20% tal-popolazzjoni jew aktar minn 100,000 ser ikunu pensjonanti. Dan iġib sfidi kemm tal-passat kif ukoll tal-futur u li qal ma jiddejjax jiffaċċahom. Huwa qal li l-ghixien tal-pensjonant jiddependi mill-pensjoni u l-ewwel priorità kienet li tinghata l-pensjoni lill-aktar nies. Il-Ministru fakkar li bir-riforma tal-2006, id-differenzi fil-pensjoni baqgħu għal 16-il sena fuq il-karta u issa bdejna narawhom fil-prattika u li jekk bħala pajjiż ma niffaċċjawx din l-isfida minn issa, il-pajjiż ma jkunx jista' jirrangaha. L-intenzjoni hi li jibda jingħalaq id-distakk għalkemm dan ma jistax isir f'budget wiehed. Il-ministru kkonkluda billi qal li fil-budget li ġej ser ikun hemm il-COLA li ser tinghata shiħa lill-pensjonanti kollha, kif ukoll xi haġa zieda fil-pensjoni u li l-qasma tal-1961/62 ser tibda tingħalaq.

Il-Moderatur, is-Sinjura Louise Azzopardi introduċiet lil-membri tal-Panel. Hija qalet li l-ewwel ser isir intervent kull wiehed mill-membri tal-Panel u wara jsiru interventi minn dawk prezenti.

Is-Sur Joseph M. Azzopardi mill-Għaqda tal-Pensjonanti qal li l-Pensions Working Group kien isostni

li t-terms of reference tiegħu kienu l-pensjonanti futuri u li l-problemi tal-pensjonanti prezenti kellhom jittaffew b'miżuri tal-Budgets, xi haġa li ma saritx u kien biss fl-2014 li l-Pensions Working Group beda jitratta wkoll il-pensjonanti prezenti. Huwa qal li dawk li twieldu fl-1962 bdew ihallsu xi haġa aktar filwaqt li dawk il-haddiema li twieldu qabel ma nġhatawx l-istess possibbiltà. Is-Sur Josef Bugeja Segretarju Ġenerali tal-GWU qal li l-Union u l-Għaqda tal-Pensjonanti għandhom żewġ principji 1) l-età m'għandhiex tkun mezz ta' diskriminazzjoni fost il-pensjonanti u 2) l-adekwatezza tad-dhul għal-pensjonant. Is-sur Josef Vella Kap Eżekuttiv UHM qal li jinhtieg isiru żewġ affarijiet 1) li tkompli ssir pressjoni mill-unions u l-għaqdiet biex tingieb ir-rieda politika halli l-kwestjoni tal-1962 tibda tkun indirizzata 2) nesigu li wara 40 sena fis-suq tax-xogħol il-haddiem għandu d-dritt għall-mistrieħ.

Fl-ewwel l-intervent mill-pubbliku prezenti s-Sinjura Anna Vella, Għaqda tal-Anzjani GWU staqsiet lis-Sur Josef Vella xi proposti kelli għall-kwestjoni tas-61/62. Il-Prof. Arnold Cassola ppropona li l-capping għandu jispicċa u jkun hemm miżuri biex il-gap tingħalaq. Sinjura tkellmet dwar il-pensjoni tat-teżor filwaqt li s-sur Mark Chircop tal-MAPRO qal li kien jonqos li t-teknici tal-ministeru jikunu prezenti u issuggerixxa li dawk ta' wara s-62 jieħdu nofs iż-żieda l-istess bħal dawk li twieldu qabel. Anthony Borg mill-MUT xtaq li l-GWU u l-UHM jagħmlu sforz wiehed. Is-sur Victor Lapira qal li l-gvern għandu jieħu miżuri biex jindirizza l-problema ta' nuqqas ta' twelid u qal ukoll li għandu jkun hemm miżuri biex jassiguraw li l-insurances privati jzommu ma' dak li jintrabu bih meta timmatura l-policy. B'reazzjoni għall-mistoqsija li saritlu, is-sur Joseph Vella qal m'hemm tagħmel hlief li jekk hemm diskrepanza tagħti l-istess flus lil dawk li twieldu qabel l-1962.

L-Onorevoli, is-Sur David Agius MP, Shadow Minister, Kelliem Responsabbli mill-Politika Soċjali, il-Politika dwar il-Familja, is-Sigurtà Soċjali, il-Pensjonijiet, u s-Servizzi ta' Solidarjetà, qal li jifhem li jekk timmultiplika n-numru ta' pensjonanti li twieldu qabel l-1962 bl-ammont ta' ewro li ser jieħdu anqas minn dawk ta' wara l-1962 tasal għal ċifra li l-gvern irid joħroġ kull sena biex isolvi dil-problema li huwa qal li kienet miżura fil-manifest elettorali tal-Partit Nazzjonalista. Huwa qal li l-esperjenza turi li jekk kulhadd joqgħod kwiet id-dar ma jigri xejn bħal meta wiehed joħroġ fit-toroq jipprotesta. L-Onorevoli, Dr Paula Mifsud Bonnici MP, Shadow Minister, Kelliema għall-Anzjanità Attiva, Responsabbli mill-Anzjani, is-Servizzi fil-Komunità u d-Djar għall-Anzjani, qalet li kull meta tattendi għal-laqgħat organizzati mill-Kunsill Nazzjonali tal-Anzjani dejjem tiehu pjaċir u li kellha l-fiduċja li dak li tkun qed tagħmel il-KNA dejjem tagħmlu għall-ġid tal-anzjani. Qalet li qed toħroġ mil-laqgħa konvinta li kulhadd qed jaqbel li din il-kwestjoni għandha tiġi indirizzata u li l-ministru wera commitment li ser tkun indirizzata.

# NCW Foundation Day Dinner 21<sup>st</sup> July 2023



# Equality Toward a Common Future'

## 'This is our time': Commonwealth women's affairs ministers meeting opens with calls for stronger action on gender equality



The 13<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting (13WAMM) was held at the Atlantis Paradise Island Resort in Nassau, the Bahamas, from 21 to 23 August 2023 under the theme 'Equality Toward a Common Future'.

Hosted by the Government of the Bahamas, the meeting serves as the principal decision-making body for Commonwealth women's affairs ministers to review progress made towards achieving four Commonwealth priorities for gender equality and women's empowerment: a) Women in leadership; b) Women's economic empowerment; c) Ending violence against women and girls; and d) Gender and climate. At this year's meeting, a special focus will also be on the inclusion of women and girls with disabilities.

The meeting was opened by the Commonwealth Secretary-General, the Rt Hon Patricia Scotland KC, and the Prime Minister of The Bahamas, the Hon Philip Davis KC. It was attended by more than 80 ministers and senior officials from across the Commonwealth's six regions.

In her opening remarks, Commonwealth Secretary-General Patricia Scotland – the first woman to hold the post – told officials that she has mainstreamed gender across all areas of her organisation's work to help member countries achieve their development goals more equitably. She said: "As we meet today, our world faces serious challenges: the long shadow of COVID-19; crippling debt, rising inflation and high interest rates ... and the increasingly harsh impacts of climate change. In each of them, the impact on women and girls is disproportionate. But together, we are more than equal to the challenges we face."

"This is our time," the Secretary-General told the representatives from across the Commonwealth. "Let us resolve that the chapter we will write together here in The Bahamas will lead us to a safer, more sustainable, more equal and more prosperous future for all. Secretary-General Scotland pledged her continued support to the ministers.

"It's time to demolish the walls of the old boys' club," said Prime Minister Philip Davis in his keynote address. "Only when opportunities are opened up more widely, will we truly be making the most of the talent and ingenuity of all of humanity."

He described the Commonwealth women's affairs ministers meeting as "an ideal platform", adding that: Your work can be the catalyst for much-needed momentum toward a better, more just

world for everyone." The decisions from the three-day meeting will feed into an action plan, designed to end gender inequality in several Commonwealth priority areas. These priority areas range from women's inclusion in climate solutions, ending gender-based violence to increased support for women with disabilities and better representation in leadership.

The meeting was chaired by the Bahamas Minister of Social Services and Urban Development, the Hon Obediah Wilchcombe. He said: "This is our time. Our people expect – and will want from us – exceptional leadership. Leadership that can make change happen. We have the opportunity [and] the strengths of the Commonwealth to collectively make this change happen."

**Women's affairs ministers from Commonwealth countries committed to a roadmap, designed to scale up efforts to achieve gender equality and empower women and girls, especially in climate action.** The roadmap was the result of three-day deliberations among ministers at their **triennial Commonwealth meeting**. It was also shaped by input from a range of stakeholders, including domestic violence survivors, civil society representatives and women with disabilities.

Specific provisions include an enhanced role of women in climate finance, increased support for women with disabilities, more economic opportunities for women, better representation in decision-making and greater protections from gender-based violence. The roadmap encapsulates the outcome statement issued by ministers, representing 2.5 billion Commonwealth people, at the conclusion of their meeting on 23 August 2023.

Next year in 2024, leaders will consider this roadmap at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Samoa.

**Doris Bingley**

*Commonwealth Women's Network  
National Council of Women Malta*



# Ageing Report

According to the International Council of Women (ICW) action plan of 2022-2025:

Being aware that the percentage of the elderly population is increasing, National Councils should:

- Develop and apply at international, regional and national levels, policies designed to enhance the lives of the aged.
- Promote national and international understanding of the humanitarian and developmental issues related to ageing and the importance of peace.
- Advocate for appropriate and affordable housing.
- Advocate for appropriate and affordable health care.
- Advocate for the expenditure on ageing to be considered as a lasting investment.
- Advocate for digital literacy
- Promote positive ageing.
- Protect the older population from discrimination.
- Introduction to Social Issues Affecting Older People include:
  - Family and marital or companion status
  - Living arrangements
  - Social network (number and quality of routine social contacts)
  - Work history
  - Education
  - Typical daily activities (e.g. how meals are prepared, what activities add meaning to life, where problems may be occurring)
  - Need for, availability, and ability of caregivers (to help plan and/or provide care)
  - History of trauma, losses, and coping strengths
  - History of substance use and legal issues
  - Patients' own caregiving responsibilities (which may make patients reluctant to report their own symptoms lest their symptoms or any resulting interventions interfere with their caregiving)
  - Worries or stressors in daily life
  - Environmental concerns regarding home, neighbourhood, transportation, or access to goods and services
  - Financial status

## Chronic disease

For instance, many patients turn to online sources for medical advice and education. However, the quality and reliability of medical information on websites like YouTube can be questionable. To address this, academic organizations should focus on producing high-quality video content and marketing it effectively to reach more viewers. Furthermore, healthcare workers must establish appropriate contact with older people, and medical education should be continuously updated and improved.

## Advocate for appropriate and affordable housing

The key here is recognising housing as more than a means to create more value, particularly given the well-established and widely acknowledged importance of housing to health and well-being in older age. This involves rediscovering housing as a social good; The challenge then turns to how to provide this good. Certainly, there is a pressing need for a clearer vision about how we adequately house an ageing population.

## Actualizing Better Health and Health Care for Older Adults

Home health care for the elderly as an integral part of primary health care services. The next administration must create an adequately prepared workforce; strengthen the role of public health; remediate disparities and inequities; develop, evaluate, and

implement new approaches to care delivery; allocate resources to achieve patient-centred care and outcomes, including palliative and end-of-life care; and redesign the structure and financing of long-term services and supports.

## Nutrition

Undernutrition continues to be demonstrated to be a major factor associated with mortality in older persons. The changes in eating behaviour that occurs with aging, including the decreased snacking between meals, lead to the physiological anorexia of ageing. New approaches to the management of weight loss in older persons have included using taste enhancers and giving caloric supplements between meals rather than with the meal.

## Protect the older population from discrimination

Human rights implications of ageing can further place older persons at heightened risk of violence, abuse and neglect which is believed to be widespread and can take place in diverse settings and forms. However, it often remains invisible due to a lack of consistent and systematic data collection as well as social perceptions and taboos. Prevention, protection, accountability and remedy mechanisms are not sufficiently developed and accessible to ensure protection and redress.

Human rights of older persons in legal and policy frameworks continue to address ageing from the perspective of welfare and social programmes. They do not take a human rights-based approach that views older persons as equal rights holders and not only as beneficiaries of support and assistance.

It is imperative that legislation and policies ensure the full and meaningful participation of older persons and take into account the tremendous diversity and contributions of older persons to their societies and communities.

## Ageism is a global challenge

The report released by WHO, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

(OHCHR), United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), call for urgent action to combat ageism and use better measurements and implement effective anti-ageism strategies.

Both older and younger adults are often disadvantaged in the workplace and access to specialized training and education decline significantly with age. Ageism against younger people manifests across many areas such as employment, health, housing and politics where younger people's voices are often denied or dismissed.

## Ageism harms everyone – old and young

Ageism has serious and wide-ranging consequences for people's health and well-being. Among older people, ageism is associated with poorer physical and mental health, increased social isolation and loneliness, greater financial insecurity, decreased quality of life and premature death. An estimated 6.3 million cases of depression globally are estimated to be attributable to ageism. It intersects and exacerbates other forms of bias and disadvantages including those related to sex, race and disability leading to a negative impact on people's health and well-being. Let us combat ageism together.

Together we can build a world of health, well-being and dignity for everyone.

Related links: The Global Report on Ageism.

*submitted by Dr. Margaret Jip KUO,  
Ageing Advisor, Standing Committee of ICW*

# ICW Statement to mark the International Day of Peace

21<sup>st</sup> September 2023

The International Council of Women (ICW-CIF), a Non-Governmental Organization in consultative status with ECOSOC, has strived to advance equal rights for women since its inception in 1888, holding steadfast in its mission to work for peace in all spheres of life. ICW-CIF firmly supports the efforts of the United Nations (UN) and the International Community to ensure that all human beings, including women and girls, will be able to reach their full potential and equally participate in the peace process. This year, the UN is devoting the International Day of Peace to the theme, “**ACTIONS FOR PEACE: OUR AMBITION FOR THE GLOBAL GOALS,**” with the aim of bringing the international community to act as “activists” in doing their utmost to work towards reaching this noble goal. The meaning is simple: how can our individual and collective actions affect and foster global peace? How can each one of us help overcome the flaws and injustices which continue to prevent us from achieving a more egalitarian world?

Women do not start wars, but they do suffer heavily from the consequences. Indeed war/conflict spurs much higher rates of sexual violence. It renders women acutely vulnerable to poverty, to the loss of jobs and to the destruction of assets, such as homes and businesses (as in the recent case of Afghan women). Essential health services also crumble, underlined by a maternal mortality rate that is 2.5 times higher on average in conflict and post-conflict areas! According to the UN Refugee Agency, women comprise 70% of the refugees worldwide and are put at greater hardship than men in these situations, based upon their gender.

Armed and other types of conflicts, terrorism and hostage-taking, aggression, ethnic, tribal, and religious conflicts (as in the cases of Pakistan, Myanmar, Ethiopia e.g.), xenophobia, poverty, hunger and other denials of economic, social and human rights, are all, currently, an ongoing reality affecting millions of people, mainly women and children.

Actions for peace and global solidarity cannot be timelier at this time of new challenges facing the world today, which are the direct results of poverty, climate change, unrest, and

conflicts in so many parts of the globe. The International Day of Peace clearly gives the opportunity to further advocate for the survival, well-being and dignity of women and girls affected by crises worldwide. By taking into account women’s capabilities and vulnerabilities, including the provision of access to education and skills development training, as well as assistance to income-generating and other activities for women, the international community can promote the full participation of women in peace-building. We need to develop innovative approaches to break the old paradigms about women and peace and focus on groundbreaking initiatives to ensure women’s full and effective participation in decision-making. Women must sit on the “decision-table” and be partners in implementing the 4 pillars of UNSCR 1325 – participation, prevention, protection, relief and recovery.

We need to make sure that women are sensitized to recognize their role in society and the importance of making their voice heard in conflict resolution and in peace-building. The Preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, “recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.” Therefore, recognition and respect for the human rights of all people, including women and girls, are critical to building and sustaining peace. As such, actions for peace should encompass efforts to promote and preserve the equal human rights of women and girls.

ICW-CIF stands up for all women and girls who are struggling to access and preserve their fundamental rights to education, economic independence and self-determination, and join hands with other national and international organizations for that ultimate goal. Most notably our ambition to attain the global Sustainable Development Goals depends on our actions for peace! To reiterate, ICW-CIF firmly supports the United Nations’ call “to take action for peace: fight inequality, drive action on climate change, and promote and protect human rights”.

**Martine Marandel**

*President – International Council of Women*

## ICW President Martine Marandel visits NCW Malta

The National Council of Women Malta was privileged to have the International Council of Women President Martine Marandel join some of NCW Malta’s activities such as the BMV Music Competition Final night and the Chopin concert by Professor Maria Ludwika Gabrys-Heyke, a graduate of the Fryderyk Chopin Academy of Music in Warsaw. ICW President Martine Marandel paid a visit to NCW Malta Centre and also attended the September meeting of NCW Executive Committee. NCW President Doreen Borg Zammit together with the Executive Committee Members hosted President Martine Marandel to a dinner after the meeting. NCW Malta was proud to be able to discuss and showcase the work that is done by NCW Malta.



# NUTRITION & HEALTHY LIFESTYLE COURSE

*Starting Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023 from 9.30am – 11.00am for 8 sessions*

This year NCW in collaboration with the Nutrition and Dietetics Unit at Primary HealthCare, will be organising an 8-week course entitled 'Nutrition and Healthy Lifestyle Course'.

Topics which will be discussed include:

- The benefits of adopting a healthy lifestyle
- Nutrition basics: Carbohydrates, Proteins and Fats and their role in the body;
- Setting SMART goals for behaviour change;
- Barriers to change and how to overcome them;
- Reading food labels and shopping;
- Meal preparation tips (cooking on a budget and minimising time in the kitchen);
- Easy meal preparation and demos.



The course will be held in a group-setting and the emphasis will not be the scales, or weight loss, but rather the learning and uptake of skills which will result in a healthier lifestyle. The uptake of a healthier lifestyle will in the end result in better weight management, improved blood markers such as better blood sugar control, lower blood pressure and lower cholesterol levels.

Sessions are free of charge. For booking and further information kindly phone on 21248881/21246982 or email: [ncwmalta@camline.net.mt](mailto:ncwmalta@camline.net.mt) to reserve a place.

**First come, first served as places are limited. Contact us now!**



## FOOD HANDLING COURSE AT NCW CENTRE, BLATA L-BAJDA

**Date:** Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at 9.30am

**Tutor:** Mr Joseph Cassar Lecturer ITS

**Duration:** 5 hr training programme

**Course fee:** €28 per person



The course to be held at NCW Learning Centre, is a one-day course covering the following topics:

- Food Safety and Hazards – Biological, Chemical and Physical
- Allergens and intolerances
- Pre requisite program- pest control, personal hygiene, cleaning and sanitation, temperature control, etc.
- The HACCP system
- Legal requirements

Other related topics

The cost of the course includes **registration with the Food Safety Commission, Tuition and License to work in the food industry.**

For booking and further information kindly phone on 21248881/21246982 or email: [ncwmalta@camline.net.mt](mailto:ncwmalta@camline.net.mt) to reserve a place.