



Annual Report

COMMISSION ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE • 2017



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Message from the Minister

The sexual abuse cases that came to light in the last months clearly show that the problem of power and control affects women across all levels of society, and no work place or social class is exempt. It is truly a societal problem and it is everybody's business to deal with it effectively.

In Malta our commitment to fight this injustice started years ago but culminated in presenting a bill in Parliament in 2017 that strengthens the legal framework to protect victims of domestic violence and gender based violence. The Bill is hailed as one of the more advanced of its nature. However our aims are much higher than that and the strategy against domestic violence launched in December 2017 maps the way forward for all the institutions to evaluate their way of working and adjust to make it effective to prevent, protect and prosecute. A tall order that cuts across many policy domains and for that reason an inter-ministerial committee was set up to bring together the relevant institutions to change work processes but also to interface and merge their practices. Such interface is critical to ensure that those suffering abuse are served with the very best support possible.

The Commission has been very active in its campaigns and in supporting institutions with their training and capacity building effort. It has also been instrumental in getting the best out of the voluntary organisations. I commend this work and the increased remit under the new legislation shall enable the Commission to go further and higher.

I thank the Commissioner and his staff for their work.

Dr Helena Dalli
Minister for European Affairs and Equality



Foreword by the Commissioner

2017 shall be remembered across the world as the year when women spoke out and said 'NO' to sexual harassment while the movement ME TOO was born. It uncovered a systematic and wide spread abuse which although it came as no surprise to many, nonetheless shocked. The abused were not the poor and disenfranchised but women who many of us look up to.

The systematic abuse, particularly the case of Larry Nassar, the Olympic medical doctor who abused talented Olympians under the pretext of medical examination was despicable. "I would not send my dogs to you, sir" said Judge Rosemarie Aquilina to Dr Larry Nassar when making her closing remarks before sentencing. It took years of silence and cover ups until one person had the courage to speak and set in motion not only change but a complete shift in thinking, in behaviour, in standards and in discourse. An important lesson was learnt.

Notwithstanding the fact that legislation and institutional development are important for a structured and sustained response to abusive behaviour, investment in an enabling environment where people feel they can speak out, stand up and hold the abuser to account is the game changer.

In 2018 the Commission worked on both fronts. It took measures to build the capacity of the sector to ensure that our institutions are ready to respond while engaging in the largest public awareness campaign ever put together - 'Love doesn't hurt'.

The agreement with the National Statistics Office to improve the collection and collation of data in Malta was a landmark. For the first time information shall

be of a quality that can feed into policy and drive our programmes.

The training committee continued to bring together the major service providers of training and in spite of its humble beginnings managed to offer quality training to many.

However the highlight for the sector in 2017 was the 16 days of activism which saw over 35 different events taking place in a space of two weeks. The investment made in 2016 to develop a network of like-minded organisations to work together on the common cause of domestic violence bore fruit in 2017. It was truly a privilege to form part of so many organisations working together in such harmony.

Finally, we applaud the new legislation as it gives us the legal framework needed, however attracting the right talent to the sector and developing enabling environments where people can give their best are equally important, if not crucial. At the Commission we are fashioning ourselves to do just that as we see ourselves as a resource to all NGOs and Public institutions to rise higher, grow stronger and move faster. We are obliged and committed to deliver.

Joe Gerada
Commissioner



1 The Commission

1.1 The Laws of Malta Chapter 481

The Domestic Violence Act, Chapter 481, Article 4 establishes that the main role of the Commission is that of advising the Minister on all aspects of Domestic Violence. The Act defines domestic violence as any act of violence, even if verbal, perpetrated by a household member upon another household member and includes any omission which causes physical or moral harm to the other. The Commission is also guided through the terms of reference as listed in the Domestic Violence Act.

1.2 Members of the Commission

The Commission on Domestic Violence is composed of the chairperson and nine members, and a board secretary. They are nominated in accordance to the Domestic Violence Act of the Laws of Malta, Chapter 481. The chairperson and members are nominated for three years, whose varied expertise and experience enable the Commission to gather information for policy recommendations for effective service delivery.

The composition of the Commission on Domestic Violence, whose term of office started on the 9th May 2016, is made up of the following members:

Chairperson

Mr. Joe Gerada

Members

Dr Cheryl Azzopardi
 Ms. Charlene Barbara
 Inspector Louise Calleja
 Dr Charles Cassar
 Dr Lara Dimitrijevic
 Ms. Stephanie Fenech
 Ms. Amanda Grech
 Ms. Renee Laiviera
 Dr Josef Masini Vento

Secretary

Mr. Melco Mallia

Employees of the Commission

Ms. Fleur Saliba
 Ms. Romina Baldwin

2 Business of the Board

During 2017 the Commission was provided with an increase of 55% supplementary funds to cover a higher level of activity than originally planned. In fact, the budget for 2018 was raised to €150,000 to keep the momentum going and even accelerate it further.

2.1 Commission Meetings

Board Members	Meeting 01/2017	Meeting 02/2017	Meeting 03/2017	Meeting 04/2017	Meeting 05/2017	Meeting 06/2017	Meeting 07/2017	Meeting 08/2017	Meeting 09/2017
	10 th Jan	14 th Feb	14 th Mar	11 th Apr	16 th May	13 th Jul	12 th Sep	10 th Oct	21 st Nov
Gerada Joe (Chairperson)	P	P		P	P	P	P	P	
Azzopardi Cheryl	P	P		Ap.	P	P	P	P	
Barbara Charlene	Ap.	P		Ap.	P	P	Ap.	P	
Calleja Louise	P	P		P	P	P	P	P	
Cassar Charles	P	Ap.		Ap.	Ap.	P	P	A	
Dimitrijevic Lara	Ap.	P		Ap.	P	P	P	P	
Fenech Stephanie	Ap.	P		Ap.	Ap.	A	Ap.	Ap.	
Grech Amanda	P	P		P	P	Ap.	P	P	
Laiviera Renee'	P	P		P	P	Ap.	Ap.	Ap.	
Masini Vento Josef	Ap.	P		A	A	A	Ap.	A	
Katya Unah	P	P		-	-	-	-	-	
Melco Mallia	-	-		P	P	P	Ap.	P	

P denotes present for the meeting / AP denotes apologies / A denotes absence.
 (-) denotes that the member was not appointed on the board at the time
 ■ denotes that the meeting was not held because a quorum was not reached

2.2 New office for the Commission

An important event in 2017 was the move to more spacious and equipped office in St. Venera. On 28th November Minister Helena Dalli inaugurated the new office facilities which include a conference room, a research lab and ample office space for the staff and visitors. The Commission submitted an organisational structure which once implemented shall bring the operation to full strength.

The new offices are also serving as a venue for the permanent art exhibition of artist Raymond Darmanin.

Domestic violence, was the inspiration behind the theme of his paintings. Despite the negative implications of the subject matter, Ray managed to look at the alternatives to abuse and use his art to inspire and encourage the survivors to look at the light at the end of the tunnel and drive faster towards it. The exhibition is open to the public three times a week. The exhibition has since become the trigger for discussion on domestic violence especially for art students who visit.



The artistic work launched during the opening of the new offices



The inauguration of the new CDV offices



Mr Joe Gerada meeting the European Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Nils Muižnieks

2.3 Meeting with the European Commissioner for Human Rights

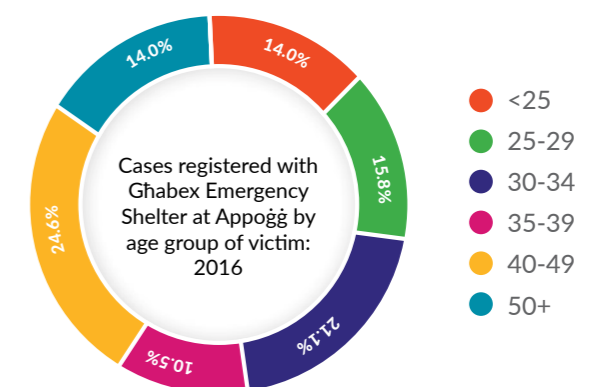
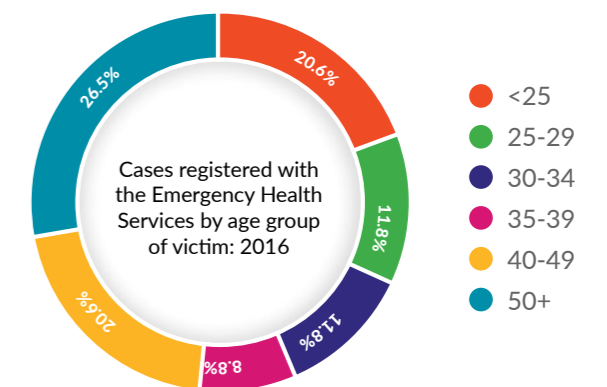
During the year the Commissioner Mr. Joe Gerada had a courtesy visit by the European Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Nils Muižnieks. Mr. Gerada explained the developments that have been taking place in Malta with regards to GBV and DV and how the Commission is gearing itself to play a central role in ensuring the human rights for those who may be in a vulnerable situation. Mr. Muižnieks said that Malta has made considerable inroads in this regard and the country has become a good example for others to emulate.



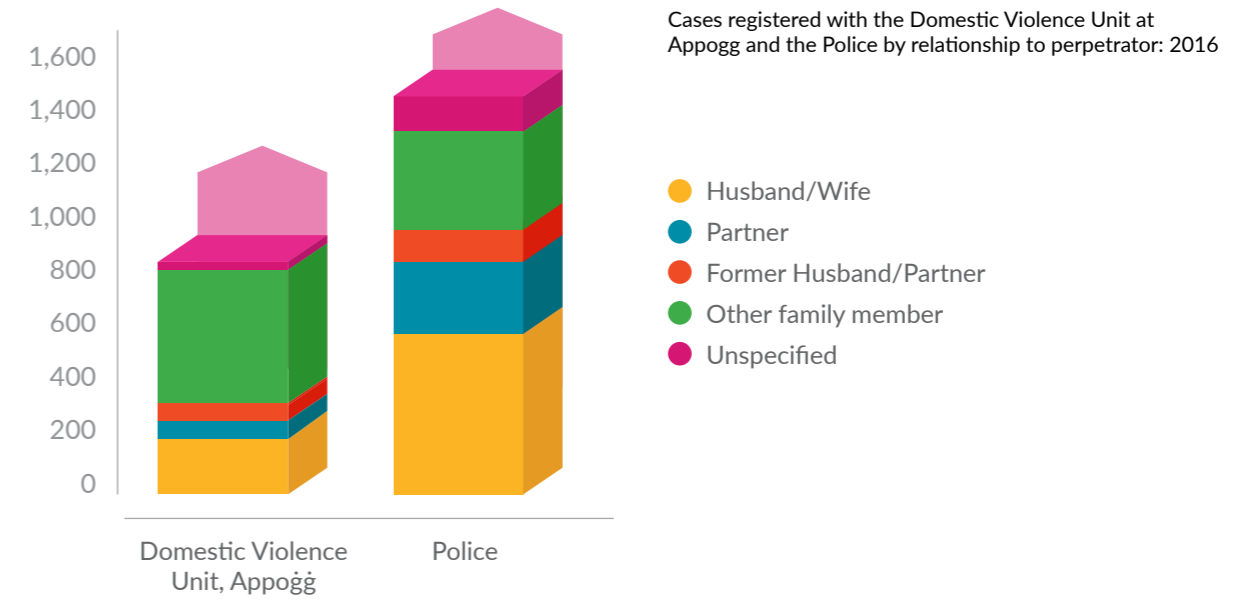
3 Research and Statistical reporting

The administrative data collection is paramount to inform policy-makers on how to protect victims of violence in an effective manner.

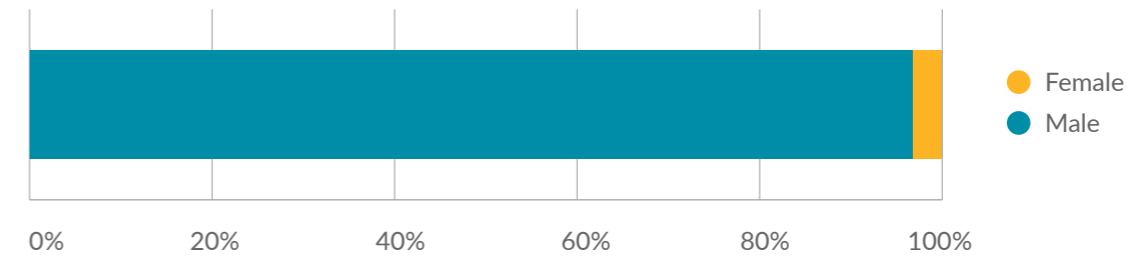
Differences in recording methodologies may be a hindrance to obtaining reliable and valid data. Nonetheless, the new contract of service with NSO ensures that administrative data collection provides a reliable and comprehensive picture of domestic violence in Malta. In 2017 NSO harmonised data for year 2016.¹ The resulting data are presented as follows:



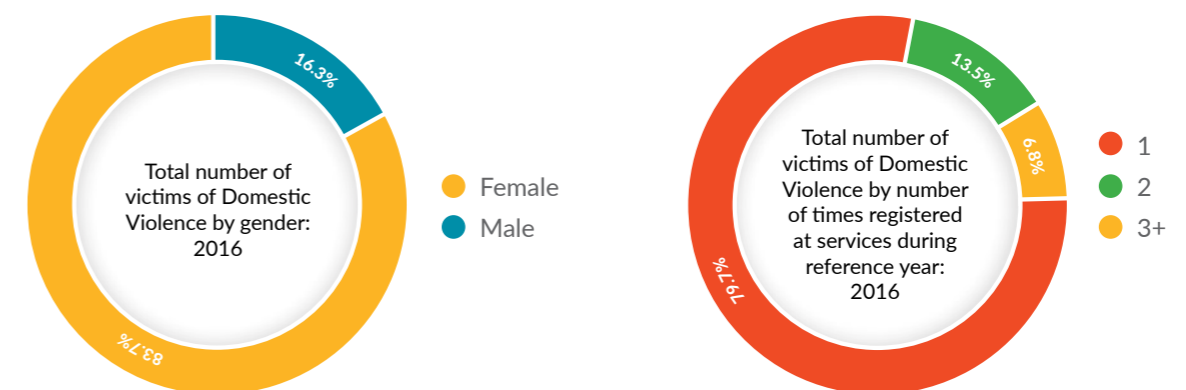
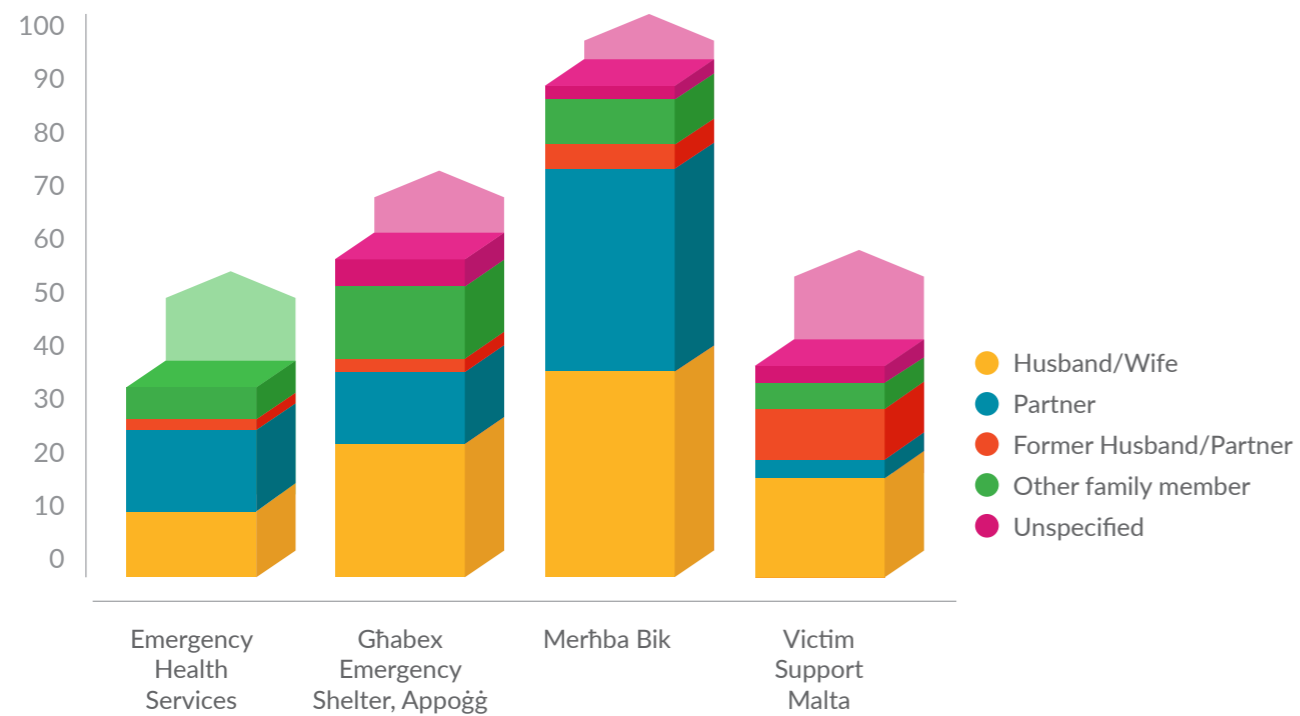
¹ Refer to Annex for Methodological Notes



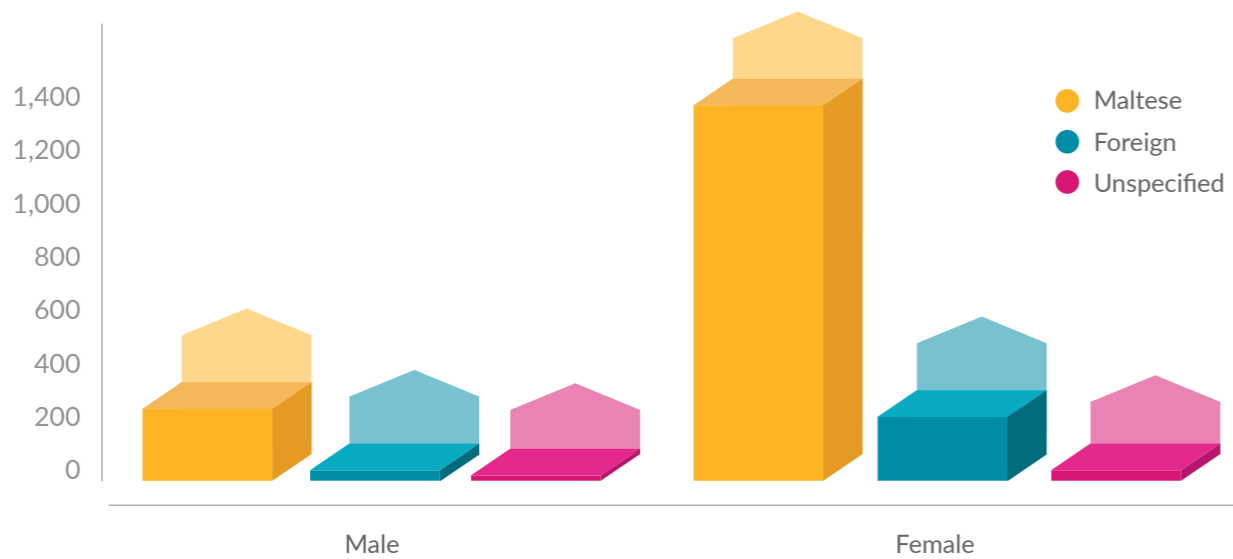
Cases registered at the Managing Abusive Behaviour Services by gender of perpetrator: 2016



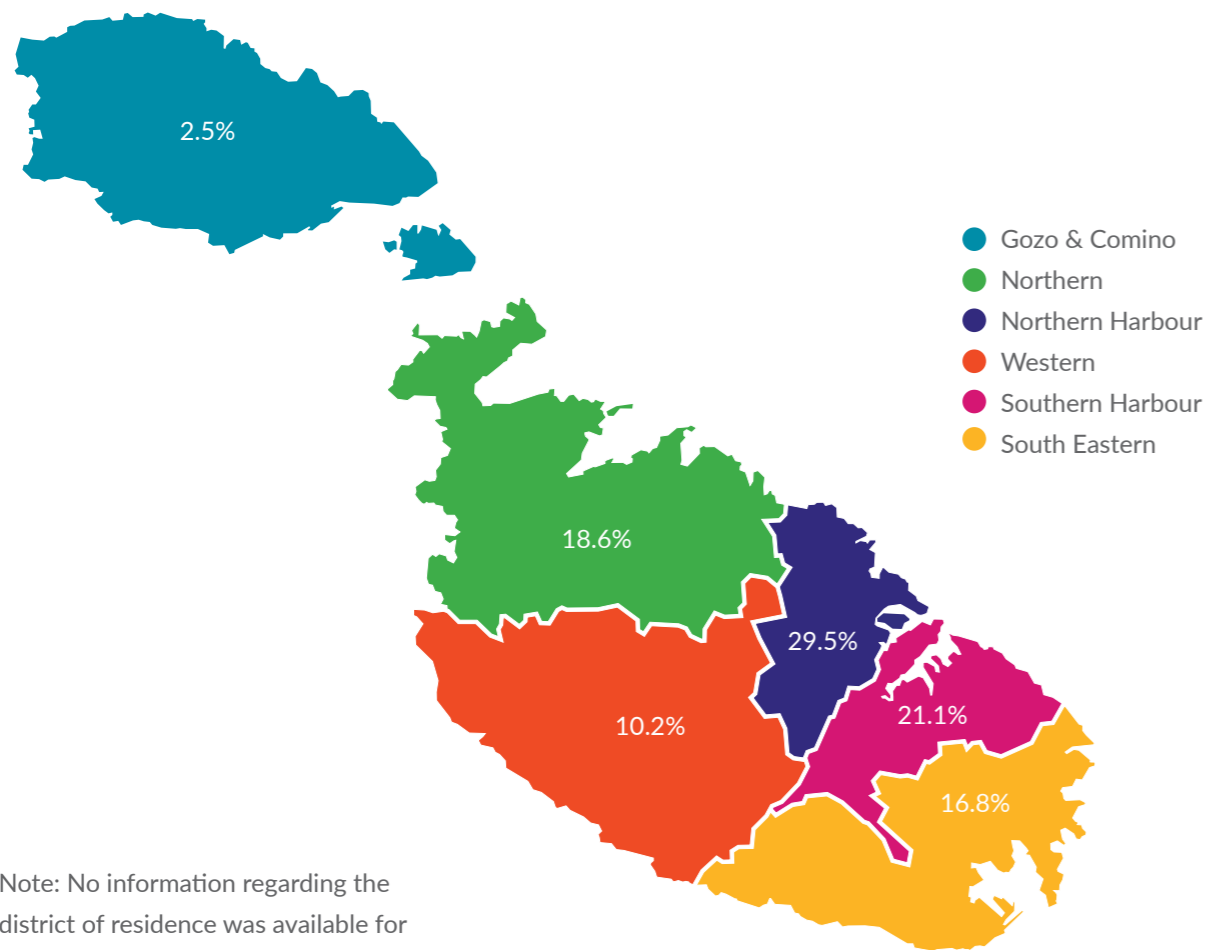
Cases registered with the Emergency Health Services, Ghabex Emergency Shelter, Merhba Bik and Victim Support Malta by relationship to perpetrator: 2016



Total number of victims of Domestic Violence by nationality: 2016



Total number of victims of Domestic Violence by most recent district of residence: 2016



Note: No information regarding the district of residence was available for 1.3% of all victims registered in 2016.

3.1 Official Questionnaires

The Commission on Domestic Violence is periodically approached by the relevant authorities to give the National position on domestic violence with regards to various dossiers being discussed at EU Commission or at United Nations meetings. In 2017 the Commission replied to questionnaires from the Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE) and the Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI).

3.2 Position Paper on Risk Assessment Tool

Risk assessment is a procedure which enables professionals, particularly Police Officers, to measure and identify risks of a situation and then determine a sensible way forward. At the beginning of 2017 the Commission contracted Ms. Krista Tabone to compile a position paper on the international risk assessment tools for domestic violence. The work on this position paper was done in March 2017, and presented and approved by the members of the board in May 2017.

Through a comparative analysis the position paper identified the most suitable tool for local use. Following the presentation, a sub-committee was set up, chaired by Insp. Louise Calleja and including Ms. Krista Tabone, Insp. Silvana Gafa and Mr. Melco Mallia to draw up recommendations. This work is still in progress.



One of the meetings of the risk assessment Sub-committee

4 Annual Conference

'Listen to me! Giving children a voice' was the theme of the 2017 annual conference held on the 24th of November. The conference attracted a record 250 participants coming from different backgrounds, ranging from representatives of voluntary organization to public authorities, professionals, educators, politicians, police officers, academics and survivors of domestic violence.

The aim of the conference was to look at domestic violence from the children's perspective and thus 'make their voice heard'. The conference showed that children are seriously hurt by violence in the family, and thus domestic violence cannot be discussed without acknowledging the importance of giving children a voice. Key note speaker Dr Clarissa Sammut Scerri spoke about the experience of growing up in family with domestic abuse. While Mr. Scott Miller, an expert from the United States discussed cases of physical and sexual abuse of minors via video conferencing.

Ministers, Helena Dalli and Michael Falzon also addressed the conference. The full proceedings of the conference shall be published in due course and accessible from the Commission's website while the proceedings of the 2016 conference were published and disseminated among professionals and social sciences' students.



The audience at the 2017 Annual Conference



DOI Photo: Charles Zammit



DOI Photo: Reuben Piscopo



5 International Commitments



A group photo of the 19th WAVE conference delegates



The Commission participated at the WAVE Annual Conference. This year's conference was held in Budapest, Hungary between the 30th October and the 1st November. It was the 19th edition of the WAVE Annual Conference, and the theme was on 'Stepping up together for the protection of women and girls from all forms of violence'.

During both the 2016 and 2017 annual conferences, WAVE were invited by the Maltese delegates to hold their conference in Malta. In fact, this invitation was accepted and in October 2018 WAVE shall hold their annual conference in Malta.

6 Work of the Commission's Sub-Committees



Dr. Marc Sant delivering a presentation on Legal Aid services

6.1 NGO network

Since its start in 2016, the network continued to expand with participating members coming from over 20 different organizations. During the year 2017 the network met 11 times, and almost on every occasion a third party was invited to deliver a presentation. The presentations dealt with various topics ranging from NGO funding to legal aid and the risk assessment tool. They were a source of knowledge but also triggers for initiatives.

Facilitated by the Commission, the network collaborated together to organize an eventful programme during the 16 Days of Activism, which was not only the first of such nature in Malta but possibly one of the most diverse around the globe.

6.1.1 Joint meeting between the CDV Board and the NGO Network

On 11th April, the Commission Board members and the NGO Network members were brought together for a joint meeting. The meeting served for the two committees to present their work, identify and share best practices and develop a collaborative way forward. During the session, the members of the NGO Network had the opportunity to express their views about the Commission's work and what support they expected from it. The requests were taken on board in the preparations of the Annual Conference and the 16 days of activism.

6.2 Training Sub-committee

State entities and voluntarily organisations namely, Victim Support Malta, St Jeanne Antide Foundation together with the Police officers and other professionals from Aġenzija Appoġġ and the Mental Health Services joined forces to coordinate and develop training programmes on domestic violence issues.

The committee identified a number of training gaps and delivered training seminars to various professionals. Dr Christian Manquet, an Austrian expert on the Istanbul Convention was invited to deliver two seminars on how professionals can make use of the Convention's provisions to safeguard the best interests of victims of violence.

The first one took place on the 25th of May, where over 80 professionals coming from various sectors, namely; lawyers, teachers, police officers, social workers, health professionals and staff from NGOs attended. Furthermore, in collaboration with the training committee within the Justice System, on the 26th of May, Dr Manquet conducted a day seminar about the Austrian Experience of the application of the Istanbul Convention in courts. The seminar was attended by over 35 members of the Judiciary.

On the 13th of June, a total of 36 participants attended for an in-house seminar organised by the Commission. The aim was to enhance the knowledge of those individuals actively working in the domestic violence sector. The scope of the seminar was to delve deeper into the different perspectives of the stakeholder and explore ways of merging initiatives for increased effectiveness for the survivor.

The training committee delivered a two-day training seminar to MCAST lecturers in November. 40 lecturers registered for the training. During the same month, 120 secondary school students and 30 educators participated in a training seminar in preparation for the students' debate in Parliament held on the 1st of December, as part of the 16 Days of Activism. The Committee is planning further training seminars for 2018; this time exploring and extending collaboration with new sectors such as the Foundation for Human Resource Development, the general medical practitioners and dentists, to mention a few.



6.3 Research and Statistics Sub-committee

The Commission gives considerable importance to data collection and collation not only because of the legal obligations of the various entities to do so but because of the policy implication of such data. In view of this, the Commission brought together the major data banks of domestic violence on the island, namely; the Foundation for Social Welfare Services/Aġenzija Appoġġ, the Department for Justice, the Law courts, the National Statistics Office and the Police Force. In addition, the NGOs and Health Division are also important contributors to statistics in this sector. The specific aim of the Research and Statistics committee is primarily to facilitate the process of data collection and collation between all relevant stakeholders but also to explore the opportunity for research projects.

In view of the fact that this area of competence is very specialised and in view of the increasing legal obligation in this regard, on the 28th November, the Commission and the National Statistics Office signed a cooperation agreement. The agreement provides for the Commission to continue to facilitate the collaboration between the various parties, while NSO shall carry out the data collection, collation and harmonization of data among the stakeholders. This development is a milestone in the field of domestic violence data collection in Malta as it eliminates the complexity of data harmonization reflected in different approaches, as well as, offer a sustained approach of specialised expertise in the matter. In addition NSO would be in a position to offer consultancy to the entities to improve their data collection systems.

This development which addresses the legal obligations of Article 11 of the Istanbul Convention was spearheaded by a seminar on the subject organised by the European Institute on Gender Equality (EIGE) in Malta who came to assist in the process of developing a more reliable and valid system of data collection. The seminar was held on the 24th of March whereby EIGE proposed a number of recommendations for improvement consistent with improvements that EIGE is recommending across all the EU member states. EIGE are currently compiling a report that is meant to improve and harmonize the various systems in the EU member states.



Mr Joe Gerada, Commissioner and Mr Reuben Fenech, Director General NSO upon signing the domestic violence data harmonization agreement



A group photo of EIGE's seminar participants

6.4 Peer to Peer Group

Launched on the 10th of October, this closed group of professionals was set up to discuss specific cases of domestic violence, evaluate the practice applied and learn from the outcomes. The group which meets once a month, is the result of the collaboration between the Commission and the Mental Health Malta. These professionals also act as a point of reference for new professionals in the sector. In addition, the group facilitates the inter-stakeholder knowledge of services, consultancy and the exchange of expertise both locally and abroad.



Photo taken during the first meeting of the Peer to Peer committee led by Dr Joan Camilleri



Friendship cards posters being exhibited during a public event

6.5 Media Policy Sub-committee

A public consultation process on the Media Policy was launched on the 22nd of November during a press conference presided by the Hon. Helena Dalli. The development of the policy was done in collaboration with the Public Broadcasting Service and the University of Malta. In fact, a sub-committee was set up by the Commission to facilitate the process of development. The committee members were Mr. Joseph Gerada (CDV), Ms. Fleur Saliba (CDV), Dr Lara Dimitrijevic (Women's Rights Foundation), Prof. Brenda Murphy (Department of Gender Studies, University of Malta), Dr Joanna Spiteri (Broadcasting Authority) and Mr. George Sultana (Broadcasting Authority).

Media stories about domestic violence usually distort domestic abuse and enhance commonly held beliefs about this social issue. The policy intends to provide guidelines for journalists and media content producers on how to communicate the message without dramatizing it. In this way, media reports can better reflect domestic violence in Malta.



7 EU Projects

7.1 Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme 2014 – 2020

In 2017, the Commission partnered with SOS Malta to submit an application for an EU funded project under the axes of 'Prevention and combating gender-based violence and domestic violence'. The priorities of the call focus on primary prevention, that is, changing social attitudes and behavior, in order to end tolerance of all forms of violence. Victim Support Malta (VSM), Corporate Citizenship for Responsible Enterprise (CORE) and Advenio eAcademy are the other partners in the project. The partners bring varied but complimentary competencies.

Victim Support Malta (VSM) have expertise in providing support to victims of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence. On the other hand, CORE is the bridge to the private sector as they attempt to encourage more corporate social responsibility in the business sector, while Advenio provides online accredited courses in the area of management, marketing and human resources amongst others.



8 Social Marketing



The brainstorming session held in July at Dar I-Ewropa

8.1 16 Days of Activism

The 16 Days of Activism is an international campaign to raise awareness against violence on women, in an attempt to end violence against women and girls around the world. The campaign runs from the 25th of November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, to the 10th of December, the Human Rights Day.

The campaign in Malta was coordinated by the Commission. Many events were organized by Voluntary and Government organisations who worked hand in hand to put up a full programme of events. Many of these organizations, most of which are members of the NGO Network against domestic Violence, took part in a brainstorming session held in July. They shared ideas and presented proposals for the 16 days campaign. The Commissioner emphasized that the campaign was to be a group effort and the Commission was to take a facilitating role and creating an enabling environment for the organizations to present their best.

On the day, those present proposed and agreed to take up the theme of 'Love doesn't hurt - Lil min thobb ma' twegġġhux'. The scope behind the theme was; to send out the message that when love starts to hurt then it is time to question the relationship because love is not supposed to hurt.

Between July and the start of the campaign numerous meetings were facilitated by the Commission to shape the activities, some of which are mentioned in this section of the report while others are reported throughout the report. Amongst others, the activities included lighting one prominent place in Malta and one

EVENTS CALENDAR

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM 2017

ALL 16 DAYS

ONLINE MEDIA CAMPAIGN

16 indicators of domestic violence posts on Facebook

Commission on Domestic Violence Facebook page

PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION

by Norma Farrugia Gatt

Foyer, Ministry of Education and Employment (MEDE), Belt is-Sebh, Floriana.

FLOOD LIGHTING OF FACADE

Commemorative lighting

Mixela' Auberge de Castille & Three arches foundation

SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

Production of clips by SOS Malta, Commission on Disability with the participation of V18

Online

WORKSHOPS

Workshops by KSU

University of Malta

WORKSHOPS

Workshops by MCAST

MCAST

PROMOTION

Participation on various local TV & Radio programmes to promote awareness

November

22.11 | 11:00 CAMPAIGN PRESS LAUNCH

Launch of campaign - Minister Dalli, Commissioner

Ministry for European Affairs & Equality, Auberge D'Aragon, Valletta

22.11 ANNUAL DENTAL CONFERENCE: SMILE FOR HEALTH XXIV

Talk by Dr. J Camilleri: Let the teeth do the talking - the link between one's dental condition, eating disorders and domestic violence

InterContinental Hotel, St. Julian's (Not open to the public)

24.11 | 8:30-15:30 NATIONAL CONFERENCE: LISTEN TO ME, GIVING CHILDREN A VOICE

The Commission on Domestic Violence (CDV) will begin with their conference, outlining the events in the 16 Days, with specific focus upon youth and the issues revolving around gender-based violence. (Live-stream on social media)

Radisson SAS, St. Julian's, TBC

25.11 WORKS AT PROGRAMM SEBH DAR QALB TA' GESU

Smart Technologies carrying out works at Programm Sebh Dar Qalb ta' Gesu shelter. These include men working in the hall, basic IT skills workshop and animators to entertain the children in the playroom.

Programm Sebh Dar Qalb ta' Gesu

25.11 | 9:30 AWARENESS RAISING SEMINAR ON CHILD TO PARENT VIOLENCE BY APPOGG, FSWS

Discussion in front of parliament with the participation of Dr. Joseph Muscat & Hon. Speaker A Farrugia

Freedom Square, Valletta

25.11 | 19:30 GALA DINNER: MAN UP, STAND UP

Malta Girl Guides to host a dinner with guests & partners which will also be open to NGO networks.

The Palace Hotel, Sliema

27.11 | AM I AM ME NOT MY AGE: HEALTH AND JUSTICE FOR THE ELDERLY?

The National Council of Women & the parliamentary secretary for persons with disability and active ageing, to provide a conference targeting the elderly and domestic violence

Dar L-Ewropa, St. Paul's Street, Valletta

27.11 | 8:30-15:00 SEMINAR IN GOZO: LE, GHALL VJOLENZA DOMESTIKA ĠO GHAWDEX

Conference programme to be advised. NGO networking market after lunch.

Ministry of Gozo, St. Francis Square, Valletta

27.11 MCAST TRAINING

Training by CDV to beauty therapists for upcoming Beauty and Hair sessions.

MCAST

28.11 | 14:00 OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF CDV OFFICES, OPENING OF THE RAY DARMANIN ART EXHIBITION

Signature of NSO and CDV agreement on the compilation of statistics. With the participation of Minister Dr. Helena Dalli, Board of Directors at the Commission

Commission on Domestic Violence, St. Venera

29.11 | 8:45-12:30 GHAJTA MOHBIJA: IL-VJOLENZA DOMESTIKA U L-FAQAR

Anti Poverty Forum

Dar L-Ewropa, St. Paul's Street, Valletta

29.11, 1.12 SCREENING OF BURNING BIKINIS

A documentary on the history of women's rights in Malta produced by Aditus Foundation and Subwaylab.

MCAST

30.11 - 1.12 | TBA HAIRDRESSING & BEAUTY SESSION BY MCAST STUDENTS

The idea is to give a pep up to the residents of these homes.

YMCA, Ghabex, Merhba Bik, Dar Tereza Spinelli and Dar Galb ta Gesu

ENDORSED by



✉ DOMESTICVIOLENCE@GOV.MT

www DOMESTICVIOLENCE.GOV.MT

f STOPVIOLENCEMALTA

📷 STOPVIOLENCEMALTA

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM 2017

EVENTS CALENDAR

ALL 16 DAYS

ONLINE MEDIA CAMPAIGN

16 indicators of domestic violence posts on Facebook
|
Commission on Domestic Violence Facebook page

PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION

by Norma Farrugia Gatt
|
Foyer, Ministry of Education and Employment (MEDE), Belt is-Sebh, Floriana.

FLOOD LIGHTING OF FACADE

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Production of clips by SOS Malta, Commission on Disability with the participation of V18
|
Online

WORKSHOPS

Workshops by KSU
|
University of Malta

WORKSHOPS

Workshops by MCAST
|
MCAST

PROMOTION

Participation on various local TV & Radio programmes to promote awareness

December

01.12 | AM STUDENT'S PARLIAMENTARY SESSION

A Discussion in parliament with 4th & 5th formers with the participation of the speaker of the house.
|
House of Parliament, Valletta

05.12 | TBA MAINTENANCE ON DAR MERHBA BIK

Students will be carrying out maintenance works in this shelter.
|
Institute of Engineering & Transport MCAST

06.12 | 18:45 DEBATE: MPS - WHY VIOLENCE?

Malta Philosophy Sharing with a conference link to the European Court of Human Rights, Strasbourg
|
The Archeology Museum, Republic Street, Valletta

01.12 | 19:30 CAN VIOLENCE BE LOVE?

Gozo Philosophy Sharing & the Humanist Association
|
Circolo Gozitano, Victoria, Gozo

05.12 | 15:00 VISIT TO GHABEX - A SHELTER FOR DV SURVIVORS

A PL delegation lead by Hon C Cardona & Hon C Feame will visit Ghabex Shelter together with Hon Minister M Falzon & Alfred Grixti, CEO FSWS
|
Ghabex Shelter

08.12 | 19:30 LAUNCH OF PILOT PROJECT

By the Dingli Local Council & Malta Girl Guides with the participation of HE Marie Louise Coleiro Preca (TBC). Talks on cyberbullying at the local school, teenage dating violence and abuse on the elderly.
|
Dingli School TBC

02.12 | 10:00 ACTION-PACKED DAY WITH VSM

Activities will include: zipline, abseil and crazy jump.
|
Mosta Bridge

06.12 | 12:00 KSU DEBATE

Panel – Dr. Marcelline Naudi, Dr. MaryIn Clarke and Mr Alex Dimitrievic.
|
Quadrangle (near Students' House), University of Malta

10.12 | 10:00 NATIONAL SOLIDARITY WALK AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

by Dar Merhba Bik, Victim Support, Women's Rights Foundation, SOAR, KSU & Phenomenal Women Malta. The walk will leave Hamrun and proceed to Auberge de Castille.
|
Blata Bajda / Porte de Bombes

04.12 | 11:00 STATEMENT TO THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE, CULTURE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Statement by Ghaqda Nisa Laburisti to the Minister of Justice, Culture and Local Government with the participation of Mr Joe Gerada of the CDV.
|
Ghaqda Nisa Laburisti

06.12 | 15:00 THE WORKPLACE & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Training session by Romina Baldwin.
|
Smart Technologies Offices

10.12 | 11:00 MALTA POLICE BAND

The Malta police band will march through the streets of Valletta and will meet the march at Castille. The march will be met by Dr. Joseph Muscat.
|
Blata Bajda / Porte de Bombes

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in Gozo, namely Auberge de Castille and the Three Hills fountain. The orange colour was used to light up the places throughout the period, symbolizing the effort to change attitudes about domestic violence.

On the initiative of Phenomenal Women Malta, the theme song – Kun Kburija – was produced for the 16 Days of Activism. While the initiative was led by Phenomenal Women Malta, the words were written by Mr. Darren Marmara and the music composed by Mro. Joe Brown. The singer was Mr. Ozzy Lino.

The media gave considerable support and offered free air time to the Commission's board members and NGOs to communicate the message in favour of equality and respect for diversity while highlighting the ills of violence in the family and gender-based violence.



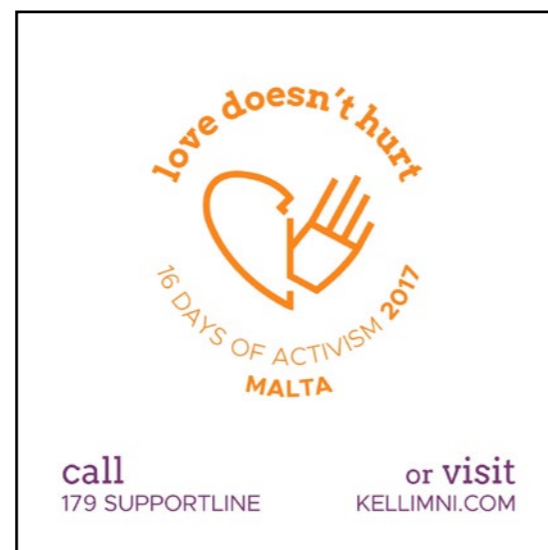
The facade of Castille lit in orange light during the 16 Days of Activism

8.1.1 Press Launch

On the 22nd of November a press conference presided by the Hon. Helena Dalli launched the programme of the 16 Days of Activism. During the press conference the Commissioner presented the full programme of events and how the Commission planned to give the maximum exposure to this year's message.

8.1.2 Social Media Campaign - Stop Violence Malta

Simultaneously with this programme of events, a social media campaign was held on Facebook named 'stopviolencemalta'. On a daily basis the public was given indicators of what type of behaviours might signify a problem of domestic abuse. The campaign started two weeks before the start of the 16 Days of Activism period and was repeated again between the 25th November and 10th December.



The social media campaign 'stopviolencemalta' that ran through the 16 Days of Activism

Refer to pages 30 and 31 for the illustrations

8.1.3 Students say it as it is in Parliament

On the 1st of December 2017, 4th and 5th Form students were invited by the Hon. Speaker of the House to debate the issue of domestic violence and gender-based violence in the House of Representatives. The debate was presided over by the Deputy Speaker the Hon. Claudette Buttigieg.

During the session, which was aimed to raise awareness about domestic violence and gender-based violence, students from various colleges, presented to the Speaker of the House of Representatives five motions mainly related to prevention, protection and awareness raising.

The first motion confers that perpetrators of domestic violence should receive harsher punishments. The second motion suggests that dating violence should be considered as a case of domestic violence. The third motion calls for further training to members of the judiciary, police officers, educators and other professionals. The fourth motion shows that awareness raising campaigns and educational programmes are imperative for a cultural change, while equal pay was the main subject of the fifth motion where students argued that a new law should come into force to eliminate the gender pay gap.

The meticulous preparation by the teachers, coordinated by Mr. Brian Chircop showed in the high level of discussion and exchange of views by the students. In addition, the students showed a very strong attitude towards inclusion and diversity.



Sudden mood swings
charmer to monster
#3 of 16

Blames you or others
for their problems
and mistakes
#2 of 16

Extremely jealous
& possessive of you
#1 of 16

Embarrasses you
in front of others
#9 of 16

Makes you change
to avoid angering them
#10 of 16

Keeps weapons
around to feel safe
#11 of 16

Isolates you
from family & friends
#4 of 16

Tries to control
your life, money,
clothing, who you meet
#5 of 16

**Threatens to
commit suicide**
if you leave
#12 of 16

**Constantly puts
you down**
by yelling at or
insulting you
#13 of 16

**Threatens to make
your life worse**
if you leave them
#14 of 16

Criticises you
on everything
you say or do
#6 of 16

Forces you
to have sex
#7 of 16

Threatens you
then begs for
forgiveness
#8 of 16

Has a history
of abusing partners
#15 of 16

Ignores
or excludes you
#16 of 16



Photos from the students' parliament debate

8.1.4 Photographic Exhibition

A photographic exhibition by Ms. Norma Farrugia Gatt entitled 'Immerse' was held at the foyer of the Ministry for Education and Employment. Ms. Farrugia Gatt used her artistic ability in merging the theme of 'therapy', often needed in the context of domestic violence, with her photographic skills. The exhibition was launched by the Minister of Education Evarist Bartolo.

During the event the Commissioner presented a number of posters sponsored by the Commission that shall be placed in schools to encourage students to speak about their concerns and to seek solutions through dialogue. The posters are part of the 'Friendships are Forever programme' developed by the local NGO – Relationships are Forever Foundation. This presentation follows another initiative when the Commission sponsored a number of Friendship cards' sets which were donated to the educators during 2017.

The Commission remains committed to work with school children by providing teachers with resources and training in an effort to teach children resolve conflict in a mature and respectful manner.



'Immerse' – the photographic exhibition by artist Ms Norma Farrugia Gatt



Hon. Evarist Bartolo visiting the photographic exhibition and the Friendship Cards posters

8.2 Information material

In 2017, 3,870 leaflets and booklets in hard copies were distributed while thousands were disseminated through the internet.

The 'Who is Who' booklet assists victims and professionals to access domestic violence services. The booklet gives details about all the organisations that offer services to survivors of violence. This booklet together with the Domestic Violence App produced by the MCAST students filled a gap in facilitating access to services in Malta.

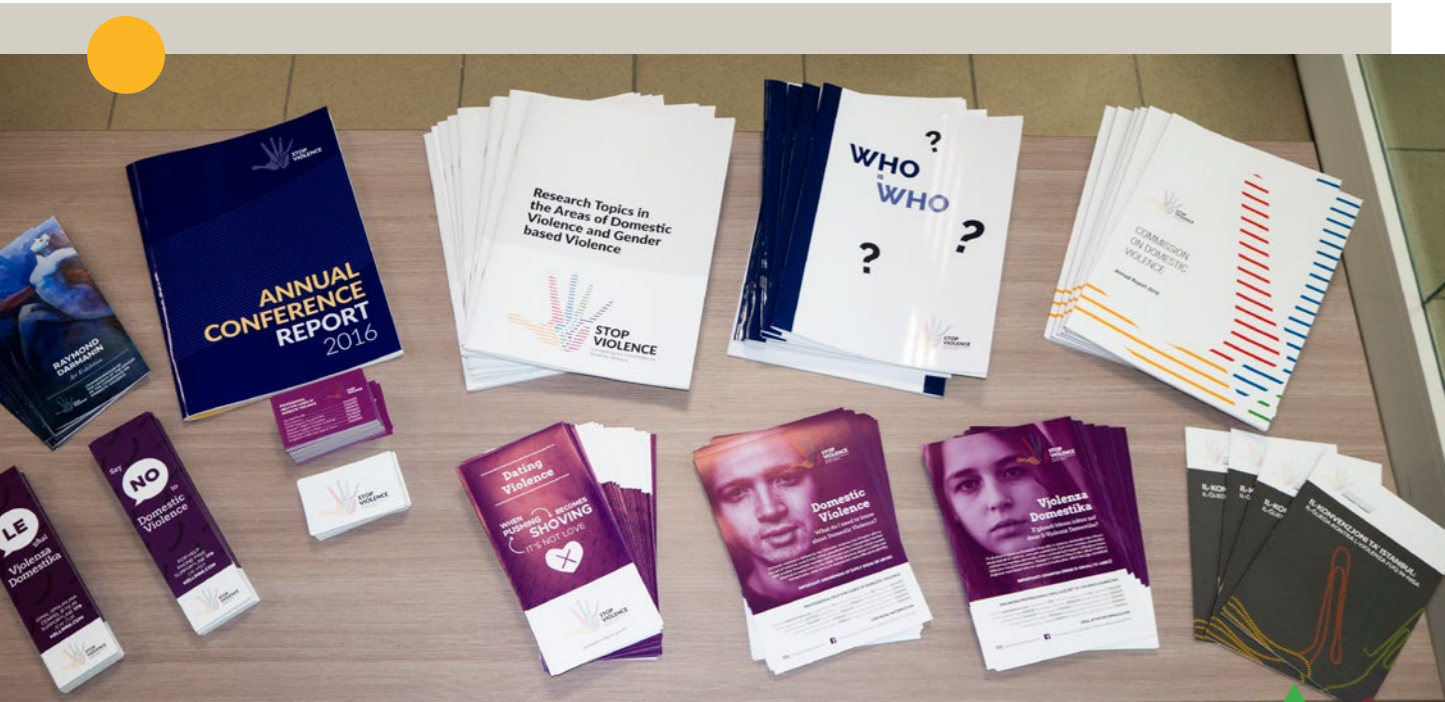
The 'Research Topics in the areas of Domestic Violence and Gender-Based Violence' was published and circulated to students during the year. The booklet enlists various topics related to domestic violence and gender-based violence which students can explore and investigate in their dissertations. The Commission is also offering the facilities of the research lab for students to use, as well as, access the most recent journals on the subject available.

The 'Domestic Violence: What do I need to know about Domestic Violence?' is a printed leaflet which is available in Maltese language as well. It gives a number of indicators that evince symptoms of domestic abuse and advices about what to look out for. While the 'Dating Violence' leaflet gives an overview of what one needs to look for during dating, if and when, abusive behaviour is identified.

'Il-Konvenzjoni ta' Istanbul: Il-Ġlieda kontra l-Vjolenza Domestika' was created for professionals to give basic information about the Istanbul convention.

The Commission produced and distributed other information material such as cards with relevant telephone numbers and bookmarks with useful contact details which individuals may use to assist survivors reach out for support.

The leaflets and cards were distributed to the Health Centres, LEAP and AĊCESS centres, parishes, University of Malta and MCAST, schools and colleges, public entities such as the Police Force, APPOĠĠ Agency and an array of non-governmental organisations.



A selection of the information material published and disseminated by the Commission in 2017

8.3 Participation on the Media

During the year there were numerous appearances on TV and Radio stations by Board members and staff of the Commission. In view of the numerous occasions, the programmes hosting the appearances are not being

mentioned, however the following are the stations that offered their support; One TV and Radio, Net TV and Radio, Radju Marija, Radju RTK, TVM and Radju Malta. During the 16 Days of Activism alone there were 30 direct contributions apart from the news coverage of the events.



9 Community Awareness

9.1 Hair and Beauty session

A hair and beauty session for five shelters, namely Dar Merħba Bik, Ghabex, YMCA, Dar Tereza Spinelli and Dar Qalb ta' Ġesu were organized by the students of MCAST. The sessions were held on the 30th November and 1st December as part of the 16 Days of Activism. A staff member of the Commission delivered a preparatory presentation to the students. It was aimed at guiding the prospective hairdressers and beauty therapists on how best to detect and observe signs of abuse, as well as, offer information to the victims.

Those in the Salon business are in a unique position to support victims of abuse, as they would have established rapport and trust with the client and therefore are well positioned to offer a safe environment where a survivor can share the predicament and perhaps access support. Often, the salon is one of the few places an abused woman may be able to visit without her partner, which creates an ideal environment for seeking support. By training the hair and beauty therapists they will be able to make an additional meaningful difference in people's quality of lives.



During the hair and beauty sessions held at MCAST

9.2 Press conference by the Responsible Gaming Foundation

The Responsible Gaming Foundation organised a press conference and awareness activity on domestic violence and gambling at the Hal Qormi Open Market Area.

The aim of the press conference was to educate and serve as an opportunity for individuals to set their priorities right in situations where gambling is the cause of domestic violence.

The Chairman of the Responsible Gaming Foundation, the Hon. Silvio Schembri addressed those present and gave a detailed description of the publication being distributed by the Foundation while emphasized the repercussions of the gambling addiction.

MEP Miriam Dalli, Commissioner Joe Gerada and CEO of the Foundation of Social Welfare Services Alfred Grixti were amongst the speakers.

During the respective activity, the Responsible Gaming Foundation staff also distributed promotional material and engaged directly with those present after the press conference.

**L-UŻU HAŻIN TAL-FLUS JEW
IL-LOGHOB IRRESPONSABBLI
JISTGĦU JWASSLU
GHALL-VJOLENZA DOMESTIKA.**

Hekk inti vittma ta' vjolenza domestika jew b'ghemilek qed tkun kaġun ta' din it-tip ta' vjolenza, nistiednuk tfittex l-ghajnuna billi ċċempel fuq freephone 1777.

AĦNA NISTGĦU NGĦINUK



AGĦŻEL IL-PRIJORITAJIET TIEGĦEK

INTI U L-FAMILJA TIĠU QABEL IL-LOGHOB IBŻA' GHAL FLUSEK

HELPLINE 1777

RESPONSIBLE GAMING FOUNDATION

www.rgf.org.mt



Posters for the event of the Responsible Gaming Foundation

9.3 Training Session to Smart Technologies Employees

Smart Technologies Ltd, a leading equipment leasing and IT outsourcing company in Malta, organised an in-house IT training for the residents of Qalb ta' Ġesu on the 25th November. On the 6th December, Commission staff delivered a presentation to the staff of Smart Technologies on the topic of 'Workplace and Domestic Violence'.

Domestic violence compromises the safety of a large number of employees every day, with tragic, destructive and possible fatal results. This presentation was designed to help create an informed, supportive workplace culture and to assist managers, supervisors and co-workers in recognizing possible signs of domestic violence.

When an organization provides all employees with domestic violence information as part of the standard hiring practice, employees who are being abused are less likely to feel singled out and may be more receptive to seeking assistance. Additionally, such a proactive approach to domestic violence in the workplace is a preventive effort and communicates to all employees that the employer is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy environment for everyone, which sets a tone of professionalism, respect and zero tolerance for violence of any kind in the workplace.



The workshop held by Smart Technologies' employees



The Żabbar Scouts group holding the banner showing the 16 Days of Activism logo - 'Love doesn't Hurt'

9.4 Żabbar Local Council

On Sunday 10th December, the Local Council of Żabbar together with the Commission organised a cultural activity at the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Grace to raise awareness against domestic violence.

During this event Żabbar singers namely; Ms. Mandy Farrugia, Ms. Lara Refalo and Ms. Graziana Axisa entertained the audience, while Rev. Evan Caruana spoke about domestic violence. The Żabbar Scouts group was out in full support of the event.



The Żabbar Scouts group performing in front the Żabbar Parish Church during the 16 Days of Activism

10 Shaping positive attitude through education



10.1 Talks to Psychosocial Professionals

The Education Division and Aġenzija Appoġġ continued with their collaboration to enhance the skills of the colleges' psychosocial staff about domestic violence and on how to provide psychosocial support to children witnessing domestic abuse. During the sessions, the staff members of the Commission took the opportunity to take stock of the difficulties faced by the psychosocial team and children witnessing domestic violence. These observations found their way in one of the workshops of the annual conference. The Colleges involved were St. Tereža, St. Benedict, Gozo College, St. Nicholas, Maria Reġina, St. Ignatius, St. Thomas More, St. Margaret and San Ġorg Preca.

10.2 Friendship Cards Programme

The NGO 'Relationships are Forever Foundation' developed the Friendship Cards which consist of an educational tool for primary school children to learn how to express themselves and how to use influence and persuasion as a way of addressing conflict. The Friendship Cards game is an innovative educational tool to help children and youths build long-lasting friendships by learning and developing life skills. It deals with emotional literacy and with conflict resolution skills for children and families.

In 2016, the Commission sponsored a number of games for the State schools, while in April 2017 the first training sessions for teachers were held. During these sessions teachers were trained on how to be creative in helping children develop the skills to build a strong friendship, encourage them to express their feelings, discuss the differences and resolve issues constructively.

The Commission worked closely with Educational Officers Mr. Dunstan Hamilton and Mr. Stephen Camilleri, to introduce the Friendship Cards during the lessons in Primary Schools. The Friendship Cards were officially launched by Ministers Helena Dalli and Evarist Bartolo at the Bormla Primary School on the 21st of April 2017.



Educators participating in the Friendship Cards training seminar



The official launch of the Friendship Cards by Ministers Helena Dalli and Evarist Bartolo at the Bormla Primary School



PHOTO: DOI - Clodagh Farrugia O'Neill



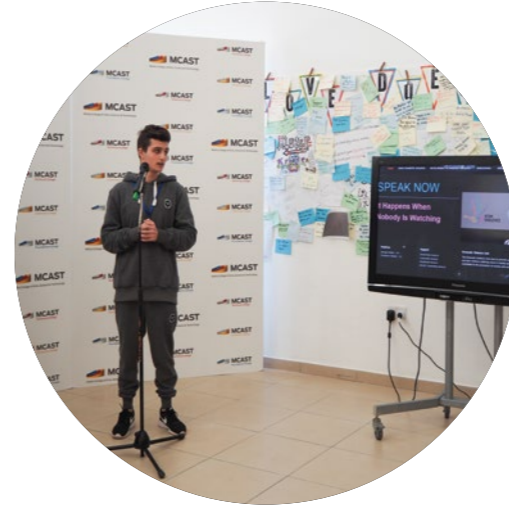
The Friendship Cards being used with students attending the Bormla Primary School



A talk being given to educators about the commission during the in-service training



50 sets of the 'Dignityland' game being presented to Mr. Brian Chircop



ICT degree student, Mr Robert Cassar Pace explaining the functions of the Domestic Violence App



A nail treatment by an MCAST student to a women residing at one of the shelters

10.3 Enter Dignityland Programme

Dignityland cards game is an educational tool developed by the Council of Europe to educate secondary school students about Social Rights. This card game allows students to act as Members of Parliament in an imaginary country called Dignity Land, and are asked to decide on the social policies concerning social rights within a development plan for the following five years. Through argumentation and decision-making processes, players learn more about social rights and their links to social policies.

The Commission brought 50 sets of this game for school teachers in Malta. The Commission worked with Educational Officer Mr. Brian Chircop to promote this game during the lessons in secondary schools. These educational games were supplied to the teachers in 2017.

On the 10th July 2017 an in service training programme was organised by the Education Division where staff members of the Commission discussed and trained the delegates in using the game.

10.4 Commitment to make a difference by MCAST students

During November and December 2017 MCAST held various events and activities to inform and create awareness on domestic violence. The campaign aimed to inform students to recognize different forms of domestic violence and associated behavior and empower them to stand up and take action against it. The Student Support Services Department, presented video clips about the

cycle of manipulation, the fact that men too can be victims of domestic violence and how children view domestic violence. The event was interactive with many interventions from the students. Informative leaflets, about healthy relationships were handed out to the students.

The different institutes at MCAST, including satellite institutes and the Gozo campus participated in creating an awareness wall. The designated wall was covered with slogans, quotes, drawings and photos by the students denouncing violence and encouraging healthy relationships. A total of 1,135 students participated. The ICT degree student, Mr. Robert Cassar Pace designed and created a Mobile App to share with all students and the general public detailing information on domestic violence and where to seek help. The content for this application was provided by Health and Social Care students from the Institute of Community Services. The information was also provided via two technological channels, Website and App for a wider reach especially for young people.¹

The Applied Sciences Institute collected gifts and donated them to children coming from domestic violence environments and who are currently homed within church institutions. The Creative Arts Institute chose domestic violence as a unit of their journalism studies and wrote various articles on the matter and published during the period. The photography students produced photographic material to create further awareness on domestic violence, while the Business Management and Commerce Institute developed a leaflet detailing information on basic financial literacy and budgeting skills for victims of domestic violence.

¹ Link to download the Domestic Violence App: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=comwMaltaDomesticViolenceUnit_610456

The leaflet was circulated among survivors of abuse. Students from the Community Services Institute organized specialized awareness sessions for Hairdressing and Beauty students and for Early Years students who in their daily duties may easily come across victims of domestic violence. Hairdressing and Beauty Services provided services for domestic violence victims homed in Church Institutions.

Additionally, the Institute of Engineering and Transport carried out voluntary maintenance work at Dar Merhba Bik. This included the servicing of cars, servicing of AC's, rebuilding of rubble walls and restoration of an old well stone (ħorża). The Gozo Campus held a thematic talk and participated in the Gozo Conference on Domestic Violence held in November 2017.

10.5 University students make their point

The KSU Social Policy Office teamed up with the Commission to bring the 'Love Doesn't Hurt' Campaign to the University of Malta campus. Several non-formal training sessions were held in collaboration with various student organisations to aid students recognise signs of emotional or verbal abuse when in a professional setting, how to approach it, what advice to give and which services are available to deal with such issues.

On the other hand, a formal discussion was held where the panelists shared their insight on emotional and verbal violence in youth relationships. An interactive self-defense session was also organised at the University quadrangle to promote Sport as an empowerment mechanism.



Participants of the interactive self-defense session



11 Financial Overview

In January 2017, the Commission was allocated a budget of €72,000 and during the year there was a virement of €39,836.53. The following is a breakdown of the Commission on Domestic Violence's expenditure:

Financial Estimates - Vote 17 (5477) Recurrent

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

Communication and CCT System	8,905.67
Office furniture and equipment	<u>12,730.95</u>
	21,636.62

CORPORATE RUNNING COSTS

Rent and Maintenance Fees	23,490
Honoraria of members	17,621.78
Local Transport	534.20
Overseas Travel	2,486.32
General Expenses	<u>7,434.27</u>
	73,203.19

SOCIAL MARKETING

Campaigns and Marketing	6,277.53
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EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Training	4,658
Publications	5,117.92
Educational Tools	<u>3,891.64</u>
	93,148.28

PROJECTS

National Conference 2017	16,265.72
Social Media Support	1,740
Sub-Committees Projects	682.53

Total Expenditure	<u>111,836.53</u>
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12 Public Sector



YADA dancers performing in front of the parliament building

12.1 Aġenzija Appoġġ - FSWS

On Saturday 25th November, a public event 'Outside with no Fear – An awareness raising event on Domestic Violence' was organised by the Foundation for Social Welfare Services outside Parliament. This event was part of the 16 Days of Activism campaign. The event consisted of a panel discussion by experts, motivational speeches denouncing violence against women while the highlight was the dance performance by the YADA Dance Company symbolizing the struggles faced everyday by victims of domestic violence. The group of ten dancers were accompanied by a violinist during their performance.

The Prime Minister Dr Joseph Muscat and Ms. Suha Arafat, Human Rights Activist for Palestine were among the



Prime Minister Joseph Muscat and Mrs Muscat during the public event 'Outside with no Fear – An awareness raising event on Domestic Violence'

speakers. Additionally, in October the Foundation for Social Welfare Services organised a week-long training session including a day seminar on Child-to-Parent Violence and Children Witnessing Violence. Ms. Jan Cooper, Prof. Arlene Vetere and Ms. Roberta Agius experts in the field led the training.

12.2 Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability

The Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability produced a social marketing clip as part of a social media campaign during the 16 days of activism, tackling the issues of domestic violence and women with disability and raising awareness on how to recognise the signs, take action and seek support.

Research shows that women who have health problems or disability are more likely to be victims of various forms of violence than women who do not have similar health problems or a disability. The actors involved in this clip were women with disabilities. This clip was aired on TV and on social media during the 16 Days of Activism.

12.3 Mental Health Services

The mental health course entitled 'Psychology and the challenges in our lives' organised by the Psychology Department at Gozo General Hospital, is now including a lecture on domestic violence. The lecture was delivered on the 11th of December by Ms. Jeanette Fava Cassar, a Forensic Psychologist working with Mental Health Malta. The main topics discussed included gender-based violence and types of domestic violence, understanding the victim and the process of domestic violence, holding the perpetrator accountable and offering appropriate treatment.

Given the interest shown, the lecture will be repeated in 2018 for members of the public.

12.4 Ministry for Gozo

As part of the 16 Days of Activism, on the 27th of November the Ministry for Gozo organised a press conference titled 'No to domestic violence in Gozo'. During her address, the Hon. Justyne Caruana, Minister for Gozo recalled that Malta was one of the first countries to ratify the Istanbul Convention. Hon. Caruana said that Government is investing in additional domestic violence services and in continuous training for professionals.

Bishop of Gozo, Mr. Mario Grech, Commissioner, Mr. Joe Gerada, Ms. Mary Gauci, Ms. Jeanette Fava Cassar and Dr Joan Camilleri were amongst the speakers.

12.5 The Malta Police Force

As part of its organizational development, the Malta Police Force, a primary actor within the criminal justice system set up a Victim Support Unit. It was launched by the Minister for Home Affairs and National Security on the 19th April 2017.

The Victim Support Unit assists victims through their needs and concerns and provides them with adequate support. The services offered within the Unit helps to minimize the adverse emotional and psychological stresses of victims of crime and also caters for the various police obligations emanating from the Victims of Crime Act, Chapter 539 of the Laws of Malta. Amongst others, Chapter 539 requires the Executive Police to provide victims with written acknowledgement of receipt of complaints, information about non-institution of criminal proceedings, and referral to victim support services.

The Victim Support Unit has also published a Victims of Crime leaflet, containing standard police procedures, which are distributed and made available in all police stations. Victims may choose to be referred to the Victim Support Unit for further support and information.

In addition, the Malta Police Force were directly involved in the 16 Days of Activism campaign. During the Solidarity March on the 10th of December the Police Band played marches along the Capital's streets culminating in an excellent programme of music at Castille where the march ended.



The Police say it loud and clear



The Victims of Crime leaflet published by the Victim Support Unit



The Police band performing at Castille place at the close of the Solidarity March

Photo: DOI - Pierre Sammut





13 Voluntary Sector

The annual report once again features prominently the initiatives and projects undertaken by the voluntary sector. It might not be enough to do justice to the effort put in by so many but nonetheless the following is impressive.

13.1 Anti-Poverty Forum Malta

In 2017, Anti-Poverty Forum Malta (APF Malta's) organised a conference entitled - Domestic Violence and Poverty - which sought to bring all stakeholders in this field together and discuss the realities of domestic violence in Malta and its relationship to poverty while exploring possible policy responses.

The speakers included Professor Andrew Azzopardi, Dean of the Faculty of Social Wellbeing at the University of Malta, Dr Charles Azzopardi, Family Therapist and Dr Roberta Lepre, a Lawyer involved in the development process of the new Act on Gender-based Violence and Domestic Violence. The conference was also addressed by the Hon. Michael Falzon, Minister for the Family, Children's Rights and Social Solidarity and the Hon. Ivan Bartolo MP.

80 participants mainly social workers, carers, representatives of local councils and voluntary organisations participated.



Prof. Andrew Azzopardi delivering a presentation during the conference



H.E. The President of Malta inaugurating the Therapeutic Area and Lay by Entrance to the shelter

13.2 Dar Merħba Bik Foundation

Il-Bon Pastur which runs 'Dar Merħba Bik' is an NGO committed to give survivors of domestic violence a chance to be included in society with dignity and determination.

In 2017, Dar Merħba Bik Foundation continued to improve and enlarge their facilities to accommodate as many as possible survivors of domestic violence. On the 13th of July 2017, H.E. The President of Malta inaugurated the Therapeutic Area and Lay by Entrance to the shelter. This area provides a therapeutic facility to both those residing at the shelter and also to other individuals who would need therapeutic services but would not necessarily need placement at that particular stage in life.

Furthermore, Dar Merħba Bik Foundation's main operating hub was refurbished and equipped with modern technology for the safety and security of everyone. This operating hub operates 24/7 and meets the needs of both the residents and guests whilst also dealing with victims of domestic violence who would phone and seek assistance at any time. The refurbishment also included the main community dining room. The dining room was purposely designed to enable residents experience the joy of eating together as a family, which often they would have never experienced.

For the second consecutive year, Dar Merħba Bik Foundation coordinated the Solidarity Walk which brought to an end the 16 Days of Activism campaign on the 10th of December. This year, the solidarity march attracted leading personalities from the world of politics and entertainment.





The Solidarity March held on 10th December



The annual Conference for Dentists – 'Smile for Health XXIV'

13.3 Dental Association

In the 22nd November, the Annual Conference for Dentists – Smile for Health XXIV – was held at the Intercontinental Hotel. Dr Joan Camilleri and Dr Brian Wallace gave a presentation entitled 'Let the teeth do the talking: the link between one's dental condition, eating disorders and domestic violence'. The speakers focused on how psycho-emotional abuse and over-criticism generally influence the survivor to become socially submissive, regaining control over one's life through anorexia. Physical and/or sexual abuse survivors tend to develop emotional impulsivity and post-traumatic stress. The latter become factors which could potentially lead to the development of bulimia and orthorexia. The conference showed how eating disorder behaviours may thus be viewed as a creative maladjustment to domestic violence.

The connection between the services provided by *Dar Kenn Għal Saħħtek* and the remit of the Commission became more obvious during the conference and therefore creating new scope for collaboration.

13.4 Fondazzjoni iDEAT

On the 6th of December, Fondazzjoni iDEAT organized a policy event with the title 'Is Prostitution Violence against women?'. Fondazzjoni iDEAT felt the need to discuss the impact of prostitution on Maltese society, particularly in the light of the legal amendments that are being considered. An experts panel of speakers were invited to present the various arguments often conflicting but nonetheless significant.

The women's organisations, political parties and youth organisations were the audiences that were most involved. The attendees were very eager to emphasize their views on the matter and whilst some vociferously opposed any form of legalization due to the negative effect on the victim, others were more cautious and expressed their opinion on the need to make legal amendments to regularise and ultimately ensure the protection of prostitutes. The discussion which was highly emotive at times generated a number of recommendations which later, Fondazzjoni iDEAT presented to Government.

13.5 Għaqda Nisa Laburisti

Għaqda Nisa Laburisti approached the lead Ministries with regards to the issue of domestic violence namely; Hon. Michael Farrugia, Minister for Home Affairs and National Security, Hon. Owen Bonnici, Minister for Justice, Culture and Local Government and Hon. Helena Dalli, Minister for European Affairs and Equality. The Commissioner Mr. Joe Gerada was invited by the respective Ministers to be present during the meetings.

The *Għaqda Nisa Laburisti* highlighted the need for a more specialized and coordinated court structures in the area of domestic violence. The sensitivity of these cases merits special powers to be given to the presiding magistrate/judge which powers could possibly include competence to decide ancillary issues.

Moreover, the problem of the accused failing to appear in court despite notification was also discussed. In analyzing the possibility of such improved systems, continuous emphasis on ensuring the protection of the victim and his/her facilitation to justice, as well as, the reform of the aggressor are also essential.

Għaqda Nisa Laburisti considered that it would be a positive step if protection orders are more frequently accompanied by treatment orders, while they made reference to the importance of having more coordinated and realistic statistics of domestic violence cases.

In addition, *Għaqda Nisa Laburisti* suggested that Police Stations should have child friendly rooms. The importance of response teams made up of trained professionals coming from different disciplines was also discussed.

The Deputy Prime Minister, Dr Chris Fearne, together with a delegation from the Labour Party met the Chief Executive Officer of the Foundation for Social Welfare Services Mr. Alfred Gixti during a visit to Għabex Shelter. On the occasion, Deputy Prime Minister, Dr Chris Fearne spoke about the Gender-based violence and Domestic Violence Bill, emphasizing that the new bill is proposing for the first time that the perpetrator may be evicted from the matrimonial home before conviction, as well as, after conviction.



13.6 Malta Girl Guides

In June, the Malta Girl Guides delivered a full day of training on WAGGGS badge Curriculum 'Voice Against Violence' to a group of teachers and heads of schools from Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania as part of the Erasmus Project 'Against School Aggression'.

In July, a 3-day training course was provided to teachers as part of the Education's Division In-Service training. The teachers will be presenting the workshops in a variety of ways to the children, such as essays, comprehensions, discussions about addressing gender inequality, identification of warning signs of violent relationships, bullying, cyber bullying and using hands on workshops.

The highlight of 2017 was the Gala Dinner held on the 25th of November as part of the 16 Days of Activism campaign. The Gala was organised by the Malta Girl Guides Stop the Violence Team, in collaboration with the Commission on Domestic Violence and Men Against Violence under the patronage of H.E. The President of Malta. Themed 'Man Up, Stand Up' the Gala Dinner was held at 'The Palace' Sliema and during the event all men present pledged their support to the white ribbon campaign.

Moreover, on the weekend of the 1st December a sleep over was organised by St. Monica school where 60 girls participated in the Voices against Violence Curriculum hands on workshops. The girls discussed various forms of violence, gender inequality, warning signs of a violent relation and survivors' story.



Members of the audience present for the NCW annual conference

13.7 National Council of Women Malta

Over the last year the National Council of Women increased its advocacy and collaboration with social partners and Government through participation at a number of conferences and seminars on the elimination of domestic violence.

At its Annual General Meeting NCW issued resolutions on 'Domestic Violence Situations' and 'Engaging men and boys in eradicating violence against women'. On the 27th November, the National Council of Women held a conference which focused on the Abuse of the



Acting President of Malta Mrs Dolores Cristina, Hon. Evarist Bartolo and other guests during the 'Man up, Stand up' Gala Dinner



The Parliamentary Secretary Mr. Agius Decelis and the American Ambassador G. Kathleen Hill were among the speakers during the conference

Photo: DOI Clodagh Farrugia O'Neil



Members of the audience present for the debate 'Why violence?' at the Museum of Archeology in Valletta

Elderly. The Conference was entitled 'I am Me not my Age: Health and Justice for the Elderly'. It was addressed by expert speakers from Malta, Europe and the United States. The Parliamentary Secretary the Hon. Anthony Agius Decelis and the American Ambassador her excellency Ms. G. Kathleen Hill were among the speakers.

13.8 Phenomenal Women Malta

Between November and December 2017, Phenomenal Women Malta, although still in its early stages of development participated in the 16 Days of Activism campaign. Its members attended several of the events taking place during the week culminating to the Solidarity March against domestic violence.

From the outset, Phenomenal Women Malta intends to address specific issues affecting female victims of domestic violence, such as access to social housing. During 2017, Phenomenal Women Malta's board members attended regular meetings with the authorities and other organisations to lobby in favour of policies that integrated survivors as fast as is possible in society.

For Phenomenal Women Malta, 2017 was all about setting priorities and for 2018 they intend to conduct a survey to explore new ways of improving the quality of life of women in Malta.

13.9 Philosophy Sharing

The Philosophy Sharing contributed with two thought provoking debates during the 16 Days of Activism campaign. The first, 'Can Violence be love?' was held in Gozo on the 1st of December. The Second, 'Why Violence?' held in Malta on the 6th of December.

During the latter, a video conference link was made with European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg where Judge Mr. Vincent De Gaetano gave his views and shared his experiences on the subject, while Dr Marceline Naudi, Mr. Alex Dimitrijevic and Dr Roberta Lepre were on the panel. At the Circolo Gozitano in Gozo Dr Nikita Alamango, Ms. Mary Gauci and Ms. Vanessa Farrugia participated in the panel discussion.



Panelists that took part in the debate held in Gozo

13.10 SOS Malta

The Solidarity Overseas Service Malta, commonly known as SOS Malta, is renowned for aiding and empowering people experiencing times of crisis.

Kellimni.com, one of the services coordinated by SOS, is an online youth support service that offers teenagers and young adults the opportunity to voice their concerns in confidence and anonymously while getting support from professionally trained operators. The Kellimni.com service allows youths to contact an operator through SmartMessaging available through the Kellimni.com App which is downloadable free of charge from the AppStore and PlayStore.

During the 16 Days of Activism, SOS Malta produced a 47-seconds long video for the 'Love Doesn't Hurt' campaign. The video was targeted at young people experiencing violence and was also targeted at promoting Kellimni.com as a service. This video was published on the Kellimni.com Facebook page on the 4th December and on the Kellimni.com YouTube channel on the 5th December, as well as, on the SOS Malta Facebook page on the 25th November. The video was boosted for 10 days on the SOS Malta Facebook page and reached a total of 7,716 viewers.

13.11 Victim Support Malta

During 2017, Victim Support Malta continued to offer psycho-social support, legal support and practical assistance to victims of crime, mainly victims of domestic violence. These support services help victims of crime to overcome trauma, get better knowledge of the legal procedures and other ancillary matters.

In addition, VSM coordinates the 'Care for Victims of Sexual Assault'. In partnership with the Ministry for the Family, Children's Rights and Social Solidarity, VSM is responsible for the provision of specialized services for victims of sexual assault and rape. The services include emergency social work services at the hospital or police station, psychotherapeutic assistance following the assault, and full legal representation parte civile.

Moreover, as part of the project 'Watch Out' VSM also provided two training programmes in neighbourhood watch and crime prevention in November and December 2017 for residents of Madliena. Neighbourhood Watch schemes are systems of local vigilance, which enable residents to join forces in making their locality safer. The training aimed to equip residents with the know-how to set up and run a local neighbourhood watch schemes. VSM is pleased to announce that following the delivery of the first training, a neighbourhood watch scheme, aiming to make the community safer and more liveable, was set up locally. The scheme operates via a closed Whatsapp group.

Annex - Methodological Notes

1. These tables make reference to various sources, including:
 - Għabex Emergency Shelter
 - Ministry for Health
 - Appoġġ
 - Dar Merħba Bik
 - Victim Support Malta
 - Managing Abusive Behaviour Services
 - Police Head Quarters
2. Classification of localities: For aggregation purposes, all localities are grouped in six districts, in line with the Local Administrative Unit classification (LAU):
 - **Southern Harbour**
Valletta, Senglea, Cospicua, Haż-Żabbar, Fgura, Floriana, Kalkara, Hał Luqa, Marsa, Paola, Santa Luċija, Hał Tarxien, Xgħajra
 - **Northern Harbour**
Hał Qormi, Birkirkara, Gżira, Hamrun, Msida, Pembroke, Tał-Pietà, St Julian's, San Gwann, Santa Venera, Tas-Sliema, Swieqi, Ta' Xbiex
 - **South Eastern**
Żejtun, Birżebbuġa, Gudja, Hał Għaxaq, Hał Kirkop, Marsaskala, Marsaxlokk, Mqabba, Qrendi, Hał Safi, Żurrieq
 - **Western**
Mdina, Haż-Żebbuġ, Siġġiewi, H'Attard, Hał Balzan, Hał-Dingli, Iklın, Hał Lija, Rabat, Mtarfa
 - **Northern**
Hał Ghargħur, Mellieħa, Mgarr, Mosta, Naxxar, St Paul's Bay
 - **Gozo and Comino**
Victoria, Fontana, Għajnsielem and Comino, Għarb, Għasri, Ta' Kerċem, Munxar, Nadur, Qala, San Lawrenz, Ta' Sannat, Xagħra, Xewkija, Żebbuġ
3. All types of violence include psychological violence even if not registered as such.
4. Additional notes regarding data provided by Police:
 - Data refers to persons registered as victims of alleged domestic violence cases, entered in the National Police System (NPS) throughout all police districts around Malta and Gozo.
 - A single report could involve multiple victims, therefore number of reports does not represent the number of victims.
5. Tables referring to total victims are based on the total number of individual persons registered with the provided services (including Merħba Bik, Appoġġ, Victim Support Malta, Police, Għabex and the Emergency Health services).




Commission on Domestic Violence

Continental Business Centre,
Old Railway Track,
St Venera.

Tel: 2247 3100

Email: domesticviolence@gov.mt

Website: domesticviolence.gov.mt

 [stopviolencemalta](https://www.facebook.com/stopviolencemalta)