

Commission on Domestic Violence Annual Report 2015-2016



COMMISSION ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Annual Report

March 2015 – February 2016

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Message

This year my ministry launched Malta's most comprehensive plan to fight gender based violence and domestic violence to date. We simply cannot accept violent behaviour, especially any form of sexist or similarly discriminatory forms of violence. In this endeavour, the Commission on Domestic Violence is of the essence and indeed we are strengthening it in order for the Commission to take a more prominent role in guaranteeing that Malta honours its commitments vis-à-vis the Istanbul Convention fully.



During the past year, the Commission carried out important awareness raising campaigns among children and young adults to prevent gender-based violence. The Commission also focused on the protection of victims and their children and the harmonisation of data on domestic violence.

Furthermore, the Commission on Domestic Violence continued to strengthen networking amongst the various stakeholders working in the field. Indeed, collaborative activities with Aġenzija Appoġġ, the Education Department, the Commissioner for Children, the Ministry for Health, the Malta Police and NGOs, have given the issue of domestic violence more visibility.

The Commission has also focused on prevention and awareness-raising in secondary schools, postsecondary colleges and the University of Malta. Other campaigns included bus shelter posters, information leaflets, TV and radio programmes as well as information cards on the various services available for victims experiencing gender-based violence.

Another important step in this field is the harmonisation of data on domestic violence. Data on domestic violence from Aġenzija Appoġġ, the Directorate for Health Information and Research as well as the Malta Police is collected on a yearly basis. For the second consecutive year, this data has been harmonised so as to gain a better understanding of which services are being sought by the victims. This enables us to strengthen collaboration with service providers as well as mobilise legislation and policy initiatives in the field of gender-based violence.

I am sure that following the implementation of the reforms that we intend to bring about, the cooperation and coordination of the various services; better referral mechanisms among professionals working with victims of gender-based violence will be strengthened and protective measures to support victims when reaching out for help will become more effective.

I thank the Chair and the members of the Commission on Domestic Violence for the relentless endeavour in their mission to lead and guide in this area of policy.

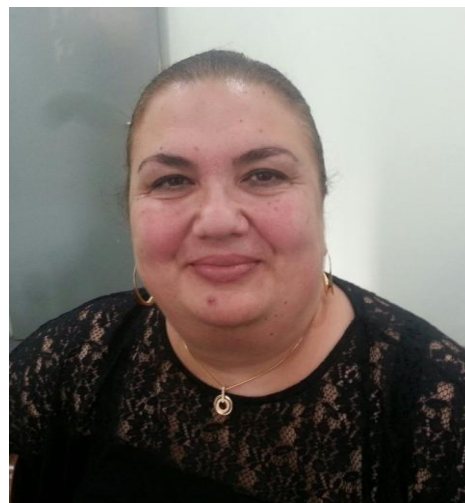
Minister Helena Dalli

Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties

Foreward

In parallel to the work carried out to address different issues related to domestic violence, the Commission on Domestic Violence has constantly worked hard in the area of prevention and awareness raising.

As a Commission we consider raising awareness on signs of abuse as crucial to enhance prevention. As we have done in previous years, we have constantly identified different stakeholders with whom we can work to combat the issue of domestic violence in a holistic way.



During the past year the Commission has continued to extend its yearly awareness raising campaigns and focus on education with regards to the younger population, focusing specifically on those attending Primary and Secondary Schools in an age-appropriate way. This initiative brought its positive results and was made possible through the collaboration achieved with the Commissioner for Children, the Education Department and the specific schools.

We strongly believe in keeping the general public informed on where to seek help. In the past year we have made such information available on the Commission's website and on information cards which were disseminated in various localities accessible to the public.

The report details these, and other efforts, undertaken by the Commission.

I take this opportunity to thank all those who assist persons experiencing domestic violence to overcome the struggles being faced.

Dr Yana Micallef Stafrace
Chairperson

1. Introduction

1.1 The Commission on Domestic Violence

The Domestic Violence Act, Chapter 481, Article 3 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

1.2 Members of the Commission

The Commission on Domestic Violence is composed of a chairperson and ten members, and they are nominated as per the Domestic Violence Act of the Laws of Malta. The chairperson and members are nominated for three years, and their expertise and experience enable the Commission to meet its targets in the field of domestic violence.

The present composition of the Commission on Domestic Violence is as follows:

Chairperson

Dr Yana Micallef Stafrace LL.D., Adv, Trib. Ecc. Melit.

Deputy Chairperson

Ms Renee' Laiviera Dip. ED (Melit), Dip. Pol. Stud. (melit)

Members

Ms Charlene Barbara

Ms Marouska Bonnici BA. (Hons) Social Work

Dr Rita Borg Xuereb Ph.D., M.Sc., RN., RM., Dip. Ed. (Adult), PQDip. (Mid. Ed.)

Inspector Louise Calleja Dip in Mngt. Studies, MBA (Grenoble)

Dr Charles Cassar Ph.D ECP.

Dr Oriella DeGiovanni B.A. (Melit.), LL.D. (Melit.), Adv, Trib. Eccles. Melit.

Dr Roberta Lepre' Camilleri B.A., LL.D

Notary Dr Josef Masini Vento LL.D

Secretary

Ms Doris Vassallo DPA

¹ Terms of Reference Domestic Violence Act – Appendix A

The Commission is also supported by Ms Doris Vassallo, DPA, who performs the functions of Secretary to the Commission.

From March 2015 till November 2015, the Commission's complement of staff included a Research Analyst and a Research Officer. At the end of November 2015, the Research Analyst resigned and the process for a replacement was initiated through the Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties. By the end of this reporting period, the process for the selection of a Research Analyst was still in progress. Thus the Commission on Domestic Violence had only a full time Research Officer.

1.3 Commission Meetings

The Commission held ten meetings between 1 March 2015 and 29 February 2016, as follows:

Meetings 2015 - 2016	Date
Meeting 02/15:	05 March 2015
Meeting 03/14:	23 April 2015
Meeting 04/15:	28 May 2015
Meeting 05/15:	02 July 2015
Meeting 06/15:	24 September 2015
Meeting 07/15:	05 November 2015
Meeting 01/16:	14 January 2016

The duration of each meeting was approximately two to three hours. The meetings were generally held at Block C Beltissebħ Floriana.

1.4 Seminar held by the Commission

The Commission on Domestic Violence organised its annual seminar in 2015 with the aim of reaching out to all stakeholders working in the field of domestic violence and also to act as a coordinated body to bring together all stakeholders in the field.

The 2015 annual seminar was held on Thursday 22 October. This year's conference hosted Professor Aisha Gill, from Roehampton University, London, and Criminologist, Department of Probation and Parole and Aġenzija Appoġġ. The seminar is entitled 'Role of Preventive Interventions with Perpetrators'. The participants who attended this conference were professionals working, both directly and indirectly, in the field of domestic violence such as Social Workers, Psychologists, Healthcare Professionals, the Police, NGOs, the Judiciary and Professionals from the Education Sector².

1.5 Committees under the remit of the Commission

During the year of reporting the committees set up by the Commission continued to oversee the SART (Sexual Assault Response Team) and the active implementation of the Istanbul Convention.

1.5.1 SART Management Board

The SART (Sexual Assault Response Team) was set up, with the aim to address Sexual Assault which is a violation of basic human rights and therefore a crime against an individual and society. SART was set up as a public social partnership between the Government and Victim Support Malta when the Commission fell under the remit of the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity. SART continued to offer its services although it has encountered various mishaps. The SART Management Board within the Commission on Domestic Violence retained its function to oversee the SART project, although as a project it falls under the remit of the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity.

² Seminar Report vide Appendix D

1.5.2 Interministerial Committee on the Istanbul Convention (IMC)

In May 2014, following Malta's ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Prevention and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, an Interministerial Committee on the Istanbul Convention continued to work on its terms of reference, after which a report was prepared.

The report with IMC recommendations was presented to the Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties (MSDC) in March 2015 and a presentation to Honourable Minister Helena Dalli was given in June 2015.

Following the presentation, it was agreed that the IMC drafts a set of Terms Of References for professionals to be included from other Ministries. An organizational chart and a list of the articles and responsible entities were sent to MSDC in August 2015.

2. Awareness Raising and Participation in Local Activities

The Commission on Domestic Violence participated in seminars, conferences, media programmes, delivered presentations and took part in discussions. Participation enables the Commission to gather useful information, enhances networking with national entities and emphasizes through awareness raising, the importance of Domestic Violence as an issue in Malta.

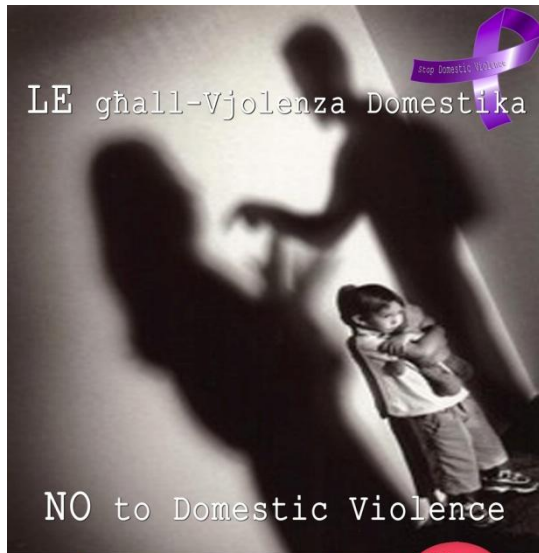
During this reporting year awareness raising was ongoing through the media, and through collaboration with other entities as explained below. The continuous awareness raising consisted of four main categories:

- awareness raising campaign '*LE għall-Vjolenza Domestika – No to Domestic Violence*'
- distribution of information material
- awareness raising in places of education and local activities, and
- participation in the media.

2.1 Awareness raising campaign: '*LE għall-Vjolenza Domestika – No to Domestic Violence*'

The Commission on Domestic Violence worked towards the continuum of awareness raising against domestic violence with this year's campaign: '*LE għall-Vjolenza Domestika – NO to Domestic Violence*'. The generic theme chosen by the Commission included various aspects of the issue, through its four posters. These posters included the following:

- Child witnessing domestic violence between parents
- Verbal abuse and violence on men
- Prevention of domestic violence and violence on women
- The importance of seeking help.



Child witnessing of domestic violence



Verbal abuse and violence on men

The generic theme ‘No to Domestic Violence’ raised awareness on different aspects such as the effects of domestic violence that is witnessed by children. It also emphasised that verbal abuse is another form of domestic violence and this can be perpetrated by both males and females.

The second aspect of ‘No to Domestic Violence’ raised awareness on the importance of prevention and seeking help.



Prevention of domestic violence and violence on women



The importance of seeking help!

The awareness raising campaign took place as follows:

- i. during the summer months starting from July to September 2015 through posters that were set up in bathroom facilities of bars, restaurants, places of entertainment, and sports.
- ii. was further extended through a Bus Shelter campaign which took place around Malta and Gozo during the month of September 2015.

The bus shelter campaign was covered by a television media coverage, which included an interview with the Chairperson Dr Yana Micallef Stafrace.

2.2 Distribution of Information Material

A reprint of the information card produced by the Commission on Domestic Violence was carried out in January 2015. The dissemination of this card took place throughout the year. These cards were provided to service providers and other stakeholders who may come in contact with persons experiencing domestic violence and can make these cards available to them.

The dissemination of cards was carried out as follows:

- i. throughout all police stations in Malta and Gozo, and Vice Squad. This was followed by an information sheet indicating the types of help provided by the entities listed on the information card. The information sheets were provided for the Police own reference, while the information cards are aimed at being made available to persons seeking help.
- ii. the information card was also provided to school psychosocial professionals and to Personal, Social, Career and Development (PSCD) teachers, for their own reference, so as to be of help through their work. These were provided during talks held with them in schools.
- iii. these cards were also made available at Mater Dei Hospital and at the Gozo General Hospital, especially in the Emergency section. These were also made available in all the Health Centres in Malta and Gozo.

- iv. the Commission on Domestic Violence made contact with the Church, with regards to dissemination of information such as leaflets and information cards. These information cards and leaflets were distributed to parish churches and other churches through the Malta Archdiocese and the Gozo Diocese. Furthermore, this material was also provided to Cana Movement Malta, and *Kummissjoni Familja Għawdex* for further dissemination, especially to be made available to *Koppji Mexxejja*.
- v. the information cards were also provided to shelters for survivors of domestic violence, *Access Centres*, as well as to all service providers listed on the information card.
- vi. the information cards and leaflets were also made available to the Courts of Malta.

Through the dissemination of information on domestic violence on where to seek help, contact was made with the various stakeholders who are likely to come in contact with persons experiencing domestic violence. Through the various stakeholders the Commission on Domestic Violence is outreaching the general public, especially when they are most in need. The Commission is also assisting stakeholders in their work towards helping those who seek their help or guidance.



Information Card (front)



Information Card (back)

2.3 Awareness raising in places of education and local activities

During the period of reporting, the Commission on Domestic Violence in collaboration with other entities focused on raising awareness in places of education and through local activities which include the following:

- i. in September - October 2015 the Commission on Domestic Violence participated for the second time at the MCAST Freshers' week in Paola, through the setting up of its stand together with Dar Merħba Bik. Through this initiative the Commission on Domestic Violence together with Dar Merħba Bik was able to reach the students who stopped by the stand, as well as through the: dissemination of leaflets, awareness raising promotional material and research report document.
- ii. throughout the scholastic year 2014-2015, the Commission on Domestic Violence continued to carry out awareness raising talks, with school psychosocial professionals on the issue of domestic violence, dating violence, prevention and services available. These talks were carried out in collaboration with Aġenzija Appoġġ.
- iii. in October 2015 and in November 2015, the Commission on Domestic Violence carried out talks with PSCD teachers on domestic violence and dating violence. The aim of these talks was to provide tools that PSCD teachers can use during their lessons so as to raise awareness about the issues and as a means of prevention. This initiative is still ongoing and is in line with Article 14 of the Istanbul Convention on Education at all levels of education.
- iv. in October 2015, the Commission on Domestic Violence together with the Commissioner for Children and with the collaboration of the Education Department launched an awareness raising art competition among all State, Church, and Independent schools. This art competition was targeted at different ages through three different categories including Primary and Secondary schools.
- v. in November 2015, further information cards, and leaflets on 'What is domestic violence?' and on 'Dating Violence', were provided to the Malta Girl Guides. This material was provided so as to help them raise awareness on domestic violence and its prevention during their

commemorative event on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

- vi. the Commission on Domestic Violence was invited to deliver an awareness raising talk on forms of violence, at Paroċċa San Ġorg, in Qormi on the 12th January, 2016. The talk was delivered by Commission member Dr Roberta Lepre`. During this event the participants were given the Commission's newly launched leaflets entitled 'What do I need to know about Domestic Violence?' – '*X'għandi bżonn inkun naf dwar il-Vjolenza Domestika?*' Information cards on where to seek help were also distributed.

2.4 Media Participation

During the year of reporting, awareness raising continued through Media participation which included the following:

- i. in January 2015 the Commission on Domestic Violence provided an awareness raising article for St Benedict's College to be published on their magazine '*Ward u Zahar: Lehen il-Kulleġġ San Benedittu*'. The article was entitled '*Il-Valur tar-Rispett: mhux biss lejn l-oħrajn iżda wkoll lejna nfusna.*'
- ii. in April 2015, an awareness raising advert on the *Kunsill Studenti Universitarji*'s magazine was published with the theme 'Violence knows no gender, sexual orientation and age'. The theme was created together with Rainbow Support and Men Against Violence. The advert included the Supportline 179 number.
- iii. in May 2015, the Commission on Domestic Violence provided an awareness raising article to Cana Movement for publication on their website www.canamovement.org. This article was entitled '*Għarfien dwar il-Vjolenza Domestika*'.
- iv. in September 2015, the Chairperson Dr Yana Micallef Stafrace was interviewed during a television feature about the Bus Shelter Campaign launch, with the theme '*Le għall-Vjolenza Domestika – No to Domestic Violence*'.

- v. on the 22nd October 2015, the Chairperson Dr Yana Micallef Stafrace was asked for comments by the Public Broadcasting Service. This was featured during TVM news whilst covering the Commission on Domestic Violence's annual seminar. The event entitled 'Role of Preventive Interventions with Perpetrators' was covered by various media.
- vi. on the 5th November 2015 Dr Yana Micallef Stafrace was interviewed by local newspaper *Illum*.
- vii. on the 5th November 2015 Dr Yana Micallef Stafrace also had a phone interview with *Radju Malta*.
- viii. on the 25th February 2016 Dr Yana Micallef Stafrace participated in the programme *Skjetti*.

3. Financial Overview

In January 2015, the Commission was allocated a budget of €40,000³. The annual awarded honoraria for the year 2015 of the chairperson was €2,329.37. The honoraria of the members of the Commission was €1,747.03 each. The honoraria for the year 2015 of the Chairperson and the members was paid from this year's budget. The remaining budget allocated for year 2015 was utilized for its various projects, which included the following;

- i. seminar;
- ii. awareness raising campaigns and material and
- iii. attending conferences abroad in relation to domestic violence.

The Commission continued to prioritise its work and activities for the term in review.

³ Financial Report – Appendix B

4. Website

During this year of reporting, the Commission on Domestic Violence made various updates on its website www.domesticviolence.gov.mt with aim of having a more user-friendly website, especially to persons who would like to seek information on where to find help. The website updates include:

- i. a section with information on ‘where to seek help’ (service-provision contact numbers and service-provision information);
- ii. a section entitled ‘About Domestic Violence’ was included on the website for further information about domestic violence, dating violence, and brief information from Chapter 481 Domestic Violence act;
- iii. a ‘HIDE THIS PAGE’ information so that website users who may be experiencing domestic abuse, can safeguard themselves online, from their abuser.
- iv. its awareness raising was extended by through the uploading of the year 2015 campaign posters on the website.

The website page was highly promoted through the campaign posters and bus shelters, information cards, the new leaflet, on campus during Freshers’ week at MCAST, and during talks with PSCD teachers.

5. Collaboration with Other Entities in Malta

5.1 Collaboration with Dar Għabex

Female survivors of domestic violence and their children who were residing at Għabex Shelter between the months of July and October 2015 embarked on an initiative to raise awareness among the general public on the issue of domestic violence. This was carried out through a number of posters that they created through art. Through these posters they shared their message among the general public on the issue of domestic violence. These posters together with crafts material, and posters published by the Commission on Domestic Violence were exhibited at the Internal Yard at Palazzo Ferreria, Valletta, from the 16th November till the 20th November. This exhibition was promoted through a joint press notice between the Commission on Domestic Violence and Foundation for Social Welfare Services.

5.2 Collaboration with the Police and Psychology Team with the Health Department

Training of Police was one of the Commission's budgetary measures for 2015. To this effect, on June 2015, a meeting was held with professionals from the state Mental Health Services, the Commission on Domestic Violence, and members of the Malta Police Force to discuss the setting up and coordination of Police Training. This commenced on a weekly basis in mid-July at the Police Academy for a six week block. This training was delivered by forensic psychologists from the Mental Health Services. Training was lead by the Managing Psychologist from the Mental Health Services and Police Inspector from the Malta Police Force.

5.3 Collaboration with the Education Department

The Commission on Domestic Violence liaised with the Education Department, Curriculum Centre, with regards to the implementation of article 14 of the Istanbul Convention on Education regarding Domestic Violence at all levels of Education. The collaboration is ongoing.

5.4 Collaboration with the Commissioner for Children

Throughout the year 2015, the Commission on Domestic Violence worked closely with the Commissioner for Children in the planning and launching of an art competition among all schools so as to promote healthy relationships and prevent domestic abuse. Throughout this initiative several collaborators from different sectors provided their help namely PSCD Education Officers, The Education Department, schools, PSCD and art teachers, Agenzija Appoġġ, and the companies sponsoring the competition prizes.

5.5 Collaboration with the Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties

In November 2015, the Commission on Domestic Violence, together with Agenzija Appoġġ was called by the Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties to provide advice on issues of domestic violence that could be targeted in the campaign carried out in the Eden Leisure (8.97 Bay Radio) campaign.

5.6 Collaboration with *Agenzija Appoġġ*

The Commission on Domestic Violence and *Agenzija Appoġġ* agreed to sign a memorandum of understanding which was also approved by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties and the Permanent Secretary, Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity. The agreement reached states that requests for help or for advice that are received by Commission from the general public are to be referred to *Agenzija Appoġġ*. These cases are then followed by *Agenzija Appoġġ*.

5.7 EU Presidency Meetings

In preparation for Malta's EU Presidency in January 2017, the Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties is holding a number of preparatory meetings on the EU Presidency. During these meetings minutes are taken and an agenda is discussed. All entities within the Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties are invited to attend and discuss EU-related matters.

6. European Union, Council of Europe and International Conferences

The Commission on Domestic Violence was invited to participate in meetings and conferences abroad on the subject of domestic violence and related issues. The invitations were received from:

- COST Action 1206 Femicide across Europe
- Committee of the Parties meetings
- WAVE Women Against Violence Europe ⁴

⁴ Conferences report – Appendix C

7. Research Studies and Questionnaires

From time to time the Commission on Domestic Violence is approached by the Directorate for EU Affairs within the Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties to give a national position on various dossiers being discussed at EU level or at United Nations meetings.

On a yearly basis the Commission on Domestic Violence contributes towards the Women against Violence Europe (WAVE) Country Report.

8. Electoral Proposals

The Commission on Domestic Violence has met up with various professionals and stakeholders to work on the implementation of the following electoral proposals:

“16.028 Naraw li l-liġi kontra l-Vjolenza Domestika tassigura l-mezzi biex il-vittmi u t-tfal jiġu protetti immedjatament.”

Electoral Proposal 16.028 aims at protecting the victims of domestic violence in an effective manner by amending current legislation and improving the current services available. It also aims to address the issue that at times, it is the victim who leaves the household instead of the perpetrator.

Malta's ratification of the Istanbul Convention supports the protection of victims.

This electoral proposal is being covered by the articles in the Istanbul Convention. Discussions on legal aspects of the Implementation of the Istanbul Convention were held between the Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties, the Commission on Domestic Violence and the Attorney General.

“16.030 Biex verament inżommu jdejna fuq il-polz tas-soċjeta' jinħoloq programm apposta fejn tinżamm statistika dwar vjolenza domestika b'mod komprensiv bil-kollaborazzjoni tal-professjonisti u l-istrutturi li jaħdmu f'dan il-qasam.”

Electoral Proposal 16.030 aims at gathering data from the various stakeholders working in the field of domestic violence for harmonisation purposes. Such data is needed to better understand the local scenario so as to improve services in relation to domestic violence and also work on a co-ordinated approach with stakeholders. For the second consecutive year, the Commission on Domestic Violence worked with various stakeholders in harmonising data for 2014. Data was gathered from the Malta Police, Agenzija Appoġġ, and the General Hospitals (through the Directorate for Health Information and Research) and Dar Merħba Bik which runs a women's shelter also provides data.

Such data is required to better understand the local scenario so as to improve services in relation to domestic violence and also work on a coordinated approach with stakeholders. In 2015 the office of the Commission on Domestic Violence harmonised data for year 2014 and these are presented as follows:

Harmonised Tables

Data for the year 2014

Table 1 – Services providing data

Services	Number of Records	Number of Individuals *
Malta Police	1095	938
Domestic Violence Unit, Agenzija Appoġġ	858	812
Ghabex, Agenzija Appoġġ	78	72
Department of Health	66	64
Dar Merħba Bik	121	102

*This refers to the number of persons who made a report/sought a service at least once.

Table 2 – Number of Individuals by Service and Gender

Services	Gender
Malta Police	717 Females, 221 Males
Domestic Violence Unit (DVU), Agenzija Appoġġ	788 Females, 24 Males
Ghabex, Agenzija Appoġġ	72 Females
Department of Health	64 Females
Dar Merħba Bik	102 Females

Table 3 – Age and Gender of Service Users at the Malta Police

Age	18-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	71-80	81+	Grand Total
Females	183	220	148	76	43	11	4	685
Males	36	60	39	32	16	2	3	188
Grand Total	219	280	187	108	59	13	7	873

Table 4 – Age and Gender of Service Users at the Domestic Violence Unit, *Agenzija Appogg*

Age	18-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	71-80	81+	Grand Total
Females	141	200	154	112	57	15	5	684
Males	5	3	3	4	2	3	0	20
Grand Total	146	203	157	116	59	18	5	704

Table 5 – Age and Gender of Service Users at Dar Ghabex

Age	18-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	Grand Total
Females	24	18	17	5	64

Table 6 – Age and Gender of Service Users at Dar Merħba Bik

Age	18-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	Grand Total
Gender: Females	36	28	24	10	4	102

Table 7 – Type of Violence

Type of Violence	Number of Records
Physical	1366
Psychological	1281
Stalking	32
Sexual	120
Economic	292
Neglect	160

Table 8 – Availed of more than one Service

Availed of more than one Service	Number of Records
DVU and Malta Police	111
DVU and Ghabex	30
DVU and Dar Merħba Bik	59
DVU, Ghabex, Malta Police	9
DVU, Ghabex, Dar Merħba Bik	4

DVU, Dar Merħba Bik and Malta Police	17
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Appendix A

Domestic Violence Act Chapter 481

Terms of Reference

The terms of reference of the Commission on Domestic Violence are laid down under Article 4, of the said Domestic Violence Act. These are reproduced below.

“The Commission shall have the function of advising the Minister on all aspects of domestic violence and in particular on:

- (a) increasing the awareness and understanding of domestic violence and harassment and their consequences and on ways and means to reduce their incidence;
- (b) areas of domestic violence on which research is necessary or desirable;
- (c) strategies to expose domestic violence and to facilitate the intervention of public and private agencies and entities with respect to victims and perpetrators of such violence;
- (d) educating the public on all aspects of domestic violence;
- (e) ways to facilitate communication between public and private agencies and entities involved in action against domestic violence;
- (f) standards for care facilities for victims and perpetrators of domestic violence, including public or private shelter services or facilities;
- (g) standards and protocols for practitioners;
- (h) procedures for the effective co-ordination on a national level of the activities of public and private agencies and entities engaged in the giving of services on domestic violence issues including support services;
- (i) a comprehensive and co-ordinated plan for the collection of data concerning domestic violence for use by the courts, prosecutors, law enforcement officers, health care practitioners, social workers and other agencies and entities in a manner that protects the identity of victims of domestic violence;
- (j) developing a comprehensive plan for a multidisciplinary approach of active prevention and early intervention;
- (k) specialized training for professional groups involved; and
- (l) consulting and networking with other relevant national and international entities.”

Appendix B

Financial Report 2015

Item 5477

Annual Budget € 40,000

Honoraria 2015 and Tax	€ 18,412.56
Overtime	€ 477.84
Expenses related to Awareness raising	€ 12515.93
Expenses related to the Office	€ 1285.03
Expenses for conferences abroad	€ 3,457.78
Expenses for Seminar 2015	€ 1,848.64
Travel reimbursement	€ 77.64
Printing of Annual report 2014-2015	€ 127.50

Appendix C

Conferences

COST Action 1206 Femicide across Europe: Working Group meeting in Cyprus –7-8 May 2015

The aim of this meeting was for the Working Group to discuss cultural definitions of Femicide and Honor Killings. It also aims at comparing data on intimate partner murders, honor killings and the cultural issues that revolve around Femicide. Ms Katya Unah attended the seminar as a member of the COST Action 1206.

Women Against Violence Europe WAVE CoCo meeting – 10-11 June 2015

Ms Katya Unah attended the WAVE CoCo meeting which was held between 10-11 June, 2015 in Vienna. During this meeting, each participating country gave an update on its achievements on issues related to domestic violence, Also during this meeting, discussions were held on formulating a Blueprint for a 2016-2017 WAVE campaign to improve systems of specialist women's services to support women survivors of violence and their children. During this meeting, the WAVE report was discussed.

COST Action 1206 Femicide across Europe: Training School on Femicide – 20-24 July 2015

On 20-24 July 2015, Ms Katya Unah, Research Analyst attended the COST Action 1206 Training School: "Research into policy and practice: Innovation and Sustainability in Femicide and Femicide Prevention" in Rome. Various topics were addressed during the sessions including psychopathology and violence against women, intervention and prevention of Femicide. The COST Action aims to establish "the first pan-European coalition on Femicide", with a main goal to improve the prevention of Femicide, by improving the efficiency of policies. Outputs include guidelines for national policy-makers, as well as books, newsletters, articles and other publications emerging from the Action.

Women Against Violence Europe WAVE The 17th WAVE Conference – The Hague – 2 November 2015

On 2 November 2015, Ms Maria Mangion, Ghabex Co-ordinator, Agenzija Appoġġ attended the 17th Annual WAVE Conference which was organised by Women Against Violence Europe WAVE, which was held in conjunction with the Third World Conference of Women's Shelters. The Conference was held in the Hague, the Netherlands.

Committee of Parties Meetings

The Commission on Domestic Violence is Malta's representative on the Committee of the Parties. The Committee of the Parties to the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) is composed of the representatives of the Parties to the Convention. Inspector Louise Calleja attended the first two Committee of Parties Meetings that were held in Strasbourg. The first meeting was held on 4 May 2015 during which the members of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO), were elected. The second meeting was held on 14 December 2015 in Strasbourg.

Appendix D

Commission on Domestic Violence

Role of Preventive Interventions with Perpetrators

Seminar Report

On 22 October 2015, the Commission on Domestic Violence organised its annual seminar at Dar Qalb ta' Gesu' in Santa Venera. The seminar entitled **Role of Preventive Interventions with Perpetrators**. The objective of the seminar was to gain a better understanding of how to prevent perpetrator violence and the services available for perpetrators. Participants from different organisations who are directly or indirectly involved with the issue of domestic violence attended this seminar. These participants included the Judiciary, police officers, social workers, lawyers, probation officers, members from the education sector and various other professionals.

The Chairperson of the Commission on Domestic Violence, Dr Yana Micallef Stafrace welcomed and thanked participants for attending the seminar. The Chairperson delivered her introductory speech.

The Honourable Minister Helena Dalli, Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties delivered the opening speech of the seminar.

The keynote speaker in this year's seminar was Professor Aisha Gill from the University of Roehampton, London whose presentation was entitled **Understanding and Preventing Perpetrator Violence**. Other speakers included Mr Kevin Sammut Henwood and Dr Chantal Avellino, from the Department of Probation and Parole whose presentation focused on **Anger Dysfunction, Violence and its Treatment among Offenders. A Community-based Perspective**. Ms Roberta Agius and Ms Lauren Agius from Agenzija Appoġġ also gave a presentation focused on **Domestic Violence Services: Focusing on Managing Abusive Behaviour**.

The suggestions which were drawn up from the seminar which were also referred to Honourable Minister Helena Dalli, Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties included:

- incident reporting at police stations, whereby the victims of domestic violence are to be referred to the Victim Support Unit within the Malta Police or to Agenzija Appoġġ. Police Officers must inform the victims that professional help is available upon giving their consent. It is recommended that on agreement between entities, the victim is referred.
- the Social Workers from Agenzija Appoġġ should support the victims by accompanying them to Court and if necessary prepare a report for the Court's attention.
- the Police should prepare a 'history of incidence' according to Article 18 of the Criminal Code. At present this is not the practice. Police Officers have to be made aware of the importance to include the incidence history when presenting the case in Court.
- a report by the social worker should be requested by the Magistrate presiding the case.
- it was evident during the seminar that in certain instances the cause of 'abuse' was linked to 'anger management' rather than issues of power and control and the imbalance of power between women and men in society. This is a dangerous assumption. The Istanbul Convention in Article 3 defines both '**domestic violence**' and '**violence against women**' whilst **Article 16** refers to '**Preventive intervention and treatment programmes**'. It is being proposed that the matter is clarified with the entities concerned by providing assistance to the perpetrators and victims in the context of the cause of violence against women.