

ISLANDS AND SMALL STATES INSTITUTE

REPORT (2009/ 2010)

1. ADMINISTRATION OF THE INSTITUTE

The Islands & Small States Institute promotes research and training on economic, social, cultural, ecological and geographical aspects of islands and small states. It also offers postgraduate courses on islands and small states studies.

Based at the University of Malta, the institute evolved from the Islands and Small States Programme which had been set up in 1989 at the Foundation for International Studies, Valletta. In 1993, the Programme was restructured as an Institute with the principal aim of enabling the organisation to offer academic courses.

The institute is housed in the building Guze Cassar Pullicino (Tal-Qroqq Campus) since August 2007.

Staff

The Director of the Institute is Professor Lino Briguglio who works on a part-time basis. The Institute is administered by Ms Isabelle Vella. The Institute uses the services of a Clerk, namely Ms Romina Carabott (who works on a reduce time basis) and a project officer, namely Mrs Maryrose Vella (who works on a part-time basis).

Boards

The ISSI Board

The ISSI Board chaired by Pro-rector Professor Alfred Vella, with the following members, Professor Lino Briguglio (Director) Professor Roderick Pace (appointed by Senate), Dr Gordon Cordina and Dr Godwin Cassar (scholar of repute), and Ms Ritianne Stellini and Mr Arnold Dingli as student representatives.

The ISSI Doctoral Committee

The ISSI Doctoral Committee is chaired by Professor Lino Briguglio, with Dr Marguerite Camilleri, Dr Gordon Cordina and Professor Roderick Pace as members.

The MA (ISSS) Board of Studies

The MA (ISSS) Board of Studies chaired by Professor Lino Briguglio, with Dr Roderick Pace, Prof Kevin Aquilina, Dr Gordon Cordina as members and Ms Ritianne Stellini and Mr Arnold Dingli as student representatives.

2. THE MASTER OF ARTS IN ISLANDS AND SMALL STATES STUDIES

The Course leading to the Master of Arts in Islands and Small States Studies is spread over two years of part-time study. Lecture sessions are normally held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at the Tal-Qroqq Campus and on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings at the Gozo Campus.

Course Content

The course consists of Environmental Studies, as the major area (40 ECTS credits), Economics as the minor area (20 ECTS credits), and the writing of a dissertation (30 ECTS credits). Topics covered include “Overview of Environmental Concerns for Islands and Small States”, “International Environmental Law and Environmental Diplomacy”, “Principles of Ecology and Biogeography of Islands”, “Environmental Planning and

Management”, “Aspects of Microeconomics and Macroeconomics with Special Focus on Size and Insularity Factors” and “Research Methodology”.



MA ISSS students (intake 2009-2010) with Professor Lino Briguglio, during a lecture break

Fieldwork

As part of their studies students have to carry out regular fieldworks. In the latest visit during the academic year 2009- 2010 students visited the Qawra/Dwejra area, which was proposed to be prescribed as one of the World Heritage Sites. This visit enabled students



MA ISSS students during a field visit at Dwejra in Gozo

to obtain practical knowledge relating to the subject they cover in the lecture sessions of Ecology and Biogeography of Islands. Following this visit, students were asked to produce a detailed report on the geographic distribution of plants and animals and the relationships of living things to one another and to their environment in the Western coast of Gozo.

Students

Fifteen students have enrolled to follow the MA ISSS for the academic year 2009/2010 of which 9 followed the course in Malta and the remaining 6 in Gozo. In all, since the year 2000, a total of 65 students have obtained the MA(ISSS) degree.

MA ISSS students graduating on 18th November 2010 at the Foundation for International Studies.



3. CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

Competitiveness Strategies for Small States

The Training Workshop on Competitiveness Strategies for Small States held on 19 – 27 April 2010 was funded by the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Maltese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The programme spread over seven days, consisted mainly of presentations by resource persons on different aspects of the main theme and country presentations by the participants. These were all followed by discussions. In addition, field visits to the Malta Chamber of Commerce and the Malta Freeport.



A total of 15 participants, hailing from different parts of the world, attended. The workshop was held at the Diplomat Hotel, Tower Road Sliema.

Participants during one of the presentations.

5. PUBLICATIONS

Occasional papers

The Institute publishes a series of six occasional papers every year (ISSN 10246282). With a focus on issues relevant to islands and small states. The list of paper titles can be accessed from <http://www.um.edu.mt/islands/publications>.

6. INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The Institute has been consulted by the United Nations Department of Social and Economic Affairs regarding the 5-year Review of the Mauritius Implementation Strategy for the sustainable development of small island states. Professor Briguglio visited the UN in June 2010 to participate in the preparatory conference of the Review, and was a keynote speaker in a side-event organised at the United Headquarters by the Commonwealth Secretariat.

The Institute is also involved in an exercise to profile countries in terms of the economic vulnerability and resilience, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat. So far three countries have been profiled (Seychelles, St Lucia and Vanuatu) and two others (Lesotho and Tonga) will be profiled in early 2011.

The Institute also collaborates with five other Universities (the University of the West Indies, the University of the West Indies, the University of Mauritius, the University of the US Virgin Islands and the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria), in a consortium with the aim of offering an international Masters Programme on the Sustainable Development of Small Islands States.

7. FUTURE PROJECTS

The Islands and Small States Institute of the University of Malta will be organising two training workshops in 2011, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Malta, as part of the Malta-Commonwealth Third Country Training Programme. The workshops will respectively focus on “Competitiveness Strategies for Small States” and on “Banking and Finance in Small States”, and will be funded by the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation (CFTC) of the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Malta Cooperation Programme of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The programmes of the workshop will be spread over two weeks, will consist mainly of presentations by resource persons on different aspects of the main theme, and country

presentations by the participants. These will all be followed by discussion. The Programme will also include visits to relevant institutions in Malta

The workshops are primarily intended for officials, at senior and middle management levels, operating in the public sectors of small states. Participants should normally be nominated by the national governments and sponsored by the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation. A limited number of self-funded participants can also participate.

Certificates of attendance will be awarded to those participants who complete the entire programme. The certificates will be issued by the Islands and Small States Institute of the University of Malta, the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation and the Malta Ministry of Foreign Affairs.