



**ISLANDS AND SMALL  
STATES INSTITUTE**  
at the University of Malta

**Annual Report**  
**Academic year 2015/2016**

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## 1. ADMINISTRATION OF THE INSTITUTE

### *Chair the Institute*

The Chairperson of the Institute during academic year 2015-2016 was Professor Alfred Vella, Pro-Rector for academic affairs of the University of Malta.



Professor Alfred Vella, Chairperson of the Islands and Small States Institute

### *Director of the Institute*

The Director of the Institute was Professor Lino Briguglio who is a member of the Economics Department of the University of Malta and offers his services to the Institute on a part-time basis.



Professor Lino Briguglio, Director of the Islands and Small States Institute

### *Staff*

The Institute was administered by Ms Daniela Galea (Secretary) and assisted by Ms Romina Carabott (clerk).



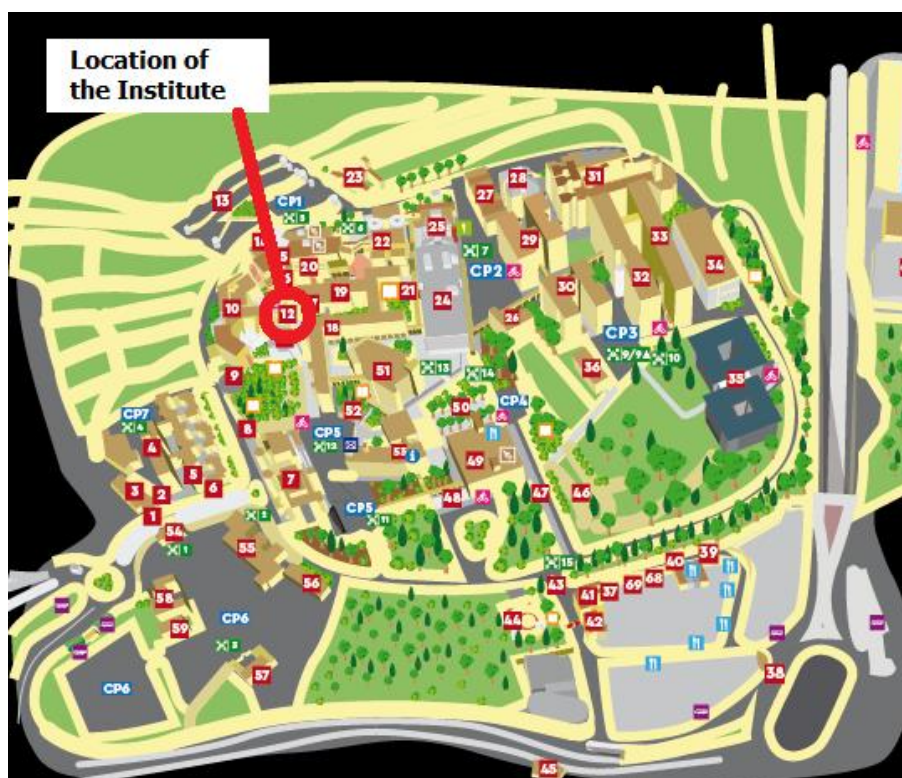
Ms Daniela Galea and Ms Romina Carabott

## 2. BOARDS

### *The ISSI Board*

In 2015-2016, the ISSI Board was chaired by Pro-rector Prof. Alfred Vella with the following members,

Prof. Lino Briguglio (Director),  
Dr Natasha Azzopardi Muscat (Council appointed),  
Prof. Kevin Aquilina (Council Appointed)  
Prof. Roderick Pace (Senate appointed)  
Dr. Ing Charles Yousif (Senate appointed)  
Dr. Stefano Moncada (Senate appointed)  
Prof. Saviour Formosa (Academic staff representative),  
Perit Raphael Axiak (Academic staff representative),  
The student representatives were Mr Robert Henry Bugeja and Ms Noemi Said.



The location of the Islands and Small States Institute in Gużè Cassar Pullicino Building.

### *The MA (ISSS) Board of Studies*

The MA (ISSS) Board of Studies was chaired by Professor Lino Briguglio, with Prof. Roderick Pace, Prof. Saviour Formosa, Perit Raphael Axiak, Dr. Ing Charles Yousif, Dr. Stefano Moncada and Mr Robert Henry Bugeja (student representative) as members.

## 3. THE INSTITUTE'S WEBSITE

The Institute's website contained information on the work that the Institute carries out. (URL: [www.um.edu.mt/issi](http://www.um.edu.mt/issi)), and structured as follows:

- The Homepage which provides an introduction to the Institute, the latest news, direct links to the study programmes offered by the Institute and previous annual reports;
- A staff page containing the contact details of the staff working at the Institute and a list of collaborating scholars
- A Student Affairs page where MA ISSS students can view timetables, past papers, dissertation information, the Course Regulations and other information related to the Course/s on offer;



The home page of the Institute's website

- A Publications page which lists the Occasional Papers and other publications of relevance to islands and small states;
- A Research page where interested researchers can view material related to the Islands and Small States including a list of dissertation titles that can be downloaded;
- A section related to the Health Research Group (HRG) including the terms of reference for the HRG, the members of the HRG, WHO Candidate Collaborating Centre at the Institute of Islands and Small States (ISSI). It also includes the Relevant Publications and Relevant Reports in the Press and any related news;
- A section relating to the Climate Change Platform (CCP) including the statute of the CCP, the members of the CCP, the Steering Committee of the CCP, relevant publications and any related news;
- A section dedicated to Sustainable Development including the consultation process towards the Sustainable Development process in Malta;
- A section which lists past events that provides information on the various events organised by the Institute

#### 4. THE MASTERS COURSE

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 Msida Campus and on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings at the Gozo Campus. The degree provides a cross-disciplinary perspective on various aspects associated with islands and small states, and allows for a specialist study in one particular area through a thesis. The students are also expected to write a dissertation, under supervision, on a theme of relevance to the islands and small states.

##### *Course Content*

The MA course consists of Environmental Studies, as the major area (40 ECTS credits), and 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” (which includes fieldwork), “Environmental Planning and Management”, “Aspects of Microeconomics and Macroeconomics with Special Focus on Size and Insularity Factors” and “Research Methodology”.



The students following the MA in Islands and Small States Studies visited Dwejra in Gozo as part of their fieldwork in Ecology and Biogeography of Islands. During this fieldwork students drew a report on the geological formation of the area and on its ecological aspects.

### *Dissertations Titles*

Two dissertations were submitted in 2016 in partial fulfilment of the MA(ISSS) degree. These were:

- “Managing the Environmental Impacts of Shipping: The Experience of a Small Island State - Malta”  
Author: Melissa Abdilla.
- “Political Governance Indicators and Small States”  
Author: Robert Henry Bugeja

The MA dissertations submitted in connection with the MA ISSS course are examined by a panel which includes a non-visiting external examiner who for academic year 2015/16 was Dr Robert Allan Read of the University of Lancaster, UK.

In all, since the year 2000, a total of 88 students have obtained the MA (ISSS) degree.



Dr Robert Read, external examiner of Masters course in Islands and Small States Studies

## **5. ISSI DESIGNATED A WHO CANDIDATE COLLABORATING CENTRE**

The Islands and Small States Institute has been designated as a World Health Organisation (WHO) Candidate Collaborating Centre on Health Systems in Small States.

For this purpose, the ISSI has set up a Health Research Group with the objective of focusing on research initiatives related to policy capacity and governance of health systems in small states. It seeks to bring together the academic experience from islands and small states work in economics, international relations, environmental management and apply this to the discipline of health systems research.

### *WHO High level meeting in Monaco*

The Institute was represented during the Third High-level Meeting of Small Countries ‘Health and sustainable development: the inherent advantages of small countries’ which was held in Monaco between the 11–12 October 2016.

Prof. Lino Briguglio and Dr Natasha Azzopardi Muscat were invited to deliver a presentation on



Dr Natasha Azzopardi Muscat at the Third WHO High-level Meeting of Small Countries

Health Resilience which was used as input for the published proceedings of the Monaco conference.

Malta shared its experience of strengthening health system resilience through retention and development of human resources. More information about the Monaco meeting is available at: [http://www.euro.who.int/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0020/334271/Meeting-report-of-the-Third-High-level-Meeting-of-Small-Countries-Monaco.pdf?ua=1](http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/334271/Meeting-report-of-the-Third-High-level-Meeting-of-Small-Countries-Monaco.pdf?ua=1)

The Monaco meeting was a follow-up of the Second High-level meeting held in Andorra on 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> July, 2015 ‘Taking forward Health 2020: Small Countries at the Forefront of Whole-of-Government Approaches to Health’ during which the Institute was represented by Prof. Roderick Pace, who delivered a presentation on ‘Characteristics of leadership and participatory governance in small states: implications for multi-sectoral implementation of Health 2020. Prof. Roderick Pace accompanied Parliamentary Secretary Dr. Fearnie, who lobbied for the ISSI to become a WHO Collaborating Centre. More information about the Andorra meeting is available at [http://www.euro.who.int/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/287274/Meeting-report-of-the-Second-High-level-Meeting-of-Small-Countries-Andorra.pdf?ua=1](http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/287274/Meeting-report-of-the-Second-High-level-Meeting-of-Small-Countries-Andorra.pdf?ua=1)

## 6. CLIMATE CHANGE PLATFORM (CCP)

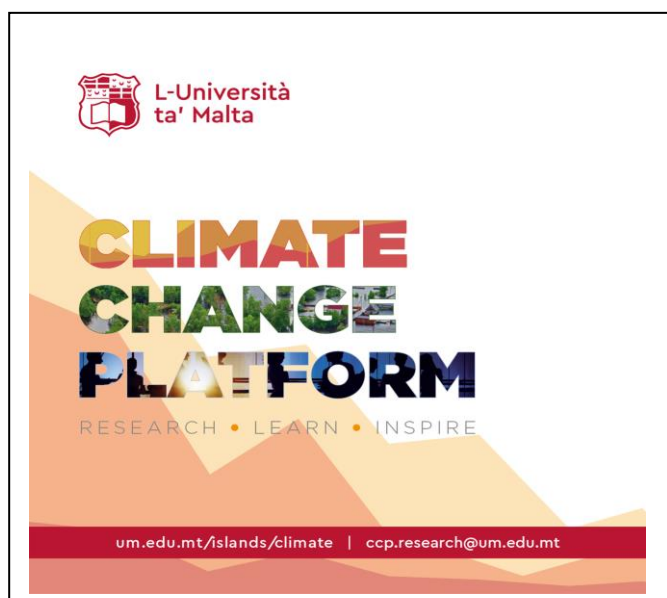
The CCP’s main objectives are (a) to facilitate collaboration between University of Malta entities and individual University academics interested in climate change issues and (b) to promote research and teaching initiatives relating to climate change at the University of Malta and elsewhere.

The Platform provides various facilities to encourage such collaboration and promotion of research, including (a) periodical issue of a newsletter that reports on CC-related activities by University entities; (b) information about research and teaching activities, as well as participation in climate-change related conferences by UoM entities and individual academics and (c) promotion and showcasing of research conducted by UoM entities and individual academics. All these initiatives will be publicised in a dedicated web space for the CCP.

The CCP is guided and overseen by a Steering Committee composed of up to seven UoM academics.

The first Steering Committee, which will serve for two years (October 2015-September 2017) is chaired by Professor Simone Borg, with Professor Maria Attard as vice- chair, and Dr. Stefano Moncada as the CCP focal point.

The other members of the



Logo of the Climate Change Platform

Committee are Professor Lino Briguglio, Dr Noel Aquilina indicated Mr James Ciarlo` as a member of The Steering Committee, and Prof. Charles Galdies.

Membership to the CCP is open to persons with an interest in climate change issues who are willing to contribute towards the objectives of the platform. In order to become members, applicants to join the CCP require the approval of the Steering Committee of the CCP.

The CCP website was revamped to act as a service for the students and staff who are interested in different aspects of Climate Change. Twitter and Facebook page were activated for the CCP, servicing as a source to publicise the events being organised. The CCP was reactivated by involving as many as staff, scholars and students as much as possible to participate and create synergies.

Interested people were asked to join in any way possible for research done to facilitate the connections to make awareness of the all things happening and being done on Climate Change Platform.

#### *Climate change global conference*

ISSI acted as a co-convener for a panel session as a part of a conference entitled “Our Common Future Under Climate Change” 7<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> July 2015 in France. Together with Prof. Hilary Bambrick, Dr. Moncada presented his research on climate change and development in informal urban settlements.



Caption: Dr. Stefano Moncada presenting at the Our Common Future Conference in Paris



## 7. OTHER ACTIVITIES

### *Cultural tourism in the European Islands*

The Islands and Small States Institute collaborated with the Observatory on Tourism in the European Islands (OTIE) in the organization of the 5<sup>th</sup> Gozo Summer School on “The challenges of Cultural tourism” held on 31<sup>st</sup> July and 6<sup>th</sup> August 2016 on the theme “Cultural Tourism Challenges in the European islands”.



Participants at the 5<sup>th</sup> Gozo OTIE Summer School viewing tourism brochures and information provided by Europe Direct Information Centre.

### *Lectures and presentations*

Professor Briguglio delivered a Public Lecture at University College London on 25 May 2016 on the theme “Climate Change and Small Island States with reference to Malta.”

Another lecture delivered by Prof Briguglio took place at the Asian Development Bank in Manila, for officials and researchers at the Bank on the theme “The relation between trade openness and volatility, with reference to the ASEAN”.

Prof Briguglio also conducted a seminar for post-graduate students and staff at the Faculty of Social Studies & Humanities, University of Mauritius held on 27 September 2016 on the theme “Good governance and economic growth with reference to Small Island Developing States.”

A lecture based on “The Maltese Economy” was delivered by Prof. Briguglio on 20 July 2016 at the University of Malta, intended for Liaison Officers in preparation for Malta’s 2017 Presidency of the EU Council, held The presentation is available at: [http://www.um.edu.mt/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0011/297245/Malteseconomy20July2016.pdf](http://www.um.edu.mt/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/297245/Malteseconomy20July2016.pdf).

The government of Luxembourg invited Prof Briguglio to deliver a public lecture on 30 June 2016 on the theme on “The small states of the EU”, in order to launch the publication “The Small States of the EU: Economic Perspectives”

The same presentation was delivered during a public discussion organised by the Malta-EU Steering and Action Committee (MEUSAC), the Department of Economics of the University of Malta and the European Parliament Information Office in Malta, at Europe House, Valletta, Malta held on 21st October 2016. The same presentation was delivered again during a public discussion organised by the Permanent Representation of Malta to the EU in Brussels held on 15 November 2016.

### *Defence of PhD by Board Member.*

Dr. Natasha Azzopardi Muscat, member of the ISSI Board and focal point of the Health Research Group of the ISSI, successfully defended her PhD thesis on “Europeanisation of Health Systems: A Small State Perspective” at Maastricht University on 28 June 2016.



Dr Natasha Azzopardi Muscat during the defence of her PhD thesis at Maastricht University

### *Visitors*

Professor Richard Brown from the School of Economics, University of Queensland, Australia visited the Islands and Small States Institute on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2016. He met Professor Briguglio and discussed possibilities of collaboration between the University of Queensland and the University of Malta.

The Dutch Ambassador, Mr Joop Nijseenn and his Assistant Research Officer, Mr Daan Wiesum visited the Islands and Small States Institute on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2015 for an informal meeting to discuss issues relating to small that were former colonies of the Netherlands.

Ms Anna Poyslova from Poland was on an Internship at Islands and Small States Institute between 2<sup>nd</sup> September and 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2015.

## **8. PUBLICATIONS**

Various publications on themes relating to islands and small states were authored or edited by members of the Board of the Institute and by collaborating scholars during the period covered by this report.

During the period covered by this report, the following ten *Occasional Papers on Islands and Small States* were published by the Institute:

- “Perceptions of Workers of the Role of Maltese Trade Unions in Health and Safety Issues” authored by S. Rizzo and M. Micallef
- “Governance in the Caribbean Small States - Evidence from Three Global Indicators” authored by L. Briguglio, C. Saliba and M. Vella
- “Islands of the World and the European Touch” authored by G. Baldacchino
- “Competition Law and Policy in Small States” authored by L. Briguglio
- “Political Governance Indicators and Small States” authored by R.H. Bugeja
- “Natural disasters and tourism-led economic growth. A case study of Fiji 1980-2014” authored by T.K. Jayarman, Chee Keong Choong, Cheong Fatt Ng and Mark and Bhatt
- “The impacts of Tourism on Small Island States” authored by M. Schembri
- “Assessing the factors influencing the job satisfaction of Public Service employees in Malta - A Binary Logit Model” authored by C. Sacco
- “Trade openness and volatility” authored by L. Briguglio and M. Vella

