

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

Annual Report
Academic year 2016/2017



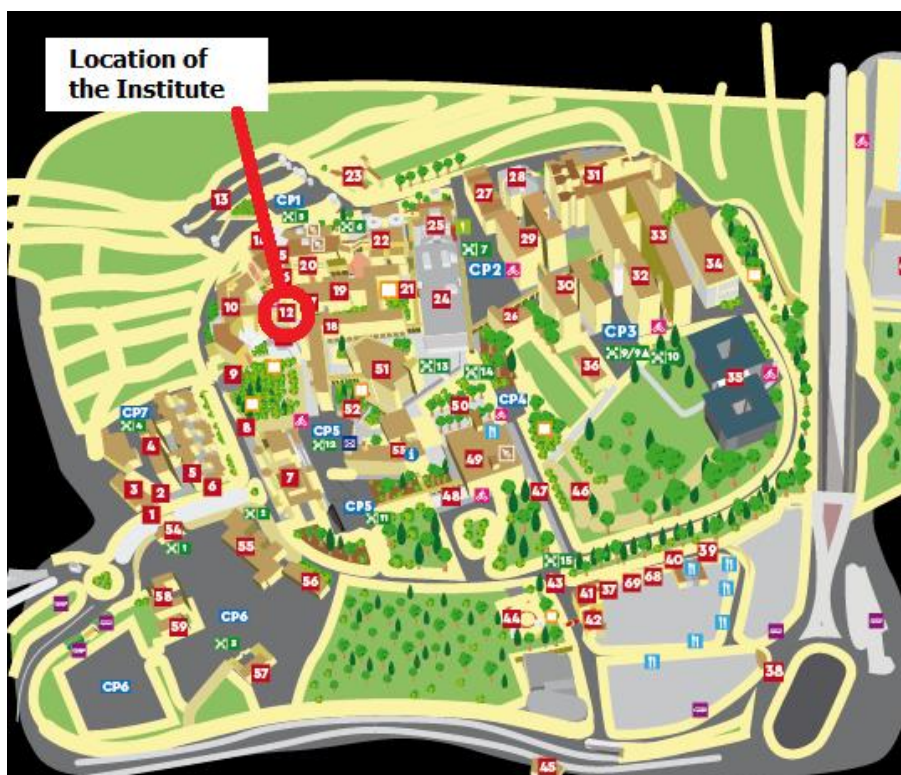
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1. REMIT AND LOCATION OF THE INSTITUTE

The Islands and Small States Institute of the University of Malta offers Master courses on islands and small states studies, and organises various other activities including international meetings and public lectures. It also publishes a series of studies entitled “Occasional papers”. The Institute also promotes research and training on economic, social, cultural, ecological and geographical aspects of islands and small states.

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. As from 2007, the institute has been housed in the Guze Cassar Pullicino Building at the Tal-Qroqq Campus.



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

2. ADMINISTRATION OF THE INSTITUTE

Chair the Institute

The Chairperson of the Institute during the first half of academic year 2016-2017 was Professor Alfred Vella, who was Pro-Rector for academic affairs of the University of Malta. He was appointed Rector in July 2016.

Professor Godfrey Baldacchino, Pro-Rector for International Development and Quality Assurance, was appointed Chairperson of the Institute in July 2016



Professor Godfrey Baldacchino, 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).



Boards

Ms Daniela Galea and
Ms Romina Carabott

The ISSI Board

During the academic year 2016/17, the ISSI Board was chaired by Pro-Rector Prof. Alfred Vella up to June 2016 and by Prof Godfrey Baldacchino as from July 2016.

The other members of the Board were:
Prof. Lino Briguglio (Director)
Dr Natasha Azzopardi Muscat
Prof. Roderick Pace
Dr Stefano Moncada
Dr Mario. T. Vassallo,
Dr Ing. Charles Yousif,
Perit Raphael Axiak
Ms Noemi Said (Student Representative)



Board meeting of the Islands and Small States Institute held on 19 July 2017, with Prof Baldacchino chairing.

The MA (ISSS) Board of Studies

The Board of Studies for the Masters in Islands and Small States studies was chaired by Professor Lino Briguglio, with Professor Roderick Pace, Dr Saviour Formosa, Dr Stefano Moncada and Ms Noemi Said (student representative) as members.

The ISSI Doctoral Committee

The ISSI Doctoral Committee was chaired by Professor Lino Briguglio, with Dr Saviour Formosa and Professor Roderick Pace as members.

3. THE INSTITUTE'S WEBSITE

The Institute's website (www.um.edu.mt/ISSI) is 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;
- Student Affairs pages where MA ISSS students can view timetables, past papers, dissertation information, the Course Regulations and other information related to the Course/s on offer;
- Publications pages which list the Occasional Papers and other publications of relevance to islands and small states that can be downloaded;
- Research pages where interested researchers can view material related to the Islands and Small States including a list of dissertation titles that can be downloaded;
- Health Research Group (HRG) pages 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;
- Climate Change Platform (CCP) pages including the statute of the CCP, the members of the CCP, the Steering Committee of the CCP, relevant publications and any related news;
- Past events pages that provide information on the various events organised by the Institute;
- Staff pages containing the contact details of the staff working at the Institute and a list of collaborating scholars.



The Homepage of the website of the Islands and Small States Institute.

4. THE MASTERS COURSE

Structure of the 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 were held 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.

In all, since the year 2000, a total of 89 students have obtained the MA (ISSS) degree.

Course Content

During the academic year 2016/17 the course consisted 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”.

Dissertations Titles

Four dissertations were submitted in August 2016, in partial fulfilment of the Masters in Islands and Small States Studies (intake 2016/2017) as follows:

- “Analysis of water resources on Mediterranean islands: the case of Malta, Cyprus, Mallorca and Create submitted by Justian Azzopardi.
- “Waste management strategies in small island states with a focus on Malta” submitted by Tonio Caruana.
- “From mass tourism to ecotourism: the case of the Balearic Islands, the Maltese Islands and the Republic of Cyprus” submitted by Noemi Said.
- “The contribution of the agricultural sector in Small Island States” submitted by Ryan Mario Vella.

As a result, these students successfully completed all requirements for the award of the Master degree with and they formally graduated in November 2017.

Another dissertation titled “The Impacts of Tourism on Small Island States.” was submitted by Marc Henry Schembri, who followed an earlier Masters programme and was given an extension. Mr Schembri graduated in November 2016.

5. COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVES

WHO Collaborating Centre on Health Systems and Policies in Small States

The Islands and Small States Institute was designated a WHO candidate Collaborating Centre for Health Systems and Policies in Small States in 2015. The application for ISSI to become a WHO Collaborating Centre was successfully submitted in December 2016, and the Institute became a fully-fledged WHO Collaborating Centre on 23rd June 2017. The announcement to this effect was made during a WHO High Level meeting for Small States



Professor Briguglio receiving the letter declaring the Islands and Small States Institute as a WHO Collaborating Centre. From Left to right: Prof Alfred Vella, Rector of the University of Malta, Dr Natasha Azzopardi Muscat, coordinator of the Centre, Dr Zsusanna Jacob, WHO Regional Director, Dr Chris Fearne, Minister of Health and Prof Lino Briguglio.

under the auspices of the Minister of Health held on 26-27 June. The Islands and Small States Institute played an important role in the proposed session on “Building Resilient and Healthy Societies” during that High Level Meeting.

The Islands and Small States Institute had, in 2016, set up a Health Research Group under the direction of Dr Natasha Azzopardi Muscat, with the objective of focusing on research initiatives related to policy capacity and governance of health systems in small states and to strengthen the capacity of the Institute as a WHO Collaborating Centre. The group 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.

Climate Change Platform (CCP)

The CCP’s is a collaborative project between the Islands and Small States Institute, the Institute for Sustainable Development and Climate Change and the Institute for European Studies at the University of Malta. Its main objectives are (a) to facilitate collaboration between UoM entities and individual UoM 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. The outcomes of these initiatives are available on the website of the Institute



Dr Stefano Moncada, the focal point person of the Climate Change Platform.

The CCP is guided and overseen by a Steering Committee 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 Committee are Prof. Lino Briguglio, and Dr. Charles Galdies.

Collaboration with the University of Prince Edward Island

ISSI, through Prof. Godfrey Baldacchino and Dr. Stefano Moncada were asked to collaborate with the University of Prince Edward Island to participate, in a research grant proposal within the Canadian SSHRC grant proposal. The Initial idea is entitled ‘Anatomy of Small Island and Subnational Island Jurisdictions: Working Towards a Sustainable Future for All Islands’.

The Observatory on Tourism in the European Islands (OTIE)

ISSI had a long-standing collaborative arrangements with the Observatory on Tourism in the European Islands (OTIE), mostly in the organization of a tourism summer-school in Gozo.

The sixth edition of the Gozo Summer School, was held at the Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS), in Qala Gozo in July and August 2017 on the subject “Islands and Events: Economics and Management”.

The OTIE was founded in Palermo in February 2007, where the Head Office is located. It’s a non-profit association, constituted by public institutions, Universities, Research



Centres and other international organisations of 7 EU countries (Italy, Spain, France, Portugal, Greece, Malta and Cyprus).

Some of the students that took part in the 6th Gozo Tourism Summer School

Collaboration with the University of Mauritius

The Institute has long-standing collaborative arrangements with the University of Mauritius. Professor Briguglio acted as External Examiner for the Master’s Degree in Economics offered by the Department of Economics at the University of Mauritius.

Professor Briguglio was invited by the University of Mauritius to deliver a research paper for the international conference on Mauritius after 50 years of independence, which was held on 28-30 June 2017.

The University of Malta through the ISSI collaborated in an academic exchange programme, utilising Erasmus+ funds. Dr Stefano Moncada visited Mauritius in June and October 2017, conducting research on climate change adaptation, and delivered



lectures on “Climate change and small island developing states” and “The role of training in fostering climate change adaptive capacity”. Academics from Mauritius have been visiting the University of Malta from 2016, and exchanges are also envisaged for 2018.

Dr Stefano Moncada (first from left) and Prof. Taruna Ramessur from the University of Mauritius, (last from right) delivering a joint research seminar at the University of Malta.

The Economics Department of the University of Mauritius and the Islands and Small States Institute also collaborated on a drawing up of a funded research proposal based on the Vulnerability and Resilience Framework developed by Prof Briguglio and his research colleagues. The outcome of this proposal is still pending.

Global Burden Disease

Dr Natasha Azzopardi Muscat became a collaborator of the Global Burden Disease Network based at the Institute of Health Metrics in Seattle. She applied for a grant with Prof. Lino Briguglio to develop their work in the Islands and Small States Institute. The outcome of this proposal is still pending.

Small States Centre of Excellence

Prof Lino Briguglio and Dr Stefano Moncada met Mr Vernon Barrett on 29 January and on 14 February 2017 to discuss possible collaboration between the Islands and Small States Institute and the Small States Centre of Excellence (SSCE), an initiative funded jointly by the government of Malta and the Commonwealth Secretariat. Mr Barrett is the consultant for the SSCE. During the meeting it was pointed out that the ISSI was prepared to collaborate with the SSCE.

6. CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

Seminars on the book on the EU Small States

A book entitled *Small States and the European Union* edited by Prof. Lino Briguglio, director of the Institute, and published by Routledge was launched in Luxembourg on Thursday 30th June 2016 in the form of a seminar on themes covered in the book. Two seminars on the same book were held at Europa House in Malta on the 21st October 2016 and at the Maltese Embassy in Brussels on 15 November 2016. The book dealt with the small states and candidate states of the EU, with a focus on their economic structure and performance, and the impact of EU membership (past, actual and potential) on the economy. The small states covered were those with a population of 3 million or less, namely: Cyprus, Estonia, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Macedonia, Montenegro and Slovenia. The book is aimed primarily for students of EU affairs and of regional integration in general.



High level Conference on Health

“European integration, Small States and Access to Medicines” workshop, was held at the Valletta Campus (Aula Magna) on **27 January 2017**. The event was organized by the Institute for European Studies, with the support of the Department of Health Services Management and the Islands & Small States Institute. The workshop was

organized within the framework of the EU project “SMSHealth.eu - European Integration, Small States and Health” co-funded by the European Union. The SMSHealth.EU project aimed to provide a deep understanding of small states’ challenges and opportunities of European integration in health through comparative studies on small states and health systems. The project consortium was composed of partners with a small state and health systems expertise from Malta, Estonia, Slovenia, Iceland and The Netherlands.



Dr Natasha Azzoprdi Muscat, Prof Lino Briguglio and Prof Roderick Pace during the workshop on “European integration, Small States and Access to Medicines”

Informal Meeting of the Energy Ministers

Professor Briguglio was invited to address the Informal Meeting of the Energy Ministers under the Maltese Presidency of the Council of the EU, will take place on the 18th May in Valletta, Malta., which was held at the on the 18th of May 2017 at The Palace Valletta, The aim of the Informal Meeting was to give the EU and EEA/EFTA Energy Ministers the opportunity to have a frank exchange of views on the Energy Efficiency proposal forming part of the ‘Clean Energy for All Europeans’ package, with a focus on energy efficiency.

Participation at a conference organised by Queen Mary University of London

The Islands and Small States Institute was represented by Prof Lino Briguglio a conference on Financial Services and Small States, organised by the Small States Centre of the Queen Mary University of London, held in London on 30 and 31 January 2017. During the conference Prof Briguglio delivered a presentation on “Constructing an Index of Financial Riskiness”

Trinidad conference

Professor Briguglio represented the Islands and Small States Institute at the conference on Sustainable Development in SIDS, organized by the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies (SALISES) on 26-28 April 2017 in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. The theme of the Conference is: Small Nations, Dislocations, Transformations: Sustainable Development in SIDS. Prof Briguglio delivered a presentation on GDP growth volatility and trade openness with a focus on Small Island States.

Research Seminars on Climate change

Two research seminars were organized by the Climate Change Platform in Autumn 2016. The first one was on “Climate Change Mitigation and the Co-benefits of the Low Carbon Economy in Malta’ on 3 November 2016 and the second one on “Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction: Trends and Economic Challenges in Malta” on Tuesday 29 November 2016. The aim of these research seminars was twofold: to present state of the art research developed by members of the University of Malta, and to identify gaps where further research is needed to support policy. The Seminar was well attended, and the publicity in the run up of the event positively spilled over the visiting of the ISSI website and its social media by new members of the public.



Another research seminar on the theme “Managing Extreme Events: Health System Preparedness for Climate Change” was organized by the Climate Change Platform on Thursday 6th April 2017 at the lecture Centre, LC217 University of Malta

CCP Research Seminar on ‘Managing Extreme Events: Health System Preparedness for Climate Change’

7. PUBLICATIONS

The Small States and Territories Journal

The online *Small States and Territories Journal*, with Professor Godfrey Baldacchino as executive editor, under the auspices of the Islands and Small States Institute, was being planned with the aim of publishing the first issue in May 2018 (<https://www.um.edu.mt/sst>). The Journal aims to encourage a truly pluri-disciplinary approach to the study of these jurisdictions.

Occasional papers

The Institute publishes occasional papers on islands and small states. The papers can be downloaded from https://www.um.edu.mt/islands/publications/occasional_papers .

Publications by persons associated with the ISSI

Persons associated with the Institute have published studies on themes relating to islands and small states. Some of these publications are listed at: https://www.um.edu.mt/issi/publications_of_interest .

8. VISITING SCHOLARS

Dr Caroline Morris



Dr Caroline Morris who is Director of the Centre for Small States at Queen Mary University of London visited Malta between 17 - 23 October 2016. During her stay she conducted a Seminar on “Regulatory Systems in Small States, with special reference to Malta” in collaboration with the Micro Jurisdictions research project of the Juris Diversitas Association of Comparative Lawyers.

A delegation from the University of the Ryukyus

Dr Caroline Morris



A delegation from the University of the Ryukyus (Okinawa, Japan) led by the University President Professor Hajime Oshiro visited the Islands and Small States Institute on 29 November 2016 and were and later joined by the Pro-Rector Prof. Joseph Cacciatolo. During the meeting collaboration possibilities between the Islands and Small States Institute and the University of the Ryukyus were discussed

Professor Hajime Oshiro

Visit by Professor Hilary Bambrick

Professor Hilary Bambrick visited the Islands and Small States Institute (ISSI) in April 2017 to discuss possibilities for collaboration on climate change and health between the ISSI and the School of Public Health and Social Work, Faculty of Health, Queensland University of Technology, Australia. Prof. Bambrick is an environmental epidemiologist and bio-anthropologist whose research focuses on the health impacts of climate variability and change, especially on more vulnerable populations, and climate adaptation planning to improve health.



Professor Hilary Bambrick with Prof Lino Briguglio and Dr Stefano Moncada during her visit to the Institute.

The meeting was attended by Professor Lino Briguglio and Dr Stefano Moncada, who, with Prof. Bambrick will be editing a special issue of the Journal of Climate Change Strategies and Management. The three academics are also planning to edit a book, to be published by Springer, on the theme 'Climate Change and Development in Small Island Developing States (SIDS)'. Another collaborative initiative discussed was the drawing up of a proposal for mobility of staff between the two Universities, through possible Erasmus+ funding.