



Inside this issue:

- Gozo Seminar 2012
- SUNY EU Council Simulation 2012
- ERASMUS and MA Students
- Model Council of Europe by ESO
- Study Visit at the Xiamen University, China
- Round Table Discussion by Russian Centre
- Public Lecture by HE Egemen Bağis
- European Studies Graduates following MA studies abroad
- Activities by the Academic Members of the Institute
- Placements in European Studies
- TEPISA

Gozo Seminar 2012

Forty-four third year European Studies students attended the annual two-day dissertation seminar organized by the Institute for European Studies of the University of Malta which took place between the 29 February and 1 March 2012.

This was the third time that this seminar was held in the Jesuit retreat house "Manresa" in Victoria, Gozo.

The Institute's resident academic staff members also participated in this event which offers third year European Studies students the opportunity to discuss their dissertation projects and receive feedback both from fellow students and from members of the academic staff.

Students confront the task of writing a dissertation for the first time in their final year of the course. Although the Institute's staff supervise the bulk of these research projects, and despite the individual attention that they are given, students encounter some difficulties in carrying out this task.

To address these difficulties, the Institute for European Studies organises a 2-day live-in seminar for all final year students at the well-equipped Manresa House in Gozo.

The process is kicked started at the

beginning of the academic year when students are prodded on by their supervisors to start researching and writing on their topic as early as possible, so that by the time the seminar is held they would have made sufficient progress as to be able to discuss it with confidence and highlight the difficulties they are encountering.

The seminars have their lighter moments as well. Students usually organise their own transport, provide lifts for those without private transport, and carry quite an amount of belongings particularly quilts as an extra precaution to fight this year's unusual cold spell. For lunch and dinner they are together – as for the night crawl on their only night out in Gozo.

One of the students' commonest remark is that the seminar serves as the only occasion in the three year course when they are able to socialize with fellow colleagues. Stronger relationships are forged.

The academic work is carried out in two simultaneous parallel sessions consisting of three to four (depending on the subject) 15 minute student presentations overseen by a team of three academic staff members. The presentations are followed by a

discussion involving students and academic staff.

Most students initially have some apprehensions about making an academic presentation on their thesis methodology and literature survey. But once their turn comes they normally do well. The methodology is generally considered the most difficult part.

At the end of the seminar the students have to fill an evaluation form which is kept anonymous and is collected by a fellow student.

The seminar provides a unique opportunity for students to cement friendships in a relaxed atmosphere, away from the university lecture rooms. The academic staff is very informal, mixing with students, both during meals and in free time. Most students treasure the experience and at the end of it regret that it is over. Some say it is unforgettable, highly enriching and unrepeatable, especially before examinations and the parting of ways which comes after them.

This article was written by two students who participated in the seminar: Albert Camilleri and Nadya Papagiorcopulo.



SUNY EU Council Simulation 2012

“Honest differences of views and honest debate are not disunity. They are the vital process of policy making among free men.” (Herbert Hoover)

Held at the beautiful campus of the University of Exeter and very professionally organized by the State University of New York, the SUNY Model of the European Union 2012 was a true success. The University of Malta was represented by four undergraduate European Studies students. Playing Portugal, the team consisted of the Head of Government Laura Muscat, which was her second SUNY MEU simulation, the Ecofin Minister Vivienne Bajada, the Foreign Minister Tobias Roth and the COREPER representative Jean-Paul Gatt.

Sometimes it is all about definitions. Should a task force be a legitimised group of armed personnel to support EU intervention or is a task force similar to a standing army which is prohibited by the treaties? Do we need to centralize military power or not? In a group of 27 students from the USA and Europe each representing one European country as foreign ministers in this example, these questions can prove to be tricky to answer. Other issues debated were fiscal rules and

measures, drug policies, the political status of Hamas, Eurobonds and Tobin Tax.

After three days of intense, exciting and often protracted negotiations, all participants were glad to be able to come up with a conclusion which was finally approved unanimously. The simulation helped participants understand the complexity of the EU since talking about decision-making processes in theory and experiencing it in person are completely different experiences. The evenings were spent socialising and lobbying for Portugal's proposals. Besides the simulation, there were chances to explore Exeter and to make new international friends.

Participating in the conference did not just prove to be of invaluable educational and personal gain for each one of the students. Our presence in Exeter as representatives of the University of Malta was highly appreciated and students from other countries showed genuine interest in finding out more about Malta and its role in the EU.

The visit was made possible by sponsorships by the United States Embassy in Malta which part-financed the students' participation.

UNIVERSITY OF
EXETER



From left: Laura Muscat, Tobias Roth, Jean-Paul Gatt and Vivienne Bajada



During one of the sessions of the Simulation

This article was submitted by the participants at the SUNY EU Council Simulation.

ERASMUS and the MA Students

The Institute has recently arranged for students following the Masters programme to be able to travel on Erasmus during their course. Previously this was complicated by the fact that students must apply in the year before they travel. As the Masters programme is one year full-time and two years part-time this made travel complicated because full-

time students could not apply and travel in the same year while part-time students normally have a full-time job which means they are unlikely to apply in their first year and travel in their second. Under the new arrangement third year students following the Bachelors course in European Studies can apply in their final, third year and then travel in their first (and possibly only) year of

the MA programme (while part-time students can still apply in their first year of the MA programme and travel in their second). The Institute for European Studies has four post-graduate agreements in place, covering universities in Hungary, Ireland, Italy and Poland.

Model Council of Europe by ESO (European Studies Organisation)

Two years after its founding, the European Studies Organisation (ESO) organized Model Council of Europe on 31 March at Europe House, Valletta.

The main topic which was debated was 'Human Trafficking'.

The guest speaker was Judge Giovanni Bonello who gave an overview about human trafficking in Europe, outlining the increase in this phenomenon in the continent and the need for more awareness on this issue. He highlighted that only one case on human trafficking had been decided upon at the European Court of Human Rights, pointing out how difficult it is to track this ever-growing trade.

ESO's President Albert Camilleri chaired the session, where he explained the Council procedure and moved on to present the resolution. The resolution was defended by Germany played by Ana Maria Vella and Jamie Fenech Williamson. In total 25 countries participated with around 43 participants from different academic backgrounds, mostly European Studies, International Relations and Law.

Participants in the simulation represented a Council of Europe country either as individuals or grouped into a team of two. They all had to prepare a two-minute speech, where they had to give their countries' position on human trafficking. During the debate each country presented a

number of points and amendments and after two hours of debating, all the countries agreed on the resolution. Subsequently certificates were signed and presented by Judge Giovanni Bonello.

This was the first event of its kind for ESO and proved to be a success given the large number of participants as well as observers who attended including academic staff from the Institute for European Studies, Mr. Stefano Moncada and Dr. Mark Harwood.

ESO would like to thank the companies and entities which sponsored this event.

This article was written by the ESO members and event was photographed by Seren Ozcan.



From left: Ana Maria Vella, Annabelle Muscat, Wayne Magri, Roderick Muscat, Judge Giovanni Bonello, Albert Camilleri, Jean-Paul Gatt, Laura Muscat, Julia Pisani

Study Visit at the Xiamen University - China

The Institute for European Studies has been chosen to participate in the University's study visit to Xiamen University, China, in July. The University Delegation will be led by the Rector, Professor Juanito Camilleri. The Delegation will include 15 representatives of the student body with 2 of the students representing the University's various Centres and Institutes. To select which Centres and Institutes would be represented, each had to nominate one of their students who went before a university-

wide selection board in March of this year. Eight students applied to represent the Institute for European Studies and Ms. Francesca Aquilina, a student on the MA programme, was selected from the applicants. She went on to appear before the university selection board and from a large number of candidates representing the numerous Centres and Institutes, was successful. The Institute would like to congratulate Ms. Aquilina and we look forward to reading about her experience in the newsletter on her return.



Francesca Aquilina



Round Table Discussion organised by Russian Centre for Science and Culture in Malta

Professor Roderick Pace, Director of the Institute, together with Professor Stephen C. Calleya, Director of the Mediterranean Academy for Diplomatic Studies (MEDAC), participated in a round table discussion organised by the Russian Centre for Science and Culture in Malta, which was held on 29th March at the Council Room, at the University of Malta. Academic staff from the Institute and from MEDAC as well as other academics from the University and other

experts were invited to attend. The discussion was launched with an introduction from His Excellency Boris Marchuk, Ambassador of the Russian Federation and Mr Oleg Beglov, Director of the Russian Centre for Science and Culture in Malta. Prof Michael Nosov, Deputy Director of the Institute of Europe of the Russian Academy of Science of the Russian Federation was guest speaker in this event. The discussion focused on two main themes: the position of Russia on stability

and prosperity in Europe and Russia-EU relations; and the perspective of Russia on recent political changes in the Mediterranean region and the Arab world. This was a positive discussion, with an active and interesting discussion amongst all the participants. Indeed, the possibility of organising other round table discussions on other themes in the near future is being considered.



Academic staff members of the Institute participating in the discussion

Public Lecture by His Excellency Egemen Bağış



His Excellency Egemen Bağış and Dr Vanni Xuereb

On Thursday 12 April 2012 His Excellency Egemen Bağış, Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator of the Republic of Turkey was the main speaker in a public lecture held at the Valletta Campus of the University of Malta. Minister Bağış theme was "Creating a Common Future: Need for a Visionary Europe". The focus was on Turkey's EU membership prospects. The Activity was organized by MEUSAC, with the collaboration of the Institute for European Studies and was facilitated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Dr Vanni Xuereb Director of

MEUSAC chaired the proceedings which were also addressed by Dr Tonio Borg Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs.



European Studies Graduates following MA studies abroad

A good number of students who obtained their Bachelors degree in European Studies are pursuing their studies at Masters level abroad. The following students have shared their experience with us:

Neville Arpa

Following the completion of his undergraduate degree in European Studies at the University of Malta, Neville was given the opportunity by Malta's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to pursue a Masters in Contemporary European Studies (MACES) at the University of Sussex.

The European Studies Institute at the University of Sussex, more commonly known as the Sussex European Institute (SEI), is considered by many as one of the leading research and postgraduate training centres on contemporary European issues. The key to the Institute's success has been its distinctive philosophy built on interdisciplinary, broad and inclusive approach to Europe, policy-relevance at the academic cutting edge, and integration of European and the domestic levels of analyses.

More specifically, the Masters in Contemporary European Studies aims to deliver a broad introduction to the recent development of contemporary Europe, providing a basis on which students can subsequently develop specialized studies through options and dissertation topics. Three distinctive features about the SEI's approach to contemporary European studies are that it covers the whole of Europe, including the study of non-European Union countries such as Russia, Ukraine, and Turkey; it locates the main themes of post-

war European history in a theoretical and comparative context to understand contemporary developments within a broader conceptual framework; and it involves an inter-disciplinary approach and specifically analyzing connections between different disciplines in order to understand the key issues of contemporary European governance.



Neville Arpa

Antonella Gatt

Antonella Gatt graduated in European Studies in December 2010 and in October 2010, started to read a Master of Arts in Euroculture. This is part of the Erasmus Mundus programme and is recognized by the European Commission as a Master of excellence.

The MA in Euroculture is offered in a consortium of eight universities across Europe and in collaboration with four international universities. Its main focus is to analyse the construction of Europe, both from a political and a cultural perspective. Indeed, students study in two different universities of the consortium. Thus, Antonella has followed her first semester at the University of Deusto in Bilbao, Spain

whilst during the second semester she has studied at the University of Göttingen in Germany. The third semester involved two options; a research track, potentially in one of the collaborating international universities or an internship. Antonella chose the second option and pursued an internship with the European Commission from October 2011 till February 2012.



Antonella Gatt

Leah Gatt

Leah Gatt completed the BA in European Studies in 2009. Continuing on her dissertation topic - the EU's Trade and Development Policy in West Africa – she then went to Kenya where she helped to implement an overseas development aid project. This was followed by a stint in Tunisia where she undertook an intensive Arabic course. Subsequently, Leah commenced an MSc in International Relations at the London School of Economics, in the UK.

Leah considers that the wide range of interdisciplinary modules covered within the BA programme at the Institute for European Studies has provided her with a strong foundation which has helped her to pursue this demanding Masters programme. Leah's research has focused on asymmetrical negotiations, focusing on the strategies employed by developing states in their dealings with the European Commission. However, Leah found the topic of International Relations to be too broad and is currently reading for the MSc in African Studies at Oxford University. Her current research focuses on the impact of income tax on state-society relations in Lagos, Nigeria. While having moved away from EU related topics to more African domestic ones, Leah prefers the area studies approach, which she believes enables students to gain an in-depth knowledge of a region.



Leah Gatt

Paula Gera

Paula is currently pursuing a Masters in Climate Change and Policy at the University of Sussex, UK. Whilst this is a completely different study area from her first degree in European Studies, she has researched on this topic in her dissertation. This increased

her interest in climate change and was the motivation for selecting this Masters programme.

Paula considers that this course enables students to understand different attitudes and perceptions towards the concept of climate change. She has found lectures to be really interesting and has also adapted well to reading a Masters degree, which requires more independence and commitment from students. This course enables students to do significant research and this helps students to understand better the concepts related to their area of study.



Paula Gera

Maria Strati

After graduating in November 2011, Maria is currently pursuing an MSc in International Management at the University of Brighton, UK. This course deals with economic issues as well as the analysis of cultural, political, legal and environmental factors that influence organization's decision-making in today's complex international environment. In the course, there is also significant emphasis on the importance to understand socio-cultural difference and to enable students to work effectively within a multicultural team.

In January 2012, Maria participated in a study project organized by the University of

Brighton and the Grenoble Graduate School of Business. Along with other fellow-students and some lecturers, she visited some organizations in Grenoble in France, where students had the opportunity to carry out interviews with managers and CEOs and later to prepare reports on their managerial practices.

Maria considers that whilst her studies at the University of Malta helped her to improve her knowledge and critical thinking about EU practices and the international community, the MSc which she is currently pursuing is helping her to improve her economic and managerial skills. She believes that the combination of these two studies will improve her job prospects.



Maria Strati

Activities by the Academic Members of the Institute

Dr Marcello Carammia

In February, as a joint-coordinator of the Italian Agendas Project and a member of the EU Agendas Project, Dr Carammia was invited by the University Institute of Lisbon (ISCTE-IUL) to hold a two-day seminar about the Comparative Agendas Project (<http://www.comparativeagendas.org>). This Project joins 13 country teams developing systematic comparable measures of the activities of political institutions. Some Portuguese universities are setting up a team for studying Portuguese political agendas in the comparative perspective.

In March Dr Carammia participated in the 19th International Conference of Europeanists, organized by the Council for European Studies of Columbia University which was held in Boston. This conference being one of the world's biggest scholarly

events focusing on the European Union featured about 1000 participants. Dr Carammia presented a paper titled *Institutional and Agenda Change in EU Immigration Policy* at the panel on "Agenda-Setting and the European Union".

(<http://www.councilforeuropeanstudies.org/meetings-and-conferences/past-conferences/2012-conference>)

Later on in March Dr Carammia had a meeting in New York with a *Marie Curie Fellow*, Professor Caranti at Columbia University. Professor Caranti is a political theorist specialising on Kantian thought, with a special interest on the relationship between processes of regionalism/federalism and the reduction of international conflicts. Dr Carammia and Professor Caranti are exploring the possibility of developing a joint research project on the

normative implications of agenda-setting processes in regional political systems.

Mr Stefano Moncada

Mr. Stefano Moncada's abstract, which discusses the preliminary results of his Ph.D. research, was accepted to be presented at the Knowledge Gaps conference (<http://www.tyndall.uea.ac.uk/knowledge-gaps-conference>), organised by the University of East Anglia, a leading research institution in the area of climate change.

An additional paper submitted by Mr. Moncada and entitled 'Aid to Adapt – A Framework for Analysis', was also selected for an interdisciplinary Ph.D. Workshop in Sustainable Development, organised by the Columbia University in New York (http://blogs.cuit.columbia.edu/sdds/schedule-events/ipwsd_2012/).

Placements in European Studies

As from the current academic year, the Institute is offering a limited number of placements to second year Bachelor of European Studies students. The Institute has concluded agreements with different entities that will make it possible for European Studies students to obtain work experience and earn credits for it through a traineeship programme. This traineeship programme offers students a better understanding of the work environment and its dynamics. It allows students to benefit from practical aspects of public and private working related experiences, in the area of European

studies. Each student is assigned to a mentor from the entity hosting the placement, whilst a member of the academic staff of the Institute follows both the practical and academic aspects of the placements. Currently, 17 students are being hosted among 5 entities being the Ministry of Finance, the Economics and Investment (MFEI), KOPIN, Malta Business Bureau (MBB), Malta-EU Steering and Action Committee (MEUSAC) and the Institute for European Studies.

The Institute has worked hard to be able to offer its students this opportunity. It believes

that this is an important development which will contribute to bridge the gap between academic studies and the work environment.



Academics and Students from the Institute for European Studies at the MBB Offices

INSTITUTE FOR EUROPEAN STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF MALTA
TAL-QROQQ
MSIDA MSD 2080
MALTA

Phone: +356 2340 2001 / 2998
Fax: +356 21337624
Email: europeanstudies@um.edu.mt



<http://www.um.edu.mt/europeanstudies/>



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Institute for European Studies



The Institute for European Studies is a multi-disciplinary teaching and research Institute within the University of Malta. It runs an evening Diploma course, as well as full-time courses leading to the Bachelor of European Studies degree and to qualifications at MA and PhD level. Each year Maltese and international students enrol in its degree programmes, and through the ERASMUS Programme it offers a number of student and staff exchanges with universities and institutions of higher learning abroad. All of the Institute's courses are fully in line with Bologna Process guidelines.

Founded in 1992 as the European Documentation and Research Centre (EDRC), the Institute was granted the status of a Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence in 2004. The Institute is engaged in various research and publication activities in European Integration Studies and is a member of the Trans-European Policy Studies Association (TEPSA), the LISBOAN network, EPERN and the two Euro-Mediterranean networks, EuroMeSco and FEMISE. The research interests of its staff include comparative politics and history of the European Union (EU); EU institutions; EU external relations and enlargement; small states in the EU; Malta in the EU; Euro-Mediterranean Relations; Stability and Growth Pact; Economic Governance of the Euro Area; Europe 2020; EU development policies and Climate Change.



TEPSA

the Trans European
Policy Studies Association

The Institute has accepted to participate in a joint research project with other TEPSA members on: "Democratic control in the member states of the European Council and Euro zone summits" and a study headed by the University of Cologne leading to the preparation of a Handbook on "National Parliaments and the EU".