



## Introduction

I am delighted to, once again, submit to the reader this *Biennial Report of the Centre for Labour Studies* (CLS), the oldest centre at the University of Malta. This collection covers the two-year period 2017-2018.

All faculties, institutes, centres and schools at the University of Malta are obliged to report on their workings on a regular basis, typically annually. The CLS has been submitting such reports unfailingly since 1982. It has shifted to a biennial format in order to develop a significant publication, complete with an overview of what has been achieved in the 24 months under scrutiny. Additionally, this creates an opportunity for the CLS-connected academic staff to put the proverbial pen to paper and submit a few articles that reflect critical views on current trends and developments in the areas that matter most to the CLS. These contributions have grown into a solid corpus of material over the years. The areas covered include human resource issues, industrial and employment relations, gender and development, occupational health and safety, career guidance and counselling, trade union and cooperative affairs.

This testimonial is both an evaluative and formative exercise. The CLS submits its work and accomplishments for scrutiny and critical feedback, as an integral part of the quality assurance process underway at the University of Malta. At the same time, the reporting exercise offers an opportunity for the CLS itself to scrutinise its actions and to examine how effectively it expands its energies and resources, in the light of changing times and possibly changing priorities.

I congratulate the CLS for the considerable amount of work that it continues to churn out, in terms of teaching and learning, research and outreach, with its core complement of three academic and three administrative staff members. During the period under review, CLS academic staff member Luke Fiorini completed his doctorate at the Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences, University of Nottingham, UK. And CLS stalwart (and honorary member on the CLS Board) Dr Frank La Ferla was honoured for his lifelong commitment to occupational health and safety with an honorary degree.