

Emn Self Care & Coping Strategies Workshop

Strategiji kif nibnu fuq il-ħiliet tagħna għall-ħarsien shiħ tagħna nfusna fuq il-post tax-xogħol *Anna Catania – EMN officer*

The EMN Maltese National Contact Point organised a one-day ‘Self Care & Coping Strategies’ workshop on the 28th July 2022. Fifty (50) front line workers from the Agency for the Welfare of Asylum Seekers, the Correctional Services Agency, the Returns Unit, PDPI Department, Detention Services, Primary Health Care and General Health Services, Malta Police, and the Armed Forces of Malta attended an intensive one-day capacity building event.

The trainer, Ms Annabelle Borg Kandeh, a Maltese psychologist, who until recently, was the Chief of the Staff Counselling Unit at MONUSCO, the UN Peacekeeping Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo has around 20 years work experience with the United Nations. She has served in Tanzania, New York, Geneva, Burundi, Sierra Leone, in varying capacities. For the past 3 and a half years, her main responsibility has been the implementation of the organisation’s mental health and psychosocial duty of care for over 3000 civilians and 15000 uniformed personnel located across DRC, some in active combat zones.



Credit: Armed Forces of Malta

The workshop targeted persons who in their line of work are in close contact with traumatised migrants and who are not professionally trained to deal with and manage the manifestation of this trauma. It was a tailor-made workshop for those front liners whose daily work could progressively impact their own physical and emotional well-being, resulting in adverse effects in their personal lives and in their relationships with the migrants. The objective was to create a space where the satisfactions, challenges, and frustrations in this area of work were

shared and reflected upon, and to equip the participants with ways which enable them to channel negative emotions in a psychologically healthy manner.

The Maltese EMN NCP believes that what contributed to this achievement was primarily the skills and expertise of the trainer and psychologist, Ms Annabelle Borg Kandeh, and of the participants themselves who managed to network and share their experiences in front of officers from other entities.



EMN Maltese National Contact Point The Integration of Migrant Women Study Policies & Measures

Anna Catania – EMN officer

As part of the EMN 2021 work programme, the Maltese EMN National Contact Point conducted a focused study on the Integration of Migrant Women in the EU – Policies and Measures. Although Malta does not have a national policy for the Integration of Migrant women, integration measures have been tailored to help ensure that gender is mainstreamed in all areas including, the labour market, education and language learning, health, accommodation, and civic integration.

In a research study among migrant mothers in Malta, findings showed how language, school, work, care work, and social networks can contribute, facilitate, or prevent the feeling of belonging and integration, which appears to be strongly affected by the intersecting factors of gender, socio-economic class, ethnicity, citizenship, and legal status. A point highlighting how gendered integration may take place emerged: integration seems to happen outside of the home, in being employed, having daily interactions in the public sphere, even if only with grocers and neighbours. This might explain why some research participants declared that integration was easier for their male employed partner.

Employment is a very important step towards sustainable integration. Through the AMIF 11.01 project, eligible migrants (asylum seekers and those granted international protection, including women) can register onto the Job Brokerage Scheme, have access



to guidance services, and can enrol in tailor-made basic English and Maltese language training. To facilitate the attendance of migrant women with children, Jobsplus is liaising with an NGO to offer childminding services in parallel to these courses. This would further encourage and enable migrant women's participation.

Migrants, including women, are eligible for guidance services and have access to training courses, schemes, traineeships and grants offered by Jobsplus, Malta's Public Employment Services. These services are a stepping stone to employment and eventual independence and integration into Maltese Society.

Furthermore, Jobsplus is currently seeking to develop relationships with employers willing to offer opportunities to migrant women

working from their home. This would greatly solve any transport and child-minding issues that could currently be an obstacle for them to enter the labour market.

According to data gathered for this study, the female TCN population is considerably younger than the rest of the national female population.

“In 2020, 83% of the third country national women in the population were of working age (15-64), the share within the same age group was 63% for Maltese women and 80% for EU women. For the 65+ age group only 1% of the TCN women form part of this age group, compared to 24% and 11% of Maltese and EU national women, respectively.”





In Malta, migrant women from EU and EEA countries together with Swiss nationals are automatically exempted from school and tuition fees

The above indicates that the integration of migrant girls living in Malta is of utmost importance and this can be achieved, to a great extent, through education. It is through education that the teachers and support teachers also reach the families and the mothers.

The training of teachers and school staff on migrant learners' sensitivities; on achieving effective migrant learning; and on appropriate forms of pedagogy for migrant learners represent an ongoing process offered by the Migrant Learner Unit's cohort of expertise.

In Malta, migrant women from EU and EEA countries together with Swiss nationals are automatically exempted from school and tuition fees. Migrant women from the UK residing in Malta under the terms of the Brexit agreement are also exempted. Other third country nationals are exempted according to the residence permit as issued by Identity Malta Agency (IMA).



Furthermore, services in schools are provided at the compulsory education level through teams of counsellors, youth workers, social workers, psychologists, and career advisors. Moreover, also at compulsory education level, the Migrant Learners Unit (MLU) within the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation has embarked on

various initiatives to encourage inclusion, tolerance and non-discrimination including:

- Community Liaison Workers for liaison with migrant learners and their respective families especially about state schooling matters,
- the "Making Friends Bringing Friends Club",
- the "Living Together in Malta" project,
- "Friendship Cards", and
- training of teachers and school staff.

At further and higher education level, the University of Malta, Malta College for Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) and Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS) also offer services to migrant women as requested.

Malta also welcomes migrants into its lifelong learning programmes, should they wish to apply. In 2021, the Directorate for Research, Lifelong Learning, and Employability (DRLE) within Malta's Ministry for Education, Sports, Youth, Research, and Innovation conducted an outreach campaign with migrant organisations, including the Migrant Women Association.



EMN Annual Report on Migration and Asylum

Xylona Spiteri – EMN Officer

Every year, the Annual Report on migration and asylum is drawn up by the EMN Maltese National Contact Point to highlight any significant legislative and political developments both at a national and EU level. This article includes an overview of Malta's main migration and asylum-related developments during 2021.

In January 2021, a Returns Unit was set up under the Ministry for Home Affairs, Security, Reforms and Equality, to improve the national approach on Voluntary Returns. It assists migrants in obtaining their travel documents, assistance in voluntary returns and assistance to migrants to meet the Covid-19 necessary requirements.

Moreover, it also assures the departure of the migrants through assistance by the Returns Unit officials at the airport, where the migrant is accompanied at the check-in desk and the boarding gate.

Within the Human Rights Directorate, Malta's first national anti-racism strategy - the Anti-Racism Strategy 2021-2023 - was published. The aim is to face and eliminate racism by various means. This directorate is collaborating with all the different Ministries in Malta in order to create an intra-ministerial racism action plan which is based on this strategy.



Various legislative amendments were made to the International Protection Act (Cap 420 of the Laws of Malta), the Reception of Asylum Seekers Regulations (S.L 420.06) and the Procedural Standards for Granting and Withdrawing International Protection (S.L 420.07). These were drafted with a view to transposing more accurately the provisions of pertinent Directives.

On the other hand, cooperation between the Child Protection Services of Malta and

the Agency for the Welfare of Asylum Seekers on the care of unaccompanied minors has led to amendments to pertinent legislation. A bilateral agreement was signed between the two bodies whereby the Maltese Law Courts issuing any pending care orders of Unaccompanied Minor Asylum Seekers which are in the reception centres as well as appointments of representatives. AWAS has also finalised procedures aimed at providing unaccompanied minors access to information on return procedures in a child-friendly manner.



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