



MALTESE ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS

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## **MASW Administrative Report for the period between April 2017 – March 2018**

- Chairperson: Ms. Charlene Martin
- Vice Chairperson & Treasurer : Ms. Roslynn Vella
- Secretary & Communications: Mr. Charlene Muscat & Ms. Ruth Stafrace
- Continuous Professional Development Officer: Mr. Jareth Grima
- Memberships Officer: Ms. Bernardette Grima
- International Relations Officer: Ms. Josephine Muscat
- Current Issues & Legal matters Officer: Ms. Andrew Azzopardi
- Media Relations Officer: Mr. Aaron Azzopardi
- Executive Committee decided that Mr. Andrew Azzopardi will represent MASW within the University of Malta and Ms. Josephine Muscat represent MASW within the Social Work Professions Board.



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### **MASW input within Social Work Professions Board**

MASW 2 representatives continued their work within this Board. This Board continued to process and verify Social Work Warrant Applications. The Board is also working to conclude the Code of Ethics for the Social Work Profession.

On 5th July 2017, MASW organised a Consultation Meeting with the members in relation to the Social Work Code of Ethics. The Executive Committee reviewed such feedback and made these suggestions to the Social Work Professions Board.

**MASW Proposals during the Election Campaign:** During the Election Campaign, the Executive Committee has come up with ten proposals that were sent to all political parties. Following change in Minister, Hon Michael Falzon was appointed for the Ministry for the family, children's rights and social solidarity. MASW held a meeting in order to establish ways to collaborate together and sustain further relationships. The ten proposals were also discussed during such meeting.

**Child Protection (Out of Home Care) Act.** A working group was set up as per Annual General Meeting 2017. It was comprised of Ms Marika Borg Wirth, Fr. Antoine Farrugia, Mr. Joseph Antoncich, Mr. Ashley Cumbo, along with two Executive Members, Ms. Charlene Martin and Mr. Andrew Azzopardi. MASW Executive also forwarded feedback about the current proposed Act and held discussions with the Government representatives to discuss such proposals. In relation to this Act, the Executive Committee met twice with the Ministry legal representative to discuss its proposals. MASW was instrumental to amend this Bill, after the mentioned meetings. Until the present date, the Executive is still waiting for the official proposed Bill.

**Future of Social Work Profession Meeting:** Following the improved working conditions for the teaching profession, the MASW felt the need to discuss with all social workers the way forward for the MASW and to the Social Work Profession in Malta. This was achieved through a meeting held on the 13th November 2017, in which meeting a good number of social workers and social work students attended. During the meeting, a strong sense of need was felt for the recognition of the social work profession together with the working conditions of each social worker. Consequently, it was resolved that social workers should unite together to motivate and encourage policy makers to make critical changes that support the profession and society.



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During this meeting, it was also discussed whether MASW should become a union or otherwise remain an association. The latter option was chosen and the attendees at the meeting decided that MASW should promote and encourage further social workers to become part of it in order to have a stronger voice.

Furthermore, the discussion also enhanced the need to promote self-confidence and pride for the social work profession. It was mentioned that as social workers we should be proud of what we stand for; believe in our professional assessments and abilities and not have to accept external authorities to take decisions on our behalf. It was pointed out that as social workers, we should foster trust, and respect amongst each other and strive to keep the profession alive, despite enormous challenges that we face as a profession.

**MASW Memberships:** During this term, official correspondence and updates were being sent to MASW Members. In addition, MASW members are obtaining a reduced price for MASW Training. Within the last Administrative report, it was reported that 50 persons are MASW members. At present, there are 114 professional members and 8 as student members within this association. There was an increase in membership after the meeting of 13<sup>th</sup> November 2017.

**Press Releases:**

MASW Executive Committee was highly present with various Press Releases during the last year.

The following are the Press Releases that were issued:

1. 14th April 2017: Press Release on disclosure of sensitive information in relation to the story that was reported on the local media.
2. 19th April 2017: Press release on the guidelines launched with the aim of increasing awareness on mental health issues by the Association of Psychiatric Nurses.
3. 30th May 2017: Press release which deals with Employment appointments in the social sector, social issues and use of vulnerable persons in the electoral campaign.
4. 4th August 2017: Press release on hatred discourse instigated by a minority of political personalities and political appointees.
5. 20th October 2017: Press release in relation to the tragic event that happened in Malta causing moral injury which risks shattering our well held values of freedom of expression and democracy.



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6. 7th November 2017: Press release in relation to the improved working conditions for teachers, focusing on giving the same recognition to the social work profession.
7. 19th January 2018: Press release in relation to the Industrial Action within the Foundation for Social Welfare Services.
8. 25th January 2018: Press release in relation to the tragic death of the seven year old girl from Zabbar.
9. 2<sup>nd</sup> February & 8th February 2018: Roslynn Vella gave an interview on Radio RTK regarding the Industrial Action within the Foundation for Social Welfare Services, and follow up comment when industrial action was ceased as there was an agreement on the collective agreement. The industrial action with regards to the social workers within the ministry of education was also mentioned.

#### **Meetings with Various Entities:**

- MASW held an informative meeting with Ms. Roberta Farrugia Debono to discuss what it entails for an association to become a union and it's pros and cons.
  
- Malta Federation of Professional Associations: MFPA. Rosalyn Vella, Ruth Stafrace, Aaron Azzopardi, Jareth Grima, Charlene Martin on behalf of the Executive Committee attended such monthly meetings.
  
- MASW held a meeting with the committee members of the National Foster Care Association Malta.
  
- Ms. Josephine Muscat met French students who were interested in social work practice in Malta.
  
- MASW held a collaboration meeting with Studenti Ħarsien Soċjali Committee Members
  
- MASW also attended a meeting organised with the Alliance for Mental Health for more work towards holistic mental health services.



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- MASW also met and offered guidance to entities who provide social work services in order to further ameliorate the social work practice within the Community Chest Fund.
- MASW has also a planned meeting with MUMN to discuss and collaborate further with this union.

### **Training:**

On the 20th June 2017 and 4th July, MASW organised a training seminar on “*The effect of separation on children and parental alienation*”. This training was facilitated by Dr. Roberta Farrugia Debono. These trainings were well attended and positive feedback was received.

The training was coordinated by Mr. Jareth Grima.

### **MASW rebranding of Website and Promotion of MASW**

Mr. Aaron Azzopardi held several meetings with various companies regarding the new branding of the MASW website. The Executive Committee decided to implement a new design and revamped website.

A video about MASW was also launched in order to promote the work of the Association.