

Biographical data form of candidates to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Name: Angela ABELA

Nationality: Maltese

Date and place of birth: 21 October 1956, Luqa Malta

Working languages: English, French and Italian

Current position/function:

I am a Full Professor within the Department of Family Studies within the Faculty for Social Wellbeing at the University of Malta. In my work, I train clinical psychologists as well as other psychologists from other specialisations. I also train family therapists. Gender is an important running thread in the training of these professionals. I also teach on gender and power and on families living on the margin with a special emphasis on gender issues in many other courses. I am also the Chairperson of the National Centre for Family Research within the President's Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society where our body of research on couples and singles takes into account a gendered perspective. The authorship of this work is that of the President's Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society. I also sit on an inter ministerial taskforce (Family, Health, Education and Justice) for a three year period (2018-2021) mandated to implement the Positive Parenting Strategy. This Strategy fights discrimination against women by fighting poverty in children and families including lone parent families and by empowering men and women and the State to take support parenting.

Educational background:

Originally trained as a teacher in primary and secondary schools at the Department of Educational Studies, MCAST, I then read a first degree in social Studies in French and Social Studies. I have two Master degrees; one in social studies from Paris XIII and one in clinical psychology and psychopathology from Paris V (Sorbonne) France. I read for a clinical PhD in child and family psychology at the University of London in conjunction with the Child and Family Department at the Tavistock Clinic in London.

Other main activities in the field relevant to the mandate of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women:

- As Chairperson of the National Family Commission, I presented a policy document to the Maltese Prime Minister on the need to balance home and work advocating for family friendly policies thus empowering women to participate in the labour market;
- Co-presented a study on family poverty with special emphasis on children to the Social Affairs Committee in Parliament. The study was selected amongst a number of presentations and discussed in Parliament;
- Led a National study on Lone Parents in Malta commissioned by the Ministry of the Family and Social Solidarity, which was presented at a National Conference and presided by the Minister and attended by the Members of Parliament sitting on the Social Affairs Committee;

- On an international level, I participated on an expert group and subsequently on expert missions with the Council of Europe regarding Families living in poverty. Gender was a crosscutting theme;
- Recently was invited by DIFI (Doha International Family Institute) to present on the implantation of the Millennium Goals for the Family. Women feature very strongly in the implementation of the Millennium Goals. The expert meeting was carried out in partnership with the Arab States Regional Office for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) on 29/30th of November in Doha Qatar;
- December 2017: Invited to present at the 1st international Forum on Women's Brain and Mental Health in collaboration with the Global Alliance for Women's Brain Health and The Lancet Psychiatry and The Lancet Neurology on the 12th of December at the Rolex Research Centre of the Ecole Polytechnique Federale de Lausanne Switzerland. The presentations are work in progress for publication in The Lancet Psychiatry.

List of most recent publications in the field of discrimination against women and advancement of their human rights:

- Abela, A, Casha, C, Bezzina, F. Azzopardi, M.R. (2012 – 2014) Improving the Quality of Life of Lone Parents in Malta. Submitted for publication;
 - Abela, A (2016) Family Life in Eds Briguglio, M. & Brown, M *Sociology in Malta* Miller Publications (takes a historical gendered perspective);
 - **Book**
Sammut Scerri, C., Abela, A. Vetere, A. & Cooper, J. (2017) *Intervening after Violence: Therapy for Couples and Families* (Springer) My principal contribution included a chapter on intervening in the case of physical and sexual abuse of children, a chapter on the preventive policies against violence and on the supervision of professionals.
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