

Narrative Report

Graduate Travel-Research Fellowship on the European Union,
European Integration, EU-Canada Relations

Margaret Mizzi

PhD Candidate, Department of Geography and Environmental Studies
Carleton University, Ottawa (Canada)

The fellowship covered a portion of the expenses tied to my doctoral fieldwork on the island of Gozo (Malta). The research was undertaken over a four-month period from April to July 2011. The focus is onto women's work on a small, peripheral island of Gozo forming part of the Maltese archipelago in Southern Europe. Since it joined the European Union (EU) in 2004, the Maltese Government has been contending that the country has the lowest female participation rate in the EU and that this situation needs to be remedied by enticing more women to enter paid employment.

While in Gozo, I conducted archival research to analyze how the discourse on gender and employment by the Maltese Government was being represented in the main local newspapers. Concurrently, I obtained ethnographies from local women using a photo-elicitation methodology. The participants captured work which they perform on a daily basis, utilizing their own definitions of what they consider as "work." This method led to revealing experiences on invisible work which women perform in public and private spaces. Women were also interviewed to extrapolate their past work experiences vis-à-vis gender-norms with a special emphasis on EU citizenship and mobility.

This research is a medium through which marginalized sections of the population can have their voices heard as more women are being pressured to join the labour market when they are already working very hard within the unpaid caring sectors of the economy.

I am very grateful to the Centre for European Studies at Carleton for supporting this research.