



Family and Social Solidarity Minister Michael Farrugia addressing stakeholders during the launch of the draft Positive Parenting Policy in Valletta on 10 October 2014

## Fostering Positive Parenting – A Shared Bilateral Perspective

The first Maltese draft policy for constructive parenting was launched for public consultation at a seminar on 10 October 2014 in Valletta, Malta. The seminar was co-organised by the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity and the Funds and Programmes Division within the Ministry for European Affairs and Implementation of the Electoral Manifesto, which is the National Focal Point and Programme Operator of the EEA and Norway Grants 2009-2014 in Malta.

The Minister for the Family and Social Solidarity, Dr Michael Farrugia, opened the seminar that was well attended by representatives of child welfare organisations such as the Office of the Commissioner for Children, the National Agency for Children, Families and the Community (APPOGG), the Child Guidance Clinic, the Adoption Board, the Department of Paediatrics at Mater Dei Hospital, foster care institutions and children’s homes, as well as principals and teachers from various state and church schools. The policy interventions will build on the services that are already being offered and will cut across different departments and ministries for better synergy and smooth continuation of services from one entity to another.

Relatively, parenthood has only recently attracted global attention. Governments around the world have come to realise the consequences of parenting methods, especially in view of the challenges faced by today’s society. Developed by the Department of Family Studies at the University of Malta, the Positive Parenting Policy aims at helping to build and sustain a positive culture in supporting parents and guardians in raising children to become responsible and productive citizens. This is a major contribution that parents and guardians make to society at large, particularly in terms of economic growth and social development.

Experts from Norway and the UK were invited to share their thinking on this important topic. Norwegian Experts, Mr. Terje Christensen and Ms. Elisabeth Askeland from the Norwegian Centre for Child Behavioural Development, an affiliate of the University of Oslo, illustrated the current situation and system of parenting in Norway. Prof. Frances Gardner from the Department of Social Policy and Intervention at the University of Oxford delivered an overview of parenting across Europe.

Prof. Angela Abela and Ms. Ingrid Grech Lanfranco from the Department of Family Studies at the University of Malta presented the Positive Parenting Policy. Towards promoting ownership and cooperation on the subject, the participants were grouped into four thematic workshops, during which discussions were held to contribute further insight into the policy.

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