

ICASSI 2005 Marsascala, Malta

Malta hosted the thirty eighth ICASSI. This was a pleasure and what they viewed as an honor for the Malta hosts. A four star hotel built on the water's edge of the picturesque sea side village of Marsascala welcomed approximately four hundred participants. About half of them were locals. Over twenty countries were represented by the participants. Two weeks of sunny days on the Mediterranean shore provided pleasure for many. People were swimming in the blue sea before breakfast, before lunch and before dinner.

The Malta ICASSI was clearly mixing business with pleasure. The workshops were carried out in air conditioned hotel rooms while evenings were spent on the terraces, and often dancing went on well into the night. The warm summer nights lent themselves to outdoor activities.

The local interest in Individual Psychology (IP) had been established for about a decade, mainly under the leadership of Pius (Xavier) Gatt and Joyce Callus. A number of Maltese parents, educators, professionals and others were aware of the benefits of IP, and having the benefit of forgoing transport and hotel expenses, it was easier for them to join ICASSI in Malta than abroad. A few Maltese people have joined ICASSI every year since then, largely made possible through scholarship assistance. Because of the leadership of Joyce Callus in preparing the Malta ICASSI in 2005, professionals and parents from all over Malta eagerly attended the 38th Rudolf Dreikurs Summer Institute.



Both locals and overseas participants enjoyed the Malta village fiestas. Villages in Malta celebrate the feast of their patron saint during the summer months. A fiesta means a fully lit and decorated village, brass bands along its streets, traditional Maltese sweets and wonderful displays of

fireworks. Many participants had the opportunity to share Maltese traditions and to join with Maltese hospitality. Having a public transport bus stop outside the hotel door facilitated visiting the capital city Valletta, built over five hundred years ago by the Knights of St John as well as the old capital Mdina built during the Arab rule over one thousand years ago.

As one participant noted, 'You can enjoy three days in one day here'. For her this meant going for a day's work during lessons, then engaging in a couple of hours swimming or shopping, and still having time to dress up for a night out! Work and relaxation in one go! This is where small is beautiful. One can travel from one end of the island to another in about forty-five minutes.

The wonderful service given by the staff of the Jerma Hotel was much appreciated. Although some participants from across the ocean planned to take the short trip to Sicily while in this area of the globe, they found Marsascala and Malta so intriguing and interesting that they extended their stay here instead.

All the Bloc one sessions were fully attended and enjoyed. Workshops were as interesting as ever, in line with the informal yet highly professional approach of ICASSI. As one local participant commented, 'this is a goldmine of knowledge and information made possible for all of us.'

The memory of the welcoming ceremony and farewell banquet is still vivid, with many in later ICASSIs commenting on their wonderful experiences in the 2005 Malta ICASSI. An abundant variety of Mediterranean fruits was offered and enjoyed during the opening ceremony. The food at the farewell banquet was excellent, the honours list, reading of poems especially written for the occasion, and entertainment were electrifying. The opening ceremony extended way past midnight, with nobody leaving the hall.

Adlerians try to walk their talk. ICASSI is Dreikurs' dream of walking the talk all over the world, and thanks to people like Eva Dreikurs Ferguson and other Chair / Board members and faculty, this dream is still marching on, in Malta as elsewhere.