

ANNUAL REPORT

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ADDRESSING
BULLYING
BEHAVIOUR
FOR

5 YEARS



March 2022

VO 1422

bBrave

bullying: awareness & support

c/o 3, Honeycomb
Triq Preziosi, Sqaq Nru. 2,
Hal Lija, LJA 1190
MALTA

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bBrave's Mission Statement

To raise awareness on different forms of bullying,
to facilitate assistance for individuals suffering
from bullying and for the reform of individuals
displaying bullying behaviour in Malta.

Il-Missjoni ta' bBrave

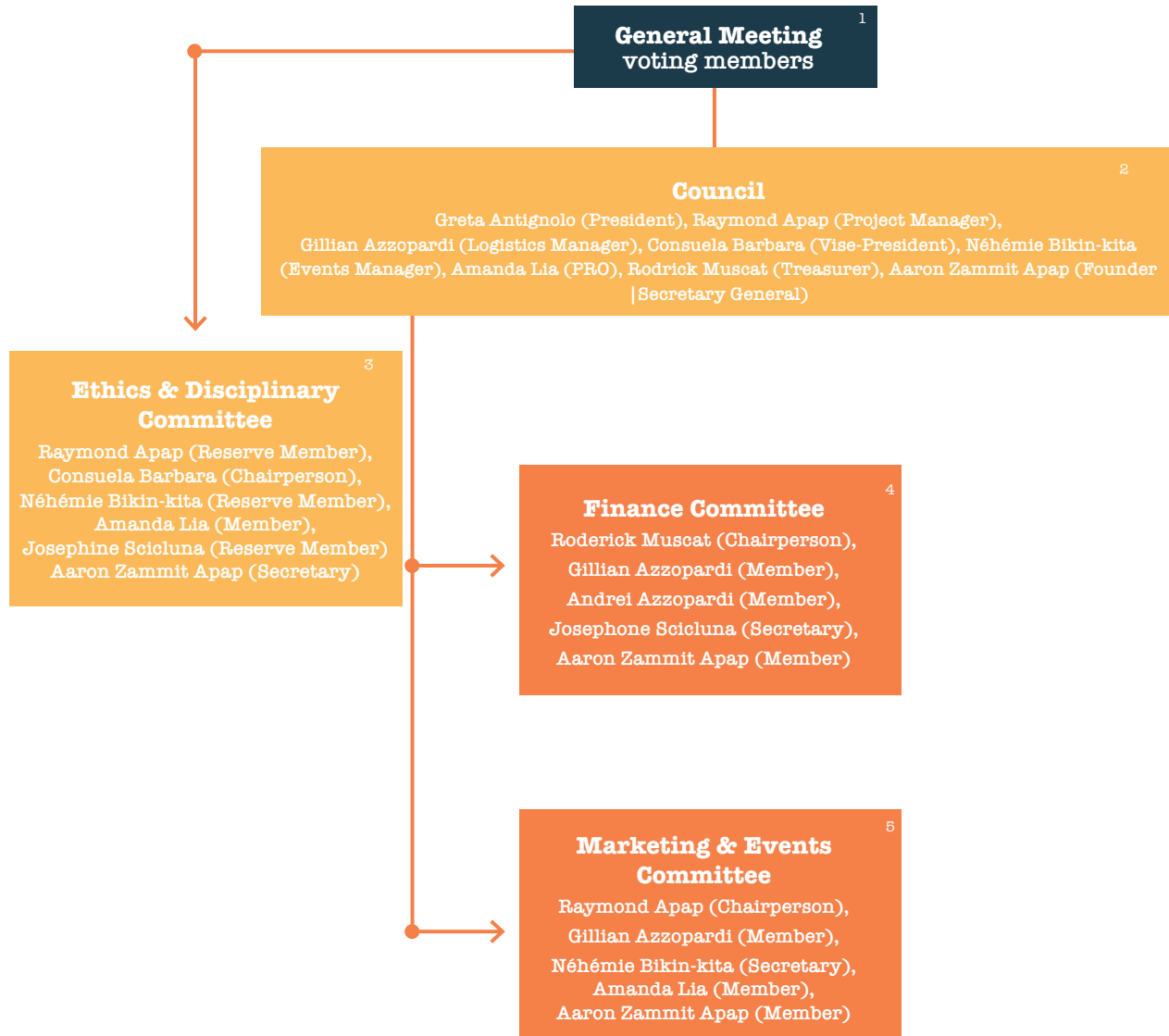
Sabiex titqajjem kuxjenza dwar forom differenti
ta' bulliżmu, sabiex tiġi ffaċilitata l-ghajnuna għal
dawk li jsofru l-bulliżmu u għar-riforma ta' min
jadotta mġieba ta' bulliżmu f'Malta.

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bBrave (VO 1422)



Organisation Chart



NOTES

1 The General Meeting is made up of those Members having the right to attend and vote. Minors may not attend General Meetings and vote. Honorary Members or Honorary Past Members may attend, but not vote at, General Meetings.

2 The Council is responsible for the day to day running of the Organisation.

3 The Ethics & Disciplinary Committee, inter alia, monitors the ethical behaviour of the Council, ensures compliance with the *Code of Ethics & Discipline*, and advises on ethical dilemmas. It is also charged with leading disciplinary proceedings. Such proceedings may be brought against any Member for alleged misbehaviour, such as breaches to the Statute, the *Code of Ethics & Discipline*, or any other rules and procedures of the Organisation, bringing disrepute onto the Organisation, performing material acts of bullying, and acting against the interests of the Organisation.

4 The Finance Committee is responsible for supporting the Treasurer in maintaining the finances of the Organisation, as well as seeking funding opportunities.

5 The Marketing & Events Committee supports the Council in marketing the Organisation and organising events.

bBrave currently has no employees. It mainly relies on the voluntary efforts of the Members of the Council and the various Committees.

President's Statement to Members

**Greta
Antignolo**



It is with great honour to have served as President for the second consecutive year with bBrave. Amidst the COVID situation, I feel that this year has been another fruitful year for our NGO.

We have worked together mostly remotely; however, we have still managed to accomplish so much. I must start off by one of our greatest achievements to date: our ESF funding for a project whereby we will commission a study on bullying at the workplace.

Our annual Anti-Bullying Week this year was circled around the theme 'One Kind Word'. We have created great awareness nationally about the impact one kind word can have on other people. During our Anti-Bullying Week, we also introduced our bBrave ambassador Leanne Bartolo. Leanne has made a great contribution to bBrave, and we are proud and honoured to have her, not only as part of our team, but also as the main face of our organisation.

Similarly to last year, we continued to offer free counselling sessions for anyone who has or is experiencing bullying. I would like to heartily thank all the counsellors who have dedicated hours of their time to help fight our cause. For this, we are grateful.

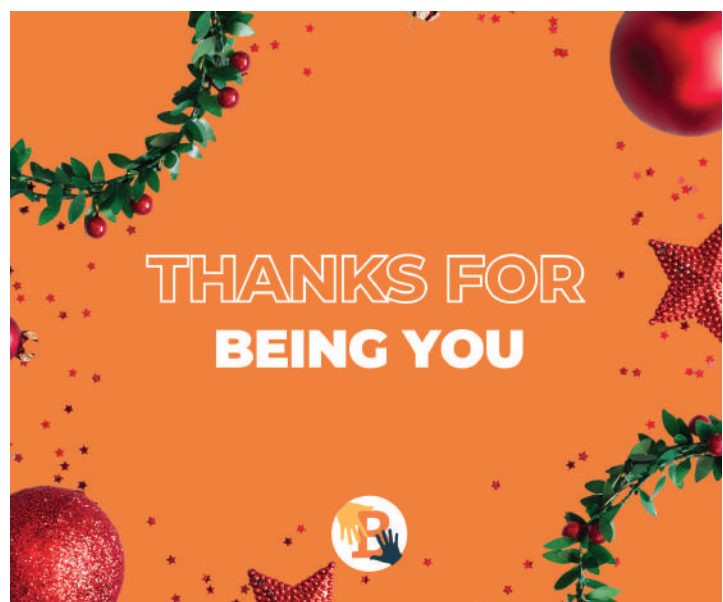
We have lots more in store and bigger projects coming our way and I am super excited to continue working and dedicating my time for this initiative. It has been such an honour serving as President and I am proud of everything we have accomplished.

I would like to thank our Founder & Secretary General Dr. Aaron Zammit Apap whose energy and level of professionalism has been an inspiration. Finally, I would like to thank all our colleagues and members for their time and dedication. Without you all, bBrave would not be where it is today, helping and supporting many people.

Thank You!

Antignolo

Ms. Greta Antignolo
President



REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

COUNCIL

In terms of bBrave's Statute, the affairs of the Organisation, in all matters not reserved for the Organisation in General Meeting, shall be managed by the Council of the Organisation.

MEETINGS

The Council held five (5) formal meetings throughout the reporting year.



The Members serving on the Council throughout the reporting period and to date are the following:

MEMBERSHIP

Ms. Greta Antignolo

President

(appointed 6th February 2018)

Ms. Néhémie Bikin-kita

Events Manager

(appointed 7th March 2019)

Mr. Raymond Apap

Projects Manager

(appointed 6th February 2018)

Ms. Amanda Lia

Public Relations Officer

(appointed 1st December 2018)

Ms. Gillian Azzopardi

Logistics Manager

(appointed 7th March 2019)

Mr. Rodrick Muscat

Treasurer

(appointed 8th March 2021)

Ms. Consuela Barbara

Vice-President

(appointed 7th September 2020)

Dr. Aaron Zammit Apap

Founder | Secretary General

(appointed 22nd February 2017)

** The roles carried out by each Council Member may have changed over time.*

ETHICS & DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE

The Ethics & Disciplinary Committee, inter alia, monitors the ethical behaviour of the Council, ensures compliance with the *Code of Ethics & Discipline*, and advises on ethical dilemmas. It is also charged with leading disciplinary proceedings. Such proceedings may be brought against any Member for alleged misbehaviour, such as breaches to the Statute, the *Code of Ethics & Discipline*, or any other rules and procedures of the Organisation, bringing disrepute onto the Organisation, performing material acts of bullying, and acting against the interests of the Organisation.

The Members serving on the Committee throughout the reporting period and to date are the following:

Mr Raymond Apap, Reserve Member

Ms. Consuela Barbara, Chairperson

Ms. Néhémie Bikin-kita, Reserve Member

Ms. Amanda Lia, Member

Ms. Josephine Scicluna, Reserve Member

Dr. Aaron Zammit Apap, Secretary

** The roles carried out by each Council Member may have changed over time.*

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee is responsible for supporting the Treasurer in maintaining the finances of the Organisation, as well as seeking funding opportunities.

The Members serving on the Committee throughout the reporting period and to date are the following:

Mr. Rodrick Muscat, Chairperson

Mr. Andrei Azzopardi, Member

Ms. Gillian Azzopardi, Member

Ms. Josephine Scicluna, Secretary

Dr. Aaron Zammit Apap, Member

** The roles carried out by each Committee Member may have changed over time.*

During the year the team continued to ensure all financial commitments can be met in a timely manner, as well as support projects from the financial aspect.



MARKETING & EVENTS COMMITTEE

The Marketing & Events Committee supports the Council in marketing the Organisation and organising events. The Members serving on the Committee throughout the reporting period and to date are the following:

Mr. Raymond Apap, Chairperson

Ms. Gillian Azzopardi, Member

Ms. Néhémie Bikin-kita, Secretary

Ms. Amanda Lia, Member

Dr. Aaron Zammit Apap, Member

** The roles carried out by each Council Member may have changed over time.*



MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the Organisation as at the end of December 2021 stood as follows:

Adults - 25

Minors - 4

GENERAL MEETINGS

bBrave's last General Meeting was its Annual General Meeting held on the 8th March 2021.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Statute stipulates that no Member of the Council or any Committee may vote on matters on which such Member may have a conflict of interest. Any conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest must be declared at the outset of any meeting (including General Meetings), and the conflicted Member may be asked to leave the meeting during the discussion of the impacted business.

COMPLIANCE

The Organisation is a registered voluntary organisation with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations (VO 1422).

The Organisation is a registered legal person with the Malta Business Registry (LPA-118).

bBrave is subject, inter alia, to the provisions of the Voluntary Organisations Act, 2007 (CAP 492), the Voluntary Organisations (Annual Returns and Annual Accounts) Regulations, 2020 (LN 317 of 2020), and the Second Schedule to the Civil Code, 1868 (CAP 16).

The Organisation is in good standing with both its regulators, the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations and the Malta Business Registry.

Upon approval of this Annual Report, bBrave shall proceed to submit its Annual Return with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations, in terms of applicable regulatory requirements.

PARTNERSHIPS & AFFILIATIONS

bBrave is a Core Member of the Anti-Bullying Alliance, an international coalition of organisations and individuals that are united against bullying.

The Organisation is registered as a youth organisation with Aġenzija Żgħażaġh (AZ 252/2017).

The Organisation's ethos is to collaborate with other persons and entities, with a view to pursue its mission. bBrave believes that much can be achieved by partnering with others having similar or related interests, making the best use of scarce resources.

During 2021, there were several other stakeholders bBrave which collaborated with, amongst them:

- Department of Counselling, Faculty for Social Wellbeing (University of Malta), and their trainee counsellors, who are enabling bBrave to offer free counselling services to persons suffering from bullying; the beneficiaries of this service have expressed that this service has helped them overcome much of the negativity brought about by the bullying experienced;
- Blue Iris Intervention Centre, with whom we delivered a session on bullying and disability to the members of the Early Childhood Development Association of Malta (ECDAM);



- Crisis Resolution Malta, with whom we discussed the difficult topic of bullying and suicide/self-harm on Facebook;
- Commissioner for Mental Health, with bBrave now included in its Mental Wellbeing in the Community for you - List of entities which offer support in Malta;
- Ronald McDonald House Charities Malta, who provide their premises with a professional disposition at the RMHC Malta Learning Centre in St. Paul's Bay; and
- The Meeting Place, for their warm welcome and use of their premises in Marsa.



MEDIA PRESENCE

bBrave continues believing in the importance of reaching out to the community through various media. During the COVID-19 pandemic, social media continued to be a crucial medium, as many increased their online presence further to the inevitable periods of isolation.

bBrave Members participated in various programmes and initiatives over the year, including television and radio. The organisation participated with a monthly topic on Campus FM's Campus Breakfast till June 2021, and has secured a monthly slot on TVM's breakfast show 'Ta' Filghodu as from October 2021.





FUNDING

During 2021 bBrave carried out projects supported by the following:

DONATIONS

Throughout the year, bBrave received the following total sum by way of donations: c.€21,000.

SPONSORSHIP

A number of sponsors have supported the activities of bBrave either through cash donations, or support in goods and services. We are thankful to our sponsors – their support helps us achieve our goals, without whom our impact on society would not have been so pronounced.

A list of these sponsors may be found on pages 34-35.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Over 2021, we continued our activities with a greater online presence due to COVID-19. Below are a few of the initiatives we would like to highlight:

- In January, representatives from our Council, together with some of our youth volunteers, delivered lectures at MCAST on youth volunteering;
- In October, we had an exciting fund-raising event thanks to the young Kai Naudi. Kai had experienced bullying making him feel excluded, tired and hurt; he turned to swimming and decided to use the experience to raise awareness. He raised funds for bBrave and Inspire when swimming between Gozo and Malta; the event was aptly named BRAVE THE WAVE;



- Sessions on cyberbullying were delivered to a number of schools during Skolasajf;
- Throughout the year we held a number of workshops (mainly online) on various bullying topics;
- Over December, bBrave ran its #12daysofchristmas campaign, passing on motivational messages and encouraging people needing help to step forward;



- Our Erasmus+ BAM! (Brave Ambassadors!) project remains on hold due to COVID-19. This entails an exchange visit with youths from BulliesOut, our Welsh counterpart, and our own youths hailing from local schools and youth organisations. We hope to be able to carry out this project which will see young anti-bullying ambassadors proliferating our anti-bullying message.

ANTI-BULLYING WEEK

- Our Lady Immaculate School in Hamrun was presented the bBrave trophy for Anti-Bullying-Week 2020; this school had also won the trophy in 2019.



- The theme for Anti-Bullying-Week 2021 was One Kind Word, emphasising the power of the word, and the impact it can leave on its recipient.



- Once again, schools and organisations were encouraged to participate, and we were pleased to observe that some workplaces have also started celebrating it.
- Local author and educator Lorraine Galea presented a signed copy of her new book *Hadd Wara Hadd* to bBrave's Founder & Secretary General Dr. Aaron Zammit Apap. Ms. Galea often writes novels with the bullying theme at their core.



Anti-Bullying Ambassador Leanne Bartolo

In 2021, bBrave announced its first anti-bullying ambassador. Fitness instructor and personal trainer running her own gym, and 2X WFF European Bikini Pro Champion, Leanne Bartolo is all about supporting people on their journey towards their health and fitness goals.

She first developed a passion for running and sports in secondary school. She later read Psychology at University and obtained a Psychology MA Qualifying Certification. She started teaching at Chiswick House School in 2011 while also training others in fitness and aerobics at various gyms.

In 2015, Leanne embarked on the Kilimanjaro Challenge. Together with other volunteers, she climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro to raise funds for a school in Sorsa, Ethiopia. The experience ticked two of Leanne's boxes: her passion for voluntary work and her thirst for adventure. Meeting the love of her life – her partner David Schembri – at the same time was the cherry on the cake.

In 2017, Leanne opened her own gym, Warehouse Fitness Studio in Gzira, and transformed fitness into her full-time career. Since then, it has become the go-to place for classes to suit all ability levels and ambitions. Once Warehouse was up and running, Leanne set her sights on a new goal: becoming a World Fitness Federation champion. Encouraged by a nutritionist friend, she took the plunge, winning the WFF European Bikini championships in 2018 and 2019.

When COVID hit, workouts and classes came to a standstill and clients were frustrated. At the time, Leanne was on a sabbatical year, taking a break from teaching to concentrate on her fitness career and launch her new brand, Team Leanne. Rather than letting the pandemic hit pause on her plans, she pivoted her approach and got back to teaching fitness in a whole new way.





She launched a series of free, live fitness classes that brought satisfaction and results to thousands of followers every day, keeping them active during lockdown. In 2021, upon the beginning of the second lock down, Leanne came up with “Lock Down League”, which was a free, open league aimed at encouraging members and non-members to keep active and healthy even though all the facilities were closed.

Throughout the past year, despite all the obstacles the pandemic brought with it Leanne has managed to keep her trainees, followers and athletes engaged both mentally and physically through continuous support, informative workshops as well as team building activities. To make Leanne’s mission more complete, Leanne couldn’t think of a better way than joining bBrave. As the very first anti-bullying ambassador, her aim is to instill a sense of empathy and support from a young age. Having been bullied herself, knowing others that have been bullied, speaking with children and adults who commit bullying, Leanne knows this can be stopped by addressing underlying causes, bullied or being the perpetrator is not what anyone wants. Together with the hard working and dedicated bBrave team, Leanne aims at raising more awareness as well as inform and educate about the various options one can opt for to receive professional help.

bBrave is proud to have Leanne on board. Her values have fit in very well with its anti-bullying mission.

Bullying & Ostracism at the Workplace in Malta

Project Ref: ESF.02.150

When bBrave first started out in 2017, it was immediately established that as the only anti-bullying NGO in Malta, one could not afford to speak only about the most obvious form of bullying, which is that of bullying within schools. It was agreed that bBrave would speak out about all forms of bullying, including that taking place with adults.

bBrave launched its Bullying & Ostracism at the Workplace in Malta project at a Press Conference held at the Valletta Design Cluster.

The Press Conference was opened by bBrave's President Ms. Greta Antignolo, who explained that the project was the first of its kind and was made possible thanks to EU support under the European Social Fund, the support of the Planning and Priorities Coordination Division and the collaboration of Servizzi Ewropej f'Malta (SEM). She added that *"At least twelve stakeholders are collaborating on the project, many of them national entities that each day have a significant impact on Maltese society."*

Dr. Aaron Zammit Apap, bBrave's Founder & Secretary General, outlined the project, explaining that a study would be held to identify the Maltese reality of bullying at the workplace, and based on the findings, bBrave would put together a toolkit for employers to implement at various places of work. Moreover, an awareness campaign would be designed to tackle those findings which were of particular significance. Ms. Leanne Bartolo, fitness professional and wellbeing motivator & bBrave's Ambassador expressed that bullying had far-reaching effects and extended from the classroom to the workplace. This behaviour had alarming mental health repercussions and was not to be overlooked.

The event was then addressed by Dr. Clifton Grima, Parliamentary Secretary for Sports, Recreation and Voluntary Organisations, who applauded this initiative which was intended on shedding light on what workers experienced at their place of work. Dr. Grima explained that with greater awareness on the dangers of bullying, more people would speak out when faced with similar circumstances.

Dr. Stefan Zrinzo Azzopardi, Parliamentary Secretary for European Funds announced that the project would cost €98,000, 80% of which would be financed by the European Social Fund. He expressed that this initiative would give a ray of hope to persons suffering from bullying at the workplace.

Carmelo Abela, Minister within the Office of the Prime Minister, closed the Conference and held that bullying first and foremost has a negative effect on the person experiencing it, but also on the person displaying bullying behaviour. But bullying also has a negative effect on the work environment, which needs to be strong and serene for all workers. Bullying can even lead to the reduction of productivity.

With reference to the project which would be carried out by bBrave, Minister Abela stated that the laws on employment and industrial relations already protected those suffering from harassment. It was now due to further strengthen this aspect, and this project should also be discussed with social partners at a national level, with a view to improve working conditions for employees in Malta.



In conclusion, Minister Abela thanked the organisation, as well as SEM, wishing success for this initiative, which was raising awareness on the sensitive subject of bullying at the workplace.

The project is co-financed under the European Social Fund. We hold this project to be of national importance as we believe bullying does not only harm the employee from a social and human point of view, effecting one's mental health and general wellbeing, but it also has a negative economic effect. We all know that unhappy employees are less productive, and bullying could serve as encouragement to change jobs. The loss of experienced individuals, recruitment and training bring about unwelcome undesirable costs for the employer.

The project is based on three main pillars. A study will be carried out with a selection of workers. We currently do not have detailed statistics on how deep-rooted the problem is in our workforce. Thus we need to understand its frequency and its effects. We also need to understand why it happens – does it occur because of gender, race, disability or other factors? Due to the wide-ranging effects of this study, bBrave is pleased to be working with national entities that cover areas such as employment, mental health, equality and disability. Once the study is in hand, we intend to develop a toolkit for employers, consisting of a template policy and training material. This will facilitate the raising of awareness within local organisations for thousands of employees. We aim to complement this by running a public awareness campaign.

bBrave is proud to shine the spotlight on workplace bullying and to be of service to employers and employees. The project runs between October 2021 and March 2023.

This Project is being carried out with the support of:

Aġenzija Sedqa
Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD)
Commissioner for Mental Health [Office of the]
General Workers' Union (GWU)
Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise & Industry [The]
Malta Chamber of SMEs
Malta Employers' Association (MEA)
National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE)
Richmond Foundation
Safeguarding Commission
SOS Malta (Kellimni.com)
Tonio Axisa
UHM Voice of the Workers

In collaboration with:

Servizzi Ewropej f'Malta (SEM)

OUTLOOK



It has certainly been an eventful five years. In February 2017, a very small group of people sat around a table to set-up Malta's first and only anti-bullying NGO. Our **mission** was, and still is, to raise awareness about bullying and provide support. It is with this mission in mind that we look forward with determination in furthering the scope and reach of bBrave.

It is ironic that our organisation gets thrown in the limelight when bullying **cases** surface in the public domain. We take no pleasure in receiving more attention based on the suffering of others, but it is our duty to use every opportunity to argue our cause. A recent video of the bullying of a school girl by several children cause national shockwaves. Regrettably, this is only a sample of the cases that come to our attention throughout the year. We intend learning from each of these cases to identify loopholes in the system. It is evident that there are still wide gaps leading to the failure of protection of a good number of people.

The coming year will be key for bBrave as we carry out a national study on bullying and ostracism at the **workplace**. We will not only produce a report that will identify significant aspects of workplace abuse, but we will also proactively build a toolkit and make it available to all employers. An awareness campaign will follow. We are invigorated by the interest demonstrated in the project, and proud to have secured the collaboration of an impressive list of entities that operate on a national level, covering subjects ranging from employment, equality, diversity, disability, mental health and social wellbeing. Our ambition is that employers will not consider this project as one of a social nature only, but also appreciate the economic impacts of bullying at work, where unhappy workers are less efficient, and prone to change jobs.



The **demand** for our intervention has increased to unsustainable levels. Schools, sports organisations, voluntary organisations and workplaces have placed requests on us that could not be realistically met. Individuals are also clearly raising their expectations, and we must work harder to bolster the support function. This is perhaps our biggest frustration as we find that the current resources are simply inadequate to meet the community's needs. We have to face the reality that reliance on volunteers only will simply not suffice.

We believe that the organisation needs to work on a clear **strategy** to ensure that it does not lose steam. bBrave needs to secure its own premises and also have its own full-time members of staff. Relying solely on early morning sessions, lunch breaks and weekends will not cut it any longer. Naturally, getting to this next level will not be an easy feat, but it is a goal that our hard-working volunteers have already started working on.

We value the financial opportunities afforded to us by government and the EU. There has also been a noticeable appreciation of our work by the business community. After the less enthusiastic sponsorship activity in 2020, our requests for monetary assistance have been more favourably met over 2021. With our 5-year track record, we hope to garner more substantial **funding** support for our strategy, be it through the government and/or commercial sponsors.

I will take a moment to thank each and every one of our volunteers, all of those that have helped us in their way in the past 5 years. From time to time, **volunteers** apologise for not being able to offer more time. I tell them that their efforts, big or small, have helped build the bBrave that we have today, and they should be very proud. If the volunteers over the next five years carry your same level of enthusiasm, then the organisation is destined to reach new heights.

Our promise to the **beneficiaries** of our organisation is that we will keep you at the heart of our activities. A Maltese community can be a better society with less bullying and more empathy.

Dr. Aaron Zammit Apap

Founder | Secretary General

FINANCIALS

*There is no requirement for the financials of an organisation with these levels of annual revenue to be audited.

SURPLUS OR DEFICIT

Name of voluntary organisation:
VO number:
Year ended:

bBrave
1422
31 December 2021

	€	€
Income		
Donations received	20,841.00	
Membership fees	207.00	
SIS project 2020	900.00	
Total income		21,948.00
Expenditure		
Advertising	363.43	
Annual registration fees	10.00	
Bank charges	35.34	
Postages	9.00	
Subscriptions	116.43	
Website expenses	392.50	
Other expenses	194.96	
Erasmus Plus Project - expenses - General	11.10	
SIS project 2020 - expenses	505.73	
European Social Fund - expenses - ESF	671.80	
Total expenditure		2,310.29
Excess of Income over Expenditure		19,637.71

Funds Movement

	At the beginning of the year	Movements for year	At end of year
	€	€	€
Cash in hand/petty cash	142.31	0.00	142.31
Current accounts	41,361.09	18,722.41	60,083.50
Savings accounts	48.83	981.42	1,030.25
	41,552.23	19,703.83	61,256.06

The accounts have been approved by the members at the Annual General Meeting held on: 7th March 2022



Ms. Greta Antignolo
President



Dr. Aaron Zammit Apap
Founder | Secretary General

Sponsors

Platinum



Keeping families close™

AMANDA LIA

WRITER | SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER | CONSULTANT



betsson group

Gold



Silver

Bronze

Blue





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