

## Malta Pride 2021 - #YouAreIncluded

The Pride Movement is about promoting equality, self-affirmation, and visibility of LGBTIQ+ communities by creating a safe space for people to be who they are. The first recorded LGBTIQ+ Pride demonstration in Valletta was held in 2004. Since then, Pride became an annual appointment for the LGBTIQ+ community in Malta and its allies.<sup>1</sup>

**Malta Pride Week 2021** will take place between the 10<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> September, with various events being held at different locations.<sup>2</sup> The theme for this year's Pride, **#YouAreIncluded**, focuses on equality for everyone that cannot be achieved through a one-size-fits-all approach. Malta Pride Week will take place in a context where Malta continues to occupy the number one spot on the Rainbow Europe Map for the sixth year in a row, with a score of 94%.<sup>3</sup>

In order to create more awareness on diversity, an office for the LGBTIQ + Gozo organisation was inaugurated in Gozo. The office, named Qawsalla Hub, will be providing various services to Gozitan members of the LGBTIQ + community.

Malta is also preparing for Euro Pride 2023, in view that Malta won the bid to host Europe's most prominent gay pride event, Euro Pride, in 2023, that attracts thousands of people from across Europe and the world.<sup>4</sup>

While significant progress has been made in the field of LGBTIQ+ rights, there are still members of the community who might not feel included. According to the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) survey carried out in 2019,<sup>5</sup> in Malta, **1 in 5** trans and intersex people were physically or sexually attacked in the five years before the survey, while **33%** of respondents felt discriminated against in many areas of life, such as going to a café, restaurant, hospital or a shop. Furthermore, **27%** of respondents stated that they were harassed the year

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<sup>1</sup><https://gozointhehouse.com/the-story-of-malta-pride/>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.maltapride.org/>

<sup>3</sup><https://www.ilga-europe.org/rainboweurope/2021>

<sup>4</sup>[https://ncpe.gov.mt/en/Documents/Our\\_Publications\\_and\\_Resources/Annual\\_Reports/NCPE%20Annual%20Report%202020%20\(online\).pdf](https://ncpe.gov.mt/en/Documents/Our_Publications_and_Resources/Annual_Reports/NCPE%20Annual%20Report%202020%20(online).pdf)

<sup>5</sup> FRA 2020, the second EU LGBTI Survey – A long way to go for LGBTI equality

before the survey, with only **14%** reported their discrimination experiences to an equality body or another organisation in Malta.

In this context, more efforts are needed to ensure that every person is fully respected regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics. Over the years, the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) has taken various initiatives to safeguard equal treatment by investigating complaints on the above-mentioned grounds, organising conferences and awareness raising campaigns, and delivering training sessions.

Indeed, the NCPE is currently implementing an EU-co funded project, '**Empowerment for Diversity' (E4D)** that focuses on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity, sex characteristics and gender expression and seeks to address the societal and cultural effects of the recent legislative changes. For this project, the NCPE has partnered up with **Allied Rainbow Communities (ARC)**, a grassroots organisation focusing on fostering a sense of belonging and growth within the LGBTIQ+ community.

A qualitative study on the current situation in Malta regarding LGBTIQ+ discrimination is currently being conducted. This research will include both a comparative analysis, with a similar research study conducted by the NCPE in 2011, as well as an analysis of updates with regards to the recently adopted legislation and an envisaged wider remit for the NCPE. Three workshops will be hosted with members of the LGBTIQ+ community to discuss issues faced by the LGBTIQ+ community, identify the needs to be addressed, and the current deterrents resulting in underreporting of discrimination.

In order to further sustain its work towards equality, the NCPE will take part in the Malta Pride Week 2021, thereby maximising exposure of the services offered by NCPE with the LGBTIQ+ community, and publicising the project work, its aims and activities. Representatives of the NCPE will be present at events of the Malta Pride Week 2021.



As Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, said *“being yourself is not your ideology. It’s your identity. And no-one can ever take it away.”*<sup>6</sup>

*The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) can be contacted on: 2295 7850 or [equality@gov.mt](mailto:equality@gov.mt) or our Facebook page.*

**15<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

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<sup>6</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0698&from=EN>