

Gender Mainstreaming in the Public Service

Gender mainstreaming has been official Government policy since June 2000. This policy was reiterated in 2012 through [OPM Circular No. 15/2012](#), to ensure that policies and practices are gender mainstreamed. Through this process, Government departments and entities assess the implications for women and men of any planned action and integrate them within the dimensions of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres. The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) assists this process by providing training to public officials on gender mainstreaming as well as on the compilation of the annual report on the implementation of gender mainstreaming in the public sector.

What exactly is gender mainstreaming?:

- A process used to achieve gender equality.
- A holistic approach towards gender equality that tackles the circumstances and needs of different groups of women and men, girls and boys in all areas of life.
- Acknowledging the differences between women and men, girls and boys.
- Bringing the experience, knowledge, and interests of women and men, girls and boys to bear on the agenda.
- Establishing adequate accountability mechanisms for monitoring progress related to gender equality.
- Identifying issues and concerns related to gender equality across all areas of activities.
- Diagnosing the root causes of gender inequality and addressing the differences and disparities through remedial action plans.

Reporting on OPM Circular No. 15/2012:

Since gender mainstreaming is an official government policy, every department and entity are requested to prepare a report on the measures taken and the progress achieved in the sphere of gender equality and mainstreaming. This report is to be forwarded to the [National Commission for the Promotion of Equality \(NCPE\)](#) on an annual basis and a synopsis of it is also to be included in the department's annual report. In 2015, the template used for such report was revised and then simplified to facilitate reporting. To this end, during this same year, NCPE provided new training sessions to public officers on the new template.

Training sessions on Equality:

NCPE regularly delivers equality training to the Public Administration. A session delivered by NCPE focusing on equality and the Public Service is integrated in the induction training for public officers and other training sessions are carried out at the request of

departments/entities. Moreover, a number of sessions are organised yearly to equip public service officers with a better understanding of gender mainstreaming and the reporting obligations emanating from government policy. Therefore, such training sessions targeting Public officers are ongoing and are also provided upon request.

The following are the topics covered by NCPE in these training sessions:

- **Equality legislation:** Maltese laws prohibiting discrimination, the areas they cover and the grounds that are protected by these laws
- **Discrimination:** Different forms of discrimination and harassment at the work-place and in the provision of goods and services
- **Sexual Harassment:** What constitutes sexual harassment and how it can be addressed
- **The six grounds of discrimination:** Social issues surrounding the six protected grounds within NCPE's remit - gender, sexual orientation, age, religion/belief, race/ethnic origin and gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics
- **Stereotypes:** Defining the term stereotypes and the importance of avoiding stereotypical portrayals
- **Equality and education:** Fostering a more inclusive and diverse educational environment
- **Gender and equality mainstreaming:** Integrating gender and equality concerns in all policies, practices and actions
- **Diversity Management:** Creating an environment that values and respects differences by taking into account the needs of different groups in the implementation of human resource practices and in the provision of goods and services.

Besides offering training sessions to Public officials, NCPE is also available to discuss and answer any queries related to equality issues that Public officials might have, in particular on the gender mainstreaming strategy and reporting.

Toolkits on Gender Mainstreaming:

The following toolkits that can be utilized during the implementation of gender mainstreaming have been developed by NCPE:

- [Step-by-Step Guide for Gender Impact Assessment](#): This is the core tool for implementing a gender mainstreaming strategy. This guide aims at promoting a system of accountability and effectiveness by means of assessing the impact on gender throughout the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of any legislation, policy, activity, programme or project.
- [Checklist for Gender Mainstreaming of Government Action](#): This checklist offers a step-by-step guide for gender mainstreaming in the Public Service.
- [Factsheet](#): Gives a brief outline on what gender mainstreaming is, its aims and benefits and how it can be implemented.

For further information on the reporting on gender equality and gender mainstreaming (as in OPM Circular No.15/2012), on the training sessions and the toolkits that NCPE offers, contact NCPE on 2590 3850, equality@gov.mt or on its Facebook page – *National Commission for the Promotion of Equality*.