

Women mean business

Research shows that women participating in executive positions give an added value to their organisations that report a better financial performance more frequently. Men and women have different viewpoints, ideas, and market insights, which enable better problem solving, ultimately leading to superior performance. By increasing women leaders, organisations foster diversity in service provision. Such organisations will thus have a more diverse group of high-calibre leaders to drive their business.

In this context and in order to address the challenge of gender imbalance, the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) has developed an online Directory of Professional Women that aims to give visibility to professional women and their competences. This Directory is an online database with profiles of professional women from various fields and backgrounds. It includes information about the qualifications, experiences, skills and areas of interest.

According to the latest study of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), three out of 13 members of the key decision-making bodies of the Central Bank of Malta are women. These figures clearly define the persisting underrepresentation of women in the Maltese economic sphere. Moreover, only 4% of the board members of the country's largest companies are women. These figures underline the need of action to be taken to bring about an increase in the number of women leaders in such organisations.

There are organisations in Malta that are excelling in recruiting and involving women; in cultivating the female talent they have on board and in helping women realise their full potential; and supporting women by creating a culture that is merit-based to enable women to rise to the top. Such initiatives need to increase.

Through the visibility provided by the Directory of Professional Women, women are in a better position to be appointed to senior positions in the public and private sectors or to assume decision-making positions in the labour market and elsewhere, including politics. It is thus that the “old boys network” can be understood to include women.

The Directory is a very useful structured tool for employers to identify qualified and experienced professionals who can be appointed on a decision-making board/committee. The online Directory gives the possibilities to locate a professional woman in a relevant field by saving time and money, as it is free of charge. The Directory, which is easy to use, is accessible from NCPE's website – www.equality.gov.mt – by clicking on the link ‘*Directory of Professional Women*’. When the drop-down menu appears, one can click on ‘*Search*’ to look up for the expertise required. Professionals can be contacted via NCPE.

The benefits of gender diversity in organisations reach well beyond the board level. **Gender diversity is vital to any workplace not just because it's a laudable goal; it simply makes bottom-line business sense.**



NCPE deems that equality should be a reality for everyone and hence strives to empower women and men, from all walks of life, to achieve their potential in all spheres of society, including the economic sphere. This will thus bring about effective equality in Maltese society.

For more information in particular on the Directory of Professional Women, contact NCPE – 25903850 / equality@gov.mt / Facebook

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