

Press Release

NCPE's 6th Annual Conference, 4th June 2010

The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality carried out its 6th Annual Conference on 4th June 2010 at The Palace, Sliema, that was opened by Hon. Minister of Education, Employment and the Family Dolores Cristina. The aim of this conference was to highlight the main developments that were achieved throughout 2009 as well as the way forward in relation to achieving *de facto* equality in society at large.

NCPE's Commissioner, Dr Janet Mifsud delivered an introductory speech delineating NCPE's efforts to safeguard equal treatment and to raise awareness on equality among all stakeholders. Dr Mifsud highlighted NCPE's role in providing guidance to organisations applying for projects funded through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF) to mainstream equality in their respective projects. Besides, Dr Mifsud outlined the developments undertaken in the investigation of complaints and how this procedure has been strengthened and streamlined throughout the years.

NCPE's Executive Director, Ms. Therese Bugeja gave an extensive overview of the initiatives and measures carried out by NCPE in 2009. In fact, Ms Bugeja described various initiatives carried out by NCPE to raise awareness and empower different stakeholders by disseminating information on rights and responsibilities in relation to equal treatment. In particular, Ms Bugeja conveyed the objectives and components of the EU co-funded projects that NCPE worked on last year; and NCPE's commitment to give training to different groups on topics related to NCPE's remit and responsibilities. Moreover, Ms Bugeja explained other facets of NCPE's work, including the assistance given to persons who feel discriminated against by investigating their complaints; the requests for information on equality and discrimination that NCPE receives from various entities or the general public; as well as the research that NCPE has carried out throughout the year.

The following presentation by NCPE's Legal Advisor, Dr Therese Comodini Cachia, gave a detailed description of the NCPE's function of investigating complaints. To this end, this presentation summarised the legislative framework that regulates gender equality in employment and education, as well as gender and racial equality in the access to and supply of goods and services. In this regards, Dr Comodini Cachia presented the different stages of the complaints



procedure, and the powers that NCPE has in providing assistance and redress. Besides, the issues that emanated from some complaints were highlighted to raise awareness and encourage replication of good practices in relation to sexual harassment in employment and the utilisation of family friendly measures.

Moreover, Ms Marika Fsadni, researcher on the EU co-funded project ESF 3.47 Unlocking the Female Potential, delineated the research elements that will be carried out as part of this project. Indeed, this presentation highlighted the objectives of this research, mainly to provide policy makers with vital information in relation to the female participation in the labour market; as well as the research components.

For more information about the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) please contact us on equality@gov.mt or on 2590 3850.