



PRESS RELEASE:

Gender Balance in Decision-Making

A new 'Directory of Maltese and Gozitan Professional Women' will soon be developed with the aim of giving visibility to professional women and their competences in various sectors. The directory will include information about the qualifications, experience and skills of local professional women and will provide a pool of professional women in different sectors, who eventually may be considered for boards, committees and other decision-making positions. This was announced this morning by Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties, Dr Helena Dalli, during the launching of an EU funded project on gender balancing in decision-making.

Dr Dalli said that the under-representation of women on boards and at senior management level is an issue that needs to be addressed immediately and at the highest levels.

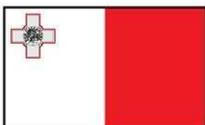
The Minister referred to the European Commission report 'Gender Balance in Boards', published in January this year, which says that Maltese women represent just 3.5% of board members of the largest publicly listed companies in Malta. This is the lowest share in the EU and a long way short of the EU average of 15.8%.

Minister Dalli said that the research component of this project will shed more light on the under-utilisation of skills and credentials of persons within the labour market within these positions. It will therefore help policy-makers to identify possible measures of redress.

Speaking about further government commitment on gender equality on the workplace, Minister Dalli said that all efforts are being made at having more women in managerial positions within the public sector. She said that she has already issued a government circular to the public service and the public sector, which will ensure more transparency when people apply for family-friendly measures. Dr Dalli said that the government has already committed itself with the electorate to provide free childcare services to all working parents.

The project, 'Gender Balance in Decision-Making', is partially funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) of the European Union and is being implemented by the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE). The project is spread over two years and will end in 2015.

The Executive Director of the NCPE, Dr Romina Bartolo, explained that the other objectives of *Gender Balance in Decision-Making* include the empowerment and enabling of women to take up decision-making positions and to tangibly support and advise policy makers on gender-balance in decision-making.



Operational Programme II – Cohesion Policy 2007– 2013
Empowering People for More Jobs and a Better Quality of Life
Project part-financed by the European Union
European Social Fund
Co-financing rate: 85% EU Funds; 15% National Funds





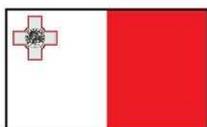
Referring to gender quotas, Dr Bartolo said that the introduction of quotas may contribute to increasing the participation of women in decision-making positions. However, NCPE's Executive Director also said that the introduction of quotas alone will not be successful to empower more women to contest elections, be appointed to senior positions in the public and private sector, or to assume decision-making positions in the labour market and elsewhere. Therefore, there is the need of measures and support structures that facilitate a wider participation of persons with caring responsibilities and greater awareness-raising.

The Senior Projects Executive of the NCPE, Ms Annalise Aquilina, outlined the activities which will be carried out throughout this new project. The first research study which will be conducted shall focus on gender-based representation in the boardrooms in Malta and Gozo as well as in political decision-making positions. The second research study shall focus on gender quotas in the boardroom and gender electoral quotas. The research shall explore Malta's readiness for gender quotas (and/or any other related measures), Malta's view of gender quotas, how Malta compares to other European countries and whether other measures would lead to an increase in participation of both genders in boardrooms or politics.

A mentoring programme will be implemented with the aim of mentoring women aspiring to hold decision-making positions by persons, preferably women, who occupy high-level jobs. A training programme shall be organised for the mentees prior to the commencement of the mentoring period. Training shall cover topics such as leadership and supervisory skills, decision-making, assertiveness and communication skills.

The newly appointed Commissioner of NCPE, Ms Renee Laiviera, expressed her appreciation of the trust placed in her. She emphasised the importance of increasing the number of women in decision-making positions and the fact that this project will contribute to this increase thus benefitting not only the women themselves but also the country and its economy as a whole.

5th June, 2013



Operational Programme II – Cohesion Policy 2007– 2013
Empowering People for More Jobs and a Better Quality of Life
Project part-financed by the European Union
European Social Fund
Co-financing rate: 85% EU Funds; 15% National Funds

