

**PRESS STATEMENT:**

**A significant achievement for women in European Parliament elections**

The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) welcomes the election of four Maltese women in the European Parliament elections held on May 24. This is a significant step towards achieving a gender-balance in decision-making positions given that in the 2009 elections no women candidates were elected, although three women were subsequently elected as a result of casual elections held in 2013.

The NCPE considers that gender-balance in decision-making positions contributes to the achievement of equality in society at large and recognises that a greater commitment is required to sustain the achievement registered in the May 24 elections in future elections, not only EP elections but also the general election and local council elections. Women still occupy a disproportionately smaller percentage of parliamentary seats than men, and it is vital that the success registered in the EP elections is extended to all decision-making levels in the political, economic and social spheres in Malta. This might require institutional changes that remove challenges that otherwise function as barriers to women accessing the political domain.

The NCPE is carrying out various initiatives to continue promoting gender-balance in decision-making positions. A 'Directory of Maltese and Gozitan Professional Women' is being formulated to give more visibility to professional women and their competences in various sectors, the aim being that of enhancing the opportunity of their being considered for boards, committees and for other top posts.

A mentoring programme will also be launched for women aspiring to hold decision-making positions. Moreover, research studies are being conducted on gender-balanced representation in boardrooms and in the political sphere as well as on gender quotas and other measures that may enhance such gender-balance.

This work is aimed at sustaining the positive developments registered in the 2014 European Parliament Elections.

For further information, contact NCPE on 2590 3850 or [equality@gov.mt](mailto:equality@gov.mt)

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