

PRESS RELEASE:

Marking the European Equal Pay Day

This year the European Commission is marking the European Equal Pay Day on 2nd November. The average difference in pay between men and women in the EU is of 16.4%. This means that symbolically as from today onwards women, whilst continuing to work, stop earning till the end of the year when compared to men.

The aim of the European Equal Pay Day is to raise further awareness on the gender pay gap and its long-term consequences, particularly in the pension entitlements for women and men.

The Government is committed to address the pay gap by taking initiatives that tackle the issue of precarious employment, with measures such as blacklisting of companies that fail to abide by their employment obligations. Addressing an International Labour Organisation Conference earlier this year, Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties, Dr Helena Dalli, spoke about how the Government is committed to making work pay by ensuring that no workers are exploited.

The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) works to raise awareness on gender discrimination in employment, including in pay. In effect, NCPE organized the first public event in Malta, in March this year, to discuss with different stakeholders the effects and consequences of the gender pay gap. Employers and NGOs also shared their experiences on how they promote and safeguard the principle of equal pay for work of equal value.

Research on the situation of vulnerable workers in Malta was carried out by NCPE. Differences emerged in the remuneration arrangements offered to male and female employees in the sectors that were studied.

NCPE is also empowered to investigate complaints of alleged gender discrimination in employment. In fact, it is pertinent to take this opportunity to highlight another milestone that has been reached through the investigation of a case on equal pay for work of equal value between women and men. This year, NCPE's Commissioner has concluded an investigation which determined the occurrence of gender discrimination in the wage of a female employee.

The complaint concerned alleged discrimination or differential treatment on the grounds of sex in pay/wage or other work-related benefits. The complainant alleged that she was receiving a lower wage than the male employees who were in a similar or same rank and responsibilities.

NCPE's Commissioner noted that while all of the managers' wages differ in amount, the gap between the male managers' wages is smaller than the one between the average male manager wage and the complainant's wage. Moreover, NCPE's Commissioner deemed that

the company's arguments that there is no set salary scale for managers should not act as a detriment towards the company's employees and that the company should strive for more transparency in the manner in which wages are set for managers.

NCPE acknowledges that the practical implementation of the principle of equal pay for equal work and work of equal value has to be central for companies in order to promote equality and address discrimination among their employees. Providing equal pay can help companies to recruit and retain the best employees; create a positive work environment and gain the loyalty of their employees; make the best use of human resources and improve productivity and competitiveness; and have a better public image.

Employees, who think that they are being discriminated with regards to differences in wage/salaries and related benefits between women and men in the same or similar job positions, are encouraged to contact NCPE and file a complaint for further investigation.

Employers, who would like more information on equal pay for work of equal value or who are interested in applying for the Equality Mark, are also encouraged to contact NCPE.

For more information, NCPE can be contacted on 2590 3850 or equality@gov.mt

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