

## Press Statement

### Malta retained its ranking at 13<sup>th</sup> place on the Gender Equality Index 2022

The **Gender Equality Index (GEI)** measures the progress of gender equality in the EU over time with a score from 1 to 100, where 1 is for total inequality between women and men and 100 is for full equality between women and men. The six domains measured by the GEI are work, money, knowledge, time, power, and health.

With **65.6 points out of 100**, Malta retained its ranking at 13<sup>th</sup> place in the EU on the Gender Equality Index (GEI) with a score that is 3 points below the EU's (68.6 out of 100).

Malta's score has decreased the most out of all Member States in the domain of **health** (– 4.5 points) since the previous index, dropping the ranking from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> place, with 87.8 points. This change is driven by severe losses in the sub-domain of health behaviour, whereby between 2014 and 2019, despite less women and men engaging in high-risk behaviours such as smoking and excessive drinking, *“the proportion of women and men doing physical activities and/or consuming fruit and vegetables has decreased dramatically from 43% to 22% for women and from 45% to 22% for men.”*

This GEI edition also has a thematic focus on the **COVID-19 pandemic and care**. Data show that in 2021, 37% of women reported taking care of children aged 0–11 for more than four hours a day, compared to 14% of men, which is the lowest share of men across the EU. Moreover, 56% of women compared to 25% of men were entirely or primarily responsible for the care of children aged 0–11.

On the other hand, 50% of women and 58% of men depended on grandparents or other relatives for external support with caring for children, while 36% of women compared to 58% of men relied on day care centres and schools. In addition, in 2021 women (16%) were more likely than men (12%) to reduce or change their working time due to care responsibilities.

Moreover, despite the drastic increase of women in employment narrowing the gender employment gap, such gap remains the widest in the EU. Since 2010, in the domain of work

Malta's score has increased considerably by 11.9 points (5<sup>th</sup> place) scoring 77 points. This reflects Malta's score in the sub-domain of participation at work (81.2 points) whilst, when compared to other EU countries, Malta ranks in second place in the sub-domain of segregation and quality of work with a score of 73 points. This is due to narrow gender gaps with regards to (i) the ability to take one hour or two off during working hours to take care of personal or family matters; (ii) as well as the Careers Prospects Index.

Since 2010 women's disposable income increased at a higher rate than men's resulting in a gender gap of 2%, which is the lowest among all the Member States. In fact, Malta's score in the domain of **money** increased by 4.4 points since 2010.

Between 2010 and 2020, Malta registered a decrease of 0.2 points in the domain of **knowledge**. This is due to the fact that since 2010, Malta's score increased in the sub-domain of educational attainment and participation (+ 9 points) but decreased in the sub-domain of segregation (– 10 points). In 2020, women students in the EU *“outnumbered men more than twofold in education, health and welfare, humanities and the arts.”*

The GEI 2022 also measures gender inequalities in the allocation of **time** spent on care and social activities. Malta's overall score increased by 9.9 points since 2010, ranking in the 13<sup>th</sup> place as the gender gap in doing the cooking and/or housework duties decreased drastically despite still being considered primarily women's responsibility.

Although still below the EU average (57.2), Malta's score has improved in the domain of **power** (+ 19.5 points) since 2010, with a score of 40.4 points. These changes were mainly driven by improvements in the sub-domains of economic and social decision-making. The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) looks forward to upcoming indexes in this domain that should take into account the considerable increase in the number of women in parliament following the implementation of the gender corrective mechanism in the 2022 general election.

The NCPE acknowledges the results of the Gender Equality Index and recognises the improvements towards achieving gender equality registered in Malta since 2010. Despite the

GEI score is lower than the EU average, the gap between the country and the EU has narrowed over time.

The NCPE deems that there is room for further progress in all areas, particularly in the domain of power and the reconciliation of work and family life in order to upgrade Malta's overall ranking and to continue enhancing gender equality for the benefit of the whole of society.

**26<sup>th</sup> October 2022**