the national curriculum
minimum
analisi tal-kuriku
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mill-perspetiva
review report
stregening equality
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make equality happen
ml-legislażjoni
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u li him
the national minimum curriculum
- an equality review report

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tal-kurrikulu minimu nazzjonali
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As part of Strenghtening Equality beyond Legislation VS/2009/0405, a project designed to reach out to specific target groups to sensitise and stimulate specific action by stakeholders as their contribution towards a de facto equal environment, a research was carried out to review the National Minimum Curriculum (NMC) 1999 from an equality perspective and put forward recommendations on how equality can be mainstreamed throughout the NMC. Furthermore, the research was aimed at identifying any possible causes of direct and indirect discrimination within the NMC, propose recommendations as to possible ways to ensure non-discrimination throughout the NMC, highlight proposals for specific actions promoting equality and diversity and present the findings and recommendations to all relevant stakeholders.
Through a previous project implemented by the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) *Facilitating Equality Through Education*, the NMC was reviewed from a gender equality perspective. Consequently, the need was felt for an equality review of the NMC which would build on the previous one, while reviewing the NMC from all the six grounds of discrimination: age, disability, race and ethnicity, religion or belief and sexual orientation, while gender was being treated horizontally throughout.

Education is the basis of society. The importance of having a national minimum curriculum which not only, in itself, is non-discriminatory, but which also promotes equality, diversity and non-discrimination whilst ensuring that students are being educated in these issues, cannot be underestimated. It is to this end that NCPE has commissioned such a review to be undertaken. Working on the NMC from an equality perspective, NCPE aims at working towards a society free from discrimination for all.


A special thanks goes to the key expert and the researchers involved in this research, as well as the NCPE staff who worked on this project.

Dr Romina Bartolo LL.D., MJuris [EU Law]
Executive Director, NCPE
December 2010

Ringrazzjament specjali jmur lilt-espert ewdieni u r-ricerkaturi nvoluti f’din ir-ricerka, kif ukoll lill-impjegati tal-NCPE li hadmu fuq dan il-progett.

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Direttur Ezekuttiv, NCPE
Dicembru 2010
1 introduction

introduzzjoni
The importance of mainstreaming equality issues into the national curriculum is a reflection of the importance of the national curriculum itself. The National Minimum Curriculum provides the backbone for the education system, which is a channel of intellectual and personal development of individuals to become capable and equipped to contribute fully to society.

As Malta develops into an increasingly diverse society, the importance of instilling a culture of and for equality is all the more pertinent. In a country where the perception and experience of discrimination is high, the importance of an inclusive curriculum cannot be overstated.

'Inclusion is about the active presence, participation and achievement of all pupils in a meaningful and relevant set of learning experiences.' These include both experiences from the curriculum itself, but also those hailing from a variety of other sources within and beyond the classroom.

This report analyses the National Minimum Curriculum (NMC) and syllabi as established by the Education Division within the Ministry.


Hekk kil Malta tiżviluppa f’socjetà dejjem ilžjed diversa, l-importanza li titnissel kultura ta’ ugwalanja hi dejjem ilżjed pertinenti.

F’pajjiż fejn il-perċezzjoni u l-esperjenza tad-diskriminazzjoni li għolja, għandha tinghata importanza kbira għal kurrnikulu inklassiv.

'L-inkluzjoni hi dwar il-preżenza, il-partecipazzjoni u r-rendiment attivi tal-istudenti kotilha f’sett ta’ esperjenzi tat-tagħlim sinifikanti u rilevanti.' 2 Dawn inklużu kemm esperjenzi mill-kurrnikulu nnifsu, izda wkoll dawk li ġejxin minn varjetà ta’ sorsi oħra fi ħdan u lil hinn mill-klassi.

Dan ir-rapport janalizza l-Kurriku Minimu Nazzjonali (NMC) u s-syllabi kif stabbilti mid-Divizjoni tat-Edukazzjoni fi ħdan il-Ministru.
responsible for Education. The role of the NMC is not to be a document that establishes the be all and end all of the system, but is rather the starting point for colleges and schools to develop their own system within the guidelines of what is in the NMC. Due to this, and because each child has acknowledged in the NMC has a different set of needs and requirements – educational, personal, psychological, emotional – different schools must also cater differently and with enhanced sensitivity to any minority groups or groups that are prone to discrimination in a timely and sensitive manner, which, whilst not prescribed in the NMC beyond the conceptual framework, would be a practical necessity.

It is important to recognise grounds of discrimination beyond those established in regulations. What the curriculum should promote is a principle of equality that cuts across the system, and not only be restricted to the individual grounds which have achieved recognition so far.

This, moreover, requires a shift from the traditional charity approach to minorities and those who have been discriminated against, into responsabbli għall-Edukazzjoni. Ir-rwol tat-NMC mhuwiex li jkun dokument li jistabblixxi l-element l-aktar importanti tas-sistema, izda li jkun minflok il-punt tat-tluq għall-Kullegġi u l-iskejel biex jizzviluppaw is-sistema taghhom fi ħdan il-linji gwid ta’ x’hemm fl-NMC. Minħabba dan, u minħabba li kull tifel/tifla (kit rikonoxxut mill-NMC) ghandu/ghandha sett differenti ta’ bżonnijiet u rekwiżiti – edukattivi, personali, psikologjici, emozzjonali – l-iskejel differenti ghandhom jieħdu hsiel b’mod differenti u b’iżjed sensittività kwalunkwe gruppi ta’ minoranza jew gruppi li huma vulnerabbli għad-diskriminazzjoni b’mod puntwali u sensitivi, li filwaqt li mhux preskritt fl-NMC lil hinn mill-kwadru kuncettwali, ikun ta’ necessità prattika.


Barra minn hekk, dan jirrikkjedi bidla mill-approċ tradizzjonali ta’ kantà lil-minoritajiet u lil dawk li ġew diskriminati, lejn ambjent.
the realm of real equality of opportunity and empowerment, where all children, parents and the educational community may engage in a healthy exchange of ideas and dialogue, leading to a more accepting and co-operative society.

Diversity is not a threat but an opportunity, and must be recognized as such. No longer can we base notions of nationalism and identity on homogeneity, simply because we are all different.

The review of the National Minimum Curriculum and Syllabi is a comprehensive examination of the consideration and addressing of issues of equality as a general approach within the education system, and also within specific syllabi, taking into consideration relevant social and legal developments that have taken place in the Maltese islands since the 1999 NMC.

The aim of this research is to analyse the National Minimum Curriculum from an Equality perspective and to put forward suggestions on how equality can be mainstreamed throughout the National Minimum Curriculum. To this effect, the review:

- Analyses the NMC 1999 with regards to equality;
- Identifies any possible causes of direct and ta' uguwaljanza reali ta' opportunità u l-ghoti
tas-setgha, fejn it-tfal, il-genituri u l-komunità
edukattiva kellha jkunu jistgħu jinvolvu ruhhom
fi skambju tajjeb ta' ideat u djalogn, li jwassal
ghal socjetà ċjied ospitanti u kooperattiva.

Diverseità mhijex theddida izda opportunità,
u ghandha tiġi rikonokxuta bħala tali.
Ma nistgħux nibqgħu nibbajaw l-ideat ta' nazzjonaliżmu u identità fuq l-omogeneità,
sempliciment għax ġna l-koll differenti.

Ir-reviżjoni tal-Kurrikulu Minimu Nazzjonali u s-Syllabi hij ġżaminazzjoni kompresiva tal-kunsiderazzjoni u l-indirizzar tal-kwistjonijet tal-uwaljanza bħala approċċ ġenerali fi ṣħi is-sistema edukattiva, u anke fi ṣħi sittlabi speċifiċi, filwaqt li jiġi kkunsidrat żviluppi socjali u legali rilevanti li seħħew fil-Gżeijer
Malta mill-NMC tal-1999.

L-ġhan ta' din ir-riċerka hu li jiġi analizzat il-Kurrikulu Minimu Nazzjonali minn perspettiva ta' Uwaljanza u li jressaq suġġerimenti dwar kif l-uwaljanza tista' tiġi integrata fil-Kurrikulu Minimu Nazzjonali. Għal dan l-ġhan,
ir-reviżjoni:
- Talanizza l-NMC tal-1999 fir-rigward tal-uwaljanza;
- Tidentifika kwalunkwe kawżi possibbli ta'...
indirect discrimination within the NMC;

- Proposes recommendations as to possible ways to ensure non-discrimination throughout the NMC;
- Proposes recommendations as to possible ways equality can be mainstreamed in the NMC, in particular by highlighting proposals for specific actions promoting equality and diversity.

The structure of this review has been organised in such a way as to ensure that its specific sections may be pulled out to be utilized in the government’s review of the National Minimum Curriculum core document, and specific subject syllabi.

Recommendations are divided into two groups – specific sets of recommendations for each syllabus, and a general set of recommendations at the end of the Review that cut across subjects. The recommendations set forth by this review are aimed at ensuring adequate respect for equality and diversity in schools – within the taught curriculum as well as beyond.
aimed at ensuring adequate respect for equality and diversity in schools

huma mmirati biex jiżguraw rispett xieraq ghall-ugwaljanza u d-diversità fl-iskejjel
2 research design

disinn tar-ricerka
The method adopted for the drafting of the present review included a combination of desk research and two focus group meetings with educators. This combination of methods was intended to ensure that different angles to the review were considered, through bringing together a diversity of views and backgrounds as well as varying degrees of practical involvement in the actual implementation of the curricula.

The desk research consisted of an analysis of the curriculum and syllabi. The review focused around the National Minimum Curriculum, the various syllabi and any relevant policies that supplement the curriculum.

In order to supplement and complement the findings of the desk research, two Focus Groups were organized in which participants (school teachers and persons working within school administration) were asked for their input into the review process, specifically on the practice of equality within their schools.

The first focus group consisted of seven participants from a Church-run primary coeducational school, which included two members of the schools administration, two Learning Support Assistants and three teachers. The participants of the second focus group adottat ghall-abbozzar tar-revisjoni preżenti kienet tinkludi kombinazzjoni ta' ricërka mill-ufficcju u żewġ focus groups ma' edukaturi. Din il-kombinazzjoni ta' metodi kienet intiża biex tiżgura li jiġu klknsidrati angoli differenti għar-revisjoni, billi jinġiebu flimkien diversità ta' fehmiet u sfondi kif ukoll livelli differenti ta' involviment Prattiku ft-implimentazzjoni attwali tal-currikula.


Sabiex jissupplementaw u jikkumplimentaw is-sejbiet tar-ricërka mill-ufficcju, ġew organizzati żewġ focus groups li fihom il-parċipanti lghaljem tal-iskola u persuni li jahmu fl-amministrazzjoni tal-iskola intalbju jaghtu s-sehem tagħhom fil-proċess ta' revisjoni, speċifikament fuq il-prattika tal-ugwaljanza fi ħdan l-iskejjel tagħhom. L-ewwel focus group kien jikkonsisti f'seba' parċipanti minn skola koeduqattiva primarja mmexxija mill-Knisja, li kienet tinkludi żewġ membri l'amministrazzjoni tal-iskola, żewġ Learning Support Assistants u tliet għalliema. Il-parċipanti tat-tieri focus group kienu sitt.
group were six teachers from a government girl's secondary school.

Following a brief introduction to the project, the focus group coordinator outlined the aims and objectives of the review, giving an overview of the six grounds of discrimination. The main issues discussed and dealt with in the focus groups were the causes of direct and indirect discrimination within the National Minimum Curriculum, any recommendations that could be made within the review in order to address such discrimination, and finally the mainstreaming of specific measures in the promotion of equality and diversity within the education system.

The research presented no ethical challenges as the informants at focus groups were aware of the research aims and objectives. Moreover, they participated voluntarily, and did not form part of a vulnerable group.

Other literature, most notably recommendations of various international organizations on the promotion of equality through education, and local research addressing equality in education in Malta, were

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1 For the purposes of the Council for International Organizations of Medical Sciences' definition of vulnerability, it is said that, if a substantial degree of protection is taken to ensure that vulnerable groups are not exposed to harm, this would reduce their vulnerability. See: C.I.O.M.S. 2004, International Ethical Guidelines for Biomedical Research Involving Human Subjects, Council for International Organizations of Medical Sciences and Medical Research Council (UK), http://www.cioms.ch/web/guest/download/Resources/CIOMS_Ethical_Guidelines.pdf.

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Ir-ricerka ma ppreżentat l-ebla sfidi etci għax dawk li provdew l-informazzjoni fil-focus groups jew mgħarrfa bil-miri u l-ghanijiet tar-ricerka. Barra minn hekk, ippartecipaw volontarjament, u ma kinux jiffurma part minn grupp vulnerabbl.

Litteratura oħra, liżjed notevoli rakkomandazzjonijiet ta’ diversi organizzazzjonijiet internazzjonali dwar il-promozzjoni tal-ugwaljanza permezz tal-
read in order to inform the review, allowing the reviewers to take account of any possible indicators that might exist.

In addition to what the scope of the review is, the authors of this Review cannot but point out its own limitations. On a broad level, it is not the aim of the review to provide the broad philosophical background to equality in education, but rather to be concretely and directly aimed at what is currently found in the National Minimum Curriculum and syllabi.

On a more practical level, the education system entails a far broader set of policies, documents (letter circulars, reports, textbooks, materials and other resources used in the classroom) and individuals, and as such this review is partial insofar as it deals with the skeletal basis of education on the Maltese islands.

Having set out the limitations, the review does set out the importance of having established the first set of analysis in preparation for a wider review of the system in its entirety.
3 changing context: legal and social

kuntest li qed jinbidel: legali u socjali
This review, as well as any equality review of the education system and community, is based on a set of social and legal contexts, changes and requirements that have emerged in recent years within the Maltese islands. The processes of globalisation, joining the EU, migration, change, diversity and its recognition, would merely be catchphrase had we to not recognize the psycho-social impact that such processes or their constituent parts have on all individuals\(^4\). To this end, the context which has led to concern with ensuring equality in education is briefly outlined hereunder.

### 3.1 THE SOCIAL CONTEXT

The past decade has also been marked with important social changes, which have left an impact on the way issues of diversity, non-discrimination and equality are perceived. These have included the arrival of persons of African origin, coming to Malta to seek asylum, greater visibility for particular groups including LGBT, as well as greater awareness of discrimination and remedies to combat it. All of these changes make the promotion of equality through the education system more important, as whilst the realities have changed, the education system plays a role in how these changes

Din ir-reviżjoni, kif ukoll kwalunkwe reviżjoni dwar l-ugwaljanza tas-sistema u l-komunità edukattiva, hi bbażata fuq sett ta’ kuntesti socjali u legali, bidiet u rekwiżiti li żviluppaw fi snin riċenti fil-Gżejer Maltin. Il-processi ta’ globalizzazzjoni, id-dħul fl-UE, il-migrazzjoni, il-bidla, id-diversità u r-rikonoximent taghha, ikunu biss frażijiet użati spiss kieku ma kellniex nirrikonox xu jimpatt psiko-socjali li dawn il-processi jew il-partijiet kostitwenli taghhom ikollhom fuq l-individwi kollha\(^4\). Għal dan il-ghan, il-kuntest li wassal ghal thassib fl-izgurar tal-ugwaljanza fl-edukazzjoni hu deskritt fil-qasor hawn taht.

### 3.1 IL-KUNTEST SOĊJALI

L-aħħar decenju esperjenza wkoll bidiet socjali importanti, li hallew impatt fuq kif ġu perceived kwistjonijiet ta’ diversità, non-diskriminazzjoni u l-ugwaljanza. Dawn kilu jinkludu l-wasla ta’ persuni ta’ origini Afrikana, li ġew Malta biex isfitxu l-asil, izjed vizibilità għal gruppi partikolari inkluzzi LGBT, kif ukoll izjed kuxjenza dwar id-diskriminazzjoni u r-rimedji fil-ġlieda kontrieha. Dawn il-bidiet kollha jagħmlu l-promozzjoni tal-ugwaljanza permezz tas-sistema tal-edukazzjoni izjed importanti, għax filwaqt li r-realija jew bidiet, is-sistema edukattiva tilgħab rwol fuq kif jinlaqghu dawn il-bidiet. Tinsab l-pożizzjoni
are received. It is in a position to combat stereotypes and promote mind-sets open to a diverse society.

3.1.1 ARRIVAL OF NEW ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS MINORITIES

![Arrival of Boat People 2002-2009](chart.png)

Figure 1: Arrival of Boat People 2002-2009
Source: Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs.

Migration has always been part of Malta’s narrative, however the past decade has been marked by a shift from its being a country of emigration to a country of immigration, including an increasing number of irregular immigrants of sub-Saharan African origin arriving in Malta, whether by choice or through forlorn events and seeking asylum in Malta. The chart above illustrates the number of arrivals over the period between 2002 and 2009.

3.1.1 IL-WASLA TA’ MINORITAJET ETNICI U RELIGIJSKI GODDA

![Il-Wasla ta’ Nies fuq Dghajjes 2002-2009](chart_2.png)

Figura 1: Il-Wesla ta’ Nies fuq Dghajjes 2002-2009
Sors: il-Ministeru tal-Gustizzja u l-Intern.

This went side by side with other migrants who come to Malta to work or study from both within and outside the European Union. The number of migrants as a % of the whole population went from 2.4% in 2001 to 4.4% in 2008.9

Whilst migration in Malta is commonly understood as referring exclusively to what has commonly come to be referred to as 'boat people' in both popular and political discourse, these do not form the majority of migrants in Malta. In this context the term boat people refers to mixed flows of migrants (refugees and irregular immigrants) arriving at Malta's shores, usually from Libya with a view to seeking asylum. Recent data indicates that 57% of newly arrived migrants in Malta are EU Nationals with the other 43% including both 'boat people' and other third country nationals who may have arrived in Malta through various channels and for a variety of reasons.10

Dan mexa id f' id ma' migranti oħra li ġew Malta biex jahmdju jew jistudjaw kemm minn ġewwa l-Unjoni Ewropea jew minn barra. In-numru ta' migranti bhała % tal-popolazzjoni kollha telah minn 2.4% fl-2001 għal 4.4% fl-2008.9

Filważt li l-miżrażzjoni f' Malta hi spiss millhuma li tirreferi esklussivament għal dawk li spiss jissijju 'dawk li ġew bid-dghajjes' kemm fid-diskors popolari u dak politiku, dawn ma jiffurmawx il-maġgoranza ta' migranti f'Malta. F dan il-kuntest, it-term nies fuq dghajjes jirreferi għal flussi mhallta ta' migranti (refugjati u immigranti irregolari) li jaslu fix-xrut Maltin, normalment mill-Libja bl-ghan li jfitxu l-asil. Data riċenti tindika li 57% ta' migranti li jaslu ġodda f'Malta huma Ċittadini tal-UE bit-43% l-oħra li jinkludu kemm 'nies fuq dghajjes' u ċittadini oħra ta' pajjiżi terzi li jista' jkun waslu Malta b'diversi metodi u għal diversi raġunijiet.10

Figure 2: Newly Arrived Migrants by Origin, Compiled from the National Demographic Review 200911.

Figure 1: Mġjuriż Min-Reviżjoni Demografiku Nazzjonali 200911.
‘boat people’
...do not form the majority of migrants in Malta

‘dawk li ġew bid-dghajjes’
...ma jiffurmawx il-maggorganza ta’ migranti f’Malta
These arrivals furthered Malta's move towards becoming a multicultural society and one where persons of different nationalities, ethnicities, colour and religions lived together. The arrivals of African migrants also increased the visibility of the 'black' community in Malta, one which until recently remained largely unnoticed within the Maltese context. This reception was unfortunately not always positive. Migration was often linked, on the media and through political and public discourse, to issues of security with the arrival of migrants being described in terms of 'invasions'\textsuperscript{11,13}. This created a sense of apprehension amongst many Maltese and led to a backlash against the migrant community symbolised by the creation of a number of far-right political parties and organizations. In Eurobarometer 71 of Spring 2009\textsuperscript{14} immigration was ranked as the highest concern expressed by Maltese respondents, with 58% of respondents stating that this was their biggest concern. Despite the increase in numbers, and the greater visibility of ethnic minorities in Malta, interaction with the locals remained limited. Indeed, a Eurobarometer study found that only 31% of Maltese respondents had a friend or acquaintance who was of a different ethnic origin\textsuperscript{15}. Dawn il-wasliet komplew il-mixja ta' Malta biex issir socjetà multikulturali u waħda fejn persuni ta' nazzjonalitajiet, etnicitajiet, kultur u reliġjonijiet differenti jghaxxu flimkien. Il-wasliet ta' migranti Afrikani żiedu wkoll il-viżibilità tal-komunità 'sewda' fl-Malta, waħda li sa fit taż-żmien ilu ma tantx kon taraha fil-kuntsent Malti. Sfortunatament, dan mhux dejjem intlaqa' b'mod pożittiv. Il-migrazzjoni ġiet spiss konnessa, fuq il-mezzi tal-media u waqt diskors politiku u pubbliku, ma' kwiżjonijiet ta' segurità bil-wasta tal-migranti tiġi deskritta f'termini ta' 'invażjonijiet'\textsuperscript{12,13}. Dan holoq sens ta' biża' fost ħafna Maltin u wassal għal reazzjoni negattiva kontra l-komunità tal-migranti simbolizzata bil-holqien ta' 'nnumru ta' partiti politiċi u organizzazzjonijiet tal-lemin estrem. Fl-Eurobarometer 71 tar-Rebbieqha 2009\textsuperscript{16}, l-immigrazzjoni ġiet fl-ewwel post fl-affarrijiet li huma ta' thassib għar-rispondenti Maltin, bi 58% tar-rispondenti li għal li dan kien l-akbar thassib tagħhom. Minjejjija ż-żieda min-numru, u l-viżibilità akbar tal-minoritajiet etnici fl-Malta, l-interazzjoni man-nes tal-lokal baghett limitata. Fil-fatt, studju tal-Eurobarometer sab li 31% biss tar-rispondenti Maltin kellhom ħabib jew persuna li jafu li kienet ta' oriġini etnikidifferenti\textsuperscript{13}. 

3.1.2 GREATER VISIBILITY OF LGBT

Moreover, over the past decade, the local LGBT community has become more visible, with people feeling able to be more overt about their sexual orientation. A number of gay bars emerged in a number of localities, whilst Malta's first LGBT organization (the Malta gay rights movement) was set up in June 2001 with other similar organizations following suit. A number of websites addressing members of the LGBT community were also set up over the period. During this period MGRM also developed their own resources in order to raise awareness on LGBT issues, and has made this literature available to teachers upon request. MGRM has also called for a clear strategy addressing homophobic and transphobic bullying in schools.

Research about the reception of LGBT person in Malta often comes to differing conclusions. On the one hand, studies quoted by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency indicate that a majority of the population supports the Catholic Church in its speaking out against homosexuality. In contrast, a 2008 Eurobarometer which asked, 'How would you personally feel about having a homosexual / gay person as your neighbour?', resulted in a split with 42% saying they would be happy and 58% saying they wouldn't. However, the same survey also found that 80% of Maltese agreed with the statement 'Gay people should be allowed to marry'.

3.1.2 IŻJED VĠĦIBILITĂ TA’ LGBT


man or lesbian woman) as a neighbour? (1 meaning 'very uncomfortable' and 10 meaning 'very comfortable') found that the figure in Malta was 8.4 compared to the EU average of 7.9. Moreover, 32% of respondents to a 2009 Eurobarometer survey[^10] stated that they had at least one friend or acquaintance who was homosexual. In surveys, about 40 per cent of LGBT respondents state having experienced harassment at their workplace, whilst around the same number report having experienced discriminatory treatment from family members. Perhaps most worrying is the level of homophobic bullying in Maltese schools which MGRM has described as 'rife'[^20].

### 3.1.3 GREATER AWARENESS OF DISCRIMINATION

Moreover, under the influence of the European Union, the past decade has also been marked by a series of awareness raising campaigns on discrimination issues which has lead to increased awareness of discrimination amongst the Maltese public[^21]. Managed mainly by the equality commissions, these campaigns have sought to increase the awareness of Maltese persons regarding their rights under the law. Barra minn hekk, taht l-influenenza tal-Unjoni Europea, l-aħħar decenju kien immarkat ukoll b-serje ta’ kampanji li żqajmu għarfien dwar kwistjonijiet ta’ diskriminazzjoni li wasslu għal iżjed għarfien dwar id-diskriminazzjoni fosta il-pubbliku Malti[^2]. Immexxija primarjament mill-kummissjonijiet tal-uqwaljanza, dawn il-kampanji kellhom l-ġhan li jżidu l-ġharfien tal-persuni Maltin dwar id-drittijiet tagħhom taht il-Europa. L-influenenza tal-Unjoni l-żuha il-deċembru ta’ 2010, li bżellijiet ta’ Stati Maltin li żqajmu mill-organizzazzjoni li għall-byed u għall-talenti l-ċirkwi. 17. 18.
the anti-discrimination legislation. This objective has been met to varying degrees by different groups and in different contexts. Over the past years, equality has also become a hot topic of discussion, often debated in fora and on television programmes. It is interesting to note that the Discrimination Euro-barometer\(^2\) found that less than half of respondents knew what their rights are should they be discriminated against.

\[3.2 \quad \text{LEGAL CONTEXT – DEVELOPMENTS IN ANTI-DISCRIMINATION LEGISLATION}\]

An equality perspective review of the NMC is both timely and mandated by the developments in Malta’s legal framework in the field of anti-discrimination. The last decade, since the adoption of the last NMC, has seen the enactment of equality legislation as well as other laws that will also have an impact on the way diversity is experienced within Malta’s schools and the broader education system. This section of the review will provide an overview of some of these legal provisions in highlighting how equality within the education system is no longer a question of ‘good practice’ but also one of legal obligation arising under national law. Many of the legal

\[\text{il-legislazzjoni ta’ kontra d-diskriminazzjoni. Dan l-ghan intlahaq sa livelli differenti minn gruppi differenti u f’kuntesti differenti. Matul dawn l-aħħar snin, l-ugwaljanza saret ukoll sugġett ta’ diskussjoni jahraq, li spiss jiġi diskuss f’forums u fuq programmi televizivi. Hu interessanti li jiġi osservat li l-Euro-barometer dwar id-Diskriminazzjoni\(^2\) sab li inqas minn nofs ir-rispondenti kienu jafu x’inhumu d-drittijiet taghhorn jekk isofru xi diskriminazzjoni.}\]

\[3.2 \quad \text{KUNTEST LEGALI – ŻVILUPPI FIL-LEĠĠAŁAŻŻIJNI KONTRA D-DISKРИMNAŻŻIJNI}\]

Revizjoni tal-NMC mill-perspettiva tal-ugwaljanza waslet ti zmienha u hi meħtiega wkoll minhabba l-iżviluppi fil-qafas legali ta’ Malta fil-qasam ta’ kontra d-diskriminazzjoni. Fl-aħħar decenju, sa mill-adozzjoni tal-aħħar NMC, ġiet imwaqqfa leġislazzjoni dwar l-ugwaljanza kif ukoll liġijiet ohra li wkoll se jkollhom impatt fuq il-mod ta’ kif id-diversità hi esperjenzata fl-iskejjel Maltin u s-sistema edukattiva usa’. Din it-taqsim ta’ revizjoni se tipprovdi ħarsa generali ta’ wħud minn dawn id-dispożizzjonijiet legali billi turi kif l-ugwaljanza fi ħdan is-sistema edukattiva m’ċħadhiex biss kwistjoni ta’ ἱ’prattika ta’ja’iżda wkoll wiehed mill-obbligi legali li johorgu mil-liġi nazzjonali. Hafna mid-dispożizzjonijiet legali
provisions take the form of transposition of relevant EU Directives most notably:


1. Id-Direttiva tal-Kunsill 2000/78/KE tas-27 ta’ Novembru 2000 li tistabbilixxi qafas generali ghall-ugwaljanza fit-trattament fl-impjieg u fix-xoghol\textsuperscript{15}.


The Maltese anti-discrimination legal framework is incorporated in a number of acts of parliament as well as a number of key legal notices. The most relevant are: Il-qafas legali Malti kontra d-diskriminazzjoni hu inkorporat f-numru ta’ atti tal-parlament kif ukoll numru ta’ awiżi legali ewlenir. L-izjed rilevanti huma:

1. Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act\textsuperscript{25} 1. l-Att dwar OPPORTUNITAJET INDAQS (PERSONU b’ DISABILITTA)\textsuperscript{35}.
The relevant provisions of these instruments will be considered hereunder.

3.2.1 **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES (PERSONS WITH DISABILITY) ACT**

Title 2 of Part III of the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act deals specifically with discrimination in education. It prohibits such discrimination at every stage of the process. Article 11 provides:

11 (1) Save as provided for in sub-articles (2) and (3) of this article, it shall be unlawful for an educational authority or institution to discriminate against:

(a) an applicant for admission as a student on the grounds of his disability or a disability of any of his family members -

(ii) by refusing or failing to accept his application for such admission, or

(iii) in the terms or conditions on which such educational authority or institution is prepared to admit him as a student; and, or,

11 (1) Salv kif provdut fis-subartikoli (2) u (3) ta’ dan l-artikolu, awtorità jew istituzzjoni edukattiva ma tistax tiddiskrimina kontra:

[a] min japplika biex jiddahhal bhala student minhabba fixi diżabilità tieghu jew xi diżabilità ta’ xi wiehed mill-membri tal-familja tieghu -

[i] bitti tichadlu jew tonqos milli tilqa’ l-applikazzjoni tieghu ghal dak id-dhul, jew

[ii] fil-patti jew kondizzjonijiet li bihom dik l-awtorità jew istituzzjoni edukattiva tkun lesta li ddahlu bhala student; u, jew,
(b) a student on the grounds of his disability or disability of any of his family members by
(ii) denying him access, or limiting his access, to any benefit provided by such educational authority or institution; or
(iii) expelling him from the educational institution he is attending.

The exceptions provided for these rules are when the institution is set up primarily for a student with a particular disability\(^{26}\) and when admission of such disabled person would impose unjustifiable hardship on the institution.\(^{31}\) The act defines the education institution broadly as including any kindergarten, school, college, university or other institution at which education or training is provided.\(^{32}\) Disability, in turn, is taken to mean: a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of a person.\(^{33}\) Discrimination in this context is defined broadly as including less favourable treatment linked to one's disability or requirements linked to one's disability\(^{24}\) in circumstances which are the same or not materially different. In this context, the fact that different accommodation and, or, services may be

\(^{26}\) Article 11(2)(d) states that 'Where an educational authority or institution has been wholly or primarily established or maintained with the purpose or for the benefit of disabled persons, the authority or institution may restrict admission to such an institution to persons who only have the particular or specific disability and exclude admission to other persons who have the particular or specific disability but are not disabled'.

\(^{31}\) Article 11(2)(d).

\(^{24}\) The term "requirements" refers to the need for auxiliary aids or other assistance.
required by the person with a disability shall in no case be deemed as constituting circumstances which are materially different. These provisions do not make direct reference to the quality of education given, nor do they specifically address the actual methodologies and tools adopted within the classroom, the implication being that once access has been negotiated discrimination is no longer an issue of concern. This is in contrast with the specific reference to such content found in the Equality for Men and Women Act (discussed below).

3.2.2 EQUALITY FOR MEN AND WOMEN ACT

The provisions relating to education in the Equality for Men and Women Act are an improvement on the provisions outlined above in the sense that they not only regulate issues of formal access but also the content of the education provided. They therefore go further than the Disability Act. Article 8 provides that:

8. (1) It shall be unlawful for any educational establishment or for any other entity providing vocational training or guidance to discriminate against any person in -
(a) the access to any course, vocational training or guidance; or
(b) the award of educational support for students or trainees; or
(c) in the selection and implementation of

3.2.2 L-ATT DWAR L-UGVALJANZA

GHALL-IRGIEL U N-NISA

ld-dispożizzjonijiet relatati mal-edukazzjoni fl-Att dwar l-Ugwaljanza għall-Irgiel u n-Nisa huma tiljib fuq id-dispożizzjonijiet deskritti hawn fuq fis-sens li mhux biss jirregolaw kwistjonijiet ta’ access formal iżda wkoll il-kontent tal-edukazzjoni provduta. Għaldaqstant dawn imorro lill hinn mill-Att dwar id-Diżabilità. L-Artikuolu 8 jipprovdi li:

8. (1) L-ebda stabbiliment edukattiv jew stabbiliment ieħor li jagħti taħri jew gwida vokazzjonali ma jista’ jiddiskrimina kontra xi hadd -
(a) fl-attendenza għal xi kors, tahri jew gwida vokazzjonali; jew
(b) fl-ghoti ta’ appoġġ edukattiv għal studenti jew trainees, jew
the curricula; or

d) in the assessment of the skills or
knowledge of the students or trainees.

Furthermore, it shall be the duty of
educational establishments and entities
providing vocational training, within the
limits of their competence to ensure that
curricula and textbooks do not propagate
discrimination.36

 Discrimination in this context, is defined
as discrimination based on sex or because
of family responsibilities and includes the
treatment of a person in a less favourable
manner than other person is, has been or
would be treated on the grounds of sex or
because of family responsibilities.

3.2.3 EQUAL TREATMENT OF PERSONS ORDER

The Equal Treatment of Persons Order,
which transposed into Maltese law the non-
employment sections of the Race Directive,
also prohibits discrimination in education, this
time on the basis of race and ethnic origin.
Article 4 provides that:

4. (l) No person, establishment or entity,
whether in the private or public sector and
including public bodies, shall discriminate

(c) fl-għażla u fl-implimentazzjoni tal-
kurrikuli; jew (d) fil-valutazzjoni ta' kultHits jew
konokxenja tal-isudenti jew trainees.

Ikun id-dmir ta' stabbilimenti u entijiet
edukattivi li jipprovdju tahriq vokazzjonatal, fil-
parametri tal-kompetenza taghhom li jizzguraw
li l-kurrikula u l-kotba skolastici ma jkunux
jippropagaw ebda diskriminazzjoni.36

F'dan il-kuntest, id-diskriminazzjoni hi definita
bhata diskriminazzjoni abbażi tas-sess jew
minhabba r-responsabbiltajiet li g gib il-
familja u tinkludi t-trattament ta' persuna
b'mod anqas favorevoli mit-trattament
moghti jew li jista' j kun moghti il-persuna
ohra għal raġunijiet ta' sess jew minhabba
responsabbiltajiet li g gib il-fam lja.

3.2.3 ORDNI DWAR TRATTAMENT
INDAQS TA' PERSUNI

L-Ordni dwar Trattament Indaqs ta' Persuni, li
ttrasponiet fil-liġi Maltija t-taqsiminiet mhux dwar
l-impieg tad-Direttiva dwar ir-Razza, tipprobbixxi wkoll
id-diskriminazzjoni fl-edukazzjoni, din id-clarba fuq il-
bażtar-rażza u l-origini etnika. L-Artikolu 4 jipprovdji li:

4. (l) L-ebda persuna, stabbiliment jew entià, kemm
jekk fis-settur pubbliku kemm f'dak privat
inkluzi korpi pubbliċi, m'għandha
against any other person in relation to, inter alia, education.

tiddiskrimina kontra xi persuna ohra dwar, inter alia, l-edukazzjoni.

Whilst no definition or elaboration is provided in this context, it is reasonable to interpret this provision as taking into account the same remit proposed by the Equality between men and women act most notably because of the references between the order and the Act whereby, for instance, the order extends the remit of the NCPE which is created through the Act.

3.2.4 POSITIVE ACTION MEASURES

It is important at this stage to note that none of the anti-discrimination legislation prohibits the perusal of positive action measures aimed at ensuring effective equality in practice. Indeed, in order for the education system to equally address the needs and concerns of all students it is crucial that such measures are adopted in order to overcome the structural barriers faced by particular groups. For instance, extra language lessons may be required for newly arrived migrants whilst specific equipment may be required in the cases of students with a disability. Equal opportunities will not be achieved unless, for instance, language requirements are addressed. Such measures should therefore be promoted and encouraged within the Maltese education system.37

3.2.4 MIŻURI TA’ AZŻJONI POŻITTIVA

3.2.5 OVERVIEW

The legal framework therefore prohibits (to varying degrees) discrimination on the basis of disability, gender and race. In line with the limitations of EU law in the field of equality, no similar provisions exist with regards to the other grounds of discrimination (sexual orientation, religion and age). This is possibly one of the biggest weaknesses in the legal framework, in that it creates a hierarchy of grounds, prohibiting discrimination (in education) for some grounds but not for others. The challenge, therefore, is in ensuring that any future changes to the NMC will ensure that the legal requirements emanating from the existing legal framework is interpreted in such a way as to ensure the highest degree of equality for all grounds.

Moreover, what these provisions mean in practice is that two institutions now have a competence to look into claims of discrimination within educational establishments and by the education system itself. In the case of disability, the relevant entity is the National Commission for Persons with Disability whilst in the case of gender and race, the relevant entity is the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality.

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3.2.5 MARSAM ĠENERALI


Whilst at the time of the drafting of the previous curriculum the promotion of equality was a matter of discretion because there was no formal legal obligation, there is now a legal obligation to prevent cases of, and protect people from, discrimination.

It is to be stated however, that the provisions as they currently stand, are limited to the prohibition of discrimination and do not go as far as to require the promotion of equality. Even so, the provisions, most notably those established under the equality between men and women, clearly require that the curriculum, including the textbooks and materials used are such as they do not propagate discrimination.

3.2.6 OTHER RELEVANT LEGISLATION: ASYLUM LEGISLATION

Whilst asylum legislation does not in itself tackle the issue of discrimination, the provisions enshrined therein, which effectively formalise the right to education for minors who are going through or who have been through the asylum system provides the basis for more ethnically diverse classes in Malta. As such, these provisions are relevant for the present research. The Refugee Act provides that an

3.2.6 LEĠISLAZZJONI RILEVANTI OĦRA: LEĠISLAZZJONI DWAR L-ASIL

applicant for asylum shall have access to state education and training whilst the Reception of Asylum Seekers Regulations provides that:

9 (1) Minor children of asylum seekers and asylum seekers who are minors shall have access to the education system under similar conditions as Maltese nationals for so long as an expulsion measure against them or their parents is not actually enforced; such education may be provided as may be determined by the Director of Education.

Whilst the corresponding provisions in the procedural standards in examining application for refugee status only refer to persons who have been granted protection, the wording of the above provision implies that minors or minor children of asylum seekers whose asylum claims has been refused will still have access to the education system, up till such time as the removal may be effected. These provisions effectively exclude the possibility of applying the nationality exemption provided for the race directive and the equal treatment of persons order.

Minor children of asylum seekers and asylum seekers who are minors shall have access to the education system.

It-tfal minuri ta' persuni li jfittxu asil u persuni li jfittxu asil li huma minuri għandu jkollhom access għas-sistema ta' edukazzjoni.
4 the national minimum curriculum

il-kurrikulu minimu nazzjonali
The National Minimum Curriculum is the basic document which lays out the core elements of primary and secondary education in Malta. The ethos behind the syllabus is based on a response to cultural, social and economic changes by building upon a number of themes, namely, 'Values and Socialization', 'Holistic Development', 'Lifelong Education', 'Global Perspective' and 'The World of Work'. As then-Minister for Education Louis Galea notes in his forward, that elements within the national curriculum are also intended to counter certain problems such as 'intolerance, impracticality, economic irrelevance, sexism, gender based career limitations, the emargination of those with special needs, social and personal apathy, and ignorance.'

The NMC aims to achieve this through a set of principles which frame the education system. Primarily, the curriculum aims to provide a student-focused, holistic, inclusive and quality education to all within a stable learning environment. The NMC aims to enhance students' analytical, critical and creative thinking skills while giving them an education which is relevant for life. Furthermore, it aims to foster respect for diversity and continue to promote a sense of gender equality.
The NMC also recognises the importance of ensuring a positive physical environment which is accessible to all students. Furthermore, it recognises the importance of quality teaching resources and learning aids which are of good quality and socially representative. The NMC aims to increase enthusiasm in learning and democratic participation. The system is also aimed to be a continuous and inclusive process of development which is dependent on participation by educators and students.\(^{41}\)

The principles are backed by a number of overarching objectives. These are 'the self awareness and the development of a system of ethical and moral values', 'developing a sense of identity through creative expression', 'religious education', 'strengthening of gender equality', 'education on human sexuality', 'preparing educated consumers', 'media education', 'effective and productive participation in the world of work', 'education for leisure', 'wise choices in the field of health', 'greater awareness of the role of science and technology in everyday life', 'competence in communication' and 'preparation for change'.

The NMC also considers the different stages of childhood development in terms of L-NMC jirikonoxxi wkoll l-importanza li jji żgurat ambjent fiziku pożittiv li hu accessibbli ghall-istudendi kollha. Barra minn hekk, jirikonoxxi l-importanza ta riżorsi tat-tagħlim ta' kwalità u għajnuniet tat-tagħlim li huma ta' kwalità tajba u rappreżentattivi soċjaliament. L-NMC għandu l-ghan li fid l-entużjażmu fit-tagħlim u fil-partecipazzjoni demokratika. Is-sistema hi mmirata wkoll biex tkun proċess kontinwu u inklusiv tal-izvilupp li hu dipendenti fuq il-partecipazzjoni mill-edukaturi u l-istudenti.\(^{41}\)

Il-principji huma appoggjati min-numru ta' għanijiet predominanti. Dawn huma 'il-konokxenza prorja u l-izvilupp ta' sistema ta' valuri etiċi u morali', 'l-izvilupp ta' sens ta' identità permezz ta' espressjoni kreattiva', 'edukazzjoni religjuża', 'tisħiħ tal-ugwaljanza bejn is-sessi', 'edukazzjoni dwar is-sestalka tal-bniem', 'il-preparazzjoni ta' konsumaturi edukati', 'l-edukazzjoni tal-media', 'il-partecipazzjoni effettiva u produttiva fid-dinja tax-xoghol', 'l-edukazzjoni għall-pjaciżir', 'għażlet ghaqlin fil-qasam tas-saħha', 'iżjed għarfien tal-irwol tax-xjenza u t-teknologija fil-hajja ta' kuljumi', 'kompetenza fil-komunikazzjoni' u preparazzjoni għall-bidla'.

L-NMC iqis ukoll l-istadji differenti tal-izvilupp tal-tfilija f'termi ta' żvilupp intellettwali.
intellectual, socio-emotional, physical and moral development as well as the development of a sense of aesthetics and creativity.

The particular aims are focused on the development of skills, knowledge, bilingualism and language learning, personal and social education, and the teaching of religion.

Furthermore, there is a policy of support of diversity in classrooms and the strengthening of the role of parents in the curriculum.\textsuperscript{42} The NMC also considers the forms of teaching and assessment.

\section{Equality and the Six Grounds of Discrimination in the National Minimum Curriculum}

Equality, whilst being a stable concept, must not be taught in the same way to children of all ages and levels. The NMC and subject syllabi themselves set out specific targets and aims for the different educational sectors and (based on children’s age and maturity), taking into account the development of the child. The same should be taken into account in the case of equality – explanations and exploration of the meaning and practice of equality should be dealt with differently as children progress through the education system, having gained broader intellectual and cognitive exposure.

\textsuperscript{42} For the full and detailed focal primary school and secondary aims see Appendix A.
and development. Simplification of equality and non-discrimination, however, should not be reduced to pigeonholing, and should not present absolutes, providing instead sets of both knowledge and skills that will serve as a foundation for later exploration.

Whereas much of the NMC discusses Maltese identity, we must recognize that identity is a multi-faceted part of people’s individual and social interaction, and is therefore constructed as we discuss and act upon it. For this reason, we should not assume that identity is either static or definitively composed. Indeed, the significant changes that have taken place since the publication of the 1999 National Minimum Curriculum – not least accession in to the EU – are symptomatic of the continuously shifting nature of National Identity.

It is important to view identity not as a set of principles that are given to children, but rather as elements that all stakeholders in society – in this case most notably educators and children – discuss and develop over a period of time and on the basis of a constantly developing context and environment. Children are themselves the composers of their own identity, and as such of our social m’ghandhomx ċigu mnaqqsa ghal pigeonholing, u m’ghandhomx jippreżentaw kuncetti assoluti, iżda minflok jipprovdu settijiet kemm ta’ għarfien u ta’ httiet li għandhom iservu bhala bażi għal esplorazzjoni izjed ‘il quddiem.


Hu importanti li wiehed ihares lejn l-identità mhux bhala sett ta’ prinċipji li jingħataw lit-tfal, iżda minflok bhala elementi li l-istakeholders kollha fis-socjetà – f’dan il-kaz l-izjed notevolment l-edukaturi u t-tfal – jiddiskutu u jiżviluppaw fuq perjodu taż-żmien u fuq il-bażi ta’ kuntest u ambjent li qegħdin dejjem jiżviluppaw. It-tfal stess huma l-kompożituri tal-identità taghhom stess, u bhala tali tal-apprezzament socjali tagħna u d-dala li
understanding and the data we collect on our
shared identity.\textsuperscript{43} Having a shared identity,
moreover, does not mean being homogenous,
but rather recognition of equality and a level of
fraternity. It is about acceptance and respect,
debate and recognition\textsuperscript{44}.

Equality should not be taught as a subject separate
from all others,\textsuperscript{45} although when it comes to
identity formation and exploration and expression
of personal and social characteristics, a critical
approach towards notions of non-discrimination
and equality specifically is encouraged.\textsuperscript{46} Indeed,
the National Minimum Curriculum mentions the
possibility of developing projects on the basis of
themes whereby teachers of different subjects
could collaborate. The broad theme of equality as
well as a number of sub-themes within the topic
would be very well-suited to such an approach,
since their mainstreaming into different subjects
would ensure consistency and exposure whilst
creating a holistic approach that would be ideal for
the honing of positive skills and attitudes\textsuperscript{47}.

Furthermore, a comment may be made about
the Policy for Language Teaching which states
that whereas Maltese and English should


L’ugwoljanza m’ğhandhiex tiġi mghallma
bħala sughjett separat mill-ohrajn kellha.
\textsuperscript{45} għalkemm meta niġu għall-formazzjoni
tal-identità u l-esplorazzjoni tal-karatteristici
personali u soċjali, appreċċi kritiċi lejn l-ideat
tan-non-diskriminazzjoni u l-ugwoljanza b’mod
spēċifiku hu mheggexe.\textsuperscript{46} Fil-fatt, il-Kurikulu
Minimu Nazzjonali jsemmi l-posibbiltà li
jiġu żviluppati progetti fuq il-bażi ta’ temi fejn
l-għalliem ta’ suggetti differenti jkunu jistghu
jkkollaboraw. It-tema wiesgha tal-ugwoljanza
kif ukoll numru ta’ sott-temi li ħdan is-sughjett
ikunu adattati hafna għal dan l-approċċ, peress
li l-integrazzjoni tagħhom f’suggetti differenti
tizgura konsistenti u espożizzjoni filwaqt li
tśollm approċċ olistiku li jkun ideali għat-
trawwimm ta’ ħiliet u attituddnijiet pożitive\textsuperscript{47}.

Barra minn hekk, jista’ jsir kummernt dwar
il-Plutika għat-Tagħlim tal- ingwi li tghid
be taught in the language of the subject and that all languages should ideally be taught in their respective subject languages, all other subjects should be taught in English, yet social studies, history, religion and Personal and Social Development should be taught in Maltese. This provides a way in which children may further practice both Maltese and English within different subjects, with the added benefit of receiving additional tuition in both official languages should they not be sufficiently fluent.

Moreover, the NMC states that whereas many of the languages taught in schools are European, “the Education Division must ensure that the country can avail itself of a nucleus of people who have a mastery of languages deemed strategically important. These include Chinese, Japanese, Russian and Arabic.”148 Indeed, looking beyond the immediate European region will prove invaluable specifically since the increasingly intercultural classroom hosts children from a range of regions – not merely Mediterranean or European169. As is also stated in a number of language syllabi, knowledge of a language specifically if sufficiently enhanced with cultural knowledge is a way for individuals li filwaqt li l-Malt: u l-Ingliż ghandhom ħiġu mghaltma fil-lingwa tas-suggettu l-li l-lingwi l-ohra kollha ghandhom idealment ħiġu mghaltma fil-lingwa tas-suggettu rispettv taghom, is-suggettu l-ohra kollha ghandhom ħiġu mghaltma bl-Ingliż, izda l-istudji soċjali, l-istorja, ir-religion u l-Iżvluopp Personali u Socjali ghandhom ħiġu mghaltma bil-Malti.

Dan jipprovd mod li bih it-tfal justghu jkomplu jipprattikaw kemmi il-Malti u l-Ingliż f’suggetti differenti, bit-beneficju miżjud li jirċievu tagħlim addizjonali fiż-żewġ lingwi ufficjali jekk ma jkunux fluenti biżżejjed filhom.

to become better aware of the wider socio-cultural context of the nation the language of which they learn.

4.1.1 GENDER

Whereas two categories of 'gender' have traditionally been recognised, this notion is being challenged in both the natural and social sciences. This development must be taken into account in the ongoing review of the National Minimum Curriculum, as it more accurately reflects a more contemporary understanding of gender.

One of the education system's main aims is that of the preparation of students for entry into the world of work, and for a career, and whereas the Forward to the NMC is not in itself regulatory, it does shape the political will behind the document, by establishing the fact that gender should not prove to be an impediment to individuals to reach their intended aims and goals, be this in accessing the labour market as well as in the role and value of all genders within Maltese society - socially, politically and economically.

4.1.1 SESS


Waħda mill-ghanijiet ewlenin tas-sistema edukattiva hija dik tal-preparazzjoni tal-istudenti għad-dħul fid-dinja tax-xogħol, u għal karrieri; filwaqt li d-Daħla għall-NMC mhijiex fiha niftisa regolatorja, xorta waħda tifforma l-hsieb politiku wara d-dokument, billi tistabbilitxi l-fatt li s-sess m’għandux ikun impedimen; għall-individwi biex jilqu t-tiġi u l-miri intiżi tagħhom, sew jekk dan ikun biex jaċċessaw is-suq tax-xogħol kif ukoll fi-irwel u l-valur tas-sess kollha fi ṣhdan is-soċjetà Maltija - soċjament, politikament u
"You will be pleased to find here elements that needed to be specially emphasised because of what our own society has learnt, sometimes painfully, in our own past, and of what consequently requires change in the way we are and in the way we act. Those elements are a bit like medicine for our national illnesses, and vaccines to protect against clear and present dangers such as intolerance, impracticality, economic irrelevance, sexism, gender-based career limitations, the emargination of those with special needs, social and personal apathy, and ignorance."\(^{53}\)

Indeed, one of the key values established by the NMC is that of equal access to the education system, without any discrimination on any grounds, including gender – going beyond the narrow school environment and instead establishing:

a) Equal access to the education system.
b) Acceptance and respect of all voices (irrespective of whose voices they are).
c) Non-discrimination as a prerequisite and fundamental tenet of social justice and solidarity.
d) The role of the education community in the wider context of overcoming discrimination and discriminatory attitudes.

To this end, the National Minimum Curriculum states the following:

"In a democratic society, all voices are not only heard but also respected. The educational community must ensure equality of access to the educational system without discrimination on the grounds of ability, gender, religion, race or socio-cultural and economic background. The educational process should cultivate within students a sense of social justice and solidarity. The educational community should actively oppose all forms of discrimination by promoting the corresponding attitudes and readiness to act."\(^4\)

Having established the philosophical background to notions of discrimination on the basis of gender, Principle 11 of the National Minimum Curriculum deals specifically with gender equality – that is the recognition of gender as an identity and hence affirming equality (especially in opportunity) albeit with differences amongst genders.

On a more practical level, the Principle sets to the education community the challenge of ensuring that:

"Boys and girls:

u l-attitdunjiet diskriminatorji.

Għel dan il-ghan, il-Kurrikulu Minimu Nazzjonali jgħid dan li ġej:


Wara li jistabbilixx l-isfond filosofiku għal kuncetti ta' diskriminazzjoni abbażi tas-sess, il-Prinċipju 11 tal-Kurrikulu Minimu Nazzjonali jittratta speċifikament l-ugwaljanza bejn is-sessi - jiġifieri r-nkonoxximent tas-sess bħala identità u għaldaqstant jafferma l-ugwaljanza b'mod speċjali ft-opportunità għalkemm b'diferenzi bejn is-sessi.

Fuq livelli iżjud prattiku, il-Prinċipju jpoġġi fuq il-komunità edukattiva l-isfida li tiżgura li.
- follow the same curriculum;
- are catered for in a manner that ensures equal access to the same work opportunities;
- are exposed to the same educational experiences.\(^5\)

Hence, the content and academic experiences presented to students should not be different based on their gender, and that there should be any discrepancies or preconditions, measures must be implemented in order to redress this point and ensure equal access.

The NMC subsequently goes further to highlight the fact that in making academic decisions, it is not gender that should condition the choice of children, but rather, having been presented with equal opportunities to excel at all subjects, such decisions should be based on ability and career goals.

In the case of subjects and careers that are stereotypically linked to a specific gender, the NMC establishes the need for all children to be well aware of both the actual contents of such subjects, as well as the fact that such stereotypes are not based on factual potential levels of attainment of students in these subjects on the basis of their gender.

\(^{5}\) For research on gender equality, see G. D. M. A. A.
The NMC states that children:
1. need to know what various subjects entail, especially those subjects that are stereotypically associated with one gender or another;
2. need to understand that both boys and girls can learn these subjects."56

Yet the NMC does not assume that such stereotypes are based merely on what is explicitly said about them, but also that the "attitude, choice of language and guidance"57 of educators have a strong impact on children's subject and career choice, and that therefore there must be special attention given to the delivery of ideas – official and unofficial, explicit and implied.

Beyond the strict academic realm, as well as beyond specific subjects (both their syllabi and supporting texts used), the NMC provides for a holistic approach to gender equality, stating that this "should be an interdisciplinary theme which teachers can develop within the context of their particular subject, confronting prejudice and promoting more gender inclusive alternatives".58

It is the recognition of educators as communicators with students using a variety of means (lessons, supporting texts, advice, discussions) that is required to foster a more balanced and inclusive approach to gender equality. The NMC suggests that educators should be aware of the impact of their language and attitude on students' perceptions of gender roles.

Minkejja dan, l-NMC ma jassumix li dawn l-isterjotipi huma bbażati biss fuq dak li jinghad b'mod espliciżu dwarhom, iżda wkoll "l-atteğiżament, il-lingwa, u l-gwida"57 tal-edukaturi ghandom impatt b'sahhtu fuq l-għażla tas-suġżetti u l-karrieri tat-tfal, u li għaldaqstant ghandha tinhgha attenzjoni specjali dwar kif jtwasslu l-ideat – uffiċjali u mhux uffiċjali, espliciċi u implikati.

Lil hinn mill-ambitu akkadenuk strett, kif ukoll li hinn minn suġżetti specifiki (kemm is-sillabi taghhom u kif ukoll it-testi ta' appogg użatil), l-NMC jipprovdi għal approċċ olistiku għall-uqwaljanza bejn is-sessi, u jghid li din "għandha titqies bħala tema interdixxiplinarja, li l-għalliemna kollha jistghu jittrattawha mill-perspettiva tas-suġżett taghhom u jikkumbattur l-preġudizzji kif ukollli jofrru mudelli godda".58

Ir-rikonoximent tal-edukaturi bħala
etc) that is the key to horizontally dealing with, and eliminating, gender inequality.

Whereas there has been concern over the use of resources that are not gender-sensitive (that is, that do not portray men and women as being equal), the NMC does not recommend the elimination of such texts, and instead suggests that they should be utilized specifically in order to sensitize children to the issues by proposing critical discussion of such resources.

Rather than discarding books and other teaching resources that do not reveal any sensitivity to issues concerning equity, schools should use these in discussions centring around such topics as gender discrimination, sexual abuse, and the creation of stereotypes.59

Whilst a critical evaluation of text is to be encouraged, it would seem somewhat unreasonable however to impose on educators the dual task of, whilst teaching content, consistently being required to battle against inappropriately-written texts. Whilst it would not be necessary to eliminate all texts that present typical stereotypes, all such books should be reviewed and a decision taken on their value as historical and literary texts in

komunikaturi mal-istudenti bl-użu ta’ varjetà ta’ mezzi (lezzjonijiet, testi ta’ appogg, pannri, ecc.) huwa kruċjali sabiex tiġi indirizzata, u eliminata, l-inugwaljanza bejn is-sessi.

Filwaqt li kien hemm thassib dwar l-użu ta’ rizorsì li mhumiex sensittivi ghas-sess (igailier ti ma jurux l’il-lirgiel u n-nisa bhala ugwali), l-NMC ma jirrakkkomandax l-eliminazzjoni ta’ dawn it-testi, u minflok jissużgernixx li għandhom jintużaw specifikament sabiex it-tfal isiru sensittivi għall-kwistjonijiet billi tiġi proposta diskussjoni kritika ta’ dawn ir-rizorsì.

"Rizorsi bħal kotba u materjal iekhor tat-tagħlim li m’humix sensittivi għall-principju ta’ l-ekwità m’għandhomx ikunu skartati. Għall kuntrarju, dawn ir-rizorsi għandhom jintużaw waqt diskussjonijiet u attivitajiet edukattivi ohra li jittrattaw terni bħalma huma d-diskriminalazzjoni sesswali, il-formazzjoni ta’ l-istenjotipi, u l-abbuż sesswali."59

Filwaqt li għandha tiġi mheggja evalwazzjoni kritika tat-test, ma jkunx raġonevoli madankollu li jiġi impost fuq l-edukaturi l-kompitu dopiju li, waqt li jghall’nu l-kontenut, ikunu b’mod konsistenti rikjesti li jikkom battu kontra testi mikitbin b’mod li mhux xieraq. Filwaqt li ma jkunx neċessarju li jiġu skartati
conjunction with what they may portray in the way of stereotypes.

The National Minimum Curriculum also asks of educators that they should consider the broader institutional and social control exerted over students of different genders, and that structurally there should be consistent improvement and development in the training of educators as well as their pedagogical delivery.\(^4\)

The classroom itself, specifically in co-ed schools, is in fact a site of practice and reproduction of gender roles. Educators will find themselves to not only be teaching about the issues but to critically assess their own actions and dealing with children, whilst mediating any gender conflict that may arise. Educators also administer and negotiate the physical, mental and participatory space in the classroom, and the National Minimum Curriculum specifically highlights the educators’ role in ensuring fair and equitable interaction, in children’s group activities, in the assigning of responsibilities, as well as in educators’ division of attention amongst students of different genders.

\(^4\)Principles in NVQs supra \(\ldots\) pg 32
Yet whilst the classroom is a venue which may be regulated, children enter the classroom already having been exposed and having had experience of, stereotypes.61 The National Minimum Curriculum acknowledges the importance of interacting with the children’s parents and guardians who “should be informed of the different aspects of the concept of equity and, at the same time, be afforded the opportunity to reflect on their thoughts, attitudes and behaviour in this regard.”62

Educators also teach by example, as stated in Principle 12 of the NMC, in which whilst educators work in order to foster “a sense of democracy”63 and social justice”,64 they do this on the basis of their pedagogical practice, when they themselves do not discriminate or treat differently, students who may be different.65

The first Educational Objective – a cornerstone of the NMC, establishes the equal treatment of all persons, on the basis of a number of criteria including gender.

Objective 5 of the National Minimum Curriculum, entitled ‘Strengthening of Gender

62 Principle 12, NMC supra c.
63 See also the European Commission’s Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, which establish the importance of attitude, cooperation, within, specifically skills of negotiation, participation at all levels and an attitude to collaboration, experience and engage, specifically in Objective 6, Social and Civic Competences. Available online at: http://europarl.europa.eu/evr/evr/evr11/evr118580517853013.pdf.
65 Principle 12, NMC supra cXX 22.
Equality is, as are all objectives, divided into three sections - Knowledge / Information, Skills and Attitudes. The division of Objectives into these categories is vital, as equality is itself only partly based on knowledge (and basic principles) and more significantly based on skills and attitudes.

Once again, this objective sets out the horizontal approach to the acquisition of knowledge on gender equality, that is, knowledge of the legal framework with regards to rights and responsibilities within the family and world of work, Maltese obligations under international law [the Council of Europe’s European Convention on Human Rights and the United Nations’ Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)]. This Objective, however, does not stop at knowledge of the legal framework, but establishes that children should be made aware of the “effect of the hidden curriculum”.66

Within the set of Skills of Objective 5, which are meant to be practiced through the curricular experience, there seems to be the resistance and criticism of discriminatory practice, the recognition of dignity (one’s own and others’) and

1 - Għan 5 tal-Kurrikułu Minimu Nazzjonali, intitolat “It-Tišiħ tal-Ugwaliżanja bejn is-Sessi” hu, b’żal l-għanijiet kollha, maqsum “ti liet partijiet - Għarfien / Informazzjoni, Hiliet u Attitudnijiet. Il-qasma tal-Għanijiet f’dawn il-kategoriji hi essenzjali, għax l-ugwaljanza nnifsha hu biss parżalment ibbażata fuq l-gharfien (u prinċipji bażiċi) u b’mod izjud sinifikanti hi bbażata fuq hiliet u attitudnijiet.

Għal darb’ohra, dan l-ghan jistabblix xi l-approċċ orizzontali għall-kisba tal-gharfien dwar l-ugwaljanza bejn is-sessi, jiżifheri, l-gharfien dwar il-qafas legali fir-rigward tad-drittijiet u r-responsabbiltajiet fi ħdan il-familija u d-dinjaj tax-xogħol, l-obbligi ta’ Malta taħt il-liġi internazzjonali [il-Konvenzjoni Ewropea dwar id-Drittijiet tal-Bniedem tal-Kunsill tal-Ewropa u l-Konvenzjoni tal-Ġnus Magħquda dwar l-Eliminazzjoni ta’ Kuti Forma ta’ Diskriminazzjoni kontra n-Nisa (CEDAW)]. Dan l-Għan, madankollu, ma jigħafx fi-gharfien dwar il-qafas legali, iżda jistabblix xi li t-tfal ghandhom jingħataw kuxjenza dwar l-“effekt tal-kurrikułu mohbi”.66

Fi ħdan is-sett ta’ Hiliet tal-Għan 5, li huma intiżi biex jiġu prattikati permezz ta’ esperjenza kurrikulari, jidher li hemm ir-reżistenza u l-kritika tal-prattika diskriminatorja, ir-
an acceptance and appreciation of gender difference as a positive contribution to society.

The National Minimum Curriculum also gives all stakeholders a window of opportunity to be the change they would like to see in the system, by stating that one of the skills learnt is that of proposing and carrying out according to one’s circumstances the changes necessary for the country to move in the direction of genuine and effective equality between men and women” [Objective 5]. In this way, not only are students recipients of the knowledge given to them, but they are also in a position to change – by proposing and acting – what may be inequitable practices.

In the final section of this Objective, that on Attitudes, the National Minimum Curriculum establishes the value of difference, a belief in the abolition of negative discrimination, a belief in equality as a principle of social justice, and an eagerness to alter negative attitudes.

Whereas gender is dealt with as an identity throughout the entire National Minimum Curriculum, Objective 6 [Education on
Human Sexuality highlights the importance of the interrelation between sexuality and gender politics, whilst recognizing the link between the physicality of the human body and the socio-cultural understanding of, and respect for, different bodies.

The starting point of the National Minimum Curriculum is clear – men and women (and girls and boys) are equal, and should be respected both on the basis of deserving to be heard equally and to achieve equally high academic and career results, as well as due to legislation and legal obligations.

Since discrimination may be, and often is, manifested in a number of different, albeit interrelated ways, the education system must abolish all of these. This includes ensuring that educators and the education community are aware of stereotypes and avoid directly or indirectly reproducing them; whilst ensuring that positive roles are presented and that children do not feel that their gender identity in any way impedes them from achieving their full potential – academic and professional, or indeed in any other aspect of their life choices.

Il-punt tat-tluq tal-Kurrikułu Minimu
Nazzjonali hu car – l-irgiel u n-nisa (u bniet u subien) huma ugwali, u ghandhom jigu rispettati kemm fuq il-bażi li jixirqilhom li jinstemghu b' mod ugwali u li jiksbu riżultati akkademici u te' kariera ugwałment ta'jba, kif ukoll minħabba obbligj legali.

Peress li ġ diskriminazzjoni tista' tkun, u spiss hi, manifestata f'numru ta' modi differenti, ghalkemm relatati, is-sistema edukattiva ghandha thassar dawn kollha. Dan jinkludi ti jigi żgurat li l-edukaturi u l-komunità edukattiva jkunu konxji tal-isterjotipi u jevitaw li jirriproduċuhom b'mod dirett jew indirett; filwaqt li jiżguraw li l-irwoli pożittivi jigu preżentati u li t-tfal ma jħossux li l-identità tas-sess taghhom b'xi mod tfiżkilhom milli jithqu l-potenzjal shih taghhom – akkademiku u professjonali, jew fi kwalunkwe aspett ieħor tal-għażiet tal-najja taghhom.
In Malta, different educational opportunities are available to persons of all ages. The National Minimum Curriculum is based on the Education Act, which establishes that compulsory school age is any age from five years to fifteen years, both inclusive, and accordingly a person shall be deemed to be of compulsory school age if he has attained the age of five years and has not attained the age of sixteen years.\textsuperscript{68}

Different groups may be affected by age discrimination; however, literature has tended to focus on two particular groups, namely the young and the old.\textsuperscript{69} The young can be further divided into children and young people, groups that tend to be discriminated against for the same reason – a perceived lack of ability (based on understandings of cognitive development and maturity), and in the case of the latter, often with some element of moral depravity, to contribute to society. This stereotype, however, has been challenged as children and young people have taken on increasingly important positions in society, and have given very valid contributions. The National Youth Policy points out the need to develop strategies that promote and

\textsuperscript{68} Article 2 Education Act, Chapter 377 of the Laws of Malta. The minimum age may also be considered an unconstitutionally discriminatory aspect of child employment practices and mandatory retirement (see Sutcliffe, M. ENAHR: The Law on Age Discrimination in the EU: Member States.

\textsuperscript{69} See, for example, Bax, E. The ILO and the European Union:dcc, 1985, p. 27. ILO Report Series 1, No. 1, 1987, and Bax, E. in ILO Report Series 1, No. 1, 1987, p. 27.
encourage "the involvement of young people in the process of establishing, evaluating and reviewing educational curricula."30

Beyond the statement of children being the leaders of tomorrow, there is a need to recognize that children and young people can, and often are, also the leaders of the present. Documents such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child31, the World Program of Action on Youth for the Year 2000 and Beyond32, Supporting young people in Europe: principles, policy and practice,33 and many others attest this.

Moreover, August 2010 to August 2011 is the United Nations' International Year of Youth: Dialogue and Mutual Understanding, in the establishment of which the United Nations General Assembly stated that it was "Convinced that young people should be encouraged to devote their energy, enthusiasm and creativity to economic, social and cultural development and the promotion of mutual understanding".34 The international community and Malta (through various policies and reports) have recognized the contribution of children and young people.

jinkorajixxu "l-involvment taż-żgħażagh fil-process tat-twaqqif, l-evalwazzjoni u r-revżjoni tal-kurrikula edukattivi."39


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30 Section 3.1.2.4, Malta's National Youth Policy 2010.
The National Minimum Curriculum does not address specific issues related to age in curricular content, save for within Objective 11 entitled Wise Choices in the Field of Health. In this case, the knowledge that children should acquire within their curricular experience include knowledge of the human body, nutrition, hygiene and the health system, whilst knowing more about accessing services, being sensitive to individuals with health issues, and the role of technology in health. The type of knowledge that children are expected to acquire could therefore be divided into two specific sections – one being knowledge on health, the other is a set of facts that children may use in order to navigate the world of health (specifically services).

One of the skills that children are expected to develop throughout their years in the education system is that to “nurture and develop an altruistic spirit for the benefit of persons who are sick or elderly, persons with a disability, and others who may be at risk or involved in an accident”. Whereas there is no arguing the fact that altruism is a valuable skill, this does not detract from the fact that the definition of ‘elderly’ is taken to be tantamount of frailty and dependence. It is

Wahda mill-niljet li t-tfal huma mistennija li jįżviluppaw fis-snin taghhom fis-sistema edukattiva hi dik li “irawmu spirtu altruwistiku favur il-morda, l-anzjani, persuni b’dizabbiltà, u oħrajn li jistgħu jkunu f’xi incident jew fil-periklu”. Filwaqt li wiehed ma jistax jargumenta l-fatt li l-altruiżmu hu hila prezjuża, dan ma jnaqqaxs mill-fatt li d-definizzjoni ta’ “anzjani” titqies bħala wahda ta’ fragilità u dipendenza. Hu importanti li jirrawmu, fis-sistema edukattiva, il-

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75 Objective 11, MHC Stoppa, 14.
76 Which there is no common definitions of the word ‘elderly’, this is generally partly defined in terms of age (that is, the beginning of receipt of a pension), and partly on a declining state of health that does not enable individuals to give a full contribution to society. See World Health Organisation, Ageing and Europe, www.who.int/ageing/
important to hone, in the educational system, intergenerational cooperation and respect for the elderly as members of society who have much to contribute.77

As stated in the Vienna International Action Plan on Ageing,78 "A longer life provides humans with an opportunity to examine their lives in retrospect, to correct some of their mistakes, to get closer to the truth and to achieve a different understanding of the sense and value of their actions. This may well be the more important contribution of older people to the human community. Especially at this time, after the unprecedented changes that have affected humankind in their lifetime, the reinterpretation of life-stories by the aged should help us all to achieve the urgently needed reorientation of history."79

The elderly hence have a valuable contribution to make to the social sphere, and as such the category of 'elderly' should not be equated with weakness. This is crucial from the perspective of equality, since the role that the elderly have to play in society is becoming all the more crucial as the world faces an ageing population80. This in itself will result in

kooperazzjoni bejn ġenerazzjonijiet u r-rispett ghall-anzjani bhala membri tas-socjetà li ghandhom hafna x'jikkontribwixxu.77


L-anzjani ghaddaqstant għandhom kontribuzzjoni prezzjuża x-jaghtu lill-isfera socjali, u ghaddaqstant il-kategorija ta' 'anzjani' m'għandhiex tkun meqjusa l-istess bħal dghjufija. Dan hu kruċjali mill-perspettiva tal-ugwaljanza, ġrax l-irwel li l-anzjani għandhom fis-socjetà qieghed dejjem iżjed isir kruċjali iżjed ma'd-dinija tiffaċċija tixxiż demografiku19. Fih innifsu, dan għandu jirriżulta

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78 World Assembly on Ageing, Vienna Austria, 29th July 1982, See www.waafa.org/docs/madfa/index.htm
79 ibid 12
a greater interdependence between different generations in future⁸¹, and hence a need for enhanced intergenerational communication and intergenerational relations. One factor that may be taken into account is the vital and ever-increasing role that the globalized media plays in the development of culture and identity. The elements to which younger generations are exposed may result in a notable cultural gap between generations.⁸² To this end, discussion and sensitization to such issues would be conducive to the fostering of respect for and understanding of older generations.

Finally, whilst the National Minimum Curriculum forms the backbone of compulsory education that is undertaken by children within the formal education system, one of its aims is to prepare students for lifelong learning.⁸³ In this respect, the curriculum aims to hone the skills necessary to make students aware of their educational needs, help them to evaluate learning outcomes and develop their research skills, in order to continue to learn and live effectively and productively in a world which, though exciting, is unpredictable.⁸⁴ It also seeks to raise awareness of the importance of lifelong learning to future work.⁸⁵ This will help students to counter discrimination which they may experience as they grow older by equipping them with the tools and attitude to contribute to society throughout their lives.

Sexual Orientation is mentioned a number of times in the National Minimum Curriculum, starting from the first Educational Objective, whereby within the section on Knowledge, recognition and respect for all people without discrimination is established. It states that children should acquire knowledge and information of:

"the inalienable right of all persons to be regarded and treated equally and without any discrimination, irrespective of race, country of origin, political views, colour, religious beliefs, gender, age and physical or mental ability".  

Whereas the fact that sexual orientation is not specifically mentioned as one of the grounds may not in itself prove to be discriminatory or exclusionary, the fact that other grounds are indeed mentioned and sexual orientation is not is an objectionable omission.

Objective 5, however, that is entitled Strengthening of Gender Equality, establishes as one of the key attitudes to be acquired, that of having a "readiness to change negative attitudes, for example, prejudices regarding gender equality and


"l-inajenabilità tad-dritt tal-bnedmin kollha li jkunu mejjusa u ttattali ndaq u bbla ebda diskriminazzjoni tkun xi tkun ir-razzu, il-post ta' origini, il-fehmiet politiċi, il-kultura, il-twemmin, is-sess, l-età u l-abbiltà fiziika jew mentali".

Filwaqt li l-fatt li l-orjentazzjoni sesswali mhijiex specifikament imsemmija bħala waħda mill-oqsm ma jistax jitqies li hu diskriminatorju jew li jagħmel eskluzjoni, il-fatt li l-oqsma l-ohra huma fil-fatt imsemmija u l-orjentazzjoni sesswali mhijiex hi nuqqas oggezzjonabbti.

L-Għan 5, madankollu, li hu intitolat It-Tišiħ tal-Ugwaljanza bejn is-Sessi, jistabbilibxi bħala waħda mill-attitudnijiet ewlenin li ghandhom jinkisba, "dik li ikunu lesti jibdul attitudnijiet negattivi, nghidu afna, preguddizzji dwar l-ugwaljanza bejn in-nisa u l-irġiel."
equality between people of different sexual identities". Whilst there is recognition of the link between sexuality and identity, it is unclear whether the identity referred to here is that related to sexual characteristics (that is sexual identity that is closely linked to gender identity) or sexual orientation. Indeed, it would seem that since this Objective focuses on gender, it would be the former meaning of sexuality that is being indicated.

Objective 6 of the National Minimum Curriculum is entitled Education on Human Sexuality and follows the same structure as all other objectives, setting out three sets of learning targets for children, under Knowledge / Information, Skills, and Attitudes.

The Knowledge that children are expected to acquire is related partly to the interrelation between sexuality and other areas of society: the law, censorship, religion and politics. This is important as sexuality is expressed within a social context, and knowledge about sexuality would allow children and young people to know what is and what is not acceptable. Two of the points of information are particularly pertinent:
- stereotypes regarding sexuality;
- the range of sexual identities;

u nis ta' sesswalità differenti". Filwaqt li hemm rikonoximent tal-konnessioni bejn is-sesswalità u l-identità, mhuwiex c'ar jekk l-identità msemmija hawn hijiex dik relatata mal-karakteristici sesswali jiġifier li-identità sesswali li hi konnessa mill-qrib mal-identità tas-sessl jew l-orjentazzjoni sesswali. Fil-fatt, jidher li billi dan l-Ghan jifoka fuq is-sess, akterx li hija l-ewwel tifsira ta' sesswalità li qieghda tigi indikata.

L-Ghan 6 tal-Kurrikulu Minimu Nazzjonali hu intitolat Edukazzjoni dwar is-Sesswalità Umana u jssegwi l-istess struttura bhall-ghanijiet l-ohra kollha, u jistabbilixxi tliet settijiet ta' miri tat-taghlim ghat-tfal, taht Gharfien / Informazzjoni, Hiliet, u Attitudnijiet.

L-Gharfien li t-tfal huma mistennija li jiksbu hu parzjalment relatat mal-inter-relazzjoni bejn is-sesswalità u qgsma ohra tas-socjetà – il-tiġi, ic-censura, ir-religion u l-politika. Dan hu importanti ghax is-sesswalità hi espresso l’kuntest socijali, u l-għarfien dwar is-sesswalità tippermetti lit-tfal u ż-żghażagh li jkunu jafu xinhu u x’mhuwiex aċċettabbli. Tnejn ‘mill-punti ta’ informazzjoni huma partikolarment pertinenti:
- sterjetipi dwar is-sesswalità;
- il-lihrs ta’ identitajiet sesswali;
the inalienable right of all persons to be regarded and treated equally and without any discrimination,

l-inaljenabilità tad-dritt tal-bnedmin kollha li jkunu meqjusa u ttrattati ndaqqs u bla ebda diskriminazzjoni
Whereas what the points are referring to
(whether it is sexual orientation or sexual
identity in the gendered sense) is once
again vague, it is nonetheless important to
acknowledge the fact that stereotyping in
terms of sexuality is acknowledged as a vice
and an issue with which the curriculum should
deal. Moreover, the reference to the "range of
sexual identities" is a positive step towards not
addressing sexual identity as a bipolar set of
possibilities.

Objective 6 also presents a number of skills
relating mainly to one's sexual activity. Two
specific points that are of relevance to sexual
identity are the development of the following
skills:
- Empathy with persons experiencing
difficulties related to sexuality or their sexual
activity;
- How to avoid talk and action that discriminate
against or hurt people of different sexual
orientation.\(^{88}\)

Both are vital in order for students to treat
others as equal as well as to understand
diversity within the context of sexuality and
sexual orientation. However, it would seem
that this set of skills addresses members of
Filwaqt li dak li l-punti qed jirreferu ghalih
[jekk hijex orientazzjoni sesswali jew identità
sesswali fis-sens tas-sess] huwa ghal
darb’ofra vag, huwa xorta wahda importanti
li naghrfu l-fatt li l-isterjotipar f’termi ta’
nesswalità huwa rikonoxxut bhala vizju u
kwistjoni li ghandha tiqi trattata mill-kurrikulu.
Barra minn hekk, ir-referenza ghall-’firxa
ta’ identitajiet sesswali’ hi pass pozittiv biex
l-identità sesswali ma tiqix indirizzata bhala
sett ta’ possibbiltajiet bipolari.

L-Għanò ĵippreżenta wkoll numru ta’ hiliets
relatat l-iżjed mal-attività sesswali ta’ persuna.
Żewg punti speċifiki li huma ta’ rilevanza għall-
identità sesswali huma l-izvilupp tal-hiliets li
ġejjin:
- Kompassjoni ma’ persuni li jesperjenzaw
diffikultajiet relatati mas-sesswalità jew
l-attività sesswali taghhom;
- Kif jiġu evitati diskors u azzjoni li
jiddiskriminaw kontra jew li jweġġghu nies ta’
orientazzjoni sesswali differenti;\(^{54}\)

It-tejn huma essenzjali sabiex l-istudenti
jitrattaw lil xutxin bhala ugwali kif ukoll li
jilhom d-diversità li ħdan il-kun-test tas-
nesswalità u l-orientazzjoni sesswali.
Madankollu, jiżdher li dan is-sett ta’ hiliets

\(^{88}\) IPMC Objective 6, IPMC supra id.” 43.
sexual orientation minorities as 'others' with whom children will interact, rather than being identities that the children will be exploring and discovered about themselves throughout the course of their experience within the education system.

Children must be made aware not only of the prospect and likelihood of not being discriminative towards individuals of a different sexual orientation, but rather of they themselves potentially being from a sexual orientation minority, and hence understanding their own identity.

The Attitudes that should be developed within this objective relate back to the knowledge and skills mentioned above – that is, openness about sexuality responsible behaviour, and respect of persons with a different sexual identity. Once again, there is a missing element of understanding of one’s own sexual orientation.

Finally, this Objective gives a word of guidance to the educators involved, stating that “when dealing with this topic, the teachers must keep in mind the context of moral and religious values of the students and their parents.” There is much to be said about this

jindirizza till-membri ta’ minoritajiet ta’ orientazzjoni sesswali bhala ‘ohrajn’ li magħhom it-tfal ikollhom interazzjoni, izż ġiex mli identitajiet li t-tfal se jkunu qed jesploraw u jiskopru dwarhom infushom tul il-kors tal-esperjenza tagħhom fis-sistema edukattiva.

It-tfal ghandhom jigu mgharrfa mhux biss dwar il-prospett u l-probabbiltà li ma jkunu diskriminiatti lejn individwi ta’ orijentazzjoni sesswali differenti, ġiżda wkoll li huma stess jistgħu potenzjalment ikunu minn minorità ta’ orijentazzjoni sesswali, u għaldaqstant sebiex jifħmu l-identità tagħhom.


Finalment, dan l-Għan jagħti parir till-edukaturi involuti, li jghid li “l-ghalliena ghandhom jagħtu kas tal-kuntest tal-valuri morali u religjużi ta’ l-istudenti u tal-genituri tagħhom”. P Hemm ħafna x’jinghad dwar din id-dikjarazzjoni. Edukatur spiss ikun affrontat
statement. An educator is often faced with
a number of children within a given class.
As has been discussed, the classroom is
seldom homogenous – children would hail
from different socio-economic, religious and
cultural backgrounds, and hence their parents
may have different opinions about what would
be appropriate to be taught to their children.
The National Minimum Curriculum, however,
is based on the standardization of children’s
education – it is based on equal opportunity of
learning and achievement for all children, and
because of this, it is indeed all children who
should be taught the same notions relating to
sexual identity and orientation, whilst being
provided with the space to explore notions
relating to sexual identity and orientation
within a non-judgmental and safe environment.

Since this review’s aim is not that of discussing
sexual education in general but to focus on
sexual orientation, the following should be
noted:

a. An educator is not in a position to make
assumptions about the parents’ and
family’s religious and moral beliefs and
codes, especially (but not restricted to)
tercultural classrooms. Parents may
not wish to discuss such beliefs, and had
they to do so, there is a case to be made
for the standardization of what is taught to
all children on the Maltese islands.

b’.numru ta’ tfal li klasxi. Kif gie diskuss, il-
klassi rari tkun omojenija - it-tfal ikunu gjin
minn sfondi sogjo-ekonomichi, relijiuzzi u
kulturali differenti, u ghaddaqstint il-gejnuti
taghhom jista’ jkolloth opinjoni jiet differenti
dwar xi tkun xieraq li ji gi mghaltem lit-tfal
taghhom. Il-Kurrikulu Minimu Nazzjonali,
madankollu, hu bbaqat fuq l-istandardizzazzjoni
tal-edukazzjoni tat-tfal - hu bbaqat fuq
opportunita’ daqqs ta’ taghhlim u success ghat-
tfal kollo, u minhabba dan, huma fil-fatt it-tfal
kollo li ghandhom ji gi mghallma l-istess
kuncetti relatati mal-identiti u l-ortjentazzjoni
sesswali, filwaqt li ji gi prcvdu bl-ispazju li
ji gi esplorati kuncetti relatati mal-identiti
u l-ortjentazzjoni sesswali f’ambjent li ma
jiggudikax u li hu sikur.

Peress li l-ghan tar-revizjoni mhuwiex dak li ti gi
diskussa l-edukazzjoni sesswali in generali izda
li tiffoka fuq l-ortjentazzjoni sesswali, ghandu
ji gi osservat dan li gej:

a. Edukaturi ma jkunux f’pozizzjoni li jaghmu
prezzunzjonijiet dwar it-twemmin u
l-kodicijiet relijiuzzi u morali tal-gejnuti
u l-familja, b’mod specjali izda minghajr
restrizzjoni ghall klas sjiet interkulturali.
Jista’ jkun li l-gejnuti ma jkunux jixtiequ
li jiddiskutu dan it-twemmin, u kieku
kellhom jaghmu hekk, jista’ jkun lok li ssir
standardizzazzjoni ta’ x’ghandu ji gi
mghaltem lit-tfal kollo fil-Gzejjer Mattin.
b. Whereas it may be the case that parents and children themselves belong to social groups that may not be accepting of sexual orientation minorities, this does not mean that what is taught in schools should support this position, as it would be both illegal and unfair to do so. It is indeed the teacher’s responsibility to counter any discriminatory attitudes that the children may acquire within other spheres of interaction.

c. Last but not least, it is the educator’s responsibility to keep in mind the best interest of the child – both as an individual as well as within the context of social contact and relations with other children and society at large. The curriculum is built around the tenets of improving children’s life chances, and a child’s understanding of one’s own sexual orientation as well as that of others is an important part of his or her interaction with others if this curriculum is to be truly holistic.

Finally, sexual orientation must not only be seen as an identity but also a lifestyle. The National Minimum Curriculum states that “One of the important aims of education should be the preparation and sound formation for marriage and family life”.90 However, it must be

Finalment, l-orjentazzjoni sesswali m’għandhiex biss titqies bħala identità iżda wkoll bħala stil ta’ ħajja. Il-Kurrikulu Minimu Nazzjonal jiġi li “Mira importanti ta’ l-edukazzjoni għandha tkun it-tnejjja u l-formazzjoni tajba għall-familja u ż-żwieg” 90
noted that not all individuals are in a position
to enter into marriage in Malta, on the basis of
sexual orientation. This is problematic insofar
as the ‘family’ is legally constructed as one
composed of two adults of opposite genders.
This means that the accomplishment of such an
educational aim would only be possible for
heterosexual children. Homosexual children
(as well as homosexual educators and other
members of the education system) would
be conceived of as incapable of fulfilling an
educational objective in this regard.

4.1.4 DISABILITY

The National Minimum Curriculum is not
the only policy document of the Ministry of
Education dealing with Disability and merely
provides a general and basic set of principles
and notions to be followed within mainstream
education, that are expanded upon within a
number of reports on inclusion as well as the
New Policy on Inclusion of Students with a
Disability (discussed briefly in this review). 9

Principle 12 of the National Minimum
Curriculum establishes a basic principle for
the treatment of students by educators, who
are democratic and just when they "treat
students on an equal basis, irrespective of

Macankollu, għandu jiġi osservat li mhux
l-individw kollha ġuma f’pożizzjoni li
jiżżewġu f’Malta, fuq il-bażi tal-orjentazzjoni
sesswali. Dan hu problematiku safejn
il-’familja’ hi legalment meqjusa bhala
wahda komposta minn żewġ adulti ta’ sessi
opposti. Dan ifisser li dan l-ghan ikun jista’
jintlahaq biss minn tfal eterosesswali.
Tfal omosesswali (kif ukoll edukaturi
omosesswali u membri oħra tas-sistema
eduqattiva) jiġu meqjusa bhala mhux kapaċi li
jilħqu dan l-ghan edukattiv f’dan ir-rigward.

4.1.4 DIŻABLITÀ

Il-Kurrikulu Minimu Nazzjonali mhuwiex
l-uniku dokument ta’ politika tal-Ministaru
tal-Edukazzjoni li jittartra d-Diżabilità u
jipprovdi biss sett ġenerali u bażiku ta’
principji u kuncetti li għandhom jiġu segwiti
fil-edukazzjoni integrali, li huma spjegati f’iżjed
dettall f’numru ta’ rapporti dwar l-inklużjoni
kif ukoll il-Politika Ġdida dwar l-ir-kluzjoni tal-
Iistudenti b’Diżabilità [diskussa fil-Qosos f’din
ir-revijoni].

Il-Principju 12 tal-Kurrikulu Minimu Nazzjonali
jistablibixxi principju bażiku għat-trattament tal-
istudenti mill-edukaturi, li jkunu demokratiċi u
ġusti meta “jittartraw lill-istudenti bhala individwi...
social background, gender, religious affiliation and ability or disability".\textsuperscript{92}

The National Minimum Curriculum is a wide-ranging document, yet one can find within it key themes that run through many of the values, principles and objectives. One of these is the use of the media and information technology as tools, an element that is further elaborated upon and mainstreamed as Objective 8 – Media Education. One of the expectations of this Objective is the development of skills that would "render information technology accessible to everyone, including children with disabilities or different abilities".\textsuperscript{93} This principle of inclusiveness is important as it establishes the importance of mainstreaming technology (which is a vital social and economic tool) for the use of all.

Since one of the National Minimum Curriculum’s aims is that of ensuring that children are well equipped and prepared for the world of work, Objective 9 [Effective and Productive Participation in the World of Work] addresses the need for students to be knowledgeable about the employment system, and to therefore be aware of what rights and means of support are available for individuals with a disability.

\textsuperscript{92} Objective 12, HMIC supra c. 1, p. 30
\textsuperscript{93} Objective 1, HMIC supra c. 11, p. 44


Objective 11 of the National Minimum Curriculum [Wise Choices in the Field of Health] highlights the need for students to be sensitized to the needs of individuals whose health may be weaker, including individuals who have a disability:

"- nurture and develop an altruistic spirit for the benefit of persons who are sick or elderly, persons with a disability, and others who may be at risk or involved in an accident."^4

Whilst it is certainly a positive that children should be willing to help those who may need such help, individuals who have a disability must not be presented as a homogenous category of people who need help, and must recognize their potential and agency as individuals.

The National Minimum Curriculum also contains sections specific to the different ages and sectors of the education system in which children are. Within this context, two very important statements are made for children of primary school level:

a Including pupils with a disability [as a continuous process, following their inclusion at kindergarten level].

b Strengthening mixed ability teaching [which, whilst not related specifically to

^4 Objective 11, NMIC supra n. 48.
disabled students, is certainly relevant to their academic development).

These factors hence points towards a process that is inclusive, proactive, and that engages all stakeholders including parents (that is, individuals who are outside of the formal education system).

4.1.5 RACE AND ETHNIC ORIGIN

The concepts and categories of 'race' and 'ethnicity' are amongst the most hotly debated and contested socially and politically. Moreover, the intersection of race, ethnicity, culture, language, nationality and religion create a complex mesh of ideas, notions and responses.

Education in Malta is accessible to all irrespective of "ability, gender, religion, race or socio-cultural and economic background". Whereas this does not specifically tackle ethnicity, the fact that both race and socio-cultural background are specifically mentioned is in fact a confirmation of the broader appreciation of individuals' complex formation of identity. Objective 1 of the National Minimum Curriculum establishes the philosophical basis for this practical policy: the inalienable right of L-edukazzjoni f’Malta hi accessibbli għal kultūr mill-abbiltà, mis-sess, mir-religion, mir-rass, jew mill-isfond soċjali, ekonomiku jew kultural xi taghhom". Filwaqt li dan ma jemmibix b’mod specifiku l-etniċità, il-fatt li jissemew speċifikament kemm r-rass u kif ukoll l-isfond soċj- kultural li fil-fatt konferma tat-apprezzament uża taż- formazzjoni taż-identità kumplessa tal-individwi. L-Ċhan 1 tal-Kurrikulu Minimu Nazzjonali jistallbackixxi l-baż filosofika għal din il-politika prattika: l-inaljenabilità
all persons to be regarded and treated equally and without any discrimination, irrespective of race, country of origin, political views, colour, religious beliefs, gender, age and physical or mental ability.

The National Minimum Curriculum document starts out with a discussion of some of the key challenges facing the Maltese islands today, including those posed by globalization. It states that one of our needs is “for our country to move forward with an identity in a global scenario where the concepts of nation and national identity are constantly called into question through the process of globalisation and the emergence of multi-ethnic, multicultural and pluralist societies”. It would seem, based on this statement, that there is a set of dichotomized movements at play – the first is Maltese national identity, the second the threat of its disruption by external forces.

This theme marks most of the statements made in the National Minimum curriculum in the field of culture and ethnicity. The NMC moreover states that there is a “need to provide satisfactory political responses to the tension arising from the confluence of two contemporary cultural trends: the trend of inclusion and the erosion of social barriers;
and the strong emphasis on the affirmation of identity and difference”.

Whereas diversity may indeed be a challenge, whilst being an opportunity, it would seem that there is emphasis on its apparent damage to national identity. Having stated this, one of the established key values of the NMC is that “in a society that is increasingly becoming multi-cultural, the educational system should enable students to develop a sense of respect, co-operation, and solidarity among cultures”. In 1999, Maltese society was indeed becoming multicultural, yet as has been demonstrated in the section on the social and legal context, Malta forms part of a globalization world that is increasingly multicultural.

However, it must not be assumed that multiculturalism is a specific ‘brand’ – it is rather a definition based on a concept of diversity, the contents of which may, and often do, change over time and on the basis of different elements. Objective 2 (The Development of Citizens and a Democratic Environment), in fact, states as one of the important experiences within a democratic school and classroom, the development of an attitude of “respect for our country’s cultural differences and diversity”.


Madankollu, m’għandhiex issir preżunzjoni li l-multikulturalizmu hi ‘marka’ specifica – hija pjuttost definizzjoni bbażata fuq kuncett ta’ diversità, li l-kontenut tagħha jista’, u spiss isun, bidla tul iż-żmien u fuq li-bażi ta’ elementi differenti. L-Ghan 2 (Żivilupp ta’ Ħittadini u Ambjent Demokratiku), fil-fatt, jag’id li waħda mill-izjed esperjenzi importanti fi ħdan skola u klasxi demokratici, hija l-żivilupp ta’ attitudini ta’ “rispett lejn id-differenzi u d-diversità kulturali ta’ pajjiżna”. L-edukaturi, fil-fatt, għandhom...
should be aware of the evolving processes of multiculturalism and diversity.

Students are moreover expected to understand democratic principles within a wider context than that of ballots and counting of numbers – that is in the appreciation of different voices, by “appreciating the importance of a democratic environment” and “the defence of democracy within the country”.\textsuperscript{100} Moreover, Objective 3 (Developing a Sense of Identity through Creative Expression) states that children should develop, as key attitudes:

- an evaluation of cultural diversity as a desirable social phenomenon;
- an evaluation of xenophobia and racism as undesirable social phenomena;
- an appreciation of our affinities with other cultures and of our own distinctive traits.”\textsuperscript{101}

This is related to an active production of culture, which feeds into ethnic identity. Since ethnicity relates to both race and sociocultural elements, it is interesting to note that another key value stated in the NMC document relates to aesthetic experience gained by children, whereby “the school should expose students to the local, regional, continental and world cultural traditions and experiences”\textsuperscript{102}


\textsuperscript{100} L-istudenti huma barra minn hekk mistennija li jifhmu l-principji demokratichi li hdan kuntest usa’m minn dak ta’ dokumenti tal-voti u l-ghadd tan-numri – jiġiferi fl-apprezzament ta’ vucijiet differenti billi jemmnux fl-importanza ta’ ambjent demokratiku u “d-difiża tad-demokrazija fil-pajjiż”.\textsuperscript{100} Barra minn hekk, l-Ghan 3 Izvilupp ta’ Sens ta’ Identità Marbut mal-Espressjoni Kreattival għid li t-tfal għandhom jiżviluppaw, bhala attidunijiet ewleni:

- li jqisu d-diversità kulturali bhala fenomeni sociali pożittiv;
- li jqisu l-ksofofja u r-razziżmu bhala fenomeni sociali negattivi;
- apprezzament tat-affinitajiet tagħna kemm ma’ kulturi oħra kif ukoll ma’ dak li jiddistingwina.”\textsuperscript{101}

\textsuperscript{101} NMC sugraper, MA.
Acceptance of differences in race and ethnic origin must also be taken into account within the broader context of identity formation and lifestyle. One of the values of the NMC states that "the educational system should encourage students to express themselves creatively in different situations and contexts. It should inspire students and show them how human beings, individually and collectively, develop their environment, society and culture." 103

Children are agents within society, and their racial and ethnic background plays into their actions and interaction, both when perceiving the world as well as when they are perceived by others. Race and ethnicity should not be barriers to children’s social development, and as stated within the National Minimum Curriculum it is democratic principles and notions of equal citizenship that should form the basis for equality and equity.

4.1.6 RELIGION

The case of religion is somewhat different than that of other grounds discussed in this document, as Religion is taught as a specific subject in schools, a number of schools are faith-based or run by faith-based organizations, and religious teachings underpin L-accettanza tad-differenze fir-raza u l-origini etnika ghandha tigi kkunsidrata wkoll fi'hdan il-kuntest usa' tal-formazzjoni tal-identità u l-istil tal-hajja. Wiehed mill-valuri tal-NMC jghid li 'is-sistema edukattiva ghandha theggeg lill-istudenti li jesprimu ruhhom b'mod kreativ f'silwazzjonijiet u kuntesti differenti. Ghandha tispira lill-istudenti u turiehom kif in-nias, individualment u kollettivament, jiżviluppaw l-ambjent, is-socjetà u l-kultura taghhom. 105

It-tfal huma agenti fis-socjetà, u l-isfond razzjai u etniku taghhom jaffetta l-azzjonijiet u l-interazzjoni taghhom, kemm fil-percezzjoni tad-dinja kif ukoll fuq kif jigu percepiti minn haddiehor. Ir-raza u l-etnicità m'ghandhomx ikunu ostakli ghall-izvilupp soujali tat-tfal, u kif jghid il-Kurrikulu Minimu Nazzjonali, huma l-principji demokratici u l-kunċetti tasc-cittdadinanza ugwali li ghandhom jifurmaw il-bażi ghall-ugwaljanza u l-ekwità.

4.1.6 RELIĠJON

Il-każ tar-reliġjon hu pjuttost differenti minn dak tal-oqsma l-oħra diskussi f’dan id-dokument, ghax ir-Reliġjon jigi mghallem bhala sugżett specifiku fl-iskejjel, numru ta' skejjel huma bbażati fuq il-fidi jew immexxija minn organizzazzjonijiet ibbażati fuq il-fidi, u
a great number of other teachings relating to social life. To this end, religion features in a number of values, Principles and Objectives in the National Minimum Curriculum, as well as being an Objective specifically dedicated to the teaching of religion.

The National Minimum Curriculum reiterates the notion of equal access to education, including regardless of religion, stating that “the educational community must ensure equality of access to the educational system without discrimination on the grounds of ability, gender, religion, race or socio-cultural and economic background.”

All schools in the Maltese islands have the same curriculum, irrespective of their religious standing, as the Education Act gives the Minister responsible the task of building a curriculum “without prejudice to the specific religious nature of any school.”

The Education Act moreover establishes the following:

“It is the Minister’s duty to provide for the teaching of the Catholic Religion in the State schools and to establish a curriculum for...”

______

the teaching of this religion in these schools, according to the wishes of the Bishops of these islands in this regard."\(^{106}\)

Having stated this, the Act recognizes that not all students are themselves Catholic, and not all parents would want their children to be brought up within this faith. To this end, a provision is made for such students:

"The parents of minors have the right to decide that the minors are not exposed to any teaching in the Catholic Religion".\(^{107}\)

This is in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states the following in Article 14:

1 States Parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

2 States Parties shall respect the rights and duties of the parents and, when applicable, legal guardians, to provide direction to the child in the exercise of his or her right in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child.

Moreover, the fact that the Catholic religion must be taught by virtue of the
Maltese legal framework does not, mean that it should be the only religion taught. Indeed, what seems to have been equated here is the teaching of the Roman Catholic Religion and religious knowledge itself.

The National Minimum Curriculum reiterates what is found in the Agreement between the Holy See and Malta in 1989, which is that "the Republic of Malta guarantees the teaching and education in the Catholic Religion in all state schools, of all types and levels, except those at tertiary level, in the context of the school's aims and as an integral part of its work. Nobody, however, can be compelled to receive teaching and education in the Catholic Religion". 108

The NMC document breaks down the teaching of religion into different sectors as it does with other sets of general principles – into kindergarten, primary and secondary levels. At kindergarten level, children are taught within a context that is highly creative and experiential, in order to provide a basis for later learning of facts, skills and attitudes. Teaching focuses on the beauty of creation, the joy of one's relationship with God, participating in religious ritual and celebration, and an awareness of the mundane

tkun l-unika religjjon mghallma. Fil-fatt, jidher li t-tagħlim tar-religjjon Kattolika Rumana u t-tagħlim tal-gharfien religjuz innifsu kienu qed jigu meqjusa bhala l-istess ħaġa.

Il-Kurrikuju Minimu Nazzjonali jtenni dak li hemm fil-Ftehim bejn is-Santa Sede u Malta fl-1989. li ġir-Repubblika ta’ Malta tiggarantixxi t-tagħlim u l-edukazzjoni fir-religjjon Kattolika fl-iskejel kollha statali ta’ kull tip u ta’ kull grad, li mhumiex ta’ livell terzjarju, fl-isfond ta’ l-ghanijiet ta’ l-iskola u ħalha parti integranti tal-hidma tagħha. Ħadd, iżda, ma ghandu jkun imjiegħel jirċievi t-tagħlim u l-edukazzjoni fir-religjjon Kattolika”. 108

L-NMC jaqsam it-tagħlim tar-religjjon ”setturi differenti bhal ma jagħmel f’settijiet oħra ta’ principji ġenerali - f’tivelli ta’ kindergarten, fuq livell primarju u sekondarju. Fuq livell ta’ kindergarten, it-tfal jiġu mghallma f’kwest li hu kreativ u esperjenzjali ħafna, sabiex jippovdi bαżi għal tagħlim ta’ fatti, hiliet u atttudnijiet aktar ġil quddiem. It-tagħlim jiffoka fuq is-suħija tal-holqien, il-ferhe tar-relazzjoni m’Alla, il-partecipazzjoni fir-rit u c-celebrazzjoni religjuż, u l-gharfien tal-elementi ta’ kuljum li huma simboli ewlėnin tal-Kristjaneżn. Il-
elements that are key symbols of Christianity. The Primary and Secondary levels are covered with specific syllabi, which are discussed later on in this report. What is found in the National Minimum Curriculum is skeletal, yet provides some interesting thoughts specifically in the case of the teaching of religion at secondary level. Here, the document states that “Those children whose parents object to their receiving teaching and education in the Catholic Religion should be given a formation in those universal moral values which provide the foundation for civil conviviality”.\textsuperscript{109}

Whereas it would therefore seem that the principles of conviviality may be taught in a way that is separate from the teaching of religion (or indeed a specific religion), one of the Values established by the NMC, the following statement is that:

- “This National Minimum Curriculum recognises that knowledge of Religion is in itself essential for the moral and spiritual development of a society around values that lie at the heart of social conviviality and understanding.”\textsuperscript{109}

It is indeed worrying that whilst the document seems to categorically state freedom of religion – generally as well as within the education structure, including a belief in livelli tal-edukazzjoni Primarja u Sekendarja huma koperti b’sillabi specifici, li huma diskussi iżjed ‘il quddiem f’dan ir-rapport. Dak li hemm fil-Kurrikulu Minimu Nazzjonali hu l-qafas, iżda jipprovdi xi ħsibijiet interessanti specrikament fil-każ tat-tagħlim tar-religijon fil-livell sekendarju. Hawnhekk, id-dokument jgħid li “ulied ġenituri li ma jixtiqhomx jirċievu iż-żejn li l-edukazzjoni fis-sirra fil-Katolika, għandhom jingħataw formazzjoni fil-valuri etici u moralu universalli li fuqhom hija mibnija il-konvivenza ċivili.”\textsuperscript{110}

Filwaqt li jidher għaldaqstant li l-principji tal-konvivenza jistgħu jiġu mghallma b’mod li hu separat mit-tagħlim tar-religijon (jew fil-fatt religijon specifika), wieħed mill-Valuri stabbiliti mitt-NMC, kif tghid din id-dikjarazzjoni, hu: “Dan il-Kurrikulu Minimu Nazzjonali jagħraf li l-għarfiien tar-Reliġjon hu minnu nniflu essenzjali fil-formazzjoni ta’ soċjetà mibnija f’koll valuri li huma s-sisien tal-konvivenza ċivili u l-ftieh.”\textsuperscript{110}

Hu fil-fatt inkwetanti li filwaqt li d-dokument jidher li kategorikament jiddikjarra l-libertà tar-religion – b’mod ġenerali kif ukoll fi ħdan l-istrukturra edukattiva, inkluż twemmin f’sistema different kif ukoll nuqqas ta’ twemmin, fl-istess ħin jistabblixxi s-superjorità
different system as well as a non-belief, it simultaneously establishes the superiority of religion. Objective 1 of the National Minimum Curriculum also establishes that children should acquire "the ability to recognise the key contribution of every area of knowledge (religion, literature, philosophy etc.) to the person’s holistic development", which once again assigns religion to a central role within a child’s development.

The case is not being made for the complete elimination of the teaching of the Roman Catholic religion from the education system (although some changes to the syllabus are proposed later on in this document, and the centrality of religion should be reconsidered within the multicultural classroom). It would indeed be important for children who are Roman Catholic to learn more about their religion in class. Rather, if one were to assume that conviviality may only be achieved through the teaching of religion, or that absence of faith or religious beliefs in a child or person is a significant loss, then we would be creating a negative stereotyped image and labelling the non-Catholic or non-religious person.

The section on Values and Socialization within the National Minimum Curriculum gives due weight to notions of democracy, discussion, 


Il-parti dwar-il-Valuri u s-Socializzazzjoni li ħdan il-Kurniku Minimu Nazzjonali tagħti l-importanza dovuta lill-kuncetti tad-demokrazija, id-diskussjoni, li persuna tesprimi ruħha u dd-diversità, u b'mod kategoriku tghid li "il-libertà intellettwali hija kundizzjoni importante"
self-expression and diversity, categorically stating that “intellectual freedom is an important feature of a healthy democracy”. It is somewhat contradictory, however, in stating that “in a democratic society, all voices are not only heard but also respected”, and yet “this does not imply that all voices should be celebrated uncritically”, finally resting on the premise that “intellectual freedom is fostered in a context governed by specific values”.

This set of statements seems to not be clear as to what such values are, and it should therefore be ensured that they should be those of diversity and equality rather than the values set out by particular religious and/or moral systems and institutions. Keeping within the theme of democratic debate, the NMC concludes its observations on democracy as a value by stating that “Political, ethical, social and religious discussions between students and teachers should reflect this particular feature of democratic life”.  

Moreover, students should be trained in order to “actively oppose all forms of discrimination by promoting the corresponding attitudes and readiness to act”. Students are hence not merely taught about democratic principles, but should be in a position to actively participate had there to be any injustices taking place.

Dan is-sett la dikjarazzjonijiet ma jëdhir x li hu car dwar x’inhuma dawn il-valuri, u ghaldaqstant ġhandu jiġi żgurat li dawn ġhandhom ikunu cawk tad-diversità u l-ugwaljanza iżjed milli l-valuri stabbiliti minn religijonijiet partikolari u jew sistemi u istituzzjonijiet morali. B’konformità mat-tema tad-dibattitu demokratiku, l-NMC jkkonkludi l-osservazzjonijiet tieghu dwar id-demokrazija b'hala valuri billi jghid li “id-diskussjoni politika, soċjali, etika u religjuza bejn l-istudenti u l-ġhaliema ġhandha tkun imnebbna minn din il-k.indizzjoni”.  

Barra minn hekk, l-istudenti ġhandhom jiġu mħarba sabiex “attvament jopponi kull forma ta’ attitudni jew azzjoni diskriminatorja billi jippromwovu attitdijiet korrispondenti u l-prontezza li ġaċċxu”. L-istudenti ghaldaqstant ma jiġux mghallma biss dwar principji demokratici, iżda ġhandhom ikunu f-pożizzjoni li jippartecipaw li’mod attiv jekk ikunu qed isiru xi inżustizzji.

L-edukaturi huma fdati kemm biex irawmu biliet
Educators are entrusted with both honing skills and attitudes conducive to democratic participation in their students, whilst themselves practicing such principles in their actions. The National Minimum Curriculum insists that educators foster ‘a sense of democracy and social justice’, whilst being democratic and just in their pedagogical practice by treating all students equally on the basis of all grounds including religious affiliation, a notion that is further expanded in Objective 1 of the document, which establishes the right of students to be treated equally. In this way, it is clearly a case of the educators and students interacting in order to create a holistic and democratic environment in which all participants are safe and accepted.

Objective 3 of the National Minimum Curriculum is of particular interest to the ground of religion, as it deals with the construction of ‘Identity through Creative Expression’. Amongst the knowledge and information that children should acquire through the education system is that of:

- the religion of the Maltese people;
- the culture, history and different religions of the Mediterranean and Malta’s history viewed within this regional context;

L-Ghan 3 tal-Kurrikulu Minimu Nazzjonali hu ta’ interess partikolari għall-qafas tar-religion, ghax jittratta l-izvilupp ta’ ‘Identità marbuta mal-Espresjoni Kreattiva’. Fost l-gharfiem u l-informazzjoni li t-tfal ghandhom jiksbu permezz tas-sistema edukattiva hemm dak ta’:

- ir-religion tal-poplu Malti;
- il-kultura, l-istorja u r-religionijiet differenti fir-reġjun tal-Mediterran u l-istorja ta’ Malta bħala parti minn dan ir-reġjun;
- il-kultura, l-istorja u r-religionijiet differenti fil-Kontinent Ewropew u kif l-identità Ewropea qieghda tissawwar permezz ta’ l-istituzzjonijiet
institutions are developing a European identity.”

It is indeed laudable that children should be taught, experience and understand identity formation and corresponding self-expression. Moreover, it is important to learn about the history, culture and religions of the island and the regional context – both Mediterranean and European. Yet what is interesting within this formulation of targets is that there would seem to be a singular Maltese religion (presumably the Roman Catholic religion), and multiple ‘foreign’ religions. This notion is certainly not conducive to children’s understanding of diversity as a feature present within Maltese society, and is reminiscent of a division between us’ and ‘them’ that both creates a division between Maltese persons of different religions (by only establishing one type of religion as being ‘local’ and pertaining to the national identity) and a division between Maltese students and those who are not (by creating an imaginary homogenous Maltese society as opposed to ‘other’ societies).

Objective 4 of the National Minimum Curriculum deals specifically with Religious Education. It would be rather futile to summarize what the Objective stipulates here, yet what is useful to note is that the notion

Ewropej”.


L-Ġhan 4 tal-Kurrikulu Minimu Nazzjonali jitratta specifikament l-Edukazzjoni Religjuża. Ikun pjutttost inutli li jiġi mqassar dak ti l-Ġhan jistipula hawn, izda dak li hu importante li jiġi osservat hu li l-kuncett ta’ ‘Edukazzjoni
of ‘Religious Education’ refers specifically to the Roman Catholic religion. Once again, the assumption is that since this religion must be taught due to our international legislative agreements, it should be the only religion taught (and that other religions would only be taught within a comparative context, taking Roman Catholicism as the grounding point. There is one Attitude and one Skill that deal with religious diversity. These are:

Attitude:
"- accepting, understanding, and making dialogue with those who profess a different faith or adopt a different lifestyle”

Skill:
"- respect towards people who profess a different religion or choose not to profess any”

Both deal with different religious beliefs (or lack thereof) as an external factor to the students involved, and whilst this may be logically the case as students who are not Roman Catholic are unlikely to be present during such classes, the attitudes and skills highlighted here nonetheless do not do justice to knowledge of different religions and cooperation amongst religion.

Sexuality is a topic that is linked to religion


Attitudni:
"- diskussjoni, djalogu, kompresjoni u tolleranza ma’ min iħaddan twemmin jew imjiha differenti”

Hila:
"- rispett lejn min iħaddan twemmin ta’ religjonijiet oħra jew lejn min għażel li ma jħaddan l-eبدا religjon”

It-tnejn jittrattaw it-twemmin religjuż differenti jew in-nuqqas tieghu bhalha fattur estern till-istudenti involuti, u filwaqt li dan jista’ logikament ikun il-każ peress li l-istudenti li mhumiex Kattolici Rumani aktarx li ma jkunux preżenti waqt dawn il-klassijiet, l-attitudnijiet u l-hitliet indikati hawn xorta waħda ma jagħmlux ġustizzja mal-għarifen ta’ religjonijiet differenti u kooperazzjoni fost ir-religjonijiet.

is-sexualità huwa suġġett li hu konness mar-
in the National Minimum Curriculum, both in terms of students' knowledge as well as their attitudes. Whereas the NMC establishes that students should acquire knowledge on "sexuality and religion" (Objective 6 – Human Sexuality), it is unclear what this statement means, specifically since it seems to assume religions knowledge of a specific kind (that is, of a specific religion since it is not all religions that hold the same sets of principles on sexuality). Moreover, when coupled with the statement "When dealing with this topic, the teachers must keep in mind the context of moral and religious values of the students and their parents," it is assumed that the students in class are homogenous in moral and religious values, as any concept of heterogeneity would require not a focus on the parents' and students' beliefs, but rather on what is prescribed within the curriculum as being appropriate to the children's cognitive development in terms of knowledge and exposure to issues of sexuality.

What is particularly interesting is the inclusion of religion within the National Minimum Curriculum’s Objective 13, which deals with Competence in Communication. The section on Knowledge states that:

"By means of psycho-linguistic development, religion fil-Kurrikulu Minimu Nazzjonali, kemm f’termini ta’ għarfiien tal-istudenti kif ukoll fl-attitudnijiet taghhom. Fikwaqt li l-NMC jistabbillixxi li l-istudenti ghandhom jiksbu l-gharfiien dwar "is-sesswalità u r-reliigion" (Għan 6 - Sesswalità Umana), mhuwiex car xi fgressor din id-dikjarazzjoni, specifikament għax tidher li tippreżumi għarfiien tar-reliigionijiet ta’ xorta specifika (igigierri, ta’ reliジョン specifika peress li mhuwxem ir-reliigionijiet kollha li ghandhom l-istess settijiet ta’ principji dwar is-sesswalità). Barra minn hekk, dan irid jittiehed b’konnessjoni mad-dikjarazzjoni "Fil-Kors tat-tagħlim taghhom dwar dan is-suggett, l-għallima ghandhom jaghtu każ tal-kuntest tal-valuri morali u religjużi ta’ l-istudenti u tal-ġenituri taghhom." Għal darb’oħra, issir preżunzjoni li l-istudenti fil-klassi huma omożenji fil-valuri morali u religjonijiet, għax kull kuncett ta’ eterogeneità jirrikjedi mhux biss attenzjoni fuq it-twemmin tal-ġenituri u l-istudenti, iżda izjed dwar dak li hu preskritt fi.hdan il-kurrikulu li hu xieraq għall-izvilupp konjittiv tat-tfal f’termini ta’ għarfiien u espożizzjoni għal kwislijiet ta’ sesswalità.

Dak li hu partikolarment interessanti hu l-inklużjoni tar-reliジョン fi hdan l-Għan 13 tal-Kurrikulu Minimu Nazzjonali, li jitratta l-Kompetenza Komunikattiva. Il-part dwar l-Għarfiien tghid li:

"Permezz tal-izvilupp psikolinguistiku u
socio-linguistic experiences, and formal and non-formal teaching, students understand and learn about:
the diversity of human expression in the social, political, and religious spheres and others, used by people with different needs.\textsuperscript{118}

This raises awareness about the role of religion (amongst other areas) as a type of communication and discourse – moreover it sets out the importance of understanding the religious and context of communication, which can itself lead to a broader understanding of others whose beliefs may be different within one’s own social group and outside it.

5 other policies

policies ohra
The NMC document is not a framework that exists in isolation. As has already been highlighted it is to be seen in the context of other resources and materials which supplement it and through which it is implemented. However, for the purpose of this project, it was felt that some pertinent policies which give a broader understanding of the practical application of the NMC are being given. This section is not intended to be an exhaustive analysis of all policies and supporting documents, but aims to give a basic understanding of how different policies which touch upon aspects of equality complement the NMC document. The policies analysed in this section are the "Guidelines for the Implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum", "Inclusive Education – Policy Regarding Students with a Disability", "School Attendance Improvement", "Standard Operating Procedures", "HELP – Healthy Eating Lifestyle Plan".

5.1 GUIDELINES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM POLICY ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

September 2002

This document goes beyond the others that are being reviewed as it also addresses diversity.

5.1 LINJI GWIDA GHALL-IMPLimentazzjoni tal-Politika tal-KurrikuL Nazzjonali dwar l-Edukazzjoni Inklussiva

Settembru 2002

Dan id-dokument imur lil hinn mill-ôhrajn li qeghdin jiġu riveduti ghax jindinizza wkoll id-diversità u
and inclusiveness of recruitment and staffing of schools, which is a vital and much required aspect of diversity within the education system as a whole.

Whilst, as stated in the document, the process is indeed never-ending, the Guidelines do not identify any specific measures that the school should take, aside from the setting up of a group that should decide on such measures. Instead, the document is based on extracting sections of the National Minimum Curriculum that deal with inclusiveness and equality, and then jumps straight to the assumption that some measures are taken and that the school is in a position to assess their effectiveness.

This is problematic insofar as there is merely a suggestion to liaise with the Working Group itself. Whilst it may be of great benefit that any measures of inclusion should be implemented by individual schools in order to be specifically tailored to sets of circumstances, the organizational challenge of not having minimum guidelines yet encouraging ad hoc measures may prove to be too great to adequately cater for all Colleges and schools. There seems to be no specific complaints mechanism for inclusiveness in schools, that is, the Working Group is linked to the schools but would not see it within its competence to


Dan hu problematiku peress li hu sempliciment suġġeriment biex jixxi id f’id mal-Grupp ta’ Fidma nnifsu. Filwaqt li jista’ jkun ta’ beneficiċju kbir li kwalunkwe mill-miżuri ta’ inkluzjoni għandhom jiġu implimentati mill-iskejel individwali sabiex jiġu mfassla speċifikament għal settejjiet ta’ ċirkostanzi, l-isfida organizzattiva li għad m’hemm linji gwida minimi tħegħeg miżuri ad hoc li taf tkun wisq kbira biex tipprovdi b’mod xieraq għall-Kullegji u l-iskejel kollha. Jidher li m’hemm l-ebda mekkaniżmu speċifiku għall-ilmenti għall-inklussività fl-iskejel, jiġifieri, il-Grupp ta’ Fidma hu konness mal-iskejel ġida ma jqisx li hi kompetenza tiegħu li jircievi rispons minn barra l-gerankja.
receive feedback from outside the hierarchy.
Our key concerns stem out of the response method and the reporting system of this index:

a There is no rule as to the compulsory use of the index, meaning it is a suggested framework rather than one that must be put into place in order to ensure the review of inclusiveness measures.

b It would seem that it is the school that would be responding to the questions set in the index. The suggestion would be that data should be collected from a number of stakeholders - heads of schools, administrative staff, teachers, parents and children themselves. In this way, the data collection would itself be inclusive.

c It is also unclear what would be done with the data had it to transpire that the school is not sufficiently inclusive, whether the data is reviewed by the Working Group, or the school-based committee.

Moreover, the setting up of a mechanism of sharing of best practice methods of inclusiveness amongst schools is being suggested, not as an end in itself but rather as a means of ensuring that schools that are struggling to implement measures of inclusion due to a lack of resources [to, for instance,]

Lt-thassib ewlieni taghna jirriżulta mill-mekkaniżmu ta’ ġirrespons u s-sistema ta’ rappurtaġġ ta’ dan l-indici:

a M’hemm l-ebda regola dwar l-użu obbligatorju tal-indici, li jfisser li dan hu qafas suggerit iżjed milli wiehed li ghandu jiddaħhal sabiex tiġi żgurata r-reviżjoni tal-mizuri tal-inklusività.


c Lanqas ma hu ċar x’għandu jsir mid-data kieku kellu jirriżulta li l-iskola ma tkunx inklussiva biżżejjed, jekk id-data tiġix riveduta mill-Grupp ta’ Hidma, jew il-kumitat ibbażat fuq l-iskola.

Barra minn hekk, qed jiġi suggerit it-twaqqif ta’ mekkaniżmu ta’ qsim ta’ metodi tal-ahjar praktiċi tal-inklusività fost l-iskejjel, mhux bhala tir fih innifsu iżda izjed bhala mezz li jiġi żgurat li l-iskejjel li qegħdin ibatu biex jimplimentaw Mizuri ta’ inkluzjoni minhabba nuqqas ta’ rizorsi Ighal, pereżempju, mizuri xierqa ta’ ricerka l-ghandhom ikunu kapaci
research adequate measures) should be able to engage with other schools and adopt (given sufficient similarities amongst cases, and with all necessary adaptations) measures that have worked elsewhere.

5.2 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION - POLICY REGARDING STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY

This Policy is a key tool for the provision of services to students with disabilities in schools, and provides an excellent framework for analysis and implementation of measures to assist such students.

Whilst it is partial in terms of the grounds covered (as disability is one out of the six grounds), it sets out a number of important concepts, to which some recommendations are attached:

a. The acknowledgement of different needs of students who have different types of disabilities

Within the wider context, recognition of a ‘diversity within diversity’ is vital as it acknowledges the heterogeneity of diversity, yet moreover it contends to deal with such diversity using ways and means that are adequate and appropriate to the needs of the jahdmu ma’ skejjet oħra u jagdottaw (minhabba similaritajiet bizzied bejn il-kazijiet, u bl-adattamenti kollha neċessarji) miżuri li ħadimu band oħra.

5.2 EDUKAZZJONI INKLUSIVA – POLITIKA DWAR L-ISTUDENTI B’DIŻABILITÀ

Din il-Politika hi strument essenzjali għall-provista ta’ servizzi lill-istudenti b’diżabilitajiet fl-iskejjet, u tipprovdi qafas eccellenti għall-analiżi u l-implimentazzjoni ta’ miżuri biex jasististu lil dawn l-istudenti.

Filwaqt li hu parżali f’termini tal-oqsm a koperti (peress li d-diżabilità hi wħaħda mis-sitt oqsmal), tistabblixi numru ta’ kunsatti importanti, li magħhom huma marbuta xi rakkomandazzjonijiet:

a. Ir-rikonoxximent ta’ bżonnijiet differenti ta’ studenti li ghandhom tipi differenti ta’ diżabilitajiet

students concerned.

b The preparation and implementation of a programme assessing the students' key strengths and weaknesses, and hence educational needs – an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Whereas it is all students whose individual academic achievement should be ensured, those who are at risk of falling behind using mainstream methods (both because of disadvantages brought on by factors such as disability or a lack of structural and systemic adaptability of the school, or more loosely due to social insecurities brought on by their diversity) should indeed be granted special attention that ensures their educational and holistic well-being. In the case of students from different national backgrounds, for instance, additional language tutoring or practice may be necessary.19

c The coherence of any system developed, in which the roles of key stakeholders are known and understood, and where the relationship amongst one another is clear to all concerned.

d A system whereby the needs of the student are assessed and the correct level of handling of the issue is decided, following which the case is referred to the relevant body.

19 For instance, Calvillo et al. (2001) suggest, as an example of best practice, the provision of a complementary teacher to support foreign students with learning English both inside and outside the classroom.
The case of disability may be somewhat different from that of other criteria on the basis of which students may face exclusion. The Individualized Education Program, for instance, does not cater for awareness-raising amongst other students or educators.

This document, whilst being instrumental to the educational development of students with disability, deals only with one ground of discrimination. We would therefore suggest that similar policies and strategies be drawn up to cover other grounds, in which case the measures taken would be to protect students from any adverse effects of their difference (for instance dealing proactively with a lack of knowledge of the language of instruction, or providing support in cases of bullying on the basis of), as well as ensuring provision of services to mitigate the psychological effect of any discrimination to ensure that it should not result in a weak educational and psychosocial outcome.

5.3 SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT

Comments on the 2005 Report

Whereas the School Attendance Improvement report does not feed into a direct policy, the fact that attendance has a direct impact on the eventual success or failure of the student in

Il-każ ta’ diżabilità jista’ jkun xit differenti minn dak ta’ kriterji ohra li fuq il-bażi taghhom l-istudenti jistgħu jiffăċilitaw l-eskluzjoni. Il-Programm tal-Edukazzjoni Individualizzat, pereżempju, ma jipprovdx għal generazzjoni ta’ kuxjenza fost studenti jew edukaturi ohra.


5.3 TITJIB FL-ATTENDENZA FL-ISKOLA

Kummenti dwar ir-Rapport tal-2005

Fitwaqt li r-rapport tat-Titjib fl-Attendenza fl-Iskola ma jwassalx għal politika diretta, il-fatt li l-attendenza għandha impatt direkt fuq
question makes it of relevance to the current purpose of this report.

Whereas the report starts out with a number of literature-based observations and reasons for absenteeism that include culture and cultural expectations, ethnic/race conflict and disability, the report does not address these categories. The data presented is divided according to a number of well-established factors, including type of school, sector and gender, yet gives no further information as to other factors which were previously highlighted within sections on reasons for absenteeism found in international literature.

On a methodological note, knowing more about the causes of absenteeism and understanding whether children from specific minority groups are more likely to miss school is made difficult due to the fact that the data is not segregated beyond gender. Whereas the reasons for which Heads of Schools believe absenteeism occurs are computed quantitatively, the reasons given by the students themselves are given in focus groups and are based on three focus groups, that is, 12 girls and 13 boys who are regular absentees. It would seem that there needs to be a wider inclusion of children within the research process.

Filwaqt li r-rapport jibda b-numru ta` osservazzjonijiet ibbatafuq it-letteratura u ra`gunjijiet ghala t-tfal ifallu l-isksola li jinkludu l-kultura u l-aspetattivi kulturali, il-kunfitt etniku/razzjali u d-dizabilita`, ir-rapport ma jindirizzax dawn il-kategoriji. Id-data prezentata hi maqsuma skont numru ta` fatturi stabilita` sew, inklu` t-tip ta` skola, is-settur u s-sess, i`zdta ma jaghtix aktar informazzjonijiet dwar fatturi ohra li `gew indikati qabel fil-partijiet dwar ir-ra`gunjijiet ghala t-tfal ifallu l-isksola kif misjuba fil-letteratura internazzjonali.

Fuq nota metodologika, li wiehed ikun jaf i`jed dwar ir-ra`gunjijiet ghala t-tfal ifallu l-isksola u apprezzament dwar jekk it-tfal li huma gejjin minn gruppi ta` minoranza specifiki aktarx li jfallu i`jed l-isksola, isir diffi`l minhabella l-fatt li d-data mhijiex maqsuma i`jed htesf skont is-sess. Filwaqt li r-ra`gunjijiet ghala l-Kapijiet tal-Iskiejel jemmnu li t-tfal ifallu l-isksola ji`gu kkomputati b`mod kwantitattiv, ir-ra`gunjijiet moghtija mill-istudenti nfushom huma moghtija f focus groups u huma bba`zati fuq tliet focus groups, ji`gifieri 12-il tifla u 13-il tifel li regolarment ifallu l-isksola. Jidher li hemm b`zonn ta` inkluzjoni usa` tat-tfal fi
It is suggested that absenteeism be studied in more detail, that data (collecte in accordance with ethical guidelines and Data Protection laws) be segregated by race and/or ethnic group, sexual orientation, disability (in addition to gender, which is already taken into account in current data), and that strategies be set up on the basis of each factor that results, from the data, to be a reason for absenteeism, in order to deal with each in a concerted and targeted fashion.

Having stated this, a number of considerations will need to be made:

a. For factors such as minority group status, the population under consideration may be significantly smaller than that of other groups and therefore appropriate measures must be taken to ensure accuracy of research results.

b. Results indicating that members of specific groups are more or less likely to be absent from school does not necessarily make that factor the actual reason for absenteeism.

This in itself marks the necessity and importance of carrying out research whose method and analysis lead to the development of an understanding of causal links, creating

hdan il-proċess ta’ ricerka.


Ma’ dan in-d ind jingħad ukoll li hemm bżonn li jsiru numru ta’ kunsiderazzjonijiet:

a. Għal fatturi bhall-istat tal-grupp ta’ minoranza, il-popolazzjoni li tkun qed tiġi kkunsidrata tista’ tkun sinifikament iżgħar minn dik ta’ gruppì oħrajn u għaldaqstant għandhom jittieħdu miżuri xierqa biex tiġi żgurata l-preċizjoni tar-riżultati tar-ricerka


Fiħ innifsu dan jindika n-neċessità u l-importanza tat-twettiq ta’ ricerka li l-metodu u l-analisi tagħha twassal għall-
an intersection amongst the six grounds of discrimination as well as other factors such as poverty.

It would seem from the research presented in this report that one of the key reasons for absenteeism is in fact a lack of recognition of the value of education itself, that is, the apparent irrelevance of education. This in itself would entail community-based projects and added assistance, which in many cases would entail a level of understanding of the specific socio-cultural system of each child.

5.4 STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES
DES-HRDD001-09
(March 2010)

The Standard Operating Procedures manual is intended to standardize and regulate the policies and procedures within the education system and community. Whereas they do not form part of the National Minimum Curriculum, some important issues are raised within this document. The first two mentioned here are related to employees of the state, the third is related to the teaching of religion, and the final point to the role of the Inclusion Officer.

5.6 PROCEDURI OPERATTIVI STANDARD
DES-HRDD001-09
(Marzu 2010)

Non-discrimination – it is the duty of all public officers, including those working in schools, to not “harass or discriminate in work practices on the ground of sex, marital status, pregnancy, age, race, colour, nationality, physical or intellectual impairment, sexual preference or religious, political or other convictions / allegiances when dealing with their colleagues and members of the public.”

Moreover, data pertaining to specific issues including many potential grounds of discrimination (“race or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, membership of a trade union, health, or sex life”) is considered to be of a sensitive nature and should only be shared with bodies requesting such data and given appropriate measures of protection to the individual. Moreover they should only be collected when it is of particular relevance to the purpose at hand.

The document also establishes that the selection of religion textbooks (an issue which is dealt with in more detail in the analysis of the National Minimum Curriculum as well as in the specific

Id-dokument jistabbilitxxi wkoll li l-ghażla ta’ Kotba testwali tar-religjjon likwistjoni li hi trattata f’izjed dettall fl-analizi tal-Kurrikulu Minimu Nazzjonali kif ukoll fit-parti dwar is-sillabi
syllabi section], is to be made by the Episcopal Conference, and that no other religion books "should find a place in the school curriculum". This factor ties in with the teaching of religion on the basis of the 1989 agreement between the Holy See and the Republic of Malta.

d The Procedures also set out the role of the Inclusive Education Coordinator (INCO), who, amongst others, is responsible for ensuring coherence within the system of addressing students' individual educational needs by liaising with all stakeholders concerned, developing the College-wide Special Educational Needs Policy, the development of a program for students with Individual Educational Needs and ensuring its achievement.

Whereas the Standard Operating Procedures are not an intrinsic part of the curriculum, the fact that they establish the working methods of much of the educational community, specifically within the school itself as well as the relations amongst different actors within the system, makes them an important part of the goings on in schools. The four points highlighted above were deemed to be specificiċi, għandha ssir mill-Kunferenza Episkopali, u ti l-ebda kotba ofra tar-religion "miżgħom isibbu post fil-kurriku l-tal-iskola". Dan il-fattur jorbot mat-tagħlim tar-religion fuq il-bażi tal-ftehim tal-1989 bejn is-Santa Sede u r-Repubblika ta’ Malta.

d Il-Proċeduri jistabbilitxxu wkoll l-bindoli tal-Koordinatur tal-Edukazzjoni Inkluswwa (INCO) li, fost affarri ħofra, hu responsabbli biex jiżgura l-koerenza f’ħdan is-sistema tal-indirizzar tal-bżonnijiet edukattivi indvdwali tal-istudenti billi jahdem id f’id mal-il-stakeholders kollha kkonċernati, billi jiżviluppa l-Politika ta’ Bżonnijiet Edukattivi Speċjali fil-Kulleggi, l-żvilupp ta’ Programm għall-istudenti bi Bżonnijiet Edukattivi Individwali u jiżgura t-twettiq tieghu.

Filwaqt li l-Proċeduri Operattivi Standard mhumiex parti intrinsika tal-kurriku, il-fatt li jistabbilitxxu t-metodi ta’ ħidma tal-biccà l-kbira tal-komunità edukattiva, specifikament fi ħdan l-iskola nnifisha kif ukoll ir-relazzjonijiet fost atturi differenti fi ħdan is-sistema, jagħmluhom parti importanti ta’ dak li jkun qed jiġri fl-iskejjel. L-erba’ punti indikati hawn fuq ġew meqjusa li huma
particularly relevant to the context of equality and non-discrimination.

5.5 UNACCOMPANIED MINORS IN MAIN STREAM SCHOOLS
A Project of the Ministry of Education
2009 - 2010

"During the scholastic year 2009 - 2010, unaccompanied minors residing in a residential home, were slowly introduced to the Main Stream Secondary School. There were 4 girls and 9 boys who participated in the programme."

The arrival of asylum seeking children, whether accompanied or otherwise has resulted in a need for the Maltese education system to develop mechanisms to address their needs and allow for their reception within mainstream education. Over the course of 2009-2010, a programme was implemented which aimed at promoting their integration within the school environment.

The programme included pre-preparation, staggered entrance into the school system and then finally the actual regular attendance at the school. The programme benefited 11 students. The approach taken included elements of positive action measures.

5.5 MINURI MHUX AKKOMPANJATI FL-ISKEJEL MAIN STREAM
Proġett tal-Ministeru tal-Edukazzjoni
2009 - 2010

"Tul is-sena skolastika 2009 - 2010, il-minuri mhux akkompandati li jgħixxu f’dar reresenzjali, ġew bil-mod il-mod introdotti fl-Iskola Sekandjar Main Stream. Kien hemm 4 bnieta u 9 subjien ti jpartecipaw til-programm."


Il-programm kien jinkludi preparazzjoni minn qabel, dħul gradwali fis-sisterna ta’ skola u mbagħad finalment l-attendenza regolari attwali fl-iskola. 11-il student għamlu uzu mill-programm. L-approċċ meħd kien jinkludi elementi t’ażżuri ta’ azzjoni pożittiva
This project addressed unaccompanied minors who were living within the assigned open centre. It did not cater for children who were in Malta with their parents and were therefore living in other centres or within the community. This project appears to have been intended as a pilot initiative and as such these concerns, mostly relating to scope, should be taken into account so as to avoid excluding students who might require the help that the programme sought to provide.

In the future, it would be ideal for the project to be extended to migrant children irrespective of whether they are within the asylum system. If broadened on this scale, these projects would be best implemented within the School and College context, which would facilitate and enhance the participants’ integration into the school community.

5.6 HEALTHY EATING LIFESTYLE PLAN – HELP DOCUMENT

The Healthy Eating Lifestyle Plan does not engage with issues of diversity, as it addresses...
the nutritional value of foods. However, in encouraging the development of a school and classroom open to diversity, the topic of 'healthy eating' may be discussed within a wider context that includes the cultural elements of food. For example:

a. The type of food consumed, that is guided by culture as well as by religion – for instances in cultures and religions where meat is not consumed, or where the consumption of certain types of meat (such as pork and beef) are prohibited.

b. Food preparation methods, which hence guide what should and should not be consumed, including, for instance, the killing of livestock for consumption, as well as other preparation methods (halal and kosher, for instance).

c. Order of food consumption, for instance the cultural and/or religious organization of foods into categories, the consumption of which is regulated in the order of consumption as well as with set time gaps between categories.

d. Times of the day as well as seasonal differences based on cultural or religious belief, when food in general as well as certain types of food are consumed – for instance during Ramadan or other similar festivals.

e. The way of consuming food is itself a ghax jindirizza l-valur nutrittiv tal-ikel.

Madankolltu, fit-theggi tal-izvilupp ta' skola u klassi miftuha ghad-diversità, is-staggett tal-'ikel sustanzjuż jista' jiġi diskuss fi ġdan kuntest usa' li jinkludi l-elementi kulturali tal-'ikel. Peregempju:


b. Metodi ta' preparazzjoni tal-ikel, li ghaldaqstant jipprovdu gwidu ghal dak li ghandu jiġi ikkunsmat u dak li m'għandux. inkluzi, peregempju, il-qtil tal-animali ghall-konsum, kif ukoll metodi ta' preparazzjoni ohra (peregempju halal u kosher).

c. L-ordni tal-konsum tal-ikel, peregempju l-organizzazzjoni kulturali u/jew relikjuża tal-ikel f'kategoriji, li l-konsum taghhom hu regolat [l-ordni tal-konsum kif ukoll bi spazji tal-hin stabbilit bejn il-kategoriji].

d. Il-hinijiet tal-ġurnata kif ukoll differenzi staggjonali bbażati fuq twemmien kulturali jew religjuż, meta l-'ikel in generali kif ukoll ċerti tipi ta' ċerti tipi ikkunsmati – peregempju waqt ir-Ramadan jew festivals simili ohra.
product of socialization and cultural practice, and within the intercultural classroom it is important to acknowledge the fact that children will come from backgrounds in which food is consumed in different ways (for instance using chopsticks, or one's hands).

Food is not merely a product to be ingested and from which nutrients are extracted – it is very much a cultural and social practice both in production, preparation and consumption. Specifically within a context where children are being taught about food, its wider connotations and the value of commensality and cultural diversity should be considered and addressed.\(^{120}\)

\[\text{L-ikel mhux biss prodott li ġhandu jittiekel u li minnu jigu estratti n-nutrijenti – huwa wkoll pratika kulturali u socjali fil-produzzjoni, il-preparazzjoni u l-konsum tiegħu.}\]

\[\text{Speciflikament fi ġhandun kuntest fejn it-tfal ġigu mghallma dwar l-ikel, il-konnotazzjonijiet usa tiegħu u l-valur tal-kommensaltà u d-diversità kulturali tiegħu ġhandhom ġigu kkonsidrati u indirizzati.}\(^{120}\)
its wider connotations and the value of commensality and cultural diversity should be considered and addressed

il-konnotazzjonijiet usa' tiegħu u l-valur tal-kommensalità u d-diversità kulturali tiegħu għandhom jiġu kkunsidrati u indirizzati
6 syllabi review
reviżjoni tas-sillabi
In addition to an equality based review of the National Minimum Curriculum, a number of specific syllabi of Primary and Secondary School subjects were also reviewed:

### PRIMARY LEVEL

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<thead>
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<tr>
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<td>Drama</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Biology</td>
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<td>European Studies</td>
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<td>Geography</td>
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### LIVELL PRIMARJU

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<td>Id-Disinn u t-Teknologjija</td>
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The full review of each syllabus is available online at [www.equality.gov.mt](http://www.equality.gov.mt)

Ir-reviżjoni shiha ta` kull sillabu hi accessibbli online minn [www.equality.gov.mt](http://www.equality.gov.mt)
7 final recommendations
rakkomandazzjoniet finali
These recommendations are based on the National Minimum Curriculum analysis, as well as the analysis of specific subjects. We start from the premise that classrooms may provide space for healthy dialogue that is both theoretically and practically inclusive, and that children should be encouraged to participate in sharing different views and opinions. The emphasis here is on discovery rather than indoctrination, that is, an exploration of issues and understanding of the importance of diversity rather than imposing a set of beliefs, inclusion rather than exclusion, and above all, equality.

The process of both creating a National Minimum Curriculum as well as the practical implementation of such a curriculum within the classroom setting, however, is a collaborative effort. As such, it is the responsibility of all stakeholders to engage in the process of discussion and consultation with the Ministry responsible for Education, in order to formulate a Curriculum that is both ambitious and realistic.

We hence make recommendations in four specific areas, namely Research, Policy and Institutional Framework, Monitoring and Review, and Awareness Raising and Tool Development.


Ahna għaldagstant nagħmlu rakkomandazzjonijiet f’erba’ oqsma specifiċi, jiġifieri, ir-Scripts, il-Qafas ta` Politika u Isitiuzzjonali, is-Sorveljanza u l-Revizjonijiet, u l-Generazzjonijiet tal-Gharfien u l-Iżvilupp tal-Ghadod.
• Collection of relevant data relating to academic welfare, focused on qualitative as well as quantitative indicators of accomplishment, segregated by group (with a special focus to the educational accomplishment of social minorities and marginalized groups), in order to identify groups who are particularly vulnerable within the education system. On the basis of this, a system for the investigation and mitigation of causal factors should be developed.

• Researching the educational experience of students who are members of minority groups, with the aim of grasping the manifest and latent impacts of the curriculum and hidden curriculum on such groups, and hence mitigating any negative effects.

• Compiling research on knowledge, perception, understanding and approaches to diversity within the educational structure and setting (that is, from teachers and students).

• Šbir ta’ data rilevanti relatata mal-ġid akkademu, iffukata fuq indikaturi ta’ kisba kwalitativi kif ukoll kwantitattivi, maqsuma skont il-grupp taghhom lb’attenzjoni specjalj lill-kisba edukattiva ta’ minoritajiet sociojali u gruppi marginalizzati, sabiex jiġu identifikati gruppi li huma partikolarment vulnerabbli li ḫdan is-sistema edukattiva. Fuq din il-bażi, ghandha tiġi żviluppata sistema għall-investigazzjoni u t-tnaqqis ta’ fatturi każwali.

• Ir-riċerka dwar l-esperjenza edukattiva ta’ studenti li huma membri tal-gruppi ta’ minorenza, bl-ġhan ti jiġu mifhum l-impatti li jidhru u dawk mohbiya tal-kurrikulu u t-kurrikulu mohbi ta’ dawn il-gruppi, u b’hekk jيتناقش القوَلاً و الاذواق النيغالي.

• Il-kumpilazzjoni ta’ riċerka dwar l-gharfien, il-percezzjoni, apprezzament u l-approcći ghad-diversità li ḫdan l-istruttura u l-ambjent edukattivi (jigifieri mill-ghallliema u l-istudentil).
7.2 POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

- Extending the prohibition of discrimination in education, as found in the Equal Treatment of Persons Order, the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act, and the Equality Between Men and Women Act, to all six grounds of discrimination.

- Ensuring that every College and School adopts and upholds an equality policy that addresses both issues that may be faced by educators as well as students. Moreover, ensuring that the development of such a policy should be a collaborative effort undertaken by all the stakeholders including administration, teachers, students and parents.

- Setting up and promoting positive action measures to assist those who might face difficulties or exclusion (such as due to a language barrier), in order to ensure the achievement of equality of opportunity.

- Mainstreaming the teaching of equality, human rights and citizenship in a horizontal manner into the National Minimum Curriculum.

- Declaring a National Decade of Equality through Education that would allow for research, development, implementation

7.2 QAFAS TA' POLITIKA U ISTITUZZJONALI

- L'estensjoni tal-projbizzoni tad-diskriminazzjonijiet fl-edukazzjonijiet, kif jgħidu l-Ordini dwar it-Trattamenti Indaqs ta' Persuni, l-Att dwar l-Opportunitajiet Ugwali (Persuni b'Dizabilità), u l-Att dwar l-Ugwaljanza bejn l-Irgie u n-Nisa, għas-sitt oqsi ma ta' diskriminazzjoni.


- Il-twaggif u l-promozzjoni ta' miżuri ta' azzjoni pożittiva biex jassistitu dawk li jistgħu jiżaffja awk diffiktajiet jew eskluzjoni (pereżemju minħabba ostaktlu fil-lingwa), sabiex jżguraw il-kisba tal-ugwaljanza tal-opportunità.

- L-integrazzjoni tal-tagħlim tal-ugwaljanza, id-drittijiet tal-bniedem u ċ-cittadinanza b'mod orizzontali fil-Kuriiku Minimu Nazzjonali.

- Id-dikjarazzjoni ta' Deċenju Nazzjonali
and evaluation of multiple layers of policy, projects, and that would feed into the next review of the National Minimum Curriculum. Similar initiatives have been undertaken by organizations such as the United Nations in the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education and the International decade for the Culture of Peace.

- Developing a Guide to Equality in Education, in booklet format to be distributed in schools as well as online to be distributed in schools, that would provide a set of guidelines for school administrators and educators to better understand their responsibilities as well as to be aware of relevant bodies that are in a position to provide advice on issues of discrimination. Such information would include, for instance, key legislation and policy relevant to schools, and a set of Frequently Asked Questions that would be informed by a consultation process leading to the writing of the Guide, advice for different parties (administration and educators). The online version would also contain a link for direct contact with the person and/or body responsible for the overseeing of the Guide and related policy.


- L-Iżvilupp ta’ Gwida għall-Ugwaljanza fl-Edukazzjoni, f’forma ta’ fuljett li għandu jiqassam fl-iskejji kif ukoll online li għandu jiqassam fl-iskejji, li jipprovdi sett ta’ lini gwida għall-amministraturi tal-iskola u l-edukaturi biex jifhem ħajjar ir-respansabbiltajiet tagħhom kif ukoll li jkunu konxji dwar korpi rilevantti li huma f’pożizzjoni li jipprovdu parrii dwar kwistjonijiet ta’ diskriminazzjoni. Din l-informazzjoni tkun inkludi, perezęmpju, legislazzjoni u politika ewlenin rilevantti għall-iskejji, u sett ta’ Domandi li Jsiru Spiss li jiġi formulat wara process ta’ konsultazzjoni għall-kitba tat-Gwida, parrii għal partijiet differenti (amministraturi u edukaturi), il-verżjoni online kollha wkoll konnessjoni għal kuntatt direttr mal-persuna u/jew korp respansabbli għall-
• Appointing an Equality Officer within the Ministry responsible for Education as well as a network of Equality Officers (one in each school and/or College) who would oversee the implementation of the school equality policy, advise colleagues on equality issues (following being given adequate training on relevant social and legal aspects by the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality and/or other competent bodies) and be charged with taking appropriate steps in cases of alleged discriminatory treatment.

• Assessing the representation of minority groups within the educational decision-making chain, and should there be a strong under-representation of minority groups especially at the higher levels of decision-making, introducing measures that specifically address this deficit (either through the establishment of a strong consultation processes with such groups where and when this is relevant to the discussion at hand, or through the introduction of a mechanism by which there is more equality in such governance or decision-making structures).


• L-evalwazzjoni tar-rappreżentanza ta’ gruppi tal-minoranza fi ħdan il-katina tat-tehid ta’ deċiżjonijiet edukattivi, u jekk ikun hemm nuqqas ta’ rappreżentanza qawwiża ta’ gruppi ta’ minorità speċjalment fil-livelli oġħa tat-tehid tad-deċiżjonijiet, l-introduzzjoni ta’ miżuri li speċifikament jindirizzaw dan in-nuqqas (jew permezz tat-twaqqif ta’ proċessi ta’ konsultazzjoni sodi ma’ dawn il-gruppi fejn u meta dan ikun rilevanti għad-diskussjoni inkwistjoni, jew permezz tal-introduzzjoni ta’ mekkaniżmu li bih ikun hemm izjed ugwaljanza f’dawn l-istruttri ta’ governanza jew tehid ta’ deċiżjonijiet).
7.3 MONITORING AND REVIEW

- Ensuring the collection and representation of views and needs of all stakeholders in Maltese society, including the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality, non-governmental organizations, and minority groups, within the development of the National Minimum Curriculum as well as in the running of the education system, through an active consultative framework.

- Providing a regular structure for groups (non-governmental organizations, government agencies, etc.) to raise awareness of equality issues within the school environment, through direct engagement in classrooms as well as through wider periodic awareness raising projects and programmes.

- Holding an Annual Meeting on Equality in Education, at which all Heads of Colleges and Schools would be invited to discuss updates to equality legislation, specific cases, and other issues relevant to fostering an equality-conscious and discrimination-free system and school environment.

7.3 SORVELJANZA U REVĪŻJONI


- Prowista ta’ struttura regola ghal gruppijiet lorganizzazzjonijiet mhux governattivi, agenzji tal-gvern, etc. għall-generazzjoni ta’ għarfiem ta’ kwistjonijiet tal-ugwaljanza fi ħdan l-ambjent ta’ skola, permezz tal-involviment dirett fil-klassijiet kif ukoll permezz ta’ progetti u programmi perjodiċi għall-generazzjoni tal-għarfiem.

- It-tmexxija ta’ Laggħa Annwali dwar l-Ugwaljanza fl-Edukazzjoni, li fiha l-Kapijet tal-Kulţegġi u l-Isekjel kollha jiġu mistiedna biex jiddiskutu aġġornamenti għal-legistlazzjoni dwar l-ugwaljanza, każijiet speċiċi, u kwistjonijiet ofra rilevanti għat-trawwim ta’ sistema u ambjent ta’ skola konxjji dwar l-ugwaljanza u hielsa mid-diskriminazzjoni.
7.4 AWARENESS RAISING AND TOOL DEVELOPMENT

- Developing a set of lesson plans organized by subject, and set specifically to what is found in the National Minimum Curriculum and subsequent syllabi, that directly or indirectly address issues of equality, whilst ensuring that schools and educators have access to such resources.

- Setting up an Equality Education Library, at a location accessible to educators, from which they could access resources to use in the classroom setting in order to


7.4 GENERAZZJONI TAL-GĦARFIEN U ŻVILUPP TA’ GHODOD

- L-izvilupp ta’ sett ta’ pjanijiet tal-lezzjonijiet organizzati skont is-suggett, u stabbiliti specifikament skont dak li hemm fil-Kurriku Minimu Nazzjonali u sillabi sussegwenti, li direttament jew indirettament jindirizzaw kwistjonijet ta’ ugwaliżjena, filwaqt li jiżguraw li l-iskejjej u l-edukaturi jkollhom access ghal dawn ir-rizorsi.

- Il-twaqqiff ta’ Librerija ta’ Edukazzjoni dwar l-Ugwaliżjena, f’post ċessibbl li l-edukaturi,
directly or indirectly address issues relating to equality and discrimination.
Moreover, as part of this effort, developing a complementary database of online materials that may be used.

- Organizing diversity days and equality-themed events as well as introducing such themes into annual events in order to raise awareness within the school as well as within the wider community (for instance having an equality-themed Sports Day).

- Promoting student fora and exchanges amongst different schools in Malta as well as between Maltese schools and other schools (in Europe, the Euro-Med area as well as outside of the region) through which students experience different cultures.

- Organizing specialized training courses in order to acquaint educators with issues of equality, including sensitization sessions about topics that are of specific relevance to the Maltese context.

- Organizing programmes and competitions targeted at both schools and individual students, that recognize awareness-raising efforts (policy and projects), and that give li minnu jistgħu jaccessaw ir-riżorsis għatt-użu fl-ambjent tal-klassi sabiex direttament jew indirettament jindizzaw twistjонijiet relatati mal-ugwaljanza u d-diskrimnazzjoni. Barra minn hekk, bħaħa parti minn dan l-isforz, l-iżvilupp ta’ database kumplimentari ta’ materjali onlic li jistgħu jintuzzaw.

- L-organizzazzjoni ta’ ġranet tad-diversità u awenimenti b’tema tal-ugwaljanza kif ukoll l-introduzzjoni ta’ dawn it-temi f’awenimenti annwali sabiex jiġi gżiraż għarfien fi ħdan l-iskola kif ukoll fi ħdan komunità usa’ (pereżempjju li jkun hemm Jum Sportiv b’tema tal-ugwaljanza).

- Promozzjoni ta’ forums u skambji bejn l-istudenti fost skejjet differenti f’Malta kif ukoll bejn skejjet Maltes u skejjet ohra (fl-Ewropa, iż żona tal-Euro-med kif ukoll Barra r-regjun) li permezz tagħhom l-istudenti jesperjenzaw kulturi differenti.

- L-organizzazzjoni ta’ korsijiet ta’ tahniġ speċjalizzazz sabiex l-edukaturi jiġi familjarizzati ma’ kwistjonijiet tal-ugwaljanza, inkludi sessjonijiet ta’ ġenerazzjoni tas-sensittività dwar sugġettit li huma ta’ rilevanza specifika fil-kuntest Malti.
an added value to the education received by
the children and the indirect impact on
families and communities.

- Developing a School Equality Audit Pack, to
be utilized by schools and Colleges
to evaluate the policies, processes and
educational material.

- Developing a series of in-service trainings
for teachers on topics related to equality
and discrimination.

- Developing a series of colouring books for
children which could be utilized in class
as activity books (in tandem with, or outside
of, set lessons) through which issues of
equality would be explored and discussed in
an informal and semi-structured manner.

- Establishing intra-school debate
competitions – general or language-specific
(for students learning languages) in which
equality issues (amongst others) would be
debated in a respectful manner.

- L-organizzazzjoni ta’ programmi u
kompetizzjonijiet immirati kemm lejn skejel
u kif ukoll studenti individwali, li jirrikonoxxu
sforzi għall-ġenerazzjoni tal-għarfien [politika
u progetti], u li jagħtu valur miżjud għall-
edukazzjoni rċevuta mit-tfal u l-impatt indirett
fuq il-familji u l-komunitajiet.

- L-iżvilupp ta’ Pakkett ta’ Verifica tat-
Ugwaljanza fl-Iskejjel li għandu jintuża mill-
iskejjel u l-Kutlegġi sabiex jeventaw il-policies,
processi u l-materjali edukattiv.

- L-iżvilupp ta’ serje ta’ taħriġ fis-servizz għat
ghalliena dwar sugġetti relatati mal-
ugwaljanza u d-diskriminazzjoni.

- L-iżvilupp ta’ serje ta’ kotba tat-tpinjja għat-
tfal li jistgħu jintużaw fil-klassi bħaľa kotba tal-
attività [ físikien ma’, jew li hinn minn,
lezzjonijiet standard l] li permezz taghhom
kwistjonijiet tal-ugwaljanza jistgħu jiġu esplorati
u diskussi lm mod informali u semi-strutturat.

- It-twaqqif ta’ kompetizzjonijiet ta’ dibattitu bejn
l-iskejjel – generali jew speċifiku għal-lingwa
[għat studenti li jitgħallmu l-lingwij li ftom il-
kwistjonijiet tal-ugwaljanza fest oħrajn jiġu
diskussi l’ambjent ta’ rispett.
8 conclusion

konkluzjonì
The education system is a living system, and to this end, this report and its conclusion are not the end of a process but rather a milestone in its trajectory and a part of its journey. The National Minimum Curriculum, education policies and syllabi are constantly being developed, built upon and reviewed. The current ongoing review of the National Minimum Curriculum is merely an indication of the idea that stakeholders are constantly striving to improve the system.

The inclusion of equality and our increased sensitivity is a demonstration that our schools have changed, the students have changed, the requirements have changed – and specifically that a much more diverse and inclusive education system has developed and must be supported by concerted measures.

The National Minimum Curriculum is based on ensuring all children receive the same level of education, yet is also strongly based on the needs of the learner – children themselves are likely to inhabit a domestic, personal or community space that involves a degree of diversity, and therefore as an individual who navigates an increasingly diverse society should be given the opportunity to discuss and engage with

Il-Kurrikulu Minimu Nazjonali hu bbażat fuq li jiġi żgurat li t-tfal kollha jircievu l-istess livell ta’ edukazzjoni, iżda fl-istess ħin hu bbażat hafna wkoll fuq il-bżonnijiet ta’ min qed jil-ħallim – it-tfal stess aktarx li jgħixu f’ambjent domestiku, personali jew komunitarju li jiżvoli livell ta’ diversità, u għdaldaqstant bħala individwi li jgħammru f’socjetà dejjem iżżed diversa, għandhom jingħataw l-opportunità li jiddiskutu u jkollhom x’jaqsmu
concepts and practices of equality as these skills are necessary for his or her holistic personal and professional development.

This research has highlighted the importance of promoting equality through the National Minimum Curriculum. Changing legal and social scenarios call upon the education system to ensure that it addresses these issues in a proactive manner. The current NMC addresses equality issues but a more concerted and direct effort is required. Different grounds of discrimination are addressed to varying degrees and in different ways, yet a proactive approach to the promotion of equality on all grounds remains lacking.

Equality is a value and to this end, those in the education system should be trained and equipped to not only live by the value but a so to protect it and speak out for it – to be ambassadors for equality. This report has highlighted a number of ways in which this may be done. Most importantly, however, the process may only be successful and its aims o’ a truly equal society achieved if we listen to each other, celebrate each others’ ideas and work together as partners in shaping the future of our education system.

ma’ kuncetti u prattiċi ta’ ugwaltanja għax dawn il-hiliet huma meħtieġa għall-iżvilupp personali u professjonali olistiku taghhcm.


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APPENDIX 2: UNPUBLISHED

DISERTATIONS COMPLETED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MALTA ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN EDUCATION


APPENDIĆ I 2: DISSERTAZZJONIJIET MHUX PUBBLIKATI LI SARU FL-UNIVERSITÀ TA’ MALTA DWAR ID-DIVERSITÀ U L-INKLUŻJONI FL-EDUKAZJONI


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### APPENDIX 3: USEFUL WEBSITES

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APPENDIX 4:
OUTLINE OF THE NMC

Foreword by the Minister
Message Director General Education
Message Director curriculum
Message President Malta union of Teachers
Message President Association of Schools Councils
Preamble
Background to the review process
The legal framework of the Maltese NMC
The process of curriculum review
Recognizing the challenges
The educational response to the cultural social and economic challenges
  Values and Socialization
  Holistic development
  Lifelong Education
  Global Perspective
  The World of Work

The Curricular Principles
1 Quality Education for all.
2 Respect for diversity.
3 Stimulation of analytical critical and creative thinking skills.
4 Education relevant for life.
5 Stable learning environment.
6 Nurturing commitment.

APPENDIĊI 4:
DESKRIZZJONI QASIRA TAL-NMC

Dahla mill-Ministru
Messagg mid-Dirrettur Ġenerali tal-Edukazzjoni
Messagg mid-Dirrettur tal-Kurrikulu
Messagg mill-President tal-Malta Union of Teachers
Messagg mill-President tal-Associazzjoni Kunsilli tal-Iskejjel
Preambolu
L-isfond ghall-process tar-revizjonij
It-qalas legati ghall-NMC ta’ Malta
It-process tar-revizjoni tal-kurrikulu
Rikonoxximent tal-isfidi
Ir-rispons edukattiv ghall-isfidi kulturali, socjali u ekonomici
Valuri u Socjalizzazzjoni
Žvilupp Olistiku
Edukazzjoni ta’ matul il-Hajja
Perspettiva Globali
Id-Dinja tax-Xoghol
Il-Principji Kurrikulari
1 Edukazzjoni ta’ Kwalitá ghal Kulhadd.
2 Rispett tad-Diversitá.
3 Stimulazzjoni tal-Hilla Kritika u Kreattiva.
4 Edukazzjoni Rilevanti ghall-Hajja.
5 Stabbiltà fl-Ambjent tat-Taghlim.
6 Trawwim ta’ Impenn.
7 Edukazzjoni Olistika.
7 Holistic education.
8 Inclusive education.
9 A more formative assessment.
10 The strengthening of bilingualism in schools.
11 Gender Equality.
12 Vocation and Competence.
13 The importance of learning environment.
14 Increasing participation in curriculum development.
15 Decentralization and Identity.

Educational Objectives

1 Self Awareness and the development of a system of ethical and moral values.
2 The development of citizens and the democratic environment.
3 Developing a sense of identity through creative expression.
4 Religious education.
5 Strengthening of gender equality.
6 Education on human sexuality.
7 Preparing educated consumers.
8 Media Education.
9 Effective and Productive participation in the world of work.
10 Education for Leisure.
11 Wise choices in the field of health.
12 Greater awareness of the role of science and technology in everyday life.
13 Competence in communication.
14 Preparation for change.

Għanijiet Edukattivi

1 Gharfien Personali u l-izvilupp ta’sistema ta’valuri etiċi u morali.
2 żvilupp ta’ċittadini u l-ambjent demokratiku.
3 żvilupp ta’ sens ta identità marbut mal-espressjoni kreativa.
4 Edukazzjoni religjuża.
5 Tishih tal-ugwaljanza bejn is-sessi.
6 Edukazzjoni dwar is-sesswalità umana.
7 it-trawwirm ta’ konsumaturi edukati.
8 Edukazzjoni dwar il-Media.
9 Partecipazzjoni Produttiva u Effettiva fid-dinja tax-xogħol.
10 Edukazzjoni għall-Hin liberu.
11 'Għażliet Għaqlin fil-Qasam tas-Sahha.
12 Għarfien akbar ta’sehem ix-xjenza u t-teknoloġija fil-hajja ta’kuljurn.
13 Kompetenza fil-komunikazzjoni.
14 Preparazzjoni għal bidla.
The different levels of the educational system

1. Early childhood education.
2. Intellectual development.
3. Socio-emotional development.
4. Physical development.
5. Moral development.
6. The development of a sense of aesthetics and creativity.
7. Effective tools to facilitate the holistic development of children.

Primary education

- Learning a repertoire of skills.
- Strengthening of personal and social education.
- Development of enhanced skills and knowledge and attitudes linked to the basic subjects.
- Fulfilling principle of diversity.
- Linking summative and formative forms of assessment.
- Implementing a policy of bilingualism.
- The teaching of religion.
- Parent education programmes.

Secondary education

- Strengthening and refinement of the skills developed at primary level.
- Strengthening of Personal and Social Education.
- Implementation of the broad aims within the curriculum content.
Development of enhanced skills and knowledge and attitudes linked to the basic subjects.
• Implementing a policy for language teaching.
• Adopting summative and formative forms of assessment.
• The development of projects revolving around themes.
• The teaching of religion.
• Strengthening of emotional development.
• Strengthening parent participation.
• Schools and the interpretation of the curriculum.
• The school as a community centre.

Conclusion.

• Twettiq ta’ politike te’taghlim tal-lingwi.
• Assessjar summattiv inżewweq ma’dak formattiv.
• Žvilupp ta’ proqetti marbuta ma’ temi.
• Taghlim tar-religion.
• Tishìh tal-izvilupp emozjonali.
• Tishìh tal-partecipazzjoni tal-żenituri.
• L-iskejjel u l-interpretazzjoni tal-kurrikulu.
• L-iskola bħala centru komunitarju.

Konkluzjoni.