



NCPE

Annual Report

2020

The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality

**ANNUAL REPORT
2020**

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What We Stand For

The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality is an independent equality body entrusted by Chapter 456 of the Laws of Malta to safeguard equality on the basis of sex, family responsibilities, religion/belief, age, sexual orientation, race/ethnic origin and gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics in employment as well as access to vocational/professional training or banks and financial institutions.

The NCPE's remit is also established in the field of gender as well as race/

ethnic origin in access to and provision of goods and services via two legal notices, namely Legal Notice 181 of 2008, Access to Goods and Services and their Supply Regulations and Legal Notice 85/2007, Equal Treatment of Persons Order.

Legal Notice 173 of 2016, Exercise of Rights Conferred on Workers (Freedom of Movement) Regulations, establishes NCPE's remit with regards to the freedom of movement for workers in the EU.



Minister's Message

The year 2020 was an intense year as the Covid 19 pandemic affected countries all over the world and impacted the lives and well-being of many people. This pandemic has highlighted the exacerbated inequalities that already existed in our societies. It has shown us that, now more than ever, equality matters and should be at the forefront of any policy and legislative response.

The coronavirus pandemic has shone a light on the changes in our living patterns – at home, at work, at school – that have brought negative stress to our lives. Whilst working from home may have helped our work-life balance and may have lessened opportunities for harassment at the workplace, at home the situation worsened particularly where abusive behaviour was already part of the daily routine.

In this context, Covid-19 strengthened our commitment to achieve equality in all spheres of Maltese society. Enhancing a balanced representation of women and men in political decision-making is high on the Government's agenda considering that currently the percentage of women in the national parliament is 14.9% compared to the European average of 31.7%¹. In this regard, the 2019 green paper 'Gender Balance in Parliament Reform Consultation Document' proposed various positive measures including the introduction of a corrective mechanism for a 40% gender representation in the House. Discussions

were held with members of the opposition, and following agreement, the Bill, entitled An Act to amend the Constitution of Malta and other laws to ensure de facto equality between men and women in politics, was tabled in the House in March 2020.

Another legal initiative was the enactment of the ACT to amend the Notarial Profession and Notarial Archives Act, Cap. 55, and various laws in connection with gender equality in the drafting of public deeds and to provide for related and ancillary provisions. The objective of this legislation was to eliminate any direct or indirect provision that may lead to discrimination between men and women.

The Government also focused on the needs of vulnerable groups particularly victims of domestic violence, who are mainly women. The fact that the pandemic necessitated remote working meant that domestic abuse augmented. In fact, a rise in domestic violence cases was registered, with around 15% more cases reported in the first half of 2020 compared to the same period in 2019.

In this context, focus was put on the prevention and protection of women and girls from different forms of violence with Government announcing that domestic violence victims could request free legal advice and assistance if there are grounds

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/sdg_05_50/default/table?lang=en



Hon. Dr Edward Zammit Lewis
Minister for Justice, Equality and Governance

for the victim to proceed with a civil court case against the aggressor.

Moreover, a new police unit was inaugurated to handle domestic violence and gender-based crime in order that such cases will be handled by a team of professionals with specialised training. In this regard, we are committed to take all the necessary steps, including the strengthening of gender equality in our society, whose lack is the direct cause of violence against women.

Malta continues to rank first in the ILGA-Europe Rainbow Index for the fifth consecutive year. A new centre for the LGBTIQ community is being set up to bring together a number of services and facilities provided by Government and the civil society to the LGBTIQ community. This centre will also be providing financial support to the LGBTIQ community in bringing EuroPride 2023 to Malta.

A public consultation for the National Action Plan Against Racism and Xenophobia (NAPRAX) was launched. The NCPE has also provided its input to this public consultation which is an important development in achieving an inclusive society. The consultation encourages stakeholders and the general public to share experiences of racism and xenophobia in Malta, and to submit additional ideas for a more effective NAPRAX.

To further enhance the substantial increase in the participation of women in the labour market, we are also focusing on decision-making and headship positions. In fact, in 2020, we registered substantial progress in this regard with the appointment of women in various such high positions, including: the Attorney General, the Chair of the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) Board; and the Head of News of the PBS.

In addition, the Equality Bill and the Human Rights and Equality Commission Bill, currently being discussed in Parliament, envisaged to be passed in the coming months, will drastically strengthen the legal framework protecting the rights of every individual whilst establishing a new entity to act as Malta's human rights watchdog.

Along the years, the NCPE has always worked to sustain equality in our society particularly with the strengthening of its remit and has continued working to promote and safeguard equality with the relevant stakeholders. I pledge my commitment to continue supporting the NCPE's initiatives while ensuring that Malta stays at the forefront of inclusion, diversity and equality for all and in all aspects.

Commissioner's Message

It is with satisfaction that every year I report on the work carried out by the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE). This year, most meetings went online. However, whilst our work was limited as far as travelling to meetings abroad was concerned thus curtailing face to face discussions with our European colleagues, it has provided other work opportunities in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Needless to say 2020 was another year of solid work albeit in a different format for the attainment of equal treatment in Maltese society by addressing issues of concern in relation to non-discrimination on the basis of the grounds that are covered within our remit whilst promoting equality through empowerment and awareness raising.

As NCPE's Commissioner, I consider the **investigation of cases of alleged discrimination** crucial to ensure that equality is truly safeguarded. In 2020, **15 complaints** were investigated, one of which was an ex officio investigation on the grounds of gender and age. Moreover, five opinions were issued on various grounds including gender, religion

and race & ethnic origin, and two ex officio investigations on the ground of gender and race & ethnic origin.

A new initiative undertaken was based on our decision to look into developments within households with the increase in teleworking and remote working. We wanted to see how care responsibilities were being shared between parents who now had to carry on with their paid and unpaid work in the context of the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Thus, between June and July 2020, the NCPE disseminated an online survey on the distribution of tasks between women and men during the pandemic in view that many people were forced to adapt to different work and social practices. The findings indicate that, during the pandemic, the increase in the number of hours spent doing household tasks and childcare increased more for women than for men, while the time spent on leisure, personal care and sleep decreased more for women than it did for men.

Another important development was The Equal Pay Tool. The Tool aims to check the organisations' equal pay for work of



Ms Renee Laiviera
NCPE Commissioner

equal value between women and men during Equality Mark audits. This work was undertaken as part of the commitments that we had to carry out as part of the EU co-funded project '**Prepare the Ground for Economic Independence**' (PGEI) launched in 2018. The last campaign was the Equal Pay Campaign re-launching the Equality Mark and strengthening it with the Equal Pay Tool. We are pleased to say that nine organisations, that are already equality certified, supported the piloting of this Equal Pay Tool.

In the meantime, the **Equality Mark Certification** continued to be awarded to companies and entities that are committed to create a work environment that fosters equality for everyone regardless of their gender and their caring responsibilities. **15 new organisations** were certified with the Equality Mark in 2020, and **nine organisations** went through re-certification. By December 2020, there were 112 certified organisations employing over 26,500 individuals.

During this year, the NCPE was awarded a new EU co-funded project: '**Empowerment for Diversity**' (E4D) that commenced in April

and will run until March 2022. It focuses on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity, sex characteristics and gender expression. The project aims to address the societal and cultural impact brought about by the recent LGBTIQ+ legislative advancements in Malta through awareness-raising initiatives, capacity building and various analytical activities.

We continued to provide reviews and feedback in the development of national and international **policies and legislation** that are vital to safeguard equal treatment. This work entails giving input with relevant information, suggestions and ideas on equality, whilst emphasizing the need of mainstreaming equality in all policies as per national and EU policy.

Communication is crucial to push the equality agenda forward particularly among the general public. The number of contributions in the traditional media added up to **45** this year and included: press statements, articles, press contributions and participation in television and radio programmes. Much use is also being made of social media as a

cost-effective way of reaching a wide range of people or specific target groups. Through 'Facebook', 'Instagram' and 'Twitter', the NCPE highlighted international days focusing on the human rights of different groups within society, statistics, upcoming events and developments in relation to equality.

Training on equality, diversity and non-discrimination strengthens our work on awareness raising. Such training continued to be given to various groups, including employees in the public and private sectors, managers, employers, educators, and students. In 2020, the NCPE gave 34 training sessions to 440 participants.

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The NCPE looks forward to the widening of its remit and to strengthening its powers through the setting up of the **National Human Rights and Equality Commission**. We look forward to this transformation that will enable the NCPE to bolster its work in assisting victims of discrimination and harassment.

I conclude by thanking the Minister for Justice, Equality and Governance, Hon. Dr Edward Zammit Lewis for his relentless commitment to safeguard equal rights in Malta. I also thank the Commission members and all the staff at the NCPE for their hard work and dedication to meet the NCPE's objectives to ensure that equality is truly a reality in the everyday life of all.

The Commissioner and Commission Members in 2020

The Commissioner: Renee Laiviera

The Commission Members: Dr. Claudine Borg

Mary Galea Debono

Prof. Mark Anthony Falzon

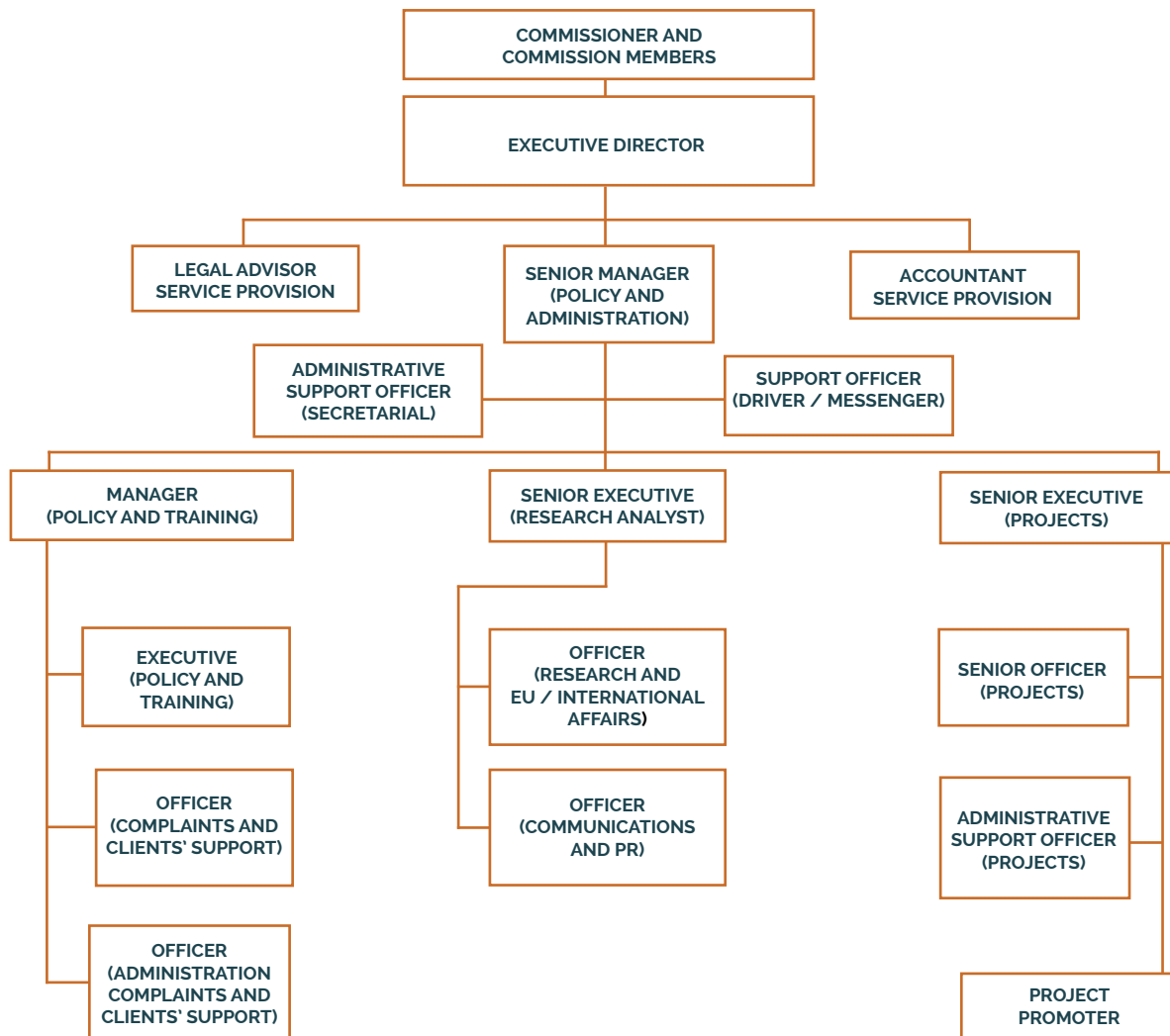
Mario Mallia

Oliver Scicluna

Lorraine Spiteri

Dr. Vanni Xuereb

NCPE Organisation Chart 2020



1. Equality in Malta

1.1 Overview of Developments in 2020

The most important equality developments connected to the NCPE's remit in 2020, a year marked by the Covid-19 pandemic, are highlighted in this section.

Gender equality continued to be strengthened in several spheres, but challenges remain in areas such as work and pay, politics, leadership positions and gender-based violence. The EIGE Gender Equality Index 2020 evidenced improvements in several spheres, with Malta ranking as the third European country registering most progress over a ten-year period. It also showed the persistence of gender gaps and imbalances, especially in the domain of power.

Malta kept the top placing in the Rainbow Europe Map report on LGBTIQ rights, but the same report also highlighted areas that need improvement.

One year after the racially motivated murder of Lassana Cisse Souleymane, Malta ramped up its efforts to combat racial hatred by initiating the drafting of its first action plan against racism and xenophobia.

With respect to equality on the ground of age, pension rises were announced in the 2021 Budget and a draft National Youth Policy was published for consultation.

In 2020, Parliament continued discussing the Bills that will establish the Human Rights and Equality

Commission, a legal framework that would strengthen protection against discrimination.



The NCPE Conference on International Women's Day

Sex and Family Responsibilities

The **employment** rate of women in quarter three of 2020 increased to 65.5%² from 62.8% in 2019³. On the other hand, the employment rate of men in the same quarter decreased to 80.8%⁴ from 82.4% in 2019⁵; a reduction that can be most likely attributed to Covid-19 and the related economic challenges. Although it seems these changes have impacted primarily men's employment, it is

2) National Statistics Office (NSO), December 2020, Labour Force Survey: Q3/2020

3) National Statistics Office (NSO), October 2020, Key Indicators on the Labour Market: 2014-2019

4) National Statistics Office (NSO), December 2020, Labour Force Survey: Q3/2020

5) National Statistics Office (NSO), October 2020, Key Indicators on the Labour Market: 2014-2019

too early to draw conclusions from these figures. To be able to understand the full picture of the pandemic's effect, one will have to wait for the final employment figures for 2020, as well as for the long-term gendered impact of Covid-19 on the economy and social life.

Looking at the sustained increase in the female employment rate over the years, it can be affirmed that several measures aimed at increasing women's participation in the labour market, such as free childcare, the breakfast club, Klabb 3-16, tapering of benefits and in-work benefit, left their desired effects. However, women's employment rate, especially in the 55 – 64 age-bracket, remains relatively low, although slowly and steadily on the rise. In quarter three of 2020 the employment rate for women in this category stood at 40.8%⁶, an increase of more than five percentage points over 2019, but still well below the employment rate of men in the same age-bracket, at 63.6%.

The 2021 Budget announced further measures to continue incentivising women's participation in the labour market and create a more family-friendly work environment. It was stated that the in-work benefit will be boosted by extending the threshold so that more families become eligible. For couples where both work, the threshold will go up to €35,000. For couples where only one parent works, the threshold will go up to €26,000⁷. The in-work benefit is aimed at assisting couples and single parents with children who are employed and earn below a certain income. The Budget also announced that employers will be incentivised to offer measures leading to a better work-life balance for employees and to support men wanting to increase their participation in home life⁸.

The latest available figures for the **gender pay gap** in Malta show that this gap currently stands at 13%, slightly below the EU average of 14.4%⁹. The gender pay gap represents the difference between the average gross hourly earnings of

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female and male employees. In November, the NCPE held an online conference during which speakers from related fields highlighted the way forward for closing the gender pay gap and ensuring equal pay for women and men. The gender pay gap affects women throughout their lifecycle, including their pension, where the gap is even wider, currently standing at 39.5%¹⁰. Thus, tackling the gender pay gap is crucial to mitigating the risk of falling into poverty and social exclusion particularly in later life. One recommendation concerning pay transparency, was considered to be of vital importance in order to register progress.

Employment and pay were among the domains assessed by the **Gender Equality Index 2020**¹¹ published by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). The Index covers six different domains: work, money, knowledge, time, power and health. **Malta ranked 15th** and obtained an overall score of 63.4, 4.5 points below the EU average of 67.9. However, Malta was among the first three countries that **registered most progress** since 2010, with an increase of nine points, mostly thanks to a marked improvement in the domain of work. Conversely, Malta lagged behind in the domain of power scoring just 32.8 points, well below the EU average of 53.5.



EIGE 2020 Gender Equality Index

6) National Statistics Office (NSO), December 2020, Labour Force Survey: Q3/2020

7) The Budget Speech 2021, p. 16

8) Ibid. p. 87

9) Eurostat, Gender pay gap in unadjusted form in 2018

10) Eurostat, Gender pension gap by age group in 2019

11) www.eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2020

In order to address the persistent under-representation of women in **politics**, the Technical Committee for the Advancement of Representative Democracy finalised its proposals after evaluating the feedback gathered from the Gender Balance in Parliament Reform public consultation process carried out in 2019. The Technical Committee agreed on a set of proposals that aim for a family-friendly Parliament, gender-sensitive political party structures and operations, a gender-balanced Electoral Commission, and envisage the allocation of additional Parliamentary seats when the under-represented sex obtains a percentage of less than 40%. The two major political parties expressed their agreement with the proposals during the consultation process piloted by the Technical Committee¹². The recommendations were then discussed in the Government Cabinet before their presentation in Parliament.

In order to support women who are considering submitting their nominations at the next elections, in August, the NCPE issued a statement highlighting one of the main barriers experienced by women in politics, that of harassment and hate speech. In its statement, the NCPE observed that there has been an increase in cyber harassment of women Parliamentarians in Malta¹³.

An NCPE ex officio investigation concluded in 2020 found that the **Notarial Professions and Archives Act** discriminated on the basis of gender since only women were asked to declare their civil status upon entering a notarial contract. In October, an amendment to this Bill, removing its discriminatory provisions, was tabled in Parliament by Hon. Rosianne Cutajar. The amendments were approved by Parliament in December¹⁴.

¹²) Department of Information: PR200341

¹³) www.ncpe.gov.mt/en/Documents/News_and_Events/Press_Releases/2020/PS_Challenges_faced_by_Women_in_Politics_EN.pdf

¹⁴) www.parlament.mt

The debate surrounding the **prostitution reform** continued in 2020. In March, the NCPE reiterated its stance in favour of a prostitution reform that respects the dignity of women and that sends a clear message against exploitation and gender inequality. It said that the prostitution reform should ensure that the country has all the necessary legal and social means to assist persons to exit prostitution as well as create the conditions where no person has to resort to prostitution for a living. The NCPE underlined that the State should send a clear message that prostitution is a form of exploitation that reproduces and reinforces a patriarchal society. In this context, the NCPE said that sex-buyers should be penalised and that there should be an effective strategy for a crackdown on pimps and traffickers in order to narrow an inherently exploitative sex market¹⁵.

In October, an agreement signed between the Human Rights Directorate (HRD) and the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS) established the Sex Workers Support Services run by Aġenzija Appoġġ. This service will ensure the provision of relevant assessment tools, carry out work with clients, community outreach, counselling, and develop long-term care plans¹⁶.

Another agreement was reached among Legal Aid Malta, FSWS and the Victim Support Unit within the Malta Police Force, that will ensure that victims of **domestic violence** are provided with holistic support from the moment a victim reports a case, up until the resumption of his/her normal everyday life. The Police will be responsible for offering initial support and will also refer persons to Legal Aid Malta for specialised legal assistance. FSWS will then offer the necessary social support for the full reintegration of survivors into society¹⁷.

¹⁵) www.ncpe.gov.mt/en/Documents/News_and_Events/Press_Releases/2020/Prostitution_reform_should_send_clear_message_against_exploitation_and_gender_inequality_PS_EN.pdf

¹⁶) Department of Information: PR202013

¹⁷) Department of Information: PR201722

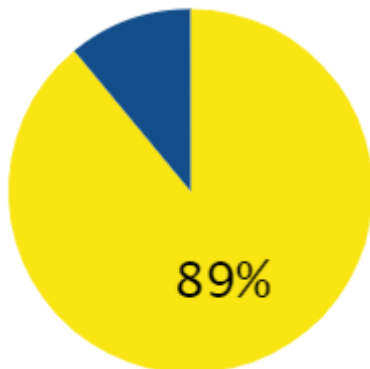


Demonstration in Valletta following the femicide of Chantelle Chetcuti

2020 saw the femicide of Chantelle Chetcuti, murdered on the 2nd February, allegedly by her former partner. During a rally denouncing her murder, civil society and women's rights organisations called for an end to Malta's patriarchal society and for reforming how the institutions and the media deal with cases of violence against women¹⁸. In March, the Commission on Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence warned that the Covid-19 pandemic could result in higher risk of domestic abuse¹⁹. A 15% increase in domestic violence cases was registered in the first half of 2020 compared to last year's data²⁰.

LGBTIQ

For the fifth year in a row, Malta continued to occupy the number one placing on the **Rainbow Europe Map**, with a score of 89%. The Rainbow Map, published by ILGA-Europe, examines the laws and policies in 49 European countries using a set of 69 criteria divided under six thematic categories: equality and non-discrimination; family; hate crime and hate speech; legal gender recognition and bodily integrity; civil society space; and asylum²¹.



Overall score
Achieved LGBTI human rights

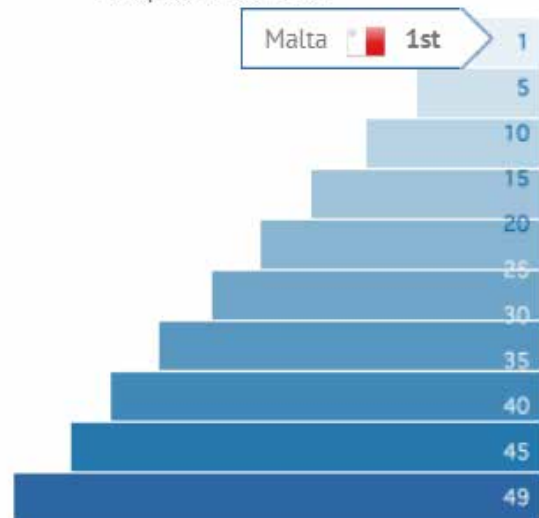
Breakdown

Achieved in each category



Place

Among 49 European countries



Rainbow Map 2020 - Malta

¹⁸ www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/valletta-protest-to-pressure-government-to-curb-violence-against-women,768460

¹⁹ Department of Information: PR200532

²⁰ www.lovinmalta.com/news/watch-domestic-abuse-in-malta-is-up-by-15-but-police-commissioner-hopes-its-a-sign-more-victims-coming-forward/

²¹ www.rainbow-europe.org

While Malta obtained a full score in most spheres, it scored 33% and 75% in the spheres of 'asylum' and 'equality and non-discrimination', respectively. ILGA-Europe put forward the following recommendations for Malta to further improve its score:

- Specifically including all SOGISC (sexual orientation, gender identity, sex characteristics) grounds in legislation prohibiting discrimination in education and goods and services.
- Introducing laws on asylum and formalising policies and/or other positive measures on asylum that contain express mention of all SOGISC (sexual orientation, gender identity, sex characteristics) grounds.
- Implementation of national strategies for the LGBTI community in rural areas.

On the occasion of **World AIDS Day**, the Malta LGBTIQ Rights Movement (MGRM) called for increased access to HIV testing at the genitourinary (GU) clinic, more focus on preventive treatment and a push to make sure people are on the most effective medication. The organisation stated that in order to end the HIV epidemic in Malta, the island requires a watertight strategy focused on achieving the targets set out by UNAIDS, where: 90% of people with HIV know they are infected, 90% of those are on medication, and 90% of those on medication are undetectable and untransmittable²².

The 2021 Budget speech announced that a **new centre** for the LGBTIQ community will be set up, with the objective of bringing together, under one roof, a number of services and facilities provided by Government and the civil society to the LGBTIQ community. This centre will also be providing financial support to the LGBTIQ community in bringing EuroPride 2023 to Malta²³.

²²) www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/106237/malta_needs_to_step_up_fight_against_hiv_epidemic_mgrm_says#YEiY4dwo_IU

The 2021 Budget speech announced that a **new centre** for the LGBTIQ community will be set up, with the objective of bringing together, under one roof, a number of services and facilities provided by Government and the civil society to the LGBTIQ community. This centre will also be providing financial support to the LGBTIQ community in bringing EuroPride 2023 to Malta²³.

Race/ethnic origin and religion/belief

The document leading to the first **National Action Plan Against Racism and Xenophobia** (NAPRAX) in Malta was launched for public consultation. The document recognised that ingrained and at times institutionalised racialised problems within Maltese society are a source of alarm, and urgently need to be addressed. It outlined the Government's commitment to address racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and intolerance in Malta by means of effective, measurable actions in various spheres of life²⁴.



²³) The Budget Speech 2021, p. 87

²⁴) www.meae.gov.mt/en/Public_Consultations/MJEG/Pages/Consultations/TowardsaNationalActionPlanagainstRacismandXenophobia.aspx

The public consultation document identified 11 key areas in which concrete actions could contribute to addressing racism and xenophobia, and which could be further developed into concrete measures:

- Knowledge and Research
- Meeting Places
- Debate and Democracy
- Children, Youth and Education
- Employment
- Housing
- Criminal Justice / Law Enforcement
- Public Services
- Freedom from Hatred
- Integration
- International Efforts

A National Action Plan against Racism and Xenophobia will be finalised after evaluation of the submissions received.

One year after the racially motivated murder of **Lassana Cisse Souleymane**, Hon. Parliamentary Secretary held a commemorative event in Birżebbuġia where she unveiled a plaque on the site of the drive-by shooting. Hon. Cutajar stated that the murder of Lassana should help us realise how dangerous hate speech and racist comments are, and that they can even be fatal²⁵. In 2019, two former soldiers were charged in Court with the racially aggravated murder of Lassana in Hal Far.

Age

Further **pension** increases were outlined in the 2021 Budget. Government stated that, in addition to the COLA increase, pensions will increase by €3.25 per week, applicable to all those on a retirement pension, a widows' pension, an invalidity pension, and a non-contributory age pension. The tax exemption cap was raised to €14,058.

Persons of 63 years of age or over, particularly women who spent many years out of employment

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in the past and are not entitled to a pension even though they might have paid some social security contributions, will be given a further increase of €50 in their annual bonus²⁶.

In September, a public consultation was launched on the **National Youth Policy**. The new Youth Policy will cover the period 2021 to 2030 and will focus on all young people aged 13 to 30. The policy aims to support and encourage young people, both as individuals and citizens, in schools and other educational and training institutions, in work, in the community and through social media. The finalised document will seek to empower young people through the effective practice of youth work, including the digitalisation of youth work; regional and locally-based centres; national programmes, projects and initiatives; and cross-sectoral initiatives with the voluntary, state and private sectors.



Draft National Youth Policy - Towards 2030

²⁵ www.independent.com.mt/articles/2020-04-06/local-news/Brief-ceremony-commemorates-migrant-slain-one-year-ago-6736221718

²⁶ The Budget Speech 2021, p. 17 - 18

The public consultation outlined six strategic goals and accompanying actions that will be implemented over the period 2021-2030. All groups and organisations that work for and with young people were invited to actively participate and contribute to the development and implementation of the National Youth Policy.

The Human Rights and Equality Commission

The **Equality Bill** was discussed at length in the Parliamentary Adjunct Committee for the Consideration of Bills in 2020, following the tabling in Parliament of the Human Rights and Equality Commission (HREC) Bill and the Equality Bill in 2019²⁷. Once enacted, the Bills will restructure and strengthen Malta's legal framework on **human rights and discrimination** through transforming

the NCPE into a Human Rights and Equality Commission (HREC) answering to Parliament, with a wider remit as well as sanctioning powers.

The Equality Bill was heatedly debated both in Parliament as well as on the media. In view of calls for the inclusion of a 'conscientious objection' clause in the Bill, the NCPE Commissioner Ms Renee Laiviera reiterated that including such a clause within the context of equality law may go counter to the core principles of non-discrimination law itself, as well as to the fundamental values of a country aspiring for equality²⁸.

Parliament will continue discussing the two Bills in 2021.

²⁷) www.parlament.mt

²⁸) www.maltatoday.com.mt/comment/blogs/105102/no_one_should_be_given_a_license_to_discriminate_renee_laiviera#.YEia2Nwo_IU

1.2 Statistical Overview

In this section, gender-disaggregated data gathered for the spheres of employment, public administration, politics, the judiciary, education, and the media are presented.

Year after year, figures continue to show an ever-present underrepresentation of women in most areas, as well as a persistent gender imbalance

in decision-making positions. Although significant improvements have been made in some areas, it is also clear from the data that there is still a long way to go for gender equality to be achieved across the board.

Employment

Table 1: Activity rates of women and men, divided by age in 2018, 2019 and 2020 (Q3)²⁹

Age	2018		2019		2020 (Q3)	
	M %	F %	M %	F %	M %	F %
15 - 24	55.7	56.3	56.6	55.0	58.5	56.3
25 - 54	96.4	74.6	96.6	76.5	95.2	79.3
55 - 64	69.4	34.1	67.1	36.1	65.1	41.7

Figure 1: Activity rates of working-age women and men (15-64 years old) in 2018, 2019 and 2020 (Q3)³⁰

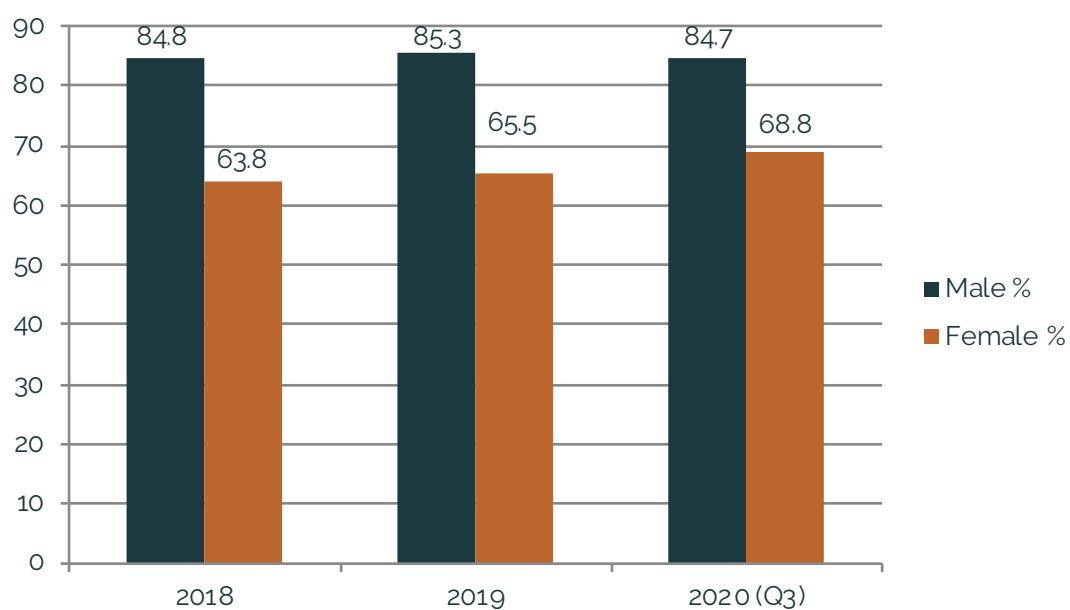


Table 2: Employment rates of women and men, divided by age in 2018, 2019 and 2020 (Q3) and 2020 (Q3)³¹

Age	2018		2019		2020 (Q3)	
	M %	F %	M %	F %	M %	F %
15 - 24	49.5	52.5	50.7	50.6	51.8	50.3
25 - 54	93.6	72.5	93.9	73.7	91.3	75.9
55 - 64	67.3	32.8	66.3	35.4	63.6	40.8

²⁹⁾ National Statistics Office (NSO), December 2020, Labour Force Survey: Q3/2020 and National Statistics Office (NSO), October 2020, Key Indicators on the Labour Market: 2014-2019

³⁰⁾ Ibid.

³¹⁾ Ibid.

Figure 2: Employment rates of working-age women and men (15-64 years old) in 2018, 2019 and 2020 (Q3)³²

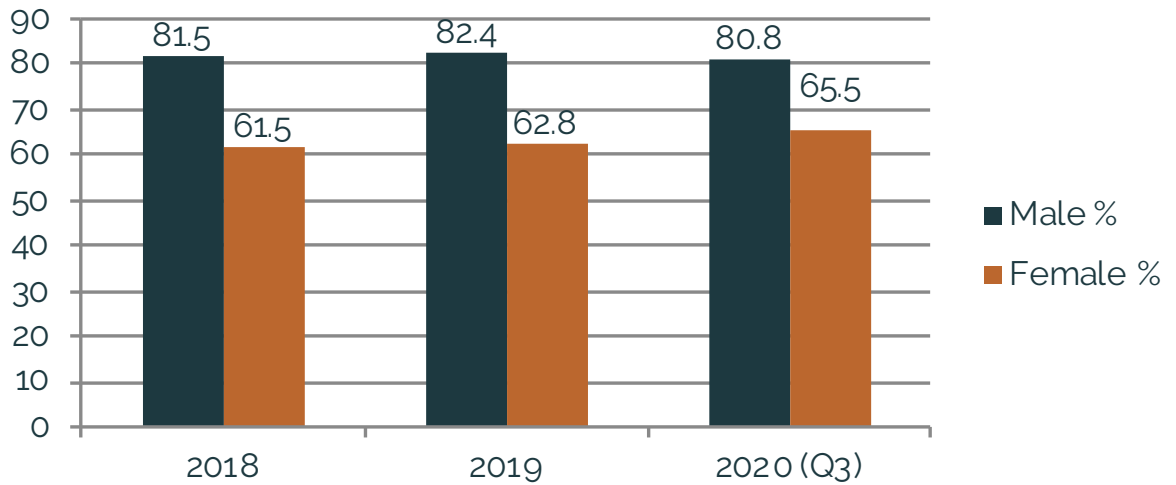
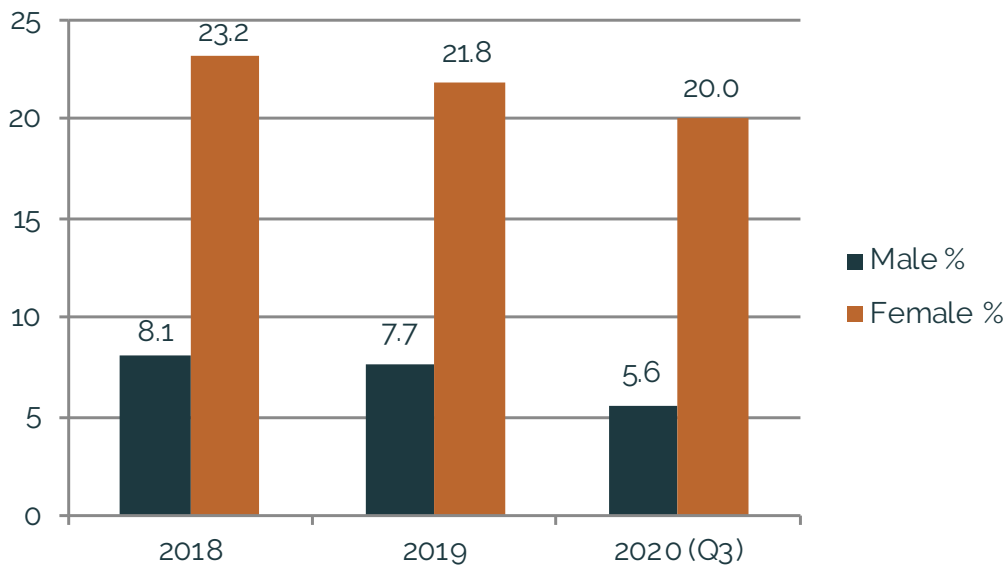


Figure 3: Percentage of women and men having part-time as their main occupation in 2018, 2019 and 2020 (Q3)³³



³²) Ibid.

³³) National Statistics Office (NSO), December 2020, Labour Force Survey: Q3/2020 and correspondence with the National Statistics Office (NSO), 30/12/2020

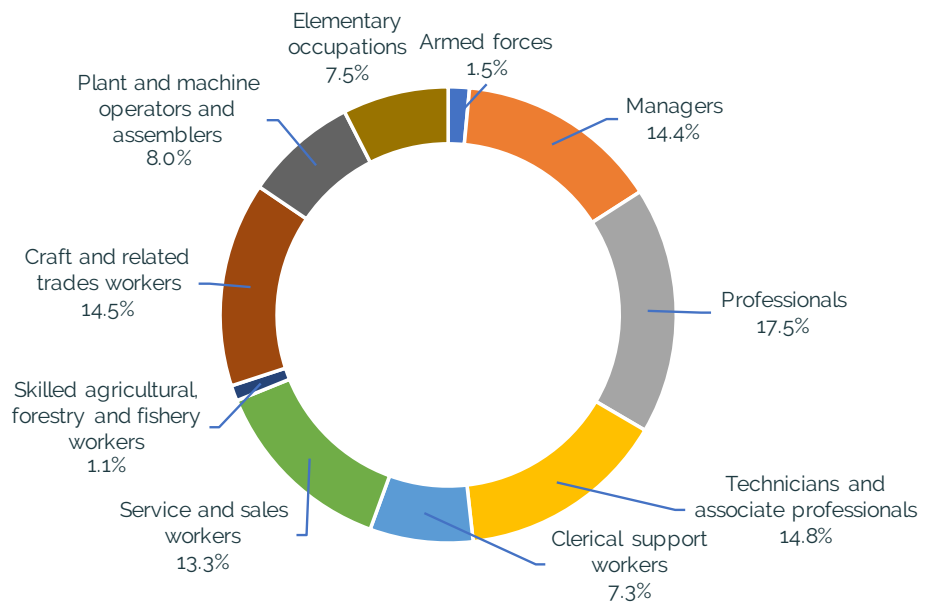
Table 3: Total employed by occupation in 2018, 2019 and 2020 (Q3)³⁴

Occupation	2018		2019		2020 (Q3)	
	M %	F %	M %	F %	M %	F %
Armed forces	1.2	:	1.1	:	1.5 ^u	:
Managers	12.5	7.4	12.7	8.1	14.4	7.6
Professionals	15.5	22.1	16.3	23.2	17.5	26.0
Technicians and associate professionals	16.0	13.8	15.9	13.1	14.8	11.7
Clerical support workers	7.8	16.2	7.5	16.3	7.3	15.8
Service and sales workers	14.6	28.4	13.9	27.8	13.3	26.5
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	1.8	:	1.4	:	1.1 ^u	:
Craft and related trades workers	15.4	1.3	15.6	1.0	14.5	2.7 ^u
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	6.2	3.6	6.5	3.3	8.0	1.8 ^u
Elementary occupations	8.9	6.9	9.0	6.9	7.5	7.7

: Unreliable - less than 20 sample observations
^u Underrepresented - between 20 and 49 sample observations

Figures 4 & 5: Total employed by occupation in 2020 (Q3)³⁵

Males



³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ National Statistics Office (NSO), December 2020, Labour Force Survey: Q3/2020

Females

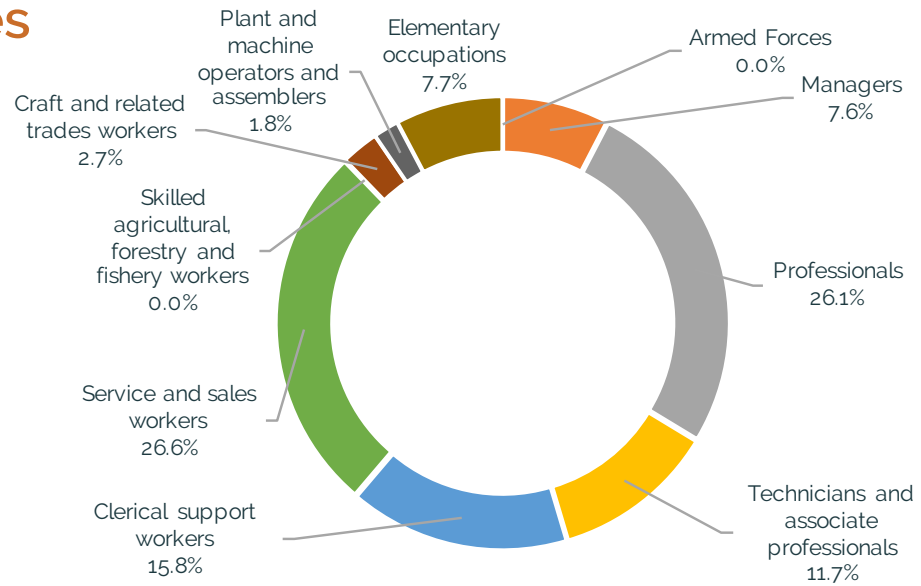
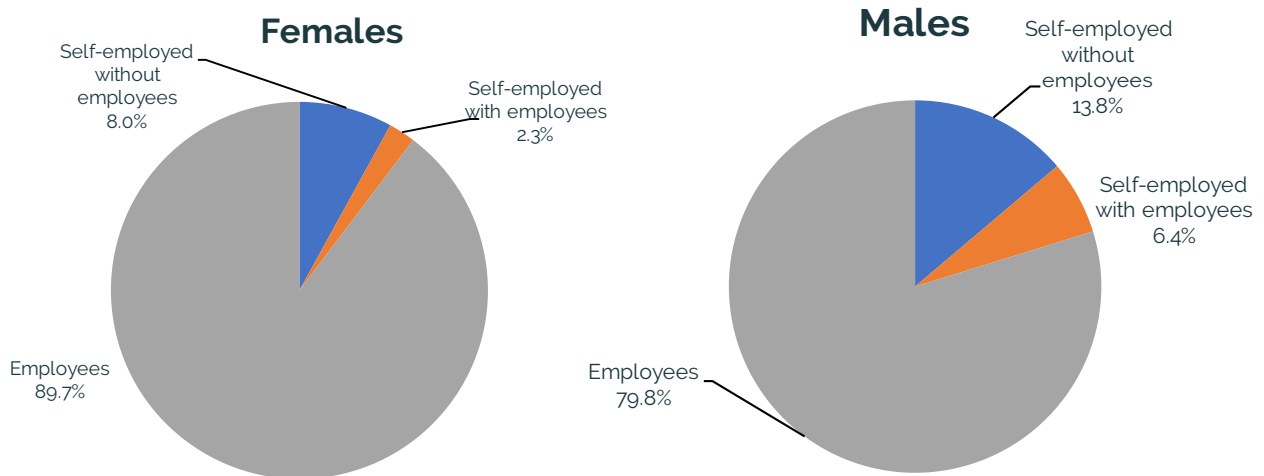


Table 4: Total employed by professional status in 2018, 2019 and 2020 (Q3)³⁶

Professional status	2018		2019		2020 (Q3)	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Self-employed without employees	12.7	5.9	13.5	6.9	13.8	8.0
Self-employed with employees	5.7	2.3	6.3	2.7	6.4	2.3 ^u
Employees	81.6	91.8	80.2	90.4	79.7	89.6

^u Underrepresented - between 20 and 49 sample observations

Figures 6 & 7: Total employed by professional status of women and men in 2020 (Q3)³⁷



³⁶ National Statistics Office (NSO), December 2020, Labour Force Survey: Q3/2020 and correspondence with the National Statistics Office (NSO), 30/12/2020

³⁷ National Statistics Office (NSO), December 2020, Labour Force Survey: Q3/2020

Table 5: Unadjusted gender pay gap in 2017, 2018 and 2019³⁸

	2017	2018	2019
Malta	13.2	13.0	11.6(p)
EU 28 countries	15.7	15.3	:
EU 27 countries (since 2020)	14.6	14.4	14.1

p = provisional
(:) = not available

Table 6: Gender balance in largest listed companies: presidents, board members and employee representatives in 2018, 2019 and 2020³⁹

	2018-B2		2019-B2		2020-B2	
	M%	F%	M%	F%	M%	F%
Malta	90.4	9.6	90.0	10.0	90.1	9.9
EU 28 countries	73.3	26.7	71.2	28.8	70.0	30.0
EU 27 countries (since 2020)	73.6	26.4	71.6	28.4	70.5	29.5

Comments

The activity and employment rates of working-age women over the last three years have increased in all age brackets, whilst the percentage of women having a part-time job as their main occupation has been on a steady decline. However, there is still a significant gap of over 15 percentage points between employed women and employed men in quarter three of 2020.

There has been little to no progress with regards to gender segregation in the labour market. Some occupational categories, such as Services and Sales and Cleric Support Workers continue to be

dominated by women, whereas other categories like Managers, Craft and Related Trades and Plant and Machine Operators and Assemblers continue to be dominated by men. It is also clear from the figures that the percentage of women in decision-making positions at company level is very low, and there are also few women in self-employment.

Horizontal and vertical segregation in the labour market is one of the main contributors to the gender pay gap, which stood at 13% in 2018 (latest available data).

³⁸) https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/sdg_05_20/default/table?lang=en

³⁹) https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/wmidm_bus_bus_wmid_comp_compbm/bar/year:2020-B2/geo:EU28,EU27_2020.I-PA,EEA,BE,BG,CZ,DK,DE,EE,IE,EL,ES,FR,HR,IT,CY,LV,LT,LU,HU,MT,NL,AT,PL,PT,RO,SI,SK,FI,SE,UK,IS,NO,ME,MK,RS,TR,BA/EGROUP:COMP/sex:M,W/UNIT:PC/POSITION:MEMB_BRD/NACE:TOT

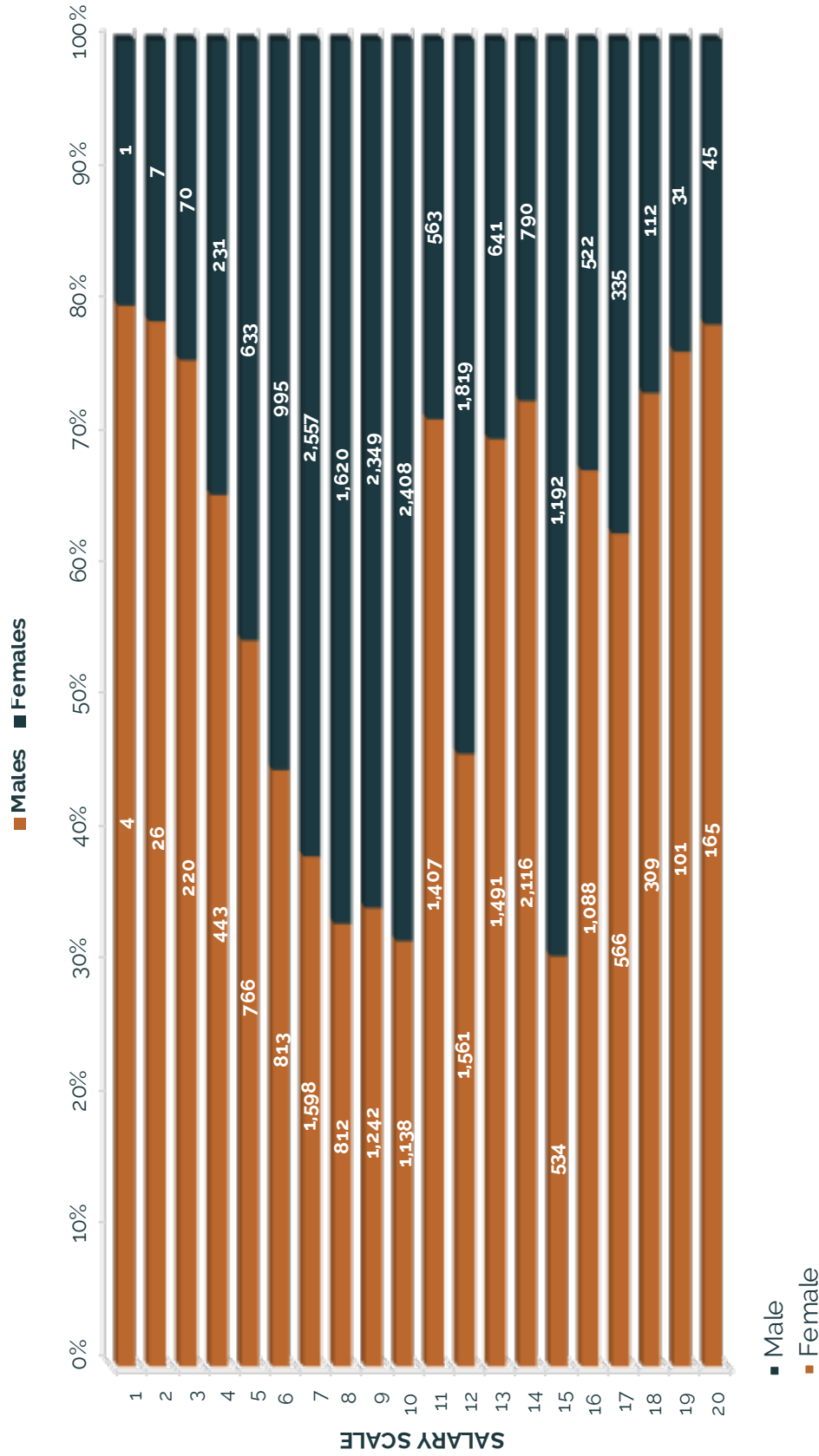
Public Administration

Table 7: Women and men in salary scales (2019 and 2020)⁴⁰

Salary scale	2019				2020				Change in percentage	
	Males		Females		Males		Females		M	F
1	5	83.3%	1	16.7%	4	80.0%	1	20.0%	-	+
2	15	75.0%	5	25.0%	26	78.8%	7	21.2%	+	-
3	198	73.1%	73	26.9%	220	75.9%	70	24.1%	+	-
4	434	67.6%	208	32.4%	443	65.7%	231	34.3%	-	+
5	703	53.6%	608	46.4%	766	54.8%	633	45.2%	+	-
6	722	44.7%	894	55.3%	813	45.0%	995	55.0%	+	-
7	1,420	38.9%	2,234	61.1%	1,598	38.5%	2,557	61.5%	-	+
8	777	29.7%	1,838	70.3%	812	33.4%	1,620	66.6%	+	-
9	1,076	31.8%	2,306	68.2%	1,242	34.6%	2,349	65.4%	+	-
10	1,266	34.4%	2,413	65.6%	1,138	32.1%	2,408	67.9%	-	+
11	994	61.4%	624	38.6%	1,407	71.4%	563	28.6%	+	-
12	1,467	49.3%	1,509	50.7%	1,561	46.2%	1,819	53.8%	-	+
13	1,683	69.9%	724	30.1%	1,491	69.9%	641	30.1%	=	=
14	2,183	70.4%	920	29.6%	2,116	72.8%	790	27.2%	+	-
15	559	29.1%	1,360	70.9%	534	30.9%	1,192	69.1%	+	-
16	1,103	69.5%	484	30.5%	1,088	67.6%	522	32.4%	-	+
17	570	56.1%	446	43.9%	566	62.8%	335	37.2%	+	-
18	248	44.0%	316	56.0%	309	73.4%	112	26.6%	+	-
19	50	50.5%	49	49.5%	101	76.5%	31	23.5%	+	-
20	123	75.5%	40	24.5%	165	78.6%	45	21.4%	+	-
Total	15,596	47.8%	17,052	52.2%	16,400	49.2%	16,921	50.8%	+	-
					32,648		33,321			

40) Correspondence with the People and Standards Division (P&SD), 16/02/2021

Figure 8: Women and men in salary scales (2020) by percentage⁴¹



⁴¹ Ibid.

Table 8: Utilisation of family-friendly measures by gender in 2018 and 2019⁴²

Type	2018						2019					
	Males			Females			Males			Females		
	No	%	Total	No	%	Total	No	%	Total	No	%	Total
Maternity Leave (first 14 weeks)	0	0.0	573	573	100.0	573	0	0.0	548	548	100.0	548
Maternity Leave (additional 4 weeks)	0	0.0	411	411	100.0	411	0	0.0	420	420	100.0	420
Adoption Leave	4	23.5	13	13	76.5	17	3	37.5	5	5	62.5	8
Responsibility Leave	11	26.8	30	30	73.2	41	7	28.0	18	18	72.0	25
Parental Leave Applicable to Parents, Legal Guardians and Foster Carers	11	2.4	454	454	97.6	465	9	2.3	384	384	97.7	393
Career Break	7	3.0	228	228	97.0	235	9	4.8	177	177	95.2	186
Leave to accompany spouse / partner in Civil Union on Govt-sponsored courses or assignments	0	0.0	7	7	100.0	7	0	0.0	4	4	100.0	4
Reduced hours – 20 hours/week	17	6.5	245	245	93.5	262	10	5.8	163	163	94.2	173
Reduced hours – 25 hours/week	5	4.2	115	115	95.8	120	3	3.1	93	93	96.9	96
Reduced hours – 30 hours/week	43	13.0	287	287	87.0	330	16	6.0	252	252	94.0	268
Reduced hours – 35 hours/week	11	6.3	165	165	93.8	176	8	5.6	135	135	94.4	143
Reduced hours – other amounts	6	3.3	174	174	96.7	180	17	11.0	138	138	89.0	155
Teleworking	200	15.2	1,120	1,120	84.8	1,320	255	18.4	1,128	1,128	81.6	1,383
Flexi-Time	513	43.2	674	674	56.8	1,187	474	40.4	698	698	59.6	1,172
Total	828	15.6	4,496	4,496	84.4	5,324	811	16.3	4,163	4,163	83.7	4,974

⁴² Correspondence with the People and Standards Division (P&SD), 15/02/2021

Table 9: Utilisation of family-friendly measures by different Scale Categories in 2019⁴³

Type	Scales 1-5		Scales 6-10		Scales 11-15		Scales 16-20		Definite Contracts	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Maternity Leave (first 14 weeks)	0	12	0	342	0	175	0	5	0	14
Maternity Leave (additional 4 weeks)	0	6	0	255	0	142	0	5	0	12
Adoption Leave	0	0	1	4	2	1	0	0	0	0
Responsibility Leave	0	0	2	4	5	8	0	6	0	0
Parental Leave Applicable to Parents, Legal Guardians and Foster Carers	0	3	3	263	6	111	0	1	0	6
Career Break	0	1	8	118	1	56	0	0	0	2
Leave to accompany spouse / partner in Civil Union or Govt-sponsored courses or assignments	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0
Reduced hours – 20 hours/week	0	8	3	85	3	44	1	22	3	4
Reduced hours – 25 hours/week	1	8	1	37	0	31	1	17	0	0
Reduced hours – 30 hours/week	2	8	4	122	5	80	2	40	3	2
Reduced hours – 35 hours/week	0	9	5	61	2	41	1	23	0	1
Reduced hours – other amounts	1	4	5	72	2	37	0	24	9	1
Teleworking	51	91	135	503	63	444	2	61	4	29
Flexi-Time	83	45	196	308	150	256	39	74	6	15
Totals	138	195	363	2,177	239	1,427	46	278	25	86
Overall percentage	41.4%	58.6%	14.3%	85.7%	14.3%	85.7%	14.2%	85.8%	22.5%	77.5%

43) Ibid.

Comments

Whilst there has been a slight increase in the percentage of women in some of the upper salary scales, gender imbalance in top managerial roles within the public service is still very high. Female representation here can mainly be seen between Scales five and ten, with men still dominating the higher Scales one to four.

A small increase in the percentage of men using family-friendly measures has been registered in the public service, however, this is still very low when compared with the percentage of women making use of such measures, especially with regards to parental leave, career breaks, teleworking, reduced hours, responsibility leave and adoption leave.

Political Sphere – National Government

Table 10: Cabinet in 2018, 2019 and 2020⁴⁴

	2018				Total
	Males		Females		
Ministers	13	86.7%	2	13.3%	15
Parliamentary Secretaries	9	90.0%	1	10.0%	10
Cabinet - Total	22	88.0%	3	12.0%	25

	2019				Total
	Males		Females		
Ministers	13	92.9%	1	7.1%	14
Parliamentary Secretaries	9	90.0%	1	10.0%	10
Cabinet - Total	22	91.7%	2	8.3%	24

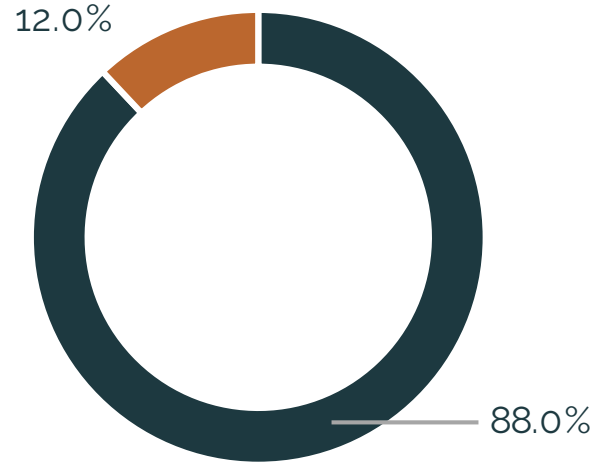
	2020				Total
	Males		Females		
Ministers	18	85.7%	3	14.3%	21
Parliamentary Secretaries	5	83.3%	1	16.7%	6
Cabinet - Total	23	85.2%	4	14.8%	27

⁴⁴ <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Ministries%20and%20Entities/Pages/default.aspx>

Figure 9, 10 & 11: Cabinet in 2018, 2019 and 2020 by percentage⁴⁵

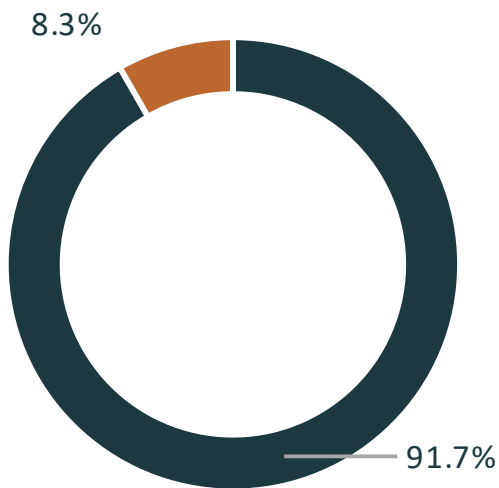
2018

- Male
- Female



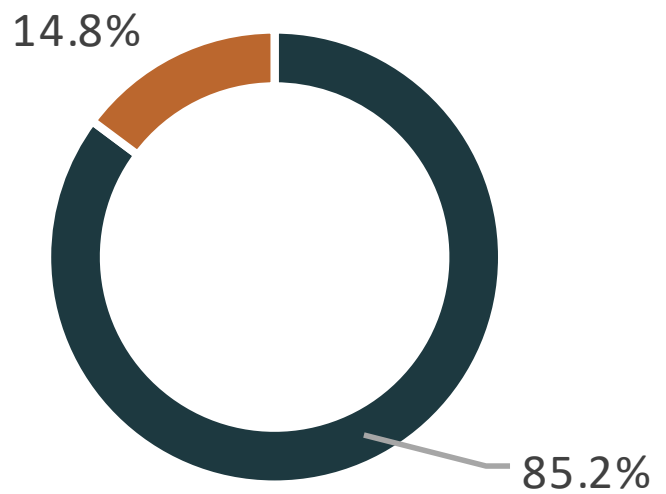
2019

- Male
- Female



2020

- Male
- Female



⁴⁵ Ibid.

Table 11: Maltese MEPs in 2018, 2019 and 2020

	2018		2019		2020	
Males	3	50.0%	3	50.0%	4	66.7%
Females	3	50.0%	3	50.0%	2	33.3%
Total	6	100.0%	6	100.0%	6	100.0%

Table 12: Local Councils in 2018, 2019 and 2020⁴⁶

	2018				
	Males		Females		Total
Mayors	55	80.9%	13	19.1%	68
Deputy Mayors	55	80.9%	13	19.1%	68
Councillors	244	76.7%	74	23.3%	318
Total	354	78.0%	100	22.0%	454

	2019				
	Males		Females		Total
Mayors	57	83.8%	11	16.2%	68
Deputy Mayors	47	69.1%	21	30.9%	68
Councillors	238	72.6%	90	27.4%	328
Total	342	73.7%	122	26.3%	464

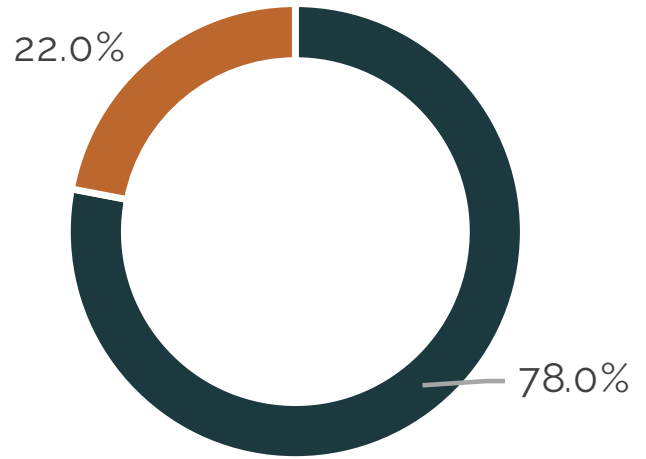
	2020				
	Males		Females		Total
Mayors	57	83.8%	11	16.2%	68
Deputy Mayors	46	67.6%	22	32.4%	68
Councillors	239	72.9%	89	27.1%	328
Total	342	73.7%	122	26.3%	464

⁴⁶) Correspondence with the Local Government Division, 04/01/2021

Figure 12, 13 &14: Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors in 2018, 2019 and 2020⁴⁷

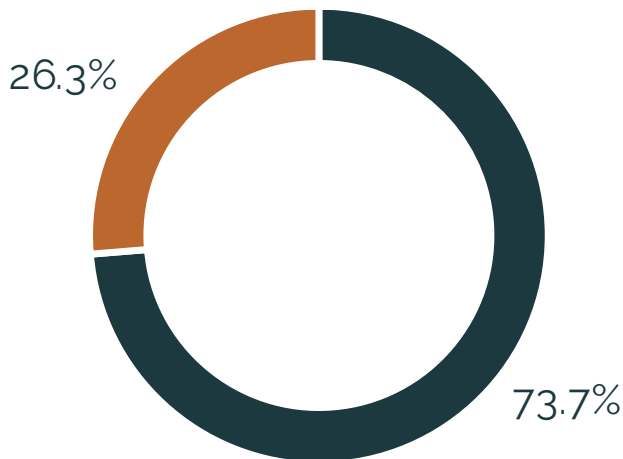
2018

- Male
- Female



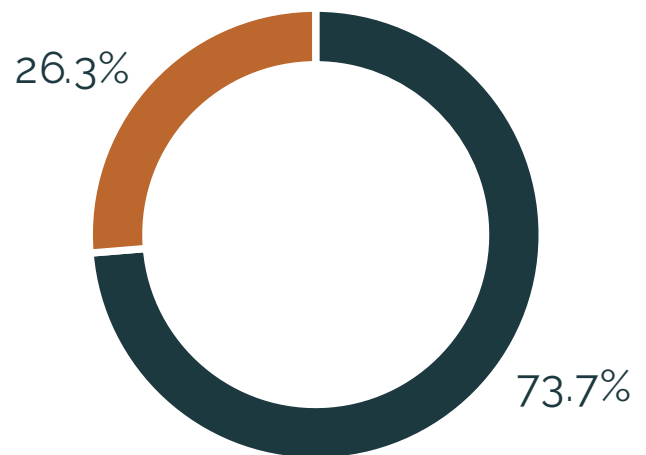
2019

- Male
- Female



2020

- Male
- Female



⁴⁷) Ibid.

Comments

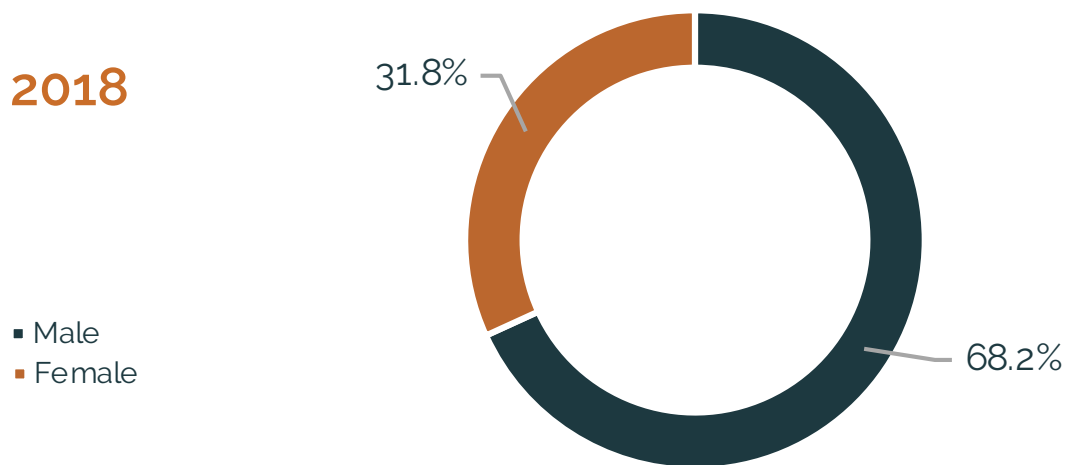
There has been a small improvement in the participation of women in the cabinet, with female representation in the cabinet increasing overall due to the appointment of Hon. Dr Miriam Dalli as Minister. However, gender equality here is still a long way ahead, as a visible gap of over 70 percentage points between male and female members of the cabinet is still present.

In Local Councils, there has not been any significant change from last year's figures, where a gap of over 40 percentage points can be seen. In MEP elections, where gender equality had previously been achieved in 2018 and maintained throughout 2019, the figures are once again in disparity due to the return of Dr Miriam Dalli from the European Parliament to National Parliament, and the election of Mr Cyrus Engerer to the European Parliament.

Judiciary

Table 13 & Figures 15, 16 & 17: Bench of Judges in 2018, 2019 and 2020⁴⁸

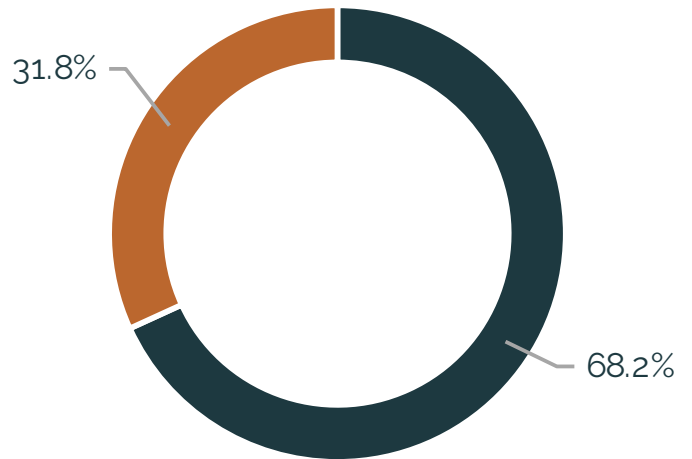
	2018		2019		2020	
Males	15	68.2%	15	68.2%	14	63.6%
Females	7	31.8%	7	31.8%	8	36.4%
Total	22	100.0%	22	100.0%	22	100.0%



⁴⁸) Correspondence with the Courts Services Agency, 31/12/2020

2019

- Male
- Female



36.4%

2020

- Male
- Female

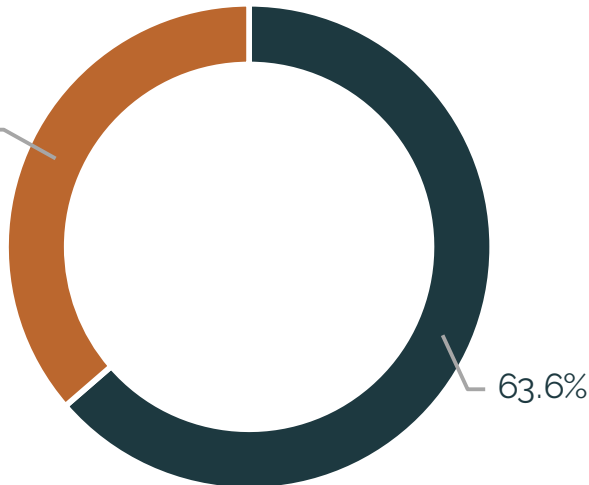


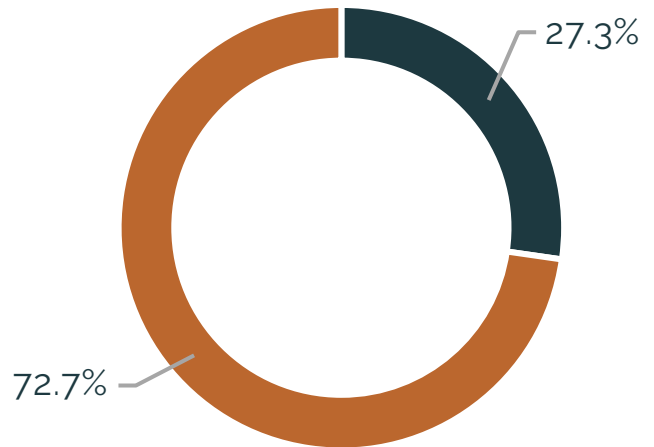
Table 14 & Figures 18, 19 & 20: Bench of Magistrates 2018, 2019 and 2020⁴⁹

	2018		2019		2020	
Males	6	27.3%	4	19.0%	4	19.0%
Females	16	72.7%	17	81.0%	17	81.0%
Total	22	100.0%	21	100.0%	21	100.0%

⁴⁹⁾ Ibid.

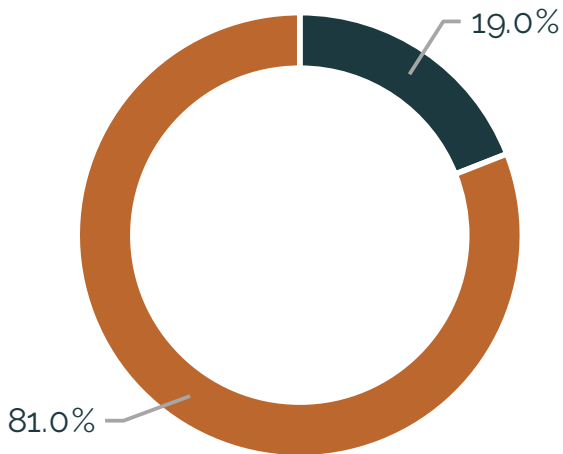
2018

- Male
- Female



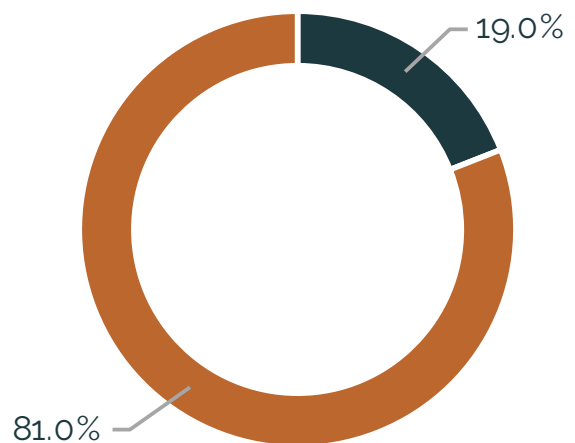
2019

- Male
- Female



2020

- Male
- Female



Comments

The Bench of Magistrates is predominantly female and has been for the past few years. On the other hand, although there has been a slight increase

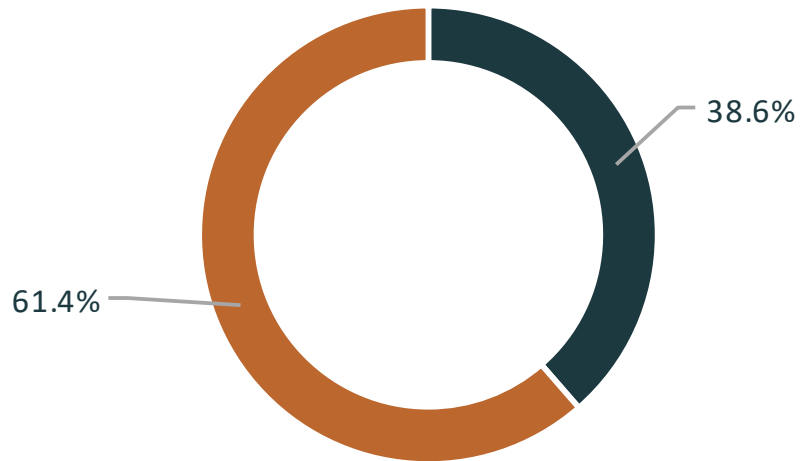
in female representation between 2019 and 2020, women are still outnumbered by men on the Bench of Judges.

Education

Figures 21 & 22: University Graduates 2018/2019 & 2019/2020 by percentage⁵⁰

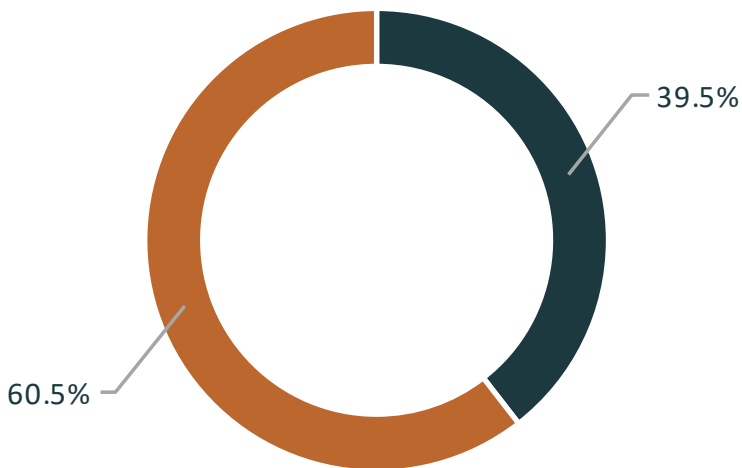
2018/2019

- Male
- Female



2019/2020

- Male
- Female



⁵⁰ <https://www.um.edu.mt/about/facts/numbers/graduates>

Table 15: University Graduates in 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 by faculty/institute⁵¹

Faculty/Institute	2018/19				2019/20				Change in Percentage	
	M		F		M		F		M	F
		Total		Total		Total		Total		
Faculty of Arts	139	33.4%	277	66.6%	107	28.6%	267	71.4%	-	+
Faculty for the Built Environment	113	54.1%	96	45.9%	113	54.9%	93	45.1%	+	-
Faculty of Economics, Management and Accountancy	280	46.1%	327	53.9%	274	48.5%	291	51.5%	+	-
Faculty of Education	65	17.2%	312	82.8%	30	10.8%	248	89.2%	-	+
Faculty of Engineering	96	85.0%	17	15.0%	88	74.6%	30	25.4%	-	+
Faculty of Health Sciences	98	24.1%	309	75.9%	88	23.7%	284	76.3%	-	+
Faculty of Information and Communication Technology	92	86.0%	15	14.0%	83	81.4%	19	18.6%	-	+
Faculty of Laws	102	34.6%	193	65.4%	132	37.6%	219	62.4%	+	-
Faculty of Medicine and Surgery	112	39.7%	170	60.3%	101	39.6%	154	60.4%	-	+
Faculty of Science	67	56.3%	52	43.7%	44	53.7%	38	46.3%	-	+
Faculty for Social Wellbeing	63	20.8%	240	79.2%	75	24.4%	233	75.6%	+	-
Institute of Digital Games	8	80.0%	2	20.0%	6	85.7%	1	14.3%	+	-
Centre for Entrepreneurship and Business Incubation	7	36.8%	12	63.2%	11	61.1%	7	38.9%	+	-
Centre for Labour Studies	11	19.0%	47	81.0%	3	27.3%	8	72.7%	+	-
Others	191	45.5%	229	54.5%	277	48.1%	299	51.9%	+	-
Total	1,444	38.6%	2,298	61.4%	1,432	39.5%	2,191	60.5%	+	+

51) Ibid.

Table 16: MCAST Graduates in 2019 and 2020⁵²

	2019					2020					Change in Percentage	
	M		F		Total	M		F		Total	Males	Females
Institute for the Creative Arts	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Institute of Applied Sciences	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Institute of Business Management and Commerce	/	/	/	/	/	21	80.8%	5	19.2%	26	/	/
Institute of Community Services	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Institute of Engineering And Transport	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Institute of Information and Communication Technology	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Centre for Professional Development	23	50.0%	23	50.0%	46	25	49.0%	26	51.0%	51	-	+
Applied Research and Innovation Centre	25	49.0%	26	51.0%	51	16	45.7%	19	54.3%	35	-	+
Total	48	49.5%	49	50.5%	97	62	55.4%	50	44.6%	112	+	-

	2019					2020					Change in Percentage	
	M		F		Total	M		F		Total	Males	Females
Institute for the Creative Arts	44	53.7%	38	46.3%	82	42	43.8%	54	56.3%	96	-	+
Institute of Applied Sciences	20	46.5%	23	53.5%	43	24	30.8%	54	69.2%	78	-	+
Institute of Business Management and Commerce	38	36.9%	65	63.1%	103	34	50.7%	33	49.3%	67	+	-
Institute of Community Services	13	36.1%	23	63.9%	36	18	43.9%	23	56.1%	41	+	-
Institute of Engineering And Transport	52	86.7%	8	13.3%	60	47	90.4%	5	9.6%	52	+	-
Institute of Information and Communication Technology	58	84.1%	11	15.9%	69	84	92.3%	7	7.7%	91	+	-
Vocational Training Unit	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Total	225	57.3%	168	42.7%	393	249	58.6%	176	41.4%	425	+	-

⁵²) Correspondence with MCAST, 09/02/2021.

Level 5	2019					2020					Change in Percentage	
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	Males	Females				
Gozo Campus	1	20.0%	4	80.0%	5	/	/	/	/	/	/	
Institute for the Creative Arts	3	42.9%	4	57.1%	7	2	66.7%	1	33.3%	3	+	-
Institute of Applied Sciences	1	25.0%	3	75.0%	4	11	44.0%	14	56.0%	25	+	-
Institute of Business Management and Commerce	5	41.7%	7	58.3%	12	66	85.7%	11	14.3%	77	+	-
Institute of Community Services	10	5.3%	177	94.7%	187	7	2.9%	233	97.1%	240	-	+
Institute of Engineering And Transport	6	100.0%	0	0.0%	6	6	85.7%	1	14.3%	7	-	+
Institute of Information and Communication Technology	6	85.7%	1	14.3%	7	11	100.0%	0	0.0%	11	+	-
MGZI	15	100.0%	0	0.0%	15	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Total	47	19.3%	196	80.7%	243	103	28.4%	260	71.6%	363	+	-
Grand Total	320	43.7%	413	56.3%	733	414	46.0%	486	54.0%	900	+	-

Figures 23 & 24: MCAST Graduates in 2019 and 2020, by percentage⁵³

2019

- Male
- Female



2020

- Male
- Female



⁵³ Ibid.

Table 17: University of Malta Academic Staff (Women and Men) in 2019 and 2020⁵⁴

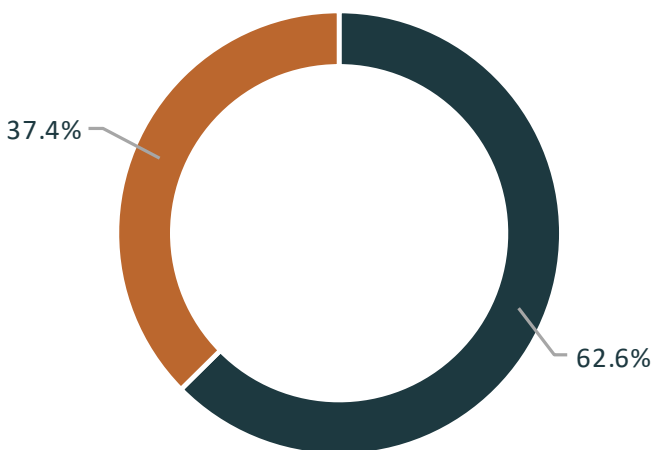
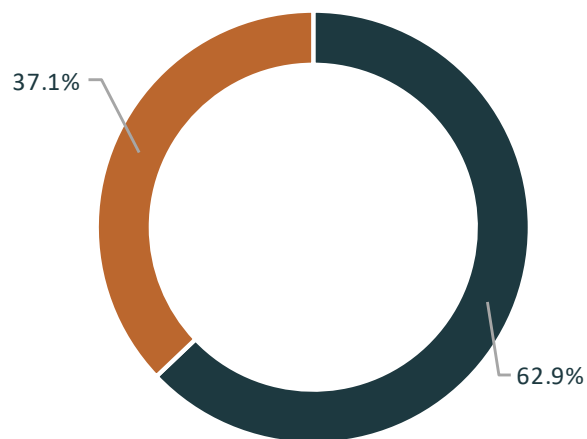
Post	2019				2020				Change in Percentage	
	Males	Females	Totals		Males	Females	Totals	Males	Females	
Resident Academics										
Professor	106	24	130	81.5%	106	24	130	81.5%	18.5%	
Associate Professor	111	29	140	79.3%	107	35	142	75.4%	24.6%	
Senior Lecturer	141	72	213	66.2%	156	85	241	64.7%	35.3%	
Lecturer	106	92	198	53.5%	97	93	190	51.1%	48.9%	
Assistant Lecturer	41	48	89	46.1%	32	50	82	39.0%	61.0%	
Associate Academic	10	6	16	62.5%	10	6	16	62.5%	37.5%	
Visiting Staff (part-time)										
Visiting Professor	4	0	4	100.0%	5	0	5	100.0%	0.0%	
Visiting Associate Professor	5	2	7	71.4%	5	2	7	71.4%	28.6%	
Visiting Senior Lecturer	224	102	326	68.7%	200	80	280	71.4%	28.6%	
Visiting Lecturer	129	68	197	65.5%	106	53	159	66.7%	33.3%	
Visiting Assistant Lecturer	135	114	249	54.2%	84	74	158	53.2%	46.8%	
Junior College										
Senior Lecturer I	32	35	67	47.8%	33	33	66	50.0%	50.0%	
Senior Lecturer II	32	30	62	51.6%	33	35	68	48.5%	51.5%	
Lecturer	7	10	17	41.2%	4	8	12	33.3%	66.7%	
Assistant Lecturer	6	9	15	40.0%	5	9	14	35.7%	64.3%	
Total	1,089	641	1,730	62.9%	983	587	1,570	62.6%	37.4%	

54) Correspondence with the University of Malta, 05/02/2021

Figures 25 & 26: University of Malta Academic Staff (Women and Men) in 2019 & 2020 by percentage⁵⁵

2019

- Male
- Female



2020

- Male
- Female



⁵⁵ Ibid.

Table 18: MCAST Academic Staff (Women and Men) in 2019 and 2020⁵⁶

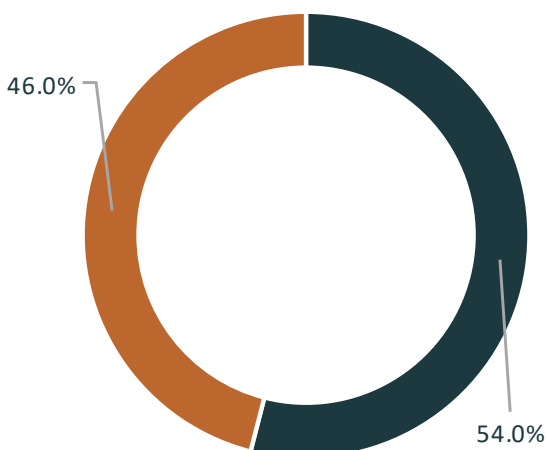
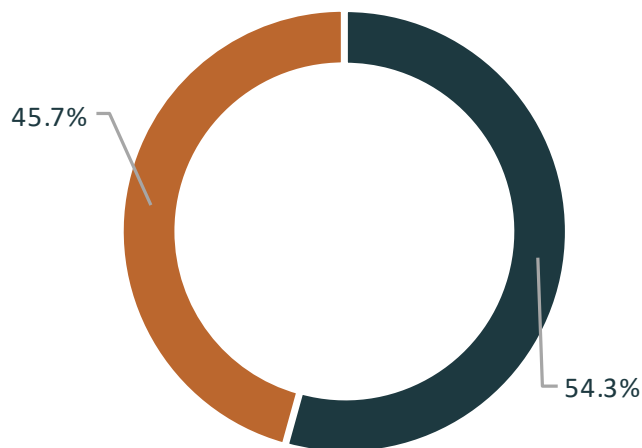
Academic posts at MCAST	2019			2020		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Senior Lecturer 2	75	52	127	76	53	129
Senior Lecturer 1	99	104	203	102	108	210
Lecturer	74	51	125	76	53	129
Assistant Lecturer	43	38	81	44	40	84
Total	291	245	536	298	254	552

⁵⁶) Correspondence with MCAST, 05/01/2021

Figures 27 & 28: MCAST Academic Staff (Women and Men) in 2019 and 2020 by percentage⁵⁷

2019

- Male
- Female



2020

- Male
- Female

Comments

Although more women than men graduated from both University as well as MCAST in 2019/20, there is still significant segregation in the choice of educational subjects. Women are heavily underrepresented in business and STEM subjects whereas men are underrepresented in social and care subjects.

A slight improvement is registered with regards to the equal representation of women and men in academia at MCAST, where gender balance at all levels is close to being achieved. On the other hand, female representation in the academic staff at the University of Malta, although slightly increased from 2019, remains very low, with the overall underrepresentation of female academics becoming even more accentuated within the top academic posts.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

Women in the Media

Table 19: Public broadcasters: presidents and members of the board/council (highest decision-making body) in 2018, 2019 and 2020⁵⁸

	2018		2019		2020	
	M%	F%	M%	F%	M%	F%
Malta	71.4	28.6	83.3	16.7	83.3	16.7
EU 28 countries	64.2	35.8	62.3	37.7	64.3	35.7
EU 27 countries (since 2020)	64.0	36.0	62.4	37.6	64.4	35.6

Comments

The marked decline in female representation in the Maltese media between 2018 and 2019, has remained steady between 2019 and 2020. Female representation across EU nations has declined

slightly between 2019 and 2020, however, a considerable difference can still be seen between Malta and the EU average.

⁵⁸) https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/wmidm_med_pbrc__wmid_media_pbrc_bm

2. Striving Towards Equality

2.1 Investigations

As the national entity established by Chapter 456 of the Laws of Malta, the NCPE aims to ensure that Maltese society is free from discrimination based on:

- sex/gender and family responsibilities, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, racial or ethnic origin, and gender identity, gender expression or sex characteristics in employment; banks and financial institutions, as well as education;
- racial / ethnic origin and gender in the provision of goods and services and their supply; and
- freedom of movement for workers in the EU.

Victims of discrimination falling under the remit of NCPE can submit a complaint. Subsequently, the NCPE will independently investigate the case to determine whether provisions of the Act have been contravened or not.



Investigation of Complaints

Complaints Forms are available in both Maltese and English and available online from the NCPE website or from servizz.gov. The Form is to be duly filled and submitted along with any relevant evidence, which may substantiate the complaint within a year from the incident. The NCPE Complaints and Clients Support Officers are available to explain the investigation procedure and to provide assistance with filling in the Form. Once received, the Complaints Form will be acknowledged by the Complaints Section and forwarded to the Commissioner who will determine whether the case falls within the NCPE's remit. Complaints, which are frivolous or vexatious, are not investigated.

If the complaint falls under the remit of the NCPE, the Commissioner will ask for a report stating the version of facts from the person/entity responsible for the alleged discrimination. The NCPE will then hold investigation meetings with the involved parties and witnesses. Sittings are recorded, transcribed and sent to the parties to ensure a transparent method of investigation.

Once all evidence is collected, the Commissioner issues an opinion outlining any breach of equality legislation. If the alleged breach could amount to a criminal offence, such as the occurrence of sexual harassment, the Commissioner will send the opinion issued to the Commissioner of Police.

The Commissioner may also offer mediation between the parties involved as well as initiate ex

officio investigations on any matter involving an act or omission that is allegedly unlawful under the provisions of the Act.

Investigations Statistics 2020

2020				
	Women	Men	Ex Officio Investigations	Total
Sex	3	2	1	6
Sexual Harassment	1	0	0	1
Race/Ethnic Origin	0	0	0	0
Gender Identity/ Gender Expression/Sex Characteristics	0	0	0	0
Age	0	1	1	2
Sexual Orientation	0	0	0	0
Religion/Belief	0	0	0	0
Freedom of Movement	0	0	0	0
Not within NCPE's remit	1	5		6
Total Investigations*				15

* An ex officio investigation covered more than 1 ground

Case Summary A

The NCPE Commissioner concluded an ex officio investigation regarding allegations of discrimination experienced by women in having to declare their civil status upon entering a **notarial contract**.

An individual brought forward a case to the Constitutional Court, arguing that Article 28(1) (c)(i) of the Notarial Profession and Archives Act (Chapter 55 of the Laws of Malta) was inconsistent with her fundamental rights under Article 45 of the Constitution of Malta and Article 8 and 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights. Article 28(1) (c)(i) of the Act required that on any official contract in the presence of a Notary: "Provided that where any of the parties to the act is a woman, it shall also be stated whether she is a spinster, a married woman

or a widow". Whilst the Constitutional Court's ruling was won by this individual, it was observed that the implementation of such ruling was not being observed in its entirety. The NCPE Commissioner initiated an ex officio investigation in this regard.

A sitting was held with the President of the Notarial Council, whereby he declared that he fully agreed with the ruling as well as with the allegations that such practice was indeed discriminatory and effectively placed women at a disadvantage. Moreover, he stated that such anomalies in legislation had been pointed out along the years and that in this day and age women should not be facing such unequal treatment.

In her opinion, the Commissioner declared that the legislation was indeed discriminatory against women and urged Parliament to make the necessary amendments to the law to stop such discrimination against women and to ensure equality in practice.

Case Summary B

The Commissioner conducted an ex officio investigation on alleged discriminatory practices in the **tax system** based on gender. This was based on several reports received from the NCPE by the general public as well as posts on social media alleging gender-based discrimination in the tax system. These included potential discriminatory practices in the refund of overpayment of income tax related to employment; tax returns for individuals under the separation of estates; and access to income tax related e-services by married individuals. The NCPE Commissioner held a sitting with the Inland Revenue Department Commissioner, who outlined the Department's position. Following, the below recommendations were made by the NCPE Commissioner:

- There should be an awareness-raising campaign about the right to have a separate tax account and explaining how this works in practice. The campaign should use a wide-range of means to reach all members of the public. It should not be limited to an online campaign since a portion of the public has limited or no access to the online sphere.
- The opportunity to opt for a separate tax account should not be a one-off but ongoing, since the person's situation and wishes may change during his/her lifetime.
- Equal treatment is for all and not when a request is made on a voluntary basis. Therefore, any measure to treat spouses equally should be addressed to all individuals.
- It should be ensured that rights and obligations emanating from the community of

acquests are not negatively impinged when the spouses have separate tax accounts. Having separate tax accounts will make it harder for the spouses to know each other's income and any underpaid tax, especially due to data privacy issues. To address this problem, a tax return for each spouse that includes separate records for both spouses, may be issued. This is of particular interest during separation cases as well as when either spouse is indebted to third parties.

- Currently, the 'other' spouse benefits from two tax-free thresholds in the year of marriage. With the institution of two separate tax accounts, the concept of 'responsible' and 'other' spouse will cease to exist. It should be clear who will be benefitting from such thresholds once these concepts cease to exist.
- At present, with regards to income from dividends, investments, rents and capital gains, such income is assessed on the higher-income earner. The NCPE Commissioner is of the opinion that it is the individual who earned this type of income that should be taxed and not the higher-income earner. This would be in line with the principle that each individual should be responsible for his/her own income and tax affairs.
- It is positive that the request of one of the spouses will suffice for the institution of separate tax accounts. However, having separate tax accounts should be automatic and obligatory in order to ensure the economic empowerment of everyone, and also to ensure that everyone has the same rights and obligations before the law.

Finally, the Commissioner acknowledged the positive changes taking place and augured further efforts will be made to address any anomalies that may still be found in the current legislation.

2.2 Policy Review and Recommendations

National Policies

Input is provided by the NCPE to Government laws, policies and strategies issued for public consultation. In its review, the NCPE evaluates the impact of the proposed actions on different social groups, checks whether the document contains provisions that are directly or indirectly discriminatory, and proposes the integration of measures that can combat discrimination and achieve equality in practice.

The NCPE always underlines that a gender mainstreaming exercise is to be carried out for all policies/actions/measures, as per Government policy. The proper implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy enables policy-makers to integrate and address the concerns, experiences and aspirations of women, men, girls and boys from different social groups into any planned action, thus ensuring that all groups are affected in a positive manner and that the needs of different cohorts are taken into account.

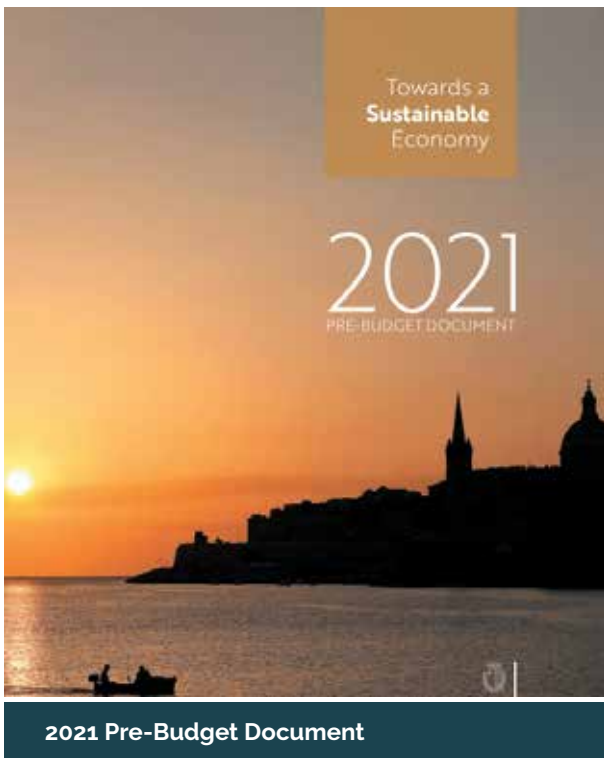
spouses have separate tax accounts. Having separate tax accounts will make it harder for the spouses to know each other's income and any underpaid tax, especially due to data privacy

The NCPE provided its input to the following documents in 2019:

- Towards a Smart Specialisation Strategy 2021 – 2027
- An Act to amend the Broadcasting Act, Chapter 350 of the Laws of Malta, and Legal Notices to amend related Subsidiary Legislation

- Census of Population and Housing 2021
- Social Regulatory Standards for Domestic Violence Residential Services & Standards for Domestic Violence Community-Based Services
- Guidance on Technology Arrangements, ICT and Security Risk Management and Outsourcing Arrangements
- Pre-budget Document 2021
- National Youth Policy – Towards 2030 – Reaching out to, working with and supporting young people
- Towards a National Action Plan against Racism and Xenophobia
- Malta's Research and Innovation Smart Specialisation Strategy (RIS3) 2021 – 2027

In its input to the **Smart Specialisation Strategy**, the NCPE stated that the criteria for funding research and innovation should be inclusive of the needs of both women and men as well as persons with family responsibilities. It also recommended that a gender concern is integrated in the design of research and innovation initiatives, especially in the areas of Health and Well-Being and Future Digital Technology. With respect to Artificial Intelligence (AI), the NCPE underlined the importance of ensuring that AI designers and operators, carrying out initiatives connected to the Strategy, uphold equality principles, such as ensuring that data feeding algorithms is representative and does not favour discriminatory outcomes.



The NCPE submitted several proposals for the **2021 Budget** which covered different areas and targeted diverse social groups and realities. The NCPE proposals called for the:

- allocation of adequate resources for the setting up and functioning of the Human Rights and Equality Commission
- development of a National Action Plan about women and men in the labour market that addresses issues such as the gendered impact of Covid-19, unequal pay for work of equal value, gender segregation and precarious work
- enhancement of childcare services and incentivisation of family-friendly measures in the private sector for both women and men
- right to request flexible working arrangements in the private sector
- strengthening of paternity leave, parental leave and maternity leave, and introduction of leave to take care of sick dependants
- development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems that do not reproduce and exacerbate existing discriminatory practices and patterns
- creation of separate tax accounts for married couples
- improvement of pensions
- promotion of active ageing by offering part-time positions on a definite contract for retired officers
- allocation of resources for the successful implementation of the integration strategy and for its gender mainstreaming.

As part of its feedback to the draft **National Youth Policy**, the NCPE stated that the policy should strive to eliminate discrimination and harassment of young people, when these happen on the basis of their age, but also when they are related to other intersecting identities, such as gender, race/ethnic origin, religion/belief, sexual orientation and gender identity, with special attention given to hate-speech, especially on social media. The NCPE also recommended that all entities offering services to youth are aware of the different needs and barriers experienced by young people from different social groups, so that such services can adequately cater for all young people and their intersecting identities. It also highlighted the need for a pro-active effort to reach out to marginalised young people, who are hard to reach via the mainstream services and spaces, such as migrant youth who might be experiencing language barriers and social exclusion. Moreover, the NCPE underlined the importance of tackling gender, and other stereotypes among youth.

In its input to the public consultation document titled **Towards a National Action Plan against Racism and Xenophobia**, the NCPE stated

that the Action Plan should adopt a structural approach to racism and xenophobia, based on an understanding of the underlying structures that give rise to such attitudes. The NCPE recommended a focus on community engagement that aims to build a society where all people feel safe, secure and valued – socially, culturally and economically – with a shared sense of belonging. This also entails addressing stereotypes and hate speech in the sphere of the media, including social media. The importance of research that uncovers and addresses the underlying structures that give rise to racism and xenophobia was highlighted. Moreover, the NCPE called for policies that reduce both spatial as well as economic segregation, and awareness-raising campaigns on the positive contribution of migrants to society. It also stated that the Action Plan should be horizontally integrated in all Government actions.

EU and International Affairs

The Covid-19 pandemic has served as a barrier to the NCPE's work within the EU and international field, particularly due to the limitations placed on travelling. The NCPE Commissioner and other officers who attend meetings abroad, not only travel to participate in meetings, but also travel to build networks with other EU and international organisations and institutions. That being said, the NCPE proactively sought other alternatives such as attending and holding meetings online.

In 2020 the European Commission distributed its Communication **A union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025**. The NCPE reviewed the Communication and commended the proposed dual approach, of targeted measures and gender mainstreaming, and the use of an intersectional perspective, since it contributes to the addressing of circumstances and needs of different groups of women and men. The NCPE expressed its opinion on the important role which different institutions and stakeholders have in the implementation of this strategy, as well as showed

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support towards the action which calls for the integration of a gender dimension throughout the financial framework.

In March, the NCPE provided its input to the Consultation on the **White Paper on Artificial Intelligence** of the European Commission. The NCPE suggested that the actions listed in the Paper are to:

- ensure that equality is safeguarded by AI systems
- empower more women and girls to study, work and advance their career in AI
- provide training to AI professionals on equality
- address bias, stereotypes and discrimination
- raise awareness on discrimination and AI
- provide information on how to analyse the outcomes of algorithms in terms of equality.

Moreover, the Croatian Presidency of the Council of the EU distributed **Council Conclusions** on the Impact of Long-Term Care on Work-Life Balance, alongside a **research note** carried out by EIGE on Home-based formal long-term care for adults and children with disabilities and older persons. The NCPE suggested that the needs of informal caregivers, particularly those of pre-retirement age, are to be addressed in order to facilitate the reconciliation of work and care by ensuring positive support through the provision of adequate services, including respite care. The NCPE also gave feedback on the Tackling the Gender Pay Gap: Valuation and Distribution of Paid and Unpaid Work **Council Conclusions** by suggesting amendments to the draft text.

In addition, the NCPE was requested by the **Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men**, to propose topics on which

Opinions could be developed with the aim of supporting policy development in Member States and at EU level. The NCPE suggested the following topics:

- the value of work in feminised sectors
- the empowerment of women in the household and at work
- the role of men and care.

Furthermore, the NCPE agreed with the two topics proposed by the Advisory Committee, specifically, Gender Stereotypes, and Gender Dimensions of Climate Change. The NCPE gave its contribution with respect to the Opinion on Gender Stereotypes by:

- giving an overview of the stereotypical culture in Malta vis-à-vis employment, unpaid work, Artificial Intelligence, education, media, and the law
- mentioning good practices which are reducing gender inequalities caused by stereotyping
- presenting obstacles which are serving as barriers to changing stereotypical mentalities in Malta. Moreover, the NCPE also gave its feedback to the consultation on Binding Pay Transparency Measures at EU level.

In October, the NCPE Commissioner chaired the meeting of the Advisory Committee which had as its agenda the adoption of Opinions on Artificial intelligence and gender equality and on Combatting online violence against women. The NCPE gave its input to both Opinions prior to their adoption and also published a press statement on the former Opinion



EIGE logo

During the year, the NCPE continued to be an expert member of the **European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)**. The NCPE Commissioner participated in EIGE's 25th Experts' Forum Meeting in which discussions on anti-gender were carried out, particularly on positive ways to advance gender equality in the context of anti-gender movements as well as on the next steps in addressing the anti-gender narratives and strategies in the Member States. The NCPE Commissioner also participated in EIGE's Gender Equality Index 2020 Conference.

The NCPE remained an active member of the **European Network of Equality Bodies (Equinet)** Working Groups on gender equality, policy formation, equality law, communication strategies and practices, and research and data collection. The NCPE also circulated the Recommendation for a fair and equal Europe: Rebuilding our Societies after Covid-19, which focuses on the importance of equality when working towards rebuilding countries after the pandemic.

As an active member of Equinet, the NCPE gave its feedback and input on numerous topics – particularly on Equinet's report on Meeting new challenges to equality and non-discrimination from increased digitisation and the use of AI;

Needs assessment survey – Engaging with UN mechanisms; and Capacity-building seminar on tackling age discrimination. Moreover, the NCPE provided updates to Equinet on the Freedom of Movement Directive, as well as the NCPE's work vis-à-vis equality and the Covid-19 pandemic.

The year 2020 marked the third year of the implementation of the **Council of Europe** Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023, to which the NCPE gave its input on the carrying out of activities and measures that contributed to the achievement of the six strategic objectives of the Strategy.

The NCPE Communications Officer participated to the **European Commission against Racism and Intolerance** (ECRI) seminar for equality bodies, entitled Communicating the Equality and Diversity Message.

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Throughout 2020, the NCPE gave feedback to other national and international bodies. These included input to Malta's first National Action Plan on the **United Nations** Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, which was launched in October, as well as input to the UN Implementation Report, specifically on social inclusion and ending poverty, and building the urban government structure; UNECE's Recommendations for Measuring Intra-household Power and Decision-Making; EPSCO Council on A Union of Gender Equality? How to implement the Commission's Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 to achieve labour market participation of women and men, amongst others.

2.3 Media

A strong media presence is essential for the NCPE's work towards an equal society free from discrimination. A **communication work plan** was drawn up in 2020 to increase the NCPE's presence across different media. The communication work plan sets out main objectives and gives a structure to determine who is to be reached, where and how. The aim of such a plan is to widen the NCPE's outreach and to adequately cover diverse subjects related to its remit.



The NCPE Commissioner Ms Renee Laiviera on TVAM

Throughout 2020, work continued on raising awareness on equality through various means of communication. The number of contributions in the traditional media added up to 45. These contributions included:

- Press Statements
- Articles and features
- Answering journalists' questions
- Participation in television and radio programmes

Press Statements

Press Statements dealt with various topics ranging from coverage of national debates to events and activities organised by the NCPE throughout the year.

In 2020, the NCPE published seven Press Statements:

- NCPE Conference to mark International Women's Day
- Prostitution reform should send clear message against exploitation and gender inequality
- Challenges faced by Women in Politics
- Prepare the Ground for Economic Independence (PGEI) Project: Online Final Conference
- A human rights approach to the prostitution reform entails the penalisation of sex-buying
- NCPE Online Annual Conference
- NCPE Conference to mark Equal Pay Day

Articles and Features

The number of articles and features published in local newspapers more than doubled compared to the previous year. Such articles and features were vital to raise awareness on general and specific matters related to equality and human rights.

The NCPE published 21 articles and features in 2020. Some of the topics were:

- Why Malta needs the Equality Act
- Gender imbalance in decision-making positions

- LGBTQI+ equality in Malta
- Women and girls in technology
- Gendered unpaid care and domestic work
- Fighting racial and ethnic discrimination
- Rebuilding societies after the Covid-19 pandemic
- EU Gender Equality Strategy (2020-2025)
- Integrating Gender Equality in Artificial Intelligence
- Efforts to combat pregnancy discrimination

The NCPE also published articles to mark international days including:

- International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia
- World Elder Abuse Awareness Day
- International Day of Older Persons
- International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

The Press Statements and articles can be accessed from the News section of the NCPE website.

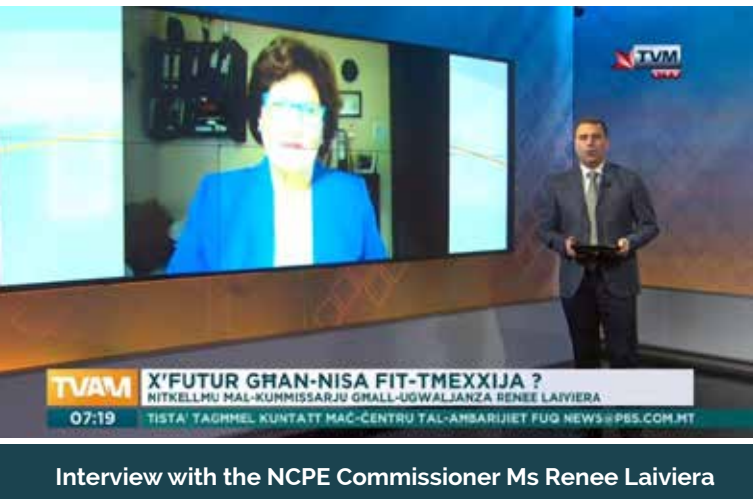
Answering Journalists' Questions

Additional topics were addressed in replies to questions sent by journalists from different media organisations. Topics included:

- Women's representation in the political sphere
- Prostitution and human trafficking reform

TV and Radio

The NCPE participated in TV and radio programmes to discuss issues related to equality. Topics covered in 2020 included: the gender pay gap, violence against women, female genital mutilation and gender-balanced participation in politics.



Interview with the NCPE Commissioner Ms Renee Laiviera

Social media

Even though the Covid-19 pandemic has caused physical limitations, the NCPE made use of its social media platforms, alongside other media platforms, to raise awareness on equality issues.



Social media post on the International Day of the Girl Child

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Social media is a cost-effective way of reaching a wide range of people or specific target groups. Through 'Facebook', 'Instagram' and 'Twitter', the NCPE highlights international days, statistics, upcoming events, and developments in relation to equality. The NCPE uses this platform on a daily basis by posting engaging and informative content such as links, infographics, photos, videos and slides.

Social media post for Pride Week

Compared to the previous year, the NCPE increased its social media posts. The number of posts on the NCPE Facebook Page amounted to **334** in 2020, an increase of over 40 posts when compared to 2019. Moreover, by the end of 2020, the NCPE Facebook Page reached over **3,500** likes, an increase of 100 likes from 2019, while the NCPE Instagram account reached over **140** followers.

Website

The NCPE website – www.ncpe.gov.mt – is updated frequently with the latest events, publications, and other NCPE work. The website is a useful tool for students, academics and researchers who are carrying out research about equality issues. It is also an essential tool for potential victims of discrimination as it provides detailed information on how to submit a complaint with the NCPE.

The website also features a section on the Directory of Professional Women with a registration and a search facility for stakeholders who are looking for women professionals in specific fields of expertise. In addition, employers who would like to apply for the NCPE Equality Mark may also find pertinent information on the certification process.

Newsletter - 'Equality Matters'

Two editions of the NCPE e-newsletter 'Equality Matters' were published in 2020. An edition on maternity, paternity and parental rights, published in May, outlined maternity rights as per Maltese legislation, featured information on paternity and parental leave, and explained the NCPE's role as an equality body. Reference was also made to the International Labour Organization's (ILO) convention on maternity, the ILO recommendations on how companies can manage maternity well, and the EU Work-Life Balance Directive.

The second issue, published in June, gave an overview of the Covid-19 pandemic's impact on the grounds of gender, family responsibilities, age, race and ethnic origin, religion and belief as well as sexual orientation and gender identity. Reference was also made to the benefits and challenges of teleworking, the role of equality bodies and the NCPE's ongoing work.

Both newsletters were posted on the NCPE's Facebook Page and disseminated to different stakeholders. Those interested in receiving a copy of the e-newsletter can send an email to the NCPE on equality@gov.mt. The newsletter can also be accessed from the NCPE website.

Awareness-raising campaign

The 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence is an international campaign that kicks off on 25th November - the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and runs until 10th December - Human Rights Day. The link between gender inequality and violence against women is highlighted on a global level, whilst calling for actions such as those stipulated in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating

violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention).



Social media post on 16 Days of Activism

To support the 16 Days of Activism, the NCPE published an article on a local newspaper highlighting the many efforts that have been made in Malta over the past years to enhance the prevention and protection of women and girls from different forms of violence. Additionally, the NCPE published on its Facebook Page social media posts in the form of research findings, statistics, videos, and posters that briefly explain the various forms of violence and abuse women may be subject to. These posts aimed to spread further awareness on this issue amongst women and men. The hashtag #16DaysOfActivism was used for this global campaign. This online campaign reached a total of **2025 individuals**.

2.4 The Covid-19 Pandemic: Research on the Distribution of Work in Households

Four months into the Covid-19 pandemic, between June and July 2020, the NCPE disseminated an online survey about the distribution of tasks between women and men during the pandemic. The backdrop to this survey were the sudden changes that forced many individuals to adapt to radically different work and social practices brought about by the need to stop the spread of Covid-19. Several reports, globally and locally, had already started indicating that these changes were impacting women and men differently.

The survey asked respondents about the increase/decrease in time spent on different tasks – paid work, housework, caring for children, home-schooling for children, caring for dependent adults, leisure/free-time, personal care and sleep - as a result of Covid-19. It also inquired about the respondents' perception of equality in the sharing

of responsibilities with their partner during the pandemic.

The preliminary findings of the study were presented during the NCPE Annual Conference in November. These suggest that, during the pandemic, the increase in the number of hours spent doing household tasks and childcare increased more for women than for men, while the time spent on leisure, personal care and sleep decreased more for women than it did for men; confirming that the existing gender inequality in the distribution of unpaid household and caring responsibilities was exacerbated as a result of the pandemic.

The data collected from the survey will be analysed further and a final report with findings and recommendations will be published in 2021.

2.5 Prepare the Ground for Economic Independence

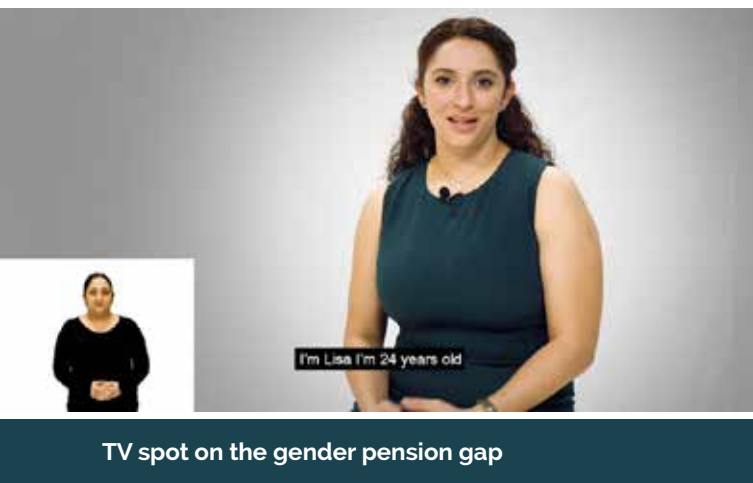
The 'Prepare the Ground for Economic Independence' (PGEI) project was launched in September 2018 and ran until August 2020. This project was co-financed by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme 2014-2020 and focused on addressing the gender gaps over the life cycle. Besides the public at large, the project had three main target groups; students, working age adults and companies/organisations.



'Prepare the Ground for Economic Independence' project logo

2020 saw the continuation of the PGEI project's activities, mainly the launch of its second and third awareness-raising campaigns: the gender pension gap campaign and the Equal Pay Campaign. The PGEI project came to an end in August 2020.

The Gender Pay Gap Campaign was the first campaign of the PGEI project launched in 2019. Its aim was to educate the general public on the issue of the gender pay gap with information and statistics.



TV spot on the gender pension gap

Following the **Gender Pay Gap Campaign**, the Gender Pension Gap Campaign was launched during the second quarter of 2020. The aim of this campaign was to raise awareness on the repercussions that career choices may have, both in the present time and in the future. It consisted of the development and production of five real-life stories by individuals, TV adverts showcasing real-life stories, including a call for action, and an online advertising campaign.

A short video clip was produced for each of the five stories. Each video clip was shortened to a TV advert and aired 12 times on the three local national TV stations.

The campaign was launched and spread over three weeks during April of 2020, which coincided with the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic. This however, proved to be an advantage as the adverts could reach a wider audience that was confined at home. In fact, following the airing of

these TV adverts, the NCPE received queries from the general public related to their pensions. These queries were redirected to the social services department.

Besides, these same videos were further shortened and posted as stream adverts on both Facebook and YouTube, with each video reaching a minimum of 30,000 views. In total this online campaign reached **337,679** views. Furthermore, the videos were all posted on the NCPE Facebook page and Instagram page as individual posts

The last campaign of the PGEI project was the **Equal Pay Campaign**, by which the NCPE Equality Mark was re-launched and strengthened with the development of an Equal Pay Tool.

This campaign consisted of 50 posts uploaded on a regular basis on the NCPE Facebook page featuring equality certified companies, as well as three adverts published on nine different business magazines in order to target companies.



Equality Mark advert in a business magazine

Each advert's content was sequential with the first advert showcasing the new NCPE Equality Mark logo, the number of certified organizations to date, as well as the number of employees benefitting from gender equality at the workplace thanks to the Equality Mark certification and the commitment of these organisations towards gender equality. The second advert highlighted the benefits of being an equality opportunities organisation. The third and final advert publicised the nine companies that had pilot tested the new Equal Pay Tool.

The NCPE Equality Mark logo was revamped as part of this same campaign, keeping a similar style which, most companies are familiar with by now. An additional logo was created, that is the Equality Pay Certified logo, to be awarded to those companies that opt to be equal pay certified by using the Equal Pay Tool. Furthermore, the Equality Mark brochure, information booklet, application form, folder and certificate were all updated and re-designed.

Furthermore, on a regular basis, a total of 50 posts were uploaded on the NCPE Facebook page featuring equality certified organisations and reaching more than **24,000 individuals**.

The PGEI project produced two **research studies**, which can be downloaded from the project's subpage on the NCPE's website.

One research study looked at existent European Equal Pay Tools used to analyse equal pay between women and men. Following this study, technical specifications were developed for a Tool which is suitable for the Maltese context and is tailor-made for the Equality Mark certification process. This new Equal Pay Tool was pilot tested with nine companies certified with the Equality Mark. A **training session** was then organized for all Equality Mark representatives of companies that pilot-tested the Tool. Besides discussing the issue of equal pay for work of equal value, the representatives of each company gave their feedback on their experience of using the Tool, with the aim to fine-tune it to its full potential. The

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Equal Pay Tool aims to check the organisation's equal pay for work of equal value between women and men during Equality Mark audits.

The other research study produced by the PGEI project researched how trade unions in Europe tackle the concept of equal pay for work of equal value during collective bargaining and identified tools which were developed for this purpose. Following this research study, a training content was developed to be used during NCPE consultation sessions with trade union representatives.



Within the framework of this same activity, **consultation sessions with trade union representatives** were organised. The aim of these sessions was to equip trade unions with knowledge on equal pay, given its relevance when negotiating collective agreements. Two sessions were held with two different local trade unions, with a total of ten participants.

The **Project's Final Conference** took place on 26 August 2020, with the aim of presenting the findings of both research studies as well as to give an overview of all campaigns and activities of the project. The Final Conference was held online due to the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions at the time. The conference's outcome was very positive, with a total of **132 participants** actively participating via an online chat as well as intervening throughout the event.

An evaluation study of all the activities was carried out throughout the project duration. The study was conducted by an external evaluator who, with the aid of the NCPE, drew up pre- and post- evaluation forms for the career guidance

sessions and the consultation sessions to trade union representatives. The external evaluation provided an insight into the impact on the level of knowledge and awareness which the activities and campaigns had on the target groups. The results of the evaluation were presented during the project's Final Conference.

In terms of procurement processes related to the PGEI project, two processes were launched in 2020, three were evaluated and three tenders were awarded.

2.6 Empowerment for Diversity (E4D)

As from April 2020, the NCPE in partnership with the Allied Rainbow Communities (ARC), is implementing the Empowerment for Diversity (E4D) Project. This project is co-financed by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme 2014-2020 and will run until March 2022. It focuses on the grounds of **sexual orientation, gender identity, sex characteristics and gender expression**. The project is designed around Malta's unique situation in the LGBTIQ+ field whereby in the past five years, Malta has enacted several important laws which placed it at the forefront of LGBTIQ+ rights. Given the significant changes which came about in a relatively short time span, the NCPE has identified the need to address the societal and cultural dimension.



Empowerment for Diversity

E4D project logo

A Project Coordinator was engaged as from 1 September 2020 and is responsible for the smooth running of the implementation of all project activities. The project logo and corporate image were specifically designed to emphasise the project's objectives and focus on the local context. This design and logo will be applied to all the promotional items, which will eventually be disseminated during the Pride Parade 2021, and other activities or events organised in the framework of the E4D Project.

A **launch conference** was planned to take place in the form of a soirée in September 2020 to announce the NCPE's new EU co-funded project. However, the Covid-19 restrictions in Malta impeded the launch conference from taking place

in person as initially planned. The Project Team plans to organise this conference in the second quarter of 2021, where the aims, objectives and initiatives of the project will be presented.

As part of the E4D Project, the NCPE had planned to participate and promote the project and its aims during the **Malta Pride Parade and Week 2020**. Unfortunately, this event was also cancelled due to Covid-19. If the restrictions on mass-gatherings are lifted, the NCPE will participate in the Malta Pride Parade and Week 2021.

In terms of procurement processes related to the E4D Project, three processes were launched in 2020, two were evaluated and two tenders were awarded.

2.7 Managing EU Funds

The focus of 2020 was two-fold; the successful implementation and closure of the PGEI project and the initiation and implementation of the E4D project. Both projects are part financed by the European Union Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014-2020).

The NCPE's main focus in the first quarter of 2020, was that of finalising the procurement processes related to the PGEI project, mainly the provision of a research study on equal pay for trade unions and the development of the Equal Pay Tool, so as to ensure that both activities were completed by project closure. Moreover, the PGEI Gender Pension Gap campaign video clips were also finalised.

Meanwhile, the European Commission (EC) notified the NCPE that the project proposal entitled 'Empowerment for Diversity' (E4D) was evaluated favourably. Thus, during this quarter the NCPE concluded the grant preparation stage for

E4D project on the EC's online portal. Finally, the E4D project Grant Agreement was signed by all parties in March 2020.

During the second quarter of 2020, the PGEI project made further progress by reaching the following milestones: the development of the technical specifications for the Equal Pay Tool; the launch of the project Gender Pension Gap campaign on local TV stations, Facebook and YouTube; the launch of the NCPE Equality Mark Equal Pay Campaign on local business magazines; and the development of the first version of the Equal Pay Tool. This quarter saw also the initiation of the E4D project during which the NCPE was geared towards ensuring the smooth procurement processes in order to be able to award the contracts to start the implementation of the project activities.

The third quarter of 2020 saw the completion of all project activities connected to the PGEI project. During this period the Equal Pay Tool was pilot

tested and finalised, training sessions with equality representatives and trade unions were organised and, finally, the Project Final Conference was held online on the 26 August. During the final conference, the main findings and publications emanating from the project's two research studies and the project external evaluation study were presented to the general public and disseminated through the NCPE website. Concurrently, as part of the E4D project, a Project Coordinator was employed, and the first two project procurement processes were completed. Unfortunately, due to the rise in Covid-19 cases, the project launch conference had to be postponed and the Malta Pride Parade and Week 2020 were cancelled. Thus, NCPE could not participate as initially planned.

Throughout the fourth quarter, the NCPE produced the PGEI Final Technical report and submitted it through the EC's online portal on the 29 October. Simultaneously, further progress was achieved with regards to the E4D project procurement processes and the project logo and corporate image were developed.

During 2020 the NCPE also signed a letter of support for the project proposal ACT2SHARE, which falls under the Horizon 2020 Programme. This project proposal is being coordinated by ENEA (Agenzia Nazionale Efficienza Energetica) and it intends to address Energy Poverty in connection with post-Covid Crises and the Gender and Inequalities issues, under the framework of the EU plan for the economy recovery.

2.8 Training

One of the services offered by the NCPE is the delivery of training on a range of subjects connected to equality and non-discrimination. Most training sessions are delivered at the request of public and private sector organisations that want to improve their ability to prevent and address discrimination and harassment, as well as better integrate equality practices within their human resource management and service provision. Training is also delivered as part of the NCPE Equality Mark re-certification process.

In 2020, the regular provision of training was affected by Covid-19, especially during the first months of the pandemic. Consequently, no training sessions were delivered between March and June due to public health restrictions. The delivery of training resumed in July, although fewer requests for training were received in comparison to previous years.

A total of 34 training sessions to around 440 participants were delivered in 2020. Most sessions were face-to-face, with a few held online. Participants included public and private sector employees, union officials, healthcare professionals, students and police officers.



An NCPE training session

No. of training sessions	34
Hours of training	59
No. of participants	440

The NCPE gives training on:

Equality law: The basic principles of Maltese equality legislation and EU Directives are explained and discussed. The NCPE trainers outline the different grounds of discrimination in Maltese law as well as the different spheres it covers. Discussions also focus on the definition of important provisions within the law such as direct and indirect discrimination, victimisation, burden of proof, harassment and sexual harassment.

Different social identities: The different characteristics protected by law are explained in detail. The NCPE highlights that equality is more than simple non-discrimination. Equality entails being attentive to the various needs and concerns of different social groups by taking the needs of everyone into account since the structures currently in place do not necessarily ensure equality in practice. Thus, to achieve equality there has to be a pro-active effort at building inclusive settings.

Harassment and sexual harassment: Harassment and sexual harassment are discussed as a grievous form of discrimination, highlighting sexual harassment as a criminal offence. The difference between the two is elucidated and examples provided. The obligations emanating from law related to addressing and preventing sexual harassment are explained, and practical ways to deal with harassment, as well as good practices for its prevention, are outlined.

Diversity management: The term diversity management is discussed in its wider context: diversity management is not about having different rules for different groups, but is about the valorisation of different identities and the recognition that diversity can lead to better work processes and outcomes. Practical ways of managing diversity are outlined and discussed with the participants.

Gender mainstreaming: The meaning of the strategy of gender mainstreaming is explained and the participants are guided through the gender mainstreaming process. Tools are distributed in the form of booklets together with online resources to assist officers in their gender mainstreaming work.

Gender Mainstreaming

In order to ensure that there is an understanding of the gender mainstreaming strategy and reporting obligations, the NCPE provides regular training and information sessions to public sector employees.

The gender mainstreaming strategy is defined as “the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making” (Council of Europe).

Gender mainstreaming has been official Government policy since June 2000, which policy was reiterated in 2012 through **OPM Circular No.15/2012** to ensure that policies and practices are gender mainstreamed and to have a consolidated yearly report on developments in this regard. This report is to be forwarded to the NCPE on an annual basis and a synopsis of it, is to be included in the department's annual report.

The NCPE then compiles a single evaluation report for the attention of the Permanent Secretary responsible for equality.

From 2012 to 2020, the NCPE delivered 61 training sessions to over 790 public sector employees. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the NCPE had to cancel its annual training to public officers on the gender mainstreaming reporting template, usually held in

March. Instead, it circulated to all public officers a set of tools and a power point presentation to help them with filling in the reporting template. It also provided them with a phone number they could call for assistance.

Detailed information sessions on gender mainstreaming were held at the Ministry for Transport, Infrastructure and Capital Project, the Resources, Recovery and Recycling Agency, and the Human Rights Directorate.

A total of **143 gender mainstreaming reports** were received by NCPE in 2020, slightly less than the previous year, when 146 reports were submitted, but an increase over the four preceding years (115 reports in 2018, 99 reports in 2017, 110 reports

in 2016 and 58 reports in 2015). In its review, the NCPE again stated that the reports reflected a limited understanding of gender mainstreaming and of how it can be applied systematically to the departments'/entities' work, together with a low level of commitment to implementing the strategy. It again recommended a specific public sector structure, within and across all ministries and departments, to pilot, implement, monitor and evaluate the implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy. It also recommended sustained training to public officers at all levels so that they become knowledgeable in this field as well as to have higher accountability to follow government policy, particularly at top management levels.

2.9 Discrimination in advertising

The NCPE reviews local newspapers on a daily basis for discriminatory advertisements. As per Article 10 of Chapter 456, it shall be unlawful: "(1)... for persons to publish or display or cause to be published or displayed any advertisement, or, otherwise, to advertise a vacancy for employment which discriminates between job seekers ..."

Where discriminatory adverts are identified, the NCPE formally informs the publisher and the company, notifying them why the advert is discriminatory and suggesting alternative wording and actions to be taken.

Discriminatory adverts reduced drastically over the past years as can be seen in the table. In 2020, the NCPE identified 3 discriminatory adverts in employment on the ground of gender. The general public and other stakeholders are encouraged to inform the NCPE of discriminatory adverts so that action can be taken.

Discriminatory Adverts by Means	Amount
Local Newspapers	1
Online Media	2

Year	Total amount of discriminatory adverts
2020	3
2019	20
2018	41
2017	43
2016	57

2.10 Requests for Information (RFIs)

Requests for information are received on a regular basis. Such requests are forwarded by the general public as well as various entities and agencies, both local and international, requiring information on topics related to the NCPE's remit. When possible, individuals who request information that is not within the NCPE's remit, are referred to the relevant entity that can provide further assistance.



Total Number of Requests for Information received in 2020

Year	2020		
	Women	Men	Total
Gender	20	6	26
Sexual Harassment	1	0	1
Race/Ethnic Origin	1	1	2
Gender Identity, Gender Expression & Sex Characteristics	2	0	2
Age	1	1	2
Sexual Orientation	3	0	3
Religion/Belief	0	0	0
Others / Not within NCPE's remit	2	2	4
Freedom of Movement	0	0	0
Total RFI received	37*		

* 3 RFI covered more than one ground.

2.11 Directory of Professional Women

The NCPE further promoted the Directory of Professional Women through a local newspaper as well as through the NCPE Facebook Page.

An article published by NCPE on Times of Malta on the 14 October, titled 'Gender imbalance in decision-making positions', served as a promotional platform for the online Directory of Professional Women. Moreover, in August a Facebook advert promoting this Directory was developed and published on the NCPE Facebook Page.

Between March and September various mail shots were sent to existing Directory profilers in order to

inform them about various career opportunities that from time to time the NCPE was notified about. Furthermore, the Directory profilers were also encouraged to participate in a NCPE online survey on the distribution of work in households across Malta during the Covid-19 pandemic.

By the end of 2020, a total of 265 professional women from different sectors were on the NCPE Directory. The section with most professionals is currently the Economy sector with 25% of the share, followed by the Social Wellbeing sector and the Health Sciences sector with 12% and 11% respectively.

2.12 Library and Documentation Centre

With over **7,400** publications, the Library and Documentation Centre at the NCPE premises serves as a resource to students, academics and members of the general public who visit it to conduct research on various themes related to equality.



The NCPE Library

Additionally, a compilation of local newspaper articles related to areas of equality and discrimination is also provided at the Library. Its database can also be accessed on the NCPE website. Those interested can visit the NCPE Library and Documentation Centre by appointment, either by calling on 2295 7850 or by sending an email to equality@gov.mt.

3. The NCPE Equality Mark

The Equality Mark certification entered its tenth year since its inception in 2010. Initially funded through the European Social Fund, the scheme continued to be run by the NCPE past the end of the co-financing period due to its successful uptake by employers in both the private and public sectors. By December 2020, there were **112 certified organisations employing over 26,500 individuals**.



The new Equality Mark logo

The Equality Mark is awarded to organisations that make gender equality one of their values and whose management is based on the recognition and promotion of the potential of all employees: both women and men, and persons with caring responsibilities. Organisations certified with the Equality Mark have to demonstrate a commitment towards best practices in the area of gender equality that go beyond what is mandatory by law.

Certified equal opportunity employers can be identified through the Equality Mark logo. This logo can be used on all outgoing correspondence including recruitment advertising and press statements. The NCPE also promotes certified organisations locally by showcasing their good practices as a standard for other employers to emulate and for job seekers to look out for. There are no application fees and the provision of logos and promotion is also free of charge.



Commissioner Ms Renee Laiviera, Parliamentary Secretary Ms Rosianne Cutajar and Minister Dr Edward Zammit Lewis during the Equality Mark awarding ceremony

The Equality Mark benefits certified organisations by enhancing their ability to access the full talent pool of human resources and becoming an employer of choice; boosting profitability through improved work processes; cutting costs through higher staff retention; and increasing understanding of different customers' needs and the ability to meet them.

The NCPE Equality Mark certification is awarded for a period of two years, at which point a re-certification process is carried out with those organisations that want to retain the Equality Mark. Currently a number of organisations are going through the second re-certification process.

15 new organisations were certified with the Equality Mark in 2020, and **9 organisations went through re-certification.**

2020		
Certified	1st re-certification	2nd re-certification
Apex Childcare Ltd.	Kerber Security Ltd.	AIS Group of Companies
Apex Community Care Ltd.	Ministry for Energy, Enterprise and Sustainable Development	Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD)
Apex Community Services Ltd.	Protection Services Ltd.	Mater Dei Hospital
Archdiocese of Malta		Medicines Authority
Bad Boy Cleaning Services Ltd.		National Statistics Office (NSO)
Baxter Malta		Public Broadcasting Services (PBS)
Calamatta Cuschieri Investment Services		Simonds Farsons Cisk plc.
Foundation for Medical Services (FMS)		
General Cleaners Co. Ltd.		
MeDirect Bank (Malta) plc		
Ministry for Transport, Infrastructure and Capital Projects		
National Audit Office (NAO)		
Professional Security Services Ltd.		
Resource, Recovery and Recycling Agency (RRRA)		
Waste Collection Ltd.		

Certification

All organisations applying for the Equality Mark are assisted by the NCPE in carrying out the necessary assessments and in identifying the best way forward for their specific organisation. The NCPE provides guidance to organisations in implementing the necessary measures, such as drafting an **Equality Policy** and a **Sexual Harassment Policy** and putting in place or improving the availability of **family-friendly measures**.

The Equality Mark is not a simple paper exercise and requires the whole organisation to be committed to gender equality principles in order to ensure that the necessary measures are implemented and are of benefit to all. Top management needs to demonstrate commitment to each of the standards outlined in the Equality Mark certification.

Companies certified with the Equality Mark:

- Implement an Equality Policy and a Sexual Harassment Policy, including internal reporting procedures for cases of discrimination and sexual harassment
- Implement standard operating procedures for recruitment and employment that are based on the principles of equal opportunities
- Provide incentives for women and men with caring responsibilities to remain employed or return to work by offering family-friendly measures, such as reduced hours, telework and flexitime
- Process fairly and transparently requests for family-friendly measures and keep a record of persons applying for such measures
- Ensure equal pay for work of equal value

- Ensure that job descriptions are gender-inclusive and roles assigned are free from gender stereotypes
- Appoint a gender equality representative within the organisation or establish a gender equality committee responsible for acting as a point of reference on equality issues
- Ensure equal opportunities in accessing training, staff development activities, news and other material
- Specify those measures that the organisation undertakes to facilitate participation from employees with caring responsibilities (including those making use of family-friendly measures) should training or other activities need to take place outside the normal working hours or environment
- Ensure that any goods and/or services supplied by the organisation are equally accessible to women and men.

Interested organisations may apply to become equal opportunity employers by contacting the NCPE to discuss the organisation's current scenario and eligibility for the Equality Mark. The **Application Form**, available on the NCPE website, needs to be submitted duly completed together with the requested documentation. Following review, the NCPE provides feedback and assists the organisation in carrying out the necessary changes that will put it in line with the certification criteria.

The last step of the certification process is a gender equality audit by the NCPE at the applicant's premises.

Re-certification

After the lapse of two years from certification, the NCPE reassesses the criteria and ensures that the commitments taken at certification stage are being followed. As part of the re-certification process, the NCPE asks for the completion of two different questionnaires: one questionnaire by the employer and one questionnaire by a number of randomly chosen employees. Some of the organisation's employees are also required to attend a short training-session by the NCPE on gender equality.

From the replies to these questionnaires, the NCPE verifies that the organisation is upholding equality principles. Areas for improvement are identified and brought to the attention of the company.

The NCPE notes with satisfaction that most organisations with the Equality Mark opt for re-certification and invite the NCPE to reassess their context from a gender equality perspective.



Equality Mark awarding ceremony

4. Building Knowledge and Networks

4.1 Our Conferences

The International Women's Day Conference – 4 March

The International Women's Day Conference focused on how Artificial Intelligence (AI) can perpetuate discrimination in spheres such as employment and service provision on the one hand, and on the other hand, how equality can be mainstreamed in AI.

Lecturer Dr Claudia Borg, from the Department of AI at the University of Malta, highlighted the technical aspect of AI and mentioned how algorithms could determine social outcomes and impact the lives of women and men with different life experiences.

Prof. Brenda Murphy, an Associate Professor at the Department of Gender, University of Malta, stressed that in all circumstances, discrimination risks must be prevented and mitigated with special attention for groups, particularly women, who are at higher risk of discrimination.

Mr Bernard Montebello, Human Resources Manager and Ms Greta Attard, Software Developer at the Malta Digital Innovation Authority (MDIA) delivered a presentation that focused on people's concerns in relation to AI and Malta's AI Vision and Strategy 2030, Malta's AI Framework and certification process, and their role vis-à-vis equality.



Panel members during the International Women's Day Conference

Following these presentations, a panel with representatives from employers' associations, trade unions, and NGOs discussed their experiences in relation to AI and its impact on gender equality in Malta.

Prepare the Ground for Economic Independence – 26 August

The final conference for the project 'Prepare the Ground for Economic Independence' (PGEI), took place online and marked the end of this EU co-funded project that was launched in September 2018. This innovative project addressing the

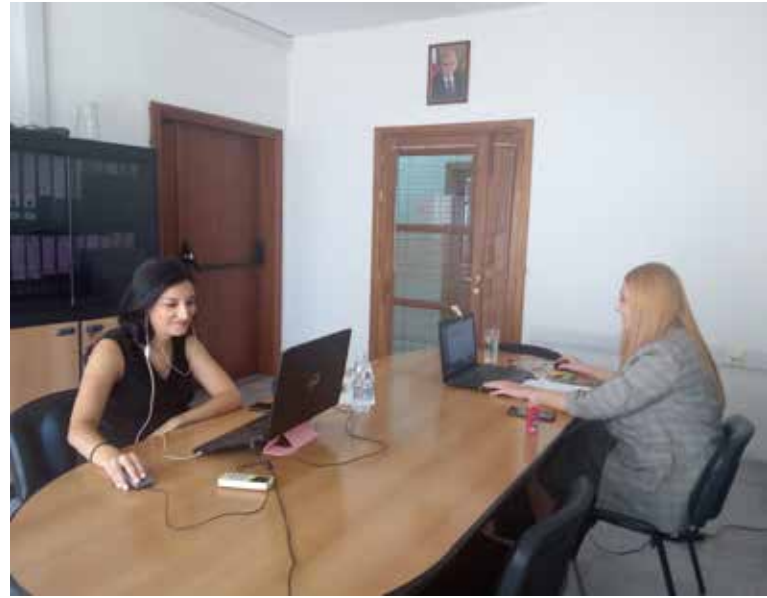
gender gap over our life cycle was implemented to increase awareness on both the gender pay gap and gender pension gap. Invitations were sent out through direct e-mails to Government officials, trade unions, NGOs and the general public.

Hon. Minister Dr Edward Zammit Lewis kicked off the conference with an opening speech in which he held that equal economic independence is a prerequisite for women and men to be in control of their lives and that Government is fully committed to supporting this goal.

Hon. Parliamentary Secretary Ms. Rosianne Cutajar underlined how unequal pay and gender discrimination in pay contribute to increasing the gender pay gap. Due to this, strengthening the principle of equal pay for work of equal value is a crucial prerequisite for equal economic independence for women and men, and gender equality in general.

The NCPE Commissioner Ms Renee Laiviera outlined how the gender pay gap not only weakens the economic independence of women while in employment but also how inequalities accumulate over time, leading to a significant gap in pensions at retirement age. Ms Laiviera maintained that by ensuring equal pay for work of equal value, women's earnings would increase throughout the lifecycle, thus enhancing women's economic independence during different stages of their life.

Ms Annalise Frantz, NCPE Senior Executive (Projects), explained the main aims and objectives of the PGEI project: to educate the relevant target groups on the gender pay gap, the gender pension gap and inactivity, whilst empowering them to act where necessary and possible, raise awareness and generate discussion on these issues. Ms Joana Micallef, PGEI Project Promoter, gave an overview of the deliverables and results of the project's outreach activities.



Ms Annalise Frantz and Ms Joana Micallef during the PGEI project final conference

The research study on existing equal pay tools in Europe, with the aim of developing a similar tool suitable for Malta's labour market and tailored to the NCPE Equality Mark certification process, was presented by KPMG Malta. A further research study into how European trade union representatives embrace the principle of equal pay for women and men during collective agreement negotiations and pass on this knowledge to local union representatives was presented by M. Fsadni & Associates. Finally, an external evaluation of all the project's activities and the resulting recommendations was presented by NCP Consult SLRS.

In her final remarks, whilst acknowledging the valid work undertaken, the NCPE Commissioner Ms Renee Laiviera concluded that the conference should be seen as an opportunity to scrutinise the challenges that still need to be addressed to empower both women and men to reach their full potential in the economic sphere.

The NCPE Online Annual Conference - 19 October

During its Annual Conference, held online for the first time, the NCPE highlighted its work in 2019, underlining the progress achieved and the remaining challenges towards achieving equality in specific areas.

An Equality Mark awarding ceremony was held and recorded prior to this event, and a video clip of the ceremony was shown during the Conference. 14 new companies were awarded the Equality Mark certification, six companies were re-certified for the first time, and eight companies received their second re-certification. Moreover, nine companies received a certificate for participating in the Equal Pay Tool pilot-testing exercise. The ceremony was presided by Hon. Minister Dr Edward Zammit Lewis and Hon. Parliamentary Secretary Ms Rosianne Cutajar.

In the last part of the Annual Conference, the participants were presented with the preliminary results of the NCPE survey on the distribution of unpaid domestic work between women and men during Covid-19, that raised a healthy discussion among the participants.

The NCPE Online Conference to mark Equal Pay Day - 26 November

The NCPE's Online Conference to mark Equal Pay Day focused on the **way forward to closing the gender pay gap** and ensuring equal pay for women and men.

The NCPE Commissioner, Ms Renee Laiviera maintained that the gender pay gap affects women throughout their lifecycle, including their pension, where the gap is even wider. Thus, tackling the gender pay gap is crucial in mitigating the risk of women falling into poverty and social exclusion, particularly in later life.



The NCPE Commissioner Ms Renee Laiviera during the online conference on Equal Pay Day

KPMG Malta gave a presentation on existing Equal Pay Tools in EU Member States and referred to the NCPE Equal Pay Tool; a tool suitable for Malta's labour market and tailor-made for the NCPE Equality Mark certification process. The Tool as developed, is the first of its kind in Malta and is a good baseline upon which to keep improving. In fact, KPMG recommended that the Tool is revised regularly and in a structured manner by continuously analysing its outcomes and the users' approach towards it.

Dr Rose Marie Azzopardi, Senior Lecturer, Economics Department, FEMA, University of Malta, addressed the development of a **gender pay gap action plan for Malta**. She first outlined the EU's action plan in this regard, covering the period 2017-2019. Dr Azzopardi insisted that there is a need for clear legislation on pay transparency. Furthermore, persuasive deterrents and stronger institutional support are needed to ensure fairness and justice on equal pay.

A panel discussion composed of Government authorities, NGOs, unions and employers' associations discussed tangible actions to close the pay gap and ensure equal pay, and the role of different stakeholders in this regard.

4.2 Fora and Networks

The NCPE is a member of various networks, committees and boards and participates in their respective events.

European Network of Equality Bodies (Equinet)

Equinet is the European Network of Equality Bodies, which are public institutions fighting discrimination at the national level. Through Equinet, members are able to share their expertise at European level. The Network ensures that information and knowledge flows as efficiently as possible between members in order to learn from the successes achieved and the challenges raised during the implementation of their mandate at national level.

Equinet promotes equality in Europe through supporting equality bodies to be independent and effective as valuable catalysts for more equal societies.

The NCPE actively participated in Equinet's events throughout 2020 as in previous years.

The NCPE Commissioner, Ms Renee Laiviera maintained that the gender pay gap affects women throughout their lifecycle, including their pension, where the gap is even wider. Thus, tackling the gender pay gap is crucial in mitigating the risk of women falling into poverty and social exclusion, particularly in later life.

EU Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities between Women and Men

The Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men assists the European Commission in formulating and implementing

the European Union work aimed at promoting equality between women and men.

Created in 1981 by the European Commission Decision relating to the setting up of an Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, the Advisory Committee delivers opinions to the Commission on issues of relevance to the promotion of gender equality in the EU.

It comprises representatives of EU member states, social partners at EU level and NGOs, fostering ongoing exchanges of experiences, policies and practices between EU countries and the various parties involved.

The NCPE Commissioner was the Chair of the Advisory Committee in 2020.

European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) Experts' Forum

The Experts' Forum is EIGE's advisory body. Its principle function is to provide expertise knowledge in the field of gender equality.

It is composed of members from competent bodies specialised in gender equality issues from every EU Member State. Each country designates both a member and an alternate and there are two members designated by the European Parliament, as well as three members designated by the European Commission and representing interested parties at the European level.

The NCPE Commissioner is a member of the EIGE Experts' Forum.

European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)

ECRI is a human rights body of the Council of Europe, composed of independent experts, which monitors racism, xenophobia, antisemitism, intolerance and discrimination on grounds such as race, national/ethnic origin, colour, citizenship, religion and language. It prepares country reports on developments and issues recommendations to States under review.

The NCPE's Commissioner is a member of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) and regularly participates in its work. In 2020, the NCPE participated in the ECRI seminar on communicating the equality and diversity message

Collaborative Platform on social and economic rights

The main objective of the Platform is to help reinforce the effectiveness of the standards for national bodies and contribute to finding responses to fundamental rights challenges in Europe, including coordinated action on regional policies. The Platform provides an opportunity to discuss ways to ensure that the European Social Charter (ESC) and other international human rights standards relating to economic and social rights are taken into account in the design and implementation of national legislation and practice.

The Platform is composed of the Council of Europe (CoE), the European Union Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI) and the European Network of Equality Bodies (Equinet).

The NCPE participates in the work of the Platform.

Committees and Boards

In 2020, NCPE officers sat on a number of Committees to promote equality between men and women, equal opportunities and non-discrimination that relate to a horizontal priority across all these programmes.

- Gender Representation Guidelines Committee (BA): The Committee was established in 2020 to draft guidelines to the media on ensuring fair and balanced gender representation in discussion programmes. The Committee is composed of two members from the Broadcasting Authority (BA) and one member from the NCPE.
- Project Selection Committee (PSC): This Committee evaluates and selects project proposals submitted under the General Programme Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows. The NCPE is a member of this Committee, providing its input from a gender perspective.
- Interreg Italia-Malta 2014-2020 Executive Committee: The Interreg Italia-Malta 2014-2020 is a cross-border Programme which covers the Maltese Islands and several regions in Sicily. This Programme aims to reinforce sustainable growth at the cross-border level with a particular focus on the Research & Innovation sectors, fosters the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises, protects the environment as well as promotes actions which mitigate the effects of climate change whilst also addressing the area's natural and anthropic risks. One of the principles of the Programme is "equality between men and women and non-discrimination". As part of the Executive Committee of this Programme, the NCPE gives feedback on the equal opportunities section of the project proposal. The NCPE also sits on the programme's Monitoring Committee.
- The European Fisheries Fund Monitoring Committee: The European Fisheries Fund

(EFF) 2014-2020 contributes to realising the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) objectives, which specifically consist of ensuring the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources. The NCPE sits on the Monitoring Committee that assesses progress in reaching the objectives of the operational programme for Malta and analyses and approves the selection criteria for the financed operations. The NCPE's role is to give horizontal feedback on issues related to equality.

- The Rural Development Programme for Malta under the European Agricultural fund for Rural Development 2014-2020: The objective of this programme is to reduce economic and social disparities within the European Economic Area. The NCPE sits on the programme's Monitoring Committee.

- PPCD - Operational Programme I and Operational Programme II: The NCPE is a member of the programme's Monitoring Committee whose role is to monitor the effectiveness and quality of the implementation of the Operational Programme, in accordance with Articles 49 and 110 of Regulation (EU) 1303/2013.

- Asylum, Migration, Integration Fund (AMIF) 2014-2020: The AMIF is a mechanism to enhance, through financial assistance, effective management of migration flows to the EU, in particular by sharing responsibility between Member States and strengthening cooperation with third countries. In Malta, the programme focuses on asylum and reception, integration, return and solidarity. The NCPE sits on the programme's Monitoring Committee.

5. Financial Overview

During the financial year 2020, the NCPE received government funding amounting to €403,431 (2019– €453,431). Other income amounted to €6,124. Total recurrent cost amounted to €406,258 (2019 – €387,588) thereby registering a surplus of €3,297 for the year ending 31st December 2020. Staff Costs and Honoraria increased to €372,380 (2019 – €342,575) representing 92% of the total costs. Administrative costs amounted to €33,875 (2019 – €45,013). As in previous years, these costs are being kept to a minimum. The main administrative costs are listed hereunder:

	€
Legal and Professional fees	13,491
Stationery, Printing and postage	6,816
Office related costs	7,251
Transport	1,457
Other	4,860
	33,875

The NCPE focuses on the investigation of complaints as per Chapter 456 of the Laws of Malta as well as the promotion of equality and research in this context. The NCPE regularly submits a number of proposals for EU Funding so as to be in a position to further its research and its training and awareness-raising activities. During 2020, the NCPE continued to implement and completed the project 'Preparing the Ground for Economic Independence', which commenced in September 2018 and was completed by the end of August 2020. It was part-financed by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme 2014-2020. The project total cost amounted to €221,625. Additionally, in 2020, the NCPE commenced the project 'Empowerment for Diversity', which commenced in April 2020 and will end by the end of March 2022. It will also be part-financed by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme 2014-2020. The project total budget will amount to €205,367.

Looking Ahead

After the unexpected onset of Covid-19, the NCPE had to rapidly adapt to working under new and unprecedented conditions in order to continue fulfilling all its functions amidst a pandemic. This new reality will, most likely, also characterise 2021.

The most important function of the NCPE is the Commissioner's investigation of complaints of alleged discrimination or harassment. These investigations will continue as usual with most sittings now being held online. This ensures that despite current circumstances, victims of unlawful acts under Chapter 456 of Maltese legislation are still able to come forward and report their cases, to be independently investigated by the Commissioner.

The use of the media to promote equality gains even more importance in a context where it became harder to reach out to different social groups in person. The NCPE will strengthen its communication strategy to ensure the effective delivery of the equality message and remain a constant presence in both social and traditional media, an area where it has already made great strides. Training on valuing diversity and achieving equality in practice will carry on in the form of sessions to smaller groups and online training.

Policy work will remain an important pillar of the NCPE's work, especially in a volatile context where new policies and measures responding to the impact of Covid-19 are constantly proposed

and implemented. National, European and international documents connected to the NCPE's remit will be reviewed to include input from an equality perspective. Important challenges and opportunities related to social inequalities will also be raised and discussed during conferences and seminars organised by the NCPE, which will primarily take place online. Moreover, the NCPE plans to continue with its participation in both international and national fora.

The auditing of organisations applying to obtain the Equality Mark certification, as well as Equality Mark re-certification processes, will be maintained on a regular basis and we look forward to an increase in the number of organisations that are awarded this certification.

2021 will see the implementation of most of the Empowerment for Diversity (E4D) EU co-funded project activities. A qualitative research study on the current situation in Malta regarding LGBTIQ+ discrimination will commence. This study will be both a comparative analysis with a similar research study conducted by NCPE in 2011, as well as include updates with regards to recently adopted legislation. A Launch Conference in the form of a soirée is planned, but it still has to be seen whether Covid-19 restrictions will allow for this format. The second half of 2021 will include the organisation of workshops with the LGBTIQ+ community, internal capacity building and an awareness-raising campaign.

The NCPE may transition to a Human Rights and Equality Commission (HREC) in 2021 if the Bills establishing this entity are enacted by Parliament. We look forward to the widening of our remit and powers through the proposed legislation since this would enhance both the Commission's ability to offer effective protection and redress to victims of discrimination as well as better address social inequalities and human rights breaches in our society.

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The Covid-19 pandemic has brought to the fore and widened already-existing inequalities. The impact of the virus on health, economy and society was not felt in the same way by everybody. Our belonging to different social groups, such as our gender, our sexual orientation, our age and our ethnic origin, has had a significant bearing on our experience of the pandemic. Now more than ever, the NCPE stays committed to ensure that the equality agenda remains a national priority.



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