



Equality Matters

National Commission for the Promotion of Equality

December 2014

Issue 4

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Message from the Editor



Once again, NCPE is sending you the latest issue of *Equality Matters* covering a variety of topics related to equality and anti-discrimination.

This issue gives an update on the Equality Mark, a certification that is

awarded to companies that hold gender equality as a core value and that have passed an audit which assesses specific gender equality standards.

An overview of a pilot study carried out by NCPE on how to educate students about equality is also presented in this newsletter.

A number of good practices are featured to show how equality is safeguarded on various grounds in specific everyday situations.

The question – *What are your rights as an employee?* is addressed giving some answers in this regard.

Finally, as usual, a game is found on the last page.

Enjoy reading!

Maria Theresa Portelli
PR & Communications Officer, NCPE

**We are of course a
nation of differences.
Those differences don't
make us weak.
They're the source of
our strength.**

Jimmy Carter



The Equality Mark



The Equality Mark is a certification awarded to companies that have gender equality as a core value and whose management recognises and promotes the potential of all employees irrespective of their gender and caring responsibilities. The certification is based on a set of criteria to which that organisations show commitment.

Between January and November 2014, the following **9 organisations** were newly certified and another **19 organisations** were re-certified after a period of two years:

Organisations CERTIFIED in 2014

Kummissjoni Nazzjonali Persuni
b'Diżabilità (KNPD)
Public Broadcasting Services
Medicines Authority
Tek-moulds
Equinox
Hudson Holdings
Time International Sport Ltd
Hudson International Co. Ltd
Unpaused Co. Ltd

Organisations RE-CERTIFIED in 2014

Adpro
Chetcuti Cauchi
National Statistics Office
Melita plc
Internal Audit and
Investigations Directorate
Nexia BT
FTI AS
Intercomp
Bank of Valletta
MISCO International Ltd
MISCO Consulting Ltd
Besedo
ST Microelectronics
Pharmacy of Your Choice
Adi-Associates
Grand Hotel Excelsior
Public Administration HR Office
MSV Life
Studio 7



Organisations / entities that are interested in being certified with the Equality Mark can log on to

www.equality.gov.mt

for more information

or contact NCPE on 2590 3850 or equality@gov.mt

Educating about Equality—A Pilot Study



The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) developed and tested educational material which promotes equality with children at both the primary and secondary level. This was carried out through a pilot study which focused on the development and trial of four activities, two at primary school level and two at secondary school level. These activities were embedded within the current subject curricula in order to test how possible it is to mainstream equality within the compulsory age educational system.

The pilot study aimed at gauging the effectiveness of these materials in terms of impact and outcome on the children's parent/s and guardian/s. Further to a review of the existing literature, lesson plans and modules tied to core subjects (a language subject and a science subject) were developed.

Each activity was evaluated and the following remarks and conclusions were drawn:

- ⇒ Teachers tend to be willing to teach about aspects of equality, diversity and mainstreaming;
- ⇒ Teachers were surprised by how sensitively they had managed to touch on the issues targeted and yet the message to the students was still very strong and effective;
- ⇒ Children of different ages understood the main message of the lesson;
- ⇒ The majority of the parents/guardians viewed this initiative positively and they felt that education about equality was needed in the education of young generations;
- ⇒ The activities have shown that it is possible to successfully embed the learning of such activities in subject content;
- ⇒ Students, particularly from primary school, shared their experience at home and could articulate the main message of the lesson. This gave the lessons a snowball effect and the education of parents/guardians is possible through the students;
- ⇒ The teachers intend to keep using these activities in the future;
- ⇒ All the teachers interviewed highlighted how there is a need for the professional development of teachers in learning how best to tackle these issues in the classroom;
- ⇒ Teachers expressed a need to have more teaching resources which they can adapt and use to teach their students.



This initiative was carried out as part of an EU co-funded project '*Enhancing Equal Rights*'.

The pilot study research report may be accessed on NCPE's website:
[http://msdc.gov.mt/en/NCPE/Pages/Projects and Specific Initiatives/
Enhancing Equal Rights.aspx](http://msdc.gov.mt/en/NCPE/Pages/Projects_and_Specific_Initiatives/Enhancing_Equal_Rights.aspx)

Safeguarding Equality ... in practice

The equality legislation protects the rights of persons who are at risk of being discriminated. Equal treatment has to be safeguarded in everyday life to ensure that everyone can participate in different spheres of society without being harassed or discriminated. Hence, creating an environment that fosters equal opportunities is fundamental.

The following examples portray attitudes, behaviours and initiatives that safeguard equal treatment on different grounds of discrimination...



Gender and family responsibilities:

John is married with two young kids. To be able to balance his work and family life, he negotiated with his employer to be able to work on reduced hours. Now he works as an accountant in the morning, which leaves him more time to take care of his children after school and to carry out other family duties.



Sexual orientation:

Sue was being harassed by her colleagues due to her sexual orientation. When she spoke to her manager about this situation, he drafted an equality policy to address this hostile and humiliating working environment. He also organised a training session on diversity at the workplace to explain the contents of this policy to all employees and to challenge ingrained stereotypes. This positively affected the attitudes of Sue's workmates and the work environment as a whole.



Age:

Manuel is 56 years old and works as an Executive Officer with a private company. His employer recognised his potential and experience, and encouraged him to undergo training to continue advancing his career with this company. Manuel is also reading for a bachelor's degree in human resources.

Safeguarding Equality ... in practice

More examples....



Religion or belief:

Mariam works as a receptionist at a big retail organisation. The fact that she wears a headscarf does not interfere with her work, and she is not looked at as a “stranger”. Recently, Mariam applied for a promotion within this same organisation and, after considering her qualifications and capabilities, she was promoted to Section Manager.



Race or ethnic origin:

Noah comes from an African country and after acquiring refugee status, he tried to rent a flat. The property owner from whom he was renting was so helpful that he turned to him for friendly advice on matters that helped Noah settle in his new apartment.



Gender Identity:

Jessica identifies herself as female. Her colleagues continually refer to her directly as ‘Sir’ and she repeatedly overhears comments from colleagues about herself using male pronouns such as ‘he’ and ‘him’. Jessica turned to her human resource manager who addressed the situation through appropriate training on the subject and her colleagues then started to use the suitable pronouns.

In each of the above situations, should the individual feel that they have not been treated equally or should harassment have continued, each of these people could have turned to NCPE for help or to submit a complaint.

NCPE also offers training sessions on various aspects related to equality and assist in the drafting and implementation of equality and sexual harassment policies in the workplace.

Case Study (NCPE Investigation)



Racial Harassment in the Provision of Housing:

The Commissioner was asked to investigate the occurrence of racial harassment in the provision of housing. The complainant, a professional of Egyptian nationality, was on assignment with an established Maltese service provider and in the course of his stay in Malta took up residence in leased premises. He complained that he suffered racial harassment by the owner of the premises when the latter sought his removal from the premises. However, the owner stated, in the information provided to the Commissioner, that he had acted correctly and in defense of his rights since the complainant was residing in the premises abusively.

The Commissioner collected information from the complainant, the owner and also other persons who were involved in the incident. From this information, it was established that the ethnic background of the complainant was referred to pejoratively by the owner even in the presence of other persons besides the complainant.

In this regard, the Commissioner noted that Legal Notice 85 of 2007 prohibits discrimination based on race/ ethnic origin in the provision of and supply of goods and services, in both the public and private sector and also in respect of housing. This Legal Notice states that:

“harassment shall be deemed to be discrimination when it is related to racial or ethnic origin and takes place with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person and of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment”.



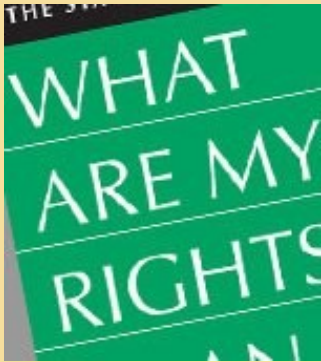
Consequently, it is recognised that racial discrimination may be effected by harassment perpetuated through any manner including the use of spoken words. Moreover, such words amount to discrimination when they are either spoken with the purpose or have the effect of violating the dignity of a person and of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Without prejudicing the owner's claim of illegal occupation of the premises, the Commissioner concluded that the information collected did indicate the use of pejorative language in relation to the complainant's ethnicity and that the use of the language created that degree of hostility that amounts to harassment based on race/ethnic origin.

NCPE's Complaints Form can be downloaded from:

<https://socialdialogue.gov.mt/en/NCPE/Pages/Complaints.aspx>

What are your rights as an employee?



Your job is fundamental to your livelihood. It enhances economic independence, reduces the risk-of-poverty and social exclusion, enables you to make use of your skills, talents and qualifications, puts food on the table, pays the rent, and it may even help finance your child's education....

But while you have obligations at work, you also have certain rights that you should take note of. It is also important to speak out if you feel discriminated against.

You should be treated equally and fairly at the place of work, irrespective of...

- ⇒ parenthood, family responsibilities or other reasons related to sex, sexual orientation, age, religion/belief, racial/ethnic origin, and gender identity;
- ⇒ actual or potential pregnancy or have recently given birth or are breastfeeding;
- ⇒ private life and family plans;
- ⇒ responsibilities towards children or dependent adults at home;
- ⇒ having lodged a complaint regarding discrimination or sexual harassment;
- ⇒ whether you are availing yourself of flexible working arrangements or family-friendly measures.

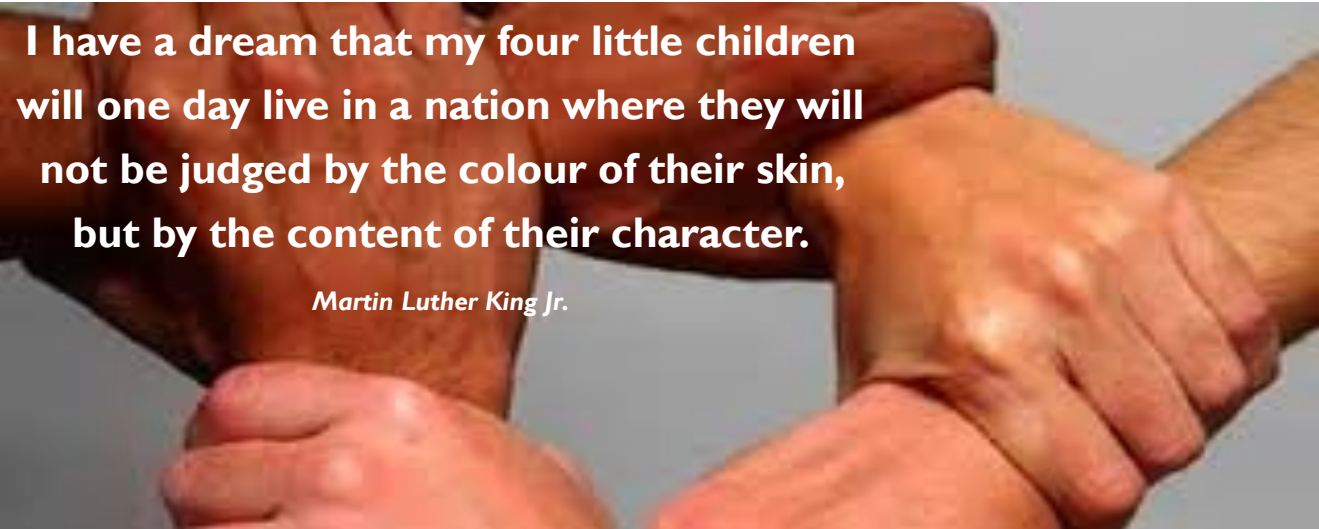
You should be treated equally and fairly at the place of work...

- ⇒ in the arrangements made to determine who should be offered employment;
- ⇒ in the terms and conditions on which the employment is offered, including pay and other benefits;
- ⇒ in determining who should be dismissed from employment;
- ⇒ in the management of work, in the giving of promotions, in the distribution of tasks, for training opportunities or for any arrangement of the working conditions.

Know your rights

If you have any query, you can contact us on 2590 3850, equality@gov.mt or look for further info on our website www.equality.gov.mt





I have a dream that my four little children
will one day live in a nation where they will
not be judged by the colour of their skin,
but by the content of their character.

Martin Luther King Jr.

Game ... Word Search

O	A	K	R	O	W	P	A	H	K	L	C	A	Y	T	P	H	W	D	M
X	R	K	N	S	B	F	K	C	D	Q	C	A	W	C	D	A	I	R	A
R	R	T	I	O	V	Z	X	K	C	D	O	B	Y	R	D	F	O	S	R
Z	A	I	C	F	R	G	I	P	U	O	O	T	R	O	F	D	Y	E	R
D	N	N	E	C	Z	U	X	T	D	H	M	G	C	E	M	T	B	C	I
W	G	T	N	E	M	T	I	M	M	O	C	M	R	R	I	I	O	R	A
H	E	J	Y	O	Q	E	B	Q	H	L	H	E	O	N	M	Q	J	U	G
Z	M	U	Q	K	S	G	Q	N	Q	A	N	D	R	D	T	Y	P	O	E
B	E	N	E	F	I	T	S	F	F	C	T	E	R	T	A	S	D	S	F
N	N	N	M	Y	D	L	V	S	E	Y	T	H	X	D	I	T	H	E	L
Z	T	N	W	O	K	K	D	S	N	A	J	C	Y	R	X	E	I	R	T
C	S	D	O	T	W	S	I	O	M	O	O	K	D	J	I	U	Z	O	V
R	E	S	P	O	N	S	I	B	I	L	I	T	I	E	S	A	H	H	N
A	N	D	K	Y	F	W	A	Q	R	G	X	T	R	M	W	L	F	A	C
N	L	L	S	A	C	K	K	O	V	K	D	O	O	A	L	V	G	I	F
S	E	V	E	V	K	Y	R	S	P	W	J	L	G	M	I	R	C	H	D
F	G	R	K	H	N	O	V	B	N	X	B	Q	Y	K	O	N	Q	A	W
O	P	F	L	W	X	O	N	L	Y	N	Y	S	Y	K	R	R	I	J	G
Q	Q	W	J	D	D	P	J	U	L	Z	R	Q	R	G	C	T	P	N	Q
Y	V	S	N	B	B	H	D	H	P	J	A	P	X	X	F	U	F	N	G

ACCOMMODATION

ARRANGEMENTS

BENEFITS

COMMITMENT

DIFFERENCES

DUTIES

FAIR

JOB

MARRIAGE

MATERNITY

PROMOTIONS

RESOURCES

RESPONSIBILITIES

TRAINING

WORK

For more information on NCPE's services
and its upcoming events contact us on:

Tel: 25903850

Website: www.equality.gov.mt

Email: equality@gov.mt

Facebook: National Commission for the Promotion of Equality