



Equality Matters

National Commission for the Promotion of Equality

June 2013

Issue 1

Message from the Editor

The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality is pleased to send you this first issue of its e-newsletter which aims at further promoting equality-related issues in Malta.



We, at NCPE, work to safeguard equal treatment based on sex/gender and family responsibilities, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, racial or ethnic origin, and gender identity in employment, banks and financial institutions, as well as education and vocational training. We also work to ensure equality based on racial or ethnic origin and gender in the provision of goods and services and their supply.

Awareness-raising is one of the pivots of NCPE and hence by disseminating this newsletter we are keeping interested stakeholders up-to-date with NCPE's continuous work and any other matters related to equality. This first issue of our newsletter features information on the Equality Mark and two new EU co-funded projects which are being implemented by NCPE. Information is also provided on how to lodge a complaint with NCPE, and on the gender pay gap. We shall get to know more about NCPE's Commissioner, Ms Renee Laiviera, in the interview featured on page 4. And for those interested in our activities, pencil down in your diaries our upcoming events.

Enjoy reading!

Maria Theresa Portelli

PR & Communications Officer, NCPE

In this issue:

- The Equality Mark
- New EU co-funded projects
- NCPE receiving and investigating complaints
- The gender pay gap
- Interview with NCPE Commissioner
- Games
- From NCPE's Diary...

The Equality Mark

The Equality Mark is a certification which is awarded to companies that have gender equality as one of their values and whose management is based on the recognition and promotion of the potential of all employees irrespective of their gender and caring responsibilities. The certification is based on a set of criteria that organisations need to show a commitment to.

For those organisations / entities interested to attend the information session, and to obtain the Equality Mark, log on to www.equality.gov.mt for more information, or contact NCPE.



NCPE

New EU co-funded projects

NCPE has launched two new EU co-funded projects - *Enhancing Equal Rights* (JUST/2012/PROG/AG/3717) and *Gender Balance in Decision-Making* ESF 3.196:

Enhancing Equal Rights



Launch Conference held on 24th May, 2013. From left: Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties Hon. Dr Helena Dalli, NCPE Executive Director Dr Romina Bartolo, NCPE Manager Ms Therese Spiteri. (DOI Photo – Pierre Sammut)

This project, co-financed under the PROGRESS 2007-2013, which is projected to span over one calendar year, targets: the general public; enterprises, trade unions and NGOs; national and local authorities; teachers; young people and children.

One of the main components of the project is internal training for NCPE staff and Commission members. This will ensure that there is an increase of internal knowledge especially in view of the extension of NCPE's remit in 2012. A train-the-trainer manual on all grounds of discrimination is expected to be produced for NCPE staff. The project also focuses on diversity management training which will be provided to employers. Finally, training on all grounds of discrimination will also be offered to teachers and teachers in training. Training modules on equality and non-discrimination will also be piloted with primary and secondary school children. Another main component of the project concerns information dissemination and awareness-raising. Another Anti-Racism Theme day is being planned similar to the one held last year, together with a non-discrimination campaign through newspapers, billboards and social networking sites. A project external evaluation shall also be carried out in order to evaluate the activities implemented throughout the project's lifetime.

Gender Balance in Decision-Making

This project, which is co-financed by the European Social Fund, is intended to facilitate, through knowledge and specific action, gender-balanced representation in decision-making. This shall be done through various activities namely:

- two research studies: one on gender-balanced representation in decision-making and the other on gender quotas and other measures;
- a Mentoring Programme which will provide women aspiring to hold decision-making positions with the opportunity to be mentored by persons (preferably women) who occupy high-level jobs; and
- the development of a Directory of Maltese and Gozitan Professional Women.

The project duration is 24 months, and shall last until the 2nd quarter of 2015.



Launch Conference held on 5th June, 2013. (DOI Photo – Pierre Sammut)

NCPE Receiving and Investigating Complaints



Investigating complaints is amongst one of the core functions and responsibilities of NCPE as per Chapter 456 of the Laws of Malta, *Equality for Men and Women Act*. Heading the Commission, NCPE's Commissioner is responsible for the investigation of complaints. Prior to lodging a complaint with NCPE, complainants may request an appointment with NCPE's Complaints and Client Support Officer, should they have any queries in relation to the complaint being lodged, or if they would like to clarify anything in relation to NCPE's complaints procedure.

Anyone who believes that s/he has been a victim of discrimination on the basis of sex or family responsibilities, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, racial or ethnic origin, and gender identity in employment, banks and financial institutions as well as education and vocational training; and discrimination on the basis of

racial or ethnic origin and gender in the provision of goods and services and their supply, may submit a complaint to NCPE by downloading and filling in the complaints form from NCPE's website www.equality.gov.mt

Case study (NCPE Complaint) – Alleged discrimination on the basis of sex in access to employment:

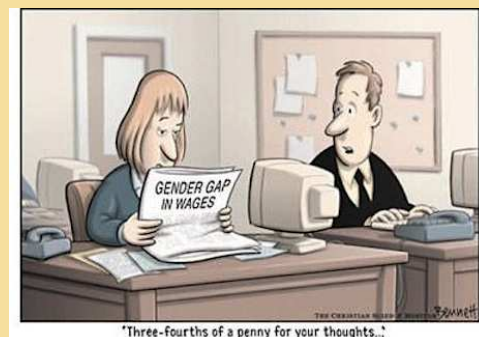
NCPE's Commissioner was asked to investigate a case where the complainant stated that in applying for a position as PSD/Religion teacher in a girls' school, he received a reply stating that "it is not advisable to have a male PSD teacher in a girls' school".

The Commissioner stated that the wording used in the replies given to the male applicants of the call for applications, to the effect that "it is not advisable to have male PSD teachers in a girls' school", constitutes discrimination on the basis of sex as it potentially deprives male applicants of an opportunity to attend an interview for the call for applications on the sole basis of their sex and without taking into consideration their suitability for the vacancy, qualifications and experience. Furthermore, the Commissioner noted that the wording used in the reply sent to the male applicants was discriminatory on the basis of sex.

The Gender Pay Gap

The gender pay gap:

- is the average difference between men's and women's hourly earnings within the economy as a whole;
- is the consequence of ongoing discrimination and inequalities in the labour market;
- has an important impact on lifetime earnings and on pensions;
- has to be closed for the benefit of employers and workers; and
- has to be closed to equally value both women's and men's work and skills and to create a more equal and cohesive society.



Interview with NCPE Commissioner Ms Renee Laiviera

Who is Renee Laiviera?

I have been an activist on equality for many years during which I have held management positions in the Malta Public Service, including that of Director (Women's Rights), and chaired the Commission for the Advancement of Women. I participated in numerous international fora representing both government and civil society.



conditions that enable them to achieve their aspirations in life; for their own personal benefit, that of their family as well as for the good of the whole community.

What does your role of Commissioner of NCPE consist of?

Chapter 456 of the Laws of Malta lists 12 functions that fall under the responsibility of the Commissioner together with the Commission. In my opinion, the first function encompasses the remaining eleven as it empowers the Commission to identify, establish and update all policies directly or indirectly related to issues of equality for men and women, in order to address discrimination on the basis of sex, age, ethnic origin, race, belief, sexual orientation and gender identity within the remit of the said law. This work needs to be done in conjunction with other government entities, agencies and civil society organisations operating in the field both on a national and international context.

What does equality mean to you?

Equality is to do with a fair and just society where each person can contribute and has the same opportunities to fulfil his/her potential. Equality is about bringing up our girls and boys outside the stereotypical roles of the social construct that stipulates the position of boys and girls in society. I believe that people, irrespective of their gender, belief, ethnicity, race, age or sexual orientation, should grow up in those favourable

What do you think about the developments in the different grounds of equality in Malta? What are the remaining challenges to the achievement of equality in Malta?

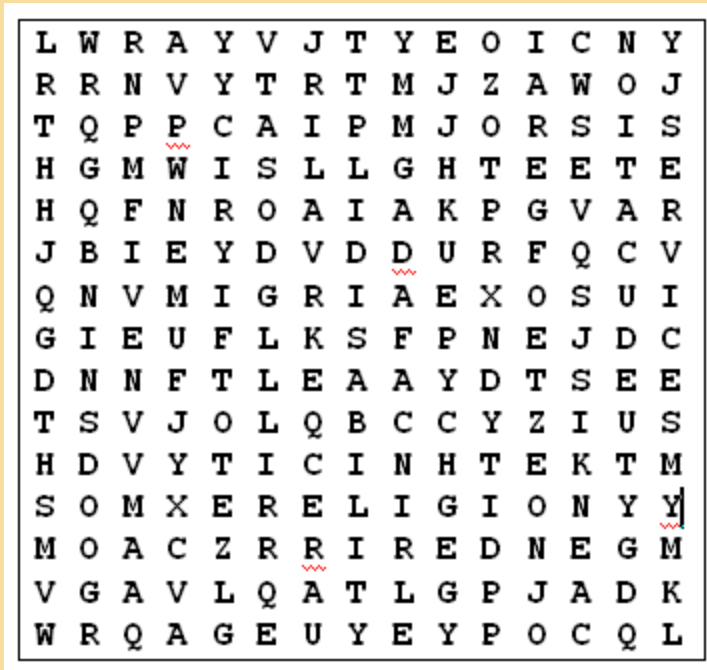
Significant changes have been registered in the last 40 years particularly with regard to legislation. However, there are still lacunae in the legislative framework. Moreover, legislation alone cannot bring about a society free of discrimination. NGOs, whatever aspect of discrimination they address, are continually highlighting instances and incidents of discriminatory behaviour in our society. Furthermore, much more work is needed in educating both the young as well as adults to be appreciative of diverse cultures which in themselves enrich our own.

What are the plans which the Commission will be working on in the future?

The Commission is presently drafting a work plan to identify the areas of highest concern. Legislation, research projects, training, consultation with different entities are on the table for discussion with the aim of reaching our objective – the elimination of discrimination and implementation of equality in Maltese society.

Games

Word search



- Age
- Belief
- Disability
- Diversity
- Education
- Employment
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Goods
- Identity
- Race
- Religion
- Services
- Sexuality
- Training

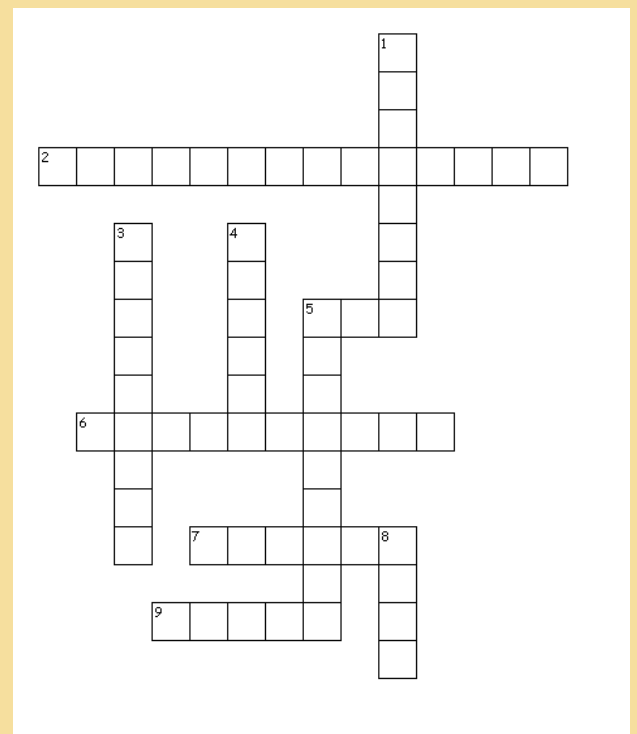
Crossword [Solutions can be found on the last page]

Across

2. Unfair treatment of persons on one or more grounds
5. The gender ____ gap is the average difference between men's and women's hourly earnings
6. Unwanted conduct that intimidates a person, and can have sexual connotations
7. Discrimination on the grounds of race or ethnic origin
9. The underrepresented gender in decision-making positions

Down

1. The absence of discrimination
3. Can be lodged at NCPE when a person is discriminated against
4. Enhancing Equal _____ is a new project carried out by NCPE
5. National Commission for the _____ of Equality
8. The certification awarded by NCPE to organisations that foster gender equality: Equality _____



From NCPE's Diary...

Making a Difference

A **training session** on equality and the combating discrimination by guest speaker and Expert on Equality Niall Crowley.

On: 17th July, 2013

At: 9:00am – 1:00pm

At: Dar l-Ewropa, Valletta



Annual Conference 2013

A half-day conference featuring NCPE's work throughout 2012 and looking ahead to new work in 2013.

On: 24th July, 2013

For more information on these upcoming events and any services offered by NCPE, make contact on:

Tel: 25903850

Website: www.equality.gov.mt

Email: equality@gov.mt

Facebook: *National Commission for the Promotion of Equality*



Crossword Solutions:
Across – 2. Discrimination 5. Pay 6. Harassment 7. Racism 9. Women
Down – 1. Equality 3. Complaint 4. Rights 5. Promotion 8. Mark