



# Equality Matters

National Commission for the Promotion of Equality

Special Edition—Summer 2016



## Message from the Editor

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This is a *Special Edition* of *Equality Matters*, targeting employers both in the public as well as

in the private sector. Employers have a key role in fostering equality at the workplace. It is highly significant that employers are seeking and coming up with initiatives that create and promote a workplace that fosters equal opportunities in order to maximize productivity, attract new talent and increase employee commitment. So, for an organisation, equality makes good business sense!

In this regard, NCPE is presenting in this *Special Edition* two of its initiatives that employers can benefit from – the Equality Mark Certification and the online Directory of Professional Women. In addition, preventing sexual harassment at the workplace as well as promoting family-friendly measures can also make good business sense both for employers as well as for the well-being of employees. Read more on these issues in the pages that follow.

We hope that you find this *Special Edition* a useful one!

*Maria Theresa Portelli*  
PR & Communications Officer, NCPE



What every employer is looking for is not someone who can do the job, but someone who can reinvent the job.

— Thomas Friedman —

## The Equality Mark Certification



This year, seven **(7) newly certified organisations** and another **nine (9) organisations were re-certified** with the Equality Mark by NCPE.

The Equality Mark Certification, that entered in its sixth year, is awarded to companies / 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 irrespective of their gender and caring responsibilities.

NCPE

### Why do entities aspire to obtain the Equality Mark?

- **Accessing the full talent pool:** The enhanced corporate image of these entities puts them in a better position to attract employees that demonstrate high creativity and skills. This is more likely to happen when recruitment is sourced from the population's total pool of talent, and not just half.
- **Higher profitability through gender diversity:** there is a link between gender distribution in a company's management and its profitability. Encouraging gender diversity at each level of the organisation and decision-making process means the development of more innovative approaches based on the different skills and experiences of both genders.
- **Being an 'employer of choice':** Organisations have created a good working environment for both women and men, which means that the best people want to work with them. This positive employment brand helps an organisation to both attract and retain staff.
- **Reduce costs through staff retention:** Equal access to family-friendly measures helps organisations retain valuable staff, leading to lower turnover and thus decreased recruitment costs.
- **Customers' perspective:** By involving both genders into their decision-making process, organisations are more likely to meet the needs and expectations of all their customers, be they women or men.
- **Risk management:** Discrimination, in all its forms, is a factor that is taken up in risk assessments. Adopting policies and business structures that safeguard the rights of all employees buffer against possible risk and cost of reputation damage and potential litigation. On the other hand, it attracts investors and business opportunities that increasingly take gender diversity into consideration.



For more information on the Equality Mark:

[http://ncpe.gov.mt/en/Pages/The\\_Equality\\_Mark/The\\_Equality\\_Mark.aspx](http://ncpe.gov.mt/en/Pages/The_Equality_Mark/The_Equality_Mark.aspx)

## Award Ceremony 2016

Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties, Hon. Helena Dalli, this year presented the Equality Mark Certification to seven (7) newly certified organisations and another nine (9) organisations that were re-certified. The Award Ceremony was held during this year's NCPE's Annual Conference on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2016.



NCPE's Commissioner, Renee Laiviera, addressing the Annual Conference which included the 2016 Award Ceremony

### Newly certified 2016

Argus Insurance Agencies Ltd  
 be.hotel  
 Busy Bee  
 ICON  
 MEUSAC  
 Office of Superintendence Public Health  
 Prohealth Ltd



Busy Bee



Office of the  
 Superintendent  
 of Public Health

prohealth



### Re-certified 2016

AIS Group of Companies  
 Alf Mizzi and Sons  
 Deloitte  
 Link English School  
 Mater Dei Hospital  
 Partit Laburista  
 Sign Services  
 Simonds Farsons Cisk plc.  
 Uniblue Systems Ltd

For more info on the Equality Mark:  
 contact NCPE—2590 3850 / [equality@gov.mt](mailto:equality@gov.mt)

## The Directory of Professional Women

Women's under-representation in decision-making positions in Malta persists. This is why NCPE developed the online Directory of Professional Women that can be utilised by all those who are looking for a qualified and experienced female professional. This aims to give further visibility to professional women and their competences.

This is a very useful, more structured and organised tool for employers to find qualified and experienced professionals who can be appointed on a decision-making board/committee. There are **233 professionals** who are registered. The online Directory gives the possibilities to locate a professional woman in a relevant field by saving time and money, as this service is free of charge.

You can search the Directory's database on:  
<http://ncpe.gov.mt/en/Pages/Directory/Search.aspx>

### THE NCPE DIRECTORY OF PROFESSIONAL WOMEN HAS REGISTRANTS FROM VARIOUS SECTORS:



LAWS & JUDICIARY



MEDICINE & SURGERY



EDUCATION



ECONOMY



SOCIAL WELLBEING



TECHNOLOGY

ENGINEERING

HUMANITIES

TOURISM & ENTERPRISE

POLITICS

ENVIRONMENT

ARTS & CULTURE

SPORTS & LEISURE

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

HEALTH SCIENCES

MEDIA, TECHNOLOGY AND KNOWLEDGE SCIENCES

SCIENCES

VISIT THE DIRECTORY ON [WWW.EQUALITY.GOV.MT](http://WWW.EQUALITY.GOV.MT)

Find the right person for your company  
on the  
NCPE Directory of Professional Women.

FREE AND EASY-TO-USE

[www.equality.gov.mt](http://www.equality.gov.mt)

## Sexual Harassment at the Workplace:

### What are the Legal Obligations of the Employer?

Sexual harassment at the workplace is a prohibited form of gender discrimination which is essentially defined as 'unwelcome sexual conduct' and is unlawful. It may take many different forms such as physical acts, words or gestures, and the display of sexually offensive material.

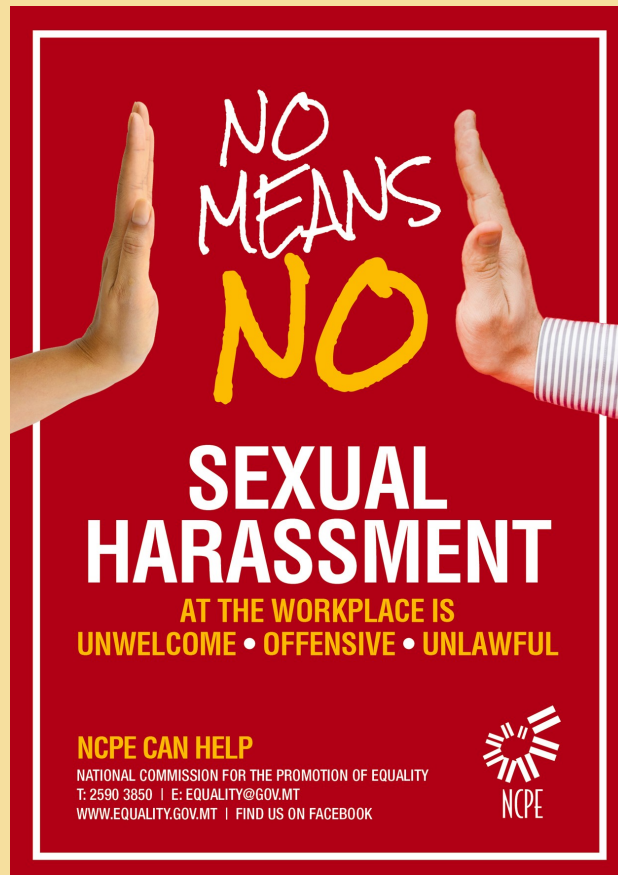
The employer has to ensure that sexual harassment does not occur at the workplace. Organisations also have a duty to promote a positive work environment. In this respect, sexual harassment besides falling within the meaning of gender discrimination, may also become a health and safety issue when such acts have psychological repercussions on the victims.

Sexual harassment at the workplace can also damage the organisations' public image because the employer can incur liability and face legal sanctions if sexual harassment is allowed to happen. This last consideration can also cost the organisation money in cases where the employer is condemned to pay damages. The organisation can also be less attractive to employees.

Under the *Equality for Men and Women Act*, an employer may be liable for acts of sexual harassment committed by one or more of his/her employees unless all steps, as are reasonably practical, have been taken to prevent sexual harassment from taking place.

#### There are two main actions that employers may take in this regard:

- ⇒ Adequate preventive measures, such as a sexual harassment policy should be adopted, fully implemented and monitored effectively. These should be made known to employees.
- ⇒ Cases of "alleged sexual harassment" should be investigated and if proved remedial measures should be applied.



#### NCPE can help...

- ⇒ **NCPE provides training sessions to organisations on the prevention of sexual harassment at the workplace**
- ⇒ **Victims of sexual harassment can file a complaint with NCPE for investigation**

## Family-friendly Measures: The benefits for the employer

Family-friendly measures are flexible measures or working arrangements that assist workers, both men and women, to balance and reconcile work-related demands with family needs. Such measures include flexi-time, job sharing, reduced hours, and teleworking.

### What does the employer reap from all this? Why endorse family-friendly measures?

- Research shows that organisations offering family-friendly measures have noted higher job satisfaction on the part of employees, which is related to higher motivation at work and increased productivity.
- Motivated employees are also more likely to promote their organisations and to carry out tasks proactively and efficiently.
- Such measures also lead to a better adaptation of the workload, lower absenteeism and sick-leave and ultimately higher staff retention.

Employers are encouraged to be well-versed with the family-friendly initiatives. It is also suggested to employers to establish a formal policy indicating conditions of access to these measures. Each request for the use of family-friendly measures is to be considered with a set structured policy, taking into consideration the needs of the employee, employer and customer. Therefore, this may require a compromise to be reached for the benefit of the parties involved.

The offering of family-friendly measures for men and women with caring responsibilities is one of the criteria that NCPE assesses when certifying organisations as true equal opportunities employers with the Equality Mark.



For more information contact NCPE:  
2590 3850 / [equality@gov.mt](mailto:equality@gov.mt)