



NCPE

ANNUAL REPORT

2019



**The National  
Commission for the  
Promotion of Equality**

**ANNUAL REPORT  
2019**



# Table of Contents

Minister's Message.....	6
Parliamentary Secretary's Message.....	8
Commissioner's Message .....	10
The Commissioner and Commission Members in 2019 .....	13
NCPE Organisation Chart 2019 .....	14
1. Equality in Malta .....	15
1.1 An Overview of Developments in 2019 .....	15
1.2 Statistical Overview .....	25
2. Striving Towards Equality .....	41
2.1 Investigations .....	41
2.2 Policy Review and Recommendations.....	45
2.3 Media .....	51
2.4 Prepare the Ground for Economic Independence.....	55
2.5 Managing EU Funds.....	57
2.6 Training .....	59
2.7 Discrimination in Advertising.....	61
2.8 Requests for Information.....	62
2.9 Directory of Professional Women .....	63
2.10 Library and Documentation Centre.....	63
3. The Equality Mark.....	64
4. Building Knowledge and Networks.....	68
4.1 Our Conferences .....	68
4.2 Fora and Networks .....	70
5. Financial Overview .....	75



# What We Stand For

The National Commission for the Promotion 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 28/2007, 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

In the context of a society that is becoming ever more diverse, Government's commitment and work to safeguard equal treatment and celebrate diversity picked up the pace during 2019. Various initiatives were undertaken to strengthen our laws and their implementation, to ensure that the wealth of experiences and perspectives we gain from diversity truly makes us a thriving society.

Fragmented legal framework on equality and human rights, with little remedy to victims of discrimination, is a challenge for citizens to understand their rights and enforce them. To this end, in 2019, I presented the *Equality Bill* and the *Human Rights and Equality Commission Bill* in Parliament.

The Equality Bill strengthens the legal framework by ensuring a comprehensive prohibition of discrimination in the different spheres of public life. Moreover, the *Human Rights and Equality Commission Bill* will transform NCPE into a fully independent Commission, that includes an Equality Board with the mandate to hear and decide cases on alleged breaches of the right to equal treatment. We will thus make sure that justice is served to those who deserve it.

The two Bills are currently at an advanced stage in Parliament, and I look forward to their enactment in the near future.

In order to bring about substantive equality for women and men, in March 2019, Malta signed and ratified the *United Nations Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW). This Protocol recognises the competence of the CEDAW Committee to provide recommendations to the State Parties to ensure the implementation of the provisions of the Convention focusing on women's rights, as well as providing a redress mechanism for the investigation of complaints against the State. Malta's accession to this protocol is further proof of government's intention to be bound by the highest international and regional law guaranteeing the rights of all<sup>1</sup>.

The Gender Mainstreaming Unit (GMU) was established within the Human Rights and Integration Directorate (HRID) with the aim of developing and implementing the first national strategy and action plan in relation to gender mainstreaming and the introduction of corresponding legislation.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/DOI/Press%20Releases/Pages/2019/March/16/pr190553.aspx>





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

Enhancing a balanced representation of women and men in political decision-making is one of the core missions of this government. The green paper *Gender Balance in Parliament Reform Consultation Document* was drafted by a Technical Committee following intensive research and presented to representatives of the Parliament of Malta and other stakeholders.

A public consultation was launched to further protect vulnerable people from being exploited, such as sex workers, and enhance the fight against trafficking of persons, mainly made up of women and girls. The measures proposed in the *Reform on Human Trafficking and Prostitution*, published in 2019, contribute to raise awareness and strengthen laws and service provision mechanisms with the aim of enhancing support for persons to exit prostitution.

Furthermore, government is also committed to safeguard equal pay for work of equal value. In this context, the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality is carrying out a set of initiatives to address the gender gaps across the

lifecycle as part of an EU co-funded project in order to raise awareness on the gender pay and pension gaps with different stakeholders.

During 2019, the NCPE continued investigating and addressing complaints of alleged discrimination. The commitment of various companies to safeguard gender equality was recognised by awarding them the NCPE's Equality Mark Certification. Moreover, various training sessions and outreach initiatives on different topics related to equality were given to strengthen awareness and disseminate further information on rights and responsibilities related to equal treatment as per the NCPE's remit.

We are all different, but we all deserve to be treated equally and with respect. Thus we are committed to keep equality high on our agenda. I thank the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality for the valuable work in this field and look forward to strengthen the NCPE's remit and powers to ensure that equality and human rights are truly a reality in the everyday life of all.

# Parliamentary Secretary's Message

The progress achieved in the sphere of equality in the past years has been significant. Several initiatives contributed to enhance equal opportunities for different groups of women and men and made a difference in the everyday lives of various individuals and families.

In fact, the participation in employment increased, with more than 32,000 women who entered the labour market in the last five years following the introduction of several measures that facilitate the reconciliation of work and family life including free childcare, breakfast club, Klabb 3-16, afterschool programme, and the Maternity Leave Trust. Laws, policies and structures in the sphere of violence against women and gender-based violence were strengthened; the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) has seen a strengthening of its remit and has continued working to promote and safeguard equality with different stakeholders and investigate complaints of alleged discrimination. Malta also remarkably stood at the top of the *Rainbow Europe 2019* country ranking for the fourth year in a row representing what matters in the lives of LGBTI communities. Moreover, other national

initiatives were taken to enhance equality in a wide range of spheres.

In light of this, we are committed to continue reinforcing such progress and achieving additional developments in the coming years. In particular, we will further strengthen family-related leaves and flexible working arrangements and ensure that discrimination on the grounds of family responsibilities is curbed. The effective implementation of the *Work-Life Balance Directive*, that entered into force in 2019, will enable more women and men to share their family responsibilities while pursuing a career, to address challenges related to work-life balance for parents and carers, and thus to support them to enter or remain in employment.

Moreover, we will work not only to ensure that more women and men are able to participate in the labour market, but also to safeguard their rights while in employment. Particularly, discussions with social partners will be held to strengthen the principle of equal pay for work of equal value through appropriate mechanisms. Such mechanisms will contribute to ensure equal pay in practice, which is indeed a crucial prerequisite for



**Hon. Rosianne Cutajar**  
*Parliamentary Secretary for Equality and Reforms*

equal economic independence for women and men and for gender equality. We look forward to the development of the NCPE's equal pay tool that will be tailor made for Malta's labour market within the local context.

Equal opportunities for women and men are important in all areas of life, including decision-making positions in politics. Acknowledging the dearth of women in politics and the little progress registered in this area over the years, we are committed to improve the gender balance in politics through positive action measures that increase the participation of the under-represented sex, following the proposals published for public consultation in 2019, with the aim of challenging the current democratic deficit in Parliament.

Moreover, addressing the circumstances and needs of those in most need of protection and support is another objective that will contribute to empower women in vulnerable situations. Specifically, we will continue working to protect persons, particularly women and girls, from being exploited as sex workers and enhancing the fight against trafficking of persons.

In addition, the harmonisation of equality laws is envisaged through the prospective adoption of the *Equality Bill* and the *Human Rights and Equality Commission Bill*. These Bills seek to protect the rights of individuals while promoting and embracing diversity in all its forms, ensuring that human rights are further respected, and facilitating access to justice for victims of discrimination and human rights breaches. Such legislation, as well as appropriate structures within the new Commission, will thus enable everyone to assert their rights and seek redress when necessary.

As the newly appointed Parliamentary Secretary for Equality I declare a strong commitment to continue working to further safeguard equality in the various sectors in order to strengthen the considerable progress registered to date and address new and outstanding challenges for the achievement of de facto equality. Specifically, we look forward to the transformation of the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality as well as to other respective reforms and initiatives for a more equal and just society.

# Commissioner's Message

2019 was a fruitful year for the NCPE that focused on work to promote equality in the areas covered by its remit by investigating complaints, creating awareness-raising campaigns, delivering training sessions to stakeholders, providing input and contributions to policies and legislations, networking with different entities at national and international levels and providing assistance to the general public.

The **investigation of complaints** is a crucial aspect of the NCPE's work to ensure that equality is safeguarded in our society. As Commissioner, I have the responsibility to investigate complaints alleging discrimination on the grounds of 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, race/ethnic origin and gender in the provision of goods and services and their supply; and freedom of movement for workers in the EU. **16 complaints** were investigated, one of which was an ex-officio investigation on the basis of gender.

In addition, the NCPE contributed to **policy debates and developments** at local, EU and international level. The NCPE reviews various documents giving pertinent input and suggestions to promote equal treatment and equal opportunities to women and men in different spheres and in different vulnerable situations, also taking into consideration the issue of intersectionality.

Maintaining regular **communication** is important to sensitise the general public and other stakeholders on matters related to equality. In 2019, the NCPE continued raising awareness on equality matters through various means of communication to convey targeted messages to a wide range of audiences. The number of contributions in the traditional media added up to 60. These contributions included: press statements, articles, press contributions and participation in television and radio programmes. Additionally, through infographics on social media, the NCPE highlighted international days, upcoming events and developments in relation to equality. The number of posts on the NCPE Facebook Page amounted to 292 during 2019. By the end of the year the NCPE's Facebook Page reached over 3,400 likes.



**Ms Renee Laiviera**  
*NCPE Commissioner*

The NCPE deems that equal economic independence for women and men is a prerequisite for equality. In fact, the NCPE started implementing a set of initiatives to address the gender gaps across the lifecycle as part of the EU co-funded project **Prepare the Ground for Economic Independence (PGEI)**, that was launched in September 2018 and will run until August 2020. In 2019, a seminar on the gender pay gap and the gender pension gap was organised to discuss these topics with different stakeholders. Training was provided to career guidance teachers, trainee career advisors and career advisors to empower young students, in particular girls, to make informed choices on their field of study and eventually their careers. Moreover, a research study was initiated to analyse best practices on equal pay tools in Europe and to develop an equal pay tool for the Maltese context. In this regard, we will continue working to finalise these initiatives and conclude this project in 2020.

Targeted awareness on gender equality at the workplace is reinforced through the **Equality Mark Certification** whereby the NCPE continues to certify organisations whose commitment to gender equality goes over and above the legal obligations. The Equality Mark is awarded to organi-

sations that make gender equality one of their values and whose management is based on the recognition and promotion of the potential of all women and men. In 2019, there were 11 certified organisations with the Equality Mark and 22 others went through the re-certification process.

**Training** is another vital tool in the NCPE's work to disseminate information on rights and responsibilities related to equality. The NCPE provides training to various groups, including employees in the public and private sectors, managers, employers, educators and students. Requests for training are discussed with the respective organisation or group in order to ensure that the training is customised for their particular needs. In 2019, the NCPE gave 55 training sessions to 890 participants.

The NCPE's way forward entails the widening of its remit and strengthening powers through the setting up of the **National Human Rights and Equality Commission**. This transformation will strengthen the national legal framework on equality and human rights, further promote diversity and safeguard prohibition of discrimination in the different spheres of our society whilst facilitating redress for victims.



In conclusion, I would like to thank the then Minister for European Affairs, Dr Helena Dalli, the Minister for Justice, Equality and Governance, Hon. Dr Edward Zammit Lewis and the Parliamentary Secretary for Equality and Reforms, Hon. Rosianne Cutajar for putting equality high on the national agenda. I would also like to thank the Commission members and all the staff at the NCPE for the diligence and dedication they put in their work. I augur that 2020 will be another rewarding year for the NCPE for the reinforcing of equality and human rights in the Maltese society.

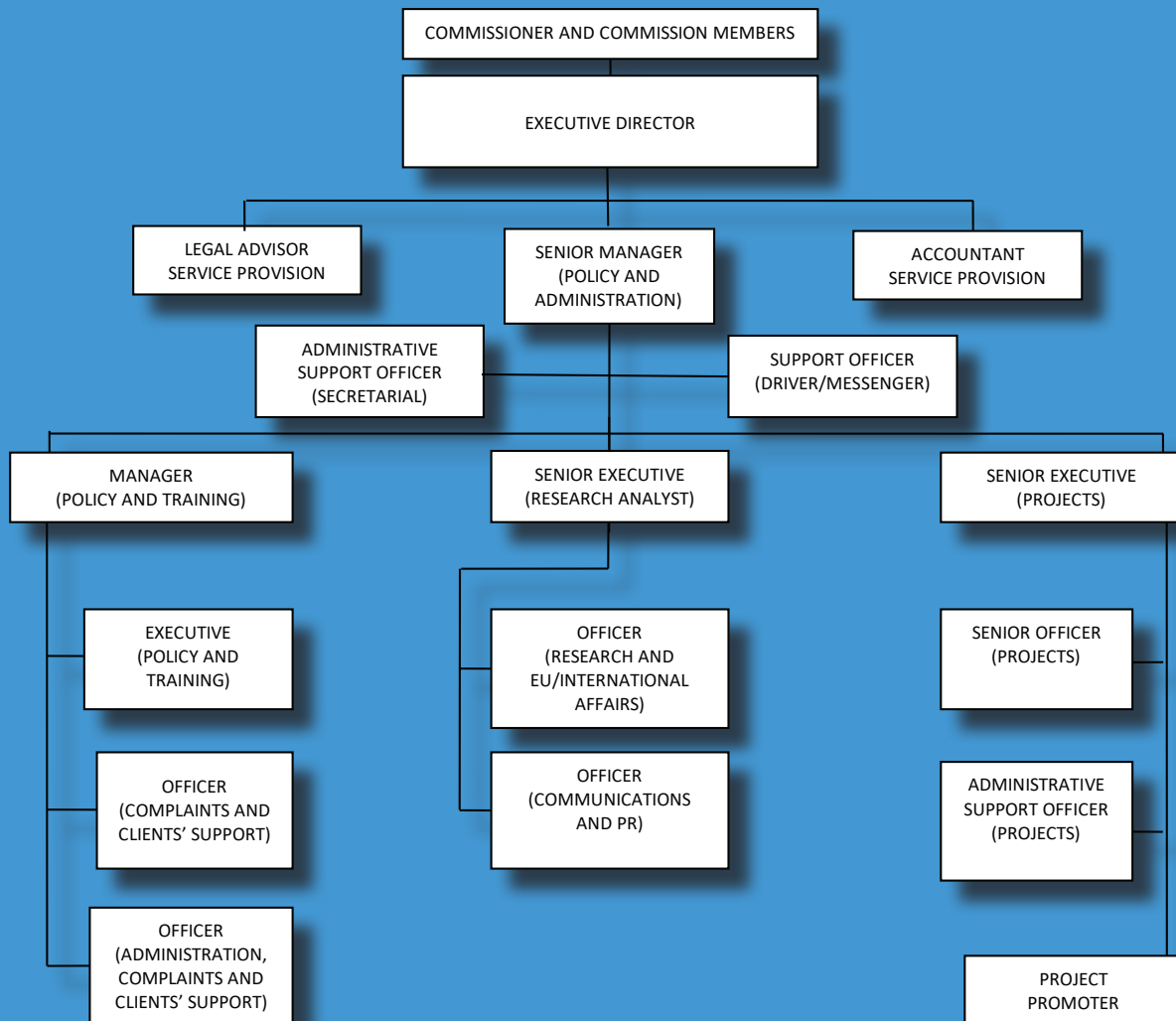


# The Commissioner and Commission Members in 2019

**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 2019





# 1. Equality in Malta

## 1.1 Overview of Developments in 2019

This section outlines the most significant developments connected to equality issues within the NCPE's remit in 2019.



*The NCPE 15th Anniversary*

It was a year during which important measures for the achievement of gender equality in practice were unveiled and Malta's leading position in LGBTI rights was reaffirmed.

It was also a year that brought to the fore the country's challenges with building a safe, equal and inclusive society for everyone.

### Sex and Family Responsibilities

The employment rate of women continued increasing in 2019. In Quarter 3, 63.4% of all working-age women were in employment, compared to 61.5% in 2018 and 57.6% in 2017. This increase followed

the implementation of a number of **measures that facilitate the participation of women in the labour market**, such as free childcare for working parents, breakfast clubs and Klabb 3-16, over the past years. The employment rate of working-age men was 83.2%, 81.5% and 80.1% respectively.<sup>2</sup> These figures show that, notwithstanding the steady increase of women's participation in the labour market, the **employment gap** between women and men remains significant

Figures also point to a number of persistent challenges to the achievement of equality between women and men in the sphere of employment and economic independence. The **gender pay gap** for Malta, measuring the difference between the average gross hourly earnings of male and female employees, stood at 12.2% in 2017 (latest available data).<sup>3</sup> The gap has widened along the years as the number of women in employment increased and inequalities within the labour market, such as horizontal and vertical gender segregation, and unequal pay, became

<sup>2</sup> National Statistics Office (NSO), December 2019, Labour Force Survey: Q3/2019 and correspondence with the National Statistics Office (NSO), 20th January 2020

<sup>3</sup> National Statistics Office (NSO), December 2019, Labour Force Survey: Q3/2019 and correspondence with the National Statistics Office (NSO), 20th January 2020

more pronounced. For example, 27.8% of employed women work in Services and Sales, compared to 13.2% of men working in this occupation. In contrast, 13.4% of employed men and 7.7% of employed women work as Managers.<sup>4</sup> The contrast becomes even starker if we look at the topmost positions. For instance, only 12.5% of the largest listed companies in Malta have a woman as a CEO.<sup>5</sup>

Gender inequalities in employment and in labour market participation are also reflected in the gap between the pensions of women and men. In 2018 (latest available data), Malta had a gender pension gap of 42.3%.<sup>6</sup> Although this constitutes a slight decrease of 1.4%, from the previous year, it is still the second highest gender pension gap in the EU.

project titled **Prepare the Grounds for Economic Independence** which aims to address gender gaps over the lifecycle through:

- Increasing awareness on both the gender pay gap and the gender pension gap;
- Increasing knowledge through various training and outreach initiatives;
- Providing information to students on subject and future career choices;
- Revamping and re-launching the Equality Mark Certification;
- Developing an Equal Pay Tool;
- Empowering union representatives with knowledge on equal pay for women and men.



*Interview with Commissioner Ms Renee Laiviera on the gender pay gap*

**NCPE flyer on the gender pay gap**

Aware of these challenges, the NCPE is currently implementing an EU co-funded

Government has also reiterated its commitment to address unjustified pay discrepancies between women and men. In April 2019, the then Minister for European Affairs and Equality, Dr Helena Dalli, stated that Government is working on a **mechanism that identifies pay discrimination** and other obstacles hindering the achievement of equality in the labour market.<sup>7</sup>

4 [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=s-dg\\_05\\_20&plugin=1](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=s-dg_05_20&plugin=1)  
 5 National Statistics Office (NSO), December 2019, Labour Force Survey: Q3/2019 and correspondence with the National Statistics Office (NSO), 20th January 2020  
 6 [https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/wmidm\\_bus\\_bus\\_wmid\\_comp\\_compex/datatable](https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/wmidm_bus_bus_wmid_comp_compex/datatable)

7 <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/DDN-20200207-1>

## ANNUAL REPORT 2019

On a European level, an important development has been registered with regards to addressing gendered employment challenges. In January 2019, the European Commission, the Council and the Parliament agreed to adopt a proposal for a **directive on work-life balance** for parents and carers,<sup>8</sup> first proposed in April 2017. This was adopted and published in June 2019. Member States now have three years to adopt the laws, regulations and administrative provisions necessary to comply with the Directive.

Measures under the directive include:

- The introduction of paid paternity leave: under the directive, fathers will be entitled to take at least ten working days of paternity leave around the time of birth of their child, compensated at least at the level of sick pay.
- Ensuring that two out of the four months of parental leave are non-transferable between parents and compensated at a level that is determined by the Member State.
- The introduction of carers' leave: workers providing personal care or support to a relative will be entitled to five days of leave per year.
- Extending the right to request flexible working arrangements to carers and working parents of children up to eight years old.

The directive is also accompanied by a set of policy measures that are designed to support Member States in achieving the aims of better work-life balance and more equally distributed caring responsibilities.

<sup>8</sup> Department of Information: PR190928

A new European Commission was appointed in 2019 following elections for the European Parliament held across the EU. For the first time, a woman, **Ursula von der Leyen**, was appointed as President of the Commission. Malta also nominated a woman, former Minister for European Affairs and Equality, **Dr Helena Dalli**, to the Commission.



*Minister Dr Helena Dalli and Commissioner Ms Renee Laiviera at the 15th NCPE Annual Conference*

Dr Dalli became the **first European Commissioner for Equality** after her nomination was approved by the European Parliament.

On a national level, the **underrepresentation of women in political decision-making** was once again highlighted, this time by the low participation of women in Local Council elections, with only 26% of candidates being women and almost the equivalent, 25.6%, elected.<sup>9</sup> Bucking the trend of female underrepresentation in politics, MEP elections in Malta resulted in a perfect gender balance, with three men and three women elected to the European Parliament. However, women still constituted less than a quarter of MEP election candidates.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Correspondence with the Local Government Division, 19th July 2019

<sup>10</sup> Correspondence with the Electoral Office, 4th June 2019



A Technical Committee was set up to address the current democratic deficit resulting from an acute and persistent gender imbalance in Parliament. The ***Gender Balance in Parliament Reform*** was unveiled in April and the public was invited to provide its feedback.<sup>11</sup> The document put forward several positive measures in a multi-tiered approach, acting on both the causes and consequences of gender inequality in the political sphere, whilst taking into account the political and social specificities of the Maltese context. Positive measures aimed at accelerating de facto equality between women and men are enshrined in Article 45 (11) of the Constitution of Malta which *'provides for the taking of special measures aimed at accelerating de facto equality between men and women, and in so far only as such measures, taking into account the social fabric of Malta, are shown to be reasonably justifiable in a democratic society.'*

The proposed reform envisages:

- the setting up of a Commission tasked with developing a more gender-sensitive Parliament
- incentives to political parties enabling them to recruit more women candidates
- periodic gender equality audits for political parties
- a gender balanced Electoral Commission, and
- legal and Constitutional reform aspiring to reach at least 40% representation of each sex.

<sup>11</sup> [https://meae.gov.mt/en/Public\\_Consultations/OPM/Pages/Consultations/GenderBalanceinParliament.aspx](https://meae.gov.mt/en/Public_Consultations/OPM/Pages/Consultations/GenderBalanceinParliament.aspx)

## ***Gender Balance in Parliament Reform***

CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

26<sup>th</sup> March 2019



TOWARDS  
EQUAL  
REPRESENTATION

PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIAT FOR REFORMS, CITIZENSHIP  
AND SIMPLIFICATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESSES

### ***Gender Balance in Parliament Reform consultative document***

The NCPE described the document as a *"...historical turning point towards the achievement of gender equality in practice, making Malta a more democratic society with the full and equal participation of women and men in the political sphere."*<sup>12</sup>

In March, Malta signed and ratified the ***Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)*** during the 63rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women.<sup>13</sup> This ratification follows previous ones intended to bring about substantive equality for men and women in Malta, such as for instance the Istanbul Convention, which is now fully transposed in Maltese legislation and policy. The Optional Protocol recognises the competence of the

<sup>12</sup> [https://ncpe.gov.mt/en/Documents/News\\_and\\_Events/Press\\_Releases/2019/Gender\\_balanced\\_parliament\\_PS.pdf](https://ncpe.gov.mt/en/Documents/News_and_Events/Press_Releases/2019/Gender_balanced_parliament_PS.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Department of Information: PR190553

CEDAW Committee to provide suggestions and recommendations with regard to rights emanating from the Convention. It also provides a redress mechanism for the investigation of complaints against State parties to the Convention, and expectation to implement such subsequent recommendations.

Also in March, Government published a consultation document to receive proposals from governmental entities, civil society organisations and the general public in order to establish the main measures required for the progress of women in society and their equality.<sup>14</sup> Titled *The Gender Equality Mainstreaming Framework*, the document is based on eight pillars:

- Right to equal treatment
- Equal access and opportunity to the workplace and the combatting of the gender pay gap
- Financial independence
- Equal access and opportunity to knowledge and education
- Co-responsibility and balance of work, private and family life
- Equal access and opportunity to positions of authority for women and men
- Equal access and opportunity to health and general well-being
- Intersectionality

The document aims to lay the basis for the development of the first national strategy and action plan in relation to gender

<sup>14</sup> [https://meae.gov.mt/en/Public\\_Consultations/MEAE/Pages/Consultations/Towards-a-Gender-Equality-Mainstreaming-Framework.aspx](https://meae.gov.mt/en/Public_Consultations/MEAE/Pages/Consultations/Towards-a-Gender-Equality-Mainstreaming-Framework.aspx)

mainstreaming, and the introduction of corresponding legislation. Malta also called for gender equality mainstreaming to be a priority and a policy objective in the *EU Multi-Annual Financial Framework 2021-2027* and stated that the EU budget should include measures that address gender inequalities in all spheres.<sup>15</sup>

An administrative measure announced in June will enable couples to opt to **fill in the tax form and receive tax refunds separately**. This measure will start addressing the discriminatory situation of couples whereby men have access to information and control over tax accounts that, however, are the responsibility of both parties, due to the fact that men are often considered as the 'responsible spouse'.<sup>16</sup>

A technological advancement that is increasingly having an impact on gender equality and discrimination on different grounds is that of Artificial Intelligence. The use of **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** in spheres such as employment and the provision of services can potentially reproduce and exacerbate already-existing stereotypes and discrimination in any given social context, since machines learn from data that reflects social inequality. As Malta aims to become a hub for AI use and investment, *A Strategy and Vision for Artificial Intelligence in Malta 2030* was launched in 2019.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, a consultation document titled *Malta: Towards Trustworthy AI* was published,<sup>18</sup> recognizing that AI can generate unfairly biased outcomes.

<sup>15</sup> Department of Information: PR191347

<sup>16</sup> Department of Information: PR191250

<sup>17</sup> [https://malta.ai/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Malta-The-Ultimate-AI-Launchpad\\_vFinal.pdf](https://malta.ai/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Malta-The-Ultimate-AI-Launchpad_vFinal.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> [https://malta.ai/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Malta-Towards-Ethical\\_and\\_Trustworthy\\_AI.pdf](https://malta.ai/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Malta-Towards-Ethical_and_Trustworthy_AI.pdf)

Among the points outlined, the document highlights the need to:

- Create mechanisms for staff to flag issues relating to bias/discrimination
- Establish a strategy or set of procedures to avoid creating or reinforcing unfair bias in the AI system, in terms of both input data and algorithmic design
- Implement a mechanism for individuals to flag issues about bias, discrimination or poor performance of the AI system
- Adopt an adequate working definition of “fairness” to use when designing AI system.

## LGBTI

Malta has ranked first for the fourth consecutive year in the **Rainbow Europe classification**.<sup>19</sup> This report, published by the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA), assesses the country’s situation according to six criteria: equality and non-discrimination, family, hate crime and hate speech, legal gender recognition and bodily integrity, civil society space and asylum. Malta achieved a score of 90%, followed by Belgium’s 73% and Luxemburg’s 70%.

Malta also topped the list in another ILGA report, one that assesses the global situation with regards to state-sponsored homophobia.<sup>20</sup>



In January, the Transgender Healthcare policy document was launched by the Ministry for Health and it was revealed that thirty persons were making use of the transgender clinic run by a multi-disciplinary team.<sup>21</sup> This clinic opened its doors in November 2018, aiming to cater for the unique medical needs which trans persons might have and which were previously not being addressed by the public health system. The clinic offers services such as counselling, hormone therapy and advice on surgery to people who identify as trans.

Notwithstanding the legal and social advances achieved by Malta in the sphere of LGBTI rights, LGBTI persons in Malta continue experiencing discrimination

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.ilga-europe.org/rainboweurope/2019>

<sup>20</sup> <https://ilga.org/state-sponsored-homophobia-report>

<sup>21</sup> <https://deputyprimeminister.gov.mt/en/Documents/National-Health-Strategies/Transgender-Healthcare.pdf>

## ANNUAL REPORT 2019

and inequality. A report published by the Malta LGBTIQ Rights Movement (MGRM) in 2019<sup>22</sup> on the **national school climate for LGBTIQ persons** found that:

- Nearly half (49.6%) reported feeling unsafe at school in the past year because of their sexual orientation.
- One in four (27.3%) LGBTIQ students felt unsafe because of how they expressed their gender.

To address the challenges experienced by LGBTI persons in the school setting, the report recommends:

- Providing professional development for school staff to improve rates of intervention and increase the number of supportive teachers and other staff available to students
- Implementing comprehensive national bullying/harassment policies that specifically enumerate sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics in individual schools, with clear and effective systems for preventing student victimisation and for reporting and addressing incidents that students experience
- Ensuring that education policies on trans, gender variant and intersex students in school are implemented and transposed at the individual school level such that trans and gender variant students enjoy equal access to school facilities and activities

- Ensuring that the whole school community is aware of the existence of such policies and what is expected of them
- Implement measures that address the additional safety risks that LGBTIQ students reportedly experience in frequenting specific locations within the school such as bathrooms and locker rooms
- Ensuring that school policies and practices, such as those related to dress codes and school dances, do not discriminate against LGBTIQ students
- Increasing student access to appropriate and accurate information regarding LGBTIQ people, history, and events through inclusive curricula and library and internet resources;
- Supporting student clubs that provide support for LGBTIQ students and address LGBTIQ issues in education
- Periodically conduct monitoring of school climates through research to assess the impact of any measures adopted over time.

The MGRM also launched an HIV Malta campaign and website - [www.hivmalta.com](http://www.hivmalta.com) – with the objectives of destigmatising HIV, starting a conversation on the subject by making information easily accessible, promoting the importance of mental wellbeing, and ensuring that there is an ongoing commitment to make newly developed HIV medication available without any further delay.

<sup>22</sup> <http://maltagayrights.org/the-2017-malta-national-school-climate-survey-report/>



In September, the annual **Pride march** was held in Valletta. Thousands joined this event celebrating achievements in the area of LGBTI rights whilst taking a stand against continued discrimination and inequality. This year's Pride was themed *From Riots to Rainbows*, since 2019 marked 50 years from the Stonewall riots, the historic uprising by the LGBTI community in New York City against institutional violence, harassment and discrimination, following the police raiding of a popular gay bar in the city.

### Race/ethnic origin and religion/belief

On the 18th May 2019, two soldiers were arrested for their involvement in the murder of Lassana Cisse Souleymane the month before, during a drive-by shooting in Hal Far that also left a Guinean and a Gambian national grievously injured. The attack was **allegedly a racially motivated hate-crime**.



Lassana Cisse Souleymane

### *I Belong Integration Programme*

In its reaction to the incident, the NCPE stated that such tragic cases, wherever they happen, are never isolated incidents but always connected to a context of inequality and normalised behaviour of hatred.<sup>23</sup> Maltese society and institutions were invited to embark on a soul-searching exercise to see where they have failed and take the necessary action to ensure that all social groups in Malta are considered and treated as equally valuable members of society. The NCPE also argued that the widespread sadness and alarm surrounding the incident engenders a transformative process towards a better and more inclusive country by everyone for everyone.

<sup>23</sup> [https://ncpe.gov.mt/en/Documents/News\\_and\\_Events/Press\\_Releases/2019/Press\\_Statement\\_murder\\_race.pdf](https://ncpe.gov.mt/en/Documents/News_and_Events/Press_Releases/2019/Press_Statement_murder_race.pdf)



## ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Following the arrests, Government reiterated its strong commitment to the **integration** of migrants and affirmed that words of hatred and division have no place in our society. An internal investigation was also launched to determine whether the accused were isolated individuals or part of wider issues.<sup>24</sup>

The first graduation ceremony of Stage 1 of the 'I Belong' programme took place in November.<sup>25</sup> **'I Belong'** is an integration programme implemented by the Human Rights and Integration Directorate (HRID) in collaboration with MCAST and the University of Malta as part of the Migrant Integration Strategy and Action Plan (Vision 2020). In his address, Minister Zammit Lewis held that integration is a two-way process through which everyone should be on board to ensure it is a success story, and stating that Government has been at the forefront of several important social reforms backed by legislation, policy, and services that upheld and made human rights and equality tangible. Dr Zammit Lewis reiterated his commitment to ensuring that equality remains one of the hallmarks of Government.

A nationwide awareness-raising campaign – **Human, Like You** – was announced in July by the Parliamentary Secretary for Reforms, Citizenship and Simplification of Administrative Processes Julia Farrugia Portelli, stepping-up efforts in the fight against human trafficking, an international crime which involves millions of men, women and children who are being controlled by other individuals, mainly for the purpose of sex, labour or servitude.

The campaign aims to bring stakeholders together in order to keep the public aware of the ugly face of human trafficking. A website – [www.trafficking.gov.mt](http://www.trafficking.gov.mt) – was launched to serve as a tool for the public to recognise signs of human trafficking and act upon it. Moreover, in September, a document about the Reform on Human Trafficking and Prostitution was published for consultation.<sup>26</sup>

### Age

The 2020 Budget published in 2019 raised the **social security pensions** for the fifth consecutive year. It gave an increase of €3.51 per week along with the COLA, and the maximum pension income that is tax exempt was raised to €13,798. Moreover, married couples receiving a single pension are to benefit from a maximum tax exempt income of €15,798. Bonuses for persons, who do not have enough social security contributions to qualify for a minimum pension, will continue being granted even when the person receiving it reaches the age of 75.

A new measure targeting service employees or public sector employees was also introduced. Those who, despite having enough social security contributions to retire at the age of 61, or reaching retirement age between 2016 and 2018, chose to carry on working without taking out their pension, for at least a year, will not lose the percentual increases that accumulated in these years as they will have their pension rate adjusted to reflect the accumulated increases.

<sup>24</sup> <https://timesofmalta.com/articles/view/two-soldiers-believed-to-be-behind-migrants-drive-by-murder.710302>

<sup>25</sup> Department of Information: PR192430

<sup>26</sup> Department of Information: PR192333

The Budget also announced that, after the successful implementation of the **Youth Guarantee**, which ensures that every young person is studying or employed, the services will be extended to young people who from some reasons abandoned their studies while reading for a post-secondary degree. The service, titled Reach Out, will help the youth to solve the challenges they encounter and make informed decisions on whether to continue studying or find a job.

### **The Human Rights and Equality Commission**

In July 2019, the *Human Rights and Equality Commission (HREC) Bill* and the *Equality Bill* were tabled in Parliament. In November, they passed to the second reading.

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. It is envisaged that these changes will take place in 2020.<sup>27</sup>

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27 Department of Information: PR192473

## 1.2 Statistical Overview

This section presents gender-disaggregated data in the spheres of employment, public administration, politics, the judiciary, education and the media.

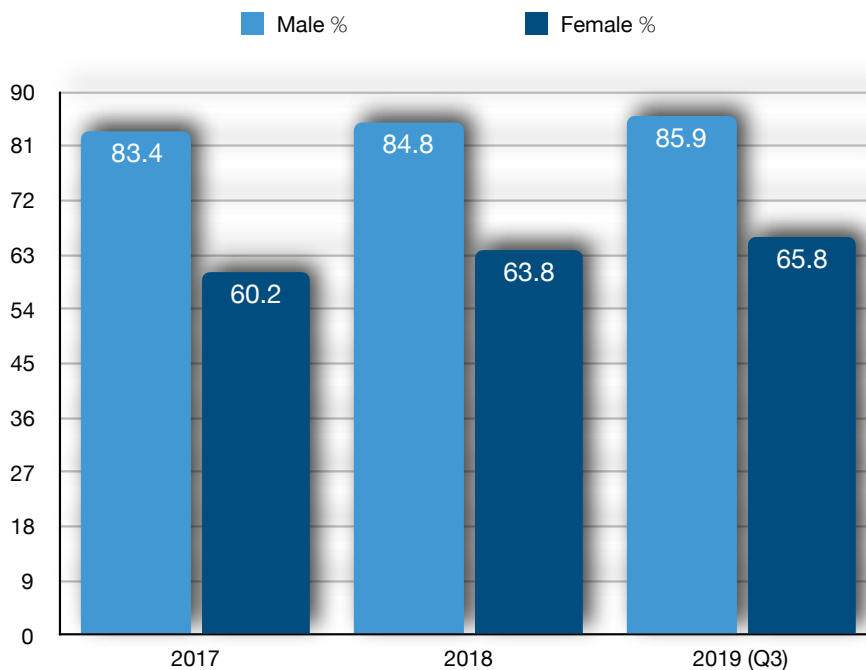
Figures continue to show that women are underrepresented in most areas and that heavy gender imbalance in decision-making positions persists. They also underscore significant improvements in the achievement of gender equality in some cases, as well as sluggish progress in others.

### Employment

**Table 1:** Activity rates of women and men, divided by age in 2017, 2018 and 2019 (Q3)<sup>28</sup>

Age	2017		2018		2019 (Q3)	
	M %	F %	M %	F %	M %	F %
15 - 24	54.5	51.2	55.7	56.3	64.2	56.8
25 - 54	96.2	72.0	96.4	74.6	97.2	76.7
55 - 64	66.1	30.6	69.4	34.1	64.0	36.6

**Figure 1:** Activity rates of working-age women and men (15-64 years old) in 2017, 2018 and 2019 (Q3)<sup>29</sup>

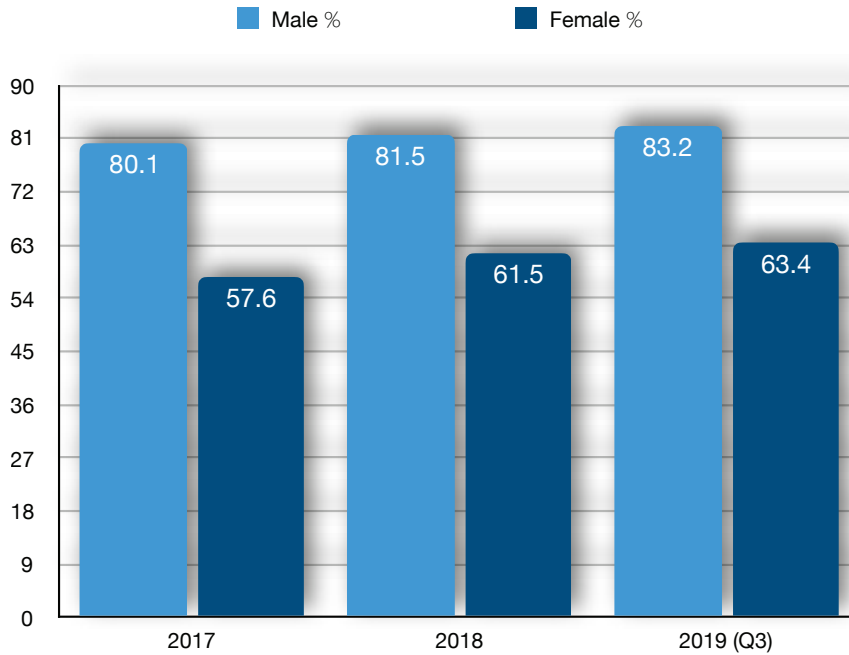
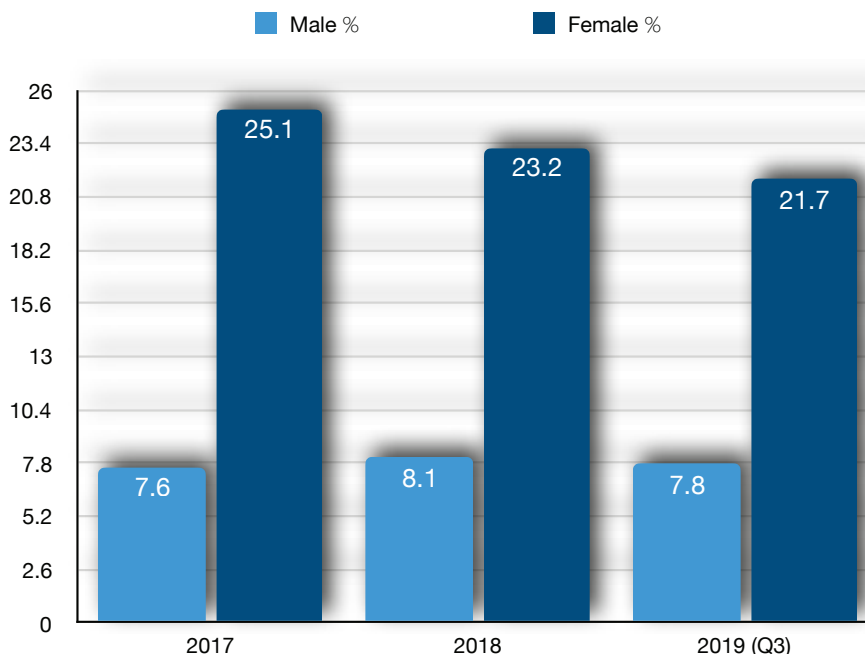


<sup>28</sup> National Statistics Office (NSO), December 2019, Labour Force Survey: Q3/2019 and National Statistics Office (NSO), October 2019, Key Indicators on the Labour Market: 2013-2018

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

**Table 2:** Employment rates of women and men, divided by age in 2017, 2018 and 2019 (Q3)<sup>30</sup>

Age	2017		2018		2019 (Q3)	
	M %	F %	M %	F %	M %	F %
15 - 24	48.5	46.1	49.5	52.5	57.4	52.6
25 - 54	93.2	69.5	93.6	72.5	94.9	74.4
55 - 64	64.5	29.9	67.3	32.8	63.2	35.2

**Figure 2:** Employment rates of working-age women and men in 2017, 2018 and 2019 (Q3)<sup>31</sup>**Figure 3:** Percentage of women and men having part-time as their main occupation in 2017, 2018 and 2019 (Q3)<sup>32</sup>

30 Ibid.

31 Ibid.

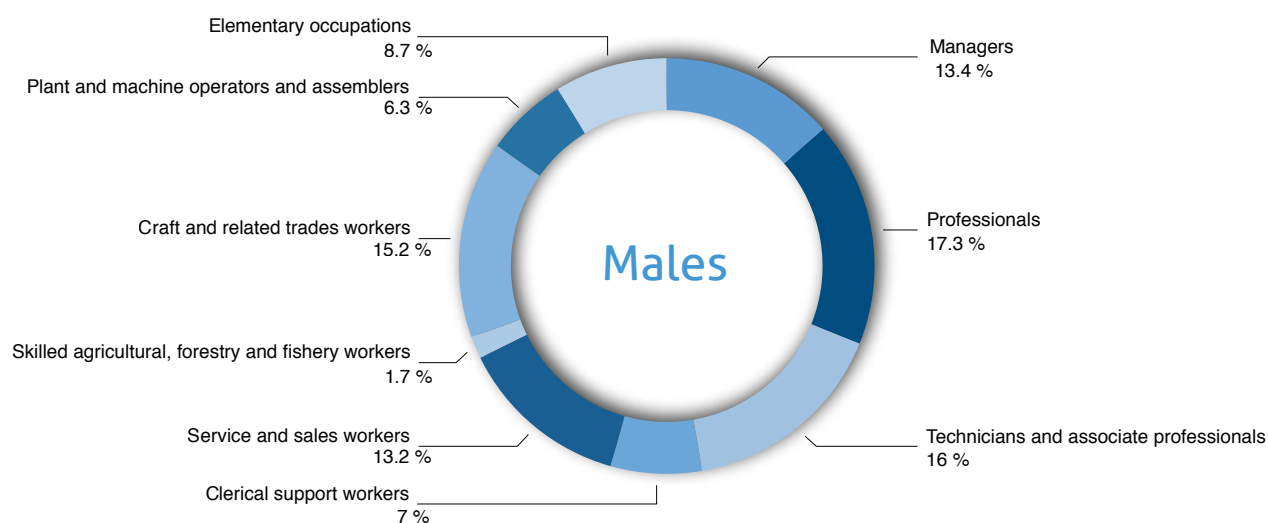
32 National Statistics Office (NSO), December 2019, Labour Force Survey: Q3/2019 and correspondence with the National Statistics Office (NSO), 20th January 2020

**Table 3:** Total employed by occupation in 2017, 2018 and 2019 (Q3)<sup>33</sup>

Occupation	2017		2018		2019 (Q3)	
	M %	F %	M %	F %	M %	F %
Armed forces	1.5	:	1.2	:	:	:
Managers	12.2	7.4	12.5	7.4	13.4	7.7
Professionals	15.0	21.2	15.5	22.1	17.3	22.5
Technicians and associate professionals	15.6	13.2	16.0	13.8	16.0	12.5
Clerical support workers	6.6	16.5	7.8	16.2	7.0	16.8
Service and sales workers	15.0	28.8	14.6	28.4	13.2	27.8
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	1.7	:	1.8	:	1.7u	:
Craft and related trades workers	15.7	1.6	15.4	1.3	15.2	:
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	7.1	3.9	6.2	3.6	6.3	3.8u
Elementary occupations	9.6	7.3	8.9	6.9	8.7	7.4

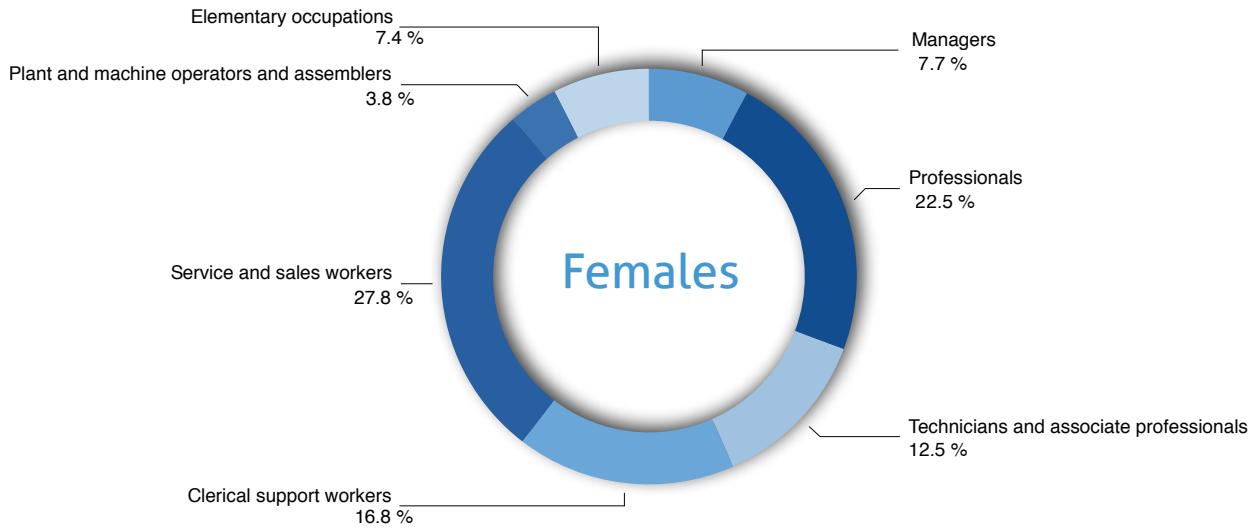
: Unreliable - less than 20 sample observations  
 u Underrepresented - between 20 and 49 sample observations

**Figures 4 & 5:** Total employed by occupation in 2019 (Q3)<sup>34</sup>



<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> National Statistics Office (NSO), December 2019, Labour Force Survey: Q3/2019

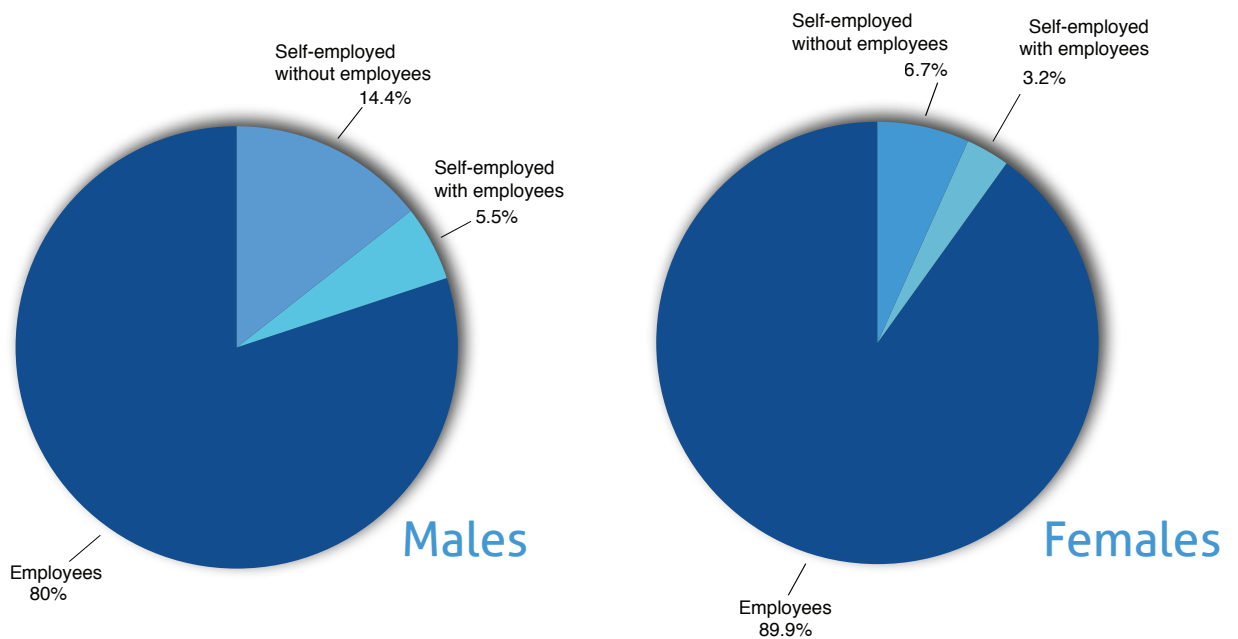


**Table 4:** Total employed by professional status in 2017, 2018 and 2019 (Q3)<sup>35</sup>

Professional status	2017		2018		2019 (Q3)	
	M %	F %	M %	F %	M %	F %
Self-employed without employees	6.3	1.8	5.7	2.3	14.4	6.7
Self-employed with employees	12.9	6.5	12.7	5.9	5.5	3.2 <sup>u</sup>
Employees	80.8	91.7	81.6	91.8	80.0	89.9

<sup>u</sup> Underrepresented - between 20 and 49 sample observations

**Figures 6 & 7:** Total employed by professional status of women and men in 2019 (Q3)<sup>36</sup>



<sup>35</sup> National Statistics Office (NSO), December 2019, Labour Force Survey: Q3/2019 and correspondence with the National Statistics Office (NSO), 20th January 2020

<sup>36</sup> National Statistics Office (NSO), December 2019, Labour Force Survey: Q3/2019

**Table 5:** Unadjusted gender pay gap in 2015, 2016 and 2017<sup>37</sup>

	2015	2016	2017
Malta	10.4	11.0	12.2
EU (28 countries)	16.5p	16.3p	16.0p
EU (27 countries)	16.6p	16.3p	16.1p

*p = provisional*

**Table 6:** Gender balance in largest listed companies: presidents, board members and employee representatives in 2017, 2018 and 2019<sup>38</sup>

	2017-B2		2018-B2		2019-B2	
	M%	F%	M%	F%	M%	F%
Malta	91.6	8.4	90.5	9.5	90	10
EU (28 countries)	74.7	25.3	73.3	26.7	71.2	28.8

## Comments

Both the activity and employment rates of working-age women continue to increase in all age brackets. However, in quarter three of 2019, there remains a gap of almost 20 percentage points between employed women and employed men.

The percentage of women having a part-time job as their main occupation is steadily decreasing, but there has been little progress with regards to gender segregation in the labour market. Certain occupational categories, such as Services

and Sales and Managers continue to be dominated by either women or men, and the percentage of women in decision-making positions is also very low. Also, few women compared to men are in self-employment.

Horizontal and vertical segregation in the labour market is one of the main contributors to the widening gender pay gap, which continued to increase in 2017 (latest available data).

<sup>37</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=sdg\\_05\\_20&plugin=1](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=sdg_05_20&plugin=1)

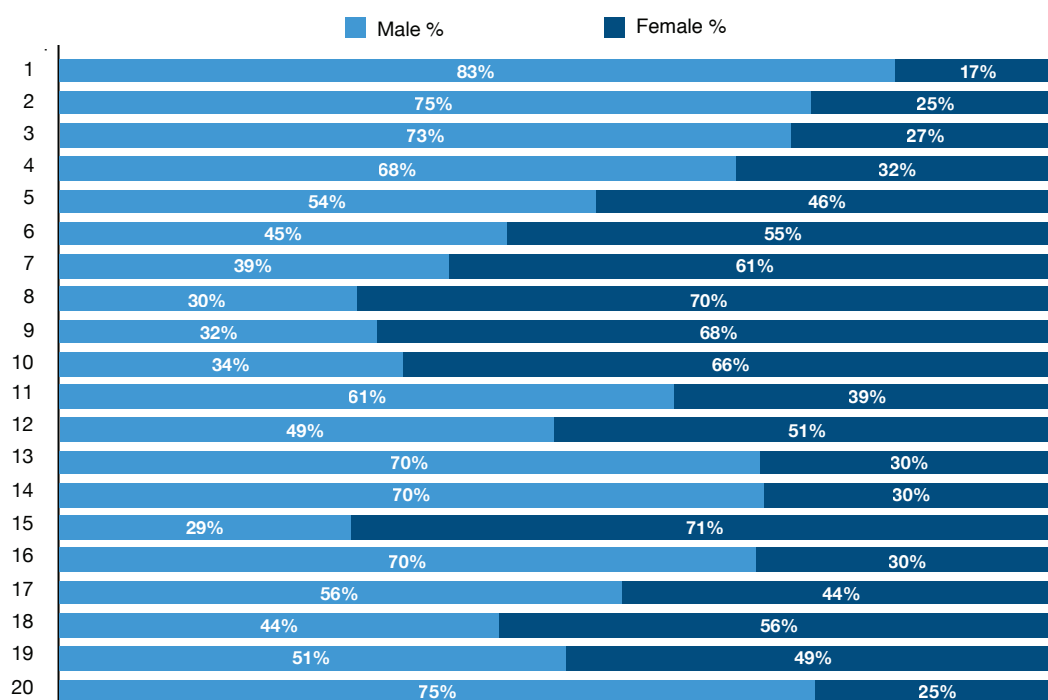
<sup>38</sup> [https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/wmidm\\_bus\\_bus\\_\\_wmid\\_comp\\_complex](https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/wmidm_bus_bus__wmid_comp_complex)

## Public Administration

**Table 7: Women and men in salary scales (2018 and 2019)<sup>39</sup>**

Salary scale	2018					2019					Change in percentage	
	Males		Females		Total	Males		Females		Total	Males	Females
1	5	83.3%	1	16.7%	6	5	83.3%	1	16.7%	6	=	=
2	12	70.6%	5	29.4%	17	15	75.0%	5	25.0%	20	+	-
3	240	79.2%	63	20.8%	303	198	73.1%	73	26.9%	271	-	+
4	395	69.3%	175	30.7%	570	434	67.6%	208	32.4%	642	-	+
5	559	59.2%	385	40.8%	944	703	53.6%	608	46.4%	1,311	-	+
6	454	53.6%	393	46.4%	847	722	44.7%	894	55.3%	1,616	-	+
7	1,573	42.1%	2,165	57.9%	3,738	1,420	38.9%	2,234	61.1%	3,654	-	+
8	945	33.9%	1,841	66.1%	2,786	777	29.7%	1,838	70.3%	2,615	-	+
9	1,082	32.6%	2,242	67.4%	3,324	1,076	31.8%	2,306	68.2%	3,382	-	+
10	1,195	35.2%	2,200	64.8%	3,395	1,266	34.4%	2,413	65.6%	3,679	-	+
11	906	53.4%	790	46.6%	1,696	994	61.4%	624	38.6%	1,618	+	-
12	1,762	55.2%	1,428	44.8%	3,190	1,467	49.3%	1,509	50.7%	2,976	-	+
13	1,779	67.5%	857	32.5%	2,636	1,683	69.9%	724	30.1%	2,407	+	-
14	1,864	65.0%	1,005	35.0%	2,869	2,183	70.4%	920	29.6%	3,103	+	-
15	583	29.0%	1,428	71.0%	2,011	559	29.1%	1,360	70.9%	1,919	+	-
16	1,335	72.6%	504	27.4%	1,839	1,103	69.5%	484	30.5%	1,587	-	+
17	631	68.1%	295	31.9%	926	570	56.1%	446	43.9%	1,016	-	+
18	382	44.0%	486	56.0%	868	248	44.0%	316	56.0%	564	=	=
19	16	19.5%	66	80.5%	82	50	50.5%	49	49.5%	99	+	-
20	217	80.4%	53	19.6%	270	123	75.5%	40	24.5%	163	-	+
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,935</b>	<b>49.3%</b>	<b>16,382</b>	<b>50.7%</b>	<b>32,317</b>	<b>15,596</b>	<b>47.8%</b>	<b>17,052</b>	<b>52.2%</b>	<b>32,648</b>	-	+

**Figure 8: Women and men in salary scales (2019) by percentage<sup>40</sup>**



<sup>39</sup> Correspondence with the People and Standards Division (P&SD), 13th February 2020

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.



## ANNUAL REPORT 2019

**Table 8:** Utilisation of family-friendly measures by gender in 2017 and 2018<sup>41</sup>

Type	2017					2018				
	Males		Females		Total	Males		Females		Total
	No	%	No	%		No	%	No	%	
Maternity Leave (first 14 weeks)	0	0.0	673	100.0	673	0	0.0	573	100.0	573
Maternity Leave (additional 4 weeks)	0	0.0	485	100.0	485	0	0.0	411	100.0	411
Adoption Leave	3	25.0	9	75.0	12	4	23.5	13	76.5	17
Responsibility Leave	10	24.4	31	75.6	41	11	26.8	30	73.2	41
Parental Leave Applicable to Parents, Legal Guardians and Foster Carers	3	0.6	477	99.4	480	11	2.4	454	97.6	465
Career Break	5	2.5	198	97.5	203	7	3.0	228	97.0	235
Leave to accompany spouse / partner in Civil Union on Govt-sponsored courses or assignments	0	0.0	6	100.0	6	0	0.0	7	100.0	7
Reduced hours – 20 hours/week	25	7.8	296	92.2	321	17	6.5	245	93.5	262
Reduced hours – 25 hours/week	6	4.2	137	95.8	143	5	4.2	115	95.8	120
Reduced hours – 30 hours/week	27	7.0	359	93.0	386	43	13.0	287	87.0	330
Reduced hours – 35 hours/week	9	4.6	185	95.4	194	11	6.3	165	93.8	176
Reduced hours – other amounts	16	7.0	213	93.0	229	6	3.3	174	96.7	180
Teleworking	175	14.2	1,059	85.8	1,234	200	15.2	1,120	84.8	1,320
Flexi-Time	434	43.1	573	56.9	1,007	513	43.2	674	56.8	1,187
<b>Total</b>	<b>713</b>	<b>13.2</b>	<b>4,701</b>	<b>86.8</b>	<b>5,414</b>	<b>828</b>	<b>15.6</b>	<b>4,496</b>	<b>84.4</b>	<b>5,324</b>

**Table 9:** Utilisation of family-friendly measures by different Scale Categories in 2018<sup>42</sup>

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	25	0	326	0	204	0	5	0	13
Maternity Leave (additional 4 weeks)	0	18	0	238	0	139	0	4	0	12
Adoption Leave	0	0	1	9	3	4	0	0	0	0
Responsibility Leave	0	1	4	14	6	13	1	2	0	0
Parental Leave Applicable to Parents, Legal Guardians and Foster Carers	0	8	2	327	9	105	0	6	0	8
Career Break	0	3	3	135	4	84	0	4	0	2
Leave to accompany spouse / partner in Civil Union on Govt-sponsored courses or assignments	0	2	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	1
Reduced hours – 20 hours/week	0	8	9	154	6	59	2	24	0	0
Reduced hours – 25 hours/week	1	7	2	49	2	39	0	20	0	0
Reduced hours – 30 hours/week	2	10	9	155	6	99	26	21	0	2
Reduced hours – 35 hours/week	2	8	3	61	5	68	1	27	0	1
Reduced hours – other amounts	0	15	3	70	2	56	1	29	0	4
Teleworking	43	107	92	463	58	462	5	67	2	21
Flexi-Time	78	34	212	274	145	256	53	84	25	26
<b>Totals</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>2,278</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>1,589</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>Overall percentage</b>	<b>33.9%</b>	<b>66.1%</b>	<b>13.0%</b>	<b>87.0%</b>	<b>13.4%</b>	<b>86.6%</b>	<b>23.3%</b>	<b>76.7%</b>	<b>23.1%</b>	<b>76.9%</b>

41 Correspondence with the People and Standards Division (P&amp;SD), 12th February 2020

42 Ibid.

## Comments

Management in the public service is becoming more gender balanced as the percentage of women in Scales three to ten has increased. However, Scales one to five are still dominated by men.

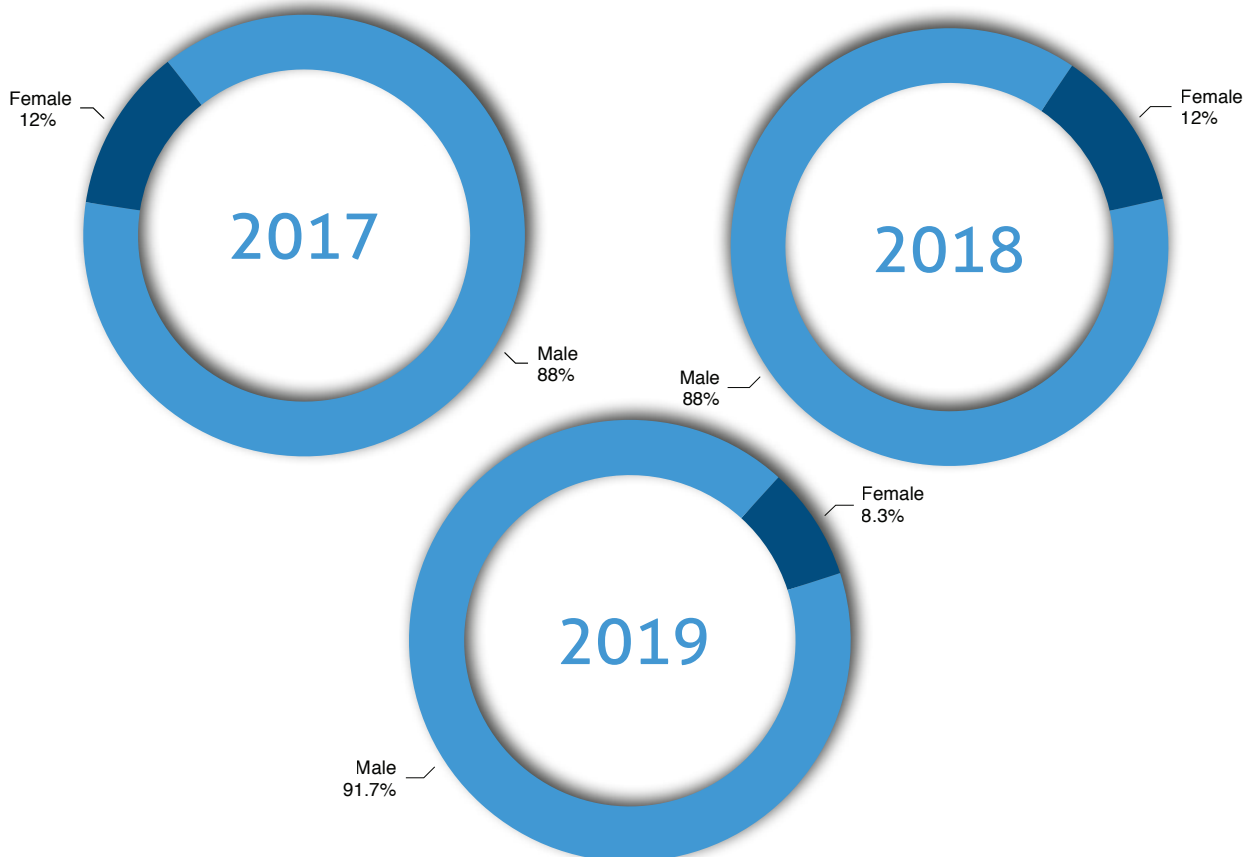
While women and men used flexitime in almost equal measure, women were by far those who made most use of parental leave, teleworking, responsibility leave, adoption leave and reduced hours.

## Political Sphere – National Government

**Table 10:** Cabinet in 2017, 2018 and 2019<sup>43</sup>

	2017					2018					2019			
	Males		Females		Total	Males		Females		Total	Males		Females	
Ministers	13	86.7%	2	13.3%	15	13	86.7%	2	13.3%	15	13	92.9%	1	7.1%
Parliamentary Secretaries	9	90.0%	1	10.0%	10	9	90.0%	1	10.0%	10	9	90.0%	1	10.0%
Cabinet - Total	22	88.0%	3	12.0%	25	22	88.0%	3	12.0%	25	22	91.7%	2	8.3%

**Figure 9, 10 & 11:** Cabinet in 2017, 2018 and 2019 by percentage<sup>44</sup>



<sup>43</sup> [https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government of Malta/Ministries and Entities/Pages/def](https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Ministries%20and%20Entities/Pages/def)

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

**Table 11:** MEP elections 2019 – Women and men: candidates and elected<sup>45</sup>

	Candidates		Elected	
Men	31	75.6%	3	50.0%
Women + X	10	24.4%	3	50.0%
Total	41	100.0%	6	100.0%

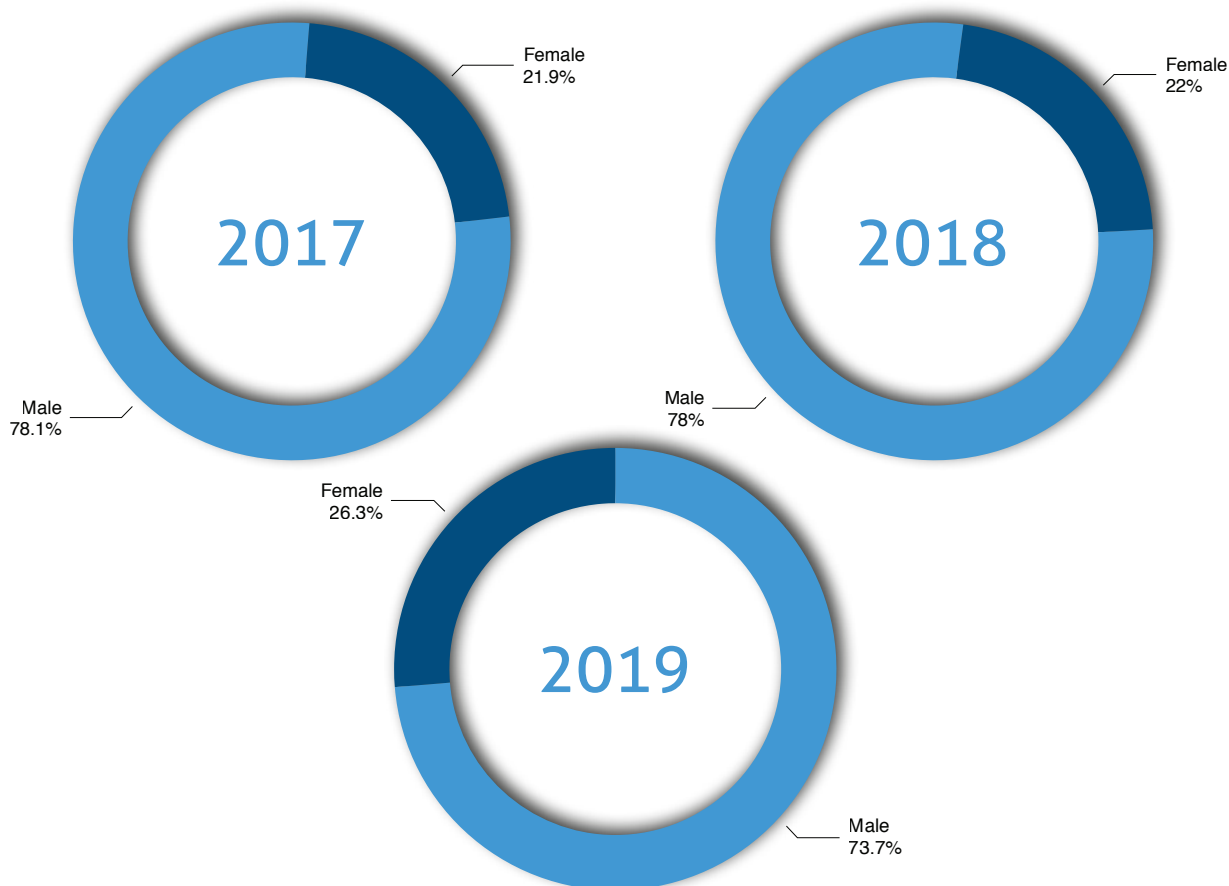
**Table 12:** Local council elections 2019 – Women and men: candidates and elected<sup>46</sup>

	Candidates		Elected	
Men	542	74.0%	345	74.4%
Women	190	26.0%	119	25.6%
Total	732	100.0%	464	100.0%

**Table 13:** Local Councils in 2017, 2018 and 2019<sup>47</sup>

	2017			2018			2019								
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total						
Mayors	55	80.9%	13	19.1%	68	55	80.9%	13	19.1%	68	57	83.8%	11	16.2%	68
Deputy Mayors	55	82.1%	12	17.9%	67	55	80.9%	13	19.1%	68	47	69.1%	21	30.9%	68
Councillors	246	76.6%	75	23.4%	321	244	76.7%	74	23.3%	318	238	72.6%	90	27.4%	328
Total	356	78.1%	100	21.9%	456	354	78.0%	100	22.0%	454	342	73.7%	122	26.3%	464

**Figures 12, 13 & 14:** Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors in 2017, 2018 and 2019<sup>48</sup>



45 Correspondence with the Electoral Office, 4th June 2019  
 46 Correspondence with the Local Government Division, 19th July 2019  
 47 Correspondence with the Local Government Division, 16th January 2020  
 48 Ibid.

## Comments

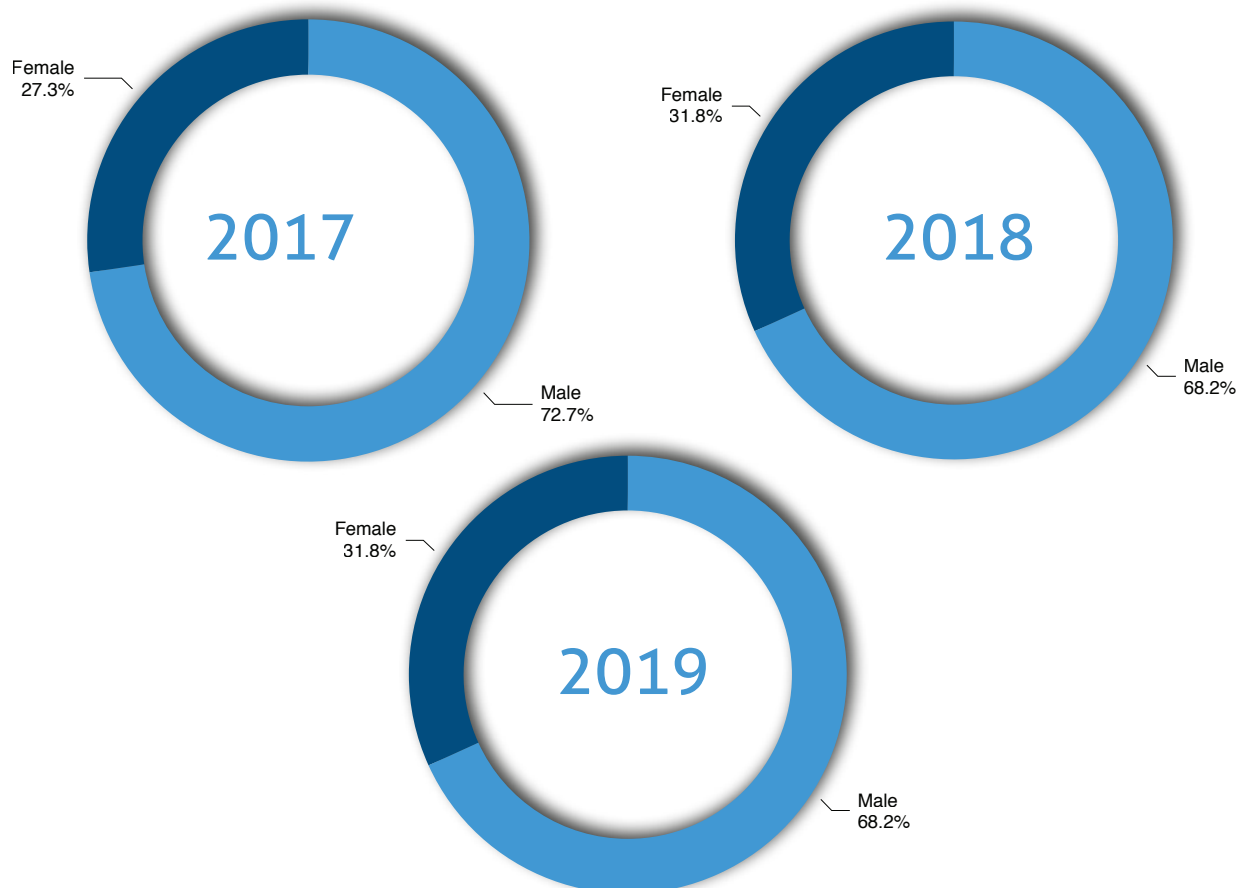
Malta has registered little or no improvement in the participation of women in politics. This remains particularly low, both in terms of women contesting the elections as well as women represented in the decision-making institutions. Gender balance has only been achieved in the election of MEPs. However, even in this case, fewer women than men contested the MEP elections.

In 2019, there has also been a reduction in the percentage of women in Cabinet since one of the two female Ministers, Dr Helena Dalli, was appointed to the European Commission.

## Judiciary

Table 14 & Figures 15, 16 & 17: Bench of Judges in 2017, 2018 and 2019<sup>49</sup>

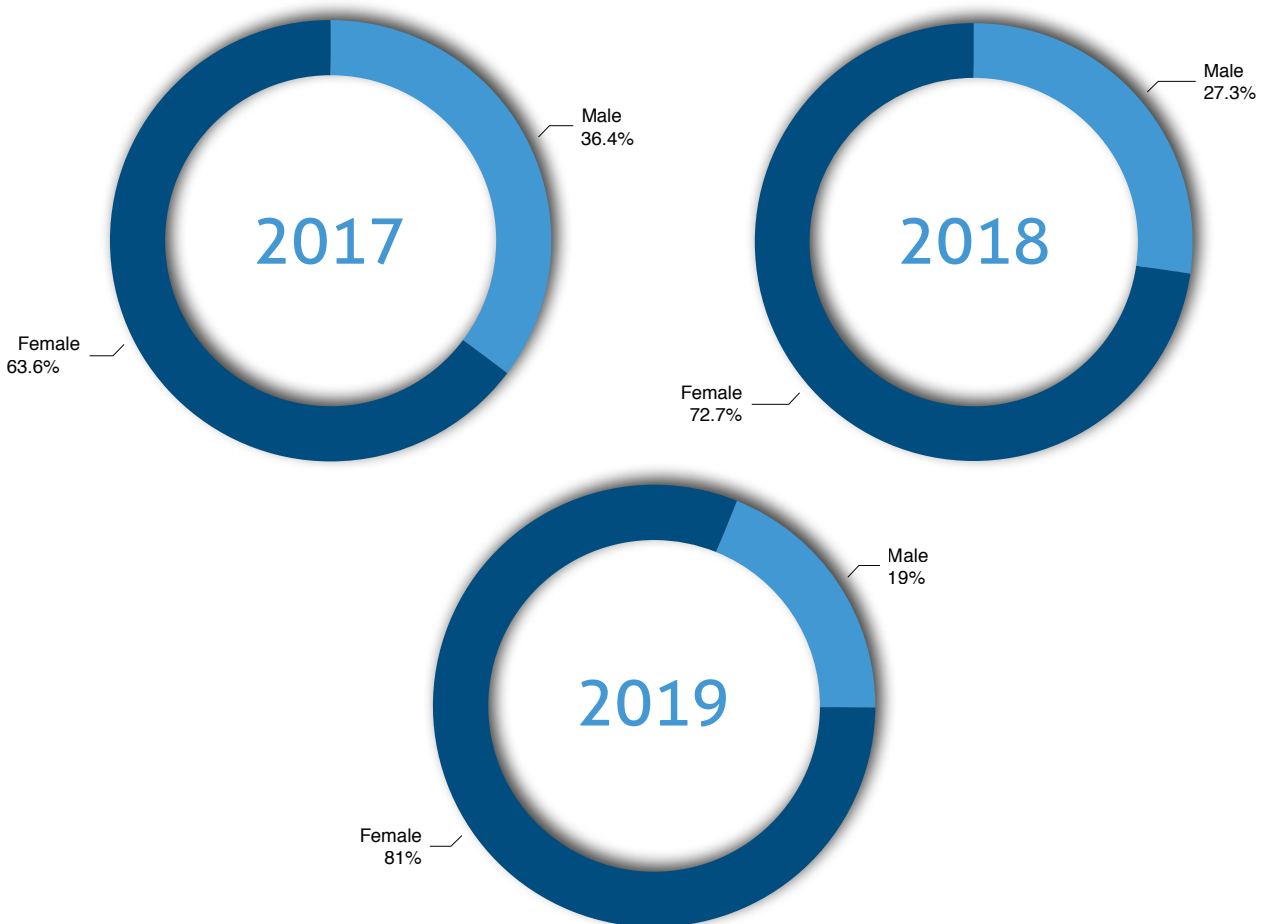
	2017		2018		2019	
Males	16	72.7%	15	68.2%	15	68.2%
Females	6	27.3%	7	31.8%	7	31.8%
Total	22	100.0%	22	100.0%	22	100.0%



<sup>49</sup> Correspondence with the Courts Service Agency, 15th January 2020

Table 15 & Figures 18, 19 & 20: Bench of Magistrates in 2017, 2018 and 2019<sup>50</sup>

	2017		2018		2019	
Males	8	36.4%	6	27.3%	4	19.0%
Females	14	63.6%	16	72.7%	17	81.0%
Total	22	100.0%	22	100.0%	21	100.0%



**Comments**

The Bench of Magistrates is now predominantly female. However, men outnumber women on the Bench of Judges.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

## Education

Figures 21 & 22: University Graduates 2017/2018 & 2018/2019 by percentage<sup>51</sup>

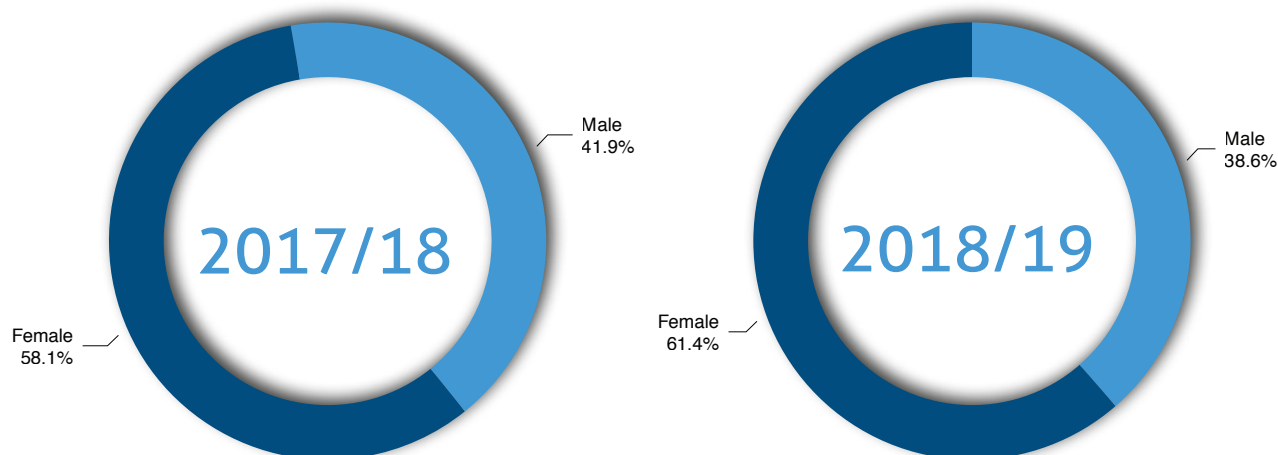


Table 16: University Graduates in 2017/2018 and 2018/2019 by faculty/institute<sup>52</sup>

Faculty/Institute	2017/18					2018/19					Change in Percentage	
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	Males	Females	
Faculty of Arts	129	33.9%	251	66.1%	380	139	33.4%	277	66.6%	416	-	+
Faculty for the Built Environment	119	56.1%	93	43.9%	212	113	54.1%	96	45.9%	209	-	+
Faculty of Economics, Management and Accountancy	296	49.4%	303	50.6%	599	280	46.1%	327	53.9%	607	-	+
Faculty of Education	49	23.0%	164	77.0%	213	65	17.2%	312	82.8%	377	-	+
Faculty of Engineering	91	77.1%	27	22.9%	118	96	85.0%	17	15.0%	113	+	-
Faculty of Health Sciences	80	24.4%	248	75.6%	328	98	24.1%	309	75.9%	407	-	+
Faculty of Information and Communication Technology	88	76.5%	27	23.5%	115	92	86.0%	15	14.0%	107	+	-
Faculty of Laws	115	38.3%	185	61.7%	300	102	34.6%	193	65.4%	295	-	+
Faculty of Medicine and Surgery	116	44.1%	147	55.9%	263	112	39.7%	170	60.3%	282	-	+
Faculty of Science	52	49.1%	54	50.9%	106	67	56.3%	52	43.7%	119	+	-
Faculty for Social Wellbeing	92	28.8%	228	71.3%	320	63	20.8%	240	79.2%	303	-	+
Institute of Digital Games	6	75.0%	2	25.0%	8	8	80.0%	2	20.0%	10	+	-
Centre for Entrepreneurship and Business Incubation	8	47.1%	9	52.9%	17	7	36.8%	12	63.2%	19	-	+
Centre for Labour Studies	0	0.0%	8	100.0%	8	11	19.0%	47	81.0%	58	+	-
Others	234	43.6%	303	56.4%	537	191	45.5%	229	54.5%	420	+	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,475</b>	<b>41.9%</b>	<b>2,049</b>	<b>58.1%</b>	<b>3,524</b>	<b>1,444</b>	<b>38.6%</b>	<b>2,298</b>	<b>61.4%</b>	<b>3,742</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>+</b>

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.um.edu.mt/about/facts>

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

## ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Table 17: MCAST Graduates in 2018 and 2019<sup>53</sup>

Level 7	2018					2019					Change in Percentage	
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	Males	Females	
Institute for the Creative Arts	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Institute of Applied Sciences	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Institute of Business Management and Commerce	7	58.3%	5	41.7%	12	4	57.1%	3	42.9%	7	-	+
Institute of Community Services	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Institute of Engineering And Transport	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Institute of Information and Communication Technology	2	50.0%	2	50.0%	4	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Centre for Professional Development	8	44.4%	10	55.6%	18	25	49.0%	26	51.0%	51	+	-
Applied Research and Innovation Centre	/	/	/	/	/	19	48.7%	20	51.3%	39	/	/
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>52.8%</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>47.2%</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>49.5%</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>50.5%</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>+</b>
Level 6	M		F		Total	M		F		Total	Males	Females
Institute for the Creative Arts	52	49.5%	53	50.5%	105	44	53.7%	38	46.3%	82	+	-
Institute of Applied Sciences	18	47.4%	20	52.6%	38	20	46.5%	23	53.5%	43	-	+
Institute of Business Management and Commerce	38	40.0%	57	60.0%	95	38	36.9%	65	63.1%	103	-	+
Institute of Community Services	3	12.0%	22	88.0%	25	13	36.1%	23	63.9%	36	+	-
Institute of Engineering And Transport	43	84.3%	8	15.7%	51	52	86.7%	8	13.3%	60	+	-
Institute of Information and Communication Technology	63	91.3%	6	8.7%	69	58	84.1%	11	15.9%	69	-	+
Vocational Teacher Training Unit	16	44.4%	20	55.6%	36	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
<b>Total</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>55.6%</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>44.4%</b>	<b>419</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>57.3%</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>42.7%</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>-</b>
Level 5	M		F		Total	M		F		Total	Males	Females
Gozo Campus	1	33.3%	2	66.7%	3	1	20.0%	4	80.0%	5	-	+
Institute for the Creative Arts	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	2	3	42.9%	4	57.1%	7	-	+
Institute of Applied Sciences	1	33.3%	2	66.7%	3	1	25.0%	3	75.0%	4	-	+
Institute of Business Management and Commerce	2	50.0%	2	50.0%	4	5	41.7%	7	58.3%	12	-	+
Institute of Community Services	10	3.4%	287	96.6%	297	10	5.3%	177	94.7%	187	+	-
Institute of Engineering And Transport	15	83.3%	3	16.7%	18	6	100.0%	0	0.0%	6	+	-
Institute of Information and Communication Technology	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	2	6	85.7%	1	14.3%	7	-	+
MG2I	/	/	/	/	/	15	100.0%	0	0.0%	15	/	/
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>9.7%</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>90.3%</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>19.3%</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>80.7%</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>36.2%</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>63.8%</b>	<b>784</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>43.7%</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>56.3%</b>	<b>733</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>-</b>

53 Correspondence with MCAST, 17th January 2020

Figures 23 & 24: MCAST Graduates in 2018 and 2019, by percentage<sup>54</sup>

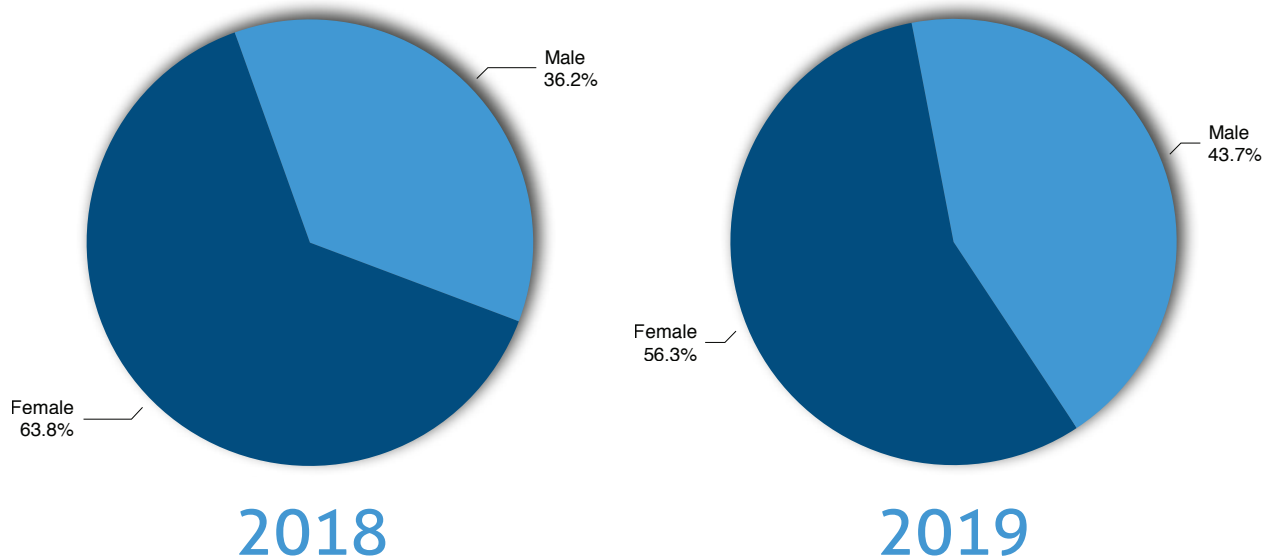


Table 18: University of Malta Academic Staff (Women and Men) in 2018 and 2019<sup>55</sup>

Post	2018					2019					Change in Percentage	
	Males		Females		Totals	Males		Females		Totals	Males	Females
Professor	98	86.0%	16	14.0%	114	106	81.5%	24	18.5%	130	-	+
Associate Professor	112	77.8%	32	22.2%	144	111	79.3%	29	20.7%	140	+	-
Senior Lecturer	143	70.4%	60	29.6%	203	141	66.2%	72	33.8%	213	-	+
Lecturer	107	51.7%	100	48.3%	207	106	53.5%	92	46.5%	198	+	-
Assistant Lecturer	53	46.9%	60	53.1%	113	41	46.1%	48	53.9%	89	-	+
Associate Academic	10	66.7%	5	33.3%	15	10	62.5%	6	37.5%	16	-	+
<b>Visiting Staff (part-time)</b>												
Visiting Professor	3	100.0%	0	0.0%	3	4	100.0%	0	0.0%	4	=	=
Visiting Associate Professor	5	71.4%	2	28.6%	7	5	71.4%	2	28.6%	7	=	=
Visiting Senior Lecturer	224	72.0%	87	28.0%	311	224	68.7%	102	31.3%	326	-	+
Visiting Lecturer	129	65.8%	67	34.2%	196	129	65.5%	68	34.5%	197	-	+
Visiting Assistant Lecturer	151	51.4%	143	48.6%	294	135	54.2%	114	45.8%	249	+	-
<b>Junior College</b>												
Senior Lecturer I	30	50.0%	30	50.0%	60	32	47.8%	35	52.2%	67	-	+
Senior Lecturer II	35	55.6%	28	44.4%	63	32	51.6%	30	48.4%	62	-	+
Lecturer	9	36.0%	16	64.0%	25	7	41.2%	10	58.8%	17	+	-
Assistant Lecturer	7	43.8%	9	56.3%	16	6	40.0%	9	60.0%	15	-	+
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,116</b>	<b>63.0%</b>	<b>655</b>	<b>37.0%</b>	<b>1,771</b>	<b>1,089</b>	<b>62.9%</b>	<b>641</b>	<b>37.1%</b>	<b>1,730</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>+</b>

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Correspondence with the University of Malta, 20th January 2020



Figures 25 & 26: University of Malta Academic Staff (Women and Men) in 2018 & 2019 by percentage<sup>56</sup>

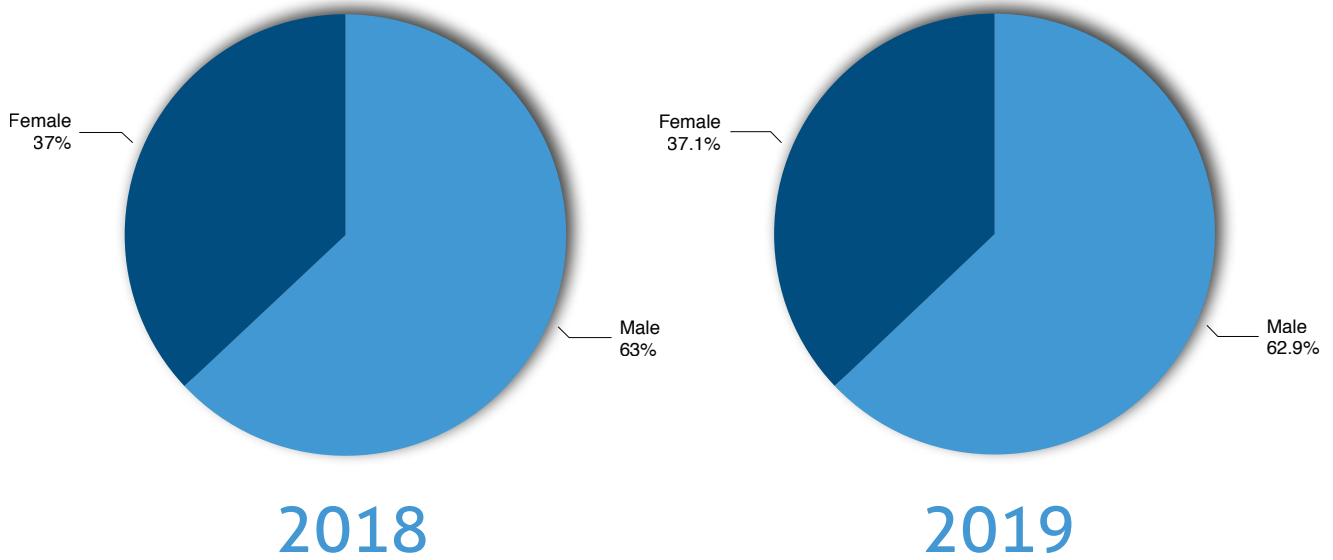
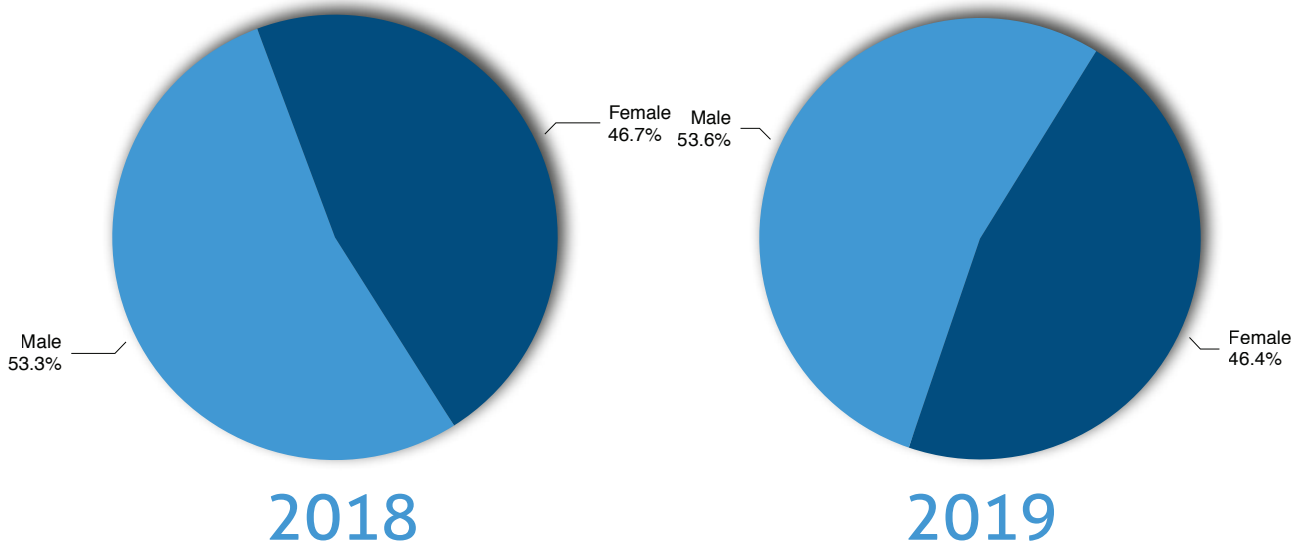


Table 19: MCAST Academic Staff (Women and Men) in 2018 and 2019<sup>57</sup>

Academic posts at MCAST	2018					2019					Change in Percentage	
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	
Senior Lecturer 2	14	77.8%	4	22.2%	18	61	57.5%	45	42.5%	106	-	+
Senior Lecturer 1	83	52.9%	74	47.1%	157	84	49.1%	87	50.9%	171	-	+
Lecturer	116	53.0%	103	47.0%	219	82	57.3%	61	42.7%	143	+	-
Assistant Lecturer	44	50.0%	44	50.0%	88	43	51.2%	41	48.8%	84	+	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>53.3%</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>46.7%</b>	<b>482</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>53.6%</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>46.4%</b>	<b>504</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>-</b>

Figures 27 & 28: MCAST Academic Staff (Women and Men) in 2018 and 2019 by percentage<sup>58</sup>



56 Ibid.

57 Correspondence with MCAST, 20th January 2020

58 Ibid.

## Comments

More women than men graduated from both University as well as MCAST. However, segregation in the choice of educational subjects remains strong. Women are heavily underrepresented in STEM subjects and men are underrepresented in social and care subjects.

Significant improvement is registered with regards to the equal representation of women and men in academia at MCAST. In this case, gender balance at all levels has almost been achieved. The same cannot be said for the University, where the overall underrepresentation of women academics becomes even more accentuated within the top academic posts.

## Media

**Table 20:** Public broadcasters: presidents and members of the board/council (highest decision-making body) in 2017, 2018 and 2019<sup>59</sup>

	2017		2018		2019	
	M%	F%	M%	F%	M%	F%
Malta	75.0	25.0	71.4	28.6	83.3	16.7
EU (28 countries)	63.1	36.9	64.2	35.8	62.6	37.4

## Comments

In 2019, there was a reduction in the representation of women within decision-making roles in the media.

<sup>59</sup> [https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/wmidm\\_med\\_pbrc\\_\\_wmid\\_media\\_pbrc\\_bm](https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/wmidm_med_pbrc__wmid_media_pbrc_bm)

# 2. Striving Towards Equality

## 2.1 Investigations

The Act which establishes the NCPE, Chapter 456 of the Laws of Malta, aims to ensure that Malta is free from discrimination based on:

(i) sex 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;

(ii) racial/ethnic origin and sex in the provision of goods and services and their supply; and

(iii) freedom of movement for workers in the EU.

In case one deems that his/her rights on these grounds have been violated, s/he can lodge a complaint with NCPE. Cases of sexual harassment are also investigated by the NCPE.

The **Complaints Form**, available in both Maltese and English, can be acquired either from the NCPE's offices or from the website. The duly filled form should reach

the NCPE either by email or by hand. The Complaints Form is also found on [servizz.gov](http://servizz.gov) and can be submitted online. The NCPE can investigate complaints that are lodged within a year from the experienced discrimination. Responsible personnel at the NCPE can provide the necessary assistance in case it is needed when filling out the Complaints Form. The complainant is urged to provide relevant evidence for the investigation and to substantiate the complaint. All Complaints Forms lodged are acknowledged and forwarded to the Commissioner to determine whether the case falls within the remit of the NCPE. If in the affirmative, the investigation will be initiated by requesting a written report from the person/s or entity/ies responsible for the alleged discrimination.



The NCPE will then hold **sittings** with all parties involved. All sittings are recorded, transcribed, confirmed and, finally, sent to the other party to ensure a transparent investigation. Following collection of all possible evidence, including final submission, the **Commissioner issues an opinion** determining whether there was a breach of the Act. The opinion is then sent to the parties concerned. The Commissioner may also forward the opinion to the Commissioner of Police in case of criminal offences, refer the case to the Industrial Tribunal, and offer mediation between the parties involved. Cases cannot be re-investigated once an opinion is issued.

Chapter 456 also empowers the Commissioner to initiate ex officio investigations in case of discriminatory practices falling under the remit of the NCPE and occurring within the Maltese society.

The Commissioner disregards complaints which are frivolous or vexatious. Complaints which do not fall under the remit of the NCPE are forwarded to the responsible entity/department.

### Investigations Statistics 2019

2019				
	Women	Men	Ex Offico	Total
Sex	5	0	1	6
Sexual Harassment	0	0	0	0
Race/Ethnic Origin	1	3	0	4
Gender Identity/Gender Expression/Sex Characteristics	0	0	0	0
Age	1	0	0	1
Sexual Orientation	0	0	0	0
Religion/Belief	0	0	0	0
Freedom of Movement	0	0	0	0
Not within NCPE's remit	0	*5		5
<b>Total Investigations</b>	<b>16</b>			

\* These 5 complaints were lodged by one person.

## Case Summary A

In 2019, the NCPE's Commissioner concluded a case whereby allegations of **discrimination on the basis of gender** were made. The complainant stated that whilst her partner and herself had clearly indicated in their original application for Children's Allowance, that she was to be listed as 'Parent 1', this had been ignored by the Department concerned. She further explained that whilst both her and her partner (father) had signed a document stating all correspondence was to be addressed to her, this hadn't been the case. She stated that on a specific occasion her partner collected a registered letter from the post office which was addressed to him by the Department of Social Security. When the complainant called the Department to query the matter, she was informed that irrespective of how they had filled the application form, the man was considered to be the 'Head of the Household' and is therefore considered to be 'Parent 1'.

During the collection of evidence, and following the Department's reply in relation to the allegations made, the Commissioner made the following observations:

- The original Children's Allowance application submitted by the complainant and her partner had been marked by the Department, presumably as reference, with the father's ID card number, even though, as previously outlined, both parents had indicated the complainant as 'Head of the Household.'
- In their reply, the Department stated that the documents were sent to the father rather than the complainant

because he had renewed his ID card in 2018, whilst the complainant's ID card was renewed in 2014, and therefore it was assumed that the father's address was the correct one.

- The above statement was however contradicted by a document presented by the complainant which indicated that she had advised the Department that both parents were living in the same residence at the address indicated by the complainant.
- Finally, the Department argued that such omissions did not occur due to a patriarchal mentality adopted by the Department but were merely an issue of limitations in the IT system which required a long overdue update.

The Commissioner stated that since both parents had indicated that the complainant was to be considered as 'Head of the Household', all documentation should have been sent to her. The Commissioner further stated that this had not been the case, since the file was in the father's name. The Commissioner found that this was not merely due to the limitation of the Department's IT system as argued by the Department, which automatically refers to the father's ID card, but also due to the patriarchal culture still present within the Department, which considers the man as 'Head of the Household'.

Following a thorough investigation, the Commissioner opined that the complainant's allegations did in fact amount to **direct discrimination on the basis of gender** and upheld the complaint as founded. Moreover, the NCPE's Commissioner recommended that training on

equality and non-discrimination should be given to all members of staff within the Department, particularly those in contact with the public.

### Case Summary B

An ex-officio investigation was initiated by the NCPE's Commissioner following information received from a number of sources regarding a set of bye-laws, which were being implemented by a number of Local Councils, that were **potentially discriminatory on the basis of race and ethnic origin**. The main allegation was that said bye-laws were in fact implemented to target predominantly African migrants. Special reference was made to subsidiary legislation SL 363.206 titled *Loitering in Marsa*. At the onset of the investigation, the NCPE's Commissioner clarified that its aim was not to target a particular Local Council, but rather to challenge the system which may potentially be allowing such discrimination to occur.

During the investigation, the Commissioner came across a number of articles covering the topic, and sittings were also held with the mayors of the respective localities where the bye-laws were being implemented. The Commissioner delved into the definition of 'loitering' as found in said bye-laws, which defines loitering as '*the persistent presence of any person for no apparent reason.*' Such definition was vague and potentially damaging to one's fundamental rights. The Commissioner noted that loitering for illicit activities was already covered by criminal law and did not necessitate further accentuation.

Following a thorough investigation, the Commissioner concluded that SL 363.206

and other similar bye-laws targeting loitering had been implemented by the respective Local Council to primarily target foreign nationals, particularly African migrants, in order to address complaints by residents of such localities.

Whilst the NCPE's Commissioner acknowledged challenges brought by migration, she further reiterated that seeing migrants' presence in a locality as a problem leads to this specific social group to be perceived as a threat, simply because of its cultural background or skin colour. Moreover, the Commissioner encouraged the relevant authorities to address the specific needs of migrants rather than target them by implementing such bye-laws, as these contribute to the fuelling of racism. The Commissioner therefore declared all bye-laws addressing loitering as '*the persistent presence of any person for no apparent reason*' to be **indirectly discriminatory on the basis of race and ethnic origin**.

The Commissioner's opinion was sent to the Prime Minister, the Minister for Justice, Culture and Local Government, and the Marsa, Ħamrun, Ta' Xbiex, Tal-Pietà and Birkirkara Local Councils.

## 2.2 Policy Review and Recommendations

### National Policies

Input from an equality perspective to documents issued by Government for public consultation is regularly submitted. The NCPE goes through draft policies, laws and strategies to highlight **potentially discriminatory provisions or clauses** as well as to suggest **pro-active measures** for the achievement of equality in practice.

The NCPE always states that the policy/action/measure should be **gender mainstreamed** by all departments/entities, as per Government policy<sup>60</sup>. The carrying out of a gender mainstreaming exercise 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 of society are taken into account.

The NCPE reviewed and provided recommendations to the following documents in 2019:

- Building Resilience: Transforming Services: A Mental Health Strategy for Malta 2020 - 2030
- MCAST Strategic Plan 2019 - 2021
- Towards a Gender Equality Mainstreaming Framework

- National Adoption Strategy for Children and their Families (2019 - 2022)
- A Policy on Inclusive Education in Schools: Route to Quality Inclusion - A National Inclusive Education Framework
- The Future of Research and Innovation - Post 2020
- Gender Balance in Parliament Reform
- Malta towards Trustworthy AI: Malta Ethical Framework
- Pre-budget Document 2020
- Reform on Human Trafficking and Prostitution
- Constitutional Reform

In its input to the *MCAST Strategic Plan 2019-2020*, the NCPE recommended that the plan includes an equality duty on MCAST to gender mainstream all its operations and carry out periodic **equality audits** covering areas such as curricula, administrative procedures, policies, rules and regulations and promotional material. It also suggested that the institution uses tools which aid research institutions in enhancing women's representation and retention at all levels, and to promote the integration of the gender dimension in research and innovation content.

The feedback submitted to the *Towards a Gender Equality Mainstreaming Framework* outlined the NCPE's proposals for the adoption of strategies and methods

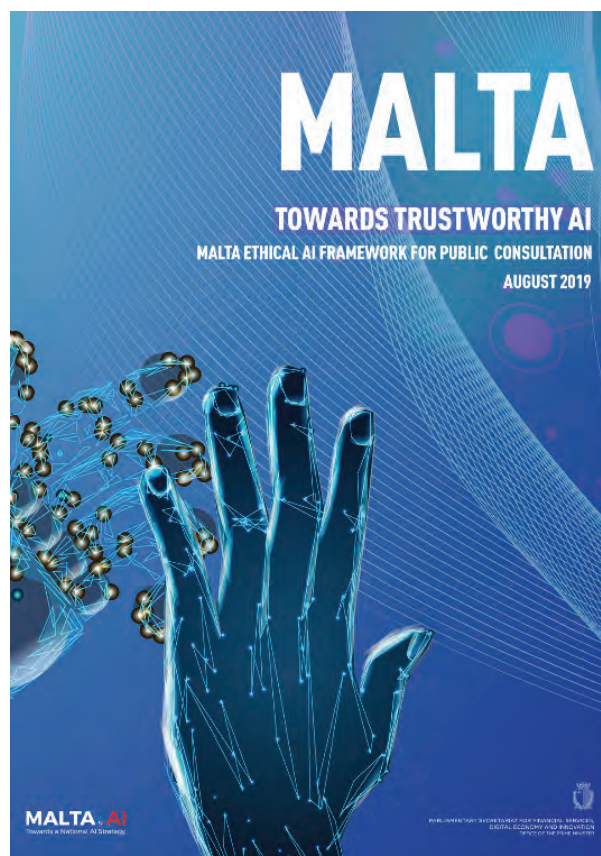


that enhance the integration of a **gender perspective** in the day-to-day Government work in all areas. Among its recommendations, the NCPE called for: the inclusion of gender mainstreaming as a key objective in the performance reviews of top positions; the setting up of a Gender and Diversity Network; intensive hands-on training on the implementation of gender mainstreaming and the gender impact assessment; and emphasis on the importance of always producing and using **gender disaggregated statistics**.

The NCPE expressed its agreement with the regulation framework proposed in the consultation document *Malta Towards Trustworthy AI: Malta Ethical AI Framework* since it addresses the potential discriminatory practices, decisions and outcomes that are based on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and algorithms. The NCPE stressed that there should be **binding mechanisms** to ensure that the rules and standards outlined in the document are upheld by all AI designers and operators. Moreover, it recommended that technology should be developed to ensure that data inputted in algorithms is representative and does not favour discriminatory outcomes of the algorithmic process.

As part of the consultation process leading to the *2020 Budget*, the NCPE put forward proposals for strengthening equality in Malta through the **equitable allocation of resources** and the implementation of specific measures, in the following areas:

- the setting up of the Human Rights and Equality Commission
- women and men in the labour market
- family-friendly measures in the private sector



*Towards Trustworthy AI consultative document*

- measures related to the Work-Life Balance Directive
- pay discrimination
- Artificial Intelligence
- tax accounts and tax returns
- pensions
- active ageing
- migrant integration.

The NCPE welcomed most measures in the proposed *Reform on Human Trafficking and Prostitution*. In particular, it commended efforts to combat human trafficking through prevention, awareness-raising and the strengthening of laws and protection mechanisms. The NCPE also welcomed plans to “decriminalise prostitutes” and enhance support for persons to exit prostitution. In addition to the measures outlined



Pre-Budget Document 2020

in the consultation document, the NCPE proposed a legal framework that **penalises sex-buyers**, underlining that a defining feature of prostitution is power and control of men over women, which both reflects and reinforces a patriarchal society.

The NPCE also took part in the consultation process about the **Constitutional Reform** by listing a number of points for consideration. The NCPE recommended that the Constitution:

- adopts a language that is gender-inclusive, since this is both legally and symbolically important.
- enshrines a legally enforceable right to non-discrimination and outlines a list of discrimination grounds
- includes a Declaration of Principles that specifically recognizes the social, cultural, political, civil and eco-

conomic contribution and participation of both women and men from different social groups

- recognizes the importance of and strives to achieve gender-balance in all spheres of life, in particular within the legislative and executive branches, the civil service and the judiciary, for the benefit of society in general
- incorporates a specific obligation on the part of the State to strive to eliminate violence against women as a form, cause and consequence of discrimination and inequality, and a violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the rights to life, health, equal protection, security and liberty
- includes a right to quality legal aid in both civil as well as criminal matters
- expressly states that special measures to accelerate substantive equality do not violate the principle of non-discrimination, as the purpose of non-discrimination provisions is to promote substantive equality of marginalized and underrepresented groups including, but not limited to, women
- prohibits speech that incites hatred, hostility, discrimination, intolerance and/or violence
- updates basic rights and fundamental freedoms to reflect developments since 1964, both in the national and international arena.

## EU and International Affairs

The NCPE continued to actively participate in policy debates and developments at EU and international levels, and to keep abreast with updates on subject matters related to equality.

During 2019, the European Commission consulted widely on the future policy priorities for gender equality through a public consultation, in view that the European Commission's strategic framework for gender equality and the term of office of the Commissioners ended in 2019. The NCPE participated in this public consultation to assist the European Commission to set the policy priorities for the next five years. The NCPE also expressed its opinions through another public consultation by the European Commission that focused on the gender pay gap and sought to assess the implementation of the principle of "equal pay for equal work and work of equal value" for women and men.

Moreover, both the Romanian and Finnish Presidencies of the Council of the EU discussed a way forward in relation to **safeguarding gender equality and implementing gender mainstreaming across the EU** in the coming years. In addition, during the Romanian Presidency, the EPSCO Council also discussed ways to support women in atypical employment and adopted Council Conclusions on closing the gender pay gap. During the Finnish Presidency, discussions focused on the economy of wellbeing, adopting Council Conclusions on this topic as well as on **gender equal economies in the EU**. The NCPE gave feedback to these Council Con-

clusions and followed such EU policy debates, drafting input as requested.

Negotiations on the text of the **Proposal for a Council Directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation** carried on in 2019. The NCPE reviewed respective articles and gave feedback on the way forward.

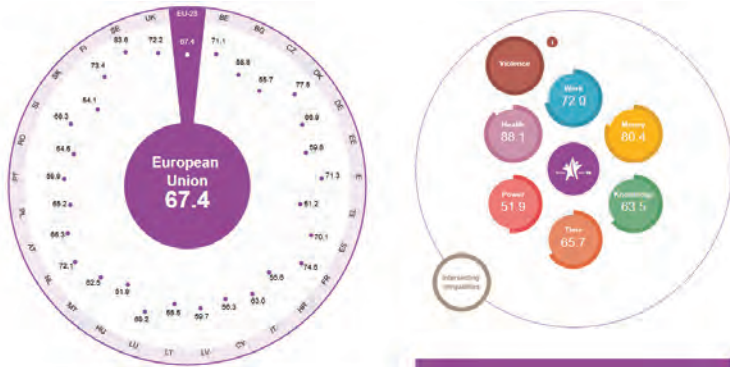
In addition, the NCPE contributed to the compilation of the two opinions adopted in 2019 by the Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men: one on **challenges for gender equality in a rapidly ageing society**, and another on **intersectionality in gender equality laws, policies and practices**. The NCPE also participated in the working groups on the opinions that will be considered for adoption in 2020 on **artificial intelligence and gender equality**, as well as on **combating online violence against women**. The NCPE's Commissioner is the Vice-Chair of this Advisory Committee and participated in both meetings held in 2019.

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) published the **Gender Equality Index 2019** which highlighted the progress made in relation to gender equality across the European Union, or rather lack thereof. The NCPE Commissioner attended the launch of the Index and participated in respective discussions. In Malta, the EIGE organised a roundtable discussion on the **risk of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**. Moreover, in 2019 the EIGE worked on the compilation of a report on **institutional mechanisms for gender equality and gen-**



## ANNUAL REPORT 2019

**der mainstreaming.** The NCPE thus provided updates on the personnel and financial resources of the NCPE to the national expert and to the member of the High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming.



EIGE Gender Equality Index 2019

The NCPE continued to be an active member of the **European Network of Equality Bodies (Equinet)** in 2019. It not only participated in the Annual General Meeting to adopt the 2020 Workplan and elect a new Executive Board, but also participated in all the **working groups on gender equality, policy formation, equality law, communication strategies and practices**, as well as **research and data collection**. These working groups, as well as the seminars and conferences organised by Equinet in 2019, provided valuable opportunities for mutual learning and exchange with other equality bodies across Europe. Moreover, the NCPE participated in the meetings of the project on **standards for equality bodies** which focused on the challenges, needs and promising practices of equality bodies in relation to their mandate and functions, independence, effectiveness and institutional architecture. Furthermore, the NCPE continued distributing any published and audio-visual material among Equinet members, answered to requests for information by other equality bodies, and re-

plied to surveys and questionnaires to share relevant experiences and knowledge. One of the main questionnaires by Equinet for 2019 focused on the equality bodies' perspective on the implementation of the **Racial Equality Directive** and the **Employment Equality Directive**, and the equality bodies' needs for future equality and non-discrimination policies at European level.



The NCPE participating in Equinet's AGM

In relation to the Council of Europe, 2019 was the second year of implementation of the new **Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023** adopted in March 2018. The NCPE's Commissioner was a member of the Gender Equality Commission (GEC) of the Council of Europe that supports the implementation of this strategy and participated in their meetings. Moreover, the NCPE submitted the annual update on the initiatives carried out in Malta in line with the six strategic objectives of the strategy. Furthermore, in preparation for the analytical report prepared by the GEC on the implementation of **Recommendation CM/Rec (2013)1** on gender equality and media, the NCPE collaborated with respective entities to reply to a questionnaire on the topic.

In March, the Council of Europe adopted the first-ever legal instrument to stop sexism. The recommendation provides a **definition of sexism** and covers sexism in various sectors, including online as well as offline. The NCPE participated in a conference organised by GEC that sought to identify examples of good practices in tackling problems and overcoming challenges caused by gender stereotypes and sexism.

The NCPE's Commissioner participated in an exchange of views with the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms Dunja Mijatović, that focused on the cooperation between the Commissioner and **equality bodies** as well as on **artificial intelligence**, which is a relatively new concept and its outcome may be both fruitful as well as detrimental to the fight against discrimination, depending on how and by whom it is made use of.

The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) of the Council of Europe marked its **25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2019**. A conference was organised to review the achievements and challenges over the last 25 years, examine the main trends in the fields of equality and the fight against racism, antisemitism and homo/transphobia, and shape further action in these fields. The NCPE's Commissioner attended this conference as well as the ECRI plenary meetings as an ECRI member.

The NCPE provided information on initiatives related to **violence against women**, mainly related to sexual harassment, in reply to the questionnaire on legislative and other measures that gave effect to the provisions of the Istanbul Convention. The questionnaire was utilised by the Group of experts

on violence against women and domestic violence (GREVIO), in order to compile the country report on Malta. The NCPE's Commissioner was also member of the Committee of the Parties to the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) and in 2019 attended their respective meetings.

Throughout 2019, NCPE reviewed various notes, resolutions, statements and other documents from international bodies. For instance, the Organisation for Security and Co-Operation in Europe (OSCE) addressed topics, such as: the equal enjoyment of rights and equal participation in political and public life; equal opportunities for women and men; and violence against women, during their Human Dimension Implementation Meeting. The NCPE also contributed to the reporting on respective articles for *Malta's 13<sup>th</sup> Revised European Social Charter Report* on the situation of Maltese legislation and practice and provided necessary information in reply to the conclusions of previous cycles.

Other topics were also addressed by the United Nations. Particularly, in the context of preparations of the regional review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action +25 that will take place in 2020, the NCPE submitted information on initiatives taken as per its remit, as well as on the achievements, challenges and set-backs in progress towards gender equality in the last five years.

The NCPE also reviewed the *United Nations Declaration for Gender-Responsive Standards and Standards Development* aimed at integrating a gender perspective in the

## ANNUAL REPORT 2019

development of both standards and technical regulations. In view that the Declaration was signed by the Maltese Standards Body, the Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority, the NCPE also collaborated with the Authority towards the implementation of this Declaration.

## 2.3 Media

Media presence is vital for the dissemination of information on topics related to the NCPE's remit and to work towards an equal society which is free from discrimination. A **communication plan** was implemented in 2019 to enhance the NCPE's visibility across different media. The communication plan defines what type of information should be given, when that information should be delivered and what communication channels should be used. The aim of such plan is to widen the NCPE's outreach and to cover diverse topics that are related to its remit.

Throughout 2019, the NCPE continued raising awareness on responsibilities and rights in relation to equality through various means of communication. The number of contributions in the traditional media added up to 60. These contributions included:

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

### Press Statements

Press statements covered different subjects varying from coverage of national debates to events and activities organised by the NCPE throughout the year.

It published 12 press statements in 2019, an additional three to the previous year:

- NCPE urges more women to come forward and contest MEP elections
- Public consultation on EU rules guaranteeing equal pay between women and men



TV interview with Commissioner Ms Renee Laiviera

- International Women's Day Conference - Career Advancement: Equal Opportunities?
- Positive measures can effectively address gender inequality and Malta's democratic deficit
- Words matter
- Need for soul-searching after racially motivated murder
- NCPE's 15th Annual Conference
- The NCPE congratulates Dr Helena Dalli on her nomination to the European Union
- Pelting Incident: A Sorry Spectacle of Domination and Humiliation
- Job Adverts for Equal Opportunities
- Prostitution reform should penalise sex-buyers
- NCPE's seminar: Gender Pay Gap and Gender Pension Gap

### Articles and features

Several articles and features written by the NCPE were published in local newspapers and magazines in 2019 covering different topics such as maternity leave, discrimination in employment of African people, the reconciliation of work and family life and fertility rates, standards for equality bodies, gender segregation in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), gender budgeting, discrimination experienced by migrants and online violence against women.

The press statements and the articles can be easily accessed from the 'News' section

of the NCPE's website – [www.ncpe.gov.mt](http://www.ncpe.gov.mt).

### Answering journalists' questions

The NCPE replied to questions sent by journalists from different media houses encompassing the following topics: the NCPE's wider remit, *European Pillar of Social Rights*, family responsibilities and political life, gender-based violence, elderly abuse and payroll transparency, among others.

### TV and radio

Compared with the previous year, the NCPE increased its participation in television and radio programmes. The NCPE's Commissioner and staff participated in such programmes to inform the public about the Commission's work and to discuss equality issues. Some of the topics addressed in 2019 included: patriarchy and mental health, the gender pay gap, gender-inclusive language, gender balance in parliament reform, women in employment, tax refund for married couples, prostitution and sexual assault.

### Facebook

Social media is a valuable tool to interact with the public. Through Facebook, the NCPE highlights international days, statistics, upcoming events and developments in relation to equality. The NCPE uses this platform daily by posting engaging and informative content such as links, infographics, photos, videos and slides.

The number of posts on the NCPE Facebook Page amounted to **292** during 2019. Furthermore, by the end of 2019, the Page reached over **3,400 likes**. The NCPE is



## ANNUAL REPORT 2019

committed to continue working to expand its use of social media in order to reach and engage with wider audiences.

### Website

The website – [www.ncpe.gov.mt](http://www.ncpe.gov.mt) - is updated throughout the year with the latest publications, events and other NCPE's work. It is an essential tool for students, researchers and academics who are carrying out research about equality issues. The website is also a useful tool for potential victims of discrimination as it provides pertinent information on how to submit a complaint with the NCPE.

Press Statements	12
Articles and features	10
Answering journalists' questions	10
Participation in television and radio programmes	28

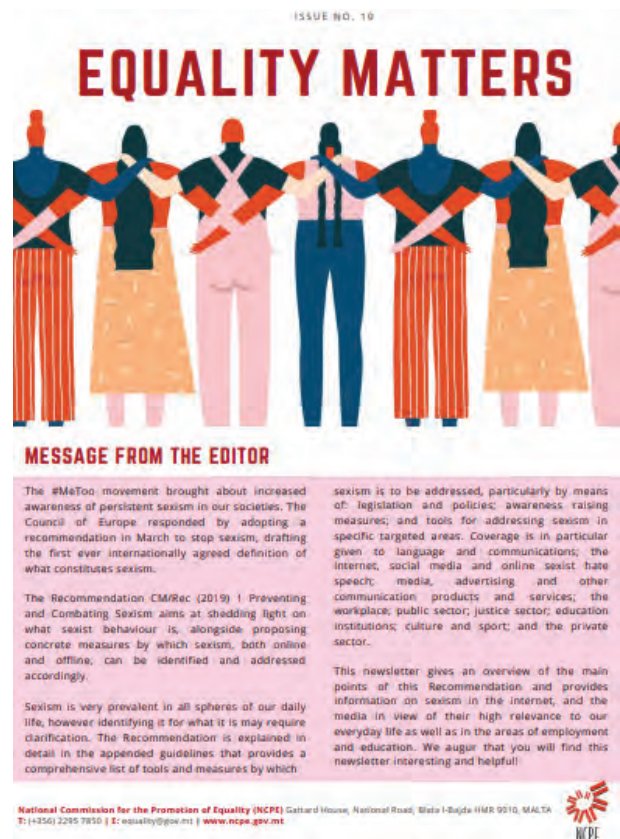
### Newsletter: *Equality Matters*

In 2019, the NCPE published the 10<sup>th</sup> issue of the e-newsletter *Equality Matters* which focused on sexism. The newsletter provided insights on the *Recommendation CM/Rec (2019) Preventing and Combating Sexism*, which was the first Council of Europe legal instrument to stop sexism. Particularly, information on sexism on the internet and the media was provided in view of its high relevance to our everyday life, as well as in the areas of employment and education.

The newsletter can also be accessed from the NCPE's Facebook page and website. Those interested in receiving the e-newsletter can send an email to the NCPE on [equality@gov.mt](mailto:equality@gov.mt).

Additionally, the website also contains a section on the Directory of Professional Women that features a registration and a search facility for stakeholders who are looking for women professionals in particular fields of expertise.

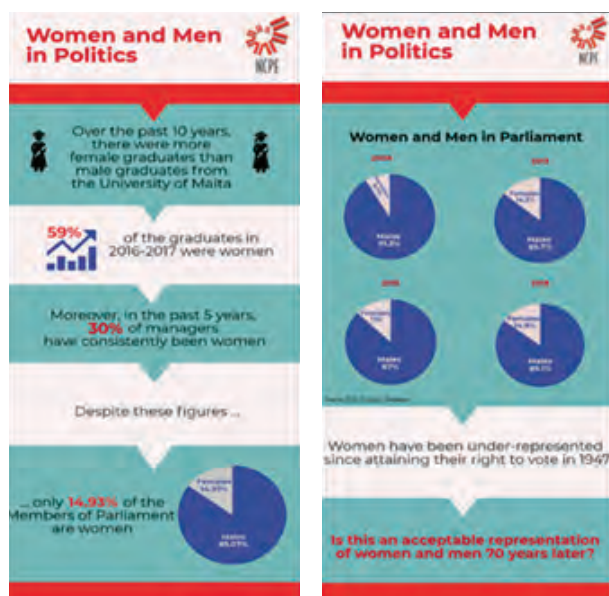
Furthermore, employers who would like to apply for the Equality Mark can also find detailed information on the certification process.



## Campaign on women in politics

In 2019, the NCPE continued raising awareness on the importance of gender balance in politics through a campaign on traditional and social media.

Four infographics (EN & MT) were created on gender representation in the political sphere and disseminated on the NCPE's social media. The infographics sought to highlight the persistent underrepresentation of women in politics throughout the years; the current democratic deficit in this regard; the achievements of women in education; and the perspective that both women and men can become effective politicians. Such infographics were boosted in order to increase the amount of people that view the content – reaching a total of **57,781** people.



*Social media campaign on gender balance in politics*

Through a Press Statement, the NCPE urged more women to contest the MEP elections. Another Press Statement welcomed the Government's proposals aimed at achieving gender equality in Maltese

Parliament. The NCPE said that the measures proposed in the gender balance in parliament reform consultation document, issued in March 2019, are necessary to address both the causes and consequences of gender inequality. This document was also discussed by the NCPE during a television and radio programme respectively.

## 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence and domestic violence

The 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence and domestic violence is an **annual international campaign** that kicks off on 25<sup>th</sup> November - the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and runs until 10<sup>th</sup> December - Human Rights Day. This period is used by individuals and organisations around the world to call for the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls.

To support the 16 Days of Activism, the NCPE published on its Facebook Page various posts in the form of research findings, statistics, videos, images and articles which concisely explain the various forms of violence and abuse that women may be subject to, as well as the consequences of such violence.



*Campaign – 16 Days of Activism*

## ANNUAL REPORT 2019

These social media posts aimed to spread further awareness on this issue amongst women and men. The UN hashtags: #OrangeTheWord and #16DaysOfActivism were used for its global campaign. This online campaign reached a total of 2,772 people.

## 2.4 Prepare the Ground for Economic Independence

The project Prepare the Ground for Economic Independence (PGEI) was launched in September 2018 and will run until August 2020. This project, which is co-financed by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme 2014-2020, focuses on addressing the **gender gaps over the lifecycle**. Besides the public at large, the project has three main target groups; students, working age adults and organisations.

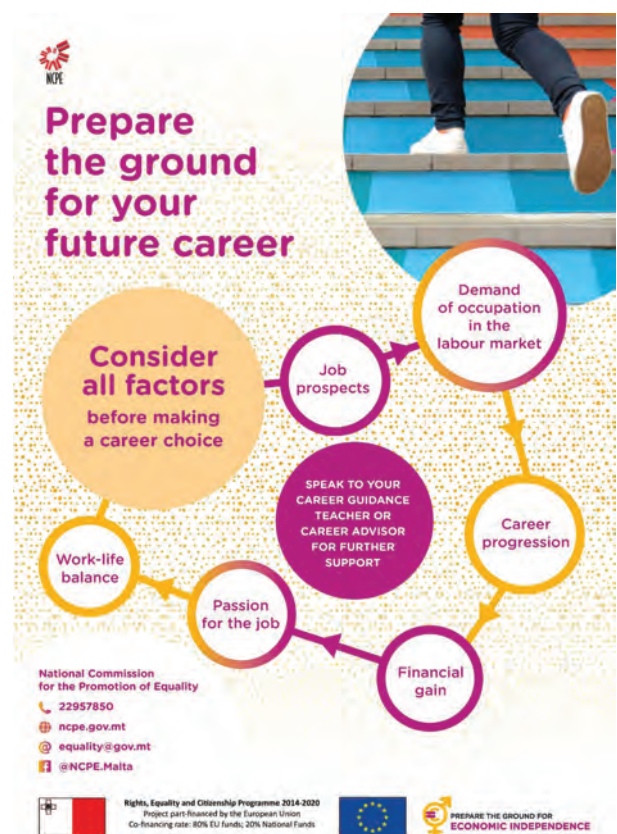


*Prepare the Ground for Economic Independence logo*

One of the activities in the framework of the PGEI project was the training to career guidance teachers, trainee career advisors and career advisors. Two **train-the-trainer courses** were held for the career guidance teachers, each split in two sessions; the first one on 29<sup>th</sup> April and 6<sup>th</sup> May 2019, and the second one on 21<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> October 2019. The course for the trainee career advisors and career advisors was split in three sessions held on the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> June 2019. In total, **67 participants**

from state schools in Malta and Gozo, attended all three of these sessions.

In line with this activity, a **poster** was created with the aim of encouraging students to consider all factors when planning their future career. These factors include job prospects, career progression and work-life balance to name a few. The poster



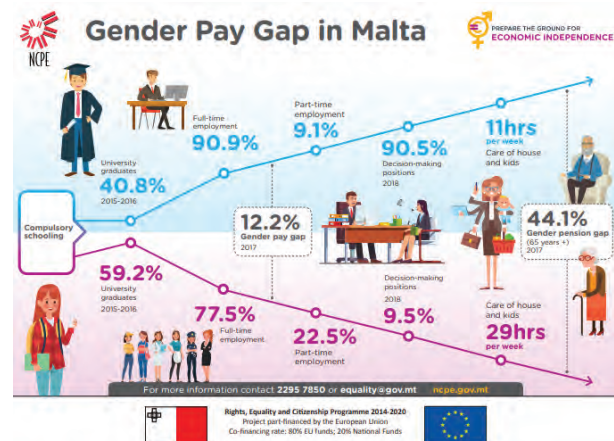
*Poster distributed to Secondary Schools*



was disseminated to all state, church, and independent secondary schools in Malta and Gozo for display on each school's noticeboard. It was also posted on the NCPE's Facebook Page whilst heads of schools were encouraged to disseminate it on their websites or social media pages.

On 18<sup>th</sup> November 2019, a **Seminar on the Gender Pay Gap, Inactivity and the Gender Pension Gap** was organised. The seminar consisted of two panels: 'From School to Work: Students' decisions in choosing their career' and 'From the gender pay gap to the gender pension gap'. The seminar's target audience were national policymakers, social partners, NGOs and relevant stakeholders as well as the general public. During the first panel discussion, academics and stakeholders discussed the correlation between educational choices and the gender pay gap, and factors that students consider when making their subject choices as well as how these choices impact their careers. The second panel examined the causes and consequences of the gender pay and pension gaps and how these gaps can be addressed. A total of **80 participants** were in the audience as well as ten panel speakers.

The **gender pay gap campaign** was the first campaign launched and completed in 2019. It focused on educating the general public on the gender pay gap with statistics and factual information on the issue, highlighted through adverts and articles published on all seven Sunday local newspapers as well as on social media. Besides, the NCPE's Commissioner attended TV and radio programmes where she was interviewed about the issue of the gender pay gap and equal pay between men and women.



### Campaign on the gender pay gap

Subsequently, the campaign will focus on the **gender pension gap** with the aim of raising awareness on the repercussions that career choices may have, both currently and in the future. It will feature videos with five real-life stories illustrating these women's choices about their education or employment and the effects these have had on their financial independence as well as on their pension. This campaign will target the public at large as it will be broadcast on the local TV stations as well as on the NCPE's social media. Filming has already taken place and editing is underway.



Panel discussion – Seminar on the gender pay gap



Filming the gender pension gap campaign

The NCPE will be re-launching the Equality Mark and strengthening it through the development of an **Equal Pay Tool**. During 2019, through a public call the NCPE contracted a service-provider to work on the research study on which the tool will be developed. Research is being carried out

on existent equal pay tools in Europe in order to develop the technical specifications for the Equal Pay Tool best suited for the local context. Once developed, the tool will be pilot tested with five organisations certified with the Equality Mark, to ensure that it is suited to the NCPE's needs within the national context as well as to the organisations' needs. Subsequently, a campaign will be launched to promote the new equal pay measure of the Equality Mark.

Moreover, as part of the revamp of the Equality Mark, equality-certified organisations or companies have been featured on the NCPE's Facebook page by creating posts on a regular basis. So far, around 40 companies have been featured already and more than 19,000 people have been reached through these posts.

In terms of procurement processes related to the PGEI project, six processes were launched in 2019, seven were evaluated and five were awarded.

## 2.5 Managing EU Funds

The focus of 2019 was two-fold: the successful implementation of the PGEI project and the submission of project proposals for potential EU funding. The first half of 2019 was geared towards ensuring the smooth **procurement processes** in order to be able to award the contracts so that the first activities of the project would start being implemented. This was, in fact, the case as in the second half of the year many of the **project's activities** were initiated such as the design of the project cor-

porate image and the logo, the newspaper adverts and articles, the filming of the real-life stories, the holding of the seminar, the research study on equal pay tools and the evaluation study.

In the meantime, the NCPE was informed that the project proposal submitted in 2018 entitled *Developing Inclusive Views for Eliminating Racist Speech* (DIVERSE) was not accepted for funding by the European Commission in March 2019.

In June 2019, another project proposal entitled **Empowerment for Diversity (E4D)** under the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014 – 2020) was submitted. In December 2019, the European Commission informed the NCPE that the proposal was evaluated favourably and a three-month grant preparation period was launched. The project Empowerment for Diversity (E4D), which spans 24 months, will focus on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity, sex characteristics and gender expression.

The aim of the project is 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 in 2020.

The project E4D will be introduced to the general public, the LGBTI target group and relevant stakeholders, through a launch conference.

A qualitative study on the current situation in Malta regarding LGBTI discrimination will be conducted. This will be a comparative analysis with a similar research study conducted by the NCPE in 2011. This analysis will also include updates with regards to the recently-adopted legislation and the widened remit of the NCPE with the addition of three grounds of discrimination: gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics.

Three workshops will be hosted with members of the LGBTI community with the aim of discussing the issues being faced by the LGBTI community, identifying the needs to be addressed, and the current deterrents resulting in underreporting. A report of

these workshops will be published.

The NCPE will enhance its capacity through legal training on the laws of Malta as well as training on how to address underreporting, mainstreaming LGBTI policies, and outreach amongst others. A training report will be developed for sustainability purposes.

Templates of the Equality Policy and the Sexual Harassment Policy will be made available to the public by publishing them online on the NCPE's website. As part of the outreach of the project, the NCPE will take part in the Malta Pride Parades of 2020 and 2021, thereby maximising its exposure with the LGBTI community. The NCPE will also present the project, its aims and activities during the 2020 Malta Pride Week and it will present the project outcomes a year later at the 2021 Malta Pride Week.

Moreover, in collaboration with the Allied Rainbow Communities (ARC), the NCPE will launch an awareness-raising campaign with the aim of making the target group aware of its rights, aware of who the NCPE is, what it does and what its services are.

The project will come to a close with a final conference whereby the project outcomes and findings will be presented, along with the evaluation study and recommendations.



## 2.6 Training

The NCPE regularly delivers training on matters related to equality, diversity and non-discrimination to both the private and the public sector. In 2019, participants included educators, nurses, students, migrant women, public officers and employees in companies from different sectors of the economy.

In most cases, the NCPE receives requests from organisations, public entities or companies to deliver training on equality-related subjects. The NCPE provides the organisation with the full list of topics it can cover, the procedure for organising the session/s and any applicable fees. In other cases, such as training connected to EU co-funded projects or the Equality Mark, the NCPE organises training or consultation sessions that are open to specific cohorts. All sessions are structured according to the needs of the context and trainers always give importance to discussion and engagement with the participants.

The NCPE gives training on:

**Equality law:** The basic principles of Maltese equality legislation and EU Directives that 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.



*NCPE training to migrant women interpreters*

**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 officials 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.

NCPE training in 2019	
No. of training sessions	55
Hours of training	105
No. of participants	890

## ANNUAL REPORT 2019

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

In order to enable this reporting, from 2012 to 2019, the NCPE delivered 56 training sessions to over 760 public sector employees. In 2019, two training sessions were given to 32 public sector employees on the gender mainstreaming strategy, the reporting template and the related reporting process. Seven detailed information sessions on gender mainstreaming were held, five to managers working in the Primary Health Care and two to career advisors and guidance teachers. Moreover, a detailed explanation of the gender mainstreaming process was given during four

sessions to students undertaking a BA in Public Policy. These included the carrying out of several **hands-on exercises**.

A total of **146 gender mainstreaming reports** were received by the NCPE in 2019, a considerable increase over the four preceding years. In its evaluation report, the NCPE stated that the increased reporting is positive and encouraging. However, the reporting quality was generally low, reflecting a limited understanding of gender mainstreaming and of how it can be applied systematically to the departments/entities' daily work and the collection of data, together with a low level of commitment to implementing the strategy.

## 2.7 Discrimination in Advertising

The NCPE reviewed local newspapers on a daily basis for any discriminatory advertisements, as defined by Chapter 456 of the Laws of Malta that safeguard equality in employment and prohibits discriminatory vacancy adverts. As per Article 10 of the said legislation, it is unlawful:

*"...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 notifies the publisher and the company, notifying them why the advert is discriminatory and suggesting **alternative wording** and **actions to be taken**. Moreover, information on the

topic is disseminated to sensitise stakeholders and the general public. In August 2019, the NCPE published a Press Statement in order to raise awareness about equality between women and men in relation to advertising **job vacancies**. Discriminatory adverts have reduced drastically over the past five years as can be seen in the table. In 2019, the NCPE identified 20 discriminatory adverts in employment: 19 adverts on the ground of gender and one advert on the ground of religion.

The general public and other stakeholders are encouraged to inform the NCPE of discriminatory adverts by email - [equality@gov.mt](mailto:equality@gov.mt) - so that necessary action can be taken.

Year	Total amount of discriminatory adverts
2019	20
2018	41
2017	43
2016	57
2015	54
2014	83

Most common discriminatory text in adverts in 2019	NCPE suggestions
Waiter	Waitr/ess
Handyman	Handyperson

## 2.8 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 in-

ternational, requiring information on topics related to the NCPE's remit. Individuals who request information that is not within the NCPE's remit are referred to the relevant entity.

### Total Number of Requests for Information received in 2019

Year	2019		
	Women	Men	Total
Gender	24	5	29
Sexual Harassment	1	1	2
Race/Ethnic Origin	0	0	0
Gender Identity, Gender Expression & Sex Characteristics	0	0	0
Age	1	2	3
Sexual Orientation	0	2	2
Religion/Belief	0	3	3
Others /	8	3	11
Not within NCPE's remit			
Freedom of Movement	0	0	0
<b>Total RFI received</b>	<b>50*</b>		

\* 2 RFI covered more than one ground

## 2.9 Directory of Professional Women

The Directory of Professional Women aims to give **visibility to professional women** and their competences in various fields. This online Directory, launched by the NCPE in 2015, includes information about the qualifications, experience and skills of Maltese and Gozitan professional women. It can aid the identification of women in the various sectors for possible appointment on boards and committees and/or to assume decision-making positions in the labour market.

The NCPE further promoted the Directory of Professional Women through the Government Intranet as well as through NCPE's Facebook Page in 2019. A digital poster promoting the online Directory of Professional Women was developed and made available to view on the Intranet on the 29<sup>th</sup> May 2019. Moreover, three Face-

book adverts were developed and published between April and August 2019. These adverts together reached 663 people.

Between May and June 2019, various mail shots were sent to existing Directory profilers in order to urge them to validate and update their accounts. The validation of the account ensures that each profiler is responsible for the data on the Directory and can update it accordingly. In total, 39 profilers validated/updated their profile.

By the end of 2019, a total of **263 professional women** from different sectors were on the NCPE's Directory. The sector with most professionals is currently the Economy sector with 25% of the share, followed by the Social Wellbeing sector with 12% and the Health Sciences with 11%.

## 2.10 Library and Documentation Centre

The Library and Documentation Centre situated at NCPE's offices includes a wide range of books, journals and newspaper articles. It is constantly updated, bringing the total number of publications to more than 7,300.

Most of the resources available in the library are related to equality in employment, education, politics, the media, health and religion, European Union issues, and sexual harassment, among others.

The Library also hosts a database of local newspaper articles connected to equality issues and the grounds of discrimination. Researchers, academics and the general public can visit the library by appointment. Additionally, the library's database is available on the NCPE's website for ease of reference.

# 3. The Equality Mark

The Equality Mark certification entered its ninth year since its inception in 2010. Initially funded through the European Social Fund, the NCPE continued to run this scheme past the end of the co-financing period due to its successful uptake by employers in both the private and public sectors. By December 2019, there were **98 certified organisations employing over 23,300 individuals**.

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.

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 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.

**11 new organisations were certified with the Equality Mark in 2019, and 22 organisations went through re-certification.**



*The Equality Mark logo*

2019		
Certified	1 <sup>st</sup> re-certification	2 <sup>nd</sup> re-certification
Directorate Corporate Services (MJCL)	Alberta Fire & Security Equipment Ltd.	Alf Mizzi & Sons (Marketing) Group
Health Care Funding Directorate	Argus Insurance Ltd.	Aviation Online Ltd.
Malta Business Registry	Caremalta Ltd.	BPO Services Ltd.
Malta Home Care Services	Caremalta Mellieħa Ltd.	Centercom Ltd.
Ozo Care	Catalogue Solutions Ltd.	Partit Laburista
Ozo Group	Cateressence Ltd.	World Aviation Group
Ozo Malta	Executive Security Services Ltd.	
Ozo Security	Francis Busuttil & Sons (FBS) Marketing	
Specialist Group Cleaners Ltd.	G4S Security Services (Malta) Ltd.	
WM Environmental Ltd.	Grange Security Ltd.	
X Clean Ltd.	ICON	
	Island Insurance Brokers Ltd.	
	Maltapost p.l.c	
	Medserv Operations Ltd.	
	Signal 8 Security Services	
	Vassallo Builders 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 enjoyed by 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 men and women with caring responsibilities to remain employed or return to work by offering family-friendly measures, such as reduced hours, telework and flexitime





*Equality Mark awardees during the NCPE Annual Conference*

- 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 allow the NCPE to reassess their context from a gender equality perspective.**

Following the first re-certification, an organisation undergoes a re-certification process every three years. Out of the 33 organisations re-certified in 2019, 6 went through their second re-certification process.

### NIMXU MAŻ-ŻMINIJET...

Hafna negozji jhossu l-bżonn li jzommu aġġornati mar-realtajiet ta' kif hafna mill-familji tal-hum qeghdin jgħix u jaħdmu. Dawn l-organizzazzjonijiet jgħuraw li l-opportunitajiet offruti lil-impjegati tagħhom, irġiel u nisa, huma ibbażati fuq il-hiliet u l-kapaċitajiet tal-individwi u mhux iddeterminati mis-sess tal-persuni, mill-istat ċivili tagħhom, tqala jew potenzjal ta' tqala, jew mill-fatt li l-persuni jkollhomx responsabbiltajiet ta' kura għal persuni dipendenti.

### X'INHUMA L-BENEFIĊĊJI GħALL-ORGANIZZAZZJONI?

Skont diversi sondaggi li saru madwar id-dinja, l-organizzazzjonijiet li jppromwvu l-ugwaljanza bejn is-sessi fil-prattika organizzattiva tagħhom, jidher li għandhom vantaġġ ċar fuq negozji oħra li joperaw fuq-ċettur tagħhom. Dan instab li huwa dovut għal għadd ta' fatturi li jinkludu:

- **Aċċess għall-grupp sħiħ ta' talent:** hemm ċans aħjar li reklutaġġ mitub għan-nisa u għall-irġiel jaqbad lil-individwi l-aħtar kreattivi u ta' hila.
- **Profittabbiltà akbar permezz tal-inkluzjoni taż-żewġ sessi:** l-inkuraggiment mogħti liż-żewġ sessi f'kull livell tal-organizzazzjoni f'focer approċċi aktar innovattivi bbażati fuq il-hiliet u l-esperjenzi differenti tal-impjegati rġiel kif ukoll tal-impjegati nisa.
- **L-istatus ta' 'organizzazzjoni ppreferuta':** organizzazzjonijiet li jakkomodaw livell ta' flessibbiltà fl-waqt li joffru opportunitajiet għall-iżvilupp fuq il-post taż-żewġ, jgħdbu lejhom l-impjegati li għandhom l-akbar talenti.



- **Inqas spejjeż grazzi għaż-żamma tal-impjegati:** aċċess ugwali għal miżuri favur il-familja jgħin biex l-organizzazzjonijiet ikkonċernati jzommu magħhom persuni ta' valur, u b'hekk jiffrankaw l-ispejjeż ta' reklutaġġ ġdid u ta' taħniġ.
- **Il-perspettiva tal-klijenti:** grazzi għall-involvement taż-żewġ sessi fil-proċess tat-tehdid tad-deċisjonijiet, l-organizzazzjoni għandha ċans akbar fissoċjoċla l-hiġġijiet u l-aspettattivi tal-klijenti tagħha.
- **Gestjoni ta' riskju:** it-tħaddin ta' politika u struttura kummerċjali li jissalvagwardjaw id-drittijiet tal-impjegati kollha, jkura kontra problemi legali li jstgħu jinqalghu u kontra d-danni għar-reputazzjoni minhabba l-possibbiltà ta' litigazzjoni.
- **Holqien ta' opportunitajiet għal negozju ġdid:** qiegħda tikber fost l-investituri u l-imprizi, it-tendenza li jikkunsidraw il-prattika u l-politika organizzattiva favur il-promozzjoni u l-harsien tal-ugwaljanza bejn is-sessi, dawn l-entitajiet qegħdin ifittxu dejjem aktar li jaħdmu ma' organizzazzjonijiet li jhaddnu listess prinċipji f'dan il-qasam.

### X'INHUMA L-KRITEĊJI GħAĊ-ĊERTIFIKAZZJONI?

Sabiex jingħataz ċ-certifikat tal-Marka tal-Ugwaljanza, huwa meħtieġ li l-organizzazzjoni turi li tincab impenjata li:

- Timplimenta politika favur l-ugwaljanza u kontra l-hażtju sesswali fuq iż-żewġ sessi;
- Tiedu miżuri biex ikunu żgurati opportunitajiet indaqq fil-prattika tar-reklutaġġ u l-impjieg, u kif ukoll fil-proċess ta' żvilupp personali u fil-karriera;
- Tahtar rappreżentant/jew rappreżentanti tal-ugwaljanza minn fost l-impjegati tagħha;
- Timplimenta miżuri li jirrispetwaw il-hiġġijiet tal-familji tal-impjegati nisa u rġiel, u li daww li għandhom responsabbiltajiet ta' kura għal dipendenti toffrihom għazfiet biex jintlaħaq bilanċ bejn il-hajja privata u l-hajja taż-żewġ sessi;
- Tissorvelja l-modi kif sistemi jew politika għodda jstgħu jaffettwaw lil-impjegati rġiel u nisa;
- Tizgura li kull oġġett jew servizz iprovduti u/jew immaniġġati mill-organizzazzjoni jkunu aċċessibbli b' mod ekuw kemm għall-klijenti rġiel kif ukoll għall-klijenti nisa.

# 4. Building Knowledge and Networks

## 4.1 Our Conferences

The NCPE organised three conferences in 2019, namely: the *International Women's Day Conference*, the NCPE's *15<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference* and a seminar on the *Gender Pay Gap and Gender Pension Gap*.

### International Women's Day Conference 2019 – 5 March Career Advancement: Equal Opportunities?

The event to mark *International Women's Day* focused on career advancement and the underrepresentation of women in decision-making positions. The Conference '*Avvanz fil-Karriera: Opportunitajiet Ugwalī?*' (Career Advancement: Equal Opportunities?) provided an opportunity to scrutinize the challenges that need to be addressed to empower women whose full potential is not being achieved due to societal barriers. During the Conference, a forum discussed this area of concern.

The presentations focused on the **gender pay gap** and how this varies between different sectors, especially in decision-making positions; and on equal opportunities in the reconciliation of work and family life.

Personal achievements in **career advancement** were highlighted by panel members hailing from different backgrounds. These outlined the difficulties and successes of women and men and discussed what needs to be done to strengthen **gender balance in decision-making positions**.

As part of another panel discussion, NGOs and social partners explained their role and work towards the achievement of gender balance in decision-making positions at the workplace and discussed how they address issues such as reconciliation with family responsibilities and their impact on the gender pay gap.

### NCPE's 15th Annual Conference – 4 June

The NCPE held its 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference to showcase the NCPE's work during the previous year and to mark its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

An overview of the work in 2018 was given by staff members who explained the different facets of the NCPE's remit and functions. During the Conference, ten new companies were awarded the Equality Mark certification and 31 companies were recertified.





*The 15<sup>th</sup> NCPE Annual Conference*

Additionally, being the **15<sup>th</sup> anniversary** from the establishment of the NCPE, the main highlights of the work during these years were presented. These covered the main changes in the NCPE's remit along the years and developments in its investigative and promotional work.

The Conference underlined the progress achieved and the remaining challenges towards enhancing equality in specific areas. The NCPE laid out its commitment to continue working for equality in Maltese society.

### **Seminar on the Gender Pay Gap and the Gender Pension Gap – 18 November**

A seminar on the gender pay gap and the gender pension gap was organised on the 18 November and included discussions on the **segregation in education and the labour market**, **lack of women in decision making positions** and the **unequal distribution of unpaid care work** between women and men. This seminar was part of the EU co-funded project Prepare the Ground for Economic Independence.

The participants were welcomed by Ms. Renee Laiviera, the NCPE Commissioner and Acting Executive Director, who gave a brief overview of the gender pay gap in Malta and NCPE initiatives to address the gender gaps over the life course that hinder women's economic independence.



*Seminar on the gender pay gap and gender pension gap*

In his opening speech, Minister for European Affairs and Equality Hon. Edward Zammit Lewis held that equal economic independence is not only a requisite for self-fulfilment, but it is also a prerequisite for women and men to be in control of their lives and to make genuine choices. He highlighted that in general women are less economically independent than men even though women's participation in the labour market increased significantly in the last six years. Minister Zammit Lewis underlined that various measures have been introduced to support equal economic independence to empower more women to join or re-join the labour market.

Ms. Joana Micallef, the NCPE Project Promoter, presented the context of the gender pay gap in Malta and the EU and

explained how gender segregation in education leads to segregation in the labour market contributing to the gender pay gap. The second presentation focused on the gender inequalities that lead to the gender pay gap and the gender pension gap.

The first panel was made up of four representatives of educational institutions and support services and it was facilitated by Mr. Mario Xuereb, Junior Manager (Production News and Current Affairs) at the Public Broadcasting Services. The topic was on the student's decisions in choosing

their career and a debate followed on the educational systems, subject and course selections made by students, role models and job exposure in certain industries.

The second panel was made up of mainly union and employers' representatives and the topic was the gender pay gap and the gender pension gap. The arguments brought up during this discussion were primarily on women in the labour market and their financial dependence, wage transparency, salary structures and family-friendly measures.

## 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 the 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 2019 as in previous years.



*Equinet seminar on age discrimination*



*Equinet working group on policy formation*

### **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 elected the first vice-chair for 2019.

### **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.



*EIGE Logo*

It is composed of members from competent bodies specialised in gender equality issues from every Member State of the EU. Each country has 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.

### **High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming of the EU**

The High Level Group (HLG) on gender mainstreaming is an informal group created in 2001 and comprises high-level representatives from all member states responsible for gender mainstreaming at national level. It is chaired by the European Commission at regular meetings convened twice a year in close collaboration with the Presidency.



The HLG plays a key role for the EU gender equality agenda, including in the formulation, programming and implementation of the EU Gender Equality Pact and the Trio-Presidencies Programme. It helps the Presidencies and the Commission to identify gender equality subjects and priorities which are of political relevance. The HLG is also the main forum for planning the follow-up of the Beijing Platform for Action inside the EU and for preparing the annual meeting of the UN Commission on the Status of Women. It also assists the Commission in the preparation of its Report on equality between women and men.

### **Gender Equality Commission (GEC) – Council of Europe**

The Gender Equality Commission (GEC) was established to help ensure the mainstreaming of gender equality into all Council of Europe policies and to bridge the gap between commitments made at international level and the reality of women in Europe. The Commission, whose members are appointed by State Parties, provides advice, guidance and support to other Council of Europe bodies and to State parties. The GEC supports the implementation of the six objectives of the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy.

The NCPE's Commissioner attends the GEC plenary meetings that are held twice a year.

### **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).

### **Committee of the Parties to the Istanbul Convention**

Malta's representative in the Committee of the Parties of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), composed of the representatives of the Parties to the Convention is the NCPE's Commissioner.

The Committee of the Parties may adopt specific recommendations addressed to the Parties concerned on the basis of the reports and conclusions of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO).

### **Mutual Learning Programme on gender equality**

The mutual learning programme on gender equality aims to reinforce mutual learning among EU countries. The programme focuses on policy measures as well as concrete and existing examples. It addresses both the opportunities and limitations of real-life implementation. The



## ANNUAL REPORT 2019

programme provides an opportunity for the stimulation of debate and exchange of experience between governmental representatives, independent experts and other relevant stakeholders. The ultimate aim is to facilitate the dissemination of good practices on gender equality in the EU.

### European Social Cohesion Platform

The objective of the European Social Cohesion Platform is to enhance the Council of Europe's work in the area of social cohesion, in particular through the promotion of the European Social Charter and its collective complaints procedure in order to ensure equal and effective access to social rights.

### Committees and Boards

In 2019, the 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.

- **Project Selection Committee (PSC):** This Committee evaluates and selects project proposals submitted under the General Programme Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows.
- **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, foster the competitiveness

of small and medium-sized enterprises, protect the environment as well as promoting 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) 2007-2013 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 2007-2013:** The objective of this programme is to reduce economic and social disparities within the European Economic Area.
- **PPCD - Operational Programme I and Operational Programme II:** The role of the Monitoring Committee 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.



*NCPE Officer Ms Antoniella Gatt participating in an Equinet workshop*

# 5. Financial Overview

During the financial year 2019, the NCPE received government funding amounting to €453,431 (2018 – €350,366). Other income amounted to €2,175. Total recurrent cost amounted to €387,588 (2018 – €394,305) thereby registering a surplus of €68,018 for the year ending 31st December 2019. Staff Costs and Honoraria decreased to €342,575 (2018 – €346,992) representing 88% of the total costs. Administrative costs amounted to €45,013 (2018 – €47,313). As in previous years, these costs are being kept to a minimum. The main administrative costs are listed hereunder:

implement the project '*Prepare the Ground for Economic Independence*', which commenced in September 2018 and is set to be completed by the end of August 2020. It is part-financed by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme 2014-2020. The project total budget amounts to €394,202.

	<b>Eur €</b>
Legal and Professional fees	17,624
Stationery, Printing and Postage	7,560
Office related costs	6,179
Travelling & Transport	4,849
Other	8,801
	<hr/>
	<b>45,013</b>

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 2019, the NCPE continued to

# Looking Ahead

As we enter a new decade, the NCPE renews its commitment to work for a society that values diversity and strives for equality. In 2020, the Commission will continue receiving complaints of discrimination and ensure that complaints are investigated fairly and effectively so that cases of unfair treatment can be addressed as per its remit.

Promoting equality is one of our major objectives. In this context several campaigns will be conducted covering a wide range of issues such as pay discrimination, racism, homophobia and gender balance in politics. As part of its promotional work, the NCPE will continue delivering training and use will be made of different media to deliver its 'equality for all' message. National laws, policies and strategies will be regularly reviewed providing its input from an equality perspective. The organisation of and participation in conferences on specific subjects will enhance our work. The NCPE will also be available to reply to queries from the public.

The NCPE will develop its work to increase the number of employees working in equality-certified conditions by auditing, certifying and re-certifying companies and public entities with the Equality Mark. The NCPE Equality Mark will be strengthened through a campaign focusing on the new Equal Pay Tool measures in the updated certification process being developed as part of the Prepare the Ground for Economic Independence (PGEI) project. Following the finalization of the research study on existent equal pay tools in Europe and the development of the technical specifications, the Equal Pay

Tool will be created and pilot-tested on five companies going through the re-certification process in order to customise it for the local context.

The PGEI project will reach several milestones in 2020. A gender pension gap campaign will be carried out on the local TV channels and the NCPE's social media platforms. Sessions will be held with trade union representatives on how to safeguard equal pay in collective agreement negotiations and an information booklet will be presented to each participating trade union.

2020 will see the conclusion of the PGEI project and, potentially, the initiation of the project E4D (Empowerment for Diversity) in April. A launch conference is planned for the E4D project in the second half of 2020, should funding be secured. Moreover, the NCPE will initiate the procurement processes to kickstart the activities of the two-year project.

The *Human Rights and Equality Commission (HREC) Bill* and the *Equality Bill* will most likely be enacted in 2020 since these two Bills are now at an advanced stage in the Parliamentary debate. The NCPE would thus become an HREC with a wider remit, more functions and increased powers. We look forward to this development and commit ourselves to building the foundations of a new Commission that leaves a practical and positive impact on people's lives by offering effective remedies against discrimination and promoting equality in the different spheres of life.





