

PRESS STATEMENT:

An increase in the number of women elected in Local Council Elections

Out of 224 elected councillors in the 2015 local council elections, 43 were women - constituting 19.2% of all elected candidates. This registers an increase of 1.22% over the 2012 local council elections, when the percentage of women elected councillors was 17.98. Research has shown that the chances of women being elected is proportional to the percentage of women contesting. In fact, the percentage of women contestants stood at 20.37 while that of women elected stood at 19.2. This compares well with men's chances for election, whereby the percentage of men contestants and men elected was 79.63 and 80.8 respectively.

The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) welcomes the increase in the number of women elected on April 11th. Though this is a positive development towards further achieving gender-balance in decision-making positions, there is the need within political parties to integrate more women in all their structures and at all levels as well as to encourage more women to run for elections. It is important to strengthen the support structures, such as childcare and similar services, to address the specific needs of contesting individuals and elected officials. Greater commitment is required by all stakeholders to increase the number of contesting and elected women..

NCPE is currently carrying out various initiatives that promote gender balanced representation especially at the decision-making levels. The 'Directory of Professional Women' is in its final stages of development and will soon be officially launched. This Directory aims at giving visibility to professional women and their competences in the various sectors enhancing their opportunities to be considered for boards, committees and other top posts.

A mentoring programme where professionals support and empower women aspiring to hold decision-making positions is currently underway. Furthermore, research studies are being conducted on gender-balanced representation in boardrooms and in the political sphere. The studies also explore gender quotas and other measures that may enhance such gender-balance.

Gender-balanced political participation is vital for the good governance of the country. NCPE looks forward to further inroads by women in political participation as well as in decision-making positions in general.

For further information, contact NCPE on 2590 3850 or equality@gov.mt

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