

**NCPE urges Government and Opposition to prioritise establishment of National Human Rights and Equality Commission**

The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) urges the Government and the Opposition to prioritise the enactment of legislation establishing the National Human Rights and Equality Commission (NHREC), by finalising discussions on this much-needed law in the coming weeks so that it can be given priority when Parliament resumes following the summer recess.

The establishment of an independent Commission to replace the NCPE, together with the strengthening of Malta's human rights and equality framework, has been the subject of extensive discussion for the past 12 years. The failure of Parliament to proceed with the Bill establishing the NHREC earlier this year was therefore a major disappointment and a missed opportunity to strengthen people's access to their rights.

The Bill that was before Parliament would have established an independent NHREC answerable to Parliament, with functions and powers to promote human rights and equality and to investigate related breaches. It would also have introduced a more coherent and robust equality framework aimed at addressing shortcomings in Malta's current equality legislation.

Malta remains without a dedicated human rights commission with the mandate to monitor and promote human rights. Furthermore, the current legal framework governing the NCPE and the existing anti-discrimination provisions contain several weaknesses and do not conform to the EU Directives on Standards for Equality Bodies, which were required to be transposed by June this year.

The NCPE notes the public consultation process launched by the Opposition on the proposed National Human Rights and Equality Commission. While it welcomes stakeholders' contribution to the development of this important legislation, it also highlights the need for both the Government and the Opposition to ensure that the parliamentary process moves forward and that the legislation is ultimately enacted without further delay.

The establishment of an independent and effective National Human Rights and Equality Commission is long overdue. Malta needs a strong institutional framework capable of protecting and promoting human rights and equality and ensuring effective access to rights for all.

**28<sup>th</sup> August 2026**