

Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for
Action and the Outcomes of the Twenty-third Special Session
of the General Assembly

Malta

Malta National Review on the Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (2000)

This report presents the developments on measures and action undertaken in Malta to further achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women, in line with the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. In effect, this report delineates progress on the implementation of measures, alongside other relevant information on the progress and challenges in relation to gender equality including researches, quantitative and qualitative data, and links to publications and other relevant documents.

As suggested in the '*Guidance note for the preparation of national reviews*', this report is presented in four sections, with respective Annexes, as follows:

- Section One: Overview analysis of achievements and challenges since 1995
- Section Two: Progress in the implementation of the critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action since 2009
- Section Three: Data and Statistics
- Section Four: Emerging priorities
- Annexes with relevant statistical information and related material.

This national report is structured according to the guiding questions provided, and a consultative process was carried out with various departments and Ministries for its compilation.

NCPE fosters a good working relationship and constant consultation with various stakeholders, including employers, employees, non-governmental organisations, civil society organisations and other entities. This consultation process includes the sharing of knowledge and experiences related to gender equality and an exchange of views to better understand the circumstances and needs of these stakeholders.

A comprehensive list of the entities consulted is delineated in Annex I – Entities Consulted.

Section One:

Overview analysis of achievements and challenges since 1995

a) What are the country's three to five major achievements in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly?

Why are these considered to be the major achievements? Please provide evidence that supports this assessment.

What has contributed to this success? Describe measures taken in terms of policies and mechanisms to maintain or build on this success.

The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality

Since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 1995, one of the major achievements in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women in Malta is the establishment of an equality body that promotes *de facto* equality, and works to promote and safeguard gender equality in society at large. In effect, in 2014 the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) is marking the 10th Anniversary since its inception; ten years that have been characterised by numerous initiatives through which equality has been placed and steadily maintained on the national agenda.

Over the past ten years, NCPE has increasingly sought ways to continue to raise awareness on rights and responsibilities related to equality and non-discrimination based on equal treatment. Moreover, the Commissioner for Equality continues to investigate reports of alleged discrimination on grounds falling within the remit of NCPE, as defined in the sections hereunder.

When established by the Equality of Men and Women Act (CAP 456 of the Laws of Malta) in 2004, NCPE dealt exclusively with non-discrimination and equal opportunities on the basis of gender and family responsibilities in employment and education. This legislation was amended in 2012 and broadened NCPE's remit which today encompasses equal treatment on the grounds of sex and family responsibilities, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, racial or ethnic origin, and gender identity in employment, education or vocational training and by banks or financial institutions. NCPE also safeguards and promotes equal treatment on the grounds of gender and race or ethnic origin in the access to and supply of goods and services through respective legislation¹.

¹ In particular, NCPE works to safeguard equal treatment in the access to and supply of goods and services: between women and men by virtue of *Legal Notice 181 of 2008 – Access to Goods and Services and their Supply (Equal Treatment) Regulations*; and on the grounds of race or ethnic origin by virtue of *Legal Notice 85 of 2007 – Equal Treatment of Persons Order*.

NCPE provides, on an ongoing basis, expert advice in areas falling within its remit; including training to various stakeholders on subject matters related to equal treatment; and carries out awareness raising initiatives on specific subject matters related to gender equality. Throughout the years, NCPE has also been engaged in various national research studies and their respective publications, which help shed further light on matters related to equality. This research has also enabled NCPE to develop tools for various stakeholders and to continue to raise awareness and educate society through the dissemination of further information on equality rights and responsibilities.

Furthermore, NCPE has also introduced initiatives, such as the Equality Mark, to provide a mechanism, which promotes equal opportunities and recognises good practice. In effect, the Equality Mark Certification is awarded to companies that truly foster gender equality in their policies and practices. By 2013, 54 companies have obtained this certification resulting in more than 15,000 employees working under gender-certified conditions. *(Please refer to Section II in the area of 'Women and the Economy' for further details on this initiative)*

Hence, through its functions and remit, NCPE promotes gender equality and the empowerment of women in line with the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action through various initiatives. NCPE also engages with various stakeholders to continue safeguarding gender equality in their work, and assists persons who are discriminated in their quest for gender equality.

The Implementation of Gender Mainstreaming

Since its inception, NCPE has carried out various initiatives to empower stakeholders to implement gender mainstreaming in policies and measures to further strengthen the position of gender mainstreaming on the national agenda.

In effect, in 2000 the Government published a Circular that reiterated that *“At the World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995, the Government of Malta endorsed the adoption of gender-mainstreaming as the main strategic objective for action to achieve de facto gender equality”*². It also stated that the implementation of gender equality policies and gender mainstreaming is the responsibility of every Ministry and Department³ within the public administration. Moreover, the national machinery for gender equality (the Commission for the Advancement of Women at the time) was entrusted with the responsibility of co-ordinating the implementation of gender mainstreaming.

In 2000, Malta’s national report on the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action stated that *“methodologies for consistent application [of gender mainstreaming were] being developed”*. In effect, gender equality committees were established in Ministries and Departments to further safeguard gender equality within the public administration and the respective policies and measures undertaken.

² Office of the Prime Minister Circular No. 24/2000. Gender Mainstreaming

³ Ibid.

In particular, NCPE sought to monitor and identify further capacity building needs for the actual implementation of gender mainstreaming across all Ministries, Government departments, public entities and in the national policy-making programmes⁴; and to provide training and sensitise stakeholders within the public administration in this regard.

NCPE also reiterated its commitment towards gender mainstreaming through another set of initiatives aimed at strengthening the knowledge and understanding of gender mainstreaming within the public administration⁵. Discussions with high level representatives within all Ministries were carried out; alongside further workshop training sessions that empowered stakeholders to implement gender mainstreaming. Practical and user-friendly tools were developed and widely disseminated with relevant stakeholders to provide further assistance.

As a result of such discussions, another Circular⁶ was published that formalises gender mainstreaming and establishes an annual reporting system that has to be carried out by Ministries and Departments. Thus a consistent and structured monitoring system on gender mainstreaming was established to continue addressing the circumstances and needs of men and women in all spheres.

Increased participation of women in the labour market

Malta has witnessed a significant increase in the participation of women in the labour market throughout recent years. In 2000, the female employment rate was 33% for the 16-54 age group, which increased to 44.2% by 2012⁷. This increase in female representation on the labour market enables women to make better use of their talent, skills and qualifications; to enhance their economic independence; to reduce the risk-of-poverty and social exclusion and to further contribute in the labour market and the national economy. Moreover, an enhanced participation in the labour market contributes to gender equality and the empowerment of women in various critical areas of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. 1

Despite this achievement, the Government of Malta is committed to seeing more women participate in the labour market through the introduction of various support measures that are set out in Section Two of this report. The employment rate stood at 63.1% in 2012, which exceeded the previous national target of 62.9%.^[1] In effect, the Government has revised its employment target (among 20 to 64 year olds) to 70% by 2020. Measures and initiatives to continue increasing the participation of women in the labour market, and thus to further enhance the empowerment of women are a priority of this Government.

The Employment Aid Programme was a successful scheme in supporting the labour market participation of women. Between 2009 and 2013, 44% of participants in the scheme were women. This indicates an

⁴ This was done through the EU co-funded project *Living Equality VS/2007/0442*.

⁵ These initiatives were carried out as part of the EU co-funded project *Gender Mainstreaming in Practice VS/2010/0819*.

⁶ Office of the Prime Minister Circular No.15/2012. *Gender Mainstreaming in Practice*.

⁷ Eurostat Employment (main characteristics and rates) - annual averages [lfsi_emp_a]

[1] Ministry for Finance, April 2014. *Malta's National Reform Programme under the Europe 2020 Strategy*.

improvement in attracting females in an activation measure, expected to lead to an increase in female participation in the labour market. In addition, the EAP scheme had a very successful retention rate of participants. Since the start of the scheme till 2013, 813 females out of 1125 female participants were still in employment 6 months after receiving subsidy (72.3% retention rate).

b) What are the country's three to five major challenges in the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly?

Why are these considered to be the major challenges?

Describe the strategy (ies) that is (are) in place to address the challenges?

Under-reporting of Discrimination

One of the major challenges in the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women is the under-reporting of discriminatory incidents to responsible bodies. In effect, NCPE is empowered to investigate complaints of persons who feel discriminated against on the grounds of gender and family responsibilities, as well as gender identity (among other grounds) in employment, education and vocational guidance, and by banks and financial institutions, as well as in the access to and supply of goods and services. Nonetheless, NCPE deems that the under-reporting of discrimination has been prevalent throughout the years and is still common.

In this regard, NCPE carried out a study in 2010 to identify and analyse the reasons that inhibit victims of discrimination from reporting their cases to responsible bodies⁸. It emerged from this study that the major reasons that prevented victims from reporting gender discrimination were feelings of powerlessness, fear of being exposed and embarrassment.

This is a major challenge since it is through reporting of cases of discrimination that victims of discrimination can experience redress in the context of effective gender equality. Hence, NCPE is addressing this challenge by intensifying awareness on gender equality and on its functions and remit, especially its investigative responsibility to assist victims of discrimination; and to further empower victims of discrimination to come forward with their cases.

In effect, NCPE's strategy is to provide training on equality to every group of individuals that requests such training and to disseminate further information on NCPE's functions and responsibilities to empower victims of discrimination to report their cases to responsible bodies, including NCPE. NCPE is also active in awareness raising campaigns on the reporting of discriminatory incidents and harassment. This is done through its participation in programmes in the broadcast media as well as through the printed media.

⁸ Underreporting of Discriminatory Incidents in Malta – A Research Study. This research was carried out as part of the EU co-funded project *Strengthening Equality beyond Legislation - VS/2009/0405*.

To further enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of NCPE's assistance to victims of discrimination, NCPE is working to strengthen its internal capacity. In particular, NCPE staff members will be provided with training on psycho/social skills for supporting client groups including victims of discrimination⁹.

Gender Stereotypes

Traditional gender stereotypes inhibit gender equality and the empowerment of women in all the critical areas of the Beijing Platform for Action. Gender stereotypes limit the developments and the achievements that women and men can accomplish in all the social, economic and political spheres of society, since through gender stereotypes, rigid stereotypes are assigned to women and men. Hence the participation of women, or men, in areas that are typically dominated by a particular gender, may be limited.

Throughout the years, various developments have taken place whereby women are seen to increasingly participate in areas in which they were previously under-represented. In particular, women are increasingly participating in paid employment; and are high achievers in tertiary education not only numerically but also qualitatively. Nonetheless, women are still under-represented in decision-making roles and tend to be victims of domestic violence much more than men. Hence, stereotypes are still a challenge to the achievement of gender equality in these spheres.

NCPE is committed to continue raising awareness and providing training to empower girls and boys, and women and men to challenge stereotypes and discriminatory attitudes, so that they are better able to develop and make best use of their skills. Through the Equality Mark Certification, which is awarded to companies that truly foster gender equality in their policies and practices, NCPE is empowering employers and employees to abolish discriminatory practices and challenge stereotypical attitudes towards employees on the ground of their gender and family responsibilities. NCPE also published guidance on tools to empower stakeholders to mainstream gender in their work and in the policies and/or programmes that they develop, with the aim of safeguarding gender equality and combating discrimination and stereotypes through selective initiatives. In this regard, NCPE also provides training to empower stakeholders to implement gender mainstreaming as a means of safeguarding equality and challenging stereotypes in all areas. *(Please refer to Section II in the area of 'Institutional Mechanisms for the advancement of women' for further details the initiatives related to the promotion of gender mainstreaming).*

NCPE is working on initiatives that will give further visibility to women in decision-making positions and will empower more women to aspire for these positions. These initiatives include a Directory of Professional Women, a mentoring programme for women aspiring to hold decision-making positions, as well as training and research on this subject. *(Please refer to Annex XII – Gender Balance in Decision Making for further details on these initiatives)*

⁹ This training will be carried out as part of the EU co-funded project *Developing a Culture of Rights through Capacity Building – ESF 4.220*.

NCPE will also promote the zero-tolerance approach to violence against women and girls through a nation-wide launched awareness raising campaign. Thus, through such approach NCPE will further challenge stereotypical attitudes and beliefs in relation to such forms of violence. NCPE will carry out research on distinct forms of violence against women and respective awareness raising campaigns in this regard. *(Please refer to Section II in the area of 'Violence against women' for further details these initiatives)*

Enhancing Gender Equality and Empowerment of Diverse Women

Women are at risk of being discriminated against on grounds other than just gender. Hence, multiple discrimination is identified to pose an additional challenge to the achievement of equality for women and men in society at large.

NCPE deems that the implementation of gender mainstreaming has to be strengthened in order to address the circumstances and needs of diverse women and men in all policies and programmes. NCPE is also undertaking to further enhance its capacity to be better able to address equality mainstreaming, thus consolidating gender mainstreaming. To this end, NCPE staff members have been provided with specific training on equality mainstreaming to be better able to promote equality mainstreaming and assist stakeholders in delivering on this objective¹⁰.

Moreover, following its extension of NCPE's remit in 2012 to cover additional grounds of discrimination based on age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, racial or ethnic origin, and gender identity besides gender and family responsibilities, the protection of equal treatment on these grounds was further enhanced and constitutes part of the ongoing work of NCPE. NCPE is also working to enhance its efficiency and effectiveness to better deliver on its functions and responsibilities in order to address wider audiences, particularly those who are at risk of being discriminated against on the ground of gender, alongside other grounds.

c) What setbacks/reversals in progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women have been experienced since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (if different from those already identified in b)?

What were the major factors that caused the setbacks?

What mitigation measures or other actions, if any, have been implemented to counter the setbacks?

The main setbacks/reversals to the achievement of gender equality are delineated in reply to question (b) below. As stated in the previous reply, progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women have experienced a positive curve with some areas showing more positive results (the participation of women in employment) than in others (the underrepresentation of women in decision-making positions).

¹⁰ This training was provided to NCPE staff as part of the EU co-funded project *Enhancing Equal Rights JUST/2012/PROG/AG/3717*.

d) What have been the main constitutional, legislative and/or legal developments in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women?

What laws and/or regulations remain in place (or have been introduced) that could have adverse effects on promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women in the country?

An important legislative development in this field since 1995 is the enactment of Chapter 456 of the Laws of Malta – *Equality for Men and Women Act* that safeguards gender equality (among other grounds) in employment, education and vocational guidance, and by banks and financial institutions, whilst prohibiting discriminatory advertising for vacant posts in employment and sexual harassment. Moreover, this legislation established the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) and delineates its functions, as follows:

- (a) to identify, establish and update all policies directly or indirectly related to issues of equality for men and women;
- (b) to identify the needs of persons who are disadvantaged by reasons of their sex and to take such steps within its power and to propose appropriate measures in order to cater for such needs in the widest manner possible;
- (c) to monitor the implementation of national policies with respect to the promotion of equality for men and women;
- (d) to liaise between, and ensure the necessary coordination between, government departments and other agencies in the implementation of measures, services or initiatives proposed by Government or the Commission from time to time;
- (e) to keep direct and continuous contact with local and foreign bodies working in the field of equality issues, and with other groups, agencies or individuals as the need arises;
- (f) to work towards the elimination of discrimination between men and women;
- (g) to carry out general and independent investigations with a view to determine whether the provisions of this Act are being complied with;
- (h) to independently investigate complaints of a more particular or individual character to determine whether the provisions of this Act are being contravened with respect to the complainant and, where deemed appropriate, to mediate with regard to such complaints;
- (i) to inquire into and advise or make determinations in an independent manner on any matter relating to equality between men and women as may be referred to it by the Minister;
- (j) to provide independent assistance, where and as appropriate, to persons suffering from discrimination in enforcing their rights under this Act;
- (k) to keep under review the working of this Act, and where deemed required, at the request of the Minister or otherwise, submit proposals for its amendment or substitution;
- (l) to perform such other function as may be assigned by this or any other Act or such other functions as may be assigned by the Minister.

Chapter 456 was further strengthened by the entry into force of Legal Notice 181 of 2008 - *Access to Goods and Services and their Supply (Equal Treatment) Regulations*, which prohibits direct and indirect discrimination, as well as harassment and sexual harassment in the access to and supply of goods and services.

Furthermore, work has also started on the revision of the Social Security Act¹¹ in order to preclude differential treatment based on gender whilst sustaining instances of positive action when necessary.

e) What is the approximate share of the national budget that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women?

Malta's Financial Estimates 2014¹² indicate that the total national recurrent expenditure is €2,726,175,000, while the budget allocated for the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (that works to safeguard equality on the grounds of gender and family responsibilities, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, racial or ethnic origin, and gender identity) is €230,000 and €100,000 co-financing allocation for the implementation of EU co-funded projects (EU PROGRESS).

Besides, at a national level, the total funds for Priority Axis 3 of the Operational Programme II, (that is aimed at increasing the female participation rate in labour market; and to contribute towards the integration, retention and progression of disadvantaged groups in the labour market, whilst addressing labour market distortions) were fully committed. In effect, the total funds allocated for this Priority Axis €36,900,000 (85% EU + 15% MT) were committed.

In addition, NCPE has taken up various EU-funded initiatives between 2007 and 2013, which include:

- ESF funds, as part of the Priority Axis 3 (ESF, OPII 2007-2013): allocation was in fact taken up by 2 of NCPE's projects (ESF3.47 and ESF3.196), amounting to circa €1,194,000, i.e. €179,236 co-financing, with another project worth €320,500 under Priority Axis 4 on the Strengthening of the institutional and administrative capacity (i.e. €48,075 MT share).
- As regards PROGRESS funds (2007-2013), NCPE has taken up circa €1.5million (i.e. €300,319 MT share).

Therefore, the total national share (including PROGRESS and ESF funds) for NCPE between 2007 and 2013 amounted to circa €527,630. *Please refer to Annex II – Funds Utilised by NCPE for EU co-funded projects.*

In a nutshell, on average, the annual expenditure on equality by NCPE is €230,000 that is allocated in the Budgetary Estimates. Besides this, EU funds are allocated to specific projects with the respective national share of funding that is utilised to carry out such projects to further enhance gender equality, as indicated above.

¹¹ Electoral Manifesto 2013 – Malta Taghna Lkoll.

¹² Ministry for Finance, 2014. Financial Estimates 2014.

Describe efforts to increase and track national planning and budgetary allocations related to achieving gender equality and empowerment of women, in preparation of development plans and budgets at national, regional/provincial and local levels.

In order to enhance Malta's national capacity building in relation to gender responsive budgeting, NCPE published a study on Gender Responsive Budgeting¹³ in 2009. This study sought to sensitise stakeholders on the impact that budgets can have on women and men. In fact, this research highlights the benefits of gender responsive budgeting; delineates its pre-requisites and principles; outlines various methods and tools that can be used to conduct a gender analysis of budgets; and gives various examples of gender responsive budgeting in European countries. The findings were published in a research document *Gender Responsive Budgeting: A study on GRB initiatives* which is available on: http://msdc.gov.mt/en/NCPE/Documents/Projects_and_Specific_Initiatives/Living_Equality/grb.pdf

f) What mechanisms are in place for regular dialogue between Government and civil society? If mechanisms are in place, briefly describe them.

The Malta-EU Steering and Action Committee (MEUSAC) provides a forum for a structured and regular dialogue between Government and civil society on matters related to European Union policy and legislation.

Moreover, a Core Group, chaired by the Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties and composed of senior government officials, representatives of political parties, the social partners, other constituted bodies and civil society, meets regularly to discuss EU related issues having national implications. The Chairman and Executive Secretary of the Malta Council for Economic and Social Development (MCESD) are also members on the Core Group, thereby ensuring that the two main consultative structures for social dialogue in Malta (MEUSAC and MCESD) work in tandem with one another.

Moreover, MEUSAC has 9 sectoral committees that in general mirror the EU Council formations and which deal with EU related issues of a more sectoral nature. Membership of these committees is open to all civil society organisations having an interest. The sectoral committees are the following:

- Agriculture and Fisheries
- Competitiveness and Consumer Affairs
- Economic and Financial Affairs
- Education, Youth, Culture and Sport
- Employment, Social Policy and Health
- Environment
- General Affairs
- Justice and Home Affairs
- Transport, Telecommunications and Energy

¹³ This study was carried out as part of the EU co-funded project *Living Equality VS/2007/0442*.

The Malta Council for Economic and Social Development (MCESD)¹⁴ is an advisory council that issues opinions and recommendations to the Maltese Government on matters of economic and social relevance. In this capacity, the MCESD's vision is one of continuous improvement of social dialogue, through an effective catalyst between the Social Partners and the Government. The aim of this Council is that, following consultations held within the Council, sound and concrete recommendations on socio-economic matters are heeded by the Government prior to any reforms, or the introduction of relevant measures. The Council is a tool for analysis and, at times, a catalyst for change. The fact that Unions, Government and Employers' Organisations get together to discuss issues of national relevance, in a very frank way, is considered a positive achievement in furthering the development of social dialogue in Malta.

Do non-governmental organizations, including civil society organizations, women's organizations, academia, faith-based organizations, the private sector and other actors participate formally in the mechanisms established to monitor and implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action?

Despite not having a formal mechanism in place, the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) has a good working relationship with non-governmental organisations, including civil society organisations, women's organisations, academia, faith-based organisations, and the private sector. NCPE consults with these organisations when formulating and/or implementing initiatives or measures that further safeguard or promote gender equality, in line with the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. NCPE also partners with various organisations when carrying out specific initiatives to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of such measures through the sharing of expertise and knowledge on equal treatment or on particular areas in which these organisations work.

g) What main in-country, bilateral, sub-regional and/or regional cooperation is the country engaged in to support sharing of knowledge and experiences in the monitoring and implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly?

What results have been achieved through such efforts and what lessons have been learnt?

What is the perceived value of the cooperation?

In what ways could cooperation be improved to strengthen sharing of knowledge and experiences in implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action?

As one of the key players in promoting and safeguarding equality, NCPE deems that for there to be optimisation of resources and output and in order to achieve an equal society, it is imperative to engage with key stakeholders at national and regional levels (including government, national and local authorities, various associations, educational authorities, employers' organisations, trade unions, civil society and NGOs as well as international organisations). NCPE regularly engages with relevant stakeholders, and in so doing, keeps them updated with

¹⁴ The Malta Council for Economic and Social Development (MCESD).
<http://www.mcesd.org.mt/content.aspx?id=101555>

information on developments in relation to equality, mainly through the dissemination of tools and publications on equal treatment, which includes a newsletter published by the NCPE on a regular basis and other information disseminated through various media, including on NCPE's website; updates on equality and on initiatives carried out by NCPE through social media; and meetings with stakeholders when appropriate.

Through such efforts, NCPE not only seeks to share and disseminate information on equality, but to also acquire further knowledge on current developments and needs at local and grassroots levels. Such cooperation is valued by NCPE since, apart from raising further awareness on equality, NCPE is also better able to understand the challenges that need to be addressed in order to enhance gender equality, and to develop and implement initiatives to further safeguard gender equality.

h) How, and to what extent, have the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) overall, and in particular the gender-related MDGs, facilitated or strengthened the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action?

NCPE acknowledges contribution of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), particularly the goals that are gender-related, to the enhancement of gender equality and equal opportunities for women and men. These strengthen the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action since such goals and commitments contribute to the effective development and participation of women in the different sectors of society, be it social, political as well as economic. NCPE deems that through the MDGs and in line with the objectives of BPfA, gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment in the various spheres have enhanced their participation in society at large thus facilitating the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

Section Two:

Progress in the implementation of the critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action since 2009

This section addresses the following guiding questions for each of the twelve critical areas of concern when appropriate:

a) What is the status of progress in each of the twelve critical areas of concern and their strategic objectives, and relevant sections of the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly? Please provide concrete supporting evidence, including statistical data and other relevant sources.

Has any of these areas been supported by legal measures, national policies, strategies, plans, programmes and/or projects developed and implemented since 2009? Please provide examples of such measures.

Were these measures monitored in the relevant areas? Please provide statistical data and assessments on the results achieved through these measures.

b) Describe the obstacles, gaps and challenges since 2009 in implementing the critical areas of concern.

Were there any countercyclical measures introduced in your country since 2009 to mitigate the consequences of global economic and financial crisis?

If so, did these measures incorporate a gender perspective and/or include women as a targeted group?

c) Have austerity policies/measures, such as tax increases, cuts in public expenditure, or public sector downsizing, been introduced in your country in the aftermath of the 2007/2008 financial crisis?

If so, to what extent have they affected the critical areas of concern? Please describe the effects of such measures on key indicators, such as participation of women and men in social and economic activity, including education, training, participation in labour markets, unpaid work, access to social protection, access to credit, or entrepreneurship.

A. Women and poverty

Progress

The feminisation of poverty is strongly linked to a number of critical areas of concern and strategic objectives of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The critical areas of concern and strategic objectives aimed at promoting women's economic rights and independence, including through access to employment, appropriate working conditions, education and training, health, the media and the environment, are all seen to impact on poverty and social exclusion. Likewise, the strategic objectives of combating violence against women, participation in armed conflict, ensuring the protection of the human rights of women, enabling access to power and decision-making as well as the creation of institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women are all important factors in poverty reduction. In addition, addressing attention to promoting the well-being of the girl-child should help to counteract the inter-generational transmission of poverty, in particular the feminisation of poverty. Hence, the measures delineated in the respective sections below, contribute to curb or prevent the feminisation of poverty.

In January 2014, the Government of Malta launched *Malta's National Action Plan on Social Inclusion for 2014*¹⁵ and the '*Green Paper: A Framework for Poverty Reduction and for Social Inclusion*', which put forward a number of measures to enhance the active inclusion of women. Such initiatives include the implementation of measures to: increase the employment rate of female vulnerable groups; enhance work-life balance and consolidate family friendly measures; mainstream gender issues across all national policies; and strengthen legislative and policy frameworks to combat discrimination and gender stereotypes. National strategies aim to consolidate convergences between social inclusion and anti-discrimination issues and address multiple-discrimination and multiple forms of poverty and exclusion faced by women. *The Green Paper is available on: <http://mfss.gov.mt/en/MJDF/Press%20Releases/Pages/The%20Minister%20Press%20Releases/Il-Gvern-b'mira-li-jnaqqas-il-faqar.aspx>*

¹⁵ The "Malta's National Action Plan on Social Inclusion for 2014", will be finalised and published online till end of April 2014.

Moreover, NCPE has carried out research on the situation of vulnerable workers in Malta in 2011. This research study sought to explore self/employed/contract workers in the tourist industry, the cleaning industry and language schools and to assess and analyse what makes their situation vulnerable. To this end, this study analysed the working conditions of these vulnerable women and men including remuneration, other entitlements, training opportunities, health and safety, together with their relationship with management; employment status; and effects of the vulnerability on these workers. *The research findings of this study are available on:*

http://msdc.gov.mt/en/NCPE/Documents/Projects_and_Specific_Initiatives/Unlocking_The_Female_Potential/research_report.pdf

Women are at a higher risk of poverty than men, partly due to lower earnings, higher prevalence in less valued and precarious employment conditions and unpaid caring responsibilities. Despite the considerable advancement in gender equality over the past decades, gender gaps in relation to poverty remain prevalent. Recent data shows that in 2012, the at-risk-of-poverty rate stood at 14.4% for males and 15.8% for females, while the at-risk-of-poverty or social exclusion rate for males stood at 24.1% and 21.7% for females¹⁶. Furthermore, in 2012, the material deprivation rate for women stood at 20.4%, exceeding the rate of 19.1% for men. In 2012, the rate of severe material deprivation for females also exceeded that of males with 9.7% and 8.6% respectively¹⁷. Thus, the efforts sustained towards combating poverty among women need to be accompanied and supported through other general social protection measures to enhance social cohesion and promote the full participation of women across all sectors of society. In effect, the below-mentioned measures present some of the legal measures, policies, and programmes that have been proposed and implemented to target the relevant areas to address the feminization of poverty.

Work-life balance and family friendly measures have been consolidated, namely through an extension in maternity leave, from 14 to 16 weeks in 2011, and 16 to 18 weeks in 2013. In addition, Malta continued to invest in fiscal incentives, child-care facilities and tax rebates, to encourage more women to participate in the labour market. The 2014 budget also announced various measures aiming to empower persons with caring responsibilities and women to return or remain in employment. Such measures include, for example, the introduction of free child care service to dual-earner families, single employed parents, and parents in education. This budgetary measure came into force as from April 2014. In October 2013, a White Paper on *Early Childhood Education and Care*, aiming at the formulation of a National policy was published for consultation. Together with the provision of free child-care centres, the Maltese Government shall be endorsing an increased deduction, from 1,300 Euro to 2,000 Euro, in income tax for parents whose children attend payable childcare centres. *Further measures are delineated in Area of Concern F: Women and the Economy.*

¹⁶ NSO, 2013. Statistics on Income and Living Conditions 2012: Salient Indicators.

¹⁷ Eurostat. Material Deprivation rate by sex (source: SILC)

Another proposed measure is that of increasing the number and role of women in decision-making positions, such as those serving on government appointed boards and commissions¹⁸. *Please refer to initiatives in relation to Area of Concern G: Women in Power and Decision-Making for further information in this regard.*

Quality full-time employment is the best safeguard against poverty and social exclusion. Active inclusion strongly demands improved access to quality jobs so as to allow people, particularly women and vulnerable groups to integrate in the labour market. Thus, active inclusion demands actions aimed at enhancing working conditions, flexible working arrangements, access to lifelong learning and career prospects. Reconciliation of work and private life is an important determinant of a woman's work prospect. To this end, due attention should be paid to flexible working-time arrangements and the provision of affordable and accessible (child and elderly) care services.

In this regard, among many other European Union Member States, in 2012, Malta recorded the highest increase in the share of employed women (7%). Malta also has the highest percentage of career prospects and advancement: 43% (45% for women and 42% for men), almost doubling the EU average. In Malta, women benefit from higher career and employment security than men, in the case of transitions from one job to another in cases of redundancy or resignation (an 11% difference). Furthermore, in Malta, the percentage of training received at work tends to be higher for women than men, signifying a higher investment in skills development¹⁹.

Challenges and Impacts of the Financial Crisis

The global crisis affected negatively world demand, trade, investment conditions, as well as industrial production. The repercussions of this downturn also contributed to a slow-down in Malta's real economic growth although this was not as serious as in some other European Union Member states. Malta's exports have also been negatively hit as a consequence of the global economic downturn, this having been also reflected in the turnover of the local manufacturing industry which declined during the course of 2008 and the second half of 2009. Nevertheless, the Maltese banking system continued to be characterised by a strong liquidity ratio, a capital adequacy ratio, which is well above the statutory minimum, a prudent loan-to-deposit ratio and well diversified portfolios and non-performing loans on a downward trend. In view of this and the minimal indirect effects of the crisis on Maltese banks, there was no need for any rescue packages to be implemented by the Maltese Government.

Although Malta's economy is very open, Malta managed to withstand the economic crisis successfully without resorting to austerity measures. The Maltese Government embarked on a deficit reduction exercise, focusing on restraining growth in government expenditure, coupled with incentives to strengthen the country's competitiveness. In view of this, no adverse impact is seen on the critical areas of concern and strategic objectives of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action as a direct result of the financial crisis.

¹⁸ National Reform Programme 2013 Measure

¹⁹ Review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States: Women and the Economy' (Draft report: January 20, 2014).

B. Education and training of women

Progress

Equal access to education

In order to safeguard equal access to education, the Directorate for Educational Services within the Ministry for Education and Employment ensures compliance to statements arising from the Education Act (CAP 327) that is set up to consolidate and reform the law relating to Education in Malta (16th August, 1988; 5th September, 1988; 16th April, 1991) This legislation provides that:

- *‘It is the right of every citizen of the Republic of Malta to receive education and instruction without any distinction of age, sex, belief or economic means.’*
- *It is the duty of the State - (a) to promote education and instruction; (b) to ensure the existence of a system of schools and institutions accessible to all Maltese citizens catering for the full development of the whole personality including the ability of every person to work; and (c) to provide for such schools and institutions where these do not exist.*
- *It is the duty of every parent of a minor to cause him- (a) to be registered in a school for the first scholastic year starting when he is of a compulsory school age; (b) to continue to attend school up to the end of the scholastic year during which the minor ceases to be of compulsory school age, or up to the end of such further.*

Furthermore, the Government is unrolling a series of reforms in the Maltese educational system. These reforms, such as the “*Framework for the Education Strategy for Malta 2014-2024: Sustaining foundations, creating alternatives, increasing employability*” (<http://education.gov.mt/strategy/Documents/BOOKLET%20ESM%202014-2024%20ENG%2019-02.pdf>) are available and apply to both sexes. Their monitoring ensures that data is collected for both females and males. This framework for the Education Strategy for Malta 2014-2024 has four broad goals in line with European and world benchmarks:

- Reduce the gaps in educational outcomes between boys and girls and between students attending different schools; decrease the number of low achievers and raise the bar in literacy, numeracy, and science and technology competence; and increase student achievement;
- Support educational achievement of children at-risk-of-poverty and from low socio-economic status, and reduce the relatively high incidence of early school-leavers;
- Raise levels of student retention and attainment in further vocational and tertiary education and training; and
- Increase participation in lifelong learning and adult learning.

Other reforms include the White Paper on “**Early Childhood Education and Care in Malta: the Way Forward**” (<http://education.gov.mt/en/Documents/Public%20Consultations/White%20Paper.pdf>) including the provision of free childcare to all workers and parents in education, which measure is to further facilitate and increase the participation of females in the labour force, and also strengthening the country’s skills, as the initiative is also available to those parents seeking to further their education.

The “**National Curriculum Framework**” (<http://curriculum.gov.mt/en/Resources/The-NCF/Pages/default.aspx>) also presents initiatives and reforms that are inclusive of gender. One of the important principles that the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) is based upon is that of Diversity. Throughout the document respect for diversity and value difference are embedded in all the initiatives and activities being promoted. These values are primarily addressed through an inclusive school policy. The inclusive school does not only cater for the student irrespective of gender, religion, race, ability and beliefs, but has as one of its aims the promotion of the potential of each student through individualised attention and support. The school ethos and practices, especially at the Secondary years, transmit this value to all students. Besides being achieved specifically through particular learning areas, this aim is also developed through education for democracy and education for sustainable development.

Moreover, the co-education system that will start in Form 1 Secondary Education in all state Colleges as from scholastic year 2014-2015 and the introduction of vocational education for both sexes are also intended to further support strategic objective B.4, to support non-discriminatory education and training.

Promoting and safeguarding gender equality in schools

In 2010, NCPE delivered training sessions to educators and guidance teachers respectively to empower them to foster equal opportunities in the education of girls and boys.²⁰ This training sensitised teachers on equal treatment, including gender equality, and non-discrimination; and provided them with the opportunity to discuss related subject matters. Through these sessions, information was provided on discrimination experienced by vulnerable persons who are at risk of being discriminated against; information on relevant legislation on equal treatment; and an overview on diversity in schools.

In 2014, NCPE provided further training to teachers on equality²¹ to provide more information on this subject matter; including the long-term effects of equality in the classroom; and practical examples on equality mainstreaming. Hence teachers were further encouraged to incorporate equal treatment, including gender equality in their lessons by safeguarding equal opportunities for their students and curbing stereotypical or discriminatory beliefs or attitudes during the education process.

²⁰ This training was part of the EU co-funded project *Strengthening Equality beyond Legislation VS/2009/0405*.

²¹ This training was part of the EU co-funded project *Enhancing Equal Rights JUST/2012/PROG/AG/3717*.

NCPE also provides training to children and students at large, to help sensitise them on equality issues and empower them to challenge gender stereotypes. *Further information on this training is provided in Section L on the Girl-child.*

In 2010, NCPE organised an ‘Equality in Schools Competition’²² to further promote an educational responsibility towards equality, including gender equality. This competition gave secondary schools the possibility to present and describe the steps and measures taken to promote and implement equality within their school and disseminate an anti-discrimination message among students.

Lifelong education and training

The Government has been committed throughout the past years to provide access to education to ensure that illiteracy rates are decreased and to minimise the rates of early school leavers. Together with education, the provision of training services also plays an important role in addressing these areas of concern, to ultimately assist the persons in becoming employed. In this regard, the Public Employment Service (PES) ensures that women and men are given the opportunities to obtain the skills needed to integrate in the labour market. It seeks to promote lifelong learning with the aim to decrease illiteracy rates among jobseekers including women, while also enhancing their employability prospects through various initiatives, including training services and work exposure schemes. *Please refer to Table Two in Annex IV – Data on Lifelong Learning and Training for statistical information on female participants in education and training.*

The PES offers a number of training programmes that can assist job seekers, employed persons and inactive persons, including women, to enhance their skills or acquire new skills that help them become more employable. Amongst the subjects taught, IT courses such as Microsoft Digital Literacy and Basic Web Design are provided, given that knowledge in IT is considered as one of the key competences. Indeed when analysing the vacancies submitted by employers one can notice that being IT literate has become a must.

The Jobseekers’ Advisory Services Unit within the PES offers various services in a bid to aid the low-skilled, including women, develop basic skills and enhance their employability. Sessions on, ‘Developing an innovative and creative thinking pattern’, are intended to train participants on how to adopt a flexible attitude in the context of changing attitudes attributed to women’s participation in the labour market and an open mind by overcoming negative beliefs and thinking habits. Clients are assisted in meeting objectives and challenges at the place of work. Furthermore, the unit organises seminars for low-skilled people, which effectively help amongst others, to equip women with beneficial information on the benefits of work and re-entering the labour market, PES services, non-PES services, incentives and opportunities available, as well as information on the importance of soft skills and a revision of job searching tools.

²² This competition was part of the EU co-funded project *Strengthening Equality beyond Legislation VS/2009/0405*.

Since 2009 the Government has sought to implement measures to support and enhance the employability of women and men through training and job exposure. In fact, the Public Employment Service has implemented several training services and work exposure schemes such as the *Training Aid Framework*, the *Enhancing Employability Scheme* and the *Average Wage Training Allowance*.

The *Training Aid Framework* was intended to promote access to training of persons, including women, actively participating in the Maltese labour market. This programme also aimed to increase and/or improve the skills of employed persons. The *Training Aid Framework* provides financial assistance to employers in the form of a part-refund of training costs incurred by private owned companies when they train their employees. During 2011 and 2012, over 22,000 persons participated in the scheme.

The *Enhancing Employability through Training Programme* is available to all actively employed, inactive, early school leavers, and registered unemployed individuals who are eligible to work. One of its overall objectives is the reintegration of registered unemployed or inactive individuals, including women, into the labour market through training programmes, and the provision of assistance to employed persons to secure and advance their position within the labour market. This programme is sub-divided into four main components: Training Design, Short Courses, Traineeships, and a Training Subsidy Scheme. The Programme includes a Skills Assessment followed by a certification of the knowledge, skills and competences acquired by individuals through non-formal learning. Courses include IT-related courses, Technical and Trade courses, Management Development courses, and Work Orientation courses. Basic Skills courses are also offered as part of the programme for those who need assistance with reading and writing skills in English and Maltese languages and IT literacy. Additionally, one of the courses is ‘Women for Employment’, and is targeted to equip women with basic skills as well as instil in them a sense of empowerment and encouragement to further their employment prospects. Between 2009 and 2013, over 14,000 women were trained through this programme. *Please refer to Table One in Annex IV – Data on Lifelong Learning and Training for further statistical information on female participants in this scheme.*

The *Average Wage Training Allowance* initiative, one of the measures listed in the Budget for 2013 and follows the Training Allowance for Minimum Wage Earners’ scheme which initiated in 2011 is targeted towards employees, including women, who earn less than the national average wage. It aims to provide a grant to low wage earners when they participate in further training through which they can develop their skills and thus improve their job and career prospects.

Furthermore, the ETC offers other schemes, which not only aim to increase employability, but also provide other benefits such as up-skilling and re-skilling of participants’ competences and which contribute to the promotion of hands-on learning for adults. The *Community Work Scheme* seeks to provide long-term unemployed persons, including adult women and men, who have been registering for work for more than three years in Malta and more than two years in Gozo²³, the opportunity to undertake community work under the

²³ The difference in the criteria applied for Malta and Gozo is attributed to the fact that Gozo’s inactivity rate is higher than Malta’s rate. Different criteria for Gozo aims to address the difficulty of employability in Gozo.

direction of local councils and non-governmental organisations with a view to enable them to obtain further skills, improving their employability and their chances of finding employment on completion of such an experience. *Please refer to Table One in Annex IV – Data on Lifelong Learning and Training for statistical information on female participants in this scheme.*

The Government is also undertaking measures aimed to facilitate the transition between compulsory schooling to employment or between inactivity to employment, or from unemployment to employment; provide early intervention and prevention services targeted at young people, including women who are at-risk of being excluded from the labour market; offering opportunities for educational attainment and formal validation; and ensuring the sustainability of young people's entry into the labour market through the provision of life-long learning opportunities.

One of the major providers of lifelong opportunities in Malta is the Directorate for Lifelong Learning (DLLL) within the Ministry for Education and Employment (www.lifelonglearning.gov.mt). In view of the Resolution adopted by the General Assembly S-23/3, this Directorate is planning to launch a Lifelong Learning Strategy by end of Q2, 2014.

3.85% of adults participating in lifelong learning attend courses organised by DLLL. The participation in Adult Learning Courses organised by DLLL has increased from 5,258 (in 2008) to 12,270 (in 2013). 66% of the learners are women and from 2008 the participation of women increased from around 3,505 (in 2008) to 8,180 (in 2013). Among the courses offered, there are courses on Health and Well Being. One of the major components of this course is the lifelong benefits of nutrition and the link between mother and child health. There are other providers of adult learning in Malta. According to Eurostat statistics for 2011, the total adult participation in lifelong learning in Malta is 7%.

A major objective of DLLL courses are 'second chance education'. These courses are aimed to enhance the employability of women and their access to quality jobs, through improving access to formal, non-formal and vocational training. The 'Second Chance Education' programme will also contribute towards a decrease in drop-out rates of girls and help more women to continue with their education.

Another core component of DLLL is to offer scholarships (myscholarship.gov.mt) in order to provide more opportunities to promote further specialisation at higher levels of education particularly at a masters and doctoral level. The response was very encouraging. The effect will become evident in the coming years because more women will be empowered and thus be able to assume more headship positions. Concurrently, this will lead to a better quality of life among women and an improved distribution of power.

In addition, the PES intends to continue offering training programmes that address the needs of the labour market. At the end of each training programme, the PES monitors the number of participants that have entered the labour market in order to assess whether the skills acquired by the participants have successfully addressed labour market demands. Project targets were exceeded and have remained constant throughout the years. In

particular, between 2009 and 2013, over 14,000 females were trained through the Employability Programme. The Public Employment Service has recently set-up a programme design function with a view to developing training programmes that satisfy national standards of competence. Moreover, it will be seeking accreditation of all its VET courses by the National Commission for Further and Higher Education.

In 2012, 58.5% of females in employment held the highest level of education attained (from upper secondary to second stage of tertiary education). In order to obtain further information about the skills that young women and men possess during 2014 the Public Employment Service will set up a skills bank. This skills bank will further facilitate policy formulation and job matching.

Access to vocational training, science and technology, and continuing education

One of the measures listed in the National Reform Programme²⁴ is to offer more opportunities in Vocational Education as an important vehicle to encourage more students to continue their education beyond the school-leaving age and to develop their true employment potential. To this effect, Government, together with the service-providers, designed a number of measures to boost VET and work-based learning, whilst also engaging in strengthening existing schemes:

The PES administers apprenticeship schemes to improve young persons' vocational training, including women. The main aim is to provide apprentices with the necessary hands on experience at an employer's establishment while receiving the underpinning knowledge from a VET Institution. Two nationally-funded apprenticeship schemes at MQF (Malta Qualifications Framework) levels 3 and 4 are currently available - the Technician Apprenticeship Scheme (TAS) and the Extended Skill Training Scheme (ESTS). The off-the-job training is delivered at one of two VET Institutions, the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) and the Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS), depending on the chosen career path. Between 2009 and 2012, a total number of 1,712 persons participated in the TAS and a total number of 1,021 participated in the ESTS.

The Apprenticeship Scheme has proved to be successful. According to the latest tracer study in 2012, 35% of apprentices pursued further education following their successful completion of the apprenticeship course. 85% of the candidates, who did not pursue further studies, were in full time employment, whilst 7% were in part-time employment in the first 3 months after completion of the apprenticeship. 61% of these were retained by the same employer responsible for their apprenticeship.

Furthermore, work is underway to combine the two schemes into one National Apprenticeship Scheme offered at different levels within the Maltese and European Qualifications Framework. for more relevance to the needs of a dynamic labour market

²⁴ Ministry for Finance, April 2013. Malta's National Reform Programme under the Europe 2020 Strategy.

New measures were announced in Budget 2014; one which provides for a Tax Deduction for Entrepreneurs who offer Apprenticeship Placements; the other concerning the launching a new course in 2014, 'Foundation in Tourism Studies' by the Institute of Tourism Studies in collaboration with Malta Enterprise and the PES.

Moreover, the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST)²⁵ is Malta's leading vocational education and training institution. MCAST, as set up by public deed of the 11th August, 2000, has been re-established and incorporated in the Education Act to implement the mission to provide studies and training for education in the vocational and professional sectors. The MCAST, in a general manner, ensures the existence of educational institutions accessible to all, and establishes such facilities and such programmes of education and training, and of work and practical experience which the College may deem necessary to provide all with the opportunity to qualify in trades, skills, artisan or technical or commercial activities, and in the professions according to the socio-economic needs of the country in a lifelong learning curriculum framework and holistic personal development. MCAST provides a child care facility to students and staff, and other family-friendly measures to staff members. *Statistical data on the participation and enrolment of students in MCAST is provided in Annex V – Statistical Data on MCAST.*

Moreover, the achievement of equal opportunities and gender equality in education is also evident in the fact that females outnumber males in their participation in tertiary education, (58% female students at University of Malta²⁶); and female graduates outnumber males in tertiary education (61% female graduates in 2012/2013²⁷). *For further statistical data on the participation of women and men in tertiary education please refer to Annex VI – Statistical Data on the University of Malta.*

Consequences of Economic Crisis

No countercyclical measures to the education system were introduced in Malta since 2009 to mitigate the consequences of global economic and financial crisis.

No austerity policies or measures were introduced in Malta in the aftermath of the 2007/2008 financial crisis. As such the participation of women and men in social and economic activity, including education, training, participation in labour market, unpaid work, access to social protection, access to credit, or entrepreneurship have not been affected because of the introduction of any such measures.

²⁵ MCAST is subject to the provisions of the Education Act: *'It is the right of every citizen of the Republic of Malta to receive education and instruction without any distinction of age, sex, belief or economic means.'*

²⁶ University of Malta. Facts & Figures. Students Statistics by Faculty/ Institute, Course & Route. Last retrieved on 28th February 2014 on:

http://www.um.edu.mt/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/204447/studentstatistics2013-14.pdf

²⁷ University of Malta. Facts & Figures. Completed Awards Statistics by Faculty/ Institute, Course & Route. Last retrieved on 28th February 2014 on:

http://www.um.edu.mt/__data/assets/pdf_file/0015/206502/completedawards2012-3.pdf

C. Women and health

Progress

The Maltese health care system is based on the principle of equity and solidarity with universal coverage. The public health care system provides a comprehensive basket of health services to all entitled persons residing in Malta, and also provides for all necessary care to vulnerable population groups. Healthcare in public services is generally free at point of use.

Whilst no discrimination on the basis of gender is made with regard to the provision of health care services and the dissemination of health information, the Government of Malta is conscious of and recognizes the specific needs of particular population groups such as women, and in so doing ensures that access to such information and services is widespread. In fact, a number of health programmes and initiatives covering various aspects of women's lives have been implemented.

Health Promotion

The Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate is responsible for promoting health at the national level. Health promotion initiatives aimed towards women awareness campaigns and specialised clinics include:

- Prenatal classes which also provide information on nutrition and exercises. Breast-feeding is encouraged, and during Malta's Breastfeeding week, a seminar is held for mothers and grandmothers to listen to best and most up to date information. The Breastfeeding Initiative Friendly Hospital was launched in 2012, with the availability of a breastfeeding room at Mater Dei Hospital. Health professionals at the walk-in clinic provide information for breast feeding mothers, as well as weaning tips. The revised Breast feeding policy has been launched for consultation²⁸, while National weaning guidelines are currently being formulated. A weaning seminar is being planned for child carers and managers running nurseries.
- Although free weight management and aerobics classes organised by health promotion are open to both males and females, these are more popular among women; the number of participants has increased from 234 (weight management) and 263 (aerobics) in 2010 to 802 and 972 respectively in 2012(NHSS). In effect, in 2012, out of 972 participants for the aerobics course, 942 were women (in 2011, out of 839 participants 817 were women). For the weight management course, in 2012, out of 802 participants, 699 were women (in 2011, out of 521 participants, 464 were women). Cooking on a budget project is to be launched in March especially targeted at a socially deprived group. *More information on health promotion campaigns can be obtained from the website https://ehealth.gov.mt/healthportal/health_promotion/introduction.aspx*
- Breast cancer awareness leaflets that contain information on risk factors, minimising risks and early detection of breast cancer are distributed to women.
- A number of publications promoting Sexual health include information on specific sexually transmitted infections such as Hepatitis B, C and HIV, as well as general sexual health. *Further information on Health*

²⁸ National Breastfeeding Policy Consultation Document 2014-2020
<https://ehealth.gov.mt/download.aspx?id=10499>

*promotion publications can be found on the Health Promotion website:
https://ehealth.gov.mt/healthportal/health_promotion/library/publications.aspx*

Health Services

The Ministry for Energy and Health is responsible for the provision of health services in Malta and Gozo, providing Primary Health Care through a number of Health Centres and community services, and Secondary and Tertiary care in specialised public hospitals of varying sizes, 2 acute and 3 specialised. With regard to health care aimed at women, both gynaecological and obstetric services are offered as part of the national health care package, at both primary and secondary levels of care.

Primary Health Care

Primary health care clinics provide Gynae clinics and Napro clinics with respect to women-oriented services. Gynae clinics operate at seven health centres around the island on different days of the week. Although cervical smear tests are done when deemed to be necessary by the doctor, screening is also done according to women's own initiative. Requests for bone density investigations are also done. *For statistical data in this regard, refer to Annex VII - Gynae Clinic Statistics, 2013.*

Napro (Natural Procreative Technology)²⁹ clinics started operating in December 2013, and provide sexual and reproductive health and education services. They provide information for women/couples to make informed choices about their sexual and reproductive health and well-being. *Further information on the Natural Procreative Technology Clinic is available on:
https://ehealth.gov.mt/HealthPortal/health_institutions/primary_healthcare/health_centre_services/bkara_healthcentre/overview.aspx#Natural Procreative Technology Clinic*

Well-baby clinics within the primary health care system cater for the assessment of babies by monitoring and recording children's development, give advice on immunisation and feeding and any further support that may be needed. Primary health care also offers a vaccination programme to all children, that include HPV-immunisation specifically targeted for young girls, to help prevent the later onset of cervical cancer.

Cancer Screening

The National Cancer Screening Programme offers screening services for breast cancer to target population groups among the female population, in a bid to detect cancer at an early stage. The programme is a rolling one. The first three year cycle was open to women born between 1950 and 1960 and was completed in March 2014.

²⁹ NaPro Technology (Natural Procreative Technology) is a scientific and holistic process of investigating abnormal gynaecological and reproductive health through the monitoring of hormonal events, and is particularly effective in treating infertility and recurrent miscarriages. The fertility-care based medical approach to gynaecological health and family planning helps women/couples to appreciate their own fertility more, and treats it as part of health not a disease.

The response rate among the 38,445 women invited for screening was 57%. A positive diagnosis of cancer was found among 170 women out of the total 18,517 who were screened. Expansion of the age groups screened is planned for the future.

Screening for colorectal cancer is also being offered to both men and women. Statistics for the first year of screening, from November 2012 show an acceptance rate of 40%, with a total 13,751 people being invited for screening. More information is available from:

https://ehealth.gov.mt/HealthPortal/health_institutions/units/national_screening/introduction.aspx

Secondary and Tertiary level of care

In the secondary and tertiary care sector, Mater Dei Hospital (the state general hospital) offers out-patient obstetric and gynae clinics, as well as in-patient services, including minor and major operations, and a delivery suite. 99.5% (4155) of all deliveries in 2012 occurred in hospital, with hospital care and services available for all those who delivered at home or elsewhere (NOIS). A 24hour emergency obstetric and gynae service is also in operation at Mater Dei Hospital.

Health Information and Research

The Directorate for Health Information and Research (DHIR) within the Ministry for Energy and Health is responsible for the collection, analysis and dissemination of various types of health information, dealing both with health status and with health care activity. DHIR is responsible for the national health data sets on mortality, cancer, congenital anomalies, organ transplant, obstetrics, hospitals information system and accidents and injuries as well as for a number of other databases on health service activity. The National Obstetrics Information System (NOIS) specifically focuses on mothers who give birth, and details information on all births and deliveries in Malta and Gozo. All other data is collected for both women and men, and is then analysed according to gender. Ongoing data collection is done for the National Mortality Register and National Cancer Register. The annual report (2012) for the former can be found on <https://ehealth.gov.mt/download.aspx?id=10075>

DHIR is responsible for carrying out the Health Interview Survey (HIS), which is next due in 2014. Through this survey, information on health related issues is collected, thus providing an analysis of the state of health of the population and also information to policy makers to make evidence based policy decisions on health prevention and health care services. *Summary statistics for the last European HIS in Malta, carried out in 2008, can be found on <https://ehealth.gov.mt/download.aspx?id=3177>*

The *Sexual Knowledge, Attitudes and Behaviour National Survey* is a comprehensive assessment of the sexual knowledge, attitudes and behaviour of the population aged 16-40 years in Malta. This cross sectional survey, conducted in 2012, collected information on sex education, knowledge and attitudes about sexual health and

behaviour, personal experiences as well as usage and desired features of sexual health services in Malta. *The report is available on <https://ehealth.gov.mt/download.aspx?id=9982>.*

A planned three phase study titled *Needs Assessment of the Elderly in Malta* assesses the needs of older adults, as well as the experience and needs of informal carers taking care of the elderly within the community. This study is being carried out with older persons aged 75+, and covers quality of life issues pertaining to community-based Maltese elderly individuals. Phase one of this study was carried out in 2012, and the survey results deal with morbidity and degree of impairment; availability of personal, familial and community resources; social isolation; and demand for long term services and community care by the Maltese elderly population. Indeed, gender seems to play an important role in the degree of impairment and isolation experienced by the older adult population.

More information on this study is available on:

https://ehealth.gov.mt/HealthPortal/chief_medical_officer/healthinfor_research/surveys/elderly_needs_assessment.aspx

Strategy and Policy

The vision of the Ministry for Energy and Health is to actively promote a society that fosters an environment that is conducive to persons attaining their maximum potential for health and well-being. In order to attain these goals, the Ministry has formulated a National Health Systems Strategy for the period 2014 to 2020. The aim of this over-arching strategy is to provide every individual with the opportunity to lead a healthy and active life, and to benefit from equitable access to sustainable quality health care throughout the life-course. *The Strategy is accessible on <https://ehealth.gov.mt/HealthPortal/news.aspx?newsid=1325>*

D. Violence against women

Progress

The Commission on Domestic Violence within the remit of the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity is responsible for advising the Minister on all aspects of domestic violence and in particular on:

- (a) increasing the awareness and understanding of domestic violence and harassment and their consequences and on ways and means to reduce their incidence;
- (b) areas of domestic violence on which research is necessary or desirable;
- (c) strategies to expose domestic violence and to facilitate the intervention of public and private agencies and entities with respect to victims and perpetrators of such violence;
- (d) educating the public on all aspects of domestic violence;
- (e) ways to facilitate communication between public and private agencies and entities involved in action against domestic violence;
- (f) standards for care facilities for victims and perpetrators of domestic violence, including public or private shelter services or facilities;

- (g) standards and protocols for practitioners;
- (h) procedures for the effective co-ordination on a national level of the activities of public and private agencies and entities engaged in the giving of services on domestic violence issues including support services;
- (i) a comprehensive and co-ordinated plan for the collection of data concerning domestic violence for use by the courts, prosecutors, law enforcement officers, health care practitioners, social workers and other agencies and entities in a manner that protects the identity of victims of domestic violence;
- (j) developing a comprehensive plan for a multi disciplinary approach of active prevention and early intervention;
- (k) specialized training for professional groups involved; and
- (l) consulting and networking with other relevant national and international entities.³⁰

During 2010, the Commission on Domestic Violence embarked on a project which included a nationwide quantitative research survey across Malta and Gozo with 1,200 female survey respondents³¹. It was entitled ‘*A nationwide research study on the prevalence of domestic violence against women in Malta and its impact on their employment prospects.*’³² In this study, domestic violence was examined within the context of an intimate relationship between partners.

The Objectives of this study were as follows:

- To bolster the general scientific knowledge base on domestic violence in Malta, which would, in turn, serve as a sound platform for the policy and service development planning for the betterment of services offered to domestic violence survivors.
- To assess the impact of domestic violence on the employment prospects of domestic violence female survivors.
- To support efforts to rationalise routine data administration and the undertaking of other related studies that are aimed at building a more comprehensive understanding of the extent and scale of the phenomenon of ‘domestic violence against women’ in Malta.
- To collect, analyse and report primary data research findings, by way of a pre-formulated research instrument, which would allow for survey data to be collected and analysed through a standardized and comparative international framework.

Following the nationwide study, the Commission on Domestic Violence organised specialised training for various professionals working in the field of domestic violence. In 2011, an awareness campaign was launched, focusing on domestic violence and the importance of labour market participation for victims of domestic violence. The awareness campaign was conducted through advertisement in the.

In October 2013, the Commission on Domestic Violence focused on raising awareness among young adults at the University of Malta. The aim of this awareness campaign was violence prevention and awareness on dating

³⁰ Laws of Malta, (2006). Domestic Violence Act, Chapter 481.

³¹ This survey was part of the EU co-funded project *Dignity for Domestic Violence Survivors – ESF 3.43*.

³² https://secure3.gov.mt/socialpolicy/family/domestic_violence/publications

violence, the early signs of violence and how to seek help in such situations. This awareness campaign will be launched again in 2014.

A Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) was officially launched on 1 March 2014 to provide a co-ordinated service that would be directed towards children, adolescents and adults, who have been victims of any form of sexual assault; including all forms of sexual offences of gender-based violence as well as victims of domestic violence and victims of trafficking in persons. This service is being provided at Mater Dei hospital. Victims of sexual abuse will be treated and assisted by a team of professionals in one place. SART is being managed through a social-public partnership by NGO Victim Support Malta and the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity.

Amendments to the Criminal Code³³, which entered into force in 2014, prohibit female genital mutilation in Malta. Anyone who performs an operation or carries out any intervention on a woman's genitalia that damages the genitalia or inflicts upon them permanent changes, is guilty of enforced female genital mutilation and is liable to imprisonment. These amendments also prohibit enforced sterilisation and forced marriage.

Besides, amendments in the Criminal Code in 2013 further enhance the safeguards against human trafficking³⁴, and further amendments introduced in 2014 increase the penalties on sexual offences on minors³⁵.

In addition, Malta is in the process of ratifying the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (the Istanbul Convention). The Maltese President signed the law on 17 June 2014 that lays the ground for the ratification in Strasbourg. Malta signed the Convention on 21 May 2012.

Moreover, NCPE started working on an initiative with the aim of raising further awareness on violence against women and girls³⁶, addressing distinct forms of violence against women, and the circumstances and needs of victims of violence as well as of professional people who work with these victims. In particular, this project will focus on violence inflicted on women and girls, as well as specific forms of violence such as female genital mutilation (FGM), violence on older women and men and violence, harassment and bullying in schools. To this end, research studies will be carried out on FGM in Malta; violence and abuse of older men and women; and on violence, harassment and bullying in schools respectively. Furthermore, awareness raising campaigns will be developed to address these subject matters, alongside training to multidisciplinary professionals and legal experts.

³³ Act I of 2014. An Act to Amend the Criminal Code.

³⁴ Act XVIII of 2013. An Act to Amend the Criminal Code.

³⁵ Act IV of 2014. Various Laws (Criminal Matters) (Amendment) Act, 2014.

³⁶ These activities will be carried out as part of the EU co-funded project *Forms of Violence in Malta – A Gender Perspective JUST/2012/PROG/AG/VAW*.

Sexual Harassment

NCPE works to prevent and combat sexual harassment in employment and in education and vocational guidance. NCPE provides training on sexual harassment and investigates complaints of persons who are sexually harassed at the work place. In effect, since 2009 NCPE continued providing training on sexual harassment to any entity that requests such training including to both employers and employees to inform them on their rights and responsibilities related to gender equality and sexual harassment.

NCPE also encourages and provides assistance to organisations to put in place or update sexual harassment policies. Since 2009, NCPE has been providing assistance to empower entities to have a sexual harassment policy in place and to ensure that these policies are in line with the obligations emanating from legislation in this regard.

Moreover, in the 'Equality Policy for the Public Service', the Government reiterated the definition of sexual harassment and what is perceived as sexual harassment for Public Service employees and stipulates the procedures that shall be adopted in cases of allegations of sexual harassment at work and in the provision of goods and services. The Public Service is an equal opportunity employer and as such condemns any form of sexual harassment at the workplace. In terms of Article 9 of the Equality for Men and Women Act, (Chapter 456) it is a criminal offence for any person, whether a public officer or not, to sexually harass other persons. Sexual harassment is also prohibited in terms of Article 29 (2) of the Employment and Industrial Relations Act (Chapter 452) and in the Legal Notice 181/2008, Access to Goods and Services and their Supply (Equal Treatment) Regulations, which delineates the illegality of sexual harassment in the provision of goods and services. Procedures are in place on how sexual harassment cases should be tackled in a fair, consistent and expeditious way while ensuring standards of good practice, natural justice and utmost confidentiality

Obstacles

The budget allocation for the Commission on Domestic Violence for the year 2014 has increased when compared to 2013. This increase will help to overcome some of the obstacles encountered in financing the implementation of the critical areas of concern highlighted in the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action. The budget allocated for 2013 was € 25,000 whilst for 2014 the amount of € 40,000.

E. Women and armed conflict

Progress

The Government of Malta is not involved in any armed conflict, but it is directly affected by its consequences. The influx of irregular migrants, who leave their countries, mainly because of conflict, has increased in the past years. Upon their arrival migrants are informed of their rights, including the possibility to challenge detention and removal orders, as well as the right to file an asylum application. It is to be noted that practically all

irregular migrants in Malta file an asylum application, which demonstrates that the system is readily accessible. Moreover, Malta has a consistently high asylum recognition rate, which attests to the fairness of the asylum system.

Moreover, asylum seekers of both sexes are afforded the same rights with regards to rights pertaining to the detention process, including investigation into their case for asylum. Both males and females are afforded medical care when and if required, are provided with legal services and are supported by NGOs and IOs as required.

Female detainees are afforded privacy, in that single and unaccompanied females are housed in a zone solely occupied by female detainees. Families or spouses are housed together in a separate zone. Female detainees are provided with the necessary sanitary and skin products and appropriate undergarments.

All senior Armed Forces of Malta (AFM) staff are trained on equality and diversity and Humanitarian Law. In addition, such training is also envisaged for the Detention Service Officers.

Besides, at the Police Academy, all police recruits and inspector cadets are trained on Policing and Human Rights issues. As for specialised courses for those who deal with irregular migrants, lectures are also delivered during ad hoc courses on the same topic.

On the International front, Malta is a supporter of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security, mainly 1325 and 1820. In this regard, Malta is involved in the EU Implementation of the aforementioned Resolutions. Such actions include the provision of aid to programmes addressing the needs and rights of women in conflict affected areas and post conflict situations; and the mainstreaming of human rights and gender in the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy including through specific actions in the fight against sexual and gender-based violence.

For further statistical data as to the proportion of female and men asylum seekers from 2008 to 2013 please refer to Annex XIV.

F. Women and the economy

Progress

The Government has made large, concentrated efforts aimed at facilitating women's equal access to employment. The employment rate for women aged 20 to 64 has been steadily increasing since 2004. In fact, the female employment rate for the 15-64 age group increased by 10% since 2009, (from 37.8% in 3rd quarter, 2009³⁷ to 47.3% in same quarter, 2013³⁸), indicative of the positive results being achieved through the measures

³⁷ National Statistics Office, 2010. *Labour Force Survey, Q3/2009*.

³⁸ National Statistics Office, 2014. *Labour Force Survey, Q3/2013*.

being pursued to increase the overall participation of women within the labour market. As at March 2013, there were 54,347 women who were gainfully occupied (full-time employment) and 18,546 in part-time employment (as primary employment). For further statistical data, please refer to Annex VIII – Participation of Women in the Labour Market.

In effect, various measures have been carried out since 2009 to empower more women to enter or remain in the labour market. The main measures include:

- Tax credits to women returning to employment, including mothers who have children under sixteen years of age, who have been absent from gainful occupation for five years and for women who continue working after having children following January 2007³⁹.
- The period of maternity leave was extended to 16 weeks from January 2012 and to a period of 18 weeks as from January 2013 onwards⁴⁰. The extra weeks are payable from public finances with a fixed weekly rate⁴¹. (This legislation also prohibits employers from forcing pregnant employees, or employees who have given birth or adopted a child to, work overtime, for a period of 12 months from the birth or the adoption of the child)
- Similarly, adoption leave was extended to 16 weeks from January 2012, and to 18 weeks as from January 2013. Adoption leave may be availed of by both the mother or the father. It can also be shared between them⁴².
- Legal developments to further safeguard the equal treatment rights of pregnant employees particularly in case of dismissal during probation⁴³. Employers are bound to give a reason of termination, not related to the employee's condition, during probation if the employee has given notice of her pregnancy to the employer.
- The parental leave entitlement was extended to a period of four months to parents on the grounds of birth, adoption, legal custody and fostering of a child from March 2012⁴⁴.
- In its budget for 2012, the Government introduced the "Parent Computation" in the income tax system in order to make the labour market more attractive to women. Hence, besides the single and joint computations, parents supporting children who are not gainfully employed up to 18 years of age and extended to 21 years of age if the children are still in tertiary education, can benefit from this fiscal measure⁴⁵.
- Parents, mainly women, who had career breaks to look after their children, are entitled to contribution credits for each child under 6 years of age when they resume work. In 2013, this measure has been extended to cover more parents⁴⁶.
- From 2011, self-employed women working on a part-time basis were given the opportunity to choose to pay a 15% pro rata contribution on their income, as in the case of employed persons, instead of the

³⁹ Income Tax Act – Chapter 123 of Laws of Malta

⁴⁰ Legal Notice 503 of 2011. Protection of Maternity (Employment) (Amendment) (No.2) Regulations, 2011.

⁴¹ Ministry for Finance, 2013. Malta's National Reform Programme under the 2020 Strategy.

⁴² Ministry for Finance, 2013. Malta's National Reform Programme under the 2020 Strategy.

⁴³ Legal Notice 130 of 2011 - Protection of Maternity (Employment) (Amendment) Regulations.

⁴⁴ Legal Notice 204 of 2011 - Parental Leave Entitlement (Amendment) Regulations.

⁴⁵ Ministry for Finance, 2013. Malta's National Reform Programme under the 2020 Strategy.

⁴⁶ Ministry for Finance, 2013. Malta's National Reform Programme under the 2020 Strategy.

minimum currently stipulated by law. This pro rata contribution also grants pro rata rights for some social benefits⁴⁷.

- Since October 2009, the Foundation for Educational Services has been providing an after-school care service – Klabb 3-16 –to bridge the gap between day school and regular working hours of parents in employment. This service is for school-age children (3 to 16 years old), and runs throughout the year. The Foundation for Educational Services is offering the Klabb 3-16 service from within sixteen schools, and is planning to open a further 14 new centres in 2013. Besides, new localities are being identified for new Centres to be opened between 2013 and 2015⁴⁸.

Childcare services are offered to children aged between three months and three years. The childcare centres follow the National Standards for Child Day Care Facilities (2006), and a personalised service of quality care for all children is offered with special attention given to children who are at risk of poverty or social exclusion. In March 2010, the National Childcare Unit was created within the Foundation for Educational Services (FES), which coordinates the management of the operations of Smartkids Childcare Centres and co-manages the centres in which government has a public private partnership agreement. Parents who pay fees for childcare services are eligible to a tax deduction for every child⁴⁹. In addition, to further enhance the affordability of childcare services:

- Families in Malta and Gozo will have the opportunity to send their children to childcare centres free of charge. Parents who are in education or in employment will be able to make use of this service⁵⁰.
- Families who opt to send their children to private childcare centres will benefit from an income tax deduction on childcare centre fees⁵¹.

Besides, the Government of Malta is also committed to enhance equality of opportunity to men and women and to persons with caring responsibilities in the labour market through other measures⁵², including: the gradual introduction of the ‘Breakfast Club’ that will provide a one hour care service to students before school opening hours; a tax-exempt wage for married women who are over forty years of age and have been inactive for more than five years but are going to start employment; and helping long-term unemployed to join the labour market by gradually lowering their unemployment benefit/s once they are in employment.

NCPE carried out a set of research studies⁵³ on various facets related to the participation of women in the labour market and provided findings and recommendations mostly relevant to policy-makers, namely on: identifying and analysing the reasons underlying the inactivity of women in Malta; analysing the ‘glass ceiling’ in Maltese

⁴⁷ Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment, April 2011. Malta’s National Reform Programme under the 2020 Strategy.

⁴⁸ Ministry for Finance, 2013. Malta’s National Reform Programme under the 2020 Strategy.

⁴⁹ Ministry for Finance, 2013. Malta’s National Reform Programme under the 2020 Strategy.

⁵⁰ DOI Press Release: PR140284. February, 2014. Free Childcare to help families achieve a work/life balance.

⁵¹ Ministry for Finance, 2013. Malta’s National Reform Programme under the 2020 Strategy.

⁵² These measures are delineated in the *Budget Document 2014*. Ministry for Finance, 2013. Last retrieved on 15th January 2014 on: http://mfina.gov.mt/en/The-Budget/Documents/The_Budget_2014/Budget2014_Document.pdf

⁵³ These research studies were carried out as part of the EU co-funded project *ESF 3.47 – Unlocking the Female Potential*.

society; a comparative study on male and female entrepreneurs to provide further knowledge on the impact of gender on entrepreneurship; examining the relevance of economic independence to Maltese women and the role of social security benefits in accessing employment; analysing the situation of vulnerable workers in specific sectors; and a longitudinal study on the life prospects of teenage parents.

Over the past years, the Public Employment Service has provided a significant number of schemes and initiatives aimed at facilitating women's equal access to employment. Besides measures discussed in Section B on the *Education and Training of Women*, that contribute to enhance the employability of women and men, other measures that have contributed to fostering employability in Malta are the Employment Aid Programme, the Bridging the Gap Scheme, an entrepreneurship programme, and the Work Trial Scheme.

- The *Employment Aid Programme* sought to facilitate the integration of disadvantaged and disabled persons in the labour market by enhancing the employability and productivity of persons with low employment rates; facilitating access to employment and upgrade the skills of those furthest away from the labour market. The Employment Aid Programme targeted single adults looking after dependents, unemployed persons over 50 years of age, the long term unemployed (more than two years), and persons who wished to enter or re-enter working life and who have been absent both from work and from education for at least two-years. Since its inception in 2009 till 2012, a total number of 1,293 females benefitted from this scheme. *Please refer to Table One in Annex IV – Data on Lifelong Learning and Training for statistical information on female participants in this scheme.*
- The *Bridging the Gap Scheme* offers disadvantaged jobseekers, including women a period of work exposure with an employer to enable them to demonstrate the skills needed for a particular job. Participants have access to employment opportunities and acquire the skills required by employers. The employer on the other hand, has the opportunity to interview and select the client; evaluate his or her progress and have the support of the Public Employment Service officials throughout the work phase.
- The Public Employment Service offers an entrepreneurship programme aimed at women and men of all ages who want to start their own business. It provides training, personal advice and counselling on how to start a business and successfully make it work, whilst also offering services of mentoring and financial grants. The programme aims at promoting an enterprise culture in the Maltese society.. A financial grant of up to €5,000 is given to those who attend at least 80% of the training modules. Between 2008 and 2012, a total number of 40 females participated in the scheme. In 2013, 9 females completed the training.
- The Work Trial Scheme gives jobseekers an opportunity to gain practical work experience on the job, for 12 consecutive weeks. The Work Trial Scheme is open to both men and women, and like other schemes provided by ETC is beneficial to women, because it equips persons who are at-risk of being detached from the labour market, and who may therefore as a consequence be also at risk of social exclusion, with the skills needed to be employable in a competitive and dynamic labour market. Active labour market programmes are hence an important commitment to encourage women who are not gainfully occupied, to be active in the labour market. *Please refer to Table One in Annex IV – Data on Lifelong Learning and Training for statistical information on female participants in this scheme.*

In order to further promote and safeguard gender equality at the workplace, NCPE awards the 'Equality Mark' certification to entities that work to actively foster gender equality. Through the 'Equality Mark' further awareness is raised on the rights and responsibilities of employers, human resources managers, equality committees/ representatives within the workplace and employees. Following an assessment of the respective policies and measures, organisations whose management is based on the recognition and promotion of the potential of all employees irrespective of their gender and caring responsibilities are awarded the 'Equality Mark'. These criteria include policies and initiatives on equality and sexual harassment; equal opportunities in recruitment and employment; equality in career advancement and personal development; the availability of family friendly measures for men and women with caring responsibilities; employee equality representatives; and gender equality in the access to and supply of goods and services. Till January 2013, 52 companies were awarded the 'Equality Mark' and other companies are in the process of being awarded this certification.

The 'Equality Policy for the Public Service' further promotes gender equality in the recruitment processes of the public administration. This policy promotes gender-sensitive appointment procedures; and gender neutral vacancies, vacancy advertisements and job descriptions. Moreover, in determining the eligibility of and in assessing candidates for employment within the Public Service, any form of direct or indirect discriminatory treatment is prohibited.

Promoting work-life balance

The Government has been at the forefront of translating its work-life balance commitment into effective family-friendly policy solutions. To that effect, Government aims to foster a better balance between workplace and workforce needs to create a family-friendly work environment which is conducive of social inclusion and employment opportunities for all⁵⁴. *Please refer to Annex IX – Family Friendly Measures for a list of the family-friendly measures that are in force in the Public Service, and other family-friendly measures that are utilised by the private sector.*

The 'Equality Policy for the Public Service' reiterates that family-friendly measures are applicable to all public employees, and that requests for the uptake of family-friendly measures should be facilitated by the respective Director, always taking into account the exigencies of the service.

The 2010 Circular issued by the Management and Personnel Office '*Procedure for facilitating requests for family-friendly measures*' reiterates the applicability, eligibility and procedure for the uptake of family-friendly measures by employees within the Public Service⁵⁵. Also, MPO Circular No18/2010 – '*Work on Reduced Hours by Officers in Category A Positions*' clarified that work on reduced hours is also applicable to officers who are engaged in the top management category.

⁵⁴ Ministry for Finance, 2013. Malta's National Reform Programme under the 2020 Strategy.

⁵⁵ Management and Personnel Office. MPO Circular No 36/2010 – Procedure for facilitating Requests for Family Friendly Measures.

In addition, in order to further safeguard equal opportunities to men and women, the 2013 Circular issued by the Office of the Prime Minister⁵⁶, strengthens family friendly measures across the public sector. This Circular encourages further efforts to meet the demands by officials for the take-up of family-friendly initiatives. Equitable solutions are encouraged to maintain, and possibly improve, the department's output while supporting employees in combining work and family responsibilities. This Circular also reiterates that requests for family-friendly measures should be discussed with the respective employee before deciding on their requests and a process of appeal is allowed in case of refusal.

During 2012, the PES was involved in the implementation of a publicity campaign on the benefits of sharing life's responsibilities – commonly known as NISTA⁵⁷. The campaign sought to challenge cultural stereotypes pertaining to male and female roles in relation to work and family, and to simultaneously promote family friendly measures amongst employers. The project aimed at promoting financial independence for women and the greater involvement of men in the sharing of non-remunerated family work. The campaign aimed to:

- Increase the female employment rate by promoting the benefits of financial independence for women through formal employment and self-employment; sharing of non-remunerated work at home; and a second income for the family, to achieve a better standard of living;
- Decrease the feminisation of poverty through dependence on the State and/or their spouse/partner where financial matters are concerned; and
- Promote a change in the workplace mentality by targeting employers on the benefits and win-win solutions that can be achieved through the introduction of various work-life reconciliation measures in their organisations.

More information on the Nista' Campaign is available on: *NISTA – Essential Information for Women Returners* – <http://etc.gov.mt/Category/5/22/Research-and-Reports.aspx> and *NISTA Pre-Campaign Research* - <http://etc.gov.mt/Category/5/22/Research-and-Reports.aspx>

In order to continue raising awareness on flexible working arrangements, NCPE will provide training to empower and aid tele-managers in the effective management of staff on tele-working⁵⁸. This training will provide further support on the management of tele-working and will thus ensure that adequate tele-management is in place at the workplace, thus further safeguarding the uptake of this measure.

The Government of Malta is aware that in the coming years there will be a shift to knowledge- and skills-intensive occupations which in turn lead to a change in the educational attainment level for employability prospects. To this effect, Government believes that it is of utmost importance that current and future jobseekers are prepared for the challenges of the labour market. To address these challenges, several measures have been designed to ensure that individuals possess the qualities and skills needed to meet labour demands. Due to the dynamic nature of the employment sector, in the 2014 Budget the Government highlighted that an employability index will be developed. The employability index will offer more guidance to students on the choices of jobs

⁵⁶ OPM No. 8/2013. Family Friendly Measures.

⁵⁷ The *Nistá - Sharing Work-Life Responsibilities Campaign* is an ESF co-funded project.

⁵⁸ This training will be carried out as part of the EU co-funded project *Developing a Culture of Rights through Capacity Building - ESF 4.220*.

that are available for the various lines of studies by indicating to the student the potential of finding a job in line with the field of study being chosen. This is envisaged to address the issue of skills mismatches in the Maltese economy.

Furthermore, the Public Employment Service attempts to forecast and anticipate labour skills shortages through a number of initiatives. These include:

- the monitoring of vacancies submitted directly to the Corporation;
- the monitoring of local newspapers vacancy adverts;
- meetings with various stakeholders;
- the monitoring of employment licenses applied for; and
- ad hoc surveys.

This in return gives an indication of the type and the extent of skills required in the labour market and the shortages being experienced in particular occupational sectors.

Moreover, the PES has developed new measures aimed at providing focused attention to the particular needs of various target groups including women. In this regard, various activities will be held on a monthly basis, which include motivational seminars, information sessions, and group seminars.

Furthermore, Government is determined to continue pursuing its efforts to ensure that jobseekers, the inactive and people who are already in employment have the opportunity to further develop their competences and skills, and improve their job prospects. This will be done through continuous investment in resources from both national and European Union sources.

Government is committed to ensure that the identified challenges are addressed. The priorities for the coming years will include:

1. Addressing the skills gaps;
2. Providing more opportunities for the labour force to be equipped with the specific and transversal skills needed to be competitive in the labour market; and
3. Encouraging and assisting employers to invest in their business and their workforce.

G. Women in power and decision-making

Progress

The Government of Malta is committed to increase the representation of women on boards and in senior management positions within the public administration⁵⁹. The number of women candidates for European, General and Local elections is on the increase, which in turn has also increased the number of women elected to represent their constituents on a European, National, and Local level. *Statistical data in this regard is available in Annex X – Contesting and Elected Women and Men in Politics.*

⁵⁹ Gender Balance in Decision Making. DOI Press Release PR1175 of 5th June 2013. Last retrieved on 12th March 2014 on: <http://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Press%20Releases/Pages/2013/June/05/pr1175.aspx>

As regards to the public sector, with particular focus on the Regional Committees and Local Councils, the number of women occupying the post of Executive Secretary, which is the administrative head of the Regional or the Local Authority, has also increased dramatically since 2009. In fact, 24.1% of the Executive Secretaries were female in 2000, whereas it reached 36.4% in 2014. *Further statistical data is available in Annex XI – Executive Secretaries in Office, by Gender.*

NCPE carried out a research study on the effects of the glass ceiling on women in employment⁶⁰ with the aim of providing valuable findings and recommendations to policy makers on this subject matter, and to be better able to develop targeted initiatives that address this concern. This research captured a comprehensive picture of the situation in relation to the representation of women in decision-making positions in employment. In fact, for this study, 600 employed women, occupying different job positions were interviewed. The majority of the respondents claimed that they never applied for or showed interest in a job promotion with their current employer or with past employers, mainly due to lack of interest from their part in applying for promotions (other reasons included: not having necessary skills, qualifications or experience; considering the promotion as a commitment that required responsibility or longer hours; and caring responsibilities). The respondents perceived that the glass ceiling effect is more present among working women who have caring responsibilities than among those without caring responsibilities. In fact, the majority of respondents claimed that they did not know of any instances where a working woman without caring responsibilities (and with the necessary qualifications, skills and ability) was not chosen for a managerial post or was not given a promotion. Following the findings of this study, published in December 2011, NCPE developed various initiatives to empower more women to participate in decision-making positions. The findings of this research are available on:

http://msdc.gov.mt/en/NCPE/Documents/Projects_and_Specific_Initiatives/Unlocking_The_Female_Potential/research_report.pdf

NCPE is working on various activities with the aim of enhancing the gender-balance in decision making positions given that women in Malta are under-represented in decision-making positions⁶¹. These activities will include the empowerment of women to take up decision-making positions as well as support and advice to policy makers on gender-balance in decision-making⁶². In particular, a Directory of Professional Women will give visibility to professional women and their competences in various fields to enhance their possibilities to be appointed to decision-making positions. Moreover, a mentoring programme will be carried out in 2014 and 2015 to provide women aspiring to hold decision-making positions with the opportunity to be mentored by persons who occupy high-level posts. Furthermore, training and research will also be carried out on this subject matter to raise awareness and disseminate further information and findings in this regard.

For further information on this project, please refer to Annex XII – Gender Balance in Decision-Making.

⁶⁰ This study was carried out as part of a comprehensive research on the participation of women in the labour market as part of the EU co-funded project Unlocking the Female Potential ESF 3.47. The research report is available on NCPE's website on:

http://msdc.gov.mt/en/NCPE/Pages/Projects_and_Specific_Initiatives/Unlocking_the_Female_Potential.aspx

⁶¹ Currently, in Malta, 14% of the members of Parliament are women, and 21.3% of Local Councillors are women.

⁶² These activities will be carried out as part of the EU co-funded project *Gender Balance in Decision-Making ESF 3.196*.

Obstacles

Gender stereotypes are an obstacle towards the achievement of gender equality and gender balanced participation in decision-making positions. In fact, the study carried out by NCPE in 2010, which was referred to above, revealed that the majority of respondents (59.5%) perceived that managerial positions in Malta are largely occupied by men, and they believed that this is so because it is in Malta's cultural norm for males to be in authority. NCPE is working to enhance the gender balance in decision-making positions through the initiatives mentioned above, seeking to challenge gender stereotypes and empower more women to participate in decision-making positions.

H. Institutional mechanism for the advancement of women

Progress

NCPE carried out a set of initiatives⁶³ to strengthen the knowledge and understanding of gender mainstreaming within the public administration, in 2011 and 2012. This project was multi-fold and sought to establish a network of persons within the public administration to effectively implement gender mainstreaming in their work. Tools were produced to enhance the effective implementation of gender mainstreaming; and training was provided to highlight good practices and encourage the replication of such good practices on gender mainstreaming. In particular:

- A symposium on good practices to provide insights on the implementation of gender mainstreaming to public employees and various stakeholders, including the presentations by foreign speakers of successful practices in other European countries.
- A series of bilateral meetings with all Ministries addressing how gender can be mainstreamed in policies and action taken within the public administration. These discussions resulted in the publication of a Circular by the Office of the Prime Minister, '*Gender Mainstreaming in Practice*' described in further detail below.
- A set of publications were developed to further disseminate practical information on gender mainstreaming, as follows:
 - *Factsheet on Gender Mainstreaming* defines gender mainstreaming, highlighting its aims and benefits as well as brief information on its implementation.
 - *Checklist for Gender Mainstreaming of Government Action* is a practical hands-on tool that guides stakeholders step by step in the implementation of gender mainstreaming in their actions.
 - *Step-by-Step Guide for Gender Impact Assessment* provides in-depth information on gender mainstreaming and on gender impact assessment.

⁶³ These initiatives were carried out as part of the EU co-funded project *Gender Mainstreaming - In Practice VS/2010/0819*.

- *Checklist on Gender Mainstreaming in Infrastructure Projects* (EN/MT) provides an overview on gender equality and gender mainstreaming, and describes how gender mainstreaming can be implemented in infrastructure projects;
- Training workshop sessions with all government Ministries, mainly targeting policy and decision-makers, whereby hands-on activities empowered participants to implement gender mainstreaming in policies and use respective tools.
- A hands-on training workshop for stakeholders including employers, NGOs, social partners and members of entities on gender mainstreaming. A study visit in Stockholm consisting of meetings with a number of public bodies and NGOs, on the implementation of gender mainstreaming.

As a result of this project, in April 2012, following a series of discussions with NCPE, the Office of the Prime Minister issued a Circular, '*Gender Mainstreaming in Practice*'⁶⁴. It formalised the implementation of gender mainstreaming within the business, policy, law-making and project/programme development and implementation processes of the public administration. This Circular reiterated that gender mainstreaming is the responsibility of all public employees through the work carried out in each Ministry, Department and Entity. To this end, this Circular requires each department/entity to submit a brief annual report to NCPE, on the measures taken and the progress achieved in the sphere of gender equality and mainstreaming. To support this work, NCPE provides assistance via training and consultation to entities in the implementation of gender mainstreaming.

Another set of initiatives⁶⁵ were carried out by NCPE from 2007-2009 to monitor and identify further capacity building needs for the actual implementation of gender mainstreaming in all Ministries, Government departments, public entities and in the national policy-making programmes. Indeed, training was provided to public employees highlighting good practices within Ministries, Government departments and public entities in relation to the implementation of gender mainstreaming for possible further replication. Moreover, a set of Electronic Newsletters were developed and sent to all public officials to disseminate information on the activities and results of this project.

In 2013, the Maltese Public Administration HR Office issued an Equality Policy⁶⁶ to further promote equal treatment and to enhance the commitment of the Public Service to provide an inclusive environment that promotes gender equality and diversity. The policy focuses on gender equality in the recruitment processes and in the conditions of work, and it also explains various family friendly measures and their applicability thus endorsing the reconciliation of work and family life. In addition, this policy reiterates the prohibition of sexual harassment and explains related legislative frameworks, definition of terms, other related principles and the procedures taken in cases of sexual harassment. Hence, this equality policy safeguards a non-discriminatory

⁶⁴ OPM Circular No.15/2012. Gender Mainstreaming in Practice.

⁶⁵ These initiatives were carried out as part of the EU co-funded project *Living Equality VS/2007/0442*.

⁶⁶ Public Administration HR Office, Employee Relationship Management Directorate. '*Equality Policy for the Public Service*'. Last retrieved on 12th March 2014 on: <http://www.mpo.gov.mt/downloads/EqualityPolicy.pdf>

working environment within the Public Service and binds all its employees and management structures to this commitment.

Moreover, the Government is committed to enhance the ‘Gender Focal Points’⁶⁷ within departments and entities in the public administration to further safeguard equal opportunities. These equality representatives will further support gender mainstreaming in their respective departments, thus enhancing gender equality in their work.

I. Human rights of women

Progress

In 2009, the Equality for Men and Women Act – Chapter 456 of the Laws of Malta, that established the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) and determined its functions, was amended to further safeguard gender equality on a wider timeframe (including discriminatory treatment that a person “is, has been or would be treated”, rather than “has been or would be treated”) and accentuated the independence of NCPE as the national equality body⁶⁸. This amendment also enhanced NCPE’s independence when carrying out its functions, particularly when carrying out general investigations to determine whether the provisions of the Act are being complied with; when making determinations on matters related to gender equality; as well as when investigating complaints and providing assistance to persons who are discriminated against; when making determinations.

The Equality for Men and Women Act was also amended in 2012 whereby it extended NCPE’s remit to cover additional grounds of discrimination, namely sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, racial or ethnic origin, and gender identity. NCPE also works to safeguard equal treatment on the grounds of gender as well as race or ethnic origin in the access to and supply of goods and services by virtue of Legal Notice 181 of 2008 - Access to Goods and Services and their Supply (Equal Treatment) Moreover, Legal Notice 316 of 2011 - *The Procedure for Investigation Regulations* delineates the investigation procedure adopted by NCPE.

Throughout the years, NCPE continued to carry out initiatives and measures to disseminate more information on rights and responsibilities related to equal treatment. In particular, NCPE works to promote gender equality and equal opportunities for women and men in society at large. In this regard, NCPE seeks to empower more stakeholders to implement the gender perspective in policies and programmes through training and the provision of tools on gender mainstreaming.

Moreover, recent legal developments further safeguarded the rights of transgender persons. In fact, amendments to the Civil Code⁶⁹ removed the legal obstacles for persons who have undergone a legally recognised change in sex to be considered as pertaining to the acquired sex for all intents and purposes of civil status, including marriage.

⁶⁷ Electoral Manifesto 2013 – Malta Taghna Lkoll.

⁶⁸ Act IV of 2009: An Act to amend the Equality for Men and Women Act, Cap. 456.

⁶⁹ This was done through Act VII of 2013. Civil Code (Amendment) Act, 2013.

The Government is committed to put in place legislation that regulates relations between cohabiting heterosexual and same sex couples. In this regard, the proposals for the Cohabitation Bill are at the final stages prior to submission to ministry.

J. Women and the media

Progress

In 2009, NCPE published the *Inclusive Advertising: Guidelines for Authors and/or Publishers of Adverts*. These guidelines raise awareness about the laws that deal with equality between men and women when it comes to advertising job vacancies, as well as advertising by educational establishments with regard to courses, training or vocational guidance. These guidelines provide assistance in the development of inclusive advertising and the use of gender-neutral and/or gender-inclusive communication, to overcome stereotypes and discrimination.

These Guidelines are available on:

[http://msdc.gov.mt/en/NCPE/Documents/Our Publications and Resources/Resources and Tools/Guidelines/inclusive_advertising.pdf](http://msdc.gov.mt/en/NCPE/Documents/Our_Publications_and_Resources/Resources_and_Tools/Guidelines/inclusive_advertising.pdf)

NCPE reviews the local newspapers and online employment agencies for any discriminatory advertising of job vacancies. Since 2009, NCPE continues to intervene in cases of discriminatory adverts by contacting the publishers/advertising agencies and inform them about any discrimination in such adverts that breach *The Equality for Men and Women Act (Cap 465)*. These entities are contacted either for discriminatory text or for non-balanced gender images that are published as part of the advert. Adverts are related to employment as well as to educational opportunities.

In 2010, NCPE organised a seminar for persons working within the sphere of media⁷⁰ to further empower them on equality and non-discrimination. Participants had the opportunity to acquire further knowledge on diversity and on equal treatment. This training sought to sensitise media professionals on their role to safeguard non-stereotypical and non-discriminatory attitudes and portrayal of women and men across different grounds.

NCPE also promotes a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women and men in the media. In fact, NCPE provides further information on its responsibilities and remit, as well as on specific facets related to gender equality (including equality at the workplace, women in employment, work-life balance, gender pay gap and sexual harassment) through its participation in media programmes.

NCPE also features in a number of articles in the local print media to further promote gender equality and non-stereotypical attitudes and behaviours in relation to the roles of men and women in society at large. A list of the articles published by NCPE is available on: [http://msdc.gov.mt/en/NCPE/Pages/News and Events/Articles.aspx](http://msdc.gov.mt/en/NCPE/Pages/News_and_Events/Articles.aspx)

⁷⁰ This Media Seminar was part of the EU co-funded project *Strengthening Equality beyond Legislation VS/2009/0405*.

K. Women and the environment

Malta has sought to raise awareness of the benefits of gender equality. Malta believes that gender mainstreaming would bring out the potential of both men and women in the economic, social, cultural and environmental spheres.

In 2007, the Government of Malta endorsed the National Strategy for Sustainable Development. Sustainable development has a multifaceted approach, in that it integrates environmental, economic and social policy objectives. In Malta, the goal of promoting sustainable development is increasingly becoming a central focus of policy at a national level. In fact, the Environment and Development Planning Act (2010) has enshrined within it the goal of sustainable development.

One of the major issues related to sustainable development is gender equality. The Equality for Men and Women Act (2003) provides the legal framework to eliminate gender discrimination in a number of areas and by which the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality was set up in order to ensure that measures are put in place to promote equality between men and women in all areas. In this regard, a number of measures are being implemented by Malta in line with the EU Sustainable Development Strategy to establish gender mainstreaming in social protection and social inclusion, gender equality in employment to promote stable and quality employment for all women and men who are capable of working. Furthermore, flexible work arrangements (such as flexible work arrangements) have been introduced to facilitate a healthy work-life balance for both men and women.

Furthermore, Malta is also addressing the issue of an ageing farming population by developing proper initiatives to encourage young farmers to consider taking up farming as their main economic activity and also by promoting gender equality. Malta seeks to strengthen employment in the agriculture and the agri-food industries by investing more in new technology and processes, make improvements on holdings, which would lead to a production of unique quality products through the application of efficient and green technologies. It is considered that through these measures, it will be possible to encourage more women and younger generations into the agriculture sector.

A number of associations also exist in Malta, which provide opportunities for the general public to acquire knowledge and training on various areas of development, including the environment and sustainability. Activities and initiatives such as 'the Clean Up the World Campaign' and tree-planting activities with 34U are held in order to engage men and women of all ages to work towards the improvement of sustainable development.

L. The girl-child

Progress

In 2010, NCPE organised forum theatre sessions⁷¹ with students aged 9 to 17 years on anti-discrimination and equality issues. These training sessions included a number of interactive exercises that challenged stereotypical and discriminatory attitudes and behaviours of students. and empowered girls and boys to adopt an outlook which is based on awareness and understanding and further promoted a positive attitude towards diversity. These sessions also addressed the concepts of stereotypes, labelling and bullying and encouraged students to take an active role in challenging discrimination. Fifteen forum theatre sessions took place, with sixteen schools, with more than 500 students participating.

Training to students and other groups of children is also provided on an ongoing basis that is tailored to the needs of the respective groups of participants, and the subject matter as well as the props and materials used reflect the needs of each group. Training sessions on gender stereotypes with children are very interactive with practical exercises so that children can actively participate throughout the session.

As described in Section D on Violence against Women, NCPE will also be raising further awareness on violence, harassment and bullying in schools to prevent or curb violent attitudes from a young age⁷². In effect a research study will be carried out which, among other objectives, aims to analyse violence, harassment and bullying from a gender perspective to highlight how different forms of violence affect girls and boys. Moreover, awareness raising material will be developed for a wide dissemination to further prevent bullying and violence in schools and to further empower students on this subject matter.

In 2012, NCPE published the findings of a longitudinal study of the life prospects of teenage parents⁷³ that provided valuable information to policy makers. The findings delineate the circumstances and needs faced by teenage parents in Malta and Gozo in relation to their life prospects; the impacts of parenthood on their lifestyles; their reconciliation of caring and work or education; as well as on their educational and work aspirations.

Health Services

As previously mentioned, no discrimination on the basis of gender is made with regards to the provision of health care services and the dissemination of health information in Malta. The recognition of specific needs of particular population groups such as children is catered for, and children, be they boys or girls are entitled to, and receive the same in terms of health care, according to the offered comprehensive basket of health services. Primary health care also offers a vaccination programme to all children, that includes HPV-immunisation specifically targeted for young girls, to help prevent the later onset of cervical cancer.

⁷¹ The forum theatre sessions were part of the EU co-funded project *Strengthening Equality beyond Legislation VS/2009/0405*.

⁷² These activities will be carried out as part of the EU co-funded project *Forms of Violence in Malta – A Gender Perspective JUST/2012/PROG/AG/VAW*.

⁷³ This study was carried out as part of the EU co-funded project ESF 3.47 – Unlocking the Female Potential.

Education

The Directorate for Educational Services supports education initiatives to eradicate any forms of gender discrimination through Career pathway guidance and Counselling; and adherence to current education strategies and reforms that are designed for all children to perform better irrespective of gender and sex orientation. Moreover all courses, institutions and training programmes within the Maltese education system are equally available to both females and males. This is guaranteed by the Constitution of Malta (<http://justiceservices.gov.mt/DownloadDocument.aspx?app=lom&itemid=8566>) and by the Chapter 327 of the Laws of Malta (the Education Act):

<http://www.justiceservices.gov.mt/DownloadDocument.aspx?app=lom&itemid=8801>.

Section Three

Data and statistics

a) Has a core set of national indicators for monitoring progress in gender equality been established? If so, please provide the indicators in an annex.

Most social related statistics are gender disaggregated and this ensures that disseminated information can be used to measure the extent of gender equality in various areas. The gender-related data collection of the National Statistics Office (NSO) is in line with Eurostat's requirements and thus does not have a core set of national indicators to monitor progress in gender equality.

The Government is committed to compile and publish a *Gender Scoreboard Index* that will shed light on gender equality and gender gaps in different spheres in society. Hence, through this Index, an enhanced commitment to mainstream gender in the data collection and compilation will be fostered.

Where is responsibility for collecting the data located?

If national indicators have not been established, what are the reasons?

The responsibility of collecting gender disaggregated statistics lies across all the NSO units in charge with the collection of social-related statistics. As an office NSO does not keep a list of national indicators since all the information NCPE produce on social statistics is gender disaggregated.

b) Has data collection and compilation on the Minimum Set of Gender Indicators begun, which was agreed by the UN Statistical Commission in 2013?

If so, what is the status of data collection and compilation? Please describe plans to improve gender-related data collection and compilation at the national level that have been developed.

If not, are there any plans at the national level to begin work based on the Minimum Set? Please describe briefly.

Data on the Minimum Set of Gender Indicators is collected and compiled as follows:

Minimum Set of Gender Indicators	Data Collection
I. Economic structures, participation in productive activities and access to resources	
1 Average number of hours spent on unpaid domestic work by sex	Data is not available
2 Average number of hours spent on paid and unpaid	Information is available on hours worked in paid

work combined, by sex	employment; source Labour Force Survey
3 Labour force participation rates for 15-24 and 15+	Data is available from the Labour Force survey
4 Proportion of employed who are own-account workers by sex	
5 Proportion of employed who are working as contributing family workers by sex	
6 Proportion of employed who are employer, by sex	Information is available on self-employed with employees and self-employed without employees; term 'employer' is not used in the Labour Force survey terminology
7 Percentage of firms owned by women, by size	Not available from NSO
8 Percentage distribution of employed population by sector and sex	Data is available from the Labour Force survey
9 Informal employment as a percentage of total non-agricultural employment by sex	Data is not available
10 Youth unemployment by sex	Data is available from the Labour Force survey
11 Proportion of population with access to credit, by sex	Data is available from a one time conducted Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC) module
12 Proportion of adult population owning land, by sex	Not available from NSO
13 Gender gap in wages	Data is available from the Labour Force survey
14 Proportion of employed working part-time, by sex	
15 Employment rate of persons aged 25-49 with a child under age 3 living in a household and with no children living in the household by sex	
16 Proportion of children under age 3 in formal care	The National Statistics Office collects this data
17 Proportion of individuals using the Internet, by sex	Data is available from statistics on ICT usage
18 Proportion of individuals using mobile/ cellular telephones, by sex	
19 Proportion of households with access to mass media (radio, TV, internet), by sex of household head	Data is not available
II. Education	
20 Literacy rate of persons aged 15-24 years old, by sex	Data is available from Census
21 Adjusted net enrolment ratio in primary education by sex	Net enrolment rate can be worked out from education statistics
22 Gross enrolment ratio in secondary education, by sex	Gross enrolment rate can be worked out from education statistics
23 Gross enrolment ratio in tertiary education, by sex	

24 Gender parity index in enrolment at primary, secondary and tertiary levels	The NSO is in a position to work out this indicator since the relevant data is available.
25 Share of female science, engineering, manufacturing and construction graduates at tertiary level	Available from education statistics
26 Proportion of females among tertiary education teachers or professors	
27 Net intake in first grade of primary education, by sex	
28 Primary education completion rate, by sex	
29 Graduation from lower secondary education, by sex	
30 Transition rate to secondary education, by sex	The NSO is in a position to work out this indicator since the relevant data is available.
31 Education attainment of population aged 25 and over by sex	Data is available from the Labour Force Survey
III. Health and related services	
32 Contraceptive prevalence among women who are married or in a union, aged 15-49	Data is collected for those who are legally married or co-habiting with a partner. This data was collected in 2002 and 2008 and is due to be collected in the next round of the European Health Interview Survey (EHIS) in Autumn 2014.
33 Under-five mortality rate, by sex	Data is extracted from the comprehensive Mortality Register. The Mortality register is a comprehensive on-going registry that captures all deaths in Malta.
34 Maternal mortality ratio	Data is collected continuously. Data on this indicator is collected both through the on-going Mortality register as well as through the National Obstetric Information System (NOIS).
35 Antenatal care coverage	This data is collected indirectly through the National Obstetric Information System Malta (NOIS), which captures the gestation at 1 st antenatal visit for those women who give birth. The NOIS captures data from all birthing facilities in Malta, and only excludes planned home deliveries which are few and far between. Data is therefore collected on almost 100% of women who give birth, (not all women who get pregnant).
36 Proportion of births attended by skilled health	Data is collected through NOIS, which includes the

professional	most senior attendant at birth. This may be a midwife, CP, Resident Specialist or Consultant.
37 Smoking prevalence among persons aged 15 and over by sex	Data is collected. In fact, data on this indicator was collected in 2002 and 2008 and is due to be collected in the next round of the European Health Interview Survey (EHIS) in Autumn 2014, on a representative sample of the population resident in Malta.
38 Proportion of adults who are obese, by sex	
39 Women's share of population aged 15-49 living with HIV/AIDS	Prevalence data is not available. Data collected is able to provide Incidence rates of HIV positive among the said population. Also, All antenatal women are screened for HIV unless it is specifically refused, thus prevalence among the cohort of women who give birth is known.
40 Access to anti-retroviral drug, by sex	<p>To date specific data on 'Access to anti-retroviral drugs by sex' is not being maintained. All HIV positive cases are seen regularly at HIV clinics and all have access to treatment and are monitored.</p> <p>Data is collected with regards to medicinal treatment, which is coded and not differentiated by patient sex. Full demographic and clinical details of all patients is available in a confidential manner, therefore the respective number of males/ females currently being treated with anti-retroviral drugs, may if necessary be extracted accordingly.</p> <p>However, the medicines' entitlement process and the protocols governing the utilisation of anti-retroviral drugs as per Government Formulary List do not in any way discriminate between genders.</p> <p>Records regarding the number of pregnancies during HIV treatment may similarly be obtained/ extracted as necessary. This information may be relevant since it is to be noted that in the therapeutic management of HIV, pregnancy is an urgent indication for the initiation of treatment, overriding any entitlement issues.</p> <p>Proposals have been made such that in the future a database including gender disaggregated information concerning patients on anti-retroviral treatment is maintained for ease of reference as necessary.</p>
41 Life expectancy at age 60, by sex	Data on this indicator is collected and calculated.

	Life expectancy is calculated by the National Statistics Office from mortality data by age and gender which is collected by the Department of Health Information and Research through the Mortality registry. This is calculated assuming that age-specific mortality levels remain constant.
42 Adult mortality by cause and age groups	YES, data on this indicator is collected and calculated. The mortality registry collects mortality data primarily based on details obtained from death certificates. Data pertains to residents of the Maltese Islands, and includes residents dying abroad, for which information is available. Annual reports collates mortality statistics by cause of death.
IV. Public life and decision-making	
43 Women's share of government ministerial positions	List of ministers is available online.
44 Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament	The list of Members of Parliament is available online ⁷⁴ .
45 Women's share of managerial positions	Data is available from the Labour Force Survey
46 Percentage of female police officers	Total strength of the Malta Police Force is 1939 out of which 342 are female (17.64%).
47 Percentage of female judges	The list of judges is available online ⁷⁵ .
V. Human rights of women and girl children	
48 Proportion of women aged 15-49 subjected to physical or sexual violence in the last 12 months by an intimate partner	The Commission on Domestic Violence carried out a one-off study called 'A nationwide research study on the prevalence of domestic violence against women in Malta and its impact on their employment prospects' using these indicators. The Malta Police Force also collects data on the number of cases reported to them.
49 Proportion of women aged 15-49 subjected to physical or sexual violence in the last 12 months by persons other than an intimate partner	
50 Prevalence of female genital mutilation/ cutting (for relevant countries)	To date there are no known official or published estimates of the number of women victims of FGM or girls at risk living in Malta. A relevant indicator that may be helpful as a sign of changing demographics that may be increasing girls at risk of being submitted to this practice is the

⁷⁴ The list of Members of Parliament is available on: <http://www.parlament.mt/membersofparliament?l=1>

⁷⁵ The list of Judges is available on: <http://www.judiciarymalta.gov.mt/judges>

	<p>information obtained from the National Obstetric Information System (NOIS) on the annual number of women giving birth in Malta that originated from countries in the sub-Saharan and other countries in Africa with a known high prevalence of FGM in their adult female populations.</p> <p>It has been proposed that the collection and analysis of information should be catered for, a) through the current existing NOIS data collection system, and b) that hospitals be requested to supply information re-FGM in mothers delivering a baby. Implementation of this additional feature will require upgrading and updating of the current NOIS database to be able to record this information and have it readily available for relevant analyses and requests for information.</p>
51 Percentage of women aged 20-24 years old who were married or in a union before age 18	The National Statistics Office collects this data
52 Adolescent fertility rate	Data on this indicator is collected and calculated. In fact, data collected through NOIS provides the number of births in women aged 15-19, which is then applied to the total population of that age group from updated census data.

c) Has data collection and compilation on the nine indicators on violence against women, as agreed by the UN Statistical Commission in 2013, begun?.

If so, what is the status of data collection and compilation? Please describe plans that have been developed to produce these indicators at the national level.

If not, are there any plans at the national level to begin work based on these indicators? Please describe briefly.

Presently in Malta statistics and data collection on domestic violence and violence against women is collected by various stakeholders working in this field. The Commission on Domestic Violence is presently working with these stakeholders to harmonise statistics so as to be able to have a better understanding and a clear picture of those seeking services in relation to domestic violence. The 'Violence against Women' indicators have also been presented to the stakeholders so that data is collected in such a manner that can be harmonised, thus making data more comparable among EU Member States. Hence, the Commission on Domestic Violence is currently working closely with stakeholders to implement the first eight indicators on violence against women as per government policy for 2014-2015.

In 2013, the Commission on Domestic Violence was invited by the European Institute on Gender Equality to participate in a study entitled 'Mapping the current status and potential of administrative sources of data on gender-based violence in the EU and Croatia'. Preliminary results, presented in March 2014, will be online by June 2014. The official report of the study will be published later in 2014.

The Malta Police Force also collects information related to indicators 1-7 on the *Violence against women indicators*, as in the data in *Annex XIII*, which contains information regarding victims of domestic violence and sexually related offences for the year 2013. This information is categorised according to the type of offence registered and the age bracket of the victims contained in these reports, (with further clarifications in the respective footnotes). Other information such as relation with perpetrator and frequency is not available as statistical information.

Refer to data in Annex XIII for further information. Persons recorded as victims of Domestic violence and Sexual Offences reported to the Police during 2013.

As stated above, to date there are no known official or published estimates of the number of women victims of FGM or girls at risk living in Malta. Nonetheless, it has been proposed that the collection and analysis of information should be catered for, a) through the current existing NOIS data collection system, and b) that hospitals be requested to supply information re-FGM in mothers delivering a baby.

d) What processes have been undertaken to collect data on the situation of particular groups of women, such as rural women, older women, women with disabilities, indigenous women, women living with HIV and AIDS, or other groups? Please describe briefly.

All surveys carried out by the National Statistics Office have a set of core variables and through these variables we are in a position to single out subgroups of women, however one has to keep in mind the limitations of small sample sizes. The core variables do not however identify women with disabilities, indigenous women and women with HIV and AIDS.

In relation to health, data on women irrespective of sub group is available only if they make use of health care services where this data is documented especially for secondary care, certain chronic diseases and their treatment, as well as infectious diseases. In the scenario of free medicines entitlement, apart from the data related to disease and medicines entitlement, the collected data includes: gender, age and locality of residence.

Section Four

Emerging priorities

a) What are the key priorities for action over the next three to five years for accelerating implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and subsequent intergovernmental agreements for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women at the national level?

For the past months, work has been undertaken by the Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties to further widen NCPE's mandate to include human rights. This will enable NCPE to further promote and safeguard equality treatment and human rights. Hence, NCPE will not only build on work which has already been identified in relation to equal treatment, but also expand and strengthen its work and responsibilities in the field of human rights and equality. An online consultation process is currently being followed to compile feedback from civil society on how best this entity will be strengthened. This initiative will further safeguard gender equality, alongside human rights, across the areas of concern of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

In this regard, NCPE will continue working on promoting gender mainstreaming and encouraging respective stakeholders to implement a gender perspective in policies and programmes through further training and assistance to policy-makers and other stakeholders to foster gender mainstreaming in their work. NCPE is also working to enhance its capacity building to promote equality mainstreaming, apart from gender mainstreaming in the different spheres in society.

NCPE will also continue raising awareness and disseminating further information on rights and responsibilities related to gender equality through training and other campaigns, to further implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. In this regard, NCPE will continue combating stereotypes and discrimination, and assisting victims of discrimination by investigating their complaints.

The Government delineated specific priorities in relation to gender equality in the Electoral Manifesto⁷⁶ and a number of initiatives are being promoted and implemented to empower more women to participate in the labour market; to ensure that women are not discriminated against in relation to pay, working conditions and career advancement; to appoint more women on public bodies; as well as to compile and publish a *Gender Scoreboard Index* to analyse current trends and circumstances in relation to the participation of women in the social, political and economic spheres of society to be better able to address challenges to the achievement of gender

⁷⁶ Electoral Manifesto 2013 – Malta Taghna Lkoll.

equality. The Government is also committed to safeguard gender equality as delineated in the European Union Directives and the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW).

Further initiatives will be carried out by NCPE in relation to specific areas of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, namely to encourage women to participate in areas where they are under-represented such as in decision-making positions, and to further promote zero tolerance to violence against women. Regarding violence against women, Malta is working on ratifying the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (the Istanbul Convention)..

b) What are your country's priorities and recommendations to strengthen gender equality and the empowerment of women in the current discussions on Sustainable Development Goals and the post-2015 development agenda?

NCPE deems that it is through the inclusion of the gender perspective and the participation of women and men that the Sustainable Development Goals and the post-2015 development agenda can be truly effective in further enhancing gender equality within the goals and the resulting long term effects in the economic, political and social sectors for the well-being of the whole of society.

Annexes

Annex I – Entities Consulted

For the compilation of this report, various entities and departments within the following Ministries were consulted, including:

- The Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties
- Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity
- Ministry for Education and Employment
- Office of the Prime Minister
- Ministry for Energy and Health
- Ministry for Foreign Affairs
- Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security
- Ministry for Tourism
- Ministry for Justice, Culture and Local Government

Other stakeholders include:

- National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE)
- Malta-EU Steering and Action Committee (MEUSAC)
- The Malta Council for Economic and Social Development (MCESD)
- Commission on Domestic Violence
- Department for Local Government

Annex II – Funds utilised by NCPE for EU-co funded projects

Year	Name of Project	Fund	Amount	Co-Financing	
				EU Share	MT Share
2013	Forms of Violence in Malta - a gender perspective JUST/2012/PROG/AG/ 4733/VAW	European Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity - PROGRESS (2007 - 2013)	€375,000.00	€300,000	€75,000
2013	Developing a Culture of Rights through Capacity Building ESF4.220	European Social Fund (ESF), OPII	€320,500.00	€272,425	€48,075
2013	Gender Balance in Decision-Making ESF3.196	European Social Fund (ESF), OPII	€573,024.00	€487,070	€85,954
2013	Enhancing Equal Rights JUST/2012/PROG/AG/ 3717	European Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity - PROGRESS (2007 - 2013)	€186,726.00	€149,381	€37,345
2011	I'm NOT Racist, but... JUST/2011/PROG/AG/ 1902	European Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity - PROGRESS (2007 - 2013)	€129,485.00	€103,588	€25,897
2010	Gender Mainstreaming in Practice VS/2010/0599	European Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity - PROGRESS (2007 - 2013)	€223,485.00	€178,788	€44,697
2010	Think Equal VS/2010/0569	European Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity - PROGRESS (2007 - 2013)	€176,740.49	€141,392	€35,348
2009	Strengthening Equality Beyond Legislation VS/2009/0405	European Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity - PROGRESS (2007 - 2013)	€157,572.00	€126,058	€31,514
2008	Unlocking the Female Potential ESF3.47	European Social Fund (ESF), OPII	€621,885.00	€528,602	€93,283
2007	Living Equality VS/2007/0442	European Community Programme for Employment and Social	€73,911.00	€59,129	€14,782

		Solidarity - PROGRESS (2007 - 2013)			
2007	Voice For All VS/2007/0477	European Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity - PROGRESS (2007 - 2013)	€308,160.00	€246,528	€61,632

Annex III – Uptake of Children in Childcare facilities⁷⁷

As at April 2014, 13 active Government Childcare Centres were running across Malta. The last Childcare Centre which opened is situated in Gzira and has just started receiving its first service users. The Foundation for Educational Services was also a partner in the running of three other childcare centres on a Private/Public Partnership situated within three different state schools till March 2014.

During March 2014, placements stood according to the figures as shown in the Table below.

Smartkids Childcare Centres	2011	2012	2013	2014
Smartkids Access Vittoriosa	63	75	93	60
Smartkids Access Qawra	84	68	73	35
Smartkids Birkirkara	43	85	46	25
Il-Bejta, Cospicua	65	61	53	40
Il-Merill, Pembroke	75	104	82	56
Id-Denfil, Siggiewi	65	95	97	60
Il-Bebbuxu, Santa Venera	79	132	86	68
It-Tghannaqa, Floriana (opened January 2012)	10	67	52	46
It-Tbissima, Qormi (opened March 2012)	N/A	88	97	56
Il-Pespis, Marsa (opened June 2012)	N/A	67	76	59
Pizzi Pizzi Kanna, Naxxar	N/A	N/A	67	66
Is-Sardinella, San Gwann	N/A	N/A	46	59
Smart Kids Gzira	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total	484	842	868	630

⁷⁷ Ministry for Finance, 2013. Malta's National Reform Programme under the 2020 Strategy

PPPs		2012	2013	
Gharghur	114	96	89	
Luqa	109	125	148	
Paola	59	49	48	
Total	282	270	285	

Annex IV – Data on Lifelong Learning and Training

Table One: Female Participants in PES Schemes:

	2007-2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Total
Community Work Scheme	NA	7	5	30	67	109
Employment Aid Programme	NA	148	272	502	371	1,293
Mainstream Courses ⁷⁸	1,761	2089	4239	5393	2196	15,678
Work Trial Scheme	NA	55	171	283	381	890

Source: PES Administrative Data

Table Two: Female participants in education and training (25-34):

2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
9.1%	10.5%	9.8%	9.9%	12.6%

Source: Eurostat

⁷⁸ The Mainstream Courses are offered as part of the *Enhancing Employability through Training Programme*.

Annex V – Statistical Data on MCAST

Students who successfully completed their studies in MCAST in July 2013		
Males	Females	Total
1547	1208	2755
56.2%	43.8%	100%

Students who registered in MCAST in October 2013		
Males	Females	Total
3805	2612	6417
59.3%	40.7%	100%

Students who registered in MCAST in October 2013, by choice of subjects			
	Males	Females	Total
Science, Engineering & Technology	2698	552	3250
	83%	17%	100%
Other Study areas	1107	2060	3167
	35%	65%	100%

Students who successfully completed their studies in MCAST in July 2013, by choice of subjects			
	Males	Females	Total
Science, Engineering & Technology	1137	264	1401
	81%	19%	100%
Other Study areas	410	944	1354
	30%	70%	100%

MCAST Full Time Employees, as at February 2014					
All Employees			Lecturing Staff		
Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
356	279	635	243	202	445
56%	44%	100%	55%	45%	100%

Uptake of Family Friendly Measures at MCAST					
	Career Break	Parental Leave	Reduced Hours	Teleworking	Total
Females	2	9	25	6	42
Males	0	1	6	1	8
Total	2	10	31	7	50

MCAST Child Care Centre: Magic Wonders

	2011			2012			2013	
	Actual Nos.	% Data		Actual Nos.	% Data		Actual Nos.	% Data
Number of children who attended centre during one or more months during the year	49			43			44	
Total number of MCAST Students* making use of the facility	9	18		4	9		3	7
Female Students	9	100		4	100		3	100
Male Students	0	0		0	0		0	0
Total number of MCAST Staff* making use of the facility	7	14		9	21		14	32
Female Staff	5	71		5	56		8	57
Male Staff	2	29		4	44		6	43
Total number of External Customers* making use of the facility	33	67		30	70		27	61
Female	23	70		22	73		24	89
Male	10	30		8	27		3	11

*as registered on the Income Tax Return

Annex VI – Statistical Data on the University of Malta⁷⁹

Faculty/Institute	Female	Male	Total
Faculty of Arts	754	406	1160
Faculty for the Built Environment	146	254	400
Faculty of Dental Surgery	44	19	63
Faculty of Economics, Management and Accountancy	900	857	1757
Faculty of Education	852	232	1084
Faculty of Engineering	107	354	461
Faculty of Health Services	946	364	1310
Faculty of Information and Communication Technology	82	257	339
Faculty of Medicine and Surgery	539	436	975
Faculty of Science	187	210	397
Faculty for Social Wellbeing	538	185	723
Institute for Climate Change and Sustainable Development	5	4	9
Edward de Bono Institute for the Design and Development of Thinking	26	19	45
Institute for European Studies	84	62	146
Institute for Sustainable Energy	6	23	29
Faculty of Theology	80	115	195
Faculty of Laws	612	444	1056
Administration	0	1	1
Faculty of Media and Knowledge Sciences	154	84	238
Institute of Earth Systems	72	108	180
Institute for Tourism, Travel and Culture	92	54	146
European Centre for Gerontology	9	4	13
Institute of Digital Games	1	18	19
Institute of Public Administration and Management	21	27	48

⁷⁹ Student Statistics by Faculty, Course & Route. 2013/2014. Available on: http://www.um.edu.mt/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/204447/studentstatistics2013-14.pdf

School of Performing Arts	20	12	32
Centre for Labour Studies	66	47	113
Mediterranean Institute	3	2	5
Institute of Linguistics	9	4	13
Euro-Mediterranean Centre for Educational Research	8	6	14
Institute for Physical Education and Sport	11	34	45
Institute for Islands and Small States	1	3	4
Institute of Maltese Studies	5	5	10
Foundation Studies Programme	9	17	26
International Institute for Baroque Studies	5	5	10
Centre for Environmental Education and Research	5	3	8
Centre for Entrepreneurship and Business Incubation	10	21	31
Medical Foundation Studies Programme	23	13	36
Other	9	9	18

Annex VII – Gynae Clinic Statistics, 2013

HEALTH CENTRE	No. of APPTS GIVEN	ATTENDANCES	WALK-INS (BD REQUEST)	ANTE-NATALS	POST-NATALS	BONE DENSITY RESULTS	PAP S	AFTERNON LISTS
FLORIANA	1619	1134 (70%)	276	235 (80%)	127 (66%)	456	380	N/A
MOSTA	1579	1169 (74%)	347	232 (86%)	127 (65%)	80	521	593 (67%)
PAOLA	1928	1440 (75%)	376	374 (86%)	117 (53%)	131	712	629 (68%)
QORMI	1405	1025 (73%)	217	157 (92%)	109 (67%)	408	351	N/A
B'KARA	1343	1025 (76%)	155	101 (78%)	117 (69%)	404	367	N/A
COSPICUA	569	424 (75%)	50	66 (79%)	34 (71%)	144	159	N/A
GZIRA	1463	1000 (68%)	182	280 (84%)	124 (65%)		388	N/A
<u>TOTAL</u>	9906	7217 73%	1603	1445 84%	755 64%	1975	2878	1273 68%

Annex VIII – Participation of Women in the Labour Market

Female Employment Rate (20 to 64):

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
EU 28	62.7%	62.2%	62.0%	62.2%	62.3%
MT	39.4%	39.8%	41.5%	43.4%	46.8%

Source: Eurostat

Female Gainfully Occupied (including Apprentices):

Dec 2008	Dec 2009	Dec 2010	Dec 2011	Dec 2012	Mar 2013
46,359	46,915	48,851	51,187	53,447	54,347

Source: NSO (through PES Administrative Data)

Employment rates by sex, age and highest level of education attained (20 to 64 years, Females, Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3 and 4) First and second stage of tertiary education (levels 5 and 6)

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
EU 28	64.8%	64.1%	63.6%	63.6%	63.4%
MT	60.5%	67.2%	62.7%	63.0%	66.4%

Source: Eurostat

Annex IX – Family Friendly Measures

Family-friendly measures in the public sector⁸⁰

The following family-friendly measures are currently in force in the public sector:

Maternity Leave: A pregnant employee may apply for maternity leave for an uninterrupted period of eighteen weeks.

Adoption Leave: Public employees may apply for paid adoption leave for an uninterrupted period of eighteen weeks. In those cases of international adoptions, which involve lengthy processing abroad, special consideration will be given for the granting of additional separate periods of unpaid leave, which should not exceed three months in aggregate.

Breastfeeding Facilities: The conditions of work of breastfeeding employees should be facilitated through the temporary adjustment of the work environment and/or the hours of work. In case of requests for breastfeeding facilities, employees should be provided with adequate, clean and private facilities for the expression and storage of milk. Employees are to avail themselves of a maximum of 1 hour each working day for the expression of milk, without incurring any loss of pay.

Release to attend ante-natal examinations: Pregnant employees are entitled to time-off without loss of pay or any other benefit to attend ante-natal examinations if these are conducted during office hours.

Paternity Leave: Male employees are entitled to 2 working days paid leave on the birth of each of their children.

Parental Leave: Employees who have at least 12 months service are allowed to avail themselves of a maximum of 12 months unpaid parental leave on the grounds of birth, adoption, legal custody, and foster care of children who are under 8 years of age. The period of parental leave chosen may only be taken in one period and may be shared by both parents. The maximum of 12 months unpaid leave may be availed of in respect of each child.

Career Break: Parents/legal guardians are allowed a total of 5 years unpaid career break to be utilised for the care of a child/children under 8 years of age. The 5 years must be utilised in aggregate, and may be reduced by multiples of three months. If the 5 years are not availed of in one whole period, the outstanding balance of leave may only be taken for the care of another child/children. Unpaid leave from the entitlement of 5 years may be shared once by both parents, for each child.

Responsibility Leave: Employees may avail themselves of unpaid responsibility leave to take care of dependent elderly parents, sons/daughters, or spouses, for a period of one year, renewable yearly.

Teleworking: Employees may work on a teleworking arrangement if their job performance, traits and skills as well as the nature of their job are suitable for telework.

Work on reduced hours: Employees may be allowed to work on a reduced timetable, which may vary between 20 to 35 hours per week.

Urgent Family Leave: Employees may avail themselves of 16 hours from their vacation leave entitlement as urgent family leave in cases of sickness or accident, which require the immediate presence of the employee.

Leave to accompany spouse on Government-sponsored courses or assignments: A maximum of four years unpaid leave renewable on application yearly, may be granted to public service employees to accompany their spouse abroad on government sponsored courses or assignments.

Leave for a special reason: Employees may avail themselves of a maximum of 30 days special leave without pay for a special reason, including any special family-friendly reason, in any period of 12 months.

⁸⁰ Ministry for Finance, 2013. Malta's National Reform Programme under the 2020 Strategy.

Flexi-time: Employees may be granted permission to work on a flexi-time system, so long as the number of working hours is satisfied.

N.B. Unpaid leave entitlements are subject to an overall maximum aggregate of eight years unpaid leave, whether the unpaid leave is taken at a stretch or interrupted by periods of resumption of duty.

Family-friendly measures in the private sector⁸¹:

Some private sector entities are adopting family-friendly measures, among which one finds:

- Telework;
- Unpaid parental leave;
- Special leave on humanitarian grounds;
- Flexible hours;
- Examinations leave plus study leave for related to work subjects;
- Examinations leave for apprentices;
- Maternity and adoption leave.

Further information on the uptake of family-friendly measures in the Public Administration is available on:

<http://pahro.gov.mt/reports?l=1>

⁸¹ Ministry for Finance, 2013. Malta's National Reform Programme under the 2020 Strategy.

Annex X – Contesting and Elected Women and Men in Politics⁸²

Elections	Contesting Males	Elected Males	Contesting Females	Elected Females	Total Contesting (M + F)	Total Elected (M + F)
Local Councils 2009	212	123	60	38	272	161
	77.9%	76.4%	22.1%	23.6%	100%	100%
Local Councils 2013	273	173	92	59	365	232
	74.8%	74.6%	25.2%	25.4%	100%	100%
General Election 2008	153	63	19	6	172	69
	89%	91.3%	11%	8.7%	100%	100%
General Election 2013	141	60	26	9	167	69
	84.4%	87%	15.6%	13%	100%	100%
MEPs 2004	25	5	2	0	27	5
	92.6%	100%	7.4%	0%	100%	100%
MEPs 2009	26	5	8	0	34	5
	76.5%	100%	23.5%	0%	100%	100%

In the table above, the figures of the ‘elected’ women and men represent the original number of candidates elected in the first instance.

It may be of interest to note that, in the MEPs 2009 election, the seats increased from 5 to 6, and through casual elections three women were elected at a later stage.

⁸² Data by the Electoral Office.

Annex XI – Executive Secretaries in Office by Gender

Executive Secretaries in Office in base year by Gender

Gender	2000	2005	2010	2014
Males	63	57	71	56
Females	20	22	29	32
Total	83	79	100	88

Annex XII – Gender Balance in Decision-Making⁸³

NCPE is working on a set of initiatives with the aim of increasing the number of women in decision-making positions; empowering and enabling women to take up decision-making positions; and at supporting and advising policy makers on gender-balance in decision-making, as follows:

- *Research on gender-balanced representation in decision-making and on gender quotas and other measures:* NCPE is working on two research studies that will be finalised next year. One on gender-balanced representation in decision-making in various fields, including private and public sector boardrooms, political parties, national and local government and Malta's representations abroad to EU/International Bodies, and what is hindering this balance; and another one on gender quotas and related measures that enhance the gender balance in the boardrooms and gender electoral quotas. This research will provide findings and recommendations that can be utilised by policy makers to improve the gender balance in decision-making positions.
- *Directory of Maltese and Gozitan Professional Women:* This Directory aims to give visibility to professional women and their competences in various fields. It will include information about the qualifications, experience and skills of Maltese and Gozitan professional women and will identify women in various sectors who have the possibility to be appointed to serve on Boards, Committees, Representations or any other decision-making positions.
- *Mentoring Programme:* This mentoring programme will provide women aspiring to hold decision-making positions with the opportunity to be mentored by successful persons (preference shall be given to women) who occupy high-level jobs to further empower these mentees to participate in decision-making positions.
- *Training Programme:* Prior to the commencement of the Mentoring Programme, a Training Programme will be organised on topics such as leadership and supervisory skills, decision-making, assertiveness and communication skills.
- *Publicity campaign:* A publicity campaign will be organised to attract mentees and mentors to apply for the Mentoring programme, as well as for the promotion of the Directory of Professionals. The campaign will include a facebook advert campaign, a newspaper advert campaign, a radio campaign, billboards, adverts on business magazines, flyers, brochures and posters. Furthermore, the programme will also be publicised with the Equality Certified Organisations (organisations certified with the Equality Mark). Moreover, an information session for interested mentors and mentees will be held to inform them about the upcoming Mentoring Programme and what will the programme consist of.

⁸³ *Gender Balance in Decision-Making - ESF3.196* is an EU co-funded project.

Annex XIII – Persons recorded as victims of Domestic violence and Sexual Offences reported to the Police during 2013

Incident Class	Incident Sub Class	UNDER 18 YEARS	18-59 YEARS	60+ YEARS	Age n/a	Grand Total
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	GBH WITH ARMS IMPROPER	0	6	1	0	7
	GBH WITH PHYSICAL FORCE	1	19	2	0	22
	PSYCHOLOGICAL HARM	8	302	23	0	333
	SBH BY ARMS IMPROPER	0	19	4	0	23
	SBH BY ARMS PROPER	1	1	0	0	2
	SBH WITH PHYSICAL FORCE	28	360	30	0	418
	STALKING	0	30	1	0	31
	DOMESTIC VIOLENCE Total		38	737	61	0
SEXUAL OFFENCE	DEFILEMENT OF MINORS	14	3	0	0	17
	GROOMING OF MINORS	1	0	0	0	1
	INDECENT EXPOSURE	6	6	1	0	13
	RAPE	1	11	0	0	12
	SEXUAL ACTIVITY WITH MINORS	5	0	0	0	5
	VIOLENT INDECENT ASSAULT	10	38	2	1	51
	SEXUAL OFFENCE Total		37	58	3	1
Grand Total		75	795	64	1	935

Source: Police Incident Reporting System (PIRS) – Victims

Notes: 1) The above table refers to the number of persons recorded as victims of alleged Domestic Violence and Sexual Offences, entered in the P.I.R.S (Police Incident Reporting System) throughout all Police districts around Malta and Gozo. Cases that may have been filed solely at specialised branches are not included.

- 2) These figures do not reflect the number of reported incidents since a single report could involve multiple victims.
- 3) Incident subclass refers to the type of report entered whilst the number of victims refer to all persons contained and/or listed as victims within such reports.
- 4) Sexual offences contains all statistics, whether domestic or not.

Police Statistics Office, GHQ Floriana 24/02/2014

Annex XIV – Proportion of female and men asylum seekers from 2008 to 2013

2008							
Gender Label	ABANDONED/LOST	INADMISSIBLE	PROVISIONAL	REFUGEE	REJECTION	SUBSIDIARY	HUMAN RIGHTS
FEMALE		2	1	2	73	186	
MALE	10	110		8	975	941	
MINOR FEMALE	4				10	21	
MINOR MALE	55	11			93	55	
Total	69	123	1	10	1151	1203	

2009							
Gender Label	ABANDONED/LOST	IMPLICITLY WITHDRAWN	INADMISSIBLE	REFUGEE	REJECTION	SUBSIDIARY	HUMAN RIGHTS
FEMALE			1	9	102	273	
MALE	6	1	24	14	575	1239	
MINOR FEMALE	4			2	10	20	
MINOR MALE	3		1	2	16	39	
Total	13	1	26	27	703	1571	

2010							
Gender Label	ABANDONED/LOST	INADMISSIBLE	PROVISIONAL	REFUGEE	REJECTION	SUBSIDIARY	HUMAN RIGHTS
FEMALE	1		1		1	8	
MALE		11		9	50	33	
MINOR FEMALE							
MINOR MALE	1	1			2	3	
Total	2	12	1	9	53	44	

2011							
Gender Label	ABANDONED/LOST	INADMISSIBLE	PROVISIONAL	REFUGEE	REJECTION	SUBSIDIARY	HUMAN RIGHTS
FEMALE	6			10	127	121	

MALE	18	78		24	536	544	
MINOR FEMALE	3			2	21	24	
MINOR MALE	4	2		4	35	37	
Total	31	80	0	40	719	726	

2012								
Gender	Not Known	ABANDONED/ LOST	IMPLICITLY WITHDRAWN	INADMISSIBLE	PROVISIONAL	REFUGEE	REJECTION	SUBSIDIARY
MALE		17			1	7	32	325
	5	20	2	5		26	148	1150
MINOR MALE	2	6				1		15
MINOR FEMALE	3	11	2				4	54
Total	10	54	4	5	1	34	184	1544

2013								
Gender	Not Known	ABANDONED/ LOST	IMPLICITLY WITHDRAWN	INADMISSIBLE	PROVISIONAL	REFUGEE	REJECTION	SUBSIDIARY
MALE	4		9			3	60	171
	15	5	16	66	4	23	304	880
MINOR MALE	7		7			1	7	20
MINOR FEMALE	46	6	89	6		3	26	113
Total	72	11	121	72	4	30	397	1184

Notes: 'Not known': Either people still awaiting their first decision or people who were given the Refugee Commissioner (RefCom) Number and for some reason or another they did not apply.