

# GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

2023-2027



**GOVERNMENT OF MALTA**  
MINISTRY FOR TRANSPORT,  
INFRASTRUCTURE AND CAPITAL PROJECTS



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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Ministry for Transport, Infrastructure and Capital Projects (*hereinafter referred to as “the Ministry”*), recognizes the principle of Gender Equality as a human right and fundamental principle which must be safeguarded, guaranteed and enjoyed by all employees within the organization. The Ministry is committed towards supporting gender equity on the workplace and aims to ensure that all employees have the same opportunities, rights and respect on the workplace regardless of their gender.

All divisions, departments, directorates and units within the Ministry are responsible to ensure implementation of this Plan . The Finance & Administration Directorate (*hereinafter referred to as “the FAD”*) shall be responsible for the updating of this Plan as may be required from time to time.

The role of the FAD within the Ministry is that of promoting a culture of excellence in human resource management and to provide a self-fulfilling work environment to its employees or those physically working within the divisions, departments, directorates or units under the Ministry. It is also devoted towards creating a working environment where all employees within the Ministry are equally respected and valued, while equity, opportunities and outcomes are accessible and enjoyed by all employees. The FAD aims in meeting the structural necessities of the Ministry, as well as the requirements of all its employees in aspects which embrace employee relations, recruitment, promotions, increments, retirements, personal developments, work-life balance measures, allowances and discipline. It recognizes the need to ensure that the commitment towards gender equality and gender mainstreaming is fully reflected in its policies, programmes and projects.

### ***1.1 Abbreviations:***

The abbreviations used in this Gender Equality Plan are the following:

- PSMC – Public Service Management Code
- MTIP – Ministry for Transport, Infrastructure and Capital Projects
- FAD – Finance & Administration Directorate
- PSC – Public Service Commission
- EIRA – Employment and Industrial Relations Act
- NCPE – National Commission for the Promotion of Equality
- GEP – Gender Equality Plan

### ***1.2 Application and Scope:***

This Plan shall apply from the date it is issued. It applies to all employees and to any other persons physically working within the divisions, directorates, departments and units under the responsibility of the MTIP. This includes any persons who are employed with another employer (and not the Ministry) but who work within the Ministry. Authorities and Entities should adhere with their respective Plan s/policies.

The scope of this Plan is to ensure that an approach based on gender equity is upheld and maintained throughout the Ministry with the aim of guaranteeing all its employees’ access to the same opportunities and fair treatment. It is intended to strengthen and guide the

collective efforts to safeguard the principle that all workers should benefit equally from their work and to ensure support towards achieving gender equality.

This Plan aims to eliminate gender inequality which has the potential of limiting and impacting negatively on the health and safety, education, employment, family lives and opportunities of staff both in the immediate and long term.

Whilst every effort is made to ensure that this Plan is updated, employees are nonetheless requested to refer to the Public Service Management Code (*hereinafter referred as "PSMC"*) and any relevant manuals issued thereunder, the provisions of which shall prevail in case of any conflict in interpretation. To further facilitate the dissemination of information, the Public Service Management Code (PSMC) and online manuals may be accessed online on <https://publicservice.gov.mt/en/Pages/The%20Public%20Service/PSMC.aspX>.

## **2. OUR COMMITMENT**

### ***2.1 Benefits of Gender Equality:***

Gender Equality brings with it benefits in different sectors and at different levels. Benefits which accrue to individuals are visible in spheres of social contribution, better education, career progression and the conciliation between family and work. Gender Equality also allows a positive level of financial independence for all. Moreover, women have also increased their participation in the labour market with the result that nowadays women have also gained a more active role in defining public policies.

Broader benefits which go beyond individual concern include the contribution to human development and economic growth. Gender Equality has been meaningful to the broadening of choices, capabilities and freedoms. This is the result of Gender Equality actions which view the interests of people's needs as a core value in the policymaking process.

Additionally, corporate benefits include enhanced organizational performance, workplace innovation, more effective recruitment, more productive working environment and a better organizational image. The Ministry believes that is therefore important to view Gender Equality as a productive factor which can put to light the full productive potential of the Ministry's labour force with the result of achieving a sustainable demographic development.<sup>1</sup>

### ***2.2 Appointment of Equality Representatives:***

"Equality Representative" shall be a public officer working within MTIP who has been specifically nominated as such by the Director responsible for the FAD and who shall be responsible, *inter-alia*, for the promotion of equality.

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<sup>1</sup> European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) – Benefits of Gender Equality – Online Discussion report.

### ***2.3 The Role of an Equality Representative shall include the following:***

- To promote Gender Equality in the workplace;
- To provide assistance and advice whenever necessary;
- To vet policies and documents in order to report on their compliance with Equality Legislation, changes and good practice;
- To liaise with NCPE representatives whenever required;
- To receive formal complaints in relation to any breaches of this Plan;
- To forward cases received to the Disciplinary Unit in order to take the necessary action;
- To liaise with other Supervisory Officers from different Divisions, Departments, Directorates and Units within the Ministry with regards to any queries related to this Plan;
- To maintain records and information systems in accordance with the provisions of this Plan; To report matters to the Disciplinary unit who will then liaise with the Director of the alleged accused person and decide on the appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the Manual on Disciplinary Procedures and the PSC Disciplinary Regulations, 2017 and updated Public Service Disciplinary Regulations, 2023 (S.L. Const. 07) which will be enforced from 1 October 2023.
- Once a year MTIP's staff involved in projects shall attend a Gender Equality Training in the Workplace. Training material shall be online and easily accessible anytime at the employee's convenience.

### ***2.4 How to communicate the Gender Equality Plan :***

Persons in Headship positions, responsible for employees within a division, department, directorate or unit within the Ministry should be informed of this Plan and of the possibility of seeking redress should it be felt that discrimination has taken place, either against themselves or against any other employee/s. Heads of Divisions, Departments, Directorates and Units and all public officers working within the Ministry shall be duty bound to safeguard and uphold the principles articulated in this Plan.

For all employees to be informed of this Plan, the following instruction shall be followed:

- The GEP, as may be updated from time to time, shall be made available on the Ministry's website for download.
- A circular shall be sent to all employees of the Ministry informing them that a new Plan on gender equality is available. For this purpose, FAD is to ascertain that they are in possession of updated information with regards to those employees having access to an e-mail and those without such access. In the case of employees who do not have access to an e-mail, circulars shall be distributed in hard copies and such employees shall be asked to sign off on having received a copy of the GEP.
- A copy of the signed-off circular confirming receipt of the GEP by employees who do not have access to an email shall be kept for record purposes by the FAD in a specific Ministry file.
- Once an employee is made aware of the Plan, it is his/her responsibility to ensure knowledge of the contents and comply therewith.

The FAD within the Ministry shall be responsible to review and update this Plan as may be required from time to time but in any case, not less than once every two (2) years.

### **3. GENDER EQUALITY IN RECRUITMENT AND CAREER PROGRESSION**

#### ***3.1 Relevant Legislation:***

The Constitution of Malta is a primary source of Maltese Employment law as it devotes particular attention to work and work relations. Additionally, it also safeguards citizens from discriminatory treatment. In fact, Article 45 provides for a horizontal anti-discrimination provision prohibiting discrimination in relation to a citizen's respective description including the prohibition of discrimination in relation to a person's sex, sexual orientation or gender.

Another primary source which regulated the main terms and conditions of employment is the Employment and Industrial Relations Act<sup>2</sup> (*hereinafter referred to as "EIRA"*). The statute was first enacted in 2002 with the aim of consolidating various sources of legislation in connection with employment law.<sup>3</sup>

Subsequently, the Equality for Men and Women Act was enacted with the main purpose of promoting equality for both men and women.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, legal Notice 181 of 2008 on the Access to goods and services and their supply (Equal Treatment) aims to combat discrimination based on gender in the access to and supply of goods and services, with a view to putting into effect in the access to such goods and services and their supply the principle of equal treatment between men and women.

In addition to the primary sources, a number of subsidiary legislations have been promulgated to regulate specific fields of employment law which ultimately serve to transpose the different directives and regulations of the European Union.

With regards to members of the public service, their conditions of employment are regulated specifically by means of the Public Service Management Code (PSMC) which was introduced in the year two thousand and two (2002). This Code falls within the competence of the Management and Personnel Office within the Office of the Prime Minister. Complimenting this code are various manuals, including (but not limited to) the Manual on Disciplinary Procedures in the Malta Public Service applicable with regards to cases of discipline of public officers.

#### ***3.2 Forms of Discrimination:***

Discrimination may take any of the following forms:

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<sup>2</sup> Chapter 452 of the Laws of Malta.

<sup>3</sup> The Conditions of Employment (Regulation) Act (Chap. 135 of the Laws of Malta) and the Industrial Relations Act (Chap 266 of the Laws of Malta).

<sup>4</sup> Chapter 456 of the Laws of Malta.

- **Direct Discrimination** which shall be deemed to occur where a person is treated less favorably on the grounds of sex or because of family responsibilities, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, racial or ethnic origin, or gender identity, gender expression or sex characteristics;
- **Indirect Discrimination** which shall be deemed to occur where there is any treatment based on an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice, which would put persons having any one, or a combination, of any of the protected grounds listed above (*i.e. the clause preceding this, regarding direct discrimination*), at a particular disadvantage compared with other persons, unless that provision, criterion or practice is objectively justified by a legitimate aim and the means of achieving that aim are appropriate and necessary;
- **Harassment** refers to any unwanted conduct which occurs with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of another person and of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment;
- **Sexual Harassment**, which shall be deemed to occur when there is any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, which has the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person in particular when creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment;
- **Victimisation** shall be deemed to have occurred where a person is treated less favourably for having made a complaint to the management, or to the competent authorities, or for having initiated or participated in proceedings for redress on grounds of alleged breach of the provisions of this Plan or for having disclosed information, confidential or otherwise, to a designated public regulating body, regarding alleged illegal or corrupt activities committed by any person falling within the scope of application of this Plan or by persons acting in such persons name and interest;
- Any **threatening, abusive or insulting words or behavior**, or the **display of any written or printed material which is threatening, abusive and/or insulting**, with intent thereby to stir up hatred or violence against another person or group of persons in relation to any of the protected characteristics;

It must be highlighted that there shall not be considered to be discrimination in the event of the taking of any measures of positive action where such measures are intended for achieving equality in practice.

### **3.3 Good Practices Adopted by Selection Boards:**

While any member of the selection board can ask any question or request any information which is intended to assess a candidate in terms of the predetermined criteria, members of the selection board shall at the same time ensure that:

- Applications of candidates are treated and processed exactly in the same manner;
- Candidates are treated in a cordial and respectful manner;
- No question should be asked that are sexist, ageist, racist or are discriminator;

- Questions should relate to the requirements of the job;
- No candidates are given an unfair advantage over others or are treated unfairly;
- It shall never be assumed that a particular gender is able to perform certain types of work;
- No information shall be solicited from the applicant regarding their private or family life.

Additionally, MTIP and appointed selection boards shall act in line with the provisions outlined in the *Manual on Industrial Relations and the Selection and Appointment Process under Delegated Authority in the Malta Public Service*<sup>5</sup> as published by the People Resourcing & Compliance Directorate within the People & Standards Division.

### **3.4 Employees rights and responsibilities:**

All employees are entitled to:

- recruitment and selection decisions based on merit and not affected by irrelevant personal characteristics;
- a work place which is free from discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment;
- the right to raise issues or to make an enquiry or complaint in a reasonable and respectful manner without being victimized;
- reasonable flexibility in working arrangements which meet the exigencies of the service but which also seek to accommodate as much as possible family responsibilities or disability.

All employees must:

- follow the standards of behaviour outlined in this Plan;
- offer support to any employee who experience discrimination, bullying or sexual harassment, including providing information on how to make a formal or informal complaint;
- avoid gossip and respect the confidentiality of complaint resolution procedures;
- treat other employees with respect, dignity and courtesy.

Senior officials of the Ministry in managerial and supervisory grades must also:

- Practice a model appropriate standard of behavior ensuring adherence with the Code of Ethics for employees in the Public Sector;
- take the necessary steps to educate and make employees aware of their obligations under this Plan and applicable legislation;
- intervene expeditiously and appropriately when they become aware of inappropriate behavior;
- act fairly to resolve issues and enforce workplace behavioural standards, making sure the relevant parties are heard;
- where possible, help employees resolve complaints informally;

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<sup>5</sup> *Manual on Industrial Relations and the Selection and Appointment Process under Delegated Authority in the Malta Public Service* Version 5 as on 2 September 2022 – Published by the People Resourcing & Compliance Directorate within the People & Standards Division.

- refer formal complaints about breaches of this Plan to the appropriate complaint handling officers for investigation;
- ensure employees who raise an issue or make a complaint are not victimized;
- Where possible, aid in facilitating requests for flexible work arrangements in accordance with the applicable public service Plan and the exigencies of the Ministry.

### **3.5 Guidelines to be followed when recruiting new members or promoting existing ones:**

The Ministry shall ensure that there is no discrimination in a call for vacancies and the advertisement for such vacancies, job descriptions and selection procedures including when promoting existing employees.

Selection Boards must not discriminate, whether directly or indirectly, on the grounds of gender, family responsibilities, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, racial or ethnic origin, or gender identity, gender expression or sex characteristics, and are to ensure equality of opportunity during the selection process.

In fact, in terms of section 2.5 of the *Manual on Industrial Relations and the Selection and Appointment Process under Delegated Authority in the Malta Public Service*<sup>6</sup>

*[...] Selection Boards must not discriminate, directly or indirectly, on the grounds of gender or family responsibilities or vulnerabilities, and are to ensure equality of opportunity during the selection process. In determining the eligibility of and in assessing candidates, the Selection Board should avoid any form of discriminatory treatment as defined in the Employment and Industrial Relations Act (Cap. 452 of the Laws of Malta) and subsidiary legislation (Equal Treatment in Employment Regulations - SL 452.95), as may apply from time to time, as well as the Equality for Men and Women Act (Cap. 456 of the Laws of Malta) and the Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics Act (Cap. 540 of the Laws of Malta). Selection Boards are also to observe subparagraph (a) of clause 20 of the Code of Ethics for Public Employees and Board Members, which states that they shall not discriminate in any manner or on any basis including race, place of origin, nationality, skin colour, political opinions, creed, sex, sexual orientation, expression or gender identity, civil status, mental or physical well-being. [...]*

## **4. WORK-LIFE BALANCE MEASURES**

The provision of good working conditions for all staff, including staff members with special needs, which will allow both men and women to have the flexibility for a healthy work-life balance and a safe working environment to enable staff to reach optimal performance levels. The manual on work-life Balance measures, issued by the Principal Permanent Secretary and published by the Office of the

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<sup>6</sup> *Manual on Industrial Relations and the Selection and Appointment Process under Delegated Authority in the Malta Public Service* Version 5 as on 2 September 2022 – Published by the People Resourcing & Compliance Directorate within the People & Standards Division.

Prime Minister<sup>7</sup> is applicable to public employees. It delineates the wide range of measures that public employees may benefit from to achieve a healthy work-life balance and provides the applicable procedure and conditions for a public employee to be eligible and benefit from such measures.

#### **4.1 Rules applicable to work-life measures:**

The Ministry shall ensure that all new recruited members, as well as existing ones are provided with the necessary information on all types of Work-Life Measures which may be availed by public officers in line with the Manual on Work-Life Balance Measures.<sup>8</sup>

## **5. GENDER BALANCE IN LEADERSHIP AND DECISION-MAKING**

Fig. 1 illustrates the number of males and females in the senior management team at MTIP, namely Directors and Assistant Directors. This shows that MTIP has already achieved a gender balance in leadership and decision-making roles. MTIP shall continue working to ensure that this gender balance is kept.

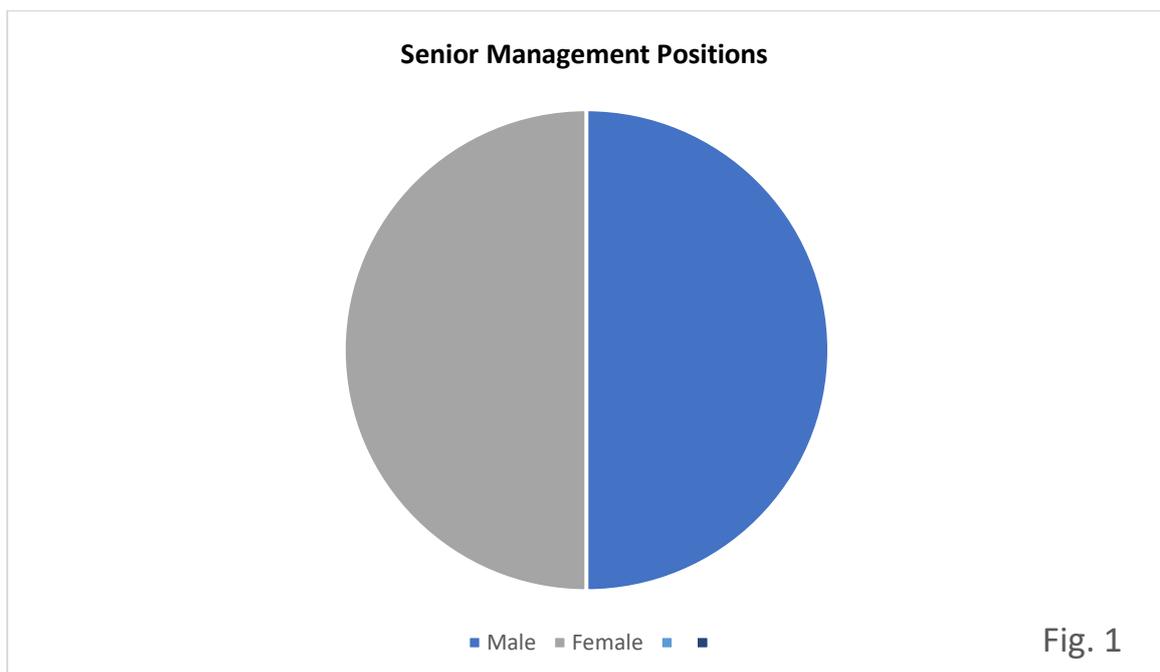


Fig. 1

<sup>7</sup> Manual on work-life balance measures as updated on the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

<sup>8</sup> Manual on work-life balance measures as updated on the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

## **6. MEASURES AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

The conduct of sexual harassment at the workplace is prohibited both under the Equality for Men and Women Act (Cap 456), as well as under the EIRA (Cap 452). Moreover, the “Access to Goods and Services and their Supply (Equal Treatment) which regulations also enshrine the concept of non-discrimination, emphasize that a person’s rejection or submission to harassment or sexual harassment may not be used as a basis for a decision affecting that person. Sexual harassment may also constitute a criminal offence.

The Ministry operates a zero tolerance to any form of harassment on the workplace including that of sexual harassment and shall treat all incidents seriously and with strict confidentiality. It shall respond promptly and investigate any complaints of sexual harassment and where it is proved that inappropriate conduct has occurred, it shall act promptly to eliminate such conduct and impose corrective action as necessary, including any disciplinary action where appropriate.

Moreover, any victimization against any employee who has complained about sexual harassment, or who has or is cooperating with an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint, is also prohibited and will not be tolerated.

### ***6.1 Prohibition of Sexual Harassment:***

- a) Sexual harassment is prohibited at the workplace.
- b) As indicated in article 29(2) of the EIRA, it is unlawful for any employee to sexually harass another employee by:
  - 1) subjecting another employee to an act of physical intimacy; or
  - 2) requesting sexual favours from another employee; or
  - 3) subjecting another employee to any act or conduct with sexual connotations, including spoken words, gestures or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other material where:
    - (i) the act, request or conduct is unwelcome to the particular employee and could reasonably be regarded as offensive, humiliating or intimidating;
    - (ii) the particular employee is treated differently, or it could reasonably be anticipated that the particular employee could be so treated, by reason of his or her rejection of or submission to the act, request or conduct.
- c) The conduct which may constitute sexual harassment includes the following:
  - Unwelcome physical contact such as touching, hugging or kissing;
  - Staring or leering;
  - Suggestive comments or jokes;
  - Unwanted invitations to go out on dates or requests for sexual interaction;
  - Intrusive questions about an employee’s private life or body;
  - Unnecessary familiarity;

- Insults or taunts based on your sex;
  - Sexually explicit emails or messages;
  - Accessing sexually explicit internet sites;
  - Sexually explicit pictures, screen savers or posters; and
  - Behaviour which would also be an offence under the criminal law, such as physical sexual assault, indecent exposure, and obscene or pornographic communications.
- d) There shall not be any conduct of sexual harassment where sexual interaction, flirtation, attraction or friendship is or was invited, mutual, consensual or reciprocated.
- e) Any employee who either observes sexual harassment or believes herself/himself to be the object of sexual harassment should, where possible, communicate her/his position to the offending employee and/or her/his immediate supervisor.
- f) Without prejudice to any criminal or other action that may be taken according to law, any employee found to be in breach of section 6.1 of this Plan shall be liable for disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions of the Manual on Disciplinary Procedures in the Malta Public Service and the Public Service Commission Disciplinary Regulations.

### ***6.2 Prohibition on victimization for reporting sexual harassment allegations:***

- a) No employee shall take any retaliatory action against any employee due to any of the following reasons:
- The disclosure or threatened disclosure of any violation/s of this policy;
  - The provision of information related to or testimony before any public body investigating, hearing or inquiring into any violation of this policy; or
  - Assistance or participation in a proceeding to enforce the provision of this policy.
- b) For the purposes of this policy, retaliation includes any reprimand, discharge, suspension, demotion, denial of promotion or transfer, or change in the terms or conditions of employment of any employee that is taken in retaliation for an employee's involvement in any protected activity pursuant to this policy.
- c) No employee shall be retaliated against for making a complaint under this policy, even if such complaint is not substantiated.
- d) Any employee who feels victimized for any reason mentioned in sub-section (a) may report the case to his supervisory officer or with an Equality Representative in order for the complaint to be addressed.

### ***6.3 Consequences for knowingly making a false complaint:***

- a) Any false or frivolous complaint is a grave offense that shall itself result in disciplinary action.

- b) Any employee who intentionally makes a false report alleging a violation of any provision of this Plan shall be subject to discipline actions in accordance with the Manual on Disciplinary Procedures in the Malta Public Service and the PSC Disciplinary Regulations.

#### **6.4 *Right of the employee accused of sexual harassment:***

The following section is intended to serve only as guidelines for Heads of Departments and employees on how sexual harassment cases should be tackled in a fair, uniform and expeditious way, while at the same time ensuring standards of good practice, natural justice and utmost confidentiality.

- a) The alleged harasser should be informed of the alleged breach of conduct against him/her;
- b) The alleged harasser should be given the opportunity to state his or her case prior to the commencement of any disciplinary action;
- c) If the Head of Department thinks that the accused employee did not exculpate himself/ herself, s/he shall proceed to issue the statement of charges in accordance with the Public Service Commission Disciplinary Regulations 2017 and updated Public Service Disciplinary Regulations, 2023 (S.L. Const. 07) as of 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023, on Disciplinary Procedures under Delegated Authority.

#### **6.5 *Confidentiality:***

Supervisory Officer, Equality Representatives or/and any other employee who come to their knowledge that investigations are ongoing with regards to any alleged sexual harassment, shall treat matters as strictly confidential and shall not disclose the same unless such disclosure is necessary in the course of a prosecution or an action for redress under this policy.

## **7. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

Discipline in the Public Service is regulated by the Public Service Commission Disciplinary Regulations, 2017 and the new Public Service Disciplinary Regulations, 2023 (S.L. Const. 07) which will be enforced as of 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023. These regulations aim to define and regulate the People Management function, as well as the rights and obligations of employees. The Regulations are applicable to officers recruited in the Public Service, as well as to officers who are detailed/deployed with entities. Moreover, the Manual on Disciplinary Procedures in the Malta Public Service<sup>9</sup> serves as a tool to assist appointed officers in their task to manage disciplinary cases in a uniform manner, whether such cases result from disciplinary or criminal issues.

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<sup>9</sup> Manual on Disciplinary Procedures in the Public Service as updated on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2022

The PSMC and all its rules, policies and instructions contained therein were assigned the status of a directive<sup>10</sup> in terms of the Public Administration Act<sup>11</sup>. Subsequently, through amendments, the legal status of a directive under the Public Administration Act was also extended to include the Manuals that accompany it.<sup>12</sup>

### **7.1 Redress and Grievance Procedures:**

Under the PSC Regulations, all employees, irrespective whether they are employed on a full-time, part-time, temporary or otherwise, may seek redress if they have reason to believe that they have been discriminated against, unfairly treated or sexually harassed.

The Public Service Commission (Disciplinary Procedure) Regulations (S.L. Const. 03), also considers a serious offence the victimization of a witness or an officer who lodges a report or is part of ongoing investigations in accordance with the same regulations.

### **7.2 Petitions relating to appointments and promotions**

The procedures found in the Manual on The Selection and Appointment process under delegated authority in the Malta Public Service shall apply whenever petitions relating to appointment or promotions in the Public Service are lodged by external applicants or serving employees.

### **7.3 Guidance and Assistance**

Public Officers who feel that they are or have been victims of discrimination or sexual harassment (*in accordance with the provisions of this policy*) may seek the advice of the Head of department or any supervisory officer within their department, division, directorate or unit.

Alternatively, guidance and assistance may also be requested directly through an Equality Representative within the FAD by sending an email on the following e-mail address [equality1.mtip@gov.mt](mailto:equality1.mtip@gov.mt). Once a complaint is received, an Equality Representative shall contact the alleged victim in order to outline all possible courses of action, including the lodging of a formal complaint against the alleged offender. The alleged victim shall decide on which course of action he or she would like to take.

When the alleged harasser is the employee's superior, the alleged victim shall seek guidance from the next higher authority or from any Equality Representatives. Complaints may also be lodged directly with the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) by filling up the appropriate Complaint Form which can be downloaded from the NCPE official website accessible through the following link: <https://ncpe.gov.mt/en/Pages/Complaints.aspx>.

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<sup>10</sup> Directive 1 issued by the Principal Permanent Secretary on the 5<sup>th</sup> of March of the year 2010: *Assignment of Legal status of Directive to the Public Service Management Code (PSMC)*.

<sup>11</sup> Chapter 595 of the Laws of Malta.

<sup>12</sup> Amending Directive 1-1 issued on 3<sup>rd</sup> of November 2016 by the Principal Permanent Secretary in terms of the Public Administration Act.

## 8. INTEGRATION OF GENDER DIMENSION INTO RESEARCH AND TEACHING CONTENT

Recognising matters concerning gender diversity and inclusivity, and subsequently create awareness within employees at all levels. Such principles are highlighted in the *Equality Policy* as updated on the 18<sup>th</sup> of June 2021.<sup>13</sup>

### 8.1 *The Employee Support Programme*

Furthermore, MTIP also promotes the Employee Support Programme (ESP) which provides professional counselling services and support through a multi-disciplinary team of professionals. The ESP provides a wide range of free and confidential support services to public employees designed to assist them in managing their work and life difficulties.

## 9. MONITORING OF THE GEP

MTIP shall monitor this Plan with the purpose to keep track of the implementation of the main actions and update as necessary. Data shall be collected about the senior management team to ensure gender balance in leadership and decision-making.

Additionally, the key actions will be implemented between 2023 and 2027 and will be revised in 2025-2028

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<sup>13</sup> Equality Policy – Malta Public Service – updated June 2021  
<https://publicservice.gov.mt/en/people/Documents/People-Support-mWellbeing/Policies%20and%20Guidelines/Equality%20Policy.pdf>