



Raising the awareness of companies about combating gender stereotypes (VC/2007/0350)

BREAK GENDER STEREOTYPES, GIVE TALENT A CHANCE

MALTA

NATIONAL INSTITUTION IN CHARGE OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INITIATIVE AT NATIONAL LEVEL:

Name	Malta Association of Women in Business
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No. of SMEs associated: 40

Sectors: Education, training, travel, waste management, automotive, health and safety, fashion & beauty, pharmaceutical, insurance, retail, legal and financial, and medical services.

Institutional partnerships:

- FCEM
- AFAEMME
- MCWO

National Focal Point:	Expert on Gender Issues and SMEs in the country:
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DATE AND VENUE OF THE WORKSHOP “Break Gender Stereotypes, Give Talent a Chance”:

23/7/08 – 25/7/08

Radisson SAS Bay Point Hotel
St George's Bay
Malta

NATIONAL AND LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS INVITED/INVOLVED IN THE INITIATIVE:

- Employers Associations
- Workers Unions
- SME associations
- Local Authorities (Councils)
- General Retailers and Traders' Union
- Equal opportunities institutions
- Employment and Training Corporations
- SME associations
- Banks

SMEs IN THE COUNTRY:

- 99.87% of all registered companies in Malta are small and medium companies, with the largest number of these falling under a micro enterprise category (96.59% of SMEs).
- Employment figures indicate that the share of the public sector in total employment dropped from 35% in 2000 to around 30% in the last quarter of 2006. The private sector consequently accounts for 70% of the local economic activity. This has been constantly changing due to state utility providers, and other local government operated companies being privatised.
- For such small territories as the Maltese Islands there is a healthy economic activity. This mainly consists of tourism, which incorporates a high level of accommodation availability and a vast choice of the leisure activities. Related to this sector is the catering industry, where local and international restaurants compete fiercely.
- Ten years ago textiles dominated the industrial manufacturing activity, but this has been replaced by an electronic component manufacturing industry. A large percentage of local business activity has shifted to information technologies and financial services¹.
- Manufacturing Industry still accounts for the largest part of economic activity, followed by transport, storage and communication services.
- The Financial Sector has a high growth rate; it is also one of the sectors where the glass ceiling is evident for women employees.

¹ *Malta's Economy on the Path to the Euro*, Central Bank of Malta, July 2007



- Healthcare and other caring professions are now being revolutionised and there is also a drain of available staff. This profession is also very gender-stereotyped.
- The Information Technology Sector is growing very rapidly with substantial foreign investment in Malta. It has been acknowledged by the Maltese government that there is a shortage of manpower to fill the posts being created; one of the initiatives of the government is to set up Smart Island of which a particular segment is known as Smart Women. This project, run by the Ministry for Communications and National Projects and Microsoft Corporation, is aimed at increasing the employability of women in this sector.
- Retail also accounts for a large part of the economy and it is evident that gender sensitisation is crucial.

GENDER SEGREGATION IN THE LABOUR MARKET (*):

- Gender segregation in economics sectors 15.2%
- Gender segregation in occupation 24.3%

These indexes measure gender segregation in the Maltese labour market in 2005; the higher the value of both indexes, the higher the segregation biased against women.

In Malta, gender segregation is evident in all sectors. However, the two sectors where gender segregation is most visible are the caring profession, where the absolute majority is female, and the engineering profession where there is an absolute male majority. This is observed both in the private as well as in the public sector. One worrying factor of gender segregation and stereotypes is the lack of female legislators, and senior officials. Gender segregation in Malta is particularly strong within the service sector, including healthcare, teaching and tourism, where female workers are employed in lower level occupations such as receptionists, secretaries and customer care, whilst their male counterparts hold higher positions and decision-making posts.

Maltese women tend to concentrate into fewer occupations than men. Most of them work as secretaries, salespersons or domestic helpers and cleaners. The concentration of men is not as high, as they tend to concentrate in different, more varied occupations, mainly related to high-skilled manual works, technical professions or in trade-related jobs.

GENDER ISSUES AND STEREOTYPES (*):

When taking a general overview, women in employment still represent a very low percentage in local economic activity. There is still an ingrained line of thought that women should be first and foremost good wives and mothers, and for this culture to promote itself it seeks personal fulfilment, and in doing so, becomes a better person for everyone's benefit including the husband and offspring.



The private sector is full of gender stereotypes. Although most private entities are in conformity with legislation such as sexual harassment policies and other regulations, there is a world of difference between the written regulation at work to the actual culture and unwritten norms.

The legislation for Equality is in place and most people expect nothing less than what is on paper. But when it comes to promotion and commitment to their career, most females decline or are sidestepped, because they still have a young family to care for. This all boils down to the sharing of domestic duties, if these are really shared equally, then the women would not be seen as the only person with heavy commitments in the family. In fact, it has been found that most women who have reached high decision making positions, are either single or they are perceived as truly resourceful and ambitious to get there

()From the review of the national situation for the purpose of the workshop in Malta produced in the framework of the Contract "Raising the awareness of companies about combating gender stereotypes", commissioned by the European Commission to the International Training Centre of the ILO in partnership with EUROCHAMBRES.*



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The seven-year Programme targets all stakeholders who can help shape the development of appropriate and effective employment and social legislation and policies, across the EU-27, EFTA and EU candidate and pre-candidate countries.

PROGRESS mission is to strengthen the EU contribution in support of Member States' commitments and efforts to create more and better jobs and to build a more cohesive society. To that effect, PROGRESS will be instrumental in:

- (1) providing analysis and policy advice on PROGRESS policy areas;*
- (2) monitoring and reporting on the implementation of EU legislation and policies in PROGRESS policy areas;*
- (3) promoting policy transfer, learning and support among Member States on EU objectives and priorities; and*
- (4) relaying the views of the stakeholders and society at large.*

For further information, see:

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/progress/index_en.html.

The information contained in this document does not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of the European Commission.