



## GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

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## **01. Gender Equality Plan Working Group**

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## 02. Definitions

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**Gender** refers to ‘social attributes and opportunities associated with being female and male and to the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as to the relations between women and those between men’ (EIGE, 2021a).

**Sex** refers to the ‘biological attribute that distinguish male, female and intersex’ (European Commission, 2020h).

**Gender Identity** refers to ‘each person’s deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond to the sex assigned at birth, including the personal sense of body (which may involve, if freely chosen, modification of bodily appearance or function, by medical, surgical, or other means) and other expressions of gender, including dress, speech and mannerisms’ (EIGE, 2021a).

While the data collection for the Malta Tourism Authority only considers sex-disaggregated data for men and women, it will be important to also consider non-binary gender for data collection in future publications, where possible. Non-binary is an umbrella term for gender identities that fall outside the gender binary of men or women. This includes individuals whose gender identity is neither exclusively man nor woman, a combination of man and woman or between or beyond genders. This category can be listed as X. `

### **03. General Introduction**

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This Gender Equality Plan (GEP) was developed for the Malta Tourism Authority (MTA) based on an internal analysis, meetings with stakeholder involved in the GEP implementation, as well as a review of the policies and practices presently applied by the MTA.

Presently, the MTA already has a commitment to follow the main areas covered by GEP's and has policies and practices in place which are aligned with the Government policy on gender mainstreaming (OPM Circular 15/2012) and Maltese Legislation.

The MTA also endorses the Equality Policy and the Harassment and Bullying Free Workplace Policy issued by the Office of the Principal Permanent Secretary.

## 04. Priority Areas

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- Work-life balance and organisational culture
- Gender balance in managerial and general grades positions
- Gender equality in recruitment and career progression
- Gender dimension into research
- Training

### 04.1 Work - life balance and organisational culture

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 which enables staff to reach optimal performance levels.

- These principles are also highlighted in the Employment and Industrial Relations Act (Cap. 452 of the Laws of Malta); subsidiary legislation (Organisation of Working Time Regulations – SL 452.87), subsidiary legislation (Work-Life Balance for Parents and Carers Regulations – 452.125); the Occupational Health and Safety Authority Act (Cap. 424 of the Laws of Malta) and subsidiary legislation (Work Place (Minimum Health and Safety Requirements) Regulations – SL 424.15), the Government of Malta Policy Manual (Manual of Work-life balance measures).

## 04.2 Gender balance in managerial and general grades positions

Figure 1 illustrates the number of males and females' managerial positions. As shown in the Figure 1, MTA has already achieved a gender balance in managerial and decision-making roles.

Figure 1

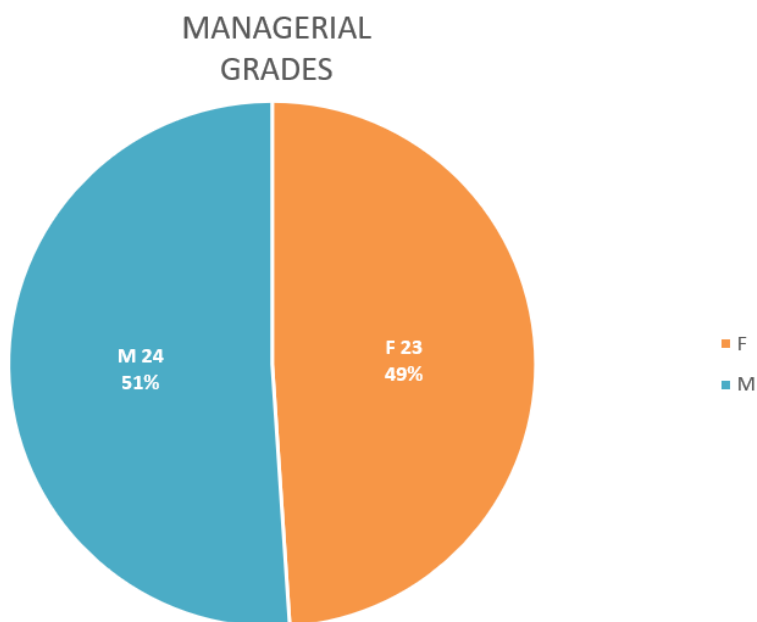
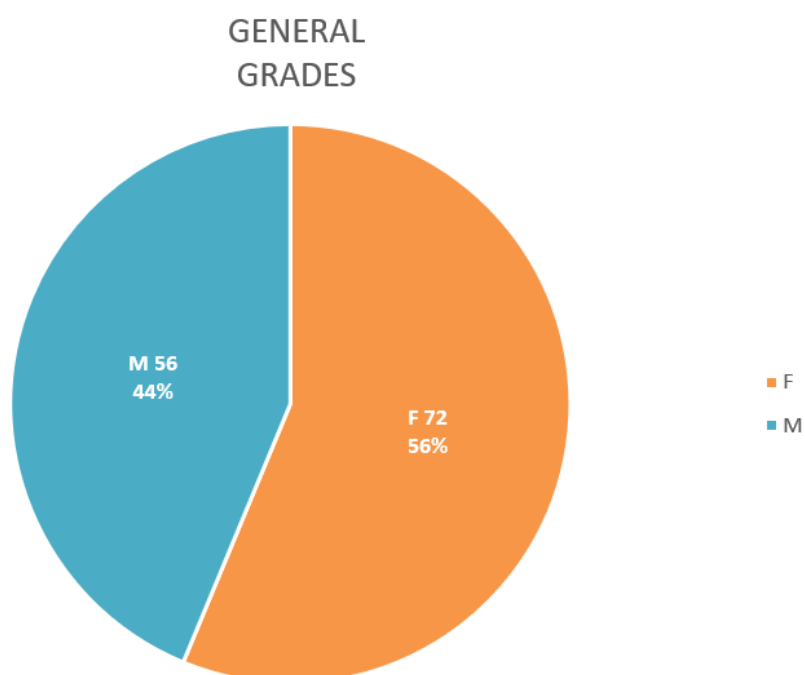


Figure 2 illustrates the number of males and females in the General Grades Positions. Since MTA is an equal opportunity employer, it commits to always select the right candidates irrespective of gender.

Figure 2



### 04.3 Gender Equality in Recruitment and Career Progression

MTA is an equal opportunity employer and commits to select the right candidates irrespective of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, income, marital status, sexual orientation, age, class or disability.

Gender balance in recruitment and career progression ensures equal opportunities at the stage of recruitment and subsequent career progression for all levels of staff, including top management grades.

- These principles are highlighted 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), Article 7 of the MCST Terms of Employment Handbook [Version 1.5] and Article 2.5 of the Government of Malta Policy Manual (Manual on Industrial Relations and the Selection and Appointment Process under Delegated Authority In the Malta Public Service [Version 4.17]) 4. Integration of Gender Dimension into Research and Teaching Content.

### 04.4 Training

Promoting equality in the workplace is a combination of legal (the Equality for Men and Woman Act, Chapter 456 of the Laws of Malta) and moral requirements. Training is an indispensable tool that improves employee engagement. This fosters productivity and efficiency.

### 04.5 Measures against Gender-based Violence and Sexual Harassment

Non-discriminatory treatment based on the grounds of religion or religious belief, disability, age, sex, sexual orientation, political orientation and racial or ethnic origin.

- These principles are also highlighted 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), the Equality for Men and Women Act (Cap. 456 of the Laws of Malta), the Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics Act (Cap. 540 of the Laws of Malta) as well as Article 8, Article 9, Article 10, Article 14 and Article 20 of the MCST Terms of Employment Handbook [Version 1.5] b.

Gender matters in addressing gender-based violence that empower staff, amplify their voices, offer opportunities of redress, and promote acceptance of all gender identities and sexualities.

- These principles are highlighted in Article 29 of the Employment and Industrial Relations Act (Cap. 452 of the Laws of Malta), the Equality for Men and Women Act (Cap. 456 of the Laws of Malta), Article 251A of the Criminal Code (Chapter 9 of the Laws of Malta), as well as Article 8 and Article 12 of the MCST Terms of Employment Handbook [Version 1.5]

Circular 15/2012 issued by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) also highlights the importance on gender mainstreaming asserting that gender mainstreaming “will enhance the ability of employers to make the best use of human resources and improve productivity and competitiveness whilst giving employees the benefit equally in society. In practice it requires a pro-active approach, the need to identify those areas where any degree of inequality could potentially arise, assess the underlying causes of such inequalities and take necessary steps to bring about change.” In response to the guidelines of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), which aim to “identify and implement innovative strategies to promote cultural change and equal opportunities in Universities and Research Centres”, this GEP aims to identify gaps in the MTA current policies and practices and to introduce new measures that better support gender equality within the Authority.



## 05. Key Priority Area 1: Work life balance and organisational culture.

### 05.1 Remote Working / Extended Remote Working

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1.1 To promote and improve the balance between work and personal life.	Extended Remote working is extended to all MTA staff irrespective of gender and/or family responsibilities	Number of extended remote working arrangements broken down by sex and position/scale	Q1 2024- Q4 2028
	Remote working is extended to all MTA staff irrespective of gender and/or family responsibilities without the need of a justification	Number of remote working arrangements broken down by sex and position/scale	Q1 2024- Q4 2028

The MTA has a teleworking policy which enables office-based employees to enter into a voluntary agreement with the MTA wherein work which is normally performed at the employer's premises, is carried out from home on a regular basis. It was identified that the telework policy was only being extended to a particular segment of staff and that staff was required to meet the following criteria to be considered as eligible:

- a. The employee is the parent or legal guardian of a child under 16 years of age
- b. The employee is a parent or legal guardian of a disabled child who needs applicant's constant care and attention
- c. The employee is a son/daughter of elderly parent/s who needs applicant's constant care and attention

**Goals:** To give the opportunity to all staff members to benefit from working remotely by introducing Remote Working and Extended Remote Working irrelevant of gender and/or family responsibilities.

**Action Plan:**

**Remote Working:** Remote working provides employees with full flexibility Up to 20% of the weekly working hours may be worked remotely, without the need to provide a justification. Remote working hours are to be worked during the employee's normal office hours.

**Extended Remote Working:** Extended remote working is a remote working arrangement whereby employees may work any number of their weekly working hours remotely. Extended Remote Working will absorb the existing arrangements of telework.

This measure shall be implemented from 2024 and shall continue to be accessible throughout until 2028.

## 06. Key Priority Area 2: Gender balance in managerial and general grades positions

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<i><b>Objective</b></i>	<i><b>Actions</b></i>	<i><b>Indicators</b></i>	<i><b>Timeline</b></i>
2.1 Develop gender-inclusive requirements and selection criteria for recruitment to ensure balance in managerial and general grades positions	Review requirements and selection criteria from a gender perspective	Number of males and females who applied for each post. Number of male and female candidates who were chosen for each post.	2024 onwards

**Goals:** Mixed gender applications to be gender balanced in all grades

**Actions:** The MTA will ensure that call for applications apply to all genders. Moreover, nominating mixed representation in recruitment boards will ensure gender balance in all recruits.

## **07. Key Priority Area 3: Gender equality in recruitment and career progression**

### **07.1 Ensure mixed representation of genders on recruitment interviewing boards**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
3.1 To promote processes to support gender sensitive recruitment and career progression opportunities	To ensure a mixed representation of genders on recruitment and interviewing boards.	Number of male and female members on each recruitment and interviewing board.	2024 onwards
3.2 Develop gender-inclusive requirements and selection criteria for recruitment and career progression	Review requirements and selection criteria from a gender perspective	Number of males and females who applied for each post. Number of male and female candidates who were chosen for each post.	2024 onwards

3.1 At MTA, recruitment panels are made up of three persons as part of the selection and recruitment process. All interviewers and selection committees are familiar with equality issues. Whenever possible, such recruitment and selection panels are gender balanced however it was identified that there were two instances when such panels were composed of only female members and only male members.

**Goals:** Ensuring mixed representation of genders in interviewing panels.

**Actions:** The MTA will ensure that recruitment panels are made up of at least three members and will include both males and females. This will address the issue of gender representation and participation of both males and females in the recruitment and selection process of the MTA and will further promote equality, diversity and inclusion in matters concerning recruitment & selection and promotion decisions.

3.2 MTA ensures that job vacancies are an equal opportunity to all, irrespective of gender. This is included in a clause in the call for applications – *MTA is an equal opportunity employer and commits itself to select the right candidates irrespective of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, income, marital status, sexual orientation, age, class or disability.*

**Goals:** Ensure mixed gender applications.

**Actions:** The MTA will ensure that call for applications are applicable to all genders, even though some vacancies tend to be more female/male oriented.

## 08. Key Priority Area 4: Gender dimension into research

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<b>Objective</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
4.1 Design gender-sensitive research studies for informed policymaking and implementation.	Ensure that the data used to design the research study is sex-disaggregated, when such data is available.	<p>Number of times sex-disaggregated data was used, per research study.</p> <p>Number of times sex-disaggregated data was not used, per research study.</p>	Quarter 2, 2025

The overall objective of the MTA's Research Unit is to assist the Authority in making the best use of resources using evidence-based practice in decision making. The unit is responsible to implement the research programme and a main contributor in the development, monitoring and implementation of MTA's Planning processes. The Research Unit collects and generates market intelligence on tourism from both primary and secondary sources. Research exercises are carried out with tourists visiting Malta and the tourism trade to monitor traveller profiles and tourism performance. Continuous surveys which are carried out by the Unit include, MTA Traveller Survey, Expenditure Survey and Heritage and Coastal Locality Surveys.

**Goals:** Ensuring sex-disaggregation in the questionnaires designed by the Research Unit by May 2025; i.e. changing the gender question options from Male/Female to Male, Female, Other, Prefer not to say.

**Actions:** The MTA will ensure that the new questionnaires to be launched in May 2025, will have a gender inclusive question featuring the options Male, Female, Other, Prefer not to say, as guided by the Gender Mainstreaming Unit - Human Rights Directorate.

## 09. Key Priority Area 5: Training

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<b>Objective</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
4.1 Gender Equality Workshop	Attending workshop in the gender equality plan	Q1 2024
4.2 Yearly Training on Equality	Two sessions of training on Equality to be scheduled with NCPE	Q2 2024 - ongoing
4.3 Training on Equality Principles	<p>Appreciation and ensuring Adherence to Equality Principles - IPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The values around equality, diversity and human rights;</li> <li>• The employer's and employee's legal duties;</li> <li>• Examples of test cases.</li> </ul>	Q1 2024 – Q4 2025

4.1 The Gender Equality workshop hosted by the Malta Council for Science and Technology, in collaboration with the Horizon Europe-funded Genderaction+ EGET taskforce and the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) will assist in the drafting, implementation, general requirements, best practices and monitoring of Gender Equality Plans.

**Goals:** Attending the workshop provides knowledge to keep in line with the implementation of the plan.

**Actions:** The MTA will ensure that staff from the HR department attends the workshop as this will include a review of the general requirements and best practices with regards to the GEP.

4.2 Yearly Training on Equality provided by the NCPE

**Goals:** MTA staff will be provided with training sessions on Equality on a yearly basis and ensure that training has a good response and attended by most of the employees.

**Actions:** The Training section will ensure that all MTA staff are aware of this training and attend on a yearly basis. This training is planned to be ongoing.

## 10. Data Collection and Monitoring

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For the purpose of this GEP, the data in relation to each challenge shall be collected as follows:

- **Priority area 1: Work life balance and organisational culture**  
Applications for remote working and extended remote working is open to all staff members. Segregated data is collected upon application and a report is issued on an annual basis.
- **Priority area 2: Gender balance in managerial and general grades positions**  
Call for applications apply to all genders. Segregated data is collected upon recruitment and a report is issued on an annual basis.
- **Priority area 3: Gender equality in recruitment and career progression**  
The HR Department staff has been made aware of this requirement and when a recruitment file is opened, gender segregated data of the members of the selection panel is collected and a report is issued on an annual basis. Any shortcomings will require a justification.
- **Priority area 4: Gender dimension into research**  
The MTA, Research unit will be deploying AI instruments to analyse tourists' behaviour, sentiments and perceptions, making sure to collate data in a gender segregated manner.
- **Priority area 5: Training**  
MTA Training section will ensure that staff are given training with regards to Gender Equality. Training is to be provided to all staff irrespective of grade. Gender segregated data of staff attending courses is collected and a report is issued on an annual basis.