

The Malta Girl Guides reaction

The Malta Girl Guides (MGG) is satisfied with the proposal in the White Paper on the setting up of a Human Rights and Equality Commission. Whilst commending the concept of independence of the new Commission and its tasks mainly to issue opinions on human rights and equality matters, make legislative and policy proposals and analyse the government's actions when needed, the MGG insists that the following should also be taken into consideration:

1. The Commission should be responsible to provide professional training on:

- a) collation, monitoring and analysis of human rights and equality infringement to its personnel,
- b) victim rights in terms of their right to appeal, their right to information, their right to translation services if required, right to access victim support services, right to legal aid, right to compensation, *inter alia*, as enshrined in the EU Directive 29/2012 to its personnel and to social workers and civil servants, and
- c) training to practitioners working in the area.

2. The Commission should encourage the importance to non-formal education

Given the fact that the Commission is to be responsible for the promotion of human rights and equality, the MGG expects the Commission to involve public, private and voluntary sectors in the field of education. It should work hand in hand with the education department on including topics about eliminating gender disparities at all levels of education. Furthermore it should work on increasing the retention, transition and completion rates of women and girls; improving the quality of education and learning outcomes; eliminating gender stereotypes in the curriculum; mainstreaming a gender perspective into education and training programmes, including science and technology and sports and eradicating female illiteracy. With regards to providers of informal and non-formal education such as NGOs like the MGG, these have an important role in empowering people in becoming active agents of human rights and equality. The commission could provide such organisations with tools to do so.

3. The Commission should invest more energy into gender discrimination at the workplace

Given the fact that MGG is a women organisation, it welcomes the concept of a more flexible legal framework in employment law in order to encourage more women to enter the job market and subsequently providing them with flexible working arrangements that facilitate a work/life balance. Moreover, the MGG keeps pushing for positive discrimination on any level in national law. The MGG is confident that the local trend will move towards introducing the 50/50 gender quotas that have been highly pushed forward in the European fora in order to boost women participation both in politics and in managerial roles.

Should any of the above-mentioned points is not clear enough, kindly contact the Chief Commissioner Mrs Marjoe Abela on chiefcomm@maltagirlguides.com