



European network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination

NEWS REPORT

Country:	Cyprus
Title:	Code of Practice for the prevention of sexual harassment in employment within the public sector
Date:	6 November 2018
Expert:	Lia Georgiades
<u>Context</u>	
Issue at stake:	Code of Practice for the prevention of sexual harassment and harassment in employment & Code of Practice for combating of sexual harassment and harassment in employment in public sector
Ground of discrimination:	Sex
Source:	Commissioner for Administration and Human Rights/ Equality Body/ Anti- Discrimination Body (Ombudsman)
Field:	Employment
Applicable law:	L. 205(I)2002 (Article 12, 30 as amended)

Content

Policy development: Ombudswoman Maria Lottides presented on 18 July 2018 a code of Conduct her office has prepared to prevent and deal with [sexual harassment](#) within the civil service.

The code provides practical guidance to employers and employees aiming at securing appropriate procedures to deal with sexual harassment and harassment incidents, through prevention but also through repression. This is a useful manual for the creation of a working environment that embraces the gender equality principles and respect of human dignity while uplifting any discrimination on the basis of gender.

Key points of analysis: The code provides useful advice and directions for employees and their employers in order to facilitate an effective prevention and a strong response to sexual harassment and harassment in the field of employment.

The text will also be a guide for the government, as the employer, to take immediate measures to avert acts – isolated or repeated – that constitute harassment, sexual harassment and victimisation of those who may report such behaviour.

The Code of Conduct has been established for the civil service, but an effort is underway for the private sector.

It also lists the responsibilities of each authority including measures for prevention and dealing with such behaviour and providing support to the victim. The code stresses the importance of discretion with which the reported cases must be dealt.

The Code of Conduct provides definitions of what constitutes harassment, sexual harassment, unwanted behaviour and behaviour of a sexual nature and gives instructions to employees on how to prevent it and what to do if it takes place.

The guide also refers to the stages of unofficial and formal processes of investigating such claims. The informal process aims at dealing directly with sexual harassment before it proceeds further.

The Code also provides a list of misconceptions and stereotypes about harassment.

Ombudsman Maria Lottides said that each supervisor, each competent authority and the public administration in general must know that harassment and sexual harassment at the work place constitutes gender discrimination which is forbidden by law, and employers have the legal responsibility to ensure a safe, dignified, healthy and friendly working environment. She further stated that in case employers do not take action, they will be held jointly responsible with the perpetrator for the harassment.

The code followed: a) Directive of 2006/54/EC, b) the enacting Law 205(I)2002 as amended by Law 40(I)2006 (article 12) whose violation consists a criminal offense (article 30- Penalties- if a natural person deliberately commits the offense there is a penalty of EUR 4 500 or six months imprisonment or both and if the offence is committed by a legal person EUR 7 800) and c) the European Committee Code of Practice and the Guide of Prevention of Sexual Harassment in the Workplace - International Labor Organization.

Internet link source

http://www.ombudsman.gov.cy/ombudsman/ombudsman.nsf/page31_gr/page31_gr?OpenDocument.