

ANNUAL REPORT – 2006

The National Commission Persons with Disability commits itself to render Maltese society inclusive so that persons with disability can fulfil themselves as persons who enjoy a high quality of life by means of equal opportunities in all sections of society. In order to implement this commitment, KNPD works for a society that eliminates all forms of direct or indirect discrimination against persons with disability or their families while providing them with the necessary help and support.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1. Setting up of KNPD

The National Commission Persons with Disability (KNPD) was set up for the first time on the 3rd November 1987 when the then Minister for Social Policy made a parliamentary statement in which he appointed the first members of this Commission. On the 10th February 2000, KNPD was officially constituted according to Act No. 1 of the year 2000, the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act. This same law established the aims of KNPD.

2. The Aims of KNPD

The aims of KNPD, as set out in Section V, Article 22 of the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act are to:

- identify, establish and update all national policies which are directly or indirectly related to disability issues;
- identify the needs of persons with disability, their families and voluntary bodies working in the field of disability and to take all necessary steps or propose appropriate measures in order to cater for such needs as much as possible;
- ensure that all Government programmes concerning the affairs and interests of persons with disability, their families and voluntary bodies working in the field of disability, are implemented in accordance with national policies for disability issues;
- ensure that there is the necessary co-ordination between all Government departments and agencies in implementing measures, services or initiatives proposed by Government or proposed by KNPD from time to time;
- keep direct and continuous contact with local and foreign bodies working in the field of disability, and with other groups, agencies or individuals as required;
- monitor the provision of services offered by Government or its agencies or by any other person or group of persons, where the clients of such services are persons with disability;
- work towards the elimination of discrimination against people with disability;
- carry out general investigations with a view to determining whether the provisions of this Act are being complied with;
- investigate complaints made to KNPD about individual non compliance with any provision of this Act and, where it seems appropriate, act as a conciliator in relation to such complaints;
- inquire into, and make determinations on, matters referred to it by the Minister;
- provide, where and as appropriate, assistance, including legal and financial assistance, to persons with disability in enforcing their rights under this Act;

- keep under review the enforcement of this Act and, when deemed fit by KNPD or so required by the Minister, draft and submit to the Minister proposals for amendments to the Act;
- examine laws, and (when requested to do so by the Minister) propose laws, with the purpose of ascertaining whether the laws or proposed laws are or would be, inconsistent with or contrary to the objects of this Act, and to report to the Minister the results of any such examination;
- provide all such services that may be necessary or required for KNPD to attain its objectives;
- collate, analyse and publish statistics related to the disability sector which, among others, indicate the national level achieved in the policy regarding inclusion.

3. The Period of this Annual Report

This report covers the calendar year 2006 and is being drawn up according to Article 30 of the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act. This report does not include the work carried out by KNPD with respect to the implementation of the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act since this was published separately. A copy of this report may be obtained from the offices of KNPD and also downloaded from the website of KNPD: www.knpd.org.

4. The Structure of the National Commission Persons with Disability

1. The members of KNPD are appointed by the Prime Minister on the advice of the Minister for the Family and Social Solidarity for a two year period. In October 2006, the term of the members on KNPD expired and, thus, a new Commission was elected. Therefore, for the first nine months of this year, the composition of KNPD was different, as can be seen from Table 1.

2. The Equal Opportunities Act (Article 21) stipulates that half the members of KNPD have to be persons with disability or relatives of persons with disability. The present membership of KNPD satisfies this criterion because five out of sixteen members are persons with disability and three members are relatives of persons with disability.

3. During this year, KNPD held nine meetings.

4. During this year, KNPD's Secretariat issued a report every two months to the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity, the members of KNPD and the general public. This report is published on KNPD's website.

TABLE COMPOSITION OF KNPD 2006	
Name	Status

Mr Joseph M. Camilleri ^(a)	Chairperson
Ms Rita Borg ^{(a)(b)}	Vice-Chairman
Dr Anthony Charles ^{(a)(c)}	Vice-Chairman Voluntary Sector
Mr Jesmond Schembri	Ministry of the Family and Social Solidarity
Mr George Borg ^(d)	Ministry of Education, Youth and Employment
Ms Myriam Aquilina ^(c)	Ministry of Education, Youth and Employment
Dr Taygeta Firman ^(d)	Ministry of Health and Community Services
Dr Marvic Sammut ^(c)	Ministry of Health and Community Services
Mr Alfred Camilleri	Ministry of Finance
Mr Noel Formosa	Ministry of Gozo
Ms Sarah Cuschieri	Local Councils Association
Dr. Marie Alexander	University of Malta
Fr. Martin Micallef	Archdiocese of Malta
Ms. Miriam Bonnici ^{(a)(d)}	Voluntary Sector
Mr. Ronald Galea ^{(a)(d)}	Voluntary Sector
Ms. Marchita Mangiafico ^{(a)(d)}	Voluntary Sector
Ms Ingrid Valenzia ^{(a)(d)}	Voluntary Sector
Mr. Epifanio Vella ^{(a)(d)}	Voluntary Sector
Dr. Daniela Mangion ^{(a)(d)}	Voluntary Sector
Ms Marthese Mugliette ^{(a)(c)}	Voluntary Sector
Ms Pam Muscat ^{(a)(c)}	Voluntary Sector
Mr John Peel ^{(a)(c)}	Voluntary Sector
Mr. Karl Borg ^{(a)(c)}	Voluntary Sector
Mr Fred Bezzina	Secretary/Executive Director

(a) These people are persons with disability or family members of persons with disability in accordance with article 21 of the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act.

(b) Mr Rita Vella neé Borg was a member and was appointed Vice-Chairperson in October 2006.

(c) These people were members of KNPD until October 2006.

(d) These people were appointed new members of KNPD in October 2006.

5. The Secretariat of KNPD

1. KNPD presented its Annual Report for the year 2005 during a press conference held in February 2006. This Conference was addressed by the Hon. Clyde Puli, the Chairperson Committee for Social Affairs of the Maltese Parliament. This report was distributed among all those who work in this sector and can be obtained from KNPD, in Maltese or in English, in Maltese audio version, in large font, or from the website of KNPD, both in Maltese and in English.

2 At the moment, there are twenty-one persons in the Secretariat of KNPD, eighteen working on a full-time basis and three working on a part-time basis. Ten of these employees are persons with disability. The Secretariat seeks to offer equal opportunities of work at all levels.

3 KNPD hired the services of fourteen professionals so as to be able to function more effectively. This included professional services about:

- the Equal Opportunities Act;
- vetting of various applications;
- reports and home visits for the Social Assistance Service;
- vetting by architects of applications for development made to MEPA;
- its financial accounts;
- Maltese Sign Language interpretation

4. Every year, KNPD organises a Staff Development Day with the aim of providing a training session and to develop the Secretariat's team members. This year, the intention was to provide training in relation to language used in the disability sector.

6. Services of KNPD

1. The services offered by KNPD to persons with disability and their families are the following:

- The National Register of Persons with Disability;
- The Special Identity Card;
- Investigation of Complaints of Discrimination;
- The Assistive Apparatus Fund;
- The Resource Centre;
- Courses on Disability Issues;
- The PEKTUR Programme;
- Support Service for Persons with Disability with Challenging Behaviour.

2. KNPD makes recommendations to the departments concerned regarding these benefits:

- The vetting of applications for development to MEPA;
- The exemption from customs duty on vehicles to the Ministry of Finance;
- The exemption from payment of road licenses to the Licensing and Testing Directorate;
- The Blue Sticker to the Commissioner of Police;
- Work Permits for Personal Assistants to the Department of Citizenship;
- The Review of Decisions concerning Reserved Parking to the Malta Transport Authority.

3. Detailed reports of these services are given in this report in the respective chapters.

CHAPTER 2 ACTION PLAN

1. The World Action Programme for Persons with Disability

KNPD has to conform to the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act. Moreover, KNPD, as it did in the past, continued to follow the recommendations and proposals established and recommended as a model by the United Nations to all Governments in the World Action Programme for Persons with Disability issued in 1983. This report is modelled on this programme. At the end of 1993, the United Nations also published the Standard Rules for Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disability. This document complements and continues to develop the World Action Programme and, therefore, KNPD, during this period, also kept these Standard Rules as an important reference in the execution of its work.

2. Maltese Council for Economic and Social Development (MCESD)

In order to ensure that the persons with disability sector is an integral part of Malta's economic and social development, the Government enacted legislation so that KNPD would form part of the Civil Committee of the Maltese Council for Economic and Social Development. KNPD is represented on this Committee by its Chairperson, Mr. Joe Camilleri.

3. The National Register of Persons with Disability

1. During this period, KNPD continued to build the Register of Persons with Disability in order to be able to communicate with them, both through its own literature and the literature of other entities that wish to contact persons with disability. Moreover, this register is drawn up so that we can compile statistics on this sector. Every person who applies for any service offered by KNPD is automatically listed in the Registry.

2. Together with this report, KNPD is publishing statistics taken from the registry on persons with disability in Malta and Gozo (Appendix A).

3. KNPD receives a number of requests from different entities, such as organisations of persons with disability, local councils, archpriests, university students and others, to use this information in order for them to be able to contact the persons listed in the registry or a number of them. Although KNPD cannot pass on this information because it is strictly bound by confidentiality, it has chosen to help. It asks persons who would like to use this service to state which information they want to pass on so that KNPD can pass on this information itself. This year, KNPD provided this service to fifteen different entities or individuals.

CHAPTER 3 REHABILITATION

1. New Support Service for Persons with Disability with Challenging Behaviour

1. At the end of last year, KNPD began a new service that had been on its agenda for a long time. One of KNPD's priorities for the last few years has been the need of a holistic service for persons with disability with challenging behaviour. In order to offer this service, KNPD engaged the services of Ms Forough Hessabi M.A (Psych), Ed. S., educational specialist with a number of years of experience.

2. This service is aimed for those persons with disability who have a challenging behaviour, their families and those who work with them in various sectors. The service provides direct training, consultation and individual therapy sessions. The statistics relating to this service for the year 2006 can be found in Table 2.

TABLE 2		
SUPPORT SERVICE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITY WITH CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR		
	2005	2006
TRAINING SESSIONS	91	84
SUPPORT Agency	36	21
Dar tal-Providenza	24	18
Day Centres	15	14
Mount Carmel Hospital	14	-
Schools	-	17
Child Guidance Clinic	-	14
Others	2	-
INDIVIDUAL SESSIONS	1140	1480
From the Community	521	667
SUPPORT Agency	302	426
Child Guidance Clinic	124	75
Mount Carmel Hospital	85	109
St. Luke's Hospital	-	38
Dar tal-Providenza	51	31
Education Division	30	75
Gozo	-	38
Nazareth House	24	21
Others	3	-
CLINICAL SUPERVISION	21	12
SESSIONS WITH SIBLINGS	12	6

3. When one compares the principal components of this service with the first year of this service, one finds that there was a big increase of about 30% with respect to individual sessions and a decrease of about 11% in training sessions.

4. KNPD tried to expand this service by employing a professional seconded from SAPPOR Agency. This plan did not succeed and this person returned to his original employment.

2. Special Aid Service

1. During this period, the Special Aid Service offered financial assistance and advice with regard to services aimed at helping persons with disability live a more independent life. The general statistics about this service are shown in Table 3. These statistics show that although the number of beneficiaries this year increased slightly (3%), there was a decrease of 12% in the number of applications for this service which is also reflected by a decrease in the number of people in the waiting list. After the substantial increase which was registered last year, this decrease means that the numbers have returned to those registered in the preceding years. The total sum also stabilised itself to the level of the preceding years.

TABLE 3		
ASSISTIVE APPARATUS FUND		
	2005	2006
New Applications	315	276
Persons who benefited from the service	207	214
On the waiting list	54	38
Did not qualify	18	10
Pending	8	9
Returned apparatus given to other applicants	17	17
Returned apparatus	26	29
Total sum of grants	Lm67,000	Lm63,300
Average Grant	Lm324	Lm 296

2. Tables 4 and 5 provide an analysis of this service in terms of the age of the beneficiaries and the apparatus supplied, respectively.

TABLE 4				
ASSISTIVE APPARATUS FUND ACCORDING TO AGE				
AGE	2005		2006	
0-5	22	11%	13	6%
6-16	50	24%	54	25%
17-30	33	16%	23	11%
31-60	38	18%	51	24%
61+	64	31%	73	34%
Total	207	100	214	100

TABLE 5				
ASSISTIVE APPARATUS FUND ACCORDING TO APPARATUS				
APPARATUS	2005		2006	
Wheelchairs & Walking Aids	84	34%	82	33%
Seating & Bedding	65	26%	74	30%
Personal Hygiene	24	10%	31	12%
Communication Aids	33	13%	27	11%
Lifting Aids	31	13%	27	11%
Other Apparatus	10	4%	9	4%
Total	247*	100	250*	100

* The total is higher than the number of applicants because some applicants benefit from more than one type of apparatus.

3. Due to the lack of funds, KNPD cannot help every person who applies for the service. It can only subsidise 50% of the total price up to a maximum of Lm500 even in the case of objects which cost a lot more. For this reason, KNPD repeated its request to the Government to increase the funds made available to it in the 2007 Budget. Unfortunately, this request was not granted.

4. This service continued to work more closely with the Community Chest Fund:

- Mr. Joe Camilleri, the Chair of KNPD is a member of this Fund;
- Persons who have already benefited financially from this service can apply for more financial assistance from this fund. Very often, such requests are met.
- The agreement between KNPD, the Foundation for Information Technology Accessibility (FITA) and the Community Chest Fund has continued so that applications by persons with disability for financial assistance to buy computers are accepted by this Fund. A substantial number of persons with disability have benefited from this agreement.

5. KNPD is working on the proposals for two projects to be financed by funds allocated to Malta by the European Social Fund. One of these projects is aimed at establishing a Centre for Independent Living which helps people to have the necessary apparatus and training for an independent life. This also includes apparatus which helps persons with physical disability drive.

3. Refund for Apparatus for Persons with Disability

1. KNPD has continued to administer this scheme on behalf of the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity. This scheme is aimed at giving refunds for extra expenses incurred by persons with disability when VAT started to be charged on special apparatus. This year KNPD amalgamated this scheme with another one by means of which it helped persons with disability by refunding VAT paid on computers. Details of how this scheme worked in 2006 can be found in Table 6.

TABLE 6		
REFUND ON APPARATUS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITY		
	2005*	2006
Refund	Lm15,391	Lm21,296
Number of Persons who benefited from the Scheme	198	308
Average assistance	Lm77	Lm 69

*These figures show the total amount of refunds for both special apparatus and computers.

2. These statistics show that this year there were substantial increases both in refunds (30%) and in the number of persons who benefited (56%). This increase was anticipated because this was the second year in which this service was offered and, therefore, the amount increased as the public became more widely aware of this service.

CHAPTER 4

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

1. Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act

1. Equal Opportunities Unit

One of the main aims of KNPD is to “investigate complaints as may be made to them of failure to comply with any provision of” the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act and “keep under review the working of this Act”. With this aim, in the Secretariat of KNPD, there is the Equal Opportunities Section which is in charge of this work.

Due to the great importance given by KNPD to this work, a detailed report of the work carried out by this Section is given separately. This year KNPD published its annual report on the sixth year (October 2005-October 2006) of its work on this law, which was presented to the general public during a press conference which was attended by the Hon Louis Galea, Agent Minister for the Family and Social Solidarity, and the Hon Marie Louis Coleiro Preca, chief spokesperson of the Opposition in this sector.

A copy of the Annual Report on the Equal Opportunities Act in Maltese or in English or in Maltese audio version can be obtained from the offices of KNPD or from KNPD’s website: www.knpd.org.

In order to avoid repetition, this report is not going to discuss the work carried out by KNPD in this sector.

2. The Test of Reasonableness Board

During this year, KNPD continued with the work of the Board which determines what is reasonable in accordance with the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act. The work of this Board is included in the annual report on the Equal Opportunities Act (mentioned above) and is therefore not included in this report.

3. Revision of the Equal Opportunities Act

In 2006, KNPD completed its consultation and discussion programme, which had started the year before, aimed at revising the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act. The amendments to the Law proposed by KNPD seek to make this law more effective and compliant with the European Union Directive which establishes a General Framework on Equal Treatment in Employment. KNPD presented these amendments to the Ministry of the Family and Social Solidarity for its consideration. These amendments can be found on KNPD’s website: www.knpd.org.

2. Special Identity Card

1. KNPD continued to issue the special identity card to persons with disability in order to help them have equal opportunities. The statistics on this service for this period are shown in Table 7.

TABLE 7		
SPECIAL IDENTITY CARD		
	2005	2006
New Applications	1001	1158
Accepted Applications	1096	1143
Applications which were not Accepted	5	15
Special Identity Card Renewed	497	472
Special Identity Card Withdrawn	236	411
Total number of persons with disability in possession of the Special Identity Card	7655	8402

2. These statistics show that this year the number of applications for this service increased slightly by 5% while the number of withdrawn cards increased drastically, by about 74%. This happened after KNPD started working on the withdrawal of the Special Identity Card on the death of the person with disability. This diminishes the possibility of abuse of this document. The total number of cards increased by about 10% in 2006.

3. Persons who have this special identity card are entitled to benefit from a number of services, a list of which can be obtained from the offices of KNPD, from the booklet Benefits and Services for Persons with Disability (pages 59-61), or from the website of KNPD: www.knpd.org

3. Work on the Policies of the State

One of the tasks of KNPD is to ensure that the policies of the state provide equal opportunities to persons with disability and their families. This year KNPD worked intensively in this respect. The most important aspects of this work were the following:

1. The National Budget for 2006-2007

Every year, KNPD presents a case in favour of the national budget taking into consideration the needs of persons with disability and their families. For this purpose, a meeting was held with the Prime Minister, the Hon. Dr L. Gonzi, and other government officials in order to implement the measures for this sector announced in the 2006 budget and to make proposals for the 2007 budget. These proposals are discussed in several sections in this report.

2. Pension Reform

KNPD kept following up the Pension Reform. One of the main proposals of KNPD for this Reform was that parents of children with disability should be given a longer period in which the National Insurance contribution is credited and thus the parents would have the opportunity to take care of the new born child for a longer period of time. This proposal was accepted and now these people can choose to have four years of paid contributions instead of two.

3. The Water and Electricity Surcharge

KNPD discussed the surcharge on water and electricity in view of the fact that this affects persons with disability and their family in a more negative way. KNPD recommended that the income ceiling upon which the tax bands are calculated and the income ceiling upon which exemptions from paying the surcharge on water and electricity are made should be higher for persons with

disability and their families. This recommendation was made to the Ministry of the Family and Social Solidarity and was one of the proposals made by KNPD for the 2007 budget. This proposal was not accepted.

4. The National Tourism Plan

KNPD was asked by the Ministry of Tourism to give its feedback on the Tourism Policy and National Plan on Tourism. KNPD sent various concrete proposals to be included in this document so that the tourism sector may also offer equal opportunities to everyone. There was a positive response to these comments and it is hoped that some of them will be included in the final document.

5. The Labour Party Plans on Health and Family.

The Labour Party requested KNPD to give its feedback on two draft plans proposed by them: one on Health and one on Family. The position of KNPD on these documents was prepared after KNPD discussed them during a meeting. The reactions of KNPD were presented to the Labour Party during two meetings, one held between KNPD's delegation and the Deputy Leader, Dr. Charles Mangion, about the Health Plan and another meeting held between KNPD's delegation and the Labour Party's Leader, Dr. Alfred Sant, about the Family document.

6. A Meeting with Alternattiva Demokratika

A delegation of KNPD held a meeting with a delegation from Alternattiva Demokratika led by Dr Harry Vassallo. During this meeting, the main issues affecting this sector were discussed. A press release was issued afterwards.

7. The Euro Changeover

KNPD is represented on the Consumers' Committee on the Euro Changeover. KNPD stated that the information campaign on this changeover should take into consideration the needs of persons with disability for them to be informed adequately. Unfortunately, many of KNPD's recommendations on the matter are not being followed.

CHAPTER 5 PHYSICAL ACCESS

1. Physical Access for All

1. In 2006, KNPD continued to work on the implementation of the principles of Access for All. Its work in this sector can be divided into three categories:

- a) The application of the Equal Opportunities Act (which was discussed in the annual report which is issued by KNPD every year);
- b) the vetting of applications for development on behalf of the Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA);
- c) consultancy and other activities.

2. This year, KNPD continued to vet applications for development submitted to MEPA for public buildings which are of major use. Table 8 shows the statistics about this service:

TABLE 8				
VETTING DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS				
	2005		2006	
Applications	531		741	
Recommended subject to certain conditions	233	(44%)	259	(35%)
Not recommended	232	(44%)	387	(52%)
More information requested	47	(9%)	83	(11%)
Pending	19	(4%)	12	(2%)

3. These statistics show that there was an increase of 40% in the number of applications vetted by KNPD. The level of recommended applications, even if subject to certain conditions, which was already low (44%), decreased by a further 9% to 35% of the vetted applications.

4. KNPD carries out inspections so that MEPA can issue the Clearance/Compliance Certificate for water and electricity to the applicants. KNPD's work in this sector is presented in Table number 9:

TABLE 9				
VETTING FOR THE CLEARANCE/COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATE				
	2005		2006	
Applications	41		59	
Recommended subject to certain conditions	21	(51%)	35	(59%)
Not recommended	16	(39%)	23	(39%)
Pending	4	(10%)	1	(2%)

5. Once again, KNPD feels that the figures in this table are very worrying despite the fact that the number of buildings (51) which were vetted for this certificate increased from that of last year. However, the number is very low when compared to the number of new applications (741) that were vetted by KNPD. This amounts to 7% of the plans vetted by KNPD. On a positive note, the number of buildings which were recommended increased by 8%.

6. Access for All – Design Guidelines

This year, KNPD, with the collaboration of the Chamber of Architects and Civil Engineers and with funds from the European Union Community Action Programme to Combat against Discrimination, distributed the booklet, ‘Access for All- Design Guidelines’ among all the architects who are members in this Chamber.

- KNPD also organised two meetings in Gozo about this subject and this publication. One meeting was intended for Gozitan architects and the other one for Gozitan mayors. The purpose of these meetings was for KNPD to present this booklet as well as discuss the vetting of plans submitted to KNPD by MEPA. While the attendance for the meeting for architects was very poor, almost all the Gozitan local councils were represented in the mayors’ meeting.

7. The Installation of Lifts by Voluntary Entities and Small Enterprises

In the beginning of 2006, the Minister for Finance, with the collaboration of KNPD, initiated a scheme whereby VAT on the installation of lifts by voluntary entities and small enterprises is refunded. This scheme had been announced in the budget for 2006. It is hoped that as a result of this scheme, more public buildings will be accessible to everyone.

2. The Blue Sticker Service

1. KNPD also continued to make recommendations to the Commissioner of Police for persons with mobility impairment to receive the Blue Sticker service. This benefit primarily entitles persons with mobility impairment to park in public parking places reserved for them.

2. During this period, KNPD worked in this respect as shown in Table 10.

TABLE 10		
BLUE STICKER		
	2005	2006
New Applications	824	814
Recommended permanent blue sticker	806	504
Recommended temporary blue sticker	-	111
Not Recommended	18	119
Did not attend doctor’s appointment	-	68
Pending	-	12
Number of persons who renewed the Blue Sticker	454	174
Withdrawn	306	393
Total persons in possession of blue sticker	4,659	4,881

3. In last year’s annual report, KNPD reported a drastic increase of 75% in the number of applications received for this service. KNPD felt that this increase was unsustainable and for this reason it took two measures to offer this service to those who really need it:

- All the applications for the Blue Sticker are being vetted by KNPD’s doctor;
- The Blue Sticker (and the Special Identity card) is being collected when the applicant dies. People who fail to return the sticker are reported to the Commissioner of Police who issues this document.

4. The figures in Table 10 show that these measures are having the desired results. While the number of applications was consistent with that of last year, the number of Blue Stickers which were issued this year was 24% lower than that of last year. Moreover, 18% (111) of these Blue

Stickers are temporary and are to be reviewed. The number of withdrawn Blue Stickers increased by 28%, which is a substantial amount. While the number of Blue Stickers increased by 222, this figure is substantially lower than that of last year when 400 new blue stickers were issued.

5. In order for these initiatives to be taken, KNPD had to introduce a minor fee for this service.

3. Reserved Parking Areas

1. The Reserved Parking Service in front of residencies of persons with disability who have severe mobility impairment is given by the Malta Transport Authority upon criteria agreed with KNPD. This year the Authority proposed to KNPD that these reserved parking spaces should be used by all persons with disability in possession of a Blue Sticker. In this way, a better use of parking could be made since many of these reserved parking spaces were being left empty for long periods of time. KNPD initially agreed with this proposal with certain conditions but after receiving various complaints, it reviewed its position and recommended to the Authority that these parking spaces should be used only by the person who applies for them.

2. KNPD, in agreement with the Authority, administers the Review Panel for this service. This Panel is composed of a representative of the Local Council's Association, who acts as Chairman, and representatives of KNPD, the Malta Transport Authority and the Health Division, as members. This Panel is in charge of reviewing decisions taken by the Authority which are contested by the applicant or the relevant local council.

3. This year, the Review Panel functioned as shown in Table 11.

TABLE 11		
RESERVED PARKING REVIEW PANEL		
	2005	2006
Applications examined	77	27
First decision confirmed	44 (57%)	11 (41%)
First decision changed	31 (40%)	16 (59%)
Pending	2 (3%)	0

4. This service, which is administered by KNPD, saw a substantial decrease of 65% in the number of applications examined by the Panel. The number of applications in which the first decision was changed went up to 59%.

4. Exemption from Registration Tax

1. KNPD continued to make recommendations to the Ministry of Finance to exempt persons with disability (and, in certain circumstances, their families) from the registration tax and/or customs duty on the cars they need. Table 12 shows statistics about this service:

TABLE 12		
REGISTRATION TAX EXEMPTIONS		
	2005	2006
New applications	181	180
Recommended by the OHU	157 (87%)	149 (83%)
Not recommended by the OHU	9 (5%)	12 (7%)
Still have not used the exemption	9 (5%)	11 (6%)
Pending applications	6 (3%)*	8 (4%)*

* These are waiting for the medical report from the Occupational Health Unit of the Health Division.

2. KNPD continued with the procedure of referring the recommendation to the Ministry of Finance for its approval when the applicant produces evidence that he is going to buy a car. The number of applicants (11) who have not yet made use of this exemption is very low and indicates that the system is working.

3. The figures for this service have become stable and there was only a slight decrease of 5% in the number of beneficiaries when compared to last year.

4. This service is very complex and for this reason KNPD asked the Ministry of Finance to simplify the procedure by giving professional officials of KNPD the responsibility of doing the necessary certification. This request was accepted and next year KNPD will start implementing this new procedure.

5. Exemption from Road License Payment

1. KNPD continued to make recommendations to the Licensing Directorate to exempt drivers with disability according to the Social Security Act (1987) or who have a modified vehicle because of their disability from paying the Road License. The statistics for the year 2006 can be seen in Table 13.

TABLE 13		
EXEMPTION FROM ROAD LICENCE PAYMENT		
	2005	2006
New applications	104	113
Recommended	80 (77%)	86 (76%)
Not eligible	14 (13%)	14 (12%)
Still have not used the exemption	6 (6%)	6 (5%)
Pending applications	4 (4%)*	7 (6%)*

* These are waiting for the medical report from the Occupational Health Unit of the Health Division.

2. This service registered an increase of 9% in the number of applications and 8% in the number of beneficiaries when compared to last year.

6. Accessible Transport

1. Since last year, KNPD has had an agreement with the Foundation for Respite Care Services so that the latter could start providing an individualised transport service to persons with disability who need it. KNPD, by means of the NGO Liaison Committee of the Ministry for the Family, started giving the funds voted for this service to this Foundation.

In the past, this work was done by the Transport for Independent Living Foundation that KNPD established together with the Foundation for Independent Living. KNPD worked on the complete closure of this Foundation.

2. KNPD held discussions with the Ministry for Information and Information Technology about the Park and Ride Scheme. An agreement was reached whereby:

- (a) workers with disability who work in Valletta are to be exempted from the fee to park in Valletta;
- (b) persons with disability who were exempted from the tariff usually paid to enter Valletta are to have an equivalent benefit under the new system.

CHAPTER 6

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

1. Collaboration with the Foundation for Information Technology Accessibility (FITA)

1. In 1988, KNPD and MITTS joined their efforts to establish the Foundation for Information Technology Accessibility (FITA) with the primary aim of providing persons with disability with full access to information technology. KNPD has continued to offer its full support to this Foundation, partly by nominating two persons in the Foundation's administrative board.

2. This year, KNPD also collaborated with FITA by:

- Continuing to develop a section of journals, books and CDs in the Resource Centre on this subject which can be used by everyone who is interested;
- implementing the agreement with the Community Chest Fund that assists persons with disability financially when buying a computer;
- offering a service which enables persons with disability to benefit from Websave and financial aid given by Go Mobile.

3. KNPD is working with FITA to make sure that the Computer Centres in the Community, which are being established with the support of the Ministry for Information and Information Technology, are made accessible to everyone both in terms of equipment and also in terms of the building in which they can be used. So far, four of these Centres have been opened but none of them has equipment which is accessible to persons with different disabilities. Moreover, two of these centres, that is, those of UHM and the Richmond Foundation, are found in buildings which are not accessible to everyone, especially to people with mobility impairment.

CHAPTER 7 EDUCATION

1. Revision of Inclusive and Special Education

KNPD continued to give its full support to the implementation of the Spiteri Report on the Revision of Special and Inclusive Education. This was done mainly through work done with the coordinator, Mr. George Borg, who is responsible for the implementation of the recommendations of this report. This work can now be done more effectively since Mr. Borg has been appointed as a member of KNPD.

One area in which this work is being carried out effectively is the training of facilitators and Inclusive Coordinators. KNPD is helping in the preparation as well as the provision of this training.

2 The Statementing Moderating Panel and the Appeals Board

The Ministry of Education has again selected the Statementing Moderating Panel and the Appeals Board as indicated by the policy document, “Inclusive Education – Support to Students with Disability”. KNPD is contributing to this exercise through its Chairperson, who is KNPD’s representative in the Appeals Board. The main aim of this policy and of these entities is to make sure that every student with disability has an individual educational programme according to his individual needs.

3 The Giving of Medicine in Regular Schools

One of the major problems faced by a number of parents of students with disability attending regular schools is the giving of medicine to students who need it. Very often, parents have to go to school everyday to give the medicine to their children or else the students have to remain without their medicine to the detriment of their education. This is happening despite the fact that many of these students have a full-time facilitator. KNPD is aware of the complexity of this issue and has thus agreed to give its contribution. KNPD’s Chairperson, Mr. Joe Camilleri, formed part of a work group which had the task of making recommendations to the Ministry. At the end of last year, the work group completed its report and forwarded it to the Minister of Education.

Despite the fact that a year has now passed and despite various appeals by KNPD for there to be some progress in this issue, KNPD has still not received any proposal by the Ministry of Education except for the fact that it has asked for the advice of the Attorney General’s Office. KNPD believes that the process is taking too long and will thus have to take legal action.

4. The University

2. KNPD, since its establishment, has contributed through its Chairman to the Special Needs Committee of the University of Malta. However, KNPD felt that not enough progress was being made and thus it asked the new University Rector, Prof. Juanito Camilleri, to restructure this Committee in order to make it more effective. This request was accepted and the following measures have already been taken:

- a) The chairperson of this Committee is now the Pro-Rector, Dr Marianne Lauri;
- b) The name of this Committee will change to “Access (Students with Disability)”;
- c) This Committee will be both a Senate Committee as well as a University Committee (not just a Senate Committee as it was before);

- d) A number of sub-committees were established to examine in detail various issues such as special arrangements during examinations and physical access at University.

KNPD will continue to give its support through the direct participation of its Chairperson in this Committee and some of the subcommittees.

5. Post-Secondary

KNPD has often shown its concern about the fact that a number of students with disability are terminating their secondary schooling and not finding a place where they can continue their education like other students. The only choice offered to these students was to attend a special school. KNPD does not agree with this proposal and thus it had a number of meetings about the issue both with the Minister of Education, Dr Louis Galea, as well as high officials from MCAST and ETC. It appears that the Ministry has concrete proposals and it is hoped that they will be implemented in 2007.

6. Pilot Study at Maria Assumpta Secondary School

KNPD continued to work on the pilot project at Maria Assumpta Secondary School, which started in 2004. The aim is to provide students with disability at this school an individual educational programme and to make sure that their facilitators are provided with the necessary support to implement these programmes. This was the last year of the project which was financed by the HSBC Care for Children Fund. KNPD hopes that it can help in order for this project to continue.

CHAPTER 8

SERVICES FOR ADULTS WITH DISABILITY

1. Employment

1. Employment and Training Corporation

KNPD kept in touch with the Employment and Training Corporation, mainly through regular meetings with the Chief Executive of this Corporation, Ms. Sue Vella, for the Corporation to provide specialised services to persons with disability in both vocational training and employment. Moreover, Mr Joe Camilleri, Chairperson of KNPD, is also a director of this Corporation.

2. Smart City

KNPD has made a number of proposals to make sure that all the plans for the development at Smart City take into consideration the issues related to the employment of persons with disability. KNPD is represented in a task force that is participating in the implementation of this development.

3. Employment projects financed by the European Social Fund

KNPD is working on two proposals for projects to be financed by the funds allocated to Malta through the European Social Fund. One of these projects is aimed at developing schemes that offer incentives for the employment of persons with disability in accordance with the guidelines recommended by the study carried out by Mr. Gordon Cordina for KNPD.

2. Day Services

1. KNPD continued to work to ensure that the Day Services for persons with disability are transferred from the Ministry of the Family to the Foundation for Social Services. In the last budget, the funds for these services were incorporated with those for SAPPOR Agency, which is an agency of this Foundation. The Foundation has also employed a manager to administer this handing over. KNPD held various meetings, including with Mr. Joe Gerada, Chief Executive of the Foundation, to help making this transition as smoothly and as quickly as possible.

2. KNPD has once again requested that the 2007 budget provides these services with the necessary funds to:

- have an adequate managerial structure;
- improve the services, mainly by training personnel and engaging professionals;
- make these services accessible to all those who need them, thus eliminating the need for a waiting list.

3. KNPD received a number of complaints that persons with disability, especially those who were to leave the special schools, did not know if they were going to be given the day service they need. After several interventions by KNPD, this year the decision that they were going to be given these services was taken early and thus the transition could be performed more effectively.

4. This year, KNPD made an agreement with the Foundation for Social Services for Mr Charles Borg, employee of KNPD, to work as a part-time Braille instructor at the Centre for Visually Impaired People, at the Centru Hidma Socjali.

CHAPTER 9

RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

1. SAPPORT Agency

KNPD continued to give its full backing to the SAPPORT Agency within the Social Services Foundation. This Agency has the responsibility to develop community services to help persons with disability continue to live in their own home and, when this is no longer possible, to provide them with small houses in the community and the necessary support. KNPD gave its full support to the Agency by:

- a) working to ensure that it is given the funds it needs;
- b) being represented on the Committee for the Allocation of Services, which examines applications for the services provided by this Agency.

2 KNPD believes that this Agency does not have the necessary funds to provide the community services to persons who need them. In fact, it has a very long waiting list. KNPD has asked the Government to substantially increase the funds for this Agency in the 2007 Budget. Unfortunately, this request was rejected.

3. In the 2007 Budget Speech, the Government allocated Lm75,000 for the opening of Dar Pirotta in Birkirkara to offer residential services to a small number of persons with disability. KNPD is giving its full support to this initiative.

4. KNPD, together with SAPPORT Agency and Mount Carmel Hospital, has prepared a report proposing that a number of persons with disability residing in this hospital should move to SAPPORT Agency. The hospital administration accepted to transfer the funds that would be saved to SAPPORT Agency. However, these funds are not enough for SAPPORT to be able to offer these persons with disability an adequate service. KNPD requested the Government to provide the necessary funds for this project to be implemented. Discussions are ongoing in an attempt to acquire these funds.

2. The Legal Framework

KNPD completed its discussions with representatives of the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity about the Bill regarding Guardianship which is aimed at improving substantially the procedures followed to ensure that persons who cannot administer their wealth and who cannot look after themselves completely will have legal protection about whoever provides them with the support they need. The draft of this law is now being studied by the Attorney General.

3. Personal Assistance Scheme

1. A small number of persons with disability are hiring personal assistance services from non-Maltese citizens. To carry out this work, these assistants need a work permit from the Employment and Training Corporation. After an agreement reached between KNPD and the Authorities, it was decided that this permit would be granted if the applications are recommended by KNPD. Consequently, KNPD now makes these recommendations after its professional people visit the applicants in their home. This year's work by KNPD related to this sector is illustrated in Table 14.

TABLE 14		
PERSONAL ASSISTANCE SCHEME		
	2005	2006
New Applications	32	36
Recommended	27 (84%)	32 (89%)
Not eligible	2 (6%)	2 (6%)
Pending	3 (9%)	2 (6%)

2. There was an increase of 11% in the applications made for this service.

4. Respite Care Services Foundation

KNPD joined forces with the Society of Parents of Persons with Disability in order to establish the Respite Care Services Foundation to provide temporary residential services to persons with disability so as to give some relief to the families taking care of them. KNPD has been giving its support to this initiative throughout the years in particular by nominating three members to be part of the managing boards of the Respite Care Services Foundation.

5. Improvements in Homes of Persons with Disability

1. The Housing Authority has a scheme by which it provides financial assistance to persons with disability with the aim of helping them modify their homes in accordance with their specific needs. The manager who directs the Special Aid Service represents KNPD in the committee which examines these requests.

CHAPTER 10

ACTION IN THE COMMUNITY

1. Social Work with Persons with Disability

KNPD continued to work with the unit within SAPPOR Agency which provides social work services to persons with disability and their families. KNPD provided premises at the Centru Hidma Socjali in Santa Venera for the operation of this unit, and it also offered administrative assistance.

2. Subsidy on Postage to Voluntary Organisations

KNPD again allocated a sum of money from its funds to subsidise the postage expenses of voluntary organisations which work in the field of persons with disability. This subsidy amounts to 50% of the total expenses. During this period, the eleven organisations which benefited from this service were:

- Down Syndrome Association
- Fund for the Rehabilitation of the Physically Handicapped
- Arka Foundation
- Equal Partners Foundation
- Respite Care Services Foundation
- The National Association of Parents of Persons with Disability
- National Deaf People Association
- Caritas Group Persons with Epilepsy
- Friends of Support Agency
- Commission for the Sick and Persons with Disability of the Catholic Action Movement

3. Work with Other Organisations

This year, KNPD worked closely with a number of non-governmental organisations in order to reach its aims. Most of this work is mentioned in other parts of this report. However, very often the collaboration is informal and thus not included in this report. Work was done with a number of entities, including:

- Down Syndrome Association
- The Federation of Organisations for Persons with Disability
- FOCAL – Consultative Committee of the Local Councils Department
- Guide Dogs Foundation
- Society of Parents of Persons with Disability
- General Workers Union
- Newspapers
- Commission for Children
- Commissioner for Equality
- Commission of the Family
- World Arthritis Day Committee
- Maltese Council of Disabled Persons
- Radio Stations
- Television Stations
- Media Consulta- the company which is in charge of the Campaign Against Discrimination
- Mental Health Association
- The Committee of the National Action Plan to Combat Discrimination

CHAPTER 11 RESEARCH AND TRAINING

1. Courses on Disability Issues

1. KNPD continued to organise a series of meetings on issues related to disability for various students and employees in order to broaden their knowledge about this field, especially from the social aspect. These lectures are delivered primarily by persons with disability themselves. Table 15 shows the work of KNPD in this area:

TABLE 15		
LECTURES ON DISABILITY ISSUES		
Client	Course	Number of Participants
The University of Malta	Faculty of Education	289
	Faculty of Medicine	64
	Social Work	80
	Institute of Health Care	40
Education Division	Supply Facilitators	320
Employment and Training Corporation	Support Workers	40
	Child Carers	82
Police Academy		195
HSBC		90
Total		1,200

2. The number of participants in these meetings increased by 30%.

3. This year, KNPD increased substantially the number of such meetings for secondary schools. This was made possible by the financial support of the European Union Community Action Programme to Combat Against Discrimination. These also involve the active and direct participation of persons with different disabilities. KNPD's work in this respect is shown in Table 16.

TABLE 16		
DISABILITY ISSUES - SCHOOLS		
School	Hours	Students
Primary	71	1,950
Secondary	56	2,765
Post-Secondary	6	150
Total	133	4,865

2. PEKTUR (Continuous Education, Training and Research Programme)

1 This programme was established in 1998 with the aim of offering limited financial support in continuous education, training and research in the field of disability. This year, PEKTUR once again issued two calls for application for training and research in the field of persons with disability. The programme received seven applications and the board which administers this programme decided as follows:

- A person wanted to read for a Masters Degree in special and inclusive education. This application could not be accepted because the Board deemed that this area does not fall under the priorities of PEKTUR.
- A person wanted to further her studies at a post-tertiary level in the disability sector by following a B.Phil in Interdisciplinary Approach to Learning Difficulties: Severe, Profound and Complex. Since studies on intellectual disabilities are a priority of PEKTUR, this application was accepted and a grant of LM300 was given.
- A person with disability wanted to visit an information technology fair for persons with visual impairment which was going to be held in the United Kingdom. This application was not accepted because it was felt that a technical background was needed to benefit from this visit and this person did not have this background.
- The Society of Parents of Persons with Disability requested financial assistance to organise a training course for those who help persons with disability at home. Since this training involves both support workers and parents of persons with disability, this application was accepted and a grant of Lm400 was given.
- The Society of Parents of Persons with Disability applied for financial assistance in connection with the organisation of a training course for support workers and voluntary workers who work for the Respite Care Services Foundation of Dar il-Kaptan. The board decided that the application should have been made by Dar il-Kaptan and therefore it was not accepted.
- The ADHD Support Group requested financial assistance for the organisation of a seminar which was to be attended by a foreign professor. This seminar was meant for doctors and parents of children suffering from ADHD. Since parents of persons with disability were to be involved, the application was accepted and the Group was given a grant of Lm200.
- A person with disability wanted to attend a conference on “Extending Accessibility to Next Generation Networks” that was going to be held in the United Kingdom. Since this conference was beneficial mainly for experts in the field, this request was not accepted.
- A person applied to pursue tertiary studies in the human resources sector. This application was not accepted because there was no relevance to disability issues.
- The Down Syndrome Association applied for financial assistance to publish an information pack for parents of Down Syndrome babies, as well as to offer training in counselling skills to parents of children with Down Syndrome for them to be able to support other parents. This was considered to be a positive initiative and a grant of Lm400 was given.

2. The programme received a number of requests for people to attend conferences abroad related to the disability sector. The policy of this programme is to refuse such requests unless they cover expenses related to the disability of the person, such as, the expenses for a personal assistant.

3. Research by KNPD

1. Ways of Mainstreaming Disability Policy

This year, KNPD, completed its work in a project financed by the European Union aimed at studying ways in which the disability sector can become an integral part of the national policy in various spheres by developing the European Disability Action Mainstreaming Assessment Tool (EDAMAT). This project was co-ordinated by Leonard Cheshire International. Apart from Malta, organisations from the United Kingdom, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Morocco and Greece took part in this project. This project was co-ordinated in Malta by Anne-Marie Callus from KNPD and Agnes Bezzina from SAPPOR Agency.

The work done this year on this project consists of:

- The presentation of a final document in Malta during a seminar held in the Persons with Disability Week. This seminar was attended by a good number of government offices, the Unions, the Church, and non-governmental entities, many of which gave their views on how this document can help in a practical way for disability issues to be mainstreamed in regular policies.
- The presentation of this document was held in Brussels during a seminar which was attended by a Maltese delegation consisting of George Borg, Agnes Bezzina, Anne-Marie Callus, Mariquina Micallef, Marthese Mugliette and Mariella Venanzi Beck. Ms Venanzi Beck gave a presentation of the document in representation of the Maltese delegation.
- This document was translated into Maltese.
- An easy-to-read version of this document (meant mainly for persons with intellectual impairment) and a text-only version (meant mainly for persons with visual impairment) were also published.
- A third seminar of this project in Malta was organized by KNPD. This seminar was attended by representatives of all the participating organizations. These representatives also had a meeting with the Permanent Committee for Social Affairs of the Maltese House of Representatives at the Palace, Valletta. During this seminar, the aims of this important project were explained to the policy makers.
- A number of meetings were held for the Maltese Project Advisory Group in order to provide feedback before the finalization of this document.

This document is available from KNPD in Maltese, English, or on a CD containing all the versions. The Maltese version can also be downloaded from the website of KNPD: www.knpd.org

2. Good Practice to Ensure Reasonable Access in Buildings to Persons with Disability

2006 saw the completion of this project aimed at establishing criteria upon which to decide what is reasonable in terms of physical access - "Good Practice for Providing Reasonable Access to the Physically Built Environment for Disabled Persons". This project was carried out by the University of Malta and the University of Leeds with the active participation of KNPD and the Centre for Disability Studies of the University of Leeds. This year the project continued in the following way:

- A delegation of KNPD consisting of the Chairperson, members of the Test of Reasonableness Board and architects of KNPD attended a research seminar held at the University of Leeds;
- The last seminar of this project, during which the final document was completed, was held in Malta.

This document is going to be published next year.

3. Access to Professional Training

In 2005, KNPD was involved in a pilot project, Access to Professional Training, aimed at giving persons with disability the opportunity to train at a tertiary level, mainly in social work. This project is financed by the Leonardo Programme of the European Union and co-ordinated by De Montfort University of Leicester in the United Kingdom. The Marie Curie Association of Bulgaria, the Social Services Centre of Sliven in Bulgaria and the Social Work Department of the University of Malta are also taking part in this project. This project continued this year with Ms Rosanne Fenech and Ms Alison Grima, officials of the secretariat of KNPD, coordinating the project for KNPD. The work done this year in relation to this project consisted of:

- A meeting in Sliven, Bulgaria, for all the representatives of the organizations taking part in this project. The Maltese representatives were Ms Rosanne Fenech from KNPD and Dr Charles Pace from the University of Malta.
- Various meetings of the Maltese Consultative Board for this project.
- The identification of persons with disability wishing to participate in this course, individual interviews with every person with disability applying for this course and the identification of the individual support required by these persons with disability to participate in this course.
- The training required for the mentoring of third year students who are making the grade in Social Work. Eventually, some of these students will take on the roles of mentors for students with disability.
- Assistance in the preparation of study units being offered by the University of Malta which are planned to be used in the first course between February and April 2007.
- Work was done to find an electronic platform that can be used by students of the preparatory course for the blended part of the project.
- Preparatory work for the marketing of this project.

CHAPTER 12

INFORMATION AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

1. Persons with Disability Week

The 3rd December is the International Day of Persons with Disability. Every year, KNPD organises a National Disability Week in an effort to raise awareness about this sector. Apart from organising a number of activities, KNPD invites a number of organisations to organise activities in order to reach this aim.

The theme of this Week was “Equal: Good for Me, Good for You”. This year the Week was organised between 27th November and 3rd December 2006.

Many of the activities organised by KNPD for this week were sponsored by the European Union Community Action Programme to Combat Against Discrimination. The following were the activities organised by KNPD:

1. Press conference inaugurating the Persons with Disability Week

KNPD organised this conference in its offices. During this conference, the following was presented to the public:

- A poster with this Week’s theme. This was distributed around Malta and Gozo to be exhibited in public places.
- A message to the general public that KNPD issues during this Week.
- A message aimed at children that was circulated around all the schools in Malta and Gozo with the aim of being read on the International Day or a date close to it.
- A short television advert that was sent to all television stations to be broadcast during this Week.
- The full programme for this Week.

2. Presentation of the Equal Opportunities Act Annual Report

Since the Equal Opportunities Act came into force in October 2000, KNPD has been publishing a yearly report to the general public in which it details the work it carried out during that year, from October to September, in order to inform the public on the ways in which the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act is being implemented. The 2005/2006 report was presented during a press conference given by Mr Joe Camilleri, Chairman of KNPD and Ms Marianne Debono, Manager of the Equal Opportunities Section. The Hon. Marie Louise Coleiro Preca, main speaker for the Opposition on Solidarity issues, and the Hon. Louis Galea, Agent Minister for the Family and Social Solidarity, gave their comments on this report during the press conference. A copy of this report is available from the Offices of KNPD and from KNPD’s website: www.knpd.org.

3. Awareness Campaign in Schools

During this Week, KNPD initiated its awareness campaign in schools which is planned for next year and which is going to be financed by European Union Funds. Mr Joe Camilleri, chairperson of KNPD, together with Mr Leon Sciberras and Ms Alexia Mercieca, who was accompanied by a Maltese Sign Language interpreter, presented the message that KNPD prepared for this Week to the students of the Maria Assunta Secondary School in Hamrun. This activity was introduced briefly by Mr Ray Vella, headmaster of the school.

4. A Meeting for Youth Leaders

Since the European Union chose the theme of Youths for this year's Persons with Disability Day, KNPD organised a seminar for Youth Leaders entitled, "Good for Me, Good for You; Youths". The main speakers in this seminar were Mr Gordon Cardona, a young activist with disability and Ms Daniela Debono, a young activist. This seminar was organised with the collaboration of the Youth Section of the Ministry of Education and the National Youth Council.

5. FITA Annual General Meeting

The United Nations chose information technology and persons with disability as the theme for this year's International Day for Persons with Disability. Consequently, the Foundation for Information Technology Accessibility (FITA) organised its Annual General Meeting during this Week. A study on information technology and persons with disability in Malta was presented during this meeting. The Hon. Leo Brincat, the Opposition's speaker on this sector, also gave a speech during this meeting.

6. The Presentation of the Document "EDAMAT"

KNPD presented the document "EDAMAT to the public and to policy makers". This document was the result of research conducted by KNPD in a project with other European countries financed by European Union funds. More details about this meeting can be found in the relevant section of this report.

7. Ministerial Message on TVM by the Minister Dolores Cristina and Ms Mariella Venanzi Beck

Every year, on the International Day for Persons with Disability, the Minister responsible for this sector gives a message to the Maltese public on TVM together with a person with disability. This year, Minister Dolores Cristina, Minister for the Family and Social Solidarity, gave this message together with Ms Mariella Venanzi Beck. The message was also interpreted in the Maltese Sign Language.

2. The Right to Choice Campaign

The National Commission Persons with Disability is fully committed in a continuous campaign to raise awareness on discrimination based on disability. For this reason, KNPD applied for and was granted funds by the European Union Community Action Programme to Combat against Discrimination. This year's awareness campaign had the theme: The Right to Choice and it consisted of the following activities:

1. Training for Speakers with Disability

KNPD invites various persons with disability to give speeches in awareness campaigns that KNPD constantly organises for University students, other students and employees. These people need training for their speeches to be effective. Thus, KNPD organised a weekend training programme entitled "Disability Equality Training of Trainers (DETOT)". During this weekend, persons with disability, parents of children with disability and relatives of people suffering from mental health problems, met to discuss their major concerns and to prepare a number of presentations which can be used during meetings.

2. Working Lunch for Civil Service High Officials

A meeting in the form of a working lunch was organised for the Permanent Secretaries and the General Directors of the Civil Service. During this meeting, a presentation, which had been prepared during the weekend training programme, was given. The presentation focused on the social model of disability and the discussion continued during lunch. Mr Joe Camilleri introduced the speakers, who were Tessa Anastasi, Dorianne Callus, Rita Borg, Marthese Deguara, Marica Gatt and Michael Micallef. These are all persons with disability or parents of persons with disability

who cannot represent themselves. These speakers spoke about their thoughts and aspirations, which they see as being priorities. The participants were seated in a way as to have a balance of Civil Service representatives and persons with disability so that they could talk about what can be done to eliminate the obstacles that stop persons with disability from having equal opportunities. This meeting was also addressed by the Principal Permanent Secretary of the Civil Service, Dr Godwin Grima.

3. "Right from the Start (Breaking the News)" Publication

KNPD published a document entitled "Right from the Start (Breaking the News)" ("Tajjeb mill-Bidu (Kif Taghti l-Ahbar)") with the aim of helping professionals in giving the news of disability to people or parents of children with disability. This document was completed after wide consultation and was presented to the public during a seminar. This seminar was conducted by Mr Camilleri, Chairman of KNPD, while the document was presented by Ms Vickie Gauci. There were several interventions by professionals and persons with disability. The seminar was closed by a speech by Dr Louis Deguara, Minister of Health and Community Care.

This document was distributed among many professionals working in the medical sector. It was published in Maltese, English and in Maltese audio format. It can be obtained from the offices of KNPD or from KNPD's website: www.knpd.org.

4. A Sign System for Persons with Intellectual Disability

KNPD, in collaboration with the Speech and Language department of the Health Department and the Special and Inclusive Network of the Education Division, published the Book of Signs in print and CD format. The former includes pictures of 400 commonly used signs while the same signs are presented as pictures and in video clips on CD.

This publication was presented during a seminar organised for this purpose. The main speaker was Dr Nicola Grove from City University, London. This document can be obtained from the offices of KNPD while Dr Grove's speech and the booklet are available from KNPD's website: www.knpd.org.

5. Advertising Campaign on the Equal Opportunity's Act

KNPD's laid out an advertising campaign in all the media in order to raise awareness on the Equal Opportunities Act. This campaign included adverts on all means of communications (newspaper, radio and television). The central activity of this campaign was the publication of an informative booklet in Maltese about this Act, which also included a model of a letter of complaint. This booklet was resented to the public during a meeting organised for representatives of non governmental groups working in this sector. This booklet can be obtained from the offices of KNPD or from KNPD's website: www.knpd.org.

6. The National Policy on the Self-Advocacy of Persons with Intellectual Disability

Last year, KNPD started a process to publish a national policy on self advocacy for persons with intellectual disability. This process started with a consultative seminar which had as a main speaker, Mr Andrew Lee, chairman of the People First of the United Kingdom, a group of persons with intellectual disability led by themselves with the necessary support. In 2006, this process continued through consultation meetings with:

- Day Services clients;
- Residential Services clients;
- Special Schools clients;
- Representatives of NGOs working in this sector; and
- Gozitan clients.

Relatives of these people and people who work with them were also invited to these meetings.

This process was concluded with the presentation of the Report on the National Policy on Self-Advocacy for Persons with Intellectual Disability. This document includes a report of what was said during the consultation process. There is a Maltese version and an easy-to-read version of this Report. This document can be obtained from the offices of KNPD or from KNPD's website: www.knpd.org.

7. Public Activities in Summer

KNPD organised two open air activities around the theme, "Together"; one in Marsalforn, Gozo, and one in Sliema. The activities included singing, dancing by persons with disability and persons using a wheelchair, as well as information about issues concerning persons with disability. KNPD also distributed various publications during these activities.

8. Traffic Code in Maltese Sign Language

Upon a request by the Deaf People Association, KNPD worked on making the Traffic Code accessible to everyone, including persons with hearing impairment whose first language is Maltese Sign Language. Therefore, this publication was translated into this language and reproduced on a number of CDs. Copies of these CDs can be obtained for free from the offices of KNPD.

3. Website

1. KNPD kept updating its website (www.kpd.org) as well as making sure that it is completely accessible to everyone.
2. Statistics for 2006 related to this website are shown in Table 17.

THE KNPD WEBSITE		
	2005	2006*
New visitors	323	558
Visited the website more than once	1,165	544
Used pages	10,847	25,298

* These are approximate figures since no exact statistics are available for the last 2 months of 2006.

3. These figures show that the KNPD website is being used heavily. There were significant increases in the number of new visitors (about 73%) and the number of pages used (about 133%). However, the number of visitors who used this website more than once decreased by 53%.

4. Resource Centre

1. In 2006, KNPD continued to provide a Resource Centre which is found in its offices at the Centru Hidma Socjali, Santa Venera. Everyone can make use of it during office hours, including Saturday mornings.
2. Table 18 illustrates the resources of this Centre and the work done in 2006:

TABLE 18			
RESOURCE CENTRE			
	Borrowed	New	Total
Books	741	177	4,169
Periodicals	64	0	67*
Videos	20	3	443
Audio Cassettes	4	2	121
CDs	31	13	84
DVDs	10	9	10
Persons who used the Centre in 2006			223
Persons registered with the Centre			1,277

*KNPD is a subscriber of 67 different periodicals.

3. This year, the number of users of this Centre increased substantially by about 76% (from 127 to 223) to now reach an average figure.

4. This year, the Centre was moved to a more accessible location in the Centru Hidma Socjali. During this move, there was a stocktaking exercise of all the literature in this Centre.

5. Publications of KNPD

KNPD publishes various publications each year in order to fulfil its functions. The majority of these are published in Maltese and English. In order to ensure that they are accessible to everyone, these publications are also published in audio and in large font, principally for persons with visual impairment. KNPD is working so that the majority of its documents are published in easy-to-read format principally for persons with intellectual disability, as well as in Maltese Sign Language for persons with hearing impairment. The documents, in different versions, may be acquired for free from the offices of KNPD. The Maltese, English and easy-to-read versions are also posted on KNPD's website: www.knpd.org.

1. New Publications

This year, KNPD published the following publications:

- Services and Benefits for Persons with Disability - Maltese, English, audio and large font versions;
- National Policy on Self-Advocacy for Persons with Intellectual Disability - Maltese, English, audio and easy-to-read versions;
- Book of Signs – published and CD version;
- European Disability Action Mainstreaming Assessment Tool (EDAMAT) - English, Maltese and various formats on CD versions;
- Right from the Start - Maltese, English, audio and large font versions;
- Booklet on the Equal Opportunities Act - Maltese, audio and large font versions
- Traffic Code in Maltese Sign Language on CD;
- Two editions of the Equal (Indaq)s newsletter;
- The Annual Report on the Equal Opportunities Act - 6th edition (2005-2006);
- KNPD's Annual Report for 2005.

These publications, with the exception of KNPD's Annual Report, the Report on the Act and the Equal (Indaq)s Newsletter, were financed by the Right to Choose Campaign as part of the European Union Community Action Programme to Combat against Discrimination.

2. *Benefits and Services for Persons with Disability Booklet*

In 1989, KNPD published the first edition of the booklet, Benefits and Services for Persons with Disability. This is a comprehensive collection of the services and benefits offered in Malta and Gozo to persons with disability and their families. Apart from information on benefits and services, the booklet provides details on where further information may be obtained.

KNPD updates this booklet regularly since this information changes continuously. In 2006, KNPD published the 5th edition of this booklet in Maltese, English, audio and large font versions. The necessary work is being carried out in order to issue an updated version in Easy-to-Read format and, later on, in the Maltese Sign Language. KNPD gives a copy of this booklet to every person with disability who is registered with it. This booklet may also be obtained from the offices of KNPD or from the website of KNPD: www.knpd.org.

3. *Equal (Indaqs)*

In 2006, KNPD published two issues of its newsletter, Equal (Indaqs), in May and November. This newsletter, of which 9,000 copies are circulated, is distributed among all persons with disability who are registered with KNPD and all those involved in this sector. The newsletter can also be obtained in English, in Maltese audio format, and from KNPD's website.

4. *KNPD Publications in Different Media*

In order to make its information as widely accessible as possible, KNPD is offering all of its 2006 publications, as well as some others, for free from the Secretariat of KNPD, as shown in Table 19.

PUBLICATIONS OF KNPD IN DIFFERENT FORMATS								
	Maltese	English	Easy-to-Read	Audio	Sign Language	CD	Website	
							Maltese	English
Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act	•	•		•			•	•
Equal (Indaqs)	•	•		•			•	•
Benefits and Services for Persons with Disability	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Access for All - Design Guidelines		•						•
Book of Signs	•	•				•	•	•
Services of KNPD - Fact sheet	•	•	•	•			•	•
Right from the Start	•	•		•			•	•
National Policy on Self Advocacy for Persons with Intellectual Disability	•	•	•	•			•	•
Report on Self Advocacy for Persons with Intellectual Disability	•	•	•	•			•	•
Seminar: Equal Opportunities for	•	•		•			•	•

Persons with Disability: EU Action Plan								
Conference on the European Union Directive for Equal Treatment in Employment	•	•		•			•	•
KNPD Annual Report 2006	•	•		•			•	•
Equal Opportunities Act 2005/6 Annual Report	•	•		•			•	•
Booklet: Equal Opportunities Act	•			•			•	
Leaflet on Self Advocacy			•				•	
Leaflet on research on the Major Concerns of Persons with Disability and their Families	•			•			•	•
Clients with Disability and You	•			•				
EDAMAT	•	•				•	•	•
Traffic Code in Maltese Sign Language					•			

CHAPTER 13

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. Working with the United Nations: International Convention

On an international level, 2006 will be remembered as the year in which the United Nations managed to draft an International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability. This was done after many long discussions held in the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

The European Union Member States agreed to adopt a common stance. In fact, before every meeting in New York, there was a meeting in Europe to agree on a common position.

Malta was represented in these discussions by KNPD and it participated in almost all the discussions held at a European level. Due to limited human and financial resources, KNPD could not attend meetings held in New York. Since this year the discussions reached their final stages, a meeting was held by the European Union in Helsinki, Finland. This was attended by Mr. Fred Bezzina, Executive Director of KNPD.

KNPD hopes that Malta will be one of the first countries to ratify the convention and that this instrument will truly help to improve the quality of life of persons with disability and their families around the world.

2. Working with the European Union

1. A Group of High Officials on Disability

The European Union has a group of High Officials on Disability which is formed by representatives from the Member States. This Group is aimed at keeping the Member States informed of what is happening in this sector at a European level. Moreover, the officials share ideas and experiences. KNPD represents Malta in this Group. This year, the Group met twice in Brussels. Mr Fred Bezzina, Executive Director of KNPD, attended this meeting. Some of the issues discussed were:

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability;
- The New Regulations on State Aid;
- The Mainstreaming of Disability Issues;
- The Legislation on Transport Services and Persons with Disability;
- New Regulations of the European Union Social Fund;
- Social Services and Persons with Disability;
- The Blue Sticker;
- The European Year for Equal Opportunities;
- The Progress Programme.

2. Community Action Programme to Combat against Discrimination

Similarly to the previous two years, KNPD was successful in its application for funds to organise a year-long awareness campaign about disability. The funds allocated this year amounted to 150,000 euros and the theme chosen for this campaign is “Equal: Good for Me, Good for You”. Various activities planned for next year, which is the European Year for Equal Opportunities and the 20th Anniversary of the Establishment of KNPD, will be financed by these funds.

3. European Disability Forum

KNPD is an observing member of the European Disability Forum (EDF), which is the principal organisation within the European Union in this sector. KNPD keeps itself updated with what happens in Europe with respect to this sector by means of this Forum.

4. European Conferences

KNPD receives various invitations, mostly related to the European Union, to participate in seminars, conferences and other activities abroad. KNPD decides whether to accept to participate on the basis of financial means and the importance of the event because it believes that KNPD, persons with disability, their families and their organisations should be up-to-date with what is happening in the disability sector both in Malta and abroad. This year KNPD participated in the following conferences:

- The KNPD Chair, Mr Joe Camilleri, was invited to give the main speech in the annual conference of the Disability Studies Association of the United Kingdom which took place at the University of Lancaster. Mr Camilleri's speech was entitled: "The Genesis of Disability Studies in Malta: From a Colonial Past to an Independent Future?" This presentation can be obtained from the website of KNPD: www.knpd.org.
- Ms. Maria Mercieca, a youth with disability, who was nominated by KNPD, and her personal assistant, participated in a conference in Brussels which took place on the International Day for Persons with Disability. The theme of the conference was, "Youth = Future. Let's make an Equal Future for All."

5. Assistance to Other Entities

KNPD also gave its support to some entities working in this sector in order for them to benefit from European Union Programmes. This year the Secretariat of KNPD helped in the following ways:

- In September 2006, KNPD, together with the Deaf People Association, organised a training camp for youths with hearing impairment. This seminar was financed by the European Union Youth Programme. The participants of the seminar came from Finland, Germany, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Malta and the European Union of the Deaf Youth. The aim of this seminar was to help the participants develop a positive self-image and a positive outlook on issues relating to hearing impairment. The training camp included both formal and informal activities in which the participants discussed various issues related to the life of persons with hearing impairment. Every organisation explained the services available to people with hearing impairment in its country. One of the main activities during the camp was a meeting with Hon. Lawrence Gonzi, Prime Minister of Malta. During this meeting, the need for more interpreters in Malta was highlighted. The camp also addressed the need to develop the personal skills of the participants in view of making their contribution to their organisations more effective.
- KNPD helped the Maltese Council of Persons with Disability coordinate a study visit in the United Kingdom by Flimkienaslu (Together We Can Make It). The Council applied for funds from the Leonardo Programme. This group is a sub-committee of the Council and consists of persons with intellectual disability. These are planning to visit the People First Self-Advocacy Group in London.
- KNPD successfully assisted FITA in applying for funds from the Youth Programme to help a person with disability from Poland to have a voluntary work experience in Malta with this Foundation in the Information Technology sector.

**APPENDIX
STATISTICS FROM THE
NATIONAL COMMISSION PERSONS WITH DISABILITY NATIONAL REGISTRY**

TABLE 20

STATISTICS ACCORDING TO AGE AND GENDER

Age	Women	Men	Total	%		Difference
				2006	2005	
0-4	37	58	95	0.98	0.99	-0.01
5-9	89	157	246	2.55	2.69	-0.14
10-14	147	184	331	3.43	3.43	0.00
15-19	127	198	325	3.36	3.42	-0.06
20-24	133	223	356	3.68	3.85	-0.17
25-29	162	241	403	4.17	4.21	-0.04
30-34	166	206	372	3.85	3.81	0.04
35-39	159	205	364	3.77	3.71	0.06
40-44	163	237	400	4.14	4.68	-0.054
45-49	239	344	583	6.03	5.89	0.14
50-54	252	362	614	6.35	6.44	-0.09
55-59	309	439	748	7.74	7.88	0.14
60-64	277	442	719	7.44	6.79	0.65
65-69	308	420	728	7.53	7.14	0.39
70-74	399	412	811	8.39	8.15	0.24
75-79	464	385	849	8.79	9.11	-0.32
80-84	557	414	971	10.05	8.43	1.62
>85	384	309	693	7.17	8.76	-1.59
Unknown			55	0.57	0.61	-0.04
Total	4372	5236	9663			

Graph 1 | Statistics According to Age

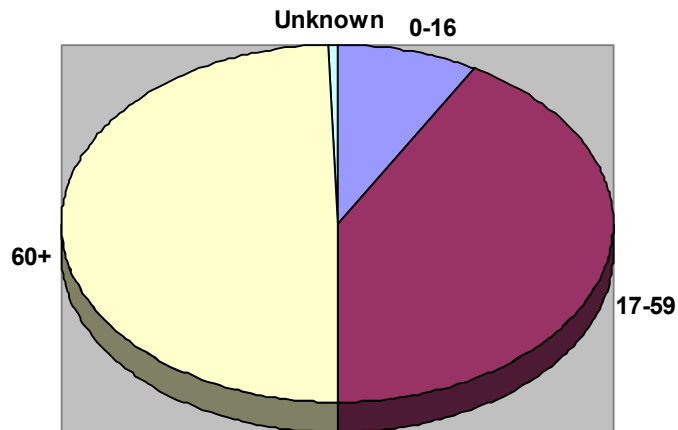


TABLE 21**STATISTICS ACCORDING TO AGE OVER THE YEARS**

Year	0-16		17-59		60+		Unspec.	Total
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%		
1994	815	24.5	1839	55.2	651	19.5	25	3330
1999	1089	17.2	2961	46.7	2286	36.1	4	6340
2003	1260	16.6	3388	44.5	2962	38.9	0	7610
2005	764	8.4	3854	42.5	4388	48.4	57	9063
2006	807	8.4	4030	41.7	4771	49.4	55	9663

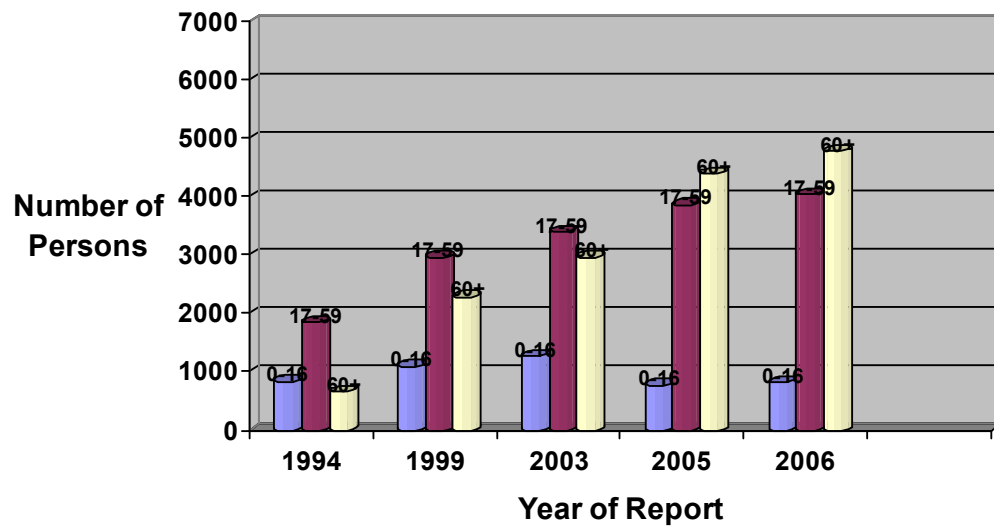
Graph 2 | Statistics According to Age Over the Years

TABLE 22					
STATISTICS ACCORDING TO IMPAIRMENT					
Type of Impairment	Total		%		Difference
	2006	2005	2006	2005	
Physical	5953	5338	61.61	58.98	2.63
Intellectual	1964	1895	20.32	20.91	-0.59
Psychological	946	849	9.29	9.37	-0.08
Visual	1129	1127	11.68	12.44	-0.76
Hearing	1025	986	10.61	10.88	-0.27
More than One	1881	1767	19.47	19.50	-0.03
Unspecified	1383	1484	14.31	16.37	-2.06

Note: The totals are higher because there are a number of persons who have more than one disability.

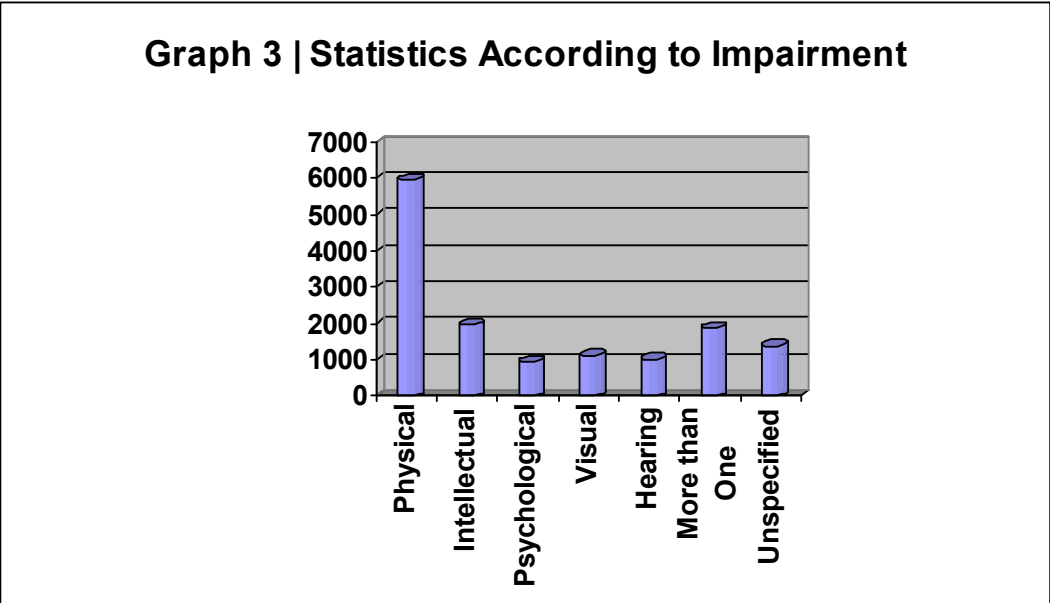


TABLE 23**PREVALENCE OF DISABILITY COMPARED TO POPULATION**

Year	Prevalence (%)
1994	0.9
1999	1.6
2003	1.9
2005	2.3
2006	2.4

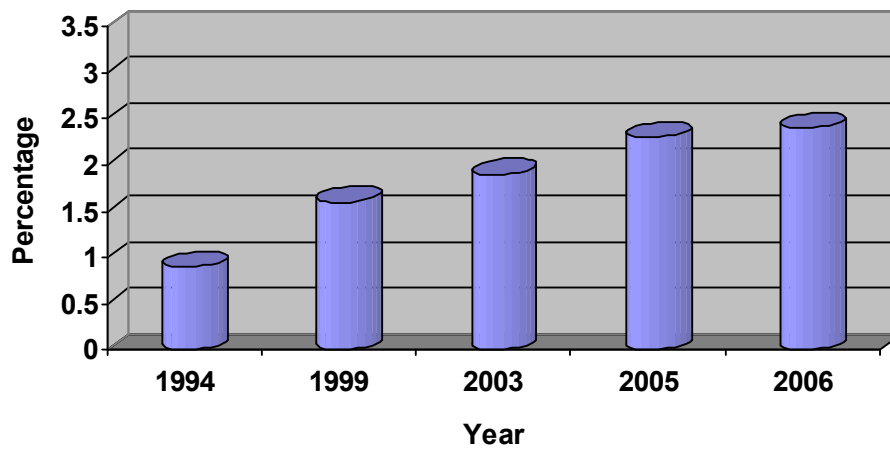
Graph 4 | Prevalence of Disability Compared to Population

TABLE 24**STATISTICS ACCORDING TO IMPAIRMENT AND AGE**

Physical	%	Psychological	%	Intellectual	%	Hearing	%	Visual	%	More than 1	%
40	0.67	19	2.02	55	2.81	7	0.69	2	0.18	36	1.92
104	1.75	41	4.36	118	6.03	29	2.84	21	1.87	63	3.36
130	2.19	46	4.89	163	8.33	33	3.24	27	2.40	79	4.21
139	2.34	54	5.74	160	8.18	39	3.82	27	2.40	81	4.32
153	2.57	52	5.53	162	8.28	45	4.41	37	3.29	91	4.85
157	2.64	56	5.95	162	8.28	50	4.90	42	3.74	83	4.42
160	2.69	56	5.95	138	7.06	41	4.02	44	3.91	85	4.53
180	3.03	48	5.10	132	6.75	25	2.54	29	2.58	59	3.14
204	3.43	55	5.84	110	5.62	47	4.61	45	4.00	85	4.53
319	5.36	74	7.86	136	6.95	54	5.29	74	6.58	114	6.08
374	6.29	80	8.50	101	5.16	58	5.69	55	4.89	99	5.28
503	8.46	81	8.61	130	6.65	65	6.37	84	7.47	137	7.30
507	8.52	53	5.63	79	4.04	57	5.59	91	8.10	110	5.86
553	9.30	45	4.78	60	3.07	49	4.80	80	7.12	100	5.33
622	10.46	39	4.14	59	3.02	75	7.35	76	6.76	113	6.02
666	11.20	35	3.72	53	2.71	77	7.55	110	9.79	150	8.00
617	10.37	47	4.99	64	3.27	128	12.55	136	12.10	188	10.02
521	8.76	60	6.38	74	3.78	141	13.82	144	12.81	203	10.82
5949	100.00	941	100.00	1956	100.00	1124	100.00	1124	100.00	1876	100.00

Note: The totals are higher because there are a number of persons who have more than one disability.

TABLE 25					
PREVALANCE ACCORDING TO LOCALITY					
Locality	Number	%	Locality	Number	%
ATTARD	184	1.90	MUNXAR	17	0.18
BALZAN	106	1.09	NADUR	93	0.96
BIRGU	86	0.88	NAXXAR	204	2.11
BIRKIRKARA	549	5.68	PAOLA	277	2.86
BIRZEBBUGA	171	1.76	PEMBROKE	43	0.44
BORMLA	175	1.81	PIETA`	111	1.15
DINGLI	57	0.58	QALA	37	0.38
FGURA	251	2.60	QORMI	437	4.52
FLORIANA	90	0.93	QRENDI	56	0.50
FONTANA	23	0.24	RABAT	405	4.19
GHAJNSIELEM	55	0.56	SAFI	35	0.36
GHARB	33	0.34	ST JULIANS	210	2.17
GHARGHUR	38	0.39	SAN GWANN	222	2.23
GHASRI	11	0.11	SAN LAWRENZ	15	0.16
GHAXAQ	80	0.83	ST PAUL`S BAY	284	2.93
GUDJA	47	0.48	SANNAT	40	0.41
GZIRA	179	1.85	SIGGIEWI	249	2.58
HAMRUN	363	3.76	SLIEMA	482	4.99
KALKARA	57	0.59	SANTA LUCIJA	85	0.88
KERCEM	26	0.26	SANTA VENERA	192	1.99
KIRKOP	41	0.42	SWIEQI	108	1.11
LIJA	59	0.61	TA` XBIEX	41	0.42
IKLIN	28	0.29	TARXIEN	184	1.90
ISLA	79	0.82	VALLETTA	235	2.43
LUQA	121	1.25	VICTORIA (GOZO)	164	1.70
MARSA	221	2.28	XAGHRA	77	0.80
MARSASCALA	170	1.76	XEWKIJA	64	0.66
MARSAXLOKK	66	0.68	XGHIRA	19	0.20
MDINA	12	0.12	ZABBAR	309	3.19
MELLIEHA	181	1.87	ZEBUG	237	2.45
MGARR	56	0.58	ZEBUG (GOZO)	48	0.50
MOSTA	352	3.64	ZEJTUN	296	3.06
MQABBA	42	0.43	ZURRIEQ	179	1.95
MSIDA	158	1.63			
MTARFA	41	0.42	TOTAL	9,663	100.00