

Annual Report 2008

COMMITMENT

KNPD commits itself to rendering 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.

01 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Setting up of KNPD

The National Commission Persons with Disability (KNPD) was first set up on the 3rd November 1987 when the then Minister for Social Policy, Dr Louis Galea, made a parliamentary statement in which he announced that he had appointed the first members of this Commission.

On the 10th February 2000, KNPD was officially constituted according to Act 1 of the year 2000, the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act. This same law established the aims of KNPD. These aims are 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.

1.2. The Period of this Annual Report

This report covers the calendar year 2008 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 a report about this was published separately in December 2008. A copy of this report may be obtained from the KNPD Secretariat and can also be downloaded from the KNPD website: www.knpd.org.

- (a) These are persons with disability or family members of persons with disability, as required by Article 21 of the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act.

1.3. KNPD Structure

The members of KNPD are appointed by the Prime Minister on the advice of the Minister for Social Policy for a two-year period. This term expired in September 2008 and, consequently, a substantial number of members have changed. The composition of KNPD up to September 2008 is shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1: COMPOSITION OF KNPD BOARD JANUARY – SEPTEMBER 2008	
Name	Status
Mr Joseph M. Camilleri ^(a)	Chairman
Ms Rita Borg ^(a)	Vice-Chairman
Dr. Elaine Burmingham	Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity
Mr George Borg	Ministry of Education, Youth and Employment
Dr Taygeta Firman	Ministry for Health and Community Services
Mr Alfred Camilleri	Ministry of Finance
Mr Noel Formosa	Ministry for Gozo
Ms Sarah Cuschieri	Local Councils Association
Dr. Marie Alexander	University of Malta
Fr. Martin Micallef	Archdiocese of Malta
Ms. Miriam Bonnici ^(a)	Voluntary Sector
Mr. Ronald Galea ^(a)	Voluntary Sector
Ms. Marchita Mangiafico ^(a)	Voluntary Sector
Ms Ingrid Valenzia ^(a)	Voluntary Sector
Mr. Epifanio Vella ^(a)	Voluntary Sector
Dr. Daniela Mangion ^(a)	
Mr Fred Bezzina	Secretary/Executive Director

In October 2008, the new members of KNPD were appointed, as shown in Table 2.

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

TABLE 2: COMPOSITION OF KNPD BOARD OCTOBER 2008 – OCTOBER 2010	
Name	Status
Mr Joseph M. Camilleri ^(a)	Chairman
Ms Rita Borg ^(a)	Vice-Chairman
Dr Marvic Sammut	Ministry for Health and Community Services
Mr George Borg	Ministry for Education, Youth and Employment
Mr Alfred Camilleri	Ministry for Finance
Ms Marija Natoli	Local Councils Association
Dr Marie Alexander	University of Malta
Fr Martin Micallef	Archdiocese of Malta
Ms Mary Rose Attard	Ministry for Gozo
Ms Tessa Anastasi ^(a)	Voluntary Sector
Mr Olaf Attard	Voluntary Sector
Mr. Ronald Galea ^(a)	Voluntary Sector
Ms Marchita Mangiafico ^(a)	Voluntary Sector
Mr Joseph Stafrace ^(a)	Voluntary Sector
Mr Fred Bezzina	Secretary/Executive Director

(a) These are persons with disability or family members of persons with disability, as required by Article 21 of the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act.

1.4 KNPD Meetings

During 2008, the KNPD board held 9 meetings and discussed the following subjects:

- The Equal Opportunities Act
- The Persons with Disability Week
- The Special Identity Card
- The Blue Badge Service
- KNPD projects funded by the EU
- The MEPA consultation process
- The Independent Living Centre
- The Individualised Transport Service
- Support Agency Services.

1.5 The Consultative Committee

KNPD appointed a Consultative Committee comprising persons with intellectual disability to discuss issues that are relevant to them and to put forward proposals to KNPD. This Committee is made up as follows:

Mr Omar Jelassi	Chair
Mr Brian Micallef	Vice Chair
Ms Marthese Deguara	Secretary
Ms Isabelle Bonello	Assistant Secretary
Ms Alison Bonello	PRO

During this year, this Committee held 10 meetings and discussed various issues, including:

- the role of KNPD
- the Special ID Card
- the KNPD Annual Report
- terminology to use when discussing disability issues
- the *Indaqs* (Equal) magazine
- the Convention on the Rights of Disabled People
- day services
- the participation of disabled persons in the world of work
- participation in leisure activities.

The Committee participated fully in the production of easy-to-read publications by KNPD. These were: the Convention on the Rights of Disabled People, *Indaqs*, and the KNPD Annual Report.

1.6 The KNPD Secretariat

KNPD has a permanent secretariat that operates from the Ċentru Ħidma Soċjali, Istituto Vincenzo Bugeia in St Venera. At present, this secretariat has 22 members of staff: 17 full-timers, and 5 staff members who are working part-time or on reduced hours. Twelve of these workers are disabled people. Apart from this, in order to be able to provide the best services possible, KNPD purchased the services of various professionals including lawyers, doctors, paramedics, accountants, architects and Maltese Sign Language interpreters.

KNPD encourages its staff members to continue their professional and personal development in various ways. This includes:

- 3 members of staff have been given the possibility of working flexible hours and having study leave so that they can continue with their academic studies;
- a Staff Development Day was organised for all staff members of the Secretariat, with training sessions focusing on communication;
- 2 members of staff attended courses on the use of computers organised by the Staff Development Organisation.

KNPD saw an increase in its workload thanks to EU funded projects in 2008. The Secretariat therefore employed new project managers. These are Ms Mary Rose Meli, who is working on the Independent Living Centre, and Mr Svetlik Muscat, who is working on the awareness-raising campaign funded by the Progress Programme. Mr Matthew Giordamaina was employed to replace Ms Mary Kay Vassallo who decided to resign because of family commitments.

During this year, a major refurbishment of KNPD offices was also undertaken.

1.7 Work by KNPD

The work carried out by KNPD can be split into four main sections:

- a) ensuring that disabled persons are not discriminated against, as required by the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act;
- b) contributing to the drawing-up of policies that ensure that disability issues are included in general policies in our country and are given the necessary priority, and ensuring that these policies are based on the social model of disability;
- c) providing a number of direct and indirect services, to disabled persons and their family members in order to ensure that they have equal opportunities, thus making it possible for them to have a high quality of life;
- d) organising awareness-raising activities, based on the concept of human rights, so that Maltese society has a more positive attitude towards this sector.

1.8 The 2007 Annual Report

In February 2008, KNPD presented its Annual Report during a press conference. This report, which is available in Maltese, English, easy-to-read in Maltese, and audio, can be obtained from the KNPD Secretariat. The first three formats can also be downloaded from the KNPD website: www.knpd.org.

02 ANTI-DISCRIMINATION INITIATIVES

2.1 Investigations (guided by the Equal Opportunities Act) on Complaints against Discrimination

KNPD is in charge of ensuring that the Equal Opportunities Act is observed in a reasonable manner. For this purpose, KNPD receives complaints from disabled persons who feel they have been discriminated against on the grounds of their disability. KNPD investigates these complaints, tries to mediate in order to find a reasonable solution in the shortest time possible, and where this is not possible, it also takes complaints to the Arbitration Centre or to Court.

This is one of the most important aspects of the work carried out by KNPD. Therefore, it was decided that the relevant Annual Report be presented separately. Since the Act came into force on the 1st October 2000, this annual report covers the period October to September of the following year. Last December, the report for the period October 2007 to September 2008 was presented during a press conference which was chaired by the Hon. John Dalli, Minister for Social Policy. Copies of the report in Maltese and English can be obtained from the KNPD Secretariat or from the KNPD website: www.knpd.org.

Since the report on the Equal Opportunities Act is published separately, the KNPD Annual Report does not provide an account of the work that KNPD has carried out on this Act. This applies also for work related to the Test of Reasonableness Board, which is also reported in the Equal Opportunities Act Annual Report.

2.2 Vetting of MEPA Applications

As part of the enforcement of this Act, MEPA is bound to consult with KNPD regarding applications for developments of buildings which are open to the public and which are of major use. This consultation consists of two exercises:

- a) MEPA sends development plans to KNPD for its technical personnel to examine, in order to check whether they conform to the guidelines published by KNPD in the 'Access for All – Design Guidelines'.
- b) MEPA requires developers to obtain a certificate from KNPD that says that the finished building is in line with these guidelines before issuing the Compliance Certificate. In this way, developers can then apply for water and electricity supplies.

Table 3 shows the work that KNPD has carried out during this year regarding vetting of MEPA development permits.

	2007		2008		Diff.
	No	%	No	%	%
New applications	659	-	469	-	-29
Recommended with conditions	420	64	189	40	-55
Not recommended	208	32	199	42	-4
More information requested	28	4	55	12	+96
Pending	3	1	26	6	-

This table shows a substantial decrease of 29% in the number of applications that KNPD vetted in 2008. The amount of applications that were recommended subject to certain conditions is almost equivalent to the amount of those that were not recommended. KNPD could not decide on 12% of the applications it received and asked for further information about them. This means that the percentage of applications that were recommended was reduced substantially when compared to 2007, from 64% to 40%.

A substantial number of applications are vetted by KNPD more than once. An analysis of these applications can be found in Table 4.

	Recommended with conditions		Not recommended		More information requested		Total	
	No	%	No	%	%	No	%	%
First time	101	34	152	51	43	15	296	67
Second time	70	58	38	32	12	10	120	27
Third time	17	74	6	26	0	-	23	5
More than 3 times	1	25	3	75	0	-	4	1
Total	189	43	199	45	55	12	443	-

Table 4 shows that a third of applications are being vetted by KNPD more than once, which results in a waste of time and resources for all parties concerned. It is worrying that, despite this fact, the rate of applications which are not recommended is rather high: 32% of applications that KNPD vets twice, and 26% of those it vets three times.

During this year, in the case of a small number of applications, KNPD was requested to also vet the building for MEPA to issue the Compliance Certificate. This work is presented in Table 5.

TABLE 5: VETTING OF BUILDINGS FOR CLEARANCE/ COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATE					
	2007		2008		Diff.
	No	%	No	%	%
Applications	57		45		-21
Recommended with conditions	54	95	25	56	-54
Not recommended	3	5	14	31	+367
Pending	0	-	6	13	-

This table shows that the number of buildings inspected by KNPD remained very low, especially when compared to the number of applications that were vetted. In fact, this only amounts to 10% of the applications that were vetted. The table also shows that the number of buildings vetted by KNPD during 2008 decreased substantially when compared to the preceding year, with a reduction of 21%. It is rather worrying to observe that the percentage of buildings that have been certified as being in line with KNPD guidelines was reduced drastically, from 95% to 56%.

03 POLICY MAKING

3.1 The Maltese Council for Economic and Social Development (MCESD)

In order for KNPD to be able to fulfil its function better in terms of drawing up policies in this sector, and for general policies in our country to take due consideration of disabled people's issues, Maltese legislation states that KNPD should form part of the MCESD. This is the highest ranking policy making organ in Malta. Consequently, KNPD's contribution to this committee, through its chairman Mr Joseph M Camilleri, is very important. During 2008, KNPD was always present for all the meetings held by this committee.

3.2 National Register of Disabled Persons

During 2008, KNPD continued its work in adding to the National Register of Disabled Persons. Every person who applies for a KNPD service is entered in this Register which, up to December 2008, had 11532 persons. This is an increase of 1341, or 12%, on last year's figures. A detailed analysis of the figures drawn out from the Register are found in Appendix A of this Report.

The information in this Register is used primarily so that KNPD can keep direct contact with the disabled persons and their families through its own literature, mainly its *Indaqs* (Equal) magazine, as well as through literature from other entities who wish to pass on information to these persons. These include: disabled people's organisations, local councils, parish priests, university students, private entities, and others. This information can be sent either to all registered persons or to a section of them, according to disability, age or locality. KNPD is strictly bound to keeping its data confidential and thus cannot pass on personal details to others. Therefore, a procedure has been set up whereby these various entities can still communicate with persons registered with KNPD. During this year, seven entities or individuals used this service.

3.3 United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons

In December 2006, the United Nations adopted the International Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons together with the Optional Protocol. Malta was among the first countries that signed the Convention and Protocol in March 2007. The Maltese government has committed itself to ratifying them as soon as possible.

To this end, the Office of the Prime Minister appointed an Inter-Ministerial Committee, led by the Permanent Secretary within the Ministry of Social Policy,

to prepare a detailed report about what needs to be done for Malta to be in a position to ratify the Convention and Protocol. The Committee is made up of representatives of the Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Office of the Attorney General, KNPD, and the Maltese Federation of Voluntary Organisations of Disabled Persons. KNPD provided administrative support for this Committee.

The Committee held eight meetings and drew up a detailed report with a substantial number of recommendations, including proposals for changes in a number of laws. At present, the Committee, with the support of the Office of the Attorney General, is drafting the necessary amendments.

It is hoped that the Committee will present its final report to the Office of the Prime Minister in the coming weeks.

Malta was also represented in the Ministerial Committee about this Convention, organised by the European Union Presidency of Slovenia, which was held in Slovenia itself. The Maltese delegation consisted of Mr Joe Ebejer, Permanent Secretary within the Ministry for Social Policy, and Mr Fred Bezzina, Executive Director of KNPD.

KNPD published a Maltese version of this Convention and presented it to the public during a seminar, during which there was a discussion about it. The Maltese version of the Convention can be downloaded from the KNPD website www.knpd.org as well as from the UN website.

KNPD also published an easy-to-read version of the Convention and this was presented to the public during Disabled Persons' Week. This version can also be downloaded from the KNPD website.

The UN Convention was the subject of various activities that KNPD organised during Disabled Persons' Week in December 2008. These activities included a national conference as well as a Disabled People's Parliament. KNPD also took an active part in a seminar about the Convention organised by the Gozo Federation of Organisations for Disabled Persons that was also held during this Week.

3.4 The New Administration

During this year, there was a general election and therefore a new administration. KNPD felt the need to request a meeting with a number of Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries to discuss with them its general policy as well as pending issues. In this regards, KNPD had the following meetings:

- Meeting with the Prime Minister the Hon. Dr L Gonzi, the Hon. Dr C Said and the Hon. Dr M Demarco. In this meeting there were discussions about the UN Convention, the MEPA reform, local councils, and tourism.
- Meeting with the Minister for Gozo the Hon G Debono, with whom the work of KNPD in Gozo and physical access in more schools were discussed.
- Meeting with the Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Communication, the Hon Dr A Gatt, with whom public transport and access to information were discussed.
- Meeting with the Minister of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, the Hon. D Cristina. During this meeting, there were discussions among the implementation of the Spiteri Report, the administration of medicines in schools, and opportunities for disabled students at MCAST.
- Meeting with the Minister of Finance, the Economy and Investment, the Hon. T. Fenech, with whom increased financing for organisations in this sector, especially *Sapport* Agency, was discussed.
- Meeting with the Hon Dr C. Said, primarily about local councils.
- Meeting with the Hon. Dr G De Marco, Parliamentary Secretary, about tourism.
- Meeting with the Hon Dr J Cassar, Parliamentary Secretary, with whom there were discussions about the health sector, with particular reference to the setting up of the Independent Living Centre.
- Meeting with the Hon M. Galea, Parliamentary Secretary, with whom community services were discussed, especially regarding the Assistive Apparatus Fund.

3.5 Consultation

The National Budget

Every year, KNPD makes recommendations regarding the national budget. The principal recommendations, together with their outcomes to date, are set out below:

- a) KNPD recommended that the necessary funds are allocated for the implementation of the recommendations of the Inter-Ministerial Committee of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability. As the work of the Committee had not been completed, KNPD presented estimates. Unfortunately the request was not acceded to.
- b) KNPD recommended an increase in the finances allocated to *Sapport* Agency, both in order to improve existing services as well as to reduce the number of people on the list of those waiting to benefit from residential services, service in the community or day services. Although the allocation for the Agency in the 2009 Budget was increased, the rise unfortunately only helps to cover operations as these stood in 2008,

- especially because salaries were raised following the signing of a new collective agreement.
- c) KNPD lent its full support to the proposal that the government should introduce in this budget measures that would help the parents of persons with disability to plan for the future and for the care of their children following the parents' decease. Disabled people who inherit their parents' residence are now exempt from inheritance tax, thereby retaining more capital to help pay for the care services that may be needed.
 - d) KNPD recommended an increase in the financing of the Individualised Transport Service, currently provided by the Foundation for Respite Care Services. During 2008 the Foundation was given €28000 from KNPD funds and €18000 by the Ministry for Social Policy. An administrative arrangement was reached whereby KNPD was given an extra €18000 for 2009, such that the financial assistance for the Foundation in providing this service now stands at €46000, all of which is to be taken from the KNPD vote.
 - e) KNPD recommended that the disability sector should have a fair allocation of funds from the EU. It appears that this request has been acceded to and in fact KNPD was awarded funds from the European Regional Development Fund to build a Centre for Independent Living at Hal Far, funds from the European Social Fund to train personnel employed in the Centre, and funds from the Progress Programme for an awareness-raising campaign. Additionally, the *Sapport* Agency was given funds for the Day Services section to organise the ME2 Programme.
 - f) KNPD also recommended that the Ministry of Education should proceed with its implementation of the Spiteri Report. For the 2009 Budget, the government decided to put into action the recommendation concerning Learning Support Assistants and independent schools. The State will now assist in their funding, as in the case of State and Church schools.

White Papers

During this year, the government published various white papers for discussion. KNPD gave its comments on the following white papers:

- rent reform;
- local councils;
- public transport.

The Reform of MEPA

Regarding the MEPA reform, the Office of the Prime Minister requested KNPD and MEPA to draw up a joint report on how to improve the consultation that MEPA carries out with KNPD to ensure that applications for the development of buildings open to the public are accessible to all. Representatives of the two

parties prepared a report that eventually was approved by both the KNPB Board and by the MEPA Board. MEPA wanted to consult with other entities before presenting the report to the Office of the Prime Minister. Meanwhile, a number of recommendations on which agreement was reached and which could be implemented immediately have already entered into effect.

National Youth Policy

The Parliamentary Secretariat responsible for Youth within the Education Ministry set up a task force to review the national youth policy. KNPB was invited to participate on this Committee. Mr Gordon Cardona is representing KNPB.

3.6 Work on Policy in the Education Sector

KNPB places a lot of importance on the education sector since it believes that the quality of life of disabled persons depends substantially on this sector. It gave its full support in the drawing up of the Spiteri Report and is actively helping in the implementation of the recommendations made in this report.

Study Regarding the Purchase of Educational Services

One of the recommendations made was the purchase of educational services by the Ministry of Education from non-governmental organisations. During this year, the Ministry commenced a detailed study of this aspect, that is what services are needed, which services are being provided and if these services are of the desired quality. KNPB is giving its full support in this study so that there is a basis on which decisions can be taken.

The Statementing Appeals Process

KNPB continued to give its contribution to this process that is administered by the Directorate for Educational Services, so that all disabled students have an individual educational programme with the necessary support. Support that cannot be provided by the school is discussed and decided upon by the Statementing Moderating Panel. Parents or students who do not agree with the Panel's decision have the right of recourse to the Appeals Board. Through its Chairman, Mr Joseph M. Camilleri, KNPB gives its full contribution to this appeals process.

MCAST

KNPD has always insisted that disabled persons should have equal opportunities in post-secondary education. MCAST, which is one of the principal governmental entities in this sector, has the responsibility of ensuring that disabled students have full access and the necessary support for them to follow the courses that it offers. It also has the responsibility of developing courses that are aimed specifically at disabled people, where this is strictly necessary. KNPD held lengthy discussions with MCAST to ensure that this happens and, during this year, a formal agreement between the two sides was also signed in order to ensure this. Apart from this, a sub-committee with representatives from both sides was set up to develop the necessary policies and ensure that they are implemented. Moreover, during this year MCAST reintroduced the educational programme Pathways, an intensive programme which is aimed mostly at persons with intellectual disability so that they can enter the world of work with the necessary support.

The University of Malta

KNPD continued with its full contribution in various ways in order to ensure that this tertiary institution truly offers equal opportunities and the necessary support for disabled students. For this purpose, the Chairman, Mr Joseph M. Camilleri, is a member of both the University Senate and of the Council.

Another way in which KNPD contributes in this sector is through representation, by means of the Chairman, on the Access: Disability Support Committee and its sub-committees on physical access, examination arrangements, and information. The examination arrangements sub-committee, which has a special reference to MATSEC, continued discussing requests from disabled students for arrangements for them to have equal opportunities according to guidelines that have now been made public. Moreover, students have been given the opportunity to contest decisions taken by this sub-committee by submitting appeals to a board of experts that has been set up specifically for this purpose. KNPD is also represented on this board.

Pilot Project at Maria Assumpta Secondary School

This project is funded through the HSBC Cares for Children Fund. Through it, every disabled student in the school has an individual education programme and staff, especially Learning Support Assistants who implement these programmes, are given the necessary training. KNPD started this pilot project and gave a lot of support for it to become established. It is now clear that the project has taken root, and it is hoped that from next year it will be an integral part of the educational activities of this school.

3.7 Work on Employment Policy

KNPD kept constant contact with the Employment and Training Corporation so that the latter can continue to provide support services for disabled persons both in vocational training as well as in employment. This was done mainly through the fact that the KNPD Chairman held his post as one of the directors of the Corporation.

KNPD is also updating its National Employment Policy for Persons with Disability, which it had published in 1994, after full consultation with all stakeholders. During 2008, KNPD collected relevant statistics in order to obtain a clearer picture of the situation. It is hoped that the first draft of the policy will be published early next year so that afterwards formal discussions with stakeholders can start in order to finalise the national policy.

3.8 Work on Day Services Policy

The Day Services sector falls under the responsibility of *Support Agency*. KNPD works very closely with this Agency in order to ensure that this service is the best possible. KNPD has long been requesting that the government to ensure that these services have the necessary funding so that they can employ more professional personnel, and provide a service to all those persons who are on the waiting list.

KNPD also worked to obtain funds so that its staff together with staff from *Support Agency* who are responsible for this sector can gain experience from examples of good practice abroad. KNPD submitted an application for funds from the Leonardo Programme for representatives of the two entities to carry out study visits about Day Services for Disabled People with Complex Dependency Needs. Two visits were planned to the North Lanarkshire Social Services, in the UK, which has been certified as providing very good services in this sector.

The first group comprised Ms Joyce Mifsud, Day Services Manager within Agenzija *Sapport*, Ms Jacqueline Tabone, Head of a Day Centre, and Ms Mary Camilleri, parent of a disabled person with complex dependency needs. The visit took place in October 2008, while the second visit is planned to take place in the early part of next year. The participants of the first study visit said that it was a very positive experience.

KNPD gave its full support to *Sapport* Agency for the submission of an application for funds from the European Social Fund for the ME2 project. Apart from this, KNPD is also one of the partners together with *Sapport* Agency and the ETC. The main aim of the project is to provide vocational training and work experience for clients who use the Agency's day services. This project was accepted and it is planned that it will start being implemented early in 2009.

3.9 Work on Residential Services Policy

Sapport Agency

KNPD worked hard for the setting up of *Sapport* Agency and, from its inception has lobbied for this Agency to have the necessary funds to offer community services as well as residential services in small homes in the community. KNPD has always insisted that this Agency does not have sufficient funds and consequently it has a waiting list for both community and residential services.

The Agency has a Service Allocation Committee which vets requests for services from the Agency. This Committee is led by a KNPD representative, who during 2008 was Ms Rita Vella.

The Foundation for Respite Care Services

In 1991, KNPD joined forces with the National Society of Parents of Persons with Disability to set up the Foundation for Respite Care Services. The main function of this Foundation is to provide residential services to disabled people for a limited time or during an emergency, thereby providing respite to the family supporting the disabled person at home. KNPD continued to give its full support to this Foundation by nominating three persons to serve as directors on the Foundation's management board. During 2008, these three persons were Ms Agnes Bezzina, Mr Alfred Bezzina, and Mr Marcel Pisani.

Improvements in Residences of Persons with Disability

The Housing Authority runs a scheme through which it gives financial assistance to disabled people for them to make the necessary modifications in their

residences so that these are adapted to their needs. The manager of the Assisitive Appartus Fund represents KNPD on the Authority's committee which vets these requests.

3.10 Work on Information Technology Policy

In 1998, KNPD and the then government agency in the information technology sector, MITTS, joined forces to set up the Foundation for Information Technology Accessibility (FITA), with the main aim of ensuring that disabled persons have full access in this sector. KNPD continued giving its full support to this Foundation by nominating two persons to serve on its management board. For this year, at first these persons were Mr Joseph M Camilleri and Dr Joseph Pace, who was later replaced by Mr Joseph Gasan.

During this year, KNPD also gave its contribution for FITA and the Ministry for Industry and Information Technology (MIIT) to reach an agreement to ensure the long term financing of this Foundation. This agreement ensures that FITA can not only continue with its work but can also continue to develop through the employment of further staff.

3.11 Policy Work at a European Level

European Directive

As part of its social programme, the European Commission is proposing to adopt a Directive about Equal Treatment in respect of minorities on the grounds of gender, disability, sexual orientation, age, or religion or belief. KNPD participated in discussions that Maltese government officials are having about this Directive.

Apart from this, the French Presidency of the European Union organised an Equality Summit in Paris. One of the main themes of this Summit was this Directive. Malta was represented in this Summit by, among others, the KNPD Chairman and Executive Director.

The High Level Group on Disability

KNPD represents Malta during regular meetings of the High Level Group on Disability. The aim of this Group is to coordinate the work of the European Union in this sector. It has now also been given the important duty of reporting to the Council of Ministers about the progress in the ratification and implementation of the UN Convention.

During this year, this Group held three meetings and the main themes discussed included:

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- The Directive on Equal Treatment in respect of minorities on the grounds of gender, disability, sexual orientation, age, or religion or belief
- The situation of supported employment for disabled persons
- The work of this Group on the future of the European Union Disability Action Plan
- The Structural Funds and how these can be used to ensure accessibility and non-discrimination for disabled persons
- Directives in favour of disabled persons in the different transport sectors
- The use of the Blue Badge on a European basis
- The collection of comparable data across member states of the Union
- Social services of general interest
- Examples of good practice such as accessible voting systems and the UK Independent Living Strategy
- The work of the Academic Network of Experts on Disability (ANED) and information on other research studies financed by the European Union
- Regulation about Air Travel by Disabled Passengers.

During this year, regulations came into effect in all member states of the European Union that ensure full assistance to disabled air passengers. KNPD is involved in discussions for the implementation of these regulations in our country. In fact, substantial improvements have already been registered in the support provided for disabled persons at the Malta International Airport.

European Conference

Every year, the European Commission organises an annual two-day conference on the 3rd December, which is the International Disabled Persons Day. The theme of this year's conference was 'Acting Locally for a Society for All'. KNPD was represented in this conference by Ms Lydia Papadopoulou, Ms Maria Mercieca and Dr Marie Alexander.

European Disability Forum

KNPD is an observer member of the European Disability Forum (EDF), which is the main entity working in the disability sector on a European level. This membership helps KNPD to keep updated about what is happening in Europe in this sector.

3.12 Policy Work with Other Entities

KNPD keeps close contact with different entities, on both a national and an international level, in order to help in the drawing-up of policies. These entities may be ones working in the disability sector or in other sectors. They may be government or other entities. The Equal Opportunities Act itself requires this. Indeed, the KNPD members are representatives of the main Ministries, while the other half are those who, according to the opinion of the Prime Minister, are best placed to represent the voluntary sector. The Prime Minister normally requests the Maltese Federation of Voluntary Organisations of Disabled Persons to nominate five members to represent the voluntary sector on the KNPD board. Consequently, KNPD has an ongoing relationship with this Federation.

Apart from this, KNPD works closely with other entities. During 2008, it worked with the following entities in particular:

- the University Chaplaincy
- the Community Chest Fund
- the Federation of Non-Governmental Organisations in Gozo
- the Malta Guide Dogs Foundation
- the Maltese Biblical Society
- the Chamber of Architects
- the Health Division Consultative Committee
- the Strina Committee
- the Commissioner for Children
- the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality
- the Family Commission
- the Għaxaq Local Council
- the Maltese Council of Disabled Persons
- the Management and Personnel Office
- the Muscular Dystrophy Group
- the Special and Inclusive Education Network
- *Support Agency*
- the Malta Standards Authority
- the Broadcasting Authority
- the National Society of Parents of Persons with Disability
- the National Deaf People's Association
- the Ombudsman
- the Union *Haddiema Magħqudin*
- newspapers
- radio stations
- television stations.

3.13 Research

PEKTUR

KNPD has a Programme for Continuous Education, Training and Research, known as PEKTUR, which offers limited financial assistance for disabled persons to be able to continue their education and provision for research to be carried out in the sectors that KNPD feels ought to be prioritised. Table 6 shows the work carried out through this programme in 2008.

Table 6: PEKTUR	
Malta Caritas Epilepsy Association	This application was not accepted since it was not according to the aims of this programme.
Mr Ray Cassar	This application was accepted and the applicant was awarded €1165 to purchase books related to the subject he is studying.
Malta Guide Dogs Foundation	This application was accepted and the Foundation was awarded €1165 to be used for the organisation of a course on Mobility and Orientation for Young Visually Impaired Persons.

Academic Network of Experts on Disability (ANED)

KNPD has been a part of this Network from its inception in 2007. During this time, it has presented reports about the situation of disabled people in Malta in different areas, including education, and social inclusion and protection. Mr Gordon Cardona, research assistant at the KNPD secretariat, represented KNPD in the Network's first AGM that was held in Brussels in December 2008.

ANED was set up by the European Commission with the aim of having a network for national and regional entities across Europe that work in the disability sector. The Network works hand in hand with the Disability Unit of the European Commission. The aim of the Network is to help develop research and policies in this sector. Another aim is to enable professionals who work in this field to share good practices. In this way, member states can develop better policies that include disabled people, with disabled people themselves participating fully in the development of these policies both on a European as well as on a national level. More information about ANED can be obtained from <http://www.disability-europe.net/en/countries/Malta>.

Study about the National Census

In 2005, the National Statistics Office (NSO) held a national census which included a reference to disability. This has provided a wealth of information about the socioeconomic conditions of disabled people in our country. At present, this information is being analysed by KNPD with the aim of drawing up a report about the quality of life of disabled people. The first part of the report compares the situation of disabled people with the rest of society in terms of access to education, employment, housing and leisure. Apart from eliciting the differences between these two groups, this study investigates variations in the quality of life of different groups of disabled persons.

In fact, this study also explores differences in education, employment, housing and leisure according to age, sex, locality and type of disability. The final report has the aim of helping all those who work in this sector by giving, for the first time, access to information about the whole population. The report 'The Quality of Life of Disabled Persons: Information from the Census' is planned to be ready by mid-2009.

Study about Disabled Women in Malta.

KNPD was commissioned from the European firm Ecotec to collect information about the situation of disabled women in Malta. This study involved various European Union countries. The report was drawn up by KNPD with close consultation with other entities, among them *Sapport* Agency and the Employment and Training Corporation.

04. DIRECT SERVICES

In order to reach its aims, KNPD provides direct services to disabled persons and their families so that they can have equal opportunities and the best quality of life possible.

4.1 The Special Identity Card

KNPD continued to issue the Special Identity Card to disabled persons. Table 7 presents KNPD's work in this sector during this year.

TABLE 7: SPECIAL IDENTITY CARD			
	2007	2008	Diff.
New applications	1041	1315	+26
Accepted applications	1024	1301	+27
Refused applications	17	14	-18
Renewed Special Identity Cards	420	592	+41
Returned Special Identity cards	-	922	-
Total no. of persons who have this card	9038	9417	+4

This table shows that the number of disabled persons who applied for the Special Identity Card increased significantly, rising by 26% over the year 2007. However, this increase is not reflected in the total number of persons who have the Card since a substantial number of these Cards were returned or have expired. In fact, the total increase during 2008 was only 4%. The number of applications that were refused remained low and amounts to only 1% of all the applications.

During this year, KNPD started a campaign so that the Special Identity Card of disabled people who have passed away is collected. The work of KNPD in the first 8 months of 2008 in this regard is shown in Table 8.

TABLE 8: RETURNED SPECIAL IDENTITY CARD						
Returned		Affidavit		Report to Police Commissioner/ Legal Letter		Total
No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
178	67	51	19	37	14	266

This table indicates that KNPD is managing to collect the majority (67%) of these Cards while in 14% of the cases further steps need to be taken by sending a letter through the KNPD's lawyer.

4.2 Assistive Apparatus Fund

During this year, the Assistive Apparatus Fund continued to provide financial assistance as well as advice about assistive apparatus that can enable disabled people to live a more independent life. The general statistics for this service are shown in Table 9.

	2007	2008	Diff. %
New applications	260	327	+26
Persons who have benefitted	199	304	+53
Persons who did not qualify	9	15	+67
Pending applications	2	1	-50
Persons who are on the waiting list	57	22	-61
Returned apparatus that was given to other applicants	35	31	-11
Returned apparatus	29	36	+24
Total sum of approved grants	€140701	€210950	+50
Average grant	€708	€694	-2

In the 2008 budget, government allocated a substantial increase of €46500 for this fund. In fact, the sum of approved grants shows an increase of 50% in 2008, when compared to the previous year. This increase in funding is also reflected in the number of applicants who were given financial assistance, with a rise of 53%, and a substantial decrease in the number of applications on the waiting list, a drop of 61%. The number of apparatus returned to KNPD and given to other disabled people remained more or less at the same level as last year.

Table 10 shows an analysis of the applicants for this service according to their age.

Age	2007		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%
0-5	11	6	21	7
6-16	52	26	50	16
17-30	22	11	40	13
31-60	42	21	70	23
61+	72	36	123	40
Total	199	100	304	100

This table shows clearly that a substantial number of those using this service are elderly, 40% of all applicants. The number of elderly people who made use of this service in 2008 is also 4% higher than the previous year.

This table also shows that percentages according to age stayed more or less the same for these past two years except for the category of children aged 6 to 16, where there was a 10% decrease.

Statistical analysis, this time according to the apparatus that was bought through this service, can be found in Table 11.

Appartus	2007		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%
Wheelchairs and walking aids	92	38	114	32
Beds and seating apparatus	76	31	129	36
Personal hygiene	15	6	28	8
Communication aids	32	13	46	13
Lifting aids	23	9	32	9
Other apparatus	5	2	9	3
Total	243	100	358	100

This analysis shows that percentages for 2007 and 2008 are more or less the same, with the most significant differences being in the category of wheelchairs and walking aids where there was a 6% decrease, and in that of beds and seating apparatus where there was a 5% increase.

4.3 Independent Living Centre

KNPD presented a project to the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) which was accepted. This project will enable it to build an Independent Living Centre in Hal-Far. This Centre will have the necessary equipment to offer professional assistance so that disabled persons can purchase suitable equipment to help them lead a more independent life. Among other things, this includes equipment that helps disabled people drive adapted vehicles. This project will cost about a million and a half euros and is expected to be ready in two years' time.

In order to be able to implement this project, KNPD has published or will be publishing a number of tenders which include:

- a) purchase of professional architectural services
- b) purchase of publicity services

- c) construction work of the Centre
- d) purchase of the necessary equipment.

KNPD also presented another project, this time from the European Social Fund (ESF) to obtain funds to train professionals who will be providing services directly or indirectly from this new Independent Living Centre. This request was accepted and funds of €300000 were granted.

4.4 Information for Disabled People

Indaqs (Equal)

KNPD works so that disabled persons are informed about its work and about developments in the sector. For this purpose, KNPD publishes a biannual magazine *Indaqs* (Equal), once in May and once in November. This magazine, which is published in different formats (Maltese, English, audio and easy-to-read), is sent by post to every person registered with KNPD.

Website

KNPD has a website, www.knpd.org, which is updated regularly and is accessible to all, including blind persons.

4.5 Assistance with Posting for Organisations

KNPD once more allocated a sum of money from its funds in order to give modest financial assistance to voluntary organisations who work in the disability sector. This assistance consists of KNPD paying for half the postage expenses of these organisations. In 2008, KNPD helped these ten organisations:

- Friends of Support Agency
- Caritas Malta Epilepsy Association
- Arka Foundation
- Equal Partners Foundation
- Foundation for Respite Care Services
- Commission for Work with the Sick and Disabled Persons
- Physically Handicapped Rehabilitation Fund
- Multiple Sclerosis Society (Malta)
- Down Syndrome Association (Malta)
- National Society of Parents of Disabled Persons.

05 INDIRECT SERVICES

Apart from direct services, KNPD administers a number of services that are provided for disabled persons and their families and which are the responsibility of other governmental entities.

5.1 The Blue Badge

Persons who have a physical impairment that hinders their mobility are entitled to a Blue Badge issued by the Police Commissioner and valid in all European Union countries. The administrative work for this service is carried out by the KNPD Secretariat. The work done on this service by KNPD during this year is shown in Table 12.

	2007		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%
New applications	982		1565	+ 59
Permanent Blue Badge recommended	604	62	1015	+68
Temporary Blue Badge recommended	139	14	176	+27
Not recommended	123	13	185	+50
Did not attend doctor's appointment	93	10	146	+57
Pending/ Requested new appointment	23	2	43	-

This table shows that the trend from previous years where a substantial increase in the number of applications for this service was registered. In fact, the increase this year when compared to last year is 59%. Naturally, this also reflects the number of new Blue Badges that have been issued, which was also much higher than last year (68% more permanent and 27% temporary Blue Badges). The number of applications which were not accepted and the number of persons who did not attend the doctor's appointment also increased, by 50% and 57% respectively.

During this year, KNPD started to administer the Appeals Board that was set up to consider appeals by persons who feel that the decision of the KNPD's medical professional was not correct. This Board is led by the Assistant Police Commissioner. Its work is shown in Table 13.

	2008	
	No.	%
Requests examined	29	-
First decision confirmed	20	69
First decision overturned	9	31

This table shows that the Board did not accept the majority (69%) of the appeals it heard.

In order to reduce abuse of the Blue Badge, KNPD has started an exercise to collect Blue Badges of disabled persons who have passed away. Work in this regard for the first 8 months of 2008 is shown in Table 14.

Returned		Affidavit		Reported to the Commissioner/ Legal Letter		Total
No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
147	82	15	8	18	10	180

This table indicates that KNPD managed to collect the majority (82%) of these Badges and it is only in very few cases that the intervention of the Police Commissioner is requested for this Badge to be returned.

5.2 Exemption from Car Registration Tax and Road Licence

The Finance Ministry gives exemptions from the car registration and other taxes to disabled people so that they use adapted vehicles. This exemption is proportionate to the modifications to the vehicle the disabled person needs. This service is administered by KNPD. The work carried out in 2008 is shown in Table 15.

	2007		2008		Diff.
	No.	%	No.	%	No.
New applications	301	-	278	-	-8
Recommended	269	89	234	84	-13
Not recommended	9	3	11	4	-22
Withdrew application/ did not use exemption	21	7	31	11	+48
Pending applications	2	1	2	1	-

This table shows that there was a slight reduction of 8% in the number of applications for this service, which was naturally also reflected in the percentage of applications that were recommended and those that were not.

Analysis of the type of vehicle that was purchased by persons who were given this exemption is shown in Table 16.

TABLE 16: CAR REGISTRATION TAX EXEMPTION (ANALYSIS)		
	2008	
	No.	%
Standard cars	84	36
Modified standard cars	4	2
Automatic cars	102	44
Modified automatic cars	14	6
Accessible vans for wheelchair users	30	13
Total	234	100

This table shows that the majority of exemptions were given on automatic cars (44%) or standard cars (36%). 13% were given on accessible vans for wheelchair users, while the rest were on modified automatic cars (6%) and modified standard cars (2%). KNPD also continued making recommendations to the Licencing Department so that drivers who have a disability, according to the Social Security Act (1987) and those who have a modified vehicle because of their disability, are exempted from paying the road licence. The statistics for 2008 regarding this service can be found in Table 17.

TABLE 17: EXEMPTION FROM ROAD LICENCE					
	2007		2008		Diff.
	No.	%	No.	%	No.
New applications	191	-	206	-	+8
Recommended	144	75	172	83	+19
Not recommended	31	16	20	10	-35
Withdrew application	15	8	12	6	-20
Pending applications	1	1	2	1	-

This table shows a slight increase of 8% in applications for this service. This is reflected in the number of applications that were recommended and those that were not.

In the 2009 national budget, government announced radical changes to the system regulating payment of the car registration tax and the road licence. The Finance Ministry and KNPD held various meetings so that the exemptions that the Ministry used to give disabled persons in this regard are reflected in a just manner in these changes. The two sides agreed on the new exemptions which have been drawn up on these two principles:

- a) as far as possible disabled persons do not pay more than they used to before these changes were introduced;
- b) disabled persons pay their contribution when their vehicle is very polluting for the environment.

These new exemptions came into effect on the 1st January 2009 and can be found on the KNPD website www.knpd.org.

5.3 Individualised Transport

During this year, KNPD continued with the agreement it has with the Foundation for Respite Care Services for this Foundation to provide individualised transport for those disabled persons who need this service, primarily because of their education or employment. KNPD, through the NGO Liaison Committee within the Ministry for Social Policy, gave the funds it had voted for this service to the Foundation.

5.4 Reserved Parking

Reserved parking bays in front of residences of disabled persons who have severe mobility impairment are approved by the Transport Authority according to criteria agreed upon with KNPD. The latter, in agreement with the Authority, **administrates** this service's Review Panel. During this year, this Panel functioned as shown in Table 18.

TABLE 18: RESERVED PARKING REVIEW PANEL					
	2007		2008		Diff.
	No.	%	No.	%	No.
Requests examined	58	-	41	-	-29
First decision confirmed	35	60	25	61	-29
First decision overturned	23	40	16	39	-30

This table shows that the number of appeals has continued to decrease substantially (by 29%). The trend for the majority of appeals not being accepted (60% in 2007 and 61% in 2008) also continued.

5.5 Refund on Equipment

Since most equipment that is used by disabled persons to be able to lead an independent life now has VAT added (mostly at 5%), KNPD has been appointed to administer a scheme on behalf of the Ministry for Social Policy to give financial aid that is equivalent to the amount paid in VAT. KNPD also refunds VAT on computers that have been bought by disabled persons. During this year, this scheme functioned as shown in Table 19.

TABLE 19: REFUND ON EQUIPMENT FOR DISABLED PERSONS					
	2007		2008		Diff. %
Refunds	€59946		€68443		+14
No. of beneficiaries	341		402		+18
Average refund	€176		€170		-3

This table shows that there was an increase both in the amount of money refunded (14%) and in the number of beneficiaries (18%).

5.6 Work Permits for Personal Assistants

A small but increasing number of disabled persons are purchasing Personal Assistance services from foreigners. They do this mostly since they do not find these services from local assistants at affordable rates. The Government has accepted to issue work permits for these persons on condition that there is an assurance that there will not be any abuses. Consequently, the Government requested KNPD to vet applications made to ETC for these work permits. From October 2008 onwards, ETC no longer felt the need to continue consulting with KNPD and these permits are now being issued by ETC without vetting from KNPD.

KNPD used to vet these applications by forwarding them to one of its medical professionals to examine the applicant and draw up a report. In 2008, this work was carried out as shown in Table 20. This shows that all applications vetted by KNPD were valid.

TABLE 20: PERSONAL ASSISTANCE SCHEME				
	2007		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%
New applications	106	-	57	-
Recommended	81	76	57	100
Not eligible	19	18	0	0
Pending	6	6	-	-

06 AWARENESS RAISING

6.1 Wenzu Dalli Resource Centre

KNPD offers the services of the Wenzu Dalli Resource Centre with the aim of giving access to specialised literature on subjects related to disability to disabled persons and all those working in the sector. This Centre is open to the public during office hours and is located at the KNPD Secretariat in the Ćentru Hidma Soċjali in Santa Venera. Table 21 shows the resources used in this Centre in 2008 and how they were used.

	Lent			New		Total
	2007	2008	Diff. %	2007	2008	Diff. %
Books	726	638	-12	152	123	-19
Periodicals	97	93	-4	89	74	-17
Videos	12	9	-25	0	0	-
Audios	0	0	-	8	6	-25
CDs	20	19	-5	8	10	+25
DVDs	11	13	+18	12	8	-33
				2007	2008	Diff. %
Members who used the Centre				235	215	-9
New members				80	32	-60
						1357

Table 21 shows that, although in 2008 resources continued to increase, a slower rate of increase was registered when compared to the previous year. The same can be said for the number of new members who were registered during the year. The number of persons who used the Centre during 2008 also shows a decrease of 9% when compared to the number who used it in 2007.

6.2 Disability Issues Courses

KNPD continued to deliver a series of training courses regarding disability issues with University students and with various workers with the aim of ensuring that they have a wider understanding of this sector, especially from the social aspect. This training is carried out primarily by disabled people themselves. The work carried out by KNPD in this sector is shown in Table 22.

Table 22: DISABILITY ISSUES TRAINING SESSIONS			
Clients	Course		No. of Participants
University of Malta	B.Ed		125
	M.Ed		10
	B. Psy		80
	Faculty of Medicine		56
	Social Work		52
	Institute of Health Care		28
Ministry of Education	Heads and Assistant Heads		55
	Learning Support Assistants		310
	Institute for Tourism Studies		4
MCAST	Pathways Programme		5
	Community Studies		70
Support Agency	Careworkers		13
Archdiocese of Malta	New Seminararians		6
Police Academy			56
Gozo Channel			120
Dar il-Kaptan			15
St Joan Antide Foundation			50
Total	2007	2008	Diff %
	828	1055	+27

This table shows that KNPD increased its work in this sector substantially, by 27%.

Apart from this, KNPD had a small number of requests from schools and youth organisations. The number was much lower than in the previous year, with the reason being that in 2007 KNPD had funds from the EU Progress Programme to work in this area pro-actively.

6.3 Disabled Persons Week

The 3rd December is the day that the United Nations chose as the International Day of Disabled Persons. Every year, KNPD organises a week of activities around this day. This year, the week started exactly on the 3rd December 2008 and ended on the 10th December, which is the International Day of Human Rights.

The theme chosen for this Week was 'Access for All, Success for All'. This slogan was used for an attractive poster that was distributed around the whole of Malta and Gozo. Apart from this, the same poster was used during the week and in the following days for three billboards that was set up in Marsa, Qormi and Burmarrad.

During the week, KNPD presented the message for the public by Mr Joseph M. Camilleri, Chair. Apart from this, the Hon. John Dalli, Minister for Social Policy delivered the ministerial message together with Ms Mary Rose Attard, a disabled activist from Gozo. The message was broadcast exactly on the International Day of Disabled Persons. Another message for children was sent to all schools in Malta and Gozo. Apart from this, the KNPD Chairman presented this message in person at the Jeanne Antide School in Gudja. During this event, every student attending this school was given a book that KNPD published recently about children with different disabilities. Mr Carmel Cauchi, who is the author of these books, read short excerpts from the books to the children while Mr Charles Borg entertained the children with songs and guitar playing.

The following activities were organised during this week:

- A *National Conference* with the theme "Access for All, Success for All through the UN Convention". This conference, that was addressed by Ms Lydia la Riviere-Zijdel, was inaugurated by the Hon. John Dalli, Minister for Social Policy. Two panels made up of representatives from different entities discussed this theme. The first panel consisted of Ms Marica Gatt, Education Officer at the Directorate for Educational Services, Mr Felix Borg, General Manager of the Employment and Training Corporation, Dr Natasha Azzopardi Muscat, Director General of the Health Division, Mr Alfred Portelli, Assistant Director at the Department of Social Security, and Ms Audrey Testaferrata de Noto, Manager at the Transport Authority. The second panel consisted of Mr Marcel Pisani, Chief Operating Manager tal-Agenzija *Sapport*, Mr Stanley Debono, Chief Executive of the Foundation for Information Accessibility, Dr Marvic Sciberras Abdilla, Senior Lawyer at the Office of the Attorney General, Fr Anton Gouder, Pro Vicar at the Curia of the Catholic Church in Malta, Mr Lino Spiteri, representative of the private sector and Ms Louisa Grech, representative of the non-governmental sector. In the near future, KNPD will post a summary of the discussions from this conference on its website.

- The *Disabled People's Parliament* was addressed by Mr Joseph M. Camilleri, KNPDP Chair since the foreign speaker who was scheduled to speak during this event could not come. This Parliament was chaired by the Hon. Dr Louis Galea, Speaker of the House of Representatives. A good number of Members of Parliament attended: the Hon Carmelo Abela, David Agius, Dr Jason Azzopardi, Dr Justyne Caruana, Dolores Cristina, Marie Louise Coleiro Preca, John Dalli, Dr Franco Debono, Mario Galea, Dr Beppe Fenech Adami, Dr Chris Said and Edwin Vassallo. The Parliament concluded with interventions by the Hon. Dr Joseph Muscat, Leader of the Opposition and the Hon. Giovanna Debono, Acting Prime Minister.
- The *Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons* in Maltese was presented to the public in the easy-to-read version in Maltese by the KNPDP Consultative Committee of Persons with Intellectual Disability. The presentation was made by Mr Joseph M. Camilleri, KNPDP Chair together with Omar Jelassi, Brian Micallef, Marthese Deguara and Isabelle Bonello, all of whom are members of this Committee. Others participated in the discussion held during the presentation. This activity was concluded by a speech from the Hon Mario Galea, Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry for Social Policy. A copy of this version of the Convention can be obtained from the KNPDP Secretariat or from the website www.knpd.org.
- Mr Joseph M. Camilleri and Mr Fred Bezzina, Chairman and Director of KNPDP, also took part in a *conference on the same subject held in Gozo* by the Gozo Federation of Organisations for Disabled People. This Conference was address by the Hon. Giovanna Debono, Minister for Gozo, and by Mons Mario Grech, the Bishop of Gozo.
- KNPDP organised a *consultation session with the private sector*, to discuss the employment sector as well as the issue of physical accessibility. Unfortunately, attendance for this activity was quite poor.
- As in past years, KNPDP organised a *thanksgiving reception* to show its appreciation for the work carried out by many people. Some of these people offer their time, even on a voluntary basis, so that disabled persons and their families can have a good quality of life.

The majority of these activities were partly funded by the Progress Programme of the European Union.

6.4 Progress Programme

The Progress Programme of the European Union has the aim of giving financial assistance for projects that combat discrimination and work in favour of the social inclusion of minorities. Part of this project offers financial aid for awareness-raising campaigns to be held in member states. KNPD and the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) this year put forward a project for the organisation of an awareness-raising campaign about the sectors of disability and race. Unfortunately, NCPE could not continue to give its active contribution to this project due to financial reasons. Consequently, activities related to race had to be reduced.

This project, which has a total financment of around €200000, started in December 2008 and has a twelve-month duration. KNPD employed Mr Svetlik Muscat to manage this project.

The majority of activities organised during Disabled Persons Week that was held in the beginning of December 2008 were financed from these funds. Other activities that are planned as part of this campaign are:

- Seminars about race and disability issues for heads of schools and guidance teachers.
- Meetings in various schools about these two issues with the participation of disabled people and people from ethnic minorities.
- Meetings with employers about the national policy on employment and disabled people.
- Awareness-raising campaign for the better use of the Blue Badge.
- KNPD publications in different formats which include audio, easy-to-read and Maltese Sign Language.
- Training for disability issues trainers.
- Open-air cultural activities with the participation of performers with disability and from ethnic minorities.

6.5 KNPD Publications

Reading Books for Children

KNPD published four short reading books for children with the main characters being disabled children:

- *Clint Għandu Down Syndrome* (Clint has Down Syndrome)
- *Dorianne Niegħa mid-Dawl* (Dorianne is Visually Impaired)
- *Jason Juża Wheelchair* (Jason uses a Wheelchair)
- *Marcel Niegħes mis-Smigh* (Marcel is Hearing Impaired).

These books have colour illustrations and were written by the children's author Carmel Cauchi. These books were presented to the Hon. John Dalli, Minister for Social Policy. KNPD distributed the books in all Maltese and Gozitan schools –

state, Church and independent schools. Every class of the third, fourth, fifth and sixth year of each primary school received a set of these books to be placed in the class library.

This initiative was sponsored by the Good Causes Fund of the Ministry of Finance.

Other Publications

During 2008, KNPD published the following:

- the UN Convention in Maltese
- the UN Convention in easy-to-read format
- the seventh edition (2007 – 2008) of the Annual Report of the Equal Opportunities Act in Maltese and English
- the 2007 KNPD Annual Report in Maltese, English and audio.

These publications are all found on the KNPD website: www.knpd.org.

All KNPD Publications

During the years, KNPD has issued various publications, many of which are also in different formats so that they are as far as possible accessible to all. Many of these publications can be obtained for free from the KNPD Secretariat or downloaded from the KNPD website, as shown in Table 23.

TABLE 23								
	Malt	Eng	Easy-to-read	Audio	Sign Lang	Website		
						Mal	Eng	ETR
• Access for All - Design Guidelines								X
• <i>Affarijiet li saru f'Malta biex il-Persuni b'Diżabilita' u l-Familji Tagħhom Ikollhom Opportunitajiet Indaqs</i>			X					
• Rights not Charity Manual	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
• Fact sheets – KNPD services	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
• Self Advocacy leaflet								X
• <i>Ħoloq</i>	X					X		
• EU Directive on Equal Treatment in Employment – Conference proceedings	X	X		X		X	X	
• Highway Code in Maltese Sign Language					X			
• The Signs Book*	X	X				X		-
• The Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act	X	X		X		X	X	
• <i>Indaqs (Equal) (various editions)</i>	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
• Self Advocacy for Persons with Intellectual Disability – report	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
• <i>Klijenti b'Diżabilita' u Inti</i>	X			X				
• <i>Clint Għandu Down Syndrome</i> <i>Dorianne Niegħa mid-Dawl</i> <i>Jason Juża Wheelchair</i> <i>Marcel Niegħes mis-Smiġħ</i>	X			X			X	
• Liġi Opportunitajiet Indaqs	X			X		X		
• Equal Opportunities for Disabled Persons: EU Action Plan - Seminar	X	X		X		X	X	

• <i>Policy Nazzjonali dwar is-Self Advocacy għall-Persuni b'Nuqqas Intellettuali</i>	X		X	X		X		X
• Services and Benefits for Disabled Persons	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

* there is a nominal fee for this publication.

Highlights of Major Activities for 2007

General

- KNPD met nine (9) times while the Consultative Committee of Persons with Intellectual Impairment met ten (10) times.
- KNPD publishes two annual reports. The first focuses on its work related to the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act of 2000. The second is this present report which focuses on the general work of KNPD.

Combating discrimination

- KNPD vetted 469 development applications made to the Malta Environment Planning Authority (MEPA). These marked a drop of 29% when compared with last year. Only 40% of these applications were approved, while in 2007 the percentage of successful applications was 64%.
- KNPD vetted 45 building in connection with the issuing of a MEPA TO Compliance Certificate. This marked a decrease of 21% on last year's figures. The Commission recommended only 56% of these when compared to the 95% of last year.

Policy Development

- KNPD was an active participant in the Civil Society Group within the Malta Council of Economic and Social Development.
- It registered a total of 11,532 people in its National Register of Persons with Disability. This is a 12% increase on last year's figures.
- It actively participated, and also administered, the Inter-Ministerial Committee set up by the Prime Minister in connection with the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability and its Optional Protocol.
- It published a Maltese and an Easy-to-Read version of the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability and its Optional Protocol.
- In 2008, following general elections a new government was sworn in. Subsequently, KNPD held meetings with the Prime Minister and various Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries. The aim of these meetings was to encourage a dialogue with KNPD regarding general policy and other outstanding issues.

- KNPD made several recommendations for inclusion in the National Budget 2009. A substantial number of these recommendations were actuated.
- It contributed its views regarding the following White Papers: Rent Reform, Local Councils, Public Transport and Youth.
- As part of the MEPA reform process, a joint committee between KNPD and MEPA prepared a report outlining how the consultation process between MEPA and KNPD could be improved. Some of the recommendations in the report are already being put into practice.
- KNPD is giving its full support to the Education Division which is preparing a report on how the Division can buy Education Services from non-government organisations.
- KNPD and MCAST have agreed on the implementation of an equal opportunities policy for MCAST and a complete revision of the Pathway Programme.
- KNPD maintained its full support for the University of Malta's ACCESS: Disability Support Committee and its various sub-committees.
- It continued its active involvement in the pilot project aimed at providing support for every student with a statement of Individual Educational Programme in the Maria Assumpta Secondary School.
- During 2008 KNPD maintained work on revising and updating its National Policy on Employment and Persons with Disability.
- KNPD entered into a partnership with the *Agenzija Support* on the ME2 project which is being funded through the European Social Fund. The project aims at providing vocational training and work experience to *Agenzija Support* clients.
- KNPD continued to be represented on the Board of Directors of the Foundation for Respite Care Services and the Foundation for I.T. Accessibility (FITA).
- The Commission remained Malta's representative on the European Union High Level Group on Disability.
- KNPD kept up its involvement with the European Union's Academic Network of European Disability Experts (ANED).

- It carried on with its analysis of the information about disabled people which resulted from the National Census of 2005.

Services

- KNPD issued 1301 Special Identity Cards, an increase of 27% on last year's figures.
- It provided financial assistance to 301 disabled person enabling them to purchase assistive apparatus which improved their independence. This marked a 53% on 2007 figures.
- It has begun work on building an Independent Living Centre at Hal-Far as well as creating a training programme for the centre's personnel. Both projects have been made possible through European Union funds.
- It helped 10 disability NGOs to sustain their work in this sector by providing them with financial support to defray some of their postal expenses.
- It processed 1565 Blue Badge applications, an increase of 59% on the previous year. Out of these 18% were refused, an increase of 50% from last year's figures.
- In 2008, KNPD began to carry out the administrative work connected to the Blue Badge Appeals Board. Twenty-nine appeals were received of which 69% were refused.
- KNPD began a procedure to call in the Blue Badges of people who had died. 147 badges were collected during 2008.
- It gave a positive recommendation to 234 applicants who had sought to benefit from the Exemption on Registration Tax scheme. This marked a decrease of 8% on 2008.
- It positively recommended the applications of 172 disabled persons who sought to benefit from the Free Road Licence scheme; an increase of 8%.
- Once again KNPD voted a substantial portion of its annual budget to help sustain the Individualised Transport Service which is run by the Foundation for Respite Care Services.
- KNPD continued to administer the Reserved Parking Review Panel. During 2008 the Commission received 41 appeals out of which 61% were approved.

- It continued to refund VAT on items purchased for the specific use of persons with disability. This included the purchase of computers. 402 benefited from this scheme, an increase of 18% on last year.

Awareness Raising

- KNPD once again increased the resources of its Wenzu Dalli Resource Centre. 215 made use of the Centre's services a decrease of 9% over last year.
- It delivered Disability Studies and Disability Equality Training sessions to 1055 persons, an increase of 27% over 2007.
- Once more KNPD organised Disability Week, this year with the theme: 'Access for All, Success for All'. This slogan was used on posters, billboards, during a Ministerial Message to the media, a message to the general public and another message for school children. Among the principal activities organised during this week were: a national conference, a parliament of disabled people and a thanksgiving reception.
- KNPD managed to secure approximately €200,000 from European Union's Progress Programme. The funds are to be used to create a public awareness campaign which will run from December 2008 to November 2009.
- KNPD published 4 reading books aimed at young children. Each book has a fictitious disabled child talking about their lives and experiences.

APPENDIX A

Statistics from the National Register of Disabled Persons for the Year 2008.

Table 25: Statistics according to Age and Sex

Age	Females	Males	Total	%		Difference
				2008	2007	
0-4	43	48	91	0.79	0.86	-0.07
5-9	91	173	264	2.29	2.39	-0.10
10-14	146	207	353	3.06	3.43	-0.37
15-19	138	202	340	2.95	3.26	-0.31
20-24	145	225	370	3.21	3.35	-0.14
25-29	177	252	429	3.72	4.11	-0.39
30-34	171	257	428	3.71	3.83	-0.12
35-39	196	229	425	3.69	3.80	-0.11
40-44	186	222	408	3.54	3.85	-0.31
45-49	239	382	621	5.39	5.74	-0.36
50-54	284	425	709	6.15	6.25	-0.10
55-59	350	498	848	7.35	7.79	-0.44
60-64	427	592	1019	8.84	8.19	0.64
65-69	344	505	849	7.36	7.51	-0.15
70-74	494	497	991	8.59	8.43	0.16
75-79	591	491	1082	9.38	8.87	0.51
80-84	576	471	1047	9.08	8.56	0.52
85 +	709	495	1204	10.44	9.21	1.23
Not known			54	0.47	0.56	
Total	5307	6171	11532			

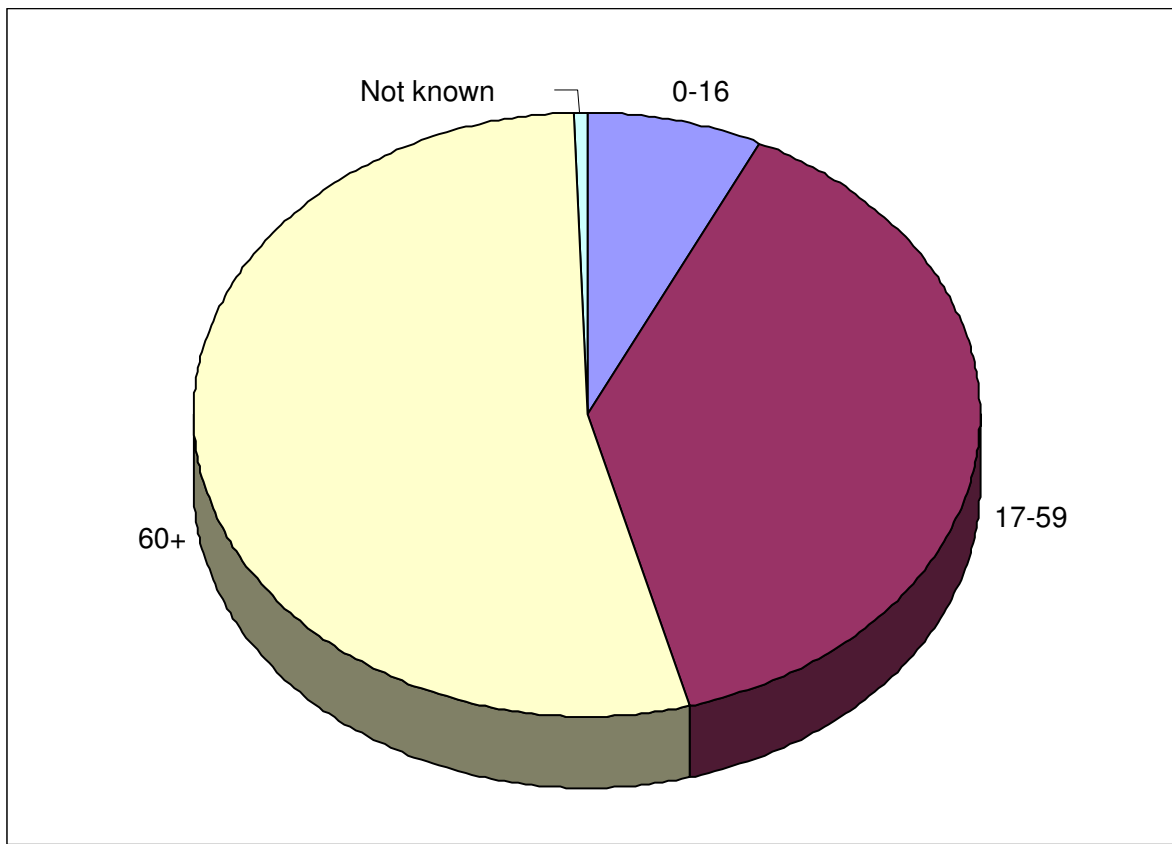
Figure 1: Statistics According to Age

Table 26: Statistics According to Age Over the Years

Year	0-16		17-59		60+		Not Known	Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
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
2007	819	8.0	4188	40.7	5227	50.8	57	10291
2008	837	7.3	4449	38.6	6193	53.7	54	11532

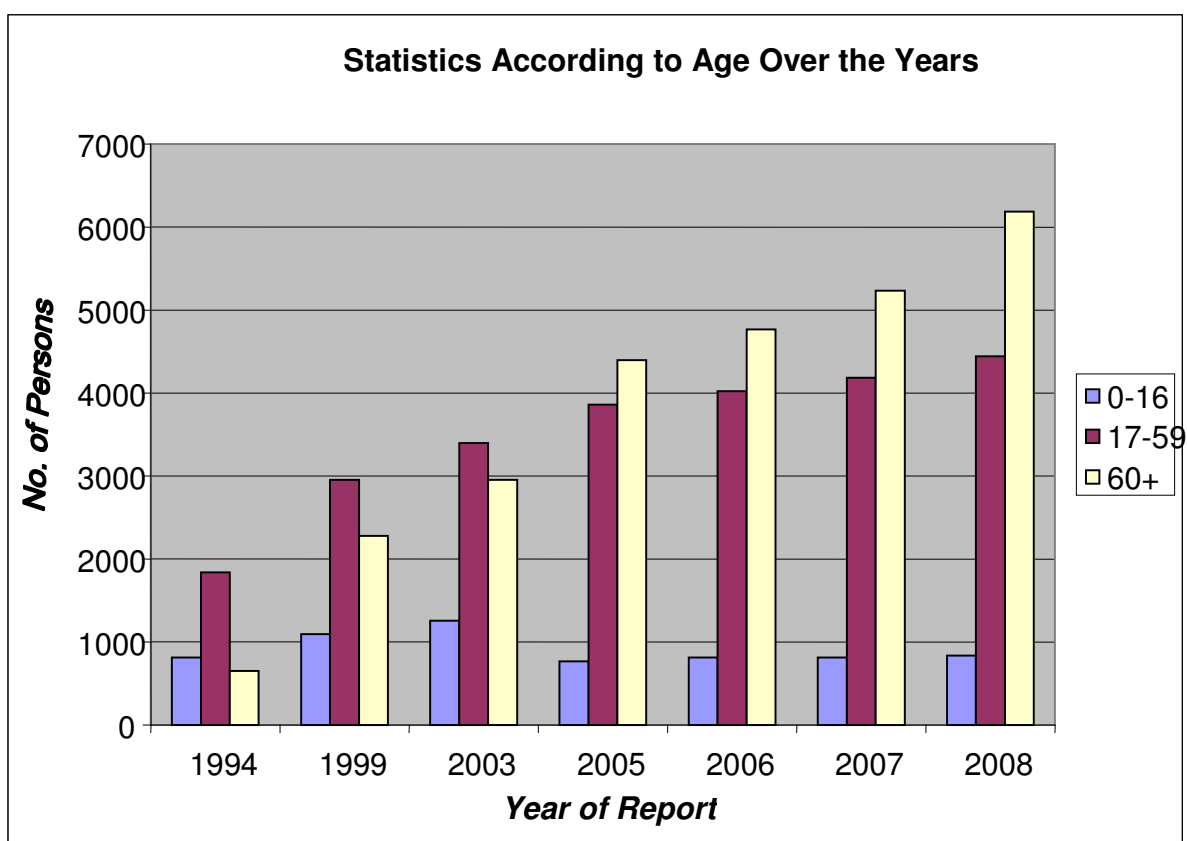
Figure 2

Table 27: Statistics According to Impairment

	No					%		Difference 2007 - 2008
	2008	2007	2006	2005	2003	2008	2007	
Physical	7801	6556	5953	5338	3819	67.65	63.71	61.61
Intellectual	2184	2052	1964	1895	1314	18.94	19.94	20.32
Psychological	1166	1054	946	849	493	10.11	10.24	9.79
Visual	1236	1159	1129	1127	757	10.72	11.26	11.68
Hearing	1128	1062	1025	986	636	9.78	10.32	10.61
More than one	2284	2022	1881	1767	1166	19.81	19.65	19.47
Not specified	1140	1279	1383	1484	2025	9.89	12.43	14.31

Note: The totals are higher since there are a number of persons who have more than one impairment

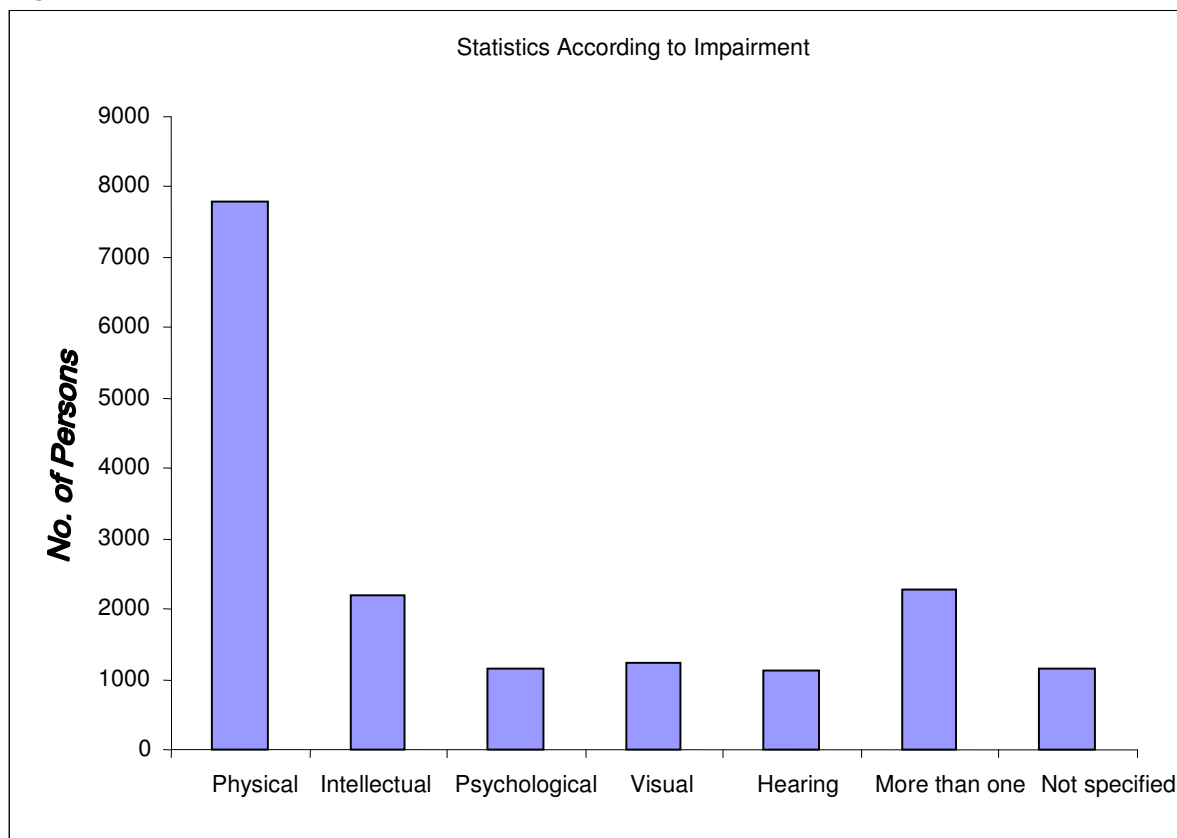
Figure 3

Table 28: Statistics According to Impairment and Age in Five Year Groups

	Physical	%	Psycho-logical	%	Intell-ectual	%	Hearing	%	Visual	%	More than one	
0-4	55	0.71	21	1.80	52	2.38	7	0.62	9	0.73	45	1.97
5-9	89	1.14	66	5.66	143	6.55	31	2.75	17	1.38	80	3.50
10-14	154	1.97	70	6.00	182	8.33	35	3.10	30	2.43	107	4.68
15-19	146	1.87	70	6.00	172	7.88	40	3.55	24	1.94	94	4.12
20-24	171	2.19	49	4.20	162	7.42	51	4.52	37	2.99	92	4.03
25-29	195	2.50	55	4.72	180	8.24	41	3.63	32	2.59	90	3.94
30-34	197	2.53	63	5.40	164	7.51	38	3.37	41	3.32	83	3.63
35-39	223	2.86	56	4.80	148	6.78	39	3.46	44	3.56	87	3.81
40-44	242	3.10	54	4.63	98	4.49	32	2.84	30	2.43	75	3.28
45-49	357	4.58	87	7.46	154	7.05	63	5.59	70	5.66	135	5.91
50-54	464	5.95	93	7.98	119	5.45	52	4.61	72	5.83	115	5.04
55-59	624	8.00	97	8.32	120	5.49	63	5.59	80	6.47	148	6.48
60-64	769	9.86	97	8.32	121	5.54	69	6.12	111	8.98	167	7.31
65-69	682	8.74	51	4.37	59	2.70	57	5.05	86	6.96	110	4.82
70-74	817	10.47	50	4.29	65	2.98	79	7.00	94	7.61	142	6.22
75-79	901	11.55	52	4.46	71	3.25	91	8.07	118	9.55	182	7.97
80-84	863	11.06	50	4.29	65	2.98	126	11.17	133	10.76	207	9.06
>85	852	10.92	85	7.29	109	4.99	214	18.97	208	16.83	325	14.23
	7801	100.00	1166	100.00	2184	100.00	1128	100.00	1236	100.00	2284	100.00

Note: The totals are higher since there are a number of persons who have more than one impairment

Table 29: Statistics by Impairment and Age

	Physical	%	Psycho-logical	%	Intell-ectual	%	Hearing	%	Visual	%	More than one	%
0-16	345	4.42	181	15.52	442	20.24	93	8.24	65	5.26	263	11.51
17-59	2572	32.97	600	51.46	1252	57.33	399	35.37	421	34.06	888	38.88
60+	4884	62.61	385	33.02	490	22.44	636	56.38	750	60.68	1133	49.61
	7801	100.00	1166	100.00	2184	100.00	1128	100.00	1236	100.00	2284	100.00

Figure 4

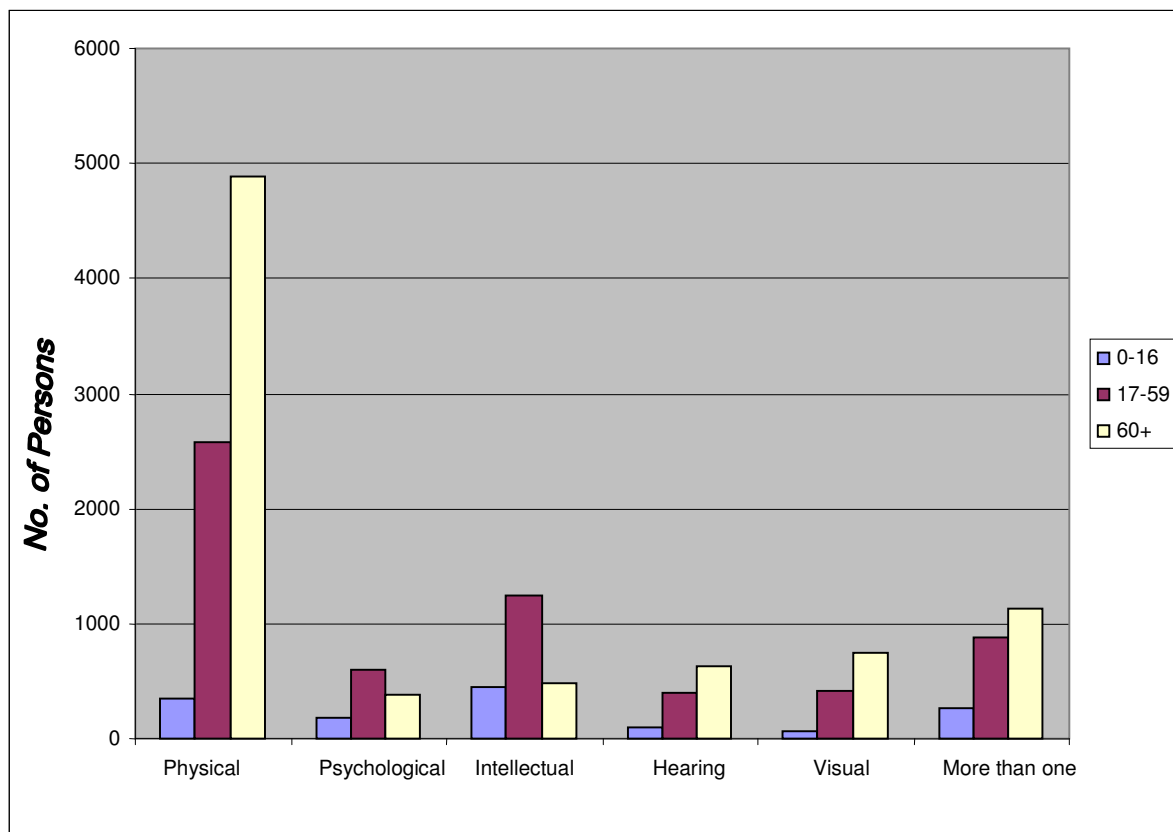


Table 30: Prevalence by Disability compared with the Population

Year	Prevalence
1994	0.9
1999	1.6
2003	1.9
2005	2.3
2006	2.4
2007	2.5
2008	

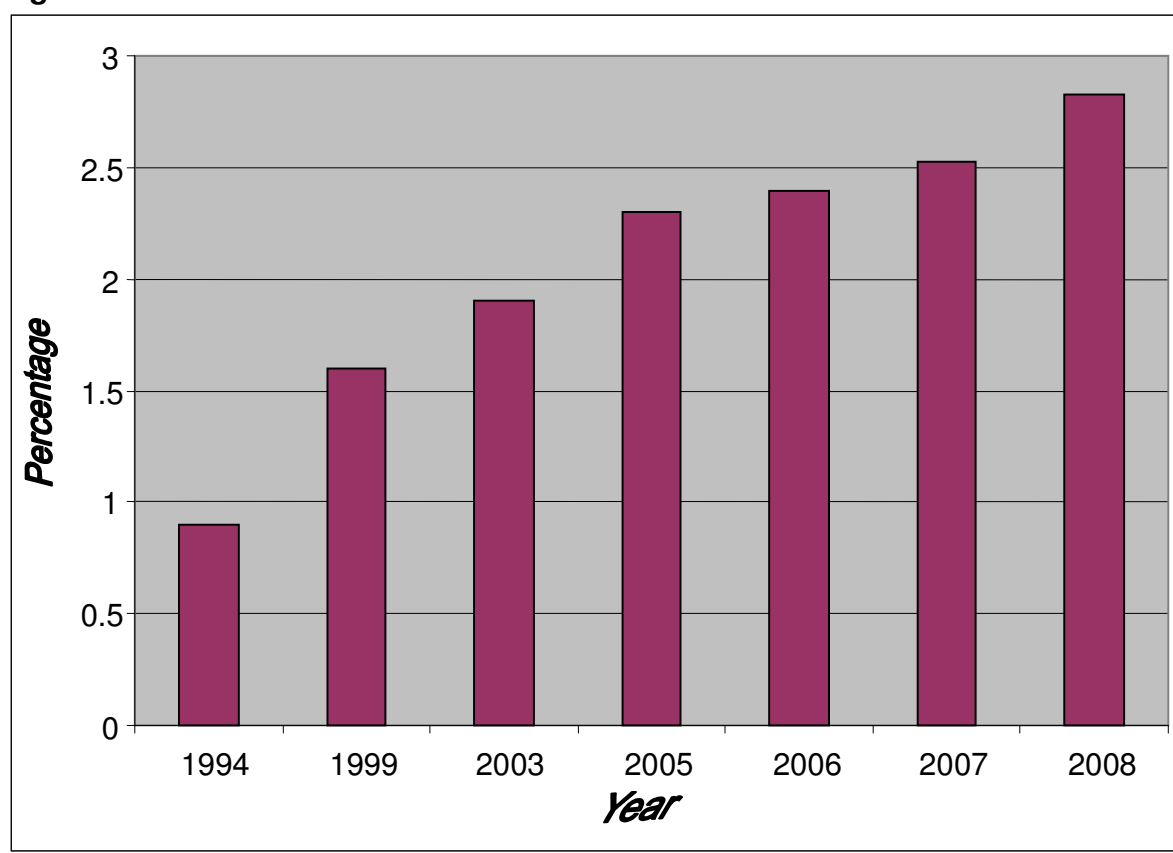
Figure 5

TABLE 31: PREVALENCE BY LOCALITY					
ATTARD	204	LIJA	71	SAN ĠILJAN	248
BALZAN	132	LUQA	139	SAN ĠWANN	285
BIRGU	103	MARSA	242	SAN LAWRENZ	20
BIRKIRKARA	639	MARSASKALA	211	SAN PAWL IL-BAĦAR	383
BIRŻEBBUĠIA	224	MARSAXLOKK	75	SANNAT	43
BORMLA	206	MDINA	13	SIGĠIEWI	274
DINGLI	67	MELLIEĦA	218	SLIEMA	562
FGURA	306	MĠARR	67	STA LUĊIA	93
FLORIANA	111	MOSTA	432	STA VENERA	238
FONTANA	27	MQABBA	54	SWIEQI	144
GĦAJNSIELEM	64	MSIDA	191	TA' XBIEX	55
GĦARB	40	MTARFA	55	TARXIEN	231
GĦARGĦUR	47	MUNXAR	20	VALLETTA	271
GĦASRI	11	NADUR	107	VICTORIA (GĦAWDEX)	185
GĦAXAQ	85	NAXXAR	252	XAGĦRA	83
GUDJA	58	PAOLA	327	XEWKIJA	77
GĠIRA	219	PEMBROKE	55	XGĦAJRA	24
ĦAMRUN	417	PIETA'	133	ŻABBAR	395
IKLIN	42	QALA	47	ŻEBBUĠ	275
ISLA	91	QORMI	513	ZEBBUĠ (GĦAWDEX)	50
KALKARA	67	QRENDI	69	ŻEJTUN	335
KERĊEM	35	RABAT	465	ŻURRIEQ	220
KIRKOP	48	SAFI	42		