

Annual Report 2007

COMMITMENT

KNPD 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.

01 INTRODUCTION

1. Setting up of KNPD

The National Commission Persons with Disability (KNPD) was 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. Therefore, 2007 was the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of KNPD.

On 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 KNPDP 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 KNPDP 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 2007 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 KNPDP with respect to the implementation of the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act since this was published separately in December 2007. A copy of this report may be obtained from the offices of KNPDP and also downloaded from the website of KNPDP: www.knpd.org.

4. The Structure of KNPDP

4.1. The members of KNPDP are appointed by the Prime Minister on the advice of the Minister for the Family and Social Solidarity for a two year period. The present members of KNPDP were elected in November 2006 for a period of two years. The members are listed in Table1, which shows some changes which occurred during this year.

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

TABLE 1 : COMPOSITION OF KNPD 2007	
Name	Status
Mr Joseph M. Camilleri ^(a)	Chairperson
Ms Rita Borg ^(a)	Vice-Chairman
Mr Jesmond Schembri ^(b)	Ministry of the Family and Social Solidarity
Dr. Elaine Bingham ^(b)	Ministry of the Family and Social Solidarity
Mr George Borg	Ministry of Education, Youth and Employment
Dr Taygeta Firman	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)	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)(c)}	
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) In March 2007 Mr. Schembri resigned and Dr. Elaine Bingham was elected instead.

(c) In March 2007 Dr. Daniela Mangion offered her resignation as a KNPD member after being appointed as legal counsel of KNPD.

3. During the year 2007, KNPD held eleven 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.

5. The Secretariat of KNPD

5.1. KNPD presented its Annual Report for the year 2006 during a press conference held in February 2007. This Conference was addressed by the Hon. Marie Louise Coleiro Preca, speaker of the opposition for this sector, and Hon. Dolores Cristina, Minister for the Family and Social Solidarity. 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.

5.2 KNPD Report on the Equal Opportunities Act

Every year, KNPD publishes an account of the work it does in the implementation of the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act. Since this Act came into force in October 2002, this report covers the period between October 2006 and September 2007.

This report was presented to the public in a press conference held in the offices of KNPD during the Persons with Disability Week. Following the press conference, Hon. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, speaker of the opposition for this sector, and Hon. Dolores Cristina, Minister for the Family and Social Solidarity, gave their reactions to the report.

This report is available in Maltese, in English, in large font or in Maltese audio from KNPD's offices. It is also available on KNPD's website: www.knpd.org

5.3 At the moment, there are twenty persons in the Secretariat of KNPD, fifteen working on a full-time basis and five working on a part-time basis or on reduced hours. Ten of these employees are persons with disability. The Secretariat seeks to offer equal opportunities of work at all levels.

5.4 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.

5.5 This year, KNPD and Union Haddiema Maghqudin, which represents the majority of the employees within the secretariat of KNPD, signed their third collective agreement. This Collective Agreement improved further the conditions of work of the employees. These employees are covered by this Collective Agreement but also by the Collective Agreement between the Government and the Civil Service, especially in terms of wages.

5.6 Every year, KNPD organises a Staff Development Day with the aim of providing a training session and to develop the Secretariat's team. This year, training focused on the transition from the Maltese lira to the Euro.

6. Services of KNPD

6.1 The services offered by KNPD to persons with disability and their families during this year were the following:

- The National Register of Persons with Disability;
- The Special Identity Card;
- Investigation of Complaints of Discrimination;
- Assistive Apparatus Fund;

- The Resource Centre;
- Courses on Disability Issues;
- The PEKTUR Programme;
- Support Service for Persons with Disability with Challenging Behaviour.

6.2 KNPD makes recommendations to the departments concerned regarding the following 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.
- The Review of decisions with respect to the Blue Sticker.

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

02 ACTION PLAN

1. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability

KNPD is obliged to function according to what is stipulated in the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act. In December 2006, the United Nations published the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability. Malta was one of the first countries to sign in March 2007. Consequently, KNPD used the Convention as a major guideline in its work.

KNPD also bases its work on the World Action Programme for Persons with Disability (1983) and the Standard Rules for Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disability (1993), both of which are United Nations documents.

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

3.1 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 used by KNPD to compile statistics on this sector. Every person who applies for any service offered by KNPD is automatically listed in the Registry.

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

3.3 KNPD receives a number of requests from different entities, such as, organisations of persons with disability, local councils, chaplains, University students, private entities 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 according to their disability, age and locality. 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.

03 REHABILITATION

1. Support Service for Persons with Disability with Challenging Behaviour

1.1 At the end of 2006, KNPD started offering a service which provides holistic support to persons with disability with challenging behaviour. KNPD offered this service through Ms Forough Hessabi M.A. (Psych), Ed. S., an educational specialist with many years of experience. Unfortunately, in May, Ms Hessabi had to return to her country and thus KNPD could not continue to provide this service.

1.2 In the first five months of this year, this service was offered as shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2: SUPPORT SERVICE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITY WITH CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR		
	2006	2007
TRAINING SESSIONS	91	7
INDIVIDUAL SESSIONS	1480	551
From the Community	667	353
SUPPORT Agency	426	49
Child Guidance Clinic	75	45
Mount Carmel Hospital	109	-
St. Luke's Hospital	38	20
Dar tal-Providenza	31	8
Education Division	75	39
Gozo	38	3
Nazareth House	21	2

TABLE 3: ASSISTIVE APPARATUS FUND		
	2006	2007
New Applications	276	260
Persons who benefited from the service	214	199
On the waiting list	38	57
Did not qualify	10	9
Pending	9	2
Returned apparatus given to other applicants	17	35
Returned apparatus	29	29
Total sum of grants	Lm63,300	Lm60, 403
Average Grant	Lm 296	Lm304

2. Assistive Apparatus Fund

2.1 During this period, the Assistive Apparatus Fund 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 this year there was a slight decrease in the number of applications (6%) as well as in the number of beneficiaries (7%). Nonetheless there was a significant increase in the number of people who were offered this service through apparatus which had been returned to KNPD. There were thirty-five such people as opposed to seventeen in the previous year. Thus, the total number of beneficiaries remained on the same level as that of last year.

2.2 An analysis of this service according to the age of the beneficiaries and the apparatus provided is found in Tables 4 and 5.

2.3 Due to 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 substantially more. For this reason, KNPD, as it did in previous years, repeated its request to the Government to increase the funds made available to it in the 2008 Budget. KNPD is happy to note that this request was approved and €46,800 (Lm20,000) were voted for this service.

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

- Mr. Joe Camilleri, the Chairperson 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.

AGE	2006		2007	
0-5	13	6%	11	6%
6-16	54	25%	52	26%
17-30	23	11%	22	11%
31-60	51	24%	42	21%
61+	73	34%	72	36%
Total	214	100	199	100

APPARATUS	2006		2007	
Wheelchairs & Walking Aids	82	33%	92	38%
Seating & Bedding	74	30%	76	31%
Personal Hygiene	31	12%	15	6%
Communication Aids	27	11%	32	13%
Lifting Aids	27	11%	23	9%
Other Apparatus	9	4%	5	2%
Total	250*	100	243*	100

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

2.5 KNPD worked on applying for funding from the European Union for two of its projects. One application was for funds from the European Regional Development Fund and the other application was for funds from the European Social Fund. Both of these are aimed at helping KNPD offer advice and professional training about apparatus that persons with disability need to live an independent life, including by driving. The application to build a Centre in Hal-Far has already been made, while the other one, which is aimed at getting funds for training, is going to be presented in 2008.

3. Refund for Apparatus for Persons with Disability

3.1 KNPD has, on behalf of the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity, continued to manage this scheme which is aimed at giving refunds for extra expenses incurred by persons with disability when buying special apparatus subject to VAT. KNPD also helps persons with disability to have a computer by refunding the VAT paid on their computers. Details of how this scheme worked in 2007 can be found in Table 6.

3.2 These statistics show that this year there were substantial increases both in refunds (21%) and in the number of persons who benefited (11%).

3.3 KNPD made several representations with the European Members of Parliament and other entities so that, on a European level, apparatus for the specific use of persons with disability should not be subject to VAT.

	2006	2007
Refund	Lm21,296	Lm25,735
Number of Persons who benefited from the Scheme	308	341
Average assistance	Lm 69	LM75

04 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

1. Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act

1.1 Equal Opportunities Section

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”. In view of this, 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 Unit is given separately. This year KNPD published its annual report on the seventh year (October 2006-October 2007) of its work on this law, which was presented to the general public during a press conference which took place during the Persons with Disability Week. During this conference there were also speeches by the Hon Dolores Cristina, 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.

1.2 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.

1.3 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 through a number of amendments to this Act in order to make it more effective and compliant with the European Union Directive which establishes a General framework on Equal Treatment in Employment.

From a preliminary study of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability, it seems that the Equal Opportunities Act will have to be amended for Malta to be completely compliant with this Convention. KNPD recommends that all necessary amendments are tackled in one process.

2. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability

In December 2006, the United Nations succeeded in adopting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability. Malta gave its contribution in the drafting of this Convention, especially on a European level, through KNPD. In March 2007, the Member States could sign the Convention and the Non-Obligatory Protocol. Malta was one of the first states to sign them. This shows the Government's willingness to sign this Convention and the Protocol. The Government also intends to appoint an inter-ministerial committee to study what measures need to be taken before Malta is in a position to ratify this Convention. KNPD agrees with this proposal and is ready to give its contribution for this Committee to carry out its work in the shortest time possible for Malta to ratify this important Convention and the Protocol.

KNPD started to work on making persons with disability more aware of this Convention. KNPD has worked on a Maltese translation of this Convention, which was published, together with the English version, on its website. KNPD also presented a copy of this Convention to His Excellency, Dr E. Fenech Adami, President of Malta and Hon. Dolores Cristina, Minister for the Family and Social Solidarity.

3. Special Identity Card

3.1 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 2007 are shown in Table 7.

TABLE 7: SPECIAL IDENTITY CARD		
	2006	2007
New Applications	1158	1041
Accepted Applications	1143	1024
Applications which were not Accepted	15	17
Special Identity Card Renewed	472	420
Total number of persons with disability in possession of the Special Identity Card	8402	9,038

3.2 The statistics show that there was a decrease of 10% in the number of applications this year.

3.3 This year, KNPD continued to work on collecting the Special Identity Card of people who have died. This year, KNPD wrote to 874 relatives of persons with disability who had died. 637 of these (73%) returned the Special Identity Card to KNPD while 141 (16%) wrote an affidavit declaring that they had lost this card. KNPD's lawyer wrote to 96 others (11%) to demand the return of this card.

3.4 Those 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.

4. 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. This year KNPD worked on the following:

4.1 The National Budget for 2007-2008

Every year, KNPD made its representations so that the national budget takes into consideration the needs of persons with disability and their families. This year, KNPD made several proposals for the pre-budget document and also for the 2008 Budget. The majority of these proposals were accepted. These include:

- The commitment of the Maltese Government to ratify in the shortest time possible the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability;
- The commitment of the Government to make sure that the recommendations made by the Spiteri Report for the Inclusive and Special Education Sector are implemented;
- An important measure to help more persons with disability start working by, in addition to any existent measure or proposal in the same budget, exempting employees of persons with disability from paying social security contributions for this employee for the first three years;
- Measures for full physical access at Blue Flag bays and public toilets;
- The opening of another residential home in Cospicua by SAPPOR Agency;
- Assistance to people who employ foreign live-in carers by accrediting their social security contribution and by exempting them from paying ETC administrative fees;
- A substantial increase in Special Children's Allowance for parents of children with disability and the removal of the means test for this allowance;
- An increase of €46,800 (Lm20,000) a year in the allocation to the Special Apparatus Fund administered by KNPD and aimed at helping more persons with disability to buy apparatus needed to live a more independent life.

KNPD is happy to note that the Government has expressed the need for some persons in important positions to change those attitudes which can hinder the desired improvements in this sector. KNPD agrees fully with the view that a change in mentality is required for persons with disability to participate more fully in the community and for them to have equal opportunities

4.2 The Electoral Programmes of Political Parties for the Next General Elections

In view of the fact that the General Election is going to be held in 2008, KNPD prepared a memo with proposals that could be included in the electoral programmes of the political parties which will be contesting the elections. KNPD sent this memo to the four parties.

4.3 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. Some of these proposals were accepted, mainly relating to the fact that TV programmes should have Maltese Sign Language interpretation.

Moreover, this Committee wished to provide every person with visual impairment registered with KNPD with a talking Euro Converter. Unfortunately, this apparatus did not arrive on time and, instead, NECC distributed, through KNPD, a talking calculator and a template for blind people to recognise the money. Also the Maltese Central Bank sent these persons a talking booklet with information about the Euro paper money and coins.

05 PHYSICAL ACCESS

1. Physical Access for All

1.1 In 2007, 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 the Commission every year);
- b) the vetting of applications for development on behalf of the Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA);
- c) consultancy and other activities.

1.2 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				
	2006		2007	
Applications	741		659	
Recommended subject to certain conditions	259	(35%)	420	(64%)
Not recommended	387	(52%)	208	(32%)
More information requested	83	(11%)	28	(4%)
Pending	12	(2%)	3	(1%)

1.3 After the substantial increase of 40% registered last year in the number of applications vetted by KNPD, this year there was a slight decrease of around 11%. We are happy to note that the number of recommended applications, albeit with certain conditions, increased substantially this year by around 29%. The number of applications in relation to which we asked for more information decreased by 7%.

1.4 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 9:

TABLE 9: VETTING FOR THE CLEARANCE/COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATE				
	2006		2007	
Applications	59		57	
Recommended subject to certain conditions	35	(59%)	54	(95%)
Not recommended	23	(39%)	3	(5%)
Pending	1	(2%)	-	-

1.5 The number of buildings that KNPD examined for the Clearance/Compliance Certificate remained on the same level as last year, 57. This is very low especially when compared to the number of applications that KNPD vetted, 659. The number of inspected buildings amounts to only 9% of the applications.

1.6 On the other hand, it is very encouraging that the number of buildings which were found to be accessible after being inspected was very high: 95%. This is a clear sign that the need to provide physical access for all is being recognised.

1.7 KNPD is often asked to provide information about accessibility in hotels. In order to gather the necessary information, KNPD offered the service of sending an official to carry out an audit of the accessibility in every hotel. Following this audit, a detailed report is sent to KNPD and also to the management of the hotel in order for them to be able to improve the accessibility of the building. KNPD offered this service to 21 hotels, 12 of which accepted. So far, 10 reports have been completed.

1.8 Using European Union funds, KNPD printed more copies of the booklet- Access for All - Design Guidelines.

2. The Blue Sticker Service

2.1 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.

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

TABLE 10: BLUE STICKER				
	2006		2007	
New Applications	814		982	
Recommended permanent blue sticker	504	(62%)	604	(62%)
Recommended temporary blue sticker	111	(14%)	139	(14%)
Not Recommended	119	(15%)	123	(13%)
Did not attend doctor's appointment	68	(8%)	93	(10%)
Pending	12	(1%)	23	(2%)
Number of persons who renewed the Blue Sticker	174		125	
Total persons in possession of blue sticker	4,881		5,267	

2.3 Once again, there was a substantial increase both in the number of applications (21%) for this service as well as in the number of Blue Stickers that were issued (20% in permanent Blue Stickers and 3% in temporary Blue Stickers). This happened despite the fact that the applications are being vetted in KNPD's offices by a professional working for KNPD and despite the introduction of an application fee. The number of refused

applications (13%) and the number of applications which were withdrawn after failure by the applicant to be visited by the doctor (10%) is also high.

2.4 KNPD's initiative to collect the Blue Sticker of deceased persons helped in keeping the global number of Blue Stickers in circulation low. While 743 new Blue Stickers were issued, the total number only increased by 386. This year, KNPD wrote to 722 families asking them to return the Blue Sticker of their deceased relative. 571 (79%) returned the Blue Sticker while 8 (11%) signed an affidavit stating that the Blue Sticker had been lost. Only 69 (10%) failed to return the Blue Sticker. In such cases, KNPD writes to the Commissioner of Police for the Police to collect this document.

2.5 KNPD requested the Police Commissioner to provide a mechanism whereby those applicants whose application had been refused and who did not agree with this decision can appeal. After long discussions, a board, which is headed by the Assistant Commissioner of Police, was established in order to examine these claims. This Board is administered by the Secretariat of KNPD. During this year, the Board met four times; the first two meetings were held in order to establish the procedure while six appeals were held in the other two meetings. The Board did not uphold any of the appeals and confirmed the decision of the KNPD professional.

3. Reserved Parking Areas

3.1 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. 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 KNPD representatives, 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.

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

TABLE 11: RESERVED PARKING REVIEW PANEL		
	2006	2007
Applications examined	27	58
First decision confirmed	11 (41%)	35(60%)
First decision changed	16 (59%)	23 (40%)

3.3 After the substantial decrease experienced last year in the number of applications for this service, an increase was registered this year when the number of applications more than doubled. The majority of the applications for revision, 60%, were refused.

4. Exemption from Registration Tax

4.1 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		
	2006	2007
New applications	180	301
Recommended by the OHU	149 (83%)	269 (89%)
Not recommended by the OHU	12 (7%)	9 (3%)
Still have not used the exemption	11 (6%)	21 (7%)
Pending applications	8 (4%)	2 (1%)

4.2 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 (21) who have not yet made use of this exemption is very low and indicates that the system is working.

4.3 The figures for this service showed a high increase in the applications of around 7%, while the percentage of approved applications remained high at around 89%. This percentage is so high because the secretariat of KNPD invests a substantial amount of time in giving advice to applicants before filling in applications.

4.4 This year, KNPD, with the approval and support of the Ministry of Finance, managed to reorganise in a radical way both this service and the one relating to the Exemption from the Payment of a Road Licence. In the first half of this year, the applicants had to apply at KNPD, go for a medical examination at the Occupational Health Unit of the Health Division and then wait for KNPD to inform the Ministry of Finance whether the exemption letter should be issued. This service has been simplified as now the medical tests are being carried out by medical professionals of KNPD. This is a more specialised service which is being given in a shorter time. Another advantage of this procedure is that those who apply simultaneously for this service and the Blue Sticker are having one medical examination.

5. Exemption from Road Licence Payment

5.1 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 2007 can be seen in Table 13.

EXEMPTION FROM ROAD LICENCE PAYMENT		
	2006	2007
New applications	113	191
Recommended	86 (76%)	144 (75%)
Not eligible	14 (12%)	31 (16%)
Withdrawn Application	6 (5%)	15 (8%)
Pending applications	7 (6%)	1 (1%)

5.2 This service, similarly to that on registration tax exemption, saw a substantial increase in the number of applications over the previous year, 69%. This increase is probably due to the fact that these two services are being administered by KNPD and thus the procedure, since it is now simpler, is also faster.

6. Accessible Transport

This year KNPD continued working under the agreement reached last year 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.

06 ACCESS TO INFORMATION

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

1. In 1998, 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. The Commission has continued to offer its full support to this Foundation, partly by nominating two persons on the Foundation's administrative board.

1.2 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;
- Continuing to implement 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.

07 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 Learning Support Assistants (formerly known as facilitators) and Inclusion Coordinators. KNPD is helping in the preparation as well as the provision of this training.

Following discussions between KNPD, the Network for Inclusive and Special Education and ETC, a basic course was offered to people who wish to work as Learning Support Assistants. This means that when the Education Division will have the need to employ staff even on a casual basis, there will be people who are trained, at least in a basic way, for this work.

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 a member of 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 Learning Support Assistant. 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 working group which had the task of making recommendations to the Ministry. This group completed its report and its recommendations and presented them to the Ministry of Education.

Since several months passed without any progress being made, KNPD lodged a judicial protest, which, however, was not answered. Therefore, KNPD had to institute proceedings against the Ministry of Education. This case is already being heard by Mrs Justice Lofaro.

4. MCAST

KNPD continued to work to ensure that MCAST offers equal opportunities to persons with disability both by offering the necessary support for these students to follow regular courses at the College as well as by offering specific courses for persons with disability, especially with intellectual impairment.

Unfortunately, this year, KNPD received various complaints about the fact that students with disability were not accepted to follow regular MCAST courses, including IT Courses, because the necessary support for the students was not available. Moreover, the Pathways course, which was aimed at students with intellectual impairment, was suspended. Following discussions between KNPD, MCAST and the Ministry of Education, a number of students with disability were offered the necessary support to follow the courses they chose while Pathways was re-introduced.

KNPD is going to keep on working to ensure that this educational institution offers real equal opportunities to students with disability.

5. University

KNPD remained in close contact with the University Authorities to ensure that the University students and authorities are aware of issues related to persons with disability. This communication could occur in direct ways since Mr Joe Camilleri, chairperson of KNPD, is a member of the senate of the University.

As we reported last year, the University of Malta reorganised what was formerly the Special Needs Committee into ACCESS: Disability Support Committee (ADSC). This Committee is headed by the Pro-Rector, Dr Marianne Lauri, and is both a Senate and a University Council Committee and can thus also discuss academic issues.

In order to carry out its work effectively, this Committee formed 3 sub-committees:

- a committee on physical access at the University headed by Dr Marie Alexander;
- a committee on special arrangement for access to University examination headed by Mr Benny Borg Bonello;
- a committee on the use of information in communication technology during examinations headed by Dr Paul Bartolo.

One of the first issues discussed by this Committee was that of the arrangements for access to University examinations, especially those of MATSEC. The sub-committee in charge of this issue drafted guidelines for these arrangements as well as an application form. These guidelines and forms were published in a book and presented to the general public, to schools, professionals, persons with disability and their families. This publication is also available from the University's website and that of KNPD. These arrangements were formulated through a collaborative effort with the Education Division and the Examinations Department.

Mr Joe Camilleri, chairperson of KNPD, represents KNPD on this Committee.

6. Pilot Project 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 Learning Support Assistants are provided with the necessary support to implement these programmes. This year, the HSBC Care for Children Fund with the support of KNPD, accepted to continue to sponsor this project for the next 3 years.

08 SERVICES FOR ADULTS WITH DISABILITY

1. Employment

1.1 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.

1.2 KNPD made various proposals aimed at increasing the opportunities of persons with disability in terms of employment. In the pre-budget document, the government explained that two alternatives were available: the enforcement of the quota law or giving incentives to employers and persons with disability. KNPD believes that both of these alternatives can be useful. In the Budget, the government decided to give further incentives to employers by exempting them from paying social security contributions for persons with disability in the first three years of their employment. This incentive is being given over and above the other incentives offered by ETC.

1.3 In 1996, KNPD, in agreement with all the entities involved, published the National Policy on Persons with Disability and Employment. KNPD felt that this policy needed to be updated and for this reason, last year, it initiated a process of consultation about the revision of this policy. As part of this, a consultation meeting was held and various suggestions were discussed. KNPD is going to continue working so as to, if possible, complete the process by next year.

2. Day Services

KNPD continued working on ensuring that Day Services for adults with disability have the necessary funds in order to afford an adequate managerial structure; on improving the service, mainly through training employees and hiring professionals; and on making these services accessible to anyone who needs them by removing the waiting list.

As it did in previous years, KNPD made this request in the discussions for the 2008 Budget. In his Budget speech, the Prime Minister promised that the request made by this sector for European Funds allocated to Malta are going to be considered favourably. In view of this, KNPD and ETC are giving their support to SAPPOR Agency in the presentation of a project called "ME2" to be financed by the European Social Fund. The applications for these funds are going to be issued in the first part of 2008. This project is aimed at giving work experience to a number of Day Service clients in view of some of them finding permanent employment.

09 RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

1. SAPPOR Agency

1.1 KNPD continued to give its full backing to SAPPOR Agency within the Foundation for Social Welfare Services. This Agency is responsible for the development of 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.

1.2 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 increase substantially the budget for this Agency in 2008. The Government increased the funds of this agency for it to open a small home in the community of Cospicua.

2. The Legal Framework

This year, KNPD continued working on the drafting of a law about 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. Unfortunately, the right legal formula in order to transform this bill into a law has not been found yet. KNPD believes that this legal framework is necessary for Malta to be in a position to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability.

3. Personal Assistance Scheme

3.1 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 professionals 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		
	2006	2007
New Applications	36	106
Recommended	32 (89%)	81 (76%)
Not eligible	2 (6%)	19 (18%)
Pending	2 (6%)	6 (6%)

3.2 There was a very substantial increase in the number of applications that KNPД received for this service. Indeed, there were almost three times as many applications as last year.

3.3 The government recognised the importance of this service and in the 2008 Budget it accepted the recommendations of KNPД and exempted the applicants from administrative expenses owed to ETC and credited these employees with their social security contributions. This means that persons with disability using this service are going to have fewer expenses.

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. KNPД 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 this Foundation.

5. Improvements in Homes of Persons with Disability

5.1 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 KNPД in the committee which examines these requests.

5.2 This year, the Housing Authority accepted the request of KNPД and improved the scheme whereby persons with disability can install a lift in their residence.

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. The Commission provided premises at the Ċentru Ħidma Soċjali in Santa Venera for the operation of this unit, and it also offered administrative assistance.

2. Subsidy on Postage for 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
- Arka Foundation
- Eden Foundation
- Equal Partners Foundation
- Fund for the Rehabilitation of the Physically Handicapped
- Respite Care Services Foundation
- The National Association of Parents of Persons with Disability
- Caritas Group Persons with Epilepsy
- Friends of Support Agency
- Commission for the Sick and Persons with Disability of the Catholic Action Movement
- Multiple Sclerosis - Malta

3. Work with Other Organisations

This year, KNPD worked closely with a number of non-governmental organisations in order to achieve 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
- Mental Health Association
- Malta Standards Authority
- Broadcasting Authority
- University Chaplaincy
- Gozo NGOs Association
- The Federation of Organisations for Persons with Disability
- Equal Partners Foundation

- Guide Dogs Foundation
- Newspapers
- General Workers Union
- Society of Parents of Persons with Disability
- Deaf People Association
- Institute of Maltese Journalists
- Radio Stations
- Television Stations
- National Euro Changeover Committee
- National Action Plan Against Poverty Committee
- World Arthritis Day Committee
- Commissioner for Children
- Family Commission
- The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality
- Pastoral Commission for Persons with Disability
- Valletta Local Council
- Maltese Council of Disabled Persons
- Media Consulta

11 RESEARCH AND TRAINING

1. Courses on Disability Issues

1.1 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 in relation 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 B. Ed	169
	Faculty of Education M. Ed	20
	M. Psy	4
	Faculty of Medicine	45
	Faculty of Laws	15
	M.A (Human Rights)	30
Ministry of Education	Social Work	37
	Institute of Health Care	75
	Heads and Assistant Heads	21
	Learning Support Assistants	60
Employment and Training Corporation	Institute of Tourism Studies	24
	Child Carers	31
Police Academy	Support Workers	67
		120
BOV		60
Gozo Channel		35
Dar tal-Providenza		15
Total		828

1.2 The number of participants in this training decreased considerably by about 31%. This follows the substantial increase of last year and thus this year's number is very similar to that of 2005.

2. Training for Persons with Disability and the course "Speak Out!"

For the second time, KNPD organised a two day residential course offering persons with disability training in how to give lectures on Disability Issues organised by KNPD. This course was attended by 15 participants with different disabilities. It was conducted by Mr Mark Harrison from the Empowerment and Development Agency of the United Kingdom. There was also the participation of Michelle Vigar from Outlook Co-op and Mr Joseph Camilleri, chairperson of KNPD.

This course was followed by the course “Speak Out!” which consists of a series of practical seminars on public speaking, writing skills and other skills needed to work on television and the radio. There were practical sessions in radio and television studios.

The participants who completed this course were given an attendance certificate by the Prime Minister, Dr Lawrence Gonzi, during a thanksgiving reception in Castille that KNPD offered during the Persons with Disability Week.

This training was funded by the European Union Community Action Plan to Combat Discrimination.

3. Training for Persons with Intellectual Disability

As part of the implementation of the Policy of Self-Advocacy for Persons with Intellectual Disability and the establishment by KNPD of the Permanent Group of Persons with Intellectual Disability, KNPD worked with the Sub-Committee “Grupp Flimkien Naslu” of the Maltese Council of Persons with Disability for the members of this sub-committee to go on a study visit to the offices of People First in London. This sub-committee consists of five persons with intellectual disability and three people who support them. People First is the United Kingdom National Organisation representing the interests of persons with intellectual disability and is headed by persons with intellectual disability with the necessary support. This visit occurred in March 2007 and KNPD was the co-ordinator of the funds which this sub-committee received from the European Union Leonardo Programme.

This visit was successful and included meetings with Mr. Bert Massie, chairperson of the United Kingdom Disability Rights Commission, Mr Dave Morris, primary consultant to the office of the Mayor of London and with the British All Party Parliamentary Group on Learning Disability.

4. 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 made a call for applications for training and research in the persons with disability sector. There were three requests and the board administering this programme decided as follows:

- A non-disabled person applied for financial assistance to continue her doctorate on the topic of Persons with Disability and Sexuality. Since this topic is not considered to be one of the priorities of PEKTUR and due to the limitations of the funds, this request could not be accepted.
- A non-disabled person applied for financial assistance to continue in her distance learning studies at a post-tertiary level with a foreign university. Her studies were in the disability sector, specifically a PGCE in Adults with Learning Disabilities who

have Significant and Complex Needs. Since support given to persons with challenging behaviour is one of the main priorities of PEKTUR, this student was given a grant of Lm600.

- A person without disability requested financial assistance to pursue her studies in human resource management at a tertiary level. Since this area is not one of the priorities of PEKTUR and due to limitations of funds, this request could not be accepted.

5. KNPD Research

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 was completed successfully during 2007 and was financed by the European Union Leonardo Programme and coordinated by the De Montfort University in Leicester, United Kingdom. The Marie Curie Association of Bulgaria and the Social Work Department of the University of Malta also took 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 by KNPD this year in relation to this project consisted of:

- Participation in meetings held in Greece and England in which the work done under this Programme was evaluated;
- Training to students who participated in the Moodle Programme in order for them to be able to access this project;
- Planning of a number of study units. 24 persons with disability planned this units with the support of 29 mentors. The mentors were university and MCAST students who had also been given the necessary training.

At the end of the course, these students and their mentors were given a certificate for their participation in the course. In this activity there were speeches by Mr Anthony Saliba, Vice-Principal of MCAST, Dr Charles Pace from the University of Malta and Mr Joseph Camilleri, chairperson of the Commission. Mr Joseph Stafrace, a student with disability, and Ms Joanne Agius, mentor, shared their experiences about the course with the audience. This activity was presented by Ms Mariquinia Micallef.

We are happy to note that two of the students who followed this course have started a university course. Moreover, the Department of Social Policy and Social Work of the University of Malta will continue this project with the necessary support of KNPD.

12 INFORMATION

1. Wenzu Dalli Resource Centre

1.1 One of the main ways in which KNPD presents information about disability is through the Wenzu Dalli Resource Centre. In 2006, there was the beginning of an initiative to make this place more accessible to everyone, including persons with disability. This process was completed this year with the inauguration of the new premises of the Centre, which was named after the very important activist and KNPD member, Wenzu Dalli. The premises were officially opened by Wenzu Dalli's sister, Ms Carmen Dalli and were blessed by Fr Martin Micallef.

During this activity, a mass was celebrated in commemoration of Mr Dalli. During the mass, several people spoke about their memories of Wenzu Dalli. These included Ms Carmen Dalli, Wenzu's sister; Joseph Camilleri, chairperson of KNPD; Vince Tonna, assistant director responsible for the Day Centre in which Wenzu used to work; Fr Martin Micallef, former chaplain of Ghaxaq; Michael Micallef, a colleague and a person with visual impairment; and Emmanuel Vassallo, Mayor of Ghaxaq. The activity was co-ordinated by Ms Marchita Mangiafico, president of the Federation of Organisations of Persons with Disability.

1.2 The services of the Wenzu Dalli Resource Centre were offered in 2007 as the Centre was open during office hours. This Centre is located in the offices of KNPD at the Ċentru Hidma Soċjali, Sta Venera. The resources that can be found in this Centre and the work which was done in 2007 are analysed in Table 16

	Borrowed	New	Total
Periodicals	97	89	250
Videos	12	0	443
Audio Cassettes	0	8	129
CDs	20	8	92
DVDs	11	12	22
Persons who used the Centre in 2007			235
Persons who registered with the Centre in 2007			80
Persons registered with the Centre			1,357

1.3 This year, the number of people who used this Centre was very similar to that of last year as there was a slight increase of 5%.

2. KNPD Publications

Another source of information for persons with disability and the general public are publications by KNPD. The majority of these are published in Maltese and English. In order for them to be 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. Most of the documents 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

2.1 New Publications

This year KNPD published the following publications:

- The Manual “Rights, not Charity”
 - Available in Maltese Large Font, English Large Font, audio, Easy-to-Read in both printed and audio formats, and in Sign Language on DVD;
- The Educational Package “Holoq”
 - In Maltese
- Benefits and Services for Persons with Disability
 - Easy-to-Read format in Maltese both printed and in audio format
- The May Indaqs Newsletter
 - In Maltese, English and audio
- A Special edition of Indaqs
 - In Maltese, English, Audio and Easy-to-Read Summary
- Factsheets about other services of KNPD
 - In Maltese, English, Audio and Easy-to-Read Format
- A reproduction of Access for All – Design Guidelines
 - In English
- A leaflet listing all the measures taken over the years that contribute to Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disability
 - In an Easy-to-Read Version in Maltese
- The Equal Opportunities Act Annual Report (6th edition 2006-2007)
 - In Maltese, English and audio
- The KNPD Annual Report for 2006
 - In Maltese, English and audio

The Manual “Rights, not Charity” was published through funds from the European Union and the Maltese Government that were allocated for the European Year for Equal Opportunities for All. The other publications, with the exception of the Annual Report and the March edition of Indaqs, were financed by funds from the European Union Community Programme to Combat Discrimination.

2.2 Services and Benefits for Persons with Disability

Since 1989, KNPD has been publishing an informative booklet listing all the benefits and services available in Malta for persons with disability and their families. In 2006, KNPD

prepared an easy-to-read draft version of this booklet, and following consultation with persons with intellectual disability, this publication was updated and published in an easy-to-read format both in print and in audio form.

2.3 Indaqs Newsletter

In 2007, KNPD published two issues of its newsletter, Indaqs (Equal), in May and December. 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 aim is to inform the readers about the work done by KNPD.

The December 2007 edition of Indaqs was a special edition commemorating the 20th anniversary of KNPD and the European Year for Equal Opportunities for All. This edition was presented during a courtesy visit that the members of the secretariat of KNPD made to His Excellency Dr E. Fenech Adami in which he was presented with a copy of this special edition.

This edition includes:

- The usual Indaqs, that is, detailed information about KNPD's work over the last six months;
- A message by the Chairperson;
- The work done by KNPD over the last 20 years;
- A list of all the members who have worked for KNPD;
- A list of all those who worked for the secretariat of KNPD;
- A list of publications by KNPD
- A list of projects of KNPD funded by the European Union;
- A copy of all the posters published by KNPD for the Persons with Disability Week;
- A copy of all the front pages of Indaqs;
- The activities organised by KNPD in 2007 to commemorate its 20th anniversary and the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All;
- A list of measures taken over the years which lead to equal opportunities for persons with disability.

Indaqs is also published in English, in Maltese audio format, and is available from the website of KNPD. An easy-to-read version was also prepared for the special edition of Indaqs and for the list of measures which contribute to equal opportunities. These can also be found on the KNPD website.

	Maltese	English	Easy-to-Read	Audio	Sign Language	Website		
						Malt	Eng	ETR
Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act	X	X		X		X	X	
Equal (Indaqs)	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Benefits and Services for Persons with Disability	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Manual: Rights, not Charity	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Access for All - Design Guidelines		X					X	
Holoq (Chains)	X					X		
The Book of Signs*	X	X				X	X	
Fact sheet: Services of the Commission	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
National Policy on Self Advocacy for Persons with Intellectual Disability	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Report on Self Advocacy for Persons with Intellectual Disability	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Seminar: Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disability: EU Action Plan	X	X		X		X	X	
Conference on the European Union Directive for Equal Treatment in Employment	X	X		X		X	X	
Booklet: Equal Opportunities Act	X			X		X		
Leaflet on Self Advocacy								X
Clients with Disability and You	X			X				
Traffic Code in Maltese Sign Language					X			

* A nominal fee is charged.

2.4 Fact Sheets about KNPD Services

KNPD published fact sheets about services offered by it. This year KNPD continued this series by publishing informative fact sheets in Maltese and English about four services which it offers indirectly. Thus, KNPD now has fact sheets about all the services it offers. These four services are:

- Blue Sticker;
- Refund on products for the specific use of persons with disability;
- Vehicle registration tax exemption;
- Road Licence payment exemption;

KNPD also published a leaflet which summarises this information in an Easy-to-Read Format.

2.5 In order to make its information as widely accessible as possible, KNPD is offering all of its 2007 publications, as well as some others, for free from the Secretariat of the Commission, as shown in Table 17.

2.6 The Website of KNPD

Another source of information is KNPD's website: www.knpd.org. This website is updated regularly and is completely accessible to everyone.

13 PUBLIC EDUCATION

1. Activities funded by the Programme to Combat Discrimination

One of the principal functions of KNPD is to raise positive awareness about issues related to persons with disability and their families in Maltese society through public education. This year, this function was given a wider scope as in 2007 KNPD celebrated its twentieth anniversary of its establishment in 1987. Moreover, 2007 was the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All. In view of all this, KNPD organised a wide range of activities, some of which are described in various parts of this report. The majority of these activities are reported in this section since they had an educational scope. Most of these activities were funded by the European Union Community Action Plan to Combat Discrimination. These were:

1.1 A Meeting with the Media

These activities were inaugurated with an activity organised for the media that had the aim of promoting these activities but also of encouraging the media to present persons with disability in a more positive attitude and to focus more on the obstacles that hinder them from participating fully in their community life. This activity, which was held in January 2007, was also addressed by the Prime Minister, Dr. Lawrence Gonzi, and Hon. Dr Alfred Sant, Leader of the Opposition.

1.2 National Conference, Back to the Future

Another awareness raising activity that was organised during the Persons with Disability Week was a National Conference with the theme “Back to the Future”. The main aim of this conference was to give an overview of the positive things which happened over the last 20 years and to explore what has to be done in the future for persons with disability to have equal opportunities and a better quality of life. Four papers were presented during this conference. These papers were about:

- Education by Ms Dorianne Callus;
- Work by Ms Mary Rose Attard;
- Health By Mr Gordon Cardona;
- Family Life by Ms Louisa Grech.

After every paper, the Ministers responsible for each of these sectors, that is, the Hon. Dr Louis Galea, the Hon. Dr Louis Deguara and the Hon. Dolores Cristina gave their reactions with a particular emphasis on what has to be done. After each paper there was also a short discussion.

The conference ended with the Hon. Marie Louise Coleiro-Preca, representing the Opposition, and the Hon. Dr Tonio Borg, Vice-Prime Minister, presenting their vision for the next few years about this sector.

During this conference, a video about the work of the Commission over the last twenty years was shown. The video is also interpreted in the Maltese Sign Language.

1.3 Conference on Gozo and Persons with Disability

In collaboration with the Ministry for Gozo, KNPD organised a regional conference, 'Equal: Good for Me, Good for You', in order to get more information about the situation of persons with disability and their families in Gozo and in order to identify the steps that have to be taken to consolidate what is good and to improve that which should be improved. During this conference, there were a number of presentations about some crucial issues and about persons with disability in Gozo. These included:

- Education by Chev Frank Gatt;
- Health by Dr Anthony Livori;
- Employment by Mr Marcel Bonnici;
- Day Services for Persons with Disability by Mr John Camilleri;
- Physical Access by Architect Walter Portelli;
- Access to Information by Ms Joanne Sultana;
- The Voluntary Sector by Ms Rose Attard;
- Entertainment by Dr Kevin Cutajar;
- The Church by His Excellency Mons Nikol Cauchi.

After the presentations, there were workshops which were chaired by persons with disability or their parents. The Hon. Giovanna Debono, Minister for Gozo, brought the conference to its end.

KNPD is working to place these speeches and discussions on the website of KNPD and on that of the Ministry of Gozo. Work has already started towards exploring and possibly implementing the suggestions made during these discussions.

1.4 The Persons with Disability Parliament

Once again, KNPD organised the Persons with Disability Parliament with the aim of raising the awareness of Maltese policy makers about this sector. This year, a number of persons with disability were invited to give their contribution about subjects of their choice. The people who participated were:

- Saviour Dimech, a parent who spoke about the need for Post-Secondary education for persons with disability;
- Dorianne Callus, a person with hearing impairment who discussed the need for accessible education and proper employment including the possibility of promotion;
- Tessa Anastasi, a parent who spoke about the issues faced by people with mental health problems and who suffer from ADHD;
- Michael Micallef, a person with visual impairment who emphasised the need for access to the use of computers and a speech synthesiser in Maltese;

- Mark Demartino, a parent who spoke about the development of day services for adults with disability;
- Marthese Deguara, a person with intellectual impairment who emphasised the need to respect persons with disability;
- Olaf Attard, a parent who pointed out the need to finance non-governmental organisations in order to voice the opinion of persons with disability;
- Francis Ripard who spoke about the importance of research and the spread of information;
- Sandra Borg, a parent who spoke about the right to information and communication;
- Gordon Cardona, a person with disability, who discussed the role of the media and persons with disability.

There were also speeches by the following members of parliament: the Hon. Dr Michael Axiaq, the Hon Dr Louis Galea, the Hon. George Pullicino and the Hon. Dr Zammit Dimech.

This parliament was chaired by Dr Anton Tabone, speaker of the House of Representatives, and was concluded with speeches by the Hon. Marie-Louise Coleiro-Preca and the Minister, the Hon. Dolores Cristina. The parliament was broadcast live on TVM and on 106.6 FM radio.

1.5 Presentation of the Educational Package, *Holoq*, in Gozo

In collaboration with the Education Division, KNPD organised a course over three half days for teachers with the aim of presenting the new version of the educational package, *Holoq* and how this can be used to raise students' awareness about children with various disabilities. This package consists of lessons about students with hearing impairment, with visual impairment, who use a wheelchair or who have Down syndrome. These are complemented with teachers' notes.

This course was attended by 19 participants. It was followed by a meeting for PSD teachers in Malta and one in Gozo. Copies of this educational package were sent to all state, church and independent schools around Malta and Gozo. An article about this package appeared in the education section of The Times.

1.6 Open Air Activities in Summer

KNPD organised two open-air activities in summer, one in Marsalforn, Gozo, and one in Marsascala, Malta. These activities consisted of dancing and singing by artists with and without disabilities and also an exhibition of Disney tunes. A number of short video messages about inclusion and the eradication of discrimination against persons with disability were shown together with a ten minute video about the work done by KNPD over the last twenty years. During these activities, KNPD distributed publicity material such as caps, biros, lenses and bookmarks with the logos of KNPD and the European Year for Equal Opportunities for All of the European Union Community Action

Programme to Combat Discrimination. KNPD also set up a stand distributing KNPD publications.

1.7 A Meeting about Persons with Disability and Different Religions

KNPD organised an interfaith meeting to bring together persons holding different faiths to pray and reflect on persons with disability and their families. The theme of this meeting was 'Unity in Diversity'. Nine leaders of different religions practiced in Malta took part in this ceremony. These were:

- The Hebrew Community represented by Rabbi Herbert Richer;
- The Indian Community represented by Mr. Tikamdas Bharwani;
- The Islamic Community represented by Mr. Mario Abdurrahman Farrugia-Borg;
- The Greek Catholic Church represented by Monsignor George Mifusd;
- The Catholic Church represented by Fr Charles Abela;
- The German Protestant Church represented by Pastor Herwig Nolte'
- The Baha'is Spiritual Assembly represented by Mr Emanuel Cassar; and
- The St Andrew's Scots Church represented by Rev David Morris.

During the ceremony, the Umanah family lighted a candle as a symbol of the light that must guide us to achieve equal opportunities for everyone. This ceremony was concluded with a speech by His Excellency Dr. Edward Fenech Adami, President of Malta.

During this activity, the song 'Together We Can Make It', sung by Mr Charles Borg with a musical arrangement by Philip Vella and accompanied by Cher and Sean Vella, was sung for the first time.

This activity was recorded and broadcast twice on Channel 22.

1.8 Commemoration of Deceased People who Worked for Equal Opportunities in Malta

On the 2nd November, All Soul's Day, KNPD commemorated deceased people who over the years worked for equal opportunities of everyone in Malta. In view of this activity, KNPD invited a number of governmental and non-governmental organisations to nominate relevant individuals. The following were the nominees:

Tanya Abela, Andrew, Azzopardi, Dennis Azzopardi, Mons Mikiel Azzopardi, Nene Azzopardi, Anthony Borg, Kan Joe Bugeja, Joe Burlò, Fr Joe Camilleri, Emanuel Carbonaro, Carmen Carbonaro, Fr Charles Caruana, John Cauchi, Joseph Dalli, Wenzu Dalli, Guzi Demanuele, Vitorin Demanuele, Diane Dingli, Paul Ellul, Dr Renè Eminyan, Josette Galea Curmi, Paul Galea Curmi, Mr Justice Wallace P. Gulia, Mari Lowell, Victor Lowell, Frank Anthony Mallia, Lady Margaret Mamo, Ughetta Manfredi Toja, Johnny Micallef, Moyra Mintoff, Mario Muscat, Paul Muscat, Connie Pace, Emanuel Pace, Lewis Portelli, Andrew Pisani, Gregorio Pisani, Mary Ripard, Carmelo Saliba, Carmen Schembri, Divinia Spiteri, Mario Spiteri, Paddy Stubbs, Sonia Tanti, Chev Emmanuel S. Tonna, Maria Tonna, Joseph Vassallo, Alfred Zammit Montebello.

These names were printed on a bookmark that was published in commemoration of this occasion.

The activity consisted of a solemn mass at St John Co-Cathedral that was concelebrated by Mons Philip Calleja in the absence of the Archbishop who was indisposed. The other concelebrants were the Chapter of the Co-Cathedral and other priests who work in this sector or who are relatives of those who were commemorated.

His Excellency Dr E Fenech Adami, President of Malta, Hon. Dolores Cristina, Minister of the Family and Social Solidarity, and Hon. Dr Louis Galea, Minister for Education, Youth and Employment, were present. There was also the active participation of various other people, especially relatives of the nominees. Mass was accompanied by the choir of the Co-Cathedral directed by Maestro Dione Buhagiar.

1.9 Thanksgiving Reception

Every year during the Persons with Disability Week, KNPD organises a reception to show its appreciation for the work carried out by numerous people, some even on a voluntary basis, during the year to help persons with disability and their families achieve a good quality of life. This year, the aim of the reception was extended to show appreciation to everyone who has worked for this aim during the twenty years since KNPD was set up.

Due to the significance of this year, this reception was held in the Auberge de Castille under the patrimony of the Hon. Dr Lawrence Gonzi, Prime Minister, and Mrs Catherine Gonzi.

1.10 Persons with Disability Week

Every year, KNPD organises the Persons with Disability Week with the aim of celebrating the International Persons with Disability Day which is commemorated every 3rd December. This Week is meant to raise positive awareness about this sector.

The slogan chosen for this Week is “Let’s Continue our Work” so that while looking back proudly at what has been achieved to improve the quality of life of persons with disability, we also remember that a lot still needs to be done. This slogan was the principal theme of:

- (a) A press release issued by KNPD for this Week and which can be found in another section of *Indaqs*;
- (b) The Ministerial message by the Hon. Dolores Cristina, Minister for the Family and Social Solidarity, and Mr Joseph M Camilleri, Chairperson of KNPD, which was broadcast by TVM on the International Day for Persons with Disability;
- (c) A message to all children to be read on this day that was sent to all the schools around Malta and Gozo;
- (d) A poster that was distributed around Malta and Gozo;

(e) Three billboards.

Moreover, KNPD organised a number of activities that are reported in other parts of this report.

1.11 Presentation of the Message for Children at St Benedict Secondary School

KNPD, together with the Commissioner for Children, released a message for the International Day for Persons with Disability with the theme, “Let’s Continue our Work”. This message was given to the students at St Benedict Secondary School by Mr Joe Camilleri, Chairman of KNPD, and Ms Carmen Zammit, Commissioner for Children. There was also a message by the Hon Dr. Louis Galea, Minister for Education. This symbolic ceremony was also attended by Ms Marilyn Sciortino, Principal of the College, and Ms Micheline Sciberras, Director General. The headmaster, Mr Joseph Micallef, presented the activity.

1.12 Schools and Youth Organisations

This year KNPD continued to offer the opportunity to schools and youth organisations to meet persons with disability or their parents. The work done in this sector is presented in Table 18:

Entity	Hours	Participants
Schools	108	3491
Youth Organisations	10	265
Total	118	3756

2 The Manual: Rights not Charity

On the occasion of the European Year for Equal Opportunities for All, the European Union and the Maltese Government allocated funds for activities to be held over this year. KNPD obtained funds to publish the manual, *Rights, not Charity*, that offers a series of guidelines on how to organise inclusive activities for persons with disability and guidelines to the media on how to portray this sector positively. The introduction also provides an explanation of the social model of disability on which KNPD’s policies are based.

This manual was presented in a public activity organised together with the Broadcasting Authority. Mr Joe Camilleri, chairperson of KNPD, presented this activity. After an explanation of the content of this manual, a panel of speakers expressed their opinions about the matter. This panel consisted of: Mr Mario Axiaq, from the Broadcasting Authority; Fr Joe Borg, a media consultant for the Ministry of Tourism; Rev. Prof. Saviour Chircop, Director of the Centre for Communication Technology at the University of Malta; and Mr Malcom Naudi, president of the Institute of Journalists. The discussion

was concluded with a speech by the Hon. Clyde Puli, chairperson of the Social Committee of the House of Representatives.

Significantly, this activity was held on the 10th of December, which is also the International Day for Human Rights.

This manual was written after comprehensive consultation with all those working in this sector. Two consultative meetings were held, one in Malta and one in Gozo. The organisations which work in this sector were asked to answer a questionnaire about this manual. KNPD examined all the opinions which were forwarded to it and many of these were included in the final version of the manual.

This manual can be obtained for free from the offices of KNPD in the following formats:

- Printed in Maltese in a large font;
- Printed in English in a large font;
- In an audio format in Maltese on cassette or CD;
- In an Easy-to-Read printed or audio format;
- In Maltese Sign Language on DVD.

The versions in Maltese, English and Easy-to-Read can be obtained from KNPD's website.

3. Planting of Trees

KNPD invited the four ministers who were, or still are, responsible for KNPD to plant a tree in Romeo Romano Garden, which is very close to the offices of KNPD. The aim of this simple but significant activity was to thank these politicians for their work in this sector as well as to show how the persons with disability sector can contribute to the well-being of the community and to the environment.

The Ministers who planted these trees were:

- The Hon. Dr Louis Galea who inaugurated the Commission;
- The Hon. Prof. Edwin Grech who continued this work;
- The Hon. Dr Lawrence Gonzi who was the Minister in charge of KNPD as well as its chairperson; and
- The Hon. Dolores Cristina who is the Minister currently in charge.

Another tree was planted by Mr Joseph Camilleri, the current chairperson, and Mr Fred Bezzina, the Executive Director. Later, KNPD planted another 20 trees, one for each of its years.

5. □ Official Visit by the Archbishop of Malta

After the election of Mons. Paul Cremona as Archbishop of Malta, KNPD invited him to come on an official visit to meet the secretariat and the members of KNPD. Mons. Cremona immediately accepted this invitation.

During this visit, Marthese Deguara, Charles Borg, Rita Vella, Kevin Vella, and Louisa Grech shared their experiences with the Archbishop focusing mainly on spiritual and religious matters. At the end of this activity, Ms Angela Agius presented a gift to the Archbishop in the name of KNPD. The gift was a mouth painting by Mr Francis Camilleri, a person with disability.

This visit was followed by a meeting between the Archbishop and a delegation of KNPD in which a number of pending issues and practical ways of collaborating were discussed. This communication is being followed up by continuous contact between the two sides.

5.□ Other Educational Activities Organised with Other Entities

5.1 Conference on ‘Equality and Disability: Towards the Future’

KNPD, in collaboration with The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality, organised a seminar, ‘Equality and Disability: Towards the Future’, as part of the European Union project EQUAL. The main aim of this Conference was to focus on the double discrimination which is often faced by women with disability due to both their gender and their disability. This seminar was conducted by Ms Sina Bugeja and Ms Marianne Debono. There were a number of speeches, including:

- Family Life by Ms Louisa Grech and Mr Philip Grech;
- Education for Life by Mr George Vella;
- Supported Living by Ms Rita Vella and Mr Kevin Vella;
- Employment and Independence by Ms Mariella Beck Venanzi and Mr Joseph Stafrace;
- Self Advocacy and Access to Information by Ms Marthese Deguara.

There were also a discussion and interventions made by various Government and Civil Society entities.

5.2 Employment and Persons with Disability – EURES Forum

The European Employment Services (EURES) in Malta organised a forum together with KNPD with the aim of promoting mobility among workers with disability. Mr Joe Camilleri, Chairman of KNPD, gave a speech in the Forum about the last twenty years of work of KNPD especially in the employment sector. Mr Raphael Scerri, Manager of EURES in Malta, explained the services offered by EURES. Mr Charles Cassar, Senior Manager of the Supported Employment Section within the ETC, explained what ETC does to increase the opportunities for employment for persons with disability. An employer from Norway who employs persons with disability and a similar one from Malta also spoke in this Forum. The Chief Executive Officer of ETC, Dr Sue Vella, concluded the Forum by emphasising that ETC was committed to continue its work in order to improve the opportunities for training and employment for persons with disability.

5.3 Activity for the Equal Opportunities of Youths

The Youth Section within the Ministry of Education organised an activity with the theme, “Everyone is Equal, Everyone is Different” to commemorate the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All. The Section collaborated with KNPD to ensure that there was the full participation of youths with disability. This activity consisted of a living library including persons from various minorities whom the Youths could consult during a short trip around the Grand Harbour. KNPD offered the support needed for two persons with disability, Mr Gordon Cardona and Ms Mariella Beck, to participate in this activity and serve as live books. During this activity the youths could choose any human book they wanted and discuss with him or her any relevant issues. The human library also included a homosexual person and a Muslim.

14 INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. Work with the European Union

1.1 The European Year of Equal Opportunities for All

This Year was celebrated on a European level with two activities: one on its beginning and one on its ending. The first activity took place in Berlin since Germany held the European Union Presidency at the time. Malta was represented by a delegation headed by Hon Dolores Cristina, Minister of the Family and Social Solidarity. KNPD was represented by its Chairperson, Mr Joseph Camilleri. This ceremony also included an unofficial meeting of the Ministers about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability.

The Closing Conference was organised in Lisbon by the Portuguese European Union Presidency. Malta was represented by a delegation led by Mr Joseph Ebejer, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of the Family and Social Solidarity. Mr. Joseph Camilleri, Chairperson, and Mr. Fred Bezzina, Executive Director of KNPD, were part of this delegation.

The European Union distributed advertising material with the logo of this Year. The material included umbrellas, pens, erasers, pen drives, T-shirts, etc. KNPD distributed the material that it received.

2. High Level Group on Disability

The European Union has a group of high officials on the persons with disability sector in every Member State of the Union. The aims of this Group are to keep Member States informed about the work being done by the Union in this sector and to share among each other and with other officials of the directorate information about initiatives taken in this sector on a national level. Malta is represented in this Group by KNPD. This year this group met three times in Brussels and Malta was represented by Mr. Fred Bezzina, Executive Director of KNPD, in two meetings and by Mrs Anne-Marie Callus in another meeting. The most important issues discussed were:

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability and the Non-Obligatory Protocol;
- The Structural Funds for the period between 2007 and 2013;
- Mainstreaming in the new streamlined European social protection and inclusion processes;
- Social services of general interest offered to persons with disability;
- The European Union Action Plan about Disability for 2008-2009 with the main theme chosen being accessibility;
- Flexicurity;

- Exemption from regulations about state assistance with respect to the employment of persons with disability;
- The Blue Sticker;
- Awarding Public Contracts with respect to sheltered employment;
- Transport legislation of the European Union;
- The Progress programme.

3. Academic Network of Disability Experts

KNPD was invited, through its Chairperson, Mr Camilleri, to a meeting held with the intention of establishing an Academic Network of Disability Experts financed by funds from the European Union. This initiative brings together experts from different countries in the European Union. The meeting was co-ordinated by Prof. Mark Priestley from the Centre for Disability studies of the University of Leeds.

A small group of academics and activists from France, Germany, Sweden, Malta, Holland, the United Kingdom and Hungary participated in the meeting. The aim was to establish a pan-European centre for disability studies. An important aspect of this network is that of giving a voice to persons with disability with respect to decision making and the research conducted.

As a result of this meeting, KNPD was invited to enter in a partnership with the University of Leeds and other European Union organisations in order to apply for funds towards the establishment of the Academic Network of Disability Experts. The Commission accepted this invitation and the University of Leeds, acting as co-ordinator of this project, filed the application for the funds.

4. European Disability Forum

KNPD is an observing member of the European Disability Forum (EDF) that is the principal organisation within the European Union in this sector. Through this forum, KNPD keeps up-to-date with the latest European Developments in this sector.

5. European Conferences

KNPD receives various invitations to participate in seminars, conferences and other activities abroad, mainly in connection with the European Union. KNPD considers whether to accept these invitations on the basis of its financial means and their importance. KNPD believes that persons with disability and their organisations should be up-to-date with what is happening in this sector both in Malta and abroad. This year, KNPD participated in two conferences:

- Ms Mary Rose Attard, Mr John Camilleri and Ms Ann Marie Brincat participated in the conference organised by the European Union Commission for the International Day of Persons with Disability at the beginning of December. The theme of this year's conference was *Active Players in the Internal Market*;

- Mr Gordon Cardona from KNPD, Ms Mary Rose Meli from the Outlook Cooperative, Ms Fiorella Pace from RTK and Mr Neville Cardona attended a conference about the media and persons with disability called: *Hidden Audience: 50,000,000 Reasons to Think Outside the Box.*

Highlights of Major Activities for 2007

Policy and Legislation

KNPD:

- following the signing in March of the **United Nations Convention** (and optional protocol) on the Rights of Persons with Disability, KNPD translated both documents into Maltese and a formal presentation to H.E. Dr. E. Fenech Adami, President of Malta and to the Hon. D. Cristina, Minister for the Family and Social Solidarity.
- concluded work on amending Act I of 2000, the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act.
- prepared draft legislation concerning Guardianship.
- put forward a variety of proposals for inclusion in the 2008 National Budget, most of which were adopted.
- presented its proposals to all political parties for inclusion in the electoral programmes they would be drawing up in preparation for the forthcoming Maltese General Election.
- initiated the process for updating its National Policy on Employment and Persons with Disability.

Education and Employment

KNPD:

- maintained its support for the implementation of the Spiteri Report.
- collaborated with the Ministry of Education and MCAST in order to ensure the re-introduction of MCAST's PATHWAY programme.
- worked closely with the University of Malta towards the setting up of the ACCESS: Disability Support Committee at the university and also for the drafting of the University of Malta's key document: The University of Malta and Students with Disability (a document which includes examination arrangements for disabled students).
- kept up its involvement in the Maria Assunta Secondary School pilot project.
- noted that government had accepted its proposal to increase incentives to employers who employ persons with disability.

Physical Access

KNPD:

- prepared an accessibility audit on 10 local hotels.
- transferred funds allocated to providing an individualised transport service
- for persons with disability to the Foundation for Respite Services (Dar il-Kaptan).

Services for Persons with Disability

The following are the various services which KNPD provided for disabled persons and their families during 2007:

- the **Special Identity Card** – a total of 420 clients, a reduction of 10% from last year.
- the **Assistive Apparatus Fund** – 234 beneficiaries, an increase of 1% from 2006.
- the **Wenzu Dalli Resource Centre** – 235 clients, an increase of 5% from last year.
- **Disability Issues courses** – 828 participants, a decrease of 31% from 2006.
- The **PEKTUR** programme - 3 applicants.

KNPD made recommendations to various departments in connection with the following benefits:

- **Access for All vetting** regarding development applications made with the Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA) - 659 applications, a decrease of 7% over last year.
- **Clearance/Compliance Certificate (MEPA)** - 57 buildings, a reduction of 2% on 2006. 95% of all applications vetted were accessible.
- **Exemption from import duty on modified vehicles** on behalf of the Ministry of Finance - 301 beneficiaries, an increase of 89% on last year.
- **Exemption from payment of Road Tax**, on behalf of the Licensing Department – 191 exemptions, an increase of 69% on 2007.
- The **Blue Badge** (known locally as the Blue Sticker), on behalf of the Commissioner of Police – 982 applications, an increase of 21%. KNPD wrote to 722 families of disabled Blue Badge holders who died. 571, or 79% returned the Blue Badge.
- **Blue Badge Appeals Board** – 6 appeals were lodged, none of which were upheld.
- **Personal Assistants' Work Permits**, on behalf of the Employment Training Corporation - 106 applications, an increase of 194% on last year.
- **Reserved Parking Review Board**, on behalf of the Malta Transport Authority - 58 requests for review, an increase of 194%. The majority of requests for review (60%) were not upheld.

During 2007, while KNPD could not sustain its service for persons with challenging behaviour, on the other hand it began carrying out professional assessments for the following services: the Blue Badge and the Blue Badge Appeals Board, Exemption from Import Duty on Modified Vehicles and the Exemption from Payment of Road Tax.

Public Awareness Activities

2007 was designated the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All, it also marked KNPD's 20th anniversary. In order to commemorate these important occasions KNPD organised a number of different public awareness activities, which included:

- **Disability Week**, occurring around the 3rd December (the International Day of Persons with Disability) which included posters, public announcements, adverts and a number of other activities*.

- **A meeting for all representatives of the local media** aimed at launching the Year and to create a greater awareness about disability issues*.
- The presentation of a manual entitled: **Rights, Not Charity**, consisting of guidelines aimed at assuring equal opportunities for all**.
- A national conference with the theme: **Back to the Future***.
- A conference focusing on the needs and aspirations of **persons with disability in Gozo***.
- A conference on: **Equality and Disability - Future Concerns**.
- The official opening of the **Wenzu Dalli Resource Centre***.
- The **Disabled People's Parliament** the proceedings of which were broadcast live on national television by PBS Ltd*.
- A EURES Forum, organised together with ETC, focusing on **Employment and Persons with Disability**.
- A course and presentation to all schools in Malta and Gozo about KNPD's education pack: **Holoq*** .
- **Awareness activities** held in various schools which involved 3,756 pupils*.
- **An official visit** to KNPD by His Grace the Archbishop Mgr. Paul Cremona.
- Open air **cultural activities** organized in summer, one held in Marsalforn Gozo and the other one in Marsascula, Malta*.
- An **interfaith meeting** focusing on persons with disability and spirituality*.
- A **remembrance service** held in honour of deceased activists who worked to ensure equal opportunities for all, especially persons with disability in Malta and Gozo*.
- The presentation of a **Message for Maltese Schoolchildren** to pupils attending St. Benedict School in Kirkop.
- A **tree planting ceremony** by the four cabinet ministers who were responsible for KNPD in the last 20 years.
- A **sea tour** aimed at promoting equal opportunities for all among young people.
- A **Thanksgiving Reception***.

* *Financed through the European Union's Community Programme to Combat Discrimination.*

** *Financed through EU funds dedicated to the European Year of Equal Opportunities.*

Publications

During 2007, KNPD issued the following publications:

- **Rights Not Charity** Manual – versions prepared in Maltese and English, in large print in both Maltese and English, in audio, electronic and easy-to-read formats and in Maltese Sign Language (on DVD)*.
- The educational pack **Holoq** – in Maltese**.
- **Services and Benefits for Persons with Disability** – produced in Maltese and in audio and easy-to-read versions**.
- The May edition of KNPD's official newsletter **INDAQS** (equal) – produced in Maltese and English and also in audio format.
- A special anniversary edition of the newsletter **INDAQS** – produced in Maltese, English, in audio and an abridged version in easy-to-read format**.

- **Fact sheets** about various KNPD services - produced in Maltese, English and in audio and easy-to-read versions**.
- A reprint of the booklet **Access for All - Design Guidelines** – produced in English**.
- A leaflet listing the **milestone measures** taken over the years to ensure equal opportunities for persons with disability – produced in an easy-to-read Maltese version**.
- The 6th Edition of KNPD's **Equal Opportunities Compliance Unit's Annual Report** (2006-2007) – produced in Maltese, English and on audio.
- **KNPD's Annual Report** (2006) - produced in Maltese, English and on audio.

** Financed through EU funds dedicated to the European Year of Equal of Opportunities for All.*

*** Financed through the European Union's Community Programme to Combat Discrimination.*

Research and Training

- A course for disability activists entitled: **Speak Out!** which included a residential weekend component.
- Financial support given to a group of persons with intellectual impairment making it possible for them to visit **People First (UK)**.
- The **Access to Professional Training** project was concluded. This project was carried in collaboration with the De Monfort University (UK). The course aimed at giving disabled people some exposure to higher education, particularly in the social work field.

International Endeavours

- KNPD maintained its representation on the European Union's **High Level Group** on Persons with Disability.
- Senior officials from KNPD attended the opening (in Berlin) and closing (in Lisbon) ceremonies of the **European Union's Year of Equal Opportunities for All**.
- Through the participation of KNPD Chairman, Joe Camilleri, Malta was included in the preparations for the setting up of an **Academic Network of Experts on Disability**, an initiative spearheaded by the University of Leeds' Centre for Disability Studies.

Other Activities

KNPD

- Applied for EU Regional Funds in order to develop a **Centre for Independent Living in Malta**.
- Together with the local trade union, UHM, a third **Collective Agreement** covering KNPD secretariat employees was concluded and signed.
- Provided financial support by subsidising the postage expenses of 11 **local NGOs** working in the disability secretary.

APPENDIX

STATISTICS FROM THE NATIONAL COMMISSION PERSONS WITH DISABILITY NATIONAL REGISTRY

TABLE 19: STATISTICS ACCORDING TO AGE AND GENDER						
Age	Women	Men	Total	%		Difference
				2007	2006	
0-4	32	56	88	0.86	0.98	-0.12
5-9	90	156	246	2.39	2.55	-0.16
10-14	144	209	353	3.43	3.43	0.00
15-19	136	199	335	3.26	3.36	-0.10
20-24	140	205	345	3.35	3.68	-0.33
25-29	174	249	423	4.11	4.17	-0.06
30-34	158	236	394	3.83	3.85	-0.02
35-39	175	216	391	3.80	3.77	0.03
40-44	171	225	396	3.85	4.14	-0.29
45-49	246	345	591	5.74	6.03	-0.29
50-54	247	396	643	6.25	6.35	-0.10
55-59	350	452	802	7.79	7.74	0.05
60-64	338	505	843	8.29	7.44	0.75
65-69	321	452	773	7.51	7.53	-0.02
70-74	441	427	868	8.43	8.39	0.04
75-79	498	415	913	8.87	8.79	0.08
80-84	490	391	881	8.56	10.05	-1.49
>85	555	393	948	9.21	7.17	2.04
Unknown			58	0.56	0.57	-0.01
Total	4706	5527	10291			

Graph 1 | Statistics According to Age

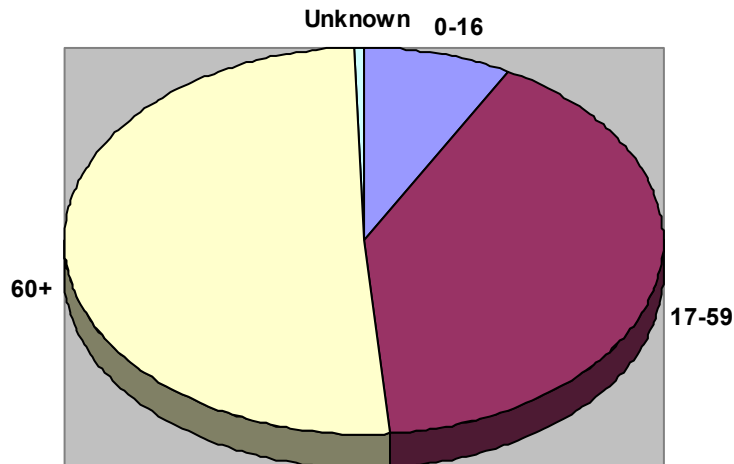


TABLE 20: STATISTICS ACCORDING TO AGE OVER THE YEARS									
	0-16		17-59		60+		Unspecified		Total
Year	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
1994	815	24.5	1839	55.2	651	19.5	25	0.7	3330
1999	1089	17.2	2961	46.7	2286	36.1	4	-	6340
2003	1260	16.6	3388	44.5	2962	38.9	0	-	7610
2005	764	8.4	3854	42.5	4388	48.4	57	0.6	9063
2006	807	8.4	4030	41.7	4771	49.4	55	0.6	9663
2007	819	8.0	4188	40.7	5227	50.8	57	0.6	10291

Graph 2 | Statistics According to Age Over the Years

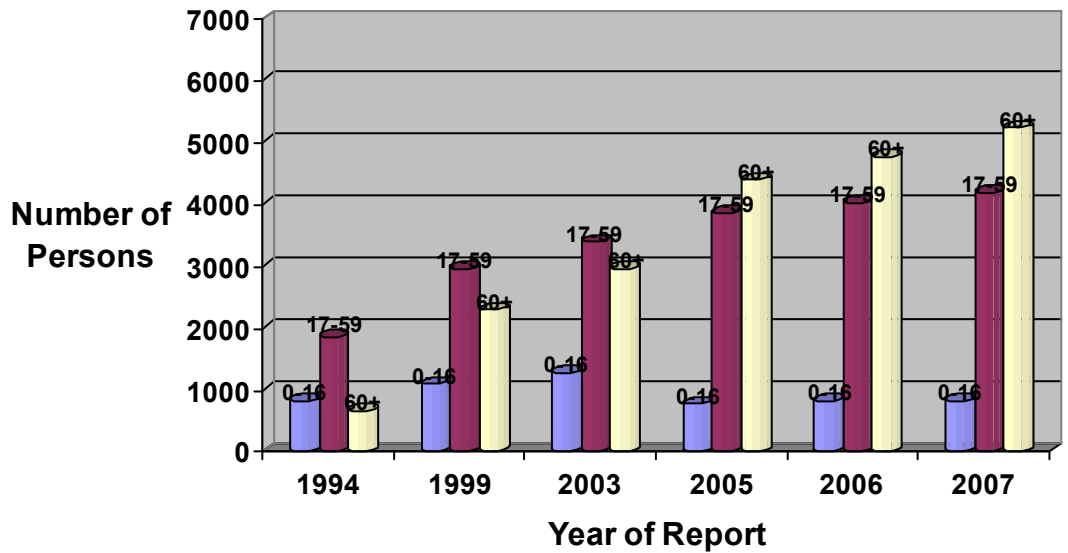


TABLE 21: STATISTICS ACCORDING TO IMPAIRMENT

	Total				Total			
	2007	2006	2005	2003	2007	2006	2005	2003
Physical	6556	5953	5338	3819	63.71	61.61	58.98	50.18
Intellectual	2052	1964	1895	1314	19.94	20.32	20.91	17.27
Psychological	1054	946	849	493	10.24	9.29	9.37	6.48
Visual	1159	1129	1127	757	11.26	11.68	12.44	9.95
Hearing	1062	1025	986	636	10.32	10.61	10.88	8.36
More than 1	2022	1881	1767	1166	19.65	19.47	19.50	15.32
Unspecified	1279	1383	1484	2025	12.43	14.31	16.37	26.61

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

Graph 3 | Statistics According to Impairment

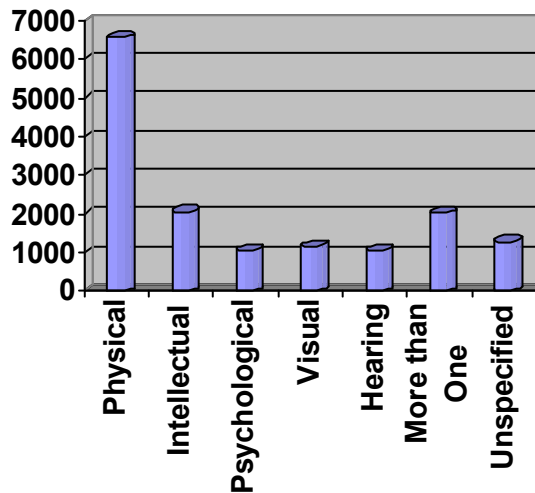


TABLE 22: STATISTICS ACCORDING TO IMPAIRMENT AND AGE (PER 5 YEARS)

Age	Physical	%	Psychological	%	Intellectual	%	Hearing	%	Visual	%	More than One	%
0-4	41	0.63	21	2.01	57	2.79	7	0.66	3	0.26	41	2.03
5-9	96	1.47	47	4.49	120	5.87	27	2.56	17	1.47	64	3.17
10-14	135	2.06	63	6.02	182	8.91	38	3.60	29	2.52	94	4.66
15-19	150	2.29	65	6.21	161	7.88	39	3.69	24	2.08	90	4.46
20-24	147	2.24	45	4.30	158	7.73	47	4.45	32	2.78	82	4.07
25-29	177	2.70	55	5.25	168	8.22	46	4.36	41	3.56	83	4.12
30-34	174	2.66	58	5.54	151	7.39	39	3.69	45	3.90	84	4.17
34-39	192	2.93	48	4.58	139	6.80	37	3.50	37	3.21	72	3.57
40-44	210	3.21	57	5.44	106	5.19	39	3.69	38	3.30	84	4.17
45-49	334	5.10	73	6.97	139	6.80	58	5.49	64	5.55	110	5.46
50-54	393	6.00	89	8.50	106	5.19	54	5.11	70	6.07	111	5.51
55-59	559	8.53	102	9.74	136	6.66	66	6.25	82	7.11	152	7.54
60-64	621	9.48	69	6.59	89	4.36	66	6.25	106	9.19	131	6.50
65-69	600	9.16	45	4.30	55	2.69	45	4.26	74	6.42	90	4.46
70-74	684	10.44	48	4.58	71	3.48	82	7.77	88	7.63	134	6.65
75-79	736	11.24	49	4.68	56	2.74	84	7.95	111	9.63	161	7.99
80-84	686	10.47	44	4.20	66	3.23	123	11.65	129	11.19	187	9.28
85+	615	9.39	69	6.59	83	4.06	159	15.06	163	14.14	246	12.20
Total	6550	100	1047	100	2043	100	1056	100	1153	100	2016	100

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

**TABLE 23:
STATISTICS ACCORDING TO IMPAIRMENT AND AGE (Children, Adults and Elderly)**

Age	Physical	%	Psychological	%	Intellectual	%	Hearing	%	Visual	%	More than One	%
	0-16	326	4.98	152	14.52	417	20.41	90	8.52	53	4.60	229
17-59	2282	34.84	571	54.54	1206	59.03	407	38.54	429	37.21	838	41.57
60+	3942	60.18	324	30.95	420	20.56	559	52.94	671	58.20	949	47.07
Total	6550	100	1047	100	2043	100	1056	100	1153	100	2016	100

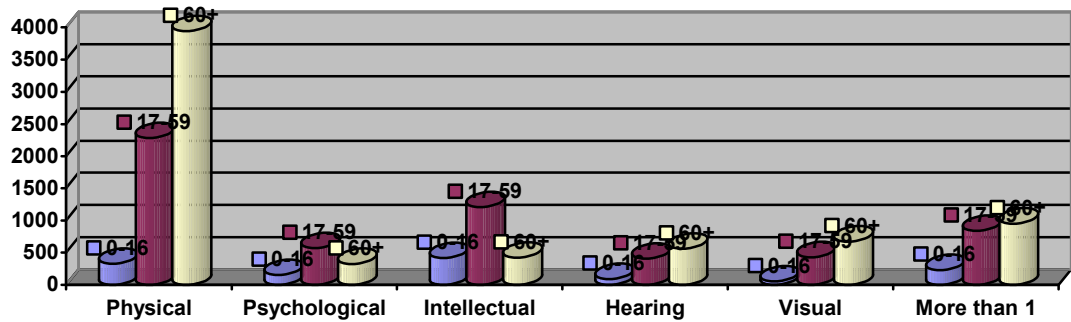


TABLE 24: PREVALENCE OF DISABILITY IN RELATION TO POPULATION

Year	Prevalence (%)
1994	0.9
1999	1.6
2003	1.9
2005	2.3
2006	2.4
2007	2.5

TABLE 25: STATISTICS ACCORDING TO LOCALITY			
ATTARD	184	MUNXAR	20
BALZAN	123	NADUR	98
BIRGU	93	NAXXAR	220
BIRKIRKARA	571	PAOLA	294
BIRZEBBUGA	192	PEMBROKE	49
BORMLA	186	PIETA`	117
DINGLI	57	QALA	44
FGURA	272	QORMI	467
FLORIANA	101	QRENDI	63
FONTANA	26	RABAT	419
GHAJNSIELEM	56	SAFI	39
GHARB	37	ST JULIANS	224
GHARGHUR	42	SAN GWANN	242
GHASRI	11	SAN LAWRENZ	18
GHAXAQ	80	ST PAUL`S BAY	324
GUDJA	48	SANNAT	39
GZIRA	194	SIGGIEWI	252
HAMRUN	373	SLIEMA	508
IKLIN	34	SANTA LUCIJA	86
ISLA	82	SANTA VENERA	208
KALKARA	60	SWIEQI	122
KERCEM	31	TA` XBIEX	46
KIRKOP	47	TARXIEN	206
LIJA	63	VALLETTA	249
LUQA	122	VICTORIA (GOZO)	167
MARSA	226	XAGHRA	77
MARSASCALA	184	XEWKIJA	70
MARSAXLOKK	68	XGHIRA	2
MDINA	11	ZABBAR	337
MELLIEHA	187	ZEBBUG	224
MGARR	62	ZEBBUG (GOZO)	44
MOSTA	383	ZEJTUN	307
MQABBA	44	ZURRIEQ	194
MSIDA	175		
MTARFA	49		

