

Annual Report 2009

National Commission for Persons with Disability

COMMITMENT

KNPD commits itself to rendering Maltese society inclusive so that persons with disability can fulfil themselves as persons who enjoy a high quality of life by means of equal opportunities in all sections of society.

In order to implement this commitment, KNPD works for a society that eliminates all forms of direct or indirect discrimination against persons with disability or their families while providing them with the necessary help and support.

01 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Setting up of KNPD

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

On the 10th February 2000, KNPD was officially constituted according to Act 1 of the year 2000, the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act. This same law established the aims of KNPD. These aims are set out in Section V, Article 22 of the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act are to:

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

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

1.2. The Period of this Annual Report

This report covers the calendar year 2009 and is being drawn up according to Article 30 of the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act. This report does not include the work carried out by KNPD with respect to the implementation of the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act since a report about this was published separately in February 2009. A copy of this report may be obtained from the KNPD Secretariat and can also be downloaded from the KNPD website www.knpd.org.

1.3. KNPD Structure

The members of KNPD are appointed by the Prime Minister on the advice of the Minister for Social Policy for a two-year period. In 2009 a number of changes occurred within the board structure. Dr Marvic Sammut resigned and Dr Victoria Farrugia Sant'Angelo was appointed in her place to represent the Ministry for Health, the Elderly and Community Care. Ms Maria Natoli also resigned from the Local Councils Association. So far, nobody has been appointed to replace her. Additionally, Mr Fred Bezzina resigned from his position of KNPD's Executive Director in order to assume new responsibilities within the civil service. In the absence of a new director, he was Acting Director and Acting Secretary at KNPD from 1st October to 31st December 2009. At the end of 2009, KNPD was composed as shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1: COMPOSITION OF KNPD BOARD JANUARY – DECEMBER 2009	
Name	Status
Mr Joseph M. Camilleri ^(a)	Chairman
Ms Rita Borg ^(a)	Vice-Chairman
Mr George Borg	Ministry of Education, Youth and Employment
Dr Victoria Farrugia Sant'Angelo	Ministry of Social Policy
Mr Alfred Camilleri	Ministry of Finance
Ms Mary Rose Attard ^(a)	Ministry for Gozo
Vacant post	Local Councils Association
Dr Marie Alexander	University of Malta
Fr Martin Micallef	Archdiocese of Malta
Mr Olav Attard ^(a)	Voluntary Sector
Ms Tessa Anastasi ^(a)	Voluntary Sector
Mr Ronal Galea ^(a)	Voluntary Sector
Ms Marchita Mangiafico ^(a)	Voluntary Sector
Mr Joseph Stafrace ^(a)	Voluntary Sector
Mr Alfred Bezzina	Acting Secretary/Executive Director from October to December 2009

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

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

1.4 KNPD Meetings

During 2009, the KNPD board held 9 meetings and discussed the following subjects:

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability
- The Equal Opportunities Act
- The Test of Reasonableness Board
- The Special Schools Reform and the transition to Day Services
- Exam arrangements
- Guidelines for lifts
- The Policy on Persons with Disability and Employment
- Persons with Disability in Gozo
- The Special Identity Card
- The Foundation for Respite Care Services
- The National Budget
- The Persons with Disability Week
- The post of Executive Director
- KNPD projects funded by the EU

The KNPD also met with representatives of the Consultative Committee of Persons with Intellectual Disability.

1.5 The Consultative Committee

The composition of the Consultative Committee changed in 2009. A call for applications was issued in May for persons with intellectual disability to apply for membership. Due to the strong response (more than 30 people), the Committee was divided into three groups. The first of these is the Core Committee, which meets in order to plan the meetings scheduled with the other members. The Core Committee is composed of:

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

The other two groups are Group A and Group B of the Full Committee. These meet during alternate months, with the meeting being led by the Core Committee. During 2009, two other meetings were held for all Committee members.

These two meetings formed part of KNPD's consultative process regarding the Policy for Employment of Persons with Disability. The Committee also held meetings during which residential services for persons with disability were discussed, and a report written on the matter.

The Core Committee gave its full support in the production of the easy-to-read versions of the various publications issued by KNPD throughout the year 2009. These were a concise overview of KNPD's Annual Report, the two editions of *Indaqs* and the report on the Census research: *Il-Kwalita` tal-Ħajja tal-Persuni b'Diżabilita` -- naraw dak li hemm fiċ-Ċensiment tal-2005 (The Quality of Life of Persons with Disability – a look at the 2005 Census)*. These are available on the KNPD website.

1.6 The KNPD Secretariat

KNPD has a permanent secretariat that operates from the Ċentru Ħidma Soċjali, Istituto Vincenzo Bugeja in St Venera. At present, this secretariat has 22 members of staff: 16 full-timers, and 6 staff members who are working part-time or on reduced hours. Ten of these workers are disabled people. Apart from this, in order to be able to provide the best services possible, KNPD purchased the services of various professionals including lawyers, doctors, paramedics, accountants, architects and Maltese Sign Language interpreters.

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

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

In addition to Mr Alfred Bezzina's resignation from his post of Executive Director, 2009 also brought about staff changes within the Secretariat. With the help of funds received from the European Social Fund, KNPD employed Ms Lorraine Pleven as Project Administrator of Independent Living Services. Mr Svetlik Muscat's contract of work on the awareness-raising campaign funded by the Progress Programme throughout 2009 came to an end. Ms Lydia Papadopoulou resigned for personal reasons and Ms Nicolette Bugeja was employed.

1.7 2008 Annual Report

During a press conference in February 2009, KNPD presented a report of the work carried out in the previous year. This report, available in Maltese, English, easy-to-read (Maltese) and audio, is available from the KNPD Secretariat. The first three formats are also available on KNPD's website www.knpd.org.

02 ANTI-DISCRIMINATION INITIATIVES

2.1 Investigations of Complaints According to the Equal Opportunities Act

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

This is one of the most important aspects of the work carried out by KNPD. Therefore, it was decided that the relevant Annual Report be presented separately. Since the Act came into force on 1st October 2000, this annual report covers the period October to September of the following year. This report will be presented in February 2010. Copies of the report in Maltese and English can be obtained from the KNPD Secretariat or from the KNPD website www.knpd.org.

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

2.2 Vetting of MEPA Applications

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

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

Table 2 shows the work that KNPD has carried out during this year regarding vetting of MEPA development permits.

	2008		2009		Diff
	No	%	No	%	%
New applications	469		766		+39
Recommended with conditions	189	40	261	34	-6
Not recommended	199	42	361	47	+5
More information requested	55	12	144	19	+5
Pending	26		39		

This table shows a substantial increase of 39% in the number of applications that KNPD vetted in 2009, when compared to 2008. Despite this, there was a decrease in the amount of applications that were recommended by KNPD subject to certain conditions (6% less), and an increase of 5% in the amount of those that were not recommended and 5% increase in the applications about which KNPD required further information.

A substantial number of applications are vetted by KNPD more than once. An analysis of these applications can be found in Table 3.

TABLE 3: REPEATED VETTING OF APPLICATIONS

	Jan-Feb	Mar-Apr	May-Jun	Jul-Aug	Sep-Oct	Nov-Dec	Total	%
First time	41	56	55	53	66	73	344	45
Second time	32	44	41	31	43	58	249	32
Third time	18	16	16	13	34	24	121	16
More than 3 times	4	1	8	5	15	19	52	7
Total	95	117	120	102	158	174	766	100

Table 3 shows that more than half of the applications are being vetted by KNPD more than once, with 7% being vetted more than 3 times. This rate is higher than that for 2008. The percentage of applications increases throughout the year, especially because of applications that are vetted more than once. This results in a waste of time and resources for all parties concerned, especially in view of the fact that only 40% of applications are ultimately recommended anyway.

During this year, in the case of a small number of applications, KNPD was requested to also vet the building for MEPA to issue the Compliance Certificate. This work is presented in Table 4.

TABLE 5: VETTING OF BUILDINGS FOR CLEARANCE/ COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATE

	2008		2009		Diff.
	No	%	No	%	%
Applications	45		67		+32
Recommended with conditions	25	56	26	39	-17
Not recommended	14	31	40	60	+29
Pending	6	13	1	1	-12

This table shows that the number of buildings inspected by KNPD increased since 2008, but still remained low. The fact that only 39% were recommended (with conditions) is worrying, especially when one considers that this amounts to 17% less than 2008.

2.3 Local Councils Accessibility Scheme

Parliamentary Secretary for Local Councils Hon. Dr Chris Said launched a scheme through which local councils receive a maximum of €10,000 to render accessible its offices or other public areas in their locality. The applications required KNPD's approval prior to their submission.

2.4 Study Visit to the Equality and Human Rights Commission

KNPD received funds from the EU's Leonardo Programme to enable its staff working on the implementation of the Equal Opportunities Act to go on a study visit to the Equality and Human Rights Commission in the United Kingdom. The visit took place in September 2009. KNPD Chairman Mr Joseph M. Camilleri and lawyer Dr Daniela Mangion participated. The second visit is scheduled for 2010.

2.5 EU Directives and Regulations

Throughout 2009, KNPD contributed to the discussion regarding the European Commission's proposal of a Directive to implement the principle of equal treatment of people, irrespective of their religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation (known as the Anti-Discrimination Directive).

KNPD also submitted its comments on the European Parliament and the Council's proposal regarding the rights of passengers travelling at sea or on water, and for the amendments of the Regulations with regard to the cooperation of national authorities responsible for the enforcement of consumer protection laws.

03 POLICY MAKING

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

In order for KNPD to be able to fulfil its function better in terms of drawing up policies in the disability sector, and for general policies in our country to take due consideration of disabled people's issues, Maltese legislation states that KNPD should form part of the MCESD. This is the highest ranking policy making organ in Malta. Consequently, KNPD's contribution to this committee, through its chairman Mr Joseph M Camilleri, is very important. Throughout the year 2009, KNPD was always present for the meetings held by this committee as well as those organised by the Civil Society Sub-Committee.

3.2 National Register of Disabled Persons

During 2009, KNPD continued its work in adding to the National Register of Disabled Persons. Every person who applies for a KNPD service is entered in this Register which, up to December 2009, had 11,637 persons, an increase of 105 persons, or 1%, on last year's figures. A detailed analysis of the figures drawn out from the Register are found in this Report's Appendices.

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

3.3 United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons

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

Following the detailed report presented by the Inter-Ministerial Committee -- appointed by the Office of the Prime Minister -- to the Office of the Attorney General, among others, the latter presented its own proposals, which were accepted by the Committee. The report is currently being discussed by the authorities concerned.

3.4 The Guardianship Act

For these past years, KNPD has been working hard to implement the Guardianship Act or a similar legislation to protect the rights of persons with disability who cannot represent themselves. For this aim, meetings were held between KNPD and the Office of the Attorney General, as well as with the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Social Policy, Mr Frans Borg. We hope that progress in this regard is registered in the near future.

3.5 Consultation

The National Budget

As happens each year, KNPD made recommendations regarding the national budget. These recommendations are set out below:

- The need for more social awareness about persons with disability
- The need for stronger legislation and policies to safeguard persons with disability against discrimination
- The need for adequate services and professionals to ensure that persons with disability receive all the necessary support to help them lead an independent life.

The proposals were the following:

- The KNPD budget should continue to grow stronger to be in a better position to raise awareness about persons with disability;
- Organisations of persons with disability should be given the required support, including financial aid, in order to be able to represent persons with disability more effectively and to continue to spread awareness within the sector;
- The work of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on behalf of the Human Rights Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability should be finalised, so that Malta is then able to ratify the Convention and the Non-Obligatory Protocol;
- The Constitution should be amended in order to include a declaration that discrimination on grounds of disability goes against an individual's human rights;
- The Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act should be amended, primarily to render it compatible with EU Directives and the United Nations Convention;

- A Guardianship Act or similar legislation should be passed to ensure that all persons with disability are given all their civil rights and receive adequate support to do so;
- In light of the revision of the Policy on Persons with Disability and Employment, new employment schemes should be developed so that more persons with disability find work, and the ETC registration scheme for persons with disability is exercised;
- A thorough revision of the Child Development Assessment Unit must be carried out in order to lead it back to its primary aims and provide practical, comprehensive, comprehensible and opportune advice, and to implement individualised programmes catering for the needs of its clients;
- The Directorate for Educational Services should continue to implement its recommendations of the Spiteri Report to the full and within a reasonable time;
- The post-secondary and tertiary education sectors should provide the necessary support services to allow students with disability to pursue their studies after 16 years of age;
- MCAST should provide vocational courses lasting two years or longer for students with intellectual disability to prepare for adult life after 16 years of age;
- *Aġenzija Support* should be given the financial and human resources it requires to ensure that persons with disability and their families can avail of the full spectrum of community services that enable them to live as independently as possible, and to continue to provide small community residences for persons with disability;
- The disability pension should be gradually increased until it reaches at least the national minimum wage. The eligibility criteria should be similar to the ones for the invalidity pension scheme, that is, based on the level of severity of the disability.
- The national tourism website should be made accessible to all and include information regarding accessible locations and facilities in Malta;
- The Blue Flag beaches should be accessible to all, including persons with disability who use a wheelchair;
- All towns and villages should have at least one WC that is accessible to all, including persons with disability who make use of a wheelchair;
- Within a reasonable amount of time, public buses that are inaccessible should be replaced by kneeling buses, with a lifting device (in compliance with EU specifications on public buses utilised in urban environments) to render them accessible by all, including wheelchair users;
- Persons with disability who require individualised transport services should receive reasonably subsidised services;
- Persons with disability should be given the necessary advice, training and financial assistance to be able to drive as well as possible;
- The KNPD budget for the Special Needs Services should be increased substantially to be able to offer full subsidisation and eliminate the waiting list;

- KNPD should receive the required funds to allow it to manage the Centre for Independent Living efficiently and develop it to its maximum potential.

3.6 Work on Policy in the Education Sector

KNPD places a lot of importance on the education sector since it believes that the quality of life of disabled persons depends substantially on this sector. During 2009, KNPD carried out the following work in this regard:

Study Regarding the Purchase of Educational Services

KNPD collaborated with the Student Services Department in order to conduct a study regarding the purchasing of educational services from the Ministry of Education from non-governmental entities, in order to ensure that these services truly cater for the individual needs of students with disability.

The Statementing Appeals Process

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

MCAST

KNPD continued to collaborate with MCAST, one of the principal governmental entities in this sector, to ensure that disabled students have full access to vocational training and the necessary support for them to follow the courses that it offers, as well as developing courses that are aimed specifically at disabled people, where this is strictly necessary.

KNPD was represented in a committee which presented a report regarding the work required for MCAST to fulfil such aims. As a result, a Committee for Inclusive Education and the educational programme Pathway were set up. KNPD is represented on both committees. Ms Anne-Marie Callus, KNPD Secretariat Manager, is also a member of the MCAST Board of Governors.

The University of Malta

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

KNPD is also represented on the Access: Disability Support Committee and its sub-committees on physical access, examination arrangements (including MATSEC), and information technology.

Special Schools Reform

KNPD voiced its comments regarding the proposed reform for special schools. It is hoped that this reform serves as a catalyst to better prepare students with disability for an inclusive life within society in their adulthood.

16 + Steering Committee

There are various initiatives which provide students with disability of 16 and over with opportunities for post-secondary and tertiary education, vocational training and work experience. However there hasn't yet been a full coordination of the work carried out by such entities. For this reason, KNPD set up a Steering Committee 16+ which includes representatives from the Ministry of Education, the Student Services Department, MCAST, the University of Malta, *Aġenzija Support* and the Ministry for Gozo. This committee is meeting to discuss ways of coordinating the work and to identify sectors which require the development of new services or an improvement of the existent ones.

3.7 Work on Employment Policy

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

KNPD continued with its consultation process regarding the Policy on Persons with Disability and Employment. Apart from a series of individual meetings representatives of employers, unions and government entities, meetings were also held with NGO representatives and the Consultation Committee for Persons with Intellectual Disability. A meeting was also held in Gozo in this regard. The consultation process came to an end during the Week for Persons with Disability, the details of which will be given in Section 6.5 of this report. The document for

this policy will be published in 2010 with the aid of funds received through the EU's Progress Programme.

3.8 Work on Day Services Policy

The Day Services sector is linked to the Employment sector, and is in fact also included in the revision of KNPD's employment policy, as well as in the discussions currently being held within the Consulting Committee 16+. This sector falls under the responsibility of *Sapport* Agency, and in 2009 KNPD continues to work very closely with this Agency in order to ensure that this service is the best possible, especially for persons with disability who are unable to work, or who can only work for a number of hours per week or have sheltered employment. KNPD has long been requesting that the government ensure that these services have the necessary funding so that they can employ more professional personnel, and provide a service to all those persons who require it, thus putting an end to the waiting list. Persons with disability who make use of this service can truly continue to develop their skills and abilities while being included in society.

The funds received from the EU's Leonardo Programme enabled KNPD to proceed with the second study visit to the North Lanarkshire Social Services in the UK, in order to obtain further knowledge regarding the experience of good practices within the sector. This visit occurred in April 2009 and was attended by KNPD Secretariat Manager Anne-Marie Callus, *Aġenzija Sapport* Manager Agnes Bezzina, and parent Simone Borg Bartolo.

Following this second visit, discussions between KNPD and *Aġenzija Sapport* regarding how individualised and community-based day services could be developed in Malta. KNPD started working on a study together with *Aġenzija Sapport* to make a recommendation in this regard. This study is to be finalised in 2010.

KNPD is also a partner (along with ETC) in the ME2 project, for which *Aġenzija Sapport* is being funded by the European Social Fund. KNPD is fully contributing in the various meetings and activities being held in order for the project to be successfully implemented.

3.9 Work on Residential Services Policy

Aġenzija Sapport

Following KNPD's hard work towards the setting up of *Aġenzija Sapport*, it continued to lobby for this Agency to have the necessary funds to offer community services as well as residential services in small homes in the community. KNPD has always insisted that this Agency does not have sufficient funds and consequently it has a waiting list for both community and residential services.

For 2009, KNPD was represented by Ms Rita Vella on the agency's Service Allocation Committee, which vets requests for services from *Aġenzija Sapport*.

The Foundation for Respite Care Services

In 1991, KNPD joined forces with the National Society of Parents of Persons with Disability to set up the Foundation for Respite Care Services. The main function of this Foundation is to provide residential services to disabled people for a limited time or during an emergency, thereby providing respite to the family and allowing it to continue to support the disabled person at home. KNPD continued to give its full support to this Foundation by nominating three persons to serve as directors on the Foundation's management board. During 2009, these three persons were Ms Agnes Bezzina, Mr Alfred Bezzina, and Mr Marcel Pisani.

Improvements in Residences of Persons with Disability

The Housing Authority runs a scheme (Scheme L) through which it gives financial assistance to disabled people for them to make the necessary modifications in their residences so that these are adapted to their needs and disability. The manager of the Assistive Appartus Fund represents KNPD on the Authority's Scheme L committee which vets these requests.

3.10 Work on Information Technology Policy

In 1998, KNPD and the then government agency in the information technology sector, **MITA**, joined forces to set up the Foundation for Information Technology Accessibility (FITA), with the main aim of ensuring that disabled persons have full access in this sector. KNPD continued giving its full support to FITA, having placed KNPD representatives Mr Joseph M. Camilleri and Mr Joseph A. Gasan on its board.

3.11 Policy Work at a European Level

The High Level Group on Disability

Apart from its contribution towards the various disability-related documents issued by the EU (see Section 2.5 of this report), KNPD continued to represent Malta in meetings held regularly within the High Level Group on Disability in the EU. The aim of this Group is to coordinate the work of the European Union in this sector. It has now also been given the important duty of reporting to the Council of Ministers about the progress in the ratification and implementation of the UN Convention.

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

- The ratification and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;
- The Directive on Equal Treatment of persons regardless of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation;
- The EU's Progress Programme;
- The use of the Blue Sticker within the European Union;
- The EU's Action Plan on Disability

European Conference

KNPD participated in the conference organised by the European Commission, together with the European Disability Forum, on the 3rd December of each year – the European Day for Persons with Disability in Brussels. The theme of this year's conference was 'The Creation of Conditions for Independent Living'.

The participants discussed several aspects related to independent living, particularly the economic aspect, autonomy, community services and assistive technology.

The conference was addressed by representatives of the EU 2010 Spanish Presidency, a representative of the Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, the Belgian State Secretary for Social Affairs, and the European Forum of Disability Vice-President.

Throughout this conference, there were also persons with disability who shared their experiences regarding the importance of leading an independent life.

The Academic Network of European Disability Experts

In 2009, KNPD continued to carry out its work with ANED. This pan-European network was founded by the University of Leeds and is financed by the Progress Programme of the European Commission. Its aims are advising the European Commission and proposing the best policy and practice for the disability sector.

As part of its work with this network, KNPD updated the 2008 report on employment and also issued reports on inclusion and social protection.

Towards the end of each year, ANED invites expert representatives from all participating countries to an annual general meeting in Brussels. This meeting gives the network members the opportunity to evaluate ANED's progress and to discuss future action plans. As an annual meeting it also strengthens the network and encourages experts in the various countries to exchange ideas and research findings. KNPD is pleased that its reports were praised for their high standard in both content and form. For more information on ANED and to download the Maltese reports and those of other countries, visit the website www.disability-europe.net/en/home.

European Disability Forum

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

3.12 Policy Work with Other Entities

Part of KNPD's role, which is also required by the Equal Opportunities Act, is to keep in close contact with different entities, on both a national and an international level, to help in the drawing up of policies. These entities may be ones working in the disability sector or in other sectors, and belong to governmental or non-governmental sectors. Indeed, half of the KNPD members are representatives of the main Ministries, while the other half are those who, according to the Prime Minister, are best placed to represent the voluntary sector. Apart from this, KNPD works closely with other entities. During 2009, it worked with the following entities in particular:

- *Aġenzija Sapport*
- the Malta Standards Authority
- the Public Broadcasting Authority
- the University Chaplaincy
- the Community Chest Fund
- Dar tal-Providenza
- the Student Services Department
- the Federation of Non-Governmental Organisations in Gozo

- the Malta Guide Dogs Foundation
- the Maltese Biblical Society
- the National Parents' Society for Persons with Disability
- the National Deaf People's Association
- the 'For Diversity Against Discrimination' campaign
- the Chamber of Architects
- the Health Division Consultative Committee
- the I-iStrina Committee
- the Commissioner for Children
- the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality
- the Family Commission
- the Għaxaq Local Council
- the Maltese Council of Disabled Persons
- the Management and Personnel Office
- the Muscular Dystrophy Group
- the Jesuit Refugee Service
- the Malta Society of the Blind
- the Torball Society for the Blind
- the Office of the Ombudsman
- the Office of the Coordinator of the Disability Sector in Gozo
- the Faddiema Magħqudin Union
- newspapers and radio and television stations.

3.13 Research

Study about the National Census

In addition to the research carried out for ANED (as reported in Section 3.10), KNPD continued to work on the report on the research statistics on persons with disability gathered by the National Statistics Office during the 2005 National Census, which included a reference to disability. The report was presented during a public seminar held in November 2009, where the main findings were discussed. The latter revealed that there is a tendency for:

- persons with disability to be more disadvantaged than persons without disability;
- females with disability to be more disadvantaged than males with disability;
- older persons with disability to suffer more disadvantages than younger persons with disability;
- persons with intellectual disability experience greater disadvantages than persons with other forms of disability.

The report is available on the KNPD website www.knpd.org. Leaflets with the main findings have also been published in Maltese, English, audio (Maltese) and easy-to-read Maltese. The printed versions are all available from the KNPD website.

04. DIRECT SERVICES

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

4.1 The Special Identity Card

KNPD continued to issue the Special Identity Card to disabled persons, with the aim of helping them attain equal opportunities. Table 5 presents KNPD's work in this sector in 2009.

	2008	2009	Diff.
New applications	1,315	1,271	-3
Accepted applications	1,301	1,054	-19
Refused applications	14	45	+221
Renewed Special Identity Cards	592	547	-8
Returned Special Identity cards	922	808	-12
Total no. of persons who have this card	9,431	9,839	+4

This table shows that although the number of disabled persons who applied for the Special Identity Card in 2009 decreased since the previous year, the number of persons with disability registered with KNPD increased by 4%. The substantial increase in refused applications reflects the enforced application of criteria for the issue of the Special Identity Card. Throughout the year KNPD continued to reclaim the Special Identity Cards of deceased persons. The statistics related to this work are displayed in Table 6:

TABLE 6: RETURNED SPECIAL IDENTITY CARDS

	Returned		Affidavit		Report to Police Commissioner/ Legal Letter		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
2008	178		51		37		266	
2009	205	+15	60	+18	64	-42	329	+19

This table indicates that KNPD is succeeding in reclaiming the majority of these ID cards (64%). It also managed to collect 19% more than last year, although there was also an increase in the number and in the percentage of affidavits and letters sent through the lawyer or the Police Commissioner.

4.2 Assistive Apparatus Fund

During this year, the Assistive Apparatus Fund continued to provide financial assistance as well as advice about assistive apparatus that can enable disabled people to live a more independent life. The general statistical analysis for this service are shown in Table 7.

	2008	2009	Diff. %
New applications	327	286	-12
Persons who have benefitted	304	245	-19
Persons who did not qualify	15	7	-53
Pending applications	1	1	0
Persons who are on the waiting list	22	11	50
Returned apparatus that was given to other applicants	31	22	-29
Returned apparatus	36	11	69
Total sum of approved grants	€210,950	€177,577	-16
Average grant	€694	€725	+4

In 2009 there were fewer applications for this service than there were in 2008. On the other hand, there were fewer applicants who did not qualify or who were on the waiting list at the end of the year. In addition, the average grant was higher than that for 2008.

Table 8 shows an analysis of the applicants for this service according to their age.

Age	2008		2009	
	No.	%	No.	%
0-5	21	7	13	6
6-16	50	16	34	14
17-30	40	13	13	6
31-60	70	23	65	26
61+	123	40	116	48
Total	304	100	246	100

This table clearly shows that almost half (48%) of the persons with disability who are making use of this service are senior citizens. The table also shows that there was a decrease in percentage and number of persons with disability between the ages of 17 and 30 who make use of the service. The percentages for the other age groups remained more or less the same.

Statistical analysis, this time according to the apparatus that was purchased through this service, can be found in Table 9.

Apparatus	2008		2009	
	No.	%	No.	%
Wheelchairs and walking aids	114	32	96	31
Beds and seating apparatus	129	36	137	42
Personal hygiene	28	8	20	6
Communication aids	46	13	34	10
Lifting aids	32	9	34	10
Other apparatus	9	3	3	1
Total	358	100	324	100

This analysis shows that the percentages for 2008 and 2009 remained more or less the same, with a slight difference with regard to the purchasing of beds and seating apparatus.

4.3 Independent Living Centre

Work on the two projects linked to this centre, which are financed by the EU Structural Funds, made significant progress in 2009.

Due to the project financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), work on the construction of the Centre was begun. A billboard was put up close to the site. A call for tenders was also issued for the purchasing of equipment for the centre. Among these are adapted cars, a pressure mapping system, a driving simulator, wheelchairs and other assistive apparatus. The evaluation of this tender is still ongoing at the end of 2009.

There was also a call for tenders with regard to the project for the training of professionals in the correct use of the Centre's apparatus. The contract is expected to be issued at the beginning of 2010. This project is being financed by the European Social Fund (ESF).

4.4 Information for Disabled People

Indaqs (Equal)

KNPD publishes a biannual magazine *Indaqs (Equal)* with the aim of informing persons with disability, their families and those interested in the sector about KNPD's work and about developments in the disability sector. In 2009, the magazine was issued in January and in June. The June edition included a supplement about the EU and persons with disability, which was financed by the EU's Progress Programme. This magazine is published in different formats (Maltese, English, audio and easy-to-read), which are available on the KNPD website.

Website

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

4.5 Assistance with Posting for Organisations

KNPD once more allocated a sum of money from its funds in order to give modest financial assistance to voluntary organisations who work in the disability sector. This assistance consists of KNPD paying for half the postage expenses of these organisations. In 2009, KNPD helped these organisations:

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

05 INDIRECT SERVICES

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

5.1 The Blue Badge

Persons who have a physical impairment that hinders their mobility are entitled to a Blue Badge issued by the Police Commissioner and valid in all countries of the European Union. The administrative work for this service is carried out by the KNPD Secretariat. The work carried out on this service by KNPD during this year is shown in Table 10.

TABLE 12 THE BLUE BADGE					
	2008		2009		
	No.	%	No.	%	Diff.
New applications	1565	+ 59	1064	-	32
Permanent Blue Badge recommended	1015	+68	454	42	-55
Temporary Blue Badge recommended	176	+27	219	21	-20
Not recommended	185	+50	165	16	-11
Did not attend doctor's appointment	146	+57	93	9	-57
Pending/ Requested new appointment	43	-	143	13	+70

This table shows that, contrary to previous years, the number of applications for this service decreased by 32%. There was also a substantial decrease in the number and percentage of Blue Badges issued on a permanent basis, and a fall in the figures of temporary stickers. On the other hand, the applications that were not recommended were fewer in number this year. This may be due to the fact that those who are aware that they will not qualify for this service are no longer applying for it. This trend is also reflected in the fact that there was a reduction of more than 50% in the percentage of applicants who did not turn up for their appointment. On the other hand, it is worth noticing the equal percentage increase in applicants who requested a new appointment or whose application remained pending at the end of 2009.

During this year, KNPD started to administer the Appeals Board that was set up to consider appeals by persons who feel that the decision of the KNPD's medical professional was not correct. This Board is led by the Assistant Police Commissioner. Its work for 2009 is shown in Table 11.

TABLE 11: BLUE BADGE APPEALS					
	2008		2009		Diff.
	No.	%	No.	%	%
Requests examined	29	-	120	-	+76
First decision confirmed	20	69	93	78	+79
First decision overturned	9	31	24	20	+63
Pending	-	-	3	2	-

This table shows that there was a substantial increase in the number of appeals. The percentage confirming the first decision has also increased.

In order to reduce abuse of the Blue Badge, KNPD has continued its collection of Blue Badges of deceased persons with disability. Work in this regard for 2009 is shown in Table 12.

TABLE 12: RETURNED BLUE STICKERS								
	Returned		Affidavit		Reported to the Commissioner/ Legal Letter		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
2008	147	-	15	-	18	-	180	-
2009	180	18	44	66	33	45	257	30

This table indicates that KNPD managed to collect the majority (82%) of these Badges and it is only in very few cases that the intervention of the Police Commissioner was requested for the Badges to be returned. In 2009 KNPD also reclaimed 30% more Blue Badges than in 2008.

5.2 Exemption from Car Registration Tax and Road Licence

The Finance Ministry gives exemptions from the car registration and other taxes to persons with disability so that they use adapted vehicles. This exemption is proportionate to the vehicle modifications required by the person with disability. This service is administered by KNPD. The work carried out in 2009 is shown in Table 13.

	2008		2009		Diff.
	No.	%	No.	%	%
New applications	278	-	331	-	+16
Recommended	234	84	304	92	+23
Not recommended	11	4	14	1	+21
Withdrew application/ did not use exemption	31	11	10	3	-68
Pending applications	2	1	3	1	-

This table shows an increase of 16% in applications for the service, which was naturally also reflected in the percentage of application that were recommended or otherwise. There was also a decrease in the number of withdrawn applications and in the cases where exemption was not utilised. The data analysis of the types of vehicles purchased by persons who were granted this exemption is found in Table 14.

	2009	
	No.	%
Standard cars	78	36
Modified standard cars	6	3
Automatic cars	84	39
Modified automatic cars	19	9
Accessible vans for wheelchair users	29	13
Total	216	100

This table shows that the majority of exemptions were given on automatic cars (39%) or standard cars (36%).

KNPD also continued making recommendations to the Licensing Department so that drivers who have a disability, according to the Social Security Act (1987), and those who have a modified vehicle because of their disability, are exempted

from paying the road licence. The statistics for 2009 regarding this service can be found in Table 15.

TABLE 15: EXEMPTION FROM ROAD LICENCE					
	2008		2009		Diff.
	No.	%	No.	%	%
New applications	206	-	331	-	+37
Recommended	172	83	304	92	+43
Not recommended	20	10	14	4	-30
Withdrew application	12	6	10	3	-20
Pending applications	2	1	3	1	-

This table shows an increase of 37% in applications for this service between 2008 and 2009. This was reflected in the number of applications received. On the other hand, there were fewer applications that were not recommended.

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

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

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

5.3 Individualised Transport

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

5.4 Reserved Parking

Reserved parking bays in front of residences of disabled persons who have severe mobility impairment are approved by the Transport Authority according to criteria agreed upon with KNPD. The latter, in agreement with the Authority, is in charge of the administration of the Review Panel for this service. During this year, this Panel functioned as shown in Table 16.

TABLE 18: RESERVED PARKING REVIEW PANEL					
	2008		2009		Diff.
	No.	%	No.	%	No.
Requests examined	41	-	22	-	-86
First decision confirmed	25	61	15	68	10
First decision overturned	16	39	7	32	18

This table shows that the number of appeals has continued to decrease (by 22%), although the numbers have remained low. The trend for the majority of appeals not being accepted (68% for 2009) has also continued.

5.5 VAT Refund

Since most equipment that is used by persons with disability to be able to lead an independent life now carries VAT (mostly at 5%), KNPD has been appointed to administer a scheme on behalf of the Ministry for Social Policy to give financial aid that is equivalent to the amount paid in VAT. KNPD also refunds VAT on computers that have been bought by persons with disability. During this year, this scheme functioned as shown in Table 17.

TABLE 17: REFUND ON EQUIPMENT FOR DISABLED PERSONS			
	2008	2009	Diff.
			%
Refunds	€68,443	€60,228	-14
No. of beneficiaries	402	448	10
Average refund	€170	€135	26

This table shows that there was a decrease in the amount of money refunded and an increase in the number of beneficiaries. The average refund amount was lower than for the previous year.

06 AWARENESS RAISING

6.1 Wenzu Dalli Resource Centre

KNPD offers the services of the Wenzu Dalli Resource Centre with the aim of giving access to specialised literature on two disability-related subjects to persons with disability and all those working or studying within the sector. This Centre is open to the public during office hours and is located at the KNPD Secretariat at the *Ċentru Ħidma Soċjali* in St Venera. Table 18 shows the resources used in this Centre throughout 2009 and how these were utilised.

	Lent			New		Total
	2008	2009	Diff. %	2008	2009	Diff. %
Books	638	550	+16	123	226	+84
Periodicals	93	150	+38	74	75	-
Videos	9	0	-	0	0	-
Audio Cassettes	0	0	-	6	8	-
CDs	19	3	-	10	7	-
DVDs	13	5	-	8	10	-
				2008	2009	Diff. %
Members who used the Centre				215	116	-46
New members				32	90	-52

Table 18 shows that in 2009 resources continued to increase. However, despite the new members registered at the Resource Centre, there were fewer people over all who made use of the centre in comparison with 2008.

6.2 Disability Issues Courses

KNPD continued to deliver a series of training courses regarding disability issues with University students and with various workers with the aim of ensuring that they have a wider understanding of this sector, especially from the social aspect. This training is carried out primarily by persons with disability. The work carried out by KNPD in this sector is shown in Table 19.

Table 19: DISABILITY ISSUES TRAINING SESSIONS			
Clients	Course		No. of Participants
University of Malta	B.Ed		153
	M.Ed		36
	B. Psy		100
	Faculty of Medicine		74
	Social Work		30
	Institute of Health Care		33
Ministry of Education	Learning Support Assistants		160
	Inclusion Coordinators		8
	PSD and guidance teachers		150
	Higher Secondary		12
	Heads of Schools		60
MCAST	Pathways Programme		5
Archdiocese of Malta	New Seminarians and Priests		15
Bank of Valletta	Staff		45
Mc Donalds	Staff		65
Gi Fra Group	Youth		10
Mater Dei Hospital	Secretaries		10
Total	2008	2009	Diff %
	1055	969	-9

This table shows that in 2009 there was a decrease of 9% when compared to the findings in 2008. On the other hand, KNPD created a thorough programme including school debates and youth organisations, through funds received from the Progress Programme, as part of its 'Access for All Success for All' campaign. These discussions addressed 2,300 students from 19 different schools and organisations.

6.3 Series of Meetings with the President of Malta

Four meetings with His Excellency President George Abela were held in 2009. The first meeting was a visit made by the President to the KNPD Secretariat, after having expressed his wish to do so. As a result of this visit, the President felt the need to hold direct meetings with persons with disability, and for this reason KNPD issued invitations to its registered members on behalf of the Office of the President. There was a strong response of 400 persons with disability who filled in the form. Since only 150 could attend, the names of all those who would attend the meeting in May were all drawn by ballot. Following the great success of this meeting, the President expressed his wish to meet with all the remaining applicants, and two meetings were subsequently held in October and December, the latter forming part of the activities for the Week of Persons with Disability.

6.4 Europe Close to You Fair

KNPD put up a stand at the Close to You fair in Freedom Square, Valletta. The aim of the fair was to raise awareness among the general public regarding EU structures and opportunities available throughout Europe, including equal opportunities. The KNPD stand displayed various publications on the rights of persons with disability and the services it itself offers in this regard. The fair was attended by many and therefore served as a good opportunity for KNPD to establish contact with people whom it does not normally communicate with.

6.5 Week of Persons with Disability

3rd December was chosen by the United Nations as the International Day for Persons with Disability. Each year KNPD organises a week of activities for the period of December 3-10, the latter being the International Human Rights Day.

The chosen theme this year was 'Employment a Right for All', a subject which was linked to the final stage of consultation on KNPD's Policy on Persons with Disability and Employment.

Message for Children (2nd December 2009)

Despite the fact that the week officially started on December 3rd, this message was delivered the day before for logistical reasons. Mr Charles Borg from the KNPD Secretariat relayed this message to Lija and B'Kara primary schoolchildren. He also sang the song *Flimkienaslu*, the Maltese version of *Together We Can Make It*, recorded in 2009. The song was originally composed in 2003 and was written on the occasion of the European Year for Persons with Disability.

National Conference on Employment a Right for All (3rd December 2009)

For this conference, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Justice and Internal Affairs, Hon. Tonio Borg, delivered the opening address, while Permanent Secretary (Social Policy) Mr Frans Borg closed the conference in the absence of the Minister for Social Policy, Hon. John Dalli, who was abroad. Mr Gordon Caruana from the KNPD Secretariat briefly explained the content of this policy during a presentation. The same policy was discussed on two panels shortly after. The papers and speakers on both panels are presented below.

Copies of the discourses presented during this conference are available on the KNPD website www.knpd.org.

First Panel: General Issues

‘The Role of ETC in the Implementation of the National Policy’
Dr Sandra Sladden, ETC

‘The Role of the *Unions* in the Implementation of the National Policy’
Mr Gaetano Tanti, UHM

‘The Role of the Post-Secondary Institutions in the Implementation of the National Policy’
Mr John Bartolo, MCAST

‘The Role of Employers in the Implementation of the National Policy’
Mr Noel Vassallo, The Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry

‘The Role of *Aġenzija Sapport* in the Implementation of the National Policy’
Mr Marcel Pisani, *Aġenzija Sapport*

Second Panel: Specific Groups

‘Women with Disability and the Employment Sector’
Ms Vickie Gauci and Ms Marianne Debono

‘Persons with Disability in Gozo and Problems of Employment’
Ms Mary Rose Attard

‘Youth with Disability and the Employment Sector’
Ms Corinne Zammit

‘The State of Persons with Disability Who Cannot Work’
Ms Marchita Mangiafico

Message from the Minister (3rd December)

This message was delivered by the Minister for Social Policy, Hon. John Dalli, along with Mr Steven Mulvaney, a deaf person who is following an apprenticeship as a mechanic. Closely linked to the Week's theme for 2009, the message focused on the employment sector.

Gozo Conference: Together We Can Overcome the Challenges: Persons with Disability and the World of Employment (4th December)

KNPD Chairman Mr Joseph M. Camilleri participated in a seminar organised by the Gozo Federation for Persons with Disabilities and the Office of the Coordinator of Disability in Gozo. The seminar consisted of a discussion led by journalist Ruth Amaira. Minister for Gozo Hon. Giovanna Debono attended the seminar together with a number of persons with disability, parents and professionals in the sector. The business sector was represented by just two people.

Thanksgiving Evening (7th December)

This year, the Thanksgiving Evening also served as a farewell event for Mr Fred Bezzina, who resigned from his post of KNPD director after 22 years to take on another post within the civil sector. He was presented with a token by the Prime Minister Hon. Lawrence Gonzi as a gesture of appreciation for his invaluable work carried out within the disability sector. Messages of appreciation were delivered by a number of people who have worked with Mr Bezzina over the years.

Disabled People's Parliament (9th December)

The Policy on Employment and Persons with Disability was also the topic of the meeting with Members of Parliament which was broadcast live on TVM. Mr Joe Camilleri was the keynote speaker. Hon. Dr Anglu Farrugia spoke on behalf of the Opposition while Hon. Dr Chris Said represented government. The meeting was led by the Speaker, Hon. Dr Louis Galea.

KNPD Consultative Committee of Persons with Intellectual Disability (10th December)

This meeting was the final activity during the Week for Persons with Disability. During the meeting, the Policy on Employment and Persons with Disability was discussed by the members of this committee, their family members and friends.

6.6 Progress Programme

The Progress Programme of the European Union aims to give financial aid to projects that fight discrimination and favour the social inclusion of minorities. This programme offers funds for disability awareness campaigns in the member states. In 2009, KNPD carried out these activities as part of its project with the theme 'Access for All Success for All'. The project regarded discrimination against persons with disability and those belonging to ethnic minorities. Some of the activities were held in collaboration with the Jesuit Refugee Service. The activities were as follows:

- seminars on the disability and race sectors with the heads of schools, PSD and Guidance teachers;
- meetings regarding these two sectors -- involving the participation of persons with disability and of different races -- in schools and within youth organisations;
- meetings with employers, unions and persons with disability and their family members regarding the Policy on Employment and Persons with Disability;
- an awareness campaign regarding the better use of the Blue Sticker and anti-discrimination;
- a booklet on the Equal Opportunities Act in various formats including audio, easy-to-read, and Maltese Sign Language;
- a supplement on the EU in the June edition of *Indaqs*. This was issued in various formats including audio, easy-to-read, and Maltese Sign Language;
- a new edition of the Services and benefits, in various formats including audio, easy-to-read, and Maltese Sign Language;
- training for activists with disability;
- open-air cultural activities with the participation of artists with disability and of different ethnicities.

6.7 KNPD Publications

Through the years, KNPD has issued various publications, many of which are also in different formats so that they are as far as possible accessible to all. Many of these publications can be obtained for free from the KNPD Secretariat or downloaded from the KNPD website, www.knpd.org. Details on these publications are shown in Table 20.

TABLE 20								
	Malt	Eng	Easy-to-read	Audio	Sign Lang	Website		
						Mal	Eng	ETR
• Access for All - Design Guidelines							X	
• <i>Affarijjet li saru f'Malta biex il-Persuni b'Dizabilita' u l-Familji Tagħhom Ikollhom Opportunitajiet Indaqs</i>			X				X	
• Rights not Charity Manual	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
• Fact sheets – KNPD services	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
• Self Advocacy leaflet							X	
• <i>Ħoloq</i>	X				X			
• EU Directive on Equal Treatment in Employment – Conference proceedings	X	X		X	X	X		
• Highway Code in Maltese Sign Language								
• The Signs Book	X	X			X			
• <i>Il-Kwalita` ta' Ħajja tal-Persuni b'Dizabilita` f'Malta: xi twegibiet miċ-Ċensiment tal-2005</i> (leaflet)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
• The Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act	X	X		X	X	X		
• <i>Indaqs</i> (Equal) (various editions)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
• Self Advocacy for Persons with Intellectual Disability – report	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
• <i>Klijenti b'Dizabilita' u Inti</i>	X			X				

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children's books: <i>Clint Għandu Down Syndrome</i> <i>Dorianne Nieqsa mid-Dawl</i> <i>Jason Juża Wheelchair</i> <i>Marcel Nieqes mis-Smigħ</i> 	X			X	X			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Liġi Opportunitajiet Indaq</i> 	X			X	X			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equal Opportunities for Disabled Persons: EU Action Plan - Seminar 	X	X		X	X	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Policy Nazzjonali dwar is-Self Advocacy għall-Persuni b'Nuqqas Intellettwali</i> 	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Quality of Life of Persons with Disability in Malta: some answers from the 2005 Census (leaflet) 		X					X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services and Benefits for Disabled Persons 	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Main Activities in 2009

General

During 2009, the KNPD board held 9 meetings and discussed the following subjects:

- The UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons
- The Equal Opportunities Act
- The Test of Reasonableness Board
- The Special School Reform and transition to Day Services
- Examination Arrangements
- Lifts Guidelines
- The National Policy on Employment and Disabled Persons
- Disabled Persons in Gozo
- The Special Identity Card
- The Foundation for Respite Care Services
- The National Budget
- Disabled Persons' Week
- The Post of Executive Director
- KNPD projects funded by EU Programmes

The Consultative Committee of Persons with Intellectual Disability increased its number of members and is now operating through a Core Group and a Full Committee.

Anti-Discrimination

Apart from the work on the Equal Opportunities Act, details of which is providing in a separate report, KNPD also carried out work on the vetting of MEPA applications. During 2009, 766 applications were vetted, 261 (34%) of which were recommended. 55% of the applications had to be vetted more than once, in some cases even more than 3 times.

KNPD also played a role in the scheme through which local councils could apply for a maximum grant of €10,000 in order to make their offices or a public place in their locality accessible.

KNPD staff took part in a study visit to the offices of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights, in the United Kingdom.

KNPD also contributed to the discussions regarding the proposal by the European Commission for a Directive implementing the principle of equal treatment between people irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation (known as the Anti-Discrimination Directive), and regarding other European proposals and regulations that concern disabled people.

Policy Making

During 2009, KNPD participated actively in the meetings of the Maltese Council for Economic and Social Development.

At the end of December 2009, there were 11,637 disabled persons registered with KNPD, an increase of 105 persons or 1% over the previous year.

KNPD took part in the meetings of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons. This Committee finalised its report regarding Malta's ratification of this Convention. The report is now being discussed by the authorities concerned.

Meetings were held between KNPD and the Office of the Attorney General, as well as with the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry for Social Policy regarding the Guardianship Act or similar legislation that protects the rights of disabled persons who cannot represent themselves.

KNPD drew up a series of recommendations for the national budget, as it does every year.

It also carried out a consultation process regarding the Policy on Employment and Disabled Persons. The process was finalised during Disabled People's Week and will be published in 2010.

In the day services sector, KNPD took part in a study visit in Motherwell, Scotland, for a study on providing individualised and community based day services. After this visit, discussions were held between KNPD and Aġenzija Sapport regarding ways of developing similar services in Malta. KNPD started working on a study together with Aġenzija Sapport in order to draw up recommendations in this regard. This study is due to be completed in 2010.

KNPD also contributed to the development of the education sector. It carried out a study in collaboration with the Students Services Department regarding the provision of educational services by non-governmental organisation. KNPD also provided feedback regarding the proposed special school reform.

The report from the research on the 2005 Census was finalised. This report, entitled The Quality of Life of Disabled People in Malta: some answers from the 2005 Census, was presented during a public seminar held in November. It is available on the website www.knpd.org.

Apart from this work, KNPD also continued to give its contribution through its involvement in board meetings and committees of various entities, including FITA, I-MCAST, the University of Malta and the European Commission's Disability High Level Group.

Direct and Indirect Services

During 2009, the KNPD Secretariat provided the following direct and indirect services:

Special Identity Cards were issued for 1271 disabled persons

245 disabled persons benefited from the Assistive Apparatus Fund

454 permanent and 219 temporary Blue Stickers were issued

304 recommendations for disabled people to be exempted from paying the car registration tax were made

304 recommendations for free road licences to be issued to disabled persons were made

448 disabled persons benefited from VAT refunds.

Awareness Raising

116 made use of the Wenzu Dalli Resource Centre.

KNPD continued with its Disability Issues programme, with training being provided for 969 persons. There was also a parallel programme in schools from which 2300 students benefited.

4 meetings were held in collaboration with the Office of the President. H.E. Dr George Abela, the President of Malta, visited the KNPD Secretariat and 3 meetings with disabled people were held in the President's Palace.

KNPD participated in the *Europe Close to You* fair.

Once again, the Disabled Persons' Week was held. Most of the activities were funded by the EU's Progress Programme as part of the campaign entitled *Different Persons, Different Needs, One Society*, which will continue in 2010.

Appendix

Statistics from the National Register of Disabled Persons for the Year 2009

TABLE 1: STATISTICS BY AGE AND SEX

Age	Females	Males	Total	%		Difference
				2009	2008	
0-4	48	56	104	0.89	0.79	0.10
5-9	91	151	242	2.07	2.29	-0.22
10-14	147	235	382	3.27	3.06	0.21
15-19	153	211	364	3.12	2.95	0.17
20-24	143	235	378	3.24	3.21	0.03
25-29	168	260	428	3.67	3.72	-0.05
30-34	188	264	452	3.87	3.71	0.16
35-39	200	251	451	3.86	3.69	0.18
40-44	182	216	398	3.41	3.54	-0.13
45-49	242	362	604	5.17	5.39	-0.21
50-54	289	447	736	6.31	6.15	0.16
55-59	356	504	860	7.37	7.35	0.01
60-64	411	607	1018	8.72	8.84	-0.12
65-69	376	535	911	7.80	7.36	0.44
70-74	520	538	1058	9.06	8.59	0.47
75-79	595	463	1058	9.06	9.38	-0.32
80-84	673	526	1199	10.27	9.08	1.19
85 +	585	369	954	8.17	10.44	-2.27
Not known			76	0.65	0.47	
Total	5367	6230	11673			

GRAPH 1: STATISTICS BY AGE

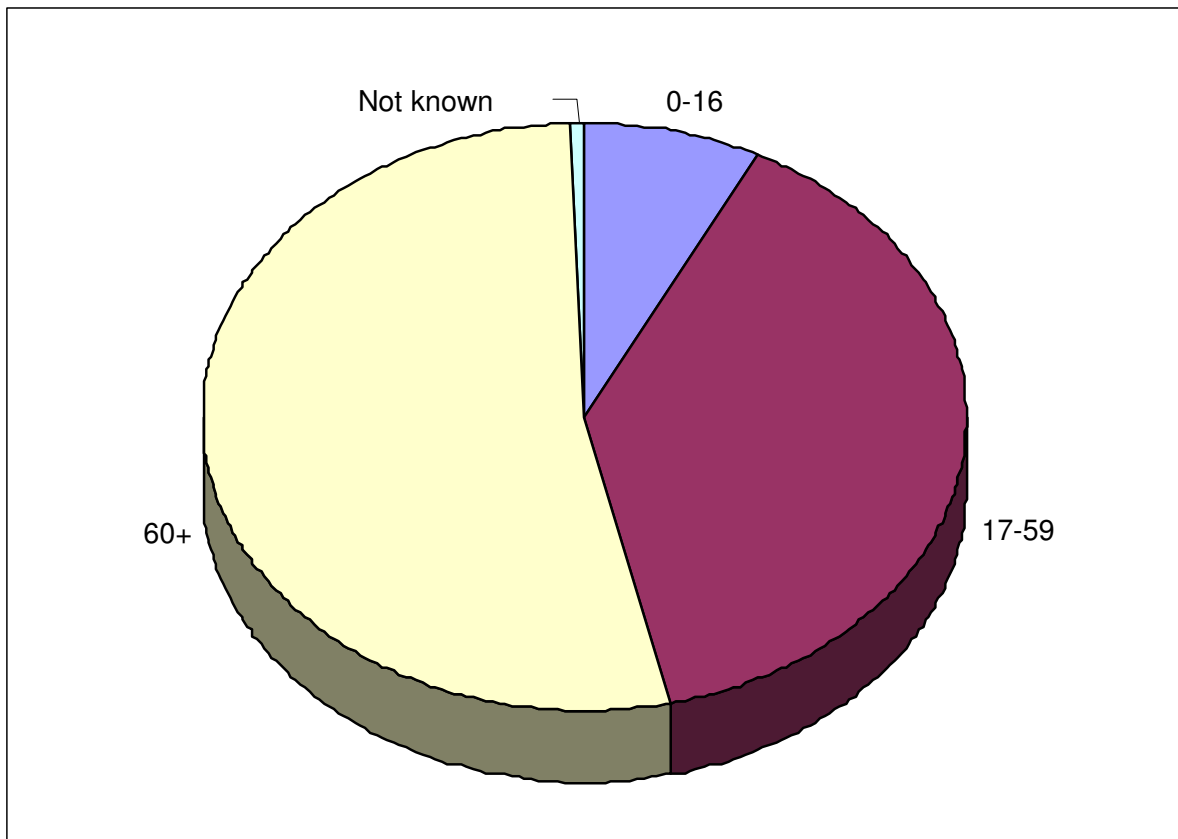


TABLE 2: STATISTICS BY AGE ACROSS THE YEARS

Year	0-16		17-59		60+		Not known	Total
	Nru.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
1994	815	24.5	1839	55.2	651	19.5	25	3330
1999	1089	17.2	2961	46.7	2286	36.1	4	6340
2003	1260	16.6	3388	44.5	2962	38.9	0	7610
2005	764	8.4	3854	42.5	4388	48.4	57	9063
2006	807	8.4	4030	41.7	4771	49.4	55	9663
2007	819	8.0	4188	40.7	5227	50.8	57	10291
2008	837	7.3	4449	38.6	6193	53.7	54	11532
2009	864	7.4	4535	38.9	6198	53.1	76	11673

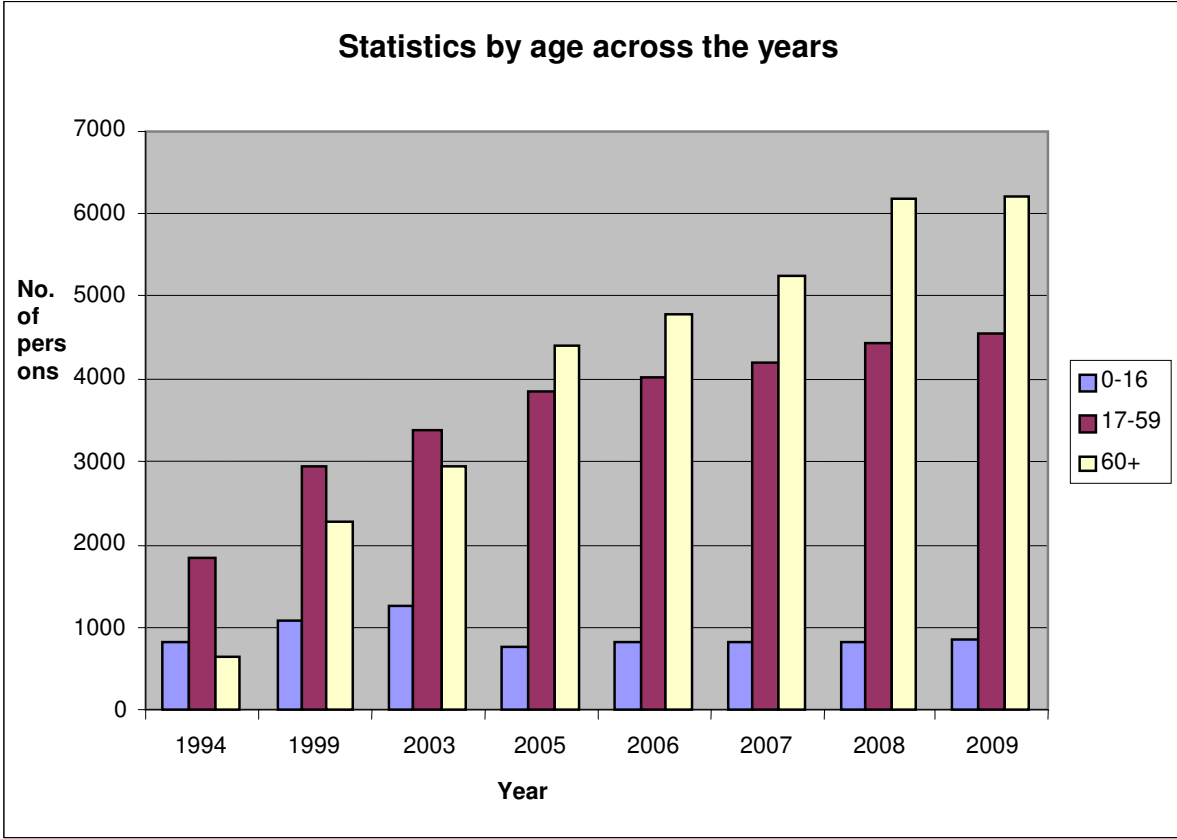


TABLE 3: STATISTICS ACCORDING TO IMPAIRMENT

	No					%		Difference 2008 - 2009
	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2009	2008	
Physcial	8190	7801	6556	5953	5338	70.16	67.65	2.51
Intellectual	2234	2184	2052	1964	1895	19.14	18.94	0.20
Psychology	1182	1166	1054	946	849	10.13	10.11	0.02
Visual	1166	1236	1159	1129	1127	9.99	10.72	-0.73
Hearing	1060	1128	1062	1025	986	9.08	9.78	-0.70
More than one	2292	2284	2022	1881	1767	19.64	19.81	-0.17
Not specified	903	1140	1279	1383	1484	7.74	9.89	-2.15

Note: The total is bigger than the number of persons since some persons have more than one impairment.

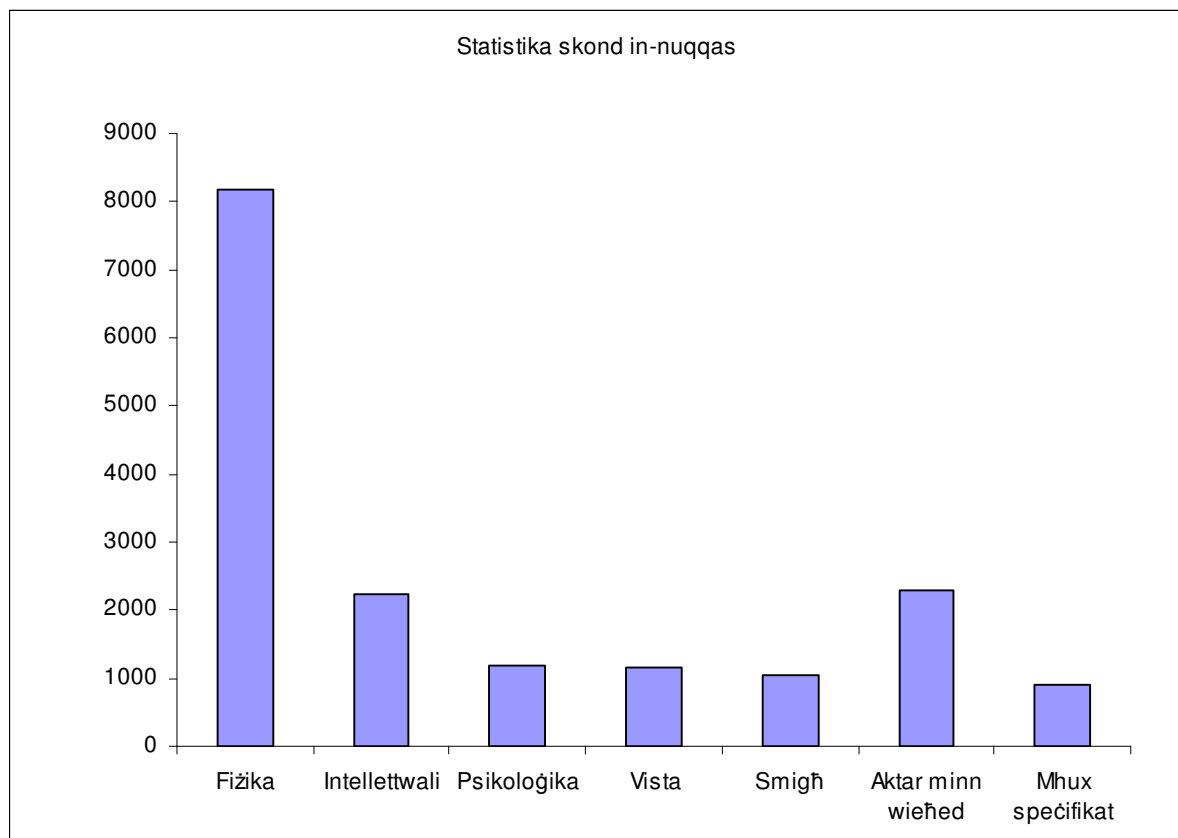
GRAPH 3

TABLE 4: STATISTICS ACCORDING TO IMPAIRMENT AND AGE BY 5 YEARS

	Phys- ical	%	Psycho- logical	%	Intell- ectual	%	Hearing	%	Visual	%	More than one	
0-4	60	0.73	26	2.20	57	2.55	6	0.57	13	1.11	48	2.09
5-9	83	1.01	66	5.58	142	6.36	26	2.45	16	1.37	82	3.58
10-14	165	2.01	77	6.51	201	9.00	41	3.87	34	2.92	118	5.15
15-19	160	1.95	74	6.26	182	8.15	42	3.96	21	1.80	99	4.32
20-24	170	2.08	54	4.57	187	8.37	45	4.25	39	3.34	103	4.49
25-29	215	2.63	51	4.31	176	7.88	45	4.25	27	2.32	92	4.01
30-34	208	2.54	62	5.25	172	7.70	42	3.96	40	3.43	84	3.66
35-39	250	3.05	64	5.41	149	6.67	43	4.06	48	4.12	99	4.32
40-44	254	3.10	57	4.82	112	5.01	22	2.08	25	2.14	79	3.45
45-49	357	4.36	73	6.18	141	6.31	62	5.85	62	5.32	118	5.15
50-54	501	6.12	98	8.29	132	5.91	54	5.09	76	6.52	140	6.11
55-59	631	7.70	104	8.80	123	5.51	66	6.23	78	6.69	144	6.28
60-64	794	9.69	96	8.12	114	5.10	70	6.60	95	8.15	164	7.16
65-69	743	9.07	58	4.91	67	3.00	54	5.09	85	7.29	120	5.24
70-74	898	10.96	54	4.57	64	2.86	77	7.26	97	8.32	156	6.81
75-79	909	11.10	49	4.15	59	2.64	77	7.26	106	9.09	158	6.89
80-84	883	10.78	44	3.72	58	2.60	97	9.15	119	10.21	186	8.12
>85	909	11.10	75	6.35	98	4.39	191	18.02	185	15.87	302	13.11
	8190	100.00	1182	100.00	2234	100.00	1060	100.00	1166	100.00	2292	100.00

Note: The total is bigger than the number of persons since some persons have more than one impairment.

TABLE 5: STATISTICS ACCORDING TO IMPAIRMENT AND AGE (CHILDREN, ADULTS AND THE ELDERLY)

	Phys- ical	%	Psycho- logical	%	Intell- ectual	%	Hear- ing	%	Visual	%	More than one	%
0-16	357	4.36	198	16.75	473	21.17	88	8.30	74	6.35	284	12.39
17-59	2697	32.93	608	51.44	1301	58.24	406	38.30	405	34.73	922	40.23
60+	5136	62.71	376	31.81	460	20.59	566	53.40	687	58.92	1086	47.38
	8190	100.00	1182	100.00	2234	100.00	1060	100.00	1166	100.00	2292	100.00

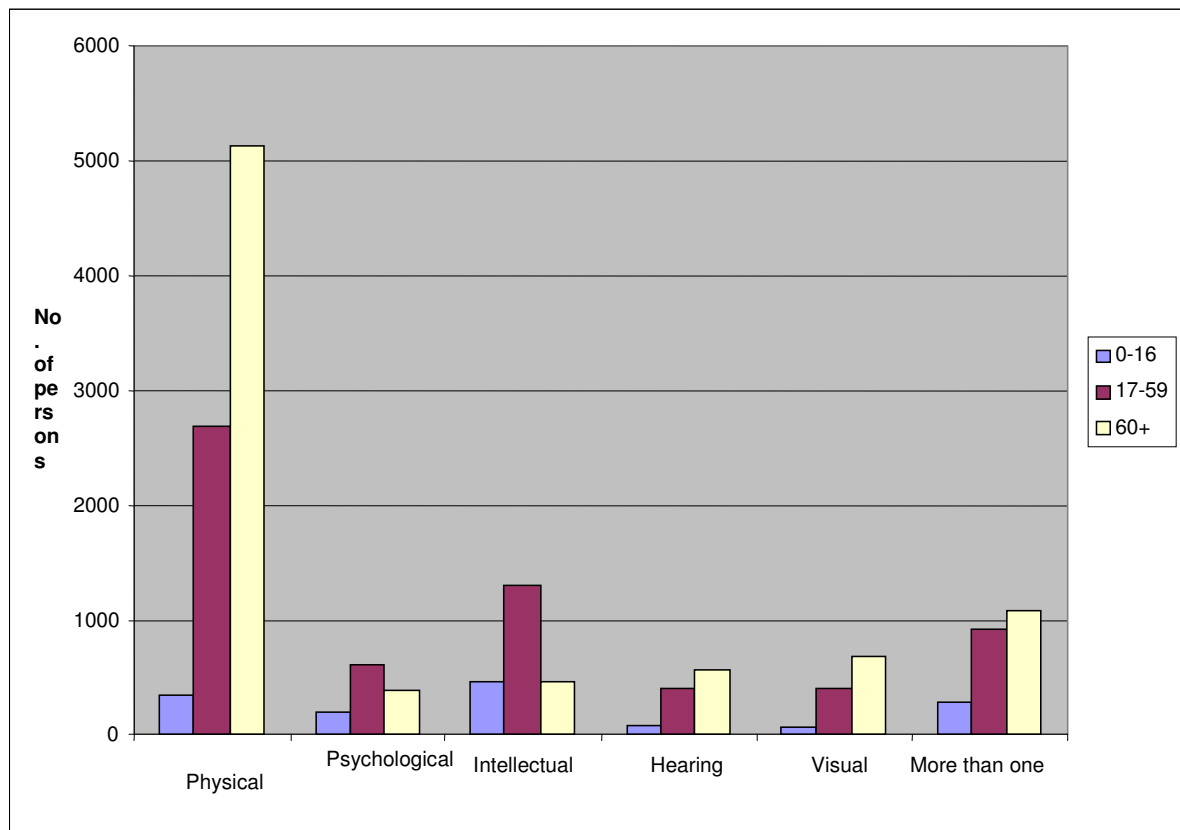


TABLE 6: PREVALENCE ACCORDING TO LOCALITY

ATTARD	207	LIJA	69	SAN GILJAN	259
BALZAN	129	LUQA	145	SAN GWANN	292
BIRGU	97	MARSA	234	SAN LAWRENZ	18
BIRKIRKARA	656	MARSASCALA	225	SAN PAWL IL-BAHAR	420
BIRZEBBUGIA	219	MARSAXLOKK	74	SANNAT	43
BORMLA	215	MDINA	15	SIGGIEWI	285
DINGLI	74	MELLIEHA	226	SLIEMA	577
FGURA	316	MGARR	63	STA LUCIA	97
FLORIANA	112	MOSTA	446	STA VENERA	238
FONTANA	25	MQABBA	64	SWIEQI	151
GHAJNSIELEM	67	MSIDA	207	TA' XBIEX	60
GHARB	40	MTARFA	62	TARXIEN	226
GHARGHUR	49	MUNXAR	21	VALLETTA	271
GHASRI	11	NADUR	110	VICTORIA (GHAWDEX)	187
GHAXAQ	91	NAXXAR	261	XAGHRA	87
GUDJA	61	PAOLA	318	XEWKIJA	73
GZIRA	236	PEMBROKE	57	XGHAJRA	23
HAMRUN	402	PIETA'	137	ZABBAR	388
IKLIN	44	QALA	48	ZEBBUG	280
ISLA	84	QORMI	511	ZEBBUG (GHAWDEX)	46
KALKARA	74	QRENDI	69	ZEJTUN	338
KERCEN	35	RABAT	483	ZURRIEQ	221
KIRKOP	44	SAFI	47		