



THE CENSUS AND THE KNPD REGISTER

When the Census data is compared to similar data found in the KNPD Register, the main findings are:

- The number of disabled people registered with KNPD in 2005 is nearly one third of those who were identified as disabled in the Census. This figure rose to nearly one half in the 2009 KNPD Register.
- Unlike in the Census, there are more disabled men than women registered with KNPD.
- There are nearly twice as many people with a visual impairment in the Census compared to those registered with KNPD both in 2005 and in 2009.
- There are nearly one third as many people with an intellectual impairment in the Census compared to those registered with KNPD in 2005 register and slightly more in 2009 register.

This report provides some indicators about the quality of life of disabled people in Malta. Some very interesting results have emerged which themselves give rise to other questions which are worthy of further investigation.

It is thus hoped that this report will stimulate debate and research in the disability sector in Malta, whilst providing a basis for comparison when another Census is conducted in the future



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The Quality of Life of Disabled People in Malta



SOME ANSWERS FROM THE 2005 CENSUS



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The questionnaire of the 2005 Census, carried out by the National Statistics Office (NSO), included a question about the number of disabled people in each household. The presence of this question means that a mine of information can be extracted about all the aspects of life included in the Census questionnaire.

Apart from demographic data, the following themes have been selected for analysis in this study: education, work, dwellings, the Internet and sport. In order to gain a greater understanding of disabled people's situation, data has been disaggregated according to disabled/non-disabled people, and disabled people by age, gender, type of impairment¹, and the district² where they live. Demographic data from the Census has also been compared to that held on the KNPD register, in order to give an indication of the extent to which the latter is representative, or otherwise, of disabled people in Malta.

This report is meant to give a general overview of what the quality of life is like for disabled persons

in Malta. Some findings warrant more in-depth analysis, which could perhaps be taken up as a continuation of the work carried out for this report. The full study is available on the KNPD website: www.knpd.org

As can be seen from the statistics analysed in this report, there is much room for improvement in the quality of life of disabled people in Malta.

¹ The different types of impairment are:

- visual impairment
- hearing impairment
- physically impairment
- intellectual impairment
- mental health impairment
- other impairments
- more than one impairment

² The districts are:

- **Southern Harbour:** Valletta, Birgu, Bormla, Isla, Żabbar, Fgura, Floriana, Kalkara, Luqa, Marsa, Paola, Santa Luċija, Hal Tarxien, Xghajra
- **Northern Harbour:** Birkirkara, Gżira, Hamrun, Imsida, Pembroke, Pietà, Qormi, St Julians, San Ġwann, Santa Venera, Sliema, Swieqi, Ta' Xbiex
- **South Eastern:** Birżebbuġia, Gudja, Għaxaq, Kirkop, Marsascala, Marsaxlokk, Imqabba, Qrendi, Safi, Żejtun, Żurriq
- **Western:** Attard, Balzan, Dingli, Iklin, Lija, Rabat, Imtarfa, Imdina, Siġġiewi, Żebbuġ
- **Northern:** Għarghur, Mellieħa, Imġarr, Mosta, Naxxar, St Paul's Bay
- **Gozo and Comino**

DISABLED AND NON-DISABLED PEOPLE

In most, if not all, aspects of life, disabled people are more disadvantaged than non-disabled people. The main findings are:

- 5.89% of the total population in Malta and Gozo have a disability.
- Disabled persons have a lower level of education, are less likely to continue studying and are 4 times more likely to be illiterate than non-disabled persons.
- Disabled persons are nearly 3 times less likely to be employed than non-disabled persons and if employed nearly twice more likely to be in elementary employment.
- Disabled persons are nearly 12 times more likely than non-disabled persons to be institutionalized, more likely to live in a dwelling that is not in a good state of repair and are less likely to have non-essential household goods.
- Disabled persons are less likely to have a computer and access to the Internet.
- Disabled persons are less likely to participate in sport.



Disabled persons are nearly 3 times less likely to be employed than non-disabled persons and if employed nearly twice more likely to be in elementary employment

DISABLED MEN AND WOMEN

Certain groups of disabled people are also at greater risk of disadvantage and discrimination. For example, when disabled men and women are compared with each other, it emerges that disabled women are more disadvantaged than disabled men in many areas.

The main findings are:

- The percentage of disabled women compared to disabled men increases with age.
- Disabled men are more likely to be married, however there are nearly 4 times more widows than widowers.
- Disabled women are more likely to have finished their education at primary level than disabled men.
- There are more disabled women than disabled men with no qualifications.
- Disabled men are 3 times more likely than disabled women to be employed. While disabled women are 34 more times than disabled men likely to take care of the household or the family.
- Disabled women are nearly twice more likely to live in an institution than disabled men. If they are not living in an institution, they are more likely to live in a dwelling that is not in a good state of repair when compared to disabled men.

DISABLED PEOPLE BY TYPE OF IMPAIRMENT

There are many similarities between people with different impairments. However, there are also some noticeable differences.

The main findings are:

- Nearly one third of disabled people have a physical impairment.
- There is a decrease of people with intellectual impairment or with a mental health condition in the older age groups.
- Persons with an intellectual impairment are more likely to be single.
- Persons with an intellectual impairment have a greater tendency to attend special schools. Of those who have attended mainstream schools, there is a tendency for them to have attended up to primary level only.
- Persons with an intellectual impairment are more likely to have no qualifications and are twice more likely to be illiterate when compared to persons with other impairments.
- Persons with a visual impairment are the ones with the lowest tendency to have attended a special school

Disabled men are 3 times more likely than disabled women to be employed



- Disabled men are more likely than disabled women to have a computer and access to the Internet.

These disadvantages should be compared to the situation of non-disabled men and women in order to ascertain to what extent disabled women are at risk of double discrimination because of their gender.

Persons with an intellectual impairment are more likely to be single

- and the least to be illiterate when compared to persons with other impairments.
- Persons with an intellectual impairment and mental health condition are less likely to be employed. If they are employed they are more likely to be in elementary employment, especially people with an intellectual impairment.
- Persons with a visual impairment tend to be more employed than persons with other impairments.
- People with more than one impairment are the most likely to live in an institution and the ones whose dwellings are in most need of repairs.

Thus, it can be seen that people with intellectual impairment are at most risk of being disadvantaged in all aspects of life. People with mental health issues are also more disadvantaged in the employment sector when compared to those with other impairments. In statistics related to dwellings, people with more than one impairment come out as the most disadvantaged.

DISABLED PEOPLE BY AGE

Older disabled people also seem to be at greater risk of experiencing disadvantage than younger ones. When disabled people in various age groups are compared with each other, the main findings are:

- The incidence of certain impairments increases with age. The largest increase occurs in the category of people with physical impairment and to a lesser degree in the category of people with multiple impairments. This implies that the incidence of these impairments increases with age.
- The incidence of some other impairment decreases with age. The largest decrease occurs in the category of people with an intellectual impairment and to a lesser degree people with "other" impairments. This implies that these people have a shorter life expectancy.

Older disabled people tend to be more institutionalized and the state of repair of their dwellings is worse



It can be seen that people with intellectual impairment are at most risk of being disadvantaged in all aspects of life

- The incidence of mental health conditions fluctuates. This increases up to the age of 49 years and then it starts to decrease again.
- Younger disabled people tend to have more years of schooling and tend to be more qualified and less illiterate.
- Older disabled people tend to be more institutionalized and the state of repair of their dwellings is worse.
- Access to a computer and to the Internet is higher among the younger generation of disabled people.

These statistics need to be taken into consideration within the wider social context. For example, when people who are over sixty were young, secondary education was not compulsory. This correlates with the high percentage of older disabled people in elementary occupations.

Statistics for retired older disabled people and younger disabled people in education are in line with the normal life course. The increase of institutionalization with age is also not surprising although one should note that the state of repair of dwellings deteriorates with age. It is perhaps also not surprising that the Internet is least available to older disabled people and that they are less likely to participate in sport.

DISABLED PEOPLE BY DISTRICT

When disabled people living in the six different districts are compared, some differences emerge. The main findings are:

- The percentage of single disabled people is highest in Gozo and Comino and in the Western district.
- Disabled people in Gozo and Comino who are employed are more likely to be in elementary occupations.
- Disabled people in the South Eastern district are half as likely to be institutionalized when compared to the percentage of the total for all districts, whilst those in the Western region are twice as likely to be institutionalized when compared to this percentage.
- Disabled people in the Northern district are the most likely to live in a dwelling that is in a good state of repair.
- Disabled people in the Northern district are the most likely to have access to a computer.

It thus emerges that disabled people living in the Southern Harbour district tend to be more disadvantaged than other disabled people, especially in the quality of their dwellings. These statistics should be compared to those for non-disabled people as the differences may be more related to geographical location than the presence of an impairment.