## 1946

**ED** The first non-government organisation for disabled persons is set up. It was originally called the Infantile Paralysis Rehabilitation Fund and later changes its name to the Physically Handicapped Rehabilitation Fund.

## 1953

**ED** The Education Division opens Malta’s first special school for ‘educationally subnormal’ (ESN) children. The school, which is situated in Msida, is closed down in 2000.

## 1956

**ED** The Education Division sets up a special school in Paola for deaf and hearing impaired children.

## 1963

**ED** The Education Division sets up the Guardian Angel, a special school in Hamrun catering for children with an intellectual impairment.

## 1964

**G&S** Blind persons only begin receiving a non-contributory pension.
1965

**G&S**  
The first residential home for severely disabled persons, *Dar tal-Providenza*, is set up in Siggiewi.

1966

**ED**  
- *Mater Dei*, a special school for boys with emotional difficulties, is set up.

**ILC**  
- The Ministry of Finance grants a *partial exemption from import duty* on modified vehicles for disabled drivers.

1969

**EMP**  
- The House of Representatives passes the *Employment (Handicapped Persons) Act* commonly know as the 2% Act. The Disablement Resettlement Unit is set up to implement the Act.

1970

**ED**  
- The Education Division sets up the *Sannat special unit* for severely disabled students. It is housed at the Sannat primary school in Gozo.

1973

**ILC**  
- The Commissioner of Police begins issuing *Blue Sticker* parking permits, allowing disabled drivers to park in specifically designated parking bays.

**NGO**  
- The *Malta Federation of Organisations Persons with Disability* (FMOPD) is set up.

1974

**G&S**  
- Government introduces a non-contributory *Pension for Handicapped Persons*. In 1994 this pension was renamed: Pension for Disabled Persons.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>The Department of Social Services opens the first <strong>Day Centre</strong> at St. Venera.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>The United Nations declares 1981 as <strong>The International Year of Persons with Disability</strong>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>The Education Division sets up a <strong>special school in Wardija</strong> for ‘educationally subnormal’ (ESN) children.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Department of Social Services opens the first <strong>Day Centre in Gozo</strong>.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>The Deaf Club</strong>, the first social centre for Deaf people opens its doors in Floriana.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td><strong>A Consultative Committee</strong> is set up between the FMOPD and government ministers responsible for key areas affecting the lives of disabled people.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td><strong>Two day care centres for disabled people</strong> are opened in Hal Far and Mtarfa.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Housing Authority introduces <strong>a home-improvement scheme</strong> for disabled people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td><strong>The Kummissjoni Nazzjonali Mandikappati</strong> is set up. In 1994 it changed its name to Kummissjoni Nazzjonali Persuni b’Diżabilità (KNPD). KNPD was set up with the full support of disabled persons, their families and non-government organisations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
involved in the sector.

**LEG**

- **Social Security Act** CAP 147 promulgated. CAP 147 was repealed by Cap 318, the current Social Security Act (Act X of 1987).

**1988**

**G&S**

- The Department of Social Services introduces a special allowance for families who have disabled children.
- KNPD, together with the Federation of Associations of the Handicapped (today the Federation of Maltese Organisations Persons with Disability) begin to organise Disability Week on an annual basis. After 1994 Disability Week began to be celebrated around the 3rd of December which the United Nations designated as the International Day of Persons with Disability.

**1989**

**ED**

- The Education Division opens San Miguel Special School in St. Andrews. The school caters for children with severe physical and intellectual impairments.
- KNPD inaugurates its Disability Issues Resource Centre which provides books, journals, audio and video material for use by disabled people, families of disabled people, professionals and students. The name was later changed to the Wenzu Dalli Resource Centre.
- KNPD provides financial assistance to the Physically Handicapped Rehabilitation Fund (PHRF) to set up a computer training facility for disabled people in IT. Trainees go on to become the first disabled persons to be employed by the House of Representatives providing transcriptions of parliamentary debates.

**EMP**

- Disabled persons are given preferential treatment when applying for state subsidised plots of land, apartments or housing.

**ILC**

- Disabled persons are given preferential treatment when applying for state subsidised plots of land, apartments or housing.

**1990**

**ILC**

- KNPD introduces the Special Identity Card for registered disabled persons
- The National Structure Plan includes specific principles to improve physical access for all, including wheelchair users.

**G&S**

- Telemalta Corporation introduces the TAFDA Service. TAFDA provides specialised equipment ensuring that the telecommunications become more accessible for disabled people.
- KNPD publishes the first edition of the booklet Servizi u Benefiċċji (Services and Benefits) which lists the services and benefits intended to improve the quality of life if
disabled people and their families. The booklet is distributed, free of charge.

ILC

• The Ministry for Home Affairs and Social Development signs a financial agreement setting up Dar il-Wens, in Paola. Dar il-Wens is the first residential home in the community for people with an intellectual impairment.

1991

ILC

• KNPD sets up the Servizz Għajnuniet Speċjali (Assistive Apparatus Fund) with the aim of offering advice and financial assistance to disabled people needed to make use of assistive apparatus in order to live a more independent life.

ILC

• The Ministry for the Care for the Elderly sets up the Home Help Care, Telecare and Handyman services for elderly and disabled persons. The aim of these community services is to encourage elderly and disabled people to live a more independent life in the community.

G&S

• The Parents Society of Handicapped Children, (today the Parents Society Persons with Disability), KNPD and the Rotary Club, jointly, set the Foundation for Respite Care Services (known as Dar il-Kaptan) enabling families to take short breaks from the responsibility of caring for disabled members of the family.

1992

G&S

• The Ministry of Finance provides exemptions from import tax and/or VAT on the purchase of personal computers by disabled people for their own use.

• Helen Keller School, for blind and deaf-blind children, opens its doors in Qrendi.

ILC

• The Ministry for Home Affairs and Social Development provides financial assistance for the Muscular Dystrophy Group to set up a computer laboratory for disabled people.

G&S

• KNPD sets up an Incontinence Service to encourage more independent living in the community.

• KNPD starts a National Register of Disabled Persons.

• KNPD sets up an Incontinence Service

• KNPD begins offering a refund on the purchase of computers by persons with disability.

• The Traffic Control Board begins issuing Reserved Parking and Keep Clear Bays in front of the residences of disabled persons in need of the service.
**1993**

| ED | The **National Policy on Inclusive Education** comes into effect and with it the concept of classroom facilitators, nowadays referred to as Learning Support Assistants (LSAs). The national policy paves the way for the introduction of an inclusive education policy by the Ministry of Education. |
| ILC | A small **computer laboratory** is set up at the **Day Centre for Blind Persons** within the Ċentru Ἠidma Soċjali, Sta. Venera. |
| LEG | KNPD prepared a draft Bill entitled **Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability)**. The aim of the Act is to prohibit discrimination based on an individual’s physical and/or intellectual impairment. |
| ED | KNPD and the Institute of Health Care (IHC) within the University of Malta begin organizing an elective study credit entitled **Disability Issues**. The credit is aimed at students attending courses at the Institute. Later the course was taken up by other university departments and institutes. |
| ED | KNPD publishes **Holoq** (disability issues lesson notes) for use in mainstream schools. The publication is distributed to all secondary schools in Malta and Gozo. |
| ED | The University of Malta sets up the **Special Needs Committee**. |
| ED | **The Eden Foundation**, a non-government organisation focusing on the needs of children with intellectual and multiple impairments is set up. |

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**1994**

| ED | Malta becomes a signatory of the **The Salamanca Statement And Framework For Action On Special Needs Education** thus committing itself to the eventual phasing out of segregated educational provision for disabled persons. |
| ILC | Fondazzjoni Nazaret, opens its first residential home: **Dar Nazaret**, for disabled persons in the community in Zejtun. |
| G&S | The **Gozo Day Centre** for disabled people moves to more appropriate premises in Ghajnsielem. This was thanks to an agreement between the Roman Catholic Church in Gozo and KNPD. |
| LEG | KNPD publishes a **first draft** of the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act. |
| G&S | Telemalta Corporation introduces **text telephones** thereby enabling persons with hearing impairment to make better use of the telephone service. |
| EMP | A financial agreement is signed between the Eden Foundation and the Ministry for Home Affairs and Social Development. The agreement enables the Foundation to **prepare people with an intellectual impairment to enter the labour markets**. |
1995

ILC
- Together, KNPD and the Independent Living Foundation set up the Independent Living Transport Foundation to provide a limited \textit{wheelchair accessible transport service}.

EMP
- KNPD in agreement with all relevant stakeholders publishes its \textit{National Policy on Employment and Persons with Disability}.

EMP
- Amendments to the \textit{1969 Employment (Persons with Disability) Act} place responsibility for the implementation of the Act on to the Employment, Training Corporation (ETC).

ILC

G&S
- The Health Division sets up the \textit{Child Development Advisory Unit (CDAU)}. The aim of the Unit was to ensure early comprehensive diagnosis, advice, support and early intervention for children born with a disability. The name was later changed to \textit{Child Development Assessment Unit}.

ED
- The University of Malta’s Institute for Child Development within the Faculty of Education, together with the Eden Foundation, begin \textit{training at tertiary level for ‘facilitators’} (later called \textit{learning support assistants}) who work with disabled children in need of learning support and who attend mainstream schools.

ILC
- Dar tal-Providenza opens its first residential unit in the community: \textit{Dar izz-Zerniq}, in Siggiewi.

1996

G&S
- KNPD, together with Aġenzija APPOĠĠ within the Social Welfare Development Programme (SWDP) sets up the \textit{Disability Social Work Unit}. The unit, later renamed Aġenzija Sapport, offers social work services to disabled persons and their family members, as and when necessary.

G&S
- Aġenzija Sapport would go on to open and manage the following small residential homes in the community for disabled persons:
  - A Housing Authority apartment in Fgura;
  - A Housing Authority apartment in Kirkop;
  - Villino Maria, a purposely built (government owned) bungalow in Mtarfa;
  - Vajrita Residence in Marsascala comprising of twelve flatlets;
  - A Housing Authority townhouse in Cospicua, Dar Andrew.
The ETC sets up its **Bridging the Gap Scheme**.

The ETC sets up its **Supported Employment Scheme**. Today the ETC has a variety of schemes based on national and EU funding.

The ETC sets up a **specialised unit** responsible for facilitating the training and employment of disabled people on its (the ETC’s) Disabled Persons Unemployment Register.

KNPD, the Deaf Persons’ Family Group, together with the Telemalta Corporation set up a committee to provide a telephone **Relay Service** for text-telephone users.

The Public Transport Authority decides that any **new public buses would have to be accessible to all**, including wheelchair users.

KNPD and the Management Systems Unit (MSU) set up a small **Information Technology Resource Centre** for disabled people at Blata l-Bajda.

KNPD sets up the Continuous Education, Research and Training Programme, known as **PEKTUR**. The programme offers limited financial assistance to persons who wish to carry out research or further their studies in disability issues. The programme gives priority to disabled applicants.

**1997**

The Ministry of Works and Construction, in consultation with KNPD, sets up an **Accessibility Unit**, with the aim of ensuring that all public buildings become accessible to all, including wheelchair users.

The Public Transport Authority issues permits to allow the importation, on a trial basis, of **three low-floor/super low-floor buses**, which begin operating on different bus routes.

The Ministry for Social Protection publishes a White Paper on the **Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Bill**.

**1998**

The Ministry of Education and Culture sets up a **Ministerial Committee for Inclusive Education**. The main aim of the committee is to give a clearer vision to the inclusive education sector.

The University of Malta inaugurates the **first training course for teachers of the Deaf**.

The Ministry for Social Protection set up the **Vajrita Day Centre** in Marsascala for persons with an intellectual impairment.

For the first time the Ministry for Social Policy appoints an **Assistant Director responsible for Day Services**.
1999

**MEPA CIRCULAR PA 3/99**
- Announced the enactment of the Equal Opportunities (Persons With Disability) Act in 2000
- that the Planning Authority would be assess applications for new buildings, or for changes of use to new buildings ‘of major use’, to ensure that they are accessible and meet the requirements for Access For All
- that KNPD would vet plans and issue final certification that a building is accessible and that no Development Permission will be granted without prior approval from KNPD.

**ACS**
- KNPD publishes an accessibility guideline entitled: Streets for All.

**ED**
- The Education Division publishes a National Minimum Curriculum. It is the first time that the education of disabled students is treated as a mainstream issues.

**ILC**
- KNPD commissions the Management Systems Unit to prepare a report about Residential Services for Persons with Disability.

**ED**
- KNPD organises a week-long training workshop for disability activists. Keynote speakers are: Prof. Mike Oliver, Ms. Joy Oliver and Prof. Len Barton. The workshop is the first of its kind in Malta.

**EMP**

**G&S**
- The Ministry for Social Policy opens the first small, community-based day centre in Mtarfa. It is situated in a building made available by the Housing Authority.

2000

**LEG**
- The House of Representatives enacts The Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act.
- The Parliamentary Secretariat within the Ministry for Home Affairs introduces a regulation to the effect that all new buildings ‘of major use’ must be accessible to all, including wheelchair users.
- The Planning Authority entrusts KNPD with the responsibility of vetting plans for new building projects ‘of major use’ for accessibility compliance.

**ACS**
- In order to carry out this task properly KNPD:
  - engages the services of architects with an interest in access for all issues;
  - sets up an Access for All section within KNPD;
  - embarks on a public awareness campaign of information sharing and technical
support aimed at facilitating compliance with access for all requirements;
- publishes the first edition of Access for All Design Guidelines.

**ILC**
- With the support of KNPD the Deaf People’s Association introduces a Maltese Sign Language Interpretation Service.
- The Ministry of Education, through the Ministerial Committee for Inclusive Education publishes ‘Inclusive Education: a policy document regarding students with disability’.

**ED**
- The Malta College for Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) is set up. MCAST offers better opportunities for disabled persons to further their post-secondary education and improve their employment prospects.
- KNPD begins an on-going programme of training for young, disability activists. The programme is entitled: Semma Leħnek! (Speak Out!).
- Official opening of Dar Arka, a Catholic Church foundation, in Ghajnsielem Gozo, offering respite, residential and other services to disabled people and their families in Gozo.
- For the first time KNPD sets up an EU Desk.

### 2001

**G&S**
- KNPD and the Malta Information Technology Agency (MITA), together and with the support of representatives from the private sector, set up the Foundation for Information Technology Accessibility (FITA).
- A unit dealing with Supported Living in the Community is set up, which eventually evolves into Aġenzija Sapport.

**G&S**
- On the recommendation of KNPD government grants work permits to foreign persons seeking employment as disabled persons’ live-in personal assistants.

**ILC**
- The Housing Authority sets up a scheme for the installation of lifts in government housing projects which have disabled residents.
- KNPD becomes a permanent member on civil society board of the Malta Council for Economic and Social Development (MCESD)

### 2002

**ACS**
- The Planning Authority adopts the “Access for All – Design Guidelines” issued by the KNPD, to replace the planning guidance which had been adopted in 1994. (MEPA Circular Pa 2/02).

**ED**
- KNPD sets up The Test of Reasonableness Board.
- The Ministry of Education publish a document entitled: Examination Arrangements
Two new, small community-based Day Centres are opened in Pembroke and Cottonera.

Aġenzija Sapport opens three, small residences in the community for disabled persons in Fgura, Kirkop and Marsascala.

The Arbitration Centre issues a first judgement based on the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act. It decides in favour of disabled persons in the case of lack of accessibility to the stage at St. James Cavalier, Valletta.

The Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) sets up the Pathway Programme to cater for students who have an intellectual impairment.

Aġenzija Sapport opens a small community-based day centre for disabled persons in Swatar.

KNPD publishes research findings entitled: The Economic Dimensions of Independent Supported Living for People with Disability.

Aġenzija Sapport opens two small community-based day centre for disabled persons in Marsascala and Mtarfa.

The Maltese Courts issue a first judgement based on the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act. It decides in favour of disabled persons in the case involving lack of physical accessibility to Student House at the University of Malta.

KNPD publishes the findings of its Research into the Major Concerns of Disabled Persons and Their Families.

KNPD begins representing Malta on the European Union’s High Level Group on Disability.

KNPD’s applications for EU funding under the Progress Programme prove successful on several occasions. The increased financial support allows KNPD to expand its public awareness campaigns.

The Spiteri Report, a review of the educational facilities for disabled children is concluded. (http://www.knpd.org/pubs/pdf/inceduc_rpte.pdf)

With the assistance of European Funds, ETC sets up the Supported Employment Scheme.
• KNPD launches a **self-advocacy programme for people with an intellectual impairment** entitled: *It’s Our Turn to Speak Out*. The programme aims at providing space for people with an intellectual impairment to express their wishes and aspirations as well as to encourage them to become more involved in decision-making processes. The self-advocacy programme’s findings are later published.

• A self-advocacy pilot group is set up entitled: *Flimkienaslù*. Later on this group becomes the first non-government organisation owned and run by people with an intellectual impairment.

• **A VAT refund scheme** of the purchase of assistive apparatus for persons with disability is introduced.

• KNPD and Aġenzija Sapport participate in the EU-funded project: *Practical Tools for Effective and Practical Policy Mainstreaming (EDAMAT)*.

• KNPD participates in the EU-funded programme: *Access to Professional Training*, organised by De Montfort University.

• Together with the University of Leeds, KNPD participates in the Eu-funded project *Defining Reasonable Access*.

2006

• The University of Malta sets up the ‘**ACCESS: Disability Support Committee**’.

• KNPD submits its **position paper to the Ministry for Tourism** as part of the drafting of a Tourism Policy and Plan for Malta

• The Catholic Church inaugurated *Dar Pirotta* in Birkirkara providing a home for disabled people, as well as a centre for disabled people and their families who living in the locality.

2007

• **Day Services for Adults With Disability** begin to be administered by Aġenzija SAPPORT within the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS).

• KNPD sets up its **Consultative Committee of People with an Intellectual Impairment**.


• KNPD publishes a set of guidelines entitled: *Drittijiet, Mhux Karita’: Miżuri għall-Maįstřoming tal-Persuni b’Diżabilita’* (**Rights Not Charity: Mainstreaming Persons with Disability**).
ILC • Dar il-Wens moves from the village of Paola to Kalkara, where it sets up a new home for 15 disabled persons.

ED • KNPD is one of the founder-members of European Union’s Academic Network of European Experts on Disability (ANED).

2008

ILC • The Ministry for Gozo appoints a Gozo Disability Coordinator.

ILCs • Aġenzija Sapport opens a small community-based residence for disabled persons in Bormla.

ED • KNPD publishes four reading books for primary school children. These books focus on the experiences of four children with different impairments.

2009

EMP • The EU-funded employment scheme ME2 is launched.

ED • KNPD publishes its analysis of the situation of disabled people in Malta and Gozo. The analysis is based on information in the 2005 National Census.

2010

ILC • KNPD organises a project entitled: Mobility and Orientation for Blind and Visually Impaired Persons. The programme is made possible with EU funds.

2011

ILC • The Public Transport Authority introduces wheelchair accessible route buses for the first time in the Maltese Islands.

G&S • KNPD, with partial funding from the European Union, sets up the Sonia Tanti Independent Living Centre in Hal-Far.

ILC • KNPD publishes a policy regarding Supported Independent Living

ED • The University of Malta sets up a Disability Studies Unit within the Faculty for Economics, Management and Accountancy.

ILC • Guide dogs begin to be used by blind persons thanks to the Malta Guide Dogs
With the support of EU funding KNPD participates in the European Union’s Social Tourism Calypso 1,2 and 3 Projects.

The Foundation for Information Technology Accessibility (FITA) launches an Maltese Speech Engine. The project is made possible thanks to EU-funding and the involvement of the IT private sector.

2012

- KNPD participates in preparations for the setting up of an award entitled: Rewarding efforts and excellence in accessible tourism
- L.N. 351 of 2012 – the Malta Travel And Tourism Services Act (CAP. 409), Tourism Accommodation Establishments Regulations, 2012 includes the requirement that facilities are made available for disabled guests
- Together with the Head of Standardization within the Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority, KNPD sets in motion the process to ensure that the Access for All Design Guidelines become accepted as Design for All National Standards.
- Malta ratifies the UNCRPD and its Optional Protocol (October).
- The UNCRPD and its Optional Protocol come into effect (November).
- The Guardianship Act comes into effect
- Dar tal-Providenza inaugurates Dar Aquarelle, a small residence for three physically disabled persons, in Qawra.
- Fondazzjoni Wens, utilising state and EU funds, opens another residential home for 14 disabled people in Fgura.

2013

- The Disability Studies Unit becomes the Department of Disability Disability Studies within the newly established Faculty for Social Wellbeing
- The circular introduces a Protocol To Regulate Development Planning Applications In Terms Of “Access For All” Requirements