

One Voice

Official Voice of the National Federation for the disability sector

Issue 1 – May 2018



**ENABLING INCLUSION
THROUGH EMPLOYMENT**

The Lino Spiteri Foundation

**I AM
ABLE**

linospiterifoundation.org



The President's Trust

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Esplora Interactive Science Centre
was part-financed by ERDF



PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIAT
FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES,
DIGITAL ECONOMY AND INNOVATION

UP NEXT



Bloody-Late

Late Event by
National Blood Transfusion Unit
Esplora, Kalkara

The aim of the event is to raise awareness about the significance of blood donation in Malta. During this event, experts, nurses and patients will be delivering sessions to explain the composition of blood and to give insight on blood groups. Participants will get to know more about blood donation and the process involved until it reaches the donor.

BLOOD DONATION

Available: 4-6pm, Free of charge

18+
ADULTS
ONLY



programmes@esplora.org.mt
For registration



2360 2300
For registration and queries



18:00 - 22:00
Opening hours



€10 (Incl. Planetarium)
Exhibits, Talks and Planetarium

[Friday] 15TH JUN 2018



Sports and Health

Week event
Esplora, Kalkara

This event seeks to raise awareness on the importance of healthy eating and about common health conditions among 60+ year-old people in Malta. The benefits of exercise and overall active ageing will also be topics of discussion. Interactive talks about nutrition, aerobics and/or sequence and line dancing sessions will be held. Participants will have access to free blood glucose and blood pressure testing.



programmes@esplora.org.mt
For registration



2360 2300
For registration and queries



09:00 - 15:00
Opening hours



60 PLACES PER DAY
€6
Entrance fee

12TH - 15TH JUN 2018

Credits and the President's Message:

One Voice is a magazine published by the Malta Federation of Organisations Persons with Disability (MFOPD).

As its title implies, the magazine is the official, unified voice of Malta's civil society working in the disability sector. It portrays the mission and vision of the various Organisations active in this sphere as represented by their umbrella Federation.

One Voice

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Front Page Photos:

Main Photo: The Signing Ceremony of the Memorandum of Understanding between MFOPD and The President's Trust, under the supervision of Her Excellency the President of the Republic of Malta, Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, July 2017

Top Right Photo: The largest international conference organised in Malta to date by the MFOPD held during Malta's EU Presidency last year, in collaboration with the European Disability Forum and the European Union of Supported Employment

Bottom Right Photo: The launching of MFOPD's Erasmus plus trans-national project for persons with intellectual disabilities attended by the Hon. Parliamentary Secretary responsible for EU Funds, Dr. Aaron Farrugia MP, October 2017. The project is being developed in conjunction with partner Organisations from Belgium, Finland, Greece, Northern Ireland and Sweden



Welcome to this very first publication of the Malta Federation of Organisations Persons with Disability (MFOPD) – ONE VOICE.

MFOPD is a voluntary non-governmental Organisation and is the national umbrella Organisation for the disability sector. It was founded forty eight years ago. The mission of the Federation is to create a movement in favour of rights for persons with disability and the development and strengthening of measures and services which improve the lives of persons with disability and that of their families.

Thanks to the work of all the past persons involved within the Federation, MFOPD is still making a difference in our lives. It is very important for the Organisations working in our sector to come together under this umbrella Organisation as we count more when we speak with a strong united voice. Under this umbrella Organisation, we NGOs become a single entity. It is important to have a single unified public message especially in our sensitive sector. We are dealing with persons - their like, needs and rights. We cannot have multiple points of view when we speak, as that would mean no longer a single entity with one vision but several unconnected viewpoints.

The name of our publication ONE VOICE was intentionally chosen. We want to send the message that we are one voice and we believe in our voice. It is important to always have

and send out a single unified message as otherwise, we will create confusion. Not speaking with one voice creates division, something which I am certain we all agree we do not want in our sector.

I am sure that all of us work and want the best for all persons with disability living on our islands. There are many needs and demands and a non-united civil society representation going off in too many tangents and directions gives the impression that we – persons with disability, their families and NGOs – are fragmented.

Let us make our one voice heard. Let us make the mission of the Federation a reality. MFOPD has a place for everyone within its structure and is open for all. To all of you out there who believe in our sector and want to make a difference, unite with us and become a member of MFOPD. There is strength in numbers and only strong, clear consistent voices have a real chance to be heard.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank all previous Presidents of the Federation and representatives of the various NGOs who were instrumental for MFOPD's long, not easy journey of 48 years. I would like to heartily thank all present NGOs and individual members of the Federation for believing in the Federation and are active within it.

MFOPD's best ambassadors are us with our one voice.

Marthese Mugliette
President
MFOPD





The NGOs enrolled with MFOPD

The Federation designates three distinctive categories of membership:

- NGOs which represent persons with disability, as well as parents, carers or guardians of persons with disability who cannot be their own representatives
- Individual Members
- Service Providers

The number of members, pertaining to each category, is increasing steadily year after year. This is

consistent with the growing national representation and the various initiatives which have registered a marked upsurge in frequency and in interaction with individuals and members throughout the years.

Our NGO Members include the enlisted established Organisations, Associations and Institutions who are active within the Federation. It is worth noting that the Federation represents the most extensive number of active Non-Governmental Organisations operating in the disability sector acting as representative Organisations or as Service Providers.

<https://adhdmalta.com/>

ADHD Family Support Group



The group was set up in 1996 by parents needing adequate support for their children. The main aims of the Group are to support, empower, educate and encourage any person involved with ADHD and related conditions, and to advocate the rights of persons with ADHD.

The objective of the Group was

to share the knowledge acquired and to sensitize professionals in the process. ADHD Malta is a Founder Member of ADHD Europe, a member of the Malta Health Network, the EPHA (European Public Health Alliance), EPF (European Patients Forum) and IAPO (International Alliance of Patients Organisations)

<http://www.autismparentsassociation.com>

Autism Parents' Association



APA has been set up by parents of children on the spectrum of autism, and to date it numbers nearly 300 family members. The aim of the Association is to create awareness within the local society regarding the said condition. This need arises from the fact that Autism is a condition which portrays no visible characteristics, thus it may be easily overlooked. Statistics

demonstrate that the number of children on the spectrum of autism is on the increase. Unfortunately, parents experience all sorts of hardship both at the diagnostic stage and when identifying the needs of their children. Currently including nearly 300 family members in the association, all of whom are parents of children on the spectrum of Autism.

Caritas Malta Epilepsy Association



It is estimated that there are more than 4,000 people who suffer from epilepsy on the Maltese Islands. The Caritas Malta Epilepsy Association (CMEA) was set up in 1996 by voluntary workers in the field and now lists close to 400 members. In May 2001 the Association was accepted as a Full Member of the International Bureau for Epilepsy (IBE).

The Association caters for persons with Epilepsy and their families. It aims to promote understanding and local awareness about epilepsy, especially due to the stigma linked to this condition, particularly in terms of employment. The Association's campaign is aimed at improving health care services, treatment and social acceptance of epilepsy as a serious yet treatable brain disorder.

Raising public and professional awareness and dispelling myths about epilepsy through media, talks, publications, videos and leaflets, is one of the key objectives. The Association organised various national conferences on the subject details of which appear on both the national and international conference records.

CMEA regularly organises in-service courses in conjunction with the Education Department for teachers and facilitators. It also endeavours to send representatives of the Association to international conferences in order to achieve more insight into epilepsy and its management as well as to interact with other Organisations so as to broaden knowledge and experience in the matter.

Commission for the Sick and the Disabled



The Commission for the Sick and the Disabled is an internal Commission forming part of Azzjoni Kattolika Malta (AKM) which was established in 1930 by Rev Prof Daniel Callus OP who set up the Lega Universitaria Cattolica Maltese thus laying the foundations for the Catholic Action in Malta. In the early sixties, Monsignor Mikiel Azzopardi founded the Commission for the Sick and the Disabled in order to create a proper structure by which the Church in Malta could aid and

assist persons with disability and their family rather than letting them depend merely on alms and charitable collections.

The Commission is still very active to date and serves as an important tool by which the Church in Malta interacts with the sick and persons with disability. In 2015, the Archbishop of Malta initiated the first steps by which the founder of the Commission would be scrutinised in relation to the beatification process.

Dar tal-Providenza



Id-Dar tal-Providenza was founded in 1965 with the aim of offering a home with a warm and family like environment to persons with disabilities who for some reason would be unable to live with their family. Since its inception, id-Dar tal-Providenza has supported its residents to achieve the quality of life within the community as the human dignity requires. Today id-Dar tal-Providenza is made up of three residences: Villa Monsinjur Gonzi, Villa Papa Giovanni and Villa Papa Luciani. It also includes four community homes, called Żernieq in Siġġiewi, Akkwarell in Qawra, Dar Pirota in Birkirkara, and Shalom in Żurrieq.

Currently, id-Dar tal-Providenza hosts approximately one hundred

and ten residents in the age range of fourteen to eighty years. It also offers respite services on a regular basis to families of persons with disabilities, offering support to enable the family member with disabilities to continue to live within the family.

Some of the residents attend activities outside the Home in Day Centres. Other residents have a job within the Home or established enterprises. The running of the Homes requires approximately four million euros per annum, much of which is the accumulated wages of about 200 employees who support the residents in their daily needs. About 200 other highly committed volunteers offer their support on a regular basis.

Down Syndrome Association



The Down Syndrome Association is one of Malta's largest and leading disability NGOs. Its aims are various. One is to encourage persons who have Down syndrome to fulfil their potential for successful and happy lives in a society that recognises their abilities and is supportive of their needs. It also considers as a major responsibility to contact parents of newborns who have Down syndrome as early as possible so as to provide counselling and support particularly in the early stages of the baby's life. It aims to represent

the interests and needs of persons with Down syndrome in all aspects of life and needs, both as individuals and as members of a family and the community. It undertakes to increase public awareness and understanding of the nature of the condition so they too can lead a rewarding and full life while pursuing the case for better services and greater choice in the facilities offered to children and adults who have Down syndrome, namely in education, therapy, training, leisure and independent living.

Equal Partners Foundation



The Equal Partners Foundation is a parent run foundation established in 1999, with the primary objective of supporting individuals with disability and learning difficulties. The Foundation is a leader in innovative inclusive practices. Its mission statement maintains as the Foundation's priority "to be in partnership with

individuals with disabilities, their families and the community, and to promote and facilitate informed personal choices and meaningful lives." Equal Partners Foundation was set up when a group of 12 families, all parents of children with a disability, shared their need to feel more involved in their children's education.

Fondazzjoni Arka



Founded on 3 December 2000, Arka Foundation is a voluntary, non-governmental Organization which promotes the welfare of both people with disability and their families. It aims to create and foster a positive attitude towards persons with disability; enrich their

quality of life; promote community integration and access by loaning special aids and equipment; form links in the local community by organizing excursions and similar activities; and facilitate support groups who cater for this vulnerable group.

Fondazzjoni San Lazzru



The St. Lazarus Foundation is the local charitable and philanthropic arm of the International Confraternity of Lazarites, actively registered in the United Nations and representing 14,000 members worldwide. The Foundation financially assists various local and international projects related to persons with disability. It developed its own inbuilt *Believe in Me*

Project for persons with disability and is an active member of various platforms including the European Disability Forum, Inclusion Europe, and Inclusion International.

Its local membership surpasses the 300 mark and to date, nearly €400,000 have been donated to various institutions and projects, including initiatives directly related to persons with disability.

Fondazzjoni Nanniet Malta



Nanniet (Grandparents) Malta is a community-based Organisation which has the goal to improve the relationship and well-being between Grandparents and their Grandchildren through collective activities benefiting themselves and their community. Grandparents Malta Foundation was created on 23 September 2013 by Philip M. Chircop obtaining the distinguished Patronage of HE Dr George Abela, then President of the Republic of Malta. Grandparents Day was established in Malta by 'Nanniet Malta' (Grandparents Malta Foundation) with the aim to instil in children and youth respect for

forefathers and to encourage them to look up to their Grandparents not only on this day, but throughout their lives.

Grandparents Day was celebrated for the first time in 2013 on Sunday 20 October, highlighting the grandparents' mission within the Maltese family life. Knowing full well that an increasing number of Grandparents members interact continuously with their grandchildren who have physical and/or intellectual disability, the NGO works hand in hand with the Federation of Organisations catering for the disability sector to project information and skills to its members.

Fondazzjoni Wens



Fondazzjoni Wens is committed to enhance the quality of life of persons with disability through innovative personalised support, expertise, and advocacy. It ensures that persons with disability can execute their right to fully participate within community life. The Foundation runs Dar il-Wens Residential Homes in Kalkara and Fgura and The Independent Living Apartments in Paola.

These are places of respite and support that ensure optimal training of these persons to attain independent living skills. It aims to develop the potential of these individuals and the quality of life enjoyed by them. The Foundation creates numerous initiatives for its residents, including edutainment opportunities, recreational projects, work-related initiatives and social and cultural excursions on a monthly basis.

Ghaqda Hbieb Sptar Monte Carmeli



The Friends of Mount Carmel Hospital Society seeks to promote awareness within the community towards persons who are receiving treatment at Mount Carmel Hospital. This is achieved by acting as a link between the hospital and the community and by being of assistance so that services delivered

within Mount Carmel Hospital would be of greater benefit to users.

Beneficiaries of this NGO also include persons who are receiving treatment at both St Luke's Hospital and Mater Dei Hospital, specifically the Psychiatric Unit and Outpatients, the Child Guidance Clinic and Psychiatric Outpatients.

Għaqda Żgħażaġh b'Diżabbiltà



The Għaqda Żgħażaġh b'Diżabbiltà was founded in 1976 by Ronald Galea together with an energetic team of youths with disability. It was the precursor of the Fondazzjoni Wens. However, throughout these years, this Organisation always managed to find a team of dynamic youths to further the aims of the Organisation, which have to date remained unchanged.

The aims of this NGO is to create

a synergic environment for youths with disability and offer them the best possibilities of communal integration, independent living, assisted employment and other services. Throughout the years, the NGO has endeavoured to participate in a number of projects, including joint projects with other NGOs within the disability sector, with funding allocated from national and EU sources.

<http://www.caremalta.com/hila/>

Hila Homes.

HILA

HILA's belief is encompassed in its mission statement: "Empowering persons through choice and developing individual abilities towards an inclusive and fulfilling life." Through HILA, CareMalta believes that it is in a unique position to offer respite services and also operate and manage residential facilities for persons with disability. Embarking in this new sector, serving persons with disability, is a natural extension of the capabilities and range of services offered by CareMalta Group. HILA first inaugurated Casa Apap Bologna in Mosta which is a beautiful town house situated in the heart of the town. Previously owned by a magistrate, it carries with it an element of prestige as a

highly renowned home in its area.

The house is strategically located in the centre of the community, serving well those residents who would wish to avail themselves of services offered in the area, since everything is within close distance. Its positioning also promotes inclusion, which is something HILA strongly believes in. HILA's second home, Casa Santa Monica in Qormi, operates as an Independent Supported Living home for long-term stays. HILA believes that it will have a cutting edge in this service provision as it will be offering a setup where, irrespective of the level of dependency of the resident, it will ensure that a person-centred approach is applied and the abilities of the individual are fully developed.

Inspire Foundation



Inspire believes that everyone has a right to equality and inclusion. Its mission is to try to help everyone with a disability achieve this. This is achieved by providing individuals and their families with educational, therapeutic and leisure services. The Foundation also advocates inclusion, educates the general public, raises awareness among peers, and holds the best knowledge base on disability on the Island. The Inspire Foundation is the result of a merger between Eden Foundation and Razzett Tal-Hbiberija – two leading charities that worked in the field of disability.

The two Organisations transferred all their resources and employees over to the new Foundation, which now provides all the services in a one-stop-shop model avoiding duplication, enhancing service delivery and being more cost effective, leading to long term sustainability and added value. Today, Inspire helps over 1000 individuals with various disabilities ranging from Down syndrome, Autism, Cerebral Palsy and others. This is accomplished through many services and disability programmes that are offered at a highly subsidised rate or sometimes even for free.

Malta Association of Crohn's Disease and Colitis



The Malta Association of Crohn's and Colitis (MACC) is a registered (VO/ 379) non-profit-making Organisation supporting the needs of patients suffering from Crohn's disease and Ulcerative Colitis. MACC aims to offer support and information to persons and relatives of persons suffering from Crohn's Disease and Ulcerative Colitis, and to promote public awareness about these two chronic conditions. MACC strives to help patients suffering from these

conditions to enhance their self-confidence, improve their quality of life and improve their overall wellbeing.

MACC also intends to promote patients' needs and rights and to encourage and promote research on these conditions. MACC became affiliated with the European Federation of Crohn's and Ulcerative Colitis Associations (EFCCA) during the annual General Conference of EFCCA held in Helsinki, Finland in April 2010.

Malta Guide Dogs Foundation



The Malta Guide Dogs Foundation is a registered NGO whose aim is to offer services for Visually Impaired Persons. It was during 1997 that the National Commission Persons with Disability (KNPD) put forward the idea of setting up a guide dog association to benefit the blind and visually impaired in the Maltese Islands.

A small Board of Directors put together a set of rules and aims, and commenced raising funds for the enterprise. The project moved slowly but the sum of almost Lm8,000 (€18,500) was raised by subscriptions and donations in the following five years. In 2005 it was mooted that the Association be reorganised.

In July 2006 a charitable foundation was formed with a Board of Directors representing blind aid associations in Malta and Gozo. The

first meeting of the reconstituted Board was held on Wednesday, July 19, 2006. The principle aims of the Malta Guide Dogs Foundation are to:

- a) ensure equal opportunities for all, in particular for blind and visually impaired persons
- b) provide specific mobility services for blind and visually impaired persons where and when the need arises, especially the provision of guide dog services
- c) ensure that all public and private services in the Maltese Islands are accessible to all, including blind and visually impaired persons
- d) provide all necessary services for blind and visually impaired persons to achieve the maximum quality of life.

Malta Society of the Blind



The Malta Society of the Blind (MSB) was established in March 1962 under the chairmanship of the late Chief Justice Dr Wallace Gulia and has been holistically and morally supporting local blind and visually impaired persons and their families ever since. MSB is a registered NGO with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations VO/0191. The Logo and Statute of MSB are legally registered and the Society is also

registered with the Inland Revenue Department as a non-profit organisation (NGO).

The Board of MSB is made up of 7 officers and their majority are visually impaired, thus they can provide first hand help and support from experience. MSB's services and support are ongoing as it is determined to make a difference in our society. MSB has approximately 80 members hailing from Malta and Gozo.

ME, CFS and Fibromyalgia Alliance Malta



The ME, CFS and Fibromyalgia Alliance Malta is an Organisation registered with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations. It is a network providing for individuals with ME/CFS (Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome) and FM (Fibromyalgia) conditions and their respective Support & Carer Groups, advocating public awareness.

The ME/CFS & Fibromyalgia Alliance (Malta) is represented on the Working Committee which has been set up to address the needs of persons with ME & Fibromyalgia conditions. The working committee functions with the participation of all stakeholders, mainly Medical Specialists & other professions, in-

cluding ME & FM Sufferers representing the newly setup NGO.

The aim of the NGO is not to just offer support to sufferers and raise awareness of these specific conditions, but also to work with the Authorities to start clinics specialising in the care of patients. Although the condition has been placed on the Chronic Illnesses List, much is still to be done towards the recognition of the condition, with this NGO pushing and lobbying for it to be recognized as a disability. By means of the NGO's lobbying, the Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability has already recognised the condition as a disability, albeit more needs to be improved in this sector.

Mental Health Association



The Mental Health Association of Malta (MHAM) was set up in 1982 by Professor Abram Galea, some Mount Carmel Hospital Staff and other individuals, in order to help the families of persons with mental ill-health. At the time, it was known as the Schizophrenia Association but in 1998 the Association's name was changed to cater for various types of mental ill-health. The main aims of the MHAM are to educate the family members on how to cope with a family member suffering from mental ill-health,

apart from raising awareness on mental ill-health in order to reduce the stigma surrounding these types of illnesses.

For this purpose, the Association organises several support groups for carers where the latter can share experiences and support each other. The Association also organises a series of psycho-educational lectures where professionals in the field of mental health impart knowledge about mental illness to the relatives of the mentally ill.

Moviment Favur id-Drittijiet ta' Persuni b'Dizabilità



The Disability Rights Movement is a global social movement to secure equal opportunities and equal rights for all people with disabilities. MFOPD is all about this. MFDPD is made up of parents of persons with intellectual disability and acts as advocacy to all who ask for their support – persons with disability, parents of and/or carers of

persons with disability avoid widow.

The Movement keeps itself informed about all that is happening in the disability sector both at local, national and international level so as to be in a position to push forward the necessary issues at MFOPD level. The issues are then discussed and acted upon with the involvement of all MFOPD members.

<http://www.msmalta.org.mt/>

Multiple Sclerosis Society of Malta



The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Malta (VO/43) was founded in 1997 and provides a voluntary means to enhance and expand public awareness, individual and family services and rehabilitation in Multiple Sclerosis (MS). It primarily offers subsidised physiotherapy to its members with Multiple Sclerosis and group psychotherapy for the whole family. It also seeks novel knowledge, disseminates it and

applies it for the benefit of persons with MS.

The total number of members is 180, comparable to the fact that people in Malta known to have MS amount to 320. The Society improves the life of MS patients by subsidising many different forms of therapy, mainly physiotherapy. This is possible thanks to the hard work of several people, and the funds raised.

National Association of Pensioners.



The role of the National Association of Pensioners (NAP) is to monitor the situation of pensioners in Malta and to voice the opinions and concerns of pensioners in society. The Association is registered with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations (VO/0255). The Association is fully represented within the National Council for the Elderly and is very active in bringing to the attention of the Authorities, and the public

in general, issues which affect the daily life of its pensioner members.

The Association also includes members who have a disability and, as is the trend all over Europe, it staunchly believes that certain issues, such as accessibility, inclusivity, independent living and other similar rights enshrined in the United Nations Charter for the Rights of Persons, should be jointly tackled by the pensioners' platform and the disability sector.

Opening Doors Malta



This is an arts Organisation which provides opportunities for adults (18+) with diverse intellectual needs. It includes a Theatre group, a Dance group and a Music group who meet for classes once or twice a week. Performances and Open-Air Jams are held for the public in outdoor and indoor spaces in various localities on the Maltese Islands. The Organisation's core activities are funded by the Arts Council of Malta through the Cultural Partnerships Agreement, and Premju tal-President għall-Kreattività.

The Association's ethos is to promote creative processes and artistic skills to adults with learning disability. All projects engage adults

with learning disability in processes which facilitate the creation of the persons' own work and aesthetic values. The Association empowers its clients taking ownership of the work and process.

The Association manages to address its ambitious plans thanks to the creative professionals engaged to develop projects, to active volunteers, artists and other members whose commitment and energy drives everyone to achieve more. Opening Doors Association exists because the members believe in cultural rights and accessibility. The entire cohort is committed to the creative expression of people with learning disability.

T1D Little Warriors



The T1D Little Warriors was recently established in Malta as a non-profit Organization dedicated solely to the support of research in Type 1 diabetes and to provide the best possible clinical and educational programmes for people, especially young children, with the disease.

The Foundation's mission is to raise funds to support these

initiatives, to coordinate with similar European and international Organisations who have more research-backed studies and information which can be used and disseminated locally, and to ensure that T1D is properly understood and noted by everyone, since children who are not promptly diagnosed with T1D may suffer severe complications which could be avoided.

S.T.A.N.D (Striving Towards Ability Not Disability)

STAND

S.T.A.N.D (Striving Towards Ability Not Disability) is an Organisation registered with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations. It was set up more than twenty years ago and is based in St. Paul's Bay. It organises several activities for persons with disability, such as educational, cultural and spiritual events.

S.T.A.N.D promotes the integration of persons with disability

within society, with the main objective of instilling, encouraging and motivating young persons to improve their way of life through communication, training and development in order to attain the goal of employment.

S.T.A.N.D offers a number of services to its members, including Speech therapy, Educational activities and various social gatherings.

Physically Handicapped Rehabilitation Fund (PHRF)



Avery disturbing calamity struck the Maltese Islands toward the end of 1942 and early 1943. It was the outbreak of poliomyelitis which baffled, to a very large extent, the local medical authorities and it affected mostly children. At the time, it was reckoned that about 369 persons had fallen victims, apart from the 18 who had died. Mrs. F.C.R. Douglas, the wife of the then Governor of Malta, immediately realized the problem and she succeeded in getting the support of a group of co-workers to set up The Infantile Paralysis Rehabilitation Fund to raise funds towards the building of a Rehabilitation Centre to afford training suitable to those affected. It was also thought that when the clients grow up, they would be independent and useful citizens rather than a liability to themselves, their families and the State.

This objective was never lost sight of, and those that succeeded Mrs Douglas kept in mind this aim. Throughout

the years, all endeavoured to organize rehabilitation schemes in different localities whereby the paraplegics realized that, in spite of their disability, what was primarily essential was that they live a normal life in a dignified manner.

On 14 February 1971, the Rehabilitation Centre had its foundation stone laid by Lady Dorman, the President of the Physically Handicapped Rehabilitation Fund, on a plot of land provided by the government at Corradino Paola. The Physically Handicapped Rehabilitation Centre was completed and functional in a couple of years.

The Physically Handicapped Rehabilitation Centre today hosts three workshops; the computer Lab, the general workshop; and the soft toys workshop. These workshops are well attended and the Council is looking for ways and means to enhance the workshops. The Council is run on an entirely voluntary basis thus reducing administration costs to the minimum.

Malta Association of Supported Employment



After years of creating awareness on a national level for the need of introducing supported employment in Malta, for the betterment of persons with disability and also for vulnerable persons in Malta and Gozo, in 2014, the Malta Federation of Organisations Persons with Disability (MFOPD) set up the Malta Association of Supported Employment through the cooperation and interaction of various non-governmental Organisations and State Authorities and entities.

During 2015 and 2016, MASE was entrusted with funds granted by the Central Government in order to run a national pilot project with challenging targets to be reached on an annual basis. Utilising only 66% of funds made available, targets were not only reached but were nearly doubled in both years, thus ensuring that supported employment is here to stay.

MASE, and MFOPD are satisfied that, following their initiative, a number of State entities and NGO Service Providers are using supported employment as their key tool in order to ensure that vulnerable and persons with disability are successful in their employment requirements.

MASE was founded by the MFOPD

and the following NGOs and State entities (the latter are listed in blue):

- Believe in Me Project
- Breaking Limits
- Down Syndrome Association
- [Dun Manwel Attard Young Adults Resource Centre](#)
- [JobsPlus – formerly Employment and Training Corporation \(ETC\)](#)
- Empower Cooperative Ltd
- Equal Partners Foundation
- Fondazzjoni Suret il-Bniedem
- [Agenzija Support](#)
- Gozo Association for the Deaf
- Gozo Federation of Persons with Disability
- Inspire Foundation
- Malta Association for the Blind
- Malta Association of Occupational Therapists
- [Malta College for the Arts, Science and Technology \(MCAST\)](#)
- Mental Health Association
- [Ministry for Gozo](#)
- [Mount Carmel Hospital](#)
- [Public Administration Human Resources Office \(PAHRO\) - Office of the Prime Minister](#)
- Richmond Foundation
- Rise Foundation



MFOPD holds number of meetings with the Education Ministry

For Your Information



Mindful of its primary duty to represent civil society in all disability related issues, the Malta Federation of Organisations Persons with Disability holds regular consultative and lobbying meetings with various Ministries and State entities in order to discuss certain issues which are of interest to the community in question. Most of the issues raised are, in fact, brought forward to MFOPD Council by its member NGOs due to MFOPD being recognised by all as the national Federation representing all disability issues.

These meetings are held regularly, year in year out. In this last year, MFOPD has had a number of meetings with the Honorable Minister of Education and Employment as well as other high ranking officials from the Directorate for Educational Services. 26 issues which affect the daily life of persons with disability in the educational spheres of local activity were forwarded to the Minister and were discussed at length during the ensuing two meetings the Federation had with Ms Mc Namara, Director General Educational Services and with Ms Josanne Ghirxi, Service Manager (Inclusive Education) from the Directorate for Educational Services. The second meeting was also attended by Mr Oliver Scicluna, Commissioner for the Rights of Persons with Disability and Mr George Borg, CRPD Advisor, the latter having extensive experience in the educational sector.

These meetings afforded MFOPD the opportunity to

be informed better about recent developments vis-à-vis educational services for students with disability. MFOPD requested the Ministry for Education and Employment to keep the Federation, and consequently all the related disability NGOs, updated with any changes and developments in this sector, including related policies that are relevant to students with disability. This suggestion was seconded by the Commissioner and was instantly accepted as a decision taken on board by the Ministry.

Furthermore, the Director General informed the Federation that whenever a student with disability faces a particular problem/situation during his/her educational years, the student is currently being assisted by the Trans-Disciplinary Team of the College concerned. Such teams are present in each College on the Islands and include the INCO. It was also stated that such cases will involve the Education Officers (Inclusion), Assistant Director (Inclusion) and Assistant Director (Special Education) so as a holistic solution may be achieved.

A further endeavour towards the most adequate solution was taken into account. If, for any reason, the issue in question is not deemed as being sufficiently addressed, the Director National School Support Services and the College Principal would be alerted. Furthermore, if the same situation would still not be satisfactorily tackled after all the possible interventions are employed, the situation/issue would then be forwarded directly to Ms Mc Namara, Director General Educational Services, on her email address: dg.des@gov.mt



United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability

This paper is an EasyRead guide to the full agreement. It is not a legal paper. You need to look at the full agreement itself if you want to know what exactly the agreement says, or what countries have signed up for.

You can find the full agreement on the Unenable website at: www.un.org/disabilities/

The name of the full agreement is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. You may also see or hear it called the United Nations Convention on Disability Rights.

1. This agreement

This agreement sets out what countries have to do to make sure that disabled people have the same rights as everybody else.

2. What the words mean

- Communication means the ways that help disabled people to talk and understand information, for example computers, easy read or Braille.
- Discrimination means being treated unfairly or not getting the changes you need because you are disabled.
- Language means any way people talk to each other including sign language.

3. The basic ideas

These are:

- People are free to make their own choices
- No one will be discriminated against

- Disabled people have the same rights to be included in society as anybody else
- Disabled people are to be respected for who they are
- Everyone should have equal opportunities
- Everyone should have equal access
- Men and women should have equal opportunities
- Disabled children should be respected for who they are as they grow up

4. What countries should do

All countries should make sure that disabled people actually do get treated equally.

They agree to do this by:

- Making rules and laws to give disabled people their rights and changing any laws that aren't fair
- Making sure the rights of disabled people to be treated equally are included in all policies
- Not doing things that are against this agreement
- Making sure governments and authorities do the things in this agreement
- Doing as much as they can to make sure no one discriminates against disabled people
- Making sure things are designed for everyone to use or that can be easily changed
- Using new technology to help disabled people
- Giving accessible information to disabled people about the things that will help them
- Training people about this agreement.

All countries promise to do as much as they can afford to make sure disabled people have equal access to things like housing, education and health care.

All countries should involve disabled people in making new laws and policies.



5. Being equal

Countries agree that everyone is equal under the law and that discrimination against disabled people will not be allowed.

6. Women with disabilities being treated equally

Countries agree that women and girls who are disabled are treated unfairly in lots of different ways.

Countries will work to make sure that disabled women and girls have full, free and equal lives.

7. Children with disabilities being treated equally

Countries agree that disabled children have the same rights as other children and are treated equally with others.

What is best for the child will be the most important thing to think about.

Countries agree that disabled children have the right to be heard in all things that can affect them in their life. Support will be given to children to help make this happen.

8. Giving people information about disability

Countries agree to do things to make everyone else aware that disabled people have the same rights as everyone else and to show them what disabled people can do.

They should do this by:

- Having campaigns to change the way some people think about disabled people's life
- Showing everyone what jobs disabled people can do
- Teaching all children about equal rights for disabled people
- Getting the media to show disabled people properly
- Supporting more disability awareness work

9. Accessibility

Countries should make sure disabled people have better access to things in all areas of life.

- There should be better access to public buildings like hospitals and schools, and transport
- There should be better access to information
- Signs should be in easy read and Braille
- More guides and sign language interpreters should be available in public buildings
- There should be guide lines about how to make access to public services better
- Anyone providing services should plan for good access for disabled people
- Accessibility training should be given
- They should make sure that disabled people have access to new technology

10. Right to life

Everyone has the right to life including disabled people.

Countries should make sure disabled people have the same chances as anyone else to live their life.

11. Emergencies

Making sure that disabled people are properly protected when there are risky situations for everyone, for example when hurricanes happen.

12. Being treated equally by the law

Disabled people are to be respected by the law like everyone else.

Disabled people have the same right to make their own decisions about important things as everyone else.

Disabled people should have the proper support they need when making decisions.

If a person really does need someone else to speak for them there should be rules to make sure this is done properly.

Disabled people have equal rights to:

- Own or be given property
- Control their own money
- Be able to borrow money the same as anyone else
- Not have their homes or money taken away from them

13. Getting justice

Disabled people should have the same rights to go to Court, take other people to Court or take part in what happens in courts as anyone else.

Disabled people should get support to make sure they get these rights.

Countries should have special training for Courts, police and prison staff.

15. Not being tortured or treated cruelly

Disabled people must not be treated cruelly or tortured.

Disabled people must not be experimented on, especially medical experiments, (unless they freely agree).

Countries must do everything possible to make sure these things do not happen.



14. Being free and safe

Disabled people should be free and safe, the same as everyone else.

Disabled people should not be locked up just because they are disabled but only if the law says so for other reasons.

If disabled people are locked up they should be treated in the ways this agreement says.

They should also have the same rights that everyone else has under other international laws. This agreement does not list those rights but they include being:

- Given accessible information about their rights.
- Given access to help and support to get a fair hearing in a Court
- Having their case reviewed as often as other people would

16. Not being used or abused

Countries must make laws and rules to make sure disabled people are protected in the home and outside from violence, being used or abused.

Countries must also try to prevent abuse and they should make sure there is proper support, information and training on how to see abuse and how to report it.

Countries should make sure that services that support disabled people are properly checked upon to make sure abuse does not happen.

Countries should make sure that disabled people who have been abused get the help and support they need to keep them safe and help recover from the abuse.

Countries must make sure they have good ways of finding out about abuse and making the abusers go to Court.

Countries must think especially about the abuse of women and children.

17. Treating disabled people as people first

Disabled people's minds and bodies are their own and must be respected the same as everyone else's.

18. Moving around

Disabled people have the right:

- To decide where they live and to move about the same as every one else
- To belong to a country (be a citizen) and not have that taken away because they are disabled
- To have papers, like passports, that other people have
- To leave any country including their own
- Disabled children will have the right to a name from birth, a right to be a citizen and if possible, the right to know and be cared for by their parents

19. Independent living and being a part of the Community

Countries should make sure disabled people have the same choices as everyone else about how they live and being part of their communities.

Disabled people can choose:

- Where they live, the same as everyone else
- Who they live with, the same as everyone else
- And not to live in a particular place like a hostel if they don't want to
- From a range of different support services including personal assistance
- From the same range of services that other people can choose from and get a good service



20. Getting about

Countries should make sure disabled people can get about independently as much as possible.

They should:

- Help people get about
- Help people get good aids and help to get about
- Make sure these things don't cost too much
- Give training on how to get about
- Get companies that make aids to think about all different needs of disabled people

21. Saying what you want and access to information

Countries must make sure that disabled people have the right to find out and give information and to say what they want, the same as everyone else.

This includes:

- Information in the way you need it, Easy Read for example
- Providing sign languages, Braille and other ways of information
- Telling other services to do accessible information
- Getting the media, including the Internet to provide accessible information
- Supporting the use of sign language

22. Privacy

Disabled people have the right to a private life and no one should interfere with or get in the way of that.

Countries must make sure that personal information about disabled people is kept confidential or private the same as everyone else's.

23. Respect for the home and the family

Countries must make sure that disabled people have equal rights to marriage, a family and personal relationships.

Countries must make sure that:

- Disabled people have equal rights to get married and start a family as long as both of the couple want to.

- Disabled people have a right to decide how many children they have and when to have them, and not be sterilised against their will
- Disabled people have the right to family planning and other information to help them decide these things
- Countries will provide support to disabled people to help bring up their children
- Children with disabilities have the right not to be kept apart from their families. Countries must support disabled children and their families
- The rights of children come first
- Countries will make sure children are not taken away from their parents if they don't want to be, except when the law says it is in the best interests of the child. Children must not be taken away just because they or their parents are disabled

24. Education

Disabled people have a right to education.

Countries will make sure disabled people have the opportunity to go to mainstream schools and can carry on learning throughout their lives so that:

Disabled people are able to develop their skills and abilities and take their place in the world.

- Disabled people are not excluded from (kept out of) any sort of education
- Disabled people can go to good local schools, and don't have to pay for them, the same as everyone else
- Disabled people have their needs met as far as possible
- Disabled people get proper support to learn
- People can learn Braille and other ways of communicating as needed
- Teach people sign language and see it as a language of the deaf community
- Deaf and blind children get the right education and support for them to learn
- Make sure teachers have the right skills
- Provide the right support for disabled people to continue their education as adults if they want to



25. Health

Disabled people have the right to good health and access to health services including family planning.

Countries will:

- Make sure disabled people have access to the same health services as others
- Make sure disabled people get the health services they need because of their disability
- Make sure services are near to where people live
- Make sure health professionals give the same service to disabled people as to others
- Make sure disabled people are not discriminated against in health and life insurance
- Make sure people are not refused care or treatment because they are disabled

26. Services to help you recover

Countries will make sure disabled people can lead as independent and healthy a life as possible and will provide support in health, work, education and social services to help that happen.

- Countries will make sure that they look at disabled peoples' needs and strengths at an early stage so that disabled people get the support and services they need
- These services will be as near to where disabled people live as possible
- Staff will be trained to do a good job
- Countries will look at the different aids and equipment made to support disabled people to recover

27. Work

Disabled people have a right to work, equal with others. Countries will do more to get disabled people work and will help do this by:

- Making laws that make sure disabled people are treated equally and fairly at work
- Making sure disabled people have equal job rights and rules and pay
- Making sure disabled people have a right to join a union the same as everyone else
- Making sure disabled people can go on work programmes and work training
- Helping disabled people find and keep jobs as well as get better jobs
- Helping disabled people set up their own businesses
- Giving disabled workers jobs with Government and in places like councils and hospitals
- Helping companies give disabled people jobs
- Making sure disabled people have suitable places to work
- Making sure disabled people can try out work
- Help disabled people get back to work
- Countries must make sure that disabled people are not forced to do unpaid work

28. Standards of living

Disabled people have an equal right to a good enough standard of living for them and their families. This includes food, clothing, housing and clean water.

Disabled people should be able to get help to improve their standard of living the same as everyone else.

Countries should make sure that:

- Disabled people have the right services and aids for their disability, at a price they can afford
- Disabled people especially girls and women and older people, have help to have a good enough standard of living
- Disabled people who are poor get help from the State with the costs of disability
- Disabled people have access to public housing programmes
- Disabled people have the same chances to get retirement pensions as other people

29. Being involved in politics

Disabled people have the right to take part in politics the same as everyone else.

Disabled people have the right to vote by:

- Making sure voting is easy to do and understand
- Making sure voting is secret
- Allowing support to help people vote in the way they want, when needed
- Making sure disabled people can be involved in non-government Organisations and political parties
- Making sure disabled people can join organisations of disabled people
- Disabled people have the right to stand for election as MPs and councillors





30. Sport and leisure

Disabled people have the right to take part in sports and leisure as much as anybody else.

Countries should work towards making sure that:

- Things like books are accessible
- Television, films and theatres are accessible
- Disabled people can get into places like museums
- Disabled people have the opportunity to be artists in their own right
- Rules and laws should not make it more difficult for disabled people to access things like books or films
- Deaf and other cultures are respected
- Disabled people are supported to take part in ordinary sports
- Disabled people are able to take part in disability sports and leisure activities
- Sports and other leisure places are accessible
- Disabled children have equal access as well

31. Information

Countries should collect the information they need to help make this agreement happen.

Personal information must be kept confidential and private.

Governments must make sure that disabled people can access the information they collect the same as everyone else.

32. Countries working Together

Countries will work together as partners to make this agreement happen.

They should:

- Make sure that working together includes disabled people
- Make sure that countries share information, experiences and training so that all people work in the best way
- Make sure that countries work together on research and share what they find out

33. Making this agreement happen

Governments should:

- Have one area of Government dealing with making this agreement happen.
- Have a way that measures how well the agreement is happening.
- Involve disabled people in looking at how well this happens.

34. Committee on the rights of disabled people

A special committee will be elected by all the countries to make sure this agreement is being followed properly. It will be based at the United Nations.

35. Reports from Countries involved:

Each country will write a report about their work for this agreement and send it to the Committee within 2 years after they agree to join.

- After that, each country will send a report every 4 years, as well as extra reports if the Committee asks for them
- The Committee will decide what information countries need to put in their reports
- The reports can also be about things that are holding up disabled people's rights

36. What happens to the reports

The Committee will look at the reports and give countries ideas and advice about what to do. They can also ask for more information.

- If the report is very late, the Committee can warn the country that in 3 months time it will go ahead and look at what is happening there anyway.
- All Countries will be able to see all reports.
- Each Country must make sure that the public can see its report and what the Committee has said about it.
- The Committee will send the reports to different departments and organisations to ask for advice or help if needed.

37. The Committee and Countries working together

Each Country will work together with the Committee and help the Committee members with any information that they need.

The Committee will think about how it can work with Countries to make this work happen in a good way.

38. How the Committee will work with other organisations

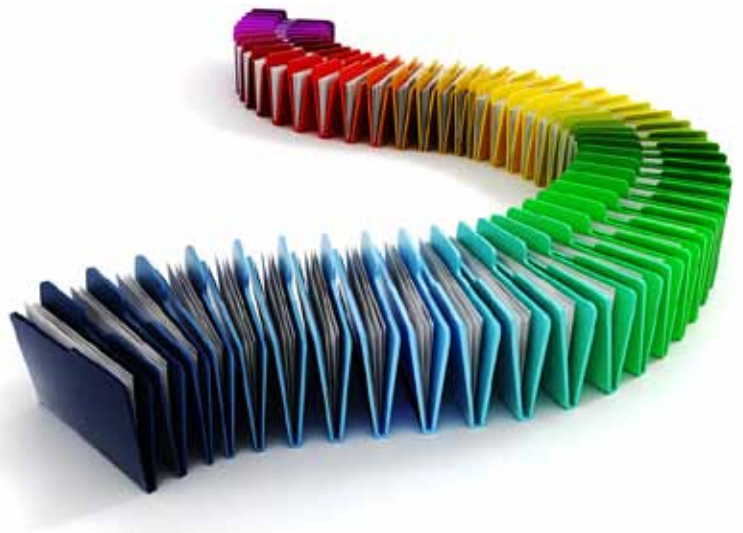
It is important that all countries and organisations work together to make this work happen.

- Different departments and organisations will be invited by the Committee to give advice and information about their area of work
- The Committee may ask other human rights organisations to write reports about how their work fits into this agreement

39. The Committee Report

The Committee will write a report every 2 years for the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. It will include ideas from the different countries about what should be done.





40. Meetings for the Countries involved

Countries involved will meet often to think about the work of this agreement.

Picture: The first meeting must be within 6 months of this work starting. Picture: The first meeting must be within 6 months of this work starting. The first meeting will be no later than 6 months from the start of this work. The Secretary General will arrange future meetings.

41. Keeping hold of all the reports and information

The Secretary General of the United Nations will hold all the information and reports for this work.

42. Signing the Agreement

Countries will be able to sign this agreement from 30th March 2007 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

43. Consent and Approval

Countries that have signed this agreement then decide when to join it properly. That is when it starts properly in their country.

Other countries who have not signed it can join it too.

44. Groups of Countries

Some countries are joined together in organisations, like the European Union.

These organisations can also join the agreement and also have a say when countries meet to talk about the agreement.

45. When will the agreement start?

The agreement will start 30 days after 20 countries have joined it.

46. Keeping to the agreement

Countries cannot refuse to sign up to any really important parts of this agreement.

47. Amendments and changes to the Agreement

Any Country can ask for changes to the agreement. They can do this by writing to the Secretary General who will tell the other Countries.

The Countries will decide if they need a meeting to talk about the idea and if it should be agreed.

48. If a Country wants to get out of the Agreement

A Country can get out of this agreement by writing to the Secretary General. They will stop being part of the agreement 1 year after the letter has arrived.

49. Accessible Information

This agreement will be available in easy to understand formats.

50. This Agreement in other languages

This agreement will be printed in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish and will be equal in these languages.

Epilepsy - Finding Help

This was the theme of the March 10, 2018 National Conference held in Malta by Caritas Malta Epilepsy Association (<http://www.caritasmalta.org/cmea-conferences/>). Her Excellency Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, President of the Republic of Malta, opened the conference with kind words about the efforts of Caritas Malta Epilepsy Association to assist and support people with epilepsy in Malta as well as to reduce stigma through educational campaigns. Prof Dorothée Kasteleijn, Department of Neurosurgery and Epilepsy, University Medical Center Utrecht, The Netherlands, then shared concepts from her vast experience about "Finding Help: Understanding Different Types of Seizures."

The audience consisted of people with epilepsy and their family and friends, caregivers, teachers, aides, nurses, pharmacists, and doctors. Her presentation was very well received and seemed to be understood by all. A panel discussion followed with a Question and Answer time from invited guests including neurologists, the Head of the Child Development Assessment Unit, a speech therapist, a pharmacist, and an EEG technician.

After a delicious lunch break, participants were invited to choose one of three interactive workshops - Finding Help for Children, Adults, or Caregivers. The day concluded with closing remarks by the Hon. Dr Michael Falzon, Minister for the Family, Children's Rights and Social Solidarity and an appeal for those present to join the Caritas Malta Epilepsy Association in assisting people with epilepsy in Finding Help.

Robin Pinkston
Assistant Secretary
Carita Malta Epilepsy Association





The three pillars of LSF

PROFILING & GUIDANCE TEAM

We create a profile of the individuals' competencies, abilities and preferences. Following this we formulate a personal action plan for suitable training, pre-employment activities and concrete employment opportunities. We will meet you regularly until you succeed at getting employed.



CORPORATE RELATIONS TEAM

We outreach to various companies and businesses to determine their needs and demands, as well as to support employers and colleagues in the recruitment process of disabled persons. The Job Carving approach is frequently used whereby identified tasks and job descriptions are then carved to suit the jobseekers with disabilities. This enables the creation of valid and person-centred vacancies within a given organisation whilst promoting inclusion.



JOB COACHING TEAM

We support the individual in their transition from unemployment to employment as well as provide training/support during their induction period into the company and throughout their employment as necessary. Our service is aimed at facilitating the individuals' integration, relationship formation with peers and overall inclusion within the company.





I AM ABLE

WE

LSF's aim is to foster greater employment opportunities for Persons with a Disability within Enterprises and the general labour market.

We work with unemployed persons with disabilities providing initial and continuous advisory, job carving, job search, and specialized workplace support as necessary.

YOU

Do you want to find employment that suits your desires and abilities?
Would you like to change your current employment?

Do you require specialized support at your workplace?

Are you an Enterprise that wants to know more about HOW we may help?

Call and ask for our Corporate Relations Team

HOW

Following your call, we will set up a meeting to kick-start an individual or Enterprise journey toward employment.

Our services include the profiling of skills and abilities, experience mapping, work sampling and training referrals to enhance the individual's skill that will facilitate employment

Call us on 22 20 17 61 or visit linospiterifoundation.org



Working with The President's Trust

The Year's Feedback



The President's Trust, as the name implies, is an initiative spearheaded and headed by Her Excellency the President of the Republic of Malta. Her Excellency is also the official Patron of the Malta Federation of Organisations Persons with Disabilities. It is with deep satisfaction that it can be reported that there abides a close collaboration between the Office of the President and MFOPD. This collaboration has been constant and entrenched for several decades and has never been so fruitful as now that the President's Trust has been launched and actively functioning.

The aims of the President's Trust can easily be elicited from the inaugural speech of Her Excellency the President of the Republic of Malta, Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca.

"It gives me deep satisfaction to see one of my dreams come into fruition. This is the establishment of an entity that will inspire and support young people in our society to build a positive life for themselves. The President's Trust is precisely the entity that will create initiatives that give vulnerable young people the skills and confidence to overcome barriers in their lives."

Since the beginning, this Presidency has endeavoured to seek the wellbeing of all people in our society, including those living in poverty or social exclusion. With this aim in mind, we have established a number of fora that together create harmonization in the chain of structures and initiatives towards making social inclusion a reality. The President's Trust will support young people who are marginalized, excluded from society, without education and without work, or no job prospects, those that had a brush with justice, towards a pathway that can lead for a decent, better life with dignity."

It is precisely this reason why the President's Trust was established, to empower people who, due to their life circumstances, or because of decisions taken, are now experiencing a difficult life, are unemployed, marginalized or at risk of poverty. It is also the intention of the President's Trust to help people with problems of mental health, or who have brushed with the law by providing practical and financial assistance for them to take the first step.

I am proud that we have created a structure that can give support to young people, and empower them to gradually change their lives, and live full, satisfying lives, and to aim for a brighter future. After all, when we invest in our young people, we are investing in the future of our country. The President's Trust will be helping to break the cycle of poverty, the cycle of social benefits, and the cycle of crime.

Finally, I sincerely hope that more and more young people will enjoy the fruits of the initiatives that the Trust will facilitate, in order to succeed in life and to fulfil their dreams and aspirations."

15 July is World Youth Skills Day which is observed by the United Nations as it aspires to keep youth unemployment on the international agenda. The UN calls upon Member States to help youth overcome the challenges regarding employment and skills development. Marginalised young people face even more challenges in this respect.

It is in line with this international commitment that on 15 July 2017, The President's Trust and the Malta Federation of Organisations Persons with Disability (MFOPD) jointly and in coordination with the Malta Association of Supported Employment (MASE) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding leading to



collaboration with The President's Trust Employment Initiative which was one of the very first initiatives taken up and developed, aiming to support young vulnerable people to be included in the labour force. This initiative is now being consolidated through the Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2017.

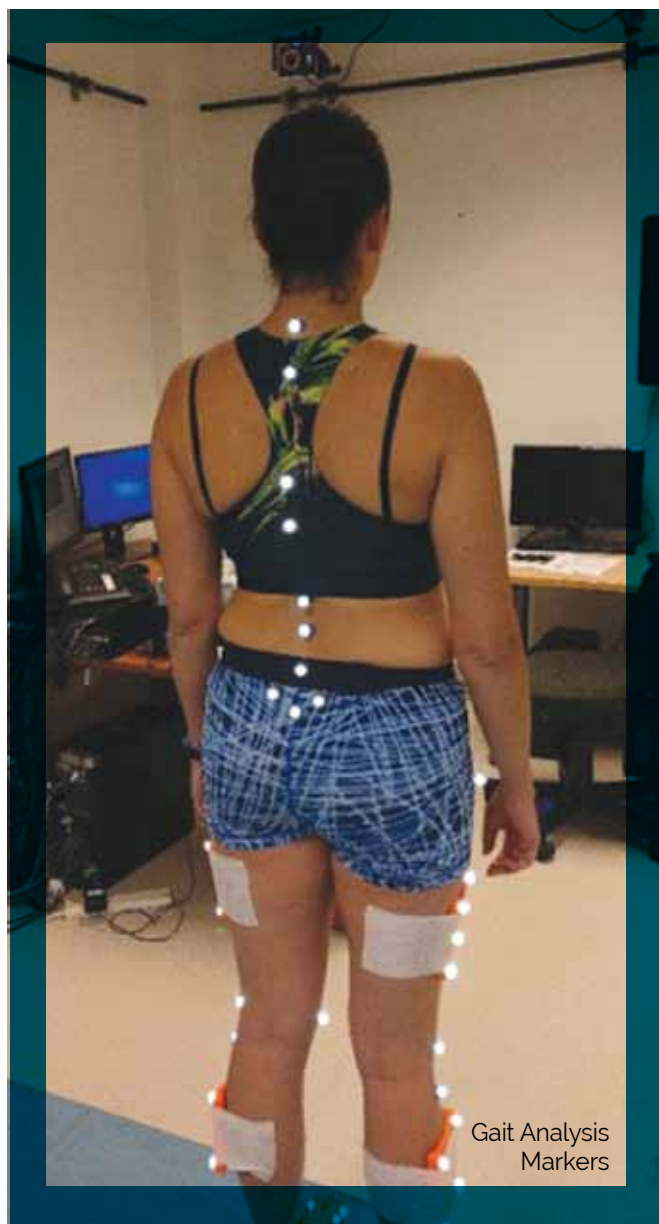
Through this collaboration with MFOPD and MASE the entities involved would be in a better position to reach more vulnerable young people coming from a wide array of challenging circumstances. MFOPD being the national umbrella Organisation for the disability sector, worked incessantly to establish MASE with the intention of offering a professional supported employment structure in Malta. MASE boasts of a vast wealth of knowledge and experience concerning supported employment and this will inevitably enrich The President's Trust Employment Initiative.

Supported employment has proven to be an effective way for disadvantaged young persons to find and retain a job in the open market. It supports both employees, as it focuses on their abilities, and employers. The President's Trust mentoring system for young people who lack a positive role model, and/or who may benefit from one-to-one mentorship, remains an important component of this initiative. Through this joint collaboration, job-coaching and skills-building will also be provided to young people who may require on-the-job training and guidance. All this is determined through an initial assessment procedure and through one-to-one relationship building with the young person and his/her family if and when required.

Fortunately, after years of incessant lobbying from the MFOPD, supported employment has become a tool exercised by various agencies and NGOs in order to ensure that vulnerable persons and persons with disability are ensured of inclusion in the workplace thus leading to independent living.



Clinical Gait Analysis



While walking is something probably most people take for granted, for others however, this might not necessarily be the case. Persons dealing with complex movement disorders can have difficulties accomplishing what should be an otherwise normal everyday task. This greatly impacts the quality of life of those affected as well as their families and carers.

Imagine not being able to get up and walk around your home to accomplish the tasks we need to do during our day. Think of how many things you do that require you to get up onto your feet, and walk. Imagine having difficulties being able to do that. Yet this is a reality for persons suffering a

disability involving the musculoskeletal and neurological systems which amongst other things, impact walking and movement in general. Many of these people are children born with a condition called Cerebral Palsy or a similar paediatric neurological condition, whilst others could be adults, once healthy who have developed a neurological condition, or even prosthetic users etc.

For those who start to walk at a young age, growth and the effects their condition has on their body means that they might not necessarily continue being able to walk as they reach adulthood. Furthermore, every patient is uniquely different, therefore the treatment for one person used to ameliorate his condition, could on someone else make him worse because the cause is very different; hence the need to understand exactly what is causing the issues affecting that particular patient's gait. Just like an MRI can help doctors understand what's wrong inside the body before a surgery is proposed, 3D Clinical Gait Analysis is used to provide high quality and safe patient care by taking precise measurement and quantifying the problems during the actual movement affected (most commonly walking).

3D Clinical Gait Analysis needs to be performed and analysed by trained specialists in this field who can then provide treatment recommendations as well as evaluate the effectiveness of that treatment using the data which is gathered using sophisticated computer technology and thorough clinical assessment to illustrate how the muscles, joints and nerves are interacting during the movement that is being assessed.

The information obtained from a motion analysis and more importantly its interpretation, is provided to the referrer so that the most optimal clinical management decisions are taken to improve the patient's function and independence. Until recently in Malta, this was only available to select patients before undergoing complex orthopaedic surgery techniques which could only be done abroad. Patients (children with Cerebral Palsy) had to travel with their family abroad for this service, which at times could even be unfeasible or contraindicated. However, since just two years ago this service has now been made available locally at Mater Dei Hospital, and more importantly, available to many more children and adults who otherwise would not have been able to access this assessment.

Gait Analysis will provide the clinical care team with an edited video, a detailed clinical assessment of the musculoskeletal system and functional movement status as well as the data from an instrumented three-dimensional motion analysis using a complex process and state of the art technology. By applying retroreflective markers on precise

anatomical landmarks together with EMG sensors and ground reaction force plate technology, the movement data is captured and processed, scaled to a biomechanical model so that we can measure

- Motions of joints and body segments
- Force, moment and power at each joint
- Activity of muscles
- Pressure distribution on the feet

This data is combined with the specialist clinical assessment and experience and analysed using biomechanical principles and up to date guidance information from the scientific literature to allow the assessment of the current patients walking or movement status. Understanding this helps us to develop an individualised treatment plan utilised by the patients physicians, orthopaedic surgeons, neurosurgeons and rehabilitation specialist, most commonly used to address the disorders of gait associated with children with cerebral palsy

To be able to do this required years of specialist and ongoing training and specialisation from two highly dedicated physiotherapists who wanted more for the patients they were seeing in their clinical practice. This was initially done largely from their own personal time and money. Mr. Darren Sillato with many years of experience in adult neurology and Mr. Mark Farrugia with many years of specific paediatric neurology experience, together with their own personal vigour to learn, embarked on this venture till the service was started and made available locally. However, continuous training is required to be able to assess the more complex cases as well as to keep abreast with the ever-evolving 3D motion technology and techniques. Unfortunately, funding such courses that are only held abroad, is not easy. Here we would like to thank the Malta Federation of Organisations Persons with Disability, MFCS and VO funding for their assistance to allow us to further our training and continuous professional development in this specialist field for the benefit of the patients we see.



Mark Farrugia

After graduating with a BSc Hons in physiotherapy in 1997, Mark started rota physiotherapy work. By May 1999 Mark started working in the specialist area of paediatric physiotherapy, locally at the CDAU and eventually Mater Dei where he gained experience seeing children with complex

movement disorders as well as specialist neonatal and acute respiratory care, inpatient and outpatient paediatric services and school services. He also had the opportunity to work in specialised paediatric hospitals in New Zealand, Saudi Arabia and Scotland. Mark has been interested in Clinical Gait Analysis since 2001 when he was working with doctors videoing children walking, to help to better identify problems that could assist in their care. In 2011 he was involved in the eventual setting up of a local gait laboratory specifically for clinical use, particularly after having gained experience when in Glasgow. Mark has already attended basic gait courses by the European society of Motion Analysis in Adults and Children and the Gillette Childrens Speciality Healthcare Gait course as well as visited gait laboratories in Oxford and Leuven. In 2016 children who previously had to go abroad for this specialist service were finally able to have a Clinical Gait Analysis locally. In 2016 Mark also successfully completed with Merit an MSc in Clinical Gait Analysis from the University of Salford in Manchester and did a study looking at the Knee adductor moments at different speeds and models which is important to identify abnormal forces in the knee which are useful to prevent the early onset of arthritis. Mark is constantly trying to improve his knowledge in this area to be able to offer the most up to date motion analysis information as well as to continue to expand the clinical service for the patients who require it.



Darren Sillato

Darren graduated as a physiotherapist in 2002, following which he worked with paediatric, amputees, respiratory and musculoskeletal cases. In 2005 he started working solely within the adult neurology and neurosurgery setting in St. Luke's, Boffa and Mater Dei Hospitals. Throughout the years, the avid interest in technology and computing amalgamated with the daily endeavours to get immobile patients to walk again sparked interest in motion analysis. In 2011 the first involvement in the setting up of a local clinical service commenced. After multiple visits to other European laboratories, and completion of an MSc in Clinical Biomechanics at the University of Malta, together with yearly courses organised by Gillette Children's Speciality Healthcare and ESMAC, the service started in 2016. Darren aims at expanding the service according to the local need, and encourage further local research.

Youth Volunteers Needed for Down Syndrome Association

When we talk about youths who have Down syndrome, we cannot avoid the reality that they constantly request activities involving other youths their age. Down Syndrome Association organises various interesting and well-attended activities but, like other youths of their age, they do not want to have their parents around them all the time! They yearn for peers so to interact and have fun with youngsters who share the same likes.

The Association has reached out to various youth groups to try and find youth volunteers to attend to these activities, but had limited success.

They are not asking for anything out of the ordinary. One of their requests is to have youths taking them out for a pizza, or to the Cinema to watch a film. Another of their requests is that they join other youngsters in activities organised by other youth group. In other words they crave to be included in the youth world.

Currently there are various projects in progress. It is understandable that if youngsters who have Down syndrome develop such projects accompanied by other youths - youths for youths - they will turn out to be all the more interesting. At the moment, these groups meetings are held on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Youths engaged in the voluntary sector are more than welcome to take up this idea and give a helping hand to fellow youths in expressing themselves, acquiring life skills and also studying music. Everybody can help in making the wish of these youths come true. Students who are learning computer studies can give computer lessons, others can share their knowledge of photography. All ideas proposing other activities and initiatives are always welcome.

Joeanna Xerri
President
Down Syndrome Association



MFOPD Welcomes the Little Warriors

One of the newest Organisations joining the Malta Federation is the T1D Little Warriors. The Organisation's representative sent us an introductory note for publication which we are gladly reproducing below for your attention.

I would like to write a few words regarding our small Organisation. T1D Little Warriors is a newly formed Organisation consisting of 46 members, all of whom are parents of children who suffer from Type 1 diabetes.

In this group we share our experiences, difficulties and try to help one another in difficult moments. As parents, we all understand each other's needs and a helping hand, or shoulder to lean on, is always more than welcome.

Type 1 diabetes needs proper care on a daily basis. It is certainly not an easy task since we need to ensure we give our children proper care.



In this group you feel that you are not alone. Indeed, it is cathartic and relieving knowing that someone is going to listen, understand and know about your needs.

T1D Little Warriors is lobbying hard so as to ensure that our kids will benefit from a device called "freestyle". This device helps them monitor their blood glucose without any finger pricking. Till now these monitors are not available in our country and we are striving hard to change this situation.

Olivia Bartolo
T1D Little Warriors

The importance of being a member of a Support Group or Society

I am writing this under the guise of two hats, so to speak. The first is as a patient/member of the Multiple Sclerosis Society, the second as the secretary of the same Society.

Having lived in different countries I found no difficulty in joining various support groups as the need arose. Yet I find the attitude towards support groups in Malta is somewhat understated. I feel that the general attitude is that one can solve one's problems on their own. Yet it is proven that no man is an island and for the want of another cliché, there is strength in numbers.

I am a firm believer in support from others who are experiencing the same difficulties, as well as in the strength obtained from various support groups/associations and societies. When I was first diagnosed with MS I hid my head in the sand and took the first experience as a one off. By the second relapse I resorted to the internet for information. It was thanks to another patient, whilst we were both attached to a drip at Mater Dei when I found out about the MS Society. It was her encouragement and an hour of crying my eyes out over the phone to the President of the Society that I was put on the right track. Only another patient can understand you when you need to have a good moan.

As the Secretary of the MS Society of Malta I can see the other side of the coin. The number of hours that go into the organisation of meetings and attending various conferences. The amount of work that goes into promoting awareness of the condition. This sometimes feels disheartening with the lack of interest of members' participation or even the reluctance of newly diagnosed persons in joining the Society. It could be that people do not recognise the need of being part of a greater being, or maybe they feel that there is a myriad of information available on the internet. Societies/Associations form part of larger international groups, in our case the European platform as well as an International Federation. Therefore we provide the latest correct information on research and support.

The members of a Society can make their voices heard. Different Societies supporting one another give strength to these voices. I urge all members to support one another and all Associations/ Societies to support each other too. Together we will bring the changes needed and grow stronger and more effective for our members.

Christine Montague
Secretary - Multiple Sclerosis Society

Who we represent

The Malta Federation of Organisations Persons with Disability is the officially recognised national Federation representing civil society's disability sector both locally and in the international fora.



MFOPD is an active member of the European Disability Forum (EDF) which is an independent NGO that defends the interests of 80 million Europeans with disability. It is a unique platform which brings together representative Organisations of persons with disability from across Europe. It is run by persons with disability and their families and is a strong, united voice of persons with disability around Europe. EDF is one of the strongest European platforms lobbying for the rights of persons with disability throughout all the structures of the European Union.

Through its EDF membership, the MFOPD is therefore the Malta Disability Representative within the International Disability Alliance (IDA).



Locally, MFOPD's representative is appointed by Her Excellency the President of Malta in the consultative committee of the Malta Community Chest Fund.



MFOPD's representative is also appointed by the Hon. Prime Minister of Malta as a Commission Member on the Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability.



The International Disability Alliance (IDA) is an alliance of 8 global and 6 regional Organisations of persons with disability. It advocates at the UN for a more inclusive global environment for persons with disability and their

Organisations. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) is its touchstone. It invests its energy and know-how in ensuring that the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals are inclusive and in line with CRPD. It supports Organisations of persons with disability worldwide to take part in UN and international human rights processes, and uses international accountability mechanisms. Through its global member Organisations, IDA represents the estimated one billion people with disabilities worldwide. This is the world's largest and most frequently overlooked marginalised group.



MFOPD is also a proud signatory of the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action. This Charter has been developed in advance of the World Humanitarian Summit (23 and 24 May 2016, Istanbul) by over 70 stakeholders from States, UN agencies, the international civil society community and global, regional and national Organisations of persons with disabilities. By endorsing this Charter, one is committed to render humanitarian action which does not exclude persons with disabilities, by lifting barriers they are facing in accessing relief, protection and recovery support, and ensuring their participation in the development, planning and implementation of humanitarian programmes. This Charter is open for endorsement by States and Governments, UN Agencies, Organisations involved in humanitarian contexts, and Organisations of persons with disabilities.



MFOPD is an active member of the European Network on Independent Living (ENIL). ENIL is a Europe-wide network of disabled people with members emanating from all European countries. It is a forum for all disabled people,

Independent Living Organisations and their non-disabled allies on the issues of Independent Living. It represents the disability movement for human rights and social inclusion based on solidarity, peer support, deinstitutionalisation, democracy, self-representation, cross disability and self-determination. ENIL's mission is to advocate and lobby for Independent Living values, principles and practices, namely for a barrier-free environment, the provision of personal assistant support and adequate technical aids, all of which make for full citizenship of disabled people. ENIL's activities target European, national and local administrations, politicians, media, and the general society. It works to strengthen the empowerment of disabled people mainly through providing resources for peer counselling and peer training. It enhances the European disability network by providing the arena for the sharing of experience, of services, and providing economical, logistic and technical expertise.



**Inclusion
international**



Inclusion Europe

MFOPD is an active member of Inclusion Europe and Inclusion International.

Inclusion Europe is an Association of people with intellectual disabilities and their families in Europe, founded in 1988. It fights for equal rights and full inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities and their families in all aspects of life. As a European Association, it works in the many different areas which its members would have identified as important to them, such as in providing for the exchange of knowledge across Europe, transnational synergy, membership support, influencing European policies, especially European social policy.

Inclusion International is the international network of people with intellectual disabilities and their families advocating for the human rights of people with intellectual disabilities worldwide. Together they agree on a Statement of Unity and are committed to progress towards inclusion within its vision. For over fifty years Inclusion International has been committed to the promotion of these human rights and it now represents over 200 member Federations in 115 countries in five regions, namely the Middle East and North Africa, Europe, Africa, the Americas, and Asia Pacific.

Offering the best Shelter Facilities - Fondazzjoni Wens

by Ronald Galea



Fondazzjoni Wens has been an active member of the national disability federation for many years now. Our elected representative in the Central Committee also holds the position of Treasurer within the Federation.

The word 'Wens' – a purely Maltese word with Semitic heritage – is roughly translated into English as 'Shelter'. But there are a number of inherent meanings attributed to the word in Maltese that cannot be fully translated into English. 'Wens' suggests shelter, harmony, safe-keeping and much more. And that is what we strive to give our family of residents.

In May 2017 our Foundation opened another residential home, Dar L-Abilita's. This house, which caters for six persons with special needs, is a stone's away from our main residential home in Kalkara. The opening of this home was not an easy task as, being an NGO, we had to strive to get the necessary help to finally provide assistance to our residents.

Just 3 months after, we managed to open another residential home in Fgura. Dar Merħba. This home is presently offering residential assistance to five male and four female residents. Presently discussions are being held with the State agency, Agenzija Sapport, so that the number of residents will increase. This residence has a

therapeutic pool installed on the roof so that residents from our homes can benefit from the therapy that will be given. Just a few weeks ago an automated tent has been installed over this pool and in the immediate future this will be enclosed with windows, so that this service can be provided even in winter. With the help of L-Istrina Funds, staff and a specialized professional will be providing training in the Halliwick concept of swimming and rehabilitation in water.

The opening of the two residences is partially funded by a contract signed between the Parliamentary Secretariat responsible for persons with disability and active ageing, Agenzia Sapport and our Foundation.

In mid-June this year we will be starting major works on our block of 2 residential homes situated in Paola. This work will entail the refurbishing of two apartments, building another apartment and a penthouse. This is a project that will run into thousands of euros.

We are hopeful that we would be able to raise enough funds to finish the works as soon as possible, as the success of this project will affect the life of many disabled persons that will benefit from it.

I appeal to anybody that can help in any way to contact us by calling me on the following mobile number 79537002. A few hours of work will mean a lot to us.



The Malta Federation of Organisations Persons with Disabilities is Malta's Civil Society Voice in the Disability Sector.



- If you are an NGO or Service Provider working in the field of persons with disability, we urge you to join the MFOPD and ensure that the disability sector in Malta has One, Strong, Representative Voice.
- If you are a person with disability, we urge you to make contact with us to discover our wealth of services, not only through MFOPD volunteers but also by means of our Organisation members who represent thousands of persons with disability and who offer numerous services and assistance which YOU might find useful.

Contact us now: MFOPD Hotline:
7707 5555



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