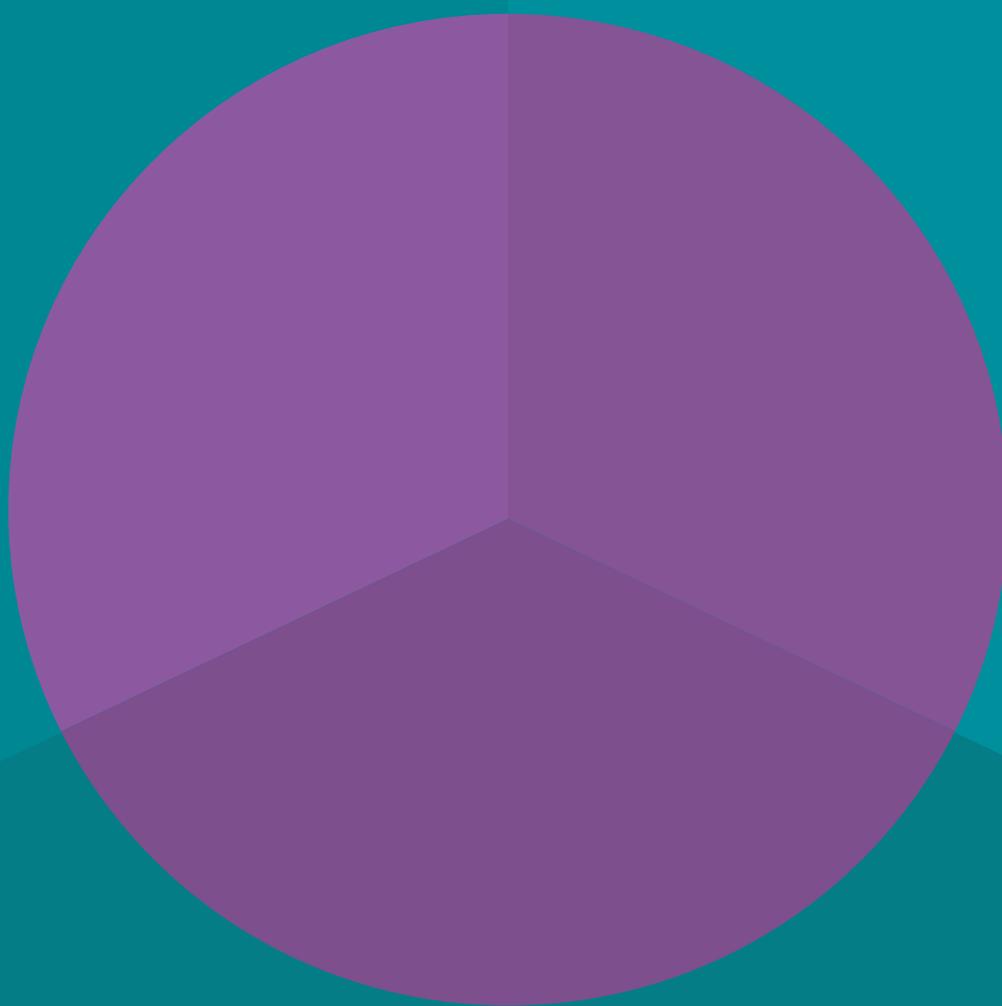


FREEDOM TO LIVE



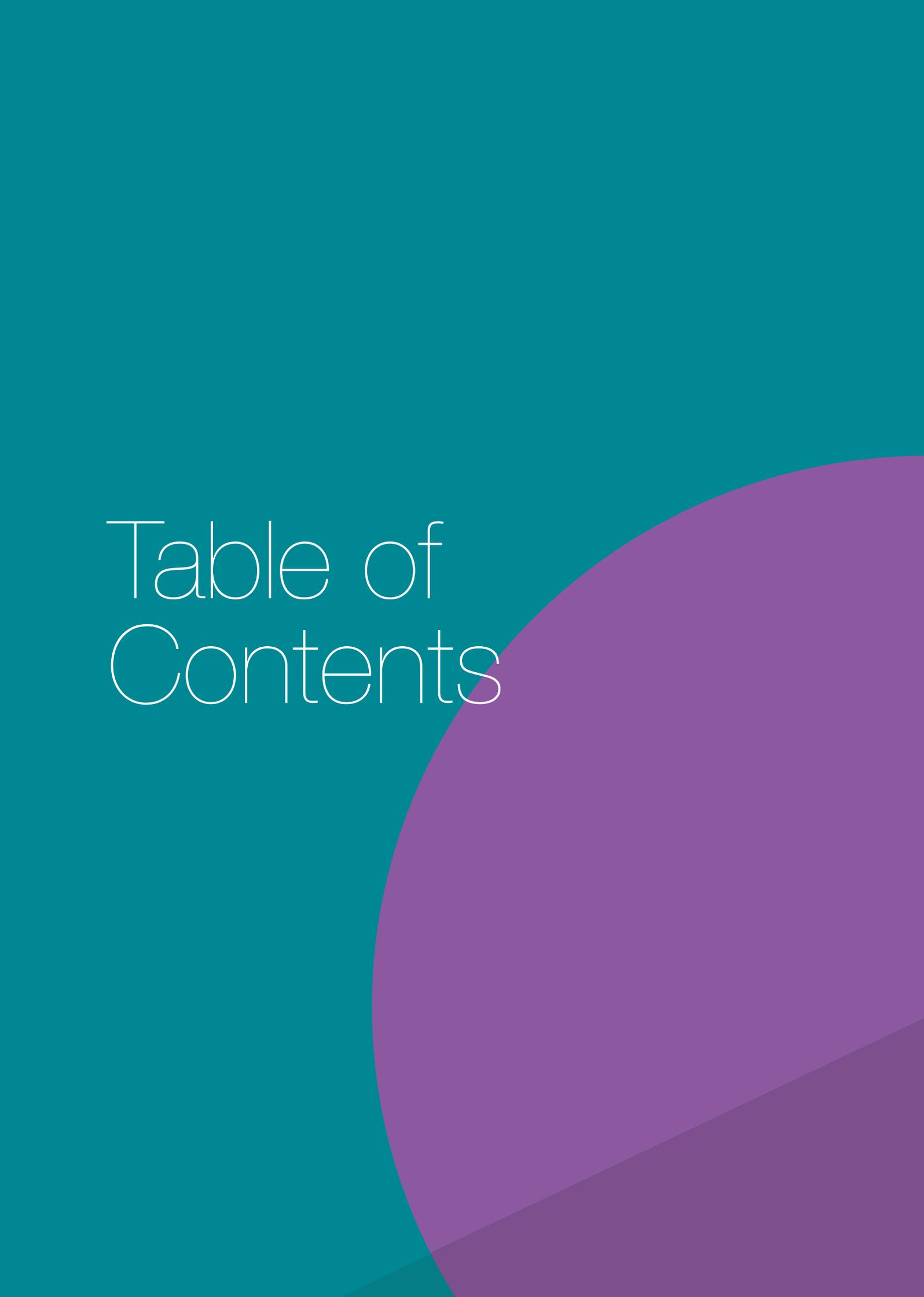
GOVERNMENT OF MALTA
MINISTRY FOR INCLUSION
AND SOCIAL WELLBEING

Malta's 2021 – 2030 National Strategy
on the Rights of Disabled Persons

FREEDOM TO LIVE

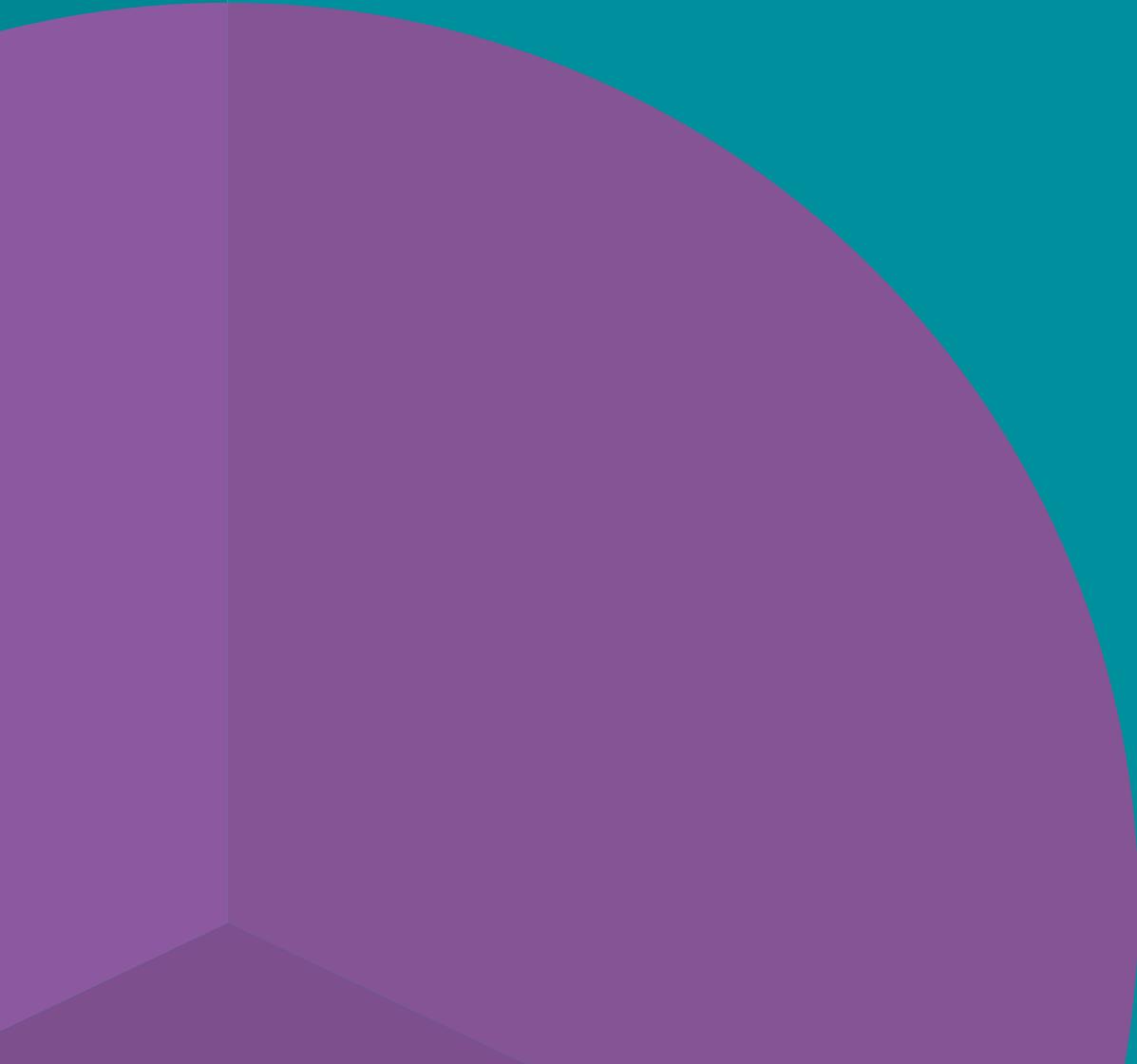
Malta's 2021 – 2030 National Strategy
on the Rights of Disabled Persons

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Glossary

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ACM	Arts Council Malta
ACTU	Access to Communication and Technology Unit – Aġenzija Support
ADSC	ACCESS-Disability Support Committee – University of Malta
ADSU	ACCESS-Disability Support Unit – University of Malta
AWAS	Agency for the Welfare of Asylum Seekers
CCWR	Consultative Council on Women’s Rights
CPD	Civil Protection Department
CRPD	Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability
DDI	Directorate for Disability Issues
DDS	Department of Disability Studies, University of Malta
DSS	Department of Social Security
DET	Disability Equality Training
EASO	European Asylum Support Office
ECDL	European Computer Driving Licence
FHEA	Further and Higher Education Authority
FITA	Foundation for ICT Accessibility
FSWS	Foundation for Social Welfare Services
HRID	Human Rights and Integration Directorate
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IEP	Individualised Education Plan
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
KLSM	Sign Language Council of Malta
LESA	Local Enforcement Systems Agency

LSE	Learning Support Educator
LSF	Lino Spiteri Foundation
LSM	Maltese Sign Language
MCAST	Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology
MFHEA	Malta Further and Higher Education Authority
MTA	Malta Tourism Authority
NCPE	National Commission for the Promotion of Equality
NSO	National Statistics Office
OHSA	Occupational Health and Safety Authority
OCMH	Office of the Commissioner for Mental Health
PA	Personal Assistant
SCSA	Social Care Standards Authority
TM	Transport Malta
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
UN ESCWA	UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
WCAG	Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

Foreword

from the Hon. Minister

Dear activists, professionals and friends,

Holding Malta's 2021-2030 National Disability Strategy in my hands is indeed a privilege. This is a great achievement for us as a country, however, it would not have been possible without your input and passion. What we have today is a reflection of the needs on the ground in Malta, which you have told us about, and which we have listened to, and prepared a roadmap to achieve.

It is very important for this Government to work directly with specific groups in situations of vulnerability. It is useless to prepare a complicated document, which is good on paper, but which has no connection to reality. This is why this document was only finalized after a public consultation, during and after which we made sure to include the voices and aspirations of different persons involved in the disability sector – family members, persons working in the sector, academics, professionals and, most importantly, disabled persons themselves.



Since it ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2012, Malta has been committed to implementing the main principle behind the Convention – ‘Nothing About Us, Without Us’. This is also why we do not just want to consult and involve people before finalising the National Disability Strategy, but also afterwards, when implementing it.

In line with its obligations under the Convention, Malta has also set up a National Coordination structure towards implementing all the key obligations in the Convention on Maltese territory. This also means that this structure will have a key role towards ensuring a coordinated approach in implementing and following up on this Strategy.

For the first time, there will be a forum, which would also be given a legal basis, that allows representatives of different entities working in the Maltese Disability sector, to come together on a regular basis, and to cooperate better in technical matters. This will be supplemented by an Inter-Ministerial Committee, ensuring that technical discussions will then also be worked upon by representatives of different line Ministries and Parliamentary Secretariats, in line with their respective portfolios.

Very importantly, we want to make sure that we will continue to give a constant voice to disabled persons and to civil society. This is why we are also setting up ENGAGE, Malta's Civil Society Participation forum for the Disability sector, within the Directorate for Disability Issues.

This forum will bring together disabled persons, their families and allies, as well as academics, NGO representatives, and CRPD, the National Disability Regulator. It will have a key role in connecting to all disability-related policy in Malta, and in particular, a major role in making sure the contents of this Strategy are brought to life.

I am extremely grateful to all those persons who have worked on this initiative, and to all those who have contributed their input towards this final document. I am proud to see this Government fulfilling yet another electoral pledge by publishing this National Disability Strategy, and I would also like to thank in advance all those who will work towards making Freedom to Live a reality.

Julia Farrugia Portelli

Minister for Inclusion
and Social Wellbeing

General Introduction

The key aim of this Strategy is to provide a roadmap for the Maltese disability sector over the next years, leading up to 2030, the target year for achievement of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

The key aim of this Strategy is to provide a roadmap for the Maltese disability sector over the next years, leading up to 2030, the target year for achievement of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. In 2015, Malta also signed up to a commitment to implement these goals, and every Objective in this Strategy makes reference to said Goals, alongside different Articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

Following on from the 2014 National Policy on the Rights of Persons with Disability, this Strategy covers all of the fields addressed by that Policy, and subscribes to the same cross-cutting ethos, that all disabled persons, no matter who they are or what their background is, should be treated equally. Thus, several references are made to the aspect of intersectionality, and the way this impacts disabled persons who might also face additional societal barriers, due to being, for example, disabled women, LGBTIQ+ persons or migrants. It also factors in major developments in disability rights, happening both locally and internationally, since the release of the Policy.

While consultations concerning this Strategy commenced in 2015, that year also saw the adoption of Agenda 2030, outlining the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, and of its Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction,

also referenced in this document following Malta's adherence to it. Furthermore, the approach towards issues such as Independent and Community Living has been subject to further clarifications over the years, and this Strategy factors in said clarifications, such as those obtained through the General Comments issued by the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, when building upon the initial precepts laid down in the 2014 Policy.

One important element to highlight – although mentioned again in certain specific Actions within this Strategy – is the Convention's underpinning principle of 'Nothing About Us, Without Us'. No action, no matter how large or small, can be performed appropriately, or could have any legitimacy, if it is not designed by and for disabled persons, and with them at the very core of the steps resulting from such work.

This should be done in a two-fold manner – ensuring representation of disabled persons at all levels of policy and decision-making, and; ensuring the setting up and proper functioning of a civil society participation mechanism, ENGAGE, to contribute to both the conceptualisation and eventual implementation of policy and decision-making. This is in line with Article 4(3) of the Convention, and General Comment No. 7 thereto issued by the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and provided for in the UNCRPD Act.

Such mechanism would also factor in participation by allies, such as equality bodies, academics and supporters of disabled persons – however, the ownership and input of disabled persons in shaping their future and taking control of their Freedom to Live, would remain paramount above all else.



Strategy Action Plan

All Actions in this Strategy are colour-coded depending on the timeframes in which they are to be achieved, as follows:

Pink: To be achieved within the next 2 years

Orange: To be achieved within the next 5 years

Green: To be achieved within the next 9 years

OBJECTIVE 1: REFORMS AND EQUALITY	ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED
Action 1.1: Development and Reform of Base Legislation and Structures	Within 2 years	Disability Rights Ministry, CRPD, DDS, DDI, Parliament, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 1.2: Further efforts by Working Group to Scrutinize Legislation and other key Documentation	Within 2 years	CRPD, DDI, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 1.3: Disability Assessment and Programme Eligibility Reform	Within 9 years	DDI, DSS, CRPD, Agenzija Sapport, Education Ministry, JobsPlus, Health Ministry, OCMH, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

OBJECTIVE 02 RESEARCH AND DATA COLLECTION	ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED
Action 2.1: Collaboration on research on innovative assistive technologies for disabled persons	Within 5 years	ACTU, Engineering Departments/ Institutes - MCAST, Faculty of Engineering - University of Malta, ICT Departments/ Institutes - MCAST, Faculty of ICT - University of Malta, Engineering Faculties/ Departments/ Institutes – other entities duly accredited by MFHEA, ICT Faculties/ Departments/ Institutes – MFHEA, Department of Communication Therapy within the Faculty of Health Sciences – University of Malta, DDI, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 2.2: Collaboration on research on gaps in leisure activities for disabled minors, teenagers and young persons	Within 5 years	Relevant departments, and institutes at MCAST, relevant departments, institutes and faculties at the University of Malta, relevant departments, institutes and faculties at other entities duly accredited by MFHEA, DDI, CRPD, Office of the Commissioner for Children, Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ, and OCMH, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 2.3: Establishment of MoU between the Disability Rights Ministry and Academic Entities	Within 2 years	Disability Rights Ministry, DDS, ADSU, DDI, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 2.4: Public Dissemination of Specific Research	Within 5 years	DDS, DDI, Local Councils, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 2.5: Aligning Data Collection with Best Practices	Within 2 years	DDI, NSO, CRPD, DSS, Agenzija Sapport, Education Ministry, JobsPlus, Health Ministry, OCMH, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
OBJECTIVE 03 DISABILITY AWARENESS-RAISING	ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED
Action 3.1: Continuing General Awareness	Within 2 years	Disability Rights Ministry, DDI, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 3.2: Awareness on how to use legislation in cases of disability discrimination	Within 2 years	CRPD, Businesses, Religious organisations, Public sector entities, Local Councils, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 3.3: Training on disability awareness for service providers in the public and private sectors	Within 5 years	CRPD, DDS, DDI, Businesses, Religious organisations, Public sector entities, Local Councils, ADSC, Faculty of Laws - University of Malta, Chamber of Advocates, Judiciary, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 3.4: Provision of Basic Sign Language instruction to key personnel and students	Within 5 years	DDI, KLSM, Aġenzija Support, Education Ministry, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

OBJECTIVE 04 ACCESSIBILITY	ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED
Action 4.1: Accessibility of Road and Transport Infrastructure	Within 9 years	DDI, TM, CRPD Compliance Unit, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 4.2: Accessibility of Public Transport and Taxi services	Within 9 years	CRPD, DDI, TM, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 4.3: Accessibility of Beaches and Tourism	Within 5 years	CRPD, DDI, FITA, MTA, Local Councils, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 4.4: Accessible Information Policy	Within 5 years	DDI, FITA, Agencija Support, ACTU, CRPD, AWAS, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 4.5: Better Access to Books and other Material in Accessible Formats at Educational Institutions	Within 5 years	DDI, Education Service Providers, National Book Council, CRPD UNCRPD Monitoring and Research Unit, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 4.6: Ensuring Accessibility of Buildings and Services	Within 9 years	CRPD Compliance Unit, DDI, Directorate for Local Government, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 4.7: Guidelines on Presentation of Information in various Accessible Formats	Within 5 years	DDS, FITA, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 4.8: Accessibility Assessment and Implementation Reports by State Entities

Within 5 years

DDI, Government and parastatal entities, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 4.9: New Disability Logo

Within 2 years

DDI, Disability Rights Ministry, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 4.10: Access to Justice System and Legal Capacity

Within 5 years

DDI, CRPD, Court Services Agency, Malta Police Force, LESA, Guardianship Board, OCMH, Disability Rights Ministry, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

OBJECTIVE 05 PARTICIPATION IN CULTURE, LEISURE, RECREATION AND SPORTS	ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED
Action 5.1: Making Cultural, Leisure and Sporting Venues, their Products, and Outdoor Public Spaces Accessible for All	Within 9 years	DDI, DDS, FITA, Ministry responsible for the Arts, Ministry responsible for National Heritage, Heritage Malta, ACM, MTA, Local Councils, SportMalta and stakeholders from the local mainstream sporting community, representatives of faith-based entities, CRPD Compliance Unit, Operators of cultural and leisure venues and their representative organisations, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 5.2: Making Public Events Accessible for All	Within 9 years	DDI, DDS, MTA, ACM, FITA, Ministry responsible for the Arts, Local Councils, Festivals Malta, SportMalta and stakeholders from the local mainstream sporting community, representatives of faith-based entities, CRPD Accessibility Unit, Organisers of public events, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 5.3: Incentives for promoting Cultural Accessibility

Within 5 years

DDI, Disability Rights Ministry, Ministry responsible for the Arts, Ministry responsible for National Heritage, DDS, MTA, ACM, Festivals Malta, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 5.4: Representation of Disabled Persons in the Media

Within 2 years

CRPD, DDI, Broadcasting Authority, DDS, CCWR, HRID, NCPE, AWAS, EASO, Civil society organisations, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 5.5: Sign Language, Closed Captioning and Narration/ Commentary in Television Programmes and Adverts

Within 5 years

DDI, Broadcasting Authority, KLSM, FITA, Representatives of different media houses, CRPD UNCRPD Monitoring and Research Unit, OCMH, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 5.6: Making local traditional events and Sports Inclusive and Accessible

Within 5 years

DDI, CRPD, Malta Police Force, Curia, Local band clubs, Festa committees, Organisational committees (traditional events), SportMalta and Stakeholders from the local mainstream sporting community, Representatives of disability-focused sports entities, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

OBJECTIVE 06 RELATIONSHIPS, FAMILY, SEXUALITY, AND PARENTHOOD	ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED
Action 6.1: Comprehensive Sexual Education and Education concerning Sexuality	Within 5 years	DDI, Disability Rights Ministry, Education Ministry, Health Ministry – Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate, Aġenzija Sapport, Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ, FSWS, DDS, CRPD, CCWR, HRID, NCPE, AWAS, EASO, Civil society organisations, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 6.2: Inclusive Sexual Health Policy and Strategy	Within 9 years	Health Ministry – Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate, DDI, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 6.3: Creation of a Family Unit at Aġenzija Sapport	Within 9 years	Aġenzija Sapport, DDI, DDS, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 6.4: Inclusive Marriage Preparation Courses	Within 2 years	DDI, Curia, DDS, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 6.5: Guidelines on the Right to Parenthood and Supported Parenthood	Within 5 years	DDI, CRPD, DDS, Aġenzija Sapport, Public and private disability service providers, SCSA, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 6.6: Media Campaign and Events for Key Professionals	Within 2 years	DDI, CRPD, Faculty for Social Wellbeing - University of Malta, DDS, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
OBJECTIVE 07 INFORMAL, FORMAL AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION	ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED
Action 7.1: IEPs for all Disabled Students	Within 5 years	DDI, Education Ministry, DDS, Faculty of Education – University of Malta, CRPD, Disability Rights Ministry, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 7.2: Transition Programmes	Within 5 years	DDI, CRPD, Education Ministry, DDS, Faculty of Education – University of Malta, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 7.3: Preparation of Accessibility Studies by Educational Establishments	Within 9 years	DDI, Education Ministry, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 7.4: Support for Training for Disabled Persons on the use of Digital Technology	Within 5 years	DDI, ACTU, FITA, CRPD, Education Ministry, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 7.5: Collaboration with MFHEA on matters concerning Social Inclusion in Education	Within 5 years	DDI, MFHEA, CRPD- Investigation Unit, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 7.6: Accreditation of suitably-qualified and experienced LSEs	Within 9 years	DDI, Education Ministry, CRPD-Investigation Unit, Disability Rights Ministry, UNCRPD-Monitoring Unit, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 7.7: Specific Initiatives	Within 5 years	DDI, Disability Rights Ministry, Education Ministry, ACTU, Education Department, Aġenzija Żgħażaġh, CRPD, DDI, FITA, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 7.8: Setting up of a working group on Inclusion and Education	Within 2 years	DDI, Disability Rights Ministry, CRPD, Education Ministry, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

OBJECTIVE 08 HEALTHCARE	ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED
Action 8.1: Revision of Code of Ethics for practising medical professionals	Within 9 years	DDI, DDS, CRPD, UNCRPD-Monitoring Unit and Research Unit, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 8.2: Specialized Training to Medical Professionals and Staff	Within 2 years	DDI, Health Ministry, Agenzija Sapport, Positive Parenting Programme – FSWS, DDS, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 8.3: Increased Disability sensitisation in Medical Boards	Within 5 years	DDI, Health Ministry, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 8.4: Health Promotion for Disabled Persons	Within 5 years	DDI, Health Ministry – Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate, DDS, CRPD, CCWR, HRID, NCPE, AWAS, EASO, Civil society organisations, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 8.5: Reporting on matters related to access to health by disabled persons

Within 9 years

DDI, CRPD, Health Ministry, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

OBJECTIVE 09
WORK AND
EMPLOYMENT

ACTION TO BE
COMPLETED

STAKEHOLDERS
INVOLVED

Action 9.1: Specific DETs and Information targeting All Employers

Within 2 years

CRPD, Malta Business Disability Forum, DDS, DDI, HRID, NCPE, AWAS, EASO, Civil society organisations, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 9.2: Pre-Employment, Employment and Job Retention Strategy

Within 5 years

DDI, Jobsplus, LSF and any other entities fulfilling a similar purpose, Malta Enterprise, CRPD, Entities duly accredited by MFHEA, Malta Business Disability Forum, CRPD UNCRPD Monitoring and Research Unit, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 9.3: Work-Related Supports and Adjustments	Within 5 years	DDI, Jobsplus-Inclusive Employment services division, LSF and any other entities fulfilling a similar purpose, Entities duly accredited by MFHEA, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 9.4: Promoting Social Enterprise Incentives	Within 9 years	DDI, CRPD, Malta Business Disability Forum, Economy Ministry, Malta Enterprise, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 9.5: Improved Career Guidance Services	Within 5 years	DDI, Jobsplus, LSF and any other entities fulfilling a similar purpose, Aġenzija Sapport, Entities duly accredited by MFHEA, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 9.6: Outreach and Detached Youth Work	Within 5 years	Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ, Aġenzija Sapport, Faculty for Social Wellbeing – University of Malta, Jobsplus, LSF and any other entities fulfilling a similar purpose, DDI, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 9.7: Media Campaign and Inclusive Employer Certification

Within 2 years

DDI, CRPD, Jobsplus, LSF and any other entities fulfilling a similar purpose, DDS, Disability Rights Ministry, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

OBJECTIVE 10
LIVING INDEPENDENTLY AND IN THE COMMUNITY, AND DE-INSTITUTIONALISATION

ACTION TO BE COMPLETED

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

Action 10.1: Addressing Gaps in Mainstream Services in the Community

Within 5 years

DDI, Local Council representatives, CRPD, UNCRPD Monitoring and Research Unit, CCWR, HRID, NCPE, AWAS, EASO, Civil society organisations, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 10.2: Strengthening Personal Assistance and Community Living Schemes

Within 5 years

DDI, Agenzija Support, public and private service providers, DDS, Local Councils, CRPD, SCSA, representatives of service providers, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 10.3: Setting up of a Train-the-Practitioner Unit	Within 9 years	Aġenzija Sapport, DDI, DDS, CRPD, University of Malta, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 10.4: Support Services and Curtailing Abuse	Within 2 years	Aġenzija Sapport, DDI, Disability Rights Ministry, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 10.5: Better Co-ordination among Service Providers	Within 2 years	DDI, Autism Advisory Council, DDS, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 10.6: De-Institutionalisation	Within 9 years	CRPD, DDI, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
OBJECTIVE 11 PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL AND PUBLIC LIFE	ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED
Action 11.1: Discussion with stakeholders on the implementation of inclusive voting mechanisms	Within 9 years	DDI, CRPD, Electoral Commission, Registered Political Parties, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 11.2: Supporting disabled candidates in local, national, and EU-level elections	Within 5 years	DDI, Electoral Commission, Registered Political Parties, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 11.3: Disability Awareness to Political Parties	Within 5 years	CRPD, Registered Political parties, Disabled persons and their representative organisations.
Action 11.4: Enhancing accessibility in Parliament	Within 5 years	DDI, CRPD, Parliament, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

OBJECTIVE 12 DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT AND REDUCTION	ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED
Action 12.1: Converting the COVID-19 Disability Task Force into a Standing Committee	Within 2 years	DDI, COVID-19 Disability Taskforce, Disability Standing Committee, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 12.2: General Emergency Plan	Within 2 years	DDI, OHSA, Department for Health, CRPD, CPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 12.3: Emergency Services	Within 5 years	DDI, CRPD, Emergency Services, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

OBJECTIVE 13 REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS	ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED
Action 13.1: Valletta Forum on EU-Arab Cooperation concerning Disability Rights	Within 5 years	DDI, DDS, Aġenzija Sapport, Foreign Affairs Ministry, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 13.2: Cooperation and Exchange of Best Practices through Existing Fora	Within 2 years	DDI, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

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Pink: To be achieved within the next 2 years

Orange: To be achieved within the next 5 years

Green: To be achieved within the next 9 years



Implementation of the Strategy

Implementation of this Strategy would be congruent on the operation of the National Coordination Mechanism within the Directorate for Disability Issues (DDI).

This is being set up further to Article 33(1) of the UNCRPD, and is also provided for in the UNCRPD Act. The Mechanism consists of two arms. The first is an Inter-Departmental Coordination Committee (IDCC), which brings together representatives of different Government authorities, agencies and entities whose work links directly or tangentially to the disability sector. The second is an Inter-Ministerial Administrative Committee on Disability (IACD), that brings together representatives of different line Ministries.

Meetings of these bodies bring together all stakeholders in a plenary formation, or else particular stakeholders further to a specific theme, and will also both flesh out and execute an implementation plan covering the different Objectives of this Strategy.

While most stakeholders operate on a national level, a particular role is envisaged for Local Councils, given their local knowledge and outreach, which is essential in capturing the UNCRPD's goal of securing an independent life within the community for all disabled persons.

A reporting system for implementing stakeholders is also being put in place by DDI, whereby quarterly progress reports would be submitted through a centralised system. These would then form the basis for further discussions in this respect, at both bilateral level, and especially through DDI's National Coordination Mechanism, and through ENGAGE, its civil society participation mechanism.

Monitoring of the Strategy

Monitoring of the Strategy's implementation will be within the remit of the Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD), designated as Malta's independent monitoring mechanism in terms of Article 33(2) of the UNCRPD, and by the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act.

CRPD's competences will be strengthened through the amendments being introduced to said Act, in line with this Strategy.

More specifically, this will happen through its Directorate for Investigations, Compliance and Enforcement, housing its Investigations, Compliance and Enforcement Units, further to monitoring carried out by CRPD's UNCRPD Monitoring Unit.

OBJECTIVE 1

REFORMS AND EQUALITY

OBJECTIVE 1: REFORMS AND EQUALITY	ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED
Action 1.1: Development and Reform of Base Legislation and Structures	Within 2 years	Disability Rights Ministry, CRPD, DDS, DDI, Parliament, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 1.2: Further efforts by Working Group to Scrutinize Legislation and other key Documentation	Within 2 years	CRPD, DDI, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 1.3: Disability Assessment and Programme Eligibility Reform	Within 9 years	DDI, DSS, CRPD, Agenzija Sapport, Education Ministry, JobsPlus, Health Ministry, OCMH, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

UN CRPD Article

4(3) Active Involvement and Consultation of Disabled Persons in Implementing UNCRPD

5 Equality & Non-Discrimination

13 Access to Justice

28 Adequate Standard of Living and Social Protection

29 Participation in political and public life

33 National implementation and monitoring

SDG Target

1.3 Appropriate Social Protection Systems and Measures for All, & Achieving Substantial Coverage of the Poor and the Vulnerable

10.2 Social, Economic & Political Inclusion for All, irrespective of status (including Disability)

10.3 Ensuring Equal Opportunities & Reducing Inequalities of Outcome

Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities

A key area for disability rights is that of Reforms and Equality. The need for solid base legislation to be enacted or amended as necessary is outlined, as a framework that would back up the implementation of this Strategy. Relevant structures should be created through this legislation, such as a structured focal point system, and a national coordination mechanism for collaboration on cross-cutting issues between different departments and line Ministries.

In the Convention's spirit of 'Nothing About Us, Without Us', a civil society participation mechanism would complete the framework of relevant entities aiding implementation.

Furthermore, other legislation that has an effect on the disability sector, would be reviewed for compliance with relevant norms, and cleaned up from elements such as unsavoury language. Representation of disabled persons on State entities would also be prioritised, while current divergent systems of disability assessment and programme eligibility would be reformed

into a unified, holistic system based on functional and social, instead of medical criteria, in the interests of simplification, sustainability, and dignity of the disabled persons who have to use these systems.- sistemi.

Specific Actions and linked Outputs

Outputs to 1.1:

Development and Reform of Base Legislation and Structures

- 1.1.1 Finalisation of a UNCRPD Act by the Disability Rights Ministry, with the UNCRPD itself being the key point of reference. Any additional content should have the aim of better reflecting the Maltese context, while never diminishing the rights of disabled persons as granted by the aforesaid Convention.
- 1.1.2 Base Legislation put forward by the Disability Rights Ministry should make provision for relevant mechanisms necessary for implementing the UNCRPD in Malta, as well as effective mechanisms for civil society participation, and for monitoring and enforcement of the UNCRPD in Malta, on the basis of which relevant policy and practice could be further created and developed.
- 1.1.3 Base Legislation put forward by the Disability Rights Ministry should also provide for simple and effective redress mechanisms for persons making claims under such legislation, administered by CRPD, that would complement any existing and future mechanisms available at the time of passage of this legislation, as well as measures ensuring better enforcement in case of abuse of rights under the UNCRPD.
- 1.1.4 Consultation with stakeholders, particularly through relevant mechanisms within DDI and CRPD.

- 1.1.5 Formal tabling of new base legislation and amendments to existing base legislation by the Disability Rights Ministry before Parliament.
- 1.1.6 Training would be provided by DDI to officers within CRPD's Directorate for Investigations, Compliance and Enforcement, to ensure that staff members are conversant with the relevant provisions of law in force, especially those that they would work to put into practice.

Outputs to 1.2:

Further efforts by Working Group to Scrutinize Legislation and other key Documentation

- 1.2.1 CRPD shall continue efforts through its working group, which is going through legislation and other important documentation, to:
 - 1.2.1.1 Map all legislation and policy documents that have an effect on disabled persons and their rights;
 - 1.2.1.2 Point out clauses that discriminate against disabled persons. This also extends to terminology used when referring to disabled persons in an explicit and/or implied manner;
- 1.2.2 The CRPD working group's findings are to be collected in one or more reports as the working group deems fit, which are to be eventually passed to DDI for discussion and action.
- 1.2.3 Training would be provided by DDI, as necessary, to relevant officers within CRPD, to ensure that staff members are conversant with the relevant provisions of law in force, especially those that they would work to put into practice.

Outputs to 1.3:

Disability Assessment and Programme Eligibility Reform

- 1.3.1 DDI will continue discussions with key stakeholders, being DSS, CRPD, Aġenzija Sapport, the Education Ministry, JobsPlus, the Health Ministry, OCMH, and civil society representatives, to ensure that different disability assessment systems operated by different entities are rolled into one holistic system, managed through a unit set up within Aġenzija Sapport
- 1.3.2 The reformed system should be operated by Aġenzija Sapport using functional and social criteria reflecting all aspects of a person's life, to ensure that assessments focus on what support disabled persons require to realise their life plans, instead of strictly medicalised criteria and quantitative outcome methods presently prevalent, since the latter prioritise functional impairments and the opinions of family members, support networks and professionals over the wishes and aspirations of disabled persons
- 1.3.3 In conducting relevant reforms, stakeholders should also develop a professional holistic assessment and prioritisation checklist, and ensure that disabled persons and/ or their family members and support networks are provided with a comprehensive list of services they could access upon conclusion of the assessment process
- 1.3.4 Programme eligibility would remain within the remit of different departments referenced in Output 1.3.1, but be discussed among stakeholders, with particular attention given to more awareness of what services every entity offers, whilst addressing the communication between professionals in each entity, and should be implemented in congruence with the reform creating a single holistic disability assessment system

OBJECTIVE 2

RESEARCH AND
DATA COLLECTION

OBJECTIVE 02 RESEARCH AND DATA COLLECTION	ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED
Action 2.1: Collaboration on research on innovative assistive technologies for disabled persons	Within 5 years	ACTU, Engineering Departments/ Institutes - MCAST, Faculty of Engineering - University of Malta, ICT Departments/ Institutes - MCAST, Faculty of ICT - University of Malta, Engineering Faculties/ Departments/ Institutes – other entities duly accredited by MFHEA, ICT Faculties/ Departments/ Institutes – MFHEA, Department of Communication Therapy within the Faculty of Health Sciences – University of Malta, DDI, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 2.2: Collaboration on research on gaps in leisure activities for disabled minors, teenagers and young persons	Within 5 years	Relevant departments, and institutes at MCAST, relevant departments, institutes and faculties at the University of Malta, relevant departments, institutes and faculties at other entities duly accredited by MFHEA, DDI, CRPD, Office of the Commissioner for Children, Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ, and OCMH, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 2.3: Establishment of MoU between the Disability Rights Ministry and Academic Entities	Within 2 years	Disability Rights Ministry, DDS, ADSU, DDI, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 2.4: Public Dissemination of Specific Research	Within 5 years	DDS, DDI, Local Councils, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 2.5: Aligning Data Collection with Best Practices	Within 2 years	DDI, NSO, CRPD, DSS, Agenzija Sapport, Education Ministry, JobsPlus, Health Ministry, OCMH, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

UN CRPD Article

31 Statistics & Data Collection

SDG Target

17.18 Enhancing Capacity-building Support to Developing Countries, incl. least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing States (SIDS), to Increase Availability of High-Quality, Timely and Reliable Data Disaggregated by ex. Disability

Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities

This Objective emphasises the importance of Research, while providing for efficient, Convention-compliant Data Collection. In the latter instance, observance of best practice criteria such as those developed by the UN's Washington Group on Disability Statistics would be ensured when running exercises such as national censuses and surveys, while service provision needs would be bolstered through the setting up of a National Disability register, that would be linked to the disability assessment reform process mentioned in Objective 1.

Specific research on key areas, that would lead to improvements in the lives of disabled persons, such as in the field of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) technologies, and leisure activities for disabled minors, teenagers and young persons, would be given particular attention, while further frameworks would be laid in place, by ensuring conclusion of a Memorandum of

Understanding between Government and the University of Malta's Disability Studies Department, and the possibility of further such agreements with other academic entities.

The importance of disseminating this research is also recognised, and steps are prescribed in this respect.

Specific Actions and linked Outputs

Outputs to 2.1:

Collaboration on research on innovative assistive technologies for disabled persons

- 2.1.1 Discussions are to be undertaken between ACTU and departments, institutes and faculties related to engineering and ICT at MCAST, and the University of Malta, as well as the University's Department of Communication Therapy within the Faculty of Health Sciences, and other such departments, institutes and faculties within entities duly accredited by MFHEA, with representation from DDI and CRPD, concerning sharing of data and/or experiences and methods or equipment, including Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) methods, designs/prototypes of specialised equipment for disabled persons, and building on existing best practice initiatives, including training and provision of guide and service animals.
- 2.1.2 Specific topics such as using of technology to support individuals to access their environment through the concept of SMART homes, which integrate with AAC devices, should be considered as niche areas of research.
- 2.1.3 As a result of said ongoing discussions, DDI shall put forward to Government suggestions as to new areas of investment with regard to assistive technologies.

Outputs to 2.2:

Collaboration on research on gaps in leisure activities for disabled minors, teenagers and young persons

- 2.2.1 Discussions are to be undertaken between relevant departments, institutes and faculties at MCAST, the University of Malta and other entities duly accredited by MFHEA, with representation from DDI, CRPD, the Office of the Commissioner for Children, Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ, and the Officer of the Commissioner for Mental Health, concerning gaps in leisure activities which are accessible and age-appropriate for disabled minors between the ages of 9-12 years (tween groups), as well as teenagers and young persons.

2.2.2 As a result of said ongoing discussions, DDI shall put forward to Government suggestions reflecting exploration and outcomes, further to participatory action research having been conducted using key input from disabled minors, teenagers and young persons, carried out in an accessible manner, and with due provision of all necessary supports, towards this gap being addressed by finding solutions to create such activities.

Outputs to 2.3:

Establishment of MoUs between the Disability Rights Ministry and academic entities

2.3.1 The Disability Rights Ministry, DDS and ADSU are to enter into discussions, facilitated by DDI, with the aim of identifying research areas that are salient to the lives of disabled persons, while factoring in considerations relating to intersectionality, in respect of elements such as gender, ethnic origin or minority status.

2.3.2 A Memorandum of Understanding shall be entered into between the Disability Rights Ministry, DDS and ADSU, concerning identified research areas, further to these discussions.

2.3.3 DDS and ADSU shall promote these identified research areas to their students and to academics at the University of Malta, with the possibility of a University Research Task Force, coordinated by DDS, being eventually considered, bringing together expertise from different Faculties and Departments, towards collaborative efforts to produce cross-cutting and translational research.

2.3.4 The salient areas of research are to be kept updated by DDS, ADSU and the Disability Rights Ministry on a year-by-year basis, as to better reflect the prevailing context, and the needs of disabled persons at a particular point in time.

2.3.5 Research should be of a participatory nature, with disabled persons given the opportunity of being primary researchers, including through ensuring that research projects are accessible and necessary supports are given throughout, and emancipatory, whereby resulting recommendations would lead to changes being implemented, in the interest of social progress, and specific attention should

be paid to tackling issues of intersectionality, such as in respect of disability and gender.

- 2.3.6 Similar initiatives are to be explored between the Disability Rights Ministry and other local academic institutions, facilitated by DDI, with any resulting MoU following the same principles outlined above.

Outputs to 2.4:

Public Dissemination of Specific Research

- 2.4.1 DDS shall develop a system whereby better promotion of research being held in the disability sector is envisaged, with specific attention being given to the role of the National Coordination Mechanism within DDI, and of ENGAGE, as the civil society participation mechanism within DDI.
- 2.4.2 Through DDS' website and other means such as newsletters, as well as through initiatives such as webinars, public talks hosted by Local Councils, and media articles, various research efforts of public interest should be promoted. This will enhance further interest in this sector from the public, and contribute towards the development of community knowledge.
- 2.4.3 Specific beneficiaries should be determined and targeted, following relevant decisions from time to time in this respect taken by the stakeholders involved, and factoring in ongoing social developments, and appropriate means for outreach and tailored dissemination should be developed and effected for every such instance.
- 2.4.4 Following the initial period for completion of the first phase of this Action, subsequent activities in this respect would be ongoing.

Outputs to 2.5: Aligning Data Collection with Best Practices

- 2.5.1 DDI shall engage with NSO and other entities, while consulting CRPD, in order to ensure that the national Census, as well as exercises such as the Labour Force Survey, include and report disability-related data by using criteria established by the UN Washington Group on Disability Statistics
- 2.5.2 A single disability database, maintained in line with relevant legal obligations, including requirements related to consent and privacy, and disaggregated in line with international best practice standards, would be created and regularly maintained, through the input of different stakeholders involved in the disability assessment reform process referenced in Action 3 of Objective 1, and administered by NSO, in order to ensure a better overview of the disability sector, and assist in appropriate provisioning of service and support needs.

OBJECTIVE 3

DISABILITY
AWARENESS-RAISING

OBJECTIVE 03 DISABILITY AWARENESS-RAISING	ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED
Action 3.1: Continuing General Awareness	Within 2 years	Disability Rights Ministry, DDI, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 3.2: Awareness on how to use legislation in cases of disability discrimination	Within 2 years	CRPD, Businesses, Religious organisations, Public sector entities, Local Councils, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 3.3: Training on disability awareness for service providers in the public and private sectors	Within 5 years	CRPD, DDS, DDI, Businesses, Religious organisations, Public sector entities, Local Councils, ADSC, Faculty of Laws - University of Malta, Chamber of Advocates, Judiciary, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 3.4: Provision of Basic Sign Language instruction to key personnel and students	Within 5 years	DDI, KLSM, Aġenzija Support, Education Ministry, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

UN CRPD Article

08 Awareness-Raising

24 Education

SDG Target

10.2 Empowering and promoting Social, Economic & Political Inclusion for All, irrespective of status (including Disability)

4.7 Ensuring acquisition of Knowledge and Skills to promote sustainable development through Human Rights Education and appreciation of cultural diversity

4.c Substantially increasing the supply of qualified teachers

Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities

Objective 3 covers the ever-necessary phenomenon of Awareness-Raising, both within society in general, but also among disabled families and those close to them. Although this has been a priority in Malta for a good number of years, the intensity and especially the content of such awareness-raising needs to be constantly adapted to changing needs and societal realities, and should always be linked to achieving acceptance, inclusion and empowerment of disabled persons.

In particular, initiatives linked to continuing general awareness, and empowering disabled persons by skilling them in available resources towards ensuring respect of their rights at law are being promoted, as are continued training initiatives in both the public and private spheres, and provision of basic Maltese Sign Language training to students and key personnel.

Specific Actions and linked Outputs

Outputs to 3.1:

Continuing General Awareness

- 3.1.1 DDI, acting through its relevant mechanisms, and in conjunction with the Disability Rights Ministry, shall initiate a major, ongoing campaign, making use of mass media and social media outlets, to reach out to various sectors of society, with targeted information on disability, and the rights and needs of disabled persons, in particular combatting disability-related stereotypes in all areas of life, while making reference to instances of intersectionality and related phenomena, such as in the case of disabled women, LGBTQI+ persons and migrants, and with disabled persons as a leading force in such campaign.
- 3.1.2 DDI, acting through its relevant mechanisms, in conjunction with the Disability Rights Ministry, and with disabled persons as a leading force in such campaign, shall develop a similar campaign, this time aimed at disabled persons themselves, with the ultimate goal being that of empowerment, but especially also of dispelling myths and wrongly-held beliefs about disability among disabled persons in Malta.

Outputs to 3.2:

Awareness on how to use legislation in cases of disability discrimination

- 3.2.1 CRPD is to draw up an action plan, with the aim to reaching out to disabled persons, their families and society
- 3.2.2 CRPD, together with relevant stakeholders, in particular disabled people's organisations and civil society organisations, is to provide ongoing information on relevant anti-discrimination legislation, in various forms that include – but are not limited to – seminars, media campaigns and discussions with key stakeholders

Outputs to 3.3:

Training on disability awareness for service providers in the public and private sectors

- 3.3.1 CRPD is to develop an updated general framework for Disability Equality Trainings (DETs), through joint collaboration with DDS and DDI, as well as specifically tailored trainings as and where necessary
- 3.3.2 CRPD is to regularly update, in consultation with DDS and DDI, its register of private entities, including key businesses, civil society organisations and religious organisations, and public sector entities, including Government Ministries, Departments, Authorities and Agencies, and Local Councils, to whom DETs would be delivered on an ongoing basis.
- 3.3.3 A particular focus should be on DETs for entities offering services to children, to ensure that disabled children are not denied their services due to fear.
- 3.3.4 DDI, through its relevant mechanisms, is to engage with different entities, and seek guarantees of DETs being offered to their staff, including on a compulsory basis, in particular to staff in sensitive front-line positions, such as disciplined forces.
- 3.3.5 CRPD, DDS and ADSC are to further existing partnerships with the University of Malta's Faculty of Laws, the Chamber of Advocates and the Judiciary, to ensure that disability rights are a core component of human rights instruction for advocates, both prior to and after being called to the bar, and for magistrates and judges.

Following the initial period for completion of the first phase of this Action, subsequent activities in this respect would be ongoing.

Outputs to 3.4:**Provision of Basic Sign Language instruction to key personnel and students**

- 3.4.1 DDI, through its relevant mechanisms, and with the involvement of KLSM and Aġenzija Sapport, should initiate discussions in order to identify key personnel who would receive training and revision classes in basic Maltese Sign Language (LSM), being members of entities or professionals who have a medium to high probability of contact with Deaf people, focusing primarily on those professionals with a front-line role, including social workers and disciplined forces, and persons active in sectors such as journalism, civil society and the religious sphere.
- 3.4.2 Tailored basic LSM instruction should be developed for and offered to secondary school students in State and private schools, through the joint efforts of KLSM and the Education Ministry.
- 3.4.3 Following the initial period for completion of the first phase of this Action, subsequent activities in this respect would be ongoing.

OBJECTIVE 4

ACCESSIBILITY

OBJECTIVE 04 ACCESSIBILITY	ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED
Action 4.1: Accessibility of Road and Transport Infrastructure	Within 9 years	DDI, TM, CRPD Compliance Unit, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 4.2: Accessibility of Public Transport and Taxi services	Within 9 years	CRPD, DDI, TM, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 4.3: Accessibility of Beaches and Tourism	Within 5 years	CRPD, DDI, FITA, MTA, Local Councils, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 4.4: Accessible Information Policy	Within 5 years	DDI, FITA, Agencija Sapport, ACTU, CRPD, AWAS, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 4.5: Better Access to Books and other Material in Accessible Formats at Educational Institutions	Within 5 years	DDI, Education Service Providers, National Book Council, CRPD UNCRPD Monitoring and Research Unit, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 4.6: Ensuring Accessibility of Buildings and Services	Within 9 years	CRPD Compliance Unit, DDI, Directorate for Local Government, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 4.7: Guidelines on Presentation of Information in various Accessible Formats	Within 5 years	DDS, FITA, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 4.8: Accessibility Assessment and Implementation Reports by State Entities	Within 5 years	DDI, Government and parastatal entities, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 4.9: New Disability Logo	Within 2 years	DDI, Disability Rights Ministry, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 4.10: Access to Justice System and Legal Capacity	Within 5 years	DDI, CRPD, Court Services Agency, Malta Police Force, LESA, Guardianship Board, OCMH, Disability Rights Ministry, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

UN CRPD Article**09** Accessibility**13** Access to Justice**SDG Target****09** (all targets) Building Resilient Infrastructure, Promoting Inclusive and Sustainable Industrialization & Fostering Innovation**11.2** Access to safe, Affordable, Accessible & Sustainable Transport Systems (incl. Roads) for All, with special attention to vulnerable persons (incl. disabled persons)**11.7** Universal Access to Safe, Inclusive and Accessible, Green and Public Spaces, in particular for (also) disabled persons

Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities

Accessibility, one of the most fundamental aspects of a disability rights framework, is covered by this Objective. Malta has long been focusing more closely on this area, particularly when it comes to the built environment, having created Guidelines which were adopted as a National Standard and eventually also written into law.

At European Union level, Malta also championed the European Accessibility Act, which it is now committed to implementing locally over the next years, while sharing its experiences through the relevant European Commission Ad Hoc Working Group. This Objective builds upon current achievements, while addressing those ever-evolving areas that need more attention.

Specific services and areas such as leisure are targeted for better accessibility coverage, and for appropriate enforcement, as are venues used for said activities, as part of the wider infrastructural landscape of the country.

Additionally, access to information and relevant materials such as e-books is tackled, as are relevant policies for such, with a particular focus on assistive technologies, while the State's responsibility to lead by example within its own entities, and Malta's obligations to ensure access to justice for disabled persons, and exercise of legal capacity, are also covered through specific Actions.

Specific Actions and linked Outputs

Outputs to 4.1:

Accessibility of Road and Transport Infrastructure

- 4.1.1 DDI should initiate discussions through its relevant mechanisms, with the inclusion of TM, and consultation with CRPD's Compliance Unit, to discuss the accessibility of Malta's road and transport infrastructure, including that of air and sea terminals and boarding points.
- 4.1.2 These discussions among these stakeholders should also discuss existing use of, as well as engaging in a needs analysis concerning further appropriate accessible signage and crossings for all, and designs for such, including in respect of a uniform model for audio-visual traffic lights and kerbing, pavement width, and well-marked accessible routes within different localities linking amenities.
- 4.1.3 The issue of pedestrianisation should additionally be tackled as a specific measure during these discussions among these stakeholders, as well as creation of policies respecting universal design on the provision of alternative accessible footpaths while works which encumber pedestrian paths are under way.

- 4.1.4 A report detailing the current state of affairs should be drawn up following said discussions, including recommendations and an implementation plan to be coordinated by DDI, also covering test runs with the full participation of disabled persons for new features to be rolled out, and an awareness campaign.

Outputs to 4.2:

Accessibility of Public Transport and Taxi services

- 4.2.1 CRPD should continue relevant discussions with key stakeholders, such as DDI and TM, in respect of application of adopted policy and practice related to accessibility of public transport and taxi services, including application of the Passenger Transport Services Regulations (Subsidiary Legislation 499.56) and the Taxi Services Regulations (Subsidiary Legislation 499.59).
- 4.2.2 Regular reports on the situation concerning accessibility of public transport and taxi services in Malta and Gozo, should be produced by CRPD as a result of these discussions, and DETs could be offered by CRPD to relevant officials and personnel, after liaising with DDI and stakeholders involved, for example, focusing on the needs of passengers with visual impairments.
- 4.2.3 CRPD shall refer its reports to all relevant stakeholders mentioned above, and liaise with them in order that concerns, such as related to safety and pricing, could be addressed, while the adoption of best practices could be constantly updated, in line with latest developments

Outputs to 4.3:

Accessibility of Beaches and Tourism

- 4.3.1 CRPD should engage in continuing discussions with relevant stakeholders, including DDI, MTA, FITA and representatives of Local Councils, in respect of the application of relevant policy and practice measures on Accessible Beaches, and on Accessible Tourism, such as in respect of issues such as wheelchair access, and including through digital accessibility solutions previously developed by entities like FITA.

- 4.3.2 Said policy and practice measures shall be drawn from relevant legislation and national Standards and policy documents in force from time to time, complemented by relevant European and international standards incumbent on Malta and in force from time to time.
- 4.3.3 Regular reports on the situation concerning accessibility of beaches around Malta and Gozo, as well as of the wider Tourism sector, should be produced by CRPD as a result of these discussions.
- 4.3.4 CRPD shall refer its reports to all relevant stakeholders mentioned above, and liaise with them in order that concerns could be addressed, while the adoption of best practices could be constantly updated, in line with latest developments.

Outputs to 4.4:

Accessible Information Policy

- 4.4.1 DDI, through its relevant mechanisms, together with other stakeholders such as FITA and Aġenzija Sapport, and ACTU within said Aġenzija Sapport, and in consultation with CRPD, is to conduct discussions towards the development and continual updating of a comprehensive policy on information accessibility, covering material related to sectors such as tourism, education, business and health, and provision of public services
- 4.4.2 A comprehensive mapping exercise is to be initially conducted by FITA, covering the state of play in areas such as accessibility of websites and brochures, and availability of information in different formats, such as Easy Read and Braille, or those that include closed captioning or sign language interpretation
- 4.4.3 The policy in question is to inform and be aligned with different obligations emanating from specific legislation, such as the European Accessibility Act, the Marrakesh Treaty and the EU's Website and Mobile Application Accessibility Directive
- 4.4.4 The policy should also contain a set of guidelines compliant with international standards such WCAG 2.1, which will list the essential disability features which shall be available on all websites providing services

- 4.4.5 Particular importance should be given to ensuring that access to information should encompass the use of assistive technologies to ensure communication accessibility, which will support those with communication disabilities in different spheres of daily life, such as work , accessing services and obtaining an education, as well as awareness activities in this respect targeted at disabled persons, their families and support networks, and different sections of society, such as employers and educators.
- 4.4.6 Due consideration should also be given to the use of pictures and symbols on key documents such as those containing health-related information leaflets, pamphlets or posters, by way of ensuring better access to information for certain disabled persons.
- 4.4.7 Translation of important information into different languages, alongside official languages, should also be addressed in order to ensure the widest possible access to information, including to disabled migrants within Maltese society, and organisations such as such as AWAS and civil society organisations could be consulted or engaged towards this end.
- 4.4.8 Discussions in respect of the policy would additionally consider the establishment of a section within Aġenzija Sapport that would translate documentation into accessible formats, allowing policy makers and actioners, service providers and front-liners, to focus on the needs of the relevant stakeholders, whilst ensuring standard production of accessible documents in keeping with national and international formats across all areas.

Outputs to 4.5:

Better Access to Books and other Material in Accessible Formats at Educational Institutions

- 4.5.1 DDI, through its relevant mechanisms, is to hold meetings with public and private education service providers and the National Book Council, with the goal being that libraries would have all intellectual property – such as books and dissertations – available in a wide range of formats, particularly in electronic formats, and with due importance being given to the use of assistive technology, also in line with the tenets of the Marrakesh Treaty.

4.5.2 CRPD is to monitor the state of play with public and private education service providers through its UNCRPD Monitoring and Research Unit, and provide regular updates to DDI, that can be raised with relevant service providers.

Outputs to 4.6:

Ensuring Accessibility of Buildings and Services

4.6.1 CRPD shall continue with its current operations in respect of ongoing assessment of physical venues, such as hospitality, cultural, leisure, sporting and entertainment establishments, shops, health centres, public conveniences, youth centres and places of worship, care facilities, hospitals, detention facilities, housing blocks and accommodation for persons in situations of vulnerability, such as domestic abuse victims and asylum seekers, and including open spaces, as well as of services offered, through its Compliance Unit, liaising with stakeholders such as the Directorate for Local Government, and present regular reports to DDI.

4.6.2 In carrying out said assessments, CRPD shall rely on relevant legislation and national Standards in force from time to time, complemented by relevant European and international standards incumbent on Malta and in force from time to time.

4.6.3 DDI shall, through its relevant mechanisms, raise concerns brought forward by CRPD with appropriate stakeholders, while also taking on board necessary feedback, or making proposals of its own, for relevant legislation on accessibility to be fine-tuned, in light of supervening circumstances at any point in time.

4.6.4 Such feedback or proposals should also tackle the existing or possible use of developing best practices, such as the importance of pictures and symbols to ensure access by disabled persons to their environment, inside or outside of a venue, especially when a person is in a situation of vulnerability, as well as allowing the entry of support animals in order for a person to be able to access a venue, as opposed to merely allowing guide or service dogs.

Outputs to 4.7:

Guidelines on Presentation of Information in various Accessible Formats

- 4.7.1 DDS, in consultation with other entities such as FITA, is to design and publish a guideline document on the accessible formats available for persons of different ages with various kinds of impairments.
- 4.7.2 The aforesaid guidelines are to cover documents in audio, electronic and Braille format. Production of Easy Read material is to be covered in depth. The guidelines are also to cover videos with Sign Language and closed captioning (subtitles), and audio description of still or moving images in videos for Blind and visually impaired persons.
- 4.7.3 The guidelines shall take into account relevant legislation and national Standards and policy documents in force from time to time, complemented by relevant European and international standards incumbent on Malta and in force from time to time.
- 4.7.4 The guidelines are to be made available for consultation to key stakeholders, and disabled persons and their representative organisations.

Outputs to 4.8:

Accessibility Assessment and Implementation Reports by State Entities

- 4.8.1 DDI, through its relevant mechanisms, shall conduct discussions with governmental and parastatal entities, in order for an exercise to be initiated whereby all such entities would conduct, on a regular basis, a detailed accessibility assessment and implementation report, concerning their premises, work environment and services offered, while ensuring that any newly acquired offices are accessible for all as per applicable legislation and Standards in force from time to time.
- 4.8.2 CRPD shall monitor said reports, and give regular feedback to DDI, which would discuss said feedback with relevant entities, with a view to said feedback being implemented.

**Outputs to 4.9:
New Disability Logo**

- 4.9.1 DDI shall enter into discussions, through its relevant mechanisms, with stakeholders including the Disability Rights Ministry and CRPD, as well as representative organisations of disabled persons, on the replacement of the old disability logo, in favour of adopting the UN Disability Logo, promoting the image of disabled persons as active participants, and active citizens within mainstream society.
- 4.9.2 The new icon would be launched by the Disability Rights Ministry, followed by an awareness campaign through the media, targeting the general public, and also specific sections of society such as schoolchildren.

**Outputs to 4.10:
Accessing the Justice System and Legal Capacity**

- 4.10.1 DDI, through its relevant mechanisms, and in consultation with CRPD, shall enter into discussions with the Court Services Agency, in order to ensure that the Courts of Justice, and the services that they offer, are accessible from a physical, including sensorial, as well as an informational and procedural point of view, and including in the provision of legal aid and other financial support measures, in line with relevant precepts contained in the UNCRPD.
- 4.10.2 DDI, through its relevant mechanisms, and in consultation with CRPD, shall enter into discussions with stakeholders such as the Malta Police Force and LESA, in order to ensure that disabled persons are to enjoy physical, including sensorial access to premises (such as police stations), as well as informational accessibility (such as access to information on the internet), and access to services, including emergency services, and appropriate guidance to disabled persons, their families and support networks in respect of these matters.

4.10.3 DDI should coordinate with the Guardianship Board, OCMH and other relevant stakeholders, in order to finalise a Personal Autonomy Bill, to be presented by the Disability Rights Ministry before the Cabinet of Ministers and eventually Parliament, with a view to ensuring equal recognition before the law for disabled persons, in terms of Article 12 of the UNCRPD, by introducing the concepts of supported decision-making and co-decision-making into Maltese law.

OBJECTIVE 5

PARTICIPATION IN
CULTURE, LEISURE,
RECREATION
AND SPORTS

OBJECTIVE 05 PARTICIPATION IN CULTURE, LEISURE, RECREATION AND SPORTS	ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED
Action 5.1: Making Cultural, Leisure and Sporting Venues, their Products, and Outdoor Public Spaces Accessible for All	Within 9 years	DDI, DDS, FITA, Ministry responsible for the Arts, Ministry responsible for National Heritage, Heritage Malta, ACM, MTA, Local Councils, SportMalta and stakeholders from the local mainstream sporting community, representatives of faith-based entities, CRPD Compliance Unit, Operators of cultural and leisure venues and their representative organisations, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 5.2: Making Public Events Accessible for All	Within 9 years	DDI, DDS, MTA, ACM, FITA, Ministry responsible for the Arts, Local Councils, Festivals Malta, SportMalta and stakeholders from the local mainstream sporting community, representatives of faith-based entities, CRPD Accessibility Unit, Organisers of public events, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 5.3: Incentives for promoting Cultural Accessibility

Within 5 years

DDI, Disability Rights Ministry, Ministry responsible for the Arts, Ministry responsible for National Heritage, DDS, MTA, ACM, Festivals Malta, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 5.4: Representation of Disabled Persons in the Media

Within 2 years

CRPD, DDI, Broadcasting Authority, DDS, CCWR, HRID, NCPE, AWAS, EASO, Civil society organisations, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 5.5: Sign Language, Closed Captioning and Narration/ Commentary in Television Programmes and Adverts

Within 5 years

DDI, Broadcasting Authority, KLSM, FITA, Representatives of different media houses, CRPD UNCRPD Monitoring and Research Unit, OCMH, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 5.6: Making local traditional events and Sports Inclusive and Accessible

Within 5 years

DDI, CRPD, Malta Police Force, Curia, Local band clubs, Festa committees, Organisational committees (traditional events), SportMalta and Stakeholders from the local mainstream sporting community, Representatives of disability-focused sports entities, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

UN CRPD Article

21 Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information

30 Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure, and sport

SDG Target

4.7 Ensuring accessible education for the appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development

8.3 Promotion of holistic development policies that support creativity and innovation

8.9 Devising and implementing policies to promote sustainable, accessible tourism

12.b Developing and implementing tools to monitor sustainable, accessible tourism

11.4 Strengthening efforts to protect and safeguard the world's culture and natural heritage for all

Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities

Accessibility of culture and leisure is also tackled more specifically in Objective 5 where, aside from building upon on the general precepts contained in Objective 4, particular actions are prescribed, especially as to specific elements such as participation in traditional events such as village festas which, by design, could be said to not always conform to principles of universal design. Specific incentives to promote such participation are also tackled.

Accessing culture and leisure through the media require conformity with certain processes, and the inclusion of elements such as closed captioning, also in light of EU legislation binding Malta such as the European Accessibility Act and the Audio-Visual Media Services Directive.

Finally, the ever-present challenge of ensuring correct, rather than tragedy-based and medicalised portrayal of disabled persons through the local media, is again brought up, with the aim of enabling disabled persons to both feel comfortable engaging in the media, and also participating in media experiences on the same basis as others.

Specific Actions and linked Outputs

Outputs to 5.1:

Making Cultural, Leisure and Sporting Venues, their Products, and Outdoor Public Spaces Accessible for All

- 5.1.1 DDI, through its relevant mechanisms, with the involvement of DDS, FITA, the Ministry responsible for the Arts, the Ministry responsible for National Heritage, Heritage Malta, ACM, MTA and Local Councils, SportMalta and stakeholders from the local mainstream sporting community, and representatives of faith-based entities, and in consultation with CRPD's Compliance Unit, is to engage in discussions said stakeholders, and with operators of cultural, leisure and sporting venues in the public and private sectors, including their representative organisations in the latter case, such as cinemas, museums, parks, art galleries, historical and other heritage sites, and sporting venues, to discuss the state of play concerning the possible and actual use of such facilities by disabled persons.
- 5.1.2 An initial report is to be drawn up by DDI, covering matters relating to accessibility, including informational accessibility, and relevant gaps, concerning both service delivery, as well as physical and sensorial accessibility of premises. The report should also pay particular attention to specific elements such as the needs of persons with sensory impairments. An exhaustive set of guidelines should be included, focusing on how to make such places accessible, together with an action plan.
- 5.1.3 CRPD shall review the implementation of the action plan on a regular basis, and refer its findings to DDI, in order that updates to said plan, and to the guidelines as necessary, could be effected and implemented thereafter through relevant implementation efforts.

Outputs to 5.2:

Making Public Events Accessible for All

- 5.2.1 DDI, through its relevant mechanisms, with the involvement of stakeholders such as DDS, the Ministry responsible for the Arts, MTA, ACM, Festivals Malta, FITA,

Local Councils, SportMalta and stakeholders from the local mainstream sporting community, and representatives of faith-based entities, and in consultation with CRPD's Accessibility Unit, is to engage in discussions with organisers of public events, concerning the accessibility of such public events for disabled persons.

- 5.2.2 An initial report is to be drawn up by DDI, covering matters relating to accessibility, including informational accessibility, of public events, and relevant gaps.
- 5.2.3 A set of guidelines to support organisers of public events should be prepared by DDI, as an outcome of said discussions, rooted in the concept of universal design, and drawing on the experiences of disabled persons.
- 5.2.4 The promotion of accessible events should also be tackled through the joint efforts of the stakeholders mentioned above, as an outcome of these discussions, together with initiatives for encouraging active participation.

Outputs to 5.3:

Incentives for promoting Cultural Accessibility

- 5.3.1 DDI shall coordinate discussions, through its relevant mechanisms, and involving the Disability Rights Ministry and DDS, and stakeholders such as the Ministry responsible for the Arts, the Ministry responsible for National Heritage, Heritage Malta, MTA, ACM and Festivals Malta, while consulting CRPD, on matters concerning promotion of accessible culture, rooted in the principle of universal design.
- 5.3.2 The discussions should lead to the identification and eventual implementation of initiatives by the stakeholders mentioned above, encouraging active participation of disabled persons in mainstream society, through cultural events, boosting informal learning opportunities by ensuring fuller access to learning further to mere appreciation of culture, as a result of ensuring accessibility, while making sure that current shortfalls concerning accessibility of these events are addressed through appropriate initiatives.
- 5.3.3 Award schemes for promoters, together with relevant guidelines and eligibility criteria, should also be considered by the stakeholders mentioned above as an outcome to be followed up in virtue of these discussions, and eventually administered by CRPD.

Outputs to 5.4:

Representation of Disabled Persons in the Media

- 5.4.1 CRPD shall bring together key stakeholders, including DDI, the Broadcasting Authority, DDS and representative organisations of persons with disability, to discuss the current state of play of representation of disabled persons in the media, in general and in particular in events such as telethons.
- 5.4.2 The discussions among these stakeholders should focus on analysing current policy and practice in terms of the Requirements as to Standards and Practice Applicable to Disability and its Portrayal in the Broadcasting Media (Subsidiary Legislation 350.17 to the Broadcasting Act), and of CRPD's Rights not Charity publication, in particular in respect of focusing on disabled persons' abilities and needs, rather than on a tragedy-based portrayal of them, in order that regular reports could be drawn up by CRPD further to these discussions.
- 5.4.3 A number of recommendations concerning best practices and policy implementation in this field are to be extracted by CRPD from these discussions, and communicated to DDI, that would disseminate them among stakeholders, such as media houses, to ensure appropriate guidance, while working with said stakeholders as necessary.
- 5.4.4 In particular, recommendations should also be considered to the effect that disabled persons should not be invited on media solely to discuss disability-related matters, but also matters such as their careers and expertise in other sectors, such as finance or law, without reference to disability, this way sending out the message that disability is only one aspect of a person's life.
- 5.4.5 Intersectionality should also be factored into the recommendations, whereby disabled persons who are also, for example, women, LGBTIQ+ and migrants should be represented, shedding more light on their specific realities, challenges and contributions, in consultation with entities such as CCWR, HRID, NCPE, AWAS, EASO and civil society organisations, to better reflect the diversity of Maltese society.

Outputs to 5.5:

Sign Language, Closed Captioning and Narration/ Commentary in Television Programmes and Adverts

- 5.5.1 DDI, through its relevant mechanisms, are to coordinate with the Broadcasting Authority, KLSM and FITA, together with representatives of different media houses, while consulting with CRPD's UNCRPD Monitoring and Research Unit and OCMH, in order to formulate and discuss an implementation plan for ensuring that television programmes and adverts broadcast locally are rendered accessible through the use of Sign Language interpretation, closed captioning and narration/ commentary, in official languages, for the benefit of, among others, Deaf persons, and those with mental and intellectual disabilities.
- 5.5.2 Implementation is to follow suit, with regular reports to be drawn up on the implementation phase by KLSM, CRPD and OCMH, and referred to DDI, for discussion with relevant stakeholders, to ensure that appropriate follow-up is worked upon.

Outputs to 5.6:

Making local traditional events and Sports Inclusive and Accessible

- 5.6.1 DDI shall coordinate discussions, in consultation with CRPD, and involving stakeholders including the Malta Police Force, the Curia, local band clubs and festa committees, and organisational committees for events such as Imnarja, to take stock of the current situation concerning accessibility of local traditional events, and to discuss solutions and concrete initiatives in order to address areas of concern.
- 5.6.2 DDI shall coordinate discussions, in consultation with CRPD, and involving SportMalta and stakeholders from the local mainstream sporting community, as well as representatives of disability-focused sports such as frame football, and relevant entities such as Special Olympics, Paralympics and Deaflympics, in order to discuss access to sport for disabled persons, current challenges, and concrete proposals and initiatives in order to ensure sport for all.

OBJECTIVE 6

RELATIONSHIPS,
FAMILY, SEXUALITY,
AND PARENTHOOD

OBJECTIVE 06 RELATIONSHIPS, FAMILY, SEXUALITY, AND PARENTHOOD	ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED
Action 6.1: Comprehensive Sexual Education and Education concerning Sexuality	Within 5 years	DDI, Disability Rights Ministry, Education Ministry, Health Ministry – Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate, Aġenzija Sapport, Aġenzija Żgħażaġh, FSWS, DDS, CRPD, CCWR, HRID, NCPE, AWAS, EASO, Civil society organisations, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 6.2: Inclusive Sexual Health Policy and Strategy	Within 9 years	Health Ministry – Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate, DDI, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 6.3: Creation of a Family Unit at Aġenzija Sapport	Within 9 years	Aġenzija Sapport, DDI, DDS, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 6.4: Inclusive Marriage Preparation Courses	Within 2 years	DDI, Curia, DDS, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 6.5: Guidelines on the Right to Parenthood and Supported Parenthood

Within 5 years

DDI, CRPD, DDS, Aġenzija Sapport, Public and private disability service providers, SCSA, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 6.6: Media Campaign and Events for Key Professionals

Within 2 years

DDI, CRPD, Faculty for Social Wellbeing - University of Malta, DDS, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

UN CRPD Article

- 21** Respect for home and the family
- 22** Respect for privacy
- 25** Health
- 17** Protecting the integrity of the person
- 24** Education

SDG Target

- 3.7** Ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health care education and services for all.
- 4.a** Education facilities that provide age, disability and gender sensitive, inclusive and effective learning environments

Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities

This Objective deals with a very thorny but necessary aspect of Maltese society, the equal right of disabled persons for respect of personal and intimate relationships, the lack of paternalistic intrusion into their lives and choices, and provision of necessary support which is age, gender and impairment-specific, allowing disabled persons to live a full life, with full respect for their will, rights and preferences.

Although Maltese law currently touches on this topic, and a number of initiatives in this field have been undertaken over the past years, the fact still remains that overprotection remains a cross-cutting phenomenon in Maltese society, and disabled persons feel the brunt of this even more, leading to denial of their rights, misunderstanding and sometimes even less than correct treatment by those who are meant to respect and support them.

Actions cover aspects such as the need for sexual education to be appropriate to a person's profile, but to be nonetheless never denied, and for national sexual health policies and strategies to also be disability-inclusive. They call for appropriate guidelines on the right to parenthood, including supported parenthood, to be made available, with the input of disabled persons at their core, and for wide dissemination of such through campaigns, events and the media. The setting up of a Family Unit within Aġenzija Sapport would also be a key step towards implementing the content of this Objective.

Specific Actions and linked Outputs

Outputs 6.1:

Comprehensive Sexual Education and Education concerning Sexuality

- 6.1.1 DDI, through its relevant mechanisms, and with the involvement of the Disability Rights Ministry, Agenzija Support, Education Ministry, Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate within the Health Ministry, Agenzija Žgħażaġħ, FSWS and DDS, as well as CRPD in as far as its awareness and outreach efforts are involved, is to convene discussions concerning the delivery of appropriate sexual education and education concerning sexuality for young disabled people in both formal and non-formal education settings, focusing on rights, risks and responsibilities, while making efforts to ensure the widest possible mainstreaming of such content.
- 6.1.2 These discussions should also factor in specific considerations for delivering sexual education and education concerning sexuality to different groups of disabled persons, such as to young disabled women, whereby education on consent should be emphasised as a means of combatting potential violence, including sexual violence, young disabled LGBTIQ+ persons and young disabled migrants, in respect of matters such as different persons' experiences, needs, backgrounds, cultures and faiths, and factor in entities such as CCWR, HRID, NCPE, AWAS, EASO and civil society organisations towards this end.
- 6.1.3 As a result of these discussions, an initial report is to be drawn up by DDI on the current state of play, focusing in particular on topics being covered or otherwise, as well as the extent and quality of education concerning sexuality and sexual education being delivered.
- 6.1.4 On the basis of this report, a revised set of guidelines, together with an action plan, are to be drawn up by DDI, using a comprehensive, sex-positive (not focused on abstinence, and the possibility of sexual abuse, unplanned pregnancy and STIs) approach, focusing on non-patronising discourse, countering the traditional, medicalized model, and existing stigma and taboos, and factoring in the full involvement of young disabled persons during both preparation and implementation, while also exploring novel delivery methods, such as peer education, as well as online methods, which are, furthermore, conducive to improved accessibility for certain end-users.

Outputs to 6.2: Inclusive Sexual Health Policy and Strategy

- 6.2.1 The Health Ministry is, through its Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate, and in conjunction with DDI, which shall engage appropriate stakeholders through its relevant mechanisms, to commence discussions with a view to drawing up a new comprehensive inclusive Sexual Health Policy and Strategy, in which disabled persons are perceived beyond the traditional, deficit-type discourse, and are guaranteed equal opportunities for quality access to sexual and reproductive health care.
- 6.2.2 In particular, the new Policy and Strategy shall emphasise that efforts towards forcing contraception on disabled persons, particularly persons with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities, and including sterilisation by way of permanent contraception, are to be countered effectively.
- 6.2.3 The new Policy and Strategy should also rule out any efforts or measures towards allowing termination of pregnancies specifically linked to the disability of the parent or the foetus.
- 6.2.4 The new Policy and Strategy should tackle the aspect of intersectionality, and the situation of disabled persons who might also be discriminated against or face phenomena such as violence due to factors such as their gender or ethnic origin.
- 6.2.5 The draft Policy and Strategy are to be made available for public consultation, through joint efforts between the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate within the Health Ministry and DDI, which shall ensure that said process is fully inclusive for disabled persons.
- 6.2.6 Implementation of the final Strategy shall be the responsibility of the Health Ministry, through its Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate, with CRPD being responsible for reviewing the implementation of the Strategy on a regular basis with regard to the rights of disabled persons, and referring its findings to the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate within the Health Ministry, in order that updates to said Policy and Strategy could be effected and implemented thereafter through relevant implementation efforts.

Outputs to 6.3:

Creation of a Family Unit at Aġenzija Sapport

- 6.3.1 Aġenzija Sapport is to set up a new Unit within its services. This Unit shall be responsible for supporting families and support networks of disabled persons, including disabled parents and disabled persons aspiring towards personhood, and interpreting the term ‘families’ in the broadest sense possible. This Unit is to eventually become a one-stop-shop for family support services, with its services also being offered in a decentralised manner throughout the community.
- 6.3.2 The Unit would be equally able to offer training to professionals servicing existing programmes in Malta, such as the Parentcraft programme offered by the Obstetrics Department at Mater Dei Hospital, and Child Protection Services and The Incredible Years at FSWS.
- 6.3.3 Working with DDI and other stakeholders through DDI’s relevant structures, this Unit is to identify the necessary human and other resources required, and to adopt best practices for providing the necessary interventions, either on its own and/or in conjunction with other governmental or private entities, and building upon current efforts being undertaken by Aġenzija Sapport and DDS.
- 6.3.4 Queries within the scope of this Objective could be either tackled or else referred to the appropriate entity by the Helpline for Persons with Disability operated by Aġenzija Sapport.

Outputs to 6.4:

Inclusive Marriage Preparation Courses

- 6.4.1 DDI, through its relevant mechanisms, is to hold discussions with key stakeholders, including the Curia and DDS, in order to ensure that marriage-related courses offered by the Roman Catholic Church are inclusive and accessible, and do not portray disabled persons in negative, stereotypical ways, including concerning matters relating to their sexuality.

6.4.2 CRPD shall offer its expertise in relation to training of members of the clergy and lay persons involved in the creation and delivery of such courses, on relevant aspects, including support in the sourcing and training of guest speakers who are disabled persons.

Outputs to 6.5:

Guidelines on the Right to Parenthood and Supported Parenthood

6.5.1 DDI, through its relevant mechanisms, in consultation with CRPD, and with the involvement of DDS, Aġenzija Support and other entities that provide services to disabled persons, and children of disabled parents, shall convene discussions with a view to drawing up guidelines on the right to parenthood, including issues of consent, and on supported parenthood and parent advocacy, for disabled persons, and building upon current efforts being undertaken by stakeholders involved.

6.5.2 The guidelines should also contain a strong emphasis on the gender perspective, such as in respect of ensuring support to disabled women in their motherhood, including as single disabled mothers.

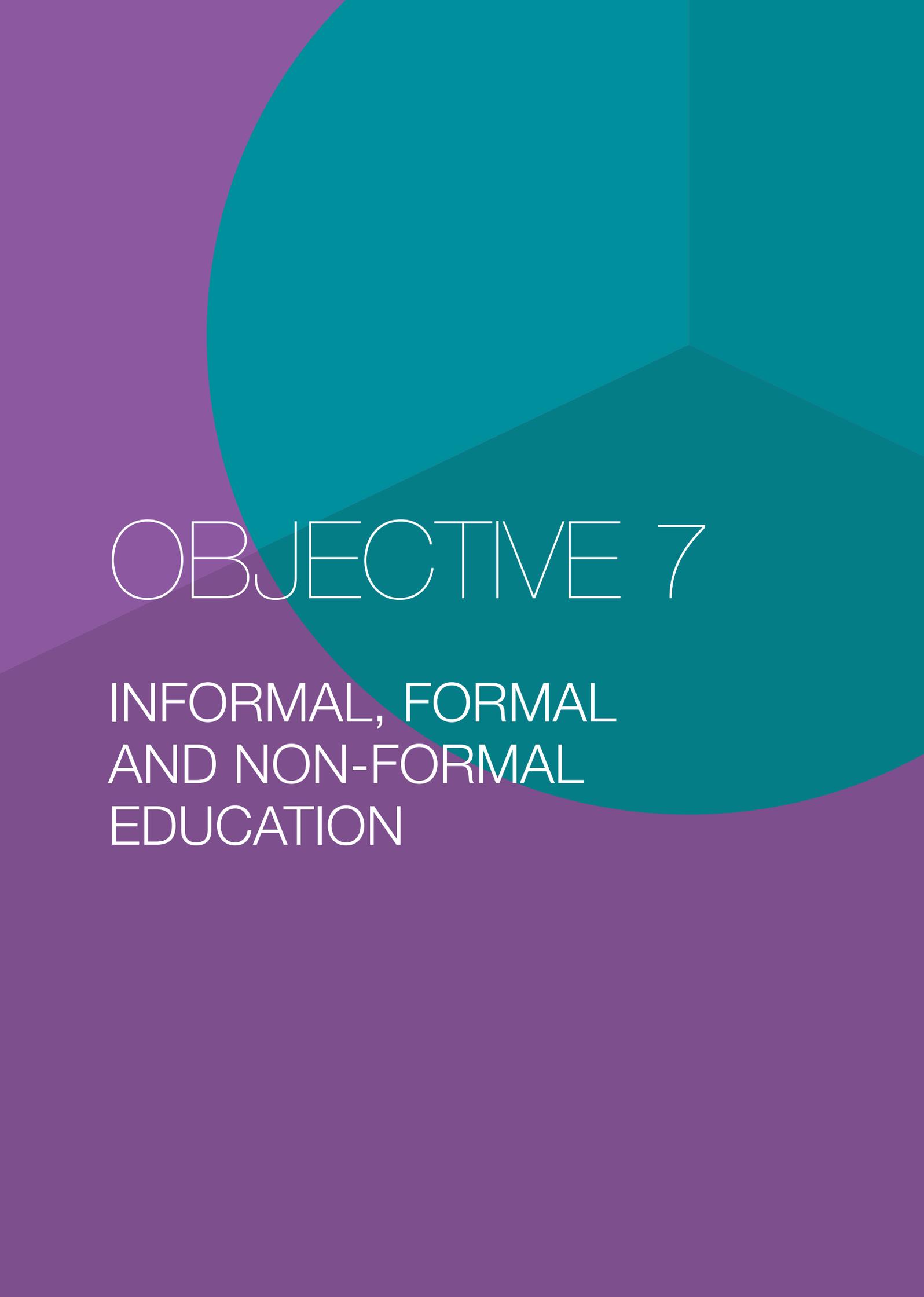
6.5.3 These guidelines are to be promulgated as standards through SCSA, following a consultation process, with the full participation of disabled parents, accorded all relevant supports and accommodations, such as personal assistance, to be able to effectively participate in the process.

Outputs to 6.6:

Media Campaign and Events for Key Professionals

6.6.1 DDI and CRPD are to convene with stakeholders such as representatives from the University of Malta's Faculty for Social Wellbeing, and other Faculties and Departments as practicable from time to time, to develop educational audio-visual materials, aimed at the general public, that seek to break taboos on sexuality and debunk stereotypes associated with the sexuality of disabled persons.

6.6.2 DDI and CRPD are to discuss with key stakeholders such as DDS, concerning the organisation of regular conferences and seminars focusing on the sexuality of disabled persons, targeting professions such as medical doctors and nurses, teachers, carers and personal assistants, as well as their professional bodies.



OBJECTIVE 7

INFORMAL, FORMAL
AND NON-FORMAL
EDUCATION

OBJECTIVE 07 INFORMAL, FORMAL AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION	ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED
Action 7.1: IEPs for all Disabled Students	Within 5 years	DDI, Education Ministry, DDS, Faculty of Education – University of Malta, CRPD, Disability Rights Ministry, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 7.2: Transition Programmes	Within 5 years	DDI, CRPD, Education Ministry, DDS, Faculty of Education – University of Malta, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 7.3: Preparation of Accessibility Studies by Educational Establishments	Within 9 years	DDI, Education Ministry, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 7.4: Support for Training for Disabled Persons on the use of Digital Technology	Within 5 years	DDI, ACTU, FITA, CRPD, Education Ministry, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 7.5: Collaboration with MFHEA on matters concerning Social Inclusion in Education	Within 5 years	DDI, MFHEA, CRPD- Investigation Unit, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 7.6: Accreditation of suitably-qualified and experienced LSEs

Within 9 years

DDI, Education Ministry, CRPD-Investigation Unit, Disability Rights Ministry, UNCRPD-Monitoring Unit, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 7.7: Specific Initiatives

Within 5 years

DDI, Disability Rights Ministry, Education Ministry, ACTU, Education Department, Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ, CRPD, DDI, FITA, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 7.8: Setting up of a working group on Inclusion and Education

Within 2 years

DDI, Disability Rights Ministry, CRPD, Education Ministry, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

UN CRPD Article

- 21** Education
- 7** Children with disabilities
- 9** Accessibility
- 21** Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information

SDG Target

- 4.4** Increasing the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills leading to decent employment and entrepreneurship
- 4.5** Eliminating Gender Disparities in Education & Ensuring Equal Access to All Levels of Education and Vocational Training for the vulnerable incl. disabled persons
- 4.8** Building and Upgrading Education Facilities that are (also) Disability-Sensitive & Providing Safe, Non-violent, Inclusive and Effective Learning Environments for All
- 9.c** Significantly increasing access to information and communications technology (ICT)

Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities

In the field of Education, although the last years have seen a better understanding of the concept of inclusion as opposed to merely integration, supports being added within the educational system, and better physical and sensorial accessibility, there is always more ground that remains to be covered in what is an ever-evolving domain. Transition planning is one of the key areas where more action is warranted under Objective 7, as are specific features such as ensuring strong frameworks for Individualised Education Plans (IEPs) for all disabled students. Additionally, ensuring that staff continually trained to enable them to excel in their roles is as crucial to the sector as are specific initiatives, such as those ensuring the spread of and access to digitalisation within the education system.

It is not just the formal education system that is covered by this Objective, but also non-formal and informal education, in line with a common approach increasingly emphasised within structures such as those of the European Union, and in terms of obligations such as the Sustainable Development Goals.

Accessibility studies by educational institutions are also covered as necessary towards implementing this Objective, as well as collaboration with regulatory authorities to ensure a cross-cutting element of social inclusion, and implementation of projects targeting specific groups, such as youths and those with hearing impairments and other specific needs.

Specific Actions and linked Outputs

Outputs to 7.1:

IEPs for all Disabled Students

- 7.1.1 DDI shall, through its relevant mechanisms, convene discussions with the Education Ministry, DDS and the University of Malta's Faculty of Education, and consult CRPD, in order to discuss concerns about the current system of devising and monitoring Individualised Educational Plans (IEPs), including extension of this system to post-secondary and tertiary education students, involving institutions' relevant disability support entities in discussions, and chart a way forward.
- 7.1.2 DDI shall enter into discussions with the Disability Rights Ministry and the Education Ministry, with a view to discussing the status of IEPs in terms of domestic legislation, also specifying that disabled students should be involved in the development of their IEPs, particularly when determining appropriate reasonable adjustments from time to time, and in related transition planning.

Outputs to 7.2:

Transition Programmes

- 7.2.1 DDI shall, through its relevant mechanisms, in consultation with CRPD, and with the inclusion of stakeholders such as the Education Ministry, DDS and the University of Malta's Faculty of Education, discuss and assess the current transition programme for disabled students from one educational stage to another.
- 7.2.2 DDI shall ensure that relevant efforts should be made, on the basis of these discussions, DDI is responsible to bring forward relevant policy and legislative changes, as well as schemes involving various actors, to ensure the used of tailored best-practice models.

Outputs to 7.3:

Preparation of Accessibility Studies by Educational Establishments

- 7.3.1 DDI shall coordinate with the Education Ministry, and consult with CRPD, in order that educational establishments, both public and private, could undertake regular studies, in the form of a detailed accessibility assessment of their buildings/ facilities, from both a physical and sensorial, and from a content delivery and assessment point of view.
- 7.3.2 DDI is to develop specific guidelines in regard to the implementation of Action 7.3, including criteria to assist with drafting of studies, and should be updated following further discussions from time to time

Outputs to 7.4:

Support for Training for Disabled Persons on the use of Digital Technology

- 7.4.1 DDI, ACTU and FITA, in consultation with CRPD, are to discuss ways on how disabled persons are to be supported in taking up ICT-related courses, including, but not limited to, basic use of computers and digital equipment such as tablets, as well as undertaking courses such as those leading up to ECDL certification and further, as well as specific training on the use of assistive technologies such as Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) devices.
- 7.4.2 The Disability Rights Ministry is to propose financial incentives for the approval of the Finance Ministry.
- 7.4.3 The Disability Rights Ministry is to propose an action plan, which includes budgeting and seeing to the implementation of the same action plan, and which would include an outreach strategy for better communicating information in respect of accessing services and financing, to disabled persons, their families and support networks.

Outputs to 7.5:**Collaboration with MFHEA on matters concerning Social Inclusion in Education**

- 7.5.1 DDI are to coordinate discussions with MFHEA, while consulting CRPD's Investigations Unit, on ways to make post-secondary, tertiary, and other non-compulsory education, including third age education, more accessible to disabled persons.
- 7.5.2 DDI is to draw up an initial report further to these discussions, also highlighting gaps on matters concerning accessibility of education services, pedagogical approaches, access to information (such as academic material), availability of accessible accommodation for students, and staff awareness and competence concerning disability issues, as well as being sensitive to the aspect of intersectionality in respect of disabled learners of, for example, different genders, faiths or ethnic origins to the majority.
- 7.5.3 Further to such report, DDI is to draw up an action plan, with recommendations as to how identified shortcomings would be addressed, including through the creation of specific projects and initiatives, that would involve disabled persons at all stages.

Outputs to 7.6:**Accreditation of suitably-qualified and experienced LSEs**

- 7.6.1 DDI, through its relevant mechanisms, shall hold discussions with the Education Ministry, while consulting CRPD's Investigations Unit, with a view to agreeing on a way forward in respect of the continuing professionalisation of Learning Support Educators (LSEs), and of their continuing professional development.
- 7.6.2 DDI is to draw up an action plan, further to these discussions, as well as draft legislation as necessary, to be then taken forward by the Education Ministry and the Disability Rights Ministry.
- 7.6.3 CRPD, through its UNCRPD Monitoring and Research Unit, shall review the progress achieved in light of the action plan and any legislation adopted, and offer regular feedback, to be factored into the implementation process, and to be used for any necessary amendments to the plan or to legislation, from time to time.

Outputs to 7.7: Specific Initiatives

- 7.7.1 The Youth. Inc programme within Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ, through youth workers and with the support of the Education Ministry, DDI and CRPD, shall incentivise more programmes designed especially to promote diversity in skills and abilities of students, with the crucial focus of these programmes being empowerment.
- 7.7.2 DDI shall coordinate with the Education Ministry, ACTU and FITA, in order to discuss the installation of hearing loop systems and other assistive technologies, in buildings used by all educational providers.
- 7.7.3 DDI, the Education Ministry and the Disability Rights Ministry shall coordinate with Education Department officials to explore possibilities in respect of resource units being made available within mainstream schools and colleges for disabled students, to be made use of during specific times as indicated in students' IEPs and allocated in the class timetable.

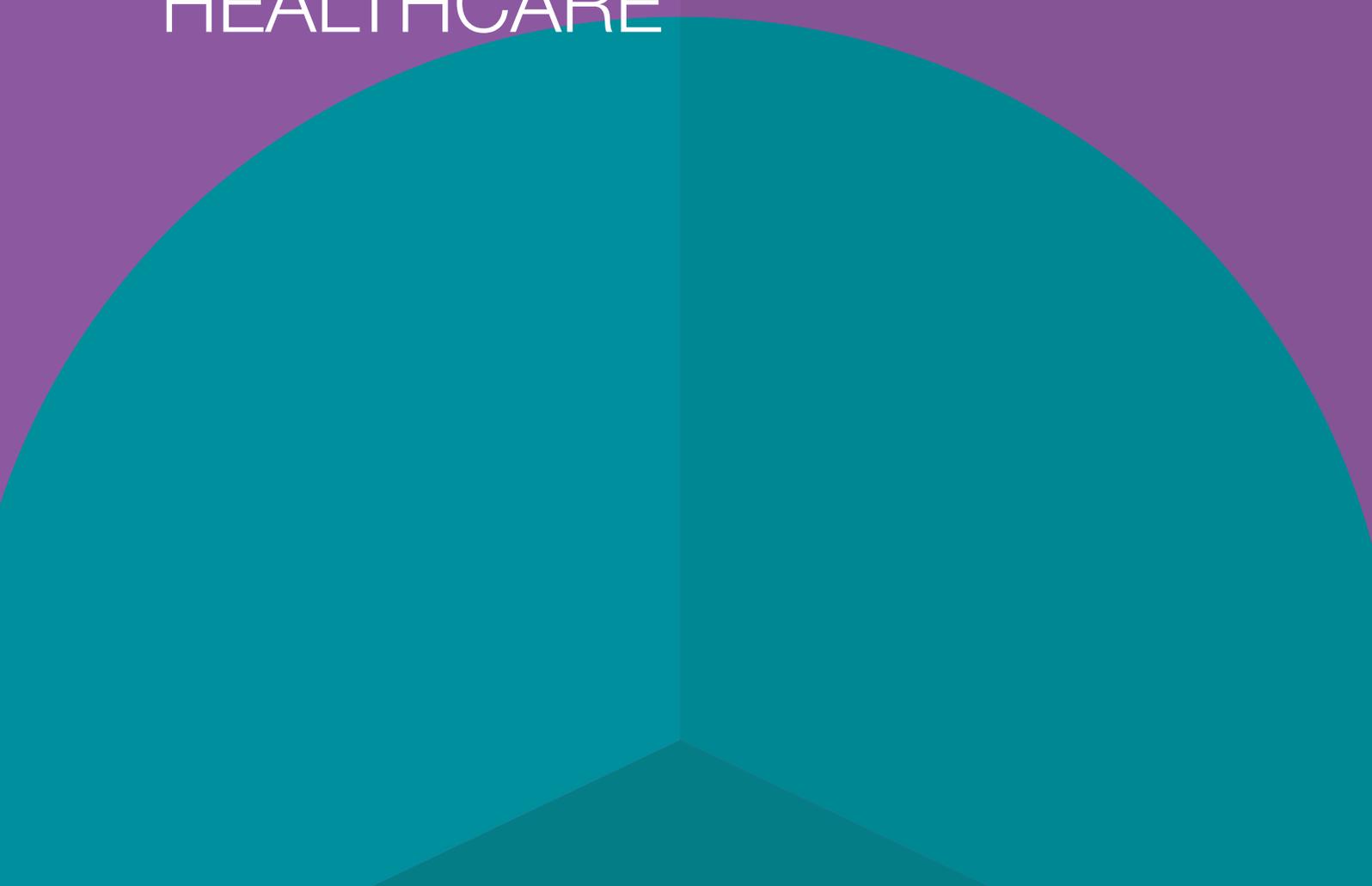
Outputs to 7.8: Setting up of a working group on Inclusion and Education

- 7.8.1 DDI, acting through its relevant mechanisms, is to coordinate a working group, with the participation of the Disability Rights Ministry, the Education Ministry, civil society and relevant trade unions, that would meet regularly and discuss matters covered by this Objective, aligning such discussions also with the content of the National Inclusion Policy.
- 7.8.2 The aim of the working group would be to ensure an accessible educational experience for all learners, factoring in the principles of Universal Design for Learning, ensuring participation through identification and provision of necessary supports and reasonable adjustments for learners, and also acknowledging the role of family members and support networks through ongoing multidisciplinary support throughout relevant processes.

- 7.8.3 The working group would also liaise with stakeholders engaged in formal, non-formal and informal education, such as educational institutions, and social, youth and faith-based groups, to offer, in conjunction with CRPD, tailored DETs to educators and leaders.
- 7.8.4 The working group would additionally focus on engaging with providers in the informal education sector, and also reach out to stakeholders such as local councils, together with which different accessible and inclusive activities within the community could be organised for the benefit of disabled persons and of the general public.

OBJECTIVE 8

HEALTHCARE



OBJECTIVE 08 HEALTHCARE	ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED
Action 8.1: Revision of Code of Ethics for practising medical professionals	Within 9 years	DDI, DDS, CRPD, UNCRPD-Monitoring Unit and Research Unit, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 8.2: Specialized Training to Medical Professionals and Staff	Within 2 years	DDI, Health Ministry, Agenzija Sapport, Positive Parenting Programme – FSWS, DDS, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 8.3: Increased Disability sensitisation in Medical Boards	Within 5 years	DDI, Health Ministry, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 8.4: Health Promotion for Disabled Persons	Within 5 years	DDI, Health Ministry – Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate, DDS, CRPD, CCWR, HRID, NCPE, AWAS, EASO, Civil society organisations, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 8.5: Reporting on matters related to access to health by disabled persons	Within 9 years	DDI, CRPD, Health Ministry, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

UN CRPD Article

25 Health

SDG Target

3.8 Achieving universal health coverage and access to quality essential healthcare, and safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all

3.7 Universal Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health-care Services & Integration of Reproductive Health into National Strategies and Programmes

3.d Strengthening the capacity for early warning, risk reduction, and management of national and global health risks

Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities

Objective 8 is a crucial yet delicate area. While Healthcare is also of utmost importance to disabled persons, it is still a fundamental challenge to ensure that disability and health are not seen as interchangeable concepts. Rather, health conditions should be seen as a component of disability and, most importantly, access to healthcare in general for disabled persons, and not only in respect of their impairment, should be available to them on an equal basis with others.

Continued sensitisation of medical professionals is a must in this area, both content-wise, and in specific areas such as 'breaking the news', both in respect of health conditions contributing to a disability, and also in respect of communicating with different disabled persons, such as with Deaf persons or those with intellectual disabilities. Additionally, Codes of Ethics for the medical profession should be revised to ensure an appropriate disability perspective, and appropriate monitoring and feedback mechanisms are to be put in place following such.

A disability perspective in medical boards is also addressed through a relevant action, as is health promotion targeted at disabled persons. Finally, a proper reporting mechanism concerning access to health by disabled persons, in order to identify shortfalls and inform future policy and practice, is discussed.

Specific Actions and linked Outputs

Outputs to 8.1:

Revision of Code of Ethics for practising medical professionals

- 8.1.1 DDI, through its relevant mechanisms, shall hold discussions with DDS, relevant medical professional bodies and their associated Faculties and Departments at the University of Malta, while consulting CRPD, with the aim of revising existing Codes of Ethics that steer away from traditional disability discourses.
- 8.1.2 CRPD would, through its UNCRPD Monitoring and Research Unit, review the functioning of existing and revised Codes of Ethics, and put forward recommendations, which would then be discussed with stakeholders through DDI, with a view to implementation.

Outputs to 8.2:

Specialized Training to Medical Professionals and Staff

- 8.2.1 DDI is to convene discussions with the Health Ministry and DDS, on developing trainings to different groups of medical professionals, as well as non-medical staff such as administrative and security personnel, on disability awareness and sensitisation, with a particular focus on themes such as invisible disabilities, and dealing with disabled persons who communicate their needs in a particular manner, ex. using AAC, to be delivered by CRPD in the form of DETs, following the model currently employed in respect of staff at Mater Dei Hospital.
- 8.2.2 DDI is to also discuss with the Health Ministry, with the involvement of Aġenzija Support, the Positive Parenting programme within FSWS, and DDS, trainings for different groups of medical professionals on breaking the news to disabled persons, their families and support networks in a disability-sensitive manner, be it in relation to diagnosis of an impairment, or to communicating other health-related matters when a particular approach is warranted.
- 8.2.3 CRPD are to regularly review any such trainings so devised, and communicate relevant feedback to DDI, in order that such feedback could be communicated to stakeholders, and relevant revisions to said training initiatives factored in accordingly.

Outputs to 8.3:

Increased Disability sensitisation in Medical Boards

- 8.3.1 DDI would discuss with the Health Ministry representatives and other relevant stakeholders, through its structures, and while consulting CRPD, different ways as to how medical boards would have a better knowledge of disability and of the needs of disabled persons, including gaps experiences along the life course, in order to ensure that any decision taken by such boards respects the dignity and rights of disabled persons.
- 8.3.2 An initial report would be drawn up following said discussions, outlining the current state of play, gaps and recommendations, in order for said recommendations to be then presented to the Health Ministry, and the voices of disabled persons, their families and support networks would be paramount in carrying out this process.

Outputs to 8.4:

Health Promotion for Disabled Persons

- 8.4.1 DDI is to convene discussions with the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate within the Health Ministry, and DDS, while consulting with CRPD, in order to ensure that national health promotion efforts, including national campaigns are inclusive of and accessible to disabled persons.
- 8.4.2 In particular, specific attention should be focused on reaching out to different groups of disabled persons, in particular disabled women, in respect of their specific health needs, while ensuring an appropriate gender and disability perspective, as well as groups such as disabled LGBTQI+ persons, in particular when accessing services such as the Gender Wellbeing Clinic, and disabled migrants, where cultural competence would be required alongside a disability perspective, and in which respect entities such as such as CCWR, HRID, NCPE, AWAS, EASO and civil society organisations could be consulted or engaged.
- 8.4.3 A specific approach should also be adopted in respect of those disabled persons with particular health vulnerabilities, especially in relation to accessing services, and ensuring continuity of such.

Outputs to 8.5:

Reporting on matters related to access to health by disabled persons

- 8.5.1 CRPD is to coordinate with the Health Ministry, in order to produce regular reporting on access to services by disabled persons, on matters related to general health, and also on health issues that are specifically impairment-related, as well as relevant actions taken and gaps identified. Such reports should be forwarded to DDI.
- 8.5.2 Such reporting would also tackle accessibility of buildings, facilities and services, in terms of law, to determine how physically and sensorially accessible they are for disabled persons, and whether they ensure that disabled persons can receive services with dignity in a way that addresses their specific needs, while also indicating what measures are adopted by way of reasonable accommodation in respect of disabled patients.
- 8.5.3 Particular attention would also be paid to best practices in respect of various supports that would make services truly accessible, such as having sign language interpreters available, or provision of Easy Read information.
- 8.5.4 Reporting would also highlight the availability of current and planned services within community settings, including afternoon services and services within schools, thus encouraging a shift from a medicalised to a more inclusive and integrated approach towards disability, by moving certain services away from rigid clinical settings.
- 8.5.5 On the basis of such reports, DDI will convene the Health Ministry and relevant stakeholders, through its mechanisms, while consulting with CRPD, in order to discuss a way forward in addressing issues and gaps identified, with the participation and input of disabled persons, their families and support networks.

OBJECTIVE 9

WORK AND EMPLOYMENT

OBJECTIVE 09 WORK AND EMPLOYMENT	ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED
Action 9.1: Specific DETs and Information targeting All Employers	Within 2 years	CRPD, Malta Business Disability Forum, DDS, DDI, HRID, NCPE, AWAS, EASO, Civil society organisations, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 9.2: Pre-Employment, Employment and Job Retention Strategy	Within 5 years	DDI, Jobsplus, LSF and any other entities fulfilling a similar purpose, Malta Enterprise, CRPD, Entities duly accredited by MFHEA, Malta Business Disability Forum, CRPD UNCRPD Monitoring and Research Unit, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 9.3: Work-Related Supports and Adjustments	Within 5 years	DDI, Jobsplus-Inclusive Employment services division, LSF and any other entities fulfilling a similar purpose, Entities duly accredited by MFHEA, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 9.4: Promoting Social Enterprise Incentives

Within 9 years

DDI, CRPD, Malta Business Disability Forum, Economy Ministry, Malta Enterprise, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 9.5: Improved Career Guidance Services

Within 5 years

DDI, Jobsplus, LSF and any other entities fulfilling a similar purpose, Aġenzija Sapport, Entities duly accredited by MFHEA, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 9.6: Outreach and Detached Youth Work

Within 5 years

Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ, Aġenzija Sapport, Faculty for Social Wellbeing – University of Malta, Jobsplus, LSF and any other entities fulfilling a similar purpose, DDI, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 9.7: Media Campaign and Inclusive Employer Certification

Within 2 years

DDI, CRPD, Jobsplus, LSF and any other entities fulfilling a similar purpose, DDS, Disability Rights Ministry, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

UN CRPD Article**27** Work and employment**SDG Target****8.5** Full and Productive Employment & Decent Work for All, incl. for Disabled Persons, & Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value**6.1** Substantially increasing the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs, and entrepreneurship

Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities

One key area to be addressed by Malta is that related to Work and Employment. An understanding of the social model of disability and of a person-centred approach is crucial towards both taking stock of the current situation, and making necessary reforms and policy and practice additions. While a number of incentives were put into place over the past years, such as fiscal incentives for employers, and a legislative framework ensuring general reasonable accommodation for disabled employees, together with awareness efforts and enforcement measures, action has to be taken in a number of areas.

There is the need to move away from pigeon-holing disabled persons as qualifying for 'special', segregated employment, or for only being employable in certain low-end jobs. There also remains a lack of awareness within the business community about what disability really is, and what disabled persons can really offer. The end goal of fulfilling this Objective should be equalisation of opportunity, through a multi-stakeholder approach, enabling disabled persons to become fulfilled, contributing members of society, and changing social perceptions in the process.

Thus, career guidance should start early on, twinned with information campaigns for all involved parties, including through the media. While up-to-date employment strategies, including a strong focus on pre-employment, should be in place, a proper focus on job retention is warranted, while specific niches such as youth work, and social enterprise, both for disabled persons themselves, and for those who work with them, should be tackled.

Moving from a quota system to a more inclusive system should also be incentivised through certifying inclusive employers, all the while continuing to build upon existing structures, and obligations such as provision of reasonable accommodation.

Specific Actions and linked Outputs

Outputs to 9.1:

Specific DETs and Information targeting All Employers

- 9.1.1 CRPD is to, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, including employers' representatives and its Malta Business Disability Forum, disabled persons and their representative organisations, as well as DDS and DDI, and entities such as HRID, NCPE, AWAS, EASO and civil society organisations, revise and update their DET programme specifically geared at employers and their staff, to reflect the situation on the ground, and relevant needs, tackling non-fiscal aside from fiscal benefits of employing disabled persons, and issues such as employing disabled migrants, to ensure that the selection and recruitment processes are free from discrimination, while developing accessible, on-demand online and print materials for employers, including specific guidelines.
- 9.1.2 DDI shall assist CRPD, through its relevant mechanisms, in discussing with employers and their representatives, and also with State entities, in order to obtain guarantees from different employers and entities to ensure that said DET is delivered by CRPD, in a tailored manner, to an as wide catchment area as possible, and to ensure the widest possible dissemination of online and print materials for employers, including specific guidelines.

Outputs to 9.2:

Pre-Employment, Employment and Job Retention Strategy

- 9.2.1 DDI shall, through its relevant mechanisms, coordinate with different stakeholders, such as JobsPlus, LSF and any other entities fulfilling a similar purpose, Malta Enterprise, entities duly accredited by MFHEA, and employers' representatives and experts, consulting CRPD and its Malta Business Disability Forum, and factoring in the involvement and input of disabled persons, to draft a Pre-Employment, Employment and Job Retention Strategy, based on the peculiarities of the local scenario, and focused on enabling disabled persons to access suitable employment of their choosing, while drawing on tried and tested best practices used elsewhere.
- 9.2.2 The preparatory work on the Pre-Employment, Employment and Job Retention Strategy should ensure a particular focus on training of and investment in sections of the population where disabled persons, due to factors such as impairment type or socio-economic status, have been historically chronically disadvantaged, while considering specific measures such as providing templates to employers issuing vacancies and selection criteria to ensure non-discriminatory award of positions based on ability of the individual to perform the role and duties, not based on disability or sympathy, and formal certification of job coaches, in collaboration with MFHEA and specific educational institutions.
- 9.2.3 Matters related to Self-Employment for disabled persons, and incentives thereto, should also be tackled by the Strategy.
- 9.2.4 Such a Strategy shall be issued for public consultation, and include an implementation plan, to be overseen by DDI in conjunction with JobsPlus, through relevant mechanisms, and also propose specific projects or schemes, of a medium to long-term duration, aimed at putting into place the main tenets of said Strategy.
- 9.2.5 CRPD would, through its UNCRPD Monitoring and Research Unit, review the functioning of the Strategy, and of all schemes and initiatives being operated in virtue of said Strategy, and put forward recommendations while highlighting shortcomings, as to a better functioning of the Strategy and of said initiatives, and the need of amendments to the Strategy, or amendments to, discontinuation or

creation of new schemes in virtue of said Strategy, in order that DDI and JobsPlus could then liaise with stakeholders to take appropriate steps accordingly.

Outputs to 9.3: Work-Related Supports and Adjustments

- 9.3.1 DDI, together with JobsPlus' Inclusive Employment Services Division, LSF and any other entities fulfilling a similar purpose, and entities duly accredited by MFHEA, while consulting CRPD shall, acting through its relevant mechanisms, analyse current needs of disabled employees, as well as of those persons in employment or education who actively support disabled persons, the latter being minors or adults, such as flexible working hours, and reasonable accommodation such as the use of assistive technologies.
- 9.3.2 Such analysis should also pay particular attention to the use of means such as personal assistance as a workplace aid.
- 9.3.3 Specific factors related to the rights of disabled persons and unionisation, as well as the need to address specific modalities and challenges faced in this regard, should also be addressed through this analysis.
- 9.3.4 The results of said discussions shall be presented by DDI to the relevant authorities, in order to reach a proposal that would be laid before the Cabinet of Ministers, whereby appropriate mechanisms would be put into place for the benefit of different disabled employees, as well as for those persons in employment or education who actively support disabled persons.

Outputs to 9.4: Promoting Social Enterprise Incentives

- 9.4.1 DDI, through its relevant mechanisms, and in consultation with CRPD and its Malta Business Disability Forum, shall discuss with key stakeholders, including but not limited to the Economy Ministry and Malta Enterprise, the formulation and implementation of a social enterprise scheme in Malta, to also benefit initiatives

undertaken in relation to the Maltese disability sector, with a particular focus on initiatives staffed and managed by disabled persons.

- 9.4.2 A policy document and legislative proposals emanating from said discussions should be put to a public consultation, conducted in an accessible manner to ensure the widest possible participation by disabled persons, prior to being implemented by relevant stakeholders.

Outputs to 9.5:

Improved Career Guidance Services

- 9.5.1 DDI shall discuss, through its relevant mechanisms, and with the inclusion of JobsPlus and LSF, proposals for the creation or improvement of career and vocational guidance services, commencing early in a person's life, to better serve disabled persons engaging in the employment market, and in particular in the mainstream employment market.
- 9.5.2 Such discussions should also specifically target the sourcing and training of appropriate personnel, who would implement programmes based on observed best practices, while being tailored to the realities of the local employment sector.

Outputs to 9.6:

Outreach and Detached Youth Work

- 9.6.1 Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ, together with other key stakeholders including Aġenzija Sapport, the University of Malta's Faculty for Social Wellbeing, LSF and any other entities fulfilling a similar purpose, JobsPlus, DDI and CRPD, shall undertake efforts in order to ensure the utilisation of youth work as a tool for better including social minorities, including disabled persons.
- 9.6.2 Said efforts should lead to the creation of specific initiatives, having the twin purposes of creating awareness of existing services and facilities for employability of social minorities, and serving as a link to entities such as LSF and any other entities fulfilling a similar purpose, and Jobsplus.

9.6.3 The training of qualified youth workers on matters such as disability awareness should also be undertaken as a key aspect of this Action, following coordination between the stakeholders involved.

Outputs to 9.7:

Media Campaign and Inclusive Employer Certification

9.7.1 DDI and CRPD shall, together with JobsPlus, LSF and any other entities fulfilling a similar purpose, and DDS, discuss an ongoing media campaign promoting disabled persons in employment, and creating awareness of services and facilities that belong to JobsPlus, and to LSF and any other entities fulfilling a similar purpose.

9.7.2 and DDS, develop and launch a scheme to certify Inclusive Employers, and said employers shall be regularly featured as best practice examples in the ongoing media campaign.

9.7.3 A concerted effort should be made to give ownership to disabled persons over all different stages of design and delivery of the media campaign, and of the Inclusive Employer Certification programme.

OBJECTIVE 10

LIVING INDEPENDENTLY AND
IN THE COMMUNITY, AND
DE-INSTITUTIONALISATION

OBJECTIVE 10 LIVING INDEPENDENTLY AND IN THE COMMUNITY, AND DE- INSTITUTIONALISATION	ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED
Action 10.1: Addressing Gaps in Mainstream Services in the Community	Within 5 years	DDI, Local Council representatives, CRPD, UNCRPD Monitoring and Research Unit, CCWR, HRID, NCPE, AWAS, EASO, Civil society organisations, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 10.2: Strengthening Personal Assistance and Community Living Schemes	Within 5 years	DDI, Agenzija Sapport, public and private service providers, DDS, Local Councils, CRPD, SCSA, representatives of service providers, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 10.3: Setting up of a Train-the-Practitioner Unit	Within 9 years	Agenzija Sapport, DDI, DDS, CRPD, University of Malta, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 10.4: Support Services and Curtailing Abuse	Within 2 years	Agenzija Sapport, DDI, Disability Rights Ministry, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 10.5: Better Co-ordination among Service Providers

Within 2 years

DDI, Autism Advisory Council, DDS, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

Action 10.6: De-Institutionalisation

Within 9 years

CRPD, DDI, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

UN CRPD Article

27 Living independently and being included in the community

26 Habilitation and rehabilitation

14 Liberty and security of person

15 Freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

16 Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse

17 Protecting the integrity of the person

20 Personal Mobility

SDG Target

10.2 Empowering and promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of disability or other characteristics

Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities

Objective 10 deals with one of the most controversial yet fundamental areas linked to implementation of the Convention. Approaches towards independent living have shifted globally and even locally, over the past years. Most crucially, while the initial drive was to move disabled persons out from hiding and into the community in some form, not least as a way to fight stigma and increase visibility, the rationale underpinning institutions and group homes has been challenged over the years.

While it is clear that differing levels of support are required for different disabled persons, the consensus within a large part of the activist and academic community is that support should start from within, ensuring that the necessary services and supports are available within one's own community and within one's own home, instead of externalising and grouping these into specialised facilities. Furthermore, a greater focus on personal support schemes, such as that focused on personal assistance, has gained more traction, and is a system which Malta has already started to implement.

While factoring in specific and more complex needs experienced by certain disabled persons, that would be addressed through particular services being offered through more centralised facilities due to aspects such as Malta's size and economic considerations, the fact remains that this should be the exception, rather than the rule.

Therefore, a push towards independent and community living being in line with the precepts of the Convention, and of General Comment 5 to Article 19 thereto, issued by the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, lies at the centre of this Objective.

Specific actions in this respect call for a gap analysis in the field of service provision, to take stock of the current situation, and address relevant gaps, a strategic plan to strengthen of existing community living schemes, mechanisms for better coordination among local service providers, systems in place to curtail abuse against disabled persons that impede independent living, and, very importantly, a focus on training existing and new practitioners and creating multipliers.

An overarching national de-institutionalisation strategy is also advocated, on the lines of practice that was followed by other countries, which would have a significant impact on fulfilling the aims of this Objective.

Specific Actions and linked Outputs

Outputs to 10.1:

Addressing Gaps in Mainstream Services in the Community

- 10.1.1 DDI, through its relevant mechanisms, with the involvement of different public and private service providers and Local Council representatives, and while consulting CRPD, is to initiate discussions concerning the current state of play with regard to accessibility of mainstream services in the community, offered by public and private service providers in different localities in Malta and Gozo, as well as identifying opportunities for further spread of community services within different localities, with Local Councils playing a key role in terms of local knowledge and logistical issues and opportunities.
- 10.1.2 Aside from the service provision needs of disabled persons, these discussions should also tackle support for parents, including for the process of letting go of their adult disabled offspring, and being able to empower them, in order that these disabled persons could make their own choices and decisions and act on them, including through the provision of appropriate support, without their plans being thwarted by parental demands, and including instances where said disabled persons would have already moved out of the family home.
- 10.1.3 Discussions should also focus on the aspect of intersectionality, and the additional barriers that certain persons, such as disabled women, disabled LGBTIQ+ persons and disabled migrants, face in accessing services, as well as identifying appropriate strategies and making reference to existing best practice that would allow such barriers to be overcome, in which respect entities such as CCWR, HRID, NCPE, AWAS, EASO and civil society organisations could be consulted or engaged.
- 10.1.4 An initial report shall be drawn up, and issued for Public Consultation, in an accessible manner, also underlining major accessibility needs, as well as recommendations.
- 10.1.5 On the basis of the report and feedback received from the public consultation, an action plan is to be drawn up, the coordination of which shall be the responsibility of DDI.

10.1.6 CRPD, through its UNCRPD Monitoring and Research Unit, shall be tasked with monitoring the implementation of the action plan, and with providing regular reports to DDI on its functioning and on shortcomings observed, in order that DDI might then take up such issues with relevant stakeholders, as well as update said action plan as and when appropriate.

Outputs to 10.2:

Strengthening Personal Assistance and Community Living Schemes

10.2.1 DDI and Aġenzija Sapport are to consult with disabled persons and other key stakeholders, such as public and private service providers, including PA service providers, Local Councils, DDS and CRPD, in order to take stock of the current situation concerning personal assistance and community living schemes, and identify gaps related to accessibility of such services for disabled persons.

10.2.2 As a result of these discussions, recommendations are to be drawn up by DDI, concerning enhancing and widening of such services in a sustainable manner, including through ensuring appropriate reform of disability assessment and programme eligibility procedures, as well as issues such as regulation, and eventual promotion and community outreach by Local Councils, and presented in the form a Strategic Plan addressing Independent Living and Personal Assistance.

10.2.3 Relevant standards in this respect would also be discussed with SCSA, with a view to eventual promulgation, while monitoring of the eventual Strategic Plan would be the responsibility of CRPD, which would offer relevant feedback on a regular basis, in order that the relevant framework and operation of the Strategic Plan could be addressed accordingly, while relevant standards could be amended or enforced accordingly, as necessary.

Outputs to 10.3:

Setting up of a Train-the-Practitioner Unit

10.3.1 The unit is to be set up within Aġenzija Sapport. Towards this end, discussions are to be held on matters related to specialized training to be delivered to

professionals involved with disabled persons. Discussions are to be coordinated by DDI, while Aġenzija Sapport, DDS and other relevant faculties and departments at the University of Malta would be the key stakeholders involved, with CRPD being consulted throughout.

10.3.2 This unit, once set up, shall offer to all those interested professional and specialised training concerning all areas /services in relation to disabled persons. This unit would also be the official accreditation centre for staff working with disabled persons.

Outputs to 10.4:

Support Services and Curtailing Abuse

10.4.1 The Helpline for Persons with Disability operated by Aġenzija Sapport should continue to be promoted and strengthened as a central contact point for disabled persons, their families and support networks, whereby feedback and concerns about different services, disability-specific or otherwise could be communicated, and advice sought, with appropriate reference being made to other entities as necessary.

10.4.2 DDI should coordinate with relevant stakeholders, in order to finalise a Protection of Adults in Situations of Vulnerability Bill, to be presented by the Disability Rights Ministry before the Cabinet of Ministers and eventually Parliament, with a view to safeguarding the rights of disabled adults in situations of vulnerability from harm, abuse or neglect, allowing them to live independently in a secure manner, while receiving required support as and when needed, and additionally offering cross-border protections by providing for Malta's ratification of the 2000 Hague Convention on the International Protection of Adults.

Outputs to 10.5:

Better Co-ordination among Service Providers

10.5.1 DDI shall, through its relevant structures, initiate dialogue with public and private service providers, in a manner similar to that adopted by the Autism Advisory Council, while involving DDS and consulting CRPD, to coordinate best

practices and discuss key concerns in relation to service provision, with a view to ensuring appropriate service coverage and delivery within the community, and to safeguarding the right of disabled persons to live independently.

10.5.2 Matters related to duplication of services within the community should also be tackled in said dialogue exercise, to ensure maximisation of resources in light of prevailing needs, and possibilities for cooperation, including through joint use of resources, where this would benefit both service providers and end users.

10.5.3 Such discussions should provide Government with a more accurate picture of the situation on the ground in Malta, and provide a basis for being able to address gaps in policy and legislative regulation in an ongoing manner, while making sure that the input and voices of disabled persons and their representative organisations are factored in throughout.

10.5.4 As an outcome of said discussions, DDI shall compile a list of service providers and professionals who are able or qualified to provide professional services, included professionals such as psychologists and therapists, and ensure that such list is publicly available in an accessible manner, and updated from time to time.

10.5.5 CRPD should continue in its role related to monitoring of service providers and services provided by them, and should refer all concerns to DDI, in order that relevant dialogue with stakeholders could be entered into, without prejudice to being able to undertake any actions in respect of which it would be empowered at law.

Outputs to 10.6:

De-Institutionalisation

10.6.1 Government shall coordinate discussions with a view to bringing together relevant stakeholders and entities, in order to formulate a National De-institutionalisation Strategy for Malta, which would also address the need in this area related to the disability sector, factoring in the situation on the ground, while presenting a phased approach for ensuring long-term planning, as well as relevant transitional arrangements meanwhile.

10.6.2 CRPD, while being consulted throughout this process, shall also be responsible for monitoring the progress achieved in this regard with respect to the disability sector, while reporting regularly to DDI, in order that said feedback could then be factored into updates of the Strategy, or of actions being undertaken in virtue thereof.

OBJECTIVE 11

PARTICIPATION IN
POLITICAL AND
PUBLIC LIFE

OBJECTIVE 11 PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL AND PUBLIC LIFE	ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED
Action 11.1: Discussion with stakeholders on the implementation of inclusive voting mechanisms	Within 9 years	DDI, CRPD, Electoral Commission, Registered Political Parties, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 11.2: Supporting disabled candidates in local, national, and EU-level elections	Within 5 years	DDI, Electoral Commission, Registered Political Parties, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 11.3: Disability Awareness to Political Parties	Within 5 years	CRPD, Registered Political parties, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 11.4: Enhancing accessibility in Parliament	Within 5 years	DDI, CRPD, Parliament, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

UN CRPD Article

29 Participation in political and public life

SDG Target

10.2 Social, Economic & Political Inclusion for All, irrespective of status (including Disability)

10.3 Ensuring Equal Opportunities & Reducing Inequalities of Outcome

Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities

Participation of disabled persons in political and public life is also an obligation which Malta is bound to tackle, in particular due to the time-limited reservation it had lodged in respect of Article 29 of the Convention upon ratification. Malta will eventually have to ensure that both access to voting, and also relevant voting practices, would be fully accessible to disabled persons on an equal basis with others, and wide-ranging discussions factoring in all relevant stakeholders, with disabled persons and their needs at the very centre, need to be convened towards this end.

Malta has taken encouraging steps in the area of access to voting in the past, such as by introducing Braille ballots, including photographs of candidates on ballot papers, and changing the appearance of said ballot papers, while initiatives to improve physical accessibility at polling places have been undertaken, and information events by the State and political parties have been rendered more accessible through tools such as sign language interpretation.

Nevertheless, initiatives to support and encourage wider participation by disabled persons in all kinds of elections run locally should be implemented, political parties should be better sensitised to the needs of disabled persons, while the accessibility of Parliament, the highest institution of the land, should be ensured, both for present and future disabled representatives, as well as for members of the general public, and any person working temporarily or more long-term in this environment.

Specific Actions and linked Outputs

Outputs to 11.1:

Discussion with stakeholders on the implementation of inclusive voting mechanisms

- 11.1.1 DDI, acting through its relevant mechanisms, is to coordinate a working group, with the participation of CRPD, the Electoral Commission, and representatives of political parties, to discuss such measures, with a view to Malta lifting the reservation to Article 29 UNCRPD that it entered upon ratification
- 11.1.2 DDI will gather the conclusions of said Working Group and compile in the form of a Report presented to the Cabinet of Ministers, that would include recommendations of legislative and policy amendments necessary to implement said reform
- 11.1.3 DDI will work with the Electoral Commission to implement the conclusions of said Report, following its endorsement by the Cabinet of Ministers

Outputs to 11.2:

Supporting disabled candidates in local, national, and EU-level elections

- 11.2.1 DDI, acting through its relevant mechanisms, and with the inclusion of representatives from the Electoral Commission and political parties, including

disabled candidates, is to convene meetings, while consulting CRPD, to discuss ways and means in which disabled candidates can be supported, including through the provision of appropriate reasonable accommodation.

11.2.2 DDI is to present the results of these discussions to the Electoral Commission, in turn the Electoral Commission is to present these results before the Cabinet of Ministers, in order that appropriate legislative and policy actions can be adopted to this effect.

Outputs to 11.3: Disability Awareness to Political Parties

11.3.1 CRPD shall offer DETs to political parties, in order to better sensitise them as to the needs of both current and prospective disabled officials and candidates, as well as those of current or future disabled members of supporters.

11.3.2 Through these DETs, CRPD shall also engage with political parties, with a view to supporting them in making their headquarters and political clubs accessible for all, in both a physical and a sensorial manner, making them more inclusive and appealing to current or potential disabled members or supporters.

11.3.3 CRPD should also offer a one-time DET to all candidates, disabled or otherwise, contesting an election on behalf of a registered political party, and focusing on issues such as inclusive communication practices in respect of disabled persons, with materials for such DETs being provided in accessible formats.

Outputs to 11.4:**Enhancing accessibility in Parliament**

- 11.4.1 DDI, in consultation with CRPD, is to organise discussions with representatives of Parliament, as well as of the Government and Opposition, in order to take stock of the current accessibility situation, and make recommendations for improvement.
- 11.4.2 The report is to be communicated to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, in order that relevant action might then be taken.
- 11.4.3 CRPD would be responsible for monitoring the implementation of relevant recommendations, and of communicating any concerns and other feedback to DDI, in order that said feedback may be discussed with relevant stakeholders, with a view to its being actioned.

OBJECTIVE 12

DISASTER RISK
MANAGEMENT AND
REDUCTION

OBJECTIVE 12 DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT AND REDUCTION	ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED
Action 12.1: Converting the COVID-19 Disability Task Force into a Standing Committee	Within 2 years	DDI, COVID-19 Disability Taskforce, Disability Standing Committee, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 12.2: General Emergency Plan	Within 2 years	DDI, OHSA, Department for Health, CRPD, CPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 12.3: Emergency Services	Within 5 years	DDI, CRPD, Emergency Services, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

UN CRPD Article

11 Situations of Risk and Humanitarian Emergencies

Sendai Paragraph

19(d)

- Empowerment and inclusive, accessible and non-discriminatory participation, paying special attention to people disproportionately affected by disasters.

- (Also) a disability perspective should be integrated in all policies and practices

19(g) A Multi-hazard Approach and Inclusive Risk-informed Decision-making based on:

- Open Exchange and Dissemination of Disaggregated Data, incl. by Disability;

- Easily Accessible, Up-to-Date, Comprehensible, Science-based, Non-sensitive Risk Information, complemented by Traditional Knowledge

Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities

Objective 12 deals with the less talked about but very crucial twin aspects of Disaster Risk Management and Disaster Risk Reduction. While traditionally understood as preparing for and providing for contingency during phenomena such as natural disasters, this area equally covers any other kind of emergency, and was most recently felt during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the effect it had on disabled persons everywhere, including in Malta. In this respect, aside from Malta's obligations in terms of the Convention, cited in the text of the Objective, its obligations in terms of the UN's Sendai Framework are also cited and must also be adhered to.

The COVID-19 Disability Task Force, set up during the pandemic, should be structured into a Standing Committee, drawing on the experience and lessons of the pandemic, and acting in future as a Disability Standing Committee on Disaster Risk Management and Reduction.

Furthermore, Malta's General Emergency Plan should, when updated, reflect a disability perspective, making it fit for purpose in multiple scenarios, and having been informed by the input and needs of disabled persons. Emergency Services should also be accessible for disabled persons, and able to respond appropriately.

Specific Actions and linked Outputs

Outputs 12.1:

Converting the COVID-19 Disability Task Force into a Standing Committee

- 12.1.1 DDI, acting through its relevant mechanisms, would subsume the existing COVID-19 Disability Task Force, having a broad representation of disabled persons and their representative organisations, as well as Government entities and experts, and convert it into a Disability Standing Committee dealing with Disaster Risk Management and Reduction, as a Standing Sub-Committee of IACD.
- 12.1.2 DDI will ensure that the Standing Committee would be restructured, following discussion with persons and stakeholders currently involved in it, as well as other entities who would be well-placed to be represented on the said Committee, in order to have a down-sized coordination body, overseeing a pool of expertise that could be called on regularly to assist with the Committee's work.
- 12.1.3 The Standing Committee would liaise with relevant actors, both in Malta and abroad, in order to exchange best practices, and be on the forefront of initiating and running, together with other stakeholders, information campaigns and projects, delivered in an accessible manner, and ensuring a disability-sensitive perspective to situations stemming from disasters, both man-made and otherwise.
- 12.1.4 The Standing Committee would, in particular, ensure that it develops capacity related to pre-emption and early warning, drawing from the COVID-19 experience, as well as other disasters tackled elsewhere, in order to be able to represent and advocate for the best interests of disabled persons in similar situations, with all levels of Government, as well as with other key actors such as private sector entities.

Outputs to 12.2: General Emergency Plan

- 12.2.1 DDI, acting through its relevant mechanisms, involving OHSA and the Department for Health, and in constant consultation with CRPD, while factoring in the voice and input of disabled persons and their families, will engage CPD, in order to ensure delivery of a timely and effective General Emergency Plan, that also addresses the needs and rights of disabled persons, including in respect of access to emergency services, while being tailored to the national context.
- 12.2.2 CRPD will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the General Emergency Plan in respect of disabled persons, and for giving regular feedback to DDI in this regard, in order that said feedback could be discussed with CPD and other relevant entities, through its structures, to ensure that the Plan itself, as well as actions undertaken or planned under it, are restructured accordingly.

Outputs to 12.3: Emergency Services

- 12.3.1 DDI shall enter into discussions with Emergency Services, to ensure that such services are rendered accessible, in terms of supervening legislation in force and best practices
- 12.3.2 DDI will enter into discussions with Emergency Services and all other relevant stakeholders, in order to study possibilities linked to providing details concerning registered disabled persons, in line with relevant supervening legislation regulating consent and data protection, to Emergency Services, in order that operators would have access to said information during an emergency request, and be able to better assist said persons.
- 12.3.3 CRPD shall continue to offer DETs to Emergency Services, such as Police and CPD, while also placing a particular emphasis on recognising disability, and especially invisible disability, in relation to emergency situations.

OBJECTIVE 13

REGIONAL AND
INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS

OBJECTIVE 13 REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS	ACTION TO BE COMPLETED	STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED
Action 13.1: Valletta Forum on EU-Arab Cooperation concerning Disability Rights	Within 5 years	DDI, DDS, Aġenzija Sapport, Foreign Affairs Ministry, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations
Action 13.2: Cooperation and Exchange of Best Practices through Existing Fora	Within 2 years	DDI, CRPD, Disabled persons and their representative organisations

UN CRPD Article**32** International cooperation**33** National implementation and monitoring**SDG Target****17.6** Regional and international cooperation on and access to science, technology and innovation, and enhancing knowledge-sharing, including through improved coordination among existing mechanisms**17.7** Encouraging and promoting effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partners

Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities

Finally, Objective 13 tackles Malta's obligations in the field of International Cooperation, outlining actions tackling regional and international partnerships of mutual benefit. Malta has long participated in international and regional fora, of both a standing and ad hoc nature, and continued participation will allow sharing of best practices that would ultimately benefit the lives of disabled persons in Malta, while also showcasing Malta's achievements beyond its shores.

A flagship initiative that should be developed further is Malta's effort to be a bridge between the European Union and the Arab world, through the setting up of the Valletta Forum on Disability Rights in April 2019, following a high-level meeting held in Malta. Specific thematic initiatives within this framework can rope together different stakeholders to explore and work together on different facets related to disability rights.

This should be done alongside continued participation at State level, and promotion at individual level of more participation, in other events, groupings and fora of a regional or international nature.

Specific Actions and linked Outputs

Outputs 13.1:

Valletta Forum on EU-Arab Cooperation concerning Disability Rights

- 13.1.1 DDI shall facilitate relevant discussions with different local stakeholders, including DDS and Aġenzija Sapport, and liaise with the Foreign Affairs Ministry, while consulting CRPD, in order to revitalise the EU-Arab partnership created through the Valletta Forum in April 2019, with the involvement of UN ESCWA, the League of Arab States and several governments, and the participation of the European Commission, to find a workable way forward for exchanging best practices and creating content, that would ultimately benefit disabled persons in Malta.
- 13.1.2 Following up of initial leads with DDS and other stakeholders in the EU-Arab region should be effected, towards the creation of an EU-Arab Research Network, and with ITU and UN ESCWA, towards creating and building a knowledge base and concrete partnerships in the field of Accessible ICT, following on from the Accessible Europe conference held in Malta in December 2019.

Outputs 13.2:

Cooperation and Exchange of Best Practices through Existing Fora

- 13.2.1 DDI shall, through the nurturing of existing international contacts, and the cultivation of new ones, acting either in a bilateral manner, or through multilateral fora in the deliberations of which it participates, including through representing Malta in the membership of standing committees, and in conjunction with relevant stakeholders within Government, academia and civil society, whereby the input of disabled persons would be paramount, participate in, develop and host initiatives such as panel discussions, regional workshops and thematic events, whereby themes of mutual benefit in connection with the disability sector are discussed.

13.2.2 DDI shall, acting in conjunction with said stakeholders on the domestic level, undertake relevant efforts to disseminate the outcomes of said efforts at international level, for the benefit of the local disability sector, while also working to encourage the participation of local stakeholders in continuing and follow-up initiatives being held in virtue of initial undertakings, such as in the service provision and research fields.

13.2.3 CRPD shall also undertake the same efforts described in the previous two Outputs, specifically in respect of better cooperation with regulatory authorities in other States Parties to the UNCRPD.



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