



GOVERNMENT OF MALTA
MINISTRY FOR INCLUSION,
VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS
AND CONSUMER RIGHTS

Opportunities and Challenges of Independent Living in Europe:

Case Study of Malta

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UNCRPD Obligations: Article 19

Living independently and being included in the community

- a) Persons with disabilities have the opportunity **to choose** their **place of residence** and **where and with whom they live** on **an equal basis with others** and are **not obliged** to live in a particular living arrangement;
- b) Persons with disabilities have access to a range of **in-home, residential and other community support services**, including **personal assistance** necessary to support living and inclusion in the community, and to prevent isolation or segregation from the community;
- c) **Community services and facilities for the general population** are **available on an equal basis** to persons with disabilities and are **responsive to their needs**.



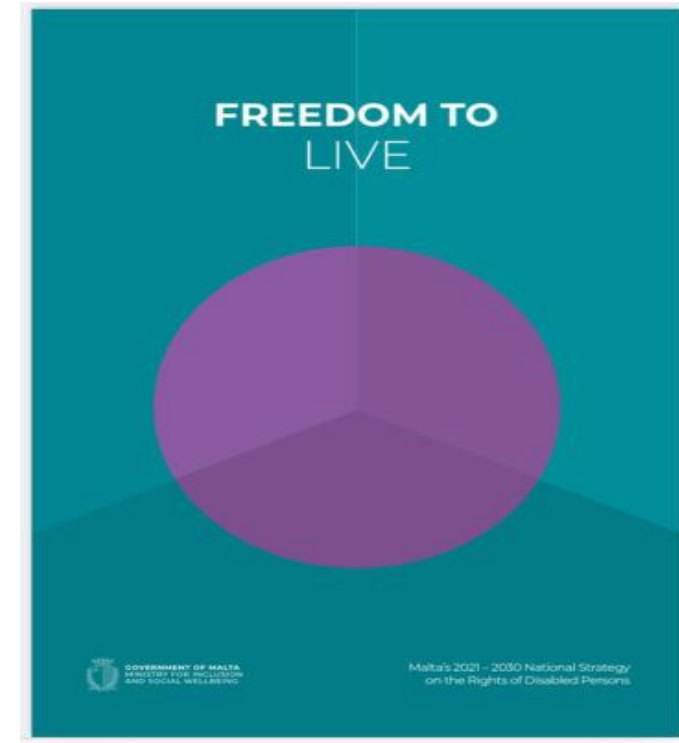
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How is Malta addressing its obligations
in line with ARTICLE 19?

**Malta's National Disability Strategy:
FREEDOM TO LIVE
2021-2030**

Standard: <https://inclusion.gov.mt/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Disability-Doc-ENG-SEP-21.pdf>

Easy Read: https://inclusion.gov.mt/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/NDS_Easy-Read_EN_Dec_21.pdf





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Malta's National Disability Strategy: FREEDOM TO LIVE 2021-2030

The Key Aims of the Strategy:

- To provide a **roadmap for the Maltese disability sector** for the next 10 years
- Underpinning the principle of **'Nothing About US, Without US'**



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*Malta's National Disability Strategy:
FREEDOM TO LIVE
2021-2030*

Objective 10 of the Strategy: Living independently and in the Community and De-institutionalisation

- Objective 10 deals with one of the most controversial yet fundamental areas linked to the implementation of the Convention.
- Moving disabled people out from hiding and into the community
- To fighting stigma and increase visibility, the rationale underpinning institutions and group homes has been challenged over the years.



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Malta's National Disability Strategy:
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Specific Actions of Objective 10

- Address Gaps in Mainstream Services in the Community
- Strengthening of Schemes related to Personal Assistance
- Better co-ordination among Service Providers
- De-Institutionalisation



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- **Address Gaps in Mainstream Services in the Community**

Currently this specific action is being addressed by the Quality Audit, Research and Innovation Department of our national disability service provider (Aġenzija Sapport). This newly set-up Department will evaluate the Agency's services, in terms of its stakeholders' needs and preferences, and make informed recommendations in this regard.



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- **Specific Schemes**

- ✓ Memorandum of Understanding: Agenzija Sapport – Housing Authority
- ✓ New Hope – Insurance Discrimination
- ✓ SensAbility
- ✓ Blue Badge Reform



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- **Strengthening of Schemes related to Personal Assistance**

- ✓ Our national disability service provider (Agenzija Sapport) is providing support services for disabled people, and is currently working on strengthening Malta's Independent Community Living Scheme with the participation and involvement of disabled people.
- ✓ A working group has been set up between the European Network for Independent Living (ENIL), Agenzija Sapport, DDI (focal point), CRPD (monitoring mechanism) and the Malta Federation of Organisations Of Persons with Disability (MFOPD)



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- **Better co-ordination among Service Providers**

An annual meeting is organised by our Ministry, for Service Providers to discuss and co-ordinate the current situation of service provision for the disability sector.





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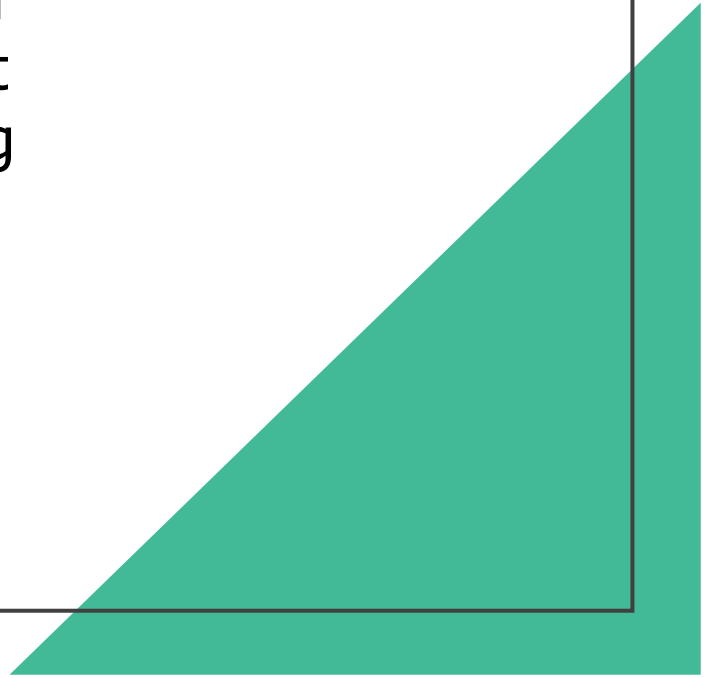
- **De-Institutionalisation**

- ✓ Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD) – Malta's independent monitoring mechanism for the Convention - carried out research on De-Institutionalisation in Malta
- ✓ Our national service provider (Agenzija Sapport) is currently collaborating with the Housing Authority to offer disabled people the possibility of moving into Independent state-owned accommodation in the community



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Malta has number of Government owned residential homes as well as government funded Voluntary Organisations providing residential care services.





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Malta's Policy plans continue to evolve in line with current research and documents such as:

- **10-year Intersectional strategy on Independent and Community Living**
being developed by the Special Rapporteur for the OHCHR
- **Guidelines on deinstitutionalization, including in emergencies (2022)**
issued by the UN Committee on Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Whilst also ensuring that disabled people are part of the Policy development of this Directorate



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- ✓ As part of the European Union, Malta also forms part of the EU Disability Platform, thus seeing to the implementation plan of our National Disability Strategy we also see to the implementation of the goals set in the European Commission's 10 year Strategy: **Union of equality: Strategy for the rights of persons with disabilities 2021-2030**
- ✓ **The EU Guidance on independent living and inclusion in the community**, to be issued this year, will also be a guide for Maltese policy implementation. *This flagship initiative will commit to provide guidance, recommending to Member States improvements on independent living and inclusion in the community (EDF, 2022)*



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A number of **legislative reforms** were also required in Maltese national laws to ensure a solid legislative basis for the rights of disabled people.

- ✓ The **Personal Autonomy Bill**, soon to be presented in the Maltese Parliament, is a Bill that addresses Article 12 of the UNCRPD, and promotes:
 - **Equality in decision-making, and**
 - **Supported decision making**
- ✓ The Bill also supports better implementation of Article 19 of the UNCRPD



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The final aim of this Maltese journey for persons with disability to live independently and in the community is to undergo a **paradigm shift from a Model of residential care to Model of support within the community.**

- ✓ Shifting from a care model approach to a support model approach
- ✓ Having accessible services in the community that facilitate services from one's own home or community centres.
- ✓ Promoting Independent state-owned accommodation is also being addressed by our national disability service provider (Agenzija Sapport)



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Ensuring representation of disabled people at all levels of policy and decision-making was paramount.

- ✓ **ENGAGE** is a civil society participation mechanism, which was set up by this Ministry in line with Article 4(3) of the Convention.
- ✓ *Through ENGAGE, disabled people have ownership and input in shaping their future and taking control of their Freedom To Live, which would remain paramount above all else. (Freedom to Live, 2021-2030)*



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THANK YOU

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