



Biennial Report
2016-2017



Aġenzija Sappport, Malta
Biennial Report, 2016-2017

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Index

• Mission Statement – Aġenzija Sappport	6
• Foreword – Hon. Anthony Agius Decelis, Parliamentary Secretary for Persons with Disability & Active Ageing	8
• Foreword – Mr Joseph Cini, Chief Executive Officer	11
• Services	16
• Social Work Services	18
• Day Services	22
• Residential Services	30
• Community Services	36
• Sign Language Interpreting	40
• Sharing Lives	44
• People Assistance Schemes	48
• Projects	52
• Human Resources: People Management & Employee Well-being	54
• Administration & EU Funds	60
• Administration & Procurement	62
• Project INK	64
• Project REACH	66
• Job Enhancing Skills Scheme	67
• Marketing & Communications	68
• Finance & Budgeting	72

Abbreviation list

CRPD	Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability
EIRA	Employment & Industrial Relations Act
EU	European Union
FITA	Foundation for Information Technology Accessibility
FSWS	Foundation for Social Welfare Services
HR	Human Resources
ICL	Independent Community Living
ISP	Individual Support Programme
JESS	Job Enhancing Skills Scheme
LSM	Lingwa tas-Sinjali Maltija
MCA	Malta Communications Authority
MCAST	Malta College of Arts Science and Technology
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
PAF	Personal Assistant Fund
PAS	People Assistance Schemes
UOM	University of Malta

List of Figures

Figure 1	Government subvention, 2015 – 2017
Figure 2	Recurrent expenditure and payroll cost per Unit, 2016
Figure 3	Percentages of consolidated expenditure per Unit, 2016
Figure 4	Recurrent expenditure and payroll cost per Unit, 2017
Figure 5	Percentages of consolidated expenditure per Unit, 2017

List of Tables

Table 1	Outline of Aġenzija Sapport residences as at end 2017
Table 2	Empowerment Scheme applicants and subsidies, January – December 2016
Table 3	Empowerment Scheme applicants and subsidies, January – December 2017
Table 4	Sapport staff complement as at 31st December 2017
Table 5	New recruits between 1st April 2016 – 31st December 2017
Table 6	Training attended by Aġenzija Sapport staff, April 2016 – December 2017

Mission statement

Agenzija Sappport is committed to enhance the quality of life of persons with disability through innovative personalised support, expertise, and advocacy.

Values

Mutual support and interdependence – giving and receiving based on the understanding that both the person with disability and society stand to gain through the advancement of persons with disability as contributing members of society

Vision

- Equality, choices and opportunities;
- Inclusion of persons with disability in all aspects of society;
- Holistic, person-centred approach rooted in the principles of shared power and self-determination.

Foreword

The disability sector is a sector full of emotion, challenges, opportunities and satisfaction that we feel on a daily basis. It is a sector of key importance for the lives of persons with disability and their families, and a sector that reflects the values of society as a whole.

This sector is very dear to me, not simply because it falls under my responsibility as Parliamentary Secretary for Persons with Disability and Active Ageing, but as a father, as a son, and as a brother, who has been brought up within a family, surrounded by people with different needs and challenges.

I am also a worker who has always put passion and energy in my work to be compassionate, understanding and provide support in any way possible. Thus, these experiences have instilled in me values that guide me when making decisions as the politician I am today.

I believe that all that I have said to describe myself stands for you who work within this sector. In the words of Sir Henry Ford, "if everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself". Thus, whatever your role is within Aġenzija Sapport, your work and team effort has a significant impact on enhancing the life of the individual, their family and society.

However, Government has acknowledged the need to provide the Agency with the necessary resources to be able to deliver the best possible services. In fact, this Government allocated €20 million to the sector, hence seeing an increase of €4.5 million from previous years. This means more services in the community for persons with disability and their families, more community living options, more training for the persons working in this sector, and more initiatives in this sector.

We have shown that the mission and work of Aġenzija Sapport is of utmost importance, by making Aġenzija Sapport officially an autonomous Agency through Legal Notice 104 of 2016, the Aġenzija Sapport (Establishment as an Agency) Order, 2016.

There was a transfer of a number of schemes from the Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD) to Aġenzija Sapport in 2017, thus allowing the Commission to focus on its regulatory role, while Sapport focuses on a holistic approach to service provision, through the centralisation of services.

We believed in the concept of Proġett Soċjetà Ġusta, with 10 residences in the community for persons with disability being inaugurated. These residences illustrate both the vision and commitment of this Government, to move towards the concept of independent living and the inclusion of persons with disability within the community. A number of these residences are operated by Aġenzija Sapport.

Other initiatives by the Parliamentary Secretariat for Persons with Disability and Active Ageing and Aġenzija Sapport, that brought about positive changes include: the launch of the Personal Assistance Scheme, with an allocated initial budget of €500,000; and INK project, a person-focused inclusion project worth approximately €3.5 million and is partially funded through the European Social Fund. These and other projects aim to continue promoting social inclusion, by encouraging independence, a positive work experience, and improvement in the quality of life.

I believe that the Government could not have implemented all

these changes, and thus a revolution in the sector, alone. This transformation could only take place because we work together as a team in the interest of persons with disability, their families and society.

Together we should be proud of what we have started and the changes we are making to enhance the lives of these persons. At times we are too busy to realise the positive impact that we have on an individual, with a service or an initiative that we have implemented.

Thus, I would like to thank Mr. Joseph Cini and all of you at Aġenzija Sapport for the tireless work you carry out on a daily basis, for the benefit of persons with disability and their families, and augur all the very best to Aġenzija Sapport, while looking forward to many more years of dedicated service by the Agency.

Hon. Anthony Agius Decelis,
Parliamentary Secretary for Persons with
Disability & Active Ageing





Foreword

Being the national service provider in the disability field, Agenzija Sapport's vision has always been that of working for the well-being of persons with disability and their families through the provision of effective and efficient services, promoting inclusion and developing innovative programmes and services.

This vision was further enhanced when Agenzija Sapport became an autonomous Agency from the Foundation from Social Welfare Services (FSWS) in April 2016. New beginnings meant new directions to achieve the mission of the Agency. This involved taking stock of services and procedures and analysing what was necessary to be in line with the trends, demands and good practices available both locally and on an international level, coupled with good governance.

Thus, the crux of this period under review, covering from 1st April 2016 to 31st December 2017, was the restructuring exercise that the Sapport Management Team embarked on. This was the starting point, the driver behind the new ideal of where we wanted to go. The hierarchy of the Agency changed, introducing corporate functions to service the Agency and Directors at the helm of the main departments, some of which new, such as the Finance Department, Human Resources Department, European Union (EU) Funds Department, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) Agreements section within the Social Work Department, the Projects Department and the Research Department. Staff complement increased in tandem to this growth, also reflecting the expanding services to meet the demand caused mainly by the increase in the exposure and highlight of the disability sector on the agenda of the government and local authorities. Such prominence also saw an increase in government funding, further bringing about an overhaul in service provision.

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The new Sapport logo portrays the networking between the person with disability, the family and the professional.

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Agenzija Sapport therefore also required a rebranding exercise. Employees were consulted and reports on way forward in communication and change management were used as the basis of this laborious task, which not only involved a change in the Agency's image, but also in the organisational culture and employees' approach which all form part of the Agency's new brand. The new brand evolved around the valid services that Sapport already had on board. These were developed and new services created, as attested in the following report. The new brand emphasises that a strong collaboration between the persons with disability, their family / carers and the professional is required. This is the core of the new brand, encompassing these three important elements.

With this in mind, we embarked on a mission to ensure that persons with disability are given a holistic service that looks beyond the disability. For the first time in the Agency's history, we introduced a new service – Sharing Lives – which facilitates the contribution of volunteers aimed at developing the social life of a person with disability. The Day Centres programmes were given an overhaul, now being redesigned to focus on active support, with the input of professionals such as Occupational Therapists. This concept was introduced in a new, state-of-the-art centre aptly named Skills Space which we opened in

Sliema in 2017, targeting highly independent persons with disability to enhance their skills and their family members with complementary training. This was considered as an example of best practice, serving as a model for the other Day Centres, which are gradually and strategically being remodelled to offer therapeutic, educational and interactive programmes to engage persons with a disability according to their individual care plan.

Promoting accessibility and inclusion also came into the form of procuring a number of wheelchair-accessible vehicles so that for the first time, Aġenzija Sapport has its own fleet, which will continue to grow in the coming years. Such vehicles allow persons with disability using the Agency's various services, to access more services and activities in the community, among others, but mostly, enhancing service provision.

Of particular significance is the ambitious project to increase residential services. During the period under review, no less than 4 new residences were opened, in Siġġiewi, Marsa, Pembroke, and Victoria, Gozo. This not only increased the total number of residential placements for persons with disability, but also further promoted the inclusion of persons with disability within the community. More residences are planned for the next years to continue addressing the demand for such service. In the meantime, more agreements with other entities including NGOs were concluded, addressing the demand for residential placements.

“
4 new residences within the community:
Siġġiewi, Marsa, Pembroke
and Victoria, Gozo.”

The Agency experienced also a demand for various community interventions. We are all aware that persons with disability and

their family situation and environment vary, thus the Agency is obliged to cater for the varying needs presented. With more emphasis being placed on the encouragement of independent living skills, more resources were dedicated to develop this service. More funds allowed more service users to benefit from community-based interventions and in 2017, a pilot scheme to provide a personal assistant to a number of persons with disability was introduced. This has since proved to be widely accepted as it targets families of persons with disability who have a need of a high level of assistance.

A salient point for the Agency was the strengthening of the Agency's presence in Gozo, through the further development of programmes offered to persons with disability attending the first Sapport Day Centre within the Għajnsielem Learning Hub. This included collaboration with various stakeholders, thus enhancing inclusion of the service users within the community. This Sapport Centre also serves as a contact point for prospective Gozitan service users needing other Sapport services.

Other complementary services included the transfer of a number of schemes from CRPD to Aġenzija Sapport, for which a new Department – the People Assistance Scheme (PAS) Department – was created within the Agency. Through these schemes, the Agency started also servicing short-term clients while allowing them to have access to a better quality of life through grants and subsidies.

We believe that the more partners working together, the more effective the services we offer. Therefore, the Sapport Social Work team designed and launched a number of workshops and support groups with the aim of reaching out to parents of children with disability and also adult siblings of persons with disability. Such workshops are being delivered from the Agency's training centre within its new Professional Training Centre in Santa Venera, which also serves as an extension to the Agency's Head Office which was necessary due to large increase in staff.

Employees within Aġenzija Sapport are considered as the main resource. The current workforce consisting mainly of professionals and frontliners are a valuable asset and we invest heavily in training and self-development of the staff. During the period under review, the Agency also started negotiations for a new collective agreement.

I cannot leave out the various agreements and Memoranda of Understanding concluded with entities including the Down's Syndrome Association, the Gozo Diocese, ALS Malta Foundation, Fondazzjoni Arka, Fondazzjoni Wens, and Dar tal-Providenza. Furthermore, preparatory work was also started in late 2017 with the University of Malta (UoM) to embark on research projects in relation to disability, and constant collaboration both with the UoM and other educational institutions such as the Malta

College of Arts Science and Technology (MCAST) to channel students following courses in community care, social work, social policy and other social sciences, towards careers in the disability sector. To this effect, the Agency's professionals many a times acted as supervisors and mentors to these students and prospective employees.

Of high significance for Aġenzija Sapport during these two years, was the introduction of the Sign Language Interpreting Service within the spectrum of services it offers, thus enriching its services portfolio. For the first time, the Agency could also offer sign language interpretation, which gained even more importance since the Maltese Sign Language became an official language.



As one can attest from the intensive work done since April 2016, enhancing inclusion is definitely on top of our agenda. The year 2017 ended with the introduction of the Jobs Enhancing Skills Scheme (JESS) and preparations for two EU-funded projects that will see hundreds of beneficiaries, mainly persons with disabilities and their significant others, benefit from a myriad of services and training opportunities aimed at improving their employability levels. These projects, which will span over a number of years, will be spearheaded by Aġenzija Sapport and will be another first in the list of innovative milestones achieved by the Agency over the few months since its autonomy. Although this will definitely push the Agency to a whole new level when it comes to service provision and targets to be reached since its autonomy, we believe that with the right team in place, we will deliver an effective project that will not only enhance inclusion, but will also continue to place the Agency and disability matters on the national agenda. These projects will be assisting the Agency to reach and engage persons with different levels of abilities, thus delivering on its vision of being committed to include persons with disability in all aspects of society, and offering holistic, person-centred services and opportunities.

Ultimately, Aġenzija Sapport will continue to enhance its services, collaborations and inter-entity projects to the benefit of persons with disability and their families. This will see the Agency participating on local fora when it comes for the development of more specialised services focusing on children and adults with disability and their varying needs to be able to be participant in our society. However, this will not come without obstacles. During the past two years, while the Agency was growing at such a fast pace with regard to staff headcount and service variety, we were also experiencing challenges particularly when it comes to recruiting qualified and

experienced workers specialising in the disability sector. This will definitely be something that the Agency will need to tackle, possibly also in collaboration with other entities, to be able to sustain the demands of the ever-growing disability sector and to ensure that the services standard remain high.

All these initiatives would not be possible were it not for the trust in the Agency by the authorities and our dedicated team. Thus, I would like to take the opportunity to thank all members of staff, volunteers and stakeholders for their valuable contribution and support so far, while inviting them to join us on the journey ahead, embarking on more exciting initiatives.

Mr Joseph Cini,
Chief Executive Officer





SERVICES & PROJECTS



Mauro Farrugia
Director

Social Work Services

The Social Work Service within Aġenzija Sapport is the first point of contact for prospective service users having a disability and their respective families. As an initial step, the Social Workers meet with service users and their families to assess their needs and desired objectives. Service users may then be referred to other services within Aġenzija Sapport such as Day, Community and Residential Services and / or to other services, funds and schemes within and outside the Agency, as necessary.

In 2016, the Social Work team set up two support groups: one for parents having a child with disability and the other for siblings of adults with a disability. These support groups meet on a monthly basis and discuss various topics and challenges.



“ 73 parents of children with disability were engaged in workshops throughout the period under review ”

“ 12 siblings of persons with disability attended the pilot project in 2017 ”

In 2017, the Social Work Service underwent a restructuring exercise which also included the appointment of a new Manager and the establishment of a section within this department towards the end of 2017 to undertake the management of NGO agreements.

New initiatives for 2017 included:

- a mentoring system for newly-employed Social Workers
- one supervisor to provide supervision for all the team
- a new case management process which includes a case weighting system
- a new intake system
- a strategy for specialised training updates for Social Workers



“ 806 the number of active cases followed by the Social Work Services at the end of 2017 ”

Additional 276 cases worked with and closed during the period under review

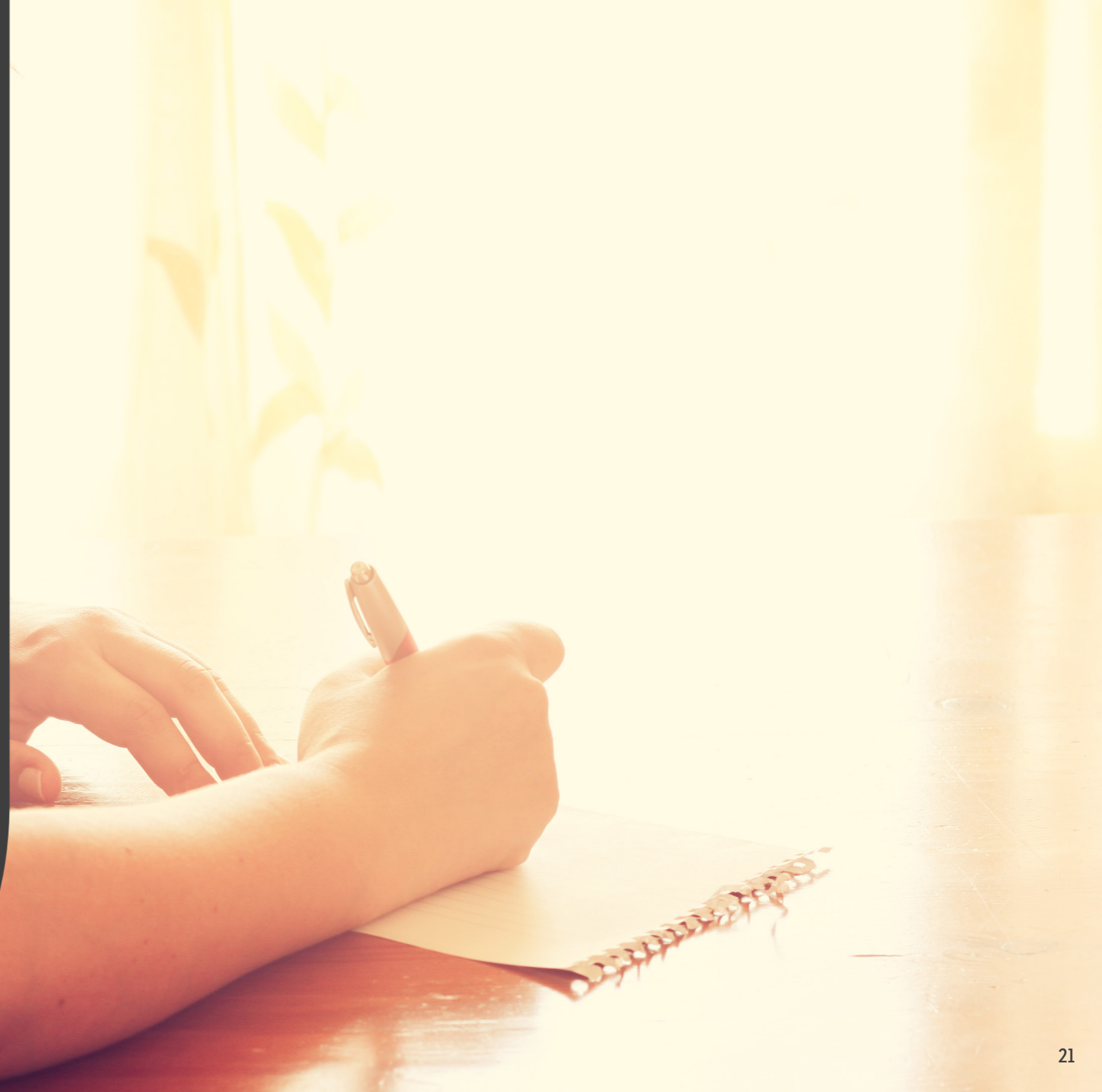
109 the number of clients followed by Social Work Services within residences run by NGOs

The Sapport Social Work team is made up of 3 Leaders and 15 Social Workers ”

Testimonial

"Before we initiated contact with Agenzija Sapport, life was very difficult. The Social Worker made us aware of various services available and even helped us apply for the service of Independent Community Living, which changed our life drastically. I am receiving help to meet my children's needs whilst having the opportunity of giving them individual attention. Through the parents' workshops, I also had the opportunity to reflect on aspects of our family, giving us different perspectives of how to ameliorate our functioning. I was given the chance to learn and the opportunity to share my experience with other parents. With this overall support, I became a stronger activist on autism and strive on a daily basis to be a voice for these children, to give them a better future and quality of life."

John, parent



Day Services

The Day Services Department aims to enhance each service users' ability with regard to independent living skills and thus empowering them to live as independently as possible to the maximum of the service users' potential. The Agency operates 11 Day Centres and also has contractual agreements with two entities for the provision of Star 25 (Inspire) and SPERO, a centre for the visually impaired (Outlook Coop).

“

11 Day Centres,
including 1 in Gozo

”



“

to empower the service
user to acquire skills
and abilities that would
best help him/her
achieve the ability to use
self-determination, and
benefit from inclusion in
the community

”

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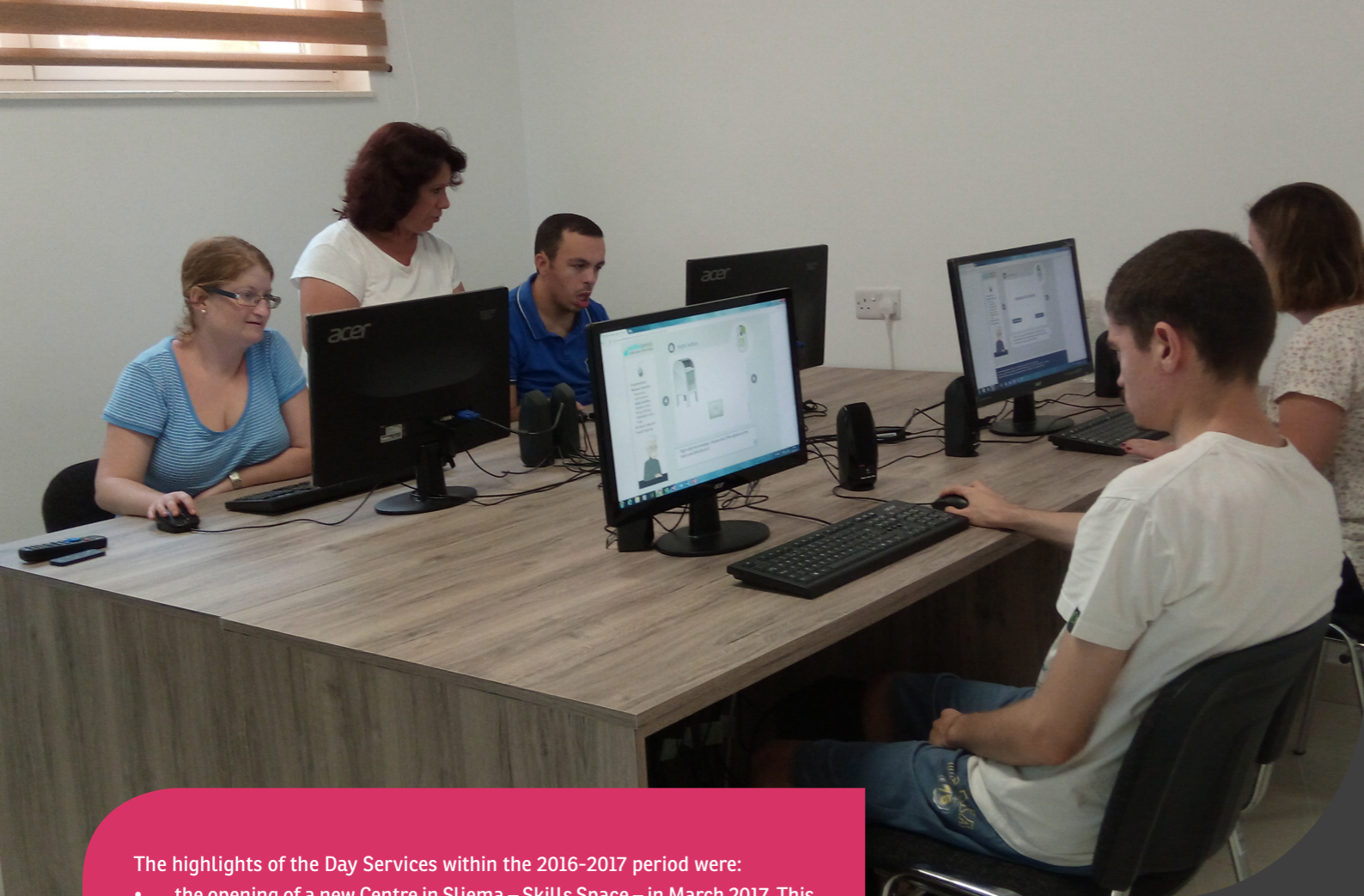
493 service users
benefiting from Day
Services as at end 2017

”



The Day Services Department is committed to analyse and develop the current service delivery, programmes service users need, staff skills, and providing increased support, assessment and training whilst modernising the environment and upgrading the services to meet the changes in accessibility for all guidelines and universal design. The increasing availability of mainstream assistive devices has also allowed the service to develop programmes using technology, permitting service users to be more involved and engaged, thus receiving a more holistic service. Technological and interactive interfaces have been included in the restructured Centres, aiming to assist service users to communicate, interact and engage in the Centres more effectively. During the period under review, restructuring works were initiated at Cottonera Day Centre.





The highlights of the Day Services within the 2016-2017 period were:

- the opening of a new Centre in Sliema – Skills Space – in March 2017. This Centre changed the perception of day services and initiated a change in Centres' culture. Skills Space was designed to target employability and skills-based training for persons with developmental disabilities.
- Restructuring and modernisation of Day Centres. This comprised of changes in the mission and aims of the service. Previously, the Centres focused on independent living skills, self-care and employability skills. Presently the focus is to also include active support, advocacy, leisure and assistive technology. This restructuring exercise will be repeated within all the Agency's Centres in Malta and Gozo.

Other 2016 – 2017 initiatives included:

- Artisan products handcrafted by service users exhibited and promoted for sale with the aim of focusing the community's awareness on the persons' abilities rather than the disabilities.
- Talent shows and performances highlighting the diverse talents and abilities of the service users.
- A new emphasis on small group activities, thus allowing service users to receive individual attention during activities enhancing skill-acquisition.
- An easy-to-read communication tool has been developed to provide an opportunity for service users across all Centres to make informed decisions and proceeding to have the service users' wishes advocated for.
- Collaboration between the Malta Communications Authority (MCA), MCAST, the Foundation for Information Technology Accessibility (FITA) and Aġenzija Sapport, which will work to develop a pathway for assessment and trial of Assistive Technological devices for persons with disability to communicate and interact more seamlessly within their own environments.



“
201
 the number of Support
 Workers within Day
 Services
 ”



A team of Leaders, Social Workers, Support Executives and Occupational Therapists complement the Centres' Management Team.

1. 6 – the number of Social Workers who perform assessments, conduct case reviews and provide ongoing support to the service users and their care givers. They work as advocates for the service user.
2. 7 – the number of Support Executives who provide assessments, intervention and evaluation of individual clients through individual support plans and ongoing support to the Centres. They also are actively involved in the preparations for the Day Centres' calendar of events, student placements and other specific specialist programmes offered within the service.
3. 2 – the number of Occupational Therapists who provide training, assessments, intervention, home assessments, functional assessments and retraining, wheelchair assessments, evaluation and consultation to the Day Services.

To continue meeting the mission and aims of the day services, the Agency will be reviewing the current best practice and evidence-based practice with regard to service delivery for persons with developmental disabilities, also based on examples of European work standards. This is to ensure the Agency's commitment towards ensuring that the clients' physical, emotional and functional needs are met through the correct and necessary human resources.

Testimonials

"I started attending the Mtarfa Day Centre a few months ago. The transition from a special school to the Centre was quite a challenge, but with the help of various professionals and the constant assistance of one of the Support Workers, today I am able to eat on my own, I do not use a wheelchair, participate during outings and activities and enjoy my time at the Centre.

One of my favourite things to do at the Centre is using the tablet!"

Shayne, service user

"Most of the success stories always start with failures. Working with people with different disabilities can be quite challenging sometimes, especially in finding motivation. Many Support Workers can feel demotivated when doing daily programmes without seeing any results or any kind of improvement.

When clients show more enthusiasm and any degree of progress, it is very rewarding for both Management and staff. An example of this is Matthew who is participating to the full in the picture bingo. Staff developed an adequate bingo suitable for clients with hearing impairments. Having more time for one-to-one sessions, which include therapeutic sessions, is another success. During these sessions, we have seen clients with intellectual disabilities, make big steps in their progress. Like Joe, who learnt how to open yoghurt tub by himself, and Karl who learnt how to make a sandwich and how to hold a paintbrush and paint by himself. Another success for Karl was when he started going home using the transport together with other service users.

We have also seen Joshua making a huge improvement in learning German and Italian. He already learnt the numbers, colours, months, days of the week, clothes and weather in both of the languages. Then, we also have Martha and Jane, both of whom are improving so much in their manners and the way they speak towards other service users. I also cannot not mention Roger. Roger learnt how to shave his beard with a little bit of support from the staff.

For us Support Workers who work with our services users every day, these are very important and rewarding steps in helping each client get closer to a better life towards independence. Our days at the Centre are not always easy but helping clients in achieving these milestones and seeing them happier, surely makes the day much brighter and more rewarding."

Sarah, Support Worker

Residential Services

Sapport Residential Services are aimed at providing a residential option to minors and adults with a disability, who for one reason or another, cannot continue living within their own home or with their own family and/or are at risk of being in an institution or already are in an institution. Such residential support is provided within small and personalised apartments or houses, with the residents being provided with the necessary assistance on a 24/7 basis. The main aim for the Residential Services is to enable the person with disability to live as independently as possible within the community. The philosophy of the service is that of focusing on developing the service user's abilities through support rather than care.

“
Ages of service users within Sapport residences vary between 17 and 70 years
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“
10 residences across Malta and 1 in Gozo operated by Aġenzija Sapport by end of 2017
”

“
56 services users were benefiting from Sapport residential services as at end 2017
”



Residence	Location	Description	Residence capacity
Vajrita 1	Marsascula	Residential Complex divided in 6 flatlets	12
Vajrita 2	Marsascula	Residential Complex divided in 6 flatlets	12
Fgura	Fgura	Apartment	3
Kirkop	Kirkop	Apartment	4
Villino Maria	Mtarfa	Bungalow	8
Birżebbuġia	Birżebbuġia	Apartment	3
Orkidea	Siġġiewi	Terraced House	4
Dar il-Fjuri	Victoria, Gozo	Apartments	11
Dar Andrew	Bormla	Townhouse	7
Dar Ave Maria	Marsa	Maisonette	3
Warda	Pembroke	Bungalow	6

Table 1: Outline of Aġenzija Sapport residences as at end 2017.

Each residence has a team of Support Workers, who are the frontliners and have a key role in assisting the service users with various aspects of their lives and to ensure that they are fully participating and included in the community. All Support Workers are followed, monitored and supported by a Leader and a Support Executive, who also have a crucial role in the overall service provision.

“
109 – the number of Support Workers within Sapport Residential Services
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During the 2016 – 2017 period, Sapport residential services reached more service users when two residences became operational, namely Orkidea in Slġġiewi and Dar Il-Fjuri in Victoria, Gozo. Towards the end of 2017, another two residences were launched – Dar Ave Maria in Marsa and Warda in Pembroke. Work on other residence was also initiated in 2017. These residences are in Żabbar, Żurrieq and Qrendi.



Service users within the residences are regularly involved in various activities and events. Such opportunities included the yearly Premju Soċjetà Ġusta events, Betlehem f'Għajnsielem and other local talent shows.



Testimonials

"I have been living at B'Bugia residence for the past 6 years. When I was 16, I wanted to find a job. I discussed several options with the Leader and the Support Workers whereby I was given several options on how this could be achieved. Eventually I decided to attend a Pathway programme at MCAST, in order to enhance my education and obtain the skills I needed for employment. This was a huge challenge for me, since I needed to learn how to catch the bus on my own and master my money management and road safety skills. Support staff assisted me and designed a programme for me to learn these skills. Today, I have learnt how to catch the bus on my own and this enabled me to attend MCAST, which I have been doing so very successfully for the past 2 years. I became more independent. Now I am very eager to continue learning and joining the labour force through placements and eventually enjoy full employment."

Jason, service user

"I have been through a difficult time but now I feel much better. I am very independent and I love catching the bus and travel around from one place to another. I work in one of the best hotels in Malta and also have a part-time job. My hobby is making cards and with the extra money I get, I buy food for abandoned dogs. I was born male but today, I am a female. It was not always clear to me what I wanted but I found a lot of people who supported me and gave me guidance along the years. Today I feel accepted by most and I am content with this. I also aspire to enter into a relationship with a person who truly loves me for who I am."

Eliza, service user

Community Services

Community Services are provided both in Malta and Gozo, and target a variety of needs as experienced by the individuals with disability and/or their family/caregivers. The intervention strategies or personal assistance needs are reviewed according to necessity to determine whether the identified outcomes are being achieved.

Community programmes can be offered for personal assistance, socialisation, community access or intervention:

- **Personal Assistance** provides direct personalised support to help persons with disability with activities of daily living within their home, workplace or in the community, where and when needed. This support is also commonly sought out by, but not limited to, primary caregivers who support persons with severe disabilities.
- **Intervention** provides an opportunity for persons with disabilities to continue developing their skills or receive training to learn new skills within the community environment. The main goal is to focus on daily living skills, communication and social interaction to prepare persons with disabilities for school, work, day centres, or general socialisation within the community.

Aġenzija Sapport provides intervention strategies developed to address specific areas of needs experienced by the person with disability. The service can be offered on a long-term or short-term basis depending on the needs of the person following consultation and assessment of the Social Worker.

Community Services also include:

- Direct Payment (Reimbursement of care costs)
- Independent Community Living (ICL) scheme
- Personal Assistant Fund

Direct Payment: A financial package is offered to persons with disability giving them the opportunity to select their own personal carer to provide a service based on conditions and tasks agreed upon between the end service user and Aġenzija Sapport. Direct Payment is to be considered as a subsidy to assist persons with disabilities to manage their selected services. Services through the Agency's human resources and Direct Payment can be accessed when requests are less than 13 hours per week.

Independent Community Living scheme: Similar to Direct Payment, the Independent Community Living scheme, is a financial package offered to persons with disability to live more independently or provide more assistance in more intense situations. The package can cover services provided by a live-in carer or an amount of hours which exceed the maximum offered through the Agency's own human resources or Direct Payment (13 hours per week). This service can also be accessed by those already receiving other services depending on the situation and needs.

Personal Assistance Fund: The Personal Assistance Fund (PAF) was founded in 2017. The PAF caters mainly for carers and service users are allocated a monthly/ yearly financial package to subsidise the costs of the carer. The PAF can be utilised by adults who have been assessed as needing more than 30 hours per week of ongoing personal assistance.



321 – the number of beneficiaries of Community Services in 2016

Salient initiatives undertaken by Community Services during the 2016-2017 period included:

- On-call service dedicated to Community Service Support Workers and their service users
- A 7-seater van was purchased specifically for the Community Services

The introduction of tablets to assist professionals and Support Workers to engage service users through several apps, mainly to determine abilities, encourage communication, etc. Tablets also reduced paperwork since forms and reports may now be filled electronically and thus rendering the back-office processes more efficient.



The number of staff members within the Community Services increased by one staff member from 25 employees in 2016 to 26 in 2017

327 – the number of beneficiaries of Community Services in 2017

Testimonials

"As a Support Worker, you need to do this work from the heart. The service users will show their gratitude even with just a look, because they know that someone is ready to help them and their family. This is worth so much for both my service users and myself as they trust you as a Support Worker to share the love and the hardships, making you part of the family."

Sharon, Support Worker

"I benefit so much from the Community Services I receive, as the Support Worker helps in my day-to-day living, from socialising to taking me on appointments and running errands. For this, I am grateful for everything they do."

Julia, service user

Sign Language Interpretation

Aġenzija Sapport offers the service of Sign Language Interpreting for hearing-impaired individuals who use Maltese Sign Language (LSM – Lingwa tas-Sinjali Maltija). The role of the sign language interpreter is to interpret between spoken language (Maltese and English) and LSM, and vice-versa.

Interpreting services are offered to facilitate communication in everyday life and therefore include a variety of sectors. These include (but are not limited to) education, employment, health, law and court, social and leisure activities. This service is also available for individuals/entities who would like to make their services or events more accessible to service users.

Achievements in 2016:

Since its launch in March 2016, the service has seen a rapid increase in the number of service users utilising the service provided by five sign language interpreters employed by the Agency.

LSM was recognised as Malta's third official language by an Act of Parliament on 16th March 2016.

The objectives of this Act are to provide for the setting up, composition and functions of the Sign Language Council of Malta, which is being set up in order to achieve a situation where the deaf community is consulted on matters relating to Maltese Sign Language. The Act also provides for the promotion of the use and development of Maltese Sign Language, whilst declaring that the Maltese Sign Language is to be considered an official language of Malta, and for other matters ancillary or consequential thereto. This is certainly an important milestone for the sign language interpretation profession.

Achievements in 2017

Sapport Sign Language Interpreters also attended a 2-day international workshop held in Malta in May 2017. Maya De Wit, former president of the European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters and interpreter trainer from the Netherlands, delivered this workshop on interpreting into and from English. Participants at this workshop hosted by Aġenzija Sapport hailed from Belgium, France, Hungary, Italy, Germany, Netherlands, Spain, and Macau. The event covered third language interpreting & international settings, linguistic strategies in formal and informal settings, coping strategies and tools, reflective practices and team interpreting.



“
Maltese Sign Language
recognised as an official
language since
March 2016
”



“
70 persons made use
of the Sign Language
Interpreting service
between March and
December 2016
”



“
79 persons made use
of the Sign Language
Interpreting service
during 2017
”

Testimonials

"The Sign Language Interpreting Service is great. The interpreters are very efficient ... It allows me to access team meetings at work and other personal appointments".

Clare, service user

"The Sign Language Interpreting Service at Agenzija Sapport has allowed me to further my studies and to participate fully in class discussions. Without the interpreting service I would not be able to understand everything that the lecturers say".

Jake, service user

"Interpreting has given me the opportunity to have new learning experiences, be involved in a wide range of activities and meet new and prominent people. An experience I will treasure forever is when we had an audience with the Pope during a conference at the Vatican."

Joanne, Sign Language Interpreter

Sharing Lives

The idea behind Sharing Lives originated from the belief that persons with a disability have a right to live a full life as any other individual in society. Quality of life is also determined by the positive relationships we have in our lives and the possibility to access social events and experience new things were we discover our strengths and passions. Therefore Sharing Lives is committed towards exposing persons with disability to more social interaction and fruitful experiences.

Sharing Lives is based on the principle that informal learning and creativity should play a major role in surmounting apparent obstacles and that it is important to share a moment of fun in a safe manner without prejudice and patronisation.

As a service, Sharing Lives started off in September of 2016, with an official launch taking place in April 2017.

Since starting work related to Sharing Lives in 2016, a number of activities were organised, ranging from horse riding, to cooking lessons, dance workshops, painting sessions, attending to music festivals and theatre productions, fitness sessions, etc.

By end of 2017, Sharing Lives had worked together with forty-two volunteers from all walks of life including young students, foreign volunteers and pensioners. These volunteers assisted in the organisation of unique and creative activities and support service users to access activities in the community. Through the volunteers' work, the Agency has reached out to almost fifty

service users and the demand is growing, with new referrals pouring in, the majority of which are young people under 30 years of age. Sharing Lives volunteers also offered their services at the Sapport Day Centres and by acting as social contacts to a number of persons with disability.

Training sessions for volunteers are also being planned to further enhance the quality of the service provided. The volunteers did not only offer their time and human resource but also brought to Aġenzija Sapport a new creative energy, fresh enthusiasm and a new set of skills and knowledge. Simultaneously, Sharing Lives has brought to the general community positive experiences that challenged the negative perceptions generally associated with disability and created a new network of people who want to be involved in the sector.

“ 46 service users benefited from these activities by end 2017 ”



“ 20 activities were coordinated between September 2016 and end of 2017 ”



“ 42 volunteers from all walks of life offered their services to Sharing Lives ”



Testimonials

"It's not just the clients that gain from the sessions, but everyone involved gets to share the joy just by sharing their time and experience!"

Keely Triganza, Chef, cooking session

"We spent a lot of time together and we built a strong relation to each other. For them I wasn't only a social work student, I became a friend and a teacher in one person. I became someone who they could relate to and trust . Even I learnt a lot from them. I learnt how to see the world in a different way."

Malina Schuler, Volunteer

People Assistance Schemes

In 2017, a new unit was formed – the People Assistance Schemes Service – encompassing a number of schemes that the Agency started administering, after being handed over to Sapport from CRPD.

The aim of these schemes is to provide financial support, assistance and guidance to persons with disability and their families/carers.

1. Empowerment Scheme

Aġenzija Sapport operates the Empowerment Scheme, which provides financial support and guidance to persons with disability enabling them to purchase equipment which would allow them to lead a more independent life. The Scheme is run by an independent Board which includes a number of professionals, who advise and provide information to persons with disability on how they can purchase equipment according to their individual needs. The Empowerment Scheme also offers subsidy on individualised transport services to persons with disability who would need to go to work, to a post-secondary education institution, or attend sports activities.

“ €240,495 given out in subsidies by the Empowerment Scheme in 2016 and €307,180 in 2017 ”

“ 358 cases benefited from the Empowerment Scheme in 2016 and 516 cases in 2017 ”

“ The Empowerment Scheme allows persons with disability to lead a more independent life ”

Total number of approved applications	Total amount approved by Board €
358	240,495

Table 2: Empowerment Scheme applicants and subsidies, January – December 2016.

Total number of approved applications	Total amount approved by Board €
516	307,180

Table 3: Empowerment Scheme applicants and subsidies, January – December 2017.



Furthermore, in September 2017, Aġenzija Sapport signed the official transfer of the following schemes from CRPD.

- Vehicle Road Licence Exemption Scheme
- Vehicle Registration Exemption Scheme
- Grant on the Purchase of Specialised Equipment

Handing over of procedures and cases from CRPD ensued, in the process also generating more drop-in clients and collaborating with other entities and professionals such as Occupational Therapists, the Ministry of Finance and Transport Malta.

2. Vehicle Road Licence Exemption Scheme

The Vehicle Road Licence Exemption Scheme allows people with disability or their parents / carers to be either partially or fully exempted from paying the annual road licence, depending on the age of the vehicle.

3. Vehicle Registration Exemption Scheme

The aim of this scheme is to provide support and financial assistance to persons with disability and their families to acquire a means of transportation suitable for their needs, by being fully or partially exempt from paying the vehicle registration fees.

4. Grant on the Purchase of Specialised Equipment

The Grant on the Purchase of Specialised Equipment provides support and financial assistance to persons with disability and their families in relation to VAT paid on the purchase of assistive equipment, which is included on a defined list.

“
Over 60 applications for the Grant on the Purchase of Specialised Equipment were received between September and December 2017
”

“
Beneficiaries of these schemes need not be existing Sapport service users
”

“
Over 250 applications for vehicle licence and registration exemptions were received between September and December 2017
”



Projects

The Projects and Maintenance section was set up in October 2016, as part of the new structure following the autonomy process. The Department continued to grow to meet the demands of the Agency and reached its full complement in 2017.

A number of large-scale projects were taken on board and successfully completed during the period under review, including:

- Skills Space in Sliema - The Team led the works to transform the building from a semi-finished state into a highly-finished Centre with smart technologies and high safety standards also including high end finishing and furnishing particularly its Computer room and Independent Living Skills section. The process involved a number of professionals who gave their input to see this project through completion to meet the requirements of the service users in the best way possible.
- Dar Ave Maria, Marsa Residence – This project involved changing the layout of a residential apartment to make it more spacious, well lit and an adequate space for a modern, accessible residential home for persons with disability.
- Dar Warda, Pembroke residence – This project involved the restructuring of a historical building into a home for minors with disability. This project involved a substantial amount of construction works in the interiors of the house whilst taking care that adequate maintenance and renovation was carried out externally. Building rectifications were effected to cater for minors.

In the new residences, the Agency's way forward is to operate smart homes. These residences have smart TV units, Internet and Wi-Fi connections, Wi-Fi-enabled air-conditioning systems, smart cookers and keyless entry. Planning of these residences was also done with accessibility and safety measures in mind thus to ensure a safe environment for persons with disability.



“

The Project and Maintenance Team also carries out routine maintenance works in all the Agency's sites: day centres, residences, Head Office and the Professional Development Centre

”

As at end 2017, the Projects Team was working on a number of other projects:

- Dar Iris, Żabbar residence – This residence will accommodate up to 8 adult persons with disability in 4 twin bedrooms. The previous building was knocked down and rebuilt on new plans, making better use of premises footprint.
- Żurriq residence – By the end of 2017, excavation works had started on these premises, planned to hold 4 flatlets with a total capacity of 11 service users, each featuring a number of single bedrooms and common areas. This residence will also have a space to be used as a multipurpose hall.
- Qrendi residence – work of a new building also started, which will hold 3 flatlets to accommodate 9 service users. Each apartment will feature three single bedrooms, and common areas. There will also be space for a multipurpose hall.
- Modernisation of Mtarfa Day Centre – preparation works started at end of 2017 which will see expansion of the Centre's building and refurbishment of the current facilities. This multi-phase project will also allow the Centre to accommodate more service users. It is indeed envisaged that the Mtarfa Day Centre will double its capacity and provide a safe and enjoyable environment for the service users who attend there.
- Head Office extension – Due to the sharp increase in number of employees within the Agency over the period under review, the present Head Office building in Santa Venera has become too small to accommodate all staff. Thus preparatory work was initiated in 2017 to expand the premises through the addition of two more floors to increase office space. This project is expected to be finalised during the forthcoming year.





Chiara Borg
Director



HR – PEOPLE MANAGEMENT & WELL-BEING

The remit of the Human Resources (HR) Department includes: recruitment and selection, payroll and data management, training and development, employee relations and people management, amongst others.

This department was set up at end 2016 when the HR function was handed over to the Agency from FSWS. The remit of the Department was thus encompassing a more holistic function that oversees employees' wellbeing.

Total male employees	116
Total female employees	346
Grand Total	462

Table 4: Support staff complement as at 31st December 2017

One of the main tasks taken on board once the Department was set-up was to standardise work-life measures and drawing up specific forms and policies.

Recruitment

As a public sector entity, the Agency follows the provisions of Directive 7 with regards to recruitment processes. Moreover, guidelines and best practices issued by the People and Standards Division and the Public Service Commission are adopted to ensure fair and transparent processes based on the principle of meritocracy.

Grade	Males	Females	Totals
Directors	0	2	2
Senior Executives	1	1	2
Support Executives	0	15	15
Executive III	0	1	1
Occupational Therapists	0	2	2
Social Workers	0	3	3
Executive I	1	0	1
Support Workers	7	36	43
Administrative Support Worker	2	6	8
Sign Language Interpreter	0	1	1
TOTALS	11	67	78

Table 5: New recruits between 1st April 2016 – 31st December 2017

Collective agreement

Negotiations, headed by the Industrial Relations Unit within the People and Standards Division of the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), regarding the new Collective Agreement 2017 – 2021, were held during 2017. The HR Department provided all the administrative and logistical support, statistics and coordinated the proposals made by the management of the Agency.

Outreach meetings and consultation processes

During the period under review, the HR team held a number of visits within the Support Day Centres and Residential Services. The Department's personnel listened to the employees, shared the operational plans and provided a forum of open dialogue and discussion.

Employee well-being

The Agency, through the People Management and Employee Well-being Department, provides psychological assistance to employees going through personal and work-related issues. Employees benefiting from such assistance have given positive feedback about the scheme.

Training and development

Throughout the period under review, the Department coordinated training needs of the Agency employees (Table 6), thus investing in human resources development.

A call for sponsorship for training abroad related to Positive Behaviour Support was also issued and two employees attended this training. Induction courses were also held for newly recruited employees and 39 participants attended during the period under review.

“ 7 employees were working within the HR and payroll teams of the People Management and Employee Well-being Department by end 2017 ”

“ 462 employees working with Agenzija Support as at 31st December 2017 ”

“ 9 internal calls and 1 external call were issued between October and December 2016 ”

“ 29 internal calls and 31 external calls were issued between January and December 2017 ”

Training	Number of employees benefiting from training
First aid	79
Food handling	25
Active support training	51
Addictions in adolescents	1
Assistive devices	3
Clinical observations	1
Dignity and Independent Living Conference	2
Disability studies postgraduate symposium	2
Disabled people and services, employment, sport and leisure	2
Domestic violence	19
Electronic public procurement	1
Employee support programme	15
Employment issues	5
Employment law	2
Excel as database	2
Excel formulas & follow up	1
Explore assistive technology	1
Fiscal and practical considerations	1
Green public procurement	1
Handling stress	1
How to apply bio-psycho-social model in occupational therapy practice	3
How to handle a client with challenging behaviour	1
Il-Protezzjoni żejda fil-ħajja tal-persuni b'diżabilità	1
Induction training	39
Accessibility without discrimination	9
CRPD conference	17
L-employer and l-problemi soċjali	2
Magnifying strengths	4
Mental health awareness	17
National requirements and legislation related to EU funding	1
Occupational therapy	2



Paediatric first aid	4
Protection of vulnerable older persons and Persons with Disability Act	22
Psychology open day	4
Sexuality & disability - Breaking the silence	9
Working together to deliver positive behaviour support	2
Workers health and safety representative	6
Trusts and Trustees Act seminar	1
Training on dementia	5
Trainers programme	2
The Parent Practice	15
Telephone call handling techniques	1
SPSS statistics	4
Smart phones training	8
Total	394

Table 6: Training attended by Aġenzija Sappor staff, April 2016 – December 2017.



ADMINISTRATION
& EU FUNDS

Cynthia Misokova
Director



Administration & Procurement

The Administration & EU Funds Department was set up towards end of 2016, this role still having been administered by FSWS. The handing-over of such function took place during the last quarter of 2016. Thus, during the first year of the period under review, the procurement of services, works and supplies, were still not part of the Agency's functions, together with the management and implementation of EU projects.

The newly set-up Department overtook a number of responsibilities, such as the drafting of Tenders which previously fell under the responsibility of the line Ministry. The approval of EU-funded projects and the possible tapping of other EU funding, brought about the introduction of the EU Unit.

During 2017, this Department tended to the move of various departments from the main Head Office premises in Santa Venera to another premises, to accommodate better the expanding departments. This extension premises hosts the Office of the CEO, the Marketing Department, the Finance Department and the Administration & EU Department. This move will further enhance the Agency's services as well as accommodate better the increasing demands of the Agency's services. The new premises – the Professional Development Centre – are also equipped with boardrooms as well as a modern conference room. As the name suggests, these premises are also used for the provision of enriched training to the Agency's employees and its relevant stakeholders, thus investing in the well-being and professional development of employees. It also serves as a venue for press events.

Throughout 2017, the Administration Department also embarked on a project to expand the Agency's vehicles fleet by investing in four tail lift vans to service its Day Centres in order to ensure that the clients' needs are constantly met. These vehicles were bought from the UK, following a thorough on-site inspection to ensure that they met all the necessary standards and requirements. Each van is equipped with textured handrails and has a seating capacity for up to 16 passengers or 6 wheelchairs. All seating is track mounted and fitted with quick release fixings to enable easy layout changes. Moreover, all vans feature a wide side entrance with glide door as well as safety cameras and a voice command system that gives vital safety and operational information, such as warning messages.



“ The Professional Development Centre hosted a number of conferences and training sessions in its Conference Room ”

“ 23 Tenders were issued between September 2016 and December 2017 ”



“ 4 wheelchair-accessible buses were bought to be used by service users attending the Agency's Day Centres ”

INK – Person Focused Inclusion ESF Project 2017/2020

The INK project is aimed at maximising the abilities of persons with disability, focusing mainly in directing each beneficiary towards enhancing one's employability skills and strengthening social engagement.

The Project specifically intends to integrate 300 persons with disability into the labour market through an INK training placement scheme. Such integration within society and in the labour market shall be further consolidated by enhancing capacity building and thus offering specialised training to:

- 300 employers
- 300 next of-kin
- 150 professionals

Through such a training component, employers shall be encouraged to give opportunities to disabled persons, thus promoting an increase in the number of disabled persons in the labour market.

Structures such as the independent living hub and INK training centres shall be developed, specifically addressing the evolving needs of persons with a disability, such as accessibility and social cohesion. In this regard, investment in institutional structures is key in providing the effective delivery of the necessary training and other sources.

Work on this project commenced during the 3rd quarter of 2017, and is expected to reach full implementation by end 2020. Project targets include:

- The production of 4 information packs along with a national directory of stakeholders
- The setting up of 6 Independent Living hubs
- The setting up of 1 main Training Centre
- Improving the facilities and resources in 3 medium-sized Centres to better equip people with disability with the necessary tools to enter the labour market and function better in society.

“

€3m
the budget for
INK project

”

“

Over 1,000 INK
beneficiaries will be
reached

”

“

Persons with
disability will have the
opportunity to carry
out job placements in
Ireland

”

“

CRPD and Irish
organisation KARE are
INK partners

”



Founded in 1967

REACH – Fair and Inclusive Society ERDF Project 08.039 2017/2022

The REACH Project aims at providing a fair and inclusive society that promotes and advocates independent living and employment by supporting the integration of vulnerable persons within the community through public infrastructure. It will provide a place where people with a disability will benefit from training in relation to independent living and housekeeping skills. The project infrastructure shall be located in Naxxar close to various amenities, including the church, village centre and retail outlets.

The REACH complex will offer a residential and transitional setting. The project will directly target persons with disability who are identified as at greater risk of social exclusion, by empowering them in order to integrate them in society and offering skills to develop a better state of living and become an active member of the community. REACH will also promote and develop a community that is all-inclusive aimed at reducing social exclusion and poverty.

REACH aims at bringing vulnerable persons closer to the labour market through support and training offered within the infrastructure. It shall offer employment opportunities to both persons with a disability who will be residing at the proposed infrastructure and to those who are living in other Aġenzija Sapport residences.

Through the project, on-the-job training will be provided to personal assistants employed, to acquire the required skills to assist persons with a disability.

Preparatory work on this project started in 3rd quarter of 2017, and is targeted to be fully implemented by 2022.



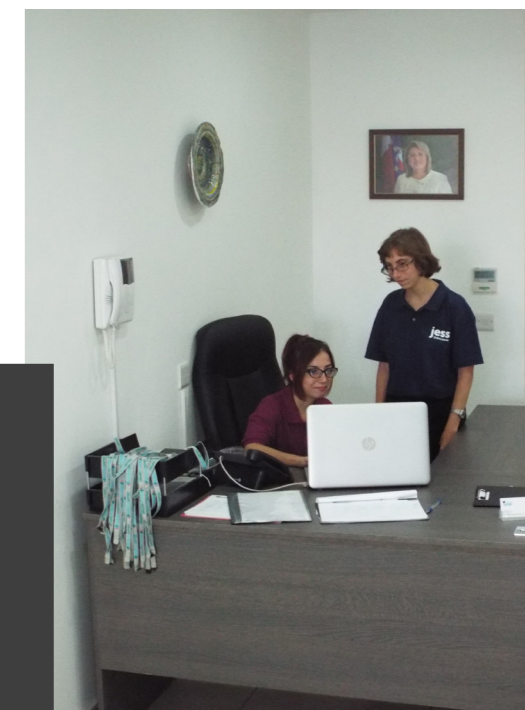
“
€20m
estimated cost of the
REACH project
”

Job Enhancing Skills Scheme 2017 – 2019

JESS is aimed to reach the segment of persons with a disability whose sole income is currently the Disability Pension, thus unemployed, aged between 16-55 years. It aims at providing persons with a disability with a work placement, which may vary according to their specific abilities and needs.

It is a fact that there is a very significant association between educational achievement and success in employment. The disadvantage for persons with a disability in education and lifelong learning is a matter of major concern, to which attention should be directed as a priority. Early intervention, prevention from further exclusion and solid promotion to ensure full integration of persons with disability into the labour market is only achieved if all entities collaborate and lead by example. Ensuring that through the work opportunities offered persons with a disability overcome the initial barrier in acquiring the appropriate skills to lead a productive and integrated work life.

By the 4th quarter of 2017, five beneficiaries were on placement as part of JESS, being provided with hands-on training by the employer and mentors in assistance.



Testimonial:

"I have joined JESS in September 2017 as a trainee Receptionist. My experience has been very positive. I have attended a course on telephone skills, I meet new people every day and I am working on improving my skills on a daily basis. I feel that this experience is helping me in becoming a better communicator and it will certainly be useful when applying for employment in the future."

Sarah, JESS beneficiary

Marketing & Communications

The Marketing & Communications Department is a new function within Agenzija Sappot, taking over from FSWS and setting up the Unit according to the requirements of the newly-autonomous Agency. The crucial factor was that the Agency required a new brand. Thus, after having conducted an internal study on communications and stakeholders' expectations, together with a deep analysis of where the Agency was heading, an extensive rebranding exercise was embarked on. This was the main characteristic of this Department, which falls within the remit of the office of the CEO, during the two years under review.

A new logo was created, reflecting the main objective of the Agency – that of providing a holistic, efficient service with the involvement of the professionals, the persons with disability and their family members.

This process set in motion various other salient factors that are part of the whole rebranding exercise, including the creation of a visual guide for official documentation, a new website, and new livery. The visual element was supported by rebranding workshops, targeting all departments within the Agency emphasising also on the customer care aspect and portrayal of the Agency's profile both in public and with the service users.

During the preparatory stage of the rebranding exercise, towards the end of 2016, a media policy was also drafted and presented to staff, during a number of seminars held for staff about representing the Agency on the media. Coordinating participation in media programmes was necessary to enhance

exposure and organisation placement. Thus, various programmes and media interviews were attended during the period under review. Of particular significance was the coordination and co-production of a TV programme – Achieve – which included regular guests in the studio to discuss selected topics in relation to disability and also weekly features focusing mostly on Day Centres programmes and other Sappot initiatives.

During the period under review, social media was also given a boost. The Agency's official Facebook was passed on to be administered by the Marketing Department and various promotions were done to reach a wide audience, covering various aspects from promotion of vacancies, activities and upcoming events. In 2017, an official LinkedIn profile was also created, increasing the Agency's exposure particularly amongst professionals. This served particularly well when it came to assist the HR Department in promoting career opportunities.



“ 71 TV and radio interventions were coordinated October 2016 – December 2017 ”

“ Over 60 employees attended the media training held in November 2016 ”



The Marketing & Communication Department also supported the HR team in the coordination of various outreach events, during careers fairs at secondary and post-secondary schools and colleges, aiming to emphasise the various professions available within the disability sector.

The Department also supports various other initiatives held by the other units within the Agency, mostly through standardisation when it comes to branding and public relations. One such initiative was the planning and implementation of an awareness campaign to promote Sharing Lives, targeting mainly young people and promoting placements as volunteers within this service.



Another milestone for the Marketing & Communications Department was the coordination of a Strategy Day in April 2017, which served as a general meeting for staff from all the Agency's Departments, which greatly enhanced teambuilding and internal communication about the Agency's current and future plans while also launching the new organisation's structure.

The way forward for the Marketing & Communications Department is definitely to continue building on the achievements of the past two years, thus continue to enhance the Agency's exposure through more presence in the media, spearheading campaigns, increasing public awareness and promoting its brand. Various projects that the Department will be supporting include the creation of informative publications and resources to be used in schools by Agency professionals; further efforts to promote careers, coordination of launches and promotion of the various projects embarked on by the Agency – such as EU projects and new residences; providing support to Day Centres in promoting handcrafted items done by persons with disability through the ongoing maintenance of an online catalogue; coordination of major seminars and events; and ultimately, also acting as the Agency's main focal point for both internal and external communication.



Alison Attard
Director



Finance & Budgeting

Through the authority granted by Legal Notice 104 of 2016 of the Public Administration Act, Aġenzija Sapport was established as an autonomous Agency with effect from April of 2016. In this regard, the Agency started to retain financial data and reporting independently from FSWS.

The demand for services continued to register an increase, as well as the introduction and implementation of a number of schemes that assist vulnerable persons in promoting independent living. During the years under review, the Agency also increased its Day Centre services as well as its number of residences. This increase in service has undoubtedly brought about an increase in expenditure over the previous years. This financial report covers period 1st January 2016 to 31st December 2017. The Agency strives to provide continued service provision as the best value for money for the Government and society in general.

1. Funding

To be able to maintain a sustainable service, the Agency required additional Government funding, which increased over the previous years as shown in Figure 1. In 2016, €11,300,000 were originally allocated in the Financial Estimates. In year 2017, there was an increase in allocation of 12% in Government funding over year 2016.

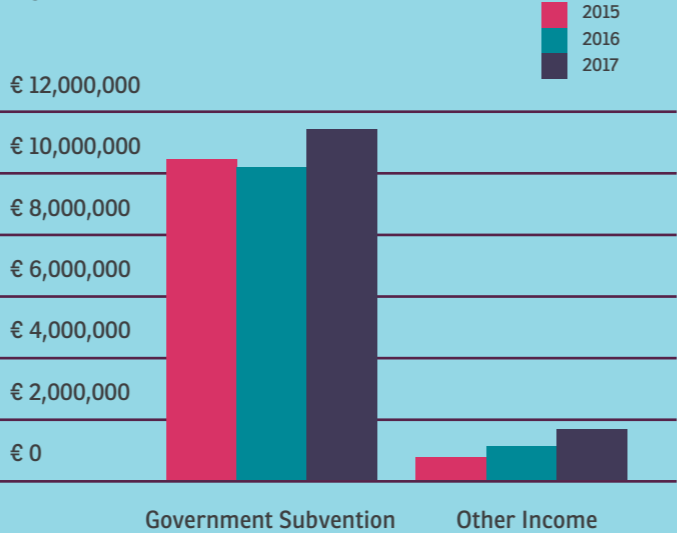
2. Operational & Administrative Expenses

The operational and administrative expenses of the Agency are subdivided into two main cost centres, being Day Centres and Sapport. The Sapport cost centre incorporates the expenses incurred in the Agency's Residences and other Schemes.

As represented in Figure 2 and Figure 3 below, in both cost centres Day Centres and Sapport, the major expense in 2016 is related to payroll costs, representing 75% and 80% respectively of total

	2015	2016	2017
Government Subvention	€10,549,998	€10,492,482	€11,749,965
Other income	€326,220	€586,138	€1,533,922
Total	€10,876,218	€11,078,620	€13,283,887

Figure 1: Government subvention 2015 – 2017



operational costs. On a consolidated basis, payroll represents 77% of total recurrent expenditure. The other expenses are categorised between operational expenditure and administrative expenditure.

The Finance Department ensures that all expenditure is in line with Public Procurement Regulations and Employment & Industrial Relations Act (EIRA) regulations. Expenses are effected in line with internal controls and established procedures.

	Day Centres	Sapport	Consolidated
Payroll	€5,200,230	€3,787,501	€8,987,731
Operational expenditure	€1,565,611	€752,966	€2,318,577
Administrative expenditure	€149,269	€188,893	€338,162
Total	€6,915,110	€4,729,360	€11,644,470

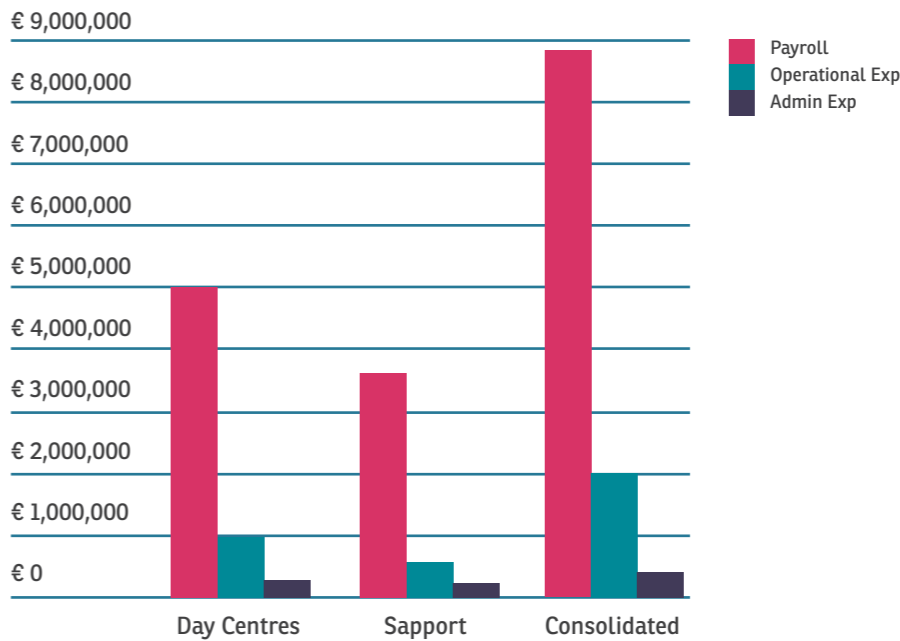


Figure 2: Recurrent expenditure and payroll cost per Unit, 2016

	Payroll	Operational expenditure	Administrative expenditure
Day Centres	75.20%	22.64%	2.16%
Sapport	80.08%	15.92%	3.99%
Consolidated	77.18%	19.91%	2.90%

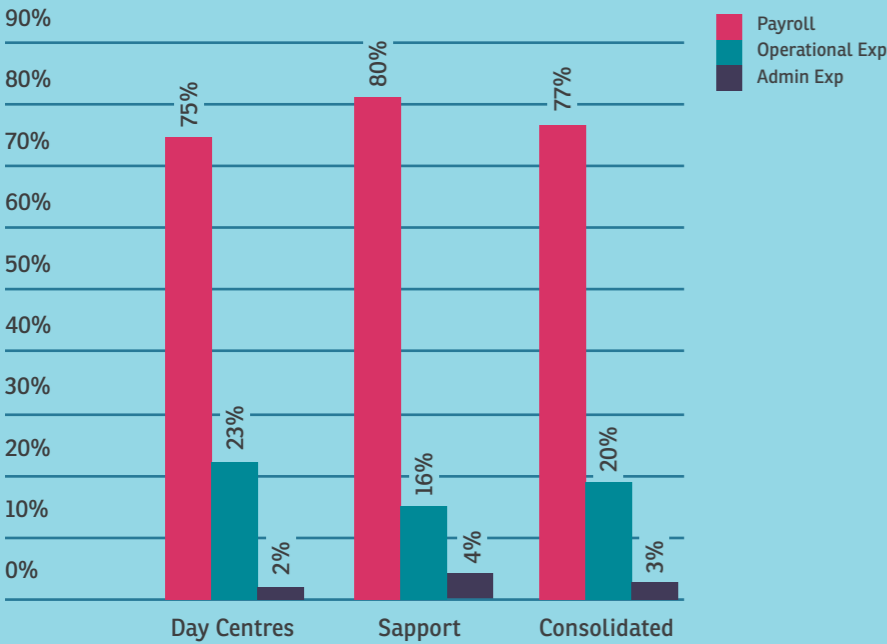


Figure 3: Percentages of consolidated expenditure per Unit, 2016

During 2017, due to expansion and increase in service provision, costs continued to increase over year 2016. Once again, the major expense is related to payroll, representing 71% of total costs. Total increase in expenses over year 2016 amounted to 12%.

	Day Centres	Sapport	Consolidated
Payroll	€5,079,361	€4,206,987	€9,286,348
Operational expenditure	€1,820,951	€1,253,693	€3,074,644
Administrative expenditure	€421,672	€307,183	€728,855
	€7,321,985	€5,767,863	€13,089,848

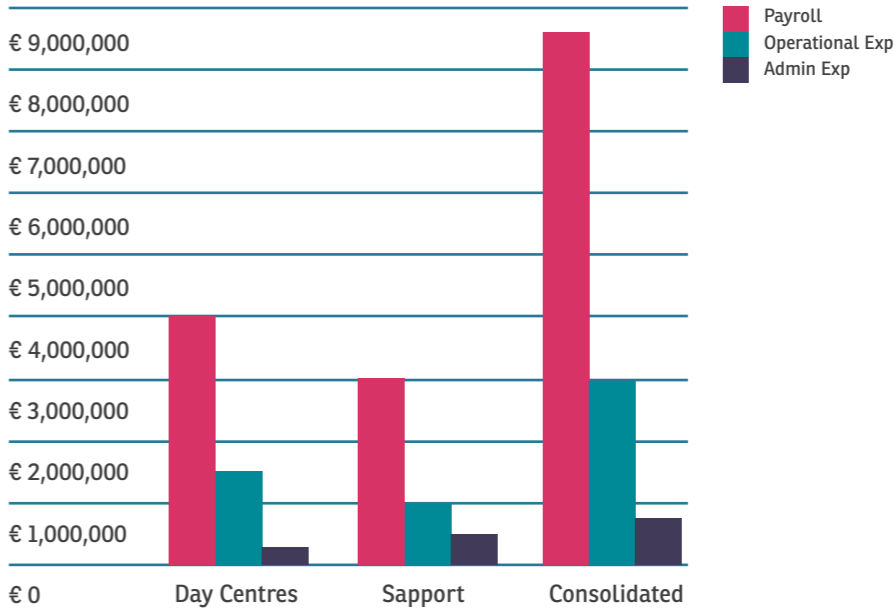


Figure 4: Recurrent expenditure and payroll cost per Unit, 2017

	Payroll	Operational expenditure	Administrative expenditure
Day Centres	69.37%	24.87%	5.76%
Sapport	72.94%	21.74%	5.33%
Consolidated	70.94%	23.49%	5.57%



Figure 5: Percentages of consolidated expenditure per Unit, 2017

All of the public funds received by Agenzija Sapport were utilised in the most efficient way possible in order to provide the best value for money service to vulnerable clients. The Agency is a service provider and thus, as shown above, the major part of the operational cost is payroll, with the Agency employing a number of professionals in the field. The specialised services continued to increase, with assistance also provided through goods and materials and refund schemes.

In 2017, the Agency expanded its base into new offices and residences, which increased the overall administrative expense.

3. Capital Expenditure

In 2016, the Agency invested €230K in its asset base whilst in year 2017 this increased considerably to €1.05 million. The Agency also utilises other Government votes for project capital expenditure throughout the year.

4. Results

During year 2016, the Agency registered an overall deficit of €565,850 whilst in year 2017, the Agency registered a surplus of €194,039.

