

A group of men are shown in a close embrace, suggesting a moment of triumph or mutual support. Most of the men are wearing bright yellow t-shirts, while one man on the left is in a black shirt. They are outdoors, with a chain-link fence and a building visible in the background. A large teal graphic element is on the right side of the image.

Annual Report

2025



Aġenzija Sappport, Malta
Annual Report 2025

© Copyright 2026 – Aġenzija Sappport, Malta

No part of this work may be reproduced or used in any form or by any means – graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, taping, web distribution or information storage retrieval systems – without the written permission of Aġenzija Sappport, Malta.

Published by Aġenzija Sappport

Index

LIST OF FIGURES	2
LIST OF TABLES	2
ABBREVIATIONS	3
MISSION, CAUSE & VALUES	4
FOREWORD	6
HON. JULIA FARRUGIA, MINISTER FOR INCLUSION AND THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR	
FOREWORD	8
MR OLIVER SCICLUNA, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	
2025: A YEAR IN REVIEW	10
SERVICES DATA	12
AWARDS 2025	14
MAP OF SAPPOT PREMISES	15
CLIENT MULTI-DISCIPLINARY SUPPORT	16
INTAKE SERVICE	17
SOCIAL WORK SERVICES	19
FAMILY ASSISTANCE SUPPORT SCHEME	21
PERSONAL BUDGET ASSISTANCE SCHEME	23
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SERVICE	25
FAMILY SUPPORT UNIT	27
YOUTH WORK SERVICE	29
SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETING SERVICE	31
DEAF & HARD OF HEARING SERVICE	33
SONIA TANTI INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTRE	35
ACCESS TO COMMUNICATION & TECHNOLOGY UNIT	37

SUPPORTED INDEPENDENT LIVING	39
SUPPORTED INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICE	40
SERVICE PROVIDERS' MONITORING TEAM	42
TRANSITION SERVICE	45
MY PROGRAMME	47
SHARING LIVES	49
CUSTOMER SUPPORT, SCHEMES & DAY SERVICES	51
DAY SERVICES	52
ACCESSIBILITY UNIT	56
PEOPLE ASSISTANCE SCHEMES	58
SKILLUP	60
CUSTOMER SUPPORT	62
PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY & PREVENTION SERVICE	64
HUMAN RESOURCES: PEOPLE MANAGEMENT & EMPLOYEE WELLBEING DEPARTMENT	67
QUALITY AUDIT, RESEARCH & INNOVATION AND CHANGE MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT	70
OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT	73
ADMINISTRATION & MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT	77
EU FUNDS DEPARTMENT	80
STRATEGIC MARKETING & INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS DEPARTMENT	83
FINANCE & PROCUREMENT DEPARTMENT	89

List of Figures

Figure 1	Sapport premises locations, 2025
Figure 2	Government subvention and other grants, 2023–2025
Figure 3	Recurrent expenditure, 2024–2025

List of Tables

Table 1	Number of service users who benefitted from Sapport services in 2025
Table 2	Number of participants in workshops and support groups held by the Family Support Unit, January–December 2025
Table 3	Sessions held by the Youth Work Team, January–December 2025
Table 4	Residential services agreements and placements, January–December 2025
Table 5	Staff development claims, January–December 2025
Table 6	Costings of major refurbishment works carried out by the Administration & Maintenance Department, January–December 2025
Table 7	Events coordinated or supported by the Strategic Marketing & International Relations Team, January–December 2025
Table 8	Government subvention and other grants, 2023–2025
Table 9	Recurrent expenditure, 2024–2025

Abbreviations

AAC	Augmentative and Alternative Communication
ACTU	Access to Communication & Technology Unit
CRPD	Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability
EASPD	European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities
EPR	European Platform for Rehabilitation
ESC	European Solidarity Corps
ESN	European Social Network
FAST	Family Assistance Support Team
FESE	Federation for European Social Employers
FSU	Family Support Unit
HR	Human Resources
ICL	Independent Community Living
ISP	Individual Support Plan
KA1	Key Action 1
KA2	Key Action 2
KLSM	Kunsill tal-Lingwa tas-Sinjali Maltija
LSM	Lingwa tas-Sinjali Maltija
MASCOT	SMart And Sustainable InClusive WORksTation
MASW	Maltese Association of Social Workers

MATP	Motor Activity Training Programme
NAPPI	Non-Abusive Psychological and Physical Intervention
NGOS	Non-Governmental Organisations
PA	Personal Assistant
PAS	People Assistance Schemes
PBAT	Personal Budget Assistance Team
PBS	Positive Behaviour Support
PSP	Public Social Partnership
QARI	Quality Audit, Research & Innovation
RSE	Relationships and Sex Education
SCSA	Social Care Standards Authority
SIL	Supported Independent Living
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
SPMT	Service Providers' Monitoring Team
STILC	Sonia Tanti Independent Living Centre
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
UOM	University of Malta
VET	Vocational Education and Training

Our Mission

Aġenzija Support is Malta's National Agency that offers and provides services, support and guidance to persons with disabilities, their support networks, and their communities.

Our Cause

The Agency's cause is to serve as a catalyst agent in the implementation of the articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). Its goal is to collaborate with persons with disabilities to develop accessible services and resources that enable and empower them to fully exercise their rights and freedoms, overcome societal challenges, and reach equity in society.

Our Values

- **Deinstitutionalisation** – Fostering services that support persons with disabilities towards living independently within communities that leave no one behind.
- **Co-production** – Where persons with disabilities and Agenzija Sapport work together to design, implement, and strengthen services.
- **Personal autonomy** – Empowering persons with disabilities to lead their own lives with dignity and independence, with the rightful freedom to live.
- **Accessibility** – Developing accessible services and resources that involve holistic accessibility. This means physical, cognitive, sensory, and information accessibility to ensure inclusion for all individuals.
- **Equity** – Providing fair and personalised support to ensure that persons with disabilities can truly access equal opportunities.



Foreword

Hon. Julia Farrugia, Minister for
Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector

This year is of particular significance for Aġenzija Sapport. Not only is it one in which we look back at yet another string of considerable achievements by this Agency. It is also an occasion to celebrate 20 years since the adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and 25 years since the creation of the Supported Living Division that has now transformed into the Agency that we all know and love.

An Agency which has prioritised as part of its mission, over the past years, the practical implementation of the concept of 'Nothing Without Us' – the mantra underpinning the UN Convention. A journey that has now factored in the full participation of persons with disabilities at every step, in designing and delivering solutions empowering their lives and their futures.

Aġenzija Sapport serves as a role model for many persons with disabilities, living proof that leadership knows no limits or disability. It has been and will continue to be a catalyst for real and significant change.

Together with the Ministry for Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector, the Agency has tirelessly worked to ensure a solid legal basis and a strong service delivery model. This, in turn, puts the minds of families of persons with disability to rest, that their loved ones will not merely survive, but thrive.

The Agency's achievements were lauded not only in Malta, but also on the international scene. Its efforts led to Malta ranking second in the EU, in the Independent Living rankings for 2024, published in 2025 by the European Network on Independent Living. The CEO was recognised through the Leadership in Social Services Award awarded by the European Social Network.

While the Report will focus on many specific elements of the Agency's tireless work, I would be remiss if I did not touch upon a few key areas, in which Aġenzija Sapport was crucial to ensuring that Malta and Gozo continue to remain a society that places persons with disabilities on an equal footing with all other residents. Implementation of Malta's Personal Budgets Reform, praised internationally, will see further choice and control for persons with disabilities, underpinned by specific legislation, that includes a guarantee for State funding of personal assistance services.

Client multi-disciplinary support will be taken to new levels, through coordination between the Agency and other key players such as Mental Health Services, the Victim Support Agency and Active Ageing and Community Care. This will be carried out by the Joint Committee created by the Protection of Adults in Situations of Vulnerability Act.

This legislation was the result of fulfilment of a key Government electoral pledge. I am honoured and humbled to have been reappointed Minister responsible for the disability sector after the last General Election, and I look forward to continuing to work with the Agency, so that together, and with the involvement of persons with disabilities and their representative organisations, we can keep on delivering. It is important to also commend the Agency on delivering on Government's commitment towards deinstitutionalisation, further to UN and EU obligations, and in line with Malta's 2021-2030 National Disability Strategy.

We have seen the proliferation of independent living and community services, and the reimagining of an approach which previously focused heavily on residential placements, to one which instead prioritises skilling, transition planning, and support through channels such as day and respite services.

In line with Malta's Vision 2050, the Agency's efforts to include persons with disabilities in mainstream society, such as in the labour market through the SkillUp Unit, are likewise worthy of note.

As are the Agency's efforts across the board to implement intersectionality, and reach as many persons with disabilities as possible, such as by integrating a gender perspective into its work, and amplifying the use of approaches and interventions such as youth work.

And in making sure that no person with disability is left behind, I am glad to see the needs of service users such as Deaf and Hard of Hearing persons being catered for specifically, through new, user-led services established by the Agency.

Circling back to the UN Convention, however, one cannot truly speak of 'Nothing Without Us', if it were not guaranteed that persons with disabilities were involved at every stage. In the same way that Government implemented relevant Convention obligations to closely consult and actively involve persons with disabilities, through the ENGAGE Committee, Aġenzija Sapport keeps on doing the same through its Service User Committees.

25 years on from humble beginnings, we now have an entity that is the beating heart of the Maltese disability sector, taking forward a silent revolution day by day, while engaging further beyond our shores, and winning accolades.

I would like to convey my heartfelt gratitude to every single employee within the Agency, unsung heroes, who work countless hours, way beyond what is expected of them, and who are responsible for the empowerment of countless individuals, and the peace of mind of their families.

 A portrait of Oliver Scicluna, a man with a beard and mustache, wearing a light beige blazer over a light blue button-down shirt. He is standing with his hands clasped in front of him. In the background, there is a large banner with the 'AGENZIA SAPPORO' logo, which consists of three overlapping circles in red, blue, and purple. To the left of the man, there is a green plant.

Foreword

Oliver Scicluna, Chief Executive Officer

In 2025, Aġenzija Sapport continued its dedication to growth, transformation, and service excellence. As Malta's national provider supporting persons with disabilities and their families, our responsibility remains unwavering: to enable everyone we serve to achieve dignity, autonomy, and inclusion within their communities.

Over the past twelve months, we intensified efforts to transition from conventional service models to approaches centred on individual needs and community involvement. This shift underscores our commitment to ensuring that persons with disabilities not only receive support but also play an active role in directing their own lives through co-production. Enhanced personal assistance services, expanded community initiatives such as the transition programme, and improved access to tailored support have consistently placed individuals at the core of our operations.

Operational consolidation and enhancement have been key themes this year. We invested in workforce development, recognising our staff as fundamental to our organisation's strength. Initiatives including comprehensive training, robust support structures, and prioritisation of employee wellbeing are cultivating a resilient and skilled team prepared to address the evolving challenges within the sector. Concurrently, improvements in internal systems, governance, and accountability have reinforced sustainability, transparency, and efficiency across our services.

Innovation has played a pivotal role throughout 2025. Significant progress in data collection is facilitating the integration of data-driven decision-making and digital solutions into our service delivery. These advancements are expected to refine quality and consistency, while enabling a deeper understanding of the needs of those we support – positioning us to respond more effectively in future years.

Collaboration remains integral to our mission. Continued engagement with families, non-governmental organisations, government bodies, and other stakeholders has strengthened partnerships essential for fostering an inclusive society. Together, we are working towards reducing barriers and increasing opportunities for persons with disabilities.

While notable progress has been made, challenges persist. Growing demand for services, workforce pressures, and the imperative for long-term sustainability require strategic planning and decisive action. Our vision for the future is clear: to establish a system that empowers individuals by offering greater choice, flexibility, and control over their support.

Looking ahead, we are committed to advancing reforms that promote independent living, co-production, and community inclusion. Our focus will be on developing innovative service models, strengthening staff capabilities, and improving the accessibility and quality of our services. Above all, we remain dedicated to supporting every person in achieving their full potential.

I wish to extend sincere appreciation to our employees, partners, families, and service users for their trust, commitment, and collaboration. Together, we will continue shaping a more inclusive and equitable society.

2025

A Year In Review

2025 was characterised by strategic consolidation and targeted reform across Aženzija Sapport, with particular emphasis on governance, service modernisation, and forward planning within the disability sector. The year focused on strengthening frameworks, piloting new approaches, and preparing for upcoming legislative and policy developments.

STRATEGIC REFORM AND POLICY ALIGNMENT

- **Personal Assistant (PA) Reform and Governance Frameworks** – Significant strategic realignment in preparation for the forthcoming Personal Assistance Act, incorporating a more sustainable and responsive operational model aligned with future legislative requirements.
- **European Disability Card and European Parking Card Directive (EU) 2024/2841** – Active participation in European Commission expert groups, alongside engagement with national stakeholders.

STRENGTHENING GOVERNANCE AND COMPLIANCE

- **Compliance Unit** – Established a dedicated unit to enhance oversight of all third-party services and regulatory obligations.
- **€40.3 million budget** – A 14% increase from 2024, underlining the Government's commitment to stronger investment in disability services.

SERVICE REFORM AND INNOVATION

- **Day Services reform** – Conducted a comprehensive review of Day Services and implemented changes to modernise operational approaches, address service gaps, and reinforce person-centred practice.

- **Budgetary measures** – The Day Services expansion also included the development of the concept and works on a new day centre for elderly persons with disabilities and a new pilot service model consisting of an afternoon programme, aimed at widening access.
- **Deaf Unit services** – Introduced family-centred teaching of Maltese Sign Language (LSM) and sessions for new young learners and their families, including home visits to improve access.
- **The Empowerment Scheme reform** – Updates to this scheme introduced new eligibility criteria and application forms, strengthening operational accountability while streamlining and facilitating the application process.

INDEPENDENCE, EMPOWERMENT, AND CO-PRODUCTION

- **Path2Independence** – A pilot project that provided an opportunity for service users to experience living by themselves for a few days, giving them the space to build life skills, develop independence, and experience shared living in a supported environment through multidisciplinary and coordinated support.
- **Sharing Lives Consultative Committee** – Established this Consultative Committee, composed of elected members and volunteers, promoting co-production, empowerment, and decision-making.

DEVELOPMENT OF FAMILY, YOUTH, AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

- **SkillUp** – Established the SkillUp Unit, incorporating newly developed structured programmes under a single, cohesive service model that promotes independent living skills.
- **New PSPs** – Discussions on new Public Social Partnerships (PSPs), including new respite services for children and adults with disabilities, and a residential transitional service for persons with disabilities and mental health conditions.
- **Family Support Unit** – Dedicated initiatives were developed by the Family Support Unit (FSU) for individuals

adjusting to newly acquired disabilities and introduced affirming spaces for LGBTIQ+ persons with disabilities aimed at addressing intersectional vulnerabilities, promoting positive identity development, safety, and social inclusion.

INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS

- Joined the European Platform for Rehabilitation (EPR) as Full Members.
- Joined the European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD) Member Forum on Workforce Development.
- Initiation of EU-funded project Same Chance: This Vocational Education and Training (VET) project with partners from Malta, Portugal, and Ireland, aims to create employment opportunities for persons on the autism spectrum through research.

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ACCESSIBILITY

- **AAC assessments** – Collaboration with the Speech Language Centre to support Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) assessments through equipment and software loans from the Access to Communication & Technology Unit (ACTU), with further discussions on the development of a National AAC Pathway.
- **Diploma in Applied Linguistics for Maltese Sign Language** – Collaboration with the University of Malta (UOM) to launch a programme that will enable the first cohort of Deaf LSM teachers to obtain a formal teaching qualification.
- **Bejn il-Linji** – Launched the Agency's first podcast, a step forward in reaching out to the general public beyond the use of conventional media.
- **Great Communication Begins with Connection** – Launched the Agency's first intranet, serving as an online platform to facilitate and enhance internal communication across the Agency.

Services data

Services	Number of Service Users in 2024	Number of Service Users in 2025
Intake Service	763	735
Social Work Services	794	545
Independent Living Monitoring Service* ¹	440	Family Assistance Support Scheme: 226 Personal Budget Assistance Scheme: 347
Occupational Therapy Service	135	76
Family Support Unit:		
Support groups for parents of minors with disabilities	14	7
Fathers' workshop	6	6
Positive parenting courses	14	-
Super Sibs	29	12 attendees (summer programme) and 6 minors + 5 parents (Christmas edition)
One-to-one parent coaching sessions	41	-
Support group for mothers with intellectual support needs	-	6
Support group for persons with acquired disabilities	-	4
Teen Siblings Support Group	-	6
3-day live-in for teen siblings of children with disabilities	-	5
Youth Work Service	-	68
Sign Language Interpreting Service	55	60
Deaf & Hard of Hearing Service	-	7
Sonia Tanti Independent Living Centre	340	390
Access to Communication & Technology Unit	268	354
Supported Independent Living Service	52	50
Service Providers' Monitoring Team	527	210* ²
Transition Services	3	3
My Programme	99	83

Services	Number of Service Users in 2024	Number of Service Users in 2025
Sharing Lives	352	350
Day Services	450	460
Accessibility Unit:		
Blue Badge	3,733 (number of Blue Badge documents issued in 2024, including new and renewed documents)	4,017 (number of Blue Badge documents issued in 2025, including new and renewed documents)
EU Disability Card	4,686 (number of EU Disability Cards issued in 2024)	4,936 (number of EU Disability Cards issued in 2025)
People Assistance Schemes:		
Empowerment Scheme	1,354 (approved applications)	1,204 (approved applications)
Vehicle Road License Exemption Scheme	896 (approved applications)	870 (approved applications)
Vehicle Registration Tax Exemption Scheme	152 (approved applications)	151 (approved applications)
Drive from Wheelchair Vehicle Grant	2 (approved applications)	1 (approved application)
Grant on Modified, Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles	16 (approved applications)	32 (approved applications)
SkillUp		
Self-Skills Programme	-	7
Skills4Life Programme	-	3
Way to Work Programme	15	4* ³
Helpline	11,414 tickets opened	Over 22,000 tickets opened* ⁴
Professional Advisory & Prevention Team	19 (service users who attended one-to-one sessions on sexuality and relationship education)	11 (service users who attended one-to-one sessions on sexuality and relationship education) 33 service users participated in focus groups contributing to the National Health Strategy 509 employees trained in NAPPI

Table 1: Number of service users who benefitted from Support services in 2025

*¹ In 2025 as part of the Personal Assistance Reform this Service was split into two, namely Family Assistance Support Scheme and Personal Budget Assistance Scheme.

*² 2025 data show the number of residential placements covered by PSP agreements. 2024 data also include day and respite placements covered by PSPs.

*³ In 2025, Way to Work Programme only had one cohort during the second half of the year.

*⁴ The number of calls registered in 2025 reflects both calls received on the Helpline and on the Agency's generic landline since there was a system integration in 2025.

Awards 2025

INTERNATIONAL AWARDS AND SHORTLISTINGS

1. Oliver Scicluna, CEO of Aġenzija Support, was awarded the **Leadership in Social Services Award** by the European Social Network (ESN) at the European Social Services Awards 2025.
2. The Adaptive Driving Clinic within the Sonia Tanti Independent Living Centre was shortlisted for the **Disability & Accessibility in Social Services Award** by the ESN at the European Social Services Awards 2025.
3. Way to Work Programme was recognised as second runner-up in the **EPALE – Adult Learning in Malta Best Non-Formal and Community Learning for Adults Award**. This programme focuses on tailored education to empower adults with disability to develop new skills, gain independence, and lead fulfilling lives.

INTERNAL AWARDS

In line with the Agency's mission to enhance employees' engagement and motivation, a staff recognition initiative was launched, recognising employees or teams who perform their duties with outstanding dedication in line with the ethos of the Agency.

The award-winning employees for this award during 2025 were:

- Anthea Sammut – Coordinator, SkillUp Unit
- Kimberlene Micallef – Senior Support Worker, Sonia Tanti Independent Living Centre
- Maria Lisa Mangion Abdilla – Senior Executive II, Supported Independent Living
- Maria Psaila – Executive IV, Finance & Procurement Department
- Mariella Zammit – Executive II, Administration Team



Map of Support premises



Figure 1: Support premises locations, 2025

Client Multi-Disciplinary Support



Intake Service

The Intake Service serves as the primary point of access to Aġenzija Sapport, providing the first structured contact for individuals, families, and professionals seeking support. The service functions as more than an administrative gateway, offering a responsive and person-centred approach that prioritises clarity, professionalism, and timely guidance from the outset.

Through early identification of presenting needs, appropriate service matching, and initial support in situations of urgency or distress, the Intake Team plays a central role in ensuring that referrals are managed efficiently and that service users enter the Agency's support system with clear direction and continuity of care.

SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY–DECEMBER 2025

- 735 total cases managed
- 634 enquiries resolved
- 101 sustained active cases
- 239 internal referrals to other Sapport specialised services

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

- 1. Strengthening the “Front Door” to Aġenzija Sapport**
The Intake Team further consolidated its role as the primary



entry point to Aġenzija Sapport, ensuring that individuals, families, and professionals received timely, accurate, and supportive responses from first contact. The function continued to evolve beyond administrative processing, providing clarity, reassurance, and direction at the earliest stage of engagement.

2. High-Volume Case Management with Strong Resolution Rates

During 2025, the team managed a substantial caseload while maintaining efficiency and consistency. A total of 735 cases were handled, of which 634 were successfully closed at the intake stage through immediate advice, guidance, or redirection. A further 101 cases were carried forward into 2026 for follow-up or continued coordination. These outcomes demonstrate a strong capacity to resolve the majority of enquiries at source, reducing demand on downstream services.

3. Effective Management of Crisis and High-Stress Enquiries

The Intake Team played a key role in initial crisis response by providing immediate emotional support, facilitating de-escalation, and delivering clear information during periods of distress. This early intervention supported the stabilisation of situations prior to referral to specialised services, reinforcing the Intake function as a protective and responsive gateway.

The Intake Team plays a central role in ensuring that referrals are managed efficiently and that service users enter the Agency's support system with clear direction and continuity of care.

WAY FORWARD

Looking toward the coming year, the Intake Team will continue to evolve through the refinement of assessment tools aimed at identifying needs with greater precision, while remaining accessible and user-friendly. Alongside this, the service will further strengthen coordination with internal services and external stakeholders to support clearer referral pathways and shared understanding at the earliest point of contact.

This integrated approach will ensure that, as the Agency's services continue to expand, the intake gateway remains an efficient, collaborative, and accessible route to appropriate support.

Testimonial

"When I first contacted Ağenzija Sapport and got in contact with an Intake professional, I was at my lowest. My husband was deteriorating every day, and this was leaving an impact on me. We needed the help of a carer 24 hours per day, and this was a huge financial problem for us. However, your compassionate approach and professionalism made this terrible period more bearable!"

I can never thank you enough for your service and support as well as Ağenzija Sapport whose name is really appropriate for this agency, since the support given to people and families like ours is beyond any words can describe. Keep it up and God bless you all."

Relative of service user

Social Work Services

The Social Work Services stand as a core pillar of Agenzija Support, providing specialised, evidence-based support across the entire developmental spectrum of the Agency's service users. Grounded in professional practice and safeguarding principles, the service plays a central role in promoting wellbeing, inclusion, and continuity of care throughout the life course.

The services are organised into three dedicated sub-teams providing a lifelong continuity of care, allowing for smooth transitions as needs evolve. These are:

- **Children's Team** – addressing the critical early years through a strong focus on safeguarding developmental support, and early intervention, in close collaboration with families, schools, and other professionals;
- **Young Adults' Team** – supporting service users aged 18 to 35 years to build independence, strengthen life skills, and actively participate within their communities;
- **Adults' Team** – providing ongoing psychosocial and mental health support for older service users, while reinforcing informal support and community networks.



SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY–DECEMBER 2025

- 545 active cases dealt with by the Social Work Team including:
 - Children's Team worked with 186 cases
 - Young Adults' Team worked with 151 cases
 - Adults' Team worked with 208 cases
- 315 formal case reviews

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Responding to Increasing Case Complexity Through Coordinated Practice

During 2025, the Social Work Services sustained effective service delivery in the face of a marked increase in case complexity. Social Workers supported service users experiencing intersecting challenges, including mental health concerns, family breakdown, and heightened social vulnerability. These demands were addressed through sustained inter-agency coordination with educational institutions, health services, and safeguarding authorities, ensuring continuity of care and timely intervention despite escalating needs.

2. Nomination for Social Work Service of the Year

In 2025, the Aġenzija Support Social Work Team was officially nominated for the Social Work Service of the Year by the Maltese Association of Social Workers (MASW) at the MASW Social Work Awards 2025. This national nomination recognised the team's professional excellence, impact on service users, and contribution to the social work profession in Malta.



WAY FORWARD

In 2026, strengthening proactive early intervention will be the primary focus, aiming to support families before challenges reach a crisis point. This will be complemented by continued efforts to foster a culture of self-advocacy and resilience, empowering every service user to thrive in an inclusive and supportive society.

Testimonial

"In recent months, I have been supported by a Social Worker while caring for my young son, who is diagnosed with autism. When we first received support, we were facing severe financial hardship and the real risk of losing our home. Our migratory status made it difficult to access services, and at that time I was managing everything on my own.

Working together with the Social Worker, I began taking small but important steps to put a care plan in place. As a survivor of domestic violence, my priority has always been to provide my son with a safe and nurturing environment where his needs are understood and his potential can grow.

With ongoing support, our situation has started to stabilise. Although there is still a journey ahead, I no longer feel alone. This experience has shown me that social work is not just about services, but about partnership, compassion, and hope for a better future."

Parent of child with a disability

Family Assistance Support Scheme

The Family Assistance Support Scheme, emerging from its previous identity within the Independent Community Living (ICL) Team, serves as a vital pillar in the lives of households raising children and young persons with disabilities. The service's mission is built on a family-centred philosophy: providing the financial and structural support necessary for families to employ assistants who facilitate day-to-day care, community participation, and developmental milestones.

By focusing on minors under the age of 16, this service acts as the essential bridge in Aġenzija Sapport's continuum of care, ensuring that the seeds of autonomy are sown early.

SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY-DECEMBER 2025

- 226 families were supported by the Family Assistance Support Team (FAST)
- This includes 53 new beneficiaries

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Service Growth and Sustained Quality of Support

The year was characterised by significant growth,



reflecting the increasing demand for and value of the scheme. A high number of new families were successfully onboarded while continuity and quality of support for existing beneficiaries were maintained. This balance reinforced the scheme's role as a reliable and responsive element within the Agency's continuum of care.

2. Holistic Impact on Children and Family Wellbeing

The support provided through FAST extends beyond basic care. It contributes to children's participation in community, educational, and social activities. Families utilised the scheme to facilitate engagement in school-related activities, non-therapeutic behavioural support, and the development of social communication skills. Feedback from parents consistently highlighted improvements in emotional stability, confidence, and overall family dynamics, underscoring the scheme's broader developmental impact.

3. Managing Transition and Continuity During Change

The transition from the former ICL structure to a dedicated FAST framework required careful planning and sustained communication with families. Despite increased demand placing pressure on onboarding capacity, procedures were refined to minimise waiting times and prioritise continuity of care, particularly for beneficiaries approaching the age of transition. These efforts ensured stability during a critical life stage and maintained the quality and effectiveness of handovers to the Personal Budget Assistance Team (PBAT).

By focusing on minors under the age of 16, this service acts as the essential bridge in Agenzija Sapport's continuum of care, ensuring that the seeds of autonomy are sown early.

WAY FORWARD

The coming year will focus on further professionalising the transition between childhood and adult support, with particular emphasis on earlier and more structured planning for minors approaching the age of 16 to ensure a smooth transition to the Personal Budget Assistance Scheme.

Continued efforts will be directed towards strengthening operational agility by streamlining onboarding processes, reducing waiting times, and ensuring timely access to support for families. In parallel, more regular and meaningful engagement with families will be prioritised to monitor outcomes and ensure that subsidies translate into tangible developmental progress. This will be complemented by the development of clear, easy-to-read guidance materials to support families in navigating their roles as employers and advocates, reinforcing preparedness for inclusive and independent living.

Testimonial

"As parents of an autistic child, caring for our child's daily needs while managing family life was becoming increasingly challenging. Through FAST, we were supported to understand our child's needs and how a personal assistant could help our family.

Having a personal assistant in place has made a real difference. Our child now receives appropriate support at home and in the community, and we feel more confident and supported as parents. FAST has helped our family maintain stability and ensure our child can thrive in a familiar and safe environment."

Parents of child with a disability

Personal Budget Assistance Scheme

The Personal Budget Assistance Scheme, formerly known as the Independent Community Living Service, represents more than just a department; it is a catalyst for autonomy and dignity. Its work is anchored in the UNCRPD Article 19, ensuring that every person with a disability has the right to live independently and be included in the community.

By aligning the PBATs operations with the Agency's vision and the National Disability Strategy, the service has shifted the focus toward a rights-based service provision that prioritises the individual over the process.

SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY-DECEMBER 2025

- 347 service users, including 68 referrals

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Strategic Evolution and the Personal Assistance Act

The year marked a significant strategic realignment in preparation for the forthcoming Personal Assistance Act. This reorganisation extended beyond administrative



restructuring, establishing a more sustainable and responsive operational model aligned with future legislative requirements. Assessment pathways were streamlined and internal roles clarified, strengthening the team's capacity to respond effectively to evolving beneficiary needs.

In parallel, the team played an active role in shaping the new legislative framework. Practical and operational insights were contributed during the public consultation process, supporting the development of person-centred provisions and transparent eligibility criteria. Information sessions were also held to further support informed participation by beneficiaries and guardians, reinforcing understanding and engagement with the national reform process.

2. Strengthening Service Reach and Accessibility

Targeted efforts to reduce waiting times and improve accessibility resulted in a measurable expansion of service reach. Improved scheduling practices and more efficient transitions enabled the team to respond more promptly to demand, supporting timely access to personal assistance and strengthening overall service responsiveness.

3. Advancing Equity Through Co-Created Innovation

A key achievement was the launch of the new Co-Created Assessment Framework. This tool was developed in direct collaboration with service users. Grounded in lived experience, the framework introduced greater clarity, consistency, and fairness in determining support levels. Through piloting and refinement, the tool was embedded as a robust mechanism for equitable support allocation, reinforcing transparency and trust within the assessment process.

4. International Collaboration and Best Practice

The team's engagement extended beyond national boundaries through participation in international networks focused on personal assistance reform. These collaborations positioned Malta's reform journey within a broader European context, enabling the exchange of best practice while informing ongoing staff development and policy refinement within Aġenzija Sappurt.

The service has shifted the focus toward a rights-based service provision that prioritises the individual over the process.

WAY FORWARD

Looking ahead, the focus will centre on the full and effective implementation of the Personal Assistance Act. Priority will be given to aligning internal workflows with the new legislative framework, while strengthening communication through accessible and easy-to-read information to support informed engagement by beneficiaries and their support networks.

In parallel, the service will progress towards the development of a comprehensive Personal Budget System. This will involve exploring digital budgeting solutions and administrative tools designed to enhance transparency, flexibility, and individual control, further reinforcing a person-centred and rights-based approach to independent living.

Testimonial

"Living with a physical disability, I always wanted to remain independent and active within my community, but I needed the right support to make this possible. Through PBAT, I was guided to better understand my daily support needs and how a personal assistant could help me live the life I wanted.

The PBAT supported me throughout the entire process, helping me identify what assistance I required at home, in the community, and to continue working. They also assisted me in preparing and presenting my case clearly and confidently in front of the board.

Today, I am living independently within the community with the support of a personal assistant. I receive help at home, can manage my daily routines more effectively, and continue working with greater security and independence. PBAT has empowered me to take control of my support and make choices that respect my abilities, goals, and dignity."

Service user

Occupational Therapy Service

The Occupational Therapy Service at Aġenzija Support offers community-based interventions for persons with disabilities between the ages of 16 and 60 years, focusing on functional goals that promote independence in self-care, productivity, and community participation. Referrals are triaged using a clinical urgency and complexity scale to ensure equitable caseload allocation.

SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY–DECEMBER 2025

- 63 referrals received by the Occupational Therapy Service
- 76 persons with disabilities benefitted from the service

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Collaborations and Consultations

Occupational Therapists supported several internal and external initiatives, including assessments for Dar Bjorn, adaptive driving assessments, participation in Agency boards, and contribution to multiple internal projects such as refurbishment of supported independent living units. The team also provided specialised consultancy to WasteServ on the refurbishment of the Romeo Romano Garden in Santa Venera.



2. Path2Independence Project

This pilot project involving two service users was held in collaboration with the Social Work, Youth Work, FSU, and Transition Service teams. This was an opportunity for service users to experience living by themselves for a few days without their guardians, giving them the space to build life skills, develop independence, and experience shared living in a supported environment.

3. Nominations

Two Occupational Therapists, Michelle Borg and Nicole Attard, were nominated for the Excellence in Practice Award and the Rising Star Award respectively, at the Malta Association of Occupational Therapists Awards, recognising their contribution to professional excellence.



Referrals are triaged using a clinical urgency and complexity scale to ensure equitable caseload allocation.

WAY FORWARD

The main target for 2026 by the Occupational Therapy Team is to extend the Path2Independence project to reach all services within the Client Multi-Disciplinary Services directorate, ensuring wider access to supported independent living opportunities.

Testimonials

“As a Leader, I have witnessed the collaborative work between our Supported Independent Living Services and the Occupational Therapist to be of a consistently high professional standard. This cooperation has ensured that therapeutic recommendations are seamlessly integrated into daily residential practice, supporting a truly person-centred model of care. Our assigned Occupational Therapist has provided comprehensive, evidence-based assessments and practical strategies aligned with residents’ needs and goals. This collaborative approach has contributed to improved functional independence and participation in meaningful activities, enhanced service quality, and promoted positive outcomes for persons with disabilities.”

Elaine Vassallo Pavia,
Supported Independent Living Services Leader

“These monthly visits have helped my daughter gain more independence. Each session focused on developing one task, with goals planned for the following month. Ann-Marie practised activities such as shopping, walking to work and singing lessons, using taxi services, and preparing lunch. Tasks were practised during the month and later assessed by the Occupational Therapist, sometimes requiring more than one session. These sessions helped my daughter learn new skills and choose her own goals. The Occupational Therapist uses a person-centred approach, values my daughter’s ideas, and supports her expression. We are very thankful for this opportunity to develop her self-help skills.”

Sarah Buckle, parent of a service user

Family Support Unit

The Family Support Unit is a cornerstone of Agenzija Support, grounded in the belief that resilient families are the foundation of independent living. By investing in emotional resilience and skills development, the Unit empowers families to move beyond crisis management toward a future of stability and autonomy, in line with the principles of the UNCRPD Articles 19 and 23.



SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY–DECEMBER 2025

Workshop/Support Group	Number of Participants
Support Group for Mothers with Intellectual Support Needs	6
Support Group for Parents of Children with Disabilities	7
Support Group for Persons with Acquired Disabilities	4
Workshops for Fathers of Children with Disabilities	6
Super Sibs – Summer Programme	12
Super Sibs – Christmas Edition	6 minor participants and 5 parents
Teen Siblings Support Group	6
3-Day Live-In for Teen Siblings of Children with Disabilities	5

Table 2: Number of participants in workshops and support groups held by the Family Support Unit, January–December 2025

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Strengthening Family Capacity Through Responsive Programmes

Throughout the year, the FSU delivered a wide range of structured workshops and peer-led sessions designed to strengthen family resilience and practical coping skills. These interventions remained dynamic and responsive, evolving in line with referrals to Social Work Services and direct feedback from families. Programme focus areas included parenting and caregiver resilience, sibling psychoeducation, life skills and independent living, and mental health awareness, collectively reinforcing the informal support networks that underpin sustainable independent living.

2. Embedding a Capacity-Building and Early Intervention Approach

During 2025, the Unit consolidated its shift from traditional support provision towards a capacity-building model centred on early intervention and inclusive practice. By prioritising skills development, emotional resilience, and preventative support, the FSU strengthened families' ability to navigate challenges proactively, reducing reliance on crisis-driven interventions and supporting long-term stability and autonomy.

3. Addressing Service Gaps Through Inclusive and Intersectional Initiatives

A significant advancement was achieved through the identification and targeted response to previously unmet support needs. Dedicated initiatives were developed for individuals adjusting to newly acquired disabilities, with a focus on preserving identity, dignity, and psychological readiness for community-based living. In parallel, the introduction of affirming spaces for LGBTIQ+ persons with disabilities addressed intersectional vulnerabilities, promoting positive identity development, safety, and social inclusion.

WAY FORWARD

Looking ahead, the FSU's focus remains on needs-led evolution. Particular attention will be given to strengthening support for adult siblings as family dynamics shift over time, alongside the development of Adolescent Identity Workshops to help young people navigate the complexities of autonomy and self-expression. In parallel, the Unit will further embed evidence-informed practice, ensuring that group-based interventions are regularly reviewed against meaningful outcomes for families and remain responsive to real-world needs.



Youth Work Service

The interventions by the Youth Work Service are built on the belief that community involvement is the key to confidence. Environments are created to enable young people to find a sense of belonging and the freedom to shape their own social networks. By adopting a co-production approach, youths are not just participants, they are the architects of their own programmes.



SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY-DECEMBER 2025

- 68 youths benefitted from Youth Work Service in 2025.

Youth Work Service activity distribution included: Social and recreational initiatives, skill-based activities, peer engagement, and voluntary work.

A variety of interventions and engagement opportunities were successfully implemented.

Type of Session	Number of Sessions
10-week programmes	40
Collaborations with external entities	5
One-off activities	14
Youth Hubs	20

Table 3: Sessions held by the Youth Work Team, January-December 2025

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Establishing a Youth Work Model Centred on Active Citizenship

The establishment of the Youth Work Team marked a significant shift in how Ağenzija Sapport engages with young persons with disabilities. The service moved beyond traditional support models to promote active citizenship, identity development, and co-production, positioning young people as active participants within their communities rather than passive recipients of support.

2. Creating an Inclusive Community-Based Youth Hub for Engagement

A major achievement was the creation of a centrally located Youth Hub, which emerged as a recognised and accessible space for creativity, peer interaction, and youth-led activity. In parallel, youth work activities expanded beyond specialised settings into mainstream community spaces, increasing visibility, fostering inclusion, and strengthening young people's sense of belonging within their local environments.

3. Embedding Youth Voice and Co-Production in Service Delivery

Youth participation was embedded as a core practice, with young people increasingly shaping and evaluating the activities they engage in. This approach strengthened autonomy, ensured relevance, and reinforced a genuinely person-centred model of youth engagement. The successful integration of youth work expertise within the wider Agency framework further supported consistency, collaboration, and sustainability of this model.

WAY FORWARD

Building on the foundations established, the Youth Work Service enters the coming year with a clear focus on scaling participation, visibility, and youth-led leadership. New initiatives such as the LEGO® Club, will use creative and collaborative play to strengthen social connection, teamwork, and problem-solving, while the Youth Awards will provide a platform where young people take ownership as planners, presenters, and storytellers, recognising the impact they create in their own lives and communities.

Alongside these developments, the service will continue to deepen strategic partnerships with local councils, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), and national youth entities, ensuring that youth engagement remains embedded within mainstream community life and driven by empowerment, inclusion, and active citizenship.



Sign Language Interpreting Service

Agenzija Sapport provides Sign Language Interpreting between Maltese Sign Language and spoken Maltese and English, ensuring accessible communication for Deaf persons in line with the UNCRPD. Interpreting is offered across key life domains including education, employment, health, legal, social and leisure settings, promoting equal participation in the community.



SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY–DECEMBER 2025

- 60 service users made use of the service
- 3,073 hours of interpreting delivered an increase of over 800 hours from 2024
- 1,422 appointments attended by the interpreters

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Collaboration with the University of Malta – Diploma for LSM Teachers

A key development in 2025 was the collaboration with the UOM to launch a Diploma for LSM teachers. The programme will enable the first cohort of Deaf LSM teachers to obtain a formal teaching qualification.

The Sign Language Interpreting Team is providing interpreting services during this course to facilitate accessible communication to a group of 14 Deaf students.



WAY FORWARD

In 2026, the service will focus on strengthening school coverage by reviewing and, where possible, expanding interpreting timetables to increase continuity of access for students. The team will also develop further sight-translation and remote interpreting to meet growing demand and widen accessibility, particularly for training, higher education, and international opportunities.

Co-production will remain a priority through structured feedback mechanisms such as Service Users' Day, continued collaboration with Deaf & Hard of Hearing Unit, and building on the UOM partnership to sustain and expand the pipeline of qualified Deaf LSM teachers.

2. Growth in Interpreting Modalities

Demand continued to diversify beyond one-to-one in-person interpreting, with increased requests for sight-translation (text to LSM and vice versa) and remote interpreting via video call-ins. These were used extensively for both local and international conferences and projects.

3. Professional Practice and Co-Production

Co-production was strengthened through the annual Service Users' Feedback Day and close collaboration with the Deaf & Hard of Hearing Unit. Activities included Deaf-led summer sessions, awareness initiatives, and educational outings for children and young people. These collaborations ensured that Deaf service users directly participated in and contributed towards the service development, ensuring that Deaf-led approaches remained central to service design.



Deaf & Hard of Hearing Service

The Deaf & Hard of Hearing Service continued to strengthen its foundations, with a clear emphasis on building meaningful engagement with stakeholders and promoting greater awareness and understanding of deafness and hearing loss across sectors. The service remained centred on advancing accessibility, fostering informed collaboration, and supporting environments that better reflect the communication needs and rights of Deaf and hard of hearing individuals.

SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY-DECEMBER 2025

- 7 participants attended the Summer Club for young Deaf service users
- 4 awareness sessions were organised for schools and workplaces

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Stakeholder Collaboration and Service Development

Prioritisation of outreach to key stakeholders – Kunsill tal-Lingwa tas-Sinjali Maltija (KLSM), Gozo Deaf Association, Deaf People Association Malta, the Foundation for Information Technology Accessibility,



and the Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD) – to align with national LSM structures and embed co-production, ensuring that initiatives remained community-led and rights-based.

2. Awareness, Training, and Education

Four awareness sessions were organised for schools and workplaces in collaboration with the Sign Language Interpreting Service, particularly in settings where Deaf persons are present or employed. These sessions covered Deaf Culture Awareness and Basic Sign Language, supporting better communication, understanding, and integration of Deaf people in educational and work environments. The Unit also launched the Agency's first in-house programme, with further sessions planned in 2026 to sustain learning and uptake.

3. LSM Teaching, Community Activities, and Outreach

Introduced family-centred LSM teaching for new young learners and their families, including home visits to improve access.

A Summer Club for two groups of young Deaf service users was also coordinated: one for children aged 10 years and over

(reaching four students), and another for children under 10 years (reaching three students). Sessions aimed to promote socialisation, language exposure, and peer interaction.

4. Marketing, Advocacy, and Technology

Public visibility and rights advocacy were strengthened through a Human Library event on the International Day of Sign Languages and Week of the Deaf activities organised in collaboration with KLSM. This alongside ongoing collaboration with FITA on assistive technology and research efforts to enhance LSM resources for Deaf persons into 2026, with discussions focusing on tools that enhance access to information and communication.

The service remained centred on advancing accessibility, fostering informed collaboration, and supporting environments that better reflect the communication needs and rights of Deaf and hard of hearing individuals.

WAY FORWARD

In 2026, the service will scale Deaf Awareness and Basic LSM training across additional schools and workplaces, embed regular in-house cycles for Agency employees, and extend family-centred LSM teaching to improve early language exposure, while developing community-led LSM learning resources aligned with Malta's official recognition of LSM. These priorities will be delivered through co-production with Deaf stakeholders and tracked through participation uptake and user feedback.



Sonia Tanti Independent Living Centre

The Sonia Tanti Independent Living Centre (STILC) is the national centre delivering specialised, person-centred services that promote independent living, inclusion, and quality of life for persons with disabilities through the use of mobility equipment, adaptive driving, and assistive devices.



SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY–DECEMBER 2025

- 390 individual service users benefitted from the various services provided by STILC

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Wheelchair and Seating

In 2025, STILC delivered more than 202 wheelchair and seating assessments and reviews, ensuring that service users received personalised interventions aligned with their functional, medical, and lifestyle requirements.

2. Custom Contoured Seating Solutions

STILC maintained its collaboration with Ottobock Plc, enabling the Centre to offer an expanded range of specialised solutions. In 2025, this partnership was further strengthened with the addition of four extra clinic days, increasing the total to 16 annual clinic days to meet rising demand. Ongoing engagement with Ottobock clinical staff supported effective information sharing and high-quality service delivery. During 2025, 73 face-to-face appointments and 9 online consultations were provided.

Additionally, in 2025, Aġenzija Sapport launched a new initiative to support families facing financial difficulties. The Agency now pays upfront the sums promised by the Malta Community Chest Fund on behalf of service users, which is then reimbursed to Aġenzija Sapport upon delivery of the wheelchair system. This measure reduces financial barriers and promotes equitable access.

3. Adaptive Driving Programme

In 2025, the Adaptive Driving Assessment Clinic conducted 166 appointments, using the Centre's driving simulator to assess service users' driving ability, safety, and suitability for adapted vehicles. Concurrently, the Adaptive Driving Motoring School delivered 443 driving lessons using modified vehicles, supporting service users in developing the skills, confidence, and competence needed for independent driving. Additionally, the team also carried out 71 vehicle inspections to ensure compliance with safety and adaptation standards.

4. European Social Services Awards 2025

The STILC Driving Clinic was nominated and shortlisted for the Disability and Accessibility in Social Services Award as part of the European Social Services Awards held by ESN.

In 2025, STILC delivered more than 202 wheelchair and seating assessments and reviews, ensuring that service users received personalised interventions aligned with their functional, medical, and lifestyle requirements.

WAY FORWARD

In the coming year, the service will continue investing in technology to enhance efficiency and improve the overall service experience. Efforts will also focus on expanding the capacity for custom-contoured seating assessments, exploring new methods and tools that support timely, high-quality evaluations.

Testimonial

"When my condition deteriorated, I urgently required a specialised wheelchair system. Despite support from the Malta Community Chest Fund, I was unable to cover the upfront cost. Through the new financial support scheme, Aġenzija Sapport advanced the pledged amount on my behalf, enabling my wheelchair to be ordered without delay. Today, I am safer, more independent, and able to engage more fully in family and community life, thanks to this timely support".

Service user



Access to Communication & Technology Unit

The Access to Communication & Technology Unit is the national unit that offers both Augmentative and Alternative Communication and Electronic Assistive Technology services. The aims of these services are to provide clinical assessment, recommendations, support initial implementation, as well as technical and training support for communication aids.



ACTU SERVICES ARE PROVIDED TO PERSONS WITH

- complex communication needs
- physical and/or sensory difficulties
- speech, language, and communication needs
- learning disabilities

SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY–DECEMBER 2025

- 354 service users supported
- 1,139 appointments were carried out
- 10% appointment cancellation rate, down from 18% in the previous year
- 100 training participants



WAY FORWARD

The focus of the Access to Communication & Technology Unit in 2026 will be to further reduce waiting times for individuals referred to the service through continuous service enhancement, streamlining of internal processes and restructuring of its operations.

The online equipment library will also be ready for live deployment in the first quarter of 2026, making the unit's equipment more accessible for therapists within the Speech Language Centre.

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Investment in Equipment and Digital Infrastructure

Further investment in equipment to expand the ACTU inventory, led to the preparation of an online equipment library, which will serve both as a reference resource and a loan system for therapists. The system was piloted in the last quarter of 2025.

2. Strengthened Partnership with Liberator

Continued partnership with Liberator, a leading international supplier of AAC solutions. This partnership aims to combine the expertise and resources of both organisations to improve delivery of AAC assessments and, as a result, reduce waiting times for service users. Joint assessment weeks were organised in May and October 2025, whereby consultants from Liberator came to Malta to support in the provision of AAC assessments to identified clients.

3. Formal Collaboration with the Speech Language Centre

A Service Level Agreement was signed to support AAC assessments through equipment and software loans to the Speech Language Centre. Further discussions are underway to build a National AAC Pathway.



Further investment in equipment to expand the ACTU inventory, led to the preparation of an online equipment library, which will serve both as a reference resource and a loan system for therapists.

Supported Independent Living



Supported Independent Living Service

The Supported Independent Living (SIL) Service enables persons with disabilities to live independently in homes located within their local communities. Its approach is grounded in person-centred planning and is designed to promote autonomy, inclusion, and self-determination. Central to its work is supporting individuals to self-advocate, take an active role in their communities, and make informed choices about their lives and future goals.

SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY-DECEMBER 2025

- 50 service users benefitted from SIL Service

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

Throughout 2025, the SIL Service focused on strengthening service user independence, participation in decision-making, and community inclusion. The team also invested in staff development and refined operational systems to enhance quality, consistency, and efficiency.



The key achievements include:

1. Digitalisation Processes

SIL implemented key digitalisation initiatives, including the introduction of the E-Mar system for medication administration recording, replacing paper-based methods. This involved system selection, supplier meetings, staff training, drafting Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), and piloting the system. Additionally, the logbook used within residences was digitalised and is currently being piloted. An Easy-to-Read digital complaint form was also created for service users.

2. Introduction of Emergency Buttons

A Smart Emergency Button system was introduced, with support from the ICT Team, to enhance crisis response and front-line staff safety, particularly for frontliners supporting service users with behaviours of concern.

3. Service User Meetings

Four service user meetings were held throughout the year to discuss aspects of the service that affect their support. These meetings provided a platform to empower service users to share their opinions, covering topics such as staffing processes, positive risk-taking, independent living, and self-advocacy.



4. Involvement in Recruitment

Some service users actively participated in the recruitment process for new part-time Support Workers, demonstrating valuable insight into the needs of the service and contributing to selection decisions.

5. Educational Advancement and Employment

One service user successfully completed their first year at MCAST, obtaining an Award in Office Skills, an important personal and academic milestone. A number of service users have also been supported in seeking employment, retaining their jobs, and transitioning between employment opportunities.

6. Travel Opportunities for Service Users

Several service users travelled abroad with support in planning and organising their trips in line with personal goals. Destinations included Sicily, Italy, and a cruise, offering meaningful opportunities for independence and enriched life experiences.

WAY FORWARD

In the coming year, the Supported Independent Living Service will continue advancing deinstitutionalisation by supporting individuals to access residential arrangements that reflect their individual needs, goals, and preferences through co-production and personalised support. This includes expanding opportunities for independent living arrangements, as well as improving services designed to support individuals with higher needs, including those who may exhibit behaviours of concern. The team's ongoing focus remains on empowering practices, the delivery of personalised support, community reintegration, and the development of co-produced services for persons with disabilities currently residing in group homes.

Building on existing digital initiatives, the service will explore the next phase of digitalisation, including the potential introduction of a digital rostering system to improve operational consistency.

Testimonial

"My name is Nevan Azzopardi, I am twenty years old and I live at Dar Warda. Dar Warda has helped me a lot to become more independent and to do many things on my own. I started dressing by myself; I started going to the Youth Hub; I started trying new things; I started attending MCAST. I also completed a course in Office Basic Skills and I am now doing a course in Hospitality. I would like to reach a level where I can live independently on my own."

Nevan Azzopardi, Dar Warda resident

Service Providers' Monitoring Team

The Service Providers' Monitoring Team (SPMT) is responsible for monitoring the implementation of PSP agreements between NGOs and the Ministry for Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector, in addition to business contracts between Aġenzija Sapport and private service providers. The team continues to monitor services within its remit, including residential homes, respite support, and day programmes, while offering ongoing support to ensure that service users and their families receive appropriate assistance and are able to fully benefit from the services delivered.

SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY–DECEMBER 2025

- 23 agreements are monitored by the SPMT, of which 19 relate to residential services (Table 4). The remaining agreements cover respite or day programme services for persons with disabilities living in the community.



MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

In 2025, the team strengthened its collaboration with NGOs, private service providers, and the Ministry to consolidate PSPs and support ongoing reforms aligned with best practices in the disability sector. A key focus remained the promotion of deinstitutionalisation and rights-based, person-centred approaches across services.

1. Service Monitoring, Assessments, and Quality Assurance

Work continued on reviewing the assessment tool used to determine support levels, alongside the development of a matching tool for future residential placements. Additional improvements included the introduction of an invoice-verification checklist and the implementation of a data-sharing service agreement to strengthen consistency, accuracy, and data protection practices.

PSP Agreements/Business Contracts	Service Provider	Number of Placements covered with PSPs and Business Contracts in 2025
Dar l-Arcipriet Degabriele	Fondazzjoni Nazareth	10
Dar Madre Tereza/Dar San Frangisk	Fondazzjoni Nazareth	10
Dar Nazareth	Fondazzjoni Nazareth	10
Dar il-Wens	Fondazzjoni Wens	24
Dar Merħba	Fondazzjoni Wens	16
Dar l-Abilità	Fondazzjoni Wens	4
Dar Arka	Fondazzjoni Arka	15
Dar il-Ġblew tal-Ħniena	Fondazzjoni Arka	5
Dar Madonna ta' Pinu	Fondazzjoni Arka	5
Akkwarell	Dar tal-Providenza	3
Dar Pirotta	Dar tal-Providenza	11
Shalom	Dar tal-Providenza	5
Żerniq	Dar tal-Providenza	4
Dar Bjorn – Żebbuġ	ALS Malta Foundation	30
Dar Bjorn – Qormi	ALS Malta Foundation	13
Dar Santa Rosa	HILA Homes Ltd.	19
Casa Apap Bologna	HILA Homes Ltd.	2 ¹
Dar Santa Anna	HILA Homes Ltd.	21
Casal Nuovo	HILA Homes Ltd.	3
Totals		210

Table 4: Residential services agreements and placements, January–December 2025

¹ Service users were relocated from Casa Apap Bologna to Dar Santa Anna, which opened in 2025.

2. PSP Development and System Improvements

SPMT initiated a procedural review of PSPs, with ongoing work to streamline PSP documentation in collaboration with the Ministry. This was also complemented by discussions on new PSPs, including a respite and transition service in Kirkop, respite services for minors in Dingli, and a residential transitional service for persons with disabilities and mental health conditions in Balluta. Respite capacity was expanded through additional placements within existing contracts, and updated respite guidelines were issued to better guide professionals and families. The Case Management System was also upgraded to improve data management and operational efficiency.

Furthermore, an additional five respite placements were incorporated into the HILA Homes Ltd. contract and two respite placements within the PSP of Arka Foundation to expand respite service provision.

3. Capacity Building and Team Development

New Monitoring Executives were recruited, and the introduction of a Senior Executive role improved internal coordination and oversight. Team members received contract-management, legal, and leadership training to strengthen competencies and support day-to-day responsibilities.

4. Stakeholder Engagement and Service User

Feedback

Work began on strengthening the service user feedback process. Discussions were launched to improve and strengthen the feedback system to ensure higher engagement and more meaningful input from persons with disabilities and families receiving services.

WAY FORWARD

In collaboration with the Ministry, the team will assist in launching new PSPs to broaden and strengthen service provision. Several PSPs are scheduled for renewal, during which the SPMT will contribute to refining their structure and alignment with evolving service expectations. Ongoing liaison with the Ministry will support PSP reform efforts, further embedding deinstitutionalisation and community-based service principles. Discussions on expanding and diversifying respite services in Malta and Gozo will also continue.

Work will also continue on reviewing the assessment tool used to determine support levels, alongside the development of a matching tool to guide appropriate placements when residential vacancies arise.

A key focus remained the promotion of deinstitutionalisation and rights-based, person-centred approaches across services.

Transition Service

The primary objective of the service is to reduce institutionalisation for persons both within existing services and in the wider community. The Transition Team facilitates access to independent living through a structured, person-centred model that balances autonomy with appropriate levels of support, targeted skill development, and opportunities for personal growth. Central to this approach is empowering persons with disabilities to build confidence, improve their skills and actively pursue independent living arrangements, whether individually or with others, in line with their assessed needs, preferences, and capacity.

SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY-DECEMBER 2025

- 3 service users were supported through transitional living programmes

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Referral Monitoring and Professional Liaison

The team formally assessed 12 referrals and maintained informal follow-through through regular professional



liaison and inter-service communication. Although these individuals were not onboarded, this approach allowed the team to track changes in circumstances, risk levels, and transition readiness, ensuring continuity of care while maintaining appropriate governance boundaries.

2. Co-Produced Refurbishment and Transition Support

One service user collaborated with the Agency's Maintenance Team on the refurbishment of her residence, enabling full co-production of her living environment. She received coordinated multidisciplinary support throughout a phased transition to independent living, guided by ongoing risk assessments, proportionate control measures, contingency planning, and enhanced support input. A positive risk-taking approach was adopted to support her independence, skill development, and autonomy while ensuring her wellbeing remained central.

The Transition Team facilitates access to independent living through a structured, person-centred model that balances autonomy with appropriate levels of support, targeted skill development, and opportunities for personal growth.

WAY FORWARD

In 2026, the Transition Team will focus on fully integrating all assessment documentation, skills portfolios, risk-management tools, and safeguarding processes into the case management system. All materials will undergo legal review to ensure compliance with legislative and organisational standards, while clearly outlining rights, responsibilities, and safeguarding obligations in a way that supports the autonomy of the individuals served.

As NGOs further expand models aligned with the Transition Team's remit, the team will also continue contributing specialist input within individual cases to support consistency of practice nationwide and strengthen the availability of sustainable, community-based alternatives to institutional care.

Future priorities also include continued engagement with the respective entities to expand access to suitable accommodation and the acquisition of additional properties to support structured transition and step-down periods.

Testimonial

"The transition team help me to learn how to do proper cleaning, buy groceries, cook new food, how to budget my money and how to apply for a new home. I am learning how to become more independent. They come with me for appointments. I am happy with the help from the Transition Team".

Service user

My Programme

My Programme is a unique and essential service designed to address a critical gap in the sector – that of supporting persons with disabilities who, beyond the challenges of their disability, face complex social circumstances and require skill development for independent living and community inclusion.

SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY-DECEMBER 2025

- 83 service users benefitted from My Programme

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Joint Support for Deinstitutionalisation

One service user received coordinated support from both the My Programme Team and the Transition Service to prepare for a move into a residential apartment as part of the deinstitutionalisation strategy. Skilled Support Workers, trained in trauma-informed practice, disability awareness, and related areas, provided an appropriate level of support for skill acquisition based on professional assessments. Joint evaluations and continuous liaison ensured a consistent approach. This pilot initiative enables the service to evaluate its effectiveness while upholding the principles of deinstitutionalisation in line with national strategies and the UNCRPD.

2. Digitalisation and Strengthened Operational Systems

The service introduced new digital systems to improve communication, accountability, and overall operational quality. Key developments included:



Online daily recordings, structured professional meetings, peer supervision, and post-incident reviews, improving professional coordination, and provided greater support to families receiving My Programme services; Introduction of an SOS emergency button to support front-line staff during critical situations, ensuring they feel safer and better supported, particularly when working alone.

3. Service Evolution and Strategic Piloting

Following the 2023 restructuring of the service, several service users transitioned from My Programme to the Independent Community Living Monitoring Service to better address their needs, resulting in a natural reduction in caseload over the past two years. In 2025, the service shifted focus towards exploring new service areas and piloting developments within My Programme to better understand its future direction, long-term relevance, and potential for expansion.

WAY FORWARD

With the Agency placing greater emphasis on programmes, My Programme will focus, though not exclusively, on minors and youths. Priority will be given to developing independent living skills, coping strategies, and adaptive abilities from an early stage, helping young persons with disabilities build the foundations for community inclusion, resilience, self-advocacy, and long-term autonomy. This approach aims to cultivate resilience, promote self-advocacy, and empower young individuals to progress confidently through their personal pathways.

Thus, in 2026, My Programme will strengthen its role within Ağenzija Sapport by working closely with the Transition Service to better prepare service users for independent living. This partnership will provide structured guidance, practical skill-building, and consistent support to persons with disabilities throughout their transition.

Priority will be given to developing independent living skills, coping strategies, and adaptive abilities from an early stage, helping young persons with disabilities build the foundations for community inclusion, resilience, self-advocacy, and long-term autonomy.

Testimonials

“Working with Ağenzija Sapport has been a transformative experience on both a professional and personal level. I have been able to build on my previous experiences and learn a lot from the experience of my colleagues, who have the utmost care for each other and most especially, for our service users. It has been an honour providing support and creating achievable goals to ensure the personal growth and success of service users. I look forward to further collaboration within the Agency and broadening the support we are able to give to people.”

Malcolm Bugeja, Individual Support Plan Executive

“Having worked within Ağenzija Support for the past 18 years, I have witnessed first-hand the positive and lasting impact that person-centred support can have on individuals and their communities. Working with the Agency has been a truly rewarding and enriching experience. Supporting service users to achieve personal goals, develop life skills, and gain confidence in their abilities has been both inspiring and fulfilling...This experience has strengthened my understanding of inclusive practices, teamwork, and the value of empathy in delivering quality support. I am proud to be part of a dedicated team that makes a meaningful and positive difference in people’s lives.”

Louise Ragusa, Support Worker

Sharing Lives

Sharing Lives is guided by the belief in people's potential, the principles of co-production, and inclusive community development. Since its launch in 2017, the service has expanded its remit to promote social inclusion for persons with disabilities through volunteer support, group activities, and educational programmes.



SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY–DECEMBER 2025

- 38 volunteers contributed to Sharing Lives, including 14 new volunteers
- 350 active members, with 36 new referrals
- 221 activities organised
- 20 active programmes delivered, including creativity sessions, community-building, environmental awareness, healthy living, cultural exchange, and leadership sessions
- 30 one-time social activities, including annual celebrations and community events
- Participation in 5 EU projects and partnerships

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Sharing Lives Consultative Committee

The establishment of the Sharing Lives Consultative Committee marked a significant step toward deeper empowerment within the service. Composed of elected members and volunteers, the committee promotes co-production, supports decision-making, and works closely with the Sharing Lives Team to plan events, shape activities, and enhance member participation.



2. Impact of EU Projects and International Partnerships

During 2025, Sharing Lives participated in five EU-funded projects and partnership exchanges that supported informal learning, leadership development, and intercultural experiences. The service hosted and took part in international exchanges, offered mobility opportunities to build leadership skills, and strengthened the foundation for the Consultative Committee. European Solidarity Corps (ESC) volunteers and an international student also contributed to inclusive projects aligned with Sharing Lives' values, fostering creativity, personal development, and meaningful connections between members and volunteers.

3. Co-Production Youth Space Project

An innovative collaboration between students from the Department of Architecture and Urban Design at the UOM and Sharing Lives members culminated in a proposed design for a youth space in Qrendi.

WAY FORWARD

In 2026, Sharing Lives will focus on fully establishing the Sharing Lives Consultative Committee and supporting its members throughout its development. Another priority will be strengthening procedures for one-to-one companionship, ensuring clearer guidance and improved support for both volunteers and members.

Testimonials

"My name is Rebecca and I am 28 years old. It's been a long time since I got into Sharing Lives. We did activities such as the crib, a day in Gozo and even volunteering. Nowadays, we meet every Friday and I will be looking forward to meet my friends. We are discussing about doing a project of cleaning the trash from beaches, parks etc. It is a very nice experience in Sharing Lives."

Rebecca Vella Incorvaja, member

"As an ESC volunteer with the Sharing Lives Team, I experienced inclusion as a daily practice built through relationships, shared time, and meaningful actions. Working alongside persons with disabilities, volunteers, and professionals taught me how the community grows when people are supported to participate to their own abilities and needs. I learned to adapt my communication, to listen carefully, and to recognise the importance of consistency, trust, and respect in social support. Through facilitating group activities, supporting individuals, and contributing to projects, I gained a deeper understanding of how autonomy and belonging can be strengthened together. This experience challenged me to reflect on my role within a community and on how responsibility, cooperation, and empathy shape inclusive spaces. Being part of Sharing Lives allowed me to learn through practice, to grow within a supportive team, and to witness how inclusive community life is built through intentional, everyday actions."

Carlotta Cottino, ESC volunteer

Customer Support, Schemes & Day Services



Day Services

Day Services provide safe and supportive spaces to persons with disabilities in which they can develop diverse skills through varied programmes, promote self-advocacy, and foster meaningful community inclusion.

SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY-DECEMBER 2025

- 460 service users benefitted from Day Services

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Service Reform

During 2025, the Day Services Management Team conducted an extensive review and evaluation of the service. This reform aims to:

- Address service gaps
- Modernise operational approaches
- Strengthen person-centred practices
- Ensure sustainability and responsiveness to sector demands

This reform also included the revision of the eligibility criteria for persons with disabilities wishing to attend Day Services. This was introduced to ensure that Day Services are accessed by individuals whose needs align with the service's scope and objectives, supporting fairness, sustainability, and more targeted support.



2. Modernisation of Centres

Modernisation remains a priority across several centres. A major milestone in 2025 was the acquisition of the Paola Day Centre premises. Through its modernisation and repurposing, the centre will:

- Expand service opportunities
- Enhance collaboration with other entities
- Reach more persons with disabilities

A sensory garden was also inaugurated within the footprint of the Day Centre in collaboration with the Agency's Projects Department and Project Green. The garden is open to both service users and the public, promoting accessibility, wellbeing, and inclusion.

3. New Budget Measures and Service Expansion

In line with ongoing reform, progress was made on two new budget measures aimed at expanding and diversifying Day Services provision.



These included the development of a new Day Centre for elderly persons with disabilities to support continuity of appropriate care for ageing service users, and the introduction of a new pilot service model consisting of an afternoon programme designed to widen access and create additional entry opportunities for persons with disabilities.

4. Special Olympics Malta Collaboration

Through ongoing collaboration with Special Olympics Malta:

- Over 80 athletes participate weekly in bocce training
- 20 athletes attend weekly swimming sessions at Tal-Qroqq
- Over 150 athletes engage in regular Motor Activity Training Programme (MATP) sessions within the centres
- Three athletes represented Day Services at the first international MATP meetup in Seixal, Portugal, marking a significant milestone in international participation and exchange

5. Strengthening Self-Advocacy

Throughout 2025, service users continued to actively contribute to Day Services through the Service User Council. The Council is now active across all 11 centres, ensuring that every service user has the opportunity to make their voice heard and participate meaningfully in decision-making processes.

6. Parents and Guardians Engagement

During 2025, Day Services organised its first dedicated meeting for parents and guardians of service users, providing an overview of the role of Day Centres, service delivery, upcoming initiatives, and shared responsibilities. This initiative strengthened communication, transparency, and collaboration between Day Services and families.

7. Service User Engagement and Inclusive Initiatives

During 2025, Day Services delivered a number of large-scale initiatives aimed at promoting inclusion, participation, and community visibility. Key events included:

- the Valentine's Day Gala involving all centres, initiated through the Service User Council;



- participation in national Carnival celebrations through a professionally choreographed dance and the creation of a Carnival float themed *This is Me*;
- inter-centre football tournament between teams representing various centres competed in a friendly yet competitive environment;
- talent shows by the Mtarfa, Mtarfa 2, and Sliema Day Centres, providing service users with the opportunity to showcase their abilities in music, dance, and drama, celebrating diversity, creativity, and confidence-building;
- the yearly Halloween event at Paola Day Centre, where the centre was transformed into a haunted house interactive experience, showcasing collaborative creativity between staff and service users while strengthening community engagement.

These initiatives provided service users with opportunities for creative expression, social interaction, and engagement with families, staff, and the wider community.



8. KreAzzjoni – Creativity and Enterprise

During 2025, KreAzzjoni remained a flagship initiative within Day Services, operating across multiple key periods at its Valletta space during Spring, Notte Bianca and Christmas periods, engaging over 80 service users from all centres, supported by skilled staff and artists.

The initiative maintained strong public visibility also through participation in national events, including:

- Public Service Expo
- Rabat Sacrum
- Villa Rundle (Gozo)
- Special Olympics Malta National Beach Games
- Nostalġija (Birzebbuga)
- Milied mal-Għaqdiet
- Natalis Notabilis
- Jum l-Inklużjoni u Sostenibbiltà
- National Conference organised by Aġenzija Support

Additionally, KreAzzjoni contributed to commissioned projects and awards including Premju Soċjetà Ġusta, private orders for wedding souvenirs, and cat shelters and public libraries commissioned by Local Councils.

HSBC also hosted KreAzzjoni at its premises, providing employees with the opportunity to meet service users and staff while supporting the initiative.

The launch of KreAzzjoni's Facebook page in collaboration with the Strategic Marketing & International Relations Department further supported its development as a social enterprise and strengthened community engagement.



WAY FORWARD

In 2026, Day Services will focus on consolidating the Day Services reform, embedding newly established service models, and strengthening consistency across all centres. A key priority will be the implementation of the Elderly Day Centre service, including the operationalisation of the new centre, refinement of service design, and alignment with existing service frameworks. These efforts will support quality, continuity, and responsiveness in meeting the evolving needs of service users.

These initiatives provided service users with opportunities for creative expression, social interaction, and engagement with families, staff, and the wider community.

Accessibility Unit

The Accessibility Unit forms part of Aġenzija Support's core applications-based services within the Customer Support & Schemes Department and is responsible for the administration of the EU Disability Card and the Blue Badge.

THE EU DISABILITY CARD

The EU Disability Card serves as an official recognition that the holder is a person with a disability. It was introduced in 2015 as a pilot initiative implemented across eight European Union Member States, including Malta.

SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY–DECEMBER 2025

- 4,936 EU Disability Cards issued: 4,623 new applications and 313 renewal applications
- 20,559 total number of EU Disability Card holders at the end of 2025

BLUE BADGE

The Blue Badge is a legal document designed to facilitate community access for persons with disabilities by authorising the vehicle in which they are travelling to be parked in designated communal parking bays reserved for Blue Badge holders.

The Accessibility Unit continued to work in close collaboration with national stakeholders, including CRPD's Enforcement Unit, particularly in relation to enforcement and efforts aimed



at curbing abuse and misuse of the Blue Badge. The Unit also continued its collaboration with Transport Malta in connection with Personalised Reserved Parking applications, facilitating assessment services in line with eligibility criteria established by law.

SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY–DECEMBER 2025

- 5,443 total applications received: 2,618 applications for new Blue Badges and 2,825 applications for Blue Badge renewals
- 4,017 eligible applicants
- 13,208 total number of Blue Badge holders at the end of 2025

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Strengthening Digital Infrastructure for Accessibility Services

During the year, the Accessibility Unit advanced its digital systems to support more effective oversight of the EU Disability Card and Blue Badge schemes. Enhanced data capabilities enabled improved real-time insight into cardholders and

applications, while groundwork was outlined to align digital readiness with the forthcoming European Disability Card and European Parking Card Directive (EU) 2024/2841.

2. Strengthening Assessment and Renewal Processes

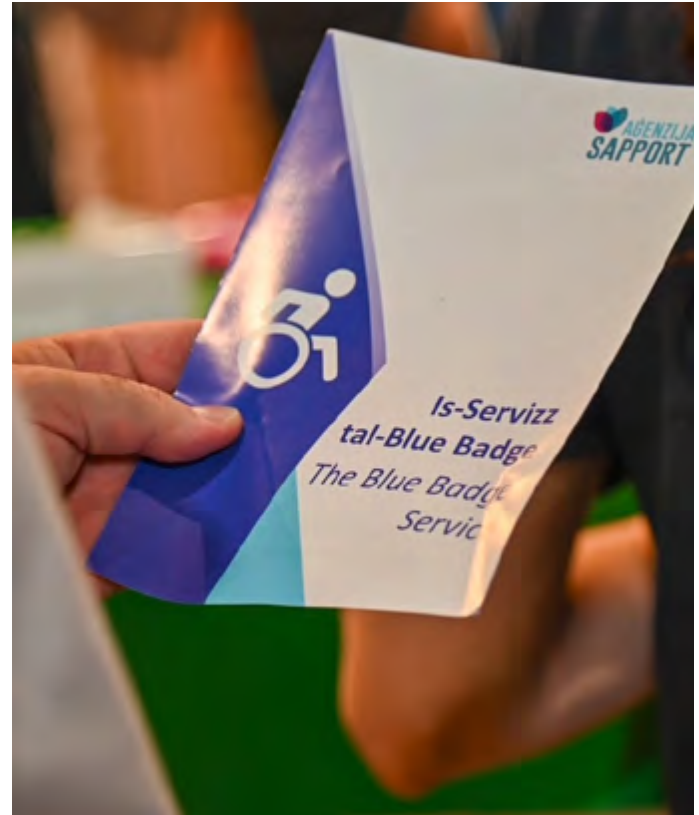
The Accessibility Unit consolidated assessment procedures for the EU Disability Card through the full implementation of the revised SOP, while also improving renewal timeliness through the introduction of proactive SMS notifications to Blue Badge holders.

3. Formalising National Partnerships

Inter-agency collaboration was strengthened through formal agreements with the CRPD on Blue Badge procedures and with Transport Malta on medical assessments for Personalised Reserved Parking, supporting clearer coordination and standardisation.

4. European Engagement

The Unit actively participated in European Commission expert groups on the European Disability Card and European Parking Card Directive (EU) 2024/2841, alongside engagement with national stakeholders at this planning stage.



The Accessibility Unit continued to work in close collaboration with national stakeholders, including CRPD's Enforcement Unit, particularly in relation to enforcement and efforts aimed at curbing abuse and misuse of the Blue Badge.

WAY FORWARD

The Accessibility Unit continues to work in line with its commitment to improving customer experience and digitising processes to enhance operational efficiency. As part of related efforts, a number of operational processes are planned to become fully digitalised. Application forms are also planned to be updated for the benefit of applicants and operations alike.

People Assistance Schemes

The People Assistance Schemes (PAS) Unit administers five core applications-based schemes aimed at supporting persons with disabilities and their families. These schemes are designed to promote independence, accessibility, and social inclusion while assisting with disability-related costs.

The schemes administered by PAS are:

EMPOWERMENT SCHEME

The Empowerment Scheme provides financial assistance to persons with disabilities to purchase equipment that supports independent living within their own home and community. In addition, the Empowerment Scheme provides a subsidy for individualised transport services to persons with disabilities who are unable to use public transport and require transport to attend employment, post-secondary education or regular sports training with a registered sports club or organisation. A Board composed of various professionals meets monthly to assess and evaluate applications received during the relevant period.

SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY–DECEMBER 2025

- 1,300 total applications received
- 1,204 approved applications: 889 applications for hearing aids, 76 applications for transport subsidy, and 239 applications for equipment



- €885,616 total funds claimed (*This figure may include funds approved in 2024 but availed of during 2025*)

VEHICLE ROAD LICENCE EXEMPTION SCHEME

In collaboration with the Ministry for Finance, applications for the Road Licence Exemption Scheme are submitted to Aženzija Support for processing and the relevant assessments. The scheme allows eligible persons with disabilities, or their parents/guardians, to benefit from a partial or full exemption from the annual road licence fee. Completed applications are forwarded to the Ministry for Finance for the Board's consideration, with decision letters issued by the Ministry.

SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY–DECEMBER 2025

- 889 total applications received
- 870 eligible applications

VEHICLE REGISTRATION TAX EXEMPTION SCHEME

Another scheme in collaboration with the Ministry for Finance is the Vehicle Registration Tax Exemption Scheme. Applications are submitted to Agencija Support for processing and the relevant assessments. This scheme grants eligible persons with disabilities, or their parents/guardians, an exemption from the vehicle registration tax when acquiring a vehicle suitable for their needs. Final decisions are issued by the Ministry for Finance.

SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY–DECEMBER 2025

- 151 total applications received and approved

DRIVE-FROM-WHEELCHAIR VEHICLE GRANT

This grant supports persons with disabilities who require a drive-from-wheelchair vehicle, equipped with an electric ramp that enables direct wheelchair access to the driver's position. The scheme provides a one-time grant equivalent to 20% of the vehicle cost, up to a maximum vehicle value of €60,000 (excluding taxes and registration costs).

SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY–DECEMBER 2025

- 1 application approved
- €1,590 total funds utilised

GRANT ON THE PURCHASE OF SECOND-HAND WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES

This scheme offers financial assistance for the purchase of second-hand vehicles adapted with wheelchair-accessible ramps or lifts. During the previous year, an extension to the grant was introduced, making it possible for those who buy a wheelchair-accessible vehicle that is purchased second-hand to also apply for this benefit. The grant amounts to 10% of the vehicle cost, up to a maximum vehicle value of €25,000, and is provided as a one-time subsidy.

SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY–DECEMBER 2025

- 32 approved applications
- €42,637 total funds utilised

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Stakeholder Engagement and Awareness

Stakeholder awareness and engagement were prioritised throughout the year through targeted information sessions delivered to allied health professionals across national entities, strengthening inter-entity collaboration with the overarching aim of facilitating the support provided to applicants.

2. Empowerment Scheme Reform

The Empowerment Scheme reform included updates to eligibility criteria and application forms, including professional reports, strengthening operational accountability while streamlining and facilitating the application process.

3. Digitalisation and Records Management

Digitalisation and records management processes were further strengthened through sustained scanning and digital archiving initiatives, improving the efficiency, accessibility, and organisation of records and filing systems.

WAY FORWARD

In the coming year, the People Assistance Schemes Unit will continue to build on recent reforms by further strengthening governance, accessibility, and service efficiency across its financial assistance and exemption schemes. Focus will be placed on refining administrative processes, enhancing clarity for applicants, and supporting a more responsive, client-centred service model. Ongoing efforts will also aim to consolidate accountability measures and improve the overall user experience, ensuring that support remains timely, equitable, and aligned with the evolving needs of persons with disabilities.

SkillUp

The SkillUp Unit offers programmes designed to support persons with disabilities, aiming to enhance their quality of life and promote their inclusion in all aspects of society.

Launched in October 2025, SkillUp is structured around four pillars:

- Way to Work Programme
- Self-Skills Programme
- Skills4Life Programme
- SkillUp Awareness Programme

These programmes provided structured support in employability skills and independent living development.

SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY–DECEMBER 2025

- 7 service users benefitted from Self-Skills Programme
- 3 service users benefitted from Skills4Life Programme
- 4 service users benefitted from Way to Work Programme

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Service Reform and Consolidation

During 2025, the SkillUp Unit was set up, integrating the Way to Work Programme with newly developed structured programmes under a single, cohesive service model. This entailed significant service reform, strengthening its structure and clarifying participant pathways.



2. Strengthening of Assessment and Service Processes

Key internal processes were reviewed and updated to support consistency and service quality. These included revised assessments, service agreements, and internal documentation, alongside the introduction of a structured trial period prior to programme allocation to ensure appropriate placement based on individual needs.

3. Programme Implementation and Expansion

During 2025, preparatory work was undertaken towards the introduction of a supplementary maintenance grant for participants attending a minimum of 75% of the Way to Work Programme. This development represents a key step in strengthening sustained participation and supporting continued engagement in structured employability and independent living programmes.



4. Recognition and Outreach

The Way to Work Programme was awarded 2nd Runner-Up at the EPALE Malta Adult Education Awards in the category of Best Non-formal and Community Learning for Adults Award, recognising its impact within the adult education sector.

5. International Collaboration

During 2025, SkillUp strengthened international collaboration through targeted knowledge exchange, including participation in an Erasmus+ Key Action 1 (KA1) study visit in Austria focused on supported employment and inclusive training models, and by hosting a Norwegian delegation to facilitate cross-sector dialogue in collaboration with key national stakeholders.

WAY FORWARD

The SkillUp Team will prioritise expanding the reach and visibility of the SkillUp Awareness Programme while continuing the strategic development of future Skills4Life cohorts. Focus will be placed on intake assessment, conducting trial sessions, and the rollout of new cohorts across Malta and Gozo, alongside preparation for upcoming Way to Work and Skills4Life programmes. Strategic capacity-building will be supported through targeted staff training, including Train the Educator course in Palermo, Sicily, and Non-Abusive Psychological and Physical Intervention (NAPPI) training, ensuring programme quality and sustainability as new cohorts are launched later in the year.



Customer Support

The Customer Support services are the first point of contact for persons with disabilities who make use of the Agency's services, their support networks, prospective applicants, service users, and other stakeholders reaching out to Aġenzija Support.

Operating within the Customer Support, Schemes & Day Services Department, Customer Support Services deliver front-line assistance through reception services across offices in Malta and Gozo. The service also manages telephone enquiries via the Agency's helpline and handles correspondence received through the Agency's generic email address.

SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY–DECEMBER 2025

- Over 10,000 visitors assisted at the Agency's reception areas across offices in Malta and Gozo
- Over 22,000 phone calls were answered, pertaining to Freephone Servizz.gov 153 (ext. 05) and 22568000
- Over 5,000 emails received through the Agency's generic mailbox were addressed



MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Service Evaluation and Customer Feedback

The Customer Support service was evaluated through a mystery shopping exercise involving persons with disabilities, carried out in collaboration with the Sharing Lives service.

2. Operational Review and Service Improvement

In collaboration with the Change Management Department, an internal evaluation was undertaken to assess service demand, operational performance, and areas for improvement.



3. Enhancement of Reception Facilities

In response to the high volume of visitors at the Head Office, further improvements were implemented at the reception area with the support of the Administration & Maintenance Department, including the installation of a ticketing and queuing system.

4. Staff Information and Knowledge Sharing

Through collaboration with various Agency sections, regular information sessions were organised to ensure the Customer Support Team remained informed of service developments and able to provide accurate guidance on the Agency's services and schemes.

WAY FORWARD

Efforts will continue to enhance Customer Support services, ensuring that every interaction is welcoming, professional, and accessible. Planned improvements address both operational aspects and team development, ranging from the digitalisation of visitor processes to a comprehensive staff training programme in collaboration with the Human Resources (HR) Department.

Professional Advisory & Prevention Service



Professional Advisory & Prevention Service

The Professional Advisory & Prevention Team (PAPT) provides professional training and supports the consistent application of evidence-based approaches across services. Its remit is to strengthen person-centred, collaborative practice that promotes independence.

During 2025, the team prioritised co-production, active support, and trauma-informed care, reinforcing practice that places service users at the centre of decision-making. The Service focuses on two main pillars: specialised training provision and the implementation of a sex education programme.

TRAINING AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Training and workforce development activities are designed to equip staff with the knowledge and skills required to deliver high-quality, rights-based support that responds to the needs and aspirations of service users across diverse service settings.



SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY–DECEMBER 2025

- 509 Support employees were provided with NAPPI training
- 30 Support employees received training to become mentors and coaches of Active Support
- 22 Support employees attended training programmes on duty of care
- 15 Support professionals received debriefing training regarding crisis intervention
- 16 training sessions were delivered regarding documentation and Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) cloud
- 13 individual person-centred NAPPI profiles were activated and followed by PAPT members
- 3 training sessions were provided to public service managers in collaboration with the People and Standards Division
- 2 trainings were delivered to police officers
- 1 training programme on autism awareness and accommodations was delivered to Transport Malta employees

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION

The Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Programme delivers tailored education on relationships, wellbeing, sexual health, and social skills to persons with disabilities, alongside training for staff and workshops for families and stakeholders. It promotes independence, dignity, and safe, inclusive environments, while also informing service and policy development.

SERVICE OUTPUTS JANUARY–DECEMBER 2025

- 240 Support frontline employees attended training on *How to Approach Sexualised Behaviour*
- 11 service users participated in multiple one-to-one sessions on relationships and sexuality education
- 33 service users participated in focus groups contributing to the National Health Strategy
- 2 group training sessions for parents were delivered in collaboration with the Down Syndrome Association

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Strategic Focus for 2025

During 2025, PAPT focused on strengthening agency-wide capacity through broader coverage of NAPPI training, continued dissemination of the PBS Cloud, and targeted training in Active Support, debriefing, and RSE. The year also marked the finalisation of the *Let's Talk About It!* project, alongside preparatory work towards the development of a potential new EU-funded initiative.

2. Training and Professional Development

The team participated in Erasmus+ KA1 learning initiatives aimed at strengthening training delivery and practice. These included training in emotional

intelligence and trauma-informed care, as well as a train-the-trainer programme focused on training design and delivery. Job-shadowing experiences in Estonia and Rome provided exposure to different service models and approaches, including the integration of sexuality training.

3. Strengthening RSE Practice Through Resource Development

Targeted training and educational resources were developed and procured to enhance the delivery of RSE across services. This included preparatory work towards the establishment of a shared internal resource library, supporting professionals with consistent, high-quality materials when delivering RSE sessions.



WAY FORWARD

In the coming year, PAPT will strengthen its strategic focus on RSE through the development of high-quality, accessible resources that support consistent, person-centred practice across services. This will include the creation of in-house professional materials, such as visual supports and Easy Language tools, alongside the expansion of shared resources for trained professionals.

PAPT will also contribute its RSE expertise to an EU-funded Key Action 2 (KA2) project with international partners, reinforcing the Agency's commitment to inclusive, rights-based practice. In parallel, the team will continue to build workforce and sector capacity through collaboration with the education sector, external organisations, and parents, promoting consistency and shared understanding across service, educational, and home environments.

Human Resources:

People Management & Employee Wellbeing Department



Human Resources: People Management & Employee Wellbeing Department

The Human Resources Department is responsible for workforce planning, people management, employee wellbeing, payroll administration, and staff development across Ağenzija Sapport. In 2025, the Department supported organisational stability and service continuity through effective onboarding, payroll enablement, training coordination, and the implementation of family-friendly measures, while promoting employee engagement and wellbeing.

649 – number of employees within Ağenzija Sapport as at end of 2025

120 – number of applications issued for internal and external calls in 2025



MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Recruitment, Onboarding, and Payroll

During 2025, a total of 108 new employees were onboarded across various roles and grades. The team played a key enabling role throughout the onboarding process, supporting both services and internal teams. This included facilitating access to the Shireburn Indigo system, allowing employees to manage their employment information through a secure, centralised digital platform, contributing to transparency, efficiency, and improved employee experience.

2. Training and Staff Development

Training investments were aligned with the Agency's mission, with particular focus on wellbeing-oriented initiatives such as active support and debriefing. 150 training opportunities were attended by Ağenzija Sapport staff in 2025 (Table 5). These ranged from training courses and webinars, EU-funded mobilities, to local and international conferences and seminars led by respected experts in the field.

Training opportunities	150 opportunities
Requests for study leave	45 applications
Requests for claim for CPD	88 applications
Requests for qualification allowance	37 applications

Table 5: Staff development claims, January–December 2025

3. Employee Wellbeing and Family Friendly Measures

In line with the Collective Agreement, the HR Department received and approved 12 applications for extended remote working and 87 applications for remote working from employees working in different sections of the Agency. Additionally, the Department also received and approved 36 requests for reduced hours and 50 requests for flexitime, contributing to improved work-life balance and employee wellbeing.

A Staff Wellbeing Committee with representatives from every department was formed, tasked with the remit to promote employee wellbeing through a number of activities spread throughout the year. These include activities aimed at promoting the physical and psychological wellbeing, as well as fostering positive team spirit and staff engagement.

The HR Department also promotes and refers employees to the Employee Support Programme as necessary and reaches out to employees going through personal challenges and difficulties.



WAY FORWARD

The Department is committed to consolidating the team's various functions while ensuring alignment with the Agency's strategy and evolving needs. Training and staff development will further strengthen the training needs assessment tool and support the delivery of a structured upskilling programme for frontliners and support teams. A stronger focus will also be placed on data-driven policies in 2026, alongside the pilot of the performance management module across selected departments. Outreach and the promotion of staff engagement remain integral to the 2026 action plan.

Testimonial

"We participated in an Active Support training to become Positive Behaviour Support Coaches. The hands-on, practical, and non-formal approach of the expert trainers was highly engaging, and for us who also deliver training, we appreciated the opportunity to pick up useful tips to enhance our own delivery. It was a valuable experience that strengthened our confidence and practical skills and in the long run, will improve the skills of the staff and the quality of life of the service users."

Ramona Pullicino and Clinton Sammut, Active Support training participants

Quality Audit, Research & Innovation and Change Management Department



Quality Audit, Research & Innovation and Change Management Department

During 2025, the Quality Audit, Research & Innovation (QARI) and Change Management Department advanced key organisational reforms aimed at strengthening governance, enhancing service quality, and supporting long-term strategic development. Through close collaboration with internal teams, stakeholders, and external partners, the Department focused on structural modernisation, quality assurance, and evidence-based decision-making.

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Personal Assistant Reform and Governance Frameworks

A major milestone was the finalisation of the PA Reform Guidelines. These were finalised from an agency-wide perspective and presented to the newly appointed Board members. To ensure broad transparency and shared understanding, information sessions were delivered for beneficiaries and stakeholders, attracting over 90 service users. These engagements contributed to further alignment on the reform's objectives and implementation.

Work also progressed on creating a unified Individual Support Plan (ISP) Framework. A dedicated working group developed a standardised, best-practice model aimed at ensuring consistency and continuity in person-centred planning. The framework was finalised and prepared for dissemination in the following year.

2. Job Analysis and Workforce Modernisation

In collaboration with the HR Team, the Department initiated a Job Analysis Training Programme and applied a structured methodology to review roles across service areas. Using this methodology, 12 roles across various service areas were reviewed. This work culminated in a comprehensive job engineering exercise for leadership roles within SIL and Day Services, resulting in modern, competency-aligned role profiles to support recruitment, workforce planning, and performance management.

3. Organisational Insights and Change Management Tools

The Department also continued to strengthen HR insights through the Exit Interview Framework, issuing quarterly reports that offered clear understanding of turnover trends, push and pull factors, and overall staff experience. In parallel, an Organisational Trust Inventory exercise was completed, combining survey data and workshops to strengthen understanding of organisational culture and areas for improvement.

The team also delivered several key outputs throughout the year, including an audit of the Blue Badge System, the launch of a customer care evaluation, an audit of medical assessments in day centres, and the establishment of a self-quality assurance reporting mechanism. These exercises provided evidence-based insights to support service improvement and organisational planning.

4. Quality Assurance, Policy Development, and Risk Frameworks

Several governance and policy initiatives advanced during the year. These included drafting the Incident Reporting Policy and associated SOPs, preparing a proposal for a PA beneficiary helpdesk, and establishing the Protection of Adults in Situations of Vulnerability Act working group.

The Department also chaired a working group focused on developing a Positive Risk Framework aimed at supporting balanced and informed risk-taking within services. To deepen understanding, a study involving employees, families, and service users was launched, with further analysis planned for 2026.

5. Research, Innovation, and QARI Restructuring

Following structural integration within the Change Management function, the QARI Unit implemented new SOPs and delivered key quality assurance outputs, including system audits, service evaluations, and the introduction of a self-reporting quality mechanism.

Progress was also made toward establishing an Academy for Personal Assistants, including exploratory discussions with institutions such as the UOM. The aim is to develop a structured professional development pathway for PAs and raise sectoral standards.

In the area of research and organisational development, the Department continued coordinating the SMart And Sustainable InClusive WORksTation (MASCOT) Research Project, ensuring alignment with partners and steady progress against research objectives.

Through close collaboration with internal teams, stakeholders, and external partners, the Department focused on structural modernisation, quality assurance, and evidence-based decision-making.

WAY FORWARD

In 2026, the Department will focus on implementing newly developed frameworks, expanding research and data-driven tools, and embedding quality assurance mechanisms across services. Priority will be given to disseminating completed frameworks, strengthening professional development pathways, and further supporting organisational change through structured analysis and governance refinement.

Operations Department



Operations Department

The Operations Department drives transformative internal enhancements across ICT, Projects, Compliance, Health & Safety, and core operations, strengthening efficiency, modern infrastructure, and regulatory adherence.

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

The Department spearheaded digitalisation initiatives, advanced infrastructure upgrades at multiple sites, transitioned to a dedicated Compliance Unit, embedded a proactive Health & Safety culture, and streamlined cross-departmental processes to support agency-wide strategic goals. Strategic collaborations with third parties such as Voice for Inclusion Gozo, Service Dogs Foundation, the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector, and Malta Rescue Corps have enabled and will continue to facilitate seamless integration of operations within Agency premises, promoting inclusivity and amplifying community impact.

These efforts, bolstered by new hires and partnerships (e.g., Infrastructure Malta, Enemalta, Project Green, Climate Action Authority and Cleansing & Maintenance Division), positioned the Operations Department as the central point for internal and external workflows, fostering innovation and sustainability.

1. ICT

In 2025, the ICT Team modernised Agency operations by completing 19 key projects, including:



- full Windows 11 upgrades for all laptops
- full detachment from MITA infrastructure/devices
- roll-out of work emails to every staff member
- digital room booking system
- centralised ICT ticketing system
- bulk mailing SOP via Microsoft Forms
- SMS notifications for Blue Badge renewals
- day centres attendance tracking for service users via fobs
- Identità onboarding integration
- Easy Language forms for SIL complaints
- eCabs taxi service tracking
- Smart Panic Buttons
- Social Care Standards Authority (SCSA) licensing dashboard
- Marketing request form
- leadership ICT training
- email Authenticator SOP booklets
- migration to SharePoint



2. Projects

The Projects section drove significant infrastructure upgrades across residences, offices, and day centres, delivering full completions and advancing key initiatives.

Works spanned over a broad range of sites, including Fgura, Żabbar, and Bormla residences, PAPT offices in Santa Venera, STILC premises in Hal Far, and infrastructure and facilities upgrades at Mtarfa, Hal Far and Gozo Day Centres. Collaborations with Project Green also resulted in innovative outdoor projects with the completion of a multi-sensory garden – Ġnien Zaylen – within the Paola Day Centre footprint and Ġnien Warda at the Pembroke residence outdoor area.

The team was also a main stakeholder in developing Tender documentation for new centralised offices and for the development of a new Community Hub in Rabat. Other ongoing works included Dingli respite premises, Balluta transition premises in collaboration with Richmond Foundation, Mosta premises, Mtarfa residence, and Gżira premises that will host a new day centre for elderly service users.





3. Compliance Unit

The Department successfully transitioned from SCSA-centric operations to a comprehensive Compliance Unit, expanding oversight across all third-party regulatory bodies. This evolution included near-completion of a digital SCSA licensing dashboard to enable proactive and efficient processes. Key actions encompassed license renewals for multiple residences and day centres, alongside a comprehensive restructuring that positioned the Department, now supported by a full-time lawyer, as the Agency's primary compliance resource.

4. Health & Safety

Health & Safety maintained vigilant risk management, fostering a safety-first culture via staff engagement, site audits, and digitalisation of forms and tools for incident tracking. These balanced reactive daily oversight with strategic sustainability alignment.

5. Core Operations

Core operations excelled in stakeholder coordination, process optimisation, and cultural shifts toward digital and safety priorities, acting as the primary reference for all departments to align with Agency strategy. This leverage of deep workflow insights enabled seamless support for reforms.



WAY FORWARD

In 2026, the Department will focus on completing key digital initiatives and major infrastructure projects, including a new day centre and community hub, STILC premises, and the transition to centralised offices. Strategic priorities will also include targeted energy and sustainability investments, continued strengthening of compliance functions, and the rollout of digital Health & Safety tools to support efficient, safe, and resilient operations.

Administration & Maintenance Department



Administration & Maintenance Department

The Administration & Maintenance Department ensures the smooth running of the Agency's back-end services. Such functions include the management of small-scale capital projects and upkeep of the Agency's various services and facilities, fleet management, stock supplies and coordination of duty travel.

OUTPUTS JANUARY–DECEMBER 2025

- 211 staff travel opportunities for conferences or mobilities
- 200 interventions by the Maintenance Team for electrical and plumbing works
- 1,200 interventions for general maintenance
- 750 Requests for Quotations issued for the procurement of goods and services
- 300 fleet vehicle-related requests

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Digitalisation and Process Streamlining

During 2025, the Administration & Maintenance Department successfully centralised all service requests



through the implementation of a single request management system on Microsoft Lists. This shift replaced fragmented communication methods and resulted in improved efficiency, transparency, and accountability. The new system enabled real-time tracking, better workload planning, consistent progress monitoring, and more reliable data for reporting and performance analysis. An internal delivery system was also introduced, reducing the need for personal collections.

2. Residential and Day Centre Refurbishments

The Department delivered a series of targeted refurbishment projects across residential services and day centres, improving safety, accessibility, and functionality. Key works included comprehensive upgrades at Żabbar, Fgura, Kirkop, and Siġġiewi residences, as well as significant refurbishment of units at Mtarfa and Paola Day Centres (Table 6). Interventions ranged from full internal renovations and electrical upgrades to accessibility improvements and environmental enhancements, supporting improved living and service environments for service users.

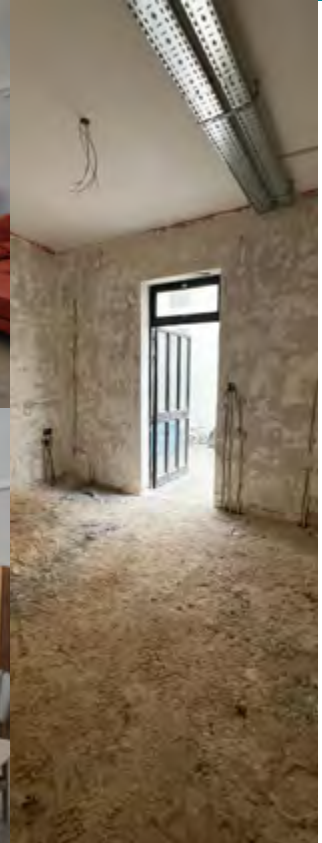
Fgura residence	€30,000
Mtarfa Day Centre	€55,000
Kirkop residence	€35,000
Siġġiewi residence	€5,000
Paola Day Centre	€30,000

Table 6: Costings of major refurbishment works carried out by the Administration & Maintenance Department, January–December 2025



WAY FORWARD

In the coming year, the Administration & Maintenance function will further enhance digital systems by upgrading Microsoft Lists to improve visibility, tracking, and data quality across sections. Maintenance processes will be streamlined through the increased use of tablets to support real-time work updates and greater operational efficiency. Planned infrastructure upgrades will continue across a number of day centres, including Fleur-de-Lys, Mtarfa, and Hal Far, alongside refurbishment works at residential facilities in Bormla, Marsa, and Żurriq, aimed at improving safety, functionality, and service environments.



3. Coordination of Duty Travel and Mobilities

During 2025, the Administration function coordinated a high volume of duty travel related to conferences, training, and international mobility initiatives. In total, 211 instances of staff participation were supported across a wide range of destinations, reflecting the Agency's ongoing engagement in professional development, cross-border collaboration, and EU-funded mobility opportunities. These movements were managed across multiple locations and events, highlighting the administrative role in ensuring effective coordination, compliance, and logistical support.



EU Funds Department



EU Funds Department

The EU Funds Department focuses on bringing in EU funding to provide opportunities for staff and service users. Such projects focus on transfers of innovation. Funding derives mainly from Erasmus+ and other centralised funding.

OUTPUTS JANUARY–DECEMBER 2025

- 17 unique mobility opportunities attended by 70 Support staff
- €179,021.41 in EU funds disbursed in mobilities

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Erasmus+ and KA1 staff opportunities

Since 2022, Aġenzija Sapport has disbursed over €350,000 in Erasmus+ mobility funds with more than 170 mobilities since the programme began. 101 of these mobilities took place through the 2024/2025 grant agreement, 70 of which in 2025, making it another successful year in the area of outgoing mobility opportunities. Visited countries included: Greece, Italy, Austria, Finland, Belgium, Czech Republic, Ireland, Spain, Estonia, Cyprus, Germany, and Sweden.

2. Erasmus+ and KA2 opportunities

Furthermore, Aġenzija Sapport has continued in its endeavours to implement Erasmus+ KA2 projects:

- *Let's Talk About It!:* A project with partners from Italy, Greece and Malta which focused on the creation of accredited training to assist professionals to provide



sex education to persons with disabilities and the creation of tools to assist in the delivery of such training. Following the train-the-trainer course developed in 2024, the training was successfully delivered, and a multiplier event was held in 2025. The project has been closed successfully.

Project value: €60,000. Status: completed.

- *Inclusive Practices:* This project with partners from Sweden, Malta, Spain, Netherlands, UK, and Hungary, focused on the sharing of best practices in relation to inclusion. Aġenzija Sapport provided expertise through the ACTU staff, who made numerous contributions through blogs and interventions during international visits.
Project value: €40,000. Status: completed.
- *It Starts with Me!:* A project with partners from Spain, Sweden, Slovenia, Greece, and Italy, centred on a number of workshops run by persons with disabilities aimed to pilot a number of questionnaires. **Project value apportioned to the Agency: €35,750. Status: completed.**
- *Same Chance:* This VET project with partners from Malta, Portugal, and Ireland, aims to create employment opportunities for persons on the autism spectrum through research. **Project value: €250,000. Status: initiated.**



The team will continue to explore the process to give the opportunity to Support service users to participate in KA1 adult mobilities to further exploit mobility opportunities under the Erasmus+ programme.

WAY FORWARD

Looking ahead, the EU Funds Team within Agenzia Support shall be creating new KA1 mobility opportunities for its employees with the aim of providing fresh and relevant opportunities. The team will continue to explore the process to give the opportunity to Support service users to participate in KA1 adult mobilities to further exploit mobility opportunities under the Erasmus+ programme. Additional funding opportunities will be explored to further expand the Agency's use of EU funding.

Testimonial

"This programme contributed significantly to my personal and professional development. It was particularly beneficial in supporting my self-growth and in fostering meaningful connections with colleagues through shared experiences and collaborative activities.

These visit settings provided an ideal space for reflection, learning, and engagement. During these visits, we participated in a range of structured activities designed to enhance teamwork, team building, and personal development. The programme also placed strong emphasis on self-awareness, encouraging us to explore our deeper selves through guided reflection and meditation sessions.

In addition to these activities, we were introduced to several day centres for persons with disabilities. This exposure allowed us to gain a clearer understanding of how these centres operate, the services they provide, and the important role they play in supporting individuals with diverse needs.

Observing these centres firsthand offered valuable insight into inclusive practices and the practical application of support services within the community.

Overall, this experience was both enriching and educational, leaving a lasting positive impact on my personal growth, professional outlook, and understanding of community support services."

Sephora Cuschieri - Lanciano mobility

Strategic Marketing & International Relations Department



Strategic Marketing & International Relations Department

The Strategic Marketing & International Relations Department supports the Agency's strategic objectives through coordinated communication and campaigns, internal brand alignment, stakeholder engagement, and international collaborations, ensuring consistent messaging, and strengthened internal and external relationships.

58 media programmes were attended between January–December 2025

162,117 website page views in 2025

16,457 Facebook followers as at end of December 2025



MARKETING MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Aġenzija Sappor Podcast

The Marketing Team produced the Agency's first podcast, Bejn il-Linji. Taking care of full production responsibilities, this podcast proved to be a step forward in reaching out to the general public beyond the use of conventional media, complementing other forms of communication and outreach measures. Streamed on YouTube and Spotify, these podcasts delved into topics deemed sensitive within the disability sector, whereby guests included lived experiences, shared information, and challenges faced.





2. Intranet

Another milestone for the Marketing Team was the design and deployment of the Agency's first intranet, serving as an online platform to facilitate and enhance internal communication across the Agency. This platform allows the engagement of all members of staff as it carries regular updates, important notices, and sharing of news across all Agency departments. A number of Communications Ambassadors were appointed and trained by the Marketing Team to represent their respective teams and share information.

3. National Conference

The team coordinated the Agency's national conference held during Disability Week, bringing together local and international experts to discuss the development and implementation of ISPs for persons with disabilities. This conference, 'My Life: Development of a National Framework for Lifelong Individual Support Plans for Persons with Disabilities' was aimed at creating a platform for meaningful dialogue that inspires transformation in how ISPs are developed and applied throughout the lives of persons with disabilities.



4. Events Highlights

January	Junior College Careers Expo 2025
February	<i>This is me</i> Carnival celebrations
March	Seminar – Sostenn lill-Familjari fit-Trobbija ta' Uljed b'Dizabilità Minister's visit to Ġħajsielem Learning Hub works Minister's visit to Fgura premises works Participation in De La Salle College careers expo Participation in St Edward's College careers expo Participation in KSU careers expo
April	Minister's visit to the new Balluta transitional services premises
May	Cupi's Spoon gastro competition Public Service Expo
June	Participation in MCAST Open Day
July	Minister's visit to Kirkop residence Presentation by students from the Faculty for the Built Environment (UOM) for architectural designs for a Youth Hub in Qrendi Signing of agreement with Project Green for a multi-sensory garden in Paola
August	<i>Let's Talk About It!</i> – EU project dissemination workshop Signing of agreement with Lands Authority – Gżira Day Centre for elderly service users
September	Launch of Sharing Lives exhibition The Gallery of Heroes Event in collaboration with Valletta Local Council – Jum l-Inklużjoni u s-Sostenibilità Participation in Giovanni Curmi Higher Secondary Freshers' Week
October	Launch of SkillUp Participation in Junior College Freshers' Week Participation in MCAST Freshers' Week
November	Opening of Ġnien Zaylen in Paola in collaboration with Project Green Opening Ġnien Warda in Pembroke in collaboration with Project Green Minister's visit to Fgura residence
December	National Conference - Ħajti: Żvilupp ta' Qafas Nazzjonali għal Sapport Individwalizzat Matul il-Ħajja għall-Persuni b'Dizabilità

Table 7: Events coordinated or supported by the Strategic Marketing & International Relations Team, January–December 2025



INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Memberships

International engagement was strengthened through continued membership with EASPD, ESN, and the Federation for European Social Employers (FESE), the upgrade to Full Members with EPR, and the hosting of EPR Board Members in Malta. The Agency also joined ESN as a partner for the European Social Services Conference 2026, positioning Malta as co-host of this key European event.

2. International Awards

Support CEO Oliver Scicluna was awarded the Leadership in Social Services Award at the ESN European Social Services Awards 2025, recognising his leadership in advancing rights-based, community-focused services aligned with the UNCRPD. In addition, the Adaptive Driving Clinic within STILC was shortlisted by ESN for the Disability and Accessibility in Social Services Award, highlighting its innovative contribution to inclusive mobility.



3. International Representations

The Agency was represented at a number of key international fora throughout the year, including the EuroMed High-Level Dialogue in Spain, the UN Conference of the States Parties (COSP18) in New York, and the High-Level Conference on Independent Living in Denmark. Representation was also maintained through active participation in EASPD various member fora, on the Board of the FESE, and EPR working groups focused on mental health and youth work, supporting continued knowledge exchange and alignment with European policy developments.

4. Cupi's Spoon

The team also coordinated this year's national competition for Cupi's Spoon, an international gastronomical competition hosted by the UNUO Association in Croatia. Two winners represented Malta in the bartending and cooking categories, with the cooking contestant placing third overall among the participating countries.



WAY FORWARD

In 2026, the Department will pursue targeted investment to further strengthen the Agency's podcast as part of its wider communication and outreach approach, while continuing to promote effective use of the intranet as the Agency's official means of internal communication. Priority will also be given to developing an Agency-wide Easy Language framework, supported by staff training to improve accessibility of information for persons with disabilities. International engagement will remain a focus through preparation for Malta's hosting of the European Social Services Conference 2026 and the organisation of a study visit by the EPR Mental Health Working Group, supporting knowledge exchange and visibility at European level.

Finance & Procurement Department



Finance & Procurement Department

The Finance & Procurement Department is entrusted with the overall financial governance and procurement operations of the Agency. It is responsible for all accounting transactions, financial analysis and reporting, budget allocation and control, as well as treasury management. The Department also oversees the drafting, publication, and evaluation of tenders and calls for quotations.

All departmental activities are carried out in full compliance with statutory obligations, the Fiscal Responsibility Act, the Public Procurement Regulations, and other applicable legislation. The members of the Finance & Procurement Department remain committed to delivering accurate and timely financial reporting and to serving as a key support function for all other Agency departments.

2025 HIGHLIGHTS

The financial results for the year clearly demonstrate the Agency's continued growth and expansion in both service provision and resource capacity. During the reporting period, the Agency broadened its services, expanded user schemes, and increased operations in newly acquired premises to better support persons with disabilities. Demand for personal assistance, community-based services, and subsidies for assistive equipment continued to rise, resulting in substantial increases in both operational and capital expenditure.

In line with the Agency's strategic plan, additional funding was required to sustain these developments. The Finance Department ensured efficient and effective financial management, with a strong emphasis on transparency, accountability, and value for money.

1. Government Grants

To maintain sustainable service delivery, the Agency required an increased Government investment in the disability sector. In 2025, the Agency received €40.3 million in government grants, programmes, initiatives, and capital allocations – representing a significant investment and a 14% increase over the previous year.

€40.3 million were received in Government grants, programmes, initiatives, and capital allocations in 2025

	2023 €	2024 €	2025 €
Government subvention	22,950,000	24,750,000	27,000,000
Other grants	8,006,618	10,582,181	13,341,350
Total	30,956,618	35,332,181	40,341,350

Table 8: Government subvention and other grants, 2023–2025



Figure 2: Government subvention and other grants, 2023–2025

Operational expenditure increased by 14.4% in 2025

2. Recurrent Expenditure

The Agency’s operational and administrative expenses are divided across the cost centres supporting its primary services:

- Day Centres
- SIL Units
- Community Services
- Social Work
- Independent Community Living
- Access to Communication & Technology Unit
- Administration, HR, Finance and Office of the CEO
- Marketing
- Client Schemes

Operational expenditure for 2024 and 2025 is presented in Figure 3. The principal costs include payroll, transport, residential and respite services, contractual obligations, and client schemes.

In 2025, operational expenditure increased by 14.4%, primarily due to rises in payroll, contractual rates, community-based service user schemes for personal assistance, IT investments, and general operational requirements linked to expanded services. Payroll costs rose by 11.6%, driven by increases under the new Collective Agreement and the recruitment of additional professionals and frontline workers. The Agency also invested significantly in IT systems to enhance staff capabilities and improve service delivery.

Additionally, the Agency continued implementing Budget Measures and Electoral Manifesto Proposals through ring fenced funding.

The Finance Department ensures strict adherence to Public Procurement Regulations, Directive 9, internal policies, and other regulatory frameworks. All Government grants were utilised in the most efficient manner possible to ensure the highest value-for-money outcomes for vulnerable service users.

	2024 €	2025 €
Payroll	17,624,466	19,667,672
Operational Expenditure	14,987,563	17,716,100
Administrative Expenditure	2,599,753	2,909,442
Total	35,211,782	40,293,214

Table 9: Recurrent expenditure, 2024–2025

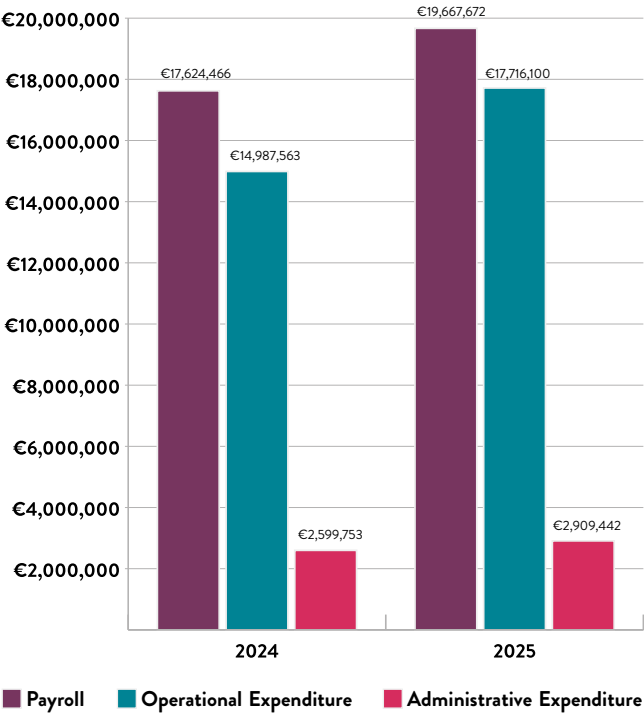


Figure 3: Recurrent expenditure, 2024–2025

3. Procurement

The Procurement Unit ensures that all supplies, works, and services are acquired in accordance with legislation and relevant regulations. It is also responsible for developing the Agency’s procurement policies and procedures.

During the reporting year, the Unit managed a substantial number of procurement processes, ranging from multi-million euro tenders to quotations, direct orders, addenda, and contract modifications, in line with the approved annual procurement plan.

The Unit also oversees supplier relationship management, contract documentation, and compliance monitoring. Throughout the year, it continued to function as a vital support and advisory service for all Agency departments and service users.

4. Capital Expenditure

Through Government capital grants, the Agency continued to strengthen its asset base, with significant progress registered on several major projects and the refurbishment of newly acquired premises. Additional smaller scale projects were undertaken to enhance Agency properties and upgrade equipment. Notable investment was also directed towards the renewal of furniture, fittings, and specialised equipment.

WAY FORWARD

In the year ahead, the Finance & Procurement Department will build on the Agency’s continued growth by strengthening budget planning and financial controls, enhancing management reporting to support timely decision making, and sustaining full compliance with the Fiscal Responsibility Act and Public Procurement Regulations. Priority will be given to further improving value for money outcomes through more proactive procurement planning, stronger contract and supplier management, and greater standardisation of processes across departments. The Department will also continue to support service expansion by ensuring that funding streams, expenditure monitoring, and procurement pipelines remain aligned with operational needs and capital investment priorities.

www.sapport.gov.mt

