

## Project within the scheme

### “Festi Inklussivi”

administered by the Parliamentary Secretary  
for Persons with Disability and Active Ageing

One of the primary reasons why band clubs were established in Malta is the Village Feast, and these celebrations still play a pivotal role today in any band club’s calendar. Making the Imperial Band Club accessible to everyone intrinsically implies making the feast celebrated in Mellieħa more accessible to one and all, an occasion where everyone can participate without having to worry about fundamental issues deriving from physical barriers to mobility.

This project is, in fact, aimed at improving access into the Club from the outside pathway through the installation of a platform lift, providing an easier and a more autonomous access to the Club to wheelchair users and other people having special mobility needs. At present, the Club has two access doors, but in both instances there are one or two steps that need to be climbed in order to enter the building. People making use of a wheelchair and others having special mobility requirements need to rely on assistance from other people in order to help them enter the Club. Through this initiative, the Club will be opening a third door which will replace a window that is currently situated at the front of the building, and install a platform lift that could be used by anyone who cannot access the building by climbing the steps at the other two entrances.

This project is not a standalone initiative to promote accessibility and inclusion of people with different abilities that the Club decided to undertake on the spur-of-the-moment, but it is one in a series of actions that are being taken to underline the Club’s culture of full inclusion. It complements further

the ethos that the Club has been embracing for a number of years with respect to promoting inclusion of people with different abilities within the Club’s structure and providing full accessibility to the Club’s premises. At present, all the facilities offered by the Club can be accessed through a lift inside the Club, provided the first hurdle of entering the Club is overcome. This platform lift is thus essential in achieving the goal of removing all physical barriers to accessing the Club’s premises, from outside to all the three floors of the Club.

Such an arrangement would be useful not only during the feast days, but will be helpful to anyone throughout the year. The Imperial Band Club organises a number of social, cultural and educational activities within its premises which are open to everyone. This project would further promote the participation of people with mobility problems and of the elderly section of our society, making our Band Club a cradle for the sharing of ideas and experiences between people with different abilities and backgrounds.

The Imperial Band Club intends to continue with its endeavours to promote inclusion. Once this project is accomplished, it will not mean that we have reached a milestone and can hence rest on our laurels. To the contrary, it will only motivate us further to embark on other projects and initiatives that would see the inclusion of people from other sectors of our society who have traditionally been left behind, without having to worry about any physical barriers to accessibility.

