



MS in Malta

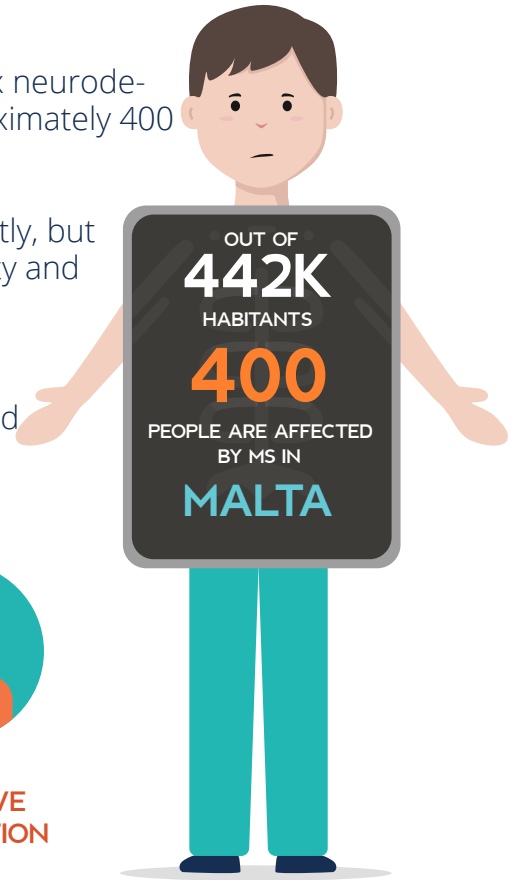


WHAT IS MS?

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a complex neurodegenerative disease affecting approximately 400 of the 442,000¹ people in Malta.

Each person will experience this unpredictable disease differently, but common symptoms often include pain, fatigue, reduced mobility and cognitive dysfunction.

There is currently no cure for MS; however, optimal treatment and support have a significant effect on disease progression and quality of life for people with MS.



PAIN



FATIGUE



REDUCED MOBILITY



COGNITIVE DYSFUNCTION

COUNTRY CONTEXT

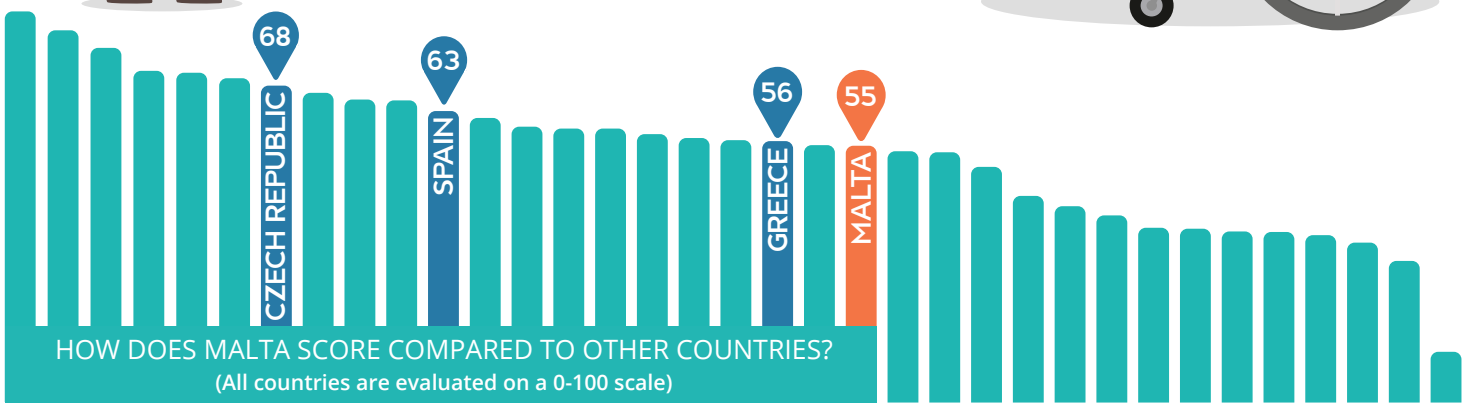
Healthcare in Malta is highly centralised and managed primarily by the Ministry of Health.²

The country provides near universal health coverage and per person expenditure has increased more than 60% since 2007, yet remains below the European Union (EU) average.

The out-of-pocket spending rate is among the highest in the EU, including significant expenses for medicines; however, people with certain chronic conditions are exempt, including people with MS.



COUNTRY RANKING



WHAT DID THE BAROMETER FIND?

The national MS registry has excellent inclusion, covering more than 90% of people with MS in Malta. There is good reimbursement of and access to rehabilitation and symptomatic treatments, but this is not the case with all disease-modifying drugs (DMDs). However, gaps remain:



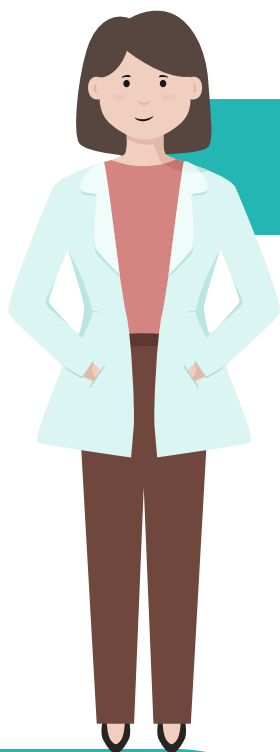
It takes 12–14 months for drugs approved by the European Medicines Agency (EMA) to be approved and reimbursed, meaning many EMA-approved DMDs are not yet available to people with MS in Malta.



There are only 7 practising neurologists in Malta – one for every 57 people with MS.

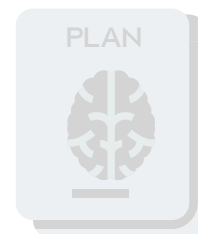


It is not known how many people with MS are in full- or part-time employment, and it is unclear whether they receive any support to complete their education or find and retain work.



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Develop a national neurological disease plan that includes a comprehensive approach to MS, with an adequate budget for implementation.



Increase the number of practising neurologists to ensure every person with MS has access to a neurologist at least once a year to provide timely and personalised care.

Reduce delays between EMA approval of new therapies and national reimbursement.



More information can be found at www.emsp.org or contact m-smalta@gmail.com

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