



ICT Accessibility Audits and Certification

The Maltese Speech Engine will provide greater accessibility to Maltese language based e-services. In combination with this, FITA's ICT Accessibility Audits Service, guides clients including website owners in implementing technology industry standards successfully and gaining maximum benefit from this.

FITA's reports are written in non-technical language for managers who are responsible for websites but who may not have a technical background. FITA also provide a technical check-list in order to guide developers.

This process will:

- show where the product stands in conforming with the WCAG;
- indicate how the website can be improved;
- provide a guide for drawing an implementation plan to better accessibility;
- provide a basis for deciding whether to fix the identified accessibility issues or redevelop the product.
- Accessibility audits are very useful first steps on the road to accessibility.

Carrying out an audit, in many cases, will be the first step towards achieving the real goal of heightened awareness about the importance of accessibility and universal design across the organization.



FITa

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www.knpd.org/mittsfita



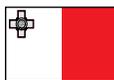
FITa Update

FOUNDATION FOR
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
ACCESSIBILITY

The Foundation for Information Technology Accessibility (FITa) was set up by the Malta Information Technology Agency (MITA) and the National Commission Disabled Persons (KNPD) in 2001 as the principal advocate and coordinator for making information and communications technology (ICT) accessible to disabled people on the Maltese islands.

In ensuring that due steps are taken to minimize the digital divide, we aim to enable individuals to contribute productively to society and the economy.

FITa



Operational Programme I – Cohesion Policy 2007– 2013
Investing in Competitiveness for a Better Quality of Life
Project part-financed by the European Union
European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
Co-financing rate: 85% EU Funds; 15% National Funds



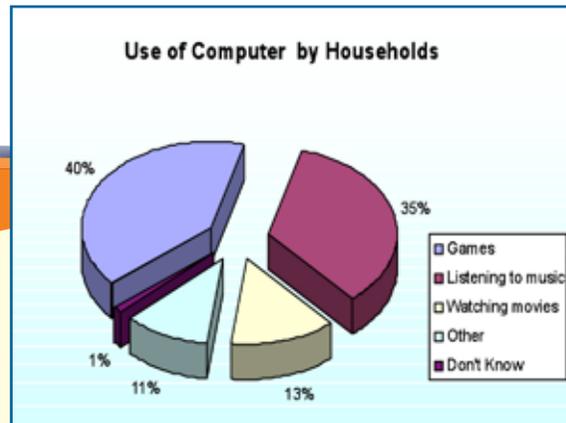
Investing in Your Future



FITA's principle function is to provide support to individuals in overcoming barriers to education and employment through ICT. Through empowerment and social inclusion, disabled persons need to rely less on family and state support.

In 2008 FITA obtained a grant, under the European Regional Development Fund for The Maltese Speech Engine Project which will be developing a SAPI¹ compatible speech engine. This will integrate with existing assistive and educational technology to promote the use of e-services, Maltese literacy and ICT accessibility. This project is part-financed (85%) under Operational Programme I - Cohesion Policy 2007-2013, Investing In competitiveness for a Better Quality of Life. FITA is collaborating with a number of disability NGOs and the Directorate for Educational Services on this project.

1. The Speech Application Programming Interface is one of the most widely adopted software platforms for the development of speech enabled software.



Households Survey

Part of the project includes the study of the use of ICT by private individuals and commercial companies.

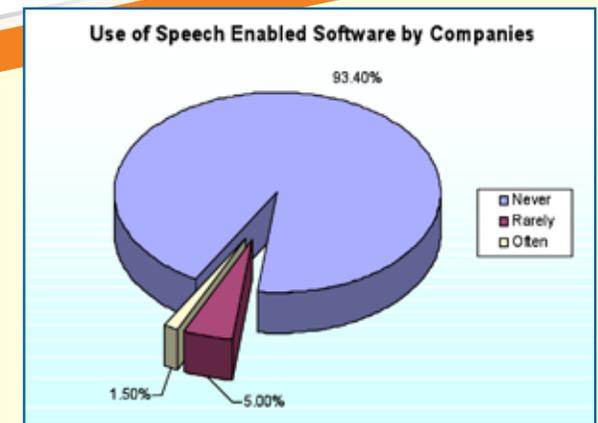
FITA commissioned M.Fsadni & Associates to carry out a quantitative research study to assess perceptions, views and attitudes towards the use of a Maltese Speech Engine. The derived survey results portray the feedback of 678 households and 197 companies.

Methodology

The research was based around CATI (Computer Aided Telephone Interviews) methodology. M. Fsadni and Associates ensured that the sample frame adequately represents the views and opinions of the target population. This also guarantees a statistically-viable quantitative representation and provides research findings with a 95% confidence level at a +/-5% confidence interval.

Potential use of Speech enabled Software

44% of respondents replied 'probably not' or 'definitely not' when asked about their need for computer software to be speech enabled. 44% also answered, either 'probably yes' or 'definitely yes' when asked if they would opt for speech-enabled software which uses the Maltese language.



Business Survey

Almost 82% indicated either 'definitely not' or 'probably not' to the need for using speech-enabled software by their employees. When respondents were asked whether they perceived the possibility of including a Maltese speech engine as an add-on to the company's existing product, 17.3% replied in the affirmative. This was confirmed by 35% of companies hailing from the banking, finance, insurance and business services sectors whilst 18.4% came from the education and the training sectors.



More information about the ERDF114 project and the survey results are available at

www.knpd.org/mittsfita