

Child Protection Directorate



Yearly Statistical Report

February 2026



Report period: January to December 2025

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Foundation for Social Welfare Services, Malta
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Introduction

This report provides statistical information regarding Child Protection Directorate (CP), which falls under the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS). This report provides global data on a directorate level followed by data for each service under the directorate.

The data contained in this report is based on information submitted by the services to the FSWS Research Team in mid-January 2026. Where applicable, the report provides data on an individual service user level (i.e., number of individuals) as well as on multiple attendance of service users level (i.e., number of cases). The data includes, but is not limited to, the number of: cases worked with, individuals worked with, referrals, new and re-contact cases, and cases closed. Data regarding cases worked with and opened cases is also stratified by key socio-demographic variables (cases opened data are reported in Appendix A).

All the information provided in this report gives an indication of service users attending the various services and some information about service performance. For this report, the term 'service users' refers to persons using the service from intake or referral until case closure. Service descriptions along with definitions regarding key terms used within this report (e.g., *cases worked with*) can be found in the appendix. For further information regarding the aims and activities of the services, please refer to the website: fsws.gov.mt.

It is important to note that the same individuals may stop and start attending a given service multiple times in the reporting period and/or may be attending one or more services concurrently within the reporting period (i.e., have multiple cases recorded). To demonstrate the difference, consider Person A, who started and stopped attending a service twice in the same year, making it equivalent to 2 cases, but 1 individual worked with. Summing the number of individuals worked with across services will over-estimate the actual number of different persons since individuals can attend several units at the same time. With the online data collection system, we are now able to identify and report the true number of individual service users across the entire directorate. Also, because of rounding, the sum of the percentages within the report may be smaller/greater than 100%.

Over time, there can be changes in what, how and when data is collected (e.g., with the introduction of the new data collection system). Relevant information about aspects which may have impacted the data and influence trends can be found as footnotes throughout the report.

This report would not have been possible without the kind assistance of each worker who provided and keyed the data.

The data contained in this report is subject to revision and modification, as and when the relevant information becomes available.

Executive summary

Cases worked with in 2025:

4,820

Out of the 4,820 cases worked with between Jan-Dec 2025:

Gender:



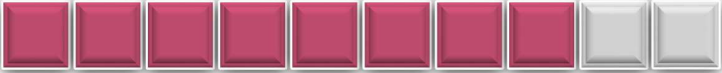
51%
Male

Age category:



91%
17 years
or
younger

Nationality:



83%
Maltese

District:

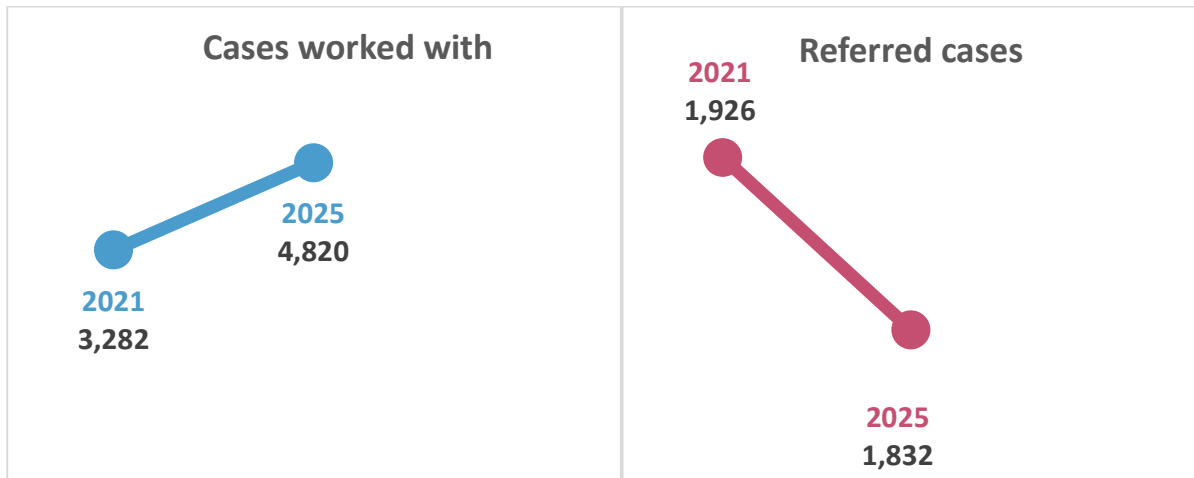


24%
Northern
Harbour



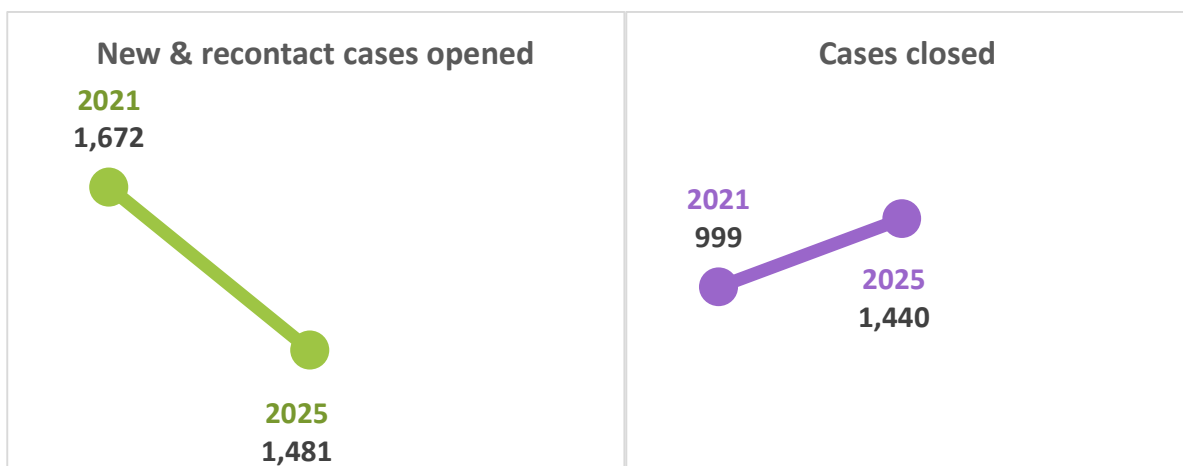
24%
Southern
Harbour

5-year comparison of case activity between 2021 and 2025:



47% increase

5% decrease



11% decrease

44% increase

Note: data on the number of cases in 2021 and 2025 is presented to display changes over a complete five-year period.

Directorate level data

This section provides information on a Directorate level.

A new online data collection system and reporting format were introduced in 2020. The Court Service was moved from the Directorate Alternative Care to the Child Protection Directorate in 2020 and all data transferred to the Child Protection Directorate portfolio.

CP: Total number of cases and individuals worked with at CP by year

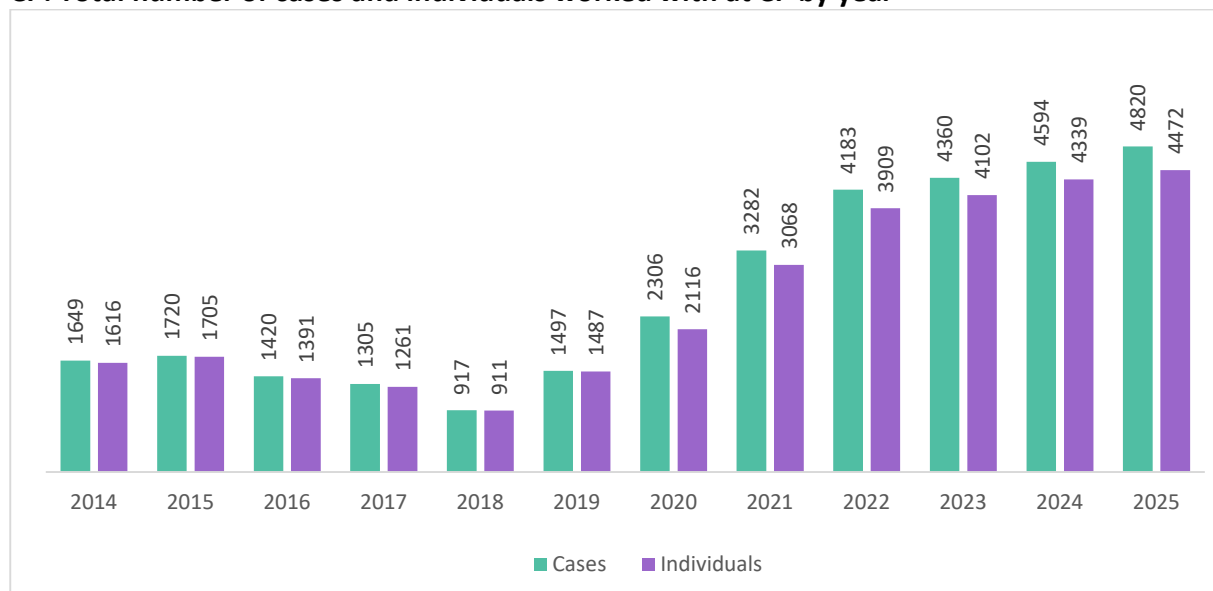


Figure 1: The figure above provides the number of cases worked with and the number of individuals worked with. To demonstrate the difference, consider Person A, who started and stopped attending a service twice in the same year, making it equivalent to 2 cases, but 1 individual worked with. Summing the number of individuals worked with across services will over-estimate the actual number of different persons since individuals can attend several units at the same time. Therefore, the number of individuals across multiple units can only provide an approximation of the number of individuals overall and the figures provided are therefore higher than the real figures. As of 2022, the number of individuals is the true number of individuals across the entire directorate as duplicate cases are identified and excluded through their identifying number. Prior to 2022 the number of individuals on a directorate level was a sum of the individuals reported by each service and was thus only an approximation. In 2025, 4820 cases and 4472 individuals were worked with compared to 4594 and 4339 respectively in 2024.

Case activity: Jan-Dec 2025

	Total cases worked with	Individuals worked with	Waiting list end of Dec 2025
Child Protection Service	4488	4234	894
Court Services	332	323	54
Total	4820	-	948

Figure 2: The figures above summarise the number of cases and individuals worked with reported on a service level. The total number of individuals is only provided if the true number of individuals across services cannot be extracted.

A total of **4,820** cases were worked with between January and December 2025.

CP: Cases worked with Jan-Dec 2025 by gender (no. & %)

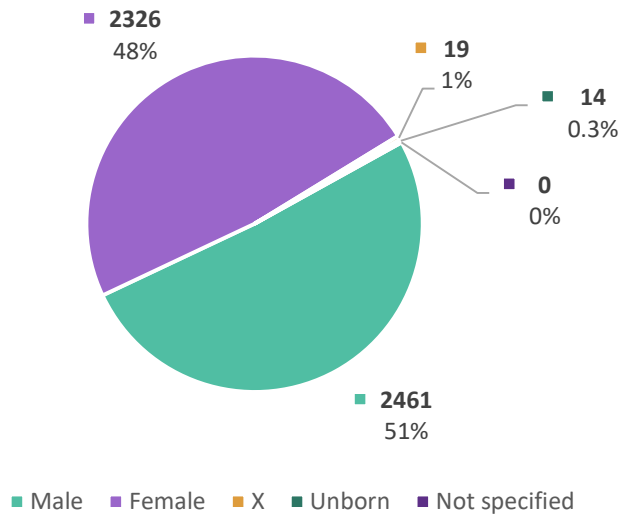


Figure 3: The figure above classifies the gender of the service user. Gender is collected at referral or first contact, but it can be updated throughout the lifetime of the case as required. The gender is collected either through formal documentation and/or the pronouns the person used when referring to themselves. In 2025, the highest percentage of cases worked with were male (51%).

CP: Cases worked with Jan-Dec 2025 by age category (no. & %)

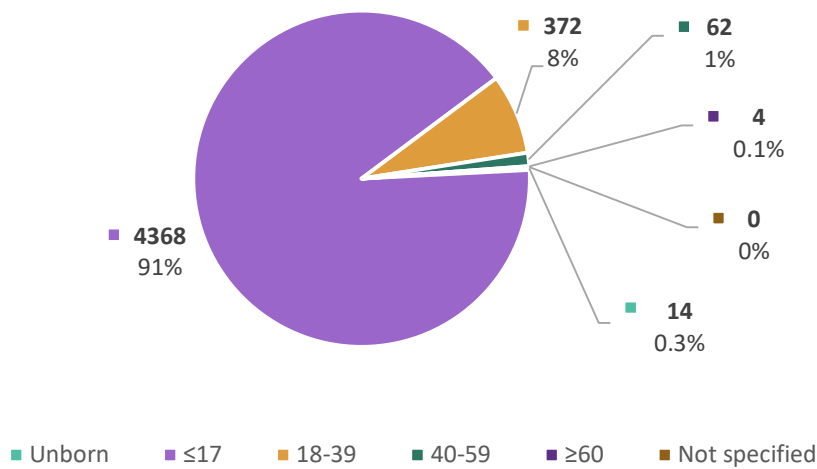


Figure 4: The figure above classifies the age of the service user in the reporting year based on the specified date of birth. In 2025, the highest percentage of cases worked with were ages 17 or younger (91%).

CP: Cases worked with Jan-Dec 2025 by nationality (no. & %)

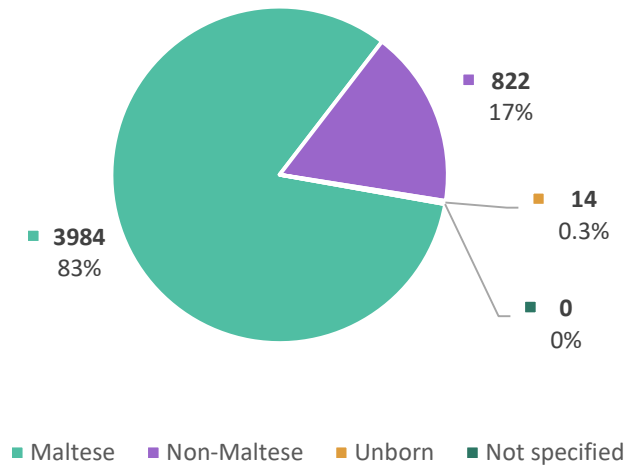
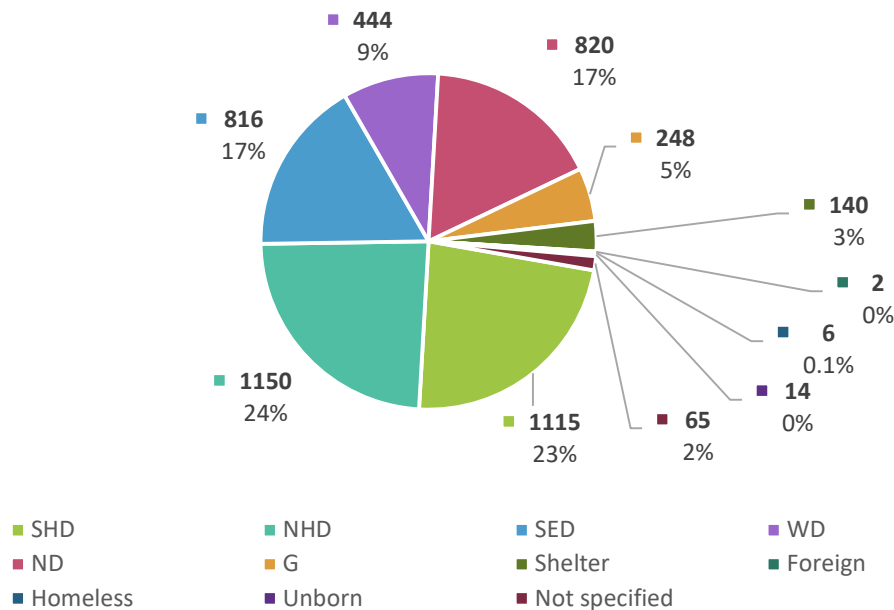


Figure 5: The figure above classifies the nationality as reported by the service user within the reporting year or based on an identity card/document. In 2025, 83% of the cases worked with were Maltese while non-Maltese made up 17% of cases.

CP: Cases worked with Jan-Dec 2025 by district of residence (no. & %)



Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District; Shelter = shelter/institution; Foreign = Foreign residence.

Figure 6: The figure above classifies the district of residence as reported by the service user within the reporting year. Some service users reside within “shelter/institution” (e.g., residential homes, centre of residential restorative services, or shelters). Some service users are in Malta temporarily and so normally have a foreign residence whilst others are homeless and do not have a fixed residence. Shelter/institution, foreign residence and homeless are reported as separate categories to avoid biasing the data on district. The Northern Harbour District (24%) had the highest percentage of cases worked with in 2025.

CP: Number of new, re-contact, known and intake cases worked with by year

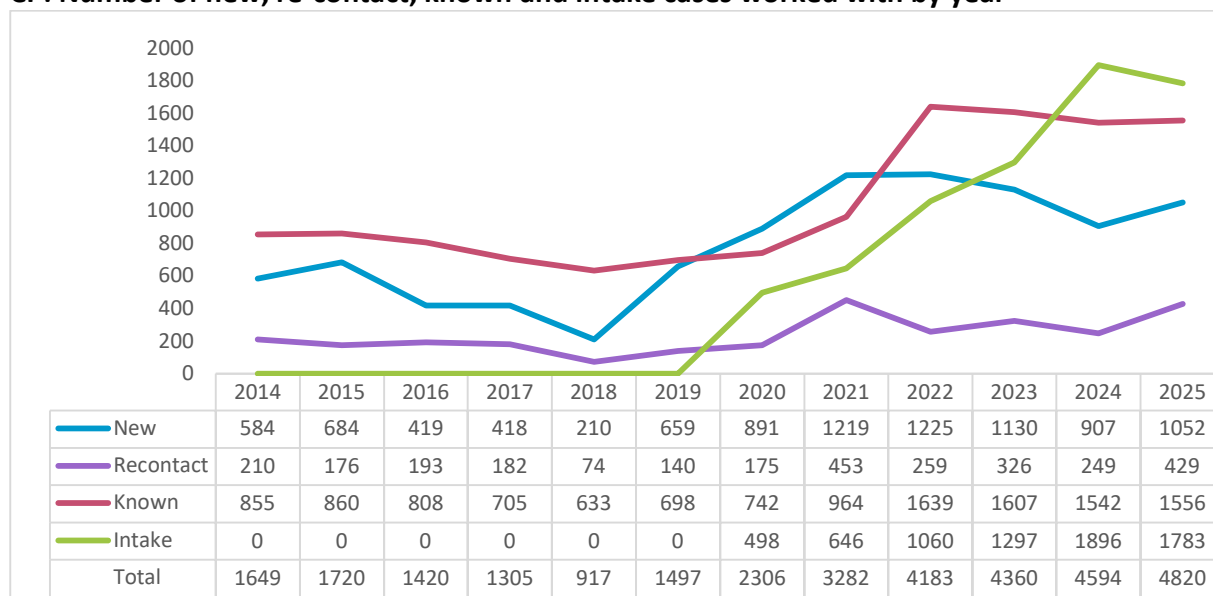


Figure 7: The cases worked with each year can be a new case, recontact case, known case or an intake case (a case starting and ending the year on intake). Further definitions can be found in the glossary. For the above graph, intake began to be reported in 2020 due to the implementation of an online data collection system. Also, as of 2023, the number of new cases is the number of new cases across the entire Agency/Directorate. Prior to 2023 the number of new cases on an Agency/Directorate level was a sum of the new cases reported by each service.

CP: Case state at the end of the reporting period

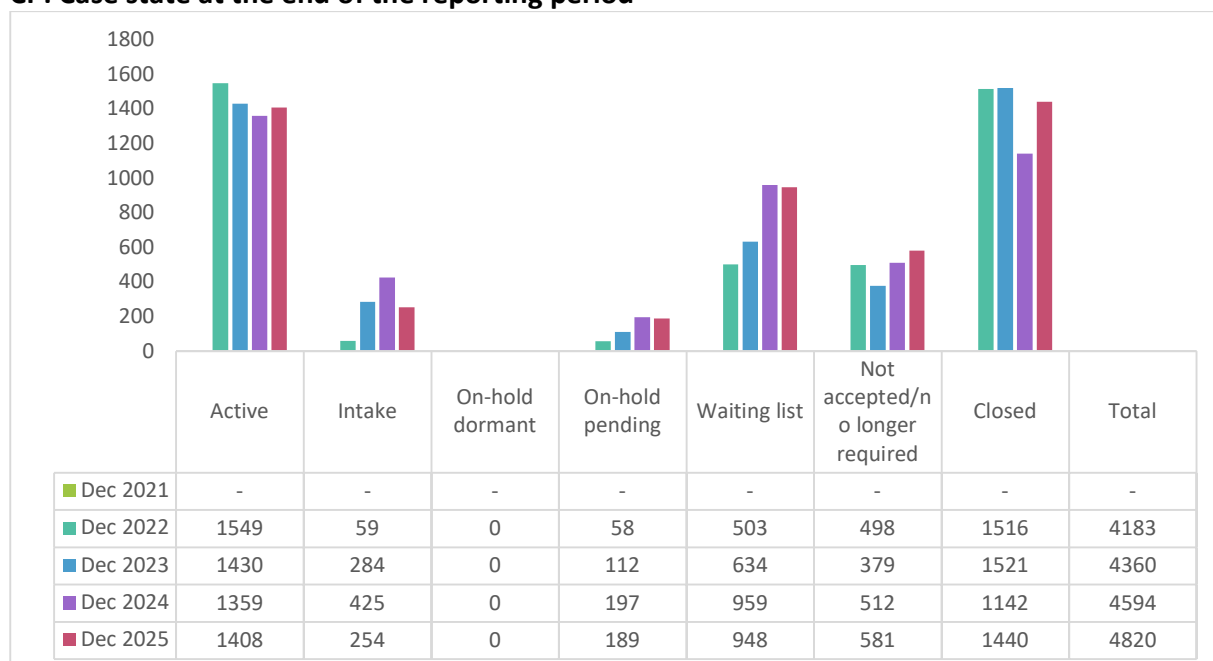


Figure 8: Cases will be handled throughout the year by placing them on intake, adding them to the waiting list, opening them, or closing them (definitions can be found in the glossary). The case state at the end of the reporting year is shown in the figure above. By the end of 2025, 29% (1408) of the cases worked with were still active. The waiting list provides the number of service users who have been assessed and determined to be at low risk, do not have any immediate needs, and/or are awaiting the next available appointment/programme. Such cases are still monitored and provided services but at a lower intensity than an active case.

CP: Waiting list at the end of the reporting period



Figure 9: The figure above only reports cases that are still on the waiting list at the end of the reporting period. The waiting list provides the number of service users who have been assessed and determined to be at low risk, do not have any immediate needs, and/or are awaiting the next available appointment/programme. Such cases are still monitored and provided services but at a lower intensity than an active case.

CP: Number of referred cases, new & re-contact cases opened, and cases closed by CP by year

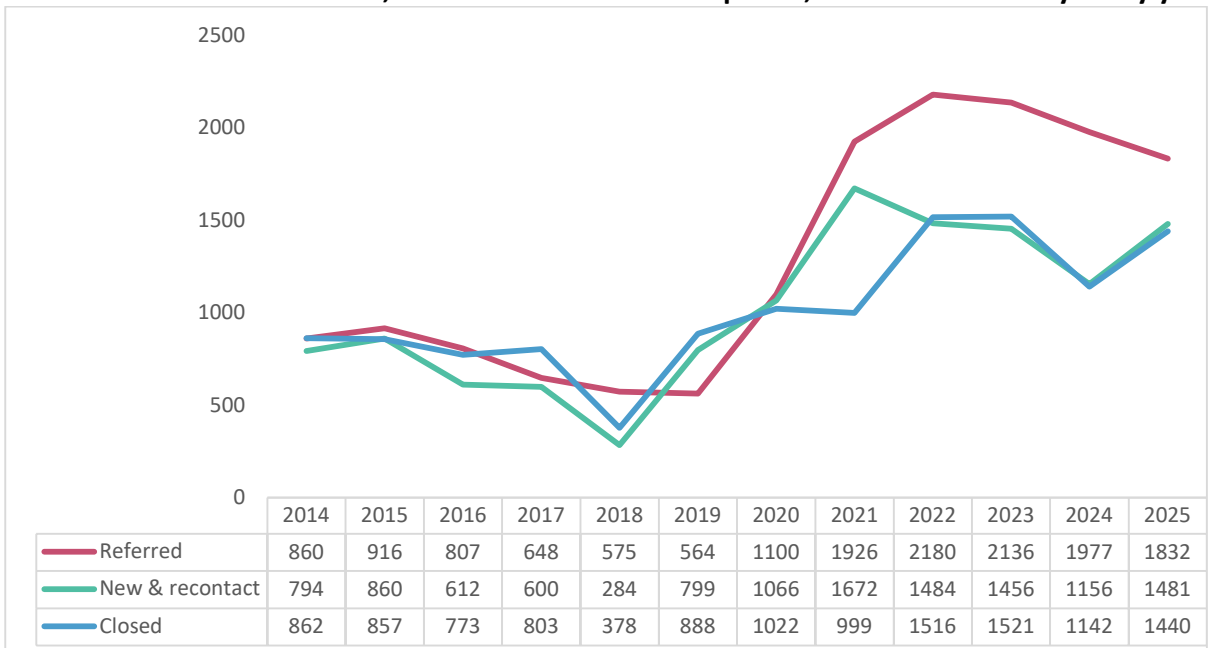


Figure 10: Cases may be referred, opened, or closed throughout the year (definitions can be found in the glossary). Opened cases include both new and recontact cases (see figure 7 for breakdown of new & recontact cases). In 2025, 1832 cases were referred, 1481 new & recontact cases opened, and 1440 cases closed.

A total of **1,481** cases were opened between January and December 2025.

Note: Further breakdowns regarding cases opened by demographics can be found in the Appendix A.

CP: Number of new & re-contact cases opened by age category and gender January - December 2025						
	Male	Female	X	Unborn	Not specified	Total
Unborn	0	0	0	3	0	3
<1	20	20	1	0	0	41
1-5	141	140	4	0	0	285
6-10	225	190	3	0	0	418
11-15	206	230	3	0	0	439
16-17	133	84	0	0	0	217
18-19	43	33	0	0	0	76
20-24	0	0	0	0	0	0
25-29	0	1	0	0	0	1
30-34	0	0	0	0	0	0
35-39	1	0	0	0	0	1
40-44	0	0	0	0	0	0
45-49	0	0	0	0	0	0
50-54	0	0	0	0	0	0
55-59	0	0	0	0	0	0
≥60	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not specified	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	769	698	11	3	0	1481

Figure 11: The figure above classifies the age of the service user in the reporting year based on the specified date of birth. Only data for new & re-contact cases opened in the reported period are provided. In 2025, the highest number of cases opened were ages 11 to 15 (439).

CP: Number of interventions conducted by CP service and year

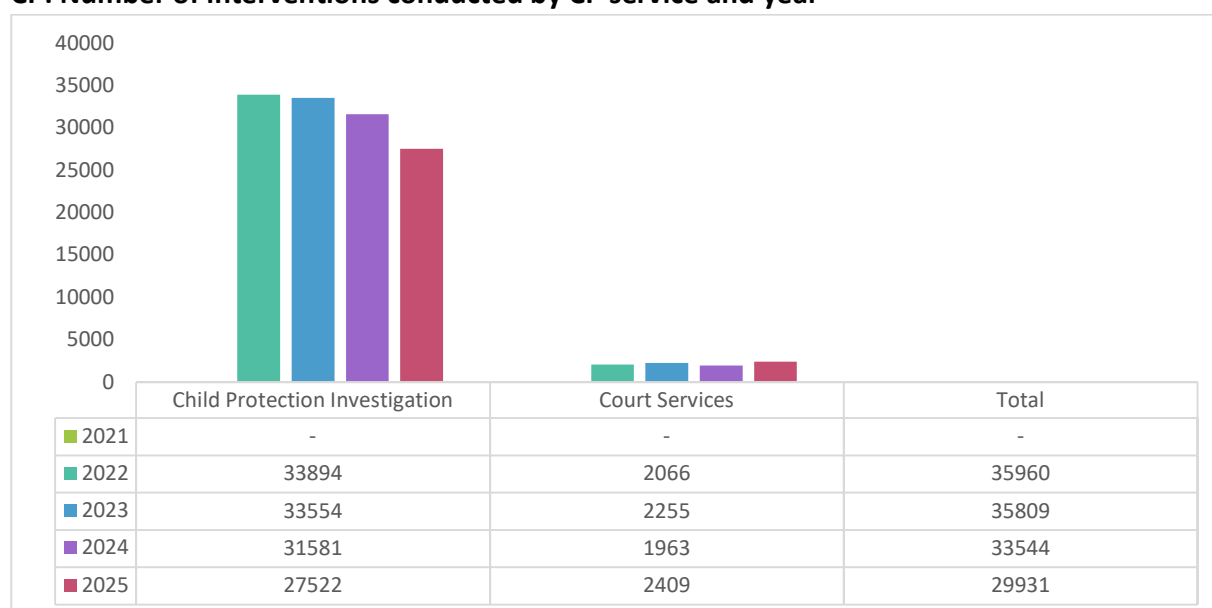


Figure 12: The figure above only provides the number of interventions that have been recorded within the online data collection system as completed or conducted. Interventions are actions taken with, or on behalf of, the service user with the goal to empower and help the person e.g., psychotherapy, assessments, or case conferences.

Service level data

Each service under the Directorate is discussed in the section that follows. Information is provided regarding case activity followed by demographic information for cases worked with and for new & recontact cases opened.

Child Protection Services (CPS)

A new online data collection system and reporting format were introduced in 2020.

CPS: Number of cases and individuals worked with by year

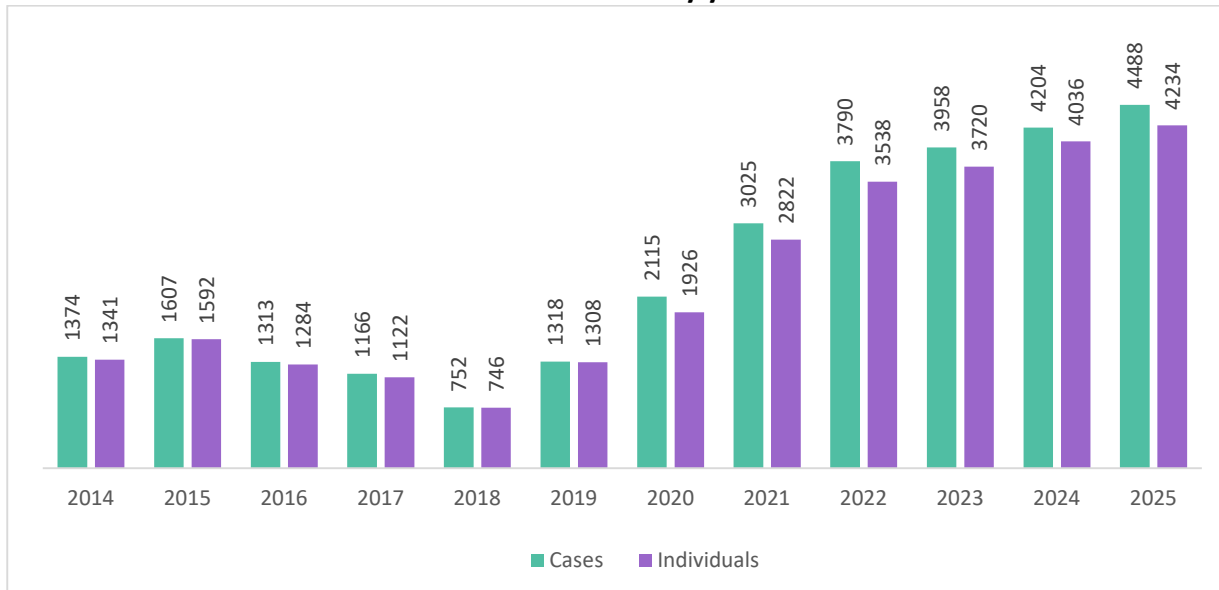


Figure 13: The figure above provides the number of cases worked with and the number of individuals worked with. To demonstrate the difference, consider Person A, who started and stopped attending a service twice in the same year, making it equivalent to 2 cases, but 1 individual worked with. In 2025, 4488 cases and 4234 individuals were worked with compared to 4204 and 4036 respectively in 2024.

A total of **4,488** cases were worked with between January and December 2025.

CPS: Cases worked with Jan-Dec 2025 by gender (no. & %)

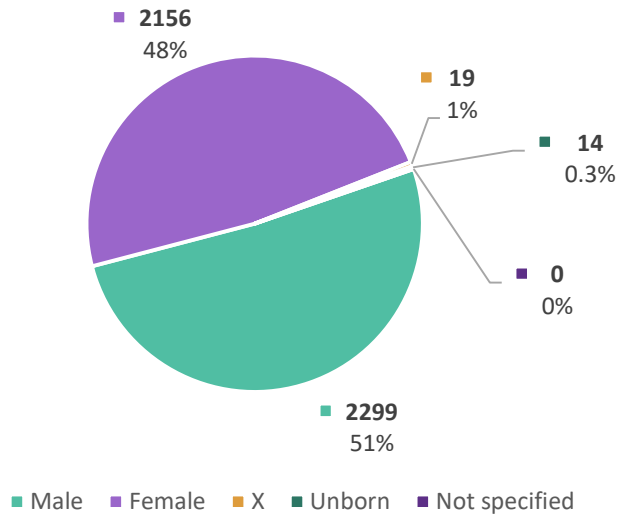


Figure 14: The figure above classifies the gender of the service user. Gender is collected at referral or first contact, but it can be updated throughout the lifetime of the case as required. The gender is collected either through formal documentation and/or the pronouns the person used when referring to themselves. In some cases, an anonymous report is made, and no details are available, and no victim is identifiable and thus the gender information is recorded as not specified. In 2025, the highest percentage of cases worked with were male (51%).

CPS: Cases worked with Jan-Dec 2025 by age category (no. & %)

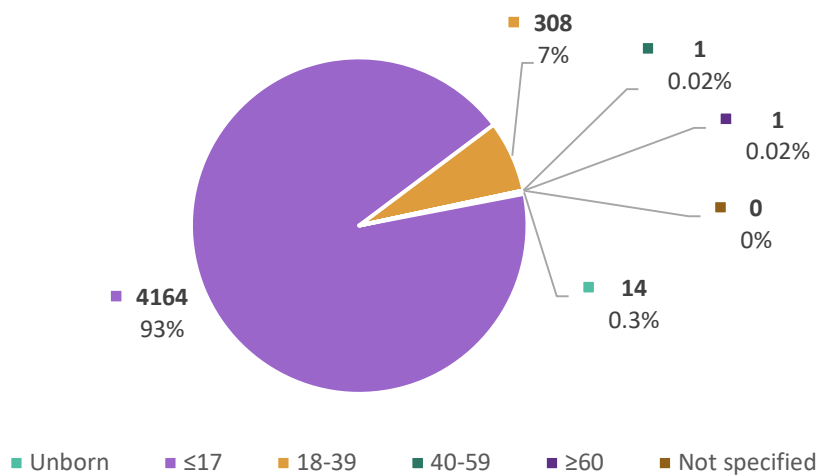


Figure 15: The figure above classifies the age of the service user in the reporting year based on the specified date of birth. In 2025, the highest percentage of cases worked with were ages 17 or younger (93%).

CPS: Cases worked with Jan-Dec 2025 by nationality (no. & %)

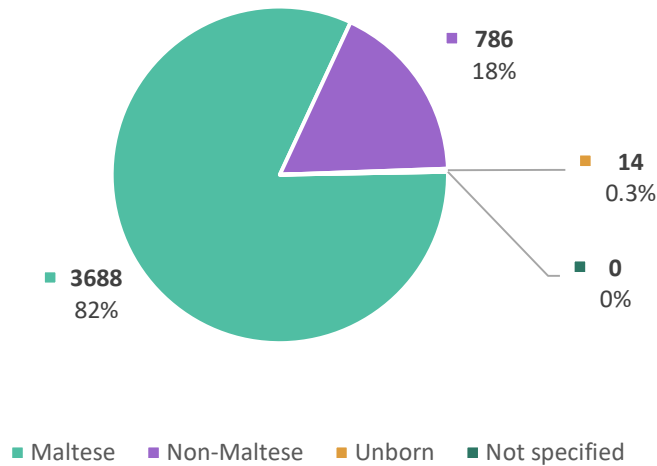
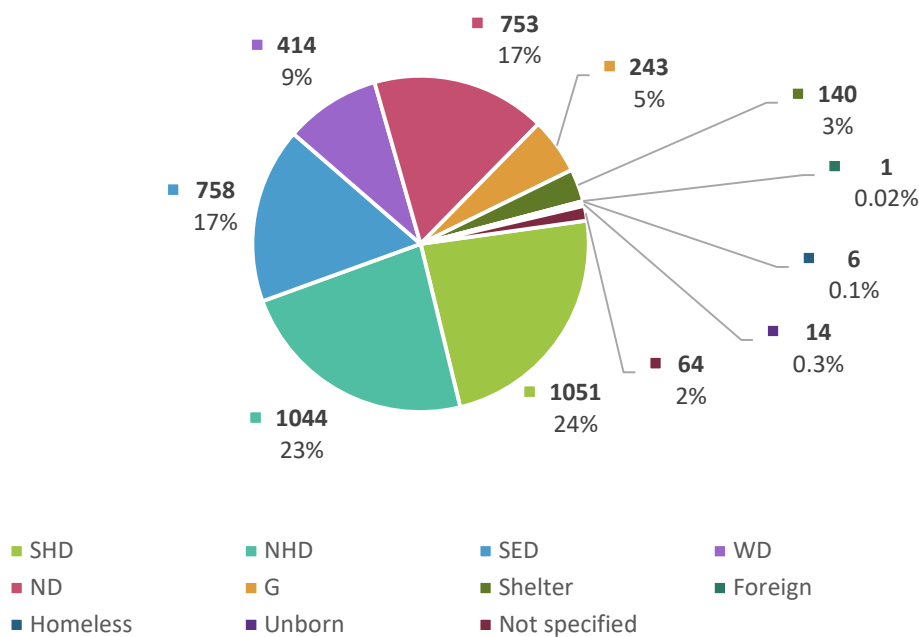


Figure 16: The figure above classifies the nationality as reported by the service user within the reporting year or based on an identity card/document. In 2025, 82% of the cases worked with were Maltese while non-Maltese made up 18% of cases.

CPS: Cases worked with Jan-Dec 2025 by district of residence (no. & %)



Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District; Shelter = shelter/institution; Foreign = Foreign residence.

Figure 17: The figure above classifies the district of residence as reported by the service user within the reporting year. Some service users reside within “shelter/institution” (e.g., residential homes, centre of residential restorative services, or shelters). Some service users are in Malta temporarily and so normally have a foreign residence whilst others are homeless and do not have a fixed residence. Shelter/institution, foreign residence and homeless are reported as separate categories to avoid biasing the data on district. The Southern Harbour District (24%) had the highest percentage of cases worked with in 2025.

CPS: Number of new, re-contact, known and intake cases worked with by year

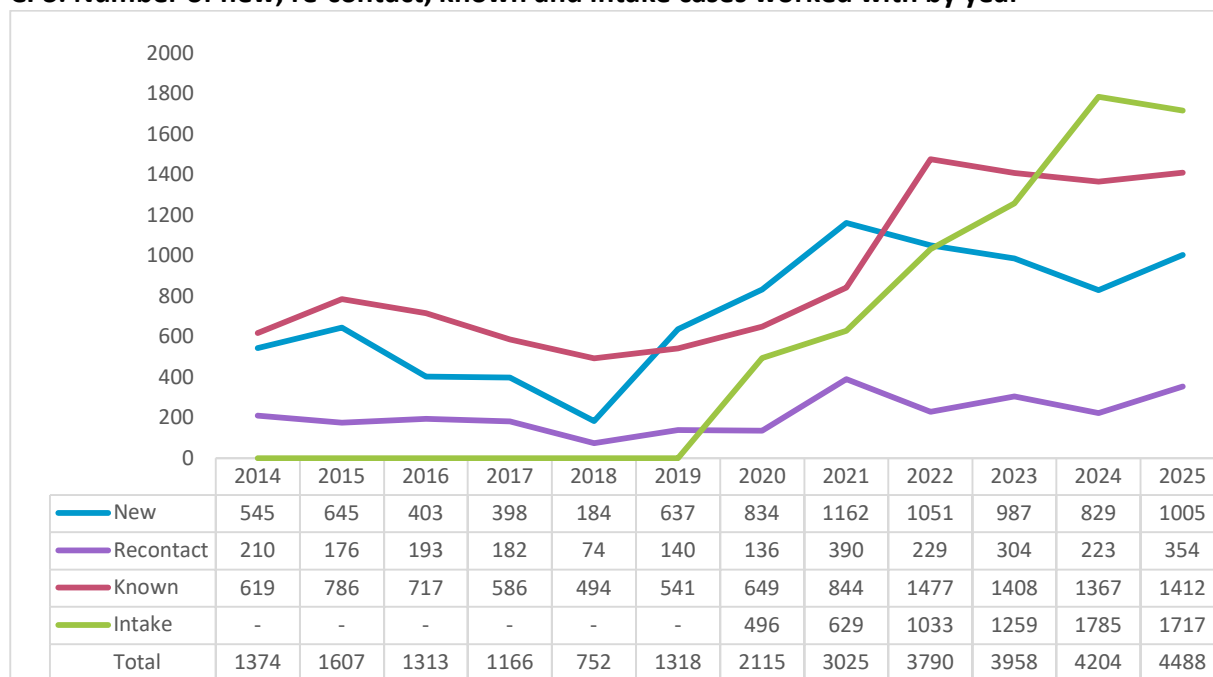


Figure 18: The cases worked with each year can be a new case, recontact case, known case or an intake case (a case starting and ending the year on intake). Further definitions can be found in the glossary. For the above graph, intake began to be reported in 2020 due to the implementation of an online data collection system.

CPS: Case state at the end of the reporting period



Figure 19: Cases will be handled throughout the year by placing them on intake, adding them to the waiting list, opening them, or closing them (definitions can be found in the glossary). The case state at the end of the reporting year is shown in the figure above. By the end of December 2025, 29% (1281) of the cases worked with were still active. The waiting list provides the number of service users who have been assessed and determined to be at low risk, do not have any immediate needs, and/or are awaiting the next available appointment/programme. Such cases are still monitored and provided services but at a lower intensity than an active case.

CPS: Waiting list at the end of the reporting period



Figure 20: The figure above only reports cases that are still on the waiting list at the end of the reporting period. The waiting list provides the number of service users who have been assessed and determined to be at low risk, do not have any immediate needs, and/or are awaiting the next available appointment/programme. Such cases are still monitored and provided services but at a lower intensity than an active case. In 2018, no data was available. As of 2021 the data was extracted from the new online data collection system which report on a service user level rather than grouping service users under a case.

CPS: Number of referred, new & re-contact, and closed cases by year

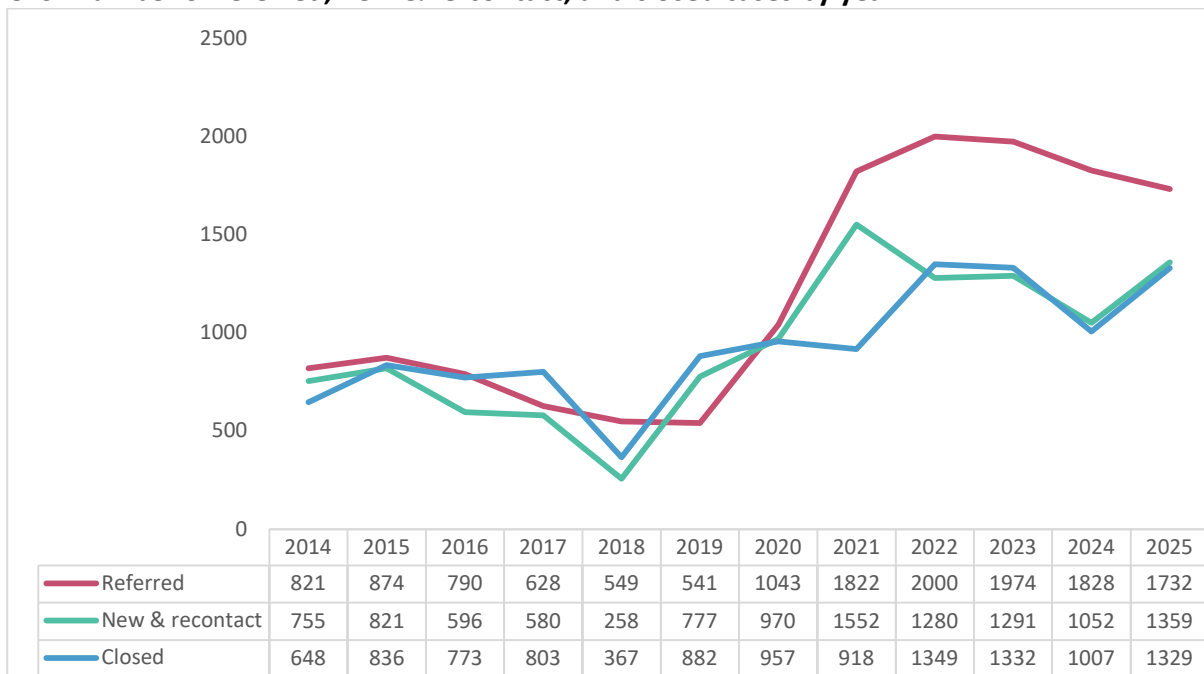


Figure 21: Cases may be referred, opened, or closed throughout the year (definitions can be found in the glossary). Opened cases include both new and recontact cases (see figure 18 for breakdown of new & recontact cases). In 2025, 1732 cases were referred, 1359 new & recontact cases opened, and 1329 cases closed.

CPS: number of referred cases by type of alleged abuse and year of referral



Figure 22: Within the online data collection system, all forms of alleged abuse reported during the referral are ticked. The number of alleged abuses indicated in the above figures, are each out of all referrals received throughout the year. The data cannot be summed across the various forms of abuse because service users may report more than one type during referral. For example, out of 1732 referrals in 2025, 1070 reported being at risk and out of 1732 referrals in 2025, 433 reported physical abuse.

At risk factors are characteristics that may increase the likelihood of experiencing child abuse and neglect, but they may or may not be direct causes e.g., substance use disorders, and intimate partner violence (IPV), drug trafficking, mental health, and/or bullying. Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs, and the most common forms includes lack of hygiene and/or abandonment. Cybercrime are abuses committed through an online platform. Parental alienation is a strategy whereby one parent intentionally displays to the child unjustified negativity aimed at the other parent with the aim to damage the child's relationship with the other parent and to turn the child's emotions against that other parent. Unaccompanied minors are monitored as they may have been exposed to risks and possibly witnessed extreme forms of violence, abuse or exploitation as well as being at risk of being marginalised and drawn into criminal activity or radicalisation.

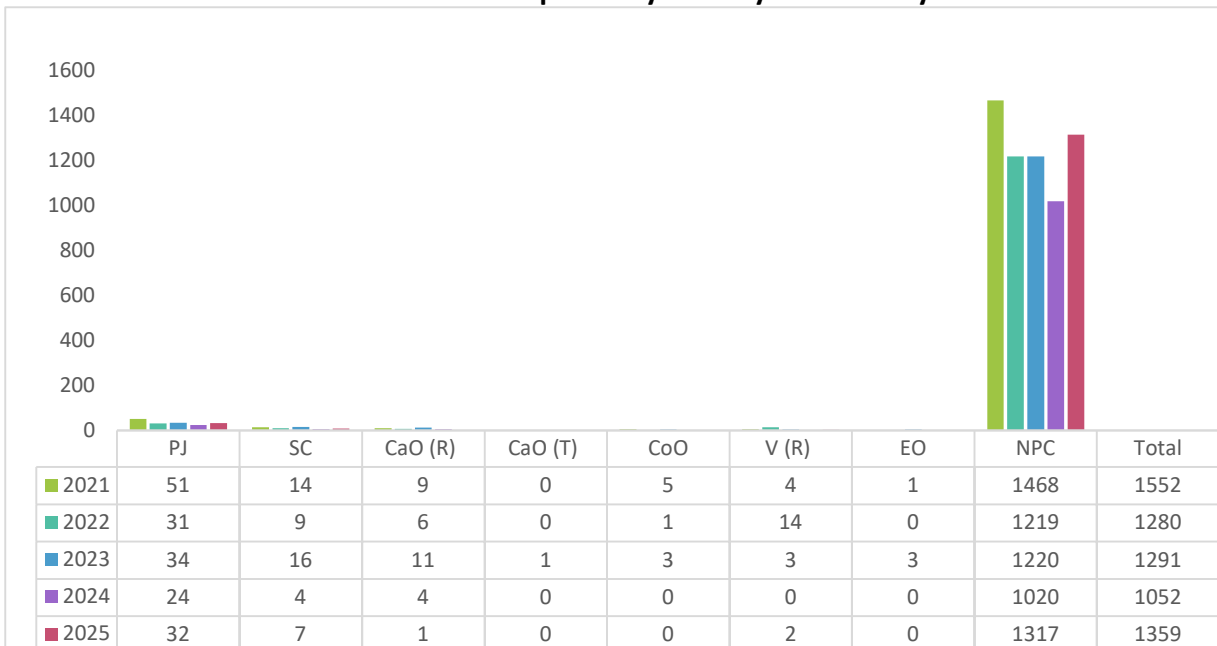
A total of **1,359** cases were opened between January and December 2025.

Note: Further breakdowns regarding cases opened by demographics can be found in the Appendix A.

CPS: Number of new & re-contact cases opened by age category and gender						
January - December 2025						
	Male	Female	X	Unborn	Not specified	Total
Unborn	0	0	0	3	0	3
<1	20	20	1	0	0	41
1-5	129	124	4	0	0	257
6-10	197	171	3	0	0	371
11-15	189	211	3	0	0	403
16-17	129	82	0	0	0	211
≥18	42	31	0	0	0	73
Not specified	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	706	639	11	3	0	1359

Figure 23: The figure above classifies the age and gender of the service user in the reporting year based on the specified date of birth and gender. Only data for new & re-contact cases opened in the reported period are provided. In 2025, the highest number of cases opened were ages 11 to 15 (403).

CPS: Number of new & re-contact cases opened by custody status and year



Graph Key: PJ= Parental joint; SC= Sole Custody; CaO (R) = Care order (regular); CaO (T) = Care order (temporary); CoO = Court order; V (R)= Voluntary (Regular); EO= Emergency order; NPC= Normal parental custody.

Figure 24: The figure above classifies the custody status, as per legal definitions¹, within the reporting year. It is the status as reported by the service user, known by the case worker, or based on documentation. Only data for new & re-contact cases opened in the reported period are provided. The variable is reported for children with a special custody status, or it is normal parental custody.

¹ Laws of Malta, chapter 602, Minor Protection (Alternative Care) Act

Court Services

A new online data collection system and reporting format were introduced in 2020. In 2021, the Service was moved from the Directorate Alternative Care to the Child Protection Directorate.

Court: Number of cases and individuals worked with by year

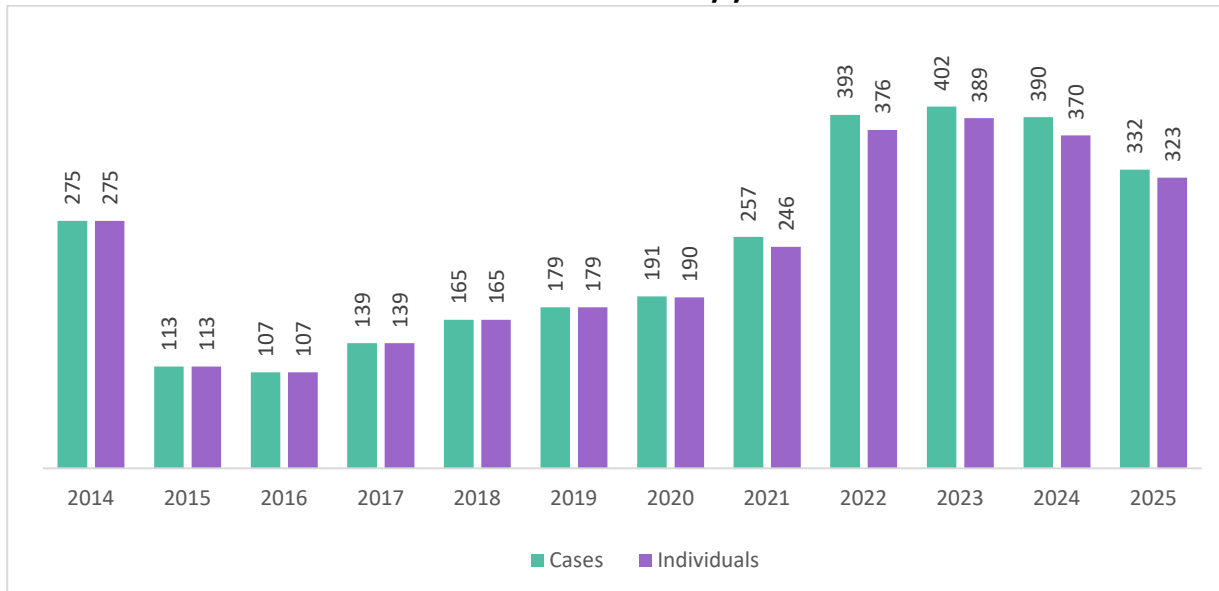


Figure 25: The figure above provides the number of cases worked with and the number of individuals worked with. To demonstrate the difference, consider Person A, who started and stopped attending a service twice in the same year, making it equivalent to 2 cases, but 1 individual worked with. In 2025, 332 cases and 323 individuals were worked with compared to 390 and 370 respectively in 2024.

A total of **332** cases were worked with between January and December 2025.

Court: Cases worked with Jan-Dec 2025 by gender (no. & %)

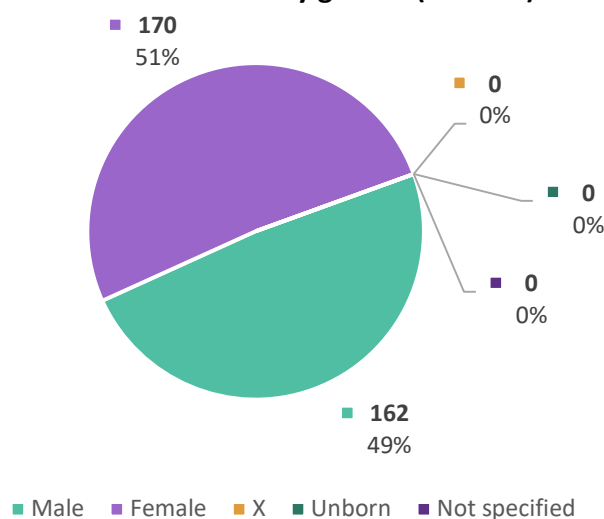


Figure 26: The figure above classifies the gender of the service user. Gender is collected at referral or first contact, but it can be updated throughout the lifetime of the case as required. The gender is collected either through formal documentation and/or the pronouns the person used when referring to themselves. In 2025, the highest percentage of cases worked with were female (51%).

Court: Cases worked with Jan-Dec 2025 by age category (no. & %)

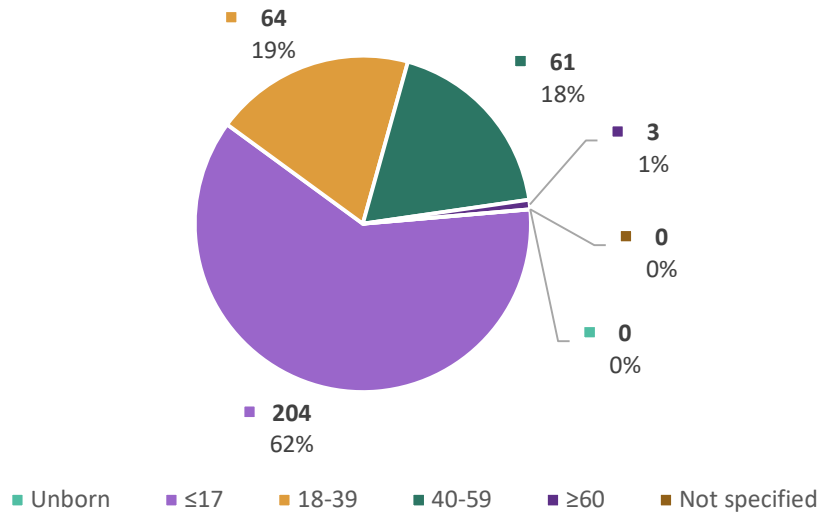


Figure 27: The figure above classifies the age of the service user in the reporting year based on the specified date of birth. In 2025, the highest percentage of cases worked with were ages 17 or younger (62%).

Court: Cases worked with Jan-Dec 2025 by nationality (no. & %)

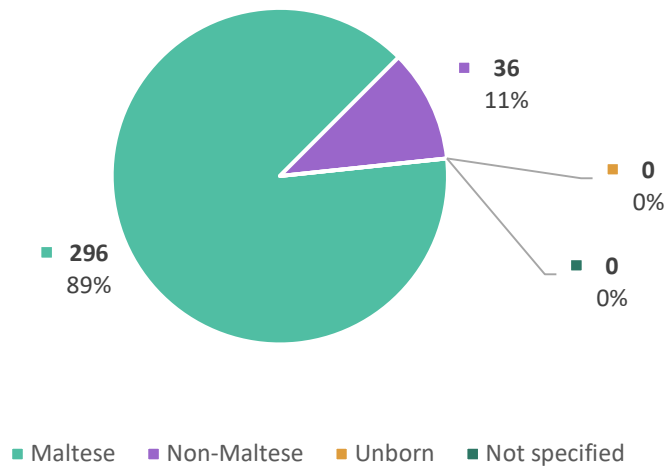
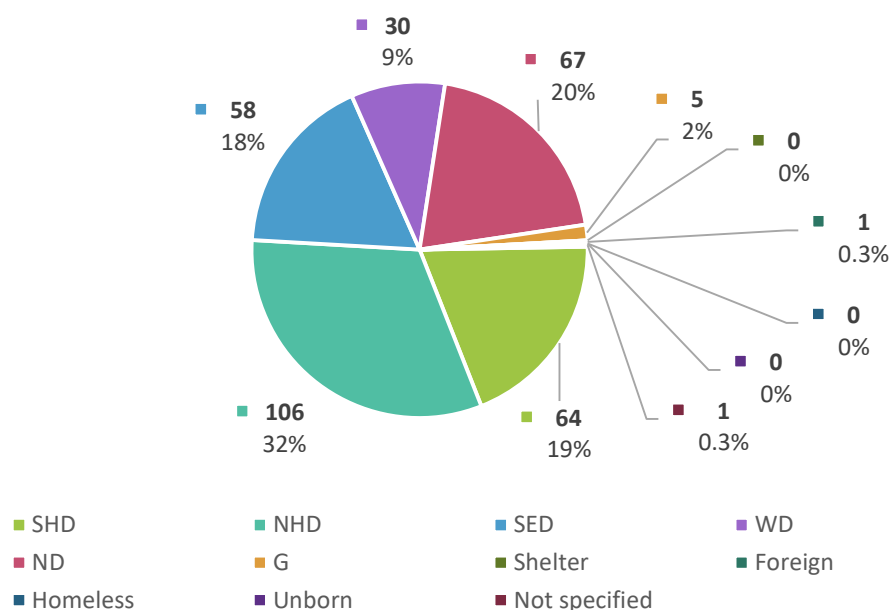


Figure 28: The figure above classifies the nationality as reported by the service user within the reporting year or based on an identity card/document. In 2025, 89% of the cases worked with were Maltese while non-Maltese made up 11% of cases.

Court: Cases worked with Jan-Dec 2025 by district of residence (no. & %)



Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District; Shelter = shelter/institution; Foreign = Foreign residence.

Figure 29: The figure above classifies the district of residence as reported by the service user within the reporting year. Some service users reside within “shelter/institution” (e.g., residential homes, centre of residential restorative services, or shelters). Some service users are in Malta temporarily and so normally have a foreign residence whilst others are homeless and do not have a fixed residence. Shelter/institution, foreign residence and homeless are reported as separate categories to avoid biasing the data on district. The Northern Harbour District (32%) had the highest percentage of cases worked with in 2025.

Court: Number of new, re-contact, known and intake cases worked with by year

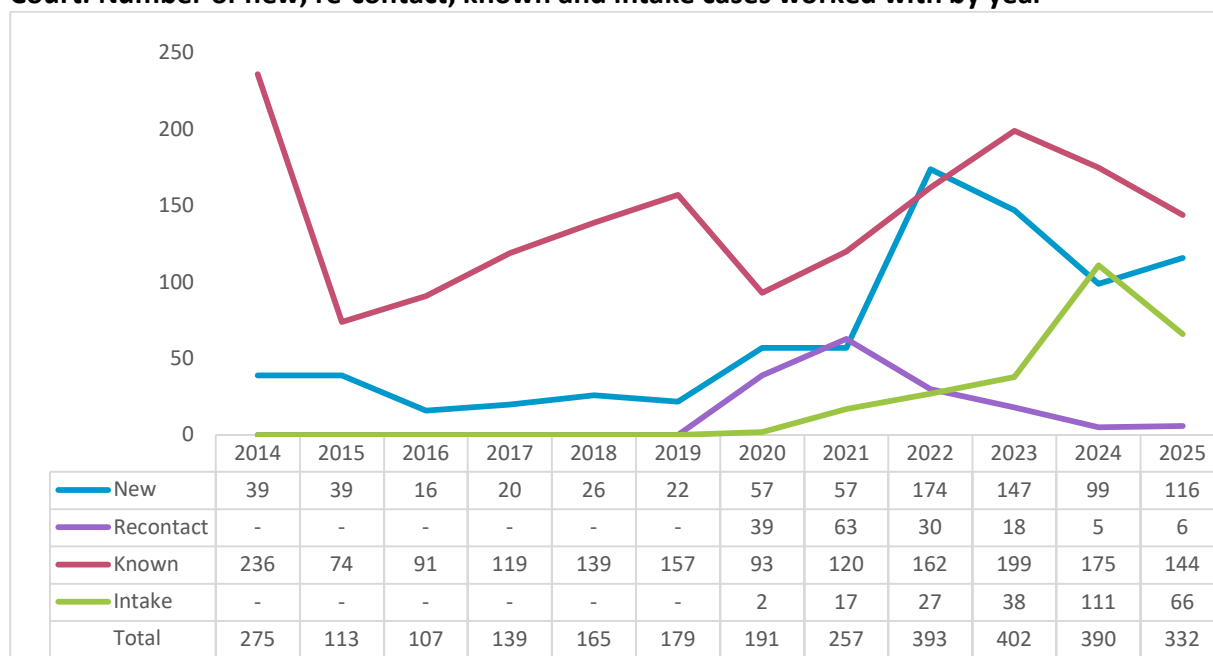


Figure 30: The cases worked with each year can be a new case, recontact case, known case or an intake case (a case starting and ending the year on intake). Further definitions can be found in the glossary. For the above graph, intake began to be reported in 2020 due to the implementation of an online data collection system. Between 2010 and 2019 new and recontact cases could not be distinguished due to the data system utilised whereby all cases were recorded as new cases.

Court: Case state at the end of the reporting period

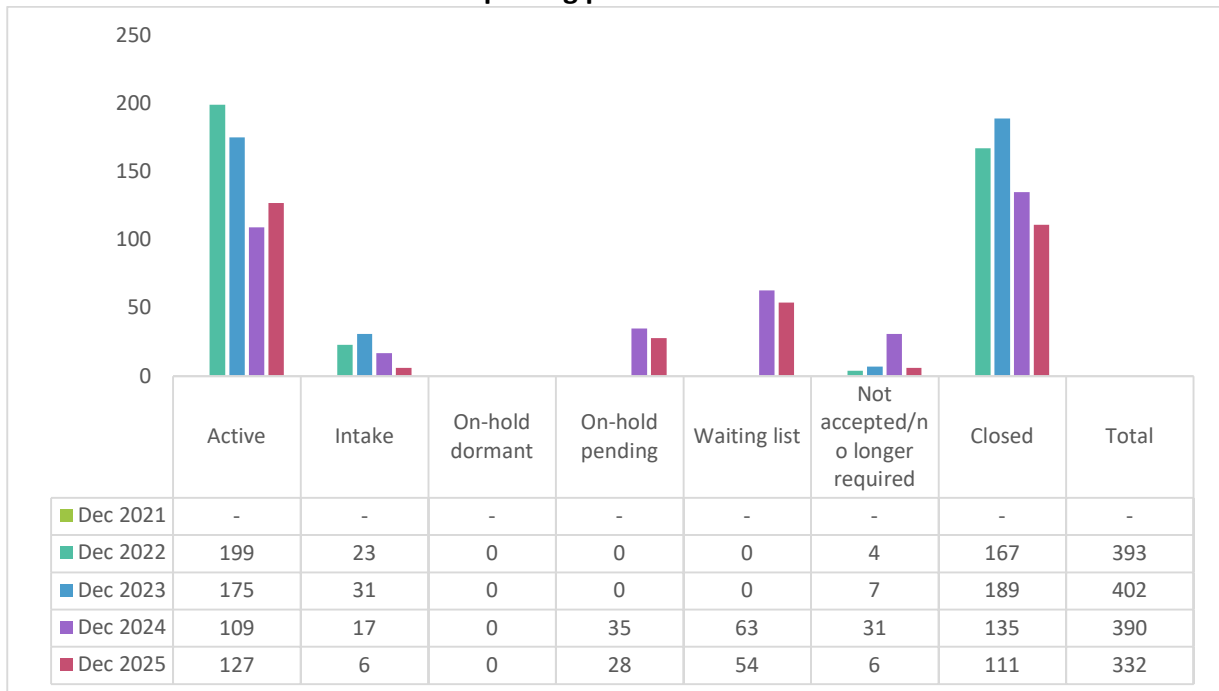


Figure 31: Cases will be handled throughout the year by placing them on intake, adding them to the waiting list, opening them, or closing them (definitions can be found in the glossary). The case state at the end of the reporting year is shown in the figure above. By the end of December 2025, 38% (127) of the cases worked with were still active. The waiting list provides the number of service users who have been assessed and determined to be at low risk, do not have any immediate needs, and/or are awaiting the next available appointment/programme. Such cases are still monitored and provided services but at a lower intensity than an active case.

Court: Waiting list at the end of the reporting period

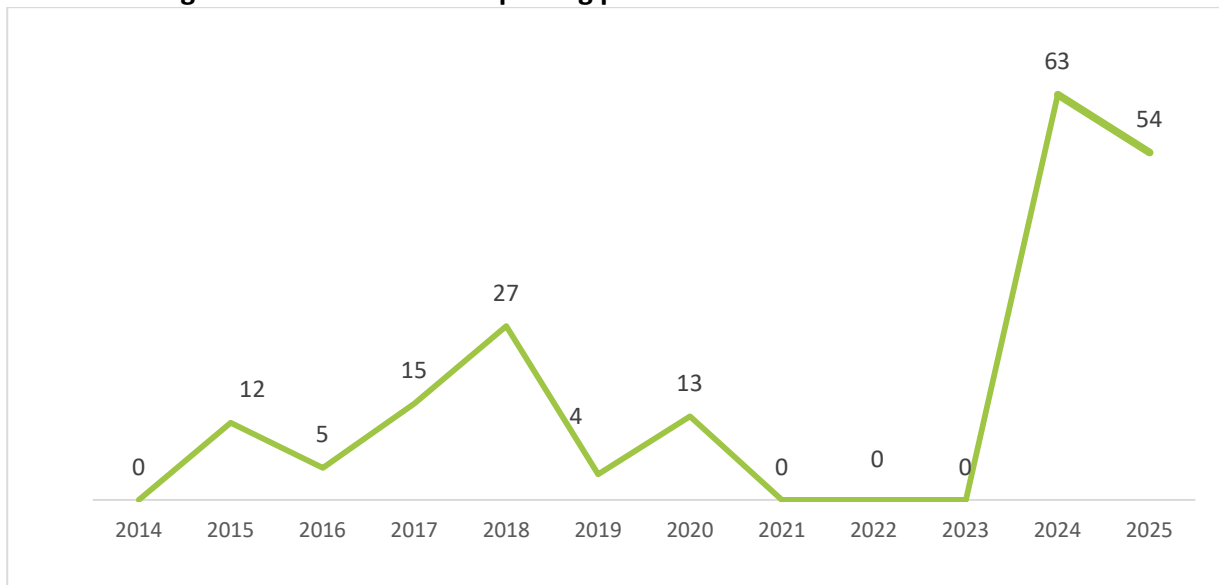


Figure 32: The figure above only reports cases that are still on the waiting list at the end of the reporting period. The waiting list provides the number of service users who have been assessed and determined to be at low risk, do not have any immediate needs, and/or are awaiting the next available appointment/programme. Such cases are still monitored and provided services but at a lower intensity than an active case.

Court: Number of referred, new & re-contact, and closed cases by year

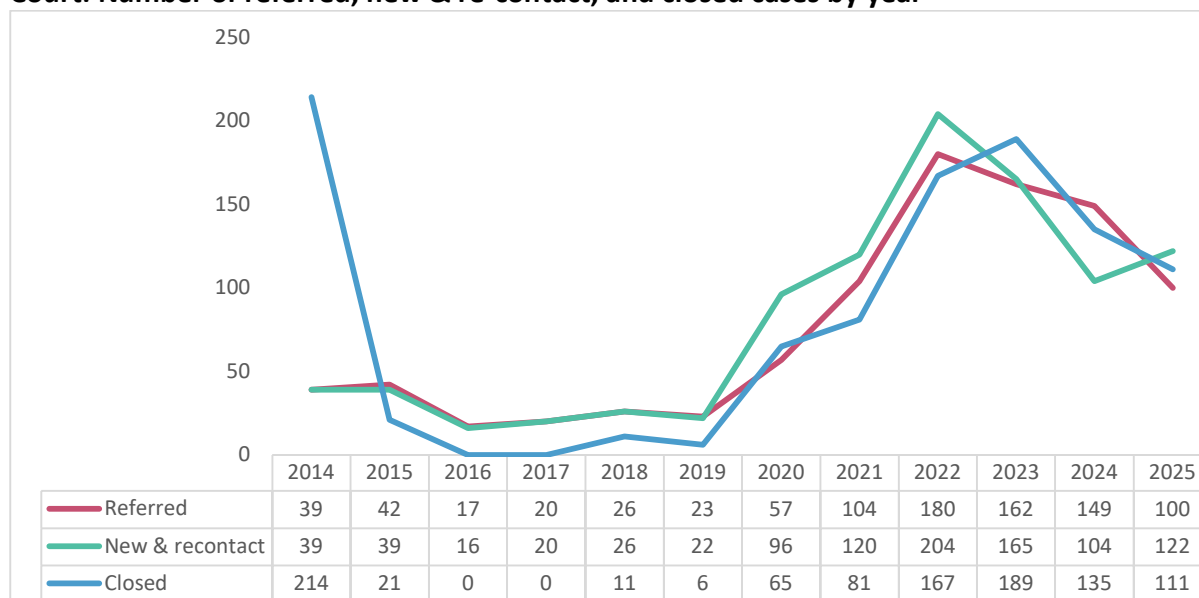


Figure 33: Cases may be referred, opened, or closed throughout the year (definitions can be found in the glossary). Opened cases include both new and recontact cases (see figure 30 for breakdown of new & recontact cases). In 2025, 100 cases were referred, 122 new & recontact cases opened, and 111 cases closed.

A total of **122** cases were opened between January and December 2025.

Note: Further breakdowns regarding cases opened by demographics can be found in the Appendix A.

Court: Number of new & re-contact cases opened by age category and gender						
January - December 2025						
	Male	Female	X	Unborn	Not specified	Total
Unborn	0	0	0	0	0	0
≤17	61	56	0	0	0	117
18-19	1	2	0	0	0	3
20-24	0	0	0	0	0	0
25-29	0	1	0	0	0	1
30-34	0	0	0	0	0	0
35-39	1	0	0	0	0	1
40-44	0	0	0	0	0	0
45-49	0	0	0	0	0	0
50-54	0	0	0	0	0	0
55-59	0	0	0	0	0	0
≥60	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not specified	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	63	59	0	0	0	122

Figure 34: The figure above classifies the age and gender of the service user in the reporting year based on the specified date of birth and gender. Only data for new & re-contact cases opened in the reported period are provided. In 2025, the highest number of cases opened were ages 17 or younger (117).

Appendix A

For comparing yearly trends, instead of using cases worked with, which would include any cases carried over from one year to the next, we use the number of new & recontact cases opened because it excludes the carried over cases and gives us an indication of incidence data.

Percentage of new & re-contact cases opened by gender and year

The table below classifies the gender of the service user whose case was opened in the reported period. Gender is collected at referral or first contact, but it can be updated throughout the lifetime of the case as required. The gender is collected either through formal documentation and/or the pronouns the person utilised when referring to themselves.

Child Protection Service	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Male	768	643	655	597	706
Female	735	625	620	443	639
X	2	4	8	8	11
Unborn	10	4	5	0	3
Not specified	37	4	3	4	0
Total	1552	1280	1291	1052	1359

Courts Service	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Male	61	101	80	47	63
Female	59	103	85	56	59
X	0	0	0	0	0
Unborn	0	0	0	1	0
Not specified	0	0	0	0	0
Total	120	204	165	104	122

Child Protection Directorate	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Male	829	744	735	644	769
Female	794	728	705	499	698
X	2	4	8	8	11
Unborn	10	4	5	1	3
Not specified	37	4	3	4	0
Total	1672	1484	1456	1156	1481

Percentage of new & re-contact cases opened by age category and year

The table below classifies the age of the service user in the reporting year based on the specified date of birth.

Child Protection Service	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Unborn	10	4	5	0	3
<1	86	48	40	37	41
1-5	319	290	286	209	257
6-10	429	331	373	274	371
11-15	505	356	388	271	403
16-17	165	217	161	142	211
≥18	38	34	38	119	73
Age Not Specified	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1552	1280	1291	1052	1359

Courts Service	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Unborn	0	0	0	1	0
<1	0	0	0	0	0
1-5	0	0	1	11	28
6-10	0	2	2	16	47
11-15	0	0	0	10	36
16-17	0	2	0	1	6
≥18	120	200	162	65	5
Age Not Specified	0	0	0	0	0
Total	120	204	165	104	122

Child Protection Directorate	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Unborn	10	4	5	1	3
<1	86	48	40	37	41
1-5	319	290	287	220	285
6-10	429	333	375	290	418
11-15	505	356	388	281	439
16-17	165	219	161	143	217
≥18	158	234	200	184	78
Age Not Specified	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1672	1484	1456	1156	1481

Percentage of new & re-contact cases opened by nationality and year

The table below classifies the nationality as reported by the service user within the reporting year or based on an identity card/document.

Child Protection Service	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Unborn	0	0	5	0	3
Maltese	1313	931	1067	751	1025
Non-Maltese	239	349	219	301	331
Not specified	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1552	1280	1291	1052	1359

Courts Service	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Unborn	0	0	0	1	0
Maltese	110	177	136	84	114
Non-Maltese	10	27	29	19	8
Not specified	0	0	0	0	0
Total	120	204	165	104	122

Child Protection Directorate	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Unborn	0	0	5	1	3
Maltese	1423	1108	1203	835	1139
Non-Maltese	249	376	248	320	339
Not specified	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1672	1484	1456	1156	1481

Percentage of new & re-contact cases opened by district of residence and year

The table below classifies the district of residence as reported by the service user within the reporting year. Some service users reside within "shelter/institution" (e.g., residential homes, centre of residential restorative services, or shelters). Some service users are in Malta temporarily and so normally have a foreign residence whilst others are homeless and do not have a fixed residence. Shelter/institution, foreign residence and homeless are reported as separate categories to avoid biasing the data on district.

Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District; Shelter = shelter/institution; Foreign = Foreign residence.

Child Protection Service	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Northern Harbour District	387	293	269	189	303
Southern Harbour District	392	267	293	219	254
Northern District	257	191	238	202	276
Southeastern District	299	277	228	191	230
Western District	133	125	122	71	126
Gozo district	57	67	51	56	76
Shelter/ institution/ other residence	2	6	22	88	51
Foreign residence	1	0	0	0	1
Homeless	0	0	1	3	2
Unborn	-	-	-	-	3
Not specified	24	54	67	33	37
Total	1552	1280	1291	1052	1359

Courts Service	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Northern Harbour District	31	52	43	27	37
Southern Harbour District	28	42	37	14	29
Northern District	24	27	28	27	21
Southeastern District	23	41	29	11	23
Western District	10	31	16	12	10
Gozo district	0	5	1	2	2
Shelter/ institution/ other residence	0	0	1	0	0
Foreign residence	0	0	0	0	0
Homeless	0	0	0	0	0
Unborn	-	-	-	-	0
Not specified	4	6	10	11	0
Total	120	204	165	104	122

Child Protection Directorate	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Northern Harbour District	418	345	312	216	340
Southern Harbour District	420	309	330	233	283
Northern District	281	218	266	229	297
Southeastern District	322	318	257	202	253
Western District	143	156	138	83	136
Gozo district	57	72	52	58	78
Shelter/ institution/ other residence	2	6	23	88	51
Foreign residence	1	0	0	0	1
Homeless	0	0	1	3	2
Unborn	-	-	-	-	3
Not specified	28	60	77	44	37
Total	1672	1484	1456	1156	1481

Appendix B

Service descriptions

Service	Description
Child Protection Service (CPS)	The service deals with cases of abuse and neglect of children and is also involved when a child seems to be suffering from, or is at risk of, significant harm.
Court Service	The Court Service focuses mostly on presenting social work court reports as requested by the Courts of Malta.

Glossary of terms

Variable	Definition
Cases worked with	The total number of service user cases that were new, re-contact or known in the reporting year and intake cases still on intake at the end of the reporting period. This does not indicate the number of individuals as some individuals could have multiple cases in the same reporting year. For example, 1 individual may have re-contacted the service 3 times in the same year and would account for 3 cases worked with in the same year.
Individuals worked with	The total number of unique individual service users who had at least one case worked with in the reporting period. This excludes cases re-opened or re-referred in the same year for the same person.
New case	A case that was opened or activated for the first time ever within the reporting year and that was never previously worked with.
Re-contact case	A case that was worked with and closed in the past and has been re-activated or re-opened within the current reporting year. A case is also considered a re-contact if it is re-opened after a new case was closed in the current reporting year.
Known case	Cases that were activated or opened in the previous reporting years and that are still active in the current reporting year. This may also be referred to as cases carried over from previous years.
Intake case	When a case is referred to the service it is placed on intake (intake is the initial state for every case). At this stage information is gathered to address any immediate needs and to determine whether a case will be assigned to a professional, placed on the waiting list, opened, or closed from intake. If a case is not a known case or opened case within the reporting period, it remains an intake case.
Waiting list	Intake cases are placed on the waiting list when it is determined that the person would benefit from accessing the service, but the service cannot be provided immediately. This can be due to various factors such as, but not limited to, space limitations, further assessments required or further feedback from the service user is required.
Referred case	A referral is when an individual's details were given to the service by another person or the service users themselves to request assistance. A case may be referred more than once in a year. Some cases may be referred and placed on a waiting list or not taken up because the service was not appropriate for the person's needs.
New & re-contact case	When a case was opened or allocated. This includes new cases (first ever contact with the service) and re-opened cases (cases worked with in the past) An individual may be seen more than once in a year and may be a new case and later a re-contact case in the same reporting year.
Closed case	When a case was closed or terminated. The same case may be closed more than once in a year if the case was re-opened in the same year.
Case state	The state of the case at the end of the reporting period. Cases can be active, closed, intake, on-hold, waiting list or not accepted/no longer required. For example, a case may start the reporting period as a known active case but by the end of the reporting period, the case is closed so the case state is now reported as closed.
Active state	A case state where the case was opened in the year and still open by the end of the reporting period.
Closed state	A case state where the case was opened in the year but closed by the end of the reporting period.
Intake state	A case state where the case was on intake in the year and still on intake by the end of the reporting period.
On-hold state	A case state where the case was opened in the year but put on hold by the end of the reporting period. The reason it is placed on hold can be:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pending: cases where all activity stops pending the action of another service. E.g., the case is pending outcomes from the child protection investigations. - Dormant: cases which must remain active but very little to no work is required. This generally occurs when a case is awaiting uptake by another service.
Waiting list state	A case state where the case was on the waiting list in the year and still on the waiting list by the end of the reporting period.
Not accepted/no longer required state	A case state where the case was on intake or the waiting list in the year but closed by the end of the reporting period. Such cases are usually closed because an assessment during intake resulted in the service not being appropriate, the alleged issues were not confirmed, the service user no longer requests the service, or the service user refused to attend.
Global/family cases	Service users' cases may be grouped under a global/family case, particularly when the service works with families. A global/family case may consist of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 service user case: One individual who attends in the year on their own without any other family member, or - 2 or more service users' cases: Several individuals identified as part of the same family attending in the year.
Ghost cases	These are cases where although the case may be registered as active or on intake, the case is actually inactive since the person may not have had contact with the service for a set period of time (no longer actually being worked with). As a result, the case may remain open for some time without any intervention or activities and will skew the actual number of service users worked with. As a result, administrators of the data will conduct exercises to identify these cases and close them administratively as per individuals service policy.
Gender	Gender is reported as male, female, X, unborn or not specified. "X" means a gender that is not exclusively male nor female. Unborn refers to service users still existing in the mother's womb.
Primary problem	Service users often present a complexity of issues. The primary issue is the only, main, or first issue recorded as identified by the service user or the professional.
Not specified	A variable that cannot be specified since the information is not available or the service user was unwilling to provide the information.
Other	Treatment, issue or location not elsewhere specified.

Types of child abuse

At Risk	Situations where there is risk of any form of abuse. This is most commonly found in re-contact situations where the family is monitored so that abuse does not re-occur. It can be found in combination with another form of abuse e.g. "At risk & Emotional" which means that there is the indicated abuse, in this case emotional abuse, and risk of another form of abuse.
Emotional Abuse	This is also referred to as psychological abuse/ violence and involves insults, put-downs, injuring or harming the victim's pets, harming the victim's objects, ignoring the victim, refraining from communicating with the victim, verbal threats, humiliation, etc.
Physical Abuse	Any unwanted physical abuse e.g. pushing, punching, burns and bruises, fractures, throwing of objects, stabbing, use of weapons, etc.
Neglect	Refers to neglecting basic needs of the victim e.g. financial neglect, neglecting to feed the person, neglecting basic hygiene requirements etc.
Sexual abuse	Refers to unwanted sexual activity ranging from forcing the individual to watch pornography to rape. Example, forcing the victim to participate in sexual activities against their will, forcing them to watch the perpetrator engage in sexual activity with another person, etc.

Cybercrime	Cybercrime is defined as criminal activities carried out by means of computers or the Internet.
Parental alienation	Parental alienation occurs when a child refuses to have a relationship with a parent (or a parent's extended family) or grandparent due to manipulation, such as the conveying of exaggerated or false information, by the other parent. The situation most often arises during a divorce or custody battles, but it can happen in intact families as well.
Unaccompanied minor	This is a child traveling (often migrating illegally) without the presence of a legal guardian.

Maltese districts

District	Towns
Northern Harbour District	Birkirkara, Gzira, Hamrun, Msida, Pembroke, Pieta, Qormi, San Giljan, San Gwann, Santa Venera, Sliema, Swieqi, Ta Xbiex.
Southern Harbour District	Birgu, Bormla, Fgura, Floriana, Isla, Kalkara, Luqa, Marsa, Paola, Santa Lucija, Tarxien, Valletta, Xghajra, Zabbar.
Southeastern District	Birzebbugia, Ghaxaq, Gudja, Kirkop, Marsaskala, Marsaxlokk, Mqabba, Qrendi, Safi, Zejtun, Zurrieq.
Western District	Attard, Balzan, Dingli, Iklin, Lija, Mdina, Mtarfa, Rabat, Siggiewi, Zebbug.
Northern District	Gharghur, Mellieha, Mgarr, Mosta, Naxxar, San Pawl il Bahar.
Gozo and Comino	Rabat, Fontana, Ghajnsielem, Gharb, Ghasri, Kerzem, Munxar, Nadur, Qala, San Lawrenz, Sannat, Xaghra, Xewkija, Zebbug, Comino.
Homeless	Not residing within any residence.
Shelter/institution	Resides in a residential home (e.g., elderly home), shelter (e.g., Ghabex or YMCA), centre of residential restorative services (CoRRS) or medical facility (e.g., Mount Carmel Hospital).
Foreign residence	Resides in a foreign country and is in Malta for a short stay.



FSWS Research Team

Vision Statement

Research that educates, inspires, and informs quality responses to improve the wellbeing of children, families, and communities.

Mission Statement

To contribute to a knowledge base that informs responses to social needs through high quality research.



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