# FOUNDATION FOR SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES

Foundation for Social Welfare Services
Here for you

# 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

# FOUNDATION FOR SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES

# 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

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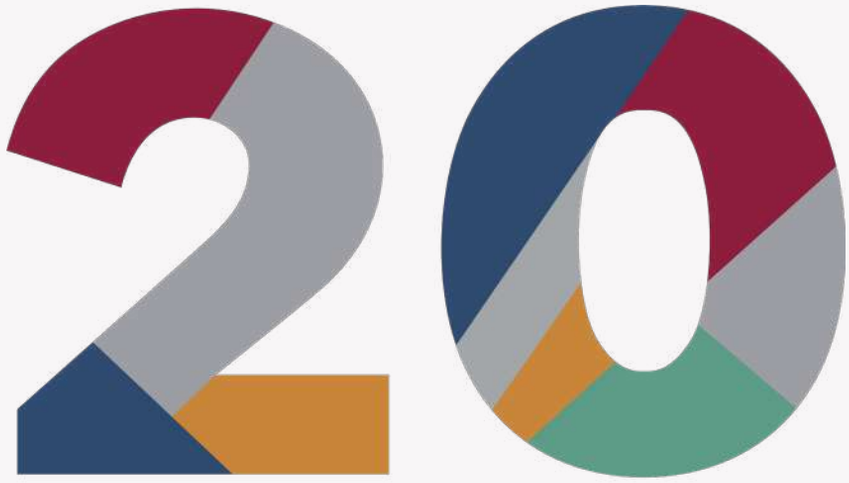
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# FOUNDATION FOR SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES



ANNUAL REPORT



# Message by the Minister for Social Policy and the Family

Every person who reaches out for support carries a story of hardship, courage and, above all, hope. Our responsibility is to ensure that, at the most difficult moments in that story, no one is left to face them alone.

The Foundation for Social Welfare Services Annual Report 2025, shows how this responsibility was translated into meaningful action throughout the year. Across Malta and Gozo, the Foundation protected children, strengthened families, supported victims of violence, responded to homelessness and addiction, and stood beside individuals experiencing vulnerability or crisis.

The achievements documented in these pages demonstrate both the breadth of the Foundation's work as well as the profound positive difference that timely, compassionate and professional intervention can make. Wider community outreach, stronger safeguarding practices, improved coordination, digital innovation and the continued investment in the workforce, have all contributed to services that are more accessible and responsive to people's changing needs.

Behind every figure in this report, there is a life touched by the dedication of others, a child given protection, a family finding stability, a victim reaching safety, or an individual taking the first steps towards recovery and independence. These human outcomes are the truest measure of progress. I here extend my sincere appreciation to the management and employees of the FSWS, whose professionalism, compassion and perseverance lie at the heart of these achievements. I also thank foster carers, volunteers, partner organisations and all those who contribute to this shared national mission.

The work before us remains important, but this report gives us reason to look ahead with confidence. Together, we will continue strengthening a social welfare system founded on dignity, solidarity and opportunity. A system that reaches people when they need it most and helps them move forward with renewed hope.

**Hon. Dr Michael FALZON**
Minister



Hon. Dr MICHAEL **FALZON**
Minister

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

# Message by the FSWS, Chairperson

At the Foundation for Social Welfare Services, we remain acutely aware of the rapidly evolving technological landscape within which we operate. Artificial intelligence and social media have assumed an increasingly prominent role across virtually every sphere of society, fundamentally reshaping the ways in which information is created, shared and received. When used thoughtfully, ethically and responsibly, these tools offer considerable potential. They can enhance efficiency, support more informed decision-making, extend the reach of important messages and enable organisations such as ours to engage more effectively and meaningfully with the communities we serve.

We recognise, however, that the value of any tool lies entirely in how it is used. The same platforms that enable awareness-raising, advocacy and rapid communication can also, regrettably, be used to spread information that is inaccurate, misleading, or harmful. This is a reality that every organisation operating in public space must confront and it is one we take seriously.

In the social sector, the consequences of misinformation are particularly acute. Many of the individuals who turn to organisations such as ours do so at difficult moments in their lives. They may not always have the means, the time, or the access to verify what they read or hear, and they may act on information that turns out to be false. The results can range from confusion and distress to decisions that leave people worse off than before. When misinformation touches on social issues, it can also shape public perception in ways that are unfair to those in vulnerable situations and damaging to the organisations that exist to support them.

The harm is not always easy to quantify. Misinformation rarely affects only a single person or a single case; it ripples outwards, influencing attitudes, eroding trust and shaping the environment in which social services operate. Its effects are often diffuse, cumulative and difficult to measure precisely, yet they are undeniably real and they demand a considered response.

For this reason, I believe that digital responsibility must go hand in hand with digital opportunity. This means promoting digital literacy, so that people are better equipped to assess the information they encounter. It means encouraging a culture of accountability, in which those who share information consider its accuracy and its consequences. It means supporting stronger fact-checking mechanisms and it means being transparent and reliable in our own communications, so that those who turn to us can do so with confidence.

As an organisation, we are committed to approaching these challenges constructively rather than defensively. Technology, including artificial intelligence, should neither be regarded as something to fear nor embraced without careful consideration. Rather, it comprises a range of tools whose value and impact will ultimately be determined by the integrity, sound judgement and care exercised by those who use them.

As we look to the future, we remain committed to harnessing the opportunities presented by this new era with care and responsibility, while continuing to stand alongside the individuals, families and communities we serve, both today and in the years ahead.

**George BORG**
Chairperson



GEORGE **BORG**
Chairperson

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

# Foundation for Social Welfare Services
## Board Members



FSWS Board Members from left to right:

**Ms. Amanda Grech**
**Mr. Saviour Grima**
**Ms. Sharon Bond**
**Mr. Stephen Rizzo**
**Mr. George Borg – Chairperson**
**Mr. Alfred Grixti – Chief Executive Officer**
**Ms. Tiziana Spiteri Aquilina – Board Secretary**
**Mr. Noel Abela**
**Dr. Karen Carachi**
**Ms. Marietta Cassar**
**Ms. Kimberly Micallef – Secretary to the Chairperson**
**Mr. Nicholas Saliba**

# Report by the
FSWS, Chief Executive Officer

# Another Year of Growth and Transformation

*"While statistics provide important indicators of performance, the true measure of our success remains the positive impact made in the lives of the people we serve. Behind every figure lies an individual, a child, a family or a community whose circumstances have improved through timely intervention, professional support and dedicated care."*



ALFRED **GRIXTI**
Chief Executive Officer

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

# INTRODUCTION

2025 was another year of sustained growth, innovation and consolidation for the Foundation for Social Welfare Services.

As Malta's national provider of specialised social welfare services, FSWS continued to respond to increasingly complex social realities while remaining firmly committed to its mission of supporting vulnerable children, families and adults across Malta and Gozo.

Demand for our services remained strong throughout the year, continuing the upward trend observed over the past decade. This continued growth reflects both increasing social needs and the confidence that the public places in the professionalism, accessibility and effectiveness of our services.

During 2025, the Foundation continued investing in service quality, workforce development, digital transformation and evidence-based practice. We strengthened our operational capacity across several services while continuing to develop innovative responses to emerging challenges including child protection, domestic violence, mental health, homelessness, addiction, social exclusion and community wellbeing.

Our priority remained clear: ensuring that persons approaching FSWS receive a timely, professional and person-centred response regardless of their background, circumstances or locality.

The year was also characterised by strengthened collaboration with Government Ministries, national authorities, the voluntary sector, international partners and local communities. These partnerships continue to play a crucial role in ensuring holistic support for service users and in strengthening Malta's social welfare ecosystem.

At corporate level, substantial efforts continued to strengthen governance arrangements, risk management systems, quality assurance mechanisms and staff wellbeing initiatives. We also continued investing in our infrastructure, information systems and professional workforce to ensure that FSWS remains equipped to meet future challenges.

While statistics provide important indicators of performance, the true measure of our success remains the positive impact made in the lives of the people we serve. Behind every figure lies an individual, a child, a family or a community whose circumstances have improved through timely intervention, professional support and dedicated care.

This report provides an overview of the work carried out throughout 2025 and highlights the commitment of more than one thousand employees who work tirelessly every day, 365 days a year to make a positive difference in people's lives.

## 2. Performance and Service Demand

The year under review, 2025, was another year of sustained growth and consolidation for the Foundation for Social Welfare Services. Building on the progress achieved in previous years, the Foundation continued to strengthen its position as Malta's leading provider of specialised social welfare services while responding to increasing and increasingly complex social needs across Malta and Gozo.



The figures presented in this report clearly demonstrate that demand for our services continues to grow. During the year under review, FSWS worked with a total of **27,324 cases involving 25,856 individuals**, representing the highest level of service activity ever recorded by the Foundation. Compared to 2024, the number of cases worked with increased by 5.2%, while compared to 2021 caseloads have grown by almost 20%.

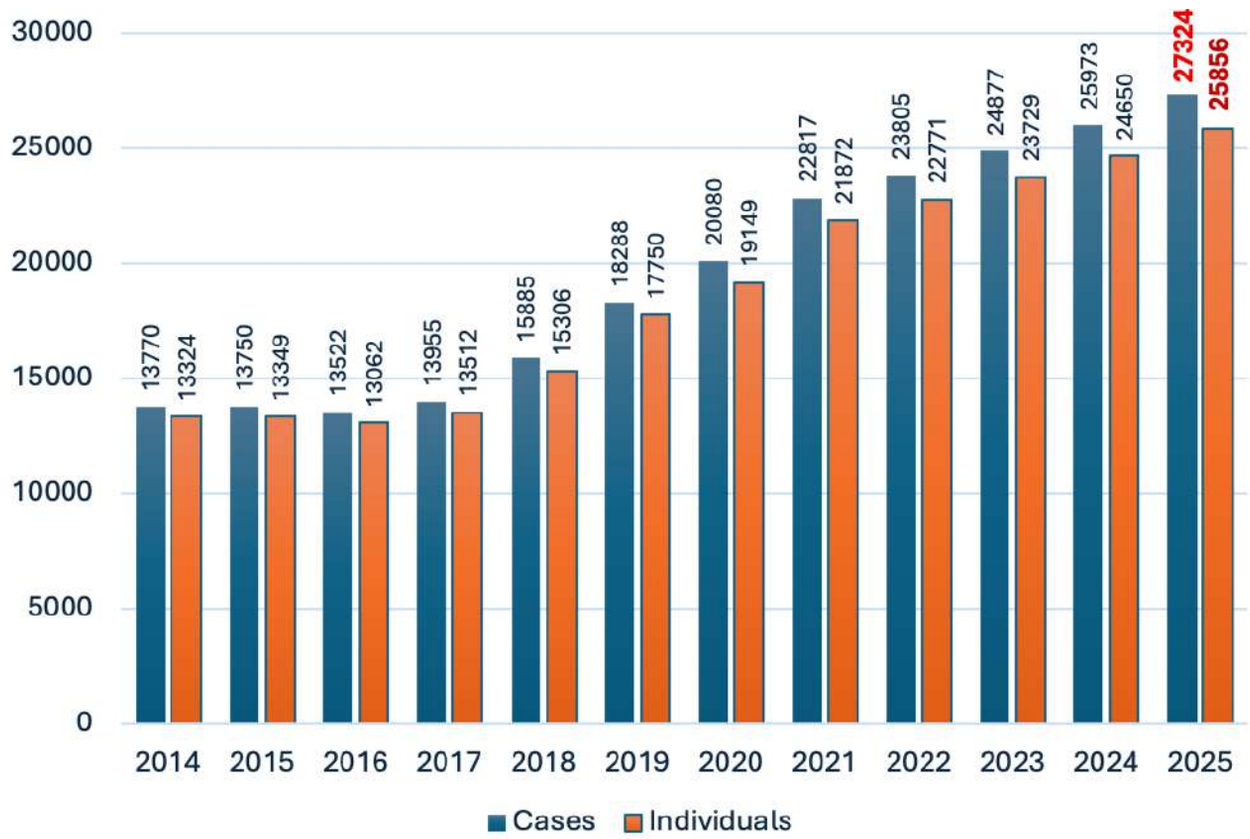



*Figure 1: Cases and Individuals worked with 2014 - 2025*

Likewise, referrals continued to increase significantly. During 2025, FSWS received **14,624 referrals**, opened **13,323 new and re-contact cases**, and closed **13,363 cases**. These figures not only reflect growing public confidence in our services but also demonstrate the Foundation's capacity to continuously expand and adapt its operations in response to changing realities. Indeed, our internal data also shows that such is the public's confidence in our services, that 24% of our service users in 2025 sought our help from more than one agency.

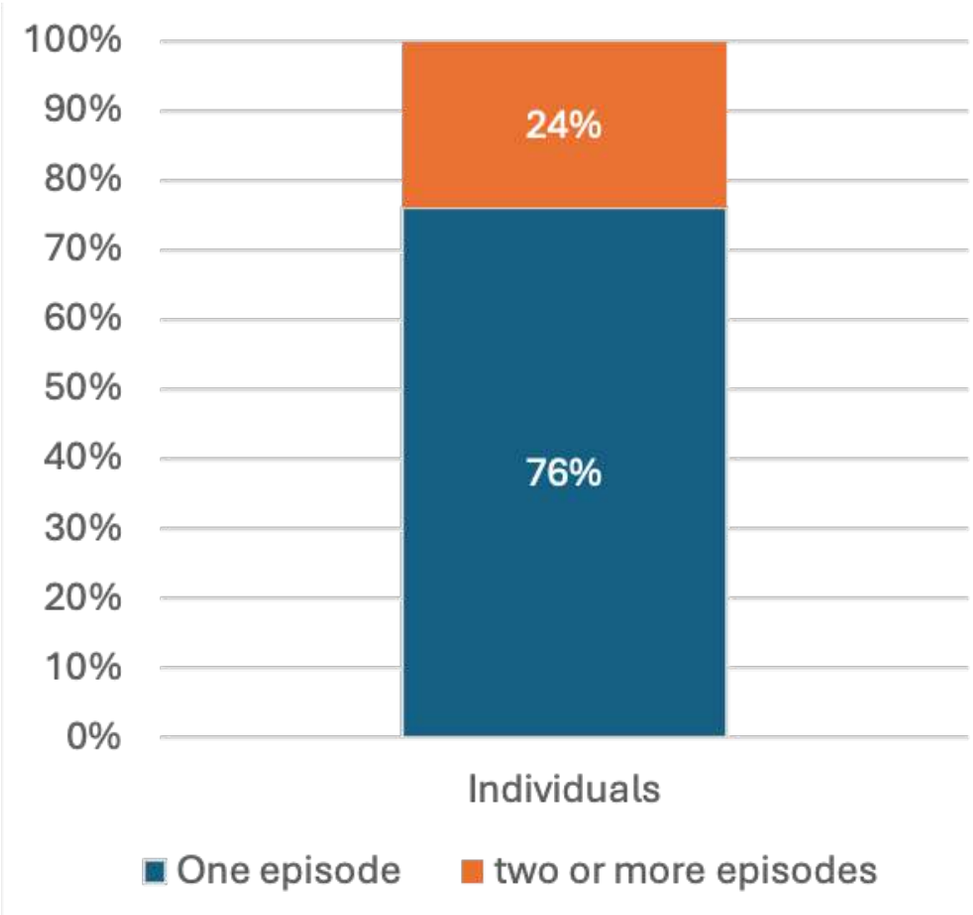



*Figure 2: Individuals who had more than one case (episode) in more than one agency in 2025*

## 2.1. Cases by Agency and Directorate

A closer examination of the data reveals that the growth in demand is broadly distributed across almost all agencies and directorates.

*Aġenzija Appoġġ* remained the Foundation's largest operational entity, working with **11,216 cases**, accounting for 41% of the Foundation's total caseload.

The Child Protection Directorate continued its upward trajectory, working with **4,820 cases**, while the Directorates for Alternative Care, Sedqa, ACTS and the Gozo Branch all maintained substantial service activity throughout the year. The continued increase in Child Protection cases deserves particular attention. Since the introduction of mandatory reporting under the Protection of Minors (Alternative Care) Act, the Directorate has experienced sustained increases in caseloads. This trend continued during 2025 and further confirms the critical role played by the Directorate in safeguarding children across Malta and Gozo.

The following two data sets show how cases increased between 2021 and 2025 as well as the cases worked with by each agency and directorate in 2025.




*Figure 3: Cases worked with 2021 – 2025*

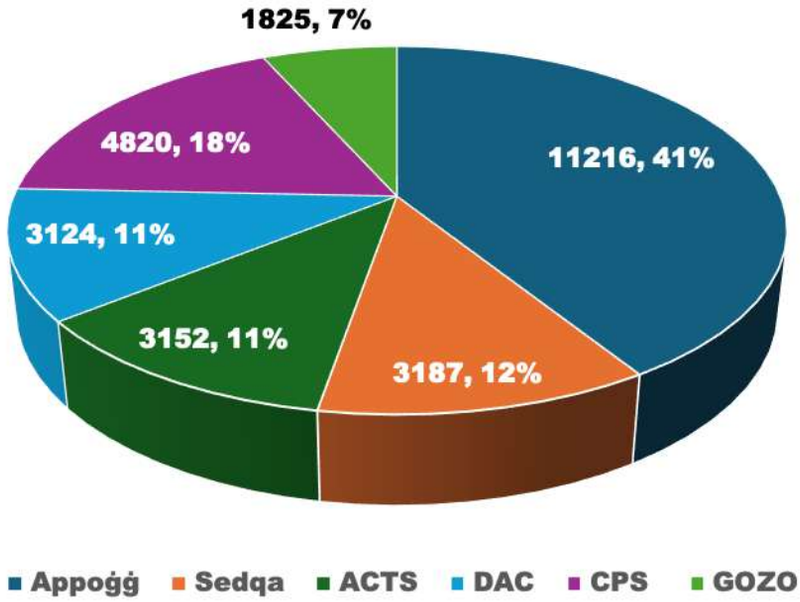



*Figure 4: FSWS – Cases worked with by Agency / Directorate 2025*

## 2.2. Case Status

Encouragingly, despite growing demand, the Foundation continued to improve throughout and service responsiveness. Nearly half of all cases worked with during 2025 had been successfully closed by year-end, while only 5% remained on waiting lists. This demonstrates that whilst demand is increasing, the Foundation continues to invest in capacity building and operational efficiency.

The FSWS-wide distribution shown is shown graphically below.

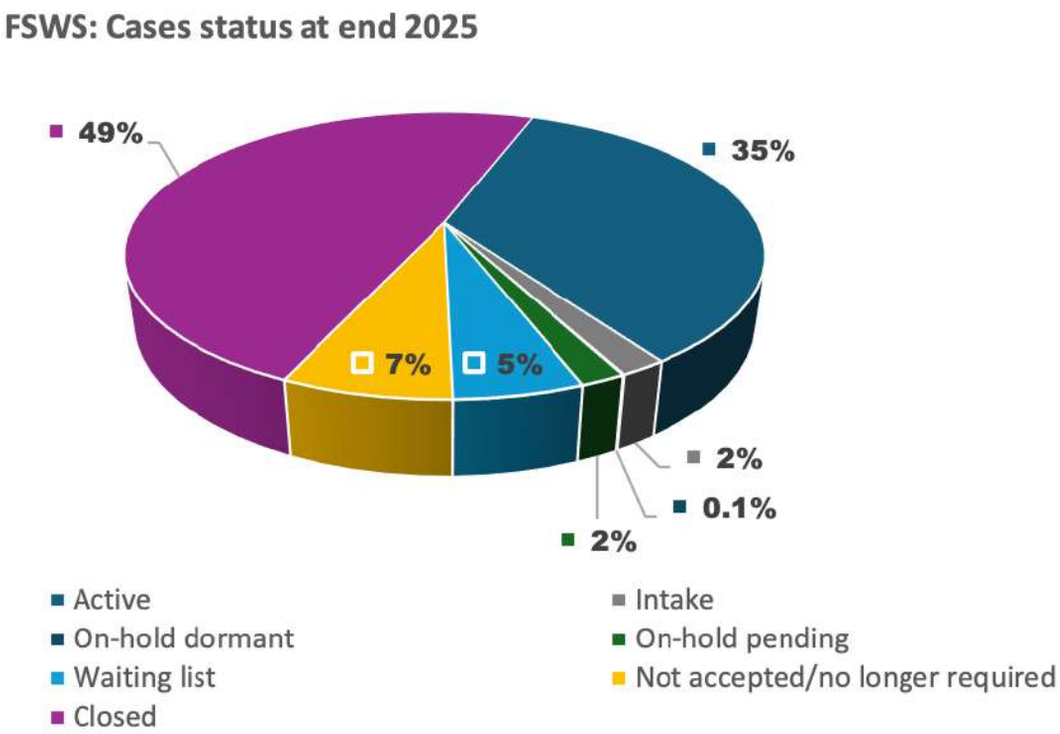



*Figure 5: FSWS – Case status at end 2025*

# 2.3. Understanding Those We Serve

The demographic profile of our service users has remained largely stable.

Women accounted for **52% of all cases**, while Maltese nationals represented **84%** of service users. The largest age cohort continues to be older adults, with persons aged 60 years and over accounting for **27%** of all cases worked with during 2025. This reality reflects an important aspect of our work that is often overlooked.

While the Foundation is widely recognised for its work in child protection, domestic violence and addictions, a significant proportion of our activity is delivered within the health and mental health sectors through our extensive social work presence in hospitals, residential care settings and community healthcare service.

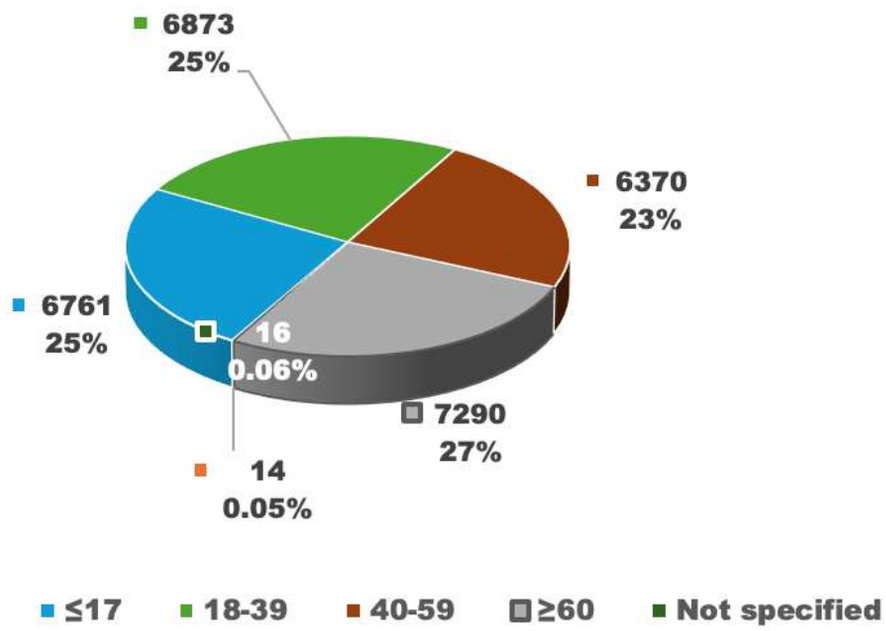



*Figure 6: FSWS – Cases worked with in 2025 by age category*

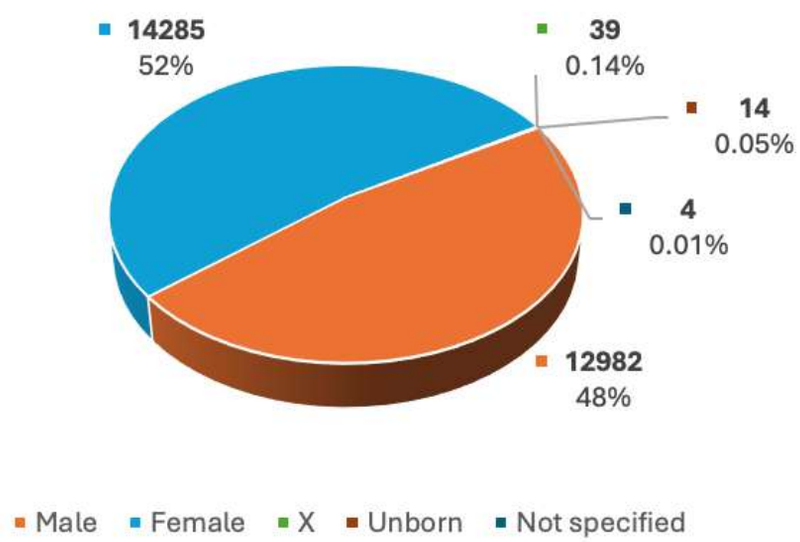



*Figure 7: FSWS – Cases worked with in 2025 by gender*

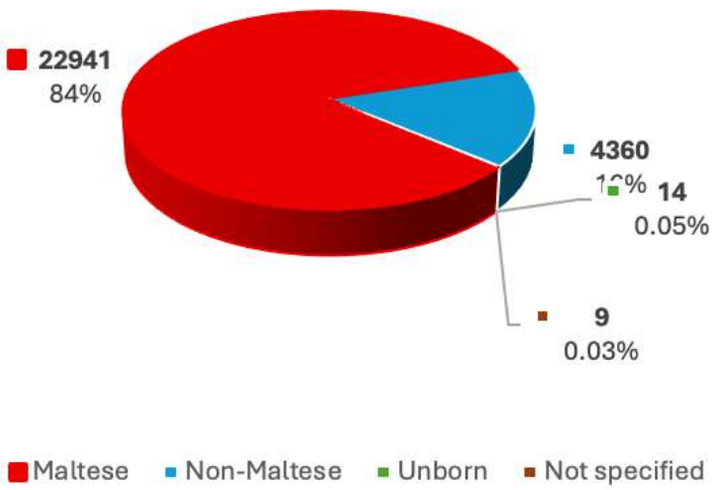
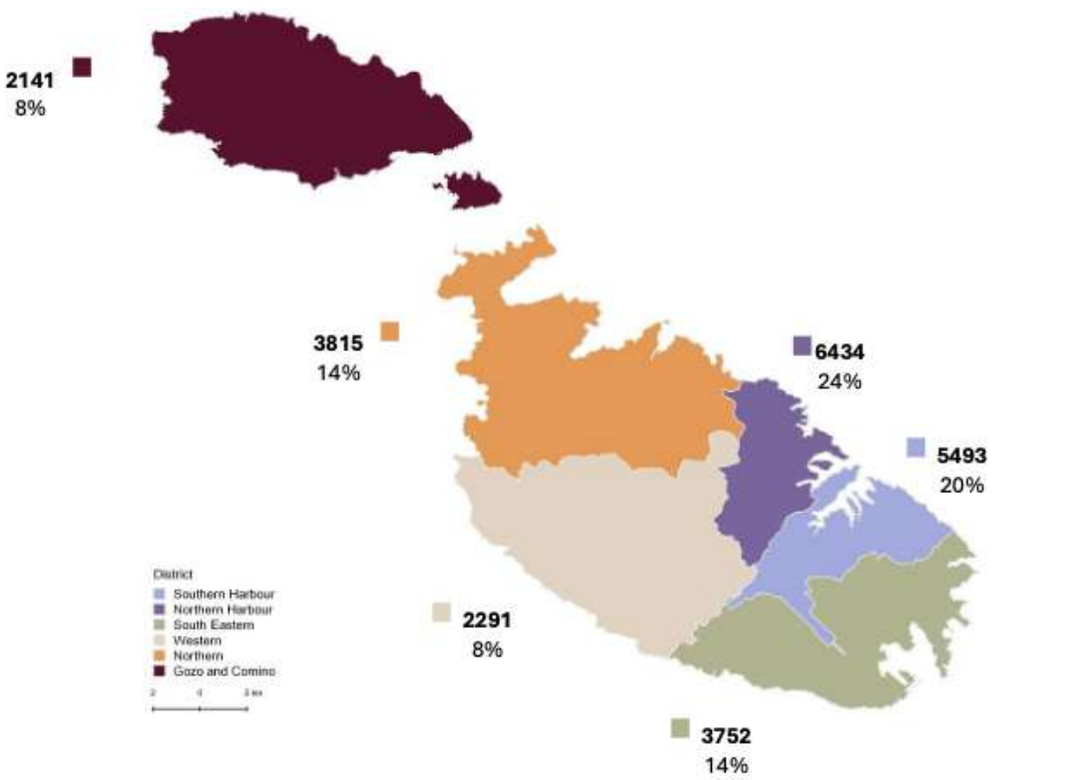



*Figure 8: FSWS – Cases worked with in 2025 by nationality*

Geographically, the largest concentration of service users remains within the Northern Harbour and Southern Harbour districts. However, when measured on a per-capita basis, Gozo continues to record the highest rate of new and re-contact cases among all districts. This reflects both the accessibility and effectiveness of FSWS services within Gozo as well as the strong integration of services provided through the Gozo Branch Directorate.




*Note: Other residential: 2251 (8%), foreign: 6 (0.02%), homeless: 229 (1%), unborn: 14 (0.1%), Not specified: 898 (3%)*

*Figure 9: FSWS – Cases worked with in 2025 by district*

That said, it must also be noted that our annual mapping of cases worked with on a locality-by-locality basis shows that there are certain localities which have a higher or lower concentration of cases than the region they are geographically located within.

This is true both in raw numerical terms and, also, in terms of the ***rate of cases*** by locality where the FSWS Research Department calculates the number of cases per thousand (pro mille) of the registered population residing within the respective localities.

This enables a better comparison and gives a more correct and holistic picture of the situation on the ground. This is shown in the maps below.

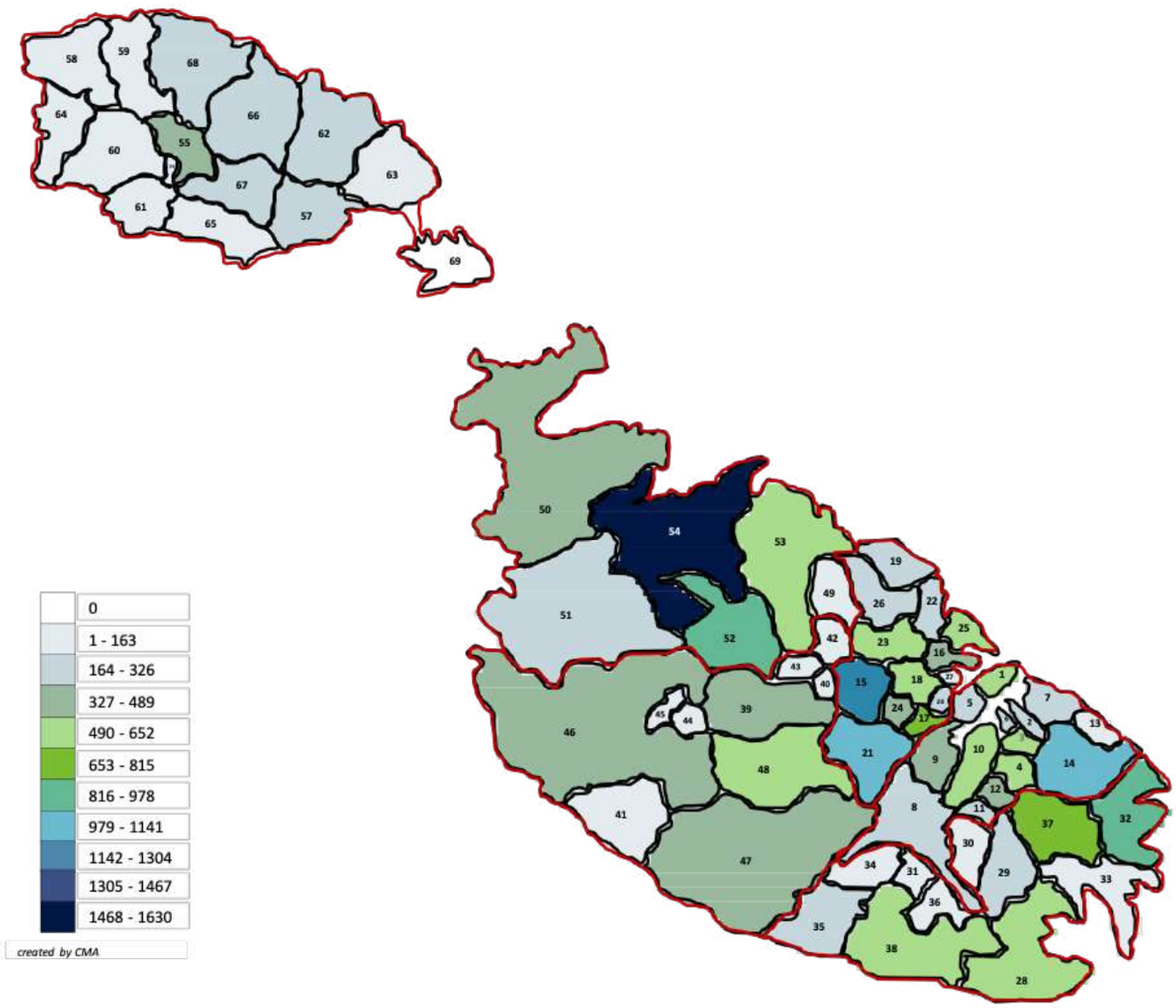



*Figure 10: NUMBER of cases worked with in 2025 by LOCALITY*

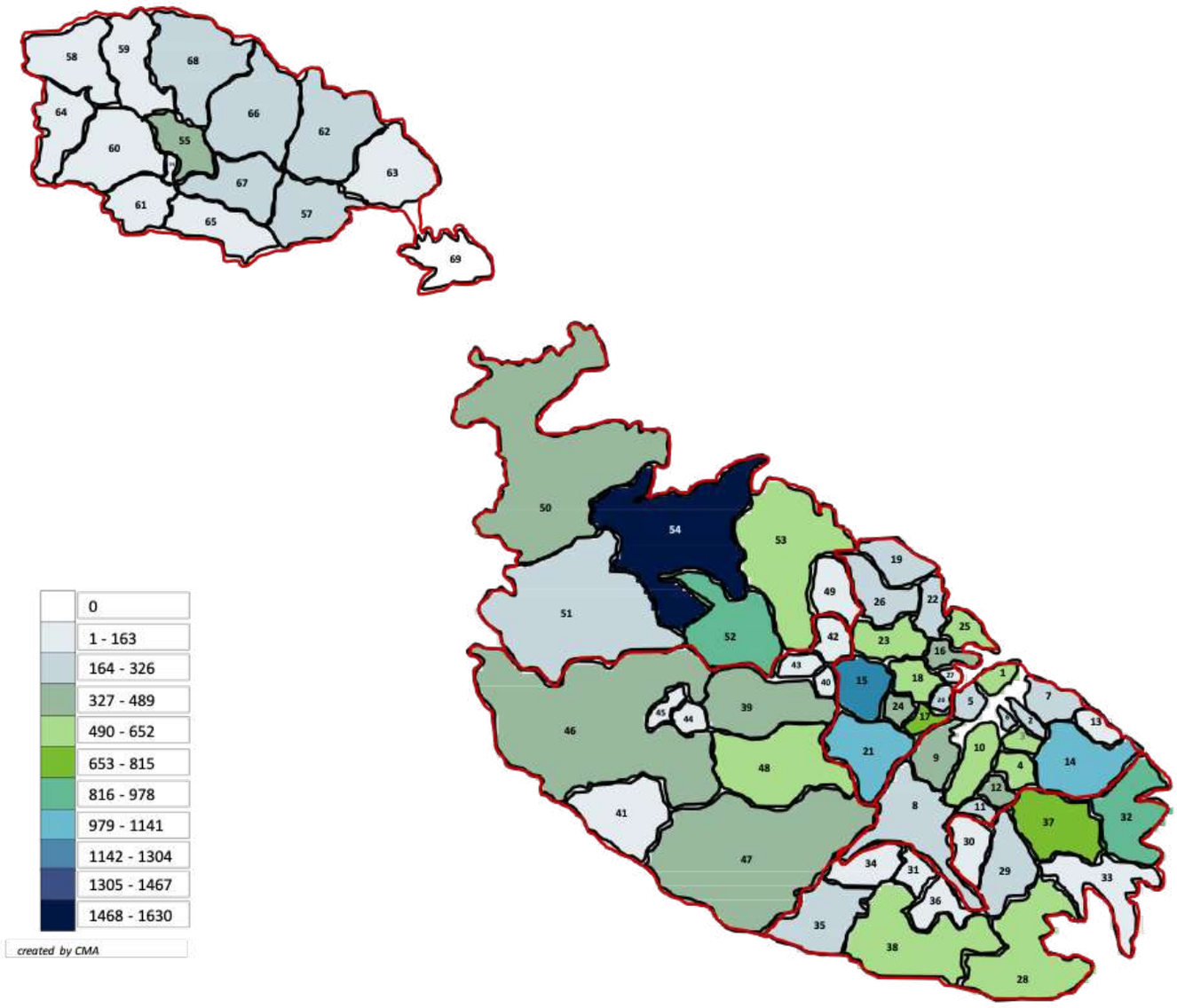



*Figure 11: The RATE of cases worked with in 2025 by LOCALITY*

This data shows, once more that it is wrong to label regions or localities as problem regions or problem towns. The persons who come to seek help form the several FSWS services come from all towns and villages across Malta and Gozo and from all walks of life.

# 2.4. The social challenges we are addressing

The Foundation's data continues to provide an important insight into the social challenges currently affecting our communities.

At Foundation level, the most frequently reported primary issues, what are called the presenting problems in the social work jargon, in 2025 were:

1. **Child abuse;**
2. **Domestic violence;**
3. **Addictive behaviours;**
4. **Mental health issues;**
5. **Health-related difficulties.**

These findings reinforce the strategic importance of our specialised services and the continued need for sustained investment in prevention, early intervention and intensive support services.

Particularly noteworthy is the continued rise in domestic violence referrals. During 2025, the Domestic Violence Services received **1,903 referrals**, representing a **73% increase** compared to 2021. Emotional abuse featured in 94% of referrals and physical abuse in 57% of referrals received throughout the year.

Similarly, Supportline 179 continued to provide a valuable window into the concerns affecting society. For the fifth consecutive year, loneliness remained the primary issue reported by callers, accounting for 31% of genuine calls. Mental health difficulties ranked second, while homelessness-related concerns have doubled over the last five years.

Within community-based services, financial difficulties remained the most common presenting issue, followed by lack of support and housing-related concerns. These findings remind us that social wellbeing cannot be viewed in isolation from wider economic and housing realities.

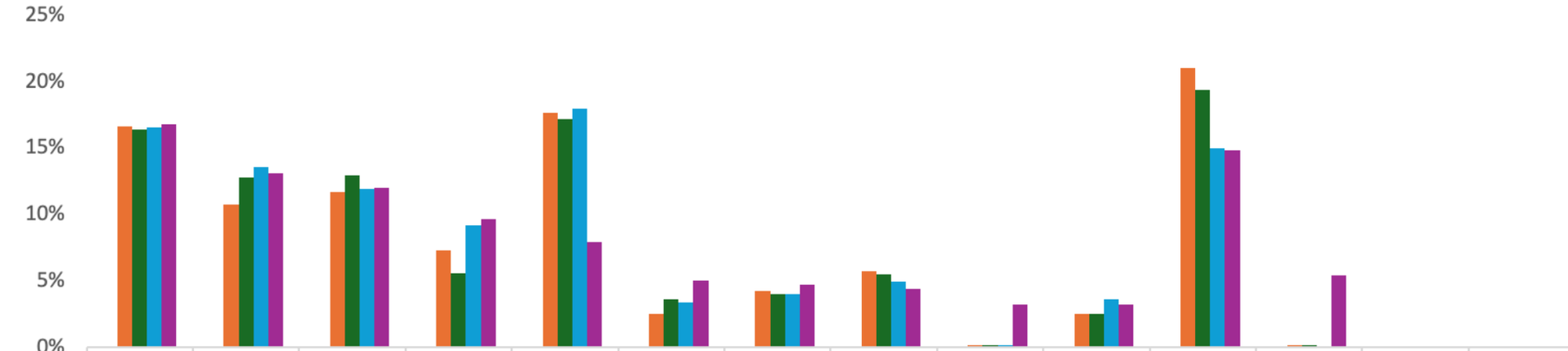
Likewise, the data emerging from Sedqa's services also deserves reflection.

Alcohol remains the primary substance reported by clients accessing the Addictions Community Service, accounting for 30% of all new and re-contact cases. Nevertheless, increases in cannabis-related cases and gambling-related problems indicate emerging trends that require ongoing monitoring and targeted interventions. Particularly concerning is the fact that gambling-related cases have almost tripled when compared to five years ago.

These developments continue to confirm that our evidence-based approach to prevention, harm reduction, treatment and rehabilitation programmes is the right one and this is what areas makes Sedqa Malta's national leader in the field of addictions.

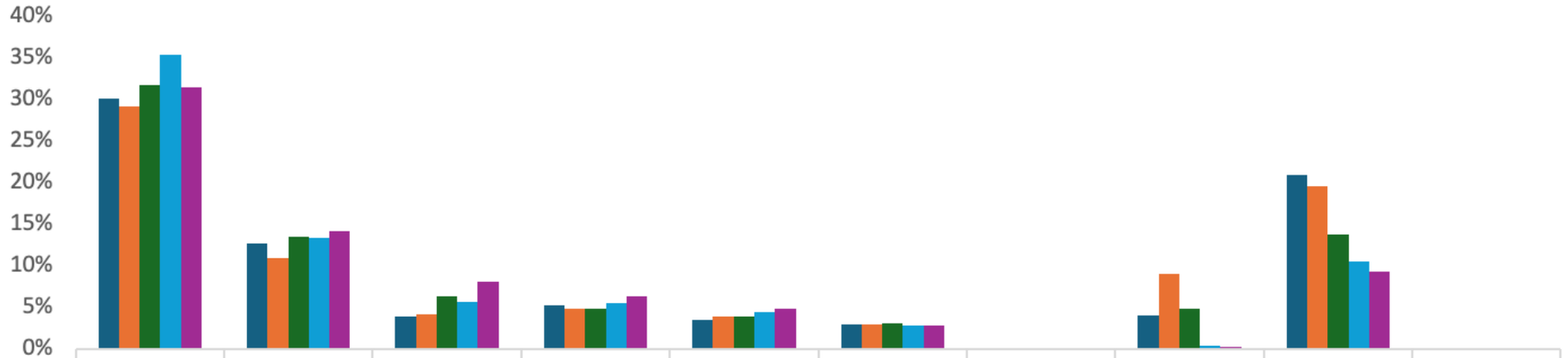
The overall picture emerging from the data is therefore one of a Foundation that continues to expand its reach while maintaining strong levels of effectiveness and throughput.

Increased referral activity, record levels of case closure, sustained engagement with active cases and manageable waiting lists all point towards an organisation that continues to deliver positive outcomes for the thousands of individuals, children and families who seek our assistance every year. Data on the top presenting cases is shown graphically in the following tables.



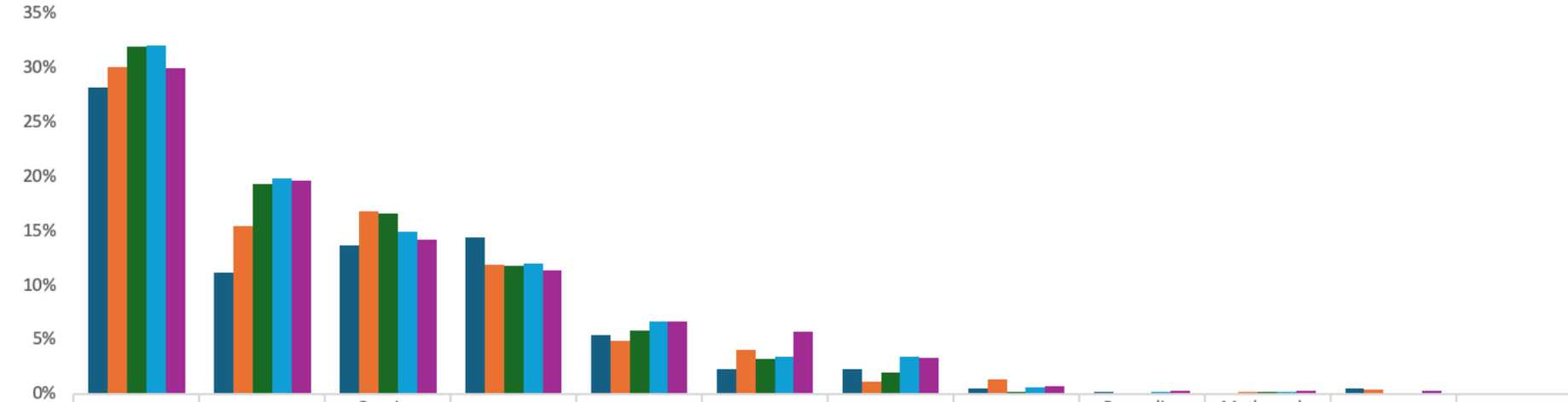

| | Rank 1: Child abuse | Rank 2: Domestic violence | Rank 3: Addictive behaviour problems | Rank 4: Mental health issues | Rank 5: Health issues | Rank 6: Elderly needs | Rank 7: Child care or access | Rank 8: Fostering or adoption | Rank 9: Loneliness | Rank 10: Homeless ness | Rank 11 or more: (Various) | Other | None specified | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2021 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2022 | 17% | 11% | 12% | 7% | 18% | 2% | 4% | 6% | 0.1% | 2.5% | 21% | 0.1% | 0.1% | 100% |
| 2023 | 16% | 13% | 13% | 6% | 17% | 4% | 4% | 5% | 0.1% | 2.4% | 19% | 0.1% | 0.1% | 100% |
| 2024 | 17% | 14% | 12% | 9% | 18% | 3% | 4% | 5% | 0.1% | 3.6% | 15% | 0.1% | 0.0% | 100% |
| 2025 | 17% | 13% | 12% | 10% | 8% | 5% | 5% | 4% | 3% | 3% | 15% | 5% | 0.1% | 100% |

*Figure 12: Percentage of cases worked with between January and December 2025 by top 10 primary problems indicated at referral.*



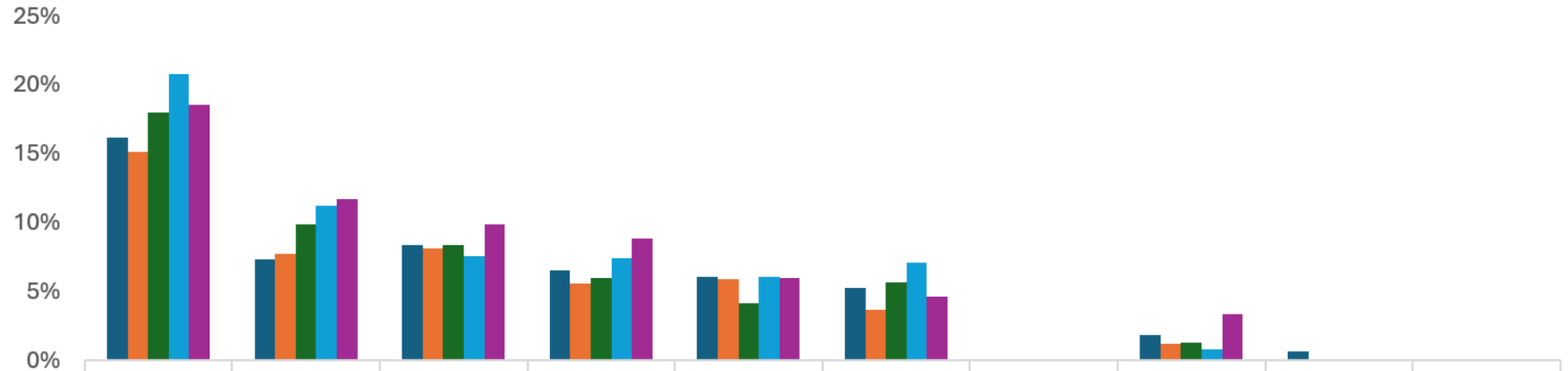

| | Rank 1: Loneliness | Rank 2: Mental health | Rank 3: Homeless | Rank 4: Domestic violence | Rank 5: Child Abuse | Rank 6: Romantic rel. conflict | ... [i.e. Rank 7 or more] (Various) | Other | None specified | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2021 | 30% | 13% | 4% | 5% | 3% | 3% | 17% | 4% | 21% | 100% |
| 2022 | 29% | 11% | 4% | 5% | 4% | 3% | 16% | 9% | 19% | 100% |
| 2023 | 32% | 13% | 6% | 5% | 4% | 3% | 19% | 5% | 14% | 100% |
| 2024 | 35% | 13% | 6% | 5% | 4% | 3% | 22% | 0.4% | 10% | 100% |
| 2025 | 31% | 14% | 8% | 6% | 5% | 3% | 23% | 0.3% | 9% | 100% |

*Figure 13: National Support Line 179 - Percentage of genuine calls received in the year by top 6 primary issues reported in Jan-Dec 2025*




| | Alcohol | Crack cocaine | Cocaine powder | Heroin | Cannabis | Gambling | Synthetic | Other beh. | Benzodia-zepines | Methamph-etamines | Other Opioids | ... |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2021 | 28% | 11% | 14% | 14% | 5.4% | 2% | 2% | 1% | 0.2% | 0% | 1% | |
| 2022 | 30% | 16% | 17% | 12% | 4.9% | 4% | 1% | 1% | 0% | 0.2% | 0.4% | |
| 2023 | 32% | 19% | 17% | 12% | 5.8% | 3% | 2% | 0% | 0% | 0.2% | 0.0% | |
| 2024 | 32% | 20% | 15% | 12% | 6.7% | 3% | 3% | 1% | 0.2% | 0.2% | 0.0% | |
| 2025 | 30% | 20% | 14% | 11% | 6.8% | 6% | 3% | 1% | 0.4% | 0.4% | 0.4% | |

*Figure 14: SEDQA (Addictions Community Service) - Percentage of new & recontact cases opened by primary substance or addiction reported.*




| | Rank 1: Financial difficulties | Rank 2: Lack of support or guidance | Rank 3: Housing problems | Rank 4: Mental health issues | Rank 5: Family relationships | Rank 6: Employment issues | … [i.e. Rank 7 or more]: (Various) | Other | None specified | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2021 | 16% | 7% | 8% | 7% | 6% | 5% | 48% | 2% | 0.6% | 100% |
| 2022 | 15% | 8% | 8% | 6% | 6% | 4% | 53% | 1% | 0.1% | 100% |
| 2023 | 18% | 10% | 8% | 6% | 4% | 6% | 47% | 1% | 0% | 100% |
| 2024 | 21% | 11% | 8% | 7% | 6% | 7% | 39% | 1% | 0% | 100% |
| 2025 | 19% | 12% | 10% | 9% | 6% | 5% | 37% | 3% | 0% | 100% |

*Figure 15: Community - Percentage of referrals received in the year by top 6 primary issues reported in Jan-Dec 2025*

*N.B. - Community = Intake and Family Support Services, Youth in Focus, ACTS Community Services, Generic Service (Gozo), Marsalforn Community Service, Victoria Community Services & Gozo Prison Project.*

# 3. Resources

As in previous years the Foundation was provided with the resources it needed to carry out it mission and deliver its services. This is taken somewhat for granted.

However, it bears pointing out that when we participate in various fora abroad and share experience with our counterparts the word they always bring up is budget cuts and austerity. Thankfully, none of this is in our daily vocabulary here in Malta.

## 3.1. Financial Allocation

This is not just lip service. In 2025 the Foundation had a direct operational budget of € 35 million, indirect funding from the ministry of another of € 6.552 million and € 300,000 for capital expenditure. For a total of €41,852,000. This consistent growth in our budgetary allocation by the ministry is graphically shown below in Figure 16.

## 3.2. Human Resources

FSWS is by nature a labour-intensive organisation. Robots cannot do the work which our specially trained and dedicated professionals do.

We need to have professionally trained people to help and assist the people we serve. This is why we invest a lot of time and energy on recruitment, training and retention. Over the past years this report has always shown the growing number of people we employ.

In 2025 we continued to surpass the 1000 mark of employees under our responsibility with our end of year figure showed that we employed 1021 employees at the close of the year under review. Of these, 79% were female and 21% were male.

More importantly, 77% were employees who carried out direct, face to face work with our service users while 23% were employees who were indirect employees. This data is summarised graphically below in figures 17, 18 and 19.

In this context, it must be stated that in 2025 continued to invest in its employees. As a matter of fact, the Human Resources and Training Department organised 222 training sessions across FSWS for which 938 employees attended. The organisation of this "in-house" training cost €56,052. There were 904 approved applications for CPD which cost €221,181.

Apart from this, there were a total of 146 participants for conferences, seminars, workshops and study visits held abroad and which participation was fully funded by the Foundation for a cost of € 177,415.

This means that the total cost for training, in its widest sense, in 2025 was of € 398,566 or just under 1% (0.959%) of our operation budget and that it involved a total of 1,988 participants in total.

We further show our commitment towards the general well-being of the social services sector by our policy of welcoming students from all branches of the social welfare professions, something which we do every year and which we have been doing for years. 2025 was no exception.

Indeed in 2025 we hosted 153 students for placements not only for social work students but across the whole range of psycho-social disciplines. I want to thank all the full-time professionals who accepted these students since the placements entail preparation and mentoring over and above their normal daily duties.

(*Kindly see detailed break-down of these placements in the appendix to this report*).

*[Page 45]*

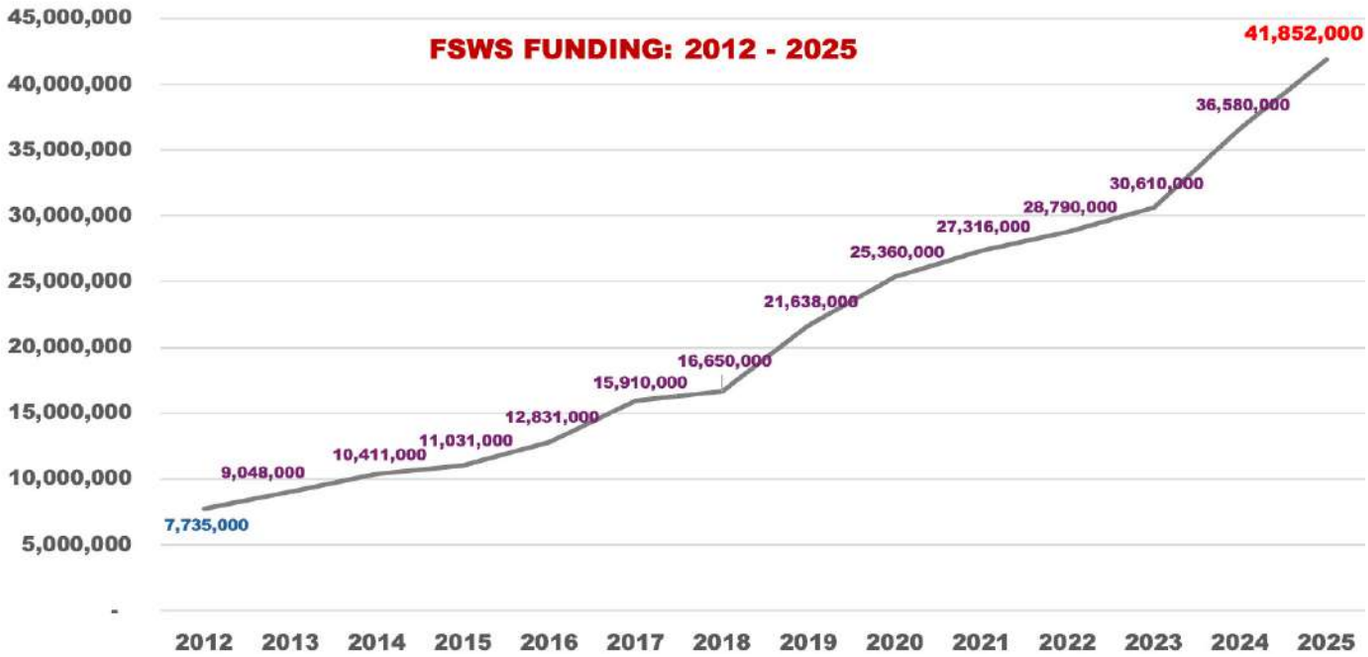



*Figure 16: FSWS funding 2012 - 2025*

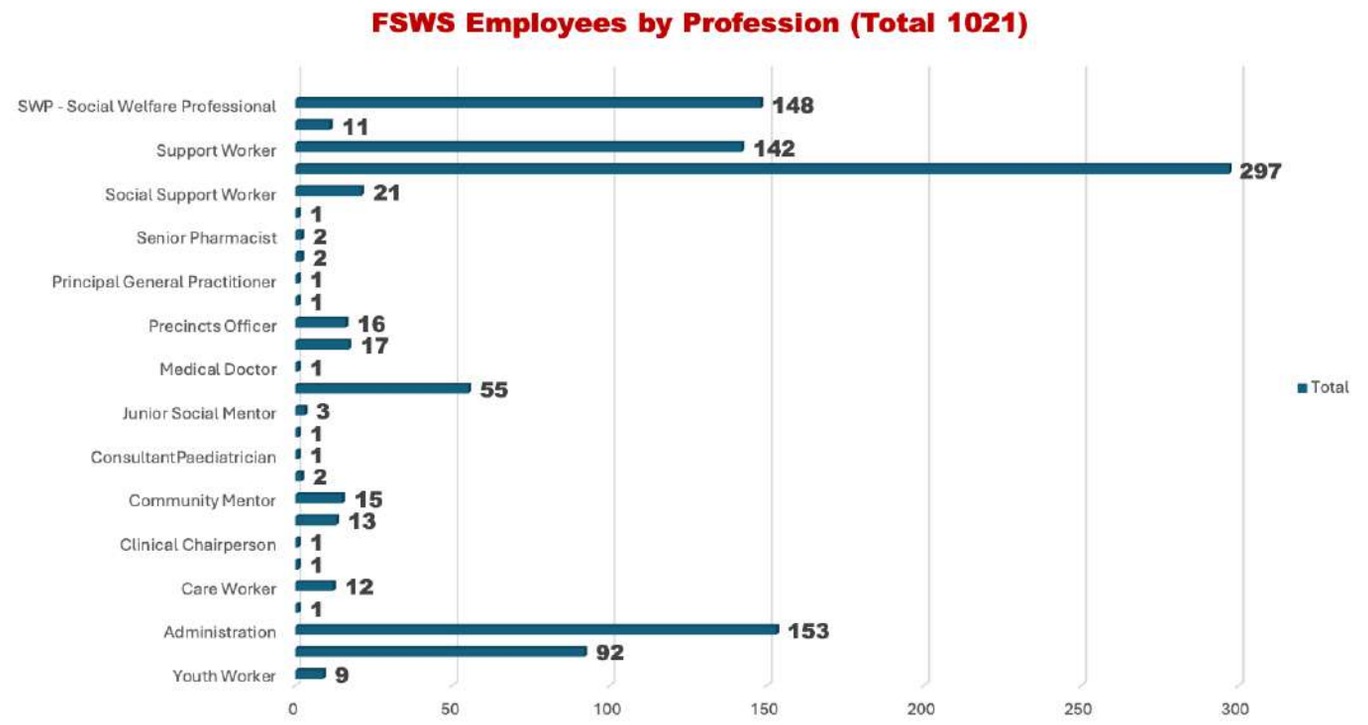



*Figure 17: FSWS employees by profession - 2025*

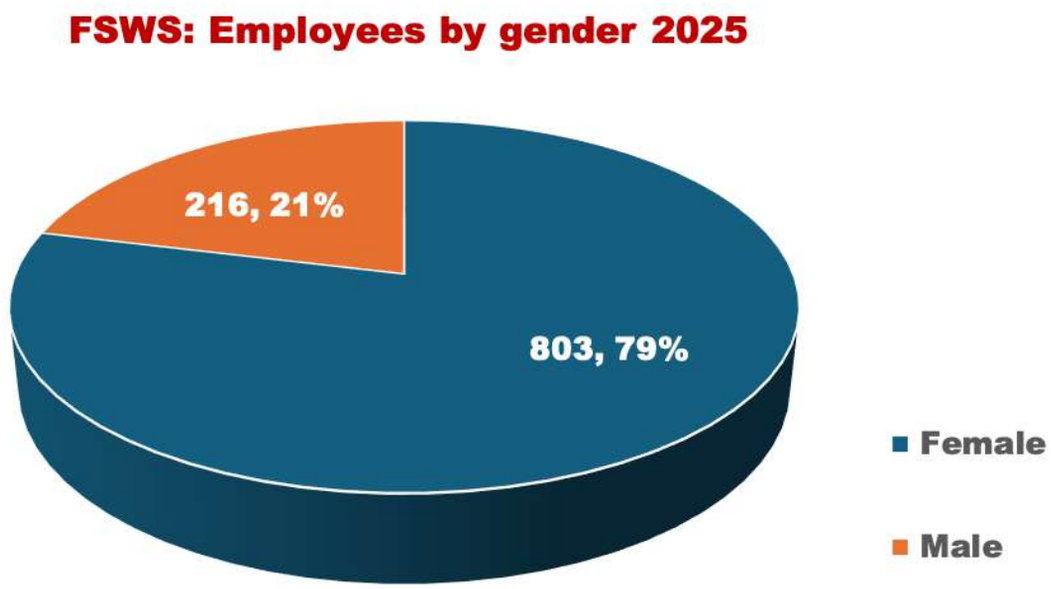



*Figure 18: FSWS employees by gender - 2025*

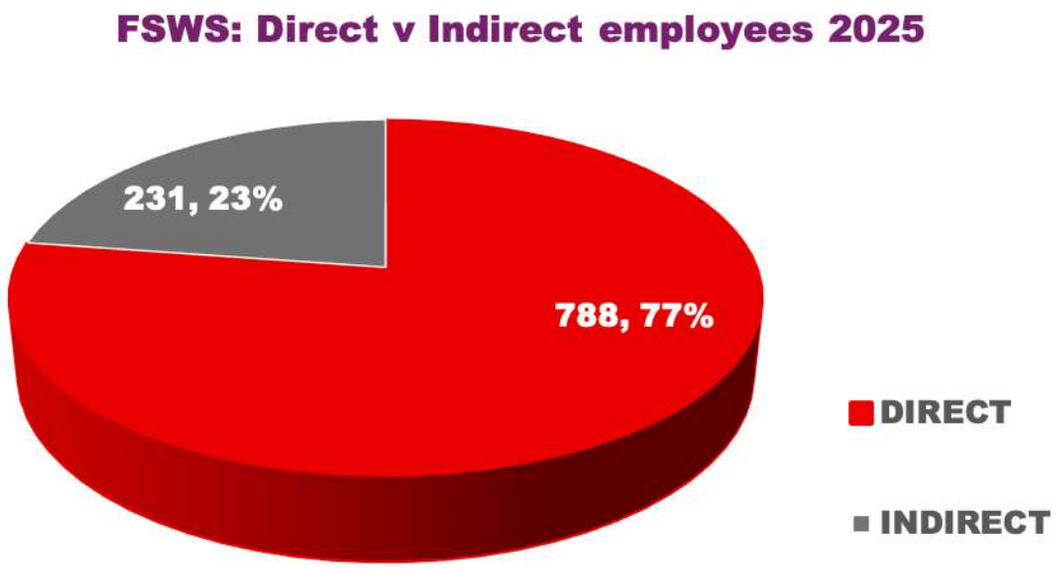



*Figure 19: FSWS Direct vs Indirect employees - 2025*

# 4. Economic analysis

The amount of money forwarded to the Foundation rightly places the responsibility on the Board and Management to ensure that this money is well spent. Part from having set up the Enterprise Risk Management Function (ERM) within the Foundation's structure and which function reports directly to the Board, for the second year running we have conducted an economic analysis of our performance framing it into the wider context of what the FSWS is contributing to Malta's economy. FSWS is rightfully proud that this exercise was carried out internally by our in-house economist, Matthew ATTARD. We are probably the only social services sector entity in Malta which has employed someone with the skill set and the intention was always to base our requests on a sound empirical footing. This is the approach taken when we made the case for the introduction of buprenorphine in 2022 – 2023.

In 2025 Matthew ATTARD "… compares two scenarios over a twenty-year horizon: one in which current FSWS services continue and one in which no new services are introduced. In the latter case, social support would not disappear entirely but would be provided primarily by the Church and other NGOs rather than the government." (ATTARD Matthew: **The Cost of doing Nothing**; September 2025 p.2)

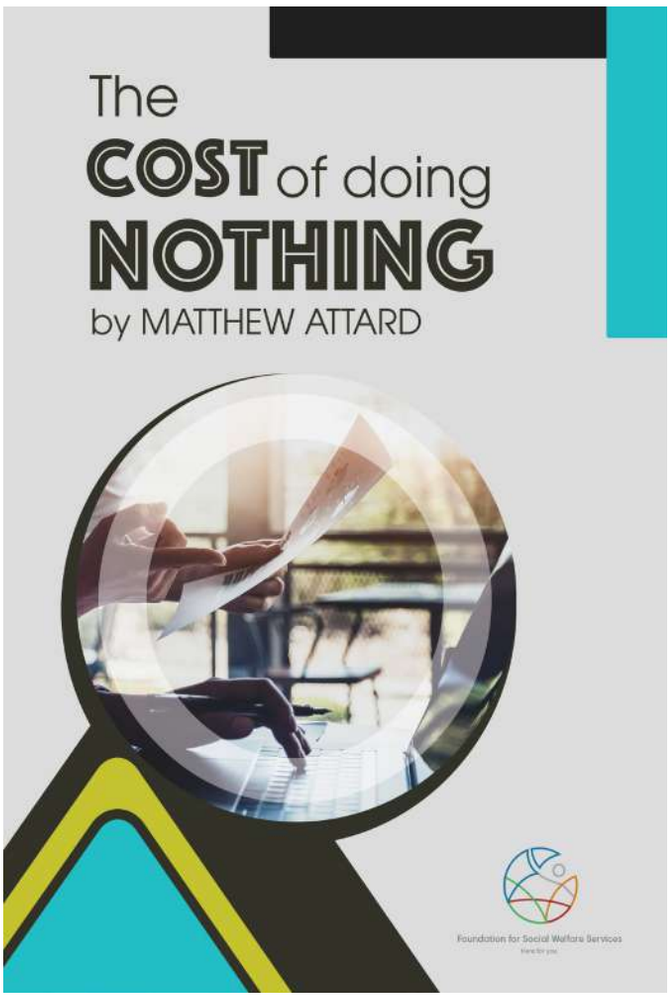
ATTARD's conclusion is clear. He wrote that:

"The study clearly showed the economic value of having social services provided by the Government through FSWS with a benefit cost ratio of 4.01, meaning that for ***every €1 the Government is spending, it is getting a return of €4.01***. The study also showed that if there was no funding to FSWS, the impact on Government's finances would still be 64% of its current spending, in increased health care spending, reduction in tax revenue, increased justice costs, and increased expenditure on social security benefits." (ATTARD Matthew: ***The cost of doing nothing***; September 2025 p.1)

For this year's analysis Matthew Attard focuses more closely on the years 2013 – 2025. His empirical conclusion is that for this period.

"The financial findings demonstrate a significant return on investment for the Maltese Government. When adjusted to 2025 prices using social discount rates, the total cost of FSWS was €285,337,550, while the total benefits reached € 1,308,300,951. ***This results in a Benefit-Cost Ratio (BCR) of 4.59, indicating that for every euro invested in FSWS, the Maltese society and economy received €4.59 in return***." (ATTARD Matthew: An Economic Evaluation of FSWS services 2013-2025; July 2026, p.1)

The conclusion from this is very clear. FSWS services, and all social services for that matter, are not a cost but an investment. An investment without which the country would be not only socially but also economically worse off.



# 5. Main events 2025

2025 was another year during which FSWS not only carried out its core business activities but also a year in which we once again organised a full calendar of "extra-curricular" activities. The aim of these events was to continue to raise awareness about the work we do and the issues which we champion.

**17th January** - *Aġenzija Sedqa* and ARUC signed the Service Agreement

**28th January** - Visit of the Prime Minister Dr Robert Abela and Minister Dr Michael Falzon at one of the FSWS' community residences

**15th February** - *Aġenzija Sedqa* and US Embassy collaboration in organising workshops focusing on fostering a healthy and supportive work environment

**6th March** - Launch of the Fostering Campaign

**25th March** - Launch of the Second Chance; Empowering First Time Offenders project

**27th March** - The Prime Minister Dr Robert Abela and Minister Dr Michael Falzon visit Komunità Santa Marija

**14th April** - Launch of the Social Audit Self-Assessment Tool

**24th April** - Launch of the New Beginnings; Empowering Against Trafficking project

**15th May** - ACTS marks the International Day of Families at the Cottonera Community Centre

**27th – 28th May** - FSWS hosted 70 EU delegates for a meeting themed: Advancing and Promoting the Implementation of the European Child Guarantee

**19th June** - Under the patronage of Her Excellency Myriam Spiteri Debono, FSWS held its annual event at Komunità Santa Marija. Entitled Breaking the Chains: A Celebration of Courage, Healing and Hope, the event recognised residents who had completed the rehabilitation programme.

**18th July** - Press Conference to highlight the work of BeSmartOnline!

**30th July** - FSWS held the Annual Human Trafficking conference to mark the National Day Against Trafficking in Persons

**1st September** - The Ministry and FSWS held a Press Conference regarding the National Alcohol Policy

**14th October** - Launch of Annual Report 2024

**22nd October** - Launch of ESPAD Report

**5th November** - FSWS held the Annual Fostering Conference titled Hidden in the body; Childhood trauma explained

**17th November** - The Youth Services within the Directorate for Alternative Care held its Annual Youth Awards Ceremony

**27th November** - FSWS held the Annual Domestic Violence Conference celebrating the 25th Anniversary of *Għabex* Emergency Shelter

**11th December** - *Aġenzija Sedqa* in collaboration with the Institute of Tourism Studies and Farsons, launched the Mocktails Booklet




Launch of Annual Report 2024




FSWS held the Annual Domestic Violence Conference celebrating the 25th Anniversary of *Għabex* Emergency Shelter




Launch of the Second Chance; Empowering First Time Offenders project




Launch of ESPAD Report



*Aġenzija Sedqa* in collaboration with the Institute of Tourism Studies and Farsons, launched the Mocktails Booklet



The Prime Minister Dr Robert Abela and Minister Dr Michael Falzon visit Komunità Santa Marija

# 6. Achievements and Milestones

## 6.1. 25 Years of Għabex, Emergency Domestic Violence Shelter.

On November 25, 2025 the FSWS hosted its Annual Domestic Violence Conference, an event dedicated to raising awareness and encouraging survivors to take the brave step towards rebuilding their lives.
This year's conference marked a special milestone - the 25th anniversary of the Għabex Emergency Shelter, which over the years has provided safety, support, and hope to countless women and their children in times of crisis.

The event featured impactful speeches by:

- **Hon. Dr Michael Falzon**, Minister for Social Policy and Children's Rights;
- **Hon. Ms Rebecca Buttigieg**, Parliamentary Secretary for Equality and Reform;
- **Dr Lydia Abela**; and
- The invited keynote guest speaker **Dr Davy Simons**, Director of the FJC and Board Memberof the EFJC; as well as
- FSWS **Chief Executive Officer Alfred Grixti** and **Ms Graziella Castillo**, Director of *Appoġġ*.

During the conference, Andre MIFSUD, a Risk Assessor within Aġenzija Appoġġ, also launched his debut novel "***Kieku Tħobbni, Ma Kontx***", which explores gender-based violence as both a personal and societal issue. Through fiction, the book highlights the hidden realities of abuse and invites readers to reflect on the shared responsibility we all have in addressing and preventing it.






## 6.2. “Second Chance” Project

In 2025, we also once more secured EU funding for another project aimed at vulnerable young people. This was the “Second Chance” project which is to run for three years and whose aim it is to work with vulnerable young who have had a brush with the law and who, therefore, are taken on in order to help them acquire the skills they need to function properly in society rather than fall into recidivism. Hence the name “Second Chance”. This project involves working with other community stakeholders, amongst whom are the Community Police.






## 6.3. Tackling Human Trafficking through the "New Beginnings" Project

One of the most important developments during 2025 was the launch and implementation of the "***New Beginnings – Empowering Against Trafficking***" initiative, a project implemented by the Foundation in partnership with the International Organisation for Migration and co-financed through the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF). This is the second time running that such a project won approval to be co-financed by EU funds.

The project strengthens Malta's response to human trafficking through a combination of prevention, protection and integration measures, whilst further enhancing support for victims through safe accommodation, psychosocial assistance, legal support and reintegration opportunities. The project further reinforces the Foundation's leading role in combating human trafficking and supporting some of the most vulnerable individuals within our society.

As part of the project activities, in 2025 the FSWS once more marked the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, by organising a national conference bringing together policy makers, professionals and stakeholders to discuss the evolving challenges posed by human trafficking and the need for a coordinated national response.



## 6.4. Trusted Flagger Status

As is well known the EU take online safety very seriously, especially where it concerns minors. In previous years, this report has highlighted the work we do in this regard by means of our Be Smart Online (BSO) and Child Web Alert (CWA) Services.

This work was recognised twice in 2025. Firstly, when the Malta Communications Authority (MCA), as part of its mandate to ensure a safe internet and in accordance with EU legislation, nominated the FSWS, specifically the above-mentioned services to be Malta's "Trusted Flagger".
In practice, this means that the MCA has officially advised the various social platform providers that when in the normal course of their work the BSO and CWA notice online material which is unacceptable and report such offensive material to the said providers then this is an official report from a country's recognised public service and will then remove the objectional material.



## 6.5. ESPAD 2024

The Foundation continued investing heavily in research, data analysis and evidence-based policy development throughout 2025.

Particularly important was the publication and dissemination of findings emerging from national studies and datasets including the **ESPAD 2024 Survey**, which provided valuable insights into behaviours, addictions and risk factors affecting adolescents and young people. FSWS has been involved with ESPAD since it was launched way back in 1995 and this has given the Foundation a wealth of institutional knowledge of the addictions sector which is second to none.

Thanks to ESPAD, and similar empirical research, the FSWS is uniquely placed to plan services based on evidence, identify emerging social trends and guide policy development at a national level.



## 6.6. MITA Cyber Security Award

In 2025, *Aġenzija Appoġġ* through the Child Web Alert Service won the Malta Information Technology Agency (MITA)'s Cyber Security Award in the Leading Public Sector category, thus recognising its contribution to promoting online safety and combating illegal child-abuse content. This was the second recognition of the leading role we play in online safety in Malta, especially where children are concerned.

This award is a true testament to the impactful work we do as ChildWebAlert, the Maltese hotline dedicated to combating illegal online child abuse content and promoting online safety for children and families. Our team's dedication and collaboration have driven meaningful progress in protecting vulnerable users in the digital space.

A heartfelt thank you to MITA for organising this prestigious event and championing cybersecurity initiatives across Malta. Together, we remain committed to creating a safer, more resilient digital environment for everyone.



## 6.7. Ministry Awards

As in previous years, 2025 was another year where the work of the FSWS was recognised at Ministry level when a number of our employees and services were publicly recognised for their commitment, dedication and efforts throughout the year.

This is the list of last year's awardees.

1. **Anne Marie CIANTAR**, Winner – Employee of the Year Award, Public Sector entities.

2. **Risk Assessment Team**, Winners – Team of the Year Award, Public Sector entities.

3. ***Aġenzija Sedqa*** - *Komunità Santa Marija* - Winners - Special Minister's Award.

4. ***Aġenzija Sedqa*** - *Komunità Santa Marija* - Runners Up - Making a Difference Award.

5. **HR Team**, Shortlisted – Team of the Year Award, Public Sector entities.



## 6.8. Dean's Award of the Faculty for Social Wellbeing

We are incredibly proud of Massimo Cherrett, one of our dedicated social workers within *Appoġġ* Health Services, for receiving the Dean's Award - Outstanding Undergraduate Students Award. Massimo's commitment to supporting the mental health community, combined with his academic excellence, truly reflects the values we stand for at the Foundation.

## 6.9. CEO of the Year

On a personal level, more than honoured, I am humbled to have been nominated, shortlisted and awarded the CEO of the Year Award as part of the annual Worker of the Year Prize ... This is not about me, it's for the 1000+ employees who go far over and beyond the call of duty to help the most needy and vulnerable people in Malta and Gozo. This award is more theirs than it is mine.



## 6.10. VIP Visits

**6.10.1. January 15, 2025:** The newly elected Dean of the Faculty for Social Wellbeing, Dr Sandra Scicluna, together with the Head of Department of Social Policy and Social Work, Dr Claudia Psaila and Dr Natalie Kenely met with CEO of Foundation for Social Welfare Services, Mr Alfred Grixti, Mr Anthony Apap and Ms Graziella Castillo to discuss future collaboration between the Faculty and FSWS.

**6.10.2. January 28, 2025:** Prime Minister Dr Robert ABELA, visited one our Residential Homes in the Community for children in alternative care. He was welcomed by Minister Dr. Michael FALZON, CEO Alfred GRIXTI and Director Alternative Care, Remenda GRECH.

**6.10.3. February 12, 2025:** On the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of diplomatic relations between Malta and Canada, we were honoured to host Mrs Andrea CLARK - GRIGNON, the Head of Public Affairs of the Canadian High Commission in Rome (which is also responsible for Malta) to our first stage domestic violence, Għabex. Apart from showing Mrs CLARK GRIGNON around the premises and facilities, we also discussed with her the real situation on the ground and the spectrum of services we offer 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

**6.10.4. March 27, 2025:** Prime Minister Dr Robert ABELA, visited our addictions Residential Rehabilitation Centre in Ħal-Farruġ, ***Komunità Santa Marija*** on the occasion of ***International Social Work Day***. He was welcomed by Minister Dr. Michael FALZON, CEO Alfred GRIXTI, Sedqa Operations Director, Charles SCERRI and Clinical Chair Dr Anna Maria VELLA MD, Ph.D. and the Manager of the facility and the programme, Ashley CUMBO. The PM sat down with the residents attending the programme and heard them recount their life stories and plans for when they complete the programme. The residents even invited the PM to join them for lunch one day and he readily accepted.

**6.10.5. May 28, 2025:** We welcomed MEP for the S7D Group, Dr Thomas BAJADA Ph.D. BAJADA met with the CEO and Operations Directors of the Foundation who gave hima an overview of the work we do.



**6.10.6. June 9, 2025:** H.E. Kari JOHNSTONE, OSCE Special Representative on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, who flew out to Malta to participate in the High-Level Conference on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, as part of Malta's Presidency of the Council of Europe, had a bilateral meeting with the CEO, Alfred GRIXTI and Director of *Appoġġ* Agency, Graziella CASTILLO with whom she discussed Malta's THB services in general while also being given an in depth presentation of what services and help the FSWS provides to victims of human trafficking.



**6.10.7. June 19, 2025:** As in previous years, Her Excellency Dr Myriam SPITERI DEBONO, President of Malta, honoured us by once more presideing over the recognition ceremony of persons who had successfully completed the addictions Residential Rehabilitation Programme at Komunità Santa Marija. She was welcomed by Minister Dr. Michael FALZON, CEO Alfred GRIXTI, Sedqa Operations Director, Charles SCERRI and Clinical Chair Dr Anna Maria VELLA MD, Ph.D. and Progamme Manager, Ashley CUMBO.

**6.10.8. Thursday, Jul 31, 2025:** True to his word the Hon. Prime Minister Dr Robert ABELA once again visisted our addictions Residential Rehabilitation Centre Komunità Santa Marija in Ħal-Farruġ to have lunch with and prepared by the residents. He was welcomed by Minister Dr. Michael FALZON, CEO Alfred GRIXTI, Sedqa Operations Director, Charles SCERRI and Clinical Chair Dr Anna Maria VELLA MD, Ph.D. and the Manager of the facility and the programme, Ashley CUMBO.

**6.10.9. Friday November 7, 2025:** The Hon. Albert Buttigieg M.P., Shadow Minister for Neurodivergence and Child Protection for the Nationalist Party, was welcomed by the CEO and Directors, Graziella CASTILLO, Antonella MIZZI, Remenda GRECH to touch base and have an informative discussion about the work we do in the area of child protection and alternative care.



**6.10.10. Thursday, December 18, 2025:** The Imam Laiq Ahmed ATIF of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat Malta, once again visited our addictions Residential Rehabilitation Centre ***Komunità Santa Marija*** in Ħal-Farruġ where he presented gifts for the residents and their families. He was welcomed by CEO Alfred GRIXTI, Sedqa Operations Director, Charles SCERRI and Clinical Chair Dr Anna Maria VELLA MD, Ph.D.



## 6.11. Reaction to National Alcohol Policy

On September 1, 2025 Aġenzija Sedqa welcomed the publication of Malta's proposed National Alcohol Policy. SEDQA, recognises that the policy is an important step towards a healthier and safer society, placing prevention, regulation and community engagement at the centre of public health efforts, while safeguarding public health and protecting future generations.

## 6.12. Launch of Mocktails

In December, just before the Christmas and New Year break, we launched ***Mocktails***. This is a booklet on how to create safe, good, impressive and, above all, non-alcoholic cocktails so that people can socialise and relax wherever they choose without being in danger of drinking too much. The book launch was held at the ITS premises and sponsored by FARSONS, importers of the non-alcoholic beverages which go into the Mocktails. The launch was also attended and addressed by the Hon. DPM and Minister for Tourism Dr Ian BORG, Minister Dr Michael FALZON, ITS CEO Pierre FENECH and FARSONS General Manager Mr John BONELLO GHIO.



# 7. Improving what we do

Three years ago, we began a process whereby we invited, thanks to our membership of the European Social Network (ESN) a group of external experts to evaluate our services by critically looking at what we are doing and how we are doing it and what we can improve.

This process continued in 2025 where it was the turn of the Directorate of Alternative Care (DAC) to undergo this evaluation process. We continue to maintain that while we generally get things right there is always room for improvement and thus we committed to continue to engage with these external evaluators in order to address these issues by further follow up visits in 2026.

# 8. Conclusion and gratitude

All of the above could not have been achieved by one person alone. The FSWS is definitely not a one-person-show. The above is also, in my humble opinion only the tip of the iceberg. There is much more going on, day-in, day-out, 365 days a year.

It is incumbent on me, therefore, to register my deepest gratitude and greatest thanks to all the people who have made 2025 such another successful year for the Foundation.

I must begin with the Hon. Minister Dr Michael FALZON and the Permanent Secretary Mr Mark MUSÙ who were always there to support our work and lobby on our behalf in order to secure more resources for our work.

On a personal level, I would like to thank our Chairman and President of the Board of Governors, Mr George BORG, who was always available to offer advice and support on practically a daily basis. Likewise, to our very active and supportive Board of Governors who take a genuine interest in our work.

I cannot thank enough my senior management team. This is a group of dedicated professionals who know their stuff and who give their all in order to improve the lives of the people we are here to serve.

They do not hog the limelight but they get the work done. In a similar way, I would like to thank my hard working office staff without whom I would not be kept on track and organised.

Above all, however, I would like to thank our frontline professionals who continue to demonstrate exceptional dedication, compassion and resilience in carrying out one of the most demanding but rewarding professions in our society.

They are the people who answer calls 24 hours a day and they are the ones who work when the rest of us are enjoying a public holiday. Thank you all from the bottom of my heart.

**Alfred GRIXTI**,
**Chief Executive Officer**,
Foundation for Social Welfare Services.

# Foundation for Social Welfare Services
## Senior Management Team



**FSWS Senior Management Team from left to right:**

**Mons. Dr Joe Vella Gauci** – Director, FSWS Gozo Branch
**Dr Dianne Galea** – Director, ERM & Legal Matters
**Stephen C Vella** – Director, Corporate Services Directorate
**Charles Scerri** – Director, Aġenzija Sedqa
**Remenda Grech** – Director, Directorate Alternative Care
**Thomas Galea** – Director, ACTS
**Alfred Grixti** – Chief Executive Officer
**Mark Zammit** – Director, Finance
**Nathalie Attard Bishop** – Director, Marketing and Communications
**Anthony Apap** – Director, Human Resource
**Antonella Mizzi** – Director, Child Protection Directorate
**Jesmond Bonello** – Director, Regulatory Compliance
**Dr Anna Maria Vella** – Clinical Chairperson, Aġenzija Sedqa

# Appendix

## Student Placements 2025

| Academic Subject Area | Number |
|---|---|
| Advanced Diploma in Social Care | 24 |
| Award in Residential & Day Care Work | 2 |
| B.A. (Hons) in Social Work | 7 |
| B.A. (Hons) in Sociology | 1 |
| B.A. (Hons) Youth and Community Studies UOM | 6 |
| B.A. in Social Work Erasmus | 1 |
| B.A. (Hons) in Sociology with Communication Studies | 1 |
| B.A. in Psychology and Sociology | 1 |
| B.A.(Hons) in Social Care Management | 4 |
| BSc Home Economics UOM | 1 |
| Degree in Social Work (Erasmus) | 2 |
| Diploma in Social Care | 1 |
| Erasmus | 3 |
| Erasmus Social Work Further Education College | 1 |
| Erasmus Social Work Higher Vocation School | 1 |
| Finished Year 11 (IPS Students) | 20 |
| Health and Social Care | 1 |
| M.A. in Clinical Psychology | 1 |
| Malti & Social - Junior College | 1 |
| Master's in Counselling | 17 |
| Master in Family Therapy & Systemic Practice | 1 |
| Master of Arts in Management of Social Care | 7 |
| Masters in Community Action and Development | 1 |
| Masters in Gestalt Psychotherapy | 11 |
| Master's in Social Work | 6 |
| MCAST BA Health and Social Care Management | 12 |
| Rhein Main Social Work Students | 19 |
| **Total** | **153** |

# Aġenzija **APPOĠĠ**

## Graziella **Castillo**

Director

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ANNUAL REPORT 2025



# OVERVIEW

The year 2025 was marked by significant progress and a meaningful impact on the lives of service users who accessed the services offered by *Aġenzija Appoġġ*. Its mission is to promote inclusion and well-being while empowering those who seek support to live more independently.

This report highlights key achievements and operational milestones, as well as the work undertaken by the services to address the challenges encountered throughout the year.

The service delivery framework continued to be strengthened through cross-team collaboration and closer working relationships with other stakeholders. The ultimate aim was to provide service users with a holistic and coordinated approach tailored to their individual needs.

Investment in workforce development was also prioritised, reflecting the belief that employee well-being is fundamental to effective service delivery. By receiving appropriate emotional support and working within a supportive environment, employees are better equipped to engage meaningfully with service users and respond effectively to their needs.

Accordingly, this report highlights the key achievements of the services within *Aġenzija Appoġġ*, outlining the support provided, the new initiatives introduced and the measures taken to reach the most vulnerable members of society.

These efforts encompassed community outreach initiatives, safeguarding measures, crisis interventions, child and family support and enhancements to specialised services, all aimed at providing service users with the highest possible standard of support.

It reflects the unwavering commitment of the workforce whose compassion, expertise, willingness and perseverance shape its daily work and strengthen its commitment to advocating for the rights and needs of our service users.



# Out of Hours Emergency Service

## Service Overview

During the year, the Out of Hours Emergency Service continued to provide critical support across the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS), particularly to the Child Protection Directorate and the Looked After Children Service. The Service played a vital role in responding to emergencies outside standard office hours, working closely with key external stakeholders, including hospitals and the police.

The Service remained focused on strengthening professional capacity, improving staff safety and enhancing inter-agency coordination.

Through specialised training, internal consultations and structural improvements, the team enhanced its ability to respond effectively to complex and high-risk situations involving vulnerable children, young people and adults.

## Milestones and Achievements

### Strengthening staff safety and professional capacity

Team members participated in De-Escalation Skills Training to enhance their ability to safely manage high-risk and crises safely and effectively.

Discussions were also initiated regarding the potential introduction of personal panic alarms to further strengthen staff safety during emergency interventions.

### Enhancing safeguarding practices

- Staff attended specialised training delivered by **Dr Mariella Mangion** on child development and age-appropriate interviewing techniques.

- This training strengthened the team's ability to assist during police interviews involving minors, while safeguarding children's rights and ensuring adherence to best practice.



**Improving organisational coordination and support systems**

- A dedicated seminar was organised for on-call managers, providing a comprehensive overview of emergency interventions and clarifying their roles and responsibilities.

- Presentations delivered by the DAC and Child Protection Services highlighted recurring challenges and strengthened understanding of the demands associated with out-of-hours service.

- Consultations were held with each directorate and agency to improve service-specific support during emergency interventions.

**Structural service improvement**

Through a series of consultations, seminars and inter-agency discussions, a new model was established whereby each directorate and agency will operate its own dedicated on-call system from 2026 onwards.

Previously, on-call managerial support was shared among multiple agencies and directorates, which sometimes limited access to specialised guidance during complex interventions.

This reform ensures that emergency workers and supervisors will receive immediate, service-specific guidance from managers with relevant expertise, strengthening decision-making, improving safeguarding outcomes, and enhancing overall service responsiveness.

This structural improvement represents an important step in strengthening emergency social work support and ensuring the highest level of protection for vulnerable individuals during crisis situations.

**Statistics**

- **746 emergency interventions conducted in 2025**, compared to 385 interventions in 2024.

- **1305 persons supported**, including both adults and minors.

- **1240 hours of emergency work delivered**, covering nights, weekends, and public holidays.

*These figures reflect a substantial increase in demand for the Service and demonstrate its vital role in ensuring the continuous provision of crisis support.*



# Supportline 179

## Service Overview

Throughout 2025, Supportline 179 strengthened its role as a key national support service by expanding access channels, enhancing staff capacity, increasing outreach to vulnerable and underserved communities and improving collaboration with partner organisations.

The service maintained its commitment to accessibility, professionalism and continuous improvement through structured training, community outreach, media engagement and service innovation.

Through the effective management of available staffing resources, the service maintained high standards of support and continued to receive positive feedback from callers, reflecting the team's professionalism and dedication.

## Milestones and Achievements

### Service development and accessibility improvements

- Successfully launched a pilot online chat service in September 2025, providing an additional and more accessible channel of support.

- Integrated the national Responsible Gaming Helpline (1777) into Supportline 179, ensuring continuous support outside standard office hours, including nights, weekends and on public holidays.

### Training and professional development

- Ongoing internal and external training was provided to maintain high service standards and strengthen operator competencies.

- All staff received specialised training to support the integration of the Responsible Gaming Helpline into Supportline 179.

**1777 // 179**

### Community outreach and awareness

- Delivered training and awareness sessions to various community organisations, including religious and disability organisations, as well as other community groups.

- Implemented a targeted outreach initiative based on research identifying localities with lower call rates, thereby increasing awareness of the service within underserved communities.

- Conducted outreach activities across several localities, including *Marsaxlokk, Marsa, Mġarr, Għaxaq, Żejtun, Mellieħa* and Valletta.

- Delivered awareness sessions to older persons and persons with disabilities through partnerships with local organisations.

### Media and public engagement

- Contributed in television and radio programmes promoting the Service and raising awareness of mental wellbeing.

- Published articles and participated in media discussions addressing loneliness, emotional wellbeing and help-seeking behaviour.

- Supported social media awareness initiatives and contributed to public discussions.

### Strengthening partnerships and collaboration

- Collaborated with Local Councils, Community Police and the Human Trafficking Service to strengthen community support networks.

- Participated in awareness raising events organised by national stakeholders and community partners.



Outreach Session with the Community police in Marsaxlokk



Launch of the Chat Service

# BeSmartOnline

## Service Overview

In 2025, BeSmartOnline! achieved its highest outreach figures to date, delivering **222** educational and awareness-raising sessions across Malta and Gozo.

These sessions were aimed at children, young people, parents and professionals, reinforcing the Foundation's commitment to promoting safer and more responsible digital engagement.





# Safer Internet Day

## Milestones and Achievements

### Safer Internet Day Outreach

As part of Safer Internet Day 2025, BeSmartOnline! organised a public outreach initiative in Valletta, engaging directly with members of the public through awareness-raising activities, information sharing and the distribution of educational resources.

The initiative was implemented through the BeSmartOnline partnership, led by FSWS in collaboration with the Malta Police Force's Cybercrime Unit, the Office of the Commissioner for Children and the Ministry for Education.

Through this coordinated national approach, the partners continued to strengthen efforts aimed to educate, support and empower children, young people, parents, educators and professionals to navigate the digital environment safely and responsibly.

### Staff Training

The team participated in various international training initiatives, strengthening professional capacity and ensuring that its practice remained aligned with emerging European digital safety standards.



## Mita Cyber Award

ChildWebAlert, Malta's national online reporting mechanism for child sexual abuse, received the MITA Cyber Award, in recognition of its contribution to strengthening online safety and reporting mechanisms in Malta.




## Participation in Public Events

BeSmartOnline! was invited by the Digital Literacy and Transversal Skills Directorate within the Ministry for Education to participate in Playcon. During the event, the teame engaged with young people and families on digital wellbeing, responsible gaming and online safety.






BeSmartOnline! participated in the Public Service Expo 2025, engaging with young people, families and stakeholders on digital wellbeing and online safety.

The service also contributed to a panel discussion hosted by the Malta Communications Authority (MCA) titled "Building a Better Online World: Platforms, Society & Policy in Action."

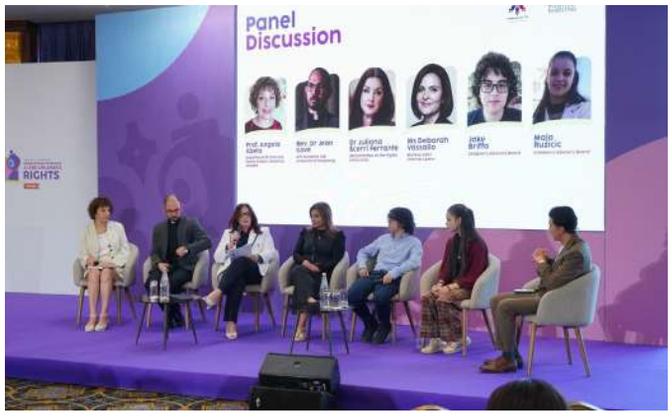
The discussion explored the shared responsibilities of online platforms, policymakers and society in promoting safer digital environments.

Collaboration with national stakeholders and entities

BeSmartOnline! continued to strengthen collaboration with national stakeholders through joint initiatives with the Victim Support Agency, reinforcing coordinated responses to online harm and enhancing the support mechanisms available to victims.

Training delivered to a wide range of organisations and educational institutions further extended the initiative's reach. This included sessions with the Victim Support

Agency, Caritas, the Psychology Chambers, DAC, DCPS and COPE Days at St. Dorothy School, St. Theresa College Birkirkara, St. Francis School Sliema, Ninu Cremona School, Aġenzija Sapport, Police Recruits and the University of Malta students in Media and Communications, Media Psychology and Youth Studies.




BeSmartOnline! also participated in a national consultation session on safeguarding in Maltese sport, contributing to discussions on the integration of online risks and digital-safety considerations into safeguarding practices.

The Malta Communications Authority formally granted Trusted Flagger Status to BeSmartOnline! Operating within the Foundation for Social Welfare Services. This designation strengthened the service's role in identifying and reporting harmful online content.

BeSmartOnline! was invited to participate in the Wellfest Festival at St Thomas More College Middle School, where the team engaged with students on digital wellbeing, online safety and responsible online behaviour.

BeSmartOnline! participated in the conference "Safeguarding Childhood: AI and Children's Rights," contributing to national discussions on the impact of artificial intelligence on children's online safety and wellbeing.

**University of Malta – Media Communications**

A significant milestone was reached through the delivery of a specialised session to marketing students at the University of Malta – Media Communications, focusing on the responsible and accurate terminology used when referring to child sexual abuse material in media and communications contexts.

The session emphasised the importance of correct language, ethical framing and the impact of media narratives in either reinforcing harm or upholding the dignity of victims. By equipping future media and marketing professionals with this critical understanding, BeSmartOnline! continues to strengthen preventative efforts and promote responsible communication standards at a tertiary level.

Involvement in European policy and discussion At European level, BeSmartOnline! actively contributed to policy and expert discussions. Key contributions included:

- Participation in the Safer Internet Forum 2025, which focused on promoting age-appropriate digital environments for children and young people. During the Forum, the service contributed to a panel discussion on online gaming, addressing both the opportunities it offers and the risks associated with children's gaming experiences.

- Engagement in discussions on artificial intelligence, online gaming and emerging risks affecting children.



• Contribution to expert meetings held in Brussels and Luxembourg concerning the implementation of Article 28 of the Digital Services Act and the development of the EU Action Plan against Cyberbullying.

• Participation in the 19th edition of the international conference "Safety of Children and Youth on the Internet" in Poland, organised by NASK and the Empowering Children Foundation (Fundacja Dajemy Dzieciom Siłę). During the conference, the service shared practical insights and case-based expertise gained through Malta's national Helpline and Hotline operations, contributing to wider European discussions on child online protection and emerging digital risks.

• Contribution to an Insafe training session held in Amsterdam, focusing on the emerging risks and safeguarding considerations related to AI companions. Drawing on national casework and frontline experience, the service supported the exchange of knowledge among European Safer Internet Centres regarding the implications of artificial intelligence for children and young people.




These engagements positioned Malta as an active contributor to key European discussions about child online protection, artificial intelligence and platform accountability.

ChildWebAlert, Malta's hotline and a member of the International Association of Internet Hotlines (INHOPE), participated in the INHOPE Data Exchange & Intelligence Forum held in The Hague. The Forum brought together hotlines, law enforcement agencies, industry representatives and policymakers to strengthen the exchange of information concerning child sexual abuse material, enabling such illegal content to be identified, assessed and removed more swiftly and consistently across jurisdictions.



Promotion and Awareness

At national level, BeSmartOnline! contributed to public discourse through television and radio appearances, panel discussions and participation in conferences addressing artificial intelligence, children's rights, safeguarding in sport and digital regulation. During the summer period, the service delivered sessions in collaboration with Skolasajf and Foundation for Educational Services (FES), extending its outreach to children attending summer programmes across Malta and Gozo.

BeSmartOnline! was also invited to contribute to the public discussion "Big Tech, Bigger Impact: Can We Make Social Media Safe for Everyone?", organised by Times of Malta in collaboration with the Parliamentary Secretariat for Equality and Reforms. During the event, the service shared expert insights into platform accountability, digital regulation, and safeguarding measures aimed at protecting children and young people online.



# Success Story

The strength of the Safer Internet Centre lies in the close collaboration between the Helpline and the Hotline. A recent case demonstrated the importance of this integrated approach is in responding effectively to emerging online risks.

The case was initially referred to the Helpline as a potential grooming concern. During the assessment process, the combined expertise of both services helped identify that the young person's vulnerability stemmed from repeated exposure to sexualised interactions through AI companion platforms. This deeper understanding reshaped the intervention. Rather than addressing only the initial presenting risk, the team was able to respond to the underlying exposure, provide more tailored guidance and support the young person and their caregivers in navigating these new digital environments more safely.

Recognising that this was not an isolated incident, the team translated the lessons learned from the case into preventive action.

An awareness campaign focused on AI companions was developed and launched, highlighting both the opportunities and the potential risks they may pose to children and young people. The campaign aimed to equip families, educators and professionals with practical knowledge to promote healthier and safer online experiences.

Insights gained through frontline work also created opportunities for broader collaboration. BeSmartOnline! was invited to contribute to an international InSafe training session, where the service shared its experience and contributed to discussions on appropriate responses and protective measures in this rapidly evolving area. This exchange strengthened cross-border dialogue and reinforced the importance of coordinated approaches among Safer Internet Centres and Helplines.

Building on this momentum, BeSmartOnline! was subsequently invited by NASK to participate in an international panel in Poland, where we shared our insights into AI companions, online vulnerability, and the evolving landscape of digital risks. What began as a response to an individual case developed into a broader contribution to policy discussions, professional learning and international cooperation.

This journey reflects how integrated services, reflective practice and collaboration can transform individual cases into opportunities for systemic learning and positive change.



# Homeless Service

The Homeless Service began operating in January 2022 and supports individuals and families experiencing homelessness, whether they are roofless or living in temporary accommodation, as well asthose at imminent risk of becoming homeless.

All social workers within the service contribute to the intake process, attending to both drop-in and telephone requests for assistance. During intake, a comprehensive assessment is conducted to understand everyone's circumstances and identify the underlying factors contributing to homelessness or housing instability. Based on this assessment, the social worker determines the most appropriate intervention and, where necessary, coordinates placement in a suitable homeless shelter.

The team maintains ongoing regular contact with various shelter providers to ensure that referrals meet each shelter's eligibility criteria.

Depending on the needs identified through assessment, individuals and families may be referred either to an emergency shelter for immediate, short-term support or to a long-term shelter for more sustained assistance.

In addition to drop-in and telephone intakes, the service receives referrals each month from a wide range of entities and organisations working to address diverse social challenges.

## Achievements and Milestones

- **Team Development**

- Two social workers attended a Study Visit in Munich focusing on homelessness.
- The Homeless Service Manager and a Senior Social worker participated in the annual FEANTSA Forum in Athens, Greece.

- **Fundraising & Support Initiatives**

- Raised €1,000 through a fundraiser in aid of the Twilight Fund.
- Initiated Support Group Sessions for team members.

- **Collaboration & Strengthened Networks**

- Strengthened collaboration with the Social Security Department and the Housing Authority, resulting in improved service delivery outcomes.Strengthened relationships with Social Security and the Housing Authority which are positively impacting our day-to-day work with clients.

- **Inter-Agency Engagement**

-Launched a multi-entity Roundtable Discussion involving several government

- A Homeless Shelter Seminar was organised, bringing together frontline shelter staff to share experiences and address common challenges

- **Stakeholder Relationship Building**

- Continued engagement with stakeholders, particularly through regular one-to-one meetings with shelter providers.

## Statistics

**445** new individuals supported

**411** new cases opened

**87** reactivated cases

**376** cases closed

**271** intake cases managed across the team

*These figures reflect the continued demand for the Service and its central role in addressing homelessness*

### FEANTSA Forum in Athens



### Round Table Meetings 2025



### Homeless Shelters Seminar 2025






### Study Visit in Munich





# Administration Team

## Overview

The Administration Team within *Aġenzija Appoġġ* provides essential operational and organisational support across all services. The team operates through specialised sub-units, namely Payroll, Procurement, Precincts, Administrative Support and Customer Care.

These functions ensure the smooth day-to-day running of the Agency, enabling frontline professionals to focus on service delivery. The Administrative Support and Precincts teams provide direct assistance to service teams, responding promptly to their logistical and operational requirements.

The Procurement team supports both *Aġenzija Appoġġ* and the Directorate for Alternative Care (DAC), ensuring the efficient acquisition of resources and services.

The Payroll team manages salary processing across multiple directorates, including *Aġenzija Appoġġ*, DAC, the Gozo Directorate, and Child Protection Services (CPS), requiring a high level of accuracy, consistency and confidentiality.

## Achievements and Milestones

Organisational Transition and Restructuring
During 2025, the Administration Team played a central role in supporting the structural separation between the Directorate for Alternative Care (DAC) and *Aġenzija Appoġġ*.

This transition involved both organisational and physical changes, requiring the review and adjustment of workflows, processes and logistical arrangements.

Despite the complexity of this transition, the team ensured continuity of operations, maintaining service efficiency and stability throughout the process.

- Raised €1,000 through a fundraiser in aid of the Twilight Fund.
- Initiated Support Group Sessions for team members.



# Intake and Family Support Service

## Service Overview

In 2025, IFSS focused on strengthening its internal processes and adapting to significant structural developments.

Against a backdrop of managerial and leadership transitions, the service prioritised resilience and adaptability, ensuring continuity in its core services throughout this period of change. Throughout this period of change, IFSS remained steadfast in delivering its services. Indeed, the service ensured that the waiting list remained well-managed and that all services continued to be delivered effectively.

## Achievements and Milestones

### Workforce Wellbeing and Team Development

Recognising the importance of staff wellbeing and effective team functioning, IFSS introduced internal support group sessions aimed at fostering communication, peer support and reflective practice among team members.

The service also continued to invest in staff development through ongoing training initiatives, strengthening professional capacity and supporting the delivery of high-quality service.

In parallel, IFSS maintained strong engagement with stakeholders within local communities to ensure that its services responded to the evolving needs of the groups it serves.This continuity demonstrated IFSS's commitment to reliability, professionalism and responsiveness during a period of organisational change.

The team, also continued to work to update the Manual of Procedures, ensuring that its policies and procedures remained relevant and effective.

### Strategic Planning and Future Development

Towards the end of the year, IFSS began planning new strategies aimed at expanding its reach and enhancing service delivery.
These efforts reflect a continued commitment to innovation, continuous improvement and responsiveness to emerging social needs.

### Statistics

237 individuals approached the Service for support.
188 cases were self-referrals.
Remaining referrals were received from services and professionals. 203 new service users Remaining cases were re-contacts.268 cases closed during 2025.



# Affordable Housing Service

## Service Overview

The Affordable Housing Service, operating within the Housing Authority, provides a comprehensive framework for facilitating access to social housing for eligible applicants. The Service manages a multi-stage process, including application vetting, detailed social assessments, contract drafting and the ongoing review of rental agreements.

Social welfare professionals from FSWS play a central role within this structure by providing essential social assessments and support, ensuring that housing allocation is informed by professional evaluation and individual needs.

Throughout the year, the team conducted 1,061 appointments, resulting in 973 complete assessments.

These efforts contribute directly to enhancing stability for vulnerable individuals and families, recognising secure housing as a key component of social wellbeing and long-term rehabilitation.

## Achievements and Milestones

### Increased Assessment Capacity

A record number of initial assessments was conducted during 2025, with 546 successful assessments completed out of 594 appointments. This contributed to a cumulative total of 1,955 initial assessments since the introduction of the streamlined process in February 2022.

### Application Vetting and Processing

The vetting team processed 876 new social housing applications, of which 562 were approved for further processing. This reflects both the growing demand for housing support and the efficiency of the screening process.

### Support within Correctional Facilities

Collaboration with the Correctional Services Agency (Kordin) was further strengthened, resulting in 57 new applications received from the facility, almost double the previous year. A total of 44 on-site assessments were carried out, representing 8% of all initial assessments in 2025.

### Financial Stability Initiatives

The Personal Plans initiative continued to support families with rent arrears through structured financial planning. During 2025, 27 new plans were established, alongside 149 interventions. Across 2024 and 2025, this initiative facilitated payments exceeding €125,000, contributing to improved financial stability among beneficiaries.

### Allocation and Housing Mobility

A total of 389 housing allocations were completed during the year, including 319 social housing units and 53 transfers through the housing exchange system. Additionally, 72 assessments were conducted for exchange requests, primarily related to accessibility needs or household size.

### Digital Transformation

In March 2025, the Service completed a full transition to a digital application system, eliminating the use of physical forms. This process included the digitisation and secure disposal of 4,300 files. The transition is expected to save approximately 13,500 sheets of paper annually and has reduced application processing times by two to four weeks.

### Community Outreach

- The Service conducted 15 information sessions across Day Centres, reaching 438 elderly individuals. These sessions promoted available housing schemes, including "*Nikru biex Nassistu*", which provides housing stability through the leasing of private properties for social housing purposes.







# Domestic Violence Services

## Overview

The year was characterised by continued growth, stronger collaboration and enhanced service delivery across all areas of the Domestic Violence Services.

Through commemorative events that brought staff and residents together, increased capacity and professional development, Għabex remained steadfast in its mission to promote safety, empowerment and recovery.

This year marked a significant milestone as Għabex celebrated 25 years of providing dedicated shelter, protection and support to women experiencing domestic violence.

The anniversary provided an opportunity both to reflect on the service's longstanding commitment and to highlight the transformative impact of its work on the lives of women and families.

At the same time, the Intake, Risk Assessment, STOP!, and Long-Term Support teams demonstrated resilience and innovation in responding to rising demand and increasingly complex cases.

This report outlines the key developments, achievements and challenges encountered throughout the year, reflecting the collective efforts of professionals committed to ensuring that every individual seeking support is met with compassion, professional expertise and a pathway towards a life free from violence.



# Għabex Emergency Shelter

## Service Overview

Għabex Emergency Shelter continued to provide safe accommodation and holistic support to women experiencing domestic violence, including those with complex needs such as substance misuse.

Throughout 2025, the Service maintained a strong focus on creating a supportive and stabilising environment, while ensuring access to external services through ongoing collaboration with key stakeholders.

## Achievements and Milestones

### 25th Anniversary Commemoration

Għabex commemorated 25 years of service through a dedicated conference that highlighted the evolution and impact of the shelter over the years. The event brought together professionals, stakeholders and individuals connected to the service.

A particularly meaningful aspect of the conference was the participation of former and current residents, who shared their personal experiences. Their testimonies offered powerful insight into the service's long-term impact and highlighted the important role Għabex has played in supporting women as they rebuild their lives.

In addition, a separate celebration was organised specifically for former and current residents. It provided a safe and supportive space in which participants could connect, reflect on their experiences and celebrate their journeys in a positive and empowering environment.

### Enhancing Quality of Life within the Shelter

Throughout the year, the Shelter continued to organise activities aimed at fostering a sense of normality and belonging among residents.

These included seasonal and cultural celebrations such as Easter activities, shared Christmas meals, gift exchanges and birthday celebrations.These initiatives play an important role in creating a supportive environment, particularly for families and children, by helping to restore routine and stability during a period of transition.



### Increased Demand and Complex Case Management

During 2025, the Shelter experienced an increase in referrals, including cases presenting more complex needs. The Service continued to provide accommodation and support to women experiencing domestic violence who also faced additional challenges, including substance misuse.

Through strengthened collaboration with other services, Għabex ensured that these individuals received coordinated and holistic support, prioritising both safety and overall wellbeing.








# Domestic Violence Unit - Intake Team

## Service Overview

In its second year following the restructuring of the Domestic Violence Unit, the Intake Team remained the primary point of contact for the assessment and processing of all referrals received throughout 2025.

The team continued to provide timely and intensive support to service users, typically engaging with service users on the same day or by the next working day.

This approach ensured that those seeking help received consistent assistance.

In response to the sustained high volume of referrals, a pilot initiative was launched in collaboration with the social welfare professionals of the Domestic Violence Long-Term Team.

The initiative provided follow-up support in selected cases requiring ongoing intervention. The outcomes were positive, with cases distributed more evenly amongIntake team members. This enabled staff to dedicate the necessary attention to each case and enhanced the overall quality of service delivery.

## Achievements and Milestones

**Strengthening Safeguarding Practices and Risk Management**

An internal structured process was developed to identify and manage high-risk cases more effectively.

This includes case discussions aimed at developing proactive and comprehensive care plans that prioritise the safety of service users. These practices also strengthened preparedness and alignment with the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Meeting (MARAM) procedures, contributing to more coordinated and strategic responses to high-risk situations.





### Collaboration and Awareness

The Intake Team maintained strong collaboration with all other Domestic Violence Services, ensuring smooth case transitions and continuity of care.

Professionals also contributed to awareness-raising efforts through participation in training sessions, public discussions, and media engagements, helping to increase public understanding of domestic violence and available support services.

## Domestic Violence Unit – Long-Term team

### Service Overview

During 2025, the Domestic Violence Unit Long-Term Team continued to provide sustained and structured intervention for service users requiring ongoing support following their initial assessment.

The Service plays a critical role in ensuring continuity of care, particularly for individuals experiencing prolonged or complex situations of domestic violence.

Referrals were allocated to Social Workers or Social Welfare Professionals based on the level of risk and case complexity.

Priority was consistently given to high-risk cases, particularly those involving individuals residing in emergency accommodation or accessing STOP! services.

Caseloads were closely monitored by the Service Area Leader and Coordinators through regular case management meetings. These meetings supported timely allocation, ensured appropriate case progression and facilitated professional guidance in managing complex situations.



# Risk Assessment

## Achievements and Milestones

### Strengthening Inter-Agency Collaboration

Throughout the year, the Long-Term Team continued to strengthen its collaboration with the Child-to-Parent Violence (CPV) Service. This collaboration resulted in more structured and coordinated interventions, particularly in cases involving family dynamics where multiple risks were present.

Improved communication and joint working practices contributed to greater clarity in roles and responsibilities, ultimately leading to more focused and effective support for families.

### Advancing Risk Assessment and Clinical Practice

Professionals within the team continued to apply structured risk assessment tools, including the Danger Assessment (DA) and the Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment (ODARA) , as part of their ongoing work with service users.

These tools supported more informed decision-making and strengthened risk management practices.

The team also actively contributed to the national process of translating and validating the Danger Assessment tool for the Maltese context. This included participation in relevant meetings and involvement in identifying suitable participants for research purposes. This contribution reflects the Service's role not only in practice but also in shaping national frameworks.

### Ongoing Implementation of the MARAM Framework

The Long-Term Team maintained strong engagement within the MARAM framework. Two Designated MARAM Officers regularly attended inter-agency meetings, contributing to coordinated responses in high-risk domestic violence cases.

Their involvement ensured consistent information sharing and strengthened inter-agency collaboration, while also allowing for feedback from frontline practice to inform ongoing development within the framework.



### Provision of Holistic and Continuous Support

The team continued to provide comprehensive support to service users across various stages of their journey. This included:

- Ongoing risk assessment and safety planning
- Emotional support and stabilisation
- Guidance in navigating services and systems
- Support during court proceedings
- Regular follow-ups to monitor progress and wellbeing

This holistic approach ensured that service users received not only immediate intervention but also sustained support tailored to their evolving needs.

### Professional Development and Capacity Building

The Long-Term Team continued to prioritise professional development through participation in specialised training initiatives. This included expert-led training delivered by organisations such as SafeLives, focusing on best practices in domestic violence interventions.

These learning opportunities strengthened the team's clinical knowledge, enhanced intervention strategies and supported alignment with international standards in domestic violence response.

### Awareness Raising and Sector Contribution

In addition to direct service delivery, professionals contributed to awareness-raising efforts through participation in media engagements, training sessions and discussions with stakeholders.

These contributions supported increased public awareness, promoted understanding of domestic violence dynamics and reinforced the Service's role within the broader social support system.

# Risk Assessment Service

## Service Overview

The Risk Assessment Service continued to operate on a 24/7 basis throughout 2025 from its two Gender-Based and Domestic Violence (GBDV) hubs, located in Santa Luċija and at Police Headquarters.

During the year, the team of risk assessors worked under constant scrutiny from various stakeholders, including the media, law enforcement and the courts.

Despite these pressures, the team remained steadfast in delivering the service with professionalism and integrity, guided by its core mission: to ensure that every individual seeking support left the hub in a safer position than when they arrived.

## Achievements and Milestones

### Recognition of Professional Excellence

During 2025, the Risk Assessment Team was awarded the Team of the Year at the Public Sector Awards. This recognition reflects the team's commitment, professionalism, and the critical role it plays in supporting individuals in high-risk domestic violence situations.

The award also highlights the impact of the Service at a national level, acknowledging the dedication and consistency demonstrated by team members in often demanding and complex circumstances.



### Contribution to Awareness and Public Discourse

A notable achievement within the team was the publication of a book by one of the Risk Assessors, Mr Andre Mifsud, as part of an initiative by Aġenzija Żgħażagħ and the Arts Council of Malta.

The publication, titled "Kieku Tħobbni, ma Kontx", explores the realities and dynamics of domestic violence, contributing to ongoing national efforts to raise awareness and promote understanding of this social issue.




### Strengthening Staff Wellbeing and Professional Support

Recognising the emotionally demanding nature of the work, structured processing supervision sessions were provided by senior social workers within the Domestic Violence Unit.

These sessions offered a safe space for professionals to reflect on their experiences, discuss challenges and process the emotional impact of their role. This support played a key role in promoting staff wellbeing, resilience and sustained professional effectiveness.




### Ongoing Training and Capacity Building

Throughout 2025, team members participated in specialised training aimed at strengthening their knowledge and skills in managing complex cases.

Key areas included human trafficking and substance misuse, both of which are increasingly relevant in cases involving domestic violence. These learning opportunities contributed to a more informed and holistic approach to risk assessment and intervention.

### Enhancing Safety Measures through Inter-Agency Collaboration

In July 2025, the Service introduced a referral pathway for high-risk domestic violence victims to access panic alarm devices. This initiative is coordinated in collaboration with the Victim Support Agency.

The implementation of this measure required close coordination between services to ensure timely referrals, appropriate allocation and effective usage. Regular inter-agency meetings were held to review practices, address challenges and strengthen collaboration.

This initiative represents a significant development in enhancing safety planning and providing immediate protective measures for individuals assessed as being at high risk.



VICTIM SUPPORT AGENCY

# STOP! The Violence and Abuse

## Service Overview

During 2025, STOP! The Violence and Abuse Service continued to strengthen its role in providing specialised interventions aimed at addressing abusive behaviour and promoting behavioural change among service users.

The Service maintained a multidisciplinary approach, enabling professionals to address the complex needs of both adult and minor service users through coordinated and holistic interventions.

This approach contributed to more comprehensive care planning and more effective engagement with individuals referred to the Service.

Throughout the year, STOP! also continued to build on its collaboration with international partners, particularly within the European network of perpetrator programmes, ensuring alignment with recognised standards and best practices.

## Achievements and Milestones

### Programme Review and Alignment with European Standards

During 2025, the Service initiated a structured internal review of its Domestic Abuse Intervention Programme. This process was undertaken in line with the European standards established by the Work With Perpetrators European Network (WWP-EN).

The objective of this review is to align the programme more closely with established best practice guidelines and to position the Service towards obtaining formal accreditation in the coming years. This reflects a strategic commitment to quality assurance, consistency and ongoing professional development.

In parallel, the Service successfully completed one Domestic Abuse Intervention Programme during the year and initiated a new cycle, which continued into 2026. This ensured continuity in service provision and sustained engagement with service users.

### Strengthening Multidisciplinary Practice

The continued development of a multidisciplinary team within STOP! resulted in more integrated and holistic interventions.

Professionals from different disciplines were able to contribute their expertise to assessment, care planning and intervention delivery, enhancing the overall quality and effectiveness of the Service.

This approach supported more tailored responses to the needs of service users, particularly in cases involving multiple risk factors or complex behavioural patterns.

### Managing Increased Demand and Service Responsiveness

The Service received a higher number of referrals than in previous years, reflecting both increased demand and greater visibility of the Service.

Despite this increase, all referrals were processed promptly. Every service user, whether self-referred or court-mandated, was engaged through the intake process, assessed by a Social Worker and provided with an individualised care plan aligned with their specific needs and risk profile.

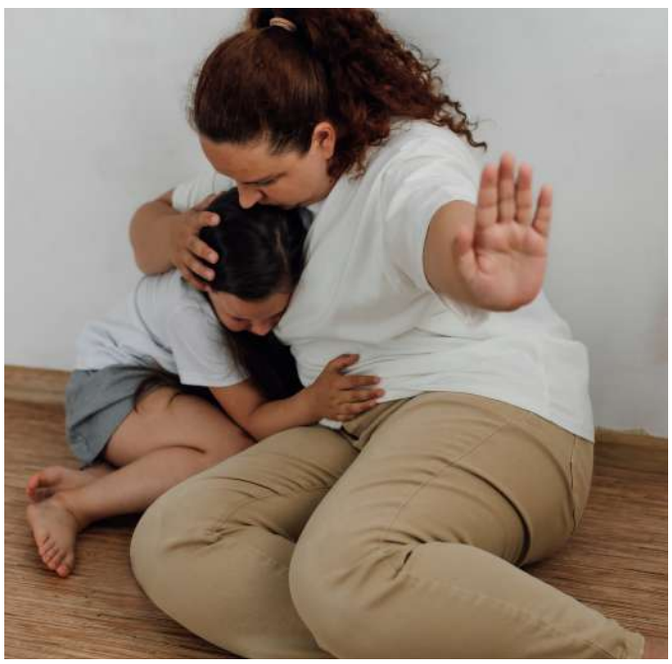
This demonstrates the Service's capacity to maintain responsiveness and quality of intervention even under increased operational pressure.



## Outreach and Professional Training

STOP! professionals remained actively engaged in outreach and capacity-building initiatives throughout 2025. The Service delivered awareness sessions and specialised training to a range of professionals, including members of the police force.

In addition, the team contributed to multi-agency training initiatives organised by the Commission on Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence. These contributions supported knowledge-sharing, strengthened inter-agency collaboration and promoted a more coordinated response to domestic violence at a national level.







# Success Story
## (Kimberly's Path to Safety and Strength)

After years in a relationship marked by intimidation, control and psychological and financial abuse, Kimberly sought help while feeling isolated and uncertain about the options available to her. Through a safe and supportive process, she began to understand the dynamics of abuse affecting her and her children.

With support from a social worker, Kimberly developed a safety plan, accessed essential services and reported the abuse at a Gender-Based and Domestic Violence (GBDV) hub. She and her children were admitted to a domestic violence shelter and later returned safely to their home under a protection order in place. Ongoing support from the Domestic Violence Services helped her rebuild her confidence and strengthen her independence.

Today, while continuing to navigate legal separation, Kimberly reports feeling empowered and safe within a calmer home environment in which her children are happier.

Kimberly's journey demonstrates how timely intervention, compassionate support and coordinated services can help survivors move from fear towards stability, safety and renewed strength.





# LGBTIQ+ Wellbeing Service

## Service Overview

Throughout 2025, the LGBTIQ+ Wellbeing Service experienced a notable increase in the number of individuals accessing support, through both self-referrals and referrals from external professionals and agencies.

Service users approached the Service with a range of needs. While the majority sought support related to gender identity, others required guidance in exploring their sexuality, as well as assistance with broader psychosocial challenges. This reflects the Service's role in providing holistic support tailored to the diverse needs of the LGBTIQ+ community.

## Achievements and Milestones

### Increased Engagement and Service Accessibility

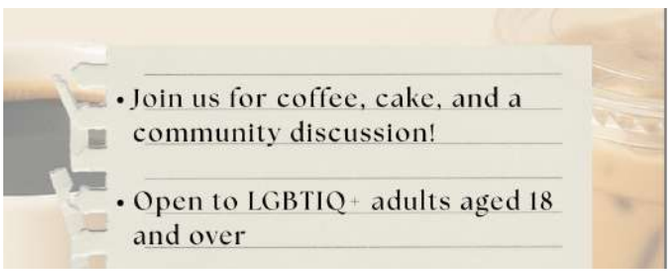
The Service recorded an increase in service uptake during 2025, reflecting both rising demand and improved visibility. The team continued to provide timely and supportive interventions, ensuring that individuals accessing the Service were guided through their personal journeys in a safe and professional environment.



### Community Outreach and Awareness Initiatives

Throughout the year, the Service actively participated in community outreach initiatives aimed at strengthening visibility and engagement with the LGBTIQ+ community.

This included participation in national events such as Malta Pride and Gozo Pride, as well as outreach sessions.






# The Human Trafficking Service and Safe House

## Service Overview

In 2025, the Human Trafficking Service within Aġenzija Appoġġ continued to strengthen its commitment to prevention, protection and partnership in addressing human trafficking in Malta.

The service plays a central role in both the identification and support of individuals who may be victims of trafficking, while also contributing to national efforts aimed at prevention, awareness and policy development. A key component of the Service is the operation of the Safe House, which provides a secure, supportive and trauma-informed environment for individuals requiring protection and assistance.

Throughout the year, the team maintained a holistic approach, combining direct support to service users with ongoing collaboration with national and international stakeholders.

## Achievements and Milestones

### Service Provision and Capacity Development

A core priority remained the identification and assessment of new human trafficking cases, alongside the daily operation of the shelter, ensuring a safe, supportive and trauma-informed environment for survivors. The team provided round-the-clock care, individualised support plans, risk assessments and coordination with relevant services, supporting 38 clients throughout 2025.

A significant milestone was the transition to a larger shelter, enhancing capacity, improving facilities and enabling the service to better respond to the complex and diverse needs of service users.



### Awareness Raising, Training and Prevention Initiatives

Awareness-raising and capacity-building remained central throughout the year. The service delivered media contributions and maintained active engagement through its Facebook page to increase public understanding of trafficking indicators and available support.

Training and awareness sessions were delivered to police recruits, educators, social work professionals, Transport Malta officials and university students, strengthening early identification and referral pathways.

Prevention initiatives also targeted vulnerable youth through an interactive escape room activity conducted in children's homes. This provided practical scenarios related to grooming, exploitation and trafficking risks, encouraging critical thinking and safer decision-making.

### Inter-Agency Collaboration and National Engagement

Collaboration remained central to the service's work. Several roundtable conferences were organised, bringing together key stakeholders to discuss issues such as child trafficking, access to justice for victims of labour trafficking, risks within the LGBTIQ community and challenges faced by undocumented migrants in the sex industry.

The service also participated in the Inter-ministerial Committee and the National Referral Mechanism working group, contributing to policy development, case coordination and the implementation of Malta's National Anti-Trafficking Strategy.

### International Collaboration and Strategic Development

The service hosted two study visits, including a Romanian delegation comprising law enforcement, a prosecutor. a civil society representative and representatives from the OSCE/ODIHR supporting the development of Malta's National Referral Mechanism.

In partnership with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the service launched the AMIF-funded project New Beginnings, aimed at strengthening support, integration and long-term outcomes for victims of trafficking.

The annual Human Trafficking Conference, held in July under the theme "New Beginnings: Empowerment Against Trafficking," served as a platform for knowledge-sharing and professional development. An additional information day in Marsa focused on raising awareness among migrant communities and residents.








# Health Services

**Benniena Service – MDH**

Social workers within the Benniena Service continued to play an essential role, with frequent referrals being made by other professionals.

The team made considerable efforts to deliver services in a timely manner; however, the service was not operating at full capacity, as there remained a need for an additional social worker.

An increase in referrals was noted, particularly involving foreign nationals, which at times added complexity to case management.

Regular multidisciplinary meetings were held to discuss cases and strengthen service coordination. Social workers also benefited from continuous training provided by Allied Health, fostering improved interprofessional collaboration.

In addition, FSWS social workers contributed by delivering training sessions to newly recruited midwives, outlining their role and the interventions available to service users.







**Mater Dei Hospital – Social Work Service**

During the first quarter, the MDH Social Work team focused on reducing waiting lists, resulting in patients being seen either on the same day of referral or the following day.

Ongoing meetings were held with the Allied Health Directorate, and the team was introduced to the newly appointed Director of Health Services. Discussions with the Clinical Chair and other managers addressed situations where parents were admitted to hospital without appropriate childcare arrangements, reinforcing that hospital settings are not suitable for children who are not patients. These matters were also raised at Ministerial level.

Plans are underway to introduce a new Electronic Medical Records (EMR) system to replace physical files. The social work service contributed to this process by providing feedback, drawing on experience with the existing Case Management System (CMS).

Social workers attended various training sessions organised by FSWS and Allied Health, including one related to the new Bill on the Protection of Vulnerable Persons.

The Service Manager and a social worker also participated in the 17th World Conference on Bioethics, Medical Ethics and Health Law.

**Mount Carmel Hospital (MCH)**

Regular meetings were held with Principal Social Workers at Mount Carmel Hospital (MCH) to address ongoing challenges and ensure effective service delivery.

These meetings proved beneficial in strengthening communication and collaboration with management.

Engagements included a meeting with Jobsplus regarding the Supportive Employment Scheme and participation in a roundtable discussion focusing on helplines and digital applications, where best practices were shared.

Social workers participated in several training opportunities, including the VIPROM European Webinar Series on Domestic Violence, FMCH CLT sessions, de-escalation training and online IPA training.

### Primary Health Care (PHC)

Social workers began participating in the Absenteeism Thematic Network Group alongside key stakeholders, including the Commissioner for Children, the Department of Justice, St Ignatius College, the International Learners' Directorate and FSWS. This initiative aims to promote innovative and sustainable approaches to addressing absenteeism and advocating for systemic change.

An EPR administrative system was introduced to support case recording, alongside the establishment of a generic referral email for professionals.

Social workers continued to participate in regular community meetings and attended an online information session on the Personal Autonomy Bill. They were also involved in skills profiling exercises and participated in various training sessions organised by FSWS and Allied Health.

Regular communication and meetings with the Professional Lead for PHC were maintained throughout the year.

### SAMOC

A social worker initiated collaborative meetings between the Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy teams to strengthen interdisciplinary working relationships, with the potential for future joint sessions involving all teams.

An information session with the Agency for Community and Therapeutic Services (ACTS) psychology team provided insights into their services, referral procedures and case profiles.

The team also conducted an orientation visit to St Michael's Hospice, exploring services offered and opportunities for collaboration.

The team leader met with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) representatives to explore ways of supporting service users and strengthening cooperation.

A team meeting was also held with the Director and Assistant Director to address key operational matters.

In collaboration with the University of Malta, nursing students were provided with short shadowing opportunities to enhance their understanding of social work. The Service Coordinator also presented her dissertation at the oncology conference "Together Through the Lens."

### St Vincent de Paul (SVP) Social Work Service

Throughout 2025, social workers at St Vincent de Paul (SVP) made a significant contribution to service delivery by supporting residents and assessing new admissions, with 904 referrals received through the service's generic email account and allocated alongside existing caseloads.

To ensure continuity of care, social workers conducted initial Active Ageing and Community Care (AACC) assessments when AACC staff were unavailable. The team also received regular supervision and self-reflection training to support professional development. Discussions to clarify the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) regarding notarial services for residents continued, alongside progress toward renewing the service agreement between SVP and FSWS.



### Active Ageing Community Care (AACC)

AACC engaged in discussions with Ġemma to introduce financial planning training for social workers and welfare professionals, aimed at strengthening support in budgeting and financial management.

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the Victim Support Agency (VSA) to collaborate on awareness-raising related to psychological abuse and harassment.

Discussions with legal representatives and senior management regarding the incapacitation process continued, with involvement from the Attorney General's Office. Proposed amendments to the needs assessment tool were also reviewed.

**Key activities during the year included:**

- Conducting an audit of Residenza San Ġużepp and preparations for Porziuncola Home
- Engagement with MGRM regarding NSPAA)
- Contributed to media programmes aimed at raising awareness of elder abuse
- Organising the AACC conference and seminars, including one held to mark World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, which was attended by 185 older adults
- Delivering training sessions and awareness-raising initiatives for professionals and older persons
- Strengthening collaboration with VSA in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)
- Initiating inter-agency meetings with Domestic Violence Services
- Developing standard operating procedures (SOPs) related to elder abuse and reporting systems
- Collaborating with MCAST through lectures, opportunities for student exposure and joint activities
- Exploring social work needs of older adults within correctional facilities
- Organising community-based activities that promote active ageing and personal development among older persons



# Conclusion

The achievements documented in this annual report reflect the continued progress and sustained commitment demonstrated throughout 2025 by professionals across the services falling within the remit of *Aġenzija Appoġġ*.

Through collective effort, strong inter-agency collaboration, and unwavering dedication, teams were able to reach and effectively support a significant number of service users. These achievements reinforce the importance of collaborative practice and responsive service delivery in addressing the evolving needs of individuals, families and communities.

Although existing challenges persist and new demands continue to emerge, *Aġenzija Appoġġ*'s core commitment remains unchanged: to stand alongside service users, amplify their voices and advocate for their needs.

The year concludes with a strong sense of purpose and confidence in the path ahead, reinforced by ongoing commitment to investing in the workforce, improving service accessibility and developing a more resilient, responsive and inclusive system.

Looking ahead, *Aġenzija Appoġġ* will remain focused on strengthening its services, listening attentively to feedback from service users, investing in its professionals and deepening both internal and external collaboration.

These priorities will place the Agency in a stronger position to address future challenges with determination, optimism and renewed purpose.

The Agency remains deeply grateful to the individuals and families it serves whose insights and lived experiences continue to shape its priorities and guide ongoing improvements in service development and delivery.

Finally, sincere appreciation is extended to every member of the workforce for their unwavering commitment and professionalism.

Guided by its shared values, vision, and mission, *Aġenzija Appoġġ* will continue to work alongside service users with compassion, integrity and innovation, while further strengthening and enhancing service delivery.

# Directorate for **ALTERNATIVE CARE**

Remenda **Grech**
Director

**84**

Foundation for Social Welfare Services



ANNUAL REPORT 2025



# OVERVIEW

The year 2025 has been a particularly meaningful year for the Directorate for Alternative Care, bringing it closer to the children and young people it serves, not only through its presence, but also through a deeper understanding of their needs and experiences.

Throughout the year, a conscious effort was made to listen more attentively, reflect more deeply and evaluate the Directorate's work more openly, guided by the voices and lived experiences of those at the heart of its services.

The Directorate strengthened its commitment to ensuring that every child is genuinely heard. Through consultation groups, daily practice and direct engagement, further opportunities were created for children and young people to express themselves safely and meaningfully.

Their voices have not only informed decision-making but have also encouraged continued growth and improvement in the way care is delivered.

This year was also marked by reflection, accountability and continued progress. The Directorate continued to critically evaluate its services, recognising that meaningful care requires ongoing learning and adaptation.

Developments aimed at strengthening both quality and responsiveness were actively pursued. Key initiatives included continued investment in a trauma-informed workforce, the introduction of specialised therapeutic supports and the development of new service pathways, including semi-secure therapeutic provision.

At the same time, the Directorate remained grounded in the everyday realities of care. Beyond strategies and structures, its work continued to centre on relationships, trust and consistency. The experiences reflected in this report highlight the resilience of children and young people, as well as the importance of providing stable, nurturing environments in which healing and growth can take place.



While progress has been made, challenges remain. One of the most pressing continues to be delays in court proceedings, which directly affect the lives of children and families by prolonging uncertainty and postponing decisions that are critical to their stability and wellbeing. The Directorate remains committed to advocating for more timely processes, always in the best interest of every child.

# Community Home Service

## Service Overview

The Community Homes Service operates eleven community homes across Malta, providing both long- and short-term residential placements within a trauma-informed and child-centred framework.

Each home offers 24-hour support from trained staff, ensuring continuous care, supervision and emotional support.

This round-the-clock presence promotes safety, stability and predictability - essential foundations for children and young people who have experienced trauma.

The service is rooted in individualised, strengths-based practice, with the voice, experiences and wishes of each young person guiding care planning and daily interventions. The homes provide structured and nurturing environments that support emotional wellbeing, physical and mental health, education development and the acquisition of essential life skills.

Family reintegration and progression towards independent living remain central objectives, supported through careful planning and consistent relational support.

Through multidisciplinary collaboration and reflective practice, the service continues to provide safe and responsive environments in which young people can heal, grow and move towards a more stable and secure future.

## Achievements and Milestones

### Service Capacity and Workforce Development

Throughout 2025, the Community Homes Service (CHS) continued to strengthen its identity as a therapeutic, relationship-based service grounded in trauma-informed care. All eleven homes operated at full capacity, responding to high demand and increasingly complex needs.

Ongoing discussions and proposals focused on ensuring the service continues to meet these demands while balancing immediate placements with long-term stability and quality of care.

Despite these pressures, the priority remained the provision of safe, structured and nurturing environments where children and young people feel protected, heard and supported to heal.

### Care Planning and Internal Systems

The revised care plan was implemented across the service, ensuring holistic, child-centred planning that integrates each young person's voice, strengths and aspirations. Internal systems were also strengthened through a revised handover structure, improving continuity and reflective communication.

### Service Development and Expansion

Preparatory work on the semi-secure therapeutic service progressed significantly, including structural planning and physical development. This marks an important step in expanding the continuum of care, providing enhanced containment and clinical support while maintaining the relational, home-based ethos of CHS.

## Statistics

| Service | Number of Residents Supported |
|---|---|
| **Sempre Viva** | Five residents – one resident successfully reintegrated into the community, while transition plans for a new resident were initiated to ensure a smooth and supportive entry into care. |
| **St Margherita** | Six residents |
| **Safe Haven** | Six residents |
| **Siblings Home** | Five residents – reduced from seven as two residents fully reintegrated into the community, while continuing to receive outreach support |
| **Gudja Home** | Relocated from Paola to Gudja – welcomed two new residents, while two residents transitioned into the community and aftercare respectively. |
| **Warm Haven** | Five residents |
| **Gżira Home** | Six residents – welcomed one new resident; one resident gave birth and continues to be supported alongside her baby; one resident is following a programme at IBWAR. |
| **Mġarr Home** | Six residents |
| **St Marija** | Six residents – two new admissions following the reintegration of two residents, one of whom returned to live with her family. |
| **Dingli Home** | Six residents – experienced several placement changes and therefore supported a higher total number of young people during the year; the home relocated from Birkirkara to Dingli. |
| **Gudja Home – Lumina** | Transitioned from a semi-basement residence in Attard to a home setting in Gudja, accommodating three residents. |



# Success Stories

## Case 1- Small Steps Towards Stability and Self-Belief

Despite experiencing early instability and emotional hardship in alternative care, this 14-year-old young person continues to show notable resilience and potential for growth.

Her early experiences have understandably affected her sense of safety, trust and emotional regulation. At times, overwhelming feelings have been expressed through oppositional behaviour and relational conflict, which can be understood as responses shaped by past adversity and unmet needs.

Over time, she has demonstrated a growing willingness to reflect on and actively invest in her wellbeing. A significant turning point has been her commitment to a structured fitness routine. Each weekday, she wakes at 5:15 a.m. to attend classes before school, demonstrating consistency, self-discipline and motivation.

Within this setting, she is respectful, follows guidance and assists her trainer, reflecting a growing sense of responsibility and stronger interpersonal skills.

The structure and predictability of this routine have had a stabilising effect, leading to noticeable improvements in cooperation and her ability to manage frustration at home.

She is also gradually becoming more open in expressing her emotions. Although trust remains a challenge, her steady progress toward forming meaningful connections reflects growing emotional resilience.

With continued relational safety and support, she is developing healthier coping strategies and a stronger sense of self-belief.



## Case 2 - Adapting to Change While Maintaining Connection and Belonging

This young person moved into the residential home following the termination of her long-term foster placement, where she had lived from birth until age 13.

The transition was emotionally challenging as she adjusted from an individual foster family environment to a therapeutic residential setting shared with other young people, each with their own complex experiences.

Navigating shared spaces and relationships initially brought feelings of uncertainty and vulnerability. However, through consistent and attuned support from staff, together with predictable routines, she gradually developed a stronger sense of safety and stability.

Her years in foster care positively shaped her character. She presents with warm, empathetic and caring qualities that have helped her develop trusting relationships with staff and peers.

Over time, she has shown improved emotional regulation, greater openness to support and increasing independence through the development of essential life skills.

She continues to maintain meaningful contact with her foster family, providing continuity and a strong sense of belonging. She has also demonstrated resilience in adapting to a new school environment and has actively engaged in volunteering.

Notably, her involvement in the Youth Engage Scheme and her voluntary work at Mosta Rotunda led to her nomination as a finalist for the Victor Calvagna Award, reflecting her significant personal growth, commitment and dedication.



## Case 3 - A Journey from Vulnerability to Independence

When this young person entered residential care at the age of 16, she was experiencing significant emotional and behavioural difficulties. She had previously lived in another residential setting, where she frequently absconded and experienced anxiety and depression that severely impacted her daily functioning.

Upon arrival, she found it difficult to trust staff, declined medication, avoided medical appointments and maintained irregular attendance at MCAST. Her mood was persistently low; she would often remain in bed for days, neglect her personal hygiene and refrain from participating in household responsibilities.

The team prioritised building a consistent, trusting relationship with her, offering encouragement without pressure. Through validation, understanding and steady support, she gradually began to open up, resume attending medical appointments and reconsider her views on medication.

Over time, she demonstrated clear improvements in her hygiene, daily routine and participation in household responsibilities.

With guidance, she explored employment opportunities and successfully secured a job, where she was entrusted with opening and closing the shop, an achievement that significantly strengthened her confidence. She also began taking driving lessons, demonstrating growing independence.

Now approaching 19, she has become a positive role model within the home. She respects boundaries and offers support to younger residents. Her progress reflects the positive impact of consistent, relationship-based care.

## Service Conclusion

The Community Homes Service demonstrates how consistent, trauma-informed and relationship-based care can bring about meaningful and lasting change.

By providing safe, structured and nurturing environments, supported by a skilled and reflective workforce, the service enables children and young people to heal, develop and progress towards greater independence.

The success stories presented illustrate that, despite significant adversity, children and young people can rebuild trust, strengthen their resilience and develop a sense of purpose when met with patience, understanding and stability.

Their journeys reflect the value of a model of care that prioritises emotional safety, meaningful relationships and each young person's individual potential.

Above all, the Community Homes Service offers hope to children and young people in care. It demonstrates that, with the right support and opportunities, they can become healthy, confident and resilient individuals, capable of building positive futures within their communities.

## Service Images




















# Looked After Children

## Service Overview

The Looked After Children is one of the largest teams within the Directorate for Alternative Care. . The service supports children from birth to 18 years of age who are placed in out-of-home care across Malta, whether in foster care or residential settings.

The service operates within the legal framework of Chapter 602 of the Laws of Malta (Protection of Minors Act). Through collaboration with all stakeholders involved in the child's life, LAC develops individualised care plans that reflect both social and legal considerations.

Through these care plans, the service also addresses the circumstances that led to the issuing of the care order or, in cases of voluntary care, the child's entry into the care system.

Once these circumstances have been addressed and the biological family is able to provide the child with a safe, healthy and nurturing environment, the Looked After Children Service works towards the child's reintegration with the biological family.

Where reintegration is not possible, the service supports the child through a permanency programme, which may, in some cases, lead to the child being declared free for adoption. This approach enables children to continue developing in a positive and nurturing environment that provides stability, security and a sense of belonging.



## Achievements and Milestones

### Strengthening Legal Preparedness and Practice

During 2025, increased emphasis was placed on the legal aspect of the service. Preparatory meetings were introduced in collaboration with the Socio-Legal Office, alongside mock trial exercises aimed at improving staff preparedness, confidence and effectiveness in court proceedings.

### Enhancing Therapeutic Support

A significant milestone was the introduction of LAC Therapists within the service. This initiative has strengthened both the availability and quality of therapeutic support provided to children in care. The system enables timely consultations and rapid response when challenges arise, ensuring that children receive appropriate support when needed.

### Promoting Reintegration and Positive Outcomes

A key achievement remains successful reintegration cases, where coordinated support from LAC professionals and other stakeholders enables children to return safely to their families. These outcomes reflect strong collaboration across services and a shared commitment to acting in the best interests of the child.

## Statistics

- Currently, the service follows **380** minors.
- Presently there are **15** minors in out-of-home care in Gozo. These come to a total of **395** cases.
- In 2025, **30** cases of care order with permanency have been approved. Seven cases of freeing up for adoption were finalised and another seven are still ongoing in court.
- In 2025, eight minors returned with their families and the service started to work with another seven minors towards the plan of reintegration.





# Success Stories

## Case 1 - Rebuilding Family Stability Through Long-Term Support

JVP was placed in care as a baby due to significant risks linked to parental substance misuse, instability and unsuitable living conditions. She was initially placed in respite care before moving into a long-term fostering placement.

In 2022, her parents entered into a Social Contract outlining steps towards reunification, including treatment, stable housing, employment and parenting support. Although initially resistant, the parents gradually began working toward these objectives.

They entered treatment, secured stable accommodation and employment and engaged positively with professionals. Supervised contact with JVP was consistently positive and reflected a secure attachment.

In 2023, the parents experienced a relapse but promptly informed Looked After Children Service and sought appropriate support. They were readmitted for stabilisation and continued community-based care.

By November 2023, they had signed the amended Social Contract, strengthened their bond with JVP, maintained stable employment, adhered to the required treatment and were expecting their second child. At that stage, no professional concerns had been raised. In 2024, the family welcomed their second child.

The Reintegration Service was introduced to support the parents in developing greater independence and strengthening their parenting capacity. Both parents engaged actively with professionals and sought assistance when needed. JVP's contact with her family gradually increased to include weekend overnight stays, as part of the progression toward full-time reunification. Professionals observed nurturing relationships between parents and both children.

Following reunification, JVP initially experienced emotional and behavioural difficulties as she adjusted to her new living arrangements. Her parents sought guidance in managing her behaviour and remained open

to receiving support as they navigated the challenges of caring for two young children. Her mother engaged in therapy, while further family support was planned for the father and the children. The parents have demonstrated resilience and commitment, providing a stable and nurturing home environment.

Ongoing community support and professional follow-up continue to promote the family's well-being and JVP's emotional development. JVP is now five years old and is very happy to be living with her family.

Although she spent the first years of her life apart from her parents, the stability provided by her foster placement, together with consistent professional support, enabled them to develop a meaningful and positive bond with their daughter.

## Case 2 - From Risk and Disengagement to Recovery and Commitment

The therapeutic team began working with the minor DM in December 2023 and continued providing support until October 2025. At the time of referral, the minor presented with significant substance misuse, delinquent and challenging behavioural patterns and complete disengagement from education. Initially, engagement proved difficult as he was resistant to psychotherapy and mistrustful of the process due to previous experiences.

Through consistency, patience and relationship-building, he gradually began attending sessions regularly and committed to the therapeutic process. Interventions focused on supporting him in reflecting on his identity, family dynamics, sense of worth and substance use as a form of self-harm and escapism.

Alongside therapy and in collaboration with the social workers, he transitioned from mainstream schooling to a resource centre, where he began attending consistently and made notable progress. He also secured two summer jobs, reflecting increased responsibility, structure and motivation towards social engagement.

Although substance use remained an ongoing challenge, accompanied by periods of ambivalence, he eventually made the autonomous decision to enter a rehabilitation programme.He is now demonstrating significant emotional and physical improvement. Despite the challenges encountered, he has sustained his engagement, developed greater insight and shown courage and commitment to achieving long-term change.



## Service Conclusion

The Looked After Children (LAC) service has a duty and responsibility to safeguard the rights of children in alternative care, ensure that their voices are heard and provide high-quality services in a timely manner.

The service is committed to building and maintaining positive relationships through effective networking and collaboration with professionals across various fields, recognising that such partnerships contribute to improved outcomes for children and young people.

Furthermore, LAC prioritises the continuous professional development of its staff to strengthen their knowledge and expertise. This ongoing investment supports the delivery of high-quality care and assistance to the children and young people.

## Service Images










SUPERBOWL
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# Looked After Children Healthcare Service

## Service Overview

LACHS strives to improve the health outcomes of children and young people placed in alternative care. Since its establishment in 2021, LACHS has played a pivotal role in identifying the specific healthcare needs of these minors and contributing to the development of policies and care pathways aimed at enhancing their overall well-being.

This work is particularly important given the vulnerability of this cohort of minors, who are at increased risk of having unmet health needs. LACHS adopts a holistic model of care that addresses physical, emotional and mental health needs in an integrated manner.

The service is firmly grounded in a trauma-informed approach, recognising that many children and young people have experienced adverse childhood experiences. Furthermore, LACHS also provides essential guidance and support to caregivers, professionals, and biological parents, given the complex needs and circumstances of each experience. A consultative service is also provided to the Adoption Team within the same directorate.



## Achievements and Milestones

### Strengthening Healthcare Access and Multi-Agency Collaboration

Collaboration with multiple entities remained central to achieving service objectives. This included liaison with mental health services to initiate treatment promptly and reduce reliance on emergency care. High-risk female adolescents were supported through access to contraceptive implants, while the genitourinary clinic aided in complex cases.

The Faculty of Dentistry continued providing free dental services, while the Immunisation Department supported the provision of vaccines for hard-to-reach minors. LACHS contributed to HPV catch-up programmes and the rollout of meningococcal vaccines and collaborated with the ophthalmic department to provide vision screening.

### Enhancing Holistic Assessments and Care Planning

During 2025, regular child-centred health assessments were maintained, alongside ongoing support for caregivers in both foster and residential settings. Comprehensive health reports were prepared following each assessment and shared with caregivers and lead workers to inform individual care plans. Consultations with biological parents were also undertaken when required, supporting a more integrated approach to care.

### Professional Engagement, Advocacy, and Training

Throughout the year, LACHS participated in media engagements and delivered training sessions to the Domestic Violence team, foster carers and psychiatric trainees.

Consultative support continued to be provided to the DAC Adoption Team, including engagement with prospective adoptive parents.

The service also played a key advocacy role in representing the voice of children in care, which in certain cases contributed to the initiation of local adoption processes. Collaboration with the Relational Pathway Service further strengthened integrated support.



## Statistics

**Table 1**. Number of children assessed by age groups and gender - January - December 2025

| Gender | Less than 1 year | 1 - 5 years | 6 - 10 years | 11 - 15 years | 16 - 17 years | 18+ years | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Females | 6 | 41 | 48 | 66 | 38 | 3 | 202 |
| Males | 6 | 44 | 49 | 66 | 22 | 9 | 195 |
| **Total** | 12 | 85 | 97 | 132 | 60 | 12 | **398** |

**Table 2**. Number of visits over 2025 by age groups and type of assessment (note: one child may have been reviewed more than once):

**1-7 refer to the type of assessment:**

**1**. Initial health assessment (IHA) New Case;

**2**. Review health assessment (RHA);

**3**. ADOC Review;

**4**. IHA Catch-up;

**5**. Educational Talk;

**6**. Telephone follow-up assessment;

**7**. Meeting with biological parents.

| Age Groups | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Total Reviews |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Less than 1 year | 9 | 13 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **24** |
| 1 - 5 years | 12 | 109 | 32 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 6 | **163** |
| 6 - 10 years | 6 | 82 | 19 | 0 | 0 | 38 | 1 | **146** |
| 11 - 15 years | 8 | 115 | 32 | 0 | 0 | 52 | 3 | **210** |
| 16 - 17 years | 2 | 45 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 24 | 0 | **80** |
| 18+ years | 0 | 3 | 19 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **22** |
| **Total** | 37 | 367 | 113 | 0 | 0 | 118 | 10 | **645** |



# Success Stories

## Case 1 - Expanding Preventative Healthcare Through Immunisation Access

Meningococcal disease is a rare but life-threatening bacterial infection that can lead to meningitis or septicaemia. Many children in alternative care were not previously immunised against this disease due to their social circumstances.

Strategic engagement with the Advisory Committee on Immunisation Policy led to the introduction of free meningococcal vaccinations for minors in residential care. As a result, eligible young people are now offered ACWY and type B vaccines from the age of 12. LACHS initiated a rollout of this immunisation programme during routine health visits.

Older minors received catch-up vaccinations, while younger children will be vaccinated as they reach eligibility.

This initiative represents a significant step in improving preventative healthcare access for vulnerable groups.



## Case 2 - 'Naf Min Jien!' A song displaying the everyday of these children.

Naf Min Jien! (I know who I am!), is an original song written by the Directorate's paediatrician, Dr Kevin Borg, and inspired by the lived experience of children and young people who have endured abuse or trauma.

The song tells their story through their eyes, conveying the confusion, pain and courage involved when a child or young person must leave their birth parents and enter alternative care. Although it speaks of a harsh reality, the song also carries a message of hope: with care, stability and love, even the deepest wounds can heal, allowing children and young people to flourish once again.

The song reflects a journey of resilience made possible through the dedication and generosity of the caregivers who support these children and young people each day. It serves as a tribute not only to caregivers in foster care as well as residential and community homes, but also to the many professionals whose work often goes unseen and unheard as they safeguard the children's rights and promote their best interests.

LACHS collaborated with the Marketing Team and various professionals across FSWS to produce a high-quality video that complements the song and raises awareness of the realities faced by children and young people in alternative care. The video was launched during the National Fostering Conference in November 2025 and was well received over social media.



## Service Conclusion

The LACHS operates within the objectives of the DAC and is committed to strengthening the quality of alternative care, with particular emphasis on addressing children's healthcare needs.

This work is guided by a child-rights-based approach that considers the range of factors shaping each minor's life experience, particularly adverse childhood experiences. By enhancing healthcare standards, LACHS aims to improve short and long-term health and wellbeing, foster resilience and enable children and young people to achieve their full potential.

LACHS also continues to play an important advocacy role in safeguarding and promoting the best interests of minors in alternative care.

## Service Images














GUESS



# Fostering Service

## Service Overview

The Fostering Service is dedicated to recruiting and supporting individuals and families to provide stable, secure homes for children unable to live with their biological families.

The primary goal is to facilitate reintegration, however, when this is not possible, focus is placed on establishing long-term permanency through alternative care.

In 2025, the service prioritised supporting foster carers navigating the complexities of lengthy Court proceedings and preliminary care orders. These dynamics highlighted the need for deeper engagement with prospective carers. In response, a Fostering Reflective Panel was established in collaboration with ACTS Directorate to ensure a systematic and clinical approach to evaluating new applicants.

## Achievements and Milestones

### Awareness and Public Engagement

Throughout 2025, Fostering Service collaborated with the Marketing Team to maintain a consistent public presence via monthly television and radio appearances, press articles and social media campaigns. Key highlights included a major awareness campaign in March and the National Fostering Conference in November, held with the support of the Ministry for Social Policy and Children's Rights.

- **144** enquiry calls received
- **27** Home Study reports submitted
- **156** review reports completed to support ongoing fostering journeys

### Pre-Service Training

Four pre-service training cycles were conducted in 2025 to meet the demand from prospective foster carers. The programme provides a vital opportunity for reflection and preparation. Although not all participants proceed to the assessment stage, the process helps ensure that those who continue are psychologically prepared for the foster journey.

### Fostering Reflective Panel

In partnership with ACTS, this panel evaluates prospective carers following their initial training. By analysing childhood histories and emotional readiness, the panel provides critical recommendations that strengthen the subsequent Home Study process.

### Training and Support Groups

Nine support groups and training sessions were facilitated for registered foster carers. These sessions fostered a peer-led environment, often co-facilitated by our Fostering counsellor and experienced carers.

- **Support Group Themes**: Included "Meeting the Child's and Foster Carer's Wound", "Connected by the Same Call" and "Fostering to Adoption Practice".

- **Training Topics**: covered "Fostering Secure Attachment", "Practical Tools for Literacy and Numeracy", "Supervised Access Visits" and "Childhood Development"

Additionally, foster carers contributed their expertise to the annual Consultation Groups hosted by the Directorate for Alternative Care.

## Statistics

**New Placements** – **14** in total in 2025





# Success Stories

## Case 1 - Supporting Recovery and Reintegration Through Foster Care

Following the approval of their foster care license, Michael and Romina were contacted by the Fostering Team regarding a potential placement for Ted, a 12-year-old boy whose father had been diagnosed with a serious medical condition.

As his health deteriorated, Ted's father struggled to meet his son's daily needs. Consequently, Ted became socially isolated, frequently missed school and experienced periods of low mood, including suicidal thoughts. Recognising his limitations, Ted's father made the difficult decision to request that a foster family is identified and signed the voluntary care agreement.

Michael and Romina agreed to care for Ted and facilitated a smooth and supportive transition into their home.

During the initial stages of the placement, the foster carers focused on establishing a trusting, stable and supportive relationship with him. They also developed a positive relationship with Ted's father, working together to maintain consistent parenting approaches, boundaries and routines, including curfews.

Although challenges arose, particularly as Ted understandably preferred to spend most of his time with his father, Michael and Romina remained patient and consistent.

With their encouragement, Ted re-engaged with education. He began attending school regularly, received private tuition, participated in school plays and formed new friendships.

Now aged 16, Ted has successfully enrolled at MCAST, attends the gym regularly and has become more independent. Following careful planning, Ted has been successfully reunited with his father.

Michael and Romina are proud to have supported both Ted and his father during a challenging period and to have contributed positively to Ted's development and wellbeing.



## Case 2 - Building Lifelong Stability Through Fostering and Adoption

Milly was placed with her foster carers as a baby. From the outset, they prioritised ensuring that she felt safe, loved and secure. Their focus has always been on developing a strong bond with Milly and responding consistently to her needs.

Over time, Milly began turning to her foster carers for comfort and reassurance, as she continues to do today. She learned to trust them and feel secure in their care. They have been present throughout her early development, sharing important milestones, such as her first smile, first steps and her first words.

Over the years, Milly has become settled and confident within the family. She has integrated very well into the family and turns to her foster carers and their extended family for support and connection.

An important aspect of this journey has been the foster carers' positive and respectful communication with Milly's biological mother and their consistent support for ongoing contact.

They recognised how important this relationship is for Milly's identity and have worked hard to ensure it remains safe and meaningful.

Five years later, what began as a foster placement has become permanent through adoption. This has been agreed with the understanding that contact will continue to be maintained with her biological mother. Milly is now thriving at school, secure within her family and growing up knowing that this is her home, while also embracing her biological family.

## Service Conclusion

A fostering home is far more than a placement; it is a sanctuary built on love, security and the foundation of a stable family environment. At the heart of this service are dedicated individuals who strive to provide the very best, often navigating the complex hardships and systemic injustices that the journey can bring.

The success of these placements is made possible through the rigorous assessment, unwavering support and tireless advocacy of our fostering professionals. Their commitment to identifying, preparing and sustaining these homes ensures that every child in need is given the opportunity to grow within a truly loving and secure family.

Looking ahead to 2026, Fostering Service remains committed in its mission to further strengthen these support systems and innovate its practices, ensuring that the voice of every child and carer continues to guide its path forward.

## Service Images














# Adoption Service

## Service Overview

The Adoption Service is a licensed state agency dedicated to supporting individuals and families embarking on both local and international adoption journeys. As a comprehensive service provider, it manages the entire process, from initial inquiry and specialised training to assessment, Home Study reports and ongoing assistance during matching and legal finalisation.

In recent years, the service has shifted its focus toward strengthening support systems for prospective parents navigating lengthy waiting periods. This journey is often delicate, as the global landscape shows a decrease in the number of children available for international adoption who meet specific parental criteria.

Furthermore, the services recognise that extensive post-adoption support is paramount to help families navigate the complex emotional and psychological dynamics associated with childhood trauma.

The Adoption team work tirelessly, utilising high emotional intelligence to meet the demands of the service and the needs of the families it serves.

## Achievements and Milestones

### Adoption Training

In 2025, the Adoption Service successfully conducted four Adoption Training Courses for those entering the process. To enhance accessibility, one of these courses was specifically tailored for English-speaking participants. A total of 48 applicants completed the training and were presented with official certificates of attendance.

### Home Study Reports (HSR)

Throughout the year, the team finalised and submitted 16 Home Study Reports and 11 HSR Updates to the Adoption Board for

approval. While an additional five reports were completed, they were not forwarded to the Board due to varying individual circumstances.

### Intercountry & Local Applications

The service actively managed numerous international applications involving Bulgaria, Slovakia, India and Colombia. These processes require meticulous documentation to comply with the legal frameworks of the sending countries. Simultaneously, local adoption applications were filed and reviewed every six months, ensuring all profiles remained current for potential local matches.

### Post-Adoption Support and Workshops

**Five Post-Adoption Workshops** were organised to provide families with professional guidance and peer support. Facilitated by therapists from the Directorate Alternative Care (DAC), these sessions provided practical tools for navigating the adoption journey.

**Themes focused on:**

- The manifestations of trauma;
- Strengthening family relationships;
- Sharing the "Adoption Story"; and
- Self-care and supporting the adopted child.

These sessions were highly successful, with 48 adoptive parents participating throughout the year.





## Statistics

The year 2025 saw the successful finalisation of five adoptions:

- Four transitions from Fostering to Adoption.
- One international adoption from Bulgaria (notably, this was the first-ever match and completed adoption from this country).

Additionally, two new local adoption placements were established.

While these children are already settled with their new families, legal proceedings are ongoing, with finalisation expected in 2026.

Two intercountry matches were also presented; however, following extensive multidisciplinary consultations, the prospective parents chose not to proceed with these specific matches.

# Success Stories

## Case 1 - Supporting Stable Transitions from Residential Care to Adoption

The Adoption Service facilitated the successful transition of two minors living in local residential homes that were matched with their adoptive families.

This journey was defined by a slow but steady pace, prioritising the emotional security and long-term stability of the children.

A multidisciplinary team of professionals provided intensive support to both the minors and the prospective adoptive parents throughout the entire process. While the transition faced various challenges and emotional ups and downs, the persistent, coordinated effort of all involved ensured a successful outcome.

The children are now well settled with their adoptive families, where they have found the safety, warmth and care they deserve.



## Case 2 - Perseverance and Stability Through Intercountry Adoption

After years of navigating long waiting periods and the emotional challenges of the adoption process, a prospective mother's commitment was finally rewarded with an intercountry match. The journey was far from straightforward and despite the setbacks she encountered along the way, she remained steadfast in her dedication, working closely with professionals to prepare for adoption.

In time, she welcomed her son into her home, marking the beginning of a new chapter in both their lives. Her son has settled well and continues to make remarkable progress.

With ongoing support and guidance from professionals, his speech is developing rapidly and he is building secure attachments. He has also integrated successfully into the local community and culture, forming meaningful friendships at school.

This journey is a testament to how perseverance, resilience and continuous professional support can, over time, lead to a stable, nurturing and successful adoption outcome.

## Service Conclusion

Moving into 2026, the Adoption Service remains committed to strengthening the collaboration with both international and internal stakeholders, including the Central Authority of Malta.

It will continue to nurture existing inter-relationships while proactively seeking new partnerships to broaden the horizons for prospective families.

As the landscape of global and local adoption evolves, Adoption service will adapt and grow to meet these shifting dynamics.

Above all, its focus remains steadfast: ensuring that every decision and evolution within the service is rooted in meeting the best interests and complex needs of the children at the heart of the adoption journey.



# Home Start Service

## Service Overview

Home-Start Malta operates within the global framework of Home-Start Worldwide. In collaboration with Home-Start Gozo, providing essential support to families with children ranging from newborns to five years of age.

The service model relies on the dedication of volunteers, whose diverse skills and capabilities are carefully matched with the specific needs of the families we serve.

The year 2025 was a period of significant leadership transition. In July, a new Coordinator was welcomed into the role, who underwent comprehensive training in Home-Start's specialised policies and international procedures to ensure service continuity.

Throughout the year, the primary focus remained on re-establishing the core values of Home-Start Worldwide and intensifying volunteer recruitment to meet growing community demand.

Home-Start Malta continues to be an active participant in international meetings, workshops, and evaluation projects to ensure that the local service meets global standards.

## Achievements and Milestones

### Strengthening Assessment and Family Matching

The coordinator conducted several consultations and formal family assessments to gain a comprehensive understanding of each household's circumstances and needs. These assessments are essential in ensuring appropriate and sustainable matching between volunteers and families.

### International Engagement and Service Alignment

Home-Start Malta maintained a strong presence within the global network. Key engagements

included participation in the Home-Start Worldwide Online Conference, attended by staff from Malta and Gozo, volunteers and committee members.

The coordinator also attended the Annual General Meeting in December, while regular inter-branch meetings between Malta and Gozo ensured a consistent and unified approach to service delivery.

### Community Outreach and Volunteer Recruitment

Strategic promotion remained a priority in 2025, with efforts focused on reaching vulnerable families and expanding the volunteer base. Visibility was increased through targeted social media campaigns and national television appearances, contributing to greater awareness of the service.

### Training Course for New Volunteers and Support Groups

Two new candidates have completed the Home-Start Preparatory Course and have been enrolled as active volunteers. To support the existing team, two Support Group sessions were organised, providing a vital space for peer support and knowledge sharing.

### Family Events

Creating a sense of community is central to the work carried out by Home-Start. In 2025, an Easter Egg Hunt and a Halloween Party were organised. Crucially, several parents took an active role in organising these events. This participation served as a powerful tool for empowerment, helping parents build self-confidence and a deeper sense of belonging within the Home-Start community.

## Statistics

In 2025, Home-Start received 32 referrals. The majority of these originated from internal services within the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS), including Child Protection Services, IFSS, Mater Dei Social Work Service and ACTS, alongside a small number of self-referrals.

**32** Referrals
Year **2025**






# Success Stories

## Case 1 - Strengthening Family Stability Through Long-Term Support

Over the past two years volunteers from the Home-start service have been working closely with AM's family. During this period there has been a significant and heartening transformation in their overall stability and well-being.

With consistent support, the children are now attending school regularly and showing marked progress in both their academic performance and their general development.

This success is rooted in the parents' increased engagement; by actively participating in their children's growth and refining their parenting skills, the family dynamic has shifted toward a much more positive and proactive environment.

A key factor in this progress has been the mother's commitment to the pool of multidisciplinary professionals involved with family, such as professionals coming from the mental health, community services and a positive relationship with school professionals.

Family and professionals are now seeing the concrete benefits of these interventions that have surely fueled the family's motivation, ensuring they remain open to support and deeply invested in their continued journey of growth.





## Case 2 - - Supporting Acceptance and Independence in Parenting

BS is the mother of two siblings aged four and six years. When Home-Start started following the mother, the latter was very overwhelmed as both of her children were identified as being on the autism spectrum. At the time, the mother was in denial and accepting this reality felt nearly impossible.

Through the consistent presence of Home-Start volunteers, the mother received the practical support she needed at home. Crucially, volunteers also accompanied her to the children's various assessments, providing support and assistance during a period that was very stressful.

As the children began attending school regularly, the mother's engagement shifted. The practical help evolved into emotional encouragement; she moved from needing accompaniment to attending specialist sessions for her children independently.

Furthermore, she managed to build a strong, collaborative relationship with the school staff, which played a very positive role for her emotional wellbeing. Today, the children are showing progress in their development, and the family dynamics have improved, resulting in the mother no longer requiring the Home-Start service.

## Service Conclusion

Home-Start Malta will continue to strive to recruit additional volunteers to expand the support available to families throughout their parenting journey. The organisation expresses its sincere gratitude to its volunteers, whose dedication remains an essential component of the service, fostering positive and supportive relationships with families in need.

## Service Images













# After Care Services

## Service Overview

2025 has been a pivotal year for Aftercare Services, centred on the mission of guiding young adults from alternative care into sustainable independent living. The holistic model used integrates rigorous assessments, proactive outreach and residential stability to equip care leavers with the necessary toolkit for adulthood.

Intervention begins at age fifteen, establishing a collaborative framework that translates individual aspirations into concrete action plans. Through meticulous interviews and personalised care planning, ensuring every young person has a clear pathway to success. Complementing this, the Outreach Service provides a vital lifeline, offering emotional support, hygiene facilities and assistance with education and employment.

Residential Services in Ħamrun and Valletta have continued to provide stepping stones for young people aged 18 to 21. During the year, it was confirmed that operations at the Ħamrun facility will cease.

Despite this transition, the service remains committed to fostering autonomy and financial responsibility through structured support, ensuring young people are prepared for independent living.



## Achievements and Milestones

### Strengthening Assessment and Engagement

In 2025, there was a notable increase in diagnostic engagement, with 16 comprehensive assessments initiated. These remain central to the service, involving in-depth interviews and multi-agency input to ensure support is tailored to each young person's evolving needs.

### Social Inclusion & Activities

To promote holistic well-being and social cohesion, the service organised a diverse calendar of events designed to build confidence and community ties:

- Physical & Recreational: Swimming sessions, hiking and laser tag tournaments;
- Community Building: Social BBQs and celebratory parties;
- Civic Contribution: Residential camping trips and active participation in fundraising initiatives for the Children's Fund, encouraging young adults to give back to the community.

## Statistics

The Outreach Program continues to demonstrate its value as a safety net for care leavers. In 2025, **47** clients received ongoing outreach support.

This consistent engagement is vital for maintaining professional networks and addressing emerging needs before they escalate, ensuring that no young person feels isolated after leaving the formal care system.

Over the past year, semi-independent flatlets have provided a stable environment for nine young people.

After Care service celebrated several key transitions during this period:

- Emergency to Independence:

  Two residents successfully moved out upon reaching age 18, having resided on an emergency licensed basis with dedicated carer support.

- Community Integration:

  Three residents achieved the milestone of transitioning into private rental accommodations within the community.

These three individuals exemplify the success of the Aftercare service model; all were actively engaged in employment or further studies at the time of their move, marking a significant achievement in their journey toward full autonomy.



# Success Stories

## Case 1 - Building Independence Through Confidence and Self-Direction

JJ has been residing with Aftercare Services for the past year. From the beginning of her placement, she demonstrated confidence, determination and a strong focus on achieving her goals.

She required minimal support from the team, primarily seeking companionship or emotional guidance when needed. She successfully balanced her school and work commitments while maintaining her friendships, relationships and daily responsibilities.

Our support mainly involved assisting with transportation when necessary and helping her explore different options when she felt uncertain about certain decisions. In the later stages of placement, she shifted her focus towards personal development and business planning while maintaining employment for financial stability.

She also began living with her partner, navigating this transition with maturity and openness to support.

JJ is now planning to relocate abroad, with clear goals around employment, business development and maintaining positive relationships. Her journey reflects strong self-direction supported by timely professional guidance.



## Case 2 - Strengthening Family Stability Through Long-Term Support

AA resided within the service for over two years and required consistent guidance to develop social, employment, and independent living skills. Initially, he struggled with confidence and decision-making, often feeling uncertain about his ability to succeed.

Through structured support, including clear boundaries and guided engagement with services, he gradually began taking more initiative.

He developed the ability to make decisions, advocate for himself and engage more actively with opportunities.

While challenges such as indecisiveness remain, AA has shown clear progress. He has built social connections, increased self-confidence and taken the significant step of securing his own accommodation, marking an important milestone in his journey towards independence.

## Service Conclusion

Continuous Assessment and Growth: The service remains committed to its core evaluative functions, including vetting prospective residents for the flatlet facilities and expanding the reach of the Outreach Service to care leavers. It also conducts early-intervention assessments for children aged 15 and over referred by the Looked After Children Services, ensuring that proactive transition plans are established well before they leave the care system.

## Service Images





# Relational Pathway Service

## Service Overview

The Relational Pathway Service (RPS), formerly known as the Re-Integration Service, stands at the forefront of child welfare practice, championing safe reunification and sustainable permanency for children in care.

Social Welfare Professionals within RPS play a pivotal role in supporting minors who are subject to pendente lite orders, working intensively with families at a critical and time-sensitive stage of intervention.

Their work goes beyond procedural case management; it is rooted in restoring relationships, strengthening parenting capacity and addressing the complex factors that led to separation.

Through structured assessment, therapeutic support and targeted skill development, practitioners guide families toward meaningful and measurable change.

Where reunification is viable, RPS ensures that it is carefully prepared, supported and sustainable. Where reunification is not possible, the service works decisively toward alternative permanency arrangements that prioritise the child's long-term stability and wellbeing.

At its core, RPS is guided by one fundamental principle: securing safe and lasting outcomes through the strength of positive relationships.

## Key Developments and Operational Highlights

**Early Intervention and Systemic Engagement**

In 2025, RPS underwent a significant transformation, expanding its role to begin intervention pendente lite, from the moment a child enters care. This shift enabled earlier engagement with families at their most vulnerable stage, allowing professionals to address the underlying causes of separation more effectively.

RPS remains the only service working

systemically across the entire family network, including children, parents, siblings and wider supports, ensuring a comprehensive relational understanding.

**Holistic Assessment and Targeted Family Support**

A key aspect of this work involves identifying specific needs within the family system. This may include emotional support for individual members, practical parenting skills, strengthening relationships through supervised access or guidance in areas such as routines, communication and financial management.

This whole-system approach enabled earlier exploration of Supervision Orders, reducing reliance on Care Orders and minimising delays for children.

**Service Development and Identity Shift**

Reflecting its expanded scope, the service transitioned from "Reintegration Service" to Relational Pathway Service, emphasising that relationships are central to healing and long-term change. The service continues to focus on early intervention, strengthened connections, and holistic support to safeguard the child's best interests.

# Success Stories

## Case 1 - Restoring Family Stability Through Sustained Support

A three-year-old girl's life reflects an extraordinary journey of care, resilience and enduring connection. Taken into care at birth, she was fostered by her grandparents, while her other grandparents remained closely involved through regular sleepovers and consistent support. Surrounded by extended family, she grew up with a strong foundation of love and security.

Her parents showed remarkable determination to rebuild their lives, moving away from drugs and addiction. Through full engagement with a rehabilitation programme, they have maintained two years of sobriety. In 2024, they welcomed a newborn and moved into their own home, establishing a safe and stable environment for their family.

Throughout this journey, they embraced support from the Relational Pathway Service (RPS), which worked step by step to strengthen their parenting skills, build confidence and deepen their bond with both children.

The combined efforts of the family, RPS and Looked After Children Services led to a defining milestone: their daughter was ready and eager to return home permanently.

Her wish to "stay for good" captures the transformative power of family fostering and relational support, demonstrating that with patience, guidance and commitment, safe reunification and lasting positive outcomes are possible.



## Case 2 - From Fear and Instability to Trust and Reunification

In 2025, the Relational Pathway Service (RPS) celebrated a truly powerful success. A six-year-old boy, in care since birth due to his mother's addiction, had been moved through several placements as his behaviour became increasingly overwhelming.

What many saw as "challenging" behaviour was a frightened child desperately protecting himself from loss. The mother completed a rehabilitation programme, has remained substance-free for the past three years, secured employment and rebuilt her life.

Throughout those months, RPS remained a stable presence, offering mentoring, emotional support, guided contact, and deep relational work, helping both mother and son understand the meaning behind his behaviours. RPS, alongside Looked After Children (LAC) and other stakeholders, worked closely to create one unified plan built on consistency, understanding and safety.

When reunification finally happened in September, the transition was intense. The boy, terrified of losing his mother again, spiralled emotionally. Many feared that the reunification might not hold. But RPS continued to walk beside them, supporting routines, strengthening therapeutic parenting skills and ensuring she never felt alone in the process.
The mother, steadfast, resilient and committed, remained present through every storm her son brought. She embraced the relational approach, remained consistent and accepted support from RPS whenever fear and fatigue arose. Gradually, the trust bond deepened. With each step forward, the family grew stronger.

This case stands as a testament to what is possible when the Relational Pathway Service, the Directorate for Alternative Care and all stakeholders join forces around a child and parent. Through collaboration, compassion and trauma-informed care, a once fragile story became one of healing, love and lasting reunification.



## Service Conclusion

The Relational Pathway Service stands as a powerful model of early, relational and trauma-informed intervention within child welfare practice.

By engaging families at the earliest stage, working systemically and maintaining unwavering focus on the minor's best interests. RPS transforms crisis into opportunity.

The milestones achieved in 2025, together with the deeply impactful reunification stories, demonstrate that sustainable change is possible when services act decisively, collaboratively and compassionately.

Through strengthened relationships, practical support and professional persistence, RPS continues to secure safe, stable and enduring outcomes for children and their families.



# Supervised Access Visits Service

## Service Overview

Supervised Access Visits provide a structured, professionally monitored contact between children and non-custodial parents or other family members when unsupervised interaction is not appropriate.

Delivered in a secure and controlled environment, this child-centred service promotes safe communication, supports relationship-building and preserves vital family connections while prioritising the minor's emotional and physical well-being.

All visits are carefully observed and documented, with detailed reports contributing to informed decision-making. Feedback may be shared with a multidisciplinary team to support a broad care plan focused on the minor's best interests.

The primary purpose of supervised access visits is to safeguard minors who are subject to a Care Order by ensuring that parental contact occurs safely and constructively. It is also frequently directed by the Family Court in cases of parental separation where supervised interaction is considered necessary to protect the minor's best interests. In some instances, parents may voluntarily consent to supervised visits when they recognise that monitored contact supports their minor's welfare.

The service combines structured oversight, including professional spot checks during visits, whether arranged through court orders or within alternative care settings.



## Key Developments and Operational Highlights

### Service Relocation and Structural Alignment

A key milestone in 2025 was the relocation of Supervised Access Visits from *Aġenzija Appoġġ* to premises within the Directorate for Alternative Care. This transition strengthened organisational alignment with child protection and alternative care services, improving coordination, case management and professional oversight.

### Development of Child-Centred Facilities

The establishment of purpose-built facilities marked another significant advancement. The new premises provide a secure, structured and child-friendly environment that ensures privacy while promoting positive parent-child interaction.

The design of the space reduces anxiety for children, encourages natural engagement and enables professionals to monitor visits effectively without creating an intrusive setting.

### Strengthening Practice and Service Responsiveness

The service continued to evolve in response to the changing needs of service users. Ongoing review of practice, flexible scheduling, enhanced monitoring procedures and a consistent child-centred approach have strengthened the quality and safety of supervised contact. These developments reflect a service committed to continuous improvement and to safeguarding the best interests of children and families.

# Success Stories

## Case 1 - Enhancing Emotional Safety Through Trauma-Informed Practice

Through a sustained multidisciplinary strategy, the implementation of a more intensive, trauma-informed model, which is being delivered through close collaboration along with therapists, has produced an improvement in supervised access arrangements.

This integrated approach has strengthened the quality, consistency and emotional safety of contact sessions, ensuring that interventions are responsive to the complex psychological and developmental needs of the minor. By embedding trauma-informed principles into practice, professionals have been better equipped to recognise triggers, manage emotional dysregulation and support healthier patterns of interaction between the minor and the biological parent.

The coordinated involvement of therapeutic specialists in some cases has enhanced assessment, planning, and real-time support during supervised contact, resulting in more constructive engagement and reduced conflict. Therefore, the minors have demonstrated increased emotional security, improved regulation, and greater willingness to participate in contact. Simultaneously, the biological parents have been better supported to respond sensitively and appropriately, fostering more meaningful and attuned interactions.

Overall, this strengthened, collaborative framework has not only improved the immediate quality and safety of supervised access but has also positively influenced the broader parent–child relationship, contributing to more sustainable and beneficial long-term outcomes.





## Case 2 - Progressing Towards Natural Contact and Community Integration

A structured and collaborative approach has led to increasing numbers of supervised visits taking place within community and public settings. This reflects improved risk management, growing confidence and positive progression in individual cases.

This development has been made possible through consistent, reflective feedback provided by supervisors, enabling contact plans to evolve in response to observed progress, parental engagement and the minor's emotional readiness.

The transition from controlled environments to public spaces represents a significant step toward normalisation. It allows minors to experience time with their biological parents in settings that more closely mirror everyday life, thereby reducing the artificial nature of supervised arrangements. Such environments provide opportunities for spontaneous interaction, shared activities and the development of natural relational dynamics, all within a structured and professionally monitored framework.

Continuous assessment and supervisor feedback remain central to ensuring that such transitions are safe, appropriate and in the child's best interests. This model has contributed to improved relationship dynamics and more sustainable long-term outcomes.

## Service Conclusion

The progress achieved by the Supervised Access Visits Service demonstrates a strong commitment to safeguarding children while preserving meaningful family connections.

By maintaining a responsive, child-centred approach within a specialised alternative care framework, the service has enhanced both operational efficiency and quality of delivery. Above all, it continues to uphold the fundamental principle that every intervention must prioritise the best interests, safety, and wellbeing of the child.

The Supervised Access Service stands as a vital protective measure, making sure that family contact occurs within a framework of safety, dignity and accountability.

## Service Images

















# Consultation Groups

## Service Overview

In 2025, the Directorate for Alternative Care (DAC) continued its successful consultation group initiative with service users, building on the positive outcomes of previous years. The groups engaged minors living in residential homes, those in foster care and young people accessing DAC's Youth Services.

These sessions offered meaningful insight into participants' experiences, exploring topics such as the experience of living in alternative care, relationships with professionals and the transition out of care.

Facilitated by DAC professionals, the groups created a supportive space for open discussion.

The initiative concluded with a closing session during which participants were acknowledged for their contributions and allowed to share their perspectives directly with the DAC Director.

The feedback collected will help guide future efforts to strengthen and enhance DAC services.

## Achievements and Milestones

### Strengthening Participation and Inclusion

The Directorate fostered strong participation and engagement, creating a safe environment where children and young people felt comfortable sharing their experiences.
The consultation groups included:

- Fostered children aged six to nine and their carers
- Youths aged 14 to 16
- Children in residential/community care aged eight to 12

### Capturing Experiences and Service Feedback

Core themes were explored openly, including experiences of entering care, relationships with professionals and perspectives on education and mental health services.

Participants also shared views on:

- qualities they value in workers
- creating more welcoming environments
- improving supervised access visits

This input provided meaningful insight to inform service development.

### Building Group Cohesion and Reflective Practice

Activities aimed at building trust and group cohesion proved effective in encouraging participation. Consistent follow-up between sessions supported strong attendance and engagement.

The use of evaluation forms and continuous feedback ensured that sessions remained purposeful and responsive, contributing to the overall success of the initiative.

## Statistics

| Group type | Attendance |
|---|---|
| Consultation group for children living in residential homes | Ten minors |
| Consultation group for children living in foster care | Four minors and 6 foster carers |
| Consultation group for youth services | Four minors |

# Success Story

## Case 1 - Empowering Young Voices to Influence Practice

A participant in the residential care consultation group initially struggled to engage, declining activities and finding it difficult to follow group expectations.

By the third session, facilitators noticed a change in her behaviour and provided individual support. In a safe setting, she shared concerns about her sister's recent hospitalisation and said that she had been deeply worried about her.

When gently encouraged to elaborate, she explained that she had learned about her sister's hospitalisation from other children in the home rather than from a carer or the head of the home.

Despite her young age, she had expected that a staff member would approach her directly to inform and reassure her. She expressed feeling overlooked and disappointed, as though she had been treated simply as another resident rather than as a sister and close family member.

The facilitators acknowledged her feelings and asked whether she would be comfortable sharing this feedback more formally, since this could be an important area for reflection and improvement within residential care. She agreed; thus the feedback was communicated to the residential home concerned as part of ongoing efforts to strengthen practice and responsiveness.



# Socio-Legal Office

## Consultation Groups Service Conclusion

The consultation groups will continue to prioritise meaningful participation and active engagement, building on the progress achieved in previous years. Emphasis will be placed on ensuring wider representation across diverse service user groups, including children in residential care, foster care and youth services.

These groups will continue to provide a safe and supportive platform for open dialogue, enabling participants to share their experiences, raise concerns and put forward recommendations. The insights gathered will play a key role in informing policy development and service improvement, reinforcing a child-centred and responsive approach to care.

# Socio-Legal Office

## Service Overview

The Socio-Legal Office plays a central role within the Directorate for Alternative Care (DAC) and is responsible for several functions, including:

- Collecting and maintaining comprehensive data on all cases followed by the Directorate.
- Attending Care Order proceedings and representing the DAC while providing professional input where required.
- Leading preparatory meetings concerning ongoing Care Order cases prior to each court sitting.
- Serving as a member of the Socio-Legal Board, where key decisions regarding freeing-up orders, permanency decisions and reintegration are taken.

- Providing legal representation to the Directorate in all matters arising, including court proceedings, stakeholder engagements and participation in legally established boards and tribunals.
- Representing minors under the Directorate's care in court proceedings, both where minors are accused of criminal offences and where they are victims of crime.
- Representing minors during police interventions, including interrogations and the taking of statements.
- Providing legal advice to DAC staff when required.
- Reviewing and correcting documentation presented before the Courts and the Minors Care Review Board.
- Attending sittings of the Minors Care Review Board, when necessary, particularly where parents are legally represented or complex legal issues arise.
- Liaising with stakeholders and legal professionals regarding cases followed by the Directorate.
- Ensuring that minors under the Directorate's care obtain legally valid travel documentation.
- The Socio-Legal Office also continued to provide both formal and informal training to staff on legal matters relevant to the Directorate's work, contributing to greater awareness and understanding of legal processes among professionals.

## Achievements and Milestones

### Strengthening Data Management and Strategic Support

During 2025, the Socio-Legal Office continued to consolidate its role as a key component of the Directorate. A major contribution was the ongoing development of data collection and record-keeping systems, ensuring accurate and up-to-date information to support both operational and strategic decision-making.

### Enhancing Court Representation and Legal Oversight

The office maintained full oversight of ongoing Care Order proceedings, many originating from the Directorate for Child Protection Services (DCPS), ensuring continuity and informed case management.
In 2025:

- **85** Care Order proceedings were followed
- **246** Juvenile Court sittings were attended

The office also:

- Represented minors in **86 court proceedings** (342 sittings)
- Represented professionals in **12 proceedings** (19 sittings)
- Represented the Directorate in **15 additional proceedings**

These achievements are particularly notable given that all legal representation is currently delivered by a single advocate.



# Success Stories

**Strengthening Legal Capacity and Professional Support**

Beyond court representation, the office continued to strengthen legal capacity within the Directorate through advisory support, documentation review, and staff training.
Its role in preparatory meetings and board participation ensured informed decision-making across legal and care processes, particularly in complex cases involving permanency and safeguarding.

## Statistics

· Socio-Legal Board meetings: 31
· Permanency Decrees: 30
· Freeing-up Decrees: 7
· Local adoptions from care: 3

The number of local adoptions from care reflects a slight decrease compared to 2024.

· Total court appearances: 376
· Care Order proceedings sittings: 246

# Success Stories

## Case 1 - Empowering Young Voices to Influence Practice

A significant milestone during 2025 was the finalisation of the first open adoption, allowing continued access between siblings. The case concerned a minor who was adopted by her foster carers. Although the minor did not maintain contact with her biological parents, she had a positive relationship with her siblings.

The Court ruled that the minor should retain access to her siblings following the adoption.
This case demonstrates the practical implementation of the amended legal framework on open adoption, which now allows for continued contact between an adopted person and members of the biological family, even where there is no contact with the biological parents.

Furthermore, open adoption arrangements are no longer restricted to minors aged eleven years or older, thereby allowing greater flexibility in safeguarding the best interests of the child.



## Case 2 - Supporting Rehabilitation and Positive Reintegration

Another notable case involved a minor who had previously conflicted with the law but has since made significant progress towards rehabilitation and positive social integration.

The minor had been arrested and charged before the duty magistrate with serious offences together with other accomplices, with prosecution conducted by the Attorney General due to the nature of the charges. The minor was subsequently granted bail under several conditions and placed under a provisional supervision order.

Throughout the process, the Directorate's lawyer worked closely with the minor's probation officer. The minor is now employed on a full-time basis, actively participates in sports activities and has surrounded himself with individuals who provide positive support. He is also actively avoiding situations that may hinder his progress.

Similar cases encountered throughout 2025 demonstrate the positive outcomes that can be achieved through a multidisciplinary approach when working with young people.

## Service Conclusion

The year 2025 was both demanding and productive for the Socio-Legal Office. Despite limited human resources, the office continued to provide comprehensive legal support while strengthening data management, legal representation and staff training.

Its work highlights the critical role of legal oversight in safeguarding the rights and best interests of minors in alternative care.

Moving forward, the office remains committed to further strengthening its services, enhancing collaboration and supporting effective, legally sound decision-making across the Directorate.



# Youth Services Malta

Youth Services Malta provides multi-professional interventions for vulnerable young people through social work, youth work and therapeutic support. Interventions are tailored to individual needs using a strengths- and needs-based approach aimed at empowering young people to reach their potential.

Throughout the year, various initiatives were implemented, including national recognition events such as Youth Skills Day and the Youth Services Awards Ceremony.

The service also led the implementation of the Second Chance Project, supporting young people involved in or at risk of illegal behaviour. This initiative contributed to the establishment of a network group addressing key themes related to vulnerable youth.

Additionally, training needs were identified through stakeholder consultations, leading to the initiation of procurement processes to strengthen service delivery.

## Embark for Life Service

### Service Overview

Embark for Life (E4L) supports young people aged 14–25 in their transition to employment and further education. Many participants face challenges such as trauma, mental health difficulties, intellectual limitations, probation, homelessness or substance misuse.

The service provides structured support through personalised guidance, breaking down goals into manageable steps, alongside group sessions that develop employability and social skills. A multidisciplinary approach ensures integration with individual care plans, allowing for consistent monitoring and coordinated responses during periods of instability.



## Achievements and Milestones

### Individual Support and Programme Delivery

E4L provided personalised guidance to 94 young people throughout 2025. The service also delivered the 5th and 6th editions of the Ħabrek employability skills programme in collaboration with JobsPlus. In addition, JobsPlus offered on-site registration services at the Youth Services Activity Centre in Msida, carried out in the presence of the young persons' key workers, ensuring accessibility and immediate support.

The weekly Thursday group sessions were held again throughout the year, maintaining strong attendance. These sessions were facilitated by the E4L team, with contributions from youth work and sociology students as part of their placements.

The sessions created a safe, non-judgemental environment where young people could connect, share experiences and support one another through mutual understanding, empathy and practical advice. A new initiative introduced during the year included three short, accredited courses delivered by national stakeholders. These added value to participants' development and enhanced their CVs.

- Emotional Intelligence – delivered by JobsPlus
- Conflict Resolution – delivered by JobsPlus
- Resilience – delivered by the Health Promotion Unit

Additionally, several job site visits were organised across different sectors, including Civil Protection, electronics, hospitality, MaltaPost and retail. These visits provided practical exposure to real work environments and broadened participants' understanding of employment opportunities.

These complemented E4L's aim of strengthening employability and personal development skills.

### Partnerships and Pathways to Employment

The Youth Engage Scheme, implemented in collaboration with the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector (MCVS), registered an increase in host NGOs. This strengthened both the variety of volunteering opportunities and the quality of matching between youth and placements.

E4L workers carried out regular on-site visits to ensure smooth integration and to address any emerging challenges. The service also extended its work to young people residing at CORRS, supporting them in their transition towards employment following release.

## Statistics

Active Cases January to December 2025 – **94**

Interventions January to December 2025 – **1,967**

*Ħabrek* Thursday weekly afternoon group sessions held - **49**

Average number of youths attending – **10**

JobsPlus Appointments at the Youth Services Activity Centre – **45**

Job Site Visits – **6**

Youth Engage Scheme - **23** young persons who were matched with **13** host NGOs



# Youth in Focus

## Service Overview

Youth in Focus supports young people aged 13–18 through social work, counselling and therapeutic interventions. The service addresses complex challenges, including behavioural difficulties, substance misuse, family conflict and disengagement.

The aim is to work with young people whose needs are not being met through assessments, short and long-term interventions, and agreed-upon care plans with the youth.

The service aims to support young people within their own environment and the community they live in to strengthen their social support network. Several interventions are held with young people such as accompanying them to medical appointments, conducting home and school visits, accompanying them to Court hearings and anywhere where they feel safe to talk. Youth in Focus works hand in hand with other professionals to support the young people to reach their goals.

## Achievements and Milestones

### Service Delivery and Collaborative Practice

Youth in Focus maintained a strong level of service delivery throughout 2025, continuing to provide social work, counselling and therapeutic support to young people and their families.

Demand was effectively managed, with waiting lists kept to a minimum for most of the year. A temporary increase occurred towards the end of the year due to the departure of a Social Worker, impacting capacity.

Considerable emphasis was placed on strengthening collaboration through regular intra- and inter-agency meetings.

These supported the development of coordinated and holistic responses to the needs of young people, ensuring consistency across interventions.

### Extending Support to Parents

A significant development was the introduction of therapeutic and counselling support for parents of young people engaged with the service.

This initiative proved highly beneficial, with feedback indicating:

- improved parental wellbeing
- increased engagement with services
- strengthened support systems for young people

This represents an important step towards a more systemic, family-focused approach.

## Statistics

- Over **30** minors and parents given counselling and/or therapeutic support the in-house counsellor and therapist.
- **104** closed cases in 2025
- Around **170** cases active cases worked with at any given period throughout.

# Youth Empowerment Initiatives

## Service Overview

The service supports young people through structured group interventions aimed at building resilience, confidence and life skills. Support is primarily delivered through structured group settings, enabling young people to develop social skills, confidence and a sense of belonging.

Key programmes include Youth Lounge, the Adolescent Day Programme (King's Trust International accredited), Armed Forces of Malta programmes (AFM) and Summer Ventures.

These support vulnerable young people outside mainstream education to gain a certificate leading to an O-Level equivalent qualification, while the AFM programmes, delivered in collaboration with the Armed Forces of Malta, promote discipline, teamwork and responsibility.

Through collaboration with families, schools and community stakeholders, the service ensures holistic and coordinated support that empowers young people and encourages positive development.

## Achievements and Milestones

### Strengthening Referrals and Service Visibility

The service recorded a strong level of referrals from professionals across different sectors, reflecting increased awareness and confidence in the support provided.

This was supported through ongoing communication and collaboration with families, schools and stakeholders, ensuring clarity around the service's role and interventions.

### Sustained Engagement Beyond Programmes

A notable outcome was the continued engagement of young people with the service even after completing programmes.

This ongoing communication demonstrates:

- sustained trust in the service
- effectiveness of relational engagement
- successful communication of ongoing accessibility and support

**Enhancing Holistic Support Networks**

Through continued collaboration with families, schools and community stakeholders, the service strengthened its holistic approach. These efforts contributed to:

- improved resilience among young people
- increased confidence and social skills
- stronger connections within their support networks

## Statistics

**Youth Lounge (ongoing sessions)**
- 17 young people attending at one point or another
- 35 sessions were held

**I matter – (30 weeks)**
- Four regulars (Six referrals)
- CoRRS (ongoing Friday Sessions)
- 50 service users

**ADP – 13th January – 30th April**
- Sessions: 40
- Youth referred: 16
- Youth Attended: 8
- Youth completed portfolios: 4

**Summer Venture – 7th July – 15th September**
- Sessions: 26
- Youth referred: 10

**AFM Programmes**
- Sessions: 14
- All youth who joined: 50

# Success Stories

## Case 1 - From School Disengagement to Employment

**Profile of young person:**

A 16-year-old referred by school presented with absenteeism, anxiety, ADHD and early substance use. Through coordinated intervention across Youth in Focus, ADP and E4L:

**Background and Referral**

The young person was referred to Youth in Focus (YIF) by the school due to persistent school absenteeism, emerging behavioural concerns and family-related difficulties. At the time of referral, the young person was experiencing heightened anxiety, had a diagnosis of ADHD and had begun experimenting with substances, all of which were negatively impacting engagement with education and daily functioning.

The school expressed concern that without immediate and coordinated intervention, the young person was at risk of early school leaving and further social exclusion.

**Intervention – Youth in Focus (YIF)**

Upon intake, YIF conducted a holistic assessment focusing on the young person's emotional wellbeing, family dynamics and social environment. Individual social work and therapeutic support was provided, addressing:

- Anxiety management and emotional regulation
- ADHD-related challenges, including concentration and impulse control
- Family communication and conflict
- Motivation and goal setting

Parallel family work helped improve understanding, reduce tension at home and strengthen the support system around the young person.

**Youth Empowerment Initiatives Unit.**

Given ongoing disengagement from mainstream schooling, the young person was referred to the Adolescent Day Programme



(ADP) within the Youth Empowerment Initiatives Unit of this service. The programme provided a structured, supportive environment tailored to adolescents facing similar challenges

Through ADP, the young person:

- Re-established a daily routine
- Improved social skills and peer relationships
- Participated in experiential learning and group work
- Developed increased self-confidence and accountability

ADP staff worked closely with YIF to ensure continuity of care and consistent emotional support.

### Transition to Embark 4 Life (E4L)

Following successful engagement in ADP, the young person was referred to Embark 4 Life (E4L) to support their transition towards employment. Through E4L, the young person:

- Completed the Ħabrek employability skills programme
- Received career guidance and job readiness training
- Developed practical skills such as CV writing, interview preparation and workplace behaviour
- Received one-to-one support in job seeking

### Outcomes

As a result of the integrated, multi-disciplinary approach across Youth Services Malta:

- The young person showed significant improvement in emotional regulation and anxiety management
- Substance experimentation reduced as coping strategies strengthened
- Engagement and motivation increased
- The young person successfully secured employment as a salesperson and demonstrated sustained commitment to work
- The young person continues to maintain employment and reports increased self-esteem, independence and a sense of purpose.



## Case 2 - Diverting Risk Through Early Intervention and Engagement

A 15-year-old at risk of gang involvement was supported through coordinated intervention across E4L, Youth in Focus and Youth Empowerment Initiatives.

### Background and Referral

The young person's mother contacted Youth Services Malta expressing serious concern that her daughter was associating with a local gang and was at risk of becoming involved in criminal activity. The young person was spending extended periods on the street, disengaged from structured activities and displaying increasingly risky behaviours. The mother requested immediate support to help redirect her daughter towards safer and more positive alternatives.

### Initial Intervention – Embark 4 Life (E4L)

The young person was initially engaged through Embark 4 Life, specifically the Youth Engage Scheme, a voluntary work programme aimed at increasing structure, responsibility and positive community involvement.

Through the scheme, the young person:

- Engaged in supervised voluntary work
- Developed a daily routine and sense of responsibility

Following internal referral, the young person was linked with Youth in Focus (YIF) for social work intervention. Support focused on:

- Risk awareness and decision-making
- Exploring peer influence and identity
- Strengthening family communication
- Building self-esteem and coping strategies

Ongoing collaboration between E4L and YIF ensured that the young person remained engaged in structured activities while receiving consistent emotional and social support.

To further reduce time spent on the street and maintain engagement during the summer period, the young person was referred to Youth Empowerment Initiatives (YEI) through the Summer Ventures programme.

Participation in Summer Ventures:

- Provided a safe and structured summer environment
- Encouraged teamwork, creativity and life skills development
- Reduced exposure to negative peer influence
- Reinforced positive routines and interests

As a result of timely and coordinated intervention:

- The young person disengaged from gang-related activities
- Time spent on the street significantly reduced
- Family relationships improved
- The young person developed a stronger sense of belonging through positive peer and community engagement

The combination of voluntary work, social work support and structured youth programmes played a key role in keeping the young person safe and engaged during a critical period.

## Service Conclusion

These cases demonstrate the importance of cross-service collaboration within Youth Services Malta. By responding quickly and flexibly to identified risks, embark 4 Life, Youth in Focus and Youth Empowerment Initiatives worked together to divert a young person from potential harm and support her towards safer, more positive pathways.

## Service Images

Youth Skills Day Activity










## Service Images

Youth Awards Ceremony









# Concluding Remarks

The progress achieved during the year was made possible by the dedication and professionalism of staff, together with the strong collaboration of partners and stakeholders. Their commitment to reflective practice, continuous development and compassionate care remains the driving force behind the Directorate's work.

Looking ahead, the Directorate will continue to place children's voices at the heart of its work, evaluate and strengthen its services, and advance the changes needed to enhance the quality of care.

Above all, it remains committed to ensuring that every child and young person in its care feels seen, heard, supported and is allowed to build a positive future.

# Directorate for **CHILD PROTECTION** Services

Antonella **Mizzi**
Director

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ANNUAL REPORT 2025



# OVERVIEW

The Directorate for Child Protection Services (DCPS) operates under the Minor Protection (Alternative Care) Act, Chapter 602 and carries statutory responsibility for safeguarding minors who are experiencing abuse, neglect or who are at serious risk of significant harm.

The Directorate delivers a continuum of services ranging from prevention and early intervention to intake, investigation, court mandated assessment, monitoring and the management of the Children's House.

In 2025, the Directorate, which is present across Malta and Gozo through the Juvenile Court, Family Court, Unaccompanied Minors and cross-country child protection matters, worked on 4,488 cases involving 4,234 minors and received 1,732 new referrals.

These figures reflect both the trust placed in the service by the community and the urgent, real-life situations requiring immediate and careful intervention.

Guided by Maltese and European legislation, the Directorate continued to evolve in response to the needs of service users, with an increased focus on forensic practice, prevention and support. Building on the 2024 service review, the Directorate introduced a standardised screening tool in 2025 to enhance risk assessment and enable timely intervention.

The Directorate remains committed to supporting families with the aim of maintaining safe and stable home environments, recognising that every child deserves a secure and nurturing upbringing. Child protection cannot rest solely on the shoulders of a single agency or profession; it requires sustained collaboration across social services, law enforcement, education, health, the judiciary and the wider community.

Throughout 2025, the Directorate operated in a context of sustained and increasing demand, marked by greater case complexity, multi-risk family systems and increased inter-agency involvement.

Alongside its statutory safeguarding mandate, DCPS prioritised prevention, system strengthening and evidence-based practice, ensuring proportional, child-centred and rights-based responses.

The Child Protection Services receive reports from professionals, services, institutions and the public to investigate concerns related to child abuse and neglect. The Service remains accessible to minors at risk and aims to intervene early, implement preventative strategies and reduce the escalation of harm wherever possible.

Despite these efforts, 99 cases presented persistent risks that could not be mitigated through intervention, requiring the removal of children from the family environment. Of these, 52 involved unaccompanied minors, representing a significant increase from the previous year. In addition, two minors were placed under a correctional order to address risks posed to themselves and others.

The Directorate is composed of the Intake and Public Relations Service, Investigation and Monitoring Service, Court Services, Family Preservation Service and the Children's House, working collectively to ensure the protection and wellbeing of children.

The protection of children is not just a task it is a shared commitment to ensuring that every child can live free from harm and thrive.

# Intake and Public Relations Service

## Service Overview

In 2025, the Intake and Screening Unit of the Directorate for Child Protection Services (DCPS) remained the primary entry point for all child protection referrals. The Unit plays a critical role in evaluating reports of alleged abuse and neglect, ensuring that concerns are assessed promptly and that appropriate protective measures are initiated where necessary.

## Achievements and Milestones

### New Risk Assessment Framework

The Intake Service at Child Protection maintained close communication with professionals and families throughout the assessment process.

During this period, the service reviewed and adapted a new risk assessment framework to more effectively evaluate the level of risk and ensure consistent, evidence-based decision-making.



This strengthened approach supported timely and proportionate responses to children's needs. Reporters were kept informed of case state and case progress and children received appropriate and timely support. Strong inter-agency coordination was sustained with the different services.



### Digital Transformation

Throughout 2025, significant progress was made in the development of a secure and comprehensive database under the Protection of Minors (Registration) Act (POMA), whose process is now reaching its final stage for implementation.

The system is designed to ensure robust data protection, accurate record-keeping and effective information management in line with statutory requirements. It has been specifically developed to enhance operational efficiency and, most importantly, to further safeguard the protection of minors through improved oversight, monitoring and timely access to information.

### Public Relations and Consultations

Over the past year, the Public Relations and Consultations Leader continued to serve as a key liaison between the Intake Service and external stakeholders, fostering collaborative practice, structured case consultations, enhancing communication channels and building professional capacity and accountability in safeguarding processes.

During the reporting period, the PR and Consultation Team within the Intake Service discussed approximately 1,300 cases with the different services. Of these, 150 cases are currently on the waiting list.

These structured case discussions have contributed to fostering a stronger sense of shared responsibility among the services involved. Also, this collaborative approach has enhanced inter-agency communication, supported informed and transparent decision-making and promoted coordinated and timely intervention planning.

Throughout 2025, ten training initiatives and multiple consultative meetings were organised with key stakeholders to strengthen knowledge of child abuse, Maltese legislation, applicable procedures and coordinated inter-agency responses aimed at prevention, investigation and the protection of children at risk.



## Statistics

The Intake Team registered 1732 new reports of suspected child abuse or neglect, concerning minors of whom 123 were unaccompanied minors. These figures indicate sustained demand for child protection services and underscore the continuing necessity for timely and effective interventions, of which 1329 cases were closed at intake.

**During 2025, reports were mostly referred by:**

- Family members - 355 reports,
- The Malta Police Force (including the Gender-Based and Domestic Violence Unit, Vice Squad and Vulnerable Victims Unit) - 355 reports,
- *Appoġġ* services (including Supportline 179, Malta Emergency/On-Call Service and the Domestic Violence Unit) - 292 reports,
- NGOs - 140 reports.
- Educational institutions - 172 reports.

**The most reported forms of abuse in 2025 continued to rank as follows:**

1. At Risk of Harm
2. Physical Abuse
3. Neglect (often in combination with other risks)
4. Emotional
5. Sexual Abuse
6. Cases involving Unaccompanied Minors

# Investigation and Monitoring Service

## Service Overview

During 2025, the Directorate of Child Protection Services received 1,732 reports from the public, professionals and other institutions in 2025 related to the investigation of child abuse. These referrals often included multiple alleged abuses per child.

Active across Malta and Gozo, the Unit builds on the initial work of the Intake Team, pursuing more detailed investigations into reports of abuse under Chapter 602 of the Laws of Malta.

Where interventions and care plans fail to support behavioural change within the family, regional teams, in collaboration with partners and stakeholders, secure alternative placements for the child.

The Directorate continued its mandate throughout 2025 to safeguard children experiencing significant harm or at serious risk of abuse.

## Key Developments and Operational Highlights

### Case Complexity and Emerging Trends

The year 2025 was marked by sustained demand for investigative interventions and growing case complexity, often involving multiple risk factors and multi-layered family dynamics.

Regional teams worked on 4,488 cases involving 4,234 minors. The highest number of cases involved children between the ages of 11 and 15. An emergent trend identified within this group is an increase in cases of abandonment, where parents or custodians abdicate their caregiving responsibilities.

Further trends observed include:

- Increasing multi-factor risk cases (for example, emotional abuse combined with neglect or parental conflict)
- Cases involving multiple siblings requiring different simultaneous interventions
- High demand in Harbour region areas, likely linked to population density
- A concentration of reports involving childrenaged six to 15, reinforcing the need forcontinued collaboration with educational institutions
- Ongoing pressure on waiting lists, reflecting both case complexity and workforce constraints
- Positive alignment between revocation of Protection Orders and improved family functioning

### Court Orders and Protective Measures

During 2025, Child Protection Services issued a total of 99 Protection Orders, of which 52 involved unaccompanied minors seeking asylum.

Of the remaining Provisional Orders, 26 were applications for Care Orders, reflecting ongoing concerns related to safety, neglect or parental capacity. A total of 14 Emergency Orders were issued due to the need for immediate intervention in high-risk situations. In addition, the Directorate issued five Supervision Orders and two Correctional Orders, representing a smaller but significant group of cases requiring structured behavioural intervention.

Only eight Provisional Orders were confirmed within the same year, reflecting delays in court proceedings, the complexity of cases and broader challenges in ensuring timely legal outcomes.



Most cases requiring court intervention involved long-term protective measures. The high proportion of Care Orders highlights the severity and persistence of safeguarding concerns.

During the year, nine Orders were revoked following mitigation of risk, improved parental capacity or the establishment of alternative permanency arrangements. The Directorate continues to work towards lifting Orders when no longer necessary, demonstrating flexibility and a commitment to proportionality.

### Operational Activity and Service Demand

Beyond court applications, regional teams conducted 27,522 investigative and support interventions, including assessments, case conferences and therapeutic actions.

These figures reflect both the scale of demand and the intensity of service provision required to respond to increasingly complex safeguarding situations.

## Outcomes and Forward Focus

The Investigation and Monitoring Team played a critical role in safeguarding children throughout 2025 by responding to a high volume of cases and delivering sustained intervention.

The data reflects both the scale of need and the dedication of professionals working to ensure children's safety. While the number of Protection Orders remains high, outcomes such as Order revocations, timely confirmations and improved stability for minors indicate progress.

Continued investment in workforce capacity, early intervention services, inter-agency collaboration and ongoing training will be essential to sustain progress and respond effectively to the evolving needs of children and families.



# Support Services

## Service Overview

In line with its mission to safeguard children while preserving family unity, the DCPS continued to successfully operate the Support Services Pillar established in mid 2024. This structure reinforces the Directorate's belief that sustainable child protection begins with holistic family support.

The service continued to operate throughout 2025, resulting in expanded and more responsive support to families, with a stronger focus on preservation and early intervention within the home environment.

The Support Services team provides practical guidance in areas such as budgeting, parenting, hygiene and life skills, alongside therapeutic interventions for families in crisis.

The expansion of these services enabled more families to be supported directly in their homes, reducing risk factors and strengthening parental capacity. This approach contributed to improved family stability and minimised the need for legal intervention.

While the issuance of a protection order may be considered a success in legal terms, the Directorate adopts a broader, more holistic definition of success. Even where protective measures are required, the Directorate continues to support families post order.

Through one to one mentoring and ongoing support, officers work to reduce a child's time in alternative care and enhance family readiness for reunification, ensuring that wherever possible, children are safely supported within their own homes.

Despite changes in the workforce, including the departure of the Forensic Psychologist and the Service Manager, the service continued to expand its support through the Family Mentor and Family Therapist roles. This contributed to a reduction in protection orders and enhanced family stability.



**Parenting When Separated Programme**

In 2025, the Support Services Pillar continued to strengthen its contribution through an evidence-based programme designed to help separated or separating couples develop healthier co-parenting relationships.

A total of 43 individuals benefited from the six-session programme. Participant feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Although many began the programme with low expectations or emotional resistance, by the final sessions, they reported:

- Improved communication with co-parents
- Greater self-awareness and emotional regulation
- Surprise at their own growth and the practical outcomes achieved
- Improved relationships with their children as they navigate through the separation

## Children's House

In 2025, the Directorate continued to experience a slow but steady increase in children accessing Children's House services to a total of 32 children, with 23 children witnessing from the Children's House through video conferencing and another nine children who were forensically interviewed by specialised Forensic Interviewers.

This shift reflects our increased awareness of the issue and growing adoption of child-friendly justice practices, albeit not enough. Efforts by the Directorate to promote video conferencing as a tool for court testimony have gained momentum.

While not yet a universal practice, some professionals within the judicial system have begun accepting this method, recognising its potential to reduce trauma and encourage more accurate disclosures.

The Children's House model provides a safe, comforting and neutral environment for children to testify. The approach seeks to:

- Minimise re-traumatisation
- Promote reliable, child-centred testimony
- Prevent children from having to face courtrooms directly

The Directorate initiated steps to align the Children's House with the Barnahus Model, an internationally recognised standard for integrated child protection and forensic interviewing, by being an active member of the International Barnahus Network. Key developments include:

- Solidifying the pool of trained and specialised professionals trained in forensic interviewing through ongoing supervision
- Ongoing alignment with international best practices and standards
- Continued advocacy for systemic changes to support trauma-informed, multidisciplinary approaches.

With the launch of the Support Services Pillar and the expansion of Children's House services, the Directorate has reinforced its commitment to child protection through family empowerment.

These initiatives reflect the evolution of the Directorate's approach, from reactive interventions to proactive support and systemic change.

## Court Services

The Court Services Unit, operating within the DCPS since 2021, continued to play a central role in supporting the Family Courts of Malta throughout 2025. Guided by the Family Law Act (Chapter 255 of the Laws of Malta), the team provides specialised assessments and professional recommendations in complex child-related matters arising during separation and custody proceedings.

The service maintains a strong evidence-based approach, with each professional acting independently and submitting recommendations based on clinical judgment, expertise and evidence gathered during assessment. This independence remains central to the Unit's credibility and its contribution to judicial decision-making.

During 2025, the Court Services Unit delivered comprehensive assessments focusing on:

- Family dynamics, including the involvement of extended family
- Parenting capacity, including emotional, psychological and practical abilities
- Residence and care arrangements
- Co-parenting collaboration and decision-making

These assessments support the Family Court in making informed decisions that prioritise child safety, stability and wellbeing.

During the year, 89 cases were referred for specialised assessment, and 61 cases were closed. The service managed a high volume of complex cases, most involving high-conflict separation proceedings requiring in-depth evaluation.

These assessments often included multiple home visits, individual and joint parent interviews, child observations and collaboration with other professionals involved in the family's wider support network.



Although Court Services forms part of the Directorate, professionals maintain full independence in their evaluative work, ensuring that all recommendations are based solely on professional expertise, evidence and the best interests of the child or children.

Court Services experienced a slight reduction in overall caseload compared to 2024, decreasing from 390 cases involving 370 individuals to 332 cases involving 323 individuals.

Despite this decrease, demand for specialised assessments remained high. While referrals decreased from 149 in 2024 to 100 in 2025, the number of opened cases increased, indicating that a greater proportion of referrals required full assessment.

Beyond the figures, cases continue to present complex circumstances requiring long-term, multi-disciplinary intervention and careful professional judgment.

# Achievements and Milestones

## Strengthening Prevention and Early Intervention

A major milestone in 2025 was the initiation of structured collaboration with the Lucy Faithfull Foundation to establish Malta's first Preventive Helpline targeting individuals who experience thoughts of sexually abusing children and seek help to prevent harm.

This initiative represents a strategic shift from reactive protection to proactive prevention, strengthening national safeguarding by intervening before offences occur. Preparatory work included service design discussions, policy alignment and the scheduling of a specialised professional training programme for early 2026.

## Enhancing Intake and Risk Assessment

The Intake and Screening Unit reviewed and implemented an adapted risk assessment screening tool, strengthening consistency, transparency and evidence based decision making at the earliest stage of child protection involvement. This tool resulted in better risk evaluation and case management with only one third of the referred cases requiring long-term investigation and monitoring.

## System and Capacity Development

- Continued progress on the POMA digital database, improving oversight, data integrity and inter service coordination
- Expansion of structured inter agency consultations, reinforcing shared accountability and better gatekeeping of incoming referrals
- Delivery of ten training initiatives aimed at strengthening knowledge of legislation, safeguarding procedures and coordinated responses across different entities
- Increased the workforce to an additional 12 Child Protection Officers to better address the demands of the service
- Appointed Coordinators with the main task of mentoring new Child Protection Officers
- Introduced a structured induction and mentorship programme for new employees
- Established tailored wellbeing support, including access to structured supervision and emotional resilience training to enhance staff retention

# Statistics

Over the last year, the Directorate strengthened its commitment to enhance efficiency in investigation, assessment, and processing of cases presenting safeguarding concerns to ensure that the best interests of minors are protected.

Cases worked with in 2025: **4,820**




**Applications of Protection Orders submitted in the Juvenile Court**

**32** children served at the Children's House

**43** parents attending the Parenting When Separated Programme



*Despite the indelible traumas, there are many hidden success stories that the Directorate for Child Protection Services celebrates each year.*

# Success Stories

## Case 1: Multi-agency Collaboration in practice

In February 2023, DCPS began supporting a family of three minors, following concerns related to the father's substance misuse and ongoing parental conflict. Early interventions revealed that the father's addiction and unstable lifestyle were significantly affecting the children's wellbeing since they were witnessing their inebriated father and everyday incidents of arguments. At that time, he was supported by multiple services, including Sedqa and mental health professionals. Throughout the investigation, both parents cooperated with DCPS professionals.

The mother consistently acted as a strong protective factor, taking decisive action during crises, such as contacting the police when the father returned home under the influence of alcohol. She maintained regular communication with the father's probation officer and mental health team to ensure coordinated support.

The DCPS worker focused on strengthening the mother's and children's emotional resilience by helping her to reach out to other services. The children received counselling through their school. One of the children, who exhibited behavioural challenges, was later diagnosed with ADHD and thereafter referred to an NGO service for play therapy. The mother was offered therapy by the Directorate for a few months. This provided valuable space for reflection and emotional processing.

Despite ongoing support, the father's instability persisted. Following multiple breaches of probation and criminal reports, he received a three year prison sentence during 2025.

During this period, the mother received additional family therapy support from DCPS to navigate separation, co parenting considerations and the emotional impact of the father's incarceration.

By the end of 2025, the family had achieved stability, with each member engaged in appropriate support services. DCPS closed the case in December 2025, recognising the mother's resilience, the children's progress and the strong professional network surrounding the family.



## Case 2: The effectiveness of collaborative family support in safeguarding a child's wellbeing without the need for legal intervention.

In May 2025, the court services completed an assessment regarding a three-year-old boy who had been referred by the Court. The assessment focused on his mother and maternal grandmother, who have been co-parenting him since birth. Information gathered from the child's primary school indicated regular attendance, consistent provision of basic needs and noticeable positive progress in his academic and language development.

School staff also described both caregivers as cooperative and consistently acting in the child's best interests. Medical records confirmed that the child is fully vaccinated according to the national immunisation schedule. During home visits, the environment was observed to be safe, nurturing and well-resourced. The child had access to food, clothing, toys and a dedicated play area.

He presented as comfortable and secure in the presence of both caregivers. The mother and grandmother demonstrated a strong, supportive relationship and shared decision-making in the child's upbringing. Although the mother experiences learning difficulties and is supported through a legal guardianship arrangement with her own mother, this support structure was found to enhance, rather than hinder the child's wellbeing.

The grandmother provides guidance with complex decisions, while the mother remains actively involved in daily caregiving, routines and extracurricular activities, including sports and creative development. The child also attends speech therapy regularly and receives appropriate developmental assessments where needed, reflecting proactive parenting and responsiveness to emerging needs.

Following a holistic assessment, it was concluded that the child is growing up in a stable, safe and stimulating environment. Both caregivers demonstrate commitment, cooperation and consistent prioritisation of his wellbeing. As there were no safeguarding concerns identified, joint care and custody was recommended, and the case was successfully closed.

This case highlights the positive impact of collaborative family support, structured caregiving and early developmental intervention in promoting a child's safety and overall wellbeing.



# Concluding Remarks

The work undertaken throughout 2025 reflects a Directorate responding decisively to growing demand, increasing complexity and evolving safeguarding challenges. While investigative activity and court ordered protections remain substantial, the Directorate has taken critical steps toward earlier, preventive and proportionate intervention.

The establishment of Malta's first Preventive Helpline, enhancements in risk assessment, digital transformation and sustained inter agency collaboration signal a system that is not only reactive but forward looking and prevention oriented.

Continued investment in early intervention services and cross sector coordination will be essential to sustain progress and ensure that every child is afforded safety, stability and the opportunity to thrive.

# Aġenzija SEDQA

## Charles **Scerri**

Director

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ANNUAL REPORT 2025

# Dr Anna Maria **Vella**

## Clinical Chairperson



# ANNUAL REPORT 2025




# OVERVIEW

The year 2025 marked a period of consolidation, strategic growth and service enhancement for *Aġenzija Sedqa*, as the Agency continued to strengthen its national role in addiction prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and community support.

Guided by FSWS's strategic objectives and its own commitment to evidence based practice, Sedqa focused on reinforcing service quality, improving workforce cohesion and expanding its professional reach across Malta and Gozo.

Throughout the year, Sedqa invested substantially in workforce development, preparing and launching an internal induction module, coordinating extensive internal and external training opportunities and ensuring a strong presence in national and international conferences. These efforts ensured ongoing professionalisation and promoted Sedqa's reputation as a leading contributor to research and knowledge dissemination in the field of addictions.

Alignment with external entities and internal operational considerations remained a central priority, with management leading ongoing initiatives to integrate practices, enhance collaboration across FSWS directorates and unify operational philosophies.

This alignment translated into strengthened service pathways, improved cross team communication and more seamless support for service users.

In parallel, Sedqa continued to expand its prevention presence, leveraging media, outreach initiatives and evidence-based programmes to address emerging societal trends. Collaborations with schools, football associations, youth organisations and the wider community were strengthened. At the same time, research-driven improvements, such as programme evaluations and expanding the Teen Outside the Box and S.A.F.E. initiatives, ensured that prevention efforts remained current and impactful.

Clinical and rehabilitation services also registered important progress. Substance Misuse Outpatients Unit (SMOPU) expanded its health services through the establishment of the GU Clinic and continued its targeted Hepatitis C efforts, while Substance Misuse Inpatients Unit (SMIPU) has gradually introduced psychoeducational support to residents, amongst several initiatives introduced by the unit's new leadership.

Komunità Santa Marija continued its therapeutic and infrastructural development, integrating new group processes, fostering community engagement and investing in gender sensitive approaches to better meet the needs of female residents.

The annual recognition ceremony under the patronage of Her Excellency Myriam Spiteri Debono, the President of Malta, held at Komunità Santa Marija, crowned the Agency's ongoing efforts to ensure successful outcomes for its clients, away from addiction. Another very prestigious milestone for the Agency was the Social Policy Employees Awards 2025, during which Sedqa's Komunità Santa Marija received the Minister's Award.

This has further elevated and recognised the efforts made by the Agency's residential rehabilitation centre. Komunità Santa Marija has also been named a runner-up for the Making a Difference Award.

Overall, Sedqa's operations in 2025 reflect a mature and increasingly integrated system of care, driven by professional expertise, compassion and a strong commitment to continuous improvement.



The Social Policy Employees Awards 2025

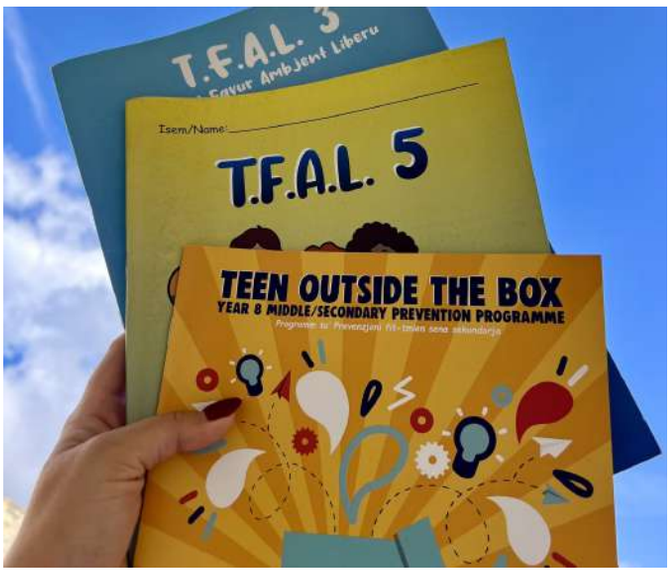
# Prevention Services

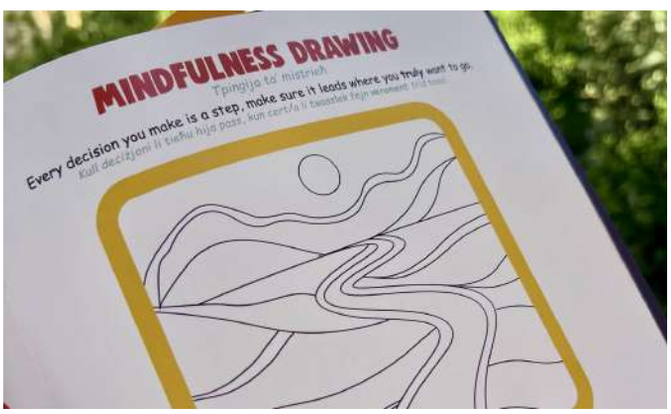
## Key Developments and Operational Highlights

**Primary Sector**: During 2025, the Prevention Programmes continued the accreditation process at MQF Level 2. Students who completed the T.F.A.L. 5 Programme and achieved 80% overall across both programmes were awarded their MQF Level 2 certificates.

At the same time, the Prevention Team remained mindful of students who were absent for some sessions and were therefore not eligible to receive the certificate. To provide these students with another opportunity, the team organised revision classes during the summer period.

To support this initiative, during the scholastic year, the Prevention Team informed schools about students who were not eligible and provided details on revision classes, which were then communicated to the parents of those students. There was a good turnout for these revision classes, with 28 students attending and the participants subsequently obtained their certification.








**Secondary Sector**: During summer 2025, the Teen Outside the Box Programme underwent a full revision. This decision followed research indicating that directly addressing addiction with youths may increase curiosity and, in some cases, lead to experimentation.

The programme was redesigned into four sessions:

- Three sessions focusing on life skills
- One wrap-up session

Key themes include:

- Self-love and coping skills
- Peer pressure and decision-making
- Resilience

Addiction-related content continues to be addressed indirectly through practical examples within these themes. The revised programme was launched at the start of the scholastic year and has shown positive progression. In parallel, the accreditation process for Teen Outside the Box commenced, with attendance now being systematically recorded to qualify participants for MQF Level 3 certification.



**Post-Secondary Sector**:
During the new scholastic year, Knight's College began implementing the B.A.S.H. Programme, with the intention of delivering all three exhibitions so that students can benefit fully from the initiative.




**Community**: During 2025, the Prevention Team focused on standardising community sessions to ensure consistency in messaging across all target groups.

The community programme consists of seven sessions:

Five life-skills sessions:

- o Effective Communication
- o Peer Relations
- o Coping Skills
- o Self-Efficacy
- o Decision Making



- One Harm Reduction session (targeted at individuals already experimenting with substances)

- One joint session involving youth and their parents/guardians (three-step programme), focusing on communication and relationship-building

In addition, outreach was expanded through public exhibitions held in shopping malls during the summer and Christmas periods. These initiatives proved highly effective, reaching approximately 2,500 individuals and extending engagement beyond traditional programme settings.

### S.A.F.E Programme

During 2025, the Prevention Team successfully reached a significant number of professionals in the workplace, delivering approximately 528 sessions to 3,926 participants who attended the S.A.F.E. sessions on-site.

Over the summer period, the Prevention Team once again implemented the Wellbeing Project. Companies could choose any session offered within the S.A.F.E. programme, rather than being limited to wellbeing-focused sessions. The response from companies was very positive, with around 29 organisations participating in the Wellbeing Project.

The S.A.F.E. Booklet also underwent a complete revamp. It was fully updated to reflect recent studies and session updates and to incorporate research-based articles for each topic covered during the S.A.F.E. sessions.



### Media Campaigns

During 2025, the Prevention Team collaborated with Malta Daily to increase public awareness of Sedqa's work. This included a wide range of digital formats:

- MFiles: Short videos featuring voluntary client and family experiences
- Day in the Life: Showcasing Sedqa professionals
- Motivational content: Shared across social media platforms
- Interview-based videos: Addressing current trends and topics
- Short-form ('Shorts') videos: Explaining services such as the B.A.S.H programme
- Vox pop content: Public engagement on topics such as drink-driving
- Creative articles: Covering topics such as disclosures

The campaign achieved strong reach and engagement across Malta Daily's platforms.








## Other Achievements

Another key achievement for the Prevention Team was the opportunity to present their work at international conferences. During the ISAM Conference held in Hamburg, Germany, prevention professionals presented three different research papers developed by the team. In July, two other professionals presented the same paper at the ICBA Conference in Nantes, France.

This represents a significant achievement, as both conferences are major international events in the field.

Another achievement was the Prevention Service being shortlisted for an ESN Award after submitting the project "Innovative Prevention Practices in Malta" under the "Children, Families and Youth Support Award" category. The awards ceremony took place in Madrid, Spain, in November.






## Prevention Team Statistics:

January - December 2025

| Sector | Total Number of Programmes | Total Number of Sessions | Number of Participants | Number of Material Distributed | Hours of Intervention |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Primary | 492 | 2,731 | 10,123 | 10,399 | 2,737 |
| Secondary (inc. Ad-hoc sessions) | 183 | 670 | 7,914 | 5,820 | 690 |
| Community | / | 212 | 5,114 | 623 | 212 |
| Workplace | / | 528 | 3,926 | 1,359 | 528 |
| Grand Total | 675 | 4,141 | 27,077 | 18,201 | 4,167 |

## Service Conclusion

Overall, 2025 was a year of growth, innovation, and consolidation for the Prevention Services. Through continuous programme development and accreditation across the primary, secondary, post-secondary, community and workplace sectors, the team ensured that prevention efforts remained relevant, accessible and evidence-based.

The successful revamping of key programmes, expansion of outreach initiatives, strengthened partnerships and increased visibility through media campaigns helped reach a wider, more diverse audience.

The high level of engagement, positive participation rates and international recognition achieved throughout the year clearly reflect the Prevention Team's commitment, adaptability and professionalism in promoting healthier, more resilient individuals and communities.





# Addictions Community Team (ACT)

## Overview

The Addictions Community Team within Sedqa is a specialised team of social workers, operating as a community-based, person-centred service providing a tailor-made support service to individuals experiencing addiction-related difficulties and their significant others.

The team functions as a frontline entry point and an in-depth service provider. Its core roles include conducting initial assessments, developing community-based rehabilitation care plans, delivering psychosocial interventions to reduce the harmful effects of addiction and supporting motivation for behavioural change by helping clients focus on their desired outcomes.

The team adopts a biopsychosocial and recovery-oriented approach, combining psychological, social and health-related interventions and incorporating harm reduction and crisis intervention strategies tailored to the needs of the service user. In addition, it plays a key case management role through referrals and liaison with medical, psychiatric and therapeutic services, ensuring continuity of care from engagement through to treatment and aftercare, including preparation for admission to residential services and relapse-prevention support.

The service also extends outreach to vulnerable populations, including individuals in hospitals or correctional facilities and actively involves families and significant others, reflecting a systemic approach to addiction; overall, its modality can be understood as an integrated, community-based, bio-psycho-social model that emphasises accessibility, individualised care, multidisciplinary collaboration and long-term reintegration.



## Achievements and Milestones

In 2025, the team once again managed over 1,000 cases, with more than 400 individuals receiving services at any given time throughout the year. This reflects a consistent trend observed over the past five years.

Throughout the year, ACT experienced a steady flow of new referrals, alongside a modest increase in returning clients.

This pattern reflects the level of trust placed in the service, with individuals feeling confident to re-engage when facing challenges or setbacks. ACT's non-judgmental and person-centred approach continues to foster a safe and supportive environment, ensuring that support remains accessible at any stage of a client's journey.

## Statistics

The presenting issues encountered in 2025 remained largely consistent with previous years. Cocaine-related concerns continued to slightly exceed those associated with alcohol, with both remaining the most prevalent substances of abuse among service users. A slight decrease was observed in heroin-related cases, while modest increases were noted in cannabis use and behavioural addictions.

The most represented age group among individuals initiating services at Sedqa was 40–44 years, followed closely by those aged 35–39 and 30–34. Together, these three age groups accounted for approximately half of all clients who engaged with ACT during the year. Males accounted for approximately 73% of service users, while 83% of those accessing the service were Maltese nationals.

# Success Story

Noel struggled with cocaine addiction compounded by heroin use for several years before engaging with the Addictions Community Team on a community-based rehabilitation programme. Following referral to the Substance Misuse Outpatient Unit, he was stabilised on opiate replacement therapy, which helped reduce harm and support his recovery journey.

After serving a prison sentence, he remained committed to positive change, maintaining regular contact with support services and avoiding relapse. Gradually, he rebuilt trust and meaningful relationships with his family, restoring a vital support network. With ongoing guidance, he addressed complex social challenges, including resolving a long-standing housing issue and obtaining essential identity documentation.

Today, he is living independently, in regular employment, managing his responsibilities and actively contributing to society. His journey highlights how the support of the Addictions Community Team throughout the different stages of recovery helped him with coordinated, effective community support, ensuring continuity of care, motivation and support to keep him in recovery even in adverse periods. This helped Noel build resilience, achieve long-term recovery and successfully re-integrate.





## Service Conclusion

Throughout the past year, ACT remained committed to enhancing accessibility to services for individuals experiencing substance use and behavioural addictions.

Through outreach initiatives, ongoing inter-agency collaboration and active engagement with stakeholders, the team continued its efforts to reach individuals who may encounter barriers to accessing mainstream services.

Several training initiatives were also delivered to promote a human rights-based approach and to strengthen knowledge among service providers. In its advocacy role, ACT remains committed to challenging institutional stigma and promoting greater inclusion within service systems.



# Sedqa Medical Services

## Substance Misuse Outpatients Unit (SMOPU) and Substance Misuse Inpatients Unit (SMIPU)

### Services Overview

Sedqa Medical Services, through the Substance Misuse Outpatients Unit (SMOPU) and the Substance Misuse Inpatients Unit (SMIPU), provides comprehensive medical care to individuals experiencing substance misuse.

From its inception, *Aġenzija Sedqa* was entrusted with integrating preventive, medical and social services into a unified structure, ensuring a coordinated, holistic approach to substance misuse treatment. Over the years, the services have continued to evolve in line with emerging trends, guided by a strong public health perspective.

Both SMOPU (commonly referred to as Detox) and SMIPU are among the busiest units within Aġenzija Sedqa. Although the service has been operating since 1987, continuous service development remains a priority, with new goals and initiatives set annually to enhance quality, specialisation and patient outcomes.

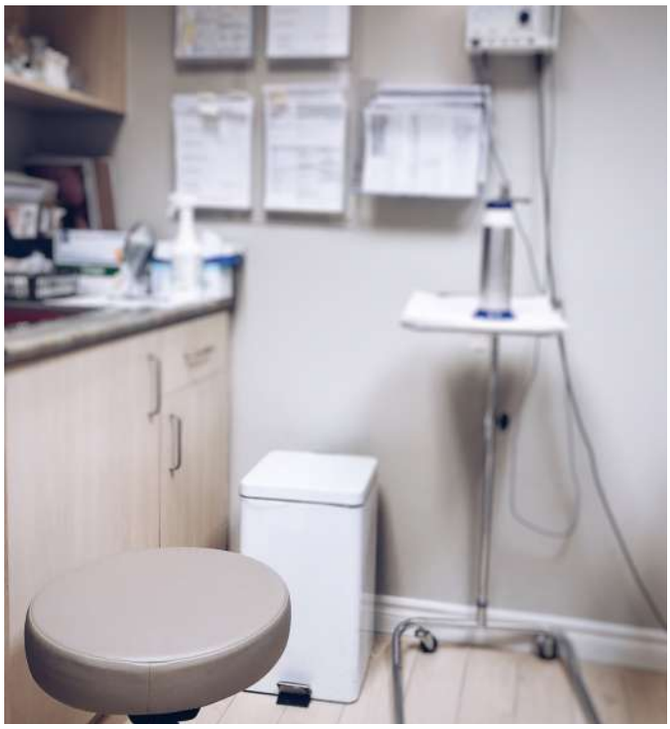
In addition to core detoxification and inpatient services, Sedqa Medical Services administers specialised clinics and initiatives, including Hepatitis C treatment, sexually transmitted infection screening, dental care coordination, staff professional development and applied research related to the client population.

## Achievements and Milestones

### Expansion of Preventive Healthcare – GU Clinic

A key development in 2025 was the planned establishment of an in-house Genito-Urinary (GU) Clinic aimed at improving access to sexually transmitted infection screening for Sedqa clients.

Following patient feedback highlighting challenges in attending external appointments at Mater Dei Hospital, two doctors and four nurses received specialised training to support the rollout of this service. The launch of the clinic represents a significant step towards improving accessibility, early intervention and preventive healthcare for a vulnerable population.



### Strengthening the Hepatitis C Programme

The Hepatitis C programme remained a cornerstone of service provision. Since the national rollout of free treatment in 2018, Sedqa has become a key provider due to the high prevalence of Hepatitis C among its clients. In 2025, the service continued to enhance care delivery by simplifying pathways and actively re-engaging patients previously lost to follow-up.

A major milestone was the development of an in-house "one-stop-shop" model, enabling testing, treatment initiation and follow-up appointments to be conducted on site. This significantly improved efficiency, accessibility and patient retention.



### Enhancing Access to Dental Care

Another important development was the formalisation of a collaboration with the dental clinic at Mater Dei Hospital. This partnership addressed a long-standing gap in care by enabling patients to access comprehensive dental treatment in a structured and supportive manner. Improved access to dental services contributed positively to both physical health outcomes and overall quality of life.

### Professional Development and Research Contribution

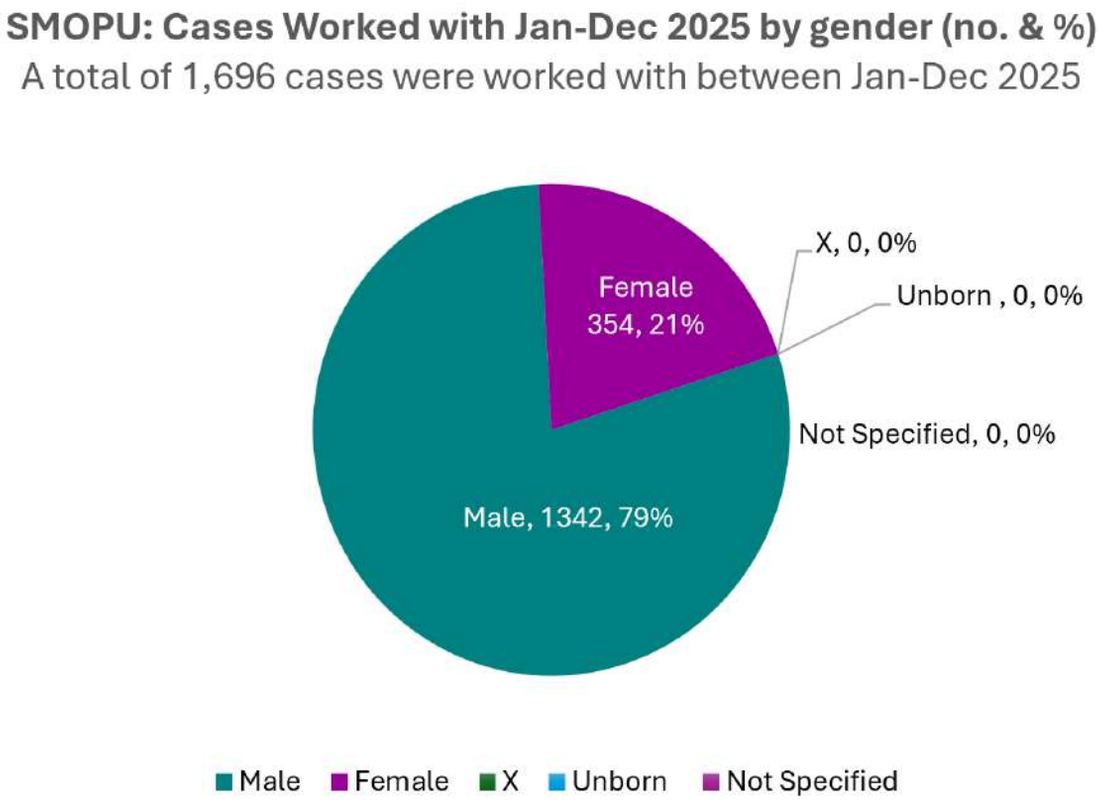
Professional development remained a key priority. Staff participated in both local and international training opportunities and conferences, while several scientific papers were developed and presented, reflecting the service's contribution to best practice and knowledge advancement.

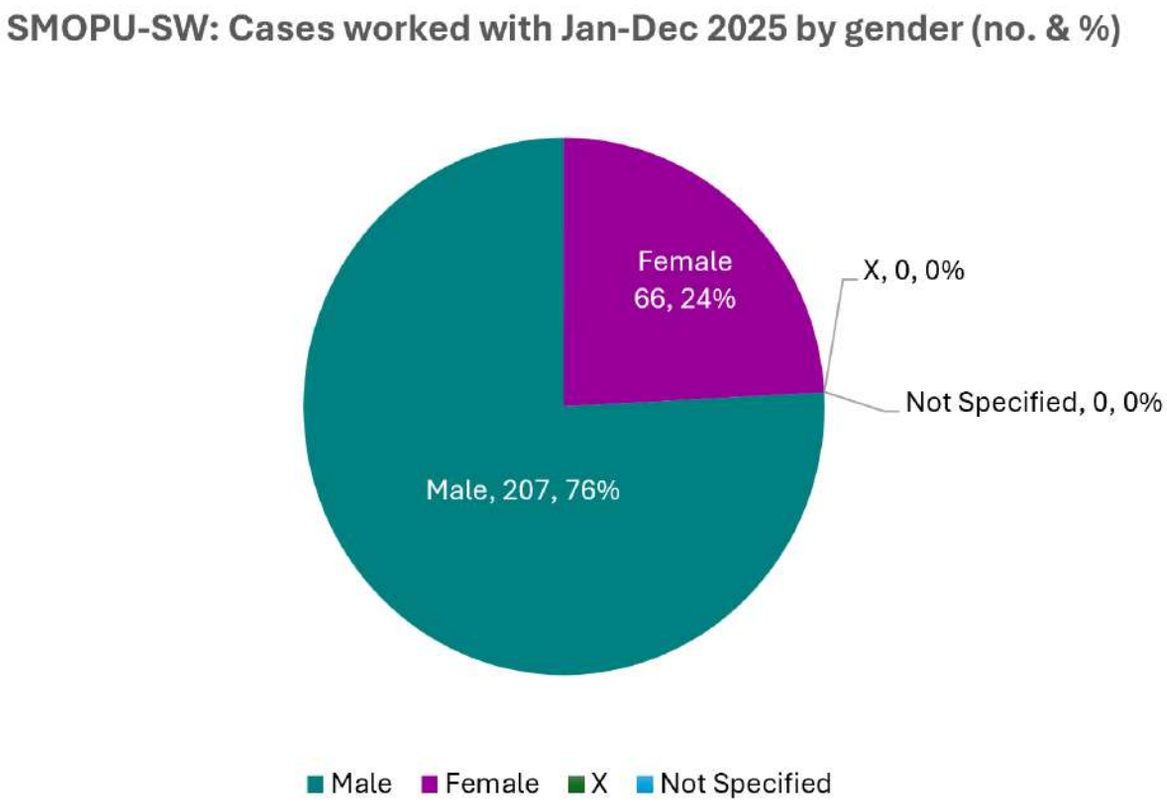
A major achievement was the completion and international dissemination of the research study:

*"Exploring the biopsychosocial needs of ageing persons with a heroin use disorder in treatment."*

This study has been published internationally and has become an important reference point for policy development and future service planning.

## Statistics






## Service Conclusion

The year 2025 was marked by significant progress and service expansion within Sedqa Medical Services. Through the introduction of new initiatives, the strengthening of existing programmes and a continued focus on integrated and patient centred care, SMOPU and SMIPU further enhanced their ability to respond effectively to the complex medical needs of individuals experiencing substance misuse.

Key achievements, such as the development of in house GU services, the expansion of Hepatitis C treatment through a streamlined care model, improved access to dental care and the completion of impactful research, demonstrate Sedqa's commitment to innovation, evidence based practice and holistic healthcare.

These developments, supported by ongoing professional development and multidisciplinary collaboration, position Sedqa Medical Services to continue delivering high quality, responsive care in the years ahead.



# Komunità Santa Marija (KSM)

## Overview

Komunità Santa Marija (KSM) is *Aġenzija Sedqa*'s residential rehabilitation programme, operating as a Therapeutic Community structured over three distinct phases spanning a total of 14 months. The programme provides intensive, structured support to individuals seeking recovery from substance use, with a strong emphasis on therapeutic intervention, personal responsibility, community integration and continuity of care.

KSM works closely with other Sedqa services, particularly the Substance Misuse Inpatient Unit (SMIPU), ensuring a seamless transition into residential rehabilitation. Throughout 2025, KSM continued to deliver holistic and responsive services, adapting therapeutic interventions to reflect the evolving local substance use landscape and residents' individual recovery plans.

## Achievements and Milestones

### Enhancing Therapeutic Practice and Gender-Sensitive Support

During 2025, KSM maintained a strong focus on strengthening its therapeutic approach through continuous internal evaluation and reflection. Significant progress was made in expanding gender-sensitive interventions to meet the increasing demand for female residential support.

Gender-focused support groups were introduced, providing female residents with a safe space to address their specific therapeutic, emotional and medical needs.

These groups also contributed to broader community discussions about gender perspectives in the rehabilitation process.

### Strengthening Partnerships and Therapeutic Environments

KSM further strengthened collaboration with external stakeholders. A partnership with the Kunsill Nazzjonali tal-Ktieb (KNK) led to a substantial donation of books, enriching the KSM library and supporting the refurbishment of its facilities.

This development created a dedicated quiet space for residents, enhancing both individual reflection and the quality of the environment used for group therapy sessions.

### Promoting Social Reintegration through "Giving Back"

The "Giving Back" concept remained central to KSM's rehabilitation ethos. Residents actively contributed to the wider community through participation in prevention initiatives, educational seminars, voluntary work and awareness campaigns organised by Aġenzija Sedqa and other entities.

These initiatives strengthened residents' sense of purpose, accountability and readiness for social reintegration.



## Statistics

- **Referrals received**: **108**
- **New admissions**: **68**
- **Primary referral source**: Substance Misuse Inpatient Unit (SMIPU)
- **Residents supported on Opioid Substitution Therapy (OST)**: Almost 30 during their stay at KSM
- **Gender ratio**: Approximately one female resident for every five male residents

*These figures reflect KSM's continued demand and its role as a key residential service within Sedqa's continuum of care.*



# Success Stories

## Case 1- Recovery through Peer Support and Community Engagement

Residents demonstrated meaningful personal growth through ongoing participation in peer support, aftercare and community-based initiatives. Individuals who completed the programme remained actively involved during the aftercare stage, supporting current residents through mentorship, group participation and informal therapeutic engagement.

This peer-led dynamic fostered continuity, shared responsibility and a strong sense of hope within the community.

## Case 2 - Creative Expression and Identity

A notable highlight of 2025 was the research and art-based project "***I Am… a unique colourful shade of black***", facilitated by art teacher Ms Ramona Borg.

Through artistic expression, residents explored themes of identity, personal struggle and transformation. The resulting works were exhibited at the Sedqa Celebration Ceremony and later showcased at Palazzo Ferreria in Valletta, offering the wider public insight into the residents' lived experiences and recovery journeys.

## Case 2 - Creative Expression and Identity

Residents also participated in the "*Hurt by Others, Healed through Others*" seminars, where they shared their personal experiences with students facing challenging circumstances. Their testimonies on addiction, recovery, resilience and hope were well received, generating strong engagement both during sessions and through social media outreach.




## Service Conclusion

Throughout 2025, Komunità Santa Marija continued to deliver a comprehensive, responsive and person-centred residential rehabilitation service. KSM strengthened its therapeutic interventions, increased gender-sensitive support and enhanced community partnerships. Through innovative initiatives such as creative expression and peer engagement, it reinforced its commitment to recovery, empowerment and social reintegration.

By fostering personal growth, encouraging responsibility and promoting active contribution to society, KSM remained a vital pillar within *Agenzija Sedqa*'s service framework, supporting residents not only in overcoming addiction but also in rebuilding meaningful, fulfilling lives.



# Court Services

## Service Overview

Sedqa's Court Services provides support to both the Drugs Tribunal and the Drug Offenders Rehabilitation Board.

Under the Drug Dependence (Treatment not Imprisonment) Act (Cap. 537), these structures adopt a multidisciplinary and rehabilitative approach to drug-related offending, including cases of simple possession and other offences linked to substance misuse.

Within this framework, Sedqa staff fulfil the roles of Coordinator and Psychotherapist. The coordinator acts as the central case manager, ensuring the effective implementation of Board decisions. This includes coordinating assessments, developing individualised care plans and monitoring compliance with treatment orders.

The coordinator also serves as a key liaison among the judiciary, treatment services and other stakeholders, overseeing each case and providing regular progress reports to inform decision-making.

The Psychotherapist delivers the clinical component of the intervention, providing therapeutic support focused on behavioural change and relapse prevention. Through structured psychoeducational and therapeutic sessions, the Psychotherapist supports clients in developing insight, motivation and coping strategies necessary for recovery and reintegration.

Together, these roles operationalise the core objective of the Act, treating drug dependence as a health and social issue rather than solely a criminal matter. By combining structured supervision with evidence-based therapeutic support, the service helps reduce recidivism and promote long-term rehabilitation outcomes.



## Statistics

During 2025, Sedqa's Court Services engaged with 186 individuals undergoing rehabilitation in relation to over 200 offences. Over 100 individuals completed their rehabilitation programmes within the year. The client population was predominantly male and Maltese.

Notably, individuals who completed their rehabilitative journey under the service's supervision and care achieved favourable outcomes in their respective court proceedings, effectively avoiding custodial sentences.

# Success Story

## Mark's Rehabilitation Journey

Mark commenced his rehabilitation journey with the support of Sedqa's Court Services in February 2024, at a time when he was facing ongoing court proceedings related to a 2023 theft case.

At the request of his legal counsel, the Criminal Court referred his case under the provisions of the Drug Dependence (Treatment not Imprisonment) Act, transforming the proceedings into a drug court process. This allowed for an 18-month suspension, during which Mark was placed under the supervision of the Drug Offenders Rehabilitation Board to address his substance use.

In collaboration with the Court Services Coordinator, Mark engaged with Sedqa's Addictions Community Team, where he underwent a comprehensive multidisciplinary assessment. It became evident that, alongside psycho-social interventions, he required medical support. He was therefore referred to a Sedqa medical doctor, who supported him through medication and facilitated access to detoxification services at the Substance Misuse Inpatient Unit.

With coordinated input from the medical doctor and social worker, Mark addressed key areas affecting his stability, including unemployment

and physical health concerns. As his recovery progressed, he was referred for psychotherapy within Court Services to explore longstanding psychological difficulties rooted in his early life, which posed risks to sustained recovery.

Throughout this period, his progress was closely monitored by the Court Services Coordinator and regularly reported to the Drug Offenders Rehabilitation Board, based on input from the multidisciplinary team. In August 2025, Mark successfully completed his rehabilitation programme, and the Board issued a formal decree recognising his progress.

He remained engaged with services until the resumption of court proceedings, where the court considered the Board's decree and his sustained commitment to recovery, ultimately issuing a suspended sentence. This outcome enabled Mark to avoid imprisonment and continue building a stable, substance-free life.

### Service Conclusion

Sedqa's Court Services continued to fulfil its mission of providing a credible and effective alternative to punitive measures, in line with Malta's policy direction towards prioritising treatment over imprisonment for individuals with substance use disorders. This marks the tenth year since the enactment of the Drug Dependence (Treatment not Imprisonment) Act, under which the service has consistently supported clients in addressing substance-related issues within a structured rehabilitative framework. Over the years, hundreds of individuals have engaged in tailored care plans that facilitated meaningful rehabilitation, enabling them to achieve sustained recovery and positive legal outcomes. These interventions have not only contributed to reducing recidivism but have also supported individuals in regaining stability, autonomy and freedom from addiction, thereby mitigating the long-term social and personal consequences of substance-related offending.

## Concluding Remarks

Throughout 2025, Agenzija Sedqa strengthened both its professional capacity and strategic direction. The Agency successfully delivered on its operational plan, achieved key milestones across all services and demonstrated resilience and adaptability in responding to emerging needs within Maltese society. From pioneering research collaborations and expanding prevention outreach to improving clinical pathways and enhancing residential services, Sedqa continued to evolve as a more cohesive, knowledge driven and service-user centred organisation.

Notable achievements during the year included the establishment of new health services at SMOPU, advancements in programme evaluation frameworks, significant progress in staff professional development and the expansion of collaborative initiatives with schools, community partners and international networks.

Sedqa's strengthened media presence and enhanced public engagement also helped ensure that accurate, accessible and research informed information reached diverse segments of the population.

Looking ahead, Sedqa remains committed to fostering evidence based practice, strengthening multi agency cooperation and investing in services that respond proactively to the evolving nature of addictions and societal vulnerabilities. The foundations laid in 2025 will support continued innovation, service excellence and improved outcomes for individuals, families and communities in the years ahead.

# Agency for **COMMUNITY** and **THERAPEUTIC** Services

Thomas **Galea**
Director

**190**

Foundation for Social Welfare Services



ANNUAL REPORT 2025



# OVERVIEW

Communities are constantly evolving, and the ACTS continues to adapt its work accordingly. As a very active part of communities, the ACTS must also evolve its operations to fit the needs of each respective community. Throughout 2025, this evolution required sustaining what works, as well as developing and reviewing existing structures.

A key development during the year was the formal establishment of a Strategic Community Development Team. This reflects a shift towards embedding community development within a broader FSWS strategy, recognising that community-based work plays a central role in addressing complex social challenges.

Hence, over the coming years, ACTS will be carrying out participatory action research into capacity building within specific communities to support the child protection work and support the integration of community residential homes for children in care within the wider social fabric.

Continued adaptation also meant a look at the quality of the work being carried out. This year saw the appointment of a clinical services manager to ensure that the commitment to uphold and review the therapeutic practices was placed into focus.

Additionally, a concerted effort was made by the operational management to collect and review data related to the professionals' practices to ensure that the leadership of the agency has a clear perspective on all the work being carried out.

This was part of a two-pronged strategy to ensure quality on both a quantitative and qualitative level of service.

This brief of 2025 will start with an overview of the community services and strategic community development team, which then leads to an exploration of the therapy work and clinical team processes.

# Community Services

## Agency for Community and Therapeutic Services

### Regional Map




| COMMUNITY SERVICE | LOCALITIES SERVED BY EACH REGION |
|---|---|
| Qawra | St.Paul's Bay, Qawra, Buġibba, Burmarrad, Wardija, Pwales, Lambordini, Xemxija, Mellieħa, Mġarr |
| Mosta | Mosta, Għargħur, Naxxar |
| Msida & B'Kara | Pembroke, Swieqi, St. Julians, San Ġwann, Gżira, Sliema, Ta' Xbiex, Pieta', Santa Venera, Ħamrun, Msida, Birkirkara, Swatar |
| Valletta & Floriana | Valletta, Floriana |
| Western (Qormi) | Rabat, Mtarfa, Lija, Balzan, Attard, Iklin, Mdina, Dingli, Żebbuġ, Siġġiewi, Qormi, Marsa |
| Cottonera | Kalkara, Bormla, Birgu, Senglea, Paola, Tarxien, Fgura, Santa Luċija |
| Żabbar | Żabbar, Xgħajra |
| Southern (Kirkop) | Gudja, Għaxaq, Birżebbuġia, Luqa, Żurrieq, Safi, Kirkop, Qrendi, Mqabba Marsaxlokk, Żejtun, Marsascala |



## Service Overview

ACTS Community Services are delivered through eight centres located across Malta, each responsible for a specific region. The service focuses on enhancing the well-being of children, families and individuals within their communities, with particular attention to those experiencing vulnerability or social exclusion.

Through a professional and integrated approach, ACTS offers Community Social Work and Community Mentoring services, underpinned by a Community Development approach that brings social welfare support closer to where people live.

The Community Services aim to nurture and reinforce both formal and informal networks of support, encourage active community participation and strengthen local capacities through training, collaboration and shared initiatives.

A strong commitment to reflection and quality improvement supports the service, with ongoing evaluation and the application of evidence-informed practices to ensure effective and sustainable outcomes. Accessibility is central to the service model. A community-based approach allows professionals to engage with residents within their own neighbourhoods, supported by close collaboration with local stakeholders and the operation of outposts in various community settings.

These outposts act as accessible entry points to services, helping to reduce barriers and deepen relationships between communities and professionals. In addition to the eight Community Services, social work services are also offered at the Paulo Freire Institute and the Millennium Chapel.

PAULO FREIRE
JESUITS MALTA

**The service framework is built around three interrelated pillars:**

- Community Social Work focuses on supporting individuals to navigate challenges within their social environment by strengthening support systems and facilitating access to services. This model moves beyond traditional casework by addressing individual needs alongside wider community issues, creating both personal and collective impact.

- Community Mentoring supports individuals in developing motivation, resilience and readiness for change. The community mentor focuses on employment preparation, lifelong learning, housing stability, financial capability and parenting skills, empowering participants to work towards improved life outcomes.

- Community Development Work promotes resident empowerment through participation, organisation and skills development. By encouraging collective action, this pillar builds on existing community strengths while responding to shared concerns, contributing to healthier and more connected communities.

## Achievements and Milestones

In 2025, Community Services continued to strengthen its holistic, person-centred approach to supporting individuals and families experiencing complex challenges. Alongside structured casework interventions that promoted long-term stability, the service prioritised community development strategies.

A key focus was shifting from doing the work for communities to enabling communities to lead their own initiatives, building local capacity, ownership and sustainability.

Through community-led approaches, Community Services supported residents to become active contributors in shaping solutions and developing resilience, not only at an individual level but across the wider community. The examples that follow, one from each Community Service, illustrate some of the main achievements.

**Community Initiatives**

**1.Sustainability Initiative (Mosta Community):**

Mosta Community Service facilitated collaboration between WasteServ, Għargħur Local Council and Dainty Vintage Shop. Through coordinated stakeholder meetings, an initiative focusing on sustainable fashion and youth engagement was developed, offering both online content and an in-person workshop on practical clothing repurposing techniques.

The workshop reached full capacity shortly after launch, with resources provided by the Local Council and the private sector partner. The initiative contributed to Sustainable Development Goal 4 Quality Education, Goal 12 Responsible Consumption and Production and Goal 17 Partnerships for the Goals. This led to sustained collaboration between partners, resulting in the co-creation of an ongoing community sewing course.

**2. Rakkonti tal-Beltin u Furjaniżi (Valletta and Floriana Community):**

Valletta and Floriana Community Service secured funding from Reġjun Port to initiate this community-driven literary and oral history project in Valletta and Floriana. Through informal interviews, intergenerational storytelling, written contributions and place-making activities, the project is compiling a narrative archive of residents' lived experiences, cultural practices and social life. The initiative aims to preserve the intangible heritage of

both communities while actively engaging residents in shaping and documenting their own collective memory.

### 3. Intergenerational Partnerships (Western Community):

Western Community Service worked on a structured partnership between St. Elizabeth Elderly Home and St. Nicholas College which led to the implementation of two intergenerational initiatives, alongside additional activities conducted separately with each entity. These initiatives encouraged meaningful relationships between younger and older generations and created sustainable collaboration between institutions.

### 4. 'Superheroes of the Earth' and the European Week for Waste Reduction (Southern Community):

The 'Superheroes of the Earth' project has been facilitated by the Southern Community Service for the last few years. Using a permaculture-based approach, the programme equips children with practical environmental skills. As part of the European Week for Waste Reduction, a video was produced featuring participants sharing their learning, with the aim of raising wider community awareness and creating a ripple effect through social media engagement.

### 5. Outreach and Community Mapping (Cottonera Community):

Cottonera Community Service engaged residents through outreach and community mapping, identifying individuals willing to contribute their skills for the benefit of the community. This led to the establishment of the Craft Club, which provides an inclusive space for individuals of all ages and backgrounds to connect through creative activities. The initiative promotes mental, emotional and social wellbeing while fostering practical skills such as sewing, knitting and other crafts. It also aims to promote environmental sustainability through recycling and upcycling practices.

### 6. Language Café (Qawra Community):

Qawra Community Service facilitated a Language Café within the community Centre, aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 16, promoting peaceful and inclusive societies. The initiative provides a welcoming space for intercultural dialogue and language exchange within a multicultural community. It strengthens social cohesion, inclusivity and active participation, reflecting the service's commitment to diversity and community integration.

### 7. Work with young people (Żabbar):

Żabbar Community Service strengthened participation in the 'MeTween' teen project, targeting adolescents aged 11–15, including those with complex socioeconomic backgrounds. The project provides a safe and supportive environment that encourages socialisation and self-expression. It promotes inclusivity, diversity and equal participation, contributing to the holistic development and wellbeing of young people.

### 8. Collaborations with Stakeholders (Msida and Birkirkara Community):

Msida and Birkirkara Community Service collaborated with the Parish of San Ġużepp Ħaddiem to address the needs of carers and former carers identified through parish outreach.

Following two focus groups, which confirmed the need for ongoing support, a peer-led support group was established with facilitation from the Home-Based Therapeutic Service (HBTS) Central. The Community Service adopted a time-bound supportive role, encouraging sustainability.

The group commenced in December with 15 registered participants and continues to receive positive feedback, with the Parish providing venue and logistical support.



## Community Service Success Stories

Community Social Work and Community Mentoring adopt a broad, holistic approach to supporting individuals and families across the lifespan.

Interventions address diverse social issues, including mental health difficulties, loneliness, social isolation, housing or financial challenges, relationship concerns, parenting difficulties and other complex life circumstances.

To better illustrate the impact of this work, the following examples highlight effective casework practices from 2025, showcasing how community-based interventions have made a meaningful difference in the lives of many individuals and families.





## Case 1

A Community Social Worker worked with a 45-year-old single mother of a ten-year-old boy who lives with severe mental health challenges and had been residing in substandard housing. With coordinated support from community partners, NGOs and the Housing Authority, she was able to secure a safer, better-quality apartment and obtain the essential furniture.

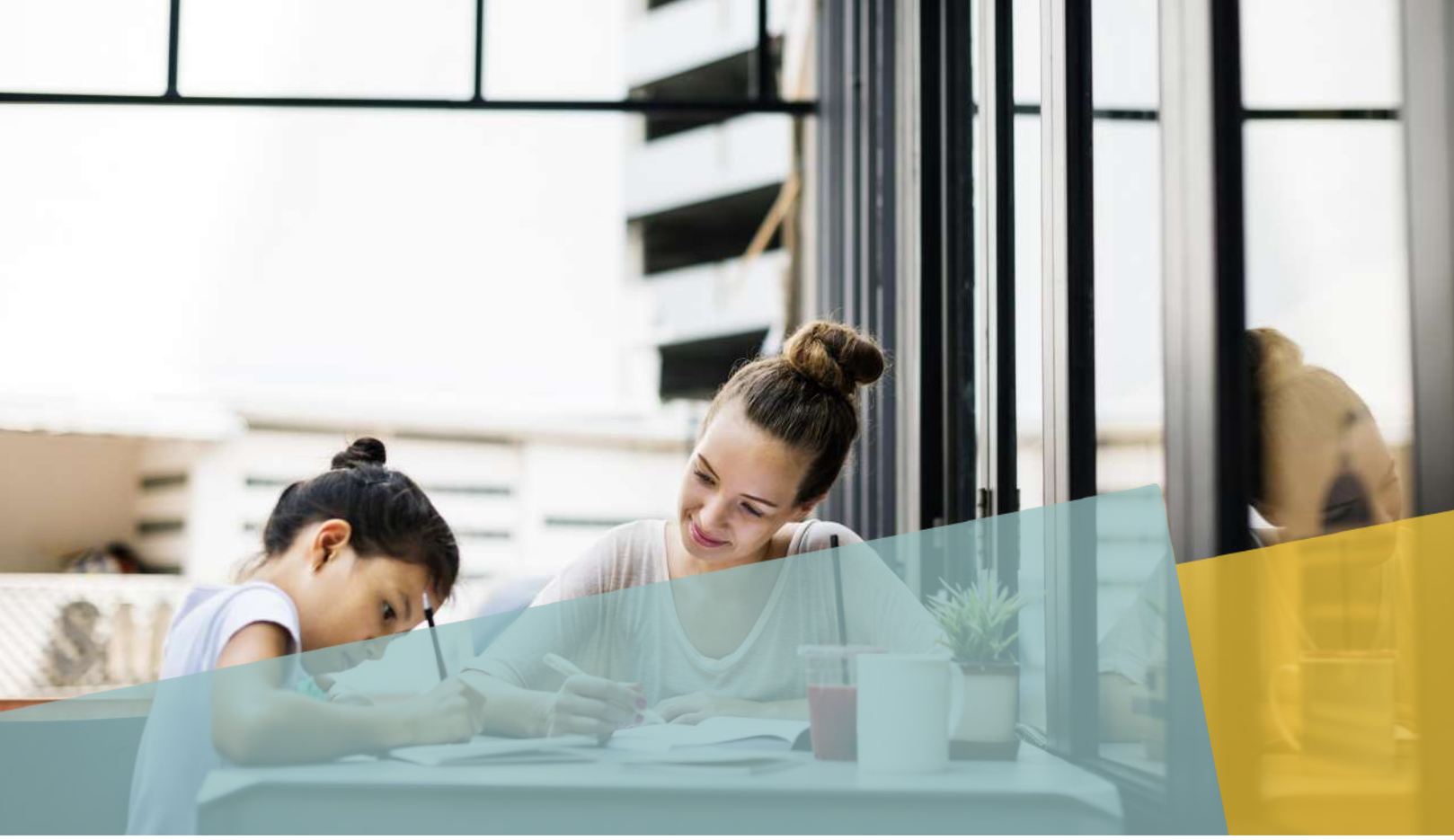
The professional's role was to provide ongoing psychosocial support, advocate for their needs and mobilise community resources to ensure sustainable housing stability and create the foundation for addressing broader personal and family goals.

## Case 2

A woman was confined to her home due to mobility issues, with no support from relatives. She was trapped in a domestic violence relationship, with her partner being her main carer and only source of support. Leaving the relationship meant not only ending the abuse but risking the loss of care and basic stability. At the same time, she was facing significant debt and had been on the verge of homelessness for months. With limited mobility and no informal support network, her situation was extremely fragile.

With the support of the Community Social Worker, the woman has left the abusive relationship and now lives independently in a social housing apartment. She continues to receive assistance from the Community Service while rebuilding her life with greater safety, stability and dignity.





## Case 3

A young mother of a one-year-old was referred to a residential programme, run by the Richmond Foundation, at a time when her life felt uncertain and unsettled. Her education had been disrupted and she was unsure how to move forward while caring for her child.

Transitioning into semi-independent living marked a turning point. In a safe and structured environment, she began to stabilise. With consistent guidance from her assigned Community Mentor, she strengthened her parenting skills, improved her emotional wellbeing,and gradually developed the practical skills needed for independent living.

With encouragement and flexibility, she found the confidence to re-engage in her education. She enrolled to complete her O-Level qualifications and began an LSE-linked course, taking meaningful steps toward building a more secure and hopeful future for herself and her child.

## Service Images





# Strategic Community Development Unit

## Service Overview

In 2025, the Strategic Community Development Unit focused on strengthening consistency in practice and embedding its direction more clearly within day-to-day work. The emphasis was not on expanding activity, but on ensuring that community development values were reflected in everyday practice across services.

Across Community and Therapeutic Services, practice-based mentoring spaces supported teams in applying the principles of community development. These reflective sessions focused on participation, inclusion, co-production, ethics and shared responsibility, helping teams translate these values into their daily work and strengthening consistency across services.

Co-leadership in community development was introduced deliberately in 2025. What began as a structural adjustment evolved into a shared way of working, with Community Services Leaders increasingly planning, reflecting and taking responsibility collectively. Over time, co-leadership became embedded in practice rather than remaining a structural concept.

The commitment to being community-led also continued to grow. Greater space was created for communities to identify priorities and shape their own initiatives, with professionals taking a more facilitative role by listening, stepping back where appropriate and supporting community ownership.

## Achievements and Milestones

### The Establishment of the Strategic Community Development Unit

The previously-mentioned developments highlighted led to the formal establishment of the Strategic Community Development Unit, aimed at strengthening prevention, learning and innovation within FSWS, particularly in relation to community-based work.

The Unit supports and promotes community-led and evidence-informed approaches across services, ensuring that practice remains grounded in local realities and responsive to evolving community contexts. It also contributes to a broader shift towards more inclusive, preventive and participatory models of practice.

### International Collaboration and Professional Development

Through the work of this unit, FSWS strengthened its professional links by joining the International Association for Community Development (IACD). This connected local work to international standards and networks and contributed to the development and award of the Erasmus+ Project - Learn, Engage, Impact – Staff Mobility for Community Development, supporting professional exchange and learning.

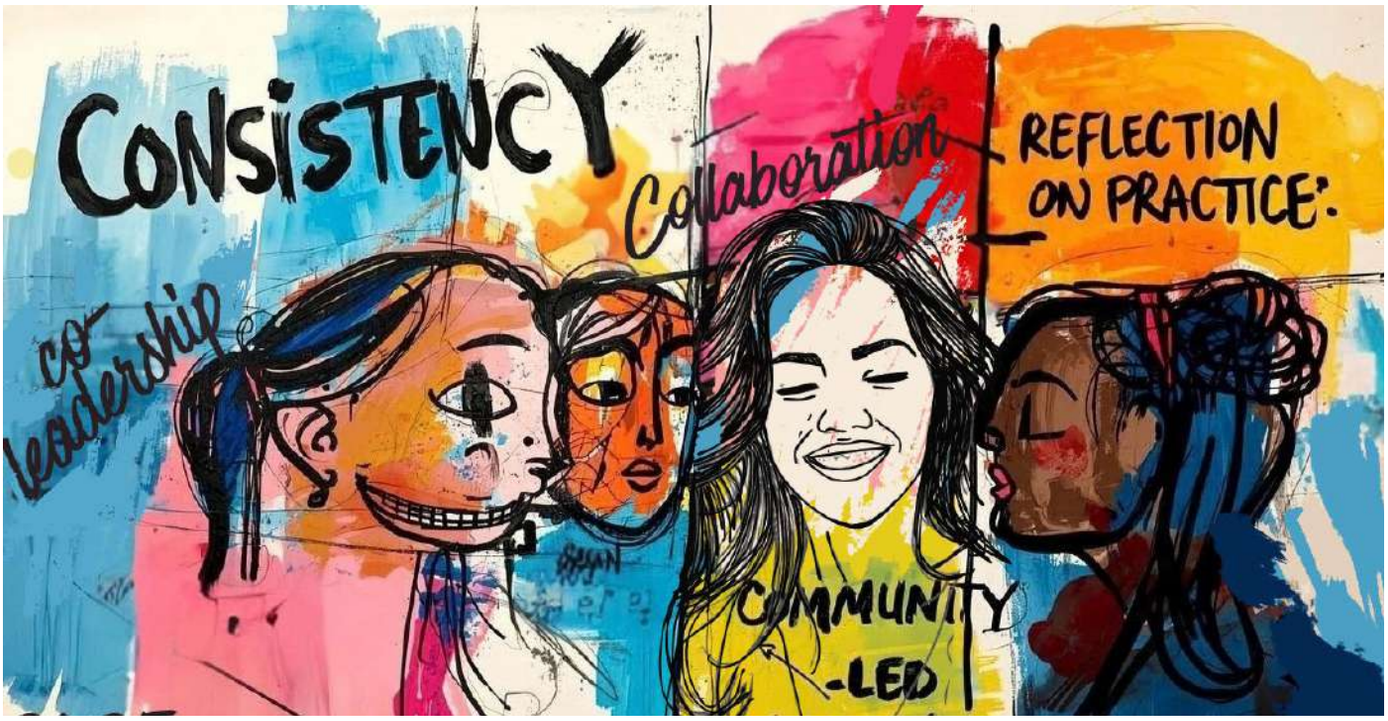
2025 was also dedicated to preparing a Community of Practice. Through stakeholder engagement and dialogue, the groundwork was laid for creating a shared learning space, bringing together those working directly and indirectly with communities. The Community of Practice will be launched in January 2026.

### Practice Development and Participatory Research

The Strategic Community Development Unit continued strengthening its role by embedding community development approaches within specialised services and laying the foundations for Participatory Action Research, a collaborative methodology that brings practitioners and communities together to generate practice-based knowledge and inform service improvement.

## Service Images

Journey of Growth





# Therapeutic Services

## Service Overview

The Therapeutic Services within ACTS provide specialised, community and office-based therapeutic interventions to children, families and individuals experiencing complex social, relational and emotional difficulties.

Historically, the service was made up of two distinct strands: Psychological Services and the Home-Based Therapeutic Service (HBTS), each operating with different criteria, structures and ways of working. Over time and more deliberately throughout 2025, these have continued to come together into one service, alongside the Parenting Team.

This has not been a sudden shift, but a gradual process of alignment. The introduction of a shared waiting list, a more coordinated intake process and increasing overlap in how cases are understood and worked with has meant that the distinction between services is becoming less relevant in practice.

What matters more is matching the need of the service user to the intervention, rather than the service to the referral.

The service is delivered by a multidisciplinary team including Psychotherapists, Psychologists, Family Therapists, Counsellors and Parenting Coaches. Alongside direct therapeutic work, the service also contributes to multidisciplinary teams, crisis response, staff support and community-based initiatives.

Accessibility and clinical quality continue to sit at the centre of the service. Accessibility is supported through a combination of community-based work and centralised processes, while clinical quality is strengthened through supervision, consultation and the ongoing development of the Clinical Pillar.



## Service Delivery

### Home-Based Therapeutic Service

HBTS continues to provide therapy within the home and community. The regional structure (North, Central, South) remains important in ensuring accessibility and keeping the work grounded in the realities of the families we support.

Working within the home allows for a different type of intervention. It brings the work closer to the family's everyday context, often making patterns more visible and the work more immediate. Although this approach presents its own challenges, particularly in managing complexity and maintaining professional boundaries, it remains central to how the service reaches families who might otherwise struggle to engage.

### Psychological Services

Psychological Services continue to play a central role within the Therapeutic Services, particularly in relation to assessment, formulation and work with more complex presentations. The contribution of psychologists within multidisciplinary settings remains significant, often supporting teams in developing clearer and more coherent understandings of cases where multiple factors are present.

Their role extends beyond direct intervention. Psychological input contributes to shared clinical thinking across services, with formulation supporting a more structured and consistent approach to decision-making.

Throughout 2025, there has been a continued shift in how this role is utilised. In certain contexts, emphasis has been placed on brief, stand-alone interventions, with greater focus instead on formulation as a means of guiding the direction of the work. This has helped establish greater clarity at the outset, particularly when working with more complex cases.

This development remains ongoing but reflects a broader effort to make more effective use of the expertise within the team, both in direct work and in supporting the wider system.



**Parenting Team**

The Parenting Team continues to provide structured parenting interventions and programmes, supporting parents to better understand and respond to their children's needs.

At the same time, their role has increasingly extended beyond direct service delivery.

Greater emphasis has been placed on supporting community services through training, consultation and supervision, particularly in embedding parenting-informed approaches across services.

This has begun to reshape how parenting is understood and addressed within the wider system, although this work remains at an early stage.

## Achievements and Milestones

2025 was a year of consolidation, with a focus on strengthening existing structures and ensuring consistency across a decentralised service.

The priority was to align core processes, particularly intake and allocation, resulting in a more coherent system for both service users and referrers.

A key development was the introduction of a shared waiting list and a more structured intake process, creating a single, clearly defined pathway into the service. Allocation is now driven by need rather than service boundaries, enabling more efficient and transparent use of resources.

Clearer expectations around caseloads strengthened the operational baseline, while increased use of service data improved visibility of demand, allocation patterns and workload distribution, supporting more consistent and informed decision-making.

The integration of HBTS and Psychological Services became more evident in practice, with reduced reliance on service boundaries and



greater alignment in processes contributing to a more unified service structure. The Parenting Team was also recognised with the "Making a Difference Award" at the Social Policy Employees Awards 2025. Across all areas, supervision and reflective structures have been maintained as core components of the service, supporting staff in managing complexity while sustaining clinical quality.Together, these developments have contributed to a more aligned, transparent and operationally coherent Therapeutic Service.

## Success Stories

### Case 1

A female client was referred to us for therapy following a prolonged history of severe domestic abuse and ongoing court proceedings, presenting with significant trauma-related difficulties.

The therapist initially focused on stabilisation, providing a consistent and reliable space for the client to reduce distress and support her day-to-day functioning. As time went on, the therapy focused on helping the client better understand and manage her emotional responses, including reconnecting with suppressed feelings in a safe and contained way.

The therapist noticed progress when the client began to access a sense of self-protection and assertiveness, which due to her traumas had previously been absent. This was supported by ongoing work on grounding, emotional regulation and practical coping strategies.

Over time, the focus shifted toward strengthening boundaries, rebuilding confidence and supporting the client to make meaningful changes in her life. She became more able to advocate for herself, both in personal contexts and within ongoing legal proceedings.



Today, the client reports feeling more stable, more in control and better equipped to manage her challenges. She has made significant life decisions, including purchasing her own home and becoming increasingly confident and independent.

This case reflects the impact of consistent, structured therapeutic support in promoting stability, recovery and long-term resilience.

## Case 1

An adult male experienced a sudden and significant disruption to his living environment, resulting in the complete loss of his home and familiar surroundings. He presented as disoriented, anxious and struggling to make sense of rapidly changing and unpredictable circumstances.

The initial phase of support focused on stabilisation, helping the client orient himself within a new and highly unfamiliar context, while maintaining basic functioning.

Early interventions prioritised practical coping strategies, encouraging flexibility and supporting the client to tolerate uncertainty without becoming overwhelmed. Attention was also given to maintaining small, consistent anchors within his routine.

As the situation evolved, the client was exposed to a wide range of new experiences and perspectives, often challenging his previous assumptions about control, meaning and his place in the world. Through ongoing relational and situational support, he gradually developed a greater capacity to adapt, demonstrating less reliance on rigid expectations and greater openness to the unpredictable nature of his environment.

A key shift in the process was facilitated through targeted interventions, ongoing guidance, emotional-regulation work, the development of a a broader range of coping strategies and longer-term planning.

The client became increasingly able to remain engaged despite confusion and the absence of

clear answers. Rather than seeking immediate resolution, he began to tolerate ambiguity and approach uncertainty with curiosity rather than distress.

Humour and perspective-taking emerged as important coping mechanisms, enabling him to manage anxiety and maintain a healthy psychological distance from overwhelming situations. Towards the end of the intervention, the client presented as more adaptable, less reactive to uncertainty and better equipped to navigate complex and unfamiliar environments.

Although many external factors remained unresolved, his internal capacity to cope with them had strengthened significantly.This case reflects the impact of supporting individuals to develop flexibility, tolerance for uncertainty and adaptive coping in the face of uncontrollable and often chaotic life events.

## Service Images

ACTS Parenting Team, winners of the Making A Difference Award at the 2025 Social Policy Employees Awards




As part of the Valletta Stakeholders Network, staff from the Community and Therapeutic Services and Community Services were invited to form part of the 'Christmas in the Community' event organised by the Malta Police Force.







# Clinical Pillar Unit

## Service Overview

The Clinical Team is the backbone of clinical quality, ethical practice and reflective thinking across ACTS and the wider organisation. It provides the framework through which evidence-based, trauma-informed, systemic and strengths-based approaches are embedded into practice, ensuring that the agency's work remains safe, responsive and clinically robust amid increasing complexity.

The team ensures that clinical excellence is not only upheld but actively incorporated into everyday practice, decision-making and service delivery, while supporting practitioner wellbeing.

At its core, the Clinical Team is concerned with more than compliance or supervision – it creates the conditions in which professionals can think clearly, practice ethically and remain emotionally present while undertaking complex high-stakes work.

Through consultation, clinical supervision, research, leadership, training and quality context, the Clinical Pillar provides robust support to clinicians operating in complex and high-risk contexts. It also oversees crisis debriefing processes and staff-support initiatives, recognising practitioner wellbeing as a foundation for safe and effective care.

In a system that asks a great deal of its people, the Clinical Team ensures that care for clients is matched by care for those who deliver it.



## Milestones

**In 2025, ACTS strengthened the Clinical Pillar through the following milestones:**

- Introduction of the Clinical Manager;
- Introduction of Case Formulation;
- Positioned the Clinical Pillar as central to quality assurance;
- Increased cross-departmental collaboration between practitioners from other agencies; and
- Strengthening of shared clinical thinking and reflective engagement.

# Concluding Remarks

This report presents selected highlights of ACTS' achievements throughout this year. These accomplishments reflect the passion, dedication and commitment of the agency's multidisciplinary team of professionals. ACTS will continue to develop and refine its multidisciplinary, community-based approach to social service provision.

Community development theory remains central to this approach, acknowledging both the importance of working alongside communities and the limitations of direct intervention. Building the capacity of individuals and communities to undertake independent collective action will therefore remain a key priority.

The preventive role of community social work will also continue to be emphasised, particularly its potential to contribute sustainably to the FSWS's child protection work. ACTS' therapy services will remain available free of charge to the wider Maltese society, supported by the Clinical Pillar through the promotion of evidence-based and reflective practice measures.

This support will help practitioners remain skilled, responsive and effective. Looking ahead, ACTS remains committed to continued growth, development and evolution.

# FSWS
# GOZO Branch
# OPERATIONS

Mgr Dr Joseph **Vella Gauci**

Director

**210**



# ANNUAL REPORT 2025



# OVERVIEW

*"The true measure of a society is how it supports those who are most vulnerable."* - Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948)

This quotation continues to guide the work of the Foundation for Social Welfare Services Gozo Branch Operations and remains at the heart of every intervention delivered throughout the year.

This report reflects a year of continued commitment, resilience and collective effort aimed at strengthening the social support network across the Gozitan community.

The reality of Gozo, as a small island that remains dependent on the mainland for many essential services, presents both opportunities and limitations. While distance and insularity create specific challenges, they also reinforce the importance of collaboration, solidarity and strong social services to ensure that no one is left behind. Throughout the year, the Directorate continued to consolidate and expand its services to ensure that individuals and families facing social challenges receive timely, professional and compassionate support.

Through a multidisciplinary team of dedicated professionals, FSWS Gozo provided a wide range of services addressing diverse social realities aimed at strengthening community resilience.

Beyond direct service delivery, 2025 was also marked by a strong emphasis on outreach and community engagement. Through regular outreach initiatives, collaborative activities with local stakeholders and continuous networking with regional partners, the Directorate sought to bring services closer to the people while promoting early intervention and accessibility to support systems.



The achievements outlined in this report are the result of the dedication, professionalism and compassion demonstrated daily by our staff, as well as the ongoing collaboration with numerous national and local partners who share our vision of a more inclusive and supportive society.

As social realities continue to evolve, the FSWS Gozo Branch Operations remains committed to strengthening its services, enhancing professional capacity and building effective partnerships to respond to the needs of the community.

This report provides an overview of the work carried out during 2025 and reflects the collective effort to safeguard the wellbeing and dignity of the individuals and families we serve.

# The Gozo Team

## Human Resources

The strengthening of human resources remains a key priority for the Directorate, as the availability of qualified professionals is essential to ensure the continuity, quality and sustainability of services provided to the Gozitan community.

In 2025, the Gozo team comprised thirty-three workers, including management, professional, administrative and contract-based staff.

This highlights the importance of continued investment in human resources and social infrastructure to ensure that services in Gozo remain sustainable, accessible and responsive to the evolving needs of the community.



## Staff Well-Being, Training and Professional Development

The Directorate recognises that a positive and supportive workplace culture is fundamental to employee well-being, motivation and organisational effectiveness. Throughout 2025, efforts focused on fostering an environment where staff feel respected, supported and encouraged to contribute to their full potential, with an emphasis on open communication, transparency and engagement.

On 20th November, the Agency Development Day was held under the theme "Sharing is Caring – A Day of Creativity, Connection and Collaboration." The event provided staff with an opportunity to engage in collaborative and creative activities, strengthening communication and fostering a stronger sense of teamwork across the Directorate.

A new initiative introduced during the year involved monthly team development sessions, each organised by a different team. These sessions aimed to enhance collaboration across service areas and promote staff engagement through interactive activities.

Throughout 2025, workers participated in a range of training programmes relevant to their roles, facilitated by the HR and Training Department as well as external entities. Participation in these initiatives reflected a strong commitment to continuous professional development, contributing to enhanced competencies and improved service delivery.

## Staff Meetings and Internal Coordination

Quarterly staff meetings, led by the Director, were held to support the smooth operation of services, reinforce adherence to policies and procedures, promote employee wellbeing and strengthen teamwork across the Directorate.

These meetings also provided a platform to discuss operational matters and address emerging issues.

In addition, regular meetings were held across specific teams, including monthly meetings with Service Area Leaders and

Coordinators, unit meetings for professional staff and administrative team meetings. These contributed to improved coordination, effective information sharing and strengthened service delivery across the Directorate

# FSWS Gozo Services

## Generic Service

During 2025, the Generic Service was mainly focused on drug-related cases. Collaboration with the Drugs Board was further strengthened, including the administration of urine tests and structured follow-ups with clients struggling with addiction. This further heightened the monitoring and support framework, aimed at promoting recovery and accountability.

This service also took the initiative to participate in Social Work Day through an awareness stand designed to promote the profession and showcase the diverse range of services offered by FSWS Gozo Branch Operations.









## Marsalforn Community Service

Throughout 2025, the Marsalforn Community Family Centre Team continued to actively address social cases within the locality, with financial difficulties and housing-related concerns emerging as the most frequently reported issues, among other social challenges. The team remained committed to strengthening community engagement and improving accessibility to services.

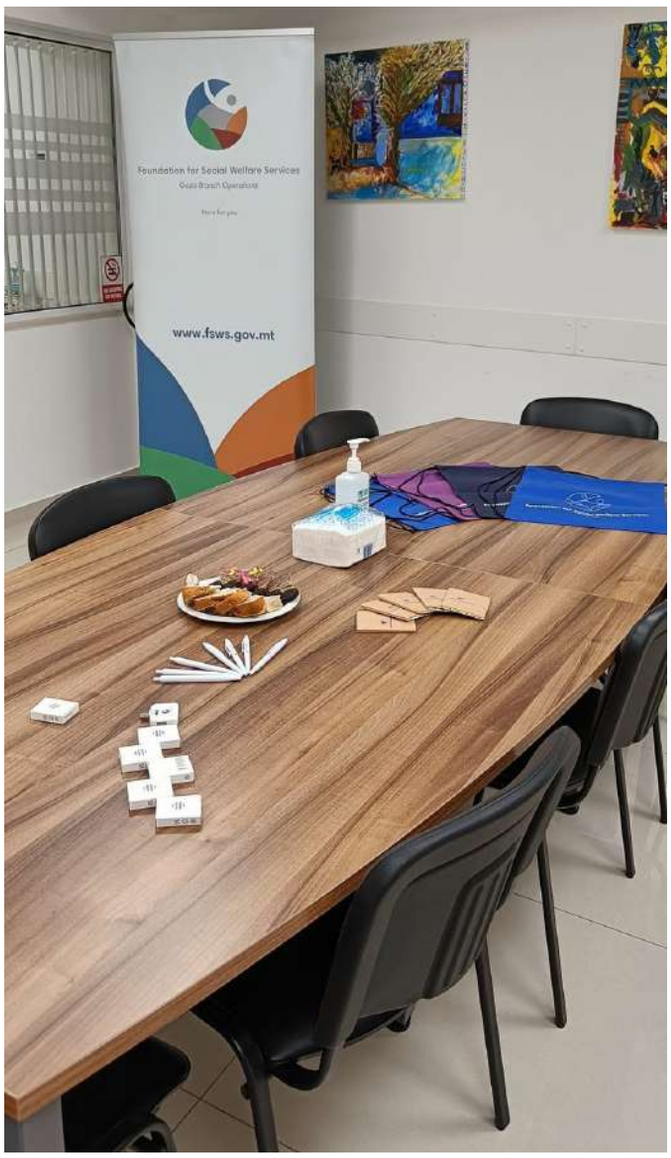
As part of its outreach initiatives, the team organised an Open Day, inviting Gozitan social professionals and members of the community to visit the Centre.

This initiative provided an opportunity to strengthen professional networking and raise awareness about the services offered within the locality. In addition, two social activities were organised for the residents, encouraging participation while creating a welcoming space that promoted interaction and engagement among community members.

During the Christmas period, a stand was set up on the parvis of St Paul's Church in Marsalforn to increase visibility, provide information and offer an accessible point of contact for residents. Throughout the year, the team maintained close collaboration with the Żebbuġ Local Council and the Church Rector, ensuring coordinated support to emerging community needs.

Outreach efforts were also extended to Xlendi, where the team engaged directly with residents to promote services and gain better insight into evolving needs.





## Domestic Violence and Risk Assessors Service

During the year, the service continued to provide support to victims of domestic violence through immediate intervention during office hours and through the Emergency On-Call Service. Over 100 cases were managed, reflecting sustained demand.

All social workers are trained Risk Assessors, authorised to administer the Danger Assessment and ODARA tools, enabling the service to operate on a 24/7 basis.

In line with established procedures, high-risk cases are referred to MARAM (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management) for coordinated action and monitoring, ensuring an integrated and multi-agency response to domestic violence cases. Throughout 2025, close cooperation with key stakeholders remained central to service delivery, particularly with the Vulnerable Victim Unit within the Gozo Police Force, the Victim Support Agency and local shelters.

A significant development in 2025, was the introduction of a panic alarm system through the Victim Support Agency. In line with existing practice in Malta, victims in Gozo who are identified as being high-risk, are now provided with a panic device, enhancing their safety and enabling rapid access to assistance when required.

To ensure consistency in procedures and alignment with national practices, monthly coordination meetings were held with the Domestic Violence Unit within Aġenzija Appoġġ while regular contact was maintained with the Vulnerable Victim Unit at the Victoria Police Station to strengthen professional collaboration.

During the year, social workers also participated in specialised multi-agency training on gender-based violence and domestic violence to further develop professional practice.

Awareness-raising efforts were also undertaken through media contributions and outreach initiatives, contributing to increased public awareness of domestic violence and the support services available.




## Homeless Service

2025 marked important developments within the Homeless Service. A new intake procedure was introduced to enhance structure, accountability and service efficiency.

Meetings were held with the Head of Home of Dar Emmaus Emergency Shelter, as well as with the respective Service Area Leader in Malta to strengthen coordination between regions. Active participation in a national seminar in Malta, which was attended by representatives from all homeless shelters, included the presentation of the updated intake procedure implementation in Gozo, along with some sharing of best practices.



## Fostering Service

During 2025, the Fostering Service in Gozo continued to strengthen its network of foster families in Gozo. During the year, one new family approached the Directorate to begin the fostering process and explore the possibility of becoming foster parents.

The social worker responsible for the service maintained regular collaboration with the Malta Fostering Service through weekly meetings, ensuring alignment in practice. Ongoing training and professional development further supported service quality.

Furthermore, the social worker responsible kept regular contact with foster carers during office meetings, home visits and appointments related to the minors in care.

In 2025, two foster families started the adoption process for the children who had been in their care for several years. These two cases reflect stability and long-term commitment often developed within fostering placements.



Close collaboration was maintained with the Looked After Children Service in Gozo to ensure coordinated and comprehensive support for shared cases.

In coordination with LAC Gozo, two activities were held for children residing with foster carers, one at Dreams of Horses and another at Esplora, providing opportunities for recreation and social engagement.

During 2025, KPMG once again sponsored generous Christmas gifts for children in foster care. Outreach efforts were sustained throughout the year, with information provided to individuals interested in fostering.

The fostering social worker also participated in media programmes to promote the service and encourage prospective foster carers to come forward.








## Looked After Children (LAC)

In 2025, most of the service users continued to reside in stable foster placements, while others resided in residential homes designed to meet their specific needs. The social worker responsible for this service maintained close collaboration with fostering families and Head of homes to ensure the safeguarding, stability and well-being of each minor.

Individualised care plans were developed and implemented, with the social worker coordinating regular case reviews to monitor the minor's educational and social progress. Active cases were managed in alignment with the service offered in Malta, including weekly coordination with the Directorate of Alternative Care.



## Supervised Access Visit (SAV)

The SAV service continued to provide structured support through supervised access visits in care order and court-mandated cases.

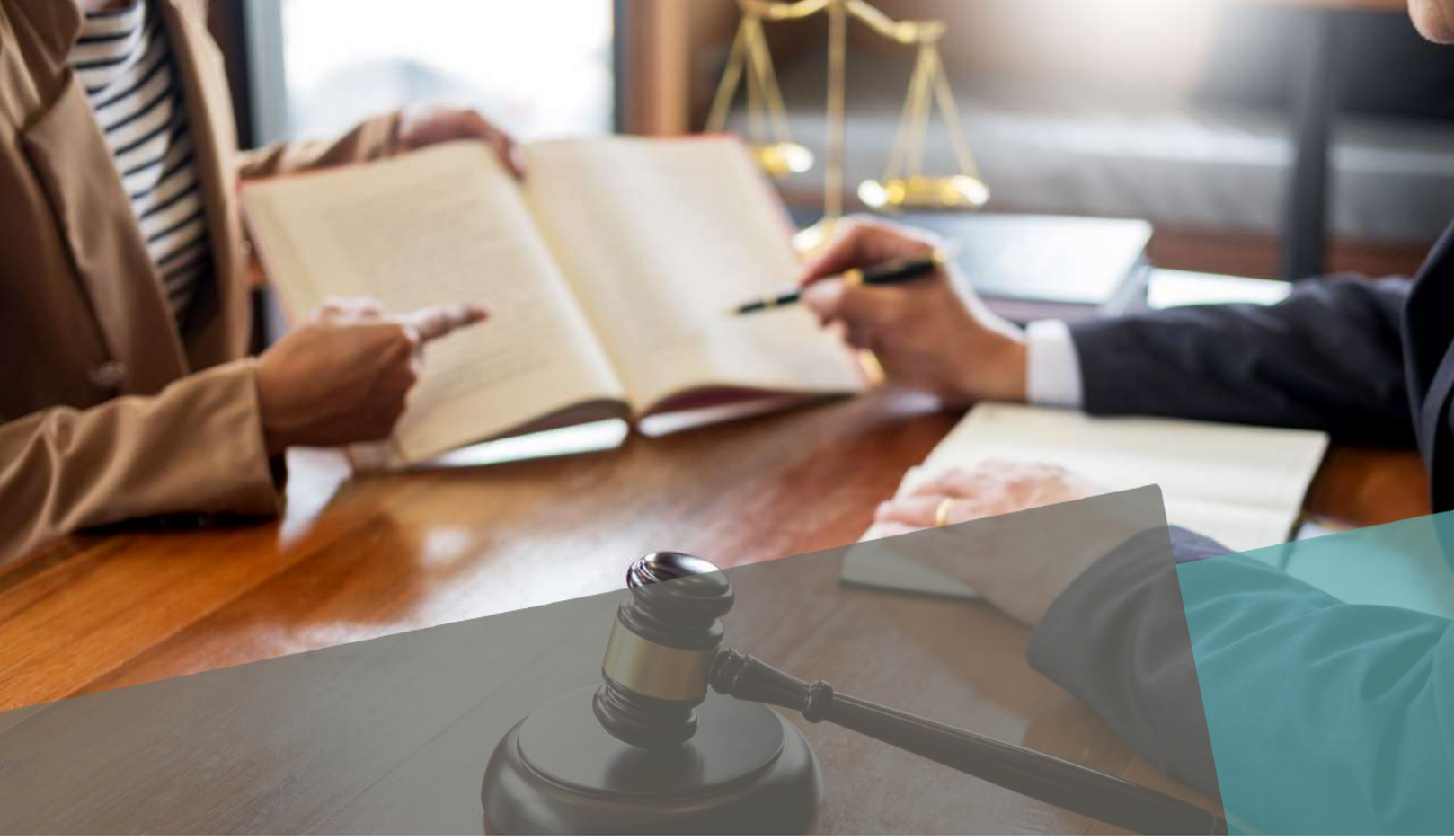
Throughout the year in review, the service maintained close collaboration with the Gozo Courts, ensuring regular communication regarding correspondence and case-related documentation.

Close collaboration with its counterpart service in Malta was maintained, ensuring consistency in practice while facilitating coordinated support for service users.

## Home-Start *Għawdex*

Home-Start Għawdex continued strengthening support to families through training, outreach, and service development. Two training courses were successfully organised to enhance the skills and preparedness of volunteers.

As a result of recruitment efforts, six new volunteers joined the service, further expanding its capacity to support families in



need. Various activities were organised for families, promoting positive parenting, child development and social inclusion. Additionally, a dedicated mobile phone was introduced to improve accessibility and responsiveness, ensuring families could reach the service more efficiently.



## Court Services

Court Services continued to provide professional assistance in cases referred by court decrees, issued by various magistrates. Cases addressed during the year involved both minors and elderly individuals. In such cases thorough assessments, reports and close collaboration with legal and social entities to safeguard vulnerable persons were required.



## Medical and Psychiatric Social Work Services at the Gozo General Hospital

***At the Gozo General Hospital, several significant developments and collaborative initiatives were undertaken during 2025.***

### Service Improvements and Procedures

A new case-assigning system was introduced to optimise workload distribution among medical social workers and to enhance overall service efficiency.

The team played an integral role in the development and review of the Long-Term Care (LTC) Policy relating to the process required for patients needing such care.

The team also participated in the development of the Stroke Team Procedure to strengthen interdisciplinary coordination.

Social workers began attending the Male Ward multidisciplinary meetings to improve holistic patient care.

### Collaboration and System Development

Discussions were initiated with FSWS social workers at Mater Dei Hospital regarding the development of a Case Management System (CMS). Following these discussions, communication was established with the company providing the CMS to explore the development of a tailored CMS system.

A meeting was also held between FSWS Management and GGH Management to strengthen collaboration concerning DETOX services.

Social workers began attending monthly meetings organised by the Lead Entity Management, fostering greater inter-professional collaboration with allied professionals.

### Awareness and Professional Engagement

The team organised two awareness stands on Social Work Day, in the two main foyers of the hospital to raise awareness about the profession and the services offered by FSWS Gozo Branch Operations. Additionally, an informative meeting was held with BARTS Management regarding "Dead Body Donation."



## Emergency On-Call Service

In 2025, the social workers continued to provide office hours service, including weekends and public holidays ito respond to social emergency situations in Gozo. Referrals were primarily received from Vulnerable Victim Unit & the police within the Gozo Police Force, support line 179, Directorate of Child Protection Services and After Care and Gozo General Hospital.

In 2025 more than 150 cases were managed during the Emergency on-call hours. Main interventions involved domestic violence cases, where the social workers were called to assess the risk of the victims through the Danger Assessment and ODARA tool, child protection situations and homelessness.

## Prevention Services

Prevention remained a key priority throughout the year. Awareness initiatives were held in shopping malls during both the summer and Christmas periods, reaching a broad audience and promoting social well-being and available support services.

Summer School sessions were delivered, focusing on the subjects: Bullying Prevention and Healthy Environment - Healthy Living. These sessions were aimed at equipping children and young people with knowledge and practical skills to foster respectful relationships and healthier lifestyles.

## Food Distribution

In 2025, FSWS Gozo continued its efforts to assist families in need through the FEAD and SFFD food distribution programmes.

Each distribution site was organised by the team's members with the collaboration of the Directorate of Corporate Services within FSWS and Arka Foundation.

Throughout the distributions, staff engaged with clients to understand what their needs are, to offer guidance and support and to refer the clients to the appropriate services if needed.



# Success Stories

*Fictitious names and ages were assigned to the stories to respect the client's privacy and comply with GDPR regulations.*

## Success Story 1

Marvin, a young adult in his early twenties, has been using the generic service for the past months. He initially sought support due to his unemployment, anger management issues towards his mother and a lack of motivation to leave home.

After losing his job, the mother-son rapport deteriorated, leading to emotional distress and an unhealthy sleeping pattern to avoid interactions. Marvin struggled to find employment as he was frequently associated with his father, who was in prison for various criminal activities.

Despite having no contact with him for years, Marvin was unable to avoid the stigma, which, under such circumstances, is sometimes met in the close-knit Gozitan community. When he started considering alternative opportunities in Malta, his mother objected, insisting that he deserved a job in Gozo.

With the strong support of the FSWS Professional team at the Community Family Centre in Marsalforn, boundaries were established, safety plans developed, and Marvin was assisted in rediscovering educational opportunities and was helped in securing subsidised accommodation.

He also acquired part-time employment. His mother was guided to accept his need for independence. Marvin is currently enrolled in an educational programme for four months, lives independently and works part-time.

His relationship with his mother has significantly improved, and they now meet fortnightly. Both are still receiving ongoing support provided by the Community Family Centre in Marsalforn.



## Success Story 2

Angela was admitted to Gozo General Hospital following a fall that raised serious concerns about her safety and wellbeing.

On assessment, she appeared disoriented and physically unstable, with clinical signs associated with long-term alcohol misuse. Her condition indicated the need for close monitoring and multidisciplinary intervention.

During her admission, it became evident that Angela faced significant social and emotional challenges in addition to her health needs. Due to cognitive impairment, contact was established with her daughter, who resides abroad.

With the support of an interpreter, FSWS professionals providing service at the Gozo General Hospital were able to communicate effectively with the family.

Angela's daughter explained that her mother had no local support network and described long-standing concerns related to alcohol dependency and its impact on her safety.

With medical and psychiatric support, Angela's condition gradually stabilised, and she regained orientation. Initially, she expressed a wish to return home with community support.

However, due to her immigration status and ineligibility for certain services, a referral was made to FSWS Community Family Centre in Victoria to ensure continued follow-up.

During a home visit following discharge, Angela demonstrated increased insight into her health and vulnerability and expressed willingness to return to her home country, Switzerland, where family support was available.

Shortly afterwards, she required a brief re-admission due to alcohol intoxication. This highlighted the ongoing complexity of her situation and the importance of sustained support.

Angela's daughter subsequently travelled to Gozo to assist with arrangements for her return to Switzerland.



Through coordinated efforts between the FSWS social worker at the Gozo General Hospital, healthcare professionals and the family, Angela was able to return safely with appropriate support in place.

Ongoing coordination and follow-up were provided by the FSWS social worker at the Gozo General Hospital throughout the process until the departure of both Angela and her daughter.

This case illustrates how collaborative multidisciplinary work, clear communication and family involvement can help achieve positive outcomes even in complex situations involving addiction, isolation and vulnerability.

## Regional Network Meetings

As part of its continued commitment to strengthening collaboration across the social sector, the Directorate organised four Regional Network Meetings on a quarterly basis during 2025, bringing together key regional stakeholders and professionals from various sectors.

These meetings served as an important forum for dialogue, professional exchange and the sharing of good practice, while reinforcing the value of coordinated responses to emerging social realities within the region.

The sessions featured distinguished speakers, including the Director of Caritas Gozo, the Director General and Director Income Support from the Department of Social Security, the Police Inspector from the Gozo Police Force Vulnerable Victims Unit and the Director and Officials from the Gozo Services Directorate within the Ministry for Gozo and Planning.

The meetings were consistently well attended and generated strong engagement among participants, reflecting both the relevance of the topics addressed and the increasing recognition of the importance of inter-agency collaboration in enhancing service delivery and supporting the well-being of the Gozitan community.

# Conclusion

The year 2025 has once again reaffirmed the pivotal role of the Foundation for Social Welfare Services Gozo Branch Operations in safeguarding the dignity, wellbeing and social inclusion of individuals and families in Gozo. Through sustained commitment, professionalism and compassion, the Directorate continued to respond effectively to increasingly complex social realities, while ensuring that essential support remained accessible to those most in need.

The progress outlined in this report reflects the dedication and resilience of all staff, as well as the strength of strategic partnerships with stakeholders, public entities, voluntary organisations and the wider community. These collaborations have reinforced the social support framework in Gozo, enabling more coordinated, timely and impactful interventions.

At the same time, 2025 brought into sharper focus several ongoing challenges, particularly in relation to human resources, recruitment constraints linked to insularity, increasing service demand and the need for continued investment in social infrastructure. Addressing these realities will require sustained commitment, forward planning and innovative approaches to ensure services remain resilient and responsive.

The Directorate remains committed to strengthening professional capacity, enhancing service delivery, investing in staff wellbeing and further developing inter-agency collaboration, while continuing to bring services closer to the community and adopting modern practices.

Continued investment in strategic initiatives will be essential, particularly in areas such as homelessness support, crisis intervention, therapeutic environments and community-based services. These developments will strengthen Gozo's ability to respond to future social challenges with preparedness and confidence.

Gozo's social services must reflect both its unique realities and its potential. With clear direction and collective commitment, FSWS Gozo Branch Operations will continue striving towards a future where every person is supported, every family is valued, and no one is left behind.

# HUMAN RESOURCES and TRAINING

Anthony **Apap**
Director

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Foundation for Social Welfare Services



ANNUAL REPORT 2025



# OVERVIEW

The Human Resources Department within the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS) plays a central role in supporting the Foundation's workforce through strategic recruitment, training, employee development and organisational support.

The department ensures that the Foundation continues to attract, develop and retain competent professionals capable of delivering high-quality social welfare services.

Throughout 2025, the Human Resources Department continued to strengthen its operational processes while supporting employees across all agencies and directorates.

Key priorities included recruitment to address workforce needs, the implementation of professional development opportunities, employee well-being initiatives and the continuous monitoring of staff engagement through structured meetings and feedback mechanisms.

## Human Resources Services

### Overview

During 2025, the Human Resources Department focused on strengthening workforce capacity through recruitment, training, professional development and employee support mechanisms.

The department continued to oversee recruitment processes, manage employee movements, coordinate training initiatives and support employee engagement across the Foundation.



The department also maintained structured systems for employee onboarding, exit meetings, probation follow-ups and performance appraisal monitoring. These processes contributed to better workforce planning, improved employee support and stronger organisational learning.




# Recruitment

## Achievements and Milestones

- Continued recruitment processes to support service expansion and workforce capacity building.
- Recruitment across several professional grades, including social workers, social welfare professionals, support workers, psychologists and administrative staff.
- Strengthened recruitment procedures through open calls, structured interviews and transparent selection processes.
- Increased internal mobility through upgrades, promotions and movement requests.
- Regular probation meetings and exit interviews were conducted to better understand employee experiences and improve retention strategies.

### Statistics

- Calls issued: **168**
- Applications received: **744**
- Applications eligible for interview: **540**
- Interviews conducted: **409**

**Recruitment outcomes:**

- Recruited individuals (replacement): **77**
- Recruited individuals (new vacancies): **36**
- Recruited individuals under EU projects: **10**

**Employee movement:**

- Upgrades/promotions: **83**
- Resignations: **96**
- Terminations: **8**
- Retirements / deceased: **6**

**Employee engagement meetings:**

- Exit meetings conducted: **76**
- Probation meetings conducted: **103**

### Service Conclusion

Recruitment remained a core priority during 2025 as the Foundation continued to expand its services and strengthen workforce capacity. Through structured recruitment processes and continuous monitoring of employee feedback, the Human Resources Department maintained a proactive approach to workforce planning and organisational development.

## Training and Professional Development

### Achievements and Milestones

The Human Resources Department continued to invest in professional development opportunities for employees across the Foundation. Training programmes addressed emerging social welfare challenges and strengthened staff competencies in areas such as child protection, mental health, trauma-informed practice and leadership.

Training initiatives also included induction programmes for new employees, specialised workshops, conferences and professional seminars aimed at improving service delivery and professional knowledge.



### Statistics

**Training delivered across FSWS during 2025:**

- Training sessions delivered: **222**
- Total cost of training sessions: **€57,000**
- Employees attending multiple training sessions: **939**
- Certificates issued: **2,465**

**CPD (Continuous Professional Development) Funds:**

- Employees eligible for CPD funds: **996**
  - o **369** warranted employees
  - o **627** non-warranted employees
- Total CPD budget allocated: **€870,000**
- Total amount claimed: **€222,000**
- Applications submitted: **904**



Distribution of CPD claims:

- **674** applications from warranted employees
- **230** applications from non-warranted employees

### Service Conclusion

The continued investment in training and CPD initiatives reflects the Foundation's commitment to maintaining a skilled and knowledgeable workforce. By providing diverse training opportunities and supporting professional development, the Human Resources Department ensures that employees remain equipped to address the complex needs of the individuals and families served by FSWS.

## Employee Administration and Workforce Management

### Achievements and Milestones

Throughout 2025, the Human Resources Department continued to manage a range of administrative processes related to employment contracts, employee movements and workplace arrangements. This included the management of telework agreements, internal movements, contractual documentation and communication with employees.

The department also supported employee well-being and organisational engagement through structured meetings with both new recruits and employees leaving the organisation.

### Statistics

**Administrative operations carried out in 2025 included:**

- Total contracts and letters issued: 564
- Telework contracts: 146 employees
- Telework applications received: 19
- Employees with remote working arrangements: 6

**Additional workforce statistics:**

- Internal movements carried out: 34
- Movement requests by professionals: 18
- Employees who changed working hours:19
- POMA requests processed: 396

### Service Conclusion

Through efficient administrative management and structured workforce monitoring, the Human Resources Department ensured that employment processes across FSWS continued to operate smoothly. These mechanisms support organisational transparency, workforce flexibility and improved staff support.

## Deployments

### Achievements and Milestones

Deployments continued to play an important role in workforce optimisation across FSWS. Through collaboration with other entities and internal workforce sharing, the Foundation was able to respond effectively to service demands and operational needs.

Deployments also facilitated knowledge sharing across different services and supported employees who continued contributing beyond the standard retirement age.

### Statistics

- Total active deployments: 101
- From Engineering Resources to FSWS: 21
- From Community Worker Scheme to FSWS: 4
- From other entities to FSWS: 26
- From FSWS to other entities: 36
- Employees working beyond retirement age:14

### Service Conclusion

Deployment strategies remain an effective mechanism for strengthening workforce collaboration and operational flexibility across the Foundation. These arrangements ensure that FSWS can continue responding efficiently to evolving service needs.

## Students Placements

### Achievements and Milestones

The Foundation continued to support the development of future professionals through structured student placement programmes.

These placements provide students from various academic backgrounds with the opportunity to gain practical experience within the social welfare sector.Student placements also strengthen partnerships with educational institutions and contribute to the development of the future social welfare workforce.

### Statistics

- Total student placements during 2025: **153**

Students came from various programmes, including:

- Advanced Diploma in Social Care
- B.A. (Hons) Social Work
- Youth and Community Studies
- Sociology and Psychology programmes
- MCAST Health and Social Care Management
- Master's programmes in counselling, social work and family therapy

Student placements remain a key investment in the future workforce of the social welfare sector. By supporting students during their academic journey, FSWS continues to contribute to the development of skilled professionals committed to social welfare services.

## Conclusion

Throughout 2025, the Human Resources Department continued to play a vital role in strengthening the Foundation for Social Welfare Services by supporting its workforce through effective recruitment, professional development, employee administration and workforce planning. The department remained committed to enhancing organisational capacity while ensuring that employees across all services receive the necessary support to deliver high-quality social welfare services.

The year was characterised by sustained efforts to improve operational efficiency, promote continuous professional development and maintain structured engagement with employees through recruitment processes, training initiatives and workforce management practices. These efforts contributed to a stronger, more resilient workforce capable of responding to the evolving needs of the individuals, families and communities served by FSWS.

In recognition of the dedication and collaborative work of the team, the Human Resources Department was shortlisted for the Team of the Year Award organised by the Ministry for Social Policy and Children's Rights. This recognition reflects the department's commitment to excellence, professionalism and its continuous contribution to strengthening the Foundation's services.

Looking ahead, the department remains committed to further strengthening its processes, supporting employee well-being and continuing to invest in the development of a competent and motivated workforce that upholds the mission and values of the Foundation for Social Welfare Services.

# CORPORATE SERVICES Department

Stephen C **Vella**

Director

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ANNUAL REPORT 2025



# OVERVIEW

As we reflect on 2025, a year shaped by challenges and meaningful progress of the Corporate Services Division within the Foundation for Social Welfare Services. This report outlines how the Division has strategically strengthened the organisational backbone that enables our agencies and departments to fulfil their mandates effectively and sustainably.

The Corporate Services Division maintained a strong focus on governance, resource optimisation, and the modernisation of core systems to ensure that the Foundation's operational infrastructure remains resilient, responsive and future-ready. This included the strategic adoption of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and the continued development of integrated systems to support data quality, oversight and informed decision-making.

Corporate Services also continued to play a vital enabling role across key functions, including procurement, EU-funded projects, information technology, maintenance services, food distribution schemes and administration. Alongside operational efficiency, priority was given to strengthening staff capacity and promoting a culture of collaboration, inclusivity and shared responsibility.

Looking ahead, the Division remains committed to further strengthening coordination among stakeholders, ensuring that systems, people and processes remain aligned to deliver high-quality, accessible and sustainable social welfare services.



# Key Developments and Operational Highlights

## Digital Transformation and System Integration

A major organisational milestone in 2025 was the full implementation of the Foundation's Case Management System (CMS). This significantly enhanced service delivery, coordination and decision-making across the organisation.

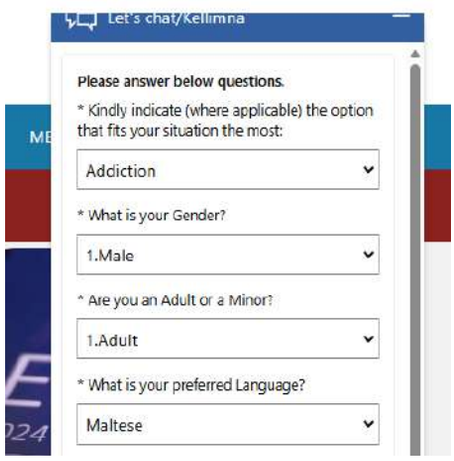
Prior to the CMS rollout, operations were affected by fragmented processes and limited access to real-time data. The introduction of a unified, cloud-based system streamlined workflows, improved data integration and facilitated real-time collaboration among professionals.

The Division also advanced the strategic use of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, thereby improving efficiency, analysis and service oversight.

## Enhancing Accessibility and Service Reach

A key development was the launch of the 179 online chat service, accessible through the Foundation's website. This initiative introduced a discreet, immediate and user-friendly channel for individuals seeking support.

The service strengthened early intervention pathways and expanded outreach, making support more accessible to individuals who may not engage through traditional channels.





## Strengthening Operational Support and Internal Systems

Corporate Services continued to ensure the smooth functioning of internal operations across procurement, IT, maintenance and administrative services.

Through improved coordination and system efficiency, the Division enhanced internal workflows and strengthened its ability to support frontline services effectively and consistently.

## EU Projects

The Foundation continues to actively leverage EU-funded initiatives to strengthen innovation, capacity and service quality. Through the EU Projects Office, funding has been strategically utilised to address complex social challenges and introduce forward-looking service models.

**During 2025, several projects were successfully approved:**

- Second Chance – Supporting youth through reintegration, skills development and social inclusion
- New Beginnings – Supporting victims of human trafficking through enhanced care models
- Food for You Scheme & State-Funded Food Distribution – Coordinating the distribution of over 85,000 food packages annually in collaboration with ACTS and the Gozo Branch
- Erasmus+ – Learn, Engage, Impact – Supporting staff mobility and community development training



Another proposal remains under favourable consideration, reflecting the continued growth and strategic alignment of the Foundation's EU project portfolio.

Through these initiatives, the Foundation has diversified funding sources, strengthened staff competencies, introduced new methodologies and reinforced its engagement with European partners.

Overall, the EU Projects Office has evolved into a key driver of innovation and sustainability, ensuring that the Foundation remains responsive to emerging challenges while aligning local impact with broader European objectives.

## Concluding Remarks

The Foundation extends its sincere appreciation to the entire Corporate Services team for their dedication, professionalism and sustained commitment throughout 2025. The team's contributions have been instrumental in advancing the Foundation's mission and ensuring the continuity of high quality services for the vulnerable individuals and communities it serves.

Looking ahead the Corporate Services Department's priorities will remain firmly focused on strengthening operational efficiency, enhancing staff capacity and safeguarding financial integrity. These principles will continue to guide the alignment of resources, systems and infrastructure with the Foundation's evolving needs and ambitions.

# FINANCE

Mark **Zammit**

Director

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ANNUAL REPORT 2025



# OVERVIEW

The primary objective of the Finance Department of FSWS is to ensure the responsible management, control and accountability of public funds across the Foundation, while supporting all agencies and services through effective financial planning, reporting and governance.

In practice, this means the Finance Department aims to:

- Safeguard FSWS financial resources
- Maintain compliance with statutory and audit requirements
- Provide accurate financial reporting and oversight
- Support operational continuity through budgeting, payments, and payroll
- Promote transparency and sustainability across all FSWS entities

Overall, its core purpose is to ensure that FSWS can deliver its social welfare services efficiently while maintaining strong financial integrity and public trust.

This report outlines the key activities undertaken by the Finance Team in pursuit of this objective and illustrates the collaboration maintained with all FSWS teams. The year 2025 was marked by significant progress and the Finance Department is pleased to present an overview of its operations and achievements.



## Composition of the Finance Department

The Finance Department is headed by the Finance Director and supported by four Finance Managers, each overseeing their respective areas, as well as a team of ten Finance Executives. This includes two Senior Finance Executives, two Payroll Finance Executives and a Personal Assistant to the Finance Director.

The Finance Team oversees the daily operations of the accounts function, ensuring the organisation's financial activities are managed effectively and efficiently.

## Responsibilities of the Finance Department

The Finance Department is entrusted with several key responsibilities, which include:

- Overseeing and managing all accounting functions for FSWS Head Office, as well as its sub-agencies and directorates.
- Administering the Foundation's accounting operations, treasury activities and financial reporting processes.
- Ensuring full compliance with all statutory obligations, regulatory frameworks and legal requirements.
- Delivering effective, efficient and reliable financial services in support of the FSWS Board and senior management, thereby contributing to sound governance and informed decision-making.




## Ledger Maintenance and Financial Recording

- Ensuring that all financial transactions are accurately recorded in the relevant ledgers, including the general ledger, accounts receivable and accounts payable.
- Confirming that entries are properly classified in line with applicable accounting standards and principles, including IFRS (International Financial Reporting Standards) requirements.
- Carrying out regular reconciliations to maintain the accuracy, completeness and integrity of financial records.

## Supplier Payments and Accounts Payable

- Review supplier invoices against purchase orders, contracts and supporting documentation to ensure compliance with internal controls and adherence to Malta's Public Procurement Regulations (S.L. 601.03).
- Securing the necessary authorisations prior to processing payments.
- Issuing payments through the appropriate methods, including electronic transfers, cheques and online payment systems.
- Maintaining proper payment records and ensuring suppliers are paid on time to sustain strong working relationships.




## Payroll Administration

- Preparing accurate calculations of salaries, wages, allowances, bonuses and other entitlements, supported by timely updates from HR on employee records and contractual changes.
- Applying the required statutory deductions, including taxation and other withholdings, in accordance with legal and regulatory obligations.
- Processing payroll through the appropriate systems while ensuring full compliance with employment legislation.
- Managing and adhering to the FSWS payroll calendar to ensure timely payroll processing, salary disbursements and the issuing of payslips.
- Addressing payroll-related queries raised by employees, liaising with HR where necessary to clarify contract-related matters.

## Additional Key Functions

**The Finance Department also undertakes a wide range of essential financial duties, including:**

- Preparing monthly management accounts and supporting the production of annual financial statements, such as balance sheets, income statements and cash flow reports.
- Contributing to budgeting and forecasting activities by delivering accurate financial data and analysis to the management team and the Board.

- Administering petty cash funds across all FSWS agencies, directorates and Community Homes, ensuring strong accountability and transparent fund management.

- Liaising with external auditors and the National Audit Office during financial audits and providing the required documentation and explanations.

- Implementing and overseeing internal control systems across the Foundation to safeguard organisational assets and mitigate the risk of fraud and financial errors.

- Remaining updated on developments in financial regulations, accounting standards and best practices, ensuring ongoing compliance.

- Delivering financial insights and analysis to assist management in strategic and operational decision-making.

In addition to its core responsibilities, the Finance Department provides financial support for special initiatives, including EU-funded projects, process enhancements and efficiency-driven improvements to strengthen the Foundation's overall financial governance.

## Financial Oversight Across FSWS Entities

The Finance Department is responsible for overseeing and coordinating the financial management of FSWS's Head Office, its various agencies and directorates and other budget votes allocated by the Ministry. This includes ensuring appropriate financial governance, budgeting, reporting and operational support across the Foundation's diverse service areas, namely:

- *Aġenzija Appoġġ*, which provides social work and support services to vulnerable individuals and families.

- *Aġenzija Sedqa*, responsible for rehabilitation and intervention services related to drug, alcohol, and gambling dependency.

- The **Directorate for Alternative Care (DAC)**, which delivers support and oversight for children and young persons placed in out-of-home care.

- The **Agency for Community and Therapeutic Services (ACTS)**, offering community-based outreach initiatives and therapeutic programmes.

- **Child Protection Services (CPS)**, dedicated to safeguarding children from abuse, neglect and harm.

- **Gozo Operations**, which extend FSWS services and support to individuals and communities within the Gozo region.

Through its central role, the Finance Department ensures that all entities within FSWS are supported by sound financial administration, enabling the Foundation to deliver its social welfare services effectively and responsibly.




## Budget Allocation

In October 2024, during the annual Budget Speech for the year 2025 estimates, the Minister for Finance allocated **€35,000,000** to FSWS, representing an increase of **€5,000,000** when compared to the previous year's budget.

In addition to overseeing the main operational allocation, the Finance Department is also responsible for administering and monitoring several other designated budgetary provisions. These include the Out of Home Care Programme (**€6,200,000**), mainly for FSWS Community Homes, fostering grants and children under special care, as well as Embark for Life (**€192,000**), Youth Outreach (**€150,000**), B SmartOnline! (**€10,000**), and the Adoption Grant (**€450,000**).

## Capital Expenditure

**For 2025, the government allocated €300,000 for capital expenditure, including:**

- Infrastructure Development: The finishing of the Directorate for Alternative Care (DAC) offices in Cannon Road, Santa Venera to enhance social services.

- Sustainable Investments: The Finance Department supported the acquisition of laptops and other essential equipment for both office premises and employees, ensuring that staff have the necessary tools to carry out the day-to-day operations of the Foundation efficiently and effectively.



# Key Activities Undertaken by the Finance Department in 2025

Below is a summary of key initiatives and responsibilities undertaken by the Finance Department to support effective financial management and strategic alignment across FSWS:

- Enhancing Financial Governance:

  The Finance Department continued to reinforce the organisation's financial governance structures, ensuring full compliance with regulatory obligations and recognised best practices. This included ongoing reviews and enhancements of financial policies and procedures, the implementation of strong internal control systems and periodic internal checks to promote accountability and transparency.

- Budgeting and Resource Allocation:

  Finance led the Foundation-wide budgeting exercise, working closely with departmental leaders to evaluate operational requirements, establish priorities and allocate resources effectively. This process ensured that financial planning remained aligned with organisational objectives while maximising the efficient use of available public funding.

- Cost Control and Management:

  A strong emphasis was placed on expenditure control, particularly in relation to staffing costs, which represent a substantial portion of FSWS's overall budget. Initiatives included optimising staffing structures, engaging suppliers to secure favourable contractual terms and implementing cost-saving measures while safeguarding service quality and continuity.

- **Financial Reporting and Analysis:**

  The Finance Team oversaw the preparation, monitoring and review of key financial reports, providing essential insight into organisational performance. Through the analysis of financial trends, monitoring of indicators and the delivery of informed recommendations, Finance supported evidence-based decision-making across the Foundation.

- **Stakeholder Engagement:**

  The Department prioritised ongoing communication with government entities and funding authorities, ensuring accurate and transparent reporting on the utilisation of financial resources. Presenting clear financial narratives and demonstrating programme impact contributed to sustained trust and continued external funding support.

- **Capacity Building and Training:**

  Investment in strengthening financial knowledge across the organisation remained a priority. Training initiatives and development programmes were supported to enhance financial literacy and ensure that staff throughout FSWS are equipped to contribute to responsible financial management.

- **Performance Evaluation:**

  Financial Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and relevant metrics were developed and tracked to assess organisational and departmental effectiveness. These measures supported accountability, highlighted areas for improvement and encouraged continuous enhancement of financial processes.

- **Digital Transformation – Online Leave System:**

  As part of its ongoing digitalisation strategy, the Department further advanced the implementation of an online leave application system. This development improved administrative efficiency and provided a more accessible and streamlined process for both employees and management.

- **Implementation of Collective Agreements:**

  In close collaboration with the HR and Payroll teams, the Finance Department plays a pivotal role in implementing collective agreements for both FSWS employees and management grades. This process includes:

  o Overseeing the calculation and disbursement of arrears covering the relevant periods of the collective agreements.

  o Carrying out thorough financial assessments to ensure accuracy and compliance in all payments.

  o Preparing and submitting the necessary funding claims to the Ministry of Finance to secure the resources required to meet these commitments.

This initiative requires extensive cross-departmental coordination among all payroll departments across the Foundation's agencies, along with careful financial planning, to ensure proper implementation within the established timeframes.

Through these strategic activities, the Finance Department continued to play a vital role in safeguarding the financial stability and long-term sustainability of FSWS, while ensuring the effective utilisation of government funding in support of the Foundation's mission.

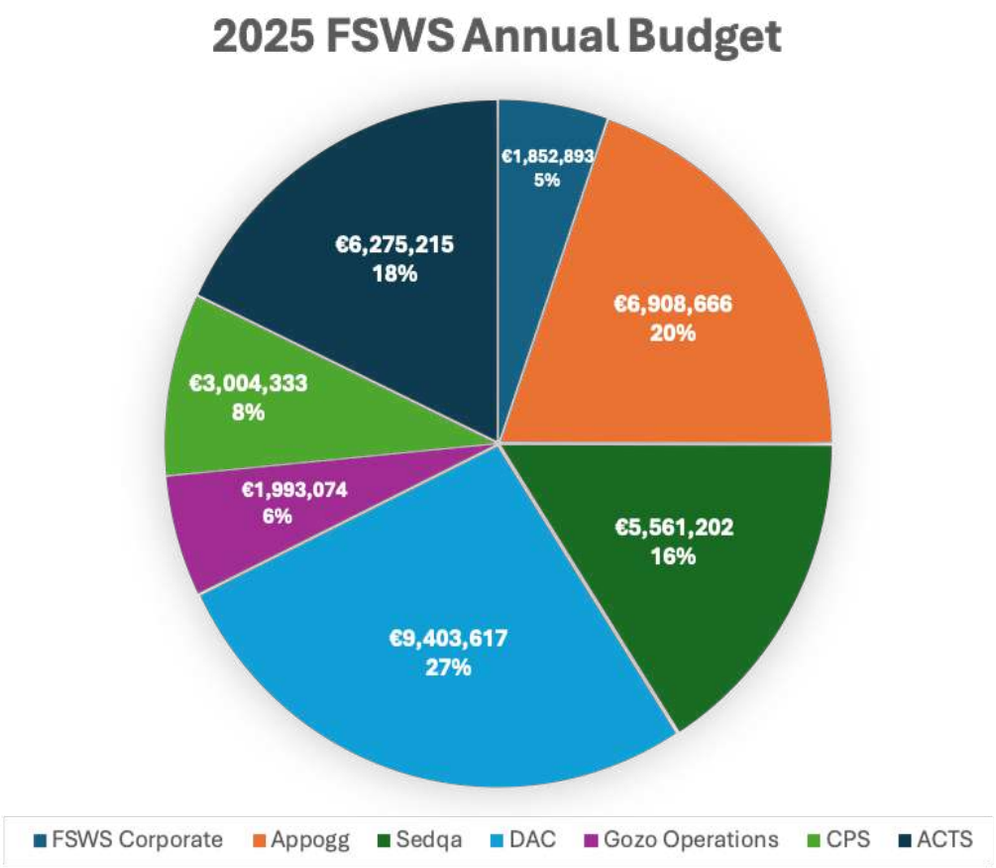
# Expenditure Overview

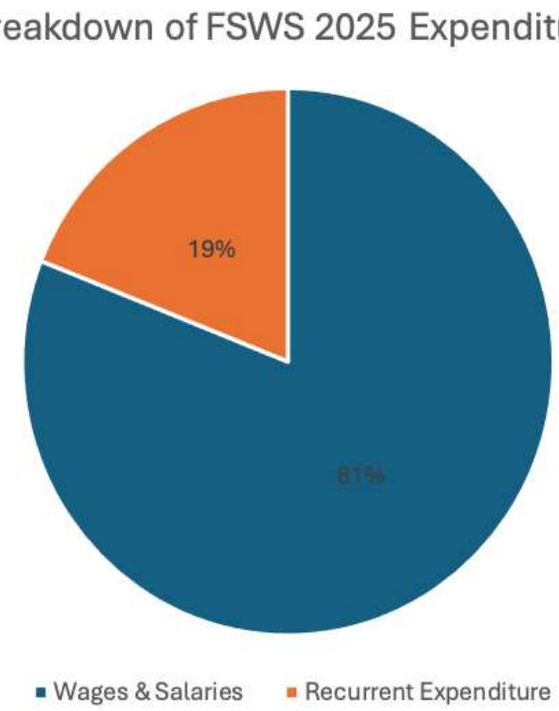
The budgets for 2025 and preceding years are presented in the table below. As FSWS operates as a national service provider, its largest and most consistent expenditure is on employee salaries, reflecting the significant workforce required to deliver its services.

**Government Budget allocations to FSWS over the years:**

| Year | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Budget | €21,400,000 | €24,000,000 | €25,000,000 | €26,400,000 | €30,000,000 | €35,000,000 |

The charts below present the funding allocated by the Government of Malta to each agency and service provider within FSWS, as outlined in the FSWS budget prepared by the Finance Department. They also provide a breakdown of the Foundation's main expenditures between salaries and other expenses, along with a detailed analysis of recurrent expenditures for 2025.






## Breakdown of recurrent expenditure for the year 2025




# Conclusion

As FSWS continues to expand its services across Malta and Gozo, strong financial oversight remains fundamental to ensuring effective and sustainable delivery of support to the communities it serves. Throughout 2025, resources were managed diligently and responsibly to maximise impact, promote long-term sustainability and contribute to the positive outcomes achieved across the Foundation.

These accomplishments would not have been possible without the commitment of staff, the support of management, the CEO, the Board of Governors and the continued backing of the Government of Malta. Looking ahead, FSWS remains fully dedicated to its mission and confident that, through ongoing collaboration and sound financial stewardship, it will continue to strengthen its contribution in the years ahead.

# MARKETING and COMMUNICATIONS

Nathalie **Attard Bishop**
Director

**254**

Foundation for Social Welfare Services



ANNUAL REPORT 2025




# OVERVIEW

During 2025, the Marketing and Communications Department continued to play a central strategic role in supporting the Foundation for Social Welfare Services through integrated communication, media visibility, campaign development, event coordination, publication management and digital engagement.

Throughout the year, the Department remained focused on strengthening public awareness of FSWS services, maintaining a coherent and professional organisational image and ensuring that the Foundation's priorities, achievements and services were communicated clearly and effectively to audiences across Malta and Gozo.

The annual report shows that the Department sustained a high level of operational activity across the year, while also responding flexibly to emerging needs and ad hoc initiatives. In addition to delivering planned measures under the 2025 Operational Plan, the Department supported broader organisational objectives through strategic partnerships, media coordination, creative production, stakeholder liaison and logistical oversight of major events and publications. This work reinforced the Department's role as both a communications function and an enabling service for the wider Foundation.



# Media Relations and Public Visibility

## Television, Radio and Media Presence

Throughout 2025, the Department maintained a strong and consistent presence across television, radio and other media platforms to raise awareness of FSWS services and related social issues. Media appearances remained an important communication tool, enabling Foundation representatives to discuss service provision, highlight campaigns and engage directly with the public.

This sustained media visibility contributed significantly to keeping the work of the Foundation within public discourse and ensuring that audiences remained informed about available support and ongoing initiatives.

The Department also continued to use broadcast opportunities as part of wider strategic campaigns. Advertising placements and media interventions were carefully aligned with periods of high visibility, including televised programmes, national broadcasts and major public events. This approach strengthened campaign reach and ensured that key messages were delivered in a timely and impactful manner.



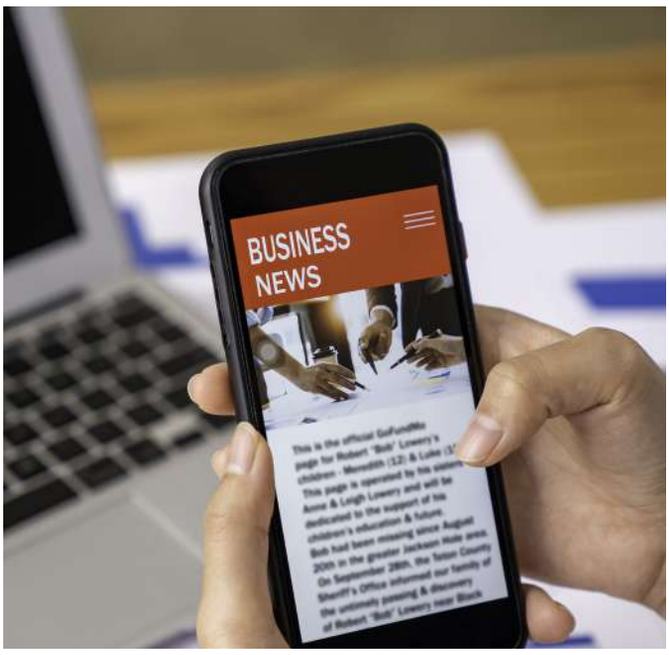
## Press Releases and News Features

The Department continued to support the Foundation's public profile through the preparation and dissemination of press releases and feature-based media content. This work ensured that important organisational developments, launches, conferences and awareness initiatives were communicated effectively to the public through national media.

The Department's contribution in this area supported greater public understanding of the Foundation's role and helped communicate the relevance and impact of its services in a clear and accessible way.

In parallel, the Department also supported the development of more narrative-based media features, which served to humanise services and bring forward the experiences and realities connected with the Foundation's work.

These outputs complemented formal press communications and contributed to a broader and more relatable communication strategy.



# Strategic Campaign

## Fostering Campaign

The fostering campaign remained one of the Department's most significant priorities during 2025. Early in the year, strategic discussions were held with the Malta and Gozo fostering branches to define the campaign approach, priorities and key messages for the year ahead. The campaign was then delivered through a multi-channel communication strategy that included television advertising, digital outreach, social media storytelling, articles and other promotional interventions intended to strengthen awareness of fostering and encourage more people to consider becoming foster carers.

As the year progressed, the campaign became increasingly visible and emotionally resonant. Media placements were aired during high-profile programmes, informative articles were printed on various newspapers around International Fostering Day and dedicated social media reels provided more personal insight into the fostering experience. During the latter part of the year, the Department also developed new audiovisual productions to strengthen public engagement. The final quarter saw the successful implementation of a broad programme of activities, including the annual Fostering Conference, which celebrated and acknowledged the valuable role of foster carers. Overall, the campaign demonstrated strong continuity, strategic planning and a clear focus on increasing both awareness and public connection with fostering services.




## FSWS Services Awareness Campaign

The FSWS services awareness campaign, delivered primarily through the ***Isma' Ftit*** reel series, remained a key communication measure throughout the year. The campaign was designed to raise public awareness of the range of services offered by the Foundation's agencies, directorates and departments, especially those that may be less widely known. Through short-form informative videos published on social media, the Department sought to communicate service information in a format that was direct, accessible and engaging. The first quarter saw the launch of the campaign through a series of in-house productions, while the second quarter focused on sustaining and expanding this output, including content linked to service awareness and relevant commemorative dates. During the second half of the year, the Department continued publishing informative videos and laid the groundwork for future production capacity through staff development and presentation training. Further short-form videos were produced, including content focused on Gozo services and domestic violence support. The campaign therefore continued to evolve into a practical and effective digital communication tool that strengthened public understanding of FSWS services.

## Domestic Violence Campaign

The Domestic Violence campaign remained another major area of strategic focus during 2025. Initial planning discussions were held with Domestic Violence Services in Malta and Gozo and opportunities were also explored to integrate awareness messages into wider prevention initiatives. Early campaign efforts included prominent leaderboard advertising across national online news portals, thereby ensuring strong digital visibility from the outset.

As the year progressed, the campaign broadened in scope and ambition. Media appearances by the domestic violence team continued during the year. In preparation for a larger national campaign, discussions were initiated with the Malta Premier League to explore collaboration opportunities aimed at leveraging football personalities to amplify key awareness messages.

As part of the Foundation's outreach and public awareness efforts, these personalities subsequently featured in two short videos, which were broadcast during the main TVM news bulletin.

The campaign culminated in the annual Domestic Violence Conference held on the 25th November under the theme 25 Years of Għabex: Past, Present and Future.

The campaign was further strengthened through feature-based storytelling, survivor testimony, continued media exposure and related awareness activity during the 16 Days of Activism. Collectively, these efforts reinforced the Foundation's commitment to addressing domestic violence through strong public awareness and survivor-centred communication.



## Social Work Campaign

The Social Work Campaign progressed steadily during 2025 and aimed to present social work as a meaningful and viable career path, particularly among students who are still shaping their educational and professional direction.

During the first quarter, the Department conceptualised the campaign and initiated discussions with educational stakeholders, including the Head of Guidance within public schools. These discussions resulted in the organisation of school-based sessions and participation in career expos, enabling the Foundation to directly engage students and promote awareness of social work opportunities within FSWS.

The campaign was significantly expanded during the second quarter through a series of career talks in secondary schools and an outdoor billboard campaign intended to increase visibility. Collaboration continued with the Human Resources and Training Department and further discussions were held with Church school representatives to support outreach to guidance teachers and students.

The Marketing and Communications Department and HR secured talks with groups of guidance teachers and career advisors from both public and Church schools, ensuring that those advising students were better informed about the study pathway and career possibilities within the Foundation. Preparations also continued for future rounds of student talks and the production of supporting informative video content. The campaign therefore developed into a structured and multi-layered initiative that served both awareness and future workforce-building objectives.



## Sedqa Awareness Campaign

The Sedqa Awareness Campaign remained an evolving and collaborative initiative throughout 2025. Its main purpose was to raise awareness of the services offered by *Aġenzija Sedqa* in the areas of prevention, support and rehabilitation, while also promoting healthier lifestyles and greater public understanding of substance misuse and addictive behaviours.

The Marketing Department worked closely with Sedqa's Prevention Team to review messaging, identify suitable outreach methods and explore new communication concepts, including video content and community-based engagement.

The campaign intensified around the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, observed annually on the 26th June. Increased media exposure was secured to highlight the importance of the day and a feature in It-Torċa helped communicate the impact of Sedqa's rehabilitation work through lived experience and professional support perspectives.

During the second half of the year, the campaign continued to be strengthened through close coordination with Sedqa's management, targeted outreach and multi-channel communication.

This collaborative approach ensured that information about Sedqa's services remained visible, accessible and consistently presented across all platforms.

# Major Events and Organisational Launches

## Sedqa Recognition Ceremony

One of the year's most notable event-related achievements was the successful coordination of ***Aġenzija Sedqa***'s Recognition Ceremony, Breaking the Chains, held at Komunità Santa Marija under the patronage of the Her Excellency, Myriam Spiteri Debono, President of Malta.

From the planning stage onwards, the Department was responsible for overseeing the logistical and organisational aspects of the event, including liaison with Sedqa management, the Office of the President, the compere and other relevant stakeholders.

Following confirmation of attendance by Her Excellency, preparations intensified to ensure a high-quality event.

The Department managed the issuing of invitations, the venue setup and all practical arrangements necessary for the smooth delivery of the ceremony. The successful execution of this event reflected the Department's capacity to coordinate high-profile occasions with professionalism, precision and sensitivity to protocol.



## Launch of the National ESPAD Report

The Department also played a central role in the launch of the National ESPAD Report. Following the completion of the underlying research, discussions were initiated with the Research Department regarding the planning of the event, the printing of the report and the broader communication strategy surrounding the publication. It was agreed that the launch will be scheduled to align with the release of the international ESPAD report in October.




The report was officially launched with the Marketing Department coordinating the full range of practical and logistical arrangements. This included venue booking, audiovisual setup, branding elements and event presentation. The Department also supported the report's printing process, helping to ensure a professional final product and an effective public launch. This initiative demonstrated the Department's ability to manage publication-related events that are both technically significant and publicly important.




## Human Trafficking Conference

On the 30th of July, the Marketing and Communications Department, together with the Human Trafficking Service, organised the annual Human Trafficking Conference to mark the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons. The event, titled Invisible Chains: Vulnerabilities and Human Trafficking, formed part of the AMIF co-funded project New Beginnings: Empowering Against Trafficking.

It brought together frontline professionals and stakeholders to reflect on the hidden vulnerabilities that traffickers exploit and to strengthen collective understanding of the challenges faced by individuals affected by exploitation.In preparation for the conference, the Department coordinated the venue arrangements, audiovisual setup and related logistical requirements to ensure a smooth and well executed event. Media presence was also supported to help raise awareness of the conference's themes and to ensure that the message reached a wider audience. This contribution formed part of the Department's continued commitment to providing strong communication support for FSWS initiatives.

The conference included a series of workshops designed to help practitioners identify coercion, deception and control that may not always be immediately recognised by victims or service providers. The event served as an important platform to reinforce shared responsibility, enhance professional capability and promote a more informed and victim-centred national response to human trafficking.



## Fostering Conference

The Marketing and Communications Department, together with the Fostering Service within the Directorate for Alternative Care, supported the organisation of the annual National Fostering Conference titled Hidden in the Body: Childhood Trauma Explained. The event brought together foster carers, professionals and stakeholders to reflect on the impact of childhood trauma and to acknowledge the significant role that fostering plays in providing safety and stability for children who cannot live with their biological family.

The conference featured addresses by the Minister for Social Policy and Children's Rights, Hon. Dr Michael Falzon and Clinical Psychologist Dr Rose Galea. During the event, the Foundation recognised the dedication of foster carers and the Fostering Team, whose continued commitment provides nurturing and supportive environments for children in need. The conference also included the launch of the music video Naf Min Jien, written by Dr Kevin Joseph Borg, a paediatrician within the Directorate for Alternative Care.

In preparation for the conference, the Department coordinated venue arrangements, audiovisual requirements and the overall running order of the event. Media and communication support was also provided to ensure that the conference message was communicated clearly and shared with the wider public. This contribution strengthened both the visibility of the event and the promotion of fostering as a vital support pathway for many children.





## Domestic Violence Conference

The Marketing and Communications Department supported the organisation of the Annual Domestic Violence Conference, which this year marked the 25th anniversary of the Għabex Emergency Shelter.

The event featured speeches by the Minister for Social Policy and Children's Rights, Hon. Dr Michael Falzon, the Parliamentary Secretary for Equality and Reform, Hon. Ms Rebecca Buttigieg, Dr Lydia Abela, Dr Davy Simons, Director of the FJC and Board Member of the EFJC. During the conference, Andre Mifsud, a Risk Assessor within *Aġenzija Appoġġ*, launched his debut novel 'Kieku Tħobbni, Ma Kontx', which explores gender-based violence as both a personal experience and a societal issue.

The conference served as a significant platform to raise awareness, encourage dialogue and reaffirm the Foundation's commitment to supporting survivors and working towards a society where individuals can live in safety, dignity and without fear.







# Student and Community Outreach

## Freshers' Week and Career Engagement

Freshers' Week remained a valuable outreach opportunity during 2025 and formed part of the Department's broader efforts to engage with students and position FSWS as both a service provider and a prospective employer. Preparations began early in the year through the ordering of branded materials, followed by stand booking and stock assessments to ensure adequate resources for participation across major educational institutions.

The Foundation's participation in campus events enabled representatives to engage directly with students, explain the role of the Foundation and promote both services and career pathways. The Department also ensured that the FSWS stand remained attractive and interactive through the use of branded merchandise and a spinning-wheel competition that drew significant student attention. The overall scale of participation and student engagement demonstrated the ongoing value of this initiative as part of the Foundation's awareness and recruitment-related outreach.



# Creative Production and Visual Identity

## Stock Photography and Visual Resources

Throughout 2025, the Department also invested in strengthening its visual communication resources. The Department acquired and organised a substantial library of high-definition images. These visuals were subsequently curated and used where needed across a range of communication outputs, helping to enhance visual consistency and support the design of major publications such as the Annual Report. This work contributed to the ongoing improvement of the Foundation's visual standards and branding coherence.

## Printing and Artwork

The production of artwork and printed material remained one of the Department's most continuous and important operational responsibilities during 2025. Throughout the year, the Department maintained an in-house approach to the conceptualisation, design and finalisation of visual communication materials for campaigns, events and publications.

This included billboard artwork, print and digital adverts, stage backdrops, magazine layouts and official publications.

This internal production model enabled the Department to maintain stronger control over branding, quality and deadlines, while also ensuring that all materials reflected the messaging and objectives of the relevant initiative. In addition to routine campaign support, the Department also coordinated the printing of major publications, including the 2024 Annual Report and the ESPAD report.

The quarterly reviews indicate that this in-house creative capacity remained a significant operational strength throughout the year.



# Social Media and Digital Communication

## Management of Social Media Platforms

The management of the Foundation's social media platforms remained one of the Department's most visible and consistent responsibilities throughout the year.

In line with strategic marketing objectives, the Department continued to use Facebook, Instagram and TikTok to promote FSWS services, campaigns, events, vacancies and emerging initiatives on a daily basis. This work formed an important part of the Foundation's public communication strategy and contributed directly to stronger visibility and broader audience reach.

A key aspect of this responsibility was the review and approval of all content submitted by agencies and directorates prior to publication. Through this oversight, the Department ensured that all material was accurate, aligned with communication standards and reflective of the Foundation's visual identity and brand values.

By maintaining this quality control function, the Department helped preserve consistency across channels and supported stronger digital engagement throughout the year.

## FSWS Monthly Highlights

Another ongoing initiative was the monthly FSWS highlights series on social media. This campaign was introduced to present key statistics, facts and updates related to FSWS services in a concise and visually engaging format.

By summarising important developments and service information through infographic-style content, the Department sought to keep the public informed while also enhancing the accessibility of organisational updates.

The initiative evolved into a regular communication feature. During the final quarter, particular emphasis was placed on selecting timely themes, compiling relevant information and presenting it in a format that remained aligned with FSWS branding and clear public messaging. This monthly series supported transparency, awareness and ongoing public interest in the Foundation's work.



# Ad Hoc and Emerging Initiatives

## Additional Support Across the Year

In addition to the operational measures, the Department also responded to a wide range of ad hoc initiatives during the year. This included the launch of the EU-funded Second Chance project, collaboration with Home-Start, support for the SAV FreeHour campaign, coordination of the Prime Minister's visit to Komunità Santa Marija, the development of a media training programme for FSWS professionals, support for the visit of MEP Alex Agius Saliba and the organisation of a management team-building event.

The Department also coordinated the production of a video shown at the European Social Network Conference in Denmark and supported FSWS' participation in the Public Service EXPO 2025 through branding, staffing and direct public engagement. It also managed logistics for key press conferences, supported awareness campaigns for SupportLine 179 and the LGBTIQ+ Wellbeing Service and participated in early coordination for Malta's hosting of the 34th European Social Network Conference in 2026. Additional support was provided for the Annual Youth Services Awards Ceremony, the launch of the Mocktails booklet at the Institute of Tourism Studies and Christmas-related initiatives at CoRRS Youth Prison and Sempreviva Home. Collectively, these actions illustrate the Department's responsiveness, versatility and ability to support the wider Foundation beyond the core measures originally scheduled.




# Conclusion

Overall, 2025 was a year of sustained delivery, strategic communication and significant public-facing activity for the Marketing and Communications Department.

The Department not only fulfilled its planned operational measures, but also continued to expand its contribution across campaigns, events, digital communication, publications and organisational support. Its work strengthened the visibility of FSWS services, promoted important social messages and ensured that the Foundation's activities were communicated in a clear, professional and impactful manner.

The annual report demonstrates a Marketing and Communications Department that operated with consistency, adaptability and a strong sense of purpose throughout the year.

Through integrated communication planning, strong collaboration with internal and external stakeholders and effective management of both routine and emerging priorities, the Marketing and Communications Department made a substantial contribution to the Foundation's mission and public profile during 2025.

Looking ahead, the Marketing and Communications Department will continue to strengthen the Foundation's public profile through strategic, accessible and impactful communication. Priorities will include enhancing digital engagement, supporting the effective promotion of FSWS services and initiatives, and developing campaigns that raise awareness of key social issues.

The Department will also remain focused on strengthening collaboration across the Foundation, responding effectively to emerging communication needs and ensuring that all public-facing content reflects the values, mission and evolving priorities of FSWS.

# INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, RESEARCH and POLICY DOCUMENTATION Department

Sharon **Arpa** and
Elizabeth **Zammit**
Managers

**268**

Foundation for Social Welfare Services



# ANNUAL REPORT 2025



# OVERVIEW

The year 2025 was a productive period for the International Relations, Research and Policy Documentation Department (IRRPD). Through the combined efforts of its units, the Department continued to support the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS)'s broader mission, contributing to a coordinated and informed approach to social welfare.

Key areas of work included strengthening informed decision-making, expanding international collaboration, contributing to policy development and monitoring emerging social trends. Collectively, these efforts help ensure that FSWS remains responsive, effective and aligned with the community's needs.

## Research Team

During this reporting year, the Research Team continued analysing data collected in 2024 as part of the eighth wave of the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD). This led to the completion of the national ESPAD report.

There were also contributions to the international report. Together, these outputs offer a long-term view on trends in substance use behaviours and related perceptions among students aged 15–16, spanning nearly three decades.

Alongside the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, the reports also examine areas that are increasingly relevant to young people's lives, including e-cigarette use, social media use, gaming and gambling.

Bringing these elements together provides a more comprehensive understanding of the current situation and enables comparisons over time and across countries. The reports were made publicly available, with the national report launched in October 2025.

A few key findings are worth emphasising, namely declines between 2019 and 2024 in lifetime alcohol use among all students in Malta and Gozo (from 82% to 74%) and in cigarette smoking (from 22% to 16%), alongside an increase in lifetime e-cigarette use (from 21% to 26%).

Notably, different patterns emerged between boys and girls: in 2024, girls reported higher lifetime rates of these behaviours than boys. More detailed information on these and other findings is available on the Foundation's website - https://fsws.gov.mt/fsws/publications/espad-reports/

The year also saw continued involvement in various research initiatives, including projects linked to the Council of Europe and a European Union Drugs Agency (EUDA) project focused on gender and substance use. Simultaneously, work commenced on collaborative projects with national stakeholders to explore well-being among young people and within a specific professional group.

Simultaneously, a strong emphasis was placed on analysing FSWS service user data. This led to the creation and distribution of 12 statistical reports, two summary reports, two mapping reports and a nationality report.

Collectively, these outputs offer valuable insights into service usage and emerging trends, aiding in planning and supporting service development. The findings reveal a significant rise in the number of cases handled over the past five years, from 22,817 in 2021 to 27,324 in 2025. The data also show that females and older service users remain predominant across FSWS services. All reports are accessible on the FSWS website.: *https://fsws.gov.mt/fsws/publications/espad-reports/*



Beyond reporting, the Research Team was actively involved in over 95 activities throughout the year, including providing training, attending meetings and responding to data-related queries from internal and external stakeholders. These activities were undertaken with the clear purpose of meeting the evolving needs of FSWS and ensuring that decision-making is supported by reliable, valid and timely data.

The team also provided direct analytical support by processing 110 data requests, ensuring that FSWS remains a central resource for this information. To further enhance efficiency and consistency, a new data analysis process was developed and implemented during the year, streamlining workflows and strengthening the timeliness of outputs.

In addition, the Research Team expanded its analytical scope by producing a greater number of outputs focusing on changes in population profiles, demographic characteristics and time in services. These enhanced outputs support a deeper understanding of service user trajectories and changing social needs.

Alongside these developments, during 2025, the Research Team received a range of research inquiries from both students and experienced researchers with an interest in the social sector. Dissertation-related requests totalled 46, of which 19 were submitted by undergraduate students and 27 by postgraduate students. Beyond dissertation work, six requests were received regarding academic assignments and a further seven were related to research not linked to academic studies.

Each application undergoes a review by the Research Team to ensure that the proposed research meets ethical and methodological requirements. Relevant FSWS services are also consulted to determine the feasibility of the proposed research.



# Policy Documentation Unit

In 2025, the Policy Documentation Unit (PDU) continued to play a central role in policy development at both national and international levels. One of the key public consultations reviewed during the year was the new Alcohol Policy, for which FSWS services provided substantial feedback. In total, 172 documents were reviewed throughout the year.

Following the compilation of feedback from FSWS Agencies and Directorates, the PDU submitted responses to five public consultations. The Unit also prepared four submissions related to the Women, Peace and Security agenda, one submission for the Domestic Violence Action Plan and one submission for the Human Trafficking Action Plan, bringing the total number of documents processed to 183.

The PDU continued strengthening its internal processes, especially in data collection. This involved conducting the necessary groundwork before asking for feedback from Directors or seeking clarification from the original sender to ensure that services could deliver accurate and informed responses. Additionally, the Senior Executive and Executive III were nominated by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to join the Women, Peace and Security Oversight Committee.

Throughout the year, the Unit consistently provided feedback on documentation, questionnaires and requests received from various local and international entities. Key areas of work included compiling, reviewing and coordinating the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report, as well as the ongoing review of the Digital Europe Programme (Coordination and Support Actions - CSA) and Cooperation in Criminal Matters (COPEN) and the Domestic Violence Transposition. FSWS contributed feedback on several international documents, particularly those addressing human trafficking, child abuse and domestic violence.

In 2025, the European Social Network (ESN) launched the Social Services Index questionnaire for the third time. The PDU acted as the liaison for gathering feedback not only from FSWS but also from other entities within the social sector in Malta and coordinated a consolidated national submission. The Senior Executive and the Corporate Services Director represented FSWS at the ESN Conference, where each delivered a presentation on FSWS services and ongoing work.

The PDU also continued to support Directors in developing and refining their operational plans, providing guidance and feedback as required.

# International Relations Office (IR)

During 2025, the International Relations (IR) Office continued to strengthen FSWS's international engagement through coordinated submissions, improved internal processes and enhanced support to professionals across the Foundation. A key focus was the management of ESN related initiatives, including the ESN Awards and ESSC 2026 proposals.

Two award applications were submitted, with Sedqa's proposal shortlisted. The IR Office coordinated all follow up requirements, liaised with the Marketing Department on the voting process and ensured that stakeholders remained informed. The Office also supported three ESSC 2026 proposals from Appoġġ, Child Protection Directorate (CPD) and Agency for Community and Therapeutic Services (ACTS), two of which were accepted and published on the ESN's website. Throughout the process, staff were guided to ensure submissions met ESN standards.

Travel report analysis remained a core responsibility. All the reports reviewed by the IR Manager this year included tailored feedback for staff and senior management who participated in international learning

experiences, with the intention of adding value to our services. The online travel report form was updated to be more user friendly and new guidelines were drafted to help employees maximise learning and reduce the need for clarification emails. Presentations were delivered Foundation wide and within respective teams to support knowledge transfer. A full overhaul of the travel report database resulted in a more efficient system for 2025.

Another milestone was the comprehensive update of the FSWS Services List. This required coordination with all Departments and Agencies to gather accurate information on services, line managers and contact details. The updated list was disseminated to support internal alignment.

Membership management continued to be a priority. The IR Office coordinated renewals, clarified commitments with international organisations and reviewed the FSWS online presence across membership platforms to ensure accuracy. New opportunities for international collaboration were monitored and communicated to agencies.

The review of SAGE publications usage was another important initiative. After internal consultations, the membership was renewed and access was expanded to Directors, Managers, Leaders and FSWS staff studying at the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) or the University of Malta (UOM). Newly promoted managers and leaders received individual guidance to ensure they could make full use of this resource.

Collectively, these efforts contributed to a more coordinated, informed and internationally connected Foundation, with the IR Office continuing to build strong international links while enhancing internal systems that support FSWS's mission.

## Economic Unit

In 2025, the Economic Unit within FSWS continued its work on implementing the current FSWS strategic plan.

Through this, the Unit has maintained the empirical foundation necessary for evidence-based decision-making and resource management within the Foundation. The highlight of the year was the completion of the study, The Cost of Doing Nothing, which provides a simulation of the economic impact social services have on the Maltese economy over a twenty-year horizon.

The findings showed an Economic Net Present Value of approximately €1.77 billion and a Benefit-Cost Ratio of 4.01, meaning every €1 spent returns over €4 in value.

A Monte Carlo risk simulation involving 10,000 iterations confirmed the economic importance of FSWS, showing a 0% probability of a negative return.

The report defines the cost of doing nothing by simulating the outcome across various sectors of FSWS services, such as drug rehabilitation, child protection and domestic violence support, were absent. The study found that even if funding to FSWS were halted, the government would still spend 64% of its current expenditure on increased social security, justice and healthcare costs.

The study highlights the indirect benefits provided by FSWS to service users, estimated at nearly €1.98 billion throughout the timeline of the study. These benefits are driven by increase in wellbeing, increase in educational and employment outcomes as well as improved health outcomes.

Beyond research, the Unit remained active in public engagement, participating in media discussions, conferences and stakeholder consultations.



## Conclusion

In conclusion, the combined efforts of the International Relations, Research and Policy Documentation Department have resulted in a highly successful year. Notably, ESPAD-related work, alongside other research initiatives and international efforts, significantly strengthened the evidence base for policy and practice.

This is also seen through the robust economic report demonstrating a positive return on social investment, the continued expansion of international collaboration and knowledge-sharing, active contributions to key public policy processes and the production of statistical reports.

Importantly, 2025 also marked a year of substantial progress in FSWS' international engagement, with the International Relations Office strengthening cross border collaboration, coordinating high quality submissions to ESN, supporting award applications and enhancing internal systems, including the travel report process and the FSWS Services List. These efforts ensured that FSWS remained visible, connected and aligned with European standards, while also maximising the learning gained from international exchanges.

Moving forward, the enhanced efficiencies, strengthened engagement in public consultations and analytical frameworks developed will continue to support the Foundation in responding to emerging social needs and delivering effective support to the communities it serves.

# ERM and LEGAL ISSUES Department

Dr Dianne **Galea**
Director

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# OVERVIEW

The ERM (Enterprise Risk Management) and Legal Issues Department plays a central role in strengthening governance, compliance, and operational efficiency across the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS). The Department oversees procurement controls, legal support, risk management, GDPR compliance and resource optimisation across services. Through continuous monitoring, advisory support and strategic intervention, the Department ensures that services operate in line with regulatory frameworks while promoting accountability, sustainability and best value for public resources.

## Procurement, Compliance and Resource Management

### Overview

This service focuses on ensuring effective procurement practices, financial accountability, and resource management across all Children's Homes and related services. It provides oversight, guidance and intervention where necessary, fostering a culture of compliance and responsible spending.



## Procurement Controls and Financial Oversight

### Achievements and Milestones

- Strengthened procurement monitoring across all Children's Homes, including Għabex (Appoġġ) and Komunità Santa Marija.
- Delivered an online training session on Procurement Regulations (July 2025), improving awareness across services.
- Introduced enhanced tracking systems for expenditure on food, consumables and stationery.
- Transitioned from global expenditure tracking to home-by-home monitoring, enabling future year-on-year comparisons from 2026 onwards.
- Conducted targeted interventions on excessive spending, resulting in significant cost reductions.
- Supported strategic discussions toward structured nutritional planning across residential services.
- Promoted value-for-money practices even below procurement thresholds.

### Statistics

- Monitoring covers all FSWS Children's Homes
- Over 50% reduction achieved in identified excessive procurement cases
- Multiple training sessions delivered across services

## Petty Cash Monitoring

### Achievements and Milestones

- Continued regular audits across all homes
- Identified and resolved minor discrepancies
- Maintained commitment to multiple annual checks per home

## Office Equipment and Resource Approval

### Achievements and Milestones

- Strengthened compliance with procurement regulations
- Encouraged cost-conscious purchasing
- Supported infrastructure improvements at Head Office
- Ensured appropriate support for staff with specific needs

## Asset Management – Laptops

### Achievements and Milestones

- Improved awareness regarding responsible use
- Successfully resolved outstanding cases

### Statistics

- Reduction in negligence-related incidents
- All major cases addressed

## Motor Vehicle Policy and Insurance Claims

### Achievements and Milestones

- Delivered multiple training sessions to staff
- Decentralised claims handling to administration teams
- Resolved all reported issues efficiently

## Property Acquisition and Management

### Achievements and Milestones

- Acquired and upgraded multiple residential properties
- Relocated services to improved premises
- Secured cost-effective rental agreements
- Expanded housing availability for vulnerable clients
- Negotiated infrastructure improvements at no additional cost

# Maintenance of Residential Services

## Achievements and Milestones

- Centralised maintenance under dedicated leadership
- Maintained service continuity despite staffing challenges
- Identified coordination gaps and initiated improvements





## Legal, GDPR and Other Support Functions

### Achievements and Milestones

- Delivered GDPR training to approximately 230 employees
- Provided ongoing legal support and court representation
- Supported inter-Department collaboration
- Participated in professional development initiatives

### Statistics

**230 Employees**
trained in GDPR

- Continuous legal support provided

## Concluding Remarks

2025 has seen a steady progress in strengthening governance, improving financial oversight and enhancing operational efficiency across FSWS services. The Department has fostered a culture of accountability supported by structured monitoring, improved procurement practices and strategic interventions.

Collaboration across the Foundation has been instrumental in achieving these outcomes, particularly in service delivery, finance and administration. Key developments include improved residential facilities, enhanced training initiatives and stronger compliance frameworks.

Looking ahead, the Department remains committed to further strengthening systems, promoting sustainability and supporting innovation in service delivery. Continued investment in staff development and inter-service coordination will remain a priority.

The Department acknowledges the dedication, professionalism and sustained commitment of all staff whose collective efforts contributed to these achievements and supported the effective delivery of its work throughout the year.

# REGULATORY COMPLIANCE Department

Jesmond **Bonello**
Director

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Foundation for Social Welfare Services



ANNUAL REPORT 2025



# OVERVIEW

In 2025, the Department continued to strengthen and refine its services, building on the progress achieved in previous years. Through effective collaboration, a shared vision and sustained commitment, service delivery was further enhanced with these improvements gaining recognition among stakeholders. The dedication, professionalism and collective efforts of the team remained central to safeguarding the safety and well-being of clients, staff and all other stakeholders.

## Health & Safety

In 2025, FSWS continued to place greater emphasis on protecting its workforce as part of its commitment to fostering a safe and healthy working environment. Updated health and safety standards issued by OHSA, together with increased awareness surrounding legionella, required the department to further strengthen its efforts to maintain the highest levels of safety.

Throughout the year, assessments and direct interventions were further reinforced. Routine property inspections were carried out; ongoing training was delivered to all personnel and awareness of potential health and safety risks was actively promoted.

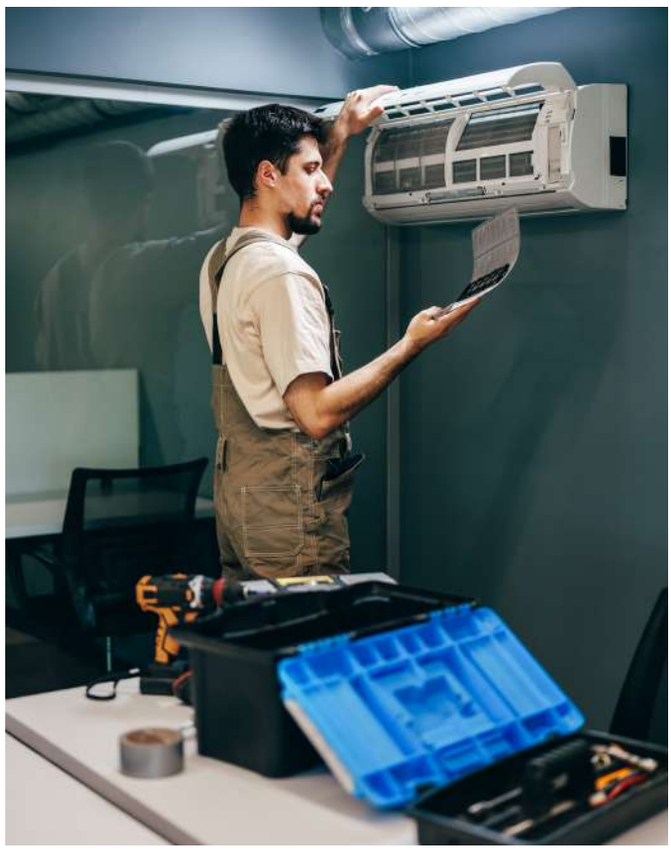
The team ensured that all premises remained compliant with relevant health and safety legislation, while legionella and OHSA risk assessments were consistently monitored. The Regulatory Compliance maintenance team also addressed any identified hazards promptly, based on findings from various reports and assessments.



## Legionella

Legionnaires' disease is a serious form of pneumonia caused by a bacterial infection that affects the lungs. It is triggered by the Legionella bacterium, which is commonly found in water and soil. Infection typically occurs through the inhalation of contaminated water droplets, often originating from sources such as showers, hot tubs and air-conditioning systems. In Malta, reported cases have been associated with both private residences and various establishments.

As the risk of Legionella continues to rise locally, the Regulatory Compliance team kept a strong focus on prevention by applying procedures in line with expert guidance. In 2025, the Regulatory Compliance Department carried out 180 routine tests across all FSWS premises. Additionally, water tanks were cleaned regularly, and any new or previously unoccupied properties were hyper-chlorinated to ensure safety and compliance.





### Fire Protection

During 2025, the Regulatory Compliance Department continued to prioritise fire safety, recognising it as one of the most common risks to health and safety. Considerable effort was directed towards strengthening preventive measures and ensuring preparedness across all premises.

The team consistently verified that all sites were equipped with effective, reliable fire alarm systems and ensured that fire extinguishers were regularly inspected and any identified issues were promptly addressed.

Fire safety training remained a vital part of the overall health and safety programme. In partnership with the HR Department, the Regulatory Compliance Department provided ongoing training for fire wardens.

Throughout the year, more than 180 fire drills were conducted across various locations in Malta and Gozo, with the department making multiple visits to all facilities to strengthen compliance and preparedness.

## Maintenance

In 2025, the Regulatory Compliance Department continued to oversee major maintenance projects across all FSWS premises in Malta, while also supporting employees with day-to-day minor maintenance needs.

All health and safety requests submitted to our network of representatives were addressed urgently, ensuring the maintenance team responded swiftly and effectively. By making efficient use of available resources and implementing timely interventions, identified risks were managed, helping to create safer working environments across all sites.

The department maintained a proactive and comprehensive approach within its maintenance and health and safety strategy. Alongside responding to immediate concerns, regular inspections were carried out across all



premises to identify potential risks and address emerging needs in a timely manner.

This year marked continued progress in advancing the Foundation's health and safety objectives. Requests raised by administrative staff were consistently prioritised, ensuring swift action and resolution.

## Licensing of Services through the Relevant Standards Authorities

To ensure that service users receive the highest standard of care, the Regulatory Compliance Department maintained ongoing communication with the relevant Standards Authorities and FSWS management.

The department's main goal remains to protect the well-being of service users, defend their rights, and maintain accountability and professional standards across all FSWS services.

Key focus areas include both minor and major maintenance, procurement, corporate social responsibility initiatives, support for social cooperatives and the licensing of services through the Social Care Standards Authority (SCSA) and the Older Persons Standards Authority (OPSA).

There are stringent standards and guidelines governing work with vulnerable individuals, with the SCSAand OPSA responsible for regulating and enforcing these requirements. All FSWS services must hold a valid licence in accordance with SCSA and OPSA regulations, which must be renewed annually.

A licence issued by the relevant SCSA is essential for each service to operate. All social services undergo a rigorous, evolving review process, with new requirements and

regulations introduced regularly. To ensure that service users receive the highest standard of care, the department supports all services during inspections conducted by the relevant authorities, ensuring full compliance with licensing obligations.

During 2025, the Regulatory Compliance Department successfully renewed 93 service licences. This process also involved several quality tool interviews, as well as ongoing inspections conducted by both SCSA and OPSA.

To secure licence renewals, the team worked closely with the relevant authorities to address any observations or requirements identified during inspections. In addition, the department facilitated the licensing of six new services. Continuous collaboration with service managers and leaders ensured that each service maintained an up-to-date Manual of Procedures, in line with regulatory standards and quality expectations.

## Corporate Social Responsibility Committee

In 2025, the Department continued to chair the Corporate Social Responsibility Committee. A range of initiatives and activities were organised to raise funds in support of the Children's Fund and service users in the Domestic Violence and Homelessness sectors.

Through an outreach-driven approach, the Department also contributed to enhancements within the Domestic Violence service, such as the addition of new bedrooms in shelters. Additionally, funds were raised to support national initiatives like Istrina and Pink October, reinforcing the Foundation's ongoing commitment to social responsibility and community support.

## Conclusion

Each year brings its own challenges and 2025 was no different. However, the commitment and dedication shown by all staff allowed the department to carry out a range of measures that guaranteed the safe and ongoing delivery of services.

Looking ahead, the Department continues to focus on developing projects and initiatives that address the changing needs of both employees and service users, while also adapting to updated OHSA regulations.

# FSWS MAPPING REPORT 2025

## Report by

Christine **Marchand-Agius**
Leader

**290**

Foundation for Social Welfare Services



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# INFORMATION

This report indicates the number and rate of cases worked with between January and December 2025 by district and town of residence reported by service users (according to data analysed in January 2026). The term "cases" refers to the total number of service user cases that were new, re-contact or known in the reporting year and cases still on intake at the end of the reporting period.

This does not indicate the number of individuals, as some individuals could attend a service more than once in the same reporting year. For example, three cases worked with in the same year may consist of one individual who re-contacted the service three times in the same year. Since individuals can attend more than one unit at the same time, summing up the number of cases worked with will over-estimate the actual number of persons worked with.

Furthermore, changes in agency/directorate composition, procedure changes and even changes in policy can influence trends. Please refer to the statistical reports for definitions and for information regarding changes which potentially can impact Figures (reports available at: www.fsws.gov.mt).

Within this report, the reader will also find choropleth maps (created through CMA Mapping), which are thematic maps in which areas are shaded or patterned in proportion to the measurement of the statistical variable being displayed on the map. The maps within this report are organised according to town of residence as reported by the service users (data tables can be found in Appendices A to D).

The distribution within each map was determined by taking the maximum value and dividing it by 10 and rounding up the number. Graphs are also provided which indicate the number of cases worked with between January and December 2025 by district of reported residence. The composition of towns within the districts can be found in Figure 1. When reporting on towns we exclude cases where service users report residing in temporary situations as these would skew data on town and district of residence. These temporary situations are reported as 'other residences', which consists of residential homes, prison, hospitals, mental health facilities, or shelters. Data must be interpreted cautiously when there are many cases where the town of residence was not specified since missing data places doubt on the true distribution of cases throughout the reported towns and districts.

When comparing data on towns or districts of reported residence, to account for the difference in population size, rates of cases per 1,000 residents are also calculated on an agency/directorate level. Rates are not calculated on a service level since the number of service users is too small to provide valid rates.

The rates within this report were calculated using the population per town obtained from the NSO statDB data (http://www.nso.gov.mt) and the 2021 census report (http://www.nso.gov.mt) and past rates were revised according to service composition in December 2025. The rate is calculated as follows: the number of cases/NSO population*1,000.

Figure 1: Towns distributed by district

| Southern Harbour District | Northern Harbour District | South Eastern District | Western District | Northern District | Gozo District |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Birgu (Vittoriosa) | Birkirkara | Birżebbuġia | Attard | Għargħur | Rabat (Gozo) |
| Bormla (Cospicua) | Gżira | Għaxaq | Balzan | Mellieħa | Fontana (Gozo) |
| Fgura | Ħamrun | Gudja | Dingli | Mġarr | Għajnsielem (Gozo) |
| Floriana | Msida | Kirkop | Iklin | Mosta | Għarb (Gozo) |
| Isla (Senglea) | Pembroke | Marsaskala | Lija | Naxxar | Għasri |
| Kalkara | Pieta | Marsaxlokk | Mdina | San Pawl il-Baħar | Kerċem (Gozo) |
| Luqa | Qormi | Mqabba | Mtarfa | | Munxar (Gozo) |
| Marsa | San Ġiljan | Qrendi | Rabat (Malta) | | Nadur (Gozo) |
| Paola | San Ġwann | Safi | Siġġiewi | | Qala (Gozo) |
| Santa Luċija | Santa Venera | Żejtun | Żebbuġ (Malta) | | San Lawrenz (Gozo) |
| Tarxien | Sliema | Żurrieq | | | Sannat (Gozo) |
| Valletta | Swieqi | | | | Xagħra (Gozo) |
| Xagħjra (Malta) | Ta' Xbiex | | | | Xewkija (Gozo) |
| Żabbar | | | | | Żebbuġ (Gozo) |
| | | | | | Comino |

# Overview

A total of 27,324 cases were worked with between January and December 2025. The largest number of cases worked with within the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS) in Jan-Dec 2025 reported residing within the Northern Harbour District, with 6,434 cases (see Figure 2).

On the other hand, when we account for differences in population size, the highest rate (per 1,000 residents) of cases worked with in the FSWS reported residing within the Southern Harbour District, with a rate of 61 per 1,000 residents (see Figure 4).

We also see slight differences when stratifying by gender whereby most male (24%), female (23%) and service users who identify as X (23%) worked with in Jan-Dec 2025 reported residing in the Northern Harbour District (see

Figure 3). In terms of town of residence, for the FSWS overall, the highest number of cases resided within San Pawl il-Bahar (1,626 cases) (see Figure 5) but the highest rate of cases per 1,000 residents worked with was Bormla, with a rate of 131 (see Figure 6). Within the FSWS Gozo Branch the highest number of cases worked with resided within Rabat Gozo (268 cases) (see Figure 49) but the highest rate was within Munxar Gozo, with a rate of 50 per 1,000 residents followed by Zebbug Gozo with a rate of 49 per 1,000 residents (see Figure 50).

## Commentary

The largest number of cases worked with within the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS) between January and December 2025 reported residing within the Northern Harbour District (6,434 cases within the FSWS), (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Number of cases worked with at the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS) between January and December 2025 by reported district of residence and agency/directorate.

| | Appoġġ Agency | Child Protection Directorate | Directorate for Alternative Care | Sedqa Agency | ACTS | FSWS Gozo Branch | FSWS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Southern Harbour District | 2013 | 1115 | 613 | 922 | 799 | 31 | 5493 |
| Northern Harbour District | 2818 | 1150 | 743 | 959 | 711 | 53 | 6434 |
| South eastern District | 1457 | 816 | 529 | 408 | 514 | 28 | 3752 |
| Western District | 958 | 444 | 329 | 242 | 299 | 19 | 2291 |
| Northern District | 1402 | 820 | 521 | 357 | 682 | 33 | 3815 |
| Gozo District | 108 | 248 | 86 | 77 | 31 | 1591 | 2141 |
| Other residence | 1828 | 140 | 200 | 49 | 27 | 7 | 2251 |
| Foreign residence | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| Homeless | 168 | 6 | 9 | 25 | 10 | 11 | 229 |
| Unborn child | 0 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 14 |
| Not specified | 462 | 65 | 94 | 146 | 79 | 52 | 898 |
| **TOTAL** | **11216** | **4820** | **3124** | **3187** | **3152** | **1825** | **27324** |

*Table Key: ACTS = Agency for Community and Therapeutic Services; FSWS = Foundation for Social Welfare Services*
*Figure note: Other residence refers to residential homes, prison, hospitals, mental health facilities, or shelters.*

Most male (24%), female (23%) and service users who identify as X (23%) worked with in Jan-Dec 2025 reported residing in the Northern Harbour District (see Figure 3). Rates per 1,000 residents were calculated to account for the difference in population size between districts (see introduction for method of calculation). In Jan-Dec 2025, the FSWS had the highest rate of cases per 1,000 residents within the Southern Harbour District, with a rate of 61 per 1,000 residents (see Figure 4). For the majority of the agencies/directorates, the highest rate of cases per 1,000 residents was found within the Southern Harbour District. The exception was the FSWS Gozo Branch, which predominantly works with cases within Gozo.

Figure 3: Percentage of cases worked with at the Foundation for Social Welfare Services between January and December 2025 by district of residence and gender.

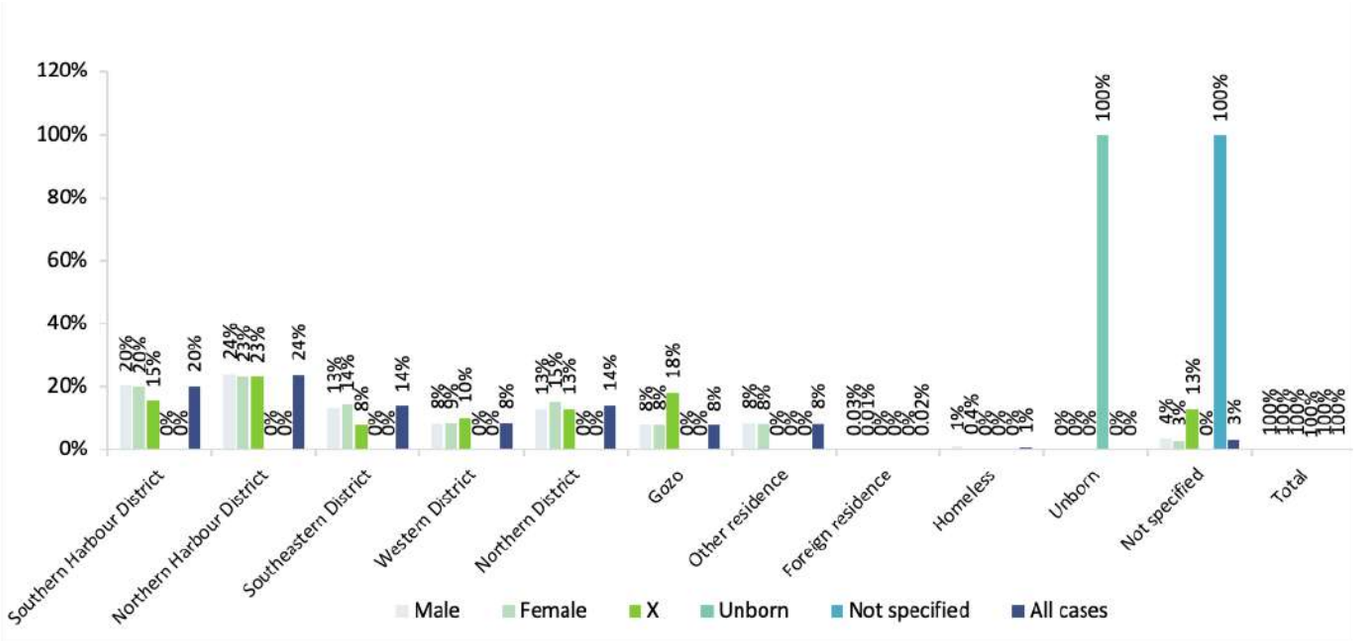
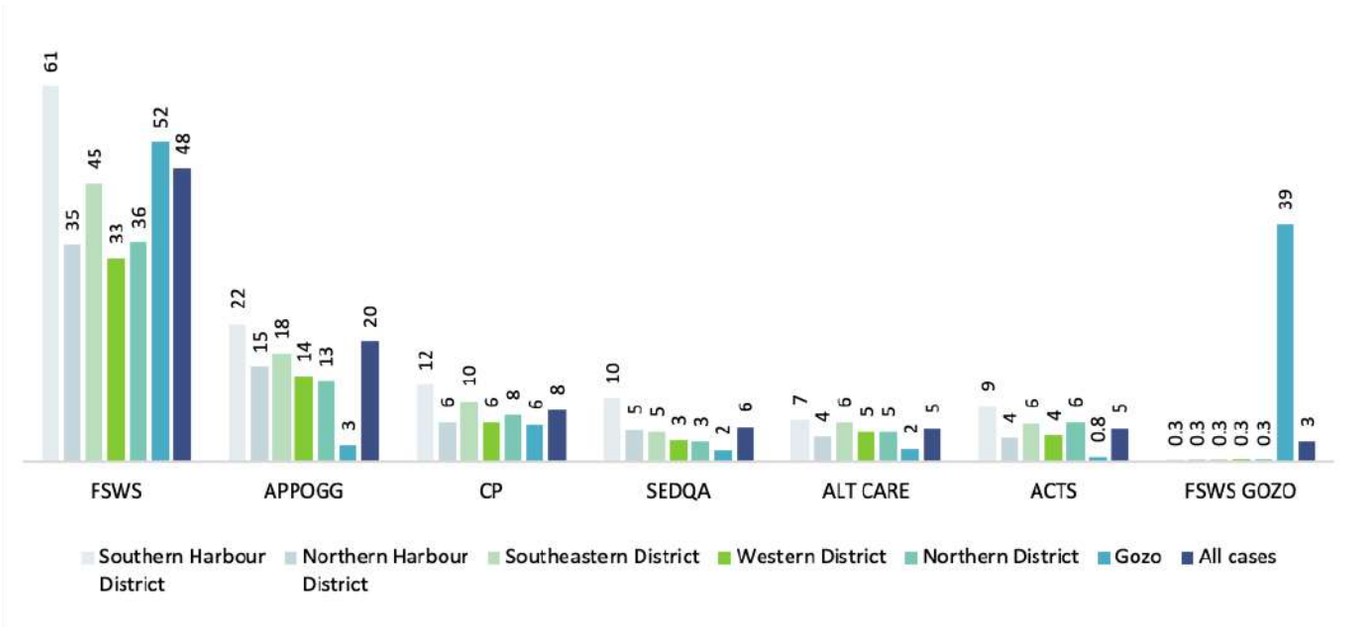


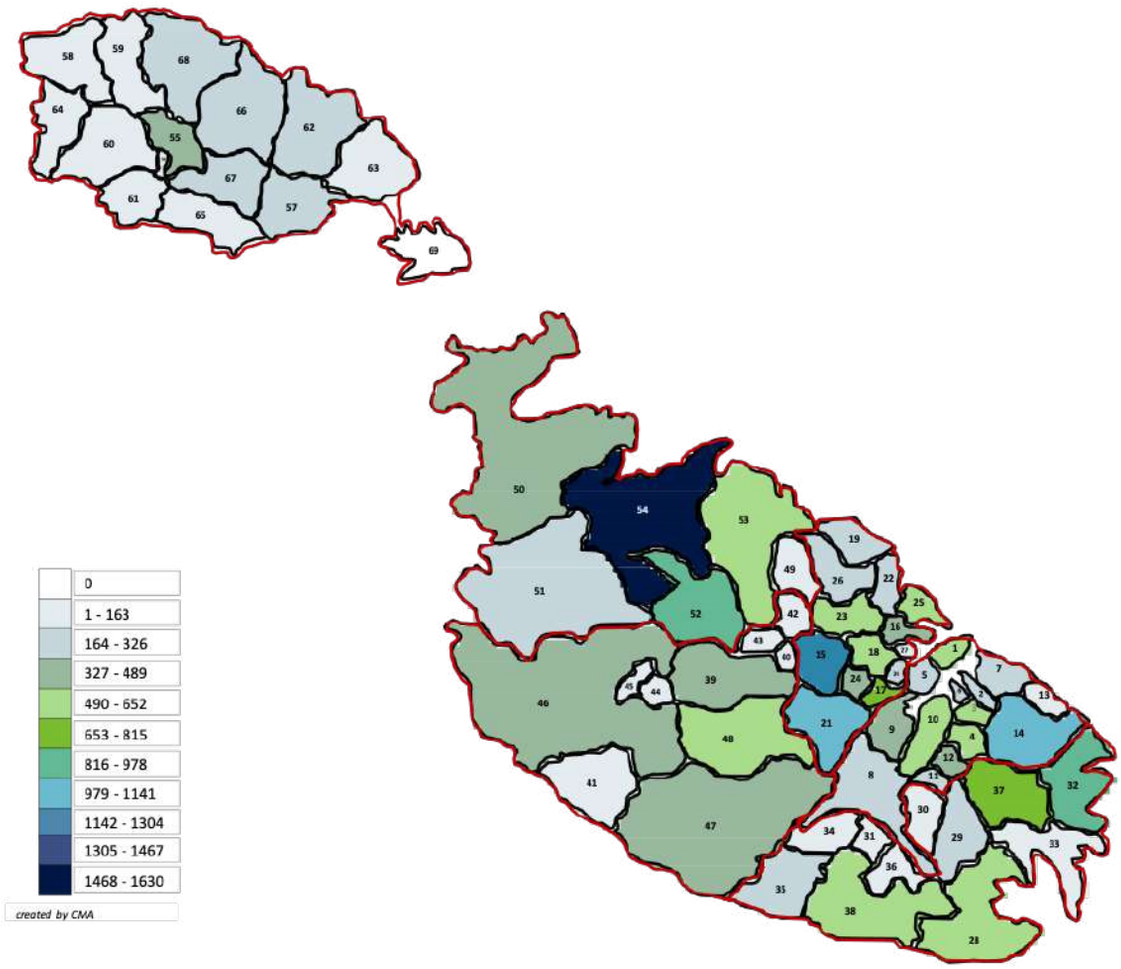

*Figure note: Other residence refers to residential homes, prison, hospitals, mental health facilities, shelters, foreign residence, or homeless.*

Figure 4: The rate of cases worked with between January and December 2025 by agency/directorate (per 1,000 residents) and district of residence.



# Foundation for Social Welfare Services.

Figure 5: The NUMBER of cases worked with at the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS) between January and December 2025 by town of residence.




### Southern Harbour District

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

### Northern Harbour Districts

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

### South Eastern District

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

### Western District

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

### Northern District

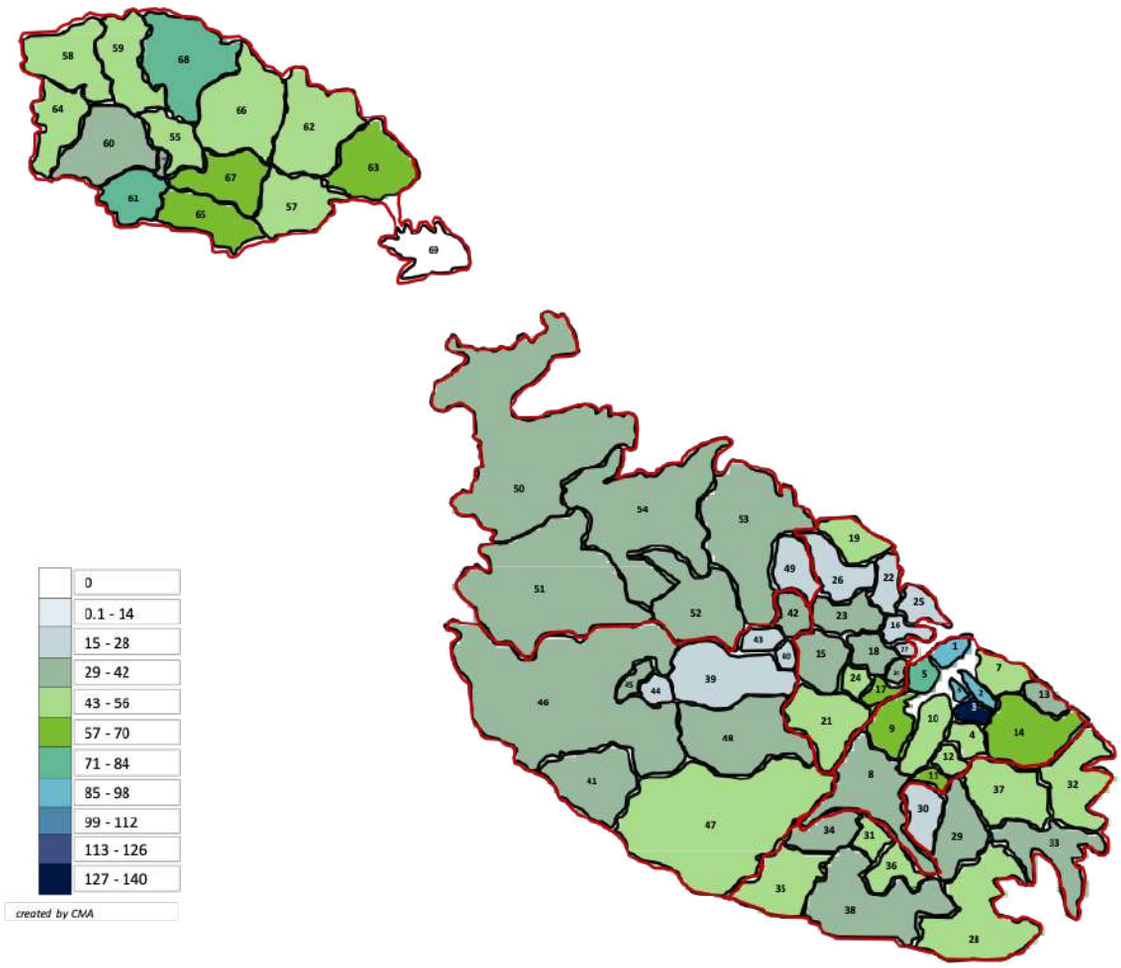
49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

### Gozo and Comino

55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: On a Foundation level the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of San Pawl il-Bahar with 1,626 cases worked with (see raw data in Appendix A).*

Figure 6: The RATE of cases worked with at FSWS between January and December 2025 by town of residence (per 1,000 residents).




### Southern Harbour District

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

### Northern Harbour Districts

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

### South Eastern District

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

### Western District

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

### Northern District

49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

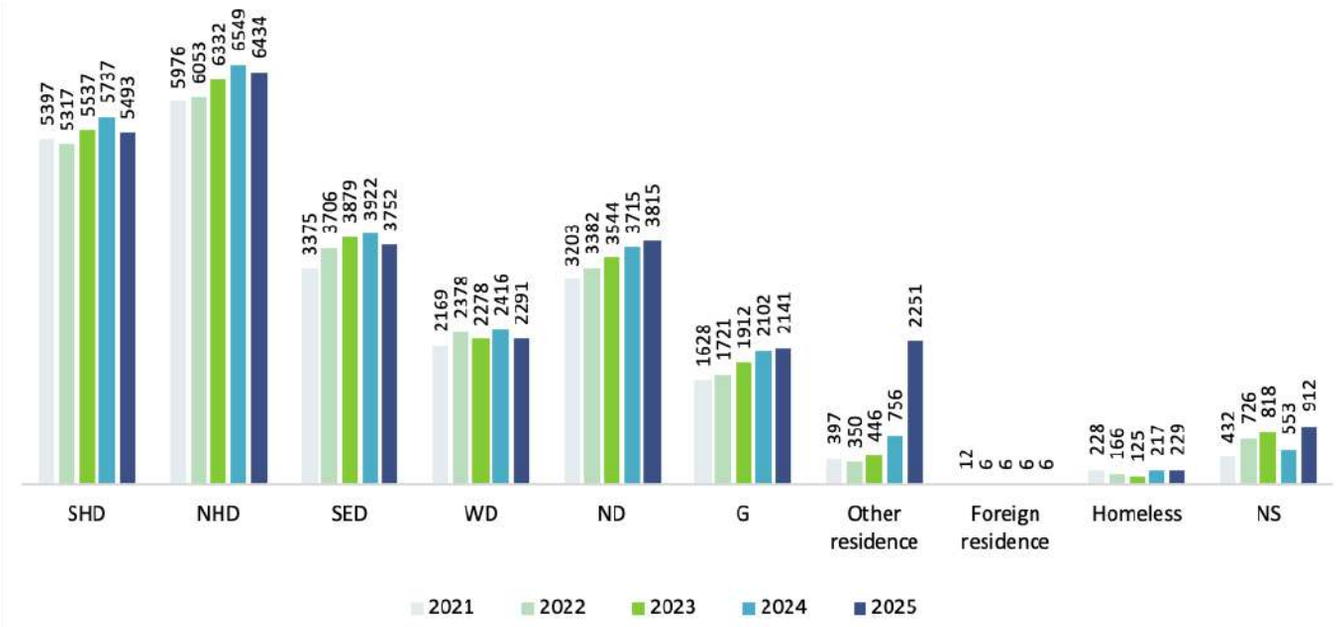
### Gozo and Comino

55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: When the population of the town is taken into consideration, and we calculate the rate per 1,000 residents, the town with the highest rate of cases worked with was Bormla, with a rate of 131 per 1,000 residents (see Appendix C).*

On a FSWS level the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of San Pawl il-Bahar with 1,626 cases worked with (see Figure 5), but the town with the highest rate of cases worked with was Bormla, with a rate of 131 per 1,000 residents (see Figure 6). In terms of district, the highest number of cases worked with in Jan-Dec 2025 resided in the Northern Harbour District (6,434 cases) (see Figure 7) and the highest rate of cases worked with in Jan-Dec 2025 was in the Southern Harbour District with a rate of 61 per 1,000 residents (see Figure 8).

Figure 7: The number of cases worked with at FSWS by district of residence and year.




*Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District; NS = Not specified/unborn.*

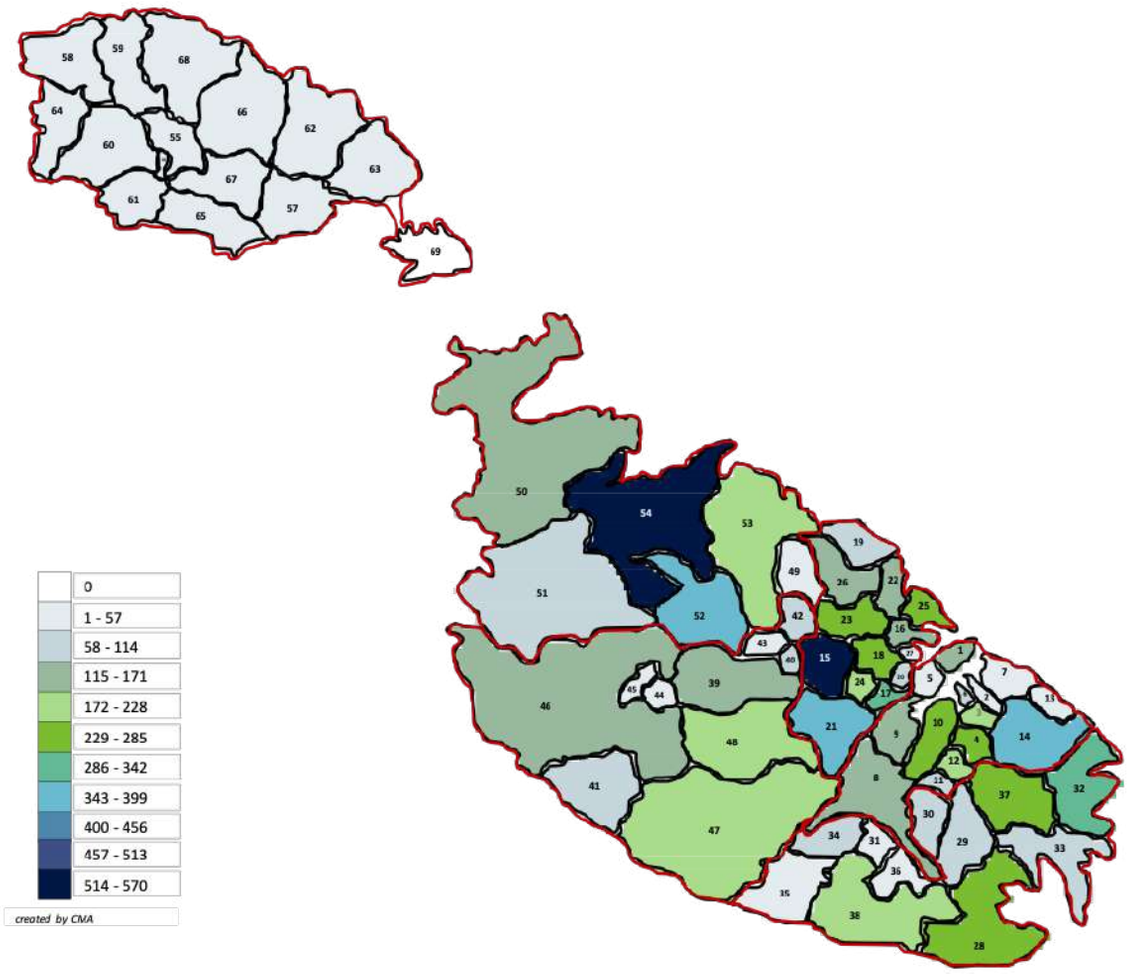
Figure 8: The rate of cases worked with at FSWS by district of residence and year (per 1,000 residents).




*Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District.*

# Appoġġ Agency.

Figure 9: The NUMBER of cases worked with at Appogg Agency between January and December 2025 by town of residence.




### Southern Harbour District

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

### Northern Harbour Districts

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

### South Eastern District

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

### Western District

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

### Northern District

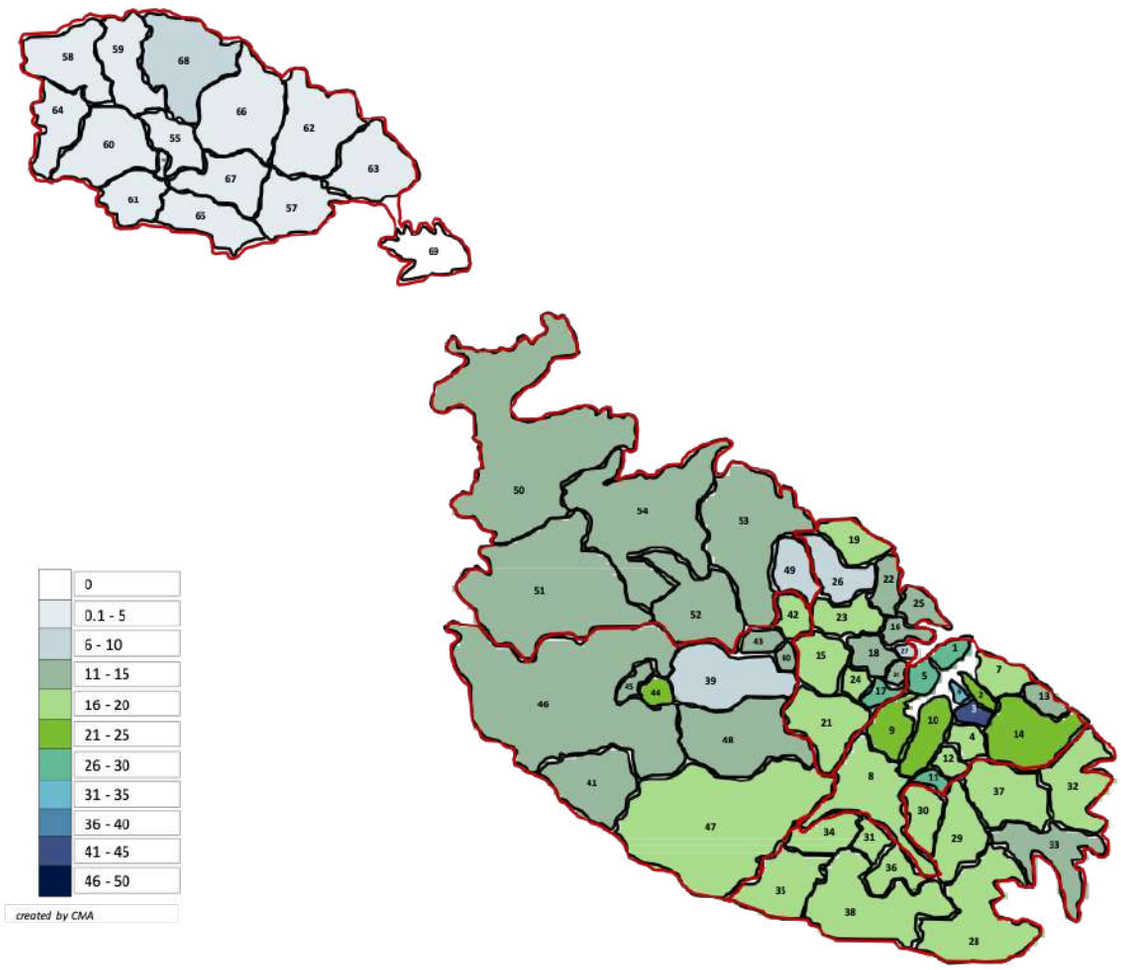
49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

### Gozo and Comino

55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: On an Appogg Agency level the highest number of cases worked with resided in the towns of San Pawl il-Bahar (568 cases) and Birkirkara (560 cases) (see Appendix A).*

Figure 10: The RATE of cases worked with at Appogg Agency between January and December 2025 by town of residence (per 1,000 residents).




**Southern Harbour District**

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

**Northern Harbour Districts**

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

**South Eastern District**

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

**Western District**

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

**Northern District**

49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

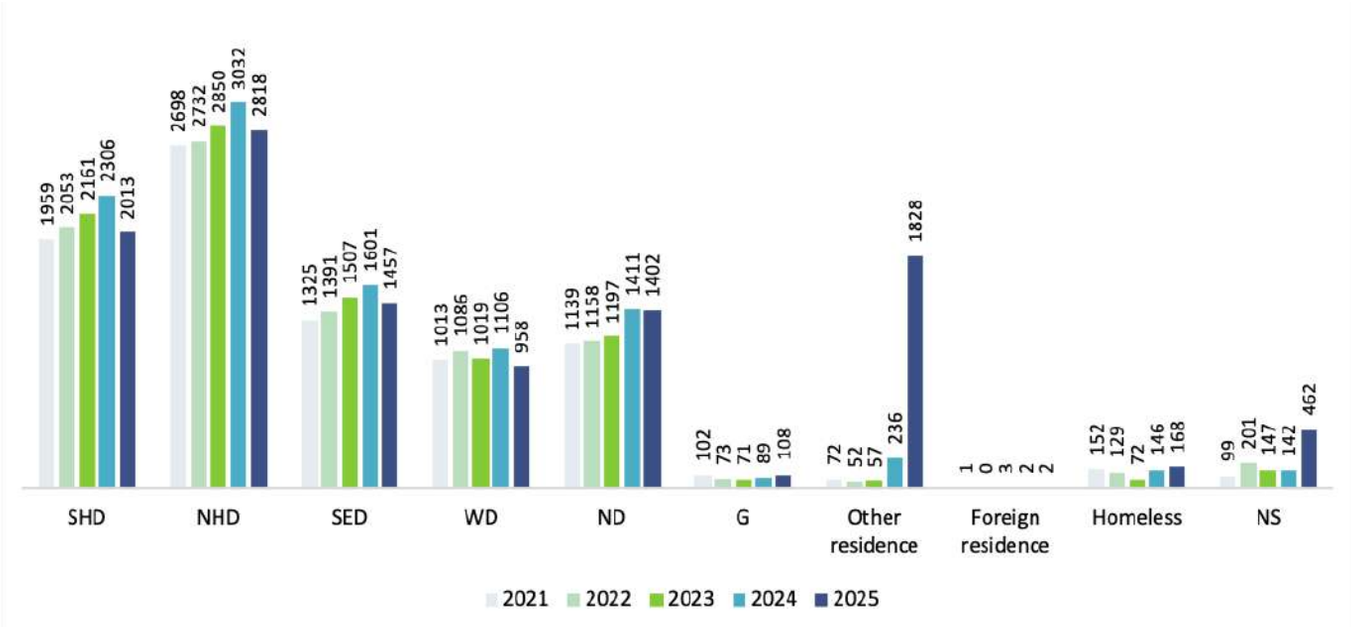
**Gozo and Comino**

55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: When the population of the town is taken into consideration, and we calculate the rate per 1,000 residents, the town with the highest rate of cases worked with was Bormla, with a rate of 43 per 1,000 residents (see Appendix C).*

On an Appoġġ Agency level the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of San Pawl il-Bahar (568 cases) and Birkirkara (560 cases) (see Figure 9) but the town with the highest rate of cases worked with was Bormla, with a rate of 43 per 1,000 residents (see Figure 10). In terms of district, the highest number of cases worked with in Jan-Dec 2025 resided in the Northern Harbour District (2,818 cases) (see Figure 11) whilst the highest rate was in the Southern Harbour District with a rate of 22 per 1,000 residents (see Figure 12).

Figure 11: The number of cases worked with at Appoġġ Agency by district of residence and year.



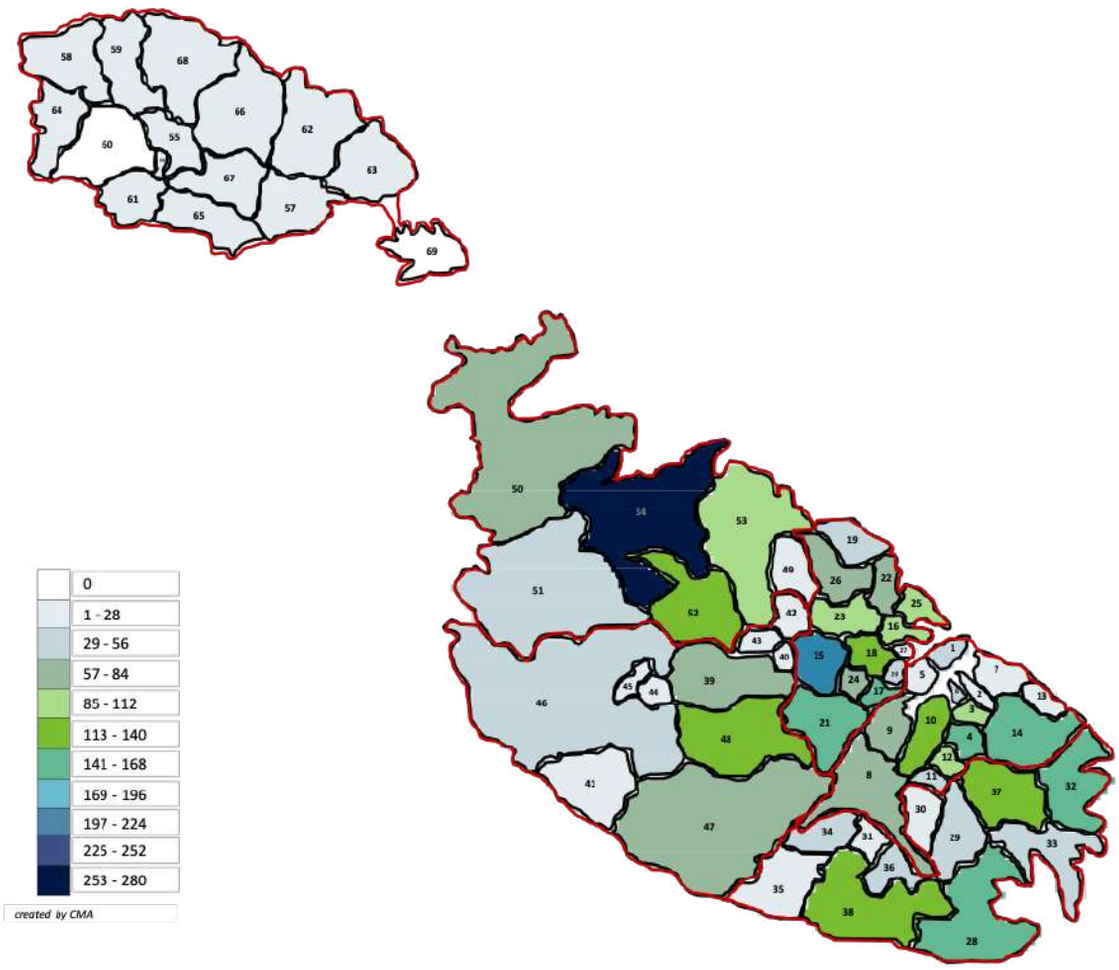

*Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District; NS = Not specified district or unborn.*
*Note: The high increase in 'Other Residence' in 2025 is due to most Appoġġ Health-related services now using the FSWS online system and updating the current town of residence as the actual residential home e.g. St. Vincent de Paul Residence.*

Figure 12: The rate of cases worked with at Appogg Agency by district of residence and year (per 1,000 residents).




*Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District.*

Figure 13: The NUMBER of cases worked with at Appogg Agency's individual or family related services between January and December 2025 by town of residence.




### Southern Harbour District

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

### Northern Harbour Districts

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

### South Eastern District

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

### Western District

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

### Northern District

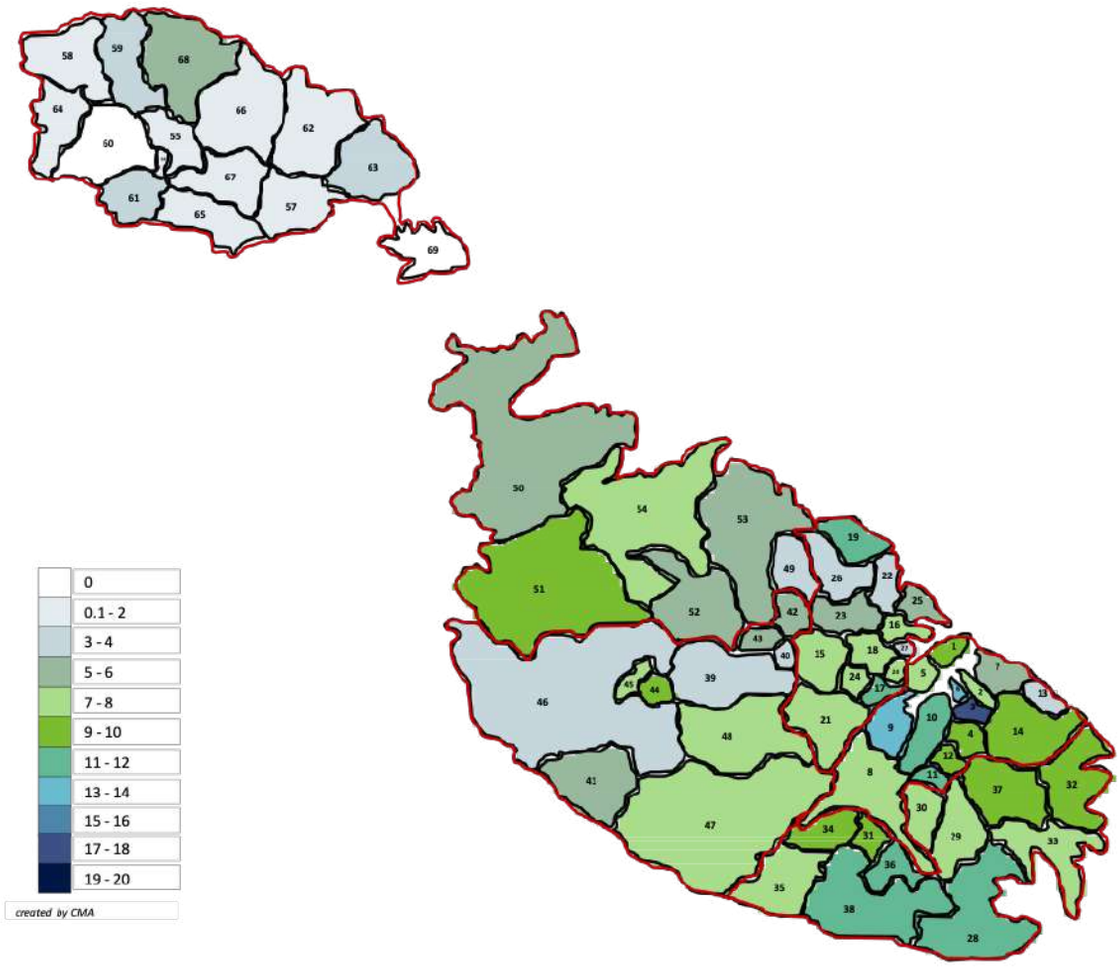
49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

### Gozo and Comino

55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: On an Appogg Agency's individual or family related services level the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of San Pawl il-Bahar (273 cases) (see Appendix A).*

Figure 14: The RATE of cases worked with at Appoġġ Agency's individual or family related services between January and December 2025 by town of residence (per 1,000 residents).




### Southern Harbour District

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

### Northern Harbour Districts

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

### South Eastern District

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

### Western District

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

### Northern District

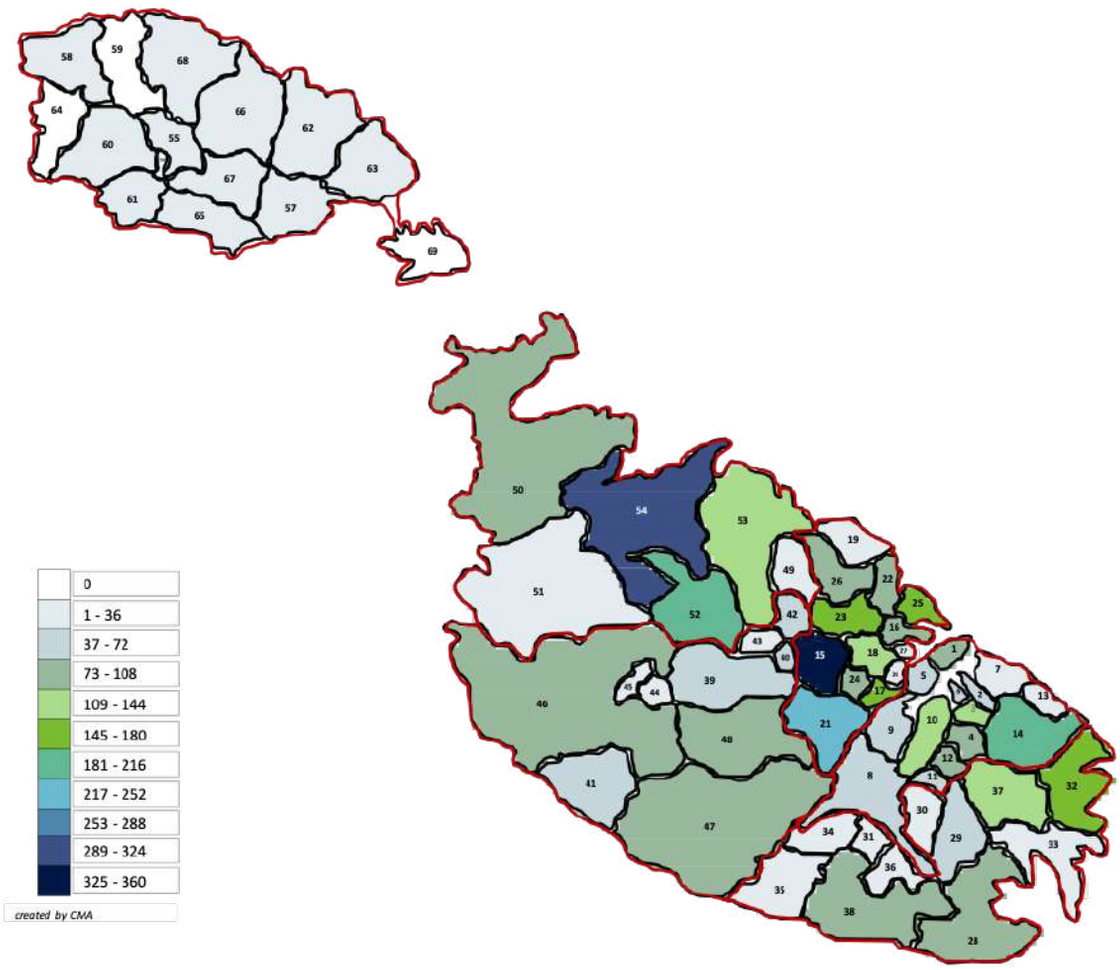
49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

### Gozo and Comino

55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: When the population of the town is taken into consideration, and we calculate the rate per 1,000 residents, the town with the highest rate of cases worked with were Bormla, with a rate of 18 per 1,000 residents (see Appendix C).*

Figure 15: The NUMBER of cases worked with at Appoġġ Agency's health related services between January and December 2025 by town of residence.




### Southern Harbour District

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

### Northern Harbour Districts

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

### South Eastern District

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

### Western District

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

### Northern District

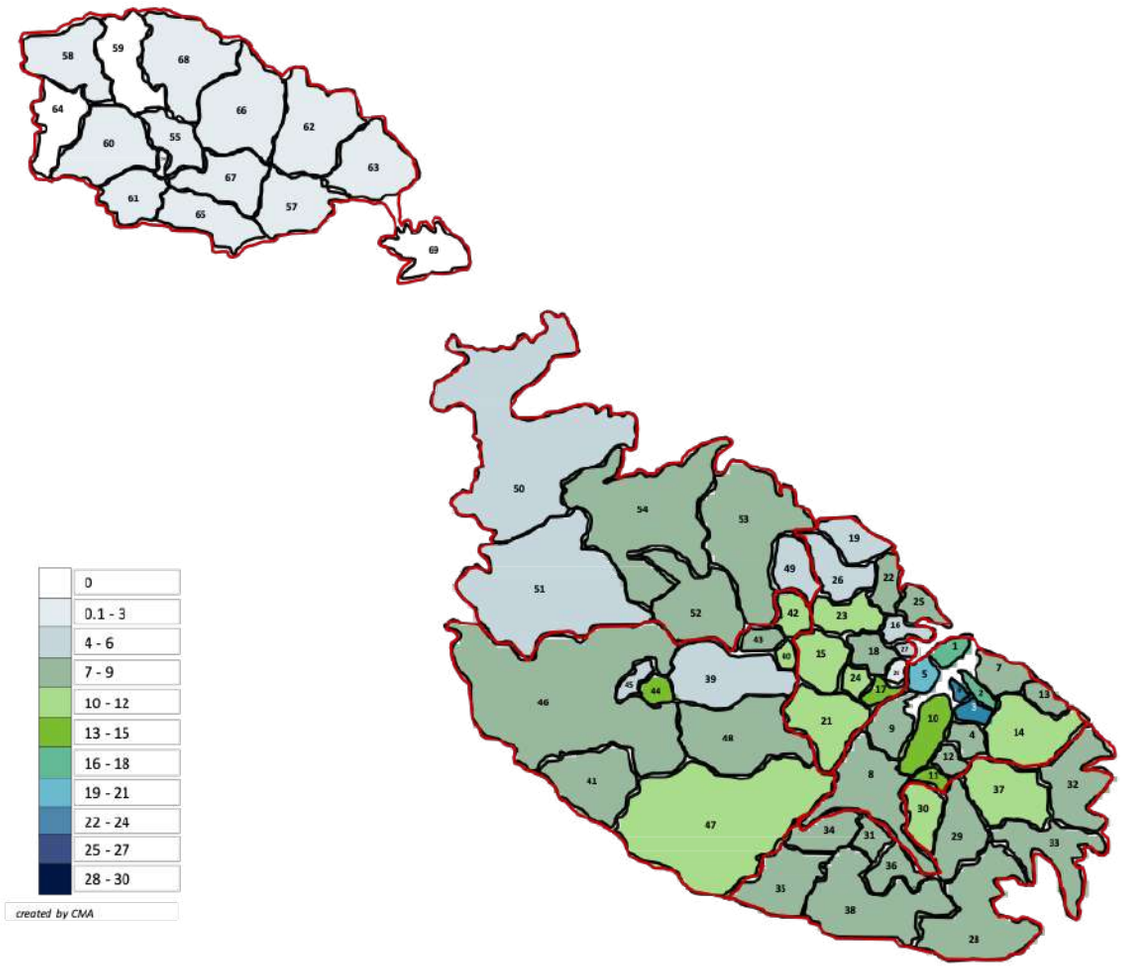
49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

### Gozo and Comino

55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: On an Appogg Agency's health related services level the highest number of cases worked with resided in the towns of Birkirkara (356 cases) (see Appendix A).*

Figure 16: The RATE of cases worked with at Appoġġ Agency's health related services between January and December 2025 by town of residence (per 1,000 residents).




### Southern Harbour District

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

### Northern Harbour Districts

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

### South Eastern District

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

### Western District

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

### Northern District

49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

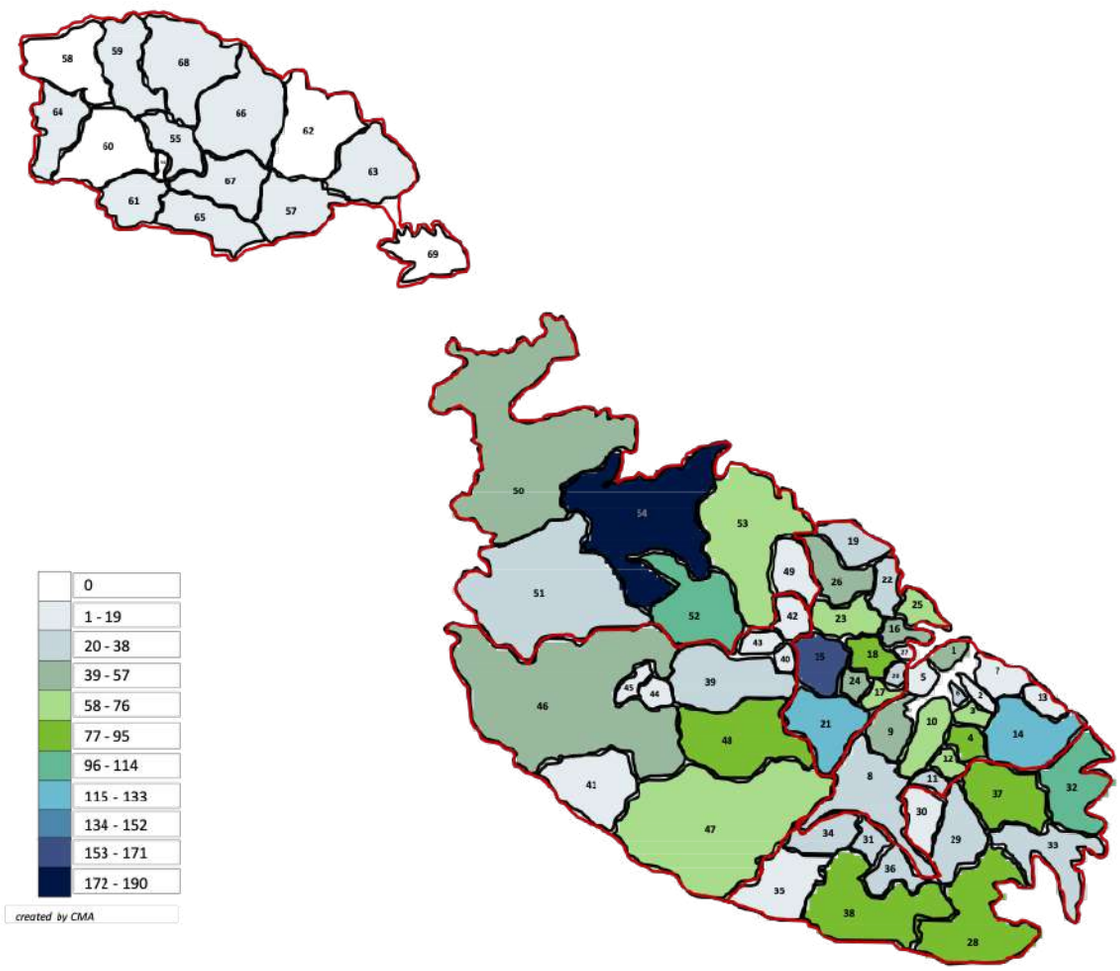
### Gozo and Comino

55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: When the population of the town is taken into consideration, and we calculate the rate per 1,000 residents, the town with the highest rate of cases worked with was Bormla, with a rate of 24 per 1,000 residents (see Appendix C).*

# Appoġġ Agency Service Level.

Figure 17: The number of cases worked with at Domestic Violence Unit (DVU) between January and December 2025 by town of residence.




### Southern Harbour District

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

### Northern Harbour Districts

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

### South Eastern District

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

### Western District

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

### Northern District

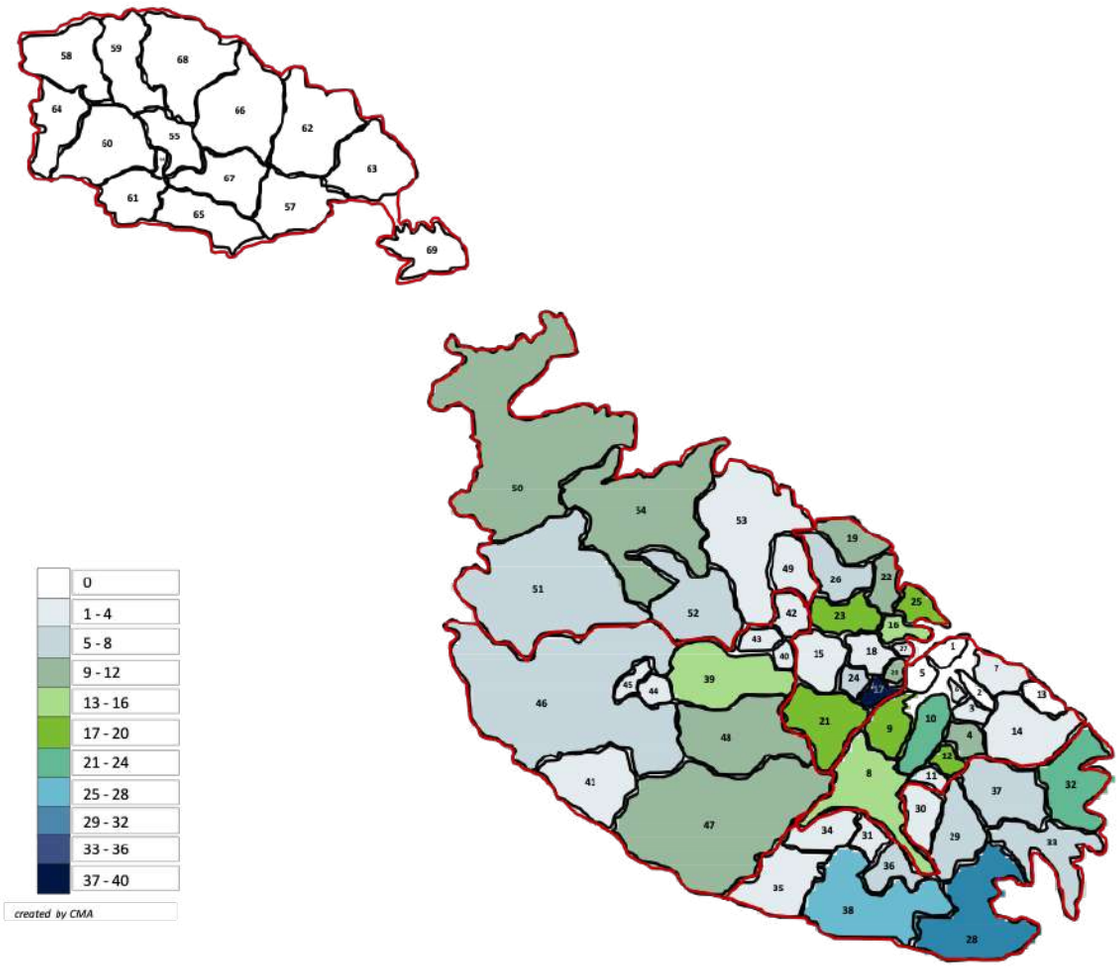
49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

### Gozo and Comino

55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: On a Domestic Violence Unit (DVU) level the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of San Pawl il-Bahar with 185 cases worked with (see raw data in Appendix B).*

Figure 18: The number of cases worked with at Intake & Family Support Service (IFSS) between January and December 2025 by town of residence.




### Southern Harbour District

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

### Northern Harbour Districts

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

### South Eastern District

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

### Western District

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

### Northern District

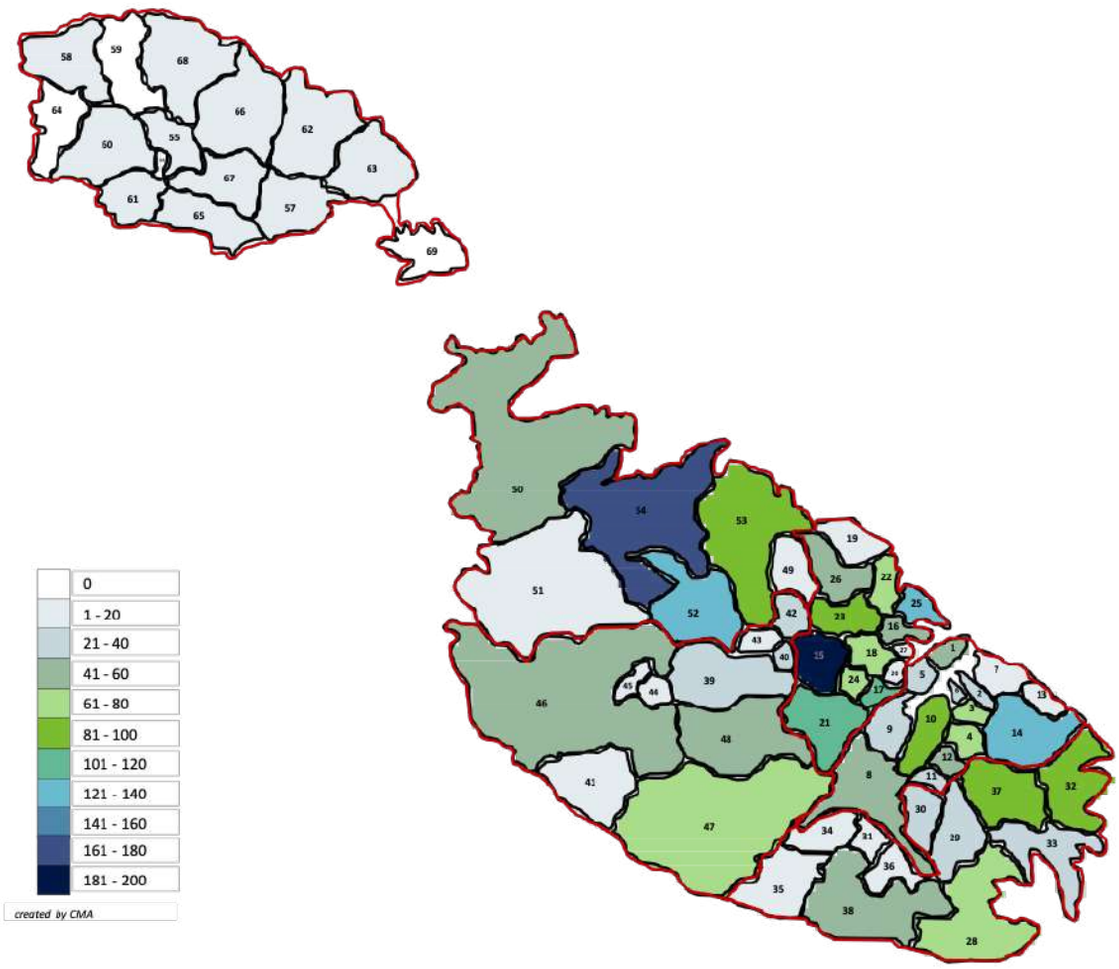
49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

### Gozo and Comino

55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: On an Intake & Family Support Service (IFSS) level the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of Hamrun with 38 cases worked with (see raw data in Appendix B).*

Figure 19: The number of cases worked with at Mater Dei Hospital (MDH) between January and December 2025 by town of residence.




### Southern Harbour District

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

### Northern Harbour Districts

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

### South Eastern District

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

### Western District

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

### Northern District

49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

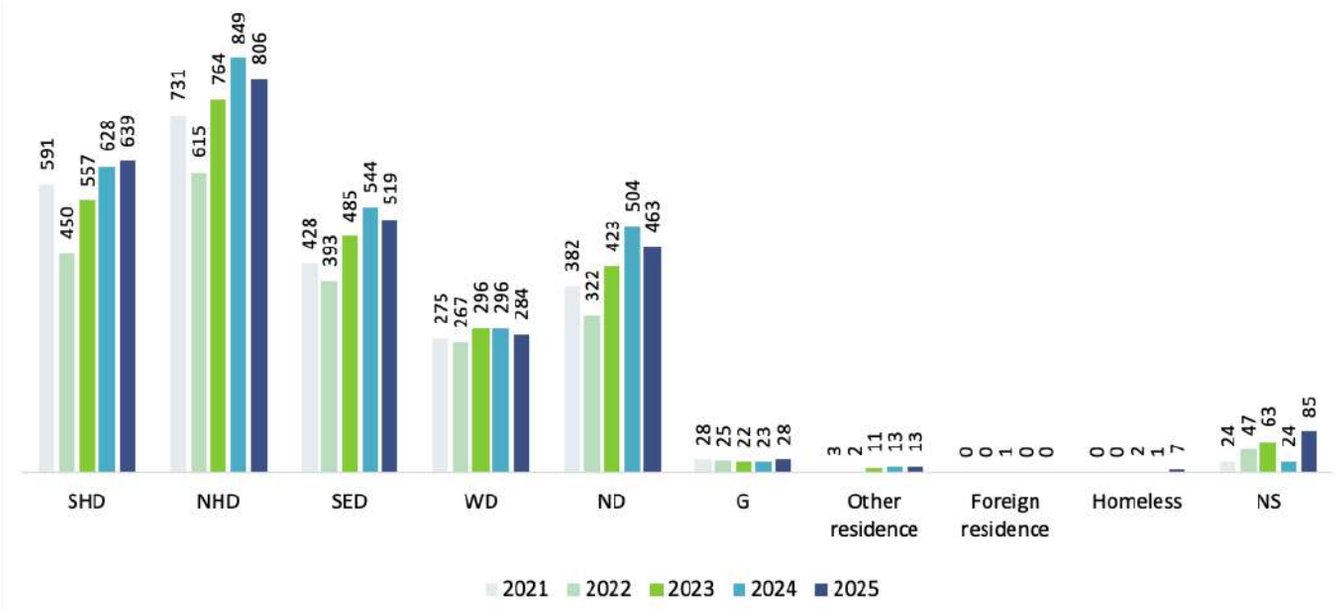
### Gozo and Comino

55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: On a Mater Dei Hospital (MDH) level the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of Birkirkara with 194 cases worked with (see raw data in Appendix B).*

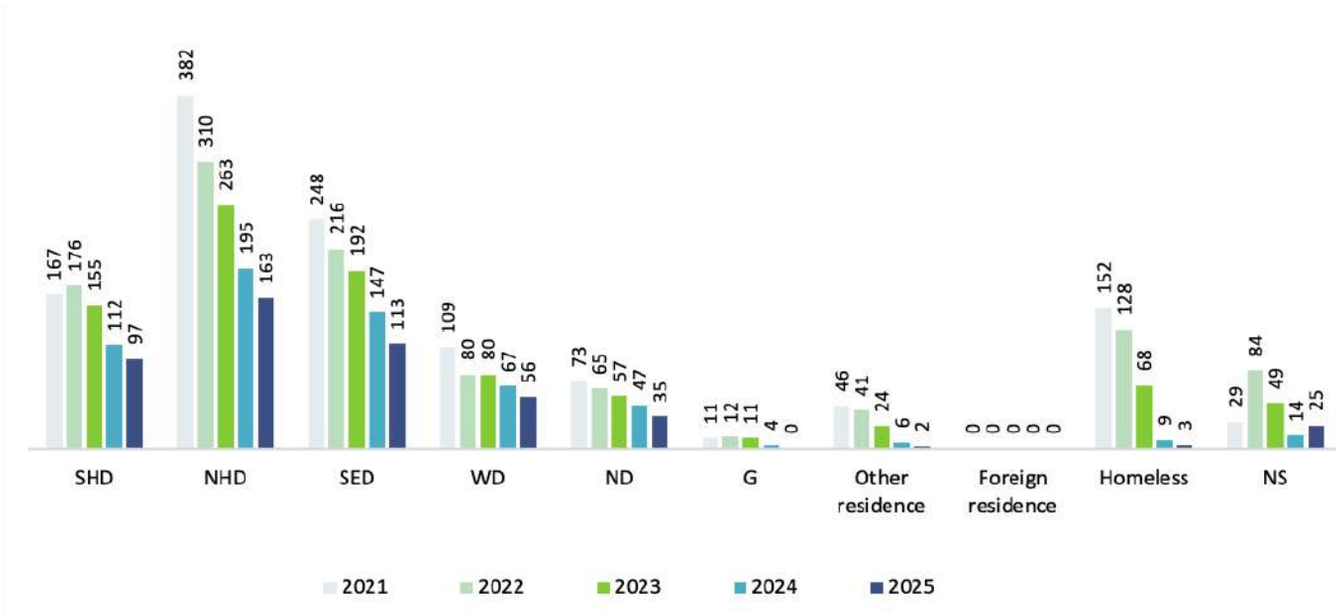
In this section we focused on a few key services in Appoġġ which are the Domestic Violence Unit (DVU), Intake and Family Support Service (IFSS) and the Mater Dei Hospital Social Work Service (MDH). On a DVU level, the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of San Pawl il-Bahar with 185 cases worked with (see Figure 17), and within the Northern Harbour District with 806 cases (see Figure 20). On an IFSS level, the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of Hamrun with 38 cases worked with (see Figure 18), and within the Northern Harbour District with 163 cases (see Figure 21). On an MDH level, the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of Birkirkara with 194 cases worked with (see Figure 19), and within the Northern Harbour District with 983 cases (see Figure 22).

Figure 20: The number of cases worked with at Domestic Violence Unit (DVU) by district of residence and year.



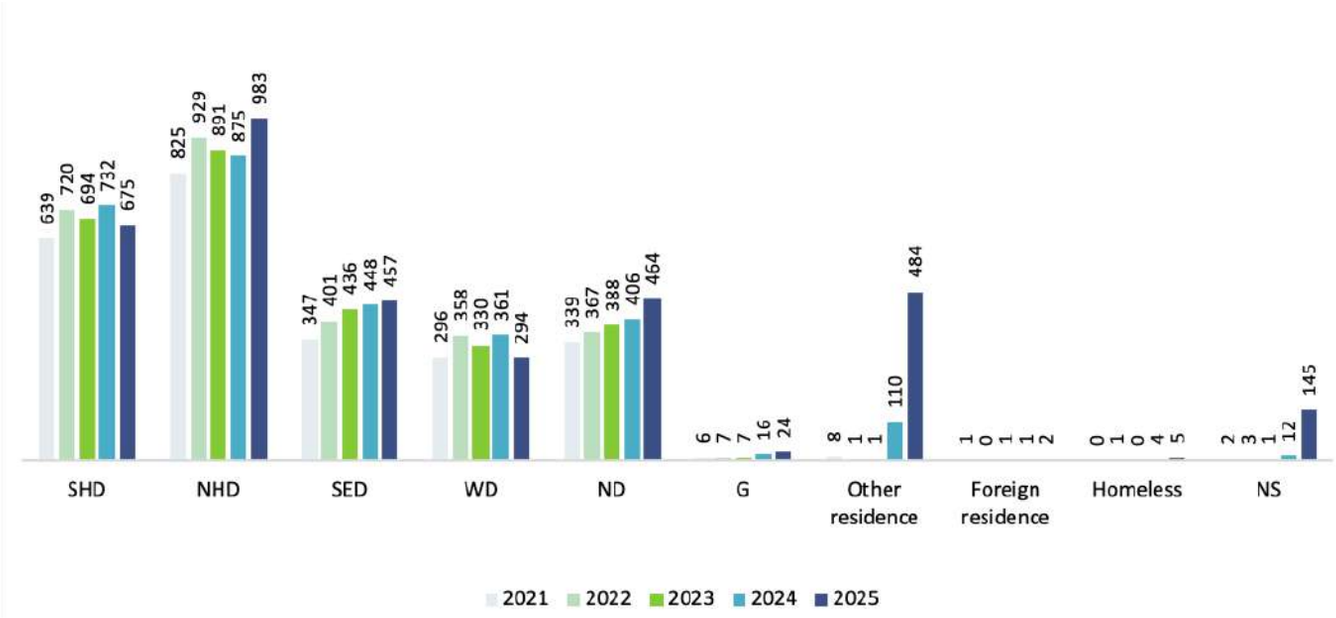

*Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District; NS = Not specified district or unborn.*

Figure 21: The number of cases worked with at Intake & Family Support Service (IFSS) by district of residence and year.




*Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District; NS = Not specified district or unborn.*

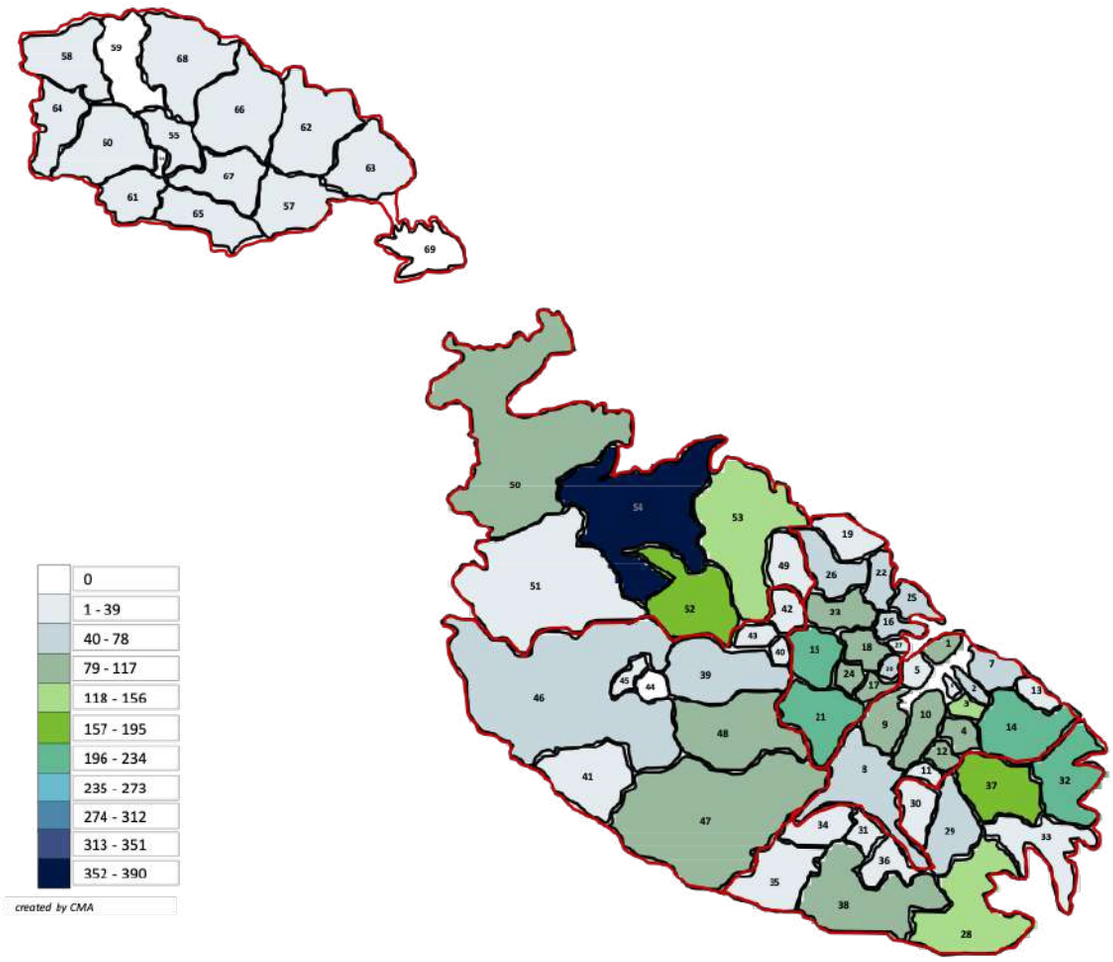
Figure 22: The number of cases worked with at Mater Dei Hospital (MDH) by district of residence and year.




*Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District; NS = Not specified district or unborn.*
*Note: The high increase in 'Other Residence' in 2025 is due to Mater Dei Hospital Social Work Service now using the FSWS online system and updating the current town of residence as the hospital.*

# Child Protection Directorate.

Figure 23: The NUMBER of cases worked with at the Child Protection Directorate (CP) between January and December 2025 by town of residence.




### Southern Harbour District

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

### Northern Harbour Districts

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

### South Eastern District

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

### Western District

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

### Northern District

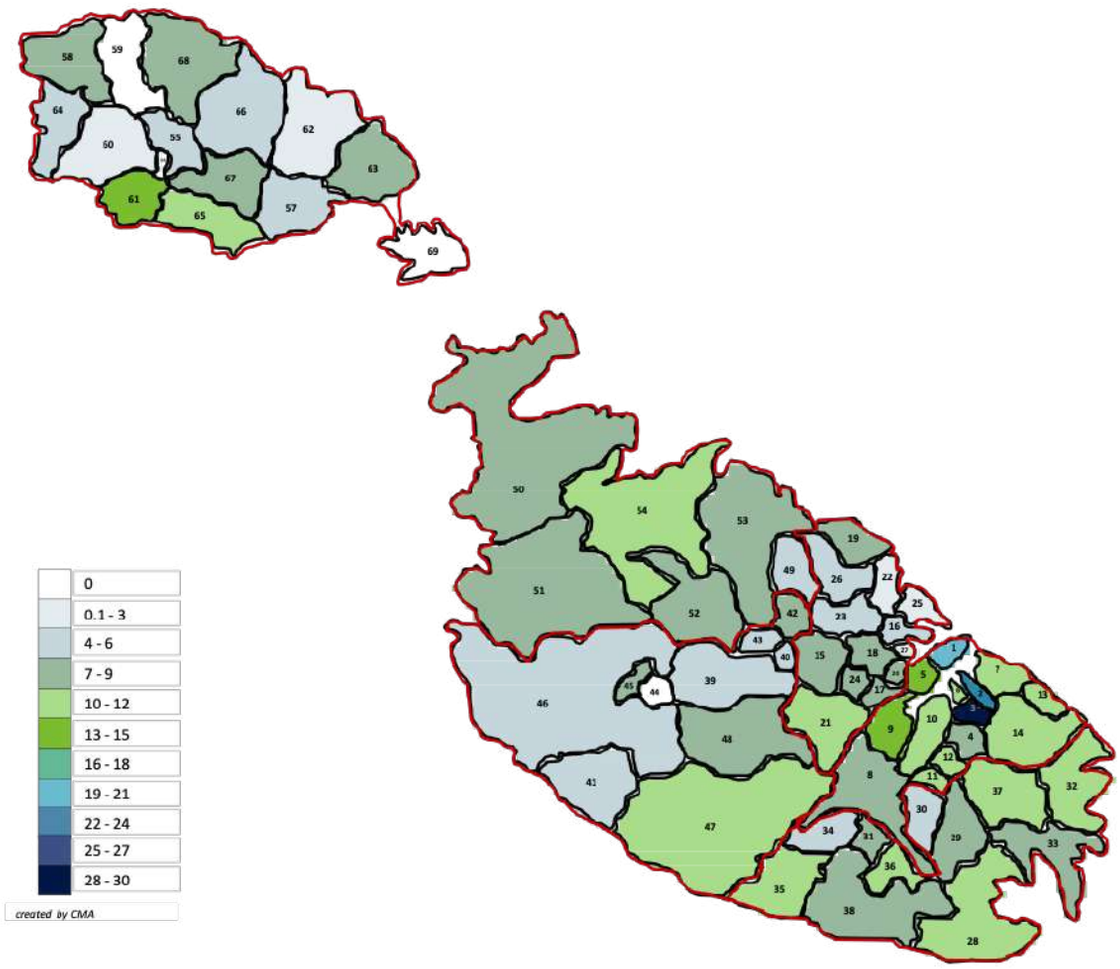
49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

### Gozo and Comino

55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: On a Child Protection Directorate level, the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of San Pawl il-Bahar with 382 cases worked with (see raw data in Appendix A).*

Figure 24: The RATE of cases worked with at the Child Protection Directorate between January and December 2025 by town of residence (per 1,000 residents).




### Southern Harbour District

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

### Northern Harbour Districts

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

### South Eastern District

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

### Western District

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

### Northern District

49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

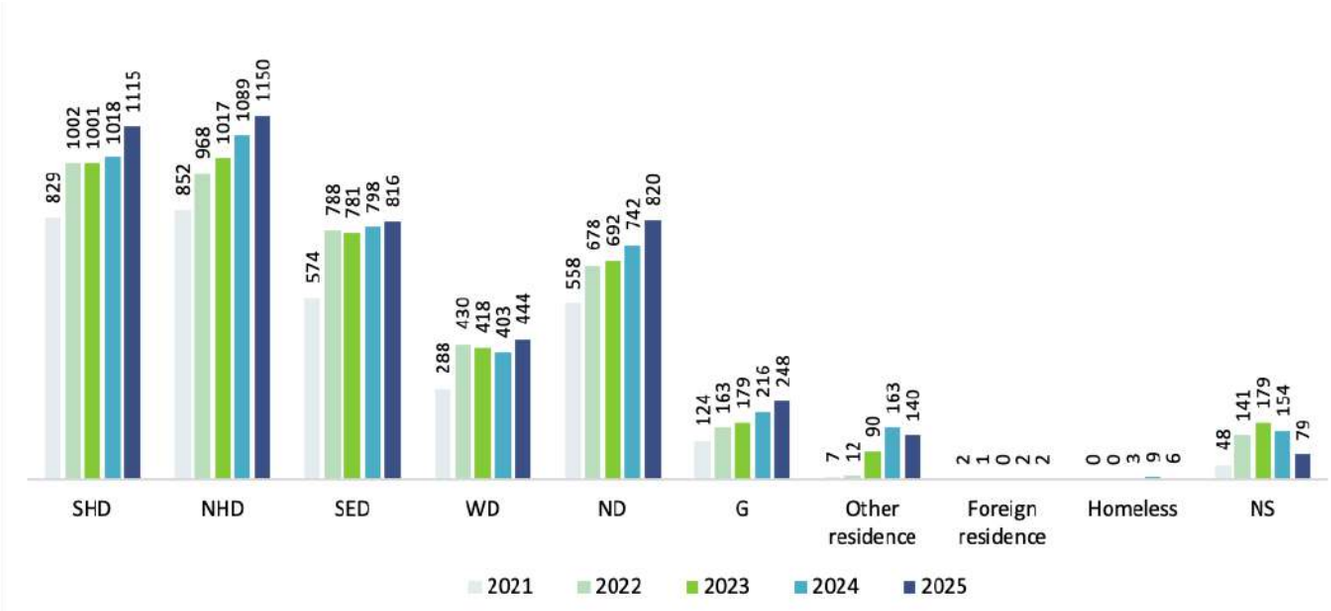
### Gozo and Comino

55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: When the population of the town is taken into consideration, and we calculate the rate per 1,000 residents, the town with the highest rate of cases worked with was Bormla, with a rate of 28 per 1,000 residents (see Appendix C).*

On a Child Protection Directorate level, the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of San Pawl il-Bahar with 382 cases worked with (see Figure 23) but the town with the highest rate of cases worked with was Bormla, with a rate of 28 per 1,000 residents (see Figure 24). In terms of district, the highest number of cases worked with between January and December 2025 resided in the Northern Harbour District (1,150 cases) (see Figure 25) whilst the highest rate was in the Southern Harbour District with a rate of 12 per 1,000 residents (see Figure 26).

Figure 25: The number of cases worked with at Child Protection Directorate by district of residence and year.




*Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District; NS = Not specified district or unborn.*

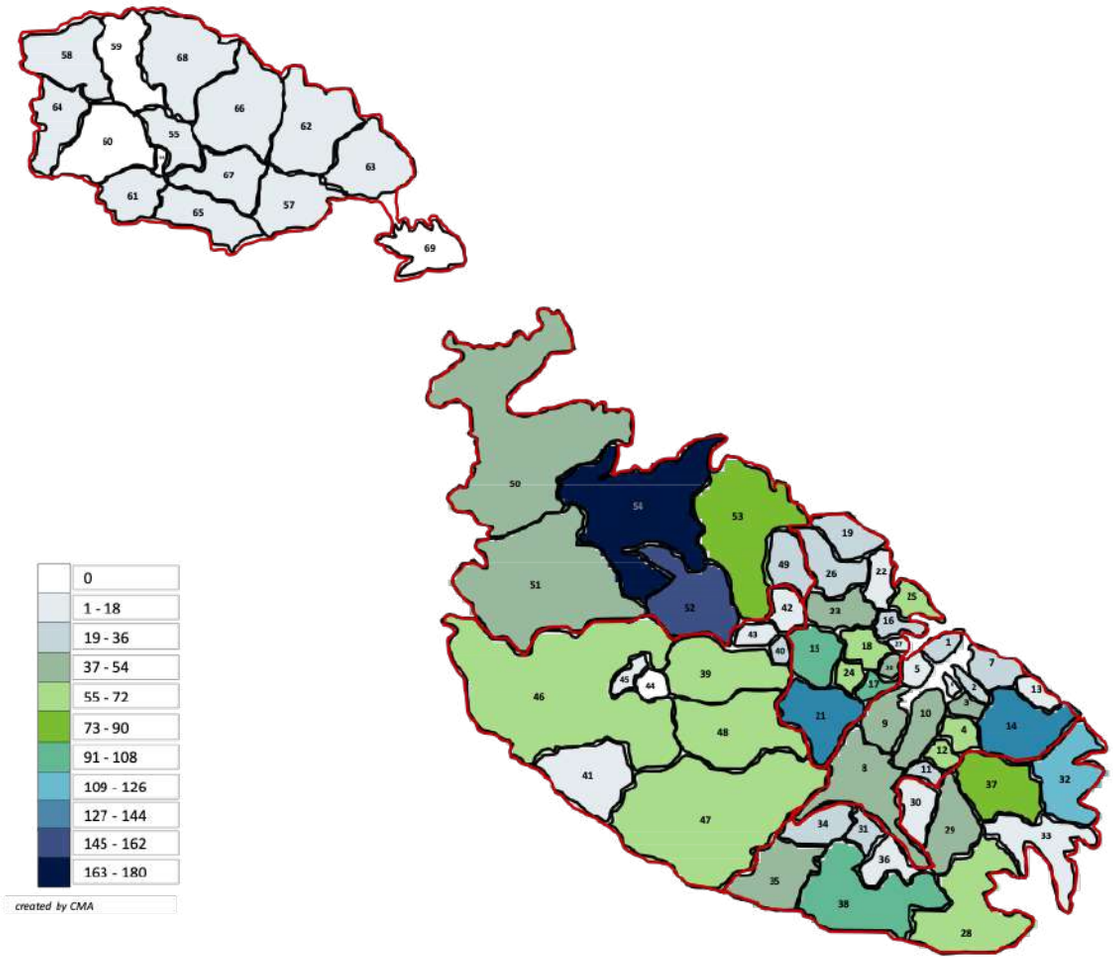
Figure 26: The rate of cases worked with at Child Protection Directorate by district of residence and year (per 1,000 residents)




*Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District.*

# Directorate Alternative Care.

Figure 27: The NUMBER of cases worked with at the Directorate Alternative Care between January and December 2025 by town of residence.




### Southern Harbour District

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

### Northern Harbour Districts

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

### South Eastern District

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

### Western District

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

### Northern District

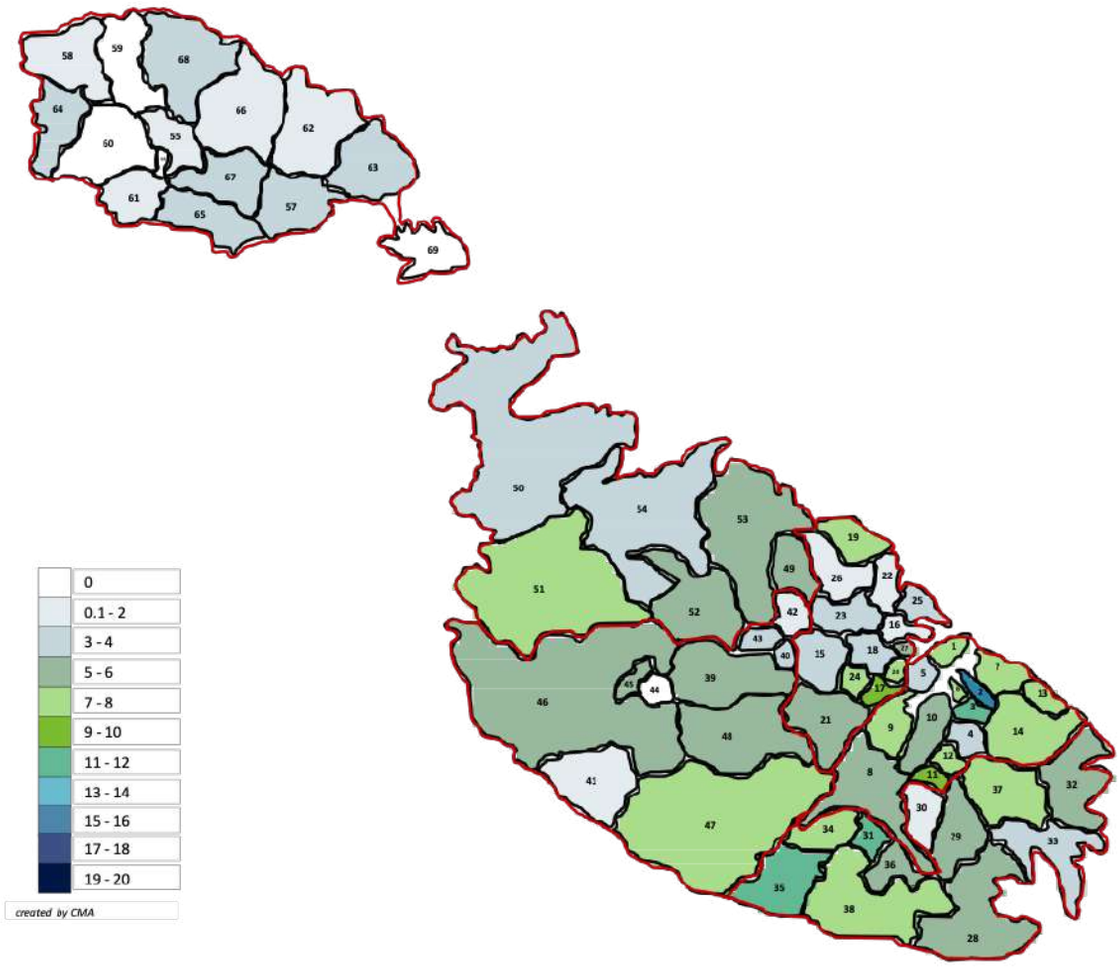
49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

### Gozo and Comino

55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: On a Directorate Alternative Care level, the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of San Pawl il-Bahar with 176 cases worked with (see raw data in Appendix A).*

Figure 28: The RATE of cases worked with at the Directorate Alternative Care between January and December 2025 by town of residence (per 1,000 residents).




### Southern Harbour District

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

### Northern Harbour Districts

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

### South Eastern District

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

### Western District

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

### Northern District

49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

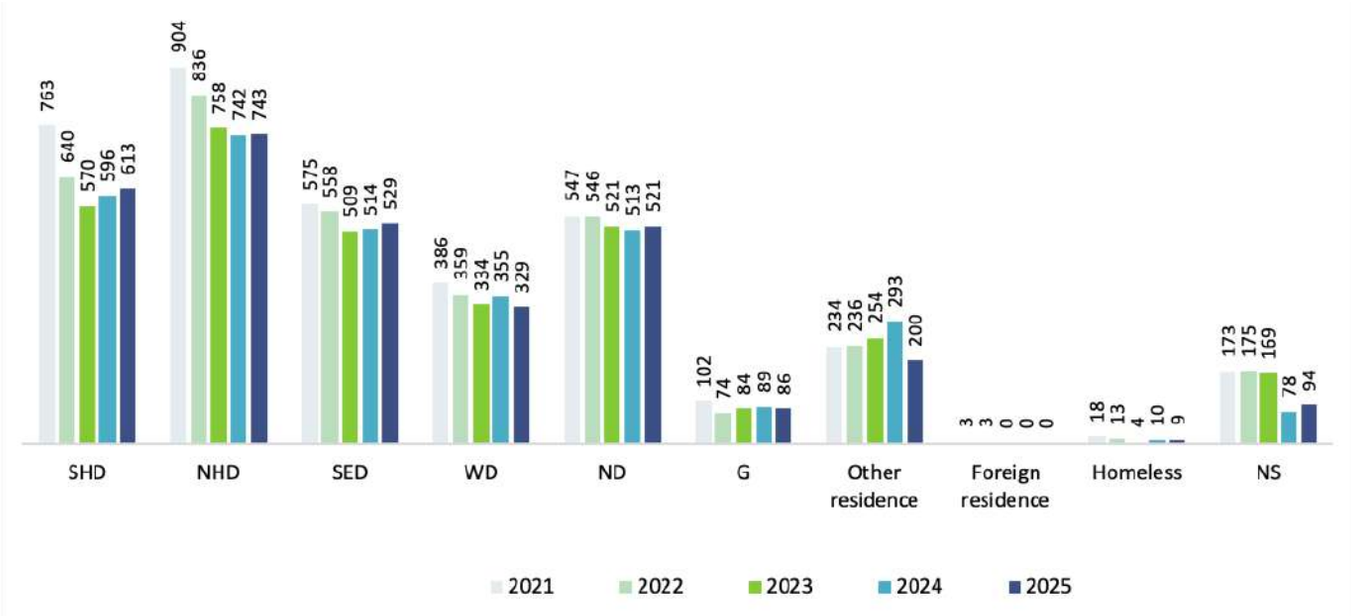
### Gozo and Comino

55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: When the population of the town is taken into consideration, and we calculate the rate per 1,000 residents, the town with the highest rate of cases worked with was Birgu with a rate of 16 per 1,000 residents each (see Appendix C).*

On a Directorate Alternative Care level, the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of San Pawl il-Bahar with 176 cases worked with (see Figure 27) but the town with the highest rate of cases worked with was Birgu with a rate of 16 per 1,000 residents each (see Figure 28). In terms of district, the highest number of cases worked with between January and December 2025 resided in the Northern Harbour District (743 cases) (see Figure 29) whilst the highest rate was in the Southern Harbour District with a rate of 7 per 1,000 residents (see Figure 30).

Figure 29: The number of cases worked with at Directorate Alternative Care by district of residence and year.




*Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District; NS = Not specified district or unborn.*

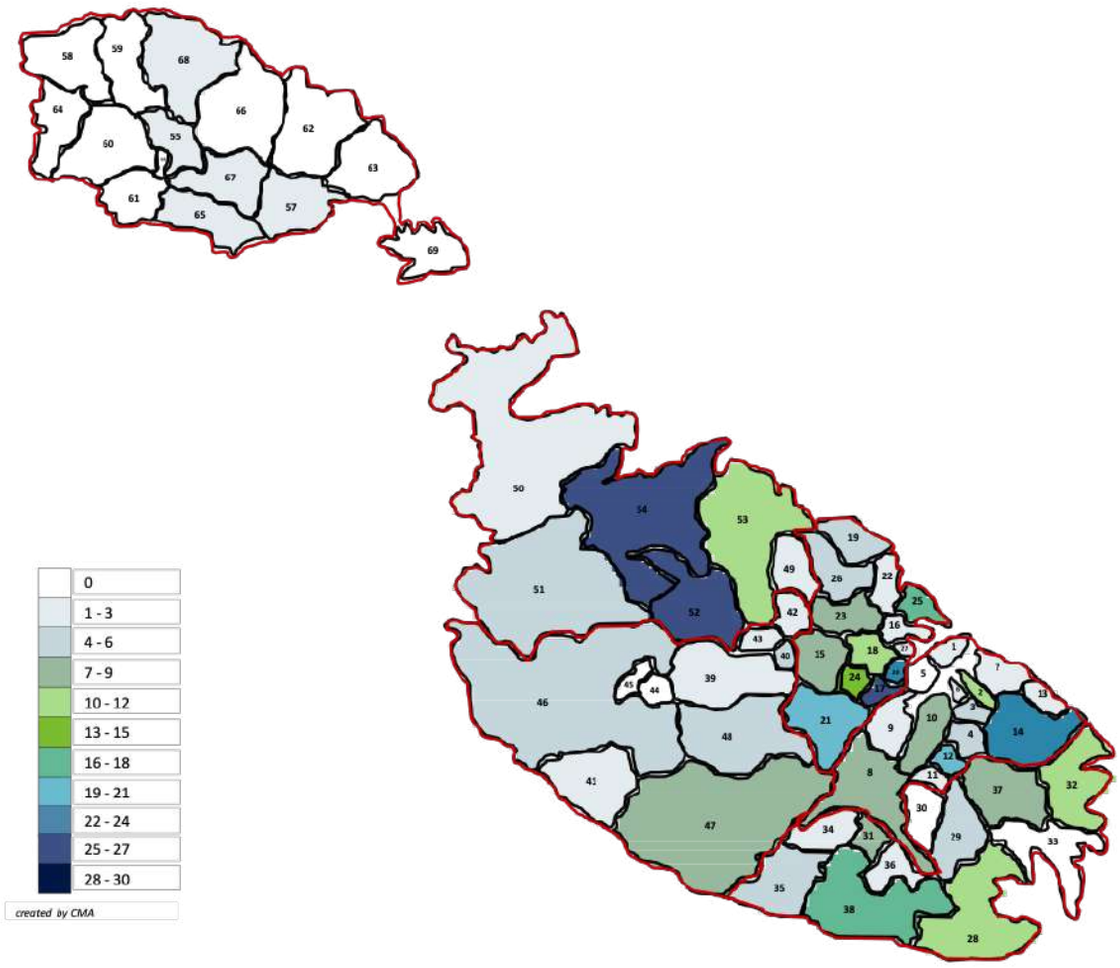
Figure 30: The rate of cases worked with at Directorate Alternative Care by district of residence and year (per 1,000 residents).




*Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District.*

# Directorate Alternative Care: Service level cases.

Figure 31: The number of cases worked with at Looked After Children Service (LAC) between January and December 2025 by town of residence.




### Southern Harbour District

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

### Northern Harbour Districts

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

### South Eastern District

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

### Western District

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

### Northern District

49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

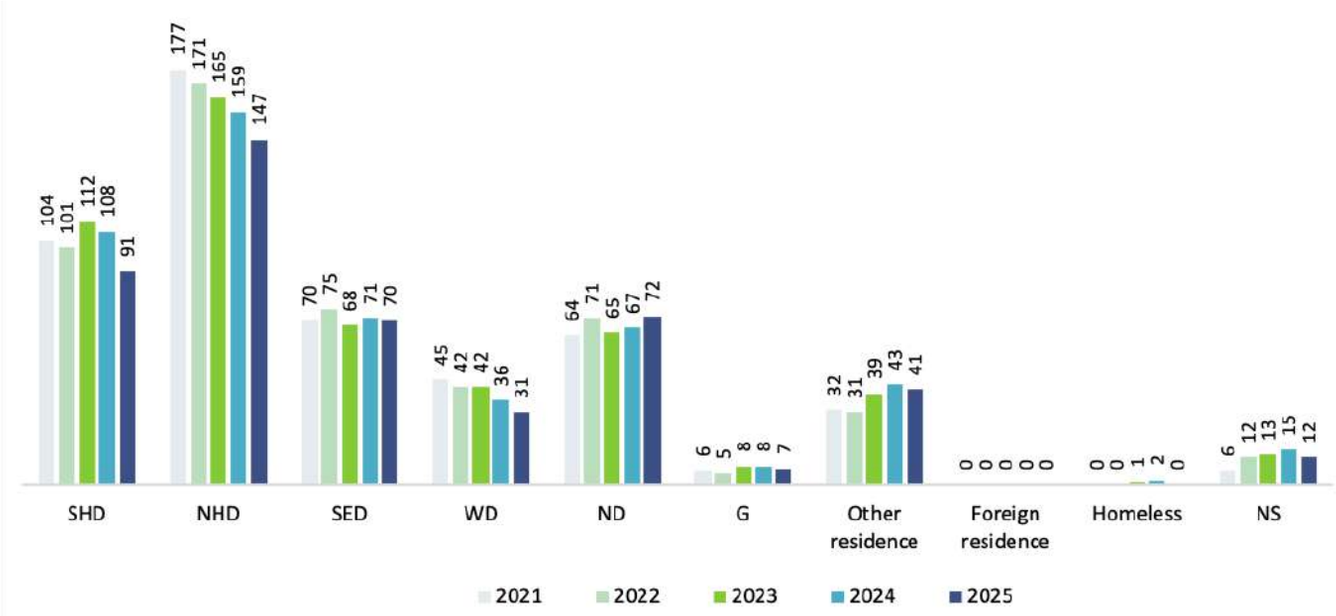
### Gozo and Comino

55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: On a Looked After Children Service (LAC) level the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of Hamrun (27 cases) (see Appendix B).*

In this section we focused on a key service in the Directorate Alternative Care which is Looked After Children Service (LAC). On a LAC level, the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of Hamrun (27 cases) (see Figure 31), and within the Northern Harbour District with 147 cases (see Figure 32).

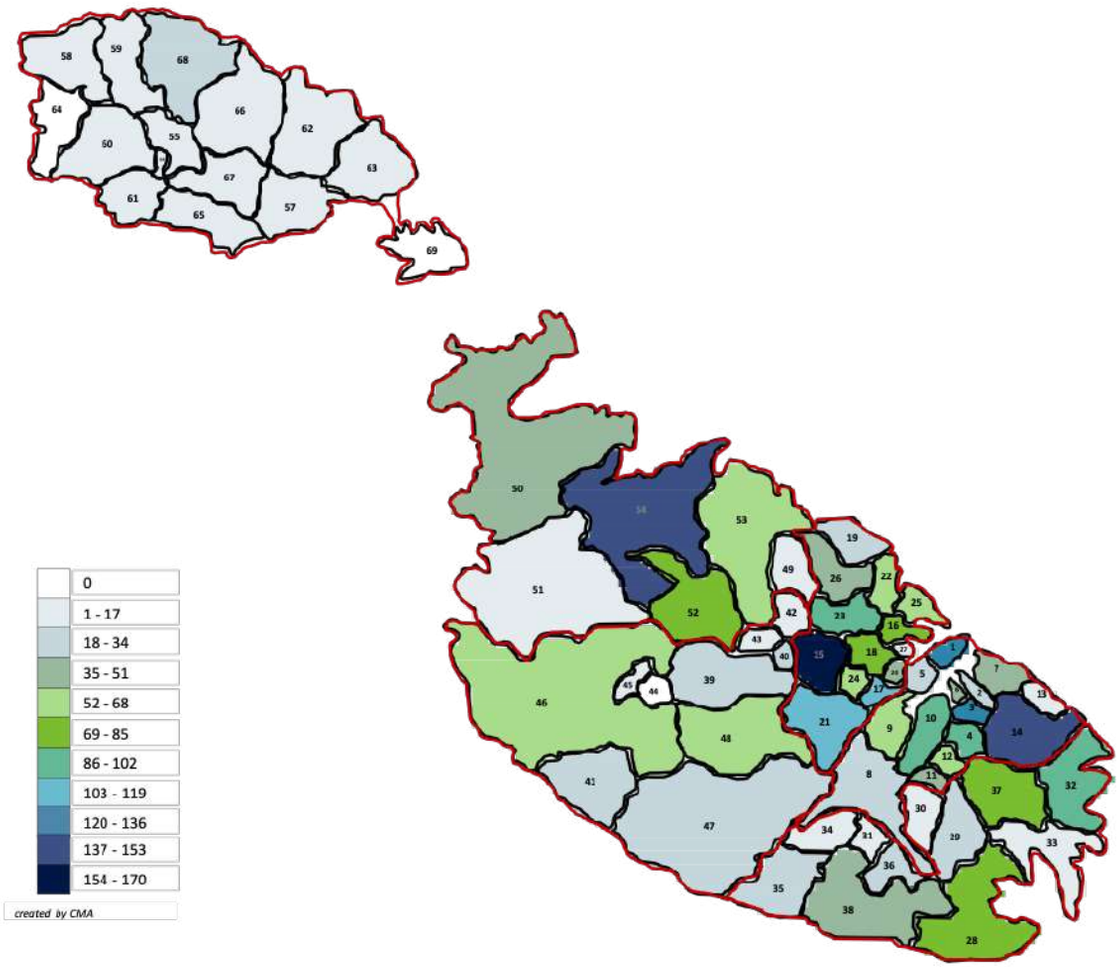
Figure 32: The number of cases worked with at Looked After Children Service (LAC) by district of residence and year.




*Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District; NS = Not specified district or unborn.*

# Sedqa Agency.

Figure 33: The NUMBER of cases worked with at Sedqa Agency between January and December 2025 by town of residence.




### Southern Harbour District

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

### Northern Harbour Districts

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

### South Eastern District

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

### Western District

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

### Northern District

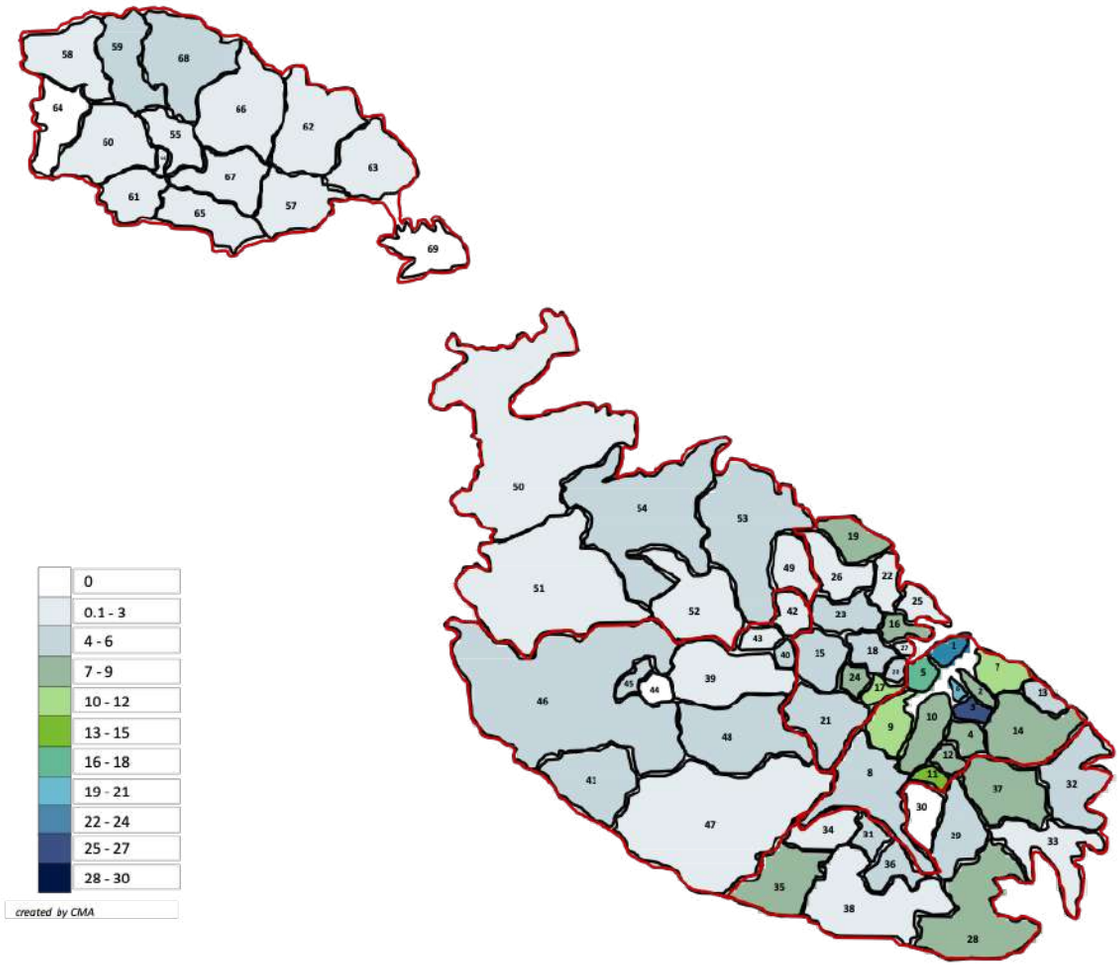
49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

### Gozo and Comino

55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: On a Sedqa Agency level the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of Birkirkara with 163 cases worked with (see raw data in Appendix A).*

Figure 34: The RATE of cases worked with at Sedqa Agency between January and December 2025 by town of residence (per 1,000 residents).




### Southern Harbour District

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

### Northern Harbour Districts

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

### South Eastern District

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

### Western District

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

### Northern District

49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

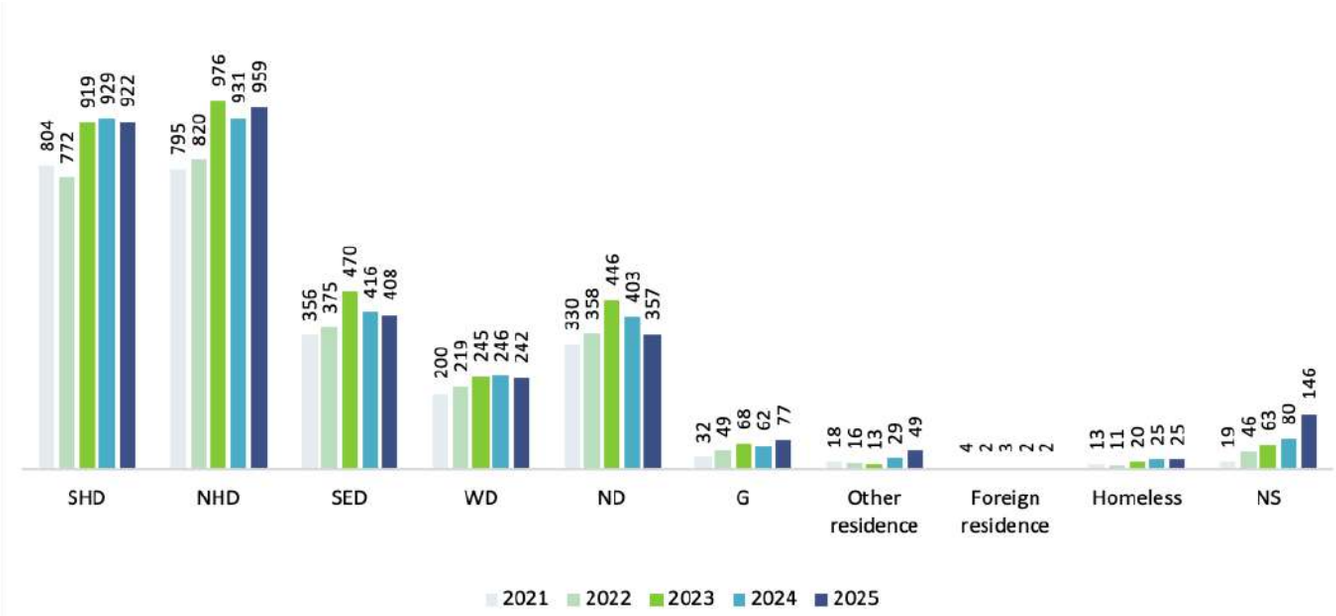
### Gozo and Comino

55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: When the population of the town is taken into consideration, and we calculate the rate per 1,000 residents, the town with the highest rate of cases worked with was Bormla, with a rate of 27 per 1,000 residents (see Appendix C).*

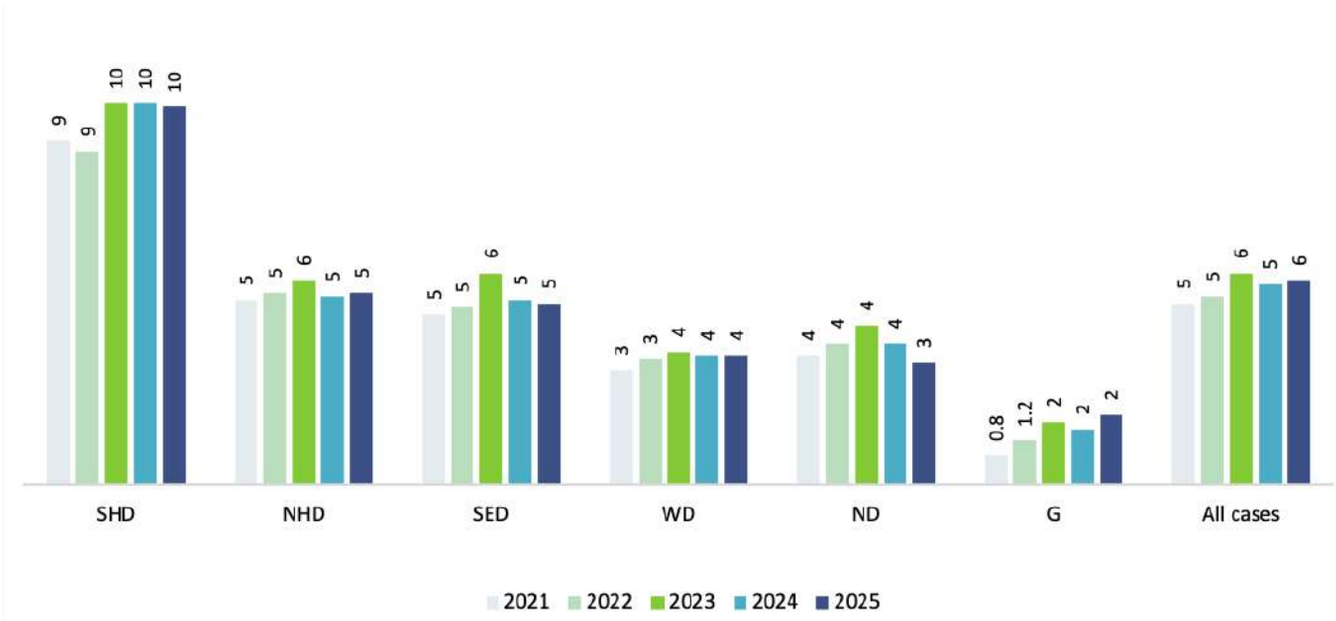
On a Sedqa Agency level the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of Birkirkara with 163 cases worked with (see Figure 33) but the town with the highest rate of cases worked with was Bormla, with a rate of 27 per 1,000 residents (see Figure 34). In terms of district, the highest number of cases worked with between January and December 2025 resided in the Northern Harbour District (959 cases) (see Figure 35) and the highest rate was in the Southern Harbour District with a rate of 10 per 1,000 residents (see Figure 36).

Figure 35: The number of cases worked with at Sedqa Agency by district of residence and year.




*Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District; NS = Not specified district or unborn.*

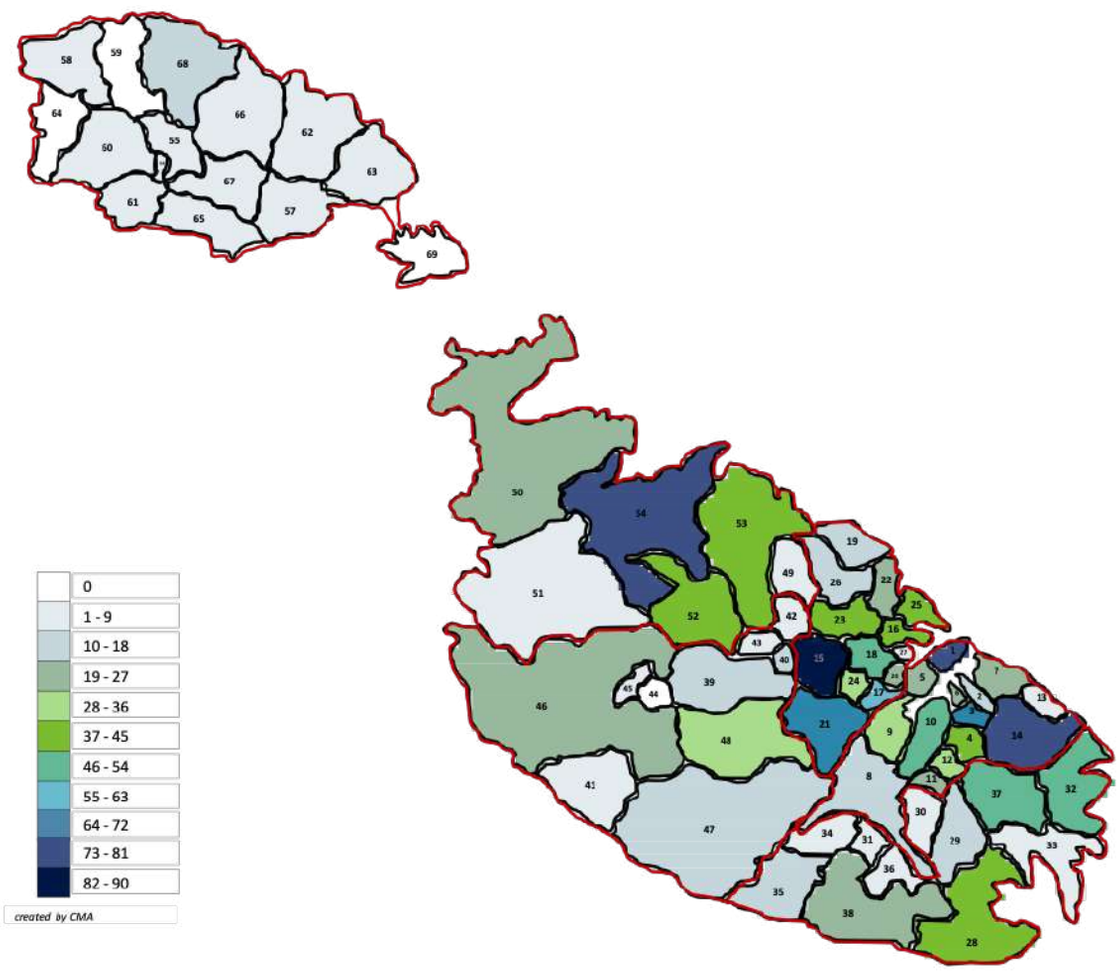
Figure 36: The rate of cases worked with at Sedqa Agency by district of residence and year (per 1,000 residents).




*Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District.*

# Sedqa Agency: Service level cases.

Figure 37: The number of cases worked with at Substance Misuse Out-Patients Unit (SMOPU) between January and December 2025 by town of residence.




### Southern Harbour District

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

### Northern Harbour Districts

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

### South Eastern District

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

### Western District

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

### Northern District

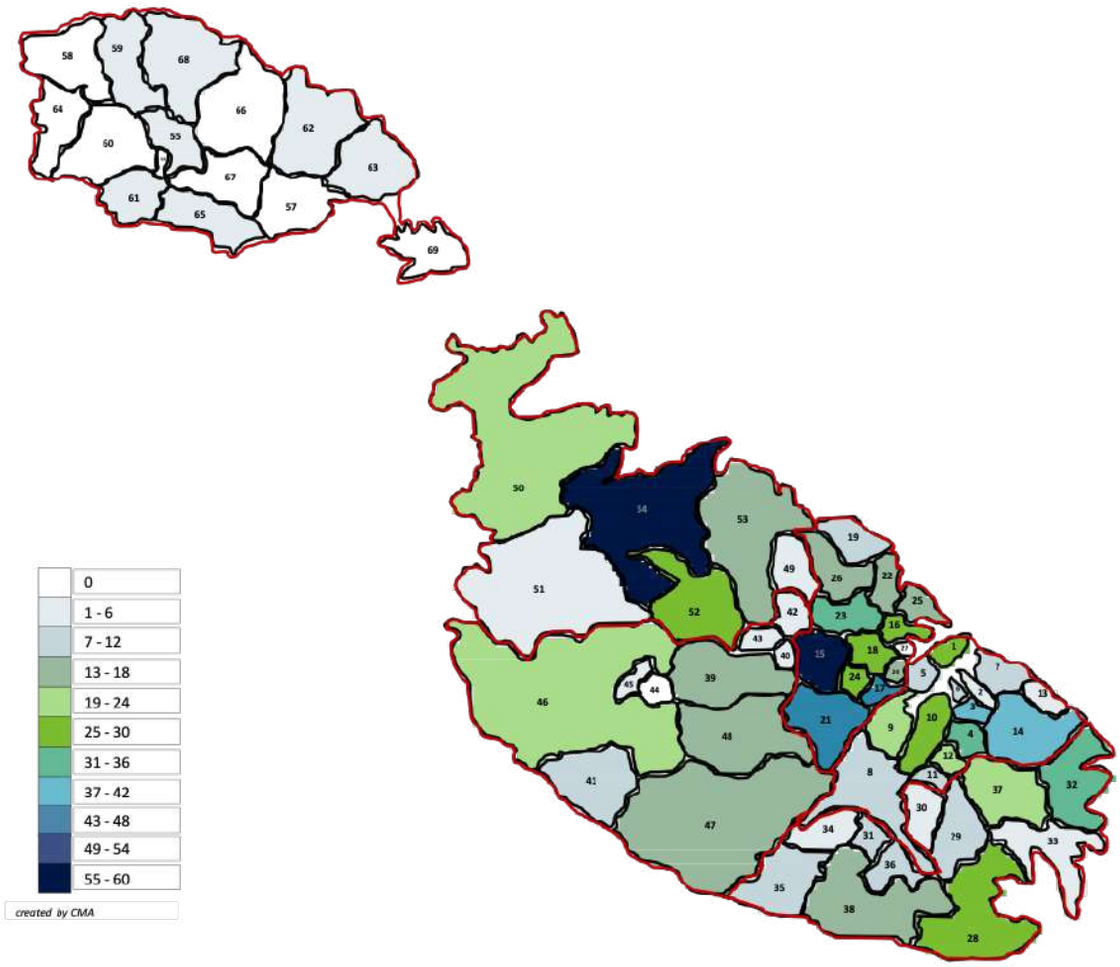
49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

### Gozo and Comino

55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: On a Substance Misuse Out-Patients Unit (SMOPU) level the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of Birkirkara with 86 cases worked with (see raw data in Appendix B).*

Figure 38: The number of cases worked with at Addictions Community Service between January and December 2025 by town of residence.




### Southern Harbour District

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

### Northern Harbour Districts

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

### South Eastern District

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

### Western District

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

### Northern District

49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

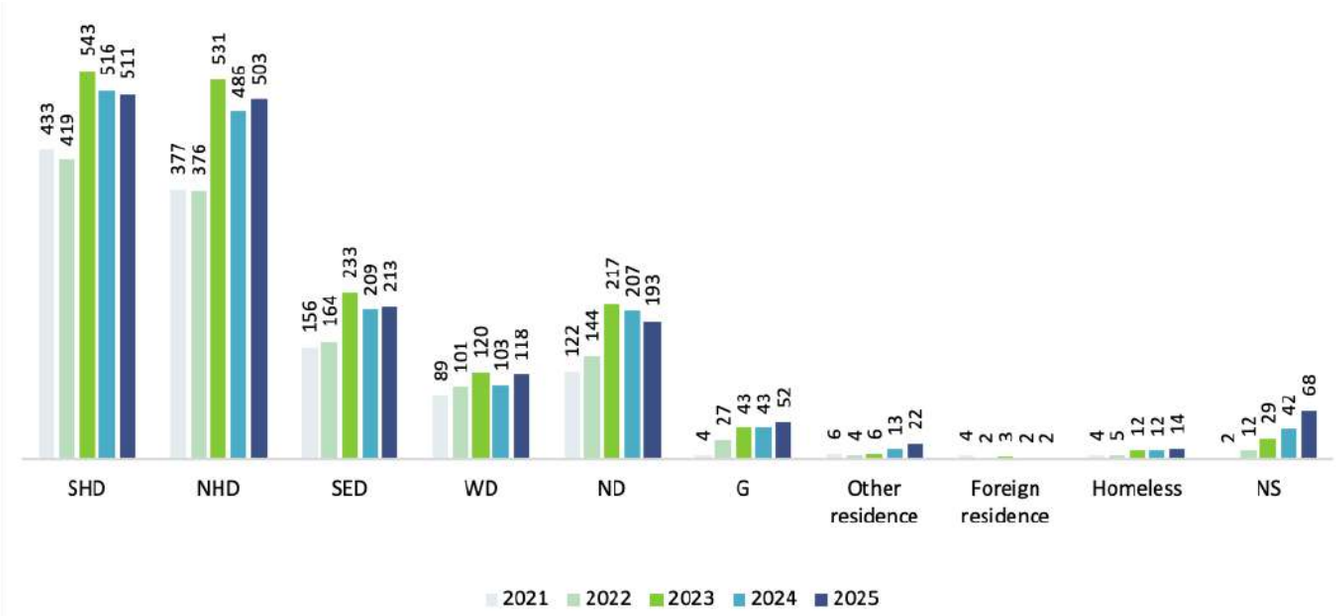
### Gozo and Comino

55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: On an Addictions Community Service level the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of Birkirkara with 59 cases worked with and San Pawl il-Bahar with 56 cases worked with (see raw data in Appendix B).*

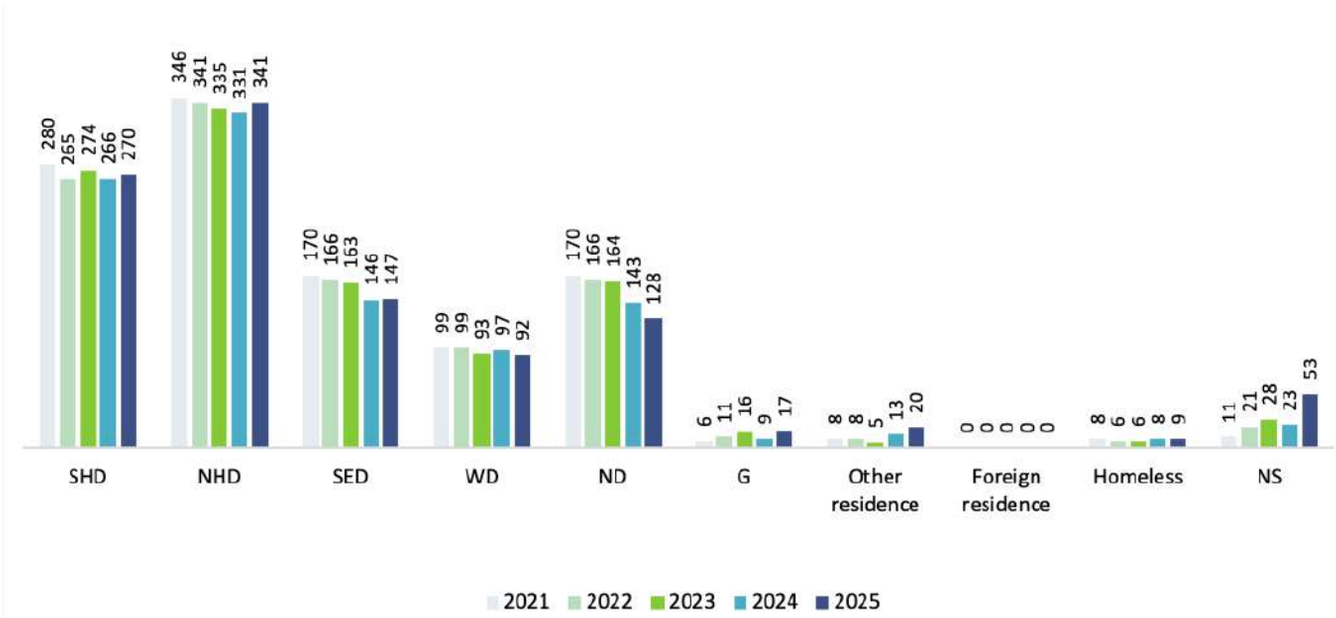
In this section we focused on a few key services in Sedqa Agency which are the Substance Misuse Out-Patients Unit (SMOPU) and the Addictions Community Service. On a SMOPU level, the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of Birkirkara with 86 cases worked with (see Figure 37), and within the Southern Harbour District with 511 cases (see Figure 39). On an Addictions Community Service level, the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of Birkirkara with 59 cases worked with and San Pawl il-Bahar with 56 cases worked with (see Figure 38), and within the Northern Harbour District with 341 cases (see Figure 40).

Figure 39: The number of cases worked with at SMOPU by district of residence and year.




*Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District; NS = Not specified district or unborn.*

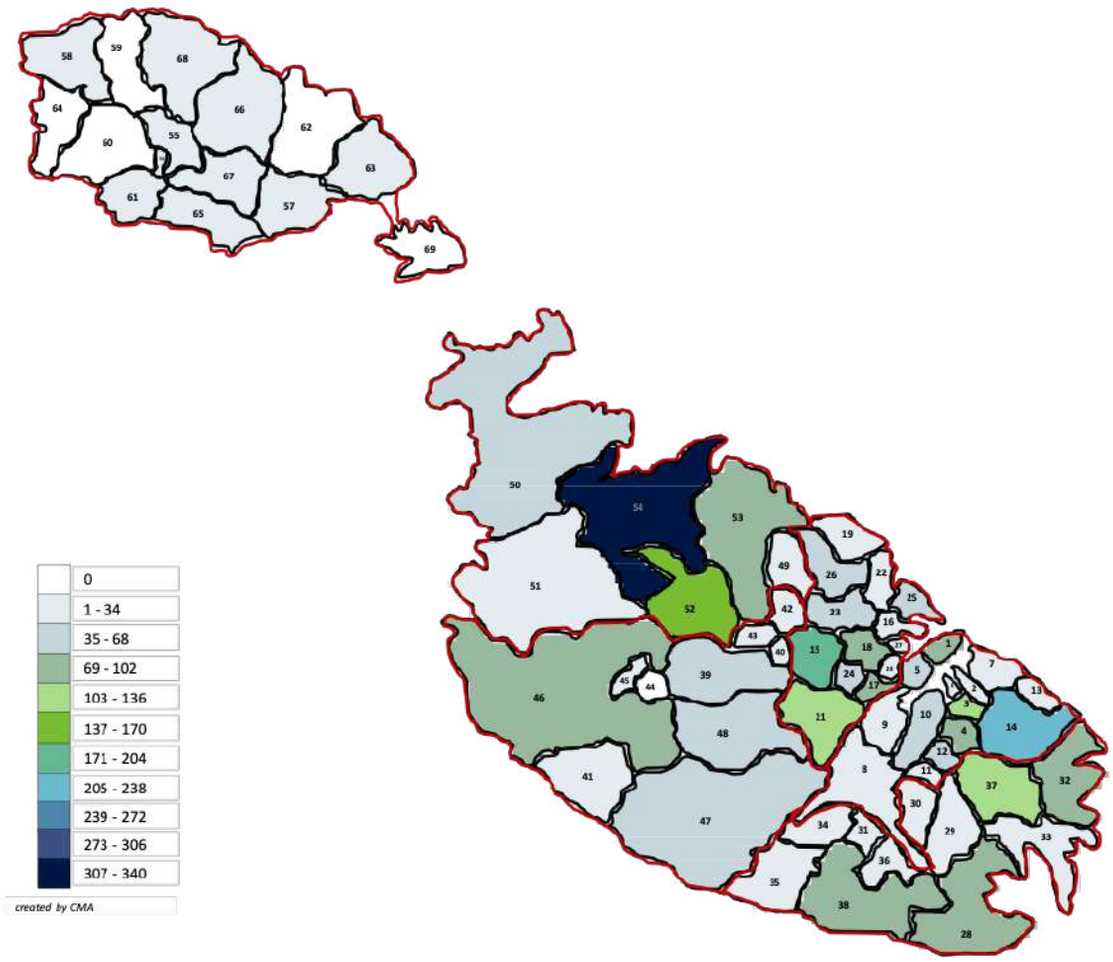
Figure 40: The number of cases worked with at Addictions Community Service by district of residence and year.




*Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District; NS = Not specified district or unborn.*

# Agency for Community and Therapeutic Services.

Figure 41: The NUMBER of cases worked with at Agency for Community and Therapeutic Services (ACTS) between January and December 2025 by town of residence.




### Southern Harbour District

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

### Northern Harbour Districts

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

### South Eastern District

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

### Western District

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

### Northern District

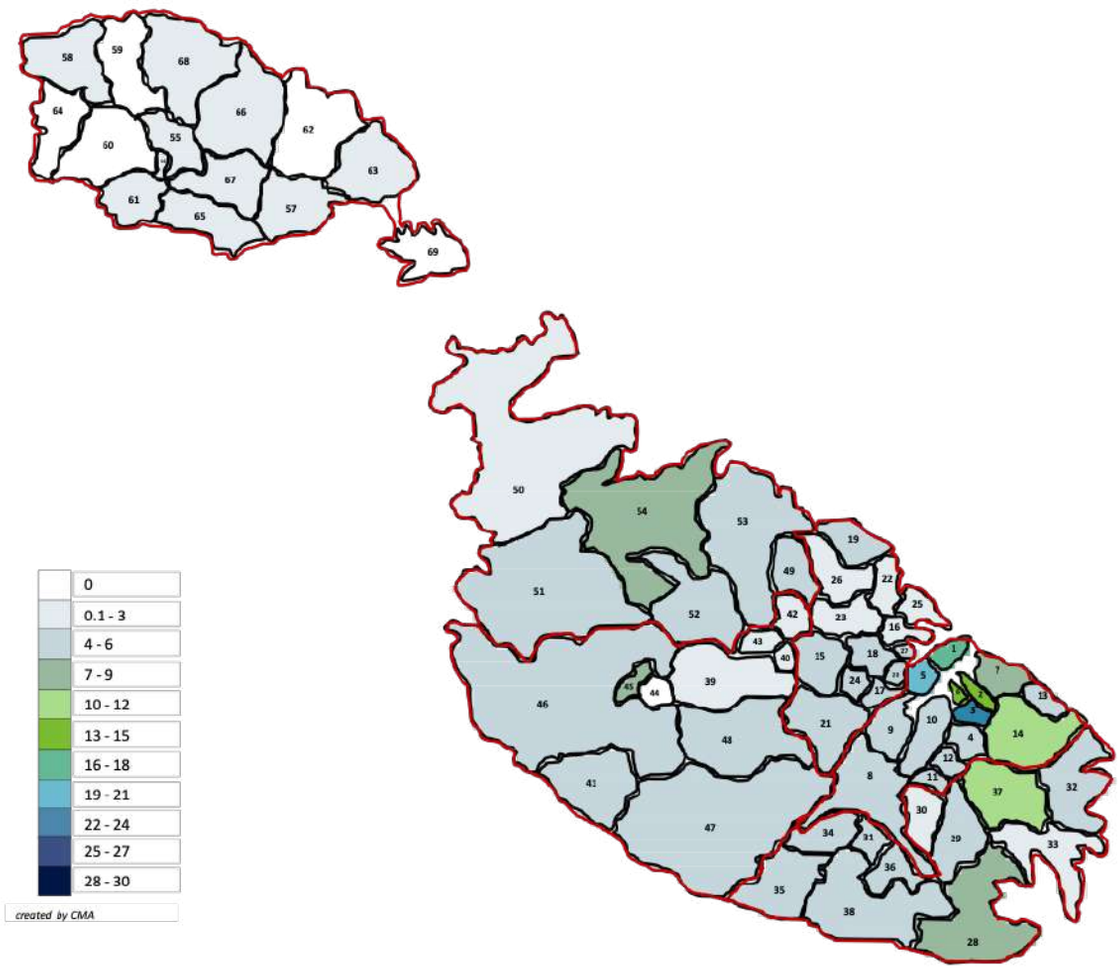
49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

### Gozo and Comino

55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: On an Agency for Community and Therapeutic Services level the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of San Pawl il-Bahar with 338 cases worked with (see raw data in Appendix A).*

Figure 42: The RATE of cases worked with at Agency for Community and Therapeutic Services (ACTS) between January and December 2025 by town of residence (per 1,000 residents).




### Southern Harbour District

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

### Northern Harbour Districts

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

### South Eastern District

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

### Western District

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

### Northern District

49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

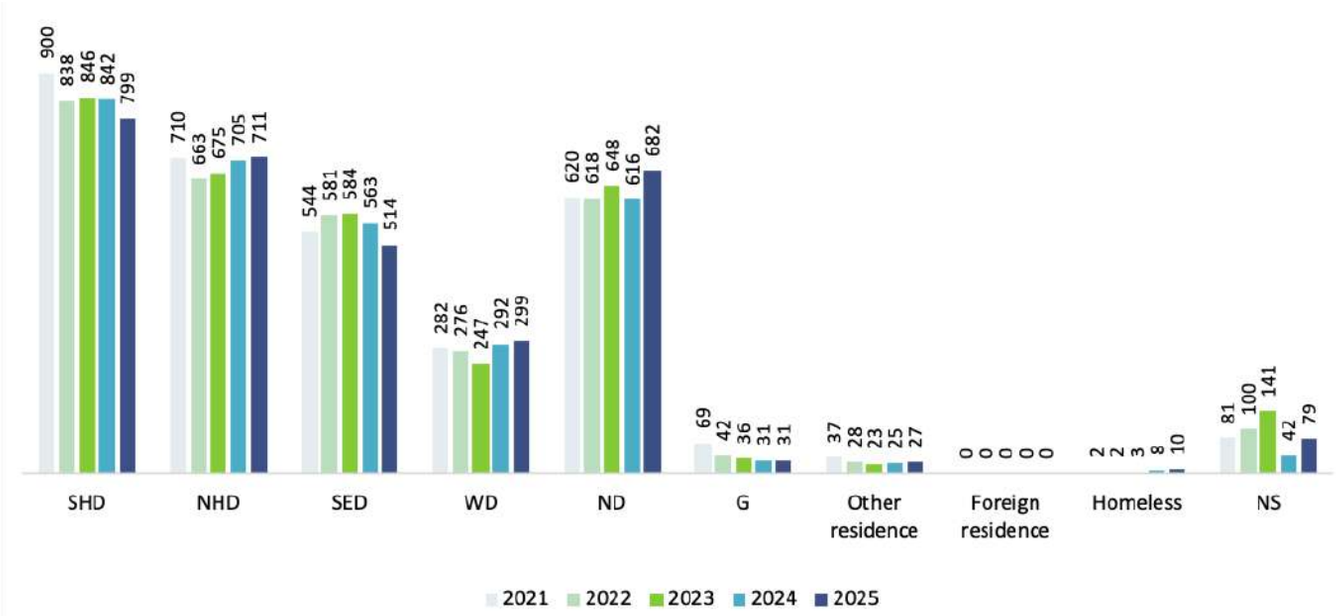
### Gozo and Comino

55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: When the population of the town is taken into consideration, and we calculate the rate per 1,000 residents, the town with the highest rate of cases worked with was Bormla, with a rate of 22 per 1,000 residents (see Appendix C).*

On an Agency for Community and Therapeutic Services (ACTS) level the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of San Pawl il-Bahar with 338 cases worked with (see Figure 41) but the town with the highest rate of cases worked with was Bormla, with a rate of 22 per 1,000 residents (see Figure 42). In terms of district, the highest number of cases worked with between January and December 2025 resided in the Southern Harbour District (799 cases) (see Figure 43) and the highest rate was in the Southern Harbour District with a rate of 9 per 1,000 residents (see Figure 44).

Figure 43: The number of cases worked with at Agency for Community and Therapeutic Services (ACTS) by district of residence and year.




*Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District; NS = Not specified district or unborn.*

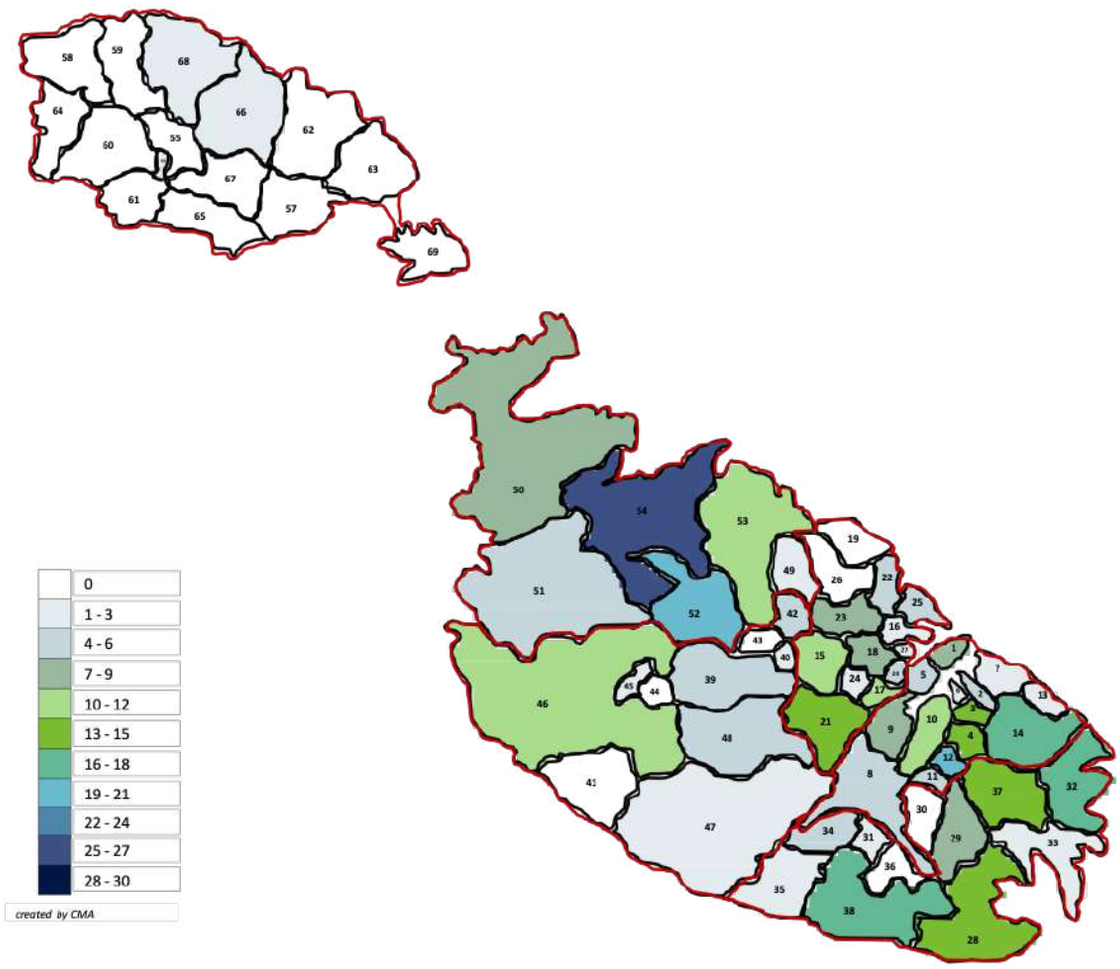
Figure 44: The rate of cases worked with at Agency for Community and Therapeutic Services (ACTS) by district of residence and year (per 1,000 residents).




*Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District.*

# Agency for Community and Therapeutic Services: Service level cases.

Figure 45: The number of cases worked with at Home Based Therapeutic Services (HBTS) between January and December 2025 by town of residence.




### Southern Harbour District

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

### Northern Harbour Districts

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

### South Eastern District

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

### Western District

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

### Northern District

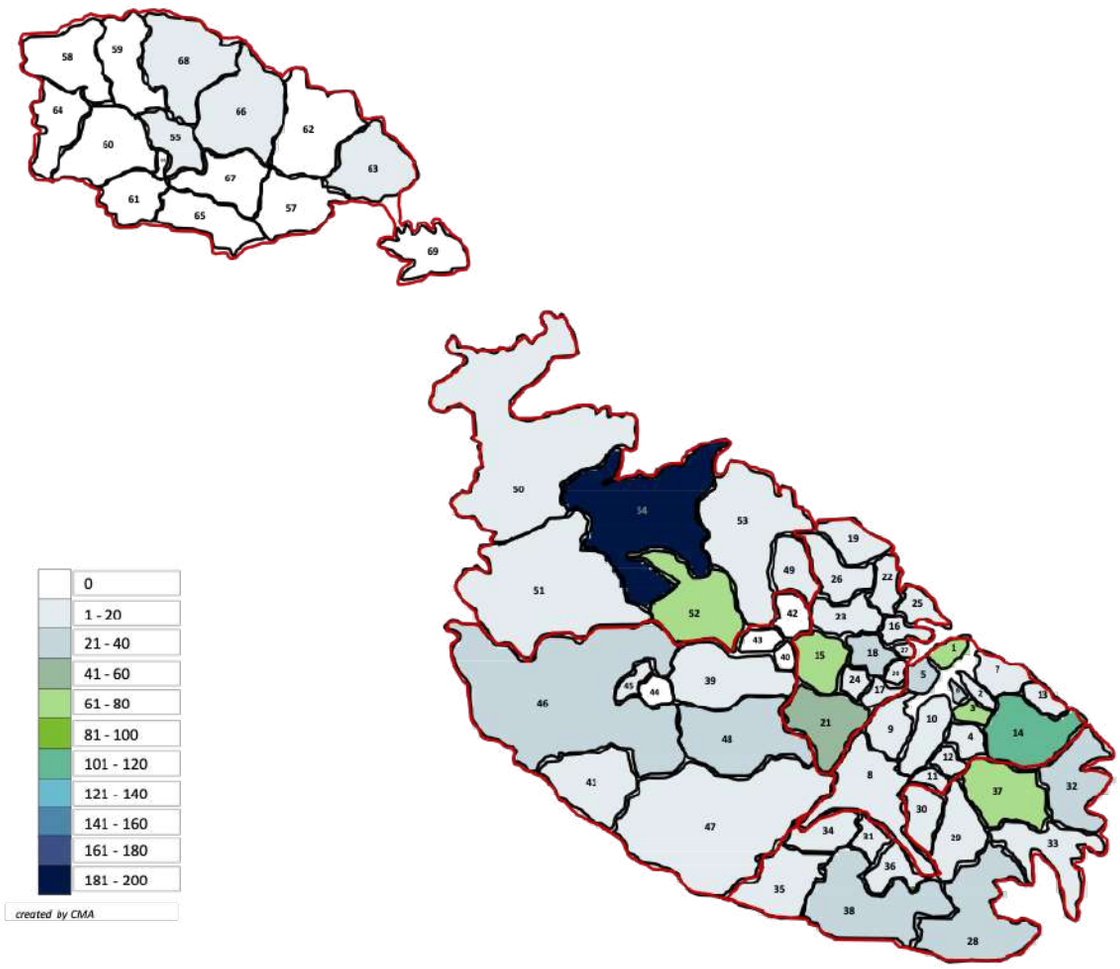
49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

### Gozo and Comino

55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: On a Home Based Therapeutic Services (HBTS) level the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of San Pawl il-Bahar with 26 cases worked with (see raw data in Appendix B).*

Figure 46: The number of cases worked with at Community Services between January and December 2025 by town of residence.




### Southern Harbour District

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

### Northern Harbour Districts

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

### South Eastern District

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

### Western District

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

### Northern District

49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

### Gozo and Comino

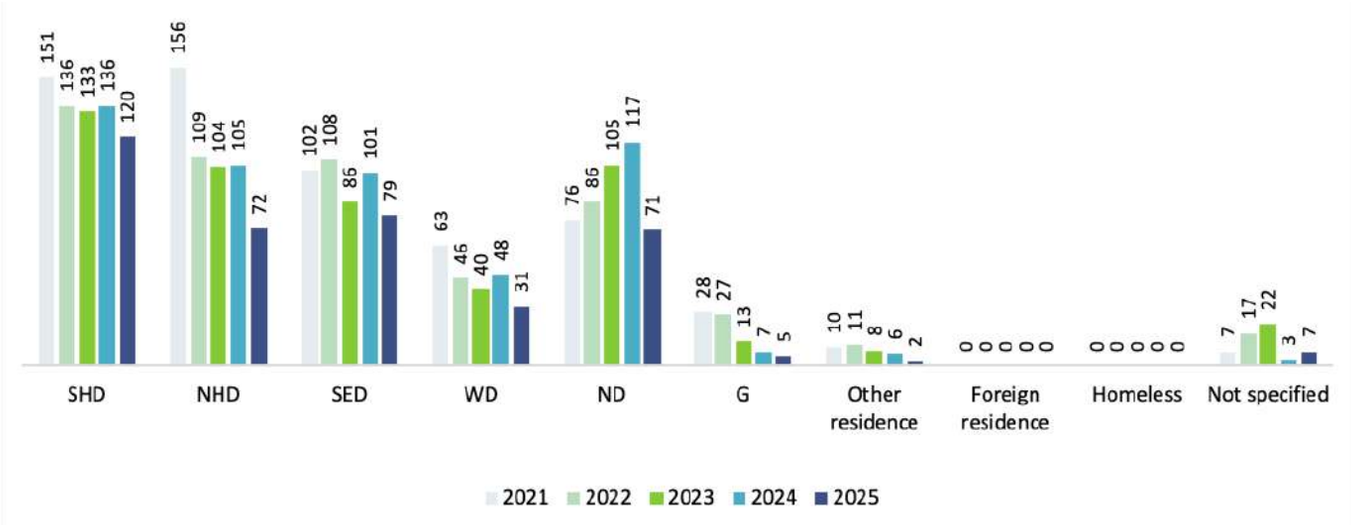
55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: On a Community Services level the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of San Pawl il-Bahar with 195 cases worked with (see raw data in Appendix B).*

*Note: In Jan-Dec 2025, the Community Services consisted of Birkirkara, Cottonera, Mosta, Msida, Northern Harbour, Paolo Friere, Qawra, Southern, Valletta, Western, and Zabbar Community Services.*

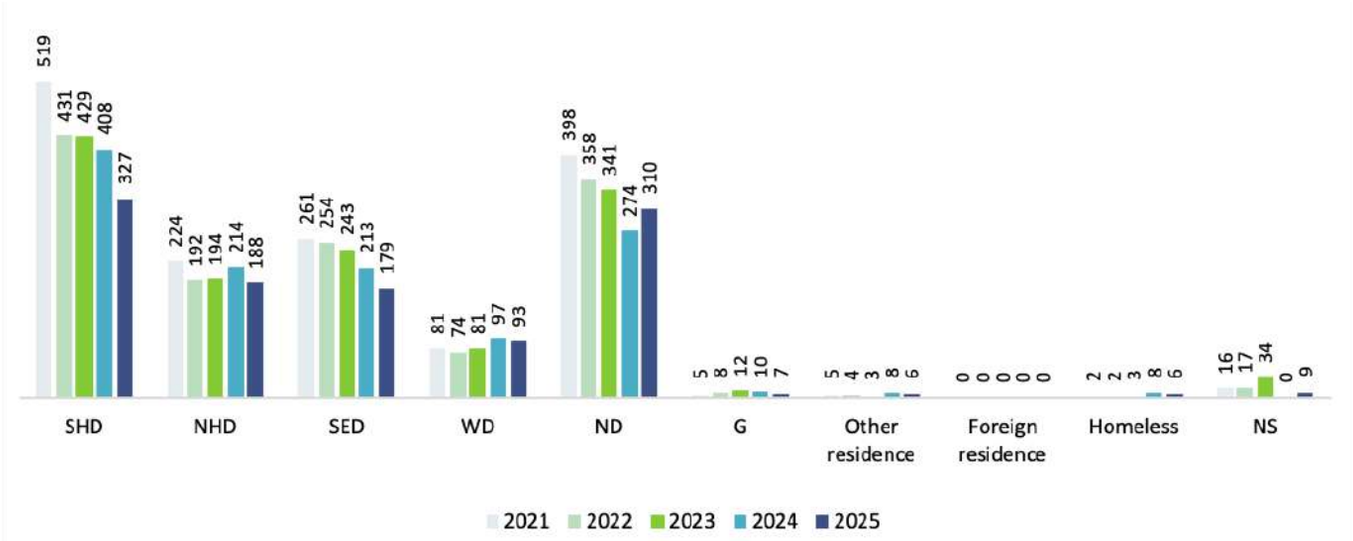
In this section we focused on a few key services in Agency for Community and Therapeutic Services (ACTS) which are the Home Based Therapeutic Services (HBTS) and the Community Services. On an HBTS level, the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of San Pawl il-Bahar with 26 cases worked with (see Figure 45), and within the Southern Harbour District with 120 cases (see Figure 47). On a Community Services level, the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of San Pawl il-Bahar with 195 cases worked with (see Figure 46), and within the Southern Harbour District with 327 cases (see Figure 48).

Figure 47: The number of cases worked with at Home Based Therapeutic Services (HBTS) by district of residence and year.




*Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District; NS = Not specified district or unborn.*

Figure 48: The number of cases worked with at Community Services by district of residence and year.

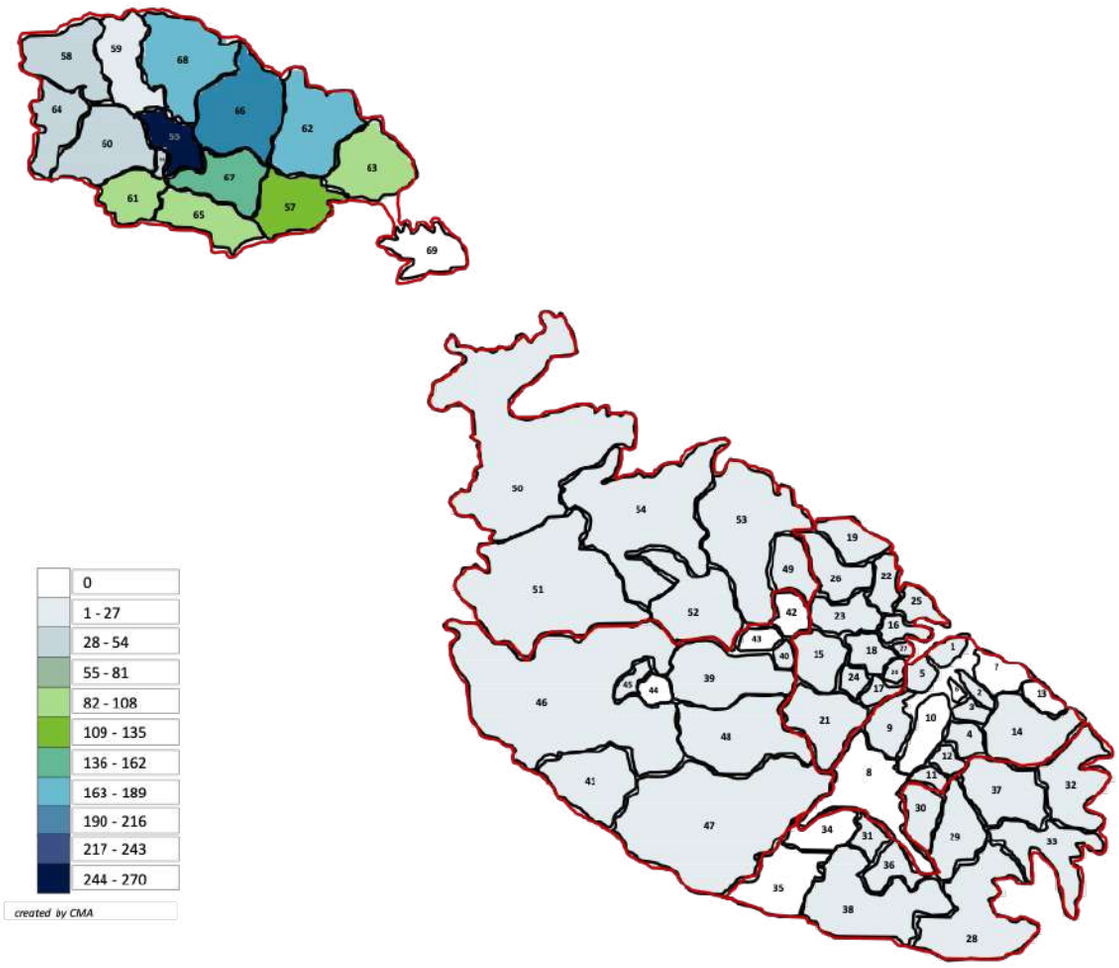



*Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District; NS = Not specified district or unborn.*

*Figure note: Community Services in 2016-2019 consisted of Paolo Friere Institute, Birkirkara, Cottonera, Msida, Qawra, and Valletta. Since 2020 the Community Services consisted of Birkirkara, Cottonera, Msida, Mosta, Northern Harbour, Paolo Friere, Qawra, Southern, Valletta, Western, and Zabbar.*

# FSWS Gozo Branch Operations.

Figure 49: The NUMBER of cases worked with at FSWS Gozo Branch Operations between January and December 2025 by town of residence.




### Southern Harbour District

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

### Northern Harbour Districts

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

### South Eastern District

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

### Western District

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

### Northern District

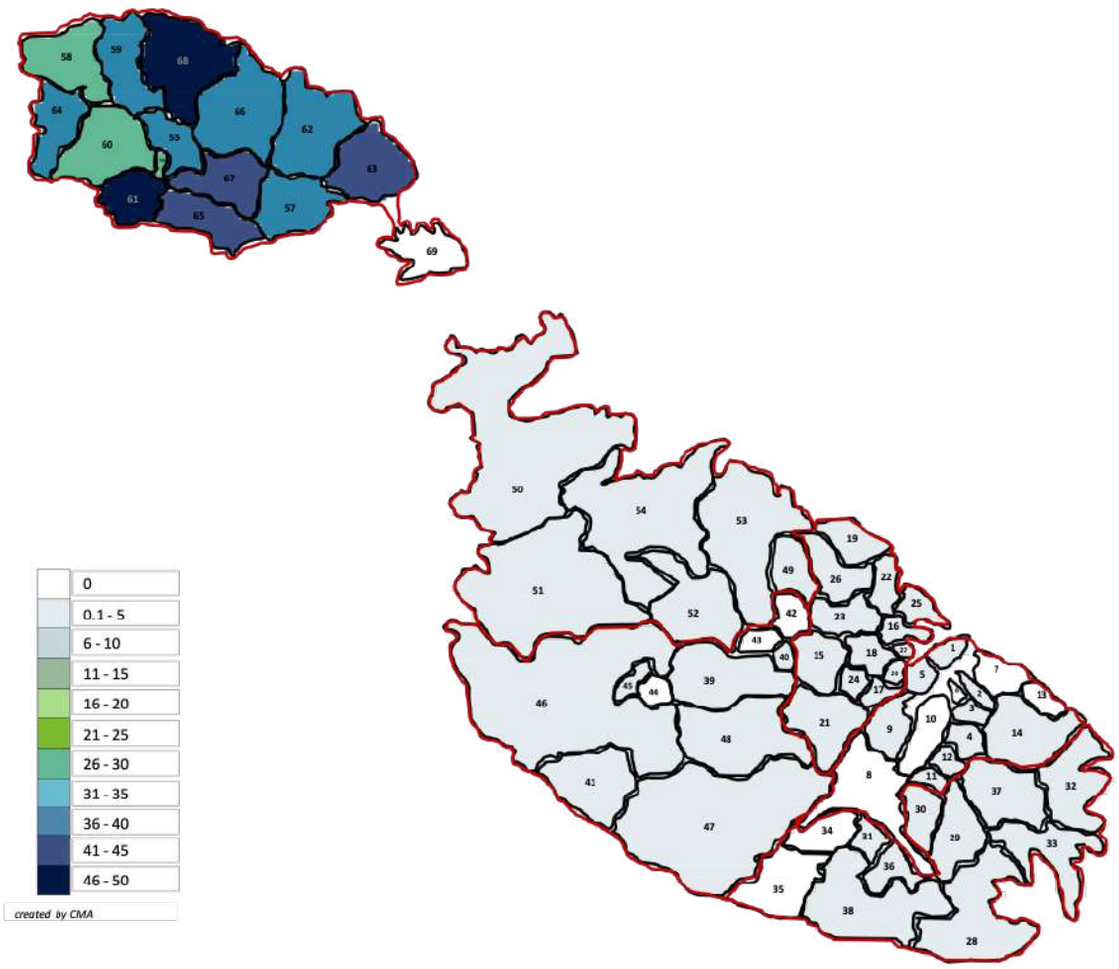
49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

### Gozo and Comino

55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: On a FSWS Gozo Branch Operations level the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of Rabat Gozo with 268 cases worked with (see raw data in Appendix A).*

Figure 50: The RATE of cases worked with at FSWS Gozo Branch Operations between January and December 2025 by town of residence (per 1,000 residents).




### Southern Harbour District

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

### Northern Harbour Districts

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

### South Eastern District

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

### Western District

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

### Northern District

49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

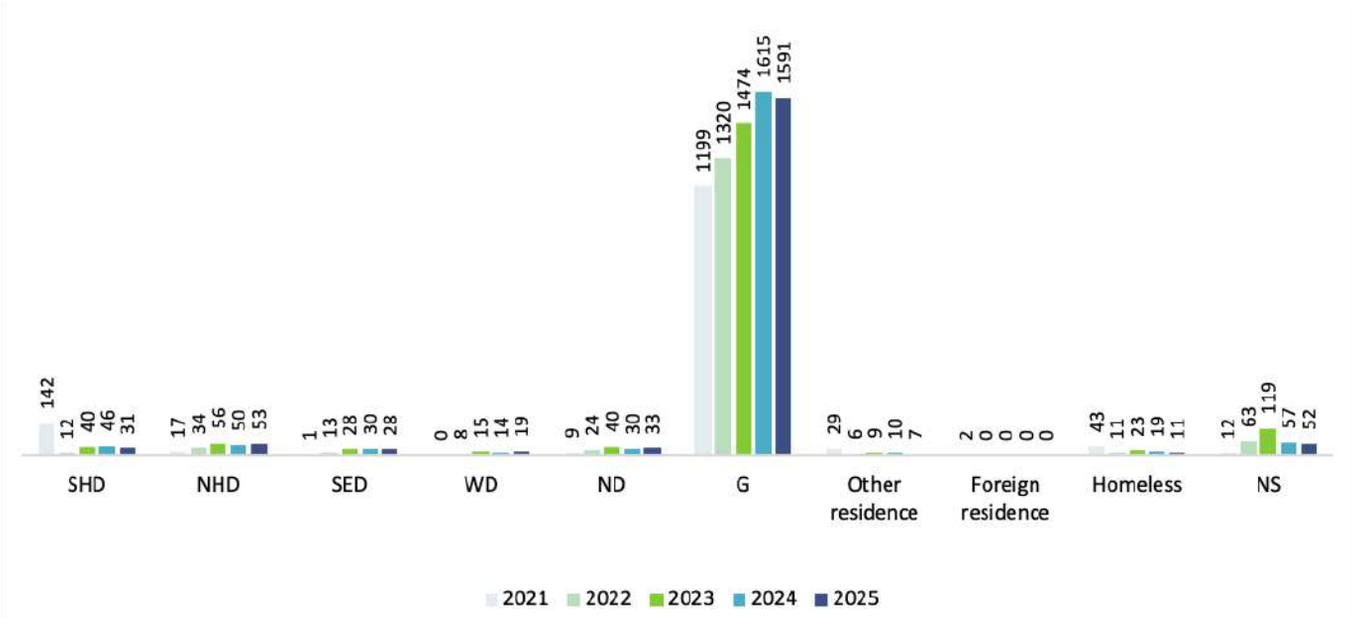
### Gozo and Comino

55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: When the population of the town is taken into consideration, and we calculate the rate per 1,000 residents, the town with the highest rate of cases worked with was Munxar Gozo, with a rate of 50 per 1,000 residents and Zebbug Gozo, with a rate of 49 per 1,000 residents (see Appendix C).*

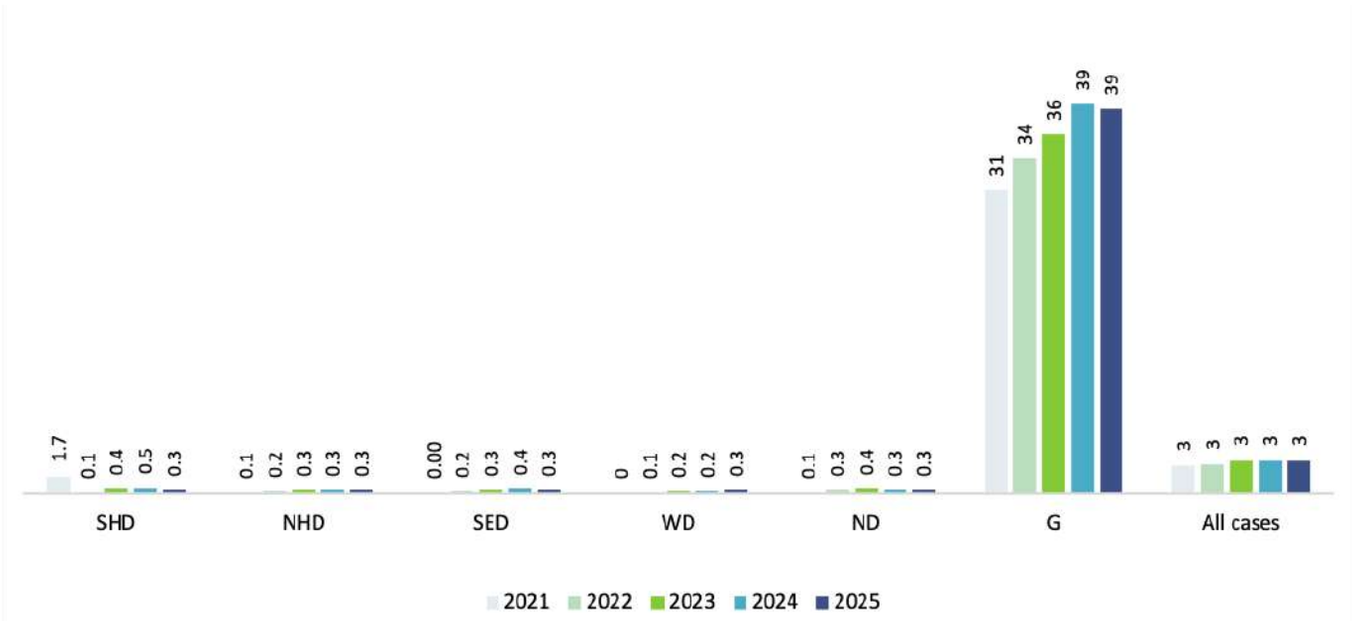
On an FSWS Gozo Branch Operations level the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of Rabat Gozo with 268 cases worked with (see Figure 49) but the town with the highest rate of cases worked with was Munxar Gozo, with a rate of 50 per 1,000 residents and Zebbug Gozo, with a rate of 49 per 1,000 residents (see Figure 50). In terms of district, the highest number of cases worked with between January and December 2025 resided in the Gozo District with 1,591 cases (see Figure 51) and the highest rate was in the Gozo District with a rate of 39 per 1,000 residents (see Figure 52).

Figure 51: The number of cases worked with at FSWS Gozo Branch Operations by district of residence and year.




*Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District; NS = Not specified district or unborn.*

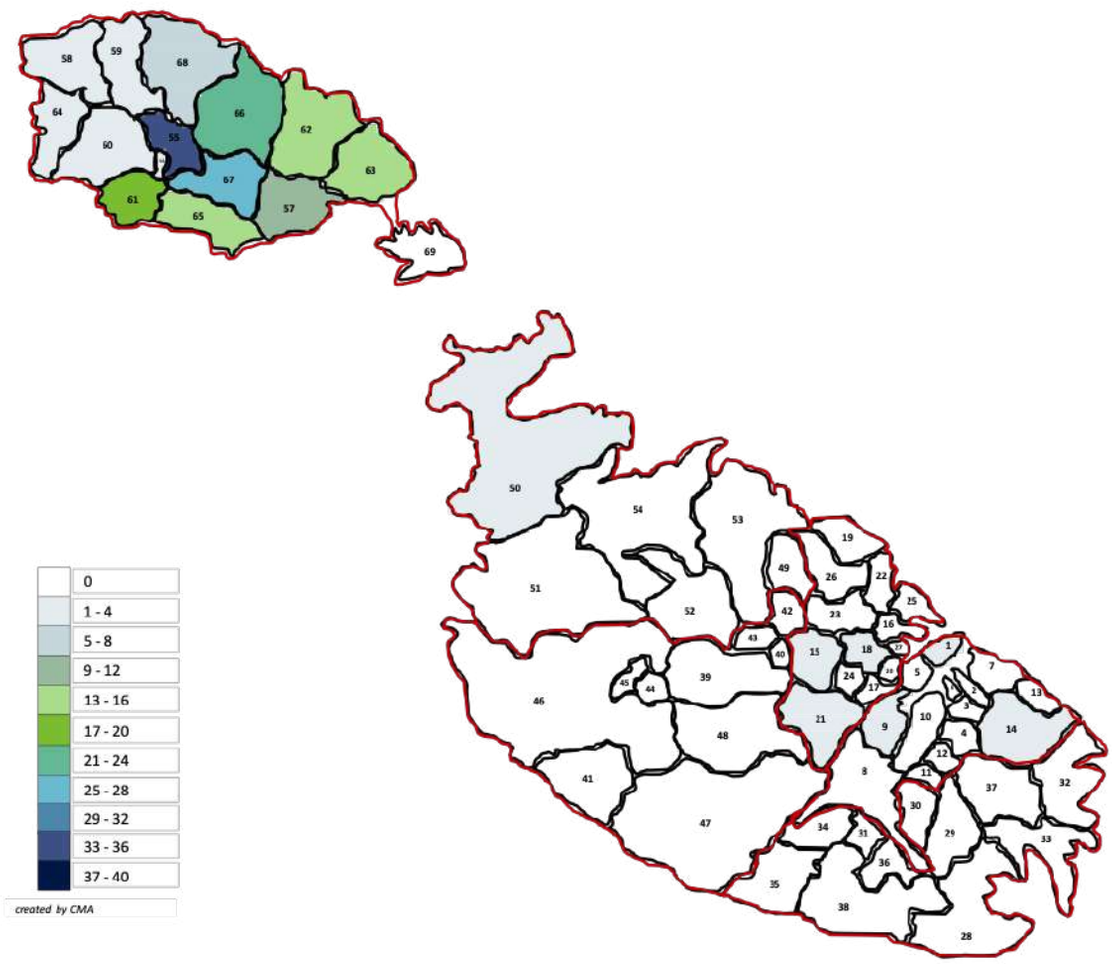
Figure 52: The rate of cases worked with at FSWS Gozo Branch Operations by district of residence and year (per 1,000 residents).




*Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District.*

# FSWS Gozo Branch Operations: Service level cases.

Figure 53: The number of cases worked with at Gozo Generic Service between January and December 2025 by town of residence.




### Southern Harbour District

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

### Northern Harbour Districts

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

### South Eastern District

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

### Western District

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

### Northern District

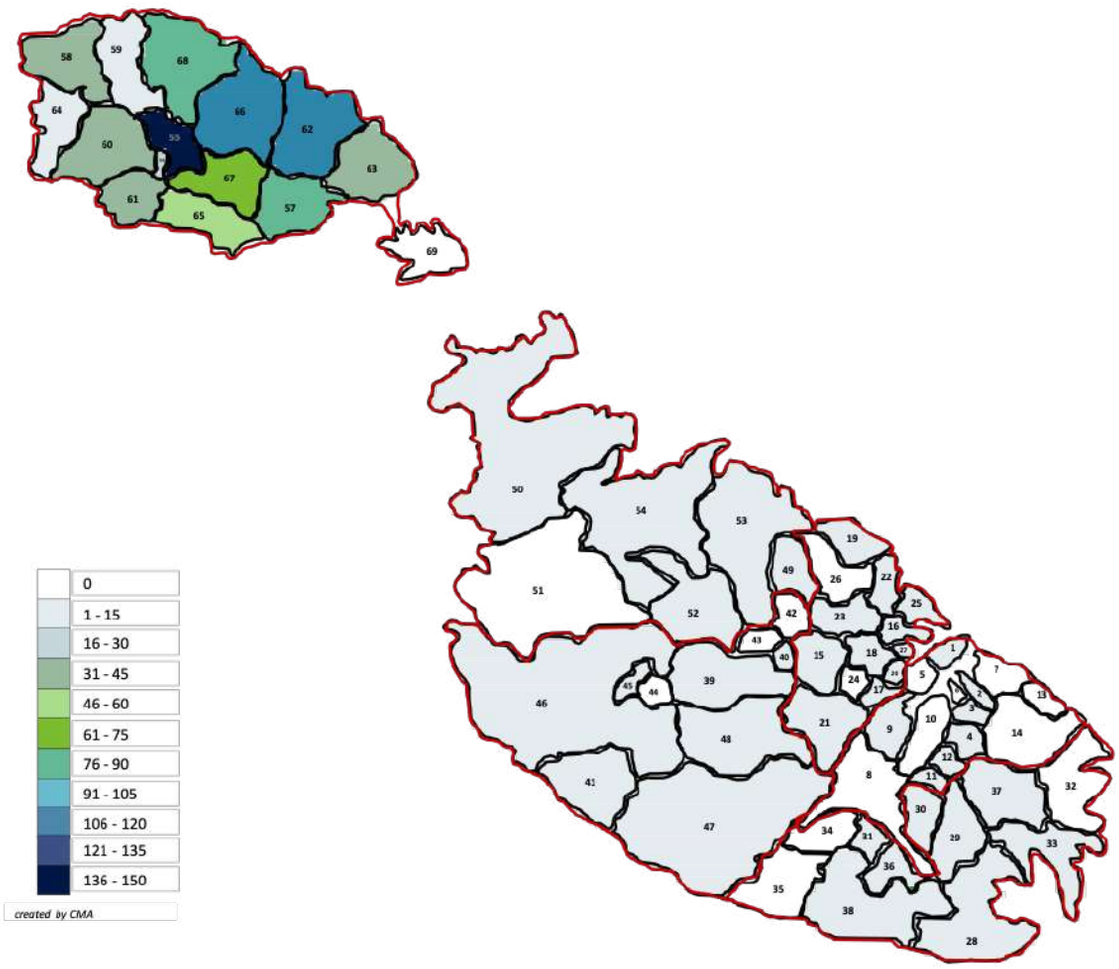
49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

### Gozo and Comino

55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: On a Gozo Generic Service level the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of Rabat Gozo with 34 cases worked with (see raw data in Appendix B).*

Figure 54: The number of cases worked with at Gozo General Hospital Service between January and December 2025 by town of residence.




### Southern Harbour District

1. Valletta
2. Birgu
3. Bormla
4. Fgura
5. Floriana
6. Isla
7. Kalkara
8. Luqa
9. Marsa
10. Paola
11. Santa Luċija
12. Tarxien
13. Xagħjra
14. Żabbar

### Northern Harbour Districts

15. Birkirkara
16. Gżira
17. Ħamrun
18. Msida
19. Pembroke
20. Pieta
21. Qormi
22. San Ġiljan
23. San Ġwann
24. Santa Venera
25. Sliema
26. Swieqi
27. Ta Xbiex

### South Eastern District

28. Birżebbuġa
29. Għaxaq
30. Gudja
31. Kirkop
32. Marsaskala
33. Marsaxlokk
34. Mqabba
35. Qrendi
36. Safi
37. Żejtun
38. Żurrieq

### Western District

39. Attard
40. Balzan
41. Dingli
42. Iklin
43. Lija
44. Mdina
45. Mtarfa
46. Rabat
47. Siġġiewi
48. Żebbuġ

### Northern District

49. Għargħur
50. Mellieħa
51. Mġarr
52. Mosta
53. Naxxar
54. San Pawl il-Baħar

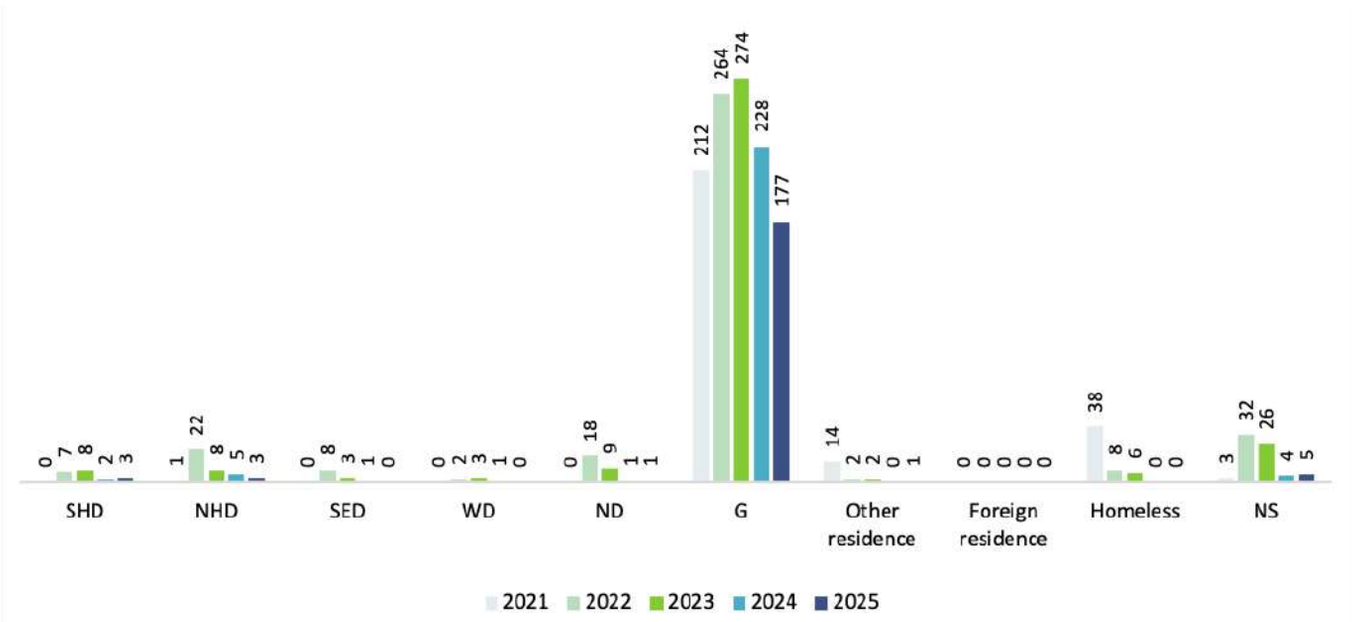
### Gozo and Comino

55. Rabat
56. Fontana
57. Għajnsielem
58. Għarb
59. Għasri
60. Kerċem
61. Munxar
62. Nadur
63. Qala
64. San Lawrenz
65. Sannat
66. Xagħra
67. Xewkija
68. Żebbuġ
69. Comino

*Figure note: On a Gozo General Hospital Service level the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of Rabat Gozo with 144 cases worked with (see raw data in Appendix B).*

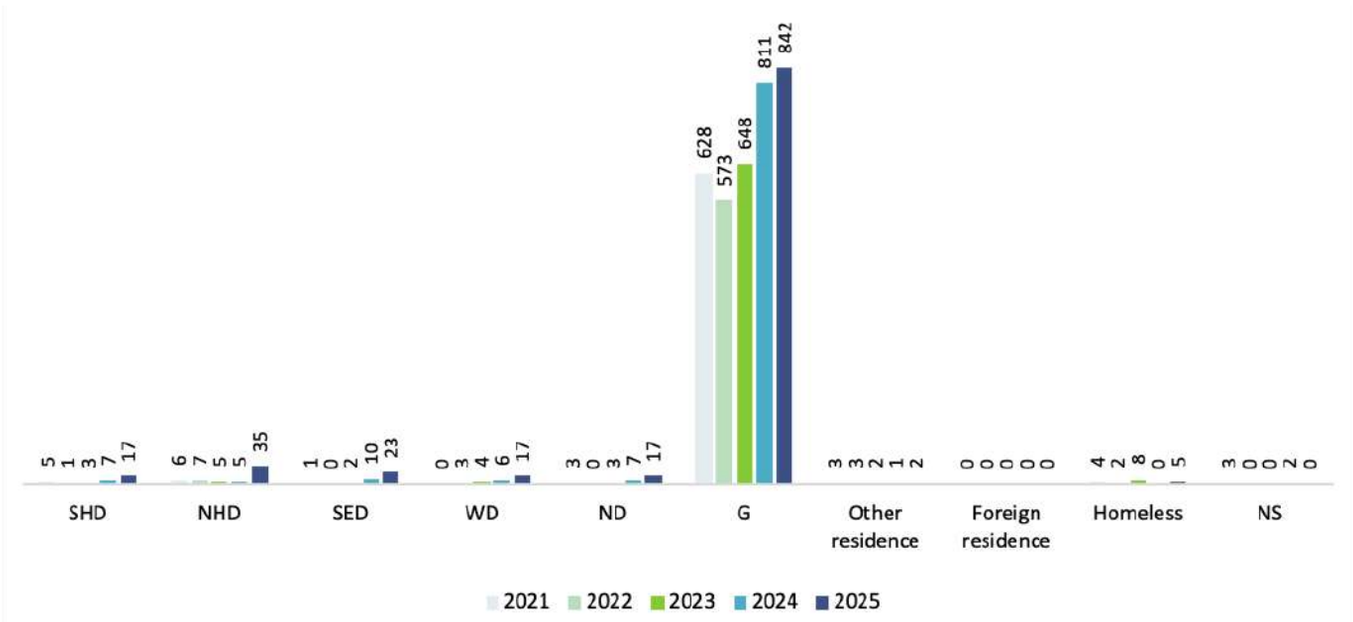
In this section we focused on a few key services in FSWS Gozo Branch Operations which are Gozo Generic Service and the Gozo General Hospital Social Work Service. On a Generic Service level, the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of Rabat Gozo with 34 cases worked with (see Figure 53), and within the Gozo District with 177 cases (see Figure 55). On a Gozo General Hospital level, the highest number of cases worked with resided in the town of Rabat Gozo with 144 cases worked with (see Figure 54), and within the Gozo District with 842 cases (see Figure 56). Southern Harbour District with 327 cases (see Figure 48).

Figure 55: The number of cases worked with at Gozo Generic Service by district of residence and year.




*Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District; NS = Not specified district or unborn.*

Figure 56: The number of cases worked with at Gozo General Hospital Social Work Service by district of residence and year.




*Graph Key: SHD = Southern Harbour District; NHD = Northern Harbour District; SED = Southeastern District; WD = Western District; ND = Northern District; G = Gozo District; NS = Not specified district or unborn.*

# Highlights

The largest number of cases worked with within the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS) between January and December 2025 reported residing within the Northern Harbour District (with 6,434 cases) (see Figure 2).

On the other hand, when we account for differences in population size, the highest rate of cases (per 1,000 residents) worked with within the FSWS reported residing within the Southern Harbour District (with a rate of 61 per 1,000 residents) (see Figure 4).

The towns with the highest rate per 1,000 residents of cases worked with in the FSWS between January and December 2025 were Bormla (rate of 131 per 1,000 residents), followed by Valletta (rate of 97 per 1,000 residents) (see Figure 57).

The towns with the highest rate per 1,000 residents remained stable over time (see Figure 59), with the data of Jan-Dec 2025 indicating a similar pattern as the past three reporting years.

The towns with the largest increase in rate per 1,000 residents in 2025 compared to 2024 were Munxar (Gozo) (increasing from 58 to 75 per 1,000 residents) and Sannat (Gozo) (increasing from 47 to 59 per 1,000 residents) (see Figure 58).

Figure 57: Top 5 towns with the highest rate of cases worked with at FSWS between January and December 2025 by yearly rate (per 1,000 residents).

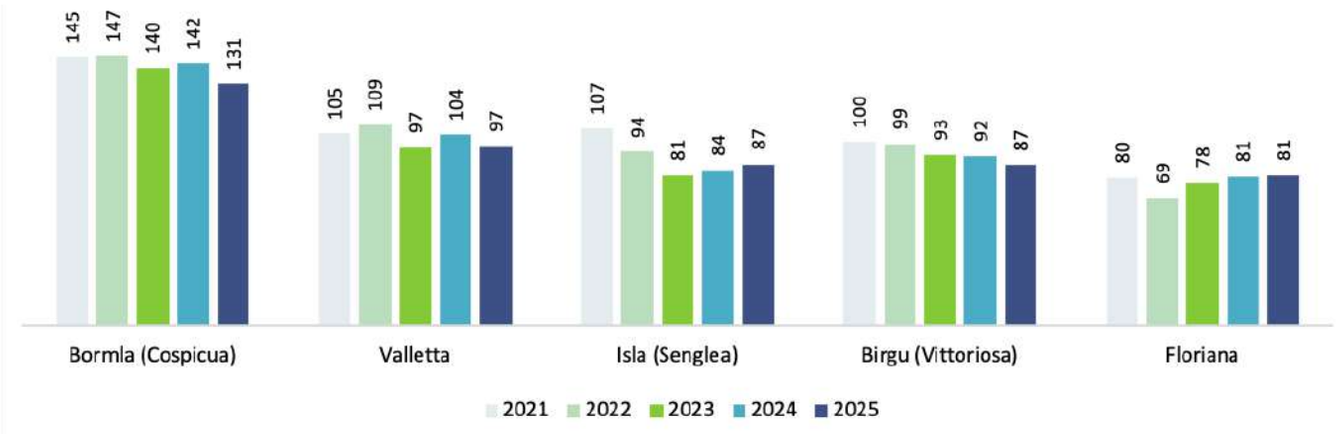



Figure 58: Top 5 towns with the largest increase in 2025 compared to 2024 in rate (per 1,000 residents) of cases worked with at FSWS.

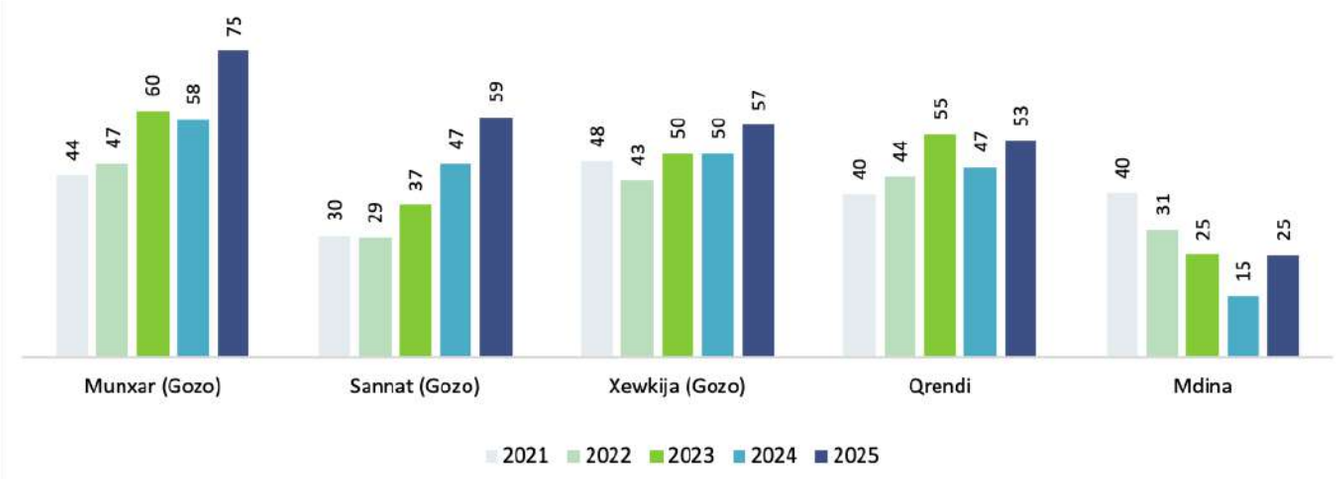


Figure 59: The rate of cases worked with at FSWS in 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025 by town of residence (per 1,000 residents).

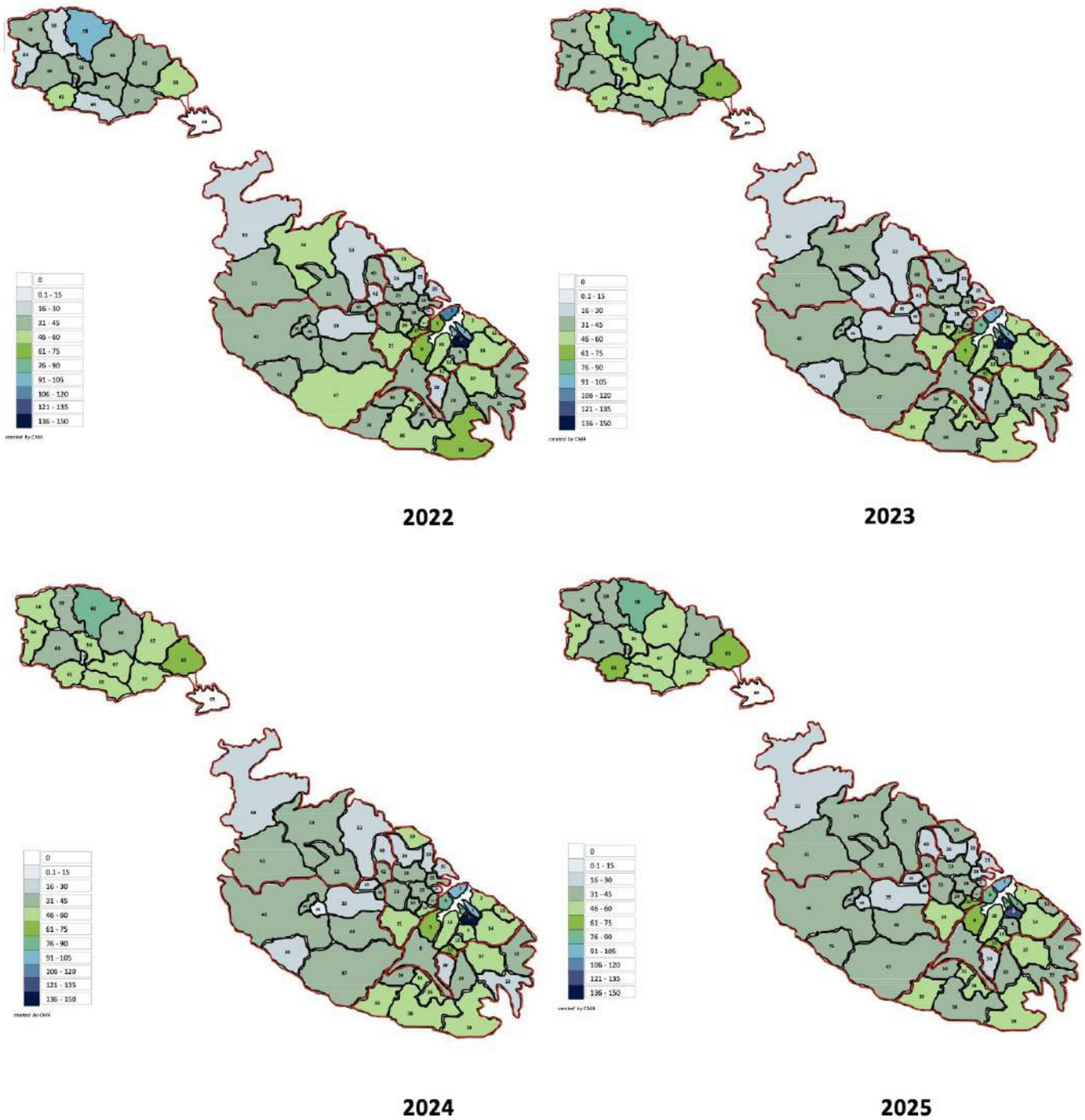



*Figure note: see Appendix D for town and number.*

# Appendix

Appendix A: Number of cases worked with between January and December 2025 by town and agency.

| District | Town | Appogg (all) | Appogg (indiv/fam) | Appogg (health) | Child Protection | Alternative Care | ACTS | Sedqa | Gozo Branch | FSWS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WD | Attard | 124 | 58 | 66 | 67 | 69 | 42 | 29 | 1 | 332 |
| WD | Balzan | 67 | 18 | 49 | 18 | 22 | 13 | 20 | 2 | 142 |
| SHD | Birgu (Vittoriosa) | 57 | 18 | 39 | 53 | 36 | 29 | 21 | 2 | 198 |
| NHD | Birkirkara | 560 | 204 | 356 | 215 | 107 | 184 | 163 | 9 | 1238 |
| SED | Birzebbugia | 241 | 143 | 98 | 137 | 71 | 87 | 82 | 5 | 623 |
| SHD | Bormla (Cospicua) | 204 | 88 | 116 | 134 | 54 | 104 | 127 | 4 | 627 |
| WD | Dingli | 58 | 21 | 37 | 15 | 8 | 21 | 21 | 1 | 124 |
| SHD | Fgura | 251 | 146 | 105 | 105 | 57 | 85 | 92 | 6 | 596 |
| SHD | Floriana | 56 | 15 | 41 | 28 | 8 | 42 | 33 | 1 | 168 |
| G | Fontana (Gozo) | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 30 | 35 |
| G | Għajn-sielem (Gozo) | 10 | 6 | 4 | 23 | 13 | 3 | 4 | 135 | 188 |
| G | Gharb (Gozo) | 4 | 1 | 3 | 12 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 47 | 68 |
| ND | Għargħur | 37 | 17 | 20 | 18 | 23 | 21 | 9 | 3 | 111 |
| G | Għasri | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 19 | 23 |
| SED | Għaxaq | 91 | 39 | 52 | 48 | 37 | 29 | 23 | 4 | 232 |
| SED | Gudja | 58 | 23 | 35 | 16 | 3 | 8 | 12 | 2 | 99 |
| NHD | Gżira | 162 | 85 | 77 | 52 | 19 | 26 | 79 | 2 | 340 |
| NHD | Ħamrun | 316 | 149 | 167 | 109 | 106 | 74 | 117 | 4 | 726 |
| WD | Iklin | 64 | 23 | 41 | 25 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 0 | 116 |
| SHD | Isla (Senglea) | 84 | 32 | 52 | 29 | 16 | 33 | 47 | 0 | 209 |
| SHD | Kalkara | 51 | 21 | 30 | 40 | 26 | 28 | 38 | 0 | 183 |
| G | Kercem (Gozo) | 2 | 0 | 2 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 52 | 60 |
| SED | Kirkop | 48 | 26 | 22 | 25 | 32 | 11 | 14 | 2 | 132 |
| WD | Lija | 46 | 20 | 26 | 21 | 12 | 4 | 10 | 0 | 93 |
| SHD | Luqa | 121 | 59 | 62 | 46 | 42 | 28 | 32 | 0 | 269 |
| SHD | Marsa | 135 | 84 | 51 | 87 | 40 | 30 | 64 | 7 | 363 |
| SED | Marsaskala | 312 | 166 | 146 | 202 | 110 | 99 | 96 | 2 | 821 |
| SED | Marsaxlokk | 60 | 30 | 30 | 39 | 18 | 12 | 2 | 1 | 132 |
| WD | Mdina | 5 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| ND | Mellieħa | 167 | 77 | 90 | 95 | 48 | 49 | 48 | 10 | 417 |
| ND | Mġarr | 75 | 45 | 30 | 35 | 38 | 25 | 11 | 1 | 185 |
| ND | Mosta | 343 | 140 | 203 | 172 | 146 | 162 | 74 | 3 | 900 |
| SED | Mqabba | 60 | 34 | 26 | 14 | 24 | 19 | 12 | 0 | 129 |
| NHD | Msida | 233 | 114 | 119 | 113 | 67 | 77 | 83 | 6 | 579 |
| WD | Mtarfa | 36 | 20 | 16 | 18 | 13 | 23 | 9 | 2 | 101 |

| District | Town | Appogg (all) | Appogg (indiv/fam) | Appogg (health) | Child Protection | Alternative Care | ACTS | Sedqa | Gozo Branch | FSWS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| G | Munxar (Gozo) | 10 | 7 | 3 | 29 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 96 | 144 |
| G | Nadur (Gozo) | 3 | 2 | 1 | 11 | 4 | 0 | 7 | 175 | 200 |
| ND | Naxxar | 212 | 90 | 122 | 118 | 90 | 87 | 64 | 5 | 576 |
| SHD | Paola | 246 | 121 | 125 | 112 | 52 | 45 | 91 | 0 | 546 |
| NHD | Pembroke | 62 | 40 | 22 | 25 | 31 | 17 | 27 | 2 | 164 |
| NHD | Pieta | 77 | 54 | 23 | 55 | 49 | 26 | 44 | 2 | 253 |
| G | Qala (Gozo) | 9 | 7 | 2 | 17 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 107 | 151 |
| NHD | Qormi | 386 | 165 | 221 | 206 | 129 | 124 | 119 | 15 | 979 |
| SED | Qrendi | 52 | 25 | 27 | 35 | 39 | 21 | 29 | 0 | 176 |
| G | Rabat (Gozo) | 15 | 9 | 6 | 37 | 12 | 2 | 16 | 268 | 350 |
| WD | Rabat (Malta) | 159 | 53 | 106 | 68 | 63 | 70 | 55 | 3 | 418 |
| SED | Safi | 57 | 33 | 24 | 33 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 1 | 142 |
| NHD | San Giljan | 163 | 62 | 101 | 49 | 15 | 9 | 52 | 2 | 290 |
| NHD | San Gwann | 250 | 98 | 152 | 92 | 45 | 47 | 96 | 2 | 532 |
| G | San Lawrenz (Gozo) | 1 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 31 | 39 |
| ND | San Pawl il-Baħar | 568 | 273 | 295 | 382 | 176 | 338 | 151 | 11 | 1626 |
| G | Sannat (Gozo) | 6 | 5 | 1 | 23 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 93 | 133 |
| SHD | Santa Lucija | 69 | 32 | 37 | 28 | 23 | 10 | 35 | 2 | 167 |
| NHD | Santa Venera | 173 | 76 | 97 | 88 | 68 | 41 | 68 | 1 | 439 |
| WD | Siġġiewi | 184 | 80 | 104 | 105 | 67 | 51 | 32 | 3 | 442 |
| NHD | Sliema | 276 | 105 | 171 | 75 | 72 | 37 | 68 | 5 | 533 |
| NHD | Swieqi | 139 | 65 | 74 | 63 | 23 | 35 | 41 | 1 | 302 |
| NHD | Ta Xbiex | 21 | 10 | 11 | 8 | 12 | 14 | 2 | 2 | 59 |
| SHD | Tarxien | 182 | 101 | 81 | 107 | 71 | 58 | 66 | 3 | 487 |
| SHD | Valletta | 144 | 54 | 90 | 108 | 34 | 89 | 127 | 3 | 505 |
| G | Xagħra (Gozo) | 7 | 2 | 5 | 31 | 6 | 3 | 8 | 201 | 256 |
| G | Xewkija (Gozo) | 8 | 5 | 3 | 29 | 13 | 2 | 4 | 155 | 211 |
| SHD | Xgħajra (Malta) | 30 | 9 | 21 | 27 | 18 | 10 | 11 | 0 | 96 |
| SHD | Żabbar | 383 | 167 | 216 | 211 | 136 | 208 | 138 | 3 | 1079 |
| G | Żebbug (Gozo) | 30 | 21 | 9 | 27 | 16 | 9 | 19 | 182 | 283 |
| WD | Żebbug (Malta) | 215 | 113 | 102 | 107 | 67 | 66 | 56 | 7 | 518 |

| District | Town | Appogg (all) | Appogg (indiv/fam) | Appogg (health) | Child Protection | Alternative Care | ACTS | Sedqa | Gozo Branch | FSWS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SED | Żejtun | 252 | 124 | 128 | 159 | 88 | 131 | 84 | 7 | 721 |
| SED | Żurrieq | 226 | 137 | 89 | 108 | 91 | 80 | 36 | 4 | 545 |
| G | Comino | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Other residence | 1998 | 278 | 1720 | 148 | 209 | 37 | 76 | 18 | 2486 |
| | Not specified/ unborn | 462 | 241 | 221 | 79 | 94 | 79 | 146 | 52 | 912 |
| | **Total cases** | **11216** | **4592** | **6624** | **4820** | **3124** | **3152** | **3187** | **1825** | **27324** |

## Appendix B: Number of cases worked with between January and December 2025 by town and service.

| District | Town | DVU | IFSS | LAC | SMOPU | ACT | HBTS | CS | Gen. | MDH | GGH |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WD | Attard | 38 | 14 | 3 | 14 | 14 | 5 | 10 | 0 | 34 | 1 |
| WD | Balzan | 10 | 2 | 4 | 11 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 28 | 1 |
| SHD | Birgu (Vittoriosa) | 15 | 0 | 10 | 13 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 0 | 23 | 2 |
| NHD | Birkirkara | 162 | 3 | 9 | 86 | 59 | 12 | 70 | 1 | 194 | 6 |
| SED | Birżebbugia | 83 | 30 | 11 | 45 | 28 | 14 | 30 | 0 | 63 | 4 |
| SHD | Bormla (Cospicua) | 63 | 4 | 5 | 70 | 39 | 15 | 62 | 0 | 62 | 2 |
| WD | Dingli | 15 | 4 | 2 | 7 | 9 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 19 | 1 |
| SHD | Fgura | 93 | 12 | 5 | 41 | 34 | 14 | 11 | 0 | 71 | 6 |
| SHD | Floriana | 15 | 0 | 0 | 23 | 9 | 6 | 25 | 0 | 30 | 0 |
| G | Fontana (Gozo) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 21 |
| G | Għajn-sielem (Gozo) | 3 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 3 | 76 |
| G | Għarb (Gozo) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 32 |
| ND | Għargħur | 13 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 0 | 12 | 2 |
| G | Ghasri | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 13 |
| SED | Għaxaq | 27 | 8 | 6 | 10 | 10 | 8 | 7 | 0 | 36 | 4 |
| SED | Gudja | 18 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 27 | 2 |
| NHD | Gżira | 55 | 13 | 2 | 44 | 25 | 3 | 6 | 0 | 57 | 2 |
| NHD | Ħamrun | 75 | 38 | 27 | 55 | 46 | 10 | 11 | 0 | 113 | 2 |
| WD | Iklin | 18 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 25 | 0 |
| SHD | Isla (Senglea) | 21 | 3 | 3 | 20 | 11 | 3 | 21 | 0 | 31 | 0 |
| SHD | Kalkara | 17 | 1 | 2 | 20 | 10 | 1 | 9 | 0 | 15 | 0 |
| G | Kercem (Gozo) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 35 |
| SED | Kirkop | 20 | 1 | 7 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 16 | 2 |

| District | Town | DVU | IFSS | LAC | SMOPU | ACT | HBTS | CS | Gen. | MDH | GGH |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WD | Lija | 11 | 4 | 1 | 7 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 14 | 0 |
| SHD | Luqa | 33 | 14 | 8 | 15 | 9 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 43 | 0 |
| SHD | Marsa | 44 | 19 | 2 | 34 | 22 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 35 | 2 |
| SED | Marsaskala | 110 | 23 | 11 | 50 | 35 | 18 | 33 | 0 | 90 | 0 |
| SED | Marsaxlokk | 20 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 22 | 1 |
| WD | Mdina | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| ND | Mellieħa | 56 | 10 | 3 | 22 | 22 | 7 | 13 | 1 | 54 | 4 |
| ND | Mġarr | 25 | 7 | 5 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 19 | 0 |
| ND | Mosta | 114 | 5 | 25 | 38 | 29 | 20 | 74 | 0 | 125 | 3 |
| SED | Mqabba | 24 | 3 | 2 | 8 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 18 | 0 |
| NHD | Msida | 80 | 4 | 12 | 50 | 25 | 9 | 38 | 1 | 69 | 4 |
| WD | Mtarfa | 15 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 0 | 7 | 2 |
| G | Munxar (Gozo) | 4 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 19 | 1 | 44 |
| G | Nadur (Gozo) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 15 | 1 | 115 |
| ND | Naxxar | 70 | 3 | 12 | 40 | 15 | 11 | 20 | 0 | 84 | 4 |
| SHD | Paola | 66 | 22 | 7 | 48 | 29 | 12 | 2 | 0 | 86 | 0 |
| NHD | Pembroke | 23 | 10 | 6 | 14 | 11 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 7 | 2 |
| NHD | Pieta | 33 | 11 | 22 | 26 | 14 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 15 | 2 |
| G | Qala (Gozo) | 2 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 14 | 2 | 43 |
| NHD | Qormi | 117 | 19 | 21 | 67 | 44 | 14 | 41 | 1 | 120 | 10 |
| SED | Qrendi | 16 | 4 | 5 | 14 | 11 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 18 | 0 |
| G | Rabat (Gozo) | 3 | 0 | 1 | 8 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 34 | 3 | 144 |
| WD | Rabat (Malta) | 39 | 5 | 6 | 27 | 20 | 10 | 27 | 0 | 60 | 3 |
| SED | Safi | 24 | 5 | 3 | 8 | 9 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 12 | 1 |
| NHD | San Ġiljan | 33 | 11 | 1 | 27 | 17 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 63 | 2 |
| NHD | San Ġwann | 58 | 20 | 7 | 42 | 36 | 8 | 6 | 0 | 99 | 1 |
| G | San Lawrenz (Gozo) | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 11 |
| ND | San Pawl il-Baħar | 185 | 9 | 25 | 80 | 56 | 26 | 195 | 0 | 170 | 4 |
| G | Sannat (Gozo) | 3 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 16 | 1 | 50 |
| SHD | Santa Lucija | 25 | 1 | 2 | 24 | 8 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 22 | 1 |
| NHD | Santa Venera | 53 | 7 | 14 | 33 | 30 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 65 | 0 |
| WD | Siġġiewi | 58 | 11 | 7 | 12 | 17 | 2 | 19 | 0 | 63 | 3 |
| NHD | Sliema | 60 | 18 | 18 | 41 | 17 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 121 | 2 |
| NHD | Swieqi | 48 | 8 | 5 | 16 | 17 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 51 | 0 |
| NHD | Ta Xbiex | 9 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 9 | 2 |

| District | Town | DVU | IFSS | LAC | SMOPU | ACT | HBTS | CS | Gen. | MDH | GGH |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SHD | Tarxien | 66 | 19 | 19 | 35 | 23 | 21 | 2 | 0 | 54 | 3 |
| SHD | Valletta | 43 | 0 | 2 | 79 | 29 | 7 | 68 | 1 | 60 | 1 |
| G | Xagħra (Gozo) | 1 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 24 | 4 | 109 |
| G | Xewkija (Gozo) | 4 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 26 | 2 | 72 |
| SHD | Xgħajra (Malta) | 8 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 9 | 0 |
| SHD | Żabbar | 130 | 2 | 24 | 81 | 41 | 18 | 107 | 1 | 134 | 0 |
| G | Żebbuġ (Gozo) | 6 | 0 | 1 | 12 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 5 | 77 |
| WD | Żebbuġ (Malta) | 79 | 11 | 5 | 30 | 18 | 6 | 25 | 0 | 41 | 6 |
| SED | Żejtun | 95 | 5 | 9 | 48 | 22 | 14 | 64 | 0 | 97 | 6 |
| SED | Żurrieq | 82 | 27 | 16 | 20 | 14 | 16 | 23 | 0 | 58 | 3 |
| G | Comino | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Other residence | 20 | 5 | 41 | 38 | 29 | 2 | 12 | 1 | 491 | 7 |
| | Not specified/ unborn | 85 | 25 | 12 | 68 | 53 | 7 | 9 | 5 | 145 | 0 |
| | **Total cases** | **2844** | **494** | **471** | **1696** | **1077** | **387** | **1125** | **190** | **3533** | **958** |

*Table Key: DVU = Domestic Violence Service; IFSS = Intake & Family Support Service; LAC = Looked After Children; SMOPU = Substance Misuse Out-Patients Unit; ACT = Addictions Community Service; HBTS = Home Based Therapeutic Service; CS = Community Service; Gen. = Gozo Generic Service; MDH = Mater Dei Hospital Social Work Service; GGH = Gozo General Hospital Social Work Service.*

Appendix C: Rate of cases worked with between January and December 2025 by town and agency (per 1,000 residents).

| District | Town | Appogg (all) | Appogg (indiv/fam) | Appogg (health) | Child Protection | Alternative Care | ACTS | Sedqa | Gozo Branch | FSWS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WD | Attard | 9 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 25 |
| WD | Balzan | 13 | 4 | 10 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 28 |
| SHD | Birgu (Vittoriosa) | 25 | 8 | 17 | 23 | 16 | 13 | 9 | 1 | 87 |
| NHD | Birkirkara | 19 | 7 | 12 | 7 | 4 | 6 | 6 | 0 | 42 |
| SED | Birżebbugia | 19 | 11 | 8 | 11 | 6 | 7 | 7 | 0 | 49 |
| SHD | Bormla (Cospicua) | 43 | 18 | 24 | 28 | 11 | 22 | 27 | 1 | 131 |
| WD | Dingli | 15 | 5 | 9 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 31 |
| SHD | Fgura | 18 | 10 | 8 | 8 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 0 | 43 |
| SHD | Floriana | 27 | 7 | 20 | 14 | 4 | 20 | 16 | 0 | 81 |
| G | Fontana (Gozo) | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 26 | 30 |
| G | Għajn-sielem (Gozo) | 3 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 36 | 50 |
| G | Għarb (Gozo) | 3 | 1 | 2 | 8 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 30 | 43 |
| ND | Għargħur | 9 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 28 |
| G | Għasri | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 37 | 44 |
| SED | Għaxaq | 16 | 7 | 9 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 40 |
| SED | Gudja | 17 | 7 | 10 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 28 |
| NHD | Gżira | 13 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 0 | 28 |
| NHD | Ħamrun | 26 | 12 | 14 | 9 | 9 | 6 | 10 | 0 | 61 |
| WD | Iklin | 17 | 6 | 11 | 7 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 31 |
| SHD | Isla (Senglea) | 35 | 13 | 22 | 12 | 7 | 14 | 20 | 0 | 87 |
| SHD | Kalkara | 16 | 6 | 9 | 12 | 8 | 9 | 12 | 0 | 56 |
| G | Kerċem (Gozo) | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 27 | 31 |
| SED | Kirkop | 18 | 10 | 8 | 9 | 12 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 50 |
| WD | Lija | 12 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 25 |
| SHD | Luqa | 17 | 8 | 9 | 6 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 38 |
| SHD | Marsa | 23 | 14 | 9 | 15 | 7 | 5 | 11 | 1 | 61 |
| SED | Marsaskala | 17 | 9 | 8 | 11 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 44 |
| SED | Marsaxlokk | 14 | 7 | 7 | 9 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 31 |
| WD | Mdina | 25 | 10 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 25 |
| ND | Mellieħa | 12 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 29 |
| ND | Mġarr | 14 | 9 | 6 | 7 | 7 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 35 |
| ND | Mosta | 13 | 5 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 3 | 0 | 35 |
| SED | Mqabba | 16 | 9 | 7 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 35 |
| NHD | Msida | 14 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 35 |
| WD | Mtarfa | 14 | 8 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 9 | 4 | 1 | 39 |

| District | Town | Appogg (all) | Appogg (indiv/fam) | Appogg (health) | Child Protection | Alternative Care | ACTS | Sedqa | Gozo Branch | FSWS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| G | Munxar (Gozo) | 5 | 4 | 2 | 15 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 50 | 75 |
| G | Nadur (Gozo) | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 38 | 43 |
| ND | Naxxar | 12 | 5 | 7 | 7 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 0 | 32 |
| SHD | Paola | 25 | 12 | 13 | 11 | 5 | 5 | 9 | 0 | 55 |
| NHD | Pembroke | 17 | 11 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 5 | 7 | 1 | 44 |
| NHD | Pieta | 11 | 8 | 3 | 8 | 7 | 4 | 6 | 0 | 36 |
| G | Qala (Gozo) | 4 | 3 | 1 | 7 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 45 | 63 |
| NHD | Qormi | 19 | 8 | 11 | 10 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 1 | 49 |
| SED | Qrendi | 16 | 8 | 8 | 11 | 12 | 6 | 9 | 0 | 53 |
| G | Rabat (Gozo) | 2 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 36 | 47 |
| WD | Rabat (Malta) | 13 | 4 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 0 | 34 |
| SED | Safi | 19 | 11 | 8 | 11 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 0 | 48 |
| NHD | San Ġiljan | 11 | 4 | 7 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 19 |
| NHD | San Ġwann | 16 | 6 | 9 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 6 | 0 | 33 |
| G | San Lawrenz (Gozo) | 1 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 39 | 49 |
| ND | San Pawl il-Bahar | 14 | 7 | 7 | 10 | 4 | 8 | 4 | 0 | 40 |
| G | Sannat (Gozo) | 3 | 2 | 0 | 10 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 41 | 59 |
| SHD | Santa Lucija | 26 | 12 | 14 | 11 | 9 | 4 | 13 | 1 | 63 |
| NHD | Santa Venera | 18 | 8 | 10 | 9 | 7 | 4 | 7 | 0 | 45 |
| WD | Siġġiewi | 19 | 8 | 11 | 11 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 45 |
| NHD | Sliema | 12 | 5 | 8 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 23 |
| NHD | Swieqi | 9 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 20 |
| NHD | Ta Xbiex | 8 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 24 |
| SHD | Tarxien | 18 | 10 | 8 | 11 | 7 | 6 | 7 | 0 | 48 |
| SHD | Valletta | 28 | 10 | 17 | 21 | 7 | 17 | 24 | 1 | 97 |
| G | Xagħra (Gozo) | 1 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 38 | 48 |
| G | Xewkija (Gozo) | 2 | 1 | 1 | 8 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 42 | 57 |
| SHD | Xgħajra (Malta) | 12 | 4 | 8 | 11 | 7 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 38 |
| SHD | Żabbar | 21 | 9 | 12 | 12 | 8 | 12 | 8 | 0 | 60 |
| G | Żebbuġ (Gozo) | 8 | 6 | 2 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 49 | 76 |
| WD | Zebbuġ (Malta) | 14 | 8 | 7 | 7 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 34 |

| District | Town | Appogg (all) | Appogg (indiv/fam) | Appogg (health) | Child Protection | Alternative Care | ACTS | Sedqa | Gozo Branch | FSWS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SED | Żejtun | 20 | 10 | 10 | 12 | 7 | 10 | 7 | 1 | 56 |
| SED | Żurrieq | 18 | 11 | 7 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 3 | 0 | 42 |
| G | Comino | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | **Total Cases** | **20** | **8** | **12** | **8** | **5** | **5** | **6** | **3** | **48** |

## Appendix D: Rate of cases worked with at FSWS in January 2021 to December 2025 by town of residence and year (per 1,000 residents).

| District | Town | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WD | Attard | 23 | 28 | 23 | 26 | 25 |
| WD | Balzan | 37 | 39 | 30 | 34 | 28 |
| SHD | Birgu (Vittoriosa) | 100 | 99 | 93 | 92 | 87 |
| NHD | Birkirkara | 39 | 41 | 39 | 40 | 42 |
| SED | Birżebbuġia | 52 | 63 | 57 | 56 | 49 |
| SHD | Bormla (Cospicua) | 145 | 147 | 140 | 142 | 131 |
| WD | Dingli | 28 | 31 | 26 | 26 | 31 |
| SHD | Fgura | 42 | 45 | 43 | 45 | 43 |
| SHD | Floriana | 80 | 69 | 78 | 81 | 81 |
| G | Fontana (Gozo) | 33 | 42 | 19 | 25 | 30 |
| G | Għajnsielem (Gozo) | 38 | 32 | 35 | 49 | 50 |
| G | Għarb (Gozo) | 34 | 40 | 38 | 47 | 43 |
| ND | Għargħur | 25 | 31 | 33 | 30 | 28 |
| G | Għasri | 17 | 29 | 48 | 43 | 44 |
| SED | Għaxaq | 37 | 34 | 42 | 39 | 40 |
| SED | Gudja | 23 | 29 | 30 | 27 | 28 |
| NHD | Gżira | 35 | 35 | 31 | 31 | 28 |
| NHD | Ħamrun | 68 | 63 | 61 | 60 | 61 |
| WD | Iklin | 24 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |
| SHD | Isla (Senglea) | 107 | 94 | 81 | 84 | 87 |
| SHD | Kalkara | 50 | 47 | 48 | 55 | 56 |
| G | Kercem (Gozo) | 34 | 34 | 34 | 36 | 31 |
| SED | Kirkop | 48 | 56 | 49 | 49 | 50 |
| WD | Lija | 24 | 31 | 29 | 29 | 25 |
| SHD | Luqa | 35 | 34 | 33 | 37 | 38 |
| SHD | Marsa | 74 | 66 | 65 | 68 | 61 |
| SED | Marsaskala | 41 | 45 | 43 | 45 | 44 |
| SED | Marsaxlokk | 28 | 36 | 33 | 30 | 31 |
| WD | Mdina | 40 | 31 | 25 | 15 | 25 |
| ND | Mellieħa | 24 | 28 | 24 | 27 | 29 |

| District | Town | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ND | Mgarr | 33 | 33 | 33 | 32 | 35 |
| ND | Mosta | 32 | 33 | 30 | 34 | 35 |
| SED | Mqabba | 29 | 34 | 35 | 37 | 35 |
| NHD | Msida | 39 | 38 | 30 | 34 | 35 |
| WD | Mtarfa | 35 | 44 | 36 | 42 | 39 |
| G | Munxar (Gozo) | 44 | 47 | 60 | 58 | 75 |
| G | Nadur (Gozo) | 36 | 36 | 40 | 46 | 43 |
| ND | Naxxar | 27 | 26 | 27 | 29 | 32 |
| SHD | Paola | 50 | 54 | 59 | 58 | 55 |
| NHD | Pembroke | 51 | 48 | 44 | 47 | 44 |
| NHD | Pieta | 41 | 46 | 40 | 41 | 36 |
| G | Qala (Gozo) | 39 | 49 | 61 | 65 | 63 |
| NHD | Qormi | 56 | 54 | 55 | 52 | 49 |
| SED | Qrendi | 40 | 44 | 55 | 47 | 53 |
| G | Rabat (Gozo) | 46 | 41 | 46 | 49 | 47 |
| WD | Rabat (Malta) | 34 | 37 | 36 | 37 | 34 |
| SED | Safi | 38 | 39 | 49 | 49 | 48 |
| NHD | San Ġiljan | 21 | 22 | 18 | 18 | 19 |
| NHD | San Ġwann | 29 | 31 | 32 | 35 | 33 |
| G | San Lawrenz (Gozo) | 26 | 28 | 35 | 57 | 49 |
| ND | San Pawl il-Baħar | 45 | 48 | 43 | 41 | 40 |
| G | Sannat (Gozo) | 30 | 29 | 37 | 47 | 59 |
| SHD | Santa Luċija | 60 | 57 | 69 | 70 | 63 |
| NHD | Santa Venera | 51 | 51 | 46 | 42 | 45 |
| WD | Siggiewi | 46 | 49 | 45 | 45 | 45 |
| NHD | Sliema | 26 | 29 | 27 | 25 | 23 |
| NHD | Swieqi | 18 | 21 | 19 | 20 | 20 |
| NHD | Ta Xbiex | 32 | 29 | 24 | 27 | 24 |
| SHD | Tarxien | 48 | 49 | 53 | 51 | 48 |
| SHD | Valletta | 105 | 109 | 97 | 104 | 97 |
| G | Xaghra (Gozo) | 22 | 39 | 42 | 45 | 48 |
| G | Xewkija (Gozo) | 48 | 43 | 50 | 50 | 57 |
| SHD | Xgħajra (Malta) | 72 | 52 | 56 | 53 | 38 |
| SHD | Żabbar | 56 | 54 | 56 | 59 | 60 |
| G | Żebbuġ (Gozo) | 90 | 100 | 83 | 80 | 76 |
| WD | Żebbuġ (Malta) | 37 | 38 | 36 | 38 | 34 |
| SED | Żejtun | 56 | 57 | 60 | 59 | 56 |
| SED | Żurrieq | 42 | 46 | 44 | 47 | 42 |
| G | Comino | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | **Total Cases** | **44** | **46** | **44** | **45** | **48** |

## Appendix E: List of services within each agency/directorate which provided data included in the mapping report.

| Appoġġ Agency | Individual / Family Related |
|---|---|
| | Intake & Family Support Service |
| | Human Trafficking Service |
| | Appogg Homeless Service |
| | Domestic Violence Service |
| | Għabex Shelter |
| | Stop! The Violence and Abuse Service |
| | Child to Parent Violence Service |
| | LGBTIQ+ Wellbeing Service |
| | **Health Related** |
| | Mater Dei Hospital Social Work Service |
| | Benniena Service |
| | Oncology Social Work Service |
| | Qormi Health Centre Social Work Service |
| | St. Vincent de Paule Social Work Service |
| | Primary Health Care Service |
| | Bormla Mental Health Care Service |
| | Floriana Mental Health Care Service |
| | Mtarfa Menthal Health Care Service |
| | Child and Young People's Service |

| Child Protection Directorate | Child Protection Service |
|---|---|
| | Court Service |

| Directorate for Alternative Care | Looked After Children Service |
|---|---|
| | Aftercare Service |
| | Fostering Service |
| | Adoption Service |
| | High Support Service |
| | Community Homes Service |
| | Home-Start Malta |
| | Youth in Focus Service |
| | Youth Empowerment Initiative |
| | Embark for Life Service |
| | Supervised Access Visits Service |

| Sedqa Agency | Addictions Community Service |
|---|---|
| | Substance Misuse Out-Patients Unit |
| | Substance Misuse In-Patients Unit |
| | Sedqa Residential Rehabilitation Program |
| **Agency for Community and Therapeutic Services** | **Home Based Therapeutic Services** |
| | Psychological Services |
| | Incredible Years Programme |
| | Community Services |
| **Gozo Branch** | **Generic Social Work Service** |
| | Domestic Violence Service - Gozo |
| | Homeless Service - Gozo |
| | Marsalforn Community Service |
| | Psychological Service - Gozo |
| | Looked After Children - Gozo |
| | Fostering Service – Gozo |
| | Home-Start – Gozo |
| | Court Service - Gozo |
| | Supervised Access Visits Service - Gozo |
| | Gozo Prison Project |
| | Gozo General Hospital Social Work Service |
| | Gozo General Hospital – Psychiatric Unit Social Work Service |

# ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| AACC | Active Ageing and Community Care |
| ACT | Addictions Community Team |
| ACTS | Agency for Community and Therapeutic Services |
| ADHD | Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder |
| ADP | Adolescent Day Program |
| AFM | Armed Forces of Malta |
| AI | Artificial Intelligence |
| AMIF | Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund |
| B.A. (Hons) | Bachelor of Arts with Honours |
| CEO | Chief Executive Officer |
| CHS | Community Homes Services |
| CORRS | Correctional Services |
| CPD | Continuous Professional Development |
| COPEN | Cooperation in Criminal Matters |
| CPS | Child Protection Services |
| CMS | Case Management System |
| CPV | Child to Parent Violence |
| CSA | Coordination and Support Action |
| CSR | Corporate Social Responsibility |
| CV | Curriculum Vitae |
| DA | Danger Assessment |
| DAC | Directorate Alternative Care |
| DCPS | The Directorate of the Child Protection Services |
| DV | Domestic Violence |
| DVU | Domestic Violence Unit |
| E4L | Embark for Life |

| | |
|---|---|
| EMR | Electronic Medical Records |
| ESN | European Social Network |
| ERM | Enterprise Risk Management |
| ESPAD | European School Survey Project on Alchohol and other Drugs |
| ESSC | European Social Services Conference |
| EU | European Union |
| EUDA | European Union Drugs Agency |
| FEAD | Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived |
| FEANTSA | European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless |
| FES | Foundation for Educational Services |
| FSWS | Foundation for Social Welfare Services |
| GBDV | Gender-Based and Domestic Violence |
| GDPR | General Data Protection Regulation |
| GREVIO | Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence |
| GU Clinic | Genitourinary |
| HBTS | Home Bases Therapeutic Service |
| HR | Human Resources |
| IACD | International Association for Community Development |
| ICAB | International Conference on Behavioural Addictions |
| INHOPE | International Association of Internet Hotlines |
| IOM | International Organization for Migration (IOM) |
| IR | International Relations |
| ISAM | International Society of Addiction Medicine |
| IFRS | International Financial Reporting Standards |
| IFSS | Intake and Family Support Service |
| IPA | Institute for the Public Service |

| | |
|---|---|
| IRRPD | International Relations, Research and Policy Documentation Department |
| KPI | Key Performance Indicator |
| KNK | Kunsill Nazzjonali tal-Ktieb |
| KSM | Komunita' Santa Marija |
| LAC | Looked After Children |
| LACHS | Looked After Children Healthcare Service |
| LGBTIQ+ | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer/Questioning |
| LSE | Learning Support Educator |
| MARAM | Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Meeting |
| MCA | Malta Communications Authority |
| MCAST | The Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology |
| MCH | Mount Carmel Hospital |
| MCVS | Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector |
| MDH | Mater Dei Hospital |
| MEP | Member of the European Parliament |
| MITA | Malta International Technology Agency |
| MQF | Malta Qualifications Framework |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| NSPAA | National Strategic Policy for Active Ageing |
| ODARA | Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment |
| ODIHR | Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights |
| OHSA | Occupational Health and Safety Authority |
| OPSA | Older Persons Standards Authority |
| OSCE | Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe |
| OST | Opioid Substitution Therapy |
| PDU | Policy Documentation Unit |
| PHC | Primary Health Care |

| | |
|---|---|
| POMA | Protection of Minors Act |
| PR | Public Relations |
| RPS | Relation Pathway Service |
| RS | Reintegration Service |
| S.A.F.E | Skills for Addiction Free Employees |
| SAV | Supervised Access Visits |
| SCSA | Social Care Standards Authority |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SFFD | Scheme for Food Distribution |
| SMOPU | Substance Misuse Outpatients Unit |
| SMIPU | Substance Misuse Inpatients Unit |
| SVP | St Vincent de Paul |
| T.F.A.L | TFAL Favur Ambjent Liberu |
| TIP | Trafficking in Persons |
| UOM | University of Malta |
| VSA | Victim Support Agency |
| WWP-EN | Work With Perpetrators – European Network |
| YEI | Youth Empowerment Initiatives |
| YIF | Youth in Focus |

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