

In 2019, 2,565 individuals made use of services available to those experiencing domestic violence. Of these, 80.2 per cent were females.

## Domestic Violence: 2016-2019

When compared to 2016, the number of persons in 2019 who used services offered to those experiencing domestic violence increased by 41.2 per cent, from 1,816 to 2,565 (Table 1).

Table 2 presents statistics on cases registered across the different service providers – cases counted within and across services may involve the same person more than once. In 2019, as in previous years, the services with the highest number of registered cases were the Domestic Violence Unit (DVU) within Aġenzija Appoġġ (1,870 cases) and the Police Department (1,532 cases).

Table 3 breaks down cases registered with domestic violence services by age group of the service user. In 2019, more than half of the total cases registered across all services involved persons aged under 40. As seen in Table 4, the majority of service users during 2019 were Maltese nationals. Distributions by age and nationality of service users have remained relatively stable over the period 2016-2019.

Table 5 presents data on the type of violence reported by those experiencing domestic violence in 2019. Across the service providers, excluding the Police Department and the Emergency Health Services, persons may report experiencing more than one type of violence per case. For cases recorded by the Police Department, the main crime category of the report, i.e. the crime that is associated with the gravest penalty as established by relative legislation, is recorded. For the Emergency Health Services, the nature of the service limits cases to physical violence. Over 90 per cent of cases registered during 2019 by the shelters, Victim Support Malta (VSM) and the DVU were of persons experiencing psychological violence. Of the cases registered by the Police Department, 50.7 per cent were of persons experiencing psychological violence while 47.3 per cent were of persons experiencing physical violence.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of cases registered with the Police Department by location of the reported incident. When taking into account the size of the resident population within each district, the Southern Harbour and South Eastern districts had the highest number of cases registered for every 1,000 persons resident within the district (4.8 and 4.6 respectively). Across all districts, the number of cases registered with the Police Department per 1,000 resident females was at least double that for resident males.

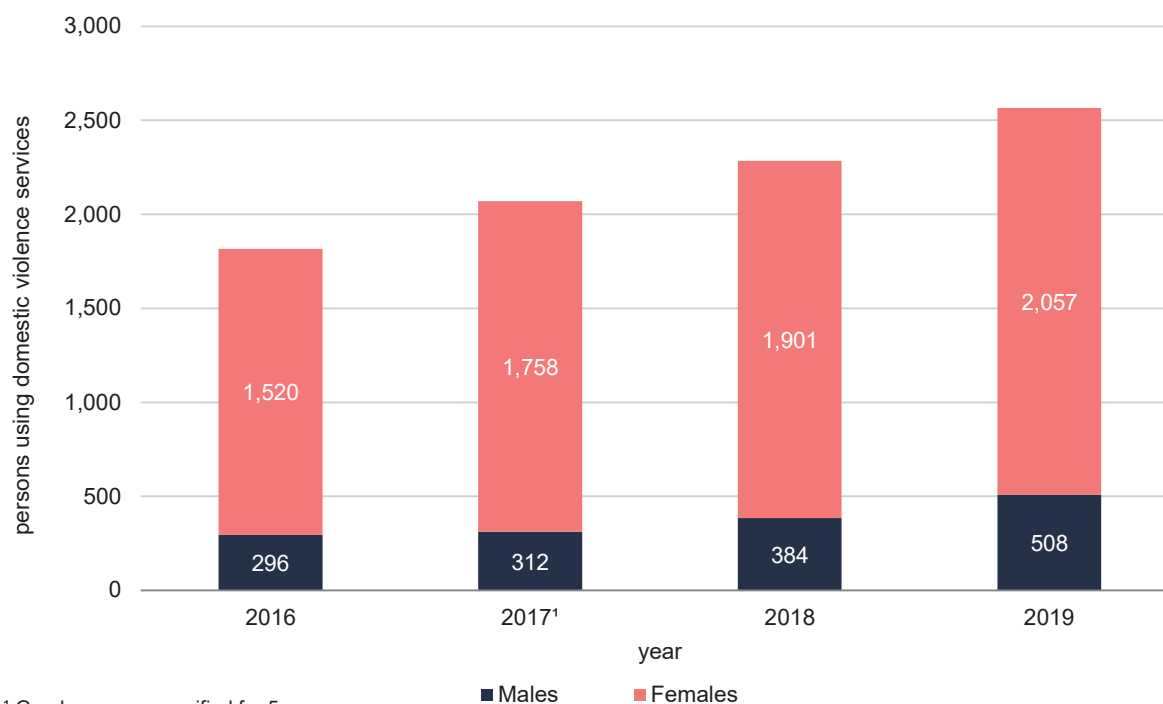
This news release also covers services targeting the perpetrators of domestic violence. Data for 2019 includes 'Stop!' (formerly known as 'Managing Abusive Behaviour') within Aġenzija Appoġġ and services provided by the Department of Probation and Parole. The Stop! programme registered 99 cases dealing with perpetrators of domestic violence while the Department of Probation and Parole registered 66 cases. As is the case with services for those experiencing domestic violence, cases reported from perpetrator services may include persons counted more than once. For both service providers, the absolute majority of cases involved male perpetrators with only 8 cases involving female perpetrators. The majority of perpetrators across all cases were aged between 30 and 49 with the largest share of cases involving perpetrators of Maltese nationality. When looking at the unique number of persons using the perpetrator services, 2019 saw a total of 144 individuals using one or more service - 136 males and 8 females (Table 6) ■

**Table 1. Total number of persons using domestic violence services by gender and frequency of service use**

Frequency of service use in reference year	Gender			Total
	Males	Females	Unspecified	
<b>2016</b>				
1	273	1,174	-	1,447
2	17	228	-	245
3+	6	118	-	124
<b>Total</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>1,520</b>	-	<b>1,816</b>
<b>2017</b>				
1	284	1,398	5	1,687
2	20	244	-	264
3+	8	116	-	124
<b>Total</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>1,758</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2,075</b>
<b>2018</b>				
1	333	1,448	-	1,781
2	44	307	-	351
3+	7	146	-	153
<b>Total</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>1,901</b>	-	<b>2,285</b>
<b>2019</b>				
1	379	1,366	-	1,745
2	107	508	-	615
3+	22	183	-	205
<b>Total</b>	<b>508</b>	<b>2,057</b>	-	<b>2,565</b>

Note: Refer to methodological note 5.

**Chart 1. Total number of persons using domestic violence services by gender**



<sup>1</sup> Gender was unspecified for 5 persons.  
Note: Refer to methodological note 5.

**Table 2. Number of cases registered with the Police Department and service providers by service and gender of service user**

Gender	Emergency Health Services		Shelters <sup>1</sup>		Domestic Violence Unit, Aġenzija Appoġġ		Victim Support Malta		Police Department	
	Absolute	%	Absolute	%	Absolute	%	Absolute	%	Absolute	%
<b>2016</b>										
Males	c	c	-	-	14	1.8	-	-	310	22.5
Females	c	c	147	100.0	785	98.2	40	100.0	1,069	77.5
Unspecified	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>799</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,379</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>2017</b>										
Males	3	17.6	-	-	27	2.6	4	6.1	322	23.4
Females	14	82.4	158	100.0	1,026	97.4	62	93.9	1,051	76.3
Unspecified	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	0.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,053</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,378</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>2018</b>										
Males	5	10.4	-	-	69	5.6	9	20.0	360	23.4
Females	43	89.6	174	100.0	1,157	94.4	36	80.0	1,180	76.6
Unspecified	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,226</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,540</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>2019</b>										
Males	5	6.8	-	-	250	13.4	6	8.2	404	26.4
Females	69	93.2	136	100.0	1,620	86.6	67	91.8	1,128	73.6
Unspecified	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,870<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,532</b>	<b>100.0</b>

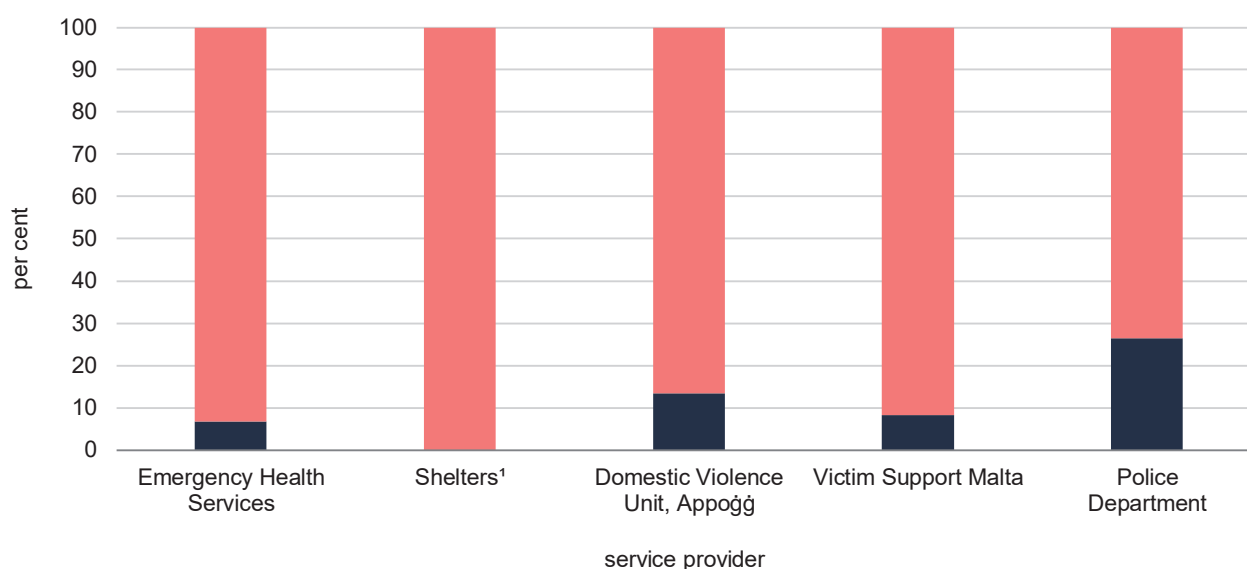
<sup>1</sup> Refer to methodological note 1.

<sup>2</sup> New legal provisions came into force during 2019 which impacted operations within the Domestic Violence Unit, Aġenzija Appoġġ.

c - confidential figure - less than 3 reported counts in a specified category are suppressed due to confidentiality.

Note: Includes persons making use of services more than once.

**Chart 2. Distribution of cases registered with the Police Department and service providers by gender of service user: 2019**



<sup>1</sup> Refer to methodological note 1.

■ Males ■ Females

Note: Includes persons making use of services more than once.

**Table 3. Number of cases registered with the Police Department and service providers by service and age-group of service user**

Age group	Emergency Health Services		Shelters <sup>1</sup>		Domestic Violence Unit, Aġenzija Appoġġ		Victim Support Malta		Police Department	
	Abolute	%	Abolute	%	Abolute	%	Abolute	%	Abolute	%
<b>2016</b>										
<30	11	32.4	47	32.0	151	18.9	8	20.0	432	31.3
30-39	7	20.6	45	30.6	211	26.4	17	42.5	386	28.0
40-49	7	20.6	30	20.4	199	24.9	7	17.5	287	20.8
50+	9	26.5	25	17.0	216	27.0	c	c	272	19.7
Unspecified	-	-	-	-	22	2.8	c	c	2	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>799</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,379</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>2017</b>										
<30	5	29.4	61	38.6	164	15.6	10	15.2	357	25.9
30-39	6	35.3	47	29.7	274	26.0	18	27.3	409	29.7
40-49	c	c	29	18.4	269	25.5	20	30.3	338	24.5
50+	c	c	21	13.3	308	29.2	17	25.8	273	19.8
Unspecified	-	-	-	-	38	3.6	1	1.5	1	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,053</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,378</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>2018</b>										
<30	11	22.9	51	29.3	204	16.6	5	11.1	377	24.5
30-39	16	33.3	52	29.9	341	27.8	13	28.9	449	29.2
40-49	11	22.9	30	17.2	321	26.2	12	26.7	378	24.5
50+	10	20.8	39	22.4	345	28.1	14	31.1	334	21.7
Unspecified	-	-	2	1.1	15	1.2	1	2.2	2	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,226</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,540</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>2019</b>										
<30	24	32.4	39	28.7	318	17.0	10	13.7	430	28.1
30-39	23	31.1	39	28.7	543	29.0	21	28.8	434	28.3
40-49	16	21.6	34	25.0	483	25.8	25	34.2	327	21.3
50+	11	14.9	24	17.6	526	28.1	17	23.3	340	22.2
Unspecified	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,870<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,532</b>	<b>100.0</b>

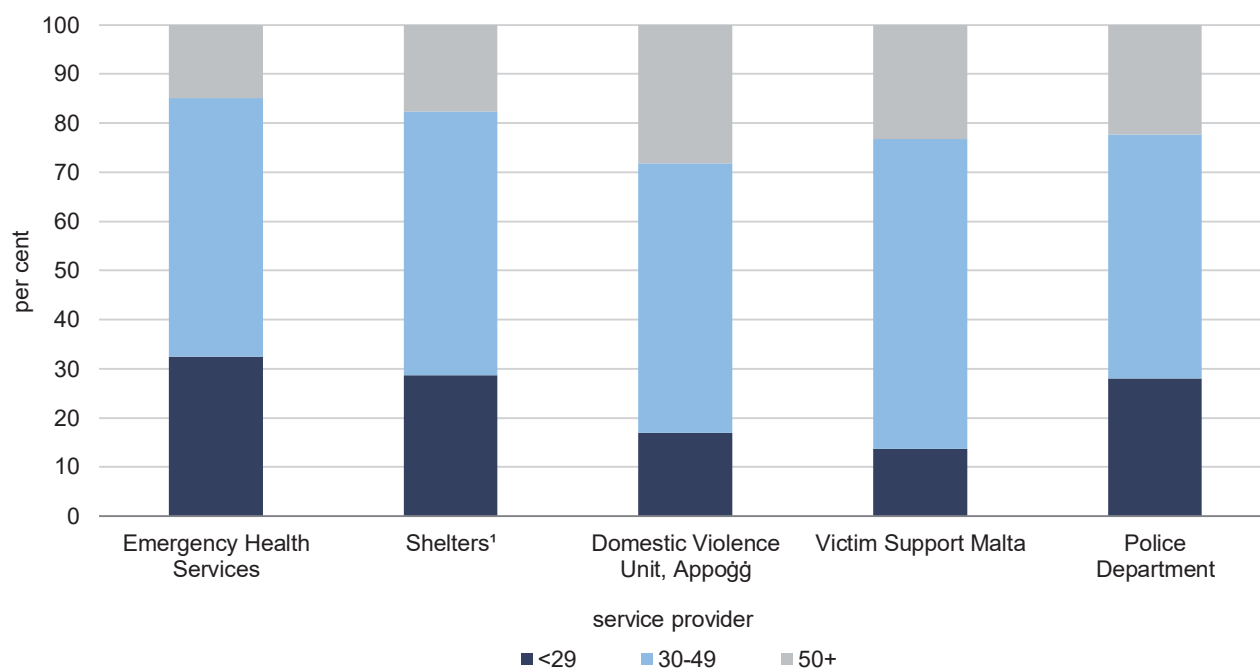
<sup>1</sup> Refer to methodological note 1.

<sup>2</sup> New legal provisions came into force during 2019 which impacted operations within the Domestic Violence Unit, Aġenzija Appoġġ.

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Note: Includes persons making use of services more than once.

**Chart 3. Distribution of cases registered with the Police Department and service providers by age group of service user: 2019**



<sup>1</sup> Refer to methodological note 1.

Note: Includes persons making use of services more than once.

**Table 4. Number of cases registered with the Police Department and service providers by service and broad citizenship of service user**

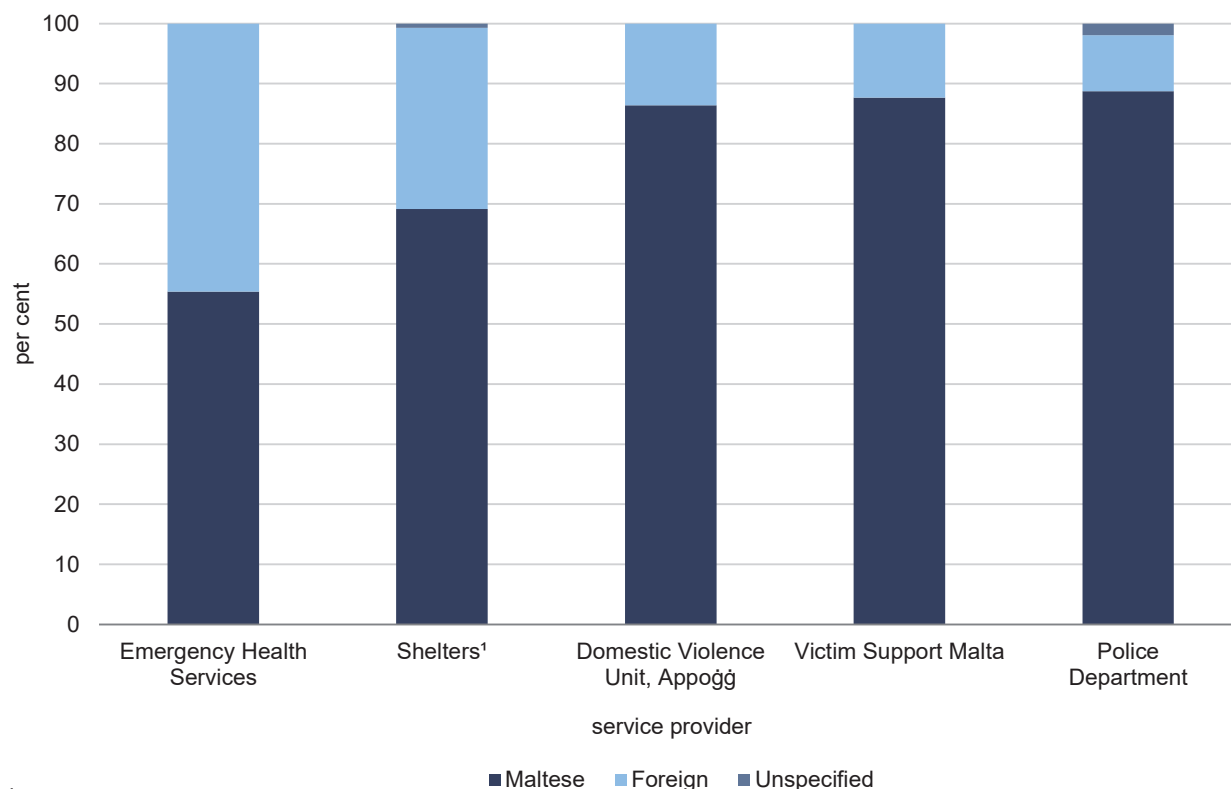
Broad citizenship	Emergency Health Services		Shelters <sup>1</sup>		Domestic Violence Unit, Aġenzija Appoġġ		Victim Support Malta		Police Department	
	Absolute	%	Absolute	%	Absolute	%	Absolute	%	Absolute	%
<b>2016</b>										
Maltese	27	79.4	118	80.3	667	83.5	36	90.0	1,200	87.0
Foreign	4	11.8	29	19.7	132	16.5	4	10.0	144	10.4
Unspecified	3	8.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	35	2.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>799</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,379</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>2017</b>										
Maltese	-	-	114	72.2	881	83.7	54	81.8	1,189	86.3
Foreign	-	-	44	27.8	172	16.3	6	9.1	156	11.3
Unspecified	17	100.0	-	-	-	-	6	9.1	33	2.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,053</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,378</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>2018</b>										
Maltese	31	64.6	140	80.5	1,040	84.8	36	80.0	1,336	86.8
Foreign	17	35.4	33	19.0	186	15.2	9	20.0	185	12.0
Unspecified	-	-	1	0.6	-	-	-	-	19	1.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,226</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,540</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>2019</b>										
Maltese	41	55.4	94	69.1	1,615	86.4	64	87.7	1,359	88.7
Foreign	33	44.6	41	30.1	255	13.6	9	12.3	143	9.3
Unspecified	-	-	1	0.7	-	-	-	-	30	2.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,870<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,532</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<sup>1</sup> Refer to methodological note 1.

<sup>2</sup> New legal provisions came into force during 2019 which impacted operations within the Domestic Violence Unit, Aġenzija Appoġġ.

Note: Includes persons making use of services more than once.

**Chart 4. Distribution of cases registered with the Police Department and service providers by broad citizenship of service user: 2019**



<sup>1</sup> Refer to methodological note 1.

Note: Includes persons making use of services more than once.

**Table 5. Number of cases registered with the Police Department and service providers by service and type of violence reported: 2019**

Service provider	Total cases	Type of violence reported			
		Physical	Psychological	Sexual or economic or other	Not specified
Emergency Health Services	74	74	-	-	-
Shelters <sup>1</sup>	136	99	124	58	2
Domestic Violence Unit, Appoġġ	1,870 <sup>2</sup>	1,293	1,745	626	2
Victim Support Malta	73	41	67	16	-
Police Department	1,532	724	777	31	-

<sup>1</sup> Refer to methodological note 1.

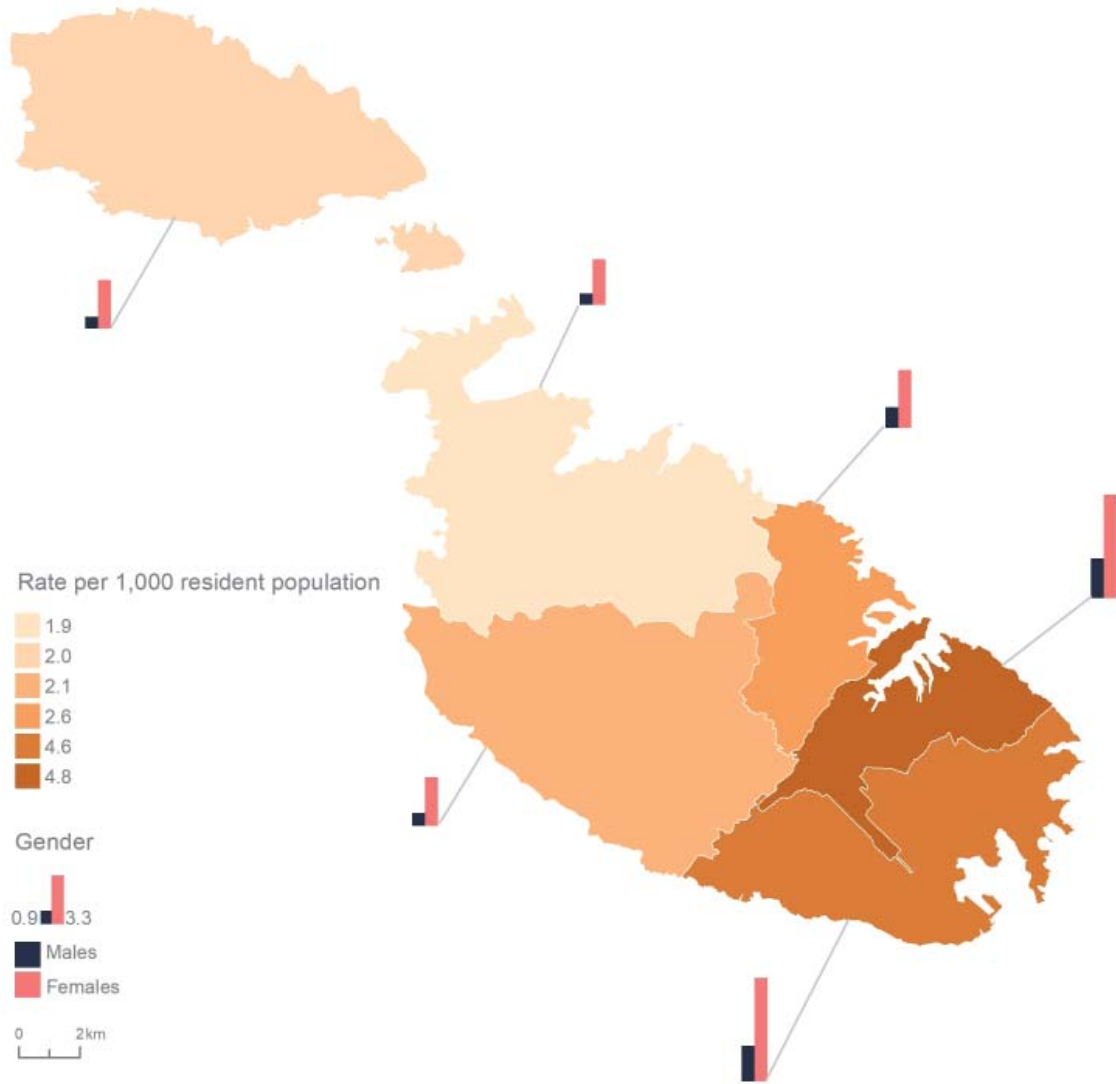
<sup>2</sup> New legal provisions came into force during 2019 which impacted operations within the Domestic Violence Unit, Aġenzija Appoġġ.

Notes:

Includes persons making use of services more than once.

Total number of cases does not add up to the sum of cases within each category of violence since cases may have more than one type of violence recorded.

**Figure 1. Number of cases registered with the Police Department by district of incident (rate per 1,000 resident population): 2019**



**Notes:**

Includes persons making use of service more than once.

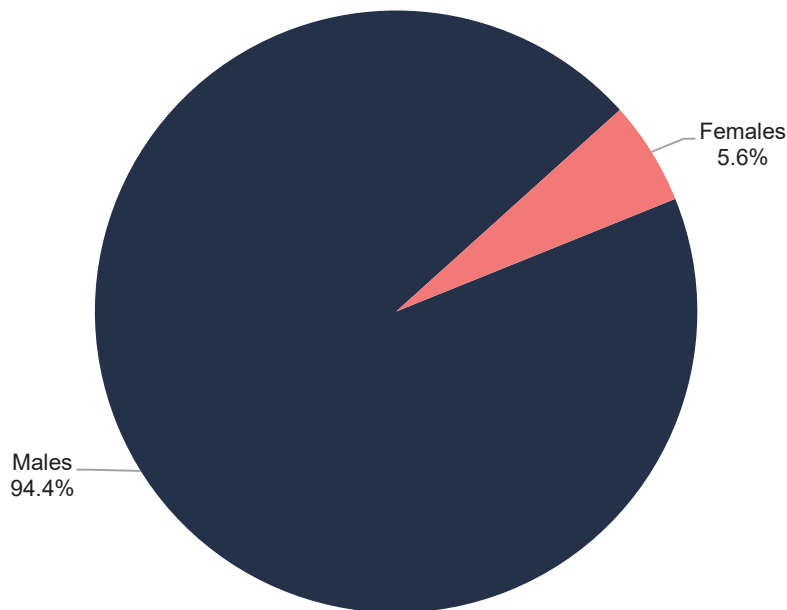
Refer to page 9 for more information on Local Administrative Units (LAU) categories.

**Table 6. Number of cases registered with services for perpetrators of domestic violence by age and broad citizenship of service user: 2019**

Registered cases	Stop!		Department of Probation and Parole		
	Absolute	%	Absolute	%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
Age	<29	15	15.2	20	30.3
	30-49	67	67.7	29	43.9
	50+	17	17.2	15	22.7
	Unspecified	-	-	2	3.0
Broad citizenship	Maltese	93	93.9	61	92.4
	Foreign	6	6.1	3	4.5
	Unspecified	-	-	2	3.0
<b>Total number of perpetrators using domestic violence services (unique cases)<sup>1</sup></b>					
Males			136		
Females			8		
<b>Total</b>			<b>144</b>		

<sup>1</sup> The total number of perpetrators does not tally with the number of cases/reports across services, since individuals may use a service more than once.

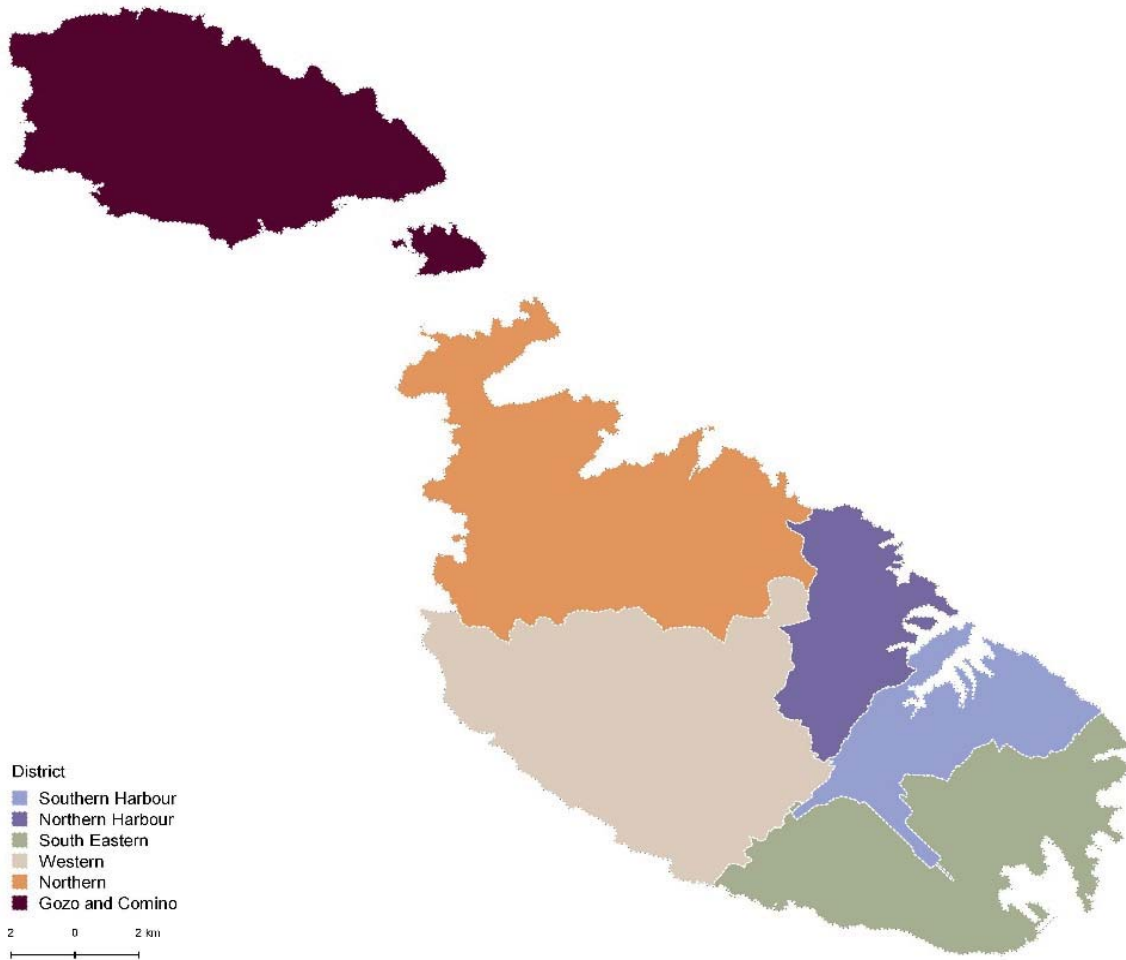
**Chart 5. Distribution of perpetrators using domestic violence services by gender of perpetrator: 2019**



Note: Domestic violence services targeting perpetrators includes the 'Stop!' programme and the Department of Probation and Parole.



## Graphical Illustration of MALTA by NUTS Classification



### Districts classification

#### Southern Harbour

Bormla; Il-Fgura; Floriana; Ʀal Luqa; Ʀaž-Žabbar; Il-Kalkara; Il-Marsa; Raħal Ġdid; Santa Luċija; L-Isla; Ʀal Tarxien; Valletta; Il-Birgu; Ix-Xgħajra.

#### Northern Harbour

Birkirkara; Il-Gżira; Ʀal Qormi; Il-Ħamrun; L-Imsida; Pembroke; San Ġwann; Santa Venera; San Ġiljan; Is-Swieqi; Ta' Xbiex; Tal-Pietà; Tas-Sliema.

#### South Eastern

Birżebbuġa; Il-Gudja; Ʀal Ghaxaq; Ʀal Kirkop; Ʀal Safi; Marsaskala; Marsaxlokk; L-Imqabba; Il-Qrendi; Iz-Žejtun; iz-Žurrieq.

#### Western

Ʀad-Dingli; Ʀal Balzan; Ʀal Lija; Ʀ'Attard; Ʀaž-Žebbuġ; L-Iklin; L-Imdina; L-Imtarfa; Ir-Rabat; Is-Siġġiewi.

#### Northern

Ʀal Għargħur; Il-Mellieħa; L-Imġarr; Il-Mosta; In-Naxxar; San Pawl Il-Baħar.

#### Gozo and Comino

Il-Fontana; Għajnsielem and Comino; L-Għarb; L-Għasri; Il-Munxar; In-Nadur; Il-Qala; San Lawrenz; Ta' Kerċem; Ta' Sannat; Ir-Rabat; Ix-Xagħra; Ix-Xewkija; Iz-Žebbuġ.

## Methodological Notes

1. The sources of data referenced in this news release are:

- **Aġenzija Appoġġ:** The national agency for children and families which promotes their well-being through psycho-social welfare services. Information about both parents and children who make use of the service is recorded. Furthermore, cases of minors receiving child protection interventions by the Child Protection Services offering protection to vulnerable children and adolescents under the age of eighteen years may be recorded as a Child Protection case and not included in this data. In reference year 2019, new legal provisions came into force which impacted operations within the Domestic Violence Unit at Aġenzija Appoġġ (DVU). The increase in service users documented for this year may therefore partly be attributed to these changes.
- **Dar Merħba Bik:** A shelter that works with and helps women and children who have experienced domestic violence. Data on children accompanying their guardians and using this service is not available and only data on adult users is provided.
- **Dar Qalb ta' Ġesu:** A second stage shelter which supports and helps women and children with independent living after experiencing domestic violence. Data for this shelter was not available for 2016, and therefore is only included in the figures for 2017 and 2018. Data on children accompanying their guardians and using this service is not available and only data on adult users is provided.
- **Department of Probation and Parole (DPP):** A service within the criminal justice system and works in collaboration with the Judiciary, Police, various agencies and Government departments, amongst others. The DPP aims at enhancing community safety by reducing recidivism through the implementation of restorative justice measures and the use of community-based sanctions such as probation and parole.
- **Emergency Health Services:** Data on patient injuries is collected and provided by emergency departments across Malta and Gozo. This includes information from Mater Dei Hospital and Gozo General Hospital and excludes Primary Health Care, private hospitals/clinics and private health practitioners.
- **Ghabex:** An emergency shelter for women and children experiencing violence within the family, in intimate relationships or from human trafficking. Both adults and children who attend the shelter are recorded as separate service users.
- **Stop!:** Previously known as the *Managing Abusive Behaviour Service*. A service set up to assist the abusive partner in intimate relationships to become aware of, understand and change their behaviour.
- **Police Department:** Malta Police Force statistics section collects and provides data on all reports of domestic violence that have been made with them and registered in the National Police System (NPS). Individuals, including children, involved in a domestic violence report are recorded as separate victims. Data is recorded by the Police based on reports registered within the NPS which captures the Police Incident Reporting System (PIRS). This system collects information on all police reports filed at Police Districts and Stations throughout Malta and Gozo. The system records cases based on the main crime category of the report, i.e. the crime that is associated with the gravest penalty as established by relative legislation.
- **Victim Support Malta:** A non-governmental organisation which provides support and assistance to victims of crime. Information provided in this regard covers those persons benefiting from services provided by Victim Support Malta for reasons of domestic violence. Currently this service is provided to persons experiencing domestic violence and aged 18 and over.

2. **Measuring unit:**

**Persons** (Table 1 and 6): Unique persons who made use of any services in the area during the reference period. Figures across reference periods may include persons who have been included as victims or perpetrators during previous years.

**Cases** (Tables 2-6): All cases registered at the respective service in the reference period. Persons who make use of the services may be counted more than once within or across services.

**Rate** (Figure 1): Number of cases registered by location where incident occurred per 1,000 mid-year resident population.

3. **Definitions of the types of violence:**

- **Physical:** Any act which causes physical harm as a result of unlawful physical force such as bodily harm or deprivation of liberty, as described in Article 251 of Chapter 9 of the Laws of Malta.
- **Psychological:** Any act which causes psychological harm to an individual such as coercion or harassment, as described in Article 251 of Chapter 9 of the Laws of Malta.

- **Sexual:** Any sexual act performed on an individual without their consent such as rape or sexual assault, as described in Articles 198-207 of Chapter 9 of the Laws of Malta.
  - **Economic:** Any act or behaviour which causes economic harm to an individual such as restricting access to finances or property damage, as described in Article 251 of Chapter 9 of the Laws of Malta.
  - **Other:** Any other act or behaviour, not classified and registered with the different service providers in the area. Other forms of violence includes harassment, stalking, neglect, deprivation of liberty, exploitation and human trafficking.
4. **Coverage:** Data within this news release covers one calendar year, i.e. from 1 January to 31 December.
  5. **Harmonisation:** To compute the total number of persons experiencing domestic violence, the data provided from the different stakeholders is analysed and harmonised to identify unique persons who have been found to make use of one or more services in the area of domestic violence.
  6. **Confidentiality:** As with all the data collected and processed by the NSO, data is governed by the provisions of the Malta Statistics Authority Act (XXIV of 2000). This Act emphasises both the NSO's right to collect and process private and personal information for statistical purposes, while binding the NSO from providing any identifiable information to third parties. To prevent risk of identification from the data, counts of less than 3 are suppressed and denoted by a 'c'.
  7. The **National Statistics Office** collaborates with the **Commission for Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence** in collecting, analysing and stream-lining data collection in the area of domestic violence.
  8. References to this news release are to be cited appropriately.
  9. A detailed news release calendar is available on:  
[https://nso.gov.mt/en/News\\_Releases/Release\\_Calendar/Pages/News-Release-Calendar.aspx](https://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/Release_Calendar/Pages/News-Release-Calendar.aspx)