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Key Indicators on the Labour Market: 2013-2018

This release presents a number of key indicators emerging from the Labour Force Survey (LFS), a quarterly enquiry carried out among private households. The indicators presented refer to the period 2013 to 2018 and a comparison with EU 28 levels is given for 2018 data.

The LFS is considered as one of the most important monitoring tools across the European Union for assessing progress made on employment rates and educational attainment. It is the source of three Europe 2020 headline indicators, namely: employment rate, early leavers from education and training rate and tertiary educational attainment rate.

Key facts:

1. In 2018, the employment rate for the 20 to 64 age group was 75.5 per cent; 5.5 percentage points higher than the Europe 2020 target of 70 per cent (Chart 3).
2. Between 2013 and 2018 the services sector was the main contributor to the increase in employment rates (Tables 2 and 3).
3. Increases in activity rates were noted between 2013 and 2018, especially among females (Table 1).
4. The unemployment rate in 2018 stood at 3.7 per cent, well below the EU 28 average of 6.8 per cent (Table 9).
5. In 2018, out of every 100 persons between 15 and 24 years, five were unemployed. At EU 28 level, six out of every 100 youths were unemployed (Table 10).
6. During 2018 the share of youths not in employment, education or training (NEET) stood at 7.3 per cent (Table 11). This figure is below the EU 28 average of 10.5 per cent.
7. During 2018 the rate of early leavers from education and training stood at 17.4 per cent (Table 13). This is a drop of 3.4 percentage points over a span of 6 years, but still above Malta's Europe 2020 target of 10 per cent and above the EU 28 average for 2018.
8. A steady increase in the share of persons between 30 and 34 years with a tertiary level educational attainment has been registered between 2013 and 2018. In 2018, the rate stood at 34.8 per cent, hence exceeding the EU 2020 national target of 33 per cent (Chart 10).
9. Females tend to outperform males in all education-related indicators (Tables 13 to 16). By contrast, males are more likely to be in the labour market at a younger age when compared to females and they also tend to stay in employment for a longer time when compared to the opposite sex.

Labour Force

Over the last six years starting from 2013, the activity rate for the 15 - 64 age group increased by 8.4 percentage points. Females played an important role in the labour market growth. In this regard, the female activity rate increased from 52.0 per cent in 2013 to 63.8 per cent in 2018 (Table 1). On the other hand, the contribution of males to the overall increase in activity rate was lower with a difference of 4.8 percentage points between 2013 and 2018.

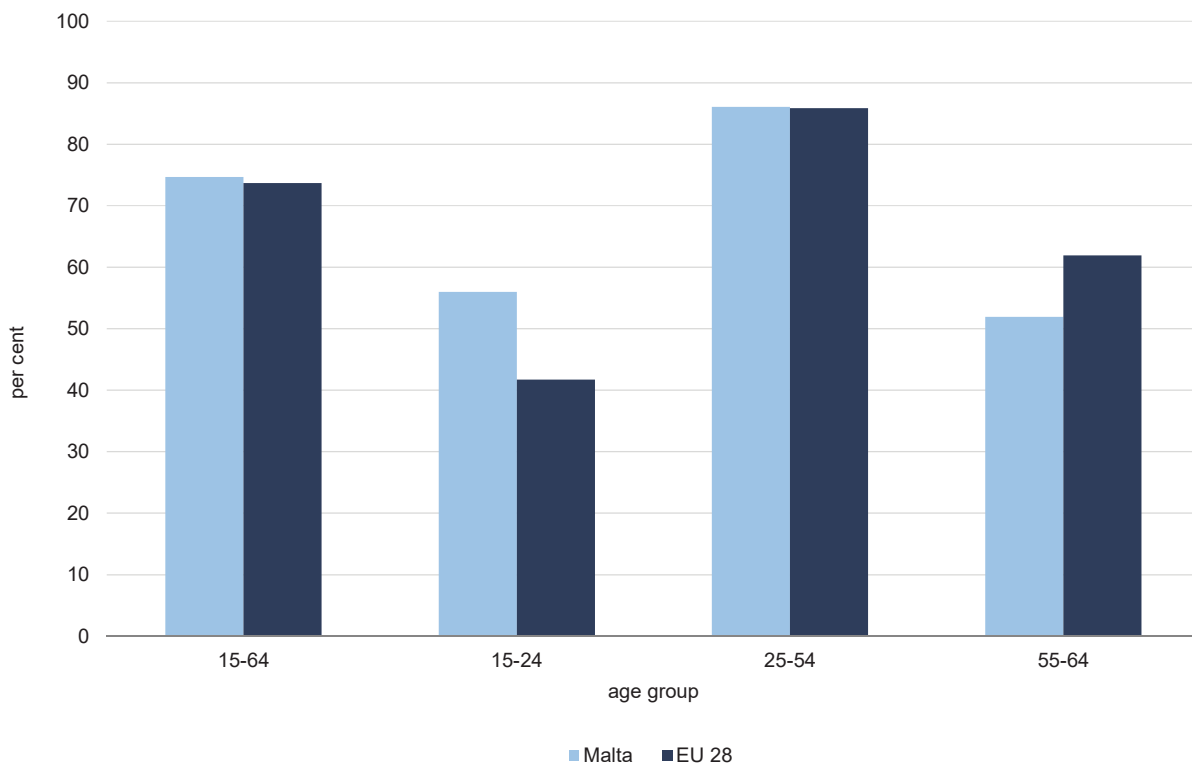
The highest increase in the activity rate was registered among those aged 55 to 64. This age group registered a substantial increase in both male and female rates and in fact between 2013 and 2018, there were increases of 11.2 and 14.0 percentage points for males and females respectively.

Table 1. Activity rates by sex and age group
(%)

Year	Males	Females	Total	Activity gender gap (p.p)
15-64				
2013	80.0	52.0	66.3	28.0
2014	80.8	54.3	67.8	26.5
2015	81.5	55.6	68.8	25.9
2016	82.5	58.0	70.6	24.5
2017	83.4	60.2	72.2	23.2
2018	84.8	63.8	74.7	21.0
EU 28 (2018)	79.2	68.2	73.7	11.0
15-24				
2013	56.5	50.3	53.5	6.2
2014	53.4	52.3	52.9	1.1
2015	53.6	49.4	51.6	4.2
2016	54.4	48.8	51.7	5.6
2017	54.5	51.2	52.9	3.3
2018	55.7	56.3	56.0	-0.6
EU 28 (2018)	44.3	38.9	41.7	5.4
25-54				
2013	94.8	63.6	79.5	31.2
2014	95.5	65.7	81.0	29.8
2015	95.4	67.2	81.7	28.2
2016	95.8	69.7	83.2	26.1
2017	96.2	72.0	84.5	24.2
2018	96.4	74.6	86.1	21.8
EU 28 (2018)	91.7	80.1	85.9	11.6
55-64				
2013	58.2	20.1	39.1	38.1
2014	61.5	22.8	42.1	38.7
2015	63.3	26.0	44.6	37.3
2016	65.1	29.9	47.5	35.2
2017	66.1	30.6	48.4	35.5
2018	69.4	34.1	51.9	35.3
EU 28 (2018)	69.1	55.2	61.9	13.9

The overall national activity rate (15-64 years) for 2018 was 1.0 percentage point higher than that for EU 28 and 14.3 percentage points higher for the younger segment of the population (15-24 years) (Chart 1). On the other end of the spectrum, for the older generation (55-64 years), the EU 28 activity rates were found to be 10.0 percentage points higher than national rates, in spite of the considerable growth observed over the past six years.

Chart 1. Activity rates by age group (Malta and EU 28): 2018



Employment

Over a span of six years, male employment rates increased by an average of 1.3 per cent per year whereas female rates increased an average of 2.5 per cent per annum (Chart 2).

At a national level, more males tend to be in employment when compared to the EU 28 average. This holds true for all age groups illustrated in Table 2. By contrast, the female employment rates for EU 28 were higher across all age groups with the exception of the young segment (15 to 24 years).

Chart 2. Annual growth rates on employment rate (15-64) by sex

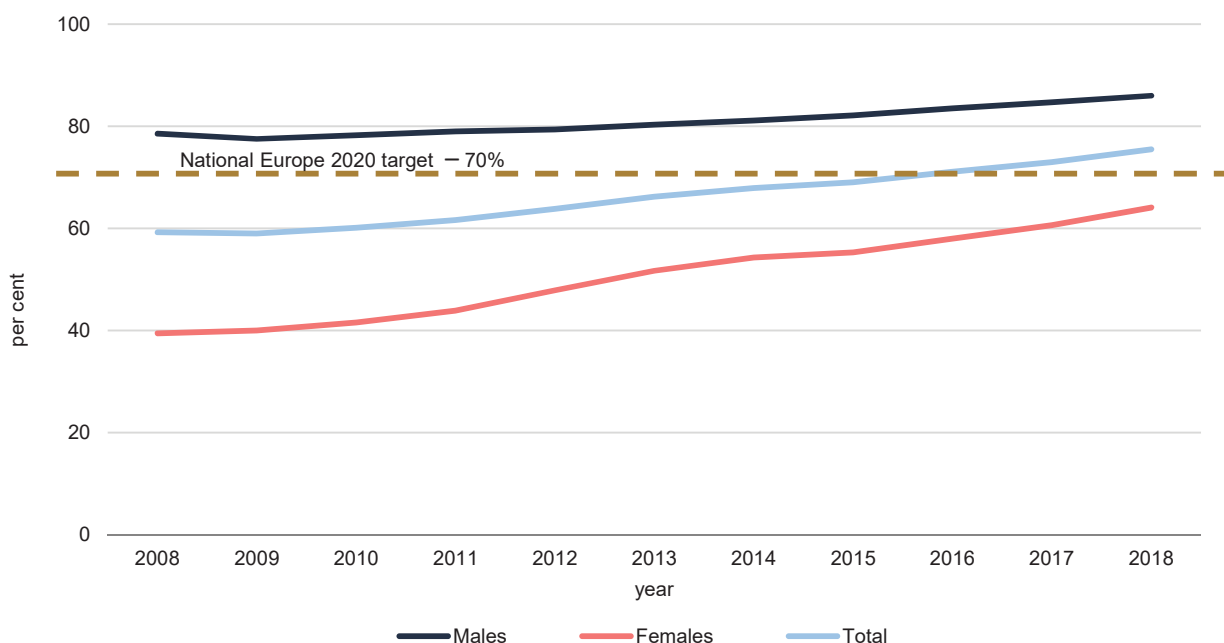


Table 2. Employment rates by sex and age group
(%)

Year	Males	Females	Total	Employment gender gap (p.p)
15-64				
2013	75.1	48.8	62.1	26.3
2014	75.7	51.5	63.9	24.2
2015	77.0	52.6	65.1	24.4
2016	78.9	55.0	67.2	23.9
2017	80.1	57.6	69.2	22.5
2018	81.5	61.5	71.9	20.0
EU 28 (2018)	73.8	63.3	68.6	10.5
20-64				
2013	80.3	51.7	66.2	28.6
2014	81.1	54.3	67.9	26.8
2015	82.1	55.3	69.0	26.8
2016	83.5	58.0	71.1	25.5
2017	84.7	60.6	73.0	24.1
2018	86.0	64.1	75.5	21.9
EU 28 (2018)	78.9	67.4	73.1	11.5
National target			70.0	
15-24				
2013	48.2	45.1	46.7	3.1
2014	46.1	47.3	46.7	-1.2
2015	46.6	44.6	45.6	2.0
2016	48.9	43.3	46.2	5.6
2017	48.5	46.1	47.3	2.4
2018	49.5	52.5	50.9	-3.0
EU 28 (2018)	37.3	33.3	35.4	4.0
25-54				
2013	90.2	60.3	75.6	29.9
2014	90.9	62.9	77.2	28.0
2015	91.5	64.1	78.2	27.4
2016	92.3	66.7	79.9	25.6
2017	93.2	69.5	81.8	23.7
2018	93.6	72.5	83.6	21.1
EU 28 (2018)	86.2	74.6	80.4	11.6
55-64				
2013	55.2	18.9	37.0	36.3
2014	57.1	22.1	39.6	35.0
2015	59.5	25.1	42.3	34.4
2016	62.8	28.9	45.8	33.9
2017	64.5	29.9	47.2	34.6
2018	67.3	32.8	50.2	34.5
EU 28 (2018)	65.4	52.4	58.7	13.0

The employment rate for the 20 to 64 age group is one of Europe's 2020 headline indicators. National figures show that in 2018 the employment rate for Malta was 5.5 percentage points higher than the national target of 70 per cent. Chart 3 shows that the surge in employment rates can be mostly attributed to females. Significant growth in employment levels for persons within the older age cohort (55 to 64) also contributed to the rise in employment rates.

Chart 3. Employment rates (20-64) by sex



Charts 4 and 5 reveal that the increase in employment over the past six years was mainly attributed to a growth in the service industry. Both manufacturing and agriculture industries remained relatively unchanged from 2013 to 2018.

The share of employment in the services sector has increased during the period under review, starting from 47.9 per cent during 2013 and reaching 57.8 per cent in 2018 (Table 3). When compared to EU 28 levels, the 2018 employment share in services for males stood at 59.5 per cent, 15 percentage points higher than the EU 28 average. Additionally, in 2018, the female employment share in services was 2.5 percentage points higher than the EU 28 average.

Table 3. Employment share in services¹ by sex
(%)

Year	Males	Females	Total
2013	52.8	42.9	47.9
2014	53.5	46.0	49.8
2015	54.2	47.9	51.1
2016	55.9	50.2	53.1
2017	57.4	52.1	54.8
2018	59.5	55.9	57.8
EU 28 (2018)	44.5	53.4	49.0

⁽¹⁾ refer to methodological note 3.

Economic activity classified according to [NACE Rev. 2](#) as follows:

Agriculture - NACE A

Industry - NACE B-F

Services - NACE G-U

Chart 4. Employment distribution by major economic activity¹ (15-64): 2013

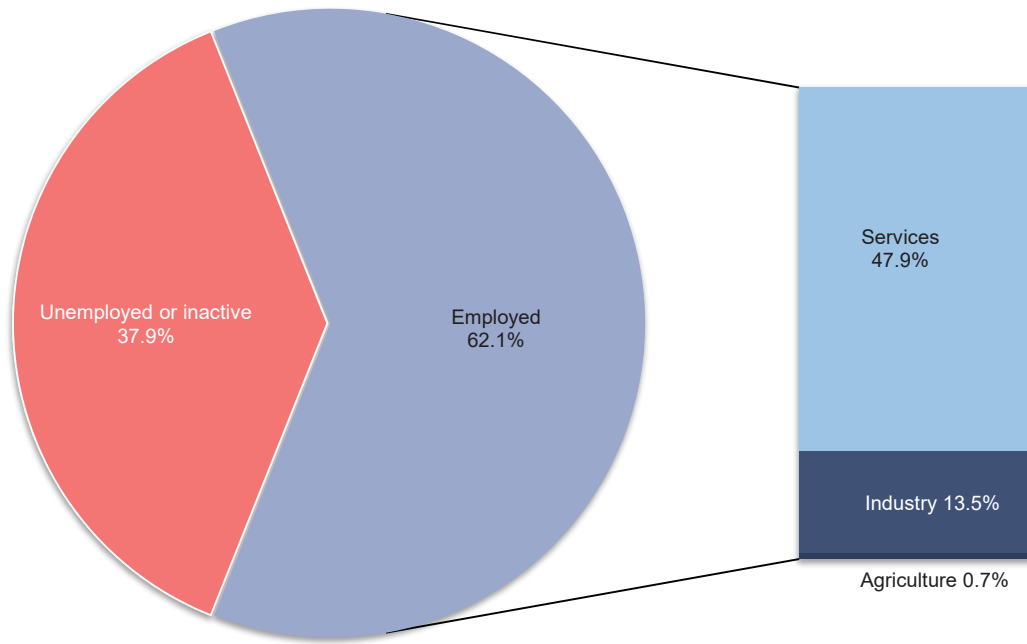
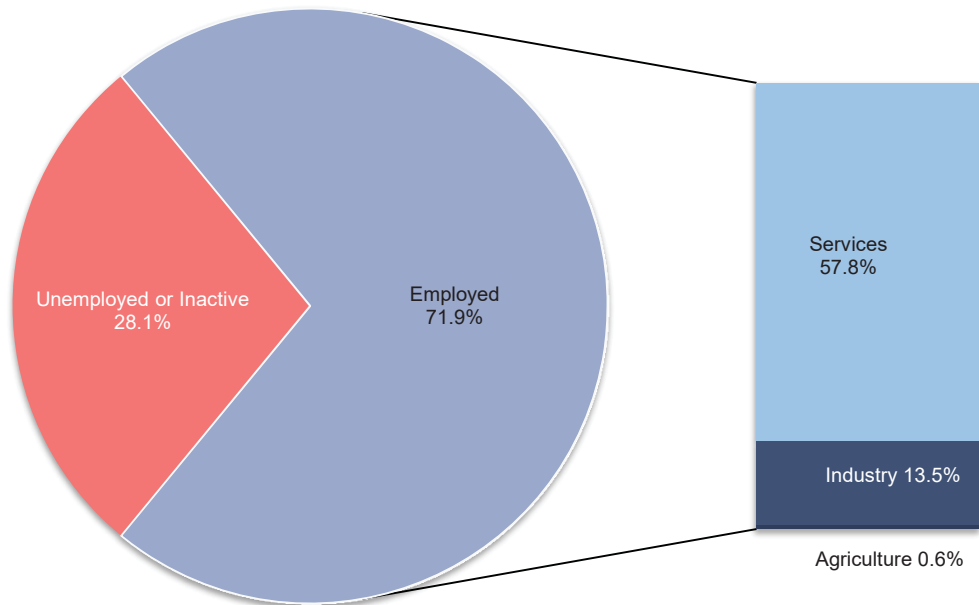


Chart 5. Employment distribution by major economic activity¹ (15-64): 2018



⁽¹⁾ Economic activity classified according to [NACE Rev. 2](#) as follows:
Agriculture - NACE A
Industry - NACE B-F
Services - NACE G-U

Table 4. Self-employed (15+ years) as a percentage of total employment by sex
(%)

Year	Males	Females	Total
2013	18.3	6.2	13.7
2014	17.7	6.8	13.5
2015	18.0	7.2	13.8
2016	19.2	6.1	14.0
2017	19.2	8.3	14.8
2018	18.4	8.2	14.3
EU 28 (2018)	17.9	10.1	14.3

In 2018, the national share of self-employment was equivalent to EU 28 levels. On average, over the past six years, self-employed males accounted for 18.5 per cent of total employed males. On the other hand, national rates for female self-employment were lower than those recorded at EU 28 level (Table 4).

On average, over the past six years, approximately 15 out of every 100 employees were working on a part-time basis. Just over a fifth of female employees in Malta had this type of working arrangement, whereas at EU 28 level, a third of all female employees were engaged on a part-time basis. The national share of part-time workers during 2018 was 7.1 percentage points lower than EU 28 levels, with a difference of 10.7 percentage points lower for females and 2.3 percentage points less for males (Table 5).

Table 5. Part-time employees (15+ years) as a percentage of total employees by sex
(% employees)

Year	Males	Females	Total
2013	7.4	24.9	14.7
2014	8.3	27.5	16.4
2015	7.4	26.3	15.3
2016	6.2	25.4	14.5
2017	6.8	23.9	14.1
2018	6.9	21.5	13.2
EU 28 (2018)	9.2	32.2	20.3

Chart 6. Share of part-time employees (15+ years) of total employees by sex

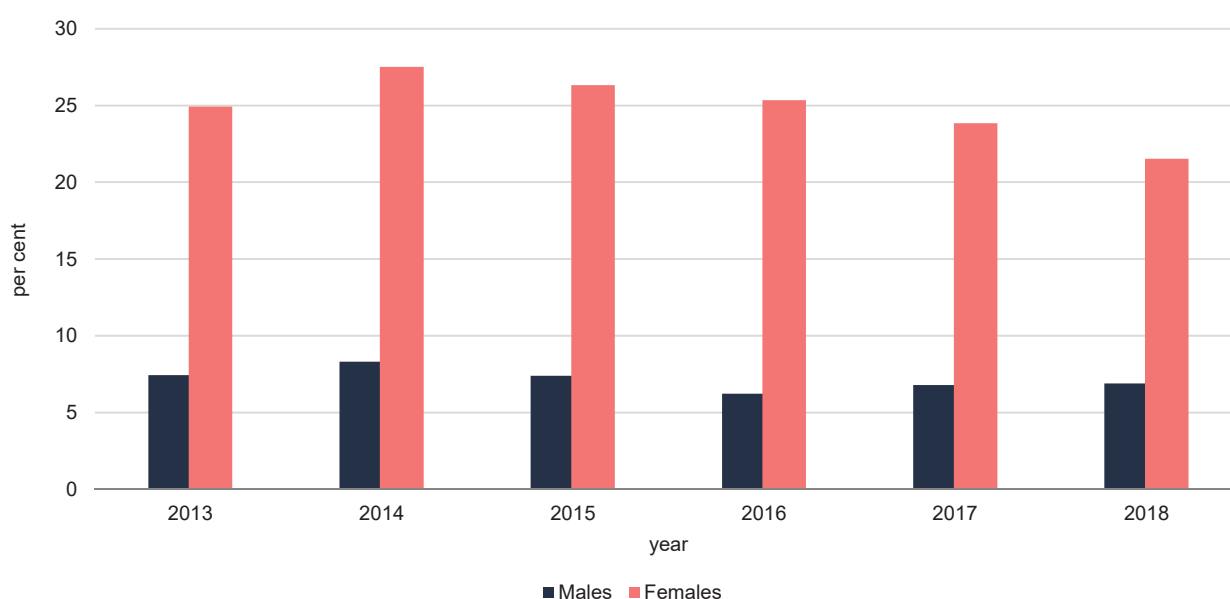


Table 6. Proportion of employees (15+ years) on a fixed-term contract basis by sex
(% employees)

Year	Males	Females	Total
2013	6.8	8.8	7.6
2014	6.4	9.6	7.8
2015	6.7	9.0	7.7
2016	6.8	8.9	7.7
2017	5.4	6.9	6.0
2018	7.4	8.6	7.9
EU 28 (2018)	13.7	14.7	14.2

In 2018, almost eight out of every 100 employees worked on a fixed-term contract basis. This type of working condition results to be more prevalent among females (Table 6). National levels are however lower than those recorded for EU 28.

On average, in 2018, full-time employees worked 40.8 hours per week. As Table 7 illustrates, this average is very close to that recorded for EU 28.

Time-related under employment, illustrated in Table 8, provides information on those persons in employment who wish to work more hours than they normally do in their main occupation. In 2018, 8.0 per cent of all employed persons wished to work more hours, however the share among both full-timers and part-timers is on the decrease with a decline of 5.3 and 8.8 percentage points respectively when compared to 2013 results (Table 8).

Table 7. Average number of hours normally worked per week by sex (full-time employees)
(hours)

Year	Males	Females	Total
2013	41.3	39.2	40.5
2014	41.1	39.1	40.4
2015	41.3	39.3	40.6
2016	41.2	39.6	40.6
2017	41.3	39.5	40.6
2018	41.5	39.7	40.8
EU 28 (2018)	40.8	39.3	40.2

Table 8. Time-related under employment by type of employment
(%)

Year	Full-time	Part-time	Total
2013	12.3	22.9	13.9
2014	10.6	19.5	12.0
2015	9.3	18.0	10.6
2016	8.9	17.3	10.2
2017	7.7	14.9	8.7
2018	7.0	14.1	8.0

Note: EU 28 data in respect of this variable is not available.

Unemployment

Unemployment rates have been declining steadily during the past years, reaching 3.7 per cent in 2018, from 6.1 per cent in 2013 (Table 9, Chart 7). In 2018, the male and female unemployment rates stood at 3.8 and 3.5 per cent respectively.

When comparing to EU 28 levels, national rates for 2018 were lower for both sexes across all age groups. The largest differences between EU 28 levels and national rates were however prevalent in the younger cohort where the difference was 4.5 percentage points for males and 7.7 percentage points for females (Table 9).

Chart 7. Unemployment rate (15-74) by sex

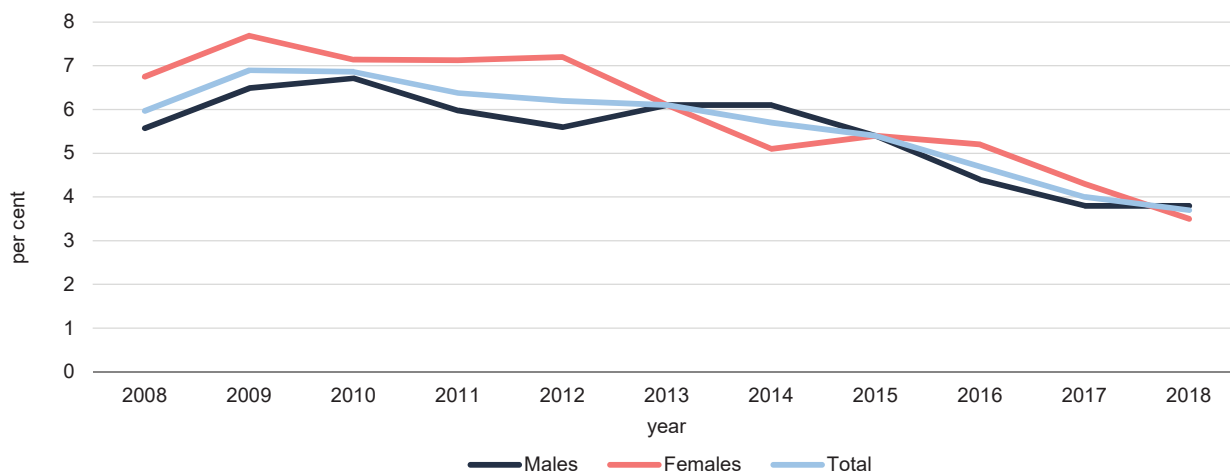


Table 9. Unemployment rate by sex and age group
(%)

Year	Males	Females	Total	Unemployment Gender Gap (p.p)
15-74				
2013	6.1	6.1	6.1	-
2014	6.1	5.1	5.7	1.0
2015	5.4	5.4	5.4	-
2016	4.4	5.2	4.7	-0.8
2017	3.8	4.3	4.0	-0.5
2018	3.8	3.5	3.7	0.3
EU 28 (2018)	6.6	7.1	6.8	-0.5
15-24				
2013	14.7	10.4	12.7	4.3
2014	13.6	9.5	11.7	4.1
2015	13.2	9.8	11.6	3.4
2016	10.2	11.3	10.7	-1.1
2017	11.1	9.9	10.6	1.2
2018	11.2	6.8	9.1	4.4
EU 28 (2018)	15.7	14.5	15.2	1.2
25-74				
2013	4.8	5.2	4.9	-0.4
2014	5.1	4.2	4.7	0.9
2015	4.3	4.5	4.4	-0.2
2016	3.6	4.1	3.8	-0.5
2017	2.9	3.3	3.1	-0.4
2018	2.9	3.0	2.9	-0.1
EU 28 (2018)	5.7	6.4	6.0	-0.7

This release provides data on the youth unemployment ratio which is defined as the number of unemployed persons aged 15 to 24 as a percentage of the total population within the same age bracket (Table 10). For 2018, the youth unemployment ratio stood at 5.1 per cent, which is 1.2 percentage points less than the EU 28 average. The young male unemployment ratio (15-24) tends to be higher than that recorded for females for both national as well as EU 28 levels.

On the other hand, the share of young people not in employment, education or training (NEET) is larger for females both in Malta and within the EU 28. The NEET rate has gained considerable importance within the local and global scenario since it measures the vulnerability of youths. In 2018, NEET rates dropped to 7.3 per cent; 3.2 percentage points less than the EU 28 average (Chart 8, Table 11).

For 2018, the national long-term unemployment rate, representing the number of persons who have been unemployed for 12 months or more dropped to 1.1 per cent. This is almost a third of the figure at EU 28 level for the same period (Table 12).

Chart 8. Youth unemployment profile (15-24): 2018

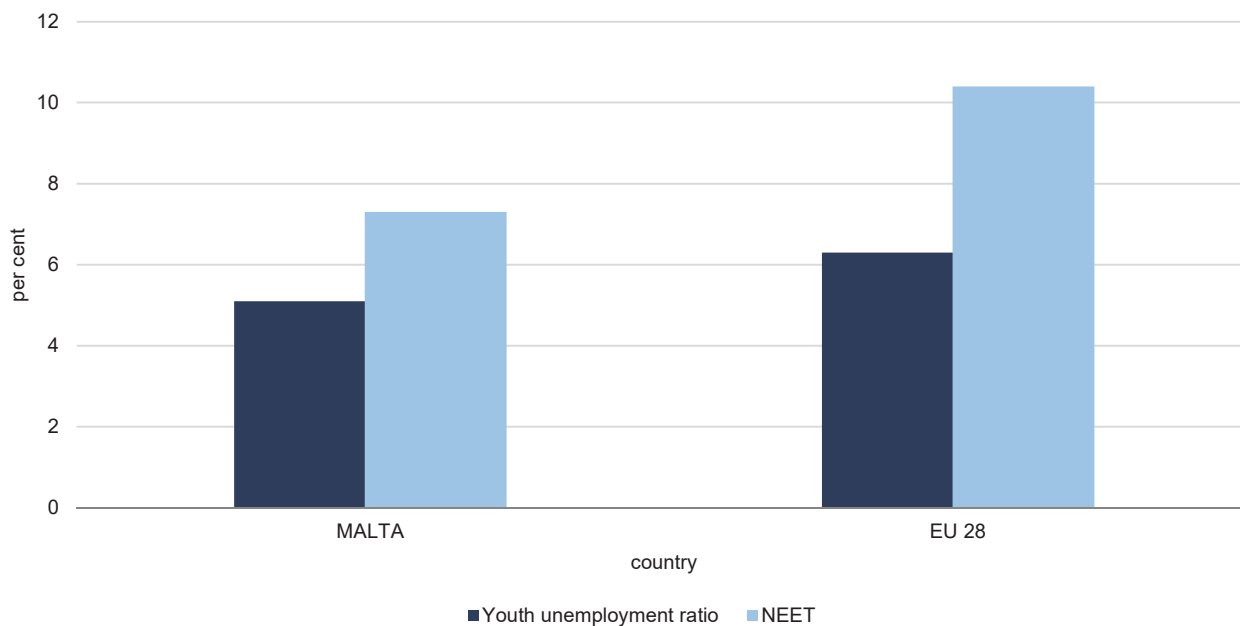


Table 10. Youth (15-24) unemployment ratio by sex (%)

Year	Males	Females	Total	Youth unemployment ratio gender gap (p.p)
2013	8.3	5.2	6.8	3.1
2014	7.3	5.0	6.2	2.3
2015	7.1	4.9	6.0	2.2
2016	5.5	5.5	5.5	-
2017	6.1	5.1	5.6	1.0
2018	6.2	3.8	5.1	2.4
EU 28 (2018)	7.0	5.7	6.3	1.3

Table 11. NEET: Not in employment, education or training (15-24) by sex
(%)

Year	Males	Females	Total
2013	9.8	10.1	9.9
2014	8.8	11.9	10.3
2015	9.3	11.9	10.6
2016	6.8	10.8	8.8
2017	8.4	8.8	8.6
2018	6.9	7.8	7.3
EU 28 (2018)	10.1	10.9	10.5

Table 12. Long-term unemployment rate (15-74) by sex
(%)

Year	Males	Females	Total
2013	3.2	2.3	2.8
2014	3.3	1.9	2.8
2015	3.0	1.6	2.4
2016	2.2	1.8	2.0
2017	1.6	1.6	1.6
2018	1.4	0.8	1.1
EU 28 (2018)	2.8	3.0	2.9

Education

Another Europe 2020 headline indicator is the rate of early leavers from education and training. In 2018, this rate stood at 17.4 per cent, registering a drop of 3.4 percentage points from 2013 levels. The rate for males dropped from 23.3 per cent in 2013 to 18.8 per cent in 2018 while that for females declined by 2.3 percentage points over the last six years reaching 15.8 per cent in 2018 (Table 13).

Although Malta's levels for the early leavers from education and training indicator declined significantly over the years, national values are still higher when compared to European averages. In 2018, the rate was 7.4 percentage points higher than the EU 2020 national target of 10 per cent (Chart 9).

At the same time, data for the six years under review show that on average the number of persons aged 20 to 24 years achieving at least an upper secondary education was 76.8 per cent, with the national rate being 5.9 percentage points lower than the EU 28 average for 2018 (Table 14).

Table 13. Early leavers from education and training (18-24) by sex
(%)

Year	Males	Females	Total
2013	23.3	18.1	20.8
2014	22.5	19.2	20.9
2015	23.3	16.9	20.2
2016	23.1	15.0	19.3
2017	20.9	14.3	17.7
2018	18.8	15.8	17.4
EU 28 (2018)	12.2	8.9	10.6
National target			10.0

Chart 9. Early leavers from education and training (18-24) by sex: 2008-2018

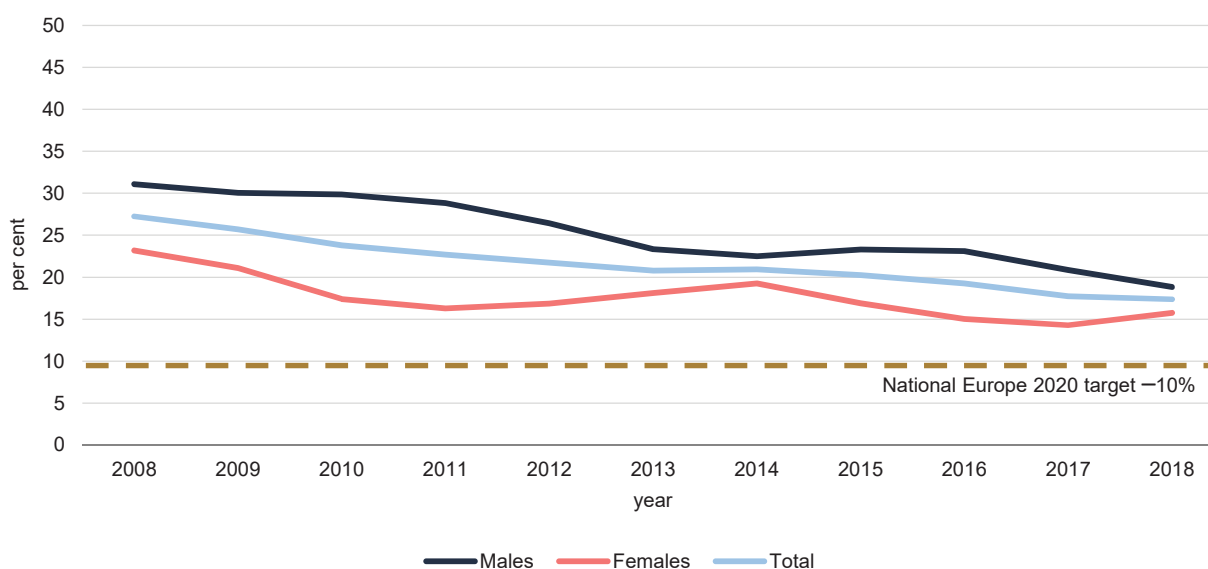


Table 14. Youth educational attainment¹ (20-24) by sex
(%)

Year	Males	Females	Total
2013	72.8	80.1	76.4
2014	72.4	77.7	75.0
2015	72.4	82.0	77.1
2016	72.5	82.0	77.0
2017	74.1	82.3	78.0
2018	76.5	78.5	77.4
EU 28 (2018)	80.8	85.9	83.3

⁽¹⁾ Persons with at least upper secondary education (ISCED \geq 3)

The skills level and continuous training of the adult population of working age is measured through the life long learning indicator. As Table 15 illustrates, the rate during 2016 stood at 10.9 per cent, an increase of 0.3 percentage points over 2017 levels. The national percentage of persons between 25 and 64 years undertaking lifelong learning was almost at par with the EU28 average.

Table 15. Lifelong learning (25-64) by sex
(%)

Year	Males	Females	Total
2013	7.4	8.0	7.7
2014	7.3	8.1	7.7
2015	6.9	7.9	7.4
2016	7.0	8.7	7.8
2017	9.5 ^b	11.9 ^b	10.6 ^b
2018	9.4	12.5	10.9
EU 28 (2018)	10.1	12.1	11.1

^b: break in series

Another Europe headline indicator is the tertiary educational attainment for the 30 to 34 year age group (Chart 10). Within this age group, there has been an increasing trend of persons attaining tertiary education for both males and females. Tertiary educational attainment increased by 6.1 percentage points over the past six years. In 2018, tertiary educational attainment stood at 34.8 per cent, hence surpassing the EU 2020 national target of 33 per cent.

Chart 10. Tertiary educational attainment (30-34) by sex

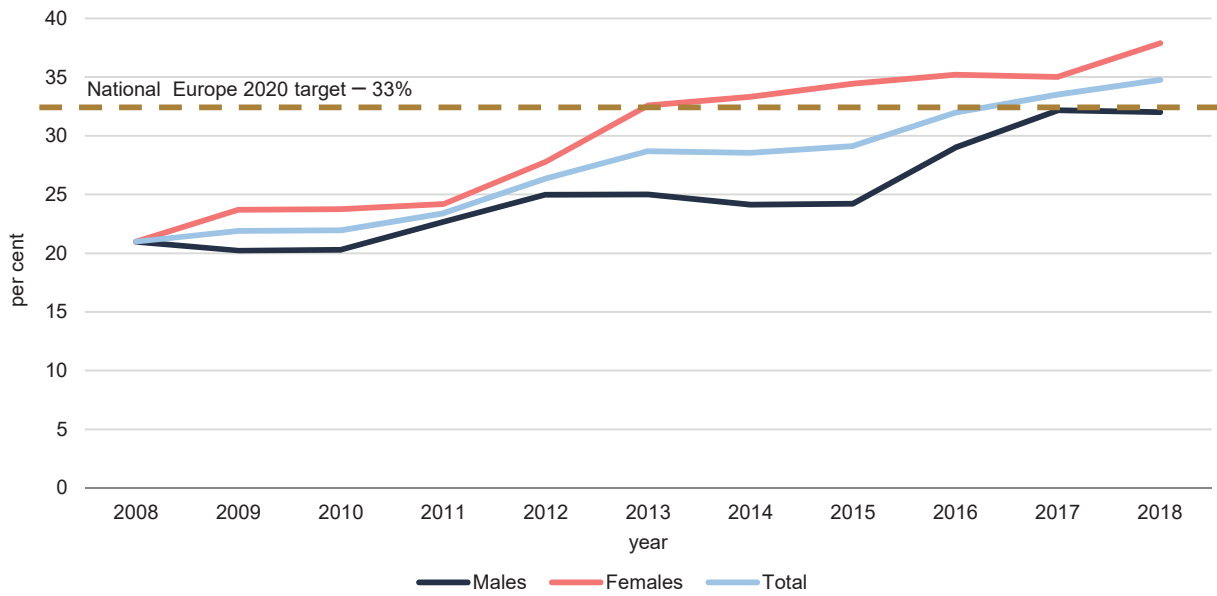


Table 16. Tertiary educational attainment (30-34) by sex (%)

Year	Males	Females	Total
2013	25.0	32.6	28.7
2014	24.1	33.3	28.6
2015	24.2	34.4	29.1
2016	29.0	35.2	32.0
2017	32.2	35.0	33.5
2018	32.0	37.9	34.8
EU 28 (2018)	35.7	45.8	40.7
National target			33.0

Methodological Notes

General Note

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is carried out on an ongoing basis using a quarterly gross sample of 3,200 private households. The objective is to have a continuous assessment of labour market trends given that the reference weeks are evenly spread throughout the 13 weeks of the quarter. One-fourth of the sample is made up of households who have been selected to participate in the LFS for the first time. Three-fourths of the quarterly sample is made up of households who were selected to participate in the survey in previous instances, either one quarter before, one year before, or one year and a quarter before (2-(2)-2). Unless otherwise indicated, figures provided in this release refer to persons aged 15 and over and living in private households during the reference period. All criteria used for this survey match international methodologies used by the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

The LFS is designed to satisfy the concepts and definitions as outlined by Eurostat. This allows the comparability of results with other EU member states and countries following ILO definitions of employment and unemployment. Occupations are classified according to the ISCO-08 classification (International Standard Classification of Occupations) whereas the economic activity is classified according to NACE Rev. 2 (Nomenclature générale des Activités économiques dans les Communautés Européennes). Education attainment is classified according to ISCED 2011.

Figures for Malta in this release may vary from those present in Eurostat's database due to a difference in the calculation of annual estimates. The difference is completely due to rounding of figures and not due to the definitions used to calculate the indicators.

Eurostat figures for EU 28 have been extracted from Eurobase on 1st October 2019.

Concepts and Definitions

1. Labour force

- **Activity rate:** the number of persons in the labour force falling within a particular age bracket as a percentage of the working population in the same age bracket (15-24, 25-54, 55-64 and 15-64).
- **Activity gender gap:** the difference in activity rates between males and females for different age groups (15-24, 25-54, 55-64 and 15-64).

2. Education

- **Early leavers from education and training rate:** the percentage of persons aged 18-24 who achieved secondary education or less (ISCED ≤ 2) and are not pursuing further education or training.
- **Life long learning rate:** the percentage of persons aged 25-64 participating in regular education, or in non-formal training such as courses, seminars and conferences. Students on holiday are considered to be part of the population in life-long learning.
- **Tertiary educational attainment rate:** the percentage of persons aged between 30-34 years having achieved at least tertiary level of education (ISCED ≥ 5).
- **Youth educational attainment rate:** the percentage of persons aged 20-24 years having achieved at least upper secondary education (ISCED ≥ 3).

3. Employment

- **Employment rate:** the number of employed persons falling within a particular age bracket as a percentage of the working population in the same age bracket (15-24, 25-54, 55-64, 15-64 and 20-64).
- **Employment gender gap:** the difference in employment rates between males and females for different age groups (15-24, 25-54, 55-64, 15-64 and 20-64).
- **Employment share in services:** the number of employed persons (15-64 years) working in the services sector (NACE Rev 2.0 G to U) as a percentage of the working population in the same age group.
- **Average weekly number of hours usually worked per week:** the sum of hours usually worked by full-time employees divided by the number of full-time employees. The average excludes persons working variable hours.
- **Self-employed:** this component is made up of persons who are self employed with or without employees. The rate is worked out as a percentage of the total employment.
- **Type of employment:** grouped into full-time employment and part-time employment. For the purpose of this release part-time employment is made up of full-time with reduced hours jobs and part-time jobs. The rate is worked out as a percentage of the total employees.
- **Fixed-term contracts:** refers to all those persons working with a definite contract or on a temporary basis. The rate is worked out as a percentage of the total employees.

- **Time-related under-employment:** refers to the number of persons having a main job but willing/wishing to work more than the number of hours currently worked in their job. The rate is worked out as a percentage of the total employment.

4. Unemployment

- **Unemployment rate:** the number of unemployed persons aged within a particular age bracket as a percentage of the labour force in the same age bracket (15-24, 25-74 and 15-74).
 - **Youth unemployment ratio:** refers to the number of unemployed persons aged 15-24 as a percentage of the total population falling within the same age bracket.
 - **Not in employment or in education:** the number of persons aged 15-24 years not in employment, education or training as a percentage of total persons aged 15-24. This indicator is referred to the NEET rate.
 - **Long-term unemployment rate:** the number of long-term unemployed (12 months or more) aged 15-74 years as a proportion of the labour force in the same age bracket.
5. During 2017, the NSO introduced a change to the questions related to the measurement of the lifelong learning indicator. This change resulted in a break in series between 2016 and 2017, and contributed to an increase of life-long learning rates.
6. More information relating to this news release may be accessed at:

Statistical Concepts: <http://nso.gov.mt/metadata/concepts.aspx>

Metadata: <http://nso.gov.mt/metadata/reports.aspx?id=33>

Classifications: <http://nso.gov.mt/metadata/classificationdetails.aspx?id=NACE Rev. 2>

<http://nso.gov.mt/metadata/classificationdetails.aspx?id=ISCED 2011>

7. References to this News Release are to be cited appropriately.

8. A detailed news release calendar is available on:

https://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/Release_Calendar/Pages/News-Release-Calendar.aspx

European statistics comparable to data in this News Release are available at:

[EUROSTAT Website/Homepage/Statistics Database](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&code=sdg_8_4_1)

>Tables on EU Policy

>Europe 2020 Indicators

Additional data may be available and can be requested by filling in the form available at:

<https://nso.gov.mt/en/Services/Pages/Request-for-Information.aspx>