

News Release



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Special Observances

International Women's Day 2006

International Women's Day is the universal day that connects all women around the world and inspires them to achieve their full potential. It is an important day because the collective power of women is witnessed by millions, and the brave achievements of women past, present and future are respectfully honoured. Around the world, International Women's Day marks a celebration of the economic, social, cultural and political achievements for women.

The idea of an International Women's Day first arose at the turn of the century. Following is a brief chronology of the most important events:

- 1909 - First National Women's Day - United States - 28th February.
- 1910 - Women's Day established during a meeting in Copenhagen - no fixed date was set.
- 1911 - International Women's day marked for the first time in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland - 19th March. This date was selected by German women because on this date in 1848 the Prussian king had promised the vote for women.
- 1913 - International Women's Day first observed in Russia - last Sunday of February.
- 1914 - Women in Europe held rallies either to protest World War I or to express solidarity with their Russian sisters - on or around 8th March.
- 1917 - Russian women went on strike for "bread and peace" - last Sunday in February. That historic Sunday fell on 23rd February on the Julian calendar then in use in Russia, but on 8th March on the Gregorian calendar in use elsewhere.

Since those early years, International Women's Day has assumed a new global dimension for women in developed and developing countries alike.

Aside from covering the demographics of Maltese women, this year's news release will focus on women participating in sports activities, as well as taking a look at various health factors.

During 2004, 50.4 per cent of the Maltese population were females. Population forecasts for both sexes show an increase in the number of persons aged 60 years and over, whilst the number of persons aged under 60 is decreasing, with an especially sharp decline for those persons under the age of 40. Although on the whole the percentage of women is greater than that of men, this is not apparent until age 60, when the number of women overtakes that of men quite significantly. In fact, this is confirmed when one looks at life expectancy - the life expectation for women has been higher than that of men for over 100 years.

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The number of female members in sports organisations has been growing steadily over the past four years, displaying a percentage increase of 43.1 per cent. It is important to note that these members do not necessarily represent a total number of individual persons - it is possible that the same person was a member of many different organisations. During 2004, most women preferred to attend sports centres (41.5 per cent), followed by gyms (17.6 per cent) and diving (8.3 per cent). The least popular sports with women were shooti and regatta. The largest percentage of women who were members of a sports organisation in 2004 were aged between 20 and 24, followed by those aged 15 to 19. Membership of a sports organisation was least common with women over the age of 40. A total of 156 females were employed by sports organisations in the year 2004, of which 52 worked on a full-time basis. Nearly half of these worked in a training capacity.

The number of females participating in some form of dance has also been on the rise - increasing from 1,928 in 2001 to 2,905 in 2004 - an increase of 50.7 per cent. In 2004, the number of females participating in dance was over 16 times the number of male participants. Most of these dancers were aged between 5 and 14. The most popular form of dance amongst females was classical ballet with 1,529 participants, followed by jazz and modern dance with 882 and 291 participants respectively. Spanish and Latin American dancing also proved popular, whilst the least popular forms of dance amongst females were salsa and Argentine tango. A total of 1,301 females sat for dance exams in the year 2004.

According to the Lifestyle Survey carried out in June - July 2003, 32,000 women over the age of 17 said that they were cigarette smokers. The majority said that they smoked between 1 and 10 a day (56.8 per cent), followed by 32.1 per cent who smoked 11 to 20 a day. Also in the same survey, it was found that 37,450 women aged 18 and over - 25.0 per cent of the sample taken - regularly consumed alcohc

Book-reading was found to be the most popular hobby, with 51.5 per cent of the female population aged 18 and over enjoying this. 37.2 per cent cited home decoration as one of their hobbies, with a further 26.7 per cent saying they regularly sew or knit, and 25.2 per cent saying gardening. The least popular hobbies with women were gambling (0.7 per cent) and playing a musical instrument (2.5 per cent)

When asked about exercising habits, 61.7 per cent of women said that they walked regularly, 23.3 per cent swam regularly, and 13.3 per cent exercised at home. An interesting point to note is that swimming has a relatively high percentage due to the fact this survey was carried out in the summer months. Women spent, on average, 2.2 hours per week walking, 1.8 hours swimming, and 1.3 hours exercising at home. These values are relatively low when one considers that men spent an average of 2.3 hours, 2.5 hours and 1.7 hours respectively doing the same activities.

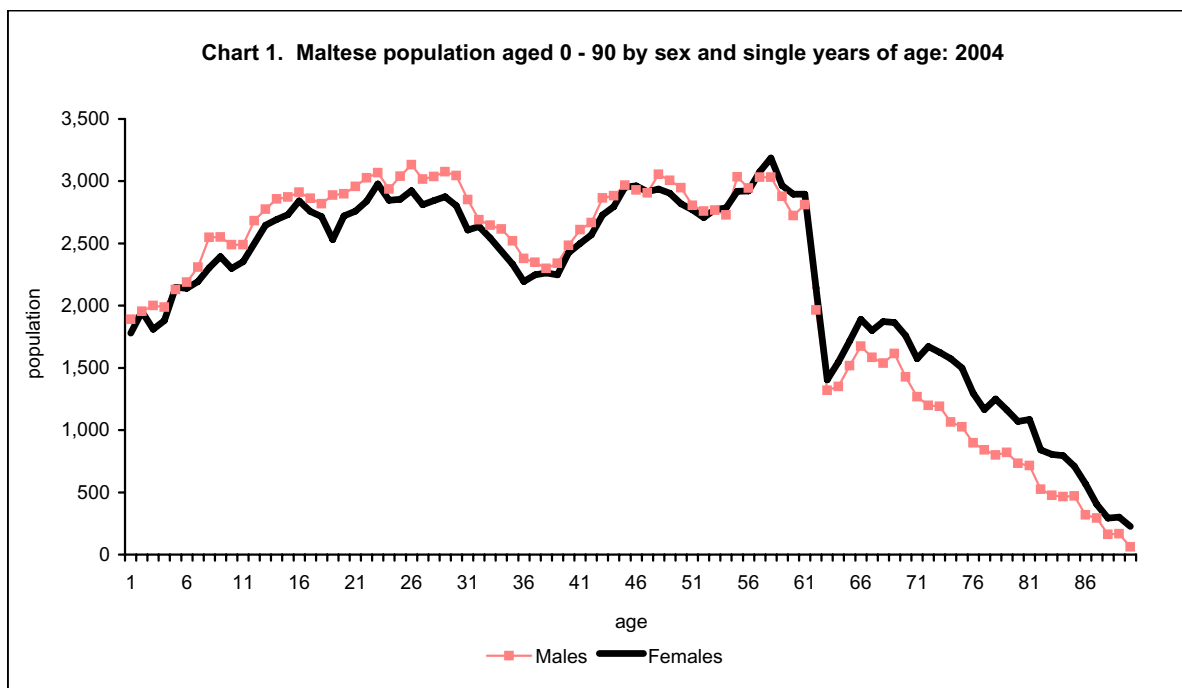
The average weight of women over the age of 17 was found to be 65.8 kg. It can be observed that this average weight starts off at its lowest value (55.6 kg) in women aged 18 to 24, and increases gradually with each age group.

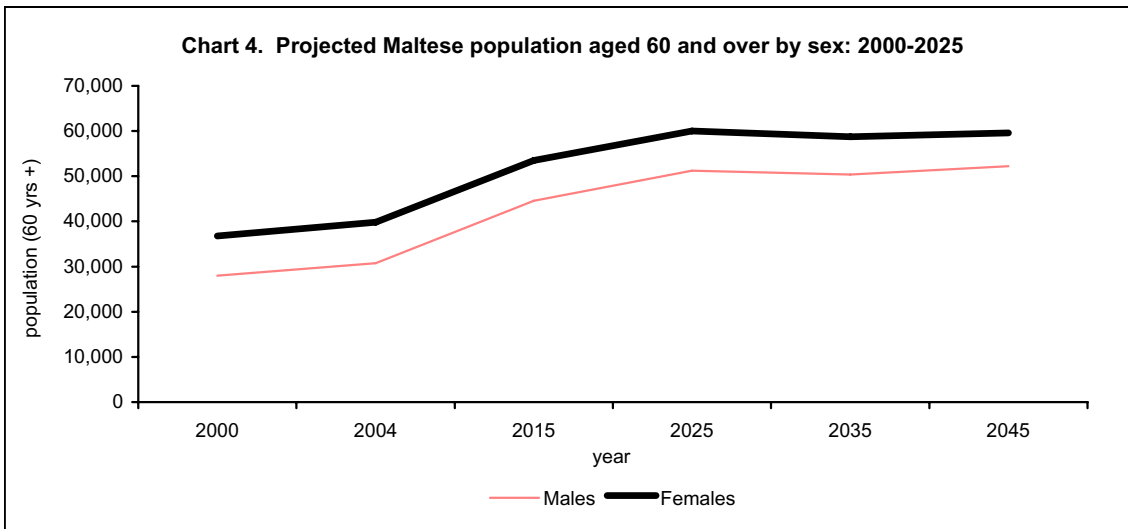
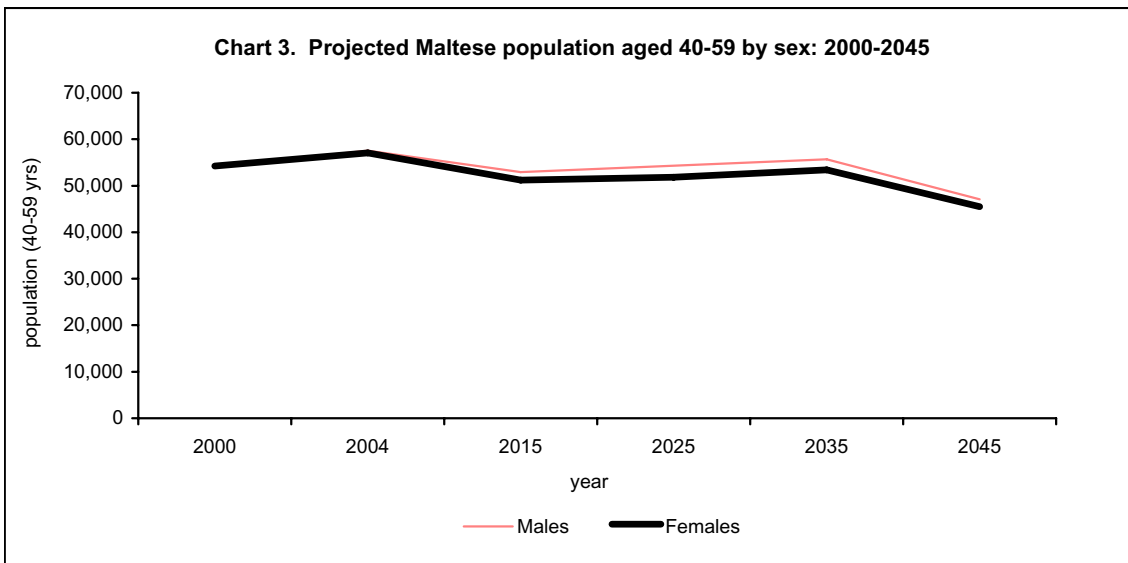
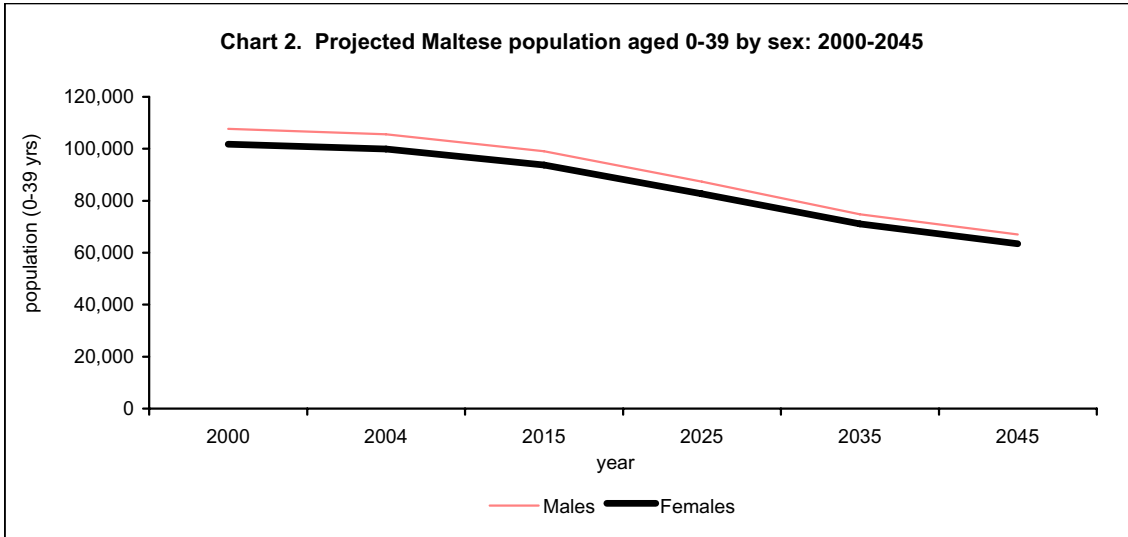
The growing international women's movement has helped make International Women's Day a special day for promoting women's rights. Increasingly, International Women's Day is a time to reflect on the progress made, to call for change and to celebrate acts of courage and determination by ordinary women who have played an extraordinary role in the history of women's rights ■

Table 1. Maltese population by sex and age group: 2004

Age group	Males	Females	All population
0 - 9	22,052	20,903	42,955
10 - 19	28,055	26,488	54,543
20 - 29	30,336	28,535	58,871
30 - 39	25,170	23,933	49,103
40 - 49	28,834	28,083	56,917
50 - 59	28,703	28,999	57,702
60 - 69	16,799	18,890	35,689
70 - 79	9,839	13,883	23,722
80 - 89	3,652	6,026	9,679
90+	477	1,015	1,492
Total	193,917	196,754	390,671

Source: NSO demographic statistics 2004.





Source: NSO demographic statistics 2004.

Table 2. Expectation of life by sex

Year	Males	Females
1870	44.7	47.4
1890	41.2	42.8
1910	43.4	44.7
1920	45.9	45.2
1930	41.3	43.5
1948	55.7	57.7
1957	65.7	68.9
1967	67.5	71.6
1985	70.8	76.0
1995	74.9	79.5
2004	76.7	80.5

Source: NSO demographic statistics 2004.

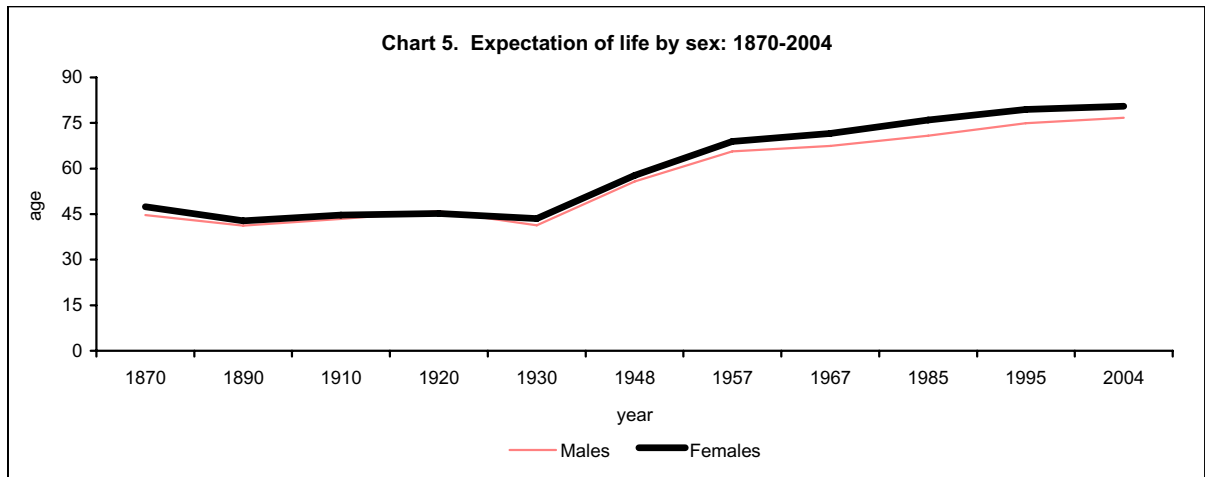


Table 3. Number of female members in sports organisations by year and type of sport

Type of sport	2001		2002		2003		2004	
	Number	% total	Number	% total	Number	% total	Number	% total
Athletics	375	2.5	405	2.7	210	1.1	227	1.1
Basketball	630	4.3	673	4.4	516	2.6	620	2.9
Boc�ci	26	0.2	26	0.2	42	0.2	44	0.2
Darts	31	0.2	25	0.2	27	0.1	28	0.1
Diving	571	3.9	561	3.7	1,448	7.3	1,763	8.3
Football	473	3.2	538	3.6	576	2.9	635	3.0
Gymnastics	2,080	14.0	2,242	14.8	83	0.4	281	1.3
Gyms	4,212	28.4	4,043	26.7	3,160	15.9	3,726	17.6
Handball	105	0.7	218	1.4	161	0.8	175	0.8
Hockey	34	0.2	49	0.3	26	0.1	43	0.2
Martial arts	738	5.0	771	5.1	617	3.1	663	3.1
Netball	200	1.4	201	1.3	205	1.0	200	0.9
Sailing	246	1.7	264	1.7	290	1.5	288	1.4
Sports centres	2,274	15.4	2,200	14.5	8,883	44.8	8,799	41.5
Table tennis	19	0.1	27	0.2	33	0.2	33	0.2
Tennis	1,077	7.3	1,158	7.7	643	3.2	674	3.2
Volleyball	414	2.8	412	2.7	326	1.6	326	1.5
Waterpolo	178	1.2	151	1.0	1,526	7.7	1,583	7.5
Other*	1,139	7.6	1,179	7.7	1,048	5.3	1,095	5.2
Total**	14,822	100.0	15,143	100.0	19,820	100.0	21,203	100.0

* Other organisations are: archery, billiards & snooker, bridge, canoeing, chess, cricket, draughts, fishing, golf, karting, pigeon racing, polo, regatta, rugby, shooting, squash, swimming, triathlon, ten pin bowling and wrestling.

** This total does not necessarily represent a total number of individual persons - it is possible that the same person was a member of many different organisations.

Source: NSO culture statistics 2004.

Table 4. Female members in sports organisations by year and age group

Age group	2001		2002		2003		2004	
	Number	% total	Number	% total	Number	% total	Number	% total
5 - 14	3,408	23.0	3,583	23.7	1,854	9.4	2,227	10.5
15 - 19	2,320	15.7	2,625	17.3	4,157	21.0	4,282	20.2
20 - 24	2,199	14.8	2,129	14.1	5,498	27.7	5,820	27.4
25 - 29	2,517	17.0	2,602	17.2	2,815	14.2	2,990	14.1
30 - 39	1,687	11.4	1,574	10.4	2,537	12.8	2,668	12.6
40 - 49	1,285	8.7	1,235	8.2	1,394	7.0	1,536	7.2
50+	1,406	9.5	1,395	9.2	1,565	7.9	1,680	7.9
Total*	14,822	100.0	15,143	100.0	19,820	100.0	21,203	100.0

* This total does not necessarily represent a total number of individual persons - it is possible that the same person was a member of many different organisations.

Source: NSO culture statistics 2004.

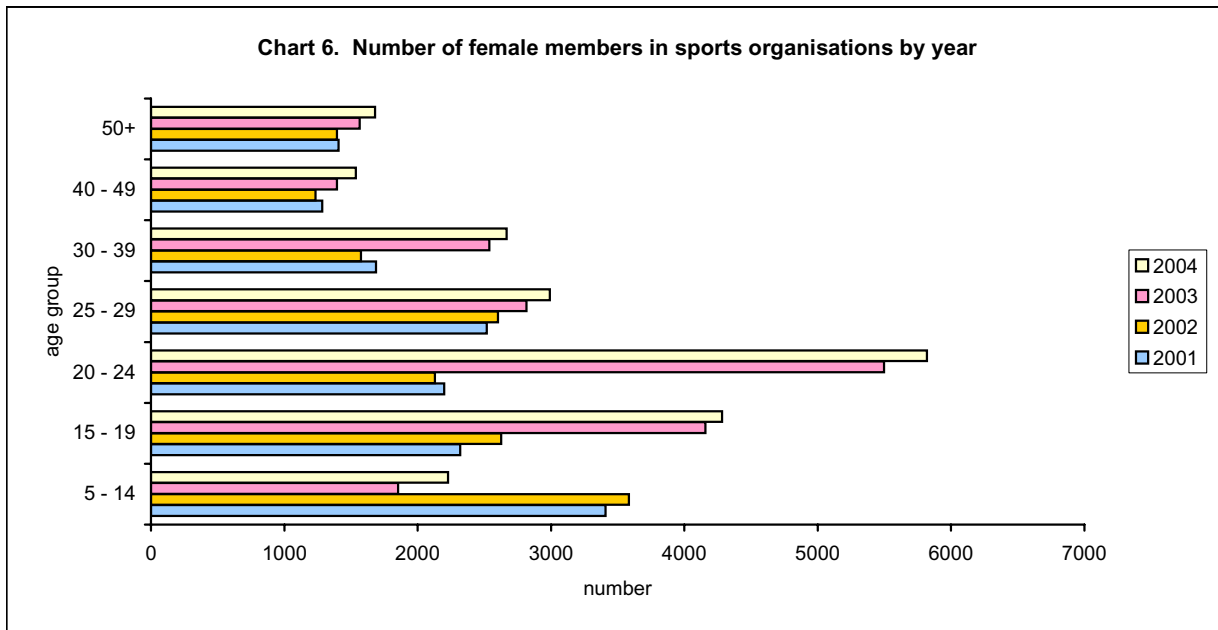


Table 5. Full-time personnel employed by sports organisations by year, sex and type of staff

Type of staff	2001			2002			2003			2004		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Administrative	31	30	61	38	39	77	53	30	83	52	33	85
Training	50	19	69	57	15	72	78	16	94	85	15	100
Other	70	4	74	81	4	85	55	5	60	57	4	61
Total - paid staff	151	53	204	176	58	234	186	51	237	194	52	246

Table 6. Part-time personnel employed by sports organisations by year, sex and type of staff

Type of staff	2001			2002			2003			2004		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Administrative	37	11	48	38	22	60	32	23	55	34	26	60
Training	546	40	586	596	44	640	275	53	328	297	61	358
Other	39	10	49	37	9	46	31	20	51	34	17	51
Total - paid staff	622	61	683	671	75	746	338	96	434	365	104	469

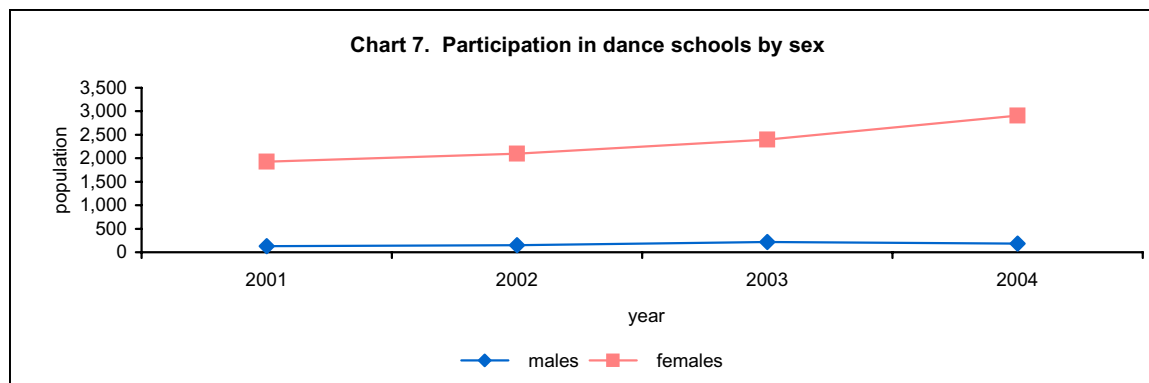
Table 7. Full-time and part-time personnel employed by sports organisations by sex and type of staff: 2004

Type of staff	Full-time						Part-time					
	Males			Females			Males			Females		
	Number	% sex	Total	Number	% sex	Total	Number	% sex	Total	Number	% sex	Total
Administrative	52	61.2	33	33	38.8	85	34	56.7	26	43.3	60	100.0
Training	85	85.0	15	15	15.0	100	297	83.0	61	17.0	358	100.0
Other	57	93.4	4	4	6.6	61	34	66.7	17	33.3	51	100.0
Total - paid staff	194	78.9	52	52	21.1	246	365	77.8	104	22.2	469	100.0

Source: NSO culture statistics 2004.

Table 8. Participation in dance schools by year and sex

Sex	2001		2002		2003		2004	
	Number	% sex	Number	% sex	Number	% sex	Number	% sex
Males	130	6.3	150	6.7	217	8.3	181	5.9
Females	1,928	93.7	2,096	93.3	2,400	91.7	2,905	94.1
Total	2,058	100.0	2,246	100.0	2,617	100.0	3,086	100.0



Source: NSO culture statistics 2004.

Table 9. Females in dance schools by year and age group

Age group	2003		2004	
	Number	% total	Number	% total
Under 5	301	9.3	355	9.9
5 - 9	920	28.5	972	27.2
10 - 14	860	26.6	940	26.3
15 - 19	519	16.1	567	15.8
20 - 24	309	9.6	414	11.6
25 and over	321	9.9	330	9.2
Total*	3,230	100.0	3,578	100.0

*This number does not represent the total number of dance students due to the fact that some students participate in more than one type of dance.

Source: NSO culture statistics 2004.

Table 10. Females in dance schools by year and type of dance

Type of dance	2001		2002		2003		2004	
	Number	% total	Number	% total	Number	% total	Number	% total
Classical ballet	1,554	50.3	1,605	49.2	1,489	46.1	1,529	42.7
Jazz	473	15.3	501	15.3	443	13.7	882	24.7
Modern dance	140	4.5	151	4.6	310	9.6	291	8.1
Contemporary	84	2.7	90	2.8	85	2.6	57	1.6
Spanish	213	6.9	233	7.1	296	9.2	253	7.1
Tap	57	1.8	88	2.7	82	2.5	60	1.7
Salsa	59	1.9	69	2.1	16	0.5	4	0.1
Argentine tango	-	-	-	-	9	0.3	6	0.2
Ballroom	112	3.6	128	3.9	99	3.1	67	1.9
Latin American	180	5.8	174	5.3	176	5.4	186	5.2
Line dancing	15	0.5	10	0.3	-	-	-	-
Other	202	6.5	215	6.6	225	7.0	243	6.8
Total*	3,089	100.0	3,264	100.0	3,230	100.0	3,578	100.0

*This number does not represent the total number of dance students due to the fact that some students participate in more than one type of dance.

Source: NSO culture statistics 2004.

Table 11. Number of female students taking dance exams by year

Year	Exam					
	Local		Foreign		Total	
	Number	% total	Number	% total	Number	% total
2001	106	8.3	1,164	91.7	1,270	100.0
2002	109	8.3	1,198	91.7	1,307	100.0
2003	-	-	914	100.0	914	100.0
2004	-	-	1,301	100.0	1,301	100.0

Source: NSO culture statistics 2004.

Table 12. Female cigarette smokers by number of cigarettes smoked per day

Average cigarettes smoked per day	Number	%
1 to 10 a day	18,180	56.8
11 to 20 a day	10,250	32.1
21 to 30 a day	2,030	6.3
31 or more a day	770	2.4
Do not know	770	2.4
Total	32,000	100.0

Source: NSO Lifestyle Survey 2003.

Chart 8. Female cigarette smokers by number of cigarettes smoked per day

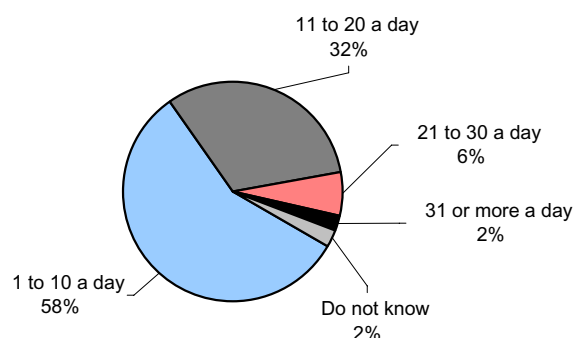


Table 13. Persons drinking alcohol on a regular basis by sex

Sex	Alcohol consumers		
	Number	% persons aged 18+	% sex
Males	67,790	47.5	64.4
Females	37,450	25.0	35.6
Total	105,240	72.5	100.0

Source: NSO Lifestyle survey 2003.

Table 14. Hobbies amongst females by type of hobby

Type of hobby	Number	% females aged 18+
Arts / cultural activities	23,320	15.6
Playing a musical instrument	3,690	2.5
Bingo	18,790	12.5
Book-reading	77,270	51.5
Collectibles	8,810	5.9
Crafts	19,790	13.2
Gambling	1,050	0.7
Gardening	37,750	25.2
Home decoration	55,710	37.2
Lotteries / sweepstakes	6,660	4.4
Photography	7,330	4.9
Sewing / knitting	40,060	26.7

Source: NSO Lifestyle survey 2003.

Table 15. Female participation in sports activities by type of activity

Activity	Number	% females aged 18+
Walking	92,450	61.7
Swimming	34,990	23.3
Cycling	5,830	3.9
Running or jogging	4,550	3.0
Aerobics	3,460	2.3
Gym exercising or weight training	7,960	5.3
Exercising at home	19,990	13.3
Tennis	1,130	0.8
Other*	2,950	2.0

*Other activities include basketball, football and squash

Source: NSO Lifestyle survey 2003.

Table 16. Average number of hours spent in each sporting activity per week by sex and type of activity

(This question was addressed to only those who practise sports activities)

Type of activity	Males	Females	Total
Walking	2.3	2.2	2.2
Swimming	2.5	1.8	2.2
Exercising at home	1.7	1.3	1.5
Other*	2.5	1.8	2.2

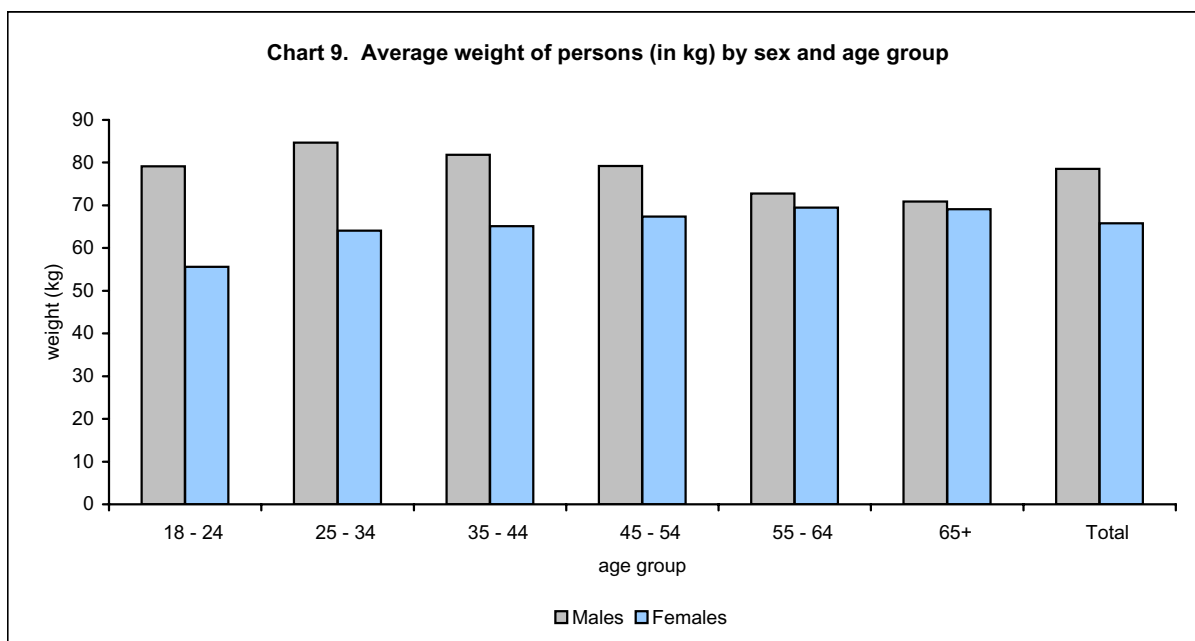
*Other sports include: running or jogging, aerobics, football, cycling, gym exercising or weight training, tennis, basketball and squash

Source: NSO Lifestyle survey 2003.

Table 17. Average weight of person (in kg) by sex and age group

Age group	Males	Females	Total
18 - 24	79.1	55.6	68.5
25 - 34	84.7	64.1	74.2
35 - 44	81.8	65.1	74.3
45 - 54	79.2	67.4	72.8
55 - 64	72.8	69.5	71.2
65+	70.9	69.1	69.8
Total	78.5	65.8	72.0

Source: NSO Lifestyle survey 2003.



Methodological notes

This news release makes reference to various works published by the NSO over the past 3 years.

Sources are quoted after each work mentioned.

Source for commentary: <http://www.internationalwomensday.com>

The Lifestyle Survey 2003 was conducted in June-July 2003. The target population was Maltese residents aged 18 years and over and living within private households. A sample of 1,000 individuals was selected using systematic random sampling from the Electoral Register. Data was collected through self-completion questionnaires, which were sent by postal mail, and the survey was anonymous.