

23 April 2015 | 1100 hrs | 078/2015

Total absences for students in primary and secondary schools during the academic year 2012/2013 amounted to 710,161 days, equivalent to an annual average of 15.4 absences per student.

Absenteeism in Schools: 2012/2013

In total, the number of absences recorded during the academic year 2012/2013 decreased by 8.0 per cent when compared with the previous academic year. Total authorised absences increased by 8.6 per cent and made up 61.2 per cent of total absences. In contrast, unauthorised absences dropped by 25.9 per cent (Table 1).

The average number of absences during the period under review stood at 15.4 days per student, down by 1.1 days in comparison with the previous academic year (Table 2).

In absolute terms, male students recorded higher levels of absenteeism during the academic year 2012/2013, most of which were classified as authorised. The levels of unauthorised absences dropped substantially both among male and female students (Table 3). On average, male and female students at the same level of education exhibited similar levels of absences (Chart 1).

The largest volume of absences in state schools was recorded by upper secondary students, while in the case of church and independent schools, students at primary level of education recorded the highest absenteeism levels. Increases in authorised absences were recorded in state, church and independent schools when compared to the previous scholastic year. Unauthorised absences rose by 11.0 per cent in church schools and declined in both state and independent schools - 28.0 and 17.3 per cent respectively (Table 4).

Students of all ages recorded lower levels of absences during the scholastic year 2012/2013, with the exception of students aged 16 and over. In particular, students aged 11 to 15 exhibited drops of up to 19.0 per cent in their absence levels, when compared with the previous academic year. Total absences among students aged 16 increased by 3.4 per cent over 2011/2012 (Table 5).

On average, eight year olds were the ones scoring the lowest absence levels, while 16 year olds had the highest average levels of absenteeism (Table 6).

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Absences in state schools decreased by 10.5 per cent when compared with the previous year. Unauthorised absences went down by 28.0 per cent, while authorised absences increased by 11.0 per cent (Table 7). On average, students attending state schools located in the South Harbour district accumulated the highest average number of absences (40.5 days per student), while Gozitan students recorded the lowest average number of absences with 13.9 days per student (Table 8) ■

Table 1. Absences by academic year and class level*

Class level	Academic year 2010/2011	Academic year 2011/2012	Academic year 2012/2013	Percentage change 2012/2013-2011/2012
	Authorised absences			
Year 1	32,795	35,121	36,552	4.1
Year 2	28,771	28,971	30,039	3.7
Year 3	26,629	25,508	29,103	14.1
Year 4	23,425	23,544	23,437	-0.5
Year 5	22,796	23,163	24,210	4.5
Year 6	26,571	22,071	25,197	14.2
Form 1	27,133	27,479	25,780	-6.2
Form 2	29,056	31,072	29,090	-6.4
Form 3	35,072	35,571	34,600	-2.7
Form 4	43,136	49,041	47,175	-3.8
Form 5	66,522	98,748	129,717	31.4
Total	361,906	400,288	434,899	8.6
	Unauthorised absences			
Year 1	14,313	18,764	15,794	-15.8
Year 2	13,939	19,247	15,555	-19.2
Year 3	14,641	17,800	14,216	-20.1
Year 4	13,385	17,904	15,093	-15.7
Year 5	16,532	19,785	15,966	-19.3
Year 6	18,775	21,139	15,890	-24.8
Form 1	26,137	30,615	21,244	-30.6
Form 2	34,773	38,101	29,010	-23.9
Form 3	43,811	48,564	35,350	-27.2
Form 4	51,059	63,316	48,351	-23.6
Form 5	70,792	76,032	48,793	-35.8
Total	318,158	371,266	275,262	-25.9
	Total absences			
Year 1	47,108	53,885	52,346	-2.9
Year 2	42,709	48,217	45,593	-5.4
Year 3	41,271	43,308	43,319	0.0
Year 4	36,811	41,448	38,530	-7.0
Year 5	39,328	42,948	40,176	-6.5
Year 6	45,345	43,209	41,087	-4.9
Form 1	53,270	58,093	47,024	-19.1
Form 2	63,829	69,173	58,100	-16.0
Form 3	78,883	84,135	69,950	-16.9
Form 4	94,195	112,357	95,525	-15.0
Form 5	137,314	174,780	178,510	2.1
Total	680,063	771,554	710,161	-8.0

* Excludes children attending special schools

Table 2. Average absences by academic year and class level*

Class level	Academic year 2010/2011	Academic year 2011/2012	Academic year 2012/2013
	Authorised absences		
Year 1	8.4	9.0	9.3
Year 2	7.4	7.4	7.7
Year 3	6.6	6.6	7.4
Year 4	5.9	5.9	6.0
Year 5	5.7	5.9	6.0
Year 6	6.1	5.6	6.4
Form 1	6.2	6.3	6.3
Form 2	6.2	7.0	6.7
Form 3	7.1	7.4	7.8
Form 4	8.8	10.0	9.9
Form 5	13.1	20.3	26.7
Total	7.5	8.5	9.4
	Unauthorised absences		
Year 1	3.7	4.8	4.0
Year 2	3.6	4.9	4.0
Year 3	3.6	4.6	3.6
Year 4	3.4	4.5	3.9
Year 5	4.2	5.0	4.0
Year 6	4.3	5.4	4.0
Form 1	6.0	7.0	5.2
Form 2	7.4	8.6	6.7
Form 3	8.9	10.1	8.0
Form 4	10.4	12.9	10.1
Form 5	14.0	15.7	10.1
Total	6.6	7.9	6.0
	Total absences		
Year 1	12.0	13.9	13.3
Year 2	11.0	12.4	11.7
Year 3	10.3	11.2	11.0
Year 4	9.3	10.4	9.9
Year 5	9.9	10.9	10.0
Year 6	10.5	10.9	10.4
Form 1	12.3	13.3	11.4
Form 2	13.6	15.7	13.4
Form 3	16.0	17.5	15.8
Form 4	19.1	22.9	20.0
Form 5	27.1	36.0	36.8
Total	14.2	16.5	15.4

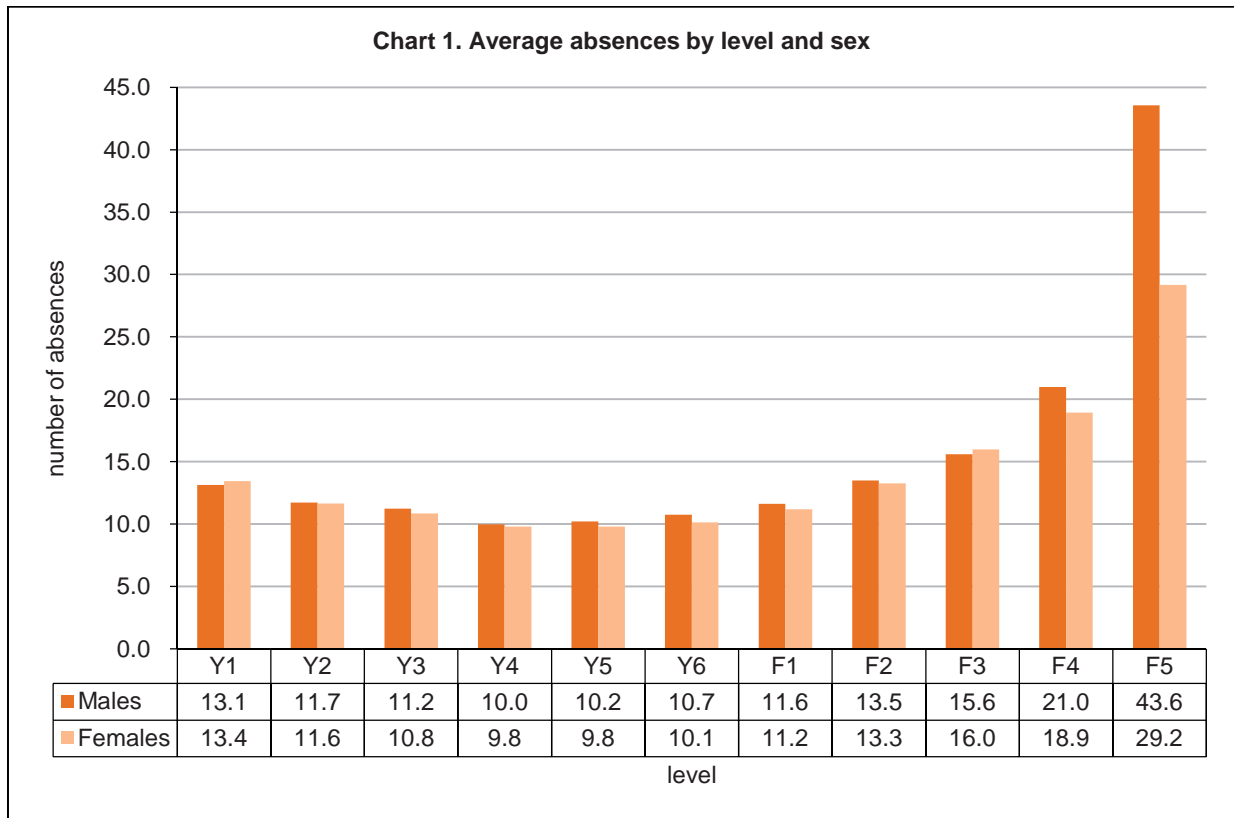
* Excludes children attending special schools

Note: Averages are compiled on the basis of the entire student population as present in news release No: 045/2015.

Table 3. Absences by academic year, sex and class level*

Class level	Academic year 2010/2011		Academic year 2011/2012		Academic year 2012/2013		Percentage change 2012/2013-2011/2012	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
	Authorised absences							
Year 1	16,539	16,256	19,044	16,077	19,027	17,524	-0.1	9.0
Year 2	15,084	13,687	14,973	13,997	15,855	14,184	5.9	1.3
Year 3	13,507	13,123	13,561	11,947	14,727	14,376	8.6	20.3
Year 4	11,823	11,603	11,719	11,825	11,524	11,913	-1.7	0.7
Year 5	11,955	10,841	12,451	10,712	11,901	12,310	-4.4	14.9
Year 6	13,636	12,935	11,628	10,443	13,432	11,765	15.5	12.7
Form 1	14,311	12,822	14,548	12,931	13,239	12,541	-9.0	-3.0
Form 2	15,783	13,273	16,301	14,771	14,624	14,466	-10.3	-2.1
Form 3	19,884	15,188	19,672	15,899	17,842	16,758	-9.3	5.4
Form 4	23,253	19,883	27,569	21,472	25,638	21,537	-7.0	0.3
Form 5	39,201	27,321	53,987	44,760	83,599	46,118	54.8	3.0
Total	194,974	166,931	215,454	184,834	241,407	193,492	12.0	4.7
	Unauthorised absences							
Year 1	7,660	6,653	9,484	9,280	7,986	7,808	-15.8	-15.9
Year 2	7,441	6,497	10,072	9,175	7,947	7,608	-21.1	-17.1
Year 3	7,451	7,191	9,677	8,123	7,813	6,403	-19.3	-21.2
Year 4	7,028	6,357	8,880	9,024	8,217	6,877	-7.5	-23.8
Year 5	9,457	7,075	10,524	9,261	8,294	7,672	-21.2	-17.2
Year 6	9,829	8,945	11,896	9,243	8,578	7,312	-27.9	-20.9
Form 1	12,840	13,297	14,772	15,843	11,863	9,381	-19.7	-40.8
Form 2	18,029	16,744	19,173	18,928	14,259	14,751	-25.6	-22.1
Form 3	23,303	20,508	25,279	23,285	17,130	18,220	-32.2	-21.8
Form 4	25,989	25,069	35,024	28,292	25,592	22,758	-26.9	-19.6
Form 5	37,429	33,363	36,569	39,462	28,280	20,513	-22.7	-48.0
Total	166,457	151,700	191,350	179,916	145,960	129,302	-23.7	-28.1
	Total absences							
Year 1	24,199	22,909	28,528	25,357	27,014	25,332	-5.3	-0.1
Year 2	22,525	20,184	25,045	23,172	23,802	21,792	-5.0	-6.0
Year 3	20,957	20,313	23,239	20,069	22,540	20,779	-3.0	3.5
Year 4	18,851	17,960	20,599	20,849	19,740	18,790	-4.2	-9.9
Year 5	21,412	17,916	22,975	19,973	20,195	19,982	-12.1	0.0
Year 6	23,465	21,880	23,524	19,685	22,010	19,077	-6.4	-3.1
Form 1	27,151	26,119	29,320	28,773	25,102	21,922	-14.4	-23.8
Form 2	33,812	30,017	35,475	33,699	28,884	29,217	-18.6	-13.3
Form 3	43,187	35,696	44,951	39,184	34,973	34,978	-22.2	-10.7
Form 4	49,243	44,952	62,593	49,764	51,230	44,295	-18.2	-11.0
Form 5	76,630	60,684	90,557	84,223	111,879	66,631	23.5	-20.9
Total	361,431	318,631	406,805	364,749	387,367	322,795	-4.8	-11.5

* Excludes children attending special schools



Note: Averages are compiled on the basis of the entire student population as present in news release No: 045/2015.

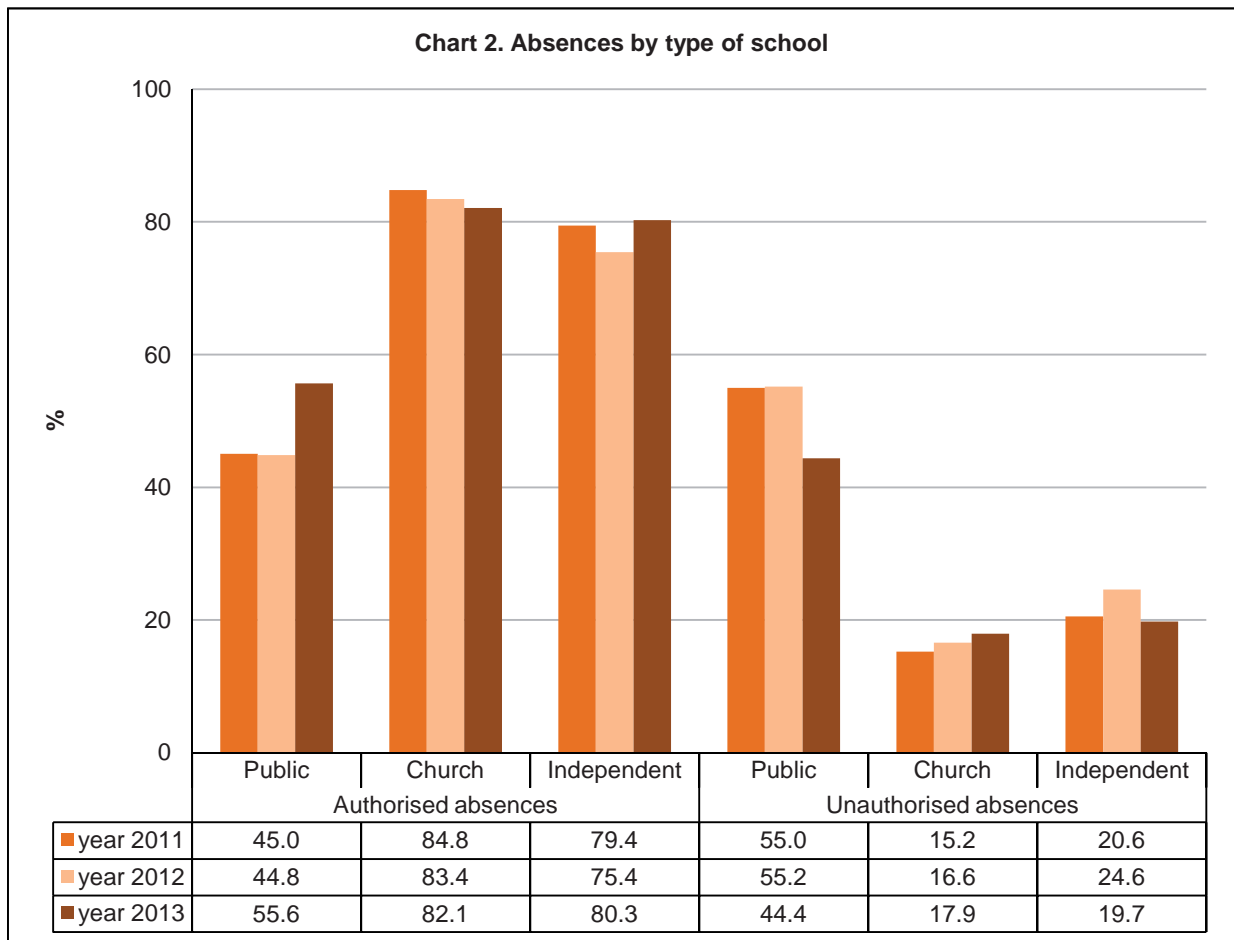


Table 4. Absences by academic year, school type and level*

Level	Authorised absences	Unauthorised absences	Total absences
Academic year 2010/2011			
Total state schools	240,871	294,087	534,958
Primary	95,923	82,368	178,291
Lower secondary (Form 1-3)	60,636	98,505	159,141
Upper secondary (Form 4-5)	84,312	113,214	197,526
Total church schools	91,544	16,440	107,984
Primary	46,543	6,511	53,053
Lower secondary (Form 1-3)	24,867	3,833	28,700
Upper secondary (Form 4-5)	20,135	6,096	26,231
Total independent schools	29,491	7,630	37,121
Primary	18,521	2,707	21,228
Lower secondary (Form 1-3)	5,758	2,383	8,141
Upper secondary (Form 4-5)	5,211	2,541	7,752
Academic year 2011/2012			
Total state schools	278,957	343,303	622,260
Primary	94,117	99,620	193,737
Lower secondary (Form 1-3)	61,432	111,460	172,892
Upper secondary (Form 4-5)	123,407	132,223	255,630
Total church schools	90,885	18,048	108,933
Primary	45,204	8,989	54,193
Lower secondary (Form 1-3)	25,357	3,973	29,331
Upper secondary (Form 4-5)	20,324	5,085	25,409
Total independent schools	30,446	9,916	40,361
Primary	19,056	6,029	25,085
Lower secondary (Form 1-3)	7,332	1,847	9,179
Upper secondary (Form 4-5)	4,058	2,039	6,097
Academic year 2012/2013			
Total state schools	309,780	247,031	556,811
Primary	97,388	78,452	175,840
Lower secondary (Form 1-3)	58,616	79,437	138,053
Upper secondary (Form 4-5)	153,776	89,142	242,918
Total church schools	91,783	20,028	111,811
Primary	50,391	8,797	59,188
Lower secondary (Form 1-3)	23,675	4,987	28,661
Upper secondary (Form 4-5)	17,717	6,244	23,961
Total independent schools	33,337	8,203	41,540
Primary	20,759	5,265	26,024
Lower secondary (Form 1-3)	7,180	1,180	8,360
Upper secondary (Form 4-5)	5,398	1,758	7,156

* Excludes children attending special schools

Table 5. Absences by academic year and age*

Age	Academic year 2010/2011	Academic year 2011/2012	Academic year 2012/2013	Percentage change 2012/2013-2011/2012
	Authorised absences			
5 years and under	32,040	34,527	35,545	2.9
6 years	28,761	28,741	29,992	4.4
7 years	26,736	25,543	29,181	14.2
8 years	23,191	23,539	23,261	-1.2
9 years	22,716	22,893	24,316	6.2
10 years	25,905	21,925	24,815	13.2
11 years	26,179	27,348	25,621	-6.3
12 years	28,223	29,359	28,824	-1.8
13 years	32,558	34,363	32,603	-5.1
14 years	41,560	43,654	43,841	0.4
15 years	62,297	91,633	114,465	24.9
16 years	11,310	16,659	21,875	31.3
Over 16 years	429	105	560	433.7
Total	361,905	400,288	434,899	8.6
	Unauthorised absences			
5 years and under	13,709	18,253	15,422	-15.5
6 years	13,865	18,788	15,291	-18.6
7 years	14,436	17,864	14,124	-20.9
8 years	13,404	17,696	14,961	-15.5
9 years	15,755	19,899	15,942	-19.9
10 years	19,121	20,525	15,837	-22.8
11 years	23,076	29,183	20,148	-31.0
12 years	32,995	35,809	28,607	-20.1
13 years	41,126	44,568	32,845	-26.3
14 years	48,344	58,895	43,724	-25.8
15 years	68,283	75,643	48,411	-36.0
16 years	13,823	13,992	9,825	-29.8
Over 16 years	221	151	125	-16.9
Total	318,157	371,266	275,262	-25.9
	Total absences			
5 years and under	45,749	52,780	50,967	-3.4
6 years	42,627	47,529	45,283	-4.7
7 years	41,172	43,407	43,305	-0.2
8 years	36,595	41,235	38,222	-7.3
9 years	38,471	42,792	40,258	-5.9
10 years	45,027	42,451	40,652	-4.2
11 years	49,255	56,531	45,769	-19.0
12 years	61,217	65,168	57,431	-11.9
13 years	73,684	78,931	65,448	-17.1
14 years	89,904	102,549	87,565	-14.6
15 years	130,581	167,275	162,876	-2.6
16 years	25,132	30,651	31,700	3.4
Over 16 years	650	256	685	168.2
Total	680,063	771,554	710,161	-8.0

* Excludes children attending special schools

Table 6. Average absences by academic year and age*

Age	Academic year 2010/2011	Academic year 2011/2012	Academic year 2012/2013
Authorised absences			
5 years and under	8.3	9.0	9.2
6 years	7.4	7.4	7.7
7 years	6.7	6.6	7.4
8 years	5.9	5.9	6.0
9 years	5.8	5.9	6.1
10 years	6.0	5.6	6.3
11 years	6.1	6.3	6.3
12 years	6.2	6.8	6.7
13 years	6.8	7.4	7.5
14 years	8.5	9.1	9.5
15 years	12.4	18.7	23.8
16 years	20.8	35.0	42.5
Over 16 years	19.5	11.7	33.0
Total	7.5	8.5	9.4
Unauthorised absences			
5 years and under	3.6	4.8	4.0
6 years	3.6	4.8	3.9
7 years	3.6	4.6	3.6
8 years	3.4	4.4	3.9
9 years	4.0	5.1	4.0
10 years	4.5	5.2	4.0
11 years	5.4	6.7	5.0
12 years	7.2	8.3	6.6
13 years	8.6	9.6	7.6
14 years	9.8	12.3	9.5
15 years	13.5	15.4	10.1
16 years	25.4	29.4	19.1
Over 16 years	10.0	16.7	7.4
Total	6.6	7.9	6.0
Total absences			
5 years and under	11.9	13.8	13.2
6 years	11.0	12.2	11.7
7 years	10.3	11.2	11.0
8 years	9.3	10.4	9.8
9 years	9.8	10.9	10.0
10 years	10.5	10.8	10.4
11 years	11.5	13.0	11.3
12 years	13.4	15.0	13.3
13 years	15.4	17.0	15.1
14 years	18.3	21.4	19.0
15 years	25.9	34.1	33.9
16 years	46.2	64.4	61.6
Over 16 years	29.5	28.4	40.3
Total	14.2	16.5	15.4

* Excludes children attending special schools

Note: Averages are compiled on the basis of the entire student population as present in news release No: 045/2015.

Table 7. Absences in state schools by academic year and school's district*

District	Academic year 2010/2011	Academic year 2011/2012	Academic year 2012/2013	Percentage change 2012/2013-2011/2012
	Authorised absences			
Southern Harbour	59,659	77,134	76,665	-0.6
Northern Harbour	81,604	100,654	113,400	12.7
South Eastern	28,320	27,270	35,938	31.8
Western	30,776	21,687	24,570	13.3
Northern	24,582	30,350	37,690	24.2
Gozo and Comino	15,931	21,861	21,517	-1.6
Total	240,871	278,957	309,780	11.0
	Unauthorised absences			
Southern Harbour	79,574	95,236	69,815	-26.7
Northern Harbour	114,143	125,948	88,081	-30.1
South Eastern	36,800	49,791	32,011	-35.7
Western	22,454	16,248	13,750	-15.4
Northern	29,231	42,900	33,113	-22.8
Gozo and Comino	11,885	13,181	10,261	-22.2
Total	294,087	343,303	247,031	-28.0
	Total absences			
Southern Harbour	139,233	172,371	146,480	-15.0
Northern Harbour	195,746	226,602	201,481	-11.1
South Eastern	65,121	77,060	67,949	-11.8
Western	53,230	37,934	38,320	1.0
Northern	53,812	73,250	70,803	-3.3
Gozo and Comino	27,816	35,042	31,778	-9.3
Total	534,958	622,260	556,811	-10.5

* Excludes children attending special schools

Table 8. Average absences in state schools by academic year and school's district*

District	Academic year 2010/2011	Academic year 2011/2012	Academic year 2012/2013
	Authorised absences		
Southern Harbour	9.7	18.7	21.2
Northern Harbour	8.7	9.0	10.2
South Eastern	6.6	6.8	9.1
Western	11.9	10.0	11.7
Northern	7.4	10.2	11.6
Gozo and Comino	6.1	8.9	9.4
Total	8.5	10.4	11.8
	Unauthorised absences		
Southern Harbour	13.0	23.1	19.3
Northern Harbour	12.2	11.2	8.0
South Eastern	8.6	12.3	8.1
Western	8.6	7.5	6.5
Northern	8.8	14.4	10.2
Gozo and Comino	4.6	5.4	4.5
Total	10.4	12.7	9.4
	Total absences		
Southern Harbour	22.7	41.8	40.5
Northern Harbour	20.9	20.2	18.2
South Eastern	15.1	19.1	17.2
Western	20.5	17.5	18.2
Northern	16.2	24.6	21.9
Gozo and Comino	10.7	14.3	13.9
Total	18.9	23.1	21.2

* Excludes children attending special schools

Note: Averages are compiled on the basis of the entire student population as present in news release No: 045/2015.

Methodological Notes

1. Data collection is carried out during the second quarter of each academic year. The reference period for the information provided is at the end of March.
 2. Information on students attending state schools is based on administrative records obtained from the Ministry for Education and Employment (MEDE) and the School Information System (SIS). Data in the non-state sector are collected by use of a questionnaire owned and distributed by NSO. Full coverage of state and non-state schools was obtained.
 3. Most of the questionnaires sent to primary and secondary schools, are sent via ordinary mail. However each educational institution may opt to provide its information using the soft-copy version of the questionnaire. All incoming questionnaires are processed through a custom-made computer software.
 4. Item non-response was resolved making use of the appropriate imputation techniques.
 5. Data was weighted to account for the months in which data was not being collected. Basing on recommendations received from MEDE, the scholastic year for students in year 1 to form 4 spans from September to May, while in the case of fifth formers the school year runs from September to April.
 6. Average age is calculated as at 1 January of the academic year.
 7. Under Maltese Law school is mandatory up to age 16.
 8. In its policy document entitled "Addressing Attendance in School Policy - October 2014", MEDE identifies the following five varieties of absence:
 - a. Authorised Absence**
 - i. School refusal/school phobia
 - ii. Authorised non-attendance
 - b. Unauthorised Absence**
 - i. Unauthorised non-attendance with parental knowledge
 - ii. Truancy
 - iii. School transience
- The quoted policy document is available on the MEDE website: www.education.gov.mt
9. **Definitions:**
 - a. Mandatory education** includes education from primary to upper secondary levels.
 - b. Class** refers to a group of students who are physically following a common course of study in the same space.
 10. More information relating to this news release may be accessed at:
<http://nso.gov.mt/metadata/classificationdetails.aspx?id=LAU>