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Total absences for students attending primary and secondary schools during academic year 2013/2014 amounted to 597,239 days, equivalent to an average of 13.0 absent days per student.

Absenteeism in Schools: 2013/2014

In total, the number of absences recorded during academic year 2013/2014 decreased by 15.9 per cent when compared with the previous year. Total authorised absences decreased by 24.6 per cent and made up 54.9 per cent of total absences. Total unauthorised absences also showed a decrease of 2.2 per cent (Table 1).

The average number of absences during the period under review stood at 13.0 days per student, decreasing by 2.4 per cent when compared with levels for the previous academic year. On average students recorded 7.2 days of authorised and 5.9 days of unauthorised absence in one scholastic year (Table 2).

In absolute terms, male students recorded higher levels of absenteeism when compared to their female counterparts: most of these were classified as authorised (Table 3). The average level of absence among males was found to be higher or equal to that of females for all levels of education (Chart 1).

Student absenteeism in state schools decreased by 22.4 per cent during 2013/2014. Most of these absences were unauthorised. Unauthorised absences in state schools decreased by 4.9 per cent. In contrast church and independent schools saw a drop in authorised absences and an increase in unauthorised absences (Table 4).

Students of all ages recorded lower levels of absence during the scholastic year 2013/2014. (Table 5).

The lowest absence levels were recorded among nine year olds at 8.1 days. On the other hand 16 year olds held the highest average levels of absenteeism (Table 6).

Students attending state schools located in Gozo and Comino registered the sharpest drop in their absence levels (49.9 per cent) (Table 7). On average, students attending state schools located in the South Harbour district accumulated the highest average number of absences (20.1 days per student), while Gozitan students recorded the lowest average number of absences with 9.8 days per student (Table 8) ■

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Table 1. Absences by academic year and class level*

Class level	Academic year 2011/2012	Academic year 2012/2013	Academic year 2013/2014	Percentage change 2013-2014/2012-2013
	Authorised absences			
Year 1	35,121	36,552	28,451	-22.2
Year 2	28,971	30,039	22,579	-24.8
Year 3	25,508	29,103	19,409	-33.3
Year 4	23,544	23,437	18,558	-20.8
Year 5	23,163	24,210	17,325	-28.4
Year 6	22,071	25,197	18,081	-28.2
Form 1	27,479	25,780	24,883	-3.5
Form 2	31,072	29,090	25,476	-12.4
Form 3	35,571	34,600	29,331	-15.2
Form 4	49,041	47,175	38,665	-18.0
Form 5	98,748	129,717	85,215	-34.3
Total	400,288	434,899	327,972	-24.6
	Unauthorised absences			
Year 1	18,764	15,794	17,442	10.4
Year 2	19,247	15,555	15,674	0.8
Year 3	17,800	14,216	13,552	-4.7
Year 4	17,904	15,093	14,408	-4.5
Year 5	19,785	15,966	14,045	-12.0
Year 6	21,139	15,890	15,179	-4.5
Form 1	30,615	21,244	20,619	-2.9
Form 2	38,101	29,010	26,052	-10.2
Form 3	48,564	35,350	34,767	-1.6
Form 4	63,316	48,351	44,860	-7.2
Form 5	76,032	48,793	52,670	7.9
Total	371,266	275,262	269,267	-2.2
	Total absences			
Year 1	53,885	52,346	45,893	-12.3
Year 2	48,217	45,593	38,253	-16.1
Year 3	43,308	43,319	32,961	-23.9
Year 4	41,448	38,530	32,966	-14.4
Year 5	42,948	40,176	31,371	-21.9
Year 6	43,209	41,087	33,260	-19.1
Form 1	58,093	47,024	45,501	-3.2
Form 2	69,173	58,100	51,528	-11.3
Form 3	84,135	69,950	64,098	-8.4
Form 4	112,357	95,525	83,525	-12.6
Form 5	174,780	178,510	137,884	-22.8
Total	771,554	710,161	597,239	-15.9

* Excludes children attending special schools

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

Class level	Academic year 2011/2012	Academic year 2012/2013	Academic year 2013/2014
	Authorised absences		
Year 1	9.0	9.3	6.6
Year 2	7.4	7.7	5.7
Year 3	6.6	7.4	4.9
Year 4	5.9	6.0	4.7
Year 5	5.9	6.0	4.5
Year 6	5.6	6.4	4.5
Form 1	6.3	6.3	6.2
Form 2	7.0	6.7	6.3
Form 3	7.4	7.8	6.6
Form 4	10.0	9.9	8.6
Form 5	20.3	26.7	17.8
Total	8.5	9.4	7.2
Unauthorised absences			
Year 1	4.8	4.0	4.1
Year 2	4.9	4.0	3.9
Year 3	4.6	3.6	3.4
Year 4	4.5	3.9	3.7
Year 5	5.0	4.0	3.6
Year 6	5.4	4.0	3.8
Form 1	7.0	5.2	5.2
Form 2	8.6	6.7	6.4
Form 3	10.1	8.0	7.8
Form 4	12.9	10.1	9.9
Form 5	15.7	10.1	11.0
Total	7.9	6.0	5.9
Total absences			
Year 1	13.9	13.3	10.7
Year 2	12.4	11.7	9.6
Year 3	11.2	11.0	8.4
Year 4	10.4	9.9	8.4
Year 5	10.9	10.0	8.1
Year 6	10.9	10.4	8.2
Form 1	13.3	11.4	11.4
Form 2	15.7	13.4	12.7
Form 3	17.5	15.8	14.4
Form 4	22.9	20.0	18.5
Form 5	36.0	36.8	28.8
Total	16.5	15.4	13.0

* Excludes children attending special schools

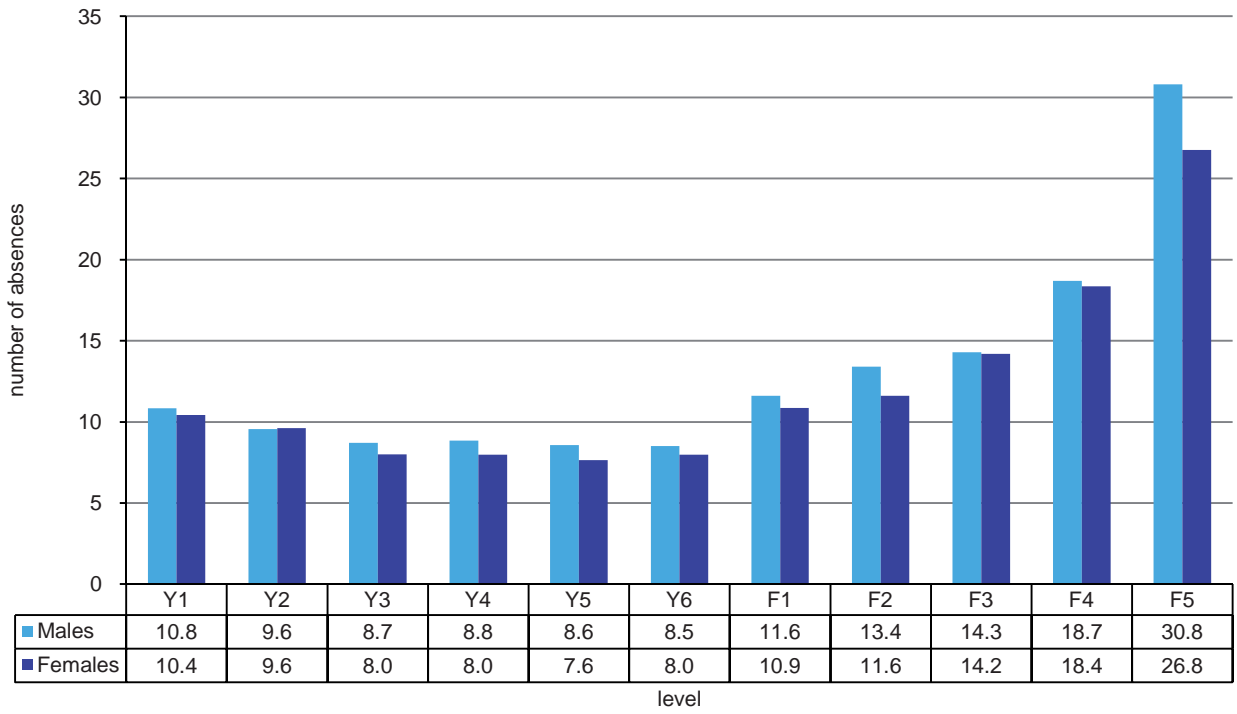
Note: Averages are compiled on the basis of the entire student population as present in news release No: 212/2015

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

Class level	Academic year 2011/2012		Academic year 2012/2013		Academic year 2013/2014		Percentage change 2013-2014/2012-2013	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
	Authorised absences							
Year 1	19,044	16,077	19,027	17,524	14,841	13,609	-22.0	-22.3
Year 2	14,973	13,997	15,855	14,184	11,699	10,880	-26.2	-23.3
Year 3	13,561	11,947	14,727	14,376	10,288	9,121	-30.1	-36.6
Year 4	11,719	11,825	11,524	11,913	9,641	8,917	-16.3	-25.2
Year 5	12,451	10,712	11,901	12,310	9,115	8,211	-23.4	-33.3
Year 6	11,628	10,443	13,432	11,765	8,868	9,213	-34.0	-21.7
Form 1	14,548	12,931	13,239	12,541	13,544	11,339	2.3	-9.6
Form 2	16,301	14,771	14,624	14,466	13,579	11,897	-7.1	-17.8
Form 3	19,672	15,899	17,842	16,758	15,222	14,109	-14.7	-15.8
Form 4	27,569	21,472	25,638	21,537	20,699	17,966	-19.3	-16.6
Form 5	53,987	44,760	83,599	46,118	47,033	38,182	-43.7	-17.2
Total	215,454	184,834	241,407	193,492	174,529	153,443	-27.7	-20.7
	Unauthorised absences							
Year 1	9,484	9,280	7,986	7,808	9,233	8,209	15.6	5.1
Year 2	10,072	9,175	7,947	7,608	8,198	7,476	3.2	-1.7
Year 3	9,677	8,123	7,813	6,403	7,538	6,013	-3.5	-6.1
Year 4	8,880	9,024	8,217	6,877	7,885	6,523	-4.0	-5.1
Year 5	10,524	9,261	8,294	7,672	7,728	6,317	-6.8	-17.7
Year 6	11,896	9,243	8,578	7,312	8,030	7,149	-6.4	-2.2
Form 1	14,772	15,843	11,863	9,381	10,894	9,725	-8.2	3.7
Form 2	19,173	18,928	14,259	14,751	14,552	11,500	2.1	-22.0
Form 3	25,279	23,285	17,130	18,220	16,096	18,671	-6.0	2.5
Form 4	35,024	28,292	25,592	22,758	21,321	23,539	-16.7	3.4
Form 5	36,569	39,462	28,280	20,513	26,825	25,845	-5.1	26.0
Total	191,350	179,916	145,960	129,302	138,300	130,967	-5.2	1.3
	Total absences							
Year 1	28,528	25,357	27,014	25,332	24,074	21,819	-10.9	-13.9
Year 2	25,045	23,172	23,802	21,792	19,897	18,356	-16.4	-15.8
Year 3	23,239	20,069	22,540	20,779	17,826	15,135	-20.9	-27.2
Year 4	20,599	20,849	19,740	18,790	17,526	15,440	-11.2	-17.8
Year 5	22,975	19,973	20,195	19,982	16,843	14,528	-16.6	-27.3
Year 6	23,524	19,685	22,010	19,077	16,898	16,361	-23.2	-14.2
Form 1	29,320	28,773	25,102	21,922	24,438	21,064	-2.6	-3.9
Form 2	35,475	33,699	28,884	29,217	28,131	23,397	-2.6	-19.9
Form 3	44,951	39,184	34,973	34,978	31,318	32,780	-10.4	-6.3
Form 4	62,593	49,764	51,230	44,295	42,019	41,505	-18.0	-6.3
Form 5	90,557	84,223	111,878	66,631	73,858	64,027	-34.0	-3.9
Total	406,805	364,749	387,367	322,794	312,829	284,410	-19.2	-11.9

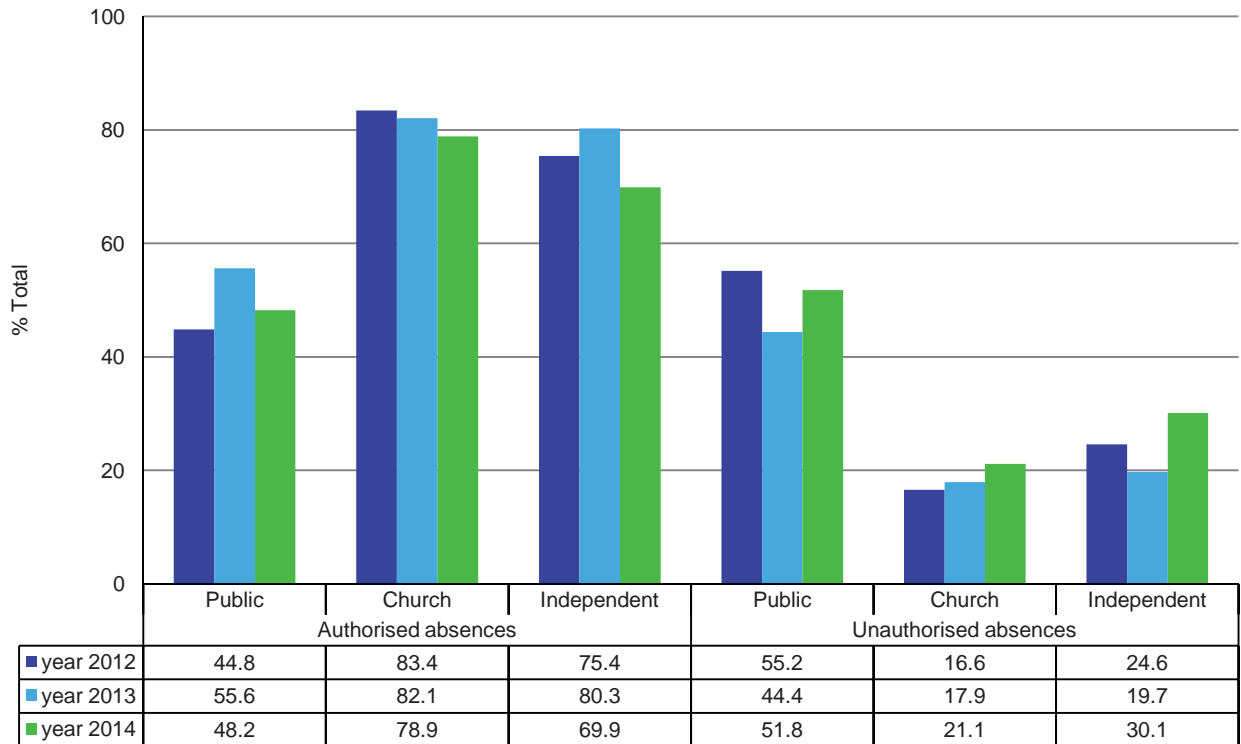
* Excludes children attending special schools

Chart 1. Average absences by level and sex: 2013/2014



Note: Averages are compiled on the basis of the entire student population as present in news release No: 212/2015.

Chart 2. Absences by type of school



Note: Averages are compiled on the basis of the entire student population as present in news release No: 212/2015.

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

Level	Authorised absences	Unauthorised absences	Total absences
Academic year 2011/2012			
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 State Schools	278,957	343,303	622,260
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 Church Schools	90,885	18,048	108,933
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
Total Independent Schools	30,446	9,916	40,361
Academic year 2012/2013			
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 State Schools	309,780	247,031	556,811
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 Church Schools	91,783	20,028	111,811
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
Total Independent Schools	33,337	8,203	41,540
Academic year 2013/2014			
Primary	71,971	72,800	144,771
Lower Secondary (Form 1-3)	49,299	74,427	123,726
Upper Secondary (Form 4-5)	98,280	88,282	186,562
Total State Schools	219,550	235,509	455,059
Primary	38,619	9,452	48,071
Lower Secondary (Form 1-3)	22,176	4,785	26,961
Upper Secondary (Form 4-5)	18,897	7,129	26,026
Total Church Schools	79,691	21,366	101,058
Primary	13,813	8,048	21,861
Lower Secondary (Form 1-3)	8,215	2,225	10,440
Upper Secondary (Form 4-5)	6,702	2,119	8,821
Total Independent Schools	28,730	12,392	41,123

* Excludes children attending special schools

Table 5. Absences by academic year and age*

Age	Academic year 2011/2012	Academic year 2012/2013	Academic year 2013/2014	Percentage change 2013-2014/2012-2013
Authorised absences				
5 years and under	34,527	35,545	27,325	-23.1
6 years	28,741	29,992	22,444	-25.2
7 years	25,543	29,181	19,331	-33.8
8 years	23,539	23,261	18,410	-20.9
9 years	22,893	24,316	17,289	-28.9
10 years	21,925	24,815	18,289	-26.3
11 years	27,348	25,621	24,296	-5.2
12 years	29,359	28,824	25,198	-12.6
13 years	34,363	32,603	28,517	-12.5
14 years	43,654	43,841	36,140	-17.6
15 years	91,633	114,465	78,132	-31.7
16 years	16,659	21,875	12,327	-43.6
Over 16 years	105	560	273	-51.3
Total	400,288	434,899	327,972	-24.6
Unauthorised absences				
5 years and under	18,253	15,422	16,596	7.6
6 years	18,788	15,291	15,649	2.3
7 years	17,864	14,124	13,511	-4.3
8 years	17,696	14,961	14,155	-5.4
9 years	19,899	15,942	14,083	-11.7
10 years	20,525	15,837	15,459	-2.4
11 years	29,183	20,148	19,649	-2.5
12 years	35,809	28,607	24,857	-13.1
13 years	44,568	32,845	34,146	4.0
14 years	58,895	43,724	41,033	-6.2
15 years	75,643	48,411	49,860	3.0
16 years	13,992	9,825	10,033	2.1
Over 16 years	151	125	237	89.7
Total	371,266	275,262	269,267	-2.2
Total absences				
5 years and under	52,780	50,967	43,922	-13.8
6 years	47,529	45,283	38,093	-15.9
7 years	43,407	43,305	32,842	-24.2
8 years	41,235	38,222	32,565	-14.8
9 years	42,792	40,258	31,371	-22.1
10 years	42,451	40,652	33,748	-17.0
11 years	56,531	45,769	43,944	-4.0
12 years	65,168	57,431	50,055	-12.8
13 years	78,931	65,448	62,664	-4.3
14 years	102,549	87,565	77,173	-11.9
15 years	167,275	162,876	127,992	-21.4
16 years	30,651	31,700	22,360	-29.5
Over 16 years	256	685	510	-25.6
Total	771,554	710,161	597,239	-15.9

* Excludes children attending special schools

Table 6. Average absences by academic year and age*

Age	Academic year 2011/2012	Academic year 2012/2013	Academic year 2013/2014
Authorised absences			
5 years and under	9.0	9.2	6.5
6 years	7.4	7.7	5.6
7 years	6.6	7.4	5.0
8 years	5.9	6.0	4.7
9 years	5.9	6.1	4.5
10 years	5.6	6.3	4.5
11 years	6.3	6.3	6.1
12 years	6.8	6.7	6.3
13 years	7.4	7.5	6.5
14 years	9.1	9.5	8.3
15 years	18.7	23.8	16.8
16 years	35.0	42.5	22.4
Over 16 years	11.7	33.0	10.1
Total	8.5	9.4	7.2
Unauthorised absences			
5 years and under	4.8	4.0	4.0
6 years	4.8	3.9	3.9
7 years	4.6	3.6	3.5
8 years	4.4	3.9	3.6
9 years	5.1	4.0	3.6
10 years	5.2	4.0	3.8
11 years	6.7	5.0	4.9
12 years	8.3	6.6	6.2
13 years	9.6	7.6	7.8
14 years	12.3	9.5	9.4
15 years	15.4	10.1	10.7
16 years	29.4	19.1	18.2
Over 16 years	16.7	7.4	8.8
Total	7.9	6.0	5.9
Total absences			
5 years and under	13.8	13.2	10.5
6 years	12.2	11.7	9.6
7 years	11.2	11.0	8.4
8 years	10.4	9.8	8.4
9 years	10.9	10.0	8.1
10 years	10.8	10.4	8.4
11 years	13.0	11.3	11.0
12 years	15.0	13.3	12.5
13 years	17.0	15.1	14.2
14 years	21.4	19.0	17.6
15 years	34.1	33.9	27.5
16 years	64.4	61.6	40.6
Over 16 years	28.4	40.3	18.9
Total	16.5	15.4	13.0

* Excludes children attending special schools

Note: Averages are compiled on the basis of the entire student population as present in news release No: 212/2015

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

District	Academic year 2011/2012	Academic year 2012/2013	Academic year 2013/2014	Percentage change 2013-2014/2012-2013
	Authorised absences			
South Harbour	72,568	69,015	49,754	-27.9
North Harbour	100,654	113,400	71,214	-37.2
South Eastern	27,270	35,938	34,550	-3.9
Western	21,687	24,570	15,920	-35.2
Northern	34,917	45,340	39,550	-12.8
Gozo and Comino	21,861	21,517	8,562	-60.2
Total	278,956	309,780	219,550	-29.1
	Unauthorised absences			
South Harbour	85,183	61,356	52,363	-14.7
North Harbour	125,947	88,081	85,732	-2.7
South Eastern	49,791	32,011	32,625	1.9
Western	16,247	13,750	14,942	8.7
Northern	52,953	41,572	42,484	2.2
Gozo and Comino	13,181	10,261	7,363	-28.2
Total	343,303	247,031	235,509	-4.7
	Total absences			
South Harbour	157,750	130,371	102,117	-21.7
North Harbour	226,602	201,481	156,946	-22.1
South Eastern	77,061	67,949	67,175	-1.1
Western	37,934	38,320	30,862	-19.5
Northern	87,870	86,912	82,034	-5.6
Gozo and Comino	35,042	31,778	15,925	-49.9
Total	622,259	556,811	455,059	-18.3

* Excludes children attending special schools

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

District	Academic year 2011/2012	Academic year 2012/2013	Academic year 2013/2014
	Authorised absences		
South Harbour	17.6	19.1	9.8
North Harbour	9.0	10.2	9.0
South Eastern	6.8	9.1	9.2
Western	10.0	11.7	6.7
Northern	11.7	14.0	8.6
Gozo and Comino	8.9	9.4	5.3
Total	10.4	11.8	8.7
	Unauthorised absences		
South Harbour	20.7	16.9	10.3
North Harbour	11.2	8.0	10.8
South Eastern	12.3	8.1	8.6
Western	7.5	6.5	6.3
Northern	17.8	12.8	9.2
Gozo and Comino	5.4	4.5	4.5
Total	12.7	9.4	9.3
	Total absences		
South Harbour	38.3	36.0	20.1
North Harbour	20.2	18.2	19.8
South Eastern	19.1	17.2	17.8
Western	17.5	18.2	13.0
Northern	29.5	26.9	17.8
Gozo and Comino	14.3	13.9	9.8
Total	23.1	21.2	17.9

* Excludes children attending special schools

Note: Averages are compiled on the basis of the entire student population as present in news release No: 212/2015

Methodological Notes

1. Data collection is carried out during the second quarter of each academic year. The reference period for information received from church and independent schools, is at the end of March of the reference year. Data received from state schools covers all of the scholastic year.
2. Information on students attending state schools is based on administrative records obtained from the Ministry for Education and Employment (MEDE) via the School Information System (SIS). Data for reference year 2013/2014 was received in December 2014.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. Item non-response was resolved making use of the appropriate imputation techniques.
6. 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 one to form four spans from September to May, while in the case of fifth formers the school year runs from September to April.
7. Average age is calculated as at 1 January of the academic year.
8. Under Maltese Law school is mandatory up to age 16.
9. 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
10. **Definitons:**
 - 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.
11. More information relating to this news release may be accessed at:
Metadata: <http://nso.gov.mt/metadata/searchresults.aspx?id=absenteeism>