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Key Indicators on the Labour Market: 2012-2016

This release presents a number of key indicators emerging from the Labour Force Survey, a quarterly enquiry carried out among private households. The indicators presented refer to the period 2012 to 2016 and a comparison with EU 28 levels is given for 2016 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 of the main headline indicators of Europe 2020 targets, namely: employment rate, early school leavers and tertiary educational attainment.

Key facts:

1. In 2016, the national employment rate was 69.6 per cent, only 0.4 percentage points away from the 70 per cent national Europe 2020 target (Chart 3).
2. The services sector was the main contributor to the increase in employment rates between 2012 and 2016 (Tables 2 and 3).
3. Significant increases in activity rates were noted between 2012 and 2016, especially among females (Table 1).
4. The unemployment rate in 2016 stood at 4.7 per cent, well below the EU 28 average of 8.6 per cent (Table 9).
5. In 2016, out of every 100 persons aged between 15 and 24 years, 6 were unemployed. At EU 28 level, 8 out of every 100 youths were unemployed (Table 10).
6. The share of youths not in employment, education or training (NEET) stood at 8.4 per cent during 2016 (Table 11). This figure is below the EU 28 average which stands at 11.5 per cent.
7. The rate of early school leavers (ESL) stood at 19.7 per cent during 2016 (Table 13). This is a drop of 1.4 percentage points over a span of 5 years, but still above the Malta's Europe 2020 target of 10 per cent and above the EU 28 average for 2016.
8. A steady increase in the share of persons between 30 and 34 years with a tertiary level educational attainment has been registered between 2012 and 2016. In 2016, this rate was 29.9 per cent whereas the national Europe 2020 target is of 33 per cent (Chart 11).
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. They also tend to stay in employment for a longer time when compared to the opposite sex.

Labour Force

The activity rate of persons between 15 and 64 years increased by 6.0 percentage points when compared to 2012 levels. Females played a decisive role in this development since more of them started to join the labour market in the past years when compared to the situation in 2000. Over the past five years, the rate of growth among females was double that estimated for males (Table 1). There are however differences in the evolution of trends when looking at the data by age category.

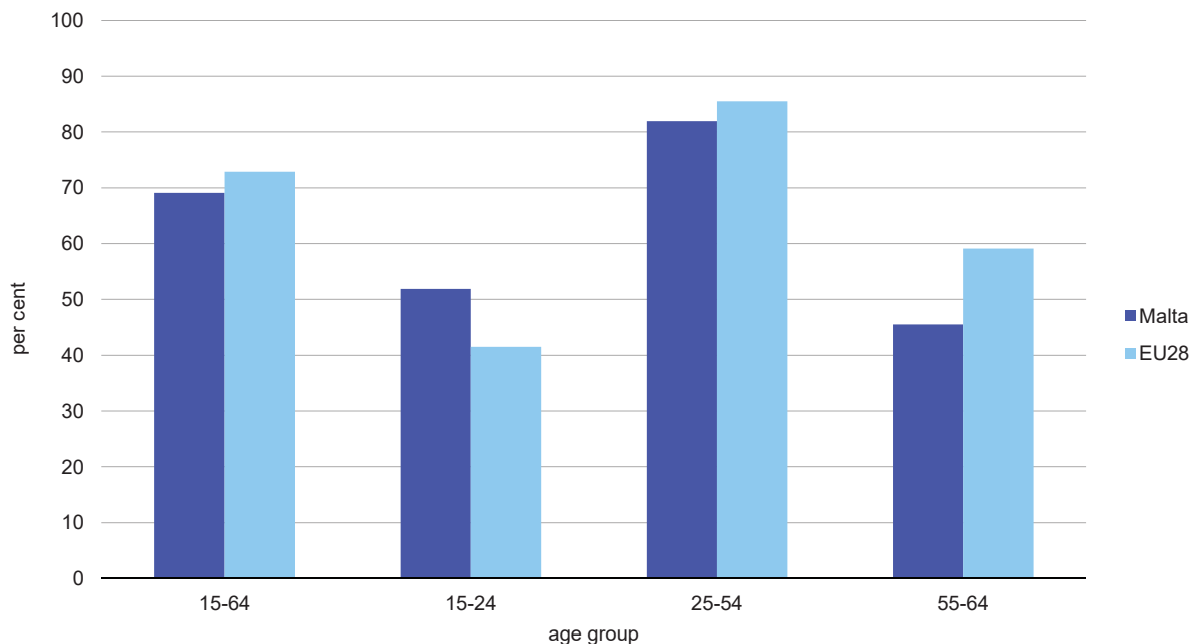
Among the younger group (15 to 24) there were minimal increases in activity rates between 2012 and 2016. The activity rate estimated for the 25 to 54 year old age group has increased by 5.5 percentage points over the same period, with females contributing mostly to this increase. The older segment, namely those between 55 and 64 years experienced the highest change between 2012 and 2016. In this regard, activity rates for this age group had an absolute increase of 9.5 percentage points.

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

Year	Males	Females	Total	Activity gender gap
15-64				
2012	78.3	47.5	63.1	30.8
2013	79.4	50.2	65.0	29.2
2014	79.9	52.3	66.3	27.6
2015	80.8	53.8	67.6	27.0
2016	82.0	55.6	69.1	26.4
EU 28 (2016)	78.5	67.3	72.9	11.2
15-24				
2012	54.0	47.7	50.9	6.3
2013	56.0	49.5	52.8	6.5
2014	52.9	51.8	52.4	1.1
2015	53.3	49.9	51.6	3.4
2016	54.4	49.2	51.9	5.2
EU 28 (2016)	43.9	38.9	41.5	5.0
25-54				
2012	94.3	58.1	76.5	36.2
2013	94.4	61.1	78.1	33.3
2014	95.1	63.4	79.6	31.7
2015	95.3	65.8	81.0	29.5
2016	95.9	67.3	82.0	28.6
EU 28 (2016)	91.4	79.5	85.5	11.9
55-64				
2012	54.8	17.3	36.0	37.5
2013	57.2	19.7	38.4	37.5
2014	60.1	20.7	40.3	39.4
2015	62.2	22.6	42.4	39.6
2016	64.0	27.0	45.5	37.0
EU 28 (2016)	66.6	52.0	59.1	14.6

The increase in activity rates among females has been noticeably higher than that of males. Notwithstanding this positive development, the gap between sexes remains relatively higher compared to EU level. The highest disparity is in the older segment of the population (55-64), where the gap between males and females is of 37.0 percentage points. This is a rather striking difference when compared to the mere 14.6 percentage points across EU 28 Member States and reflects the national labour market situation in the past, where, females were more likely to permanently leave their jobs in order to take over family responsibilities. By contrast, the national activity gender gaps of the younger cohort (15 to 24) are similar to those reported at EU level. In this regard, the national gap is of 5.2 percentage points whereas the EU gap is of 5.0 percentage points.

Chart 1. Activity rates by age group (Malta and EU 28): 2016

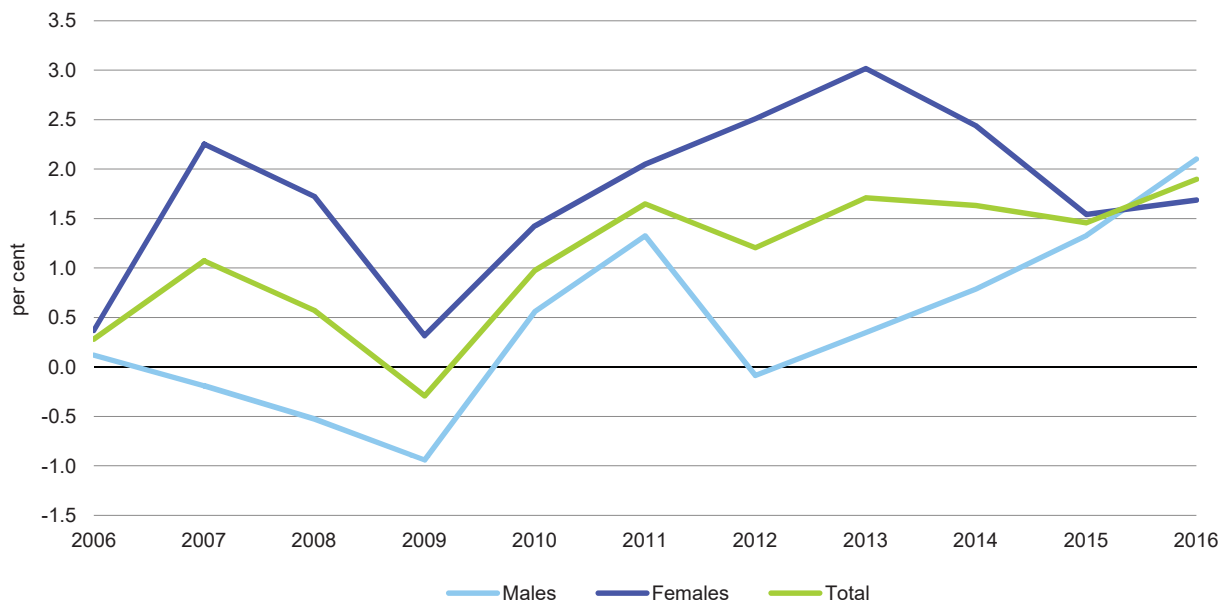


Employment

In 2016, male employment rates registered a year on year growth of 2.1 percentage points while the female employment rates experienced a growth of 1.7 percentage points. There was a positive growth in female employment rates between 2006 and 2016, whereas increases among males were slower over the same period (Chart 2).

The employment rate is one of the Europe 2020 headline indicators and national figures for 2016 show that Malta is 0.4 percentage points away from the 70 per cent rate that is to be achieved in 2020 (Chart 3). The boost that has occurred in employment rates can mostly be attributed to females. In this regard, over a period of ten years, female employment rates increased by nearly 20 percentage points whereas the male employment rates increased by 3.6 percentage points (Chart 3).

Chart 2. Annual growth rates on employment rate (15-64) by sex: 2006-2016

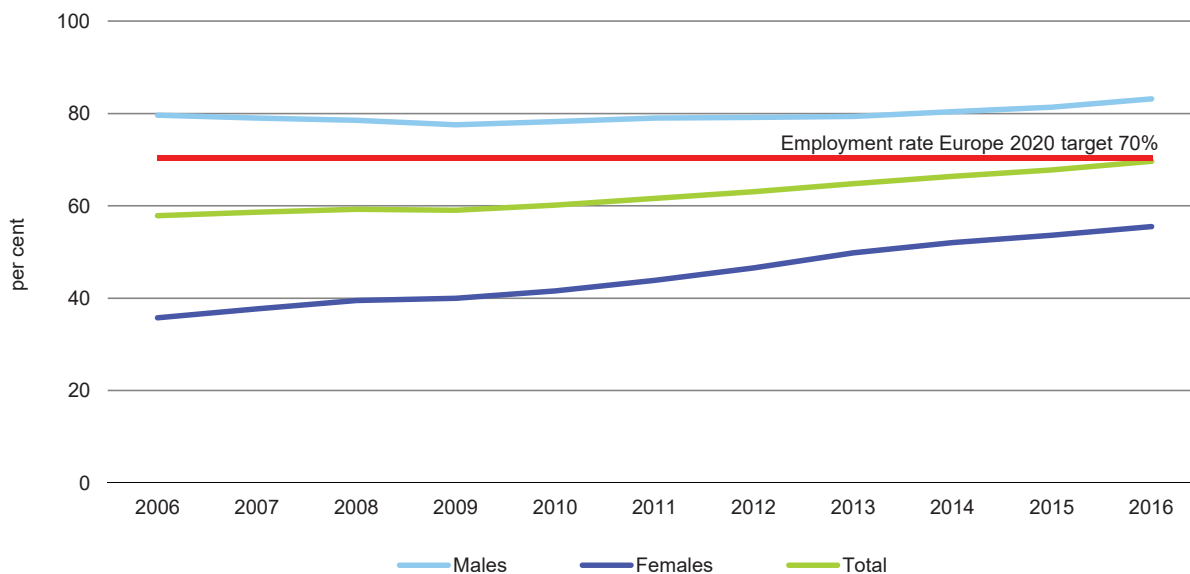


At a national level, more males tend to be in employment when compared to the EU 28 average. In this regard, among those between 20 and 64 years, the difference between the national and EU figures is of 6.4 percentage points. By contrast, EU 28 female employment rates are 9.8 percentage points higher than the national estimates (Table 2).

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

Year	Males	Females	Total	Employment gender gap
15-64				
2012	73.8	44.0	59.1	29.8
2013	74.1	47.0	60.8	27.1
2014	74.9	49.5	62.4	25.4
2015	76.2	51.0	63.9	25.2
2016	78.3	52.7	65.8	25.6
EU 28 (2016)	71.8	61.3	66.6	10.5
20-64				
2012	79.2	46.6	63.0	32.6
2013	79.4	49.8	64.8	29.6
2014	80.4	52.0	66.4	28.4
2015	81.4	53.6	67.8	27.8
2016	83.2	55.5	69.6	27.7
EU 28 (2016)	76.8	65.3	71.0	11.5
15-24				
2012	46.7	40.7	43.8	6.0
2013	47.5	44.4	46.0	3.1
2014	45.7	46.8	46.2	-1.1
2015	45.9	45.2	45.6	0.7
2016	48.4	43.8	46.1	4.6
EU 28 (2016)	35.4	31.9	33.7	3.5
25-54				
2012	89.7	54.9	72.5	34.8
2013	89.6	57.8	74.0	31.8
2014	90.6	60.6	75.9	30.0
2015	91.3	62.9	77.4	28.4
2016	92.5	64.3	78.8	28.2
EU 28 (2016)	84.6	72.9	78.7	11.7
55-64				
2012	53.1	16.3	34.6	36.8
2013	53.8	18.7	36.2	35.1
2014	55.7	19.9	37.8	35.8
2015	58.9	21.9	40.4	37.0
2016	61.8	26.4	44.1	35.4
EU 28 (2016)	62.0	48.9	55.2	13.1

Chart 3. Employment rates (20-64) by sex: 2006-2016



Data provided in Charts 4 and 5 reveal a rise in employment over the past five years which is mainly concentrated in the services industry¹. The share of persons employed in industry and agriculture remained relatively unchanged between 2012 and 2016 at 13.0 and 1.0 per cent respectively.

The share of persons employed in the services sector has, on the other hand increased from 45.3 per cent during 2012, to 51.9 per cent in 2016 (Table 3). When compared to EU levels, the national employment share in services for males in 2016 was higher by 12.8 percentage points than the EU 28 average. On the other hand, despite an improvement of 8.5 percentage points over the past five years, the share of females employed in services resulted to be relatively lower than the EU 28 average.

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

Year	Males	Females	Total
2012	51.3	39.1	45.3
2013	51.9	41.3	46.7
2014	52.7	44.2	48.5
2015	54.1	46.2	50.3
2016	55.9	47.6	51.9
EU 28 (2016)	43.1	51.8	47.4

¹ Economic activity classified according to NACE Rev. 2.0 as follows:
 Agriculture - NACE A
 Industry - NACE B-F
 Services - NACE G-U

Chart 4. Employment distribution by major economic activity¹ (15-64): 2012

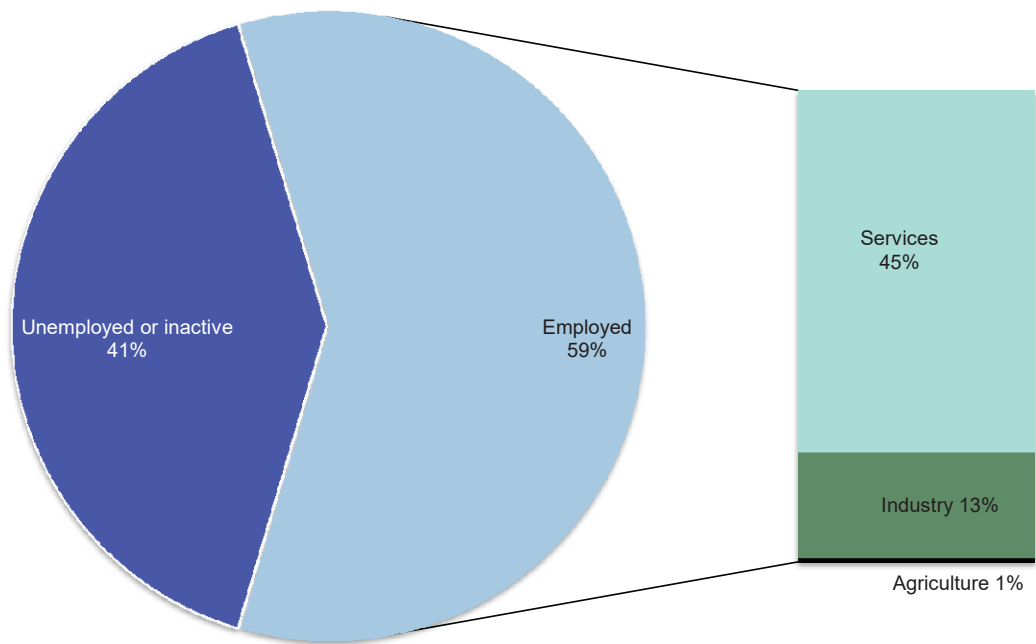
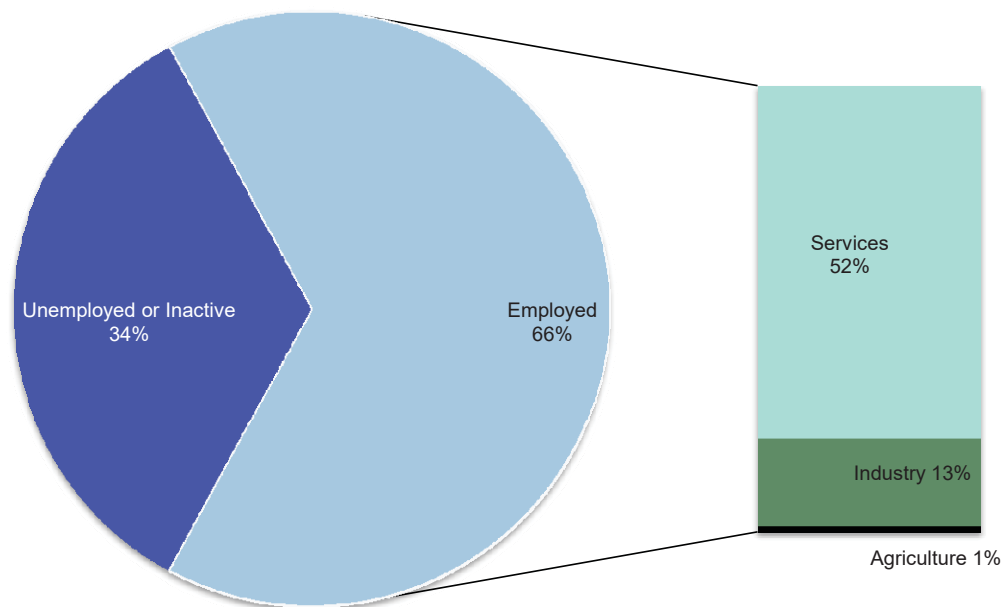


Chart 5. Employment distribution by major economic activity¹ (15-64): 2016



¹ Economic activity classified according to NACE Rev. 2.0 as follows:
Agriculture - NACE A
Industry - NACE B-F
Services - NACE G-U

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

Year	Males	Females	Total
2012	17.6	6.2	13.5
2013	18.5	6.2	13.9
2014	18.1	6.8	13.8
2015	18.3	7.0	13.9
2016	18.3	6.1	13.5
EU 28 (2016)	18.5	10.3	14.8

In 2016, 13.5 per cent of the employed population were self-employed with males having a higher propensity of taking up such an employment condition. National rates of self-employment remained practically unchanged during the past years, and for males they are at par with EU levels (Table 4).

On average, over the past five years, 15 out of every 100 employees were working on a part-time basis. Just over a quarter of female employees worked on a part-time basis while less than 7 per cent of males were employed under this type of working condition. The national share of part-time workers during 2016 was 6.2 percentage points lower than the EU 28 average, with a difference of 7.1 percentage points less for females and 3.1 percentage points less for males (Table 5).

Over the same 5-year period, an average of 7.5 per cent of employees were working on a fixed-term contract basis. This type of working condition results to be more prevalent among females. The share of employees working on a fixed-term contract basis in Malta was just over half that of the EU 28 average in 2016 (Table 6).

As Table 7 illustrates, there are no differences between national and EU 28 levels in terms of the average weekly hours normally worked by full-time employees. In this regard, males tend to work an average of 41 hours whereas the female average stands at 39 hours.

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

Year	Males	Females	Total
2012	5.9	25.2	13.5
2013	7.7	25.7	15.1
2014	8.3	28.3	16.6
2015	7.2	26.9	15.4
2016	6.2	25.7	14.4
EU 28 (2016)	9.3	32.8	20.6

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

Year	Males	Females	Total
2012	6.1	7.9	6.8
2013	6.9	8.4	7.5
2014	6.8	9.2	7.8
2015	6.7	8.8	7.6
2016	6.4	9.3	7.6
EU 28 (2016)	13.8	14.7	14.2

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

(hours)

Year	Males	Females	Total
2012	41.5	39.3	40.7
2013	41.3	39.1	40.5
2014	40.9	38.9	40.2
2015	41.0	38.9	40.2
2016	41.2	39.3	40.5
EU 28 (2016)	41.0	39.3	40.3

Table 8. Time-related under employment by type of employment

(%)

Year	Full-time	Part-time	Total
2012	13.5	24.3	15.0
2013	11.9	22.0	13.4
2014	10.3	19.5	11.8
2015	9.0	18.1	10.5
2016	8.6	16.0	9.7

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

The Labour Force Survey also provides information on time-related under-employment, which corresponds to the share of workers who seek to work more hours in their main job. Between 2012 and 2016 a decline in the number of persons wishing to work more hours in their main job was recorded, reaching 9.7 per cent in 2016. Drops of 4.9 and 8.3 percentage points in the rates of under-employment among full-time and part-time workers respectively were recorded when compared to 2012 levels (Table 8).

Furthermore, Charts 6 and 7 show that males tend to wish to work more hours than females, irrespective of the type of employment they have. This phenomenon may be linked to the traditional notion of males being the bread winners of the family. One does however note that the difference between the rates of males and females working on full-time basis has been narrowing since 2012, implying a convergence in roles between the two sexes and possibly the increasing likeliness for females to retain their full time jobs.

Chart 6. Time-related under-employment for full-timers by sex: 2012-2016

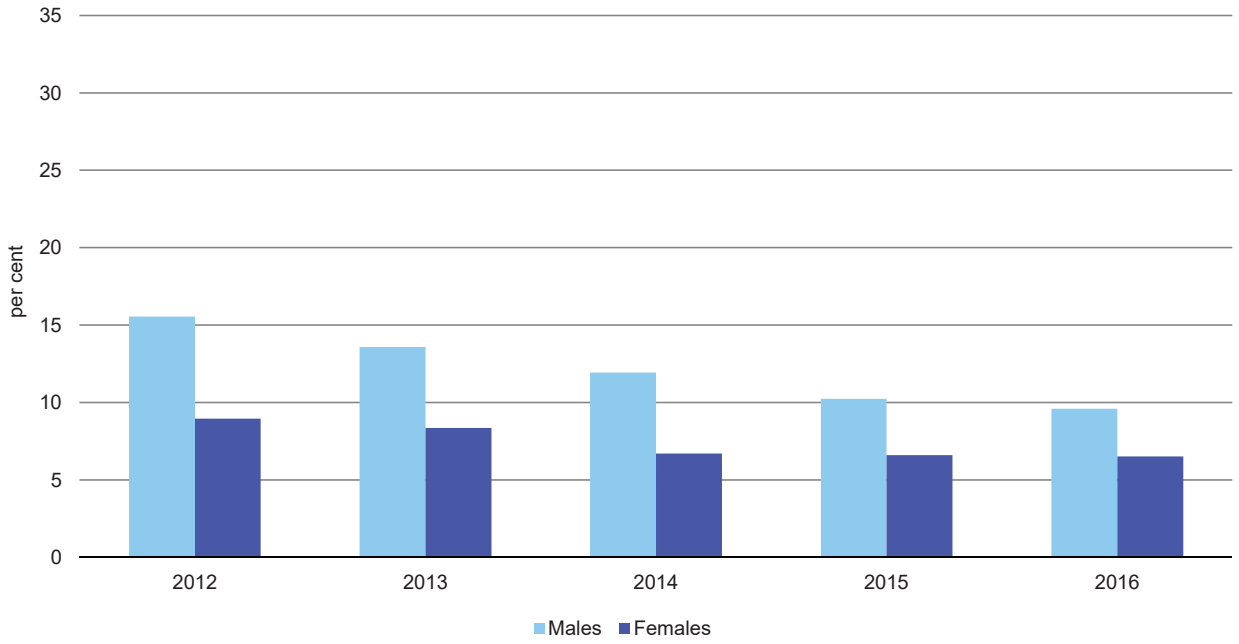
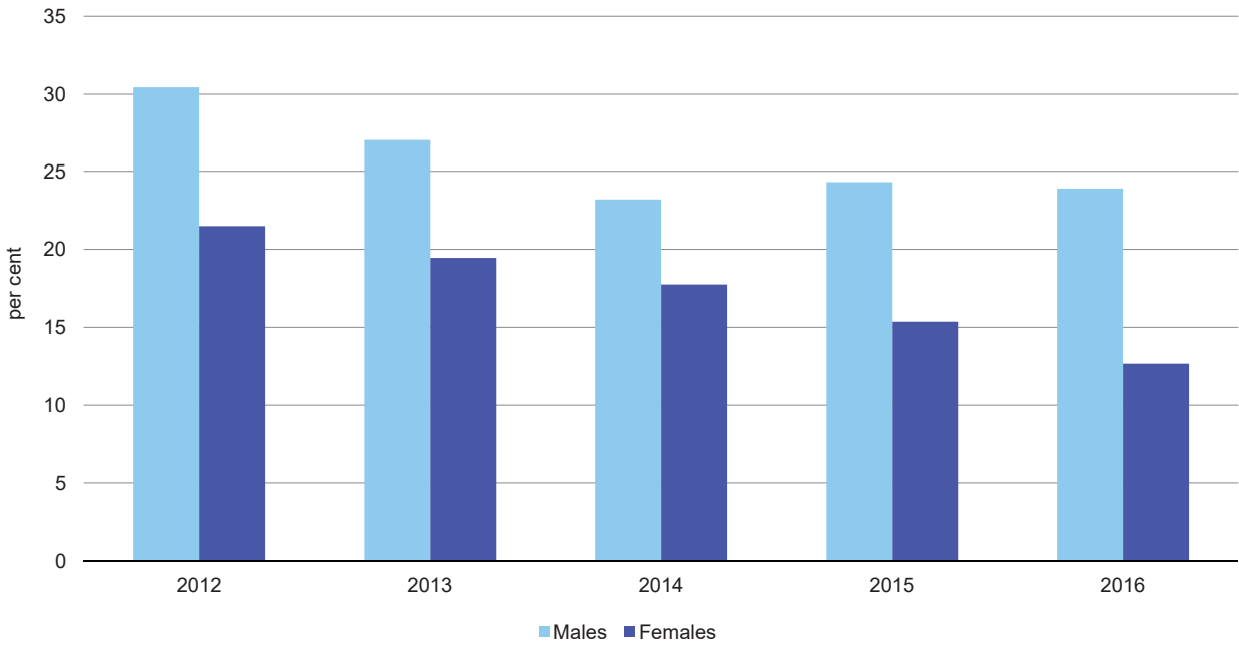


Chart 7. Time-related under-employment for part-time by sex: 2012-2016



Unemployment

Unemployment has been declining steadily during the past years, reaching 4.7 per cent in 2016, from 6.8 per cent in 2006 (Chart 8). Compared to EU 28 levels, national rates for 2016 were lower across all age groups and for both sexes (Table 9). In addition, the rate of persons who have been unemployed for 12 months or more (long-term unemployment rate) has dropped to 2.1 per cent. This is half the figure registered at EU level for the same period (Table 12).

Chart 8. Unemployment rate (15-74) by sex: 2006-2016

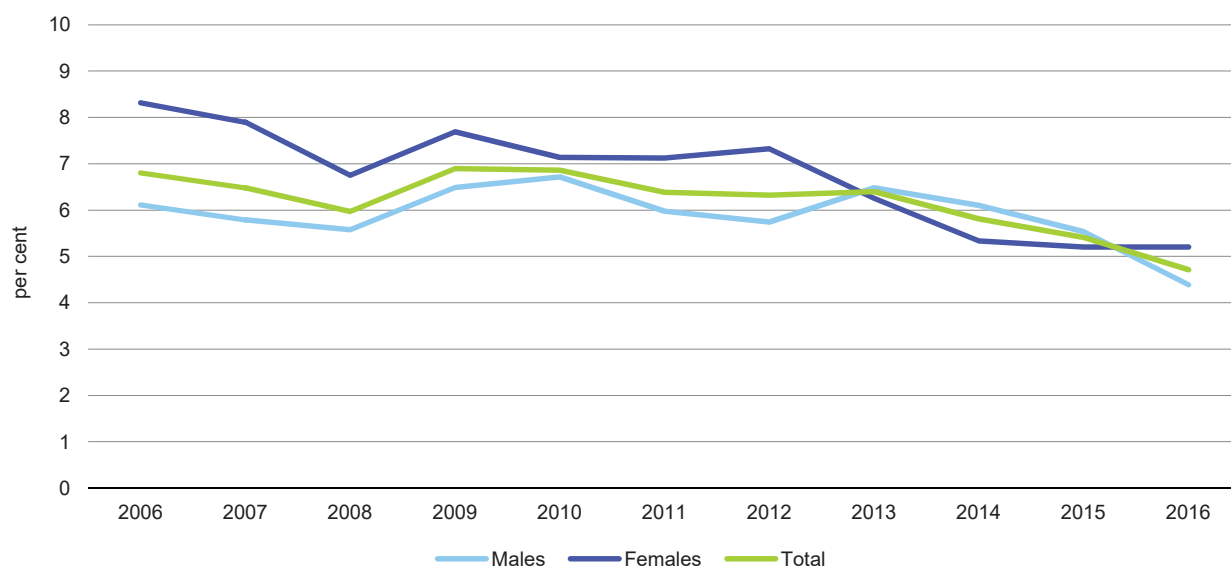


Table 9. Unemployment rate by sex and age group
(%)

Year	Males	Females	Total
	15-74		
2012	5.7	7.3	6.3
2013	6.5	6.3	6.4
2014	6.1	5.3	5.8
2015	5.5	5.2	5.4
2016	4.4	5.2	4.7
EU 28 (2016)	8.4	8.8	8.6
Year	15-24		
	Males	Females	Total
2012	13.5	14.8	14.1
2013	15.2	10.4	13.0
2014	13.7	9.6	11.7
2015	13.9	9.4	11.8
2016	11.2	10.9	11.1
EU 28 (2016)	19.4	17.9	18.7
Year	25-74		
	Males	Females	Total
2012	4.5	5.6	4.9
2013	5.1	5.3	5.2
2014	5.0	4.4	4.8
2015	4.4	4.4	4.4
2016	3.5	4.1	3.7
EU 28 (2016)	7.3	7.8	7.5

This release provides data on the youth unemployment ratio, which is defined as the number of unemployed persons aged 15-24 as a percentage of the total population within the same age bracket. For 2016, the youth unemployment ratio stood at 5.7 per cent, 2.1 percentage points less than the EU 28 average. The young male unemployment ratio (15 to 24), which is the share of unemployed males from the total number of males between 15 and 24, tends to be higher than that recorded for females and this is true for both national as well as EU 28 figures.

On the other hand, the national share of young people not in employment, education or training (NEET) is larger for females by over 3 percentage points. These two results imply that there are many more female youths than males that are either economically inactive and are not participating in education or training. The same cannot be said at EU level, since the NEET rate is practically the same for both sexes. The NEET indicator has gained considerable importance both in the local and global sphere since curtailing unemployment, early school leaving and labour market discouragement is tantamount to better economic prospects for the younger generation. In 2012, the national NEET rate dropped from 10.6 per cent to 8.4 per cent in 2016, 3.1 percentage points less than the EU 28 average (Chart 9).

Chart 9. Youth (15-24) unemployment profile (Malta and EU 28): 2016

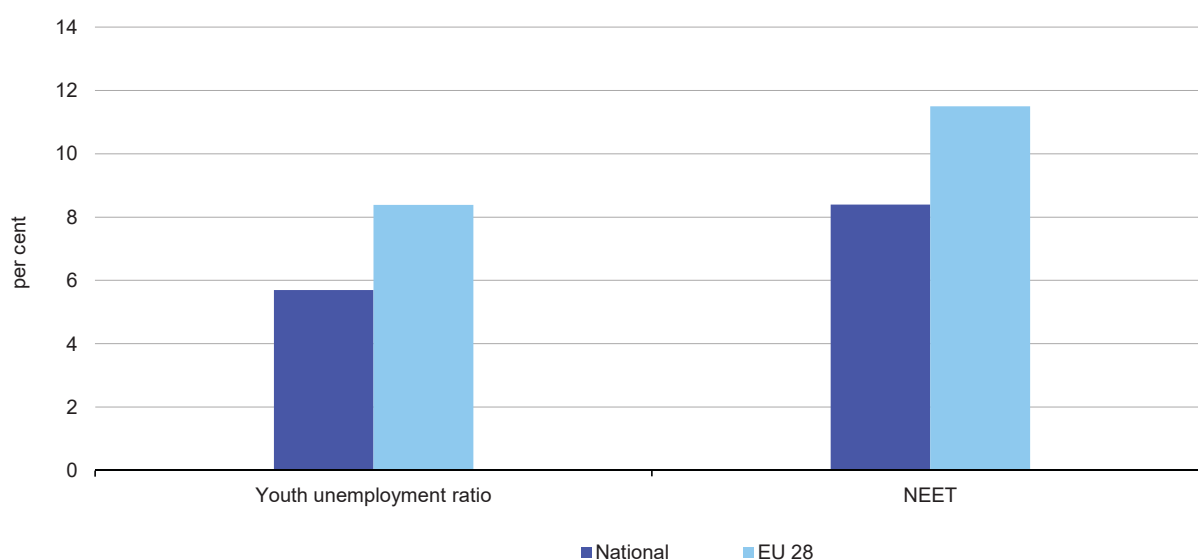


Table 10. Youth (15-24) unemployment ratio by sex
(%)

Year	Males	Females	Total
2012	7.3	7.0	7.2
2013	8.5	5.2	6.9
2014	7.2	5.0	6.1
2015	7.4	4.7	6.1
2016	6.1	5.4	5.7
EU 28 (2016)	8.5	7.0	7.8

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

Year	Males	Females	Total
2012	10.0	11.3	10.6
2013	9.8	10.1	10.0
2014	9.0	12.0	10.5
2015	9.7	11.1	10.4
2016	6.8	10.1	8.4
EU 28 (2016)	11.2	11.9	11.5

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

Year	Males	Females	Total
2012	3.4	2.7	3.1
2013	3.3	2.3	3.0
2014	3.3	2.0	2.8
2015	3.1	1.4	2.4
2016	2.2	1.9	2.1
EU 28 (2016)	3.9	4.0	4.0

Education

Table 13 presents information concerning the rate of early school leavers (ESL). During 2016, the national ESL rate was 19.7 per cent. Notwithstanding the large drops recorded in the past years, the national ESL rate remains almost double that registered at European level (Table 13). In addition, in 2016 the ESL was 9.7 percentage points away from the national EU 2020 target of 10 per cent (Chart 10).

Tied to the evolution of the early school leavers indicator, the rate of 20 to 24 year olds achieving upper secondary level, has been on the increase over the same span of years. In this regard, there was an increase of 1.9 percentage points between 2012 and 2016. Notwithstanding this, the national rate is 5.7 percentage points lower than the EU 28 average. Most of this difference can be attributed to males, whose rate remains 9.3 percentage points lower than that of females (Table 14).

Table 13. ESL: Early school leavers (18-24) by sex
(%)

Year	Males	Females	Total
2012	25.3	16.8	21.1
2013	23.2	17.7	20.5
2014	22.1	18.3	20.3
2015	22.9	16.6	19.8
2016	22.9	16.3	19.7
EU 28 (2016)	12.2	9.2	10.7

Chart 10. Early school leavers (18-24) by sex: 2006-2016

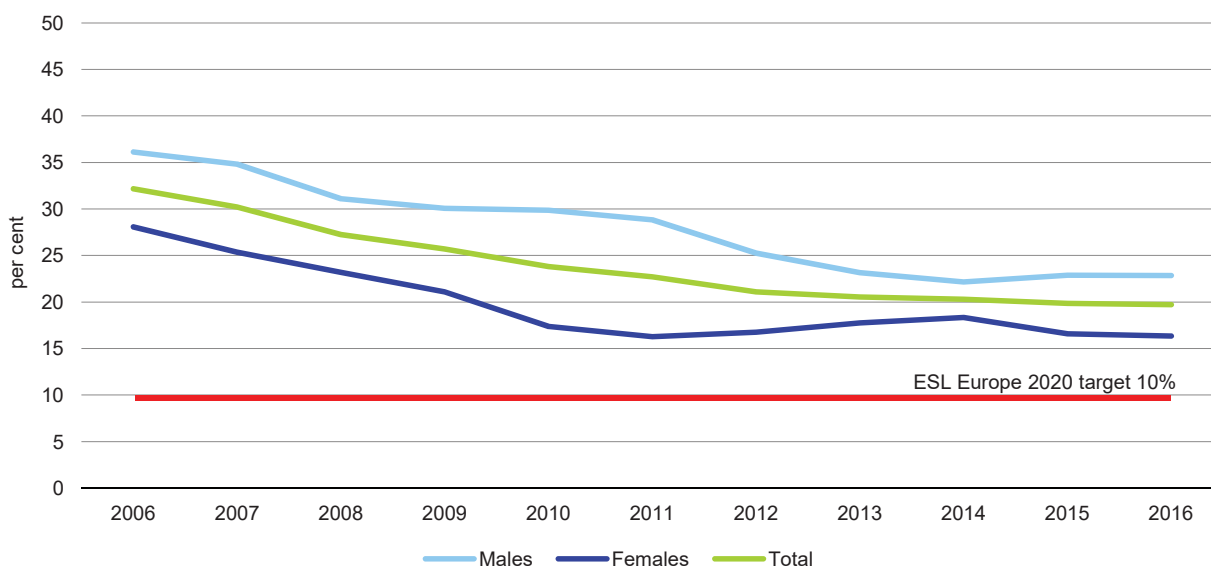


Table 14. Youth educational attainment (20-24) by sex
(%)

Year	Males	Females	Total
2012	70.6	80.9	75.6
2013	72.6	80.5	76.5
2014	72.4	78.9	75.6
2015	72.8	82.7	77.6
2016	73.1	82.4	77.5
EU 28 (2016)	80.8	85.6	83.2

Another indicator which measures the skills level of the adult population of working age is the life long learning indicator, which corresponds to the percentage of persons aged 25-64 participating in regular education or non-formal learning activities. The national rate for the past five years has remained practically unchanged, with an average of 7.4 percentage points (Table 15). In 2016, the percentage of males aged 25 to 64 years participating in life long learning was 6.9 per cent, while the rate for females stood at 8.2 per cent. Female rates for this indicator tend to be higher than those estimated for males. This holds for both national as well as EU 28 figures.

Chart 11 presents the evolution of tertiary educational attainment for persons between 30 and 34 years (another Europe 2020 indicator). Among this age group, there has been an increasing trend of persons attaining a tertiary level of education over the past 10 years with the most significant contribution being made by females. Tertiary educational attainment increased by 5.0 percentage points between 2012 and 2016. Moreover, the 2016 levels are 3.1 percentage points away from the 33 per cent national Europe 2020 target.

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

Year	Males	Females	Total
2012	6.7	7.4	7.1
2013	7.4	7.8	7.6
2014	7.0	7.7	7.4
2015	6.9	7.5	7.2
2016	6.9	8.2	7.5
EU 28 (2016)	9.8	11.7	10.8

Chart 11. Tertiary educational attainment (30-34) by sex: 2006-2016

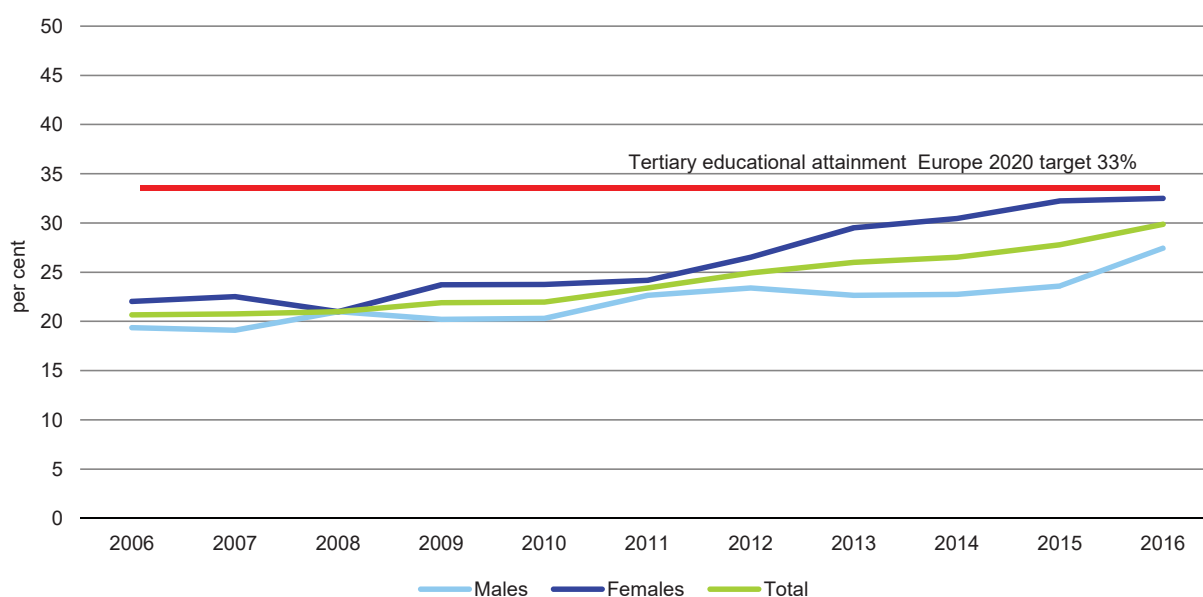


Table 16. Tertiary educational attainment (30-34) by sex
(%)

Year	Males	Females	Total
2012	23.4	26.5	24.9
2013	22.6	29.5	26.0
2014	22.7	30.5	26.5
2015	23.6	32.2	27.8
2016	27.4	32.5	29.9
EU 28 (2016)	34.4	43.9	39.1

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, or 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, which is the EU Statistical Agency. 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 10th October 2017.

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 school leavers 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:** 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:** the percentage of persons aged between 30-34 years having achieved at least tertiary level of education (ISCED ≥ 5).
- **Youth educational attainment:** 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.
- **Fixed-term contracts:** refers to all those persons working with a definite contract or on a temporary basis.
- **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.

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 is indicator referred to NEET rate.
- **Long-term unemployment rate:** the number of long-term unemployed (12 months or more) as a proportion of the labour force.

5. 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>

6. Any quotations from this news release are to be cited and/or referenced.

7. 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](#)

>Tables on EU Policy

>Europe 2020 Indicators

For further assistance send a request from:

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