

News Releases

Home » Domestic Violence: 2021

Salient Points **News** Data Methodology Maps

Domestic Violence: 2021

NR069/2023 Release Date: 25 April 2023

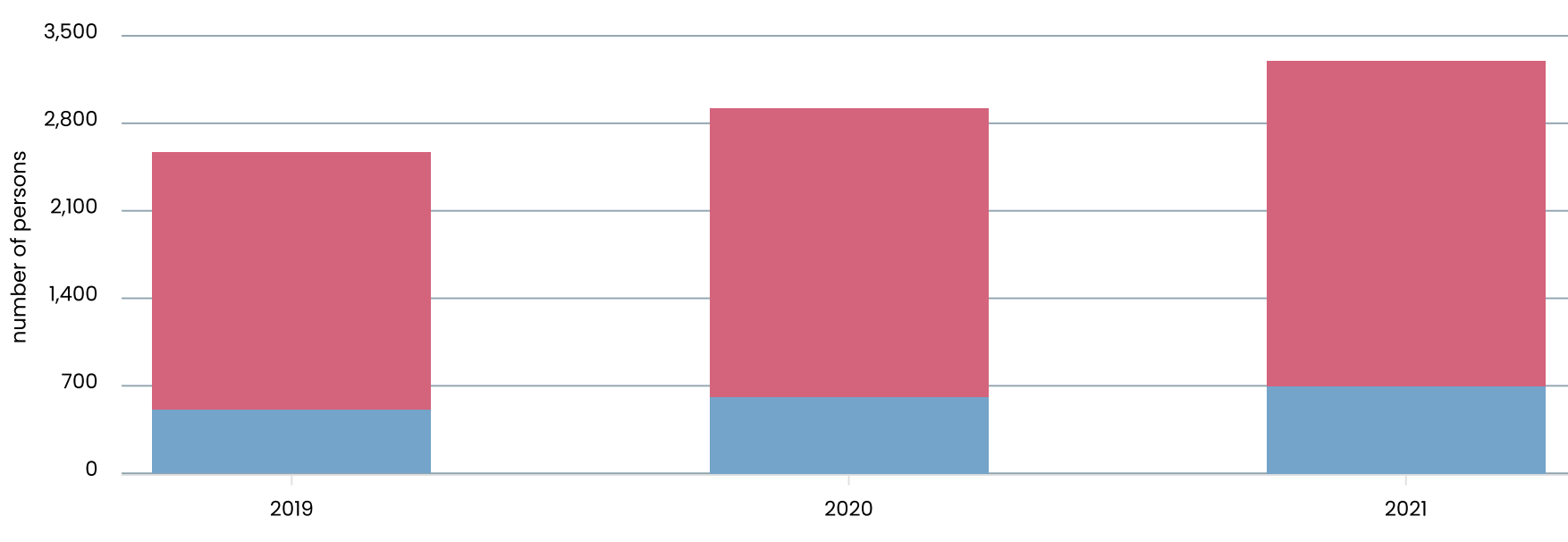
In 2021, 3,295 persons experiencing domestic violence made use of services available within this area. Of these, 78.9 per cent were females.



When compared to 2019, the number of persons using services for support on domestic violence increased by 28.5 per cent, from 2,565 to 3,295 (Table 1, Chart 1).

Chart 1. Number of persons using domestic violence services by gender

Reference period: 2019-2021

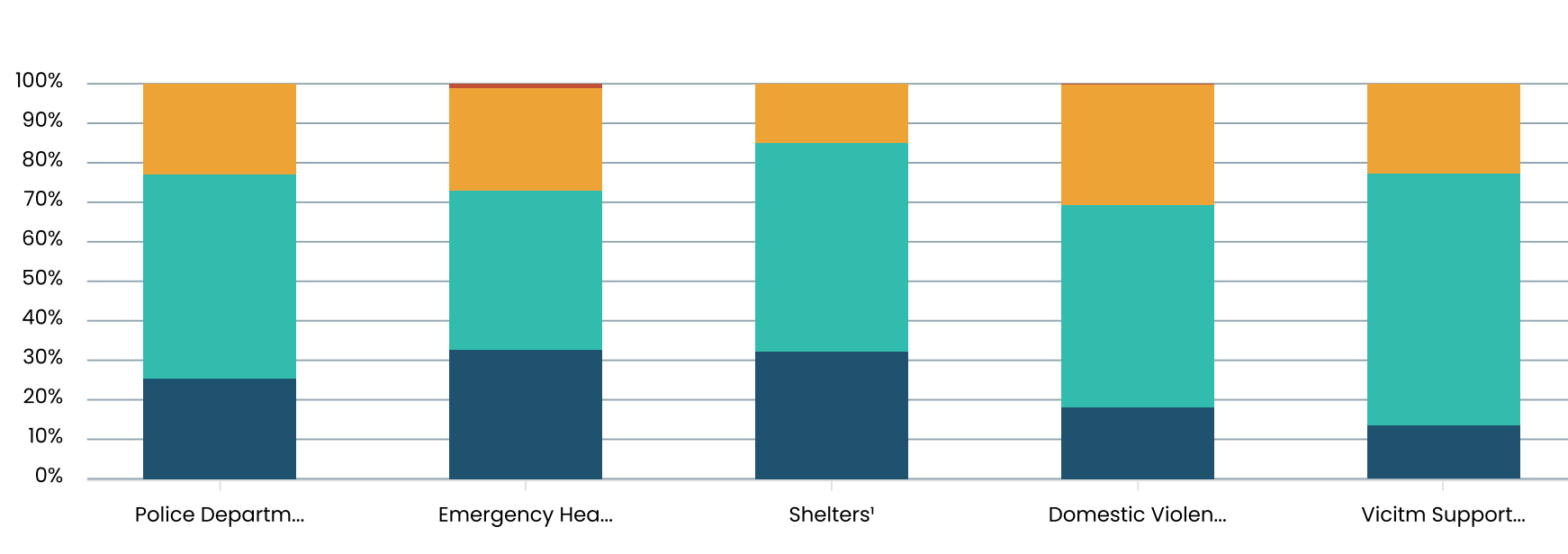


Note: Figures refer to the total number of individual persons making use of at least one service during the reference period (refer to Table 1; methodological note 3 and 5).

Table 2 presents data on cases registered across the different service providers, cases counted within and across services may involve the same person more than once. In 2021, as in previous years, the main services used by persons experiencing domestic violence were the Domestic Violence Unit (DVU) within Aġenzija Appoġġ (2,461 registered cases) and the Police Department (1,918 individual reports).

Chart 2. Distribution of individual cases registered with the Police Department and service providers by service and age group of persons experiencing domestic violence

Reference period: 2021



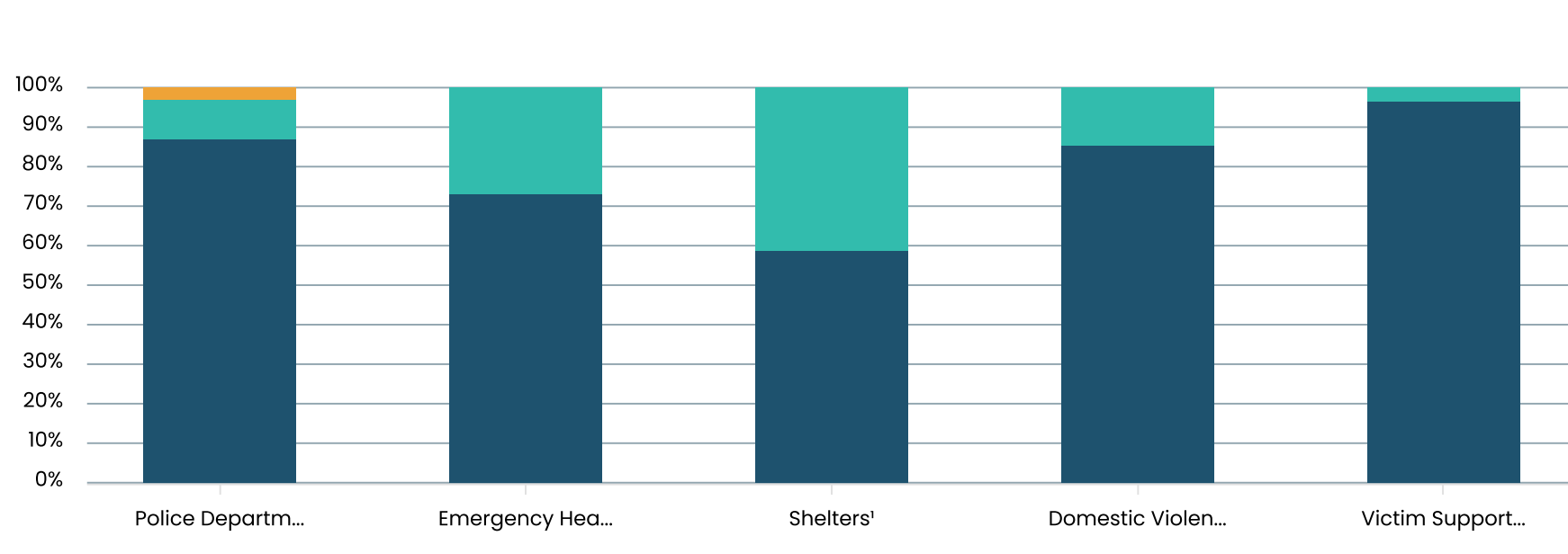
¹Shelters include Dar Merħba Bik, Dar Santa Bakhita, Għabex, and Il-Milja. Refer to methodological note 1.

Notes:
1. Individual cases are recorded by the service provider each time a person accesses the service during that reference year. Therefore figures include persons making use of services more than once.
2. Figures may not add up due to rounding.

Table 3 breaks down cases registered with domestic violence service providers by age group of the registered service user. In 2021, more than half of the total cases registered across all services involved persons aged between 30 and 49 years old (Chart 2). The majority, 85.3 per cent, were cases involving Maltese nationals (Table 4).

Chart 3. Distribution of individual cases registered with the Police Department and service providers by service and broad citizenship of service user

Reference period: 2021



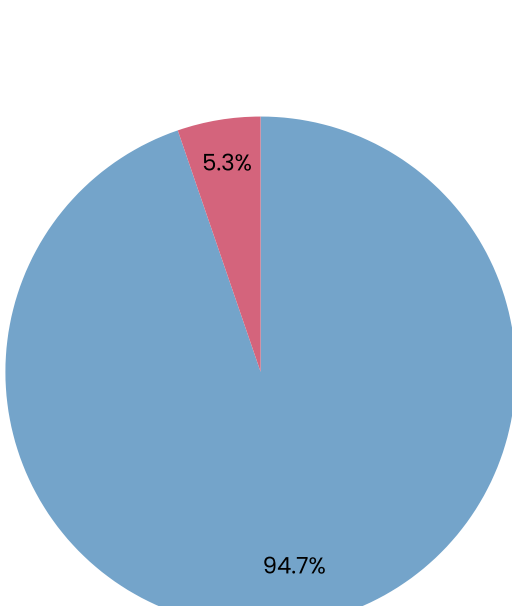
¹Shelters include Dar Merħba Bik, Dar Santa Bakhita, Għabex, and Il-Milja. Refer to methodological note 1.

Notes:
1. Individual cases are recorded by the service provider each time a person accesses the service during that reference year. Therefore figures include persons making use of services more than once.
2. Figures may not add up due to rounding.

This news release also covers services targeting perpetrators of domestic violence. Data for 2021 includes the 'Stop!' programme by Aġenzija Appoġġ and services provided by the Department of Probation and Parole. When looking at the unique number of persons using services targeting perpetrators, 2021 saw a total of 171 individuals using one or more service – 162 were males and 9 were females (Table 6, Chart 4).

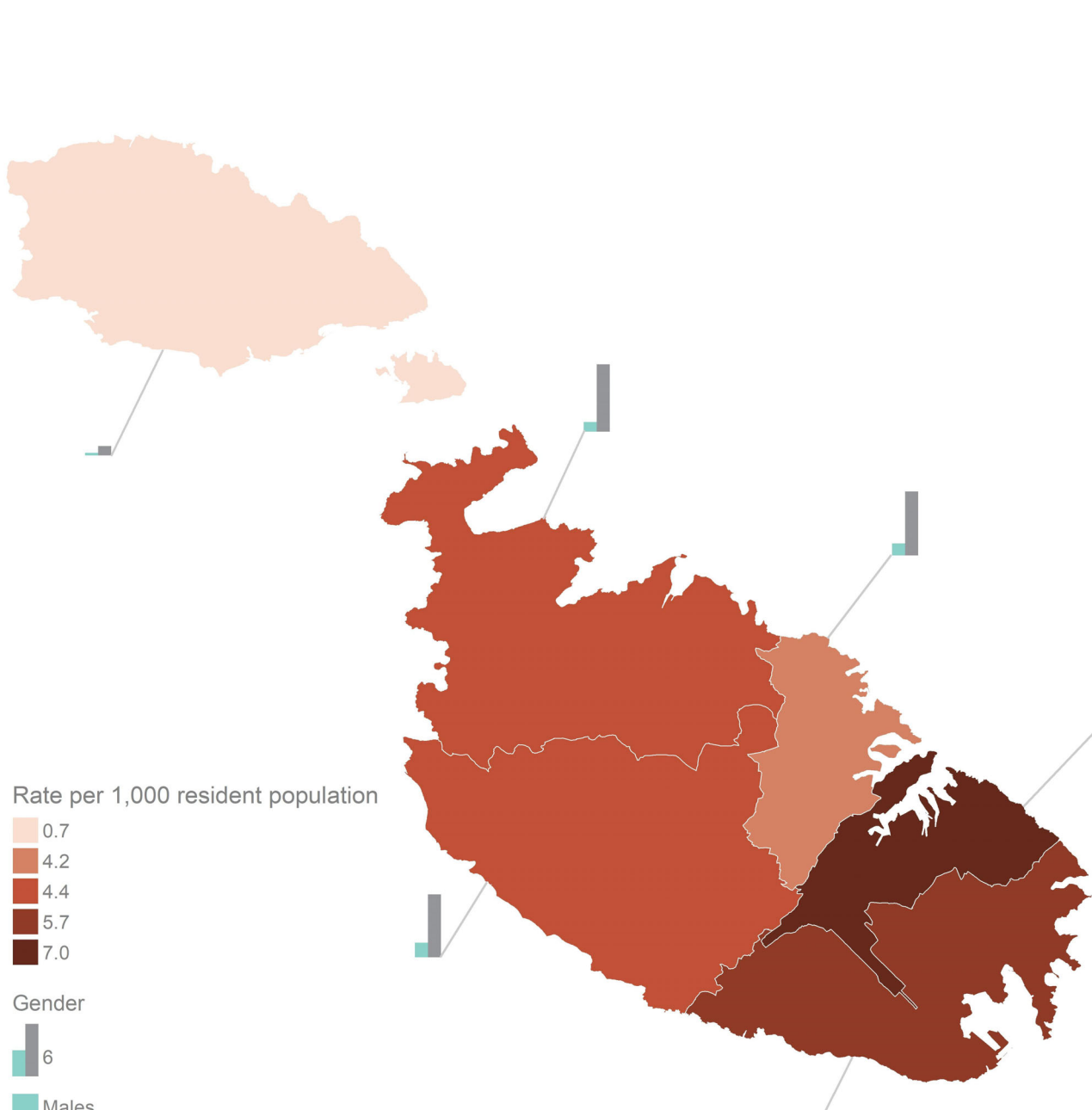
Chart 4. Distribution of persons using services for perpetrators by gender of service user

Reference period: 2021

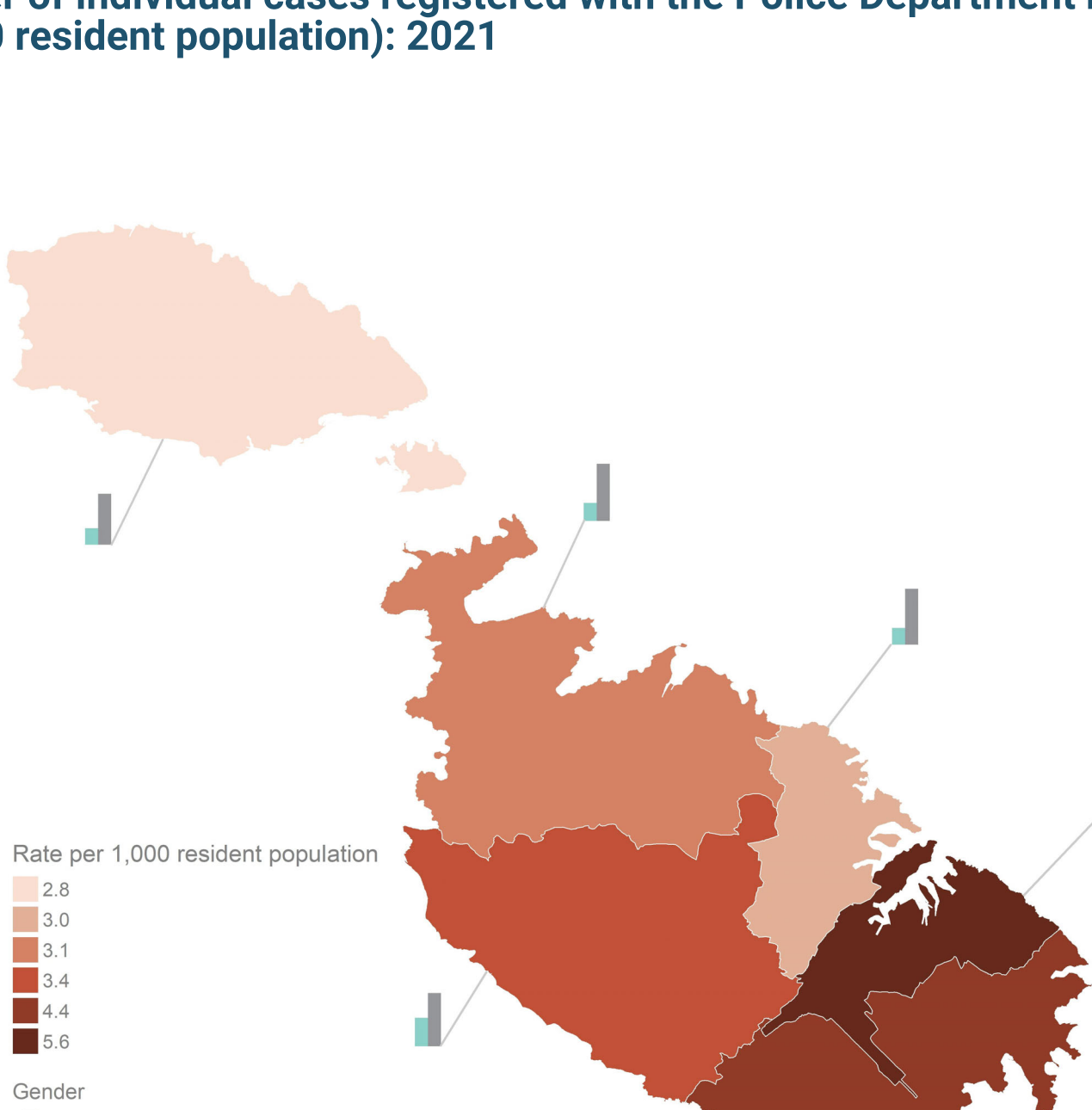


Note: Domestic violence services targeting perpetrators include the 'Stop!' programme at Aġenzija Appoġġ and the Department of Probation and Parole. Refer to methodological note 1.

Map 1. Number of individual cases registered with the Domestic Violence Unit at Aġenzija Appoġġ by district of residence of service user (rate per 1,000 resident population): 2021



Map 2. Number of individual cases registered with the Police Department by district of incident (rate per 1,000 resident population): 2021



Notes:
1. Individual cases are recorded by the service provider each time a person accesses the service during that reference year. Therefore figures include persons making use of services more than once.
2. Data recorded by the Domestic Violence Unit at Aġenzija Appoġġ includes the district of residence of the service user.
3. Data recorded by the Police Department includes the district of incident reported.
4. Rates are based on mid-year population estimates which may be subject to revision.

Table 1. Number of persons using domestic violence services by gender and frequency of service used: 2019-2021

Frequency of service used	Gender		
	Males	Females	Total
2019			
1	379	1,366	1,745
2	107	508	615
3+	22	183	205
Total	508	2,057	2,565
2020			
1	440	1,482	1,922
2	131	595	726
3+	39	232	271
Total	610	2,309	2,919
2021			
1	543	1,836	2,379
2	111	519	630
3+	41	245	286
Total	695	2,600	3,295

Note: Figures included in this table refer to individual persons making use of at least one service during the reference period. Refer to methodological note 3 and 5.

Table 2. Number of individual cases registered with the Police Department and service providers by service and gender of service user: 2019-2021

Gender	Police Department		Service providers								Total cases
			Emergency Health Services		Shelters ¹		Domestic Violence Unit, Aġenzija Appoġġ		Victim Support Malta		
	Absolute	%	Absolute	%	Absolute	%	Absolute	%	Absolute	%	Absolute
2019											
Males	404	26.4	5	6.8	-	-	250	13.4	6	8.2	665
Females	1,128	73.6	69	93.2	136	100.0	1,620	86.6	67	91.8	3,020
Total	1,532	100.0	74	100.0	136	100.0	1,870²	100.0	73	100.0	3,685
2020											
Males	453	24.9	8	12.9	c	c	370	15.9	3	3.3	c
Females	1,367	75.1	54	87.1	c	c	1,951	84.1	89	96.7	c
Total	1,820	100.0	62	100.0	105	100.0	2,321	100.0	92	100.0	4,400
2021											
Males	507	26.4	11	12.4	5	3.8	390	15.8	15	17.0	928
Females	1,411	73.6	78	87.6	128	96.2	2,071	84.2	73	83.0	3,761
Total	1,918	100.0	89	100.0	133	100.0	2,461	100.0	88	100.0	4,689

¹ Shelters include Dar Merġha Bik, Dar Santa Bakhita, Għabex, and Il-Milja. Refer to methodological note 1.

² New legal provisions introduced in 2019 impacted operations within the Domestic Violence Unit at Aġenzija Appoġġ.

c - confidential figure - less than 3 reported counts in a specified category are suppressed due to confidentiality.

Note: Individual cases are recorded by the service provider each time a person accesses the service during that reference year. Therefore figures include persons making use of services more than once.

Table 3. Number of individual cases registered with the Police Department and service providers by service and age-group of service user: 2019-2021

Age group	Police Department		Service providers								Total cases
			Emergency Health Services		Shelters ¹		Domestic Violence Unit, Aġenzija Appoġġ ²		Victim Support Malta ³		
	Absolute	%	Absolute	%	Absolute	%	Absolute	%	Absolute	%	Absolute
2019											
<30	430	28.1	24	32.4	39	28.7	318	17.0	10	13.7	821
30-39	434	28.3	23	31.1	39	28.7	543	29.0	21	28.8	1,060
40-49	327	21.3	16	21.6	34	25.0	483	25.8	25	34.2	885
50+	340	22.2	11	14.9	24	17.6	526	28.1	17	23.3	918
Unspecified	1	0.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Total	1,532	100.0	74	100.0	136	100.0	1,870²	100.0	73	100.0	3,685
2020											
<30	457	25.1	15	24.2	33	31.4	414	17.8	:	-	919
30-39	484	26.6	23	37.1	34	32.4	596	25.7	:	-	1,137
40-49	470	25.8	11	17.7	21	20.0	630	27.1	:	-	1,132
50+	409	22.5	13	21.0	17	16.2	681	29.3	:	-	1,120
Unspecified	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	:	-	-
Total	1,820	100.0	62	100.0	105	100.0	2,321	100.0	92³	100.0	4,400³
2021											
<30	488	25.4	29	32.6	43	32.3	446	18.1	12	13.6	1,018
30-39	561	29.2	20	22.5	43	32.3	637	25.9	27	30.7	1,288
40-49	431	22.5	16	18.0	27	20.3	624	25.4	29	33.0	1,127
50+	438	22.8	23	25.8	20	15.0	752	30.6	20	22.7	1,253
Unspecified	-	-	1	1.1	-	-	2	0.1	-	-	3
Total	1,918	100.0	89	100.0	133	100.0	2,461	100.0	88	100.0	4,689

¹ Shelters include Dar Meħba Bik, Dar Santa Bakhita, Għabex, and Il-Milja. Refer to methodological note 1.

² New legal provisions introduced in 2019 impacted operations within the Domestic Violence Unit at Aġenzija Appoġġ.

³ Data for 2020 was not provided by Victim Support Malta (:)

Note: Individual cases are recorded by the service provider each time a person accesses the service during that reference year. Therefore figures include persons making use of services more than once.

Table 4. Number of individual cases registered with the Police Department and service providers by service and broad citizenship of service user: 2019-2021

Broad citizenship	Police Department		Service providers								Total cases	
			Emergency Health Services		Shelters ¹		Domestic Violence Unit, Aġenzija Appoġġ ²		Victim Support Malta			
	Absolute	%	Absolute	%	Absolute	%	Absolute	%	Absolute	%	Absolute	%
2019												
Maltese	1,359	88.7	41	55.4	94	69.1	1,615	86.4	64	87.7	3,173	86.1
Foreign	143	9.3	33	44.6	41	30.1	255	13.6	9	12.3	481	13.1
Unspecified	30	2.0	-	-	1	0.7	-	-	-	-	31	0.8
Total	1,532	100.0	74	100.0	136	100.0	1,870²	100.0	73	100.0	3,685	100.0
2020												
Maltese	1,608	88.4	54	87.1	73	69.5	2,008	86.5	82	89.1	3,825	86.9
Foreign	158	8.7	8	12.9	32	30.5	313	13.5	10	10.9	521	11.8
Unspecified	54	3.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	54	1.2
Total	1,820	100.0	62	100.0	105	100.0	2,321	100.0	92	100.0	4,400	100.0
2021												
Maltese	1,668	87.0	65	73.0	78	58.6	2,104	85.5	85	96.6	4,000	85.3
Foreign	191	10.0	24	27.0	55	41.4	357	14.5	3	3.4	630	13.4
Unspecified	59	3.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	59	1.3
Total	1,918	100.0	89	100.0	133	100.0	2,461	100.0	88	100.0	4,689	100.0

¹ Shelters include Dar Meħba Bik, Dar Santa Bakhita, Għabex, and Il-Milja. Refer to methodological note 1.

² New legal provisions introduced in 2019 impacted operations within the Domestic Violence Unit at Aġenzija Appoġġ.

Note: Individual cases are recorded by the service provider each time a person accesses the service during that reference year. Therefore figures include person making use of services more than once.

Table 5. Number of individual cases registered with the Police Department and service providers by service and type of violence reported: 2021

Service provider	Total cases	Type of violence reported		
		Physical	Psychological	Sexual, economic or other
Police Department	1,918	589	1,282	47
Emergency Health Services	89	89	-	-
Shelters ¹	133	108	118	48
Domestic Violence Unit, Aġenzija Appoġġ	2,461	1,447	2,340	525
Victim Support Malta ²	88	79	85	3

¹ Shelters include Dar Merħba Bik, Dar Santa Bakhita, Ghabex, and Il-Milja. Refer to methodological note 1.

Notes:

1. Individual cases are recorded by the service provider each time a person accesses the service during that reference year. Therefore figures include persons making use of services more than once.

2. Total number of cases does not add up to the sum of cases within each category of violence since cases may have more than one type of violence recorded.

**Table 6. Number of cases registered with services for perpetrators of domestic violence¹
by age and broad citizenship of service user: 2021**

Registered cases ²		Stop!		Department of Probation and Parole	
		Absolute	%	Absolute	%
Age	<30	10	8.1	18	30.5
	30-49	79	64.2	30	50.8
	50+	34	27.6	11	18.6
Broad citizenship	Maltese	114	92.7	56	94.9
	Foreign	9	7.3	3	5.1
Total		123	100.0	59	100.0

Total number of persons using services for perpetrators of domestic violence (unique cases)³

Males	162
Females	9
Total	171

¹ Domestic violence services targeting perpetrators consist of the 'Stop!' programme at Aġenzija Appoġġ and the Department of Probation and Parole. Refer to methodological note 1.

² Total figures represent the number of cases registered at the respective service and therefore persons accessing different services or the same service multiple times are counted more than once.

³ This section does not tally with the figures provided in the first part of this table since it includes the total number of individual persons while figures above include cases across services.

News Releases

[Home](#) » Domestic Violence: 2021


[Salient Points](#)
[News](#)
[Data](#)
[Methodology](#)
[Maps](#)

Methodological Notes

1. The sources of data referenced in this news release are:

- **Aġenzija Appoġġ:** The national agency for children and families which promotes their well-being through psycho-social welfare services. Information about both parents and children who make use of the service is recorded. Furthermore, cases of minors receiving child protection interventions by the Child Protection Services offering protection to vulnerable children and adolescents under the age of eighteen years may be recorded as a Child Protection case and not included in this data. In reference year 2019, new legal provisions came into force which impacted operations within the Domestic Violence Unit (DVU) at Aġenzija Appoġġ. The increase in service users documented for this year may therefore partly be attributed to these changes.
- **Dar Santa Bakhita:** A second stage shelter providing accommodation and assistance to women and children who have experienced domestic or gender-based violence. Data on children accompanying their guardians and using this service is not available and only data on adult users is provided.
- **Dar Merħba Bik:** A shelter that works with and helps women and children who have experienced domestic violence. Data on children accompanying their guardians and using this service is not available and only data on adults is provided.
- **Il-Milja:** Formally known as Dar Qalb ta' Ġesu, Il-Milja is a second stage shelter which supports and helps women and children with independent living after suffering domestic violence. Data on children accompanying their guardians and using this service is not available and only data on adults is provided.
- **Department of Probation and Parole (DPP):** The DPP offers a service within the criminal justice system and works in collaboration with the Judiciary, Police, various agencies and Government departments, amongst others. The DPP aims at enhancing community safety by reducing recidivism through the implementation of restorative justice measures and the use of community-based sanctions such as probation and parole.
- **Emergency Health Services:** Data on patient injuries is collected and provided by emergency departments across Malta and Gozo. This includes information from Mater Dei Hospital and Gozo General Hospital and excludes Primary Health Care, private hospitals/clinics and private health practitioners.
- **Għabex:** An emergency shelter for women and children experiencing violence within the family, in intimate relationships or from human trafficking. Both adults and children who attend the shelter are recorded as separate service users.
- **Stop!:** This service, previously known as the Managing Abusive Behaviour Service, is offered by Aġenzija Appoġġ. This is a service set up to assist the abusive partner in intimate relationships to become aware of, understand and change their behaviour.
- **Police Department:** The Malta Police Force statistics section collects and provides data on all reports of domestic violence that have been made with them and registered in the National Police System (NPS). Individuals, including children, involved in a domestic violence report are recorded as separate victims. Data is recorded by the Police Department based on reports registered within the NPS which captures the Police Incident Reporting System (PIRS). This system collects information on all police reports filed at police districts and stations throughout Malta and Gozo. The system records cases based on the main crime category of the report, i.e. the crime that is associated with the gravest penalty as established by relative legislation.
- **Victim Support Malta:** A non-governmental organisation which provides support and assistance to victims of crime. Information provided in this regard covers those persons benefiting from services provided by Victim Support Malta for reasons of domestic violence. Currently this service is provided to persons experiencing domestic violence and aged 18 and over. Some of the data was not available from VSM for reference year 2020 as further noted in the respective tables.

2. **Definitions of the types of violence:**

- **Physical:** Any act which causes physical harm as a result of unlawful physical force such as bodily harm or deprivation of liberty, as described in Articles 214-222 and 251 of Chapter 9 of the Laws of Malta.
- **Psychological:** Any act which causes psychological harm to an individual such as coercion or harassment, as described in Article 251 of Chapter 9 of the Laws of Malta.
- **Sexual:** Any sexual act performed on an individual without their consent such as rape or sexual assault, as described in Articles 198-209 of Chapter 9 of the Laws of Malta.
- **Economic:** Any act or behaviour which causes economic harm to an individual such as restricting access to finances, as described in Article 251 of Chapter 9 of the Laws of Malta.
- **Other:** Any other act or behaviour, not elsewhere classified and registered with the different service providers in the area. Other forms of violence includes stalking, neglect, deprivation of liberty, exploitation and human trafficking.

3. **Measuring unit:**

- **Persons** (Tables 1 and 6): Unique persons who made use of any services in the area during the reference period. Following a harmonisation exercise (refer to methodological note 6) all the cases registered at the Police Department and different service providers are analysed and, in the case of persons making use of services more than once, such persons are counted only once. Figures across reference periods may include persons who have been included as victims or perpetrators during previous years.
- **Cases** (Tables 2 – 6): All individual cases registered at the respective service within the reference period. Persons who make use of the services may be counted more than once within or across services.
- **Rate:**
 - Domestic Violence Unit (Map 1): Number of cases registered by victim's location of residence per 1,000 mid-year resident population.
 - Police data (Map 2): Number of cases registered by location where incident occurred per 1,000 mid-year resident population.

4. **Coverage:** Data within this news release is produced in calendar years, i.e. from the 1st January to the 31st December.

5. **Harmonisation:** To compute the total number of persons experiencing domestic violence, the data provided from the different stakeholders is analysed and harmonised to identify unique persons who have been found to make use of one or more services in the area of domestic violence during the year under review.

6. **Confidentiality:** As with all the data collected and processed by the NSO, data is governed by the provisions of the Malta Statistics Authority Act (XXIV of 2000). This Act emphasises both the NSO's right to collect and process private and personal information for statistical purposes, while binding the NSO from providing any identifiable information to third parties. To prevent risk of identification from the data, counts of less than 3 are suppressed and denoted by a 'c'.

7. The **National Statistics Office** collaborates with the **Commission for Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence** in collecting, analysing and streamlining data collections in the area of domestic violence and gender-based violence. This is done in line with the **Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence Act** (Chapter 581 of the Laws of Malta).

8. References to this news release are to be cited appropriately.

9. A detailed news release calendar is available [online](#).

News Releases

[Home](#) » Domestic Violence: 2021



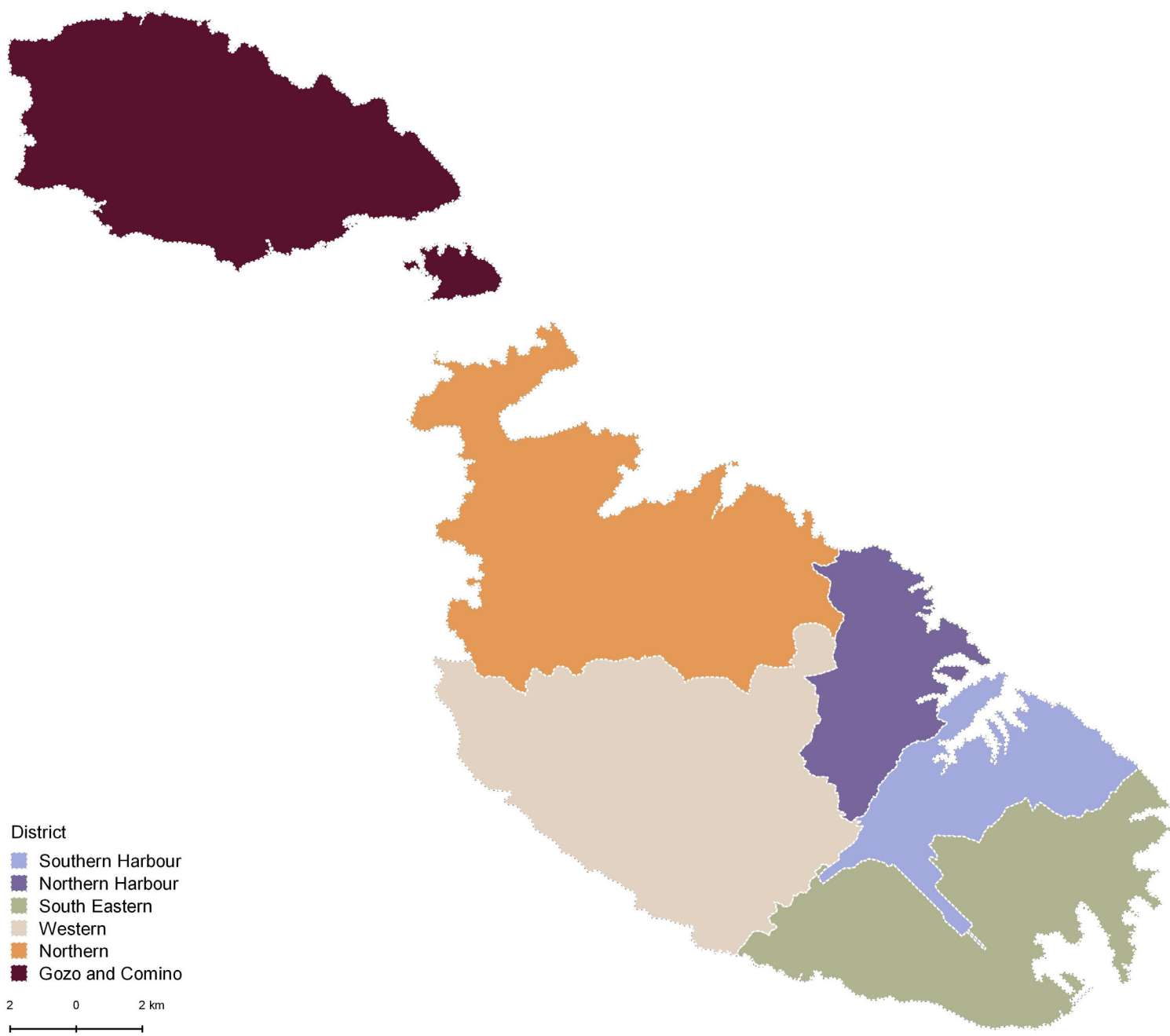
[Salient Points](#)

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[Data](#)

[Methodology](#)

[Maps](#)



Southern Harbour:

Bormla; Il-Fgura; Floriana; Ħal Luqa; Ħaż-Żabbar; Il-Kalkara; Il-Marsa; Raĥal Ġdid; Santa Luċija; L-Isla; Ħal Tarxien; Valletta; Il-Birgu; Ix-Xghajra.

Northern Harbour

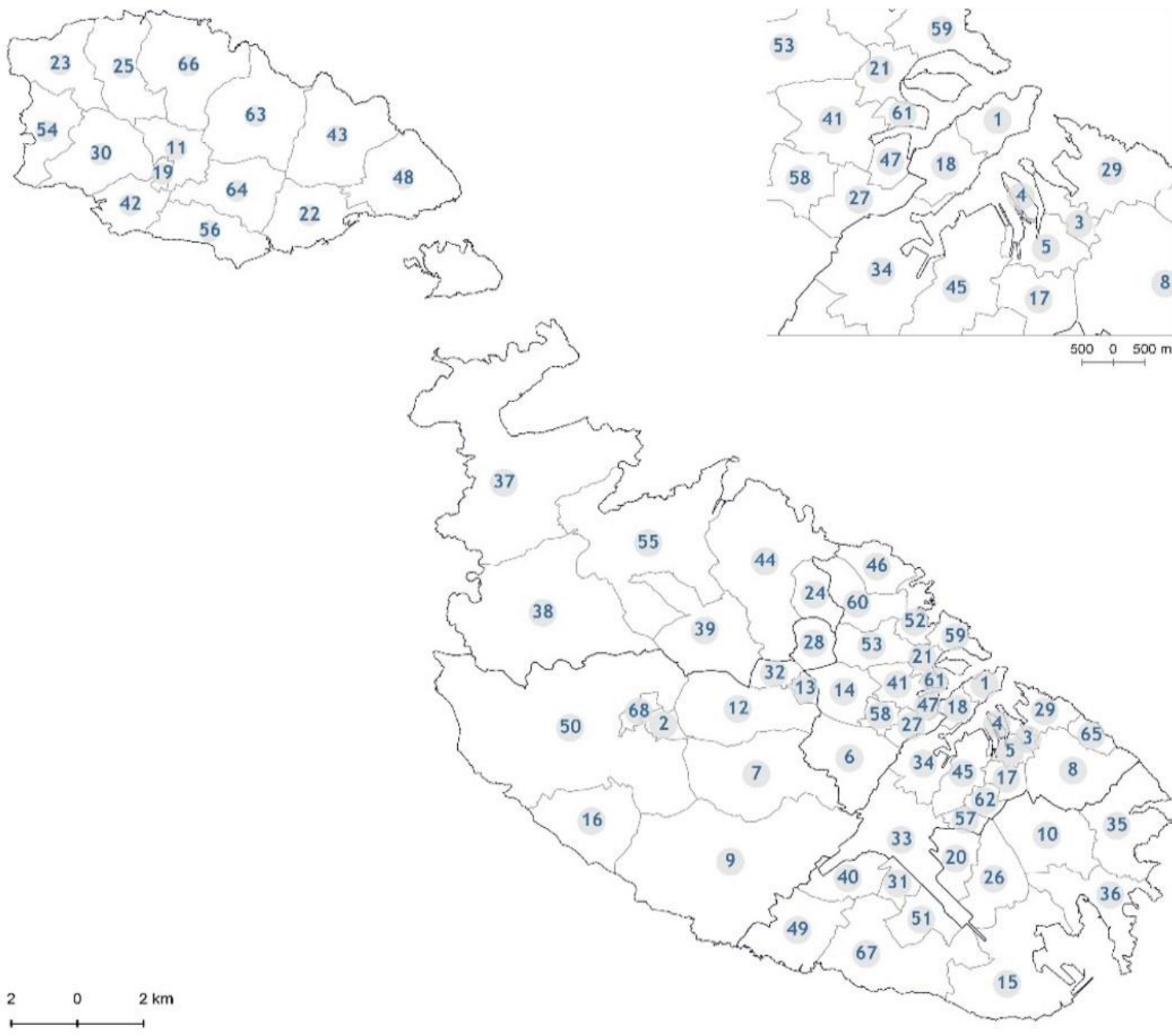
Birkirkara; Il-Gżira; Ħal Qormi; Il-Ħamrun; L-Imsida; Pembroke; San Ġwann; Santa Venera; San Ġiljan; Is-Swieqi; Ta' Xbiex; Tal-Pieta'; Tas-Sliema.

South Eastern Birzebbuga; Il-Gudja; Ħal Għaxaq; Ħal Kirkop; Ħal Safi; Marsaskala; Marsaxlokk; L-Imqabba; Il-Qrendi; Iz-Żejtun; iz-Żurrieq.

Western Ħad-Dingli; Ħal Balzan; Ħal Lija; Ħ'Attard; Ħaż-Żebbug; L-Iklin; L-Imdina; L-Imtarfa; Ir-Rabat; Is-Siġġiewi.

Northern Ħal Għargħur; Il-Mellieħa; L-Imġarr; Il-Mosta; In-Naxxar; San Pawl Il-Baħar .

Gozo and Comino Il-Fontana; Għajnsielem and Comino; L-Għarb; L-Għasri; Il-Munxar; In-Nadur; Il-Qala; San Lawrenz; Ta' Kerċem; Ta' Sannat; Ir-Rabat; Ix-Xagħra; Ix-Xewkija; Iz-Żebbug.



Key							
1	Valletta	18	Il-Furjana	35	Marsaskala	52	San Ġiljan
2	L-Imdina	19	Il-Fontana	36	Marsaxlokk	53	San Ġwann
3	Il-Birgu	20	Il-Gudja	37	Il-Mellieħa	54	San Lawrenz
4	L-Isla	21	Il-Gżira	38	L-Imġarr	55	San Pawl Il-Baħar
5	Bormla	22	Għajnsielem and Comino	39	Il-Mosta	56	Ta' Sannat
6	Ħal Qormi	23	L-Għarb	40	L-Imqabba	57	Santa Luċija
7	Ħaż-Żebbug	24	Ħal Għargħur	41	L-Imsida	58	Santa Venera
8	Ħaż-Żabbar	25	L-Għasri	42	Il-Munxar	59	Tas-Sliema
9	Is-Siġġiewi	26	Ħal Għaxaq	43	In-Nadur	60	Is-Swieqi
10	Iz-Żejtun	27	Il-Ħamrun	44	In-Naxxar	61	Ta' Xbiex
11	Ir-Rabat, Għawdex	28	L-Iklin	45	Raĥal Ġdid	62	Ħal Tarxien
12	Ħ'Attard	29	Il-Kalkara	46	Pembroke	63	Ix-Xagħra
13	Ħal Balzan	30	Ta' Kerċem	47	Tal-Pieta'	64	Ix-Xewkija
14	Birkirkara	31	Ħal Kirkop	48	Il-Qala	65	Ix-Xghajra
15	Birzebbuga	32	Ħal Lija	49	Il-Qrendi	66	Iz-Żebbug, Għawdex
16	Ħad-Dingli	33	Ħal Luqa	50	Ir-Rabat, Malta	67	Iz-Żurrieq
17	Il-Fgura	34	Il-Marsa	51	Ħal Safi	68	L-Imtarfa