

NATIONAL STRATEGY

2025-2035

for Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion.



Gender Equality, Inclusion and Poverty

Working Paper to the Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion Strategy: 2025-2035

Appendix 10

Date: December 2023
Version: Final

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https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ilc_li03__custom_8727476/default/table?lang=en.

AROP	At-risk of poverty
AROPE	At-risk of poverty and social exclusion
EC or Commission	European Commission
EIGE	European Union Institute for Gender Equality
EP	European Parliament
ESL	Early School Leavers
EU	European Union
GBDVU	Domestic Violence Unit within the Police
GEG	Gender Employment Gap
GEdG	Gender Education Gap
GGGI	Global Gender Gap Index
EIGEI	Gender Equality Index
EUROFOND	European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions
GPG	Gender Pay Gap
GPENG	Gender Pension Gap
GV	Gender-based violence
ICGP	Informal Care Gender Gap
MARA	Multi-Agency Risk Assessment mechanism
MS	Member States
NSO	National Statistics Office
PAYG	Pay As You Go
p.p.	Percentage Points
PTSD	Post-traumatic Stress Disorder
SMSD	Severe Material and Social Deprivation
SPHDC	Single-parent households with Dependent Children
TRU	Time-Related Under-employment
UGG	Unemployment Gender Gap
UNWGDW	United Nations Expert Delegation on the Working Group on Discrimination Against Women and Girls



01. Introduction

Women persistently face greater socio-economic challenges and higher levels of poverty than men in all age categories. Women generally engage in more precarious work contracts, such as part-time, low-paid, and fixed-term contracts. This is partly due to the disproportionate home childcare work that requires more flexibility for women. Women also occupy a large share of jobs in the informal economy, which tends to have fewer labour rights, less social protection, and other fundamental benefits. For some groups of women, the at-risk of poverty and social exclusion (AROE) is even higher – including single mothers, women above the age of 65, and women who are divorced or separated late in life, amongst others.²

Equality between women and men is one of the EU's fundamental values, and promoting it is an obligation enshrined in the Treaty. In 2020, the European Commission (EC) launched the Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025, titled a 'Union of Equity'. The Strategy focuses on six priorities: (a) being free from violence and stereotypes; (b) thriving in a gender-equal economy; (c) leading equally throughout society; (d) gender mainstreaming and an intersectional perspective in European Union (EU) policies; (e) funding actions to make progress in gender equality in the EU, and (f) addressing gender equality and women's empowerment across the world. Recommendations to Member States (MS), the European Parliament (EP) and the Council follow these priority areas.³ A number of these policy areas directly relate to women and poverty, such as closing gender gaps in the economy as well as the pension gender gap and other determinants that lead to poverty, such as domestic violence.

In 2022, the EP adopted a resolution on women's poverty in Europe, which, amongst other matters, urges the Commission and the MSs to effectively address the inequalities women face, tackling their main components and therefore barriers in the labour market, as well as access to affordable quality services such as childcare and long-term care services and to promote access to public pension schemes for self-employed people, inactive persons, the unemployed (either short or long term), or those in 'atypical' employment. Amongst the many actions it proposes that the EC and MSs adopt are:⁴

- Mainstreaming gender equality into all policies, programmes and actions and establishing better work-life balance policies and adequate measures to guarantee women's participation in the labour market, such as better maternity leave, significantly longer paternity leave periods, paid and non-transferable parental leave, flexible working hours, on-site childcare facilities, care services and remote working policies.
- Enabling further women's economic independence, which plays a crucial role in their ability to escape situations of gender-based violence; together with the provision of support and protection measures to support women in these situations, the adoption of a comprehensive directive on preventing and combating all forms of gender-based violence.
- Investigating barriers to female entrepreneurship and, in particular, conducting a comprehensive analysis of women's access to finance, helping to end female poverty in the EU by empowering women to become entrepreneurs and founders of small and medium-sized, the removal of barriers to ensure more women can start businesses; including the importance of knowledge about entrepreneurship and practical experience in schools.
- Ensuring that all new fiscal policy, including taxation, which has a clear gender dimension, tackles, and eliminates socio-economic and gender inequalities in all their dimensions, including removal of gender discrimination in MS tax policies and elimination of VAT on women's sanitary goods,

² Pp 2-3., Cost of living crisis exacerbates poverty for women in Europe, Position Paper, caritas Europa, March 2/023.

³ A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy: 2020-2025, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, COM(2020) 152 final, 5.3.2020, Brussels.

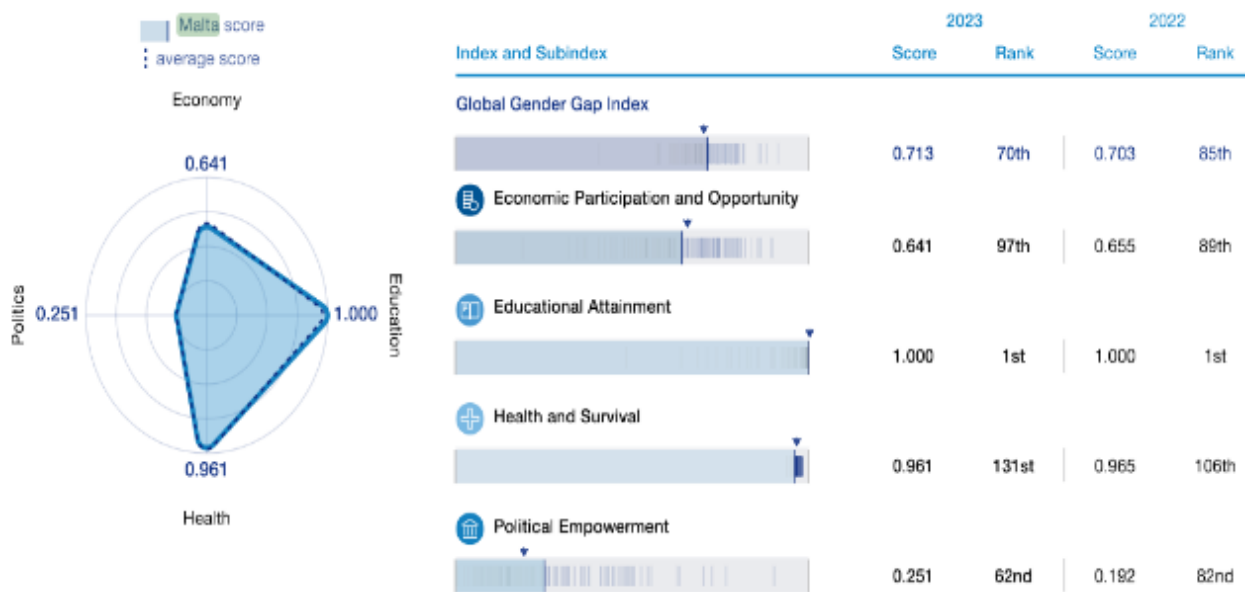
⁴ European Parliament resolution of 5th July 2022 on women's poverty in Europe, European Parliament. Accessed on 23rd November 2023: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2022-0274_EN.html.

which disproportionately jeopardises the dignity of lower-income women, and thereby ensures that all women have access to these essential products.

- Mainstreaming gender EU budgeting, as the European Court of Auditors pointed out, should be introduced urgently.

Figure 01 below presents Malta's gender rating as presented by the World Economic Forum in its Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) 2023 Edition. In this edition, Malta ranks 70th, advancing from 85th in 2022. Of note is that Malta ranks 1st in educational attainment but 97th in economic participation and opportunity. According to the European Union Institute for Gender Equality's (EIGE) Gender Equality Index (EIGEI) 2023, Malta scored 67.8 points. While this constitutes an increase of 13.4 points compared to 2010 and an increase of 2.2 points compared to 2020, it is still below the EU 2023 average of 70.2 points. Compared to the EU average, it is preceded by Slovenia at 69.4 and Italy at 68.2 points respectively.⁵

Figure 01: Global Gender Gap Index 2023 - Malta⁶



⁵ Gender Equality Index 2023, European Institute for Gender Equality. Accessed on 21st November 2023: file:///C:/Users/Admin/Downloads/EU_2023_factsheet.pdf.

⁶ Pg 255, Global Gender Report 2023, Insight Report, World Economic Forum, 2023.

02. Gender Education Gap

Figure 02 presents the number of students by sex who attended post-secondary education between the scholastic year 2019-2020 and 2021-2022. As can be seen, in the educational years 2019/20 and 2020/21, marginally there were more females in post-secondary education. In the scholastic year 2021/22, the gender education gap (GedG) shifted towards males, who surpassed females by 1.3%.

Figure 02: Post-secondary level students by academic year and gender⁷

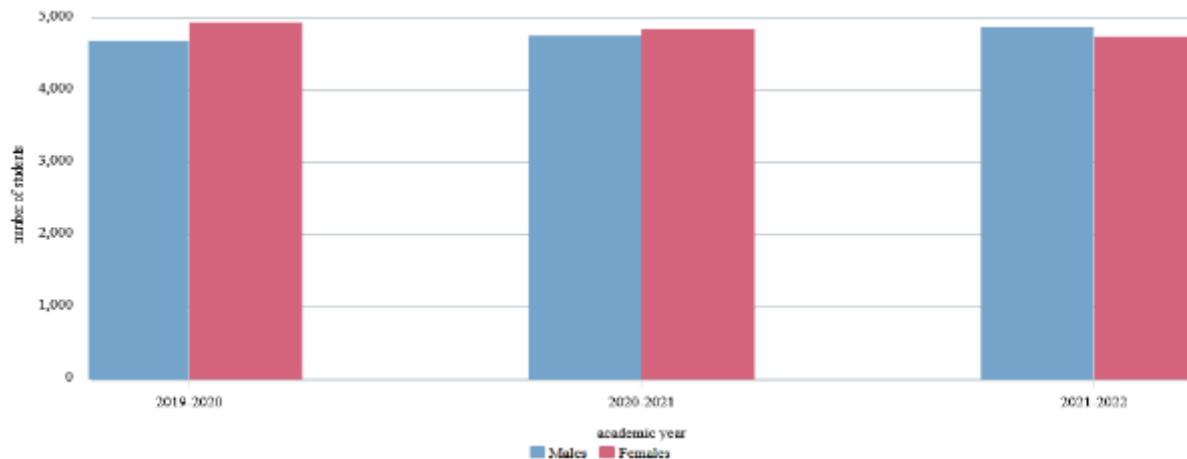


Table 01 presents the number of students in tertiary education by sex and academic year. Females, in all three academic years for which data is presented, significantly exceed males – in the academic year 2021/22, the number of female students is 58.1%, with males at 41.9%.

Table 01: Students enrolled in tertiary level courses by sex and academic year⁸

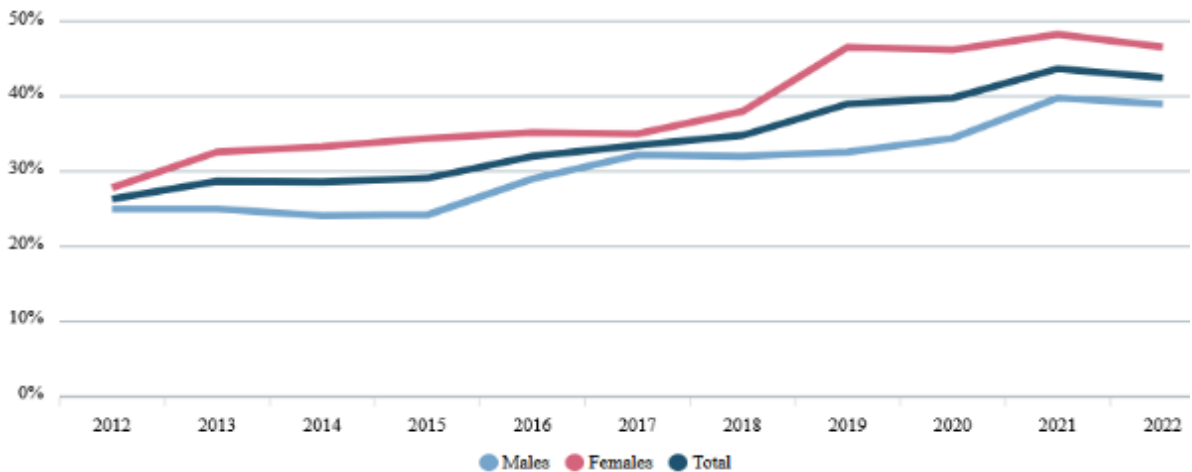
Characteristics	Academic year			Change	Percentage change
	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022		
Sex					
Males	7,497	7,497	7,982	485	6.5
Females	9,933	10,839	11,053	214	2.0
	2,436	3,342	3,071		

Furthermore, the number of females aged 30 to 34 with educational attainment increased significantly between 2012 and 2022 – increasing by 18.8%, from 27.8% to 46.6%. It is also significantly higher than males in 2022, at 39.0%. This is presented in **Figure 03**.

⁷ Accessed on 28th November 2023: <https://nso.gov.mt/students-in-post-secondary-and-tertiary-education-2021-2022/>.

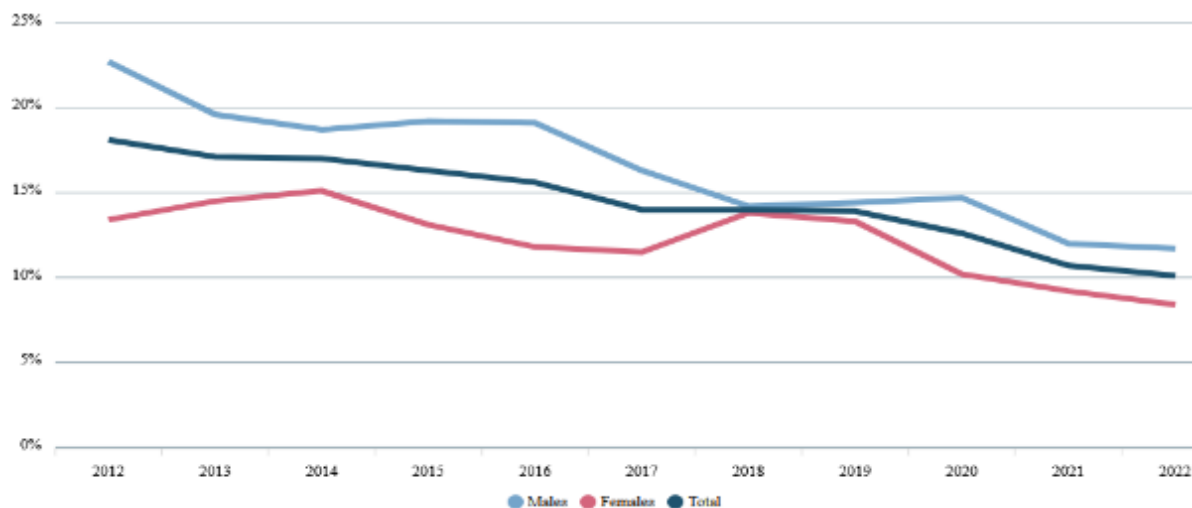
⁸ Accessed on 28th November 2023: https://nso.gov.mt/wp-content/uploads/News2023_195-T-1.xlsx.

Figure 03: Tertiary Education attainment by gender: 30-34 years⁹



The percentage of early school leavers (ESL) females fell significantly between 2012 and 2022, from 13.4% to 8.4% - a drop of 5 p.p. – and continues to be high. It is, however, lower than that of males, which in 2022 stood at 11.7%. This is presented in **Figure 04**.

Figure 04: Early School Leavers as a % of the Population: 18 to 24 years of Age¹⁰



In 2021, the Government launched the ‘Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan: 2022-2027’. In this Strategy, the Government recommends a series of measures to strengthen the principle of gender equality and mainstreaming in the education system and challenge gender stereotypes. Amongst the measures proposed are the following:¹¹

- 4.1.1: Strengthen positive gender representation in formal education of all subjects to tackle gender stereotypes and ensure that the curriculum content includes values and attitudes of gender equality.
- 4.1.2: Introduce higher education training blocks divided into attainable steps (without stipulated timeframes), especially for women whose regular educational path was truncated.
- 4.2.1: Create information sessions specifically designed for girls and women interested in careers which are traditionally predominantly male.

⁹ Accessed on 28th November 2023: <https://nso.gov.mt/key-indicators-on-the-labour-market-2017-2022/>.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Pp 19-22, Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan: 2022-2027, Human Rights Directorate, Parliamentary Secretariat for Reforms and Equality, 2022.

- 4.2.5: Enhance awareness of the importance of STEM tertiary education and its positive aspects for girls and women.
- 4.4.1: Create safe and inclusive STEM learning environments and promote the uptake of these subjects among female students.
- 4.4.4: Create and support more initiatives for girls concerning computer science and entrepreneurship learning in and out of the classroom. Encourage and support their participation in mainstream activities and competitions.

03. Gender Economic Participation and Financial Resources

Despite this exception of female-based performance concerning educational attainment, there are significant gender imbalances regarding economic participation and opportunity as shown in **Table 02**.

Figure 02: Economic Participation and Opportunity Indicators for Malta: 2023¹²

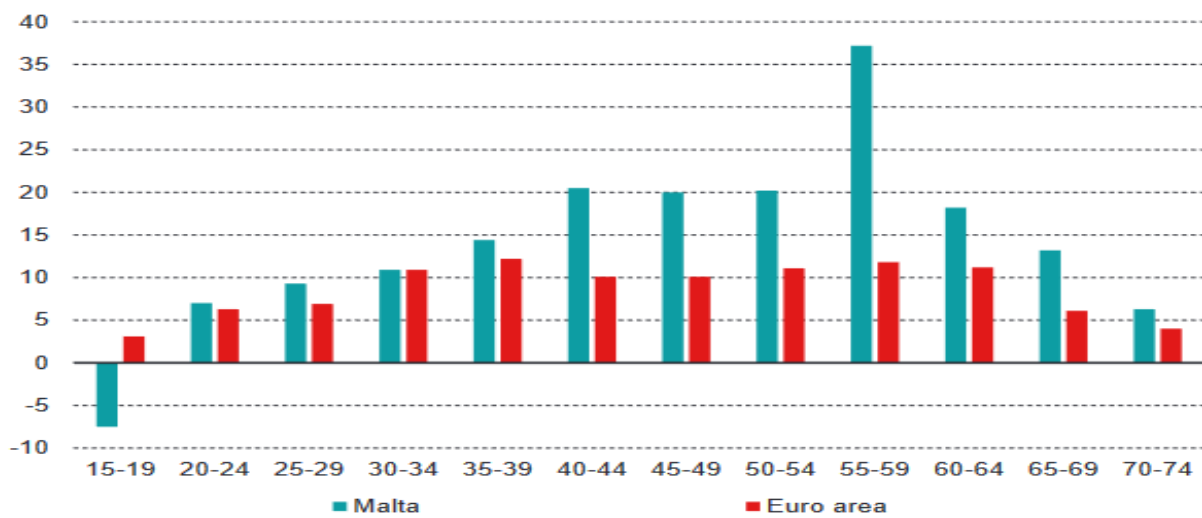
Indicator	Rank	Score*	Compare with Global average	Difference F-M	Female vs Male		Min Max
					◆	◆	
Labour-force participation rate %	84th	0.753		-17.59	53.51	71.10	0-100
Wage equality for similar work 1-7 (best)	74th	0.623		-	-	-	-
Estimated earned income int'l \$ 1,000	85th	0.622		-20.62	33.90	54.52	0-150
Legislators, senior officials and managers %	97th	0.407		-42.11	28.88	70.99	0-100
Professional and technical workers %	92nd	0.824		-9.62	45.02	54.64	0-100

03.1 Active Female Participation in the Labour Market

The labour force participation deficit between males and females results from historical, cultural, and religious expectations of women in society. Up to the late 90s, the role of women was primarily that of raising a family and managing family affairs. For example, in the early 80s, a female who worked in public service had to resign if she got married, as it was seen that she was taking a job away from a male, who was seen as the breadwinner. Thus, as can be seen in **Figure 05**, there is a significant gender employment gap (GEP) when one compares female participation rates for those aged over 40 with the EU average. The largest gap between the male and female participation rates is in the 55-59 age bracket, at 37.2 percentage points (p.p.).

¹² Ibid.

Figure 05: Female Participation Rates in Malta By Age Cohorts in 2021: Percentage Points¹³

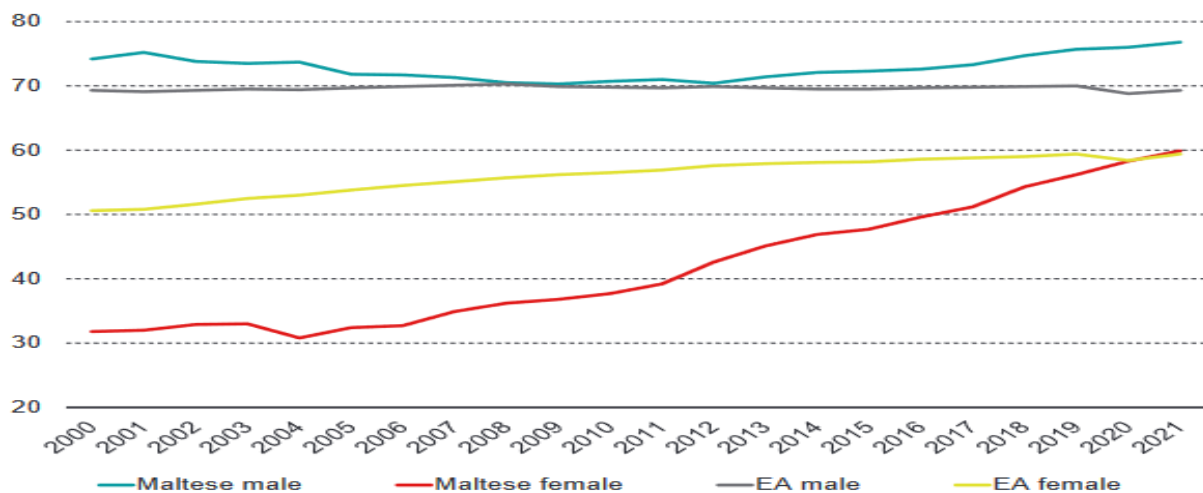


Source: Eurostat.

(¹) Data for the 70-74 age cohort is based on 2020 data as 2021 (and 2019) was not available.

Up to 2004, active female participation was 30%. Gender-based employment strategies, including family-friendly measures, remote working, free childcare, pre and after-school clubs, and fiscal incentives to employers, have since led to a significant increase in the active participation rate of women – reaching the EU female average by 2021. This is presented in **Figure 06**.

Figure 06: Female Participation Rates in Malta and the Euro Area: Percentage of the Working Age Population: 15-74 Years¹⁴



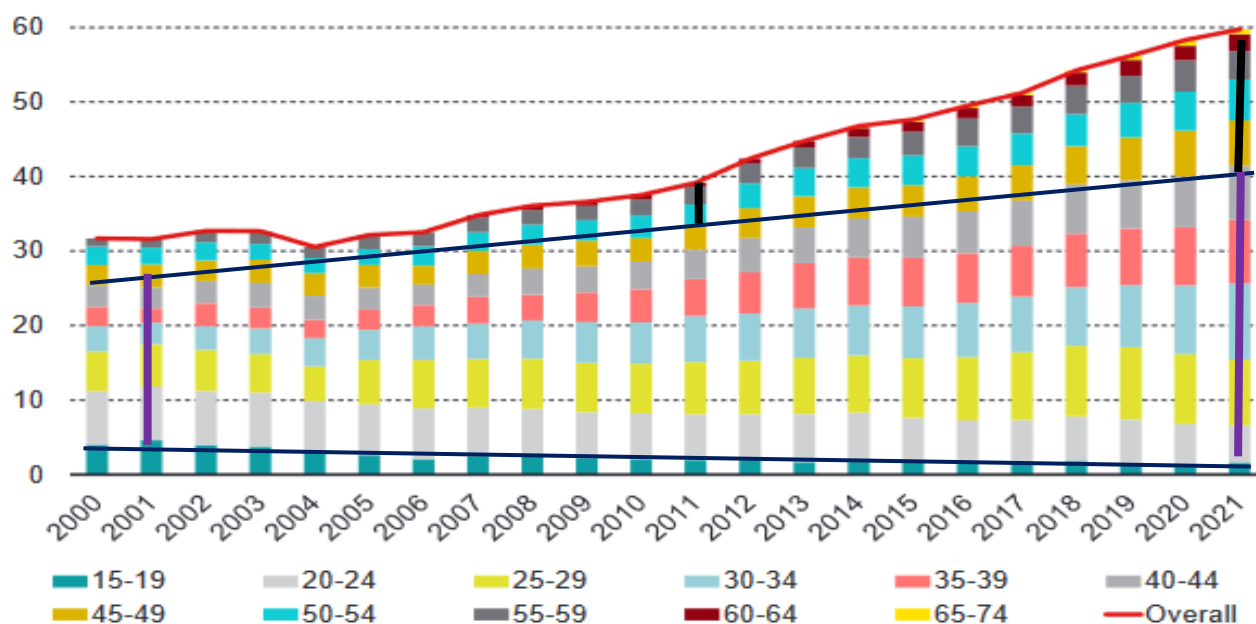
Source: Eurostat.

Figure 07 provides a decomposition of female participation by age cohort. Female employment in the age cohort between 20 and 44 years increased significantly. Of note is also the fact that there is increased women labour participation from 45 to 64 years old. The increase in the labour participation of this age group is potentially the result of females who face divorce and separation late in life and who exited the labour market to raise a family, as well as females who decided to re-enter the labour market or seek employment once their children grew up.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Pp. 78-92, Borg Caruana, J, Women in the labour market, Quarterly Review 2023:2, Central Bank of Malta. Accessed on 21st October 2023: <https://www.centralbankmalta.org/site/Reports-Articles/2023/Women-labour-market.pdf?revcount=3061>.

Figure 07: Decomposition of Female Participation Rate by Age Cohort: Percentage Point Contribution¹⁵



Source: Author's calculations.

As can be seen from **Table 03**, the number of females in full-time employment is marginally lower than that of males, having increased from 67.9% by 4.9 p.p. to 72.8% between 2017 and 2022 and being considerably higher than the EU average by 12.2% p.p. at 72.8%. On the other hand, the number of females in Malta is significantly higher than that of males, by 12.4 p.p. Of note is that females in part-time employment between 2017 and 2022 fell by 5.6 p.p., from 23.9% to 18.3%.

Table 03: 15+ years as a percentage of Total Employment by Type of Employment and Sex: 2017 to 2022¹⁶

	Full Time			Part-time			Self-Employed		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
2017	74.0	67.9	71.0	6.8	23.9	14.1	19.2	8.3	14.8
2018	74.7	70.3	72.5	6.9	21.5	13.2	18.4	8.2	14.3
2019	73.9	70.1	72.0	6.4	20.3	12.4	19.8	9.6	15.7
2020	74.8	71.1	72.9	4.9	19.2	11.2	20.3	9.6	15.9
2021	73.8	73.6	73.3	6.2	17.7	11.3	20.1	8.7	15.4
2022	74.7	72.8	73.5	5.9	18.3	11.5	19.4	8.9	15.0
EU 27 (2022)	73.8	60.6	67.3	9.0	29.5	18.9	17.2	9.9	13.8

Table 04 presents the number of hours worked per week by gender and type of employment. This Table shows that the discrepancy between males and females in full-time employment is only 1.4 hours from October 2022 to June 2023, with females working 40 hours on average per week (males 41.4 hours). On average, females working part-time over the same period worked 1.5 hours, 22.9 hours compared to 21.4 hours by males. Given the higher incidence of women in part-time work and the average weekly work hours total 22.9 hours, this is one reason for the gender pay gap (GPG) and gender pension gap (GPENG) discussed below. On average, the total hours worked by a female are 3.3 hours less than her male counterpart.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Accessed on 23rd November 2023: <https://nso.gov.mt/key-indicators-on-the-labour-market-2017-2022/>: https://nso.gov.mt/wp-content/uploads/NR2023_122_all-Tables.xlsx.

Table 04: Hours Worked Per Week by Sex and Type of Employment in the Main Occupation¹⁷

Type of employment	Males	Females	Total	Total
	Average Normal Hours			Average Actual Hours
Full-time job	41.4	40.0	40.9	36.5
Part-time job	21.4	22.9	22.4	19.9
Total	40.0	36.7	38.6	34.5

Table 05 presents females' working life duration in Malta compared to males for 2018, 2020 and 2022. For females in 2022, the duration of working life is 6.8 years lower than that of males (41.6 years). This has increased at a higher rate than that of males between 2018 and 2022 – by 4.8 years compared to 0.6 for males. This partially explains the reduction in the GPG described below. Furthermore, whilst in 2018, Maltese females' working life was lower than that of their EU counterparts by 2.7 years, in 2022 Maltese females working life increased by 0.4 years compared to the EU average female counterpart.

Table 05: Duration of Working Life by Sex¹⁸

		2018	2020	2022
EU (27 Countries from 2020) Average	Total	35.7	35.6	36.5
	Female	33.2	33.1	34.2
Malta	Total	36.0	36.8	38.4
	Male	41.0	40.9	41.6
	Female	30.5	32.4	34.8

In the afore-referenced 'Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan: 2022-2027', the Government recommended introducing a series of measures within 5 years to reduce the GPG. The measures to be implemented are:¹⁹

- 3.1.1: Reinforce actions to achieve equal economic independence for women and men by promoting tax incentives that strengthen women's participation in the labour market.
- 3.1.2: Explore the introduction of further incentives to entice informal workers to move from the unregulated market to the formal sector, thus safeguarding their rights as employees.
- 3.1.3: Promote existing incentives to encourage more women to enter the labour market and become financially independent.
- 3.2.1: Review and revise inland revenue policies and legislation to ensure equal treatment between men and women, irrespective of civil status or sex.

¹⁷ Accessed on 22nd November 2023: https://nso.gov.mt/wp-content/uploads/News2023_044-Tbl-7.ods.

¹⁸ Accessed on 23rd November 2023: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/web/main/search/-/search/dataset?p_auth=pswvSOaa&text=duration+of+working+life&_estatsearchportlet_WAR_estatsearchportlet_INSTANCE_bHVzuvn1SZ8J_collection=&_estatsearchportlet_WAR_estatsearchportlet_INSTANCE_bHVzuvn1SZ8J_theme=.

¹⁹ Pp 18, Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan: 2022-2027, Human Rights Directorate, Parliamentary Secretariat for Reforms and Equality, 2022.

03.2. Time-related under Part-time Employment

The international definition for time-related under-employment (TRU), previously referred to as 'visible under-employment' is based on three criteria: it includes all persons in employment who:

- (a) Want to work additional hours - wanted another job (or jobs) in addition to their current job (or jobs) to increase their total hours of work; to replace any of their current jobs with another job (or jobs) with increased hours of work; to increase the hours of work in any of their current jobs; or a combination of the above.
- (b) Worked less than a specified hours threshold (working time in all jobs) and
- (c) Were available to work additional hours, which allowed more work.²⁰

As seen from **Table 06**, persons employed part-time at 12.1% have a higher incidence of TRU in 2022 than full-timers, at 7.9%, of 4.2 p.p. Between 2017 and 2022, the TRU for part-time workers fell by 2.8 p.p. from 14.9% to 12.1%. Given the higher number of females in part-time work, as shown earlier in the document, a corollary of TRU is that this results in insufficient income earned, impacting both the GPG and the GPENG.

Table 06: Time-Related Under-employment by Type of Employment - %²¹

Year	Full-time	Part-time	Total
2017	7.7	14.9	8.7
2018	7.0	14.1	8.0
2019	7.0	13.4	7.8
2020	7.1	12.5	7.8
2021	9.0	15.9	9.8
2022	7.9	12.1	8.4

03.3 Unemployment Gender Gap

Table 07 presents the unemployment gender gap (UGG) for persons aged 15 to 74. The female unemployment rate between 2017 and 2022 fell by 1.6 p.p. For the 15-24 age cohort, the UGG in 2022 is 5.1 p.p., with females having an unemployment rate of 5.6% compared to 10.7% of males. Concerning the 25-74 age cohort, the UGG in 2022 was 0.1 p.p., with the unemployment rate for males being 2.4% compared to 2.3% of women. The UGG in 2022 is 0.5 p.p.

Table 07: Unemployment Rate by Gender as a Percentage of Population: 15 to 74 years Age Cohort²²

Year	Males	Females	Total	Unemployment gender gap (p.p)
2017	3.8	4.3	4.0	-0.5
2018	3.8	3.5	3.7	0.3
2019	3.4	4.0	3.6	-0.6
2020	4.3	4.5	4.4	-0.2
2021	3.6	3.1	3.4	0.5
2022	3.1	2.6	2.9	0.5
EU 27 (2022)	5.9	6.5	6.2	-0.6

²⁰ KILM 12: Time related underemployment: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---stat/documents/publication/wcms_422452.pdf.

²¹ Accessed on 22nd November 2023: https://nso.gov.mt/wp-content/uploads/NR2023_122_all-Tables.xlsx.

²² Ibid.

Table 08 below presents the long-term unemployment rate for 2017 to 2022 for the 15-74 age cohort. Between 2017 and 2022, this rate fell by 0.8 p.p. from 1.9% to 1.1% concerning males and 1.2 p.p. from 2.2% to 1.0%. Regarding males and females, the rate of males and females in long-term unemployment in this age cohort in 2022 was lower than the EU average by 1.1 p.p. and 1.5 p.p., respectively.

Table 08: Long-term Unemployment Rate by Sex: 15-74 years Age Cohort - %²³

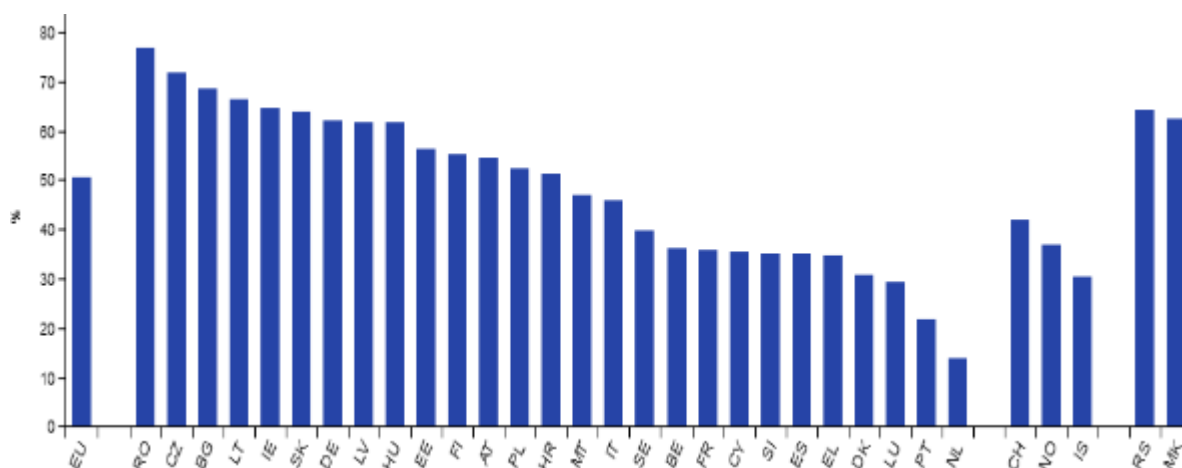
Year	Males	Females	Total
2017	1.9	2.2	2.0
2018	2.1	1.3	1.8
2019	1.3	0.6 ^u	1.0
2020	1.6	1.0 ^u	1.4
2021	1.2	0.8 ^u	1.0
2022	1.1	1.0 ^u	1.1
EU 27 (2022)	2.2	2.5	2.4

^u Under represented - between 20 and 49 sample observations.

03.4 Informal Care Gender Gap

How families organise themselves to look after children outside of formal childcare is likely to be influenced by gender roles and expectations. The informal care gender gap (ICGP) in caring responsibilities at home directly impacts women’s opportunities in the job market. As discussed earlier, the larger share of females in part-time work and the lower working life duration likely result from the fact that women play a larger role in economic inactivity due to care duties. **Figure 08** presents 46.9% of children aged 3 years and younger who in 2021 were cared for by a parent rather than placed at a childcare centre.

Figure 08: Share of Children Aged less than three years cared for only by their parents - 2021²⁴



The 2023 EIGE indicator on informal care activities titled ‘people caring for and educating their children or grandchildren, elderly or people with disabilities, every day (% , 18-74 population, 2022)’ shows that 32% of women are responsible for such care compared to 16% males – a 16 p.p. difference. Maltese females constitute a 2 p.p. share compared to the average EU female, which is 34%.²⁵

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Accessed on 22nd November 2023: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Living_conditions_in_Europe_-_childcare_arrangements.

²⁵ Gender Equality Index 2023, European Institute for Gender Equality. Accessed on 21st November 2023: file:///C:/Users/Admin/Downloads/EU_2023_factsheet.pdf.

The tables below look at a more disaggregated distribution of types of care and by whom. **Table 09** shows that the distributional care for children aged 0 to 11 between partners in Malta in 2021 rested with the female partner at 56%, 4 p.p. higher than the EU average.

Table 09: Distribution of care and supervision for children (aged 0-11) (% , 20-64 years, EU, 2021)²⁶

	Malta		EU Average	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Completely or mostly my partner	17	30	13	31
About equal or both together	25	45	32	44
Completely or mostly me	56	25	52	23
Other	2	0	2	2

Grandparents' involvement in informal childcare support for children aged 0 to 17 is a key enabling factor that allows parents in Malta to combine work and family responsibilities. As can be seen from **Table 10**, the dependency by parents on both the male and female grandparent for the provision of such care is high, 4 p.p. for either gender, higher than the EU average. The issue here is that as the statutory retirement age becomes 65 years in 2026, and older adults are incentivised to continue working past their statutory retirement age, the ability for the extended members of the family to act as informal carers for their grandchildren, whilst the parents are at work, is likely to be reduced. This reality of reduced informal care by the elderly members of the extended family will significantly increase the financial, time, and quality of life pressures and impact both the mother and the family unit. A potential further negative impact is the reduced transference of values through family socialisation, partly provided by grandparents and will continue to be eroded.

The **second** highest reliance on external support is through after-school programmes and extracurricular activities.

Table 10: Relying on external informal care support for children 0-17 by type of support (% , 20-64 years, 2021)²⁷

	Malta		EU Average	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Daycare centre/school (also if with reduced offer/online format)	36	58	42	51
After-school programme(s) and other extracurricular activities	45	52	41	49
Nanny or babysitter	27	43	22	31
Nurse or social worker	26	36	20	28
Grandparents or other relatives	50	58	46	54
Other adults (neighbours, friends, parents from child's school or daycare)	40	47	32	39

²⁶ Accessed on 22nd November 2023: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/thematic-focus/covid-19/country/MT>.

²⁷ Ibid.

The share of females outside the labour force due to caring responsibilities in Malta fell from 4.4% in 2016 to 2.1% in 2020.²⁸ A second important indicator the EIGE applies relates to people doing daily cooking and/or housework (% , 18-74 population, 2022). In Malta, in 2023, 78% of females assumed this role, 15 p.p. higher than males at 63%, similar to the female EU average of 63%.²⁹ It should nevertheless be noted that the level of flexible working arrangement for child care responsibility duties, whether this relates to dropping or picking up a child at school, picking up a child from school and continuing to work from home, was higher in 2021 for both males and females when compared to the EU average.

Table 11: Change in working time arrangements (% , 20–64 years, 2021) ³⁰

	Malta		EU Average	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Chose to reduce working time to take care of children and/or other relatives	16	12	8	10
Chose to change working time to take care of children and/or other relatives	20	22	12	18
Chose to reduce working time and/or change the working schedule for reasons other than care	12	11	7	10
Employer reduced r working time	5	7	10	10
Working time increased	7	7	7	6

Table 12 below compares females' and males' uptake of family-friendly measures in Malta in 2020 and 2021. On all of the indicators, the female member of the family assumes the overwhelming majority, 80% and over, to care of the family – followed by teleworking at 74.7% while flexi-time ranks lowest at 59.1%.

In the referenced 'Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan: 2022-2027', several actions are identified to promote co-responsibility and balance of work, private and family life - including:³¹

- 5.1.1: Promote the reconciliation of work and family life by encouraging family-friendly policies and practices at the workplace, both within the public and private sectors.
- 5.1.2: Promote co-responsibility between women and men and tackle gender role stereotypes and care responsibilities in families to instil a cultural change.
- 5.3.1: Incentivise companies to develop reconciliation and co-responsibility measures and promote the adoption of equality plans in small and medium-sized enterprises.
- 5.3.2: Encourage men to use flexible working arrangements and other family-friendly measures.
- 5.3.3: Extend free childcare services for employees who work in the evening, on weekends, and on a shift basis.

²⁸ Accessed on 22nd November 2023: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/sdg_05_40/default/table?lang=en.

²⁹ Gender Equality Index 2023, European Institute for Gender Equality. Accessed on 21st November 2023: file:///C:/Users/Admin/Downloads/EU_2023_factsheet.pdf.

³⁰ <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/thematic-focus/covid-19/country/MT>.

³¹ Pg 24, Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan: 2022-2027, Human Rights Directorate, Parliamentary Secretariat for Reforms and Equality, 2022.

Table 12: Utilisation of family-friendly measures in the public sector by gender, 2020-21³²

Type	2020					2021				
	Males		Females		Total	Males		Females		Total
	No	%	No	%		No	%	No	%	
Maternity Leave (first 14 weeks)	0	0.0	769	100.0	769	0	0.0	689	100.0	689
Maternity Leave (additional 4 weeks)	0	0.0	597	100.0	597	0	0.0	302	100.0	302
Adoption Leave	1	20.0	4	80.0	5	2	18.2	9	81.8	11
Responsibility Leave	6	19.4	25	80.6	31	8	18.6	35	81.4	43
Parental Leave Applicable to Parents, Legal Guardians and Foster Carers	12	2.3	507	97.7	519	9	1.8	496	98.2	505
Career Break	4	1.7	229	98.3	233	23	11.3	180	88.7	203
Leave to accompany spouse / partner in Civil Union on Govt-sponsored courses or assignments	0	0.0	6	100.0	6	1	20.0	4	80.0	5
Reduced hours – 20 hours/week	27	7.4	340	92.6	367	20	6.0	311	94.0	331
Reduced hours – 25 hours/week	4	3.6	107	96.4	111	5	5.1	93	94.9	98
Reduced hours – 30 hours/week	19	4.7	386	95.3	405	20	5.4	347	94.6	367
Reduced hours – 35 hours/week	7	4.6	145	95.4	152	5	3.2	152	96.8	157
Reduced hours – other amounts	23	8.2	259	91.8	282	20	8.3	220	91.7	240
Teleworking	457	24.8	1,383	75.2	1,840	551	25.3	1,625	74.7	2,176
Flexi-Time	602	42.5	816	57.5	1,418	631	40.9	913	59.1	1,544
Total	1,162	17.3	5,573	82.7	6,735	1,295	19.4	5,376	80.6	6,671

03.5 Gender Pay Gap

With higher educational attainment and increased female participation rates, women have seen their income converge to that of males. With the existing laws in place, especially since becoming a member of the EU, employers cannot discriminate based on gender. Nevertheless, the GPG captures other factors behind income discrepancy between genders, such as sectoral and occupational gender segregation.

Table 13 presents Malta's performance indicators concerning how females compare to males on specific high-level boards. As one can see, Malta is more or less consistent with the EU average – with one major exception: the share of females as board members in the largest quoted companies. Compared to the EU average, Malta is 17 points less concerning women appointed to such boards.

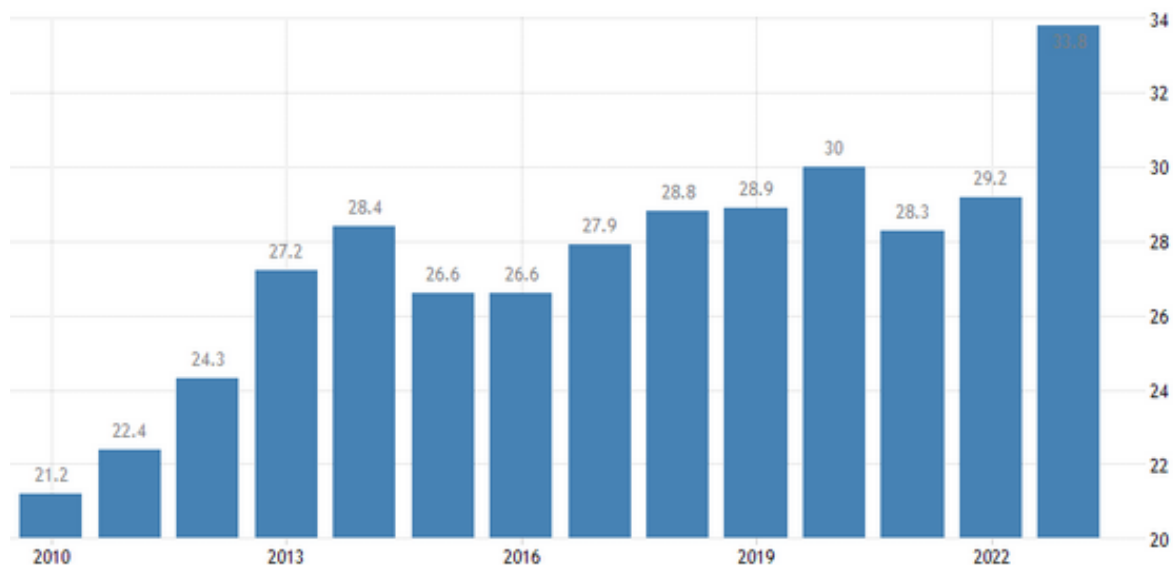
³² Cutajar, J., Avellino, M., and Magri Pantea, A., Genders Pension Gap, Consultative Council for Women's Rights, October 2023.

Table 13: Gender Equality Index 2023 Comparison of Women to Males in Terms of Share of Members in Specific High-Level Boards³³

	Malta		EU Average	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Share of members of boards in largest quoted companies, supervisory board or board of directors (% , 1st semester 2023)	16	84	33	67
Share of board members of central bank (% , 2022)	27	73	28	72
Share of board members of research funding organisations (% , 2022)	40	60	41	59
Share of board members of publicly owned broadcasting organisations (% , 2022)	33	67	38	62
Share of members of the highest decision-making body of the national Olympic sport organisations (% , 2022)	10	90	20	80

The number of females in managerial jobs, a proxy for higher-paid jobs, stood at 33.8% as of December 2022 for women aged between 15 and 74 years, with a record low of 21.2% in December 2009. This is presented in **Figure 09**.

Figure 09: Employed Women in Managerial Positions: 15 to 74 Years³⁴

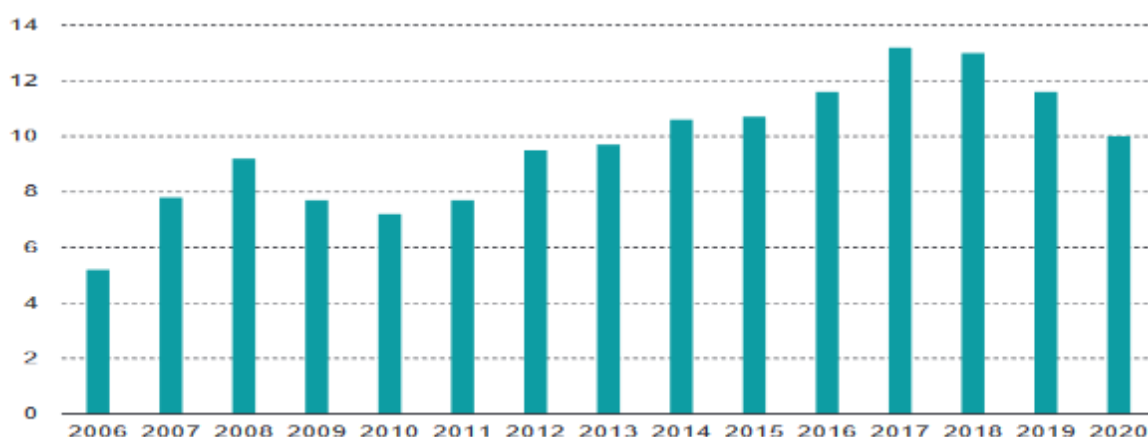


According to the GGGI by the World Economic Forum, there is a significant gender imbalance of 20.62 in income earned. On the other hand, applying the ‘unadjusted’ t GPG by Eurostat, which measures the average differences in the gross hourly wages between males and females, shows that for Malta, this was generally on the increase up to 2017, only decreasing in 2009 and 2010. After reaching a high of 13.2% in 2017, the indicator has recorded steady declines and stood at 10.0% in 2020. This is presented in **Figure 10**. Nevertheless, it increased by 0.5 p.p. in 2021 to increase the gap to 10.5%.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Accessed on 21st November 2022: <https://tradingeconomics.com/malta/employed-women-being-in-managerial-positions-from-15-to-74-years-eurostat-data.html>.

Figure 10: Eurostat Unadjusted Gender Pay Gap³⁵



Source: Eurostat.

(¹) Data for 2021 was not available in time for publication.

An analysis of the GPG in Malta shows that it is widest in the 35-54 years age cohort, standing at 14.3% in the private sector, when compared to 5% in the public sector - the latter because it is covered by general and sectoral collective agreements and the fact that many more women occupy senior positions in the public service and government entities. In the private sector, the GPG is the highest in real estate activities (29.7%) and financial and insurance activities (24.3%).³⁶

The GPG also arises because women are concentrated in low-paid jobs and sectors due to socio-cultural expectations. Furthermore, segregation is the concentration of women or men in certain occupations. It reflects the traditional division of roles in the domestic sphere, which extends to the job market. For example, caring is stereotypically regarded as women’s work. Due to this expectation, women tend to work in ‘traditionally feminine’ occupations such as childcare, care for older people, teaching and nursing. These jobs are paid significantly less than men-dominated sectors, such as information technology. Women dominate the care industry. Regarding segregation and quality of work, females in Malta employed in education, human health and social work activities (% of 15-89 employed) stood at 31% compared to 11% by males, and 1 p.p. less than the EU average.³⁷

As mentioned earlier, informal caring demands on women negatively affect the GPG. **Table 14** presents females’ mean monthly earnings and equivalised net income compared to males and females in 2023.

Table 14: Mean Monthly Earnings and Equivalised Net Income³⁸

	Malta		EU Average	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Mean monthly earnings (PPS, +16 working population, 2018)	2,238	2,662	2,321	2,818
Mean equivalised net income (PPS, 16+ population, 2021)	21,961	22,656	20,261	21,221

³⁵ Borg Caruana, J, Women in the labour market, Quarterly Review 2023:2, Central Bank of Malta. Accessed on 21st October 2023: <https://www.centralbankmalta.org/site/Reports-Articles/2023/Women-labour-market.pdf?revcount=3061>.

³⁶ Accessed 27th November 2023: <https://www.mfsa.mt/publication/minding-the-gender-pay-gap-financial-sector-bears-the-second-highest-gap-in-malta/>.

³⁷ Pp. 78-92, Borg Caruana, J, Women in the labour market, Quarterly Review 2023:2, Central Bank of Malta. Accessed on 21st October 2023: <https://www.centralbankmalta.org/site/Reports-Articles/2023/Women-labour-market.pdf?revcount=3061>.

³⁸ Gender Equality Index 2023, European Institute for Gender Equality. Accessed on 21st November 2023: file:///C:/Users/Admin/Downloads/EU_2023_factsheet.pdf.

In the afore-referenced 'Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan: 2022-2027', the Government recommended introducing a series of measures within 5 years to reduce the GPG. The measures to be implemented are:³⁹

- 2.1.5: Encourage further disseminating tools for companies to voluntarily self-diagnose their wage structure and detect and correct pay inequalities.
- 2.3.3: Propose further fiscal and financial incentives for women taking up entrepreneurship, ICT careers, and employment opportunities related to the finance and science sector.
- 2.4.1: Strengthen and upgrade the mechanisms for monitoring equality in employment by improving data on equal pay and ensuring that employees and prospective employees are given accurate and updated information on their employment contract, pay policies and practices, pay structures, starting salaries, pay and promotion progression, as well as access to additional payments and bonuses, among others.
- 2.4.2: Combat gender-based job segregation by exploring the concept of job evaluation and assessment systems that systematically determine the value of a profession or sector to introduce the proportionality principle.
- 2.4.3: Increase information and awareness and promote research on equal treatment for men and women at work, including providing specialised advice and legal information to victims of pay discrimination.

04. Gender Pension Gap

Malta's social constructs and institutional factors contribute to the gender pension gap (GPENG). As shown earlier, the burden of informal care of children and/or family members falls on the female family member. This is a key source of the GPG determinants related to the labour market. Women's higher involvement in carrying out this unpaid work than men leads to lower participation in the labour market, more breaks in their employment history, higher rates of part-time work, and lower salaries. This means that women in Malta are less likely to have access to a maximum contributory state pension and more likely to have lower and less frequent contributions resulting in a partial contributory pension – assuming that they meet the 12-year full contributory accumulation to qualify for the contributory pension. Furthermore, even if the male spouse accumulates sufficient retirement entitlements to finance both partners' retirement, women may still have fewer entitlements of their own, leaving them in a more vulnerable position in case of divorce or the death of their spouse.

The current generation of female pensioners, primarily persons born in 1956 and under, have a lower pension income for cultural, religious and traditional reasons mentioned earlier than females in the labour market today. The restrictions placed on females who are 60 years and over today mean that few potentially have a full contributory pension, with even fewer maximum pension income.

Furthermore, most female pensioners today receive a widows' pension rather than another type because they either did not accrue sufficient contributions to qualify for their pension or, if they did, the number of contributions would be on the low side. The widow's pension is a vested right, falling under the insurance coverage provided by the social security scheme. Up to recently, this consisted of 5/6th of the pension received by the male spouse. Following the 2015 strategic pension review, a gender equalisation measure established that a female entitled to a contributory pension in her own right would be entitled to the full 6/6th pension that her spouse earned. Following the 2020 strategic pension review, a further equalisation measure established that all females who receive a widow's pension will have their pension increased to the full 6/6th over five years.

Table 15 shows that the average EU pension gender gap will decrease from 30.1% to 25.2% between 2017 and 2022. In Malta, this also has fallen at a far lower rate – 0.8% for persons aged 65 to 74 and 0.6% for those aged 65 to 79.

³⁹ Pp 15-16, Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan: 2022-2027, Human Rights Directorate, Parliamentary Secretariat for Reforms and Equality, 2022.

Table 15: Comparison of Gender Pension Gap in Malta with EU Average⁴⁰

	2017	2020	2022
EU (27 Countries from 2020) Average of 65 to 74 years	30.1	26.9	25.2
Malta: 65 to 74 years	45.3	41.5	44.5
Malta: 65 to 79 years	45.6	42.7	45.0

Today's women in the labour market will likely have a full pension. Recognising the inherent gender discrimination of the Pay As You Go (PAYG) pension system, which is based on an uninterrupted career, thereby reflecting the traditional family model where the male spouse is the breadwinner, during which contributions are acquired over the long term (persons born between 1962 and 1968 must have a full 40-year contributory history and those born in 1969 and over a full 41-year contributory history) the Government introduced two gender equalisation measures to address career breaks, and hence reduced contributions paid by females. These are the award of contributory credits to the person's contributory history for:

- Child rearing. As shown earlier, responsibility for child rearing in Malta falls mainly on the female member of the family. Credits are awarded unconditionally for 4 years for each of the first three children. Concerning fourth and other children, credits are awarded for 2 years for each child subject to the parent returning to active employment for the same period.
- Human capital development. As shown earlier, a higher percentage of females follow tertiary education. Credits are awarded for full-time tertiary and lifelong learning for a maximum of 5 years.

Whilst female workers below 40 will be entitled to a contributory pension in their own right, this is not the case concerning the older cohort of women. For reasons explained earlier, older generations of women are less likely to qualify for a contributory pension, or if they do, this would be at the lower end of the scale as they would have sacrificed their careers to raise a family. In the event of a divorce or separation, this older generation of women will be at risk of poverty (AROP). The Government adopted a recommendation presented in the 2020 pension strategic review that for women aged 50, at the time of its implementation, the contributions of the male spouse from the date of marriage to the formal date of separation or divorce would be divided equally between the parties.

Concerning investing in a private pension retirement savings plan, the proportion of women with savings in a personal plan is usually close to but below the proportion of men with personal plans in Europe. As shown earlier, the share of women in part-time employment is significantly higher than that of males. Therefore, eligibility criteria based on a female's contributory history paid on a lower salary will result in a lower state pension income and a high risk of not meeting the minimum qualifying period for a contributory pension. A lower income generated through part-time work also renders investment in a voluntary private pension less affordable.

The afore-referenced 'Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan: 2022-2027' recommended that the Government should explore the current gender gaps in pension, assess the risks of these gaps and identify solutions (3.2.3).⁴¹

⁴⁰ Accessed on 22nd November 2023: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ilc_pnp13__custom_8629801/default/table?lang=en.

⁴¹ Pg 18, Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan: 2022-2027, Human Rights Directorate, Parliamentary Secretariat for Reforms and Equality, 2022.

05. Gender Violence

Many women experience different forms of violence just because they are women. These include domestic violence, sexual harassment, rape, sexual violence during conflict and harmful customary or concerning female migrants in Malta potentially from traditional practices such as female genital mutilation, forced marriages and honour crimes. Gender-⁴²based violence is rooted in and reinforces gender inequalities. Gender-based violence (GV), including physical and psychological violence and coercive control, are entrenched and endemic forms of violence against women – and in the modern world, they are frequently perpetrated in digital as well as physical spaces.

Apart from traumatising situations experienced during childhood or alcoholism and drug addiction, which could explain violent behaviour in general, the international consensus is that there are a series of interrelated factors which are primarily "manifestations of historically unequal power relations between men and women".⁴³

Women's financial dependency is an important risk factor for experiencing psychological violence. Research indicates that economic inequality within a couple is associated with psychological violence, with women whose partners earn more than them being more likely to experience psychological violence in their relationship than women who earn the same or more than their partner. Research also suggests that women who do not have an equal say in how the household income is used are more likely to indicate that they have experienced psychological abuse from their current partner than those who feel that they have an equal say.⁴⁴

When a female spouse is coerced by her husband not to work and is unable to generate income independently from her husband and thus unable to support herself and her children, it is very difficult for a victim of domestic violence to report her abuser to the judicial system. Often, women affected by domestic violence are afraid that their children will be taken away from them – either by social services or by their partner in a legal custody challenge after separation.

Research further shows that in the event of separation and divorce, women are more likely to suffer from financial abuse, which is often associated with other forms of intimate partner violence (IPV), which leads to financial instability, and previous experiences of violence may reappear concerning financial matters. An ex-partner may also withhold payments and control the resident parent's economic resources.⁴⁵

Experiencing GV harms victims' mental health, with victims experiencing mental health conditions such as depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) at a higher rate than the general population. In particular, research is emerging on the prevalence of suicide among women experiencing psychological violence. In terms of the impact on victims' families, children witnessing psychological violence and coercive control perpetrated against their mothers are more likely to perpetrate and become victims of such violence themselves in adulthood. Certain groups of women are at particular risk of experiencing psychological violence, for instance, women with disabilities or health conditions and women from a migrant background.⁴⁶

For a child, domestic violence lasts a lifetime. Research shows that GV can be absorbed through observation, personal experience, and culture; it is learned within the family, community, school, friends, etc. Young people living in homes where the father is violent towards the mother are more likely to reproduce these behaviours. Witnessing domestic violence is also considered a form of violence against children. It may generate attitudes that justify their use of violence and the perception that violence is acceptable, which may affect their behaviour in other interpersonal relationships.

⁴² Female genital mutilation is illegal in Malta but girls are not safe, European Institute for Gender Equality, 2019. Accessed on 11th December 2023: https://eige.europa.eu/newsroom/news/female-genital-mutilation-illegal-malta-girls-are-not-safe?language_content_entity=en.

⁴³ Pg 8, Malgenisi, et al, Gender-based violence and poverty in Europe, EAPN Gender and Poverty Working Group – Briefing No 2., 2019.

⁴⁴ Pg 35, Combating coercive control and psychological violence against women in the EU Member States, European Institute for Gender Equality, 2022.

⁴⁵ Fernqvist, S., Sepulchre, M., Guaranteed or conditional child maintenance: Examining the 2016 reform in Sweden, Critical Social Policy, pp 1-20, SAGE, 2021.

⁴⁶ Pg 13, Combating coercive control and psychological violence against women in the EU Member States, European Institute for Gender Equality, 2022.

It can also be the opposite of learning, assimilating that they can only relate to others by adopting behaviours of submission, self-blame, or giving up in the face of difficulties. In this way, violence can be perpetuated through the roles of abuser and victim, generating violent or submissive adults, potential abusers or victims.⁴⁷

Based on UN studies, a substantial amount of violent experience is not reported or officially recorded. Results are available based on the EU-GV survey wave 2021. More victims of partner violence contact the police compared to victims of non-partner violence. However, still less than one-quarter of women reported to the police at least one incident of partner violence.⁴⁸ The Tables below present an indication of violence against women in Malta according to Eurostat. Debate on GV in Malta, particularly following the death of Ms Cassar in 2022, suggests that most of the GV carried out is not recorded to the police.

As shown in **Table 16**, the largest number of domestic violence (DV) reported in Malta in 2021 was psychological, with 3,825 reported incidents, followed by physical DV at 2,312.

Table 16: Number of domestic violence (individual cases) registered with the Police Department and service providers by service and type of violence reported: 2021⁴⁹

Service provider	Total cases	Type of violence reported		
		Physical	Psychological	Sexual, economic
Police Department	1,918	589	1,282	47
Emergency Health Services	89	89	-	-
Shelters ⁵⁰	133	108	118	48
Domestic Violence Unit, Aġenzija Appoġġ	2,461	1,447	2,340	525
Victim Support Malta ⁵¹	88	79	85	3
	4,689	2,312	3,825	623

Table 17 presents the percentage of women in Malta in 2021 by type of DV reported. Eurostat does not provide an EU average. The percentage of women who have a phased physical threat that either includes sexual or non-sexual violence exceeds 10%, with the latter being 16.2%.

Table 17: Percentage of Women who have experienced Domestic Violence, by type of violence - 2021⁵⁰

	Physical, Including Threats and Not Sexual	Sexual	Physical Including Threats or Sexual
Violence	10.4	5.8	16.2

The number of males who reported that they experienced DV increased from 508 to 695 between 2019 and 2021, whilst that of females increased from 2,057 to 2,600.⁵¹

Figure 11: Number of persons using DV services by Gender⁵²

⁴⁷ Pg 14, Malgenisi, et al, Gender-based violence and poverty in Europe, EAPN Gender and Poverty Working Group – Briefing No 2., 2019.

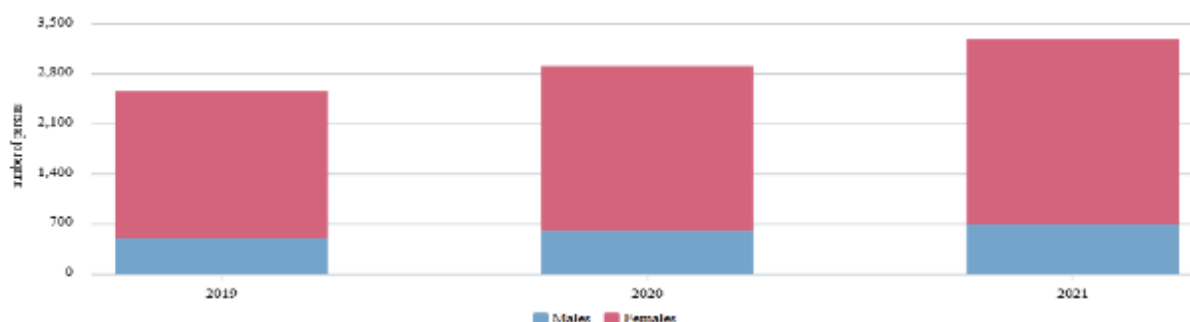
⁴⁸ Pg 4, EU survey on gender based violence against women and other forms of interpersonal violence (EU-GBV), 2022 Edition, Eurostat, 2022.

⁴⁹ Accessed on 27th November 2023: https://nso.gov.mt/wp-content/uploads/NR069_2023_Table5.xlsx.

⁵⁰ Accessed on 27th November 2023: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/gbv_dv_type/default/table?lang=en.

⁵¹ Accessed on 27th November 2023: https://nso.gov.mt/wp-content/uploads/NR069_2023_Table1.xlsx.

⁵² Accessed on 27th November 2023: <https://nso.gov.mt/domestic-violence2021/>.



The Table below presents the percentage of women by age group who experienced domestic violence (DV) in Malta in 2021. In all age cohorts, other than that for the 65-74 age group, the percentage of women who experienced DV was over 15%.

Table 18: Percentage of Women who have experienced Domestic Violence by age group - 2021⁵³

Age Group in Years	18-29	30-44	45-66	65-74
%	16.9	17.5	16.5	11.7

The Table below presents the percentage of women who experienced DV by occurrence of the last episode. 16.2% of women experienced DV during adulthood, whilst 1.0% experienced DV in the last twelve months.

Table 19: Percentage of Women who have experienced Domestic Violence by occurrence of the last episode - 2021⁵⁴

Occurrence of the last episode	Last 12 months	Last 5 years	Adulthood
%	1.0	5.0	16.2

The largest number of DV reports were made to the Domestic Violence Unit at Aġenzija Appoġġ, increasing from 1,870 to 2,461 between 2019 and 2023, followed by those made to the police, where during the same period, the number of DV reports increased from 1,532 in 2019 to 1,918 in 2023.⁵⁵

According to the National Statistics Office (NSO), the percentage of foreign persons registered with service providers between 2019 and 2021 increased from 481 to 630.⁵⁶ The Figure below presents the number of DV individual cases registered by broad citizenship with service providers. The majority of the foreigners who reported DV is registered with Shelters.

Table 12: Distribution of individual cases registered with the Police Department and providers by service and broad citizenship of service user - 2021⁵⁷

⁵³ Accessed on 27th November 2023: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/gbv_dv_type/default/table?lang=en.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Accessed on 27th November 2023: https://nso.gov.mt/wp-content/uploads/NR069_2023_Table2.xlsx.

⁵⁶ Accessed on 27th November 2023: https://nso.gov.mt/wp-content/uploads/NR069_2023_Table4.xlsx.

⁵⁷ Accessed on 27th November 2023: <https://nso.gov.mt/domestic-violence2021/>.

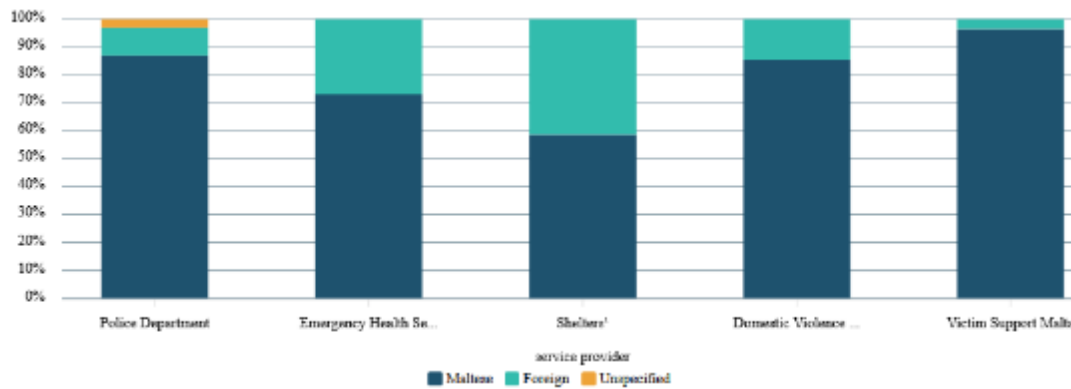
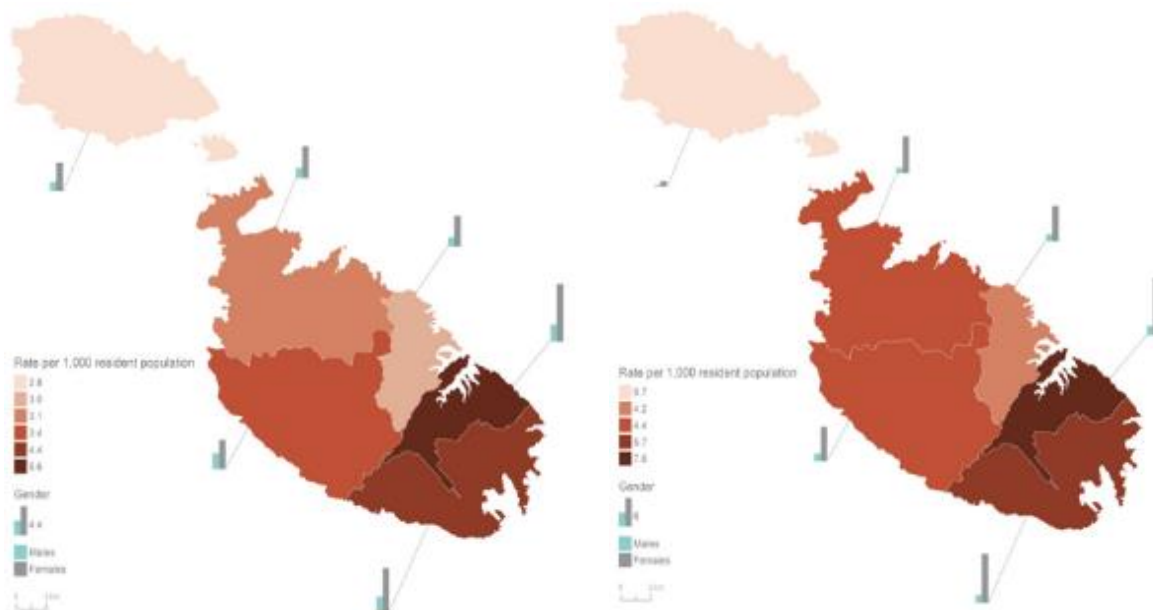


Figure 13 presents the number of persons per 1,000 residents by District who registered a DV incident with the police and the Domestic Violence Unit at Aġenzija Sapport. In both instances, the District with the highest number of reported DV incidents is the Southern Harbour District.

Figure 13: Number of DC Individual Cases Registered in 2021 by District (rate per 1,000 resident population)⁵⁸

Figures 13.1: With the Malta Police Force

Figures 13.2: With the Domestic Violence Unit



Women are 3.6 times more likely to suffer from unwanted sexual attention than men. What’s more, the likelihood of a young woman (18–34 years) reporting unwanted sexual attention is three times higher than men of the same age and 10 times higher than the oldest group of men (50+ years). Women aged 50+ are 3.5 times less likely to report unwanted sexual attention than women aged 18–34 (1.6% compared with 5.6%). There is a clear link between adverse social behaviour and the share of workers reporting negative mental health and physical health outcomes – a phenomenon known as psychosocial risk. People who experience adverse social behaviour in the workplace are around three times more likely to experience physical and emotional burnout (32% compared to 10%) and emotional exhaustion (40% compared to 14%) and almost twice as likely to suffer from anxiety (53% compared to 27%) or be at risk of depression (38% compared to 20%). It can have a long-term impact on individuals – some studies show that the effects can linger for years after the initial incident(s) – and may also affect their families, co-workers, employers and wider social circles.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Accessed on 27th November 2023: <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/en/blog/2023/violence-workplace-women-and-frontline-workers-face-higher-risks>.

Furthermore, according to the most recent data for Malta published by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound), , the percentage share of females who faced sexual harassment at work increased between 2010 and 2015 by 1.2 p.p. from 5.2% to 6.4%.

Table 20: Percentage of Female employed persons exposed to Employment-related physical, psychological or sexual violence in the last 12 months by sex and age⁶⁰

Years	2010	2015
EU – Total (27 countries (from 2020))	5.6	6.3
EU – Women	6.1	7.1
Malta – Total	4.4	6.6
Malta – Women	5.2	6.4

The Figure below presents the number of females who have experienced cyber harassment in the past 5 years and the past 12 months, as of 2019 - which during this period decreased significantly from approximately 10% to 5%, positioning Malta at the lower end of reported cyber harassment by MS.

Figure 14: Women having experienced cyber harassment in the past 5 years and the past 12 months (% , 16+ years, EU, 2019)⁶¹



In the past years positive changes in the administration of justice concerning DV have taken place, in particular- through the incorporation into domestic law of the Istanbul Convention, including the modification of the Criminal Code in June 2022 to include murder ‘with femicidal intent’, the establishment of specialised courts, the Victim Support Agency, the Gender-based and Domestic Violence Unit within the Police (GBDVU), tailored social services provided by Appoġġ, sexual assault response teams in hospitals as well as the very recently established Multi Agency Risk Assessment mechanism (MARA) established to ensure a coordinated and timely response to serious cases of domestic violence.

Be that as it may, following a visit carried out in 2023, the UN Expert Delegation on the Working Group on Discrimination Against Women and Girls (UNWGDW), reported that various stakeholders stated that women face many obstacles in their path to justice, with delays, cumbersome procedures, and an inconsistent response based on who they encounter in the system, and that there is a fragmentation of

⁶⁰ https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/qoe_ewcs_7a3__custom_8705742/default/table?lang=en.

⁶¹ Pg 23, Combating coercive control and psychological violence against women in the EU Member States, European Institute for Gender Equality, 2022.

the State response to gender-based violence as one of the major obstacles to sustained progress. The UNWGDW accordingly advised that:⁶²

- Opening two additional hubs dedicated to GV cases would allow for a more holistic approach to reporting violence and drawing up a personal-based pathway for protecting and providing a safe harbour.
- There is a lack of a unified data collection system between the various entities and authorities involved (health and social workers, police and justice).
- Both police and magistrates sometimes use discriminatory language in cases of gender-based violence (for instance, “What were you wearing?”; “Did you provoke him?”) and whilst members of the judiciary and police officers benefit from training, the training given is not sufficient or adequate.

⁶² UN Working Group on discrimination against women and girls, United Nations Human Rights Special Procedures, 2023. Accessed on 27th November 2023: <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/women/wg/EoM-Statement-Malta-7July2023.pdf>.

06. Period Poverty and Sexual and Reproductive Health

Period poverty refers to inadequate access to menstrual hygiene, including period products (e.g., sanitary towels and tampons), washing and waste management facilities and education. The stigma that shrouds periods further prevents individuals from talking about it. Social, cultural, economic, and political barriers to menstrual products, education, and sanitation exist. Lack of data and limited research on period poverty are challenges; hence, more research and engagement are needed. Period poverty, like other forms of poverty, can be debilitating. It can take different forms and has emotional, physical health (such as urinary tract infections), and mental health (depression) effects on individuals with potential adverse consequences of period poverty for women, girls, intersex, trans and non-binary persons who menstruate. It can also lead to recurrent exclusion from activities of daily living during menstruation and physical and mental health impacts resulting from both exclusion and the use of unsuitable period products.⁶³

For example, a report on period poverty in Ireland concludes that⁶⁴:

- There are 53,000 and 85,000 women who are at risk of period poverty in Ireland, and those experiencing homelessness or addiction are particularly at risk.
- 50% of girls aged 12-19 reported occasional experience of period poverty, and 10% reported use of "less suitable sanitary products" for reasons of cost.
- Women in abusive relationships, where financial control is also an issue, can be at risk of period poverty regardless of income.
-
- One-parent families are at a higher risk.

Several European countries have either reduced or removed VAT relating to sanitary pads and tampons. For example, in Scotland in 2020, a law was enacted, which came into effect in August 2022, which declares tampons and pads a necessity accessible for free to any girl or woman for "anyone who needs them". In Germany, a 17% VAT on menstrual hygiene products was reduced to 7% after they were listed as necessities; the 2023 budget in Italy reduced VAT from a reduced 10% introduced in 2022 to 5% for feminine hygiene products, and in Spain in 2022 this was reduced to 4% VAT from 10%.⁶⁵

The afore-referenced UNWGDW states that the contraceptive prevalence rate in Malta is very low. The adds that as contraceptives are not covered by the State health insurance, even for the youngest or the most marginalised persons of society, a vast number of women choose not to use contraceptives. . According to feedback, some women would rather opt for coitus interruptus (commonly known as withdrawal practice, which is unreliable and should not be promoted as a contraceptive method). It adds that emergency contraception was only legalised in 2016 and is available (between €25 and €40) unless the pharmacist is a conscientious objector. Furthermore, feedback suggests that, in practice, emergency contraception is not easily accessible, with some women reporting that they are being subjected to inappropriate interviews behind the counter before being able to obtain emergency contraception. The report commend the Government's consideration of making contraceptives available free of charge to certain age groups⁶⁶

⁶³ Michael, J., et al., Period poverty: why it should be everybody's business, ichel J, Mettler A, Schönenberger S, Gunz D. Period poverty: why it should be everybody's business. *Journal of Global Health Reports*. 2022;6.

⁶⁴ Pp 3-15, Period Poverty in Ireland, Discussion Paper, Period Poverty Sub-Committee, National Strategy for Women and Girls: 2017-2020, Ministry for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Ireland, 2021.

⁶⁵ Accessed on 23rd November 2023: <https://www.context.news/socioeconomic-inclusion/what-is-the-tampon-tax-and-which-countries-have-axed-it>.

⁶⁶ UN Working Group on discrimination against women and girls, United Nations Human Rights Special Procedures, 2023. Accessed on 27th November 2023: <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/women/wg/EoM-Statement-Malta-7July2023.pdf>.

The afore-referenced 'Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan: 2022-2027' presents several actions directed to promote gender equality in social well-being and healthcare - including:⁶⁷

- 7.2.2: Review guidelines and provide further training regarding female genital mutilation to healthcare practitioners and other support services providers.
- 7.4.2: Explore the access to and costs related to menstruation products to eliminate period poverty.
- 7.4.3: According to EU legislation, reduce the VAT rate on menstrual products to the lowest possible.
- 7.4.4: Provide free menstruation products in schools to eliminate the stigma around this issue.
- 7.4.5: Study the introduction of free contraception, including its cost and distribution methods.

07. Gender Related Poverty

As shown in Figure 15 females in Malta in 2022 had an AROPE rate marginally lower than the EU average. Females in Malta however are at higher AROPE, at 21.5%, than males, at 19.5%. The higher AROPE for females results from the gender and pension gaps, the larger number of female single mothers,

Figure 15: Share of population AROPE (% , 2022)⁶⁸

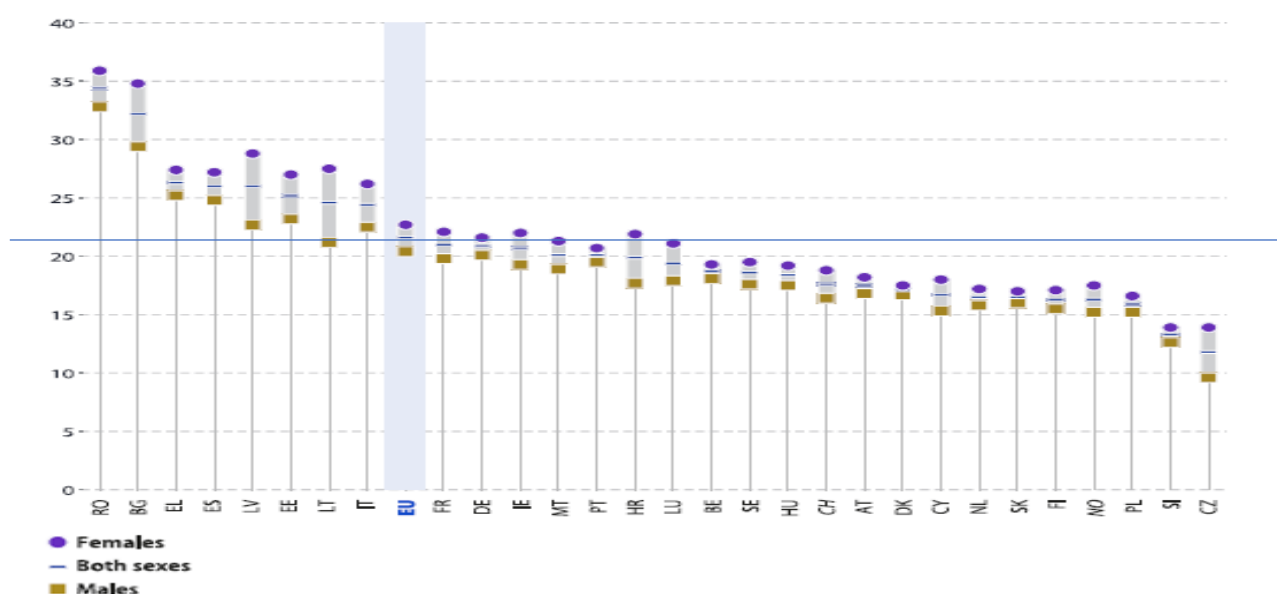
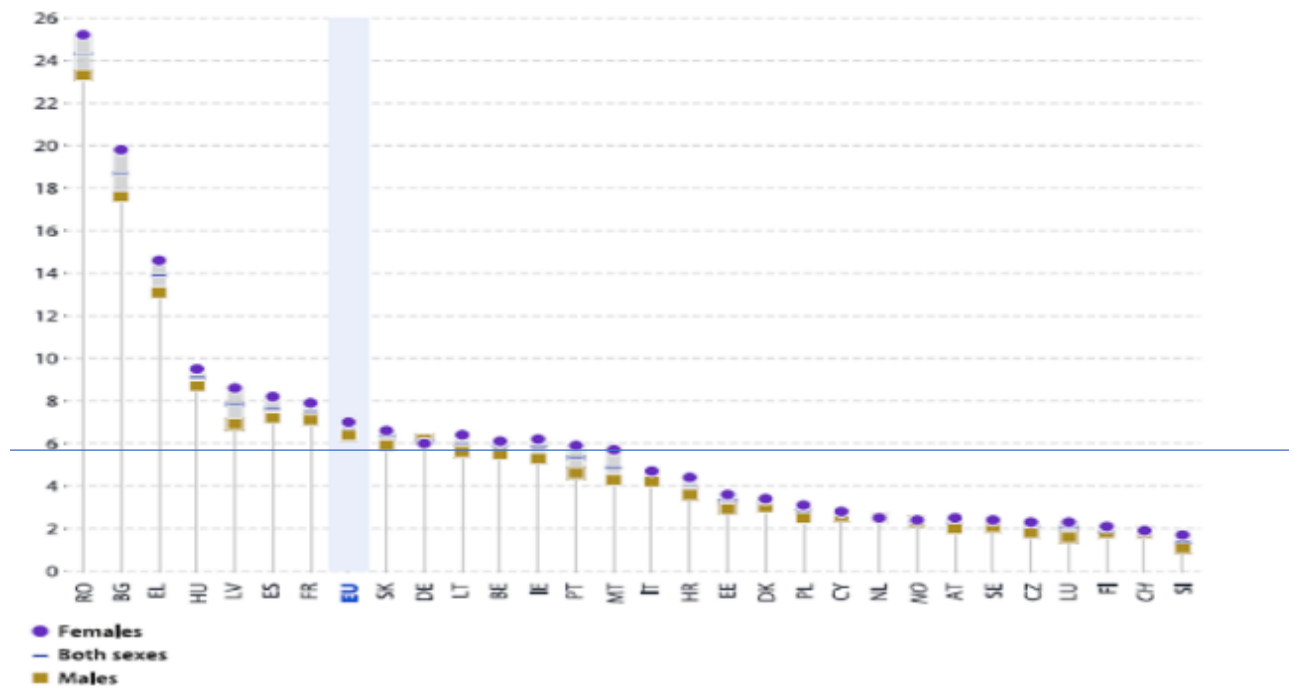


Figure 16 presents the severe material and social deprivation (SMSD) by gender in 2022 as a population percentage. As can be seen, the severe material and social deprivation SMSD rate for Malta for females in 2022 is lower than the EU average but approximately 6% higher than that of males, which is approximately 4.2.%

⁶⁷ Pp 28-29, Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan: 2022-2027, Human Rights Directorate, Parliamentary Secretariat for Reforms and Equality, 2022.

⁶⁸ Pg 14, Key figures on European Living Conditions, 2023 Edition, Eurostat, European Commission, 2023.

Figure 16: Severe material and social deprivation rate by sex (% , 2022)⁶⁹



The Figure below presents the in-work AROP for persons aged 18 and over by gender. Concerning females in Malta, this too is below the EU average and, at 4.0%, lower by 1.8 p.p. than that of Maltese males, at approximately 9.8%.

Figure 17: In-work AROP for People aged 18 and over by Gender (% , 2022)⁷⁰

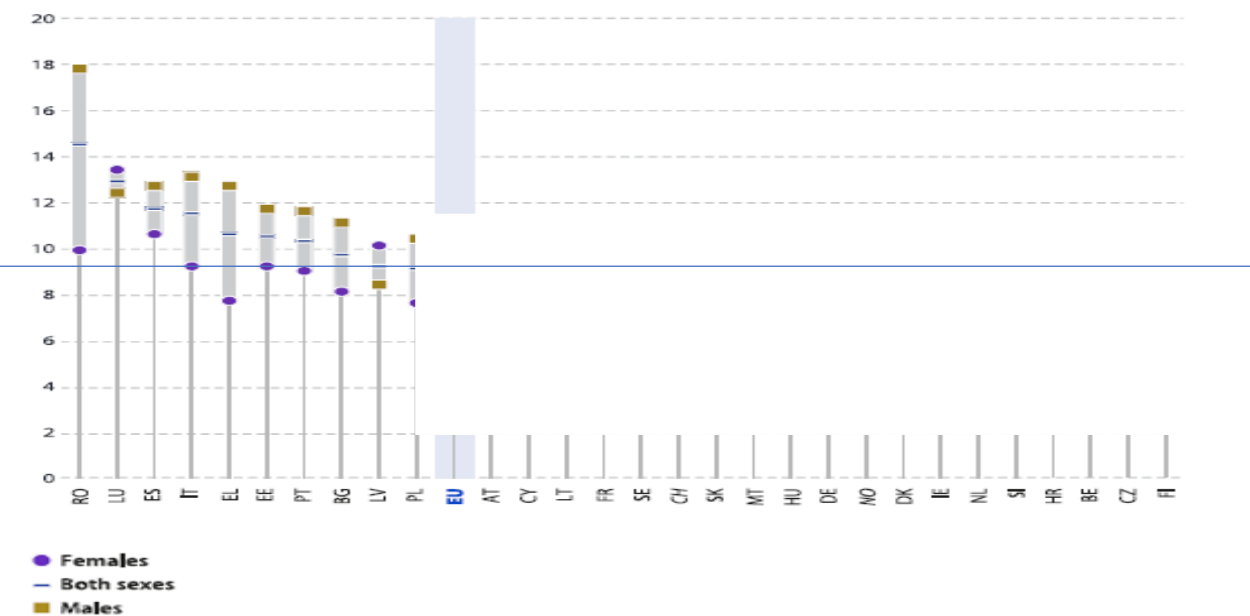


Table 21 below presents the number of AROPE and AROP persons by age and gender. In all age cohorts, females are AROPE (Table 21.1) –1.4 p.p. in the 18-64 years age cohort and a significant 6.7 p.p. in the 65 years and over age cohort. Regarding the percentage share of the population, females' AROP is lower than those at AROPE compared to males, and they are more exposed to AROP – 0.3% in the 18-64 years age cohort and a significant 6.0 p.p. in the 65 years and over age cohort.

⁶⁹ Pg 20, Ibid.

⁷⁰ Pg 37, Ibid.

Compared to 2021, female AROPE in 2022 fell by 2.1 p.p. in the 18-64 years age cohort but increased by 4.2 p.p. in the 65 years and over age cohort. The AROP for females in 2022, when compared to 2021, follows the same trend, falling by 1.5 p.p. in the 18-64 years age cohort but increasing by 1.9 p.p. in the 65 years and over age cohort.

Table 21: AROPE and AROP Rates by age group and sex⁷¹

21.1: At-risk-of-poverty or social exclusion rates (AROPE) by age group and sex					21.2: At-risk-of-poverty rates by age group and sex		
Age group	Sex	2021	2022		2021	2022	
		%	%	Number of persons below the threshold		%	%
All ages	Males	18.9	18.9	50,357	15.8	15.8	42,153
	Females	21.9	21.3	52,476	18.0	17.8	43,644
	Total	20.3	20.1	102,834	16.9	16.7	85,797
Under 18	Total	23.2	23.1	19,489	19.6	19.3	16,224
18-64	Males	15.7	14.9	26,499	12.3	12.2	21,710
	Females	18.4	16.3	25,259	14.0	12.5	19,434
	Total	17.0	15.5	51,758	13.1	12.3	41,144
65 and over	Males	27.3	29.8	13,353	25.9	26.8	12,030
	Females	32.3	36.5	18,233	30.1	32.8	16,400
	Total	29.9	33.3	31,586	28.1	30.0	28,429

Table 22 presents persons aged 18 years and over who are AROP by activity status. The number of females employed by AROP, falling by 1 p.p. between 2021 and 2022, stands at 4.0%. The AROP for retired females, whilst lower than males between 2021 and 2022, increased by 4.4 p.p. from 17.1% to 21.5%.

The rate of increase for females was higher than that of males, which increased by 1.8 p.p. during this period, though the percentage of retired males who are at AROP is higher than that of females – at 25.8%.

Table 22: At-risk-of-poverty rates among persons aged 18 and over by most frequent activity status and sex⁷²

Most frequent activity status	Sex	2021	2022
		%	
Employed	Males	8.8	9.2
	Females	5.0	4.0
	Total	7.3	7.1
Unemployed	Males	[38.0]	:
	Females	:	:
	Total	[35.7]	[35.7]
Retired	Males	25.9	27.7
	Females	17.1	21.5
	Total	23.2	25.8
Other inactive persons	Males	33.2	34.1
	Females	34.0	34.3
	Total	33.9	34.3

07.1 Single Parents

Household composition has a direct impact on poverty. Two working adults living together, for instance, may pool their resources and better protect themselves and their children against poverty, particularly if one person loses work unexpectedly. The absence of a partner in the household limits the number

⁷¹ Accessed on 28th November 2023: <https://nso.gov.mt/eu-silc-2022-salient-indicators/>.

⁷² Ibid.

of potential earners and caregivers. This alone makes it more difficult to earn a wage that exceeds the poverty line, makes the household more vulnerable to fluctuations and temporary interruptions in employment, and to combine work and family responsibilities.

Single-parent households are already facing an increased risk of poverty because of the absence of a potential second earner. Still, the gendered disadvantage women can experience in the labour market particularly exacerbates this lack of disposable income for single mothers and increases the difficulties they have to face. Single parents now constitute about 19% of the households with children in the EU. In the overwhelming majority of cases, this phenomenon concerns women. Only 15% of single parents are fathers, and their socio-economic condition is better than that of single mothers.⁷³

Thus, single parenthood is strongly gendered. Single mothers are more likely to face economic disadvantage as compared to single fathers.⁷⁴ Not only are single mothers on the rise, but their situation is in many ways more problematic than that of other women. Lone or single mothers — being women and being sole earners — face a double challenge. Due to possible difficulties reconciling work and family life, they face added constraints in finding good jobs. As discussed earlier, females in Malta are more prone to entering more flexible, less paid, less secure forms of work, such as involuntary part-time jobs. This further exacerbates the challenges faced by lone mothers. According to the EC, “regardless of the diverse causes for single parenthood, single-parent families are among the most vulnerable household types, along with large families”.⁷⁵

Therefore, factors such as economic fragility make single mothers more likely to face health problems and have difficulties meeting their children’s needs. This situation can lead to both physical and mental problems because of all the pressure mothers carry which results in a connection between “single motherhood and bad health, stress, joblessness, problems in coping with the work-family conflict, poverty and social exclusion”.⁷⁶

As highlighted by the Council of Europe, the health of members of single-parent families may be poor as a result of various conditions prevailing in this type of family set-up: the financial situation of single parents is very often precarious, the accumulation of social roles by single parents creates a physical and psychological overload that can also have repercussions on the children, and the pain of separation, divorce or bereavement throws off the social and emotional life of members of single-parent families balance”.⁷⁷ The share of single-parent households with dependent children (SPHDC) in Malta is presented in **Figure 18** – which in 2020 stood at 9%.

Figure 18: Share of Single-parent households with dependent children: 2020, % of all households with children⁷⁸

⁷³ Heine, S., The rise of single motherhood in the EU: analysis and propositions, European Policy Brief, Royal Institute for International Relations, EGMONT, 2015.

⁷⁴ Nieuwenhuis, R, and Maldonado, C, L., Single parent families and in-work poverty, LIS Working Paper Series, No. 687, Luxembourg Income Study (LIS), Luxembourg.

⁷⁵ Jordan, V., et al., “Mechanisms supporting single parents across the European Union”, produced for the European Platform for Investing in Children, published by the European Commission’s department of Employment, Social affairs and Inclusion, June 2019.

⁷⁶ Van Lancker, W., et al., “An international comparison of the impact of child benefits on poverty outcomes for single mothers”, Centre for Social Policy, n°12/03, March 2012.

⁷⁷ Pg 16, Single mothers within the Europe Union, Make Mothers Matter, 2022.

⁷⁸ Accessed on 28th November 2023: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/4187653/11581511/share-of+single+parents+with+children.jpg/1ac27ed2-4c80-2c3c-eb6b-06d1bb44225a?t=1622531761489>.

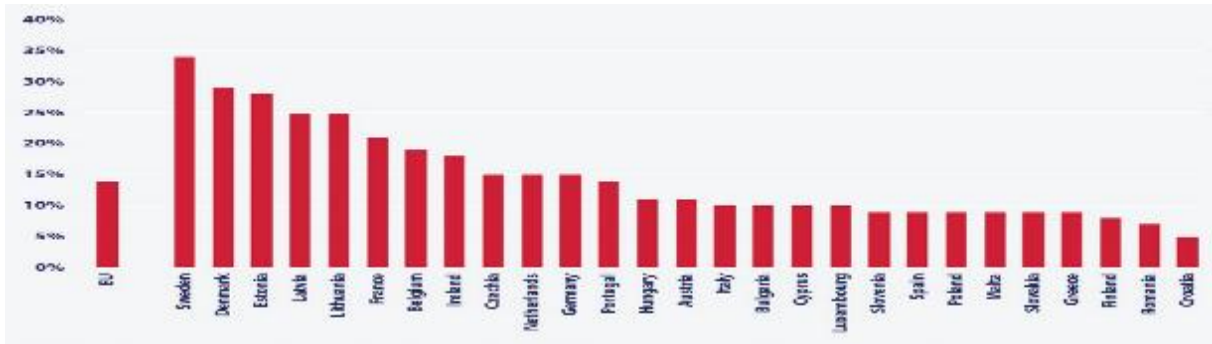


Figure 19 presents the percentage share of single parents with dependent children by gender. Concerning Malta, the share of female parents in 2019 stood at approximately 8%, with males at approximately 2%. Furthermore, compared to males, the share of female single-parent households with children increased significantly since 2009 – by 4 p.p. from 4%.

Figure 19: % Single adults with dependent children, by gender, 27 EU Member States, 2009-2019⁷⁹

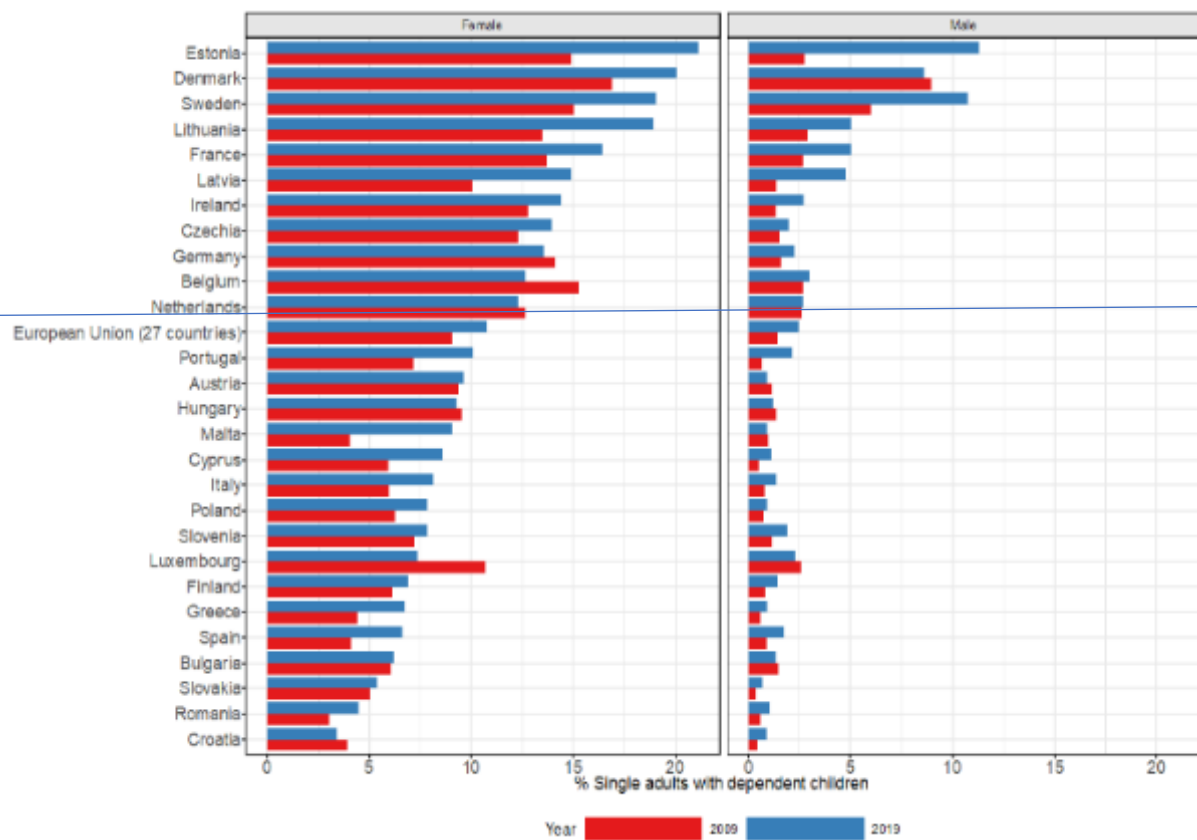


Table 23 below presents the percentage of SPHDC who are in the first to third quintile income distribution group AROPE and how they compare with the EU average. The percentage share of SPHDC increased by 5.8 p.p. between 2020 and 2023, from 91.6% to 97.4%, at a far accelerated rate compared to the EU average.

Table 23 Single parents with dependent children who are in the first to third income distribution group and are AROPE - %⁸⁰

	2020	2021	2022

⁷⁹ Pg 13, Nieuwenhuyus R., The situation of single parents in the EU, Study requested by the European Parliament's Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs, Directorate-General for Internal Policies PE 659.870 - European Parliament, 2020.

⁸⁰ Accessed on 28th November 2023: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ilc_peps03n/default/table?lang=en.

EU (27 MS from 2020) Average	Single parent with dependent child/ren	87.1	87.4	88.7
Malta		91.6	96.6	97.4

Table 24 presents the percentage of SPHDC who are in the first to third quintile income distribution group SMSD and how they compare with the EU average. This decreased by 2.9 p.p. from 30.9% to 28.0% between 2020 and 2021. The Maltese SPHDC in the first to third quintile income distribution group at 28.0% in 2022 is, however, higher than the EU average in 2022, which stands at 24.7.

Table 24: Single parents with dependent children who are in the first to third income distribution group and are in severe material and social deprivation - %⁸¹

		2020	2021	2022
EU (27 MS from 2020) Average	Single parent with dependent child/ren	25.2	23.4	24.7
Malta		30.9	31.7	28.0

Table 25 presents the percentage of SPHDCs who are AROP. This stands at a high of 43,3, falling by 5.3 p.p. since 2018. It is, however, 11.5 p.p. higher than the EU average.

Table 25: Single parents with dependent children who are AROP - %⁸²

		2018	2020	2022
EU (27 MS from 2020) Average	Single parent with dependent child/ren	34.2	32.4	31.8
Malta		48.6	48.8	43.3

The Table below presents the percentage of SPHDCs with very low work intensity in the first to third-quintile income distribution group. 2020 is an outlier year, given that the COVID-19 pandemic negatively affected jobs. Whilst the percentage share fell between 2018 and 2022, the decrease between 2020 and 2022 was only a marginal 1.8p.p.. The share of SPHDCs in the referenced income distribution groups, compared to the EU average, is high – by 13.9 p.p.

Table 26: Single parents with dependent children who are in the first to third income distribution group with very low work intensity - %⁸³

		2018	2020	2022
EU (27 MS from 2020) Average	Single parent with dependent child/ren	44.3	48.0	45.5
Malta		60.7	69.2	58.9

The Table below presents the percentage of SPHDCs at AROP before social transfers, with pensions included or excluded. In both instances where pensions are included or excluded, the percentage share fell between 2018 and 2022 – concerning the former by 4.7 p.p. and the latter by 6.2 p.p. In both instances, Malta is more or less equal to the EU average.

⁸¹ Accessed on 28th November 2023: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ilc_mdspd13/default/table?lang=en.

Accessed on 28th November 2023:

https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ilc_li03__custom_8727476/default/table?lang=en.

Accessed on 28th November 2023:

https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ilc_lvhl13n__custom_8731505/default/table?lang=en.

[https](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ilc_lvhl13n__custom_8731505/default/table?lang=en)

Table 27: Single Parents with dependent children who are AROP after and before social transfers (with and without pensions) - %

	2018	2020	2022
EU (27 Countries from 2020) Average			
Before social transfers with pensions included⁸⁴	56.0	54.9	54.6
Before social transfers with pensions excluded⁸⁵	53.9	53.1	52.8
Malta			
Before social transfers with pensions included	58.7	53.4	54.0
Before social transfers with pensions excluded	58.7	52.1	52.5

Table 28 presents the mean and median income for SPHDCs compared to the EU average. Concerning the mean and median equivalised net income, SPHDCs experienced an increase between 2018 and 2022. In 2022 the increase was €2,300 or 24.2%, and the **net median and mean equivalised income are considerably below the EU average.**

Table 28: Mean and median equivalised net income of single parents with dependent children⁸⁶

	2018	2020	2022
EU (27 Countries from 2020) Average	€	€	€
Median equivalised net income	13,555	14,749	15,396
Mean equivalised net income	15,102	16,357	17,270
Malta			
Median equivalised net income	9,503	10,263	11,803
Mean equivalised net income	11,420	12,549	13,967

The afore-referenced 'Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan: 2022-2027' recommended that the Government review and revise social security policies and legislation to ensure equal treatment between men and women, irrespective of civil status and or sex (3.2.2).⁸⁷

07.2 Homelessness

As referenced in the Working Paper titled 'Migrants, Poverty and Inclusion', a survey was carried out by Marketing Advisory Services on behalf of YMCA titled 'Contemporary Homelessness in Malta: Quantitative Research directed to quantify homelessness in Malta across local homeless shelters in January to February 2022'. As discussed in the afore-referenced paper, the definition of 'homeless' as applied in Malta does not refer to 'roofless homeless' but people who live in temporary accommodations such as shelters, staying with family or friends, etc.

⁸⁴ Accessed on 28th November 2023: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ilc_li09b__custom_8726842/default/table?lang=en.

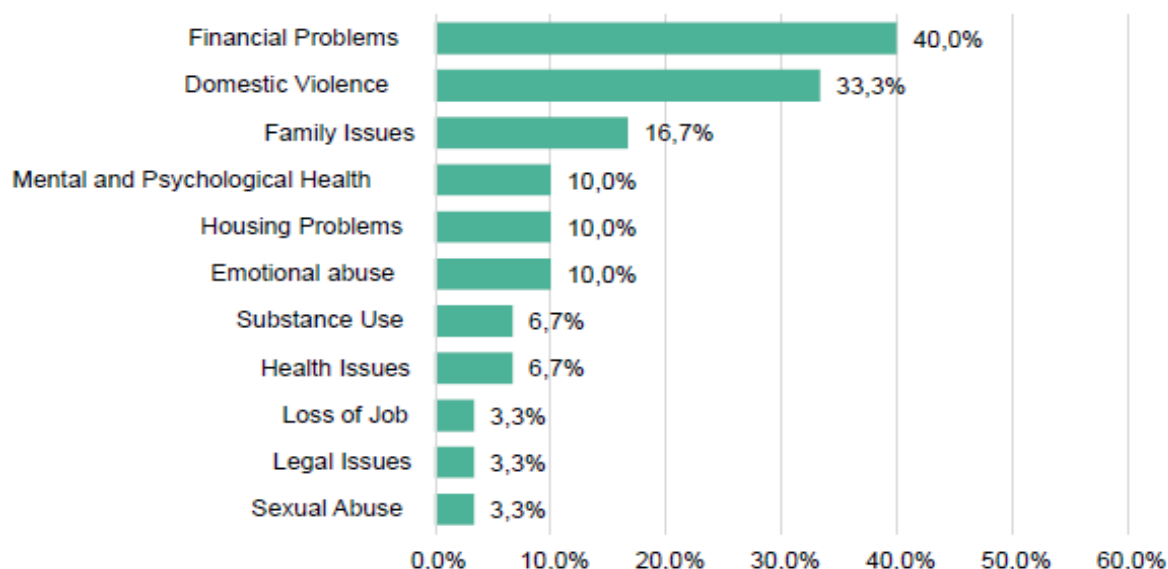
⁸⁵ Accessed on 28th November 2023: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ilc_li10b__custom_8726869/default/table?lang=en.

⁸⁶ Accessed on 28th November 2023: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ilc_di04__custom_8732285/default/table?lang=en.

⁸⁷ Pg 18, Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan: 2022-2027, Human Rights Directorate, Parliamentary Secretariat for Reforms and Equality, 2022.

The research found that during the survey, the largest number of persons who were homeless were Maltese citizens – at 52.2%. The percentage of Maltese adults with accompanying children who were homeless was 56.7% (a total of 30 persons).⁸⁸ The survey establishes the reasons for homelessness for individuals with accompanying children as presented in **Figure 20** – with financial problems at 40.0%, ranking first, followed by DV at 33.3%.

Figure 20: Reasons for homelessness for individuals with accompanying children⁸⁹



08. Gender Mainstreaming and Budgeting

The Council of Europe defined gender mainstreaming as “the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making.”⁹⁰

Gender mainstreaming helps integrate gender considerations into government decisions by enabling a government to select, prioritise and integrate budget measures with positive outcomes for gender equality and economic growth. Gender budgeting, introduced in Australia in 1984, is a key public governance tool of gender mainstreaming that governments can use to identify and fund measures that will effectively close gender gaps.

The Council of Europe defines gender budgeting as an “application of gender mainstreaming in the budgetary process. It means a gender-based assessment of budgets, incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process and restructuring revenues and expenditures to promote gender equality.”⁹¹

Public budgets are not merely economic tools but summarise policies in monetary terms and express political priorities. Budgets, therefore, are not gender-neutral. Women and men, in different ways, reflect the uneven distribution of power within society as economic disparities, different living conditions and ascribed social roles. Gender budgeting seeks to make the gender impact of budgets visible and to transform them into an instrument increasing gender equality. Gender budgeting does not mean a separate budget for women. It is not limited to budgetary allocations targeting equal opportunity policies or promoting women but encompasses the entire budget, revenues, and expenditures.⁹²

⁸⁸ Pg 37, Contemporary homelessness in Malta: Quantitative research, Marketing Advisory Services, YMCA, Malta, 2022.

⁸⁹ Pg 37, Ibid.

⁹⁰ Pg 7, Gender budgeting, Final report of the Group of specialists on gender budgeting, Directorate General of Human Rights, Equality Division, Council of Europe, 2025.

⁹¹ Pg 10, Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

The economic rationale for gender budgeting is that fiscal policies influence fiscal outcomes and, thus, economic output, growth, and equity. Government tax and spending decisions have powerful social, environmental, and economic implications for a country, shaping people's choices regarding work and economic participation. Budget measures that can have a particularly important impact on women's participation in the workforce include:⁹³

- Adjustments to paid parental leave policies.
- Tax and benefit adjustments for second earners.
- Subsidies for high childcare and long-term care costs or funding to raise the supply of care places.
- Funding for schemes to help reduce gender pay gaps, such as education and training to help women access higher-wage professions and sectors.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to gender budgeting. There are many entry points for gender budgeting. The approach chosen should build on existing cross-government strengths and fit within the national budget framework. Analytical tools of gender budgeting in terms of understanding the impact of budget policy on closing gender gaps in employment include:⁹⁴

- Gender impact assessments of budget measures: this tool can assess individual budget measures for their impact on gender equality goals. These assessments can be undertaken before the budget to help inform the design of the policy and select policies with the greatest impact. The assessment can also be undertaken after the budget measure has been implemented to assess its impact on gender equality.
- Gender impact assessment of budget: this tool involves a qualitative assessment of how a package of budget measures, or the budget as a whole, impacts gender equality goals. As well as supporting government decision-making, it may be presented alongside the draft budget to support parliamentary oversight.
- Distributional assessment of tax and welfare measures by gender: this tool quantitatively assesses how tax and welfare measures (individually or as a whole) impact gender equality goals.
- Gender dimension in spending reviews: This involves gender equality, a distinct dimension of analysis for spending reviews.

A whole-of-government approach encompassing legal, regulatory, policy and budget decisions can be significantly more effective than a single, stand-alone tool.⁹⁵ According to the OECD, over 60 OECD countries now practice gender budgeting.⁹⁶

The afore-referenced 'Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan: 2022-2027' recommended that the Government introduce a gender-responsive budgeting system with clear, measurable targets, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms (31.4).⁹⁷ The Strategy applies the afore-referenced Council of Europe definition for gender budgeting.

⁹³ Pg 13, The macroeconomic and fiscal benefits of gender equality, and how gender budgeting can support their achievement, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2022.

⁹⁴ Pg 15, Ibid.

⁹⁵ Pg 13, The macroeconomic and fiscal benefits of gender equality, and how gender budgeting can support their achievement, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2022.

⁹⁶ Pg 3, OECD Best Practices for Gender Budgeting, Draft for discussion, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2022. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2022.

⁹⁷ Pg 12, Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan: 2022-2027, Human Rights Directorate, Parliamentary Secretariat for Reforms and Equality, 2022.