

# FOUNDATION FOR SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES



## 2018 ANNUAL REPORT



Fondazzjoni għal Servizzi ta' Harsien Soċjali  
Hawn għalik



# FOUNDATION FOR SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES

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## 2018 Annual Report

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# FOUNDATION FOR SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES

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2018 Annual Report

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# MESSAGE BY THE MINISTER FOR THE FAMILY, CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND SOCIAL SOLIDARITY

We are presently nearing the half way mark of this legislature, an exciting and challenging one. These months as Minister of the Family, Children's Rights and Social Solidarity, have in turn helped broaden my perspective of our society as a whole.

In the social sphere, the Foundation for Welfare and Social Services, is surely a great asset, not only to this Ministry, but also to the whole society. This Foundation has over the years steadily increased both the services offered and the professionalism in its personnel.

As Minister for this sector, I am very satisfied with our services, especially the Home Based Therapeutic Services (HBTS), within FSWS, which is consistently proving to serve as a positive outreach towards families which may have encountered numerous difficulties.

Through this service, we have seen families reconcile and reunite again. This is

very satisfying, especially where children are involved. The success rate of this service, can be also witnessed by the decrease of Care Orders that were issued during the last years.

This social outreach has been also extended to Gozo. Last July, we have in fact launched the Family Centre in Marsalforn, aimed to assist people in need of social help. Although Gozo is a smaller community, it still needs consistent attention and guidance.

As a whole, we are quite satisfied with our outreach, yet undoubtedly there is still room for improvement. We must not only meet the basic legal duties to provide *care* for the *most vulnerable* in society, but also we must ensure adequate care, especially to minors living with vulnerable people. Our commitment is clearly there and will strengthen in the following months.

May I end this short message by thanking all those involved in the social welfare field, with a special mention being given to F.S.W.S.



**HON. DR MICHAEL FALZON**

Minister for the Family, Children's Rights and Social Solidarity

# MESSAGE BY THE CHAIRPERSON



**JOE GERADA**

Chairperson

## NOT ONLY DO THINGS RIGHT BUT DO THE RIGHT THINGS

The Government's legislative program in the area of social welfare continued unabated during the last months and we eagerly look forward to see the integration into one law, - The Minor Protection (Alternative Care) Act 2019 -, the Child Protection Bill, the Foster Care Bill and the Adoptions Bill. This important development shall not only offer a wider net of protection to children in vulnerable situations but they shall benefit from pro-active measures that enable them enjoy family life in more security and stability than before.

In last year's annual report I laid emphasis of the importance of a strong legislative framework to protect children but also highlighted the need to ensure that the policies and procedures within our own services at the Foundation reflected the same level of child friendly philosophy demonstrated by the new bills. It is not only right to ensure this level of consistency but necessary to ensure greater positive effect on the users of the services.

Some good work has already gone into this direction which however needs to continue and accelerated. The exercise in harmonising and simplifying our procedures is critical to assure the self-determination of our clients in the development and implementation of their care plans.

Nevertheless, a mature organisation will not stop at this level of operations but goes beyond into the realm of effectiveness and value for money. A reflective and learning

organisation does not only deliver a professional service but an intrinsic element of such a service is to measure clearly the effect that the service has had on the client and whether the objective or objectives of the intervention were achieved. As professionals we need to be convinced that our intervention strategy is achieving the needs of the clients and therefore we need to continuously reflect on our work while using and developing measuring tools, as well as, share our experiences for feedback by others.

I am pleased to note that some tools have been in place for some time, for example our supervision system is amongst the oldest formal consultation systems in Malta while the culture of evaluations is not new either for the Foundation. However; this is not enough and we need to disseminate more, create spaces for further discussion and dare to try new approaches that can be measured. Perhaps the best example in the last months was the evaluation carried out on a number of cases managed by the Home Based Therapeutic Service. This study gave a clear picture of the service and the outcomes achieved. The result of this research based approach resulted in more funding for this service and greater integration of community based services. To be honest, we always believed that this level of integration was needed but never had the scientific validation that this was the way to go.

Notwithstanding, the value to measure and reflect does not only stem from the necessity to ensure the best interventions but also because we are accountable to the investment in the services that the tax-



payer makes through Government. We are guardians and not owners of public funds therefore we need to ensure that every single euro spent is not only spent efficiently but effectively. In other words we should not only do things right but do the right things. There is a fine difference between the two. We should not only be contented by doing things and putting in more services but we need to ensure that what we deliver is what the clients aspire for and need.

Our interventions need to not only arrest any decline in the quality of life of the clients but in addition add value by ensuring that our interventions enable them change their situation and forge an independent and rewarding life experience. This approach to service delivery offers value for money and good return on the investment while

adds credibility to the interventions and accentuates the positive regard to the professions at play.

The strategy of the Foundation in the coming years needs to place this factor high on the agenda. I am sure that with the calibre of staff in the Foundation and the commitment of all, from the most junior to the most senior, the team shall be able to take the services higher and make them, stronger.

Finally, may I thank the Board of Directors, the CEO and his management team, as well as, all the employees in the Foundation for their contribution and I wish all the best endeavours.

Joe Gerada  
*Chairperson*

# MESSAGE BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



**ALFRED GRIXTI**

Chief Executive Officer

2018 was yet another great year for the **Foundation for Social Welfare Services**, or the FSWS as we all affectionately call it.

Yet once more we organised major international events while we continued to improve our core business mission which is all about supporting the most vulnerable members within our society. 2018 was also the year in which we concluded and signed the collective agreement for all the employees of the Foundation.

However, let me begin with the sad news. The sad news, as we all know, was the death of a young immigrant girl who was living with her family in a home run by a religious organisation. This unfortunate event caused the expected media stir and the usual uninformed chatter from the by now well-known arm-chair critics who think they are knowledgeable about everything and can lecture everybody about anything under the sun. I will not say more about this sad event because there is still an ongoing magisterial inquiry and, when that is published, the Foundation will have its say.

### **A LANDMARK COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT**

In February, 2018 we finally reached an agreement with the **Unjin Haddiem Magħqudin (UHM) – Voice of the Workers** on the 2017 – 2021 Collective Agreement. Negotiations had begun in the second half of 2016 and continued throughout 2017. Our main objectives as management were that the collective agreement had to give us the tools to achieve our recruitment and retention goals. This we have done, by amongst others, the introduction of the completely new

€1,500 a year FSWS Allowance which was a red line for us and the € 700 a year CPD Allowance which was a red line for the UHM. And when I say that the FSWS Allowance was a red line, it means exactly that and that I ultimately held out for it so much that my friends in the Ministry for Finance, who at the end of the day have to come up with the money, wondered out aloud whether I was representing the management or the union. My answer was that I wanted, and still want, the best deal for my professionals because the FSWS Allowance is a tangible recognition that our professionals are the final fall-back first class social service which has to pick up the pieces and put them together again when all other services fail and give up, be they NGOs or individuals. I, therefore, make no apology to the moaners and groaners who have complained that this collective agreement was too good for the FSWS and that it up-ended the market. My job as CEO and the job of my senior management team is to secure the best pay and working conditions for our employees because at the end of the day this is how we recruit and retain them and this is how we ensure that we are able to deliver a first class social service.

The Collective Agreement was eventually signed during a public event in July, 2018 for which all our managers, leaders and co-ordinators were invited. A hard copy was also made available to all leaders for the ease of reference of all our front-liners. Both of these were also firsts in the history of the FSWS.

### **INTERNATIONAL EVENTS**

2018 was yet another year during which we hosted a number of international events,



or events with an international flavour if you wish.

### **INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICE**

The main international event was the **International Committee (IC)** of the **International Social Service (ISS)** which was held between May 21 and 25, 2018. The ISS is the longest serving international NGO which was established in the aftermath of World War I, 1924 to be exact, in order to help with the re-unification of families displaced by the conflict. Today the ISS is present in 120 countries world- wide and specialises in assisting children and families across borders (as the UK branch now very rightly calls itself) with a particular emphasis on migrant children and children on the move. At the end of the day we had 78 foreign delegates from as far away as New Zealand right up to Ireland and Canada and the USA and

from Ukraine to Kenya. The Foundation also participated with a sizeable 95-member strong delegation from all its services.

The ISS IC was, thus, again another occasion where we were able to showcase our work and our achievements. This took place on the first two days of the programme where we organised workshops on:

1. **Working with multi-stressed families within a multi-disciplinary context**, facilitated by Ms Claire Sammut – Director of Therapeutic Services
2. **Community approach in reaching out the most vulnerable**, facilitated by Stephen Vella (Director Corporate Services and LEAP) and Catherine Fleri Soler (Services Manager – Communities)

3. *Adoption and alternative care and positive parenting*, facilitated by Charles Scerri (Services Manager – LAC) and Josephine Muscat (Services Manager – Adoptions and Fostering)
4. *Children on the move and migration*, facilitated by Roberta Agius (Services Manager – CPS) and Joseph Antoncich (Service Area Leader – CPS)
5. *Case studies on International Collaboration*, facilitated by Remenda Grech (Assistant Director Appoġġ and Case Work Co-Ordinator)
6. *Quality Standards and service users' involvement*, facilitated by Ms Yvonne Mallia (Director Service Audits, QA & Research).

Apart from this we had the following three expert key-note presentations, namely:

1. *Thinking about interventions for multi-stressed families: Learning from research and evidence-based practice*, by Dr Moira DOOLAN, Lead Interventionist, National Academy for Parenting Research Consultant Systemic Psychotherapist.
2. *An overview of Renfrewshire's journey of transformation of its children's services*, Michelle McCARGO, Social Work Children's Services Manager and Karen NOWLAND
3. *Children on the move: The Malta experience in applying The Hague*

*Convention to cases of adoptions, abductions and unaccompanied minors*, Ms Carmen BUTTIGIEG, Head of the Central Authority of The Hague Convention and Director of the Department for Social Welfare Standards, MALTA.

Apart from this, the conference was also addressed by Her Excellency Dr Marie-Louise COLEIRO-PRECA, our Minister, the Hon. Dr Michael FALZON and the Head of the Civil Service and Principal Permanent Secretary Mr Mario CUTAJAR. The Prime Minister and Mrs Michelle MUSCAT also graciously accepted to welcome our guests at the Prime Minister's official residence at Villa Francia in Lija where Mrs Muscat also addressed the delegates present.

### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE EVENT

Another major international event was the annual domestic violence activity which we held on Monday, November 25, 2018. The invited guest speaker was Ms Natasha MEDLAR TOFFA, herself a domestic violence survivor, who addressed the issue during a half-day seminar which was held on purpose at the *Dar Qalb ta' Ġesù* second-stage shelter. Other speakers included the Commissioner for Domestic and Gender-Based Violence, Ms Simone AZZOPARDI, H.E. Julianne HINCE, the High Commissioner for Australia to Malta and herself a noted activist who has spoken and written about the subject, Dr Helena DALLI Minister for Equality and European Affairs, Dr Michael FALZON, Minister for the Family, Children's Rights and Social Solidarity and the Hon. Prime Minister Dr Joseph MUSCAT. Above all, however, the lasting impressions



made were those of survivors who very courageously spoke out publicly during the event about the abuse they suffered and how they overcame it and moved on. Their contributions were more than welcome because they were both sobering to hear and humbling. It is inconceivable how such things still happen in this day and age.

### **THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL NETWORK (ESN)**

Apart from participating in the ESN's annual European Social Services Conference in Seville in May 2018, we also hosted the ESN's Governing Council Meeting in October. The active role we are playing in the ESN is opening up many new possibilities for networking with similar service providers abroad and participation in countless training opportunities for our professionals. We do this either through the Ministry's ESF training fund, the CPD or directly from our training budget.

### **A GROWING ORGANISATION**

My final comment is a personal one. 2018 was my fifth year at the helm of the FSWS. Thus, it is only right that I take stock of where we are now in relation to where we were when I was asked to lead this organisation. This is the situation. At the end of 2012, the FSWS (Aġenzija SAPPORIT excluded) had a budget of € 7,735,000. In 2014 this stood at € 10,411,000. This budget has continued to increase steadily so that now, in 2019 our operating recurrent budget stands at € 19,688,000. We use this budget to employ the professionals we need to give the best service possible to the people most in need in the Maltese islands. At the end of 2012 FSWS employed just 375 persons. By the

end of 2018 this had doubled to 752 of which 77% are professionals. Amongst others, over these last five years we have introduced the Home-Based Family Therapy Service (HBTS) which, as I said during a morning seminar held to evaluate its first year of operation, has proved to be a game-changer both in the way we deliver our services and also in the way we help our service-users. This seminar was addressed both by local and foreign academics and was accompanied by a publication entitled ***HBTS – An Evaluation of Practice***. This is testimony to our strong belief in evidence-based practice. I am proud to note that, in her forward to this publication, Prof Dr Moira DOOLAN from the Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience at King's College, London wrote that: “ ***...the approach being taken in Malta within the FSWS shows great strength and promise ...***”

During 2018 we also re-established our presence in Gozo by means of the Gozo Branch Operations which is going from strength to strength and about which you will no doubt read in the relevant section of this annual report. Here, I will only emphasise that we are investing heavily in Gozo because one of our fundamental principles is that we believe that we have to be present in every part of the Maltese islands so that we are there where and when the most vulnerable need our support and professional services.

We now also employ full timers to be the back-bone of the 179 National Support Line and the Courts and Supervised Access Visits Services (Courts & SAVs). Likewise, in 2018 we also engaged a number of risk-assessment professionals in order to implement the

changes brought about by the new domestic and gender-based violence act.

During 2018 our senior management team was strengthened by the arrival of Rev. Mgr. Joe VELLA GAUCI as Director of the Gozo Branch Operations, Claudette ABELA BALDACCHINO as Director of International Relations and Charles SCERRI who now leads Sedqa as Jesmond SCHEMBRI has moved on to head the newly set up Data Protection Directorate within the FSWS. In the meantime, Yvonne MALLIA and Roberta AGIUS have started new careers in the NGO and private sector respectively. We thank them for their service and wish them well.

All the foregoing has served to continue to strengthen the human resources available to the FSWS. This is as it should be because the FSWS is the National Social Welfare Agency of the Maltese islands and is, thus, the ultimate provider of services which are a right of the people who need them. That said we are not a monopoly. Indeed, the Government, through the procurement of Public Social Partnerships (PSPs) and on which the FSWS acts as the Government Agency, also buys many services from the NGOs who also participate in this sector. Indeed, while this budget stood at € 3 million in 2012 it has shot up to € 15.5 million in the 2019 budget. Thus, at the end of the day, the FSWS is ultimately responsible for a gross €35,168,000 spent on delivering social services in Malta and Gozo.

This success is not, however, the result of a one-man show. It is the result of team work. No more, no less. I thus, want to conclude my message by thanking the Prime Minister, our

Minister, the Chair and the Board of the FSWS for their constant support.

Naturally, I also want to thank all our dedicated and hard-working employees for their commitment and professionalism.

Finally, last but not least, I sincerely wish to thank my management team who are the gel that keeps the whole thing together and support me throughout.

**Mr Alfred Grixti**  
*Chief Executive Officer*





# Management Team

*Standing from Left to Right*

Anthony Apap, Kevin Agius, Mgr. Joe Vella Gauci, Claire Sammut, Charles Scerri, Stephen Vella and Jesmond Schembri

*Seated from Left to Right*

Remenda Grech, Claudette Abela Baldacchino, FSWS CEO Alfred Grixti, Ruth Sciberras and Nathalie Attard Bishop

AGENCIJA APPOGG



**RUTH SCIBERRAS**

Operations Director

# OVERVIEW

Aġenzija Appoġġ is a government-funded organisation which provides a myriad of social welfare services to those in need. When it was initially established in 1994, it was known as the Social Development Programme. Over the years, the Agency consolidated and expanded vastly, with the aim of establishing itself as the National Agency in this sector.

Throughout 2018, Aġenzija Appoġġ upheld a continuous commitment to develop and strengthen its services. At the end of December 2018, the agency's overall caseload stood at 11,590 cases, remaining stable from the previous year. The steep expansion of services could only be undertaken due to the work which commenced in 2017, where the agency made a commitment to restructure and position itself well, in order to effectively and successfully address the increase of services; such as human trafficking, homelessness and accommodation for youth. This resulted in an increase of the number of professionals. The number of staff at Aġenzija Appoġġ increased from 332 as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017 to 350 as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018, as well as a total number of 46 volunteers.

During the year under review, the Agency continued to safeguard and protect abused children. However; it continued to face a shortage of available placements for children and adolescents who are unable to live with their families. In order to provide nurturing and loving residential homes for these service

users, Appoġġ further developed the strategy to open more accommodations to provide 24/7 professional care for such children. This was achieved by renting premises from the private sector. Moreover, the Fostering Service successfully managed to recruit and increase the number of its dedicated foster carers; whilst the High Support Service continued to support children who are in various children's homes all over the island to support the current residential placements.

Some of the highlights for 2018 were the celebrations for youth living in out-of-home-care, who overcame insurmountable circumstances to triumph in their lives. Notably, one particular youth graduated from the University of Malta, whilst another youth had a successful kidney transplant after many years of suffering. Needless to say such moments evoke pride in Aġenzija Appoġġ's personnel as they validate all the hard work to empower service users to take charge of their lives. Their victories were celebrated at the August Moon Ball, where they were sponsored by the Marigold Foundation through the project Sweet Sixteen whose president is Mrs Michelle Muscat. This initiative started three years ago, where for three consecutive years Aġenzija Appoġġ has been entrusted to select youth in vulnerable situations in order to give them the opportunity to enhance their life skills.

Up to this year Aġenzija Appoġġ Management was concerned that the National

Support Line 179 (SPL 179) was not keeping up with the demand of the public at large. Therefore, for the very first time in its 25 years of existence, in 2018 SPL 179 was given a new lease on its operations by a recruitment drive, where a team of full-time employees were engaged. Despite the recruitment drive, there is still a role for the volunteers in the 179 service. A direct line with the police was also set up so that cases involving victims of Domestic Violence are referred to the police immediately. This procedure was later followed by a protocol between the Executive Police and Aġenzija Appoġġ and a mobile number of the emergency team was provided to the executive police.

Another recruitment drive, which also made history in the 22 years of service of the Supervised Access Visit service, was established in 2018. This service used to be carried out by a pool of contracted people who, in the majority of cases, were university students. As a result, many times this service was disturbed during examination periods and was considered as a stepping stone to another job rather than a job in itself. In 2018, full-time professionals commenced the consistent provision of this service of carryout visits with non-custodial parents and their children.

During the year under review, Aġenzija Appoġġ organised various activities to celebrate events which are linked to its many services. November marked a renewed effort to eliminate gender-based violence by holding The International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women with the theme “From Victims to Activists”.

Remarkable speakers and guests attended this event, including Australian survivor Natasha Toffa, and two Maltese survivors. The imminent importance of this national event was highlighted by the presence of Prime Minister Joseph Muscat who addressed the conference. The Australian High Commissioner for Malta Ms Julianne Hince, also attended the event.

Furthermore, Aġenzija Appoġġ Director Ruth Sciberras delivered a presentation about coordinating responses to emerging threats in violence against women and girls as a guest speaker in a high-level symposium in Brussels.

In November, Aġenzija Appoġġ held the National Annual Fostering Conference, with the theme, “I am not my Behaviour”. This event was addressed by Dr Michael Falzon, Minister for the Family, Children’s Rights and Social Solidarity. The Fostering Team held training sessions with Renè de Bot, Senior Youth Consultant from the Netherlands, who provided the foster carers with insights on the emotional and well-being of fostered children. Dr Andy Ellul, FSWS Legal Consultant, presented the audience with the Child Protection (out-of-home-care) Bill and focused on the significant changes which will benefit the fostered children and their foster carers.

Fundraising at Aġenzija Appoġġ is taken with earnest intent in aid of the Appoġġ Children’s Fund. This enthusiasm permeated to our youth who participated in our Adolescent Day Programme, who despite their difficult situations, showed

solidarity and organised a fund raising activity where €2000 were raised for this fund. During 2018, two other events which unquestionably contributed towards the Appoġġ Children's Fund was the launch of the recipe book, "L-Ikla t-Tajba" by the Health Team, as well as the concert "A Night at the Musicals", which was a collaboration

between the Ministry of Family, Children's Rights and Social Solidarity and the Ministry of Culture, Justice and Local Government. In addition, FSWS yearly commitment of launching the Children's Dreams campaign was unquestionably another success, as around 2000 Christmas wishes were fulfilled.

FOSTERING TEAM	
Total no. of children placed in foster care in 2018	50 children
Total no. of Fostering enquiry calls in 2018	133 calls
No. of Individuals who attended foster care pre-service training in 2018	77 individuals





# CHILDREN & YOUNG PERSONS SUPPORT SERVICES

## **YOUTH SERVICES (ADOLESCENT DAY PROGRAMME, YOUTH IN FOCUS AND EMBARK FOR LIFE)**

During 2018, the Youth Services of the Agency managed to gain more exposure and started being referred to as Youth Services of FSWS which incorporates all three services; a move which was beneficial as it produced more joint work between the three services and made better use of human resources.

The Adolescent Day Programme was accredited and acknowledged under the Prince Trust Achieve Programme. All young people who finish the programme are certified under the PT Achieve Programme. The launch was held at our premises in Msida, with Minister for Family, Children's Rights and Social Solidarity and Minister

for Education and Employment were both present, together with the FSWS CEO and HSBC Foundation CEO.

During 2018, Embark for Life collaborated with around 20 companies in an endeavour to provide employment opportunities for young people. Around 70 were assisted in finding employment and/or supported in retaining their job. Networking meetings were highly fruitful in building strong relationships with employers. During 2018, two workers from E4L attended two Erasmus+ projects which focused on young people.

## **179, PUD AND AFTER HOURS EMERGENCY SERVICE.**

The highlight for the 179 team in 2018 was the employment of paid operators on the

line. The operators started with an 80-hour induction training and as from November 2018, they started taking calls. The number of calls has increased significantly. When comparing the calls received in January 2018 with the calls received in January 2019, the number has doubled. A building was also identified for the 179/PUD and Hotline teams and it will be configured and structured as a professional call centre with all the necessary equipment and technology in order to extend the service not only by telephone but also by email and chat in the near future.

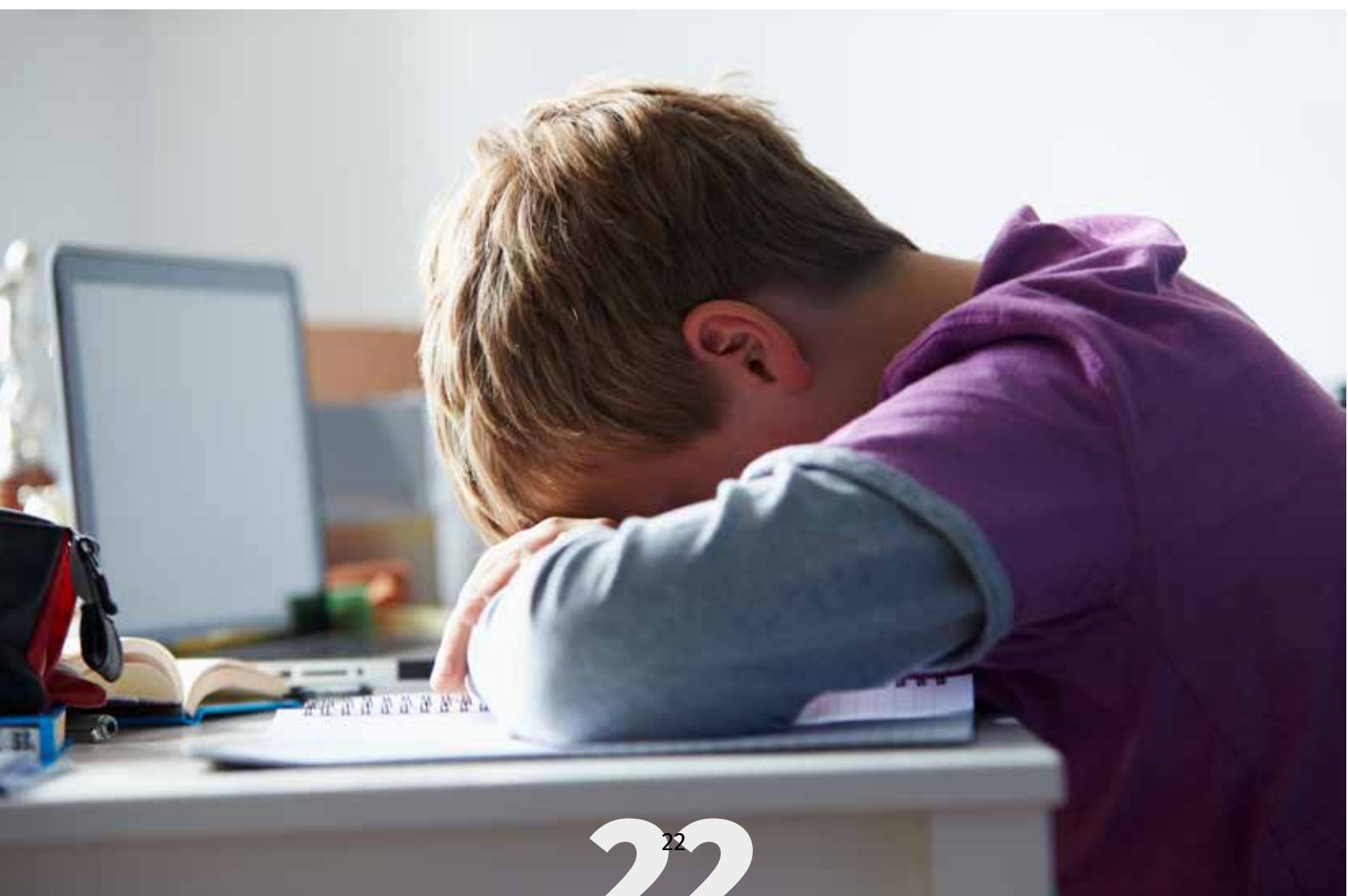
Several training initiatives were organised for the volunteers and workers of 179 and “Programm Uljed Darna” (PUD), including training on the Hotline service and internet related risks, training on the different services offered by FSWS, training on self-care, training on dealing with domestic

violence cases, training on taking referrals of child protection, and training on dealing with cases of challenging behaviour and parenting. In 2018 two volunteers, one from SPL and one from PUD, were nominated for the national volunteer award.

The After Hours Emergency Team increased by seven workers in 2018 in order to deal with the increase in DV cases, which were being reported as a result of the new DV Act. In 2018, Group supervision was introduced for all Emergency Team workers. The workers together with the DV team worked on a protocol with the police in cases of DV risk assessments.

#### **HOTLINE - CHILDWEBALERT**

In 2018 an application was submitted for approval of funds to the EC to renew the Besmartonline project and the project was





renewed for a further 24 months starting in March 2019. Over 600 children were reached through awareness sessions held by the members of the Besmartonline project.

A quality assurance exercise was held in July 2018 in which the Hotline did very well. The Hotline followed up on the recommendations given during the quality assurance.

A conference was organised for Social Workers and other people in the caring

professions during which guest speaker Michael Sheath from the Lucy Faithful Foundation UK participated. Safer internet was celebrated in February 2018. Apart from several media appearances to raise awareness, there was an outreach stand at one of Malta's main shopping malls.

In 2018 the team attended several training sessions abroad organised by Insafe and Inhope.

Children, Young Persons and Support Services	
<b>Supportline 179</b>	There were 9010 Genuine Calls
<b>After Hours Emergency Service</b>	274 interventions.
<b>Embark for Life</b>	20 new employers on board, 70 young people supported to find employment and/or attended a course to further develop their skills.
<b>Adolescent Day Programme</b>	2 groups of 16 sessions were held – 16 challenging young people were reached.
<b>Youth in Focus</b>	Reached out and engaged effectively with a record number of 148 young people who at first were reluctant to receive help;
	Worked with a total number of 164 young people. Following intensive work three young people willingly accepted to engage in a drug rehabilitation programme;
	Decrease in waiting list from 41 to 23;
	Hotline Reports (Childwebalert website): 240 online reports and 342 calls related to online abuse



# CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES & LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN SERVICE

There is an architecture that attempts to support children; it is comprised of a variety of services specialised in work with children. At the centre of this architecture lies a core mandate to protect children. It is why it exists. Social workers and professionals relentlessly engage families with a strategy that aims to nudge families unto a trajectory of safety and affection. The Child Protection Service (CPS) and the Looked After Children (LAC) Service are at the core of this mission, championing remits that directly work with children and families to ensure that every child in Malta and Gozo lives in a safe and healthy environment.

Following the tragic events in 2017, all children services experienced significant pressures which highlighted the need for change. With the introduction of two

new managers, one in each of the service mentioned, the CPS and the LAC embarked on a mission to influence and enhance the architecture of the children service in Malta. Their interest was no longer solely focused on enhancing their operations, but also on improving the general provision of services nationwide. To this effect, the two managers successfully managed to establish a new network which incorporates within it twenty eight (28) representatives of the different entities which are involved, or have a stake, in the provision of care of minors who are in an out-of-home-care arrangement. Periodical meetings bring together these organisations to iron out any operational and relational wrinkles that exist in the system so that true harmony can be achieved. This initiative, also in line with the actions taken by the

Ministry for Family, Children's Rights and Social Solidarity to engage most NGOs in official partnership agreements, seems to have strengthened relationships across the services, leading to better communication which translates into an overall improvement in the provision of care. The CPS and LAC look upon this action as a success, mostly because relations in this network have been historically elusive.

Furthermore, the work required for the establishment of this network comes along relentless advocacy and consultative work made with representatives of the judiciary and the Ministry for the enactment of the Child Protection Law. It is definitely a pleasure to see how these efforts, combined with the participation of many others in the different stages of the compilation of this act, are finally bearing fruit as the final reading of the Act is approaching. Maltese children will benefit from a law that has thoroughly sought to put them at the top of the nation's agenda, with provisions that aim at helping and supporting families.

It must be noted that these two projects have not replaced the day-to-day interventions required of the services. The work that the families we support need was not put aside. On the contrary, both services fathomed the focus needed to continue their duty without being hindered by the additional demands because of the belief that every child deserves only the highest standard of service. And it is because of this conviction that the Social Workers of both services are able to continue to support the hundreds of families that we touch every

year, and still find the energy to contribute to other macro initiatives as mentioned before.

The two new managers of CPS and LAC continuously invest in staff development and professional growth. Given that the nature of the work carried out by both services is of a sensitive nature, both teams carry out regular staff support sessions, organise sessions where different professionals share knowledge and experiences, discuss complex cases in a smaller groups and invest in ongoing professional support.

### **SOCIAL CONTACTS SERVICE**

The Social Contacts Service assesses and approves individuals or couples who would like to spend quality time with children who reside in residential homes. Social contacts take children out for extracurricular or fun activities during the weekends. They may also accommodate children to sleep at their residence or to spend a whole weekend with them.

Persons who are interested in becoming social contacts are assessed by a Social Worker. Through the assessment, the Social Workers establish whether these persons are eligible to become social contacts. A social contact needs to be a reliable person who shows commitment towards these children. Once the assessment is done and the social contacts are approved, a matching process takes place so that approved social contacts are matched with children who reside in residential care and who could benefit from this service.



Being a social contact could be a life changing event, both for the child and for the social contacts themselves. By dedicating a

consistent amount of time to a child and by showing them love and commitment, one can leave a positive impact on a child's life.

#### CHILD PROTECTION SERVICE

Child Protection Waiting list **reduced by 80% since Dec 2018;**

Intake management strategies indicate that the goal to support families in the community before a referral is made to CPS has been successful – CPS conducted over **700** case discussions with schools to support preventative work in the community.

#### LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

Number of minors reintegrated and living with birth families, who were supported by the Looked After Children Service in 2018

**52**





# THE COMMUNITY SERVICES

The Community Services operate within four communities in Malta – Cottonera and Kalkara, Qawra (including the whole St Paul's Bay area), Msida (including service provision to Birkirkara) and Valletta (including service provision to Floriana).

The Community Services offer two types of interventions; that of social work, and that of community development work, mainly in the form of activities and initiatives that provide informal and non-formal skills development in a safe and healthy environment.

Throughout the year, each service continued to carry out a number of initiatives and activities targeting children, young people, and parents. These are mainly run by the community development workers

with the input from the community Social Workers. On their part, the community Social Workers work extensively with individuals and families facing different situations and providing support as necessary. There has been a marked increase in work carried out with migrants as the migrant population is increasing in all of the communities where the services operate.

In 2018, the four community hubs, together with the Intake and Family Support Services (IFSS), started to work on the report of an audit carried out at the end of the year 2017. This audit addressed the way the services deal with situations where children are facing abuse or are at risk.

All workers together with their manager discussed main points of interventions

which were highlighted by the auditors to be beneficial to the work carried out at different levels with such families. It was a very healthy and positive exercise with room to exchange views on the different practices used. Together, it was decided which were the most favourable. The exercise ended in a half day seminar where each team made

a presentation on the interventions which were agreed upon and were to be streamlined amongst all teams.

During the summer, a new manager was appointed and by September all the community services moved out of Aġenzija Appoġġ under a new directorship.



# INTAKE AND FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

Between January and December of 2018, amongst the 1035 cases which the Intake and Family Support Services dealt with, 22.7% were cases which regarded homelessness, adding up to 235 cases.

In 2018, a lot of work was carried out with regards to the planning of the Family workshops which took place in January 2019 at the Leap Centre in Qormi. Since these workshops targeted service users residing in Qormi and the surrounding areas, several meetings were carried out with different stakeholders in Qormi, including meetings with the Head of Schools of both primary schools, in order to reach more residents.

Besides numerous training sessions and conferences the team attended, two workers attended a one-day conference in Brussels on Human Trafficking and another one attended a Migration and rights of the child expert meeting in Brussels.

Priority was also given to networking with school professionals working in all the colleges around Malta. All IFSS social workers were assigned a college to act as a contact person. This facilitated communication between the schools and the service.

## HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The service for victims of Human Trafficking, which pertains to the Intake and Family Support Services, dealt with a group of 15 victims of human trafficking (labour exploitation) who were identified by the Malta Police in the beginning of 2018. These persons were given accommodation and were supported continuously so as to facilitate their integration into the labour market and thus live independently. Towards the end of the year, there was another victim identified, who was accommodated and later assisted to return to her country, while the Social Worker worked with two other potential victims.



# COURTS SERVICE AND SUPERVISED ACCESS VISITS SERVICES

Courts Services assists Family Court in assessments, investigations, recommendations, and monitoring in cases of parental separation. It consists also of the Supervised Access Visits Service, which provides supervision, by trained social support workers, of a minor's access visits by non-custodial parents and parents with visitation disputes. This service also provides supervised contact for children protected by a care order upon recommendation by the professionals working with these children and approved by the Children and Young Persons Advisory Board.

In 2018, several milestones for the service were achieved, whereby safety, consolidation, and collaboration were the main focus.

With SAV cases becoming increasingly more complex and in order to contain potentially volatile situations, safety measures and precautions to protect workers were a main priority of the service. To this effect, there was the introduction of a trainee support workers system; cases were held jointly so that each worker had the necessary support and could provide more containment to the situation at hand, as they were accompanied rather than on their own.

During SAVs, there has been an improved level of intervention to support parents to interact more positively with their children. This brought about regular reviews of SAV arrangements, all focusing on the best interest of the minors. These



reviews brought about a shift of 10% of the SAV cases whereby parents moved to alternative methods of contact with their children.

The service invested in more regular and in depth collaborations with the judiciary system, in order to gain support in decisions that are in children's best interest by building better connections and sharing expertise.

The training and practiced wisdom of seasoned workers brought about the early detection of parental alienation and co-parenting skills needed in families, thus making it possible for these to be addressed in a more timely and effective manner.

Throughout 2018, there was more exposure on media with regards to impacts of marital separation and relationship breakdown on children.



# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE UNIT

*16 days of Activism:* The Domestic Violence Services contributed actively during the 16 days of Activism not only by organising its yearly event but also in the provision of the delivery of various training sessions to different professionals; professionals working with the elderly, lawyers, family doctors, professionals working within the sector of migration, schools, and trade unions, amongst others. In addition, the yearly event in collaboration with the Marketing and Communications Department at FSWS was organised, with distinguished guests present, including the Prime Minister Joseph Muscat, and Ms Natasha Toffa (an Australian activist). These types of activities emphasise that Domestic Violence is everybody's business since it is a public matter rather than a private one.

*The adoption of the Gender Based Violence and Domestic Violence Act:* This law brought about changes in the delivery of the service and the Social Workers were called to carry out a large number of Risk Assessments and other interventions. Despite the already heavy workload the Social Workers continued to support victims of domestic violence and their children and continued allocating high risk cases immediately. The rest of the cases were put on a waiting list which started to be monitored by social support workers in order to ensure that risk factors are reviewed and the service users are provided with timely intervention.

*Strategy on Gender based violence and Domestic Violence* The DVS continued to enhance their service provision in relation

to the implementation of this strategy in collaboration with the stake holders involved. For instance, in 2018, a protocol between the Police Force and the Domestic Violence Services was signed. This protocol is aimed at facilitating the provision of service which continues to meet the contemporary emerging needs of the victims of domestic violence and their children. This plan also included the provision of training as to ensure the service is not only delivered through wisdom attained through experience, but also evidence-based practice. In addition, the DVU actively contributed in the Human Rights and Integration Directorate projects “*Full Cooperation: Zero Violence*” and the “*Breaking the Cycle of Violence*”. The latter focused on the service users whilst the former focused on the service providers. Lastly, the DVU continues to be represented on the Inter-Ministerial Committee which is mainly focused on the implementation of the strategy.

## MANAGING ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR

**16 days of Activism:** The Managing Abusive Behaviour Unit actively participated during the 16 days of Activism and in the activity organised by the FSWS and the delivery of the training sessions. The input of this service is necessary since it is part of the spectrum of services which target safety within and where possible preservation of the family.

**Strategy on Gender based violence and Domestic Violence:** As explained above the Managing Abusive Behaviour unit is an integral part of the provision of the continuum of services and it falls under the Istanbul

Convention’s pillar of prevention. In view of this, the service actively participated in the “*Full Cooperation: Zero Violence*” project and the MAB’s representation on the Inter-Ministerial Committee remains a must as to ensure that families are receiving support which enable safety within the family.

**Presentation during the BASPCAN Conference:** The Service Manager and the Service Area Leader attended this conference and presented a paper on Child to Parent Violence during the BASPCAN Conference in Warwick. This participation enhanced the aspect of international networking and exchange of good practice in the area of Child to Parent Violence.

**Strategy for the service:** Throughout 2018, the service planned initiatives which are envisaged to support the consolidation and expansion of its services. This was done in order to fulfil the integrated policies in the area which is also one of the pillars of the Istanbul Convention.

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HUBS

**Strategy on Gender based violence and Domestic Violence:** As per the implementation of the strategy, the service of the Domestic Violence Hubs was planned and all the preparatory work which is required in order to set up the Domestic Violence Hubs was carried out. Work on the recruitment of professionals, policies, procedure, and other relevant tasks required during the planning phases was carried out as to ensure that this service is not only constructed on the practice wisdom but also on evidence based practice.

## GHABEX SHELTER

*New premises:* Throughout 2018, Ghabex Shelter continued working on the identification of premises in order to continue meeting the contemporary needs of the women and children who experience domestic violence. The premises were identified and the initial proposal formulated was reviewed in order to be upgraded as to ensure that the premises would meet the current needs of the present situation where shelter services are concerned.

## PROJECT FIDEM

Ghabex Shelter embarked on an initiative in collaboration with FIDEM Charity Foundation which promotes the empowerment of vulnerable persons through education, crafts and culture. This initiative aims to support the victims of domestic violence and their children in their journey of recovery.

### Domestic Violence Services

Total no.of referrals in 2018: **665** referrals;

This is an increase of **158** cases from **2017**. The increase of referrals may be a result of the launch of the Gender Based Violence and Domestic Violence Law, and the awareness that was raised on the media, which means that more victims of domestic violence were reached with the information about our support services and they were empowered to seek our services;

The total number of female victims of Domestic Violence that were worked with at Ghabex Shelter was **55**, and these victims stayed a total of **3428** nights, which is an average of 62 nights each. The increase from 2017 is by almost a 100%, this in itself reflects the higher amount of referrals within the Domestic Violence Unit, as well as the awareness amongst female victims about our emergency shelter service which was sought when safety issues were concerned.





# OUT OF HOME CARE SERVICES

The Minors Residential Service went through a restructuring process during 2018. This process involved the amalgamation of the services previously known as Residential Home Service (RHS) and the High Support Service (HSS). These services are now under the remit of one Manager. This measure was taken so as to facilitate the integration of minor's residential services.

In order to address the urgent needs of minors who needed alternative residential arrangements, three new residences were opened to host eight young people who ended up without a placement. These community residential services are aimed at providing a structured facility where young people engage in a number of interventions which are in line with their respective needs. These needs are documented in a care plan which is then followed up through the interventions of professionals and other carers working within the residential homes. Preparations were also carried out so that four of these residents will eventually be hosted in a better facility during 2019. This move shall lead to

enhance the quality of service aimed at these particular service users.

Investment was also carried out within the other established residential homes which hosted 17 other residents. In order to provide a better service during 2018, initial works were carried out so that the Qormi Siblings home will be hosted in two separate apartments. These preparations were initiated during 2018 so that young people living in this residential set up will be offered a more adequate environment which is more spacious, therefore providing further opportunities to carry out interventions which address directly the needs of young people living within the particular facility.

The High Support Service is providing support to other residential services and foster carers who are hosting minors living in alternative care. This support aims to maintain existing placements through the interventions carried out by the carers of this service, thus preventing the possibility of placement breakdowns.

# HEALTH SERVICES

The Health Department comprises Mater Dei (MDH), Sir Anthony Mamo Oncology Centre (SAMOC), Elderly Department, St. Vincent De Paule Residence (SVPR), Primary Health, JustSibs, Qormi Health Centre (QHC), Mtarfa Mental Health Clinic, and Care for Victims of Sexual Assault (CVSA).

March 2018 marked the launch of the book 'L-ikla t-Tajba' in aid of the Appoġġ Children's Fund. This book was crafted with the effort of all the Social Workers working within the health services, who collected different recipes and put them together to achieve the final result.

## **MDH**

The team within Mater Dei Hospital deals with 45 different wards incorporating both the elderly and paediatrics. Workers attended various trainings in relation to health.

## **SAMOC**

In 2018 five Social Workers attended training through ESF funds: - Two workers attended a conference in Birmingham on teenagers and young adults with cancer, and three workers attended training at St. Christopher's Hospice in London on Multidisciplinary team work in Palliative care.

Two presentations focusing on the role of the Social Worker in Paediatrics were also presented in two oncology conferences.

JustSibs group was held together with the Karl Vella Foundation. It was a positive experience to organise such an activity in collaboration with another organisation. Activities and crafts were held with the children.

## **ACTIVE AGEING AND COMMUNITY CARE DEPARTMENT (AACCD)**

The most prevalent issues within this department are homelessness, loneliness/solitude, abandonment by relatives, hoarding, elderly people living in extreme dirt and abuse of elderly people perpetrated either by their children, carers and/or spouses/partners.

## **PRIMARY HEALTH**

The developing trends as seen within the Primary health include elderly persons living on their own without any support system, issues of loneliness leading to other mental health problems like depression, ageing population, and disability.

## **QORMI HEALTH CENTRE**

In 2018, an increase in referrals was recorded at Qormi Health Centre because more people were being referred to the mental health service, especially service users from the catchment area.

A Higher Specialist Trainee doctor attends the clinic twice a month to hold reviews with

people who require more frequent support. This was positive for the Social Workers as a thorough assessment of the situation is given which helps Social Workers assist better the clients.

### **MTARFA MENTAL HEALTH CLINIC**

The Social Worker working within the Mtarfa Mental Health Clinic carries out home visits, accompanies service users, and attends ward visits with the psychiatrists. Liaison with other services is also crucial in order to help the service users.

### **CARE FOR VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT (CVSA)**

In 2018 there were 37 active cases – 17 accessing legal services and 20 accessing psychological services, five of which are still receiving social work service. Ongoing meetings are held with all counterparts to evaluate and strengthen the service where needed.

### **EMPLOYEE SUPPORT PROGRAMME (ESP)**

The Employee Support Programme (ESP) is a support service available to all public employees who may be experiencing personal or work-related difficulties.

One of the ESP Unit's main role is to provide training sessions to various ministries, departments, and government

entities. Such sessions are conducted in order to raise awareness on the importance of employee wellbeing and better mental health. Last year the professionals within the unit conducted 96 training sessions across several departments. In addition, the unit participated in the public service week by organising a conference entitled 'G'hajnuna fil-Waqt'. Furthermore, the ESP unit collaborated with both Aġenzija Sedqa and The Commission for Mental Health in order to provide training sessions regarding substance abuse and stigma in mental health.

During 2018, the unit was also working hand-in-hand with the Medical Boards within the People and Standards Division. This liaison was necessary and of great utility for the support in the return to work after long sick leave or other difficulties.

Greater demand for the ESP service was noticed with a total of 285 clients accessing the service in 2018. As a result, more professionals, including a Social Worker and Counsellor, were added to the team. The ESP unit strives each year to promote and create awareness regarding mental health and employee wellbeing. The past year was a clear example where the unit worked hard to achieve such goals and at the same time supported clients through one to one sessions.



Health Services				
SAMOC	SAMOC worked with <b>350</b> patients;			
	SAMOC Just sibs project reached out to <b>12</b> children whose siblings/ parents have cancer. This was held jointly with Karl Vella Foundation			
	SAMOC worked with <b>71</b> patients referred from MDH			
Primary health	Primary health Social Worker reached out to <b>27</b> clients			
	Primary health Social Worker worked with <b>13</b> elderly service users to support them to remain in the community			
CYPS	CYPS worked with <b>175</b> children and their families			
Mater Dei	Patients who were waiting from MDH for long term care; i.e. to be discharged to nursing or elderly home			
		SVPR	Elderly home	Karen Grech Hospital
	January	34	45	3
	February	11	18	0
	March	9	28	1
	April	9	37	0
	May	12	31	1
	June	11	34	0
Qormi Health Centre	From <b>100</b> cases followed by the Social Workers, only <b>10</b> services were admitted for a single brief admission at MCH whilst they managed to contain the other <b>90</b> in the community.			
SVPR (St.Vincent de Paul Residence)	SVPR community - Social Worker worked with <b>107</b> cases between January and August, 2018. (as from August they did not continue to follow community cases)			
SVP Residence	Social Worker supported <b>108</b> elderly residents			
CYPs	Social Worker at CYPs carried out <b>24</b> ADHD assessments which helped the children get a complete diagnosis			



## ADOPTION SERVICES

2018 marked the tenth anniversary of the setting up of the adoption services within Aġenzija Appoġġ. In September, a conference was organised as part of the celebrations and all those who worked in the adoption service were invited for this conference

The agency took part in the EuroAdopt conference, where Ruth Sciberras, Director of Aġenzija Appoġġ, and Josephine Muscat, Service Manager of the Adoption Team, represented the agency. The conference is held every two years and in 2018 it was held in Milan. Malta's participation was important during this conference as it gave the participants the opportunity to meet and discuss the possibility of intercountry adoptions with representatives from various countries.

In February 2018, a delegation responsible for the intercountry adoptions accompanied Her Excellency the President of Malta Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca to a State visit in Croatia to discuss the issue of adoptions.

After two visits to Bulgaria, in June and in October, the delegation was involved in the process leading to the agreement with the said country. This agreement gave families who wish to adopt, the opportunity of an additional country from where adoption is possible. The applications of the adoptive parents were immediately forwarded after the agreement took place.

The delegation is also in advanced talks with several other countries to sign further agreements.



## FOSTER CARE SERVICE

The fostering campaign was one of the highlights in 2018 where one can say that the effort to create awareness was a success. The outcome of this campaign was an increase in the enquiry calls and the increase in families going through the process to be approved as foster carers. As a result, a good number of children have been given the opportunity to be offered a fostering family.

The organisation of the Annual Foster Care Conference, held in November, was another major highlight for 2018. A speaker from the Netherlands, Renè de Bot, was the main speaker who delivered an excellent presentation. Mr. de Bot is himself a foster carer and was also the director of the Rotterdam Foster Care Centre.

A number of training programmes for Prospective Foster Carers were also delivered,

together with ongoing training to help and support the foster carers, which included sessions on Positive Parenting and Incredible Years. It should also be noted that the initial training was also increased by two sessions, now consisting of eight sessions in which the participation of a family therapist was introduced.

The agency is committed to provide ongoing training to Foster Carers hence eight training sessions will be conducted and these sessions will be held every two months. Each training sessions will address a different issue or topic, relevant to the Foster Carers, and these will be delivered by different speakers as required. These sessions will equip the foster carers with further skills and will also provide them with the opportunity to grow.

# PUBLIC SOCIAL PARTNERSHIPS (PSP'S)

The Public Social Partnerships (PSP) are three-year contractual Agreements between the Ministry for the Family, Children's Rights and Social Solidarity (MFCS) and respective NGOs which hail from the social field. Currently, MFCS has around 40 PSPs: nine in the disability sector and the remaining with NGOs that deal with the wellbeing of children/adolescents with challenging behaviour, clients that suffer from substance abuse, clients that suffer from mental health

issues, children's homes, Homes that provide a roof for the homeless, shelters for domestic violence victims, programmes for former inmates, community programmes, assistance to the LGBTIQ Community, assistance to the families of the terminally ill, professional counselling together with support services, and services such as [Kellimni.com](https://kellimni.com).

In 2018, these PSPs benefitted from around €10 million of national funds.

## CONCLUSION

The accomplishments referred to above only partially represents the achievements that Aġenzija Appoġġ staff reach on a daily basis with their service users. I would like to take this opportunity to commend and thank them for fulfilling the mission of Aġenzija Appoġġ by being key-contributors in serving those in need.

AĠĠENZIJA SEDQA





**CHARLES SCERRI**

Operations Director

# OVERVIEW

Aġenzija Sedqa's aim is to increase public awareness of the harm caused by addictive behaviours and imparts skills in order to prevent or to delay the development of such patterns. It also supports persons who have developed an addiction and their significant others to modify their lifestyles in order to lead a healthier and more satisfying life whilst becoming productive citizens within our society.

Aġenzija Sedqa seeks to do the above whilst maintaining high ethical and professional standards in all its interventions with every individual who seeks the agency's assistance.

2018 was a year of transition for the agency. In fact, throughout the last quarter of the year, a new Operations Director was appointed. A new management structure was set up and five Operations Managers were appointed for the operative areas of Community Services, Residential Services, Court Services, Psychological Services, as well as the innovative role of a Services Development Manager.

The need for a major revamp of the services being offered was immediately picked up from the various meetings that the management held with different professionals and teams at Aġenzija Sedqa. As a result, the office of the Services Development Manager was

enhanced with the assistance of an internal research officer to collect data, analyse and evaluate all current services in order to be able to have an informed perspective when bringing about the required changes and upgrades to service provision.

The main shift in service provision was characterised and driven by the need to implement changes that will ultimately lead the agency's ethos away from the traditional duality that has dominated Aġenzija Sedqa's operations for more than 20 years: the separation between alcohol and drug services. Whilst recognising the needs of each individual and also take into account the influence of their specific addiction of substance or behaviour; service users shall not be streamed into two different service paths which operated differently in many ways (both on a community and a residential service level). The focus of Aġenzija Sedqa's services shall be addiction on a global level and treating each person according to their needs.

This will not mean losing the knowledge and expertise that has been accumulated; it will actually mean integrating it into a coherent whole, and the identified philosophy behind the implementation of the required changes shall be the biopsychosocial model of treating addiction.



Sedqa – In Numbers	
Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1000 interventions</li> <li>• 38,961 participants</li> <li>• 22,200 materials distributed</li> </ul>
AGCT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2551 appointments</li> </ul>
SMOPU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1133 litres of methadone distributed</li> </ul>

# THE SERVICES



## ALCOHOL AND GAMBLING COMMUNITY TEAM

The Alcohol Community Team saw its start around 20 years ago. Later, it expanded its service to include gambling, becoming the Alcohol and Gambling Community Team and thus providing services for anyone struggling with an alcohol and/or gambling problem and their significant others. The array of services ranges from thorough one-to-one assessment at the onset, to further treatment procedures as required by each client in particular. The service also provides a drop-in service from Monday through to Friday during office hours.

Throughout the year 2018, the service received a total of 267 referrals in all, of which, the professionals involved managed to engage with quite a number. Despite the customary staff turnover, the team still succeeded to reach expectations. The end of year was scored with over 2000 biopsychosocial sessions coupled by more than 100 new assessments. To compliment such work, the team supplied their respective clients with an alcohol clinic every Friday. In addition, the team participated in a number of media interventions and hosted a student on placement from the University of Malta.



# DRUGS COMMUNITY TEAM

The Drugs Community Team's (DCT) 2018 year can be described as quite a dynamic one. During 2018, five professional staff joined the team. The new members of staff brought various professional experiences such as a counselling background, working exposure at the Law Courts of Malta, and social work intervention at the local Child Protection Services.

The team maintained rendering services to persons who live with a substance abuse difficulty or their significant others, at an average of almost one new referral per day.

The team improved its response attending to its service waiting list and has been planning improvements with different stakeholders in the field, such as psychiatric services, probation and parole officials. DCT provides professional services to clients who are living independently in the community or who are currently living in an institution in the Maltese territory. Dynamic care plans are devised on a case by case basis depending on the client's individual needs following professional assessment and respective interventions.





# PREVENTION TEAM

The Prevention Team created, worked on, and was involved in a variety of new interventions and projects throughout 2018. Amongst these projects were a number of innovative community interventions in new areas including, participation in an event in aid of Puttinu in collaboration with Kalkara Local Council. The aim of these community interventions is to further raise awareness within the community through more accessible means. The year 2018 also saw the Prevention Team's involvement in Freshers' Week for both MCAST & the University of Malta where the team set up a stand which offered Mocktails as an alternative to alcoholic drinks whilst promoting its services. During the summer of 2018, Prevention Executives worked alongside FES, LEAP centres and private summer schools to offer a tailor-made programme for students attending.

In 2018, two projects were carried out within the Żebbug Learning Centre (Primary Years) and also within the Naxxar Learning Centre (Secondary Years + Parents/Guardians). This collaboration aims to work directly with students who are attending these centres with the aim of being reintegrated into mainstream educational settings.

## **T.F.A.L 3 PROGRAMME**

The T.F.A.L 3 Programme workbook content was developed further and revamped throughout the third quarter of 2018 along with newly composed songs to include in this Programme. The team collaborated with a graphic designer as well as with a music composer in this project.

## **COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROJECTS**

Through community outreach projects, the team liaised with a variety of NGOs and

entities and provided them with personalised sessions throughout the year. Amongst these were groups within SAPPORIT, Aġenzija Żgħażaġh, the Fostering Team at Aġenzija Appoġġ, Football Nurseries, Proġett Tbiissima, Fondazzjoni Nanniet, ZAK groups, different Scout and Girl Guides groups, Sea Cadets, the Female Section at M.U.S.E.U.M, Ghaxaq Youth Centre as well as with different residential homes. These personalised sessions covered a multitude of topics including but not limited to addictions and substance abuse and are created in a hands-on learning approach for attendees. In 2018, liaison for a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Gżira Local Council began, to be signed in 2019. The intention of this MoU is to sustain a positive working relationship with this particular local council and be present at community level

### **S.A.F.E PROGRAMME**

The S.A.F.E Programme within the Prevention Section at Aġenzija Sedqa continued to extend its collaboration with different organisations

and employers in Malta and Gozo and also held an Awards Ceremony to honour the participants who availed of the programme.

### **POSITIVE PARENTING**

The Positive Parental Programme continued to develop and flourish and reached numerous localities within Malta and Gozo. Childminding was offered to parents who required the service and consisted of activities which were created to be age and content appropriate whilst always holding an educational value.

### **STAFF TRAINING**

In October 2018, three members of the Prevention Team attended a conference in Lisbon, Portugal, entitled 'Prevention Technologies – Improving the Use of Evidence in Prevention Practice' which was organised by the EUSPR (European Society for Prevention Research). These training initiatives are all meant to project the team into the coming year with renewed intervention capabilities that will ensure the prevention message reaches the agency's audiences.





# SUBSTANCE MISUSE OUT-PATIENTS UNIT (DETOX)

The SMOPU unit in Guardamangia continued to consolidate its medical and nursing services to all service users.

Apart from dispensing daily methadone doses to an average of 750 persons in 2018, there were also an average of 80 service users who benefited from the take-home methadone service. This has been implemented through weekly dispensing of

methadone to stable service users under the supervision of a significant other.

The medical and nursing staff were also involved in providing other medical services to SMOPU service users throughout 2018, including;

- Providing Hep B inoculations to service users as well as FSWS employees;
- Medical screening of service users referred by community services (Aġenzija Sedqa and Caritas);
- Providing nursing services to service users on a needs basis; and
- Providing weekly nursing support to the Psychiatric clinic held at SMOPU.

Aġenzija Sedqa Doctors have also continued to provide their services to both Aġenzija Sedqa and Caritas residential services on a weekly basis.







# PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

The Psychological Services offers a generic service and hosts a multidisciplinary team made up of Psychologists, Family Therapists, Psychotherapists, and Counsellors. The service imparts psychological assessment and screening, psychological interventions with adults, adolescents and children, group therapy, systemic psychotherapy with individuals, families and couples, supervision of staff and consultations. The service caters for service users of Agenzija Sedqa, Agenzija Appoġġ and LEAP within FSWS. The Family Therapy Services also accept referrals from the general public as well as from Health and Educational services and NGOs.

The service is also responsible for organising and facilitating co-parenting groups for parents who are separated or in the process of separation with the aim

of acquiring specific skills required when parenting from separate households while keeping the children's best interest at the core. These groups have been very well attended and successful whereby parents felt supported and better equipped to deal with this reality.

One very important aspect of the team's contribution is the provision of supervision (both individual and group) to staff and also critical stress debriefing sessions following a traumatic event on both an agency and national level. The type of supervision provided is an essential tool in the support of professional workers who sometimes have to contend with work-related emotional problems or difficult situations which can impinge on their performance. The team also offers training and professional development sessions to various teams within FSWS.



During 2018 there was an increase in networking and collaboration with other services where around 300 support groups with staff were facilitated and 68 professionals supported through regular monthly supervision. The team also continued to offer its contribution in rehabilitation services through group psychotherapy sessions and individual therapy sessions and also in the Stimulants Clinic with the aim of addressing the

emerging increase in the abuse of cocaine and other stimulants.

Our aim is to continue to develop and consolidate as a service, and so to achieve this goal, the Psychological Services Team has embarked on a pilot project to shift to a multidisciplinary style of working whereby multidisciplinary sub-teams will be created to better address service users' needs more effectively.





# COURT SERVICES

Court Services incorporates the services of Commissioner for Justice – Drugs Tribunal, Drug Offenders Rehabilitation Board (DORB) co-ordinator and a psychotherapist. This unit also provides service to Aġenzija Sedqa employees/clients and presents relative reports regarding clients' progress and information in Court when necessary.

In 2018, the Drugs Tribunal saw an increase in second time offenders who were referred to DORB. Second time offenders who abuse cannabis are referred to DORB at the Commissioner's discretion but must be referred if other substances were abused. Since the law was enacted in 2015, there were many first time offenders but the Drugs Tribunal is currently experiencing the prosecution of these same individuals and others as second time offenders. Teenagers are now indiscriminately prosecuted to appear at Drugs Tribunal. This has given the service an opportunity to filter one-off users and experimenters and retain those who require help. In the case of teenagers heard at Drugs

Tribunal, these are generally kept pending, even in the case of first time offenders.

The DORB coordinator and Board are instrumental towards the number of success stories that the whole system is experiencing. Clients co-operate and are encouraged to give their input towards their progress and re-integration.

Throughout 2018, DORB also received referrals from the Courts of Justice and this service also experienced an increase both with referrals and successful termination with the Board.

All in all, Court Services saw most of their clients achieve their goals and change their life style. The increase in service users was seen in all aspects. The service also received many requests for information and help with Drug Court applications from the Corradino Correctional Services. The results have been very encouraging and satisfactory.

# THE ASSESSMENT AND STABILISATION UNIT (ASU)

The Assessment and Stabilisation Unit (ASU) is approximately an eight-week stabilisation phase that aims to assess and identify the various factors affecting the client's substance misuse. Moreover, this unit aims to identify the different forms of dual diagnosis and assist in setting up a care plan that best fits its clients. Through the identification of these factors the client will have the possibility to focus more on the present needs and set up a care plan for further recovery. This can take the form of further residential treatment or continuity of care within the community.

The outlook for 2019 is for a general review of the entire residential structure of Aġenzija Sedqa and reorganising all residential services into a more cohesive working unit. In fact, during the last quarter of 2018, the new management team started to evaluate each unit at Hal Farruġ, including the ASU, in order to come up with a valid plan of action that shall bring about a major reform in the provision of residential services during 2019.





# KOMUNITÀ SANTA MARIJA (KSM)

KSM is the long-term drug rehabilitation programme within Agenzija Sedqa's remit. Its treatment modality is mainly rooted in a behavioural approach and along the years input from professional staff was increased, particularly professionals trained in social work and humanistic therapies.

In 2018, the treatment offered to residents was a mix of behaviour modification through conditioning, the humanistic element of building therapeutic relationships between staff and residents and the idea of building a therapeutic community which brings with it a sense of belonging and responsibility. KSM started off as a mainly behavioural programme which slowly evolved into something else.

Hence the newly set management team has started to analyse the treatment modality being provided in order to give a clearer identity to this rehabilitation programme.

2018 will mostly be remembered for major refurbishing works funded by the Ministry for the Family, Children's Rights and Social Solidarity. Virtually half of the year was devoted to a much needed refurbishment since the building was mostly the remnants of an early 20<sup>th</sup> century hospital.

The outlook for 2019 is for a general review of the entire residential structure of Agenzija Sedqa and reorganising our services into a more cohesive working unit.

# DAR ŽERNIQ

Dar Žerniq is an alcohol residential rehabilitation programme which offers services to individuals who have an alcohol dependency problem and wish to overcome the painful desires and beliefs that feed their addiction. This is done by addressing the socio-psychological needs of both the residents and their significant others. In addition, Dar Žerniq offers its services to individuals with alcohol problems who still live in the community but opt to attend the day programme.

In 2018, there were no referrals to the day programme while there was a considerable amount of referrals ranging from individuals with alcohol dependency

problem, individuals who combine their alcohol intake with drugs, and one individual with drug, alcohol and gambling addiction. Notwithstanding these situations, these individuals managed to fit in quite well within the rehabilitation aspect of the programme.

In 2018, a closed process group facilitated by a counselling psychology practitioner was introduced. This was very well-received since it is different from the open therapy groups which are offered to the residents, their significant others and individuals from the community twice a week at Dar Žerniq. The newly set therapeutic group is the only group which is exclusive to Dar Žerniq's residents.

# SUBSTANCE MISUSE IN-PATIENT UNIT (DAR L-IMPENN)

The Substance Misuse In-Patient Unit (SMIPU) is a nine-bedded unit catering for male and female patients requiring detoxification from alcohol and / or illicit drugs and related services. This service is operated by a team of four nurses and four care-workers and is currently led by a nurse-in-charge. All patients who are admitted to Dar l-Impenn are referred by the medical officers at Aġenzija Sedqa.

The bulk of successfully-detoxified clients were referred to Aġenzija Sedqa's Community Services and continued to be followed by the respective professionals.

SMIPU has been in existence since Aġenzija Sedqa's inception in 1994. The staff has gained a great deal of expertise over the years in dealing with the complexities of the detoxification process and ancillary services. On the other hand, the need to offer a better service to our clients is always on the forefront of the team's concerns, and discussions with the new management team have started in order to ameliorate and better incorporate new therapeutic concepts in the services currently being offered.




# CONCLUSION

The year 2018 has indeed been a very challenging one for Aġenzija Sedqa. The new management team has set its plans in order to achieve specific targets for 2019. Aġenzija Sedqa shall strive at ameliorating its visibility through active collaborations within the Foundation for Social Welfare Services as well as with external entities and NGOs.


Throughout the last quarter of 2018, the agency has also gone through an initial

evaluation of all community and residential services in order to adjourn, consolidate, and restructure the services being offered to its clients.

Finally, one may wrap up the aforementioned efforts in a claim outlined by the Operations Director during one of the agency's main highlights for 2018, the inauguration of restructuring works at Komunità Santa Marija:



*The aim of our team is not to be back on the local map of service provision in the field of addictions, but more ambitiously to be the landmark of that map.*





# THE THERAPEUTIC AND COMMUNITY SERVICES



**CLAIRE SAMMUT**

Director



## OVERVIEW

Home Based Therapeutic Services (HBTS) continues to offer an outreach service to multi-stressed families within their own communities. By adopting a systemically-oriented multi-disciplinary approach, professionals from different backgrounds continue to offer intensive psychological and parenting interventions to support families in addressing their complex needs.

HBTS delivers person-centred interventions by working closely with parents and carers following a 'family preservation model'. Families are supported intensively to ensure that as many children as possible benefit from a restoration of healthy family functioning, whilst mitigating any risks in the environment. Although multi-stressed families have complex difficulties, the service believes that all families have strengths

and abilities within their repertoire. HBTS interventions focus on building resiliency, to sustain clients in taking control of changes that will address risks and ameliorate functioning within the family.

In line with the government's positive parenting policy, Home Based Therapeutic Services delivers the evidence-based Incredible Years Parenting Programme to multistressed families. Depending on families' needs, these programmes are offered either on an individual or group basis. Families are given the opportunity to not just learn about positive parenting, but also to engage actively during sessions by way of discussions on videos and role plays. In this way, families have a direct and hands on experience about implementing positive parenting strategies with the help of the leader.

## THERAPEUTIC AND COMMUNITY SERVICES IN NUMBERS

30 professionals offering their service

180 family cases – 497 individuals

132 families referred

32 closed cases

144 active cases





# HIGHLIGHTS

Home Based Therapeutic Services hosted a conference in 2018 to present the outcome of its ‘evaluation of practice’ following its first year of operations. This event marked a milestone for the Foundation for Social Welfare Services, since the evaluation demonstrated Home Based Therapeutic Services to be the first evidence-based social service in Malta. The evaluation has shown that the aims and objectives of the service are actually meeting the needs and demands of multi-stressed families in Malta, thereby offering a highly professional therapeutic and parenting service to ‘at risk’ families within their communities. This is very much in line with other international services which aim to offer holistic services to ensure that children remain living with their families. A copy of the full report can be downloaded from the “FSWS

Publications” page on the Foundation’s website, [www.fsws.gov.mt](http://www.fsws.gov.mt) or by visiting the following address: <https://fswscms.gov.mt/en/fsws/news/Documents/Documents%202018/HBTSReport.pdf>. The results of the evaluation were also presented during the International Social Services Conference, which was held in Malta in May 2018.

HBTS started to offer its services from Fgura in 2018. These premises are not comprised only of offices, but also a boardroom and two counselling rooms. The presence of HBTS in Fgura meant that it became more accessible for multi-stressed families who live in the southern part of Malta. This also meant that HBTS could offer the “Incredible Years Parenting Group” to parents who live close to this locality.



Besides offering internal training, therapeutic training was also offered to staff who presently work in child care centres. The aim of such training was to support staff who work with young children to enhance their therapeutic skills. This helps to better address the needs of children who exhibit

challenging behaviour. The aim of this training was to help consolidate prevention work from a young age so that childcare centres can offer a stimulating environment. Given the positive feedback from the staff at Child Care Centres, further training will be offered during 2019.

## CONCLUSION

Home Based Therapeutic Services commits itself to continue working intensively with multi-stressed families. The benefits of our work were highlighted by the families who participated in the evaluation process. As can be seen from the above data, HBTS continues to reach vulnerable families who could potentially not have received any therapeutic or parenting intervention. The service continues to offer an opportunity to children who live in 'at risk' situations, to grow up within their family setting,

whilst ensuring that they live in a caring and nurturing environment. The plan for next year is to ensure that HBTS continues to be creative in its service delivery, by exploring any possible ways of working therapeutically with these families, whilst respecting the continuous changing needs of this particular client group. This will help to ensure that as a service, HBTS will always be at the forefront when it comes to reaching out to vulnerable families within their own communities.



# GOZO OPERATIONS





**MGR. JOSEPH VELLA GAUCI**

OPERATIONS DIRECTOR



# OVERVIEW

In June 2018, the Foundation for Social Welfare Services set up a directorate in Gozo to ensure that its services to vulnerable persons are extended to Gozo without any compromise in quality, which in normal circumstances could be expected due to distance and lack of accessibility. The Gozo Branch is therefore entrusted with the provision of the same services to all Gozo residents, irrespective of whether they are born in Gozo, Malta, or elsewhere.

The LEAP workers are the first point of reference for anyone who does not know where to seek help or what kind of help is required for their particular situation. They refer clients to specific professionals such as social workers, family therapists, counsellors, and job advisors. The Home-Based Therapeutic Service in Gozo provides a family therapist and a counsellor who visit clients at their homes. The FSWS Gozo Branch also includes Aġenzija Appoġġ services with generic social workers, and other services for fostered children and fostering parents,

looked-after children, HomeStart for families with newborns, Supervised Access Visits for looked-after children who would be meeting their natural parents, and social work service at the Gozo General Hospital.

The Gozo Branch works hand in hand with educational institutions for the dissemination of information and awareness campaigns. For this purpose, it uses the Education, Science and Culture Centre at Lunzjata Valley from where a number of educational sessions are conducted. It also serves as a research base from where a research project on Homelessness in Gozo has been conducted. The Gozo Branch also conducts a programme with 15 Gozitan prison inmates and their families.

In October 2018, the Gozo Branch launched its emergency on-call service where Social Workers, Mentors and other professional staff are available to anyone on +356 9955 7069 during the week after office hours and 24 hours on weekends and public holidays.

# GOZO BRANCH STAFF

With the appointment of a Director at the helm and the extension of the FSWS' services to Gozo, the Head Office ensured that additional professional and administrative employees are engaged with the Gozo Branch. During the year in review, the capacity building of the Gozo Branch has increased significantly to a total of 23 employees.



## FSWS MANAGEMENT MEETINGS IN GOZO

The first ever management meeting of the Foundation for Social Welfare Services to be held in Gozo occurred in July 2018. FSWS management committed itself towards strengthening the social welfare services in Malta and Gozo. Another management meeting in Gozo was held in October 2018.

# MEETINGS WITH FSWS DIRECTORS

Upon its inception, the Gozo Directorate aimed at organising various meetings with all FSWS Directors; one Directorate at a time. The Gozo Director's intention to invite his counterparts to the Gozo Branch Operation was to familiarise themselves with the services offered by FSWS in Gozo and ensure future inter-departmental collaboration and cooperation. Additionally, such visits also served as the right opportunity for the Gozo employees to be introduced to the various departments' Directors and be briefed about their respective dossiers.

2018 saw the visits by the following Directors:

- Kevin Agius, Director Finance
- Nathalie Attard Bishop, Director Marketing and Communications
- Ruth Sciberras, Operations Director Aġenzija Appoġġ
- Charles Scerri, Operations Director Aġenzija Sedqa
- Claire Sammut, Director of Therapeutic Services and Communities

Each visit enriched the Gozo Branch with useful information and guidance, and facilitated new connections. Other such visits are planned to continue in 2019.





# SERVICES

## LEAP!

The Leap service within FSWS Gozo Branch Operations ensures that support and empowerment is provided to all those who seek assistance in their plight against poverty and social exclusion through employment and education. The main role of the Social Mentor is to direct and encourage service users to approach the requested service and address their needs. The Mentor serves as the key person between the client and specialised services such as social work, family therapy and counselling, as well as liaising with other Ministries, Agencies, and Authorities, amongst others; Jobsplus, Housing Authority, White Goods Scheme, Education, Oasi, and Lino Spiteri Foundation.

The LEAP Social Mentors also organised summer classes for Year 5 and Year 6 students at the Centre for Education, Science and Culture at Wied il-Lunzjata. Classes were held once a week during July and August 2018 with the participation of 50 students.

## SFFD & FEAD DISTRIBUTION

The FEAD (Fund for European Aid to the most Deprived) in Gozo was distributed from Xewkija in February, June, October, and December 2018, while the SFFD (State Food Funded Distribution) was distributed in June and December from three localities: Xewkija, Nadur, and Victoria.

Social Mentors ensured that beneficiaries of both schemes are well served and provided with any assistance they might require, including possible follow up.

## SOCIAL WORK

The generic social work service in Gozo, at present, consists of two full time Social Workers, and another two Social Workers who also work on generic cases along with their cases of a more specialised nature, such as Looked after children and Fostering.

The generic service in Gozo is vast and caters for cases such as domestic abuse,



family disputes, families/individuals facing financial problems, and/or homelessness. The generic Social Workers also work closely with other entities including Jobsplus, Social Workers within the Gozo College, Social Workers within the Ministry for Gozo, the Gozo General Hospital Social Workers, and the Police Force.

### **EMERGENCY ON-CALL**

One of the services that the Gozo Directorate deemed essential but was lacking, despite the 179 Support Line which is based in Malta, was the Emergency On-Call Service. Following discussions with Foundation's CEO and the HR Directorate, the Emergency On-Call Service was approved and eventually launched in Gozo on the 5th October 2018. This service was also a priority item on the Management Meeting's agenda. It now operates after office hours, including weekends and public holidays. It is aimed to assist and accompany individuals facing emergency social situations. Action does not stop at answering phone calls but if needs be, direct intervention with other entities outside office hours is also possible. Emergency on-call service also attends to phone calls from other entities such as the Police and the Gozo General Hospital in crisis situations.

### **FOSTERING**

Gozitan potential foster carers are now able to attend the fostering training courses in Gozo. Following the training, a Social Worker who is assigned to the prospective foster carers, prepare the home-study report which is then sent to the Fostering Board for approval. The Social Worker also monitors, guides and supports the foster care families

to ensure the best possible service to children placed in their care.

### **HOME-START GHAWDEX**

Home-Start Ghawdex is a service provided to support families with young children who are going through a difficult time in their life and need to feel understood. Social Workers within the Gozo Branch and trained volunteers offer practical help and emotional support to these families.

This service is offered to parents who have at least one child under the age of five years and are experiencing situations such as:

- Ill health or disability
- Isolation and are bringing up children with insufficient support
- Financial, relationship or other complex difficulties
- Parents with very young children
- Multiple births

Home-Start Ghawdex volunteers are parents or people who have parental experience. It is compulsory for volunteers to be provided with a 40-hour preparation course to be able to give the best support possible to families requesting the service. The volunteers are also supported and monitored regularly by the Social Worker within the Gozo Branch who is responsible for this service.

Families receive support an average of once a week for about two hours through home visits. Parents could also be accompanied to medical or other appointments if this is so required. Since volunteers are matched according to the family's needs, families will

be given the service once a satisfactory match with a volunteer is made.

### **LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (LAC)**

Another service under the remit of the Gozo Directorate is the Looked after Children – a service which caters for children who are either in voluntary care, or in care by court order or in care order, and ensure the best interest of the minor. These children live either in a residential home or in a fostering home. The minors are referred to the LAC service by various other services such as community services, residential homes, or the child protection service. Social Workers responsible for this service ensure that the minors are well cared for and provided with the necessary life skills, communication skills, and education. In addition, the social workers work with the minors to help them form their identity. Social Workers also work with the minors' biological parents in order to discuss their children's well-being. All of this work is carried out through office visits, home visits, school visits, school meetings, hospital appointments, case reviews, and board meetings, amongst other interventions. Social Workers work in a multidisciplinary team that may include Fostering Social Workers, Therapists, Education Social Workers, and Gozo General Hospital Social Workers.

### **HOME BASE THERAPEUTIC SERVICES (HBTS) - GOZO**

Home Based Therapeutic Services (HBTS) is an outreach service offering multidisciplinary therapeutic support and parenting to multi-stressed families within their communities. This service strives to

reach vulnerable families who would not otherwise engage with office-based services. This service adopts a family preservation model, wherein therapeutic work targets families at risk to minimise the possibility of crisis escalation that requires the removal of children from their families. Apart from offering various therapeutic interventions, HBTS supports multi-stressed families through the Incredible Years Programme, which is an evidence-based programme used to support vulnerable families with children. The programme is offered either on an individual basis or in an office-based group environment.

### **GOZO GENERAL HOSPITAL SOCIAL WORKERS**

The Social Work Service at the Gozo General Hospital offers a holistic service to inpatients of all ages going through psycho-social difficulties due to their medical condition and situation. The Social Workers' role is to assess and attend to the social needs of the clients, with the aims of enhancing the quality of their stay in hospital and facilitating discharge.

This service offers social support to the clients and/or their families, while helping them to cope with their present situation. Clients are assisted to plan their return to a safe home or a new living place, to manage their daily lives and to cope with any issues that arise. In addition, clients are linked to existing community resources to assist them in fulfilling various needs such as financial support, employment, housing, socialisation, rehabilitation, and helping with arranging housekeeping or nursing interventions. Social Workers liaise with other

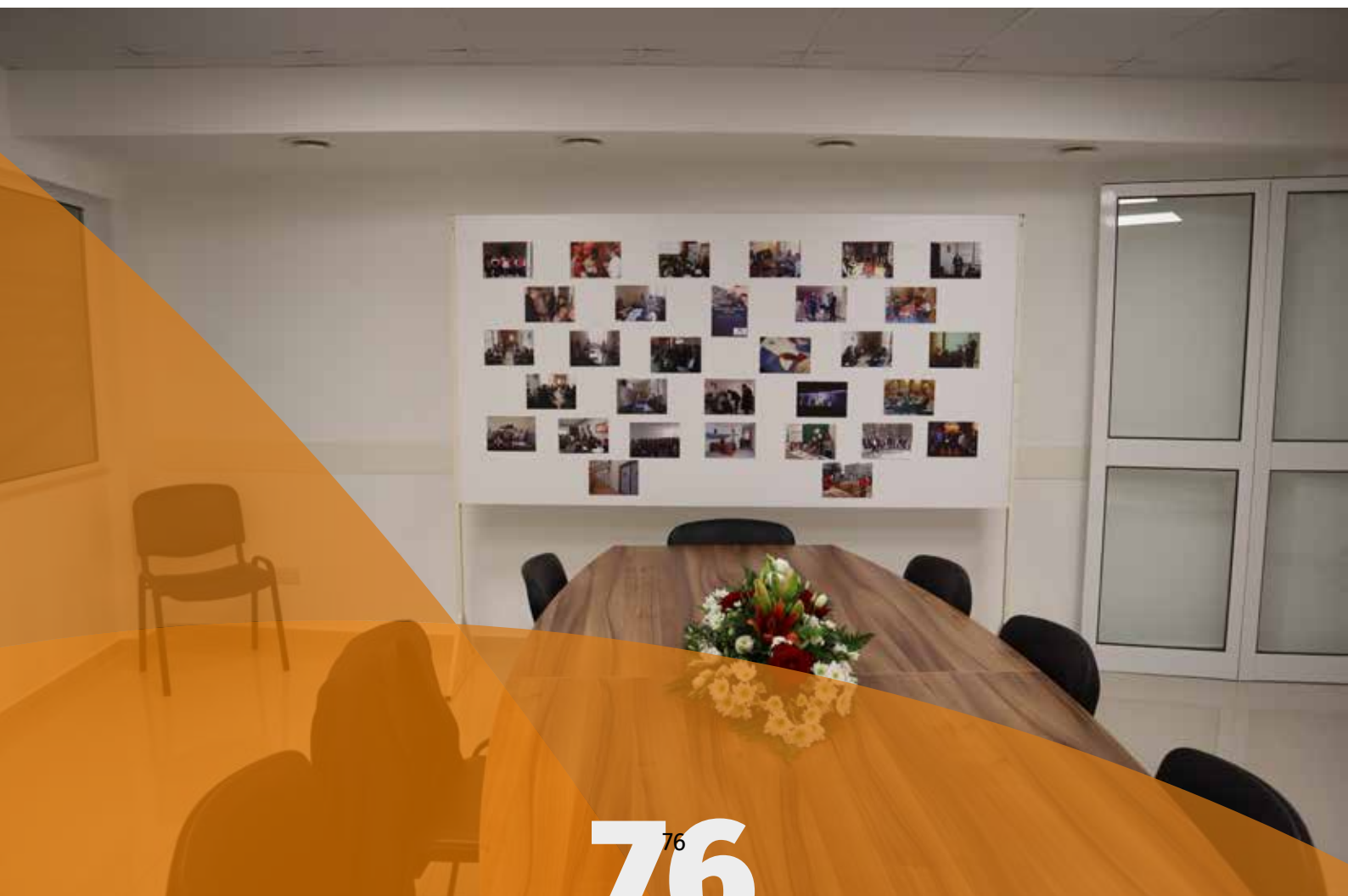
professionals, agencies, and organisations in order to provide holistic care to service users. They offer clients practical and emotional support through individuals and family sessions, home visits, and telephone calls with the objective of empowering individuals to reach their full potential and to achieve good quality lives within our society.

### **SUPERVISED ACCESS VISITS (SAV)**

Supervised Access Visits is another service which forms part of the FSWS Gozo Branch Operations. This service involves supervised contact between children and the non-custodial parents/other family members when access is not possible otherwise. The service is child-focused and is offered in a safe environment while it facilitates communication, relationship, and maintenance building among all members.

This interaction is documented so as to provide feedback which is often shared in a multi-disciplinary team. This enhances a holistic care plan for the benefit of the children.

The Supervisors within the Gozo Branch are present during the access visits in order to ensure that the children concerned are provided with a safe environment during the times of access, and that their needs are met and rights observed. They also supervise the children's behaviour with their foster parents as well as with their biological parents. Supervisors write a detailed report after each SAV. The service is provided in situations where parents are in the process of separation and the Family Court deems it necessary for the well-being of the children that one or both parents see their children in the presence of a supervisor. Moreover, the



service is also provided to children who are under a Care Order, when it is in the child's best interest that they visit their parent/s in the presence of a supervisor. Finally, the service may also be provided to children whose parents agree voluntarily that it is in the child/children's best interest to make use of this service.

### **T.F.A.L. 3 SEDQA PROGRAMME IN GOZO**

After an absence of 14 years from Gozo, in November 2018 it was agreed, that the T.F.A.L 3, the Sedqa Preventive Programme in Gozo for Year 3 primary students will be relaunched in January 2019. Initial phases included the approval from the Gozo College Principal, contacts with 15 Primary Schools in Gozo, cooperation and collaboration between the Sedqa Staff and the Gozo Staff to procure the necessary tools for the programme and a

qualified employee from the Gozo Branch to shadow sessions in Malta prior to delivery of sessions to the Gozitan students.

### **FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRES**

The Gozo Branch is extending its outreach with the launching of two Family Resource Centres, in Victoria and in Marsalforn, to provide adequate care, support and quality services to the most vulnerable and highly at risk of social exclusion irrespective of age, sex, race and belief. Refurbishment works in both centres started in 2018; whilst the inauguration of both centres is planned for 2019. The Victoria, Family Resource Centre will have all professional staff housed under one roof. On the other hand, at the Family Resource Centre in Marsalforn, additional services by key stakeholders will also be provided on a scheduled basis.



## **REGIONAL NETWORK MEETINGS**

Three Regional Network meetings were held in 2018.

The first Network Meeting for 2018 was held in January and addressed by the Minister for the Family, Children's Right and Social Solidarity Michael Falzon and the Minister for Gozo Justyne Caruana. Reduction of the risk of poverty and social exclusion were top of the agenda.

The second Network Meeting was held in February and addressed by the Parliamentary Secretary for Persons with Disability and Active Ageing Anthony Agius Decelis. The empowerment and social inclusion of the persons with disabilities as well as the well-being and the care of the elderly in the community were discussed.

The third Network Meeting was held in May and addressed by the Parliamentary Secretary for Social Accommodation Roderick Galdes, who shared with the network participants the government's plans in respect of the social housing.

## **MEETINGS WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS**

Various strategic meetings with key stakeholders have been held since September 2018. These are set to continue in 2019. The aim of these meetings is to raise awareness amongst key stakeholders about the presence and activity of the new FSWS branch in Gozo. This should ensure better communication and cooperation between these entities. In fact, five meetings were held with members from the Marsalforn community committee, Jobsplus, Projects Facilitator at the Corradino

Correctional Facility and the Director of Probation and Parole Services, the Police; and the CEO of the Gozo General Hospital and Steward Health Care Malta.

## **FRESHER'S WEEK**

In October 2018, the FSWS Gozo Branch Operations participated in the Freshers' Week at Sir M. A. Refalo Centre for further studies. The Gozo staff introduced the services offered by the Gozo Branch to the students, as well as helped them familiarise themselves with these professional services.

## **HOMELESSNESS CONFERENCE IN GOZO**

Upon the CEO's initiative, a research study about homelessness in Gozo commenced in November 2018. This was announced during the CEO's concluding speech of the Homelessness Conference held in Malta, in November 2018, when he stated that a follow-up of that conference was to be held in February 2019 in Gozo focusing on the homelessness situation on the island. The research was conducted by the Branch's Research Executive and the Executive III. They investigated the situation of homeless FSWS service users and other homeless people in Gozo, with particular attention to their characteristics, needs and challenges as well as their reasons for homelessness. This study is to be presented during the 2019 conference in Gozo.

## **16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM #UNITE #STOPDOMESTICVIOLENCE**

As part of the 16 Days of Activism, the Gozo Branch was responsible for a one-day event in Gozo on 3rd December 2018. It was organised in collaboration with the Sir Michelangelo Refalo Sixth Form. The aim of this event was



to raise awareness about domestic violence among students and help them understand the unfortunate realities that prevail in our society. Students had the opportunity to participate in a series of workshop activities and discuss their thoughts in group reflective sessions. Experienced professional social workers also delivered sessions about concepts and kinds of domestic violence, their effects and other patterns and information related to victims, perpetrators, and available services in the sector in both Malta and Gozo. A total of 60 students participated during this event.

### MISCELLANEOUS

In March 2018, University of Malta students reading for an MA in Probation Services

visited the Gozo Branch and the LEAP Centre, accompanied by Mr Joseph Mizzi, Gozo Probation Officer; whilst in December 2018, Guatemalan Social Mentors hailing from the parish of Gozitan Missionary Fr Anton Grech paid a visit to the Gozo Branch accompanied by Ms Maria Attard, founder of Dar Ġużeppa. These Social Mentors who were seeking information of how to implement a structure with the intention of launching a Social Workers Unit in their community in Guatemala, were briefed with the local social issues. They were given information about the Operational Plan that is being implemented in Gozo and also explored the possibility of future collaboration between both entities.

## CONCLUSION

This programme of works attests to the constant efforts of the FSWS Gozo Branch to deliver its services, as broadly as possible, yet in an effective manner. The main aim for the setting up of the Gozo Branch has been, since its inception, to extend all of the existing services in Malta to the island of Gozo and its population. This first six-month period has been an experiment of sorts, in this regard.

The FSWS Gozo Branch now looks forward to consolidating the work that has been initiated towards its medium-term goals, namely, the opening and effective running of two Family Resource Centres, which in turn, would constitute the first phase in the process of strengthening the social infrastructure on the island.

# HUMAN RESOURCES, RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING



**ANTHONY APAP**

Director

# OVERVIEW



Photo: DOI - Clifton Fenech

At the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS), our employees are fundamental to our success and instrumental in achieving our goals. Our Agencies are committed in providing quality services to those in need. A knowledgeable, learning-orientated workforce contributes towards this endeavour.

FSWS employs around 700 employees and the Corporate Human Resources Department

is responsible in providing HR related services across the board. This office has various functions, ranging from employee wellbeing, engagement, retention, training, and development. Other duties include; industrial relations, grievance handling, legal procedures, and employee performance appraisals. In addition, this office is also accountable for effective designing and implementation of policies, procedures, and ensuring their implementation thereof.

We strive to achieve our set objectives by equipping persons working with children, young people, adults and families in need with the necessary skills and expertise to reach the Foundation's pre-set goals.

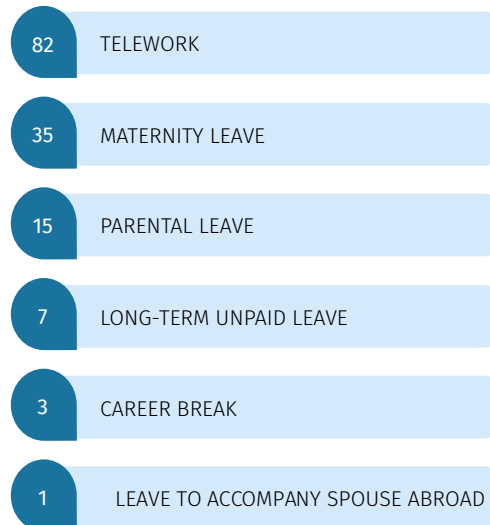
FSWS also offers placement opportunities for students ranging from various professions and academic background. At FSWS we also offer continuous professional development (CPD) for all warranted professionals as well as continuous training opportunities locally as well as abroad to both warranted and non-warranted employees. The HR Department is always on the lookout for qualified, professional, and/or experienced personnel. Following the signing of the new FSWS Collective Agreement, the conditions of employment of our staff members are very attractive and competitive.

## HUMAN RESOURCES

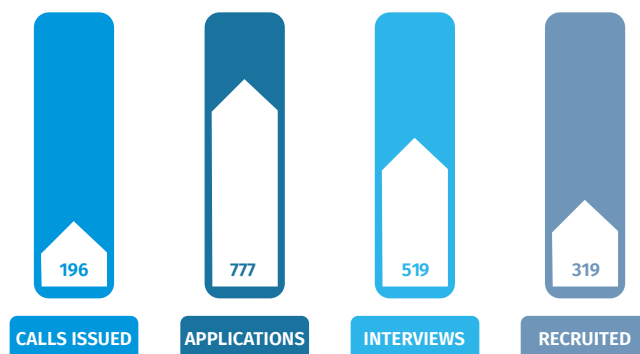
Employing the right candidate is of great importance and essential in ensuring that our clients are receiving the best service possible. Throughout 2018, the HR Department issued around two hundred (200) calls and subsequently received a total number of seven hundred and seventy-seven (777) applications. Following the calls, a total number of five hundred and nineteen (519) potential candidates were interviewed and three hundred and nineteen (319) candidates were recruited (diagram 1). FSWS is a forerunner in providing Family Friendly Measures to its staff members. As indicated in Diagram 2 a number of staff members made use of FFM.



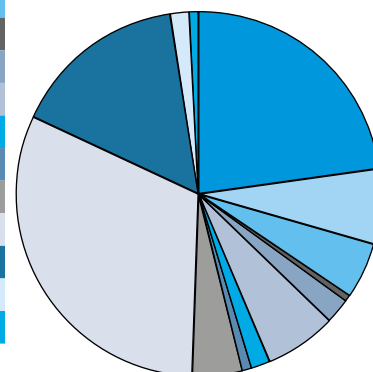
### FAMILY FRIENDLY MEASURES



### HR PROCESSES YEAR 2018



Administration	177
Executive - Services	52
Managment	40
Medical Doctor	4
Nurse/Pharmacist	17
Practitioner	49
Psychologist	12
Senior Executive II - RDA	8
Social Support Worker	33
Social Worker / Senior	244
Support Worker	120
Trainee Support Worker	14
Youth Worker	5
Total	755







### **EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME**

FSWS recognises that the effectiveness of its operations lies in the general well-being of all staff members. In order to ensure that employees are motivated and satisfied at their place of work, EAP is offered in order to deal with both problems arising from the nature of work and persistent personal problems that are likely to interfere with the individual's work performance. Throughout 2018 there were 46 staff members who made use of this service.

### **REQUESTS FOR TRANSFER**

In order to retain staff members, FSWS provides the opportunity for staff members to ask to move from one service/agency to

another. Apart from retaining employees, the expertise of experienced staff members shall not be lost. Most of requests were entertained particularly those of Social Workers.

### **GLOBAL HR TRENDS SUMMIT MALTA**

The HR Department staff members attended the Global HR Trends Summit Malta on the 23rd of October, 2018. This Summit offered deeper understanding of today's ever changing HR trends and provided the HR team with a natural support structure that will help to stretch HR knowledge. Various international HR experts from Facebook, Benetton, Dentsu Aegis, Hannesbrands, LEGO Group, and ING Bank delivered in-depth sessions and workshops

which undoubtedly contributed an overview to stay ahead of the latest HR trends.

### **CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)**

Warranted Professionals who are in Grade, 1, 2 or 3 of the FSWS Collective Agreement, are entitled to a maximum of €700 per year as Continuous Professional Development. The CPD allowance is not renewable and expires at the end of each calendar year. Warranted professionals can make use of the CPD budget for different purposes:

- Conferences/workshops – local and abroad;
- Purchase of material: including subscription/s to professional publications related to profession (including online subscriptions) and books related to profession; and
- Membership fees for affiliation to professional bodies related to profession;

Eighty-eight (88) warranted professionals across FSWS made use of the CPD fund in 2018.

### **TRAINING FUND**

Staff members who do not qualify for CPD have the opportunity to forward requests for and avail of other training which is not listed in the FSWS' Operational Plans and make use of the Training Fund. The amount granted should not exceed €300 per annum per staff member and each staff member can make a request for one training per year for this training. Twenty-four members (24) of staff

across FSWS benefited from the Training Fund in 2018.

### **ESF 02.063 – KNOWLEDGE, TRAINING, COMMUNICATIONS AND SUPPORT MEASURES IN SUPPORT OF VULNERABLE GROUPS**

The Ministry for the Family, Children's Rights and Social Solidarity has offered a number of sponsorships for government entities to attend training courses, job shadowing, conferences, seminars and workshops under the project: ESF.02.063 – Knowledge, Training, Communications and Support Measures in Support of Vulnerable Groups. The sponsorships are funded under the European Social Fund (ESF), Operational Programme II – Investing in human capital to create more opportunities and promote the wellbeing of society' for the 2014–2020 programming period. In 2018, sixty (60) workers across FSWS attended conferences and seminars abroad through this ESF Project.

### **STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**

The course entitled 'Strategic Human Resources Management' organised by the London Business Training and Consulting was held in London between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2018. For this course, two staff members, Ms Vivienne Mallia Goham and Ms Mandy Zaffarese, from the HR Team within the Foundation for Social Welfare Services attended. Throughout the course, a different topic was tackled each day and it was both theoretical and practical. The level of the course superseded the expectation of the attendees as it was very enriching and

provided adequate tools pertaining to HR strategic management.

## **INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICES CONFERENCE 2018**

Around 100 professionals across the Foundation attended the International Social Services Conference which was held between the 21<sup>st</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> May, 2018 at the University of Malta Valletta Campus. This conference offered a wide opportunity of learning through a multitude of workshops addressing a number of different aspects of social services. They covered a wide variety of topics regarding social work, including but not limited to work with multi-stressed families, parenting, migrants, and children. It also served to facilitate networking amongst professionals, locally and abroad.

## **GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION TRAINING**

The impact of the GDPR is far reaching, especially due to the nature and amount of

sensitive data workers process and store. Therefore, training seminars to all staff across FSWS were organised to provide them with the basic awareness of what this regulation entails and their role in adhering to it. Around 250 workers attended this seminar so far. This training will continue to be delivered in 2019.

## **EQUALITY MARK**

In 2018, FSWS was once again recertified with the Equality Mark for a further period of three years. The FSWS is one of the original entities in Malta which has been awarded the equality mark since its inception in 2010. The Equality Mark is a certification awarded to organisations that make gender equality one of their values. In order to be certified for the mark, the FSWS had to go through rigorous exercises to meet the tight criteria set by NCPE.

# CONCLUSION

Throughout 2018, the HR Department was involved in a myriad of things apart from the usual HR business; the signing of the new collective agreement for all FSWS employees can be considered as the highlight of the year. Following almost two years of negotiations with all parties involved, the FSWS Management is proud to have achieved an attractive salary package for all employees. The introduction of new

allowances and career path for warranted professionals working within the FSWS were introduced. Without any doubt, the attractive salary package, the possibility of working in different areas, family friendly measures, as well as training opportunities, both locally and abroad, put the Foundation as Malta's leading employer in the social sector with alluring conditions of work.

# CORPORATE SERVICES





**STEPHEN VELLA**

Director

# OVERVIEW

The Corporate Services within the Foundation for Social Welfare Services are tasked with a variety of activities that combine and consolidate enterprise-wide needed support based on specialised knowledge, best practices, and technology to serve the agencies within the same Foundation and coordinate contracts with other social partners in shared ventures. To achieve

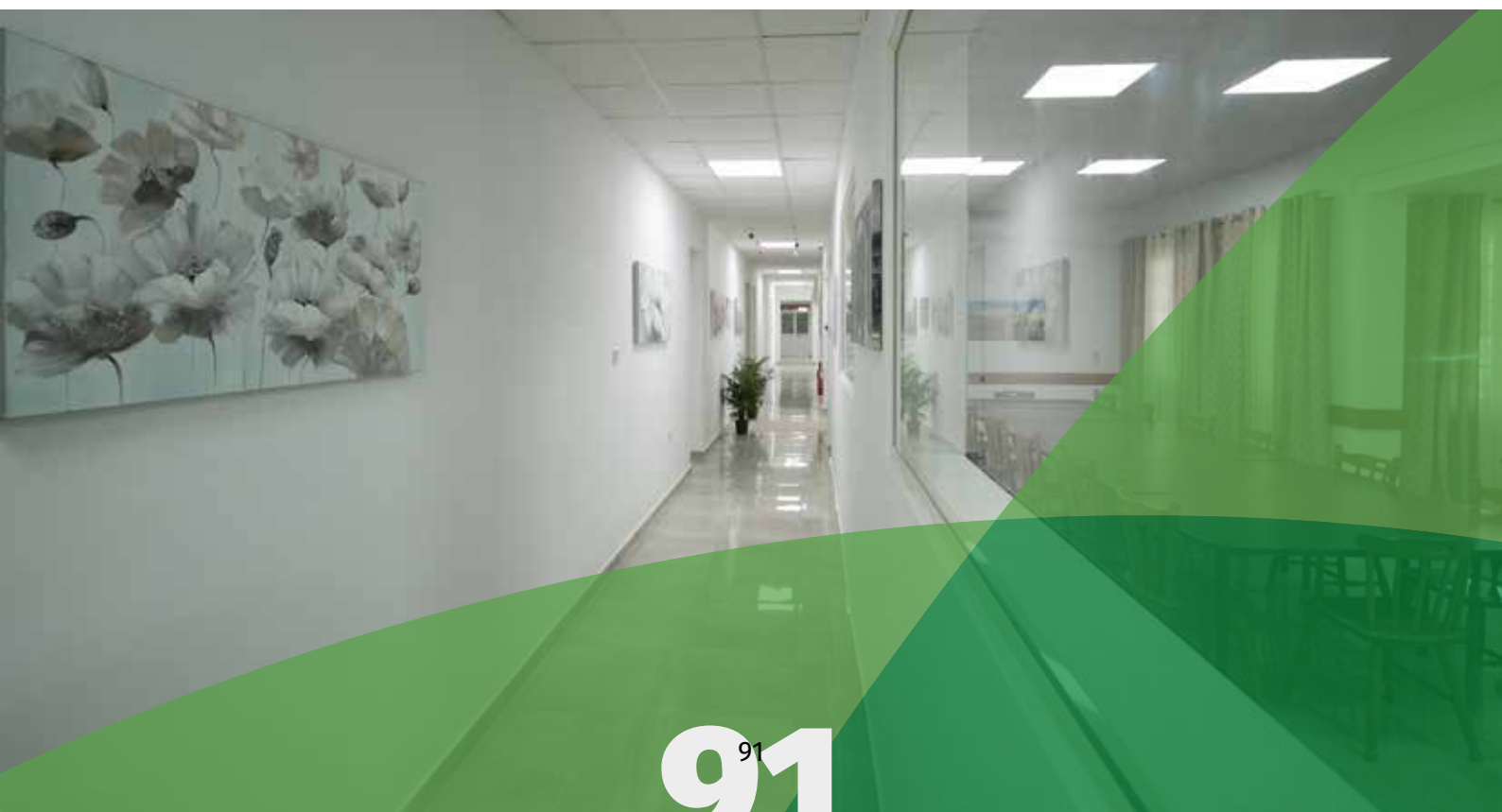
its aim, the directorate focuses mainly on procurement of services and goods; leasing and maintenance of the required operational infrastructures; provision of supplies; maintaining the ICT infrastructure; intervening in matters related to health and safety; supporting initiatives that are Foundation wide, and drafting, submitting and assisting in the implementation of EU funded projects.



# ACHIEVEMENTS

2018 was heavily marked with the extensive refurbishment works carried out across the Foundation's services. The Hal Farrug Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation services (Komunità Santa Marija) benefitted from a complete overhaul rendering the place welcoming and highly meeting the required standards. Another two major works undertaken in 2018 were the extension of

the Foundation's Head Office and the new Home Based Therapeutic Services Centre in Fgura. All works necessitated extensive interventions as all the above sites were either in shell form or required a complete overhaul to meet the designated service. Works also initiated in 2018 to host into new locations the Child Protection Services and the Supportline Services within Aġenzija Appoġġ.



# HIGHLIGHT OF EACH SECTION

## ADMINISTRATION AND PROCUREMENT

The *Administration and Procurement Team* within the directorate issued various request for quotes, Expression of interests and Tenders in 2018 ranging as follows:

3G Data Service	Lease of FEAD storage facility
Air-conditioners	Multifunction Printers
Business Advisor for Leap2Enterprise	Office Furniture
Cleaning Tender	Psychiatric Nurse
Consumables & Stationery	Representative in India
Diaries	Representative in Vietnam
External Auditors Tender	SAV Transport
Insurance Brokerage	Security Tender
Lease of premises for Gozo Branch	Vehicle Leasing Service
Lease of premises for OK Project	Website Support

This team also issues the required calls and collate process all payments pertaining to the Head Office and forward for settlement by the Foundation's Finance Department.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The *Information and Communication Technology* (ICT) team with the Foundation had a very active 2018 as this was marked by the growing and expansion of services,

some of which are based outside our core business service and thus had to ensure that the newly installed ICT infrastructure is fully compatible with MITA requirements and services. Furthermore, during 2018 various peripherals such as laptops and multifunction printers were procured and these required installation, logging and maintenance thereof. Prompt trouble shooting was supported throughout the year, assigning on a daily basis an ICT officer to support both

remote and on-site support if needed. The Case Management System (CMS) also had marked advancement during 2018 as MITA had tendered and contracted another service provider being the most knowledgeable and a Microsoft Gold Partner on the CRM software availed locally.

### MAINTENANCE TEAM

Apart from championing the refurbishment of the three major projects undertaken in 2018, the Maintenance Team assisted in the procurement process of all the construction material and required contents of the sites in question. There were instances in 2018 whereby all three projects were all active simultaneously and thanks to each assigned team, the coordination and flow of works was admirable. A special thanks goes to all who contributed in achieving such mammoth refurbishments, with considerable marked savings as most of the work was carried out by the Foundation's skilled employees.

### EU PROGRAMMES

The *EU Programmes Team* within the Foundation also had a very challenging year as various new project proposals had to be drafted and submitted. The OK Project, which assists vulnerable young people, offering them an opportunity to lead an independent life, was launched and staff duly recruited. This project is fully financed by the EEA Norway Grants. The team was also strengthened by two new staff members who brought joviality and new ideas to our service. Another major task assigned in 2018 was the strengthening of our partnership into our Ministry's ESF 02.063 Knowledge, Training, Communications and Support Measures in Support of Vulnerable

Groups project. The team was also tasked with submitting a project application supporting victims of Human Trafficking. In October 2018 the team also hosted locally the Fund for the European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) 12<sup>th</sup> Network meeting with over 100 EU delegates participating and contributing towards strengthening the provision of accompanying measures alongside food distribution. The team was also tasked with the distribution coordination of FEAD and SFFD (State Funded Food Distribution) nationwide, reaching out to over 27,000 families.

### SCHEMES & INITIATIVES

The *Schemes & Initiatives Team* was formed in 2018 within the Foundation to support ventures, initiatives, and schemes which are fully nationally funded and specifically target the most vulnerable cohort. This team championed the profiling of Housing Authority, referring clients to one of the two Bank loan schemes (APS and BOV). To date, over 700 individuals or families have been referred and these were duly profiled and assisted in submitting their request to either the specific loan to be granted a loan waiving of the 10% down payment. This team also supported the processing of applications to the Foundation of Education Services (FES) of clients deriving from any of the Foundation's services (Aġenzija Appoġġ, Aġenzija Sedqa and Community based Services) to benefit from the waiving of costs to child care services such as Klabb 3-16 and Klabb Sajf.

### PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

The *Property Management* section within the Directorate also played a pivotal role in 2018 to ensure that the operational requirements



of the agencies within the Foundation are duly met. Various properties have been leased to meet the ever growing demand, particularly servicing the specialized services offering temporary shelter, and protection of minors.

## CONCLUSION

The Directorate for Corporate Services within the Foundation always welcomes challenges and with internal resources manages to respond professionally and intervene promptly to answer to the demand. Whenever this is not possible, outside services are procured and closely supervised to ensure that maximum standards are provided.



# LEAP! – OVERVIEW

The LEAP venture within the Foundation for Social Welfare Services started as an ESF EU funded project, and since 2017 it has been streamlined and fully integrated into the Foundation’s operations. The main objective is community service – reaching out to those in most need of assistance and facilitating their active participation within the community. The dedication and commitment of all LEAP personnel was pivotal in reaching set targets for 2018, mainly those of strengthening collaboration and networking between major stakeholders. 2018 was also strategically earmarked as the year of transition from a mainstreaming project into a fully integrated service within the Foundation’s plans in establishing one team working within the community.

2018 was also earmarked by LEAP’s contribution in profiling over 1,500 families

who are on the list of the Housing Authority in an exercise being carried out by the same Authority to ensure that enlisted potential beneficiaries are fully in line with the eligibility criteria for social housing. Home visits were carried out and profiles duly compiled.

LEAP also hosted the 12<sup>th</sup> FEAD’s network meeting on the Provision of Accompanying measures alongside food distributions across all EU member states. This was held in October 2018 with the participation of over 100 foreign delegates.

5 food distributions
56,000 food packages
Reaching 26,000 families

Region	FEAD eligible households per distribution (3 distributions per year)	SFFD eligible households per distribution (2 distributions per year)	Profiles collated pertaining to FEAD households carried out during home visits (year 2016)	Families considered to be eligible for the White Goods Scheme (2017 – 2018)	Profiles collated with households considered to be eligible for the White Goods Scheme in collaboration with the Water & Energy Agency (2018)	Households referred to the National Literacy Agency for dissemination of books and to participate during other initiatives such as 'Read with Me' (2018)	Profiles collated in collaboration with the Housing Authority with households on their waiting list (2018)	Profiles collated with eligible households to benefit from a loan in collaboration with APS Bank (2016-2019)	Profiles collated with eligible households to benefit from a loan in collaboration with Bank Of Valletta (2018-2019)	Households referred to the Foundation for Educational Services to benefit from educational initiatives for free (Skolasajf, Childcare, Klabb 3-16) (2018)
Gozo Region	215	1719	366	19	7	70	101	20	23	0
Northern Region	385	2147	850	67	38	123	255	45	51	19
Northern Harbour Region	1055	6456	1441	149	97	290	219	79	118	11
South Eastern Region	537	2902	1084	71	40	223	320	55	63	2
Southern Harbour Region	961	5917	2256	123	66	195	322	96	122	8
Western Region	312	1931	1612	37	19	86	163	21	53	3
TOTAL	3465	21072	7609	466	267	987	1380	316	430	43

## HIGHLIGHTS

2018 has been another successful year for LEAP's endeavours – culminating in the various ventures undertaken at regional levels between the various stakeholders collaborating together and ensuring that those in most need of support and assistance are duly serviced. A myriad of ventures has been undertaken during the span of the

year to safeguard LEAP's mission – that of facilitating social mobility and reaching out to the most deprived. These span on the following initiatives:

- Drop in service in all LEAP centres for those in need of social assistance / referral to existing services, such as

social work service, Housing Authority, Jobsplus, and so forth;

- Facilitating the distribution of food packages FEAD and State Funded Food Distribution schemes;
- Referring and assisting families in need to the Water & Energy Agency Scheme;
- Close collaboration with the National Literacy Agency to reach out to

vulnerable families having children under the age of three and whilst donating new books, entice them to attend briefing sessions how to read with children of a tender age; and

- Encourage further collaboration amongst frontline workers to collaborate and professionally reach out to the most vulnerable.

## CONCLUSION

LEAP reaches its objective the moment social stakeholders within each region invest heftily in collaboration and networking, and together the needs of those targeted are duly encountered. The best way to eradicate poverty and social exclusion is by rendering a professional, coherent and incisive response – and the best way to reach out is to reach out together. A collective response will empower individuals and families to take the leap and

avail of the appropriate service/s required to lead an independent life, minimising as much as possible both vulnerability and exclusion. 2018 was heftily characterised in focus on such goals and results are tangible. All this augurs well to the future developments envisaged for 2019 whereby LEAP shall integrate into the Foundation's Community Services along with similar services – further strengthening collaboration and networking.

FINANCE



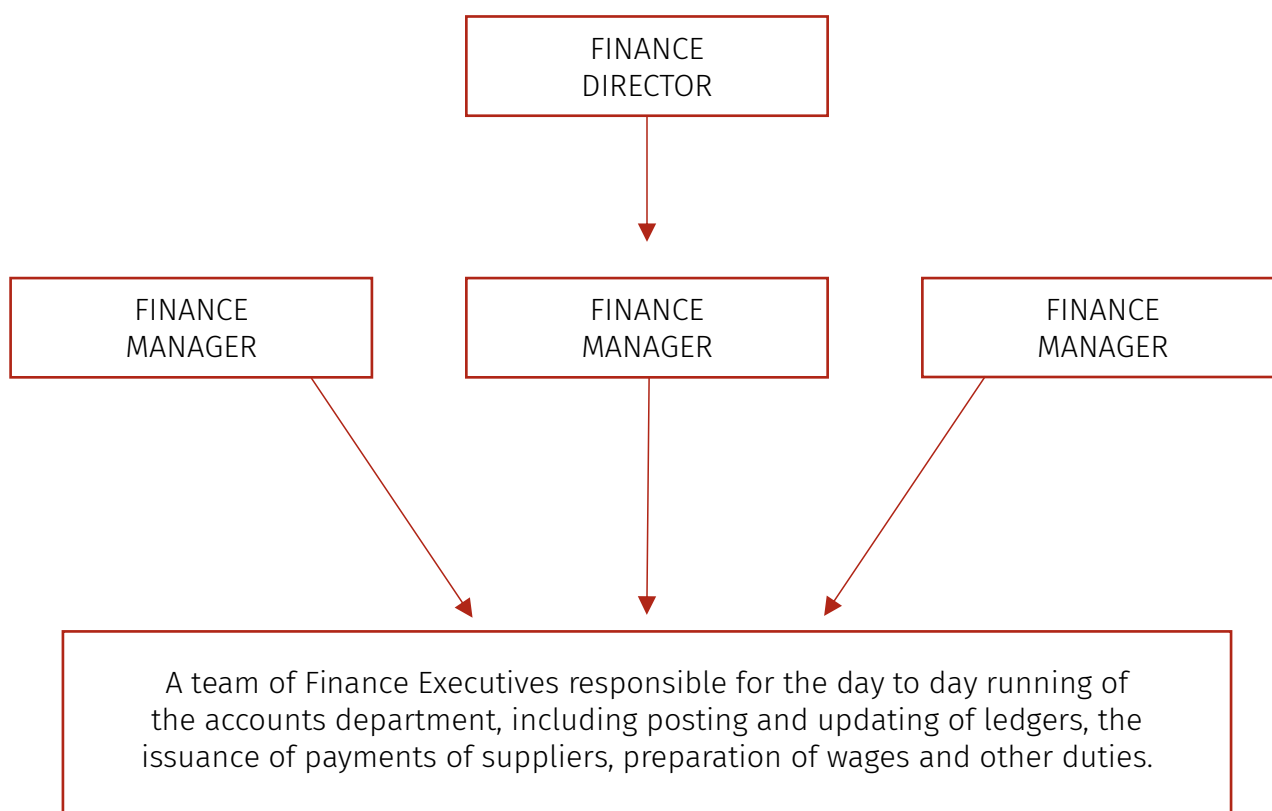


**KEVIN AGIUS**

Director

# OVERVIEW

The FSWS Finance Department is composed as follows:



The Finance Department of the FSWS is entrusted with the accounting matters of all the sub agencies which include, Agenzija Appoġġ, Agenzija Sedqa, Agenzija Għal – Harsien tat – Tfal, and LEAP Community Resource Centres.

The FSWS Finance Team is responsible for managing this budget as follows:

- accounting, treasury and financial reporting of the Foundation and its Agencies;

- ensuring that the financial affairs of the entities are conducted in accordance with relevant statutory and legal requirements; and
- striving to deliver an effective and efficient financial services to Board and Management of FSWS.

## BUDGET

During the year under review, the budget allocated to the FSWS group amounted to €15,520,000, where €11 million was allocated to

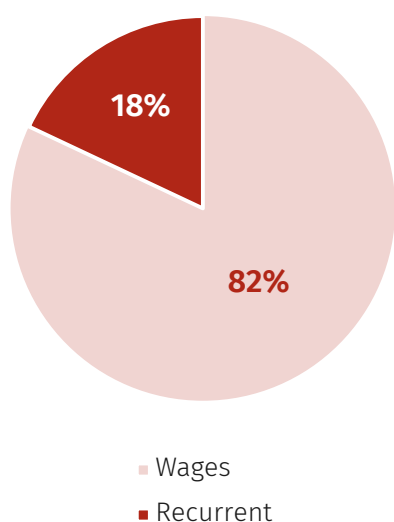
FSWS including Aġenzija Appoġġ and Aġenzija Sedqa, €2,270,000 to Aġenzija għall-Ħarsien tat-Tfal and €2,250,000 was allocated to LEAP Community Resource Centre.

The following table compares the funding with previous years as follows:

Agency	2017	2018
	€	€
FSWS (including Appoġġ & Sedqa)	10,680,000	11,000,000
LEAP Community Resources	1,950,000	2,250,000
Aġenzija għall-Ħarsien tat-Tfal	2,200,000	2,270,000
Total	14,830,000	15,520,000

Being a service industry, the greatest expense at FSWS is wages. In fact, 82% of the expenditure is wages and salaries.

Expenses - FSWS Group 2018



Another important event in 2018 was the Collective Agreement reached between the FSWS and the UM. After several months of discussions, the agreement was signed in July 2018. The agreement was backdated from

2017 and the conditions of pay and work were considerably improved.

The Finance Department together with the Payroll section, embarked on an exercise in order to determine the extra funding required as the increase in wages as a result of the collective agreement were separately funded by the MFIN.

During the final months of the year, the Payroll section together with the Finance Department, embarked on schedule in order to adjust employees' wages to reflect the collective agreement increases. By December, 2018, all employees had their wages adjusted and in conformity with new wage structures.

Another feat achieved by the Finance Department is that during the projections submitted to the Ministry for Finance (MFIN) during 2018, the department requested that a budget for capital expenditure is allotted to FSWS. The request was acceded to by the MFIN wherein Minister of Finance, during his budget speech, allocated the amount of €1.9 million towards capital expenditure in order for the FSWS to extend its services.

The Finance Department strives to:

- provide meaningful and timely reports to the FSWS top management and to the ministries concerned in order to take the correct management decisions;
- provide accurate information to acquire the correct funding for the smooth operation of FSWS and its entities; and
- abide to government procurement regulations in order to safe guard taxpayers' money.

# MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS



**NATHALIE ATTARD BISHOP**

Director



# OVERVIEW

The Marketing and Communications Department (MCD) promotes the agencies' services with the Maltese population through various media in order to cast a wide net and ensure that FSWS' reach is vast and targets as many people as possible.

This is done efficiently through the use of multiple media; television, radio, print, and online. The department constantly monitors Maltese news channels and strives to maintain an excellent relationship with local media houses in order to ensure that the services which fall under FSWS' remit are promoted in a well-organised and holistic manner.

The Foundation also values its contacts with the local community, and keeps an

open channel for anyone to comment or submit queries through the use of its various social media profiles. While there is a particular focus on its Facebook pages due to its prevalence as the favourite social media platform for the Maltese population, the Foundation also launched a Twitter profile in recent years in order to expand its reach and accessibilities to anyone interested to contact the Foundation.

The Marketing and Communications Department is also in charge of designs or artwork to be used across the agency. It creates posters for events, branded merchandise for promotional and clerical purposes, and designs adverts and materials for events, inter alia.

Media Interventions 2018		
Tv	Radio	Total
195	104	299



# HIGHLIGHTS

Throughout 2018, the MCD organised various events and campaigns to promote FSWS' agencies and services. Amongst these, FSWS contributed to various career days including the University of Malta's Freshers' Week, MCAST's Careers Expo, ITS's Freshers' Week, and Catholic Education Fifth Formers Careers Day. The MCD coordinated with various professionals working within the Foundation to attend the events and talk to interested students, as well as the design and production of various informational leaflets and merchandise for distribution.

## FOSTERING CAMPAIGN

Awareness about the need for Foster Carers was at the forefront of the 2018 campaign, with the campaign being launched on 23<sup>rd</sup> April. The campaign consisted of various events and promotions, such as: spots on TV and radio; adverts in print, social media and on buses; and a conference for foster carers.

## SAFE AWARD CEREMONY

In 2018, the SAFE Award Ceremony was held in May. This event was organised together with the Prevention Team within Aġenzija Sedqa, during which, the Minister for Family, Children's Rights and Social Solidarity together with FSWS' Chief Executive Officer presented a memento and certificates to over 20 government entities and private companies that implemented the SAFE programme.

## INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

In May 2018, the Marketing Department was also involved in the organisation of the International Social Service event. A 10-minute corporate video was prepared for this occasion and various other material was prepared and distributed to all delegates.



### **NATIONAL CONFERENCE AGAINST DRUG ABUSE**

One of the main events, during the year in review, was held on the 26<sup>th</sup> June, namely a National Conference Against Drug Abuse. This conference, “Hajja hielsa mid-droga – Flimkien b’għan wiehed” was organised together with the Ministry for Family, Children’s Rights and Social Solidarity, Caritas and Oasi and was held within the Parliament Building.

### **ADOPTION SERVICE 10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

On 19<sup>th</sup> September, the Foundation celebrated ten years since the start of the Appogg Adoption Service with an event where professionals and parents who benefitted from the services were invited to attend.

### **HBTS REPORT**

A report highlighting the performance of the Home Based Therapeutic Service in Malta in 2017 was published and released during a conference on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2018. During the conference, various presentations and discussions revolving around the accessibility of social service to families directly in their homes or communities.

### **16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM**

In November 2018, the Marketing Department worked together with the International Department in order to organise the 16 Days of Activism event. Australian born Natasha Toffa, a domestic violence survivor herself, addressed the event; whilst two other Maltese women who suffered domestic violence, also





Photo: DOI - Clifton Fenech

spoke about their experiences and how they managed to survive their ordeal.

### **ANNUAL FOSTERING CONFERENCE**

Following the launch of the Fostering campaign earlier in 2018, the Marketing Department together with the Fostering Team, organised the annual Fostering Conference in November. During the conference, a foreign keynote speaker, Renè de Bot who is a Youth Consultant, provided those present with insights on the emotional and well-being of fostered children. FSWS' Legal Consultant, Dr Andy Ellul, who was also one of the main speakers, spoke in detail

about the Child Protection Bill (out-of-home-care).

### **KOMUNITÀ SANTA MARIJA REFURBISHMENT**

After months of hard work, on 21<sup>st</sup> December Komunità Santa Marija at Hal Farruġ celebrated its intense refurbishment with a mass, blessing of the commemorative plaque and refreshments. The MCD also coordinated the setting up of this event and the necessary communication with local media sources to provide coverage of the event in order to showcase the work on the newly renovated location.

# CONCLUSION

Efforts to increase our social media presence on the Foundation's main Facebook page as well as its sub-pages together with increased presence on more traditional media such as television, radio and printed material, all work towards the ultimate goal of improving the public's awareness of the Foundation, its agencies and the services that they provide.

The Marketing Department will continue to put forward effort to participate in events which bring us closer to the people, through fairs which allow us to promote the Foundations' image as well as providing us with the opportunity to not only hear, but listen to what the public wants to tell us.





# INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



**CLAUDETTE ABELA BALDACCHINO**

Director

# OVERVIEW

The International Relations (IR) Department can pride itself on having reached a number of milestones throughout the first six months of its official operation. The IR Department saw its initial formality stages in mid-2017; however, it was only in mid-2018 that the Foundation for Social Welfare Services officially set up this Department.

Investing in an IR Department gives FSWS additional value. During the period under review IR Department gave greater prominence and enhanced the relationship with both local and international stakeholders who plan, manage, and implement social services within the context of social care, social work, and social policy to facilitate social inclusion especially the most vulnerable in an international context.

The IR Department also explored the possibility to create new platforms and actively participated in delegations, missions, meetings, and other opportunities that rose from time to time in different areas of social policy, social services, and in particular in the field of intercountry adoptions. It has also provided assistance in collaboration with the different agencies within FSWS to children and families when in distress or on the move as and where requested.

## **2018: THE YEAR OF FIRSTS IN A NUTSHELL**

The year 2018 can be branded as the year of firsts. The IR Department served as

a vehicle, promoter and a stimulus so that FSWS could host two international events, participated in exchange of views at European level, and coordinate strategic communication on the subject of Intercountry adoptions for five different countries across two different continents; Europe and Asia.

## **INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICE (ISS)**

International Social Service (ISS) is an international NGO founded in 1924. It is an international federation of interconnected NGOs and partners that works towards re-establishing links within a family separated by borders. The ISS network strives to find solutions that enhance the protection of children in vulnerable situations.

FSWS officially became a member of ISS in December 2017. Seventeen months later FSWS hosted the International Social Service (ISS) International Congress (IC) and was also elected as a member of the governing board of the international organization. This is a first for Malta and for FSWS.

A total of 120 Delegates from around the globe participated during the IC in Malta. Themes included community approach in reaching out to the most vulnerable; adoptions, including alternative care and positive parenting; human trafficking; and quality standards.

During the ISS IC in Malta, CEO Alfred Grixti was elected member of the ISS Governing Board. Claudette Abela Baldacchino Director International Relations was elected member of the Professional Advisory Committee, whilst Remenda Grech Assistant Director Aġenzija Appoġġ was elected member of the Case Work Committee.

Director International Relations Claudette Abela Baldacchino was also invited by ISS to take part in experts' meetings of the ISS Expert Group on Surrogacy.

### **EUROPEAN SOCIAL NETWORK**

The European Social Network (ESN) is the network of public authorities in the field of social services with more than 125 members in 32 European countries. The Network brings together representatives of organisations that manage, fund, implement, and evaluate social services for a range of populations.

In the beginning of 2018 and as result of the track record in its service provision, FSWS was invited to sit on the ESN Council; an invitation which was greatly appreciated and accepted by FSWS. This was a first for FSWS and Malta to have a chair on the ESN Council.

Ten months later FSWS hosted the European Social Service (ESN) Council in Malta in October 2019.

The Council meets twice a year to discuss progress regarding the activities organised by the ESN Secretariat, its present and future work, proposals for new activities and work with the members of the Network. ESN Chief Executive Officer Alfonso Montero said, "We

are very happy that the Foundation for Social Welfare Services, which is member of the Council represented by Alfred Grixti, its CEO, and Claudette Abela Baldacchino, Director of International Relations, invited other ESN member organisations from across Europe to hold its Council meeting in Valletta."

### **INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTIONS**

FSWS has a rich history of collaboration with local and international stakeholders.

During the period under review, the IR Department has effectively accomplished one of its main purposes; that of further expanding its collaboration with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion in achieving the best opportunities in all areas; including intercountry adoptions. With the collective effort of stakeholders, FSWS paved the way and coordinated all communication for visits on Intercountry adoptions in five countries across two different continents, Europe and Asia. The year 2019 will bear the fruit of the current year.

### **ADOPTIONS COLLABORATIVE PLATFORM**

IR Department collaborated with the Central Authority on a number of occasions. Meetings were also held between the two parties. The IR Director is part of the FSWS delegation that represents FSWS on the Adoptions Collaborative Platform.

### **EURADOPT**

In its quest to further expand its network towards a more comprehensive journey with Prospective Adoptive Parents who seek to adopt a child and form a family and to continue furthering its professional staff's knowledge



towards current and new emerging trends in intercountry adoptions, FSWS has through its International Relations Department in September 2018 formally submitted a request to join EurAdopt.

EurAdopt was established in 1993. It is an Association of adoption organisations in thirteen Western European countries. Around 900 children find new homes each year through these organisations.

### EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

A major achievement for FSWS was the exchange of views at the European Parliament during the S&D EMPL **Conference**, “Put an end to child poverty – Making the Child Guarantee a reality.”

*“By choosing prosperity over austerity, Malta ensured that no child is left behind” Alfred Grixti CEO Foundation for Social Welfare Services told the European Parliament Conference on ‘Put an end to child poverty – Making the Child Guarantee a reality’ organised by the S&D EMPL Conference, adding that “FSWS as the National Social Welfare Services Agency is working with families to ensure that they prioritise the needs of their children”.*

### ONE TO ONE NETWORKING MEETINGS WITH MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Earlier in 2018, the FSWS CEO and the Director IR held a number of meetings at the European Parliament. FSWS delegation met with the Head of S&D Delegation Dr Alfred Sant MEP, Dr Miriam Dalli MEP, Ms Marlene Mizzi MEP and Dr Roberta Metsola’s assistants at the EP. Discussions in relation to Brussels II

recast, child pornography, abuse, domestic violence, child to parent violence, and other provisions and legal instruments where discussed with MEP’s and/or their immediate assistants. Other areas concerning children were covered, including the Intergroup on Children’s Rights and other areas related to social service provisions.

### EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT’S INTERGROUP ON CHILDREN’S RIGHTS

Another achievement during the European Parliament mission was that of getting to know more about the Children’s Rights Intergroup. A meeting was facilitated with MEP **Julie Ward** who is a founding member of the Children’s Rights Intergroup. Meetings were also held with officials of the intergroup. As a result, the FSWS delegation was introduced to the Alliance for Childhood European Network Group.

### COUNCIL OF EUROPE

During the past few months, the IR Department explored the possibility of enhancing its collaboration with the Council of Europe. As an initial step and upon an invitation by the Council of Europe in July 2018, FSWS participated in the Octopus Conference against Cybercrime. Amongst the various topics discussed, a workshop on cyber violence against women and children was held.

### WEPROTECT GLOBAL ALLIANCE LEAD

At the request of Aġenzija Appoġġ through its professionals on the childwebalert; the IR Department facilitated the membership of WePROTECT Global Alliance Lead. The Alliance is there to protect children from

sexual exploitation online to ensure a safe and happy future for children everywhere.

### THE MARIGOLD FOUNDATION – SWEET SIXTEEN PROJECT

The IR Department coordinated the Sweet Sixteen project; a project run by The Marigold Foundation. The Marigold Foundation works with FSWS, Agenzija Appogg, Community Services and other lateral services to provide a life skills programme for young adults. The project includes a Graduation Day and comes to an end at Verdala Castle during the August Moon Ball.

### DIRECTORATE HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTEGRATION

A number of meetings were held between FSWS and Directorate Human Rights and Integration. Meetings focused on different issues relating to intercountry adoptions, domestic violence, and gender and integration.

### MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

A highlight during the period in review was the proposal for a Memorandum of Understanding whereby FSWS could offer expertise on issues related to the services it offers.

CEO Mr Alfred Grixti was invited by MFCS and MFTP to accompany an official delegation led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion and to meet with counterparts including Hanan Daoud Khalil Ashrawi. Ms Ashrawi is a Palestinian legislator, activist, and scholar. She is the first woman to be elected to the Palestinian National Council.

Ashrawi is a member of Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad's Third Way party. She is the first woman elected to the Palestinian National Council. Ashrawi is a member of Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad's Third Way party. She is the first woman elected to the Palestinian National Council. Ashrawi is a member of Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad's Third Way party. She is the first woman elected to the Palestinian National Council. As an important leader during the First Intifada, served as the official spokesperson for the Palestinian Delegation to the Middle East peace process, and has been elected numerous times to the Palestinian Legislative Council. Ashrawi is a member of Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad's Third Way party. She is the first woman elected to the Palestinian National Council. On a National level FSWS kept constant relationship with the Fadi Hanania, the *charge d'affaires* and the **Embassy of the State of Palestine** in Malta in view of the professional expertise FSWS can give in relation to social welfare services provision, if and when requested.

### DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

CEO Alfred Grixti and Director International Relations Claudette Abela Baldacchino met HE The Ambassador of the People's Republic of China Jiang Jiang. HE The Ambassador stated that he is impressed with FSWS work in the field of social services and expressed the wish to visit the Foundation and its employees in the near future.

During a formal invitation by HE The Ambassador of the People's Republic of China Mr Jiang Jiang.

## **ASSOCIAZIONE IROKO**

The IR Department contributed to the drawing up of an MOU with Associazione IROKO. The Italian Association works entirely to create and reinforce a culture of human rights and to support solidarity between diverse people, cultures, and life experiences. IROKO fights to eliminate all forms of violence against women and children, with special attention to the elimination of the trafficking and exploitation of women and children in prostitution and in other areas.

## **GREVIO – GROUP OF EXPERTS ON ACTION AGAINST VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

The IR Department followed the preparations for the GREVIO visit in Malta. GREVIO is the independent expert body responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) by the parties involved.

## **INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

2018 saw FSWS at the forefront during the 16 Days of Activism. The IR Department coordinated the event on Domestic Violence by acting as a bridge between local and international stakeholders and dignitaries. The Prime Minister of Malta Dr Joseph Muscat, HE High Commissioner Julianne Hince and International Guest Speaker Natasha Toffa were amongst the keynote speakers for the event “From Victims to Activists”.

Natasha Toffa, who hit the ground running on BBC with “Get Out Now or Die” is an

Advocate, a Victim, and a Survivor. She has enlightened people around the world through her story and self-funded International travels assisting abused women. Natasha is the Founder of Women’s Unity Movement and has hosted ten events in the past year and a half. She is also a Social Media Influencer who breaks barriers through promoting female empowerment, self-love, unity, diversity, and fashion amongst women around the globe.

The Australian High Commissioner Julianne Hince was also an important stakeholder in the event.

## **RADICALISATION AWARENESS NETWORK (RAN)**

In July 2018, FSWS was invited to be part of the stakeholders’ platform since Malta is participating in an EU level initiative called RAN. This network is an EU wide network of Member States, who through their various authorities and entities contribute towards exchanges of information regarding the identification and possible prevention of radicalisation of citizens.

## **FOREIGNER VULNERABLE SERVICE USERS**

The IR Department has dealt with a number of cases and reached out to a number of vulnerable service users who needed assistance both locally and/or abroad.

## **SERVICE AUDITS, QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The IR Department together with the Service Audits, Quality Assurance and Professional Development has reviewed **34 International Dossiers, Documents and Questionnaires**

**Documents.** The requests were submitted by MFCS, UN, EU, EU Commission, Council of Europe, ISS, WHO, ESN and the International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children amongst other international entities and stakeholders.

#### **PUBLIC POLICY EXCHANGE**

FSWS has throughout the period under review established a good working

relationship with Public Policy Exchange which is an international organisation, holding regular interactive seminars in Brussels, Belgium or the UK which provide an invaluable interface for policy discussion, debate, and networking. Professionals from the different agencies and departments within FSWS were invited and also delivered presentations at an international level.

## **CONCLUSION**

In a world which is constantly changing, with current and new emerging trends, the IR Department will focus and continue to maintain a modern, effective, and excellence-driven department.

The IR Department will continue expanding its local networks whilst looking

beyond our shores to expand its activities for the benefit of its service users. The IR Department will start looking into different methods of operation so that it will be able to expand the Foundation for Social Welfare Services' knowledge in issues related to social services and emerging trends within the sector.



# GALLERY

## INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT



**INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICE (ISS)**  
*With HE The President of the Republic of Malta  
Marie Louise Coleiro Preca*



**INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICE (ISS)**  
*ISS IC hosted by the Spouse of The Prime Minister  
Mrs Michelle Muscat at Villa Francia*











**ONE TO ONE NETWORKING MEETINGS WITH MEMBERS  
OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**  
*MEP Marlene Mizzi*



**ONE TO ONE NETWORKING MEETINGS WITH MEMBERS  
OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**  
*MEP Roberta Metsola*



**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

*FSWS CEO Alfred Gixti with Hanan Daoud Khalil Ashrawi*



**DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS**

*During a formal invitation by HE The Ambassador of the People's Republic of China Mr Jiang Jiang*





**INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

***Prime Minister Dr Joseph Muscat during the event From Victims to Activists***



# SERVICE AUDITS

# OVERVIEW

The Service Audits and Quality Assurance Unit is a function within the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS) Head Office whose main responsibility is to ensure a high standard of service delivery across the Foundation including the agencies, which it incorporates. In doing so, it reviews services to ensure that good practices are highlighted and maintained, and makes recommendations for improvements where required.

It aims to ensure that operational activities are strategically planned, implemented, and followed up.

Staff and Service users' feedback are essential in helping to enhance the quality of services provided.

The Service Audits and Quality Assurance Unit collaborate closely with the Human Resources Department to revise and update FSWS Policies and work in close collaboration with the Senior Management Team of the Foundation.

## SERVICE AUDITS UNIT INITIATIVES

### INTERNAL PERFORMANCE AUDITS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

The Service Audits and Quality Assurance Unit is responsible for carrying out Internal Performance Audits of FSWS Services.

The audits to be conducted are identified together with the Chief Executive Officer and Operations Directors of the Agencies.

The following Internal Performance Audits and Reviews were carried out in 2018:

- The Role of Senior Practitioners within Operations of FSWS Audit.

There was also a follow up of the following evaluations and audits' action plans:

- Dar l-Impenn Action Plan;
- Your Parenting Journey Action Plan;
- Appoġġ Administration Action Plan;
- NAO Action Plan Update;
- Out of Hours Emergency Service;
- Alcohol and Gambling Community Service Action Plan;
- Prevention Action Plan.

An update about the actions taken on recommendations is requested every six months. In this way, the Unit monitors any changes being affected for the improvement of services.

### **ACCREDITATION AND STANDARDS**

As per accreditation procedures, the list of new staff members within the accredited services was collected quarterly and passed on to the Inspectorate Office.

### **MONITORING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION**

Monthly reporting on the deliverables and measuring of achievements for each Electoral Manifesto Proposal (EMP) that falls under the responsibility of FSWS is provided to the relevant Ministry. As of April 2018, this task was passed to another person within FSWS but assistance was provided where and when requested.

All EU Member States including Malta, have committed to the Europe 2020 Strategy. Each country has different economic circumstances and translates the overall EU objectives into national targets in its National Reform Programme. FSWS completed its measures and no further reporting was requested.

Quarterly updates are also collected from the respective Directors. Work was carried out in the fourth quarter of 2018 to collect the 2019 operational plans and new Directors were supported to fill in the operational plan template.

The Service Audits and Quality Assurance Unit was also responsible for the co-

ordination of feedback on National Strategy/Policy/Standards.

### **OTHER INITIATIVES**

- Further co-ordination was carried out to collect the feedback on the Childonomics research project report. The project was aimed at developing a tool to determine the long-term social and economic return of investing in children and families, undertaken in collaboration with Eurochild and the Ministry for the Family, Children's Rights and Social Solidarity. Further focus groups and meetings were held to finalise the project.
- In 2017, a proposal was formulated in which the aim of the development of the standards and the plan of how these will be developed was formulated. The members for the working group were nominated and a plan for the working group sessions devised. The working group was made up of different employees from different services within FSWS. The proposed standards were compiled and are being analysed.
- Together with the Human Resources Department, FSWS Policies which are applicable to the work carried out by FSWS staff members were revised and updated.
- Regular updates of complaints dealt with by the agencies and FSWS were requested and an Annual Report compiled.
- Data and feedback were provided on questionnaires/reports for national and international bodies. The Service processed 45 reports/questionnaires in

all. As from June 2018, a lot of liaison was carried out with the International Relations Director in relation to the questionnaires/strategies from international bodies.

- Following the 2017 Peer Learning Visit held at the Care Inspectorate in Scotland, which was funded by the European Social Network, a working group was organised to work on a set of standards for FSWS Care Services. These standards will then guide our audit processes. Once the standards are finalised, a self-evaluation tool will be created. It is envisaged that the tool will be administered by the care service prior to an audit.

## **STUDENTS ON PLACEMENT**

Procedures on how students are placed within the services were created. Furthermore, the students' placement database was amended providing more available statistical information.

Meetings were held with MCAST and Youth Work Placement co-ordinators to formalise the students' placements. This was very helpful to understand the aim of the placement and the tasks required by the students. In the case of Gestalt students, a meeting was held with the placement co-ordinator and a contract was drafted to regularise the placement between the two entities.

## **UNIVERSITY SOCIAL WORK**

Two seminars were held for social work students prior to starting their placements.

These seminars were open for all social work students and not only for those students carrying out their placement within FSWS. The seminars served as an induction training and provided exposure to the students about the FSWS services. The Service co-ordinated the following placements:

- Pre-Placement Social Work/Social Policy: four students placed;
- 2nd Year Social Work Observation Placement: 26 students placed;
- 3rd Year Social Work Placement A: 18 students placed;
- 4th Year Social Work Placement B: 20 students placed.

In the case of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year and the 4<sup>th</sup> Year social work placement, the Service recruited a number of practice teachers and mentors, and processed all documentation in relation to payment of mentoring. At the end of the year, the Service started the process for the recruitment of practice teachers and mentors for Social Work Placement B which starts in January 2019.

The Service also co-ordinated a visit by Trinity College lecturers. The contact was made through the University of Malta. The aim of the visit was to discuss the possibility of future social work placements through the Erasmus exchange programmes.

## **UNIVERSITY SOCIAL POLICY**

Two students were placed with FSWS Head Office, one of whom was hosted by the Service.

## OTHER UNIVERSITY PLACEMENTS

The Service co-ordinated the following placements:

- Masters in Therapeutic Play Skills: one student placed;
- Masters in Community Action and Development: two students placed;
- Youth and Community Studies: eight students placed;
- Social Work from Danish University: one student placed;
- Residential and Day Care Studies: three students placed;
- Post Graduate in Nursing: one student placed;
- B.A. Hons in Sociology: one student placed;
- B.A. Hons in Psychology and Sociology: one student placed;
- Transcultural Counselling: one student placed.

A meeting was held with two of the placement co-ordinators of the Youth and Community Studies to formalise the placements' structure and clarified the aim of the placements.

## MCAST

A meeting was held with MCAST placement co-ordinators to discuss issues being encountered during the placements and

setting a formal system between FSWS and MCAST Care Courses.

- The Service co-ordinated the following placements:
- B.A. in Care Management (level 6): nine Students placed;
- Advanced Diploma Health and Social Care: six students placed;
- B.A. Hons in Business Enterprise: one student placed.

## GESTALT

A meeting was held with one of the Gestalt placement co-ordinators to discuss placements logistics. In relation to Gestalt, a contract was drafted and approved by CEO. Ten placements were provided. These placements will be carried out throughout 2019.



# CONCLUSION

The team is looking forward to new initiatives and to continue building on the achievements gained in the previous year.

RESEARCH

# OVERVIEW

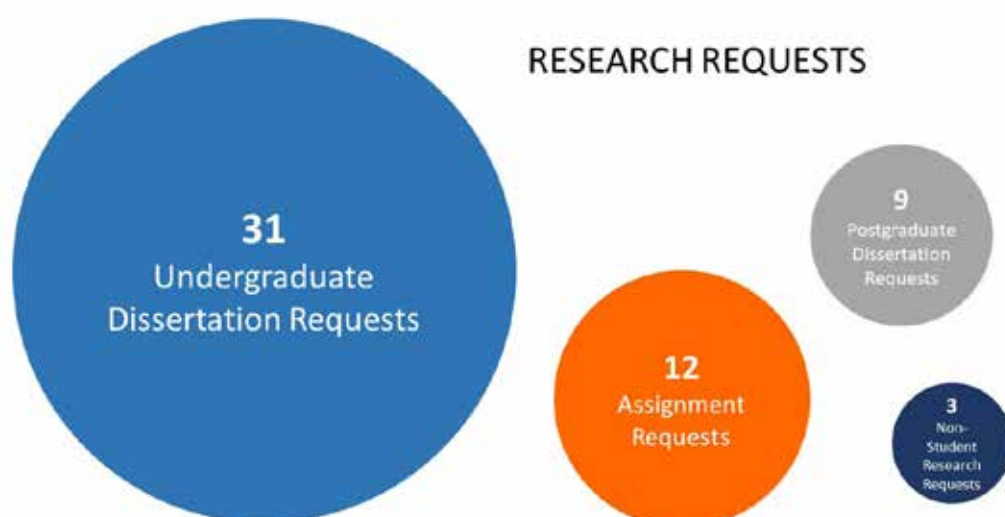
## THE RESEARCH UNIT INITIATIVES

The Research Team supports the FSWS and contributes on a national and international level in the development of evidence that underpins the development of effective practices, procedures, and policies. The information produced within the Research Team is utilised by various stakeholders including FSWS management, Ministries, National Focal Points, Commissions, International Associations, and Media.

The Research Team is engaged in various activities, including the collection, collation and analysis of service-user data and the production of related statistical reports, such as yearly and half yearly reports, trends reports, and mapping reports. The team also:

- provides available data when requested, which may be used in various ways, from FSWS decision-making to the completion of national and international questionnaires;
- estimates problem drug use;
- evaluates FSWS services;
- produces literature reviews; and
- conducts other research projects.

In addition, the Research Team coordinates and regulates requests to conduct research projects that entail collecting information from FSWS staff members or service users.



# HIGHLIGHTS

## HOMELESSNESS PROJECT

The homelessness project was initiated in 2017 with the aim of examining various aspects of the phenomenon, including the extent and nature of homelessness

experienced by FSWS service users, pathways into homelessness, and actions required. In 2018, the project was completed and the results disseminated through written reports and a conference.

**April 2018**



## ESPAD

The European School Survey Project on Alcohol and other Drugs (ESPAD): ESPAD is conducted every four years among 5th form students to examine the prevalence and patterns of substance use and other behaviours that can potentially become problematic, including gambling, gaming, and internet use. In 2018 preparatory work was initiated by the Research Team for data collection in Malta and Gozo in 2019.

## LITERATURE REVIEWS:

- In 2018 work was conducted on literature reviews on the following topics:
- Combining drug and alcohol treatment at the community level
- Dealing with children with challenging behaviours
- Prevention initiatives at the community level

## PARTICIPATION IN NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES, SYMPOSIUMS OR MEETINGS: VARIOUS EVENTS WERE ATTENDED, INCLUDING:

- European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) international expert meetings on Problem Drug Use and Drug Related Infection Diseases
- ESPAD General Assembly Meeting and ESPAD Steering Committee Meetings
- EU COST Action on Femicide
- Executive Training Seminar: Gender and Media organised by the European University Institute School of Transnational Governance.
- Reducing drug supply and demand in the EU: Developing a holistic and coordinated response across member states



## DEVELOPMENT OF THE RESEARCH TEAM'S MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

# Executive Training Seminar Gender and Media

FLORENCE, 26-28 SEPTEMBER, 2018  
PETRA BORG AND RUTH SCIBERRAS



## CONCLUSION

In terms of the Research Team, in addition to traditional topics that the FSWS has focused on, the team will, through its various activities, increasingly touch on emerging new realities within Maltese society. The team will continue its efforts to provide quality data in a timely manner, facilitated further by the

expansion of the case management software system. In general, thanks to the contribution of staff members, the Research Team will continue to enhance areas in which the FSWS operates, for the benefit of the Foundation's service users and society in general.



# DATA PROTECTION



**JESMOND SCHEMBRI**

Director

# OVERVIEW

The Data Protection Office within FSWS was formally set up in July 2018. Its aim is to provide advice regarding Data Protection issues both to the Foundation's Senior Management and to employees who seek the office's help concerning issues related either to Human Resources or of an operational nature.

The Data Protection Office is also responsible for updating the FSWS' documentation so that it becomes compliant with the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation that became operational throughout the European Union in May 2018. Moreover, it carries out Data Protection Impact Assessments to assess the impact that new procedures or initiatives within the FSWS have on the personal data of those concerned; employees and service users alike.

Presently, this office is constituted of a Director and Manager. The office also has a number of focal points in the various agencies within FSWS. The role of these focal points is to liaise between the Data Protection office and the various agencies, which includes being the first port of call in offering

preliminary assistance to these agencies and to help our office gather information from their respective agencies from time to time.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

The primary achievement of this office is to be a catalyst in assisting FSWS to effect changes to a culture that is more sensitive to data protection issues, both with respect to internal operations and also to our service users.

This Office also succeeded in establishing strategic partnerships with other structures which are assisting it in its mission. The main partner is the Public Sector's Data Protection Unit within the Ministry for Justice, Local Councils and Culture. This unit assist the office by providing template documentation and also by providing feedback on various initiatives taken by this Office.

In conjunction with the Data Protection Unit and the Institute for Public Service and in collaboration with the FSWS Training Department, all FSWS employees are currently being provided with certified basic Data Protection training. This training started in September 2018 and is expected to conclude in July 2019.

**Total numbers of FSWS' employees trained in GDPR is 250.**



# CONCLUSION

This Data Protection Office, which is one of the most recent services being launched within FSWS, looks forward to assist the whole Foundation to strive towards upholding the value of human dignity in all of its dimensions, including that of protecting the personal data of all concerned.

# ESWS SERVICE MAPPING REPORT

# INTRODUCTION

This report contains choropleth maps (created through CMA Mapping), which are thematic maps in which areas are shaded or patterned in proportion to the measurement of the statistical variable being displayed on the map. The maps within this report are organised according to town of residence as reported by the service users. Graphs are also provided which indicate the number of cases worked with between January and December 2018 by district of reported residence.

The distribution within the maps was determined by taking the maximum value and dividing it by 6 and rounding up the number. This ensures that the numbers are equally distributed within 6 categories. The rates within this report were calculated from the 2017 population per town obtained from the NSO statDB data (<http://www.nso.gov.mt/site/page.aspx?pageid=31>) retrieved on 16/10/2018. The rate is calculated as follows: the number of individuals/NSO

population\*1,000. Data must be interpreted cautiously when there are large numbers of cases where the town of residence was not specified. Missing data places doubt on the true distribution of cases throughout the reported towns and districts.

The report indicates the approximate number of cases worked with between January and December 2018 by the town of residence reported by service users (according to data analysed by April 2019). It is important to note that the services within the agency report data on a unit level. Since individuals can attend more than one unit at the same time, summing up the number of cases worked with will over-estimate the actual number of persons worked with. Therefore the following data reported on multiple unit levels can only provide an approximation of the number of cases and the figures provided are higher than the actual numbers.

## TOWNS DISTRIBUTED BY DISTRICT:

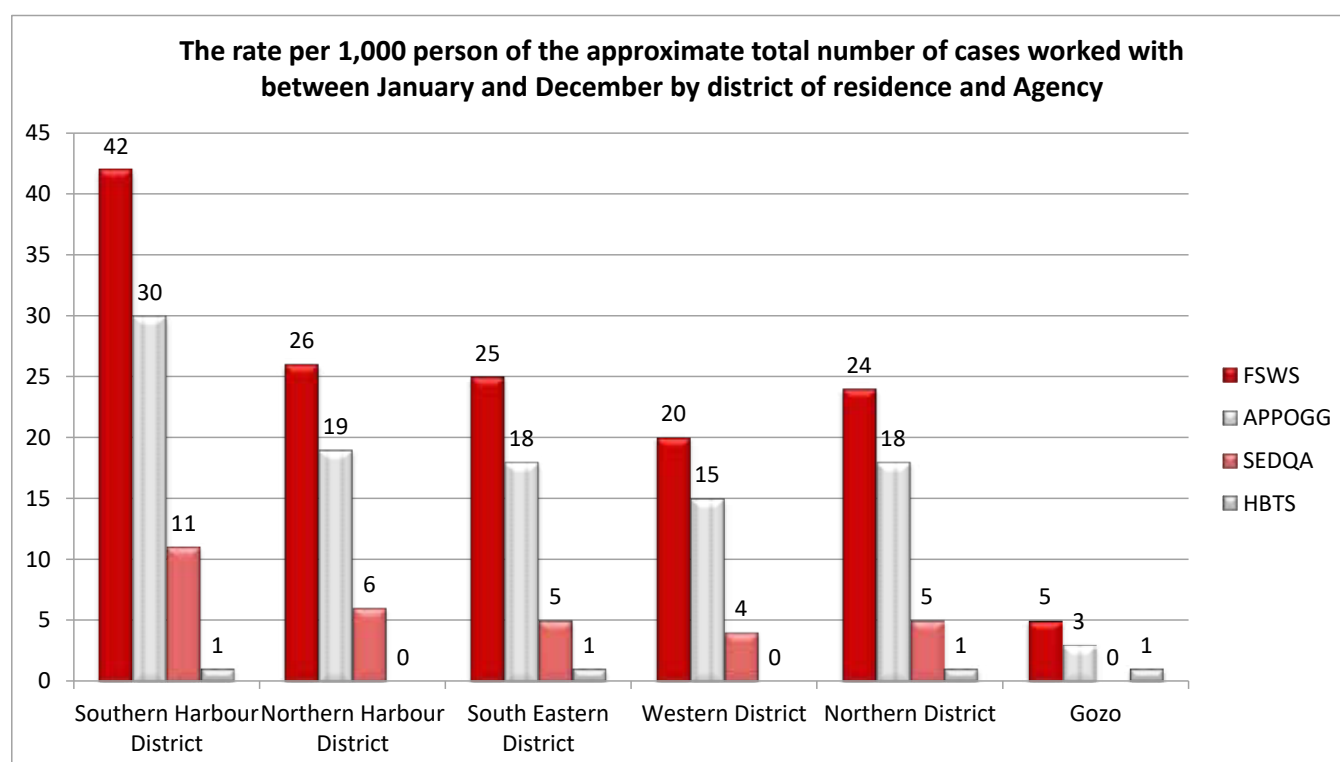
Southern Harbour District	Northern Harbour District	South Eastern District	Western District	Northern District	Gozo District
Birgu (Vittoriosa)	Birkirkara	Birzebbugia	Attard	Gharghur	Rabat (Gozo)
Bormla (Cospicua)	Gzira	Ghaxaq	Balzan	Mellieha	Fontana (Gozo)
Fgura	Hamrun	Gudja	Dingli	Mgarr	Ghajnsielem (Gozo)
Floriana	Msida	Kirkop	Iklin	Mosta	Gharb (Gozo)
Isla (Senglea)	Pembroke	Marsaskala	Lija	Naxxar	Ghasri
Kalkara	Pieta	Marsaxlokk	Mdina	San Pawl il Bahar	Kercem (Gozo)
Luqa	Qormi	Mqabba	Mtarfa		Munxar (Gozo)
Marsa	San Giljan	Qrendi	Rabat (Malta)		Nadur (Gozo)
Paola	San Gwann	Safi	Siggiewi		Qala (Gozo)
Santa Lucija	Santa Venera	Zejtun	Zebbug (Malta)		San Lawrenz (Gozo)
Tarxien	Sliema	Zurrieq			Sannat (Gozo)
Valletta	Swieqi				Xaghra (Gozo)
Xaghjra (Malta)	Ta Xbiex				Xewkija (Gozo)
Zabbar					Zebbug (Gozo)
					Comino

*Other Residences: residential homes, prison, hospitals, mental health facilities, and shelters.*

# FOUNDATION FOR SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES

## THE APPROXIMATE TOTAL NUMBER OF CASES WORKED WITH IN 2018 BY REPORTED RESIDENCE DISTRICT AND AGENCY

	APPOGG	SEDQA	HBTS <sup>1</sup>	FSWS
Southern Harbour District	2450	948	108	3506
Northern Harbour District	2986	952	114	4052
South Eastern District	1335	363	93	1791
Western District	956	270	44	1270
Northern District	1465	409	89	1963
Gozo District	122	16	45	183
Other residence	347	80	10	437
Foreign residence	14	6	0	20
Homeless	135	19	0	154
Not specified	1780	166	0	1946
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11590</b>	<b>3229</b>	<b>503</b>	<b>15322</b>

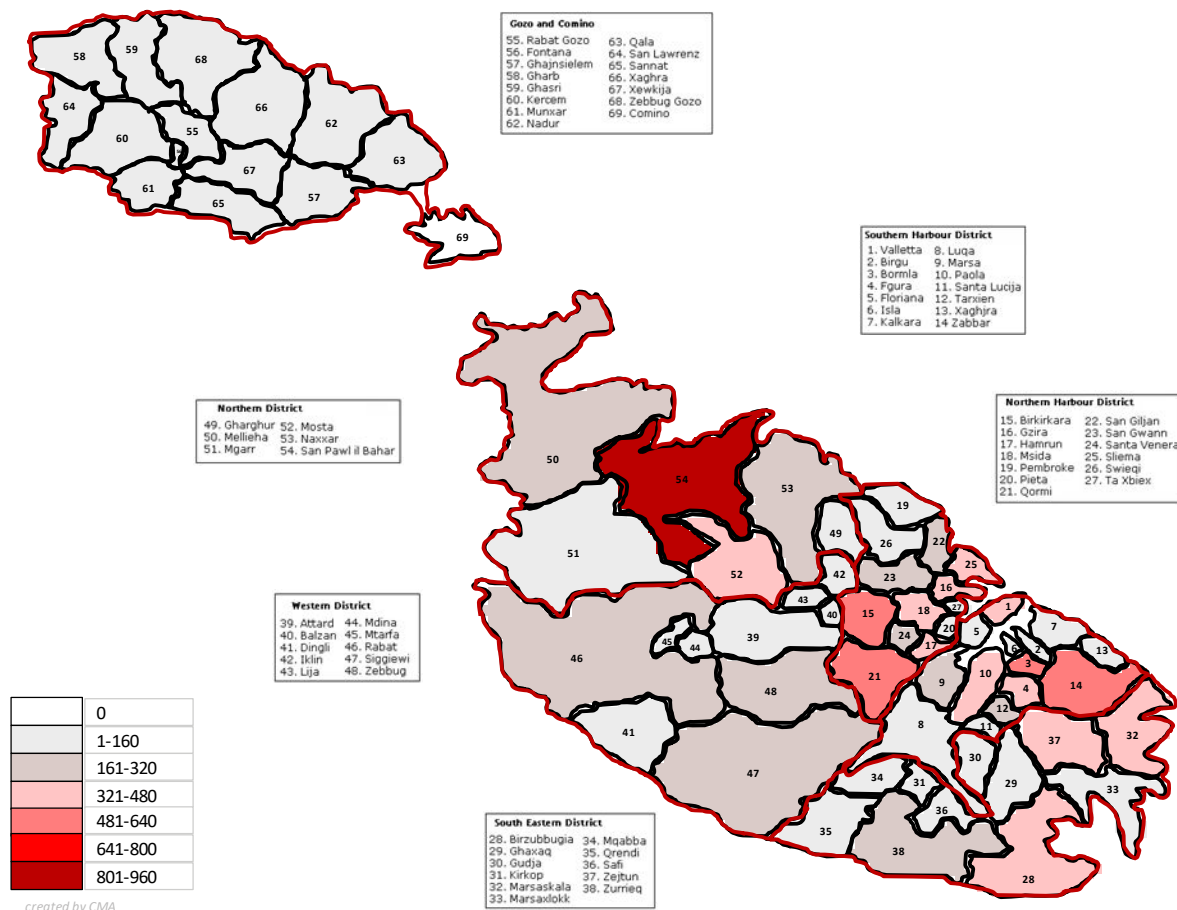


<sup>1</sup> Home Based Therapeutic Service

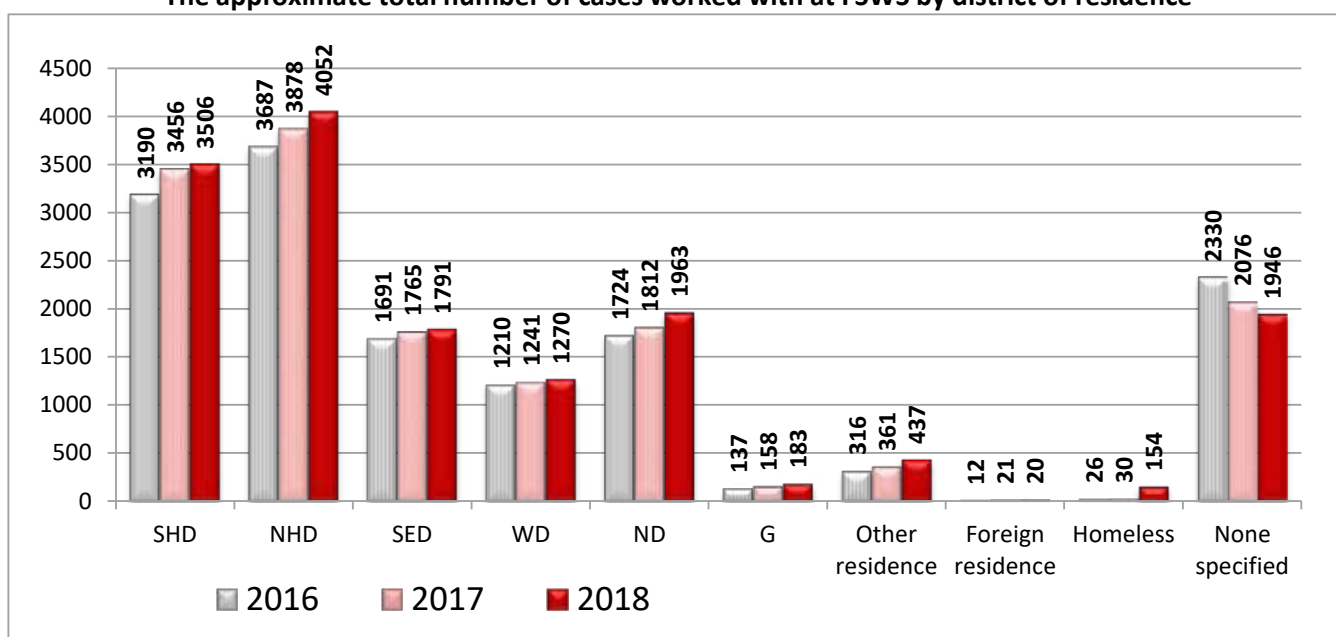


# FOUNDATION FOR SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES

The approximate total number of cases worked with at **FSWS** between January and December 2018 by town of residence

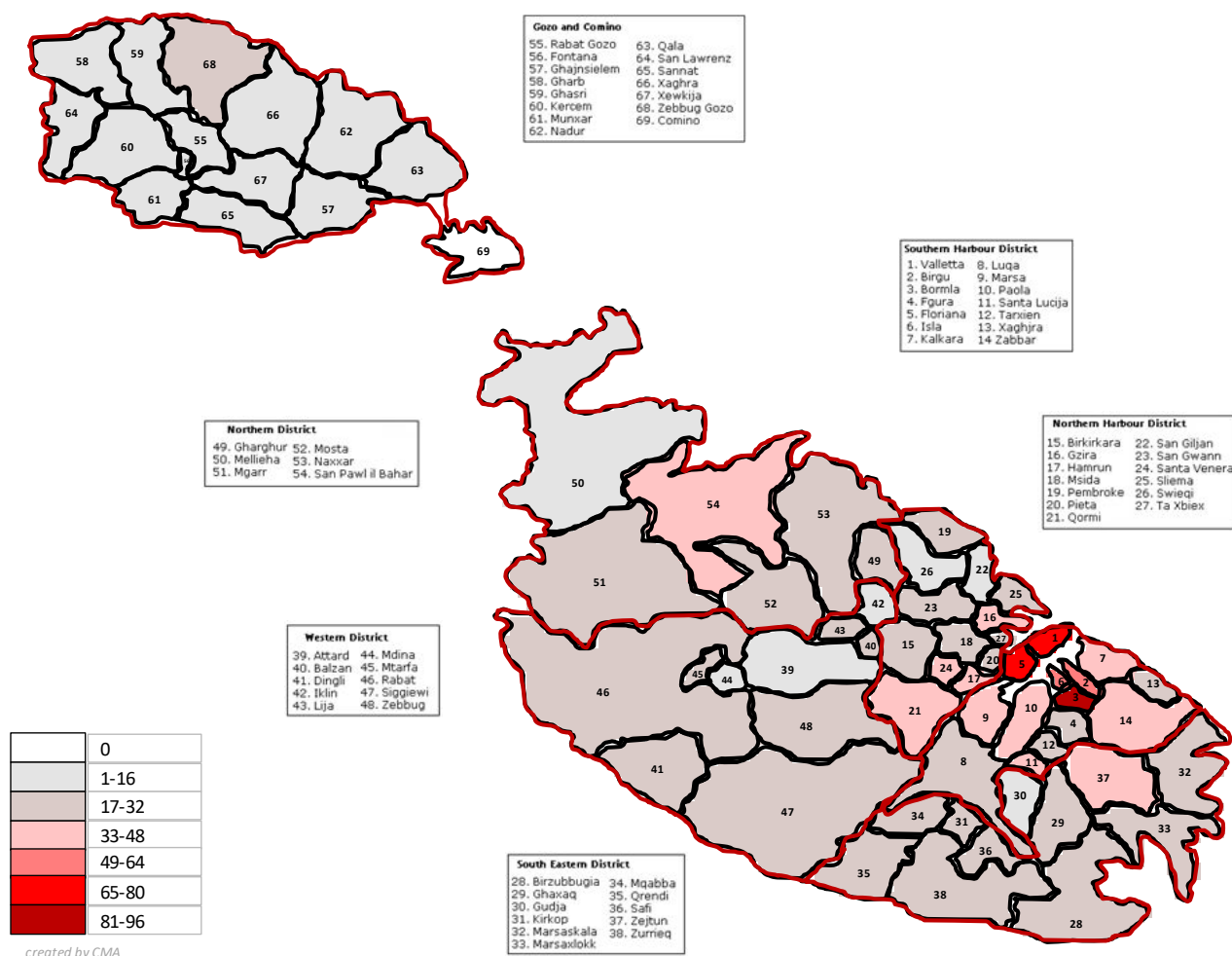


The approximate total number of cases worked with at FSWS by district of residence



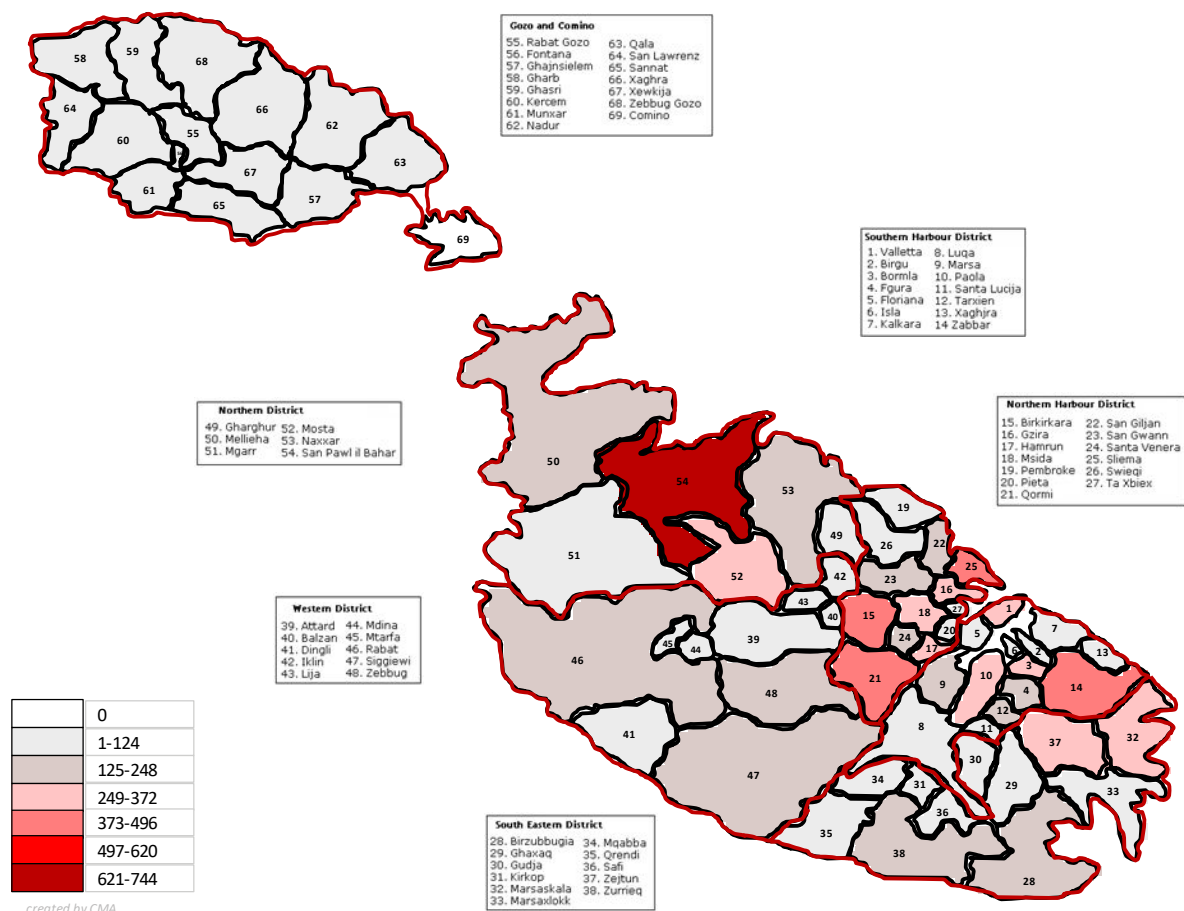
## RATE PER 1,000 PERSON

The approximate rate of cases worked with at **FSWS** between January and December 2018 by town of residence

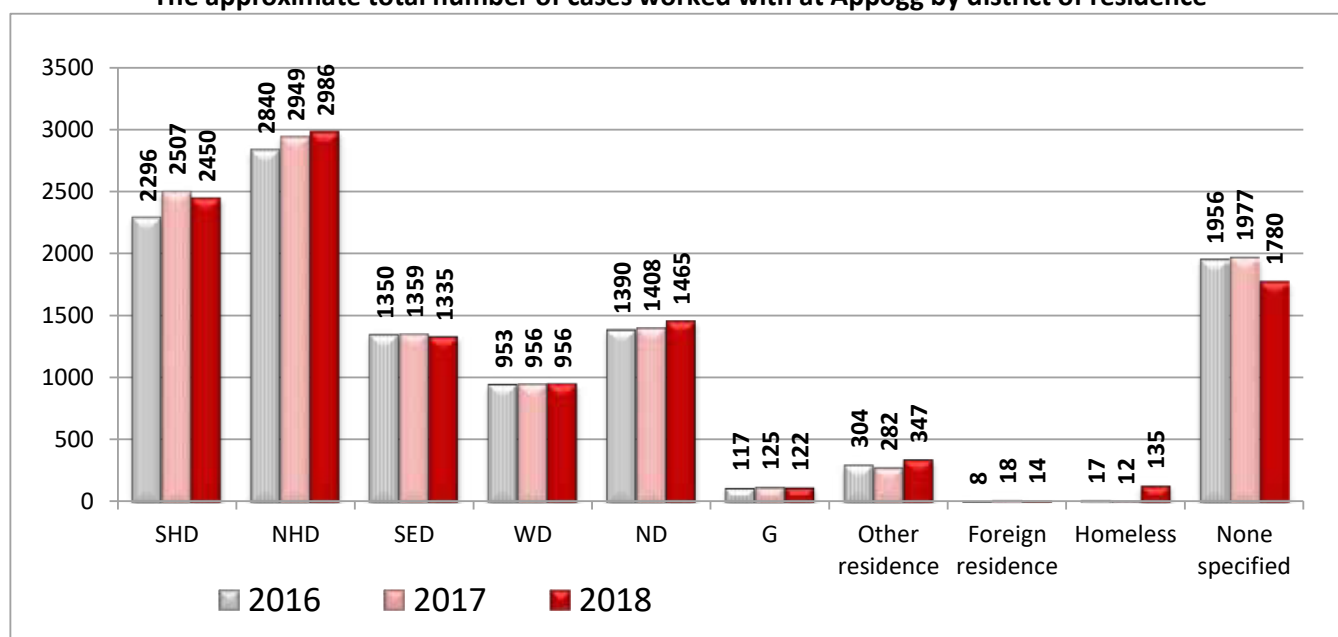


# APPOGG SERVICE

The approximate total number of cases worked with at **Appogg** between January and December 2018 by town of residence

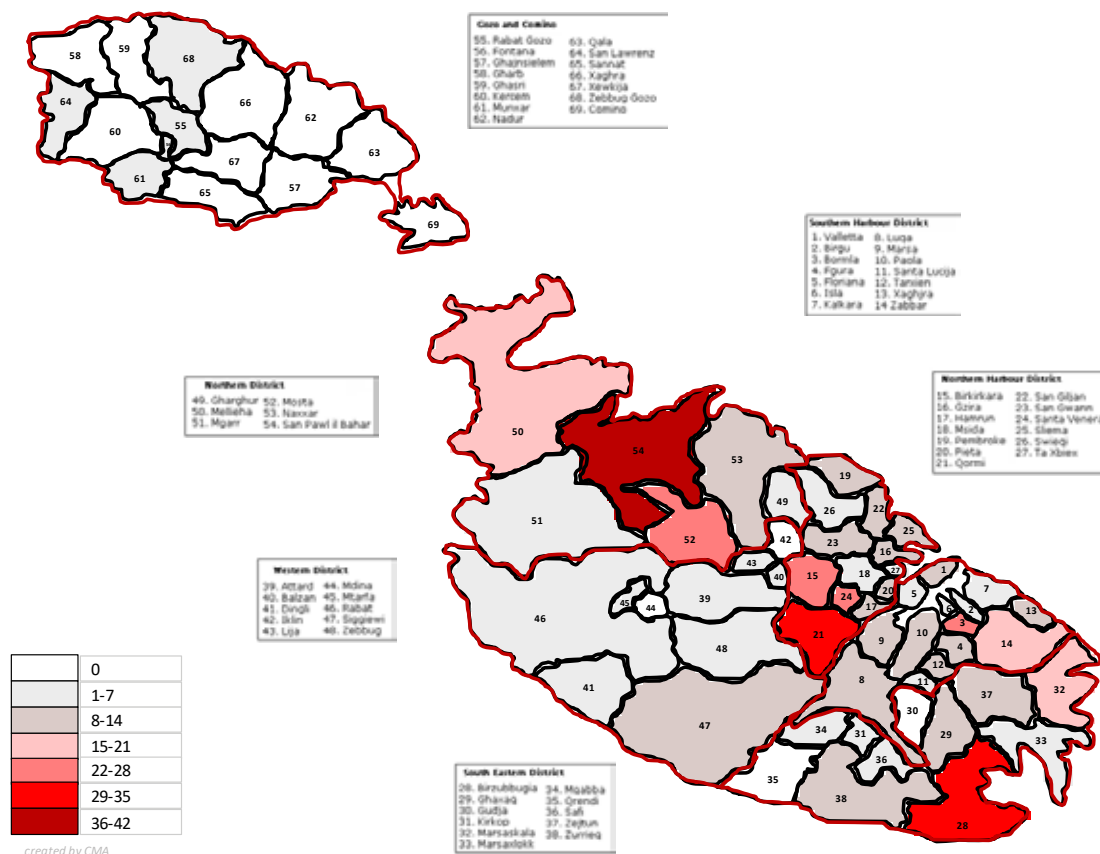


The approximate total number of cases worked with at Appogg by district of residence

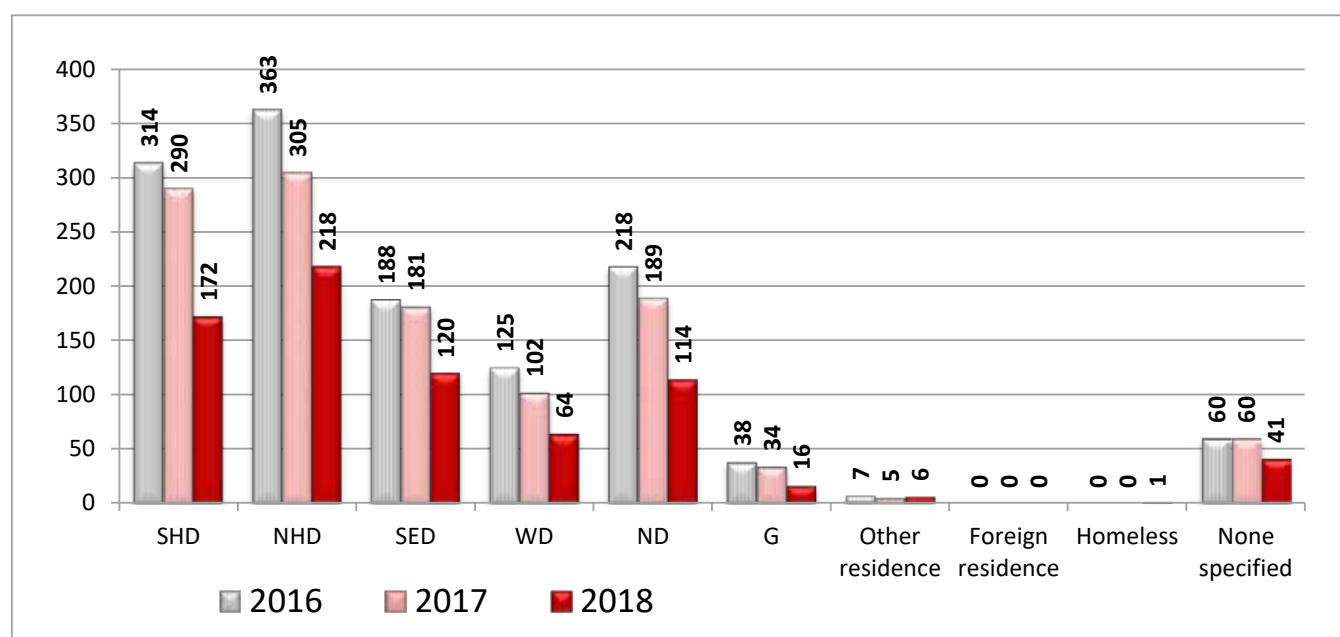


## CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES (CPS)

The total number of cases worked with at **Child Protection Services (CPS)** between January and December 2018 by town of residence

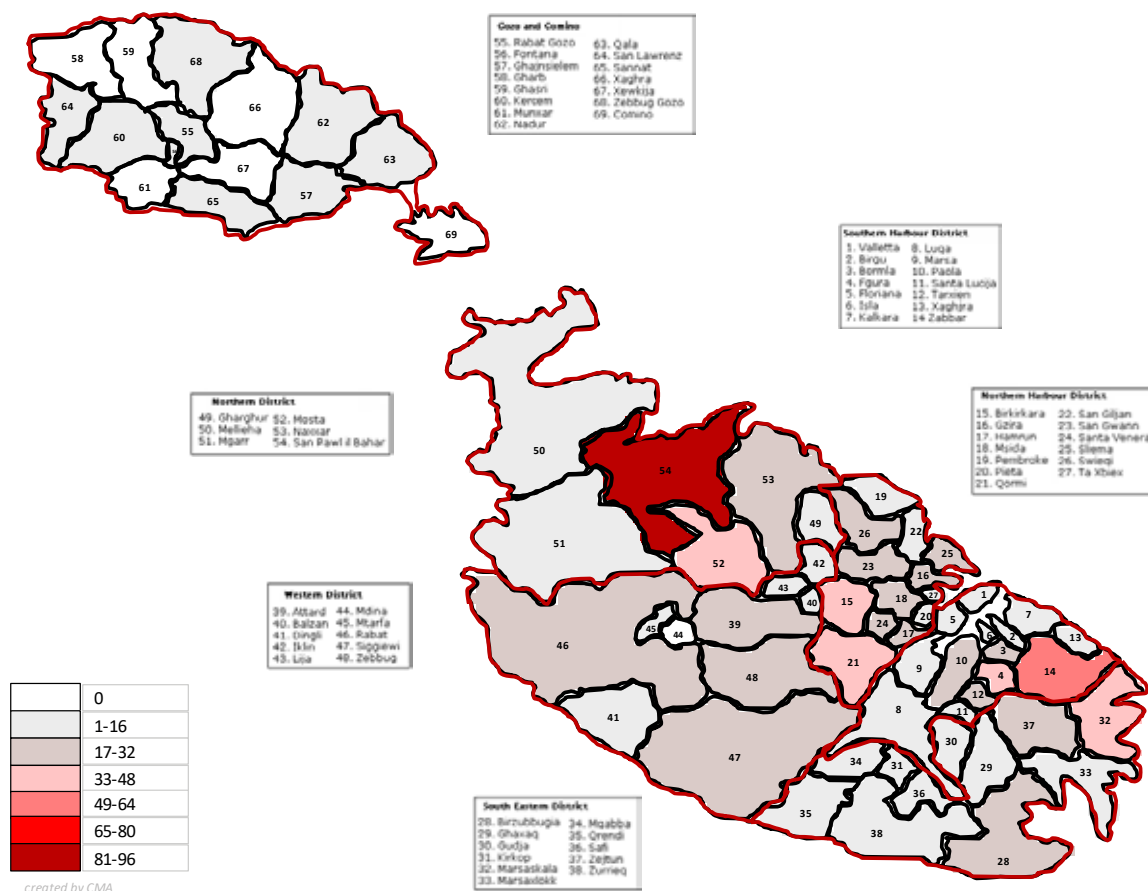


The approximate total number of cases worked with at CPS by district of residence

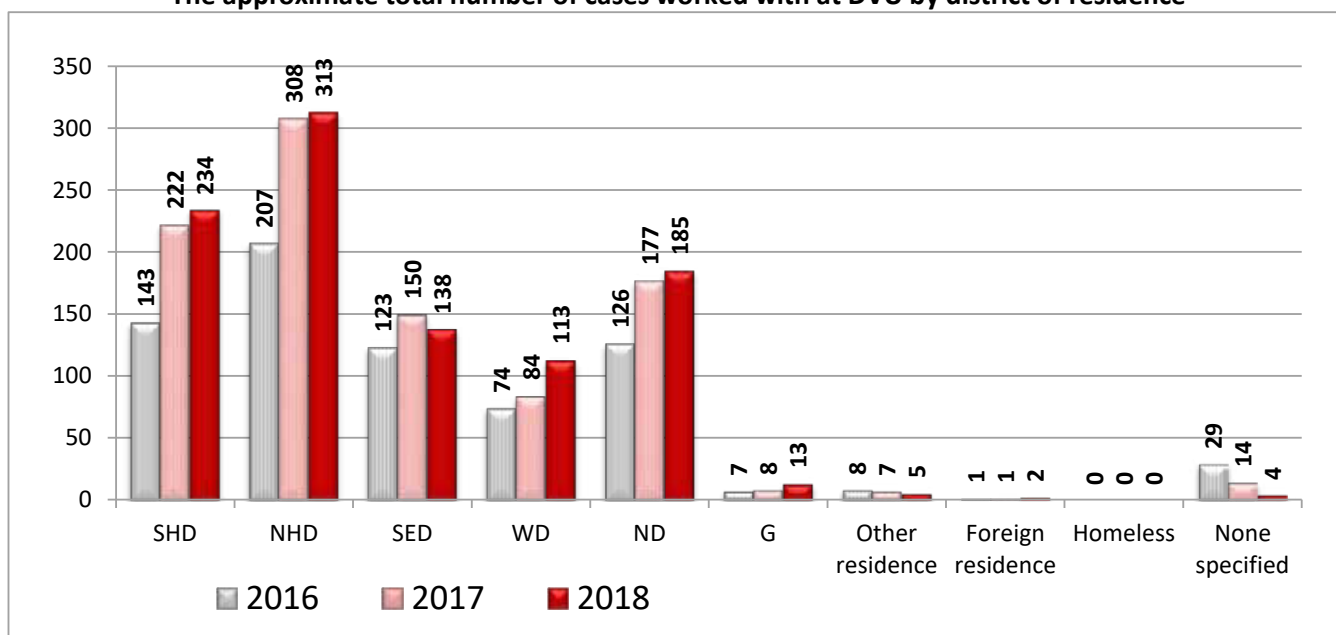


## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE UNIT (DVU)

The total number of cases worked with at the **Domestic Violence Unit (DVU)** between January and December 2018 by town of residence



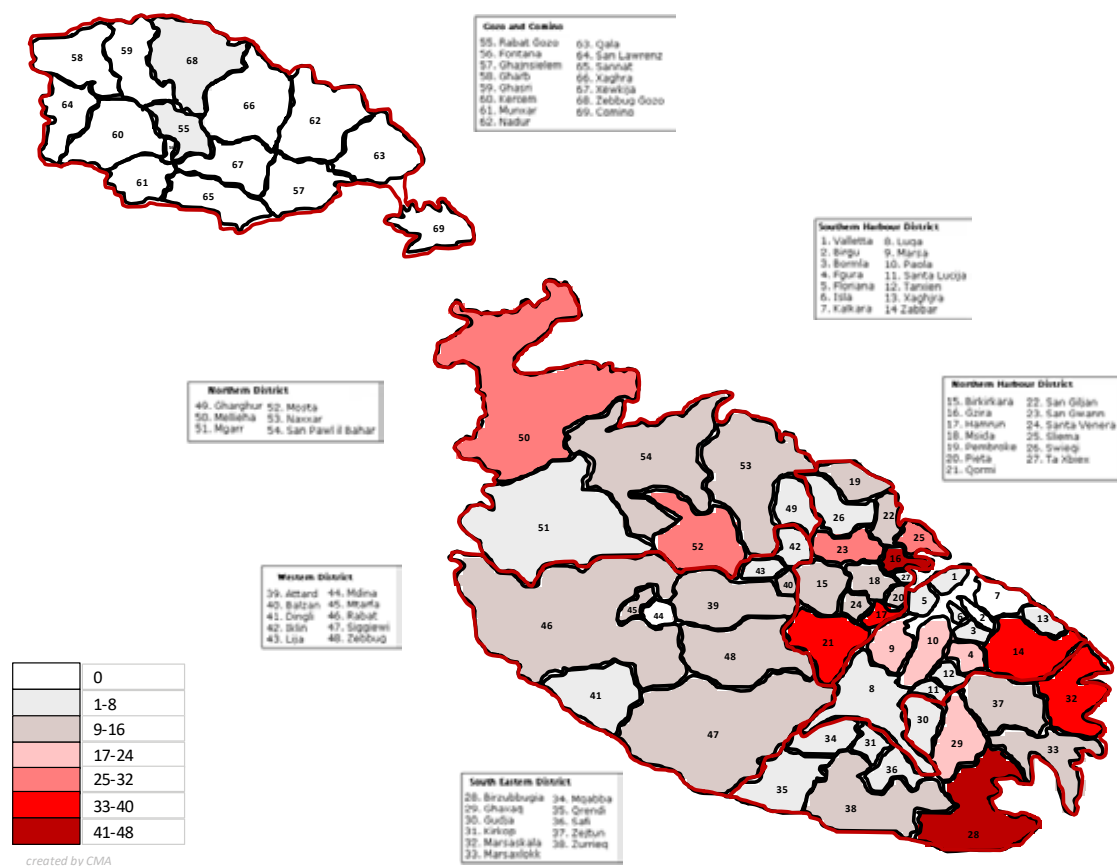
The approximate total number of cases worked with at DVU by district of residence



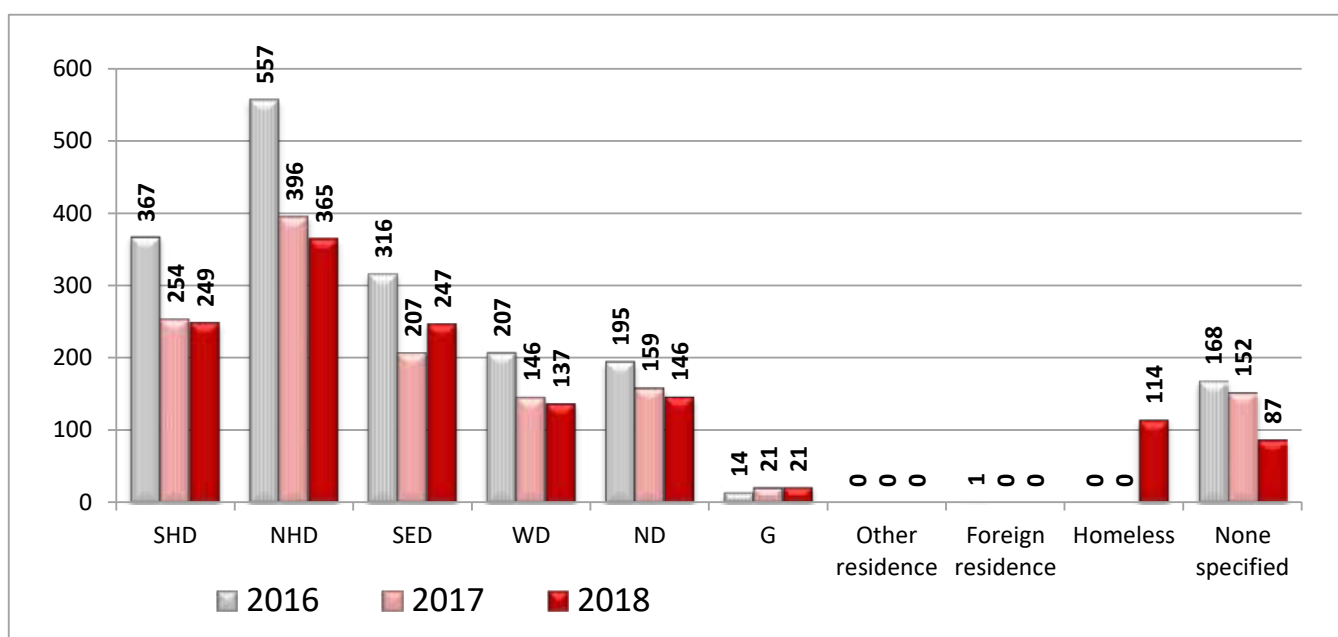


## INTAKE & FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE (IFSS)

The total number of cases worked with at the **Intake & Family Support Service (IFSS)** between January and December 2018 by town of residence

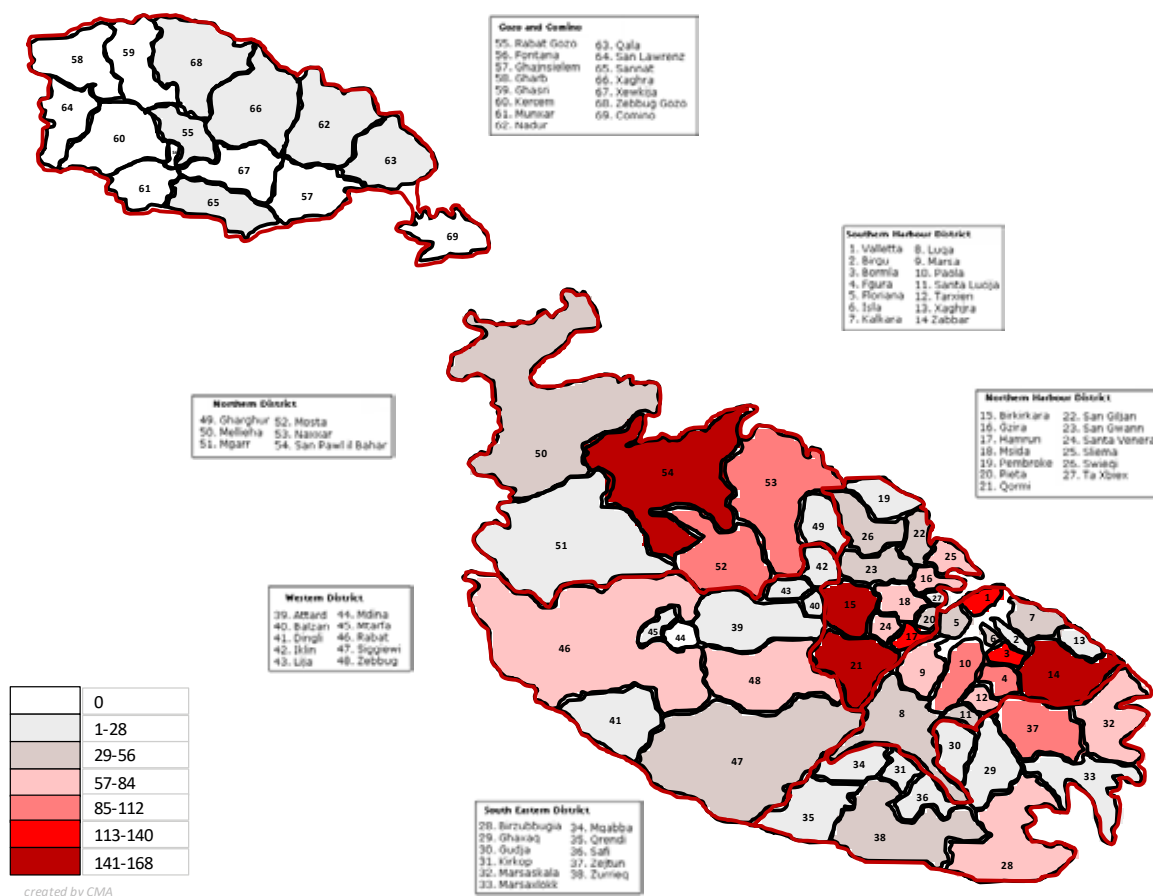


The approximate total number of cases worked with at IFSS by district of residence

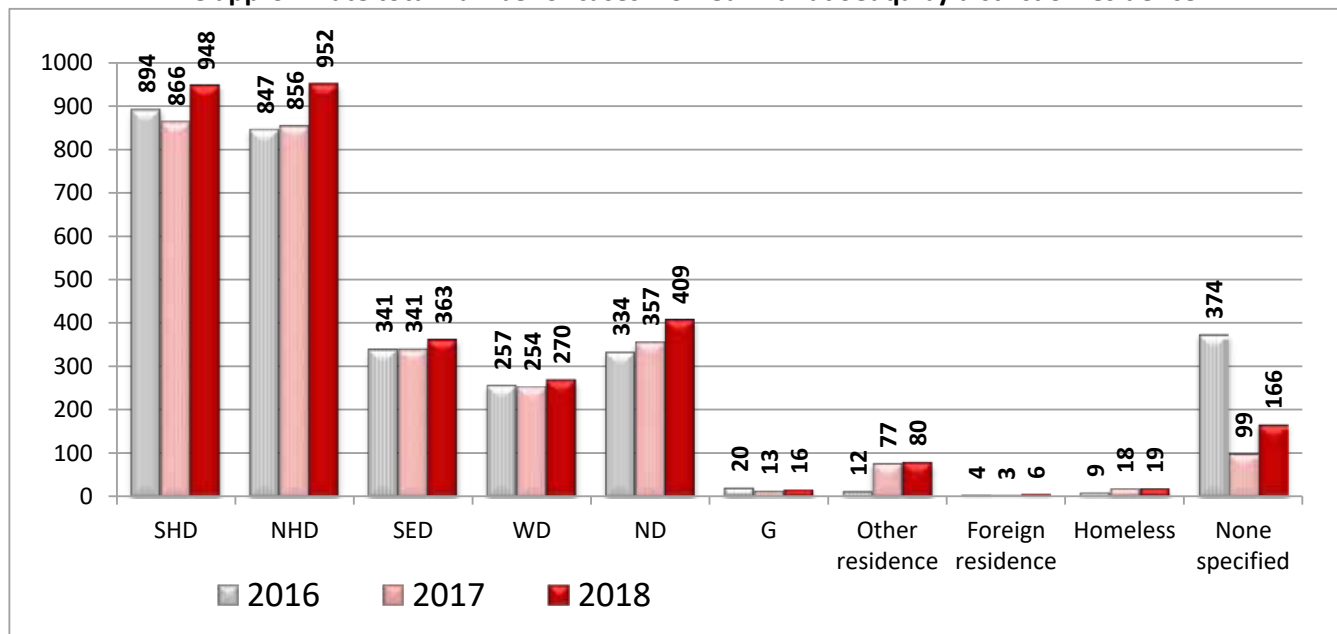


# SEDQA SERVICES

The approximate total number of cases worked with at **Sedqa** between January and December 2018 by town of residence

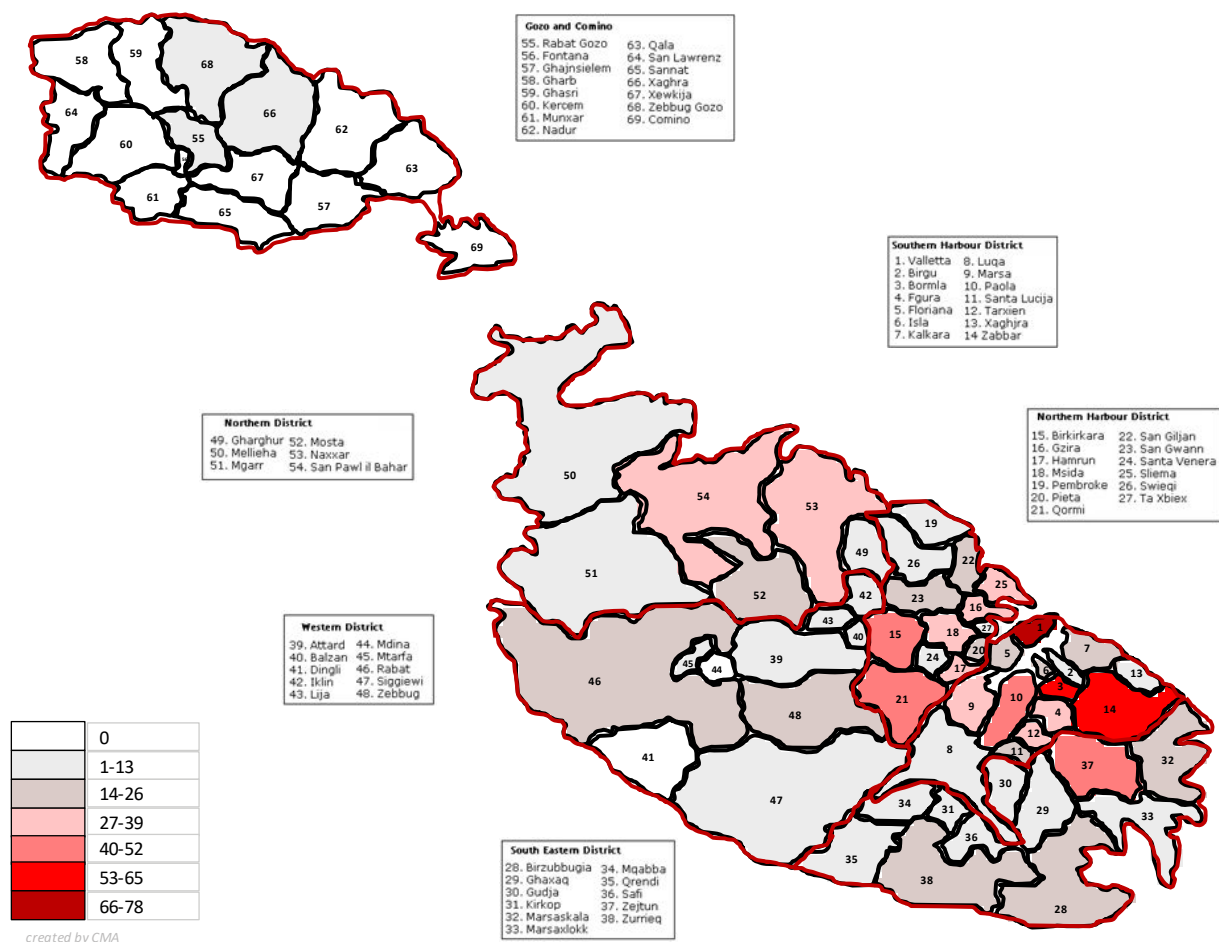


The approximate total number of cases worked with at Sedqa by district of residence

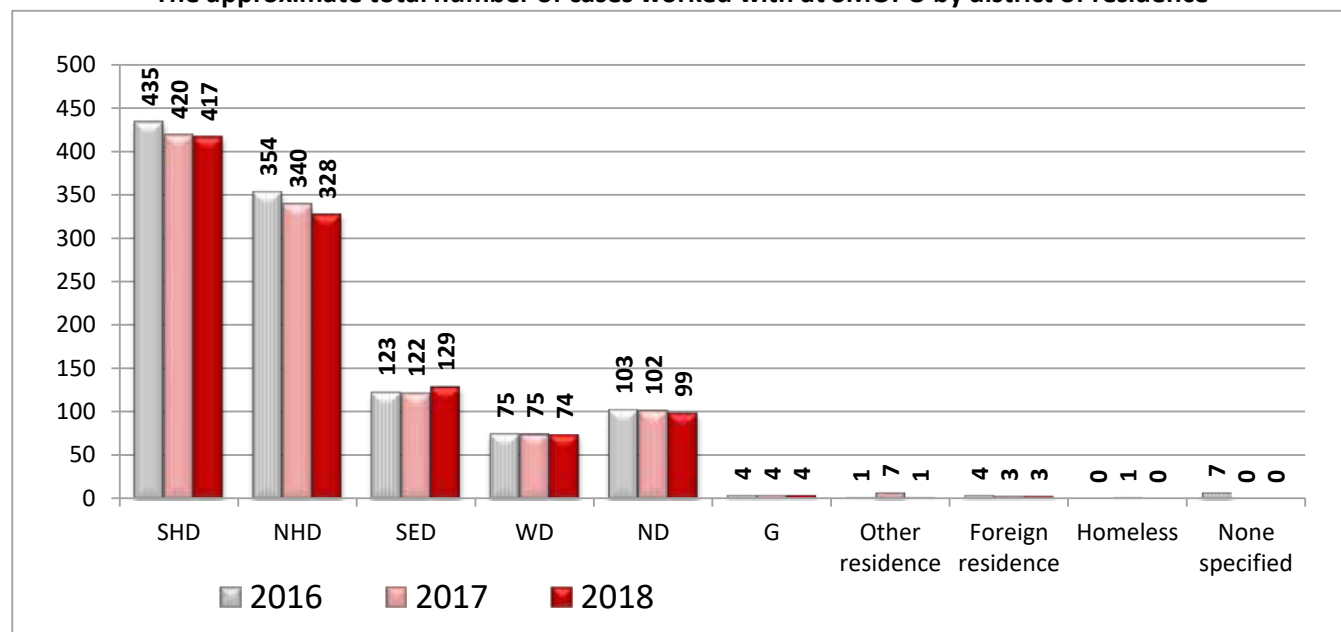


## SUBSTANCE MISUSE OUT-PATIENTS UNIT (SMOPU)

The total number of cases worked with at **Substance Misuse Out-Patients Unit (SMOPU)** between January and December 2018 by town of residence

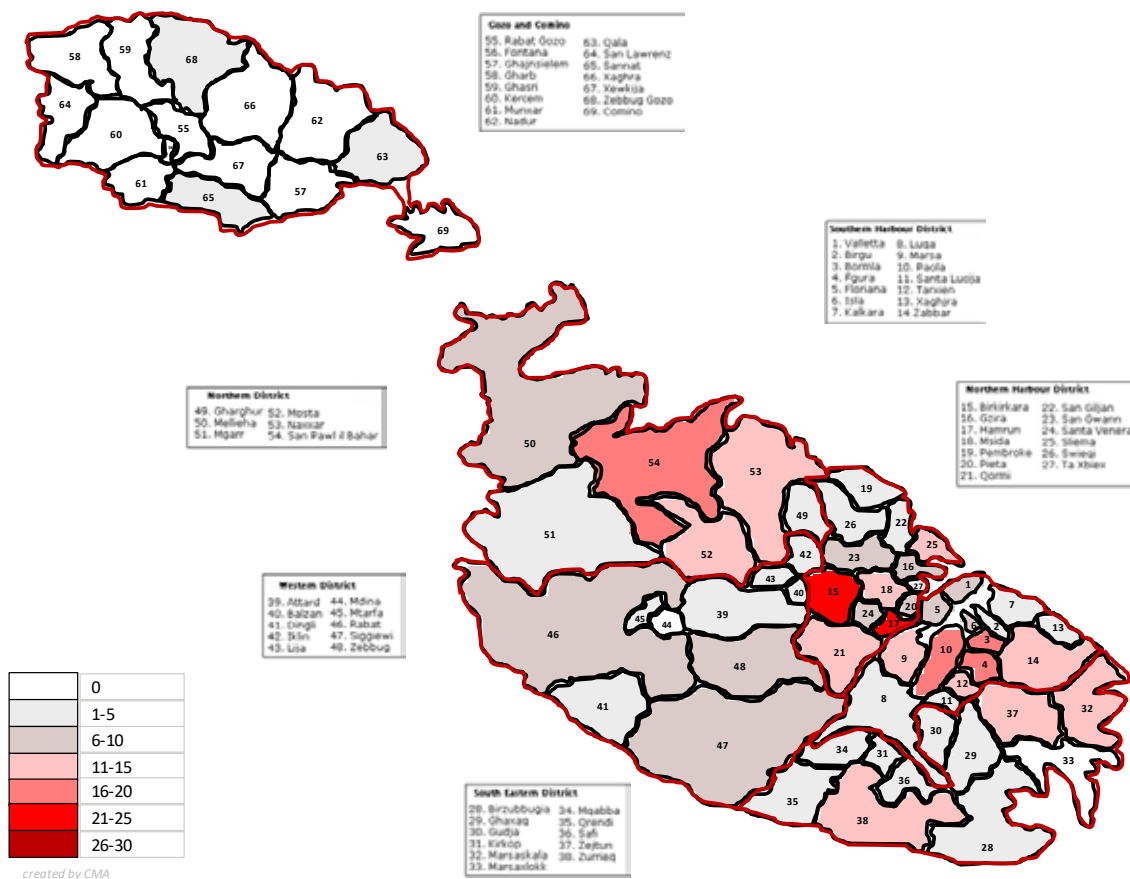


The approximate total number of cases worked with at SMOPU by district of residence

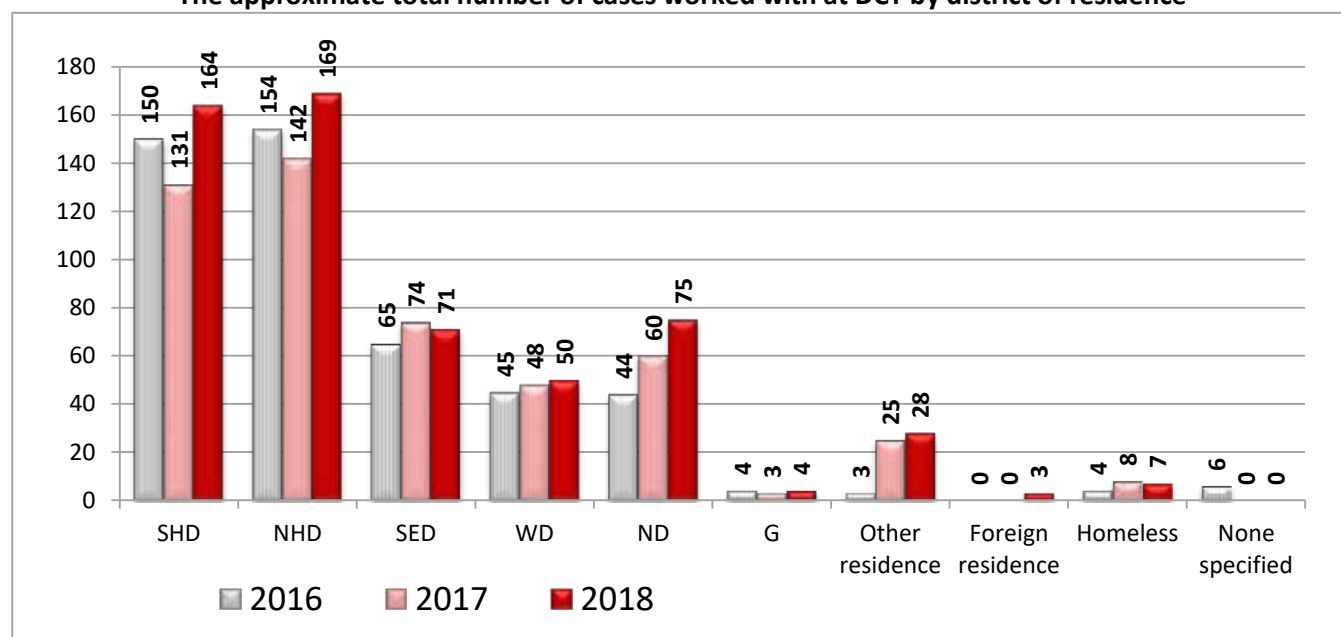


## DRUGS COMMUNITY SERVICE (DCT)

The total number of cases worked with at **Drugs Community Service (DCT)** between January and December 2018 by town of residence

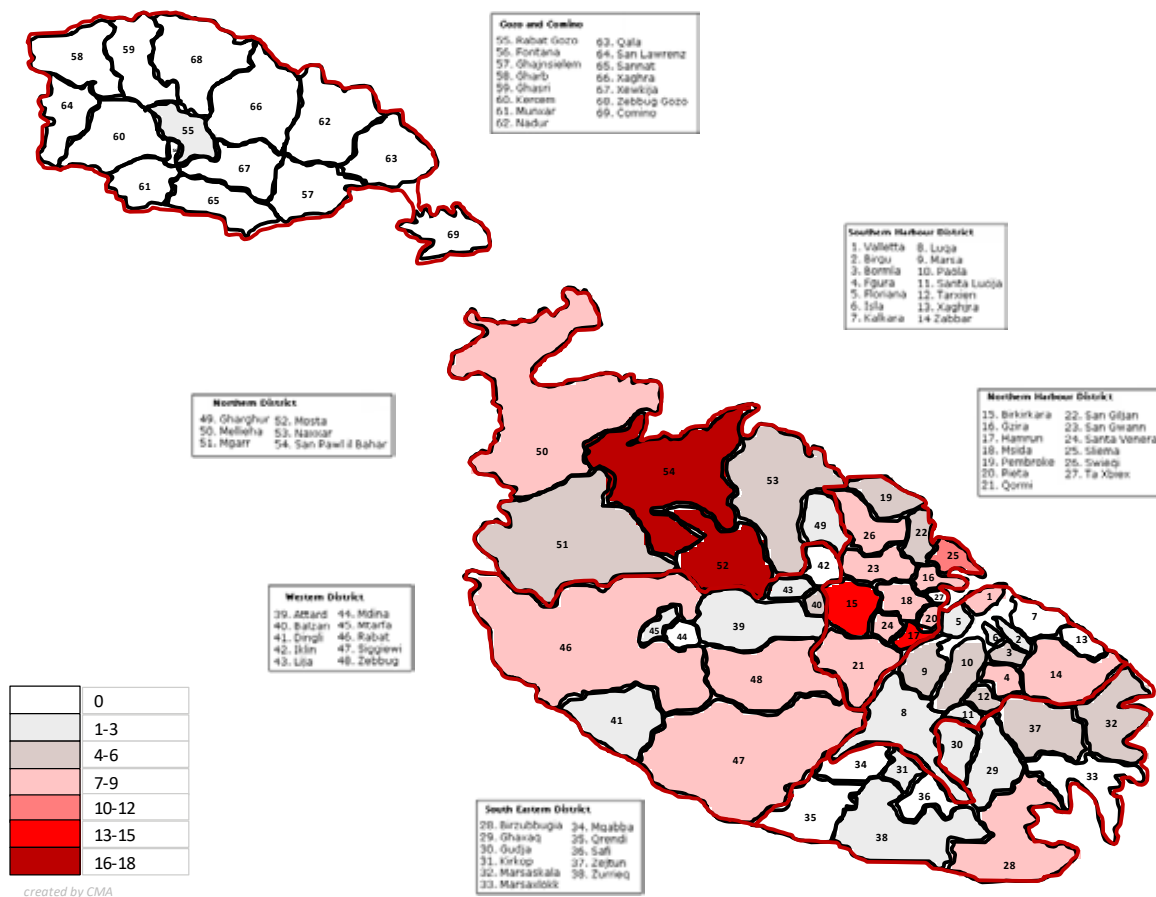


The approximate total number of cases worked with at DCT by district of residence

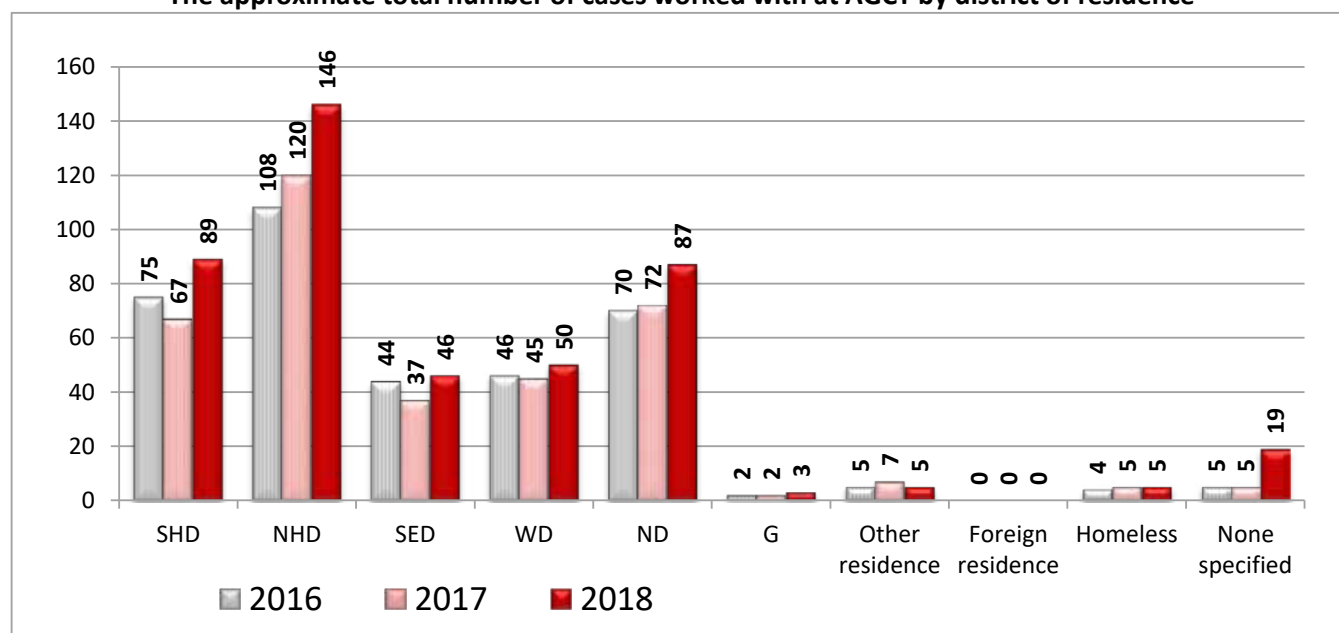


## ALCOHOL AND GAMBLING COMMUNITY SERVICE (AGCT)

The total number of cases worked with at **Alcohol and Gambling Community Service (AGCT)** between January and December 2018 by town of residence



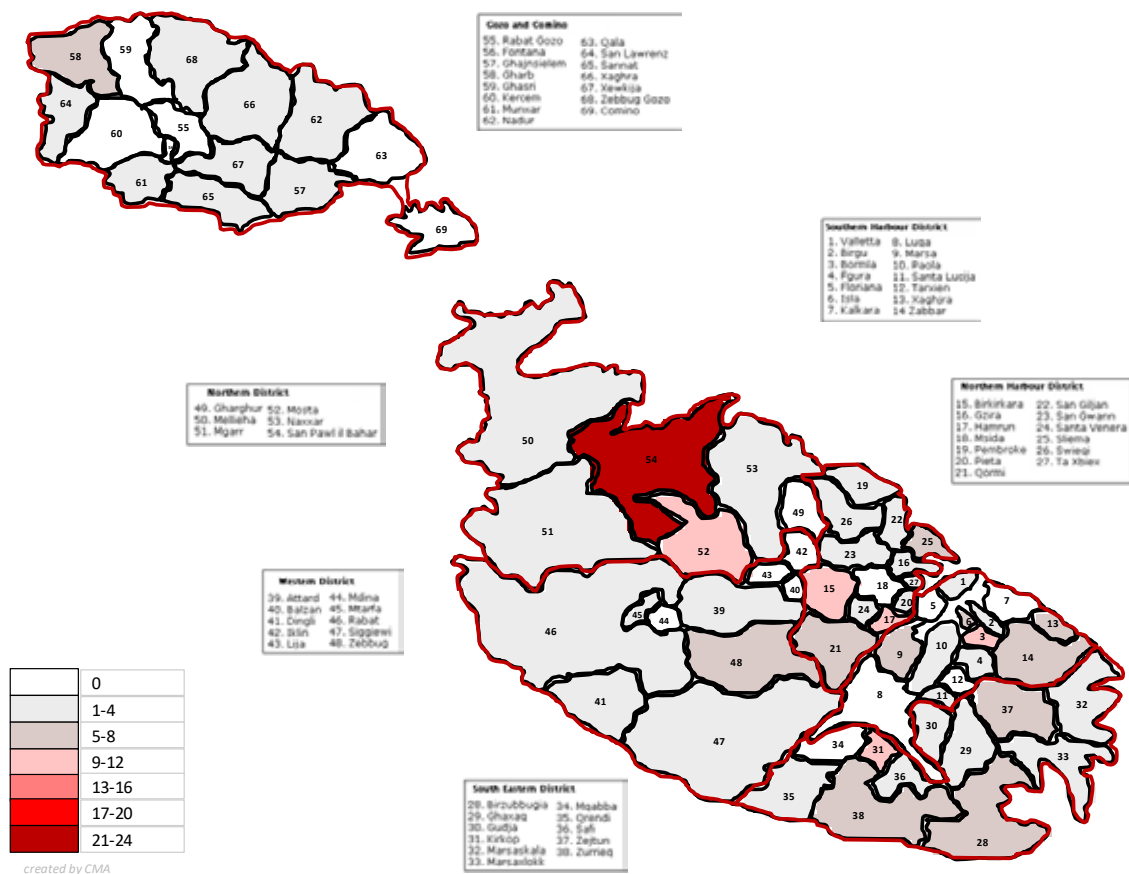
The approximate total number of cases worked with at AGCT by district of residence



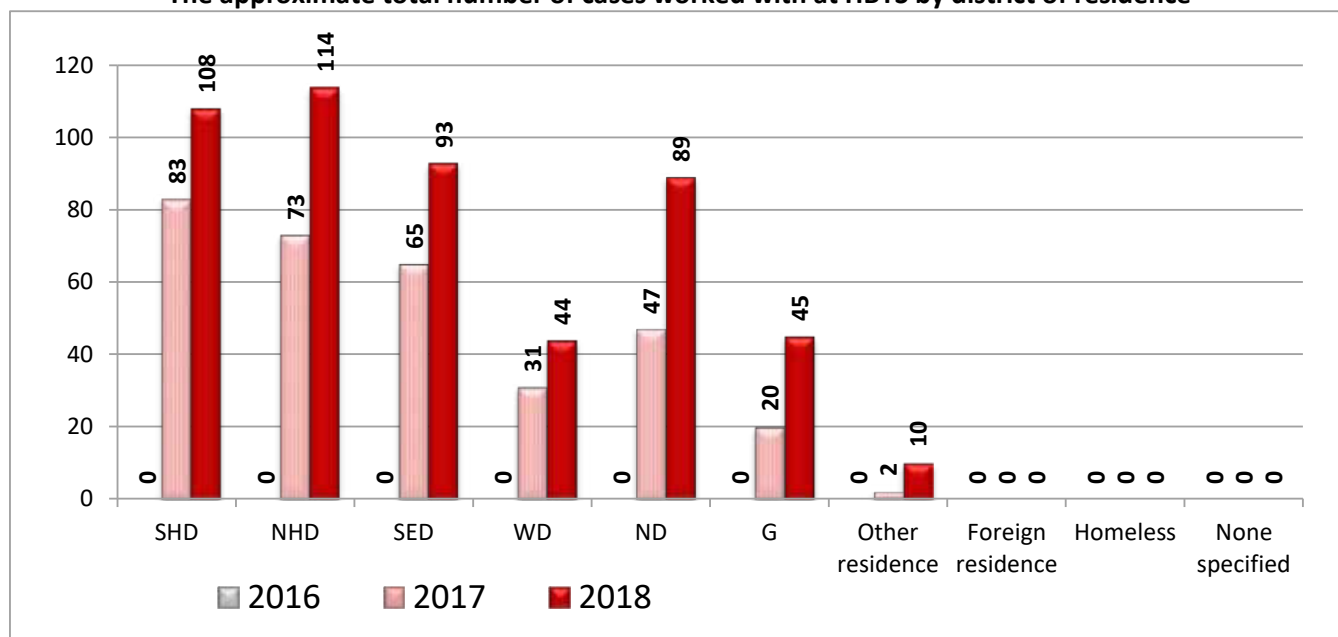


## HOME BASED THERAPEUTIC SERVICES

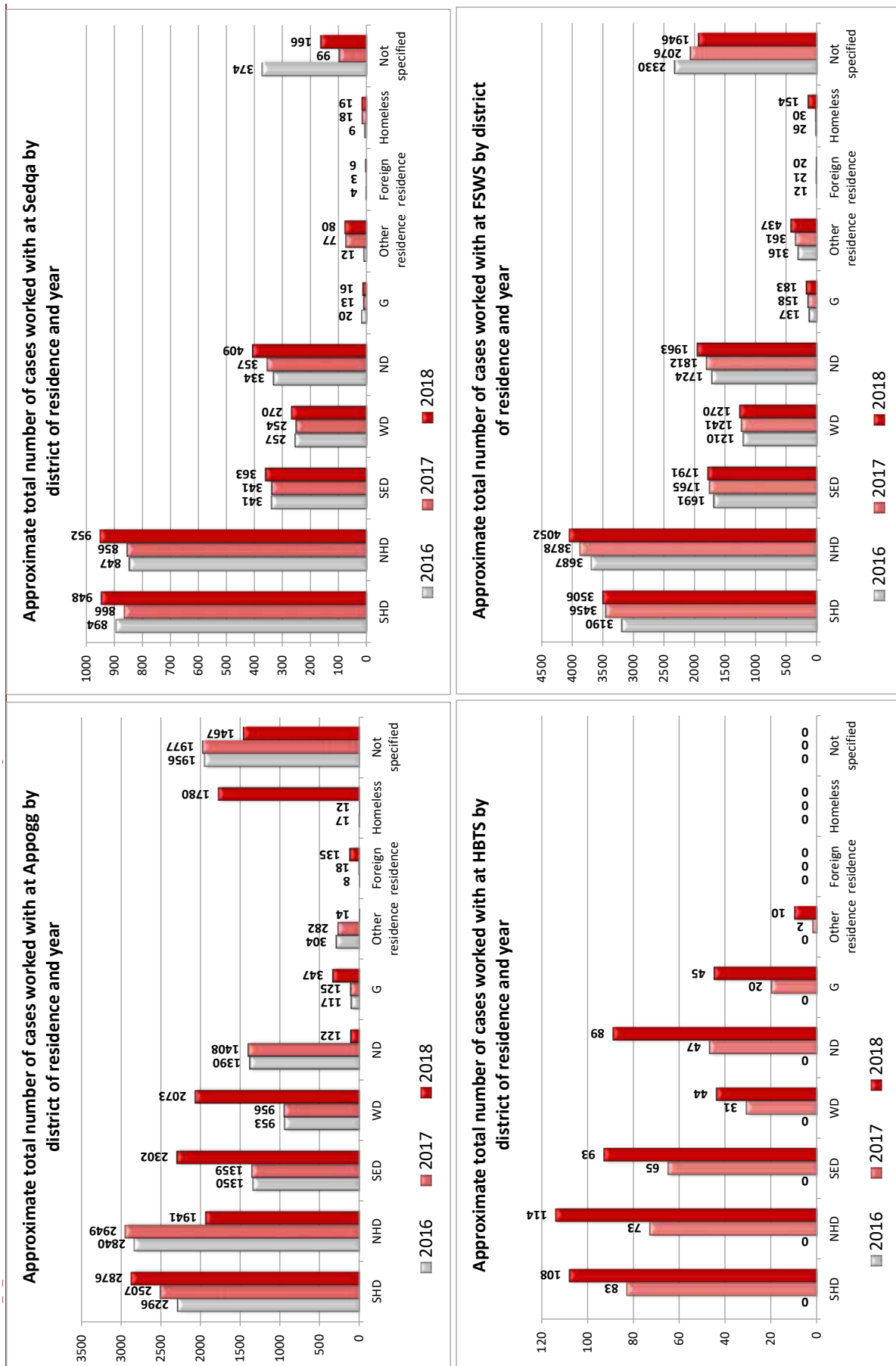
The approximate total number of cases worked with at **HBTS** between January and December 2018 by town of residence



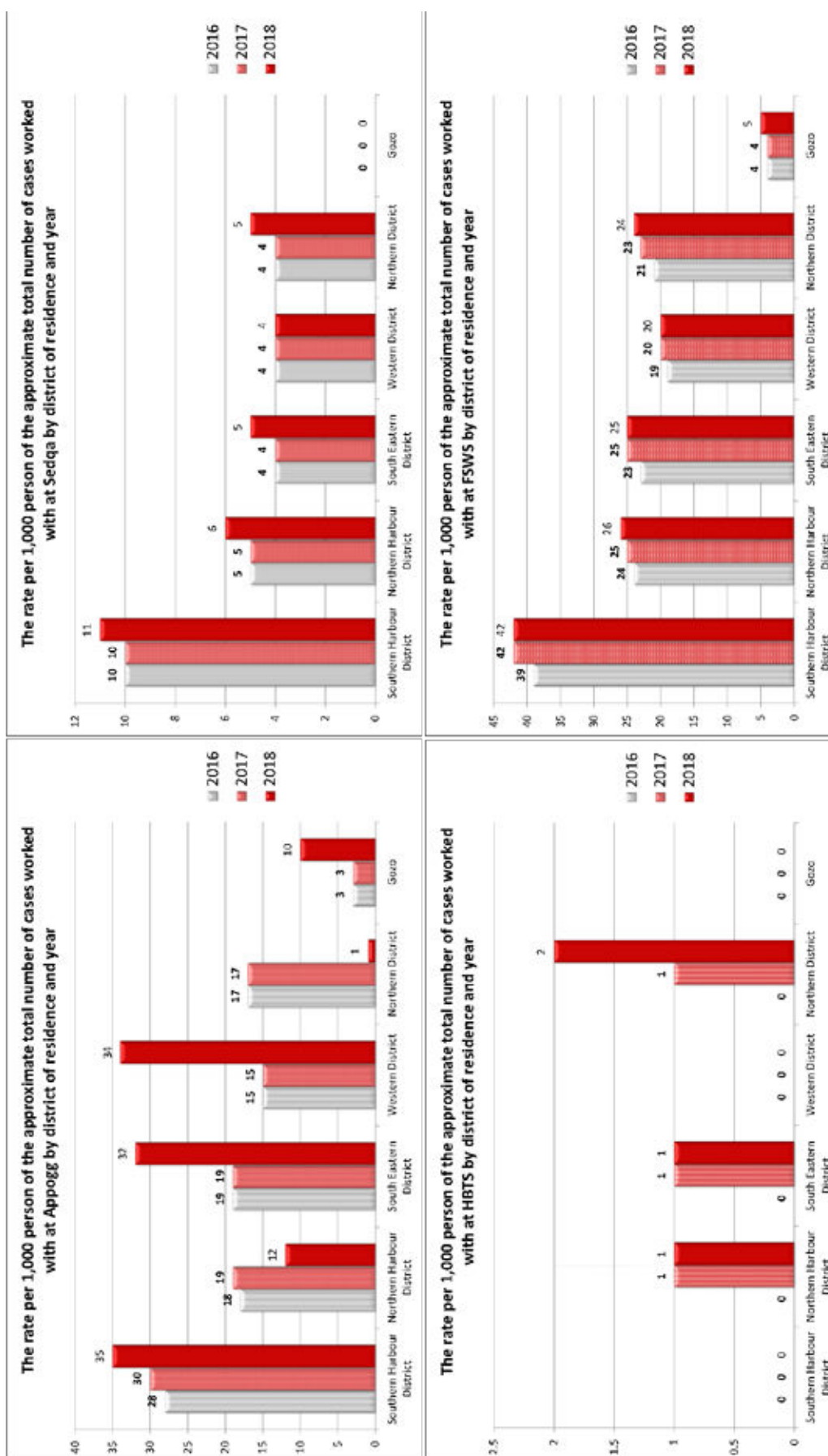
The approximate total number of cases worked with at HBTS by district of residence



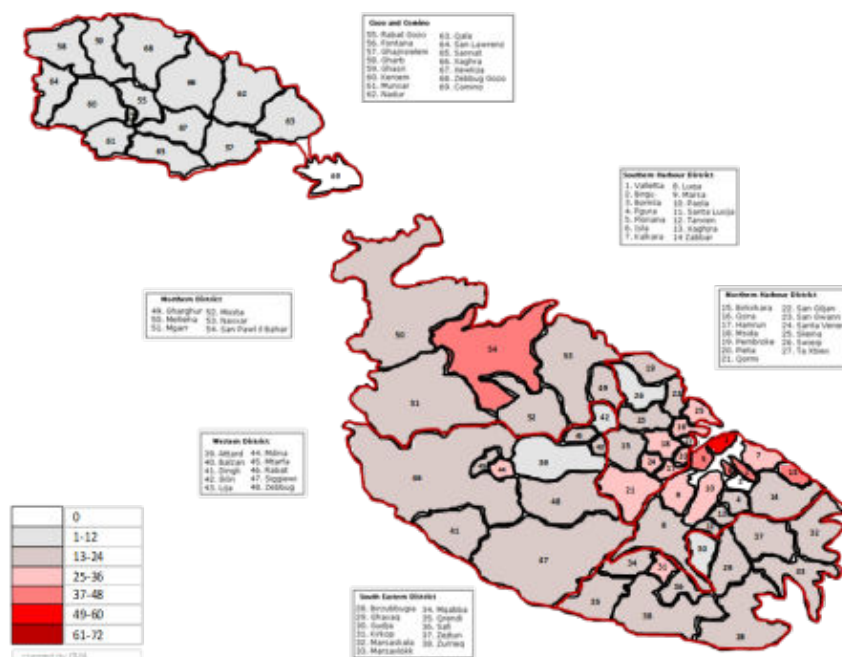
# THE APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF CASES WORKED WITH BY DISTRICT OF RESIDENCE



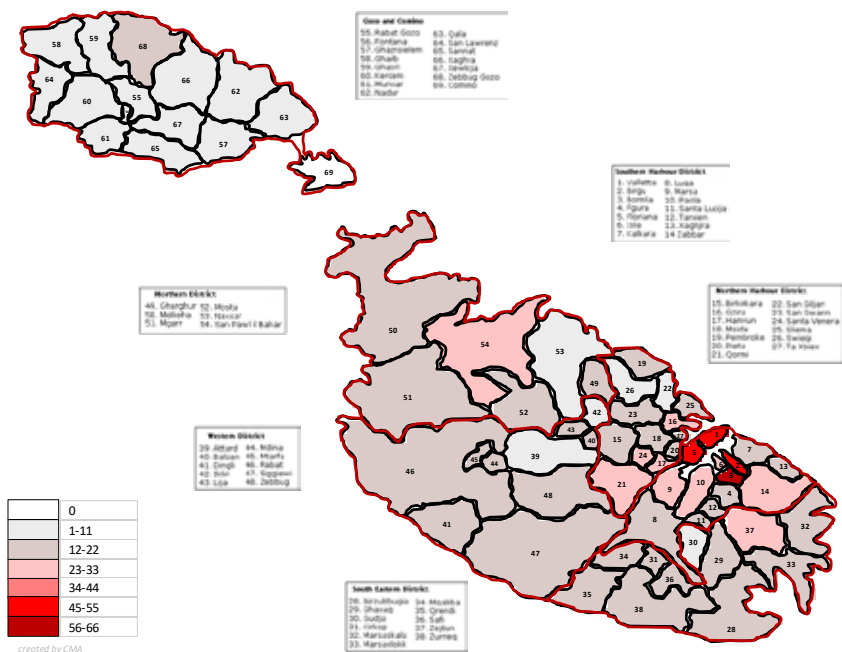
# THE APPROXIMATE RATE PER 1,000 PERSON OF CASES WORKED WITH BY DISTRICT OF RESIDENCE



# THE APPROXIMATE RATE PER 1,000 PERSON OF CASES WORKED WITH AT APPOGG BY TOWN OF RESIDENCE

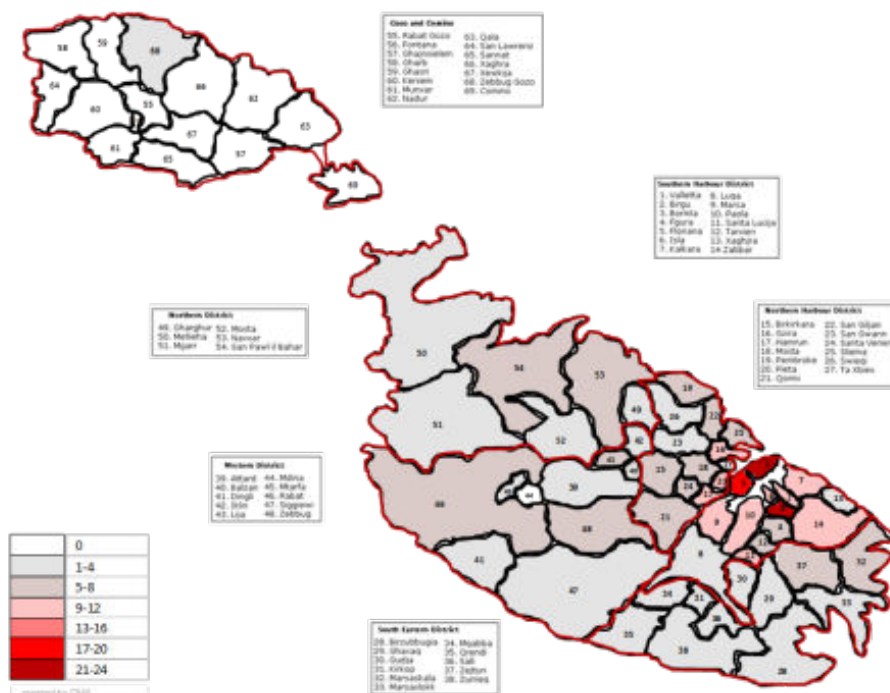


2017

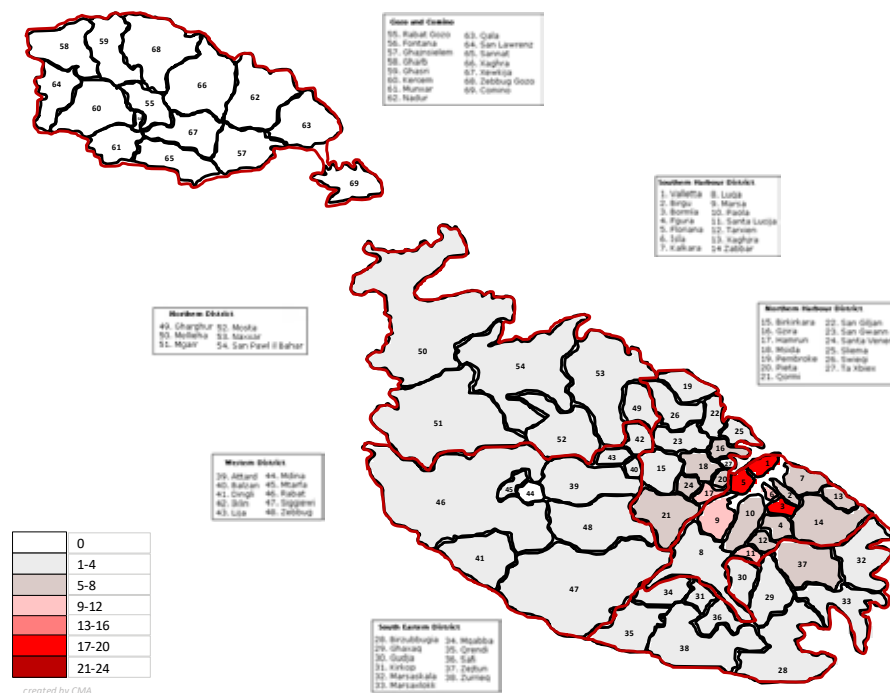


2018

# THE APPROXIMATE RATE PER 1,000 PERSON OF CASES WORKED WITH AT SEDQA BY TOWN OF RESIDENCE



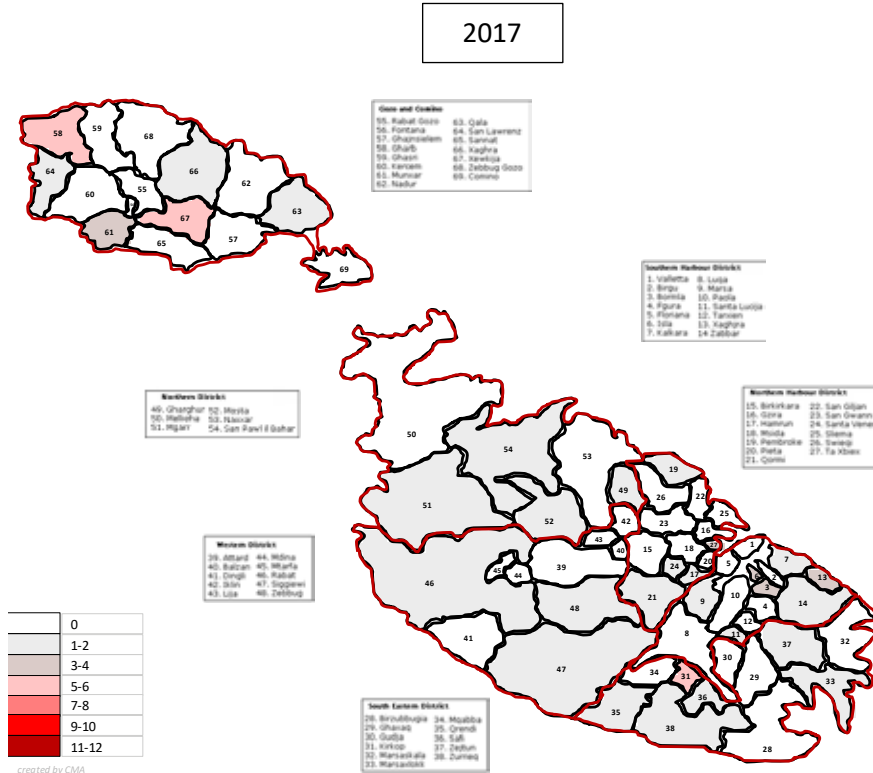
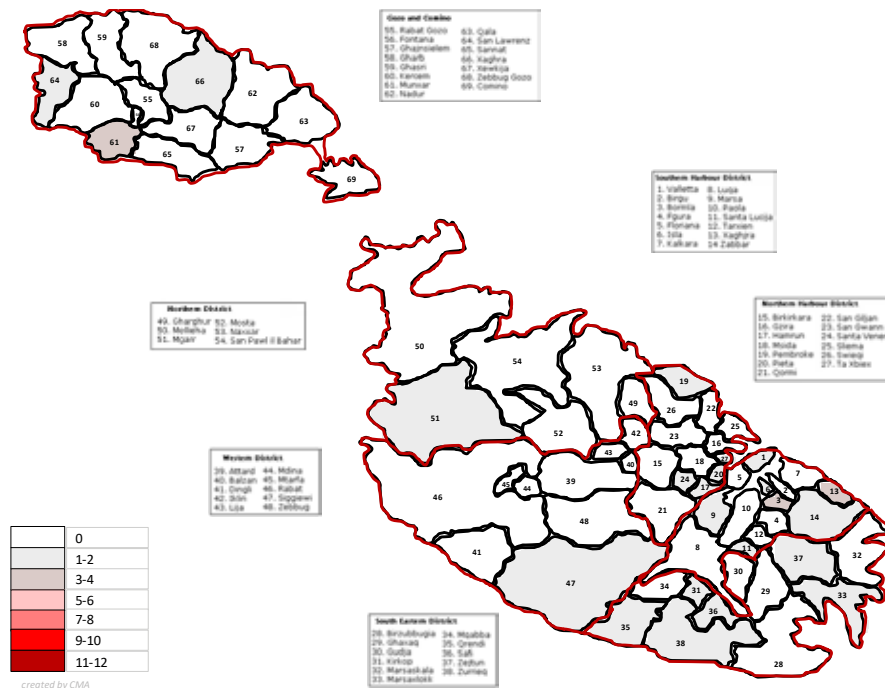
2017



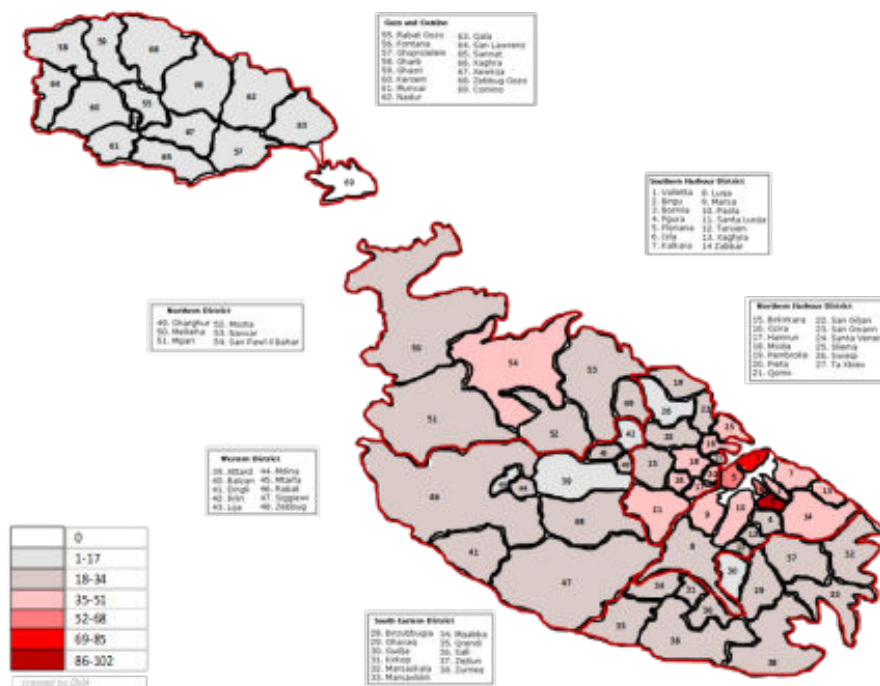
2018



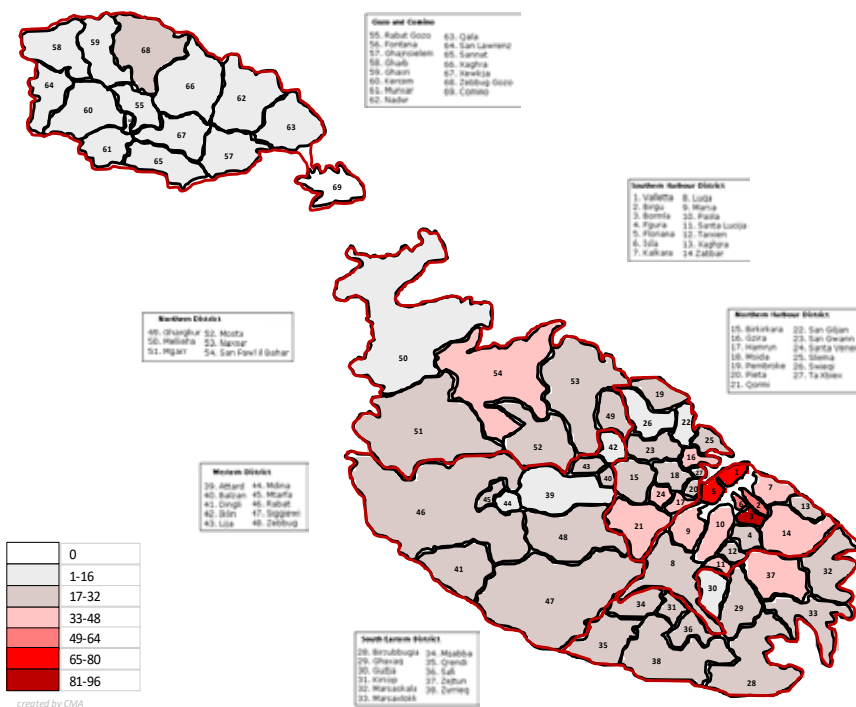
# THE APPROXIMATE RATE PER 1,000 PERSON OF CASES WORKED WITH AT HBTS BY TOWN OF RESIDENCE



# THE APPROXIMATE RATE PER 1,000 PERSON OF CASES WORKED WITH AT FSWS BY TOWN OF RESIDENCE



2017



2018



# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AACCD	Active Ageing and Community Care Department
APS	Apostleship of Prayer Savings Bank
ARMS	Automated Revenue Management Services
ASU	Assessment and Stabilisation Unit
BASPCAN	British Association for the Study and Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect
BOV	Bank of Valletta
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CMS	Case Management System
COST	European Cooperation in Science and Technology
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CPS	Child Protection Services
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
CVSA	Care for Victims of Sexual Assault
DCT	Drugs Community Team
DORM	Drug Offenders Rehabilitation Board
DV	Domestic Violence
DVU	Domestic Violence Unit
E4L	Embark for Life
EAP	Employee Assistance Programme
EC	European Commission
EEA	European Economic Area
EMCDDA	European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction

EMP	Electoral Manifesto Proposal
EMPL	Employment and Social Policy Committee of the European Parliament
EP	European Parliament
ESF	European Social Fund
ESN	European Social Network
ESP	Employee Support Programme
ESPAD	European School Survey Project on Alcohol and other Drugs
EU	European Union
EUSPR	European Society for Prevention Research
FEAD	Fund for the European Aid to the Most Deprived
FES	Foundation for Educational Services
FFM	Family Friendly Measures
FSWS	Foundation for Social Welfare Services
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
HBTS	Home-Based Family Therapeutic Services
HR	Human Resources
HSBC	HongKong Shanghai Banking Corporation
HSS	High Support Service
IC	International Committee
IC	International Congress
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IFSS	Intake and Family Support Services
IR	International Relations
ISS	International Social Service
ITS	Institute of Tourism Studies
KSM	Komunità Santa Marija



LAC	Looked After Children
LGBTIQ	Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex and Questioning
LTC	Long Term Care
MAB	Managing Abusive Behaviour
MCAST	Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology
MCD	Marketing and Communications Department
MDH	Mater Dei Hospital
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MFCS	Ministry for the Family, Children's Right and Social Solidarity
MFIN	Ministry for Finance
MFTP	Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion
MITA	Malta Information Technology Agency
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NCPE	National Commission for the Promotion Equality
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
PSPs	Public Social Partnerships
PT	Prince Trust
PUD	Programm Uljed Darna
QHC	Qormi Health Centre
RAN	Radicalisation Awareness Network
RHS	Residential Home Services
S&D	Socialists and Democrats
SAFE	Substance Abuse Free Employees
SAMOC	Sir Anthony Mamo Oncology Centre
SAQAR	Service Audits, Quality Assurance and Research
SAVs	Supervised Access Visits Service

SFFD	State Funded Food Distribution
SMIPU	Substance Misuse In-Patients Unit
SMOPU	Substance Misuse Out-Patients Unit
SPL	Support Line
SVPR	Saint Vincent de Paule Residence
TFAL	Tfal Favur Ambjent Liberu
UHM	Unjin Haddiema Magħqudin
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America
WHO	World Health Organisation
ZAK	Żgħażaġh Azzjoni Kattolika





