

Malta

SOCIAL SERVICES INDEX

RECOMMENDATION

Promote Foster Care as the Primary Placement Option for Children in Alternative Care

Put in place a national collaboration effort across all agencies working on child protection to increase the number of children under care orders who live in family-friendly placements, with foster care as the primary option.

SOCIAL SERVICES POLICY AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

There is no specific social services legislation. Instead, the legal framework ensures social services access is a fundamental right through several acts. For instance,

- Chapter 602 of the [Minor Protection \(Alternative Care\) Act](#) focuses on providing essential services for children in alternative care, ensuring their well-being and support.
- Chapter 581 of the [Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence Act](#) addresses the critical issue of domestic violence by offering services and protection for victims, seeking to create a safer environment for those affected.
- Chapter 582 of the Social Care Standards Authority Act focuses on safeguarding the quality of social services. The Authority is responsible for regulating social welfare services provided by public or private organisations.

There is no published catalogue or social

services portfolio. The [Social Care Standards Authority](#) defines the types of facilities and procedures that need to be in place and implemented by all providers. All Social Regulatory Standards are enacted by a Legal Notice and are, therefore, legally binding.

Main Agencies

The [Foundation for Social Welfare Services \(FSWS\)](#) is the national organisation responsible for the provision of social welfare services through its Agencies and Directorates.

The Agency also works with, collaborates or contracts with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) providers of social welfare services for a range of populations, including children and adolescents with challenging behaviour, homeless persons, addictions, and domestic violence, as well as assistance to carers of terminally ill family members, and psycho-social assistance related to palliative care.

The Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Malta maintains a registry of individuals with disabilities who

receive support services through [Aġenzija Sapport](#), the agency responsible. Aġenzija Sapport operates independently from FSWS (Foundation for Social Welfare Services), but collaborative efforts between the two agencies are established when necessary.

The Directorate for Alternative Care (Children and Youth) assumes responsibility for children and young individuals within the child protection system. In addition, the [Active Ageing and Community Care \(AACC\)](#) is the national entity responsible for the provision of older people services in the community and long-term care. The network of services offered by AACC to support the elderly to continue living in the community are multiple and may be broadly divided into clinical and non-clinical services.

SOCIAL SERVICES INVESTMENT

In 2022, total consolidated public spending on social services amounted to €564,327,741, or €1,083 per inhabitant.

SOCIAL SERVICES COVERAGE

Long-term Care

Residential Care

During 2022, there were 2025 applications for long-term care and all applicants were assessed. In 2023, Malta is in the process of revamping the assessment document so that the multi-disciplinary team is provided with more comprehensive information about the client, to enhance the objectivity of the admission process.

As a result, clients who are deemed not to require immediate admission may be guided towards accessing the various community services available, totalling 25 in number. This strategic adjustment will ensure that each applicant receives the most appropriate care and support based on their individual

needs.

There are 3,564 publicly financed places in residential care facilities with a current 100% rate occupancy.

Day Centres

In 2022, of a total population of 100,821 persons aged 65+, 1,713 individuals (or 1.7% of this age group) attended publicly financed active ageing centres.

Home Care

Home care data is available per type of support, not per beneficiary. The total number of interventions by home nursing and care services was 1,133,841 in 2022. It is challenging to identify the number of home care beneficiaries because a client may receive more than one type of support.

Approximately 5,224 hours of respite care were used by 179 beneficiaries per month.

Support Services for People with Disabilities

In 2023, **26,194 people with disabilities** are registered by Malta's Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Aġenzija Sapport offers support through 11 residential homes/apartments and 11 day centres, in addition to a wide array of other services available in different locations across Malta and Gozo as follows:

- 356 individuals receive an allowance to employ a personal assistant for varying amounts of hours.
- 145 individuals receive services to recommend accessible technology to assist with their complex communication needs.
- 582 individuals receive services from the in-house team of Social Workers and the Family Support Unit.

- 116 individuals receive community-based support to develop independent living skills within the community.
- 518 individuals attend day centres.
- 211 individuals are supported by Aġenzija Sapport to find placements within NGOs for residential, day programmes, and respite through Public Social Partnerships.
- 86 individuals currently reside in the 11 homes/ apartments operated by Aġenzija Sapport.
- 77 individuals receive services from Sharing Lives for socialisation and group leisure activities.
- 76 individuals use sign language interpreter services offered by the Agency.
- 38 individuals are developing their working skills through Way To Work.
- Several people are receiving services from Allied Health Professionals (primarily Occupational Therapists).

Furthermore, residential placements are also offered to persons with disabilities by the following non-governmental organisations:

- Hila has two residences and one hospital
- Dar Nazareth has three residential facilities
- Dar tal-Providenza has four residential facilities
- Fondazzjoni Wens has three residential facilities
- Dar Arka (Gozo) has three residential facilities
- Dar Bjorn has 2 homes.

Technology and Telecare Services

In 2023, 6,190 people are registered as receiving telecare services.

Child Protection Services

In 2022, there were 589 child placements documented in alternative care. Of these, 51% were placed in family foster care. In

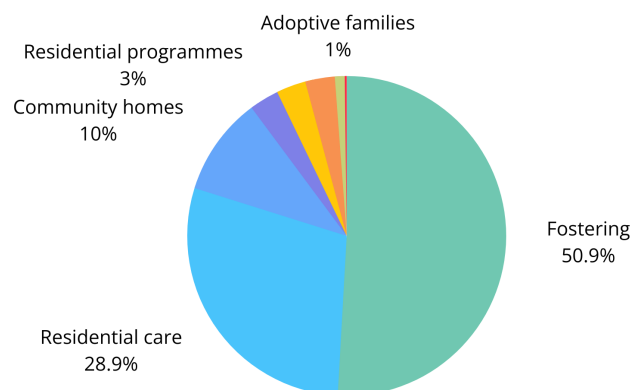
total, there were 207 foster carers.

Below is a list with the number of 2022 placements by type.

2022 Number of child alternative care placements by type

Type of alternative care	No.
Fostering	299
Residential care	172
Community homes	61
Residential programmes	20
Residential care for children with disabilities	17
Others: Temporary placements	16
Adoptive families	3
Pre-adoption	1
Total	589

2022 Percentage of child alternative care placements by type



Services for Female Victims of Violence

According to 2021 data, 3,295 persons used the different services available for persons experiencing domestic violence. 79% of this number were female.

There are 41 available beds across five centres ranging from 3 to 14 places.

Services for Homeless People

According to current data, there are six shelters with the following number of available beds for the whole population:

- YMCA: 34 beds - Dar Nikki Cassar 14 beds
- Y-Communal Home
- Dar Tereza Spinelli: 15 beds
- Dar Patri Leopoldo: 18 beds
- Dar Emmaus: 12 beds
- Dar Osanna Pia & Dar Mamma Margherita:
12 beds & 7 beds
- Dar Marvelli & Carlo Gastini residence: 3
Flatlets (1 bedroom each) & 4 beds

There are [several housing support allowances](#):

- (i) Affordable Housing
- (ii) Social Housing
- (iii) Pre-95 Protected Leases
- (iv) Private Residential Leases Unit
- (v) Repairs and Adaptations



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