



# Drug Situation 2024

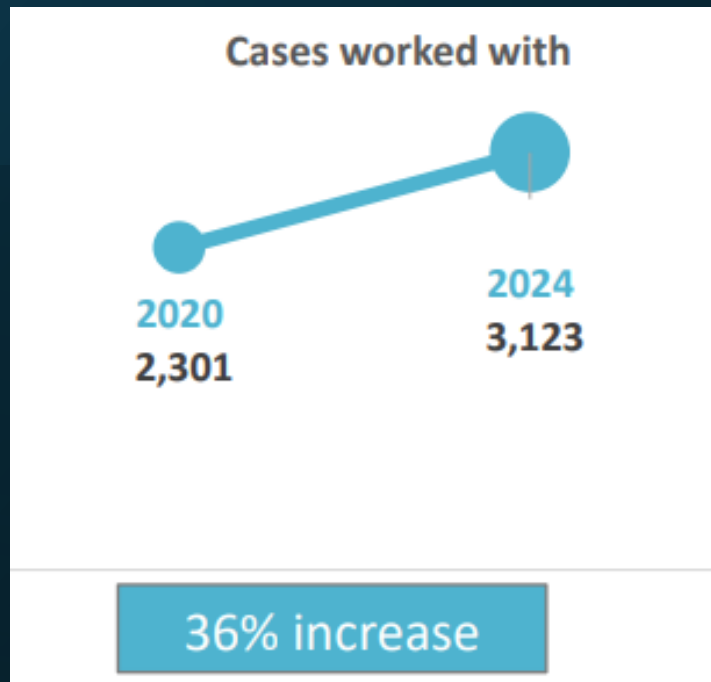
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Dr Anna Maria Vella

# Trends and statistics on drug consumption

Sedqa's Annual  
Report 2024

National Focal Point  
for Drugs and Drug  
Addiction Annual  
Report 2024



Cases worked with Jan- Dec 2024: **3,123**



Gender

**77%**  
Male

**86%**  
Maltese



Nationality



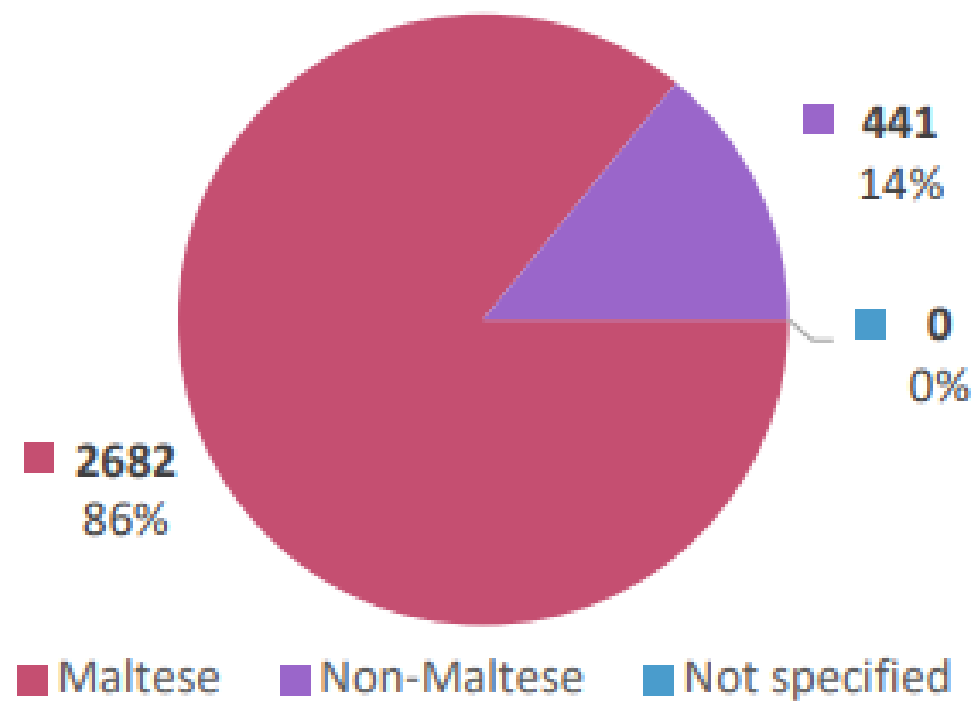
Age category

**54%**  
40-59 years

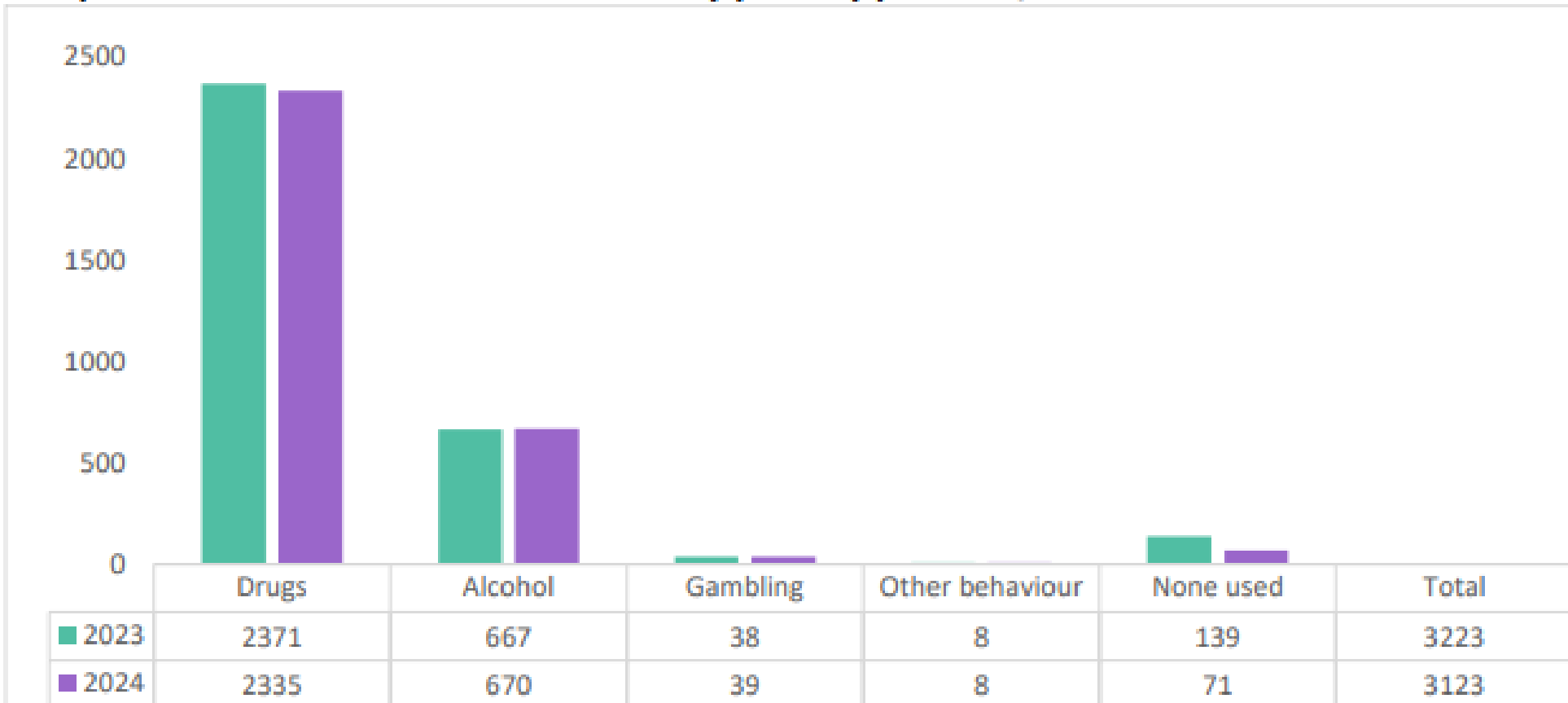
### Case activity: Jan-Dec 2024

Service	Cases worked with	Individuals worked with
Addictions Community Service	1036	976
Substance Misuse Out-patient Unit	1633	1595
Substance Misuse In-patient Unit	313	238
Komunita' Santa Marija Addiction Residential Rehabilitation Programme	141	125
<b>Total</b>	<b>3123</b>	-

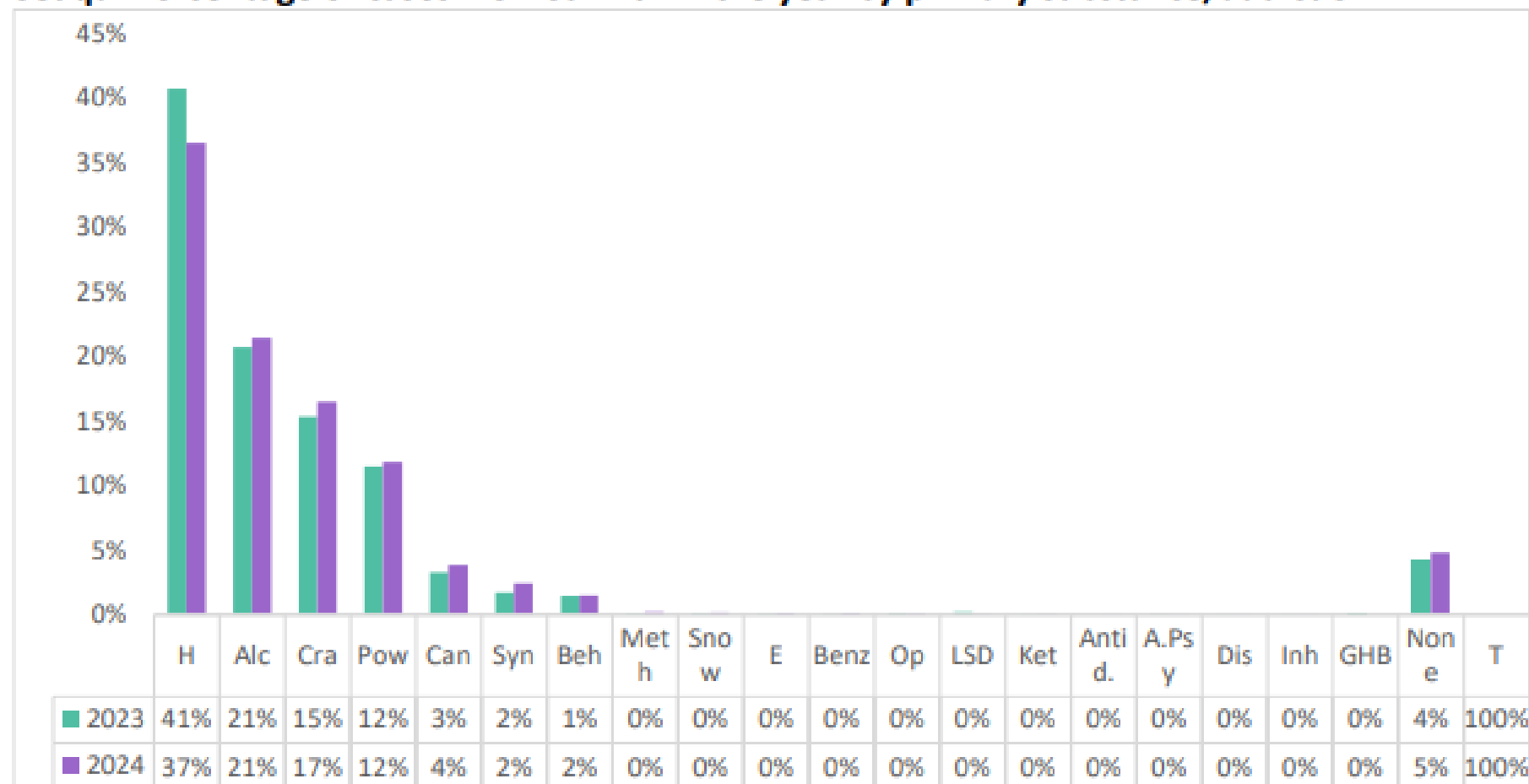
**Sedqa: Cases worked with Jan-Dec 2024 by nationality (no. & %)**



Sedqa: Cases worked with Jan-Dec 2024 by primary problem/addiction



## Sedqa: Percentage of cases worked with in the year by primary substance/addiction



Graph Key: H = Heroin; Alc = Alcohol; Cra = Cocaine (crack); Pow =Cocaine (powder); Can = Cannabis; Syn = Synthetic cannabis; Beh = Gambling/other behaviour; Meth = Methamphetamines; Snow = Snowballing; E = Ecstasy; Benz = Benzodiazepines; Op = Other Opioids; LSD = Hallucinogens/LSD; Ket = Ketamine; Antid.= Antidepressant medication; A.Psy = Antipsychotic medication; Dis = Distalgesics; Inh = Inhalants; GHB = GHB; None = None used; T = Total.



# Impact on Public Health

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- Absence from the workplace: Unemployed or erratic use of Sick Leave or Absenteeism
- Increase in Hospital Emergency admissions because of Overdoses
- Driving under the influence of Drugs: Increase of MVA's and deaths
- Transmission of Infective diseases like Hep C which involves expensive treatment
- Treatment of Complications: Bacterial Endocarditis, Deep-seated abscesses, Limb amputations

# DRUG HARMS 2023

## Drug Related Emergencies



## Drug Related Infectious Diseases

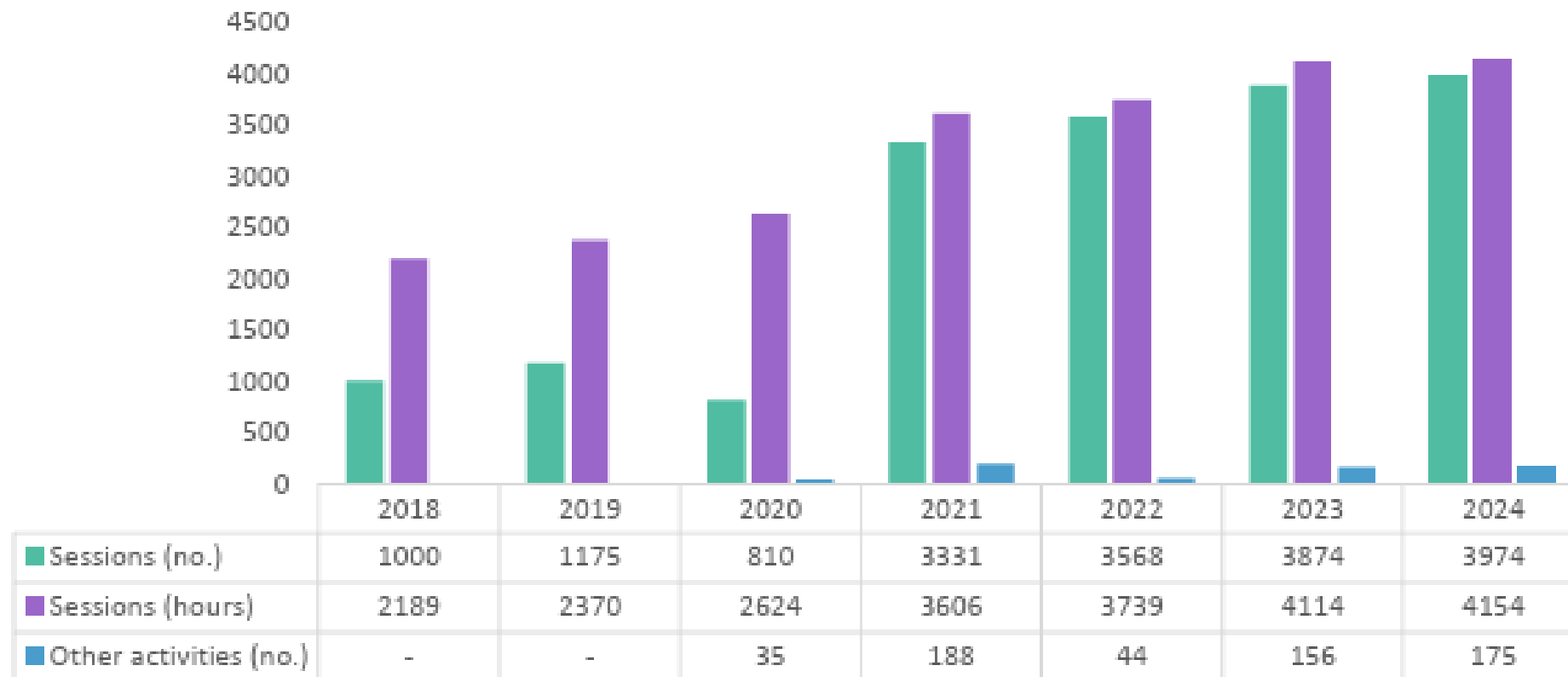
HIV	4% tested	2 positive
HBV	3% tested	0 positive
HCV	3% tested	9 positive

## Drug Related Deaths

18

# Prevention Strategies

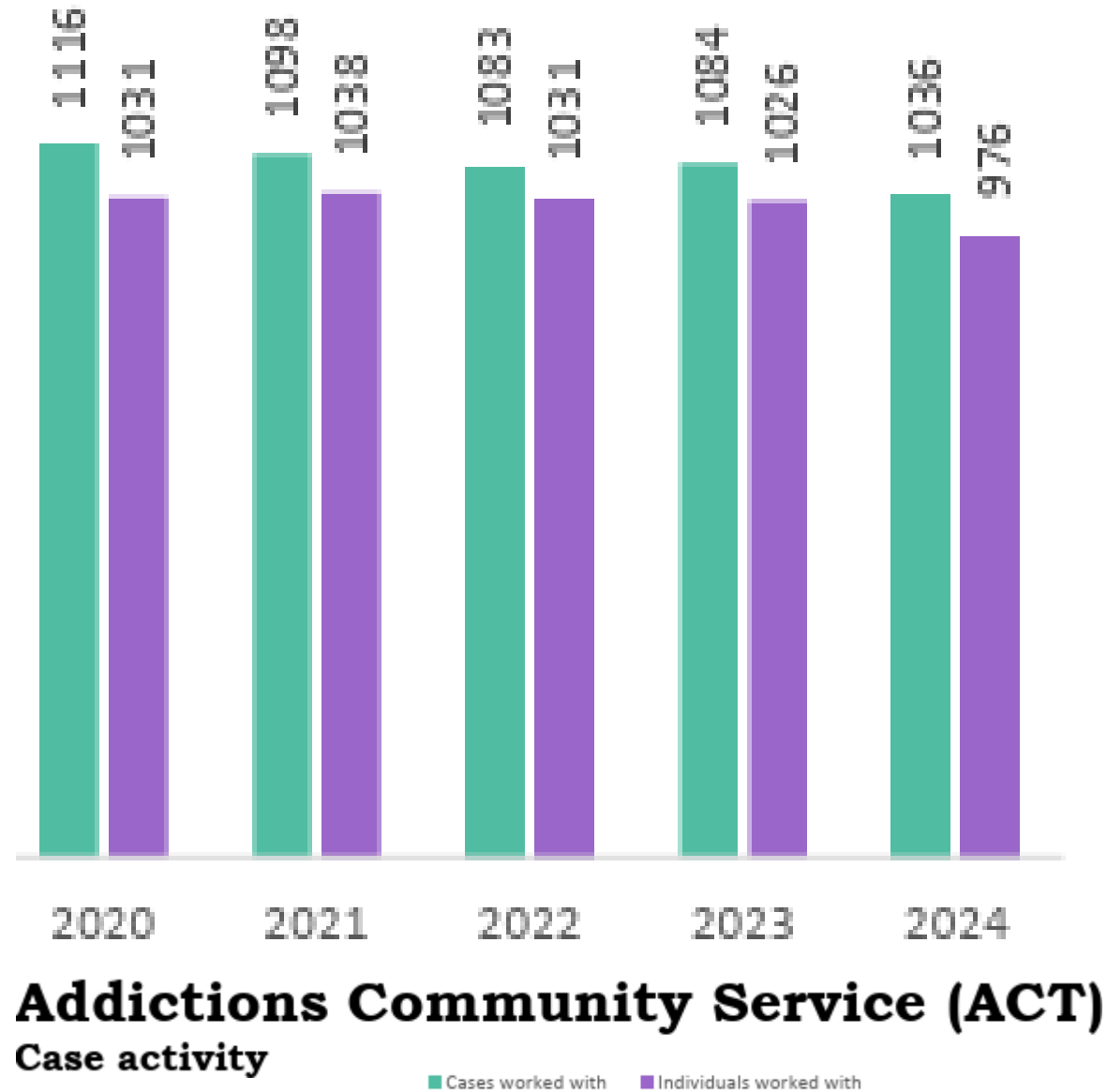
PPV: Approximate number and hours of sessions



**PPV: Approximate number of sessions co-ordinated and delivered on request by programme topic**

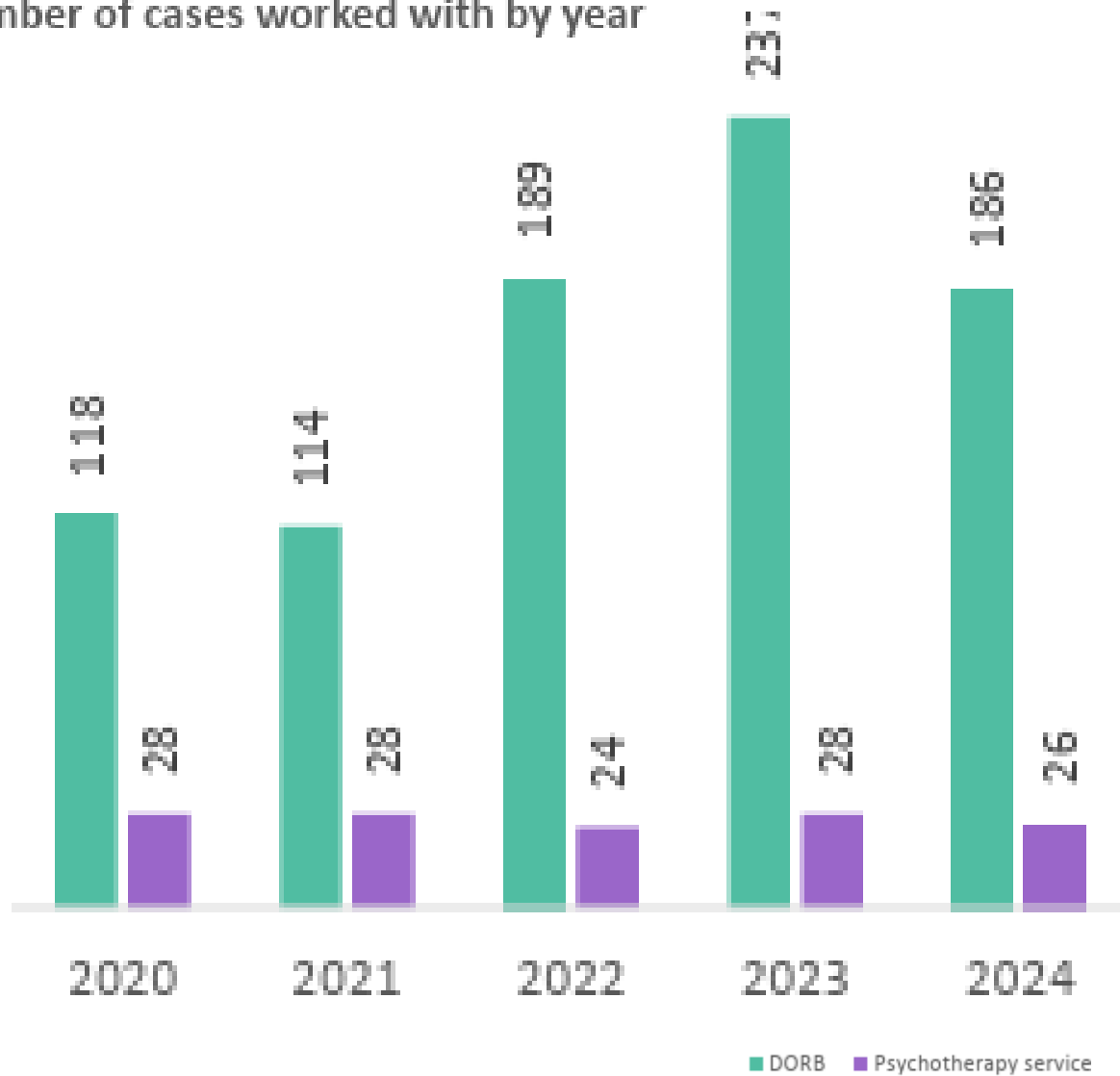
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
TFAL 3 programme	616	720	272	1302	1494	1526	1485
TFAL 5 programme	-	107	161	1235	934	1103	1354
Teen outside the box	-	-	-	339	488	601	635
SAFE sessions	117	134	43	111	161	222	196
Post-secondary interventions	-	3	195	35	78	108	127
Community sessions	-	196	104	99	99	94	118
Summer school sessions	65	15	35	197	288	192	34
Learning support centres	-	-	-	13	26	21	20
Secondary Ad-hoc sessions	-	-	-	-	-	7	5

## Support Services

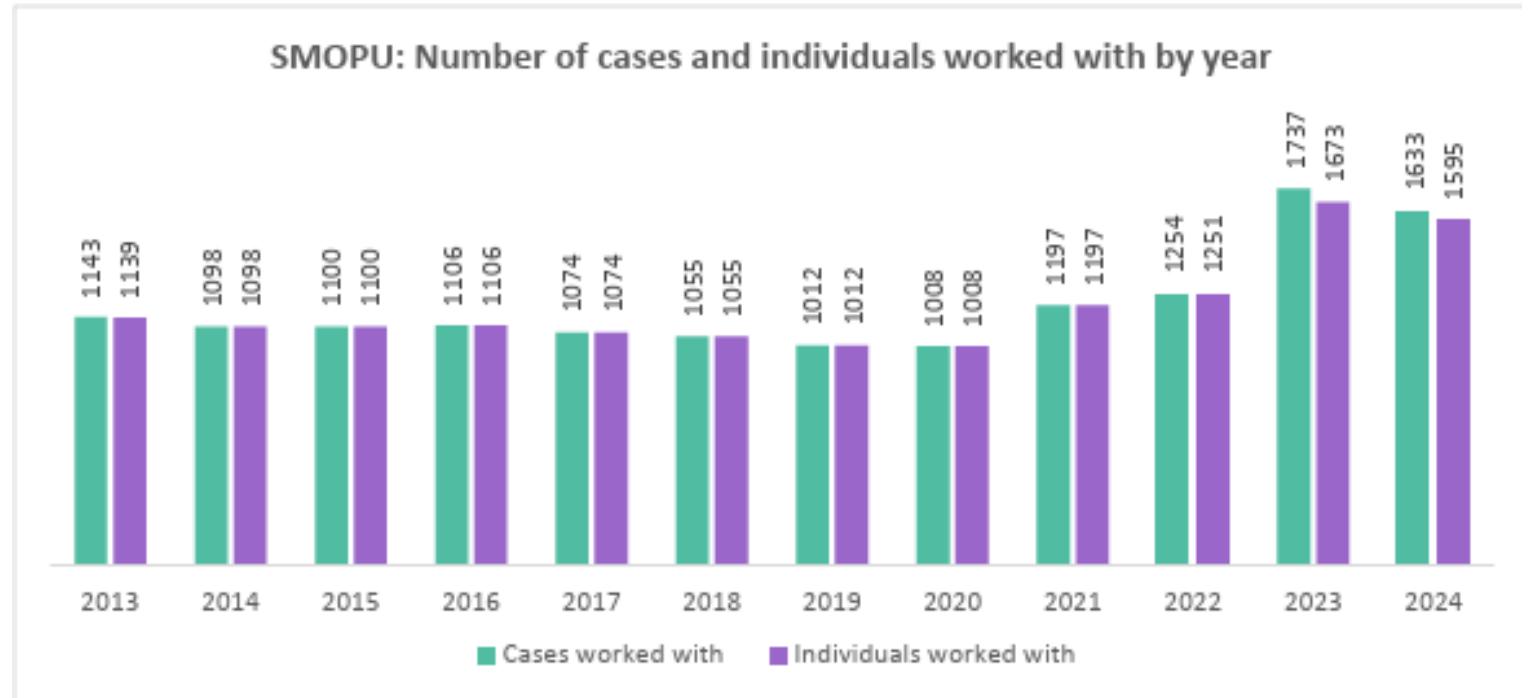


## Support services

Court: Number of cases worked with by year



## Support Services



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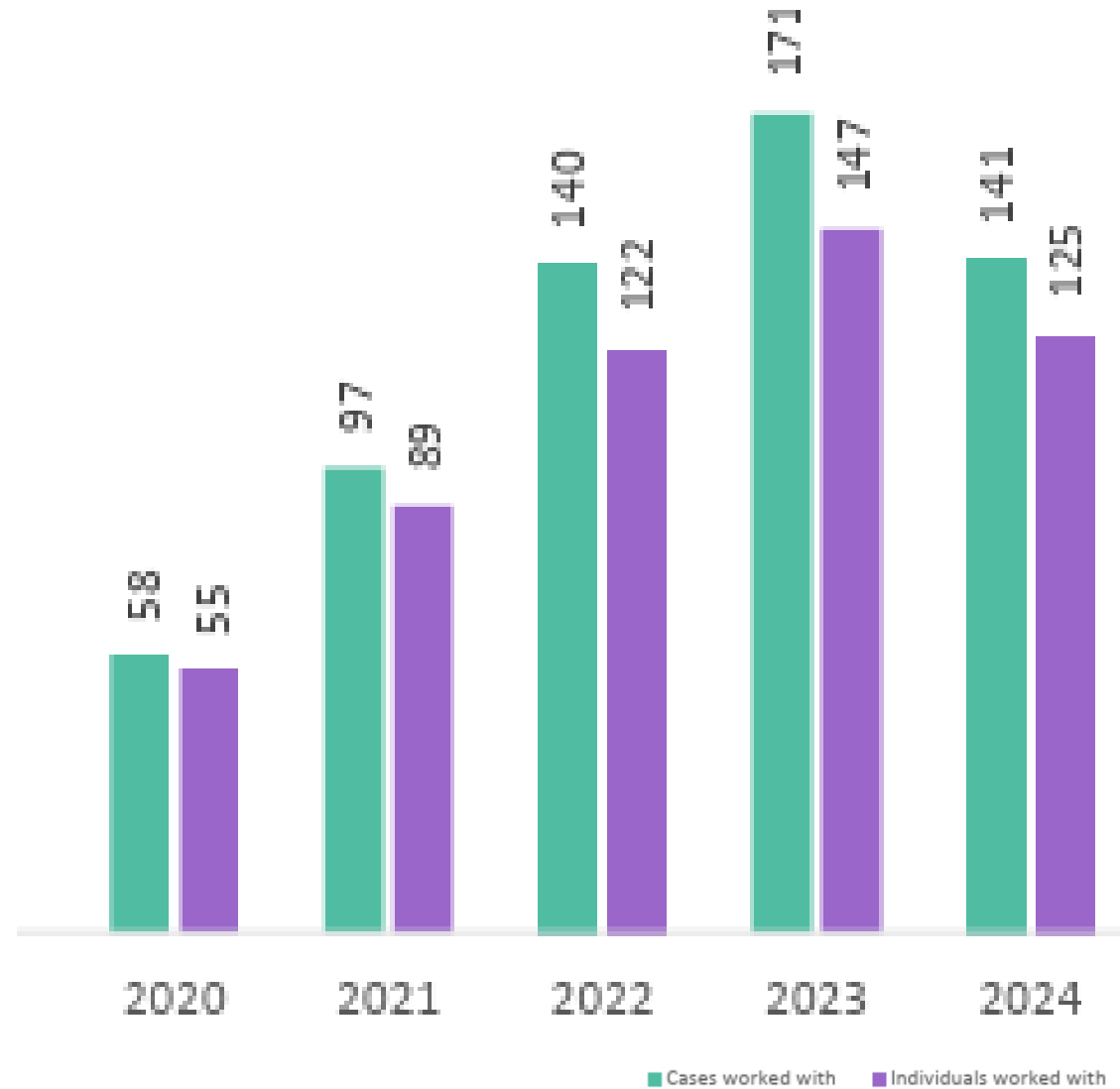
SMIPU: Number of cases and individuals worked with by year





## Support Services

Residential: Number of cases and individuals worked with by year



# Recent Developments

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- New treatment options for Opioid use: Buprenorphine
  - An In-house wound Clinic
  - Hep C treatment started and followed at SMOPU
  - GU clinic to start as from May 2025 from SMOPU
  - Increase in staff training and specialization

# Implementation of Prevention Programmes in School Settings

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Successfully led and delivered key mainstream prevention programmes, including T.F.A.L.3 for 7-8 year olds, T.F.A.L.5 for 9-10 year olds, and Teen Outside the Box for 11-12 year olds. These programmes reach a broad cohort of students across all schools in Malta and Gozo. Notably, T.F.A.L.3 and T.F.A.L.5 are accredited, and students who attend at least 80% of the sessions are awarded an MQF Level 2 certificate.

# Consolidation of the SAFE Programme in Workplaces

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- Continued to develop and deliver prevention sessions within workplace settings through the SAFE Programme. This initiative promotes well-being and safety using evidence-informed practices, reaching nearly 3,000 participants in 2024.

# Enhanced Social Media Campaign

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- Launched and implemented a more structured social media strategy in collaboration with the renowned media company Malta Daily, significantly improving public engagement and outreach on harm reduction and prevention-related topics.

# Challenges

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- Dual Diagnosis Clinics stopped because of a lack of psychiatrists interested in the field
- Increase in Drug-Related Deaths
- Drug Driving Policies
- Increase in Alcohol and Cocaine use: How to engage patients?
- Aging opioid-using population

## Lack of national curriculum standards for prevention education

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We face constraints due to the absence of an updated and cohesive national prevention policy, limiting long-term strategic planning and consistent service delivery across sectors. There is fragmented and inconsistent delivery of life skills and harm reduction content across schools and educational institutions. This weakens the effectiveness of school-based programmes and limits their long-term impact. For instance TFAL 5 and TOTB are not part of national curriculum although various attempts

# Lack of a Year 10 Prevention Programme

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- There is currently no dedicated programme for Year 10 students, creating a gap in the continuity of prevention education. Ensuring that students receive consistent messages every 2–3 years is crucial for reinforcing life skills that help them avoid harmful substances or behaviours.



# The absence of **comprehensive workplace prevention policies**

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- Including standards for employee wellbeing, substance use prevention, and referral mechanisms. This leaves significant gaps in adult-targeted prevention strategies, especially in high-risk sectors. For instance, government departments still need to adopt this policy or a similar framework.
  - Addressing these policy deficiencies is essential to establish a robust, multi-sectoral prevention framework grounded on evidence-based practices and aligned with national public health priorities.

# Limited Availability of Local Research

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The lack of recent research, specific to Malta, in the fields of prevention and substance use continues to be a barrier to timely and culturally relevant evidence-based interventions. Sedqa, in the last couple of years, has developed its research, which has been recognized on an international level.