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Total absences for students attending primary and secondary schools during academic year 2014/2015 amounted to 542,447 days, equivalent to an average of 11.9 absent days per student.

Student Absenteeism: 2014/2015

Absenteeism recorded during academic year 2014/2015 decreased by 9.2 per cent when compared with the previous academic year. Authorised absences increased by 7.5 per cent and made up 65.0 per cent of total absences. The number of unauthorised absences decreased by 29.4 per cent (Table 1).

The average number of absences during the period under review stood at 11.9 days per student, a decrease of 1.1 days per student when compared to the previous academic year. On average, students recorded 7.7 days of authorised and 4.2 days of unauthorised absences in one academic year (Table 2).

In absolute terms, male students recorded higher levels of absenteeism when compared to their female counterparts (Table 3). The average level of absence among males was found to be higher compared to that of females for the majority of class levels, with the exception of Form 4 and Form 5 students (Chart 1).

Student absenteeism in state schools decreased by 15.3 per cent during academic year 2014/2015. The majority of these absences were authorised, accounting for 60.5 per cent of total absenteeism in state schools. Authorised absences in state schools increased by 6.3 per cent. Increases in both authorised and unauthorised absences were registered in both independent and church schools (Table 4).

Students of all ages recorded lower levels of unauthorised absences when compared to the previous academic year (Table 5). The lowest average number of absences was recorded among ten year olds at 7.9 days, while 16 year olds held the highest average number of absences at 31.1 days (Table 6).

Students attending state schools located in the Northern district registered the sharpest drop in their absence levels (Table 7). On average, students attending state schools located in the Northern Harbour district accumulated the highest average number of absences (18.0 days per student). On the other hand, the lowest average number of absences was recorded in the Western district and stood at 9.9 days per student (Table 8) ■

Compiled by:

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Table 1. Absences by academic year and class level*

Class level	Academic year 2012/2013	Academic year 2013/2014	Academic year 2014/2015	Percentage change 2014-2015/2013-2014
	Authorised absences			
Year 1	36,552	28,451	35,450	24.6
Year 2	30,039	22,579	30,564	35.4
Year 3	29,103	19,409	25,693	32.4
Year 4	23,437	18,558	21,917	18.1
Year 5	24,210	17,325	21,903	26.4
Year 6	25,197	18,081	20,393	12.8
Form 1	25,780	24,883	31,684	27.3
Form 2	29,090	25,476	31,703	24.4
Form 3	34,600	29,331	33,465	14.1
Form 4	47,175	38,665	41,566	7.5
Form 5	129,717	85,215	58,085	-31.8
Total	434,899	327,972	352,423	7.5
	Unauthorised absences			
Year 1	15,794	17,442	12,260	-29.7
Year 2	15,555	15,674	12,988	-17.1
Year 3	14,216	13,552	10,200	-24.7
Year 4	15,093	14,408	10,532	-26.9
Year 5	15,966	14,045	11,243	-19.9
Year 6	15,890	15,179	10,313	-32.1
Form 1	21,244	20,619	13,171	-36.1
Form 2	29,010	26,052	17,452	-33.0
Form 3	35,350	34,767	21,204	-39.0
Form 4	48,351	44,860	30,727	-31.5
Form 5	48,793	52,670	39,933	-24.2
Total	275,262	269,267	190,024	-29.4
	Total absences			
Year 1	52,346	45,893	47,710	4.0
Year 2	45,593	38,253	43,552	13.9
Year 3	43,319	32,961	35,893	8.9
Year 4	38,530	32,966	32,449	-1.6
Year 5	40,176	31,371	33,147	5.7
Year 6	41,087	33,260	30,706	-7.7
Form 1	47,024	45,501	44,856	-1.4
Form 2	58,100	51,528	49,155	-4.6
Form 3	69,950	64,098	54,669	-14.7
Form 4	95,525	83,525	72,292	-13.4
Form 5	178,510	137,884	98,018	-28.9
Total	710,161	597,239	542,447	-9.2

* Excludes children attending special schools

Table 2. Average absences by academic year and class level*

Class level	Academic year 2012/2013	Academic year 2013/2014	Academic year 2014/2015
	Authorised absences		
Year 1	9.3	6.6	8.2
Year 2	7.7	5.7	7.1
Year 3	7.4	4.9	6.4
Year 4	6.0	4.7	5.5
Year 5	6.0	4.5	5.6
Year 6	6.4	4.5	5.2
Form 1	6.3	6.2	7.6
Form 2	6.7	6.3	7.9
Form 3	7.8	6.6	8.2
Form 4	9.9	8.6	9.3
Form 5	26.7	17.8	13.1
Total	9.4	7.2	7.7
Unauthorised absences			
Year 1	4.0	4.1	2.8
Year 2	4.0	3.9	3.0
Year 3	3.6	3.4	2.5
Year 4	3.9	3.7	2.6
Year 5	4.0	3.6	2.9
Year 6	4.0	3.8	2.6
Form 1	5.2	5.2	3.1
Form 2	6.7	6.4	4.3
Form 3	8.0	7.8	5.2
Form 4	10.1	9.9	6.9
Form 5	10.1	11.0	9.0
Total	6.0	5.9	4.2
Total absences			
Year 1	13.3	10.7	11.0
Year 2	11.7	9.6	10.2
Year 3	11.0	8.4	9.0
Year 4	9.9	8.4	8.1
Year 5	10.0	8.1	8.4
Year 6	10.4	8.2	7.8
Form 1	11.4	11.4	10.7
Form 2	13.4	12.7	12.2
Form 3	15.8	14.4	13.4
Form 4	20.0	18.5	16.2
Form 5	36.8	28.8	22.0
Total	15.4	13.0	11.9

* Excludes children attending special schools

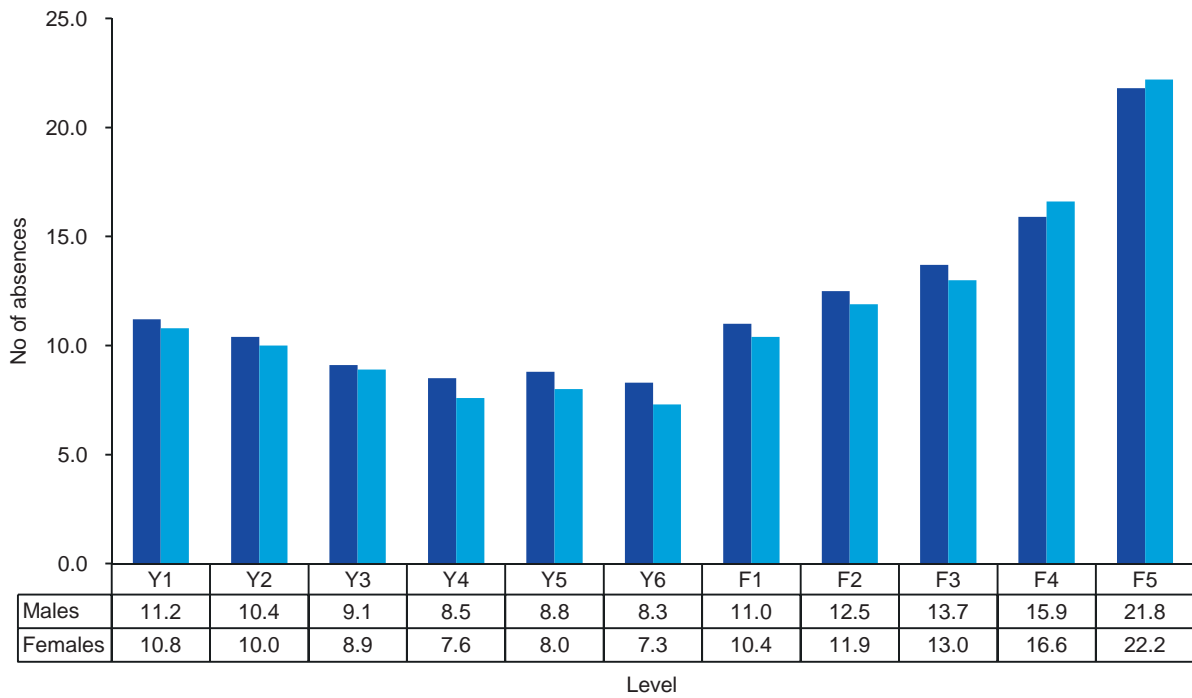
Note: Averages are compiled on the basis of the entire student population as present in news release No: 202/2016.

Table 3. Absences by academic year, sex and class level*

Class level	Academic year 2012/2013		Academic year 2013/2014		Academic year 2014/2015		Percentage change 2014-2015/2013-2014	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
	Authorised absences							
Year 1	19,027	17,524	14,841	13,609	18,311	17,138	23.4	25.9
Year 2	15,855	14,184	11,699	10,880	16,170	14,394	38.2	32.3
Year 3	14,727	14,376	10,288	9,121	13,267	12,426	29.0	36.2
Year 4	11,524	11,913	9,641	8,917	11,716	10,201	21.5	14.4
Year 5	11,901	12,310	9,115	8,211	11,176	10,727	22.6	30.7
Year 6	13,432	11,765	8,868	9,213	10,688	9,706	20.5	5.4
Form 1	13,239	12,541	13,544	11,339	16,031	15,653	18.4	38.0
Form 2	14,624	14,466	13,579	11,897	17,231	14,472	26.9	21.7
Form 3	17,842	16,758	15,222	14,109	17,567	15,897	15.4	12.7
Form 4	25,638	21,537	20,699	17,966	20,730	20,835	0.2	16.0
Form 5	83,599	46,118	47,033	38,182	30,480	27,606	-35.2	-27.7
Total	241,407	193,492	174,529	153,443	183,368	169,056	5.1	10.2
	Unauthorised absences							
Year 1	7,986	7,808	9,233	8,209	6,360	5,900	-31.1	-28.1
Year 2	7,947	7,608	8,198	7,476	6,700	6,288	-18.3	-15.9
Year 3	7,813	6,403	7,538	6,013	5,527	4,673	-26.7	-22.3
Year 4	8,217	6,877	7,885	6,523	5,917	4,616	-25.0	-29.2
Year 5	8,294	7,672	7,728	6,317	6,467	4,776	-16.3	-24.4
Year 6	8,578	7,312	8,030	7,149	5,857	4,456	-27.1	-37.7
Form 1	11,863	9,381	10,894	9,725	7,109	6,062	-34.7	-37.7
Form 2	14,259	14,751	14,552	11,500	9,156	8,296	-37.1	-27.9
Form 3	17,130	18,220	16,096	18,671	11,108	10,096	-31.0	-45.9
Form 4	25,592	22,758	21,321	23,539	14,156	16,571	-33.6	-29.6
Form 5	28,280	20,513	26,825	25,845	18,666	21,267	-30.4	-17.7
Total	145,960	129,302	138,300	130,967	97,025	92,999	-29.8	-29.0
	Total absences							
Year 1	27,014	25,332	24,074	21,819	24,671	23,039	2.5	5.6
Year 2	23,802	21,792	19,897	18,356	22,871	20,681	14.9	12.7
Year 3	22,540	20,779	17,826	15,135	18,794	17,099	5.4	13.0
Year 4	19,740	18,790	17,526	15,440	17,633	14,816	0.6	-4.0
Year 5	20,195	19,982	16,843	14,528	17,643	15,503	4.8	6.7
Year 6	22,010	19,077	16,898	16,361	16,545	14,161	-2.1	-13.4
Form 1	25,102	21,922	24,438	21,064	23,141	21,715	-5.3	3.1
Form 2	28,884	29,217	28,131	23,397	26,387	22,768	-6.2	-2.7
Form 3	34,973	34,978	31,318	32,780	28,676	25,993	-8.4	-20.7
Form 4	51,230	44,295	42,019	41,505	34,886	37,406	-17.0	-9.9
Form 5	111,878	66,631	73,858	64,027	49,146	48,873	-33.5	-23.7
Total	387,367	322,794	312,829	284,410	280,392	262,055	-10.4	-7.9

* Excludes children attending special schools

Chart 1. Average absences by class level and sex: 2014/2015



Note: Averages are compiled on the basis of the entire student population as present in news release No: 202/2016.

Chart 2. Percentage of unauthorised absences by academic year and school type

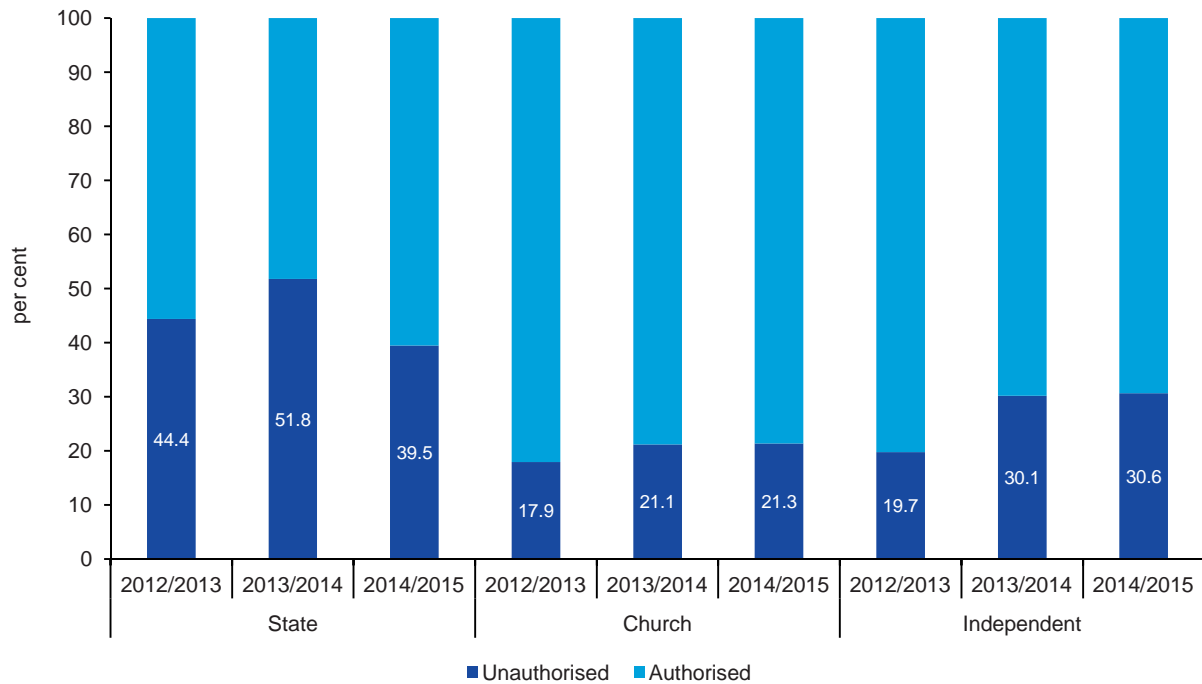


Table 4. Absences by academic year, school type and level*

Level	Authorised absences	Unauthorised absences	Total absences
Academic year 2012/2013			
Primary	97,388	78,452	175,840
Lower Secondary (Form 1-3)	58,616	79,437	138,053
Upper Secondary (Form 4-5)	153,776	89,142	242,918
Total State Schools	309,780	247,031	556,811
Primary	50,391	8,797	59,188
Lower Secondary (Form 1-3)	23,675	4,987	28,661
Upper Secondary (Form 4-5)	17,717	6,244	23,961
Total Church Schools	91,783	20,028	111,811
Primary	20,759	5,265	26,024
Lower Secondary (Form 1-3)	7,180	1,180	8,360
Upper Secondary (Form 4-5)	5,398	1,758	7,156
Total Independent Schools	33,337	8,203	41,540
Academic year 2013/2014			
Primary	71,971	72,800	144,771
Lower Secondary (Form 1-3)	49,299	74,427	123,726
Upper Secondary (Form 4-5)	98,280	88,282	186,562
Total State Schools	219,550	235,509	455,059
Primary	38,619	9,452	48,071
Lower Secondary (Form 1-3)	22,176	4,785	26,961
Upper Secondary (Form 4-5)	18,897	7,129	26,026
Total Church Schools	79,691	21,366	101,058
Primary	13,813	8,048	21,861
Lower Secondary (Form 1-3)	8,215	2,225	10,440
Upper Secondary (Form 4-5)	6,702	2,119	8,821
Total Independent Schools	28,730	12,392	41,123
Academic year 2014/2015			
Primary	94,129	48,621	142,750
Lower Secondary (Form 1-3)	63,495	43,522	107,017
Upper Secondary (Form 4-5)	75,779	59,986	135,765
Total State Schools	233,403	152,129	385,532
Primary	45,780	11,072	56,852
Lower Secondary (Form 1-3)	25,149	5,164	30,313
Upper Secondary (Form 4-5)	17,751	8,140	25,891
Total Church Schools	88,680	24,376	113,056
Primary	16,011	7,844	23,855
Lower Secondary (Form 1-3)	8,208	3,141	11,349
Upper Secondary (Form 4-5)	6,122	2,534	8,655
Total Independent Schools	30,340	13,519	43,859

* Excludes children attending special schools

Table 5. Absences by academic year and age*

Age	Academic year 2012/2013	Academic year 2013/2014	Academic year 2014/2015	Percentage change 2014-2015/2013-2014
	Authorised absences			
5 years and under	35,545	27,325	34,177	25.1
6 years	29,992	22,444	30,662	36.6
7 years	29,181	19,331	25,832	33.6
8 years	23,261	18,410	21,701	17.9
9 years	24,316	17,289	21,939	26.9
10 years	24,815	18,289	20,444	11.8
11 years	25,621	24,296	30,880	27.1
12 years	28,824	25,198	30,920	22.7
13 years	32,603	28,517	32,828	15.1
14 years	43,841	36,140	40,915	13.2
15 years	114,465	78,132	55,447	-29.0
16 years	21,875	12,327	6,448	-47.7
Over 16 years	560	273	230	-15.6
Total	434,899	327,972	352,423	7.5
	Unauthorised absences			
5 years and under	15,422	16,596	11,594	-30.1
6 years	15,291	15,649	12,261	-21.6
7 years	14,124	13,511	10,776	-20.2
8 years	14,961	14,155	10,448	-26.2
9 years	15,942	14,083	11,061	-21.5
10 years	15,837	15,459	10,420	-32.6
11 years	20,148	19,649	12,989	-33.9
12 years	28,607	24,857	17,492	-29.6
13 years	32,845	34,146	19,334	-43.4
14 years	43,724	41,033	29,715	-27.6
15 years	48,411	49,860	37,434	-24.9
16 years	9,825	10,033	6,390	-36.3
Over 16 years	125	237	109	-54.0
Total	275,262	269,267	190,024	-29.4
	Total absences			
5 years and under	50,967	43,922	45,771	4.2
6 years	45,283	38,093	42,923	12.7
7 years	43,305	32,842	36,608	11.5
8 years	38,222	32,565	32,149	-1.3
9 years	40,258	31,371	33,000	5.2
10 years	40,652	33,748	30,865	-8.5
11 years	45,769	43,944	43,869	-0.2
12 years	57,431	50,055	48,412	-3.3
13 years	65,448	62,664	52,162	-16.8
14 years	87,565	77,173	70,630	-8.5
15 years	162,876	127,992	92,882	-27.4
16 years	31,700	22,360	12,837	-42.6
Over 16 years	685	510	340	-33.5
Total	710,161	597,239	542,447	-9.2

* Excludes children attending special schools

Table 6. Average absences by academic year and age*

Age	Academic year 2012/2013	Academic year 2013/2014	Academic year 2014/2015
Authorised absences			
5 years and under	9.2	6.5	8.2
6 years	7.7	5.6	7.1
7 years	7.4	5.0	6.5
8 years	6.0	4.7	5.5
9 years	6.1	4.5	5.6
10 years	6.3	4.5	5.2
11 years	6.3	6.1	7.4
12 years	6.7	6.3	7.8
13 years	7.5	6.5	8.2
14 years	9.5	8.3	9.2
15 years	23.8	16.8	12.7
16 years	42.5	22.4	15.6
Over 16 years	33.0	10.1	6.6
Total	9.4	7.2	7.7
Unauthorised absences			
5 years and under	4.0	4.0	2.8
6 years	3.9	3.9	2.8
7 years	3.6	3.5	2.7
8 years	3.9	3.6	2.6
9 years	4.0	3.6	2.8
10 years	4.0	3.8	2.7
11 years	5.0	4.9	3.1
12 years	6.6	6.2	4.4
13 years	7.6	7.8	4.8
14 years	9.5	9.4	6.7
15 years	10.1	10.7	8.6
16 years	19.1	18.2	15.5
Over 16 years	7.4	8.8	3.1
Total	6.0	5.9	4.2
Total absences			
5 years and under	13.2	10.5	10.9
6 years	11.7	9.6	10.0
7 years	11.0	8.4	9.1
8 years	9.8	8.4	8.2
9 years	10.0	8.1	8.4
10 years	10.4	8.4	7.9
11 years	11.3	11.0	10.5
12 years	13.3	12.5	12.2
13 years	15.1	14.2	13.0
14 years	19.0	17.6	16.0
15 years	33.9	27.5	21.3
16 years	61.6	40.6	31.1
Over 16 years	40.3	18.9	9.7
Total	15.4	13.0	11.9

* Excludes children attending special schools

Note: Averages are compiled on the basis of the entire student population as present in news release No: 202/2016.

Table 7. Absences in state schools by academic year and school's district*

District	Academic year 2012/2013	Academic year ¹ 2013/2014	Academic year 2014/2015	Percentage change 2014-2015/2013-2014
	Authorised absences			
Southern Harbour	69,015	49,754	46,923	-5.7
Northern Harbour	113,400	71,214	87,781	23.3
South Eastern	35,938	34,550	36,527	5.7
Western	24,570	12,840	13,346	3.9
Northern	45,340	39,550	33,074	-16.4
Gozo and Comino	21,517	11,642	15,752	35.3
Total	309,780	219,550	233,403	6.3
	Unauthorised absences			
Southern Harbour	61,356	52,363	37,535	-28.3
Northern Harbour	88,081	85,732	61,517	-28.2
South Eastern	32,011	32,625	18,716	-42.6
Western	13,750	11,021	5,468	-50.4
Northern	41,572	42,484	22,313	-47.5
Gozo and Comino	10,261	11,284	6,580	-41.7
Total	247,031	235,509	152,129	-35.4
	Total absences			
Southern Harbour	130,371	102,117	84,458	-17.3
Northern Harbour	201,481	156,946	149,298	-4.9
South Eastern	67,949	67,175	55,243	-17.8
Western	38,320	23,861	18,814	-21.2
Northern	86,912	82,034	55,387	-32.5
Gozo and Comino	31,778	22,926	22,332	-2.6
Total	556,811	455,059	385,532	-15.3

* Excludes children attending special schools

¹ Revised

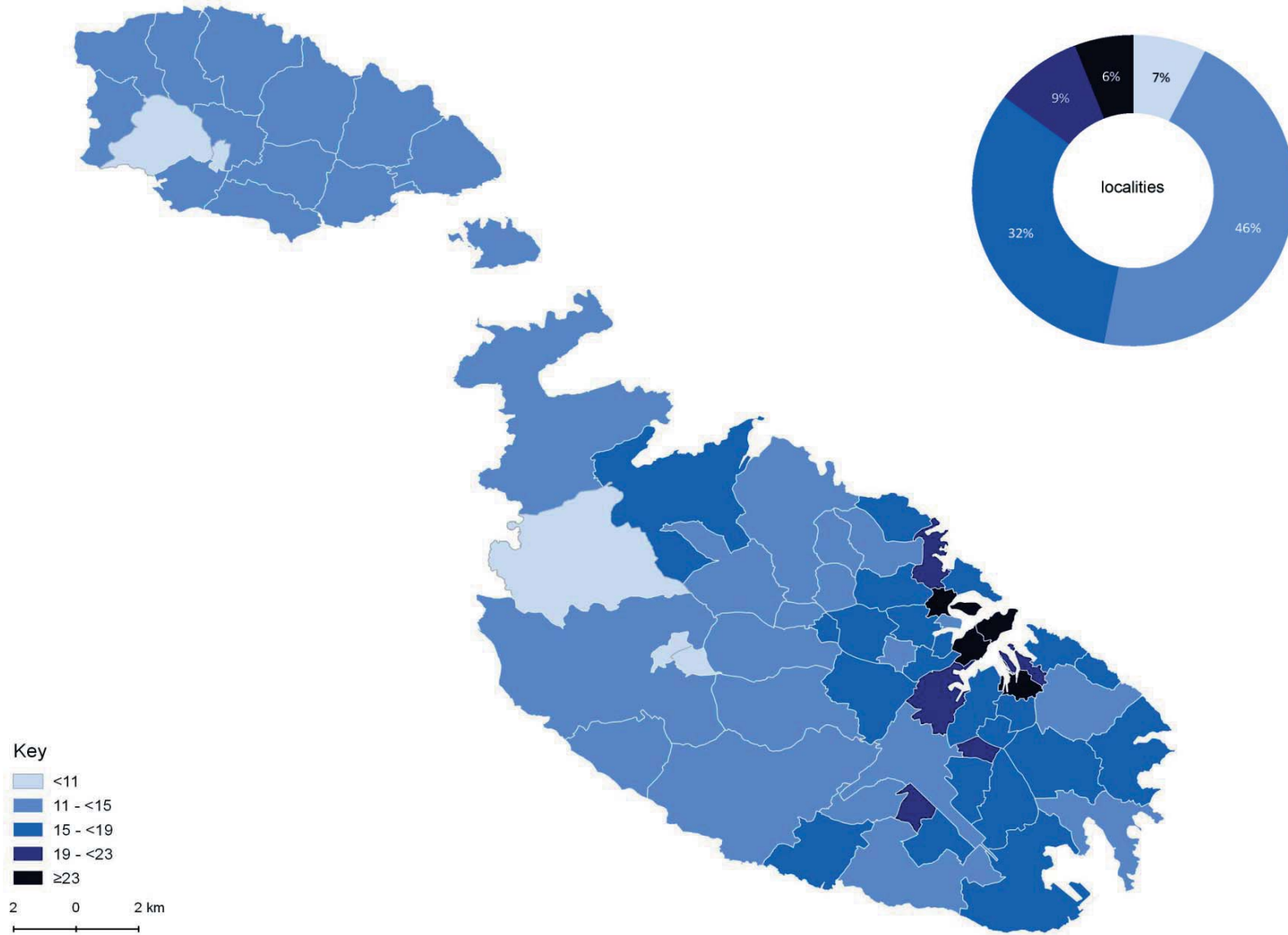
Table 8. Average absences in state schools by academic year and school's district*

District	Academic year 2012/2013	Academic year ¹ 2013/2014	Academic year 2014/2015
	Authorised absences		
Southern Harbour	19.1	9.8	9.3
Northern Harbour	10.2	8.6	10.6
South Eastern	9.1	9.2	9.5
Western	11.7	6.8	7.0
Northern	14.0	9.3	8.2
Gozo and Comino	9.4	5.4	8.3
Total	11.8	8.7	9.3
	Unauthorised absences		
Southern Harbour	16.9	10.3	7.4
Northern Harbour	8.0	10.4	7.4
South Eastern	8.1	8.7	4.9
Western	6.5	5.8	2.9
Northern	12.8	10.0	5.6
Gozo and Comino	4.5	5.2	3.5
Total	9.4	9.3	6.1
	Total absences		
Southern Harbour	36.0	20.1	16.7
Northern Harbour	18.2	19.0	18.0
South Eastern	17.2	17.8	14.4
Western	18.2	12.6	9.9
Northern	26.9	19.4	13.8
Gozo and Comino	13.9	10.6	11.7
Total	21.2	17.9	15.4

* Excludes children attending special schools

¹ Revised

Map 1. Average number of absences by students' locality of residence



Methodological Notes

1. Data collection is carried out during the second quarter of each academic year. The reference period for information received from church and independent schools, is at the end of March of the reference year. Data received from state schools covers all of the scholastic year.
2. Information on students attending state schools is based on administrative records obtained from the Ministry for Education and Employment (MEDE) via the School Information System (SIS). Data for reference year 2014/2015 was received in December 2015.
3. Data in the non-state sector are collected by use of a questionnaire owned and distributed by NSO. Full coverage of state and non-state schools was obtained.
4. Most of the questionnaires sent to primary and secondary schools, are sent via ordinary mail. However each educational institution may opt to provide its information using the soft-copy version of the questionnaire. All incoming questionnaires are processed through a custom-made computer software.
5. Item non-response was resolved making use of the appropriate imputation techniques.
6. Data was weighted to account for the months in which data was not being collected. Basing on recommendations received from MEDE, the scholastic year for students in Year one to Form four spans from September to May, while in the case of fifth formers the school year runs from September to April.
7. Average age is calculated as at 1 January of the academic year.
8. Under Maltese Law school is mandatory up to age 16.
9. In its policy document entitled "Addressing Attendance in School Policy - October 2014", MEDE identifies the following five varieties of absence:
 - a. Authorised Absence**
 - i. School refusal/school phobia
 - ii. Authorised non-attendance
 - b. Unauthorised Absence**
 - i. Unauthorised non-attendance with parental knowledge
 - ii. Truancy
 - iii. School transience

The quoted policy document is available on the MEDE website:
<http://education.gov.mt/en/resources/news/documents/attendancy%20policy%20document.pdf>
10. **Definitons:**
 - a. Mandatory education** includes education from primary to upper secondary levels.
 - b. Class** refers to a group of students who are physically following a common course of study in the same space.
11. More information relating to this news release may be accessed at:
Metadata: <https://nso.gov.mt/metadata/reports.aspx?id=173>