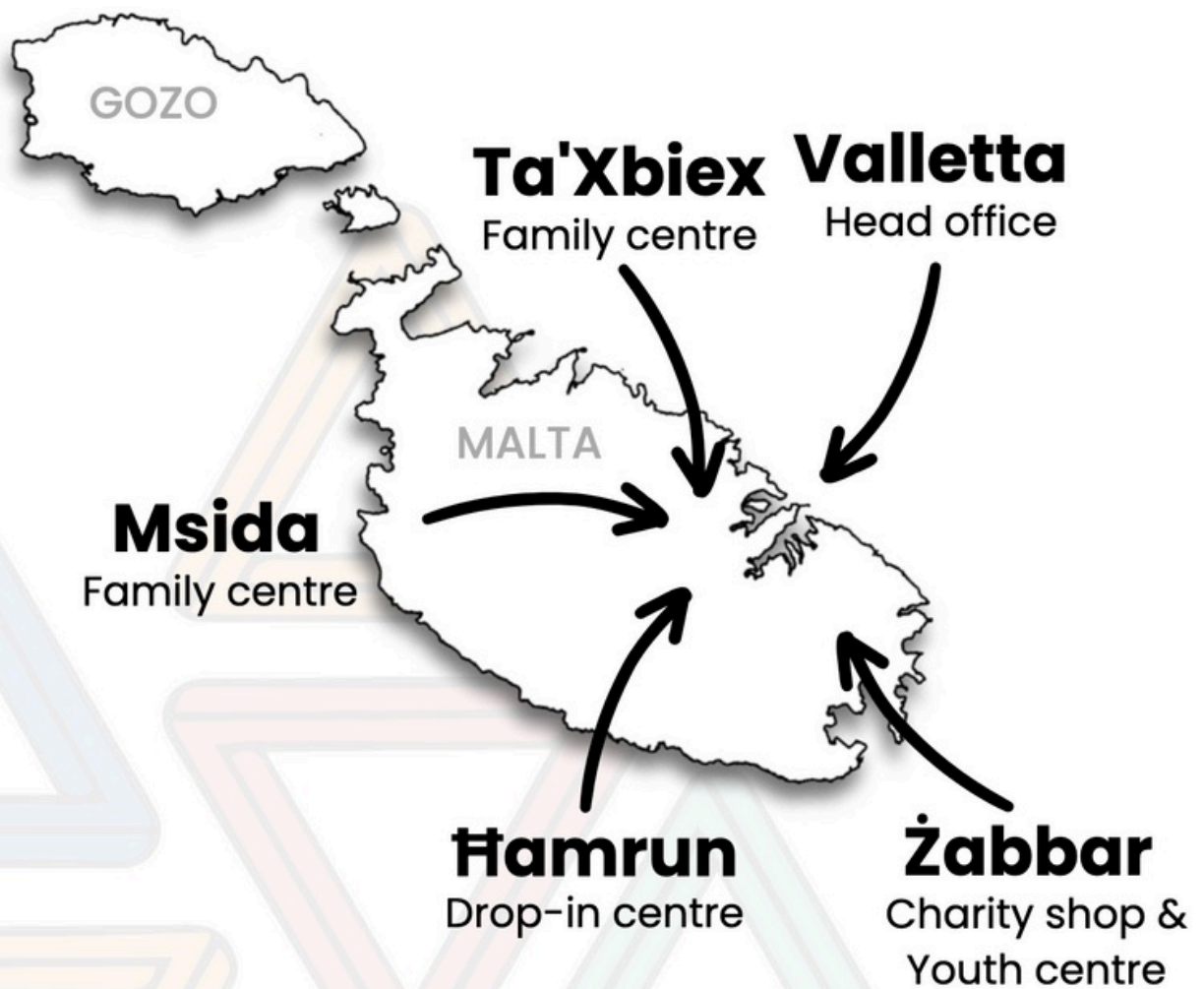


# Annual Report

2021



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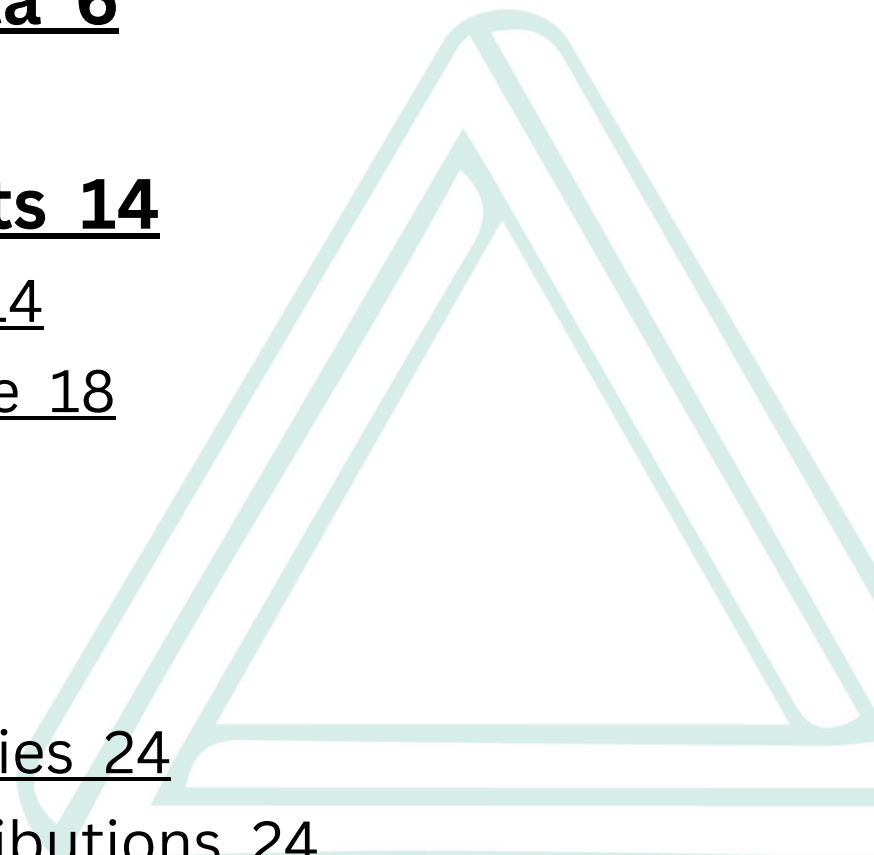
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# Foreword

Where is YMCA Malta going in the next 5 years? 2021 marks the beginning of another 5-year strategic plan 'Towards 2025' to guide our YMCA movement on the islands, prepared by our members, staff, volunteers and our Board of Directors during our Annual General Assembly last year.

'Towards 2025' is hopeful to revamp the generic social work and to integrate an intervention service that is holistic from the intake point of view to an integrative aftercare program. We are hopeful to continue raising more awareness of the houseless and roofless homelessness in Malta and through our initiatives to continue providing support and services in order to avoid episodic homelessness which is very common to those that end up roofless. We commit to base our services on the philosophy of Psychologically Informed Environments as we believe that it is not enough to provide a roof but to ensure that even the environment itself is supportive to end the cycle of homelessness.

We want to link our Residential services to Youth Empowerment initiatives to ensure that even the young people that are becoming homeless are benefitting from activities that are difficult for them to access in the light that we would be supporting them to fulfil their potential. Together we want to make a difference in continuing to work on the wellbeing of our community focusing on (cont)

couplehood aspect as we believe that to work with young people we also have to work with their extended family and therefore provide opportunities for relationship support, to improve communication skills, family reunions, to embark on sports activities for the purpose of social inclusion and community integration and to target active ageing and ‘transfer of experience’.

We believe that in the years to come we strengthen the research arm to advocate on behalf of our young generation and the homeless population we work with to assist in the voices being heard and acknowledged. We want to strengthen the capacity, knowledge, and exchange between different stakeholders including social business while continuing to offer our social and psychological services in the light that social justice is served.

This year, we have experienced for the first time soliDARjeta’ - 12 hours that our team will remember forever when the public heard, saw and responded positively to those who are homeless, who courageously enough spoke about their suffering, their experiences and their wishes.

We are proud that the pandemic did not stop our efforts in the social justice battle but filled us with courage to plan ahead for the next 5 years to come.

**Anthony Camilleri**

CEO YMCA Malta



# About YMCA Malta

YMCA is a worldwide youth organisation with more than 64 beneficiaries in 120 different countries. It was founded in England in 1844 during the Industrial Revolution to assist young people in developing a healthy body, mind, and spirit on the foundations of Christian principles. In fact, this is why the YMCAs all over the world have the symbol of the triangle, which symbolises that a healthy body and mind lead to a healthy spirit.



Left: Original  
YMCA Malta  
members, circa  
1976



It is well known that the British YMCA was also present in Malta specifically geared to serve the military forces stationed in Malta during the war. However, this activity stopped when Malta became independent in 1964. The Maltese YMCA movement started its work in 1976. The early days of YMCA Malta were concentrated around a small coffee bar (the Imperial Cafe in Valletta) which also doubled as a meeting point for young people. Up until 1988, the main activities consisted of organising rock concerts, visiting patients in hospital, Christmas parties for children and conducting street patrols to assist young people with addictions off the street.



Above: Opening of new centre  
in Valletta, 1989

The latter led to good cooperation and relationship with the police, who were appreciative of this work.

The National Council was established in 1989 to improve and consolidate on the previous work and explore new areas of operations. The EAY, the Scottish YMCA and the Swiss parish of Wil provided the initial funding. In the beginning, four YMCAs were formed in Malta whereby international youth exchanges, English language courses, literacy programmes, suicide helpline, canoeing, first aid courses, street theatre, tensing, counselling and providing homeless shelters were the first community work carried out by the Maltese YMCA.



Above: Ten Sing, 1997



In 1997, YMCA Malta received the 'Għarfien Nazzjonali - Żgħażaġħ fisSoċjeta' Award by Hon. Not. Joe Cilia Permanent Secretary for Young People, Culture and Art. In 2018, YMCA Malta won the Team of the Year Award presented by Hon. Dr Helena Dalli within the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Equality. Within the same year, YMCA Malta was also awarded First-Runner Up in the EPALE Awards 2018 by the Hon. Evarist Bartolo Minister for Education and Employment.

As a nonprofit and voluntary organisation, YMCA keeps striving to promote a vision of a more just society while supporting the positive development of youths as a preventive measure and offering a spectrum of social work services to individuals who are underprivileged or socially disadvantaged. The specialisation in this regard is the support, assistance, and reintegration of the homeless in Malta. Amongst several activities designed to foster the spiritual, intellectual, social and physical wellbeing of the community, YMCA takes an active part in cultural, environmental, artistic, musical, audio-visual and forms of activities.



# Programmes

YMCA in Malta operates as a single entity with one board of Directors and provides different services through different premises situated in different localities on the islands. After 40 years of providing services to the disadvantaged community, YMCA Malta adopted its services through four main pillars: Social Business, Residential Services, Youth Empowerment, and Wellbeing.

From 2005 onwards, aside from providing shelter to homeless and roofless individuals and families, YMCA Malta has developed a multidisciplinary team of professionals.

Through the Residential Services, YMCA Malta provides residential accommodation to 49 individuals and families, including children who experience homelessness, at 'Dar Niki Cassar' and 'Y Communal Home'. Having said that, YMCA Malta does not only provide residential accommodation, but it also provides an individualised care programme, provides both residential and community service users with donations of food, clothing, and furniture, seeks funding opportunities to support homeless individuals to benefit from psychosocial educational projects, and additionally collaborates with national and international stakeholders and agencies on matters relating to 'homelessness' and rooflessness'.

As part of its work, YMCA Malta crosses paths with many youths who wish to actively participate (cont)

in our projects, develop their skills further, learn new skills and tools, and/or wish to create their own projects. YMCA Malta provides these opportunities, and many more to underprivileged and socially disadvantaged youths, through the Youth Empowerment Programme which is a youth-led youth work programme. Here, the youths are supported, in a safe environment, through one or more of the pillars within YEP!: Education, Outreach, Research, Prevention, and Sustainability.



Above: YMCA Malta Residential Services staff & volunteers gathered for a group photo, 2021



The well-being of our service users is important for YMCA Malta, and thus well-being is at the heart of all the projects and activities, and therefore we created the Wellbeing Programme as one of the main focus areas. Thanks to the Wellbeing Programme, which forms part of our Prevention department, YMCA Malta provides free and professional understanding and intervention in response to emotional and behavioural needs of service users through the provision of individual and group counselling and psychotherapy sessions as part of an integrated, preventative and intervention service.



Above: Youth participate in various YEP activities, 2021

To provide its different services, programmes and initiatives, YMCA Malta relies on collaborations with private enterprises and organisations, and fundraising activities coordinated by the Social Business Programme (SBP) as part of the Social Entrepreneurship department. Furthermore, through SPB, YMCA Malta measures and monitors changes to specific dimensions of human well-being that do not hinder financial stability and cohesion and integrates social entrepreneurship and sustainability.



Above: Streamed live on national TV, the annual SoliDARjeta Marathon is a major fundraising project launched in 2021.

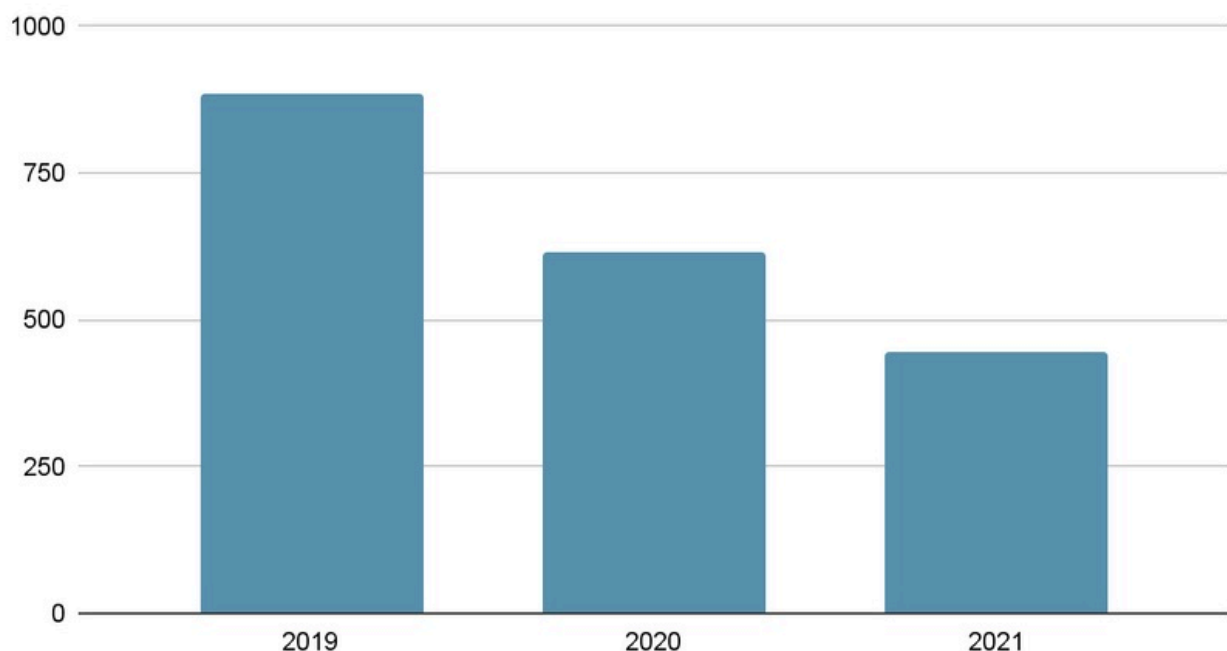
# Services & Projects

## ***‘Dar Niki Cassar’***

At ‘Dar Niki Cassar’ (DNC), YMCA Malta provides sheltered accommodation and holistic support to vulnerable individuals and families including children experiencing homelessness.

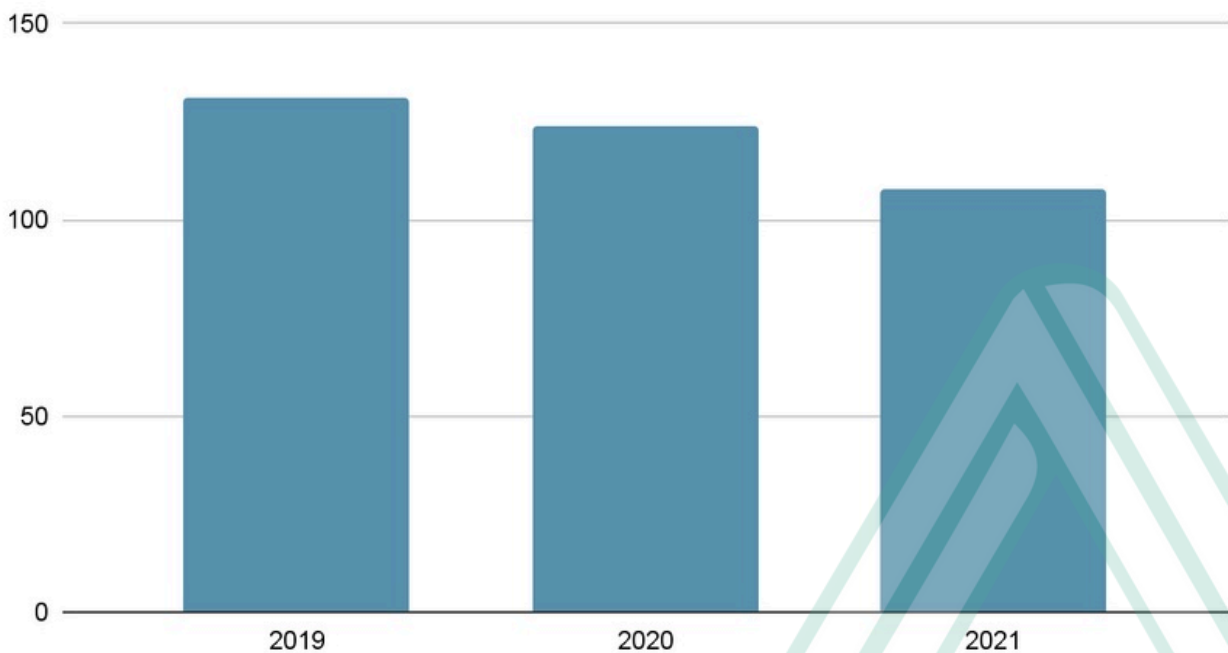
Through DNC, YMCA Malta supports up to 35 individuals at once as they prepare for independent living. YMCA Malta works with people of all ages, genders, and nationalities, where the promotion of cultural humility and diversity is carried out and where people who may have become homeless for a number of reasons are supported holistically. In 2021, YMCA received 447 referrals.

Number of Referrals Per Year



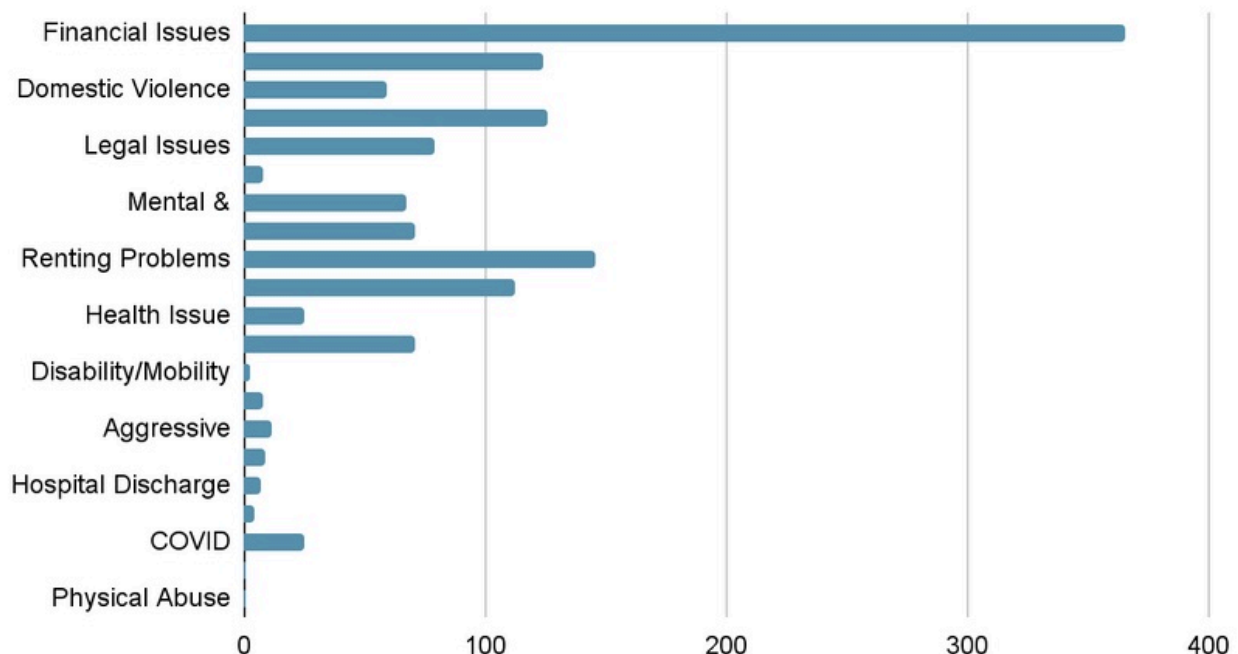


## Accepted Referrals



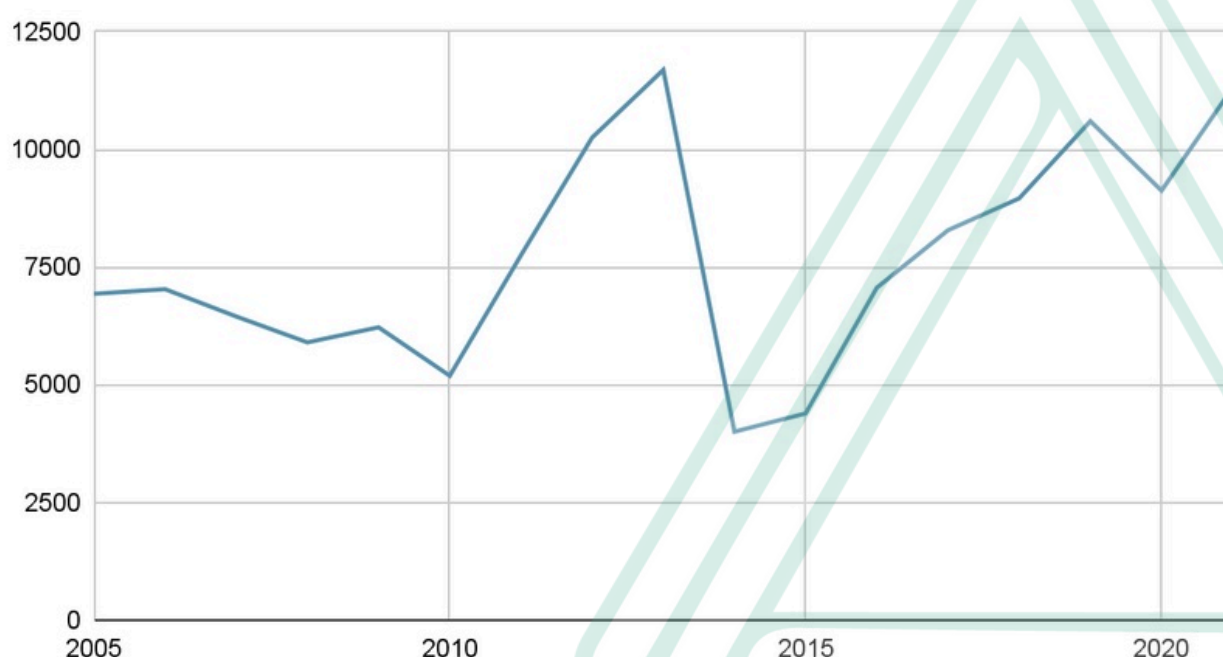
DNC functioned at maximum capacity between 2019 and 2021 during and following the COVID-19 pandemic. A significant increase in the number of new clients recorded per year was apparent, going from 59 in 2005 to 108 in 2021.

## Reasons Denoting Homelessness



In 2021, the most common reason for referral was that of financial issues, followed by renting problems and immigration. Other reasons for referrals are listed in the above table.

Bed Nights at DNC

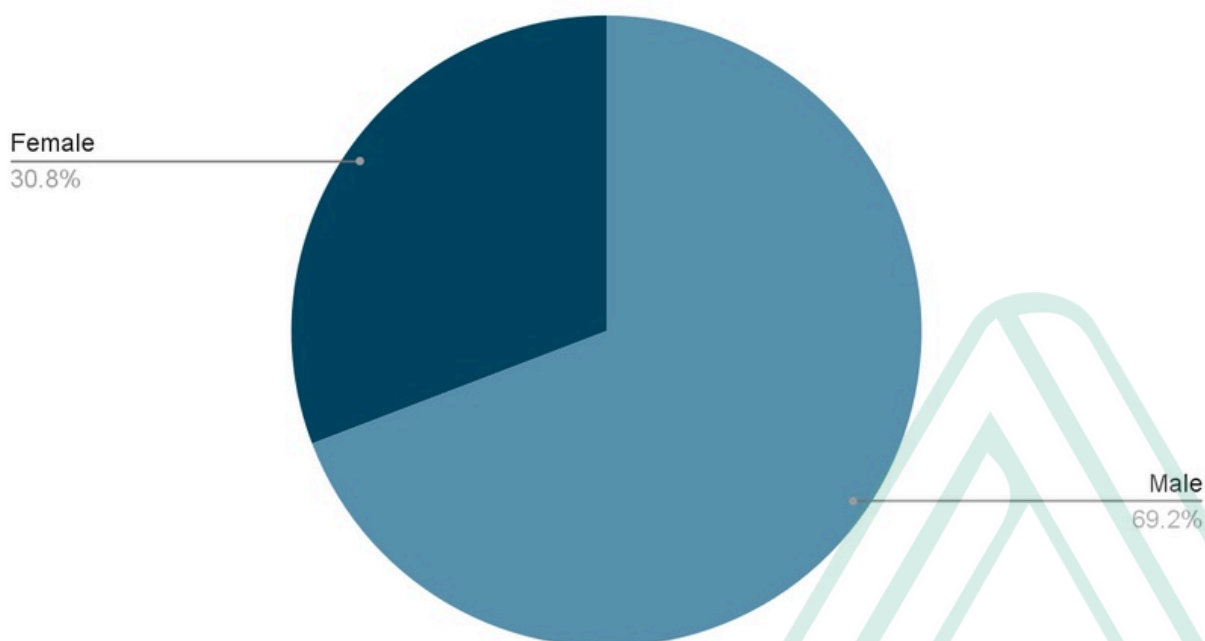


Ages of referrals from 2019 - 2021

Year	0 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 13	14 - 17	18 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 64	65 - 74	75 - 84
2019	21	11	15	20	85	93	84	81	52	9	1
2020	32	8	7	22	93	118	108	40	36	7	1
2021	35	17	6	7	96	106	74	39	22	11	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>3</b>

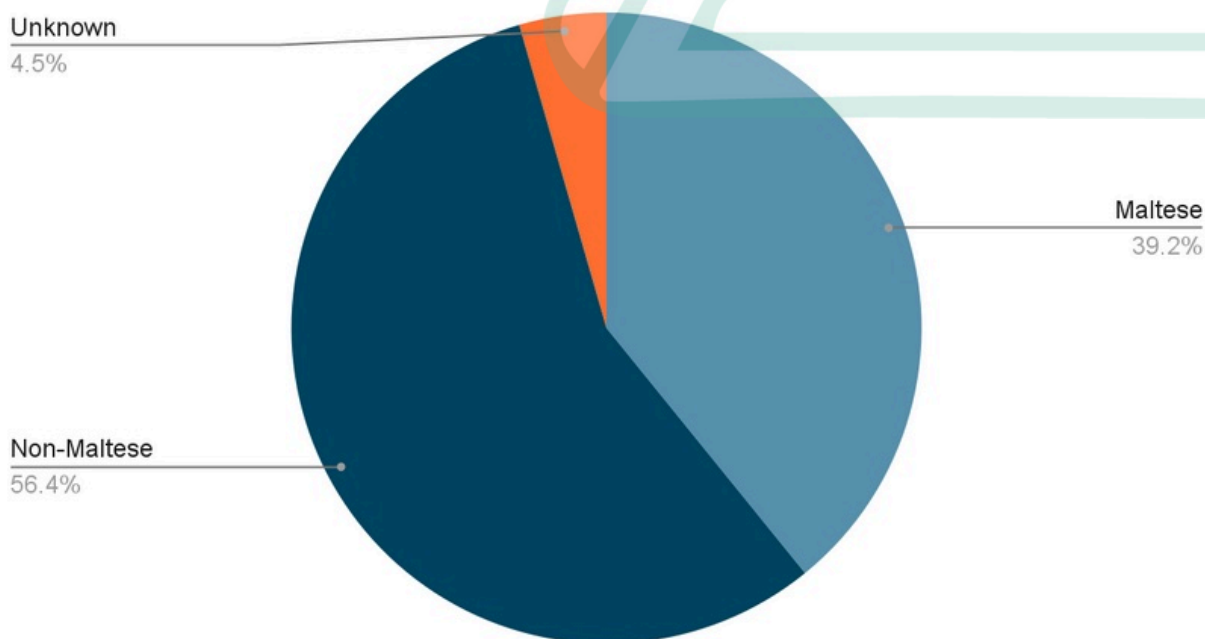
The most common age bracket of people becoming homeless remains 25 to 34-year-olds.

## Gender



The vast majority of cases YMCA Malta had in 2021 were male.

## Nationalities



In 2021, the majority of referrals received were non-Maltese, with the nationality of 4.5% of the referrals being unknown.



# Y Communal Home

Y Communal Home (YCH) was launched in 2020 after the COVID-19 pandemic hit the Maltese islands. YMCA Malta felt the need to be proactive and opened its second semi-independent shelter providing 'Program Kisbet Serhan'. Initially, the purpose of this shelter was so that families that were directly hit with financial difficulties, renting problems, and loss of employment could be hosted, and thus, avoid situations of families ending up roofless.

The birth of this shelter did not only pertain to the reason for referrals YMCA Malta was receiving back then but also to the reasons why people were making use of the YMCA Loneliness Response Line.

At Y Communal Home, YMCA Malta provides communal accommodation to individuals and families in a bid to reduce loneliness, encourage independent living, and eradicate homelessness. This house caters for up to 16 individuals living semi-independently whilst benefiting from constant support from the residential team. The service-users at Y Communal Home live on their own without 24-hour surveillance of staff and/or volunteers whilst through 'Program Kisbet Serhan' they are provided with daily routine visits, individual support by their assigned support worker, care plan, and psychological support.

Bed nights at Y Communal Home from 2020 to 2021.

YEAR	Bed Nights
2020	2751
2021	3095

# H.O.P.E

## Homeless Opportunities Prevention and Education

H.O.P.E. integrates an evidence-based programme approach and vision towards providing an alternative service-provision pathway towards reintegration. It targets service-users that itself are integrated in the service-provision given.

H.O.P.E. was initially launched in 2019 and was still running in 2021. This project aims to offer opportunities and education as a means of prevention to service-users who have successfully finished a care programme. Through the H.O.P.E programme, YMCA Malta does not only aim to reintegrate service-users into the community, but the community itself contributes to the service provision given to the service-user.

1. Housing families who do not have a home with an objective to invest in families who are not able to reintegrate in society after a 'housing first' approach.

2. Helping families find and retain their home with an objective to expand the support families need in order to experience a tenancy support scheme to their budget.
3. Increasing opportunities and options across housing and employment with an objective to retain, protect, and increase opportunities of their active employment and housing, and create further opportunities such as in-house education.
4. Building capacity and improvement for active citizenship with an objective to enhance the capacity for service-users to be actively involved in society, and outreach to community to be actively involved in H.O.P.E. itself through Education, Activities, and Opportunities.
5. Instilling hope to successfully move on with achieving the objective of resources, skills, support and integration.

In 2021 alone, YMCA Malta has given the opportunity to 3 individuals that benefitted from part-time employment, and 3 individuals in full-time employment. These individuals were all ex-homeless people.



# Y' Kids

YMCA Malta has always given importance to the provision of activities for youth and children. In 2021, over 35 children were given a smile during our kids' party thanks to the festive atmosphere created by our dedicated volunteers and the presents they received thanks to all those who donated!



Above: Scenes from the Kid's Christmas Party hosted at the YMCA Head Office in Valletta, 2021



# Y'EXPLORE

In 2021, we launched our summer programme, Y'Explore. This programme is aimed at young people aged between 13 and 18. This project integrates both our residential youth population as well as those within our community.

This project was funded by the Ministry for Justice, Equality, and Governance through the Achievers Scheme. The scheme supported NGOs who worked on projects with the aim of raising awareness on substance use and drug abuse prevention. The Y' Explore project started with the understanding that the best way to deter young people from misusing substances was to help them discover a passion through numerous activities and improve their wellbeing.



Left:  
Y'EXPLORE  
participants  
in Gozo,  
2021



The idea was then to target young people with fewer opportunities, for example, our residential youth population, and each activity was coupled with in-house discussions. We focused on offering activities that are not always easily accessible but also which allowed participants to enjoy fresh air and benefit from the beautiful environment in Malta. During this project, a workshop on drug abuse prevention was delivered by Sedqa.

Y'Explore reached around 10 young people who embarked on activities such as horse riding, snorkelling, rock climbing, abseiling, and laser tag. These activities encouraged the young people to learn interpersonal skills such as teamwork and focus whilst also giving them the opportunity to engulf themselves in Maltese culture.



Left:  
Y'EXPLORE  
participants  
in abseiling  
in Gozo,  
2021



# Residential Activities

Regular activities are organised according to the resident's needs and preferences. These include football tournaments, workshops, homework clubs, arts & crafts, picnics, quizzes, music therapy, exercise sessions, cooking sessions, community meals, pilates, board games, laser tag, scavenger hunts, movie nights, bowling, and trips to Gozo . In total, in 2021, the residential activities, despite the COVID-19 impact, were around 55 events.

## Educational Contributions

Youth Empowerment is also about providing an educational pathway to volunteers, students, and interns that come across YMCA Malta and dedicate their time within one or more of our services. Interns and students who are hosted within YMCA Malta as part of their studies are on (cont)



Above: YMCA Malta staff participate in a training, 2021



placement or are contributing their time in a voluntary capacity.

During this time, we provide training and work with the students and volunteers throughout their progress. Additionally, we also provide ongoing training opportunities to our team members, and we are also actively involved in providing educational talks and workshops in schools, and at the University of Malta.

Throughout 2021, staff, volunteers, interns and students were given the opportunity to participate in a number of workshops and training sessions, amounting to around 23 meetings and 85 hours of training.

## **Psychotherapeutic Services**

The Psychotherapeutic Services, which have been operating since 2016, are mainly provided through volunteer psychotherapists and counsellors in Tal-Pieta', Msida and Valletta. In 2017, YMCA has extended these psychosocial support sessions to the community to reach those vulnerable individuals who are not financially able to attend privately in collaboration with YWCA Malta who offered their premises in Msida to be used for these sessions.

Since then the demand for the service has increased widely and hence this particular project has been moved to fall within a much-needed Wellbeing Programme.

The main aim of these services is to provide appropriate professional understanding and intervention in response to the emotional and behavioural needs of the clients through the provision of individual and group counselling and psychotherapy sessions as part of an integrated, preventive and intervention service.

Between 2016 and 2019 a total of 919 face-to-face sessions took place with service users. However, in 2020, due to COVID-19, the number of sessions decreased to 434 with most of the sessions taking place online, in line with the mitigation and prevention measures set by the local health authorities. In 2021 over 500 sessions took place, with sessions taking place mostly online due to COVID-19.

There are several reasons why service-users seek to benefit from psychotherapeutic services, such as depression, grief, anger management issues, trauma, dependency and addictive behaviours, sexual orientation, and family issues. In 2021 the most common issues encountered and tackled with clients were loneliness and anxiety, followed by mental health issues.

As part of our Psychotherapeutic Services, Dorianne Rotin—counsellor and Wellbeing Programme Coordinator at YMCA Malta—hosted a monthly segment on the programme Ta' Filgħodu on TVM1. Each month from September through December 2021, and into 2022, a different topic was explored; these were:

- Mental Health & Wellbeing
- Support Young People's Wellbeing
- Families' Wellbeing in the Community

This platform offered YMCA Malta the chance to bring its Psychotherapeutic Services directly into people's homes and places of business.



On TVM1  
September 29<sup>th</sup>  
at 7:35am



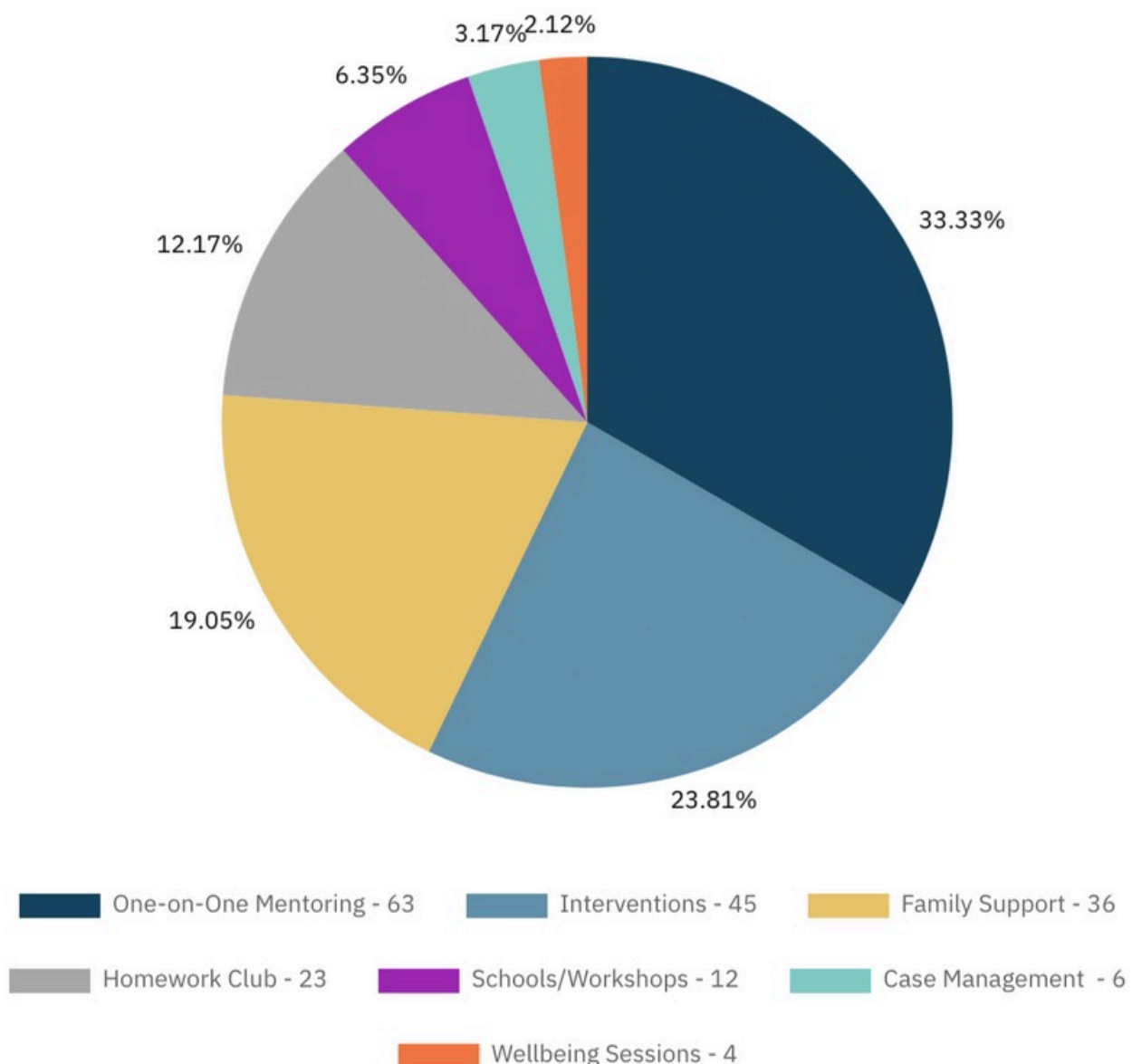
Left: TVM1  
Talk Show  
Appearance  
Poster,  
2021



# Youth Work & Community Services

Throughout 2021, numerous Youth Work & Community Services were provided to not only young people but to the community as a whole. Youth work included homework clubs, workshops, outings, family days, one-on-one work, education on homelessness in schools and universities, family support, and wellbeing sessions.

## Youth Work





Community services included provision of food via the soup kitchen, provision of clothing, crisis intervention such as response to reports from the public on urgent situations with SW clients and urgent housing and food needs, dissemination of information, referrals for further attention and much more.

## Drawing with Spices

During the month of October, we organised an activity where participants created artworks using spices such as cinnamon and curry. The concept behind this activity being the relief of stress and anxiety by stimulating the sense of smell and the memories associated with the different odours. Four sessions were held in total, with a selection of varied spices to make sure that all participants benefit from the activity. Feedback from the participants was overwhelmingly positive, with the majority of them expressing their wish to continue the weekly sessions even after the set end date of this project.



Left:  
Participants  
draw with  
spices, 2021

# Anti-Bullying Week

Anti-Bullying Week has been organised by bBrave yearly since 2019. This year's theme, 'ONE KIND WORD - Words have power, and while they can greatly hurt, one kind word can make someone's day' offered the possibility for a lovely activity to be devised by our volunteers.



The idea was to turn YMCA Malta centres into compliment-giving places by leaving anonymous sticky notes with compliments to one another, which not only made the place very colourful, but also created a very warm-hearted atmosphere.

Above: Compliments on sticky notes, 2021

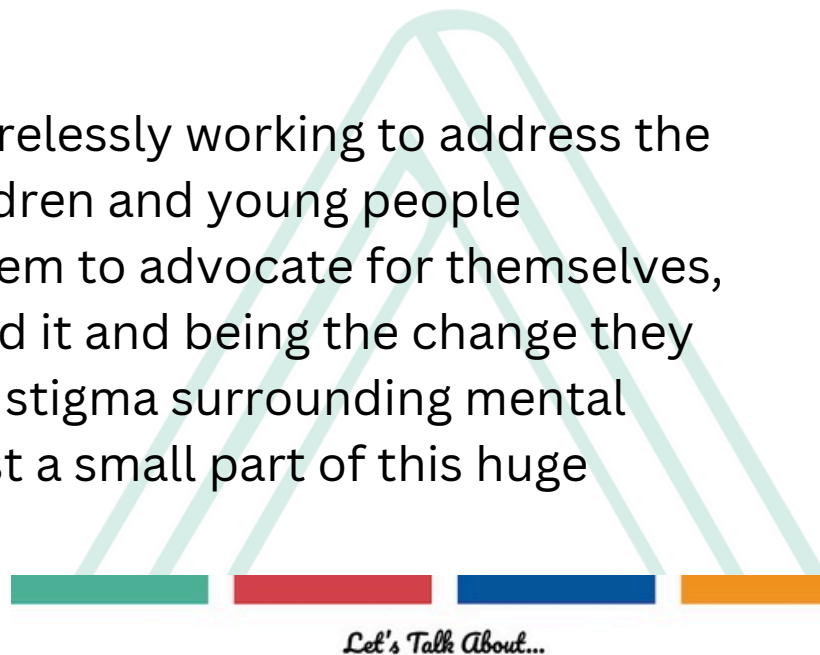
The initiative was also expanded beyond YMCA Malta by giving compliments to strangers in the street, and asking them to pass it to someone else, in hope that compliments will travel across the island and brighten many people's day.

# Let's Talk About...

'Let's Talk About...' is both an online and physical booklet series created to raise awareness about mental health related topics.

YMCAs across the globe are tirelessly working to address the mental health issues that children and young people experience by empowering them to advocate for themselves, asking for help when they need it and being the change they want to see by combating the stigma surrounding mental health issues. This series is just a small part of this huge battle.

The first edition of the booklet explored the topic of school bullying, its effect on young people's mental health, and also served as a guide to find support services in Malta. Whereas the second edition spoke about self-esteem. The second booklet acted as a guide on what self-esteem is and how healthy self-esteem can be developed.



## What is Self-Esteem?

Self-esteem is one's overall opinion of one's capabilities, limitations, the positive or negative assessment, perception or judgement that a person makes of themselves based on the evaluation of their thoughts, feelings, experiences, worth, sense of belonging, emotional wellbeing, confidence or value. A person's self-esteem impacts their relationships, decision-making process, motivation and goals. Self-esteem tends to be lowest during childhood, but it improves as we grow older.



Right: Detail from 'Let's Talk About...Self Esteem', 2021



# ProjectABLE

ProjectABLE was first initiated in 2020 whereby a space was created within YMCA Malta residencies so that residents can teach and share their skills and talents with each other.

This aims to help the residents acknowledge their strengths, believe in themselves, learn new skills (from other residents), and empower each other with the shelter communities. In 2021, residents carried out 11 ProjectABLE classes. They included:

- Bread Making
- Art Workshops
- Cooking & Baking Classes
- Meditation Classes
- Media Lab
- English Lessons



Above: ProjectABLE Cooking Class, 2021



# Mindful Hip Hop

Formulated on Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Therapy (MBSR) principles, Mindful Hip Hop was an 8 week introduction to the practice of mindfulness through the use of Hip-Hop dance.

MBSR is a secular program designed to provide comprehensive training in mindfulness. It aims to aid individuals dealing with stress, anxiety, depression, and pain. Created by Professor Jon Kabat-Zinn during the 1970s, MBSR integrates various components, including mindfulness meditation, bodily awareness, yoga, and the examination of behavioural, cognitive, emotional, and action-related patterns.



Left:  
Mindful  
Hip Hop  
session,  
2021

The sessions, held every Friday between November 2021 and January 2022, were provided by professionals in the field of counselling and dance to children between the ages of 3 and 6 years old.

This programme taught kids on how to focus on the present and being more aware of what is happening around them, which not only helps with the kids' self-esteem, but also helps them to further develop their communication skills and emotional expression.

## Twelve Appeal Campaign

For most of us, €1 a month does not make a large impact on our lives. Yet such an amount over the course of a year can entirely recalibrate the life of a young person. The 12 Appeal Campaign was launched with this sentiment in mind.

12 Appeal is an ongoing campaign that invites companies and their staff members to donate €1 per month from their wages. Every cent collected by this campaign goes directly to supporting YMCA Malta's Youth Empowerment Programme.

The funds raised through this campaign are used to support youth-led activities, events, and projects that help young people develop their talents and gain new knowledge to become responsible and active citizens.



# SoliDARjeta

YMCA Malta hosted a major fundraising event aptly titled SoliDARjeta. 'Dar' means 'home' in Maltese and this name was chosen as it fosters a sense of solidarity amongst Maltese in fighting poverty and homelessness together.

This 12-hour televised fundraising marathon was screened on all Maltese TV stations on the 30th May 2021, between noon and midnight. In total €225,028 was raised. This very generous sum funded the following projects/services:

- Our ongoing Residential Services, which provide emergency shelter for 52 individuals, including families with young children.



Left: The SoliDARjeta team in the studio preparing for the show, 2021



- The provision of apartments with reduced rent for those who have experienced homelessness and are transitioning back to independent living in the community.
- Our ongoing Psychotherapeutic Services for those experiencing homelessness/rooflessness.



Above-Top: SoliDARjeta 2021 underway. Above: SterjoTapi Perform for SoliDARjeta, 2021



# ***Ħajti hija Għażla***

*‘Ħajti hija Għażla’* (My Life is a Choice) is a book written by YMCA Malta CEO Anthony Camilleri and published by YMCA Malta. It tells the tale of two homeless young people, Alex and Anna. Although Alex and Anna's stories are dissimilar, their common thread is that they have both ended up without a roof over their head.

The story is based on real-world experiences YMCA Malta has encountered over the years, retold in this narrative to shed light on the reality of homelessness in Malta.

Right: Cover of *‘Ħajti hija Għażla’* (My Life is a Choice), 2021



# Holistic Y Being Programme

This project was launched in our shelter DNC with the belief that a person's wellbeing is connected to much more than just their mental and physical state. As the name suggests, the Holistic Y Being Programme believes in human health as holistic; everything from what we eat to our interpersonal relationships affects our overall wellbeing. This project aims to assist clients with optimising various aspects of their health—physically, mentally and spiritually.

Activities that were planned with residents included Yoga Classes, Equine Therapy, and Nutrition workshops. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 restrictions only two activities could be held: Fitness and Cooking classes. These took place from the safety of the shelter.

Fitness classes took place every afternoon with a projector set up instructing participants without the need of an instructor physically present. Many residents stated that this class was a highlight of their week.

*'Plant-Based Mondays'* were held at the beginning of every week and encouraged residents to learn how to prepare a variety of healthy, vegetarian meals using local, plant-based ingredients. Every meal was then enjoyed together.



# Youth Media Lab

The initial purpose of this undertaking was to empower youth leaders to share their knowledge with other young people. Accordingly, the overall scope of the project is now to encourage and enable young people to amplify their voices by producing media-based advocacy campaigns.

In 2020 we acquired all our own media equipment with the financial assistance of Argus Group. Since then we have been learning how to use this equipment; a group of 8 young adults have been training with a professional videographer. They have shot several interviews, band rehearsals, and landscapes; they have been exploring lighting, framing, and colour correction. To date 10 2.5 hour sessions have taken place.



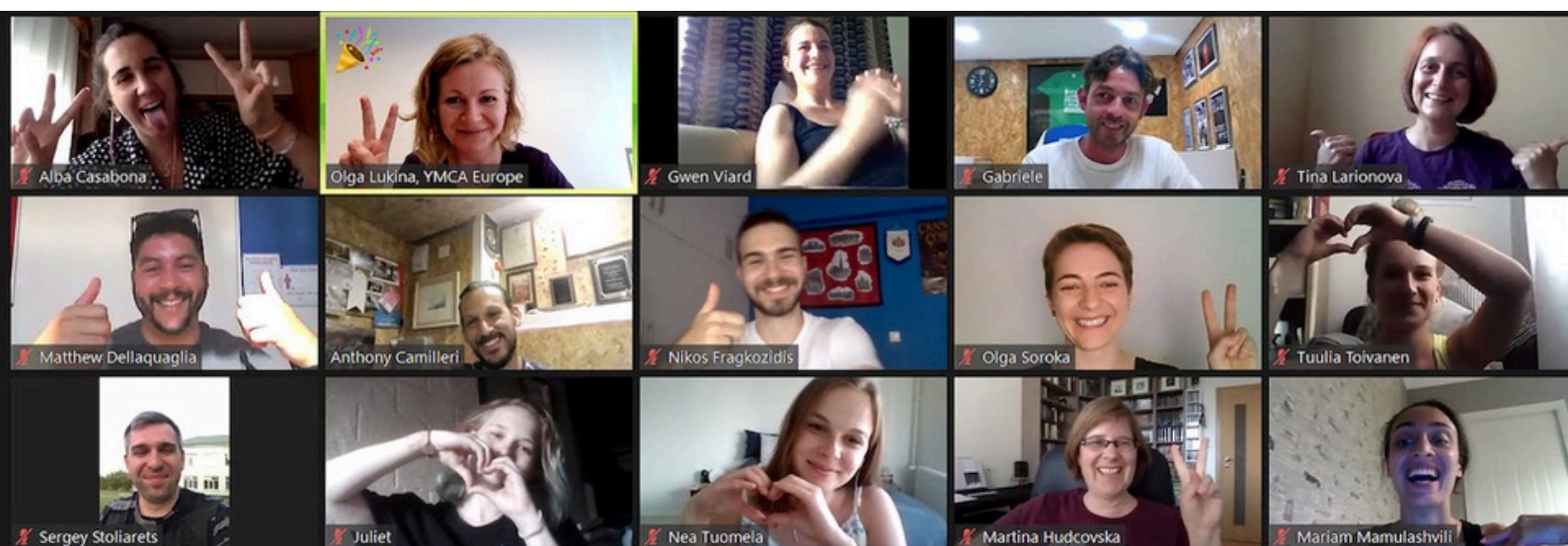
Above: Interview conducted on camera for Youth Media Lab, 2021

Ultimately, we would like participants to use these new skills alongside collaging, appropriation of found media, and creative writing to create visual accompaniments to our Y Do It Magazine. Going forward, the topics we will continue to cover include:

- Current affairs of social/cultural relevance
- YMCA Malta project updates, including learning outcomes
- Volunteer and intern experience insights
- Personal reflective insights

## YMCA Leadership Academy

YMCA Europe holds annual YMCA Leadership Academies with an eye to empowering young leaders across Europe, providing them with the tools and know-how to better serve their communities. Normally these trainings are hosted in person in an alternating host country. However due to the pandemic, this year carried on from last year's exclusively online edition.





Two YMCA Malta members attended this year's Academy, taking part in a total of 14 online meetings on the topics of Youth Participation, Partnership, Governance, Advocacy, and Leadership.

Following on from this training, YMCA Malta's Youth Empowerment team launched 'Youth Legal Advice Services', a project funded by the European Youth Foundation.

## Youth Legal Advice Services

Seeing the urgent need for legal services for young people unable to afford advice with private law firms, YMCA Malta, as part of this year's YMCA Leadership Academy, began developing a free legal service for youth. The goal is to provide legal support to youth in crisis situations who, due to long waiting lists elsewhere, would have nowhere else to go.

The project's aim is to reach a total of 120 young people aged between 18-30, living in the disadvantaged Southern Harbour district of Malta. The project will specifically cater for young people not in employment, education, nor training, and those with lower-income jobs. They will be able to seek help with issues related to the following topics:

- Employment
- Housing
- Immigration
- Human Rights
- Drug Regulations

Early this year a Memorandum of Understanding with University of Malta, and the Ministry for Justice was signed. The project is active and endorsed by the Ministry, allowing us to have law students offer this service under constant supervision of their fully qualified law tutor.

## Sailing Due To Homelessness

After being cancelled last year due to the pandemic, Sailing Due to Homelessness was back in 2021, with a particular focus on raising awareness on youth homelessness. YMCA Malta's volunteers educated passengers aboard the Gozo Channel ferry on this reality, handing out print media, and engaging them in conversation and simple activities. Over €300 was also raised, which was invested back into our services.



Left: The team aboard the Malta-Gozo ferry, 2021



# YEP! Centre Żabbar

The YEP! Centre in Żabbar hosts activities related to physical and psycho-emotional wellbeing, as well as environmental sustainability. Approximately 8 physical wellbeing sessions were held at this location in 2021. Sessions in April and the beginning of May had to be paused due to COVID-19 restrictions.

A system has been put in place whereby instructors and practitioners may rent the space once or twice weekly for private classes. These must be in line with YMCA Malta's values. Examples of workshops & sessions carried out to date:

- Diet & Fitness: Yoga, Pilates, Dietary classes
- Mental health: YMCA Certified Courses, Mindfulness.
- Private lessons: Primary, Secondary, Higher education.
- Homework Clubs
- Summer Programmes



Left: Youth activity taking place at YEP! Centre Żabbar 2021



# Social Business Programme

## 365 Campaign

In addition to the Twelve Appeal Campaign, 2021 was the inaugural year of the ongoing 365 Campaign. YMCA Malta sought the support of companies, individuals, and committed groups to raise €365 annually. This amounts to €1 a day, complementing our other campaign based on dollar-average-donating, ensuring both our financial longevity and that of our sponsors.

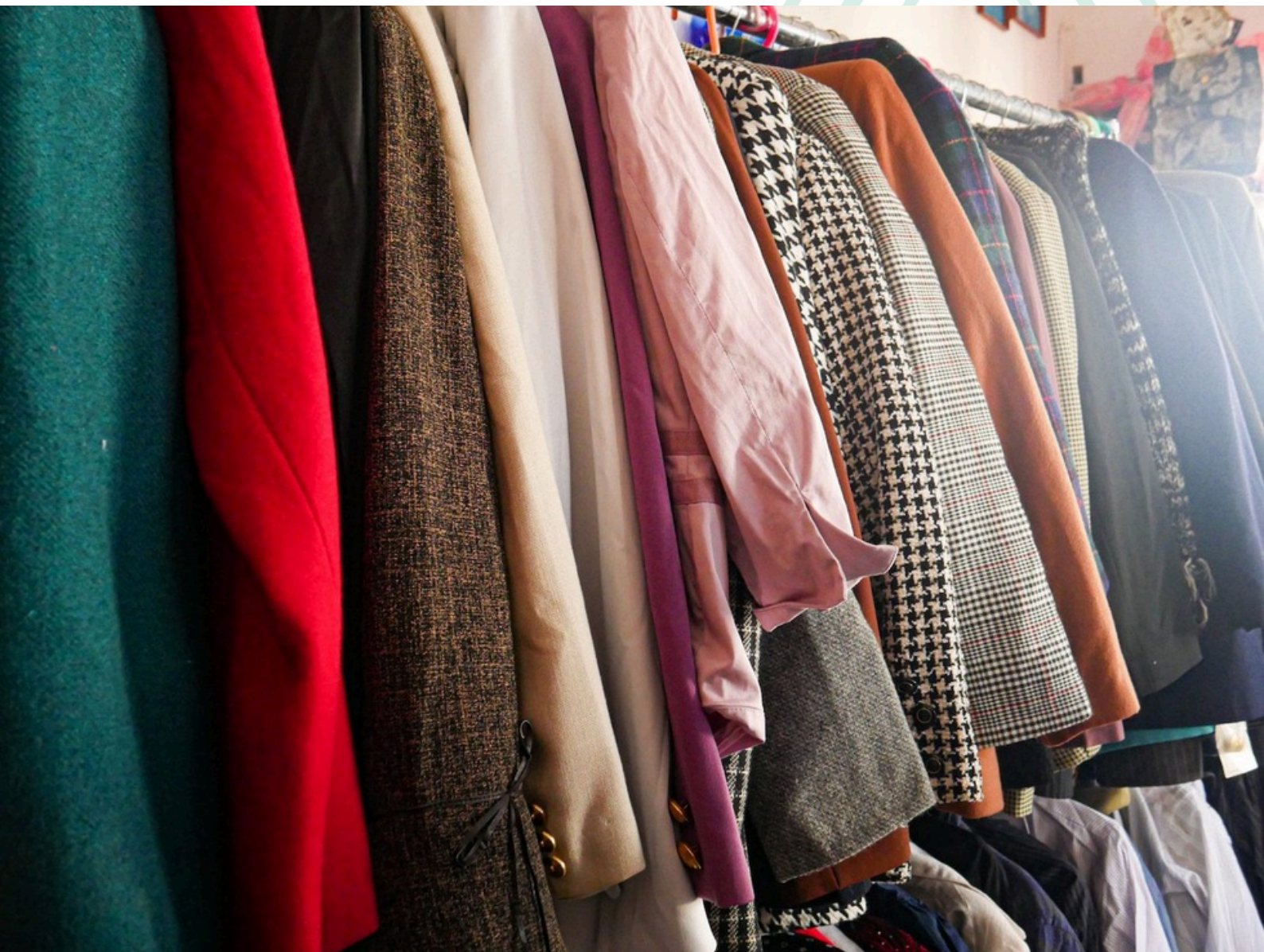
In 2021, the 365 campaign raised €9,190 that was donated to YMCA by 11 individuals, companies and groups of friends.

## Charity & Vintage Shop

The YMCA Malta Charity & Vintage Shop was opened in February 2020 in Żabbar and ran successfully for another year in 2021. The concept of this social business venture is to financially support YMCA Malta through the generation of funds selling second-hand donated items. It is mainly operated by volunteers, providing hands-on experience and training to both local students and international interns.

Being environmentally conscious is very important to us. By giving new life to used items, we reduce landfill waste, and adopt a 'circular economy' ethos. We do this by applying the 3 R's: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.

This enterprise provides essential items at a significantly reduced price, or free of charge to community members who are experiencing poverty or other tribulations, permitting them to purchase items they couldn't with full-price-retail.



Above: Clothing available at the Vintage & Charity Shop, 2021

# Doris Cusens Fund

International Women's Day on March 8th 2021 saw YMCA Malta launch a campaign inspired by a very special woman: The Doris Cusens Fund builds on the work that Mrs Doris Cusens started in Malta back in the 1970s.

Doris supported vulnerable people in the community, providing financial endowments, employment and psychological services, as well as offering other specialised assistance to those who sought her help. Throughout her career Doris also supported numerous NGOs including YMCA Malta, Dar Merhba Bik and YWCA.

Through the Doris Cusens Fund, YMCA Malta aims to continue Doris' philanthropic work; the fund will support individuals and families living in the Maltese Islands who are referred to us by NGOs and government agencies. Cases will be provided with material assistance for urgent, daily needs, including school supplies, transportation, clothing, household appliances, etc.



Left: Logo of the Doris Cusens Fund, launched in 2021



# Research

Research is a pillar of our Youth Empowerment Programme YEP! In carrying out our own qualitative and quantitative research, as well as facilitating that of third-parties wishing to collaborate with us on their own projects, YMCA Malta has become a vital resource on social justice issues in Maltese society, as well as an indicative base from which to explore broader EU trends.

## Youth Homelessness

In 2021 we worked with Ms. Dorianne Caviedes Diaz on her Masters paper entitled: 'Homeless young people; a lack of adequate policies and legislation?'. We provided Ms. Diaz with access to several of our service users as her research participants. Her study illuminates the taboo subject of youth homelessness in Malta, in particular how rental market prices and comparatively lower wages are among the leading causes of youth homelessness on our islands.

Homeless young people; a lack of adequate policies and legislation?

Dorianne Caviedes Diaz  
BA (Hons) - Youth and Community Studies  
Department of Youth and Community Studies  
Faculty for Social Wellbeing  
(2021)

Above: Click on link to access report

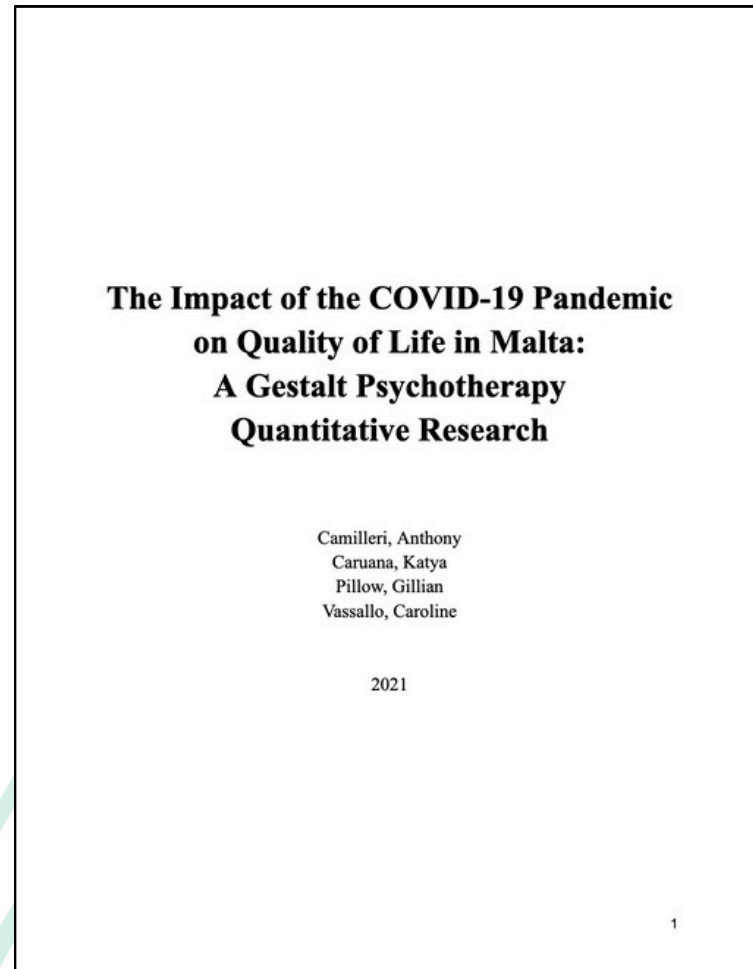
# Impacts of COVID-19

In order to support and improve the Loneliness Response Line service commenced in 2020, YMCA Malta collaborated with 4 local warranted Psychotherapists to further understand the impact of COVID-19 on the community at large.

The research was published in 2021, using a set of six questions answered by 437 people through an online survey. The respondents included 128 men, 300 women, and 3 who identified as transgender, non-binary, or other, with 24% of them being over 65 years old.

It found that people who felt more tension also tended to report higher levels of depression, especially as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The results were analysed using SPSS software, a tool for statistical analysis.

This important study supported YMCA Malta in continuing to provide a service to those experiencing adverse solitude with our Loneliness Response Line.



Above: Click on link to access report

# Volunteering

In 2021 we hosted 19 international interns from a pool of 270 applicants. These interns contributed a total of 8,641 hours to our services. An additional 20 volunteers contributed their invaluable passion, energy and a total of 2,682.5 hours to our cause.

A grand total of 11,323.5 hours were thus gifted to us by these individuals working across our residential, sustainability, research, outreach, education, and youth activities.



Left: THINK Day with staff and volunteers, 2021



# Benefactors

## Y's Friends

Inaugurated in 2004, Y's Friends consists of around eight members and acts as a service club to the YMCA Malta, assisting us in our operational needs on a project-by-project basis. The group meets with key staff from our team approximately 6 times a year with projects identified and planned together.

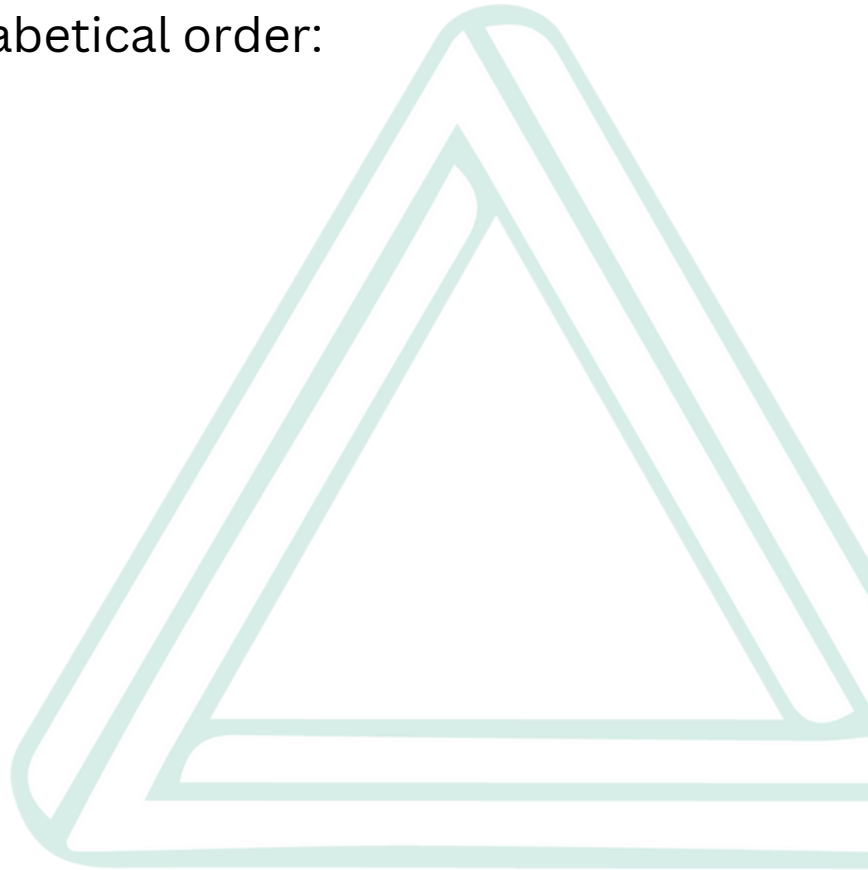


Above: Y's Friends Meeting, 2021

# Other Benefactors

YMCA Malta would not be able to carry out its services if it were not for our Benefactors believing in our mission and supporting it financially, and in-kind throughout the year. They are listed here in alphabetical order:

- AX Group
- Bortex
- C. Camilleri & Sons Ltd.
- Catena Media Malta
- Cinnabon
- Clean4u
- Dar Hosea
- Deguara Confectionary
- Earth Offerings
- Enemed Co. Ltd.
- Expedition 42
- Express Trailer
- Eyes to Argus
- Female Entrepreneurs Malta
- Fortina Investments
- Freehour Malta
- Grande Maestro Fine Stringed Instruments and Accessories Ltd.
- Homemate
- HSBC
- Mapfre
- Mazars Malta
- Microsoft Ltd.



- Misco Malta
- Nah CO3
- P Cutajar Foundation
- Pandora Box
- Parrocca San Gorg
- Pemix House
- Peppi Primavera
- Pizza al Taglio
- Pizza Hut
- Royalty Bedding
- San Anton School
- Sarah Grech Ltd
- Savewise Supermarket
- St Aloysius School
- Tektarco Ltd.
- The Master Cellars
- The Model Shop
- Toni & Malta Enterprise
- Toyland
- Vassallo Group
- Vella Brothers Limited
- Wilhelmsen Lines Malta
- Worldwide Co. Ltd.



We would equally like to thank those individuals, families and other benefactors who donated throughout the year, but who prefer to remain anonymous.



# Affiliations

- World Alliances of YMCAs
- European Alliances of YMCAs
- Women Against Violence (WAVE)
- European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless (FEANSTA)
- The Platform of Human Rights Organisations in Malta (PHROM)
- Groups of Experts on Action against Violence against Women & Domestic Violence (GREVIO)
- Anti Poverty Forum

# Beneficiaries

YMCA Malta supports, assists, and advocates for and on behalf of the most vulnerable in our communities, irrespective of their gender, sexual orientation, race, nationality, age, religion and political affiliations in order to create a more just society. These include:

- Families in difficulty
- Asylum seekers
- Homeless individuals and families
- People facing financial issues
- People living in substandard housing
- People without access to proper education
- Stranded travellers

- Unemployed people
- Victims and survivors of domestic violence and gender-based violence
- Victims of addiction such as gambling
- Victims of child abuse
- Victims of usury
- Youths



# How you can support us

## Donate via Bank Transfer

YMCA Valletta  
Bank of Valletta  
BIC: VALLMTMT  
Account No: MT24VALL 2201  
3000 0000 4002 1938 069  
Please include your full name  
and contact number.

## Donate via BOV Pay

79550065  
Donate via SMS  
Donate €4.66 - Send a blank  
message to 50618088  
Donate €11.65 - Send a blank  
message to 50619212

## Sponsor a BED

‘Sponsor a BED’ covers the daily, weekly or monthly costs we incur for providing a bed and board to someone in need of shelter at our Dar Niki Cassar or Y Communal House.

Sponsor a BED for 1 day - €15  
Sponsor a BED for 1 week - €105  
Sponsor a BED for 1 month - €365

YMCA Valletta  
Revolut Bank  
BIC: REVOGB21  
IBAN: GB79 REVO 0099 7088 026542

Please include your full name and contact number.

# Thank you/Grazzi ħafna