

KELMTEJN MA' JCA

HOMELESSNESS



TABLE OF CONTENTS:

<i>INTRODUCTION.....</i>	<i>PAGE 3</i>
<i>PRISON SENTENCE.....</i>	<i>PAGE 3</i>
<i>MALTA'S NATIONAL STRATEGY.....</i>	<i>PAGE 4</i>
<i>MALTA'S WELFARE BENEFITS.....</i>	<i>PAGE 5</i>
<i>SOUP KITCHEN.....</i>	<i>PAGE 6</i>
<i>REFERENCES.....</i>	<i>PAGE 8</i>

INTRODUCTION:

Despite that we are in the the year 2025, many individuals living in Malta are facing homelessness – a sad, but a true reality. The main causes of homelessness generally include social problems such as domestic violence, childhood homelessness, difficult childhood experiences, together with drug addictions.¹ Moreover, although one may physically come across homeless people, the truth is that a substantial amount of people live in shelters, while others are at risk of being homeless due to rise of cost of living.

PRISON SENTENCE:

Our laws make it clear that any individual who is in the possession of begging, will be criminally charged as per article 338 (w) and (x) of the Criminal Code,

Every person is guilty of a contravention against public order, who –

(w) leads an idle and vagrant life;

(x) and in any public space importunes any person to beg alms.

According to an article reported by the Times of Malta, at least **thirty-five homeless individuals** have been subject to police raids and charged in court for being homeless. A case in point includes a thirty-five-year-old man who collects plastic bottles to live on, was sentenced to two months in jail.² Furthermore, earlier in June, twelve homeless people were charged with harassment and begging near a supermarket in Hal Qormi.³

¹ < https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/bitstream/123456789/78694/1/Homelessness_2019.pdf > accessed on 11 November 2025

² < <https://tvmnews.mt/en/news/man-who-collects-plastic-bottles-to-live-on-sentenced-to-two-months-in-jail/> > accessed on 11 November 2025

³ < <https://tvmnews.mt/en/news/twelve-homeless-persons-charged-with-harassment-and-begging-near-a-hal-qormi-supermarket/> > accessed on 11 November 2025

On the 7th of November 2025, a forty-three year old man was placed under a one year probation order for stealing bottled water and towels from a guesthouse.

MALTA'S NATIONAL STRATEGY.

This year, at least thirty people were charged with homelessness. It is evident that homelessness is a major issue in our country. In an interview conducted this summer, the YMCA Malta CEO, Anthony Camilleri, called for a long-term solution which should be part of every parliamentary session's budget discussion.⁴ In 2024, 185 were recorded as homeless due to the increasing financial pressures many are facing. One may question what the is the government's current strategy in order to combat homeless?

To date, some of the government-led initiatives include **Apogġ** (FSWS) – the government's social services agency which carries out comprehensive assessments of homeless people and referrals and placements based on their specific needs, together with social housing and housing schemes. Nonetheless, this is not enough given that the numbers of individuals subject to homelessness are consistently increasing and we do not have a strategic plan specifically addressed at homelessness and housing exclusion. The situation is indeed complex. The strategy as clearly pointed out by Camilleri must be all about prevention as well as providing an emergency shelter since most shelters are full.

⁴ < <https://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2025-08-24/local-news/No-home-no-hope-YMCA-CEO-calls-for-urgent-national-strategy-6736272587> > accessed on 12 November

MALTA'S WELFARE BENEFITS.

When it comes to welfare benefits, Malta offers a range of social assistance. For families, they offer children's allowance as well as the in-work benefit for low-income working families. Pregnant women are entitled to a maternity benefit which is a maximum of fourteen weeks.⁵ The weekly rate is 140.29 euros, whereas those that are self-occupied may benefit from a weekly rate of 221.78 euro in the case of an applicant expecting multiple births, the entitlement is only for one maternity benefit.⁶

Any individuals who cannot engage in employment due to having care and custody of own minor children and are legally or de facto separated may be awarded social assistance, known as DSS every four weeks.⁷

In addition to Malta's welfare benefits, there are four types of disability assistances available that are designed in order to provide financial support to individuals with physical, intellectual, sensory, or severe disabilities, depending on their age and medical condition.⁸ Payments are issued every four weeks and amounts vary depending on the type of assistance awarded and are subject to the current schedule of benefit rates which vary from 102.62 euros to 199.61 euros.⁹

⁵ < <https://socialsecurity.gov.mt/en/information-and-applications-for-benefits-and-services/family-benefits/maternity-benefit/> > accessed on 19 November

⁶ < <https://mysocialsecurity.gov.mt/BenefitPaymentRates.aspx> > accessed on 19 November

⁷ < https://www.servizz.gov.mt/en/Pages/Inclusion_Equality-and-Social-Welfare/Social-Solidarity/Benefits-and-Services/Non-Contributory-benefits/WEB-00649/default.aspx > accessed on 19 November

⁸ < <https://socialsecurity.gov.mt/en/information-and-applications-for-benefits-and-services/non-contributory-benefits/disability-assistance/> > accessed on 19 November

⁹ < <https://mysocialsecurity.gov.mt/BenefitPaymentRates.aspx> > accessed on 19 November

SOUP KITCHEN:

Just a few weeks ago, I had the opportunity to discuss this topic together with Father Marcellino Micallef, the Soup Kitchen's founder who emphasized that many individuals, including young adults, are going through difficult situations and as a result have to depend on the services offered by the Soup Kitchen. The fact that numerous individuals have to depend on non-governmental organisations such as the Soup Kitchen signifies the reality of many who cannot even afford food – a basic human right. In 2023, at least 27,000 people, the majority of whom were Maltese, precisely around 86% turned up at Soup Kitchen which amounts to a total of 603,660 euro spent on food by the organisation.¹⁰ Moreover, the Soup Kitchen offers assistance via social workers, offer shower facilities and dental services, clothes, and any other assistance that help people to move on to a more purposeful and independent life. They welcome companies, constituted bodies, educational organisations among others in order for them to live the experience for a few hours assisting the Soup Kitchen's kitchen and their guests.

¹⁰ < <https://church.mt/27000-people-turned-up-at-soup-kitchen-in-2023/> > accessed on 12 November

CONCLUSION:

To sum up, it is evident that Malta needs a national strategy to withstand homelessness. Identifying the main groups of people in our society who face the highest risks of becoming homeless is the first step to tackle this phenomenon, followed by suggesting permanent shelter accommodation, and emergency assistance.¹¹ If it weren't for non-governmental organisations such as YMCA, Dar il-Hena, and the Soup Kitchen, many would find themselves in such complex situations. We highly encourage everyone to support these organisations by donating and volunteering as every little helps!

Author: Alize Zorban

¹¹ < https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/bitstream/123456789/78694/1/Homelessness_2019.pdf > accessed on 12 November

REFERENCES:

- https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/bitstream/123456789/78694/1/Homelessness_2019.pdf accessed on 11 November 2025
- <https://tvmnews.mt/en/news/man-who-collects-plastic-bottles-to-live-on-sentenced-to-two-months-in-jail/> accessed on 11 November 2025
- <https://tvmnews.mt/en/news/twelve-homeless-persons-charged-with-harassment-and-begging-near-a-hal-qormi-supermarket/> accessed on 11 November 2025
- <https://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2025-08-24/local-news/No-home-no-hope-YMCA-CEO-calls-for-urgent-national-strategy-6736272587> accessed on 12 November
- <https://church.mt/27000-people-turned-up-at-soup-kitchen-in-2023/> accessed on 12 November
- <https://socialsecurity.gov.mt/en/information-and-applications-for-benefits-and-services/family-benefits/maternity-benefit/> accessed on 19 November
- <https://mysocialsecurity.gov.mt/BenefitPaymentRates.aspx> accessed on 19 November
- https://www.servizz.gov.mt/en/Pages/Inclusion_-_Equality-and-Social-Welfare/Social-Solidarity/Benefits-and-Services/Non-Contributory-benefits/WEB-00649/default.aspx accessed on 19 November
- <https://socialsecurity.gov.mt/en/information-and-applications-for-benefits-and-services/non-contributory-benefits/disability-assistance/> accessed on 19 November
- <https://mysocialsecurity.gov.mt/BenefitPaymentRates.aspx> accessed on 19 November