

The background is a dark grey gradient with vibrant, multi-colored splatters in shades of teal, purple, and brown. A white line forms a large, irregular shape that frames the text. In the bottom right corner, there are several white geometric shapes, including a large chevron and a smaller arrow-like shape.

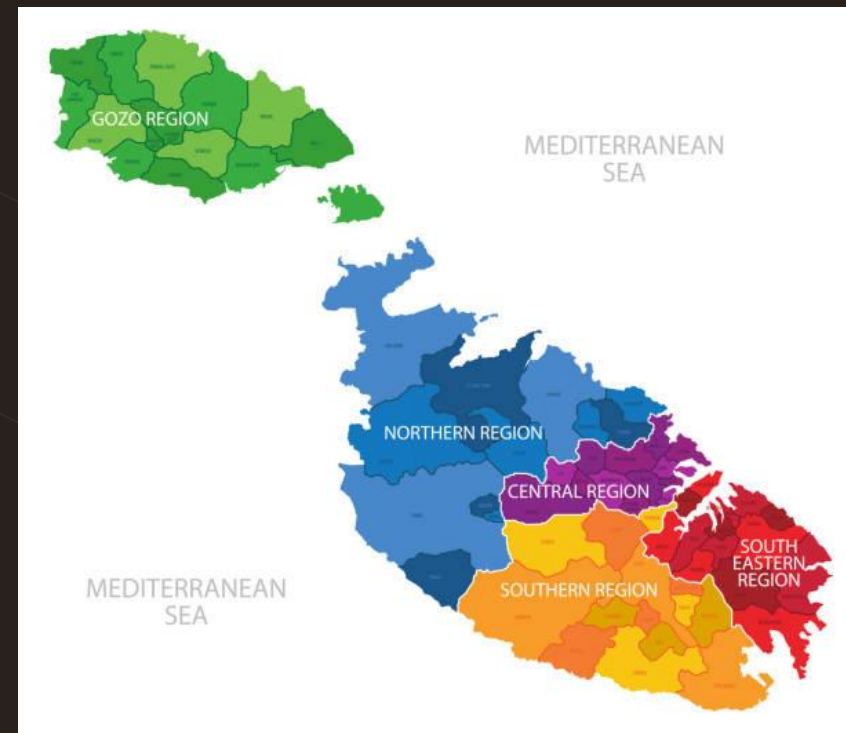
Isabel Stabile

Doctors for Choice

Abortion is a Fact of Life in Modern Malta

Malta

- Smallest and southernmost EU state
- Population of half a million
- 500 women underwent a medical abortion in 2023 i.e., 1/1000 population
- NL 1/654
- Ireland 1/518
- Spain 1/509
- Greece 1/310
- France 1/290
- England & Wales 1/277



Malta's Criminal Code

- *Article 241 (1) Whosoever, by any food, drink, medicine, or by violence, or by any other means whatsoever, shall cause the miscarriage of any woman with child, whether the woman be consenting or not, shall, on conviction, be liable to imprisonment for a term from eighteen months to three years.*
 - *Article 241 (2) The same punishment shall be awarded against any woman who shall procure her own miscarriage, or who shall have consented to the use of the means by which the miscarriage is procured.'*
 - *Article 243 Any physician, surgeon, obstetrician, or apothecary, who shall have knowingly prescribed or administered the means whereby the miscarriage is procured, shall, on conviction, be liable to imprisonment for a term from eighteen months to four years, and to perpetual interdiction from the exercise of his profession.'*
- Since the 1800s, women who have abortions in Malta could face a maximum of three years in prison
 - Doctors who help women have abortions in Malta face a maximum of four years in jail and a permanent revocation of their licence



Andrea Prudente Pre-viable PPRROM 6/2022

- Ruptured membranes at 15 weeks of pregnancy
- No Amniotic fluid left; placental separation
- Probability of survival is far less than the risk of sepsis & haemorrhage
- International guidelines support option of immediate delivery
- Doctors refused to end the pregnancy as there was still a fetal heart beat
- Air ambulance to Spain for abortion at 16 weeks
- Led to Judicial Protest signed by 135 doctors
- Prompted the State Attorney to review the existing law



Bill 28: Legal Grounds for Abortion (6/2023)

1. When a woman has a medical complication which may put her life at immediate risk

- *Article 243B. No offence under sub-article (2) of article 241 or article 243 shall be committed when the cessation of a pregnancy or damage to the foetus results from a medical intervention carried out for the purpose of saving the life and protecting the health of a pregnant woman suffering from a medical complication which may put her life at immediate risk or her health in grave jeopardy which may lead to death:*
- *Provided that the exemption from criminal responsibility by virtue of this article shall apply only when after having considered the medical practices current in Malta circumstances of necessity still subsist which dictate that the medical intervention be carried out and if the following conditions are fulfilled:*
- *(a) in the case of a pregnant woman suffering from a medical complication which may put her life at immediate risk the medical intervention is done when in the reasonable opinion of the medical practitioner carrying out the intervention **the foetus has not reached the period of viability.***



Bill 28: Legal Grounds for Abortion (6/2023)

- 2. When a woman has a medical complication that places her health in grave jeopardy which may lead to death
 - (b) *in the case of a medical intervention carried out due to a medical complication which places the health of a pregnant woman in grave jeopardy which may lead to death:*
 - (i) *that in the reasonable opinion of the medical team **the foetus has not reached the period of viability and cannot be delivered according to the standards of the medical profession**; and*
 - (ii) *that the medical intervention is carried out only after the medical team has confirmed the necessity of the intervention; and (iii) that the medical intervention is carried out in a licensed hospital having the facilities required for the necessary medical intervention to be carried out;*
 - (c) *for the purposes of this article: "medical team" means **three (3) medical practitioners registered as specialists with the Medical Council** under the HealthCare Professions Act, two (2) of whom being obstetricians or gynaecologists, one (1) of whom being the obstetrician who carries out the intervention, and the third medical practitioner being a specialist in the condition from which the pregnant woman is suffering.*



Malta's abortion law is the most inhumane in the EU

- No other exceptions in the law to allow an abortion when
 - Health is at risk of harm but not necessarily risk of death
 - Severe fetal malformation
 - Rape or incest
- 1900 women made use of abortion telemedicine services (2017 to 2023)
- Nobody imprisoned for having an abortion in the last 25 years
- Current law stops women who need medical attention from seeking help



Malta has NO Providers of Abortion Services

- Travel to country where abortion is legal is NOT a criminal offence
- No of women travelling to the UK
 - 63 in 2011
 - 4 in 2021
 - 13 in 2022
- DfC offers abortions option web app providing information and links to WoW and WhW
- After 12 weeks, travel for surgical abortion usually within EU
- Abortion Support Network offers help & financial assistance





Frequently Asked Questions

Abortion is illegal in Malta. Can I get in trouble if I have an abortion?

Taking pills to end a pregnancy is illegal in Malta. However, it is very rare for a woman to be prosecuted for having an abortion. If you would like legal advice from pro-choice lawyers, you can contact the [Women's Rights Foundation](#).

Abortion pills have other medical uses. For example, Mifepristone is used to treat certain types of cancer, and Misoprostol is used to treat stomach ulcers.

If you have an abortion abroad in a country where it is legal (which is almost all other EU states) you will not be prosecuted in Malta.

Hi 👋 If you have any questions, chat with us here. You can ask us anything...



[Click To Reply](#)



Other FAQs

- Can I get in trouble if I have an abortion in Malta?
- How effective are abortion pills?
- How long do abortion pills take to arrive in Malta?
- Will I see an embryo come out after an abortion with pills?
- I need to see a doctor. Can they find out I used abortion pills?
- How do I know if the abortion pills worked?
- Will an abortion affect my fertility?
- Can an embryo or fetus feel pain when aborted?
- When should I NOT use abortion pills?



Abortion Doula Support Service

Free service by two pro-choice
doctors who provide medical help
and support before, during, or after
an abortion, regardless of where or
how the abortion is done

100 calls between May and August
2024



Survey Maltese Doctors (n = 454) in 2019 Agreed with Abortion

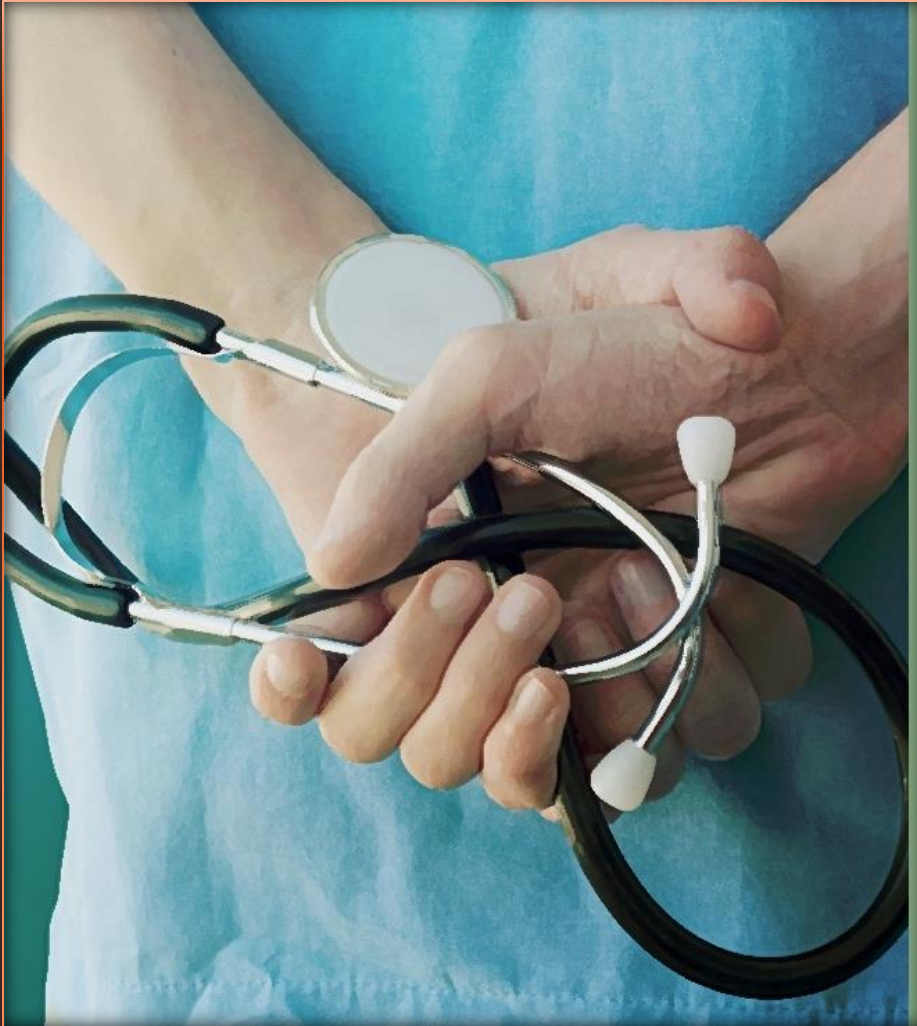
life is in danger	63%
non-viable fetal anomaly	66%
rape or incest	35%
preserving a woman's physical health	30%
preserving a woman's mental health	27%
viable fetal anomaly	25%
economic/social reasons	19%
any circumstance	15%



Survey Maltese Doctors (n = 173) in 2023:

Incorrect Knowledge

- Those accessing abortion services abroad can be criminally prosecuted in Malta: 57%
- Providing information about abortion is illegal: 38%
- Legalising abortion will increase the number of women seeking abortion: 29%



Public Opinion: % Agree with Decriminalisation (stratified, random sampling)



Age	4/2021 (n=651)	8/2022 (n=616)
Overall	47	53
16-25	66	71
36-50	46	53
51-64	36	48
>65	31	36



- Accessing abortion in a highly restrictive legal regime A
Dibben, I Stabile, R Gomperts, J Kohout. BMJ Sexual &
Reproductive Health , 2023
- Repromob (University of Barcelona)
 - Unique opportunity to investigate the mobilisation of
reproductive health services including abortion
 - Various countries in Latin America, as well as Italy,
Poland and Malta
 - Difficulty in recruiting as women are too scared





Funding????