



# Microsoft Security Intelligence Report

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*Malta*

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# Malta

The statistics presented here are generated by Microsoft security programs and services running on computers in Malta in 4Q14 and previous quarters. This data is provided from administrators or users who choose to opt in to provide data to Microsoft, using IP address geolocation to determine country or region.

On computers running real-time security software, most attempts by malware to infect computers are blocked before they succeed. Therefore, for a comprehensive understanding of the malware landscape, it's important to consider infection attempts that are blocked as well as infections that are removed. For this reason, Microsoft uses two different metrics to measure malware prevalence:

- *Encounter rate* is simply the percentage of computers running Microsoft real-time security products that report a malware encounter, whether the infection attempt succeeds or not.
- *Computers cleaned per mille*, or *CCM*, is an infection rate metric that is defined as the number of computers cleaned for every 1,000 unique computers executing the Malicious Software Removal Tool (MSRT), a free tool distributed through Microsoft update services that removes more than 200 highly prevalent or serious threats from computers.

Infection rate statistics for Malta

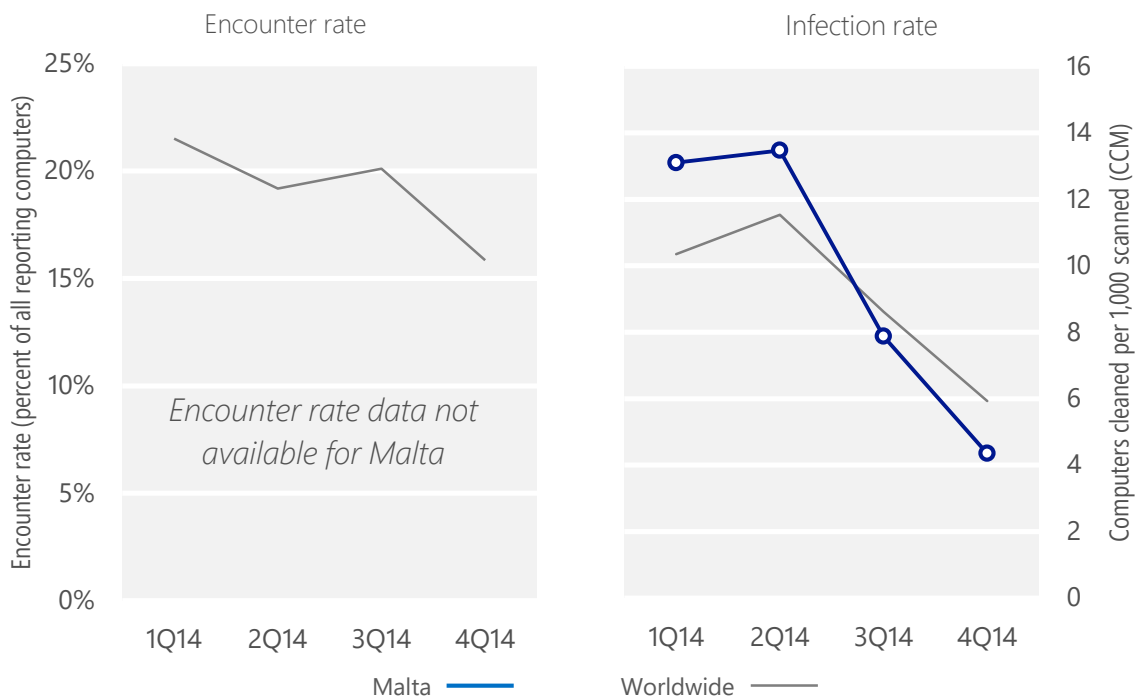
| Metric                          | 1Q14  | 2Q14  | 3Q14  | 4Q14  |
|---------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Encounter rate, Malta           | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   |
| <i>Worldwide encounter rate</i> | 21.5% | 19.2% | 20.1% | 15.9% |
| CCM, Malta                      | 13.1  | 13.5  | 7.9   | 4.4   |
| <i>Worldwide CCM</i>            | 10.3  | 11.5  | 8.6   | 5.9   |

Encounter and infection rates reported here do not include totals for the Brantall, Filcote, and Rotbrow malware families. See pages 57–64 of [Microsoft Security Intelligence Report, Volume 17](#) for an explanation of this decision.

## Encounter and infection rate trends

In 4Q14, the MSRT detected and removed malware from 4.4 of every 1,000 unique computers scanned in Malta in 4Q14 (a CCM score of 4.4, compared to the 4Q14 worldwide CCM of 5.9). The following figure shows the encounter and infection rate trends for Malta over the last four quarters, compared to the world as a whole.

Malware encounter and infection rate trends in Malta and worldwide



See the Worldwide Threat Assessment section of [Microsoft Security Intelligence Report, Volume 18](#) at [www.microsoft.com/sir](http://www.microsoft.com/sir) for more information about threats in Malta and around the world, and for explanations of the methods and terms used here.

## Top threat families by infection rate

The most common malware families by infection rate in Malta in 4Q14

|    | Family                          | Most significant category            | Infection rate (CCM) |
|----|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1  | <a href="#">VBS/Jenxcus</a>     | Worms                                | 1.7                  |
| 2  | <a href="#">Win32/Sefnit</a>    | Trojans                              | 0.3                  |
| 3  | <a href="#">MSIL/Bladabindi</a> | Backdoors                            | 0.2                  |
| 4  | <a href="#">Win32/Zbot</a>      | Password Stealers & Monitoring Tools | 0.2                  |
| 5  | <a href="#">Win32/Sality</a>    | Viruses                              | 0.2                  |
| 6  | <a href="#">Win32/Alureon</a>   | Trojans                              | 0.2                  |
| 7  | <a href="#">JS/Miuref</a>       | Trojans                              | 0.1                  |
| 8  | <a href="#">JS/Kilim</a>        | Trojans                              | 0.1                  |
| 9  | <a href="#">Win32/Wysotot</a>   | Trojans                              | 0.1                  |
| 10 | <a href="#">Win32/Lecpetex</a>  | Downloaders & Droppers               | 0.1                  |

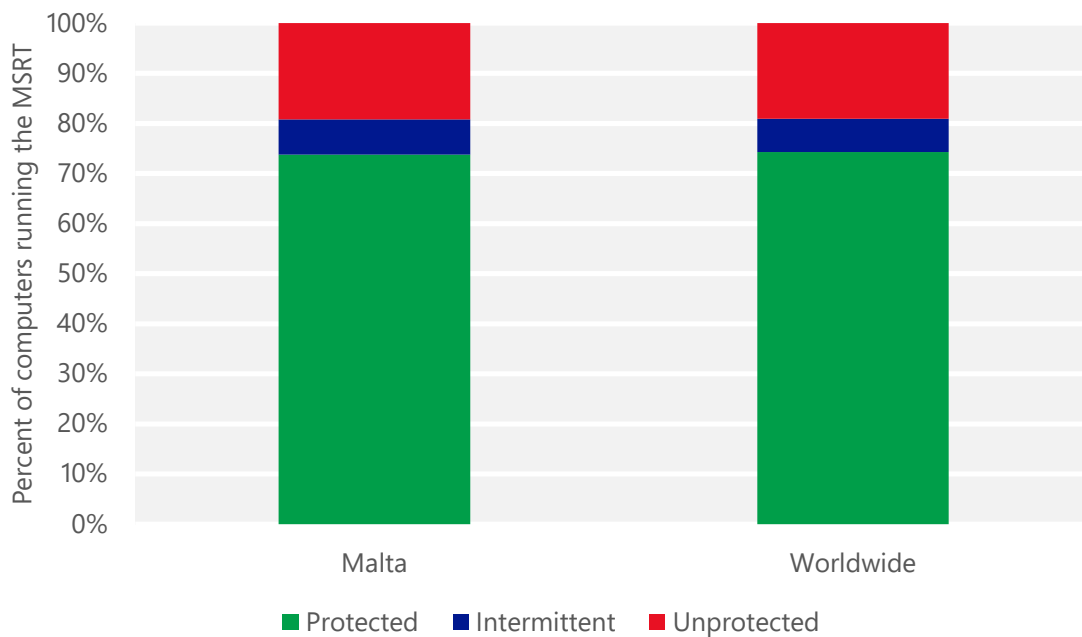
- The most common threat family infecting computers in Malta in 4Q14 was [VBS/Jenxcus](#), which was detected and removed from 1.7 of every 1,000 unique computers scanned by the MSRT. [VBS/Jenxcus](#) is a worm that gives an attacker control of the computer. It is spread by infected removable drives, like USB flash drives. It can also be downloaded within a torrent file.
- The second most common threat family infecting computers in Malta in 4Q14 was [Win32/Sefnit](#), which was detected and removed from 0.3 of every 1,000 unique computers scanned by the MSRT. [Win32/Sefnit](#) is a family of trojans that can allow backdoor access, download files, and use the computer and Internet connection for click fraud. Some variants can monitor web browsers and hijack search results.
- The third most common threat family infecting computers in Malta in 4Q14 was [MSIL/Bladabindi](#), which was detected and removed from 0.2 of every 1,000 unique computers scanned by the MSRT. [MSIL/Bladabindi](#) is a family of backdoors created by a malicious hacker tool called NJ Rat. The can steal sensitive information, download other malware, and allow backdoor access to an infected computer.
- The fourth most common threat family infecting computers in Malta in 4Q14 was [Win32/Zbot](#), which was detected and removed from 0.2 of every 1,000 unique computers scanned by the MSRT. [Win32/Zbot](#) is a family of password stealing trojans that also contains backdoor functionality allowing unauthorized access and control of an affected computer.

## Security software use

Recent releases of the MSRT collect and report details about the state of real-time antimalware software on a computer, if the computer's administrator has chosen to opt in to provide data to Microsoft. This telemetry data makes it possible to analyze security software usage patterns around the world and correlate them with infection rates.

A typical computer runs the MSRT three times each quarter, once for each monthly version of the tool that Microsoft releases. In the figure below, "Protected" represents computers that had real-time security software active and up-to-date every time the MSRT ran during a quarter; "Intermittently protected" represents computers that had security software active during one or more MSRT executions, but not all of them; and "Unprotected" represents computers that did not have security software active during any MSRT executions that quarter.

Percent of computers in Malta and worldwide protected by real-time security software in 4Q14



## Drive-by download sites

A *drive-by download* site is a website that hosts one or more exploits that target vulnerabilities in web browsers and browser add-ons. Users with vulnerable computers can be infected with malware simply by visiting such a website, even without attempting to download anything. Drive-by download pages are usually hosted on legitimate Web sites to which an attacker has posted exploit code. Attackers gain access to legitimate sites through intrusion or by posting malicious code to a poorly secured web form, like a comment field on a blog. Compromised sites can be hosted anywhere in the world and concern nearly any subject imaginable, making it difficult for even an experienced user to identify a compromised site from a list of search results.

Search engines such as Bing have taken a number of measures to help protect users from drive-by downloads. As Bing indexes the web, pages are assessed for malicious elements or malicious behavior. Clicking the link in the list of search results displays a prominent warning, saying that the page may contain malicious software.

At the end of 3Q14, Bing detected 0.12 drive-by download URLs for every 1,000 URLs hosted in Malta, compared to 0.41 worldwide. At the end of 4Q14, Bing detected 0.03 drive-by download URLs for every 1,000 URLs hosted in Malta, compared to 0.45 worldwide.

Drive-by download pages per 1,000 URLs hosted in Malta and worldwide

| Metric  | October 1, 2014 | January 1, 2015 |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| Drive-by download pages per 1,000 URLs, Malta           | 0.12            | 0.03            |
| <i>Drive-by download pages per 1,000 URLs worldwide</i> | <i>0.41</i>     | <i>0.45</i>     |



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