



# media release

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## **780,000 cruise passengers expected by the end of the year**

The Malta Tourism Authority (MTA) is pleased to note that by the end of this year, 780,000 passengers are expected to visit the Maltese Islands by means of cruise ships.

According to figures published by the National Statistics Office (NSO), 2016 was already a record year for cruise line passengers visiting Malta. A total of 682,222 passenger movements were recorded last year, which meant an increase of 2% on 2015.

Additionally, the total number of cruise passengers registered during the first nine months of 2017 stood at 482,855, a rise of 7.6% over 2016. Of these, 72% came from EU Member States. The largest increase was recorded from the British market, which advanced by 51,773 passengers.

Today, two flight tickets were awarded to an Italian couple that were the 700,000th passengers that visited the Maltese Islands by means of a cruise ship this year. The said couple will hopefully return to Malta for a longer stay in the near future.

Speaking at a press event organized at the Valletta Cruise Port terminal, Mr Carlo Micallef, Chief Marketing Officer to the MTA, said that the 700,000th arrival of cruise passengers is a significant milestone for Malta's tourism industry, which has today reached a level of cruise traffic that we could only dream about just a few years back.

Mr Micallef held that the cruise industry is an important contributor to the Maltese economy, in particular to the business community in Valletta and the Grand Harbour region. Beyond the injection of income that each cruise ship visit generates, there is also the positive contribution of showcasing some of the highlights of our Islands, including the majestic entrance to the Valletta Grand Harbour and the City itself to day trippers and often, passengers post comments and messages on their social media network. Apart from the resultant promotion of our Islands, surveys have shown that many cruise passengers are intrigued and speak positively about Malta to family and friends, and considering to return to Malta and Gozo for a longer holiday some time after.

The Minister responsible for Tourism, Dr Konrad Mizzi, called today a 'new milestone' and said that the Government is committed to continue working with the Valletta Cruise Port to ensure that Malta's offering is competitive and that the Maltese product improves continuously.

The Malta Cruise Network will carry on working incessantly in order to continue improving the visitor experience of cruise passengers to our shores. The Network will collaborate with the Grand Harbour Regeneration Corporation, Transport Malta, Heritage Malta and the Malta Police Force.

### **Sal-aħħar ta' din is-sena, 780,000 turist mistenni jasal Malta permezz ta' cruise ships**

L-Awtorità Maltija għat-Turiżmu (MTA) tinnota bi pjaċir li sal-aħħar ta' din is-sena, 780,000 turist se jkun wasal Malta permezz ta' cruise ships.

Skont ċifri ppublikati mill-Uffiċju Nazzjonali tal-Istatistika, is-sena 2016 kienet diġa' waħda rekord għall dawn it-tip ta' turisti. Total ta' 682,222 passigġier wasal Malta permezz ta' cruise ship is-sena li għaddiet, li jfisser żieda ta' 2% meta mqabbel mal-2015.

Apparti minn hekk, l-ammont totali ta' passigġieri rreġistrati fl-ewwel disa' xhur tal-2017 kien 482,855, li jfisser żieda ta' 7.6% fuq l-2016. Minn dawn, 72% kienu turisti li ġew minn stati membri tal-Unjoni Ewropea. L-ikbar żieda kienet rreġistrata fis-suq Inġliż, li avvanza b'51,773 passigġier.

Illum, żewġ biljetti tal-ajru ngħataw lil koppja Taljana li kienu s-700,000 persuni li ġew Malta permezz ta' cruise ship din is-sena. Din il-koppja issa għandha inċentiv ieħor biex terġa' tiġi Malta, din id-darba għal żmien itwal.

Hu u jtkellem waqt attivita' għall-istampa organizzata fil-Valletta Cruise Port Terminal, is-sur Carlo Micallef, Chief Marketing Officer fl-MTA, qal li s-700,000 wasla hija tragward importanti għall-industrija Maltija tat-turiżmu, li illum diġa' laħqet livell ta' traffiku li snin ilu kien biss ħolma.

Is-sur Micallef zied jgħid li l-industrija tal-cruises hija kontributur importanti għall-ekonomija Maltija, b'mod partikolari għan-negozji tal-Belt Valletta u z-zona tal-Port il-Kbir. Apparti li dawn it-turisti jonfqu l-flus, jkunu jistgħu jaraw ukoll dak li għandha x'toffri l-Belt Kapitali Maltija. Hafna drabi, viżitaturi jtellgħu rirtatti fuq siti soċjali, u dan iservi ta' riklam. Minbarra dan, dawn it-tip ta' turisti għandhom tendenza jtkellmu b'mod pożittiv dwar Malta meta jkunu lura f'pajjiżhom.

Il-Ministru responsabbli mit-Turiżmu, Dr Konrad Mizzi, uża l-kliem 'new milestone' biex jiddeskrivi l-kisba ta' illum. Qal li l-Gvern huwa kommiss li jkompli jaħdem mal-Valletta Cruise Port biex jiżgura li dak li għandha x'toffri Malta jkun kompetittiv u li l-porodott Malti jitjeb b'mod kontinwu.

Il-Malta Cruise Network se tkompli taħdem bla waqfien biex ittejjeb l-esperjenza ta' dawk li jżuru Malta. In-Network qed tikkollabora mal-Grand Harbour Regeneration Corporation, Transport Malta, Heritage Malta u l-Pulizija Maltija.



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