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## Sustaining Success – Another Record Year for Tourism in Malta

On Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2019, during the event titled ‘Sustaining Success’, the Malta Tourism Authority announced the inbound tourism statistics which were released by the National Statistics Office. These results showed that inbound tourists during the cumulative period January to December 2018 reached an impressive 2.6 million visitors (+14.3%), while total nights spent reached nearly 18.6 million nights (+12.5%).

December 2018 saw an increase in total inbound visitors (+11%), total nights (+10.1%) and tourism expenditure when compared to the same period in 2017. Total tourism expenditure for the period January-December 2018 was estimated at €2.1 billion (+8.0 per cent).

The MTA is truly happy with these results, as they are indicative of the success which has been attained in the tourism industry, especially in recent years. Thanks to the incessant hard-work of all the stakeholders, we are proud to say that Malta is one of the least seasonal of the Mediterranean’s island destinations, due to its success in developing a multitude of off-peak attractions to attract tourism volumes during the low season. Figures over the recent years confirm the huge progress the country has made in this regard. During the last two years, the growth rates recorded in the number of inbound tourists in the off-peak periods (between January and June) have significantly surpassed those recorded between July and September.

Throughout 2018, the largest share of guest nights (49.3%) was spent in collective accommodation. 2018 saw a growth in the vast majority of inbound source markets, with the largest increases being registered in the USA, Spanish, Australian, Austrian and French markets. The top five source markets for 2018 were the United Kingdom, Italy, Germany, France and Spain. Increased air connectivity to and from the Maltese islands and more events as part of our tourism product on offer are contributing heavily to this success.

During MTA’s event, those present were addressed by the Hon. Minister for Tourism, Dr Konrad Mizzi, the Executive Chairman of the MTA, Dr Gavin Gulia, The MTA’s Chief Marketing Officer, Mr Carlo Micallef, and the Chief Officer for Strategic Development, Mr Leslie Vella.

Dr Konrad Mizzi expressed satisfaction at the results achieved. He explained that during 2018, the Malta Tourism Authority worked hard in order to consolidate traditional markets and to reach out to new ones, such as the United States, Australia and Japan.

Regarding the Government's vision for 2019, Dr Mizzi said work will be conducted in order to expand connectivity towards new markets and in order to have more diversification. This includes further

collaboration on routes such as Amman, Cairo, Doha, Cork, Maastricht, Oslo Torp and Thessaloniki. New core markets will be introduced, such as Cardiff, Exeter, Verona, Genoa, Perugia, Lamesia and Bordeaux.

Dr Mizzi thanked all the stakeholders involved in the field, especially the Malta Tourism Authority, Air Malta, all airlines and the MHRA, amongst many others. Dr Gulia said that the MTA will continue to promote the Maltese Islands around the world as well as ensuring that there are internationally renowned events throughout the year, so as to continue attracting the younger generation, during the shoulder months of the year. Dr Gulia concluded by saying that the MTA is very happy with the 2018 results and augurs that 2019 will once again be a year of sustained success.