



Malta

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This essay focuses on the political, economic, and cultural history of Malta – a tiny (122 square miles and 503,000 people), strategically-located archipelago (90 miles south of Sicily) that has played an outsized and significant role in the Central Mediterranean region for two and one-half millennia. It is written for the participants in the Chief Executives Organization’s program, Malta, May 29-June 3, 2019.

I begin by summarizing the main turning points in Malta’s 2,500 years of recorded history and the key indicators of socio-economic development since Malta gained its independence from Great Britain in 1964. I then contrast the differing roles of its early outside rulers – Carthaginian, Roman, Byzantine, Arab/Berber, Norman, German, French, and Spanish dynasties – and examine how well the Order of St. John ran Malta (after 1530) and why it lost control (in 1798). I next discuss Malta’s evolving roles and significance as a British colony (1802-1964). At the end, I look at political and economic changes since Malta became independent in 1964. Prosperous Malta became the smallest member of the European Union in 2004. I append a time line, a bibliography, and a description of sites that I visited in Malta.

A Briefing on Malta

Malta's History and Politics. For 2,500 years, Malta was ruled successively as a part of Sicily by Carthaginian, Roman, Byzantine, Arab/Berber, Norman, German, French, and Spanish dynasties. Spain deeded the Maltese Islands to the Order of St. John, and the Knights ruled absolutely from 1530 to 1798. The Hospitaller Knights of Malta built an impregnable fortress and capital in Valletta.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Malta_Knights.jpg>

*The Hospitaller Knights of St. John Governed Malta (1530-1798) –
Reenactment of 16th-century Military Drills, Fort Saint Elmo, Valletta*

Napoleon Bonaparte conquered Malta in 1798. But the Maltese revolted, drove the French out, and invited British protection. Britain created a Crown Colony in Malta in 1814 and governed until the Maltese peacefully gained their independence in 1964. Malta withstood two historic sieges – by the Ottoman Turks in 1565, and by the Axis Powers (German and Italy) in 1941-1942.



*Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
><https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:BombDamageMalta.jpg><*

*The Siege of Malta, 1941-1942 –
Bombing Damage on Kingsway Street, Valletta, April 1942*

Britain gave limited self-government to Malta in 1947 and granted full independence in 1964. Two parties have alternated in governing

independent Malta, neither requiring coalitions. The center-right Nationalist Party governed 1962-1971, 1987-1996, and 1998-2013 and led Malta into the European Union (EU) in 2004. The leftist Labour Party governed 1971-1987, 1996-1998, and 2013-present and created an extensive social safety net. Joseph Muscat, the former leader of the Labour Party, was Prime Minister between March 2013 and January 2020, winning re-election in 2017. Robert Abela, the current leader of the Labour Party, has served as Prime Minister since January 2020.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons* available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pm_robert_abela_malta_21022020.jpg

Robert Abela, Prime Minister of Malta (2020-present) – Labour Party

Malta's Economy and Quality of Life. Malta's tiny land area, 122 square miles, is nearly twice that of the District of Columbia. Its population, 503,000 (2019), is 90 percent Maltese and predominantly Roman Catholic. Independent Malta experimented with socialism and then returned to market capitalism. Between 1964 and 2008, Malta's GNP grew at an annual rate of over 5 percent – the fastest sustained growth in Europe. But the annual growth of per capita income slowed after the global recession of 2008, averaging 2.9 percent (2008-2019).



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:General_map_of_Malta.svg>

Topography of Malta – Three Densely Inhabited Islands

Good performance in health and education maintained Malta's ranking in the UNDP's Human Development Index (28th of 189 countries in 2019) relative to that in the World Bank's listing of per capita incomes (26th of 186 countries in 2019). Malta benefits from good infrastructure, a well-educated workforce, and high Internet use (86 percent in 2019). But excessive regulation and widespread corruption were serious problems. Malta ranked only 88th of 190 countries in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index (2019) and only 50th of 198 countries in the Corruption Perceptions Index compiled by Transparency International (2019).



*Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:AIDAcara_Valetta.jpg>*

Valletta's Maritime Industrial Zone, Floriana, Malta

Malta's Heritage (6th Millennium BCE-1802)

Ancient Malta (6th Millennium BCE-5th century CE). Malta's first settlers arrived from Sicily about 5200 BCE. The Neolithic people made pottery but had no metals. They subsisted on crop agriculture (wheat, barley, and legumes (lentils) and domesticated animals (sheep, goats, pigs, and cattle). Between 3600 and 2500 BCE, Maltese residents created megalithic, limestone structures. The Temple Culture's largest building is a 20-foot high structure at Ggantija (on Gozo). The "temples" evidence a complex social hierarchy and significant wealth.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Temple_de_Ggantija.jpg>

Ggantija Megalithic Temple Complex, Gozo. Malta

Malta's 10,000 people then practiced intensive agriculture (cereals and legumes) and stock-breeding and developed decorated pottery. They produced the Mediterranean triad of crops – wheat (for bread), grapes (for wine), and olives (for oil).

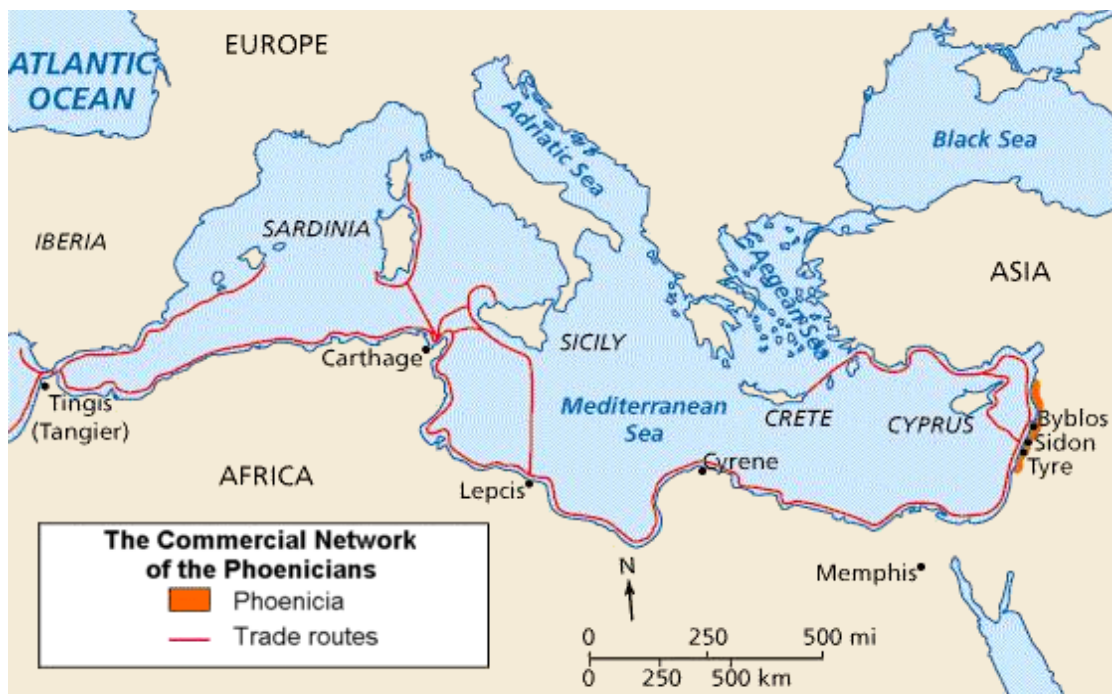


Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Triticum_durum.jpg>

Durum Wheat (Triticum durum) Fields – Malta Produced the Mediterranean Triad of Crops (Wheat, Grapes, and Olives)

Carthage was established in 814 BCE by Phoenicians from Tyre, who created the leading entrepôt for trade in the western Mediterranean region. The Carthaginians set up small city-states to control ports in North Africa, Iberia, Malta, Sardinia, and western Sicily and monopolize

the Mediterranean (Levant to Iberia) trade route. In Malta, they built a port in Grand Harbour and a capital in Mdina. The Carthaginians were defeated in a series of epic battles with the Romans (the three Punic Wars, 264-146 BCE) and disappeared from history.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:PhoenicianTrade.png>

Phoenician/Carthaginian Trade Network, 11th-2nd centuries BCE – Trading Colonies in North Africa, Malta, Sicily, Sardinia, and Iberia

Rome took control of Malta in 218 BCE (along with Sicily, Sardinia, and Iberia) and expanded to govern the entire Mediterranean region by the 1st century CE. Rome granted local government to two Municipiums – Melita (Malta Island) and Gaulos (Gozo Island). The

largest city was Città Notabile, which occupied an area three times the size of modern Mdina, its site.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sudika_Rabat_Domus_Romana.jpg>

*The Peristyle Mosaic of the Domus Romana –
Città Notabile, Capital of Roman Malta, Located in Today's Mdina*

Rome created 30 villages, based on Roman-owned agricultural estates. Malta produced grain, grapes, and olives and exported olive oil and honey to Rome. Despite high taxation, Malta prospered because the Romans guaranteed peace (*pax Romana*), governed efficiently, and improved infrastructure (roads and ports).

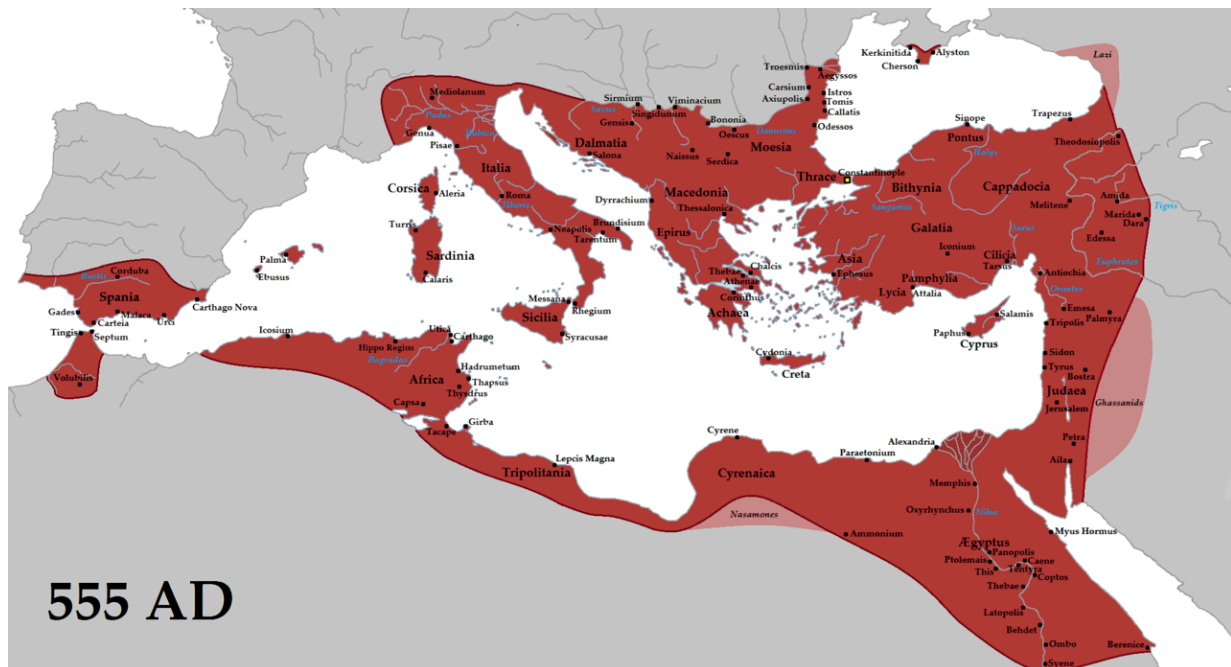


Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:RomanEmpire_117.svg

*Malta (Pink Islands South of Sicily) in the Roman Empire –
 At Its Peak Under Emperor Trajan, 117 CE*

Medieval Malta (6th century CE-1530). The Roman Empire divided in half in the late 4th century, and the western part, centered in Rome, fell in 476. Germanic invaders from northern Europe – Vandals, Visigoths, Franks, and Ostrogoths – dismembered the western Roman Empire. The eastern half, centered in Constantinople, became the Byzantine Empire and survived until 1453. In the 480s, the Ostrogoths

took control of Malta. Facing little resistance from a small Ostrogothic army, the Byzantine general Belisarius took Malta in 535. Orthodox Christianity replaced Catholicism.

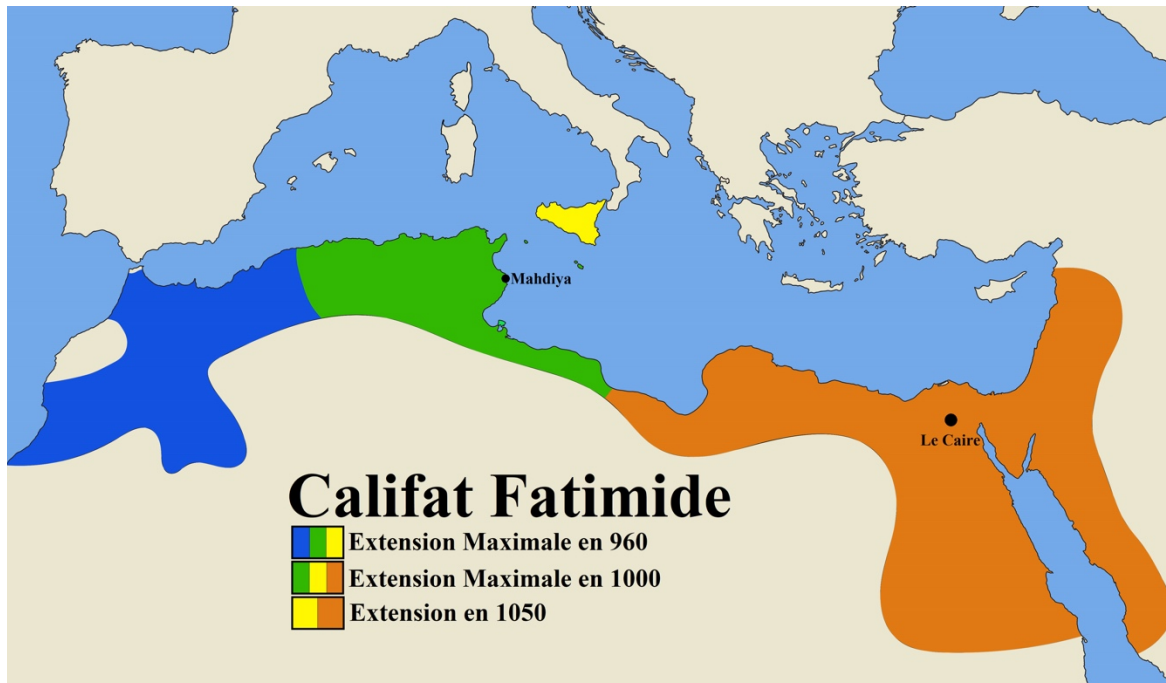


Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Justinian555AD.png>>

*Malta (Islands South of Sicily) in the Byzantine Empire –
At Its Greatest Extent, After Emperor Justinian’s Reconquest, 555*

The Arab Muslim diaspora began in 633, after the death of Muhammad, and within a century Islam spread to Iberia in the west and Persia in the east. The Aghlabids, a Sunni Muslim Arab dynasty with its capital in Tunis, conquered Malta in 870. The Fatimids, a Shi’ite Muslim Berber dynasty with its capital in Cairo, replaced the Aghlabids

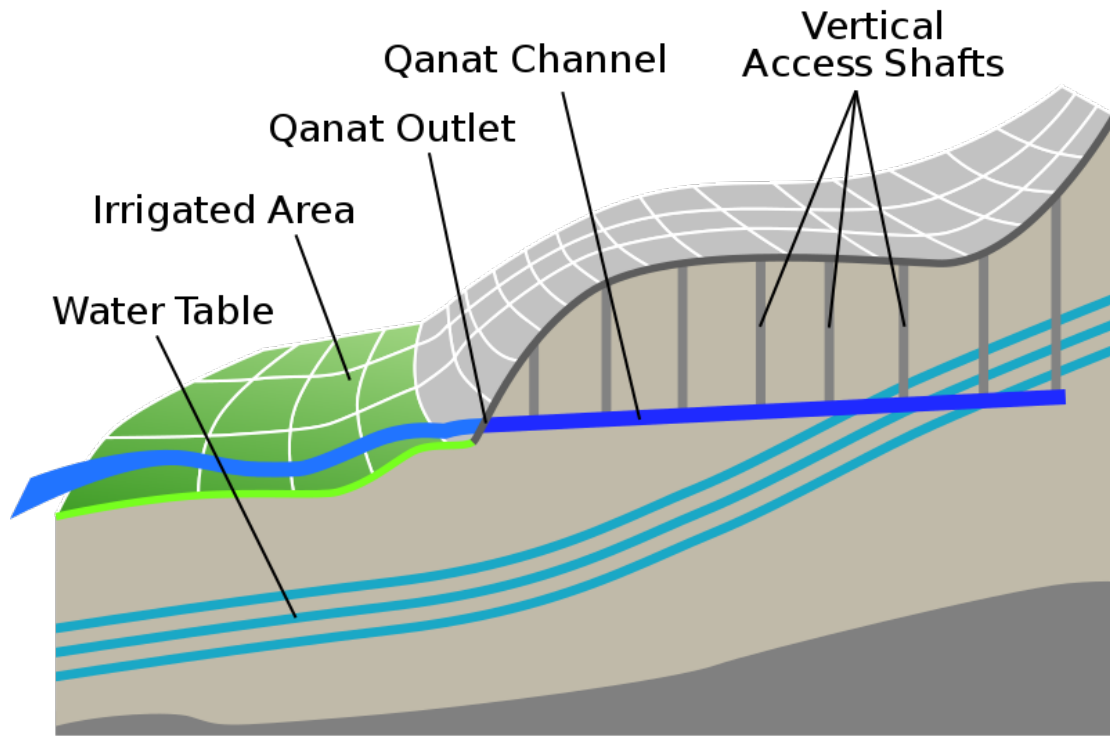
in 910 and ruled Malta (along with North Africa, Sicily, Sardinia, and southern Italy) until 1091.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Carte_Califat_fatimide.jpg>

*Arab/Berber Muslim Malta (South of Sicily, the Yellow Area) –
Under the Fatimid Caliphate (909-1072)*

The Muslim rulers of Malta increased agricultural productivity. They constructed irrigation canals, Persian *qanats* (underground canals from aquifers to fields), and *noria* (water wheels). They introduced new crops – sugar cane, cotton, lemons, bitter oranges, and melons. Malta also benefited from the Islamic trading network that linked Muslim-ruled ports from Spain to India.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons*, available at <<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Qanat-3.svg>>

Persian Qanat System of Irrigation – Moved Water From Mountain Bases to Alluvial Plains in Underground Channels

Roger de Hauteville, a Norman warrior-ruler, conquered Malta from the Fatimids in 1091 (adding Malta to the Norman Kingdom in southern Italy and Sicily). Roger's conquest was not a crusade. He ruled indirectly, taxed heavily, retained the Muslim administrative system, practiced religious tolerance, and introduced feudalism. His son, Roger II, assumed leadership in 1112 and became Malta's largest landlord and Europe's richest ruler.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Weltliche_Schatzkammer_Wienc.jpg>

Coronation Mantle of Count Roger II (ruled as King, 1130-1151)

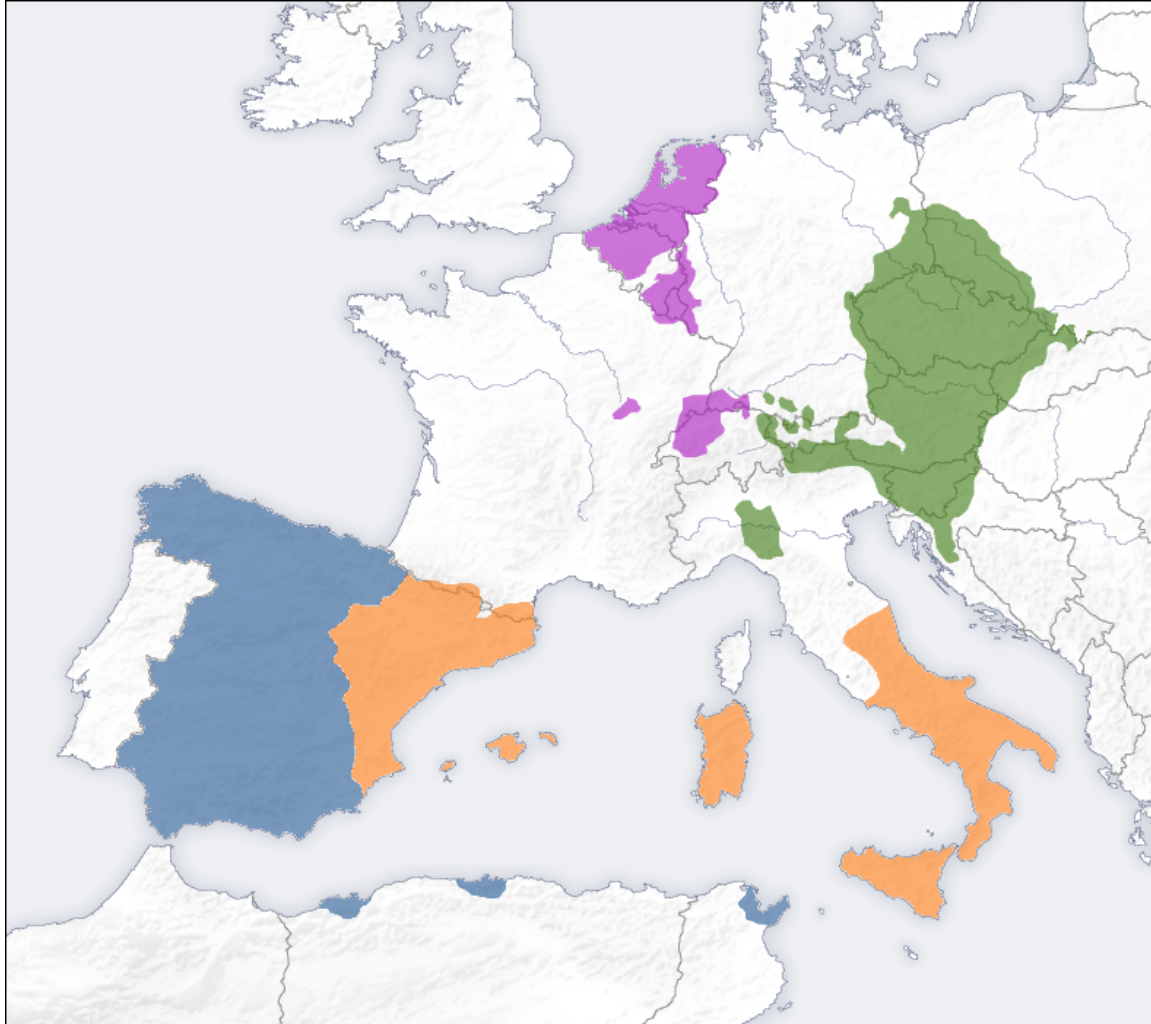
When Roger II's daughter, Constance, married the King of Germany in 1194, Malta began nine decades of Hohenstaufen German and (after 1262) Anjou French rule.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Brindisi,_augustale_di_federico_II,_1220-1250.JPG>

*Frederick II, Hohenstaufen King of Malta (1198-1250) –
Augustalis Gold Coin, Minted in Sicily between 1231 and 1250*

Aragon took over Malta in 1283, and Castile (Spain, after the union of Castile and Aragon in 1479) ruled the Maltese islands from 1412 to 1530. Absentee European rulers gave feudal concessions to local barons who taxed heavily. The barons shared power with Catholic clergy and royal officials. The large estates produced wheat, barley, and livestock for local use and cotton and cumin for export.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Charles_I_and_V_empire.png>

Malta in the Habsburg Empire Under Charles V, 1530 – Castile (Blue), Aragon (Orange), Burgundy (Purple), and Austria (Green)

Malta under the Order of St. John (1530-1798) – Rise and

Rule. The Order of St. John was founded in Jerusalem in 1071 to provide hospital services to Christian pilgrims to the Holy Land. It was recognized as a religious order by the Pope in 1113. The members of

the Order were European knights. During the Crusades (1099-1291), the Order added military functions to its hospitaller role. The Order's strong financial support came from gifts of feudal estates in Europe and fortress settlements in the Holy Land.

When Egyptian Muslims evicted the Crusaders from the Holy Land in 1291, the Order moved to Cyprus and in 1310 it received sovereignty over the island of Rhodes. The Order fortified Rhodes, added a naval function, and became adept in trade and piracy.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons*, available at
<[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Palace_of_the_Grand_Master_of_the_Knights_of_Rhodes_\(9454421010\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Palace_of_the_Grand_Master_of_the_Knights_of_Rhodes_(9454421010).jpg)>

*Palace of the Grand Master of the Order of St. John, Rhodes –
Sovereign Ruler of Rhodes, 1310-1523*

Ottoman Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent drove the Order out of Rhodes in 1523, permitting the knights to depart honorably with their movable wealth, religious relics, and archives.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:EmperorSuleiman.jpg>>

*Suleiman I (The Magnificent or The Legislator, Ruled 1521-1566) –
The Ottoman Empire’s Greatest Sultan*

The Order needed a new role and base. In 1524, Pope Clement VII convinced Habsburg King Charles V to grant Malta and Tripoli to the Order (in return for the annual payment of one falcon) – to protect the Western Mediterranean from incursions by the Ottoman Turks. The

Order was hesitant, because Malta had only 17,000 residents, few resources, and weak fortifications and thus would be costly to develop and defend. But Malta had attractive harbors, and the Order (with no feasible alternatives) took over Malta and Tripoli in 1530. (Tripoli was lost to the Ottomans in 1551.)



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Territories_of_the_Knights_Hospitaller_1530-1798.png>

Territories Granted by Habsburg King Charles V to the Order of St. John (Knights Hospitaller), 1530-1798

Sultan Suleiman ordered an Ottoman siege of Malta in May-August, 1565 with 40,000 troops in 179 ships (larger than the Spanish Armada in 1588). Malta was defended by 600 knights and 5,500 Maltese militiamen. Grand Master Jean de La Vallette led an incredibly courageous defense. Facing likely September storms and depleted supplies, the Turks were forced to give up. The losses were enormous – 30,000 Turks, 7,000 Maltese troops and civilians, and 265 knights.



*Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Siege_of_Malta-Turkish_Bombardment_of_Birgu,_6_July_1565_RMG_BHC0256.tiff>*

*The Siege of Malta, 1565 –
The Turkish Bombardment of Birgu, Matteo Pérez de Alesio, 1575*

But the Order survived and turned Malta into the most fortified island in medieval Europe. De La Vallette supervised the construction of a new fortress capital on Mt. Sciberras to protect Malta's main port, Grand Harbour. The Pope arranged for Francisco Laparelli, a protégé of Michelangelo, to design the new city, named Valletta. By 1592, Valletta had 4,000 residents.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:View_at_the_Valletta_fortifications.jpg>

Fortifications of Valletta – Built after the 1565 Siege

Malta under the Order of St. John (1530-1798) – Wealth and Fall. The knights in the Order of St. John elected a Grand Master who

governed with absolute power until his death. The knights, who were European nobles, took vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience to the Order but lived at a high standard. The Order was divided into eight *langues* (fraternal divisions), based on the European nationalities of the members – Aragon, Auvergne, Castile, England, France, Germany, Italy, and Provence. About half of the knights were French.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons*, available at
<<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:JPDV.jpg>>

Jean de la Vallette – Grand Master of the Order of St. John, 1557-1568

The knights topped the social hierarchy in Malta. Next came the Maltese nobility and clergy, who were not allowed to join the Order. At the bottom was the Maltese working class.

The Order owned feudal estates (*commanderies*) throughout Europe, which remitted income to the Grand Master. The Order and the Church owned most of Malta's agricultural land. They specialized in the production of cotton products, cumin, and citrus for export and imported grain. The export of raw cotton was banned to encourage local processing into textiles and sailcloth. The Order operated slave galleys.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cuminum_cyminum_-_K%C3%B6hler%E2%80%93s_Medizinal-Pflanzen-198.jpg>

Cumin (Cuminum cyminum) – Specialty Export in Malta Under the Rule of Spain and of the Order of St. John

The knights established Malta as an entrepôt (redistributive center) for Mediterranean trade and engaged in legitimate commerce. The

sovereign Order also encouraged privateering (legal piracy) by issuing letters of marque to permit ships to fly the Maltese flag and raid or capture ships operated by enemy Muslim countries (the Ottoman states in North Africa did the same). The Grand Master received 10 percent of the booty. Following the French Revolution and confiscation of properties in the 1790s, the Order lost half of its European income.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons*, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:A_Castro,_Lorenzo_-_A_Galley_of_Malta_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg>

*Corsairing by the Order of St. John –
A Galley of Malta, Painting by Lorenzo a Castro, c. 1680*

To expand French influence in the Mediterranean and the Middle East, Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Malta in June 1798 (en route to

Egypt) with a force of 400 ships and 54,000 troops. To defend Malta, the Order had 332 knights and 17,300 militiamen. Grand Master Ferdinand von Hompesch foolishly surrendered without a fight. Napoleon could not make a long siege of Valletta because British Admiral Nelson's fleet was in pursuit. A garrison of 3,600 French troops expelled the Order, imposed heavy taxation, and confiscated Church valuables. In September 1798, the 104,000 Maltese revolted, drove the French out, and invited British support.



*Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Nap_malta.jpg>*

*Napoleon Bonaparte Conquered Malta, June 1798 –
Grand Master Hompesch Surrendered*

Colonial and Independent Malta (1802-present)

British colonial rule of Malta (1802-1940). Imperial Great Britain had strong motivations for taking control of Malta. Malta had a strategic, central location on Britain's "Mediterranean corridor" – sited 980 miles east of Gibraltar and 1,010 miles west of Alexandria. Britain needed naval bases to protect its trade route to India (its richest colony), especially from France. Malta had good natural harbors, the Order of St. John had built strong fortifications and ample warehouses, and the Maltese people were skilled in maritime work. It was an ideal site for a base for the British Royal Navy and for sea-based trade.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons*, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:St_Lazarus_Curtain.jpg>

*Valletta, Malta –
Imperial Britain Gained Impregnable Fortifications and Skilled Workers*

In the Treaty of Amiens (1802), Britain and France agreed to return Malta to the Order. But both countries violated that treaty, and Britain retained control of Malta. The Order never regained control, instead moving eventually to Rome. Britain's de facto colonization of Malta was internationally recognized in the Treaty of Paris (1814) and the Congress of Vienna (1815), which concluded the Napoleonic Wars. Throughout the 19th century, Malta was a critical site for British trade and defense in the Mediterranean region.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Europe_1815_map_en.png

*Europe in 1815 –
Malta's Location Was Ideal for Britain's Military and Trade Networks*

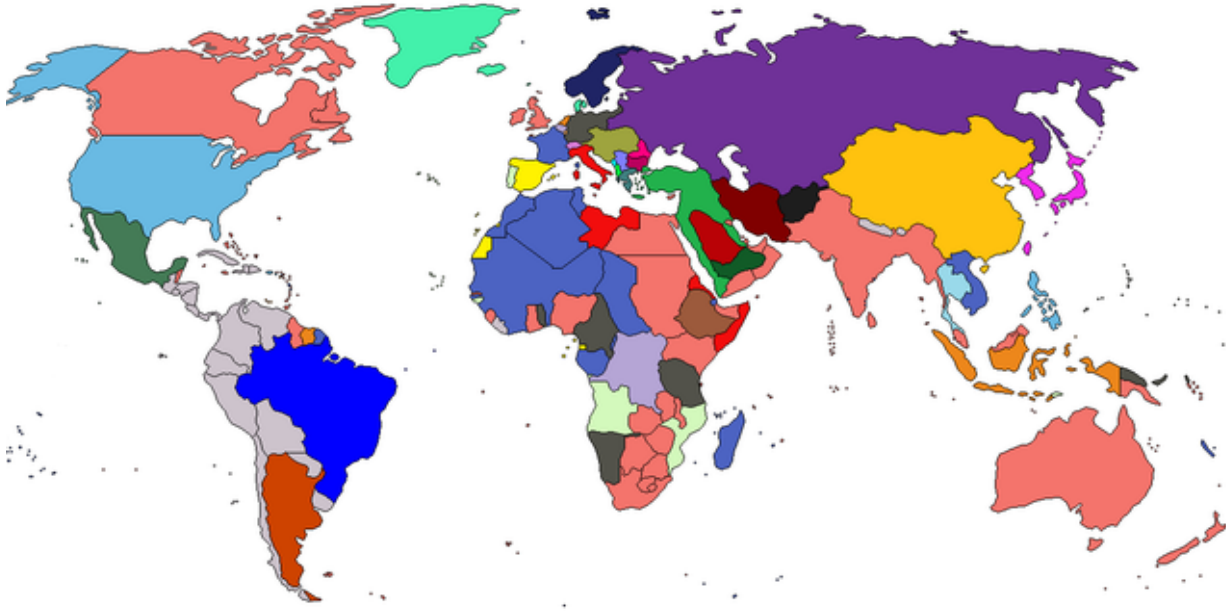
Malta's importance increased greatly after the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 shifted the maritime trade route to India to the Mediterranean. With its extensive ports and dockyards, Malta served as the main Mediterranean re-distribution center for British manufactured goods. Malta also was Britain's most important naval base in the Mediterranean, and after 1880 it served as a key coaling station for Royal Navy steamships.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Dock_No.1,_Bormla,_Malta.jpg>

*Dockyard No. 1, Valetta, Malta, Pictured in 1920, Still in Operation –
Key Base for Britain's Royal Navy (1800-1979)*

The distorted Maltese economy grew increasingly dependent on British defense spending. Malta prospered when Britain was at war.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:World_empires_and_colonies_around_World_War_I.png>

*World Empires, 1914 – British (Light Red),
French (Dark Blue), Russian (Purple), Ottoman (Green)*

During World War I (1914-1918), Malta served as the “Nurse of the Mediterranean” for 25,000 (at a time) sick or wounded Allied troops, including many from Gallipoli. With a new constitution in 1921, elected Maltese gained limited political autonomy – over domestic affairs only.

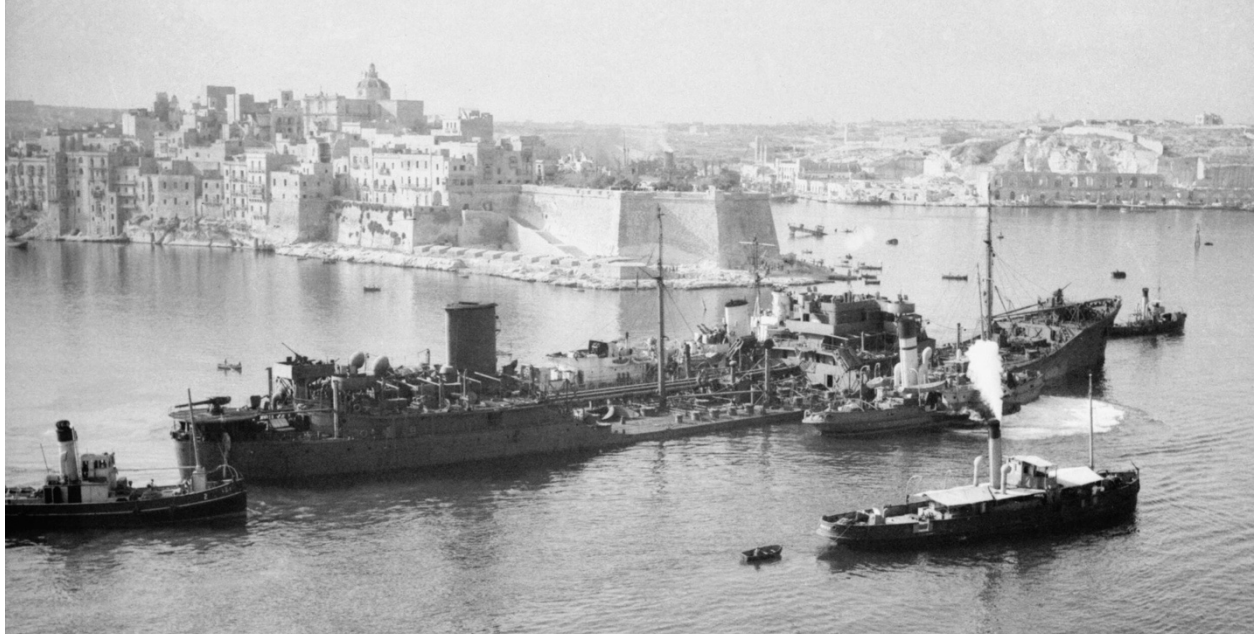


Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sacra_Infermeria_in_2016.jpg>

*Sacra Infermeria, Valletta –
Hospitaller and British Hospital, 1574-1918*

British colonial rule of Malta (1940-1964). Malta played a key role for Britain and its Allies during the first half of World War II. Hitler's Nazi Germany and Mussolini's Fascist Italy (the Axis) attempted to blockade British Malta and starve the Maltese and the Allied garrison of 30,000 troops. Between January 1941 and May 1942, the Axis powers dropped 16,000 tons of bombs on Malta, 132 tons per square mile – causing 2,150 deaths and destroying 20 percent of Malta's buildings. In August 1942, the Allies' Santa Maria convoy broke the

Axis blockade, supplied food and fuel, and saved Malta from starvation and invasion.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Operation_Pedestal_and_the_Siege_of_Malta,_August_1942_GM1480.jpg>

The Santa Maria Convoy Saved Malta – August 1942

In September 1942, Britain awarded the people of Malta the prestigious George Cross medal to honor their bravery. Winston Churchill called Malta the Allies’ “unsinkable aircraft carrier” and staunchly defended it.



*Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Flag_of_Malta.svg>*

The Flag of Malta – The George Cross Is in the Upper-Left Corner

Malta was an essential base for Allied control of supply lines to Egypt to defend the Suez Canal. When Malta was a strong naval base, supplying and protecting Allied convoys, the Allies controlled the supply routes to North Africa and prevented Nazi General Rommel from obtaining fuel and materiel. If Malta were lost, the Axis could have retained a strong hand in North Africa. The control of Malta aided the Allies' victory over Rommel at El Alamein (November 1942) and opened the way for the Allies' victory in North Africa (May 1943).

Malta was safe from Axis threats by May 1943 and served as a base for the Allies' invasion of Sicily (July 1943).



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:ItalianMareNostrum.jpg>>

Key British Naval Bases in the Mediterranean, 1942 – Gibraltar, Malta, and Alexandria (Red Area Controlled by Allies, Green Area by Axis)

In 1946, Britain granted Malta a new constitution, providing for universal adult suffrage (including women, from 1947), a forty-member Legislative Assembly, budgetary control of domestic affairs, but British control of defense, foreign affairs, and the currency. A Maltese proposal in 1955 that Malta integrate with the UK was accepted by the British, but the Maltese instead opted for full independence in 1964.



*Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Malta - Floriana - Triq Sarria - Independence Monument 02 ies.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Malta_-_Floriana_-_Triaq_Sarria_-_Independence_Monument_02_ies.jpg)>*

*Monument to Malta's Independence, Floriana –
Declared on September 21, 1964*

Malta faced difficult post-war economic transitions. Its economy was heavily dependent on British defense spending and the Royal Navy dockyard, which created 40,000 of the island's 90,000 jobs in the 1950s. The Maltese government subsidized out-migration (70,000 emigrants departed between 1946 and 1958, over half to Australia), accepted a British grant of L29 million to convert the dockyards to commercial uses, and began to promote tourism and light industry.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Valletta-Harbour.jpg>>

*Valletta Harbor Dockyards –
Source of 40,000 of Malta’s 90,000 Jobs in the 1950s*

Independent Malta (1964-2004). Britain was willing to decolonize and sought a peaceful transition with Maltese nationalist leaders. Since Malta gained independence in 1964, its political system has been dominated by two parties that have formed alternate governments without needing coalitions. The Nationalist Party government (1962-1971), led by George Borg Olivier, negotiated independence from Britain and experienced annual growth of Gross National Product (GNP) of 5.7 percent. The Nationalist Party desired full independence from Britain, wanted close ties with Italy and the rest

of Western Europe, and favored an economic system based on free-market capitalism. Its politico-economic orientation mimicked that of Christian Democratic parties in Western Europe.



*Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Georgeborgolivier.jpg>>*

*George Borg Olivier, Prime Minister of Malta (1962-1971),
Nationalist Party – Official Portrait by Esprit Barthet*

The Labour Party government (1971-1987), led by Dom Mintoff, renegotiated Britain's lease for its naval base in 1971, joined the international Nonaligned Movement, turned Malta into a Republic in

1974, ended Britain's lease in 1979, and experienced annual growth of GNP of 6.2 percent.



*Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Proclamation-de-la-R%C3%A9publiq.jpg>>*

*President Anthony Mamo (Left) and Prime Minister Dom Mintoff –
At the Proclamation of the Republic of Malta, December 13, 1974*

The Labour Party engaged in a socialist experiment of government ownership of assets by nationalizing industry, banking, transport and energy and introduced a comprehensive social safety net, including minimum pensions, unemployment benefits, childcare subsidies, and

free healthcare and education services (through tertiary education). Its politico-economic orientation mirrored that of the British Labour Party.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Monument_to_Dom_Mintoff,_Valletta_001.jpg>

*Monument to Dom Mintoff, Malta's Prime Minister (1971-1984) –
Castille Square, Valletta*

The Nationalist Party won the election of 1987 and ruled for all but two of the next 26 years (1987-1996, 1998-2013). The Nationalists were socially conservative and closely identified with the Catholic Church.

They ended central planning, gradually liberalized trade and investment

policies, and privatized state-owned sectors of the economy (while often maintaining government shares). However, they retained the widely popular social safety net that the Labour Party had introduced earlier.



*Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Malta_-_Mdina_-_Piazza_San_Pawl_%2B_St._Paul%27s_Cathedral_ex_01_ies.jpg>*

The Nationalist Party Had Close Ties with the Catholic Church – St. Paul's Cathedral, Mdina

Between 1964 and 2004, Malta's GNP grew at an annual rate of over 5 percent – the fastest sustained growth in Europe. Investments in human capital (vocational and technical education, social safety net) and in infrastructure (ports, roads, and hotels) facilitated that strong

performance. Maltese entrepreneurs expanded tourist facilities and sought niche export markets.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Triaq_Durumblat,_%C4%A6%27Attard,_Malta_-_panoramio_\(97\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Triaq_Durumblat,_%C4%A6%27Attard,_Malta_-_panoramio_(97).jpg)>

*A Key to Malta's Success Was Improved Infrastructure –
New Highway at Triaq Durumblat, H'Attard, Malta*

Malta in the European Union (2004-present). The Nationalist Party led Malta into the European Union (EU). Malta needed to accept fully the EU *acquis communautaire* (common rights and obligations of all member countries). Negotiations began in 2000 and were completed in 2002. Accession was controversial. In a referendum in 2003 (with a

turnout of 91 percent), only 54 percent voted in favor. The Nationalists then won a general election, confirming the decision. Malta joined the EU in 2004, as its smallest member. Malta moved quickly to meet EU requirements for membership in the Eurozone and adopted the Euro as its currency in 2008, giving up control of its foreign exchange rate and monetary policy.



*Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Edward_Fenech_Adami.jpg>*

*Eddie Fenech Adami, Prime Minister (1987-1996, 1998-2004),
President (2004-2009), Nationalist Party –
Led Malta's Accession to the European Union*

In 2008, the Labour Party chose Joseph Muscat, then age 34, as its leader. Muscat moved the party toward the political center, and Labour adopted a progressive, center-left orientation akin to Social Democratic parties in Europe. Labour now favored a market economy while maintaining a strong social safety net. Muscat was elected prime minister in 2013 and re-elected in 2017, both times winning 55 percent of the vote.

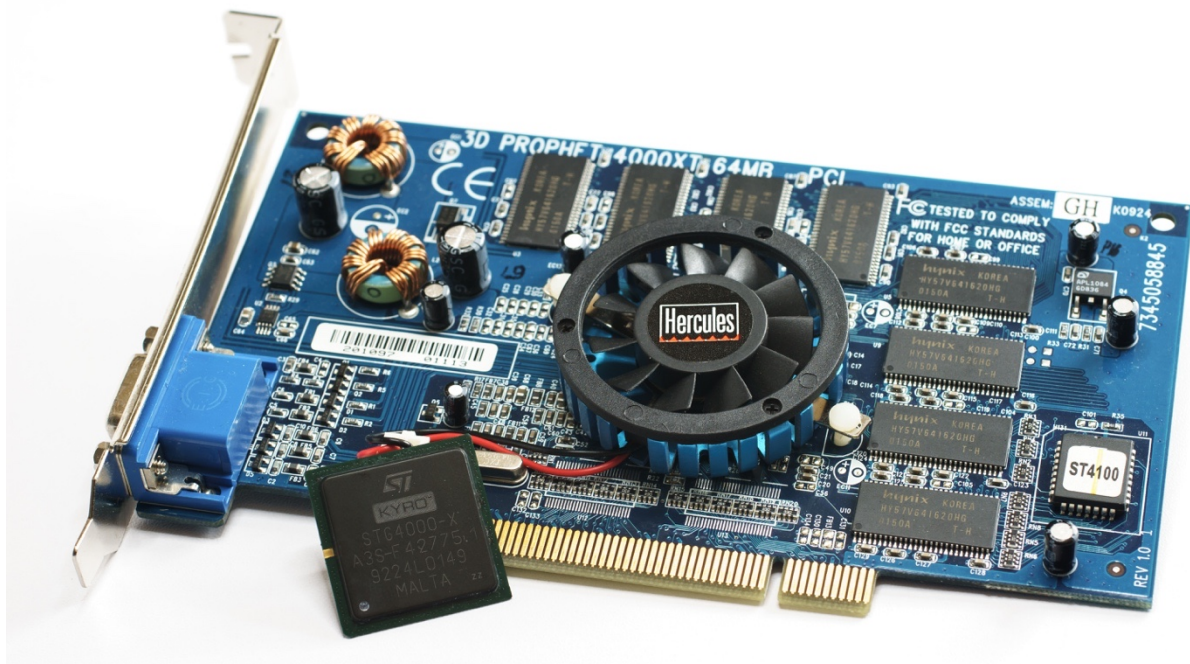


Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Joseph_Muscat_2016.jpg>

*Joseph Muscat, Prime Minister of Malta (2013-2020), Labour Party –
Pictured in 2016*

Following allegations of Muscat's personal corruption, in January 2020 he was replaced as Prime Minister and as leader of the Labour Party by Robert Abela.

Since joining the EU in 2004, Malta has accelerated its economic transformation away from port-based industry. Four-fifths of jobs and incomes are now created in service activities, less than one-fifth in industry, and only 2 percent in agriculture.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/68/STMicroelectronics%20250nm%20PowerVR_Series3%20STG-4000%20ST_Kyro%20STG4000-X_A3S_F_42775.1_9224L0149_MALTA_DSC04968.jpg

*Semiconductors, Malta's Leading Industrial Export --
STMicroelectronics Motherboard, Manufactured in Kirkop, Malta*

Tourist services account for one-fourth of income and 30 percent of jobs. In 2018, 2.6 million foreigners visited Malta and spent \$1.8 billion, some visiting for medical services. Financial services (banking, insurance, asset management) contribute one-fifth of income and employment. Niche activities include electronic gaming, film production, and property development. Malta continues to engage in freight transshipment, electronic assembly, and textile production.



*Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Uni-20malta.jpg>>*

*Malta's Specialist Economy Relies on Investments in Human Capital –
The University of Malta, Msida, Founded 1769, 11,000 Students*

In 2019, the rate of adult literacy in Malta was 95 percent, and the life expectancy of its 503,000 people was 82 years. The level of income per capita in 2019 was \$46,279, which was 99 percent of the EU average and 71 percent of the US level. Maltese income per capita (measured by the World Bank at Purchasing Power Parity in constant 2017 dollars) grew at an annual rate of 3 percent between 2004 and 2019. Malta ranked an impressive 28th of 189 countries in the UNDP's Human Development Index (2020), just ahead of Italy. However, Malta ranked only 50th of 198 countries in Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (2019) and just 88th of 190 countries in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index (2019), among the worst rankings in the EU.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
 <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_Malta_2.png>

Malta – Smallest State in the European Union

Time Line for Malta

8 th -4 th millennia BCE	earliest inhabitants of Sicily – nomadic hunter-gatherers
c. 5200 BCE	Malta's first settlers arrived from Sicily
3600-2500 BCE	Temple Culture in Malta – megalithic, limestone structures – complex social hierarchy and significant wealth
9 th century BCE	Phoenicians from Tyre, Semitic-speaking entrepreneurs and traders, settled Carthage
8 th -3 rd centuries BCE	Phoenicians from Carthage settled Malta – built port in Grand Harbour and capital in Mdina
509-27 BCE	Roman Republic – Roman Senate elected rulers
262-241 BCE	1 st Punic War – Rome defeated Carthage, claimed Sicily and Sardinia
218-201 BCE	2 nd Punic War – Rome again defeated Carthage, claimed Malta and Iberia
218 BCE-480 CE	Rome ruled Malta – granted local government to Melita (Malta Island) and Gaulos (Gozo Island)
27 BCE-476 CE	Roman Principate – military prowess decided succession of emperors
27 BCE-14 CE	Emperor Augustus ruled Roman Empire – expanded empire to natural frontiers (Rhine, Danube, Euphrates, Sahara, Atlantic)

307-337	Constantine ruled Rome – new capital in Constantinople – converted to Christianity
330-1453	Byzantine (Eastern Roman) Empire ruled in eastern Mediterranean
418-439	Germanic Vandals conquered Gaul, Spain, and Roman Africa
468	Vandals from North Africa conquered Malta
476	fall of western Roman Empire – Germanic Ostrogoths took over Italy and Rome
488-535	Ostrogoths ruled Malta – King Theodoric the Great (488-526)
533-552	General Belisarius conquered North Africa from the Vandals and Malta, Sicily, Italy from the Ostrogoths – for Byzantine Empire
535-870	Byzantine (Eastern Roman) Empire ruled Malta from Constantinople
7 th century	Muslim-Arab diaspora across North Africa – after death of Prophet Muhammad in 632
711-1492	Islamic Spain (Al-Andalus) – parts of Iberia under control of Muslim rulers
827	Arabs from Ifriqiya (Tunisia) invaded Sicily
870-910	Muslim Aghlabid Dynasty ruled Malta from Tunis – booty economy

910-1091	Muslim Fatimid Dynasty ruled Malta – peak of stability, wealth, power in Muslim era – qanat irrigation, new crops, trade networks
1071	The Order of St. John founded in Jerusalem – European knights – gave hospital services to Christian pilgrims to the Holy Land
1072-1194	Norman rule of Sicily and southern Italy – and of Malta (1091-1194)
1091-1101	Norman Count Roger I ruled Malta – kept Muslim system of administration – introduced feudalism
1099-1291	Crusades – Order of St. John added military functions to its hospitaller role
1112-1154	Norman Count Roger II (later King Roger I) ruled Malta – largest feudal landlord – Europe’s richest ruler
1194	Constance (1194-1198), Roger II’s daughter, was Queen – Sicily and Malta were ruled by her husband, Henry VI, King of Germany
1194-1262	German rule of Sicily and Malta
1198-1250	Frederick II was King of Sicily and Malta – Stupor Mundi – high intelligence
1266-1282	Charles of Anjou ruled Sicily and Malta (and Naples, Albania, Greek Achaia, and Provence)
1282	Sicilian Vespers Rebellion – overthrew Angevin rule

1282-1302	20-year war between Angevins and Aragonese for control of Sicily and Malta
1291-1310	Order of St. John headquartered in Cyprus
1300-1923	Ottoman Empire in Anatolia, Balkans, Middle East, and North Africa
1302-1700	Aragon-Catalonia rule of Sicily – and of Malta (1302-1530)
1310-1523	Order of St. John headquartered in Rhodes
1324-1700	Aragon-Catalonia takeover of Sardinia
1372	Treaty of Avignon – papacy recognized Aragonese rule of Sicily and Malta
1443	Aragon-Catalonia takeover of southern Italy
1469	dynastic marriage of Isabella (of Castile-Léon) and Ferdinand (of Aragon-Catalonia)
1479	formation of united kingdom of Spain – merger of Castile and Aragon
1492	Spain (Castile-Aragon) conquered Granada, last Muslim kingdom in Iberia
1492	Christopher Columbus discovered New World – for Spain

- 1516-1556 Habsburg King Charles V ruled Spain, Spanish America, Austria, and Habsburg territories in Europe
- 1523 Ottoman Sultan Suleiman I drove Order of St. John out of Rhodes – knights kept their movable wealth, religious relics, archives
- 1524 Pope Clement VII convinced Habsburg King Charles V to grant Malta and Tripoli to the Order of St. John – to protect Western Med from incursions by the Ottoman Turks
- 1530-1798 The Knights Hospitaller of the Order of St. John ruled Malta
- 1551 Ottoman Empire re-conquered Tripoli from the Order of St. John
- 1556-1598 Philip II ruled Spain, Spanish America, and the Netherlands
- 1557-1568 Jean de la Vallette – Grand Master of the Order of St. John and ruler of Malta
- 1565 Malta withstood siege by the Ottoman Turks – 600 knights, 5,500 Maltese militiamen fended off attack by 40,000 Ottoman troops
- 1588 England defeated Great Spanish Armada – Spain lost half of its ships, three-fourths of its sailors
- 1789-1799 French Revolution – evolved from upper-class demand for reforms into full rebellion

1798	Napoleon Bonaparte conquered Malta – defeated Grand Master Ferdinand von Hompesch
1798	Maltese Rebellion – 104,000 Maltese revolted, drove French invaders out, invited British support
1802-1964	Great Britain ruled Malta (Crown Colony, 1814-1947) – naval base, trade – strategic location, natural harbors, fortifications, skilled workers
1802	Treaty of Amiens – Britain and France agreed to return Malta to Order of St. John – both reneged
1806-1815	Napoleonic Wars – 17,000 British troops occupied Sicily and Malta – brief economic spurt
1815	Congress of Vienna – European countries recognized British colonization of Malta
1860	Giuseppe Garibaldi and his Thousand revolutionary warriors conquered Bourbon Sicily
1861-present	Sicily governed by rulers of unified Italy
1861	Garibaldi’s Sicily joined new Kingdom of Italy, led by King Victor Emmanuel II and Premier Camillo di Cavour
1869	Suez Canal opened – shifted maritime trade route to India to the Mediterranean – enhanced Malta’s importance to Britain as a trade and naval base
1914-1918	World War One – Britain, France, Russia, Italy, and US against Germany, Austria-Hungary, and

- Ottoman Empire – Malta was Britain’s “Nurse of the Mediterranean”
- 1921 Britain granted Malta a new constitution – limited political autonomy – over domestic affairs only
- 1922-1943 Benito Mussolini’s Fascist Party ruled Italy
- 1941-1942 Malta withstood siege by the Axis Powers (German and Italy) – 16,000 tons of bombs dropped on Malta – Santa Maria convoy broke Axis blockade
- 1942 Britain awarded the people of Malta the prestigious George Cross medal to honor their bravery – Malta an “unsinkable aircraft carrier”
- 1942 Battle of El Alamein, November – Allies defeated Nazis (Rommel) – Malta supply base was critical
- 1943 Battle of Sicily, July-August – Allied victory (Americans, British, Canadians) over Germany
- 1943 Italy switched sides – left Axis, joined Allies
- 1946 Britain granted Malta a new constitution – universal adult suffrage, Legislative Assembly, control of domestic affairs – British controlled defense, foreign affairs, the currency
- 1947-1964 Malta had limited self-government under British hegemony
- 1957 Italy (with France, Germany, Belgium, Netherlands, and Luxembourg) founded the

European Economic Community (later EU)

- 1962-1971 Malta governed by center-right Nationalist Party – George Borg Olivier, Prime Minister
- 1964 Malta gained full independence from Britain – politics were dominated by two parties (Nationalist, center-right, and Labour, left)
- 1964-2004 Malta’s GNP grew at an annual rate of over 5 percent – the fastest sustained growth in Europe
- 1971-1987 Malta governed by Labour Party, Dom Mintoff, Prime Minister (1971-1984) – ended Britain’s naval-base lease, created a solid social safety net, nationalized industry
- 1987-1996 Malta governed by Nationalist Party – ties to Italy/Europe, free-market capitalism – ended central planning, privatized industry
- 1996-1998 Malta governed by Labour Party
- 1998-2013 Malta governed by Nationalist Party –Eddie Fenech Adami, Prime Minister (1987-1996, 1998-2004)
- 2003 referendum on accession to European Union (EU) – 54 percent voted in favor
- 2004 Malta acceded to the European Union (EU) – adopted the Euro in 2008
- 2004-2019 Maltese income per capita grew at an annual rate of 3 percent

2013-2020	Malta governed by Labour Party, Joseph Muscat, Prime Minister – free-market economy, strong social safety net
2020-present	Malta governed by Labour Party, Robert Abela, Prime Minister – Muscat resigned in January 2020 after allegations of corruption
2020	Malta ranked 28 th of 189 countries in the UNDP's Human Development Index (Italy ranked 29 th)

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Sites Visited in Malta

Mythic Malta: Adventure in the Archipelago

Chief Executives Organization (CEO)

May 29-June 3, 2019

Land-based

Hal Saflieni Hypogeum, Paola

The Hypogeum of Hal Saflieni is a Neolithic subterranean necropolis, created between 4000 and 2500 BCE in Paola, Malta. It consists of three layers of labyrinthine and interconnected rooms, carved from soft globigerina limestone with chert, flint, and obsidian tools and antlers. The Hypogeum was abandoned as a sanctuary and burial site c. 2500 BCE and rediscovered in 1902. Archeologists found the remains of 7,000 individuals who were buried there. Other finds were decorated pottery vessels, stone and clay beads, and carved figures depicting humans and animals. The Sleeping Lady is a clay figurine believed to represent a female deity. Some walls and ceilings were decorated with designs in red ochre, a mineral pigment – the only prehistoric wall paintings found in Malta. Our group thoroughly enjoyed this incredible site.

Hagar Qim Temple, Malta Island

The CEO group also visited the Hagar Qim (“stones of worship”) Temple complex in Malta Island. This outstanding Neolithic site is one of the world’s oldest free-standing structures. The main temple was built between 3000 and 2500 BCE, and three supplementary structures are older but undated. The temple-builders used locally available coralline limestone for the external walls and globigerina limestone for the sheltered and decorated interiors. The Hagar Qim buildings had corbelled roofs, capped with horizontal beams, a highly sophisticated method of construction for its time. The largest stone used is 17 feet high and weighs about 20 tons. One stone altar appears to have been

used for animal sacrifices. First excavated in 1839, the complex was designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1980.

Medieval Mdina

Mdina was the capital of Malta from the 5th century BCE until 1530, when the Knights of Malta (Order of St. John) moved the capital to Birgu on the coast. Founded by the Phoenicians in the 8th century BCE as Maleth, the town was renamed Melita by the Romans in the 3rd century BCE. Its name was changed to Medina by the Arabs, to Citta Notabile by the Knights of St. John, and to Citta Vecchia (after Valletta was built). Today, the walled medieval town of Mdina houses about 300 permanent residents and is a popular tourist attraction. Its former suburb, Rabat, has a population of 11,000. Mdina features both Norman and Baroque architecture in its many palaces. The Cathedral of the Conversion of St. Paul dominates the main square. Our CEO group enjoyed a walking trip in Mdina and choral concert in the Cathedral.

Gozo Island

Gozo is an island of 26 square miles (8.7 miles by 4.5 miles) with a population of 37,000 people. It has a fifth of the land area of the Republic of Malta, but only 7 percent of its population (of 503,000 people). Gozo is less hectic, quieter, more rural, and less wealthy than the main island of Malta. Gozo has been politically separate from Malta only once in the past six millennia – between 1798 and 1801, after the Gozitans and Maltese revolted from French rule and before the British colonized both Gozo and Malta. The CEO group cruised to Gozo to visit a small (15-employee) glass factory that produces exquisite hand-made glassware and the Xwejni Salt Pans, where a Maltese family has produced coarse sea salt for five generations. The sea salt contains minerals (iodine, magnesium) and is used to preserve sun-dried tomatoes, capers, and cheese.

St. Paul's Catacombs, Rabat

St. Pauls' catacombs, sited in Rabat, are part of a large Roman cemetery (with 2,000 tombs), originally built outside the walls of the Carthaginian city of Maleth and the later Roman city of Melita (today's Mdina). The subterranean cemetery features elegant baldacchino tombs, canopied burial sites with arches and supporting pillars. The site was developed as a limestone quarry and then converted into a subterranean graveyard. Under Roman rule, Christians used the site as a place of refuge or secret worship. The site was first investigated by Dr. A.A. Caruana, the pioneer of modern archaeology in Malta, in 1894. The catacombs were used as air-raid shelters during the Axis Powers' (Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy) siege of Malta in 1941-1942. Our group enjoyed a guided tour of the catacombs with excellent commentary.

St. Paul's Grotto, Rabat

St. Paul's Grotto is located beneath a Baroque building constructed in Rabat in 1749 for the Chaplains of the Order of St. John and named after Grand Master Alof de Wignacourt, who ruled Malta between 1601 and 1622. The grotto (a natural underground chamber) is venerated because many Maltese believe that St. Paul lived in it for three months and founded the island's first Christian community on this site, when he was shipwrecked in Malta in 60 CE. A millennium later, the grotto became a pilgrimage site for the Pauline movement that was formed during the early Crusades. A Grand Master of the Order of St. John redecorated the place of worship in his image in the 17th century. The Wignacourt Museum, linked to St. Paul's Grotto, is built above the grotto. Our group explored the grotto with great interest and curiosity.

The Three Cities of Malta, Grand Harbour

The Three Cities of Malta – Birgu, Senglea, and Cospicua – are small fortified towns on the Grand Harbour east of Valletta. When the Order of St. John took control of Malta in 1530, the knights moved the capital

from Mdina to Birgu. The Order founded Senglea in the 16th century and Cospicua in the 17th century to provide fortifications against the Ottoman Empire. After the Ottoman's Great Siege of Malta was lifted in 1565, Birgu was given the title, *Città Vittoriosa*, and Senglea the title, *Città Invicta*. During the siege of Malta in World War II (1941-1942), the Three Cities were heavily bombed by the Italians and Germans, and they were reconstructed in the 1950s and 1960s. During our visit to the Maritime Museum in Birgu, the CEO group enjoyed a lecture by a naval historian. We then took a scenic walking tour in Birgu.

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