



GAMING MALTA

# TheUltimateGuide

Start-up Life, Business Essentials & Local Knowledge





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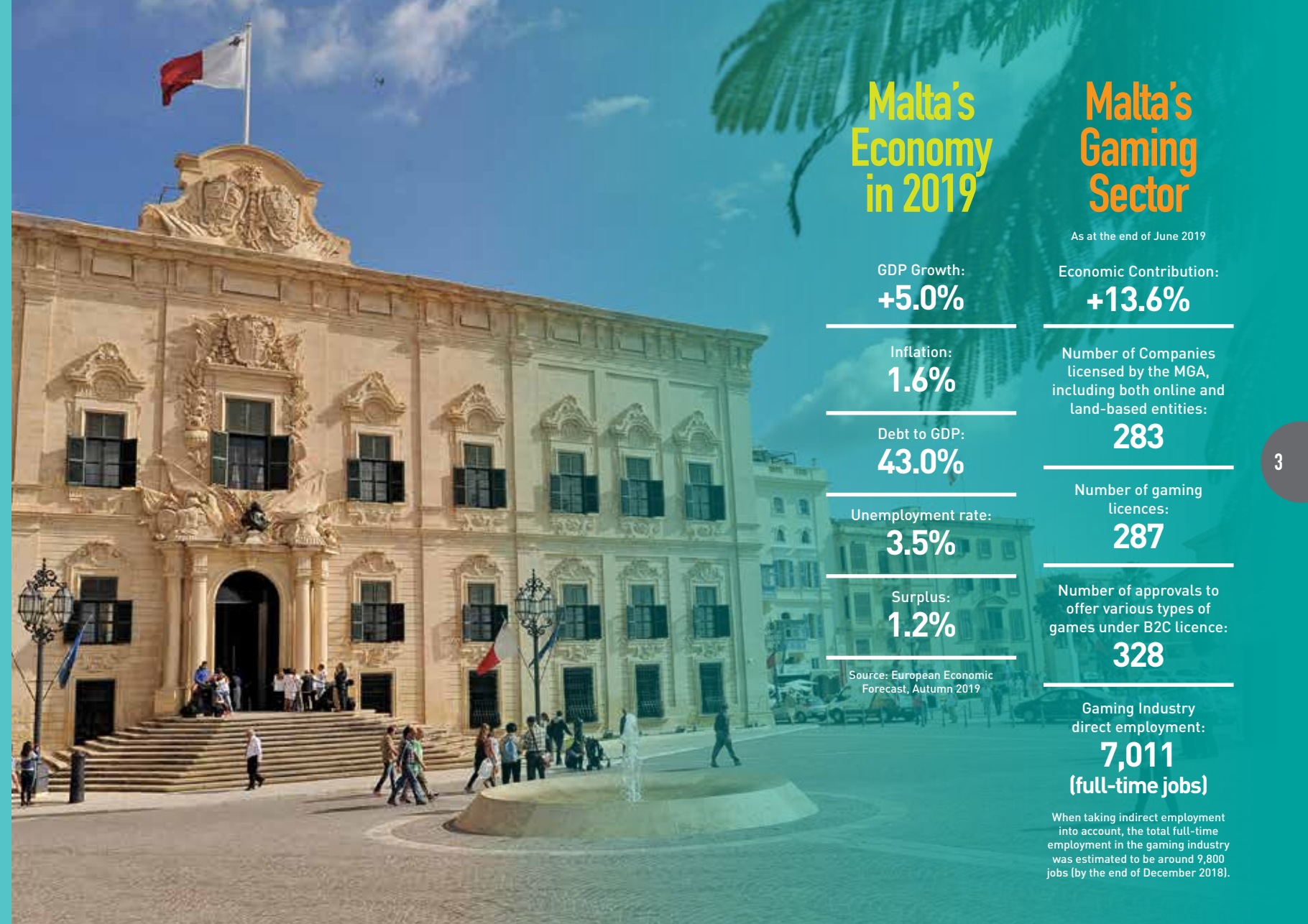


# MALTA: HOME TO GLOBAL iGAMING

Located in the centre of the Mediterranean, between Europe and North Africa, Malta is the European Union's smallest member state. Famous for its 7,000-year history and 300 days of sunshine, Malta has emerged as one of the most remarkable success stories in the Eurozone. Recognised for its pro-business attitude, state-of-the-art infrastructure and modest costs of doing business, it has become the go-to country for growth-minded entrepreneurs and multinational companies.



**Location:** Southern Europe **Official Name:** Republic of Malta **Area:** 316 km<sup>2</sup>  
**Population:** 440,000, of which: Maltese: 94% Foreign: 6% **Languages:** Maltese & English  
**Memberships:** European Union, Eurozone, Schengen Area **Sunshine:** 300 days of sunshine/year  
**Temperature average:** Winter 12C, Summer 31C **Annual rainfall:** 600 mm **Time:** GMT+1  
**Currency:** Euro **Voltage:** 240 **Religion:** Roman Catholic **International Dialling Code:** +356



## Malta's Economy in 2019

GDP Growth:  
**+5.0%**

Inflation:  
**1.6%**

Debt to GDP:  
**43.0%**

Unemployment rate:  
**3.5%**

Surplus:  
**1.2%**

Source: European Economic  
Forecast, Autumn 2019

## Malta's Gaming Sector

As at the end of June 2019

Economic Contribution:  
**+13.6%**

Number of Companies  
licensed by the MGA,  
including both online and  
land-based entities:

**283**

Number of gaming  
licences:

**287**

Number of approvals to  
offer various types of  
games under B2C licence:

**328**

Gaming Industry  
direct employment:

**7,011**  
(full-time jobs)

When taking indirect employment  
into account, the total full-time  
employment in the gaming industry  
was estimated to be around 9,800  
jobs (by the end of December 2018).

## GAMING MALTA



**GamingMalta** is an independent non-profit foundation set up by the Government of Malta and the Malta Gaming Authority (MGA). Tasked with promoting Malta as a centre of excellence in the digital and remote gaming sector globally, it is responsible for liaising with local authorities to improve Malta's attractiveness as a jurisdiction and enhance the ecosystem surrounding the gaming industry.



## WHAT WE STAND FOR

We want you to feel at home from day one, and are ready to go the extra mile and introduce you to like-minded entrepreneurs, peer companies and people you need to know, so you can easily facilitate your network of connections.

**GamingMalta is committed to:**

- Promoting ownership of the Malta brand among all stakeholders to strengthen Malta's position with the gaming industry;
- Engaging with stakeholders and providing business support to ensure that Malta is the most attractive environment for the gaming industry to thrive;
- Standing out through innovative ideas and leading the iGaming industry through research and promotion of the Maltese jurisdiction so as to be a proactive, dynamic catalyst for change;
- Accelerating growth in the gaming sector by creating a dynamic marketing mechanism anticipating market changes;
- Bringing stakeholders together – ensuring close cooperation while creating business and networking opportunities for firms working in the sector;
- Establishing the necessary expertise and foresight to future-proof the gaming sector in Malta;
- Supporting the MGA in implementing the brand strategy and road map development for the gaming industry;
- Collaborating with other Maltese sectorial promotion bodies to promote the overall image of Malta.

**Say Hello**

Reach out to us for information on how we can facilitate your operations in Malta.

**Contact:**

GamingMalta Foundation Building SCM 02-03, Level 3, SmartCity, Ricasoli SCM100, Malta  
**T:** (+356) 2247 3000 • **E:** [ivan.filletti@gamingmalta.org](mailto:ivan.filletti@gamingmalta.org) • **W:** [www.gamingmalta.org](http://www.gamingmalta.org)



*"You come, you settle, you succeed"*

We also support and promote start-up events so that entrepreneurs are giving an opportunity to present their business models.

Malta is one of the most advanced and respected online gaming jurisdictions in the world. We want to keep it that way and continue to narrate this success story.



**Ivan Filletti**  
Chief Operations Officer at GamingMalta

Joining and connecting the dots within the ecosystem is a vital component of our game. Our networking events and international roadshows serve as a platform for this. These also help to attract investors to the iGaming industry.

Our mission is to engage with all the key stakeholders and ensure we connect with the different parts of the ecosystem to promote, strengthen and accelerate the growth across all gaming sectors.

Remote gaming is only a part of this marvellous world of gaming. So we are working on other verticals – eSports and Video Gaming. This all boils down to a talent game. We want to work closely with the sector in order to attract key talent to Malta.

Our strong economy, EU member state credentials and resources, people and culture, as well as a strong presence of B2B and B2C companies and an affiliate cluster, give any operator an immediate plug into the gaming sector. To this, add the lifestyle on this sunny Mediterranean island, which, is something special.

Business gets done here. Malta is the place where ingenuity and determination pay off. You come, you settle, you succeed.



*"We have a bustling iGaming ecosystem"*

Recent surveys conducted by the MGA have consistently shown that iGaming is and will remain a key contributor to our economic growth. Not only are gaming companies net contributors in Malta, in terms of revenues, but there are also strong economic multiplier effects from expatriate workers relocating to Malta.

Malta has consistently proven that we have a bustling iGaming ecosystem. We have the resources, the people, thought leadership and culture to give iGaming professionals and entrepreneurs the opportunity to connect with like-minded individuals where business gets done.

We are committed to increasing collaboration with the key stakeholders, being good listeners and working on solutions which will strengthen our position as Home of Gaming Excellence.

Attracting and nurturing both homegrown talent and attracting top talent to Malta is a pivotal point of our vision. We will look at ways of how to smoothen the process for anyone looking at taking up a position in Malta and ensuring that onboarding foreign professionals is as uncomplicated as possible.

Malta has seen licensed operators reach the 283 mark, and we continue to attract quality operators from all over the world. This augurs well for the future.

Education is key. Initiatives such as the European Gaming Institute of Malta will continue to be bolstered to tangibly address the skills mismatch and strengthen the talent pipeline in the iGaming sector.

We will continue to intensify our efforts to take a holistic view of the gaming sector, and we can only be successful if we embrace new technologies and gaming activities such as esports and video game development.

The convergence of technologies will continue to pave the way for us to ensure that blockchain technologies and artificial intelligence are given the right regulatory and commercial environment to succeed.



Hon. Clayton Bartolo B. Accty (Hons), CPA, MP  
Parliamentary Secretary for Financial Services and Digital Economy



OUR SUCCESS STORIES:

# Growing From Malta

Where Big Players Meet Game Changers



We are a nation of fewer than 500,000 people, yet we have probably produced more **high-growth iGaming companies** than any other country in Europe.

These are some of the companies who have found success coming to our country.





But it is not only the hundreds of gaming companies that are flourishing in **Malta's iGaming ecosystem**. Gaming platforms, game developers and performance marketing companies have also chosen our island as their base.



Malta is also home to a group of **dynamic service companies** offering a diverse range of best-in-class services that help your business succeed.





# MALTA: WE KNOW iGAMING

How did that happen? We were the first European country to launch a dedicated regulatory framework for the sector in the early 2000s. Our regulatory stance and positive approach to the industry have helped us to become the most popular location for iGaming companies.

With more than 280 iGaming companies, a brand-new regulatory package for the gaming industry and our drive to regulate the fast-growing DLT sector, we are ensuring innovation does not dry up in the years ahead.

From global giants to start-ups, we know that costs are important to everyone. Malta is generally 20 to 30% cheaper than the more established European centres, while a company's seed capital may last three to five times longer.

Business is running at a hectic pace. Malta is small but beautifully compact, with all the suppliers and service providers helping your gaming business go global in close reach.

The iGaming industry is as colourful as a rainbow, and Malta offers a diverse workforce of local and foreign professionals. We know that you need to search among the best and the brightest when setting up your business.

## Home to iGaming

Malta has garnered a reputation as hub for the iGaming industry. The presence of over 280 iGaming companies is proving an irresistible draw for platform providers, game developers, payment services, support firms, start-ups and tech investors, who are flocking to our island in droves to join the thriving iGaming ecosystem.

While many countries have tried to emulate us, few have matched the commitment and innovation that Malta brings to supporting and helping the gaming industry thrive globally. **To meet the future needs of this evolving industry, Malta has entered a new era with the launch of a brand new and comprehensive suite of regulation and legislation in 2018.** Malta's new Gaming Act radically transformed the way the sector is regulated. The new law simplifies and streamlines processes, avoids duplication and speeds up time to market for B2C and B2B operators.

### GrowingFromMalta

**Mr Green** has played its cards right. The company was founded in 2007 as an online casino and ensured revenue growth by launching a sportsbook and a new live casino in 2016. MrGreen today has some 200 employees on the island.



## 20 Years in the Game

No country has welcomed gaming companies as warmly as we have. Malta is the birthplace of regulated online gaming being the first EU country to license iGaming in the early 2000s. While other countries sought to protect their state monopolies, Malta recognised the need for a dedicated regulatory framework and set up a regulatory authority for this young and vibrant industry. **Today, the iGaming industry contributes 12% to the island's economy and employs almost 6,700 people directly, with an additional 3,000 to 4,000 providing ancillary services such as web hosting, security auditing or legal work.**

Malta, in essence, serves as the backbone of the industry, attracting the largest gaming operators and suppliers, as well as some of the hottest start-ups.

### GrowingFromMalta

**Betsson** is the poster child of Malta's iGaming sector. The company has been in Malta since 2004, and today employs some 1,000 people on the island. In the short span of just three years, Betsson outgrew its brand-new eight-storey office building – the Betsson Experience Centre – which was only inaugurated in 2014. In 2016 the company expanded into a second building: the Betsson E² Hub.

## Who's Here?

Some of the most instantly recognisable brands in the gaming world have set up in Malta: Betsson, Paddy Power Betfair, Interwetten, Unibet, Mr Green, and Tipico are some of the companies that maintain a strong presence on the island. While many of these companies are now global giants, they were little more than small start-ups when they arrived in Malta many years ago. Their top executives and founders have helped to nurture the next generation of gaming brands on the island. Firms such as LeoVegas, Casumo and Videoslots have all been launched from Malta. In more recent times, industry leaders such as Pinnacle Sports and bet365, as well as US fantasy sports giant DraftKings, have lined up to receive their licences from the Malta Gaming Authority (MGA).

**But it is not just the major iGaming companies that have been beating a path to Malta, following in their footsteps have been all the leading B2B suppliers and service providers.** Today Malta offers a thriving iGaming ecosystem, where iGaming companies can find everything and everyone they need to do business with, ranging from game developers and solution providers such as NetEnt, Evolution Gaming, Play 'n Go, Microgaming, Betconstruct and Greentube, to affiliate marketing firms such as Catena Media, Raketech, MatchingVisions and the Highlight Media Group, to help grow their businesses.

**7,011** people employed

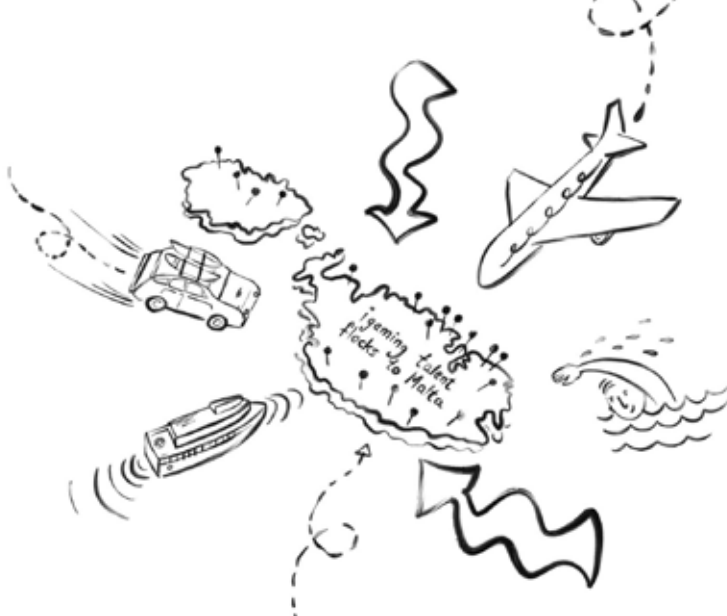


## Big in Support

Our main draw-card is the ease of doing business and a very supportive regulatory environment. **The presence of data centres, online payment processors, security auditors, gaming software developers, and platform providers contributes to a tailor-made environment that is conducive to growing a successful business.** Consultants with technical expertise are always on hand to support critical operations in areas such as search engine optimisation and affiliate management companies. Equally, the island's lawyers and accountants have a wealth of experience, ensuring that a vibrant and creative cluster of talent and know-how is in place to help companies manage and grow their operations. This is unique in Europe and goes a long way towards explaining our identity as the world's iGaming capital.

## iGaming Associations

To help shape the future of the iGaming industry, iGaming professionals can join one of Malta's iGaming associations. The **iGaming European Network** (iGEN) is an association of leading iGaming companies based in Malta and operating on the European and international markets. Its mission is to give the industry a stronger voice and to help find solutions to common problems. The **Malta Remote Gaming Council** (MRGC) provides a discussion forum for all stakeholders, and amongst its members are licensed operators, data carriers, internet service providers, lawyers and professional services providers. HR professionals can turn to **HR Connect**, an association of Senior HR decision-makers within the iGaming industry in Malta. Its members meet regularly to learn, network and solve practical challenges with the common goal to improve working and living conditions for employees in Malta. HR Connect also acts as the industry's voice towards government, educational institutions and commercial entities on all employee matters.



## Regulatory Renewal

Despite our success, we are not resting on our laurels. Recognising the changing and evolving gaming landscape, the Malta Gaming Authority set out to develop new regulations that better respond to emerging technologies and new forms of gaming. Cryptocurrencies, blockchain applications and Distributed Ledger Technologies all form part of our new business model, with Malta leading the way being the first country in the world to provide a dedicated regulatory framework for this sector. But it is not only the incorporation of innovative technologies, we are also cutting out the red tape and reducing bureaucracy, with the introduction of just two different licences: a Business-to-Business and a Business-to-Consumer licence. A new set of licence fees and compliance contributions have also been introduced, while licences issued by the MGA are no longer valid for a 5-year period, but have instead been extended to a 10-year-period.

## Seasoned Talent

Our iGaming industry attracts the best and brightest from all corners of the world, offering companies a network of seasoned professionals and support staff. Malta offers a strong skill base, with a wide range of specialisations that companies can tap into, including developers, designers, marketers, customer support and C-Level professionals.

The gaming industry is one of Malta's most diverse and international industries, with two thirds of the employees being foreign expats. They are attracted to Malta by not only the career opportunities that the industry offers but also by an exceptional Mediterranean quality of life. **An added incentive for highly qualified foreign professionals is the 15% income tax cap.** To help smooth the process of bringing non-EU talent to Malta, the government provides a fast-track service of work permits for highly specialised professionals.

## The European Gaming Institute of Malta

To meet the ever-growing demand for top-notch talent, Malta set up the European Gaming Institute of Malta (EGIM). The first of its nature in Malta and the EU, EGIM is focusing on online gaming operations. EGIM has put together a number of educational programmes tailored to the needs of the sector. It offers a mix of short-term courses and diplomas for students who would like to choose the iGaming industry as their career path. EGIM is the government's strategic commitment to develop education, skills and nurture more talent within the iGaming sector.



## GrowingFromMalta

**LeoVegas** experienced rapid growth due to the company's mobile first approach. Founded in 2011, LeoVegas went public on the Swedish stock market in 2016. Headquartered in Stockholm, LeoVegas conducts its operations and marketing in Malta, while the technical development is based in Sweden.

## Tried and Tested

Whether you are big, small or just starting out, Malta is working hard to put all the right elements in place to help you be successful. We are committed to growing the iGaming industry and ensuring the depth and breadth of talent, as well as providing transport links to open new markets across the world, a cutting-edge telecoms and ICT infrastructure and a safe and secure environment to live, work and grow your career. We understand the current and future value of the iGaming industry and are truly embracing it to unleash the sector's full potential.



OUR SECTORS. YOUR OPPORTUNITIES.

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**next iGaming innovator?**

We are here to help you flourish.



# Our iGaming industry is incredibly diverse.

## Join us to drive this exciting industry forward.



### iGaming Operators

Some of the world's biggest and smallest iGaming operators have set up shop on our island, making Malta as important to online gambling as London or New York are to finance. With over 280 operators offering casino-style games, lotteries, bingo, sportsbetting, fantasy sports and eSports based on the island, the industry is proving that tight regulation and stringent supervision offer the ideal conditions for remote gaming companies to flourish. While we are supporting the companies that already call Malta home, we are ready to welcome any new entrant wishing to explore the opportunities our gaming industry offers.

#### GrowingFromMalta

**Tipico** has been calling Malta home since 2004. The company that was founded by childhood friends in 2003 is today one of the leading European betting providers with both land-based and online business offered. In 2016, the company's founders sold large parts of Tipico Sportwetten to CVC Capital Partners, one of the world's leading private equity and investment advisory companies.

#### GrowingFromMalta

With its headquarters based in Malta, **Gaming Innovation Group (GiG)** has managed to grow the company from some 100 people to over 600 people in less than three years. In addition to operating a number of popular casino brands, the Group runs its own accelerator programme and has developed into one of the largest affiliate networks in the industry.



### Performance Marketing

We are fast becoming a favoured location in the EU for performance marketing and affiliate management companies. With a lower cost base than media hubs such as London or Berlin, and with English-speaking professionals on hand, we are being seen as an ideal base for specialist content production houses. **Companies can tap into a workforce of graphic designers, SEO and social media, as well as video and audio production companies.** A key partner for lead generation for iGaming operators, some affiliate marketing companies have grown in size and stature providing services not only to the gaming industry but also to financial services, retail and automotive to mention a few. Globally, affiliate marketing has entered the mainstream. We believe the industry has a lot of growth potential, and Malta can become the epicentre of the affiliate marketing industry.

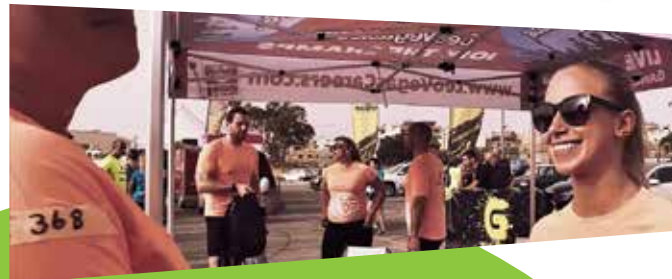
### Game Development & Solutions

Why have NetEnt, Play'n GO and Evolution Gaming set up operations in Malta? They are benefiting from close proximity to existing and potential new clients that Malta has to offer. The demand for new and custom-developed games has also attracted companies such as games producer Yggdrasil, Playson and Wazdan to join the lineup of major platform providers including EveryMatrix, BetConstruct and Bit8, and there is room for more.



## Mobile & App Development

The talent and the companies behind the growing dominance of mobile gaming applications have found Malta a fertile ground to conceive, develop and market their products. A host of tech firms, coders and programmers are already on the ground servicing the increasing needs of the gaming operators, and Malta offers a significant opportunity for innovators with the next disruptive tech.



### GrowingFromMalta

**The Stars Group**, which was previously known as Amaya, opened its first office in Malta in 2012 with only a few staff members. The company, which owns and operates the PokerStars brands amongst others, has today a workforce of more than 300 people on the island and currently holds 70% of the global poker market.



## Virtual Reality & Augmented Reality Studios

As the gaming sector pushes ever more into a virtual world or augmented reality, VR and AR game studios should keep a keen eye on Malta. **The sheer number of gaming companies present on the island creates opportunities for game studios and start-up developers to test and scale their products.**



## Animation & Design

A home for creative industries, not many people know that major blockbusters such as Troy, Gladiator and the DaVinci Code were filmed in Malta for the movie industry, and games such as Angry Birds GO, Lemmings and Metro have been produced for the video game industry. As the worlds of film, animation, gaming and gambling merge, we are positioning ourselves as home for animation, design, multimedia companies and entertainment firms.

## Payment Technology

Payment technology companies are flocking to Malta to join our growing fintech community. **The extensive iGaming industry is proving a major draw card and opportunity for companies to focus on developing new payment solutions.** Given the concentration of eBusinesses on the island, they find an environment that it is welcoming to new and innovative ideas, which helps them to focus on their product. The eBusiness sector has a strong appetite for disruptive and innovative payment solutions. Malta offers a dedicated regulatory framework for payment companies that offers them a seal of approval and access to the entire European Union.





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## Cryptocurrencies & Blockchain

Malta's government has committed itself to providing blockchain-related and cryptocurrency companies with a regulatory environment that offers them legal certainty in running and operating their businesses. **We have set our sights on helping entrepreneurs unleash the full potential of blockchain technology, with the introduction of the world's first holistic regulatory framework for Distributed Ledger Technologies (DLT), including blockchain-based businesses, ICOs and virtual currencies.** To highlight Malta's dedication and commitment to the sector, the government declared that it is expecting that the sector will account for 10% of GDP by 2027. Our initiatives are attracting interest from the entire spectrum of blockchain companies and service providers, including crypto exchanges, ICO platforms, developers of blockchain-based tools and applications, and many more.



## Venture Capital & Investors

A small but growing gaming finance cluster is starting to emerge in Malta to fund innovative start-ups as well as the merger and acquisitions of the sector's major companies. **The increasing ticket sizes and deal flow are attracting the attention of the major investment banks, angel investors and venture capital firms.** Malta is keen to capitalise on and to encourage gaming-focused financial institutions to establish dedicated offices on the ground to support the future growth of the industry.

### GrowingFromMalta

**4A Games**, the studio behind the award-winning Metro video game, is one of the more recent additions to the Maltese gaming ecosystem. In 2014, the company moved its headquarters to Malta from Kiev, Ukraine.



## Cybersecurity & Fraud

For tech-driven companies that require 24/7 uptime, cyber defence and fraud are critical issues that can significantly affect a gaming company's revenues. **The associated risk of cyber attacks is giving rise to a burgeoning cyber security industry in Malta.** The development of gaming specific software and services is something Malta is keen to encourage.

## Software Testing & Certification

Malta's move to regulate and oversee products such as gametech, fintech and blockchain technologies is requiring an ever-increasing need for software certifications. These sectors are expected to grow exponentially, and global tech labs should have Malta on their radar as regulators place greater demands on safe and secure IT solutions to protect consumers.



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## GrowingFromMalta

Some five years ago, the UK video-game developer **Exient** opened a studio in Malta. Included amongst Exient titles are games developed for IP such as: Angry Birds, F1, FIFA, The Sims and Need For Speed.

## Media & Advertising

From content marketing, corporate blogging, translation services and social media to game storyboards and scripts, our media and marketing industry has become a valuable partner for the gaming industry. Backed by a strong telecoms infrastructure and the English-language skills of the Maltese, we are well positioned to emerge as a production hub for exporting content internationally.

## Responsible Gaming Foundation

The Responsible Gaming Foundation was founded in 2014 to promote responsible iGaming and initiate studies to create a wider awareness of the extent, possible causes and consequences of problem gambling with a view to preventing it and to provide the necessary support and advice to problem gamblers and their dependents in their recovery efforts.

## Video Gaming

The video-gaming industry is the newest member of our growing creative industries, building further on our success as iGaming hub. **With some 30 games studio operating in Malta ranging from AAA to Indie game developers, 4A Games and Exient are two of the most well-known companies, producing major games for desktop and mobile, as well as Xbox and Playstation.** Coupled with our growing international film industry, Malta is seeing a huge demand for production houses, including motion capture studies, sound stages and animation facilities.



## Fantasy Sports

Malta was the first European country to license fantasy sports as a skill game. This forward-thinking move has attracted the attention of US giant DraftKings along with others who have followed their example. The Gaming Malta Foundation organises an annual Fantasy Sports Summit.



## eSports

eSports has arrived in Malta, and it isn't going away. The sector has been shattering records across the globe in viewership numbers and prize money. With eSports becoming a global growth phenomenon, gambling and betting on tournaments have become equally popular. **Specialist e-sports betting sites along with many of the world's leading online gaming companies now see this growing segment as a major opportunity for the future.** Malta's move to include eSports bets within a licensed and regulated setting offers operators legal certainty and players an all-round safer environment. The GamingMalta Foundation also hosts the Malta Esports Summit.





Doing Business

# Start. Run. Grow.

Malta has an impeccable 20 year track record in attracting iGaming companies. We are rolling out the red carpet for companies, service providers and industry professionals who want to invest, expand and grow their operations from Malta. Choosing Malta means investing in a country with possibly the best understanding of iGaming in the world.







## Rethinking Regulation

## Regulation / Licensing

Our iGaming industry has many factors working in its favour, but none more so than the island's revamped regulatory framework. The Malta Gaming Authority in 2018 has rolled out the new Gaming Act that allows companies to apply for two different licences, a business-to-consumer (B2C) and a business-to-business (B2B) licence. The two licence groups cover all types of games and activities across multiple distribution channels. As part of the regulatory overhaul the MGA has introduced a more competitive fee structure and reasonable compliance contributions. The MGA has also extended the validity of licences from 5 to 10 years.

## Incorporating a Company

Forming a company in Malta is relatively easy and only takes a couple of days. Maltese law does not have a specific requirement on the nationality and residence of directors. iGaming companies are required to appoint a Key Official, who must be resident in Malta. Maltese law does not lay down any specific requirements on the shareholding of a gaming company, and the company may be owned indirectly through a Maltese holding company or directly by non-resident shareholders. **However, corporate substance is mandatory for companies to benefit from tax refunds and other mechanisms.** Companies require an appropriate physical presence, registered employees on their books and all other necessities typically associated with economic substance.

## Tax

We have an attractive fiscal regime that supports established and start-up iGaming companies, while our network of over 70 double taxation treaties further strengthens Malta's position as a key corporate location.





## Personal Taxation & Expat Taxation

Malta has a progressive personal taxation system that ranges from 0% to a maximum of 35% for income over €60,000. To attract highly qualified personnel from abroad, the government operates an incentive scheme targeting foreign executives. iGaming professionals who qualify for the incentive can benefit from a flat personal income-tax rate of 15% on all income up to €5 million. Any income over that figure is tax-free. Malta's tax system is beneficial for entrepreneurs, wealthy individuals and investors who are looking for a stable, safe and attractive business environment.

### 15% Income tax rate for highly qualified professionals

#### GrowingFromMalta

Following the merger of PaddyPower and Betfair, **Paddy Power Betfair** announced that it wants to place Malta at the centre of its operations and is envisaging that its workforce on the island will double to reach 600 people.

#### GrowingFromMalta

Lead-generation company **Catena Media**, founded in 2012, has become one of the top players in affiliate marketing and a key driver of consolidation in the affiliate space. In 2016 alone, the company hired 130 new employees for their Malta office.

## Start-up Support

Gaming start-ups find Malta a particularly attractive place due to the concentration of industry players, talent and suppliers on the island. Malta is also stepping up its efforts in helping to create new businesses and has expanded the scope of support for innovators. Incubators and innovation hubs have been established to support start-ups that have the potential to develop innovative services for the gaming industry.

**Malta is generally 20 to 30% cheaper than the more established European centres, while a company's seed capital may last three to five times longer.** Venture capital firms have also started to move into Malta, providing promising iGaming start-ups a new avenue to access finance. A number of co-working spaces have opened up offering entrepreneurs the opportunity to work in a vibrant and dynamic environment that will not only foster their ideas, but also create invaluable business connections while still being affordable.

## Market Access

Since Malta joined the EU in 2004, companies operating in and out of the island benefit from free access to the EU's 500 million people strong internal market. As the first country in the EU to create dedicated legislation for the iGaming sector, Malta's industry has until recently enjoyed unrestricted access to all EU member states. The trend of EU member states introducing their own national iGaming licensing regimes has meant companies operating from Malta have had to acquire separate licences in these countries. Despite this, Malta-based licence holders may find it easier to acquire a licence in other jurisdictions as there are certain similarities between the various national licensing regimes. **Operators highlight the fact that despite the European market becoming more restricted, the Maltese licence still holds value by providing access to countries that have not yet introduced their own national licensing regimes.** Malta's strategic location in the centre of the Mediterranean offers easy access to the entire region and in particular to the emerging markets of Africa and the Middle East.

## Telecoms & Data Management

Given its size, the island's telecoms infrastructure is disproportionately strong. Hosting and co-location services can be easily sourced. Data centres are provided with international bandwidth through the three main telecoms service providers; GO, Vodafone and Melita. There are also several other independent data centres. Malta is internationally connected through two satellite stations and five submarine fibre optic links to mainland Europe via Italy. To reduce Malta's reliance on the existing links, Malta's government plans to invest in an additional fibre optic cable to France. Bandwidth in Malta is slightly more expensive than elsewhere due to the fact that Malta is an island, but increased competition from multiple market players is expected to drive telecommunications prices further down in the near future.

## Banking & Financial Services

Banking is a very challenging topic for iGaming companies starting up in Malta. Major companies can get access to large banking groups such as Bank of Valletta (BOV), while smaller operators and start-ups are generally being served by smaller banks and financial institutions.



## Payment Services

Malta is home to credit card companies, payment service providers, payment gateways, card issuers and eWallets, regulated and overseen by the Malta Financial Services Authority (MFSA). The island's financial services legislation is modern and sophisticated, and superior to many of its competitors in the areas of e-commerce regulation and facilitation. Specialist PCI-certified payment service providers offer the full range of payment services.

## Stock Exchange Listing

The Malta Stock Exchange (MSE) has set its sights on persuading iGaming companies to list in Malta instead of Stockholm, London or Frankfurt. With a market capitalisation of some €12 billion, the MSE may be small by international standards, but it provides companies with a solid venue to access EU investors. The Exchange uses Deutsche Börse's Xetra trading platform, while on the settlement and custodial side the MSE has a link with Clearstream Banking, the global liquidity provider of Deutsche Börse Group, which facilitates international investor access. What sets the MSE apart is its very high standard of personal service, the Exchange highlights that generally companies can go through the preparation for an initial public offering (IPO) with more support than on a larger exchange. In addition, costs and fees remain competitive.

### GrowingFromMalta

Game developer **Yggdrasil** has challenged the market from its base in Malta and is now establishing itself as a strong contender to being the industry's number one online casino supplier.

## Advertising & Marketing

Malta offers a well-established infrastructure that supports the creative needs of the iGaming industry. **The island has become renowned for its creative sectors such as film, website design, graphic design, animation, digital media and advertising.** Over recent years, the island has succeeded in attracting specialist support companies across all verticals and disciplines. Most of the global advertising agencies have a network partner in Malta, while there is a large number of boutique firms offering services in sectors such as SEO, design, animation, and affiliate marketing.

### GrowingFromMalta

**Videslots** has risen through the ranks quite quickly and become a firm favourite with players due to its reputation for fast payouts and responsive customer service. The company was founded in 2011 and today has some 120 employees.

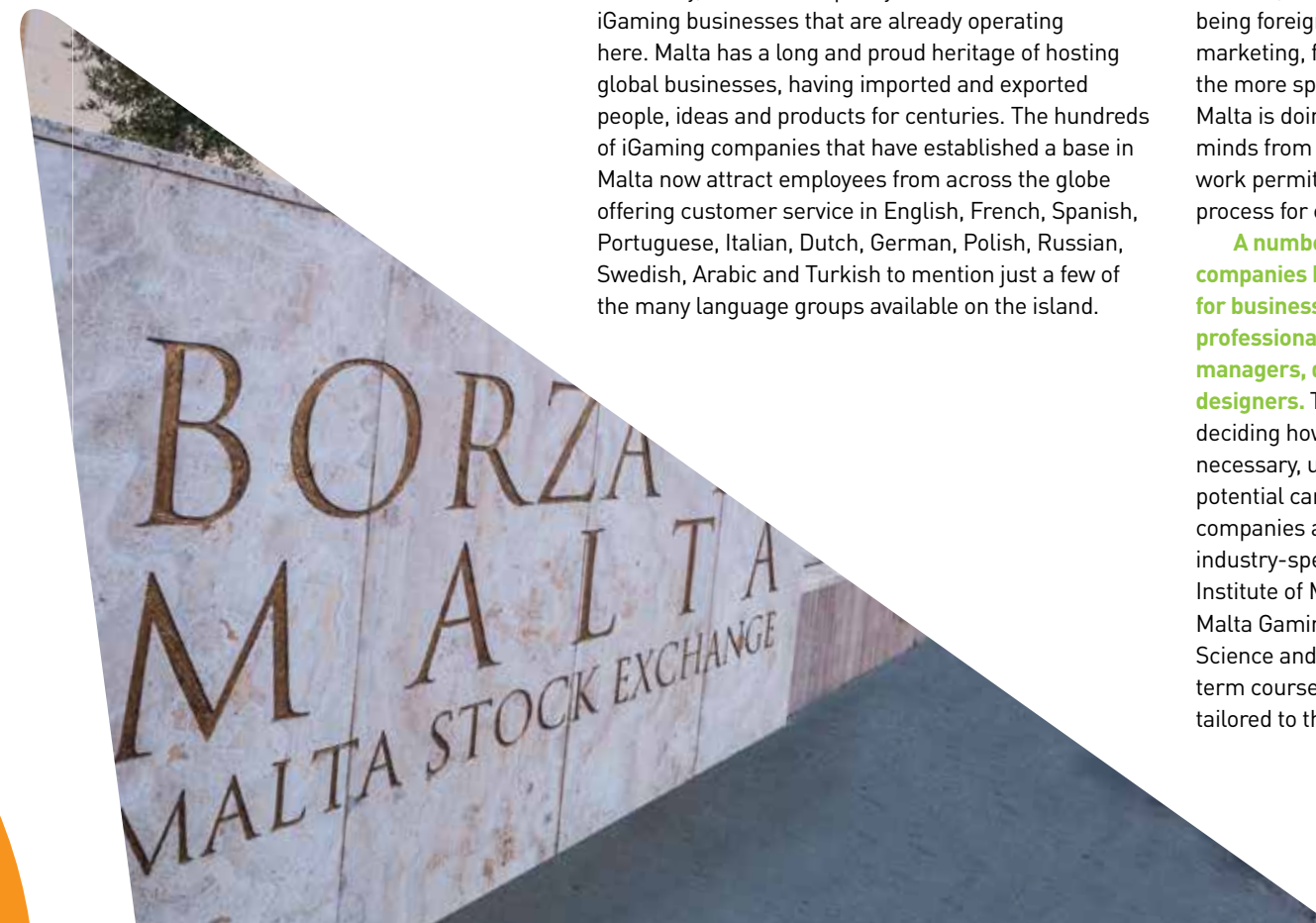
## Customer Support

The island's reputation as an outsourcing location has been built upon some of the country's most fundamental strengths: the fact that English is an official language, availability of talented people, value for money, the island's quality of life and the successful iGaming businesses that are already operating here. Malta has a long and proud heritage of hosting global businesses, having imported and exported people, ideas and products for centuries. The hundreds of iGaming companies that have established a base in Malta now attract employees from across the globe offering customer service in English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Dutch, German, Polish, Russian, Swedish, Arabic and Turkish to mention just a few of the many language groups available on the island.

## HR & Recruitment

The key ingredient to Malta's gaming success has been the ability to attract the best and the brightest. The island's comfortable lifestyle and magnificent climate make it easy to attract expats to relocate to Malta, with some 70% of the sector's workforce being foreign. Maltese staff tend to fill positions in marketing, finance and general management, while the more specialist gaming posts are filled by expats. Malta is doing its parts to attracting creative gaming minds from all over the world by fast-tracking visa and work permit applications and making the onboarding process for companies as smooth as possible.

**A number of specialist gaming recruitment companies have set up in Malta to meet the demand for business intelligence professionals, marketing professionals, affiliate managers, online marketing managers, developers, systems engineers and digital designers.** These companies can assist operators in deciding how and where to recruit the human resources necessary, using their international networks to reach potential candidates from around the world. Training companies and some educational institutes provide industry-specific training, while the European Gaming Institute of Malta (EGIM), a joint venture between the Malta Gaming Authority and the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology, also offers a mix of short-term courses, diplomas and masters programmes tailored to the needs of the gaming industry.



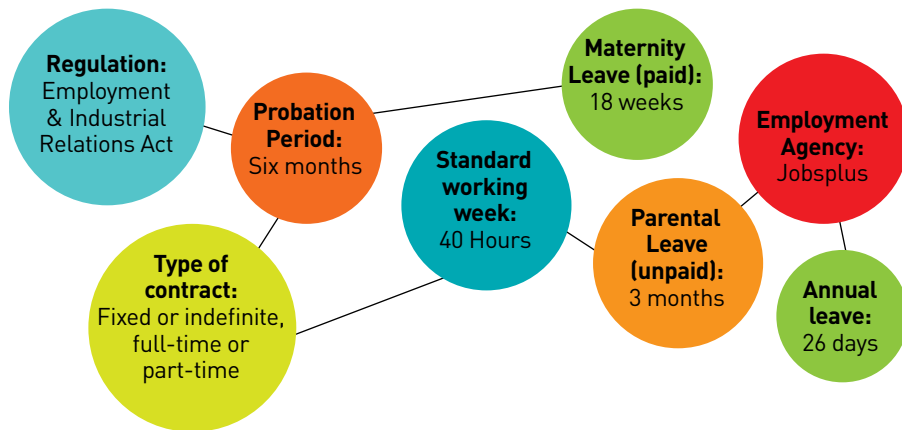




## Salaries & Staff Cost

Malta remains significantly cheaper than other European capitals in terms of staff salaries and other costs. Although the iGaming industry tends to offer remuneration that is some 30% higher than other industries in Malta, the figures are still lower than the European average. In the gaming sector, financial packages range from €20,000 for customer support staff to €80,000 for department heads and €200,000+ for CEOs.

### Employment Regulation



## Work Permits & Approvals

Visa obligations for foreign nationals reflect EU regulations and obligations. Non-EU nationals must apply for and obtain an employment permit. Due to the nature of the industry and the specific knowledge that is required, the granting of employment permits even to non-EU nationals is generally an uncomplicated and smooth process.

## Professional Services

Malta has a solid cluster of firms that specialise in providing professional services to iGaming operators, guiding them through the licensing process and assisting them with setting up a Malta company, establishing operations and recruiting HR. In addition, **the iGaming community in Malta is strongly supported by a large range of accounting and auditing practitioners ranging from small boutique practices to the global Big 4 accountancy firms, as well as most international network brands.** Most of the country's legal firms are part of international networks. Malta is able to offer operators professional services at costs that are generally lower than in other Western European locations.



## Technical Support

Malta has a highly experienced and vibrant ICT sector. There are a number of software auditors and test labs on the island, offering services ranging from compliance reviews to RNG testing. Malta is also home to a rapidly emerging cybersecurity cluster, providing operators' advice and assistance on risks, compliance and security threats.

## Commercial Property

Malta offers enviable real estate with sea views and marinas as well as prestigious landmark office complexes within easy commuting distance to residential areas. **Although sales and letting prices have been on an upward trend, they are around two-thirds of those charged for comparable spaces in Continental Europe.** Office space comes in many flavours, ranging from purpose-built office blocks, converted houses, apartments and palazzos, to new, large mixed-use developments. A large number of local and international real-estate agents provide sales and letting services and can assist in locating suitable property.





EXPAT GUIDE

# This is how we live

We know we are a small nation, so we are very outward looking and welcoming to people and ideas from around the world. Malta today is very multi-cultural. We live in an incredibly safe society with a strong family sentiment, and you'll find it easy to make friends with locals and expats alike. We take our work-life balance very seriously, and while not everything is perfect here, our climate is one of the best in the world, with 300 days of sunshine per year.



## Country

Malta is a country of contrasts, where 7,000 years of history meet an increasingly trendy vibe and a progressive society. Anchored in the crystal clear waters of the central Mediterranean, the Maltese archipelago is situated just 90 kilometres south of Sicily and 300 kilometres north of Africa. Just over 316 square kilometres in area, the Maltese Islands comprise Malta, Gozo and Comino. **The main island, Malta, has an area of 246 square kilometres, but while small in size, it is surprisingly big on attractions.**

Popular for decades with tourists, Malta's proximity to Europe means it is relatively easy to reach. Just an hour away from Rome and three hours from London or Frankfurt, the island offers visitors the chance to get away from it all and experience for themselves the beauty of its languid Mediterranean lifestyle, the charm of its island landscape and the vibrancy of its multi-cultural, multilingual, young and energetic social scene.

## History

A modern nation with ancient roots, Malta has been home to a wide range of civilisations. The island's strategic position between Europe and Africa made it a key possession for its many settlers and conquerors: from Neolithic man to the Ancient Romans, the Byzantines, the Arabs, the Normans, the Knights of St John, the French and the British, all of whom have left a wealth of architectural and cultural treasures. The country's archaeological sites pre-date Stonehenge and the Egyptian pyramids by more than 1,000 years, and the Neolithic temples are the oldest free-standing constructions in the world. Modern Malta was founded in 1964 following independence from Great Britain. The island became a republic in 1974.



## Climate

With more than 300 days of sun a year, expats in Malta often become the envy of friends back home. **With average summer temperatures around 30 degrees Celsius and winter temperatures ranging from 15 to 20 degrees Celsius, Malta's mild, year-round warm climate is considered to be one of the best in the world.** Even in winter Malta enjoys an average of five to six hours of sunshine – and more than 12 hours a day in summer. The annual average rainfall is as low as 600 millimetres, mostly falling between October and March.

## Language

Despite many strong linguistic influences and the fact that English is one of the two official languages, Malta has kept its own language alive. Maltese is a Semitic language believed to have developed during the Arab occupation of the Islands (870–1090), and it is still the only Semitic one to be written in the Latin script. English is the main language of business, while laws and regulations are published in both languages. Many Maltese are also fluent in Italian and some even speak a fourth language, usually German or French.

## Time

Malta lies in a convenient time zone for doing business across the world: one hour ahead of GMT, meaning office hours coincide with Asia in the morning, Europe throughout the day and the US in the afternoon. The country observes daylight saving time in summer, with the time shifted forward by one hour on the last Sunday of March, making it two hours ahead of GMT. On the last Sunday of October, the time is shifted back by one hour.

## Getting There

Malta is positioned as a gateway to Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. **From most major cities such as London, Frankfurt, Paris, Rome and Istanbul it takes just two-to-three hours' flying time to reach Malta International Airport (MIA), the island's only airport.** Regular flights are provided by Air Malta, the national airline, as well as other carriers such as Lufthansa, Emirates, Turkish Airlines, British Airways, Alitalia, Ryanair, EasyJet, and WizzAir. Malta is also a short 90-minute trip by catamaran to Sicily, and car ferries operate on the sea routes between the main port of Valletta and mainland Italy and Sicily.



## Hotels

Visitors can choose between two and three-star hotels, or a large range of upmarket ones with four and five-star status. Sea views are never hard to find wherever you choose to stay. **Global brands such as Hilton, Marriott, Intercontinental, Radisson and Kempinski all have a presence.**

One of the largest local players is the Corinthia Group. There are also a number of family-run Maltese hotels such as the Hotel Fortina and the Fortina Spa Resort, in addition to boutique five-star hotels such as the Xara Palace Relais & Chateaux.

## Working Hours

The working week in Malta is 40 hours on average, and 48 hours is the legal maximum, with the additional eight hours having to be paid for in overtime compensation. Daily office hours in the private sector are usually between 08:00 or 08:30 and 17:00 or 17:30.

**Since most iGaming companies run 24x7 operations, shift work is also very common, especially when it comes to customer-centric roles.**

## Scale of Opportunities

Although the gaming sector is important to the island's economy, Malta is more than just gaming: the island's diversified economy is performing exceptionally well, offering exciting and dynamic employment opportunities in a host of sectors such as financial services, education, health, maritime and aviation, to name but a few. For dual-career couples this means that accompanying spouses and partners usually do not struggle to find work.

## Efficiency & Productivity

Given Malta's size, its productivity level compares well with other European countries, while increasing efficiency is high on the government agenda. It might be time-consuming to complete certain administrative procedures, however, there is a refreshing lack of bureaucracy in other areas of public and business life.



## Work-Life Balance

Although working hours do not vary significantly from those in other countries, many expats say that they enjoy a better work-life balance in Malta. **Overtime is the exception, rather than the rule, while Malta's small size means beaches, sports facilities and restaurants are just a short ride away.** In a tight labour market, many CEOs also understand that flexible work schedules are one of the top reasons why people enjoy working at a company. Employees are also entitled to 26 working days of annual leave, and on top of this, there are 14 public holidays each year.

## Family Time

As in many southern European countries, family plays an important role in Maltese society. This also means that time-off during evenings and weekends is respected, with many expats citing that they are able to spend more quality time with friends and family.





## Culture & Social Life

Malta has a rich and diverse cultural heritage. Successive waves of traders, occupiers and colonisers have left their mark. The Maltese character is imbued with the British legacy of a strong work ethic and powerful ambition, softened by the natural southern Mediterranean temperament. Maltese are very hospitable and helpful people, exuding the traditional warmth and spontaneity of the Mediterranean region. With such an eclectic mix of culture and a diverse population, it does not take long to feel at home here. **In many ways, social life also means family life in Malta, especially during the summer months, when families tend to keep children up late as they all go out for dinner or for a stroll along the seafront.**

## Foreign Professionals & Expats

Malta's economic growth and investment from international companies have long caught the attention of high-flying foreign professionals. Today, some 6% of Malta's population is foreign, with many people coming from the UK, Scandinavia, Italy and Spain, but also from France and Germany. The majority of expats finds it easy to meet new people in Malta; and many count locals, as well as other expats among their friends. With English as an official language, language is no barrier, and especially in the smaller towns and villages, locals will be ready to go out of their way to help newcomers in any way they can so that they quickly feel at home.

## Religion

Over 90% of Maltese are Roman Catholic, with Christianity being prevalent since 60 AD when St Paul was shipwrecked on Malta and converted the local population. The Church still plays an important role in most communities, and most Maltese attend Mass on Sundays – there are no fewer than 365 churches on the island. Other Christian denominations present include Anglican, Church of Scotland, Greek Orthodox and Methodist. Malta also hosts Jewish and Muslim communities.



## Traditions & Conventions

Malta is a southern Mediterranean Catholic country; and it is socially more conservative than its Northern European peers, though less so than even a few years ago. A series of liberal bills, including same sex marriages, have given Malta a striking new look in recent years. **However, there is one tradition, no foreigner living in Malta can escape: the village festa, which in many ways captures the essence of all that is Maltese in one event.** Every village has at least one patron saint, and this serves as the basis for the village feast, which comes complete with food stalls, band marches and fireworks.

## Crime & Corruption

Crime is very low when compared to other major cities, and there is a general level of all-round safety.

## Leisure Activities

Malta offers visitors a unique experience packed with the best of all things Mediterranean. Sparkling blue seas, excellent food and a buzzing night life have made it one of Europe's most popular destinations. The variety of daytime activities available in Malta compares favourably with many destinations around the world, despite the small size of the island. Most of the picture-postcard bays are found in the northern part. With warm temperatures and clear waters around the coast you will certainly enjoy a dip in the Mediterranean – to swim or to explore the thriving marine life. **You can also test your endurance by rock climbing high above the deep blue sea on the majestic Dingli Cliffs; or wind down with a leisurely round of golf and afternoon tea on the lawns of the Royal Malta Golf Club.** Other activities include horse riding, jeep safaris and even sky diving. From autumn to spring Malta turns itself into a green island. A walk through the countryside is perfect for recharging your energy levels. Another option is to head to Gozo, Malta's smaller sister island, which is only 20 minutes away by ferry. Gozo is an island idyll of hills, valleys and cliffs, where time moves slower and life can be savoured, minute by minute, second by second.

## Best Beaches

In Malta, you are never far from the sea, and the Maltese make the most of every swimming spot. Not all beaches are sandy, with most of the coastline being rocky and rustic, but the bright-blue-hued sea is spectacular. **Malta is Europe's best diving destination, but even snorkelling offers you a remarkable window into another world.** Golden Bay, Mellieha Bay, St Peter's Pool and the Blue Lagoon in the small island Comino are just some of the popular swimming spots.

## Arts & Entertainment

Although Malta is a small country, it has a great variety of world-class attractions. Its stunning historical sites regularly provide the backdrop for events such as concerts, plays or art exhibitions, many of which are free, or remarkably cheap. Every year promises a colourful blend of local and international events, entertainment and exhibitions – from the Carnival in February, to celebrating the arrival of spring in May, with a traditional music and song festival; and a packed social calendar from summer to October, featuring the Malta Jazz Festival, the Isle of MTV music event, Malta Arts Festival and the magic of Valletta's Notte Bianca.



## iGaming Hangouts

Most iGaming companies have offices in Sliema or St Julian's and staff tend to live in the vicinity. There are many venues and bars in this area, meaning that meeting others who work in the industry is guaranteed. There is also no shortage of iGaming social events and parties.

## Meetups & Conferences

A string of networking events and conferences are organised in Malta. The Summit of iGaming (SiGMA) and iGaming Idol offer operators, service providers and affiliates the opportunity to network with like-minded people and potential investors. GamingMalta also hosts several meetups per year.

## Nightlife

Malta is dotted with cocktail lounges, rooftop bars and nightclubs, with St. Julian's, Sliema and Bugibba being the entertainment hubs. Malta's capital city, Valletta, home to a number of trendy bars, is a stylish alternative to St. Julian's and attracts a crowd which is decidedly more upmarket than in the prime entertainment hubs. Gianpula, near Rabat, is Malta's largest open-air nightclub. **There are also a number of big music events hosted in Malta, including Annie Mac's acclaimed 'Lost and Found' in spring and June's Isle of MTV, both of which have become fixed dates in the European festival calendar.** July 2017 also saw the first edition of 'Unite with Tomorrowland Malta', an offshoot of the world-famous electronic music festival that takes place in Belgium.



## Kids Entertainment

While the warm climate and endless seas surrounding Malta make hanging out at the beach an obvious choice, there's so much more to do for families with children. All localities have at least one playground, while there are also a number of outdoor and indoor fun parks with trampolines and climbing ladders.

**But that's not all: a petting farm, the Playmobil fun park, Popeye Village, the Splash and Fun Water Park, the Malta National Aquarium, an indoor trampoline park, as well as the new interactive science centre 'Esplora' will also keep your kids entertained.**

Some of the best green areas and parks include San Anton Gardens in Attard, as well as the Upper Barrakka Garden and the Hastings Garden in Valletta. The forested Buskett Gardens near Dingli are also a great place to explore.

## Island Life, Island Fever

Honestly, it's hard to get bored with the sea only a few minutes away, but if you do need a change of scenery from time to time, there are very regular flights to most European cities, as well as ferry service to Sicily.

## Shopping

Malta has a wide array of shops, catering for all tastes and budgets. Most international chains and brands have a presence in the country, as well as a number of exclusive boutiques – not forgetting the traditional flea markets.

**The main shopping districts are Sliema and Valletta, and shops usually open from 10am to 7pm, although some close for lunch between 1pm and 4pm.**

Most are closed on Sundays, except for those located in busy tourist zones.



Malta's Mediterranean charms are fascinating the growing number of affluent foreigners, expats and globetrotting professionals looking for a permanent or temporary home. Living in Malta is a unique experience, especially for those used to a hectic city environment. The island's small size and wealth of entertainment options mean that in Malta it is possible to have it all: work hard, play hard and relax by the sea, all in one day.





## Cuisine

Maltese cuisine features many of the typical ingredients of the region: aubergines, tomatoes, peppers, courgettes, onions and garlic, together with freshly caught fish and seafood. Mediterranean herbs such as basil, mint, thyme, oregano and bay leaves are used in abundance, and flavours are enhanced by virgin olive oil. Typical year-round dishes include rabbit and bragioli (beef olives), and every meal is served with the renowned local bread made with sourdough and baked in a traditional wood-burning stone oven.

## Dining Out

Dining out in Malta can be a wonderful experience: there are many restaurants which stay open late to enable you to enjoy a pleasant Mediterranean evening: from smart city restaurants in Baroque palaces to family-run trattoria-style establishments or seafront fish restaurants, the choice is wide. Maltese food is served in most restaurants offering Mediterranean cuisine. **Spinola Bay is literally the kitchen of the iGaming industry, located at the heart of St. Julian's and offering a wide variety of traditional Maltese cuisines as well as Italian pizza, British fast-food, Japanese sushi; Chinese, Indian and Middle-Eastern cuisine; and even Jewish kosher.**

## Sports

Water sports are popular in Malta. The conditions for scuba diving and snorkelling are excellent, with great views of reefs, caves and fish shoals. The sea temperature never drops below 13 degrees Celsius, even in winter. The best dive sites can be found around the northern coast of Malta and Gozo. Besides diving, the Maltese Islands have other forms of sports to offer such as horse riding, hiking, climbing or sailing. Malta has one golf course, located at the Royal Malta Golf Club. Gyms can be found all over the island, as well as football and water polo clubs. There are also a number of highly popular sports events, including national water polo competitions, horse racing, paintball, clay pigeon shooting and football. Once a year the Rolex Middle Sea Race, a highly rated offshore classic, starts and ends in Malta, attracting some 80 participating yachts.

## Tipping

Gratuities are usually not included in a bill. As in most other European countries, tips in restaurants are usually around 10 to 15% of the total. Tipping at a bar is not expected, unless you are served by a waiter/waitress. Tipping is not the norm in taxis, however, you could tip up to 10 per cent of the fare.

## Driving

Malta has a road network of 1,500 kilometres, but it only takes one hour to cross the island. EU nationals (aged 18 and over) are allowed to drive on their existing licences, or exchange them for a Maltese one after having lived in the country for more than six months. **Non-EU nationals can drive on their existing valid licences for a maximum of 12 months from the date of their last arrival in Malta. As in the UK, cars drive on the left.**

Travelling time between Malta International Airport and an office or a home is rarely longer than 20 minutes, though this is dependent on the mode of transport, time of day and distance travelled. While distances in Malta are negligible, in similarity to many other successful business centres, the country suffers from traffic congestion during rush hours and it's advisable to avoid peak times.

## Public Transport

Being small enough to walk from one side of the island to the other in a day, makes getting around in Malta easy. The public transport system is safe and cheap. A network of routes and a fleet of modern buses provide an extensive service across Malta and Gozo. A train service does not exist in Malta.

## Car Hire & Taxis

Cars can be hired at reasonable rates compared to those in other Western European countries. All the major car rental companies have a presence in Malta. Local firms also offer this service, with or without a chauffeur. There are different types of taxis: the white taxis are fitted with meters and charge government-controlled prices – you can flag these down in the street; alternatively, there are taxis owned by private companies that charge a set price depending on the location. Taxis at the airport operate on a different system, with set fares which must be paid at the taxi ticket booth in the arrivals lounge.





## Car Import

The Maltese drive on the left, so it does not always make sense to import your own car. EU citizens are allowed to drive their cars in Malta for a period of six out of 12 months if they do not live in Malta. However, if they relocate their residency to Malta, they are required to exchange their licence plates to Maltese and pay vehicle registration tax, road tax and insurance. EU citizens owning a car for a minimum of 24 months in their former home country have the option to apply at Transport Malta for an exemption on Maltese vehicle registration tax.

## Handling the Paperwork

EU nationals can work in Malta without an employment licence. It is relatively easy to obtain everything you need to begin work as an EU national; social security numbers can now be obtained online. The social security number together with a promise of employment letter from your prospective employer are needed to apply for a tax number. After being issued a tax number, the employee needs to have an employment contract in original or copy, an engagement form from JobsPlus (the national employment agency), and a passport to apply for an eResidence card. A short trip to Floriana will guarantee you have your tax number within one to two weeks. A second trip to Valletta will be enough to obtain the engagement form, and then apply for a residence card during the same day. The residence card application needs to be submitted at the Department for Citizenship and Expatriate Affairs in Valletta. **Third-country nationals require work permits, however, the granting of permits to non-EU nationals working in the iGaming sector is usually not a problem.** Permits will be given on a temporary basis and have to be renewed every one to three years. The applicant must possess a professional qualification or a high degree of skill or experience.



## Income Taxes, Social Security & Take-Home Pay

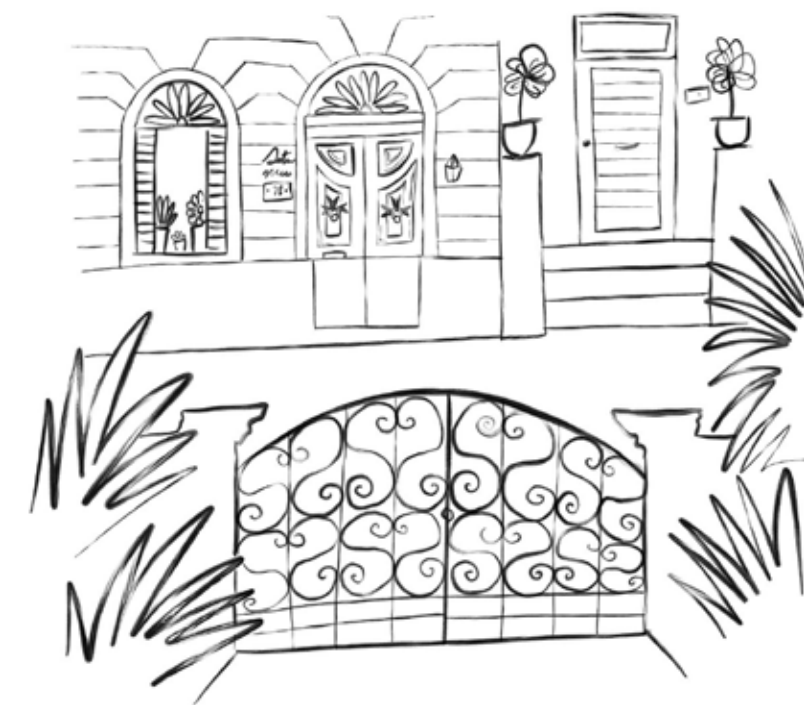
Malta has a progressive taxation system, under which individuals are taxed between 15 to 35% of their income. Highly qualified foreign professionals can benefit from a flat 15% tax rate on employment income. Both employers and employees each contribute 10% of gross salary to the social security system. In addition to the gaming industry paying above-average salaries when compared to the standard Maltese pay (approx. 30% higher), **all staff in Malta also benefit from take-home pay that is higher than in many other European countries, due to the relatively low taxes and contributions.**

## Visas & Embassies

As an EU nation, Malta's immigration laws are in line with EU policies. The country is part of the Schengen zone and EU nationals are free to live in Malta. Third-country nationals who are family members of EU nationals living in Malta can accompany them. Non-EU citizens can find details about visa-exempt countries and visa application procedures on the website of Identity Malta ([www.identitymalta.com](http://www.identitymalta.com)). The full list of foreign representations can also be accessed on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs [www.foreign.gov.mt](http://www.foreign.gov.mt).

## Standard of Living

Malta is also one of the easiest places to relocate to in the EU and residents enjoy an exceptional standard of living: 10 months of sunshine, an English-speaking population, and a Mediterranean island setting in which it is easy to find one's way around. Although Malta is a small country, it offers a variety of lifestyle choices that range from urban, cosmopolitan and luxurious to relaxed and rural. Boasting a diverse range of shopping, cultural and leisure activities, all at affordable rates, Malta provides expatriates with a unique opportunity to live every aspect of life to the full.





## Cost of Living

Although on the rise, the cost of living in Malta is one of the lowest in Europe and ranks somewhere in the middle in terms of a global league table. On average, the cost is one third of that in the world’s most expensive cities. Everyday groceries are on average more expensive in Malta than in Eastern European countries, however they are cheaper than in most Western countries and in global business centres.

Average rent for a one-bedroom apartment in the more popular Sliema/St. Julian’s area is around €700 per month, while in other localities it can be as low as €380. Banking, taxation, insurance, social security, utilities and communications services are sophisticated, professional and reliable, offering exceptional value without compromising on quality. State schools are free of charge, and the government pays for childcare services if both parents are working. There are no community taxes in Malta, and the collection of household waste is free for residents.

### Average rent prices in Malta

[ranging from one bedroom flats to detached houses]

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| Sliema, St. Julian’s, Gzira, Valletta (Central)   | €700 – €2,700 |
| Mellieha, St Paul’s Bay, Qawra, Bugibba (North)   | €400 – €2,100 |
| Vittoriosa, Senglea, Cospicua, Marsaskala (South) | €380 – €1,800 |

## Housing

The island offers a wide range of housing from contemporary high-rise apartments to traditional country houses and villas with a pool, furnished and unfurnished, all at competitive prices – in city, urban or more rural environments, according to lifestyle preferences. **Popular villa areas are Santa Maria Estate in Mellieha, as well as Madliena and High Ridge in the vicinity of St Julians/Sliema.**

A number of five-star developments have recently been built on the island, including Portomaso and Tigné Point, which offer luxury apartments surrounded by commercial, health, fitness and leisure facilities and command the highest prices and rents. Rent is paid monthly in advance. Utility costs are not included in rental charges and are charged depending on usage. Alternatives to renting a flat are hotel-style serviced apartments. Malta’s small size and excellent public transport facilities mean short commutes to work, no matter where you live.



## Removal / Shipping

There is no shortage of shipping and relocation companies to meet the demands of people intending to relocate to Malta. Sometimes the employer will have an in-house or preferred user who aims to make the move as smooth as possible. Relocation companies also offer assistance with every aspect of the move, ranging from furniture transportation to the sourcing of schools.

## Schools & Childcare

Malta provides an excellent standard of education. Children can be educated in one of the private international schools, or enrolled in the local state, church or independent schools. **All schools use the British model of education, which is compulsory between the ages of five and 16.** Most expats and cosmopolitan locals send their children to private schools. Leading schools are San Andrea School, San Anton School, Chiswick House School, St Martin’s College, St Edward’s College and Verdala International School. Tertiary-level education is offered through the University of Malta, as well as other institutes and private colleges. Childcare centres are run by the state, the church and private organisations. If both parents are working, childcare services are free. Kindergarten is not compulsory in Malta, but English-speaking kindergarten and pre-school facilities are widely available.

## Healthcare

Malta has one of the best health services in the world. The main general hospital is the state-of-the-art Mater Dei Hospital in Msida, while most towns and villages have their own state-run medical clinics. Malta also has several private clinics and hospitals, such as the renowned St James Hospital in Sliema. **EU nationals resident in Malta are eligible to receive free medical treatment at public hospitals and clinics, but foreign residents are still advised to take out private medical insurance.** EU food and beverage standards are strictly monitored in Malta, but it is still recommended to drink bottled, rather than tap water.

## Utilities

Energy and water supplies are stable. Tariffs differ between domestic and residential, with residential being the lower rate. Energy and water requirements are catered for by Enemalta and the Water Services Corporation respectively. Bottled gas is used in most households and can be purchased from delivery vans (in most areas once a week) or from special distribution centres. The electricity is 240 volts AC, 50 Hz, and sockets accept the three-pronged British plug model.



## Personal Financial Services

Malta offers a wide choice of banking options, including local, international and private banks. The banks operate a strong network of ATMs and branches across the islands. All major cards are issued and accepted. All banks offer 24-hour telephone and online banking services to conveniently and efficiently manage your financial affairs. A host of insurance companies offer all levels of cover, such as home, motor and health insurance. **If you plan to stay in Malta, it is advisable to apply for a Maltese eResidence document before opening a local bank account as this will speed up the process.** If you have not received the eResidence before opening a bank account, you can use your passport. It is absolutely necessary in this case to provide a bank statement indicating your previous foreign address. You can also use utility bills for this purpose. Although procedures vary depending on the bank, your banker will most likely also ask you for an employment contract, an initial deposit and a lease agreement for your accommodation. All banks also offer foreign-currency accounts. Banks in Malta are open in the mornings from Monday to Saturday, with some branches offering late opening hours on certain days such as Fridays.

## Home Help

Domestic and home help is relatively common in Malta. Many expatriates find they can afford domestic help that they could not have afforded at home. Most choose to employ a helper for cleaning, cooking, general household chores and child minding.

## Media & TV

Malta's bilingual culture is also reflected in the media landscape, with half the newspapers published in English. Foreign newspapers can also be easily purchased. In addition to satellite and cable TV, the high penetration of super-fast broadband has resulted in the launch of IPTV services. The content is diverse and international, including Italian, French, British and Russian programming. Radio programmes are primarily in Maltese with a number of English-language music stations.

## Notes

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## Notes

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