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Important tips for people planning to travel

Nowadays, the Maltese are becoming increasingly frequent travelers. It is important to bear in mind that when facing difficulties while traveling abroad, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs can assist. Our website - www.foreign.gov.mt - provides detailed advice to citizens of Malta planning to travel abroad. It also offers vital tips to tourists planning to visit the Maltese islands. It is highly recommended that one visits the website as part of one's travel preparations.

As a start and very early in the travel planning stage, one should ensure that travel documents are available and have not expired. Passports should be kept in a good condition and protected from any damage, such as careless scribbling or the tearing of pages. In the event that a passport is tampered with or is found to have missing pages, one may be denied entry into a country of destination. Some non-EU countries may also prevent travelers from entering the country if a passport does not have a date of expiry which is, at least, six months away from the expected date of entry into the country.

Visas

A 'visa' may be required for entry into non-EU countries. Travelers are advised to check in advance whether a visa is required for a particular country. This may be done by contacting either the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Valletta or the nearest embassy or consulate of the country of destination. ~~One may also require~~ a 'transit visa'. This is required when one plans to travel via another country prior to reaching the country of destination. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs strongly recommends that one should apply for a visa well in advance of the date of departure given that the process of issuing a visa may take time. Once a visa is issued, it is still important for the traveler to check that the visa issued covers the whole period of one's stay abroad. Travelers are warned that harsh penalties (fines, detention, or deportation) are imposed on those who risk extending their stay over and above the period indicated on a visa. ~~One must also strictly abide by the conditions~~ imposed by the visa regime, especially those regarding employment laws.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs, together with its Embassies and Consulates abroad, have no authority to issue visas to citizens of Malta living abroad. A list of Embassies and Consulates of Malta abroad can be found on the MFA website

www.foreign.gov.mt. Most of the Embassies and Consulates of Malta abroad have websites on which one may find all the relevant **information regarding visas and entrance regulations relevant to the countries they are accredited to.**

Passports

Passports are important documents and must be kept in a secure place given the high incidence of passport fraud worldwide. In the event that a passport is lost or stolen while traveling abroad, an Embassy or Consulate of Malta abroad will issue a 'temporary travelling document' which will enable one to travel back to Malta. As mentioned above, Embassies or Consulates of Malta abroad have no authority to issue new passports. One can expedite the process of issuing the 'temporary travel document' by:

- Keeping a separate identification document, apart from one's passport, such as a national identity card or a driving license;
- Keeping a photocopy of the passport page which contains the passport photo and personal details. Both should be kept separately from the passport. These may be left with close relatives or friends who can be easily contacted in case of passport loss or theft. Alternatively, one may scan photocopied passport pages and send them by e-mail to an account which one may have easy access to.

Travel insurance

A comprehensive travel insurance premium is essential for travelers. When facing difficulties, travelers and relatives alike, may encounter financial and logistical problems. This applies to long and short distance travelling. Although the European Health Insurance scheme offers health benefits to travelers travelling within the EU, in Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and Liechtenstein, it should not be considered as a replacement for the travel insurance issued by a licensed insurance company. For further details on how to obtain the European Health Insurance Card, log on to the website: <http://www.ehic.ie>.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Embassies and Consulates are not liable to pay for any medical or other expenses incurred by Maltese citizens travelling abroad.

The insurance certificate is as important as the passport. It is therefore advisable for one to retain two copies of the insurance document. One may carry one copy always during one's travel, keeping the other copy in a safe place, such as at the hotel where one is staying. It is important to keep the contact numbers that the health authorities may need to call before providing any medical services covered by the insurance policy.

It is also important to provide close friends or relatives in Malta with your insurance policy details as well as the telephone numbers of your insurance agency in case of an emergency.

As with any insurance policy, it is very important that full disclosure of all relevant information regarding any illness or health conditions one may suffer from is shared with the insurance agency when buying the insurance premium. Deliberately failing to do so, an insurance agency may choose to annul your insurance policy.

Frequent travellers

Frequent travelers are well advised to apply for an annual travel insurance policy. Offered by most insurance companies, this saves one the need to buy an insurance policy on every occasion one requires to travel abroad.

Sports and other hazardous activities

Travelers who are adventurous by nature and seek to participate in hazardous activities while abroad should ensure that their insurance policy covers these requirements, adequately. Although many travelers seek to insure themselves when going on a skiing holiday, some may also be tempted to hire a moped, to go diving or to try bungee jumping. Such activities may not be covered by an ordinary insurance policy. Besides, one should also be aware that, in case of proven alcohol or drug consumption, an insurance policy may be rendered invalid. Some insurance agencies may refuse to provide reimbursement if, for instance, it is proven that the necessary safety equipment, such as safety helmets, were not worn when an accident occurred or if the sports company providing the service is not a reputable one. In such cases, the traveler may face serious expenses, including hefty medical bills, which one may not be in a position to settle easily while abroad.

While travel requirements vary from one person to another, a reliable insurance policy must cover the following:

- Medical expenses;
- Illnesses or health conditions that a person may be suffering from;
- Sports or dangerous activities. One must read the insurance policy carefully, including the small print, and abide by all the policy obligations in order to avoid the nullification of the policy;
- The transportation of the corpse to Malta in case of death;
- The transportation of relatives in case of illness, injury or death;
- The replacement and/or transportation of vehicles to Malta;
- Air ambulance in case of medical evacuation.

Vaccinations and medicine

Especially if one is travelling to exotic destinations, one is advised to check if any type of vaccination is required at least six weeks before travelling. The necessary information may be obtained from any medical practitioner or from the Floriana Health Centre.

One would be wrong to assume that although one is travelling within the European continent, no vaccination is required.

One is also advised to check in advance whether any health precautions are required in the event that one is traveling to a destination country where cases of malaria or other diseases have been reported.

Travelers who are under regular medication should ensure that they take along adequate doses or quantities to sufficiently cover the duration of their stay abroad. They must also ensure to carry with them the medical prescription/s provided to them by their personal medical practitioner. One is advised to store all medicines (with or without a medical prescription) in their original container. This should prevent encountering problems during security controls at ports or airports.

Certain commonly prescribed medicines in Malta may be illegal in other countries. If one intends taking medication while traveling abroad, one would do well to check all indications prior to travelling. The same applies if one requires the use of syringes. Meanwhile, one is also advised to check whether medicine bought abroad is not illegal in Malta before travelling back to Malta.

General information

Before planning a vacation or travelling abroad, one is encouraged to visit the website of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs'- www.foreign.gov.mt and enter the 'Travel Advice' section. Here, one would be able to check whether there is any useful information about the country one intends visiting. This section offers updated and informed advice on any risks associated with the destination you are travelling to as well as any precautions one is bound to take before travelling. This section may also advise potential travelers to postpone any travelling plans to any particular destination which may pose serious risks.

Travelers are advised to take note of the contact details of the Embassy or Consulate of Malta situated nearest to the country of destination. If one intends travelling to a remote area or to zones known to be problematic for tourists, it is highly recommended that one registers with nearest Embassy or Consulate of Malta. When doing so, one should provide both personal and contact details, a description of one travel plans as well as details of relatives and/or friends in the Maltese islands. Travelers are advised to maintain regular contact with family and friends in order to avoid an official police search in case of serious circumstances enacting.

Travelers should research the country or region they plan visiting. It is vital for all concerned to be fully aware of the current situation prevalent there. Going through a basic tourist guide book prior to travelling is enough to prevent one from facing unnecessary inconveniences which could easily be avoided. This mostly applies to information about the cultural traditions of any given country, particularly with

respect to certain areas which pose a threat to the safety of tourists which pose certain health risks.

Consular assistance

How can the Ministry for Foreign Affairs assist you should you encounter problems during your stay abroad?

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs, supported by its Embassies and Consulates, provides a number of services to Maltese citizens who require assistance during their stay abroad, particularly in the following situations:

Illnesses or hospital needs

If one falls sick or requires hospitalization while travelling abroad, relatives or friends may contact the nearest Embassy or Consulate of Malta and request assistance. It is important to underscore however that Embassies, Consulates or Honorary Consuls of Malta abroad, cannot provide financial assistance, such as paying for hospital bills or other medical expenses. However, they can offer practical assistance to patients and relatives such as:

- Suggest local English speaking doctors as well as locally available medical facilities to Maltese patients;
- Help one to correspond with one's local insurance agency or with one's medical evacuation. Consuls may also contact one's relatives and friends in Malta;
- Communicate with health officials in case of difficulty, and, should the need arise, facilitate money transfers from one's relatives or friends in Malta;
- Visit Maltese patients in hospital. This depends on several circumstances, such as whether one is travelling alone, the distance between the embassy/consulate and the hospital where the patient is recovered. A consul may deliver other forms of assistance as the case may be.

Crime victims

Lost or stolen passports

In case of a lost or stolen passport while traveling abroad, the embassy or consulate can issue a temporary travelling document. This will allow one to travel back to Malta. As mentioned earlier, Embassies, Consulates or Consuls are not authorized to issue new passports. In such cases, one is obliged to present a police report testifying that one's passport has been lost or stolen, proving in so doing, one's identity and Maltese citizenship. Ideally, one is always advised to retain a copy of one's passport, separately.

An Embassy or Consulate should be able to issue a 'Temporary Travelling Document' in the shortest time possible. This may however take slightly longer should the request be made

between Friday and Sunday, or if one is situated far away from the closest Embassy or Consulate.

Lost/stolen money or credit cards

In the event of loss or theft of money or credit cards, the Embassy or Consulate of Malta can provide information on how one can have money transferred from Malta. In addition, assistance is also provided for one to contact the local insurance agency in order to be able to make the necessary arrangements. It should be mentioned that one would normally need a police report before one can submit a insurance claim with your insurance agency.

Victims of violence/accidents

Staff at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and officers serving within Embassies and Consulates stand ready to assist Maltese citizens who suffer accidents or fall victim to violence while travelling abroad. Whenever possible, officials will seek to visit a Maltese citizen both in hospital or in detention.

It should be clarified that the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, together with its staff in Embassies or Consulates, cannot offer legal advice or medical assistance, recommend or disburse lawyers, or pay for doctor's bills. They can, however, advise one on the availability of local lawyers and doctors; assist with the local police authorities or establish contact with the local insurance agency. This service becomes useful in the event that one is unable to communicate with the native language of the country concerned. If requested, officials may also assist in establishing contact with friends or relatives as well as offer to assist in one's transfer back to Malta.

In case of financial difficulties

A citizen of Malta who, due to unforeseen circumstances, ends up facing financial difficulties when travelling or working abroad, may seek the assistance of the nearest Embassy or Consulate of Malta.

The Embassy or Consulate will assist in establishing contact with a relative or friend to transfer money from accounts in Malta via a respectable agency. Alternatively, the embassy or consulate may also intervene to make arrangements for the transaction of funds to be made through the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. This service is provided against a modest administrative fee.

It is worth reminding that the Ministry for Foreign Affairs is not authorized to lend money or pay hotel bills or any other expenses incurred on behalf of a citizen of Malta who encounters similar financial difficulties.

Repatriation

When citizens of Malta, or their relatives, encounter serious financial difficulties when travelling or residing abroad, it may transpire that the best solution in resolving such difficulties would be to return them to Malta. There may also be instances when one is brought back to Malta due to health concerns or other serious problems. Embassies or Consulates of Malta remain available to assist whenever such instances occur.

Deaths abroad

The death of relatives and/or friends while travelling or residing abroad can be both painful and problematic. For the bereaved, the loss of someone dear can be aggravated by having to deal with a foreign bureaucracy and a language barrier. One may encounter difficulties when making transportation arrangements of the corpse to Malta or for burial ceremony in the country where the death occurred.

On being informed of the death of a citizen of Malta abroad, diplomatic staff at the nearest Embassy or Consulate will communicate with the Directorate responsible for Consular Services within the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The Directorate will undertake to inform relatives of the deceased without delay.

Embassy and Consular staff also undertake to assist with logistical requirements that arise following the passing away of a citizen of Malta abroad. Officials can, inter alia, assist in obtaining death certificates and other related documents from local authorities. They can also establish contact with a local undertaker who either makes the necessary arrangements for the burial of the deceased locally or else organize the transportation of the corpse back to Malta.

Relatives of the deceased should understand that the time required to transport the corpse back to Malta may vary according to the circumstances leading to the death or the relative country's bureaucratic practices. Although the process usually takes from one week to ten days, in some instances it may take much longer. The Embassy or Consulate will maintain ongoing contact with the authorities of the deceased with a view to keep relatives and friends continuously updated of developments.

While the Ministry's officials will do their utmost to respect the wishes and concerns of relatives and friends of the deceased with regard to funeral arrangements by acting as a point of contact with the local authorities and undertakers, it should be borne in mind that it may not always be possible to accommodate certain requests on account of the laws of the country, bad weather or other reasons over which neither the Embassy nor Consulate has any control.

It should also be noted that the Ministry for Foreign Affairs does

not cover any cost related to repatriation. In addition, it does not cover funeral expenses, expenses related to transport of relatives or friends of the deceased to and from any funeral taking place abroad or any costs related to the transport of relatives and/or friends accompanying the transfer of the deceased to Malta.

Contact with relatives of the deceased

When the death of a citizen of Malta occurs abroad, be it an act of violence or accident, it becomes necessary for the Embassy or Consulate to maintain contact with the victim's relatives all through the course of police and court investigations. When contact is made with the police authorities of the foreign country concerned, the Embassy or Consulate will keep relatives of the victim constantly updated of any new developments on the case as they occur. It should be understood that neither the Embassy/Consulate nor the Ministry for Foreign Affairs have any authority to carry out any investigations. The sole responsibility of all investigations and interrogations related to any act of violence or accident leading to the death of citizen of Malta abroad lies with the police and judicial authorities of the foreign country concerned.

Birth and Death Registration of citizens of Malta abroad

An efficient way for one to register the birth or death of citizen of Malta while being away from the Maltese islands is by having their birth or death certificates, issued by the country where the said birth or death took place, to relatives or friends in Malta who should be able to ascertain that the said certificates are on forwarded to the Department for Citizenship and Expatriate Affairs within Identity Malta.

The Department for Citizenship and Expatriate Affairs within Identity Malta issues an official letter certifying that the person on whose behalf the said birth or death certificate was submitted, is a citizen of Malta. This letter, accompanied by the birth or death certificate, as the case may be, issued by the foreign country, are to be sent to the Public Registry. The Public Registry will issue the necessary certificate within a period of seven to ten days.

Registration of marriages abroad

Citizens of Malta planning to marry abroad

Citizens of Malta who plan to get married abroad can apply for their birth certificate and matrimonial status at the Public Registry in Malta. These documents are to be authenticated (refer to the 'Documentations' section below) by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. It should be underscored that citizens of Malta who plan to get married abroad need to conform with the matrimonial legislations of the country where the marriage is planned to take place.

Registration of foreign marriages

Marriages taking place abroad which include a citizen of Malta as one of the partners can be registered at the Public Registry of Malta. In such cases, one will need the following:

- A copy of the original marriage certificate (read the 'Documentations' section below) authenticated by the certificate-issuing authority;
- An official letter issued by the Department for Citizenship and Expatriate Affairs that confirms Maltese citizenship;

This service is granted against an administrative fee of €2.33.

Marriages on board a ship

Citizens of Malta planning to get married on board a Maltese-registered ship within international waters can apply for the bans of marriage at the Marriage Registry in Malta. In such cases, one is to abide by all the obligations stipulated in the Marriage Act.

Arrest or detention abroad

Maltese citizens who are arrested or imprisoned abroad are entitled to consular assistance. When asked for, assistance will be given to all Maltese citizens without prejudice, irrespective of the seriousness of the case, whether the accused is innocent or guilty, and even if the person is under preventive arrest or already under court jurisdiction. In brief, the purpose of the consular assistance is to support Maltese citizens who, for one reason or other, find themselves in such situations.

The consular assistance is regulated by an international treaty known as: '*The Vienna Convention on Consular Relations (1964)*'. While consular assistance can be given to those with dual citizenship, the right of the citizen of Malta to receive consular assistance from the Embassy, Consulate or the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, is determined by the attitude of the country towards the circumstances of the arrest, or towards the person's other country of citizenship.

What the Ministry's officials can do

If one gets arrested while abroad, one has the right to request the local authorities concerned to inform the nearest Embassy or Consulate of Malta of his/her arrest. Whenever possible, and should prison authorities allow it, Embassy, Consulate or Ministry officials will visit the detained. Should a visit not be possible or not allowed, arrangements will be made for the said officials to contact the detained by telephone. Such visits are normally often authorized only after one is officially charged.

The Ministry's officials can:

- Assist in obtaining information on the prison where the citizen of Malta is being detained;
- Provide one with useful information about legal services available in the locality;
- Provide information concerning legal procedures prevalent in the country where the citizen of Malta is being detained.
- Only upon granted consent, the Ministry will inform relatives or friends about one's arrest;
- Inform one's relatives or friends about the prison where one is being detained;
- Assist in maintaining contact with relatives and friends;
- Ensure that one is not discriminated against as a foreign prisoner; that any requests that one might have regarding your security and treatment, including the protection of your health, reach the prison's authorities as well as any other authorities, if necessary;
- Inform one regarding the possibility or otherwise of serving part of the prison term in Malta as stipulated in the Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons.

There are limits as to the extent of assistance which the Ministry's officials can provide under such circumstances. For instance, Embassy, Consulate or Ministry officials cannot release anyone from prison; pay fines on anyone's behalf; settle any debts one may have with the local authorities. Similarly, Embassy, Consulate or Ministry officials are not authorized to offer legal advice; recommend or pay for lawyers' legal services; initiate legal procedures in one's name or get involved in the judicial procedures of the country of jurisdiction. Finally, Embassy, Consulate or Ministry officials have no authority to carry out criminal investigations in one's name or assume financial responsibility on anyone's behalf. Nevertheless, they can assist, whenever possible, to one's basic requirements, especially in prisons of developing countries.

The Strasbourg Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons

In the case where a citizen of Malta is arrested in a country that has ratified the '*Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons*', it should be possible, once court procedures are concluded (once appeal procedures have been exhausted), for one to exercise one's right to serve the rest of one's prison term in Malta. One may obtain further information in this regard either from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs or from the closest Embassy or Consulate of Malta.

Questions regarding the state of health or whereabouts of the person abroad

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Embassies and Consulates offer assistance to anyone who requests information about the health conditions or whereabouts of citizens of Malta, abroad. The Ministry facilitates contact between the person seeking information and the relevant police authorities within the country concerned. As mentioned earlier, the Ministry, its Embassies or Consulates are not authorized to carry out searches or engage in any detailed investigations.

Children

It is worthwhile informing oneself about certain rights and obligations arising from children enjoying dual citizenship, especially with when it comes to certain conditions related to parental custody. In this respect, one is well advised to seek proper guidance prior to granting consent for a passport to be issued for the child, or before allowing the child to travel, even if one is bound to accompany the child.

One is advised to exercise caution if the planned travel destination has not ratified *'The Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction'*, or if the planned travel destination is known to exercise gender or religious discrimination that may affect the family.

Documentation

Many countries, including Malta, require children to have their own passports. The practice of children having joint passports with their parents or guardians is being gradually phased out. If one still owns a joint passport with any of his children, one is advised to apply for a separate passport. As a minimum, one should check in advance whether the country of destination permits children to enter or leave the country without their own passport.

Single parents travelling with their children should be aware that certain countries may have laws that require the consent of the other parent before allowing entry into their country. One is advised to contact the Embassy or Consulate of Malta accredited to the country one plans to visit in order to check, in advance, whether certain obligations apply.

Kidnapping

The obligations mentioned above are necessary in order to facilitate the procedures of immigration officials when the need arises to search for children reported missing. They also serve as a deterrent against the possibility of a parent kidnapping his own children while undergoing court procedures for parental custody which may lead the parent to retain the children in another country without the consent of the other parent. In such cases, the other parent may exercise his or her right under the *'Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction'*. Under the obligations arising from the said Convention, kidnapped children

are to be repatriated to the country of birth or where they are resident in order that the court will be able to settle cases related to parental custody.

If the country in whose territory the child/children were kidnapped is not a signatory to the above-mentioned Convention, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs can assist by providing a list of available English-speaking lawyers and also provide information on the procedures and legal traditions of the country concerned. The Ministry can also help by establishing contact with the authorities and other organizations, as well as facilitating contact, whenever possible, with the kidnapped child or children.

Care and attention

Children are especially vulnerable when travelling with parents abroad. When travelling abroad with children, parents are well advised to keep them constantly under close attention. Before departure, parents should ensure that their children's daily requirements are available in the country of destination. In the case of very young children, one may wish to consider to have the child's own particulars and that of their parents, inclusive of contact numbers attached to them as a wrist band. Such information could turn out to be vital in case they go missing.

In the main, serious accidents which take place during holidays abroad are traffic or sea related. Parents are advised to exercise special caution and attention in similar situations when accompanied by their children.

Serious cases of emergency while abroad

Significant increase in global tourism and the growing threat of international terrorism has driven the Directorate for Consular Services of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to undergo preparations in the event that citizens of Malta are caught in emergency situations abroad. Emergency situations include terrorist attacks, conflicts and natural disasters. Natural disasters, such as the tsunami in Asia and the eruption of civil war in Lebanon in 2006, are but a few examples of emergency situations.

Emergency plans

The Directorate for Consular Services has drawn up an Emergency Plan which can be executed in case citizens of Malta abroad are caught in a serious case of emergency.

As part of this plan, the Ministry has set up a Crisis Management Unit which gets underway and engages staff to operate it immediately after it is informed that citizens of Malta are caught in a serious crisis situation. In such circumstances, the Ministry is prepared to activate free telephone lines for relatives and friends of citizens of Malta who happen to be present in the country where the crisis has occurred. This is done to ensure that the Ministry would be able to meet with the huge demand for information

from relatives and friends alike and to deal with the enquiries in the quickest possible time. Updates on the situation would also be made available on the Ministry's website: www.foreign.gov.mt

What should one do when caught in a serious crisis or emergency situation

Should one get caught in a serious crisis situation and is sure that both one's life and/or that of those accompanying is no longer under immediate threat, it is advisable that contact is immediately established with relatives and friends in order to put their minds at rest. Contact should also be established with the nearest Embassy or Consulate of Malta or the Ministry for Foreign Affairs for the very same purpose. This would assist officials focus on other pending and unresolved cases which require immediate attention. It is highly recommended that one visits the Ministry's website - www.foreign.gov.mt - for updates on a crisis situation or on any evacuation plans under consideration or actually taking place.

Should anyone get injured or goes missing while travelling in a destination undergoing a serious crisis situation, it is important, if at all possible, that whoever is accompanying the injured or missing person would get in touch with the nearest Embassy or Consulate of Malta or with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, without delay. In this regard, any information related to the nature of the injury or the possible whereabouts of the person/s gone missing would greatly assist officials to conduct their own support arrangements.

Who should be informed in the absence of an Embassy or Consulate of Malta in the country of destination.

In countries undergoing a serious crisis situation and where the Ministry for Foreign Affairs does not avail of an Embassy or Consulate, citizens of Malta are entitled, as citizens of the European Union, to consular assistance from any Embassy or Consulate of other member States of the European Union. One can get in touch with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs for more information in this regard.

Who is entitled to consular assistance?

The extent of consular assistance provided by the Embassy or Consulate to the citizen whose country they represent is regulated by the *Vienna Convention on Consular Relations (1964)*. Thus, a citizen of Malta enjoys the right to seek consular assistance from any Embassy or Consulate of Malta.

Although the Maltese diplomatic corps has grown considerably as did the number of its Embassies and Consulates abroad, the extent of its foreign representation remains limited and there remains a large number of countries where Malta enjoys no official resident representation or honorary consuls.

In such cases, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs strives to extend all consular assistance possible to assist any citizen of Malta caught in distress.

Dual citizenship

With effect from the 10th February 2000, there are no longer any restrictions under Maltese law on its citizens holding other citizenships. Dual citizens are entitled to hold a Maltese passport. Chapter Three of the Constitution of Malta was amended to allow citizens of Malta to retain citizenship of the other country without losing their own Maltese citizenship. This amendment has made it possible for Maltese citizens to retain dual citizenship for purposes of emigration or other circumstances.

However, while enjoying dual citizenship, the consular assistance which a citizen of Malta is entitled to when travelling to or residing in the other country of which one is also a citizen may be limited due to the international obligations and laws of that country. Some countries may not recognize Maltese citizenship, if you also happen to be a citizen of that same country. This may entail implications. Besides this, there may be some obligations such as military service or tax. Certain countries, including the United States of America and Australia may insist that one should enter and leave the country using the national passport. Put simply, a citizen of Malta who enjoys a dual citizenship should ensure to check all necessary requirements before travelling to the country of which one is also a citizen.

If a citizen of Malta enjoys multiple citizenship and happens to be carrying only a foreign passport when abroad, it may transpire that the local authorities may consider one to be a citizen of that country. As a result, authorities may decide that only consular assistance offered by the country that issued one's passport, is allowed.

Consular assistance from the European Union

If a citizen of Malta happens to be in a country where Malta does not have an Embassy nor Consulate, one is entitled to request assistance from any Embassy or Consulate belonging to any member State of the European Union.

Public services and complaints

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs does its utmost to provide the best possible service to the general public. It does so professionally, with dedication and courtesy. One understands that the public expects to be assisted efficiently and expeditiously. There are instances however when service delivery depends on several factors coming together and which require adequate time and a degree of understanding. The Ministry officials do acknowledge that certain situations may cause delay and inconvenience to the public. However, while prepared to tolerate and put up with certain behavior caused by stress, Ministry officials are not prepared to tolerate misconduct, attempts at bribery, insult or abuse by the general public

In case a member of the general public wishes to lodge a complaint regarding one of the Ministry's officials, one should request to do so personally with the official's immediate superior. Should one remain unsatisfied with the response provided, one can always submit a written complaint addressed to the Customer care unit at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The Ministry promises to give such complaints serious consideration and, if considered necessary, to take necessary action.

Citizenship

Marriage to foreigners

A foreign person who is married to a citizen of Malta has the right to apply for Maltese citizenship following five years of marriage and if they are still living together. If the request for a Maltese citizenship is met, the foreigner can also retain his/her original citizenship.

A foreign person may also apply for Maltese citizenship after separating from his/her Maltese spouse, provided they would have lived together for not less than five years.

Foreign widows/widowers can also qualify for Maltese citizenship if they would have been married for at least five years.

Passports

A normal Maltese Passport is valid for a period of ten years. One may apply for a new passport from the Passport Office, any local council or police station, or by logging on <https://identitymalta.com/passport-office/?lang=mt>

If one is a citizen of Malta, there is usually no need to present any certificates, especially if a Maltese passport had already issued under one's name. If one is not registered with the Public Registry, one is required to present a certificate of birth when applying for a passport.

If one is a citizen of Malta enjoying dual citizenship, one may also apply for a Maltese passport, provided that required documents, including the application form and passport photos, are presented. One also requires a letter issued by the Department of Citizenship and Expatriate Affairs which states that the Government of Malta considers the applicant as a beneficiary of the dual citizenship.

Other Consular Services provided by the Ministry

Document authentication and legalization

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs authenticates any documents issued locally for use abroad. Embassies and Consulates of Malta abroad provide services to legalize documents issued in the country of residence in order to be used in Malta. Such services are provided at a charge.

The authentication of a document implies that the signature, stamp or seal that appears on the document is genuine. The legalization of a document indicates that the document is recognized and accepted by the Maltese law courts.

The authentication and legalization of a document does not imply that its content is accurate or approved by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Apostille

The *Hague Convention of 1961* abolished the obligation that Foreign Public Documents (such as certificates of birth, marriage and death) are to be legalized by the signatory countries.

Nonetheless, countries that have ratified The Hague Convention can request that a document issued by a public authority would have an Apostille from the authorities of the country that issued the document.

The Apostille involves the addition of certification in the form of a stamp on the document itself or as an attachment. This certifies the country that issued the document, the identity and position of the individual that issued the document and the name of the authority that sealed or stamped the document.

Authentication

Any documents issued in Malta and which are to be authenticated or given an Apostille must be forwarded to:

The Directorate for Consular Services
Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Palazzo Parisio
Valletta

All documents that are to attain authentication or an Apostille must hold an original signature, stamp or seal from a Maltese Notary Public who is an authorized signatory from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Legalisation

Any other documents that need to be legalized abroad must be sent or taken to the nearest Embassy or Consulate of Malta.

There may be a fee levied for the above services.

List of embassies

AUSTRALIA

The Commonwealth of Australia

HIGH COMMISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

38 Culgoa Circuit, O'Malley ACT 2606,

Tel: 0061 (2) 6290 1724, 6290 1573

Emergency no 0061 (4) 3379 9746

Fax: 0061 (2) 6290 2453

mails: highcommission.canberra@gov.mt (General)

AUSTRIA

The Federal Republic of Austria

EMBASSY FOR THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

Operring 5/1, A-1010 Vienna, Austria

Tel: 0043 (1) 586 5010, 586 5020

Emergency no: 0043 664 820 8619 (after office hours)

VOIP General: 2204 8791; 2204 8792

Fax: 0043 (1) 5865 0109

Email: maltaembassy.vienna@gov.mt

BELGIUM

The Kingdom of Belgium

EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

25, Rue Archimède, B-1000 Brussels, Belgium

Tel: 0032 (0)2 343 0195; 0032 (02) 238 2608

VOIP: 2204 2600

Emergency Mob: 0032 47 117 6896

Fax: 0032 (0)2 230 4583

Email: maltaembassy.brussels@gov.mt

CHINA

The People's Republic of China

EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

1-51, San Li Tun Diplomatic Office Building, Chaoyang District,
Beijing 100600, People's Republic of China

VOIP: 2204 8700

Tel: 0086 (10) 6532 3114

Tel (Visa Section): 0086 (10) 6532 9750

Fax: 0086 (10) 6532 6125

Emergency mobile: 0086 1390 1017 417

Emails: maltaembassy.beijing@gov.mt (General)

visa.beijing@gov.mt (Visa Section)

DENMARK

The Kingdom of Denmark

EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

Lille Strandstræde 14B, mezz.
1254 Copenhagen K Tel:
0045 3315 3090
Fax: 0045 3315 3091
Emergency no: 0045 2570 6585
Email: maltaembassy.copenhagen@gov.mt

EGYPT

The Arab Republic of Egypt

EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

1 El, Saleh Ayoub Street, 2nd floor, Apt. 24, Zamalek, Cairo
VOIP: 2204 2023
Chancery Tel: 0020 (2) 2736 2368/9

Visa Section: Te 0020 1063827105
Fax: 0020 (2) 273 623 71
Email: maltaembassy.cairo@gov.mt

FRANCE

The French Republic

EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

23 rue d'Artois, (2nd floor), 75008 Paris, France
VOIP: 22048750
Tel: 0033 (1) 5659 7590
Mob: 0033 650 383278
Fax: 0033 (1) 4562 0036
Email: maltaembassy.paris@gov.mt

GERMANY

The Federal Republic of Germany

EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

Klingelhöferstrasse 7, 10785 Berlin,
Federal Republic of Germany
Tel: 0049 (0) 30 263 9110,
Emergency duty mob: 0049 (0) 170 8319 236
Fax: 0049 (0) 30 2639 1123
Email: maltaembassy.berlin@gov.mt

GREECE

The Hellenic Republic

EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

96, Vassilissis Sofias Avenue,
11528 Athens, Greece
Tel: (0030) 210 778 5138, 0030 210 778 5235
Fax: 0030 (210) 778 5242
Emergency no: (0030) 694 562 6075
Email: maltaembassy.athens@gov.mt

INDIA

The Republic of India

HIGH COMMISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

N60, Panchsheel Park, New Delhi 110 017, India
Tel: 0091 11 4767 4900
Fax: 0091 11 4767 4949
Emergency mobile: 0091 9910443535
Email: maltahighcommission.newdelhi@gov.mt

IRELAND

EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

15, Leeson Street Lower, Dublin 2
VOIP: 2204 2037
Tel: 00353 1 676 2340
Fax: 00353 1 676 6066
Mob: 00353 833 452 288
Email: maltaembassy.dublin@gov.mt

ISRAEL

The State of Israel

EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

50, Dizengoff Street, Top Tower, 14th Floor,
64332 Tel Aviv, Israel
General: 00972 3 6295916
VOIP: 2204 2143
Emg Mobile: 00972 5225 75 708
Fax: 00972 03 6295917
Email: maltaembassy.telaviv@gov.mt

ITALY

The Italian Republic

EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

12, Lungotevere Marzio, 00186 Rome, Italy
VOIP: 2204 2085, 2204 2087
Tel: 0039 (06) 687 9990, 687 9947, 687 7629
Fax: 0039 (06) 689 2687
Emergency mobile: 0039 (06) 687 9990 / 0039 348 2412437
Email: maltaembassy.rome@gov.mt

LIBYA

The Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
Palazzo Parisio, Merchants Street, Valletta VLT 1171,
Republic of Malta
Tel: 2124 2191
Fax: 2123 6604

THE NETHERLANDS

The Kingdom of the Netherlands

EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

Carnegielaan 4-14, 2517 KH, The Hague
Tel: 0031 (70) 356 1252, 360 2205
Fax: 0031 (70) 346 4796
Mobile: 0031 (0) 6 8356 5849
Email: maltaembassy.thehague@gov.mt

POLAND

The Republic of Poland

EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

Ul Wiśniowa 40 Lok 4
02 -520 Warsaw
Tel: 0048 22 646 46 39
Fax: 0048 22 646 46 85
Emergency no: 0048 502 436 502
Email: maltaembassy.warsaw@gov.mt

PORTUGAL

The Portuguese Republic

EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

Avenida da Liberdade 49, 5ºEsq.
1250 -139 Lisbon, Portugal. Tel:
00351 213 405 470

Fax: 00351 213 405 479
Emergency no: 00351 911 080 038
00 351 913 365 957
Email: maltaembassy.lisbon@gov.mt

RUSSIA

The Russian Federation

EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

219, Ent.8, Korovy Val 7,
Moscow 119049, Russian Federation
Tel: 007 (495) 237 1939, 230 2524
Fax: 007 (495) 237 2158
Emergency no: 007 (903) 729 9231
007 (905) 512 4111
Email: maltaembassy.moscow@gov.mt

SAUDI ARABIA

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Riyadh- Olaya District, 7733-
Abbas Al Rasheedi Street, PO Box 94361, Riyadh 11693
Tel: 00966 (11) 463 2345, 461 5315
Fax: 00966 (11) 463 3993
Emergency Mob: 00966504201824
Email: maltaembassy.riyadh@gov.mt

SPAIN

The Kingdom of Spain

EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

Paseo De La Castellana 45-6 DCHA, 28046 Madrid, Spain
Tel: 0034 913 913 061
Fax: 0034 913 913 066
Emergency Mob No: 0034 648 867 329
Email: maltaembassy.madrid@gov.mt

TUNISIA

The Republic of Tunisia

EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

Imm. Carthage Centre, Rue du Lac de Constance
B.P. 71, 1053 Les Berges du Lac,
Republic of Tunisia
Tel: 00216 (71) 965 811, (71) 963 652
Tel Consulate: 00216 (71) 965 215
Fax: 00216 (71) 965 977
Emergency no: 00216 244 32154
Email: maltaembassy.tunis@gov.mt
Email Consulate: maltaconsulate.tunis@gov.mt

UNITED KINGDOM

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

HIGH COMMISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

Malta House, 36-38 Piccadilly,
London W1J 0LE, U.K.
Tel: 0044 (0) 20 7292 4800
Fax: 0044 (0) 20 7734 1831, 7734 1832
Emergency no: 0044 783 650 3990
Visas email: visa.london@gov.mt
Email: maltahighcommission.london@gov.mt

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

2017 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.,
Washington, D.C. 20008, U.S.A.
Tel: 001 (202) 462 3611/2
Fax: 001 (202) 387 5470
Emergency mobile: 001 (202) 7163617
Email: maltaembassy.washington@gov.mt

Consuls General

AUSTRALIA

The Commonwealth of Australia

MELBOURNE

** with jurisdiction over the State of Victoria*

CONSULATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

Suite 613, 6th Floor

343, Little Collins Street,
Melbourne, VIC 3000
Tel: 061 (3) 9670 8427; (3) 9600 3953
Fax: 0061 (3) 9670 9451
Emergency Mobile: 0061 (0) 430 378 407
Email: maltaconsulate.melbourne@gov.mt

SYDNEY

** with jurisdiction over the State of New South Wales*

CONSULATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

Suite 10.04, Level 10,
31, Market Street, Sydney, NSW 2000
Tel: 0061 (02) 9262 9500
Fax: 0061 (02) 9264 4722
Emergency: 0061 04 30402177
Email: maltaconsulate.sydney@gov.mt

CANADA

TORONTO

** with jurisdiction over Canada*

CONSULATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

Sun Life Financial Centre, 3300 Bloor
Street West, Centre Tower -
10th Floor, Suite 3060,
Toronto, ON. M8X 2X3
Tel: 001 (416) 207 0922, 207 0989
Fax: 001 (416) 207 0986
Emergency no: 001 (416) 8324607
Email: maltaconsulate.toronto@gov.mt

CHINA

SHANGHAI

**with jurisdiction over Shanghai Municipality, Anhui Province,
Jiangs Province and Zhejiang Province*

CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

Magnolia Plaza, Room 1107,
777 Hongqiao Road
Shanghai, People's Republic of China
VOIP: 22048801
Tel: 0086 2162650166
Fax: 0086 2162650150
Email: maltaconsul.shanghai@gov.mt

TURKEY

The Republic of Turkey

ISTANBUL

**with jurisdiction over the territory of the Turkish Republic*

CONSULATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

16/11 Aydede Caddessi,
34437 Taksim, Istanbul
Tel: 0090 212 311 12 12
Fax: 0090 (212) 311 12 00
Emergency no: 0090 539 859 91 08
E-mail: maltaconsulate.istanbul@gov.mt

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

DUBAI

**with jurisdiction over the Emirates of Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman ,
Umm Al Quwain, Ras Al Khaimah and Fujairah*

CONSULATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

The Fairmont, Office 707, Sheikh Zayed
Road, PO Box 73664,
Dubai, UAE
Tel: 00971 (4) 331 1015
Fax: 00971 (4) 332 4368
Email: dubai.office@maltaenterprise.com

The People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

**with jurisdiction over the whole territory of Algeria*

CONSULATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

26, Rue des Freres Boufattit, El Biar, Algiers, 16034,
Algeria
Tel: 00213 (0) 21929717
Fax: 00213 (0) 21929744
VOIP: 00356 2204 8811
E-mail: maltaconsulate.algiers@gov.mt

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

PERMANENT REPRESENTATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

70 Allée de la Robertsau,
67000 Strasbourg, France
VOIP: 2204 2099
Tel: 0033 (3) 8824 7610
Fax: 0033 (3) 8824 7611
Email: malta-coe.strasbourg@gov.mt

UNITED NATIONS

European Office of the United Nations, its Specialised
Agencies and other International Organisations
(UN - Geneva)

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

26, Parc Château Banquet,

CH-1202 Geneva, Switzerland

Tel: 0041 (22) 901 0580

Fax: 0041 (22) 738 1120

Email: malta-un.geneva@gov.mt

UNITED NATIONS

** with jurisdiction over the states of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut in Consular matters (UN - New York)*

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

249, East 35th Street, New York, NY 10016, U.S.A. T

Tel: 001 (212) 725 2345

Fax: 001 (212) 779 7097

Emergency no: 001 646 707 1176

Email: malta-un.newyork@gov.mt

