



Sustainable Tourism Management

A Collection of Studies from Malta, Lebanon and Jordan



George Cassar
Editor

Sustainable Tourism Management

A Collection of Studies from
Malta, Lebanon and Jordan

George Cassar
Editor



Malta - 2015



Published by: Heland Project

Promoting socio-economic sustainable development through innovative technological actions for Mediterranean tourism heritage and landscape protection clusters.

This publication has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union under the ENPI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the University of Malta - Institute for Tourism, Travel and Culture and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union or of the Programme's management structures.

Copyright © Heland Project – University of Malta – 2015

Heland team: Nadia Theuma, George Cassar, Sarah Faith Azzopardi, Giusy Cardia

No part of this publication may be produced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the previous permission of the publisher.

ISBN: 978-99957-886-2-9

The 2007-2013 ENPI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme is a multilateral Cross-Border Cooperation initiative funded by the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). The Programme objective is to promote the sustainable and harmonious cooperation process at the Mediterranean Basin level by dealing with the common challenges and enhancing its endogenous potential. It finances cooperation projects as a contribution to the economic, social, environmental and cultural development of the Mediterranean region. The following 14 countries participate in the Programme: Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Palestinian Authority, Portugal, Spain, Syria, Tunisia. The Joint Managing Authority (JMA) is the Autonomous Region of Sardinia (Italy). Official Programme languages are Arabic, English and French.

The European Union is made up of 28 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

This book is not for sale

Design and Printing: Bonavia Offset Printers, Sliema, Malta

Contents

The Project	v
Sustainable Tourism - Mdina: A Situation Analysis of a Cultural Destination	3
<i>Nadia Theuma, George Cassar, Sarah Faith Azzopardi, Giuseppina Cardia</i>	
Tourism, Globalization and Identity - Mdina as a Maltese Case Study	27
<i>George Cassar, Nadia Theuma, Sarah Faith Azzopardi, Giuseppina Cardia</i>	
The Impact of New Emerging Technologies on the Tourism Sector: Evidence from Lebanon	47
<i>Andre Azouri, Ghada Salem, Ali Khreis, Marwan Azouri</i>	
Heritage and Landscape Sustainable Management in the Tourism Industry: Case studies from Lebanon	63
<i>Jad Abou Arrage, Ali Khreis, Amal El-Kurdi, Maha Mikhael, Fahd Nasr</i>	
مشروع هيلاند (HELAND project) "التطوير الاقتصادي الاجتماعي المستدام من خلال آليات وتقنيات متطورة تعمل على حفظ الإرث السياحي والطبيعي في منطقة حوض البحر الأبيض المتوسط"	91
<i>Jad Abou Arrage, Amal El Kurdi, Ali Khreis, Maha Mekhael, Yara Khreis, Maya Shames, Fahd Nasr</i>	
Sustainable Tourism Impacts in the City of Madaba, Jordan	103
<i>Monther M. Jamhawwi, Abdulla Al-Shorman, Zain A. Hajahjah, Roa'a J. Zidan</i>	
Gender Equality in the Tourism Industry: A Case Study from Madaba, Jordan	119
<i>Monther M. Jamhawwi, Abdulla Al-Shorman, Zain A. Hajahjah, Yasmin Okour, Marwa Alkhalidi</i>	

Sustainable Tourism - Mdina: A Situation Analysis of a Cultural Destination

Nadia Theuma
University of Malta

George Cassar
University of Malta

Sarah Faith Azzopardi
University of Malta

Giuseppina Cardia
University of Malta

Abstract

This paper looks at tourism in the walled town of Mdina. It discusses the main impacts of tourism on the city by examining the economic, social and cultural aspects. Furthermore it assesses the use of ICT in cultural heritage management. An examination of various aspects underlines how tourism has impacted the city in the past twenty years and how the residents of Mdina have, over time, adapted to tourism activity. Such activity leads to particular effects such as positive economic proceeds which in turn prompts the tourism enterprises within the city to do their best to become more accessible to visitors especially through better use of ICT. This helps the city to become more sustainable.

Keywords

Tourism; Cultural Heritage; Sustainable Indicators; Mdina; Malta; HELAND; ETIS

Sustainable Tourism - Mdina: A Situation Analysis of a Cultural Destination

Introduction

Tourism is an economic activity, which is now considered by all as an important industry. Nevertheless, this does not diminish its potential to serve as a tool for the positive development of society and a means of good governance, should the right principles of sustainability be implemented. In the past, tourism had been primarily viewed in terms of its economic advantages, marked by an increase to a country's revenue and expanded employment; however, the resources of the tourist destination were also extensively exploited, and this led to much uncontrolled development (Bogdan, 2011). Nevertheless, as tourism practices are part of human activity, these are continually being influenced and affected by changes experienced by society which remodel and redesign the daily realities of this industry. This prompts us to take a brief look at the stages that have affected tourism growth and sustainability along time. There being numerous paradigms and perspectives of development theory, it is not the intention of this paper, due to the restraints of length, to go deeply into each and every one of them, but it is pertinent to give at least a brief outline of some of the development theories.

Development Theories and Sustainable Development

Keynesian theory emerged during the Great Depression of the 1930s. It argued that growth should be controlled by national governments which adjust measures such as tax cuts and pay cuts to control demand and therefore ensure stable growth and employment (Keynes, 1936). The modernisation development paradigm developed by Rostow mostly along the 1950s and 1960s, is characterised by the importance given to economic development, industrialization and state involvement within societies (Rostow, 1960).

A criticism of the Modernisation theory provided by the Neo-Marxist Andre Gunder Frank prompted the advent of Dependency theory which rejected the idea that developing countries and regions should follow the development stages of developed countries by taking the route through agriculture and industrialization (Frank, 1969) to achieve growth. Modernisation theory argues that previous growth in western countries was achieved through colonialism where there was investment in technology and the buying of cheap raw resources from less developed countries and believes that, if developing countries want to achieve economic growth they should follow the same path of development. Dependency theory, however, does not support the Modernisation theory as it holds that though developing areas may presently be in a non-colonialism situation yet this does not necessarily mean that they are politically and economically independent; and they may also be weaker members in the world market economy and have distinctive features that indicate that they are not just primitive versions of developed countries.

Tourism Area Life Cycle theory (Butler, 1980) explains Dependency theory from a tourism perspective. It argues that dependency is a negative influence on tourism areas because, if balance is not achieved, there could be economic leakages from the local destination to core regions. Therefore, it continues, tourism destinations experience stable growth when there is less dependency.

Malta was a British colony from 1800 until it gained its political independence in 1964. However, the emergence of tourism as an economic activity showed that the dependency relationship lingered on in the post-independence era and to some extent is still present today. For many decades since 1964 Malta's incoming tourism market was highly dominated by British tourism and political relationships, and this limited diversification has weakened the tourism economy (Falzon, 2003). This British domination has, arguably, been mitigated by a more diversified source tourism market though it is still the strongest single source market for Malta (Malta Tourism Authority, 2014).

Although previous development theories incorporated important elements which are still relevant for the growth process in modern economies, they failed to mention other resource limitations, where, for example, the prediction that land is a limited resource and could bring economic growth to a standstill was not taken into consideration and therefore carrying capacity limitations are not given their due attention.

Empowerment theory criticizes the development theories, since it contends that an increase in GDP and political independence does not bring with it an increase in general prosperity. Real prosperity is achieved by development growth sustained by respecting fundamental human rights since, "Development must be woven around people and not people around development and it should empower individuals and groups rather than disempower them" (UNDP, 1993:1).



Up to 1964 Malta was a British colony and served as a naval base for the Royal Navy. In 1955 the only overseas base where Wrens (female members of the RN) were employed was Malta. This picture shows a common scene in the streets of Valletta when Wrens marched from their barracks to naval buildings

Sustainable development is a more recent development principle that underlines two elements, namely, the significance of development and the conditions required for sustainability. Similar to the Empowerment theory, it recognizes that “development is not just about increasing wealth but about a change in behavior, aspirations to an increase in the quality of life” (Tosun, 2000:2). Sustainable development reflects on the idea that the natural resources within a place are not unlimited. What is being emphasised in sustainable development is a level, not a growth, of physical resource use. This means that what needs to be developed is the qualitative capacity of using the world’s unlimited non-renewable resources to improve and create goods and services for satisfying human needs, without destroying the resource base which all humans and ecological systems depend upon (Tosun, 2000).

Sustainable Tourism Development

Sustainable Tourism Development is relatively new and has gained more significance in these last 20 years. It is an adaptive concept emerging from the parent concept of sustainable development and therefore contributes towards the same objectives and principles (Liu, 2003) related to the destination. Sustainable tourism focuses on quality, continuity and balance. Quality through sustainable tourism translates into a valuable experience for visitors, in the context of improving quality of life of communities and brings forth the significance of the natural environment. “Sustainable tourism cannot exist without the continuity of the natural resources, culture and customs of host communities” (Bulin and Călărețu, 2011: 62). This form of tourism aims to ensure a balance between all stakeholders including the tourism industry, social players, environmental representatives, the government, the local authority and local communities. In order to ensure continuity of cultural, natural and local community resources, the management strategy has to involve long-term planning and stakeholder engagement. “If we protect the environment in such a way as to bring about in the long run economic misery, we would be defeating the whole purpose of development. If we promote economic wellbeing in the short run, and lead to environmental and social degradation, we will be winning one battle and losing another, with the end result of ending up worse in the long run”. (Briguglio, 2003:n.p.) On the Malta scene, in the case of Mdina (see below, HELAND Project Pilot Site), the residents living within the small walled city have lamented that, due to the heavy influx of mass tourism they feel they are a museum display (Orbasli, 2000). The “question remains as to whether Mdina will be able to remain a place for its residents or will simply be turned into a commercial museum for visitors” (Ibid:98).

Destination Competitiveness Measurement Concepts

Sustainable tourism development is also closely linked to destination competitiveness, which attempts to measure tourism economic impacts and is used to develop destination management. For a destination to be competitive, the development of a tourism destination must be sustainable, not just in economic terms but also in environmental, social, cultural and political terms (Ritchie and Crouch, 2000, 2003). Moreover within the balance sought by sustainability principles, destination competitiveness emphasizes that the place must not only attract large numbers of tourists but must also be able to deliver an attractive tourism experience which surpasses that of competing destinations. The drive for an edge in the tourism experience



Mdina has been a favorite sight to visit by tourists for many decades and has had to accept its destiny and adapt to it. It is still trying to handle this reality up to this day (Source: MTA)

over the offer of others has nowadays developed into an increasingly elaborated objective of different destinations by leveraging on creative tourism and ICT. As Richards has observed, "Tourism destinations seeking to distinguish themselves from their increasingly numerous competitors have turned to culture as a means of distinction, and culture has been linked to tourism as a means of generating income and jobs" (2001:24). Moreover, with regard to the commercialization or 'serial reproduction' (Harvey 1989; Richards and Wilson 2006) of culture, it can be argued that cultural development is no longer sufficient to create distinction between destinations. These have thus started to replace culture-led development strategies with creative development, putting creativity and innovation on a higher level of importance in their development strategies, and in particularly in tourism development (Richards and Wilson, 2006).

Tourism competitiveness mostly takes the approach of the measurement of economic indicators. Tourism Satellite Accounts (TSA) are used by various destinations to measure the GDP, employment, tax revenues, tourism consumption and characteristics of tourism human resources. These have become a useful tool to bring out the necessary knowledge needed by various direct and indirect stakeholders to underline the necessary importance of tourism and its contribution towards the economy whilst it generates the products and services required for consumption by visitors. A criticism of TSA is that it fails to include the measurement of positive and negative tourism impacts comprising those environmental, social and cultural.

HELAND Project, Mdina Pilot Site – ETIS Indicator System

The Heland Project is a European framework project aimed at promoting socio-economic sustainable development through innovative technological actions for Mediterranean heritage tourism and landscapes protection clusters. It is a project under the 2007-2013 ENPI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme which is a multilateral Cross-Border Cooperation initiative funded by the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (Heland Project, n.d.).

For its objectives this Project is implementing a more comprehensive indicator system, that is, the European Tourism Indicator System (ETIS). In Malta, one chosen pilot site on which this tool has been used, is Mdina. The ETIS tool has been commissioned by the European Commission, through the DG Growth (formerly DG Enterprise and Industry), with the purpose to provide the tourism stakeholders with a toolkit that assists them in the measuring of sustainability impacts and benchmark their progress and performance in the future (DG Enterprise and Industry, 2013). The ETIS tool measures tourism impacts on a tourism destination level and takes into consideration the environmental, economic, social and cultural impacts on this destination. The ETIS is composed of 27 core and 40 optional indicators that can be integrated on an optional basis. The 67 indicators are divided into the four sustainability pillars which consist of: 4 core and 5 optional Destination Management impacts; 5 core and 9 optional Economic Value impacts; 7 core and 11 optional Social and Cultural impacts; and, 11 core and 15 optional Environmental impacts. The ETIS is a more comprehensive system based on sustainability principles quoted by Agenda 21, chapter 40, which states: “indicators of sustainable development need to be developed to provide solid bases for decision-making at all levels and to contribute to a self-regulating sustainability of integrated environment and development systems” (Briguglio, 2003: n.p.).



European Tourism Indicator System ETIS

For the Sustainable Management of Destinations



The Town of Mdina

The fortified small town of Mdina is located on the hilltop in the western central part of Malta. This town, has a history that goes back thousands of years as it was occupied successively by Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Romans and Byzantines. It has an Arab flavour with narrow winding streets traceable to Aghlabid and Fatimid Arab rule. Indeed, the present footprint originates from Arabic rule, who reduced the Punico-Roman enceinte by about two-thirds. It was the undisputed principal town of the Maltese Islands up until the time when the Knights of St John's arrived in Malta in 1530. Mdina has from at least medieval times hosted the palatial residences of the Maltese noble families who have continued to conserve and value their sumptuous and historic Renaissance and Baroque homes.

Mdina is one of the most popular tourism sites in Malta, welcoming 90 per cent of tourists that come to Malta, and which works out at about 1.3 million persons every year (MTA, 2013). This is a huge influx of tourists especially when taking into consideration that in Mdina there are only 237 residents (NSO 2011) dropping steadily from the 325 residents of 1992. In 1993, researchers had already indicated that the residents felt like they were being obliged to sacrifice their privacy and tranquillity for the national good without compensation from either government or tour operators (Boissevain, 1996) Questions that one may consider asking, given the increasing influx of tourism arrivals and the decrease of the resident population by 25 per cent in the past 20 years may include: How has the relationship between tourists and residents evolved? Has this relationship any effect on the decrease in the number of residents? Is there really a possibility that Mdina eventually becomes a museum town?

Methodology

For the present project, two studies were conducted. The first one dealt with the measurement of economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts of tourism on Mdina. This study was commenced in February 2014. The questionnaires were designed based on the sustainable tourism indicator tool in order to create questions applicable to the different stakeholders in Mdina including the police, the Local Council, residents, the business community, cultural attractions and visitors. For the sustainability research, 238 respondents, consisting mainly of international visitors, were selected using the random sampling method and stopped at various points in Mdina, including Greeks' Gate, Main Gate and Cathedral Square. Another 38 questionnaires were administered to Mdina residents. Questionnaires included closed ended questions that reflected the ETIS indicator toolkit. Another 36 in-depth interviews were conducted with each of the tourism cultural attractions. The tourism business community including restaurants, bars, and souvenir shops, while the cultural attractions comprised museums and audio visual attractions. Given that in Mdina there is only one hotel within the walled space, a separate in-depth interview was designed specifically to address the hotel accommodation sector. Data compiled from the questionnaires was then processed and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

The second study dealt with ICT and cultural tourism attractions and was begun in February 2014. It aimed at discovering the level of penetration of ICT among Mdina's cultural tourism attractions and to assess the visitors' perception of ICT on Mdina as a tourism destination. In

March 2014 one questionnaire for cultural attractions and another for international visitors were designed and as from April the collection of primary data was undertaken. For the ICT research, 100 respondents consisting mainly of international visitors, were selected using the random sampling method. This was administered at various points in Mdina including Greeks' Gate, Main Gate and Cathedral Square.

For the ICT enterprise, 9 cultural attractions were interviewed. Out of these, 1 is a historic house museum, 3 are religious museums, 3 are audio visual-attractions, 1 is a stately home, and 1 is an archive.

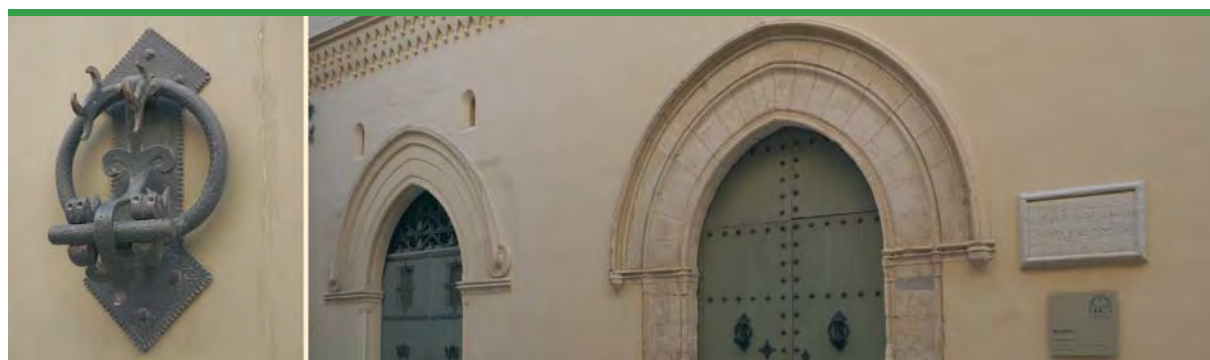
The findings related to the Sustainable Tourism Indicators

Pilot Site Management

From the in-depth interview with the representative of Mdina Local Council, it emerged that Mdina has no sustainable tourism strategy or plan and neither is it represented by a pilot site management organization.

As regards tourism and cultural attractions, 2 (28.6%) out of the 7 cultural attractions, and 4 (13.8%) out of 29 tourism enterprises stated that they had an environmental and/or sustainable certification as part of their tourism management. Regarding Corporate Social Responsibility Policy (CSR), 3 (42.9%) out of 7 cultural attractions and 5 (17.2%) out of 29 tourism enterprises have a CSR Policy. Despite the fact that most cultural and tourism enterprises do not carry out corporate social responsibility measures and activities to positively affect the environment and local community, on the other hand 6 (85.7%) out of 7 cultural attractions stated that they communicate sustainability efforts to tourists and the general public. Therefore, results show that there is more effective communication and marketing of sustainability efforts to tell tourists about what is being done rather than actually implementing CSR policies themselves. The number of tourism enterprises that communicate their sustainability measures reached 27.2 per cent, a number which is similar to that of those implemented CSR within Mdina.

Only 15 (40.6%) residents out of 37 confirmed that they are involved in the planning and development of tourism. On the other hand, 83.1% of visitors tend to be very satisfied with the tourism experience in Mdina and 80.3 % are aware of sustainability efforts within the pilot site. The number of repeat tourists is that of 22%, most of these having visited Malta more than once in the last 30 years.



The charm of Mdina - an elaborated door knob and medieval features

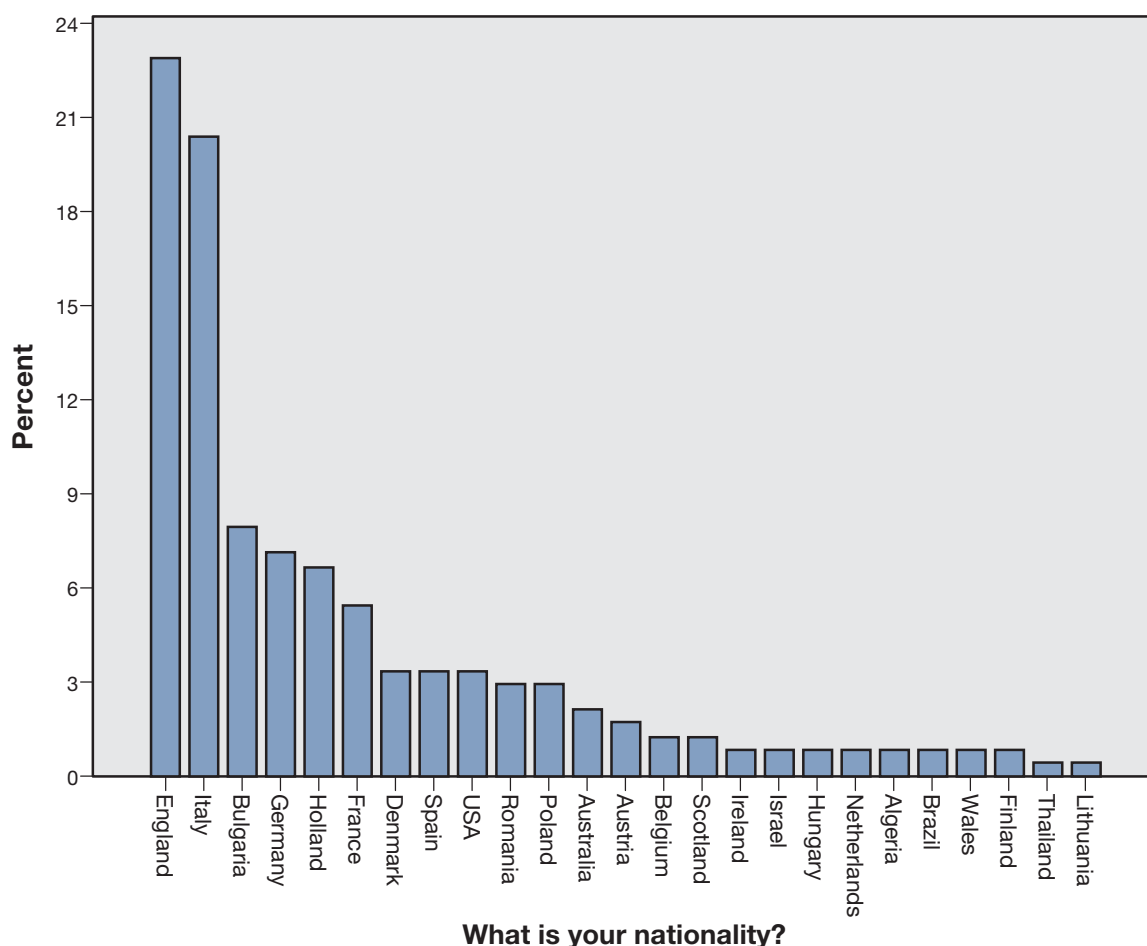
Economic Value

- Tourist Profile**

The results obtained, as shown in Table 1 and from the visual representation of Graph 1, the most prominent international tourism arrivals to Mdina are from the UK (22.9%) and Italy (20.4%). This reflects the distribution of visitors to the Maltese Islands.

What is your nationality?	Frequency	Percentage
Finland	2	0.8%
England	55	22.9%
Germany	17	7.1%
Israel	2	0.8%
Bulgaria	19	7.9%
Spain	8	3.3%
Ireland	2	0.8%
Denmark	8	3.3%
Italy	49	20.4%
France	13	5.4%
Lithuania	1	0.4%
Thailand	1	0.4%
Wales	2	0.8%
Australia	5	2.1%
Poland	7	2.9%
Scotland	3	1.3%
USA	8	3.3%
Holland	16	6.7%
Austria	4	1.7%
Brazil	2	0.8%
Romania	7	2.9%
Belgium	3	1.3%
Algeria	2	0.8%
Netherlands	2	0.8%
Hungary	2	0.8%

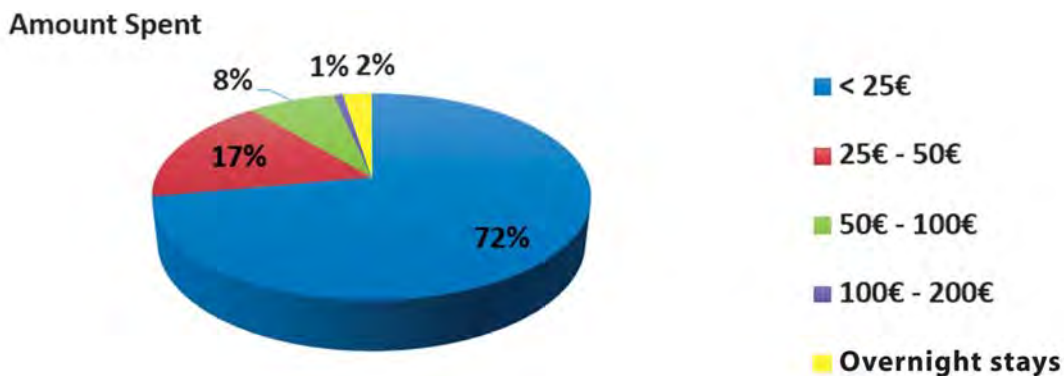
Table 1: Tourist source markets



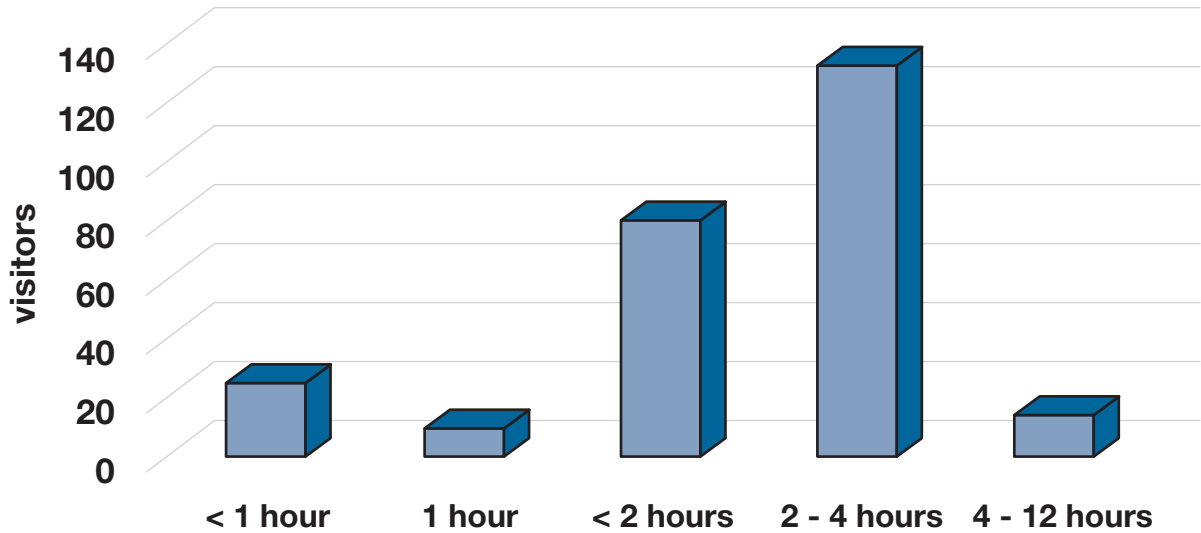
Graph 1: Graphical representation of tourist source markets

• **Daily Visitor Expenditure and Length of Stay**

The visitor expenditure is based on such items as accommodation, transportation, food & drinks, shopping, entertainment, and entrance to museums. The total per capita expenditure is of Euro 910 (MTA 2014). From the graphical representation below (Graph 2) it transpires that expenditure by visitors to Mdina ranges from Euro 200 to less than Euro 25 with the majority, that is 72%, claiming that they spend less than Euro25 during their visit to Mdina. This might be explained considering the relatively short stay of tourists most of whom remain on the site between 2 to 4 hours while only very few stay for half a day or a full day (Graph 3). Only 4 (1.68%) visitors out of 238 are overnight visitors.



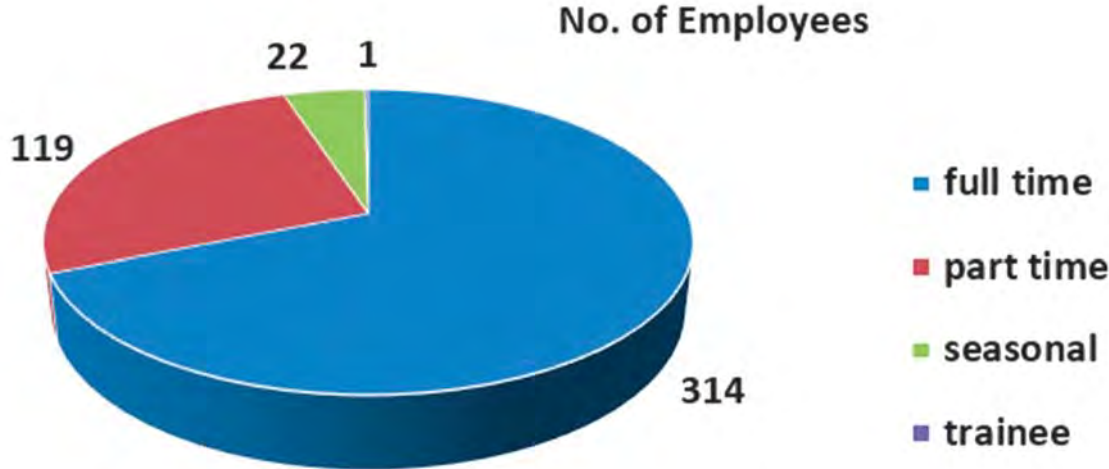
Graph 2: Graphical representation of daily expenditure of tourists in Mdina



Graph 3: Graphical representation of length of stay of visitors in Mdina

Regarding cooperation from the business community when it comes to marketing a common strategy for Mdina, only 17% of business enterprises stated that they participate in cooperative activities. Such cooperative activities include involvement in associations of tourism enterprise and common promotional advertising programmes. This lack of community efforts to promote sustainability measures from a community point of view is not mitigated by local authorities since, from the in-depth interview with the Local Council it resulted that Mdina lacks a Trade Destination Policy for the promotion of the purchase of local trade products and/or fair products and services.

Regarding the quality and quantity of employees, 456 employees were employed throughout the year on full time, part time, seasonal and traineeship basis.



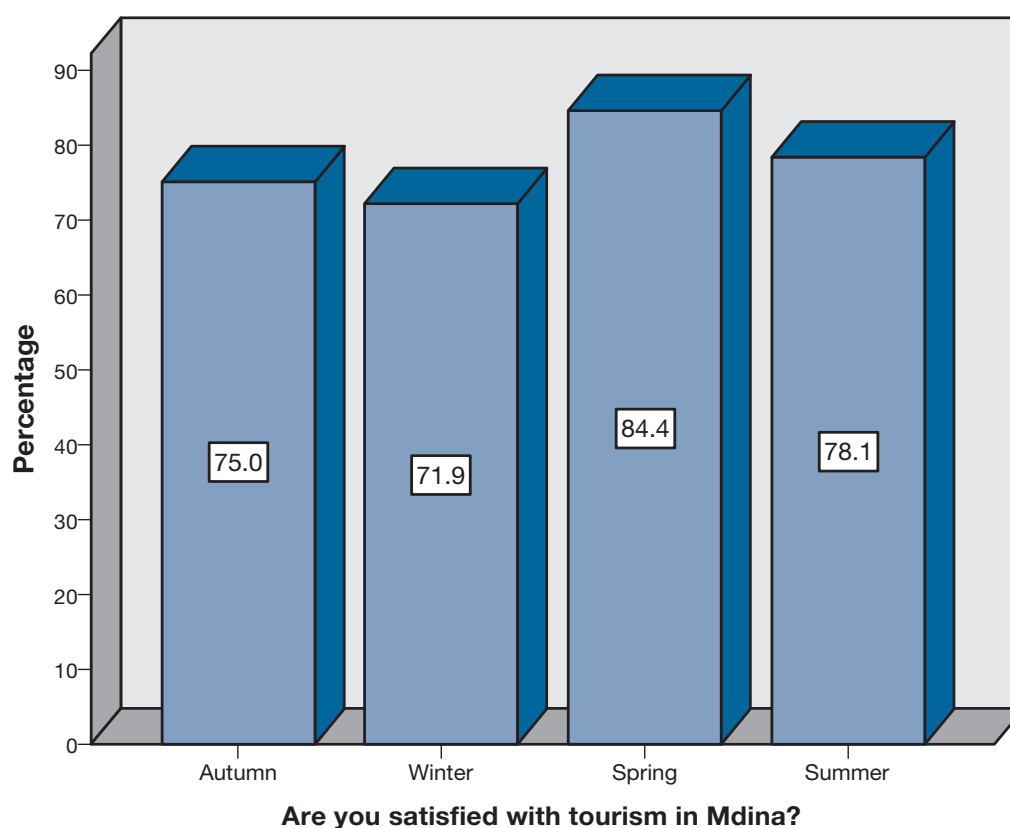
Graph 4: Graphical representation of number of employees

- **Cultural/Social Impact**

Tourism arrivals in Mdina reach 1.3 million visitors per annum whilst the local population is that of 237 residents. Despite this imbalance between tourist and resident numbers, generally locals are satisfied with tourism in spring (84.4%), in summer (78.1%), in autumn (75%) and in winter (71.9%) as seen in Table 2 and Graph 5.

Are you satisfied with tourism in Mdina?	Frequency	Percentage
Autumn	24	75.0%
Winter	23	71.9%
Spring	27	84.4%
Summer	25	78.1%

Table 2: Residents' satisfaction with tourism in Mdina by season

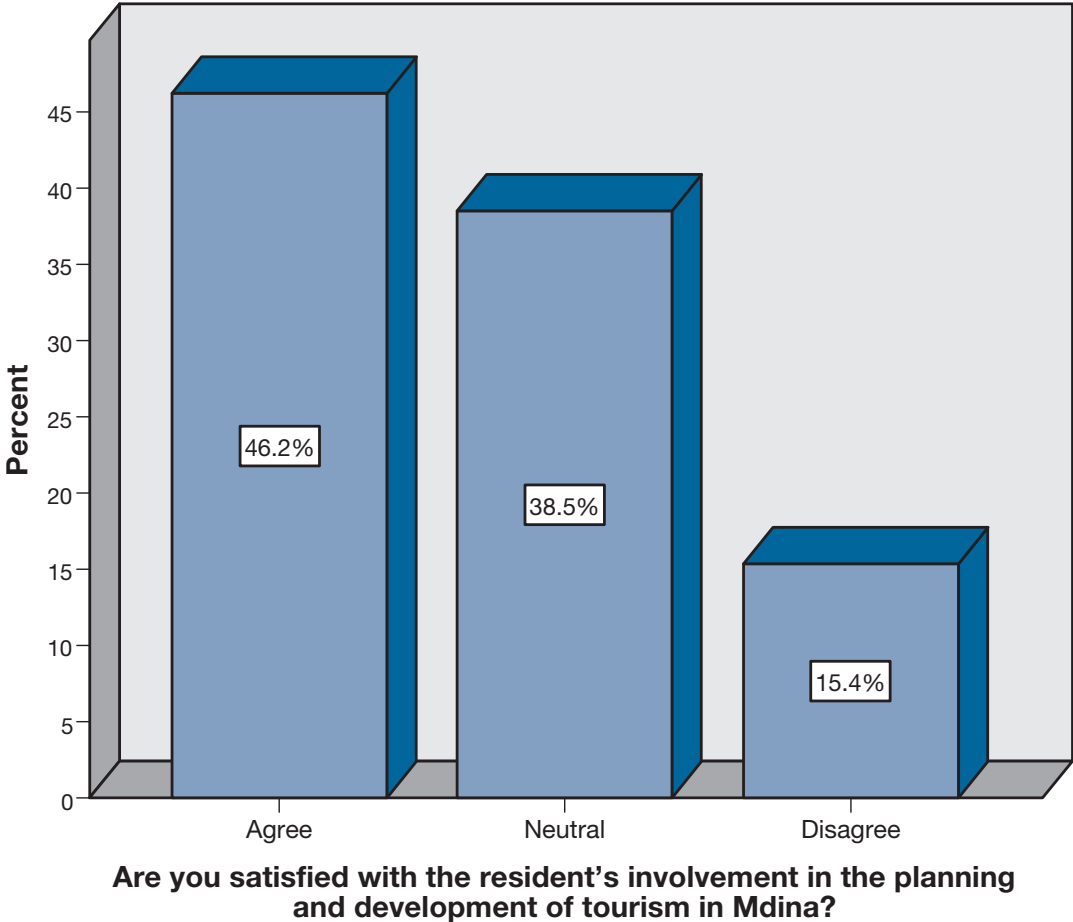


Graph 5: Graphical representation showing satisfaction levels of residents in Mdina by season

The satisfaction of locals with tourism in general could be explained to some extent when seeing their reply to the question about their involvement in the planning of tourism in Mdina, as shown in Table 3 and Graph 6.

Are you satisfied with the residents' involvement in the planning and development of tourism in Mdina?	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	18	46.2%
Neutral	15	38.5%
Disagree	6	15.4%

Table 3: Residents' involvement in tourism planning in Mdina

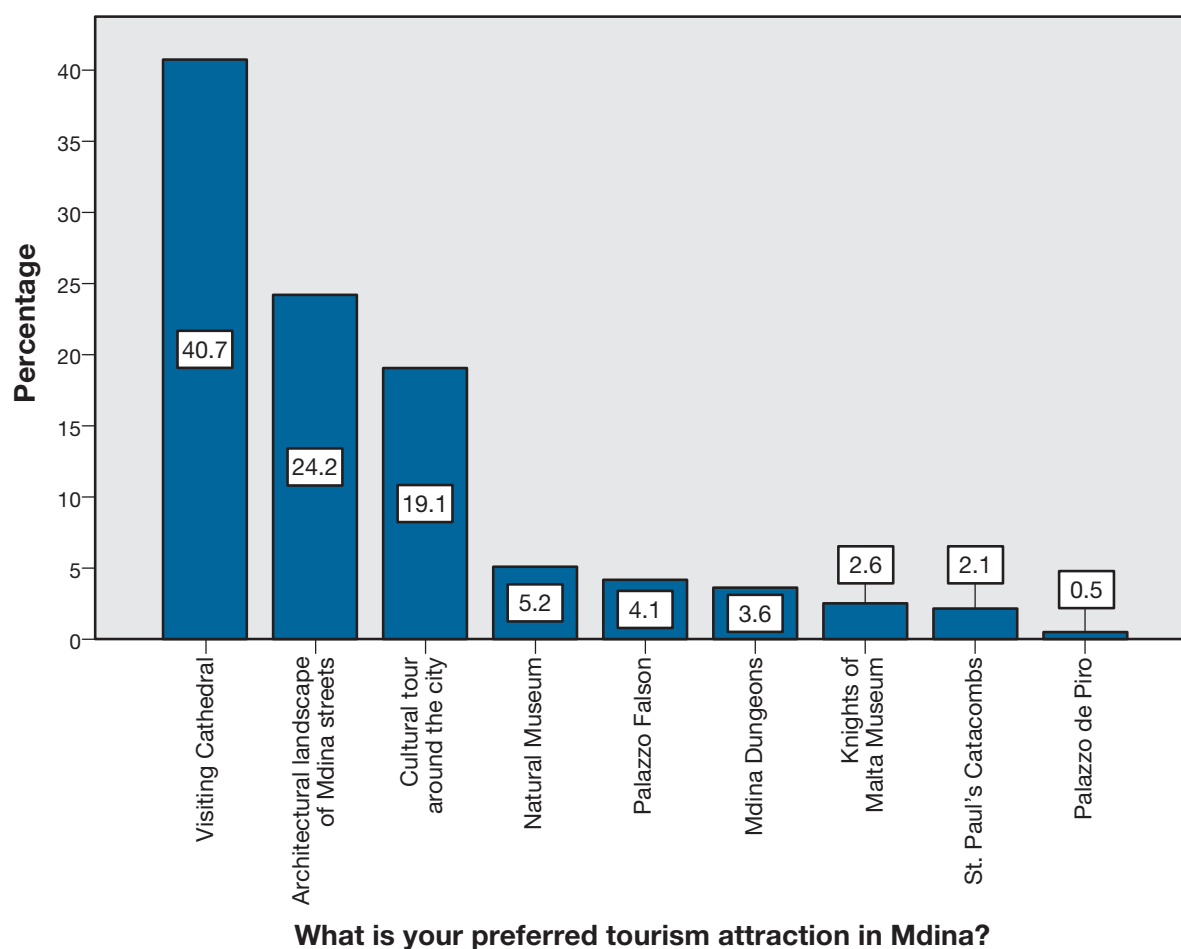


Graph 6: Graphical representation showing residents' involvement in tourism planning in Mdina

When tourists were asked to indicate the most popular cultural tourism attractions in Mdina, the more highly preferred attractions were the Cathedral and the architectural landscape of the Mdina streets. This shows that a good 24 per cent of visitors preferred to visit Mdina and just walk through the winding streets instead of visiting other attractions.

What is your preferred tourism attraction in Mdina?	Frequency	Percentage
Mdina Dungeons	7	3.6%
Visiting the Cathedral	79	40.7%
Architectural landscape of Mdina streets	47	24.2%
Cultural tour around the city	37	19.1%
Palazzo Falson	8	4.1%
Palazzo de Piro	1	0.5%
Natural Museum	10	5.2%
Knights of Malta Museum	5	2.6%
St Paul's Catacombs	4	2.1%

Table 4: Tourists' preferred attractions in Mdina



Graph 7: Tourists' preferred attractions in Mdina



Tourists are satisfied with Mdina and especially seek visiting the streets and the interesting architecture (left) and the cathedral (right)

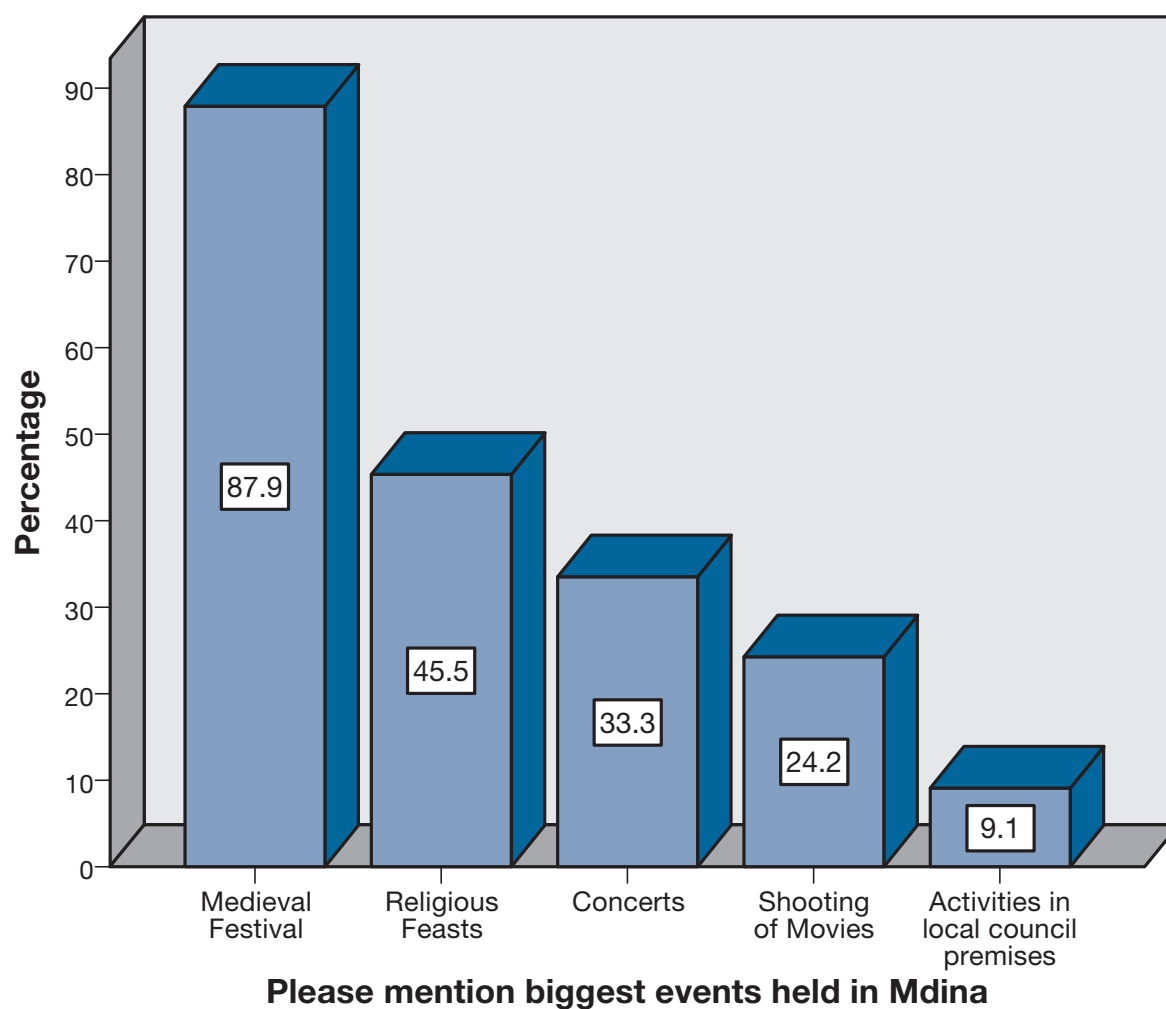


The narrow streets of Mdina entice many tourists to walk through them and explore what is around the corner (Photo by: Mario Galea - viewingmalta.com)

Residents were asked about the most popular events in Mdina and which of those events were the most authentic and the ones that reflected their local cultural traditions. The event scoring high from the locals' perspective was the Medieval Festival, an annual event organized by various tourism stakeholders in Malta including the Malta Tourism Authority, re-enactment groups, and cultural and tourism attractions.

Please mention biggest events held in Mdina	Frequency	Percentage
Medieval Festival	29	87.9%
Religious Feasts	15	45.5%
Concerts	11	33.3%
Shooting of Movies	8	24.2%
Activities in local council premises	3	9.1%

Table 5: Most popular cultural tourism events in Mdina

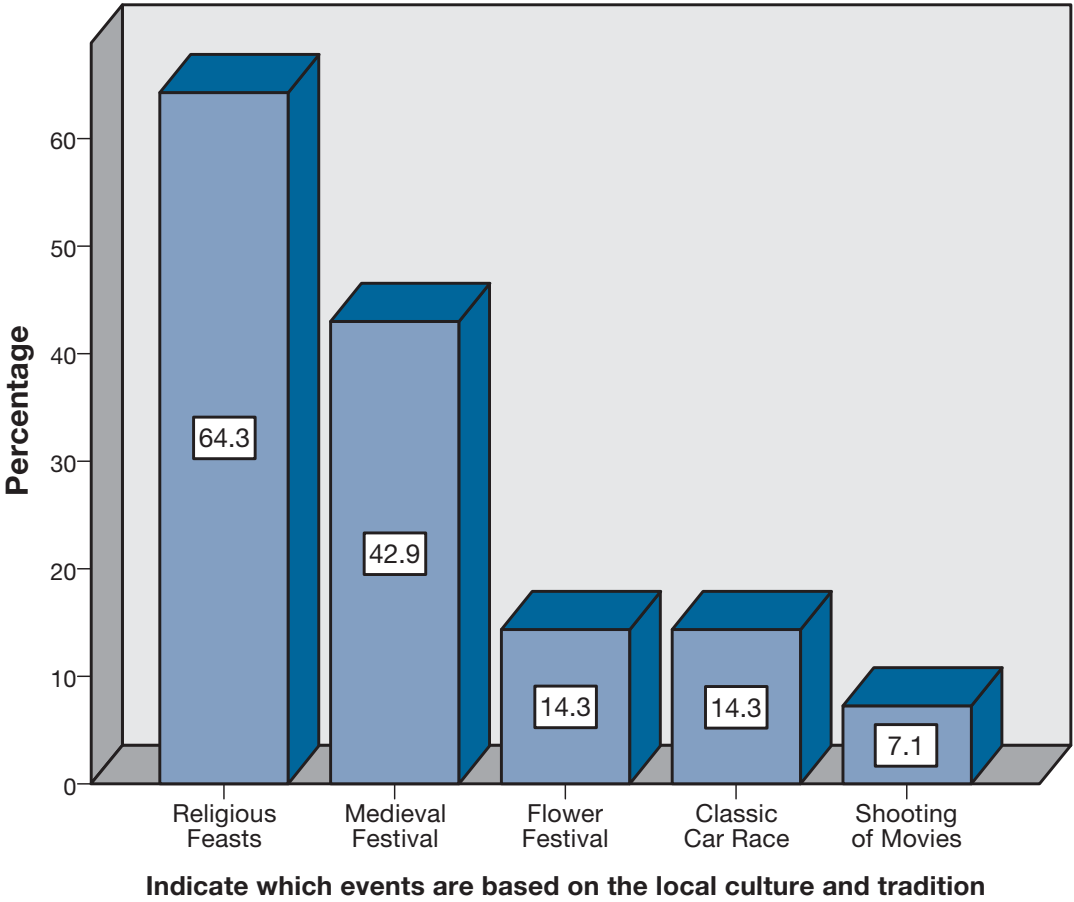


Graph 8: Most popular cultural tourism events in Mdina

When it came to authentic events tied to local culture and tradition in Mdina, from Table 6 and Graph 9, it transpires that religious events ranked first, gaining a score of 64.3% of replies. This shows that despite the fact that the most popular events are the ones organized by stakeholders from outside Mdina’s local community and are very popular since they are mostly advertised and visited by tourists, on the other hand the ceremonies and events that most represent the local traditions of the community are the ones that are the ‘living ceremonies’ practised by the residents of the place. The question that begs an answer here would be: ‘Is Mdina’s tourism product moving towards a commercialized organized offer or is it still being true to the local cultural traditions of the place?’

Indicate which events are based on the local culture and tradition	Frequency	Percentage
Medieval Festival	6	42.9%
Religious Feasts	9	64.3%
Shooting of Movies	1	7.1%
Classic Car Race	2	14.3%
Flower Festival	2	14.3%

Table 6: Most popular cultural tourism events in Mdina



Graph 9: Cultural tourism events based on local culture and tradition



Polyptych of St Paul found in the Cathedral (Source: www.gov.mt)



Religion in Mdina - St. Agatha's Chapel, St Roque Chapel, St Peter in Chains Chapel

ICT - Cultural Attractions and Visitors

- **Community Involvement and Social Activities**

Regarding social activities, 77 per cent (7 sites) of cultural sites responded that they organised social activities; 66 per cent (6 sites) stated that the main type of social activities were exhibitions; 1 did fundraising; 3 responded that their site is utilised as a meeting space; and 3 fell under the category 'other'. Further social activities included religious and spiritual workshops, tea-time concerts and a living space for retreats; while 2 responded that social activities consisted of workshops for children and old people. This question was offered as a multiple choice response, where the respondent could choose more than one type of social activity organised within the site. All 9 sites (100%) stated that they targeted both local and foreign visitors.

- **ICT and Community Involvement**

There were 7 (77%) out of the 9 sites that responded which utilise ICT for social activities. The type of IT utilised include social media, newsletters, IT systems for audio visual shows and for digitisation of documents. A multiple choice question was put regarding how ICT is viewed within a site: 7 respondents replied that ICT was viewed as a way to promote communication and marketing activities to engage with the audience; 3 replied that ICT is viewed as a way to exhibit the artefacts; and 1 included ICT as a way to manage the organisation, and to categorise and document artefacts.

- **ICT Presence within Heritage Cultural Sites**

With regard to the proficient use of the internet by employees, 8 (88%) out of the 9 sites replied that more than 50 per cent of their employees are proficient in the use of the Internet. Only one replied that less than 10 per cent of the employees were skilled in the use of Internet. On the other hand 7 (77%) out of 9 respondents claimed that their employees communicate with their suppliers and internal management utilising ICT, specifically e-mail; 2 responded that employees do not utilise ICT for communication with suppliers; while 8 (88%) out of 9 of the respondents claimed that employees are given access and the use of internet to communicate with clients electronically.

All the 9 respondents claimed that their sites have internet access and have a 'good' download speed and internet performance.

The 9 respondents also claimed that they had a website for the cultural site, with 4 (44%) stating that the primary aim of the website was to provide information about the cultural value of the site to the visitors; 3 replied that the website was used as a communication tool between the heritage site personnel and potential and present visitors, and 2 said that the primary function of the website was e-commerce.

Regarding the technology utilised to enhance the presentation of the artefacts and interpretation, none of the 9 respondents claimed to have apps for their site. Only 2 replied that artefacts are digitised in order to be used through various technological means. All respondents said that they do not have QR codes; 3 had self-guided tours, 1 had 3D audio visual, and 5 utilised ICT for signage. Again, 5 out of the 9 heritage sites had Multilanguage function for the interpretation of the artefacts.

Concerning the ICT and Innovation surveys to visitors, 67 per cent of the visitor respondents claimed that internet is important within a destination. Moreover, 58 per cent of international visitors stated that information stands to display guidelines and knowledge about Mdina take priority over wifi spots or 3G accessibility. 97 per cent of international visitors to Mdina had a smartphone with 58 per cent of visitors preferring to use the smart phone within a destination for maps and directions about the place. When asked whether they would prefer an electronic virtual guide rather than a personal local guide, 47 per cent replied that they agreed to have electronic virtual guides around Mdina, with 31 per cent preferring the personal attention of a local person, while 22 per cent kept a neutral stance.

Discussion and Conclusions

This paper has shown that the walled town of Mdina has adapted to the tourism influx which in the span of 20 years has increased from ca 950,000 in 1993 (Boissevain, 1996) to over 1.3 million visitors in 2014. This adaptation has however taken place at a cost. Residents in the city have declined and the few services present in 1993 aimed for residents have completely disappeared whilst the number of tourism-related attractions have increased. In a classic analysis of tourism impact assessment this would imply a negative trend. However, the study conducted in the past year has shown that residents reacted well to the changes happening around them. Clearly tourism is leaving economic impacts in that expenditure although on the low side is sufficient given that the majority of visitors spend between 2-4 hours in the city, and employment is rather high with tourism generating employment for more than 400 persons who live in the city and in the nearby towns.

The study on the use of ICT in the cultural sector has shown that visitors are keen to have more access to ICT for them to be able to enjoy the city. On their part, the enterprises within the city are willing to increase both the use and access to ICT. The study shows that further benefits could be obtained by using ICT in order to manage better the cultural heritage within the city.



The old city and its walls poised on a hilltop

References

- Bogdan, C. (2011) 'Sustainable Development through sustainable tourism – A conceptual Note', The Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies. Available from http://www.academia.edu/2386235/SUSTAINABLE_DEVELOPMENT_THROUGH_SUSTAINABLE_TOURISM_A_CONCEPTUAL_NOTE
- Boissevain, J. (1996) '“But we live here”: perspectives on cultural tourism in Malta'. In L. Briguglio, B. Archer, J. Jafari and G. Wall (eds) *Sustainable Tourism in Islands and Small States: Case Studies*. London: Pinter.
- Briguglio L. (2003) 'The Usefulness of Sustainability Indicators', paper prepared for the Symposium Sustainability Indicators for Malta, organized by SI-MO Malta. Available from https://www.um.edu.mt/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/63865/Usefulness_sustainability_indicators_lino_briguglio.pdf
- Butler, R.W. (1980) 'The concept of a Tourism Area Life Cycle of Evolution: Implications for Management of Resources'. *The Canadian Geographer*, 24(1).
- Călărețu and Bulin (2011) 'Sustainable Development Through Sustainable Tourism – A Conceptual Note'. Available from https://www.academia.edu/2386235/SUSTAINABLE_DEVELOPMENT_THROUGH_SUSTAINABLE_TOURISM_A_CONCEPTUAL_NOTE
- DG Enterprise and Industry (2013) 'Call For Expression Of Interest – Participation in the Informal 'ETIS Experts' Pool to support the European Commission in the testing of the European Tourism Indicators System for Sustainable Management at Destination Level'. Brussels: European Commission Enterprise and Industry Directorate.
- Falzon J. (2003) 'The Competitive position of Mediterranean countries in tourism; evidence from the Thomas Brochure' (Online). Available from <http://fama2.us.es:8080/turismo/turisonet1/economia%20del%20turismo/mercados%20turisticos/competitive%20position%20of%20mediterranean%20countries%20in%20tourism.pdf> (Accessed: 2015, April)
- Frank, A.G. (1969) 'Latin America: Underdevelopment or Revolution'. *The Economic Journal*, 8(322).
- Harvey, D. (1989) *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*. London: Basil Blackwell.
- Heland Project (n.d.). Available from <http://www.helandproject.eu/>
- Keynes, J.M. (1936) *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*. London: Macmillan.
- MTA (2013) *Tourism in Malta Edition 2013*. Malta: Malta Tourism Authority.
- MTA (2014) *Tourism in Malta Edition 2014*. Malta: Malta Tourism Authority.
- NSO (2011) *Census Of Population And Housing 2011 Preliminary Report*. Malta: National Statistics Office. Available from https://nso.gov.mt/en/publicatons/Publications_by_Unit/Documents/01_Methodology_and_Research/Census2011_PreliminaryReport.pdf
- Orbasli, A. (2000) *Tourists in Historic Towns, Urban Conservation and Heritage Management*. London: E & FN Spon.
- Richards, G, and Wilson, J. (2006) 'Developing Creativity in Tourist Experiences; A Solution to the Serial Reproduction of Culture?' *Tourism Management*, 27.

Richards, G. (2001) 'The Development of Cultural Tourism in Europe'. In G. Richards (ed.) *Cultural Attractions and European Tourism*. Wallingford, UK: CABI Publishing.

Ritchie, J.R.B. and G.I. Crouch (2000) 'The Competitive Destination: A Sustainability Perspective', *Tourism Management*, 21(1).

Ritchie, J.R.B. and G.I. Crouch (2003) *The Competitive Destination: A Sustainable Tourism Perspective*. Wallingford, UK: CABI Publishing.

Rostow, W.W. (1960) *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Comparative Manifest*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tosun C. (2000) 'Challenges of Sustainable tourism development in the developing world: A case of Turkey'. *Tourism Management*, 22.

UNDP (1993) *Human Development Report*. New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press.