

Institute for Tourism, Travel and Culture

# BIENNIAL REPORT

January 2018 to December 2019



**L-Università ta' Malta**  
Institute for Tourism,  
Travel & Culture



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 December 2018  
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   Brescia

February 2019

Launch of EU Heritage Project  
Mediterranean Tourism Forum  
MTA Career Advisor Training

March 2019

Launch of new Guidelines for community-based tours  
Lecture in London  
ROTOT  
British High Commissioner Commonwealth War Graves  
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May 2019

Award ceremony at UM's Gozo Campus  
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June 2019

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July 2019

OECD Summer Academy  
TV and Radio Promotions

September 2019

Erasmus Mundus Launch  
International Conference: Heritage and Environment, 5<sup>th</sup>  
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October 2019

Second EU Heritage meeting in Malta

November 2019

Training workshops on ProQuest databases  
Academic Oration for Postgraduate Graduation  
Ceremony

December 2019

Field Visits for BA Tourism Studies students  
Food Culture  
Piloting Workshop for the INCOME project



## FOREWORD

Prof. Godfrey Baldacchino

*Chair, Board of the Institute for Tourism,  
Travel and Culture as Rector's Delegate*

It is my pleasure to introduce the latest Biennial Report of the Institute for Tourism, Travel and Culture (ITTTC) at the University of Malta. The report highlights the various activities and achievements of the Institute in the two years under review. These range from: staff development; the review of a slate of the Institute's academic programmes; staff participation in externally funded research projects; staff presentations at conferences locally and abroad; student numbers and research interests; along with various opportunities for outreach and engagement with the public, government and industry stakeholders. Annual tourist arrivals to the Maltese islands have crossed the 2.5 million threshold for the first time in 2018. Growth has been registered in various sectors, adding to the rich and complex contribution of tourism to the economy. The industry remains invariably dependent on the connectivity of the Maltese archipelago to its source countries, via low cost airlines, regular air carriers, cruise ships, catamaran services, as well as yachting and pleasure boat operations (hence the ITTTC's additional focus on travel). Tourism in Malta is also clearly associated with experiences that involve history, re-enactments, museums, heritage homes and many expressions of daily life (hence the ITTTC's third focus on culture).

The ITTC addresses this burgeoning and nationally significant industry in multiple ways. Students are trained and get qualified at the ITTC at undergraduate and postgraduate levels to be able to operate within the industry, while critically interpreting and evaluating tourism trends and advising appropriate action, as may be necessary. Staff, along with students, engage in relevant research endeavours that shed welcome light on various tourism-related phenomena. And the Institute organizes events from time to time that address pertinent (and often controversial) topics in a respectful space that encourage dialogue and evidence-based argumentation.

The coronavirus pandemic of 2020 has wrought havoc with tourism and the sector has slumped to zero as this text is being prepared. The ITTC remains poised to support the industry when it recovers and when it finds its feet again in the 'new normal' that will follow this tragic episode in human history.

I thank the ITTC Director, Dr Marie Avellino, and her small but dedicated team of academic and administrative staff who continue to offer their quality services and boost the reputation of the ITTC as the natural 'go to' institution for tourism related education, research and outreach at tertiary level in Malta. I also thank non-university stakeholders, including government via the Malta Tourism Authority, for their wholehearted support to the work of the ITTC.



## INTRODUCTION

Dr Marie Avellino

*Director of the Institute for Tourism, Travel and Culture. Vice-Chair, Board of the Institute for Tourism, Travel and Culture*

Welcome to our Biennial report which commences in January 2018, a period which coincides with the start of my Directorship at the ITTC.

It has been a period marked by positive changes: not just at the ITTC but also within the tourism Industry and its support pillar, culture. Malta has witnessed a year on year growth in incoming tourism numbers, which is also a reflection of global trends. The benefits of tourism are far reaching: ranging from employment to valorisation of intangibles and impact on all economic, socio-cultural and environmental sectors. This makes the concept of sustainability and responsible tourism more critical, notwithstanding it being a highly complex and multi-faceted phenomenon.

As the leading research tertiary-level institution, the Institute of Tourism, Travel and Culture at the University of Malta supports tourism as a major asset for development. However, it is also aware that, for this sustainable and long-term development to take place, the communities, stakeholders and the industry which host and welcome tourists into their midst must be empowered and given the know-how to choose the right tools to make this happen. ITTC champions this not just by lip service but by being proactive. Examples of these actions can be seen in the ensuing report. Here, I must also highlight our collective contribution to research, our academic output and also our stand on issues which impinge on the hospitality, travel and culture of our national and global heritage.



# INSTITUTE FOR TOURISM, TRAVEL AND CULTURE ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES

Tourism education at the University of Malta was significantly strengthened in 2010 with the setting up of the ITTC. Prior to that, tourism studies had been embedded since 1995 within formal programmes offered by the Faculty of Economics, Management and Accountancy (FEMA).

The Institute evolved from offering just one study unit in Tourism Studies in the 1990s, to becoming a Department within FEMA, and finally morphing into a fully-fledged Institute. Today, it is housed in a 3-storey block within the 'New Humanities' area of the Msida campus, with modern offices, a fully equipped administration office on the ground floor, a kitchenette, a lecture room and a state-of-the-art boardroom.

At ITTC, we offer a range of tourism and culture courses at undergraduate and postgraduate level, and we have a number of Ph.D. students completing cutting-edge research. Year on year, we have witnessed a steady stream of students as can be noted from the subsequent page. Each of our programmes is designed to challenge students intellectually and expose them to a broad range of industry practices.

We are active in research and are involved in a range of EU-funded research projects. At ITTC, we work closely with local tourism and culture stakeholders and our academics collaborate with tourism academics at several European universities. These links ensure that programmes of study offered by our Institute are relevant and useful to people who wish to pursue a career in the tourism or culture sectors.



*ITTC academics and the Chair of the Institute: (from left): Prof. George Cassar, Dr Noel Buttigieg, Dr Marie Avellino, Dr Dane Munro, Prof. Godfrey Baldacchino.*

## ITTC STUDENTS 2010 TO 2019

ITTC Students Statistics By Course, Year of Study and Academic Year														
Course	Route	Year of Study	Maltese / Non-Maltese	Academic Year:										Totals
				2010/1	2011/2	2012/3	2013/4	2014/5	2015/6	2016/7	2017/8	2018/9	2019/0	
Diploma in Gastronomy	Gastronomy	1	Maltese	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
		2	Maltese	5	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
Diploma in Gastronomy Total	Master Chef	1	Maltese	12	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19
		Non-Maltese	0	0	0	0	7	3	10	0	9	0	29	
	Maltese	2	Maltese	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
		Non-Maltese	0	0	0	0	0	7	3	9	0	9	28	
Master Chef Diploma Total	Tourism Studies	1	Maltese	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
		Non-Maltese	0	0	0	0	8	11	13	9	10	10	61	
Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Tourism Studies Total	Bachelor of Arts in Tourism Studies	1	Maltese	21	29	32	41	37	31	24	23	22	16	276
		Non-Maltese	4	5	7	8	4	5	6	4	2	4	49	
	Maltese	2	Maltese	17	24	32	31	46	47	32	25	22	21	297
		Non-Maltese	2	5	5	7	10	5	3	6	6	2	51	
	Maltese	3	Maltese	0	17	23	35	32	47	47	32	25	22	280
		Non-Maltese	0	2	5	5	6	10	5	3	6	5	47	
Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Tourism Studies Total	Tourism Studies	3	Maltese	44	82	104	127	135	145	117	93	83	70	1000
		Non-Maltese	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15
Bachelor of Arts in Tourism Studies Total	Cultural Sustainability and Tourism	1	Maltese	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
		Non-Maltese	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Master of Arts in Cultural Sustainability and Tourism Total	Tourism Studies	2	Maltese	15	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	16
		Non-Maltese	0	0	0	0	5	1	3	0	2	0	11	
	Maltese	3	Maltese	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	1	5	0	13
		Non-Maltese	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	1	3	0	9	
Master of Arts in Tourism	Tourism Studies	1	Maltese	0	0	0	0	0	5	6	9	6	5	33
		Non-Maltese	9	14	14	8	6	3	0	0	1	1	56	
Master of Arts in Tourism Total	Tourism	2	Maltese	0	1	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	6
		Non-Maltese	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Postgraduate Certificate in Tourism Total	Tourism Development and Culture	1	Maltese	9	15	16	10	7	3	0	0	1	2	63
		Non-Maltese	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Master of Science in Tourism Development and Culture Total	Tourism and Culture	1	Maltese	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
		Non-Maltese	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Master of Arts in Tourism and Culture Total	Master of Philosophy	1	Maltese	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Non-Maltese	0	1	3	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
	Travel, Tourism and Culture	2	Maltese	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
		Non-Maltese	0	0	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Master of Philosophy Total	Doctor of Philosophy	3	Maltese	0	2	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	5
		Non-Maltese	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Doctor of Philosophy Total	Travel, Tourism and Culture	4	Maltese	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
		Non-Maltese	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		5	Maltese	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
		Non-Maltese	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		80	108	126	143	162	168	140	109	101	113	1250		

# INSTITUTE FOR TOURISM, TRAVEL AND CULTURE: BOARD

## CHAIR (AS RECTOR'S DELEGATE)

Prof. Godfrey Baldacchino  
(from October 2018)

Prof. Tanya Sammut-Bonnici  
(until September 2018)

## VICE-CHAIR

Dr Marie Avellino  
(as Director of ITTC)

## MEMBERS

*Appointed by Council*  
Prof. Nicholas Vella  
Mr Reno Calleja

*Appointed by Senate*  
Prof. Peter J Baldacchino

*Representatives of the Academic Staff*  
Dr Nadia Theuma  
Prof. George Cassar

*Student Representatives*  
Ms Nicole Busuttil  
(from March 2019)  
Mr Owen Grech

*Scholar of Repute*  
Prof. Godfrey Baldacchino  
(until September 2018)  
Dr Marie Louise Mangion  
(from September 2018))

*Actively involved in the Field of Tourism*  
Mr Leslie Vella

*Nominated by Board of Governors of the  
Institute of Tourism Studies and approved  
by Senate*

Dr Paulino Schembri  
(up to December 2018)

*Honorary Member*  
Prof. Edward L. Zammit

*Secretary to the Board*  
Ms Mireille Stubbings  
(from April 2019)  
Ms Francesca Fenech  
(until June 2019)  
Ms Carla Schembri  
(until April 2019)

# INSTITUTE FOR TOURISM, TRAVEL AND CULTURE: STAFF

## ACADEMIC STAFF (DECEMBER 2019)

Dr Marie Avellino	Director
Prof. George Cassar	Post-Graduate Programme Coordinator
Dr Noel Buttigieg	Under-Graduate Programme Coordinator
Prof. Carmel Cassar	(on Sabbatical leave from October 2017 to September 2018)
Prof. Andrew Jones	(on Sabbatical leave from October 2018 to September 2019)
Dr John Ebejer	Periodic Programme Review Coordinator
Dr Dane Munro	
Dr Silvio Debono	Part-time Resident Academic
Dr Nadia Theuma	(on Sabbatical leave from February 2016 to January 2018)

## VISITING ACADEMIC STAFF

Dr Chantal Avellino  
Dr Vanessa Borg  
Mr Malcolm Bray  
Dott.ssa Claudette Buttigieg  
Mr Simon Caruana  
Mr James Cassar  
Ms Graziella Cortis  
Mr Ettiene Dalli  
Mr Thomas Dimech  
Dr Glen Farrugia  
Mr Godwin Grech  
Dr Viana Hassan  
Ms Theresa Hoban  
Dr Alfred Mifsud  
Dr Paulino Schembri  
Mr Adrian Sciberras  
Mr James Sultana  
Dr Theresa Vella  
Dr Charles Xuereb  
Mr Julian Zarb

## ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Ms Francesca Fenech  
Ms Mireille Stubbings

## PROJECT COORDINATOR

Dr Karsten Xuereb



*ITTC Administration: Ms Francesca Fenech, and  
Ms Mireille Stubbings with the Director*



## UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Dr Noel Buttigieg

The Coordinator led a workshop session with leading industry stakeholders and the outcome informed ITTC about some of the salient aspects that required immediate attention within the strategic plan of the institute.

Emphasis on soft skills, such as working in a team and presentation skills were among the aspects most commonly mentioned by the participants. These informed both the overarching learning outcomes of the study units identified for the PPR process, as well as, helped to prepare a series of workshops to assist students in coping with the rigour of the research required for the dissertation.

A number of study units have been earmarked for revision / updating. Programme learning outcomes have been identified and all study units have been mapped against these outcomes. Two areas that require attention emerge from this evaluative process:

- a. Methods of assessment need to be reviewed / updated
- b. More practical / hands-on activities need to be included / offered

### OUTREACH

There has been some improvement in this regard, yet this is an area that still requires attention. The coordinator represented ITTC in February when meeting St Aloysius Sixth Form Students. Plans are in place to involve ITTC in the leading educational fairs in Malta. ITTC has also worked on promotional material, in print and electronic formats.

### MEDITERRANEAN STARS CONFERENCE

ITTC takes full advantage of any possible learning experiences when offered on-island. Four lecturers and four students attended the mentioned conference and ITTC also had an information stand to further propagate information about the Institute to the general public.

### RESEARCH & WRITING

A series of workshops were led by the Director for 3<sup>rd</sup> year students. Positive feedback was received from several students. The coordinator also led a series of small group tutorials intended to assist students with the writing of research proposals. Dates have already been identified on the calendar so that such workshops would continue to support our students with Literature Review Skills and Methodology.



## UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

### MASTER CHEF DIPLOMA

MQF Level 5

Duration: 4 Semesters Part-time Evening

The Master Chef Diploma programme offers core modules of specially designed topics to all participants based on the required knowledge of the international culinary current issues which go beyond cooking. The programme equips the students with the tools required to be able to research, develop and communicate culinary innovations. It is also the objective of the programme that its students become mentors to their staff in achieving higher standards and quality in the food service industry. They should also be able to move up the ranks in the kitchen career ladder.

<https://www.um.edu.mt/courses/overview/UDMACPTE-2019-0-O>

### BACHELOR OF ARTS (HONOURS) (TOURISM STUDIES)

MQF Level 6

Duration: 3 Years Full-time

The main objectives of the Tourism Studies programme are to provide a comprehensive background to the local and international dimensions of the tourism industry and to equip students with skills to critically analyse the tourism industry and its impacts on society, the environment and the economy. It is an inter-disciplinary programme, covering a wide range of subjects. Students are also expected to carry out two supervised industry placements, where they will gain valuable work-place insights and skills. In Year 2, students are encouraged to apply for student exchange programmes for one or two semesters at one of the foreign universities which have links with the Institute for Tourism, Travel and Culture. The Institute works closely with local tourism stakeholders, such as government entities and ministries, hotels, restaurants, heritage agencies, and is an active member of several European and international networks. These links ensure that programmes of study offered by the Institute are relevant and useful for anyone who wishes to develop an interest or a career in the tourism sector.

<https://www.um.edu.mt/courses/overview/UBAHTRS9-2019-0-O>



## POSTGRADUATE COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Prof. George Cassar

At the ITTC, I hold the position of Postgraduate Courses Coordinator where at present I oversee and coordinate two Masters Courses: the M.A. in Cultural Sustainability and Tourism (now M.A. in Tourism and Culture) and the M.A. in Tourism. While the first is a taught course spread over 3 years of part-time study (6 semesters), the second is predominantly by research over 2 years part-time (5 semesters). The former degree has been running since February 2015 while the latter kicked off in the academic year 2018-19. Additional Masters' courses have just been approved; these will soon be added to the ITTC's portfolio and I will be responsible for their coordination. I also coordinate the M.Phil./PhD offered by the Institute where a number of candidates have already graduated at this level, with others being in the process of finalising or starting their research journey.

The ITTC is a dynamic Institute which is looking at more ways of how to attract students to its courses. I form part of the ITTC outreach team and the activities include visits to schools and events that offer the possibility to present our Institute and its courses to potential candidates. More intensive recruitment activity is being planned for the coming years.

During 2019, I coordinated, along with Dr Marie Avellino, work for an edited book which brings together a team of authors – local and foreign – with chapter contributions. The goal is to produce a comprehensive tourism text that would be a first for Malta. Its publication is expected in Spring 2020.

## POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

### **MASTER OF ARTS IN TOURISM AND CULTURE**

MQF Level 7

Duration 5 Semesters, Part-time Evening (by research)

The programme of studies is designed to develop the intellectual abilities of the students through the provision of study-units that promote deeper understanding of the current themes facing the cultural sector and its connection with tourism. As the statistics of tourism in Malta show, the number of visitors to cultural venues is on the rise and this is not a phenomenon peculiar to Malta. This segment of tourism needs professionals who know how to present and offer cultural products in the best way so as to offer a better service to more and more tourists and thus help to strengthen the industry in this segment. These professionals need to know the subject matter well and master its application so as to present a strong product to the interested tourist and be in a position to attract those who may as yet not be appreciative enough of the cultural products on offer. The areas of culture in which the students will gain a deeper knowledge and understanding of include the built and rural heritage, cities of culture, artistic manifestations, traditions, legislation, Mediterranean culture, religious heritage, and cultural tourism.

<https://www.um.edu.mt/courses/overview/PMATCUPET8-2019-0-O>

### **MASTER OF ARTS IN TOURISM**

MQF Level 7

Duration 5 Semesters, Part-time Evening (by research)

The specific focus of this programme is to provide the student with a systematic understanding of the concepts and characteristics of tourism as an area of academic and applied study, together with an in-depth examination of both the nature and characteristics of international operations. It also provides students with the ability to evaluate products, services and operational issues within tourism environments, and foster comprehensive independent study and research. The programme is primarily assessed through the submission of a research dissertation on a topic of the candidate's chosen field of research. In addition, candidates are required to complete the unit Advanced Research in Tourism.

Candidates wishing to register for the MA should initially submit a research proposal outlining the proposed research topic and proposed research methodologies.

<https://www.um.edu.mt/courses/overview/PMATRSPER7-2019-0-O>

### **MASTER OF ARTS IN INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM EXPERIENCE MANAGEMENT**

MQF Level 7

Duration 4 Semesters, Part-time Evening

The current trend in Tourism and Hospitality is to design and provide unique and memorable tourism experiences. The Master of Arts in International Hospitality and Tourism Experience Management programme is designed for students wishing to develop a successful career at management and senior levels. The specific focus of the programme is to provide the student with a systematic understanding of the concepts and characteristics of international tourism and hospitality as an area of academic and applied study, together with an in-depth examination of both the nature and characteristics of international tourism and hospitality operations. It also coaches students in the ability to evaluate products, services and operational issues within the international tourism and hospitality industry and tourism and hospitality environments, and foster comprehensive independent study and research.

<https://www.um.edu.mt/courses/overview/PMAIHTPET9-2019-0-O>

### **MASTER OF SCIENCE IN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURE**

MQF Level 7

Duration 2 years, Full-time

This two-year Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree (EMJMD) explores contemporary theoretical and practical issues in tourism development, with a cultural focus, providing critical analytical skills. Mobility periods give students the opportunity to study at the University of Glasgow UK, the University of Malta, Lund University Sweden, and Instituto Universitário De Lisboa Portugal together they offer a unique Master of Science in Tourism Development and Culture (Tour DC). This joint degree is delivered over 4 semesters, with each semester taking place at a different campus over a 2-year period. Through this innovative programme, which includes the opportunity to have an industry

placement, students are able to integrate academic subjects which are highly relevant to the cultural tourism industry.

<https://www.um.edu.mt/courses/overview/PMSCTDCFTT9-2019-0-O>

<https://www.gla.ac.uk/postgraduate/taught/tourismdevelopmentculture/>

## MPHIL AND PHD PROGRAMME

The following is a list of students reading for a PhD or who successfully read for a doctorate, at the ITTC during the period under review, along with the titles of their theses:

Dr Agius Karl	ECO TOURISM - Assessing the ecotourism potential of central Mediterranean islands with a case study on coastal eco-tourism
Cachia Stefan	CULTURAL TOURISM - Interpreting Charity: Charitable Giving, Culture and Society
Cattivera Elsa	Community Tourism Development: Mediterranean Region
Dr Munro Dane	RELIGIOUS TOURISM - Short of a Miracle: Faith based tourism in Malta. (Completed: 2017)
Dr Pica Valeria	MUSEOLOGY - Identity in the museum experience of the Quirinale Palace in Rome, Palazzo Reale in Naples and the Grandmasters' Palace in Malta: A comparative study
Sultana James	DARK TOURISM - Dark Tourism in Malta: Witchcraft accusations in front of the Malta Inquisition Tribunal as a case study
Zarb Julian	COMMUNITY TOURISM - Local Tourism Planning: Understanding the process and its implications in established tourism destinations

## MASTERS PROGRAMMES OFFERED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE FACULTY OF ECONOMICS, MANAGEMENT & ACCOUNTANCY (FEMA)

### EXECUTIVE MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION IN HOSPITALITY AND EVENT MANAGEMENT

MQF Level 7

Duration 4 Semesters, Part-time Evening

The Executive Master of Business Administration degree is awarded to successful participants after twenty-four months of part-time, graduate-level university study in the theory and practice of business management. It places emphasis on the planning, organizing, implementation and controlling of an organization. It seeks to develop knowledge of advanced business functions, decision-making skills and the understanding of the internal and external factors affecting the management of organizations. The Hospitality and Events Management pathway develops professionals with strong managerial skills for Hospitality, Tourism, Incentives, Conference and Events organizations in the private and public sector of the industry. This MBA pathway provides a unique but strongly needed opportunity for persons who wish to embark on a career, or who are already in the industry, and would like to enhance their career with a sound academic background.

<https://www.um.edu.mt/courses/overview/PMBAHEVIPET7-2019-0-O>

### MASTER OF SCIENCE IN STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT AND TOURISM

MQF Level 7

Duration 1-year, Full time

The Master of Science in Strategic Management and Tourism study programme applies strategy as an integrative approach to the service industries of tourism and culture. These are comprised of the travel, hospitality, events, heritage, attractions, and ancillary services. Candidates can apply theories and concepts relevant to the Tourism industry. The course is intended to equip students with the necessary skills and competences to collate, analyse and interpret the highly competitive and dynamic market scenario of the tourism economy.

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## RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE ITTC STAFF

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**A**t ITTC, we are active in research, we work closely with local tourism and culture stakeholders, and our academics collaborate with academics at several European universities.

This section offers a selection of papers written by ITTC academics and which are linked in different ways to the work carried out at the Institute.

## EDUCATION TOURISM: INTERNATIONALISATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

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Dr Marie Avellino

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**M**alta is highly dependent on Tourism. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), in 2019 Travel and Tourism accounted for 15.8% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and contributed Euro1887 million in visitor spend, comprising 9.6% of total national exports (WTTC, 2020). With such growth comes more responsibility in ensuring effective destination management that minimizes any adverse effect of tourism (Pololikashvili, 2019).

This paper presents the case for Malta to further develop its touristic product by becoming a destination of choice for Education Tourism.

Education (or Educational) Tourism may be defined as a type of tourism undertaken for the scope of learning or attaining an academic qualification. This may be seen as a broad concept and will be discussed later in this paper; however, it will also be argued that this type of tourism does deliver a high level of sustainability through the economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits it generates.

### **RATIONALE AND METHODOLOGY**

From the mid-1990s through to the mid-2000s, the number of visitors to the Maltese Islands had reached a plateau. With the creation of the Malta Tourism Authority in 1999, the plan was to transition from a '3S' (Sand,

Sun and Sea) destination to a more segmented and diversified product offering. In 2004, the author was involved in training and she embarked on a research study which focused on Licensed Training Providers which were family owned and managed. The author identified the Education Tourism segment as worthy of further study as she felt that it had substantial potential for growth.

Five Education providers were chosen, based on their geographical distribution on the Island of Malta. The researcher worked with three of the organisations, one of which was solely an English Language Teaching (ELT) School, another was solely a Training Provider (TP), and the third was licensed as both an ELT school as well as a TP. The other 2 informant organisations took part by allowing the researcher to visit the school as well as by participating in open-ended, in depth interviews. The researcher was also involved in industry meetings and discussions with students, host families and other stakeholders which provided more primary data for the research study.

The initial research was carried out in 2004, when there were 46 licensed schools of English (Avellino, 2015). Of these, 70% were family owned and managed. Three of the education providers who participated in the research were licensed Schools of English and therefore represented 10% of the EFL schools, however the research did not in any way attempt to be representative of the ELT Industry as qualitative research aims to reveal the specificities of each case studied, the socio-cultural context in which actors operate and which influences their choices (Scott, 2001, pp. 87-107).

In 2009, the researcher re-visited the informants and 3 of these organisations accepted to participate in updated open-ended interviews. One informant also allowed the researcher to stay at the school and interview and observe teachers, students and other employees.

In 2019, the researcher re-visited the organisations who had been part of the 2004 and 2009 study. A qualitative research approach was chosen as this is especially appropriate when dealing with key human issues of agency, subjectivity, choice and representation, whilst also revealing conflicts that ensue as agents seek to promote their own interests or of those they seek to represent. In addition to this desk research was carried out and in this

later round of research other higher-level education organisations which were targeting foreign students to Malta were included. This meant that the research was not restricted to training providers but also included vocational and non-vocational tertiary level education providers.

## TRAVELLING FOR EDUCATION PURPOSES

Travelling for education is not a new concept. Travel as a means of education has been going on for thousands of years; however, as a rule it is the British who are credited with instituting “travel as a means of education” (Brodsky-Porges, E., 1981, p. 177). The term Grand Tour was introduced by Richard Lessels in his 1670 book *Voyage to Italy*. This highly specialized type of travel began in the sixteenth century and gained popularity during the seventeenth century. Young English elites, who were wealthy and able to afford multiple years abroad, often spent two to four years travelling around Europe in an effort to broaden their horizons and learn about language, architecture, geography, and culture in an experience known as the Grand Tour.

As demand for this type of travel developed and grew guidebooks, tour guides, and other ancillary needs were developed to meet the needs of the young adult male and female travellers as well as their tutors who travelled across the European continent. While the goal of the Grand Tour was educational, a great deal of time was spent in more frivolous pursuits such as extensive drinking, gambling, and intimate encounters. The journals and sketches that were supposed to be completed during the Tour were often left quite blank. Upon their return to England, the young Tourists were supposedly ready to bear the responsibilities of an aristocrat.

The Grand Tour as an institution was ultimately worthwhile for the Tour has been given credit for a dramatic improvement in British architecture and culture (Black, 1985). The French Revolution in 1789 marked the end of the Grand Tour for in the early nineteenth century, and railroads totally changed the face of tourism and travel across the continent. The nineteenth- and early twentieth-century was also extensively researched by Buzard (1993), who argues that an exaggerated perception, first emerging after the Napoleonic Wars, of the Continental tour's sudden radical openness to virtually ‘every’ level of society, took firm hold on the British and American travelling imagination: this hold was strengthened, over the years, by the visible labours of travel



popularisers such as Thomas Cook and professional guidebook publishers such as Murray and Baedeker. One consequence – traceable in such sources as *Punch* and *Blackwood's Magazine*, and writings by Wordsworth, Dickens, Frances Trollope, Ruskin, Anna Jameson, Henry James and Forster – was a new set of formulations of what constitutes ‘authentic’ culture (in a given place) and ‘genuine’ cultural experience (in a given person). Accounts of the modern European tour evolved a symbolic economy of practices aimed at distinguishing the true ‘traveller’ from the ‘vulgar tourist’ – mainly on the basis of imputed personal merits, not explicit social privileges. Its various forms of ‘anti-tourism’ helped to make the European tour an exemplary cultural practice of modern liberal democracies, appearing at once popularly accessible and exclusive.

Across the Atlantic, the modern-day ‘learning vacation’ concept originally surfaces in New York at Chautauqua, a residential institution, where in 1874 a Methodist minister and an Ohio businessman blended the concepts of an outdoor setting with social activities and learning opportunities (Eisenberg, 1989, p. ix).

The further expansion of Educational travel coincided with the adult education movement that swept North America in the late twentieth century which result from a large sector of the population who were entering their late 50’s and who – thanks to affluence, time and motivation – now had the propensity for travel. A major player in this expansion was the part played by the Elderhostel movement of the late 70’s.

The Elderhostel Network, an educational and travel initiative for adults 55 and over, was founded as a not-for-profit organization in 1975. This organisation soon expanded and today nearly 10,000 programs are offered each year in about 100 countries. So, in effect we see that educational travel has developed across to world and now includes not only the ‘baby boomers’, but also younger and older people across the globe.

### WHAT IS EDUCATION TOURISM?

The concept of ET is very broad: it can take in all forms of travel as every travel event is a learning experience. Education is not just ‘learning’ but can be defined as “the organised, systematic effort to foster learning, to establish the conditions and to provide the activities through which learning can occur” (Smith, 1982, p. 37). For the purposes of this paper, educational travel will be defined as an organised learning opportunity

delivered to persons not normally resident in Malta and who travel to the Islands of Malta for the sole purpose of educational travel, who would stay in Malta for this purpose, for a period exceeding 24 hours and not more than 1 year; and interjected by holidays over Christmas, Easter and summer. The education would have to take place within a licensed centre (school, university, college, and institute).

Over thirty years ago, Krippendorf (1987) had argued that the new patterns of tourism consumption which were developing would lead to fundamental changes in the tourism market. He predicted that the market segment which he called ‘new unity of everyday life’ would lead to a change in the composition of the Western tourist market. It would have the following as travel motivators:

- Broaden one’s horizon, learn something
- Introspection and communication with other people
- Come back to simpler things and nature
- Creativity and open-mindedness
- Readiness for experiments

In 1986, the percentage of this new segment had stood at 20% to 30%, whilst changing social patterns would result in a growth of market share ranging from 30% to 50% (ibid.). Today, we can confirm that Krippendorf’s predictions were correct and the main motivator, which encompasses all the criteria he referred to, are included under the ‘tourism experience’ umbrella term.

Research conducted to formulate a profile of the special interest tourist, leads one to identify this type of tourist with Plog’s allocentric category, a theory which is still used in modern day field of tourism research (Plog, 1974, pp. 55-58). Plog organised personality and travel destination choice along a continuum, with the allocentrics at one end (meaning those seeking variety, self-confident, outgoing and experimental) and the psychocentrics at the other end (meaning all those who tend to be more concerned with themselves and the small problems in life, are often anxious and inclined to seek security). A further dimension of the motivations of the special interest travel was provided in research undertaken by Crompton (1979), Ritchie and Zins (1978), Smith (1989), Hall and Zeppel (1990, 1991) and others. From this research, two primary cultural motives emerged: novelty

and education. Historical motivations were also expressed to a somewhat lesser extent.

### **NATIONAL STRATEGY**

The current National Tourism Policy (2015-2020) (NTP) has been formulated on the basis of a longer-term Tourism Vision 2030. This medium-term Tourism Vision 2030 is based on the principle of sustainable development with a view to safeguarding the positive aspects of the country's attractiveness as a tourism destination for the benefit of visitors and the host population alike (Ministry of Tourism, 2015, p. 5).

Tourism 2030 is based on the concept of controlled growth. This is achievable through the targeting of appropriate markets with the aim of achieving higher rates of economic returns and returns on investment. It is also based on the principle of aiming for high quality delivery at all levels of the tourism value chain with a view to achieving improved competitive positioning in the international tourism market.

The NTP suggested that there needs to be a focus on those markets which would fill the capacity during the shoulder and low season period, would respond most strongly to the local offer and which hold the potential for huge growth. One market segment which was identified is that of 'travel for educational purposes including school trips, nature and religious travel (Ministry of Tourism, 2015, p. 39). It also asked that the 'ageing nature of populations in Malta's established source markets' is kept in mind (ibid.). This indicates that the Education Tourism sector is clearly identified as a market segment and one could consider that the senior market as a potential subset of the sector.

Education 'per se' is a service industry and as we become even more immersed in a knowledge driven global economy it becomes even more of an asset not just for developed countries but even more for developing nations who may need to switch their economies from manufacturing and service to knowledge-based economies so as to be able to develop. The potential market for suppliers of the education service is immeasurable. It is also a renewable source of economic contribution as it is an activity that can be undertaken by the majority of the Maltese population, which in turn leads to greater innovation and creativity. Many knowledge-based industries can be attracted to invest in Malta because of its physical location,

its relative safety, English-speaking and more significantly its investment in national cultural and social capital. When all of this is integrated into the excellent tourism infrastructure gives Malta its competitive edge.

This is not to say that this will be an easy route to take or that it can be done without a strategy. We have to also acknowledge that we have many competitors and that there are pitfalls if we do not have a good policy and strategic plan in place which ropes in all the stakeholders. We can look at the example of Singapore. At the cusp of the new millennium, Singapore envisioned itself as a global education centre. It differentiated itself as a tourism destination through its strategy to become a world-class education hub by collecting "that critical mass of talent, to make it attractive for people to say that Singapore is the place to be" (Singapore Economic Development Board, 2004). Education has become an important service export for Singapore. It did this by building its brand image and also by forming alliances with strategic partners.

### **ACADEMIC TOURISM**

A further subset of Education Tourism is the Academic Tourism segment. There are many definitions of this form of tourism but for the purposes of this paper Academic Tourists are defined as those tourists who travel to take part in courses or programmes at Higher Education centres in order to carry out studies related to an academic career.

According to Forbes, foreign enrolment is slowing at US universities, although they are still hosting over a million foreign learners with China leading the way with just under 370 thousand followed by India at 202 thousand in the academic year 2018/19 (Institute of International Education, 2020). As regards US undergraduate students who studied abroad in 2017/18, from a total of 350,000, just under 40,000 studied in UK, and just under 37,000 studied in Italy.

Singapore Princeton University (SPU) – which, according to Forbes, is the top school for international students – recently announced "a new exciting partnership with National University of Singapore (NUS)" (Global Programs System, 2020). Princeton students are now able to study at SPU at undergraduate level and students which were eligible to receive financial aid at Princeton continue to receive Princeton financial aid for the approved costs of study abroad programs during the academic year. Princeton has similar agreements with other global Universities, in

fact there are 63 European Universities to choose from on their list of study abroad programmes.

### ACADEMIC TOURISM AT THE ITTC

The ITTC places a high emphasis on sustainability when it delivers its lectures to students studying tourism, and one way of practicing what we preach is by investing in building up our International visibility so as to attract both students as well as academics who are part of the Academic Tourism segment. This form of tourism is sustainable and highly appropriate for Malta, mainly because it has “a relevant role in de-seasonalisation” (Rodrigues Soares, 2019, p. 234). The majority of the academic tourists would be in Malta during the academic year – that is, between October and May – which are considered as low and shoulder seasons. This also means that students that join the UM courses for one or two semesters generate more economic activity as they have a longer than average stay. Interviews with these visitors reveal that they tend to use public transport or walk, consume less utilities as they are living like locals, purchase their food and other daily needs local shops and try to integrate into the local lifestyle as much as possible. They see their stay as an extension of their learning experience. Moreover, those that have a positive experience are more likely to return and recommend Malta to friends and relatives. The same goes for visiting academics: a good number bring their spouse or a companion when coming to Malta.

One of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals is to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development. ITTC actively contributes to this by not only teaching this to its students but through its internationalisation network is involved in projects which aim to conserve and valorise the coastal Zones which serve as a vehicle for blue economy entrepreneurship. Other projects involve work on the creation of work and upskilling through the promotion and valorisation of local products and culture utilised by the tourism industry.

ITTC promotes visits by academics and students through various mediums. For example, staff regularly embark in Staff Mobility exchanges, mainly through the ERASMUS programmes as well as through participation and presentations at conferences, overseas engagements during sabbatical leave and other academic fora. We also hosted 3 interns on a long-term basis: one professor and two PhD students during the period this period under review.

During 2018 and 2019, an internal UM Report identified 6 International Collaborative Externally Funded (ICEF) Projects at the ITTC, which compares quite well with the highest-ranking faculty which had 17 Projects (Baldacchino, 2019, pp. 13-4). This report also noted that in 2018/9, the ITTC had the 3rd highest number (22) of incoming international students amongst the University's Institutes and Centres. The percentage of international students over the total student population of ITTC registered during 2018/19 increased by 6.3% over the previous year to nearly one fifth of the total ITTC student population. The ITTC received the highest number of Erasmus+ students between 2016/7 and 2018/9 when compared to other Institutes/Centres/Schools (I/C/S). By itself, the ITTC intake in 2018/9 represents 40% of the international student intake by I/C/S at UM (Baldacchino, 2019, p. 7).

Among the I/C/S at the University of Malta, the Institute for European Studies (EUS) was followed by the Institute for Tourism, Travel and Culture, in having the highest numbers of outbound Erasmus+ students in 2018/9: 21 and 11 students respectively (Baldacchino, 2019, p. 9).

### CONCLUSION

Promoting and managing year-round tourism growth to the Maltese islands through the dual principles of competitiveness and sustainability is key to success. Maximising the socio-economic contribution of the tourism industry by aiming for higher added value based on quality service and products which will lead to the re-branding of the Maltese Islands as a destination of choice for established and emerging markets and segments worldwide. The education tourism sector and more specifically Academic Tourism is the ideal market to target as not only will it generate foreign currency through its consumption of both touristic and non-tourist consumption of goods and services, but can have a longer lasting effect as alumni will either seek to return in later years, or establish relations with their alma mater. In the case of visiting academics, at ITTC we note that once a relationship is established with our Institute this generates more visits or requests for further collaboration either through joint publications, cooperating on projects and even requests for employment.

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## A PROCESS OF CHANGE: REVIEWING THE TOURISM UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMME AT ITTC

Dr John Ebejer

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At the end of June 2019, ITTC concluded the Periodic Programme Review (PPR) for its tourism studies undergraduate programme. In this brief report, I explain the process and highlight some of the main issues that emerged.

The process was started on ITTC's own initiative in September 2016. The initial intention was to complete the bulk of the work within 9 to 12 months; but, as things turned out, the process took much longer because of various circumstances. The final report was submitted to the ITTC Board in May 2019 where it was very well received. The report is now with UM's Academic Programmes Quality & Resources Unit (APQRU) for endorsement.

It is a requirement of the University of Malta that all its programmes are reviewed every four or five years. Recommended PPR procedures are set out in UM regulations.

There is increased competition among undergraduate programmes for tourism studies, with many universities across the UK and the EU offering programmes in tourism and related studies. A main objective of the PPR is to make the programme more interesting and more of a learning experience for students, thus boosting its overall quality and making it more attractive for local and overseas students.

The thinking on PPR was guided by feedback and comments received. Consultation is an essential component and that is why so much time



is dedicated to it in the PPR process. In the first instance, different approaches were adopted for internal consultation with ITTC academics. At one stage, for example, a draft PPR report was distributed and ITTC academics were invited to comment and make suggestions. Meetings and seminars were also held, in which the PPR was on the agenda. Inevitably, this gave rise to fruitful discussions on the undergraduate programme and on measures that are needed to improve it.

Consultations were also held with students. An innovative approach was adopted using both verbal and written feedback, while at the same time safeguarding student anonymity as much as is practicable. Five separate consultation exercises with students were held. The effective use of student feedback is essential in ITTC's efforts to improve the quality of teaching and the quality of the programmes on offer.

Consultations were also carried out with industry representatives by means of a focus group. This involved the participation of individuals from different sectors of the industry, including tourism, hospitality, culture and events. Feedback was also collated by means of an online questionnaire as well as through ad hoc meetings by the ITTC Director with various stakeholders.

A record of all consultations was kept and included in the final report that has been submitted to APQRU.

During the PPR process, twenty-one learning objectives for the undergraduate tourism programme were identified. These were developed on the basis of ITTC academics' experience over the years, backed by the PPR consultations.

A holistic approach was adopted. Study units were not seen in isolation but were considered as part of a coherent whole. The revision of the curriculum in particular required a lot of time and effort to look at the content of each study unit and relate it to the overall knowledge, skills and any other learning outcomes that the undergraduate students are expected to acquire. A careful assessment of the content of the study-units was needed also to avoid repetition across different study-units. This was known to have happened in the past and, based on student feedback, it was demotivating to students. In revising the curriculum, repetition of material was avoided by careful selection of study-units and then, more importantly, by a judicious development of the content of each study-unit. In this exercise, the study-unit descriptors played a central role.

The study of tourism is multi-disciplinary, with different 'areas of study' such as tourism business, tourism destination management, marketing, culture and heritage, hospitality and travel. The then-current curriculum was analysed, with study-units subdivided according to 'area of study'. The intention is to have a balanced programme, with no one single study area taking precedence over others.

At the same time, ITTC wants to offer its students the possibility of choosing study-units according to their aptitudes, interests and career aspirations. For this reason, the revised curriculum includes elective study-units in both second and third year of the programme.

As the PPR process progressed, it became evident that some changes were urgent and could not wait for the completion of the PPR. With APQRU's endorsement, new study-units were introduced, relating to events and to food tourism. Moreover, elective study-units were introduced in the second and third years. ITTC's experience shows that the PPR is a dynamic process with long term objectives, but with the possibility of bringing about short-term changes.

The revision of the curriculum was the main focus of the PPR; but, inevitably, all matters relating to the delivery and content of the undergraduate programme were up for discussion.

For example, consultations with academics revealed that the study-unit descriptors were not being given the importance that they deserve. The study-unit descriptors (available on the UM's website) are a tool for lecturers to communicate the contents of the unit to the students and to other lecturers. Because of lack of awareness, there were instances where what was delivered in the lecture room did not conform to what was in the descriptor. Lecturers are now constantly being encouraged to 'take ownership' of the study-unit descriptor and to update this unit descriptor regularly to ensure conformity between lectures and descriptors. This is another short-term change resulting from the PPR process.

Third year students are required to prepare a long essay which is a major piece of research work similar to a dissertation. The PPR process identified measures how the learning acquired by students during this task could be improved. As a result, the long essay guidelines were revised and new guidelines for tutors were drafted. More guidance to students is being given in the first and second year, on the skills required



to successfully complete a piece of research. Another identified need is having an academic with the specific responsibility of Student Research Coordinator for all ITTC's programmes. The Coordinator is a reference point for any difficulties that may arise, if and when such difficulties cannot be suitably handled by the respective tutor. The Coordinator oversees all matters related to research, including assessments. This new position is also needed to provide for greater consistency in the way students are guided, graded and assessed.

Another identified area for improvement relates to the assignments that are given to students in connection with various study-units. Assignments can be a key element in the student learning process, particularly if the student is given meaningful feedback on the work submitted. The ITTC has introduced various measures aimed at achieving better learning outcomes from the assignments.

Tourism studies students are required to undergo work placements in both their first and second year. The ITTC considers the placement as an important component of the programme because of the experimental learning that students can derive from it. Thanks to feedback received and the internal discussions undertaken, radical changes will be introduced to work placements.

The eventual outcome of the Periodic Programme Review is the result of a collective effort of ITTC academics as well as students and others who commented and gave their feedback. The work was coordinated by Dr John Ebejer throughout, except that as from January 2018 the PPR process was coordinated by an *ad hoc* committee that included Dr Marie Avellino (as ITTC Director) and Dr Noel Buttigieg (as coordinator of the tourism studies undergraduate programme). In the final stages, this was the *de facto* working group that guided the process to its conclusion.

## BRITISH COLONIAL MALTA: A MELTING POT OF CULINARY DIETS (1800–1900)

Dr Noel Buttigieg & Prof. George Cassar

In 1844, seven British subjects stopped at Malta on their homeward trip from India. Among the several observations recorded after a twelve-day period of quarantine in the Lazaretto detention quarters of Malta (Galea, 1966), one of the members of this group put in writing the reactions of some of his friends during a particular dining experience of a three o'clock dinner. These compatriots reacted with adjectives such as 'suspicion' and 'distrust' when this perspective, claiming the service to be good and clean, 'comprising of English and French modes *de cuisine* as well as could be desired.' He then lists the selection offered in this *table d'hôte*:

...soup *à la Julienne*, and a dish of horse mackerel; roast beef *à l'Anglais* (the beef comes to Malta from Tunis, and after serving quarantine, is fattened for the table); a *fricandeau* of sweetbread in a well-flavoured sauce; a stewed breast of mutton mashed potatoes, a macaroni, peas or French beans, or artichokes, an apricot tart, cheese and a salad. Oranges, cherries and strawberries compose our dessert, and we drink a pint of Marsala (Anon., 1844, p. 60).

This experience goes back to around four decades into British rule and clearly these men could identify familiar foods linked to their culinary culture. Nevertheless, some among them felt uncomfortable with consuming the food they found, an attitude which highlighted the critical

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*The ITTC runs a number of courses / units which deal with the culture of food. The article is related to this offer.*

role played by food in the development of new tastes and the maintenance and limits of those ideas that influenced both the colonised and the coloniser. The observations recorded above are powerful reminders that the purchase, preparation, distribution and consumption of food cannot be assumed as a neutral cultural manifestation.

Food unites; food divides. Consumption patterns and food choices are functions of a cultural activity that produces and reproduces group and national identities, reflecting historical and cultural specificities (Wilson, 2006). In a colonial context, eating was one of the most subtle yet profound and regular behaviours that expressed the strong feelings between the coloniser and the colonised. Consuming the new foreign culture required constant negotiation since the coloniser could not merely impose its culinary culture, and force the colonised to change long-standing eating traditions. The intersection between foreign and local culinary cultures is a complicated affair, a 'pleasurable and perilous process' (Durmelat, 2015, p. 116). The veracity of this observation continues to be relevant in the postcolonial age. Whole nations continue to assess and reassess their culinary heritage in what is termed as culinary *métissage* (Poulain & Tibère, 2000, p. 238).

The nineteenth century context indicates how the table became more than just an exchange site for British and Maltese foodways. The Colonial government gradually inched into Maltese culinary habits; it attempted to control, regulate and facilitate a home-away-from-home environment so as to suit the British forces stationed at the geostrategic fortress colony. Beyond Malta's strategic importance, the British colonial government had to fulfil the solemn obligation of providing the Maltese with the necessary food supplies and a decent livelihood. In part, this was a continuation of an inherited situation already familiar to the Maltese, and that could be traced back through Malta's colonial annals from the beginning of history (Cassar, 2015). The locals thus came into contact and internalised culinary and other habits and ways of life from the Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Normans, Angevins, Aragonese and the Order of St John (Cassar, 2000; Blouet, 2004). Likewise, the British brought over their own culinary cultural baggage: often relatively diverse and quite different from Malta's Mediterranean dietary practices.

### FOOD STUDIES AND COLONIAL FOODWAYS

As a topic of scholarly consideration, food has long been a subject of interest to anthropologists, historians and cultural heritage researchers.

The focus on the production, processing, distribution and consumption of various food products is considered by several scholars as a means by which to better understand aspects of colonialism linked to the globalisation of food and foodways. Foodways also serves to detect the permeating political and economic undertones of colonial governments within the colonies. The seminal work of the late Sidney Mintz (1985) about sugar and sweetness is testimony of a dual meaning: the power of food and food as power. As soon it became recognised by researchers for its significance towards the understanding of material culture, "food was an instrument for the study of other things" (Mintz, 1996, p. 3). Likewise, sociologist Pierre Bourdieu explains how food is another object that allows for a "history that has crystallised over time in things" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 71). In this case, the 'objectification' of food allows for a better understanding of sociocultural behaviour and expectations.

Colonial food studies are starting to enjoy 'front burner' attention, with more researchers becoming increasingly invested in studying the long-term impact of colonialism through food (Dietler, 2007). Constructing imperial history through food and foodways requires the use of different sources of information as well as scholars that need to be able to interpret archival material from different perspectives. Miller and Deutsch (2007, p. 7) recognise the multidisciplinary character of food studies, considered to be essential since researchers have to bring together "the social and cultural aspects of food, from production through consumption". Recent publications indicate how, in several cases, the researcher would have to collate fragmented pieces of information. Amid such challenges, the study of food and empire refer to the diffusion of culinary cultures. Commensality is driven by that common denominator – exchange – which transcends any boundary. Rachel Laudan (2015) has also explored how food products, their preparation and consumption, carry implicit and explicit meanings when negotiated in a colonial context. While exchanges unfold, intimate social and cultural constructs are shaped and conveyed as daily food habits define social hierarchies, generate ethnic consciousness, emphasise gender differences and mark religious and national identities.

### MALTA: A BRITISH CULINARY COLONY?

Few researchers have to date looked closely at Malta as a colonial culinary case-study.

The Maltese islands passed on to the British Crown nearly by chance.

After being given to the Order of St John by Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, the Maltese archipelago experienced Hospitaller rule from 1530 to 1798 (Mallia-Milanes, 1993; Freller, 2010). In that latter year, and with the effects of the French Revolution in full swing in many parts of Europe since 1789, revolutionary forces under their rising star General Napoleon Bonaparte, embarked on an expedition to capture Egypt, and on their way snatched the Maltese islands, prompted also by the islands' key position on the route to India. Malta capitulated to the French, aided by a combination of treason on the part of key members of the Order, a fifth column which included influential Maltese, and the mishandling of the situation by Grandmaster von Hompesch. After three months under the French, the locals decided that they had had enough of revolutionary reforms and orders. In a national uprising, the people of the countryside revolted against the occupiers and blockaded the French garrison inside the city of Malta. The two-year ordeal saw the Maltese, backed by Portuguese, Neapolitan and British forces, battle it out until the French troops, realising the impossibility of receiving relief from their mother country, surrendered. Though the British had come to Malta's aid as allies of the King of the Two Sicilies, having sent their officers to manage the blockade, they simply took over the surrender process and made sure of being the ones to receive the French capitulation (Testa, 1997). The British became the *de facto* new masters of Malta, and after some years under their protection, when they should have left Malta, this was declared a British Crown colony in 1813, and confirmed as such by the Treaty of Paris in 1814 (Gifford, 1817, pp. 399-404).

After moving into their newly acquired territory, the British sought to establish a modicum of familiarity for the thousands of British sailors and soldiers that were sent along the years to protect and garrison Malta. Moreover, the authorities trained local people so that they could serve these needs. Basically, the focus was on the transplanting of a sense of Britishness in Malta, whose colonial society embraced a fundamentally dissimilar way of life, and whose social texture was typically Latin and Mediterranean. The upper and educated classes were culturally Italianate in all aspects, including culinary tastes. The lower uneducated classes were, on the other hand, largely tied to the products of their fields and to unpretentious living. One description of the people of the villages was given by Henry Seddall, who felt confident that what he was about to state was known to "every Englishman who has lived in Malta" and could thus be corroborated. According to Seddall, "the natives of Malta are far

behind the times in all kinds of knowledge; ... and that, notwithstanding their almost daily communication with England, they are really as senseless and as stupid as the aborigines of Australia" (1870, pp. 294-5).

The Maltese countryside may not have possessed erudite men and women; however, it did yield abundant fruits and vegetables, typical of the Mediterranean region, some of which were however untypical for the British Isles. George Percy Badger (1838) observed that a stranger would have been astonished at the 'surprising sight' of the carts laden with the variety of products waiting in front of the entrance to the fortified capital city of Valletta, so that these could be wheeled in as soon as the gates were opened at sunrise. He continued that the market was thus well-stocked with strawberries, figs, pomegranates, grapes, apples, pears, peaches, nectarines, apricots, plums, melons and prickly pears. Oranges too were very tasty and these were exported to England and other countries. Yet, the production of food items was not nearly enough to feed the whole population of locals and foreigners.

Though largely tied to the soil and the farm, food was by no means a matter to be discarded. Thomas MacGill, writing for strangers visiting Malta in 1839, informed them that the peasantry ate vegetables in their crude state, melons and prickly pears, cheese, olives, dried fruit, salt-fish, and drank wine in moderation. Meat was reserved for a feast day however. Hot food included the *minestra* made from cooked vegetables and "strengthened with a little oil or grated cheese." A deserved mention, according to the writer, went to the *kawlata* (present-day spelling) in front of which "the most dainty (*sic*) palate desires to participate."

The *caulata* of the Maltese is an appetite stirring dish, composed of all sorts of vegetables, boiled together with little water, and a piece of pork to give it a relish. Their *ravioli* is even reckoned a dainty dish by the high fed: it is composed of fresh cheese, *ricotta*, beaten eggs and chopped parsley enveloped in a thin paste, first boiled, then stewed in a savoury sauce, with the juice of the love apple.

When health gives zest, what are all your *vol-au-vents*, or fried frogs when compared with the savoury *caulata* and *ravioli* of the Maltese, but they must be cooked by a country girl; they would be ruined by the first *maitre de cuisine* of Paris (MacGill, 1839, pp. 34-5).

The largely British male population, the majority of whom were uniformed personnel, had to be entertained, as much as it needed to be nourished.

The Maltese population also had to be maintained, especially since Malta's incapacity of producing sufficient quantities caused food supply to be predominantly dependent on foreign imports, especially grain. Bread was the staple food of the Maltese and was thus especially important, its consumption growing along the nineteenth century notwithstanding the increasing and doubling of its price (Cassar, 1988).

Imports could be considered an asset in view of the fact that the Maltese were not particularly attached to, or proud of, the local produce. Indeed, local products generated a lower price on the market when compared to imported similar items. The significance of imports should also be contextualised within an age-old mentality held by the populace and conditioned by a perennial fear of hunger linked to drought and other adverse eventualities.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the notion of Britishness had increasingly seeped into several aspects of the daily life of the Maltese. Evidence indicates that the Maltese gradually expressed an interest in, and indeed a disposition towards, the introduction of new foods and drinks, which became increasingly accepted within their diet.

The choice of consuming a particular 'colonial' food and preparing it in the correct manner was one of the behaviours communicating inclusion. It was also a sign of the acceptance of the political situation where the coloniser determined the day-to-day affairs of the colonised. Historians often note how the introduction of some food products in Malta was met with stark opposition and whose consumption immediately declared a person's orientation. Obviously, we cannot ignore the way particular foods have been endowed with meanings of empire, transcending their immediate nutritional value. For the culturally Italianate section of Malta's population, such goods were looked upon as powerful, even if at times relatively covert, symbols of the British Empire and treated as another element of imposition. However, evidence also suggests how, by the end of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, such products were being progressively incorporated by the Maltese within their culinary practices (Vella, 1894; 1903; 1936; Agius, 1938).

### A CAUTIONARY APPROACH: CONSUMING POTATOES

The potato is one food item which has intrigued researchers of Maltese food and foodways. Malta seems to have had a love-hate relationship with this vegetable. The Maltese were initially, to say the least, undecided

about what to do and how to treat the potato. In a correspondence by a soldier stationed in Malta, dated 2 October 1810, to a friend who would soon join him in the colony, the writer first of all speaks about the difference between Gibraltar and Malta in that there was no resemblance between the two. Indeed, regarding Malta, the soldier admitted,

it is our own faults if we do not daily and hourly enjoy ourselves. It has amusements of every kind; everything is cheap; the climate delightful; the women pretty, if not elegant; and the people, not social perhaps, but obedient, submissive, and respectful (Anon, 1811, p.54).

The author did not miss commenting upon the vegetables available, remarking that these were abundant and cheap. Regarding potatoes, he observed that these "have not been so long known and are consequently not so much used as they are in England, though they are now cultivated in the island" (Anon, 1810, p. 58).

There appears to be consensus about the introduction of potatoes in Malta during the British Colonial period (Castagna, 1888; Bowen-Jones, Dewdney & Fisher, 1961). Historians have repeatedly quoted information from travelogues to sustain this development in Malta's culinary culture. It is also at times represented as a form of struggle between the coloniser and the Maltese farmer, hinting at a peasant resistance towards Britishness. Arguably, one may hypothesise that the apparent lack of interest in the cultivation of potatoes could indeed indicate opposition to the consumption of potatoes by the general population. This circumstance is contextualised in a general understanding, suggesting a political stand by which the Maltese wanted to make a statement in favour of their Mediterranean roots, but who, eventually, had to succumb to pressures from the colonial power. These assumptions allow for an evaluation of the relationship between cuisine and empire and how food generates intimate experiences that transcend all forms of boundaries.

Of all the food imports introduced into Europe as a result of the Columbian Exchange, the potato made a rather late appearance. Parts of northern Europe would gradually elevate the tuber from a botanical curiosity to an emergency food by the end of the eighteenth century. Southern European countries, especially those regions shouldering the Mediterranean basin, remained quite conservative and continued to consider grain as the 'staff of life'. For instance, the potato was cultivated on a small scale in the area



of seventeenth century Tuscany and small parts of Prussia (Smith, 2011; Reader, 2008).

In hindsight, the potato crop turned out to be one of the most important developments in farming and consumption patterns of the modern period. While an obvious regular food for parts of Europe, classic amongst these being Ireland (Anon, 1796; Coohill, 2014), potatoes became a fundamental crop, ensuring the survival of many during periods of hunger. The omnipresent danger of food shortages, especially grain, triggered the need to seek out solutions beyond traditional alternatives. The most important substitute was the potato, the crop which, by the closing decades of the eighteenth century, was cultivated in no less than forty varieties in Europe. Successful transition was a long-drawn process as its adoption lacked the necessary energy and conviction causing its spread to be unsystematic and sporadic. Even if scientific proponents including Adam Smith (2016) and Antoine-Auguste Parmentiere (1773) exalted the importance of this crop as a means to alleviate hunger, countries such as France, Spain, Italy and Portugal only started to gradually integrate potatoes into their culinary diet along the closing decades of the eighteenth century.

It is generally held that the Maltese, similar to several southern European nations, took quite a while before they brought themselves to consider the cultivation and consumption of potatoes. It is here suggested that this view requires some rethinking especially since cultivation is not necessarily a reflection of consumption patterns.

Evidence on the cultivation of potatoes in Malta is rather sparse and its attribution to the British colonial period rather than a follow-up to trends in other parts of the Mediterranean might require some consideration. Historians attribute the first reference to the crop as a botanical plant to Balì Argotti who in 1774 introduced the plant to Malta. There is no further mention of the plant until Malta became a British protectorate in 1800. In the absence of information, researchers have attributed the intention of the first small-scale cultivation of the plant to supply food for the British forces stationed on the island. However, one curiosity which has not been given enough attention so far, is the depiction of a number of potatoes spread on the floor in a 1762 painting found in the refectory of the Archbishop's Curia in Floriana. Incidentally, this representation is one of several found in the same hall, which comprise foods known to have been cultivated and consumed in Malta.



A depiction of the potatoe during the Order's period is found in one of the paintings at the refectory of the Archbishop's Curia in Floriana. (Photo courtesy: Daniel Cilia)



Potatoes seemed to lack recognition for their nutritional value among the Maltese, especially since the crop was regularly used to feed the animals. Thus, the fact that potatoes were considered to be a substitute food mostly fit for animals tainted this crop with several adverse sociocultural meanings. Feeding potatoes to one's family, rather than bread, was perceived as a sign of failure for the breadwinner. Moreover, as the crop never enticed the Maltese to seriously consider its nutritional value, it was quickly forgotten when times of food shortages subsided (Gambin & Buttigieg, 2004; Cassar, 2019).

Researchers also emphasise that the British colonial authorities had to work hard to convince the Maltese to cultivate the crop. In the absence of evidence about the cultivation of the potato crop, historians proposed resistance to the cultivation of the crop. We have no evidence that indicates how much animal fodder was being cultivated for the same period discussed here. Neither the authorities nor the farmers felt the need to record such information. It is thus being suggested that some consideration should be made to the fact that, if potatoes were primarily cultivated as animal fodder, then the evidence from travelogues could simply be misinforming. It is possible that the colonial government's main difficulty was in trying to convince Maltese farmers not to feed the crop to the animals but rather to sell it for human consumption. It is here argued that travellers' accounts that attribute the introduction of the potato in Malta are primarily referring to cultivation for human consumption, instead of the already known practice of growing potatoes for animal fodder. It is this process of education, and its concomitant economic return, that explains how within four decades of British rule, several Maltese farmers started to consider the potato as a cash crop cultivated for human consumption. Furthermore, the cultivation of a crop should not be considered as directly proportional to the Maltese market demand. On the contrary, the supply could not meet the demand to the extent that the British colonial government used to import large quantities of the crop (Malta Blue Book, 1828). It is documented that, around the late nineteenth century, the 'Champion' variety was in great demand in Malta. This was brought from Britain: a country that also exported other varieties to Europe and the world – 'King Edward' to Spain and North Africa; 'Up-to-date' and 'Majestic' to South Africa and Australia; and, 'Royal Kidney' to the Canary Islands, Portugal, Italy, Algeria and South America; besides smaller quantities of 'Epicure', 'Arran Banner', 'Great Scot' and 'Kerr's Pink' (Salaman, 1985, p. 406).

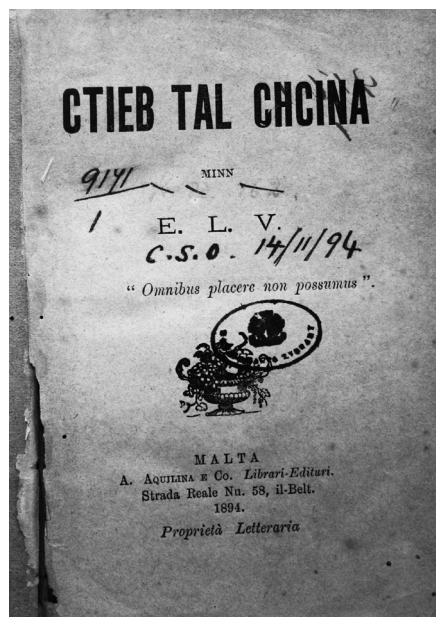
Rural inhabitants might have resisted the regular consumption of potatoes because of their direct association with the cultivation and use of the crop to maintain their herds and their attachment to other, more familiar, vegetables. Their lack of interest in consuming the crop was also influenced by market value, especially since this generated money to support their business. If these mental attitudes were employed within Malta's urban context, then the people of the harbour towns should have behaved differently. With several Maltese working side-by-side the British forces, potato consumption among the Maltese could have been rather popular in the harbour towns of Valletta, Cospicua, Senglea, Vittoriosa and Floriana. Although urbanites might have held a common opinion about the crop similar to their rural counterparts, the intense exposure to the product as a result of significant imports and its concomitant consumption may, arguably, have facilitated a process by which potatoes were increasingly adopted as part of their normal fare. Consequently, irrespective of cultivation interests, urban dwellers could have been more disposed to introduce potatoes, even if in small quantities, to their table.

Evidence is lacking when trying to specify the amount of potatoes consumed by the Maltese during the nineteenth century. However, the amounts of money spent on potato imports is indicative of the exposure the Maltese had to this crop (Malta Blue Book, 1828). Furthermore, several Maltese became acquainted with the different ways of how to prepare the potato, thus enhancing the quantity of food, and especially for the ones who struggled with the regular experience of hunger.

One should not consider statements based on statistics of potato imports as indicative of the level of integration of potatoes into Malta's dietary regime. However, it is difficult to conclude that such imports were exclusive for the British forces. Especially during the closing years of the nineteenth century, more Maltese were willing to emulate their British rulers and included the potato in several Maltese dishes.

#### EVIDENCE FROM COOKERY BOOKS

A cursory look at the first published recipe book in Maltese sheds light on how potatoes became a common ingredient in several dishes, and particularly in some that had been commonly consumed by the Maltese without the addition of potatoes prior to the coming of the British. References to *kawlata* [a vegetable soup] and *fenech la kampagnola* [fried rabbit, peasant style] are particularly revealing since today these



The front page of the first Maltese recipe book written by E.L. Vella and published in 1894

dishes represent some of the foods considered to mark Malta's culinary identity. Food transcends boundaries and, as part of a fusion cuisine, potatoes became an integral part in the preparation of these foods, even if the Maltese are constantly searching for a national cuisine they consider unique and representative of their identity (Cremona, 2010, pp. 103, 202).

The use of cookery as a reflection of the interaction of different culinary practices is rarely more evident than in a contemporary printed cookery book. The recipe book *Il Chtieb tal Chcina* [lit. The Kitchen Book] by E.L. Vella (1894) remains the first recipe book written in Maltese. In the introduction, the author indicates how the book was mainly intended to inform and educate the common woman and her servants, rather than important chefs, as had been the case for earlier books. Following the form and shape of some of the leading cookery books printed in Britain, Vella aspired to assist the user to navigate the increasingly diverse cookery products and practices by providing the latest recipes that could be prepared economically and with minimal difficulty. The author, aware of the several Maltese women employed as cooks in British households, emphasised how *Il Chtieb tal Chcina* would provide the necessary information to fulfil such domestic duties with ease, especially since most of the employers lacked the necessary culinary knowledge to prepare good and healthy dishes.

*Il Chtieb tal Chcina* is the first document that presents the researcher with the coexistence of British and Maltese culinary practices. References to beef steak, cottage pie and Irish stew are fused with soups, fish and meat dishes associated primarily with Maltese culinary customs. The collection of recipes is also a testimony to the integration of particular ingredients primarily associated with British cookery. For instance, out of a total of

114 recipes, twelve employed potatoes as one of the ingredients in the preparation of the dish. No other recipe, apart from potato fritters, has the word 'potato' included in the title. This changed significantly in the third edition of the same book (Vella, 1936), which included seven recipes specifically featuring potatoes in the title.

Although recipe books should not be simply considered representatives of a nation's dietary patterns, they surely are descriptive of that section within society with a greater disposition to embrace change and innovation. *Il Chtieb tal Chcina* included several recipes which clearly related to those who exhibited traits of Britishness. The introduction to the book attributes the recipes to Malta's culinary culture. In emulating the coloniser, Vella claims that this was a collection of recipes popularly known among the Maltese.

## CONCLUSION

The insistence of the British authorities to make potatoes available to the British Forces is a clear manifestation of power. Irrespective of whether the Maltese favoured the crop or not, the colonial government continued to invest money to meet the demands of those interested to cultivate and consume the product. To a certain extent, this could be interpreted as one good attempt by the British to engage the Maltese with a foreign culinary culture that would serve to further assert the colonisers' dominant culture.

The widespread consumption of the potato could be considered one opportunity for the British to display material wealth and sophistication. This was made possible because of a number of reasons. The British established a market for the product and were well prepared to pay good money for it. The influence of the market conditioned those Maltese farmers who sought to improve their activity to consider the potato as a cash crop. The potato also represented the dominant power, even if the main consumers were mainly British soldiers and sailors stationed in Malta. The fact that Malta was considered African and not modern was enough to create a social hierarchy: a divide between the ruler and the ruled. It is this same dichotomy that allowed for a sense of Britishness to exist. For a nation that had constantly been part of a foreign system, submissive behaviour was well engrained in the general Maltese psyche. Certainly, food sparked off conversations, and some Maltese could have chosen to experience the potato as a social occasion allowing for the exploration of an aspect of British culinary culture.

Assuming that the harbour towns became the first and main recipients of new products and new culinary practices, the fusion of Britishness into established Maltese culinary practices became inevitable. Rather than a struggle, this fusion should be considered as a learning process, allowing for the alien to become familiar as the Maltese explored new tastes and culinary practices.

Food consumption is, nevertheless, an integral part of material culture. Like other objects, food can carry shared meanings that are particular to a specific culture. When food products took on new and more widely shared meanings in society, the Maltese increasingly looked at the cookery of the British as more reflective of the same British culinary culture. The use of particular products and the replication of several dishes offered the Maltese, who lacked the means, an opportunity to taste another part of the world with which they were unfamiliar. By the end of the nineteenth century, cookery became a source of how to also emulate aspects of the British culinary culture and that of its Empire. It is important to note here that even Britain's exclusive culinary culture underwent significant changes from the eighteenth century onwards as a result of the borrowing process from the culinary cultures of Britain's own colonies and beyond (Panayi, 2008). The adoption of dishes from different parts of the Empire, such as Indian curry, and the assimilation of this food into Britain's culinary repertoire, took a new and widely shared meaning for the British. It is safe enough to claim that Malta had been exposed to a British Empire fusion culinary culture which it took up and adopted.

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## GOING ON SABBATICAL...

Prof. Andrew Jones

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**I**t has been a busy year: The sabbatical year started off with an invite to the University of Swansea's School of Management to contribute to a seminar on 'Costal Tourism and Climate Change'. This was followed by an invite to the University of Derby to examine and participate in the defence of a PhD thesis on sustainable tourism in Malawi. The autumn proceeded with a tour of South Africa, Namibia, Botswana and Zimbabwe to facilitate an understanding of sustainable/ community tourism development projects across the region, including a visit to the University of Namibia.

Visits to New Zealand and Australia took place from late 2018 to early 2019 where I attended the 'International Tourism and Sustainable Development Goals' conference hosted by Massey University Auckland (December) and visited the CAUTHE international conference – 'Sustainability of Tourism, Hospitality and Events in a Disruptive Digital Age' (January). This followed on with an invite to a workshop at the University of Queensland – Brisbane hosted by UN/The Ship for World Youth Leaders (SWY). This program invests in young global leaders, preparing them to work and thrive in a globalised world of diverse communities by providing them with an immersive cross-cultural learning experience. I was invited to contribute to the running of the climate change workshop.

Spring 2019 brought visits to the University of Wales Trinity St David's and an invitation to act as external examiner for the portfolio of undergraduate

tourism programmes offered at that University. An invite by Canterbury Christchurch University to act as an international moderator for their collaborative partnership tourism programmes in Colombo-Sri Lanka followed, along with visits to the University of Plymouth to conduct an examination of a PhD thesis on sustainable tourism development in China.

I met with CABI, the publishers in Abingdon, to undertake a follow up edited book publication to update the recent Global Climate Change and Coastal Tourism text (published 2017) with a new title along the lines of Global Climate Change and Island Tourism, with a proposed publication date of 2021. I was also invited to deliver a keynote presentation – 'Sea changes and disappearing destinations: recognizing problems, realising expectations and managing solutions' – at the World Monuments Fund/ ICOMOS conference on coastal heritage and climate change in September 2019. I also continue to act as external examiner for the University of Wales tourism MBA programmes at City University Athens and Nicosia, Cyprus.

## RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS BY ITTC ACADEMIC STAFF



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## GRADUATION CEREMONIES 2018

### ACADEMIC ORATION

Dr Marie Avellino

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As we come together today to formally celebrate your success, as graduands of our University of Malta, allow us to reflect on another successful outcome which is pervading our Maltese Islands. It is that of reaching another milestone after milestone of inbound tourist arrivals. According to the latest National Statistics between January and September of 2018 we received over 2 million visitors, compared to the 1.5 million of 2016 and 1.8 million of 2017. There are strong indicators that 2018 will surpass all other previous years' international arrivals which will translate into more foreign investment, more jobs, and other benefits and of course more costs for society and negative impacts such as more traffic, higher rents and so on.

The University of Malta has long been providing support to the Tourism industry, even before the Institute for Tourism, Travel and Culture had been established. We feel that we have contributed not in some small measure to this success through our research, and more significantly through providing a workforce that has propelled this industry forward in leaps and bounds.

Tourism, together with its bed-mate Culture is a complex and globalised phenomenon, and much like the proverbial elephant and the blind men. For those of you unfamiliar with this story, it is about six blind men who visit the Rajah's palace and encounter an elephant. Each man gives his own version of what an elephant is, based on their unique perspective:

one said it was a wall, another a snake in reference to the trunk, another assumed it was like a spear as he had handled the tusk of the elephant, and so on. Upon hearing the commotion which ensued as each believed that their version was the correct one, the Rajah decreed that each man was to touch one part only and then they must put all the parts together to find out what the elephant is like. Of course, we know that this will not actually work, but in our case as lecturers we have to strive to ensure that our students are able to understand and also visualise the different parts of the animal so as to build a coherent picture as much as possible. It is indeed a challenge to bring together all the parts of the industry, the market, and the different disciplinary and philosophical perspectives to an industry which is also dynamic and so important to the National Economy.

In another version of the tale, the Rajah actually tells the men that they are all right, as that each was describing their own experience of the elephant. This version can easily be compared to the tourism market: each visitor or tourist has their own unique experience of the trip, hotel, visit to a site or navigating the booking process. This makes our work as academics even more challenging as we seek to provide our students with the tools necessary to carve out their career in the tourism and cultural industries.

#### 2018 EUROPEAN YEAR OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

However, as a University our responsibilities go beyond that of providing a positive learning experience for our students. It is our remit to extend learning beyond our campus. This year we celebrate European Year of Cultural Heritage and we are also celebrating Valletta as the European City of Culture. 2018 is the year when we need to keep Europe's shared values in our minds. As Tourism and Migration levels exceed all expectations, European core values will be challenged as it is permeable to non-European cultural norms which sometimes do not reflect or replicate what European or National citizens feel is their natural and cultural heritage. "Cultural heritage is central to European identity" (CHCfE Consortium 2015:34). One way of ensuring that this cultural heritage is preserved is through experiential learning. This form of learning, according to UNESCO (2008) involves direct and active personal experience combined with reflection and feedback. It must engage participants in way that makes their experience of heritage personally relevant to them. It is through this personal involvement that we will have engaged citizens: both as people working in the industry but also as visitors or tourists.

And what are Europe's shared values? Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), the Lisbon Treaty declares:

*“The Union is founded on the values of respect for **human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail**”.* Tourism, especially that which is known as cultural tourism, with niches such as religious, dark, gastronomy, screen and heritage experience tourism can all serve to strengthen the values indicated in Article 2.

Another key aspect of the Tourism and Cultural experience, and which ties in with valorising the shared values is that of providing an authentic and sustainable product and service. The tourism industry although aware that tourists are in search of an authentic experience, also tends to ‘manufacture representation’ of Maltese identity. The commonplace ‘reproduction’ or ‘recreation’ of a fabricated landscape incites feelings of familiarity, or exoticism, friendliness or contempt, authenticity or synthetic, with the main aim of attracting visitors. This could also lead to the host community believing and moulding their way of life, to fit an image that has been created purely as a marketing narrative. It is this mix of presentation of cultural products produced for tourist consumption, amalgamated with cultural products which are produced for the sake of accessing EU funding, or a political agenda, plus the ‘unconscious’ production of the culture within a society which leads to the ‘native society’ such as the Maltese trying to come to terms with what it means to be Maltese in a globalised world. It also sends out conflicting messages of what the visitor and local believes is ‘authentic’ Maltese Identity. Identity is closely aligned to heritage and culture as they are considered as the basic tenets on which national identity is constructed.

Identity here refers to how meaning is constructed both by the hosts, tourists as well as by the tourism industry. The cultural production in the form of images and texts is a manifestation of the identity that these producers want to project. So the question here is this – who has the right to decide what and how ones cultural heritage is transmitted, manifested and manipulated?

## CELEBRATING SUCCESS, HONOURING RESPONSIBILITIES

I return to the successes in the tourism arrivals, which I referred to in this introduction. The high demands of the tourism industry may slowly turn the Maltese islands into a theatre of the nation's folklore, tradition, and history. Efforts to restrict the issuing of commercial activity permits in some sensitive zones are perceived as attempts to restrict or control enterprise. Over commoditisation is a reality.

Re-appropriation of heritage, culture, intangible as well as intangible assets with the explicit aim of maximising profits at the expense of losing values, identity and quality of life is to be safeguarded especially by the persons who have the knowledge and education to do so. I sincerely hope that this is a role which you, our graduates will take on with responsibility and with pride. You must be our nation's conscience and we are sure you will succeed as we have given you the skills and knowledge to do so.

May God Bless you.

## ISLAND TOURISM PLATFORM

The Island Tourism Platform (ITP), set up in 2017, is a collaborative project between the Islands and Small States Institute and the ITTC.

The ITP's main objectives are to facilitate collaboration between UM entities and individual UM academics interested in island tourism issues and to promote research and teaching initiatives relating to island tourism at the University of Malta and elsewhere.

ITP is administered and guided by a Steering Committee composed of Dr Marie Avellino as Chair, Professor Lino Briguglio (Director of the ISSI and vice-chair of the ITP), Professor George Cassar (ITTC), Dr Marie Louise Mangion (Department of Public Policy), Professor Andrew Jones (ITTC) and Mr Julian Zarb (tourism consultant).

Two public seminars were organised by ITP during this period. 'The Impacts of Tourism on the Maltese Island Culture', held on 6th June, 2018, discussed the cultural heritage of Malta. The seminar was chaired by Professor Lino Briguglio, and the panel consisted of

Dr Karsten Xuereb (Superintendence of Cultural Heritage Malta), Professor George Cassar, Dr Marie Avellino, and Dr Leslie Vella Deputy Chief executive Officer, Malta Tourism Authority. The seminar presentations and discussion dealt mainly with the cultural interaction between the visitors and the host communities on the Maltese Islands. The common theme that emerged was that many islands have interesting cultural heritage, which serve as a tourist attraction, however, tourism can usher in major social and political changes in the host country, often due to the fact that the visitors may have values and preferences which differ from those traditionally held by the host community.

The second seminar's theme, 'Maximising whilst sustaining Cultural Resources: Island Tourism and Beyond' was held on 5th December 2018. The seminar served to show case the work which has been carried out by three student researchers at ITTC.

Prof. Lino Briguglio (ISSI Director) and Dr Marie Avellino (ITTC) are currently undertaking joint research on resident attitudes to tourism.

<https://www.um.edu.mt/islands/islandtourismplatform>

## ITTC PROJECTS: 2018–2019

Dr Karsten Xuereb

The Institute for Tourism, Travel and Culture (ITTC) houses a dedicated unit to research and networking activities related to the main areas of interest to the ITTC.

The unit is headed by the Projects Coordinator, Dr Karsten Xuereb, who is responsible for identifying funding opportunities, managing the proposals and coordinating the successful grants from pre-award to the post-award phase. The Projects Unit is also involved in research and networking activities both locally as well as internationally.

At the present time, the ITTC is involved in a number of EU co-funded projects, namely FAMOUS, BLUESPROUT, 3ECONOMY, EU HERITAGE and as well as an ERASMUS MUNDUS programme for a joint Master of Science in Tourism Development and Culture. It also successfully concluded project BLUEPRINT in September 2018.

### 3 ECONOMY+

Erasmus+ is the EU's programme to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe. The 3Economy+ project consists of student exchanges in collaboration with University of Granada (Spain) and the ESTG higher education centre for management in Portalegre (Portugal). It comes to an end in August 2020.

The 3Economy+ establishes a curriculum that sets out shared expectations within economy, tourism, and marketing to ensure that the



selected students are prepared for enterprise or employment following qualification, or for further study.

The programme promotes open access to materials, documents and media for improving learning, teaching and work opportunities within the fields of business, marketing and tourism, and within multilingual environments. By fostering multilingualism and interculturality among the participants, through the use of English, Spanish and Portuguese, important international geographical areas are covered, contributing to the development of emerging economies.

<http://www.3economyplus.eu/>

### **BLUEPRINT**

Blueprint addresses one of the four priority actions identified in the EU Tourism Policy of the European Commission in response to some of the challenges faced by the tourism sector, namely promoting quality of jobs in tourism and fostering appropriate skills development. The Partners are the European Confederation of Outdoor Employers, European Network of Sport Education, Fundación España Activa, Akademia Wychowania Fizycznego Sportu im. Jędrzeja Śniadeckiego, International Council for Coaching Excellence and Sport Ireland. ITTC was involved in the data collection process on current use of qualifications for Active Leisure careers. <https://www.europeactive-euaffairs.eu/projects/blueprint>

### **BLUESPROUT**

BLUESPROUT is an Erasmus+ project that aims to boost entrepreneurs' competences, enhance their services and support their competitiveness in marine sector at EU level. Its three specific objectives are to:

1. Improve the institutional ecosystem identifying best practices and replicable models;
2. Train the trainers in order to support entrepreneurs and those seeking to become entrepreneurs in adapting their businesses to current market, where a large part of customers are interested in support environmental-sustainable businesses;
3. Encourage the creation of new businesses focused on blue economy (touristic businesses mainly) with a business model which integrate business competitiveness/growth and environmental protection.

The project is run by Varna Economic Development Agency (Bulgaria), Sociedade Portuguesa de Inovacao (Portugal), CBE - Cooperation Bancaire pour L'Europe (Belgium); FVB in Hive, Ancona (Italy) and ITTC at the UM.

<https://www.facebook.com/Bluesprout-305803743386221/>

### **DISCOVERING MALTA AND GOZO THROUGH ITS PEOPLE AND CULTURE**

Launched in 2010, this community-based tourism project aims to address some of the key issues facing tourism in the Maltese Islands. These include the stagnant state of the traditional group tour itineraries and the changing profile of tourists in general. The coordinator of this project is Mr Julian Zarb, President of the Malta Tourism Society. The project was partially funded for three consecutive years (2016-2018) by the UM Research Fund Committee

### **EU HERITAGE**

EU HERITAGE is an Erasmus+ KA2: Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices - Sector Skills Alliances project aiming at developing Sector Skills Alliances. It is a three-year project.

EU HERITAGE is a wide transnational initiative bringing together 10 partners from 7 EU countries forming a high-quality balanced partnership which includes:

4 VET / educational providers: Fondazione Fitzcarraldo (Italy); University of Malta - Institute for Tourism, Travel & Culture (Malta); Hellenic Open University (Greece); National Institute for Cultural Research and Training - NIRCT (Romania);

3 industry / sector representatives in the field of cultural heritage / culture / tourism / creative industries: MATERAHUB (Italy); Alden Biesen (Belgium); Asociation Plataforma La Cultora (Spain);

1 research centre and sector representative in the field of Digital & ICTs for cultural heritage, M2C Institut für angewandte Medienforschung GmbH (Germany)

1 European network and sector representative in the field of culture: European Network on Cultural Management and Policy - ENCACT (Belgium);

1 Chamber of Commerce: Camara de Comercio e Industria Italiana para Espana - CCIS (Spain).

The project aims to:

- enhance the innovation of the CH sector to make it more sustainable, accessible, audience centred, digitally ready, thus more competitive, resilient and able to cope with the challenges which are affecting the sector;
- build a strong Sector Skills Alliance for the promotion and valorisation of CH by working on the skills of heritage professionals and with the goal of avoiding a mismatch between the new sector's needs and the professional skills of heritage professionals, thus:
- foster the cooperation of the CH sector with other sectors and industries, in particular technology, tourism, SMEs, and Creative and Cultural industries, to allow further scope for creativity, innovation and sustainability.

<https://www.facebook.com/EUHeritageProject/>



## FAMOUS

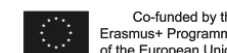
Famous is a COSME project and addresses film tourism. It has just been concluded. It addresses movie-driven tourism in the 21st century. It focuses on UNESCO world heritage sites that have hosted film productions in Europe and the Mediterranean. The project involves 8 partners from

Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta and Spain, acting as a consortium. The Italian Regione of Liguria, the Hellenic National Commission for UNESCO, the Fondazione per la Cultura Genova Palazzo Ducale and the University of Malta bring to the project their broad experience in tourism and cultural policies managing. Italian DMO Destination Makers, Spanish creative communication agency Inmedia Solutions, Cypriot tour operator Top Kinisis Travel PLC and the Italian Chamber of Commerce of Lyon (France) complete the list of partners. It is a COSME project supported by the EU that looks at Transnational Thematic Tourism Products Linked to Cultural & Creative Industries.

<https://www.facebook.com/Movietravel.eu/>



Brand of the FAMOUS project



## TOUR DC

TOUR DC is an Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees (EMJMD) project. It is international in scope whilst having a strong base in Europe. It has a common and integrated approach manifest in courses that relate to the central objectives of TourDC, complement one another and add distinctive attributes to the academic subject matter. Lecturers from the degree-awarding Consortium Partner Universities (CPUs) of Glasgow, Malta, Lisbon and Lund will contribute to the courses at other CPUs' campuses, giving a concrete element of jointness and ensuring a continuing exchange of ideas, approaches and topics taught through collaborative teaching arrangements. Furthermore, dissertation supervision will be undertaken by a supervisory team of academics from the respective degree-awarding CPUs. A fifth, non-degree-awarding CPU (Wageningen University) will deliver a Summer School (SSch). The combination of the

above aspects makes this interdisciplinary degree exceptional. No other tourism programme offers the depth and breadth covered by TourDC which will equip students for the challenges the industry faces in the future by combining cultural awareness and appreciation with an insight into managing resources, and an understanding of development in a holistic sense. The following elaborates on the integration and objectives of this programme.

The 2yr Master of Science in Tourism Development and Culture draws mainly on the social sciences, including anthropology, economics, environmental science, geography, management studies and sociology; it also contains historical approaches. Current issues including sustainability, cultural conservation, heritage management and destination development are explored by the CPUs, as well as fundamental aspects of social science theory and methodology and more specifically of tourism studies, for instance, typologies of tourists, supply and demand, socio-economic impacts on destinations, innovation in business, managing events and tourism strategies. The student will therefore get a broad introduction to the tourism industry and types of tourists as well as a deeper understanding of contemporary issues relating to the natural, cultural and urban environments and sustainability. Opportunities to hear from professionals in the sector and to undertake work experience are available to enhance the student's experience, relate theory to practice and develop suitability for the job market. TourDC is taught by European CPUs whose interdisciplinary courses complement each other.

<https://www.gla.ac.uk/postgraduate/erasmusmundus/tourdc/>

## ITTC INITIATIVES AND EVENTS 2018-2019

### JANUARY 2018

#### **COUNCIL APPOINTMENT**

Dr Marie Avellino appointed by UM Council as Director of the Institute for Tourism, Travel and Culture.

AGM of Interpret Europe, Frankfurt

Dr Avellino participated as Vice-Chair of the Supervisory Committee.

Director informed the staff at ITTC that as a strategy for supporting the UN Sustainable Development Goals, ITTC would be banning single use plastic for assignment folders, etc.

#### **JUNIOR COLLEGE EXPO 2018**

ITTC participated in the Junior College Expo 2018. Dr Marie Avellino and Prof George Cassar gave an overview of the course programmes offered by the Institute. They also led a discussion about career opportunities that are available to students reading for an Honours Degree in Tourism Studies at the University of Malta. The feedback from the participating



students and their lecturers indicates that there is not enough awareness about the academic value of reading for such a degree as opposed to following the vocational path to a career in Tourism and Hospitality.

## WORKSHOP: 'OPEN ACCESS IN PRACTICE: DISSEMINATION, VISIBILITY, USAGE & IMPACT OF SCHOLARLY RESEARCH'

Dr. John Ebejer attended workshop organised by UM Library, in collaboration with OpenAIRE.

## FEBRUARY 2018

### HALF DAY SEMINAR ON TOURIST GUIDING.

ITTC academics participated in this seminar, organised by the Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS).

### 2017 END OF YEAR RESULTS

ITTC Director and lecturers attended The Ministry for Tourism and the Malta Tourism Authority 2017 End of Year Results.

### NATIONAL RESEARCH – OCCUPATIONAL HANDBOOK

Director participated in a national research project which would lead to the development of an Occupational Handbook (CT 3001/2017) – commissioned by Jobsplus and partly funded by the European Social Fund. This project is aimed at bringing together government entities, social and educational partners, employers and job holders from 25 sectors to ensure the career information of this online Occupational Handbook is accurate and relevant to Maltese job seekers, students, and local companies and HR professionals. Dr Avellino's input was required for her expertise in the Tourism and Hospitality Sector

### ERASMUS HUNGARY DELEGATION

The Director welcomed a delegation from Hungary to discuss further cooperation between the University entities for Erasmus exchanges

### STRATEGY SEMINAR

The Director held a seminar for all the ITTC staff whereby she delivered her strategic plan for ITTC. This was the plan that she had delivered to Council in her bid for the appointment for the ITTC Directorship. All were invited to discuss and present their objective opinions either during the seminar itself or in confidence after the event. A healthy discussion ensued and this helped all the staff to come together sharing a common goal.

## MARCH 2018

### INTERPRET EUROPE CONFERENCE

Between 23 and 26 March 2018, Dr Marie Avellino and Prof. George

Cassar participated in the Interpret Europe Conference which was held in the Hungarian medieval town of Kőszeg. This year's theme was 'Heritage and Identity'. In collaboration with Dr Noel Buttigieg and Dr Dane Munro, also from the ITTC, they prepared the study 'Contested space: dissonant identity', focussing on Malta as a contested space in line with its variegated colonial heritage, consequentially leading to a dissonant identity as evidenced by the various loyalties and sympathies of the Maltese through the centuries up to this day. The second part of the presentation consisted in a case study which focussed on the colourful reality of Valletta's Strait Street. The discussion addressed the socio-historical development of this famous street – known to British and American sailors as 'The Gut', and generally abhorred by the majority of the Maltese as a no-go zone – and about the street's recent reinvention as a foodie, cultural and entertainment destination for locals and foreigners alike.

### FACES OF POSTMEMORY 3: CODES AND LANGUAGES CONFERENCE

Dr Marie Avellino and Prof George Cassar participated in the "Faces of Postmemory 3: Codes and Languages" conference held at the Collegium Maius, Krakow Poland. This was organised by the Jagiellonian University's Institute of Intercultural Studies in collaboration with the Institute of Applied Linguistics of the



University of Warsaw. Their paper entitled '*Negotiating a Postmemory dichotomy: nostalgia and aversion in Malta*' was well received by the international audience. It has also been chosen to appear in an International publication in 2020.

### MEDITERRANEAN TOURISM FORUM

ITTC Academics were present at the Mediterranean Tourism Forum held on the 1st and 2nd March 2018, at Malta Hilton: Dr Marie Avellino, Director ITTC, Prof George Cassar, Mr Julian Zarb and Prof Andrew Jones. They were joined by Dr Mary Tanke from Florida International University, USA.



## IT SUPPORT FOR ITTC ACADEMICS

The Director organised a hands-on session for ITTC lecturers. They were invited to bring their laptops to the boardroom so as to take part in a session which was facilitated by Mr Simon Caruana, a visiting lecturer at ITTC, on how to access their profile, edit it and update it with their publications. An impromptu additional session was also held on the use of VLE and Turnitin

## CAUTHE: UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE



Prof. Jones participated in the CAUTHE (Council for Australian Tourism in Higher Education) Conference hosted this year by the University of Newcastle. The focus of the conference was 'Get Smart- Paradoxes and Possibilities for Tourism' where Prof Jones presented a paper on behalf of the University and ITTC Titled 'Paradoxically speaking: Community Tourism'. In this paper Prof Jones and Mr Julian Zarb presented the key findings of an ongoing research project focussed on discovering Malta and Gozo through its people and culture.

## HVIDORE GYMNASIUM IN DENMARK

Students from Hvidore Gymnasium in Denmark, who are studying tourism were welcomed by the Director of ITTC, Dr Marie Avellino, Outreach Coordinator, Prof George Cassar and Mr Julian Zarb.

## HEA FELLOWSHIP

Dr John Ebejer was awarded Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy. HEA Fellowship is widely recognised by universities in the UK and worldwide as a certificate of competence in teaching at higher education level. Dr Ebejer's Fellowship application was backed up by a three-week teaching placement at the University of Westminster in November 2017.

## APRIL 2018

### ERASMUS+ VISIT TO ITTC.

Dr Claudia Dolezal from the University of Westminster visited the ITTC and delivered lectures to undergraduate tourism students. The visit was coordinated by Dr John Ebejer.

### EXPERIENTIAL TOURISM SEMINAR

Experiential Tourism is a form of tourism in which tourists focus on connecting the history, culture and people of the destination being visited as a means of having an immersive experience. The Seminar presenters offered a series of different perspectives of the tourist experience at different destinations. This allowed the audience to reflect, engage and discuss this global phenomenon which veers towards a form of tourism which caters for a more meaningful engagement with the host community. Dr John Ebejer, ITTC, facilitated the session which included presentations by Mr Leslie Vella, Chief Officer (Strategic Development), Malta Tourism Authority, Malta; Dr Claudia Dolezal, University of Westminster, London, UK; Dr Rory MacLellan, Edinburgh Napier University, Edinburgh, UK; Prof Jolanta Szymkowska-Bartyzel, Institute of American Studies and Polish Diaspora, Jagiellonian

University, Krakow, Poland; Dr Elżbieta Wiącek, Faculty for International and Political Sciences, Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland; and Prof. George Cassar ITTC and Dr Marie Avellino, Director, ITTC.



### MEETING WITH ARTS COUNCIL MALTA

Dr Marie Avellino and Prof George Cassar were welcomed by the Executive Chairman, Mr Albert Marshall with whom they discussed future area of cooperation. With Mr Mario Azzopardi they application that will be made for UNESCO to consider the Ftira as intangible cultural heritage. Dr Avellino expressed her support for this initiative and confirmed that ITTC would favourably consider supporting such a nomination.

### ERASMUS+ VISIT BY JAGELLONIAN UNIVERSITY

The Director hosted an Erasmus+ staff mobility visit by two academics from the Institute of Intercultural Studies at Jagiellonian University (Krakow,

Poland), Dr Elzbieta Wiacek and Dr Jolanta Szymkowska-Bartyzel. The academics lectured at both undergraduate and post graduate levels and took part in the ITTC seminar indicated hereunder.

### **THE IMPACTS OF TOURISM ON THE MALTESE ISLAND CULTURE**

The impacts of tourism on Maltese island culture' seminar focused on the cultural interaction between visitors and their host communities in the Maltese Islands. It was organised by the ITTC and the Islands and Small States Institute of the University of Malta.

Generally, tourism in small islands is promoted as a source of income and employment for the host community. However, tourism has various additional positive and negative impacts, including those on island indigenous cultures, which can usher in major social and political changes in the host country, often due to the fact that the visitors may have custom, habits and preferences which differ from those traditionally held by the host community. The event was chaired by Prof Lino Briguglio, Director, Islands and Small States Institute.

Panel Presentations were delivered by Dr Karsten Xuereb, Researcher from the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage Malta; Prof. George Cassar, ITTC and Dr Marie Avellino, ITTC together with Mr Leslie Vella, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Malta Tourism Authority.

### **STUDENT VISITS TO THE NATIONAL STATISTICS OFFICE**

Third year students today paid a visit to the National Statistics Office as part of the module 'Socio-Economic issues in Tourism'. The students were accompanied by Mr. Malcolm Bray Visiting Senior Lecturer at our Institute. During the visit, officials from the NSO delivered two presentations covering the various tourism statistics published by the NSO.

### **DESIGNING, DELIVERING AND EVALUATING ONLINE STUDY-UNITS**

ITTC lecturers attended CPD training course delivered by UM's IT Services during the period May to July 2018.

## **MAY 2018**

### **ERASMUS+ COOPERATION VISITING BY THE UNIVERSITY OF NOVI SAD**

The director welcomed Dr Milica Pavkov Hrvojevic and Dr Zelijka Cvejic from the University of Novi Sad. They discussed future cooperation between the two institutions.

## **JUNE 2018**

### **MARKETING ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES ON THE SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM**

ITTC Director took part in a programme organised by the UM IT Services and Human Resources Department on Marketing Academic Programmes on the Social Media Platform

### **WOMEN DIRECTORS MALTA (WDM) - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Dr Avellino was invited to the WDM's AGM which was held at the UM's Life Sciences Centre. Since the AGM coincided with the effective date of GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation), a panel discussion was also held.

### **KAZAN DELEGATION**

The director welcomed a delegation from Kazan which was made up of Prof Liliya Vorontsova (Vice-Rector for Economic Affairs and Strategic Development), Dr Yulia Kamasheva (Vice-Rector for Academic Work) and Ms Ekaterina Vracheva (Head of the Department for International Relations). Prof Colin Calleja from the Faculty of Education organised the meeting which laid the foundations for further cooperation between the two universities.

### **CHINESE DELEGATION FROM NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR SOUTH CHINA SEA**

On 11-12 June 2018, a delegation led by NISCSS President Wu Shicun conducted field studies in Malta. The purpose of this trip was to have a first-hand experience understand what they considered to be best practices in Malta in developing maritime industry. This would place them in a position to provide policy recommendation to Hainan with regard to its development as a free trade zone and free trade port with Chinese characteristics. The delegation also visited the University of Malta and held talks with Prof Lino Briguglio, Dr Marie Avellino and other academics from the University. They discussed various issues including ocean governance, island tourism, island economy and opportunities of cooperation.

<http://en.nanhai.org.cn/index/search/content/cid/20/id/5650/datatype/1.html>

## JULY 2018

### MEETING THE CHALLENGES OF THE FUTURE: CONSULTATIONS FOR THE ITTC'S STRATEGIC VISION

A consultation seminar for ITTC academics was held on the 16<sup>th</sup> July in the ITTC Boardroom. This was held in preparation for a new Strategic Vision for the next 5 years for the ITTC. It had been preceded and followed up with one-to-one meetings with staff, students, industry stakeholders, and persons in key positions at the University of Malta, Tourism and Culture sectors. The academics were asked to provide constructive feedback from lecturers and others in an advisory capacity after the session, so that this would be re-visited during a Strategic Planning Forum: entitled 'Aligning the UM and ITTC strategy for a holistic vision and mission' planned for the following September. Three key issues gained overall consensus:

1. Visibility - ITTC needs to stand out more clearly and be seen more widely as a 'go to' source of research and knowledge in the tourism field in Malta through press statements, academics participating in media programmes and key participants at events.
2. Knowledge-Sharing - Participative discussions, workshops and focus groups as well as an academic journal emanating from research work by the Institute are being considered as medium term strategic goals
3. Retaining - enhancing and building memory and knowledge by bringing retired professionals and students together e.g. Alumni Association

### MASTER CHEF DIPLOMA STUDENTS VISIT SICILY.



### ICHOOSE FAIR

ITTC hosted a stand at the Hotel Phoenicia at the iCHOOSE Fair. Dr M. Avellino and Prof. G. Cassar also gave presentations about ITTC to prospective students and their parents. Dr D. Munro and Mr J. Zarb also participated in the event.

### INFORMATION EVENING FOR PROSPECTIVE TOURISM & CULTURE STUDENTS

A drop-in session information evening was held for prospective undergraduate students to find out what opportunities there are for work in the tourism, culture, hospitality and events sectors. ITTC lecturers and the Director gave presentations about the different programmes that are offered at ITTC.

### ITTC LAUNCHES TOURISM INDUSTRY NEEDS SURVEY

ITTC invited tourism stakeholders to participate in an online survey and organised focus groups so as to identify skill and knowledge requirements for the tourism industry in Malta as well as to ensure that the undergraduate and graduate programmes offered by ITTC lead to higher employability for its graduates.

ITTC students receive tertiary education on a wide range of subjects, mostly focused on tourism but not limited to it. Apart from tourism and hospitality, many ITTC graduates are now working in related sectors of the economy including culture, heritage, museums, leisure, events, travel and aviation. This research initiative was coordinated by Dr M. Avellino, Dr J. Ebejer and Dr N. Buttigieg.

## AUGUST 2018

### MARKETING AND VISIBILITY CAMPAIGN

The Director was actively working on a marketing and visibility campaign together with the Communications and Marketing Department at University of Malta.

## SEPTEMBER 2018

### ITTC STRATEGY WORKSHOP

The Chair of ITTC, Prof. Tanya Sammut Bonnici and the Director of ITTC, Dr Marie Avellino organised a full day seminar with workshops for



all the members of staff. They gave presentations on the Vision and Strategy of ITTC and the University of Malta. These were followed by workshops which aimed to align the strategies through themes such as Teaching and Learning, Research and Publications, National Impact, Social Impact, Industry Impact and Financial, Social and Environmental Sustainability.

The afternoon session focussed on Student Dissertation supervision. This was ably facilitated by Dr Maureen Cole.

### INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON WALLED TOWNS



The symposium was organised by European Walled Towns, with the support of the ITTC, in October 2018. It focused on the authenticity and valorisation of walled towns. The aim of the symposium was to provide a platform for practitioners, academics and interested parties to exchange knowledge, experience and research about the better governance of walled towns and cities. The programme includes visits to Malta's main fortified towns including Valletta, Mdina and the Citadel in Gozo. Dr Marie Avellino and Dr John Ebejer delivered presentations during the symposium which elicited interesting discussions.

### OVERTOURISM: IS IT OVER FOR THE GROWTH OF TOURISM?

The Battle of Ideas is an annual festival that brings together 400-plus speakers for over 100 debates over the course of a single weekend at



London's premier cultural centre, the Barbican. In addition, the festival comprises a series of standalone satellite events in Malta that take place in the UK and other European cities from September to November. In collaboration with Dr Jim Butcher reader in geography, Canterbury Christ Church University, Dr Marie Avellino launched a *Battle of Ideas* European satellite event on the topic: Overtourism: Is it over for the growth of tourism? The event was a success with the public presenting their views on such a hot topic. A summary of the main conclusions can be found here: <https://www.um.edu.mt/newspoint/events/umevents/2018/10/overtourismisitoverforthegrowthoftourism>

Panellists for this event were: Dr Marie Avellino, ITTC Director. Prof. Godfrey Baldacchino, Professor of Sociology, University of Malta and Dr Dominic Standish, author of *Venice in Environmental Peril*, lecturer, commentator and writer on Italian politics.

### JOBS IN TOURISM

A week-long event took place in November 2018 during Freshers' Week which concluded with a workshop debating the study "Blueprint for sectoral cooperation on skills in tourism: enhancing the image of careers in the tourism sector". This was initiated according to one of the four priority actions identified in the EU Tourism Policy of the European Commission in response to some of the challenges faced by the tourism sector, namely promoting quality of jobs in tourism and fostering appropriate skills development. Dr Marie Avellino was invited to deliver the keynote for this workshop.

### HERITAGE EUROPE INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

The symposium was organised by the ITTC and European Walled Towns. EWT is an international association that promotes sustainable



With the support of  
Institute for Tourism, Travel & Culture





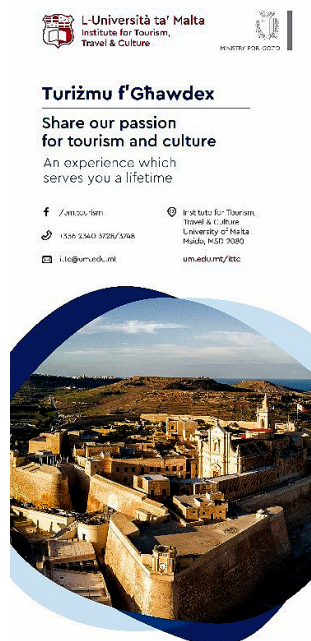
development of fortified historic towns and cities in Europe. Dr John Ebejer was co-organiser on behalf of the ITTC. The keynote speaker was Secretary General of Heritage Europe, Brian Smith. Heritage Europe is a network of European historic towns, set up following a Council of Europe initiative in Strasbourg in 1999. Dr Marie Avellino, Prof. George Cassar and Dr John Ebejer also gave presentations. The other speakers at the symposium included Joseph Spiteri, President of European Walled Towns, Leslie Vella of the Malta Tourism Authority, Perit Norbert Gatt of the Rehabilitation Directorate and Anne Scicluna, former Mayor of Chichester, UK. <https://www.europeanwalledtowns.org/single-post/2018/05/07/Valletta-Symposium-and-General-Meeting--13th-September---15th-September-2018>

### LAUNCH OF IT-TURIŻMU F'GHAWDEX PROGRAMME

ITTC launched a new, part-time programme of studies for all those working in the Tourism Sector in Gozo. This innovative programme was offered mainly in the Maltese language programme and did not require the statutory University of Malta entrance requirements. The programme introduces participants to the concepts of tourism, hospitality, vacationing and how they are nuanced by the specificities of islandness and smallness. This is especially significant to Gozo as it seeks to find its place as a Tourism Destination of choice. These two study-units offered valuable assistance to those working in the Gozo tourism industry, with ideas and discussions that are practical yet critical, inspired by suitable international experiences.

The units were designed to offer ample opportunities for participants to discuss and look at Gozo with a fresh pair of eyes, enhancing the knowledge and awareness of tourism operators on that island, allowing them to add value to what they do. The course also offered a safe environment where important issues and concerns about sustainable tourism in Gozo could be critically discussed and examined.

The course took place at UM's Xewkija Campus. The Ministry for Gozo, kindly sponsored the



programme so that it offered free of charge to the participants. The course consisted of 56 hours of lecturing spread over 14 weeks, divided into two study units of 4 ECTS each. These are entitled Tourism in Gozo [It-Turizmu f'Għawdex] and The Gozo Experience [L-Esperjenza 'Għawdex']. Lectures took place on Monday evenings and Tuesday mornings, for the convenience of those working in the tourism sector.

### ERASMUS+ VISIT

Dr John Ebejer travelled on a one-week Erasmus+ exchange visit to Canterbury Christ Church University.

### FOUNDATIONS OF UNIVERSITY TEACHING AND LEARNING

Dr Marie Avellino and Dr Noel Buttigieg commenced their participation in the Foundations of University Teaching and Learning CPD programme organised by the University of Malta for its academics. The programme provides early career academics with a solid foundation in the practical principles of teaching and learning at university level, and also enables experienced academics to further develop their teaching approaches. Some of the themes covered during the programme include understanding learning, understanding students' needs, designing the study-unit, large group teaching, small group teaching, incorporating technologies in teaching, assessment and feedback, evaluating teaching, and supervising dissertations and projects.

## DECEMBER 2018

### ISLAND TOURISM SEMINAR

The seminar 'Maximising whilst Sustaining Cultural Resources: Island Tourism and Beyond' was organised by the ITTC and the Islands and Small States Institute (ISSI) as part of the Island Tourism Platform (ITP) events programme. The seminar served to showcase the work which had been carried out by researchers at ITTC. Ms Pauline Sultana, a recent Masters graduate spoke about Comino's natural and cultural heritage. Mr Stefano Crisafulli, a PhD student from Italy shared his research about redevelopment and the refunctionalisation process in Malta and Italy. Mr Marco Prospero, a PhD student from Italy, spoke about community, hotel and urban gardens in the historical centres of the Italian Peninsula.

The underpinning theme was of islands as repositories of diverse resources. Case studies by students exemplified how these assets can be

maximised for the tourism industry whilst also embracing sustainable principles.

<https://www.um.edu.mt/newspoint/events/um/2018/12/islandtourismandbeyond>

### **STUDY VISIT FROM PROF SIMONA FRANZONI, UNIVERSITY OF BRESCIA**

ITTC hosted a week research visit by Prof Simona Franzoni, University of Brescia, Italy. Dr Avellino and Prof Franzoni used this visit to co-author a paper on Sustainability Reporting in International Hotel Chains: <http://symphonia.unicusano.it/article/view/13184>

## **FEBRUARY 2019**

### **LAUNCH OF EU HERITAGE PROJECT**

Dr Marie Avellino and Dr Karsten Xuereb attended the launch meeting of the EU Heritage Project in Matera, Italy. Currently Matera is the European Capital of Culture for 2019. Apart from participating in the 3-day meetings, they also took the opportunity to network with their colleagues, who invited them to experience projects and events in Matera which are part of the ECoC 2019.

### **MEDITERRANEAN TOURISM FORUM**

The chosen theme for 2019 was the Mediterranean; Sustainable Tourism Action for Renewal Strategies (STARS). Over 1,000 people with an interest in Mediterranean Tourism attended from 39 countries with the aim to discuss avenues for promoting sustainable tourism. International, seasoned speakers will get together to share their experience and knowledge with participants and accordingly inspire them to undertake sustainable tourism projects and initiatives. ITTC lecturers and students attended for the event.

Dr Avellino was invited to sit on the panel of the Master Class. This Master Class aims to open a dialogue between the academia, industry, and government actors with a view to serve as a platform to disperse information, broaden the professional network, mentor emerging scholars and practitioners and encourage new perspectives on best practices and potentials. Discussions will draw on ideas about the impacts, potential and realised transformations brought on by wine and food tourism using global examples of the impact of food and wine tourism across the Mediterranean region, specifically on the rural experience economy;

the rural renaissance and regional economic development; product and market development; sustainable practices, food and environmental security. It was facilitated by Mr Leslie Vella from MTA who is also a foodie and ITTC Board member.

### **MTA CAREER ADVISOR TRAINING**

Dr Avellino was invited by MTA to be part of a panel of Tourism Industry experts who spoke to guidance teachers from 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Form institutions in Malta and Gozo. The panel discussed and answered queries from the delegates about the challenges & current trends of employment in the hospitality Industry vs the challenges educators face to attract students to the industry and preparing them for the world of work.

## **MARCH 2019**

### **LAUNCH OF NEW GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNITY-BASED TOURS**

Together with the Malta Tourism Society, the ITTC launched the set of guidelines for a new concept in tourism.

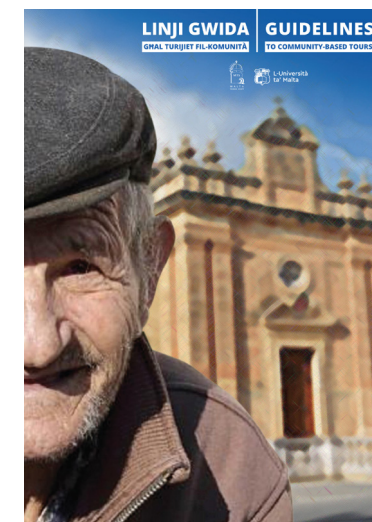
The research project which promotes the concept of Community-Based Tourism to the Maltese Islands, has been running for the past ten years, first through the Ministry for Tourism, Culture and the Environment (2009-2013), then as a research project in collaboration with the ITTC. This project is managed by the Malta Tourism Society.

### **LECTURE IN LONDON**

Dr John Ebejer lectured on spectacular architecture and its role in tourism. He also guided students on a walk of the City of London's most notable architecture. Dr Ebejer gave a second presentation to Master's students on the festivalisation of cities, with special reference to European Capitals of Culture.

### **ROTOT**

The seminar 'ROTOT: Mediterranean Routes through Intercultural Dialogue' was organised by the cultural association Inizjamed to address



as how different local realities can be brought together to reflect a wider, more common Mediterranean reality, or set of realities, that inter-relate with one another. The event was supported by the UM's Centre for the Study and Practice of Conflict Resolution, the Department of International Relations, the Department of Maltese and the ITTC at the University of Malta, along with Heritage Malta, the ADRC Trust and the Strickland Foundation.

ITTC also had a meeting with Dr Antonio Barone, Director of La Rotta dei Fenici – cultural Itinerary of the Council of Europe – to exchange views on Mediterranean tourism practices as well as opportunities and common interests for future cooperation.

British High Commissioner Commonwealth War Graves Commission

The Director, Dr Avellino together with Prof George Cassar attended two events hosted by the British High Commission in collaboration with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC). ITTC is in a position to offer support to this commission as regards Interpretation and Audience Development and extended an invitation to Ms Liz Woodfield, Director of Information and Communication of the CWGC, to collaborate on mutual areas of interest.

## MAY 2019

### AWARD CEREMONY AT UM'S GOZO CAMPUS

On Friday evening, 24 May 2019, fifteen practitioners from the tourism and hospitality sector in Gozo were presented with certificates after the successful completion of two study-units offered by the University of Malta from its Xewkija Campus in Gozo.



The study-units—Tourism in Gozo and The Gozo Experience—were delivered and coordinated by the ITTC. The innovative programme of study, was endorsed by the Gozo Tourism Association.

Dr Marie Avellino, Director of the ITTC, welcomed the audience and congratulated the successful students for participating in this human resource development experience, so critical for adding to the professionalization of the Gozo tourism product.

Pro-Rector and ITTC Board Chair at the University of Malta Prof Godfrey Baldacchino spoke about the unique experience of mentoring adult learners and reminded the audience that a programme of expansion and refurbishment of the Xewkija campus will kick in soon and is expected to be completed by June 2020.

The Hon. Minister for Gozo, Dr Justyne Caruana, reaffirmed the significance of professional education and training in the pursuit of Gozo as a tourism destination of excellence.

### FAMOUS LAB MALTA

On Tuesday 21 May, 2019 the ITTC host FAMOUS Lab Malta, a workshop lab as part of an EU COSME (aimed at capacity building & SMEs) project focusing on film and tourism called FAMOUS. ITTC hosted two international speakers to deliver a workshop on relations between film sites and tourism, and explore opportunities for synergy between the cinema and travel industries.



FAMOUS Lab Malta was held at the Valletta Campus of the University of Malta. The main speakers were Elena Tanou, specializing in the sectors of Special Interest Tours and Conferences





and Christina Lambiase, Synologist and Marketing and Communications Manager, a professional expert focusing on Asia-China tourism and travel sector. This action is part of Project FAMOUS which has received funding from the European Union's COSME Programme (2014-2020).

### ITTC FUTURE COLLABORATION WITH SALZBURG UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Potential areas for collaboration were discussed between Salzburg University of Applied Sciences and ITTC. Dr Marie Avellino and FH Salzburg's International Officer, Ms Rosalyn Eder, identified opportunities for collaboration, including the setting up of a joint undergraduate programme in tourism for third country nationals. Another potential area for collaboration is for doctorate degrees targeting Austrian and Maltese students. The two sides agreed to continue discussions leading to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding and subsequently a contract for the implementation of collaborative initiatives.

Ms Eder also met with Pro-Rector Prof. Godfrey Baldacchino (ITTC Board Chair) and ITTC academics. They discussed the internationalization of higher education and the importance of intercultural competencies for university students and academics. She also gave a presentation to third year ITTC students on 'Intercultural competences and their relevance to tourism' and met two ITTC students who will be spending their Erasmus+ study visit at FH Salzburg. Ms Eder's visit was supported by the Erasmus+ Mobility Programme. It was made possible and coordinated by Dr John Ebejer, resident academic at the ITTC.

## JUNE 2019

### MSC TOURDC ERASMUS MUNDUS AGM

Dr Avellino participated in the first TourDC AGM meeting in Lisbon. The MSc Tourism Development & Culture (TourDC) is an Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters Degree programme. It is a 24-month full-time programme with three mandatory mobility periods and an optional summer school. It has been designed to maximise your learning outcomes through both student and staff mobility and is innovative in the interconnectedness of the curriculum. She met with the consortium partners from the University of Glasgow, Lund University and University Institute Lisbon to address any arising and remaining issues prior to the start of the programme in September this year as well as get an update of the recruitment data and

acceptance of the scholarships for the first Intake of students

<https://www.gla.ac.uk/postgraduate/erasmusmundus/tourdc/>

### BA QUALITY ASSURANCE

ITTC organised a quality assurance programme whereby one third of the Bachelors final year students were invited to give their feedback on the support provided by ITTC and their long essay supervisors. This was a very useful exercise as it served to highlight areas that need improvement as well as good practices which were favoured by students. It was decided that this would be repeated the following year albeit on a larger scale.

### CERTIFICATE PRESENTATION CEREMONY

UM's Pro-Rector for Student & Staff Affairs and Outreach, Prof Carmen Sammut, hosted a Certificate Presentation for Academics who successfully completed the course - 'Foundations of University Teaching and Learning' - held during 2018 and 2019. ITTC Lecturers were presented with their certificate at this event.

## JULY 2019

### OECD SUMMER ACADEMY

Dr John Ebejer was invited to speak at the OECD's Summer Academy on Culture and Creative Industries (CCI). Dr Ebejer spoke on European Capitals of Culture and their role in the development of creative industries. More than fifty policy makers and CCI representatives from across Europe and North Africa attended. Other speakers included Prof. Pier Luigi Sacco, Special Advisor to the EU Commissioner for Education and Culture. The Academy was held in Trento, Italy and was organised by the city's OECD's Centre and the Trentino School of Management.





## TV AND RADIO PROMOTIONS

Dr Avellino participated in a number of TV and Radio programmes to promote the 2019 Bachelors and Masters programmes offered by the ITTC. These were supported by Facebook and other social media advertising initiatives.

## SEPTEMBER 2019

### ERASMUS MUNDUS LAUNCH

Dr Marie Avellino and Prof George Cassar as Postgraduate Programmes Coordinator were invited to welcome the first MScTourDC students at the Dumfries Campus, University of Glasgow, Scotland. They met the students during the induction week and gave them an overview of the course programme they would be following at the ITTC. They accompanied the students to a day visit to Glasgow Campus and in the evening were welcomed by Bailie Glenn Elder, who welcomed the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree students on behalf of the Lord Provost.

(Source: University of Glasgow, [https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/news/newsarchive/2019/23september2019/headline\\_674707\\_en.html](https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/news/newsarchive/2019/23september2019/headline_674707_en.html))



### INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE: HERITAGE AND ENVIRONMENT, 5TH HERITAGE FORUM OF CENTRAL EUROPE, KRAKOW, POLAND

Dr John Ebejer participated in the conference. In a workshop session, he delivered a paper on 'Conservation issues of two fortified historic towns and World Heritage Sites: Rhodes and Valletta'.

## OCTOBER 2019

### SECOND EU HERITAGE MEETING IN MALTA

EU Heritage is a transnational project developed under Erasmus + EU program (Sector Skills Alliance for Design and Delivery of VET) coordinated by Materahub and addressing: professionals working in the field of heritage promotion, valorisation, exploitation, mediation and interpretation.

Dr Avellino, ITTC Project Manager welcomed the partners for their meeting which was well organised by Dr Karsten Xuereb. The partners also met up with the ITTC lecturers to discuss how the new training modules could be integrated into the BA Hons in Tourism Studies programme.

## NOVEMBER 2019

### TRAINING WORKSHOPS ON PROQUEST DATABASES

Organised by the University of Malta Library, in collaboration with ProQuest was attended by ITTC Academics.

### ACADEMIC ORATION FOR POSTGRADUATE GRADUATION CEREMONY

Dr Avellino was invited to deliver an oration at a Postgraduate Graduation Ceremony. This is found on pages 58-61.

ITTC academics before the Post Graduate Graduation Ceremony: Prof. George Cassar, Dr Marie Avellino, Dr Noel Buttigieg and Dr Dane Munro.



# DECEMBER 2019

## FIELD VISITS FOR BA TOURISM STUDIES STUDENTS

Students were taken on a cultural visit to Mdina and Rabat where they were exposed to the interpretation methods which are employed in this highly visited heritage location.

## FOOD CULTURE

Launch of a Food Culture course specifically aimed at persons working in the welcoming and guiding services. This took place between December 2019 and January 2020.



### FOOD CULTURE

The Food Culture course is designed to provide students with the necessary insights into the cultural history of food. Candidates will explore methods related to the behaviour surrounding food production, distribution and consumption. Case material from specific areas includes Malta, the Mediterranean and mainland Europe. The course relies on historical factors, but will also look at relatively recent food-related events. Explored will be the way cooking methods transformed traditional food over time and the changing patterns of eating behaviour, taking specific regions and particular foods as case studies.

Throughout the course students are provided with opportunities to:

- Identify the various aspects of the usage of food in connection with culture and everyday practices.
- Appreciate the relationship between body, food and sociocultural identity and its effects on modern food consumption.
- Discuss the role of the choice of food in the construction of modern local identity.
- Appreciate the causes for change in food consumption patterns with special reference to food produced and consumed at home and also the food prepared and enjoyed in restaurants.

### MAIN COURSE THEMES:

Food & The City  
To Eat & Drink with the Other  
Food & Gender Identity  
Food & Space: Planning, Organising and Selling  
Food & Tourism - Engaging the Audience  
Food and Celebrations

### COURSE STRUCTURE

Dates: 28 Oct, 4, 11, 18, 25 Nov, 2, 9 Dec 2019, 13 Jan 2020

Lecture times: Monday from 08.00 to 11.00

Workshop on 27 Nov 2019, in the morning

Registration fees for course TTC 1400, Euro 120.00

Note: Food CTC, a level 5 course accredited by the University of Malta

On successful completion the students will awarded a Certificate

An official guide's pin included

### Application link

Enquiries: 2340 3728/2340 3748 or on [ttc@um.edu.mt](mailto:ttc@um.edu.mt)

