

foreign affairs

# Traveller's Guide





# Safe and Intelligent Travel

This handbook addresses some common problems that may arise when travelling.

This handbook is the ideal guide to ensure travellers are well prepared before and during their travels. Travellers are also urged to regularly consult the Ministry responsible for Foreign Affairs' **Travel Advice**. This contains information which assists travellers in acquainting themselves with the particular context of the country they intend to visit.

Intelligent travel combined with awareness translates into more peace of mind and a positive travel experience.

# Checklist

## When planning to go abroad, it is important to:



Seek guidance on travel-related issues and other useful information by referring to the **Travel Advice** section on the Ministry's Consular Plus Website prior to making any plans.



Ensure that your **passport** is valid for at least **6 months** from your intended date of return to Malta.



Ensure that minors (under the age of 18) travelling without their parents/guardians must have a consent letter signed by the parents/guardians and legalised at the Ministry responsible for Foreign Affairs.



Get **comprehensive travel and medical insurance** to cover all activities and any pre-existing health conditions, treatments and cases of repatriation.



Always carry a valid **European Health Insurance Card** (EHIC) to facilitate access to public medical care.



Consult a healthcare professional at least **6 weeks** prior to visiting the country to check whether any **vaccinations, certifications**, and other **preventive measures** are required.



Be careful if you are carrying pharmaceutical products or medicines; check with the destination country's authorities to ensure that these are allowed in the country you are visiting.



Check with the destination/transit country's authorities whether there are any entry and exit requirements (e.g. **visa, vaccinations**, etc.).



Make **copies** of important **personal documents** (passport, ID card, certificates, etc.), always carry them and leave copies with relatives.



Organise your **finances** to cover your intended programme and inform your **bank** of your travel plans.



Be **mindful** of the **local laws and customs** of the country you are visiting. Exercise respect towards the locals.



Maintain regular **contact** with family and friends and inform them of your travel plans and whereabouts.

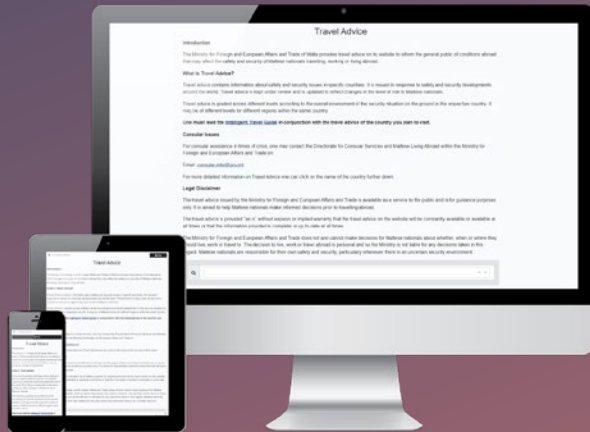


# Travel Advice

Travel advice is an official guidance issued by the Ministry that provides useful information for Maltese citizens visiting specific foreign countries. Guidelines include brief information on topics such as the security situation of the country, health, and local laws and customs. The Travel advice may be accessed on the Ministry's Consular Plus website.<sup>1</sup>

## Why is it useful?

It provides updated and informed advice on any risks associated with any destination as well as any precautions to take before travelling.



<sup>1</sup> Source: <https://consularplus.gov.mt>

# How can the Directorate for Consular Services and Maltese Living Abroad assist me?

## 1. Accident or Illness Abroad

The Directorate provides practical assistance to Maltese travellers who, unfortunately, fall victim to an accident or illness whilst abroad.



## What kind of assistance?

The assistance provided by the Maltese Missions abroad (i.e. Embassies, High Commissions and Consulates), in conjunction with the Directorate, amongst others, consists of:

- providing a list of local English-speaking doctors as well as locally available medical facilities
- helping patients correspond with their local insurance agency or assisting with a medical evacuation
- contacting the patient's relatives in Malta
- when required, communicating with health officials in the relevant country
- when required, facilitating money transfers from the patient's relatives in Malta
- when possible and permissible, visiting Maltese patients in hospital.



The EHIC card should not be considered as a replacement for travel insurance.



Ensure that you have the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC), which entitles you to free or reduced cost medical treatment in the EU, Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, and Liechtenstein.



It is important to have a travel insurance, especially in case of hospitalisation abroad.

## 2. Arrest or Detention Abroad

If you are arrested abroad, you have the right to request that the relevant local authorities inform the nearest Maltese mission of your arrest.

Embassy, High Commission and Consular officers abroad may:

- visit/contact you and assist in providing basic requirements
- provide information about English-speaking lawyers in the country and the legal procedures of the country
- only upon granted consent, the Ministry can inform relatives/friends about your arrest and assist in maintaining contact with them
- ensure that you are not discriminated against as a foreign detainee
- only upon formal request, look into the applicability of serving part of the prison term in Malta as stipulated in the Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons.



### 3. Death Abroad

The Directorate understands that in the event of a death abroad, relatives of the deceased require moral support. The loss of someone dear can be aggravated when this takes place abroad.

One may encounter bureaucratic and language difficulties when making transportation arrangements to repatriate the corpse to Malta or for the burial ceremony in the country where the death occurs.

The Directorate and the Maltese Missions abroad will only provide information to the relative who has the required Power of Attorney.

Embassy, High Commission and Consular officers abroad may:

- help obtain a death certificate and other related documents from local authorities
- provide a list of funeral organisers in the host country
- establish contact with an undertaker to assist with the necessary arrangements for the burial (if the burial is taking place abroad)
- if necessary, assist relatives with repatriating the remains.

### 4. Hostage taking or Kidnapping abroad

If a Maltese citizen is presumed or proven to have been taken hostage or kidnapped abroad, relatives of the victim/s may seek the assistance of the Ministry responsible for Foreign Affairs.

In the case of kidnapping of Maltese citizens, extreme caution is taken, in view of negotiations by the relevant police authorities.



## 5. Victims of serious crime

If you are a victim of serious crime, you should immediately file a report at the nearest police station and contact the nearest Embassy, High Commission or Consulate for direction on how to proceed.

Embassy, High Commission and Consular officers abroad may:

- provide you with a list of local English-speaking professionals which might come handy
- give general information about local police and legal procedures
- assist with the local police authorities, especially in the case of a language barrier
- help in making contact with health authorities, if you require medical treatment
- visit you in hospital (when possible)
- establish contact with friends or relatives (if specifically requested by the victim)
- assist you with the necessary documents for your return to Malta.



## 6. Loss or Theft of Travel Documents

In case of loss or theft of travel documents such as your passport or ID card, it is imperative that a police report be obtained, so it is important that you report the loss at the nearest police station.

If the report is issued in a foreign language, it must be translated into English and then apostilled (officially certified) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the country where you are.

In order to be issued with an Emergency Travel Document (ETD) to be able to travel back to Malta, the police report, together with your flight itinerary, should be presented when seeking assistance from the nearest Maltese Embassy, High Commission or Consulate.



Always carry a scanned copy and/or a photo on your mobile of your passport and ID card.





## 7. Loss or Theft of Money/Credit Cards

In case of loss or theft of money/credit cards, it is important to report the loss to your bank immediately.

It is imperative that a police report be obtained, so it is important that you report the loss at the nearest police station.

If the report is issued in a foreign language, it must be translated into English and then apostilled (officially certified) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the country where you are. This report should be presented for bank/insurance purposes.

An Embassy, High Commission or Consulate of Malta abroad can advise you on methods to have money transferred from Malta and will assist you to contact your bank or insurance agency in case of need.

## 8. Financial difficulties

There may be cases where, due to unforeseen circumstances, travellers find themselves short of money while being abroad.

### How can my relatives transfer money?

The Directorate may assist by facilitating money transfers from your relatives. Relatives would have to call at the Ministry to deposit the money. Once the money transaction is confirmed, the Directorate will instruct the relevant Mission to provide you with the money.

Money may be deposited at the Ministry during office hours from Monday to Friday.



## 9. Missing relatives

Should a Maltese citizen be presumed missing whilst travelling, Missions abroad can assist relatives who request information.

The Mission or Ministry can facilitate contact between the person seeking information and the relevant police authorities, in accordance with General Data Protection Regulation.



## 10. Major crisis abroad

If you are caught in a major crisis abroad, contact should be established immediately with the nearest Maltese Mission or directly with the Ministry.

Embassy, High Commission and Consular officers may assist with the following:

- Injury or death
- Missing persons
- Arrest or detention
- Hostage taking or kidnapping
- Evacuation and repatriation
- Documentation
- Contacting family and friends
- Communicating with local authorities in order to provide information and support to those affected
- Communicating with the travel and/or insurance agency.



If possible, it is recommended that you always establish contact with your relatives in Malta to inform them of your whereabouts.

## 11. European Consular Cooperation

If a Maltese citizen happens to be in a country where Malta does not have an Embassy, High Commission or Consulate, as a European citizen s/he is entitled to request assistance from any other EU Embassy or Consulate.

### What can an EU Embassy assist me with?

The EU Embassy may assist:

- ☐ in cases of death
- ☐ in cases of serious accident or illness
- ☐ in cases of arrest or detention
- ☐ in cases of violent crime.

Further information on the subject may be found by visiting the Consular Protection section on the European Commission's website on <https://ec.europa.eu/consularprotection>



## Useful Information

The Directorate assists all Maltese travellers who find themselves in distress. In such situations, the Directorate acts as the main point of contact between the individual abroad and his/her family in Malta, to facilitate any possible support and ensure that all services rendered are provided in the most timely and best possible manner.

### Who can I contact in case of Emergency?

The Ministry provides emergency consular assistance 24 hours a day including weekends and public holidays. If you are abroad and need help, you can call the Maltese Embassy, High Commission, or Consulate in the country you are visiting, when present, or the Ministry in Valletta. After office hours, the Ministry operates through a Duty Officer who will take note of your request and, if possible, assist immediately. When immediate assistance is not possible, your request will be referred for action to the officers in charge at the Consular Services and Maltese Living Abroad Directorate.



## Disclaimer

*It is important to note that the Ministry, Embassies, High Commissions and Consulates of Malta abroad are not authorised to lend money, pay hotel and hospital bills or repatriation costs, or any other expenses incurred by a Maltese citizen who encounters difficulty while abroad.*


*Embassy, High Commission or Consular officers abroad cannot release anyone from prison, pay fines on anyone's behalf, or settle any debts with the local authorities. Moreover, they cannot offer legal advice, get involved in judicial procedures, and carry out investigations on anyone's behalf.*





## Useful Contacts

### Directorate for Consular Service and Maltese Living Abroad

 18, Zachary Street, Valletta, Malta


 00356 2204 0000

 consular.foreign@gov.mt

 consularplus.gov.mt

### Identità


 Valley Road, Msida, Malta

 00356 2590 4000

 enquiries.identita@gov.mt


 identita.gov.mt

### Malta Police Force


 Police General Headquarters  
St Calcedonius Square  
Floriana


 00356 2122 4001-9


 pulizija@gov.mt


 pulizija.gov.mt

### Malta Customs

 Custom House, Lascaris Wharf, Valletta

 00356 2378 3310

 maltacustoms@gov.mt

 customs.gov.mt



## Other Relevant Information

- Find an EU Consulate/Embassy  
[consular-protection.ec.europa.eu](https://consular-protection.ec.europa.eu)
- Cross-Border Health  
[crossborderhealth.gov.mt](https://crossborderhealth.gov.mt)
- Travel Vaccination  
[health.gov.mt](https://health.gov.mt)
- European Health Insurance Card  
[servizz.gov.mt](https://servizz.gov.mt)