

Total outbound tourists for the first quarter in 2020 were estimated at 115,573, a decrease of 21.3 per cent over the corresponding quarter of 2019.

Outbound Tourism: Q1/2020

January-March 2020

During the quarter under review, a total of 66,416 outbound tourist trips were undertaken for holiday purposes, while a further 27,761 were made for visiting friends and relatives (Table 1). Italy and the United Kingdom remained the most popular destinations, with a joint share of 49.6 per cent of total tourist trips (Table 6).

Total nights spent by outbound tourists decreased by 19.1 per cent, amounting to 672,937 nights. In absolute terms, the majority of guest nights (52.0 per cent) were spent in rented accommodation establishments (Table 3).

Total estimated expenditure by outbound tourists between January and March decreased by 27.9 per cent over the same quarter of 2019, and stood at €81.3 million, equivalent to an average €704 per person (Tables 4 and 5) ■

Statistics in this News Release should be interpreted in context to the unprecedented developments and restrictions related to COVID-19.

Due to the COVID-19 situation the following tourism-related sequence of events happened:

28-Feb	Passengers flying in from Italy, China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Japan, Iran and South Korea, from 26 February onwards were requested to stay in quarantine for 14 days upon arrival.
8-Mar	Flights from/to Milan were suspended.
10-Mar	Flights from/to Italy were suspended.
11-Mar	Flights from/to France, Switzerland, Germany and Spain were suspended.
11-Mar	Passengers flying in from France, Switzerland, Germany and Spain were requested to stay in quarantine for 14 days upon arrival.
13-Mar	All passengers flying in from all destinations were requested to stay in quarantine for 14 days upon arrival.
18-Mar	Last Virtu' Ferries service for passengers between Malta and Sicily was operated.
21-Mar	All flights from/to all destinations were suspended.

Sources: Malta Tourism Authority and Virtu' Ferries

Table 1. Profile of outbound tourists by period of departure

Characteristics	January-March			Change	Percentage change
	2018	2019	2020 ¹	2020/2019	
Outbound tourists	137,730	146,841	115,573	-31,268	-21.3
Mode and type of travel					
Air	131,691	142,034	111,889	-30,145	-21.2
Low-cost airlines	68,139	75,220	64,494	-10,726	-14.3
Other airlines	63,552	66,814	47,395	-19,419	-29.1
Sea	6,038	4,807	3,684	-	-
Sex					
Males	76,910	83,028	65,382	-17,645	-21.3
Females	60,820	63,813	50,190	-13,623	-21.3
Age group					
0-24	24,171	23,545	18,666	-4,879	-20.7
25-44	66,108	75,522	55,673	-19,849	-26.3
45-64	39,057	39,102	33,444	-5,658	-14.5
65 or more	8,395	8,672	7,789	-	-
Final destination²					
EU	123,411	128,936	75,161	-53,775	-41.7
<i>of which: Euro area</i>	81,085	86,617	65,887	-20,730	-23.9
Non-EU	14,319	17,905	40,411	22,507	125.7
<i>of which: United Kingdom³</i>	n/a	n/a	23,462	n/a	n/a
Purpose of visit					
Holiday	77,594	84,783	66,416	-18,367	-21.7
Visiting relatives and friends	31,940	29,910	27,761	-2,148	-7.2
Business and professional	21,611	25,014	17,316	-7,698	-30.8
Other (including educational, religious and health tourism)	6,584	7,135	4,080	-3,055	-42.8
Organisation of stay					
Package	17,816	15,326	11,393	-3,933	-25.7
Non-package	119,914	131,515	104,180	-27,335	-20.8
Duration of visit					
1-3 nights	47,858	57,488	46,048	-11,440	-19.9
4-6 nights	48,142	49,260	38,200	-11,060	-22.5
7 nights or more	41,729	40,093	31,325	-8,768	-21.9
Average length of stay (nights)	6.1	5.7	5.8	0.1	-

¹ Refer to methodological note 6.

² Refer to methodological notes 7 and 8.

³ For the United Kingdom figures of 2018 and 2019, refer to the News Release: NR076/2019 (https://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/View_by_Unit/Unit_C3/Tourism_Statistics/Documents/2019/News2019_076.pdf)

Notes:

1. n/a: not applicable
2. Totals may not add up due to rounding.
3. Changes denoted by the dash symbol (-) should be treated with caution. For more information, please refer to methodological note 5.

Table 2. Outbound tourists by period of departure and type of accommodation

Type of accommodation	January-March			Change	Percentage change
	2018	2019	2020 ¹		
Rented accommodation	98,229	104,855	77,144	-27,711	-26.4
Collective	85,161	87,150	61,001	-26,148	-30.0
Other rented	13,069	17,705	16,143	-1,562	-8.8
Non-rented accommodation	39,500	41,986	38,428	-3,558	-8.5
Total tourists	137,730	146,841	115,573	-31,268	-21.3

¹ Refer to methodological note 6.

Note: Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Table 3. Total nights spent by outbound tourists by period of departure and type of accommodation

Type of accommodation	January-March			Change	Percentage change
	2018	2019	2020 ¹		
Rented accommodation	497,223	485,246	349,864	-135,382	-27.9
Collective	409,015	390,107	263,472	-126,635	-32.5
Other rented	88,208	95,139	86,392	-8,747	-9.2
Non-rented accommodation	339,590	346,639	323,073	-23,565	-6.8
Total nights	836,813	831,885	672,937	-158,948	-19.1

¹ Refer to methodological note 6.

Note: Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Table 4. Total expenditure by outbound tourists by period of departure and expenditure category

Expenditure category	January-March			Change	Percentage change
	2018	2019	2020 ¹		
Package	9,300	8,664	5,594	-3,070	-35.4
Non-package	38,062	40,456	31,119	-9,338	-23.1
Air/sea fares	19,374	20,039	17,450	-2,589	-12.9
Accommodation	18,687	20,417	13,669	-6,749	-33.1
Other expenditure	55,894	63,750	44,619	-19,131	-30.0
Total expenditure	103,255	112,870	81,331	-31,539	-27.9

€000

¹ Refer to methodological note 6.

Notes:

1. Expenditure estimates are rounded to the nearest thousand Euro.
2. Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Table 5. Average expenditure per capita and per night by outbound tourists by period of departure and expenditure category

€

Expenditure category	January-March					
	per capita			per night		
	2018	2019	2020 ¹	2018	2019	2020 ¹
Package	522	565	491	100	115	115
Non-package	317	307	298	51	53	50
Air/sea fares	161	152	167	26	26	28
Accommodation	231	225	202	46	48	44
Other expenditure	406	434	386	67	77	66
Total	750	769	704	123	136	121

¹ Refer to methodological note 6.

Chart 1a. Total expenditure per capita by outbound tourists: January-March

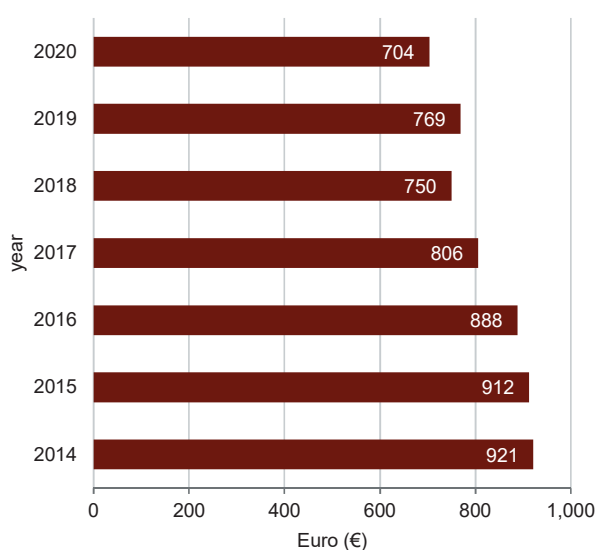


Chart 1b. Total expenditure per night by outbound tourists: January-March

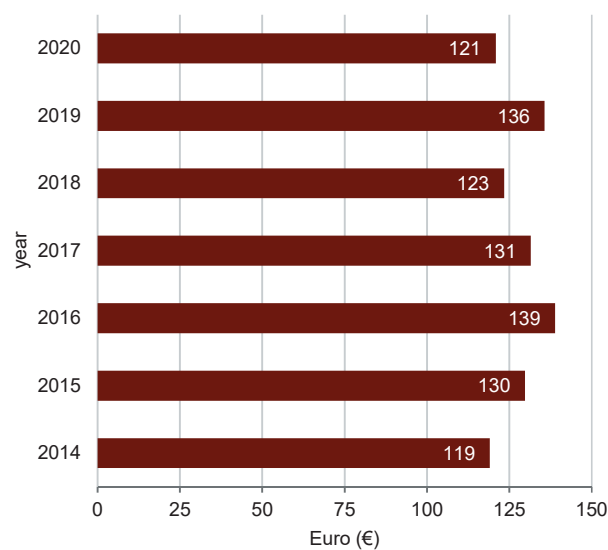


Chart 2. Average expenditure per capita by final destination of outbound tourists: January-March 2020

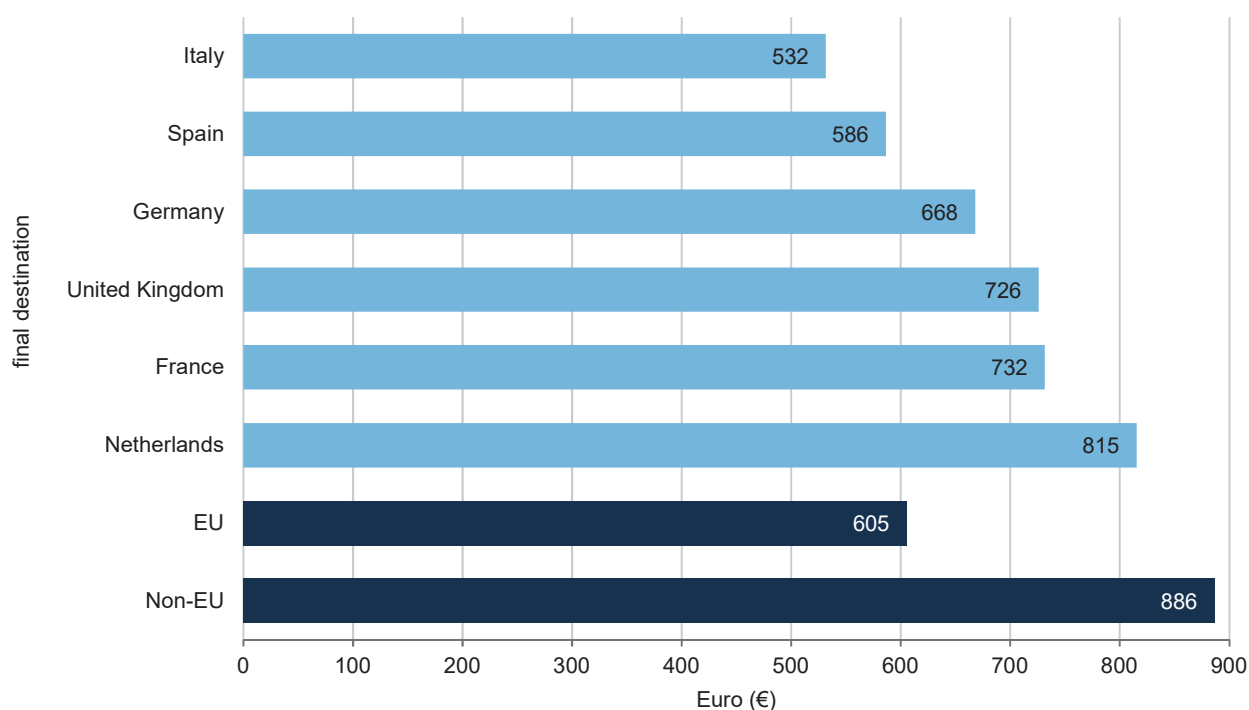


Table 6. Outbound tourists, nights spent and total expenditure by period of departure and final destination

Final destination ²	January-March			Change	Percentage change
	2018	2019	2020 ¹	2020/2019	
Tourists					
EU	123,411	128,936	75,161	-53,775	-41.7
<i>of which:</i>					
France	4,780	5,818	3,957	-1,861	-32.0
Germany	7,881	8,145	6,328	-1,818	-22.3
Italy	44,877	42,843	33,891	-8,953	-20.9
Netherlands	4,274	4,276	3,221	-	-
Spain	5,748	9,286	5,878	-3,408	-36.7
Non-EU	14,319	17,905	40,411	22,507	125.7
<i>of which:</i>					
United Kingdom ³	n/a	n/a	23,462	n/a	n/a
Total	137,730	146,841	115,573	-31,268	-21.3
Nights					
EU	669,866	619,763	346,974	-272,790	-44.0
<i>of which:</i>					
France	33,764	26,002	18,023	-7,979	-30.7
Germany	46,212	37,042	31,427	-5,615	-15.2
Italy	193,763	183,262	134,841	-48,421	-26.4
Netherlands	21,768	21,157	17,555	-	-
Spain	34,601	44,601	27,784	-16,817	-37.7
Non-EU	166,947	212,122	325,964	113,842	53.7
<i>of which:</i>					
United Kingdom ³	n/a	n/a	134,980	n/a	n/a
Total	836,813	831,885	672,937	-158,948	-19.1
Total Expenditure (€000)					
EU	82,279	85,135	45,508	-39,626	-46.5
<i>of which:</i>					
France	4,057	4,273	2,895	-1,378	-32.3
Germany	6,098	5,536	4,226	-1,310	-23.7
Italy	24,118	23,449	18,019	-5,430	-23.2
Netherlands	3,180	3,589	2,625	-	-
Spain	4,016	5,523	3,446	-2,076	-37.6
Non-EU	20,976	27,735	35,823	8,088	29.2
<i>of which:</i>					
United Kingdom ³	n/a	n/a	17,029	n/a	n/a
Total	103,255	112,870	81,331	-31,539	-27.9

¹ Refer to methodological note 6.

² Refer to methodological notes 7 and 8.

³ For the United Kingdom figures of 2018 and 2019, refer to the News Release: NR076/2019 (https://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/View_by_Unit/Unit_C3/Tourism_Statistics/Documents/2019/News2019_076.pdf)

Notes:

1. n/a: not applicable
2. Expenditure estimates are rounded to the nearest thousand Euro.
3. Totals may not add up due to rounding.
4. Changes denoted by the dash symbol (-) should be treated with caution. For more information, please refer to methodological note 5.

Methodological Notes

1. This release focuses on outbound tourism, which comprises the activities of residents of Malta travelling to, and staying in places outside Malta (i.e. outside their usual environment), and staying for not more than 12 consecutive months for personal, business or other purposes.
2. Data on outbound tourism trips are collected from an ongoing frontier national survey known as Tourstat. Tourist air departures are collected through a continuous survey carried out at the departure lounge of the Malta International Airport. A two-stage sampling design is used to collect data on air passengers. In the first stage, alternate days and nights are selected. In the second stage, within each shift, a sample of passengers is selected systematically. Every crossing passenger is counted and respondents are selected using a pre-defined interval of 1:20 for air passengers.
3. Tourist sea departures are collected through a regular survey conducted during three separate months every year at the Valletta Cruise Port. A quota sample is used to conduct sea passenger departures in which survey interviewers are guided to select people according to some fixed quota. Survey data is supplemented by administrative data provided by ferry operators.
4. 'Tourist trips' differs from the 'number of tourists' such that the same person can undertake more than one trip during a reference period.
5. Absolute and percentage changes between one survey estimate and another, which are based on less than 1,500 tourists should be treated with caution and are represented in this news release by means of the dash symbol (-).
6. Due to the COVID-19 situation, the Tourstat survey was suspended on 12th March 2020. It was assumed that no Maltese residents departed from Malta after 12th March given that airports abroad were suspending flights and in most countries one had to be quarantined upon arrival into the country.
7. Owing to the UK's exit from the European Union (with effect from 1st February 2020), UK data is statistically classified as Non-EU from January 2020 in all the tables. Requests for further clarification may be directed to the Tourism and Education Statistics Unit.
8. Due to the UK's re-classification following exit from the European Union on 1st February 2020, comparability between comparative periods should be treated with caution.
9. Expenditure data in this release represent the budgeted expenditure of outbound tourists prior to their departure.

10. Definitions:

- **Usual environment:** the geographical area, though not necessarily a contiguous one, within which an individual conducts his regular life routines and shall be determined on the basis of the following criteria: the crossing of administrative borders or the distance from the place of usual residence, the duration of visit, the frequency of visit and the purpose of visit.
- **Resident:** a person is considered to be a resident of Malta/Gozo if:
 - a. S/he has lived for most of the past 12 months in Malta/Gozo;
 - b. S/he has lived in Malta/Gozo for less than 12 months but intends to return within a year to settle here.
- **Traveller:** a person who moves between different geographic locations, for any purpose and any duration.
- **Visitor:** the three fundamental criteria used to distinguish visitors from travellers are:
 - a. **The trip should be to a place other than that of the usual environment**, which would exclude short-distance local transport and commuting, i.e. more or less regular trips between the place of work/study and the place of residence;
 - b. **The stay in the place visited should not last more than 12 consecutive months**, beyond which the visitor would become a resident of that place (from the statistical standpoint);
 - c. **The main purpose of the visit should be other than the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited**, which would exclude migratory movements for work purposes.
- **Tourist trips:** trips with at least one overnight stay in either rented or non-rented accommodation in the place/country visited.
- **Total nights spent:** nights which a guest actually spends or is registered to spend in a rented accommodation or in a non-rented accommodation.
- **Average length of stay:** the number of nights spent divided by the number of tourists during a specified reference period.
- **Rented accommodation:** consists of the following two sub-categories:
 - a. **Collective accommodation:** comprises hotels, guesthouses, hostels, tourist villages, holiday complexes, Bed & Breakfast establishments and campsites;
 - b. **Other rented accommodation:** comprises holiday furnished premises (farmhouses, flats and villas), host families, marinas, paid-convents, rented yachts and student dormitories.
- **Non-rented accommodation:** comprises own private residence (owned dwellings, owned caravans and yachts), staying with friends or relatives (even if charged - includes also friends' private apartments) and other private accommodation (oil rig, free-convents or timeshare, etc.).

- **Total expenditure:** refers to the amount that is going to be paid for the acquisition of consumption goods and services, as well as valuables during tourism trips. It includes expenditures by visitors themselves, as well as expenses that are paid for or reimbursed by others. Maltese residents are asked to budget the expenditures which they are about to incur when travelling abroad. The total expenditure is broken down by the following expenditure categories:

- a. **Package expenditure:** the whole amount of money spent on transport, accommodation and other services such as rental of a car, activities or outings during the trip;
- b. **Non-Package expenditure:** the amount of money spent on transport and accommodation reported separately;
- c. **Other expenditure:** the amount spent on shopping, souvenirs, tickets for concerts or sport events, entrance to museums or zoos and day excursions during a tourism trip. It also includes durables and valuable goods, that is, the amount spent on cars, computers, paintings, jewellery and works of art.

11. More information relating to this news release may be accessed at:

Sources and methods: https://nso.gov.mt/en/nso/Sources_and_Methods/Unit_C3/Tourism_Statistics/Pages/TOURSTAT-Survey.aspx

Statistical concepts: <http://nso.gov.mt/metadata/concepts.aspx>

Metadata: <http://nso.gov.mt/metadata/reports.aspx?id=39>

Statistical database: <http://nso.gov.mt/statdb/start>

12. References to this news release are to be cited appropriately.

13. A detailed news release calendar is available on:

https://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/Release_Calendar/Pages/News-Release-Calendar.aspx