



*equality from the heart*

# EUROPRIDE

Our Application & Bid Book

**VALLETTA  
2023**

These are difficult times. The global COVID-19 pandemic claimed thousands of lives - many of them could have been saved with the right measures. It brought the global economy and the whole planet to almost a stop.

We saw and still see so many people suffering, especially in our LGBTIQ+ Community. People are isolated at home. Others experience domestic violence being quarantined with their families. And in the LGBTIQ+ Community and beyond, people have died alone, away from friends and their loved ones.

We have put together our application and bid book under these impressions. We have tried our utmost to bring together up-to-date information to the best of our knowledge about Malta, Valletta and EuroPride Valletta 2023. This year like no other year has reminded us that a lot of things can happen during three years. We hope for your understanding that some details laid down in this book will have changed when we will welcome you on our islands for EuroPride Valletta 2023.

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# Merħba! Welcome to Malta

Malta and the Maltese LGBTIQ+ Community welcomes you to our islands in the heart of the Mediterranean. We are excited to present you today our application and bid book for EuroPride Valletta 2023!

Malta, at the crossroad between Europe, Africa and the Middle East, has always attracted visitors and settlers with different cultures, visions and languages. Diversity is part of our DNA and we are proudly fostering the developments and achievements of Malta being an LGBTIQ+-friendly place over the last decades.

Having anti-discrimination laws introduced in the Maltese Constitution in 2014 was unquestionably one high point in the development of equality for the LGBTIQ+ Community in Malta. But many more changes have been achieved and it's no surprise that since October 2015, ILGA-Europe ranked Malta first place in its annual review of the human rights situation of LGBTIQ+ people in Europe since 2016.

But Malta also has so much more to offer to visitors and guests to our islands! With 300 days of sunshine per year, beautiful beaches and hidden bays, countless cultural landmarks (three of them being UNESCO heritage sites) from over 5,000 years of history and great places for social events and a vibrant nightlife, Malta is the perfect LGBTIQ+ leisure, business and culture destination.



Over the last years, Malta has not only welcomed 2 million visitors annually, we have also attracted a young and international work force that stands for equality as much as the Maltese LGBTIQ+ Community does.

We Maltese are cordial and hearty Mediterranean people. We love to invite visitors and friends to our homes and share with them our warmth and culture. From the heart, we are looking forward to having you on our islands and showing you our thirst for diversity and equality.

One more thing: please note that this bid has been carefully put together under the assumption that travel, event organisation and the tourism and hospitality industry in Malta and Europe has returned back to normal after COVID-19 times.

Once again,

**Merħba!**  
**Welcome to Malta!**



# Fact Sheet

Candidate	Allied Rainbow Communities for EuroPride Valletta 2023		
Contact Person:	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Clayton Mercieca Community Manager clayton@arc.org.mt mob: +356 9927 2999</td> <td>Nicholas Bugeja Funds Manager nicholas@arc.org.mt mob: +356 9940 3316</td> </tr> </table>	Clayton Mercieca Community Manager clayton@arc.org.mt mob: +356 9927 2999	Nicholas Bugeja Funds Manager nicholas@arc.org.mt mob: +356 9940 3316
Clayton Mercieca Community Manager clayton@arc.org.mt mob: +356 9927 2999	Nicholas Bugeja Funds Manager nicholas@arc.org.mt mob: +356 9940 3316		
Organisation	Allied Rainbow Communities (ARC) 19, Triq St. Marc Valletta VLT 1362 Malta		
Date and place of event Timeline	<p>Pride week: 7 September – 17 September 2023  Pride march and concert: 16 September 2023  Pride location: Valletta and vicinities, Malta</p> <p>Please find more details on page 36.</p>		
Timeline	<p>2020: EuroPride 2023 bidding results  2021: Launching of EuroPride Valletta 2023 communication, finalizing agreements with stakeholders and sponsors  2022: Hosting EPOA Board and EPOA AGM  2023: Starting EuroPride Valletta 2023 activities and EuroPride Valletta 2023 in September</p> <p>Please find more details on page 62.</p>		
Program	<p>Planned highlights of the EuroPride Valletta 2023 program are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Queer arts &amp; culture festival</li> <li>Human rights conference</li> <li>LGBTIQ+ at work conference</li> <li>Interfaith dialogue</li> <li>Community fora</li> <li>Pride village</li> <li>Pride march &amp; concert</li> <li>Parties &amp; social gatherings</li> </ul> <p>Please find more details on page 36 – 39.</p>		

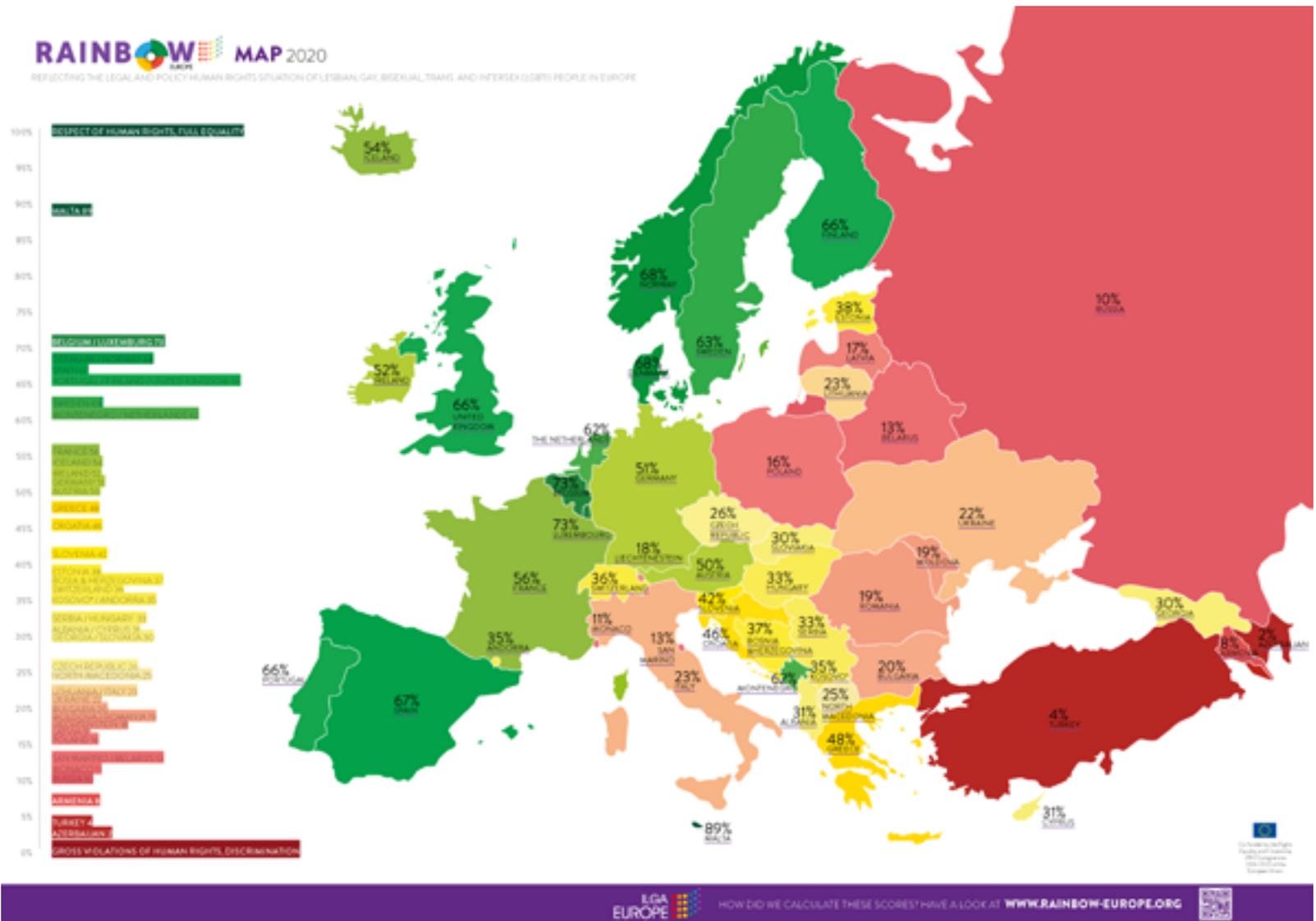
<p><b>Business plan</b></p>	<p>The projected income for EuroPride Valletta 2023 is expected to be € 410,000 from donations, sponsorships, public funds and other income.</p> <p>Compared with that the projected costs amount to €410,000 (including employee costs, administrative expenses as well as legal and professional costs. This will result in no profit or loss.</p> <p>Please find more details on pages 55 – 61.</p>
<p><b>Marketing plan</b></p>	<p>EuroPride Valletta 2023’s marketing and communication plan revolves around a pride storyline that focuses on the Maltese LGBTIQ+ community’s core values of diversity, openness and equality from the heart. It translates into a visual identity with six chapters and elements from the Maltese culture and heritage. In cooperation with media partners it covers detailed communication activities for all relevant target groups.</p> <p>Please find more details on pages 46 – 57.</p>
<p><b>Vision and Mission Political context</b></p>	<p>The Maltese LGBTIQ+ Community is a proud part of a European LGBTIQ+ Movement, but also finds itself at the heart of the Middle East and North African regions where equality is still a far cry. With Malta ranking top of the ILGA Rainbow Index for five years in a row, it is our duty to work constantly in achieving full equality from the heart in Malta as well as in neighbouring communities where LGBTIQ+ phobia and lack of human rights are still rife.</p> <p>Please find more details on page 33.</p>

<p>General information about Valletta and Malta</p>	<p>The Republic of Malta has been independent since 1964. Today just under half a million of people live on the three islands of Malta, Gozo and Comino. With a surface of just 316 km<sup>2</sup> and a population density of 1,457/km<sup>2</sup> Malta has the 5<sup>th</sup> highest population density in the world. Malta's GDP is approx. USD 23bn, produced by the major industries of tourism, manufacturing, financial services and information communication and technology.</p> <p>The country's capital, Valletta, lies on a peninsula adjacent to the Grand Harbour. Just 1km long and 600m wide it is home to 5,000 people which makes it the smallest capital in Europe. The city was founded in 1566 by Grandmaster Jean de Parisot Valette. He decreed it should be a "city built by gentlemen for gentlemen".</p> <p>Please find more details on pages 19 – 29.</p>
<p>LGBTIQ+ life in Malta</p>	<p>According to Rainbow Europe 2020 Malta by far offers the best situation to its LGBTIQ+ Community when compared to other European countries. Male homosexuality was decriminalised in 1973 against a strongly opposing, but still influential Roman Catholic Church. Since then, several important milestones were reached that brought Malta's LGBTIQ+ rights up to the highest standards.</p> <p>Today Malta has a pleasantly sized LGBTIQ+</p>



# Malta - in the Heart of the Mediterranean

According to the 10th ILGA-Europe benchmark, Rainbow Europe 2020, Malta by far offers the best situation to its LGBTIQ+ Community with regards to human rights and full equality when compared to other European countries where “decline is indeed clearly noticeable”, Malta has ranked first since 2016. For sure, it has been a long journey.





# LGBTIQ+ History of Malta

Although during the rule of the Order of St. John sodomy was considered a common practice on the islands, there are documented cases from the 17th century of people being burnt for sodomy and others fleeing from the islands towards Sicily. Another case documented in the 18th century describes a petition of an intersex person to change gender. The Grandmaster himself decided in favour of the person's petition.

With the British occupation and becoming a British colony, Malta adopted the Penal Code of Great Britain. Same-sex relations between men were criminalised; homosexuality in the military was considered to be a serious crime.

Malta became independent in 1964, but it still took until 1973 before the Government decriminalised male homosexuality and harmonised age of consent. This step happened against a strongly opposing, but still influential Roman Catholic Church as well as the Nationalist Party in opposition.

Since then, several important milestones were reached that brought Malta's LGBTIQ+ rights up to the highest standards.

**1973**

Decriminalisation of same-sex sexual activity

**2015**

Right to change legal gender

Intersex minors protected from normalising surgical procedures without informed consent

Hate crime and anti-discrimination provisions extended to include gender expression and sex characteristics;

**2002**

LGB people allowed to serve openly in the military

**2004**

Anti-discrimination laws passed regarding employment

**2014**

Constitutional anti-discrimination provisions for the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity

Recognition of same-sex couples and parenting rights including adoption through civil-unions

**2012**

Hate Crime Provisions extended to include sexual orientation and gender identity

**2013**

Grounds for asylum protection

Provision that allows time on gender affirmation treatment to be counted as part of sick leave entitlements

**2019**

MSMs allowed to donate blood (under a one-year deferral period)

**2016**

Conversion therapy banned

**2017**

Marriage equality came into force

Third-gender option on ID Cards and Passports

**2018**

Access to IVF for lesbian couples and single persons

Access to free healthcare for trans persons and setting up of Gender Wellbeing Clinic

# LGBTIQ+ Life on our Islands

“You want to go to a gay bar in Malta? Pick any one you come across and you’ll be just fine! - So said our Maltese gay friends when we asked them about the gay scene. But we get their point. When it comes to gay friendliness, Malta is killing it! This tiny island nation in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea is frequently named as one of the **most gay friendly countries in the world** (1) and we can totally see why!”

- **The Nomadic Boys** (2)

Although the country’s society and culture are deeply influenced by the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, one can witness displays of affection in public areas without attracting attention. All forms of recognition of couple and families, be it marriage, civil unions or cohabitation are open to all couples irrespective of their genders.



## Everyone knows everyone

There is no official “gay neighbourhood” in Malta. We are everywhere and one can find a good number of bars and clubs spread out across the island. Many LGBTIQ+-friendly locations organise regular LGBTIQ+ events. Being such a friendly island with an LGBTIQ+ Community that is strongly supported by the country’s society regarding diversity, equality and anti-discrimination, Malta is truly an LGBTIQ+-friendly country. In fact, the LGBTIQ+ community feels safe to settle in any part of the island.

Being a pleasantly sized LGBTIQ+ community, estimated to be around 6% of the general population (circa 30,000), it is easy to find a connection and to make friends. With the Mediterranean, caring and loving family-style demeanour, there is always a close shoulder to lean on or receive a helping hand. The Maltese, and especially the country’s LGBTIQ+ Community are surely a community in its literal sense. We are taking care of each other. For everyone who is looking for LGBTIQ+-friendly services, Allied Rainbow Communities (ARC) has established a business directory, “Pink Pages”, at [gaymalta.com/pinkdirectory](http://gaymalta.com/pinkdirectory).

The Malta LGBTIQ+ party scene is largely favoured by the locals’ seemingly innate ability to make any party a great event and a guarantee for a great time. Foreign LGBTIQ+ residents in Malta have caught the islands’ fun bug, while LGBTIQ+ tourism naturally boosts the local scene, creating a vibrant atmosphere in which fun can flourish. Much of what’s happening in the Malta LGBTIQ+ scene is in the form of special events, regularly organised by ARC. Here are just a few:

- Penthouse Party organised by S2S
- Weekly Club nights at Michaelangelo
- Monthly events organised by Lollipop
- ARC Eurovision Final Night Screening Party
- Country walks and bicycle countryside rides
- Bordello annual foam party organised by S2S
- Find me by the pool’ pool party organised by ARC
- Cabaret Nights & Drag Shows featuring foreign and local artists
- “Sundown Sundays” at Maori, a chill bar right by the sea where you meet old and new friends
- Casual professional “Midweek Meetups” at the Little Red Door followed by thematic discussions
- Virtual “Friday Night Fever” education and discussion series with changing experts who talk about LGBTIQ+ life, partnership and sexuality

(1) <https://time.com/4597632/malta-gay-rights-conversion-ban/>

(2) <https://nomadicboys.com/gay-malta-travel-guide/>



## **LGBTIQ+ Spaces in Malta**

Lollipop and S2S Events lead the way when it comes to parties for the Maltese LGBTIQ+ Community. Another main LGBTIQ+ club in Malta is Michelangelo in St. Julian's:

### **Lollipop**

Lollipop parties always attract a fun crowd of both locals and foreigners. The parties include a colourful swirl of pop music, glitter and loads of sequins, with the odd leather body-harness thrown in for good measure.

### **S2S Events**

Every few months, S2S throws a huge themed LGBTIQ+ party. Some of the best are for Pride in September, and Super Bordello foam party in mid-August.

### **Michelangelo Club Lounge**

Located in St. Julian's, Michelangelo is an LGBTIQ+ club open every night from 10pm. It is just a short drive from Valletta and gets particularly popular on weekends, especially with their themed nights.

### **Michelangelo Cafe Lounge**

A new establishment in Valletta offering food, drink and entertainment targeted for the LGBTIQ+ community

### **Pride Saturdays**

The Queen Victoria City Pub in Valletta hosts LGBTIQ+ meetups every Saturday between 8pm and 1pm.

**MGRM** also offers coffee meetups at their offices as well as Youth Workshops for LGBTIQ individuals between the ages of 13 to 17.

## **LGBTIQ+ beaches in Malta**

Although there are no official LGBTIQ+ beaches in Malta, one can find a handful of secluded gems which are popular with nudists and the LGBTIQ+ community. The main beaches are Riviera Beach, Ġnejna Bay & Pembroke.



## The annual Malta Pride Week

“Malta’s Pride March is an example of how to include people from all across the gender, sexual and political spectrum. The event is still about driving a message of acceptance and equality and the fact that both the island’s Prime Minister and the opposition leader attended and members of the Catholic clergy used the event to help build bridges with the LGBTQ community shows how things are moving in the right direction.”

- Ray Singh for [TheGayUK.com](http://TheGayUK.com) (3)

The first recorded LGBTIQ+ Pride Demonstration in Malta was held in 2004 and organised by the Malta LGBTIQ+ Rights Movement (MGRM). Back then, not more than 50 demonstrators marched along the Capital City of Valletta, most of whom were straight allies and some politicians who supported equality. The theme used was “Gay Rights? Human Rights!” Since then Pride kept its annual appointment hoping to drive the message of the LGBTIQ+ Community across the whole island, yet participation numbers during the demonstration barely exceeded 100 people up until 2015.

In 2014, ARC formed a collaboration with MGRM to jointly organise Malta Pride which saw a record participation of 3,000 people, mostly from the LGBTIQ+ community. From 2016 until present, ARC took a lead coordinating role in organising Malta Pride Week and the March. Participation Numbers and partnership involvement kept breaking records year after year. In 2019, 8,000 people, approximately 2% of the population of Malta, participated at the Pride March & Concert, with over 22 other events also held during Pride Week with a budget of just €40,000.

Malta Pride has become a much sought-after annual event in the Maltese national calendar, supported by central & local Government, private entities and a number of civil society organisations. **Malta Pride keeps the LGBTIQ+ community at its core and ensures it doesn’t become a vehicle for pink washing by corporate or political propaganda.**

(3) [https://www.thegayuk.com/gay-travel-a-visit-to-europes-most-lgbt-friendly-country-malta/?fbclid=IwAR1oc1fYoGqVOzA-Nf9rnbntdCilbWtakbAL2OB7myKpSwf\\_dFtNMA88VGY](https://www.thegayuk.com/gay-travel-a-visit-to-europes-most-lgbt-friendly-country-malta/?fbclid=IwAR1oc1fYoGqVOzA-Nf9rnbntdCilbWtakbAL2OB7myKpSwf_dFtNMA88VGY)



## What the LGBTIQ+ world thinks about Malta

Enough self-praising. Let's see what international influencers and LGBTIQ+ writers say about Malta:

### **Time Magazine:**

Malta, the tiny southern European island with a population of just over 420,000, made history earlier this month by becoming the first European country to criminalize “deceptive and harmful” conversion practices, defined as any practice which aims to change, repress or eliminate a person’s sexual orientation or gender identity. (4)

### **The Economist:**

Malta leads the way for gay and transgender rights in Europe. (5)

### **Two Bad Tourists:**

Malta may not yet be on your travel radar but it's quickly making a name for itself, particularly for the LGBT community. In just the past couple of decades, LGBT rights and protections in the country have been elevated and are considered some of the best in the world. In fact, in October 2015, the European region of ILGA ranked Malta first in terms of LGBT rights out of 49 observed European countries. (6)

### **Passport Magazine:**

From the first settlers over 7,000 years ago, to enthusiastic fans of Game of Thrones, Malta is a travel destination that attracts people from all walks of life. With UNESCO World Heritage Sites, temples older than Egypt’s ancient pyramids, and a fascinating multi-cultural history, Malta may just be one of the most appealing locations for people who appreciate art, history, natural wonders, and international cuisine. (7)

### **The Nomadic Boys:**

The country did a 180-degree turn to pass some of the most LGBTQ progressive laws in the world, quickly becoming THE gay haven in the Mediterranean region. (8)

### **Spartacus Travel:**

Malta’s accession to the EU has brought some improvements, such as the adoption of new rules to prevent discrimination based on sexual orientation at the workplace. It was the first European country to enshrine the protection of gender identity in the Constitution in 2014. (9)

(4) <https://time.com/4597632/malta-gay-rights-conversion-ban/>

(5) <https://www.economist.com/graphic-detail/2018/06/05/malta-leads-the-way-for-gay-and-transgender-rights-in-europe>

(6) <https://twobadtourists.com/2018/04/08/10-reasons-malta-should-be-on-your-gay-travel-bucket-list/>

(7) <https://passportmagazine.com/discovering-malta/>

(8) <https://nomadicboys.com/gay-malta-travel-guide/>

(9) <https://spartacus.gayguide.travel/hotels/europe/malta>

# Your Destination: Malta

There are many reasons to visit the magical Islands of Malta, the world's tenth smallest country, home to just about 500,000 people. With 316 km<sup>2</sup> Malta is the smallest member state of the European Union.

With 300 days of sunshine per year and surrounded by blue sapphire-coloured water as far as the eye can see, Malta is one of the most uniquely beautiful places on the planet. With lots of sun, light and the blue sea, it is no wonder that Malta has been the first choice for various film and television productions (most famous being *Midnight Express*, *Gladiator*, *Troy* and of course *Game of Thrones*).

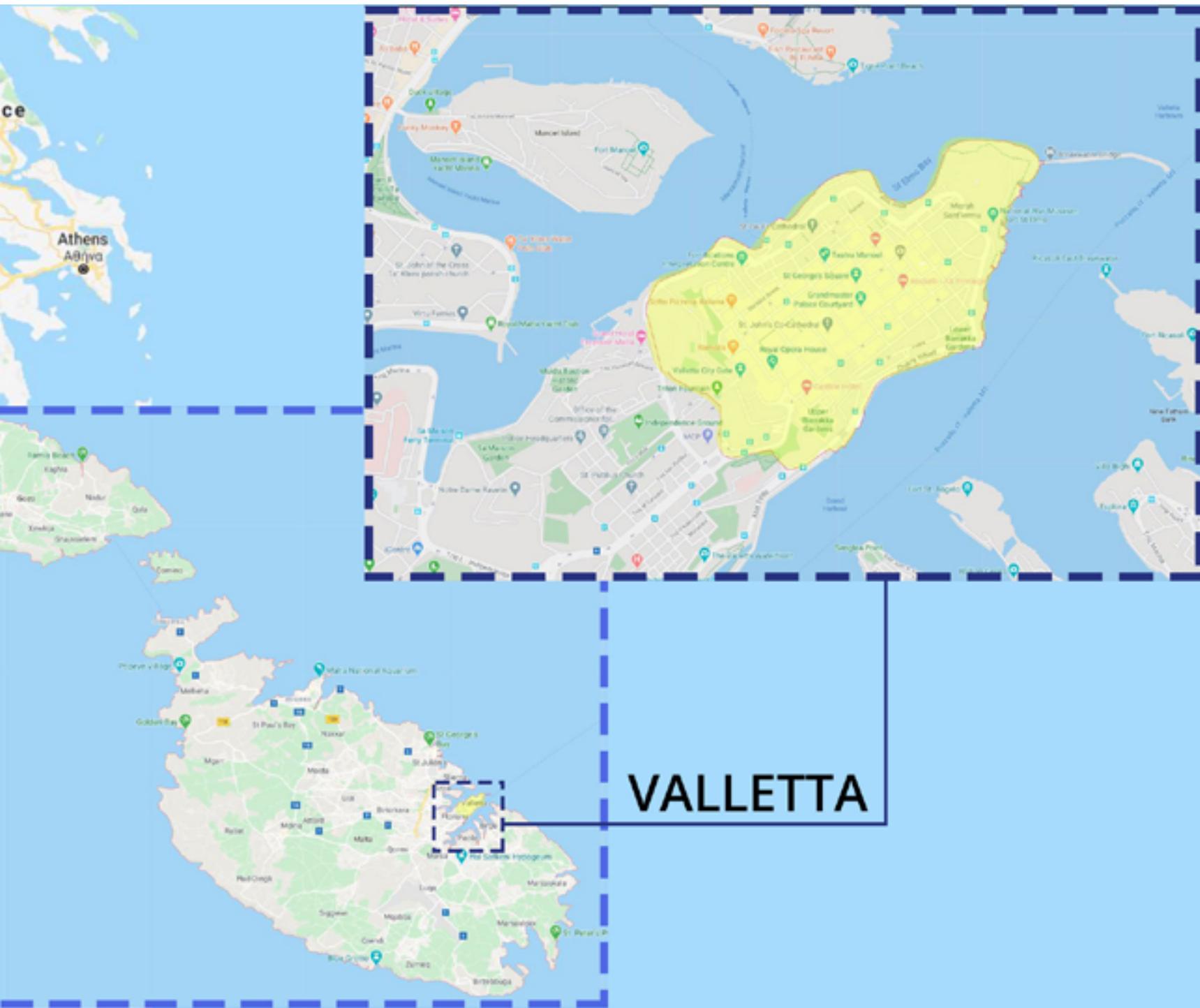
Located between Europe and Africa and at a geographical crossroad, Malta has always attracted visitors, settlers and occupiers. Its rich cultural diversity has been built up over thousands of years. Many cultures are represented here from controlling this island over the last millennia. It is ancient but it is also modern, appealing to young and old alike. Due to its climate, genuine people and proximity to all of Europe, Malta has also seen many businesses relocate or set up offices to give their employees a work-life balance not found everywhere.

Tripadvisor lists Malta as one of the TOP25 destinations in Europe and Lonely Planet ranked Malta 6th best destination to visit in 2018!





**MALTA**  
Gozo & Comino



## Valletta

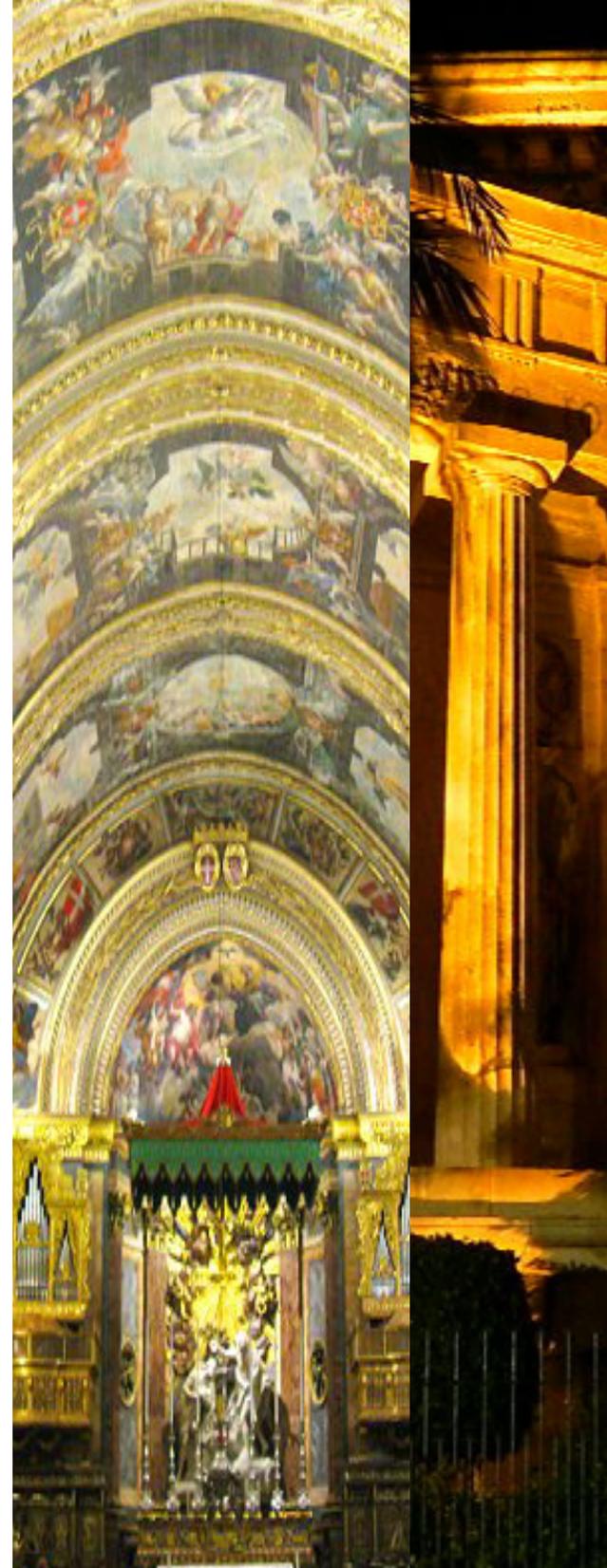
Valletta, the capital city, is on a small peninsula. Just 5,000 people live in il-Belt ("the City") which is only 1 km long and 600 m wide, making it the smallest capital in Europe. It was founded in 1566 by Grandmaster Jean de Parisot Valette. He decreed it should be a "city built by gentlemen for gentlemen". A short time after, in 1571, Valletta was declared the capital. The city still retains its 16th century elegance since limestone remained the preferred building material throughout the centuries.

Valletta may be a small city, but it's packed full of sights. UNESCO named Valletta a World Heritage site in 1980 and was described as "one of the most concentrated historic areas in the world".

Let us take you for a walk through the city.

In Valletta one can explore many buildings belonging to different historical periods of the city. In spite of having so many styles and so many periods of Architecture, there's still integrity in the fabric. The first building you come across as soon as you enter the city gate, is the new parliament building. It was designed by world famous Architect Renzo Piano, and was inaugurated in 2015. The building is contemporary, yet it was designed to fit in with the city's heritage perfectly. Its façade represents honeycombs, offering a reminiscence to the origins of the country's name, "melite" which means honey. Boundaries between new and old are blurring and create a sense of timelessness.

Next to the parliament building one will find the neo classical Royal Opera House that lay in ruins. It was built during British occupancy in 1866 and bombed during the war. Rather than reconstruct the building the idea was to turn it into a cultural space where today arts and film festivals are staged during the summer months. The ruins provide a symbol of the devastation which took place during the second world war.





Right behind the opera house, the Upper Barrakka Gardens overlook the Grand Harbour, one of the deepest natural harbours in Europe. The location of this garden provides a sense of strength, being built on the upper tier of St. Peter & Paul Bastion.

Later, after passing by St. John's Co-Cathedral from 1577 and the newly renovated city market is-Suq tal-Belt, one will find the Manoel Theatre that was constructed in 1731 with a rococo interior and is Europe's third-oldest operating theatre. This old pristine theatre is both a historical monument of immense cultural value and also the most important performing arts venue in Malta.

It has a rich and long history dating back to 1731 when it was built on request of Grand Master Fra António Manoel de Vilhena—hence its name.

Few shows are held, especially in summer, as well as the Christmas panto. The latter is always full of colourful queer characters. It also housed an LGBTIQ+-themed original play in 2014 'Jien n'hobb, inti t'hobb' (I love ,you love) by Teatru Stagun Malti.

From here it is just a short walk to Strait street – or Strada Stretta, one of the many narrow streets in Valletta. In fact, Strait Street is the narrowest street in the city. It has the reputation of being Valletta's red-light district during the British occupation. The place was studded with bars and sailors used to come here for a drink and some... distraction. Strada Stretta also had bars where drag queens gave shows and rent boys cruised the place. It was a very exciting part of the city!

One can read on the buildings' stones all of Valletta's history. All these different influences give Valletta and Malta its unique, eclectic mix.

## Travel

Malta is a member state of the European Union and has signed the Schengen Treaty. Visitors with EU nationality can enter Malta just with their valid national ID card. Whilst visitors from many other countries can visit Malta with a valid passport and without holding a visa, visitors from certain countries may need additional documentation. The Maltese Embassy in your country or neighbouring country will be able to give more information.

It is easy to reach Malta by air. Malta International Airport (MLA) is located in Luqa, just 8 kilometres away from Valletta and other cities like Sliema, St Julian's or Mellieħa.

Malta's national airline, Air Malta, together with over 30 other low-cost, leisure and international network airlines such as Lufthansa, Ryanair, Vueling or Jet2.com connect the Maltese islands non-stop to most of the major and many secondary airports within Europe. Many airlines flying into Malta are also serving major hubs in Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East, making Malta easily accessible from anywhere in Europe and the world with just one stop in Frankfurt, London, Paris or Dubai.

Reaching Malta by air is not only easy, but affordable as well. Average one-way net fares with Air Malta for September 2020 are: Rome €34, Milan €46, Amsterdam €49, Frankfurt €51, Paris €49, Zurich €56; Moscow €93, and London €56<sup>(10)</sup>. Air Malta supports Malta Pride each year and we are confident that a special discount will be offered for EuroPride Valletta 2023.

Sicily is only a 90-minute ferry ride away. Virtu Ferries' daily catamaran service for passengers and cars connects Malta with Pozzallo in Sicily. The Gozo Channel Line connects Malta with its sister island Gozo every 45 minutes.

Malta Public Transport offers an excellent bus network in Malta and Gozo with regular services from Valletta to all villages, many tourist sights and the beaches. Whilst these are served by hop-on-hop-off buses, too, rental cars and taxi services can be booked during a visit on our islands.

One can also make use of Electric car sharing cars or scooters. Car sharing cars can be an ideal addition to your transport ecosystem because it gives you the opportunity to hire a car by the minute, just when you need it. Don't hassle for parking, access 450 reserved parking spaces which can be found all-round the Maltese Islands.



**(10) Jgtourismsolutions nb One needs to bear in mind that this is just before COVID, before the situation deteriorated. There is a high doubt if fares will increase much more than the below given a possibly sluggish market and the relatively lower price for fuel, based on current data.**

## Accommodation

As a prime travel destination, hotels in Valletta are in popular demand. One would expect to pay handsomely for the mostly exclusive boutique hotels in Valletta, especially compared to the average rates for some of the best accommodations outside Valletta.

When it comes to hotel accommodation prices for September 2020, Malta has a wide range for every budget. On average, one will find prices between €80 to €140 for 4 star and €120 to €180 for 5 star (double room) hotels. Normally one projects an increase of 2-3% per year as that was the normal trend in the market up to March 2020. Given the current issues one would assume that these same rates could be valid (or even lower) for three years from now <sup>(11)</sup>. Valletta does not offer the typical choice of traditional hotels. Here you find plenty of upscale boutique hotels or exclusive B&Bs within the city walls. Those hotels provide comfortable accommodation in stylishly and respectfully renovated majestic palaces in the city's historical streets.

On a budget? Not a problem. Guesthouses, self-catering apartments and B&Bs – often LGBTIQ+ owned – can be found at a reasonable price via our website [gaymalta.com/accommodation](http://gaymalta.com/accommodation). These can be found both in Valletta or right across the Grand Harbour, in the Three Cities known as Cottonera. These Three Cities are a collective description of the three fortified cities of Birgu, Senglea and Cospicua in Malta. The oldest of the Three Cities is Birgu, which existed prior to the Middle Ages. The other two cities, Senglea and Cospicua, were both founded by the Order of Saint John in the 16th and 17th centuries. A regular ferry service connects the three cities and Valletta. The ferry itself serves as an opportunity to enjoy the beauty of the Grand Harbour.



## Food and drink

When it comes to eating out in Malta, both locals and tourists are spoiled for choice. Fresh fish? Pizza? Meat feast? Middle Eastern specialities? Veggie or vegan? Something sweet? We've got it.

Malta's diversity reflects in its food scene, too. You can find gems hidden in the quietest towns, a romantic table at the beach, and simple, but good food at reasonable prices even in popular tourist destinations such as Valletta. Maltese food is like Maltese people in general: genuine, hearty and prepared with passion.

Maltese are thirsty during hot summer days, so it is no surprise that some unique, thirst quenching refreshments can be found on our islands. Kafe Msajjar and Kafe' Malti are strong and spicy coffee specialities that are similar to North-African mocca. and - besides English tea - a typical start to the day. At the beach, ice-cold ruġġata (almond milk with lemon rind, cloves, vanilla and cinnamon) and Kinnie - Maltese bitter orange lemonade - can be found in many lunch baskets.

During dinner, Malta's most famous beer Cisk or a good glass of Maltese white or red wine (Ġellewża and Girgentina are indigenous grapes) go well with anything from the Maltese menu. Prickly pear or lemon liqueur (limuncell), made from the best lemons from Malta and Gozo, are perfect to end a great dinner and to start the night.

Over the centuries, all visitors and settlers left traces of their gourmand taste on our islands. We want to share a little must-eat list with you...

**L-Ikla t-tajba!**  
**Enjoy your meal**



## MENU

### FENEK

RABBIT STEW, MOST FAMOUS FROM THE VILLAGE OF MĠARR

### PASTIZZI

SAVOURY PASTRIES FILLED WITH RICOTTA OR PEAS AND BEST FROM IS-SERKIN (A.K.A. CRYSTAL PALACE) IN RABAT

HOBŻ BIŻ-ŻEJT ("HOBBS-BEE-ZAITE") MALTESE BREAD WITH TOMATO PASTE, CAPERS, ONIONS AND ANCHOVIES

### BIGILLA

MALTESE BEAN DIP, BEST WITH GALLETTI (WATER CRACKERS)

HAVING A SWEET TOOTH? TRY FRESH IMQARET (DATE CAKES), KANNOLI TAL-IRKOTTA (CANNOLI), QAGHAQ TAL-GHASEL ("AHK TAL-ASSEL" - HONEY RINGS), PUDINA TAL-HOBŻ (BREAD PUDDING) OR HELWA TAT-TORK (TURKISH DELIGHT)

## Safety

Malta is lucky to have a very low crime rate in both violent and small crimes. The islands are very safe for anyone walking about in the evening and at night. Just follow the common-sense precautions you take in your own country. The current U.S. Department of State Travel Advisory at the date of this report's publication assesses Malta at Level 1, indicating travelers should exercise normal precautions.

Malta is a very safe place to visit, and there are no known terrorist activities or attacks that have taken place on the island any time in the recent past.

If some sort of medical emergency should occur while visiting Malta, there should not be a concern about the level of medical care available. The public hospital, Mater Dei, as well as several private hospitals and doctors have great reputations. If you need to see a doctor, most pharmacies have general practitioners and you do not need to book an appointment. The pharmacists themselves are also highly qualified and very helpful should you need any advice. However, like on any visit to a foreign country, be sure to bring any medications with you.

In case visitors need to carry out an STI Check, the GU Clinic within Malta's General Hospital is offered for free. Rapid HIV Self-Testing Kits are available from a number of pharmacies. PrEP is also dispensed from pharmacies subject to prescription.

Tap water is safe to drink. Malta's water comes from seawater that has been filtered through various massive reverse osmosis plants, and the quality of the water is high.

### Some travel essentials

- Official languages: Maltese and English. Many Maltese also speak Italian and other languages due to our history and proximity to Italy
- Currency: Euro
- Time zone: European central time
- International dialing code: +356
- Emergency number: 112 and 196 for ambulance
- Vaccines and other medical preparation: routine vaccines are sufficient; whilst hospitals, clinics and pharmacies offer excellent service, please do not forget to pack your own medicines
- Driving: on the left-hand side, for renting a car, a valid EU driver's license or international driver's license is needed
- Internet country code: .mt
- Electricity: 240V with both Empire and continental sockets

## Facts and figures (as of 2019)

Name	Repubblika ta' Malta (Republic of Malta)
Independent from the United Kingdom	State of Malta: 21 September 1964 Republic: 13 December 1974
Ethnic groups	79% Maltese, 21% non-Maltese (as of 2019)
Religion	Roman Catholic
Government	Unitary parliamentary constitutional republic
Legislature	House of Representatives
Area	316 km <sup>2</sup> (0.001% water)
Population	493,559 (2019 estimate)
Population Density	1,457/km <sup>2</sup> - 5th highest population density in the world
GDP (purchasing power parity)	Total: USD 22,802bn Per capita: USD 48,246 (2019 estimate)
Major Industries	Tourism Manufacturing Financial services Information communication and technology

**Malta's development in Human Rights over the last 20 years is exceptional. We want to use EuroPride Valletta 2023 as a steppingstone to further promote its achievements all over Europe and show how valuable it is for a society to open up for equality and non-discrimination.**

**Still, in many countries LGBTIQ+ people are suffering from discrimination, domestic violence and open hate, sometimes suppressed, criminalised and tortured. We want to turn EuroPride Valletta 2023 into a stage to make people aware of how LGBTIQ+ people suffer and discuss ways to improve their situation.**

**300 days of sun – every year! Clear, sapphire-coloured water and beautiful beaches, breath-taking culture, amazing food and a vibrant nightlife make Malta a must-visit destination in the heart of the Mediterranean. We want to invite Europe's LGTBIQ Community to join us after discussions and a great parade to unwind with sun, sea, drinks and great food.**

**From humble beginnings in 2004 with just a couple of brave participants, this tiny island nation has seen a growth that in 2019 reached 8,000 people filling the streets of Valletta in rainbow colours. Hosting EuroPride Valletta 2023 would provide an opportunity to demonstrate not only to Europe, but to the entire world, that equality can be achieved in countries both big and small.**

**We Maltese, being cordial and hearty Mediterranean people, have hospitality in our DNA. EuroPride Valletta 2023 will give us the opportunity to invite the world to Malta. From the heart, we are looking forward to having you on our islands and sharing with you our ideas of diversity and equality.**

**For us diversity is an affair of the heart. We have already achieved many things in Malta, Europe and globally. Still, more has to come. During EuroPride Valletta 2023 we want to address open issues and challenges which impact on LGBTIQ+ persons and discuss how to put forward legislation, policies and other measures on national and international levels.**

**ALL THE COLOURS OF THE RAINBOW:**

**Six Reasons  
for EuroPride  
Valletta 2023**



## EuroPride Valletta 2023

The Maltese LGBTIQ+ Community is proud of the achievements that were reached over the last years, making Malta #1 in Europe in terms of legal recognition and protection of LGBTIQ+ people in the areas of equality and non-discrimination.

ILGA-Europe confirms in its Rainbow Europe 2019 <sup>(12)</sup> index that Malta achieved 100% of Human Right criterias in the categories Family, Hate crime & hate speech, Legal gender recognition and bodily integrity as well as Civil society space. It has already reached 80% in the category Equality and non-discrimination.

Yet more has to be done.

With the aspiration of equality at home, Malta's LGBTIQ+ Community has not forgotten that many LGBTIQ+ people in neighbouring countries and all over Europe are still ignored, suppressed, criminalised and tortured.

Due to society's prejudice, many young LGBTIQ+ people are stigmatised by their families after coming out. Many also experience domestic violence or other retribution and need to leave home, without a safe place to go where they can be accepted.

Many LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers in Malta, and all over Europe, are facing repression and persecution from their own people as well as in their host country. Some of them have not only fled from poverty and hunger, but because their life was threatened by society and authorities at home.

During EuroPride Valletta 2023 it will be a matter close to the Maltese LGBTIQ+ Community's heart and a major platform for us to call for more equality for LGBTIQ+ people in Malta, Europe and beyond.

(12) <https://rainbow-europe.org/#8647/0/0>

## Our Vision and Target: Equality from the Heart

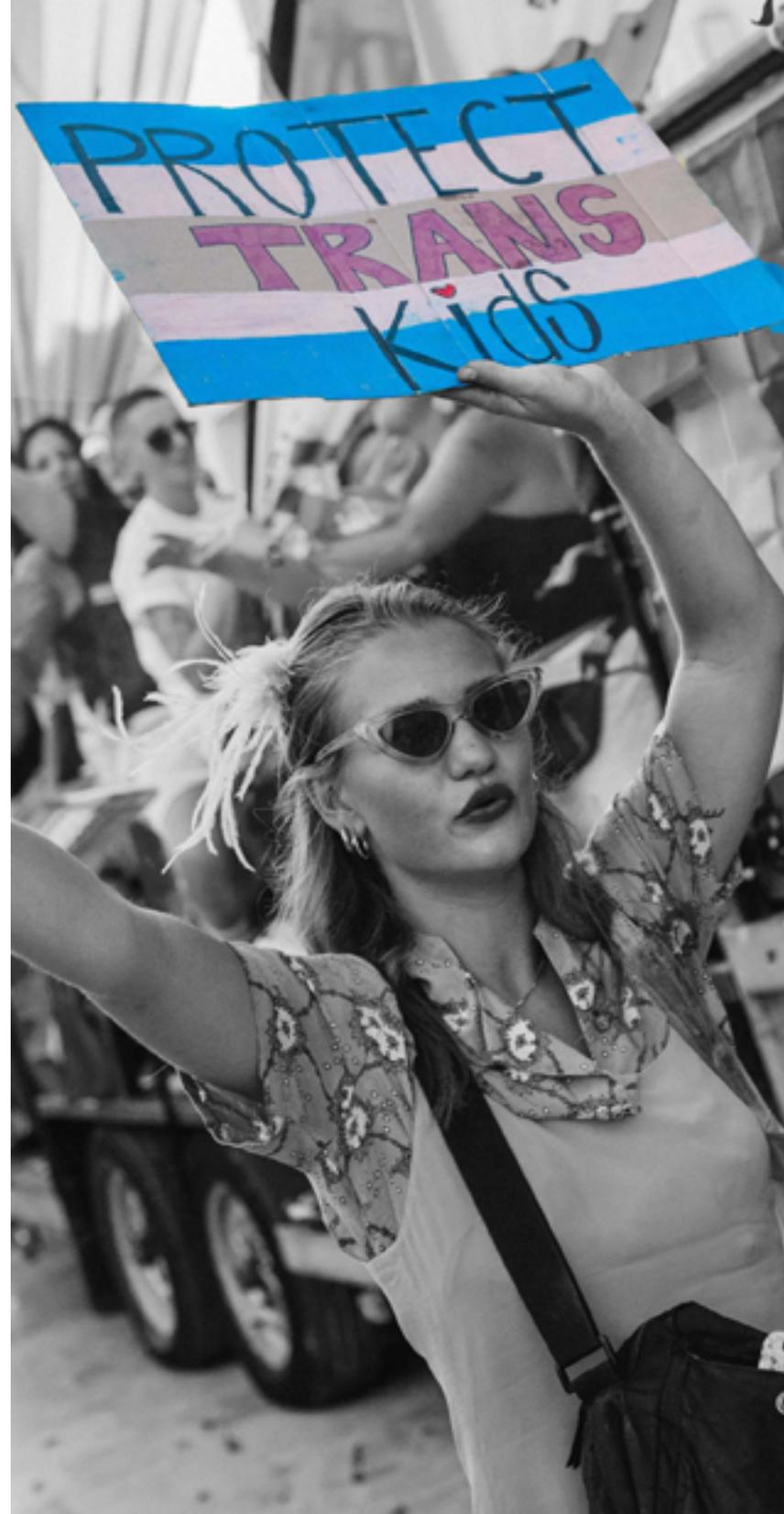
The Maltese have always been a proud people, standing up for their rights. Likewise, for Malta's LGBTIQ+ Community:

- We believe that human rights apply to everyone, everywhere.
- We believe that the human rights situation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex and queer people in Europe has significant room to improve.
- We believe that LGBTIQ+ people in Europe – and worldwide – should not experience gross violations of human rights and discrimination, but respect of human rights and full equality.
- We believe that full equality for LGBTIQ+ people should not only be a text of a law or figures in a statistic, but an affair of the heart for a whole society.

The Maltese LGBTIQ+ Community is a proud part of a European LGBTIQ+ Movement, but also finds itself at the heart of the Middle East and North African regions where equality is still a far cry. With Malta ranking top of the ILGA Rainbow Index for five years in a row, it is our duty to work constantly in achieving full equality from the heart in Malta as well as in neighbouring communities where LGBTIQ+ phobia and lack of human rights are still rife.

Our target for EuroPride Valletta 2023 is to offer the EMENA (European, Middle East & North Africa) LGBTIQ+ Community a safe port of call whilst providing them a stage where LGBTIQ+ human rights issues can be addressed and discussed. We want to contribute to more diversity and equality in Europe and surrounding regions and help to find ways to have a high level of human rights for all LGBTIQ+ people.

(And we are looking forward to celebrating with all of you during the Pride March and concert!)





## Socio-political Background

From our very own LGBTIQ+ history in Malta we know that reaching out, fighting for and finally achieving human rights like equality, non-discrimination, protection against hate crime, gender recognition and bodily integrity, family rights recognition and receiving asylum status based on sexual orientation is a challenging road.

A society's willingness to open up for an LGBTIQ+ human rights discussion, to tackle existing issues and grant equality to everyone is not just a process of changing laws. First and foremost, this is a question of how to change people's mentality and attitude. Prejudices, bias, misplaced ideas and often phobias of the LGBTIQ+ Community, its members and lifestyle are a result of influences from political parties, churches and other opinion-makers. Sometimes, false perceptions have been passed on from generation to generation and thus became part of a society's common belief. In several countries, still to this day, MSM activities are better known as "unnatural carnal knowledge" and punishable according to the criminal code that was introduced by the powers of the time.

The Maltese LGBTIQ+ Community wants to take the opportunity of hosting EuroPride Valletta 2023 to call attention to these socio-political factors. We want to create a platform where issues can be addressed, and intolerable conditions will be unveiled. We plan on events where solutions and strategies can be developed and discussed. During EuroPride Valletta 2023 we want to spread a spirit of optimism to stand up for diversity, equality and human rights for LGBTIQ+ people in Malta, neighbouring countries and Europe.

Many events and activities of the proposed EuroPride Valletta 2023 programme bear in mind the need to change people's attitude towards the LGBTIQ+ Community and will discuss various aspects of today's issues based on prejudice, bias and fear.



## Program, Events and Activities

**Year after year**, we are increasing collaboration with other organisations and partners to organise a Pride Week that is truly inclusive and impactful. Whilst the Pride March is the culmination of bringing the LGBTIQ+ community together, we also recognise that different minorities require specific platforms and events to encourage participation and representation. In the spirit of inclusivity, Allied Rainbow Communities (ARC) opens its calls for pride week events months in advance and encourages individuals and non-profit organisations to put forward their ideas even if they have no financial backing to turn them into reality.

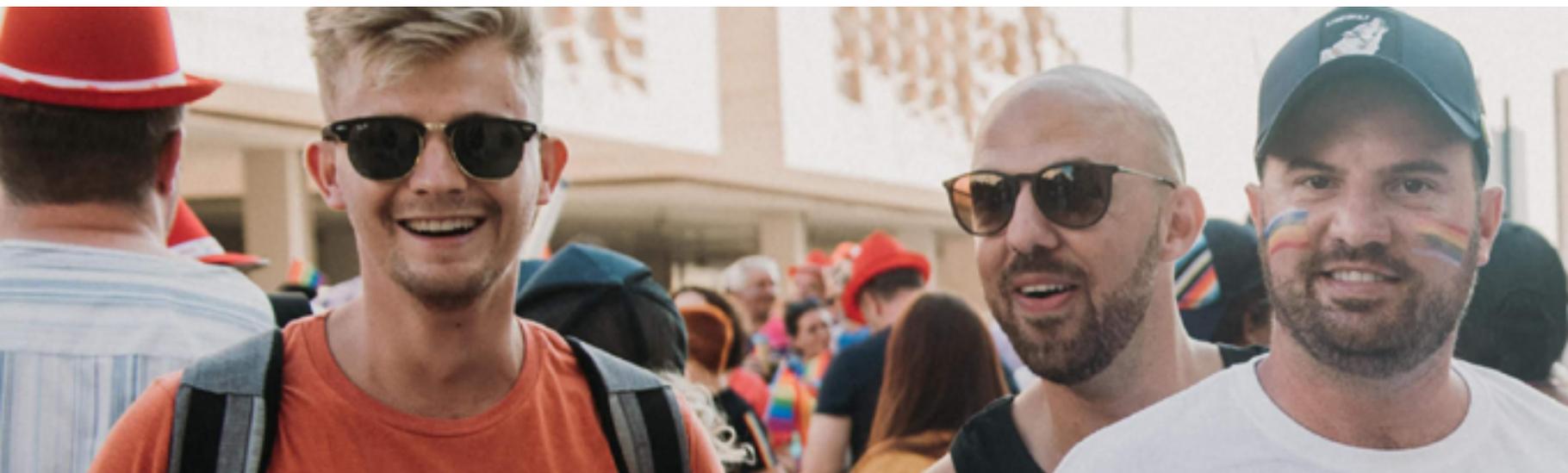
With the help of our members and partners, we support and empower these individuals from concept to completion. This results in innovative and truly inclusive events such as a trans-inclusive fashion show, a cabaret show that involves queer artists, community discussions about intersex issues, the politics of Pride and the rarely talked about chemsex situation amongst the MSM community. Other organisations have also organised sports tournaments that particularly attract trans men, LGBTIQ+ documentary screenings and literature-related workshops.

Additionally, the parties taking place throughout the week in terms of themes and format have also become more diversified and more inclusive at the same time.

The main part of EuroPride Valletta 2023 will be Pride Week that will kick-off with the opening ceremony on Thursday 7th September 2023 and conclude on Sunday 17th September 2023, with the Pride March and Concert taking place on Saturday 16th September 2023. The Pride Week will include a variety of events coordinated by ARC with the involvement of other NGOs, individuals and partner organisations centring around the following:

### Opening Ceremony EuroPride

The official Opening Ceremony will be held on Thursday 7th September 2023 in one of Valletta's public spaces where the media and the community will be invited to attend. A number of speakers will be invited to address the theme of EuroPride's "Equality from the Heart" followed by live entertainment.



## **Queer Arts & Culture Festival**

We shall be partnering with different artists and performers to offer a cultural & artistic programme of various genres, including exhibitions, theatre, cabaret shows, film and literary arts throughout the week. It is worth noting that Valletta was chosen as the European Capital of Culture in 2018 which hosted a year-long programme of cultural and artistic events.

Emphasis of the programme will be on offering a platform to LGBTIQ+ artists such as drag, burlesque, theatre and other forms of performing arts.

## **Human Rights Conference**

In collaboration with the Human Rights Directorate within the Ministry for Justice, Equality and Governance, a Human Rights conference shall be organised attracting policy makers, diplomats, allies and activists to take stock of Europe's Human Rights progress and those of the Euro-Med region, particularly for LGBTIQ+ communities hailing from North African countries and the Middle East. We also want to give a voice to LGBTIQ+ Refugees & Asylum Seekers by sharing their personal struggles through storytelling.

## **LGBTIQ+ at Work Conference**

We are proposing to host an LGBTIQ at Work Conference during EuroPride with the intention of highlighting the importance of allies & role models at work, the perils of pinkwashing and how brands can authentically support the community on the inside and out, supporting mental health and wellbeing, recruitment of transgender people and authentic recruitment campaigns to engage LGBTIQ+.



## **Interfaith Dialogue**

Growing up in a religious household can have a detrimental effect on the lives of many LGBTIQ+ people if the family is not supportive upon coming out. In an ideal situation, the family and the individual in question is supported to reconcile their faith with their sexuality and gender identity. In Malta, we have had success stories with the help of Drachma which is an LGBTIQ+ Catholic Group. Since being established, it has built bridges with the Catholic Church in Malta, created a parents' group to offer support for other parents whose child has come out and has now created an international platform of Rainbow Catholics. Drachma will be taking a lead role in hosting an assembly with other faith based LGBTIQ+ organisations to offer a distinct message of acceptance, solidarity and unity against criminalisation, injustice and discrimination.

## **Community Fora**

Through the use of documentary screenings, keynote experts and activists, we will be holding a number of seminars and community discussions that bring to lights topics that are of particular relevance to the LGBTIQ+ community.

## **Pride Village**

A Pride Village in the Capital will be set-up over 3 days leading up to the Pride March which will host a number of stands for the local and international organisations wanting to exhibit their work, sell merchandise and act as information points for the community. The set-up would also act as a space for socialisation and community building.

## **The Pride March & Concert**

The EuroPride 2023 March will take place on Saturday, September 16th in the streets of Valletta, the Capital City. Pride March is a family-friendly march where different human rights organisations, governmental entities and partners will be invited to march with us.

A number of floats, performances, giveaways and speeches will also take place during the march.

The march will finish at the Granaries in Floriana and a concert will proceed until late.





## Parties & Social Gatherings

Social gatherings were always at the core of the LGBTIQ+ Community to create a sense of belonging. Throughout the week, a number of venues will be opening their doors for a number of community events ranging from speak-easy socials, beach/poolside parties and club nights.

An after party following the Pride Concert will be organised hosted by Drag Artists and featuring Top DJs and performers.

**A quick word about environmental sustainability:** living on an island makes us Maltese very enviro-cautious. With no rivers or lakes, potable water has always been a precious resource. Island life constantly reminds us that resources are finite and should be used responsibly. Malta Pride started a couple of years ago to promote reusable cups during Pride events, asked food stands to serve food on degradable plates and motivated visitors to sort recyclable litter. In the interest of our island and the planet we will continue with and foster more environmental sustainability activities during EuroPride Valletta 2023.

## Supporting Partners

We are proud to already present several long-time partners and sponsors at this early stage who have been supporting the Maltese LGBTIQ+ Community for many years and are committed to be a part of EuroPride Valletta 2023.

- Office of Prime Minister
- Ministry for Justice, Equality and Governance
- City of Valletta
- City of Floriana
- MGRM
- Air Malta
- Eden Leisure Group
- LeoVegas
- LovinMalta
- Malta Tourism Authority
- Vodafone Malta
- YoBetIt!
- Station2Station



**KARLY**  
FROM MALTA





## Testimonials from our Community

“

Growing up in Malta as a transgender person was challenging for me, mainly because of society's mentality, as well as the absolute lack of knowledge and information available at the time. In fact, I only came to be knowledgeable about what being transgender means in my when I was sixteen. Luckily, I had a mother who always protected me and encouraged me to be myself. At the time, I was very confused and angry because I could not understand how my reflection in the mirror did not match the person I was truly.

When I began frequenting the gay scene in Malta, I became more knowledgeable about my gender identity. Transitioning was a difficult journey emotionally, physically, and mentally further enhanced by the financial strain that comes with it. Moreover, right before the GIGESC law was enacted, the process to change my gender legally was also not a pleasant experience.

While nowadays Malta has the most progressive LGBTIQ+ laws in the world and is also considered to be very safe, I still experience subtle forms of discrimination and harassment. I am grateful for the laws and the progress we have made as a society, however I still believe that more can be done at a grassroots level. In that regard, I try to use my social media platforms to bring together my passion and flair for fashion with a social conscious message, in the hopes of empowering others to be their true, authentic selves, even if that goes against the social norms very much still present in our culture.

I believe that Malta would be the ideal country to host EuroPride 2023 in order to discuss these issues and raise awareness so as to protect young children going through the same experience and also to work in order to further eliminate the hostilities and discrimination that my community still suffers from.

”



## Testimonials from our Community

“

I initially came out 10 years ago and as the years went by I saw the Maltese pride grow from a small gathering to the beautiful march that it is today. Going to Pride events and supporting the organizations that endeavour to make it happen has always been an integral part of my social life. The positive energy is palpable the minute you approach Valletta. Wherever you look there are people smiling, hugging, dancing and having fun. It is an integral experience for all members of the LGBTIQ+ community and their allies. Pride keeps growing from one year to the next and last year's Pride was probably the biggest one so far.

It is an overwhelmingly beautiful experience to be surrounded by individuals coming from all walks of life, being themselves freely and without apology, which is what Pride is all about. I feel that Malta's pride, however small compared to other countries, is a positive remembrance of past generations that struggled and worked so hard for us to be able to enjoy the rights we have today. Rights are only taken for granted by those who always had them.

The LGBTIQ+ community has pushed and sacrificed so much to arrive at this stage and the culmination of those struggles and victories is precisely the Pride march. I am proud to be part of this community, a community that welcomes everyone with open arms and gives every individual the space to shine their light.

”



**CATHLEEN**  
FROM MALTA





**BRAD & MARC**  
FROM SOUTH AFRICA





## Testimonials from our Community

“ We are an expat South African couple living in Malta and were lucky enough to experience our first Malta Gay pride in 2019 – it was an incredible experience! The Maltese people are exceptionally friendly, welcoming and accepting as a nation. The vibe and energy of the Pride festival is amazing, apart from experiencing once of Europe’s most beautiful and smallest Capital Cities (Valletta), the parade was buzzing with people taking part in the parade with many Maltese and their families come and show their support to the community and cheer on the beautifully decorated floats .

The parade takes place in the main street of Valletta – we loved walking through the beautiful historic streets filled with architectural masterpieces. We were surprised by how many people attended the pride event and how well it was supported by the local straight community, including a number of businesses. There were thousands of people who filled the streets taking part or showing support or just to enjoy the colourful floats and festivities. Clearly the LGBTQI community is accepted , celebrated and embraced by Maltese society. The pride ended with a free concert in the main square with talented local Maltese performers and DJ’s which was a celebration of everything that pride stands for.

The island is breathtakingly beautiful and filled with historical treasures but is also incredibly accepting to the Gay Traveller and although the gay scene might be small you will definitely be overwhelmed by the hospitality. I would highly recommend the event to all LGBTQ+ travellers , it’s no wonder the island and her people are known as the jewel of the Mediterranean!

”

# Marketing and Communication

Malta always has been a diverse place. Since the first pre-historic settlers, with the Knights of the Order of St. John from all over Europe, during the time of being an Italian and British colony and until today, Malta has always embraced their visitors' culture – as much as they love their own culture.

This exciting mixture of cultures makes Malta an extremely open and comforting island. Visitors recognise so many bits and pieces from their own heritage and feel immediately at home. As shown even in our language which is a mixture of Arabic, English, French, Italian, the Maltese welcome and embrace everyone instantly. Malta enchants all its visitors, leaving them as friends who are always welcomed to return.

## Pride Storyline

Diversity, openness and equality from the heart are core values of Malta and its LGBTIQ+ Community. Gay, lesbian, trans, intersex and queer visitors will find a friendly and easy to approach community. In a heartbeat every visitor is one of us and invited to join in the fun and our community.

As mentioned before, equality is another core value of Malta's LGBTIQ+ Community and equally the message of EuroPride Valletta 2023's "Pride Storyline". Since Malta has amended its Constitution in 2014, our country is one of the few in Europe that guarantees diversity and non-discrimination at a Constitutional level. Lot's has happened since then, and more still needs to come. But: equality is an affair of the heart for all the Maltese.

This message is directly reflected in EuroPride Valletta 2023's visual identity.

A horizontal rainbow stripe with the word "PRIDE" in white capital letters. The stripe consists of six horizontal bands of color: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. The word "PRIDE" is centered within the stripe.

**P R I D E**

**S T O R Y L I N E**

# Visual Identity



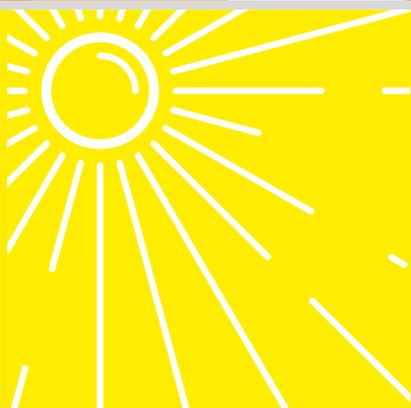
## PROMOTING EQUALITY

The Maltese Cross with its eight points symbolises the different “languages” (divisions) of the Order of St. John. It stands for diversity and equality of all groups of society. Promoting “equality from the heart” is the main concern of EuroPride Valletta 2023.



## WATCHING OUT FOR OTHERS

Above all other achievements, LGBTIQ+ people in Malta and abroad are still suffering, sometimes even suppressed, criminalised and tortured. The traditional Maltese watchtower makes us remember to look out for them.



## ENJOYING THE SUN

300 days of sun every year – of course this has to be one of EuroPride Valletta 2023’s elements! Malta invites its visitors not only for political discussions, cultural highlights and a Pride March, but offers as well perfect locations to unwind with sun and sea.

EuroPride Valletta 2023's visual identity is based on the beforementioned core values of Malta's LGBTIQ+ Community. They are reflected in the six chapters of EuroPride Valletta 2023 and visualised by elements in rainbow colours from the Maltese culture and heritage:

### JOINING MALTA PRIDE MARCH

From the first Malta Pride in 2004, participation of Malta Pride 2019 has increased to over 8,000 people. And there is no better symbol than the Maltese dgħajsa ("da:ysa" - fishing boat) to bring us all together for a gigantic Malta Pride March in 2023.



### WELCOMING ON OUR ISLAND

Water, waves and sea are symbolising the shores of our islands. Visitors have always come by sea and left remnants of their culture over the last 5,000 years. Malta's LGBTIQ+ Community is proud to be welcoming you to embrace our cultural diversity.



### SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY

The Maltese għajn ("a:yn" - eye) is a symbol that can be found on ancient watchtowers throughout the country. Supporting others is essential when you live on a remote island. It is an affair of the heart for the Maltese LGBTIQ+ Community to support those around us as well as each other.





## Target Groups

Defining target groups for marketing and communication activities is one of the core tasks of the EuroPride Valletta 2023 team. Besides transporting the core message to the relevant target groups, there are several other needs to communicate.

At this point of planning, the following stakeholders are identified as target groups for communication:

- Local LGBTIQ+ Community
- EuroPride Valletta 2023 visitors and guests
- General audience
- Office of Prime Minister, Ministries, Public Offices and local councils
- Law enforcement authorities
- Embassies and European Institutions
- NGOs and Church
- Sponsors
- Media



# MALTA PRIDE 19

The Malta Independent  
The official print media partner  
8 September 2019



From Riots  
to  
Rainbows

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RAINBOW COMMUNITIES (ARC)

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MALTA  
**PRIDE**  
The Malta Independent



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**NEW SCRATCHCARD!**  
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## Communication Activities

Together with the definition of target groups for marketing and communication, the planning of activities is essential, too. A more detailed planning of content is one of the core tasks of the EuroPride Valletta 2023 team.

Our core message “diversity from the heart”, part of our “Pride Storyline”, is in the focus of all communication efforts. At this point of planning, the following communication activities have been identified:

- Pride Storyline
- Hashtags for interactivity on social media
  - #europridevalletta2023
  - #diversityfromtheheart
- Before EuroPride Valletta 2023:
  - Creating a positive attitude
  - Calling for volunteers
  - Securing support, funding and sponsorship
- During EuroPride Valletta 2023:
  - Program information
  - Competitions
  - Inviting and activating people to join
  - Retrospect “the day after”
  - Keeping contact with Government, Authorities and other stakeholders
- After EuroPride Valletta 2023
  - Event retrospect
  - Influencing to keep up positive attitude
  - Chance for further diversity lobbying
  - Creating a digital “diversity knowledge and information” resource
- For the media
  - B2B media centre
  - Press releases and press notes
  - Press conferences
- Internal communication

## Communication Channels

Malta's LGBTIQ+ Community has already a great relationship to several media and communication partners on the islands. ARC, the organiser of Malta Pride and EuroPride Valletta 2023, today serves various communication channels to spread its information and messages.

A communication plan for the most relevant media platforms abroad will be developed as the event planning continues. For EuroPride Valletta 2023, it is planned to connect with the target groups via a wide range of communication channels:

### Traditional Media

Communication channel	Target group	Communication activities
Print	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General audience</li> </ul>	<p><b>Before:</b> pride storyline as well as creating a positive attitude towards the event through articles, interviews, opinions</p> <p><b>During:</b> information about the program, invitations and retrospect</p> <p><b>After:</b> retrospect of whole event, further influence of positive attitude and lobbying for diversity</p>
Radio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local LGBTIQ+ Community</li> <li>EuroPride Valletta 2023 visitors and guests</li> <li>General audience</li> </ul>	<p><b>Before:</b> pride storyline, creating a positive attitude, calling for volunteers through interviews, features, advertisement from sponsors</p> <p><b>During:</b> information about the program, invitations, competitions and retrospect</p> <p><b>After:</b> retrospect of whole event, further influence of positive attitude and lobbying for diversity</p>
Television	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local LGBTIQ+ Community</li> <li>General audience</li> </ul>	<p><b>Before:</b> pride storyline as well as creating a positive attitude towards the event through articles, interviews, opinions</p> <p><b>During:</b> information about the program, invitations and retrospect</p> <p><b>After:</b> retrospect of whole event, further influence of positive attitude and lobbying for diversity</p>



## Digital & Social Media

Communication channel	Target group	Communication activities
gaymalta.com/ europride2023.mt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local LGBTIQ+ Community</li> <li>EuroPride Valletta 2023 visitors and guests</li> <li>General audience</li> <li>Media partners</li> </ul>	<p><b>Before:</b> pride storyline, creating a positive attitude, calling for volunteers through interviews, features, advertisement from sponsors</p> <p><b>During:</b> information about the program, invitations, competitions and retrospect</p> <p><b>After:</b> retrospect of whole event, further influence of positive attitude and lobbying for diversity, creating a digital “diversity knowledge and information” resource</p> <p>B2B media centre for the press</p>
Facebook/ Instagram	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local LGBTIQ+ Community</li> <li>EuroPride Valletta 2023 visitors and guests</li> <li>General audience</li> </ul>	<p>Creating and spreading hashtags for interactivity: #europridevalletta2023 #equalityfromtheheart</p> <p><b>Before:</b> pride storyline, creating a positive attitude, calling for volunteers through interviews, features, advertisement from sponsors</p> <p><b>During:</b> information about the program, invitations, competitions and retrospect</p> <p><b>After:</b> retrospect of whole event, further influence of positive attitude and lobbying for diversity</p>

## One-to-one communication

Communication channel	Target group	Communication activities
E-Mail newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local LGBTIQ+ Community</li> <li>• EuroPride Valletta 2023 visitors and guests</li> </ul>	<p>Creating and spreading hashtags for interactivity:            #europridevalletta2023            #diversityfromtheheart</p> <p><b>Before:</b> pride storyline, creating a positive attitude, calling for volunteers through interviews, features, advertisement from sponsors  <b>During:</b> information about the program, invitations, competitions and retrospect  <b>After:</b> retrospect of whole event, further influence of positive attitude and lobbying for diversity</p>
Personal approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office of Prime Minister</li> <li>• Ministries, public offices and local councils</li> <li>• Embassies and European Institutions</li> <li>• Law enforcement authorities</li> <li>• MGRM (and other NGOs)</li> <li>• Church</li> <li>• Sponsors (tbd)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Before:</b> pride storyline as well as creating a positive attitude towards the event, securing support/funding and cooperation agreements/sponsorship, defining points of contact and involving authorities into the planning process  <b>During:</b> keeping communication lines open for a smooth operation and fast exchange and intervention  <b>After:</b> review of whole event and further lobbying for diversity</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media partners</li> </ul>	<p>Press releases            Press notes            Press conferences</p>

## Marketing Activities

Besides the beforementioned communication plan, additional marketing activities will be planned for both communication and visibility on the one hand and revenue generation on the other hand. Focus areas for marketing are

- Pride sponsorship packages
- Merchandising for sale
- Price sponsorship for competitions
- Brand franchise for partner merchandise
- Barter deals





# **Business Plan and Timeline**

## **Business Plan**

Since 2016 ARC has taken a leading role in coordinating Malta Pride with the participation of other LGTIQ+ NGOs, Governmental Entities and local sponsors. From 2018, ARC introduced Pride week with several events by various stakeholders for the local and visiting LGBTIQ+ communities and their allies. These included artistic and cultural programmes, discussions, interviews on national media, social gatherings, parties, as well the Pride March and concert.

As can be seen from the Past Accounts for the years of 2018 and 2019 below, the organising team has seen an increase in terms of financial support from public and private sector which allowed for an increase of expenditure to offer a number of high quality, but always inclusive, set of events. With this trajectory, we foresee considerable support from all stakeholders involved with the organisation of EuroPride 2023 in Valletta that would leave an impactful legacy, politically, socially and economically.

	Past Expenses		Projected Budget
	Malta Pride 2018	Malta Pride 2019	EuroPride Valletta 2023
	€	€	€
<b>Income</b>			
Donations	900.00	1,720.00	10,000.00
Sponsorship	17,500.00	22,600.00	50,000.00
Public funds	6,000.00	6,000.00	300,000.00
Other income	2,000.00	10,700.00	50,000.00
	<b>€26,400.00</b>	<b>€41,020.00</b>	<b>€410,000.00</b>
<b>Pride costs</b>			
Location rent	142.00	700.00	30,000.00
Location equipment	10,750.00	25,818.00	100,000.00
Parade and floats	1,300.00	2,410.00	7,000.00
Decoration and fireworks	100.00	65.00	10,000.00
Merchandising	1,900.00	1,043.00	20,000.00
Artists and panellists	1,500.00	1,384.00	70,000.00
Security	1,390.00	2,561.00	30,000.00
Fees and charges	140.00	-	12,000.00
	<b>€17,222.00</b>	<b>€33,981.00</b>	<b>€279,000.00</b>

	Past Expenses		Projected Budget
	Malta Pride 2018	Malta Pride 2019	EuroPride Valletta 2023
	€	€	€
<b>Employee costs</b>			
Volunteers and temporary staff	520.00	31.00	12,000.00
Recruitment and training	-		6,000.00
Travel, subsistence and motor expenses	250.00	1,603.50	20,000.00
Entertainment	-	-	10,000.00
	<b>€770.00</b>	<b>€1,634.50</b>	<b>€48,000.00</b>
<b>Administrative Expenses</b>			
Telephone and fax	20.00	-	200.00
Postage	450.00	-	1,000.00
Stationery and printing	1,150.00	370.00	6,000.00
Insurance	900.00	900.00	5,800.00
Conferences, exhibitions and meetings	300.00	-	10,000.00
	<b>€2,820.00</b>	<b>€1,270.00</b>	<b>€23,000.00</b>

	Past Expenses		Projected Budget
	Malta Pride 2018	Malta Pride 2019	EuroPride Valletta 2023
	€	€	€
<b>Legal and professional costs</b>			
Accountancy and audit fees	600.00	-	10,000.00
Consultancy fees	708.00	590.00	10,000.00
Advertising and PR	1,300.00	1,437.00	35,000.00
Other legal and professional costs	-	850.00	5,000.00
	<b>€2,608.00</b>	<b>€2,877.00</b>	<b>€60,000.00</b>
	<b>€23,420.00</b>	<b>€39,762.50</b>	<b>€410,000.00</b>
<b>Operating surplus/(deficit) before tax</b>	<b>€2,980.00</b>	<b>€1,257.50</b>	<b>€ -</b>

# TIMELINE



# Local Organisations & EuroPride Valletta 2023 Team

## Allied Rainbow Communities (ARC)

Allied Rainbow Communities (ARC) was established in mid-2015. ARC's motto "belong grow and contribute" reflects the organisation's mission to foster a sense of belonging and growth within the LGBTIQ+ community leading to a positive contribution to general society. ARC is a registered voluntary organisation (VO 1136) in Malta.

ARC's mission statement:

**"To reach out across all the colours of our rainbow and beyond, whilst promoting further growth in our Communities creating opportunities for giving back to society with our target group being LGBTIQ+ people and allies on the Maltese Islands."**

Under this mission statement, ARC orients its work on the Maltese Government's "LGBTIQ+ Equality Strategy and Action Plan 2018-2022"<sup>(13)</sup> with ten action areas. ARC's areas of work mainly revolve around pride, health, communication and social activities. Some of ARC's activities are:

### **Area 3: Right to Health**

**"Improve LGBTIQ+ person's general wellbeing and access to healthcare services."**

ARC embarked on several initiatives to improve sexual health in Malta. Members of the organisation attend several media programs to educate the public, teamed up with other NGOs to exert pressure on authorities to improve current practices. Further, ARC participated in UNAIDS and ECDC meetings, teamed up with dating apps such as Grindr to send informative messages to its users on SAIs and worked with Malta LGBTIQ+ Rights Movement (MGRM) to co-organise World AIDS Day 2016 activities.

Through private sponsors ARC introduced microscopy testing at the GU Clinic of Malta's national hospital Mater Dei. ARC funded the overseas training of two medical staff to make this service available.

ARC published a study on LGBTIQ+ health in 2016. The study highlighted some alarming issues such as the HIV spread in Malta and offered recommendations to tackle such issues.

ARC assembled a health work group composed of medical professionals and activists working hand in hand with the national Health Authorities, NGO's and people living with HIV to work on improving health services, treatment and educate the general public on SAIs.

(13) [https://meae.gov.mt/en/Documents/LGBTIQ+%20Action%20Plan/LGBTIQ+ActionPlan\\_20182022.pdf](https://meae.gov.mt/en/Documents/LGBTIQ+%20Action%20Plan/LGBTIQ+ActionPlan_20182022.pdf)

## **Area 7: LGBTIQ+ Civil Society**

### **“Consolidate the relationship between government and LGBTIQ+ civil society.”**

ARC is a member of the LGBTIQ+ Consultative Council <sup>(14)</sup> which falls under item 7.1 of the “LGBTIQ+ Equality Strategy and Action Plan 2018-2022”:

### **“Continue to enable the effective functioning of the LGBTIQ+ Consultative Council.”**

This advisory body was set up by the Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties (MSDC) during the previous legislature. The aims of the Council are to advise the government on those issues which impact on LGBTIQ+ persons and to put forward legislation, policies and other measures to advance the rights of LGBTIQ+ persons in consultation with the Minister. The council gathers all Maltese LGBTIQ+ NGOs and acts as a forum to put forward LGBTIQ+ related laws and push for legislation changes

## **Area 10: Other LGBTIQ+ Measures**

### **“Ensure that equality of LGBTIQ+ persons is mainstreamed across all areas and sectors of society.”**

ARC has been organising Malta Pride for the past 4 years. Participation increased from a 500 to 8,000 people in 2019. ARC’s submission to host EuroPride in Malta for 2023 aligns with area 10.1 of the “LGBTIQ+ Equality Strategy and Action Plan 2018-2022”:

### **“Continue to make visible Malta’s welcome towards LGBTIQ+ tourists in international publicity campaigns and in domestic services catering for tourists.”**

ARC also organises regular meet-up social events and facilitates informal networking. Since its inception ARC has:

- organised a variety of LGBTIQ+ social events in cultural, social & sport
- published a study on LGBTIQ+ health in Malta
- participated & co-ordinated Malta Pride
- launched gaymalta.com, an online LGBTIQ+ information portal with today more than 2,500+ users per month
- raised funds to finance health, youth and LGBTIQ+ advocacy projects
- distributed HIV self-test kits to the Maltese LGBTIQ+ Community
- launched an HIV/SAI educational campaign
- collaborated with other entities and NGOs on common initiatives and
- been active in social policy, white paper discussions and development

Although ARC is an independent NGO, the organisation often collaborates or joins forces with other entities on projects such as Businesses for Pride, MGRM for European testing week, HIV and world aids day and the LGBTIQ+ Consultative Council.

(14) <https://equality.gov.mt/en/LGBTIQ+/Pages/default.aspx>

## Other LGBTIQ+ & Ally Organisations in Malta

Malta's LGBTIQ+ Community is represented by several other organisations that focus on several topics of diversity and equality.

### **Malta LGBTIQ+ Rights Movement (MGRM)**

MGRM, the Malta LGTBIQ Rights Movement was set up in 2001 by a small group of volunteers who were determined to bring about change. Since then, MGRM has established itself as a registered organization with a statute, a clear mission, core values, and goals. It is an active member of a number of European Networks including ILGA-Europe, Transgender Europe, NELFA, and IGLYO. Membership of these organisations, participation in trainings, conferences, study sessions and network meetings have developed the capacity of the organization to effectively address a range of LGBTIQ+ issues.

Despite its limited resources, it has contributed to putting LGBTIQ+ equality high on the political agenda, leading to significant legal advances. MGRM strives to achieve full equality for all LGBTIQ+ people in Maltese society; a society that enables people to live openly and fully without fear of discrimination based on one's sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or sex characteristics.

MGRM has provided training and workshops on LGBTIQ+ issues to youths, as well as educators and other professionals. In 2013, the Rainbow Support Service was founded, providing a weekly youth drop-in, counselling services, social work intervention, legal advice and training to those who need it.

In 2019, the sub-committee HIV Malta was launched. This group was developed to provide and disseminate factual information to educate and raise awareness, work with the community and other NGOs active in the area of HIV, lobby and work with the medical sector and policy makers to improve treatment and strategies and ensure people living with HIV are living dignified lives that respect their fundamental human rights.



### **Aditus**

Aditus foundation is a non-governmental organisation established in 2011 with the mission to monitor, report and act on access to human rights by individuals and groups. As an organisation aditus provides legal advice through its pro bono unit and is involved in ongoing advocacy work. The foundation's focus is primarily Malta, but the team also works towards highlighting the regional & international dimensions of human rights in Malta.



### **Checkpoint Malta**

Checkpoint Malta was established in mid-2019 with a mission to eradicate HIV related stigma and AIDS. They work in tandem with other NGOs and entities to support the ongoing fight against ignorance, stigma and isolation that persons living with HIV face.



### **Drachma**

Drachma is a space open to all persons of good will who seek sexual and spiritual integration. It includes lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender and intersex persons, as well as friends of LGBTI persons who wish to meet to pray together and explore the intersections between sexuality, gender, gender identity, faith, spirituality and religion. It also includes parents, siblings, relatives and all those who wish to accompany and support LGBTI people, and other parents and relatives of LGBTI persons in their life journeys. Drachma is a group largely inspired by the Roman Catholic tradition, values and spirituality but is open to people coming from different religious traditions or none at all. Drachma also explores ecumenical and inter-faith spaces.



### **LGBTIQ+ GOZO**

LGBTI + Gozo, is an NGO formed in April 2015, for the purpose of promoting and raising awareness regarding the LGBTI+ community in Gozo.

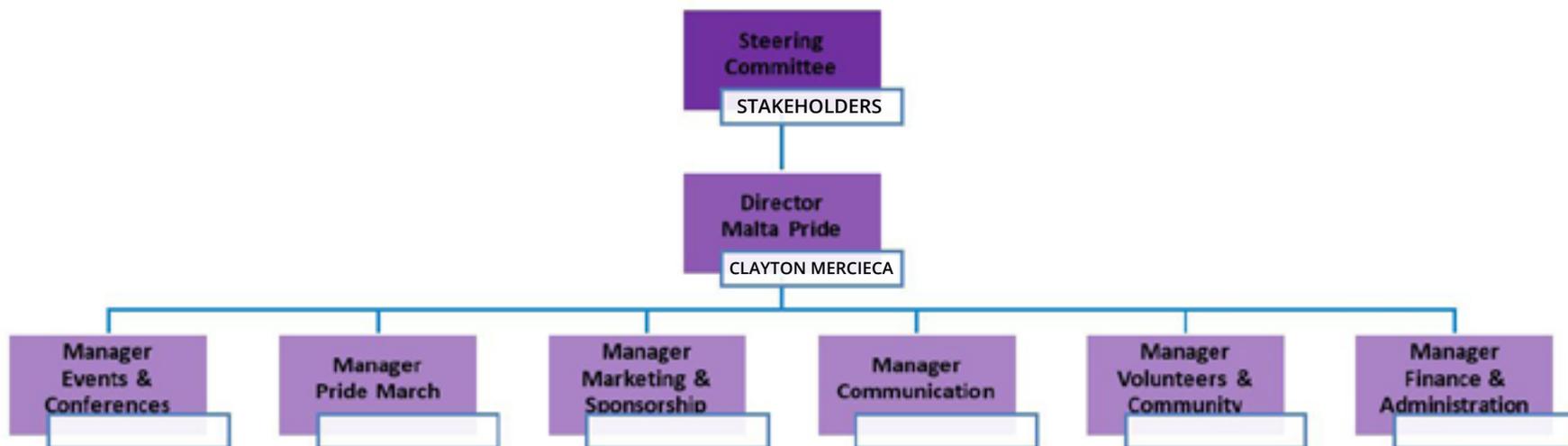




# EuroPride Valletta 2023 Team

## Organisation Structure

EuroPride Valletta 2023's organisation is managed by Clayton Mercieca, ARC's Malta Pride Director. He will be managing a team of up to six event managers that concentrate on the various areas and topics of EuroPride Valletta 2023. He will be reporting to the event's steering committee whose members are representatives of different LGBTIQ+ interest groups and other stakeholders.



# Meet the Steering Committee

EuroPride Valletta 2023 Team



**CLAYTON MERCECA**  
REPRESENTATIVE FOR ARC AND SPEAKER



**NICHOLAS BUGEJA**  
SECRETARY



**CYNTHIA CHIRCOP**  
REPRESENTATIVE FOR MGRM



**EMAN BORG**  
REPRESENTATIVE FOR LGBTI+ GOZO



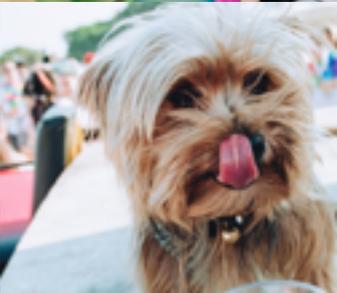
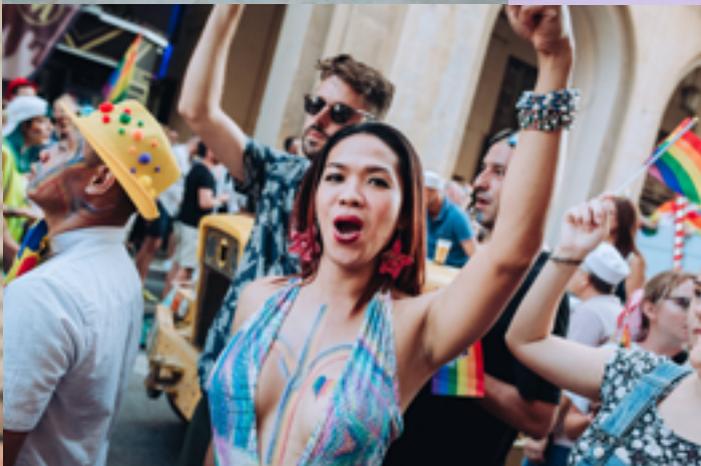
**MICHAEL CAMILLERI**  
REPRESENTATIVE FOR MINISTRY FOR  
JUSTICE, EQUALITY AND GOVERNANCE

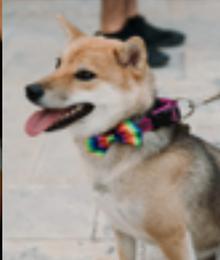


**GABI CALLEJA**  
REPRESENTATIVE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS  
& INTEGRATION DIRECTORATE



**ANTHONY CARL CARUANA**  
REPRESENTATIVE FOR  
DRACHMA MALTA





# LETTERS OF SUPPORT





Allied Rainbow Communities  
9, Tingi San Mavis,  
Valletta, Malta  
VLT 1362

09 July 2023

**LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR EUROPRIDE VALLETTA 2023**

Dear Clayton,

As Parliamentary Secretary for Equality, on behalf of the Maltese Government, it gives me great pleasure to express our wholehearted support for the Allied Rainbow Communities' bid to host EuroPride 2023 in Malta.

Malta prides itself with being a trailblazer in terms of LGBTQBI equality – both in terms of legislation as well as policy and lifestyle.

Since 2013, Malta has carried out crucial legal reforms, introducing Civil Unions at par with marriage in 2014, followed by full marriage equality in 2017. Malta's Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics Act, introduced in 2015, is a truly revolutionary law, wholly protecting the rights of intersex and trans persons, which law was then complemented by the criminalisation of harmful conversion practices just a year later.

We are also constantly striving to ensure that Maltese society is a safe and equal space for all, as the latest findings of EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) survey reveal.

We truly look forward to the opportunity to welcome EuroPride participants from Europe and beyond to our beautiful island, and pledge to support the organisers financially and otherwise, should the bid by Allied Rainbow Communities be successful.

Yours in solidarity

Hon Rosianne Cutajar  
Parliamentary Secretary for Equality and Reform



KUNSILL LOKALI FLORIANA  
FLORIANA LOCAL COUNCIL

23.09.2019

KLF 042-19

To whom it may concern,

**EuroPride 2023**

The Floriana Local Council is hereby endorsing and supporting Allied Rainbow Communities (Malta), organizers of Malta Pride, in their bid to host EuroPride 2023 in Malta.

Kind Regards,

M' Lourdes Lautier  
Executive Secretary



A: 32, Parish Street, Mosta MST 2021  
T: 21430006; M: 99255559  
VO: 0039; VAT 1620-9711

To whom it may concern,

***Re. EuroPride Application***

**MGRM – The Malta LGBTIQ Rights Movement** is pleased to endorse **ARC – allied rainbow communities** bid for Malta to host EuroPride 2023. Malta Pride, organised annually by ARC since 2016, has taken a more celebratory tone in recent years, thanks to ARC’s coordination whilst retaining the educational and awareness raising of Pride in Malta in collaboration with the various local LGBTIQ non-governmental organisations.

When MGRM was set up in 2001, Pride in Malta was more of a protest, reflecting the legal and societal barriers for LGBTIQ rights. In a relatively short period of time, since 2013, Malta has legislated in favour of civil unions, and then same-sex marriage. Rainbow Families can now adopt, conversion practices have been banned, surgeries on intersex children were made illegal, and an important Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics Act has given trans and non-binary individuals a dearth of legal rights and other protections.

Against this background, we believe that organising EuroPride 2023 in Malta is an opportunity to bring the diversity of our heritage to the fore, whilst sharing the achievements Malta has made in LGBTIQ rights. We also feel this is an opportunity for the local LGBTIQ community to participate in a global event, whilst learning from the experiences of our European counterparties.

Kind regards

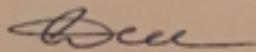
Cynthia Chircop  
Co-coordinator of MGRM

**To whom it may concern**

Drachma would like to endorse the bid presented by *Allied Rainbow Communities* (ARC) for Malta to host the Euro Pride in September 2023.

Drachma is looking forward towards this important event being hosted in Malta as it also looks forward towards presenting its own bid to host the General Assembly of the *Global Network of Rainbow Assembly* and that of the *European Network of Parents of LGBTI+ Persons* at the same time as the Euro Pride. This may well create a splendid opportunity for convergence between these realities and offer an opportunity for Rainbow Catholics from around the world and Parents of LGBTI+ Persons from all over Europe to offer a distinct message of acceptance, solidarity and unity against criminalisation, injustice and discrimination.

We therefore once again endorse ARC's bid for Euro Pride in Malta in 2023.



Christopher Vella  
Coordinator



Joseanne Peregine  
Coordinator



Diversity: Embrace it - Share it - Celebrate it

e: [lgbtigozo@gmail.com](mailto:lgbtigozo@gmail.com)

p: +356 99121148

w: [www.lgbtigozo.com](http://www.lgbtigozo.com)

VO 0450-18

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*To whom it may concern,*

In these last few years Malta celebrated growth in its legal approach towards Queer people. Such rightful equal treatment place the island nation as a catalyst for diversity. Highly intertwined with our culture, heritage and beliefs the Maltese archipelago prides itself with a rich history. Such a history can be felt within the narrow streets of Mdina(the Old city), the shores of Marsaxlokk(fish market) and the serenity of Gozo (Malta's sister Island) it is such history that puts Malta as a tourist destination that unites people from all walks of life.

Allied Rainbow Community in recent years have taken the Malta Pride under its helm. Under the direction of the organisation Malta Pride is now a staple in the events calendar in Malta. Pride Week - a united collaborative approach with different events were Queer NGOs and allies all unite under one aim. The success of the Pride Week is seen not only in the number of quality events, of attendees during the march - but the ease of logistical support by ARC and the contribution that corporate companies are giving to such march.

The input that Pride March is not only during one afternoon, but a constant walk - is within the ethos of ARC and is well reciprocated by the partner organisations being NGOs or corporate sponsors.

LGBTI+ Gozo believes that the next natural step is for Europe Pride to come at the heart of the Mediterranean, where cultures, ideas and diversity meets. We support Allied Rainbow Communities bid and look forward to host Europe in our gem of a country.

Eman Borg  
President  
LGBTI+ Gozo



## VODAFONE MALTA FOUNDATION

European Pride Organisers Association (EPOA) aisbl  
Rue du Marché au Charbon 42  
1000 Brussels  
Belgium

3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2019

Dear Sir/Madam,

On behalf of Vodafone Malta Limited, I am hereby penning this letter by way of endorsing the Allied Rainbow Communities' bid to host EuroPride 2023 in Malta.

The Allied Rainbow Communities (Arc) has been organising the Malta Pride for the past three years. Also for the past three years, Vodafone Malta has been a proud partner of Arc, reflecting our deeply embedded culture of inclusion.

'Inclusion for All' is one of the three major pillars buttressing our Purpose, which is that of connecting Malta for a better future. We are committed towards providing a supportive working environment where employees can thrive and be themselves, and be respected and valued for their individuality. We believe that employees should be valued regardless of gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, cultural background, race or beliefs.

As proud sponsors of Malta Pride, we were at the forefront of this year's Gay Pride Parade, jubilantly holding up the rainbow flag. We actively encourage a culture of inclusion through an LGBTQIA+ employee network, the purpose of which is to support and celebrate our Rainbow community while helping Vodafone have a better understanding of working with the LGBTQIA+ employees. Internal systems have also been updated to include non-binary titles and gender options.

Specific support and guidelines is also offered to managers on how to support LGBTQIA+ team members at Vodafone, whilst employees are provided with a Coming Out Guide and Travel Safe Guide, to ensure that they are as supported as possible.

Vodafone Malta Ltd.  
Level 6, SkyParks Business Centre,  
Malta International Airport, Luqa LQA 4000, Malta  
W – [www.vodafone.com.mt](http://www.vodafone.com.mt)

T +356 20950380

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CJ General

## ENDORSEMENT LETTER

To whom it may concern,

Malta is a perfect place to host EuroPride 2023, primarily because of our against-all-odds LGBT success story.

I remember attending some of the first pride marches in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Malta was a staunchly Catholic and insular nation at the time, so walking the streets of Valletta as an openly gay man, together with only a few dozen other people, was intimidating to say the least.

Today, thanks to a combination of effective lobbying, strategic foresight and community spirit, the island of Malta is probably the most exciting place to be LGBT: an open-minded and welcoming nation full of beauty, splendour and things to do.

This is why Lovin Malta is proud to submit this endorsement letter for our island to host EuroPride 2023 and share its story with the rest of the world. Since inception, we have been big supporters of Malta Pride, and we have used our large media platform to give it as much publicity as possible.

We have been particularly impressed by the work of Allied Rainbow Communities over the past three years. Clayton Mercieca and his team have taken Malta Pride to a whole new level. From a small crowd of a couple of hundred people to a colourful parade with thousands of people enjoying themselves against the backdrop of the spectacular beauty of our capital city Valletta.

Malta's story can be of huge inspiration to Europe and the rest of the world: a proud rainbow shining brightly over the Mediterranean Sea. We look forward to being able to support this event and help turn it into another great success story.

Regards,

Christian Peregín  
CEO and Founder  
Lovin Malta  
[chris@lovinmalta.com](mailto:chris@lovinmalta.com)  
+35679241187

Dear Malta Pride,

Yobetit.com Ltd is proud to support your bid for hosting EuroPride 2023.

We strongly believe that Malta Pride has adequate track record, and the capacity, to organize such an important event as EuroPride. Malta had a revolution in LGBTQ+ rights over the last few years, and managed to show that the deep Christian roots in the culture didn't stop progress in human rights and equality. We believe that Malta can set an example for other countries and societies, struggling to balance between religious tradition and progress.

As a leading company in one of the largest industries in Malta, we know that EuroPride in Malta will not just have the support by a selection of organisations but by the entire country. This will be a perfect example to show how EuroPride isn't just a separate event, but a part of everyday life that affects all of us, every day. We know that the entire country will stand behind this event.

If you have any questions, I would be pleased to discuss our endorsement in more details over the contact information below.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Hjelm". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. To the left of the first few letters of the name is a simple heart symbol.

**Michael Hjelm**  
Head of Marketing

+356 7733 1987  
michael.hjelm@yobetit.com



**station2station**

**19 Triq San Mark  
Valletta VLT1369, Malta**

*Page 1 of 1, 28 July. 2020*

***To whom it may concern***

***Malta candidacy for EuroPride 2023***

Dear EuroPride,

S2S, station2station, the longest established, leading LGBTIQ+ and ally events organisation on Malta, fully supports Malta’s candidacy for EuroPride 2023. With 24 years track record, S2S primarily organises large dance events on Malta, and attracts an integrated crowd from across the LGBTIQ+ and ally communities. Should Malta’s candidacy be successful, we intend to put our full resources and capability to organise large events for thousands of guests in the service of EuroPride 2023 in Malta to ensure the best experience for guests, both resident in Malta and visiting Malta from overseas.

We believe Malta is an excellent location for EuroPride 2023 to showcase to people across Europe how the fears of those opposed to LGBTIQ+ equality are without basis. Malta has introduced the most comprehensive LGBTIQ+ equality in the world and society has flourished, not floundered as the naysayers predicted. Guests can relay and enjoy the freedoms of being a well accepted part of society—same-sex couples holding hands on the street without fear is our daily norm.

In the World Wars of the last century, Malta was known as “the nurse of the Mediterranean” for her role in providing a safe harbour for Red Cross ships and healing the injured in her many hospitals on shore. We would be honoured to share our modern LGBTIQ+ safe harbour at the heart of the Mediterranean with guests at EuroPride 2023 in Malta, giving those from hostile jurisdictions a time of respite, and sending these and all other guests home relaxed, refreshed, and reinvigorated to continue the drive for full equality all over Europe.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'E Gomez'.

Eamonn Gomez.

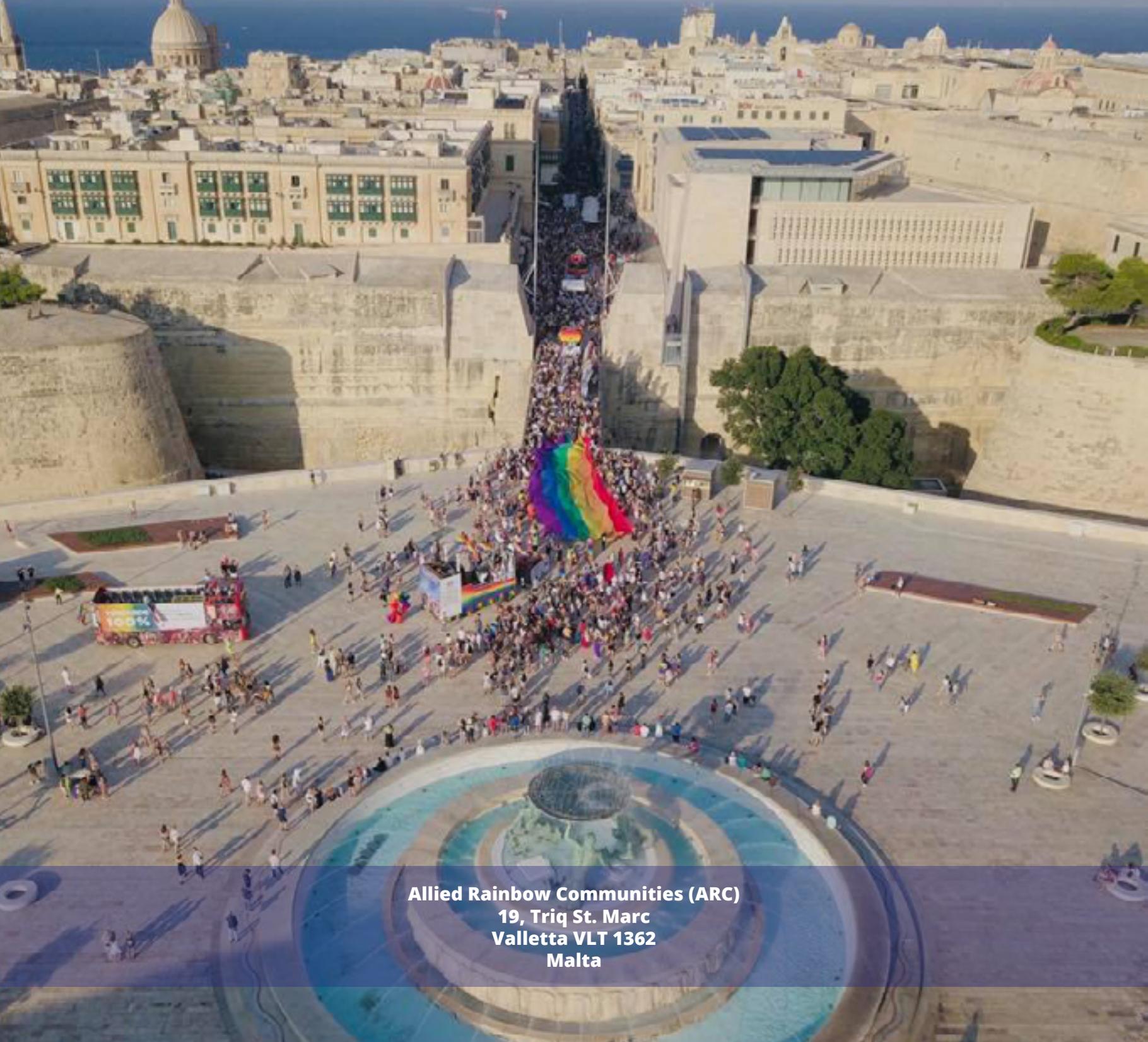
*station2station*

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO  
WELCOMING YOU**



# FORWARD TO BRING YOU





**Allied Rainbow Communities (ARC)**  
19, Triq St. Marc  
Valletta VLT 1362  
Malta