



---

# THE IMPACT AND DEVELOPMENT OF ADVENTURE TOURISM IN MALTA

---

Kayleigh Portelli

2020 / 2021

HIGHER NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN TRAVEL &  
TOURISM

## **Declaration of Authenticity**

Name and Surname: Kayleigh Portelli

Program: HND in Travel & Tourism

Title of Research: The Impact and Development of Adventure Tourism in  
Malta

Declaration:

I hereby declare that this research study is based on the outcome of self-made research. I, as the authentic author, declare that this research study is my own composition, and has not been previously produced for any other qualification.

The research study was conducted under the supervision of Mr. Alexander Ellul

---

Signature

21<sup>st</sup> August 2021

Date

## **Abstract**

The aim of this study is to identify how adventure tourism impacts the Maltese Islands. Since adventure tourism can be impactful in various ways, this study focuses mainly on its environmental and economic impact, as these are the two most affected aspects. The impact of adventure tourism on these sectors is evaluated, in order to determine whether it is positive or negative. This study also considers the current situation of adventure tourism in Malta and whether there are any plans concerning it in the future. Lastly, this study will also determine if whether adventure tourism is beneficial to Malta or not and whether it should be developed further. The advantages and disadvantages of adventure tourism are also taken into consideration. The findings of this study conclude that adventure tourism is, in fact, very beneficial to Malta as the impact it leaves on the Islands is very positive. The impact is positive as it does not harm the environment as it makes use of the natural resources found on the Maltese Islands. Additionally, it enhances the economy as more tourists visit Malta and spend most of their time enjoy the natural surroundings and spending money within various local businesses. This can be seen through the primary research that has been carried out. Research was conducted by using questionnaires and interviews. Questionnaires were distributed amongst foreign students living in Malta whilst interviews were conducted with an owner of a local adventure company alongside the minister for tourism and consumer protection.

*Keywords; adventure tourism, economy, environment, impacts*

## **Acknowledgements**

The completion of this undertaking could not have been possible without the assistance of various individuals. Their contributions are greatly appreciated and sincerely acknowledged. Firstly, I would like to express my gratitude to my tutor, Mr Alexander Ellul. My thanks also goes to all the individuals who completed the questionnaire for this study. I would also like to extend my thanks to Hon. Clayton Bartolo from the Ministry for Tourism and Consumer Protection and Mr Andrew Warrington, the managing director of MC adventure and also guide leader.

## **Table of Contents**

<b>Declaration of Authenticity.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Acknowledgements.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Literature Review.....</b>	<b>7</b>
1. History .....	7
2. Activities Practiced in Malta .....	8
3. The Impact of Adventure Tourism.....	8
4. Economical Impact.....	9
5. Environmental Impact.....	11
6. What Can Be Done.....	13
<b>Research Methodology.....</b>	<b>14</b>
1. Introduction.....	14
2. Review of Data Collection Methods.....	14
3. Limitations.....	16
<b>Research Analysis.....</b>	<b>17</b>
1. Introduction.....	17
2. Survey Analysis.....	17
3. Interview Analysis.....	20
A. Impact.....	21
B. Advantages and Drawbacks.....	22
C. Development.....	24
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Reference List.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Appendix.....</b>	<b>30</b>
1. Questions.....	30
2. Consent Forms.....	33

## **Introduction**

There is no official standard definition of adventure tourism; however, according to the Collins English Dictionary the term adventure tourism refers to 'tourism involving activities that are physically challenging' (Collins English Dictionary, 2021). Other definitions state that adventure tourism involves an increased connection with nature, the exploration of physical limitations, and visits to remote, wild, or unexplored places. There are various activities associated with adventure tourism. Such activities can be carried out on land, in the air, or at sea; indeed, they are also known as land-based, water-based, and air-based activities. This study mainly focuses on land-based activities; however, other types of activities are briefly mentioned. The level of difficulty for each activity depends on whether it is considered a hard or a soft activity. Each person has their own physical limits, and it is through such adventure activities that these limitations can be explored.

This study discusses the impact that adventure tourism has on the Maltese Islands. While suggesting how Malta can promote and develop adventure tourism in order to become an adventure tourism destination. The impacts of adventure tourism can be both negative and positive; however, this study provides information on how negative impacts can be avoided or minimised. A mixed methodology, was deemed ideal for this study in order to, understand better the benefits and drawbacks of adventure tourism. This is because through mixed methodology both qualitative and quantitative data is obtained and therefore a more accurate result is displayed. Additionally, adventure tourism in Malta is not properly developed. This is because; very few tourists that visit the Islands, know about the activities that Malta offers. Therefore, adventure tourism faces a setback when compared with other types of tourism and for this reason the true potential of having Malta as an adventure destination is not

showcased. For this reason, the probability of Malta becoming a successful adventure destination will be evaluated alongside, what can be done to make this happen.

In Malta, most of the income generated is from tourism, most specifically leisure and historical tourism. Adventure tourism is not that common in Malta; however, it can potentially become a new niche tourism. Niche tourism generates more income than any other type of tourism which is why Malta should explore the possibility of developing various adventure activities. As previously mentioned, such activities are divided into two categories, namely hard and soft activities. Hard adventure activities stand for activities that require many skills and lots of practice. These activities are also considered dangerous; hence a high level of expertise is required. Activities that fall under this category include mountain climbing, caving, and trekking. On the other hand, soft adventure consists of activities that require minimal skills and are often practised by beginners. These activities involve less risk and often do not require any sort of training. Activities that fall under this category include camping, sailing, and hiking (Soundararajan & Singh, 2019, p.53-66) (NASDAQ OMX's News Release Distribution Channel, 30 Jan 2020).

## **Literature Review**

### **1. History**

Tourism in Malta began to grow in the late 1950s 'as the Maltese authorities sought to identify new areas of economic development in view of the diminishing role of the British military base in Malta' (Attard, 2018, p.41-55). Over the years, various initiatives related to finding new areas of economic development were invented. In 1958, the Malta Government Tourist Board was created. This was very beneficial to the tourism sector, although funds were very limited as the economy was not doing very well. Nonetheless, in the mid-1960s, the Government issued grants and funds to encourage hotels and restaurants to open up and develop. Although it was a very costly and risky plan, it proved to be very successful. Throughout the 1970s, the tourism sector continued to improve. Eventually, tourism evolved into the sector it is today. Various types of tourism are found all over the world, ranging from leisure to business to healthcare. Indeed, adventure tourism is just one of the many types of tourism found nowadays. (Attard, 2018, p.41-55)

Adventure tourism is for everyone; 'adventure travel is not just for the under 40 set nor the exclusive domain of experienced adventure enthusiasts anymore and the majority of those booking adventure travel are spending significant money on one-week or longer trips, according to newly released survey results" (Adventure Travel Trade Association, 2021, p.1). Hence adventure tourism does not simply attract a small number of tourists; on the contrary, a variation of adventure activities can attract thousands of people (Adventure Travel Trade Association, 2021, p.1).



## **2. Activities Practised in Malta**

Some adventure activities that can be practised in Malta include diving, archery, golf, horse-riding, zip-lining, hiking, cycling and more. Amongst many other things, most adventure tourists that visit Malta, fall in love with the diving areas; 'more than 35,000 divers visit Malta every year to enjoy the clear waters surrounding the main island and its smaller neighbours, Gozo and Comino. Visibility is often around 30 metres with plenty of caves, grottos and crevices providing a backdrop for multi-coloured flora and fauna' (Travel Trade Gazette, 2005. p.44). It is clear that diving is popular in Malta because it is very rare to find an underwater world resembling that of Malta. Furthermore, as stated before, its sea one of the many unique attractions that Malta has to offer (Travel Trade Gazette, 2005).

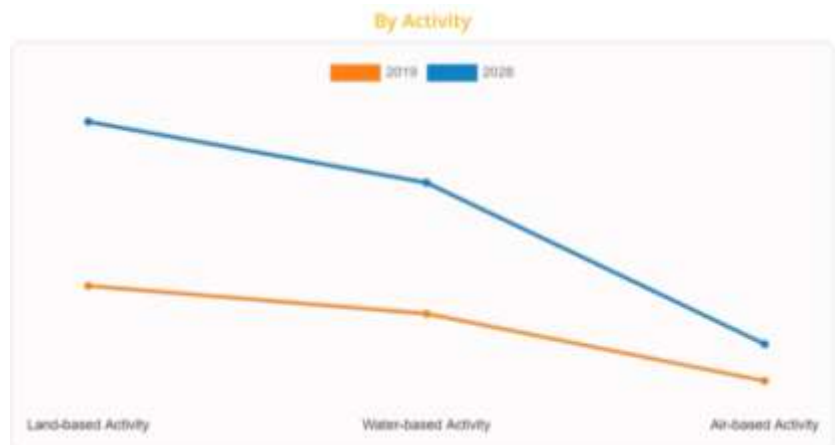
## **3. The Impact of Adventure Tourism**

Adventure tourism impacts a country in various ways, which as already mentioned, can be either positive or negative. This study focuses on its economic and environmental impact as these two areas are the most affected by adventure tourism. As stated before, adventure tourism involves being at one with nature, and consequently, it impacts the environment. Other areas that might be affected by adventure tourism may leave on a country include education and entrepreneurial development. The quality of life in a country can also be improved. When it comes to education, adventure tourism might boost historical, geographical, psychological, philosophical and cultural knowledge. On the other hand entrepreneurial development can be enhanced as adventure tourism allows individuals to be innovative by creating new means of adventure sport and how they can be practised safely. The quality of life can also be enhanced since adventure tourism is sustainable therefore it encourages individuals to be sustainable as well (Badau & Badau, 2018, p.2106).

#### **4. Economic Impact**

As it stands, Malta only generates a small percentage of income from adventure tourism with the adventure activities it currently offers. Other types of tourism, such as leisure tourism, generate millions of income per year. Increasing the number of adventure activities that can be practised on the Maltese Islands could, however, attract more tourists. The most popular adventure destinations are chosen by tourists because they have something unique to offer. Indeed, being a small island in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea, Malta certainly has potential in this regard. (SyndiGate Media, 2019). When it comes income, 'the global adventure tourism market was valued at \$586.3 billion in 2018, and is projected to reach \$1,626.7 billion in 2026, registering a CAGR of 13.3% from 2019 to 2026. The development of the travel & tourism sector fosters the growth for adventure tourism market demand' (Allied Market Research, 2021, p.1) The most popular adventure activities amongst adventure enthusiasts include zip-lining, paragliding, bungee jumping, extreme biking, and hiking. Most of these activities are already found in Malta, such as; zip-lining, hiking, and paragliding. However, incorporating the rest would attract even more tourists. As indicated in the graph below (figure 1), the most popular activities are land-based adventure activities, followed by water-based adventure activities, and lastly, air-based adventure activities, which appear to be the least popular. Additionally, the graph also shows that by the year 2026, all types of activities will have experienced an influx; however, land-based activities and water-based activities will have the highest influx.

Figure 1: Showcasing which type of adventure activities are the most popular and the influx they will have in the coming 5 years (Allied Market Research, 2021).



A benefit of tourism in general towards the Maltese economy is employment. Indeed, ‘travel and tourism make up the world’s largest commercial service sector, employing 1 in every 10 people on Earth as of 2018’ (Adventure Travel Trade Association, 2021, p.1). Thus, developing adventure tourism could create more job opportunities, which would in turn, benefit the economy. According to the Maltese statista which carried out a survey to determine the rate of unemployment in Malta, 3.72% of the Maltese people were unemployed in the year 2018. Additionally, throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the rate of unemployment in Malta continued to increase since many companies were making employees redundant. Therefore, introducing new jobs could decrease the percentage of unemployment, not only benefitting the economy but also the entire community. Adventure tourism can definitely generate more jobs, especially since it creates the need for instructors, trip leaders, and guides, amongst others. Some other job positions reacted to transport and recreational facilities, medical services, and retail might also be affected (Tourism Impacts, 2021).

While adventure tourism offers considerable positive economic input, it also comes with its disadvantages. In summer, Malta sees a massive rise in the number of tourists visiting the islands. Consequently, many businesses require additionally staff to help

out, leading to an increased number of summer job offerings. Unfortunately, such jobs are not beneficial to individuals seeking a year-round job. Furthermore, when business slows down during the winter months, such individuals end up without a job. Therefore, there is also the issue of job seasonality. Although this is a drawback within the tourism industry in general, Summer jobs are usually low-paid.. For an individual who needs to make a living out of their jobs, this would not be an ideal situation (Tourism Impacts, 2021, Economical Impacts subheading).

Another economic drawback is that depending on the adventure activity, developing the islands in order for them to cater for the said activity can be very costly. However, hiking, for instance, is not expensive as the participants would bring their own equipment and the country provides the path. Therefore, for tourists to hike in Malta, there needn't be any development as the island already offers picturesque paths for one to hike through. On the other hand, race car driving would require much more expensive development as a track would need to be created. Creating a track is very costly as health and safety precautions need to be taken into consideration, apart from many other rules and regulations. (Stainton, 2021)

## **5. Environmental Impact**

The environment can benefit from tourism as by having more tourists visit Malta, there would be an increased responsibility to keep natural resources intact. If all resources and greenery are destroyed, tourists would not want to visit the islands. Hence, tourism can act as an incentive for the population to keep the islands up to standard. This means ensuring that no litter is left on the ground and no harm is done to the environment on purpose. Instead, more trees should be planted, and natural resources should be protected. Such actions should be done not only for the sake of adventure

tourism but also for the locals. Malta is currently being engulfed by high-rise buildings and construction sites. This does not make Malta a sight for sore eyes, neither for the tourists nor for the locals. Therefore, a benefit from promoting adventure tourism would include preserving the Maltese islands and their countryside (Camilleri, 2019).

However, adventure tourism may also bring drawbacks to the environment (Camilleri, 2019). One such drawback is that it can lead to the degradation of the countryside. If people walk through the countryside, for example, when hiking, they can easily step on the soil or on the flora and fauna that are found on the islands. These natural resources need to be protected because soil might be lost, especially if one is not careful (Camilleri, 2019). For this reason, it would be a great idea to create hiking tours led by a guide to visit places where flora and fauna are commonly found. This would limit the risk of people stepping on the flora and fauna without noticing, as the guide would bring it to their attention. Another negative side effect is that in Malta, there is the issue of private fields. Since there are no labels, no one would know whether a particular field is privately owned or not and consequently, people end up stepping everywhere and destroying crops. Furthermore, such people would be trespassing, and if caught and reported, trespassers are fined. People who do not know the area, especially tourists, could easily make this mistake. Although not ideal, a suggestion would be to put up signs for people to see before entering a field.

## **6. What Can Be Done?**

It is evident that some of the negative effects can cause damage, some of which can be irreversible. However, if these effects are immediately taken into consideration, they can be prevented. Plans need to be made before investing in and developing adventure tourism. It is vital to remember that 'the protection and thoughtful promotion of these resources is crucial not just for adventure travel's continued success but for the social, cultural and environmental integrity of any destination' (Adventure Travel Trade Association, 2021 p.2).

The open months of adventure tourism are considered to be between May and October; that is during spring, summer and autumn. During these seasons, the weather is usually very good, ideal for travelling and many activities. Furthermore, water-based and air-based activities require good weather as bad weather can cause harm and lead to accidents. On the other hand, some land-based activities can be done indoors, although the majority take place outdoors. The other months are considered closed months. During these months, adventure activities are not that popular as the weather is not dependable. In Malta, however, the weather is very mild. In winter, some days can feel like spring days. Therefore, the weather barely affects the islands, making them ideal for travel enthusiasts, depending on their favourite activity.

# **Research Methodology**

## **1. Introduction**

Research methodology involved the technique used to obtain, analyse, and process information when conducting any type of research. It also highlights the credibility of the researcher. This is because, through the methodology, the reader would be able to obtain information on how the researcher obtained the data and whether the latter are reliable or not.

For this study ethical considerations were valued; participation was not enforced as the participants were asked prior if they would like to take part in the study. Prior to interviews carried out, consent forms were distributed which allowed the researcher to use the participants' comments. Lastly confidentiality and anonymity were also valued. Hence why, the questionnaires distributed were all anonymous. Furthermore, if the interviewees stated something which they did not want to be included in the study, their wishes were respected.

## **2. Review of Data Collection Methods**

When conducting a study, one may choose to obtain data in various ways. One may choose to obtain either primary or secondary data. In some cases, researchers also opt to obtain both primary and secondary data. In order to obtain primary data, one must gather information first-hand, meaning that the researcher would need to conduct interviews, questionnaires, focus groups, etc. (Cambridge English Dictionary, 2021). On the other hand, secondary data refers to others' data, which is used by other researchers to conduct their study, basing it on previous findings. (Cambridge English Dictionary, 2021). For this study, the researcher decided to conduct their own research. Hence, conducting solely primary data.

After deciding that this study was going to be based on primary data, the next step required the researcher to decide whether it was best to use qualitative or quantitative research methods or else a mix of both. Qualitative research methods are used for obtaining non-numerical data. They are employed for collecting opinions and points of views from various individuals (Cambridge English Dictionary, 2021). Meanwhile, quantitative research methods involve obtaining numerical data and conducting statistical analyses (Cambridge English Dictionary, 2021). The researcher chose to use a mix of both methodological approaches. This is because through a mix methodological approach, results are more thorough and therefore an in-depth analyses is carried out.

The quantitative data needed for this study were obtained using questionnaires. Questionnaires were chosen as the participants remained anonymous therefore, they could type honest answers. Apart from this, the questionnaires allowed the participants to fill them out at their own time. The questionnaires had a total of five questions which were distributed amongst 22 students that came to Malta to learn the English language. The questionnaires gave foreigner's perspective of adventure tourism in Malta. When it came to gathering the qualitative data, interviews were conducted with Mr Andrew Warrington, the managing director and guide leader of MC Adventure, and with the Hon Clayton Bartolo, the Minister for Tourism and Consumer Protection. By conducting these two interviews, the researcher was able to obtain multifaceted views concerning adventure tourism in Malta. This is because while Mr Warrington offered information from a business point of view and explained how there were proceeding at the time of the interview, the Hon. Bartolo offered information of the state of adventure tourism at the time from the Government's point of view and described how it is to develop on the Maltese Islands.



### **3. Limitations**

This study was conducted during the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, from the beginning, there were many limitations since the Maltese Islands were under partial lockdown, and individuals could not get out of their houses to meet with others. Luckily enough, technology made conducting this study a lot easier. Unfortunately, however, the gathering of data through focus groups has to be eliminated. This is because focus groups require a group of various individuals to meet together to share their opinions with others, which was not permitted given to the COVID-19 situation.

Additionally, since at the time of the study, tourists were not allowed to visit the islands, the researcher could not obtain a tourists' point of view. For this reason, the researcher chose to distribute the questionnaires to foreigners that came to Malta to learn English. This is because; through a question asked to the students during the questionnaire, most foreign students like to go out and roam around Malta during their free time. Nevertheless, another limitation had to be faced – many establishments were closed due to the COVID-19 regulations; therefore, few had the opportunity to try out adventure activities unless they could do so by themselves.

Another limitation faced by the researcher whilst collecting data is that since the questionnaires had to be distributed online, it took quite a while for individuals to respond. However, this limitation was overcome as reminder emails were sent out after a while and more responses came in.

## **Research Analysis**

### **1. Introduction**

This chapter analyses the data obtained from the questionnaires and the interviews. The data obtained from the questionnaires are illustrated using graphs, while the data obtained from the interviews with Mr Warrington and the Hon Bartolo are discussed and compared.

### **2. Survey Analysis**

Initially, the questionnaire was intended to obtain information from tourists visiting Malta; however, as previously mentioned, foreign English students were asked to fill in the questionnaires instead. On the bright side, the participants were in the ideal age group; adventure tourism is usually targeted towards people within the age group of 18 to 40, and the foreign English students fell under that particular category as their ages were between 25 to 40. The participants all came from the same school; indeed, 22 students were picked at random by their principal. Gender and nationality were not relevant to this situation and the questionnaire was anonymous. The aim of the questionnaire to obtain percentages concerning the participants' awareness of the activities that can be practiced in Maltese and their opinion on adventure tourism in Malta.

The first question asked the questionnaire participants was whether they were aware that Malta offers various adventure activities such as zip-lining, golf, horse-riding etc. The results show that 67% of the participants answered 'no' meaning that they were not aware, whilst 33% of the participants answered 'yes' indicating that they were aware of certain activities that Malta offers. These participants mentioned that they

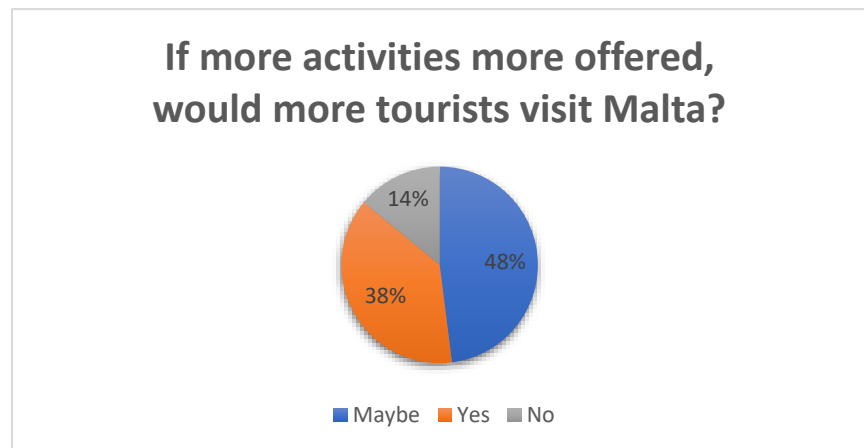
had learned about such activities from friends, teachers/colleagues, or by searching for information on Google or social media.



Figure 2: Graph showcasing the participants' awareness on adventure activities that can be practiced in Malta

The participants were asked whether they thought that offering more adventure activities would encourage more tourists to visit Malta. For this question, 48% stated 'maybe', as it depends on what activities are offered; 38% stated 'yes' meaning that if more activities were offered, more tourists would definitely visit the islands more; while the remaining percentage stated 'no'. Additionally, the participants were asked to suggest ways in which Malta can attract more adventure enthusiasts. The points that were mentioned include having cleaner roads and landscape; advertising in magazines and social media; introducing more activities, such as extreme sports and rather than mostly aquatic sports; having adventure activities all year round, instead of focusing mostly on summer; hosting competitions; and using influencers.

Figure 3: Graph showcasing the participants' opinion on whether increased adventure activities could increase tourism



The following question asked the participants whether they consider Malta as an adventure tourism destination while the majority (57%) answered 'no', the remaining 43% stated 'yes'. The latter elaborated on their answer by saying that Malta is more of a sun, sea, and partying destination. Others also added that Malta does not offer that many adventure activities, whilst some even said that Malta is boring. The latter were asked why, in their opinion, is Malta boring; and their responses indicate that for those who are not interested in history and culture, there is not much to do. It is not the ideal location for adventure tourists, and it needs considerable improvement and development to become one. Malta only focuses on the leisure sector of the tourism industry, and so, for those tourists who are not keen on a leisure holiday, Malta can be boring.

Figure 4: Graph showcasing participants' opinion on if they consider Malta as an adventure tourism destination.



### 3. **Interview Analysis**

The purpose of the interviews was to allow the participants to freely express their opinions on the topic. During the interviews, Mr Warrington and the Hon. Bartolo were asked relatively the same questions. This is because the researcher wanted to obtain information on the same topic but from two different point of views. Mr Warrington was chosen since, he is the managing director of the largest adventure company in Malta which offers various adventure activities. Additionally, the researcher decided to conduct an interview with the Hon. Bartolo because he could offer more information on the Maltese Government's future plans concerning adventure tourism.

For many years, Malta was known as a sun and sea destination; however over the years, people started to visit Malta for various other reasons, including adventure tourism. The Hon. Bartolo stated that, in his opinion, this is something that Malta can focus a lot on since it has a lot of potential for sports which is basically what adventure tourism is derived from. In previous years, Malta seemed to remain in its comfort zone, afraid to take up new challenges. Tourists visited Malta its sun and sea; therefore, there was no need to explore other types of tourism other than leisure. However, later, it was realised that although leisure tourism will always be sought after, other types of tourism can also bring various tourists to the islands. Individuals are always looking for something new and exciting, which is exactly what adventure tourism is, hence why it has gained so much popularity over the past few years.

## **A. Impact**

Adventure tourism can impact the Maltese islands in various ways. During their interviews, both Mr Warrington and the Hon. Bartolo agreed that the environmental impact is very minimal and can be seen as a positive. The Hon. Bartolo stated that adventure tourism uses the resources available on the islands; thus there would be no need to construct any buildings. Additionally, Mr Warrington stated that adventure tourism leaves a minimal ecological footprint. The Hon. Bartolo added that one cannot exclude the fact that there might be some non-harmful environmental impacts that could be considered negative, for instance, when hooks are bolted into the ground in order to participate in rock climbing. However, it is not very dangerous, and the Maltese people should be more open-minded towards this type of tourism.

When asked about the economic impact, the opinion of both interviewees agreed once again. Mr Warrington stated that the tourism trend is always changing, for instance, from packaged tours, to travelling for parties. However, adventure tourism is more of a niche tourism rather than a travel trend. This is what guarantees that adventure tourism generates a lot of revenue. Meanwhile, the Hon. Bartolo stated that the economic impact is larger than the environmental impact. Although adventure tourism is nothing like mass tourism, it can still attract a certain group of tourists that would definitely spend the money in the Maltese islands. Thus, the revenue that is generated from various activities stays in Malta, making the islands more profitable. Additionally, when adventure tourists visit a destination, they are likely to visit it again and recommend the destination to any family members or friends that enjoy the same activities as themselves. Automatically, the number of tourists visiting would increase. This is an element that should be encouraged and developed.

## **B. Advantages and Drawbacks**

The Hon. Bartolo was asked to mention some advantages of adventure tourism in Malta. He mentioned that Malta has a lot of resources that can be used for adventure tourism. These include the sea, the cliffs, the Buskett Gardens, tracks, and many more. Such resources are already found on the Maltese Islands; therefore one can simply make use of them in their own free time. Indeed, Malta has the capability of excelling with its available resources. Malta's size can be used as an advantage. This is because; in one day, one can visit lots of places. In other countries, going from one place to another would take up a lot of time. Thus, many activities can be done in Malta, perhaps, on a smaller scale, but they can still be done. Such elements make Malta an ideal adventure destination.

Nevertheless, there can be drawbacks or threats caused by adventure tourism, Mr Warrington and the Hon. Bartolo each mentioned different disadvantages associated with adventure tourism. According to Mr Warrington, the main drawback is that offering an adventure activity requires an extremely long process. As a result, many potential companies give up on their enterprise as they have to spend money on applying for various permits that might not even be approved. When the Hon. Bartolo was asked to comment on this situation, he agreed that it is a long process and half of it can be avoided. The Minister stated that the many obstacles that a potential company has to go through are usually caused by various authorities. Such authorities are not always right, mainly because they would see the activity from only one point of view, which is very limiting. However, if one looks at the bigger picture, one would realise that certain activities only require minimal intervention that would not necessarily harm the environment. In the end, such activities usually have more positive rather than negative aspects. However, the Hon. Bartolo stated that one must be very careful in

order not to go against other authorities; although the process is too long, one still needs to be very cautious. Still, there are certain sports activities that do not require any interventions, such as mountain biking, where one can simply grab their bike and go.

The Hon. Bartolo added that through minimal interventions, one could come up with many more initiatives that would benefit Malta. Therefore, everyone must become more open-minded towards the situation. In Malta, there is a lack of knowledge about adventure tourism. Indeed, very few locals know what adventure tourism is and what it entails. Only certain individuals who are particularly interested in sports and adventure would be aware of what can be practised on the Maltese Islands. Therefore, the Minister proposed that educational campaigns are created by the tourism and environmental departments to educate the public on this particular topic. This is because it is very crucial that the public is informed. Unfortunately, through social media, the public can be misinformed due to incorrect statements leading it to go against the projects that have a good intention.

Another drawback that Mr Warrington raised concerned the infrastructure and construction that are taking over the islands; leaving less space in which one can practise adventure activities. As previously mentioned, adventure tourism encourages one to reconnect with nature; this, as stated by Mr Warrington, the ongoing construction is a major drawback as it goes against the values of adventure tourism.



### **C. Development**

Mr. Warrington and the Hon. Bartolo had different ideas on how adventure tourism can be developed in the future. Nevertheless, both agreed that to keep attracting tourists, Malta constantly needs to have something new to showcase. If changes cannot be brought in every year, every two years would be fine; obviously, new projects take time and can be very costly. Mr Warrington stated that new projects could be financed or brought up by the aid of the Malta Tourism Authority (MTA). The MTA is always promoting Malta to attract various tourists; therefore, it could showcase the adventure activities that are offered. Additionally, the MTA can organise events that promote adventure tourism.

On the other hand, the Hon. Bartolo notified the researcher of the plans that are in action. Most tourists spend their holiday in Malta and then visit Gozo for a day. The Ministry is now proposing to make Gozo a destination in itself in order to encourage tourists to spend their whole holiday in Gozo. This plan started off by improving the connectivity between Malta and Gozo. This was done by introducing the fast ferry. Previously, the commute from the airport in Luqa to Gozo took about three hours; however, with the fast ferry, the whole trip now takes about an hour and a half. This also reduces the time that tourists spend on busses as they would not have to go to Cirkewwa to ride the ferry. The target is to offer tourists something different in Gozo, an unforgettable experience that cannot be found anywhere else. Indeed, the Hon. Bartolo; 'I believe that adventure tourism can be a game-changer for Gozo' A vast number of adventure activities can be done in Gozo such as trekking, mountain biking, paragliding, rock climbing, abseiling, and more, simply on a smaller scale, hence why it is believed that Gozo would be the ideal destination for adventure tourism.

## **Conclusion**

The information gathered from the questionnaire demonstrates that most of the individuals that visit the Maltese Islands are not aware of the available adventure activities. This means that unless tourists research adventure activities found in Malta, they would not know about them. On the other hand, the majority of the tourists that visit Malta, are aware of the beaches, parties, and history of the islands, which is unsurprising, seeing that these characteristics are put at the forefront when promoting Malta. This means that one must promote this aspect of the Maltese Islands if the plan is to make Malta and Gozo the ideal locations for adventure tourism.

As previously discussed, adventure tourism can impact the islands in multiple ways; however, the two major impacts are environmental and economic. Based on this study's findings, it can be concluded that the environmental impact is minimal and positive. This is because it does not harm the environment. On the other hand, the economic impact is drastically higher because, as previously mentioned, adventure tourists end up spending their money in Malta. Furthermore, they are always looking for something new to try. Since Malta is a small island, size offers a great advantage in this case, as tourists can go paragliding early in the morning, zip-lining in the afternoon, and then enjoy some dinner in the evening. Thus, tourists would constantly have something to do, and due to the shorter distances, they would not spend most of their time travelling.

This study's findings reveal many advantages and drawbacks when it comes to developing adventure tourism in Malta. However, if the said drawbacks are acted upon, the advantages of adventure tourism would be more evident. Such

disadvantages can be avoided if there is some planning and thought behind a project; adventure tourism cannot be just put out there.

In conclusion, the Maltese people should be more open-minded when it comes to adventure tourism and see the bigger picture. Indeed, adventure tourism can potentially bring a lot of opportunities to Malta that would not only benefit the tourists but also the Maltese population. Therefore, it is clear that if developed further, adventure tourism can have a positive impact on the Maltese Islands.

## **Reference List**

1. Acsedu (2021) Tourism Impacts Retrieved April 5, 2021, from <https://www.acsedu.co.uk/Info/Hospitality-and-Tourism/Ecotourism/Tourism-Impacts.aspx#:~:text=Economic%20Impacts&text=There%20are%20many%20positive%20impacts,as%20schools%20and%20medical%20services>.
2. Adventure Travel Rapidly Expanding, According to New Survey: Joint Survey Conducted by Travel Leaders Group and the Adventure Travel Trade Association Reveals Variety of New Data on Adventure Travel Market (2018) PR Newswire Association LLC Retrieved February 2, 2021, from <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2057561738?accountid=190493>
3. Allied Market Research. (2021) Adventure Tourism Market Size and Demand | Industry Analysis 2026. Retrieved April 5, 2021, from <https://www.alliedmarketresearch.com/adventure-tourism-market>
4. Attard, S. (2018) The Evolution of Malta's Tourism Product Over Recent Years Malta: Central Bank of Malta Retrieved February 24, 2021, from <https://www.centralbankmalta.org/file.aspx?f=72256>
5. Badau, D. & Badau, A. (2018) The Motric, Educational, Recreational and Satisfaction Impact of Adventure Education Activities in the Urban Tourism Environment Sustainability, Vol. 10 (6), p.2106. Retrieved March 31, 2021, from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325886566\\_The\\_motric\\_Educational\\_Recreational\\_and\\_Satisfaction\\_Impact\\_of\\_Adventure\\_Education\\_Activities\\_in\\_the\\_Urban\\_Tourism\\_Environment](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325886566_The_motric_Educational_Recreational_and_Satisfaction_Impact_of_Adventure_Education_Activities_in_the_Urban_Tourism_Environment)
6. Cammilleri, A (2019), Adventure Tourism in Gozo Retrieved November 20, 2021, from

[https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/bitstream/123456789/44330/1/Adventure\\_tourism\\_in\\_Gozo\\_2019.pdf](https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/bitstream/123456789/44330/1/Adventure_tourism_in_Gozo_2019.pdf)

7. Collins English Dictionary (2021) Adventure tourism definition and meaning / Collins English Dictionary. Retrieved February 21, 2021, from <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/adventure-tourism>
8. Contributor V, (Updated December 6 2017) *25 Adventure Activities Around the World* (HuffPost Contributor Platform) Retrieved November 26, 2020, from <https://www.huffpost.com/entry/top-25-adventure-activities>
9. Cambridge English Dictionary (2021) Retrieved on February 21, 2021, from <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/>
10. Nasdaq Omx News Release Distribution Channel (2020) Global Ecotourism Market and Adventure Tourism Market 2020 by Tourism Types, Growing Demand, Revenue, Top Regions, Cost Analysis, and Business Opportunities: Recently published report on Global Tourism (Ecotourism, Adventure Tourism) Market by Orbis Research includes market overview, detailed literature on products, services and overall industry scenario. The key categories covered in the market segmentation are region, applications and key players. Retrieved November 25, 2021, from <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2348180379?accountid=190493>
11. Malta Activities: Can't fault Malta for adventure (2005) Travel Trade Gazette, *U.K. and Ireland* p.44. Retrieved February 24, 2021
12. SyndiGate Media (2019) Malta is a treasure island, says PM. Retrieved March 31, 2021, from <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2250960254?accountid=190493>
13. Stainton, H. (2021) Economic impacts of tourism - Tourism Teacher. Retrieved April 5, 2021, from <https://tourismteacher.com/economic-impacts-of-tourism/>

14. Statista. (2021) *Malta - unemployment rate 1999-2020* | Statista. Retrieved April 5, 2021, from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/731234/unemployment-rate-in-malta/>
15. Soundararajan, S. & Singh, U. (2019) Adventure Tourism: What Drives the Indian Consumer Towards It? †", *IUP Journal of Business Strategy*, Vol. 16 (2), p.53-66. Retrieved March 31, 2021

## **Appendix**

### **1. Questions**

#### **Questions asked in Questionnaires filled in by English Learning Students**

1. Are you aware that Malta offers different types of Adventure Activities such as Archery, Horse Riding, Zip-Lining, and Golf?
2. How did you hear about the previously mentioned activities?
3. Do you think that if Malta were to offer more activities more tourists would visit the island?
4. In what way do you think Malta can attract more adventure enthusiasts?
5. Would you consider Malta as an Adventure Tourism Destination?

#### **Questions to Mr. Andrew Warrington**

1. Do you think that majority of the Maltese population knows that such activities are offered in Malta?
2. Do you think that tourists know about the type of adventure activities that Malta and your company personally offer?
3. Who visits your business most, locals or tourists? And why do you think this happens?
4. In your opinion, in what way does Adventure Tourism impact the Maltese Islands?
5. Do you think that promoting adventure tourism will be a benefit towards the Maltese economy?
6. How do you think that Adventure tourism effects the environment?
7. Do you think that Malta benefits from the adventure activities that are currently being offered?
8. Do you think that Malta should invest more in Adventure Tourism? Why? How can this be done?
9. What are some challenges that Adventure Tourism faces?

## **Questions to Hon. Clayton Bartolo – Minister of Tourism and Consumer Protection**

### **Introduction**

1. Malta is famously known as a sun and sea destination. However, Malta has much more to offer. Would you say that adventure tourism is one of the many things that Malta can offer?
2. Adventure tourism is increasing in popularity amongst tourists as it offers a wide range of activities. In Malta there is not a wide variety of activities found when compared to other destinations. When owners of adventure companies in Malta were interviewed, many of them mentioned that it is very hard to obtain a permit to operate such activities therefore, many individuals give up since it is a long and difficult process. Do you think that the Maltese Government should ease this process to encourage more individuals to open adventure companies which offer new activities?
1. Do you think that adventure tourism impacts the environment and the economy? In what way – is it a negative or a positive impact? What action can be taken on these impacts?
2. Apart from the economy and environment what does adventure tourism also impact?
3. What is a major drawback when it comes to adventure tourism in Malta?
4. Do you think that developing the adventure sector will benefit Malta? In what way?



## **Development**

1. Is there some sort of developments or plans in action within the adventure tourism sector?
  - a. If yes, what sort of plans? It is imaginable that developments take a lot of time however, is there some sort of a target for these plans?
  - b. If no, why not?
2. Does Malta have the potential of becoming an Adventure Tourism destination?

## **2. Consent Forms**

**Consent Form Filled in by Mr. Andrew Warrington**

### **Long Essay Consent Form**



Title of Research: The Impact and Development of Adventure Tourism in Malta

Researcher: Kayleigh Portelli

I.D 220402 (L)

Dear Sir / Madam,

I, Kayleigh Portelli, a student at the Institute of Tourism Studies am currently in the final year of my Higher National Diploma. I am carrying out research on The Impact and Development of Adventure Tourism in Malta.

I would like to explore your views on this matter by asking you some questions. The purpose of this form is to provide you with information so you can decide whether to participate in this study. Any questions you may have will be answered by the researcher.

There are no known risks related with this research project other than possible discomfort with the following:

- You will be asked to be honest when answering questions.

The information in the study records will be kept strictly confidential. All data will be stored securely and will be made available only to those individuals conducting the study. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link you to the study. Your identity will not be revealed in any publications that result from this study

You can terminate your participation at any time without prejudice. You also do not have to answer individual questions you don't want to answer. Your name will not be attached to the questionnaire and I will ensure that your participation remains confidential.

### Participant's declaration

I have read this consent form and am giving the opportunity to the researcher to ask questions. I hereby grant permission to use the information I provide as data in the above-mentioned research project, knowing that it will be kept confidential and without use of my name.

<u>Andrew Worrington</u> Participant's Name	<u>[Signature]</u> Participant's Signature	<u>15<sup>th</sup> April 2021</u> Date
<u>Kayleigh Portelli</u> Researcher's Name	<u>[Signature]</u> Researcher's Signature	<u>15<sup>th</sup> April 2021</u> Date

**Consent Form Filled in by Hon. Clayton Bartolo**

## **Long Essay Consent Form**



Title of Research: The Impact and Development of Adventure Tourism in Malta

Researcher: Kayleigh Portelli

I.D 220402 (L)

Dear Sir / Madam,

I, Kayleigh Portelli, a student at the Institute of Tourism Studies am currently in the final year of my Higher National Diploma. I am carrying out research on The Impact and Development of Adventure Tourism in Malta.

I would like to explore your views on this matter by asking you some questions. The purpose of this form is to provide you with information so you can decide whether to participate in this study. Any questions you may have will be answered by the researcher.

There are no known risks related with this research project other than possible discomfort with the following:

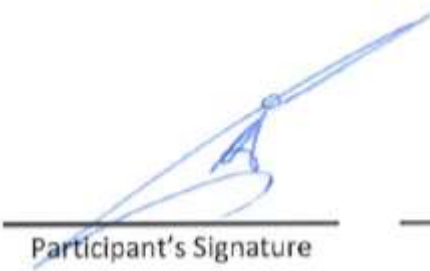

- You will be asked to be honest when answering questions.

The information in the study records will be kept strictly confidential. All data will be stored securely and will be made available only to those individuals conducting the study. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link you to the study. Your identity will not be revealed in any publications that result from this study.

You can terminate your participation at any time without prejudice. You also do not have to answer individual questions you don't want to answer. Your name will not be attached to the questionnaire and I will ensure that your participation remains confidential.

### Participant's declaration

I have read this consent form and am giving the opportunity to the researcher to ask questions. I hereby grant permission to use the information I provide as data in the above-mentioned research project, knowing that it will be kept confidential and without use of my name.

<u>CLAYTON BARTOLO</u> Participant's Name	 Participant's Signature	<u>26/07/2021</u> Date
<u>Kayleigh Portelli</u> Researcher's Name	 Researcher's Signature	<u>21<sup>st</sup> July 2021</u> Date