INTRODUCTION
With a civilization that dates back thousands of years, Malta boasts some of the oldest megalithic sites in the world. A British colony since 1814, Malta gained its independence in 1964 and declared itself a republic ten years later. Since the mid-1980s, the island has transformed itself into a freight transshipment point, a financial center, and a tourist destination.

GOVERNMENT
Chief of State
   President George VELLA
Head of Government
   Prime Minister Robert ABELA
Government Type
   parliamentary republic
Capital
   Valletta
Legislature
   unicameral House of Representatives or Il-Kamra Tad-Deputati, a component of the Parliament of Malta (normally 65 seats but can include at-large members)

GEOGRAPHY
Area
   Total: 316 sq km
   Land: 316 sq km
   Water: 0 sq km
Climate
   Mediterranean; mild, rainy winters; hot, dry summers
Natural Resources
   limestone, salt, arable land

ECONOMY
Economic Overview
   high-income, EU-member European economy; diversified portfolio; euro user; dependent on food and energy imports; strong tourism, trade, and manufacturing sectors; high North African immigration; large welfare system; educated workforce
   GDP (Purchasing Power Parity) $20.6 billion (2020 est.)
   GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity) $39,200 (2020 est.)
Industries - tourism, electronics, ship building/repair, construction, food/beverages, pharmaceuticals, footwear, clothing, tobacco, aviation services, financial services, information technology services
Agricultural products - milk, tomatoes, potatoes, onions, cauliflowers, broccoli, eggplants, pork, cabbages, poultry
Exports
   $19.04 billion (2020 est.)
   integrated circuits, refined petroleum, packaged medicines, children's toys/stuffed animals, postage stamps (2019)
   partners: Germany 12%, France 9%, Italy 9% (2019)
Imports
   $18.01 billion (2020 est.)
   refined petroleum, recreational boats, ships, aircraft, coal tar oil (2019)
   partners: Russia 22%, Italy 12%, UK 11%, Germany 6%, Turkey 5%, France 5%, China 5%, South Korea 5% (2019)

PEOPLE & SOCIETY
Population
   460,890 (July 2021 est.)
Population Growth
   0.75% (2021 est.)
Ethnicity
   Maltese (descendants of ancient Carthaginians and Phoenicians with strong elements of Italian and other Mediterranean stock)
Language
   Maltese (official) 90.1%, English (official) 6%, multilingual 3%, other 0.9% (2005 est.)
Religion
   Roman Catholic (official) more than 90% (2006 est.)
as of October 2021