



The Astronomical Society of Malta

presents the

The Malta Experience

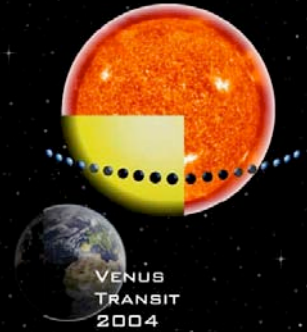
VT-2004 Project

*In association with the
European Science Week*



and



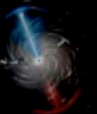


Presentation Layout

The Malta Experience



- **Preparations for the day of the transit**
- **Activities held during the day of the transit**
- **Event feedback**



Preparations for the day of the transit

The Astronomical Society of Malta, the National Node for the Maltese Islands, held a number of preparatory activities directed towards different target audiences.

The target audience identified for this project included:

- Physics and Science teachers in all secondary and tertiary educational institutions
- School children
- Tourists visiting the Islands during the period under review
- General public
- The Astronomical Society members



- **On 21st May 2004, science teachers from all secondary and post-secondary schools participated in a half-day seminar.**
- **Participants were informed about the objectives of the VT-2004 project and about the ESOs activities and website.**
- **They were provided with the Teachers' Pack and papers downloaded from ESO website – some of which translated in Maltese for distribution among students**
- **Informed teachers that they will be supplied with a purpose-made CD containing an 11-minute video and other information concerning ESO and ASM available material.**



Physics & Science Teachers

VENUS TRANSIT 2004: HOW TO OBSERVE

© HERAFILM and Czech Television 2004
www.popularis.cz
www.czech-tv.cz

Animations and other footage by courtesy of European Southern Observatory (ESO), Garching and NASA

VENUS TRANSIT 2004

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MAW
MALTA ASTRONOMY WEEK 2004

MALTA NATIONAL NODE

THE ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF MALTA
PO BOX 174 VALLETTA

VENUS TRANSIT 2004
June 8

A unique Science Discovery Programme

This Programme is part of the European Science Week, an Initiative by the European Commission

www.vt-2004.org

MALTA ASTRONOMY WEEK 2004

VENUS TRANSIT 2004

The Astronomical Society of Malta



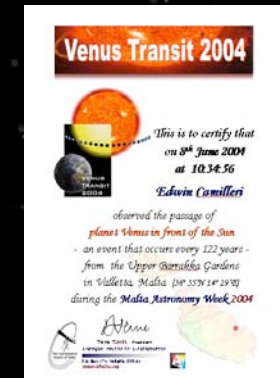
School Children

- **School children were reached:**
 - ▶ **Directly through their own tutors (science teachers) and through the CD promotion**
 - ▶ **Indirectly through interviews with ASM Committee members on children's radio and television programmes**
 - ▶ **Acquired Solar specs were distributed freely in all schools through school principals, for eventual use during the day of the transit**



Visiting Tourists

- **Tourists visiting the Island during the week of the transit were also reached in order to:**
 - ▲ **Commemorate their visit and observation of the event during their stay in Malta through a souvenir acquired from observing site**
 - ▲ **Inform them how to properly observe the transit through distributed flyers in all hotels (3-star plus) and tourist offices**
 - ▲ **The Malta Tourism Authority partly sponsored the flyers and provided access to all their offices**



MALTA TOURISM AUTHORITY

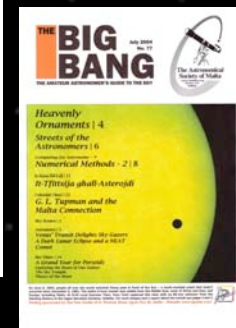


- **The public in general could be reached through:**

- ▶ **Newspaper articles compiled by ASM members**
- ▶ **News items concerning the transit activity and simulations provided by ESO. All three main TV stations were informed**
- ▶ **Flyers of the Malta Astronomy Week and VT-2004 posters distributed to all local councils and fixed in prominent places**
- ▶ **The ASM web-portal on the VT-2004 project and reference in other local websites**



- **Persons interested in Astronomy were contacted as follows:**
 - ◆ **Members and non-members were continuously updated with information through our free mailing list ... info@maltastro.org ... and the Malta Astronomy Week activities**
 - ◆ **Members were informed in more detail both about the VT-2004 project and the transit itself through articles listed in ASM publications**
- ◆ **Monthly Newsletters**
- ◆ **Quarterly publication "The Big Bang"**



The main constraints for the Maltese VT-2004 project were as follows:

- ◆ **Internal factors** – the 12 members of the organising committee were not enough to resource all desired outposts (such as schools or other parts of the Islands)
- ◆ **External factors** – the elections for the European Members of Parliament held on 16th June 2004 disrupted the availability of media personnel.

The political polarisation in Malta resulted in making these MEP elections as rigorous and demanding as a general election.

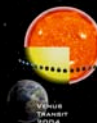
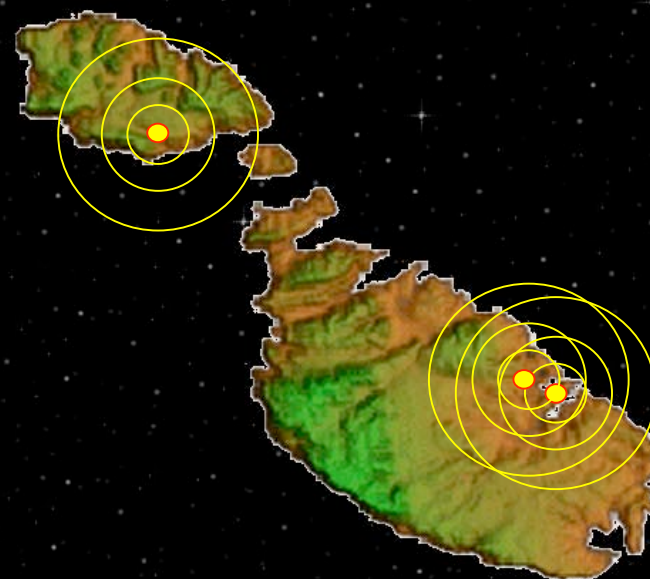


the day of the transit activities

The day of the transit was co-ordinated by the ASM-VT2004 organising committee.

- A central location that could be reached by everyone was selected as the main site – Upper Barrakka Gardens in Valletta
- Two other sites were selected to cater for tourists and other interested persons – another site in Malta and one in Gozo

These are the sites resourced by the ASM and excludes observing sites from schools.



Observation site Activities

The observing site had the following services:

- ◆ **Observation equipment – various telescopes and binoculars**
- ◆ **Live streaming of the transit to enable:**
 - ◆ **On-site observers to watch it on a 32-inch monitor**
 - ◆ **School children at school, sick persons and those working could observe it on internet**
- ◆ **On-site exhibition providing information on the event and on astronomy in general**



All methods of observation were utilised



◀ Direct observation using solar-specs



Observation ▶ through instruments



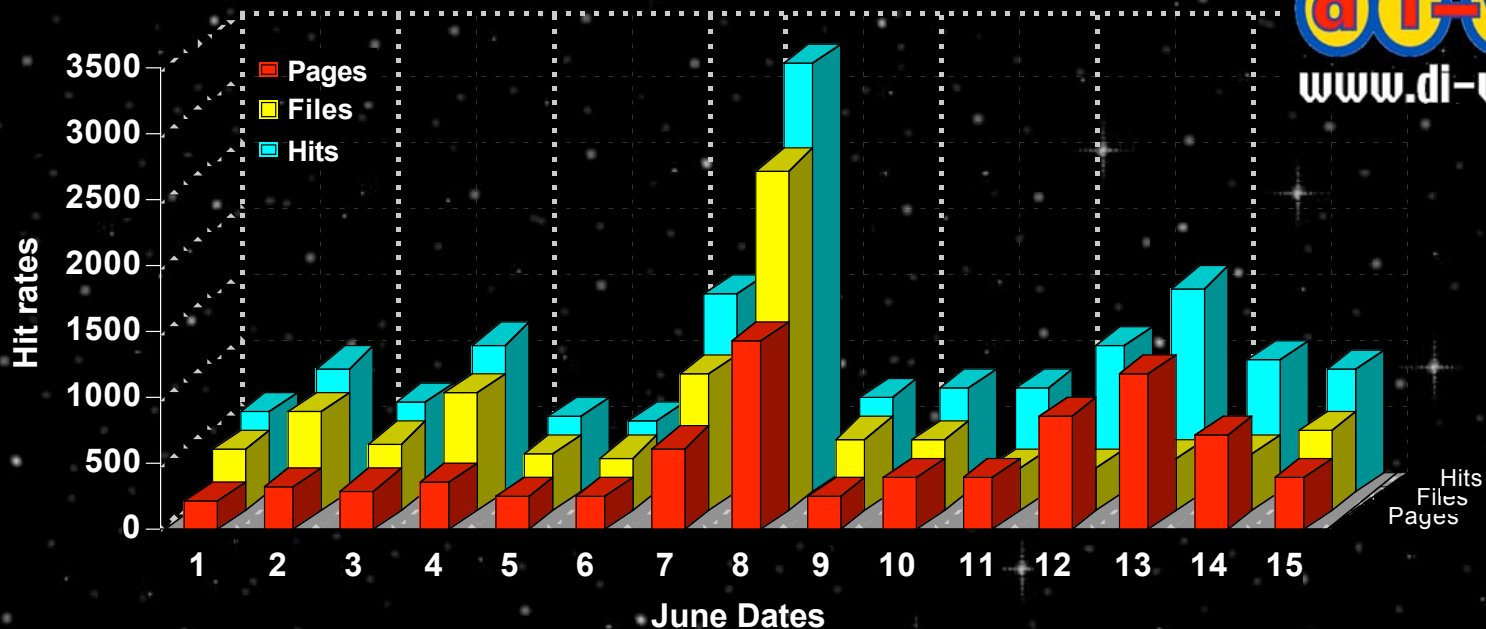
▲ Indirect on screen (including video-streaming)



◀ Through image projection

Website statistics

- The ASM website as well as the Maltese VT-2004 portal registered a rapid increase in its hit rates during the week before 8th June 2004.
- On 8th June, during the duration of the transit, 2,400 hits were registered.
- The server hosting our live streaming (**di-ve.com**) registered 8,000 hits for live streaming.



Follow-Up of the Event

- ▶ **Newspaper media coverage was good with regard to the transit phenomenon but poor in terms of local activity coverage.**

Only one newspaper reported the whole event from our observing site – *Times of Malta*

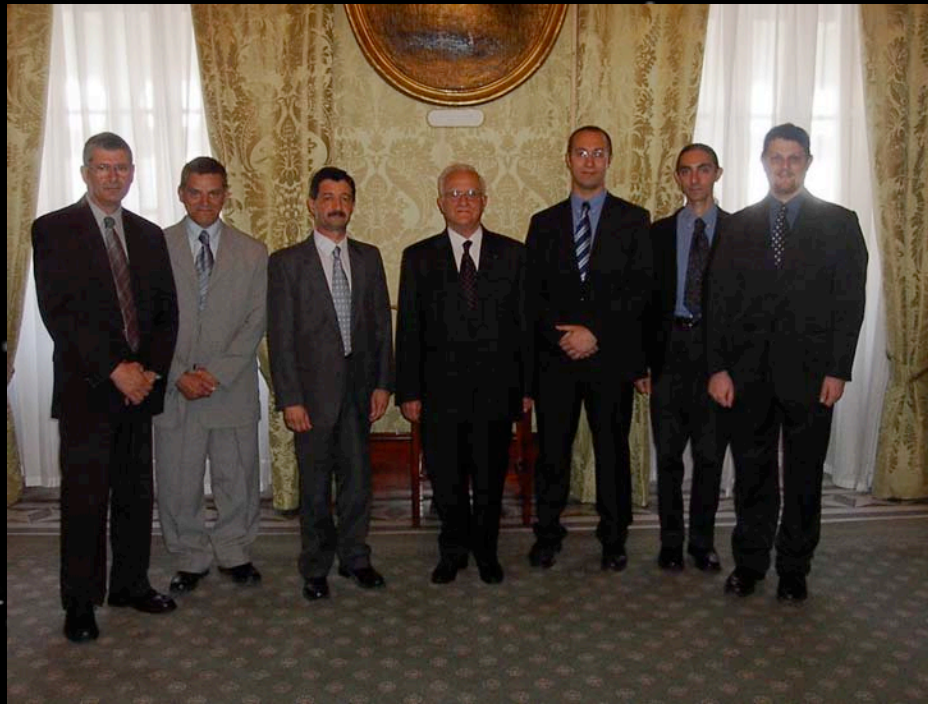
- ▶ **TV coverage was excellent. Reports used script written by ASM and animations provided by ESO.**
- ▶ **Feedback from the Ministry of Education and from schools was positive with regard to the CD promotion and briefing for teachers.**



Follow-up of Event

- ◆ **To end the whole event in style, the organising committee asked for a meeting with the President of Malta, who cordially accepted our invitation.**

A copy of the report, photos of the event and a copy of the CD promotion were given to the President of Malta as a token of gratitude.



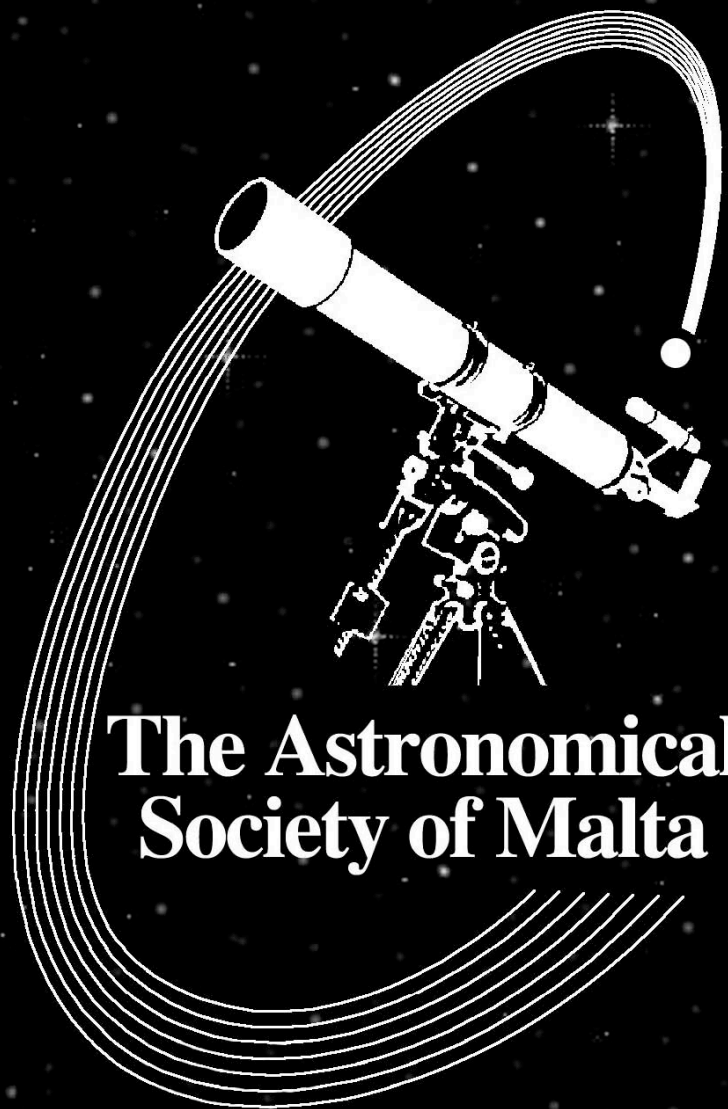
Overall outcome

- ◆ **The overall outcome of the event in Malta was successful. Better media coverage of the Maltese efforts would have made it a complete success.**

This is the team that made it all happen

..... this time in a more casual approach, right after the Venus transit event – tired, sunburned but satisfied with the outcome!



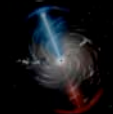


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EXIT