



THE MALTA CHAMBER



THE GOZO BUSINESS CHAMBER

# PRESS RELEASE

9<sup>th</sup> September 2021

## **Key Recommendations for the Viability of Gozo based on its Uniqueness**

*Joint Press Statement by The Malta Chamber and The Gozo Business Chamber*

The Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry and the Gozo Business Chamber held a joint Council meeting in Gozo in which they discussed issues of common concern and proposals for the sustainable economic development of Gozo.

Both Chambers have identified key issues effecting Gozo's viability in terms of business growth, employment, and other issues which need to be addressed without delay. The Malta Chamber and The Gozo Chamber are proposing the following 10 key recommendations to address these challenges:

1. Upgrading of the infrastructure at the ports of Mgarr Gozo, Ċirkewwa and Valletta to better support the existing transport links between Malta and Gozo in terms of mooring facilities, accessibility, neighbouring parking facilities, and connecting alternative mobility services.
2. Better coordination in the scheduling of multimodal transport links between Malta and Gozo to minimise waiting time, particularly by ensuring that the scheduled bus service coincides with the ferry arrival time.
3. Use of technology to utilise the capacity of existing transport links better, such as booking facilities, and the incentivisation of commercial transportation during off-peak hours.
4. A robust assessment of the carrying capacity of the entire transport network of both Malta and Gozo to ensure that any infrastructural or service developments linking the two islands are not rendered ineffective by bottlenecks within the network.
5. A new fully-fledged hospital in Gozo that would meet the requirements of a University hospital for the Queen Mary University of London Campus in Gozo and provide a more complete health service in Gozo.

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6. Innovative policies to attract investment in Gozo in niches in which Gozo can develop as a national competence centre in its own right rather than as a second option to Malta.
7. Policies that have bipartisan support to better regulate development protecting the unique natural, historical and cultural environment of Gozo.
8. A detailed, long-term and comprehensive exercise in urban planning to ensure the long-term viability of a good quality of life in both Malta and Gozo in the future.
9. The revision and adoption of policies to conserve the natural environment and water resources in both Malta and Gozo, ensuring the survival of agriculture as well as reducing its vulnerability due to the dependency on reverse osmosis plants and boreholes for water generation and supply.
10. Control on the proliferation of single-room developments in Outside Development Zones that eventually expand into more extensive developments.

Both Chambers reiterate their firm belief that Gozo's uniqueness can contribute directly to its economic development and growth, leading to enhanced national competitiveness. This potential win-win for Malta and Gozo intrinsically relies on our thoughtful and judicious use of Gozitan landscape, respecting the island's culture and authenticity.

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