



RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2014-2020 (LEADER)

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR GOZO AND COMINO

as approved by CR162 on the 26th of April 2019
as approved by CR245 on the 13th of August 2019
as approved by CR254 on the 1st of November 2019
as approved by CR664 on the 16th of October 2020
as approved by CR665 on the 2nd of November 2020
as approved by CR859 on the 26th of January 2021
as approved by CR1552 on the 10th of November 2022





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The Expression of Interest (EOI) for Additional Funding under Measure 19.2 – “Support for implantation of operations under the community-led local development strategy” and Measure 19.4 – “Support for running cost and animation” Version No: 1.0 issued on the 21st of December 2021, by the Managing Authority (EAFRD) – Funds and Programmes Division, invited the Local Actions Groups to request and receive funding support through the allocation under Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 and 2020/2220 of 23 December 2020.

This additional funding was introduced in the RDP 14-20 by commission decision notification dated 9th December 2021.

Under this scheme, already contracted Local Action Groups (i.e. Local Action Groups that are already implementing a Local Development) had the possibility to request additional funding under Measure 19.2 and Measure 19.4 as part of the implementation of the current LAG strategies.

The Gozo Action Group Foundation (GAGF) engaged ADI Associates Environmental Consultants Ltd., as the previously contracted consultants to re-validate the existing strategy with the scope of sustaining the current Local Development Strategy (LDS) as per EOI.

The Local Development Strategy for Gozo and Comino Version 2, reflects the additional funding granted to the GAGF as per Letter of Award dated the 4th of February 2022, and approved by the GAGF Decision Committee on the 17th of February, 2022.

Following the extension granted by the EU commission following the transitional allocation to Malta, on the 28th of April 2023, the Managing Authority has allocated a further extension and additional budget for M19.2 and M19.4 to Gozo Action Group Foundation as outlined below.

The Local Development Strategy for Gozo and Comino Version 3, reflects the additional budget under M19.2 and M19.4 as accepted by the Gozo Action Group Foundation on the 5th of May 2023.

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1. DEFINITION OF THE TERRITORY AND OF THE POPULATION

1.1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1. This Local Development Strategy (LDS) has been prepared by the Gozo Action Group Foundation (GAGF). It sets out the needs and priorities for the region of Gozo for the 2014-2020 funding period and outlines the measures proposed for funding under the LEADER programme.
- 1.1.2. This Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) Strategy follows a bottom-up approach and is built on the experiences learnt from the previous programming, an extensive consultation process involving various stakeholders, as well as a detailed analysis of the territory.

1.2. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AREA

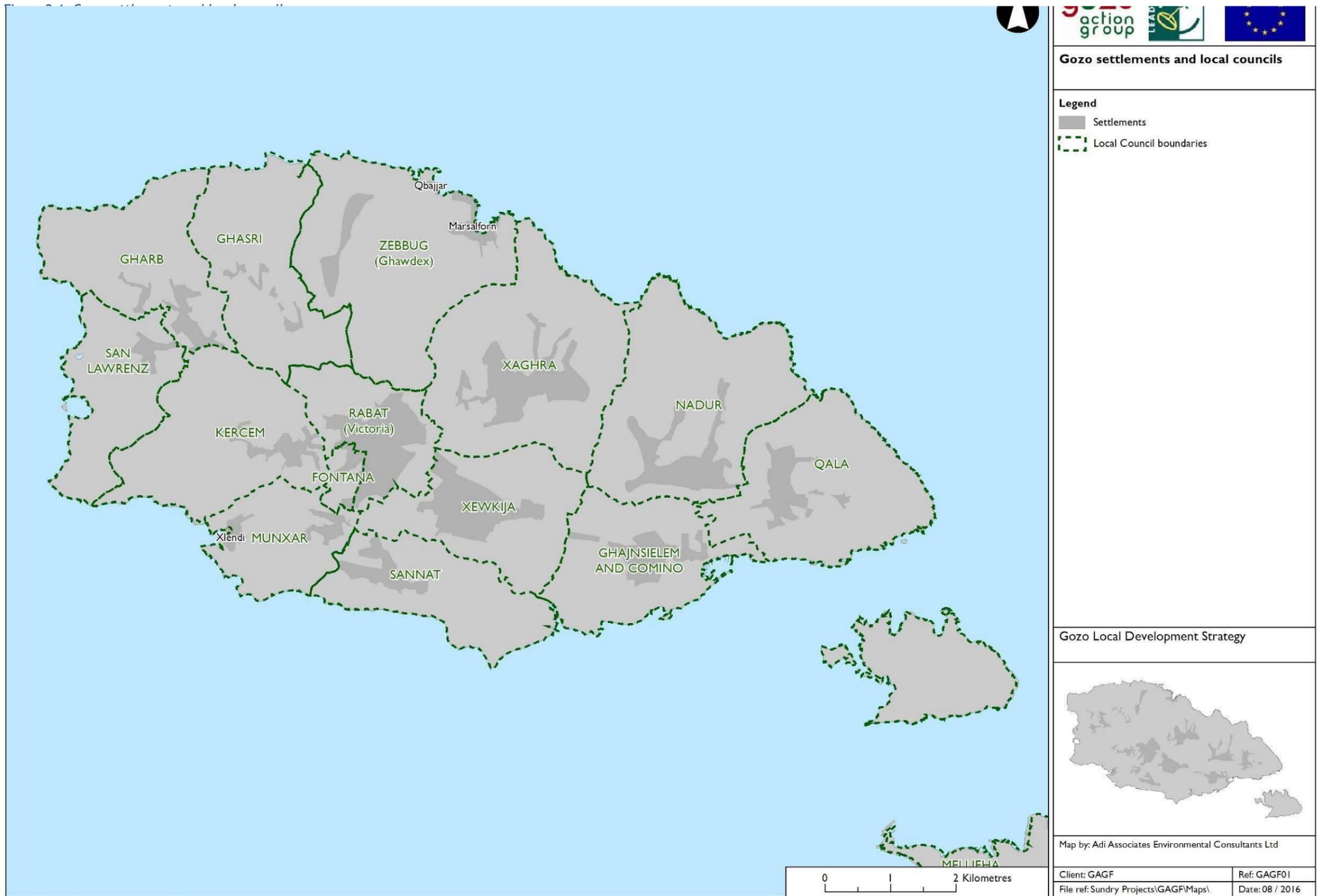
- 1.2.1. Gozo is geographically the second largest island of the Maltese archipelago. Another smaller island, Comino, is located in the channel separating Malta and Gozo. Comino is surrounded by smaller islets and rocks. Gozo and Comino are considered as one Region for LEADER purposes, and reference to Gozo is henceforth to be interpreted in the context of the Region unless otherwise stated.
- 1.2.2. Gozo has 14 local councils (municipalities), as shown in the figure below. The Island preserves a proper and distinct identity, and is sought after for its particular lifestyle. Agriculture and tourism are the main economic sectors in Gozo. One of the main challenges is the emigration of younger generations due to better career prospects on mainland Malta.
- 1.2.3. Gozo is particularly known for its landscapes and rural character. This rural character has made Gozo attractive to both domestic and international visitors. Gozo is also rich in cultural heritage and it is suggested that it was the first inhabited island of the Maltese archipelago. Archaeological finds at Il-Mixta at the Għajn Abdul Plateau suggest that the earliest people settled in this area during the Neolithic age. Other major archaeological sites in Gozo include the Ġgantija Temple Complex and the Xagħra Circle. Iċ-Ċittadella is located in Gozo's capital city, Victoria (also known as Ir-Rabat). It is a fortified hilltop which dates back to classical antiquity and has been modified in the medieval and early modern times.
- 1.2.4. The Malta Rural Development Programme 2014 - 2020 defined rural areas following these criteria:
 - having a population density lower than 5,000 persons per square kilometre;
 - having not less than 10 per cent of the area of the locality agricultural land;
 - and

- having not less than 35 per cent of the locality outside development zone¹.

1.2.5. All the localities of Gozo meet the criteria mentioned above and thus can be classified as rural areas as shown in the table below. The densest locality is Victoria with 2,157 persons per square kilometre. Ghajnsielem is the locality with the least agricultural area (36.5 per cent) whilst L-Għasri is the locality with the highest percentage of agricultural land cover (96.3%).

¹ Malta – Rural Development Programme (National), p.154

Figure 1.1: Gozo settlements and local councils



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Table 1.1: Criteria showing rural character of Gozo’s localities

Locality	Density (persons per square kilometer) ²	% of agricultural land ³	% of ODZ area ⁴
Fontana	1,889	52.6	68.6
Għajnsielem	370	36.5	89.9
Għarb	260	55.9	90.4
Għasri	84	57.0	96.3
Munxar	383	58.5	87.7
Nadur	552	45.7	86.2
Qala	312	38.2	90.7
San Lawrenz	176	54.7	95.0
Ta' Kerċem	318	70.2	93.1
Ta' Sannat	481	39.7	87.8
Victoria	2,148	40.8	54.4
Xagħra	521	46.3	84.8
Xewkija	692	51.7	74.7
Żebbuġ	246	50.7	92.8

1.3. LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS

1.3.1. Gozo comprises 14 local administrative units. All of these localities can be defined as rural areas according to Malta’s Rural Development Programme⁵.

1.3.1. Victoria (Rabat)

Victoria is Gozo’s capital city. It is located in Gozo’s centre and is the main transportation node of the island. It has a population of 6,229 inhabitants. It has a rich urban fabric that includes a number of churches including St George’s Basilica, which is located close to It-Tokk, Victoria’s main centre. Victoria is the main social and commercial hub of Gozo with many shops and shopping arcades and various other facilities such as administrative offices, theatres and a sports complex.

Victoria also has the Ċittadella (Citadel), which is located on a hill. This fortified hilltop includes the Cathedral, the Law Courts and a number of museums. The Ċittadella is also famous for its panoramic views. In addition to being a protected cultural heritage site, it is also a Natura2000 site (see **Figure 1.2**) because of the presence of a number of species present (e.g. the Maltese toadflax, the lesser horseshoe bat and the Felten’s myotis).

² Density was calculated using the 2013 population figures from the Gozo in Figures 2015 over the local administrative areas.

³ The percentage agricultural area was calculated using the land with agricultural value from the Gozo and Comino Local Plan over the local administrative areas.

⁴ The percentage ODZ was calculated by subtracting the area within the limits of development from the local administrative areas. The difference was then divided by the local administrative areas.

⁵ Malta — Rural Development Programme (National), p.154

The north-western and south-eastern areas of Victoria are dominated by agriculture. Agriculture covers 40.8 per cent of the locality and 54.4 per cent is ODZ.

1.3.2. Il-Fontana

Il-Fontana is the locality with the smallest area and has a population of 882 persons. It is located to the south-west of Victoria and has developed along the road linking Victoria to Xlendi. Fontana takes its name from the freshwater spring present along the Victoria to Xlendi road. It is also known for Wied il-Lunzjata that is partly within Il-Fontana locality and is considered the most fertile area for agriculture. Land with agricultural value comprises 52.6 per cent of the locality whilst the ODZ land comprises 68.6 per cent. A large part of the locality falls within the Xlendi Area Natura2000 site.

1.3.3. Għajnsielem

Għajnsielem is a locality in the south-eastern part of Gozo. It has an agricultural cover of 36.5 per cent whilst 89.9 per cent is ODZ. The locality includes the Mġarr Harbour, which is the main link between Malta and Gozo. Għajnsielem also includes the island of Comino. This island has a number of landmarks like the St Mary's Tower, St Mary's Battery, the cemetery and a small chapel. The small island also has a hotel and two beaches. The main landmark is the Blue Lagoon, which is a small channel between Comino and the islet of Cominotto. It is considered one of the most scenic views in the Maltese archipelago due to its pristine setting. The area faces a number of challenges in the summer months due to a high influx of local and foreign visitors.

The main landmarks in Għajnsielem are Fort Chambray, Our Lady of Lourdes church, the parish church dedicated to Our Lady of Loreto, St Cecilia Tower and St Cecilia Chapel, which is the only surviving Mediaeval chapel in Gozo. The locality includes Xatt l-Aħmar that is located beneath Fort Chambray and part of Mġarr ix-Xini. These areas are sought after by swimmers, divers and hikers alike.

Għajnsielem is also well-known for its Christmas annual event: Bethlehem f'Għajnsielem. The exhibition is organised at Ta' Passi between the Għajnsielem settlement and the port of Mġarr. This initiative showcases local traditions and crafts and at the same time addresses the problem of seasonality by attracting visitors, both local and foreign, to Gozo in winter.

1.3.4. L-Għarb

L-Għarb is the north-westernmost locality of Gozo. It has a population of 1,205 persons and an agricultural area that covers 55.9 per cent of the locality. 90.4 per cent of the locality is ODZ. The locality has a number of natural features including Wied ir-Raħeb, the northern and western cliffs of Gozo, It-Tieqa ta' Wied il-Mielah and part of Wied il-Mielah. L-Għarb is also known for the Ta' Pinu National Shrine, the San Dimitri chapel, Ta' Dbiegi Crafts Village and a folklore museum.

1.3.5. L-Għasri

L-Għasri is the locality with the smallest population, 421 inhabitants. It has an agricultural cover of 57 per cent whilst 96.3 per cent is ODZ, making it the locality with the largest ODZ area. It is located in the western part of Gozo between L- Għarb and Iż-Żebbuġ. The locality has two hills: one is used for the Ta' Pinu Stations of the Cross whilst the other one houses the Ġurdan lighthouse. These plateaux offer panoramic views of Gozo. Għasri includes Wied il-Għasri and part of Wied il- Mielah. These valleys are spots of particular scenic value.

1.3.6. Il-Munxar

Il-Munxar is located to the south of Gozo. Agricultural land amounts to 58.5 per cent of the locality whilst 87.7 per cent is ODZ.

Il-Munxar includes the Ix-Xlendi settlement. Ix-Xlendi is a popular tourist destination due to its character and picturesque scenery. Two main attractions are the Xlendi Tower and Caroline Cave that can be accessed through a flight of steps. The locality is characterised by vertical cliffs to the south, Wied Xlendi, which crosses the locality, and Wied il-Kantra. A large part of the locality is a Natura2000 site. The area includes the locality's western half, excluding the built-up pocket of Ix-Xlendi, and the southern coast of Il-Munxar.

1.3.7. In-Nadur

In-Nadur is located in the eastern part of Gozo. It is a hilltop village with a population of 3,959 inhabitants. Agricultural land covers 45.7 per cent of the total land cover whilst 86.2 per cent of the locality is ODZ.

In-Nadur has two popular bays: Il-Bajja ta' San Blas and Daħlet Qorot. The bays are located to the north of the locality and are characterised by a number of plateaux and underlying scree slopes. Il-Qortin tal-Magun and l-Qortin il-Kbir are a Natura2000 site located above Daħlet Qorot. Għar tal-Mixta is a cave located above Ir-Ramla and offers spectacular views of the beach below. In-Nadur has one coastal watchtower known as It-Torri ta' San Blas or It-Torri ta' Isopu. This tower is in the northern part of the locality. There is also a quarry in this part of the locality. There is also a British semaphore tower located to the south-west of the locality known as It-Torri ta' Kennuna.

1.3.8. Il-Qala

Il-Qala is the easternmost locality of Gozo. It has 38.2 per cent of its land cover dedicated to agriculture whilst 90.7 per cent is located ODZ.

Il-Qala's main attractions are Fõndoq ir-Rummien, Il-Ġebbla tal-Ħalfa and Il-Batterija ta' Sant' Antnin. Il-Qala northern shore is characterised by extensive quarrying activity. Further west of the active quarrying there are the traces of older quarrying activity. The southern shore is popular with both hikers and divers.

1.3.9. San Lawrenz

San Lawrenz is located to the south-west of Gozo. It has a population of 627 inhabitants. Agriculture makes up 54.7 per cent of the locality and 95 per cent of the

locality is ODZ.

San Lawrenz is mostly known for Id-Dwejra area. This site is one of the main touristic attractions in Gozo. The area is characterised by a number of features: the Azure Window that is a natural arch; the inland sea, the Fungus Rock, Il-Qattara and the Dwejra coastal watchtower. The inland sea is a sea lagoon that is connected to the open sea through a fissure in the cliff face. There are boat rides that take visitors from the inland sea through the fissure out into the open sea close to the Azure Window. The Fungus Rock is a protected islet in the area which during the Knight's period was famous for a plant which was thought to have medicinal properties. The area is also very popular with divers. The area is a Natura 2000 site and a nature reserve. Id-Dwejra area is also protected as a dark site.

San Lawrenz has a number of quarries present spread throughout the locality.

1.3.10. Ta' Kerċem

Ta' Kerċem is a locality in the eastern part of Gozo between Il-Munxar and San Lawrenz. 70.2 per cent of the locality is agricultural land and 93.1 per cent of the locality is ODZ. Wied il-Lunzjata, which is deemed to be the most fertile agricultural area of Gozo, is partly within this locality.

The locality's main attractions are the Santa Luċija hamlet; Il-Mixta, which is one of the first places to be settled in the Maltese archipelago; and the Għadira ta' San Raflu, a freshwater pool. The locality has some quarrying activity too.

The cliff faces in the southern part of the locality are a Natura2000 site.

1.3.11. Ta' Sannat

Ta' Sannat is located in the southern part of Gozo. Agriculture covers 39.7 per cent of the locality whilst ODZ land consists of 87.8 per cent of the locality.

Ta' Sannat is mainly known for the Ta' Ċenċ area which is an extensive area of garrigue and cliffs. This area is protected as a Natura2000 site. The area is also popular for country walks and its scenic views. Ta' Sannat also includes part of Mġarr ix-Xini and Il-Wied ta' Mġarr ix-Xini.

1.3.12. Ix-Xagħra

Ix-Xagħra is one of the earliest inhabited places in the Maltese archipelago. In 2013, it had a population of 3,968 persons. This makes Xagħra, the second most populated locality in Gozo after Victoria. It is a hilltop village located in the northern part of Gozo and has a 46.3 per cent agricultural land cover. 84.8 of the local administrative area is ODZ.

Ix-Xagħra houses one of the oldest free-standing building structures in the world: the Ġgantija Temples Complex. There is also the St Verna Temple and the Xagħra Stone Circle, a prehistoric hypogeum. Ix-Xagħra also has two natural underground caves with calcified formations which are open for the public and located beneath private residences.

One of the main attractions of Ix-Xagħra is Ramla Bay. Ramla Bay is popular for its red-coloured sand and is the largest beach in Gozo. It is also important for its cultural and environmental features. The beach has a Knight's period entrenchment wall and the foundations of a Roman villa that are occasionally exposed depending on the beach's depositional patterns. The site is also protected for its environmental value and is designated as a Natura2000 site. The beach contains the best preserved sand dune system. Above the beach there is Calypso's Cave, which offers panoramic views of the underlying bay.

1.3.13. Ix-Xewkija

Ix-Xewkija is located in the south-east of Gozo. Xewkija has a population of 3,135 persons. The locality has 51.7 per cent agricultural land cover whilst it has 74.7 per cent ODZ land.

Ix-Xewkija is mostly known for its landmark church, the Rotunda of St John the Baptist. The church was built in the twentieth century and replaces an older church. It is the largest church in Gozo.

The locality also has an industrial estate to the west and a helipad to the east. It has two main sports facilities: the Gozo football stadium and the horse race track. Ix-Xewkija also houses the University of Malta (Gozo Campus) and the Government Farm.

Il-Wied ta' Mgarr ix-Xini partly falls within Ix-Xewkija's administrative boundaries.

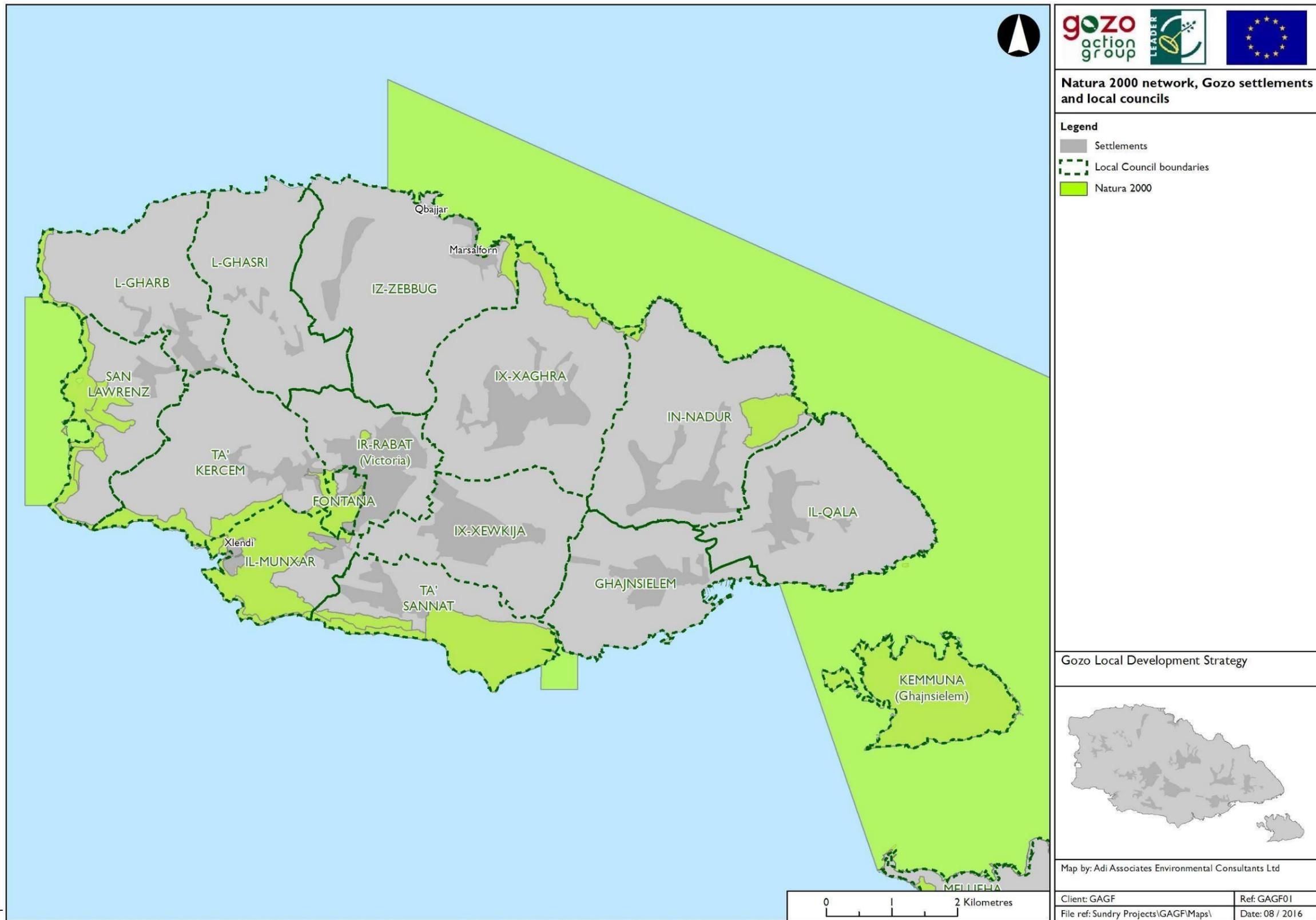
1.3.14. Iż-Żebbuġ

Iż-Żebbuġ is a locality in the north-west of Gozo. It has a 50.7 per cent agricultural cover and 92.8 per cent of the locality's area is ODZ. Iż-Żebbuġ is built on two plateaux and includes Marsalforn, which is a coastal settlement.

Marsalforn is the main summer residence area in Gozo. It is a touristic, seaside locality with a large number of food and beverage outlets and tourist accommodation. This area includes the smaller zones of Il-Qbajjar and Ix-Xwejni.

Iż-Żebbuġ's coastline to the west of Ix-Xwejni is characterised by an extensive area of salt pans.

Figure 1.2: Natura 2000 Sites in Gozo



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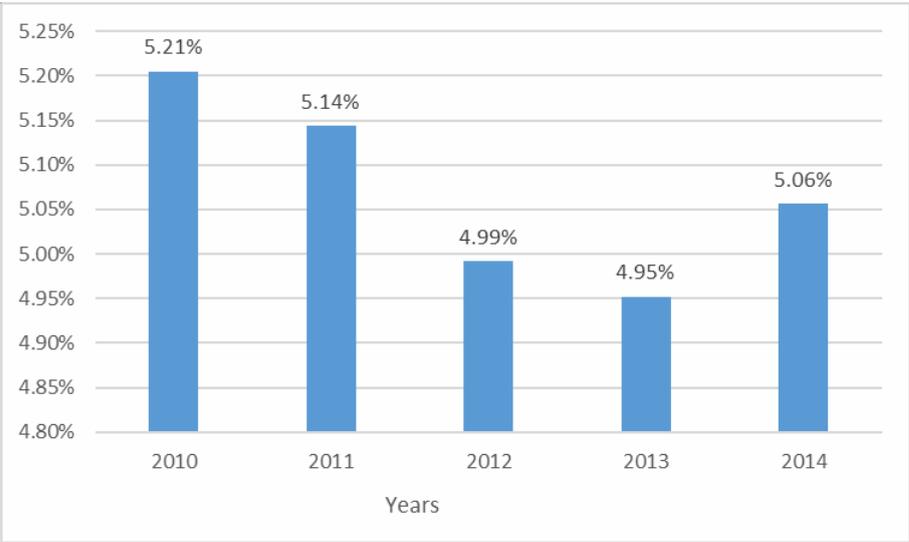
2. ANALYSIS OF THE TERRITORY

2.1. THE ECONOMY

2.1.1. The population of the Island Region of Gozo⁶ was estimated at 31,592 persons as at the end of 2014, constituting 7.4% of the national total⁷. The GDP, at market prices, produced in Gozo in 2014 amounted to €409.9 million, equivalent to 5.1% of the national total. Thus, while the population of Gozo constituted 7.4% of the national total in 2014, output and income produced in the Region amounted to 5.1% of the national total⁸. This reflects the fact that Gozo contributes significantly to the national economy, despite further growth potential which is yet to be adequately realised.

2.1.2. As depicted in **Figure 2.1**, the contribution of Gozo to national GDP in 2014 was lower than that in 2010, because the average growth rate of GDP in the main Island of Malta, which averaged 5.8% per annum over the period 2010 to 2014, exceeded the average growth rate for Gozo, which amounted to 4.7% per annum. However, the share of Gozo GDP within the national GDP increased in 2014 when compared to 2013, indicating the growing significance of Gozo to the national economy.

Figure 2.1: Share of Gozo GDP within national total



Source: Regional Statistics, NSO

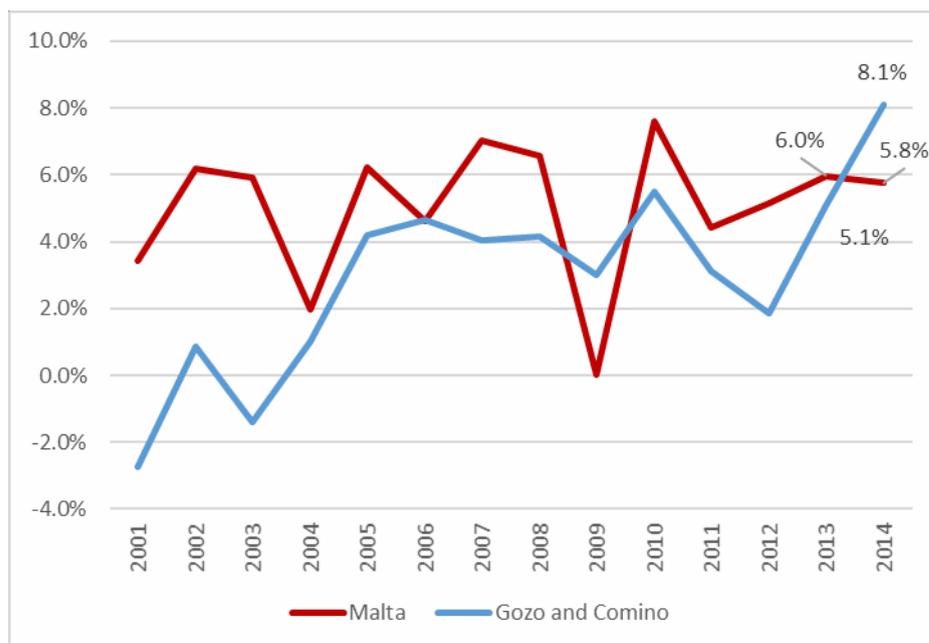
⁶ Including Comino

⁷ National total refers to the total for Malta and Gozo

⁸ Regional Statistics, NSO

2.1.3. **Figure 2.2** shows that from a negative GDP growth rate in the early 2000s, Gozo surpassed Malta in the rate of economic expansion, so that in 2014, Malta registered a growth rate of 5.8% and Gozo recorded a growth rate of 8.1%. This shows the high potential that the Island Region of Gozo has in terms of economic growth and investment.

Figure 2.2: Growth rate in GDP



Source: Regional Statistics, NSO

2.1.4. The registered unemployment rate in 2014 stood at 6.9% in Gozo relative to 3.9% in Malta⁹. In 2014, the productivity per worker¹⁰ in Gozo stood at €28,904 whilst that in Malta stood at €36,57, which means that the productivity of each job in Gozo is estimated at 80% that of Malta. This signals higher deficiencies in Gozo’s human capital relative to Malta. Per capita annual output in Gozo in 2014 is estimated at €12,974. This is just under 70% of the national average and 43% of the EU average, with little evidence that Gozo is tending to catch up.

2.1.5. The relatively lower output per capita can be mainly attributed to the higher unemployment rate that persists in Gozo. Thus, while job productivity is a priority concern in addressing the development gap between Malta and Gozo, the creation of jobs within Gozo is an even stronger one. The relatively high unemployment

⁹ Source: Employment Training Centre, Gozo in Figures publication, National Statistics Office

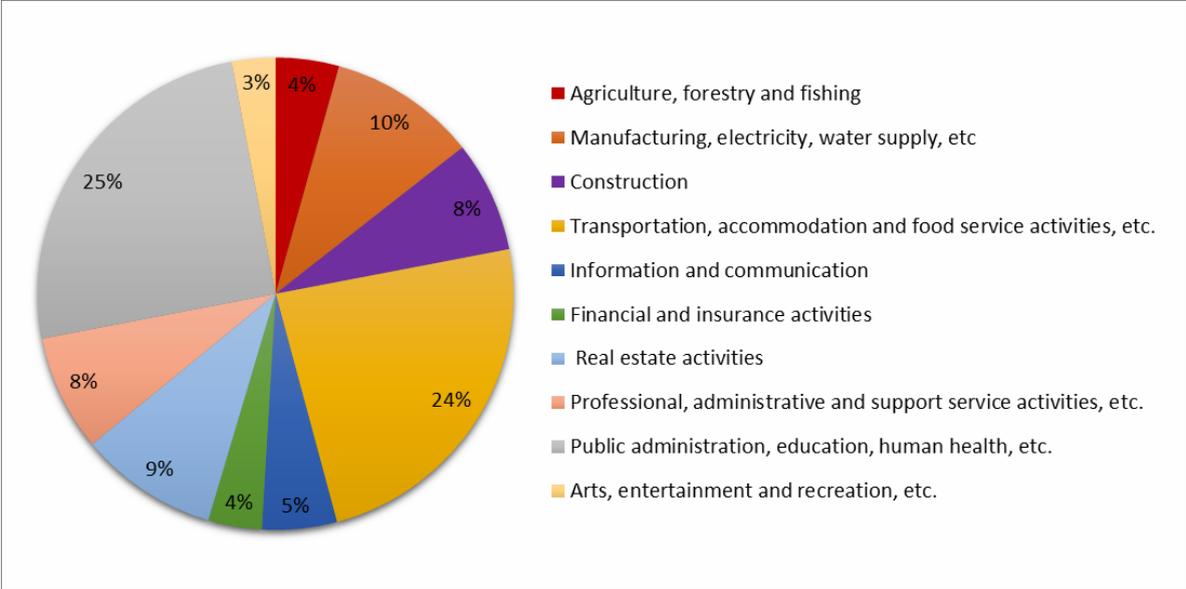
¹⁰ In this report, defined as the Gross Value Added divided by Full-Time Equivalent

situation is further exacerbated by the higher proportion of dependent population in Gozo, partly reflecting young workers seeking better employment opportunities elsewhere. Furthermore, there is a higher concentration of lower income households in Gozo. In fact, average household disposable income in Gozo stood at

€21,197 in 2013 whilst that in Malta stood at €23,627¹¹.

2.1.6. As illustrated in **Figure 2.3**, the output composition of the economy of Gozo as at 2014 is concentrated mostly in public administration, education and human health, comprising 25% of total GVA and transportation, accommodation and food service activities, making up 24% of total GVA. The agricultural industry represents around 4% of the total GVA.

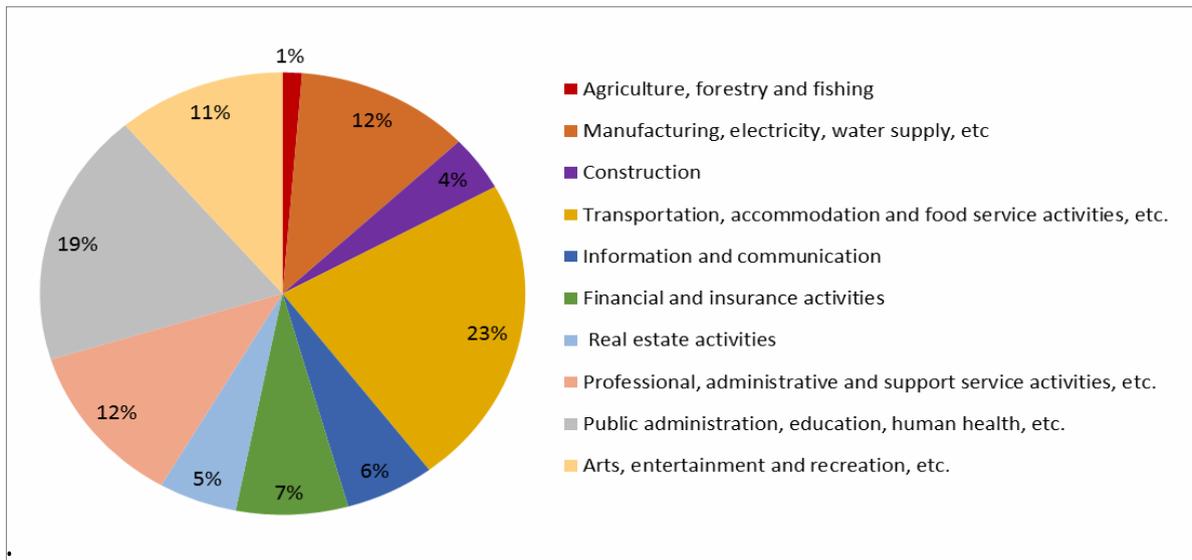
Figure 2.3: Gross Value-Added composition: Gozo (2014)



Source: Regional Data, NSO

¹¹ Gozo in Figures 2015

Figure 2.4: Gross Value-Added composition: Malta (2014)



Source: *Regional Statistics, NSO*

2.1.7. Public administration, education, human health and transportation, accommodation and food service activities also represent the highest share of GVA for the economy of Malta. However, the output composition is slightly less concentrated in these two sectors such that manufacturing, electricity, water supply and professional, administrative and support service activities represent 12% of total GVA. The agricultural industry contributes less in comparison to the same industry in Gozo, representing 1% of total GVA in 2014.

2.1.8. An assessment of sectoral performance based on the Gross Value Added points towards the following conclusions:

- The agricultural and fisheries sector adds more value to the Gozitan economy than to the Maltese economy. However, its contribution to the total economy in 2014 was 1 percentage point less than that contributed by the Maltese agricultural and fisheries sector;
- The construction and real estate sectors are relatively more important to the Gozitan economy;
- The aggregate for wholesale and retail trade, transportation and tourism play an almost equal role in both the Gozitan and Maltese economy;
- Financial and insurance activities contribute relatively less to the Gozitan economy;
- The professional, administrative and support services activity in Gozo is not as developed as that in Malta;
- Public services activities have a higher weight in economic activity in Gozo; and

- The arts, entertainment and recreation sector, which includes the gaming sector, is less significant to the Gozitan economy in comparison to Malta.

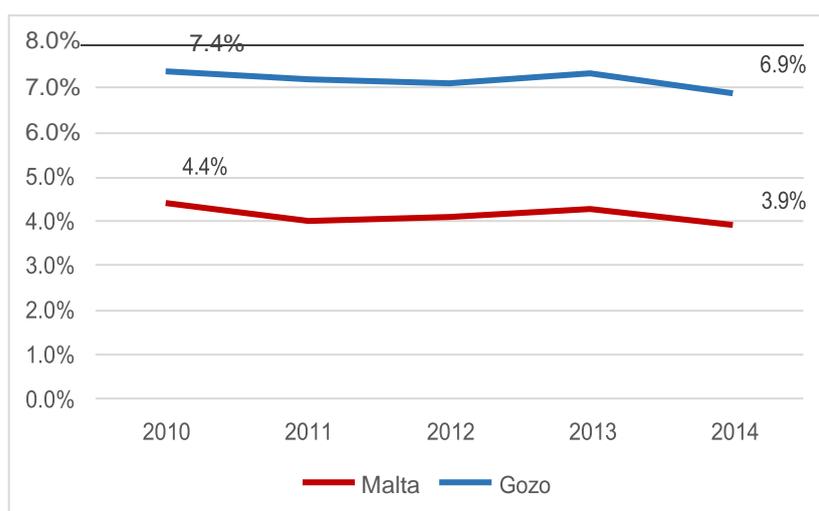
2.1.9. The significance of the agricultural and fisheries sector to the Gozitan economy is not only reflected in its value added but also in the reliance of employment in Gozo on this sector. In 2015, full-time equivalent jobs in the agricultural and fisheries sector in Gozo amounted to 5.5% of total full-time equivalent jobs, contrasting with the 1.4% figure for Malta. Assessing the economic sectors in terms of both gross value added and full-time equivalent jobs indicates that the agricultural and fisheries sector and the construction sector are relatively more significant for the Gozitan economy. Conversely, the services sectors such as financial and insurance activities and professional, administrative and technical activities are relatively less developed and contribute less to the economy of Gozo.

Labour Market Developments

2.1.10. Labour market data for Gozo point to positive developments in the labour market. **Figure 2.5** plots the unemployment rate for the period 2010 to 2014, showing that unemployment fell by 0.5 percentage points over the period analysed. However, it is evident that compared to Malta, Gozo still has higher deficiencies in its employment of the labour input. The average rate of unemployment registered during the period under analysis stood at 7.2% for Gozo while that for Malta was 4.1%.

2.1.11. In 2014, the unemployment rate in Gozo was 6.9%, triggered by a 5% expansion in the labour supply and a 1% fall in the registered unemployed population. In Malta, an increase of 3% in the labour force combined with a 6% fall in the number of registered unemployed resulted in an unemployment rate equal to 3.9% during the same year. The higher unemployment rate may be mainly attributed to the lower employment opportunities in Gozo, potentially exacerbating the brain-drain within the Island.

Figure 2.5: Unemployment Rate



Source: *Gozo in Figures 2015*, NSO

2.1.12. **Table 2.1** presents the full-time equivalent jobs in Malta and Gozo as distributed across the different economic sectors for the year 2015. On average, the number of full-time equivalent jobs in Gozo amounted to 6% those in Malta in 2015. The shaded area in the table indicates those economic sectors in which the employment in Gozo is significantly more pronounced relative to the average rate of 6%. These sectors are relatively more important for Gozo in terms of employment.

2.1.13. The table clearly highlights the reliance of employment on the agricultural and fisheries industry in Gozo. In 2015, the total number full-time equivalent jobs in this sector amounted to 646, representing 5.5% of the total full-time equivalent jobs in Gozo. As a share of total jobs, the agricultural sector provides more jobs in Gozo relative to Malta. This is also indicated by the ranking of this sector in both regions.

2.1.14. The table also shows the low employment in the services sectors including arts, entertainment and recreation, information and communication, professional, administrative and technical services and financial and insurance activities. In each of these sectors, the full-time equivalent jobs in Gozo amount to around 4% of the jobs in the main Island. These sectors are typically of a higher value added nature, implying that they produce a higher margin between the price of the final product and the cost of inputs used to produce them.

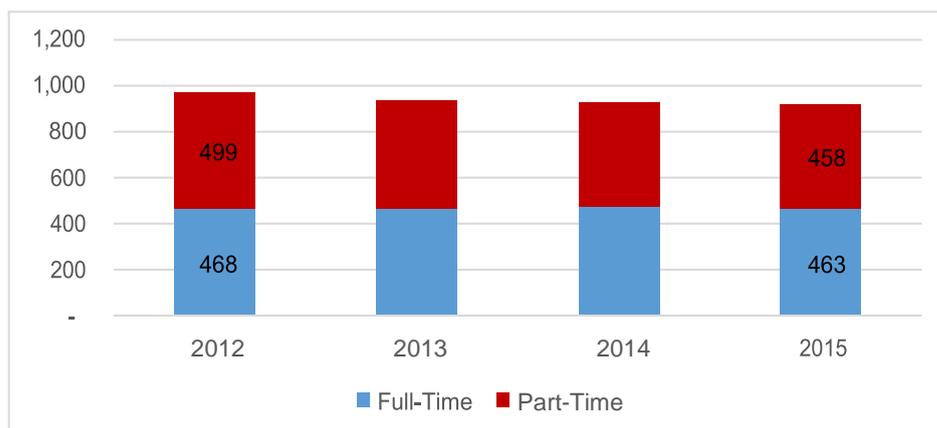
Table 2.1: Sectoral distribution of Full-Time Equivalent jobs within regions in 2015

Economic Sector	Gozo		Malta		Gozo: Malta
	Jobs	Rank	Jobs	Rank	
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	646	7	2,600	10	25%
Construction	1,054	5	9,938	7	11%
Real estate activities	121	11	1,479	11	8%
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security; education; human health and social work activities	3,448	1	44,150	2	8%
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles; transportation and storage; accommodation and food service activities	3,234	2	50,672	1	6%
Mining and quarrying; manufacturing; electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply; water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	1,231	3	22,433	4	5%
of which: Manufacturing	1,069	4	20,728	5	5%
Arts, entertainment and recreation; repair of household goods and other services	452	8	10,204	6	4%
Information and communication	281	10	6,691	9	4%
Professional, scientific and technical activities; administrative and support service activities	983	6	25,579	3	4%
Financial and insurance activities	315	9	8,647	8	4%
Total	11,765		182,394		6%

Source: *Gainfully Occupied, NSO*

2.1.15. **Figure 2.6** indicates that from 2012 to 2015, there was an 8% decline in part-time employment and a 1% fall in full-time employment in the agricultural sector in Gozo. When assessing the employment within the agricultural sector in full-time equivalent jobs, the total number of jobs amounted to 646 in 2015 constituting 5.5% of Gozo’s total gainfully occupied. This is more than double the employment in agriculture registered in Malta at 1.4% and 1.7% nationally.

Figure 2.4: Employment in Agriculture and Fisheries by type of employment

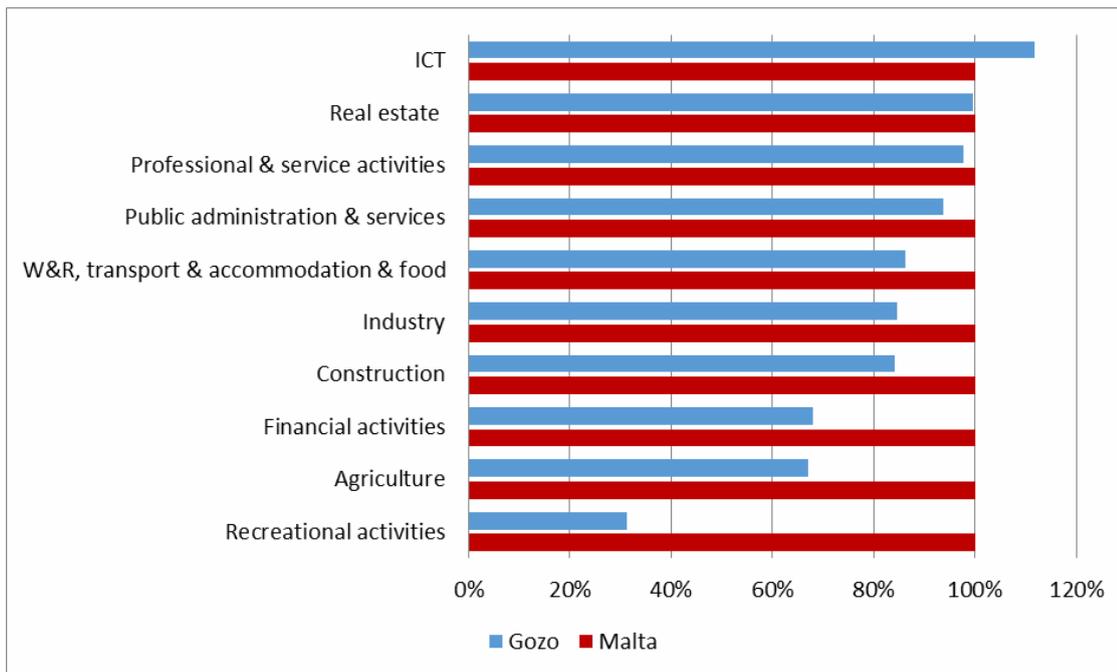


Source: Gainfully Occupied Population, NSO

2.1.16. There is potential for this sector to grow, particularly when considering that the labour productivity in this sector is only 67% of the national total labour productivity in agriculture.

2.1.17. **Figure 2.7** presents the average productivity per full-time equivalent in each economic sector in Gozo relative to Malta. The figure clearly shows that the average productivity level continues to be lower in Gozo. The only sector in Gozo registering a higher average productivity than that in Malta is the Information and Communication sector, mainly triggered by the significant increase in the growth rate of the GVA of this sector in Gozo. The shows potential but the development of the sector at this stage is below the national average.

Figure 2.5: Productivity levels in Gozo in relation to Malta (2014)



Source: *Regional Statistics and Gainfully Occupied Population, NSO*

- 2.1.18. In 2014, average productivity per worker in Gozo increased by 0.6% over the previous year. The only sector which recorded a contraction in its average productivity was the Financial and Insurance activities sector. The drop in the average productivity of this sector was however less pronounced than that registered in Malta. In terms of productivity growth, Gozo performs better than Malta in the following sectors: Manufacturing, Wholesale and retail trade, transportation and accommodation and food service activities, Financial and Insurance activities, Real estate sector and Public sector activities. However, as shown in the figure above, productivity levels are still below those registered in Malta for most of the sectors.
- 2.1.19. **Table 2.2** presents the growth rate in the productivity per worker over the year 2014. A lower productivity growth rate was registered in Gozo in comparison to Malta. However, a higher number of sectors recorded growing productivity over 2014 in Gozo. The agricultural sector productivity grew by 2.8% from 2013 to 2014. This is lower than the 8.7% growth registered in Malta and the 9.7% growth in this sector's productivity in Gozo from 2012 to 2013. This can be mainly attributed to the 5 percentage point fall in the growth rate of Gross Value Added (GVA) of this industry in Gozo from 2013 to 2014.

Table 2.2: Growth rate in sector productivity per worker in 2014

	<i>Growth rate 2013-2014</i>	
	Malta	Gozo
<i>Agriculture, forestry and fishing</i>	8.7%	2.8%
<i>Mining and quarrying; manufacturing; electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply; water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities</i>	-1.3%	1.4%
<i>of which: Manufacturing</i>	-2.9%	5.8%
<i>Construction</i>	21.1%	1.0%
<i>Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles; transportation and storage; accommodation and food service activities</i>	2.8%	5.1%
<i>Information and communication</i>	3.6%	0.1%
<i>Financial and insurance activities</i>	-6.4%	-3.0%
<i>Real estate activities</i>	-3.1%	3.5%
<i>Professional, scientific and technical activities; administrative and support service activities</i>	3.3%	1.4%
<i>Public administration and defence; compulsory social security; education; human health and social work activities</i>	-1.1%	4.1%
<i>Arts, entertainment and recreation; repair of household goods and other services</i>	6.8%	3.8%
<i>Total</i>	2.7%	0.6%

Source: *Regional Statistics and Gainfully Occupied Population, NSO*

2.1.20. The relatively lower employment prospects and lower labour productivity within Gozo could be mainly explained by a number of factors, including:

- Higher seasonality element in Gozo's economic activity. Gozo is less diversified in terms of the economic activities it engages in, making it more reliant on certain sectors, including the tourism services and the agricultural sector. These sectors tend to be of a seasonal nature, thus making the Gozitan economy more sensitive to fluctuations in tourism hotel occupancy rates and seasonal climate behaviour. Lower demand for the tourism sector during the shoulder months, for instance, has the direct impact of reducing the demand for employment and thus potentially leading to a fall in income. The seasonal attribute of this industry spills over to other sectors as it translates itself in a decline in spending across different economic sectors. This implies that the second-round effects of this seasonal fall in demand for tourism services would impact the entire economy. This makes employment in Gozo relatively more seasonal and thus less secure.
- Relatively low levels of investment in Gozo. In 2011, the stock of foreign direct investment in mainland Malta was over €12bn, as compared to just over €5m in

the Island Region of Gozo¹². Investment in Gozo is faced with a number of obstacles including the difficulties in connecting with the main Island of Malta and abroad due to a relatively lower development in infrastructure. This implies higher costs for entrepreneurs, leading to inefficiencies and loss in competitiveness.

The table below presents indications of the Extent of Access Problems faced by the economy of Gozo that are viewed as a critical deterrent to investment. Higher average travelling times are applicable to Gozo from a number of different points such as the airport and seaport, in comparison to Malta. For example, the average travelling time from the airport is estimated at 17.2 minutes for Malta in comparison to 94.1 minutes for Gozo which takes much longer due to the ferry crossing. This results in a 546% higher average travelling time for Gozo when compared to Malta.

Figure 2.8: Access and peripherality of the Gozitan economy

Access and Peripherality	Malta	Gozo	Gozo:Malta
Average travelling time (mins) from airport	17.2	94.1	546.6%
Average travelling time (mins) from passenger seaport	15.4	92.1	597.3%
Average travelling time (mins) from cargo seaport	23.6	106.1	450.6%
Average travelling time (mins) from governance hub	18.0	97.1	540.2%
Average travelling time (mins) from entertainment hub	19.8	82.1	414.9%
Average travelling time (mins) from commercial hub	18.0	86.1	479.1%
Percentage of homes with access to Internet	80.0	71.0	88.8%

Source: University of Geneva; Alterra, Wageningen University and Research Centre

- A lower rate of capacity utilisation. An example of this is the lower rate of hotel occupancy in the tourism sector in Gozo as well as a lower ratio of hotel bed-nights per inhabitant when compared to mainland Malta. In 2014, hotel bed-nights amounted to 7.9 nights per inhabitant in Gozo whilst that for Malta stood at 18.9 bed-nights¹³. Consequently, in 2013 utilization of hotel bed places stood at 52% in Gozo in comparison to 60% for Malta.
- Higher dependence on public sector employment. Latest available data show that there is a higher dependence on the public sector in Gozo relative to Malta. In 2015, the number of full-time persons employed in the public sector represented around 31% of total full-time employed population in Gozo against 25% for mainland Malta¹⁴. While contributing to further employment opportunities, the non-profit nature of public sector activities typically tends to act as a drag to growth in labour productivity.

¹² Finance Minister Tonio Fenech in reply to a Parliamentary Question raised by Anton Refalo as reported in The Times, July 6, 2012.

¹³ NSO Tourstat

¹⁴ NSO Gainfully Occupied Population

- The lack of activity in Gozo within the major areas of growth for the entire economy of Malta over recent years. Gozo has for many years been associated with certain economic sectors such as agriculture and construction, which typically render less value added per input used to the economy. This requires not solely a greater focus on services industries but also putting to use the knowledge and experience that has been acquired in these sectors so as to provide more innovative products and services.
- The migration of younger, higher skilled individuals from Gozo to mainland Malta. A significant number of young Gozo residents who are University graduates seek employment opportunities in Malta.
- Female participation is relatively lower in Gozo. In Malta, the number of employed females in 2014 amounted to 62.3% of the number of employed males whereas in Gozo this ratio stood at 59.7%. In 2014, the female participation rate¹⁵ was around 35% in Malta and 33% in Gozo. This could be partially explained by the fact that a significant number of female employees work in Malta. There are several possible reasons for this:
 - the fact that younger women tend to be better educational achievers whose career aspirations would not be fulfilled through the limited opportunities available on the Island Region of Gozo;
 - women residing in Gozo tend to qualify as teachers with the hope of being offered a job within Gozo itself, which hope is being challenged by the relatively large number as compared to the job opportunities available;
 - perceptions and values affecting the mentality of employers in Gozo, which may view males as being the main breadwinners within a family.

2.1.21. Women in this situation would later in life often establish themselves permanently on Malta, or return to Gozo in a career which may be below their abilities and aspirations.

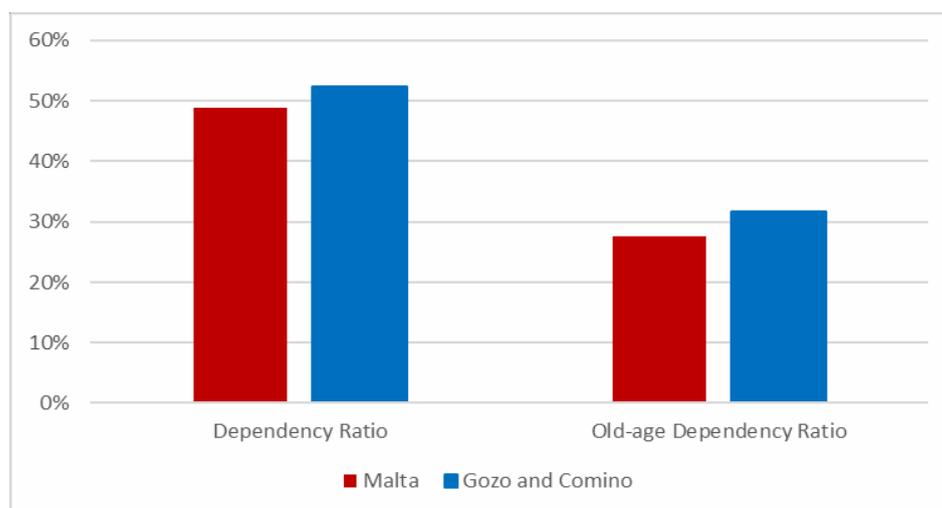
¹⁵ The number of employed and self-employed females divided by the labour supply.

2.2. DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENTS

Population

- 2.2.1. The average age in Gozo was 42.7 years compared to 41.2 years for the national total. This is also reflected in **Figure 2.9**, which presents the dependency ratio¹⁶ and old-age dependency. The total population in Gozo amounted to 7.36% of the total national. Gozo has been registering a slower population growth rate than Malta in recent years. In 2014, total population in Gozo grew by 0.46% relative to the 0.93% growth rate recorded for Malta.
- 2.2.2. An analysis of the demographic structure of the population shows that the ageing problem is more accentuated in the Island region of Gozo. In fact, the age composition of the population at the end of 2014 indicates that ratio¹⁷ for Gozo and the mainland Malta. The figure clearly shows that, in comparison to Malta, Gozo has a higher share of its population which is dependent on the working-age population. This may also be reflecting a situation where young workers prefer to work and reside in Malta due to better job opportunities and also the lower commuting time and expenses.

Figure 2.9: Dependency ratio and old-age dependency ratio



Source: *Demographic Review, NSO*

- 2.2.3. From 2011 to 2014, the younger age cohort population has experienced a larger decline in Gozo in comparison to the national change. During this period, the age cohort 0-24 years recorded a fall of 6% in Gozo and 2% in Malta. However, from **Tables 2.3** and **2.4**, it can be noted that these age cohorts represent the same share of both the Gozitan population and national total population. This decline in younger cohorts reflects the lower fertility rates observed in Gozo, where the crude birth rate registered in 2014 stood at 8.6 per 1000 of the mid-year population as against 9.8 for the national total.

¹⁶ Sum of population aged 0-14 and 65+ as a percentage of the working-age population (15-64)

¹⁷ Population aged 65+ as a percentage of the working-age population (15-64)

Table 2.3: Population age structure in Gozo

Age Cohort	Gozo				
	2011	% of pop	2014	% of pop	% Change
0-14	4,548	14%	4,289	14%	-5.7%
15-24	4,296	14%	4,063	13%	-5.4%
25-49	9,656	31%	9,714	31%	0.6%
50-64	7,065	23%	6,944	22%	-1.7%
65+	5,810	19%	6,582	21%	13.3%
Total	31,375	100%	31,592	100%	0.7%

2.2.4. The 65+ age cohort has increased at a higher growth rate in Malta from 2005 to 2011. However, whereas in Malta it represented 19% of the total population in 2014, this age cohort made up 21% of the population in Gozo. The 50-64 years' age group also represents a higher share of the total population in Gozo. Moreover, the decline in the population of this age cohort in Gozo was less than that recorded for the total national. Those aged between 25-49 years have retained the same share within the total population in both Gozo and nationally, representing 31% of the total population in Gozo and 34% in the total national population. The growth rate registered in the number of persons classified in this group has been higher for Malta from 2011 to 2014.

Table 2.4: Population age structure in Malta

Age Cohort	National				
	2011	% of pop	2014	% of pop	% Change
0-14	61,728	15%	61,449	14%	-0.5%
15-24	55,632	13%	53,878	13%	-3.2%
25-49	141,452	34%	146,217	34%	3.4%
50-64	90,437	22%	88,308	21%	-2.4%
65+	68,183	16%	79,492	19%	16.6%
Total	417,432	100%	429,344	100%	2.9%

Source: Demographic Review, NSO

2.2.5. These demographic developments can have significant economic impacts, in terms of exerting a larger strain on the growth of output and productivity potential of Gozo.

Educational attainment

2.2.6. In 2011, 39% of the population in Gozo (aged 15 years and over) had a secondary level of educational attainment¹⁸ in comparison to 41% for the national average¹⁹. Those having an educational attainment level above the compulsory secondary level but not tertiary²⁰ represented 21% of the population (aged 15 years and over) in Gozo and 23% in Malta. In Gozo, those having a tertiary level of education amounted to 13% of the population whereas the national average stood at 14%. These figures show that national averages for educational attainment levels were recorded at marginally higher levels than those of Gozo.

¹⁸ Secondary level of attainment is taken as lower secondary education level which is compulsory.

¹⁹ Source used is the Census of 2011

²⁰ Summation of the population having upper secondary and post-secondary education level

2.2.7. The number of Gozitan students following courses at the University of Malta increased by 24% from the academic year 2010/11 to 2014/15. **Table 2.5** shows the number of University of Malta graduates in Gozo and Malta in different academic years. The number of graduates in Gozo in 2013/14 amounted to 1% of the population whereas those for Malta represented 0.8% of the total population. Moreover, from 2010/11 to 2013/14, the number of graduates in Gozo increased by 55% compared to the 12.3% growth registered in the total national number of graduates.

Table 2.5: University graduates

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Malta	2,880	3,137	3,222	3,233
Gozo	211	273	379	327
Total	3,115	3,425	3,621	3,584

Source: Gozo in Figures 2015

2.2.8. This analysis indicates that the population is generating tertiary level graduates at par, if not more than the national average. Of the 1,120 Gozitan students following courses at the University of Malta during 2014/15, 34% were engaged in the area of Social Science, Business and Law. These tend to find better employment opportunities outside Gozo. For this reason, they typically seek employment elsewhere or leave Gozo entirely. The second largest share of students is involved in Health and Welfare studies, representing 21% of the total number of students attending courses at University. A number of graduates seek opportunities in education as this is perceived to result in a potential job within Gozo, although this is probably misconceived given the de-gentrification that is taking place. In fact, the number of students within the education field of study has declined by 74% from 2011/12 to 2014/15. It furthermore appears that education levels in areas where Gozo has a traditional vocation, including tourism, remain relatively low.

2.3. LAND COVER

- 2.3.1. Agriculture is one of the main land uses in the Maltese Islands, accounting for 51.4% of land cover. Natural habitats cover and urban / developed areas cover 18.9 per cent and 28.1 per cent (excluding mineral extraction sites and dump sites) of the Maltese Islands respectively (CORINE Land Cover 2012).
- 2.3.2. Gozo and Comino account for 23.1 per cent of the total agricultural land in the Maltese Islands. Whilst 50.5 per cent of Malta is agricultural land, 54.6 per cent of Gozo is agricultural land. Furthermore, Gozo and Comino account for 26.9 per cent of the natural habitats in the Maltese Islands. Natural habitats cover 17.6 per cent of Malta whilst Gozo has a 23.4 per cent land cover (CORINE Land Cover 2012). **Figure 2.10** illustrates the land cover of Gozo and Comino.
- 2.3.3. The 2010 Census of Agriculture, recorded 2,828.9ha of land declared by farmers in Gozo in that year. Utilised agricultural areas (UAA) accounted for 2,612.9ha, whilst unutilised agricultural areas and other areas accounted for 91.1ha and 124.9ha respectively²¹.
- 2.3.4. Even though Victoria (Rabat) is the capital city of Gozo, it is the locality with the largest area of agricultural land (350.6 ha of UAA), followed by Xagħra (348.5 ha of UAA), Nadur (298.4 ha of UAA), Ta' Kerċem (295.4 ha of UAA), Xewkija (251.0 ha of UAA) and Għarb (250.2 ha of UAA)²²²³.
- 2.3.5. In 2010, 83.4 per cent of the utilised agricultural land in Gozo and Comino was arable land, whilst 7.6 per cent and 9 per cent of the land was used for permanent cropping and kitchen gardens respectively²⁴.
- 2.3.6. Forage cultivation is the most popular type of arable farming in Gozo and Comino accounting for 76.7 per cent of the total arable land. This is higher than the national percentage for forage cultivation that is 61.2 per cent of the total arable land²⁵.
- 2.3.7. Vines are the most popular type of permanent crop that is cultivated, both in Malta and in Gozo. Furthermore, 52.7 per cent of the area dedicated to citrus plantations in the Maltese Islands is found in Gozo. The concentration of these citrus plantations in Gozo is more than threefold²⁶.
- 2.3.8. Vegetables are the most popular item cultivated in kitchen gardens, both at national and regional levels. Vegetables account to 58.1 per cent of the area dedicated to kitchen gardens in Gozo and Comino²⁷.
- 2.3.9. The Gozo and Comino Local Plan identified Areas of Agricultural Value (see **Figure 2.11**). Policy GZ-AGRI-1 aims at safeguarding these areas from anything that can

²¹ NSO, Census of Agriculture 2010, pp. 3-5

²² NSO, Census of Agriculture 2010, pp. 5

²³ Note: These statistics are based on the areas declared by farmers according to the following land types: UAA, unutilised agricultural areas and other areas. This is not the same as the areas described as 'land of agricultural value' in the Local Plan.

²⁴ NSO, Census of Agriculture 2010, pp. 9-11

²⁵ NSO, Census of Agriculture 2010, pp. 12-14

²⁶ NSO, Census of Agriculture 2010, pp. 15-17

²⁷ NSO, Census of Agriculture 2010, pp. 18-20

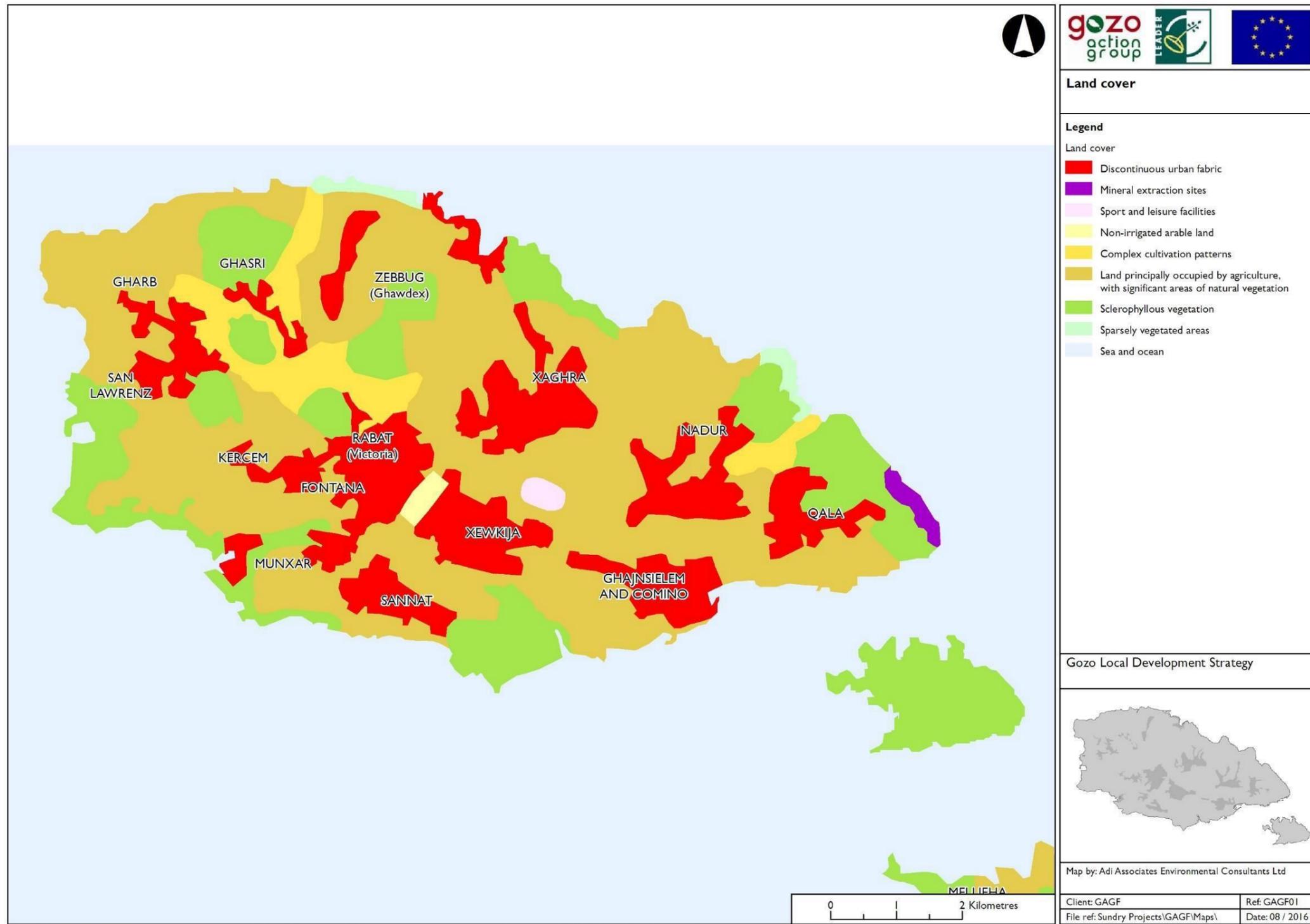
result in their degradation. Any proposed developments which will result in the fragmentation of these areas will be refused.

2.4. TENURE

- 2.4.1. The 2010 Census of Agriculture showed that 76.2 per cent of the UAA in the Maltese Islands is rented land. This is close to the percentage rented in Gozo which stands at 73.1 per cent of the UAA. This shows that land ownership in Gozo is slightly higher than in Malta²⁸.
- 2.4.2. 98.7 per cent of the agricultural holdings' legal personality in Gozo is that of a sole-holder, followed by a group or partnership (1.2 per cent) and a limited liability company (0.1 per cent).

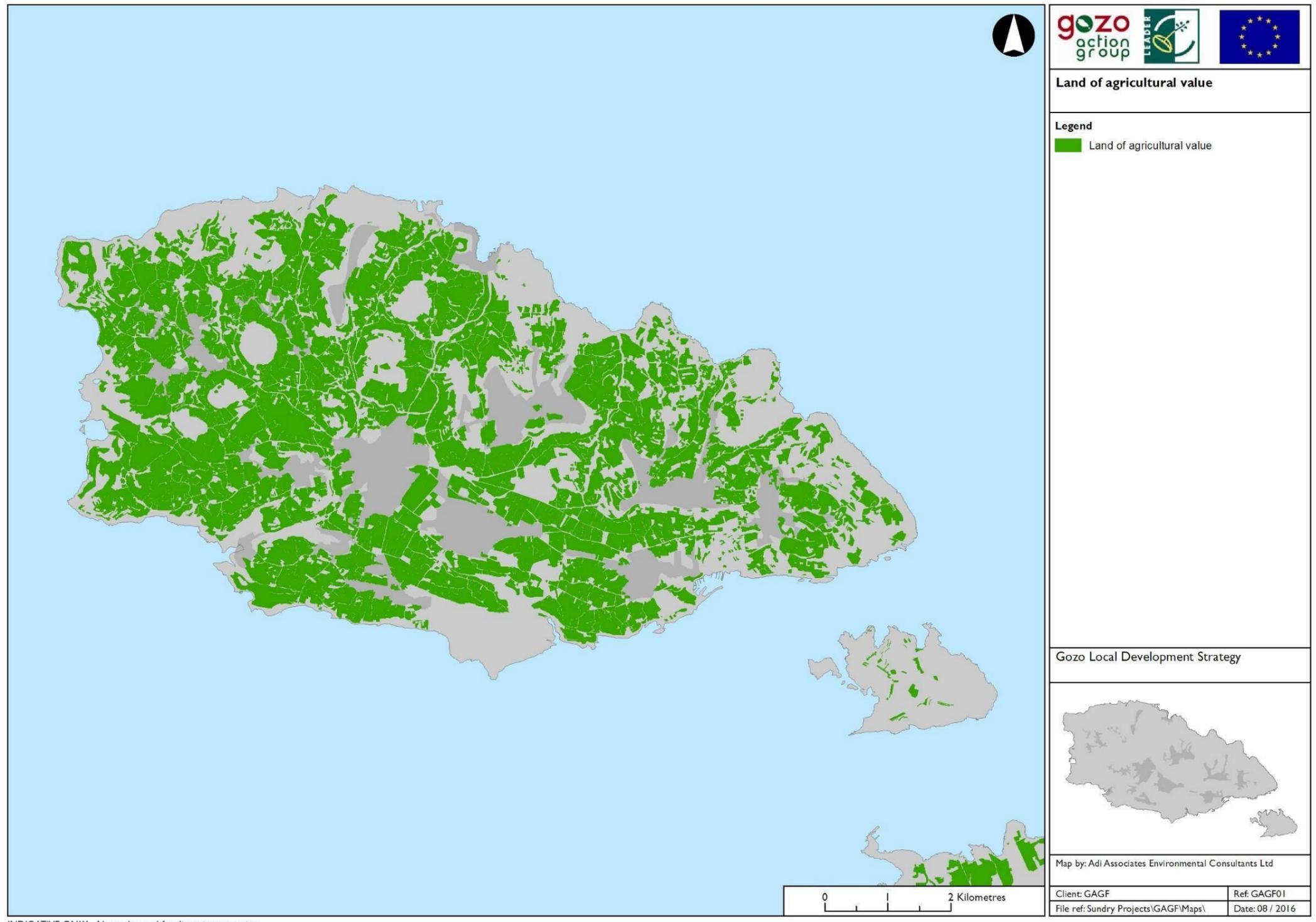
²⁸ NSO, Agriculture and Fisheries 2014, pp. 6-8

Figure 2.10: Land cover of Gozo & Comino



INDICATIVE ONLY - Not to be used for direct interpretation

Figure 2.11: Land of Agricultural Value on Gozo & Comino

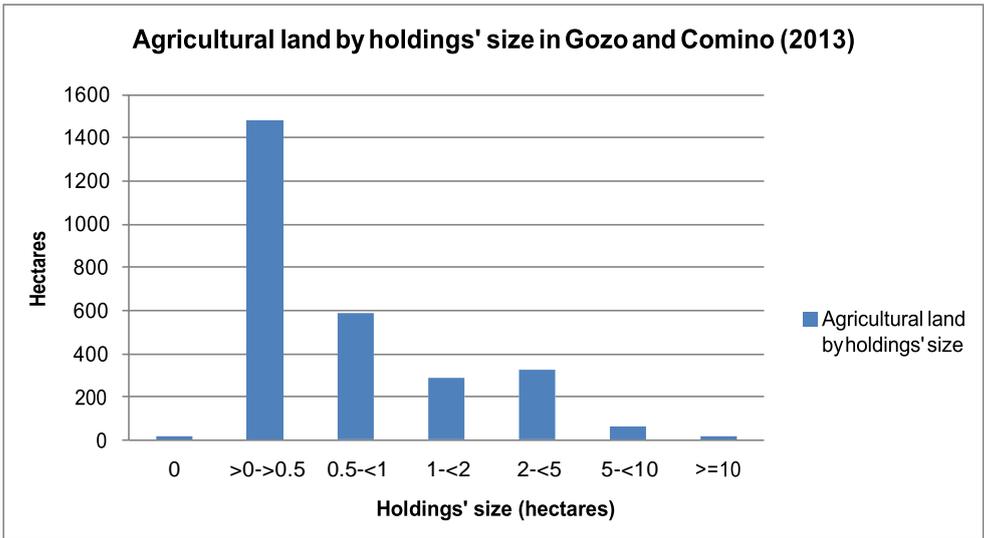


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2.5. SIZE AND STANDARD OUTPUT OF AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS

2.5.1. The most common size of agricultural holding at national and regional level in 2013 was less than 0.5 hectares. In Gozo as a whole, 1,484 ha of agricultural land consisted of holdings smaller than 0.5 ha, see figure below.

Figure 2.12: Agricultural land by holdings' size in Gozo and Comino 2013

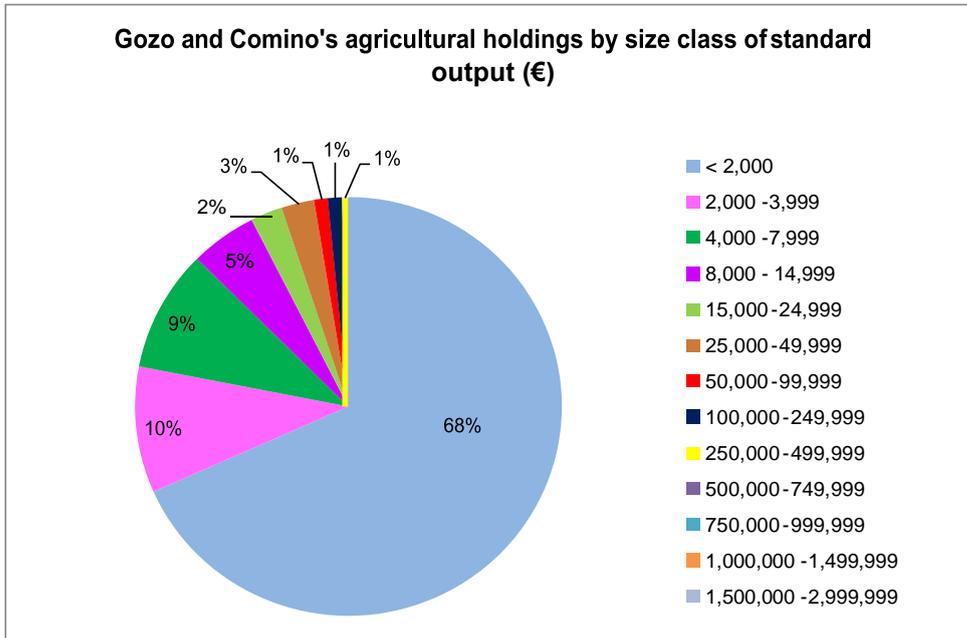


Source: NSO, Agriculture and Fisheries 2014, p. 3

2.5.2. The standard output of an agricultural holding is the sum of the average monetary value of the agricultural output of the holdings' products at farm-gate price expressed in Euro (€). This excludes direct payments, value added tax and taxes on products.

2.5.3. The Census of Agriculture 2010 classified 68.3 per cent of Gozo and Comino's agricultural holdings (i.e. 1,907 agricultural holdings) under economic size class 1, that is, a standard output of less than €2,000. Only 5.1 per cent of Gozo and Comino's agricultural holdings (i.e. 141 agricultural holdings) were classified as having an economic size class greater than V, that is, a standard output of €25,000 and over. Gozo and Comino have the only agricultural holding in the Maltese Islands that was classified under economic size class XIII, that is, a standard output ranging between €1,500,000 and €2,999,999, see figure below. The break-up of Gozo and Comino's agricultural holdings' economic size classes reflect the national average.

Figure 2.13: Gozo and Comino's agricultural holdings by size class of standard output (€)



Source: NSO, Census of Agriculture 2010, p. 27

2.5.4. Gozo in Figures 2015 presented the volume and wholesale value of agricultural produce sold through official markets, see figures below.

Figure 2.14: Volume of vegetables and fruits sold through official markets in tonnes

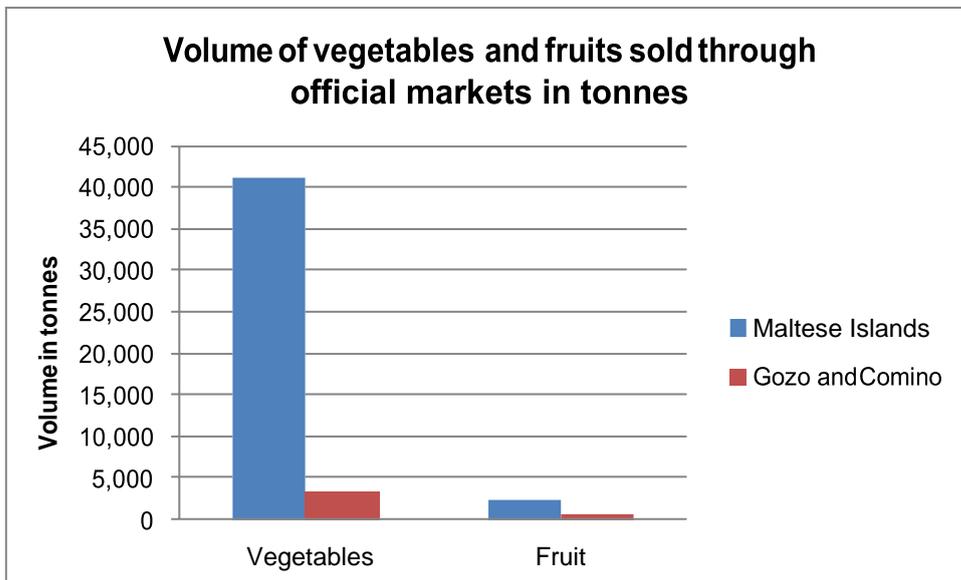
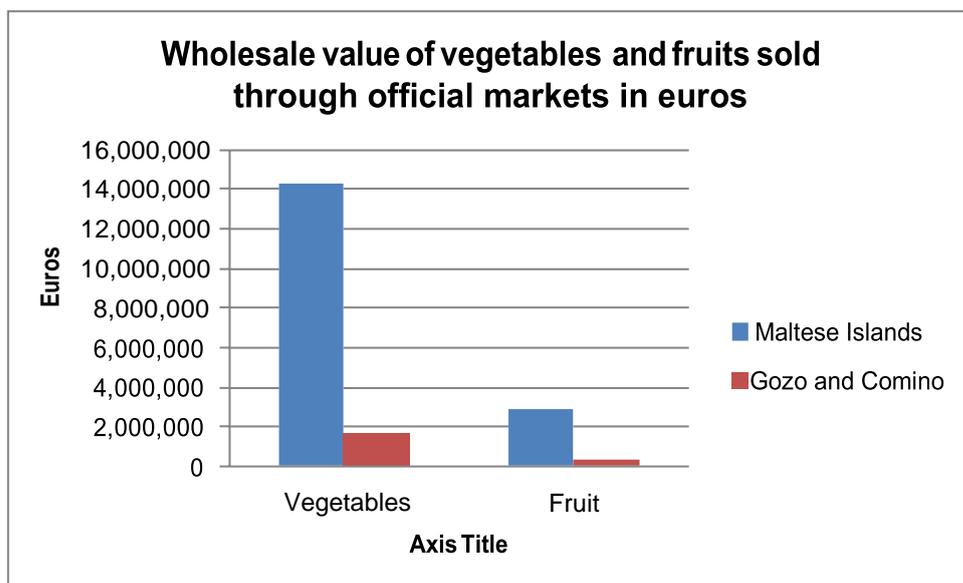
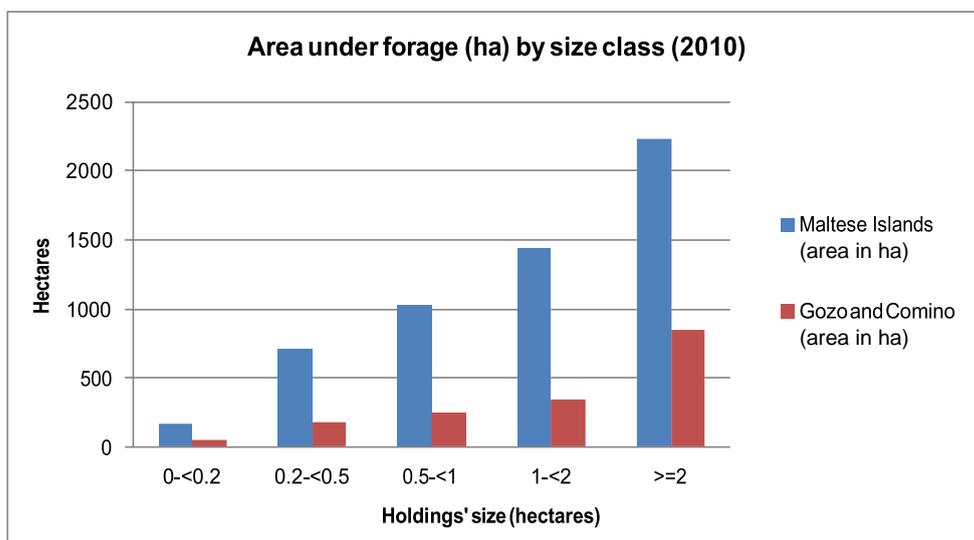


Figure 2.15: Wholesale value of vegetables and fruits sold through official markets in euros



2.5.5. Gozo and Comino have high concentrations of forage cultivation and citrus plantations when compared to Malta. The region has 1671.1 ha and 1,750 holdings dedicated to forage cultivation. The majority of the holdings (276 holdings) are less than 0.5 ha each and cover an area of 222.5 ha. Furthermore, Gozo supports 30 per cent of all land and 26 per cent of all holdings, used for forage cultivation in the Maltese Islands²⁹, see figures below.

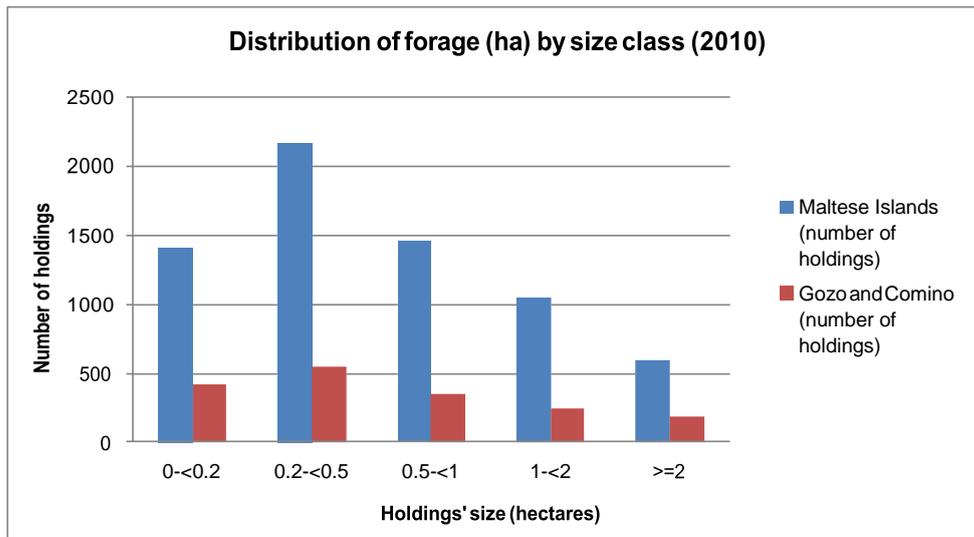
Figure 2.16: Area under forage (ha) by size class



Source: NSO, Census of Agriculture 2010, p. 35

²⁹ NSO, Census of Agriculture 2010, p. 35

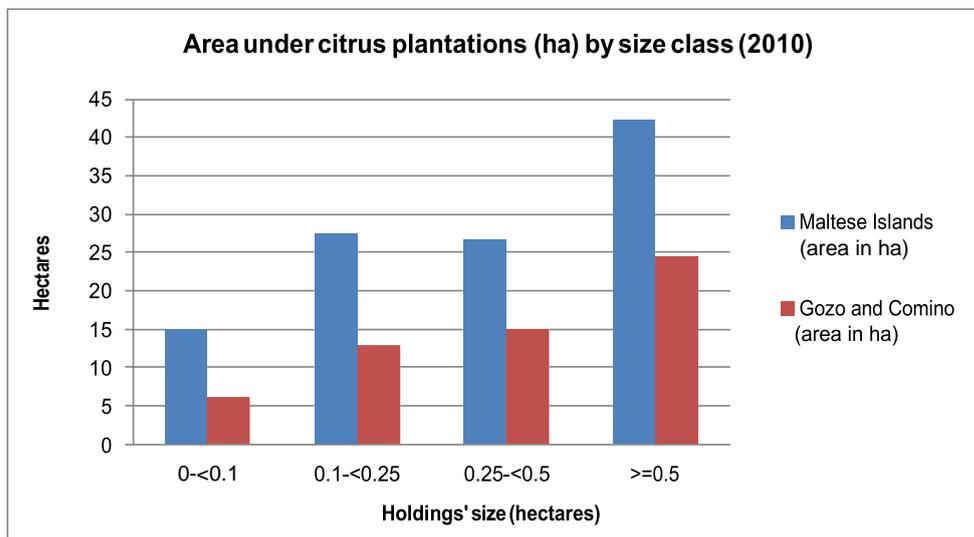
Figure 2.17: Distribution of forage (ha) by size class



Source: NSO, Census of Agriculture 2010, p. 35

2.5.6. Furthermore, more than half the land dedicated to citrus cultivations in the Maltese Islands is located in the Gozo and Comino region. This accounts to 36.4 per cent of all holdings related to citrus plantations. Gozo and Comino have an area of 58.6 ha dedicated to citrus plantations. This consists of 41.7 ha dedicated to orange plantations, 14.6 ha dedicated to lemon plantations and 2.2 ha for other citrus³⁰, see figures below.

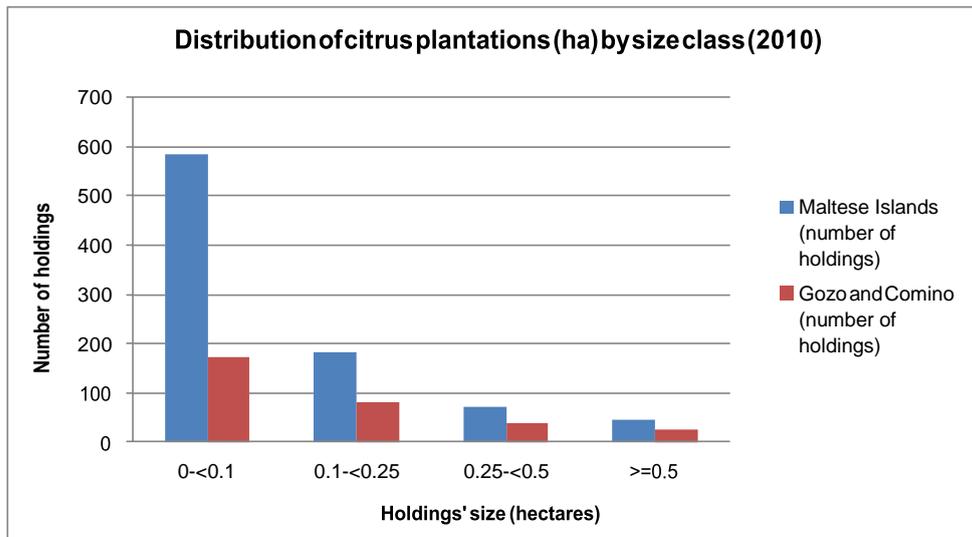
Figure 2.18: Area under citrus plantations (ha) by size class



Source: NSO, Census of Agriculture 2010, p. 43

³⁰ NSO, Census of Agriculture 2010, p. 43

Figure 2.19: Distribution of citrus plantations (ha) by size class



Source: NSO, Census of Agriculture 2010, p. 43

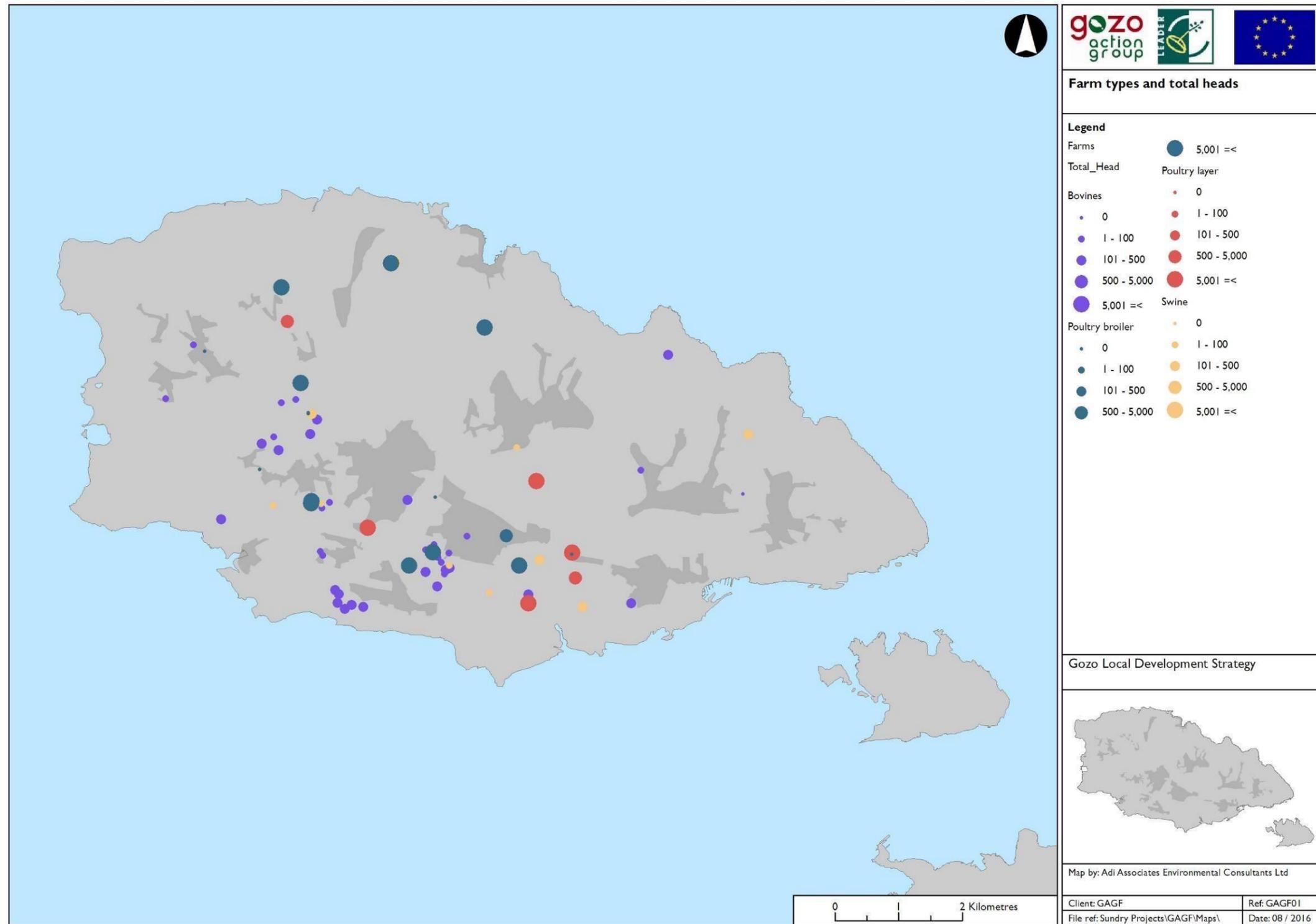
2.6. LIVESTOCK

2.6.1. Livestock refers to the raising of domesticated animals for food production. Livestock in Malta mainly refers to the raising of pigs, cattle, sheep and goats, poultry, and rabbits. The figure below presents the geographical distribution of farms on Gozo.

2.6.2. The Maltese Islands have a total cattle population of 14,883 heads on 281 farms. Gozo have 4,881 heads on 46 farms, that is, 33.8 per cent of the total cattle stock for the Maltese Islands. Furthermore, Gozo have a total of 2,279 dairy cows, that is, 35.1 per cent of the total dairy cow population in the Maltese Islands and 46.7 per cent of the total cattle in Gozo³¹.

³¹ NSO, Agriculture and Fisheries 2014, p. 30

Figure 2.20: Geographical location of farms in Gozo



- 2.6.3. The majority of the cattle are found in holdings with 100 heads or more (67.8 per cent). This trend is more accentuated in Gozo where 80.3 per cent of the cattle are in holdings with 100 heads or more. It was noted that 29.3 per cent of the 50-99 head herds and 38.8 per cent of the 100 head or more herds are located in Gozo. This is reflected in the number of farms too as 28.2 per cent of the 50-99 head farms and 37.5 per cent of the 100 head or more farms are located in this region. This shows that there is a trend for larger herds and farms on Gozo³².
- 2.6.4. Sheep and goats are mainly used for milk production. The milk is mainly used for the production of the traditional cheeslets (ġbejniet). The Maltese Islands have a population of 10,526 sheep and 4,627 goats. Gozo represents the region with the highest concentration of sheep and goat population in the Maltese Islands (27.4 per cent and 24.6 per cent respectively)³³.
- 2.6.5. A third of the sheep population are found in holdings with one to nine sheep (33.6 per cent). This trend is reflected in Gozo too. Nearly half of the goat population in Gozo (47.1 per cent) are in holdings with one to nine sheep³⁴, see figures below.
- 2.6.6. In 2013, there were a total of 918,426 poultry heads in the Maltese Islands. Nearly a quarter of the poultry population (24.2 per cent) were found in Gozo and Comino. Nearly all poultry heads in the Maltese Islands were found in holdings that supported 100 heads or more (98.6 per cent). Gozo and Comino followed this national trend (98.2 per cent). On the other hand, the most common holdings were those with less than 20 heads. These holdings represented 63.8 per cent of the holdings at a national level and 74.2 per cent of the total holdings of Gozo and Comino³⁵, see figure below.
- 2.6.7. 67.1 per cent of the poultry heads are broilers. Gozo and Comino have a higher concentration of broilers in Gozo and Comino. 27.3 per cent of all broilers in the Maltese Islands were found in Gozo and Comino and broilers made up to three quarters of the total number of poultry heads in Gozo and Comino³⁶.
- 2.6.8. The Maltese Islands have a total population of 42,917 pigs. Gozo and Comino have a total population of 4,548 pigs, that is, 10.6 per cent of the total population. The majority of pigs in the Maltese Islands were found in holdings of 400 pigs or more. There are a total of 100 pig farms in the Maltese Islands, eleven of which are in Gozo and Comino. These statistics show that pig farming is more well-established in Malta rather than in Gozo³⁷.
- 2.6.9. Livestock farming is closely linked to waste management issues. The main problem in Gozo is that there is no waste treatment plant. Animal waste treatment is essential in the Maltese Islands because there is not enough land to make use of the generated waste. The use of the existing sewerage system for pig slurry discharge is a bad practice and results in infrastructural problems that have to be addressed.

³² NSO, Agriculture and Fisheries 2014, pp. 31, 33

³³ NSO, Agriculture and Fisheries 2014, pp. 42 -43

³⁴ NSO, Agriculture and Fisheries 2014, pp. 44, 45

³⁵ NSO, Agriculture and Fisheries 2014, pp. 51

³⁶ NSO, Agriculture and Fisheries 2014, pp. 52

³⁷ NSO, Agriculture and Fisheries 2014, pp. 20

2.7. FISHERIES

- 2.7.1. Gozo's main fishing village is Mgarr which is part of the Għajnsielem locality.
- 2.7.2. The Maltese Islands' fishing fleet consists of 2,943 vessels, 95.1 per cent of which are less than ten metres in length. Gozo has a fishing fleet of 444 vessels. Gozo has a higher concentration of vessels licensed as professional fishing vessels when compared to recreational fishing vessels. Nearly half of the vessels in Gozo are licensed as professional fishing vessels (80 full-time vessels and 137 part-time vessels)³⁸.

2.8. FRESHWATER

- 2.8.1. Freshwater is a limited natural resource in the Maltese Islands. It is derived from rainwater percolating through the porous limestone rock and accumulating in aquifers from where it either seeps out from fissures in the rock or is extracted for agricultural use or human consumption.
- 2.8.2. There are two types of groundwater bodies: the mean sea level aquifer and the perched aquifer. The mean sea level aquifers are generally found in the Lower Coralline Limestone and are the result of the rain water's contact with the denser sea water. The perched aquifers are the result of percolation and infiltration of rainwater in Upper Coralline Limestone. The impermeable Blue Clay does not permit further infiltration thus creating a water table above it.
- 2.8.3. The Gozo and Comino region have two mean sea level aquifers: the Gozo Mean Sea Level groundwater body, which covers practically all Gozo, and the Comino Mean Sea Level groundwater body, which covers all Comino. The region also has another five perched aquifers which take the name of their respective localities: Għajnsielem Perched, the Żebbuġ Perched, the Xagħra Perched, the Nadur Perched and the Victoria-Kerċem Perched, see figure below,
- 2.8.4. Freshwater in the Maltese Islands originates either from groundwater or from desalinated water produced by reverse osmosis plants³⁹. Even though agriculture makes up only 3.2 per cent of billed water consumption, this sector makes use of other sources of water like private water suppliers, private boreholes and surface reservoirs. According to the Census of Agriculture 2010, the agricultural sector in the Maltese Islands consumed an annual total of 28.2 million cubic metres. The agricultural holdings in the Gozo and Comino region consumed 10.9 per cent or 3.06 million cubic metres⁴⁰.
- 2.8.5. The Census of Agriculture 2010 showed that the main source of irrigation is on-farm surface water⁴¹. This can either be rainwater or groundwater collected in reservoirs. The Gozo and Comino region accounted for a total of a 495.2 ha irrigated area in the census year, that is, 14.2 per cent of the total irrigated area. Land cultivated for vegetables accounts for 43.2 per cent of the irrigated area⁴².

³⁸ Ibid, p. 120

³⁹ MEPA, The Environment Report, Indicators 2010 - 2011, p. 31

⁴⁰ NSO, Census of Agriculture 2010, pp. 21, 23

⁴¹ Ibid, p. 105

⁴² Ibid, p. 106

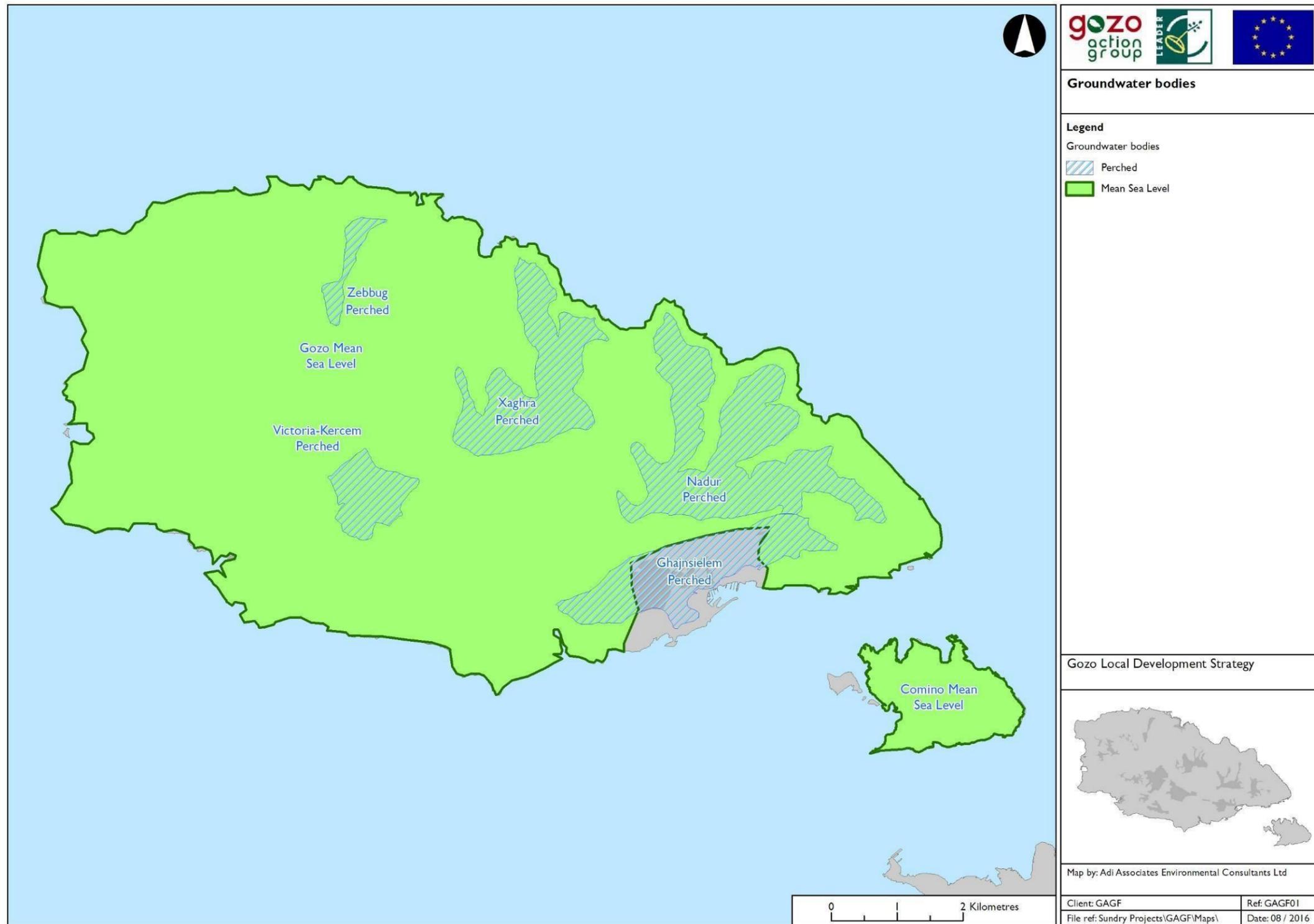
- 2.8.6. Over-abstraction and high levels of nitrates in groundwater bodies' results in sea water intrusion and contamination of the aquifer respectively. The chloride threshold levels are 1000mg/l for mean sea level groundwater bodies, 500mg/l for coastal groundwater bodies, and 210mg/l for perched groundwater bodies, whilst the Nitrate Directive threshold level is 50mg/l⁴³.
- 2.8.7. In 2011, 11 out of 15 of the groundwater bodies in the Maltese Islands surpassed the threshold level of the Nitrates Directive. The highest value recorded at a perched aquifer was found at Żebbuġ where the nitrate level was at 213.5mg/l. The nitrate level of the mean sea level aquifer in Gozo decreased slightly to 47.5mg/l thus being in line with the requirements of the Nitrates Directive⁴⁴.
- 2.8.8. The Chloride levels of the groundwater bodies in the Gozo and Comino region were within the threshold levels. Furthermore, the Nadur Perched aquifer had the lowest average concentration⁴⁵.

⁴³ MEPA, The Environment Report, Indicators 2010 - 2011, pp. 32-33

⁴⁴ Ibid, p. 32

⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 33

Figure 2.21: Groundwater bodies



INDICATIVE ONLY - Not to be used for direct interpretation

2.9. BIODIVERSITY

- 2.9.1. Biodiversity consists of the variety and variability of the different living organisms. The different species and habitats constitute the basis of life-supporting ecosystems. The Maltese Islands have a rich biodiversity notwithstanding the islands' small size and the highly urbanised land cover.
- 2.9.2. Terrestrial habitats include steppe, garrigue, maquis and woodland. These habitats have the potential of ecological succession, in this order. Ecological succession refers to a progression from one ecosystem to another.
- 2.9.3. Other habitats include saline marshlands, rainwater rock pools, sand dunes, valley watercourses and rupestral communities, which include caves, cliffs and boulder shores.
- 2.9.4. The coastal-marine area consists of the adlittoral, supralittoral, mediolittoral, infralittoral and circalittoral zones. The different zones are determined in accordance to their relationship with the sea, that is, how long they are affected / submerged and the degree of light intensity. These different zones support different life forms. Marine habitats include rocky and sandy shores, *Posidonia* banquettes, seagrass meadows and various assemblages.
- 2.9.5. The main threats to local biodiversity development in rural and marine areas include the introduction of alien species (including GMOs), and the exploitation of wildlife including illegal collection, hunting and trapping, littering and trampling.

2.10. PROTECTED AREAS

- 2.10.1. Biodiversity is safeguarded mainly through the protection and management of sites and areas. The figure below illustrates the environmental designations for Gozo.
- 2.10.2. The Gozo and Comino region has seven terrestrial Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) of International Importance. These are:
- Iċ-Ċittadella;
 - Il-Qortin tal-Magun u Il-Qortin il-Kbir;
 - L-Inħawi ta' Għajn Barrani;
 - L-Inħawi ta' Dwejra u tal-Qawra, inluż Haġret il-Ġeneral;
 - L-Inħawi tar-Ramla;
 - L-Inħawi tax-Xlendi u tal-Wied tal-Kantra; and
 - Kemmuna, Kemmunett, il-Haġriet ta' Bejn il-Kmiemen u l-Iskoll ta' Taħt il-Mazz.
- 2.10.3. Furthermore, there are also three marine SACs:
- Il-Baħar fil-Grigal ta' Malta;
 - Il-Baħar fl-Inħawi ta' Mgarr ix-Xini (Għawdex); and

- Il-Baħar fl-Inħawi tad-Dwejra (Għawdex).
- 2.10.4. Gozo has another two SACs of national importance. These are L-Għadira ta' San Raflu in Kerċem and In-Nuffara Area.
- 2.10.5. The region includes five Special Protection Areas (SPAs). These are:
- Rđumijiet ta' Għawdex 1/4: Il-Ponta ta' San Dimitri sal-Ponta ta' Ħarrux;
 - Rđumijiet ta' Għawdex 2/4: Il-Ponta ta' Ħarrux sal-Bajja tax-Xlendi (MT0000029);
 - Rđumijiet ta' Għawdex 3/4: Id-Dawra tas-Sanap sa Tal-Ħajt (MT0000028);
 - Rđumijiet ta' Għawdex 4/4: Ta' Ċenċ ; and
 - Kemmuna, Kemmunett, il-Ħaġriet ta' Bejn il-Kmiemen u l-Iskoll ta' Taħt il-Mazz.
- 2.10.6. Other environmental designations include: Areas of Ecological Importance, Sites of Scientific Importance, Tree Protected Areas and Bird Sanctuaries.
- 2.10.7. In 2011, a process for the management planning of all terrestrial Natura 2000 in the Maltese Islands was initiated. The result was the creation of a total of 22 management plans and eight conservation orders. These included five management plans and two conservation orders for Gozo and a management plan for Comino.
- 2.10.8. Common measures and actions that were presented in the management plans and conservation orders included: maintaining and/or extending of habitats, removal of alien species, site patrolling, restricting access in some areas whilst addressing access issues in other areas where access is not a threat to the habitats and species present, rehabilitating rural structures, limiting conflicting activities and undertaking studies on natural phenomena that impact the site (e.g. beach dynamics).

2.11. LANDSCAPE

- 2.11.1. In 2004, MEPA published a Landscape Assessment Study. The Study presented and described 35 character areas for Gozo. The Gozitan landscape is predominantly agricultural but includes a number of settlements. The topography is steeper than Malta. The western coast is characterised by plunging cliffs whilst the eastern coastline is generally characterised by clay taluses. Pocket beaches are mostly found on the northern shore. The inland areas include plateaux and valleys.
- 2.11.2. The figure below is based on the Local Plan map showing the Area of High Landscape Sensitivity.

2.12. CULTURAL HERITAGE

- 2.12.1. Gozo is rich in cultural heritage in different sectors: historical, traditions, etc.
- 2.12.2. Gozo's main historical landmarks are the Ċittadella in Victoria (Rabat) and the Ġgantija Temple complex, which is amongst the oldest free-standing building in the world and an UNESCO World Heritage site.
- 2.12.3. In addition to the main features mentioned above, there are also a number of

places of cultural value, which are scheduled to ensure their protection and conservation. The figure below shows the scheduled features across Gozo and Comino.

Figure 2.22: Environmental designations

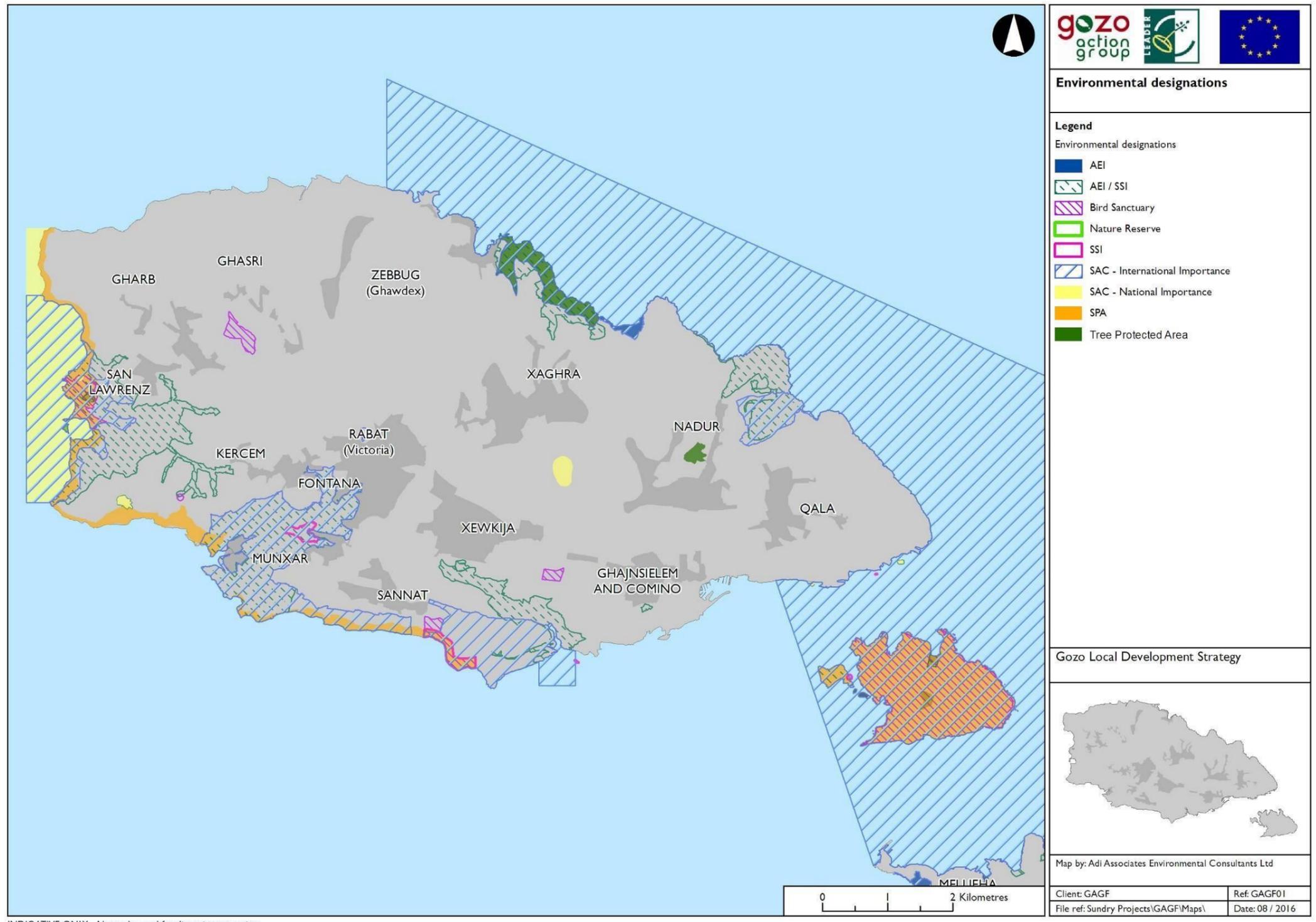
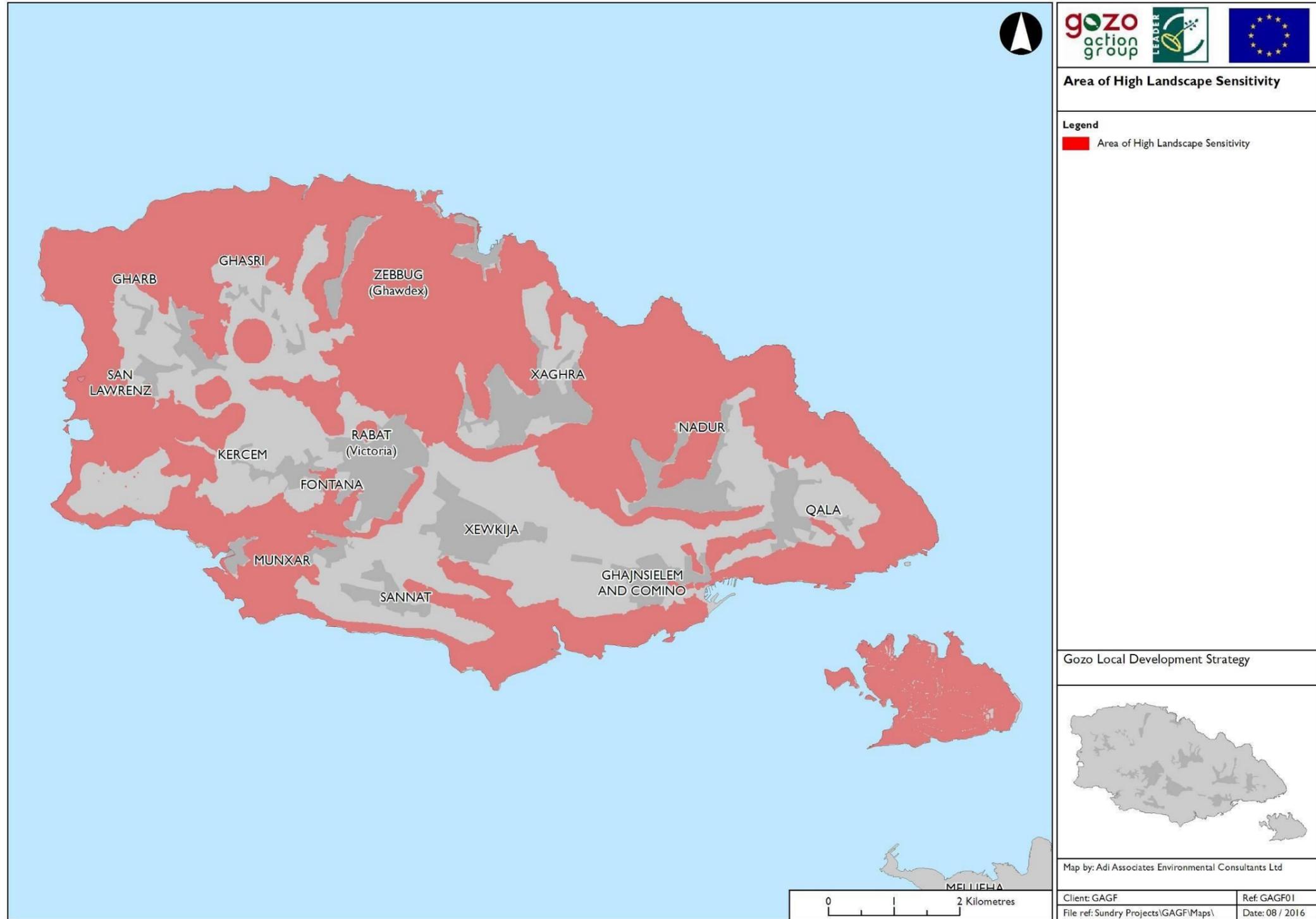
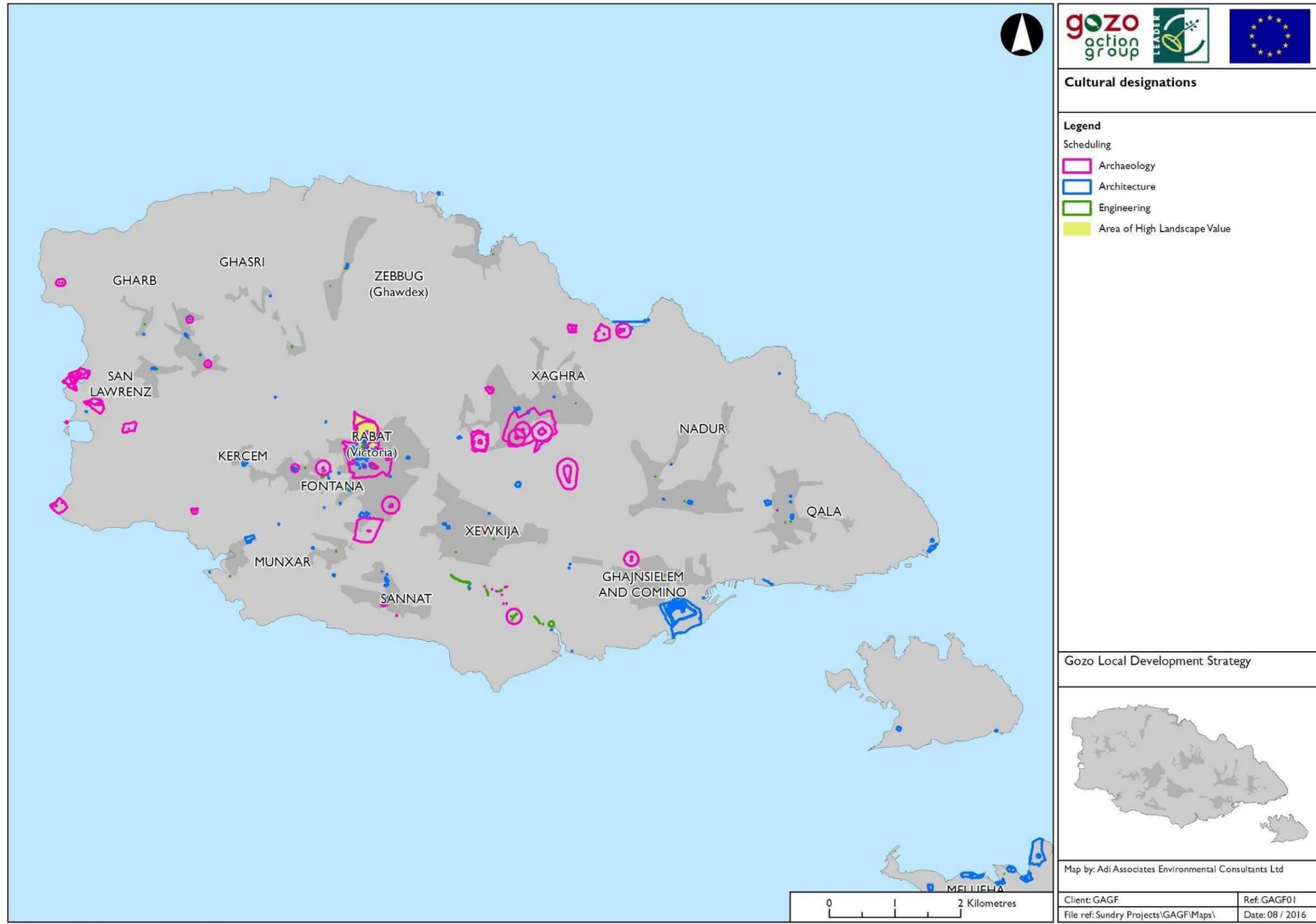


Figure 2.23: Areas of High Landscape Sensitivity



INDICATIVE ONLY - Not to be used for direct interpretation

Figure 2.24: Cultural heritage designations



INDICATIVE ONLY - Not to be used for direct interpretation

2.13. WIDER RELEVANT RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

- 2.13.1. The issues that have been presented above have long been recognized and expressed in a number of strategy documents, plans and programmes which are listed in this section of the report. Where particularly relevant, EU legislation is also referenced.
- 2.13.2. The following list makes reference to plans, programmes, and legislation that may have a bearing on the development of the LDS for Gozo. These have been divided into International Commitments, National Environmental and Planning Documents, and Sectoral Plans and Policies.

International Documents

□ **The UN Millennium Declaration and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)**

This declaration was aimed at revitalising international efforts to tackle critical development issues through the adoption of eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The seventh MDG is to ensure environmental sustainability. The LDS is cognisant of environmental sustainability requirements.

□ **UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), 1996**

This was the first international treaty that recognised the link between poverty and environmental degradation and to emphasise the need for an integrated approach to natural resource management and rural development. The Convention aims to combat desertification and mitigate effects of drought through the development of long-term integrated strategies that focus simultaneously, in affected areas, on improved productivity of land, and the rehabilitation, conservation and sustainable management of land and water resources.

□ **UN Framework Convention on Climate Change**

This Convention and any subsidiary legal instruments aim to stabilise greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with climatic conditions. Such a level should be achieved within a timeframe sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change to sustainability of food production and economic development. Climate change is considered a horizontal issue in the LDS.

□ **The Paris Agreement**

The Paris Agreement is an agreement within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. It has been negotiated by 195 countries. To date it has been ratified by 22 countries. It will enter into force once it is ratified by 55 countries that contribute to 55 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions.

The agreement included the following goals:

- “a long-term goal of keeping the increase in global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels;

- to aim to limit the increase to 1.5° C, since this would significantly reduce risks and the impacts of climate change;
- on the need for global emissions to peak as soon as possible, recognising that this will take longer for developing countries; and
- to undertake rapid reductions thereafter in accordance with the best available science.”

As mentioned, climate change is treated as a horizontal issue in the LDS.

□ **UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), 1992**

This provided the fundamental principles and the programme of action for commitments regarding the role of renewable energy in sustainable development and in reducing the effects of climate change together with an increase in the global share of renewable energy, the adoption of targets and work through partnerships with a focus for the promotion of the integration of the three pillars of sustainable development.

□ **Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, 1979**

The Bern Convention aims to ensure conservation of wild flora and fauna species and their habitats. Special attention is given to endangered and vulnerable species, including endangered and vulnerable migratory species specified in appendices. The Parties to the Convention (which includes Malta) must undertake to take all appropriate measures to ensure the conservation of the habitats of the wild flora and fauna species. Such measures should be included in the Parties’ planning and development policies and pollution control, with particular attention to the conservation of wild flora and fauna. They should also undertake to promote education and disseminate general information concerning the need to conserve species of wild flora and fauna and their habitats. Biodiversity has been highlighted as an important issue within the LDS, including specific reference to Natura2000 sites on Gozo.

□ **Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Bonn Convention), 1979**

The Convention aims to ensure conservation of migratory animals and their habitats. The Convention provides a platform for internationally coordinated conservation measures throughout a migratory range. The Convention provides a list of threatened migratory species which require strict protection since they are at risk of extinction (Annex I) and another list which indicates the migratory species that need or would significantly benefit from international cooperation (Annex II). The Convention is a legal framework with agreements ranging from legally binding treaties (i.e. Agreements) to less formal agreements (i.e. Memoranda of Understanding).

European policy documents

□ **Europe 2020**

Set out in 2010, Europe 2020 is a ten year programme aimed at creating jobs and growth across the EU. The goal of the agenda is to deliver “*growth that is: smart, through more effective investments in education, research and innovation; sustainable, thanks to a decisive move towards a low-carbon economy; and inclusive, with a strong emphasis on job creation and poverty reduction. The strategy is focused on five ambitious goals in the areas of employment, innovation, education, poverty reduction and climate/energy.*”

To ensure that the Europe 2020 strategy delivers, a strong and effective system of economic governance has been set up to coordinate policy actions between the EU and national levels.”

The programme has five targets that address the following areas:

- Employment;
- Research and Development;
- Climate change and energy sustainability;
- Education; and
- Fighting poverty and social exclusion.

□ **The Gothenburg Agenda**

Outlined in June 2001, and now known as the EU’s sustainable development strategy, it added the environmental dimension to the Lisbon Agenda, acting as its ‘third pillar’ together with economic and social reform. The agenda sets out key environmental objectives taking key international agreements into consideration. It requires the integration of environmental protection into other Community policies. The main priorities set out by this Agenda focus on climate change, sustainable transport, public health and resource management.

□ **The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)**

The CAP aims to ensure that farming and preservation of the environment go hand in hand. Following revisions to the original Policy, which focussed on subsidising production and buying up surpluses, the new emphasis is to enable food producers to survive by themselves in European and international markets. Financial safety nets are now aimed at mitigating natural disasters or outbreaks of animal disease. The Policy is being used to promote internationally competitive, quality foodstuffs, innovation in farming and food processing as well as rural development in order to counter global competition and meeting consumer demand, which are identified as the main challenges faced by EU farmers.

The CAP is based on two pillars. The first pillar addresses direct payments and market-related expenditure and the second pillar addresses rural development.

The second pillar includes the Leader rural development strategies.

□ **EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020**

This document aims to halt the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem service in the EU by 2020. There are six main targets and 20 actions to facilitate Europe to reach this goal. The six targets cover:

- Full implementation of EU nature legislation to protect biodiversity;
- Better protection for ecosystems, and more use of green infrastructure;
- More sustainable agriculture and forestry;
- Better management of fish stocks;
- Tighter controls on invasive alien species; and
- A bigger EU contribution to averting global biodiversity loss.

National environmental and planning requirements

□ **A Sustainable Strategy for the Maltese Islands 2006 - 2016**

The Sustainable Strategy is centred on the following four main themes: managing the environment and resources; promoting sustainable economic development; fostering sustainable communities; and cross-cutting strategic issues. Eight environmental aspects are identified as priorities under the environmental pillar, namely, climate change, air quality, nature and biodiversity, groundwater, seawater, waste, land use including the protection, maintenance, and improvement of the rural environment, and transport. The Strategy promotes an integrated policy approach. The Strategy highlights Gozo's sensitivity to urban development and regeneration projects by identifying that tourism as an economic activity is tied to visitors' experience of the island - over-development and over-urbanisation would have a negative effect on this economic sector. It advocates the need for an integrated approach to landscape management. The Strategy identifies the need to sustain the agricultural sector to preserve both the rural character of the countryside and to sustain food security. It acknowledges the sector's potential for multifunctionality and its appeal to tourists through production of high value-added products based on traditional techniques and practices.

□ **Malta's Partnership Agreement, 2013**

The Partnership Agreement provides the overall framework that determines the areas for investment under the European Structural and Investment Funds. The Partnership Agreement sets the framework for Operational Programme I, Operational Programme II, the Rural Development Programme, and the Fisheries Operational Programme. The Partnership Agreement includes the three funding priorities:

- Funding Priority 1: Fostering competitiveness through innovation and the

creation of a business-friendly environment

- Funding Priority 2: Sustaining an environmentally friendly and resource efficient economy
- Funding Priority 3: Creating Opportunities through investment in human capital and improving health and well-being

□ **Operational Programme I - Fostering a competitive and sustainable economy to meet our challenges - 2014-2020**

Operational Programme I (OP I) addresses the ‘specific needs of geographical areas which suffer from severe and permanent natural or demographic handicaps’. This specifically addresses Gozo’s double insularity and peripherality.

OP I states that the government will develop an integrated development strategy for Gozo to identify the specific needs and investment priorities for this region between 2014 and 2020. OP I points out that in the 2014 - 2020 funding period, the strategic investment in Gozo will include road and transport infrastructure in order to improve accessibility, competitiveness and an environment favourable for economic growth and job creation; and providing educational / training opportunities. Furthermore, investments will also be made in the environment particularly natural and cultural heritage. This will continue enhancing the Gozitan product and thus making the region more competitive.

□ **Operational Programme II - Investing in human capital to create more opportunities and promote the wellbeing of society - 2014-2020**

Operational Programme II (OP II) addresses the ‘specific needs of geographical areas which suffer from severe and permanent natural or demographic handicaps’. This specifically addresses Gozo’s double insularity and peripherality.

Both Operational Programmes aim to improve accessibility, competitiveness and the environment. OP II includes measures related to training and skills development, including the tourism sector and niche tourism sectors such as coastal and maritime tourism.

□ **Budget Document 2016**

The 2016 Budget document dedicated a whole section related to Gozo entitled: “Gozo: Creating More Prosperity”. The document included measures related to education (e.g. increased support to Gozitan students in Malta and the extension of the University Campus in Gozo). It also included measures to make Gozo a better tourist destination (e.g. studies for the construction of a rural airfield, tender for cruise liner terminal and yacht marina and a cruise liner buoy in Xlendi). It was pointed out that a robust advertising campaign was carried out and included a deeper appreciation of Gozo’s natural habitat amongst others. The employment sector is supported through various schemes. One such scheme includes refunding part of the salary of new employees in the private sector in Gozo. Furthermore there are plans for the creation of digital, creativity and medical hubs. There is also a plan to create a SME park as an extension to

the Xewkija industrial estate. The document highlights that more services have been provided to Gozo residents. More services are planned including a home for the elderly. The Budget document also points out public works and restoration works carried out (e.g. Ċittadella restoration) and applications for various historical sites.

□ **Strategic Plan for the Environment and Development, 2015 (SPED)**

The SPED replaces the Structure Plan for the Maltese Islands, 1990. It provides the long-term spatial strategy up to 2020 (identified as first date for review).

The Plan defines a spatial structure for Malta, defined as: Urban Area (Development Zone); Rural Area (Outside Development Zone); Coastal Zone (up to 12 nautical miles); Marine Area (between 12 - 25 nautical miles); and Gozo.

The Plan also outlines the National Spatial Framework for the Maltese Islands. The General Principles of this National Spatial Framework (NSF) advocate a sequential approach to the use of land, as follows:

3.1 The sustainable use of land and sea resources depends on the efficient use of available space. In preparing policies, plans and programmes Government will adopt a sequential approach to the use of land where development should be guided:

- *firstly to the re-use of existing developed land and buildings (through change of use);*
- *secondly to re-development of existing developed land and buildings; and*
- *finally, where no other feasible alternatives exist, to the use of vacant land.*

This sequential approach is being adopted in order to ensure that land take up in the Rural Area is considered as a last resort and where it is essential for the achievement of sustainable development.

The policy objectives of the NSF are defined under 4 'themes' (described as the key issues): Socio-economic Development; Environment; Climate Change; and Travel patterns, and under the spatial areas: Urban, Rural, Coastal and Marine, and Gozo).

□ **National Reform Programme, 2016**

The National Reform Programme (NRP) outlines Malta's policies and measures to sustain growth and jobs and to reach the Europe 2020 targets. The 2016 National Reform Programme points out that allowances were being given to Gozitan students following a full-time post-secondary course in Malta. This also applied to Maltese students undertaking full-time studies in Gozo. The NRP also highlights the creation of a learning hub in Gozo and the development of a retirement home, which is underway. The NRP also refers to the feasibility

study, which is being undertaken in relation to the geological challenges for the creation of a Malta-Gozo link.

□ **Gozo and Comino Local Plan, 2006**

The Gozo and Comino Local Plan is a land use plan that provides strategic guidance for the entire area of Gozo and Comino. It describes Gozo and Comino as having a predominantly rural character. The Local Plan also identifies that the strategic direction for the area is to promote Gozo and Comino as a rural, landscape and cultural heritage destination. The Local Plan includes policies related to agriculture, urban and cultural conservation, tourism and recreation, and rural conservation. The Local Development Strategy takes into consideration all relevant policies defined in the Local Plan.

□ **Rural Policy and Design Guidance, 2014**

This policy and design guidance replaced the 2007 Policy and Design Guidance - Agriculture and Farm Diversification and Stables Policy, the 1995 Development Control Guidance: development Outside Built-Up Areas and the 2000 Development Control Guidance: swimming Pools Outside Development Zone. The document regulates the use of land which is within Outside Development Zones (ODZ). The document also addresses the agriculture. The new policy document also takes into account the conservation value of any scheduled or protected site or feature in the rural area vis-à-vis proposed developments.

□ **The Rural Development Programme for Malta - 2014 - 2020**

The strategy for rural development in Malta has been based on a wide consultation with the rural stakeholders and the potential beneficiaries. It has identified five themes reflecting the RDP needs. The identified themes are:

- Water, wastes and energy: improving sustainable use and generating renewable energy;
- Maltese quality produce: improving quality, traceability, strategic marketing, adding value, branding and promotion;
- Sustainable livestock: improving resource efficiency, competitiveness and productivity, and welfare;
- Landscape and environment - managing habitats and features; and
- Wider rural economy and quality of life - developing rural tourism, rural skills and promoting social inclusion.

The cross-cutting themes consist of:

- Environment;
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation; and
- Innovation.

The focus areas of the RDP are:

1A) Fostering innovation, cooperation, and the development of the knowledge base in rural areas;

1B) Strengthening the links between agriculture, food production and forestry and research and innovation, including for the purpose of improved environmental management and performance;

1C) Fostering lifelong learning and vocational training in the agricultural and forestry sectors;

2A) Improving the economic performance of all farms and facilitating farm restructuring and modernisation, notably with a view to increasing market participation and orientation as well as agricultural diversification;

2B) Facilitating the entry of adequately skilled farmers into the agricultural sector and, in particular, generational renewal;

3A) Improving competitiveness of primary producers by better integrating them into the agri-food chain through quality schemes, adding value to agricultural products, promotion in local markets and short supply circuits, producer groups and inter-branch organisations;

3B) Supporting farm risk prevention and management;

4A) Restoring, preserving and enhancing biodiversity, including in Natura 2000 areas, and in areas facing natural or other specific constraints and high nature value farming, as well as the state of European landscapes;

4B) Improving water management, including fertiliser and pesticide management; 4C)

Preventing soil erosion and improving soil management;

5A) Increasing efficiency in water use by agriculture;

5B) Increasing efficiency in energy use in agriculture and food processing; 5C)

Facilitating the supply and use of renewable sources of energy, of by products, wastes, residues and other non food raw material for the purposes of the bio-economy;

5D) Reducing green house gas and ammonia emissions from agriculture;

5E) Fostering carbon conservation and sequestration in agriculture and forestry;

6A) Facilitating diversification, creation and development of small enterprises, as well as job creation;

6B) Fostering local development in rural areas; and

6C) Enhancing the accessibility, use and quality of information and communication technologies (ICT) in rural areas.

LEADER contributes to Focus Area 6B: Promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas. In accordance with the RDP, LEADER targets the local development of rural areas and contributes to enhancing social capital through the implementation of operations under local development strategies together with cooperation activities (direct contribution through sub-measures 19.2 and 19.3).

The RDP 2014-2020 for this funding period dedicates a large budget to actions that contribute to the attainment of EU climate change targets. The programme will not support measures that are related to the conforming to obligatory standards unless these standards are new and have been introduced during the programming period. The eligibility of expenditure will not commence until the beneficiaries have signed the relevant agreements.

□ **Waste Management Plan for the Maltese Islands 2014 - 2020**

This Plan presents the waste hierarchy and aims at moving Malta up this hierarchy through increased prevention, re-use, recycling and recovery. The Plan sets out a number of practical targets that have to be met by 2020 to reach this aim. The Plan refers to the setting up of a waste transfer station in Gozo. This facility will receive, sort, process, temporary store and transfer wastes from Gozo and Comino. The plan also suggests the setting up of an anaerobic digestion plant in Gozo for the digestion of the organic fraction of municipal solid waste. The plan has also indicated that Gozo could be used as a pilot site for the piloting of certain initiatives.

□ **Sewerage Master Plan, 1990**

The Sewerage Master Plan provides the framework for the upgrading of the sewerage infrastructure of the Maltese Islands. It calls for the construction of three sewage treatment plants, one in Gozo and two in Malta. The sewage treatment plant in Gozo was commissioned in 2008.

□ **National Report on the Strategic Action Plan for the Conservation of Maltese Coastal and Marine Biodiversity, 2002**

This Report identifies priority actions in the field of marine and coastal biodiversity. These actions include the preparation of species and habitat action plans, declaration of marine and coastal protected areas, data compilation, monitoring proposals, upgrading research equipment, and effective enforcement.

□ **A Vision for an Eco-Island**

Eco-Gozo, or the Eco-Island vision for Gozo is basically a sustainable development strategy for the Island of Gozo adopted by government in 2009. The vision was based on a public consultation process. The Eco-Gozo vision incorporates its main strategic objectives:

- Quality investment for more sustainable jobs;
- A better quality of life;

- A society exerting less pressure on the environment;
- A wholesome natural and cultural environment;
- A caring society for all; and
- Sustaining the island's identity.

□ **National Environmental Policy, 2012**

The final NEP was launched in February 2012 and covers all end sectors and natural resources, including air, waste, water, land, soil, climate, biodiversity, coastal and marine area, noise chemicals and mineral resources. The policy covers the period from 2012 to 2020.

□ **National Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan (NBSAP) (2012-2020)**

The NBSAP provides a vision that reflects the priorities for efficient use of resources and halting biodiversity loss in line with EU requirements and the Global Biodiversity Strategic Plan under the Convention on Biological Diversity. The NBSAP serves as a national policy driver to integrate biodiversity concerns in various plans, programmes and policies. The Plan includes 19 national targets, strategic directions for reaching targets and a set of actions and measures grouped into 18 thematic areas.

□ **Draft National Strategy for the Cultural Heritage (2012 - 2016)**

The draft National Strategy for Cultural Heritage 2012 addresses 22 interrelated objectives, which are grouped into four main areas:

- Broadening citizen participation: cultural heritage and the local community;
- Improving governance in the cultural heritage sector: Investment in the administration setup of the local cultural heritage;
- Care and use of the cultural heritage resource: preservation and conservation; and
- Sustainable use of heritage resources: sustainable use of cultural heritage.

2.14. REPORT OF THE STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

2.14.1. As described in Section 4 of the LDS, the Strategy was formulated following an extensive public consultation programme. The following section describes the outcome of this public consultation exercise.

Group Stakeholder Events

2.14.2. The following is a summarised report of the discussion and feedback received from the stakeholder events, organised under the headings '*issues related to experience of the previous programme*' and '*suggestions for, and issues to be taken account of, in the next programme*'; topic areas are grouped where possible. Furthermore, the wording of the comments is reported as close as possible to the actual feedback received. Detailed minutes of meeting/consultations can be found under **Appendix 1**.

Issues related to experience of the previous programme:

- LEADER is important, in the previous funding period there were challenges related to the bureaucracy involved in applying for these funds such as timing of disbursement, refund for VAT expenses and co-financing requirements.
- The process to apply for funds is inordinately bureaucratic. There needs to be more assistance available to help people with the paperwork in applying for the funds.
- The disbursement of funds was a challenge. It is also important to allocate funds where there is a real need.
- It is important to allocate funds efficiently. Funds should not be diluted on small projects but should focus on projects which can be long-term, and which will benefit Gozo as a whole.
- There should be better scrutiny of projects, as projects undertaken often go against each other's objectives.
- LEADER does not cater for tourism specifically. In the previous programme, measures 313 and 323 were important and many local councils benefitted from them. However, there now appears to be a gap to fund tourism projects.
- With regards to branding, the LEADER budget is too small to fund a national campaign.

Suggestions for, and issues to be taken account of, in the next programme:

- In identifying the projects to be funded through LEADER, it is important to make sure that the projects cannot be addressed by the RDP or other EU Funds.
- Some projects or measures can only be implemented and made effective if a supportive system is included.
- Suggestion to undertake pilot food quality schemes.

- Focus more on education by creating a specific curriculum for Gozo. The needs of Gozo are different from those of Malta, with particular reference to agriculture.
- To date, agriculture has always been regarded as a job for the unskilled, but, this mentality does not reflect the truth.
- There is the need to balance modern life and agriculture. One cannot expect youths with modern ideas to continue on the traditional path of agriculture. Instead, agriculture should be modernised through creative ideas, creating a new type of modern agriculture.
- An agricultural educational exchange can be considered as a measure.
- There needs to be a focus on the quantity and quality of local produce. The market conditions (standards, competition, regulations, etc.) are making it difficult to get local supplies. Additionally, there are issues of traceability. Food products can be marketed as local, but it is difficult to identify their exact origin; for example, there is only one official supplier of rabbits in Malta, so supply is scarce, and it means that rabbit served in restaurants is bought from abroad and mis-sold as a local product.
- Allow restaurateurs to invest in the supply of food - for example, in the infrastructure of a slaughterhouse.
- Bring in experts from abroad, with funding streams dedicated to bringing in these experts to show us how we can use these resources.
- There is the need to encourage urban farming.
- There is an issue with high prices for local produce. There is also the need for a choice; if you want to eat fresh then it means you have to be ready to pay a higher price.
- Gozo shouldn't always be associated with agriculture; we should not only build a future for the young based on agriculture.
- There should be incentives, and other positive interventions, to encourage farmers to remain in cultivation and not to disrupt bird habitats. For example, wheat is cultivated in Għarb and Għasri, where wheat attracts birds. There should also be incentives to encourage the control of alien species.
- The concept of environmental stewardship was emphasised, where the LEADER encourages sustainable agriculture, which develops hand in hand with the environment and quality of life.
- There is a need to address the issue of increasing awareness. For example, some farmers are unaware that they have to attend courses on pesticides and have to send samples abroad to be tested for high levels of pesticides.
- There is the need of a positive relationship between agriculture and the

environment and not a negative one.

- There is also an important element to explore in safeguarding the environment, which could be addressed if interventions are made in context of tourism and other events. This could be a project including cultural NGOs, done outside peak season to try to attract tourists all year round.
- It is important to emphasise and promote the Gozitan lifestyle. This is considered crucial for sustainability.
- There is the risk that all Gozo localities will become a resort, thereby losing the Gozo identity.
- Youths are emigrating and have no interest in sustaining traditions. We need to find different and innovative ways to address this issue of migrating youths to Malta. Gozo needs to become attractive to youths (***this was an issue raised several times by different stakeholders***).
- There is the need to equip youths with enough skills to integrate in this globalised world, and then to make Gozo attractive enough to return and they can contribute to Gozo.
- For youths to stay in Gozo there is the need for more emphasis on entrepreneurship.
- Suggestion for a University in Gozo with different courses than those offered in Malta. This will also address insularity; the University would also attract those living in Malta.
- Another solution could be the creation of more family facilities, to give more life to Gozo.
- The problem goes deeper than the problem of connectivity. There aren't many people with new ideas who can create new niche markets to attract quality tourists to Gozo.
- There should be a holistic approach, and a focus on new niches, to eliminate seasonality.
- There is a lack of statistics on youth employment available for Gozo; therefore, informed decisions are difficult to make.
- Statistics do highlight a high level of illiteracy in Gozo; this can be an issue of demography where there is an aging population.
- It is not a question of statistics - not a question of how many are illiterate / leave Gozo, but it is a question of why. This would be an interesting project, that could be carried out by different interested stakeholders (falls under education).
- A project on the information or background of Gozo would be an interesting one.

- The importance of participation is crucial. There is the need for more collaboration between NGOs and businesses. Actors should work together; a group of actors working together are likely to receive a larger budget.
- The work being done today by NGOs needs to be sustained. It is important that funds reach NGOs and down to grassroots level.
- Partnership is much needed to gain strength and be able to valorise Gozo globally.
- There is the need for cooperation between land owners and users of land, for example, trails.
- Suggested interventions (projects) on light pollution and noise pollution (horizontal themes).
- While partnerships of implementation of measures was encouraged so that larger budgets could be utilised there as concern that NGOs would not be able to absorb these funds.
- Measures related to infrastructure appear to have a small budget as investment is costly.
- The Department of Education, NGOs such as the Malta Organic Agriculture Movement together with Local Councils proposed a project for schools in Gozo to expose youths to rural life and by introducing Vertical Gardens with positive climate implications.

Report of the Stakeholder Interviews / Meetings

2.14.3. The following is a summarised report of the discussion and feedback received from the stakeholder events, which mainly consisted of one type of stakeholder such as Ministries, and NGOs. Again, the feedback is organised under the headings '*issues related to experience of the previous programme*' and '*suggestions for, and issues to be taken account of, in the next programme*', and topic areas are grouped where possible. The wording of the comments is again reported as close as possible to the actual feedback received.

Issues related to experience of the previous programme:

- LEADER has not been as effective as augured, even though the funds were used in needed investments. One of the reasons is the lack of partnership. Partners working together will serve to create checks and balances to the system.
- A lesson learned from the previous LEADER programme is that projects need to be inclusive.
- There is the need for a document with a description of procedures / regulations / guidelines for every measure taken during the previous LEADER programme.

- It is important to have clear and tougher criteria to avoid misunderstandings and conflict of interest.
- Some irregularities were discovered during audits of projects under the previous programme. The criteria need to be clearer, to avoid confusion.
- There needs to be clear and tougher criteria to avoid misunderstandings and conflict of interest.
- There is overlapping of projects; funding on similar projects / activities needs to be avoided.
- It is important that stakeholders are brought together to avoid duplication on projects resulting in waste of funds. Projects should not replicate what already exists.
- It is important not to allocate too much funding to landscaping projects and to not to waste funds on what is already there.
- There are challenges with regard to clarifications and the documentation required by the Managing Authority.
- The high turnover of human resources at the Managing Authority / Paying Agency resulted in a lack of coordination and proper communication
- The issue of bank charges is something that the Councils feel needs to be addressed.
- Co-financing is a challenge for the Councils and NGOs.
- There is a problem with co-financing; it requires partnership with the private sector.
- Where there is a lack of experts within the local councils, Central Government needs to help councils with the expenses incurred to appoint experts during the application process.
- There is double work when the same documentation is requested by the Paying Agency / Managing Authority and the Gozo LAG.
- There is a lack of synergy between the Gozo LAG, the Managing Authority and the Paying Agency.
- There is a need to overcome the problem of lack of communication between the Paying Agency / Managing Authority and the Gozo LAG.
- The high turnover of human resources at the Paying Agency / Managing Authority means that sometimes communication is mislaid (especially e-mail communication).

- Local Councils encountered problems of communication, in situations where they agreed on an issue and encountered problems when they needed to apply such agreement, and on the matter of VAT refunds.
- Measure 125, on access, was very important and highly requested by several applicants.

Suggestions for and issues to be taken account of, in the next programme:

- Proposed projects under the LEADER programme need to aggregate various objectives through a SMART and a vertical approach, targeting aspects from the initial stages of the product development to customer.
- Projects chosen to need to show that they can be self-sustainable beyond the funding period.
- Inter-linkages between sectors is seen positively. It is recommended that in order to develop these inter-linkages, someone who lives within the community is employed to create ideas and projects that could be funded - animation for the territory. This person would help market the product. The main issue is to ensure the person has the right competence for the job. This person would look at local needs and help them develop plans, including for funding.
- Technical support is required, as is training (maybe participation in a Conference like European Association - for crafts/heritage products etc.,)
- Partnerships between local councils and the agricultural sector is to be encouraged.
- Marketing Gozo through the promotion of local agricultural products is important.
- There is the need of a proper structure to get the small producers together, to make them aware of the funds' existence, and to help them get funds.
- Farmers should be encouraged to work together to gain strength. The Confederation of Agriculture and Fisheries unites small producers.
- The LAG should encourage farmers to work together, to gain strength.
- A farm visiting project could be taken forward under the LEADER programme, where farmers would directly sell a percentage of their produce. There could be walking trails, or cycling trails, and tourists could visit different farms whilst enjoying the unique experience of seeing and understanding the cultivation of unique Gozitan products. For example, Gozitan organises the 'Farm to Fork' event.
- The agricultural sector can be innovative, for example, the cultivation of blueberries (a possible niche) and the creation of carob tea.
- The new actions should be of direct benefit to the agriculture sector and not

to entities that make use of agriculture for their benefit.

- Sometimes there are misunderstandings between local councils and farmers. The councils and farmers should work together to innovate the farms and open them up to tourists.
- Farmers find it difficult to collaborate as they are afraid of intrusion.
- There is the need of a proper structure to get these small producers together, make them aware of the fund's existence and help them get funds.
- Trade fairs already exist but there is a lack of participation by local producers; only a few participate mainly because most of the farmers work on part-time basis. There are only two vendors at the farmers' market and there is a great demand for this produce. One of the problems is the taxation regime which allows the Pitkali produce cheaper produce.
- Gastronomic tourism is a specific niche. The ITS in Qala can incorporate such initiatives. There could be an initiative focussed around gastronomy, where a consortium of quality would be formed.
- The Gozo Tourism Association, together with the Malta Chef Society, already organise a food festival.
- There is a need for participation from restaurateurs in using local products
- One proposed project is to get international chefs to set the menu for restaurateurs using local products. These renowned celebrities could potentially show them how to do this economically, so they will be making profit while using local food.
- The project named "*Serata di Gola e Dopoteatro con gli Chef*" saw the coming together of Gozitan produce and the creativity of well-known chefs from Emilia-Romagna and other Italian produce. As part of this initiative, the Porsche Grand Tour of Taste came to the Maltese Islands including Gozo. There was a display of Porsche cars and around 40 journalists from the different Italian press houses. A similar initiative that would create a synergy between local producers, restaurateurs and chefs would be welcome and will have interested applicants. This successful activity was a once-off event and had no sustained outcome.
- Other interesting projects would be about youth entrepreneurship.
- There is a need to encourage youths to work within the tourism sector.
- In order to conserve traditions, it is important to talk to those who know these traditions and experienced them. This could be done using media - a way to conserve traditions in long run. This is a problem with the aging population and youth that are abandoning this way of life. This is an innovative proposal consisting of ICT, Gozitan way of life and the youth.

- We need innovative ideas to enhance what already is there in Gozo.
- There should be a focus on projects reviving dying traditions, including related to food, biodiversity and artisan work.
- Promotion of the village identity and Gozitan lifestyle should be prioritised, for example a photography initiative to safeguard the Gozitan lifestyle.
- There should be a Gozo Label. Alternatively, there could be a list of food items / plates that can use local produce and can be used by restaurants; restaurants using this list have to be certified.
- Projects could include themed parks like ‘Betlehem f’Għajnsielem’ and the creation of a ‘Ġnien Għawdxi’ which includes local biodiversity. The Ta’ Mena farm, includes the raising of local animals, is a good example.
- Sannat Local Council has a detailed proposal ready for the creation of a medieval life activity, involving several groups within the locality - lectures on wine production, medieval times, clothes, market, etc. Use of ICT has been considered to promote such an activity.
- The promotion of Gozo as distinct destination could include museums with audio guides.
- Industrial heritage could be promoted.
- Other projects could be the restoration of local squares, museums on local history.
- In Munxar, two war shelters need to be developed, and there is need for intervention in the local square
- The emphasis on the promotion of Gozo as a distinct destination should be extended.
- It does not make sense to promote Gozo solely for its rural products. The industry is shooting itself in the foot when taking this attitude and approach.
- Another good initiative is that of supporting short films however these should not be linked to a ‘cliché image’ of Gozo.
- Crafts and artisanal work should be developed further. It appears that local crafts have stuck to the same forms / products / models; the sector seems to be fossilized. Crafts should not be relevant solely to tourists.
- There should be a focus on what makes Gozo distinct. Features that can be enhanced should be funded. For example, walking paths are important, and maintenance and vandalism are an issue. Accessibility is also an issue, because of hunters is an issue.
- The Council of Sannat has a project for Mġarr ix Xini.

- Can there be a database and archive of interviews of people, skills, crafts - to pass on the knowledge. Capturing the information is a priority.
- There is an issue with seasonality in Gozo. Critical mass is an issue, but activities are dead in winter months. There should be more activities for the off-peak season.
- There needs to be consideration of what volumes of economic activity Gozo needs to achieve given its current population, and a balance between economic activity and the requirements of the population.
- LEADER could be a push for small artisans, to sell their goods (possibly on a website). If they form a small group, they can help each other out (micro-firms).
- There should be a common platform - ecommerce for crafts, food, drink - and similarly typical Gozo products.
- An area which can be developed further is that of managed country walks. French and UK rambler associations can possibly be international partners. Although there is the need for more co-ordination in order to avoid duplication of initiatives in this field.
- Water quality, waste management and organic farming are other areas that require action, although these areas are also addressed through other funding programmes.
- Towards the end of September, the separate collection of organic waste from households was starting for the entire island of Gozo. The LEADER programme could facilitate the introduction of this initiative through the provision of certain infrastructure (such as underground storage for bring-in sites). Waste management issues could be included in the SWOT analysis.
- Issues related to climate change are more difficult to allocate specifically to Gozo as they go beyond regional level and both adaptation and mitigation of climate change are significantly covered by the RDP. As such, climate change should be incorporated as a cross-cutting issue and should be reflected in as many leader initiatives as possible.
- Options to introduce the circular economy could be explored, with regards to waste generation from primary production and processing.
- In respect of 'Green' branding, concepts promoting green lodging and low carbon footprint would be favoured.
- Branding requires a lot of administration. An attempt was made to create a brand, but it was met with hostility from the Malta Crafts Council. One of the problems of branding is traceability of the produce, and that this measure is covered by other RDP measures.
- Another project could focus on landscape interpretation and curatorship, to

reduce the impact of rural eyesores (Israel is at the forefront in this regard). Small interventions in the landscape could be made, wherein an area would be identified that requires intervention.

- Ecosystems, biodiversity, flora, fauna-measures to support natural environment should be encouraged.
- Water conservation is important.
- We could use local knowledge to create projects; local knowledge on medicinal herbs can be developed.
- We can use funds to put signs where it is unsafe to swim; unsafe areas should be highlighted, although cluttering with signage could be an issue.
- A coordinated project should be undertaken to ensure that the landscape is safeguarded.
- Ġhajnsielem's Green Infrastructure Project that already has an Action Plan prepared for it and could be funded.
- Din l-Art Ħelwa have a project for Comino on the conversion of an old bakery to an Interpretation Centre.
- Projects with potential environmental impacts especially in Natura 2000 sites should be considered carefully.
- Education and future employment in Gozo are closely linked - the needs to train Gozitan people in niche markets and sectors that are relevant to Gozo need to be explored not only in agriculture but in all fields. Training facilities in Gozo should be considered further.
- Since Gozo gets many day trippers, it is important to try and extend these stays to cover longer periods.
- The Local Council of Ġhasri proposed projects related to resurfacing of roads, recreational area / public garden / playing field in Ġhasri, cleaning of Wied il-Ġhasri, and restoration of rubble walls and historical monuments and buildings.

2.15. SWOT ANALYSIS

- 2.15.1. This section lays out a detailed analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) of the Gozo region derived through a process based on both desk research and discussions with local actors. The environmental and socio-economic background presented above supplied the necessary information to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the Gozo region. However, though this provided a strong basis for a SWOT analysis, it was further enhanced through a bottom-up approach where public consultations were undertaken as part of the process to develop the Community-Led Local Development Strategy.
- 2.15.2. The Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats identified throughout this process where categorised under 5 categories, mainly:
- 1) Economy
 - 2) Environment
 - 3) Social
 - 4) Culture and Heritage
 - 5) Governance
- 2.15.3. The SWOT analysis carried out for each category is in line with the RDP objectives (water, waste and energy, quality produce, sustainable stock, landscape and environment and economy and quality of life) and address the RDP cross cutting themes (competitiveness, innovation, climate and environment).
- 2.15.4. The results are outlined below:

Table 2.1: SWOT analysis

	Economy	Environment	Social	Culture and Heritage	Governance
STRENGTHS	S.1 Prevalence of microbusinesses provides an extent of flexibility and resilience to economic shocks.	S.4 Presence of unique natural environment including biodiversity assets, including Nature 2000 sites with management plans approved by Government.	S.6 More pronounced sense of social cohesion and community ties as compared to the national situation.	S.11 Presence of a significant number of designated sites that are protected for their cultural heritage value.	S.12 Existence of specific Ministry to interact at national government level.
	S.2 Currently benefitting from up-surgings international tourism and to a lesser extent real estate which is taking place at the national economic level. Gozo is also benefitting from a long-established, strong reputation for domestic tourism, and incipient activities in tourism niches and film industry.	S.5 Environmental capital is relatively more abundant and relatively well-maintained, also through EU-funded investments.	S.7 Elderly people with considerable amount of knowledge on traditions that could be transmitted to younger generations.		S.13 Active involvement in local government as a means for the improvement of quality of life.
	S.3 Strong recent development of infrastructure mainly related to tourism, agriculture and transport, with a significant contribution from EU funding.		S.8 Perceived enhanced quality of life for specific segments of the population including national and international visitors.		S.14 Strong presence of NGOs
			S.9 Safe and secure living environments.		S.15 Existence of Gozo Regional Council to participate in social dialogue at a national level.
		S.10 Lower population density in comparison to national average		S.16 Implementation of first LEADER in Gozo is perceived to have produced tangible results, with some important lessons, including need for a stronger partnership approach.	

	Economy	Environment	Social	Culture and Heritage	Governance
WEAKNESSES	W.1 Accessibility issues which could result in loss of business and higher transport costs, due to insufficient transport infrastructure. Detachment from core economic and social activity in mainland is often reflected in lower rates of capacity utilisation in tourism and manufacturing.	W.9 Lack of quantity and quality of water for irrigation.	W.12 Degentrification of population reflecting the emigration of younger workers and families to the main Island and elsewhere mostly due to insufficiently rewarding job opportunities.	W.15 Aging population could result in loss of traditions that are unique to Gozo.	W.17 Excessive fragmentation of NGOs which is often characterised by small competing outfits with limited links with the business sector.
	W.2 Emigration of youths, especially those with better education, resulting in lower labour force and skills drain.	W.10 Land fragmentation, negatively effecting profitability and sustainability of agriculture while creating strong conflicts between competing uses of land.	W.13 Social proximity could at times hinder openness to external cultural influences which could be beneficial to social development.	W. 16 Exploitation of widely-known cultural heritage sites, with the less known ones being ignored especially by the tourism sector	W.18 Smallness of public and private operators accentuate the costs of bureaucratic procedures on individual entities.
	W.3 Smallness and peripherality limiting the reaping of economies of scale.	W.11 Unsustainability of certain practices in the agricultural sector especially related to emissions from waste management in livestock and lack of infrastructure to address waste management from agriculture	W.14 General lack of sufficient amenities for youths and young families.		W.19 Insufficient statistical information on Gozo which can be used for studies and analysis to better identify Gozo's needs and priorities.
	W.4 Low productivity, high concentration of lower income households and, relative low investment rates as compared to the mainland.				W.20 Fragmentation of business limits horizontal activities such as human resource activities and research and innovation.
	W.5 Education efforts conflicted between the requirement to provide widely marketable skills and the need to create skills which can be specifically used in the narrow range of economic activities in Gozo.				W.21 Excessive proximity in social networks at times inhibits from proper and fair conduct of certain governance functions.
	W.6 Seasonality in economic activity, with a marked drop in business during the winter season.				
	W.7 Excess dependence on public sector and a few traditional economic activities, limiting the variety of job opportunities.				
	W.8 Virtually no presence of 'new economy' activities.				

	Economy	Environment	Social	Culture and Heritage	Governance	
OPPORTUNITIES	O.1 Gozo's location and uniqueness can serve as an opportunity to develop and diversify into niche markets, like for example the film Industry.	O.6 Presence of under-valued sites whose amenity value could be increased through interventions.	O.8 Positive traits of Gozo's lifestyle could be promoted to wider audiences.	O.10 Widening of knowledge and appreciation of indigenous food and craft products, as well as sites could enhance cultural and natural heritage capital.	O.11 Stronger collaboration between stakeholders could produce an overall better utilisation of scarce resources, as demonstrated also by past LEADER activities within the Region.	
	O.2 Economic value for tourism valorisation of Gozo unique characteristics through the creation of distinctiveness and innovative approaches.	O.7 Potential to invest in systems that address climate change adaptation	O.9 Youth could be attracted to social activities through a modernisation effort by NGOs and other social actors.			
	O.3 Potential for further development of agricultural produce in terms of quality and variety for niche markets.					
	O.4 Improvement in connectivity could open opportunities for 'new economic' activities.					
	O.5 Unexploited potential of youth entrepreneurship					

	Economy	Environment	Social	Culture and Heritage	Governance
THREATS	T.1 Excessive dependence on a limited number of sectors may lead to individual shocks having severe repercussions.	T.5 Vulnerability to climate change	T.7 Development of economic activities in a manner that is incompatible with the valorisation of Gozo's lifestyle.	T.8 Development of economic activities in a manner that is incompatible with the valorisation of cultural and natural heritage sites.	T.9 Excessive fragmentation and inappropriate use of proximity could deteriorate the efficiency of resource use.
	T.2 Vulnerability of agriculture to climate conditions.	T.6 Development of economic activities in a manner that is incompatible with the valorisation of Gozo's natural environment.			
	T.3 Dependence on national political for the undertaking of substantial investment which will be required in coming years to sustain and improve connectivity.				
	T.4 Careers in traditional activities are perceived to be inferior by workers and students inhibiting the restructuring to higher value added niches within such activities.				

- 2.15.5. The strengths identified under each category can be used as a tool to safeguard the region of Gozo and overcome threats. For instance, although the dependence on a small number of sectors makes the Gozitan economy more vulnerable, Gozo has a long-established, strong reputation for domestic tourism, and incipient activities in tourism niches could be used as a tool to diversify within these sectors themselves to make them more resilient to external shocks. Gozo has also proved to have been resilient to external shocks over the past few years. Such experiences could be used by Gozo to tap into other market reducing vulnerability on agriculture and other small sectors. This would result in job creation. Considering the social aspect, this SWOT analysis clearly shows what a sense of belonging there is within the region of Gozo with a safe and secure environment enhancing the quality of life.
- 2.15.6. It has been clearly established that Gozo is an island with resources that are not yet being exploited to an extent that benefit the Gozo region. The opportunities need to be properly identified and developed further to address weaknesses. Gozo weaknesses can be turned into opportunities. Although Gozo is small, its smallness and unique ambiance can serve as the perfect host for new niche markets that could only be created and developed in Gozo. The conversion of weaknesses into opportunities would require innovative approaches that are underpinned by a strong network of partnerships between all actors involved, creating a virtuous circle of demographic and cultural regeneration based on the retention and attraction of talent within the younger population.

2.16. REGIONAL NEEDS

2.16.1. From the SWOT analysis, it was possible to extract the needs and objective of the Gozo region. As illustrated by **Table 2.6**, the following seven needs were identified:

- 1) **New Economy activities:** This reflects the need for new market niches to move away from traditional sectors which might be possibly creating a stagnant economy.
- 2) **Food supply chain innovation/evolution through verticalisation:** This Need calls for better recognition of Gozo produce without creating overlaps with shorter supply chain interventions contemplated through other measures within the RDP. The need satisfied through LEADER will therefore focus on innovation and evolution of food products and production.
- 3) **Agriculture and Environment:** Agriculture has always been considered as the main driver for Gozo's economy together with tourism. As such there is the need to enhance the agricultural sector.
- 4) **Climate and Environment:** The need to address climate and environment in line with the RDP horizontal themes.
- 5) **Gozo Lifestyle:** This Need emphasizes the importance to promote Gozo enhanced way of life perceived through a tranquil ambience and secure and safe environment.
- 6) **Cultural Heritage:** The need to accentuate and promote unique heritage that can only be found in Gozo.
- 7) **Partnership:** This reflects the need to remove any form of divisibility or fragmentation within Gozitan society and work together towards the benefit of Gozo.

Table 2.6: Gozo needs

R NEEDS WITH SPECIFIC RELEVANCE TO LEADE PROGRAMME	N.1 'New Economy Activities'	N.3 "Agriculture and Environment"	N.5 "Gozo Lifestyle"	N.6 "Cultural Heritage"	N.7 "Partnership Approach"
	<p>Diversification into 'new economy' activities which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) create job opportunities for younger, better-skilled workers; (ii) create synergies with the existing economic base, while reducing dependence on few sectors; (iii) are less influenced by peripherality, physical transport costs, and smallness issues; (iv) are based on a backbone of micro-and small enterprises whose competitiveness does not require economies of scale (v) generate opportunities for focused training for youths and workers <p>N.2 "Food Supply Chain Verticalisation"</p> <p>Enhance the value added and reduce seasonality in agriculture and tourism through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the valorisation of Gozo gastronomy within the tourism product offering; (ii) the verticalisation of food production in Gozo through strengthening of the local supply chain; (iii) the promotion of innovation in both sectors. 	<p>Enhancement of the interplay between agriculture and environment by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) investments which reduce inherent weaknesses in agriculture (e.g. water) (ii) improving the environmental sustainability of agricultural practices (e.g. (iii) promoting climate-friendly practices <p>N.4 "Climate and Environment"</p> <p>Enhancement of environmental amenities and climate resilience within the context of sustainable economic development,</p>	<p>Preserve and valorise the Gozo traditional lifestyle, while ensuring sufficient openness to positive external influences for social regeneration through the retention and attraction of younger population cohorts, so as to develop the Gozitan lifestyle proposition into a competitiveness asset for sustainable tourism and 'new economy' activities</p>	<p>Preservation of cultural heritage assets and creation of knowledge regarding such heritage, and valorise heritage assets to develop sustainable tourism, education and other activities</p>	<p>Foster a stronger partnership approach between NGOs, business and public governance, also to reduce excessive fragmentation</p>

To interlink all the above aspects of the analysis Appendix 2 presents a table linking the SWOT, Regional Needs, Malta Needs and the respective measures.

3. DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STRATEGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

- 3.1.1. This section is intrinsically tied to Section 2 of the LDS, 'Territorial Analysis', where the SWOT analysis is derived from an analysis of the territorial profile formulated through desk research and consultations following the bottom-up approach.
- 3.1.2. This section describes the method used by the LAG to transpose the regional needs into objectives and the objectives of the Strategy into projects. The following six objectives are identified:
- 1) Increase investment and job creation in firms in 'new economy' sectors
 - 2) Create innovation and evolution of food supply verticalisation
 - 3) Increase number of Gozo business and infrastructural amenities employing sustainable environmental and climate-friendly approaches
 - 4) Increase younger people and families within the population
 - 5) Increase amenities valorising Gozo lifestyle, environment and cultural heritage for tourism, educational and other activities
 - 6) Increase the number of projects in Gozo involving partnerships between public and private entities, and which further enable NGOs
- 3.1.3. **Table 3.1** shows how each need contributes towards one or more of these objectives.
- 3.1.4. The objectives of the Strategy and needs of the region are transformed into actions that will support beneficiary project. This section provides a list of several 'Actions' that address these objectives and needs. These actions are assessed in accordance with their merits and risks and the best response to addressing the CLLD strategy objectives and needs of the Region.
- 3.1.5. The following are the Actions (or measures) identified to address the needs and objectives aforementioned:
- **GAG1:** Develop an ICT media platform for the valorisation of Gozitan lifestyle concept
 - **GAG2:** Maximise the contribution of Gozitan agriculture to the Gozitan culinary tradition, its evolution and future sustainability
 - **GAG3:** Develop Gozo's all-season tourism product offering
 - **GAG4:** Improve the attractiveness of living in Gozo for young persons and young families.

3.1.6. These four measures are laid out in detailed hereunder. Each measure is explained in terms of what is expected from operations presented under each measure, potential applicants/ beneficiaries, what criteria need to be met, an indication of the budget allocated and its consistency in terms of the RDP and other programmes.

Table 3.1: The contribution of the strategy's objectives towards Gozo needs

Needs	Objectives					
	1. Increase investment and job creation in firms in 'new economy' sectors	2. Create food supply chain verticalisation projects	3. Increase number of Gozo business and infrastructural amenities employing sustainable environmental and climate-friendly approaches	4. Increase younger people and families within the population	5. Increase amenities valorising Gozo lifestyle, environment and cultural heritage for tourism, educational and other activities	6. Increase the number of projects in Gozo involving partnerships between public and private entities, and which further enable NGOs
N.1 'New Economy Activities'	✓					
N.2'Food Supply Chain Verticalisation'		✓				
N.3 'Agriculture & Environment'			✓			
N.4 'Climate and Environment'			✓			
N.5 'Gozo Lifestyle'				✓	✓	
N.6 'Cultural Heritage'					✓	
N.7 'Partnership Approach'						✓

Action GAG 1:

1. Action Code and Title	GAG1: Develop an ICT media platform for the valorisation of Gozitan lifestyle concept
Short Title	<i>Gozo in 21st Century Media</i>
2. Aim and Scope	<p>The creation of an ICT (and other) media platform to showcase the various aspects of the Gozitan lifestyle which can serve as bases for sustainable development, by enabling access to business, governance and non-government organisations to media resources in an organised set-up, while in itself creating a 'new economy' activity in Gozo. The measure is intended to fill the gap in respect of no single unifying IT platform in Gozo.</p> <p>The principal portal which currently exists is visitgozo.com which is operated by the Tourism and Economic Development Directorate of the Ministry of Gozo. It is a site that is intended mainly for visitors or potential visitors, giving details on events, attractions, places where to stay, food and catering establishments, and niche touristic activities. Another website currently operated by the Gozo Tourism Association (GTA) is the Island of Gozo website.</p> <p>The platform proposed to be funded by this activity is intended to provide a fully holistic approach to the Gozitan economy and society to a global audience by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – showcasing the products of micro and small enterprises and providing an e-commerce portal; – presenting activities of NGOs and providing opportunities for their integration with those of other NGOs and businesses Preserving Gozitan identity, culture and natural heritage⁴⁶ for future generations through oral history and audio-visual material; – providing opportunities for strengthening of social cohesion in Gozo between different actors and across generations; and – sustaining the presence of Gozo in the social media. <p>The action will seek to integrate this platform with the existing web portal to present a holistic and unified approach to the web presence of Gozo. This is in line with the innovative and community led approach advocated by the LAG.</p>

⁴⁶ Natural heritage refers to biodiversity, including flora and fauna, ecosystems and geological structures

3. General Description of the Action	
a. Description of the type of operation	<p>The action will create an ICT-based media platform potentially complemented by traditional media approaches to achieve the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) strengthening of media content and national and international dissemination opportunities for Gozo, including through the production of open-format, replicable audio-visual material (electronic, printed and other formats) to market the territory and enhance its global exposure and networks; (ii) enhancing the availability of media resources and access to Gozo business, NGOs, and governance functions with the creation of opportunities for joint partnership actions between them that are financially sustainable; (iii) creating a marketing and e-commerce platform for all Gozo-based business, especially for micro firms including traditional crafts⁴⁷; (iv) providing media opportunities for all Gozo based NGOs to set up activities which are commercially and environmentally sustainable on an on-going basis; (v) preserving aspects of Gozitan identity, cultural and natural heritage⁴⁸ for future generations; (vi) providing opportunities for strengthening of social cohesion in Gozo between different actors and across generations; (vii) developing and retaining ICT, media, and creative economy skills in Gozo, especially among the younger generations; (viii) act as a common reference point for all business, cultural, social, environmental and governance activity in Gozo and as enabling resource for media access to the other actions proposed in this strategy; (ix) serve as an effective resource to be utilised by and blended into the other actions proposed in this strategy, in a manner which creates synergies between LEADER interventions, contributes to focus efforts and limits fragmentation.

⁴⁷ Trade and crafts training shall be restricted to persons registered on the Malta Crafts Portal

⁴⁸ Natural heritage refers to biodiversity, including flora and fauna, ecosystems and geological structures.

<p>b. Type of support</p>	<p>The type of activities which can be supported through grants include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) capacity building for a three-year period in the form of up to 80% of the running expenses (salaries, rent of premises, operational costs, rental of equipment, training) of a micro-firm or NGO managing the ICT media platform, as shown by audited accounts, with the provision that during the three-year period of support, the operational surplus realised by the micro-firm would not exceed 5% of operational costs, and that all such surplus is re-invested in the activities of the firm, with no distribution of profits; (ii) all IT operational expenditure for a three-year period for a micro-firm or NGO managing and/or creating and managing the ICT media platform, including licenses, etc. subject to the proviso in (i) above; (iii) Production of audio-visual and similar material; (iv) Investment in IT equipment; (v) dissemination activities, including training to organisations to build capacity to effectively participate in the media platform. <p>These activities, and similar ones as may be proposed by project proposers, will furthermore be subject to inspection and verification in terms of their functional set-up. In this regard, the LAG will be following the principles and practices that are applicable within the public sector in Malta in this area of procurement. Prior to the launch of the measure, mechanisms will be put in place with relevant agencies including MITA and the Department of Contracts, to ensure adherence to standard practices in this regard. This will include the design of a specific process flow for monitoring activities, expenditures and outputs arising from this measure, as well as for their certification</p>
<p>c. Intervention Logic in terms of contribution to:</p>	
<p><i>Gozo-Specific Needs as per LDS</i></p>	
<p>N.1 'New Economy Activities'</p>	<p>Action provides a direct contribution by creating an ICT, media and digital creative economic activity. It can be expected to have spin-off effects on the generation of similar new activities in Gozo.</p>
<p>N.2 'Food Innovation/Evolution'</p>	
<p>N.3 'Agriculture & Environment'</p>	
<p>N.4 'Climate and Environment'</p>	<p>The promotion of digital connectivity is expected to reduce dependence on climate-intensive activities such as physical transport and to raise awareness on Gozo's natural and cultural environment.</p>
<p>N.5 'Gozo Lifestyle'</p>	<p>The action is expected to create a medium for the Gozitan lifestyle to be valorised and developed, also through generational renewal and valorising its economic competitiveness.</p>
<p>N.6 'Cultural Heritage'</p>	<p>The action is expected to create a medium for showing cultural and natural heritage assets and valorising their economic competitiveness.</p>
<p>N.7 'Partnership Approach'</p>	<p>The action is expected to involve collaboration between business, NGOs and governance functions, while improving their capacity for media access.</p>

<i>RDP 2014-2020</i>	
1. Water, Waste, Energy	
2. Quality Produce	
3. Sustainable Livestock	
4. Landscape and Environment	
5. Economy and Quality of Life	The action is expected to create a direct contribution through modernising economic activity, attracting younger, higher-skilled workers, and improving the marketing and competitiveness of other sectors. It is expected to improve the outreach activities of NGOs, with beneficial effects on their capacity and financial sustainability.
<i>Partnership Agreement</i>	
FP1. 'Competitiveness through innovation and business-friendly environment'	The action will create elements of innovation by directly supporting a 'new economy' activity and related creative economy activities, while providing a platform for development and innovation across a wide spectrum of business in Gozo. It will improve competitiveness by generating access to new marketing tools and payments systems.
FP2. 'Environmentally friendly and resource-efficient economy'	Digital business methods may lead to a stronger decoupling between economic growth and climate and environmental performance.
FP3. 'Human Capital'	The action will stimulate the creation of human capital in the digital and creative sectors, while fostering an improvement in digital skills across a wide sector of Gozitan economy and society.
<i>RDP cross-cutting Objectives</i>	
1. Competitiveness, education	see FP1, FP3 above
2. Innovation	see FP1 above
3. Climate and Environment	see FP2 above
4. Eligible Beneficiaries*	<p>Applicants must consist of partnerships between operators in business - ideally covering IT, media, tourism, environment, agriculture, manufacturing/crafts, creativity sectors - and/or representative bodies thereof, and NGOs. Participation from Local Councils, educational institutions, and other representative bodies within the partnerships would also be desirable.</p> <p>It is important to note that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Private undertakings where eligible, are to be limited to SME's. Large firms (as per Eurostat definition), are excluded. - NGOs refer to entities being regularly registered with the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations, in line with the Voluntary Organisations Act 2007. - Any conflict of interest in the selection process is removed through the exclusion of applicants from board of selection, since all foreseen local councils in Gozo are members of the LAG. <p>It is important that the applicant is a member of the decision board/unit/committee (or is the legal representative) of the beneficiary/applicant organizing.</p>

<p>5. Eligible/Non-Eligible Costs</p>	<p>Eligible costs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ IT and Media production Equipment, up to 30% of budget □ Operational wages and salaries for a period of up to 3 years, up to 30% of budget □ Rental of office space and other operational expenses, for a period of up to three years, up to 10% of budget □ Sub-contracted services for the production of audio-visual material, up to 60% of budget □ Dissemination activities, up to 30% of budget □ Background technical, content and commercial studies, up to 15% of budget <p>Only eligible costs incurred after the contract agreement are to be considered as eligible. The percentages are a cap on the amount allowed to be allocated on each area. For instance: if the budget is €200,000, €60,000 maximum is to be allocated to salaries (not more than 30%). LAG is to make sure that the measure is manageable. Projects should remain functional for at least five years following the last payment.</p> <p>Non-eligible* costs include acquisition of second hand equipment, interest costs, acquisition of land and of buildings</p> <p>When launching measures, eligible and non-eligible costs, have to be clearly listed in such calls and are to be in line with applicable EU regulations, including Reg 1303/2013, 1305/2013 as well as the MA OF for LAG's.</p>
<p>6. Selection Criteria*</p>	<p>The selection criteria established in this strategy for each GAG are line to RDP Measure 19.4-chapter 8.2.12.6 to ensure a non-discriminatory and transparent selection procedure and objective criteria for the selection of operations, which avoid conflicts of interest, by ensuring that at least 50% of the votes in selection decisions are cast by partners which are not public authorities, and allow selection by written procedure (as per Article 34(3)(b) of Regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013).</p> <p>A selected action shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ comply with the provisions of Sections 4 in this fiche, and of the General Notes set out below; □ obtain the maximum score out of criteria set by an Evaluation Committee appointed by the Decision Committee of the LAG so as to reflect the attainment of the objectives set out in Section 3a of this fiche, and within this context present a solid case of its capability to attain the targets as set out in Section 9 of this fiche; □ allocate budget in a manner which addresses the Gozo-specific needs identified in this LDS as specified in Section 3c of this fiche □ Show consistency with RDP objectives and cross-cutting themes set out under section 3c □ In line with Article 65(6) Regulation 1303/2015, operations shall not be selected for support by the ESI Funds where they have been physically completed or fully implemented before the application for

	<p>funding under the programme is submitted by the beneficiary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – comply with any other provisions as may be set out by the Evaluation Committee and the Decision Committee in the furtherance of this Strategy.
7. Aid Intensity	80%, as per Rural Development Plan for Malta 2014-2020
8. Budget Allocation (EAFRD Contribution)*, €	175,805
Indicative budget allocation per application	
Minimum, €	120,000
Maximum, €	200,000
9. Indicators and Targets (As per regulation 808/2014)	<p>Number of new ICT media platforms generated: 1 New jobs directly created by the action: 3 Number of media projects enabled by the action: 2 Size of circulation/media hits/views/exposure: 2,500,000 persons Number of businesses affected by the action: 150 Number of NGOs affected by the action: 75</p>
10. Risks and Mitigating Factors	<p>Risk 1: Insufficient interest/know-how in the generation of suitable applications</p> <p>Mitigant 1: Strong interest in action through public consultation; previous experience by Gozo business and NGOs in media activities including the TV and movie industry</p>
	<p>Risk 2: Substantial fixed costs of media activities to achieve a critical mass in interventions. This refers to development of media material like for example rent of equipment, insurance and depreciation. The entity being supported through capital due to the inability of the operation to cover fixed costs.</p> <p>Mitigant 2: A reasonable budget is allocated to the activity to allow for attainment of critical mass, while denoting the need for efficiency in operations and participation by private business to ensure financial sustainability</p>

11. Overall Assessment	<p>Socio-economic development in Gozo is hindered by connectivity problems, at the same time that there exists significant potential for lifestyle characteristics, and unique products and experiences to be showcased in an attractive manner to large audiences via modern media. There also exists a strong need for diversification into new economy activities which would in turn help to slow down the migration of younger, higher skilled workers from the Region. The need for this measure was strongly emphasised in the course of the extensive public consultation exercise that was undertaken in the formulation of this strategy, where issues such as the need for micro-business and NGOs to access social and other ICT media was highlighted, together with the need to sustain cost-effective methods of marketing Gozo while creating 'new economy' jobs on the Island Region. The action is highly innovative for the Region, but is also strongly underpinned by the needs of the population. The indicative budgets for individual applications aim at engendering a project with sufficient critical mass to have a marked effect which is sustainable beyond the duration of the Programming period.</p>
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Action GAG 2:

1. Action Code and Title	GAG2: Maximise the contribution of Gozitan agriculture to the Gozitan culinary tradition, its evolution and future sustainability
Short Title	<i>A Truly Holistic Gozitan Gastronomy</i>
2. Aim and Scope	The creation of projects involving Gozitan agriculture and food produced and/or consumed in Gozo in a manner which sustains the appreciation and evolution of the Gozitan culinary tradition, generates better economic value added in Gozitan agriculture and food production, and which benefits the health of consumers.
3. General Description of the Action	
a. Description of the type of operation	<p>The action will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) incentivise the development and enhance the capacity of agriculture in Gozo towards supporting the Gozitan culinary tradition, including through the improvement of cost competitiveness and of logistical supply systems of agriculture; (ii) support food business operators in valorising the Gozitan culinary tradition and its future evolution and financial sustainability, with the ultimate aim of creating better value products improving the financial sustainability of agricultural and food producers in Gozo; (iii) reap the health benefits of a wide acceptance of Gozo-based culinary products, which exemplify the Mediterranean diet; (iv) develop the Gozitan culinary arts into tourist products channelled via catering establishments and direct product sales, including the possibility of on-farm sales; (v) create self-sustaining activities leading to a greater appreciation and consumption of Gozitan agricultural and food products, providing a basis for the long term economic sustainability of agriculture and food production in Gozo.
b. Type of Support	<p>The type of activities which can be supported through grants include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) development of menus and similar activities towards the creation/preservation of knowledge to sustain and evolve Gozitan culinary tradition on the basis of local produce; (ii) support to agricultural producers to develop new products, enhance quality of production towards sustaining and evolving the Gozitan culinary tradition; (iii) support to improve the value chain from local production to local consumption through small-scale interventions on farms, catering establishments and retail outlets/venues, including efforts at cost reduction through improved transport and logistics infrastructures and facilities, including farm and market physical connectivity;

	<p>(iv) development of a market recognition brand (not a certified scheme) to be used by participants within the project, including costs of compliance, self-regulation, and auditing;</p> <p>(v) demonstration and dissemination activities with regards marketing the partnership's product.</p>
c. Intervention Logic in terms of contribution to:	
<i>Gozo-Specific Needs as per LDS</i>	
N.1 'New Economy Activities'	
N.2 'Food Innovation/Evolution'	The action incentivises the creation of value between agricultural producers and food sellers/producers by valorising the quality of food produced utilising ingredients from Gozo, improving the cost competitiveness in production, and stimulating innovation at the primary and secondary levels of production.
N.3 'Agriculture & Environment'	The action will valorise aspects of food quality and potential cost competitiveness by exploiting environmental dividends from sustainable agricultural production.
N.4 'Climate and Environment'	The action will reap positive climate dividends from shortening and improving food supply logistics through the creation of value chains.
N.5 'Gozo Lifestyle'	
N.6 'Cultural Heritage'	
N.7 'Partnership Approach'	The action is expected to involve collaboration between business, and potentially NGOs (mainly related to culinary arts/research, tourism, consumers' interest, sustainable agriculture, etc.), governance and research/knowledge functions, engaged in food production value chains operating under market recognition brands (that will be used for marketing and will not be a certified quality brand) that will be created through the action itself, which will be self-regulated and audited.
<i>RDP 2014-2020</i>	
1. Water, Waste, Energy	The action can leave beneficial effects indirectly through potential improvements in water, waste and energy performance of agriculture in adhering to the food quality chain.
2. Quality Produce	The action is directly targeted to develop a quality chain from primary to secondary production, primarily through the creation and operation of a market recognition brand, and by incentivising knowledge creation and research activities. This action is thus a step beyond, and complementary to, RDP 2014-2020 actions contemplated with respect to the agricultural sector. It is not intended to act as an established quality brand but rather as a marketing tool for local produce; the brand is to be established by the beneficiary.
3. Sustainable Livestock	The action can leave beneficial effects indirectly through adherence by operators to the food quality chain.
4. Landscape and Environment	

5. Economy and Quality of Life	The action is expected to improve the financial sustainability of farmers and food producers/sellers by creating higher value products. It is also aimed at improving the health attributes of food consumed by the resident and tourist population in Gozo.
<i>Partnership Agreement</i>	
FP1. 'Competitiveness through innovation and business-friendly environment'	The action will create elements of innovation by directly supporting new agricultural and agri-processing products and production methods, possibly also in the form of catering menus, aimed at better sustaining and evolving the Gozitan culinary arts. It will also allow for better cost competitiveness of operators, and the creation of higher value added.
FP2. 'Environmentally friendly and resource-efficient economy'	Projects could lead to environmental/ climate dividends and improved efficiency in resource use.
FP3. 'Human Capital'	The action will stimulate the creation of human capital as knowledge on food products which will be developed will spread between operators involved.
<i>RDP cross-cutting Objectives</i>	
1. Competitiveness, education	see FP1, FP3 above
2. Innovation	see FP1 above
3. Climate and Environment	see FP2 above
4. Eligible Beneficiaries*	<p>Applicants must include partnerships between operators in agriculture, agri-producers and/or catering, and/or representative bodies thereof. Participation from NGOs (mainly related to culinary arts/research, tourism, consumers' interest, sustainable agriculture, etc.), Local Councils and educational/research institutions with a direct interest in Gozitan culinary traditions would also be desirable.</p> <p>It is important to note that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Private undertakings where eligible, are to be limited to SME's. Large firms (as per Eurostat definition), are excluded. - NGOs refer to entities being regularly registered with the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations, in line with the Voluntary Organisations Act 2007. - Any conflict of interest in the selection process is removed through the exclusion of applicants from board of selection, since all foreseen local councils in Gozo are members of the LAG. <p>The applicant has to be a member of the decision board/unit/committee (or is the legal representative) of the beneficiary/applicant organizing.</p>
5. Eligible/Non-Eligible Costs	<p>Eligible costs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Services to create knowledge, up to 25% of budget

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Physical interventions on farms and catering establishments leading to new product development and/or quality enhancement and/or to improved efficiencies via better transport and logistics arrangements within the context of serving a function within a holistic Gozo culinary offering, up to 60% of budget – Development and administration of market recognition brand, up to 20% of budget – Demonstration and dissemination activities, up to 20% of the budget <p>Only eligible costs incurred after the contract agreement are to be considered as eligible. The percentages are a cap on the amount allowed to be allocated on each area. For instance: if the budget is €200,000, €50,000 maximum is to be allocated to create knowledge (not more than 25%). LAG is to make sure that the measure is manageable. Projects should remain functional for at least five years following the last payment.</p> <p>Non-eligible* costs include acquisition of second hand equipment, interest costs, acquisition of land and of buildings</p> <p>When launching measures, eligible and non-eligible costs, have to be clearly listed in such calls and are to be in line with applicable EU regulations, including Reg 1303/2013, 1305/2013 as well as the MA OF for LAG's.</p>
<p>6. Selection Criteria*</p>	<p>The selection criteria established in this strategy for each GAG are line to RDP Measure 19.4-chapter 8.2.12.6 to ensure a non-discriminatory and transparent selection procedure and objective criteria for the selection of operations, which avoid conflicts of interest, by ensuring that at least 50 % of the votes in selection decisions are cast by partners which are not public authorities, and allow selection by written procedure (as per Article 34(3)(b) of Regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013).</p> <p>A selected action shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ comply with the provisions of Sections 4 in this fiche, and of the General Notes set out below; □ obtain the maximum score out of criteria set by an Evaluation Committee appointed by the Decision Committee of the LAG so as to reflect the attainment of the objectives set out in Section 3a of this fiche, and within this context present a solid case of its capability to attain the targets as set out in Section 9 of this fiche; □ allocate budget in a manner which addresses the Gozo-specific needs identified in this LDS as specified in Section 3c of this fiche □ Show consistency with RDP objectives and cross-cutting themes set out under section 3c □ In line with Article 65 (6) Regulation 1303/2015, operations shall

	<p>not be selected for support by the ESI Funds where they have been physically completed or fully implemented before the application for funding under the programme is submitted by the beneficiary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – comply with any other provisions as may be set out by the Evaluation Committee and the Decision Committee in the furtherance of this Strategy.
7. Aid Intensity	80%, as per Rural Development Plan for Malta 2014-2020
8. Budget Allocation (EAFRD Contribution)*, €	196,011
Indicative budget allocation per application	
Minimum, €	100,000
Maximum, €	200,000
9. Indicators and Targets (As per regulation 808/2014)	<p>Number of agricultural producers affected by the action: 3 Number of food production businesses affected by the action: 1 Number of culinary knowledge/research projects supported: 1 Number of jobs directly created by action: 3</p>
10. Risks and Mitigating Factors	<p>Risk 1: Insufficient interest/know-how in the generation of suitable applications</p> <p>Mitigant 1: Strong interest in action through public consultation; existence of forward-looking agriculture producers' organisations and tourism operators and representative organisations which can benefit from the action</p> <p>Risk 2: Agricultural producers may not be sufficiently well-equipped from a business outlook perspective to reap marketing dividends of higher-value innovative production. Food producers may be reluctant change current practices of sourcing cheaper/lower quality primary inputs from outside Gozo.</p> <p>Mitigant 2: There exists a base of agricultural operators and food business entrepreneurs that are innovative and forward-looking, which will serve to create a small number of successful projects under this action, each with sufficient critical mass, which are then expected to serve as focal points and examples for other firms to join and emulate.</p>
11. Overall Assessment	<p>The economy of Gozo is highly dependent on food production and consumption, both in terms of its concentration on agricultural activities, as well as its dependence on national and international tourism. Food activities in Gozo tend to be not sufficiently linked within value chains, and higher value-added marketing opportunities are not being well-exploited. Farmers tend to sell basic products with low value added, which would in any case be not cost-competitive compared to products sourced from outside Gozo, with the result that food producers in Gozo tend to source their inputs from elsewhere. Consumer markets are nevertheless appreciative of the health and gastronomic qualities of the</p>

	<p>Gozitan culinary tradition, which must contain Gozitan elements across the value chain. Agricultural and food business operators are also aware of value opportunities being lost through the lack of market recognition of genuine Gozitan products. This action addresses these needs by involving farmers and food producers/sellers in Gozo to engage in activities which lead to the creation of innovative products and menus which are marketed through recognised brands. As a secondary consequence, interventions may also lead to improve cost-effectiveness and improve the logistical supply process, thereby providing environmental and climate opportunities. It is therefore expected to produce a quality improvement in agriculture, food production and the tourism product in Gozo, in a manner which can be self-sustained in future. It is also a logical step beyond, and a complement to, RDP interventions directed to agriculture. The indicative budgets for individual applications aim at engendering interventions with sufficient critical mass that are sustainable beyond the end of the Programming period.</p>
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Action GAG 3:

1. Action Code and Title	GAG3: Develop Gozo's all-season tourism product offering
Short Title	<i>Gozitan Attractions and Innovative Events for all Seasons</i>
2. Aim and Scope	Investment in infrastructure and innovative events which will in a complementary manner strengthen Gozo's tourism offering so as to enhance performance across all seasons, in a sustainable manner.
3. General Description of the Action	
a. Description of the type of operation	<p>The action will enable physical interventions and the organisation of tourism-oriented events that achieve the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) development of infrastructure, including green infrastructure, aimed at attracting tourists all year round but especially in the off-peak season (September to May) and for longer stays, ideally valorising the tourism attractiveness across localities within the territory, with a strong emphasis on sustainability; (ii) development of innovative events to attract international and domestic tourists all year round but especially in the off-peak season (September to May), ideally in synergy with the development of infrastructures, and which would lead to financially sustainable activities with the involvement of the business community; (iii) enhance the involvement of Gozo Local Councils and NGOs in the improvement of the Gozitan all year round but especially in the off-peak tourism (September to May) product, mainly in valorising the natural and cultural environment as bases for the development of sustainable and sustained tourism activity.
b. Type of Support	<p>The type of activities which can be supported through grants include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Small-scale infrastructural interventions contributing to all seasons but especially off-peak tourism activities in localities; (ii) the organisation of up to eight events during the programming period.
c. Intervention Logic in terms of contribution to:	
<i>Gozo-Specific Needs as per LDS</i>	
N.1 'New Economy Activities'	
N.2 'Food Innovation/Evolution'	
N.3 'Agriculture & Environment'	

N.4 'Climate and Environment'	The physical investments undertaken through this action are expected to lead to environmental amelioration and better climate performance, ideally by also focusing on related tourism niches.
N.5 'Gozo Lifestyle'	The events supporting investments are expected to preserve, valorise and evolve distinctive and unique features of Gozitan lifestyle.
N.6 'Cultural Heritage'	The action is expected to create investment and events which preserve cultural heritage assets and valorising their economic competitiveness.
N.7 'Partnership Approach'	
<i>RDP 2014-2020</i>	
1. Water, Waste, Energy	
2. Quality Produce	
3. Sustainable Livestock	
4. Landscape and Environment	The action is expected to result in landscape and environmental amelioration through physical interventions which would create tourism attractions within landscape and environmental amenities which can be enjoyed across all seasons.
5. Economy and Quality of Life	The action is expected to create a direct contribution to incomes and jobs by generating tourism demand that is better spread across the year.
<i>Partnership Agreement</i>	
FP1. 'Competitiveness through innovation and business-friendly environment'	The infrastructures developed, and the complementary events aimed at enhancing Gozo's all-year tourism offering can be expected to introduce innovative elements in tourism within the Region and possibly at the national level.
FP2. 'Environmentally friendly and resource-efficient economy'	The action will require physical interventions to be environmentally-friendly and resource-efficient, potentially also focused on sustainable tourism niches.
FP3. 'Human Capital'	
<i>RDP cross-cutting Objectives</i>	
1. Competitiveness, education	see FP1 above
2. Innovation	see FP1 above
3. Climate and Environment	see FP2 above
4. Eligible Beneficiaries*	<p>Applicants must include partnerships between business operators with a direct interest in tourism and/or representative bodies thereof, Local Councils and/or other public governance entities with a direct interest in the Gozo region, and NGOs.</p> <p>It is important to note that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Private undertakings where eligible, are to be limited to SME's. Large firms (as per Eurostat definition), are excluded. - NGOs refer to entities being regularly registered with the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations, in

	<p>line with the Voluntary Organisations Act 2007.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Any conflict of interest in the selection process is removed through the exclusion of applicants from board of selection, since all foreseen local councils in Gozo are members of the LAG. <p>The applicant has to be a member of the decision board/unit/committee (or is the legal representative) of the beneficiary/applicant organizing.</p>
<p>5. Eligible/Non-Eligible Costs</p>	<p>Eligible costs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Investment in infrastructures, up to 90% of budget (ii) Event organisation, a minimum of 10% of budget <p>Only eligible costs incurred after the contract agreement are to be considered as eligible. The percentages are a cap on the amount allowed to be allocated on each area. For instance: if the budget is €200,000, €140,000 maximum is to be allocated to infrastructure (not more than 70%). LAG is to make sure that the measure is manageable. Projects should remain functional for at least five years following the last payment.</p> <p>Non-eligible⁺ costs include acquisition of second hand equipment, interest costs, acquisition of land and of buildings</p> <p>When launching measures, eligible and non-eligible costs, have to be clearly listed in such calls and are to be in line with applicable EU regulations, including Reg 1303/2013, 1305/2013 as well as the MA OF for LAG's.</p>
<p>6. Selection Criteria*</p>	<p>The selection criteria established in this strategy for each GAG are line with RDP Measure 19.4-chapter 8.2.12.6 ensuring a non-discriminatory and transparent selection procedure and objective criteria for the selection of operations, which avoid conflicts of interest, by ensuring that at least 50 % of the votes in selection decisions are cast by partners which are not public authorities, and allow selection by written procedure (as per Article 34(3)(b) of Regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013).</p> <p>A selected action shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – comply with the provisions of Sections 4 in this fiche, and of the General Notes set out below; – obtain the maximum score out of criteria set by an Evaluation Committee appointed by the Decision Committee

	<p>of the LAG so as to reflect the attainment of the objectives set out in Section 3a of this fiche, and within this context present a solid case of its capability to attain the targets as set out in Section 9 of this fiche;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – allocate budget in a manner which addresses the Gozo-specific needs identified in this LDS as specified in Section 3c of this fiche; – show consistency with RDP objectives and cross-cutting themes set out under section 3c; – In line with Article 65 (6) Regulation 1303/2015, operations shall not be selected for support by the ESI Funds where they have been physically completed or fully implemented before the application for funding under the programme is submitted by the beneficiary. – Show that investment is part of a holistic project. Funding will not be limited solely to that element of infrastructure but should constitute an indispensable element within the holistic project. – comply with any other provisions as may be set out by the Evaluation Committee and the Decision Committee in the furtherance of this Strategy. –
7. Aid Intensity	80%, as per Rural Development Plan for Malta 2014-2020
8. Budget Allocation (EAFRD Contribution)*, €	1,276,158.29
Indicative budget allocation per application	
Minimum, €	95,000
Maximum, €	180,000
9. Indicators and Targets (As per regulation 808/2014)	<p>Number of Local Councils (municipalities) affected by physical interventions: 8</p> <p>Number of businesses affected by improved infrastructures and events: 6</p> <p>Number of NGOs affected by action: 12</p> <p>Number of cultural/environmental heritage tourism amenities improved: 11</p>
10. Risks and Mitigating Factors	Risk 1: Applications presenting excessive focus on individual projects and events without sufficient focus and synergies towards establishing holistic all-season tourism attractions
	Mitigant 1: After gaining experience with EU-funded investments and publicly-funded events, entities in Gozo appear to be ready to engage into a higher level of collaboration and specific focus on tourism objectives. This approach will be clearly explained in animation actions and specific guidelines for applications.

<p>11. Overall Assessment</p>	<p>One of the main problems for economic development of Gozo remains the seasonality of tourism, which persists in spite of national tourism trends pointing to an attenuation of the phenomenon, thanks to weekend stays of international tourists and, in the specific case of Gozo, the opportunities offered by domestic tourism. Opportunities to develop all-season tourism exist in the creation of attractions based on Gozo's cultural and natural heritage⁴⁹, and on the organisation of specific events. This action aims to satisfy this need, in a manner that creates synergies between interventions, as well as effective collaboration and networking between different actors across the entire region. The indicative budgets for individual applications aim at engendering interventions with sufficient critical mass. The involvement of business operators, especially in the undertaking of events, is intended to create sustainable activities which span beyond the end of the Programming period.</p>
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⁴⁹ Natural heritage refers to biodiversity, including flora and fauna, ecosystems and geological structures.

Action GAG 4:

1. Action Code and Title	GAG4: Improve the attractiveness of living in Gozo for young persons and young families
Short Title	<i>Rejuvenating Gozo</i>
2. Aim and Scope	The action will improve amenities and services in Gozo so as to improve the quality of life for young persons and young families, thereby contributing to retaining skills and to demographic and cultural regeneration.
3. General Description of the Action	
a. Description of the type of operation	<p>The action will provide resources to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) improve the attractiveness of Gozo for young persons and young families through the creation of hard and soft support infrastructures; (ii) enhance the involvement of Local Councils, NGOs and business operators in improving the quality of life and the environment in Gozo for young persons and families.
b. Type of Support	<p>The type of activities which can be supported through grants include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) development of infrastructures aimed at improving the quality of life and environment for young persons and young families (e.g. family parks, picnic areas) in localities . (ii) investments by NGOs, Local Councils, and/or business operators, with a direct interest in young persons and young families, in equipment and in providing new and or/extended services which is specifically required for their specialised activities (e.g. childcare, sports, cultural, educational activities, community entertainment activities compatible with the Gozitan lifestyle,), capacity-building in undertaking innovative and/or extended activities of direct interest to young persons and young families for a period of three years.
c. Intervention Logic in terms of contribution to:	
<i>Gozo-Specific Needs as per LDS</i>	
N.1 'New Economy Activities'	The action is expected to provide lifestyle attractions to young people and young families by focusing on amenities and activities associated with the 'new economy', with potential spin-off effects on employment generation.

N.2 'Food Innovation/Evolution'	
N.3 'Agriculture & Environment'	
N.4 'Climate and Environment'	Investment and activities promoted through this action will need to deliver improvements in environmental and climate performance, due to the importance of these factors for a healthy lifestyle of young persons and families.
N.5 'Gozo Lifestyle'	The main focus of this action is the preservation, valorisation and evolution of the Gozitan lifestyle through the retention and attraction of a younger population.
N.6 'Cultural Heritage'	The action is expected to improve on cultural heritage assets as a means to improve the lifestyle for young persons and young families.
N.7 'Partnership Approach'	
<i>RDP 2014-2020</i>	
1. Water, Waste, Energy	
2. Quality Produce	
3. Sustainable Livestock	
4. Landscape and Environment	The action is expected to make a contribution to Gozitan landscape and environment as a means to enhance the quality of life in Gozo for young persons and families.
5. Economy and Quality of Life	The action is expected to make a direct impact to the quality of life in Gozo by rendering the region a more attractive location to live in for young persons and families, through the establishment of hard and soft infrastructural facilities and services.
<i>Partnership Agreement</i>	
FP1. 'Competitiveness through innovation and business-friendly environment'	The action will involve elements of innovation by supporting activities for young persons associated with the 'new economy'.
FP2. 'Environmentally friendly and resource-efficient economy'	Interventions through this action will need to demonstrate environmental sustainability and resource efficiency.
FP3. 'Human Capital'	The action will stimulate the retention, attraction and creation of human capital in Gozo by focusing on lifestyle improvement needs of young persons and young families.
<i>RDP cross-cutting Objectives</i>	
1. Competitiveness, education	see FP1, FP3 above
2. Innovation	see FP1 above
3. Climate and Environment	see FP2 above
4. Eligible Beneficiaries*	Applicants can be Local Councils, NGOs and business operators. Each applicant must consist of at least three entities, spanning at least two of the aforementioned categories. The applicant has to co-operate with at least two other partners. A lead partner should also be appointed who shall be considered as the project applicant.

	<p>The application shall clearly specify the role to be played by the applicant and the project partners.</p> <p>It is important to note that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Private undertakings where eligible, are to be limited to SME's. Large firms (as per Eurostat definition), are excluded. - NGOs refer to entities being regularly registered with the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations, in line with the Voluntary Organisations Act 2007. - Any conflict of interest in the selection process is removed through the exclusion of applicants from board of selection, since all foreseen local councils in Gozo are members of the LAG. <p>The applicant has to be a member of the decision board/unit/committee (or is the legal representative) of the beneficiary/applicant organizing.</p>
<p>5. Eligible/Non-Eligible Costs</p>	<p>Eligible costs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Investment in public infrastructures by Local Councils, up to 100% of budget □ Investment in equipment by NGOs, Local Councils and business operators, up to 100% of budget □ Capacity-building by NGOs including running costs of offering services, up to 15% of budget <p>Only eligible costs incurred after the contract agreement are to be considered as eligible. The percentages are a cap on the amount allowed to be allocated on each area. For instance: if the budget is €200,000, €30,000 maximum is to be allocated on capacity building (not more than 15%). LAG is to make sure that the measure is manageable. Projects should remain functional for at least five years following the last payment.</p> <p>Non-eligible costs include acquisition of second hand equipment, interest costs, acquisition of land and of buildings</p> <p>When launching measures, eligible and non-eligible costs, have to be clearly listed in calls and are to be in line with applicable EU regulations, including Reg 1303/2013, 1305/2013 as well as the MA OF for LAG's.</p>

<p>6. Selection Criteria*</p>	<p>The selection criteria established in this strategy for each GAG are line to RDP Measure 19.4-chapter 8.2.12.6 to ensure a non-discriminatory and transparent selection procedure and objective criteria for the selection of operations, which avoid conflicts of interest, by ensuring that at least 50 % of the votes in selection decisions are cast by partners which are not public authorities, and allow selection by written procedure (as per Article 34(3)(b) of Regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013).</p> <p>A selected action shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ comply with the provisions of Sections 4 in this fiche, and of the General Notes set out below; □ obtain the maximum score out of criteria set by an Evaluation Committee appointed by the Decision Committee of the LAG so as to reflect the attainment of the objectives set out in Section 3a of this fiche, and within this context present a solid case of its capability to attain the targets as set out in Section 9 of this fiche; □ allocate budget in a manner which addresses the Gozo-specific needs identified in this LDS as specified in Section 3c of this fiche; □ Show consistency with RDP objectives and cross-cutting themes set out under section 3c; □ Show that investment is part of a holistic project. Funding will not be limited solely to that element of infrastructure but should constitute an indispensable element within the holistic project. □ In line with Article 65 (6) Regulation 1303/2015, operations shall not be selected for support by the ESI Funds where they have been physically completed or fully implemented before the application for funding under the programme is submitted by the beneficiary. □ comply with any other provisions as may be set out by the Evaluation Committee and the Decision Committee in the furtherance of this Strategy.
<p>7. Aid Intensity</p>	<p>80%, as per Rural Development Plan for Malta 2014-2020</p>
<p>8. Budget Allocation (EAFRD Contribution)*, €</p>	<p>778,218.80</p>
<p>Indicative budget allocation per application</p>	
<p>Minimum, €</p>	<p>40,000</p>
<p>Maximum, €</p>	<p>120,000</p>

<p>9. Indicators and Targets (As per regulation 808/2014)</p>	<p>Number of Local Councils (municipalities) offering new and improved amenities for young persons and families: 8 Number of businesses offering new and improved services for young persons and families: 3 Number of NGOs offering new and improved services for young persons and families: 15</p>
<p>10. Risks and Mitigating Factors</p>	<p>Risk 1: Insufficient result migration of young persons out of Gozo</p> <p>Mitigant 1: The budget allocated can allow for significant improvements in community amenities and support services aimed at young persons and families. The services developed can also be useful to serve the tourist community (e.g. child-minding facilities), especially the domestic segment, or be utilised by residents in other region which may visit Gozo specifically for the purposes (e.g. music activities for young people).</p>
<p>11. Overall Assessment</p>	<p>The outward migration of youths and young families is one of the major socio-economic problems Gozo is currently facing. This is in good part due to a relative absence of suitable job opportunities, which is being addressed through other actions in this strategy, and through measures at the national level. This action is complementing such efforts by aiming to improve the quality of life amenities which Gozo offers to young persons and young families, ranging from family and work-life balance (including life skills) support, to community entertainment facilities, to cultural activities and amenities. The budgets allocated to individual applications is intended to secure an element of critical mass in interventions balanced by a spread across the territory and across areas of focal interest of youths and young families.</p>

3.2. GENERAL NOTES ON ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS AND APPLICATIONS AND SELECTION CRITERIA

3.2.1. The following are a number of regulations and notes to which applicants are required to adhere to:

- A partnership between entities towards an application shall be formalised by a valid legal instrument specifying governance structures and mutual rights and obligations of all participants
- All applicants (public governance, business, NGOs, other) must have a physical centre of activity located in the Gozo Region and/or have a direct interest in activities in the region, proven through a track record
- Any one entity (whether main beneficiary and/or partner) can apply under one or more of the measures, but cannot participate under different/competing applications within the same measures.
- All activities proposed, especially those related to capacity building, will need to prove future financial and resource sustainability. This is essential to the durability of the interventions effected, and must entail a strong approach towards partnership involvement by actors.
- Applications shall gain points by showing wide involvement of actors, achievement of objectives, and synergies with other measures.
- In general terms, non-eligible expenditures will comply with the provisions of art.69 of R.1303/2013 and art. 45 of R.1305/2013.

3.2.2. Detailed selection criteria and a sample application for each Action are presented under **Appendix 3**.

3.3. TRANSNATIONAL/ INTER-TERRITORIAL COOPERATION PROJECTS

3.3.1. There is a budget of €99,000 on transnational/inter- territorial cooperation projects. These refer to projects undertaken in collaboration between different rural areas, involving from at least two Member States in the case of transnational cooperation. The LAG has indicated its preference to participate in cooperation on transnational projects, as this will provide stakeholders with alternative and innovative opportunities consistent with the LEADER objectives, while potentially infusing local projects with new dimensions.

Table 3.2: Transnational Cooperation

Transnational Cooperation (Examples of Projects of interest):	
Budget Allocation (EAFRD Contribution, 100% support rate to LAG), €	99,000
PRIORITY THEME	
Promotion of LEADER for social and economic development-Basis and Priority; Capacity building and training to LAG to enhance effectiveness of LEADER to regional development	
SECONDARY THEMES	
THEME BY PRIORITY	EXAMPLES OF TRANSNATIONAL PROJECTS
Tourism Events	Promoting theme-based village tourism (Finland, 2009-2011) Medieval Festivals (Estonia, Finland, France, Latvia, Portugal)
Youth Experiences	Amaze Me Leader (Youth exchange), Youth Involvement in Rural Development (Finland, Lithuania) Giving Young People the Chance to Preserve Regional Traditions (Lithuania, Poland) Engaging Young People - Broadening Horizons (Sweden, UK) Wind for Youth - Musical Heritage (Finland, Austria)
Technology and New Economy	Using Nanotechnology in the Production of Pottery (Greece) On-line Support for the Promotion of Local Business (France) Precision Farming - Advice from Space (Belgium)
Food Supply Chain	Growing Gastronomists (France, Estonia, UK) Supply Chain Innovation: Researchers and Farmers develop and Integration Production Model
Job Creation	Safeguarding Rural Jobs and Landscape (Greece) Developing New Rural Job Opportunities (Spain)

3.3.2. Table 3.2 provides examples⁵⁰ of possible projects in which the LAG could possibly be interested. These are divided into 5 categories; 4 related to the actions presented in this strategy and one related to job creation. From this analysis, the LAG has identified

⁵⁰ https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice_en

a Priority Theme for transnational co-operation, namely to promote LEADER as an effective means for socio-economic development mainly through training and capacity building for the LAG to enhance its profile and effectiveness as a leading actor in socio-economic development within the Gozo Region.

3.3.3. The **scope and objectives of transnational cooperation** which are envisaged would thus include the:

- participation in a network that contains LAGs with an interest in developing their capabilities to contribute to regional development through evolving into learning organisations, whereby implementation capacity is improved through knowledge sharing between LAGs and from local actors within LAGs participating in the co-operation projects;
- sharing of experiences and best practices in regional development through LEADER, particularly with respect to animating community involvement;
- creation of a cadre of LEADER ‘specialist animators’ within the region hailing from various segments, so as to better attune the participation of the LAG, public governance, business and NGOs in the implementation of the Strategy and its longer-term development and potential contribution;
- creation of a youth cadre of potential future social focal points that would eventually step into decision-making roles within the LAG as well as in other actors involved in LEADER; and
- creation of a durable network between participating LAGs so as to sustain learning and knowledge creation into the future.

3.3.4. It is considered that this project will lay important foundations leading to an enhanced implementation of the current Strategy and the durability of future LEADER activities. The importance of this type of cooperation activity is furthermore essential to promote and increase the likelihood of success of the more innovative elements in this Strategy, including the strong emphasis on partnership and the leveraging of financial resources from other sources. Innovation actors must share findings of their partnership on the LAG webpage and possibly through the EIP network.

3.3.5. This project is also considered to be consistent with meeting needs identified in the RDP, particularly those relating to the improvement in the quality of life through LEADER interventions. It also supports RDP focus areas, especially those related to human capital formation. It furthermore has the potential to indirectly contribute to meeting all the Gozo-specific needs that are being addressed through the actions put forward in this Strategy.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCESS FOR ENGAGEMENT IN LDS PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

4.1. INTRODUCTION

- 4.1.1. A stakeholder consultation programme was carried out to inform the formulation of the Local Development Strategy. This Chapter describes the consultation programme, including who was consulted and the consultation activities undertaken.

4.2. STAKEHOLDERS

- 4.2.1. Steps were undertaken to identify the key stakeholders, where their input was considered to be essential or important for the formulation of the Local Development Strategy. The consultation programme was also more widely advertised, in order to capture the attention of any unidentified key stakeholders, as well as to invite the participation of the wider public in the formulation of the Local Development Strategy.
- 4.2.2. The identification of the key stakeholders was undertaken in consultation with the GAFG. Furthermore, there was liaison with the Malta-EU Steering and Action Committee (MEUSAC), in relation to raising awareness of the project and advertising the consultation programme. Specifically and as further described below, MEUSAC advertised the project to all its members (through its bi-weekly updates) and informed all the Local Councils in Gozo (through MEUSAC's Gozo Coordinator).
- 4.2.3. A list of each of the key stakeholders consulted is shown in **Table 4.1**. The stakeholders included Government Ministries and agencies; the Gozitan Local Councils and Administrative Councils; non-governmental organisations (NGOs) with an interest in Gozo; and national entities and associations with an interest in Gozo.

Table 4.1: Key Stakeholders

Government Ministries / agencies	
Ministry for Gozo	Ministry for European Affairs and Implementation of the Electoral Manifesto
Malta Tourism Authority	Ministry for Tourism
Ministry for Energy and Health	Planning Authority
Ministry for Justice, Culture and Local Government	Ministry for Sustainable Development, the Environment and Climate Change
Local Councils / Administrative Councils	
Local Councils Association	Nadur Local Council
Fontana Local Council	Qala Local Council
Għajnsielem Local Council	Rabat/Victoria (Gozo) Local Council
Għarb Local Council	San Lawrenz Local Council
Għasri Local Council	Sannat Local Council
Kerċem Local Council	Xagħra Local Council
Munxar Local Council	Xewkija Local Council
Zebbug Local Council	
Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)	
Archaeological Society Malta	Malta Bat Conservation Society
Biological Conservation Research Foundation (BICREF)	Malta Ecological Society (ECO)
Birdlife Malta	Malta Entomological Society
Din l-Art Helwa	Malta Fishing Forum
Experience Adventures (Walking Group)	Malta Marine Foundation
Flimkien Għal Ambjent Aħjar	Malta Organic Agriculture Movement (MOAM)
Fondazzjoni ARKEO	Malta Water Association
Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna	Moviment Graffiti
Friends of the Earth (Malta)	Nature Trust Malta / Leaf Ekoskola
Għaqda Sajjieda u Dilettanti, Gzira	Ramblers Association Malta
Greenhouse Malta	Wirt Għawdex
Historical Re-enactment Group Malta	Youth 4 Environment
International Tree Foundation (Malta)	MIAF Maltese Islands Agri Federation
Leone Philharmonic Society	Gozo Youth Council
Light Pollution Awareness Group	Socjeta' Agrarja
National Entities / Associations	
Abseiling Malta	Malta Outdoors
Amateur Fishing Federation Malta / Fedderazzjoni tal-Għaqdiet tas-Sajjieda Dilettanti	Malta Rock Climbing
Diocese of Gozo	Malta Rock Climbing Club

Denci Fishing Club Malta	MC Adventure
Gozo Tourism Association	Professional Diving Schools Association - Malta
Gozo Business Chamber	The Scout Association of Malta
National Entities / Associations (continued)	
Gozo NGOs Association	Merill Eco Tours Malta
Malta Climbing Club	National Fishing Cooperative
Federazzjoni Tal-Għaqdiet Tas-Sajjieda Dilettanti, Malta	Federazzjoni Kaċċaturi Nassaba Konservazzjonisti (FKNK)
Kaċċaturi San Ubertu	
Others	
Sannat School	La Stella Band Club- Rabat
Għarb School	Victoria Hotspurs FC
Sannat Parish	Victoria Theatre Group
Santa Margerita Band Club Sannat	Choir Urbanus Victoria
Xagħra Parish	Choir Gaulitanus Victoria
SJ Choir Xagħra	Partit Laburista
Kor Nativitas Xagħra	Partit Nationalista
Xagħra Scouts	Qala Parish
Xewkija Tigers FC	Qala SDC Museum
Xewkija Fireworks Committee	Qala Local Radio Station
Xewkija School	'Ite ad Joseph' - Għaqda Muzikali
Banda Prekursur Xewkija	Menhir Qala Folk Group Committee
Kumitat Zagħzagħ Fontanin	L-Għaqda tal-Armar, Għarb
L-Għaqda tan-Nar, Għarb	MUSEUM (Subien u bniet) Għajnsielem
Legion of Mary Għajnsielem	Inspire Foundation
Arka Foundation	Azzjoni Kattolika
Għaqda tal-Armar Lawretana	Għaqda tan-Nar
Għaqda Hbieb tal-Presepji t'Għajnsielem	Għaqda Snooker & Pool Għajnsielem
Għaqda Muzikali San Guzepp	Għajnsielem Football Club
Għaqda 13 ta'Gunju (Armar S. Antnin)	Radju Lawretana
Għaqda Drammatika Għajnsielem	Bethlehem Foundation
RedCoats	Għaqda Muzikali San Girgor
Għaqda Armar Madonna tas-Sokkors	Kumitat tal-Festa Ta' Kerċem
Kerċem Ajax F.C.	Kor San Girgor
Legjun ta' Marija	Fondazzjoni ta' Klula
Għaqda Festa Ghajn Tuta	Għaqda Armar 13 ta' Dicembru
Kumitat tal-festa Għasri	Kumitat Banda Mnarja
Kumitat Nadur Youngsters F.C.	MUSEUM Bniet Nadur
MUSEUM Subien Nadur	Centru Papa Gwanni Pawlu II

Għaqda Rihan	Għaqda Armar Triq San Gwann
Day Centre ta' l-anzjani Nadur	Għaqda Armar Triq il-knisja
Kumitat MLP Nadur	Kumitat Armar Triq it-Tramuntana
Radju Luminaria	Kumitat Armar Triq Dicembru 13th
Kummissjoni Arbli	Kumitat Festi Esterni Nadur
Kumitat Armar Triq Xandriku	Kumitat Armar Pjazza San Pietru Pawl
Nadur Racing Pigeons Club	Għaqda tan-Nar 29 ta' Gunju
Għaqda Armar Triq il-Kappillan	Kummissjoni Zgħazagħ Mnarja
Legjun Ta' Marija Rgiel	Azzjoni Kattolika Nadur
Għaqda Hbieb Tal-Presepju Ghawdex	Dar Dun Frangisk Grima
Għaqda Muzikali Vizitazzjoni	Għarb Rangers F.C.
Kumitat Festa Għarb	Ċentru Parrokkjali Għarb

4.3. STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION PROGRAMME

4.3.1. The programme of stakeholder consultation activities was designed having regard to the need to advertise the preparation of the 2014 - 2020 Local Development Strategy in order to optimise the participation of local groups and organisations in identifying the local needs and initiatives to inform preparation of the Strategy. The consultation programme was also designed to encourage discussion and identification of the lessons learnt from the implementation of the previous 2007 - 2013 Local Development Strategy.

4.3.2. The consultation programme took two main forms of:

- Group stakeholder events - events open to the public and targeted at the local community in Gozo as well as the identified stakeholders; and
- Interviews and meetings with individual key stakeholders and small groups of stakeholders.

Group Stakeholder Consultation Events

4.3.3. Three group stakeholder consultation events were held, as follows:

- Wednesday 3rd August 2016 Arka Foundation, Għajnsielem, between 6:30pm - 8.30pm;
- Wednesday 9th August 2016 Oratoriju, Rabat / Victoria, between 6:30pm - 8.30pm; and
- 6th September Arka Foundation, Għajnsielem, between 6:00pm - 7.30pm.

4.3.4. As mentioned, these events were targeted at the community at large in Gozo (with open invitation), as well as the identified stakeholders. All three events were widely advertised, as follows:

- Press adverts were placed in The Times of Malta (on 31st July 2016 and on 4th

September 2016), KullHadd (on 31st July 2016 and on 4th September 2016) and Il-Mument (on 31st July 2016 and on 4th September 2016);

- Articles explaining the project, and also advertising the consultation events, ran in Il-Mument on 31st July 2016;
- Radio programme on Radju Marija, 1st August 2016 at 10.00 am;
- Individual email invitations were sent to all the identified key stakeholders; in these emails the Local Councils were urged to publicise the events to the residents of the locality, and the NGOs and national entities and associations were urged to publicise the events to their members; and
- MEUSAC advertised the events to all its members (through its bi-weekly updates) and also informed all the Local Councils (through its Gozo Coordinator).

4.3.5. All three consultation events were well attended:

- In the first event (Għajnsielem), the participants numbered approximately eight and included a cross-section of the local community and key stakeholders - the Gozo Diocese, San Lawrenz Local Council, Gozo NGOs Association, the Managing Authority, and local business owners.
- In the second event (Rabat / Victoria), the participants numbered approximately 17 and again included a cross-section of the local community and key stakeholders - Fontana Local Council, Fondazzjoni Belt Victoria, Dun Frangisk Grima (Anzjani) Nadur, Din l'Art Helwa, Nature Trust Malta, Birdlife Malta, Don Bosco Oratory, MEUSAC, the Managing Authority, Gozo Tourism Association, and local business owners.
- In the third event (Għajnsielem), the participants numbered approximately 30 and included a broad cross-section of the local community and key stakeholders - Local Councils of Għarb, Xewkija, Xagħra, Nadur, Kerċem, Għasri, Sannat, Gozo Tourism Association, Gozo NGO Association, various NGOs, businesses and farmers.

4.3.6. All three of the two hour events took the same form; the event began with an initial PowerPoint presentation by the Consultants, followed by a facilitated discussion. A copy of the Powerpoint presentations is included as **Appendix 1**.

4.3.7. In the discussion, the participants were prompted to consider the positive and negative aspects of the previous 2007 - 2013 Local Development Strategy, and to make suggestions for the new LEADER programme, in respect of future projects and issues relevant to Gozo which could be the focus for future projects. The final public consultation exercise was focused on the proposed measures. The participants were encouraged to comment openly.

Interviews and Meetings with Key Stakeholders

4.3.8. In total, discussions were held with over 30 key stakeholders through the interviews

/ meetings. Details of the interviews / meetings undertaken are shown in **Table 4.2**. The purpose of the interviews / meetings was both to elicit information on the positive and negative aspects of the previous LEADER programme and on future projects and issues which could be the focus for future projects in the new programme. Again, the stakeholders were encouraged to comment openly.

4.3.9. The comments are presented in Section 2 of the LDS.

Table 4.2: Interviews / Meetings with Key Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Interviews / Meetings
GAGF Decision Committee	17 th June 2016 and 31 st August 2016
Local Councils of Sannat, Xewkija, Munxar, Xagħra, Għajnsielem, San Lawrenz, Fontana Żebbuġ, Kerċem, Għarb	24 th June 2016
Għarb Local Council	6 th September 2016
Farmers	28 th June 2016
NGO Association and NGOs	28 th June 2016
Gozo Business Chamber	28 th June 2016
Gozo Regional Committee	1 st July 2016
Ministry for European Affairs and Implementation of the Electoral Manifesto (Managing Authority)	27 th July 2016
Ministry for Sustainable Development, the Environment and Climate Change	11 th August 2016
Ministry for Gozo	18 th August 2016
Ministry for Justice, Culture and Local Government (Department for Local Government)	18 th August 2016
Ministry for Tourism / Malta Tourism Association	17 th August 2016
Environment and Resources Authority	25 th August 2016
Ministry for Energy and Health	7 th September 2016
Din l-Art Helwa	7 th September 2016

5. TRANSPOSING NEEDS AND OBJECTIVES INTO PROJECTS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

- 5.1.1. This section describes the method by which the needs and objectives derived from the SWOT analysis of the Gozo Region presented in Section 2 of the LDS have resulted in the formulation of the actions described in Section 3 of this Strategy. Through the actions constituting this Strategy, the objectives for the Gozo region that can be reasonably expected to be met by LEADER (CLLD) are transposed into projects.
- 5.1.2. It is at the outset specified that the demand for LEADER actions in Gozo was found to be significant, especially in the context of the stakeholder engagement and community led requirements. It can safely be stated that the budget that the Region will eventually receive will fall short of the potential needs, ranging from embellishments to village and country amenities, the introduction of services that improve the quality of life, the development of the tourism product and the diversification and consolidation of agricultural activities. While it is recognised that the relatively small LEADER budgetary allocation is in good part a reflection of resource constraints at Programme level, it is the intention of this Strategy to contribute to the use of LEADER in Gozo in a manner that justifies an expansion of resources allocated in future Programmes, on the basis of benefit-cost considerations.
- 5.1.3. This section is organised as follows:
- The principal criteria used to identify and select a preferred action to address the needs identified and the objectives set by the Strategy are articulated;
 - The rationale for each of the four actions set out in this Strategy is subsequently derived on the basis of meeting the criteria set out in (i) above, in terms of its nature, budget, and nature of expected applicants and applications, and constituting the best response among options that can be identified in this respect; and
 - Examples of the type of projects that can effectively be expected to be implemented / supported through the actions are finally provided, to better illustrate how the actions can in practice produce concrete results towards meeting the objectives of the Strategy.

5.2. PRINCIPAL CRITERIA USED IN ACTION IDENTIFICATION AND SELECTION

5.2.1. The criteria used to identify and select preferred actions include:

1. Relevance to the LEADER (CLLD) programme, with particular emphasis on:
 - a. enhancing competitiveness, innovation⁵¹ and quality of life in a bottom-up approach where partnership and networking are key tools in action selection and implementation;
 - b. avoidance of interventions in Gozo that are potentially funded through other publicly-funded resources, particularly other measures under the RDP, ERDF and ESF.
2. Relevance to Gozo and to the future role to be played by LEADER in the region, which entailed an emphasis upon:
 - a. effectively addressing the needs identified in Section 2 of this LDS;
 - b. providing an element of continuation from the previous programme, in terms of the focus on agricultural competitiveness, tourism, and embellishment of localities, also due to residual demand that has been identified through public consultation;
 - c. infusing future LEADER interventions with a much-needed element of innovation with the clear objective of obtaining better returns on investment through effective improvements in the quality of life, driven by the creation of jobs and through environmental and climate dividends;
 - d. infusing future LEADER interventions with bottom-up, networking and partnership approaches, via extensive consultation in the derivation of measures, and by encouraging partnership approaches in the implementation of actions, as opposed to the previous programme where individual actions tended to be specifically directed to specific segments of society;
 - e. critical mass, whereby in a small and peripheral region as Gozo, the absence of this factor is often a key hindrance to development - consistent with the implementation of partnerships within individual actions, it is recommended that individual projects funded are of sufficient size to obtain a marked improvement in the quality of life.
3. Effectiveness, whereby the actions would represent the best available approach to satisfying the identified need, within the context of:
 - a. Balance, in terms of a design of a set of actions which allows progress to be achieved in a fair and equitable manner across all needs, without creating

⁵¹ The LAG may consider requesting the inclusion of projects under the umbrella of innovation under EU European innovation Partnerships.

disparities which may ultimately result in social inequalities;

- b. Synergies, that would ideally be created (i) within the action, in terms of the various activities which would be undertaken, and (ii) across the actions within the Strategy, to maximise the combined effects on improvements in development and in the quality of life in the Region;
 - c. The potential to attain financial sustainability whereby the benefits of a project within an action would continue to be enjoyed beyond project implementation.
4. Efficiency and regulatory compliance in Strategy implementation, which in good part depends on factors outside the control of the implementation of LEADER within the Region, such as procedures designed and implemented at the level of the Managing Authority, but that can be also be influenced by strategy design, including through requirements of sufficient critical mass and bureaucratic competence within project applicants and at the level of the LAG.
- 5.2.2. It is highlighted that the attainment of these criteria is dependent from all aspects of action design, including the objectives to be attained from specific interventions, the total budget available for the action and the budgets allocated to individual projects under each, the delineation of eligible expenditure and the requirements placed on the characteristics of the applicants.

5.3. THE RATIONALE FOR THE ACTIONS SELECTED IN THE STRATEGY

- 5.3.1. The rationale for each of the actions selected in the strategy is articulated in terms of their performance in relation to the criteria set out above in the following tables. One of the main criteria is the relevance to Gozo's needs, as identified in Section 2 of this document. For ease of reference, these are summarised hereunder:

N1: "New Economy" Activities

N2: Food Supply Innovation and Evolution Through Verticalisation

N3: Agriculture and Environment

N4: Climate and Environment

N5: Gozo Lifestyle

N6: Cultural Heritage

N7: Partnership Approach

The Rationale for GAG1: Develop an ICT media platform for the valorisation of Gozitan lifestyle concept

Relevance to LEADER approach	Enhancing competitiveness, innovation and quality of life	The action is innovative in bringing together strands of business, NGO activity and governance towards modern media resources. This is expected to enhance the competitiveness of business and the delivery capabilities of NGOs, leading to a better quality of life.
	Promoting a bottom-up approach, partnership and networking	Modern ICT-based media typically provide excellent bases for cost-effective collaborative approaches, with broad-based participation from all segments of society.
	Avoidance of overlapping with other interventions	This action, within its full scope and reach, is not considered to replicate other interventions, although there may be specific elements that could be financed through other sources but that would be more effectively and efficiently undertaken as part of the holistic action that is being proposed in this Strategy.
Relevance to Gozo	Addresses needs identified in Strategy	<p>N1: The Action provides a direct contribution by creating an ICT, media and digital creative economic activity. It can be expected to have spin-off effects on the generation of similar new activities in Gozo.</p> <p>N4: The promotion of digital connectivity is expected to reduce dependence on climate-intensive activities such as physical transport and to raise awareness on Gozo's natural and cultural environment.</p> <p>N5: The action is expected to create a medium for the Gozitan lifestyle to be valorised and developed, also through generational renewal and valorising its economic competitiveness.</p> <p>N6: The action is expected to create a medium for showing cultural and natural heritage⁵² assets and valorising their economic competitiveness.</p> <p>N7: The action is expected to involve collaboration between business, NGOs and governance functions, while improving their capacity for media access.</p>
	Elements of continuation from previous programme	The previous programme financed the production of marketing material for Gozo tourism, mainly in the form of books and printed material. This intervention was effective, and now needs to be renewed through a more innovative and holistic means.
	Innovative elements for Gozo	The presence of Gozo in media and ICT is scattered and not overarching within the region. This approach will represent an innovative tool for a wide segment of society.

⁵² Natural heritage refers to biodiversity, including flora and fauna, ecosystems and geological structures.

	Improving networking in Gozo	Various entities can be encouraged to collaborate and create joint activities through the media platform.
	Engendering critical mass in interventions	Social media activities can have a relatively low threshold for cost efficiency. The partnership approach would reinforce this.
Effectiveness	Best available approach as compared to other actions	Other alternative actions that could be contemplated would involve individual, differentiated actions to promote specific sectors such as tourism, agriculture, real estate, etc. These alternatives are considered to involve higher costs and to be less effective than a unified approach within a common platform that encourages partnerships and synergies.
	Balance in interventions within and across actions	The action is absorbing around 8% of the total budget, and is itself to be divided among various complementary interventions including capacity building, ICT investment and production of media material.
	Synergies within action and with other actions	The action can provide media resources and access to enhance the effectiveness of each of the other three actions proposed in this Strategy. The components of the action, including capacity building, ICT investment and production of media material, provide synergies between themselves and are essential to engender the synergies with other actions.
	Sustainability of project benefits	This is designed to be obtained through the participation of private business entities, which would financially sustain the activity through the improved business performance that it would be generating. There can also be elements of public support, subject to State Aid rules, in this regard.
Efficiency and Regulatory Compliance		The budget is considered to be sufficient so that through the partnership base established, efficiency and regulatory compliance can be attained in a cost-effective manner. The participation of public governance entities could support this function.

The Rationale for GAG2: Maximise the contribution of Gozitan agriculture to the Gozitan culinary tradition, its evolution and future sustainability

Relevance to LEADER approach	Enhancing competitiveness, innovation and quality of life	The action is innovative in identifying the competitiveness elements in Gozitan culinary tradition and evolving them to produce higher value added to agriculture and tourism. It provides space for related NGOs to undertake their activities and provides for the health benefits of better quality fresh food.
	Promoting a bottom-up approach, partnership and networking	The measure requires partnerships between operators in agriculture and in food production and sales which are therefore encouraged to network in a bottom-up approach.
	Avoidance of overlapping with other interventions	This action, within its full scope and reach, is not considered to replicate other interventions, although there may be specific elements that could be financed through other sources but that would be more effectively and efficiently undertaken as part of the holistic action which is being proposed in this strategy.
Relevance to Gozo	Addresses needs identified in Strategy	<p>N2: The action incentivises the creation of value chains between agricultural producers and food sellers/producers by valorising the quality of food produced utilising ingredients from Gozo, improving the cost competitiveness in production, and stimulating innovation at the primary and secondary levels of production.</p> <p>N3: The action will valorise aspects of food quality and potential cost competitiveness by exploiting environmental dividends from sustainable agricultural production.</p> <p>N4: The action will reap positive climate dividends from shortening and improving food supply logistics through the creation of value chains.</p> <p>N7: The action is expected to involve collaboration between business, and potentially NGOs (mainly related to culinary arts/research, tourism, consumers' interest, sustainable agriculture, etc), governance and research/knowledge functions, engaged in food production value chains operating under market recognition brands that will be created through the action itself, which will be self-regulated and audited.</p>
	Elements of continuation from previous programme	The previous programme financed aspects of improvements in agricultural competitiveness and value-added enhancement. This intervention was effective, and now needs to be renewed through more innovative and holistic means.
	Innovative elements for Gozo	The creation of new menus, new products, new delivery systems for food produced and consumed in Gozo will

		represent a significant innovation for the agricultural and tourism business.
	Improving networking in Gozo	Networking between agriculture and tourism will be strengthened, with the possible involvement of research entities, NGOs and public governance.
	Engendering critical mass in interventions	The budget is sufficient to focus on value chains for specific products and menus.
Effectiveness	Best available approach as compared to other actions	Other alternative actions which could be contemplated would involve individual, differentiated actions to support specific interventions in agriculture, agri-processing or food sale. These alternatives are considered to involve higher costs and to be less effective than a unified approach that encourages partnerships and synergies.
	Balance in interventions within and across actions	The action is absorbing around 9% of the total budget, and is itself to be divided among various complementary interventions including knowledge creation, capacity building, and facilities improvements on farms and on establishments.
	Synergies within action and with other actions	The components of the action provide obvious synergies. The action itself can provide material to be used within the context of GAG1, can promote all-year tourism thereby abetting GAG3, and can have effects on the quality of life for youths and young families (through healthier food options, for example), thereby contributing to the effects of GAG4.
	Sustainability of project benefits	This is designed to be obtained through the participation of private business entities, which would financially sustain the activity through the improved business performance that it would be generating. There can also be elements of public support, subject to State Aid rules, in this regard.
Efficiency and Regulatory Compliance		The budget is considered to be sufficient in that through the partnership base established, efficiency and regulatory compliance can be attained in a cost-effective manner. The participation of public governance entities could support this function.

The Rationale for GAG3: Develop Gozo's all-season tourism product offering

Relevance to LEADER approach	Enhancing competitiveness, innovation and quality of life	The action is innovative in providing a solution to attract off-peak tourism in Gozo through the undertaking of complementary infrastructural developments and events. This will improve economic competitiveness, and lead to a better quality of life in all aspects of the sustainable development model.
	Promoting a bottom-up approach, partnership and networking	The measure requires partnerships between NGOs, public governance entities and business operators. Network within a bottom-up approach is therefore promoted.
	Avoidance of overlapping with other interventions	This action, within its full scope and reach, is not considered to replicate other interventions, although there may be specific elements that could be financed through other sources but that would be more effectively and efficiently undertaken as part of the holistic action which is being proposed in this strategy.
Relevance to Gozo	Addresses needs identified in Strategy	<p>N4: The physical interventions undertaken through this action are expected to lead to environmental amelioration and better climate performance, ideally by also focusing on related tourism niches.</p> <p>N5: The events supporting investments are expected to preserve, valorise and evolve distinctive and unique features of Gozitan lifestyle.</p> <p>N6: The action is expected to create investment and events that preserve cultural and natural heritage⁵³ assets and valorise their economic competitiveness.</p>
	Elements of continuation from previous programme	The previous programme financed aspects of improvements in infrastructure, as well as the undertaking of events. These interventions were well-received, but now needs to be renewed through more innovative and holistic means that guarantee future sustainability.
	Innovative elements for Gozo	The creation of events jointly with infrastructural ameliorations where business elements would be involved is innovative in Gozo, leading to better outcomes with a greater chance of future financial sustainability.
	Improving networking in Gozo	
	Engendering critical mass in interventions	While absorbing a significant amount of the available budget, the resources that this measure could potentially take are significantly larger. Critical mass thus require investment by the private sector to leverage the resources provided through LEADER (CLLD). It is

⁵³ Natural heritage refers to biodiversity, including flora and fauna, ecosystems and geological structures.

		essential that animation activities clearly explain this issue to potential applicants, which will be key to the durability of benefits which is expected through the Strategy.
Effectiveness	Best available approach as compared to other actions	Other alternative actions that could be contemplated would involve individual, differentiated actions to support specific interventions in infrastructure and events. These alternatives are considered to involve higher costs and to be less effective than a unified approach that encourages partnerships and synergies, especially within the context of involving business to leverage on publicly-funded investment.
	Balance in interventions within and across actions	The action is absorbing around 51% of the total budget, and is itself to be by design divided among various complementary interventions.
	Synergies within action and with other actions	The components of the action provide obvious synergies. The action itself can provide material to be used within the context of GAG1, and can have effects on the quality of life for youths and young families, thereby contributing to the effects of GAG4.
	Sustainability of project benefits	This is designed to be obtained through the participation of private business entities, which would financially sustain the activity through the improved business performance that it would be generating. There can also be elements of public support, subject to State Aid rules, in this regard.
Efficiency and Regulatory Compliance		The budget is considered to be sufficient in that through the partnership base established, efficiency and regulatory compliance can be attained in a cost-effective manner. The participation of public governance entities could support this function.

The Rationale for GAG4: Improve the attractiveness of living in Gozo for young persons and young families

Relevance to LEADER approach	Enhancing competitiveness, innovation and quality of life	The action is innovative in targeting better quality of life for youths and young families for the purposes of economic and cultural regeneration, which are in themselves key to fostering innovation.
	Promoting a bottom-up approach, partnership and networking	The measure requires partnerships between NGOs, public governance entities and business operators. Networking within a bottom-up approach is therefore promoted.
	Avoidance of overlapping with other interventions	This action, within its full scope and reach, is not considered to replicate other interventions, although there may be specific elements that could be financed through other sources but that would be more effectively and efficiently undertaken as part of the holistic action that is being proposed in this Strategy.
Relevance to Gozo	Addresses needs identified in Strategy	<p>N1: The action is expected to provide lifestyle attractions to young people and young families by focusing on amenities and activities associated with the 'new economy', with potential spin-off effects on employment generation.</p> <p>N4: Investment and activities promoted through this action are likely to deliver improvements in environmental and climate performance, due to the importance of these factors for a healthy lifestyle of young persons and families.</p> <p>N5: The main focus of this action is the preservation, valorisation and evolution of the Gozitan lifestyle through the retention and attraction of a younger population.</p> <p>N6: The action is expected to improve on cultural and natural heritage⁵⁴ assets as a means to improve the lifestyle for young persons and young families.</p>
	Elements of continuation from previous programme	The previous programme financed aspects of improvements in infrastructure, although not with a youth and young families direct focus. A number of interventions of the same type and scale can also be undertaken under this action, but with the specific demographic focus that is required.
	Innovative elements for Gozo	The creation of infrastructures and services where business elements would be involved is innovative in Gozo, leading to better outcomes with a greater chance of future financial sustainability.
	Improving networking in Gozo	

⁵⁴ Natural heritage refers to biodiversity, including flora and fauna, ecosystems and geological structures.

	Engendering critical mass in interventions	While absorbing a significant amount of the available budget, the resources which this measure could potentially take are significantly larger. Critical mass thus require investment by the private sector and public governance entities, to leverage the resources provided through LEADER (CLLD). The leveraging of such resources, and the particular advantages which public-private partnerships may offer in this regard, is to be clearly explain in the context of animation activities.
Effectiveness	Best available approach as compared to other actions	Other alternative actions that could be contemplated would involve individual, differentiated actions without a specific demographic focus. These alternatives are considered to involve higher costs and to be less effective than a unified approach that encourages partnerships and synergies.
	Balance in interventions within and across actions	The action is absorbing around 32% of the total budget, and is itself to be by design divided among various complementary interventions.
	Synergies within action and with other actions	The components of the action provide obvious synergies. The action itself can provide material to be used within the context of GAG1, as well as a younger population with a direct interest in the operations of GAG1.
	Sustainability of project benefits	This is designed to be obtained through the participation of private business and public governance entities, which would financially sustain the activity through the improved business performance which it would be generating.
Efficiency and Regulatory Compliance		The budget is considered to be sufficient in that through the partnership base established, efficiency and regulatory compliance can be attained in a cost-effective manner. The participation of public governance entities could support this function.

5.4. RATIONALE BEHIND BUDGETARY ALLOCATION ACROSS ACTIONS

- 5.4.1. The budgetary allocation across actions is an essential element of the formulation of the Strategy and its eventual success. This was affected in a manner that reflects the principles utilised in the derivation of the Strategy itself, especially the following:
- Balance between actions so as to attain progress on all the needs identified in the Strategy;
 - An element of continuity in supporting activities to an extent and of a nature that is not excessively dissimilar from those supported in the previous Programme; and
 - Providing sufficient resources for the proposed actions to be undertaken effectively and efficiently, while allowing for a critical mass to be established within projects.
- 5.4.2. As indicated earlier, the potential demand for resources under LEADER in the Region of Gozo could be significantly higher than that provided for through the RDP for Malta 2014-2020. Within the context of this limitation, it is considered that the allocation to the four individual actions and the suggested range of allocations to individual projects achieves all of the above objectives in a reasonable manner. This is within the context of the emphasis of this Strategy for the involvement of private business and public entities to:
- Provide the necessary 20% co-financing element as indicated in the RDP; and
 - Provide additional financial resources to undertake activities of an even larger magnitude in a sustainable manner that increase economic and social activity in Gozo - in this manner, the LEADER funds would act as a base upon which additional public and private capital would leverage in order to create activities of sufficient scale to make an important impact on the quality of life in Gozo. This is a key feature in this Strategy, which must be properly communicated and motivated in the context of the animation and implementation of the Strategy itself in order to ensure durability of the effects of funding interventions.

5.5. THE ELEMENT OF RISK

- 5.5.1. It is the intention of LEADER to fund projects that are relatively risky in nature, in an attempt to undertake innovative activities that are inspired by community action leading to concrete social welfare improvement.
- 5.5.2. These concepts are incorporated in this Strategy through:
- The design of activities oriented towards introducing and strengthening 'real economy' activities in Gozo, dependent and intended to engender the retention and attraction of younger, higher-skilled workers in Gozo;
 - A strong emphasis on the need for effective partnerships between entities from different sectors in the design and implementation of projects; and

- The emphasis on interventions attaining sufficient critical mass, as opposed to the scattering of funds across numerous projects that do not create a consistent intervention, in a manner which is furthermore conducive to ensure durability of effects.
- 5.5.3. These three elements are essential for Gozo to further its socio-economic development, but present risks in the ensuring that sufficient operators would be interested in the innovative elements of the activities proposed and in bringing people to work together to create effective partnerships. This Strategy, however, considers that these risks are worth taking, and that concrete efforts should be undertaken to ensure that LEADER funds deliver the objectives set in the next Programming period. It should also lead to a much-needed culture change that will set the basis for the successful design and implementation of future LEADER programmes.
- 5.5.4. The feedback received from the extensive public consultation undertaken and from the Decision Committee of the GAG point to the fact that there is extensive public support for the Strategy as designed and awareness of the risks involved, together with the confidence that the Programme can be implemented in a manner that overcomes the negative effects of risks and reap the intended benefits.

5.6. CONCLUSION

- 5.6.1. The process of transposition of needs into actions for the Gozo region is based on rational criteria as discussed in this section and was furthermore greatly informed by the extensive stakeholder consultation process. Stakeholder consultation pointed to a series of projects that were implementable in practice, and that this Strategy seeks to enable through the articulation of four actions. The actions are furthermore aiming at creating innovative practices and a partnership approach to project formulation and implementation in Gozo, leading to the establishment of operations of a critical mass with sustainable returns in future. It is expected that these characteristics will distinguish this Strategy from the previous one for Gozo. While requiring greater efforts in terms of project conceptualisation and initial organisation, it is considered that this approach is what Gozo needs at this particular juncture of its socio-economic development, and that it is fully consistent with the aims which LEADER seeks to achieve at the regional level. The ideas of innovation and partnership approach received positive feedback in the course of stakeholder consultation, and it is highly probable that a number of interesting projects will be conceived and implemented under the aegis of this Strategy.

6. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

6.1. INTRODUCTION

- 6.1.1. In line with the Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) No. 1303/2013, article 34G, there is the need for transparent internal mechanisms and procedures that will be operated by the LAG to ensure that the overall objectives of the LDS are achieved. This section of the Strategy outlines the implementation plan based on the following implementation arrangements of the Strategy:
- 1) Management;
 - 2) Monitoring;
 - 3) Evaluation; and
 - 4) Reporting
- 6.1.2. This plan sets out the implementation of the actions namely the timing of when the actions will be launched, and supporting structures for the launch of the measures such as information sessions, press releases and adverts. In addition, this section also outlines relevant implementation issues such as contracting of beneficiaries, the monitoring requirements including the collection of relevant data to ensure effective monitoring as well as board meetings.
- 6.1.3. This section also sets out the plan to be undertaken with respect to the evaluation of the LDS in order to address the effectiveness of the Strategy. The indicators and targets set for each measure form the basis for the monitoring and evaluation process of the Strategy. To this end a data collection plan enabling collection of information is required to calculate the indicators on a periodic basis and in turn identify projects that are lagging behind or that are deviating from their initial objectives and contribution towards the Strategy. Through this monitoring, the LAG can react to ensure that implementation takes place in line with the objectives of the Strategy.

6.1.4. The figure below summarises the four processes outlined above.

Figure 6.1 Application Process

Mechanisms and Procedures	
Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation and issue of applications Preparation of transparent selection procedures Contracting
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attest that procedures are followed Ensure supply of progress reports Investigate Projects identified as at risk Carry out 'On the Spot Checks' by LAG Detailed checking of all claims/progress reports Monitoring of financial progress of the Strategy
Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compiling and providing regular claim reports to the PA Notify to the MA any changes in finances Preparing irregularity reports and applying penalties where required Internal audit to check decisions and procedures
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed reports to certify that Projects are moving towards the intended objectives. Evaluation of the local effectiveness of the CLLD strategy

6.1.5. This section also includes a communication plan of how information about applications, decisions, results of the measures and Strategy or any other matter will be communicated to the stakeholders.

6.2. MANAGEMENT

6.2.1. The GAGF is responsible for implementing and managing the Strategy. It is responsible for project assessment, monitoring of progress as well as administrating the Strategy including financial management. As such it has to prepare the applications for all the measures as well as communicate the opening of calls in a timely manner. To this end the LAG intends to develop a set-up of mechanisms and procedures to assist the selection committee in terms of the selection of the projects across each of the measures. The Application process will be in line with the Operating Rules for the Leader Programme⁵⁵, as amended.

Project Selection

6.2.2. Following submission, all applications are assessed by the selection committee for eligibility to ensure that the projects proposed are in line with the Strategy and can be funded under the LEADER initiative. In order to be eligible, applicants must:

- Submit all required documents;
- Show proof of partnership showing collaboration between different local actors;
- Demonstrate that projects will be physically located in Gozo and are of interest to the region of Gozo;
- Apply under one or more of the measures, but cannot participate under competing applications within the same measures; and
- Follow all other regulatory requirements as required by the Strategy.

6.2.3. All operations that pass the eligibility checks will be reviewed and selected according to the general and specific selection criteria outlined in Section 3 of the LDS that include the:

- All activities proposed have to demonstrate future financial and resource sustainability;
- Projects have to show their contribution towards the LDS overall objectives and interaction with other measures;
- Consistency with the overall Rural Development Programme (RDP) objectives; and
- The extent of the project's contribution towards the RDP's cross cutting themes:
 - Competitiveness

⁵⁵ Managing Authority (EAFRD) Funds and Programmes Division, MEAIM, Ministry for European Affairs and Implementation of the Electoral Manifesto, 2015, Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2007 - 2013 Operating Rules For the 'LEADER' Programme 5 Version 8

- Innovation
- Climate Change
- Environment.

6.2.4. Other general or specific criteria by the selection committee as deemed appropriate shall apply. All decisions will be formally recorded, documented and communicated to applicants.

Claims and payments procedure

6.2.5. The entire budget will be administered by the Paying Agency (PA). Claims for funds and payments will be processed using the following procedures:

- All original invoices and claim forms will be received and reviewed by the GAGF prior submission to the Paying Agency for payment.
- Project performance and progress reports will be reviewed by the GAGF for all projects.
- Where performance issues are identified, or a project fails to follow required procedures, the LAG will take note and communicate issues to the beneficiaries and if necessary to the MA.
- All documents and information are submitted to the PA and processed for payment.
- If any payment is refused this will be formally recorded and reported to the LAG and the beneficiary. Penalties are applied if applicable.

6.3. MONITORING & EVALUATION

6.3.1. The legal framework lists the tasks of the LAG including the monitoring of the implementation of the Strategy as well as carrying out specific evaluation activities linked to the Strategy. Indeed, one way of ensuring that the objectives set for the LDS are achieved is through a continuous monitoring and evaluation system of the Strategy. The monitoring and evaluation process enables the LAG to identify and solve major concerns effectively through the timeframe of the Strategy, adapt and provide the necessary support.

Monitoring

6.3.2. Monitoring the progression of projects is an essential element in managing the Strategy and ensuring effective implementation. Through the monitoring of projects, it is possible to identify, at an early stage, any risks that might jeopardise the implementation of the Strategy. The monitoring system is planned to take into account a periodic review of each project, allowing for monitoring of performance in terms of time, budget and output achievements. This will allow for the identification of weaknesses and any other problems that might arise allowing for the development of suggestions to resolve issues in an adequate and timely manner. The monitoring system is also intended to allow for the identification of good practices that could be suggested and applied thereof. The monitoring process is required to oversee that:

- The project is proceeding in line with the projects objectives identified in chapter 3;
- The project commitment and expenditure are in line with the budget to anticipate problems that could result in slow drawdown of funds; and
- The project delivery and progression are in line with the time line and action plan established;

6.3.3. To anticipate risks, annual monitoring is required. Monitoring activities may involve:

- Visits to project sites;
- Meetings with beneficiaries; and
- Other activities allowing the LAG members and staff to have feedback and an overview on project implementation.

6.3.4. Any current or anticipated problems need to be highlighted and reported to the LAG to be communicated to the beneficiaries with recommended solutions. Communication is essential for achievement of objectives.

Internal Controls

6.3.5. To ensure effective implementation of the management, monitoring and evaluation procedures, internal controls should be conducted on an annual basis. These internal controls would consist of internal audits, financial review of management accounts, cash flow forecasts and overview of contracts. These internal controls will serve as financial and operational controls for compliance and risk management. Annual

reports will be compiled and submitted to the Gozo Action Group. Of utmost importance at this stage is that the supply of information is requested in a timely manner to ensure that any problems are anticipated early on. Any irregularities are reported to the MA and penalties applied if applicable.

Evaluation

- 6.3.6. The evaluation of the implementation and the outcomes of the Strategy shall be carried out on an annual basis with two extended reports one in 2017 and the other in 2019 as depicted by the diagram below. These represent the major milestones which Managing Authorities must submit. The evaluation must ensure that there is no evidence that the objectives of the projects will not be achieved. If this is so, this needs to be highlighted and addressed in an appropriate manner. There needs to be an evaluation of the track record of the projects indicators providing evidence of whether these will be achieved or not. The evaluation will look at the extent to which the targets have been achieved in relation to the percentage of work accomplished.

Figure 6.2: Timeline of Monitoring and Evaluation



- 6.3.7. The timeline identifies two Annual Implementation Reports (AIR) in 2017 and 2019 that Managing Authorities must submit, which are an extended and more detailed version of the annual implementation reports ensuring that projects are progressing in line with the overall objectives and there are no anticipated issues of concern. The monitoring reports are internal reports for internal use by the GAG to ensure that everything is proceeding accordingly while the AIR are external reports commissioned as per legal requirements. At the end of seven-year period an evaluation will be undertaken to evaluate and determine the local effectiveness the LDS in Gozo.

6.4. COMMUNICATION PLAN

- 6.4.1. In line with Regulation 1303/2013 Art 1 (e) animation of the community-led local development strategy is required in order to facilitate exchange between stakeholders to provide information and to promote the strategy and to support potential beneficiaries with a view to developing operations and preparing applications.
- 6.4.2. This Strategy presents the basis for an efficient and effective communication plan that is vital at all stages throughout the implementation of the LDS. It is important to involve all stakeholders throughout each of the implementation phase to ensure that stakeholders contribute towards the effective implementation of the Strategy ensuring that the planned objectives are attained. One of the key issues mentioned during stakeholder involvement was how would the LDS be taken forward and how would applicants be able to tap into the LEADER funds. The Communication Plan is therefore imperative towards meeting the aspirations of potential applicants.
- 6.4.3. Communication is a two-way process and thus it is inherent to ensure that the message is well received and understood. Note that the effectiveness of the monitoring and evaluation process depends on the qualitative and quantitative information received. As such the indicators and criteria need to be well communicated together with deadlines, where applicable, to ensure that the data received is what is required and is captured and made available when requested. Lack of communication could result in unreliable data leading to wrong conclusions and thus consequences.
- 6.4.4. The LAG will ensure that:
- Objectives, processes and requirements are clear and not ambiguous – the LAG will communicate in writing to any queries presented by applicants and beneficiaries;
 - All processes will be explained in detail. Applicants need to understand the importance of the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and thus understand clearly why their contribution in terms of providing the right information in a timely manner is vital; and
 - Findings will be clearly communicated and where appropriate the recommendations will be implemented. This should be part of the monitoring and evaluation mechanism to guarantee that what has been communicated is not disregarded but applied.
- 6.4.5. For effective and efficient communication, the LAG will consider the following questions:
- **What needs to be communicated (and why)?**
 - The LAG will make sure that all objectives, requirements and procedures are well communicated in a timely, transparent and non-discriminatory manner. Information for each action proposed by the Strategy will be clearly defined through a clear description of the type of operations, the

type of support, the objectives that need to be achieved, eligible and non-eligible criteria and all selection criteria. Applicants have to be aware of all the information that will enable them to fill applications appropriately with submission of all necessary documents. Proper communication of information allows for a better decision making.

- Communication is a continuous process that does not start and finish upon submission of applications. The LAG will keep open communication with the MA in relation to the implementation of the Strategy and with beneficiaries to ensure that they are aware of all procedures. Any changes or issues that may arise will be communicated to all involved parties.
 - **Who does it need to be communicated to?**
 - The entire process, from the formulation of the LDS to its implementation has to involve the participation of all relevant parties. To this end this Strategy is developed using a bottom-up approach ensuring that information coming from the MA and the LAG is communicated to local actors who in turn contributed in building the Strategy. All parties shall remain involved in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation process. All changes, problem, irregularities and decisions have to be duly communicated to all those involved.
 - **Who and when does it need to be communicated?**
 - At any phase of the LDS from its construction to its implementation and evaluation, communication cannot come to a halt. It is an on-going process involving all parties. Communication of information and decisions shall occur on a continuous basis through all phases by all those involved.
 - **What means and channels should be used?**
 - Channels of communication could include face to face communication, broadcast and print media, written and electronic communication and any other form of channel that is deemed appropriate.
 - **How will effectiveness be assessed?**
 - The extent of the communication effectiveness can be assessed through the smooth operation of the implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes. Effective communication shall translate into successful applications, appropriate delivery of requested information, submission of reports, queries addressed, and recommendations executed in a timely manner. All communications need to be documented and recorded for auditing and evaluation purposes.
- 6.4.6. In order to achieve the aims with regards to animation the LAG will necessarily carry out information sessions specifically targeting the potential beneficiaries identified in this LDS. This will also allow the beneficiaries to seek any clarifications. Early warning of such sessions should be done in order to reach as many beneficiaries as possible. Timing of information sessions will also be crucial. Information from stakeholder

consultation during the preparation of this LDS shows that there is interest in Gozo to participate in the programme.

- 6.4.7. In order to ensure that the Strategy is made visible throughout the funding period, in addition to placing the Strategy on the LAG website in a prominent position, the LAG will issue regular newsletters to its network ensuring that the Strategy is made reference to and including links to the Strategy. On adoption of the Strategy a press release will be issued informing stakeholder of the availability of the Strategy and any planned information sessions. The LAG will also present the Strategy at any of the information sessions, meetings with stakeholders, and ensure on-going compliance with EU visibility requirements in all developed project materials, publications, e-learning courses, facilitations, workshops. In terms of animating actors and potential beneficiaries the target groups can be divided into individual, institutional and societal levels, all of which are strongly interrelated. Key to capacity building are governance, vision, planning, communication and networking. The LAG will build on its existing networks and the work already undertaken in preparing the LDS to animate its actors, those known to it and also those still new to the LEADER programme. The latter will include campaigns, newsletters, consultation meetings, information meetings and a regularly updated website. Interaction with the Local Councils should be considered to assist in this dissemination of information.
- 6.4.8. All communication processes and evaluation reports including results of the measures and Strategy implementation should be made publicly available in an accessible format to ensure transparency.

6.5. FINANCIAL ALLOCATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

6.5.1. Part of the budget to be allocated to the Gozo LEADER initiative will address running and animation costs. This is in line with measure 19.4 of the RDP that applies once the LDS has been approved and preparatory support is no longer required. It is noted that eligible costs under M19.4 Running costs and animation is to be determined by the MA in the Operational Guidelines. The scope of this budget is to ensure efficient administration of the LAG. This budget shall cover costs related to training of the LAG, promotional events, animation actions and any associated costs linked with the implementation of the LDS. Other administrative functions that will be covered by this budget include:

- Preparation and publication of applications;
- Receipt, assessment and selection and contracting of projects;
- Management, monitoring and implementation of the strategy; and
- Bookkeeping and legal-related specific issues.

6.5.2. All these activities - management, monitoring, evaluation, control and communication - support the implementation of the LDS. As such the budget needs to be appropriately allocated to these specific activities to ensure that the budget is used to support the implementation plan. The budget allocated is of €393,360 and is allocated across the running and animation activities as follows.

Table 6.1: Running and animation costs

	Activities	€
Running Costs	Training of LAG and travelling expenses	527,839.60
	Personnel/staff costs and allowances	
	Members allowance	
	Bookkeeping, legal fees and insurance	
	Utilities	
	Other operating costs (office supplies, internet, rent & insurance, repair & maintenance, cleaning)	
	Receipt, analysis, assessment, selection and contracting of projects	
	Management, Monitoring and implementation of the strategy	
Animation Costs	Promotional events	59,000
	Provision of information	
	Preparation and publication of public calls in line with the LDS	
	Total	586,839.40

Table 6.1 provides an estimation of how the budget could be allocated, a distribution of 15% for animation costs and 85% for running costs⁵⁶. However, the LAG can allocate the budget in a different proportion across the animation and running costs and between the different non-exhaustive list of activities as necessary. Following a meeting with the Managing

⁵⁶ Literature of other international LEADER examples present a distribution of 25% and 75% between animation and running cost respectively.

Authority, it was suggested that the budget should be allocated for 5 years until October 2021 as the allocated budget (€393,360) is in all probability not sufficient to adequately cover activities for a period of 7 years.

7. FINANCIAL PLAN

- 7.1. This section reports the financial plan allocated per objective of the strategy. As presented in Section 3, the LDS identifies seven regional needs translated into six objectives for the Strategy. Actions were developed with the purpose to achieve these objectives and target these regional needs. **Table 7.1** shows how the budget assigned to each action is allocated across needs and objectives; these add up to an indicative budget of €1.3 million.
- 7.2. **Table 7.2** shows the percentages allocated to the needs and objectives. The minimum amount of budget of 18% is allocated to Measure GAG1 followed by Measure GAG 4 that has an allocated 23% of the budget. Measures GAG2 and GAG3 are the two actions with the highest budget of 30% each. Most of the budget will be allocated to address needs 4,5 and 6 related to climate and environment, Gozo lifestyle and heritage respectively. Climate and environment are cross cutting themes for the RDP and for consistency purposes each action shall contribute towards these themes.
- 7.3. For the rationale behind the financial allocation see Section 5 of the LDS.

Table 7.1: Expectations of budget distribution⁵⁷

Objectives	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective3		Objective 4	Objective 5	Objective 6	Total
	Increase investment and job creation in firms in 'new economy' sectors	Create foodsupply chain verticalisation projects	Increase number of Gozo business and infrastructural amenities employing sustainable environmental and climate-friendly approaches		Increase younger people and families within the population	Increase amenities valorising Gozo lifestyle, environment and cultural heritage for tourism, educational and other activities	Increase the number of projects in Gozo involving partnerships between public and private entities, and which further enable NGOs	
Actions/Needs	N.1 'New Economy Activities'	N.2 'Food Supply Chain Verticalisation'	N.3 'Agriculture & Environment'	N.4 'Climate and Environment'	N.5 'Gozo Lifestyle'	N.6 'Cultural Heritage'	N.7 'Partnership Approach'	
GAG1: Gozo in 21st Century Media	52,742	-	-	35,161	35,161	35,161	17,580	175,805
GAG3: A Truly Holistic Gozitan Gastronomy	-	78,404	68,604	19,601	-	-	29,402	196,011
GAG3: Gozitan Attractions and Events for all Seasons	-	-	-	319,040	191,424	765,695	-	1,276,158
GAG4: Rejuvenating Gozo	166,733	-	-	155,644	466,931	38,911	-	778,219
Total	161,474	78,404	68,604	486,260	642,005	759,056	46,982	2,426,193

Table 7.2: The percentage budget allocated

Actions/Objectives	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3		Objective 4	Objective 5	Objective 6	Total	
	N.1	N.2	N.3	N.4	N.5	N.6	N.7		
GAG1	30%			20%	20%	20%	10%	100%	175,805
GAG2		40%	35%	10%			15%	100%	196,011
GAG3				25%	15%	60%		100%	1,276,158
GAG4	15%			20%	60%	5%		100%	778,219
Total	45%	40%	35%	75%	95%	85%	25%	400%	2,426,193

⁵⁷ This table is provided for indicative purposes and is not subject to an audit

8. SET OF THE LOCAL ACTION GROUP

8.1. BACKGROUND

- 8.1.1. As mentioned this Local Development Strategy has been formulated by the Gozo Action Group Foundation following extensive consultation with a wide spectrum of stakeholders.
- 8.1.2. The GAGF is responsible for the implementation of this Strategy as described above.

8.2. ORGANISATIONAL DETAILS

Gozo Action Group Foundation (GAGF),
23, Triq G.P.F. Agius De Soldanis,
Victoria (Rabat) - Għawdex

8.3. PRIMARY CONTACT

GAGF Manager , 23, Triq G.P.F.
Agius De Soldanis, Victoria
(Rabat) - Għawdex

Tel. No.: 00356 2155 0322

Website: www.leadergozo.eu

E-mail: info@leadergozo.eu

8.4. LEGAL DESCRIPTION

- 8.4.1. The Gozo Action Group Foundation (GAGF) is the Local Action Group (LAG) that works for the realisation of the LEADER programme in Gozo. GAGF is a public private partnership and a non-profit foundation. It is composed of local councils and the private sector. The following comprise the GAGF:

- From the public sector:
 - Fontana Local Council;
 - Għajnsielem Local Council;
 - Għarb Local Council;
 - Għasri Local Council;
 - Kerċem Local Council;
 - Munxar Local Council;
 - Nadur Local Council;
 - Qala Local Council;

- Rabat Local Council;
- Sannat Local Council;
- San Lawrenz Local Council;
- Xagħra Local Council;
- Xewkija Local Council;
- Żebbuġ Local Council;
- From the private sector
 - Gozo Business Chamber;
 - Gozo NGOs Association;
 - Gozo Tourism Association;
 - Maltese Islands Agri Foundation (MIAF).

8.4.2. In 2008, the statute for the GAGF was approved by all members and a board was appointed. The GAGF was launched on the 8th August 2008. The GAGF Statute, as signed by all the Foundation members, is found in **Appendix 4**.

8.4.3. The GAGF represents the whole territory of Gozo and Comino together with all the socio-economic sectors of the region. Since Gozo has a strong regional identity, many entities and operators such as SMEs, tourism operators and farmers, take a regional approach.

8.5. LAG COMPOSITION AND DECISION MAKING

8.5.1. As mentioned, the GAGF is made up of the 14 Gozitan local councils that are represented on the Decision Committee by three mayors, the general business sector represented by the Gozo Business Chamber, the Gozo Tourism Association, the Maltese Islands Agri Foundation (MIAF) and the Gozo NGO Association.

8.5.2. The Decision Committee comprises 7 members as follows:

- Mr Joe Cordina- GAGF Chairman;
- Mr Michael Galea - GAGF Vice-Chairman
- Mr Paul Scicluna- GAGF Decision Committee Secretary;
- Mr Joseph Debrincat- GAGF Treasurer;
- Mr Mario Azzopardi, Mr Paul Azzopardi, and Mr Saviour Grech - Decision Committee Members.

8.5.3. The Decision Committee meets approximately once a month. In accordance with the statute, each meeting is minuted and a quorum of 4 Committee members is required for decisions to be taken.

8.5.4. The Decision Committee will also set up an autonomous and independent Appeals

Board. Any appeals presented must be lodged with the Chairperson of the Board; no members of the evaluation or decision committee can sit on the Appeals Board.

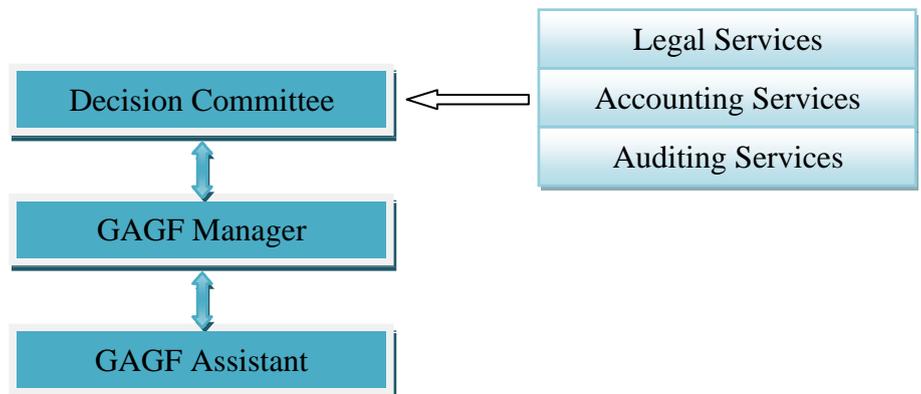
8.6. STAFFING

8.6.1. The GAGF currently employs one person who is designated as GAGF Manager. The manager has a detailed job description (see **Appendix 5**) that includes the following tasks:

- Overall management, coordination and control of the approved actions within the Local Development Strategy;
- Preparing the budget for GAGF;
- Participate fully as a member of GAGF's management team, GAGF's Arbitration, Evaluation, Technical, & Adjudicating Committees, where necessary and asked to do so by the GAGF Board;
- Co-ordinate the work of the Decision Committee;
- Prepare and submit project progress reports;
- Manage financial resources in terms of Public Financial Regulations;
- Communicate with all the horizontal stakeholders and networking and local and European counterparts; and
- Work in close liaison with relevant Government Departments, particularly the Department of Contracts, the Managing Authority and the Paying Agency.

8.6.2. It is envisaged that additional staff will be recruited in 2017 to assist the GAGF Manager. Additional support will also be sought through a competitive tender for auditing, accounting and legal services for the GAGF.

8.6.3. In accordance with the LAG Operating Rules the Project Selection Committee comprises the GAGF Manager and the secretary. An external Technical Expert may also be appointed, if the need arises.



8.7. LAG EXPERIENCE

- 8.7.1. The Foundation, with the same partners, has been operating successfully since 2008. The previous programming period was the first experience of the Foundation in the implementation of LEADER. The Foundation successfully set up a fully functioning office and has gained experience in the evaluation of projects, communication of the Leader initiative to the region as well as promoting Leader. In this regard the Interim Evaluation Report⁵⁸ states: *The LAG managers have received substantial trainings regarding their roles and responsibilities in order to be able to carry out their tasks effectively. Moreover, several communication tools have been used in order to promote the actions and spread information regarding the Leader programme, opening calls or implementation timelines. With respect to Gozo it states that In Gozo, an intensive communication campaign was launched in order to promote the Leader approach in the area and to inform the stakeholders about the consultation process. The campaign was implemented through flyers, poster and newspaper adverts.*
- 8.7.2. In preparing the LDS, the Foundation will build on the experience gained under the previous Leader programme. Lessons learnt formed a key part of the process carried out in preparing the LDS. Extensive consultation was carried out with all the Foundation members to inform the preparation of the LDS.

⁵⁸ KPMG, 2012, Interim Evaluation Report 2010-2011, Ongoing and post-evaluation of the Rural Development Programme (2007-2013).

9. IMPLEMENTATION CAPACITY

- 9.1. The Gozo Action Group Foundation will act as the accountable body and contract holder for the Local Action Programme, with ultimate responsibility for the delivery of programme, the conclusion of programme, and ensuring financial propriety and compliance. It will also be responsible for programme management (financial and practical), project development, project assessment, project monitoring, administering claims and acting as the main communication point with the Managing Authority and Paying Agency.
- 9.2. As described above, the implementation of the LDS will build on the experience that the GAGF built in the previous funding period. In particular appropriate staffing will be sought and services such as legal, auditing and accounting will be sub-contracted.
- 9.3. In terms of management the Decision Committee will be the central body in the implementation of the LDS. It will be supported by the GAGF Manager and an eventual assistant. In accordance with the Statute, the Decision Committee will meet at least once a month. In order to streamline the meetings and to ensure that all relevant decisions are taken in a timely manner, the GAGF manager needs to prepare an agenda for each meeting and document all the proceedings.
- 9.4. An Evaluation Committee will be appointed in order to evaluate all applications and make its recommendations to the Decision Committee. The Evaluation Committee will comprise the GAGF Manager and his assistant. The latter is still to be employed.
- 9.5. In accordance with the statute the LAG members will meet once a year at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Minutes of public consultation meetings

APPENDIX 2: SWOT, Regional Needs, Malta Needs and the respective measure

APPENDIX 3: Project Selection criteria and sample application form

APPENDIX 4: GAGF Statute

APPENDIX 5: GAGF Manager Job Description

Facilitators: E-cubed Consultants and Adi Associates

Time: 18.00

Location: L-Arka Foundation, Ghajnsielem

In attendance: General public, NGOs, and Local Council representative.

Dr Gordon Cordina, presenting E-Cubed and Adi Associates as contractors to the Gozo Action Group Foundation to draw up the Local Development Strategy for Gozo gave an introductory presentation on the LEADER Initiative (see **Appendix 1** for presentation).

This was then followed by a number of interventions from those present. See **Appendix 2** for attendance sheet and **Appendix 3** for photographs.

Interventions:

- The Mayor of San Lawrenz who was there also representing the Gozo Diocese highlighted the importance of LEADER in the previous funding period. He commented about the problems related to the bureaucracy involved in applying for these funds. He said that he has first-hand experience on these issues. He experienced instances where if he had not offered to take care of the paperwork certain projects would not have taken place as no one would have been willing to do so with all that bureaucracy involved. Disbursement of funds was also a challenge.
- He emphasised the importance of allocating these funds where there is a real need. He said that there is the risk for all Gozo localities to become a resort and risk losing Gozo identity as youths are emigrating and have no interest on sustaining traditions.
- One proposition was to focus more on education by creating a different curriculum for Gozo than that of Malta given that the needs of Gozo are different than those of Malta, with particular reference to agriculture. To date agriculture has always been regarded as a job for the unskilled but in reality this mentality does not reflect the truth.
- Some participants emphasised that the problem goes deeper than the problem of connectivity. There aren't many people with new ideas who can create new niche markets to attract quality tourists to Gozo.
- Dr. Gordon replied that although there are several problems, the problem of connectivity is a reality.
- There is the need to balance modern life and agriculture. One cannot expect youths with modern ideas to continue on the traditional path of agriculture. Instead agriculture can be modernised through creative ideas by creating a new type of modern agriculture.
- Another solution could be the creation of more family facilities to give more life to Gozo.
- Tourism: This does not feature prominently in the Operational Programme 2014-2020 only in a particular axis (PA 5); LEADER does not cater for tourism specifically either. In the previous programme measures 313 and 323 were important and many councils benefitted

from them. There now appears to be a gap to fund tourism projects.. With regards to branding the LEADER budget is too small to fund a national campaign.

- Another point was made on the importance to allocating funds efficiently. Funds should not be diluted on small projects but should focus on projects which can be long term and which will benefit Gozo.
- A point was made on seasonality to ensure a holistic approach and focus on new niches to eliminate this seasonality.
- Lack of statistics – No statistics on employment of youth are available for Gozo therefore informed decisions are difficult to make.
- Statistics also highlight a lot of illiteracy in Gozo—this can be an issue of demography where there is an aging population.
- A project on the information or background of Gozo would be an interesting project. It is not a question of statistics - not a question of how many are illiterate / leave Gozo but it is a question of why --- this is an interesting project that could be done by different interested stakeholders— this can fall under education.
- The importance of participation was highlighted as crucial. There is the need for more collaboration between NGOs and businesses.
- There is a lot of bureaucracy --- to encourage people to participate there is the need for help with paperwork.
- Encourage actors to work together by increasing funds as participation is added. A group of actors working together are likely to receive a larger budget.
- The work being done today by NGOs needs to be sustained. It is important that funds reach NGOS and grassroots.
- Agricultural educational exchange was highlighted as an idea for funding. Dr Cordina clarified that we need to pay attention to measures in the RDP as there is a lot on youth famers, their education etc. For education there are other funds (ESF)
- It is important to emphasise and promote Gozo **lifestyle**. This is considered crucial for sustainability.
- A participant said that there should be scrutiny of projects, as projects undertaken often go against each other's objectives. However, this issue is an issue that needs to be addressed by the PA and the MA.

LEADER: Public Consultation
3rd August 2016

Appendix 1: Presentation

Formulation of Local Development Strategy for Gozo Action Group

Rural Development Plan 2014-2020

Consultation Exercise



Meeting Agenda

Introduction and Questions	(10 mins)
Lessons Learnt from Previous Programme	
• Group Consultation	(30 mins)
Suggestions for Future Actions	
• Sketch of Individual Ideas	(15 mins)
• Group Discussion	(30 mins)
Conclusions and Final Remarks	(10 mins)

The Role of the LAG and the LDS in the RDP

M19: LEADER CLLD (Community-Led Local Development)

19.1: Preparatory support for LAG setup and strategy (LDS)

- €48,000: 100% support rate for LAG

19.2: Projects undertaken by actors as selected by LAG to achieve LDS

- €1,320,000: 80% support rate for actors in territory

19.3: Transnational and Inter-Territorial Co-operation

- €192,000: 80% support rate for LAG

19.4: Running costs and Animation

- €520,000: 100% support rate for LAG

The Basic Tenets of the LDS

Conceptually...

Inclusive of all actors
Development, poverty
Realistic

Bottom-up

1. Water, Waste, Energy
2. Quality Produce
3. Sustainable Livestock
4. Landscape and Environment
5. Economy and Quality of Life

Consistent with
national RDP

In practice...

SWOT
Lessons learned
Competitiveness, Innovation
Climate and Environment

Territory-Based

What is to be done?
Why is to be done?
By Whom is it to be done?
By When? What Priority?
From Which Budgets?

Logical/SMART

Retrospective View on Lessons Learnt...

GROUP CONSULTATION	What went well	What went badly	SSI Relevant for 2014-2020?	Suggestions for good practice	Other comments
Promotion of Gas Produce					
Promotion of Gas as Distinct Destination					

Suggestions on Future Measures...

LEADER CONSULTATION ON FUTURE MEASURES	
Are there measures? Proposed within which could be implemented?	
What is to be done? What are the objectives and measures?	
Who is to implement? Which organisations are to be involved?	
By what means? How?	
How long will it last?	
Can it be a replacement measure? If so, how will it be done?	
What kind of activities are required?	

Contact Details to Provide Further Input

info@adi-associates.com

LEADER: Public Consultation
3rd August 2016

Appendix 2: Attendance sheet

LEADER: Public Consultation
3rd August 2016

Appendix 3: Photographs



Facilitators: E-cubed Consultants and Adiassociates

Time: 18.00

Location: Don Bosco Oratory, Victoria, Gozo

In attendance: General public, NGOs, and Local Council representative.

Dr Gordon Cordina, presenting E-Cubed and Adi Associates as contractors to the Gozo Action Group Foundation to draw up the Local Development Strategy for Gozo, gave an introductory presentation on the LEADER Initiative (see **Appendix 1**).

This was then followed by a number of interventions from those present. See **Appendix 2** for attendance sheet and **Appendix 3** for photographs.

Interventions:

- An emphasis was made on the quantity and quality of local produce. The market conditions (standards, competition, regulations, etc) are making it difficult to get local supplies. Also there are issues of traceability (Although food products may be marketed as local it is difficult to identify exactly their origin). For example, there is only one official supplier of rabbits in Malta, so supply is scarce. This means rabbit in restaurants is either bought illegally or imported from abroad. Furthermore, there is a lack of adequate facilities like for example beef ageing facilities.
- Proposed initiatives:
 - 1) Allow restauranters to invest in the supply of food like for example in the infrastructure of a slaughterhouse.
 - 2) Bring experts from abroad. Not go to conference but actually provide funds to get experts to show how restauranters can use the resources available.
 - 3) As a result of lack of investment and lack of rain water certain produce are no longer sustainable to cultivate.
 - 4) The need for soft measures for urban farming.

Dr. Gordon Cordina agreed as there is the need for verticalisation between agriculture, quality of life, food tradition and retail business.

- Birdlife presented a possible intervention to encourage farmers keep a routine in cultivation not to disrupt the habitat for birds. In localities like Gharb and Ghasri there is the cultivation of wheat which attract birds. Often farmers change their cultivation pattern and this changes the habitat for birds as well. Through such measure, farmers will be encouraged to harvest their fields at a later time. Birdlife also encourage initiatives that will control alien species. These ideas were also met with enthusiasm as the LEADER encourages sustainable agriculture which develops hand in hand with the environment and quality of life. The concept of environmental stewardship was emphasised. There is the need of a positive relationship between agriculture and the environment and not a negative one.
- The importance of partnership was highlighted several times.

- It is also important to make sure that the proposed projects cannot be addressed by the RDP or other EU Funds
- A representative of the Don Bosco Oratory emphasised the need to address youths. It was pointed out that the Youth Initiative scheme has been discontinued. This funding was of great help and was used to create youth projects. Dr. Gordon Cordina said that the LEADER should address issues that are falling between the cracks including youths. We need to find different and innovative ways to address this issue of migrating youths to Malta.
- Gozo needs to become attractive to youths. This is one of the main findings. It is an issue raised several times by different stakeholders.
- A representative of the GTA said that once youths reach the university age they migrate. He proposed a University in Gozo with different courses than those offered in Malta. This will address insularity. Those who want to take these courses will have to stay or even come to Gozo as it should be open also for those living in Malta.
- Dr. Gordon Cordina, however, said that we need to pay attention how to formulate these ideas. There are two different school of thoughts:
 1. Teach youths only what is needed in Gozo
 2. However, some say that this is not correct as youths should be capable to integrate anywhere in this world and the first idea will limit their possibilities.

So first there is the need to equip the youths with enough skills to integrate in a globalised world, then make Gozo attractive enough to return and contribute to its economy.

- Some projects or measures can only be implemented and made effective if a supportive system is included. However, there are not enough funds so one needs to be careful.
- Projects or the measures that will be formulated to address the needs of Gozo might not solve these problems but we need to ensure that at least a contribution is made upon which one can continue working. The aim is to start changing things.
- A person suggested to do at least pilot schemes or else if nothing is done because of lack of funds or because of several other reasons, Gozo will remain with low standards.
- The idea of branding was raised – There is an issue with high prices. However, although this is true there is the need for a choice; if you want to eat fresh than it means you are ready to pay a higher price.
- One of the participants however was annoyed in always associating Gozo with agriculture. This participant emphasised that it is not commendable to build a future for the young on agriculture, at least not only. The younger generation are less interested in this sector.
- There is also an important element of safeguarding rural infrastructures. This could be addressed if interventions on these places could be made in context of tourism and other events. This could be a project including cultural NGOs, done outside peak season to try to attract tourists all year round.

- Partnership is much needed to gain strength and be able to valorise Gozo globally.
- The representative from Din L-Art Helwa said that there is the need for cooperation between land owners and users of land. This participant suggested trails. However, Dr. Cordina replied that it is important that any intervention or project proposed should not be reliable on interventions from the central government. This would complicate matters.
- Another participant emphasised the need to address and increase awareness of what actually happens. For example, some are unaware that every two years' farmers have to attend courses on pesticides. Inspections are also made for samples to be tested for high levels of pesticides. If pesticide levels are too high, the farmer is taken to court as has happened recently.
- It was also suggested that in order to attract more youths to remain in Gozo, there is the need for more emphasis on entrepreneurship. Dr. Cordina emphasised that many do not venture in entrepreneurship as although we might think that there are remedies for mistakes in such a small island like Malta, mistakes are heavily punished.
- Nature Trust suggested that an intervention on light pollution could be made. This could be included as a horizontal theme. The issue of noise pollution was also mentioned.
- The last intervention was made by a representative from the funding support and asked whether NGOs with an address in Malta and with projects that could help Gozo could participate. This is an answer that will be addressed at a later stage awaiting instructions from PPCD. However, there was the suggestion to invite these NGOs for the public consultations. This in itself might be an indication that NGOs with an address in Malta might be accepted.

LEADER: Public Consultation
9th August 2016

Appendix 1: Presentation

Formulation of Local Development Strategy for Gozo Action Group

Rural Development Plan 2014-2020

Consultation Exercise



Meeting Agenda

Introduction and Questions	(10 mins)
Lessons Learnt from Previous Programme	
• Group Consultation	(30 mins)
Suggestions for Future Actions	
• Sketch of Individual Ideas	(15 mins)
• Group Discussion	(30 mins)
Conclusions and Final Remarks	(10 mins)

The Role of the LAG and the LDS in the RDP

M19: LEADER CLLD (Community-Led Local Development)

19.1: Preparatory support for LAG setup and strategy (LDS)

- €48,000: 100% support rate for LAG

19.2: Projects undertaken by actors as selected by LAG to achieve LDS

- €1,320,000: 80% support rate for actors in territory

19.3: Transnational and Inter-Territorial Co-operation

- €192,000: 80% support rate for LAG

19.4: Running costs and Animation

- €520,000: 100% support rate for LAG

The Basic Tenets of the LDS

Conceptually...

Inclusive of all actors
Development, poverty
Realistic

Bottom-up

1. Water, Waste, Energy
2. Quality Produce
3. Sustainable Livestock
4. Landscape and Environment
5. Economy and Quality of Life

Consistent with
national RDP

In practice...

SWOT
Lessons learned
Competitiveness, Innovation
Climate and Environment

Territory-Based

What is to be done?
Why is to be done?
By Whom is it to be done?
By When? What Priority?
From Which Budgets?

Logical/SMART

Retrospective View on Lessons Learnt...

GROUP REPRESENTATION	What went well?	What went badly?	Is it relevant for 2014-2020?	Suggestions for good practice	Other comments
Promotion of Goro Produce					
Promotion of Goro at Distinct Destination					

Suggestions on Future Measures...

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION ON FUTURE MEASURES	
Which measures/programmes do you think should be implemented?	
What is the most important measure to be implemented?	
Why is it important? What challenges are to be addressed?	
By whom is it to be delivered?	
How long is it?	
Can it be a complementary measure to the other ones?	
What kind of information is required?	

Contact Details to Provide Further Input

info@adi-associates.com

LEADER: Public Consultation
9th August 2016

Appendix 2: Attendance sheet



Public meeting to discuss Local Development Strategy that is being formulated as part of the LEADER initiative under the 2014-2020 EAFRD funds.

Date: 9th August 2016
Venue: Don Bosco Oratory, Saint Augustine Square, Victoria, Gozo

Surname	Name	Organisation	Signature
Antonio Tabone	Charlette	MEUSAC	CH charlette.tabone@goz.net
Carolyne Plouffe	Carolyne	D.L.H.	Carolyne Plouffe
KAMILCERI	ALISON	FUNDING SUPPORT	[Signature]
Bonu	Maria	Natur Tant Malta	[Signature]
BORG	SAVIOUR	KUNSIGLI LOKALI IL-FONTANA	Sally Borg
NATOLI	MARIA	Don Frangisk Galea Mazjara NADUR	Maria Natoli
SAID	GIUSEPP	"	[Signature]
SAMMUT	TONINA	"	[Signature]
SALISA	MARCO	Ministry for Gozo	Marco Salisa
XUERRE	VICKY	Ministry for Gozo	[Signature]
ZAMMIT	Roger Lacey	Maltese Birds	[Signature]
VASSALLO	Antonie	Fondazzjoni Belt Victoria	[Signature]
MASINI	F. C. B.	Don Bosco Oratory	[Signature]
PALOMBA	RODURIO	BIRD LIFE MALTA	Rodurio Palomba
BARBARA	NICHOLAS	BIRD LIFE MALTA	[Signature]
ANGELIANO	ANDREA	BIRD LIFE MALTA	Andrea Angeliano
SCICLUNA	KONRAD	GTA	[Signature]

LEADER: Public Consultation
9th August 2016

Appendix 3: Photographs



Facilitators: E-cubed Consultants and Adi Associates Environmental Consultants Ltd
Time: 18.00 -19:30
Location: Arka Foundation Ghajnsielem, Gozo
In attendance: General public, NGOs, and Local Council representatives.

Dr Gordon Cordina, presenting E-Cubed and Adi Associates as contractors to the Gozo Action Group Foundation to draw up the Local Development Strategy for Gozo, gave an introductory presentation on the LEADER Initiative and the proposed measures (see **Appendix 1**).

This was then followed by a number of interventions from those present. See **Appendix 2** for attendance sheet and **Appendix 3** for photographs.

Interventions:

- Andrew Warrington – adventure tours. Asked about partnerships across the different measures.
- GTA–asked if there is a measure that there isn't interest in, what happens to the funds? GC answered that consultation with MA would be required. There is an element of flexibility. Could there be a 'reserve' action? This cannot happen at this stage without a budget allocation.
- Scout representative – worried about the idea of partnerships and large amounts of money for single projects. There is an issue with refunds from the PA after checks are done. Concern that for NGOs the amounts are too big. GC answered that partnership will have a number of different partners that would manage a substantial project.
- Mayor Gharb – are partners already identified? GC confirmed that these are only broadly defined at this stage. Partners cannot compete within the same measure but across measures.
- NGO Association – How will payment be effected by the PA – will these be delayed due to scale of project? Payment schedules and administration will be done at a later stage You cannot have a business that is financing the project. The idea is that businesses do continue to operate profitably.
- Perit Edward Scerri – infrastructure financed within GAG3. The budgets indicated here are quite low for infrastructure development. GC replied that the idea isn't to finance infrastructure only as even the whole budget would be insufficient. It is recognised that budget is limited.
- Mayor San Lawrenz stated that with these amounts the Councils mightn't be interested in these funds because of the relatively small amounts.
- Andrew Warrington – do you need to have PA permit in hand at time of application?
- Principal of Gozo schools – idea for schools to be exposed to rural life. Work with Local Councils. Vertical gardens with climate implications too and knowledge for youths. To involve even primary schools.
- NGO Association – Can Measure 2 be used to fund restoration of rubble walls and access roads? We need to be careful not to overlap with RDP.
- Andrew Warrington – With regards to the ICT Measure asked whether this is just one project as budget is large? Yes this is one project that would contribute to all the measures.
- Scouts – how will the actions be launched? Applicants need time to develop the projects. The LAG will animate the LDS and assist and will launch the measures.

- NGO Association – distribution of money – how can projects be financed? Consultants to check how these large projects can be financed and there will be interim payments. Efficiency from the PA was emphasized especially for disbursements. Can there be a co-financing fund for Gozo? There is a central government fund for co-financing. This is where private sector can help.

LEADER: Public Consultation
6th September` 2016

Appendix 1: Presentation

Formulation of Local Development Strategy for Gozo Action Group

Rural Development Plan 2014-2020

Consultation Exercise



The Role of the LAG and the LDS in the RDP

M19: LEADER CLLD (Community-Led Local Development) – Indicative Budget

19.1: Preparatory support for LAG setup and strategy (LDS)

- €48,000: *100% support rate for LAG*

19.2: Projects undertaken by actors as selected by LAG to achieve LDS

- €1,320,000: *80% support rate for actors in territory*

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- €192,000: *80% support rate for LAG*

19.4: Running costs and Animation

- €520,000: *100% support rate for LAG*

9/12/2016

The Basic Tenets of the LDS

Conceptually...

Inclusive of all actors
Development, poverty
Realistic

Bottom-up

1. Water, Waste, Energy
2. Quality Produce
3. Sustainable Livestock
4. Landscape and Environment
5. Economy and Quality of Life

Consistent with
national RDP

In practice...

SWOT
Lessons learned
Competitiveness, Innovation
Climate and Environment

Territory-Based

What is to be done?
Why is to be done?
By Whom is it to be done?
By When? What Priority?
From Which Budgets?

Logical/SMART

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>GAG1</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Develop an ICT media platform for the valorisation of Gozitan lifestyle concept</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Gozo in 21st Century Media</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>GAG2</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Maximise the contribution of Gozitan agriculture to the Gozitan culinary tradition, its evolution and future sustainability</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A Truly Holistic Gozitan Gastronomy</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>GAG3</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Develop Gozo's all-season tourism product offering</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Gozitan Attractions and Events for all Seasons</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>GAG4</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Improve the attractiveness of living in Gozo for young persons and young families</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Rejuvenating Gozo</p>

Gozo in 21st Century Media

The creation of an ICT (and other) media platform to showcase the various aspects of the Gozitan lifestyle which can serve as bases for sustainable development, by enabling access to business, governance and non-government organisations to media resources in an organised set-up, while in itself creating a 'new economy' activity in Gozo.

Budget Allocation (EAFRD Contribution), €	240,000
Indicative budget allocation per application	
Minimum, €	200,000
Maximum, €	280,000

Eligible Beneficiaries : Applicants must consist of partnerships between operators in business - ideally covering IT, media, tourism, environment, agriculture, manufacturing/crafts, creativity sectors - and/or representative bodies thereof, - and NGOs. Participation from Local Councils, educational institutions, and other representative bodies within the partnerships would also be desirable.

A Truly Holistic Gozitan Gastronomy

The creation of direct supply chains between Gozitan agriculture and food produced/consumed in Gozo in a manner which sustains the appreciation and evolution of the Gozitan culinary tradition and generates better economic value added in Gozitan agriculture and food production.

Budget Allocation (EAFRD Contribution), €	390,000
Indicative budget allocation per application	
Minimum, €	100,000
Maximum, €	200,000

Eligible Beneficiaries : Applicants must include partnerships between operators in agriculture, agri-producers and/or catering, and/or representative bodies thereof. Participation from NGOs (mainly related to culinary arts/research, tourism, consumers' interest, sustainable agriculture, etc), Local Councils and educational/research institutions with a direct interest in Gozitan culinary traditions would also be desirable.

Gozitan Attractions and Events for all Seasons

Investment in infrastructure and events which will in a complementary manner strengthen Gozo's tourism offering so as to enhance performance across all seasons, in a sustainable manner.

Budget Allocation (EAFRD Contribution), €	390,000
Indicative budget allocation per application	
Minimum, €	75,000
Maximum, €	150,000

Eligible Beneficiaries : Applicants must include partnerships between business operators with a direct interest in tourism and/or representative bodies thereof, Local Councils and/or other public governance entities with a direct interest in the Gozo region, and NGOs.

Rejuvenating Gozo

The action will improve amenities and services in Gozo so as to improve the quality of life for young persons and young families, thereby contributing to retaining skills and to demographic and cultural regeneration.

Budget Allocation (EAFRD Contribution), €	300,000
Indicative budget allocation per application	
Minimum, €	50,000
Maximum, €	100,000

Eligible Beneficiaries : Applicants can be Local Councils, NGOs and business operators. Each applicant must consist of at least three entities, spanning at least two of the aforementioned categories.

Suggestions on Future Measures

What is to be Done? What work/activities are involved?
Why is it Important? Which objectives are to be achieved?
By Whom is it to be Done?
How Urgent is It?
Can it be a cooperation measure? If so, how can it be done?
What kind of animation is required?

Contact Details to Provide Further Input

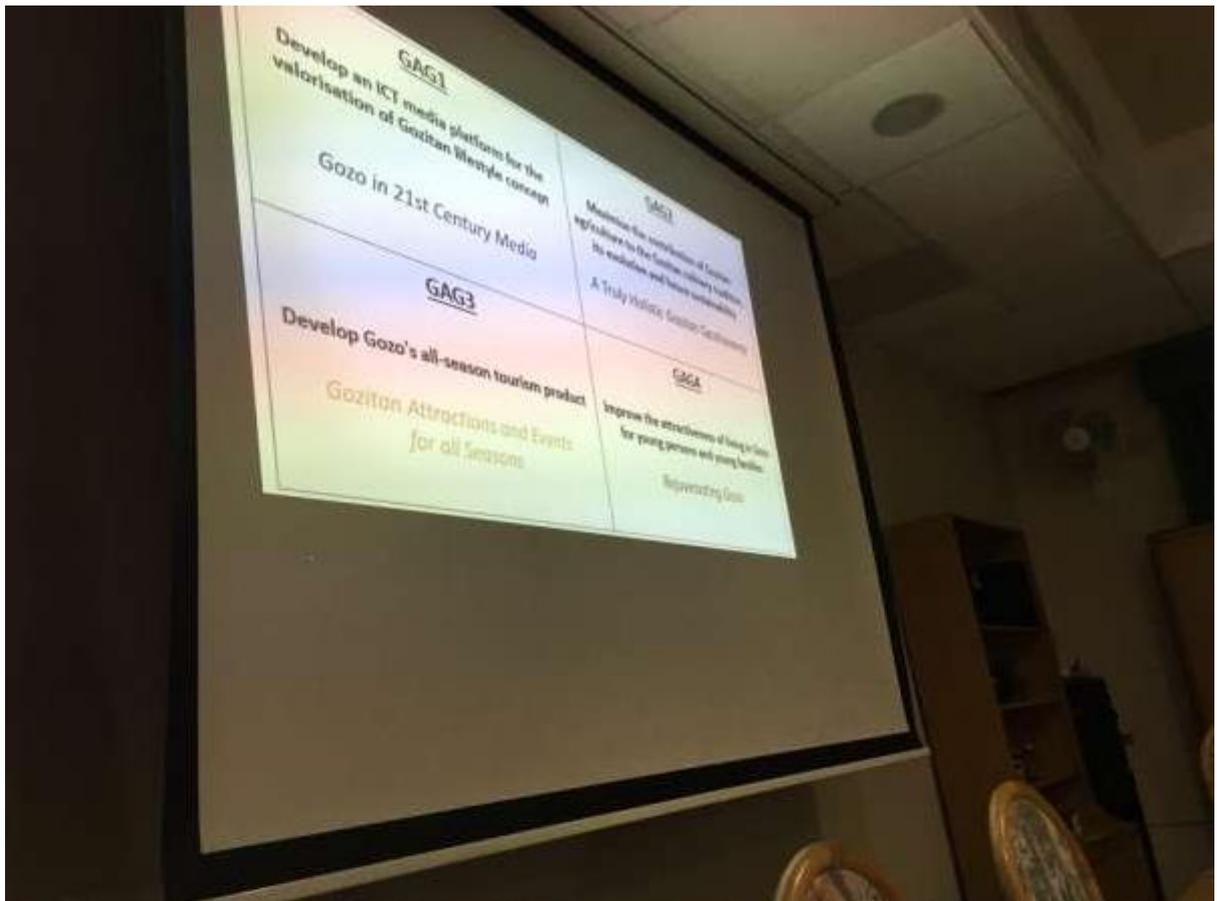
info@adi-associates.com

LEADER: Public Consultation
6th September` 2016

Appendix 2: Attendance sheet

LEADER: Public Consultation
6th September` 2016

Appendix 3: Photographs





APPENDIX 2: SWOT, Regional Needs, Malta Needs and the respective measures.

NEEDS	RDP	Water, Waste, Energy	Quality Produce		Sustainable Livestock	Landscape and Environment		Economy and Quality of Life		
	Gozo Region		Food Innovation/ Evolution	Agriculture & Environment		Climate and Environment	Cultural Heritage	New Economy Activities	Gozo Lifestyle	Partnership Approach
OPPORTUNITIES	Economy incl. Gozo location and uniqueness, agriculture, tourism niches, connectivity and youth potential		GAG2	GAG2		GAG4	GAG4	GAG1/GAG2/GAG4	GAG1/GAG3/GAG4	
	Environment incl. investment in under-valued sites			GAG2		GAG3/GAG4	GAG4	GAG4	GAG4	
	Social incl. focus on Gozo's lifestyle traits and social activities					GAG4	GAG4	GAG4	GAG1/GAG3/GAG4	
	Culture & heritage incl. widening knowledge on indigenous customs and local products		GAG2	GAG2			GAG1/GAG3	GAG1/GAG2	GAG1	
	Governance incl. focus on collaboration									GAG1/GAG2/GAG3/ GAG4
THREATS	Economy incl. reliance and vulnerability of specific sectors,		GAG2	GAG2				GAG1/GAG2/GAG4	GAG1/GAG4	
	Environment incl. incompatible development to Gozo's natural environment			GAG2		GAG1/GAG3		GAG2		
	Social incl. incompatible development to Gozo's lifestyle					GAG4/GAG3	GAG4/GAG3	GAG4/GAG3	GAG1/GAG3/GAG4	
	Culture & heritage incl. incompatible development to Gozo's culture and heritage		GAG2				GAG3	GAG1/GAG2		
	Governance incl. fragmentation of institution									GAG1/GAG2/GAG3/ GAG4

**APPENDIX 3: Project Selection criteria and sample application
form**

Selection Criteria

GAG1: Develop an ICT media platform for the valorisation of Gozitan lifestyle concept

An evaluation of the quality of proposals, including the financial projections, will be carried out in accordance with the selection criteria set out in the Selection Criteria Grid below. To be considered for funding, or to be placed on the reserve list, a project must satisfy all the Eligibility Criteria and must obtain a minimum of 50 points out of the total marks allocated to the Selection Criteria.

Reference No:

Name of Lead Applicant:

List of Project Partners:

Total Eligible Cost excl VAT: €

Total Eligible Cost excl VAT: €

Implementation Period:

All necessary permits/clearances in hand: Yes No

All conditions required on application are satisfied: Yes No

Project Title:

1. The quality of the media content created by the project towards national and international dissemination opportunities for Gozo. **(10 points)**
-

2 The effectiveness of e-marketing and e-commerce systems opportunities for Gozo business created by the project. **(5 points)**

3 The extent and quality of media opportunities for NGOs created by the project. **(5 points)**

4 The degree of financial sustainability of the project:
(i) during project implementation (5 points)
(ii) after project implementation (10 points).

5 The contribution of the project towards:
(i) preserving aspects of Gozitan identity, cultural and natural heritage for future generations (10 points)
(ii) providing opportunities for strengthening of social cohesion in Gozo between different actors and across generations (10 points)
(iii) creating opportunities for climate and environmental performance improvements in Gozo (5 points)
(iv) creating opportunities for innovative activities in Gozo (5 points)
(v) developing and retaining ICT, media, and creative economy skills in Gozo, especially among the younger generations (15 points)

6 Overall quality of the project proposal **(5 points)** and implementation readiness **(5 points)**.

7. Number of partners in proposed project (2 points per partner up to a maximum of 10 points).

Other Comments:

-

-

-

Total Score:

Date: _____

Chairperson of Section Committee: _____

Signature: _____

Selection Criteria

GAG2: Maximise the contribution of Gozitan agriculture to the Gozitan culinary tradition, its evolution and future sustainability

An evaluation of the quality of proposals, including the financial projections, will be carried out in accordance with the selection criteria set out in the Selection Criteria Grid below. To be considered for funding, or to be placed on the reserve list, a project must satisfy all the Eligibility Criteria and must obtain a minimum of 50 points out of the total marks allocated to the Selection Criteria.

Reference No:

Name of Lead Applicant:

List of Project Partners:

Total Eligible Cost excl VAT: €

Total Eligible Cost excl VAT: €

Implementation Period:

All necessary permits/clearances in hand: Yes No

All conditions required on application are satisfied: Yes No

Project Title:

1. The extent to which the project incentivises the development and enhances the capacity of agriculture in Gozo towards supporting the Gozitan culinary tradition (10 points)
-

- 2 The extent to which the project supports food business operators in valorising the Gozitan culinary tradition and its future evolution and financial sustainability. **(10 points)**
-

- 3 The degree of financial sustainability of the project:
- (i) during project implementation (10 points)**
 - (ii) after project implementation (10 points).**
-

- 4 The contribution of the project towards:
- (i) the preservation and evolution of Gozitan cuisine (10 points)**
 - (ii) the creation of jobs in Gozo (5 points)**
 - (iii) creation of new research/knowledge about culinary traditions of Gozo (5 points)**
 - (iv) creating opportunities for climate and environmental performance improvements in Gozo (10 points)**
 - (v) creating opportunities for innovative activities in Gozo (5 points)**
 - (vi) improve the positive health properties of food produced and consumed in Gozo (5 points)**
-

- 5 Overall quality of the project proposal **(5 points)** and implementation readiness **(5 points)**.
-

- 6 Number of partners in proposed project (2 points per partner up to a maximum of **10 points**).
-

Other Comments:

-

-

-

Total Score:

Date: _____

Chairperson of Section Committee: _____

Signature: _____

Selection Criteria

GAG3: Develop Gozo's all-season tourism product offering

An evaluation of the quality of proposals, including the financial projections, will be carried out in accordance with the selection criteria set out in the Selection Criteria Grid below. To be considered for funding, or to be placed on the reserve list, a project must satisfy all the Eligibility Criteria and must obtain a minimum of 50 points out of the total marks allocated to the Selection Criteria.

Reference No:

Name of Lead Applicant:

List of Project Partners:

Total Eligible Cost excl VAT: €

Total Eligible Cost excl VAT: €

Implementation Period:

All necessary permits/clearances in hand: Yes No

All conditions required on application are satisfied: Yes No

Project Title:

1. Number of distinct infrastructural interventions supported by the project (5 points per intervention up to a maximum of **15 points**)
-

2. Number of distinct events supported by the project (5 points per intervention up to a maximum of **10 points**)
-

3. The degree of financial sustainability of the project:
- (i) during project implementation (**5 points**)
 - (ii) after project implementation (**10 points**).
-

4. The quality of the project in terms of:
- (i) the potential for the infrastructure developed to attract tourists all year round (**10 points**)
 - (ii) the potential for events to attract tourists in the off-peak season (**10 points**)
 - (iii) the degree of synergy between infrastructures developed and events proposed (**5 points**)
 - (iv) creating opportunities for climate and environmental performance improvements in Gozo (**5 points**)
 - (v) creating opportunities for innovative activities in Gozo (**5 points**)
 - (vi) the potential to create jobs in Gozo (**5 points**)
-

5. Overall quality of the project proposal (**5 points**) and implementation readiness (**5 points**).
-

6. Number of partners in proposed project (2 points per partner up to a maximum of **10 points**).
-

Other Comments:

-

-

-

Total Score:

Date: _____

Chairperson of Section Committee: _____

Signature: _____

Selection Criteria

GAG4: Improve the attractiveness of living in Gozo for young persons and young families

An evaluation of the quality of proposals, including the financial projections, will be carried out in accordance with the selection criteria set out in the Selection Criteria Grid below. To be considered for funding, or to be placed on the reserve list, a project must satisfy all the Eligibility Criteria and must obtain a minimum of 50 points out of the total marks allocated to the Selection Criteria.

Reference No:

Name of Lead Applicant:

List of Project Partners:

Total Eligible Cost excl VAT: €

Total Eligible Cost excl VAT: €

Implementation Period:

All necessary permits/clearances in hand: Yes No

All conditions required on application are satisfied: Yes No

Project Title:

1. Number of distinct infrastructural interventions supported by the project (5 points per intervention up to a maximum of **15 points**)
-

2. Number of distinct lifestyle support services enabled by the project (5 points per intervention up to a maximum of **15 points**)
-

3. The degree of financial sustainability of the project:
- (i) during project implementation (**5 points**)
 - (ii) after project implementation (**10 points**).
-

4. The quality of the project in terms of:
- (i) the potential for the infrastructure developed to:
 - a improve the quality of life in Gozo for youths and young families (**5 points**)
 - b enhance lifetime opportunities for youths (**5 points**)
 - (ii) the potential for the services proposed to:
 - a improve the quality of life in Gozo for youths and young families (**5 points**)
 - b enhance lifetime opportunities for youths (**5 points**)
 - (iii) the degree of synergy between infrastructures developed and services proposed (**15 points**)
-

5. Overall quality of the project proposal (**5 points**) and implementation readiness (**5 points**).
-

6. Number of partners in proposed project (3 points per partner up to a maximum of **10 points**).
-

Other Comments:

-

-

-

Total Score:

Date: _____

Chairperson of Section Committee: _____

Signature: _____

Sample Application Form

GAG1: Develop an ICT media platform for the valorisation of Gozitan lifestyle Concept

This measure falls under the LEADER (Community Led Local Development) Programme 2014-2020 and is being implemented on the basis of the Local Development Strategy for Gozo.

Should you have any queries with the compilation of this form, contact GOZO ACTION GROUP FOUNDATION (GAGF) or email to manager@leadergozo.eu or info@leadergozo.eu or call number: 21550322.

Please read the accompanying Guidance Notes before completing this Application Form.

The information you provide in your application form will be used to check solely the eligibility of your project for approval of the grant in accordance with the Data Protection Act. If there is insufficient space to answer any question, please continue on a separate sheet and attach to your Application Form.

Applicants are to check that **all** necessary supporting documents are submitted together with this form. Following submission, the authority may request additional material. The Applicant has to submit requested information for the Application to remain valid. Only Application forms submitted by hand will be accepted.

Please complete this document in block letters or type.

1. Information about Applicants

1.1 Details about partner nominated as contact point for this application

<Request details here>

1.2 Names of all partners¹ involved in this application

Public Governance	NGOs	Private Business
...
...
...

1.3 Description of agreement between partners involved in this application

Agreement Element	Description
Agreement Start Date	...
Agreement End Date	...
Decision-Making Arrangements	...
Financial Arrangements	...
Monitoring/Auditing Arrangements	...
Administrative Arrangements	...
<other elements>	...

2. Information about Project

2.1 Project Title:

2.2 Overall Description of the way in which the project will contribute to/achieve the aims of the action

¹ Partnership shall consist of at least three entities; the applicant which could be considered as the lead partner and two other partners. Applicant shall clearly specify the role to be played by the applicant and the project partner.

3. Selection Criteria and Indicators

Criterion	The way in which the project will be designed and managed to achieve the criterion
Ensuring the quality of the media content created by the project towards national and international dissemination opportunities for Gozo	
Promoting the effectiveness of e-marketing and e-commerce systems opportunities for Gozo business created by the project	
Maximising the extent and quality of media opportunities for NGOs created by the project	
Ensuring financial sustainability during project implementation	
Ensuring financial sustainability after project implementation	
Preserving aspects of Gozitan identity, cultural and natural heritage for future generations	
Providing opportunities for strengthening of social cohesion in Gozo between different actors and across generations	
Creating opportunities for climate and environmental performance improvements in Gozo	
Creating opportunities for innovative activities in Gozo	
Developing and retaining ICT, media, and creative economy skills in Gozo, especially among the younger generations	

Indicator	Value
Number of new ICT media platforms generated	
New jobs directly created	
Number of media projects undertaken	
Size of circulation/media hits/views/exposure	
Number of business units affected	
Number of NGOs affected	

4. Detailed Budget, Procurement and Disbursement

4.1 Project Cost

Please provide an exhaustive list of the items of the proposed project to be co-financed by this Measure along with the VAT value as indicated. Eligibility costs are to be divided by type of investment as indicated. Use additional sheets if necessary. All costs to be provided in euro.

4.2 Procurement

i. Public Procurement Table

State the expected number of tenders and total value of each tender in €. VAT should be quoted separately.

Name of Tender/Call	Type of Tender	Procedure	Estimated Value excl. VAT (€)	VAT (€)
TOTAL				

ii. Implementation Schedule

In the table below, indicate the stage of the tender/call per quarter. **Please note that the proposed project must be completed by <Insert date>.**

Please use the following acronyms:

D = Design **T** = Tendering & Contracting

I = Implementation **C** = Closure

Year	Nth Year*	N+1
-------------	-----------------------------	------------

(please specify the N th year)					
Quarters	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd
Tender/Call 1					
Tender/Call 2					
Tender/Call3					
Tender/Call 4					
Tender/Call 5					

Note: The Public Contracts Regulations 2005 (and any subsequent amendments) should be consulted in order to establish realistic timeframes.

** N represents the starting year of the project*

iii. Contracting, Disbursement and Payment Claim Schedule

	Year	Nth Year*			N+1		TOTAL
	(please specify the N th year)						
	Quarter	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd	
Total eligible costs (excl. VAT) (€)	Contracted						
	Disbursement						
VAT (€)	Contracted						
	Disbursement						
Grand Total (€)	Contracted						
	Disbursement						
Submission of Payment Claim	Eligible cost only						

5. Project Readiness

Please indicate at which stage the project is in the design, tendering process (in the case of public entities), compilation of studies (where applicable), drawing up of EIA (where applicable) and related permits (where applicable).

6. Project Sustainability

Describe how the benefits of the project will continue to be delivered after grant support comes to an end. Kindly note that in accordance with Council Regulation 1305/2013 an operation retains the contribution of the funds only if that operation does not, within five years from the completion of the operation undergo a substantial modification (ownership, cessation or relocation constituting such a change).

7. Risks and Conditionality

Any conditionality must be specific and achievable, indicating clearly what should be done, by when and by whom. Conditionality not within the control of the applicant is still deemed to be conditionality on the project and should also be included.

8. Declaration

- I certify that the entries in this form and any other attachments enclosed are, to the best of my knowledge and belief, correct and the grant applied for is the minimum required for the project to proceed as described.
- I can also confirm that I am not aware of any reason why the project may not proceed or be delayed other than those reasons declared, and the commitment can be made within the timescales indicated this Application Form.
- I allow access to the land/buildings to any authorised person for the purpose of carrying out an inspection in order to verify the accuracy of the information in this application.
- I will notify the LAG in advance of carrying out any changes to the nature or construction of this project.
- I confirm that should I benefit from a grant under this Scheme, I must complete the project in accordance with the terms and conditions stipulated in the Grant Agreement. Should I fail to do so, I will not receive the grant and, if I would have already received any payments from the grant, I would have to reimburse the funds received and interest charges may be applicable.
- I will provide information on the results achieved following implementation of the project and I undertake to provide this information on an annual basis until 2026.
- I will provide any further information as may be required by all stakeholders within the Ministry for European Affairs and Implementation of the Electoral Manifesto and Government entities that may undertake audit checks and controls.
- I understand that if the application is not complete in all relevant detail and every aspect, including this section, it may be rejected.
- I confirm that the entity submitting this application has not received any other grant for the project being proposed in this application.
- I certify that financial support received is compliant with the De Minimis State Aid Regulations and enclosed is the De Minimis Certificate.

Signature of Project Leader:

Name in Block Capitals:
Date:
Position Held:

9. Supporting documentation required with regard to the applicant enterprise:

- i. Audited Financial Statements for each partner;
- ii. Specific deed of partnership between the partners involved in the project;
- iii. For each partner, a declaration signed by an auditor concerning the financial standing and the ability of the entity to continue conducting activities as a going concern;
- iv. Photocopy of ID card of Project Leader
- v. For each partner, Latest Employment Return Form submitted to the Employment and Training Corporation which proves the number of Annual Work Units employed with the entity applying for the grant;
- vi. Calculations of annual (operational) costs involved in sustaining the project for 5 years following the completion of the project and endorsed by an architect;
- vii. Declaration from a certified Auditor confirming that the partners can match the 20% co-financing funding and VAT component required from own financial resources and can sustain the project for five (5) years after its completion;
- viii. Declaration from the Project Leader confirming that the project did not benefit from other EU or National Funds.
- ix. With respect to areas of physical intervention: Proof of Ownership of premises (in the case of owned premises); Proof/evidence of building lease/management agreement/guardianship deed (where applicable); Owner's consent (where applicable) – in the case of leased premises; Letter of Intent from Local Council/s (where applicable);
- x. Project Gantt Chart signed by the Mayor, Executive Secretary and Project Leader;
- xi. An organigram detailing the organisational structure of the management team of the project;
- xii. Bank Sanction letter in case of a Bank Loan being utilised;

- xiii. Original signed project application form together with three copies of the signed project application form and a cd containing a soft copy of all documentation submitted (application should be saved in both word and pdf format).

Q5.2 Supporting documentation required related to proposed investment:

- xiv. Signed, dated and detailed Estimate by architect in case of structural works;(BOQs in case of Local Councils);
- xv. De Minimis certification as clearance from state aid issues;
- xvi. Investment Plan (Section 3 of this Application Form);
- xvii. Relevant permits (DNO, Full Development Permit, TM Clearance and No Objection Form from the Lands Department) if applicable. If no permits are required for the proposed project a declaration from relevant authority must be submitted. In such eventuality, the Ministry for European Affairs and Implementation of Electoral Manifesto and the Gozo Action Group Foundation (GAGF) will in NO way be held responsible for any expenses incurred by the Applicant as a result of this outcome;
- xviii. The Applicant must also submit site plans and approved drawings by MEPA related to the proposed investment.

PLEASE NOTE:

Part or all of the information you provide will be held on computer. This information will be used for the administration of applications and producing monitoring reports. The Department has the right to share information with other government departments, agencies and implementing bodies to enable them to prevent fraudulent applications or for detecting crime and to co-ordinate processing of complementary applications.

This Application Form along with any attached documents will be treated as confidential throughout and after the project appraisal process. If your project is selected for an award of grant, to meet EU requirements for transparency regarding the use of EAFRD assistance, the Ministry for European Affairs and Implementation of the Electoral Manifesto has the right to publish the name of the applicant, the amount of grant awarded and a brief summary of the project.

Sample Application Form

GAG2: Maximise the contribution of Gozitan agriculture to the Gozitan culinary tradition, its evolution and future sustainability

This measure falls under the LEADER (Community Led Local Development) Programme 2014-2020 and is being implemented on the basis of the Local Development Strategy for Gozo.

Should you have any queries with the compilation of this form, contact GOZO ACTION GROUP FOUNDATION (GAGF) or email to manager@leadergozo.eu or info@leadergozo.eu or call number: 21550322.

Please read the accompanying Guidance Notes before completing this Application Form.

The information you provide in your application form will be used to check solely the eligibility of your project for approval of the grant in accordance with the Data Protection Act. If there is insufficient space to answer any question, please continue on a separate sheet and attach to your Application Form.

Applicants are to check that **all** necessary supporting documents are submitted together with this form. Following submission, the authority may request additional material. The Applicant has to submit requested information for the Application to remain valid. Only Application forms submitted by hand will be accepted.

Please complete this document in block letters or type.

Information about Applicants

1.1 Details about partner nominated as contact point for this application

<Request details here>

1.2 Names of all partners² involved in this application

Public Governance	NGOs	Private Business
...
...
...

1.3 Description of agreement between partners involved in this application

Agreement Element	Description
Agreement Start Date	...
Agreement End Date	...
Decision-Making Arrangements	...
Financial Arrangements	...
Monitoring/Auditing Arrangements	...
Administrative Arrangements	...
<other elements>	...

2. Information about Project

2.1 Project Title:

2.2 Overall Description of the way in which the project will contribute to/achieve the aims of the action

²Partnership shall consist of at least three entities; the applicant which could be considered as the lead partner and two other partners. Applicant shall clearly specify the role to be played by the applicant and the project partner.

3. Selection Criteria and Indicators

Criterion	The way in which the project will be designed and managed to achieve the criterion
Maximising the extent to which the project incentivises the development and enhances the capacity of agriculture in Gozo towards supporting the Gozitan culinary tradition	
Maximising the extent to which the project supports food business operators in valorising the Gozitan culinary tradition and its future evolution and financial sustainability	
Ensuring financial sustainability during project implementation	
Ensuring financial sustainability after project implementation	
Preserving and developing the Gozitan cuisine	
Creating jobs in Gozo	
Creating new research/knowledge about culinary traditions of Gozo	
Creating opportunities for climate and environmental performance improvements in Gozo	
Creating opportunities for innovative activities in Gozo	
Improving the positive health properties of food produced and consumed in Gozo	

Indicator	Value
Number of agricultural producers affected by the action	
Number of food production businesses affected by the action	
Number of culinary knowledge/research projects supported	
Number of jobs directly created by action	

4. Detailed Budget, Procurement and Disbursement

4.1 Project Cost

Please provide an exhaustive list of the items of the proposed project to be co- financed by this Measure along with the VAT value as indicated. Eligibility costs are to be divided by type of investment as indicated. Use additional sheets if necessary. All costs to be provided in euro.

4.2 Procurement

i. Public Procurement Table

State the expected number of tenders and total value of each tender in €. VAT should be quoted separately.

Name of Tender/Call	Type of Tender	Procedure	Estimated Value excl. VAT (€)	VAT (€)
TOTAL				

ii. Implementation Schedule

In the table below, indicate the stage of the tender/call per quarter. **Please note that the proposed project must be completed by <Insert date>.**

Please use the following acronyms:

D = Design **T** = Tendering & Contracting

I = Implementation **C** = Closure

Year	Nth Year*	N+1
-------------	-----------------------------	------------

(please specify the N th year)					
Quarters	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd
Tender/Call 1					
Tender/Call 2					
Tender/Call3					
Tender/Call 4					
Tender/Call 5					

Note: The Public Contracts Regulations 2005 (and any subsequent amendments) should be consulted in order to establish realistic timeframes.

** N represents the starting year of the project*

iii. Contracting, Disbursement and Payment Claim Schedule

	Year	Nth Year*			N+1		TOTAL
	(please specify the N th year)						
	Quarter	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd	
Total eligible costs (excl VAT) (€)	Contracted						
	Disbursement						
VAT (€)	Contracted						
	Disbursement						
Grand Total (€)	Contracted						
	Disbursement						
Submission of Payment Claim	Eligible cost only						

5. Project Readiness

Please indicate at which stage the project is in the design, tendering process (in the case of public entities), compilation of studies (where applicable), drawing up of EIA (where applicable) and related permits (where applicable).

6. Project Sustainability

Describe how the benefits of the project will continue to be delivered after grant support comes to an end. Kindly note that in accordance with Council Regulation 1305/2013 an operation retains the contribution of the funds only if that operation does not, within five years from the completion of the operation undergo a substantial modification (ownership, cessation or relocation constituting such a change).

7. Risks and Conditionality

Any conditionality must be specific and achievable, indicating clearly what should be done, by when and by whom. Conditionality not within the control of the applicant is still deemed to be conditionality on the project and should also be included.

8. Declaration

- I certify that the entries in this form and any other attachments enclosed are, to the best of my knowledge and belief, correct and the grant applied for is the minimum required for the project to proceed as described.
- I can also confirm that I am not aware of any reason why the project may not proceed or be delayed other than those reasons declared, and the commitment can be made within the timescales indicated this Application Form.
- I allow access to the land/buildings to any authorised person for the purpose of carrying out an inspection in order to verify the accuracy of the information in this application.
- I will notify the LAG in advance of carrying out any changes to the nature or construction of this project.
- I confirm that should I benefit from a grant under this Scheme, I must complete the project in accordance with the terms and conditions stipulated in the Grant Agreement. Should I fail to do so, I will not receive the grant and, if I would have already received any payments from the grant, I would have to reimburse the funds received and interest charges may be applicable.
- I will provide information on the results achieved following implementation of the project and I undertake to provide this information on an annual basis until 2026.
- I will provide any further information as may be required by all stakeholders within the Ministry for European Affairs and Implementation of the Electoral Manifesto and Government entities that may undertake audit checks and controls.
- I understand that if the application is not complete in all relevant detail and every aspect, including this section, it may be rejected.
- I confirm that the entity submitting this application has not received any other grant for the project being proposed in this application.
- I certify that financial support received is compliant with the De Minimis State Aid Regulations and enclosed is the De Minimis Certificate.

Signature of Project Leader:

Name in Block Capitals:

Date:
Position Held:

9. Supporting documentation required with regard to the applicant enterprise:

- i. Audited Financial Statements for each partner;
- ii. Specific deed of partnership between the partners involved in the project;
- iii. For each partner, a declaration signed by an auditor concerning the financial standing and the ability of the entity to continue conducting activities as a going concern;
- iv. Photocopy of ID card of Project Leader
- v. For each partner, Latest Employment Return Form submitted to the Employment and Training Corporation which proves the number of Annual Work Units employed with the entity applying for the grant;
- vi. Calculations of annual (operational) costs involved in sustaining the project for 5 years following the completion of the project and endorsed by an architect;
- vii. Declaration from a certified Auditor confirming that the partners can match the 20% co-financing funding and VAT component required from own financial resources and can sustain the project for five (5) years after its completion;
- viii. Declaration from the Project Leader confirming that the project did not benefit from other EU or National Funds.
- ix. With respect to areas of physical intervention: Proof of Ownership of premises (in the case of owned premises); Proof/evidence of building lease/management agreement/guardianship deed (where applicable); Owner's consent (where applicable) – in the case of leased premises; Letter of Intent from Local Council/s (where applicable);
- x. Project Gantt Chart signed by the Mayor, Executive Secretary and Project Leader;
- xi. An organigram detailing the organisational structure of the management team of the project;
- xii. Bank Sanction letter in case of a Bank Loan being utilised;

- xiii. Original signed project application form together with three copies of the signed project application form and a cd containing a soft copy of all documentation submitted (application should be saved in both word and pdf format).

Q5.2 Supporting documentation required related to proposed investment:

- xiv. Signed, dated and detailed Estimate by architect in case of structural works;(BOQs in case of Local Councils);
- xv. De Minimis certification as clearance from state aid issues;
- xvi. Investment Plan (Section 3 of this Application Form);
- xvii. Relevant permits (DNO, Full Development Permit, TM Clearance, Permits from Environment & Resources Authority, and No Objection Form from the Lands Department) if applicable. If no permits are required for the proposed project a declaration from relevant authority must be submitted. In such eventuality, the Ministry for European Affairs and Implementation of Electoral Manifesto and the Gozo Action Group Foundation (GAGF) will in NO way be held responsible for any expenses incurred by the Applicant as a result of this outcome;
- xviii. The Applicant must also submit site plans and approved drawings by MEPA related to the proposed investment.

PLEASE NOTE:

Part or all of the information you provide will be held on computer. This information will be used for the administration of applications and producing monitoring reports. The Department has the right to share information with other government

departments, agencies and implementing bodies to enable them to prevent fraudulent applications or for detecting crime and to co-ordinate processing of complementary applications.

This Application Form along with any attached documents will be treated as confidential throughout and after the project appraisal process. If your project is selected for an award of grant, to meet EU requirements for transparency regarding the use of EAFRD assistance, the Ministry for European Affairs and Implementation of the Electoral Manifesto has the right to publish the name of the applicant, the amount of grant awarded and a brief summary of the project.

Sample Application Form

GAG3: Develop Gozo's all-season tourism product offering

This measure falls under the LEADER (Community Led Local Development) Programme 2014-2020 and is being implemented on the basis of the Local Development Strategy for Gozo.

Should you have any queries with the compilation of this form, contact GOZO ACTION GROUP FOUNDATION (GAGF) or email to manager@leadergozo.eu or info@leadergozo.eu or call number: 21550322.

Please read the accompanying Guidance Notes before completing this Application Form.

The information you provide in your application form will be used to check solely the eligibility of your project for approval of the grant in accordance with the Data Protection Act. If there is insufficient space to answer any question, please continue on a separate sheet and attach to your Application Form.

Applicants are to check that **all** necessary supporting documents are submitted together with this form. Following submission, the authority may request additional material. The Applicant has to submit requested information for the Application to remain valid. Only Application forms submitted by hand will be accepted.

Please complete this document in block letters or type.

Information about Applicants

1.1 Details about partner nominated as contact point for this application

<Request details here>

1.2 Names of all partners³ involved in this application

Public Governance	NGOs	Private Business
...
...
...

1.3 Description of agreement between partners involved in this application

Agreement Element	Description
Agreement Start Date	...
Agreement End Date	...
Decision-Making Arrangements	...
Financial Arrangements	...
Monitoring/Auditing Arrangements	...
Administrative Arrangements	...
<other elements>	...

2. Information about Project

2.1 Project Title:

2.2 Overall Description of the way in which the project will contribute to/achieve the aims of the action

³Partnership shall consist of at least three entities; the applicant which could be considered as the lead partner and two other partners. Applicant shall clearly specify the role to be played by the applicant and the project partner.

3. Selection Criteria and Indicators

Criterion	The way in which the project will be designed and managed to achieve the criterion
Increasing the number of distinct infrastructural interventions supported by the project	
Increasing the number of distinct events supported by the project	
Ensuring financial sustainability during project implementation	
Ensuring financial sustainability after project implementation	
Maximising the potential for the infrastructure developed to attract tourists all year round	
Maximising the potential for events to attract tourists in the off-peak season	
Ensuring synergy between infrastructures developed and events proposed	
Creating opportunities for climate and environmental performance improvements in Gozo	
Creating opportunities for innovative activities in Gozo	
Maximising the potential to create jobs in Gozo	

Indicator	Value
Number of Local Councils (municipalities) affected by physical interventions	
Number of businesses affected by improved infrastructures and events	
Number of NGOs affected by action	
Number of cultural/environmental heritage tourism amenities improved	

4. Detailed Budget, Procurement and Disbursement

4.1 Project Cost

Please provide an exhaustive list of the items of the proposed project to be co-financed by this Measure along with the VAT value as indicated. Eligibility costs are to be divided by type of investment as indicated. Use additional sheets if necessary. All costs to be provided in euro.

4.2 Procurement

i. Public Procurement Table

State the expected number of tenders and total value of each tender in €. VAT should be quoted separately.

Name of Tender/Call	Type of Tender	Procedure	Estimated Value excl. VAT (€)	VAT (€)
TOTAL				

ii. Implementation Schedule

In the table below, indicate the stage of the tender/call per quarter. **Please note that the proposed project must be completed by <Insert date>.**

Please use the following acronyms:

D = Design **T** = Tendering & Contracting

I = Implementation **C** = Closure

Year	Nth Year*	N+1
-------------	-----------------------------	------------

(please specify the N th year)					
Quarters	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd
Tender/Call 1					
Tender/Call 2					
Tender/Call3					
Tender/Call 4					
Tender/Call 5					

Note: The Public Contracts Regulations 2005 (and any subsequent amendments) should be consulted in order to establish realistic timeframes.

* *N* represents the starting year of the project

iii. Contracting, Disbursement and Payment Claim Schedule

	Year	Nth Year*			N+1		TOTAL
	(please specify the N th year)						
	Quarter	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd	
Total eligible costs (excl. VAT) (€)	Contracted						
	Disbursement						
VAT (€)	Contracted						
	Disbursement						
Grand Total (€)	Contracted						
	Disbursement						
Submission of Payment Claim	Eligible cost only						

5. Project Readiness

Please indicate at which stage the project is in the design, tendering process (in the case of public entities), compilation of studies (where applicable), drawing up of EIA (where applicable) and related permits (where applicable).

6. Project Sustainability

Describe how the benefits of the project will continue to be delivered after grant support comes to an end. Kindly note that in accordance with Council Regulation 1305/2013 an operation retains the contribution of the funds only if that operation does not, within five years from the completion of the operation undergo a substantial modification (ownership, cessation or relocation constituting such a change).

7. Risks and Conditionality

Any conditionality must be specific and achievable, indicating clearly what should be done, by when and by whom. Conditionality not within the control of the applicant is still deemed to be conditionality on the project and should also be included.

8. Declaration

- I certify that the entries in this form and any other attachments enclosed are, to the best of my knowledge and belief, correct and the grant applied for is the minimum required for the project to proceed as described.
- I can also confirm that I am not aware of any reason why the project may not proceed or be delayed other than those reasons declared, and the commitment can be made within the timescales indicated this Application Form.
- I allow access to the land/buildings to any authorised person for the purpose of carrying out an inspection in order to verify the accuracy of the information in this application.
- I will notify the LAG in advance of carrying out any changes to the nature or construction of this project.
- I confirm that should I benefit from a grant under this Scheme, I must complete the project in accordance with the terms and conditions stipulated in the Grant Agreement. Should I fail to do so, I will not receive the grant and, if I would have already received any payments from the grant, I would have to reimburse the funds received and interest charges may be applicable.
- I will provide information on the results achieved following implementation of the project and I undertake to provide this information on an annual basis until 2026.
- I will provide any further information as may be required by all stakeholders within the Ministry for European Affairs and Implementation of the Electoral Manifesto and Government entities that may undertake audit checks and controls.
- I understand that if the application is not complete in all relevant detail and every aspect, including this section, it may be rejected.
- I confirm that the entity submitting this application has not received any other grant for the project being proposed in this application.
- I certify that financial support received is compliant with the De Minimis State Aid Regulations and enclosed is the De Minimis Certificate.

Signature of Project Leader:
Name in Block Capitals:

Date:
Position Held:

9. Supporting documentation required with regard to the applicant enterprise:

- i. Audited Financial Statements for each partner;
- ii. Specific deed of partnership between the partners involved in the project;
- iii. For each partner, a declaration signed by an auditor concerning the financial standing and the ability of the entity to continue conducting activities as a going concern;
- iv. Photocopy of ID card of Project Leader
- v. For each partner, Latest Employment Return Form submitted to the Employment and Training Corporation which proves the number of Annual Work Units employed with the entity applying for the grant;
- vi. Calculations of annual (operational) costs involved in sustaining the project for 5 years following the completion of the project and endorsed by an architect;
- vii. Declaration from a certified Auditor confirming that the partners can match the 20% co-financing funding and VAT component required from own financial resources and can sustain the project for five (5) years after its completion;
- viii. Declaration from the Project Leader confirming that the project did not benefit from other EU or National Funds.
- ix. With respect to areas of physical intervention: Proof of Ownership of premises (in the case of owned premises); Proof/evidence of building lease/management agreement/guardianship deed (where applicable); Owner's consent (where applicable) – in the case of leased premises; Letter of Intent from Local Council/s (where applicable);
- x. Project Gantt Chart signed by the Mayor, Executive Secretary and Project Leader;
- xi. An organigram detailing the organisational structure of the management team of the project;
- xii. Bank Sanction letter in case of a Bank Loan being utilised;

- xiii. Original signed project application form together with three copies of the signed project application form and a cd containing a soft copy of all documentation submitted (application should be saved in both word and pdf format).

Q5.2 Supporting documentation required related to proposed investment:

- xiv. Signed, dated and detailed Estimate by architect in case of structural works;(BOQs in case of Local Councils);
- xv. De Minimis certification as clearance from state aid issues;
- xvi. Investment Plan (Section 3 of this Application Form);
- xvii. Relevant permits (DNO, Full Development Permit, TM Clearance and No Objection Form from the Lands Department) if applicable. If no permits are required for the proposed project a declaration from relevant authority must be submitted. In such eventuality, the Ministry for European Affairs and Implementation of Electoral Manifesto and the Gozo Action Group Foundation (GAGF) will in NO way be held responsible for any expenses incurred by the Applicant as a result of this outcome;
- xviii. The Applicant must also submit site plans and approved drawings by MEPA related to the proposed investment.

PLEASE NOTE:

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departments, agencies and implementing bodies to enable them to prevent fraudulent applications or for detecting crime and to co-ordinate processing of complementary applications.

This Application Form along with any attached documents will be treated as confidential throughout and after the project appraisal process. If your project is selected for an award of grant, to meet EU requirements for transparency regarding the use of EAFRD assistance, the Ministry for European Affairs and Implementation of the Electoral Manifesto has the right to publish the name of the applicant, the amount of grant awarded and a brief summary of the project.

Sample Application Form

GAG4: Improve the attractiveness of living in Gozo for young persons and young families

This measure falls under the LEADER (Community Led Local Development) Programme 2014-2020 and is being implemented on the basis of the Local Development Strategy for Gozo.

Should you have any queries with the compilation of this form, contact GOZO ACTION GROUP FOUNDATION (GAGF) or email to manager@leadergozo.eu or info@leadergozo.eu or call number: 21550322.

Please read the accompanying Guidance Notes before completing this Application Form.

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Applicants are to check that **all** necessary supporting documents are submitted together with this form. Following submission, the authority may request additional material. The Applicant has to submit requested information for the Application to remain valid. Only Application forms submitted by hand will be accepted.

Please complete this document in block letters or type.

1. Information about Applicants

1.1 Details about partner nominated as contact point for this application

<Request details here>

1.2 Names of all partners⁴ involved in this application

Public Governance	NGOs	Private Business
...
...
...

1.3 Description of agreement between partners involved in this application

Agreement Element	Description
Agreement Start Date	...
Agreement End Date	...
Decision-Making Arrangements	...
Financial Arrangements	...
Monitoring/Auditing Arrangements	...
Administrative Arrangements	...
<other elements>	...

2. Information about Project

2.1 Project Title:

2.2 Overall Description of the way in which the project will contribute to/achieve the aims of the action

⁴Partnership shall consist of at least three entities; the applicant which could be considered as the lead partner and two other partners. Applicant shall clearly specify the role to be played by the applicant and the project partner.

3. Selection Criteria and Indicators

Criterion	The way in which the project will be designed and managed to achieve the criterion
Increasing the number of distinct infrastructural interventions supported by the project	
Increasing the number of distinct lifestyle support services enabled by the project	
Ensuring financial sustainability during project implementation	
Ensuring financial sustainability after project implementation	
Maximising the potential for the infrastructure developed to improve the quality of life in Gozo for youths and young families	
Maximising the potential for the infrastructure developed to enhance lifetime opportunities for youths	
Maximising the potential for the services proposed to improve the quality of life in Gozo for youths and young families	
Maximising the potential for the service proposed to enhance lifetime opportunities for youths	
Creating opportunities for innovative activities in Gozo	
Ensuring synergy between infrastructures developed and services proposed	

Indicator	Value
Number of Local Councils (municipalities) offering new and improved amenities for young persons and families	
Number of businesses offering new and improved services for young persons and families	
Number of NGOs offering new and improved services for young persons and families	

4. Detailed Budget, Procurement and Disbursement

4.1 Project Cost

Please provide an exhaustive list of the items of the proposed project to be co-financed by this Measure along with the VAT value as indicated. Eligibility costs are to be divided by type of investment as indicated. Use additional sheets if necessary. All costs to be provided in euro.

4.2 Procurement

i. Public Procurement Table

State the expected number of tenders and total value of each tender in €. VAT should be quoted separately.

Name of Tender/Call	Type of Tender	Procedure	Estimated Value excl. VAT (€)	VAT (€)
TOTAL				

ii. Implementation Schedule

In the table below, indicate the stage of the tender/call per quarter. **Please note that the proposed project must be completed by <Insert date>.**

Please use the following acronyms:

D = Design **T** = Tendering & Contracting
I = Implementation **C** = Closure

Year	Nth Year*			N+1	
(please specify the N th year)					
Quarters	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd
Tender/Call 1					
Tender/Call 2					
Tender/Call3					
Tender/Call 4					
Tender/Call 5					

Note: The Public Contracts Regulations 2005 (and any subsequent amendments) should be consulted in order to establish realistic timeframes.

** N represents the starting year of the project*

iii. Contracting, Disbursement and Payment Claim Schedule

	Year	Nth Year*			N+1		TOTAL
	(please specify the N th year)						
	Quarter	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd	
Total eligible costs (excl VAT) (€)	Contracted						
	Disbursement						
VAT (€)	Contracted						
	Disbursement						
Grand Total (€)	Contracted						
	Disbursement						
Submission of Payment Claim	Eligible cost only						

5. Project Readiness

Please indicate at which stage the project is in the design, tendering process (in the case of public entities), compilation of studies (where applicable), drawing up of EIA (where applicable) and related permits (where applicable).

6. Project Sustainability

Describe how the benefits of the project will continue to be delivered after grant support comes to an end. Kindly note that in accordance with Council Regulation 1305/2013 an operation retains the contribution of the funds only if that operation does not, within five years from the completion of the operation undergo a substantial modification (ownership, cessation or relocation constituting such a change).

7. Risks and Conditionality

Any conditionality must be specific and achievable, indicating clearly what should be done, by when and by whom. Conditionality not within the control of the applicant is still deemed to be conditionality on the project and should also be included.

8. Declaration

- I certify that the entries in this form and any other attachments enclosed are, to the best of my knowledge and belief, correct and the grant applied for is the minimum required for the project to proceed as described.
- I can also confirm that I am not aware of any reason why the project may not proceed or be delayed other than those reasons declared, and the commitment can be made within the timescales indicated this Application Form.
- I allow access to the land/buildings to any authorised person for the purpose of carrying out an inspection in order to verify the accuracy of the information in this application.
- I will notify the LAG in advance of carrying out any changes to the nature or construction of this project.
- I confirm that should I benefit from a grant under this Scheme, I must complete the project in accordance with the terms and conditions stipulated in the Grant Agreement. Should I fail to do so, I will not receive the grant and, if I would have already received any payments from the grant, I would have to reimburse the funds received and interest charges may be applicable.
- I will provide information on the results achieved following implementation of the project and I undertake to provide this information on an annual basis until 2026.
- I will provide any further information as may be required by all stakeholders within the Ministry for European Affairs and Implementation of the Electoral Manifesto and Government entities that may undertake audit checks and controls.
- I understand that if the application is not complete in all relevant detail and every aspect, including this section, it may be rejected.
- I confirm that the entity submitting this application has not received any other grant for the project being proposed in this application.
- I certify that financial support received is compliant with the De Minimis State Aid Regulations and enclosed is the De Minimis Certificate.

Signature of Project Leader:
Name in Block Capitals:
Date:
Position Held:

9. Supporting documentation required with regard to the applicant enterprise:

- i. Audited Financial Statements for each partner;
- ii. Specific deed of partnership between the partners involved in the project;
- iii. For each partner, a declaration signed by an auditor concerning the financial standing and the ability of the entity to continue conducting activities as a going concern;
- iv. Photocopy of ID card of Project Leader
- v. For each partner, Latest Employment Return Form submitted to the Employment and Training Corporation which proves the number of Annual Work Units employed with the entity applying for the grant;
- vi. Calculations of annual (operational) costs involved in sustaining the project for 5 years following the completion of the project and endorsed by an architect;
- vii. Declaration from a certified Auditor confirming that the partners can match the 20% co-financing funding and VAT component required from own financial resources and can sustain the project for five (5) years after its completion;
- viii. Declaration from the Project Leader confirming that the project did not benefit from other EU or National Funds.
- ix. With respect to areas of physical intervention: Proof of Ownership of premises (in the case of owned premises); Proof/evidence of building lease/management agreement/guardianship deed (where applicable); Owner's consent (where applicable) – in the case of leased premises; Letter of Intent from Local Council/s (where applicable);
- x. Project Gantt Chart signed by the Mayor, Executive Secretary and Project Leader;

- xi. An organigram detailing the organisational structure of the management team of the project;
- xii. Bank Sanction letter in case of a Bank Loan being utilised;
- xiii. Original signed project application form together with three copies of the signed project application form and a cd containing a soft copy of all documentation submitted (application should be saved in both word and pdf format).

Q5.2 Supporting documentation required related to proposed investment:

- xiv. Signed, dated and detailed Estimate by architect in case of structural works; (BOQs in case of Local Councils);
- xv. De Minimis certification as clearance from state aid issues;
- xvi. Investment Plan (Section 3 of this Application Form);
- xvii. Relevant permits (DNO, Full Development Permit, TM Clearance and No Objection Form from the Lands Department) if applicable. If no permits are required for the proposed project a declaration from relevant authority must be submitted. In such eventuality, the Ministry for European Affairs and Implementation of Electoral Manifesto and the Gozo Action Group Foundation (GAGF) will in NO way be held responsible for any expenses incurred by the Applicant as a result of this outcome;
- xviii. The Applicant must also submit site plans and approved drawings by MEPA related to the proposed investment.

PLEASE NOTE:

Part or all of the information you provide will be held on computer. This information will be used for the administration of applications and producing monitoring reports. The Department has the right to share information with other government departments, agencies and implementing bodies to enable them to prevent fraudulent applications or for detecting crime and to co-ordinate processing of complementary applications.

This Application Form along with any attached documents will be treated as confidential throughout and after the project appraisal process. If your project is selected for an award of grant, to meet EU requirements for transparency regarding the use of EAFRD assistance, the Ministry for European Affairs and Implementation of the Electoral Manifesto has the right to publish the name of the applicant, the amount of grant awarded and a brief summary of the project.

APPENDIX 4: GAGF Statute

Today sixth (6th) of August
two thousand and sixteen
(2016)

Before me Enzo Refalo, Doctor of Laws and Notary Public, duly admitted and sworn have personally appeared after due identification according to law:

Saviour Borg, supervisor, son of the late Luigi and of Catherine nee Theuma, born in Victoria, Gozo on the 22nd February 1959 and residing at Fontana, Gozo, holder of identity card number 12159(G), who is appearing hereon in his quality as Mayor, for and on behalf of **Kunsill Lokali Fontana**, as duly authorized by means of a resolution decided at a Council meeting dated fourth (4th) July two thousand and sixteen (2016), herewith attached as document "A";

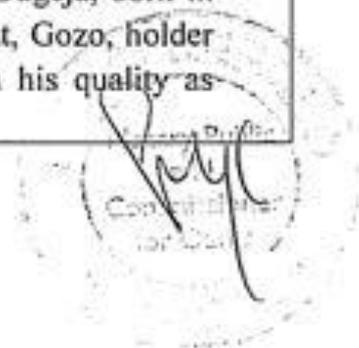
Larry Buttigieg, a clerk, son of Frank and of Veronica nee Xuereb, born in Victoria, Gozo on the 21st February 1976 and residing at Ghajnsielem, Gozo, holder of identity card number 6476(G), who is appearing hereon in his quality as Councillor, for and on behalf of **Kunsill Lokali Ghajnsielem**, as duly authorized by means of a resolution decided at a Council meeting dated twenty-fifth (25th) July two thousand and sixteen (2016), herewith attached as document "B";

Mario Azzopardi, foreman, son of Michael and of Margaret nee Debrincat, born in Kercem, Gozo on the 15th August 1968 and residing at Kercem, Gozo, holder of identity card number 23368(G), who is appearing hereon in his quality as Mayor, for and on behalf of **Kunsill Lokali Kercem**, as duly authorized by means of a resolution decided at a Council meeting dated twelfth (12th) July two thousand and sixteen (2016), herewith attached as document "C";

Carmen Said, housewife, wife of Joseph Said, daughter of Anthony Formosa and Antonia nee Saliba, both deceased, born in Fontana on the 23/2/47 and residing in Munxar: Identity card number 16147G who is appearing hereon in her quality as mayor, for and on behalf of **Kunsill Lokali Munxar**, as duly authorized by means of a resolution decided at a Council meeting dated twenty-seventh (27th) July two thousand and sixteen (2016), herewith attached as document "D";

Jason Curmi, executive secretary, son of Joseph u Felicia nee Bugeja, born in Victoria, Gozo on the 16th February 1974 and residing at Sannat, Gozo, holder of identity card number 6674(G), who is appearing hereon in his quality as

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Executive Secretary, for and on behalf of **Kunsill Lokali Sannat**, as duly authorized by means of a resolution decided at a Council meeting dated eleventh (11th) July two thousand and sixteen (2016), herewith attached as document "E";

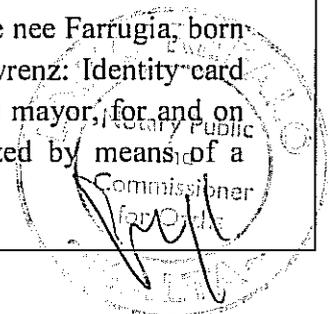
Hubert Saliba, restorer, son of Paul and Agostina nee Camilleri, born in Victoria, Gozo on the 10th October 1984 and residing at Xewkija, Gozo, holder of identity card number 1585(G), who is appearing hereon in his quality as Councillor, for and on behalf of **Kunsill Lokali Xewkija**, as duly authorized by means of a resolution decided at a Council meeting dated twenty-second (22nd) July two thousand and sixteen (2016), herewith attached as document "F";

Clint Camilleri an architect, son of the late Anthony and Marlene nee Gauci, born in Pieta', Malta on the 24/2/88 and residing in Qala: Identity card number 115088M who is appearing hereon in his capacity as mayor, for and on behalf of **Kunsill Lokali Qala**, as duly authorized by means of a resolution decided at a Council meeting dated twenty-ninth (19th) July two thousand and sixteen (2016), herewith attached as document "G";

David Apap, an officer with Malta Tourism Authority, son of John and Vincemza nee Agius, born in Victoria, Gozo on the 3rd February 1972 and residing at Gharb, Gozo, holder of identity card number 4072(G), who is appearing hereon in his quality as Mayor for and on behalf of **Kunsill Lokali Gharb**, as duly authorized by means of a resolution decided at a Council meeting dated thirteenth (13th) July two thousand and sixteen (2016), herewith attached as document "H";

Doctor of Laws Daniel Attard, a lawyer, son of Alfred and Nataline nee Mizzi, born in Victoria, Gozo on the thirtieth (30th) of May one thousand nine hundred and eighty four (1984) and residing in Ghasri: Identity card number 26384G who is appearing hereon in his capacity as mayor, for and on behalf of **Kunsill Lokali Ghasri**, as duly authorized by means of a resolution decided at a Council meeting dated twenty-third (23rd) June two thousand and sixteen (2016), herewith attached as document "I";

Noel Formosa, executive office, son of Joseph and Josephine nee Farrugia, born in Victoria, Gozo on the 10/12/71 and residing in San Lawrenz: Identity card number 30671G who is appearing hereon in his capacity as mayor, for and on behalf of **Kunsill Lokali San Lawrenz**, as duly authorized by means of a



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resolution decided at a Council meeting dated twentieth (20th) June two thousand and sixteen (2016), herewith attached as document "J";

Joseph Cordina, an accountant, son of the late Joseph and Maria Stella nee Hili, born in Victoria, Gozo on the 13th November 1962 and residing at Xaghra, Gozo, holder of identity card number 55762(G), who is appearing hereon in his quality as Mayor, for and on behalf of **Kunsill Lokali Xaghra**, as duly authorized by means of a resolution decided at a Council meeting dated seventeenth (17th) June two thousand and sixteen (2016), herewith attached as document "K";

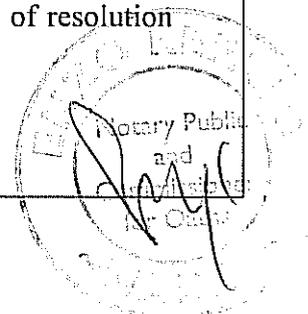
Eucharist Camilleri, enforcement officer, son the late Joseph and of the late Josephine nee Camilleri, born in Nadur, Gozo on the 1st June 1961 and residing at Nadur, Gozo, holder of identity card number 29161(G), who is appearing hereon in his quality as deputy Mayor, for and on behalf of **Kunsill Lokali Nadur**, as duly authorized by means of a resolution decided at a Council meeting dated twelfth (12th) July two thousand and sixteen (2016), herewith attached as document "L";

Doctor of Laws Samuel Azzopardi, a lawyer, son of Ludovico Azzopardi and Maria Assunta nee Camilleri born in Victoria, Gozo on 5/4/82 and residing Victoria: Identity card numver 22982G who is appearing hereon in his capacity as mayor, for and on behalf of **Kunsill Lokali Rabat (Gozo)**, as duly authorized by means of a resolution decided at a Council meeting dated first (1st) July two thousand and sixteen (2016), herewith attached as document "M";

Nicky Saliba, self-employed, son of Francis and of Jane nee Cini, born in Victoria, Gozo on the 17th June 1978 and residing at Zebbug, Gozo, holder of identity card number 14978(G), who is appearing hereon in his quality as Mayor, for and on behalf of **Kunsill Lokali Zebbug**, as duly authorized by means of a resolution decided at a Council meeting dated twenty-third (23rd) June two thousand and sixteen (2016), herewith attached as document "N";

Joseph Grech, president of the Gozo Business Chamber, son of Thomas and Giorgia nee Grech, born in Victoria, Gozo on the 21/4/1940 and residing in Victoria: Identity card number 36840G who is appearing hereon for and on behalf of **Gozo Business Chamber**, as duly authorized by virtue of resolution herewith attached as document "O";

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Ryan Mercieca, self-employed, son of Louis and Carmelina nee Xerri, born in Pieta, Malta on the 16th November 1988 and residing at Victoria, Gozo, holder of identity card number 539988(M), who is appearing hereon for and on behalf of **Gozo Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) Association**, as duly authorized by virtue of resolution herewith attached as document "P";

Paul Scicluna, a manager, son of the late John and Grace nee Attard, born in Victoria on the 21/9/55 and residing in Victoria, Gozo: Identity card number 55655G who is appearing hereon for and on behalf of **Gozo Tourism Association**, as duly authorized by virtue of resolution herewith attached as document "Q";

Frank Xerri, director, son of the late Frank and Geswalda nee Vella, born in Parramatta, Australia on the 8/1/65 and residing in Xewkija, Gozo: Identity card number 479383M who is appearing hereon for and on behalf of **Maltese Islands Agri Federation (MIAF)**, as duly authorized by virtue of resolution herewith attached as document "R".

The above mentioned are to be considered and known as the founding members of the Gozo Action Group Foundation with the letters GAGF as its acronym.

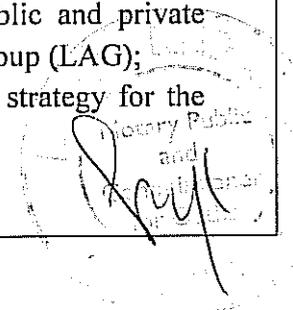
The present address of the foundation is at number twenty three (23), G.P.F Agius De Soldanis Street, Victoria Gozo or at any other address as determined by the Decision Committee.

The foundation shall be constituted for a period of ninety nine (99) years from today. Upon dissolution any remaining assets are to be applied in favour of another non-profit making purpose foundation with similar aims.

The founding members have one aim, that of establishing a Foundation, of which the aims and objectives are to:

- (a) Promote and improve the territory of the group through a holistic approach with the aim to upgrade the quality of life of the rural community;
- (b) Work towards achieving collaboration between the public and private sectors with the intention of becoming a Local Action Group (LAG);
- (c) Define and implement an area-based local development strategy for the territory concerned;

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A circular notary seal is partially visible on the right side of the page, overlapping the list of objectives. The seal contains the text "Notary Public" and "and" followed by a signature in cursive script.

- (d) Practice a bottom-up approach in decision-making for both the elaboration and implementation of the local development strategy;
- (e) Participate in inter-territorial and trans-national actions, together with other partners or Leader-type organizations having the same objectives, with the aim to programme, develop, implement, put into practice, run and realize joint-action projects;
- (f) Participate actively in the National Rural Network, European Network for Rural Development as well as any other LEADER Committees, as necessary.

The foundation is being established for the benefit of the residents of the territory where the Local Councils appearing hereon are situate.

Therefore by means of this deed the founding members are hereby constituting and forming a foundation to be named as **Gozo Action Group Foundation** with the aims and vision as explained in the preceding paragraph on this deed and in the Statute below.

Contextually an endowment of two hundred and forty Euro (€240) is being granted by the founding local councils and entities from the private sector to the **Gozo Action Group Foundation**. This amount is the constitutive asset with which the foundation is formed.

The following is the statute of the **Gozo Action Group Foundation**:

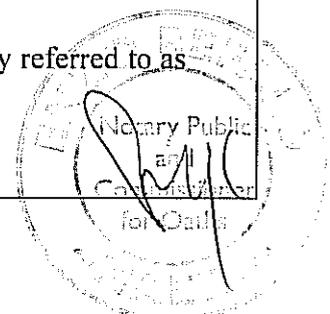
Interpretation:

‘Founders’ means the Local Councils and entities/ organisations drawn from the private sector which have executed this public deed constituting the foundation, as well as other entities/organizations which subscribe to this Statute subsequently to this deed on making a new endowment and whose name is included in the Register of founding members;

Subsequent Founder/Founding Member means any entity/organization/Local Council which becomes a subsequent Founder upon the grant of a New Endowment to the Foundation;

All the founders, initial or subsequent to this deed, are collectively referred to as the ‘Founders’;

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'Register of Founders' means the register to be established in terms of Article numbers twenty nine subarticle five (A. 29(5)) and thirty nine subarticle one (A. 39(1)) of the Second Schedule of the Civil Code.

'Initial Endowment' means the endowment granted to the Foundation by the Founders on the deed;

'Additional/New endowment' means any endowment made by a Founder to the Foundation so that this achieves its purpose;

'New Endowment' means any grant of money made to the Foundation subsequently to the execution of the deed or other sets of rules which may result in the grantor becoming a subsequent Founder;

1. Name

The name of the Foundation shall be **Gozo Action Group Foundation** with the letters GAGF as its acronym.

2. Registered Address

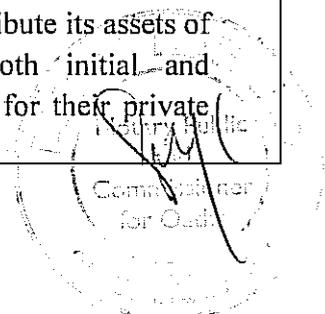
The registered address of GAGF shall be at number twenty three (23), G.P.F Agius De Soldanis Street, Victoria Gozo or at any other address as determined by the Decision Committee.

3. Legal Personality

3.1 The foundation shall be a body corporate having a distinct legal personality, and shall be capable- subject to the provisions of this Statute- of entering into contracts, of employing personnel, of holding and disposing of finances for the purposes of its functions and operations, of suing and being sued, and of doing all such things and entering into such transactions as are incidental or conducive to the exercise or performance of its functions under this Statute.

3.2 The legal and juridical representation of the Foundation shall be vested in the Chairperson and Secretary of the Committee of the Foundation; provided that the Committee may appoint any one or more Committee members or staff to appear as necessary from time to time in the name and on behalf of the Foundation in any judicial proceedings and in any deed, contract, instrument or other document whatsoever.

3.3 The Foundation is a non-profit entity. It does not distribute its assets of whatever nature to promoters, the founders, both initial and subsequent, administrators, donors and stakeholders for their private



benefit, but instead uses them to help pursue its goals. The Foundation cannot carry out activities and undertakings on a commercial basis except as allowed under Article thirty two (32) letter 'A' of the Second Schedule of the Civil Code, said activities being ancillary to the principal social purpose of the Foundation.

4. Objectives

The objectives of the Foundation shall be to:

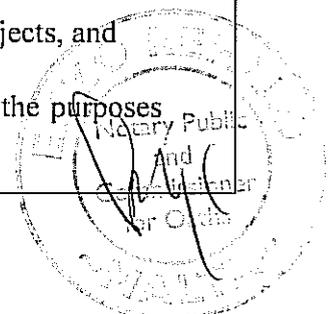
- 4.1 Promote and improve the territory of the group through a holistic approach with the aim to upgrade the quality of life of the rural community;
- 4.2 Work towards achieving collaboration between the public and private sectors with the intention of becoming a Local Action Group (LAG);
- 4.3 Define and implement an area-based local development strategy for the territory concerned;
- 4.4 Practice a bottom-up approach in decision-making for both the elaboration and implementation of the local development strategy;
- 4.5 Participate in inter-territorial and trans-national actions, together with other partners or Leader-type organizations having the same objectives, with the aim to programme, develop, implement, put into practice, run and realize joint-action projects;
- 4.6 Participate actively in the National Rural Network, European Network for Rural Development as well as any other LEADER Committees, as necessary.

5. Powers and Functions of the Foundation

The Foundation is a separate legal person and is vested with all the powers that a legal person has in virtue of its legal personality, to be able to achieve its purposes, including, without limiting the above principle, to:

- 5.1 Engage in any activity, project or undertaking that may be deemed desirable or necessary and that is consistent with the objectives of the Foundation.
- 5.2 Carry out financial administration of the Foundation in accordance with the budgets available,
- 5.3 Tap and disburse European Union and National funds/projects, and
- 5.4 Set up other operational groups to achieve all or any of the purposes for which it has been established.

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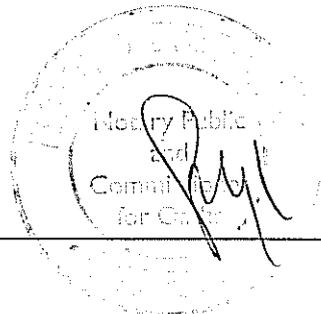


- 5.5 Establish other organizations including companies in furtherance of its purposes and objects.

Provided that no trading activity shall be carried out by the Foundation which is not in conformity with article three sub-article three (3.3) of this statute.

6. Constitution and Composition of the Foundation

- 6.1 The founding members of the Foundation, both initial and subsequent, shall be made up of public and private partners from locally-based socioeconomic sectors in Gozo.
- 6.2 Besides the founding members, other organizations are eligible to join the Foundation as long as the Decision Committee accepts their application. Should such application be refused by the Decision Committee, the applicant has the right to appeal to a general meeting of the members. In this case the applicant can become a member through a resolution approved by at least two thirds of the members present and voting in that meeting.
- 6.3 To be eligible to be a member of the Foundation, the organisation must not be bankrupt or rehabilitated, and must also represent a particular regional sector and have its head office and be present in Gozo.
- 6.4 Prospective members have to fill and sign an application form which includes a declaration that they accept and conform to the rules of the Foundation once their application is accepted.
- 6.5 The Foundation shall keep a record of all the Members in a Register of Members.
- 6.6 The current Founding Members are shown in an Annex attached hereto marked document "S".
- 6.7 The Structure of the Foundation is as follows:
- (a) Annual General Meeting of the Founders, both initial and subsequent
 - (b) Chairperson and Manager
 - (c) Decision Committee
 - (d) Operational Groups
 - (e) Initial and subsequent Members



6.8 The Founder Members forming this foundation are:

From the Public Sector

Kunsill Lokali Fontana
Kunsill Lokali Ghajnsielem
Kunsill Lokali Gharb
Kunsill Lokali Ghasri
Kunsill Lokali Kercem
Kunsill Lokali Munxar
Kunsill Lokali Nadur
Kunsill Lokali Qala
Kunsill Lokali Rabat (Gozo)
Kunsill Lokali Sannat
Kunsill Lokali San Lawrenz
Kunsill Lokali Xaghra
Kunsill Lokali Xewkija
Kunsill Lokali Zebbug

From the Private Sector

Gozo Business Chamber
Gozo NGOs Association
Gozo Tourism Association
Maltese Islands Agri Federation (MIAF)

6.10 A member can be expelled from the Foundation:

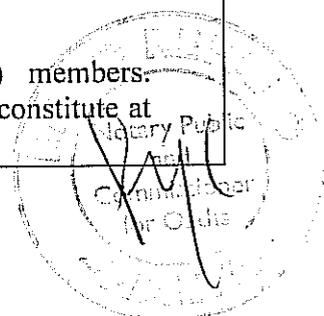
- (a) if after one verbal and one written warning, that member breaks the code of discipline established by the Decision Committee or it submits work that falls below the minimum standards established by the Decision Committee and expected of the members of the Foundation or if it acts against the interests of the Foundation.
- (b) immediately, without any warning, if caught stealing, passing confidential information to third parties or performs any other transgression against the Foundation.

7. Decision Committee

7.1 The affairs of the Foundation shall be managed by a Decision Committee ('Committee').

7.2 This Committee shall be formed of up to seven (7) members. Representatives from the civil and commercial society shall constitute at least fifty one percent (51%) of the Committee.

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The Committee shall be composed of up to three representatives chosen by Local Councils; and four nominated persons chosen by the Private Sector of the Foundation. These members must be nominated by each of the following sectors:

- a) A person nominated by the general business sector, chosen by the Gozo Business Chamber;
- b) A person nominated from the tourism sector, chosen by the Gozo Tourism Association;
- c) A person nominated by the farming/agricultural community, chosen by the Maltese Islands Agri Federation (MIAF);
- d) A person nominated by the voluntary sector, chosen by the Gozo Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) Association.

7.3 The members of the Committee shall be appointed during the Annual General Meeting of the Founder members, initial and subsequent.

7.4 Selected members from this Committee shall take up the role of Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary.

7.5 Selected members from this Committee shall be for a period of four years.

7.6 At the end of the four-year period, members of the Committee remain eligible for re-appointment for a subsequent term but cannot retain the same post as officers.

7.7 The Committee may seek advice from Thematic Working Groups to assist it in its decisions.

7.8 The Committee shall be accountable to the aforesaid public and private sectors in particular and to the population of the territory in general.

7.9 The names of the current administrators are:

Representing the Public Sector:

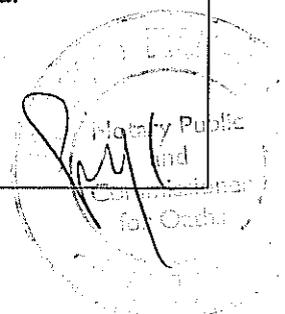
Mr Joe Cordina representing the Local Council of Xaghra.

Mr Mario Azzopardi representing the Local Council of Kercem.

Mr Paul Azzopardi representing the Local Council of Xewkija.

Representing the Private Sector:

Mr Joseph Grech nominated by Gozo Business Chamber.



Mr Paul Scicluna nominated by Gozo Tourism Association.

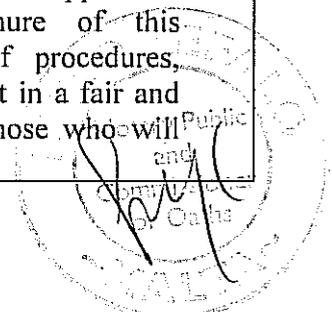
Mr Ryan Mercieca nominated by Gozo Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) Association.

Mr Frank Xerri nominated by Maltese Islands Agri Federation (MIAF).

8. Proceedings and Responsibilities of the Committee

- 8.1 The members of the Committee shall meet on a regular basis to direct the running of the Foundation and take strategic decisions, adjourn and otherwise regulate their meetings, as deemed fit. The Committee shall regulate its own procedures and may, *inter alia*, also refer to Thematic Working groups in order to assist in decision-making.
- 8.2 A quorum with the minimum of four (4) Committee members must be present for proceedings of the Committee to be initiated and continued. Decisions shall be taken by means of voting by the Committee members present only. In case of an equality of votes on any motion, the Chairperson shall have a casting vote.
- 8.3 The Committee shall regulate its own procedures and take decisions on matters related to:
- i. Running and ongoing operations of the foundation;
 - ii. Recruitment and engagement of staff;
 - iii. Financial allocations for activities engaged in by the group
 - iv. Launching of projects/measures;
 - v. Monitoring of projects during and after realization;
 - vi. Recommendations for payments to the responsible Authorities.
- 8.4 The committee's secretary shall promptly minute in detail all records pertaining to all financial and other stakes or interests whereby members of the Committee, representative or persons nominated by the various sectors, stand to benefit from decisions taken by the Committee. Moreover, a Committee Member shall not vote in respect of a decision if s/he can be a direct personal financial beneficiary of a related project.
- 8.5 Committee members shall, in the execution of their duties and the exercise of their powers, act with prudence, diligence and attention and observe the utmost good faith and practice of governing and applicable laws, directives and regulations. During the tenure of this administration and execution and implementation of procedures, measures and projects, all Committee Members must act in a fair and transparent way, and offer equal opportunities to all those who will

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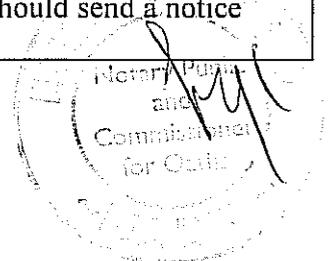
benefit potentially. In exercising their evaluation, all Committee members must always be guided by the primary purpose for which the Foundation was established as the principal objective which should be attained with the founding members being both from the public and the private sectors.

- 8.6 The Committee shall ensure that the projects and measures it endorses are administered efficiently, effectively and with efficacy and that furthermore all the rules and criteria of the responsible authorities are observed.

9. General Meetings

- 9.1 There can be two types of general meetings: annual general meetings and those called from time to time, known as extraordinary general meetings;
- 9.2 The supreme authority of the Foundation is vested in its members' general meeting. Annual general meetings must be called once a year within six (6) months of the end of the financial year;
- 9.3 Notice of the Annual General Meeting has to be given in writing, at least fifteen full days before the date of the meeting, to every member or delegate who has the right to attend the meeting;
- 9.4 An urgent extraordinary general meeting, except for an annual general meeting or a general meeting with an agenda to amend the statute, can be called by giving not less than three working days notice;
- 9.5 Every notice of a general meeting must give the agenda to be discussed and the resolutions to be proposed, and no other subject can be discussed without the consensus of the majority of the members present and voting in that general meeting.
- 9.6 No business can be carried out should a general meeting fail to attract a quorum with the members present. The necessary quorum to start business should be made up of one fourth of the members or delegates, or fifteen (15) members or delegates, whichever is the lower, eligible to vote.

If the meeting had been called at the request of the members or delegates, it is dissolved if there are not enough members or delegates to form a quorum thirty minutes after the established time of the meeting. In all other cases, the meeting is adjourned to the same day, time and venue, the following week. The Secretary should send a notice



by post to this effect, within forty-eight hours of the adjournment, to the addresses of registered members and others who have a right to attend. If there will be no quorum for the adjourned meeting, thirty minutes after the established time, the members or delegates present form a quorum.

9.7 The functions of the Foundation's Annual General Meeting are:

- (a) to consider and confirm the minutes of the previous annual general meeting and of every other preceding members' meeting that had not been approved in any other members' meeting;
- (b) to consider the Decision Committee's reports, the auditor's report, and every other report;
- (c) to consider and approve the financial statements;
- (d) to consider and approve the way that any possible net surplus can be distributed or invested;
- (e) to consider, approve and adopt every amendment of the statute;
- (f) to consider and approve any resolutions presented;
- (g) to elect the members of the Decision Committee;
- (h) to decide on appeals made by organizations who had not been accepted as new members by the Decision Committee;
- (i) to hear and decide every complaint that is forwarded by members who felt aggrieved by any Decision Committee decision. Notice that such complaints will be aired at the meeting should be handed to the Secretary at least two days prior to the meeting;
- (j) to carry out other work regarding the Foundation about which notice was accordingly given by members.

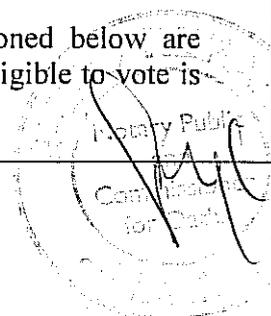
9.8 Extraordinary General Meetings of the Foundation can be convened at any time by the Decision Committee however the same Decision Committee is bound to set up a meeting upon receiving a signed request from one fourth of the members or 15 members – whichever is the lower – indicating the meeting's proposed agenda;

If the Decision Committee fails to call a meeting within one month from receiving the request, the members, as promoters of the request, have the power to call the meeting themselves by means of a notice to all members informing them of the proposed agenda and of the Decision Committee's failure to convene the meeting;

9.9 A resolution or decision brought to the general meeting is decided by a simple majority of the members present and eligible to vote.

Notwithstanding, in order that the resolutions mentioned below are approved, a two-thirds majority of those present and eligible to vote is needed:

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- (a) the removal from post of a member of the Decision Committee;
- (b) an appeal made by a member who feels aggrieved by a decision of the Decision Committee, to expel it;
- (c) decisions regarding applications for membership rejected by the Decision Committee;

Besides this, in order that the resolutions hereunder mentioned are approved, there must be a majority of three fourths of the members present and eligible to vote:

- (d) dissolving or liquidation of the Foundation;
- (e) statute amendments. Amendments are to be carried out by a public deed saving those which require the prescribed form to be notified to the authorities.

9.10 Provided that in order to respect the fifty plus one percent voting of the private sector, the number of votes which the local councils can exercise during an Annual General Meeting shall be that of three (3). If at any time the members of the private sector increase, then the number of votes which the local councils can exercise during an Annual General Meeting shall be increased accordingly until it reaches the number of fourteen (14).

10. Dissolution and Termination of the Foundation

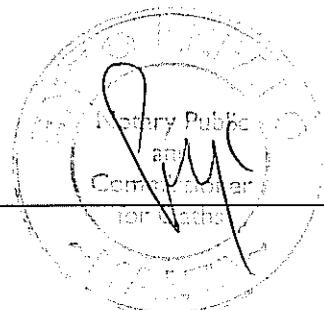
The Executive Committee shall have the discretion, subject to the consent of the Founders, to determine if and when the circumstances indicate that the purposes of the Foundation have been achieved, exhausted, cannot be achieved or become impossible, to terminate the Foundation.

If the Foundation ceases to exist, any assets after the payment of all obligations, shall be distributed to another non-profit making social purpose foundation with similar purposes as the Executive Committee, with the consent of the Founders, may determine.

Since more than five (5) documents are annexed to this deed, document 'X' is hereby being annexed, being the list of documents annexed to this deed.

Done, read and published after due explanation thereof in terms of Law, in Gozo, Victoria, GPF Agius de Soldanis Street, offices of the Gozo Action Group, with number twenty three (23).

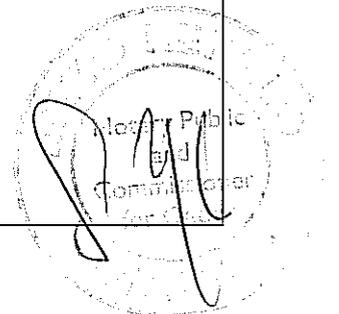
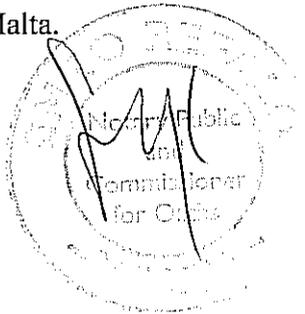
(sgd.) Saviour Borg
Larry Buttigieg
Mario Azzopardi



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Carmen Said
Jason Curmi
Hubert Saliba
Clint Camilleri
David Apap
Dr. Daniel Attard
Noel Formosa
Joseph Cordina
Eucharist Camilleri
Dr. Samuel Azzopardi
Nicky Saliba
Joseph Grech
Ryan Mercieca
Paul Scicluna
Frank Xerri
Dr. Enzo Refalo
Notary Public, Malta.

TRUE COPY OF
THE ORIGINAL
QUOD ATTESTOR



**DR. ENZO REFALO LL.D.
NOTARY PUBLIC MALTA**

APPENDIX 5: GAGF Manager Job Description

10th June 2015

Job Description for the post of a GAGF Manager

Main responsibilities of the post:

- Responsible to the Gozo Action Group Foundation by offering assistance in the overall management, coordination and control of the approved actions within the Local Development Strategy.
- Preparing the budget for GAGF
- Developing plans, policies and schedules for the GAGF staff
- Identifying cost savings or additional sources of revenue for the benefit of the foundation
- Setting up the office for GAGF
- Ensure the effective implementation and execution of the actions as specified in the Local Development Strategy of GAGF
- In liaison with the GAGF Board, set time frames and deadlines for specific action plans and ensure their timely completion in terms of cost, quality and time
- Draw up effective monitoring and control procedures required in order to ensure correctness and timeliness in all the actions undertaken both by the GAGF and also through open calls
- Attending meetings/ training/ conferences both locally and abroad
- Participate fully as a member of GAGF's management team, GAGF's Arbitration, Evaluation, Technical, & Adjudicating Committees, where necessary and asked to do so by the GAGF Board
- Co-ordinate the work of the Decision Committee
- Prepare and submit project progress reports as specified in the Operating Rules Provide a timely and effective response to any queries by the Managing Authority or the Paying Agency within the Ministry for Sustainable Development, Environment and Climate Change (MSDEC)
- Manage financial resources in terms of Public Financial Regulations
- The compilation of data and other research work
- Draw up and issue tender documents and carry out procurement of goods and services in terms of the Public Procurement Regulations

- Coordination of RDP public relations work with local media, public information and news sheets, application forms etc
- Participation in programme evaluations at mid-term and final stages
- Communicate with all the horizontal stakeholders and networking and local and European counterparts
- Work in close liaison with relevant Government Departments, particularly the Department of Contracts, the Managing Authority and the Paying Agency.
- Any other ancillary roles as may be identified by GAGF Board and the GAGF Decision Committee.
- Carry out the closure of the 'LEADER' Programme to the satisfaction of GAGF Board, the GAGF Decision Committee, the MA and the PA
- Maintaining close liaison at all stages with the Managing Authority (MA) for Rural Development and Paying Agency (PA) and with other relevant authorities to ensure their continuing cooperation and to facilitate the effective coordination of activities, priorities and deadlines
- Participate actively in any meetings, seminars, training or events organised by the National Rural Network
- Identify and liaise regularly with counterparts in EU member states to identify and share best practice on issues related to the management of a LAG and the general Rural Development Policy.
- Continue to acquire knowledge, experience and expertise in all areas related to 'LEADER' and Rural Development Policies

Take every opportunity to acquire and increase awareness of new management skills, particularly in the areas of project management, financial management, human resource management and information technology

