



GOVERNMENT OF MALTA

Government response to the Consultation on the Gozo Regional Development Authority

12th September 2018

*Ministry for Gozo
St Francis Square, Victoria, Gozo*

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Executive Summary

Introduction and overview

1. The Ministry for Gozo launched a consultation process on the setting up of a Regional Development Authority for Gozo which will be primarily responsible for the design and stewarding of the implementation of a Regional Development Strategy for Gozo. The consultation took place between 3rd August and 3rd September 2018. The consultation was open to both the general public and representatives of constituted bodies, NGOs, local councils, etc.

2. A consultation session was held on 3rd August 2018 and was presided by the Minister for Gozo. The purpose of the consultation was to present for feedback the key principles that were being considered for the legal framework for the setting up of GRDA.

The attendees were invited to contact the Ministry for a meeting to be set to discuss with the drafting team the principles presented or to present feedback setting out their recommendations. A general announcement of the consultation process was made in both the press and social media.

3. This consultation sought views

The consultation sought views on the key principles that are for consideration with regard to the drafting of the legal framework for the Gozo Regional Development Authority (GRDA) were presented – mainly:

- a) Overall legal framework is similar to that of other authorities.
- b) Specific matters relating to the GRDA:
 - Composition of the Board.
 - Corporate plan.
 - Procedure for setting key performance indicators.
 - Strategic review.
 - Functions.
 - Appointment of a Chief Executive Officer.
 - Regional Impact Assessment.

Responses to the consultation and process used to seek stakeholder views

This document is the Government Response to this consultation and sets out the Government's decisions on these matters.

4. The closing date of the public consultation. Which methods were used to receive the feedback. The total amount of responses. From whom you received the feedback.

The consultation closed on 3rd September 2018. The Ministry for Gozo invited to:

- (i) Present requests for meetings with the drafters of the Bill. No such requests were made to the Minister.
- (ii) Submit formal written feedback. There were 8 submissions in all.

5. Include (if any) meetings with stakeholders and list who the stakeholders were.

There was no take up by stakeholders to the invitation made by the Ministry for Gozo for meetings with the drafters of the Bill.

Summary of responses and decisions

The following is a summary of the consultation responses received. We would like to thank all those who took the time to respond to the consultation and participate in stakeholder meetings around the consultation exercise.

6. Statistics.

- Total feedback received: 8
- Total feedback received by individuals: 3
- Total feedback received by organisations: 5
- Total feedback received through email: 8
- Total feedback received through online form: 0
- Total feedback received by post: 0

7. Summary of feedback received.

All of the respondents welcomed the setting up of an authority for Gozo which would be responsible for the design and stewardship of a Gozo Regional Development Strategy.

There was consensus that for the GRDA to be successful it needed to be resourced adequately – both in terms of people and financing. It was also underlined that whilst the sign-off for the Strategy should be political, once that sign off is made the Authority is empowered to implement, and that it applies business standard management practices to achieve this. There was also agreement that the board of the GRDA should be responsible for the entity's policy direction, with management responsibility for operational matters resting with the CEO.

Different views were presented vis-à-vis the:

- (i) Constitution of the Board: that this should be fully representative of the economic-socio players within Gozo (1); that it is elected by Gozitan persons (1); that the majority of the Board should not represent the government's interests (1); modelled on the current make-up of the MCESD Gozo Regional Committee (1); constituted primarily of Gozitans (1).
- (ii) Endorsement and monitoring of a Gozo Regional Development Strategy should rest with a Parliamentary Committee for Gozo (i).
- (iii) Financing should be based on proportion of government revenue on the basis of GDP (1); is assigned direct responsibility for the 10% allocation to Gozo under EU funds (1).
- (iv) The name of the authority should be changed to incorporate the word 'sustainability' – Gozo Regional Sustainable Development Authority – which should underpin Gozo's strategic development (i).

Two of the respondents criticised the consultation process stating that it was short on detail and vague in terms of content presented.

8. Your assessment and the Government's decision (list the Government's decisions).

As stated in the main, the limited feedback received was positive. In terms of the different views presented above the position of the Ministry is the following:

- The Board of the GRDA should not be more than 7 – otherwise it will become unwieldy. Experience shows that large boards do not function. The Ministry is of the considered opinion that representation should not be limited to constituted bodies, local government, and NGOs but representatives of the demographics' of Gozo – youth, women, etc. The intention is that the Board is constituted of respected Gozitan persons.
- The political responsibility for a Gozo Regional Development Strategy should remain with the Ministry for Gozo and not a parliamentary committee.
- The financing of the Strategy and the Authority are key for their success. The right formula needs to be established together with the Ministry for Finance and other line Ministries responsible for projects that impact Gozo.
- Sustainability is a fundamental part of the vision and underlining principles being articulated for Gozo. There is merit in considering changing the name of the GRDA to include a stronger emphasis on sustainability.

Implementation

9. When you intend to implement the decisions

The Ministry has already passed the first reading of the Bill. The intention is to hold the second reading of the Bill in the Autumn parliamentary session. Any changes to Bill will be concluded by 30th September 2018.

Contact Details

If you have any questions regarding this response, please contact: ministryforgozo@gov.mt

Annex A: List of respondents

Organisation
Centre for Environment Education and Research
Gozo Business Chamber
Association of Gozitan Employees in Malta
Gozo Tourism Association
Environment and Resources Authority
Private Individuals (3)