



MEDIA RELEASE

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The Gozo Tourism Association notes that the Budget for 2022, presented by the Minister for Finance, apart from addressing the social aspect, it is also focusing in particular on the human capital, whilst committed in safeguarding the Maltese Islands' environment.

The human capital, including its upskilling and training, is an important asset for tourism, especially during these challenging times when this sector is experiencing shortage of workers. In this sense the Gozo Tourism Association, welcomes the various measures announced in this budget that we believe will not only retain the present workers in the tourism sector, but they will entice others to seek a career in tourism.

On a regional level, the Gozo Tourism Association takes note that this budget proposes the upgrading of the island's product including roads infrastructure, completion of the Aquatic Centre and the Reverse Osmosis, the restoration of the Aqueducts just outside Victoria, as well as the continuation of rubble walls building in Gozitan rural areas.

Connectivity is another topic which this budget intends to address by investment in the upgrading and additional facilities at the Heliport in Xewkija, which we believe are all directed towards the introduction of the inter-island airlink. Whilst the measure of free public transport as from October of next year will entice the use of public transport thus reducing traffic strains on our roads and parking spaces.

Furthermore, the GTA also notes the various measures announced aimed towards the conservation of our environment. These measures include tax incentives and grants for the purchase of houses of character and traditional buildings. Additionally, first time buyers of such properties in Gozo will receive double the grant announced.

Finally, this budget for 2022 is also focusing green economy and digitilisation. The Gozo Tourism Association believes that the Island of Gozo can optimise on these two niches and thus start slowly diversify its economy, which presently is heavily dependent and reliant on the tourism sector. **-END-**