



THE GOZO BUSINESS CHAMBER

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Press Release issued by the Gozo Business Chamber: The Chamber's Reactions to the 2020 – 2025 Vision Document published by the Malta Chamber of Commerce and Industry

The GBC welcomes the 2020-2025 Vision Document published by the MCCEI and endorses a number of its recommendations. The GBC is however fundamentally not aligned to the recommendation to Government to reconsider the investment in the tunnel between Malta and Gozo.

In this respect, the GBC reiterates the fundamental need for more efficient, reliable and cost-effective transportation between Malta and Gozo, with the smaller island being home to 6% of the population and 5% of economic activity. Gozo is falling short from optimising its contribution to the Maltese economy in good part because of connectivity barriers, with the time required to reach centres of major activity being 4 to 5 times longer than those in Malta, and the virtual complete dependence on an ageing vessel fleet.

The GBC emphasises that the tunnel between the two islands has the potential to provide the most cost-effective connectivity option. The tunnel project is a complement, not a competitor, to the implementation of multi-modal transport systems on a national scale. It would be expected to serve as the backbone of a network comprising public and shared vehicle transportation, and water and air connectivity. The tunnel project would deliver an effective link between the two islands within a reasonable period in the future, as opposed to often-mooted rail alternatives which would take decades to implement at multiples of the cost.

The GBC looks forward to the delivery of this project with an overall policy framework leading to a distinctive economic model for Gozo based on its ecological and sustainable development potential, permeating activities ranging from agriculture to manufacturing, tourism and new economy services, and where the younger population can effectively meet its lifestyle and career aspirations.

Incorporated by Public Deed on 20th December 1999

