

Administrative Annual Report for work done 2021.

Read and Submitted at the Annual General Meeting held on the 12th February 2022.

2021, was by far the most successful year of the organisation. As LGBTI+ Gozo was recovering plans for the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the executive team focused its attention on the full compilation of the action plan 2019-2021. As LGBTI+ Gozo we recognised that the success of the organisation stems from having a clear objective, such objective written down in our action plan was a gauge of what we need to work on and achieve. Therefore, we translated our work into two pillars: Project engagement through different projects and initiatives and the need to have an office space that will support the 2020 objective of restructuring internal processes of the organisation. This Annual report will dissect the work done in the last 12 months.

Projects

These projects below are the results of the groundwork LGBTI+ Gozo laid in the past few years. None of these projects exist in a vacuum and a number of meetings, lobbying attempts, press statements and collaborative efforts took place in order for these to be recognised. Whilst the organisation celebrates the finalisation of the project the coming years especially 2022-2026 and its new action plan will serve as a new chapter in the maintenance and more advancement of these projects and new ideas.

GU Clinic and HIV in Gozo

The year 2021, saw the cumulation of two services of which LGBTI+ Gozo has been a firm advocate on all through the years. In May 2021, the first appointments within the Gozo General Hospital were held in which a GU Specialist was present to operate and start the functioning of this new free service for all Gozitans in Gozo. This GU service has been a cry of the organisation since 2015 and through relentless lobbying and advocacy is now a reality. This was also thanks to the close collaboration and constant connection with GU clinic personnel and other organisations who supported this venture and our policy.

In tandem, during the early days of March LGBTI+ Gozo together with HIV Malta reported in the media that HIV medication in Gozo is not being delivered and the access of such medication (challenged and disrupted also by the COVID-19 pandemic) was only available in Mellieha. The two organisations sought to ensure that all registered HIV positive individuals will have access to their well needed medication from the Gozo General Hospital. This was done and changed in May 2021.

Are you a Boy or a Girl? Photo exhibition

Are you a Boy or a Girl? is a phrase heard many times by non binary individuals. This same phrase was the basis of a 9 day photo exhibition held at Villa Rundle Gozo between the 10th and the 18th of July. The

launch of the event held at the 10th of July at the Amphitheater at Villa Rundle saw a strong attendance of 35 individuals who together with the Minister for Gozo experienced the story of two non binary individuals one from Malta and one from Gozo. The non binary activists were matched with one photographer from their opposite island of origin and the stories these photos told were reflected through a series of quotes.

This event was held at a public space and was available for free to all individuals who happen to be passing by the Villa Rundle, and so no concrete numbers are known to how many have seen the exhibition, however the dates chosen intersect with one of the busiest weekends in Gozo as the feast of St George is celebrated in Victoria and the garden is a center place where individuals connect and hang out.

This project was fully funded (5132.07 euro) by the Social Causes Fund. Breakdown of expenses is in the Financial Report.

Gbejniet Activist Academy 2021

LGBTI+ Gozo was awarded the sum of 1400 euro to host the event Gbejniet Activist Academy 2021. 15 members applied (however 12 attended) to participate in the one day training that was held on Saturday 20th August at The Meeting Place. This day included team building activities, mental health workshop and queer activist workshop.

This project was fully funded (696.00 - the final expense) by the Agenzija Zghazagh - Be Active Scheme. Breakdown of expenses is in the Financial Report.

Qawsalla Hub

On the 11th of September 2021, LGBTI+ Gozo experienced the launch of Qawsalla Hub. This Hub serves as the core base of operation for the organisation and has a number of opening hours for members to access services, chat with each other, access our Queer Library among other services. The launch of Qawsalla Hub led to the compilation of the action plan for 2019-2021. It also symbolises the first time the local government is funding a Queer office in the Maltese Islands.

Moreover, Qawsalla Hub saw the need of a safe centric space for queer individuals come to fruition. The dream that LGBTI+ Gozo had 6 years ago is now a reality. Although this was with its own ups and downs with constant lobbying, networking and meetings throughout the years - the organisation is very proud to be one of the few NGOs in Gozo to have a base to operate and a space to offer it's members.

Social Events

Albeit limited, due to the fluid change in regulations due to the COVID-19 pandemic, LGBTI+ Gozo sought to organise a number of social events. After the Queerintina events of 2020, in 2021 the organization focused on, in person events. These events give an opportunity to those who attend the chance to connect, network and engage with each other in a safe environment. Such social events included:

- 15th May: LGBTI+ Gozo anniversary dinner - Marsalforn
- 25th July: LGBTI+ Gozo Annual Summer Meet Up - Marsalforn
- 22nd August: Night by the Beach - Hondoq
- 3rd to Sunday 5th - Weekend at Kemmuna
- 11th September - Xalata Il-Bahar

Creative Club

From October 6th 2021 (meet in total of 5 times in 2021) on a bi weekly schedule on Wednesday, LGBTI+ Gozo started to organize a creative club. A creative space for queer individuals who like to express themselves in any type of artistic form be it poems, photography, painting, the medium of dance etc. The meet ups currently held on Zoom every two weeks have a theme. In 2022, we aim to have a more strong turnaround (Around 15 individuals) and apply for funds to create some sort of publication.

Meetings

LGBTI+ Gozo held a number of meetings with nemours stakeholders. These meetings discussed various difficulties and challenges that the organisation is facing - principle the need for an office space in Gozo and the need to engage a full time worker with the organisation. Moreover it discussed topics that are key for Gozo such as Pride in Gozo, GU Clinic in Gozo and Trans health care access for Goztians.

- 8th January 2021 & 15th September 2021: H.E Bishop of Gozo
The conversation was a positive introduction to the organisation's work. The organisation presented the action plan for 2019-2021, with H.E promising an open channel of communication in light of the intersectional identities of sexuality and spirituality.
- 13th January: Agenzija Zghazagh representatives
Outcome from this meeting - More open collaboration in Gozo
- 17th March: Hon. Clint Camileri - Minister for Gozo
Outcome from this meeting - The identification of an office hub in Gozo and the timeline for such hub to be operational.

- 25th March: Hon. Chris Said - Shadow Minister for Gozo
- 1st April: Meeting with FOPIN - Equality Body for PN
- 9th April: Meeting with National Youth Council
- 14th April: Meeting with Checkpoint Malta

Other Meetings

LGBTI+ Gozo were invited for a number of research meetings from the Faculty of Social Wellbeing

- 21st July: Research on Migration in Malta with LGBTI+ Gozo focusing on regional reality in Gozo.
- 22nd November: Research on intersectionality & Disability.

LGBTI related Meetings

LGBTI+ Gozo throughout 2021 was committed to continue voice the Gozitan Queer reality in national forums - such LGBTI fora are a place where all Queer realted and supporting NGOs come together and discuss, organise and collaborate on different event and or discuss legal provisions that are pertinent during that time. LGBTI+ Gozo are members and contributed to meetings for the following bodies:

- LGBTIQ+ Consultative Council under the remit of the Ministry for Governance, Equality & Justice with LGBTI+ Gozo attending a meeting on 12th March 2021
- Pride Committee 2021 with meeting on 16th March, 20th March, 7th May these meetings also included the participation of EuroPride Committee 2023

LGBTI+ Gozo also participated in two discussions regarding sex work in Malta, these were held on 26th & 30th March.

Conferences & Roundtables

Throughout the year LGBTI+ Gozo is invited to a number of events such as conferences and roundtables to participate and make interventions on the work that the organisation is doing in Gozo. These events organised by different stakeholders are a key indicator that the work done in Gozo is leaving an impact. Our perspectives are always presented in an open and constructive way, keeping in mind the action plan 2019-2021 and the fact that we represent a number of different intersectional identities.

These events are:

- 27th April: Launch of E4D Campaign by the National Commissioner for Equality
- 9th July: Social Vision for Malta by the Ministry for Social Solidarity and Family Affairs

- 29th September: Social and Democratic Conference - The Future of Europe held by MEP Josianne Cutajar.
- 2nd October: LGBTI+ roundtable discussion with Lord Hebert - UK Prime Minister's LGBTI special envoy
- 3rd December: UNHCR LGBTIQ Forced Displacement Roundtable - UNHCR Malta
- 10th December: NGOs in Gozo - CRPD Office in Gozo

Executive meetings

During the months of March 2021 to February 2022 - LGBTI+ Gozo executives meet 13 times.

Membership

LGBTI+ Gozo submitted the documentation for the Annual General Meeting 2021 to the VO commissioner which was approved. Financial transactions to ILGA (150.00) and IGLYO (20.00) were made as per the annual membership fee. More information in the Financial Report.

The organisation also applied to be affiliated with the:

- Meeting Place, Marsa
- Ronald McDonald House of Charity, St Paul's Bay
- Valletta Design Cluster, Valletta

Our membership with these entities were all approved and so members of LGBTI+ Gozo can make use of the services offered by these entities. Contact us if that is the case.

Sponsorship and Partnership

LGBTI+ Gozo acquired no sponsorship for the year 2021. This puts the financial situation of the organisation in a stable situation. However, at the time being the organisation has mastered enough funds to maintain operational cost for the next two years (2022-2023). However, a sustainable solution is to be found. Check out Financial Report 2021 for more information.

An in kind donation by Nescafe was given of coffee and tea + cups for the office.

A number of meetings were held with Gozo in the House (GITH), a Gozo based magazine portal. These meetings will lead to a possible partnership in sharing events, material and other information on the GITH portal.

Interns

LGBTI+ Gozo had a number of interns working with it. Firstly, in May 2021 the organisation had Luke Camilleri as an intern for one month. Luke supported the organization in the Financial and Funding department due to his studies in accounting. We thank Luke for not only choosing LGBTI+ Gozo as his intern organisation but for being an active member throughout the year and helping out.

In the summer months, between July and September LGBTI+ Gozo was joined by Neil Fitzpatrick, who has now also joined as a member. Neil was part of the Student Placement Programme organised by MITA (Malta Information Technology Agency) in which LGBTI+ Gozo applied for. Neil worked on Branding for Non Binary Events (Are you a boy or a Girl?) - Activist academy event and other miscellaneous marketing material needed from time to time. Thank you Neil it was a pleasure having you with us.

We would also like to thank the National Youth Council of Malta for their support in this placement, MITA for their guidance and McCormick HR Consultancy for their pro bono services in the payroll and other financial matters.

In the month of September, LGBTI+ Gozo hosted Jens Verboeckhoven, a Belgian Intern from the University of Thomas Moore. Jens, choose LGBTI+ Gozo to do his internship and worked on administration and supporting the organisation during the pride events. Thank you Jens for your support.

Press statement

LGBTI+ Gozo issued a number of press statements in 2021. On various topics that concern the Gozitan Queer and General community. These being:

PR-001-21: HIV medication in Gozo - *A second class citizen island* - 13th March 2021

PR-002-21: Activist Academy - *LGBTI+ Gozo launches the call for the second edition of Ġbejniet Activist Academy 2021, with the funding and support of Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ through the Be Active Scheme 2021* - 29th April 2021

PR-003-21: GU Clinic - *LGBTI+ activists leave an impact on Gozo - LGBTI+ Gozo welcomes the GU Clinic in Gozo* - Update on service professional GU Clinic service in Gozo - with Steward Health Care - 12th May 2021.

PR-004-21: HRD Bus Campaign - *LGBTI+ Gozo welcomes and reflects about Malta's ranking on the backdrop of IDAHOBIT!* - 17th May 2021

PR-005-21: HIV in Gozo - *HIV Medication in Gozo - a step towards equity!* - with HIV Malta - 20th May 2021

PR-006-21: Are you a Boy or are you a Girl? Photo exhibition - *Are you a Boy or are you a Girl?* - 10th July 2021

PR-007-21: Current Affairs - *Homophobic Attack in Sliema* - 3rd August 2021

PR-008-21: Pride - *Pride Week and the opening of LGBTI+Gozo Office Space* - 8th September 2021

Press Coverage

All of these press statement gathered wide coverage on different web portals, principally the following press were covered as follows:

PR-001-21: No coverage - PR-002-21: No coverage

PR-003-21: <https://newsbook.com.mt/en/steward-health-care-opens-first-gu-clinic-in-goza/> & https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/lifestyle/health/109895/first_gu_clinic_in_gozo_opens_its_doors#:~:text=Steward%20Health%20Care%20Malta%20has,sexually%20transmitted%20diseases%20and%20infections. & <https://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2021-05-27/health/Steward-Health-Care-Malta-introduces-GU-clinic-services-in-Gozo-6736233836> & <https://maltadaily.mt/first-gu-clinic-services-launched-in-goza/> among others.

PR-004-21: Coverage on TVM News

PR-005-21: <https://www.guidememalta.com/en/gozitans-battling-hiv-can-now-pick-up-their-life-saving-treatment-from-goza-general>

PR-006-21: <https://timesofmalta.com/articles/view/not-he-not-she-the-lives-of-the-forgotten-people-in-the-middle.884533>

PR-007-21

<https://lovinmalta.com/news/malta-still-has-a-long-way-to-go-to-end-violence-against-queer-community-lgbti-go-wo-warns>

PR-008-21: TVM news, ONE News

<https://timesofmalta.com/articles/view/lgbti-go-wo-opens-service-hub-in-victoria.899759> &

https://one.com.mt/bil-filmat-inawgurat-ufficcju-gdid-tal-lgbtiq-go-wo/?fbclid=IwAR3a04Imq67iT_3g3KklcEbszYXVm_Y2Jv_VakV3d5sYABLTAJMmJW1Oarl &

<https://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2021-09-12/local-news/New-LGBTIQ-office-inaugurated-in-Go-wo-673623666> - among others

Additional coverage was shared on the Sexual Health Policy Paper written by LGBTI+ Gozo

<https://lovinmalta.com/lifestyle/lgbt/gozitan-lgbti-group-calls-for-state-funded-gender-affirmative-surgery/>

Media Interviews

Throughout 2021, LGBTI+ Gozo was interviewed on various TV programs and newspaper portals - both print and online:

- 10th May 2021 - Niskata on TVM
- 17th May 2021 - Pjazza on ONE
- 18th May 2021 - Radio Interview ONE
- 27th May 2021 - Kalamita on ONE
- 11th June 2021 - *It's not easy being out in Gozo* - Interview with Cat Camilleri on Malta Today
- 24th June 2021 - Bejnitra on NET TV
- 29th November 2021 - Niskata on TVM

International

As one would expect, given the circumstance of the COVI-19 pandemic a number of international exchanges were cancelled or yet again postponed for 2022. As LGBTI+ Gozo we did our utmost to participate in online fora in order to still promote the work that we do on the regional island of Gozo. In 2020, LGBTI+ gozo was approved as part of TGEU (Transgender Europe) and concluded the membership application of the organisation of LGBTI+ Gozo in international fora. Therefore in 2021, we focused more on being active in TGEU but also ILGA and IGLYO.

Whilst a number of international trips were cancelled LGBTI+ Gozo member Marika Borg participated in an Erasmus+ exchange titled "Generalization " in Portugal with our partners AZEC. This was held between the 10th and 16th of November in Porto, Portugal.

Moreover, LGBTI+ Gozo participated in:

- 12th June 2021: Annual General Meeting by ILGA-Europe
- 1st October 2021: Virtual Conference - Older LGBTI by ILGA- Europe
- 23rd October 2021: Annual General Meeting by IGLYO
- November 2021: LGBTI+ Gozo was chosen as Member of the Month for IGLYO

Newsletters + Membership Updates

LGBTI+ Gozo communicates with the general public and a mail list of over 500+ individuals through its monthly newsletter. Through 2021, LGBTI+ Gozo included the main achievements, main media coverage and other events and projects. In total 9 newsletters were sent in 2021.

Membership Updates are emails communicated exclusively to our members. LGBTI+ Gozo currently has 87 members. These membership updates include events and opportunities such as international opportunities that are for our members. It also includes opportunities for our members to volunteer in different capacities. A total of 9 membership updates were send.

The need to have more accessible information on our website is felt across our membership base. Suggestions that events should be put on our website and to have this website serve a purpose have been communicated. One of our pending tasks is to update the website with events and to ensure that everyone can access the information of the organisation through a streamlining process of information.

IDAHOBIT 2021.

For the second year running LGBTI+ Gozo organised the annual IDAHOBIT seminar. This year's title was the Relevance of IDAHOBIT? An island mentality and included 3 individuals from Gozo who talked about their experience/research on being Queer in Gozo. This event was held on Saturday 1st of May in preparation for the International Day Against Homo/Bi/Trans* phobia 2021.

Policy

LGBTI+ Gozo work hand in hand with a number of organisations, academics, ministries and entities to give a comprehensive approach to queer lifestyle and realities in Gozo. In November 2021, LGBTI+ Gozo launched the Sexual Health Policy Paper which included 10 recommendations on Sexual Health and Reproductive Rights for the island of Malta.

This policy will be submitted (when the eventual consultation is open) to the consultation process that will lead to the new National Sexual Health strategy.

Pride 2021

Through its commitment to participate in Pride on a yearly basis - LGBTI+ Gozo organised 1 major event that can be split into three sections. This major event was held on Saturday 11th September:

- Qawsalla Hub Launch at 09:00
- Rainbow flag at Victoria Gozo at 09:30 after the launch - with ARC Malta
- Xalata il-Bahar at 11:00 at Hondoq Bay (Started at 13:00)

In order to continue promoting an inclusive Gozo, LGBTI+ Gozo collaborated with the Ministry for Gozo and worked on the following installations:

- Re painting of rainbow bench at Villa Rundel
- Re painting of rainbow cross in front of Arkadia
- Installation of rainbow colours with facade in front of the Ministry.
- Installation of You Are Included Rainbow monument at the Xewkija Main Roundabout

LGBTI+ Gozo also participated in the pride concert held at Argotti on Saturday 18th September and gave a short speech for the occasion.

Continuation of services

In 2021, LGBTI+ Gozo sought to continue offering its services to the general public. This was more possible and facilitated with the opening of Qawsalla Hub in September 2021.

Queer Friendly professional

The Queer Friendly professional list is on our website, with the original 17 professionals not updated. As of 2022 LGBTI+ Gozo will take an inventory of the gaps within the professionals and work to recruit at least 13 more queer friendly professionals in the island of Gozo.

LGBTI+ Gozo helpline

LGBTI+ Gozo helpline serves as a one stop shop to all services in Gozo and Queer related. This service through 9935622 is in need of more human resources. LGBTI+ Gozo is working to engage a full time administrative support office (ideally with psychosocial background to support the operation of the organisation and of this helpline)

Dormant Projects.

Unfortunately, for the second year running in 2020 & 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the organisation did not work on the Annual open day during Valentine's day called "Love is Love". This event is usually held in collaboration with the Ministry for Gozo.

Moreover, the campaign Better Together is currently at halt, with no educational seminars held in 2021 under the Better Together campaign.

Research Survey 2022

The full compilation of our Action plan 2019-2021 (check out Action Plan Mandate Report) led to the need for a new research survey. This research survey is part of a longitudinal study which starts with the first research survey in 2019. There was two aspects to this survey, one being for queer gozitan who live and came out in Gozo and the other for Queer expats who chose to live in Gozo. The survey included the process of coming out, the mentality about queer issues in Gozo, awareness of services by LGBTI+ Gozo and other questions. It was held between the 6th December 2021 to the 10th of January 2022 and was answered by 69 members of LGBTI+ Gozo.

Action Plan 2022-2026

The data collected by the research surveyed was extensively analysed and reported in a report that was shared among different media houses. This led to the formulation of a 30 point action plan that will lead the organisation from this year 2022 to the end of 2026. By the end of 2026, a new research survey will be communicated to all members with the longitudinal study being more apt and clear with data points analyzed from 2019, 2022 and 2026 and compared to see the shift (if any) in reality for queer individuals in Gozo

This 32 point action plan includes 4 themes: Community, Education, Service and Policy. Some action points are:

- The organisation of a weekend celebration in Gozo to intersect with Europride 2023



- The organisation and participation within interfaith dialogue spheres.
- The organisation of a 10 year anniversary of the organisation in 2025.

Conclusion

As 2021 is now done and dusted, we reflect on the achievements of the organisation and look forward to open up LGBTI+ Gozo to more ideas, diverse individuals and to expand the operation of the organisation. There is little that we can do without the support of you, our members, that as we are now concluding our 6th year, believed in us since day one. We hope that we transferred your trust in work and commitment in these past 12 months. We are now more than ever in need of an organisation that works hand in hand and collaborates with everyone that wants to work with us, and so our call is one; be part of LGBTI+ Gozo.