



GRDA

CORPORATE
PLAN

2021-2023

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PART A

Executive Summary,
Vision, Strategic
Objectives, Deliverables

Executive Summary

The Gozo Regional Development Authority (GRDA) Corporate Plan presents an overview of the most important activities, operations and projects that the Authority intends to embark on in the next years.

It is a document that does not limit itself in providing only high level objectives but goes into a lot of details on what the GRDA plans to achieve. It includes specific objectives, activities and Key Performance Indicators. It is a bold step in terms of transparency and accountability.



The Corporate Plan builds on Article 4 of the GRDA Act and includes:

- (a) the Authority's strategic objectives together with its plans for achieving them.
- (b) the Authority's plans for programme management and overseeing the implementation of the Gozo Regional Development Strategy, the carrying out of regional impact assessment studies, and financial and human resources.
- (c) the Authority's main undertakings.
- (d) the information to be provided by the Authority to the Minister during the three-year period.
- (e) a business and financial plan containing such information as the Minister may require.
- (f) the key performance indicators of the Authority.
- (g) the management and application of regulatory powers provided under an instrument of delegation by the Minister.

This GRDA Corporate Plan for 2021-2023 sets out the strategic objectives that project the Authority's vision of an ambitious and sustainable workplan. A set of strategic deliverables have been chosen through which the objectives for sustainable economic growth is to be achieved. The deliverables emphasise the regional dimension as a prerequisite when setting national policies. The Corporate Plan lists the various activities that are expected to be carried out over the course of the years covered by this plan, in relation to each of the deliverables the Authority is committing to achieve. Such a framework will

allow the GRDA to monitor progress in a very focused and pragmatic manner.

This approach will give full transparency in the way the Authority will be adding value in the development of the region. It will give an opportunity to all key stakeholders to fully participate in the process both at the planning and at the monitoring stages of the activities proposed.

To this effect this document is structured in a way to facilitate the understanding of how the high-level strategy will be realised through a set of very focused initiatives in the economic, social and environmental spheres.

In Part B of the Corporate Plan dealing with managing and controlling activities together with measuring and reporting progress, each one of the four strategic objectives comes with a list of deliverables and each deliverable will be accompanied by a 'Activities' for which a measure of performance is being identified.

Part C and Part D of the Plan contain an overview of the organisational structure and the operating model of the GRDA.



Mario Borg

CEO GRDA

Our Vision

The mission of the GRDA is to strengthen Gozo's voice amongst policy makers and other governmental bodies, so as to ensure that policies and actions drawn up and projects proposed are adequate for the specific nature of the Gozitan ecosystem.

By making sure that Gozo's perspective is featured in policy making, the GRDA will make sure that Gozo specific issues are tackled and that strengths are capitalised, therefore developing the Island in a sustainable manner.

The GRDA will make sure that its mission is attained by carrying out its consultative as well as legislative functions, backed by the strength of the Law. Through these two roles, the Authority will draw up and implement the Regional Development Strategy for the island, which will act as a long-term holistic plan, directing authorities as to where Gozo needs to sustainably grow to reach its full potential for the benefit of both this generation and the ones still to come.

The GRDA will make sure that the Regional Development Strategy features the opinions and viewpoints of all relevant stakeholder, both in terms of strengths as well as concerns for the Island. Through such consultation, an overall long-term effective strategy will be drawn up, identifying the way forward for Gozo in one integrated plan that covers all sectors. This will make sure that there is no fragmentation between sectors and that all the players are moving towards one common goal, within the same set parameters. This Strategy will act as a guidance for all other regional and national policies in terms of what outcomes are to be achieved.

This long-term holistic roadmap for Gozo will ensure that all other sectorial and regional policies drawn up will be in line and consistent, rather than fragmented. Hence, through timely and effective implementation of the Strategy, the GRDA will make sure that all policies set out will lead to sustainable growth for Gozo.

Our Strategic Objectives



S1. Ensure sustainable economic growth, employment, and living standards across the economic, social, natural and human dimensions.



S2. Play a key role in the planning stays with regards the upgrading of infrastructure and improvement of accessibility to Gozo whilst giving due priority to the region's ecosystem and the region's characteristics.



S3. Ensure that national policy and strategies are designed and implemented in full consideration of the regional dimension and Gozo's the long-term viability.



S4. Strengthen Gozo's institutional framework to improve the planning, decision making, implementation and evaluation processes.

Our Delivery Strategies



Sustainable Economic Growth

- D.1.1 Promote further development in economic and human resource capital.
- D.1.2 Initiate traction in the 'New Economy'.
- D.1.3 Accelerate the shift from traditional to sustainable tourism.
- D.1.4 Pursue continuous social development, promoting social equality.



Infrastructure and the Ecosystem

- D.2.1 Assist with the planning to upgrade of infrastructure and improvement of Gozo's accessibility.
- D.2.2 Safeguard the ecology of the Island Gozo and support rural development.
- D.2.3 Instil urgency for upgrading spatial planning and ensure sustainable urban.



The regional dimension at the heart of decision making

- D.3.1 Design, produce and launch a holistic Regional Development Strategy based on wide consultation and stakeholder involvement.
- D.3.2 Develop a framework for the carrying out of Regional Impact Assessments to evaluate impact of national policies and projects.
- D.3.3 Produce quality research to spearhead innovative and sustainable policy development on an on-going basis.



Gozo's institutional framework

- D.4.1 Steward the implementation of the Regional Development Plan to ensure its implementation remains within scope and track.
- D.4.2 Establish a framework of cooperation with MGOZ and other Ministries.
- D.4.3 Promote social dialogue.
- D.4.4 Manage and application of regulatory powers.
- D.4.5 Ensure that the legal framework within which the GRDA operates remains adequate and relevant at all times.

PART B

Managing and
controlling our activities.
Measuring and reporting
progress.

Delivery Strategy 1.1 - Promote further economic and human capital development

Activities to be carried out in fulfillment of Delivery Strategy 1.1:



Activity A.1.1.1 – Incentivise start-ups

Creating a conducive environment for business is crucial to attract activities in line with the GRDA vision.



Performance Criteria and Measures

P.1.1.1.1

In collaboration with MGOZ and possibly the business community in Gozo, set-up an online portal through which business incentives related to Gozo are compiled and updated regularly.

P.1.1.1.2

Initiate the organisation of 'The Business Start-ups Gozo Awards' in 2022 and build necessary momentum to have such contest run periodically either annually or bi-annually.



Activity A.1.1.2 – Creating a spirit of entrepreneurship among young Gozitans

A fund for youth entrepreneurship will be established in collaboration with other governmental and/or private bodies to support the development of entrepreneurial ideas in Gozo, which embrace innovation, digitalisation and/or sustainability.



Performance Criteria and Measures

P.1.1.2.1

In collaboration with Gozo Business Chamber, support youth entrepreneurship by creating a year-long programme.



Activity A.1.1.3 – Life-long learning for workers to improve employability

Launch schemes to incentive further education and training.



Performance Criteria and Measures

P.1.1.3.1

Launch a scholarship scheme for courses delivered at the University of Malta Gozo Campus and MCAST by 2022.

Delivery Strategy 1.2 - Initiate traction in the 'New Economy'

Activities to be carried out in fulfillment of Delivery Strategy 1.2:



Activity A.1.2.1 – Support Structures to New Economy Sectors

Together with such entities as Malta Enterprise, efforts will be directed towards supporting the establishment and growth of businesses in new economy sectors, including but not limited to investment services, DLT related services, digital nomads, medical tourism, and education.



Performance Criteria and Measures

P.1.2.1.1

In collaboration with other national entities, setup Soft and hard infrastructure which help accelerate the successful development of entrepreneurial activities through an array of business support resources and services.



Activity A.1.2.2 – Addressing the Digital Skills Gap

A study will be conducted to identify basic digital skill gaps which are currently present across the new economy sectors in Gozo and design programmes to upgrade the digital skills of the Gozitan workforce in order to address the current and possible future tech skills deficits.



Performance Criteria and Measures

P.1.2.2.1

Study on basic digital skills to be concluded by 2022 and action plan presented and initiated in 2023.

P.1.2.2.2

Establish cooperation agreements with both the Ministry of Education, UoM, MCAST, JobsPlus and other entities in the field of education and employment by 2022.



Activity A.1.2.3 – Funding Opportunities

Efforts will be directed towards enhancing the cooperation with Malta Enterprise and MCAST to ensure assistance to both private and public sector entities engaging in RDI, in the digital economy and other sectors.



Performance Criteria and Measures

P.1.2.3.1

A Gozo Digital Economy Fund will be established in 2023 to support enterprises in the digital economy.

Delivery Strategy 1.3 - Sustainable Tourism

Activities to be carried out in fulfillment of Delivery Strategy 1.3:



Activity A.1.3.1 – Accelerate the shift from traditional to sustainable tourism

Develop new tourism niches in sports, and adventure tourism consistent with Gozo`s ecological model through marketing and capacity-building programmes to be developed jointly by the Ministry for Gozo (MGOZ), the Gozo Tourism Association (GTA) and other relevant stakeholders.



Performance Criteria and Measures

P.1.3.1.1

Tourist expenditure per night spent in Gozo, looking for an increase in per night expenditure and nights spent.

P.1.3.1.2

In collaboration with other entities in the sector and the MGOZ, assess the development new niches for tourism.

P.1.3.1.3

By 2023, in collaboration with GTA and MGOZ commission and publish quarterly/half yearly study on Tourism statistics.

Delivery Strategy 1.4 - Pursue social development, promoting social equality

Activities to be carried out in fulfillment of Delivery Strategy 1.4:



Activity A.1.4.1 – Support the work carried out by NGOs

We will work with stakeholders and NGOs to keep Goz's community and social values alive whilst addressing the social pressures that arise through the constantly evolving societal dynamics.



Performance Criteria and Measures

P.1.4.1.1

Keep continuous contact with NGOs through discussions and participation in the activities organised and initiatives taken by NGOs (2021).

P.1.4.1.2

By 2021, extend invitation to NGOs for participation in discussions on regional policy design and development.



Activity A.1.4.2 – Migrant Assimilation

Together with the Ministry for European Affairs and Equality, we will implement the Migrant Integration Strategy and Action Plan. The underpinning objective is to ensure that migrants living in Gozo will benefit from measures tailored towards their successful integration within Gozo's community.



Performance Criteria and Measures

P.1.4.2.1

The setting up of an inclusion hub in Gozo by 2023.

P.1.4.2.2

Carry out a survey study in 2022 to evaluate amongst other things the level of integration perceived by both the Gozitan people and the migrants and the social issue being faced by specific segments of society.

Delivery Strategy 2.1 - Upgrade infrastructure and accessibility

Activities carried out in fulfillment of the Delivery Strategy 2.1:



Activity A.2.1.1 – Building of a Car Park in Victoria

In collaboration with relevant national entities, the GRDA will prioritise the building of a multi-level car park, designed in such a way that mitigates its visual impact. The parking can be fitted with several electric vehicle recharging stations.



Performance Criteria and Measures for Activity A.2.1.1

P.2.1.1.1

Engage with national entities to plan and communicate the project (2022).



Activity A.2.1.2 - Marsalforn breakwater

In collaboration with MGOZ and relevant national entities whose services are closely related to infrastructure and planning, the GRDA will prioritise the building of a new breakwater in Marsalforn to alleviate the challenges due to adverse weather conditions, faced by fishermen and the tourism operators.



Performance Criteria and Measures for Activity A.2.1.2

P.2.1.2.1

Carry out a Regional Impact Assessment of the new breakwater in 2023.



Activity A.2.1.3 – Airlink between Gozo and Malta

Efforts should be directed to establish a fixed wing airlink between Gozo and the mainland that respects the natural environment.



Performance Criteria and Measures for Activity A.2.1.3

P.2.1.3.1

Conduct a Regional Impact Assessment on airlink by 2022.

Delivery Strategy 2.2 - Safeguard the ecology of Gozo, support rural development

Activities carried out in fulfillment of the Delivery Strategy 2.2:



Activity A.2.2.1 - Revitalising Gozo's Rural Community through a Youth Farmers Toolbox

Failure to attract youth to the rural economy will result in its demise, and, potentially, the despoliation of the rural environment. Whilst the challenge of reversing the decline of the farming community is considerable, the GRDA is resolute to sustain Gozo's roots for many years to come.



Performance Criteria and Measures for Activity A.2.2.1

P.2.2.1.1

Innovative toolbox of policy measures will be designed, discussed and implemented by 2023 in order to encourage youths to look at farming as a rewarding profession.

P.2.2.1.2

Policy options will be studied by 2022 including the 'Young Farmer Entrants Scheme', the 'Beginner Farmer Tax Credit Programme', the access to government owned agricultural land and loans on favourable commercial terms to promote the necessary investment.

P.2.2.1.3

The GRDA will look into enhancing economic viability for both full time farming activity but also and equally important to facilitate and encourage more part-timers that could contribute to the sector whilst holding another fulltime position in other sectors.



Activity A.2.2.2 – New Rural Gozo Partnership

Setting up of a new Rural Gozo partnership organisation will be supported by a Farmer Advisory Programme which will provide Gozitan farmers with technical, scientific, and entrepreneurship advice.



Performance Criteria and Measures for Activity A.2.2.2

P.2.2.2.1

Launch a 'Farmer Advisory Programme' by 2022.



Activity A.2.2.3 – Protect the Island's Wildlife and Ecosystems

In collaboration with MGOZ and relevant national entities, create and adopt policies to safeguard and protect Gozo's Ecosystems and Wildlife. Efforts should be focused on the development of measures and policies to achieve sustainable human development that respects the island's nature and its wildlife.



Performance Criteria and Measures for Activity A.2.2.3

P.2.2.3.1

By 2022, prepare and publish a light policy for the entire island of Gozo. Efforts to be made so policy is adopted by MGOZ and other entities, including NGOs and VOs, operating in Gozo.

P.2.2.3.2

By 2022, in collaboration with other competent authorities including ERA, identify a site that can be declared as a Heritage National park.

Activities carried out in fulfillment of the Delivery Strategy 2.3:



Activity A.2.3.1 – Making Gozo a Design According to Context Area

To ensure that Gozo’s distinctiveness is maintained, the GRDA will work with other competent authorities such as Planning Authority and the Building and Construction Authority to make Gozo (or large parts of Gozo) a Design According to Context Area.



Performance Criteria and Measures for Activity A.2.3.1

P.2.3.1.1

Set up a steering committee with Planning Authority to discuss making Gozo a Design According to Context Area by 2022.



Activity A.2.3.2 – Promote Green Buildings

Introduce more demand side incentives for households and business owners, such as tax credits, grants and feed-in tariffs to increase their investment in green buildings.



Performance Criteria and Measures for Activity A.2.3.2

P.2.3.2.1

By 2023, introduce a scheme to incentive the green buildings.



Activity A.2.3.3 – Greening Commercial and Private Vehicle

Removing exhaust belching commercial and private vehicles from the roads through a three-tiered approach.



Performance Criteria and Measures for Activity A.2.3.3

P.2.3.3.1

By 2023 having introduced a scheme directed at Gozo residents to replace their commercial and private vehicle by a Battery Electronic Vehicle or a hybrid electric vehicle.



Activity A.2.3.4 – Better Utilization of Land and Existing Facilities

To ensure better land utilization, the GRDA will work with competent authorities and national entities to set up organizations focused on maximizing the use of existing facilities and open spaces.



Performance Criteria and Measures for Activity A.2.3.4

P.2.3.4.1

By 2022, formulate a business model with MGOZ in order to better utilize sport facilities in Gozo and manage sport-based assets.

Delivery Strategy D.3.1 - Regional Development Strategy

Activities carried out in fulfillment of Delivery Strategy D.3.1:



Activity A.3.1.1 – Regional Development Strategy

Design, produce and launch a holistic Regional Development Strategy.



Performance Criteria and Measures

P.3.1.1.1

Conclusion of consultation and publishing of strategy by first half of 2022.



Activity A.3.1.2 – Capture more holistically the quality of life in Gozo

Economic growth should not come at the unnecessarily high expense of natural and cultural resources. Standards of living do not depend exclusively on income and scale of production. Hence, the GRDA aims to look at other factors that better capture these dimensions.



Performance Criteria and Measures

P.3.1.2.1

By 2023, design and publish a methodology to adopt an index which complements the more traditional indicators, such as per capita GDP, and factors the wellbeing aspect including the social and environmental dimension.

Delivery Strategy D.3.2 - Regional Impact Assessments

Activities carried out in fulfillment of Delivery Strategy D.3.2:



Activity A.3.2.1 – Regional Impact Assessments

Develop a Regional Impact Assessments framework to evaluate the impact of proposed national policies and projects.



Performance Criteria and Measures

P.3.2.1.1

By 2021, design a Regional Impact Assessment framework and consult with entities that are most likely to be subject to this requirement in their planning.

P.3.2.1.2

Ensure that a Regional Impact Assessment is carried out when Government ministries intend to present to Cabinet a national strategy, policy or action plan, major new projects or services, regulatory or legislative provisions which affect Gozo (ongoing).

Delivery Strategy D.3.3 - Research and Analysis

Activities carried out in fulfillment of Delivery Strategy D.3.3:



Activity A.3.3.1 – Research and analysis

Produce quality research to spearhead innovative and sustainable policy development on an on-going basis.



Performance Criteria and Measures

P.3.3.1.1

Publish research papers/analysis (ongoing).

P.3.3.1.2

By 2023, commission a study on the flexibility of developing a regional macro-economic model. This model will analyse the impact of economic shocks, including policy changes and major infrastructure projects, on the economy of Gozo.

P.3.3.1.3

Qualitative research on existing Government incentives available to both existing businesses and also to those who wish to relocate or set up in Gozo (2022).

P.3.3.1.4

Conduct a study on the carrying capacity of Gozo – including tourism (2022).



Activity A.3.3.2 - Keep abreast with international practices

Keep abreast with international practices such as the European Union Territorial development strategies, including the Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020.



Performance Criteria and Measures

P.3.3.2.1 Annual report highlighting development in international territorial sphere.

Delivery Strategy D.4.1 - Implementation of the Regional Development Plan

Activities carried out in fulfillment of Delivery Strategy D.4.1:



Activity A.4.1.1 - Monitor the implementation process

Monitor the implementation of the Regional Development Strategy for Gozo and the actions to be taken under the delivery strategies in the corporate plan.



Performance Criteria and Measures

P.4.1.1.1

Present an annual report to the Minister highlighting the progress made vis-vis the established performance criteria and measures included in this corporate plan.

P.4.1.1.2

Annual report that gives an evaluation of the performance agreements signed with entities entrusted with delivering aspects of the strategy and input to specific projects that the GRDA would be coordinating from time to time.



Activity A.4.1.2 - Recommend action to the Minister

Make recommendations to the Minister to ensure effective implementation of the Regional Strategy and attainment of the strategic objectives.



Performance Criteria and Measures

P.4.1.2.1

Active participation in both governmental and non-governmental fora that are responsible for matters pertaining to Gozo and its economic, social and ecological spheres.

P.4.1.2.2

Annual report on activities carried out by the GRDA directed towards the implementation of the regional strategy.

Delivery Strategy D.4.2 - Establish a framework of communication

Activities carried out in fulfillment of Delivery Strategy D.4.2.



Activity A.4.2.1 – Interaction with Minister and Permanent Secretary

Formal meetings to take place periodically pertaining to:

- i) the progress of the implementation of the Gozo Regional Development Strategy;
- ii) relevance of the strategy, programme of works and priorities.



Performance Criteria and Measures

P.4.2.1.1

Annual report on ministerial meetings held by the GRDA as part of its functions to ascertain the effective and expedient implementation of the Gozo Regional Development Strategy.



Activity A.4.2.2 – Stakeholders and Community reach-out



Performance Criteria and Measures

P.4.2.2.1

Communication through various channels that ensures an open and two-way communication at all times both as a means for the GRDA to provide updates on progress of implementation of its Strategic Plan and its policy direction; and at the same time to receive the necessary input in the form of concerns, feedback, proposals from key stakeholders and the community at large.



Activity A.4.2.3 - Provide MGOZ with position on national policies and projects



Performance Criteria and Measures

P.4.2.3.1

Position papers based on both quantitative and qualitative research and analysis to support the MGOZ in its evaluation and decision making on matters that are related and expected to have an impact on the implementation of the strategy and the development of Gozo across the economic, social and ecological dimensions.

Delivery Strategy D.4.3 - Promote social dialogue and cooperation

Activities carried out in fulfillment of Delivery Strategy D.4.3.



Activity A.4.3.1 - Set up working groups

Setting up a number of stakeholders working groups, centered around specific themes, so as to better understand the needs of and opportunities for the various segments of the Gozitan community and economic sectors that drive the region.



Performance Criteria and Measures

P.4.3.1.1

Establish working groups for key areas concerning the social, economic and ecological dimensions (2022).



Activity A.4.3.2 - Set-up task forces

Create specific task force groups, set up specifically with the input of other governmental entities, to address the issues identified through the working groups' consultation.



Performance Criteria and Measures

P.4.3.2.1

A number of task forces focused on specific policy areas to be set up in 2022.



Activity A.4.3.3 - Establish cooperation networks

Establish a cooperation network to include a wide range of stakeholders that shape the socioeconomic activity in the region. It is also within the scope of the GRDA to cooperate with international institutions and other regions to adopt innovative ideas.



Performance Criteria and Measures

P.4.3.3.1

By 2022, establish cooperation agreements with Malta and Gozo-based government entities, private groups and chambers, as well as private entities that could assist the GRDA in its remit.

P.4.3.3.2

By 2021, establish at least two cooperation agreements with international regional authorities with whom the GRDA shares similar challenges and opportunities due its insularity, size and ecological factors.

Delivery Strategy D.4.4. - Management and application of regulatory powers

Activities carried out in fulfillment of Delivery Strategy D.4.4.



Activity A.4.4.1 - Draw up a framework and templates for performance agreements

There will be Performance Agreements (Schedule 1 of the Act) in place that govern projects which external entities are providing. As far as possible the GRDA is to ensure that, all projects and initiatives of certain magnitude procured from third parties are governed by such performance agreements drawn up according to the established template and in line with the relevant internal policies and procedures.



Performance Criteria and Measures

P.4.4.1.1

Establish a template for Performance Agreements after seeking feedback and input from governmental entities that are likely to be subject to such agreements. Use quality standards, time schedules and other KPIs included in performance agreements to ensure that the objectives set out in the agreements are duly met by the contracting party (Q1 2022).

P.4.4.1.2

The GRDA is to use effectively and judgmentally all corrective measures within its powers to ensure the terms of the performance agreements are withheld in the best interest of the beneficiaries of the project or projects.



Activity A.4.4.2 – Regulate, monitor and review any matter regulated by or under the Act

Regulate, monitor and keep under review all practices, operations and activities relating to any matter regulated by or under the Act.



Performance Criteria and Measures

P.4.4.2.1

Compilation of a quarterly monitoring dashboard that tracks compliance with the Act. Annual compliance report presented to the Minister highlighting compliance issues and the degree of compliance with the Act (2022).

P.4.4.2.2

The Project Management and Oversight Unit to provide periodic reports at project and at activity level including any breach of contracts, departure from performance agreement, and issues related with quality of service from suppliers that the GRDA will engage from time to time. These shall be presented to the Board by the CEO and escalated to the Minister as necessary in case of major breaches which would either involve additional costs above €30,000 or when it will delay the completion of the project by more than 20% from the stipulated time frame (2022).



Activity A.4.4.3 – Carry out enforcement actions

Where such authority is provided by the Minister under regulations made in accordance with article 43 to secure and ensure the effective performance of measures and actions under the Regional Development Strategy for Gozo.



Performance Criteria and Measures

P.4.4.3.1

The compilation of a quarterly compliance and enforcement report. Annual report on compliance and enforcement activities presented to the Minister.

Part C

Legal and Operational Framework

The Legal framework

The Gozo Regional Development Authority is an autonomous authority being set up through the Gozo Regional Development Act XVIII of 2019 CAP 600 (hereafter referred to as 'the Act'). An Authority is one of the highest local institutional set-ups, given it is established, recognised and given its powers separately through an Act in the Laws of Malta.

The Act gives the Authority its own distinct personality and gives power to the Authority not only on consultative matters but also to implement, regulate and enforce action.

Apart from the Gozo Regional Development Act XVIII of 2019, the GRDA is subject to other legislation that regulates key aspects of its operations like recruitment, procurement, and funding. Such regulations will influence the process, the resources and the time required for the Authority to carry out its operations. The provisions contained in following regulations and manuals are of particular importance for Authority:

- The Constitution of Malta Article 110 (6)
- Public Administration Act Chapter 497
- The Employment and Training Services (ETS) Act (CAP 594)
- The Employment and Industrial Relations Act (EIRA) (CAP 452)
- Public Service Management Code
- Manual for Public Sector Entities: Delegation of Authority to effect Recruitment, Promotions and Industrial Relations
- Manual on Resourcing Policies and Procedures for Public Service
- Fiscal Responsibility Act Chapter 534
- Public Procurement Regulations S.L. 601.03

Legal personality and representation of the Authority

In line with Article 11(1), the Authority shall be a body corporate having a distinct legal personality and shall be capable, subject to the provisions of this Act, of entering into contracts, of acquiring, holding and disposing of any kind of property for the purposes of its functions, or suing and being sued, and of doing all such things and entering into all such transactions as are incidental or conducive to the exercise or performance of its functions, including the lending or borrowing of money.

Regulatory powers embedded in the legislation

Article 7 states that the Minister may, by means of an instrument of delegation, transfer surveillance and enforcement powers to the Authority.

Article 8 (1) (d), states that the Authority shall draw up performance agreements with government

departments or entities under the responsibility of the Ministry, which are assigned responsibility for the implementation of measures and actions identified in the Regional Development Strategy for Gozo.

Article 8 (1) (f) states that the Authority has to ensure that a regional impact assessment is carried out when government ministries intend presenting to Cabinet any of the following: (i) a national strategy; (ii) a national policy; (iii) a national action plan; (iv) major new projects or services; and (v) regulatory and legislative provisions, which affects Gozo.

Article 8 (1) (g and h) states that the Authority is to monitor the implementation process of the actions and measures under the regional development strategy for Gozo including how these are performing once implemented and take actions (or recommend action to the Minister) to ensure smooth implementation of such measures and actions.

Article 8 (1) (i) states that the Authority is to carry out enforcement actions, where such authority is provided by the Minister under regulations made in accordance with article 43 to secure and ensure the effective performance of measures and actions under the Regional Development Strategy for Gozo.

Article 8 (3, 4 and 5) states that the Authority shall in accordance with the laws it is entitled to regulate, monitor and keep under review all practices, operations and activities relating to any matter regulated by or under this Act. The Authority shall ensure compliance therewith to ensure that persons providing any services, products, operations and activities in or from Gozo relating to any matter regulated by the Authority, comply with the provisions of this Act.

Article 8 (6) states that the Authority may, in consultation with the Minister, issue such directives as it may consider to be necessary for the carrying into effect of or compliance with any of the provisions of this Act, or any decisions that the Authority may take in accordance with its functions under this Act, and it may amend or revoke such directives.

Policy making and policy development

Article 8 (1)(j) states that the Authority is to propose to the Minister policy matters with regard to the design and implementation of the Regional Development Strategy for Gozo, and in particular to request the Government, through the Minister, to ring-fence certain central funds to be directed towards Gozo.

Article 8 (2) (a) states that in the case of failure, on the part of the government entity or entities concerned, to abide by the provisions of sub-regulation (1)(f) the Authority shall be entitled, after consultation with the Minister, to initiate the relative procedures itself for the carrying out of the Regional Impact Assessment mentioned therein.

Consultative powers embedded in the legislation

Schedule II of the Act, dealing with Regional Impact Assessment Studies (RIAS) gives the Authority specific rights to be properly consulted and involved in the assessment of the initiative being undertaken.

When a Ministry, department, authority, agency or any other form of government entity is to undertake any one of the initiatives referred to in article 8(1)(f) of the Act, this entity is to ensure that such work is complemented by a Regional Impact Assessment (RIA) and inform the GRDA accordingly. The Act allows for the RIAs to be carried out jointly between the Gozo Regional Development Authority and responsible government entity.

The RIAS is to demonstrate that appropriate consultation and research took place in relation to the potential impact, on Gozo and on Gozo-related affairs, of a proposal under consideration. A primary purpose of the RIAS is to provide the opportunity to the Gozo economic operators and social partners to be consulted on changes arising from a proposal under consideration.

Such consultation process will be managed on behalf of the responsible government entity by the Gozo Regional Development Authority and will be carried out in Gozo. This consultation is carried out as part of the process leading to the conceptual articulation of the proposal under consideration and not after its articulation and publication.

External Cooperation Framework

Since that the GRDA does not possess the policy tools and the level of resources required to implement large projects, it will be entering into formal arrangements with other governmental entities, which would be entrusted with implementing projects in conjunction with or on behalf of the GRDA.

The Act provides a framework for the arrangements within which such projects would be carried out and the interaction thereof between the GRDA and the other parties. This is meant to ensure arm's length relationships that are governed by formal agreements delineating the deliverables, the quality levels and the timeframes of each project or initiative.

To this effect, the GRDA will be drawing a Performance Agreements as per Schedule 1 of the Act which will govern all aspects behind the project. Amongst others, these agreements would serve the following purposes:

- Outline roles and responsibilities at entity level in such a way that the GRDA would have the necessary clarity on what aspects of the project will be delegated, and which are to carry out through internal resources. This will allow for adequate resource planning, budgeting and capacity building.
- Ensure accountability in terms of delegation of tasks, whereby the body entrusted with the task will have specific time frames and budgets within which it must operate, thereby minimising the possibility of inefficiencies and unnecessary delays.
- Achieve greater transparency in terms of progress made in meeting the deliverables, with the established quality levels, budget and time frames.
- Facilitate the early identification of issues that could affect the completion of the project within quality levels, budget and time frames.

The Performance Agreements will include therefore five important elements:

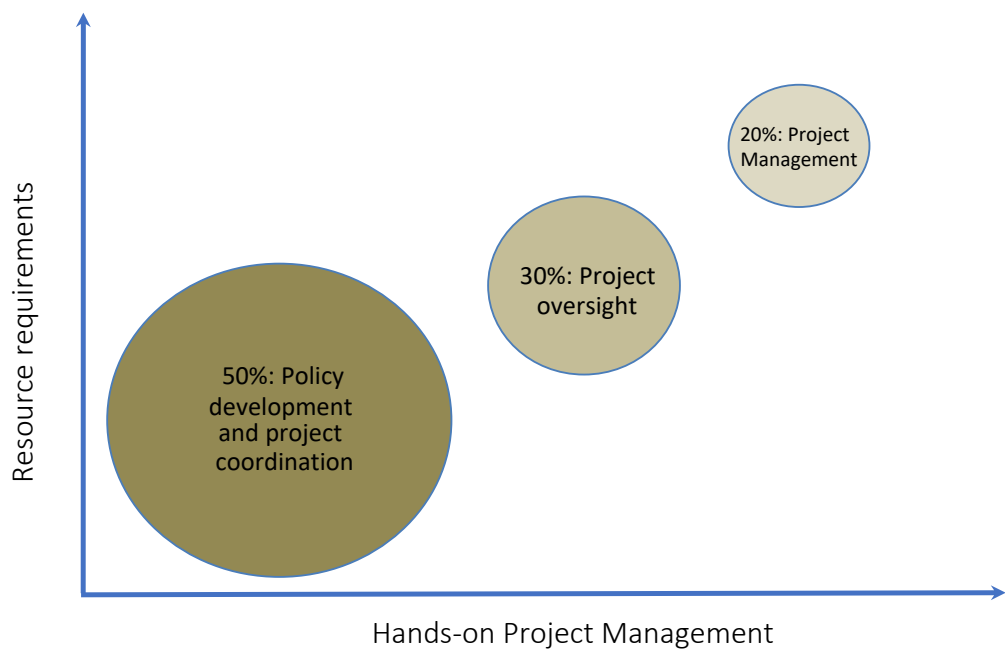
- i) An outline of the actions and measures under the Regional Development Strategy for Gozo delegated to body entrusted with their implementation, be it a governmental department and/or another entity within MGOZ.
- ii) The responsibilities, relationships and accountability parameters between on one hand the GRDA, being the 'purchaser' of the service, and the governmental entity as the 'supplier' of the service on the other.
- iii) The planning, reporting and control framework established between the GRDA and the implementing entity, to ensure accountability.

- iv) The budget management framework for the specified action and/or measure established between the GRDA and the implementing entity.
- v) Key performance indicators (KPIs) and targets that are specific, clear, measurable, and time-bound.

Portfolio of Projects

When it comes to projects and initiatives with a direct or indirect implication on the Gozo region, the GRDA's role can vary considerably in terms of level of involvement in policy coordination, project oversight and direct project management. A varying element of complexity in involvement is also applicable in case of the regional assessments. (See the next section).

Given that resources will be build up gradually, it expected that for the first two years of its operations 50% of its resources will go in policy development and project coordination. Project oversight will take 30% of its resources with 20% going towards management of projects directly entrusted to it.



There will be a number of projects that the GRDA could take under its wing and see their implementation through. Such projects whilst resource intensive could provide the GRDA with immediate tangible initiatives allowing in interacting and forging relationships with the main stakeholders in the public sector.

Project oversight on the other hand would require the GRDA to interact with the project management team of the entity carrying out the projects in the region of Gozo. In such a role, the GRDA will ensure that the project is completed within agreed time frames and achieves minimum quality levels. More importantly the GRDA will ensure that projects are planned and executed within the context of the regional strategic objectives

The Authority's main focus will be to coordinate projects and initiatives that come out from the national strategies, policies and action plan. Here the GRDA will be proactive in various manners.

By scrutinising the national strategy for economic, social and environmental development and the pipeline of projects and initiatives that would cascade from it, the Authority will ensure that it reaches out to all relevant stakeholders in Gozo. It will also play a vital role in gathering their aspirations and concerns of the stakeholders and ensure that policies are done in full consideration of the challenges faced at a regional level.

Apart from national strategies, the GRDA needs to keep track of all the sectorial strategies with the most obvious one being Transport and Infrastructure, Employment and Education, Technology and Innovation, Tourism and Culture.

It must be noted that the GRDA's effort to shape policy development and execution need to be directed to the early stages – i.e. when the policy design and planning is still on the drawing board. To this end, ongoing research and evaluation on policy areas which impact Gozo, would be critical.

The GRDA can inform future direction and increase awareness with regards to Gozo's specific and unique features. The GRDA will research and observe best practices of other European counterparts and learn from both successes and failures and bring such lessons into its policy documents for discussion at regional and national level. By consulting with other regional agencies at an EU level, the GRDA can bring other important elements to its policy development contributions.

Its ability to coordinate consultation processes will provide the Authority with the necessary data with regards to various socio-economic dimensions of the island, which will help to draw up specific socio-economic models to be used in modelling the impacts of regional policies in a more accurate and realistic manner.

Framework to carry out timely Regional Impact Assessments (RIAs)

Regional assessments are studies conducted in areas of existing projects or anticipated development to inform planning and management of cumulative effects. Regional assessments will allow the entity behind the project to go beyond project-focused impact assessments and to understand the regional context.

RIAs should include comprehensive analyses to help inform future impact assessment decisions. Using regional assessment to address issues that are best considered at a regional level will improve both the effectiveness and efficiency of the impact assessment process.

RIAs is expected to be carried out by the entity carrying out the project and this presented to the Cabinet of Ministers. The following are the initiatives that would require such an RIA:

- (i) A national strategy;
- (ii) A national policy;
- (iii) A national action plan;
- (iv) A major new projects or services; and
- (v) A regulatory and legislative provision, which affects Gozo.

The purpose of such a study is to make sure that Gozo's most important economic, social and environmental characteristics are taken into account in any national strategy, policy design and planning. It will also ensure that the impacts of the proposed policies or actions are analysed in line with the Regional Development Strategy for Gozo, and hence falls in line with the long-term vision set for the region. The RIAs will also help in incorporating Gozo in the national strategies and plans being developed.

The expectation is for the Permanent Secretary within the respective Ministry responsible for the entity behind the project, or the (Executive) Chairperson of the entity itself to be responsible of ensuring that the RIAs is carried out in accordance with the stipulated guidelines and will keep the GRDA informed throughout the process. The GRDA shall assist the process as necessary, like for instance through feedback and input during the consultation period.

The amount of detail to be included in the RIAs should be commensurate with the complexity of the proposal under consideration. The size and complexity of the policy, strategy or development, as well as the level of sensitivity which comes with such a proposal, will impact the level of assessment required.

In all instances however the RIAs need to show that the appropriate consultation and research was carried out in relation to the potential impact on Gozo and its related affairs, of any proposal being put forward. Three central aspects in the RIAs should include:

- i) a consideration whether the proposal has an impact on Gozo and in which areas;
- ii) the significance of the impact on the social, economic and environmental aspects;
- iii) what measures were taken to ensure that Gozo's needs are addressed.

As far as possible, the assessment should include a quantitative element through research analysis, modelling, surveys and/or specifically commissioned research, amongst others. In the case that the study indicates negative impacts from the proposed action, the RIAs will have to include strategies which address such impacts. These could include:

- i) avoidance strategies, which would require the altering of the proposal so that the negative impacts do not occur in the first place.
- ii) minimisation strategies, which would require the modification of the proposal so that the negative impacts are reduced in terms of their severity.
- iii) mitigation measures which would help in finding ways to alleviate or offset the impact of such negative effects and finally; and
- iv) enhancement strategies which would require the adding on of a new positive feature to the proposal to offset the negatives.

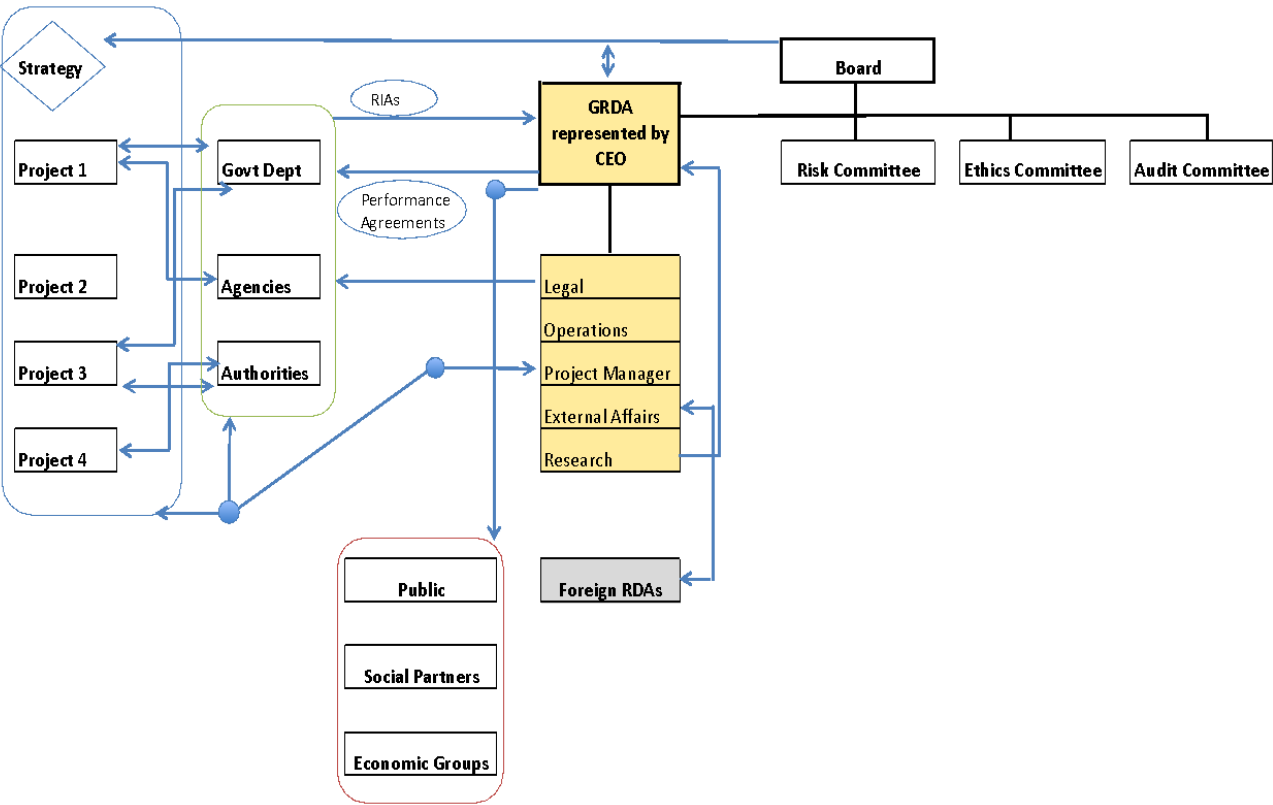
The RIA process should be flexible, and a range of approaches could be used in which the GRDA can play different levels of involvement. This could include filling data gaps and analysing trends, establishing thresholds and standard mitigation, or supporting the identification of regional development objectives and scenarios.

As provided in the Act (Schedule 2 Item 4) the RIAs are to be carried out jointly (by the entity concerned) with the GRDA rather than just in consultation with the GRDA. As this will create a significant burden on the GRDA's limited operational structure, the cost of such assessments and the cost of work that the Authority needs to do through external resources is expected to be borne by the entity proposing the policy/project or through dedicated financial resources dedicated to work related to RIAs.

Upon finalisation, the RIAs will have to be signed off by the responsible Ministry as well as the GRDA. It will have to include the main conclusions of the study as well as recommendations with regards to which parts of the proposal can be accepted and which parts cannot.

The GRDA's target operating model

The diagram captures the major operating workflows driven by the GRDA.



Board of Directors

The Board of the Authority, appointed by the Minister for Gozo and is responsible for carrying out the functions as set out in the Act. The Board will fulfil its main functions also through three specialised committees to focus on Risk, Ethics and Audit.

- The *Risk Committee* will be entrusted with assisting the board in its oversight of risk, identifying potential elements of risk and helping the board identify which degree of risk is acceptable or otherwise.
- The *Ethics Committee*, guided by the Ethics framework, will make sure that all actions and operations by all members of the Authority will be in line with pre-specified good ethical standards. This committee will be responsible of communicating such standards across all levels of the Authority as well as monitor compliance. The committee will also be responsible of reporting of non-compliance instances and make sure that these are followed up as required.

- The *Audit Committee* will be set up to analyse the operations of the various units and the other committees within the organisation and assure the Board of the effectiveness and compliance of all staff members and units. The Audit Committee will ensure that the operations are being carried out as they should be, in the most effective and efficient way and if any anomalies are discovered these are reported to the Board immediately to be rectified at the earliest. This committee will ensure the good governance of the Authority.

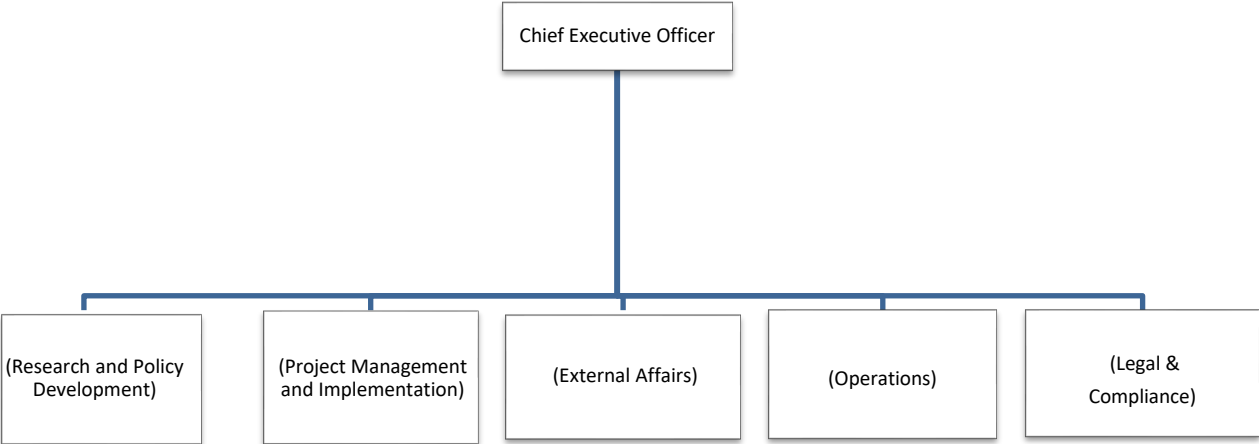
The *Chief Executive Officer (CEO)* is responsible for overseeing the practical implementation and the carrying out of the functions of the Authority as set out by the Act. This will be done through five specialised units.

- The *Legal and Compliance Unit* will serve the Authority in all its legal requirements. It will help safeguard the authority's legal interests and assist project management and implementation in their monitoring role of performance agreements.
- The *Operations unit* deals with the day-to-day administration and operations of the Authority, namely the procurement aspects, finance and accounts, human resources and talent as well as exploring options and possibilities of sources of revenues, including EU funding.
- The *Project Management and Implementation unit* will take ownership of projects and programmes and make sure they are well implemented. Moreover, this unit will also be in charge of monitoring the progress of the said projects and programs through the analysis of agreed upon by performance agreement, KPIs, budgets and timetables.
- The *Research and Policy Development unit* will serve the Authority to encourage, engage and publish research on regional policies; evaluate policies proposed by other regional entities; propose policies measures; and carry out its own RIAS whilst stewarding the studies of other entities. This unit will make sure that all policy recommendations are backed up by concrete and reliable data.
- The *External Affairs unit* manages the social dialogue and communications with external stakeholders and entities. Its role will be to constantly engage with the general public, entities and coordinate consultation processes, working groups and panels, so as to make sure that all relevant entities are being considered and consulted. It will also reach out to other regional entities outside of Malta and open channels with a view to transfer knowledge and best practices.

Part D | Operational

Organisational Structure

The organisational diagram expected to be achieved in the first phase of capacity building by end 2023:



Capacity Building

The following are the details on the major positions that the GRDA will have in its organisational structure.

CEO Office

- The CEO and his administrative team will have the overall responsibility for implementing the Gozo Regional Development Strategy in accordance with this Corporate Plan and other plans that may supersede it from time to time. Using the budget approved by the Ministry of Finance the CEO is expected to create an organisational structure to deliver such strategy and put in place the necessary controls to ensure that the strategic delivery is in line with the corporate plan and the applicable laws and regulations, in tandem with the direction set by the Board and carried out in full respect of the basic forms of organisational and financial Governance.

Legal and Compliance Unit

- The Head of Legal and Compliance in the grade of Senior Manager will be responsible for carrying out all activities related to the vetting of contracts and agreements that the GRDA will enter into from time to time. The role will also support the organisation by providing legal advice in the process to ensure compliance with clauses in contracts. The Head will be expected to develop and lead the corporate legal strategy to promote and protect the Authority's matters and overseeing delivery of legal services and resources to accomplish corporate goals, strategies and priorities. The Head will be expected to develop and lead internal audit and corporate compliance programs.

Operations

- The Head Operations in the grade of Senior Manager will be responsible for overseeing daily operations of the Authority, including people management and finance of the Authority. The role will take overall responsibility for the procurement and the setting of financial policies and implementation of internal controls together with direct involvement in the implementation of the financial framework, conducting on-going reviews of the accounting, and finance procedures, setting up the respective internal systems and controls and ensure proper reporting.

Research and Policy Development

- The Head Research and Policy Development in the grade of Senior Manager will have the responsibility to direct and implement the Authority's research and policy development to ensure that the Authority contributes towards informed policy development and decision making. The Senior Manager will have the responsibility to develop, guide and oversee the Regional Impact Assessment Studies as required under Schedule II of the GRDA Act.

- The Manager Research and Policy Development in the grade of Manager, under the guidance of the Senior Manager Research and Policy Development, will be responsible to undertake, design and conduct market research projects and programs and contribute towards setting up research groups, explore approaches to ensure knowledge management in the organization, and contribute towards preparation of the Regional Impact Assessment Studies and the strategic regional plan for Gozo.

Project Management and Implementation Unit

- The Head Implementation in the grade of Senior Manager will have the responsibility to lead project implementation, meeting timelines and budget requirements. The Head will coordinate and prioritizes project tasks, manages timelines, maintains project plans and communicates status to clients, project sponsors and senior management. The Head will be responsible for monitoring the projects that GRDA is directly managing and ensure that in cases where a project or parts thereof are delegated to an external party, the arrangement is governed by a Performance Agreement as per Schedule I of the GRDA Act and in line with the guidelines and templates set out by the Authority. The Head Implementation and his team is expected to ensure that all clauses and provisions included in the Performance Agreement are respected and timely escalation of related issues is carried out.
- The Manager Project Management and Implementation in the grade of Manager with the Project Management and Implement Unit will contribute, under the guidance of the Head Projects and Implementation, towards the successful implementation of projects, including Performance Agreement, while meeting timelines and budget requirements. The manager shall coordinate and prioritize project tasks, manage timelines, maintain project plans and communicate status to clients and senior management.

External Affairs, Social Dialogue and Communications

- The Head External Affairs and Communications in the grade of Senior Manager will be responsible to developing and manage the strategic communications of the Authority's activities and to be responsible to enhance and sustain the identity and reputation of the Gozo Regional Development Authority (GRDA) and at the same time fostering relationships with all stakeholders and partners, both locally and internationally.

Social Dialogue and Communications

- The Manager Social Dialogue and Communication in the grade of Manager be responsible for social dialogue and communication. The Manager will be responsible for the establishment and execution of a range of programme/project reporting, governance and support functions ensuring effective delivery of programmes and projects across the GRDA. The Manger will be entrusted with all forms of communication that the Authority is bound to engage in with the aim of keeping all stakeholders abreast of its progress.

Outsourcing

In addition to the resources spelled out in the organogram above it is expected that the Authority will make use of external resources to complement its internal capacity. This could range from project managers on specific projects for which the Authority could be directly responsible or technical experts that will provide the Authority with expert input during periods of monitoring of projects which various public entities would be carrying out.

It is likely that the Authority will use external resources to keep up with the need to produce policy positions whenever this is required. Outsourcing will be also required if and when the level of specialisation and expertise afforded by the in-house staff complement is not enough to match the requirement specific to a particular project or policy area.

Whilst the primary onus to carry out an RIA rests with the entity initiating the project or initiative, there is the possibility that such assessments require the Authority to perform work that goes beyond its internal capabilities and would need to resort to external assistance. Moreover, the Act calls for the Authority to carry out such assessments in cases where the initiating party does not satisfy the requirement to carry out such an assessment according to the requirements set out in the Act. In such instances, depending on the level of complexity of these impact assessments, the Authority might outsource such a task or parts thereof.

Finances

The budget allocation for the period 2020-2022 are as follows (as per financial estimates);

2020: € 47,206
2021: € 400,000
2022: € 700,000



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