

# Students' Views on Transport Problems

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One of the most urgent problems affecting Gozitan students who have to attend regularly at the University of Malta is the sorry state of transport to and from Campus. Several attempts have been made in the past to try to improve these services, however, they are still very far from adequate.

In an attempt to assess the views of the students themselves relating to these issues, the Gozo University Group representing Gozitan students in Malta has organised a questionnaire which was distributed to all 446 students involved. Even though the response was less than ideal, the responses received make interesting reading.

Nearly 84% of students say that they still encounter problems relating to transport from Cirkewwa to University, and a larger proportion (95%) face problems coming back from University. These are some of the problems mentioned:

- | Standing part or all of the way on the bus to and from Msida;
- | There is only one express bus with the first three ferries (i.e 6.00 a.m., 6.45 a.m., and 7.30 a.m.);
- | Taking a non-express bus usually means arriving late for lectures because bus stops at many stages and does not pass via University Heights. This results in a mad rush from the ferry to the bus, usually carrying large and heavy bags;
- | Often there is no bus at all, and students have to wait half an hour or more for transport;
- | So called 'express' buses often stop to pick up passengers *en route*;
- | No space to put bags/satchels on bus;
- | To avoid these hassles, many students

prefer to go to Malta on Sunday evening, thus wasting a considerable part of the weekend.

- | Coming back from University, the bus stops at many stages, often resulting in missing the ferry;
- | Very often students cannot board the bus because it is already full when it reaches Msida;

## Recommendations

The number of express buses should be increased, i.e. more than one with the early ferries and there should be an express bus with other ferries and not just the first three.

The majority (i.e. 87%) of students, are in favour of organising a direct bus services from Msida to Cirkewwa on Friday afternoons. Recognising that this could be an expensive exercise, most students were prepared to pay 30 cents for this service.

Bearing in mind that there is never going to be one ideal time which would be suitable for everybody, an optimal time schedule would be difficult to organise. However, most students seem to agree that the best time would be for buses to leave Msida to Cirkewwa on Friday afternoons between 12.15 and 3.15 p.m.

In conclusion, it is obvious to all that students are spending an inordinate amount of time travelling to and from the University, leaving very little time for study and socialising. Serious efforts should be made to ensure that the bus service is made more efficient, more regular, and faster. The introduction of express service appears to be crucial for this to happen.

*The most excellent form of human life... is one devoted in fair degree to intellectual enquiry.*

- Aristotle