

MALTA

ATT Nru XXIV tal-2024

ATT maħruġ b'ligi mill-Parlament ta' Malta.

ATT li jemenda l-Att dwar Kunsill għall-Maltin li Jgħixu Barra minn Malta, Kap. 515, u sabiex jipprovdi għal hwejjeġ ancillari jew konsegwenzjali għalih.

ACT No. XXIV of 2024

AN ACT enacted by the Parliament of Malta.

AN ACT to amend the Council for Maltese Living Abroad Act, Cap. 515, and to provide for matters ancillary or consequential thereto.

Naghti l-kunsens tiegħi.

(L.S.)

MYRIAM SPITERI DEBONO
President

12 ta' Lulju, 2024

ATT Nru XXIV tal-2024

ATT li jemenda l-Att dwar Kunsill għall-Maltin li Jgħixu Barra minn Malta, Kap. 515, u sabiex jipprovdi għal hwejjeġ anċillari jew konsegwenzjali għalih.

IL-PRESIDENT, bil-parir u l-kunsens tal-Kamra tad-Deputati, imlaqqgħa f'dan il-Parlament, u bl-awtorità tal-istess, harget b'ligi dan li ġej:-

1. (1) It-titolu fil-qosor ta' dan l-Att huwa l-Att tal-2024 li jemenda l-Att dwar Kunsill għall-Maltin li Jgħixu Barra minn Malta u dan l-Att għandu jinqara u jinftiehem haġa waħda mal-Att dwar Kunsill għall-Maltin li Jgħixu Barra minn Malta, hawn aktar 'il quddiem imsejjaħ l-"Att prinċipali".

Titolu fil-qosor
u bidu fis-sehħ.
Kap. 515.

(2) Dan l-Att għandu jidhol fis-sehħ f'dik id-data jew dati li l-Ministru responsabbli għall-affarjiet barranin jista' b'avviż fil-Gazzetta jistabilixxi, u jistgħu jiġu hekk stabbiliti dati differenti għal dispożizzjonijiet u, jew għanijiet differenti ta' dan l-Att.

2. L-artikolu 2 tal-Att prinċipali għandu jiġi emendat kif ġej:

Emenda tal-
artikolu 2 tal-
Att prinċipali.

(a) minnufih qabel t-tifsira "il-Kostituzzjoni" għandhom jiġu miżjuda dawn it-tifsiriet godda li ġejjin:

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Kap. 188. " "ċittadin Malti" tfisser kwalunkwe persuna kkunsidrata bħala ċittadin skont l-Att dwar iċ-Ċittadinanza Maltija;

Kap. 249. "Kamra" għandu jkollha l-istess tifsira kif mogħti lilha bl-artikolu 3 tal-Att dwar l-Interpretazzjoni;

"komunitajiet Maltin barra minn Malta" tfisser kwalunkwe grupp ta' ċittadini Maltin jew persuni ta' dixxendenza Maltija li jgħixu barra minn Malta;"

(b) it-tifsira "Maltin li jgħixu barra minn Malta" għandha tiġi sostitwita b'din it-tifsira ġdida li ġejja:

" "Maltin li jgħixu barra minn Malta" tfisser kwalunkwe ċittadin Malti jew persuna ta' dixxendenza Maltija li ma huwiex residenti f'Malta;"

(ċ) minnufih wara t-tifsira "membru li jgħix barra minn Malta" għandha tiġi miżjuda din it-tifsira ġdida li ġejja:

" "membri tal-Kunsill" tfisser il-membri maħtura sabiex jagħmlu parti mill-Kunsill skont l-artikolu 5(1);"

(d) minnufih wara t-tifsira "il-Ministru" għandha tiġi miżjuda din it-tifsira ġdida li ġejja:

Kap. 188. " "persuna ta' dixxendenza Maltija" tfisser kwalunkwe persuna li tista' ssir ċittadina Maltija skont l-Att dwar iċ-Ċittadinanza Maltija;" u

(e) it-tifsiriet "membru li jgħix barra minn Malta" u "Registru" għandhom jiġu mħassra.

Sostituzzjoni tal-artikolu 3 tal-Att prinċipali.

3. L-artikolu 3 tal-Att prinċipali għandu jiġi sostitwit b'dan l-artikolu ġdid li ġej:

"Twaqqif tal-Kunsill.

3. (1) Għandu jkun hemm Kunsill li għandu jkun magħruf bħala l-Kunsill għall-Maltin li Jgħixu Barra minn Malta.

(2) Il-Kunsill għandu jkun il-korp li jirrappreżenta komunitajiet Maltin barra minn Malta quddiem l-entitajiet kollha tal-Gvern ta' Malta, inkluż is-servizz pubbliku u kwalunkwe awtorità pubblika, istituzzjoni jew organizzazzjoni responsabbli għall-implimentazzjoni ta' politiki li jolqtu dawn il-komunitajiet.

(3) Il-funzjonijiet tal-Kunsill għandhom jikkonsistu f'dawn li ġejjin:

- (a) li jissorvelja l-kwalità tal-ħajja ta' komunitajiet Maltin barra minn Malta;
- (b) li jsaħħaħ, jiffaċilita u jikkultiva r-rabtiet bejn il-komunitajiet Maltin barra minn Malta u l-ħajja politika, kulturali, ekonomika u soċjali ta' Malta;
- (ċ) li jiżgura l-ħarsien effettiv tad-drittijiet tal-komunitajiet Maltin barra minn Malta;
- (d) li jiffaċilita ż-żamma tal-identità kulturali u lingwistika tal-komunitajiet Maltin barra minn Malta u jippromwovi l-kultura Maltija barra minn Malta, b'mod partikolari t-tagħlim tal-lingwa Maltija u l-aspetti kollha tal-kultura Maltija;
- (e) li jippromwovi l-istorja ta' migrazzjoni Maltija f'kooperazzjoni mal-gvern ta' Malta;
- (f) li jżomm rabtiet ma' dawg l-organizzazzjonijiet kollha stabbiliti minn Maltin li jkunu jgħixu barra u jżomm reġistru ta' organizzazzjonijiet stabbiliti minn Maltin li jgħixu barra minn Malta;
- (g) li janalizza u jivverifika l-problemi li jiltaqgħu magħhom il-komunitajiet Maltin barra minn Malta, inkluż taħriġ u żvilupp professjonali u edukattiv, u r-rikonoxximent tal-kwalifiki u l-ħiliet miksuba f'Malta;
- (h) li jhejji kwalunkwe proposta, jew jagħmel kwalunkwe suġġeriment jew rakkomandazzjoni dwar miżuri leġiżlattivi jew amministrattivi kif ukoll ftehimiet internazzjonali u atti legali tal-Unjoni Ewropea li jolqtu d-drittijiet u l-interessi tal-Maltin li jgħixu barra minn Malta;
- (i) li jippromwovi u jinkoraġġixxi studji u riċerka dwar suġġetti li jirrigwardaw il-Maltin li jgħixu barra minn Malta;
- (j) li jiġi konsultat u jagħti l-kontribut tiegħu fit-tnejja tal-leġiżlazzjoni, miżuri amministrattivi jew politiki ta' Malta li jolqtu Maltin li jgħixu barra minn Malta.
- (k) li jgħin iċ-ċentri kulturali, libreriji, arkivji, mużewijiet, teatri, gruppi mużikali u l-entitajiet kreattivi tal-komunitajiet Maltin li jgħixu barra minn Malta billi jiffaċilita l-kuntatti mal-entitajiet nazzjonali pertinenti;

(l) li jassigura l-iżvilupp tad-dimensjoni tan-negozju f'Malta mal-komunitajiet Maltin barra minn Malta;

(m) li jipprovdi informazzjoni korretta meta tiġi mitluba lill-komunitajiet Maltin barra minn Malta fuq politiki tal-gvern ta' Malta, kif ukoll fuq il-ħajja ekonomika, soċjali u kulturali tal-pajjiż;

(n) li jsaħħaħ il-konnettività ma' Malta permezz ta' kuntatti ma' istituzzjonijiet stabbiliti ta' eċċellenza barra minn Malta f'oqsma bħal, iżda mhux limitati għall-edukazzjoni (inkluż l-universitajiet u l-akkademiċi ta' vokazzjoni), il-kultura (inkluż il-produtturi tal-films, iż-żfin, l-arti, il-letteratura, il-mużika u l-wirt li mhux tangibbli), il-mediċina, in-negozju, l-intelliġenza artifiċjali, l-atleti professjonali u, jew l-organizzazzjonijiet attivi fid-dixxiplini ewlenin tal-isport; u

(o) li jidentifika Maltin li jgħixu barra minn Malta li wrew standard eċċellenti fl-attivitajiet professjonali tagħhom, u li joħolqu netwerks ta' tali persuni sabiex jippromwovu l-innovazzjoni u l-iżvilupp sostenibbli ta' Malta."

Emenda tal-artikolu 4 tal-Att prinċipali.

4. L-artikolu 4 tal-Att prinċipali għandu jiġi emendat kif ġej:

(a) il-paragrafu (a) tiegħu għandu jiġi sostitwit b'dan il-paragrafu ġdid li ġej:

"(a) kwalunkwe Abbozz ta' Liġi mressaq fil-Kamra li direttament jew indirettament jolqot id-drittijiet jew l-interessi tal-Maltin li jgħixu barra minn Malta;" u

(b) il-paragrafu (b) tiegħu għandu jiġi sostitwit b'dan il-paragrafu ġdid li ġej:

"(b) kwalunkwe kwistjoni ta' stima finanzjarja jew miżura amministrattiva dwar l-interessi tal-komunitajiet Maltin barra minn Malta, inkluż il-promozzjoni tal-kultura u l-lingwa Maltija barra minn Malta, fuq l-inizjattiva tal-Gvern jew ta' xi istituzzjoni pubblika li tkun fdata bil-promozzjoni tal-kultura Maltija barra minn Malta;"

Sostituzzjoni tal-artikolu 5 tal-Att prinċipali.

5. L-artikolu 5 tal-Att prinċipali għandu jiġi sostitwit b'dan l-artikolu ġdid li ġej:

"Kostituzzjoni tal-kunsill.

5. (1) Il-Kunsill għandu jkun kostitwit kif ġej:

(a) il-Ministru responsabbli għall-affarijiet barranin, jew kwalunkwe Ministru jew Segretarju Parlamentari ieħor kif il-Prim Ministru jista' jistabbilixxi, li għandu jkun iċ-Chairman tiegħu *ex officio*;

(b) ħames (5) membri, li għandhom ikunu ċittadini Maltin, għandhom jiġu maħtura mill-Prim Ministru għal terminu ta' tliet (3) snin, wara li jikkonsulta lill-Kap tal-Oppożizzjoni. Dawn il-membri għandu jkollhom għarfien u esperjenza distintiva tal-bżonnijiet u l-interessi ta' Maltin li jgħixu barra minn Malta; u

(ċ) sittax (16)-il membru li jinħatru mill-Prim Ministru għal terminu ta' tliet (3) snin li għandhom ikunu ċittadini Maltin residenti ordinarjament barra minn Malta, attivi f'komunitajiet Maltin barra minn Malta, u l-imsemmija għandhom jinħatru skont l-Iskeda.

(2) Persuni li jservu bħala membri tal-Kunsill jistgħu jinħatru mill-ġdid għal terminu ieħor ta' tliet (3) snin biss, mal-iskadenza tat-terminu inizjali tal-kariga tagħhom.

(3) Hlief għaċ-Chairman, persuna ma għandhiex tkun kwalifikata sabiex iżżomm il-kariga ta' membru tal-Kunsill jekk hi tkun Ministru, Segretarju Parlamentari, kandidata għall-elezzjoni jew membru tal-Kamra tad-Deputati jew il-Parlament Ewropew jew kwlaunkwe legiżlatura nazzjonali, statali, reġjonali jew lokali, jew membru ta' xi awtorità tal-gvern lokali, fi kwalunkwe pajjiż inkluż Malta. Membru tal-Kunsill ma għandu jkollu l-ebda pożizzjoni li tkun inkompatibbli mal-eżekuzzjoni korretta tad-dmirijiet uffiċjali tiegħu jew mal-fiduċja pubblika fih.

(4) Bla ħsara għad-dispożizzjonijiet ta' dan l-artikolu, il-kariga ta' membru tal-Kunsill għandha ssir vakanti:

(a) meta jgħaddu tliet (3) snin mid-data tal-ħatra jew tal-ħatra mill-ġdid;

(b) ma' riżenja permezz ta' ittra indirizzata lill-Ministru;

(ċ) jekk jinqalgħu xi ċirkostanzi li, kieku hu ma kienx membru tal-Kunsill, kien ikun skwalifikat milli hekk jinħatar;

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(d) meta l-kariga tal-membri tal-Kunsill tista' tiġi tterminata fi kwalunwke hin, jekk il-Prim Ministru, fuq ir-rakkomandazzjoni tal-Ministru, iqis li din l-azzjoni tkun xierqa; jew

(e) meta l-membri tal-Kunsill li ġew maħtura taħt l-artikolu 5(1)(ċ) ma jibqgħux residenti fiż-żona geografika li kienu maħtura sabiex jirrappreżentaw.

(5) Il-Kunsill jista' jwaqqaf Kumitati Reġjonali għal kwalunkwe wieħed mill-pajjiżi elenkati fl-Iskeda. Tali Kumitati Reġjonali għandhom ikunu esklussivament responsabbli u li jagħtu kont lill-Kunsill. Il-kostituzzjoni tagħhom għandha tkun fi hdan l-ambitu esklussiv tal-Kunsill."

Emenda tal-artikolu 6 tal-Att prinċipali.

6. L-artikolu 6 tal-Att prinċipali għandu jiġi emendat kif ġej:

(a) is-subartikolu (1) tiegħu għandu jiġi sostitwit b'dan is-subartikolu ġdid li ġej:

"(1) Laqgħat tal-Kunsill jistgħu jsiru bil-mezz ta' video u, jew telekonferenzi bl-awdjo u r-rekords ta' tali laqgħat għandhom jirreġistraw il-preżenza ta' kwalunkwe parteċipanti b'dak il-mezz.";

(b) is-subartikolu (3) tiegħu għandu jiġi sostitwit b'dan is-subartikolu ġdid li ġej:

"(3) Il-Kunsill ma għandux jaġixxi sakemm ma jkunx hemm quorum li jkun magħmul miċ-Chairman jew mid-delegat tiegħu u mhux anqas minn għaxar (10) membri tal-Kunsill."; u

(ċ) is-subartikolu (4) tiegħu għandu jiġi sostitwit b'dan is-subartikolu ġdid li ġej:

"(4) Mill-inqas darba (1) fis-sena, iċ-Chairman għandu jsejjaħ laqgħa tal-Kunsill f'Malta jew b'mod virtwali kif jitqies xieraq." .

Emenda tal-artikolu 8 tal-Att prinċipali.

7. Is-subartikolu (2) tal-artikolu 8 tal-Att prinċipali għandu jiġi sostitwit b'dan is-subartikolu ġdid li ġej:

"(2) Id-Direttorat għandu jservi bħala punt ċentrali għal tagħrif, pariri u koordinazzjoni għal Maltin li jgħixu barra minn Malta u kwalunkwe assoċjazzjoni li tirrappreżenta Maltin li jgħixu barra minn Malta jew organizzazzjonijiet li jkunu inkluzi fir-reġistru hekk imsemmi fl-artikolu 10."

8. Minnufih wara s-subartikolu (2) tal-artikolu 9 tal-Att prinċipali għandu jiġi miżjud dan is-subartikolu ġdid li ġej:

Emenda tal-artikolu 9 tal-Att prinċipali.

"(3) Is-Segretarju tal-Kunsill flimkien mad-Direttorat għandu jipprovdi lill-Kunsill bis-servizzi amministrattivi kollha, u għandu jżomm lill-membri tal-Kunsill informati b'mod regolari fuq kwistjonijiet rilevanti."

9. L-artikolu 10 tal-Att prinċipali għandu jiġi sostitwit b'dan l-artikolu ġdid li ġej:

Sostituzzjoni tal-artikolu 10 tal-Att prinċipali.

"Reġistru ta' organizzazzjonijiet mhux governattivi.

10. (1) Għandu jinżamm reġistru ta' organizzazzjonijiet mhux governattivi mwaqqfa barra minn Malta li huma involuti fil-promozzjoni u l-ħarsien tal-interessi tal-Maltin li jgħixu barra minn Malta.

(2) Ir-responsabbiltà, inkluż l-inklużjoni, l-esklużjoni u t-tneħħija ta' organizzazzjoni, mir-reġistru msemmi fis-subartikolu (1) għandha tkun tas-Segretarju tal-Kunsill f'isem il-Kunsill."

10. L-artikolu 11 tal-Att prinċipali għandu jiġi emendat kif ġej:

Emenda tal-artikolu 11 tal-Att prinċipali.

(a) il-paragrafu (a) tiegħu għandu jiġi sostitwit b'dan il-paragrafu ġdid li ġej:

"(a) li jirregolaw kwalunkwe ħatra, ħatra mill-ġdid, jew elezzjoni ta' kwalunkwe membri tal-Kunsill li jgħixu barra minn Malta;"

(b) il-paragrafu (d) tiegħu għandu jiġi sostitwit b'dan il-paragrafu ġdid li ġej:

"(d) li jipprovdu assistenza lil membri li jgħixu barra minn Malta u jattendu seduti tal-Kunsill f'Malta."; u

(ċ) il-paragrafu (e) tiegħu għandu jiġi mħassar.

11. L-Iskeda li tinsab mal-Att prinċipali għandha tiġi sostitwita b'din l-Iskeda ġdida li ġejja:

Sostituzzjoni tal-Iskeda li tinsab mal-Att prinċipali.

"SKEDA

(artikolu 5(1)(ċ))

1. Għandhom jiġu maħtura żewġ (2) membri li jgħixu barra minn Malta, kif imfisser fl-artikolu 5(1)(ċ), minn kull wieħed mill-pajjiżi u, jew żoni ġeografiċi li ġejjin:

(a) l-Istat ta' Victoria fil-Commonwealth tal-Awstralja;

(b) l-Istat ta' New South Wales fil-Commonwealth tal-Awstralja;

(ċ) l-Istati Uniti tal-Amerika;

(d) il-Kanada; u

(e) l-Ewropa, iżda mhux residenti f'Malta.

2. Għandu jiġi mahtur membru wiehed (1) li jgħix barra minn Malta, kif imfisser fl-artikolu 5(1)(ċ), minn kull wiehed mill-pajjiżi u, jew żoni ġeografiċi li ġejjin:

(a) ir-Renju Unit;

(b) kwalunkwe zona ġeografika fil-Commonwealth tal-Awstralja mhux imsemmija fil-partita 1 ta' din l-Iskeda, in-New Zealand, jew l-Oċeanja;

(ċ) l-Emirati Għarab Maqgħuda;

(d) l-Afrika ta' Fuq jew ir-Repubblika tal-Afrika t'Isfel;

(e) l-Asja;

(f) l-Amerika t'Isfel jew Ċentrali.

3. Meta jkunu qeghdin jintgħażlu membri li jgħixu barra minn Malta, għandha tingħata konsiderazzjoni xierqa għall-opinjoni, suġġerimenti, rakkomandazzjonijiet u pariri, fejn applikabbli, ta' federazzjonijiet ta' assoċjazzjonijiet, kunsilli tal-komunità u l-assocjazzjonijiet li jkunu l-aktar rappreżentattivi tal-interessi ta' komunitajiet tal-Maltin li jgħixu barra minn Malta."

Mgħoddi mill-Kamra tad-Deputati fis-Seduta Nru 256 tad-9 ta' Lulju, 2024.

ANĠLU FARRUGIA
Speaker

ELEANOR SCERRI
Skrivan tal-Kamra tad-Deputati

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I assent.

(L.S.)

MYRIAM SPITERI DEBONO
President

12th July, 2024

ACT No. XXIV of 2024

AN ACT to amend the Council for Maltese Living Abroad Act, Cap. 515, and to provide for matters ancillary or consequential thereto.

BE IT ENACTED by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the House of Representatives, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same as follows:-

Short title and
commencement.
Cap. 515.

1. (1) The short title of this Act is the Council for Maltese Living Abroad (Amendment) Act, 2024, and this Act shall be read and construed as one with the Council for Maltese Living Abroad Act, hereinafter referred to as the "principal Act".

(2) This Act shall come into force on such date or dates as the Minister responsible for foreign affairs may by notice in the Gazette establish, and different dates may be so established for different provisions and, or purposes of this Act.

Amendment of
article 2 of the
principal Act.

2. Article 2 of the principal Act shall be amended as follows:

(a) immediately after the definition "the Council" there shall be added the following new definitions:

Cap. 249.

"House" shall have the same meaning as assigned to it by article 3 of the Interpretation Act;

"Maltese citizen" means any person considered to be a citizen under the Maltese Citizenship Act;"

Cap. 188.

(b) the definition "Maltese living abroad" shall be substituted by the following new definition:

" "Maltese living abroad" means any Maltese citizen or person of Maltese descent who is not resident in Malta;"

(c) immediately after the definition "Maltese living abroad" there shall be added the following new definition:

" "Members of the Council" means the members appointed to the Council in accordance with article 5(1);"

(d) immediately after the definition "the Minister" there shall be added the following new definitions:

" "overseas Maltese communities" means any group of Maltese citizens or persons of Maltese descent living outside Malta;

"persons of Maltese descent" means any person who may become a Maltese citizen under the Maltese Citizenship Act;" and

Cap. 188.

(e) the definitions "overseas member" and "Register" shall be deleted.

3. Article 3 of the principal Act shall be substituted by the following new article:

Substitution of article 3 of the principal Act.

"Establishment of Council.

3. (1) There shall be a Council that shall be known as the Council for Maltese Living Abroad.

(2) The Council shall be the body representing overseas Maltese communities abroad before all entities of the government of Malta, including the public service and any public authority, institution or organisation responsible for implementing policies affecting these communities.

(3) The functions of the Council shall consist of the following:

(a) to monitor the quality of life of overseas Maltese communities;

(b) to strengthen, facilitate and cultivate the ties between overseas Maltese communities and Malta's political, cultural, economic and social life;

(c) to ensure effective protection of the rights of overseas Maltese communities;

(d) to facilitate the maintenance of the cultural and linguistic identity of overseas Maltese communities and promote Maltese culture abroad, in particular the teaching of the Maltese language and all aspects of Maltese culture;

(e) to promote the history of Maltese migration in cooperation with the government of Malta;

(f) to maintain ties with all those organisations established by Maltese living abroad and keep a register of organisations established by Maltese living abroad;

(g) to analyse and verify the problems encountered by overseas Maltese communities, including professional and educational training and development, and recognition of qualifications and skills gained in Malta;

(h) to prepare any proposal, or make any suggestion or recommendation relating to legislation or administrative measures as well as international agreements and European Union legal acts affecting the rights and interests of Maltese living abroad;

(i) to promote and encourage studies and research work relating to subjects concerning Maltese living abroad;

(j) to be consulted on and contribute to the drafting of Maltese legislation, administrative measures or policies affecting Maltese living abroad;

(k) to assist cultural centres, libraries, archives, museums, theatres, musical ensembles and creative edifices of overseas Maltese communities by facilitating contacts with the pertinent national entities;

(l) to ensure the development of the business dimension of Malta with overseas Maltese communities;

(m) to provide correct information when requested to overseas Maltese communities living abroad about policies of the government of Malta, as well as about the economic, social, and cultural life in the country;

(n) to enhance connectivity with Malta through contacts with established overseas institutions of excellence in areas such as, but not limited to, education (including university and vocational academics), culture (including film-makers, dance, art, literature, music and intangible heritage), medicine, business, artificial intelligence, professional sportsmen and, or organisations active in major sports disciplines; and

(o) to identify Maltese living abroad who have shown excellence in their professional activity, and to create networks of such persons in order to promote innovation and the sustainable development of Malta."

4. Article 4 of the principal Act shall be amended as follows:

Amendment of article 4 of the principal Act.

(a) paragraph (a) thereof shall be substituted by the following new paragraph:

"(a) any Bill presented to the House which directly or indirectly affects the rights or interests of Maltese living abroad;"; and

(b) paragraph (b) thereof shall be substituted by the following new paragraph:

"(b) any budgetary matter or administrative measure relating to the interests of overseas Maltese communities, including the promotion of Maltese culture and language abroad, on the initiative of Government or any public institution entrusted with the promotion of Maltese culture abroad;".

5. Article 5 of the principal Act shall be substituted by the following new article:

Substitution of article 5 of the principal Act.

"Council set-up.

5. (1) The Council shall be composed as follows:

(a) the Minister responsible for foreign affairs, or any other Minister or Parliamentary Secretary as the Prime Minister may determine, who shall be *ex officio* its Chairman;

(b) five (5) members, who shall be Maltese citizens, shall be appointed by the Prime Minister for a term of (3) three years, after consulting the Leader of the Opposition. The members shall have distinctive knowledge and experience of the needs and interests of Maltese living abroad; and

(c) sixteen (16) members appointed by the Prime Minister for a term of three (3) years who shall be Maltese citizens ordinarily resident abroad, active in overseas Maltese communities, and the said shall be appointed in accordance with the Schedule.

(2) Persons who serve as members of the Council may be re-appointed for another term of three (3) years only, upon the expiration of their initial term of office.

(3) Except for the Chairman, a person shall not be qualified to hold office as a member of the Council if he is a Minister, Parliamentary Secretary, a candidate for election or a member of the House or the European Parliament, or any national, state, regional or local legislature, or a member of any local government authority, of any country including Malta. A member of the Council shall not hold any position which is incompatible with the correct performance of his official duties or with public confidence therein.

(4) Without prejudice to the provisions of this article, the office of a member of the Council shall become vacant:

(a) at the expiration of three (3) years from the date of appointment or re-appointment;

(b) upon resignation by means of a letter addressed to the Minister;

(c) if any circumstances arise that, if he were not a member of the Council, would cause him to be disqualified for appointment as such;

(d) when members of the Council may have their appointment terminated at any time, if the Prime Minister, upon the recommendation of the Minister, deems this to be an appropriate action to be taken; or

(e) when the members of the Council appointed under article 5(1)(c) no longer reside in the geographic area for which they were appointed to represent.

(5) The Council may set up Regional Committees for any one of the countries listed in the Schedule. Such Regional Committees shall be exclusively responsible and accountable to the Council. Their composition shall be within the exclusive remit of the Council."

6. Article 6 of the principal Act shall be amended as follows:

Amendment of article 6 of the principal Act.

(a) sub-article (1) thereof shall be substituted by the following new sub-article:

"(1) Meetings of the Council may take place through the medium of video and, or audio conferencing and the records of such meetings shall register the presence of any participants through such medium.";

(b) sub-article (3) thereof shall be substituted by the following new sub-article:

"(3) The Council shall not act unless a quorum consisting of the Chairman or his delegate and not less than ten (10) members of the Council."; and

(c) sub-article (4) thereof shall be substituted by the following new sub-article:

"(4) At least once (1) every year the Chairman shall convene a meeting of the Council in Malta or virtually as deemed fit."

7. Sub-article (2) of article 8 of the principal Act shall be substituted by the following new sub-article:

Amendment of article 8 of the principal Act.

"(2) The Directorate shall serve as a focal point for information, advice and co-ordination to Maltese living abroad and any association representing Maltese living abroad or organisations included in the register referred to in article 10."

8. Immediately after sub-article (2) of article 9 of the principal Act there shall be added the following new sub-article:

Amendment of article 9 of the principal Act.

"(3) The Secretary of the Council in conjunction with the Directorate shall provide the Council with all the administrative services and shall keep the members of the Council regularly informed with relevant issues."

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Substitution of article 10 of the principal Act.

9. Article 10 of the principal Act shall be substituted by the following new article:

"Register of non-governmental organisations.

10. (1) There shall be kept a register of non-governmental organisations established abroad which are involved in the promotion and protection of the interests of Maltese living abroad.

(2) The responsibility, including the inclusion, exclusion and removal of an organisation, from the register referred to under sub-article (1) shall lie with the Secretary of the Council on behalf of the Council."

Amendment of article 11 of the principal Act.

10. Article 11 of the principal Act shall be amended as follows:

(a) paragraph (a) thereof shall be substituted by the following new paragraph:

"(a) to regulate any appointment, re-appointment or election of any member of the Council who lives abroad;"

(b) paragraph (d) thereof shall be substituted by the following new paragraph:

"(d) to provide for assistance to members who live abroad and attend meetings of the Council in Malta."; and

(c) sub-article (e) thereof shall be deleted.

Substitution of the Schedule to the principal Act.

11. The Schedule to the principal Act shall be substituted by the following new Schedule:

"SCHEDULE
(article 5(1)(c))

1. There shall be appointed two (2) overseas members, as defined under article 5(1)(c), from each of the following countries and, or geographic areas:

(a) the State of Victoria in the Commonwealth of Australia;

(b) the State of New South Wales in the Commonwealth of Australia;

(c) the United States of America;

(d) Canada; and

(e) Europe, but not resident in Malta.

2. There shall be appointed one (1) overseas member, as defined under article 5(1)(c), from each of the following countries and, or geographic areas:

(a) United Kingdom;

(b) any geographic area in the Commonwealth of Australia not referred to in item 1 of this Schedule, New Zealand or Oceania;

(c) United Arab Emirates;

(d) North Africa or the Republic of South Africa;

(e) Asia;

(f) South or Central America.

3. When choosing overseas members, due consideration shall be given to the opinions, suggestions, recommendations and advice of, where applicable, federations of associations, community councils and the associations most representative of the interests of communities of Maltese living abroad."

Passed by the House of Representatives at Sitting No. 256 of the 9th July, 2024.

ANĠLU FARRUGIA

Speaker

ELEANOR SCERRI

Clerk of the House of Representatives

