



[Home](#) > [Debate](#) > [Blogs & Opinions](#) > Post Covid plans

## Post Covid plans

Michael Briguglio

Thursday, 27 May 2021, 07:19

Last update: about 2 hours ago



The Government of Malta, through the Ministry for Research, Innovation and The Co-Ordination of the Post Covid-19 Strategy, is currently carrying out a public consultation exercise on the thematic areas underpinning Malta's national post pandemic strategy.

In this article, I would like to highlight the main gist of the respective feedback to this plan by the Malta Sociological Association (MSA), of which I am a member. For the benefit of the readers of this article, I will first briefly explain what the MSA is: a non-profit making organisation and a non-commercial entity which aims to develop and promote sociological knowledge. The Malta Sociological Association promotes sociological research and contributes toward facilitating the cooperation of people and organisations working within the open sociological field. It also aims at understanding and analysing social problems for the improvement of the

Designed and developed by Deloitte Digital

Independent Online. ©2021. Standard Publications Ltd. Registered Office: Standard House, Birkirkara Hill, St. Julian's, STJ 1149, Malta.

---

## ADVERTISEMENT



---

A main point on Government's post-covid plans raised by the MSA is that, whilst it is positive that the public consultation is taking place, this should be an ongoing process and not just a one-off exercise, given that the recovery is likely to take a few years to be completed. At present there are many uncertainties as to when it will be fully conquered globally and locally.

It is fully understandable that the government needs to have a timeline in place for the post-Covid reality, but at the same time one needs to keep in mind that this reality is more likely to take the form of a social process rather than a one-off date. There will be constraints and opportunities as well as risks along the way across various sectors. Such sectors and their respective factors, which include the medical, economic, social, political, cultural and others, interact with each other at various levels.

Hence, it is imperative to keep in mind that situations may change along the way.

The consultation should relate to various facets of life, including economic, social, environmental aspects, which sometimes conflict with each other, but at other times there may be win-win situations. Hence the need to conduct public consultation across various sectors, involving the respective stakeholders to ensure a greater understanding of the situation and a great outreach and deliberation with those affected. For example, social impact assessments could produce valuable evidence for policy formation and implementation.

Various research methods could be used in this regard. This may help produce different forms of data, ranging from statistics to real-life narratives of people's everyday lives. Stakeholders such as experts and sectoral representatives should be considered as partners in such consultation, and independent peer-reviewers could help scrutinize the exercise to help identify possible shortcomings and possible improvements to such an assessment.

One aspect which I believe requires a thorough analysis is remote working (telework), which was used more frequently during the pandemic than before. Here the consultation could be used to assess whether it is commendable to maintain the best aspects of this work method to help improve workers' work-life balance and assist public and private companies in catching up with changing situations. It is also important to

Designed and developed by Deloitte Digital

Independent Online. ©2021. Standard Publications Ltd. Registered Office: Standard House, Birkirkara Hill, St. Julian's, STJ 1149, Malta.

As is well known, a sector that was highly impacted by the pandemic was tourism, and the extent and timing of opening up our airport and harbour to international tourists should be carefully assessed. None of us wish to repeat the mistakes (perhaps due to over-enthusiasm) of last year when the high rate of tourism inflow led to a flare in infections. It should be remembered that even if we have one of the best vaccination rates in the world, we are still navigating in a sea of unknowns, including the impacts of covid variants. Hence, once again, decisions on this sector should be informed by continuous and up-to-date consultation and evidence and give priority to factors such as sustainability.

Let us all hope that we adapt well to the post-Covid process, as we are all in this together, amid our differences and divisions. This week's announcement that Malta has reached its herd immunity target is great news. Let's keep up this community spirit and avoid rushed pitfalls.

*Dr Michael Briguglio is a Sociologist and Senior Lecturer at the University of Malta*

[www.michaelbriguglio.com](http://www.michaelbriguglio.com)

Like 8

Tweet

Share



[More property in St Julian's](#)

don't miss

**SPECIAL FEATURE: Eurovision delivers decades of songs, spectacle**

Share

**Four new magistrates set to be appointed in coming days**

Share

**Parma lose 3-0 at Sampdoria, finish bottom of Serie A**

Share

**Popular DJ Tenishia leads parliamentary petition calling for opening plan for mass events**

