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The Malta Foundation
for the Wellbeing of Society

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Launch of Wellbeing Index win for society

A wellbeing index project that will serve as a repository of information to guide policymakers and politicians in protecting the wellbeing of the island and its citizens is being launched today to coincide with World Human Rights Day.

The compilation of this Malta Wellbeing Index will pave the way for regular and robust national wellbeing statistics — beyond the Gross Domestic Product — and seed research on the wellbeing of different segments of society to guide policies.

This project, launched in Parliament by Speaker Anglu Farrugia, is a collaboration between the Malta Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society and the University of Malta. It will be led by economist Marie Briguglio, who is an expert on the analysis of wellbeing data and has published numerous articles in this field.

Dr Briguglio said there were marked differences in quality of life and wellbeing among individuals, which were reflected in inequitable access not only to income and employment but also to physical and mental health, family and social interaction, levels of education and skills, expression and engagement, environmental quality and open spaces, and other benchmarks of wellbeing.

Presenting the project, Dr Briguglio said: “It is well established that while GDP is an important metric of a country’s success, it is not the only one.

“There is an urgent need for robust national wellbeing statistics and research to compare the wellbeing of different segments of Maltese society over time, and with other countries. This will help guide policy to reach the overarching goal we all strive for: wellbeing.”

MFWS chair Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca said the Foundation believed in an aspirational, inclusive, just, equitable and eco-friendly society where everyone, in particular children, may enjoy a sustainable quality life and engage in meaningful relationships.

“In many of these domains, transformative action is a matter of urgency to ensure human rights and dignity are respected — this index is a win for our society,” she said.

“This is not the only initiative on wellbeing, and we hope to forge alliances with other entities within civil society, and with local and international institutions, to avoid duplication and to promote collaboration and collectivity,” Ms Coleiro Preca said.

The project, which expects to start seeing its first results next year, will include the identification of indicators, the set-up of a network of researchers and stakeholders, the design of data collection instruments and collection of data among children and adults, among others.

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