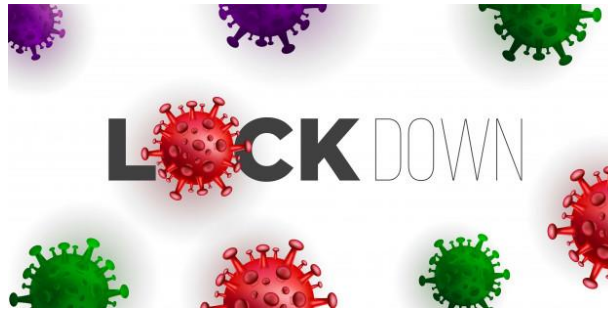


CIRCULAR NO. 22
Survey No. 5: IEM Council Member's Opinion on Total Lockdown



Dear IEM Members,

The public opinion for a "Total Lockdown" grew louder, favouring an MCO where all non-essential economic activities would be shut down. Hence, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) has engaged with numerous professional organisations and civil societies, including IEM, to gauge the views of the general populace.

In order to prepare the response to MITI, the Special Committee on Covid-19 Pandemic has conducted the Survey 5 to determine the majority view held by Council Members. It was decided to poll the Council Members, who are representatives of all IEM members, since IEM had to provide the feedback to MITI within a limited time frame. In fact, the survey was conducted in an expeditious manner, i.e. within a short duration of 12 hours. With 57 out of 71 Council Members responding to the survey, the response rate stood at an impressive 80% mark.

OBJECTIVE OF SURVEY NO. 5



The Survey 5 was conducted among the Council Members with the following objectives in mind:

- To ascertain the opinion on whether Total Lockdown is the most effective and feasible way to curb the Covid-19 transmission in Malaysia.
- To gauge the perspective of IEM Council Members on the length of Total Lockdown needed to flatten the Epidemic Curve.
- To poll the views on whether the immunisation campaign should be expedited.

The survey has 9 questions and was sent to 71 Council Members. A detailed analysis on the feedback is provided below.

DEMOGRAPHIC OF RESPONDENTS

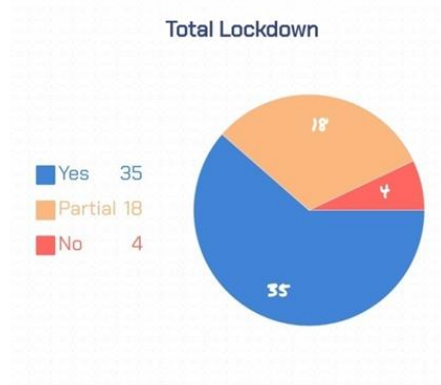
Employment Status	Persons
Employer	25
Private Employee	19
Academic	6
Public Sector	2
Retiree	5
Total	57

FINDINGS

Finding 1: Opinion on Lockdown in relation to the Financial Condition and Employment Status of the Respondent

Lockdown?	Financial Condition	Employment Status	Persons
Yes (35)	Remain the same	Private Employee	2
		Employer	12
	Worsening	Private Employee	12
		Public Sector	1
		Academic	6
		Retiree	2
No (4)	Improving	Employer	1
	Worsening	Private Employee	2
		Retiree	1
Partial (18)	Remain the same	Employer	2
		Public Sector	1
	Worsening	Employer	10
		Private Employee	3
		Retiree	2
		Total respondents	57

Table I: Opinion on Lockdown in relation to the Financial Condition and Employment Status of the Respondent

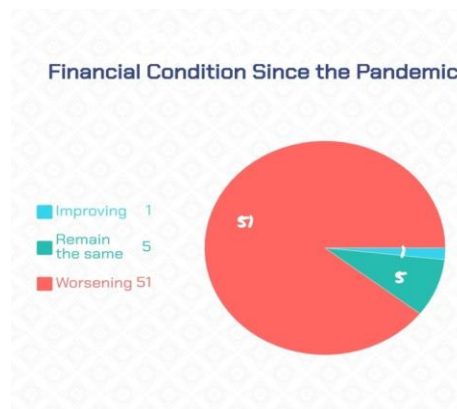


- From the 57 Council Members that have responded to Survey 5, 35 (61%) called for a Total Lockdown, whereas 4 (7%) were against, and 18 (31%) preferred a Partial Lockdown with strict SOP adherence.
- It was found that among the Employers, Public Sector Employees and Retirees, the respondents were more or less evenly split between Total Lockdown and Partial Lockdown.

- However, the overwhelming support of Private Sector Employees and Academicians for Total Lockdown has tilted the balance, resulting in a majority voice for Total Lockdown.
- As workplace clusters are now the major contributor of positive cases, not just Employees favoured a lockdown but Employers as well. In fact, of the 25 employers, 12 preferred a Partial Lockdown where certain sectors are allowed to operate, while an equal number of employers called for a Total Lockdown.
- It is noteworthy that the sole employer who disagreed with Lockdown happened to be the only respondent who felt that his financial situation has been improving since the onslaught of the pandemic.

Financial Condition	Employment Status	Persons	Total
Improving	Employer	1	1
Remain the same	Employer	2	
	Private Employee	2	
	Public Sector	1	5
Worsening	Employer	17	
	Private Employee	22	
	Public Sector	1	
	Academic	6	
	Retiree	5	51

Table II: Perception on Financial Condition based on Employment Status

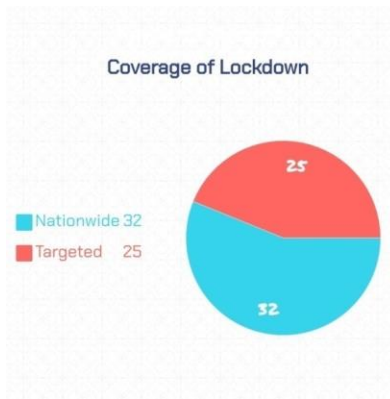


- It is not surprising at all that out of the 57 respondents, 51 (which represent an overwhelming 89%) found their financial condition worsening, as the personal finance reflects the overall national economic downturn.
- It is also in line with the less than optimistic view held by many Malaysians who thought that the Government could do more to help the needy.

Findings 2: Opinion on Proposed Coverage and Duration of Total Lockdown

Lockdown Coverage	Persons	Employment Status	Persons
Nationwide	32	Employers	11
		Private Employees	15
		Academics	4
		Retirees	2
Targeted	25	Employers	14
		Private Employees	4
		Public	2
		Academics	2
		Retirees	3

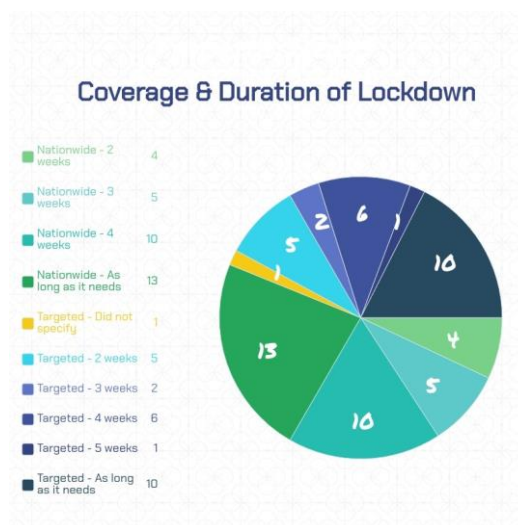
Table III: Opinion on the Coverage of Lockdown based on Employment Status



- 32 out of 57 Respondents (56%) preferred a Nationwide Lockdown, while 25 (43%) preferred a Targeted Lockdown that is implemented on certain areas based on necessity.
- Among the 25 Employers, the ratio for and against Nationwide Lockdown is 11:14 (44% vs 56%). Whereas among the 19 Private Employees, the ratio is 15:4 (78% vs 21%).
- As many of the patients are now asymptomatic, they might not go for swab test unless they have come into contact with another known patient, there is a possibility for them to spread it to other parts of the country unknowingly. Moreover, contrast to MCO 1.0 on March 2020, the traffic volume on the roads is still quite high. Therefore, a Nationwide Lockdown is still preferred by the majority.

Lockdown Coverage	Persons	Proposed Duration	Persons
Nationwide	32	2 weeks	4
		3 weeks	5
		4 weeks	10
		As long as it needs	13
Targeted	25	2 weeks	5
		3 weeks	2
		4 weeks	6
		5 weeks	1
		As long as it needs	10
		Did not answer	1

Table IV: Opinion on the Coverage of Lockdown based on Proposed Duration



- While quite a few respondents opted for a duration of 2 to 5 weeks, the option “As long as it needs” has emerged as the most popular choice, both within those who chose Nationwide Lockdown, as well as those who chose Targeted Lockdowns.
- Under the Nationwide Lockdown group, 13 out of 32 respondents (40%) opted for it. As for the Targeted Lockdown group, 10 out of 25 respondents opted for it, again constituted a 40% rate. Apparently, the Council Members believed that if the SOPs are relaxed before the Curve is flattened, we might be seeing a few more waves of infections again, thus all previous efforts will be wasted.

Employment Status	Proposed Coverage	Proposed Duration	Persons
Employers (25)	Nationwide (11)	2 weeks	2
		3 weeks	2
		4 weeks	3
		As long as it needs	4
	Targeted (14)	2 weeks	3
		3 weeks	1
		4 weeks	3
Private Employees (19)	Nationwide (15)	As long as it needs	7
		2 weeks	1
		3 weeks	1
		4 weeks	7
	Targeted (4)	As long as it needs	6
		2 weeks	1
		4 weeks	1
Public Sector (2)	Targeted (2)	As long as it needs	2
		2 weeks	1
		As long as it needs	1
Academics (6)	Nationwide (4)	2 weeks	1
		3 weeks	1
		As long as it needs	2
	Targeted (2)	4 weeks	1
		5 weeks	1
Retirees (5)	Nationwide (2)	3 weeks	1
		As long as it needs	1
	Targeted (3)	3 weeks	1
		4 weeks	1
		Didn't answer	1

Table V: Duration of Lockdown Preferred by Respondents based on Employment Status

- Among the Employers who preferred Nationwide Lockdown, a plurality (the biggest group in the case none of the groups exceeds 50%) of respondents, i.e., 4 out of 11 (36%) opted for a Lockdown as long as it needed.
- Among the Employers who preferred Targeted Lockdown, a majority of respondents, i.e., 7 out of 14 (50%) opted for a Lockdown as long as it needed.
- Such result highlights the fact that IEM Council Members are acutely aware that enduring the loss during a short-term shutdown will lead to a more robust recovery in the future once the Transmission Rate is minimised.

Lockdown?	Persons	Proposed Duration	Persons
Yes	35	2 weeks	4
		3 weeks	4
		4 weeks	10
		5 weeks	1
		As long as it needs	14
No	4	4 weeks	3
		As long as it needs	1
Partial	18	2 weeks	4

		3 weeks	2
		4 weeks	3
		As long as it needs	8
		Did not answer	1

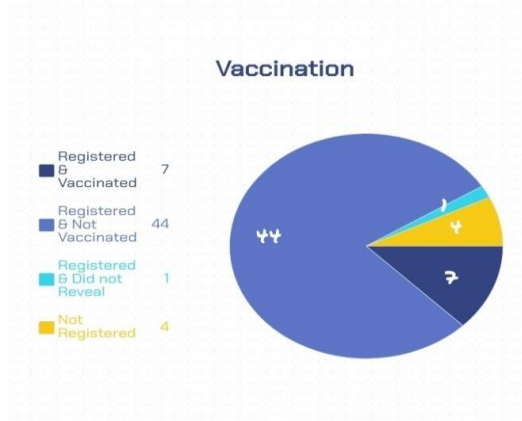
Table VI: Proposed Duration grouped by Opinion on Total Lockdown

- It is noteworthy that of the 35 respondents who agreed to Total Lockdown, 10 (33%) opted for 4 weeks, and 14 respondents (40%) thought it should be as long as needed.
- Apparently, the majority of respondents felt that Lockdown should last for at least 2 infection cycles (the incubation period for the SARS-CoV2 virus is 14 days), in order to ensure that contact is minimized, and most of those infected will be unable to spread it around.

Findings 3: Opinion on the Speed of Vaccination Campaign

Registered for Vaccine	Persons	Received Vaccination	Persons
Yes	52	Yes	7
		No	44
		Did not answer	1
No	5		

Table VII: Whether respondent has registered for and received vaccination

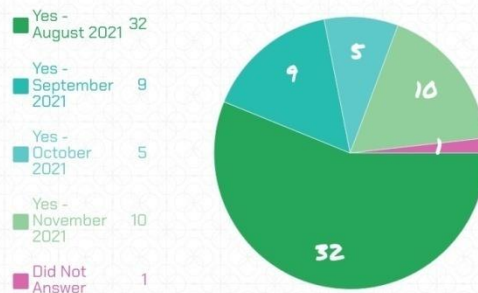


- 52 out of 57 respondents (91%) have registered for Vaccination. Contrast that with the national figures revealed by JKJAV (Special Committee on Covid-19 Vaccine Supply), which stood at 59% as of 14th June 2021, it is obvious that IEM Council members are way more eager to go for vaccination compared to the general populace.
- However, only 7 out of these 52 registered (13%) have received their injection. This resonates well with the common sentiment that the vaccination is not speedy enough, even though herd immunity is the cornerstone of economic revitalization.

Expedite Vaccination	Persons	Target	Persons
Yes	56	August 2021	32
		September 2021	9
		October 2021	5
		November 2021	10
No	0		
Did not answer	1		

Table VIII: Whether vaccination should be expedited

Whether Vaccination Should Be Expedited



- As herd immunity is the prerequisite for the return to normalcy, it is impossible to achieve economic recovery without the vaccination of 80% of the population. Hence, the survey also took stock of the current state of the vaccination campaign and polled the Council Members whether the vaccination should be expedited.
- Of the 56 respondents who answered this question, 100% of them agreed that the vaccination campaign should be expedited. 32 respondents (57%) thought it should be completed by August 2021, whereas 10

respondents (17%) opined that it should be completed by November.

- With steady and fast deliveries of all three approved vaccines - from Pfizer-BioNTech, Sinovac and AstraZeneca - starting this month, the nation would be able to inoculate 80 per cent of its population by December,
- While the delivery of vaccines by the suppliers is determined by a wide range of external factors beyond our control, the consensus on the need to accomplish the vaccination as soon as possible certainly represents the public opinion in the country.

CONCLUSION

From the findings of Survey No. 5, it is pellucid that IEM Council Members would opt for a Total Lockdown that is implemented Nationwide, and last for at least 4 weeks, depending on the situation. Nevertheless, people's well-being and the business survival are issues IEM feels strongly about. To prepare the general public and business for this harsh but necessary measure, a proper aid package must be offered to ensure that the disadvantaged segments of the society are not left to fend for themselves, and our workers will not find themselves out of jobs out of a sudden. With this in mind, the following Feedback to MITI was prepared as per below.

The Feedback of IEM to MITI

IEM supports the Government to:

- Impose a lockdown where only essential services are allowed to operate similar to the conditions of the MCO 1.0 in March 2020. The Government to however ensure construction projects and manufacturing works are not stopped in order to sustain the construction industry and the survival of the SMEs. Compliance to the SOPs issued by CIDB and MITI respectively MUST be adhered to for continued operation of these sectors.

- The lockdown should be imposed nationwide.
- The lockdown period should be at least 4 weeks on condition that there is marked improvement in the control of the spread.

There is nevertheless grave concern that another such lockdown will adversely impact the economy and as such, this lockdown should be accompanied by a structured programme from the Government to ensure survival of the people and the economy such as:

- A moratorium for loan repayment be put in place extending to at least three months after the period of the lockdown.
- Provide wage subsidies for another 6 months but increase the threshold for individual income from the previous RM4,000 to RM8,000
- Increase financial aid to SMEs to enable them to survive as the SMEs are the biggest employers of the labour force.
- Discounted rates for utility bills in view that more people will be staying at home and working from home.
- Provide double tax deduction for expenses incurred on staff training or upskilling to adapt to the new Working Norm.
- Extension of Time (EOT) for both Government and private projects hindered by this lockdown.
- Reduce the employer portion of EPF contribution with the difference being supplemented by the Government.

More importantly, IEM would like to call on the Government to look into all means to hasten the process of vaccination as this is the only way to stop the spread of the virus as well as enable the economy to recover.

The Government should work on a timeline where vaccinations for all adults could be completed latest by November this year.

IEM will continue to keep our members updated on latest announcements from the government, ministries or government agencies related or affecting the engineering industry. Do keep a look out for our email blast or visit the IEM website at www.myiem.org.my under the tab 'RELATED TO ENGINEERING' or join our Telegram Channel to receive faster updates.

Scan this QR code to access IEM Official Website



Scan this QR code to access IEM
Official Website



[myiem_official](https://www.instagram.com/myiem_official)



[MyIEM HQ Official](https://www.telegram.com/join/myiem_hq_official)

IEM had also launched our very own mobile app IEMGo on 15 April 2021 to improve communication with members. You may download IEMGo from the following platforms:



We hope that all our members would remain safe and healthy during this challenging time. We will keep you updated on any further information promptly.

Thank you.

#myIEMstaysafe

#myIEMstayhealthy

#iemstayhealthystaysafe

Special Committee on COVID-19
The Institution of Engineers, Malaysia
27th June 2021

##END##