

# Malaysia beyond 2020

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# Overview

A vision for Malaysia beyond 2020 is imperative to continue the momentum of growth and ensure that onward path to development is unfettered. In charting new frontiers of development, Malaysia must remain progressive and inclusive in line with the aspirations of the *rakyat*. The Eleventh Malaysia Plan, 2016-2020, is intended as a launchpad and foundation for the next stage of Malaysia's journey.

The post-2020 era will present new opportunities and challenges for Malaysia. Global demographics are shifting with rising life expectancy and dropping fertility rates below replacement rates in developed countries. The scale and pace of urbanisation and industrialisation, especially in emerging economies, is unprecedented. Scarcity of resources such as water, energy, and land will become more prevalent, posing greater challenges to development. The speed and magnitude of advancements in science, technology, and innovation is accelerating. This will create new jobs which require a combination of complex technical, analytical, and interactive skills, while routine and manual tasks will

increasingly be done by intelligent machines. The world is woven together in a web of connectivity that was unimaginable a decade ago. Customers and suppliers will come from non-traditional markets while a new breed of competitors will emerge as technology removes many existing barriers to entry. The economic power shift to Asia will lead to Asian countries assuming an ever more important role in the world economy.

This chapter outlines national aspirations post-2020, which represent the voices of the *rakyat* drawn from interviews, discussions, and a survey from various groups of Malaysians, particularly from the young. There is one clear message resonating from these voices – Malaysia is to become a truly advanced nation in economic, social, and environmental terms. The deliberation on national aspirations has taken into consideration domestic and international trends on economic and social development.

# Profile of Malaysia post-2020



The population is estimated to reach 32.4 million in 2020 and 36 million by 2030. In terms of age demographics, less than 23% of the population will be 14 and below, 68% between 15 and 64, and about 9% aged 65 and above in 2030.



The urbanisation rate will reach 75% in 2020 and is expected to increase to 80% by 2030. The main conurbations of Greater Klang Valley, Georgetown, Johor Bahru, Kuantan, Kuching, and Kota Kinabalu will continue to be the nexus of economic and social activities, housing major global companies and talent. The large middle-class population in these areas will be a huge consumer market for local and global products and services. Demand for modern, integrated infrastructure, efficient urban services, and green spaces will increase.



All levels of society will enjoy a comfortable lifestyle with quality healthcare; secure, safe, and green environment; good housing and modern amenities; recreation and leisure. The gap between the top 20%, the middle 40%, and bottom 40% household income groups will have narrowed considerably while income distribution will improve, as indicated by a lower Gini coefficient.

## Population

2020

**32.4**  
million

2030

**36**  
million

## Urbanisation rate

**75%**

**80%**

## Gini coefficient

**0.385**





In terms of the economy, the size of the gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to increase in 2030 to RM2.6 trillion from RM1.4 trillion in 2020. In 2030, the GDP per capita is projected to increase more than double to RM117,260 compared with RM54,890 in 2020. The economy will be dominated by knowledge-intensive and high value-added activities, generating high-income jobs. In 2030, more than 40% of total employment will comprise of skilled workers compared with approximately 35% in 2020.

Malaysia will remain an open economy, regionally and globally integrated post-2020. Global growth is expected to be driven by the emerging economies of Asia, while the centre of trade will shift towards the East. As the People's Republic of China and India prosper further, coupled with their large and growing affluent middle class, they will become major markets for Malaysian goods and services. ASEAN is expected to be the third pillar of Asia and the linchpin for Malaysian businesses to go global. Improved connectivity with ASEAN members will boost investment, trade, and tourism as well as cross-border movement of talent. In addition, rapid economic growth in ASEAN, particularly Cambodia, Indonesia, and Vietnam, and countries in both North and South Africa, will accelerate demand for infrastructure such as power plants, dams, ports, airports, and roads, offering new opportunities for Malaysian businesses to partake in infrastructure and new city development projects.

### Gross domestic product (GDP)

**RM1.4**  
trillion

**RM2.6**  
trillion

### GDP per capita

**RM54,890**

**RM117,260**

### World exports<sup>1</sup>

**US\$25**  
trillion

**US\$44**  
trillion

<sup>1</sup> World trade forecast from IHS Economics Quarterly (updated May 2015). World trade is estimated to increase from US\$50 trillion in 2020 to US\$89 trillion in 2030.

# Aspirations for Malaysia post-2020

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We stand,  
we think, and we  
act as Malaysians.

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The views of Malaysians from diverse groups and different segments of society, predominantly the young, were gathered through interviews, focus groups, and an online survey. They were asked to share their expectations and aspirations for the nation post-2020. Their input is summarised in Exhibit 10-1.

## **Voices of the *rakyat***

The post-2020 aspirations outlined in the following section reflect the hopes and wishes of Malaysians, clustered into three dimensions – **people, economy, and environment**. These three dimensions are also reflected in the six thrusts of the Eleventh Plan, which focuses on people via developing human capital, inclusiveness, and wellbeing; on the economy via re-engineering growth; and on the environment via green growth and sustainable development.

## **One nation, one people, and one aspiration**

We come from different backgrounds and different ethnicities, and speak many languages. But we speak with one voice – that of wanting a better future for our next generation. It is the voice of hope, of solidarity. It is the voice that says we are one.



The word cloud above represents the aspirations of the *rakyat* for Malaysia post-2020 against a backdrop of global trends that will be shaping the future. The aspirations are grouped into 3 dimensions – **people**, **economy**, and **environment**.

# People

The future of Malaysia depends on Malaysians being united in diversity and sharing a common set of values and aspirations. Malaysians must have a diverse range of relevant skills. These will ensure that the nation successfully makes the next leap towards becoming truly advanced - economically, socially, and environmentally.

## VALUE SYSTEM

### Unshakeable national identity

There is a greater sense of what being a Malaysian truly is. We are optimistic and resilient in the face of challenges. We stand, we think, and we act as Malaysians. We are moderate, balanced, and just in our interactions, fully embracing the *wasatiyyah* concept.

### Clear moral compass

Diverse religious and spiritual values continue to be respected and accepted as part and parcel of a caring society. Malaysians are imbued with strong moral values, unquestionable ethics, and ingrained with honesty, integrity, and compassion.

### Family-centred support systems

Strong family units are the bedrock of our natural support system, providing care, inculcating moral values, and contributing to a stronger nation.

### An inspiring role for seniors

Senior Malaysians are actively involved in nurturing younger Malaysians and ensuring that the connection with our nation's rich history is not lost. Seniors are appreciated, respected, and protected. There is a conducive environment for them to lead an independent, productive, and fulfilling life.

### A culture of compassion

Our compassionate nature is reflected in how Malaysian society provides opportunities and cares for the underprivileged, the vulnerable, the disabled, and those with special needs.

#### Box 10-1

#### ***Wasatiyyah***

In the context of national development, social cohesion, and national unity, the *wasatiyyah* concept emphasises moderation, balance, justice, and excellence in all spheres of life for the individual and the community with the aim of developing a harmonious Malaysian society.



## LIVEABILITY

### Elevated state of wellbeing

Malaysians enjoy a high standard of wellbeing. We are highly satisfied with our lives and confident in our ability to shape our own future. This state of wellbeing is a result of a combination of factors including high-income, meaningful work, a high regard for personal rights, a safe and peaceful environment, strong family and community networks, and physical and mental health.

### Universal healthcare and healthy living

All Malaysians have access to quality healthcare while state-of-the-art diagnostics equipment complement healthcare services. Personalised healthcare with virtual monitoring and digitised records will be the norm. Malaysians produce and consume healthy food. We care for our health by keeping fit physically, mentally, and emotionally.

### Caring for our children

Children are given the best possible start to life with quality healthcare and childcare facilities as well as other social support systems regardless of who they are and where they come from. Our children are safe and protected at all times.

### World-class cities for everyone

Our cities are modern, vibrant, liveable, culturally enriching, and provide a sense of belonging. Everyone has the opportunity to realise their potential and live with dignity. Everyone can afford to own or rent a home as well as have seamless access and ubiquitous connectivity at home and at work. Malaysian cities will be among the most liveable cities globally.

### Redefining rural living

Rural Malaysia is an increasingly appealing lifestyle choice for Malaysians who value living and working in tranquil settings. Rural areas are well-connected, thriving, and have facilities and services comparable to cities so that communities can live comfortably, be productive, and enjoy equitable opportunities.

### Artistic innovation and preservation

Malaysians create, appreciate, and promote artistic vibrancy, and celebrate their diverse heritage. The heritage sites and the local arts and culture are well preserved, highly valued, and renowned globally.

# People

## TALENT

### Holistic and balanced talent

All Malaysians have access to quality education, which focuses on developing both knowledge and skills (*ilmu*), as well as ethics and morality (*akhlak*). The education system places due importance on co-curricular activities such as arts, culture, sports, and volunteerism, grooming young Malaysians to become impressive personalities who have discipline, dedication, and drive for success.

### Knowledgeable and innovative individuals

Malaysians are knowledgeable and innovative individuals who appreciate diverse views and are able to think critically. We have an insatiable appetite for knowledge. We are lifelong learners. We excel in arts, sciences, and humanities. We are at the forefront of research and innovation in fields such as medicine, agriculture, and environment. We are able to contribute to the progress of the nation and betterment of mankind.

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### Inspirational leaders

Malaysians are confident, emotionally and spiritually intelligent, and effective communicators who can lead within and across national boundaries to inspire others to greater heights. We have thought leaders who contribute to global wellbeing. We produce many beacons of towering personalities who are globally renowned for their expertise, experience, leadership, sportsmanship, and philanthropy.

### Entrepreneurial leaders

Malaysians are innovative entrepreneurs, who are leaders and innovators in their respective fields, able to create value for the rapidly expanding consumer class. Our children are trained to think, to adapt, to lead, and to create jobs that do not yet exist today. We are persistent, disciplined, and we view failure as a tool that prepares us for future successes.

## GOVERNANCE

### Protecting the *rakyat*

The executive, legislative, and judicial institutions are independent and trusted, ensuring that the rights of the *rakyat* are well-protected. Our institutions are renowned for their commitment, integrity, and relevant knowledge in the service of the *rakyat*.

### Leaders who are *amanah*

The *rakyat* values transparency and responsible conduct of Government leaders. Our leaders are courageous and embrace the concept of *amanah* in carrying out their responsibilities.

### Prudent and sophisticated resource management

We live within our means. Malaysian individuals and organisations are prudent in spending. Public resources are managed carefully and sustainably in a transparent manner, while policy implementation is backed by facts, objective analyses, and takes into account the wellbeing of the *rakyat*.

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### Mature politics

Malaysians support mature politics and welcome open intellectual discourse between divergent views. The *rakyat* have freedom of access to information and participate productively in upholding the democratic process.

### A government that delivers

Malaysians demand and expect government service delivery at all levels to be highly responsive and efficient. Local governments demonstrate strong leadership by engaging the *rakyat* in the decision-making process to achieve the best outcomes. Civil society is empowered to champion social causes and its role and capabilities are expanded to actively participate in the co-creation and delivery of public services.

### An international voice of reason

We are a strong, independent, sovereign nation. Malaysia is a leader in international diplomacy and assumes regional and global leadership on important issues, having a pivotal role in international organisations. Malaysia's advice is often solicited for issues pertaining to global peace, security, and economy. Malaysia will continue to be the bridge that connects the East with the West; the Islamic world and major Asian communities with the rest of the world.

# Economy

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Malaysia is an advanced, progressive, and inclusive economy that leaves an imprint on the world. Our national development moves beyond a focus on economic growth and consumerism, with emphasis on wellbeing of the *rakyat*, quality of life, social equity, the structure of the economy, as well as the adaptability and quality of the workforce.

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## Inclusive economic growth

The economy is strong, stable, and thriving, generating sufficient productive employment opportunities for everyone in the labour market. The prosperity that is created is used to reduce income inequality among the *rakyat*, thus setting the stage for stronger future economic growth.

## A future-proof economy

There are high levels of intangible capital such as quality institutions, skilled human capital, and relational capital. The economy is resilient with increased capacity and flexibility to respond to the changing global economic landscape.

## Productive rural economy

Malaysia has a vibrant and thriving rural economy with attractive economic opportunities, supported by excellent connectivity and social amenities and services on par with urban areas.

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## A fully involved private sector

The private sector is at the forefront of nation-building and practising excellent corporate culture, instilled with integrity and economic patriotism as well as ensuring their business activities support the social fabric of the society and protect the environment. The private sector embraces a strong sense of corporate duty and fair practices, particularly in ensuring their employees' welfare.

## Global champions

Malaysia is synonymous with several global brands and is a market leader for several frontier products and services. Malaysia is associated with integrity, high quality, and high value.

# Environment

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Malaysians adapt and thrive in the face of global environmental and climate challenges. We have a genuine attachment to the land, and are committed to protecting and preserving the environment for the wellbeing of future generations. We capture opportunities from the new climate economy and embrace green practices in our daily lives.

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## Passionate stewards of the environment

Malaysians protect and conserve the environment while attaining rapid socio-economic growth. The environment is no longer seen as a trade-off to a strong economy but a prerequisite to a sustained economic growth. The national balance sheet fully incorporates Malaysia's natural assets such as forests, mineral resources, and pristine water sources. This facilitates better management of these valuable endowments and allows accountability to be assigned to relevant agencies.

## A low carbon future

The nation embraces the prospects of becoming a low carbon economy, which minimises waste. Environmentally friendly practices such as the 6Rs — reuse, reduce, redesign, remanufacture, recover, and recycle are widely applied. We develop economic opportunities arising from the latest innovations in sustainable development.

## Ubiquitous renewable energy

Malaysians are passionate about incorporating sustainable consumption and production practices in their daily lives. Affordable and renewable energy powers homes, transport, and work places.

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## Pride in and respect for our natural heritage

Local communities are surrounded with diverse landscapes and parks that provide habitats for biodiversity. Natural features such as rivers, lakes, and wetlands are well protected and used mainly for recreational and educational purposes. We are committed to protecting our diverse flora and fauna, and these become both a source of national pride and identity.

## The green building revolution

Environmentally friendly homes and work places are a common feature in all residential and office areas. They are not only water- and energy-efficient, but are resilient to climate change.

## Build back better

Malaysia is well prepared for natural disasters, supported by sophisticated and advanced systems for national emergency response, recovery, and reconstruction. After every disaster, we 'build back better' for stronger and safer communities.

# Conclusion

Malaysians have always had high aspirations. Achieving developed nation status is a very important milestone for Malaysia, and is the culmination of a 30-year journey towards realising this aspiration. The next challenge, post-2020, is to become a truly advanced nation in economic, social, and environmental terms. It is envisaged that Malaysians will have an unshakeable national identity and clear moral compass, while all members of society will enjoy an elevated state of wellbeing. Malaysia will be guided by many inspirational leaders and towering personalities, who are moulded by a holistic education system and driven by an insatiable appetite for knowledge. Malaysia will be governed by trusted and independent executive, legislative, and judicial institutions that protect Malaysians equally. Malaysia will have a government that delivers, led by leaders with integrity and conviction who embrace the concept of *amanah*.

Malaysia will punch above its weight in the international arena, both as a strong independent nation and through prominent Malaysian thought leaders in various fields. The economy will be progressive, inclusive, sustainable, and adaptable for the future, with highly productive world-class cities and thriving rural areas. Malaysians will be passionate stewards of the environment and no longer see environmental protection as a trade-off to a strong economy, making Malaysia a truly beautiful and conducive place to live for all. To achieve these aspirations, the enormity of the task ahead will be the greatest in our lifetime, and cannot be underestimated. There will be new challenges for us to face, new opportunities for us to seize, and new horizons to strive for. We will make the journey towards 2020 and beyond together. The nation's future is in our hands.