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## **TWELFTH MALAYSIA PLAN: PROSPECTIVE IMPACTS ON URBAN AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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### **Abstract**

The Malaysia Plan is a five-year development plan that comprises policies and strategies to guide the government to achieve desired economic and socio-economic goals. The first Malaysia Plan started in 1966 following the inclusion of Sabah and Sarawak in 1963, followed by consecutive plans until the present 12th Malaysia Plan (RMK12, 2021–2025). The last ten years have shown a significant shift by the Malaysian government in emphasising the importance of urban and regional planning in shaping the national development policies and strategies. This paper analyses policies and strategic projects proposed in RMK12 that relate to urban and regional development and their likely impacts on the spatial development of the nation. The present study employs conventional content analysis as its main method. In addition, RMK12 policies and strategic projects are linked to the thrusts of Rancangan Fizikal Negara 4 (RFN4) and the principles of Dasar Perbandaran Negara 2 (DPN2). The findings demonstrated existing links between the policies and strategic projects of RMK12 and the thrusts of RFN4 and the principles of DPN2. Additionally, the spatial focus of RMK12 projects on the Klang Valley and Sabah and Sarawak indicates the government's commitment to leverage the economic potential of cities and the need to reduce regional development disparity between Peninsular Malaysia and Sabah and Sarawak. The findings will assist stakeholders in better understanding the implications and significance of the policies and strategic projects highlighted in RMK12 for Malaysian urban and regional development, and will thus drive the country toward achieving sustainable and inclusive development.

**Keywords:** RMK12, Strategic Projects, Urban Development, Rural Development, Malaysia

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## **INTRODUCTION**

In the Malaysian development system, the Malaysia Plan, or better known as Rancangan Malaysia (RMK), is the most important government document that outlines the national development policies and strategies for a five-year period. The five-year development document developed by the Economic Planning Unit under the Prime Minister's Department highlights the focus of the nation's economic and socio-economic development. The current plan is the 12th Malaysia Plan (RMK12), which runs from 2021 until 2025.

The strategies and aspirations contained in the Malaysia Plan are translated into the annual development budget unveiled by the Finance Minister in October every year. Regarding physical development, the Malaysia Plan is translated into the National Physical Plan, which is currently in its fourth edition (Rancangan Fizikal Negara—RFN4). However, the recently released RMK12 may not have been incorporated into the RFN4 because the RFN4 was developed prior to the introduction of the RMK12.

RMK12 has proposed some strategic projects in the development plan as the catalyst for sustainable and inclusive urban and regional development. The questions raised in this study are “What are the strategies and strategic projects being proposed that are related to urban and regional development?” and, most importantly, “What are the implications of these policies and projects for urban and regional development in Malaysia?”

This study examines the significance and implications of policies and strategic projects outlined in the RMK12 for urban and regional development in Malaysia, especially concerning documents related to physical and urban development, such as RFN4 and National Urbanisation Policies (Dasar Perbandaran Negara—DPN2). In addition, it links these policies and strategies to the government's aspirations of Wawasan Kemakmuran Bersama 2030 and the 2030 Agenda. Conventional content analysis is used to retrieve and analyse the qualitative data from the RMK12, which addresses both research questions.

## **METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

The study employs conventional content analysis as the main method to examine the impact of RMK12's policies and strategic projects on the aspects of urban and regional development in Malaysia. Subjectively, this content analysis approach analyses and interprets the relationship between two concepts—policies and strategic projects and urban and regional planning (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

In this study, conventional content analysis is used to comprehend a phenomenon, which is the impact of policies and strategic projects on urban and regional development in Malaysia following the implementation of RMK12. This study adapted the content analysis approach underlined by Hsieh and Shannon (2005) by reading RMK12 several times to provide an understanding of the whole document. It is followed by each line of words being read using the skimming