

Rapid growth phase

ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

MYANMAR is strategically located in a corridor surrounded by Asia's growing economic powers with China to the north and India to the west as well as the ASEAN community on its doorstep.

According to McKinsey, by 2025 more than half of the world's consuming class will live within a five-hour flight of Myanmar.

Myanmar is ASEAN's second largest country bordering Laos, Thailand, Bangladesh, China and India. Despite many years of isolation from the global economy, Myanmar is growing at a rapid rate as economic and social reforms are implemented.

In terms of economic development, there are three key criteria to drive change – financial capital, technology and human capital development. The country is inviting foreign investors in to satisfy these requirements.

Inward investment into Myanmar has skyrocketed since the introduction of reforms and the lifting of economic sanctions from the US and EU in 2013. According to statistics from the Myanmar Investment Commission, foreign direct investment (FDI) into Myanmar for 2014/2015 was more than US\$8bn, which was US\$3bn over the projected target. This investment activity centered on the energy (35pc), manufacturing (25pc) and telecoms (25pc) sectors, while other areas such as tourism and clothing manufacture also saw substantial investment.

Myanmar is undergoing rapid growth and government reforms are being implemented to create a business landscape for future growth. These wide reaching reforms will cover exchange rate unification, improvements in monetary policy, increases in tax collection, reorientation of public expenditure towards social and physical infrastructure, development of the financial sector, and reforms to liberalise the agricultural sector.

This major reform agenda can bring about greater investment, better infrastructure and wider socio-economic development.

The development of its human capital is a major opportunity for Myanmar as it is projected to have an undersupply of 13 million skilled and semi-skilled workers by 2030.

Other key factors in Myanmar's economic development include advancing technological development including telecoms infrastructure, scaling up its manufacturing sector and infrastructure development to prepare for greater urbanisation.

In the short term, Myanmar is expected to continue its economic development apace with GDP growth for 2015 set to reach 8.3pc, according to the Asian Development Bank's latest projections.

Key facts...

- **National population:** 55,746,253
- **Top five cities and population of each province:**
 - Nay Pyi Taw: 1.016 million
 - Yangon: 4.705 million
 - Mandalay: 1.139 million
 - Mawlamyine: 438,861
 - Bago: 244,376
- **Area:** 676,577 sq km
- **Timezone:** GMT + 6.30
- **Currency:** Myanmar kyat (MMK)
- **Religion/s:** Buddhist (89pc), Christian (4pc), Baptist (3pc), Roman Catholic (1pc), Muslim (4pc), Animist (1pc), other (2pc)
- **Language/s:** Burmese (official) and over 100 ethnic languages
- **Gross domestic product (GDP):** US\$65.29bn
- **GDP (purchasing power parity (PPP)):** US\$244.3bn
- **Real GDP growth:**
 - 2015 (ADB projection): 8.3pc
 - 2014: 8.5pc
 - 2013: 8.3pc
 - 2012: 7.3pc
- **GDP per capita (current prices):** US\$1,096 (2013 est)
- **GDP per capita (PPP):** US\$1,700 (2013 estimate)
- **GDP share of world total:** 0.09pc
- **GDP sector breakdown:** agriculture 37.1pc, industry 21.3pc, services 41.6pc



NATIONAL FLAG

The yellow represents solidarity; the green symbolises peace, tranquility and lush greenery; the red represents courage and determination; and the white star stands for the significance of the union of the country.

- **NATIONAL DAY:** 12 June
- **DATE WHEN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WERE ESTABLISHED BETWEEN MYANMAR AND IRELAND:** 10 February 2014