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Malaysia's Youth on Madani Government:  
**Quality of Life Improved  
but Concerned over Cost of  
Living**

*By:*

**Versa x stratsea**

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# Malaysia's Youth on Madani Government: Quality of Life Improved but Concerned over Cost of Living

By **Versa x stratsea** | 6 February 2026

*Of the 2,709 Malaysian millennials and Gen Z surveyed, many of these Versa users believed that their quality of life improved under the Madani government during the 2023-2025 period. In the same time frame, however, there was an overwhelming perception that the government must do more to manage the cost of living. Developed by Versa, in collaboration with stratsea, this report provides a data-driven look at these sentiments.*

## 1. GENERAL SATISFACTION WITH MADANI GOVERNMENT

Malaysia edges closer to its 16th General Election (GE16). As the voting age was lowered from 21 to 18 in GE15, sentiments of Malaysia's youths cannot be disregarded. Data from fintech app Versa revealed that 1,764 (65.12%) Malaysian millennials and Gen Z believed that their quality of life improved under the Madani government during the 2023-2025 period. Reinforcing this, more respondents (1,333 respondents; 49.21%) were satisfied with the overall progress of the country in this two-year timespan than those dissatisfied (292 respondents; 10.78%).<sup>1</sup>

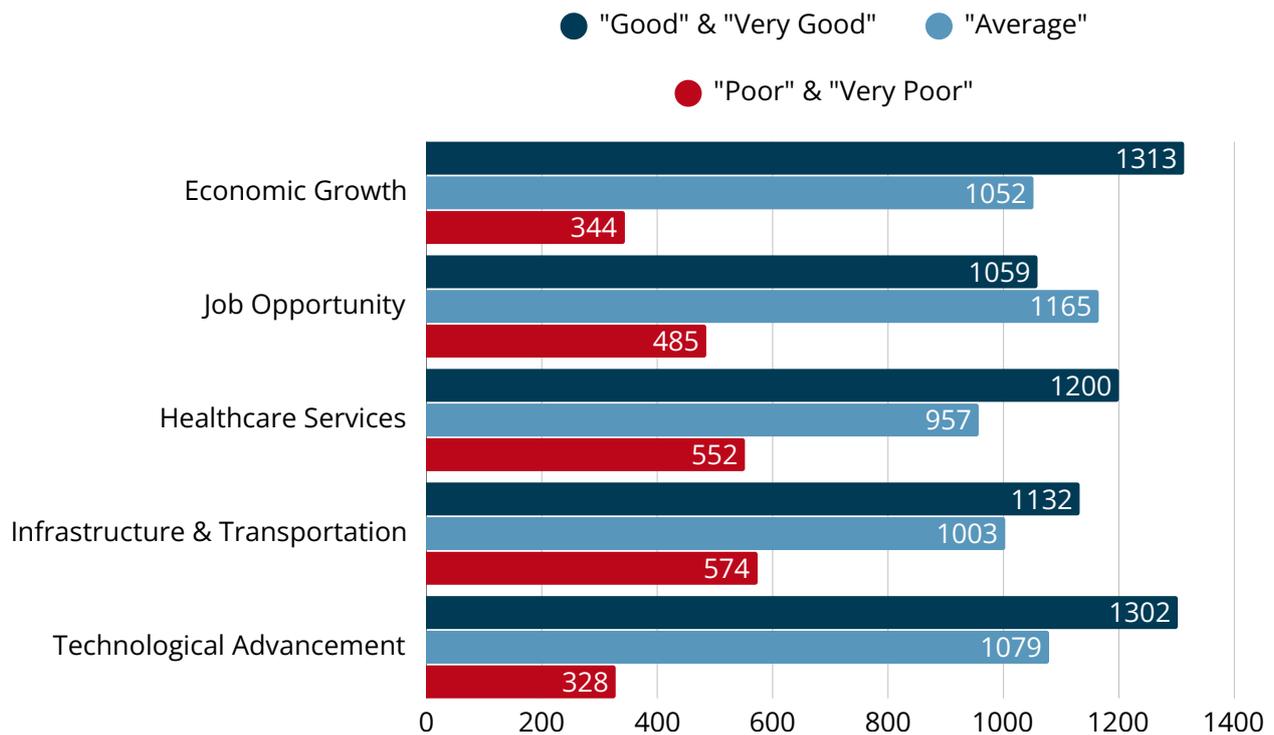
Factors that respondents felt positively about were: a) Economic Growth; b) Job Opportunity; c) Healthcare Services; d) Infrastructure & Transportation, and; e) Technological Advancement. Notably, "average" responses range from 35.33% to 43.00% in each factor. This relatively large number of "fence sitters" indicates avenues for the Madani government (and future governments) to better understand on-the-ground realities to increase the overall satisfaction of Malaysians.

On income, specifically, there is a slight edge of respondents (1,568; 57.88%) who felt that their current incomes were sufficient for their cost of living and lifestyle needs as compared to those who did not (1,141 respondents; 42.12%).

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<sup>1</sup> The remaining 1,084 respondents (40.01%) expressed neutral views.





**Chart 1: Malaysian Youth Sentiments**

## Why So?

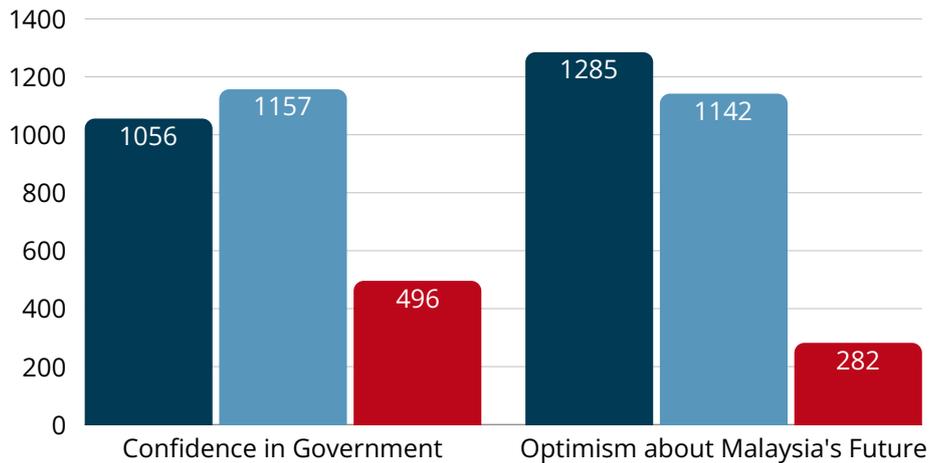
This general satisfaction with the Madani government has been attributed to several factors, including: a) **political stability**, which is welcomed after multiple changes of governments prior to GE15; b) **economic reforms** that focused on long-term fiscal health and; c) **strengthened currency and economy**, which saw Malaysia's ringgit hitting a seven-year high against the US dollar.

## 2. OPTIMISM DESPITE COST OF LIVING CONCERN

Most respondents (1,431; 52.82%) rated Malaysia's progress on cost of living as "poor" or "very poor". This emphasises how "reducing cost of living" is the top option that respondents wanted the government to prioritise and how millennial respondents felt that cost of living is the biggest challenge that they faced.

Despite this deep concern, respondents were relatively optimistic about Malaysia's future in the next 5-10 years and confident in the government's ability to drive positive change. Notably, around 42% of respondents were neutral in both outlooks. This confidence and optimism could be attributed to 1,942 respondents (71.69%) believing that the Madani government listens to the concerns of Malaysian youths.





**Chart 2: Malaysian Youths' Confidence and Optimism for the Future**

### Why So?

Concern over the cost of living persisted and intensified since COVID-19. Numerous factors contribute to this concern, such as Malaysia continuing to weather the increasing [global inflation rate](#). This anxiety may also be more pronounced for those residing in large cities such as Kuala Lumpur and Johor Bahru because they would experience sudden and faster increases in pricing than those living in other cities. Notably, respondents largely reside in these large urban centres.

At the core of this confidence and optimism could be the Madani government's principle towards inclusivity. In addition to placing a strong emphasis on racial and religious harmony, the government has developed numerous youth initiatives, such as the [Madani Youth Development Model 2030](#) (MPBM 2030).

### 3. UPSKILLING AS THE WAY FORWARD BUT IT HAS TO START IN SCHOOLS

Respondents highlighted "Economic Stability & Job Creation" and "Education & Skills Development" as the next two priorities that the government should work on. This suggests that respondents acknowledged that the creation of higher-valued jobs must correspond to having the relevant skills. While upskilling can occur throughout one's career, respondents seem inclined to developing such skillsets in schools. This is based on how respondents were ambivalent about Malaysia's education system.

As many as 825 respondents (30.45%) rated Malaysia's progress in its education system as "poor" or "very poor". Similarly, 801 respondents 29.57% rated it as "good" or "very good".<sup>2</sup> In light of Malaysia's good grasp on technological advances, 2,391 respondents (88.26%) believed that their children should adopt Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education. This also suggests respondents' belief that technological jobs are the way forward in the creation of high-valued jobs.

<sup>2</sup> Remaining 1,083 respondents (39.98%) rated it as "average".





## What Next?

Sentiments towards STEM education are aligned with the 13th Malaysia Plan that emphasises youth development through education overhaul. This includes increasing compulsory education to 12 years (preschool to secondary), boosting STEM and AI literacy, and strengthening youth economic participation to address cost of living challenges.

## 4. TAKEAWAYS

Versa's survey provides a clear insight into the sentiments of Malaysian millennials and Gen Z towards the Madani government: generally satisfied with numerous factors but with deep concerns over the cost of living.

Nevertheless, there is a grounded sense of confidence and optimism in the government's ability to better develop Malaysia. In light of the exponential speed of technological advancement, there is a strong belief that children should adopt STEM education and Malaysia's education system should be revamped.



## ABOUT THIS STUDY

**Versa** is a Malaysian digital wealth management app that makes saving and investing easy and accessible, so you can achieve financial wellness.

**stratsea** is an online platform that showcases analyses and insights from Southeast Asian experts on regional and global issues.

*This analysis was conducted by stratsea, based on an internal survey by Versa in 2025, to explore possible collaborations with the Malaysian government and relevant stakeholders to develop a Malaysia for Malaysians. Versa collected the data, and stratsea provided the analytical framework as well as interpretation to draw broader social and policy insights.*

*The survey, consisting of 23 questions, gained responses from 2,709 respondents over 24 hours. Respondents were slightly more male-dominated (56.1%) compared to females (43.9%). Similarly, millennials had slightly more representation (55.92%) compared to Gen Z (44.08%). Additionally, the races of respondents were similar to Malaysia's 2020 census with 54.9% respondents being Malay, 38.5% being Chinese and 6.6% being Indian.*

