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# CORPORATE COUNSEL *NOW*

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**Learn Your World: Malaysia**

**Career Development**



To support your global practice, ACC Docket offers country-specific fun facts from your peers who've been there — literally.



**Economy**

GDP (PPP) US\$314.5 billion  
(2017 estimate)

**Population**

32,090,217

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(2018 estimate)

## **Corruption**

According to Transparency International's "2017 Corruption Perception Index," Malaysia was the 62nd "cleanest" (i.e., least corrupt) country out of the 176 countries surveyed.

## **Additional resources**

[www.focus-economics.com/countries/malaysia](http://www.focus-economics.com/countries/malaysia)  
[www.tourism.gov.my](http://www.tourism.gov.my)

Malaysia is a multiracial society where Malays, Chinese, and Indians, as well as many other ethnic groups, live together in peace and harmony. This multiculturalism has made Malaysia a gastronomical paradise and home to hundreds of colourful festivals. Malaysians love celebrating all festivals and socializing. The people of Malaysia are relaxed, warm, and friendly.

Geographically, Malaysia is almost as diverse as its culture. It has 11 states and two federal territories (Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya) that form Peninsular Malaysia. It is separated by the South China Sea from East Malaysia, which includes the two states of Sabah and Sarawak on the island of Borneo and a third federal territory, the island of Labuan.

Malaysia is a country that is different from other nations in Southeast Asia because of its unique combination of exotic, ancient culture and the highest level of development. The Petronas towers are two of the tallest buildings in Asia. Also, the biggest mosque in Asia is found in Malaysia, as well as the third longest bridge in the world, and much more. The sun shines year-round in Malaysia with almost no seasonal changes in climate, but the coolest days are from November to January when the temperature drops to 26 degrees Celsius (78 degrees Fahrenheit).

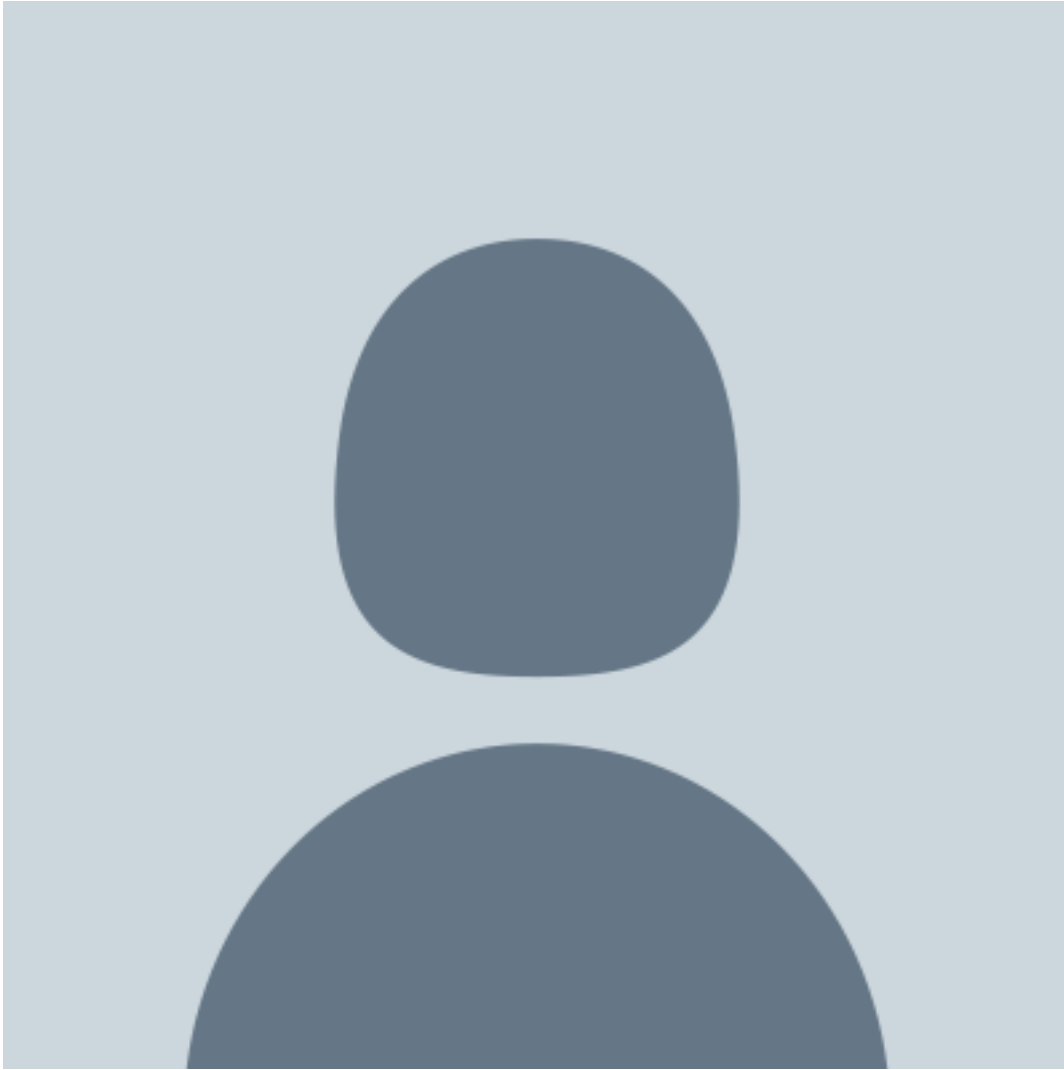
The working environment in Malaysia is polite and friendly. People don't normally wear a tie or a suit for meetings. Because of its casual nature, meetings don't usually start on time. However, punctuality is a good way to show respect and politeness. A meeting usually starts with a handshake and the exchange of business cards. Then, small talk occurs before the main agenda is discussed. The host will start the meeting by stating its objectives.

The national religion of Malaysia is Islam. As such, if the organization involved in the meeting is a government body or government-linked company, no pork or alcoholic drinks will be served as a business courtesy. However, smoking is allowed. When the meeting is over, all parties will again shake hands and thank each other. The host will normally accompany the guest to the main door or the lift.

The legal profession is highly respected in Malaysia, and lawyers are seen as role models for business practices. Most in-house counsel also serve as ethics and compliance officers.

During one's free time, socializing at sports events, fine dining, and drinking are among the top activities for most legal counsel in Malaysia, regardless of being in-house or external, or local or international.

[Sim Yen Lee](#)



Senior Legal Counsel for East Asia and Japan

Schneider Electric