



As the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the theme of Singapore Perspectives 2008, “**Scenarios for the Next Generation,**” is the Institute’s contribution to Singapore as it too embarks on the next phase of its development.

Singapore is a country that has prospered, achieving the per capita income of standard of living of the First World

Within this broad **political** spectrum, however, each passing year brings growing pluralism and complexity in society and therefore there is increasing negotiation with the state by various interest groups either for greater recognition and resources or for the autonomy to pursue their own pathways for development and self-fulfilment. Does the current social compact and development model need to be modified and updated in the light of those changes.

The state also faces the pressure of having to restructure the **economy**; to move to one that is innovation-driven and knowledge-based with new drivers for growth in the services, pharmaceuticals and biomedical sectors. The need to promote local entrepreneurship is ever more urgent. More critically, as a small and open economy, Singapore needs to be plugged into broader trends and be able to respond to them effectively. The lifeblood of the Singapore economy is connectivity, knowledge, technology and innovation. How can these resources be better harnessed to take Singapore to the next peak in the S-curve of development?

The **demographic and fiscal** challenges of a greying population and specific problems like our poorly-educated seniors with little savings increase the pressure for social spending, as do the threat of a widening income gap and job insecurity that are escalating as globalisation intensifies. Associated with these are the flows of people, **cultural** exchange and the broader and increasingly complex **geopolitical** landscape in which Singapore must locate herself. This may affect the way the Singapore nation defines itself. Responsiveness to change is a key determinant of future success as an economy and as a people. Will it mean that fundamental aspects of the political system will have to change? Are citizens and businesses prepared for the adaptive challenges ahead?

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SINGAPORE  
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