

**CHINA'S 13TH FIVE-YEAR PLAN:
ROAD MAP FOR
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

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Executive Summary

1. China is now in its 13th Five-Year Plan (FYP) period. The plan which was released in March 2016 after the annual National People's Congress (NPC) maps out China's economic and social development in the next five years (2016-2020).
2. The guidelines for the 13th FYP are "innovative development", "coordinated development", "green development", "open development" and "shared development".
3. The 13th FYP features a pro-active approach to programmes that are "social investment" in nature and a conservative approach to programmes seen as "social consumptions".
4. "Green development" and poverty reduction have received particular focus. Ten targets for "green development" are all obligatory, in contrast to other targets that are mostly anticipatory.
5. China is set to become a moderately prosperous society, with rural poverty largely eliminated by the current standard almost equivalent to the poverty line of US\$1 per day. A social safety net will be in place to meet the basic needs of the needy.
6. In 2020, China's population is projected to reach 1.42 billion, 60% or 850 million of whom will be living in urban areas. Over 40% of college-age cohorts will have access to higher education.
7. The slowing economy will create challenges for China's social development. Social expenditures grew rapidly under the previous Hu-Wen leadership. The 13th FYP period is likely to see considerably slower growth.
8. The pattern of unbalanced and unequal development is likely to persist, despite the 13th FYP's commitment to coordinated and shared development. Decentralised

financing coupled with large regional disparities will continue to make “social investment” unequal and social programmes fragmented.

9. The next five years may see major breakthroughs in “green development”, however, driven by the shift from manufacturing industries to services industries, particularly its move to cut overcapacity in some high energy consuming and highly polluting industries.
10. Overall, China’s social development will reach new heights during the 13th FYP period. The progress towards innovative, coordinated, green, open and shared development will be uneven, and will need longer time and deeper changes to achieve major breakthroughs.