



MINISTRY OF ECONOMY  
DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICS MALAYSIA

**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**LABOUR FORCE STATISTICS, MALAYSIA,  
MAY 2026**

**The unemployment rate in May 2026 stood at  
3.0 per cent, registering 513.4 thousand unemployed**

**PUTRAJAYA, July 10, 2026** - The unemployment rate in May 2026 stood at 3.0 per cent, registering 513.4 thousand unemployed, according to the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM). The figures were detailed in the **Labour Force Statistics, May 2026** release. The report provides insights on the Malaysia's labour supply, based on data from the Labour Force Survey conducted by DOSM.

Commenting on the overall performance for May 2026, DOSM stated that the country's labour market improved moderately in line with stable economic growth, registering steady employment growth and a persistently low unemployment rate, amid the global supply crisis. Therefore, the labour force continued its upward momentum during the month, rising by 0.1 per cent month-on-month to 17.34 million persons (April 2026: 17.33 million persons). Accordingly, the labour force participation rate stood at 70.9 per cent, the same as in the previous month.

On the same note, the number of employed persons continued to increase in May 2026, with a marginal rise of 0.1 per cent to record 16.82 million persons (April 2026: 16.82 million persons). In the meantime, the unemployed recorded an addition of 0.3 per cent, reaching 513.4 thousand persons (April 2026: 511.8 thousand persons). May's unemployment rate remained at 3.0 per cent, as in the prior month.

According to DOSM, 75.0 per cent of the total employed persons were in the employees' category. This category went up slightly by 0.04 per cent to 12.61 million persons in May 2026 (April 2026: 12.61 million persons). Similarly, the number of own-account workers increased by 0.1 per cent to 3.15 million persons (April 2026: 3.15 million persons).

From a sectoral perspective, the Services sector continued to be the main contributor to total employment in the current month, with Wholesale & retail trade; Accommodation and Food & beverage service activities; and Information & communication activities accounting for the largest share of the employment. Other

major sectors, including Manufacturing, Construction, Agriculture, and Mining & Quarrying, also registered increases in the number of employed persons in May 2026.

Providing further details on the unemployment situation in May 2026, DOSM highlighted that 79.5 per cent of the total unemployed persons were actively unemployed, referring to those who were available for work and actively seeking jobs. This group increased by 0.2 per cent to 408.0 thousand persons (April 2026: 407.1 thousand persons). Among the actively unemployed, 63.9 per cent were unemployed for less than three months, while 5.0 per cent experienced long-term unemployment for more than a year. Meanwhile, those who believed that no jobs were available, or the inactively unemployed, went up by 0.7 per cent to 105.5 thousand persons (April 2026: 104.7 thousand persons).

The unemployment rate among youths aged 15 to 24 years remained unchanged at 10.2 per cent in May 2026, recording 291.6 thousand unemployed youths (April 2026: 290.8 thousand persons). Likewise, the unemployment rate for those aged 15 to 30 years stood at 6.3 per cent, with 396.0 thousand unemployed youths registered during the month (April 2026: 394.7 thousand persons).

Meanwhile, the number of persons outside the labour force in May 2026 increased marginally by 0.04 per cent to 7.10 million persons, compared to the preceding month (April 2026: 7.10 million persons). Housework/family responsibilities remained the primary reason for being outside the labour force, accounting for 43.3 per cent, while schooling/training ranked second at 40.5 per cent.

Concluding the statement, Malaysia's labour market is expected to remain resilient in the coming months, supported by favourable domestic economic conditions, sustained investment activity and ongoing structural transformation. Despite external uncertainties that may affect hiring activities in some industries, overall labour market stability is expected to be sustained. Continued efforts to enhance labour productivity, strengthen workforce adaptability and better align labour supply with industry demand will be essential in sustaining quality employment and supporting long-term economic growth.

The Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM) is conducting the **Economic Census 2026 (BE2026)**, with themed “*Data Nadi Ekonomi Rakyat*”. The sixth Economic Census, will be carried out from **5<sup>th</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2026**. BE2026 aims to collect comprehensive and structured data from all registered and unregistered business establishments in Malaysia to assess the nation’s economic performance, structure and characteristics in an evidence-based manner.

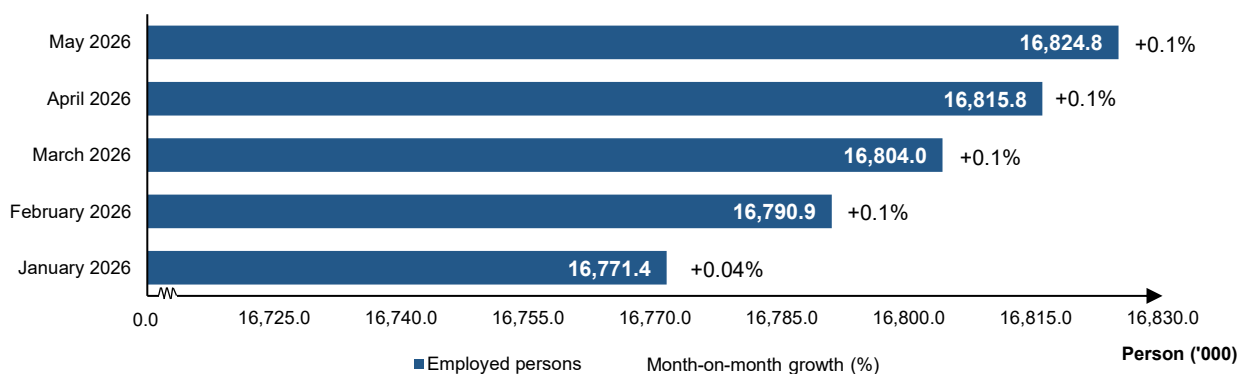
**Malaysia** has, for the first time, successfully secured the **top position** globally in the biennial **Open Data Inventory (ODIN) 2024/25** report released by Open Data

Watch (ODW), surpassing 197 other countries. This achievement marks a significant leap from its 67<sup>th</sup> position in the ODIN 2022/23 assessment.

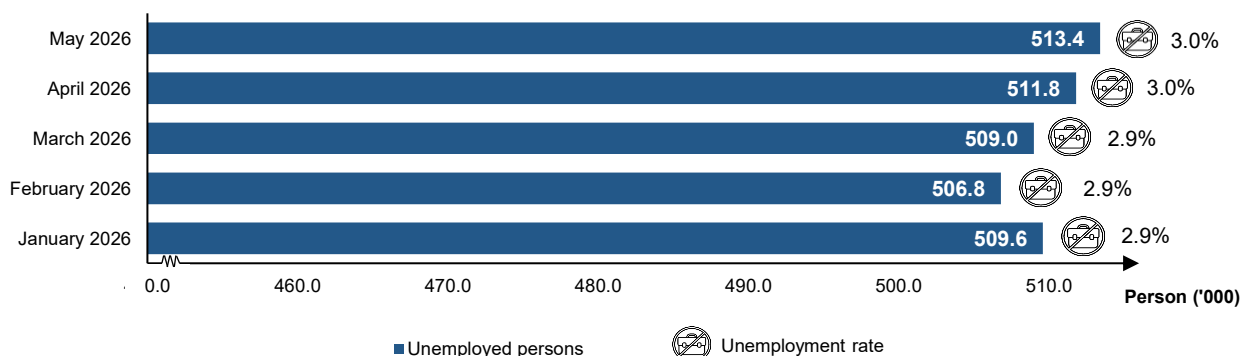
**OpenDOSM NextGen** is a medium that provides data catalogue and visualisations to facilitate users' analysis and can be accessed through <https://open.dosm.gov.my>.

**MyLabourHub** is a comprehensive platform that integrates institutions, data and technology to deliver relevant, accurate and accessible labour market information. Access the labour market data for Malaysia at <https://mylabourhub.dosm.gov.my>.

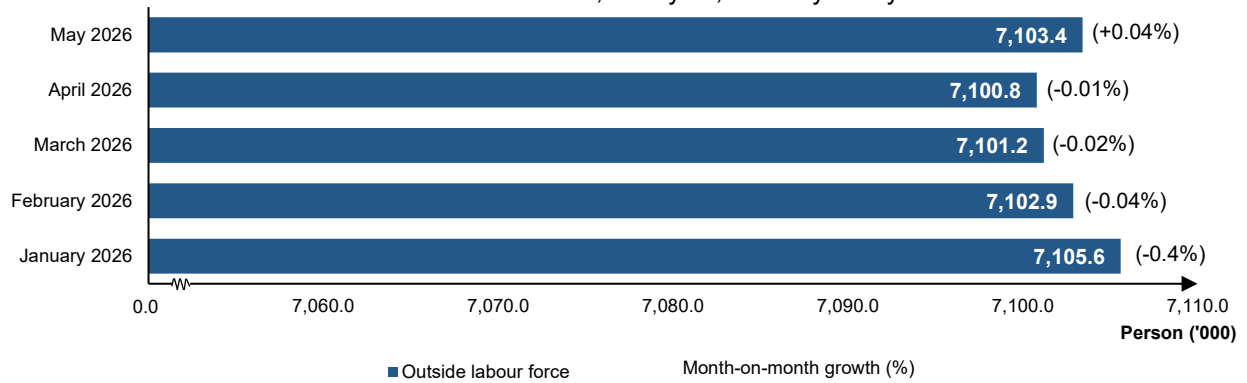
**Chart 1: Employed persons, Malaysia, January - May 2026**



**Chart 2: Unemployment, Malaysia, January - May 2026**



**Chart 3: Outside labour force, Malaysia, January - May 2026**



Note: The Labour Force Survey statistics for January 2026 onwards are estimated using projection data based on the latest current population estimates

Released by:

**THE OFFICE OF CHIEF STATISTICIAN MALAYSIA**  
**DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICS MALAYSIA**  
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