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MINISTRY OF ECONOMY
DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICS MALAYSIA

EMPLOYEE WAGES STATISTICS (FORMAL SECTOR) FOURTH QUARTER 2023

The median monthly wages for formal sector increased 4.9 per cent year-on-year to RM2,900 in December 2023. While the number of Malaysian formal employees was 6.67 million persons in December 2023 (November 2023: 6.68 million persons, October 2023: 6.70 million persons), an increase of 1.8 per cent as compared to the same month in the previous year (November 2023: 1.8%, October 2023: 1.9%).

In terms of formal employees by sex, male formal employees accounted for 55.5 per cent of the total formal employees or equivalent to 3.70 million persons in December 2023. The median monthly wage for male formal employees stood at RM2,945 while female formal employees which comprised 44.5 per cent (2.97 million persons) of total formal employees received median monthly wage of RM2,845.

Looking at detailed wage statistics by age group indicates the group that received the highest median monthly wages was for the age group of 45 to 49 years which is RM3,927 in December 2023. This age group also received the highest median monthly wages in October 2023 (RM3,500) and November 2023 (RM3,500). In December 2023, all age groups experienced an increase in median monthly wages compared to December last year, except for those below 20 years old. The age group of 60 to 64 years old experienced the highest year-on-year growth of median monthly wages with 7.4 per cent to RM2,900 in December 2023. Meanwhile, the median monthly wages of Malaysian formal employees under 20 years old was RM1,500 in December 2023, which remained unchanged for 19 consecutive months.

Further disaggregation of wages situation by economic activity, all sectors recorded a year-on-year increase in median monthly wages. Mining and quarrying sector received the highest median monthly wages of RM6,844 in December 2023, despite only representing 0.6 per cent of total formal employees. This sector also experienced the highest year-on-year growth of 7.7 per cent compared to the same month in the previous year. However, Agriculture sector which comprised of 1.9 per cent of total formal employees, recorded the lowest median monthly wages of RM2,300 with an increase of 3.3 per cent in December 2023.

The median monthly wages witnessed a positive year-on-year growth for all states in the last three months of 2023. Three states posted a higher median monthly wages compared to the national median monthly wages of RM2,900 with Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur posted the highest median monthly wages of RM4,045, followed by Pulau Pinang at RM3,245 and Selangor at RM3,164. Meanwhile, Kelantan, Perlis and Sabah registered the lowest median monthly wages in December 2023, with RM1,600, RM1,700 and RM1,882 respectively.

In terms of wage distribution in December 2023, 31.2 per cent of Malaysian formal employees earned a monthly wages below RM2,000, marking a decrease from 33.7 per cent as compared to the previous year. In the meantime, 10.7 per cent of Malaysian formal employees earned monthly wages of RM10,000 and above in December 2023. In addition, the percentile analysis shows that the 10th percentile of Malaysian formal employees earned wages of RM1,500 or less. However, this group registered an increase of 5.1 per cent in monthly wages as compared to the same month last year (December 2022: RM1,427). The wage ratio between the 90th and the 10th percentile indicates that the top 10 per cent of wage earners received more than six times the earnings of the lowest 10 per cent of wage earners.

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