



MINISTRY OF ECONOMY
DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICS MALAYSIA

LABOUR FORCE SURVEY REPORT, FIRST QUARTER 2026



MALAYSIA LABOUR FORCE

FIRST QUARTER 2026

The number of unemployed dropped to **506.5 thousand persons** in first quarter of 2026, with the unemployment rate declined to **2.9 per cent**

UNEMPLOYMENT

UNEMPLOYED PERSONS

The number of unemployed persons reduced by 0.4 per cent

▼ -0.4%
506.5 thousand
Q1 2026
508.3 thousand
Q4 2025[†]



UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

2.9%

Q1 2026

▼ -0.1 pp

3.0%

Q4 2025[†]

Unemployed and Unemployment Rate, Q1 2024[†] - Q1 2026



EMPLOYED PERSONS

Employed Persons by Employment Status, Q1 2026



76.3%
Employees



17.5%
Own-account workers



3.8%
Employers



2.4%
Unpaid family workers

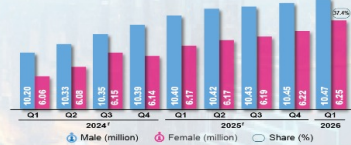
EMPLOYED PERSONS

16.73 million
Q1 2026

▲ +0.3%

16.68 million
Q4 2025[†]

Employed Persons by Sex, Q1 2024[†] - Q1 2026



LABOUR FORCE

LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE

70.9%

Q4 2025[†]

70.9%

Q1 2026

Male

LFP by Sex, Q4 2025[†] - Q1 2026

Female

Q1 2026: **83.3%**

Q4 2025[†]: **83.5%**

Q1 2026: **56.8%**

Q4 2025[†]: **56.6%**

▲ +0.2pp

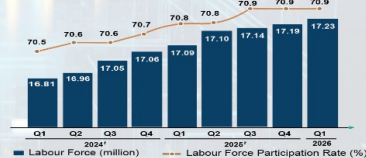
LABOUR FORCE

17.23 million
Q1 2026

▲ +0.3%

17.19 million
Q4 2025[†]

Labour Force and Labour Force Participation Rate, Q1 2024[†] - Q1 2026



OUTSIDE LABOUR FORCE

Housework/ family responsibilities were the largest component of the outside labour force



45.1%

Housework/ family responsibilities



40.1%

Schooling/ training program

OUTSIDE LABOUR FORCE

7.08 million
Q1 2026

▲ +0.2%

7.06 million
Q4 2025[†]

The number of outside labour force increased by 0.2 per cent to record **7.08 million persons**



Notes: ▲ Quarter-on-quarter ; pp Percentage point
† The Quarterly Labour Force Survey Statistics from first quarter of 2024 were revised based on the latest current population estimates

Source: Labour Force Survey Report, Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM)



- The labour force expanded by 0.3 per cent in the first quarter of 2026, adding 46.6 thousand persons to reach a total of 17.23 million persons (Q4 2025[r]: 17.19 million persons). The Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) stood at 70.9 per cent in the first quarter of 2026, maintaining the same level observed in the preceding quarter.
- The number of employed persons continued to register a positive growth in the first quarter of 2026, increasing by 0.3 per cent (+48.5 thousand persons) to 16.73 million persons (Q4 2025[r]: 16.68 million persons). On a year-on-year comparison, total employment edged up by 1.0 per cent, or equivalent to an increase of 161.5 thousand persons compared to the first quarter of 2025 (Q1 2025[r]: 16.56 million persons).
- The number of unemployed persons edged down by 0.4 per cent during the first quarter of 2026, reaching 506.5 thousand compared to 508.3 thousand persons in the previous quarter. Meanwhile, the unemployment rate decreased by 0.1 percentage point to 2.9 per cent. Year-on-year comparison showed the number of unemployed persons fell by 3.1 per cent (-16.1 thousand persons) compared to first quarter of 2025 (Q1 2025[r]: -29.0 thousand persons), leading to a 2.9 per cent unemployment rate, an improvement from the 3.1 per cent seen in the previous year.
- At the national level, the LFPR remained unchanged at 70.9 per cent in the first quarter of 2026. Five states surpassed the national LFPR, with W.P. Putrajaya recording the highest rate at 79.2 per cent, followed by Selangor (78.0%) and W.P. Kuala Lumpur (76.0%).
- From a state level perspective, eight states recorded unemployment rates below the national level of 2.9 per cent. Throughout the quarter, W.P. Putrajaya registered the lowest unemployment rate at 1.3 per cent, followed by Pahang at 1.9 per cent, as well as Selangor and Melaka at 2.0 per cent.

Note: [r] - The Quarterly Labour Force Survey Statistics from first quarter of 2024 were revised based on the latest current population estimates.

The full publication of the Labour Force Survey Report, First Quarter 2026 can be downloaded through eStatistic Portal.

Released by:

DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICS MALAYSIA

12th MAY 2026

Contact person:

Baharudin Mohamad

Public Relation Officer

Strategic Communication and International Division

Department of Statistics Malaysia

Tel : +603-8090 4681

Fax : +603-8888 9248

Email : baharudin[at]dosm.gov.my

Copyright ©2026 Department of Statistics Malaysia Official Portal. All Rights Reserved.