



MEDIA STATEMENT

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GRADUATES STATISTICS 2024

***The number of graduates increased to 5.98 million in 2024,
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PUTRAJAYA, OCTOBER 31st, 2025 – The number of graduates increased to 5.98 million in 2024, with the unemployment rate declining to 3.2 per cent, in line with the strong growth of the labour market, the Department of Statistics, Malaysia (DOSM) stated today in the release of **Graduates Statistics 2024**. The report describes the statistics of overall graduates in the labour market in 2023 by demographic and socio-economic characteristics. Graduates in this report are defined as individuals with the highest certificate obtained from universities, colleges, polytechnics, recognised bodies or equivalent, with a study duration of at least two years.

According to the Chief Statistician of Malaysia, Dato' Sri Dr. Mohd Uzir Mahidin, "The positive economic and labour market environment throughout 2024 contributed to an increase in the number of graduates, now totalling 5.98 million persons or 22.3 per cent of the working-age population aged 15 years and above. Of this total, 5.14 million were active in the labour force, resulting in a high Graduate Labour Force Participation Rate (GLFPR) of 86.0 per cent. Degree holders accounted for 54.9 per cent (3.28 million persons), while diploma holders represented 45.1 per cent (2.70 million persons). Year-on-year, the number of degree graduates in the labour force rose by 5.4 per cent, while diploma holders increased by 3.2 per cent, driven by better job opportunities and lower unemployment rates."

In line with the MADANI Government's commitment to strengthening graduate employability, various initiatives have been introduced under Budget 2024, including the opening of access to up to RM2 billion in funds from the HRD Corporation levy to finance the salaries of new graduates; the continuation of proven programmes such as the Graduates Training and Placement Scheme (MySTEP) which provides training and job

placement opportunities in the public sector and GLCs; the Graduate Entrepreneur Academy (PUSH) to encourage innovation-based entrepreneurship; as well as the e-Latih Programme which offers free online courses to enhance the digital and professional skills of graduates; the launch of the Graduate Apprenticeship Programme and the Graduate Innovation Fund, and the strengthening of employability programmes through the MyNext Graduate Employability Grant (MyNext-GEG) by TalentCorp. These initiatives reflect the government's continuous efforts in empowering a high-knowledge workforce, in line with the nation's aspiration towards a high-income and innovation-driven economy.

In 2024, the number of employed graduates grew by 4.6 per cent to 4.98 million persons compared to 4.76 million in 2023, in tandem with Malaysia's improving labour market. About two-thirds, or 67.8 per cent, of employed graduates were in the Skilled category, amounting to 3.38 million persons, with most working as Professionals (57.2%), followed by Technicians and Associate Professionals (24.4%) and Managers (18.4%). Graduates in the Semi-skilled category made up 31.0 per cent (1.54 million persons), while those in the Low-skilled category accounted for only 1.2 per cent (57.5 thousand persons). Employment among Skilled and Semi-skilled graduates each recorded positive growth of 5.0 per cent and 3.6 per cent respectively, while the Low-skilled category increased by 11.0 per cent.

Elaborating further, the Chief Statistician stated, "In terms of employment status among graduates, Employees formed the largest share at 86.4 per cent, totalling 4.30 million persons in 2024, an increase of 3.5 per cent year-on-year. The Employer category, representing 5.6 per cent, rose significantly by 10.4 per cent to 277.6 thousand persons. Similarly, the number of Self-employed graduates, constituting 7.2 per cent of employed graduates, increased by 16.0 per cent to 360.5 thousand persons in 2024. Meanwhile, Unpaid family workers accounted for the remaining 0.8 per cent, with 37.9 thousand persons recorded."

By economic sector, the majority of employed graduates were in the Services sector, comprising 77.6 per cent or 3.86 million persons, followed by the Manufacturing sector (13.4%; 667.3 thousand persons) and the Construction sector (6.3%; 313.1 thousand persons). The Agriculture and Mining & Quarrying sectors accounted for 1.7 per cent (83.9 thousand persons) and 1.0 per cent (49.2 thousand persons), respectively.

Dato' Sri Dr. Mohd Uzir Mahidin explained, "Skill-related underemployment remains a challenge, not only in Malaysia but also globally. Malaysia has taken proactive measures to address skill-related underemployment and remains committed to aligning workforce qualifications with labour market needs. In 2024, the number of graduates employed below their qualifications increased by 3.9 per cent to 1.60 million persons, bringing the graduate skill-related underemployment rate down to 32.2 per cent. This achievement

places Malaysia ahead of countries such as South Korea (36.8%), Indonesia (42.2%), and the Philippines (56.7%), demonstrating efforts to reduce skill mismatch. Although Malaysia still trails advanced economies such as the United Kingdom (28.5%), the United States (27.3%), and Australia (27.5%), the downward trend indicated potential for further improvement in the coming years.”

Details indicate that individuals aged 24 years and below recorded the highest rate of skill-related underemployment at 66.0 per cent in 2024, a decline of 1.0 percentage point compared to the previous year. This high rate typically involves recent graduates accepting employment below their qualifications to gain experience and strengthen their position in the labour market. In contrast, individuals aged 45 years and above recorded a lower rate of 18.6 per cent, reflecting their experience and skills, which enable them to secure more suitable and stable employment.

Another aspect of underemployment includes graduates working less than 30 hours a week due to insufficient work availability but are able and willing to work additional hours. In line with rapid economic development, the number of graduates in time-related underemployment increased by 17.6 per cent year-on-year to 41.7 thousand persons. Correspondingly, the graduate time-related underemployment rate edged up slightly to 0.8 per cent from 0.7 per cent in 2023.

Although the national Female Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) stood at 56.2 per cent in 2024, the Female Graduate Labour Force Participation Rate (GLFPR) was significantly higher at 83.4 per cent. Overall, Malaysia’s GLFPR rose to 86.0 per cent in 2024, up by 0.3 percentage points from 85.7 per cent in 2023. For males, the rate also increased by 0.9 percentage points to 89.0 per cent (2023: 88.6%). At the state level, six states recorded GLFPRs above the national average in 2023, led by Johor (89.6%), followed by Selangor (88.3%), W.P. Kuala Lumpur (87.9%), Sabah (87.6%), W.P. Labuan (86.9%), and W.P. Putrajaya (86.3%).

On graduate unemployment in 2024, the Chief Statistician stated, “The graduate unemployment rate declined by 0.2 percentage points to 3.2 per cent compared to 3.4 per cent in the previous year. Consequently, the number of unemployed graduates decreased by 0.8 per cent to 165.9 thousand persons in 2024, from 167.3 thousand in 2023. By educational attainment, the number of unemployed degree holders decreased marginally by 0.1 per cent to 91.5 thousand persons, while unemployed diploma holders fell by 1.8 per cent to 74.4 thousand persons. A more positive trend was observed among active job-seeking graduates, with 61.1 per cent securing employment within three months. Nevertheless, 14.0 per cent of graduates remained outside the labour force, primarily due to continued studies or training programmes (32.9%) and household or family responsibilities (32.5%).”

On graduate salaries and wages, Dato' Sri Dr. Mohd Uzir Mahidin said, "Graduate salaries continued to rise in 2024, with the median monthly salary and wage increasing by 2.5 per cent to RM4,521 (2023: RM4,409), while the mean salary rose by 8.1 per cent to RM5,330 (2023: RM4,933). The median salary represents the midpoint of graduate earnings, while the mean salary captures the overall average, which may be influenced by high-income earners. Salary growth was recorded across all occupational skill categories; Skilled up by 1.1 per cent to RM5,723 (2023: RM5,663), Semi-skilled up by 7.4 per cent to RM2,550 (2023: RM2,375), and Low-skilled up by 3.9 per cent to RM1,990 (2023: RM1,915)."

All states recorded positive growth in both median and mean monthly graduate salaries in 2024 compared to the previous year. The three states with the highest median graduate salaries were W.P. Kuala Lumpur (RM5,888; +3.4%), followed by W.P. Putrajaya (RM5,723; +15.3%) and Selangor (RM5,207; +8.7%). In terms of mean monthly graduate salaries, W.P. Putrajaya recorded the highest at RM6,471, followed by W.P. Kuala Lumpur (RM6,212) and Selangor (RM5,693), with respective growth of 6.4 per cent, 7.5 per cent, and 6.3 per cent. These states remain the nation's key economic and administrative hubs, offering high-skilled employment opportunities and contributing to robust salary growth among urban graduates.

Concluding the findings of the 2024 Graduate Statistics, the Chief Statistician stated, "Despite prevailing global economic uncertainties, Malaysia's labour market continued to demonstrate strong resilience throughout 2024. In line with Budget 2025, the Government remains committed to supporting student welfare and strengthening graduate employability through various initiatives focused on developing a highly skilled workforce. Moving forward, efforts to align the education system with labour market demands and to expand the use of artificial intelligence (AI)-based learning tools will ensure that future graduates are well-prepared to contribute to Malaysia's sustainable and innovation-driven economic growth."

ASEAN-Malaysia 2025 Chairmanship: The Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM) will chair the 15th ASEAN Community Statistical System Committee (ACSS15) which aims to strengthen the statistical cooperation towards sustainable regional development.

Malaysia, for the first time, ranked as number one (1) 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 67th position in the ODIN 2022/23 assessment.

The Government of Malaysia has declared October 20th as National Statistics Day (MyStats Day), with the theme 'Statistics is the Essence of Life'. Meanwhile, the Fourth World Statistics Day was celebrated on 20th October 2025, with the theme 'Driving Change with Quality Statistics and Data for Everyone'.

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>

Released by:

**THE OFFICE OF CHIEF STATISTICIAN MALAYSIA
DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICS MALAYSIA
31st OCTOBER 2025**

Exhibit 1: Principal statistics of graduates, Malaysia, 2023 & 2024

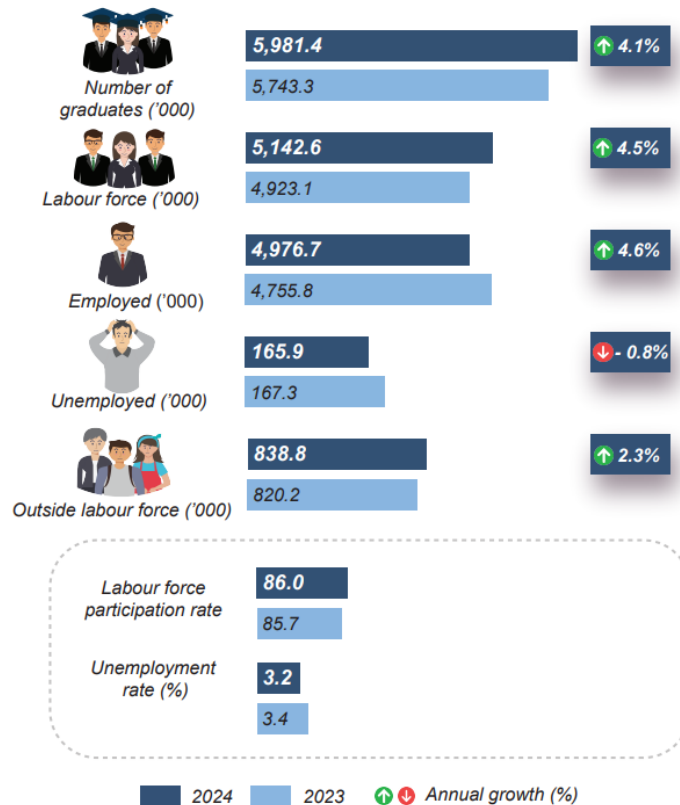


Exhibit 2: Principal statistics of graduates by certificates, Malaysia, 2023 & 2024

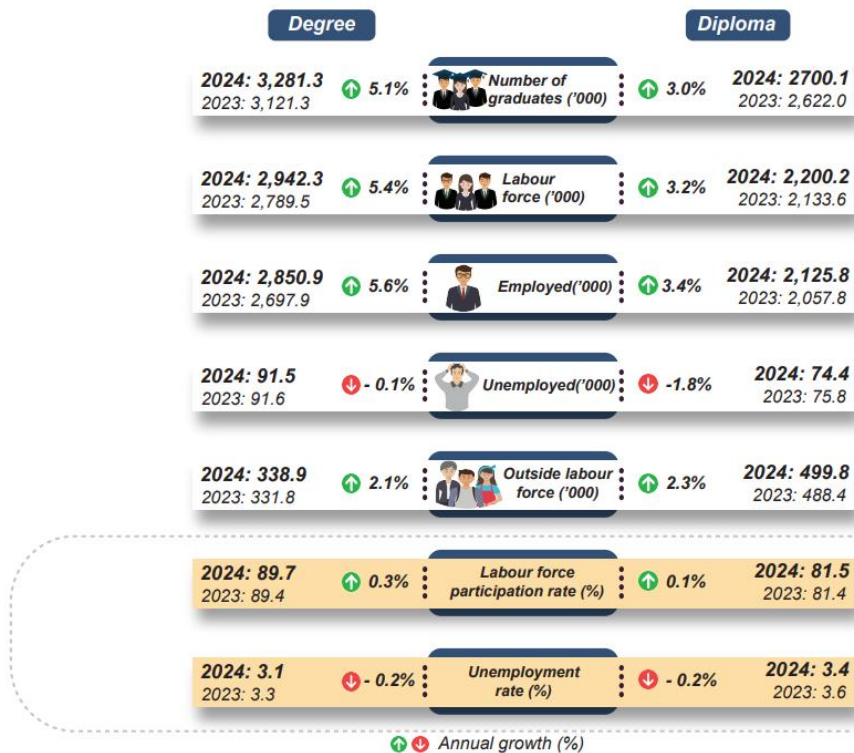


Chart 1: Graduates labour force participation rate and unemployment rate, Malaysia, 2020 – 2024

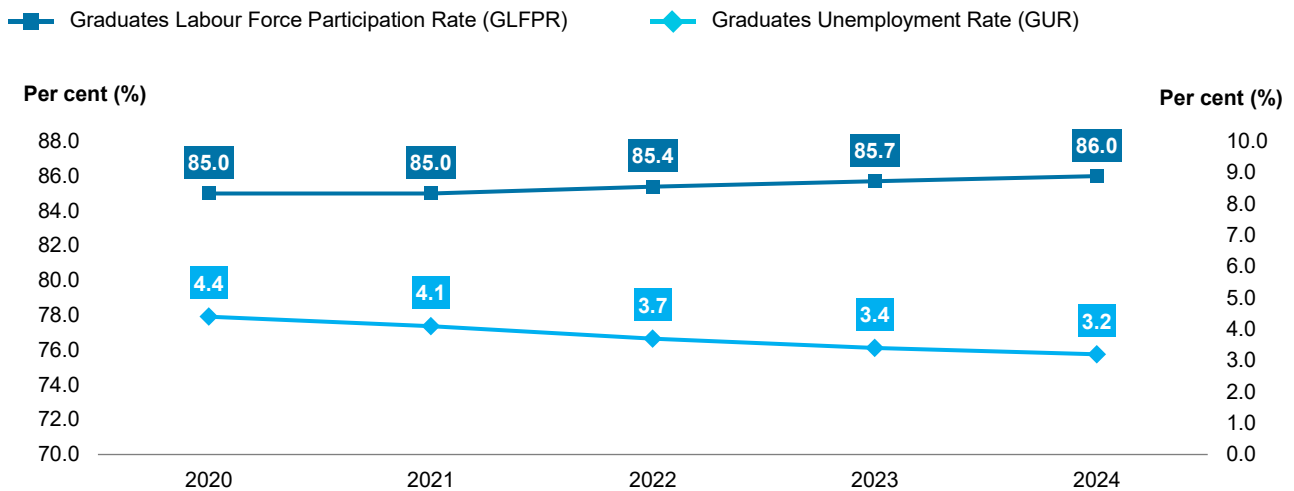


Exhibit 3: Graduates median and mean of salaries and wages by states, Malaysia, 2024

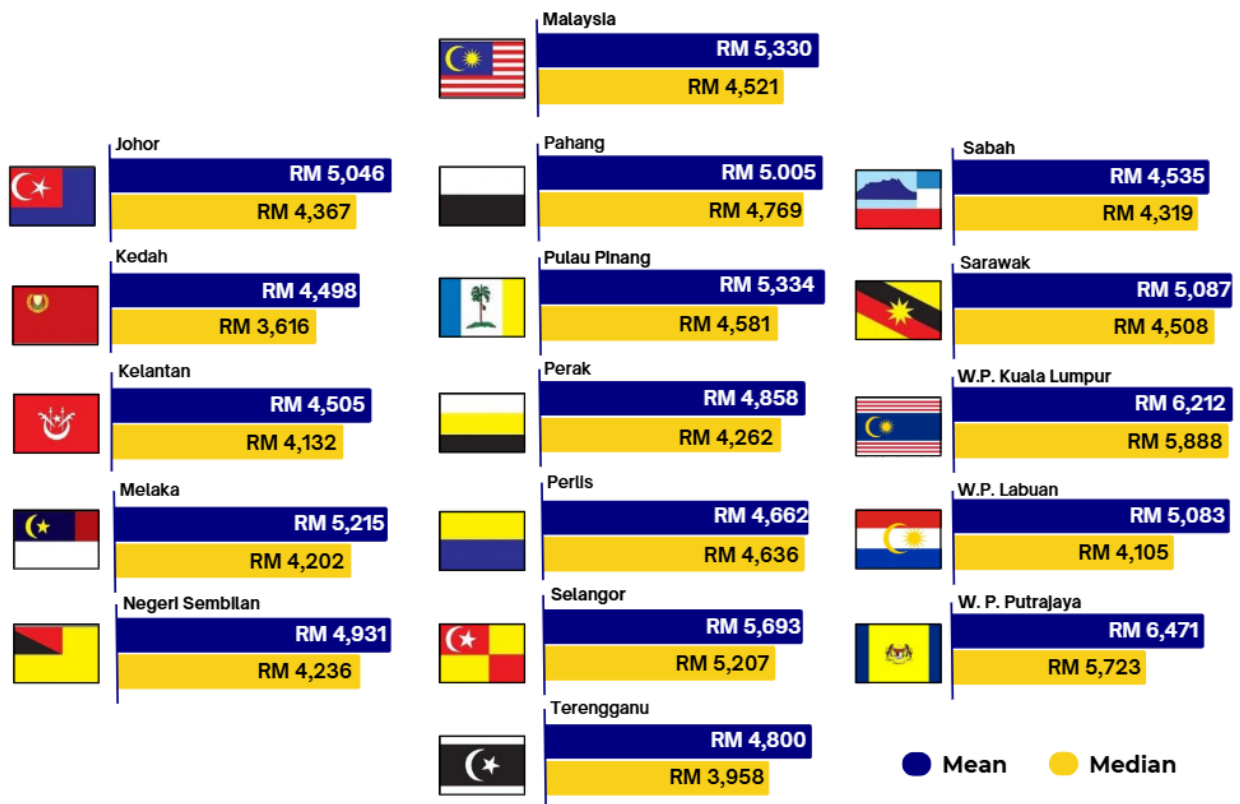


Chart 2: Skill-related underemployment of graduates, Malaysia, 2020 – 2024

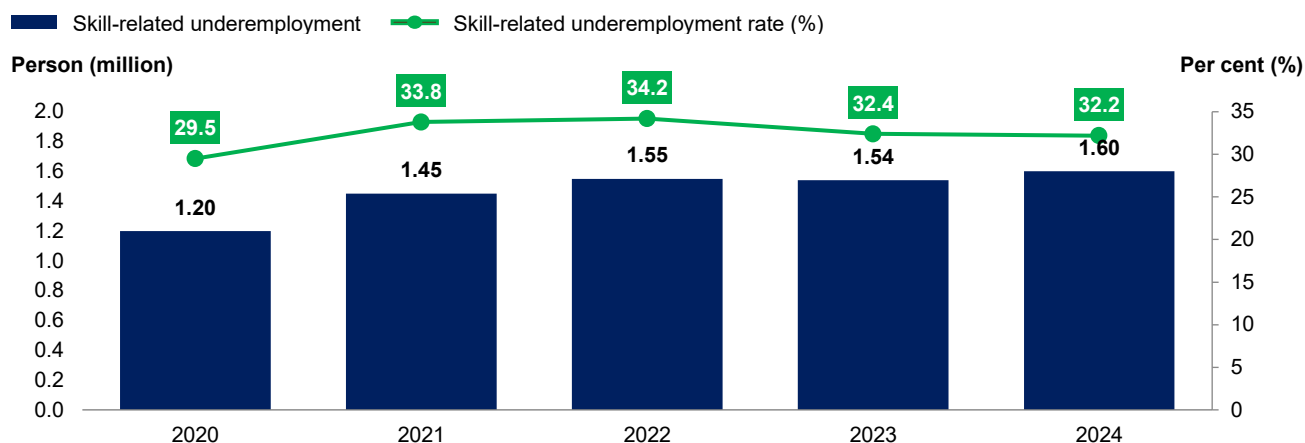


Chart 3: Time-related underemployment of graduates, Malaysia, 2020 – 2024

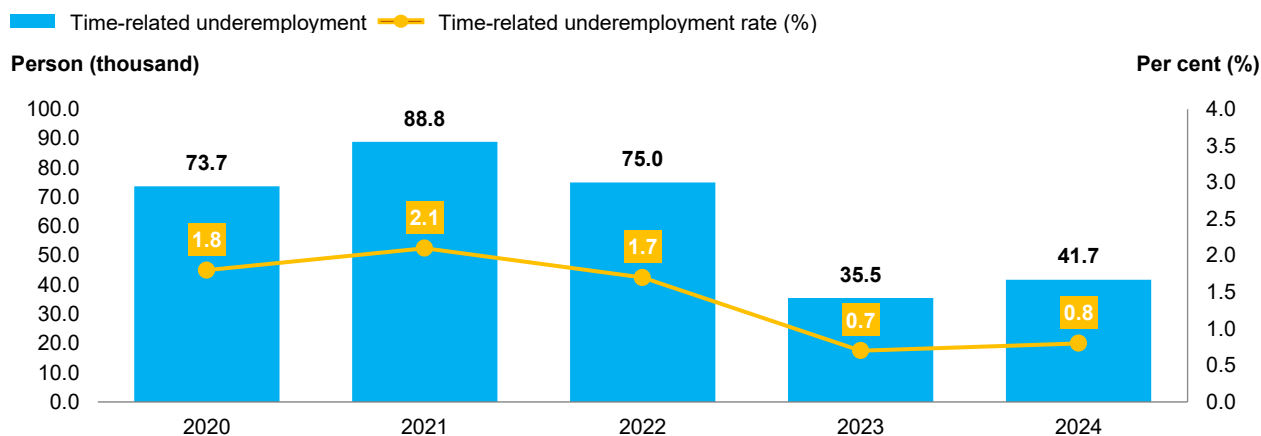
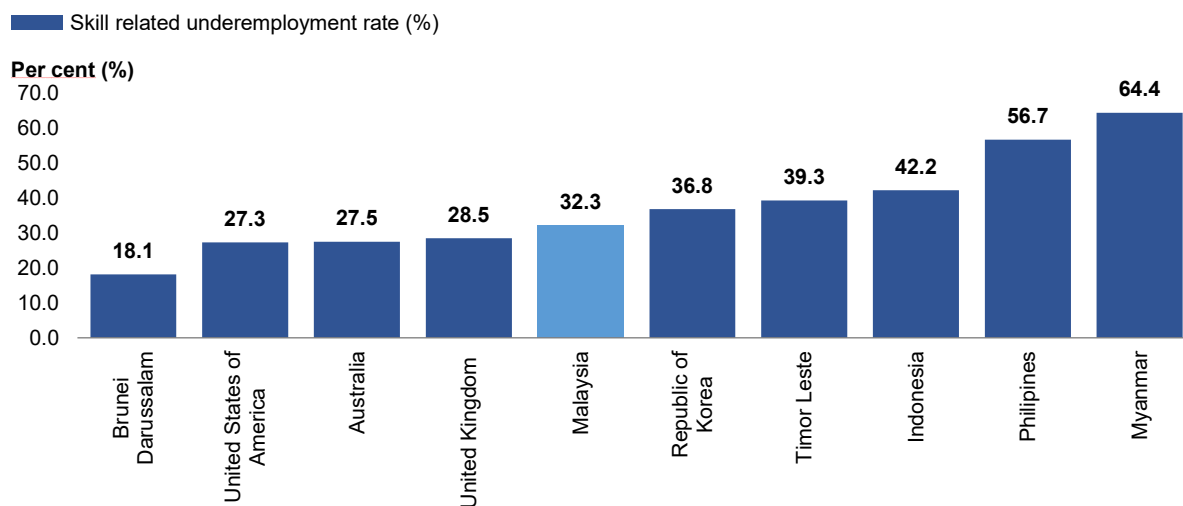


Chart 4: Graduates skill-related underemployment of selected countries, 2024



Sources: Calculation based on ILOSTATS database, 2024