



MINISTRY OF ECONOMY
DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICS MALAYSIA

MEDIA STATEMENT

**LABOUR FORCE STATISTICS, MALAYSIA,
FEBRUARY 2026**

The unemployment rate in February 2026 remained at 2.9 per cent, registering a lower number of unemployed at 506.8 thousand persons

PUTRAJAYA, APRIL 10, 2026 – The unemployment rate in February 2026 remained at 2.9 per cent, registering a lower number of unemployed at 506.8 thousand persons according to the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM). The figures were detailed in the **Statistics of the Labour Force, Malaysia, February 2026** release. The report provides insights on the Malaysia's labour supply, based on data from the Labour Force Survey conducted by DOSM.

Enlightening on the overall performance for February 2026, Chief Statistician Malaysia, Dato' Sri Dr. Mohd Uzir Mahidin said, "Malaysia's economic conditions in February 2026 remained broadly resilient, underpinned by steady domestic demand and continued expansion in the Services sector as well as investment-related activities. These economic conditions were reflected in a labour market that remained stable while showing early signs of gradual structural adjustment. As a result, the labour force during the month portrayed further enhancement, expanding by 0.1 per cent to 17.30 million persons as compared to the previous month (January 2026: 17.28 million persons). February's labour force participation rate held steady at 70.9 per cent, unchanged from the previous month."

The number of employed persons in February 2026 was on an uptrend, recording a slight increase of 0.1 per cent to 16.79 million persons compared to 16.77 million persons in January 2026. Meanwhile, the number of unemployed declined 0.6 per cent to 506.8 thousand persons (January 2026: 509.6 thousand persons). The unemployment rate in February 2026 stood at 2.9 per cent, as in the prior month.

According to the Chief Statistician Malaysia, the employees' category comprised 75.0 per cent of the total employed persons. This category went up by 0.1 per cent to 12.59 million persons during the month (January 2026: 12.59 million

persons). In addition, the number of own-account workers rose 0.3 per cent to 3.13 million persons as compared to the previous month (January 2026: 3.13 million persons).

The number of employed persons in the Services sector was on an increasing trend in February 2026. Within the sector, Wholesale and retail trade remained as the main contributor, followed by Accommodation and food & beverage services, as well as Information and communication activities. Employment in the Agriculture, Manufacturing, and Construction sectors recorded increases, while the Mining & quarrying sector registered a decline.

Dato' Sri Dr. Mohd Uzir Mahidin also highlighted that the number of individuals working less than 30 hours per week posted a decrease of 0.9 per cent to 240.4 thousand persons during the month, compared to 242.7 thousand persons in the previous month. In contrast, time-related underemployment, which refers to those working less than 30 hours per week but willing and available to work additional hours, declined by 2.1 per cent to 130.7 thousand persons (January 2026: 133.5 thousand persons). The time-related underemployment rate was at 0.8 per cent in February 2026, the same as in January 2026.

Further insight into the unemployment scenario for February 2026, the Chief Statistician Malaysia stated that the actively unemployed, or those who were available for work and were actively seeking jobs, accounted for 79.9 per cent of the total unemployed persons. This group edged down by 0.5 per cent to 404.7 thousand persons (January 2026: 406.9 thousand persons). Among the actively unemployed, 64.1 per cent were those who had been unemployed for less than three months, while those who were in long-term unemployment for more than a year encompassed 4.9 per cent. In the meantime, those who believed that there were no jobs available, or the inactively unemployed dropped 0.7 per cent to 102.1 thousand persons as compared to 102.8 thousand persons in the previous month.

The unemployment rate among youths aged 15 to 24 years stood at 10.2 per cent to record 288.7 thousand unemployed youths in February 2026 (January 2026: 10.2%; 289.7 thousand persons). Similarly, the unemployment rate for youths aged 15 to 30 years remained unchanged at 6.2 per cent, with 389.5 thousand unemployed youths compared to the preceding month (January 2026: 390.5 thousand persons).

In February 2026, the number of persons outside the labour force decreased marginally by 0.04 per cent to 7.10 million persons, compared with 7.11 million persons in the previous month. Housework/ family responsibilities were the main reasons for the outside labour force, accounting for 43.2 per cent, followed by schooling/ training category at 40.4 per cent.

Concluding the statement, Malaysia's economic and labour market outlook in the coming months is anticipated to remain stable, supported by firm domestic fundamentals and ongoing structural improvements. However, the growth trajectory is

foreseen to be more moderate, requiring continued adaptability from the economic environment and the labour force. At the same time, this situation should be assessed in light of the current scenario of the global energy crisis.

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 **5th January to 31st 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 67th 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 and February 2026

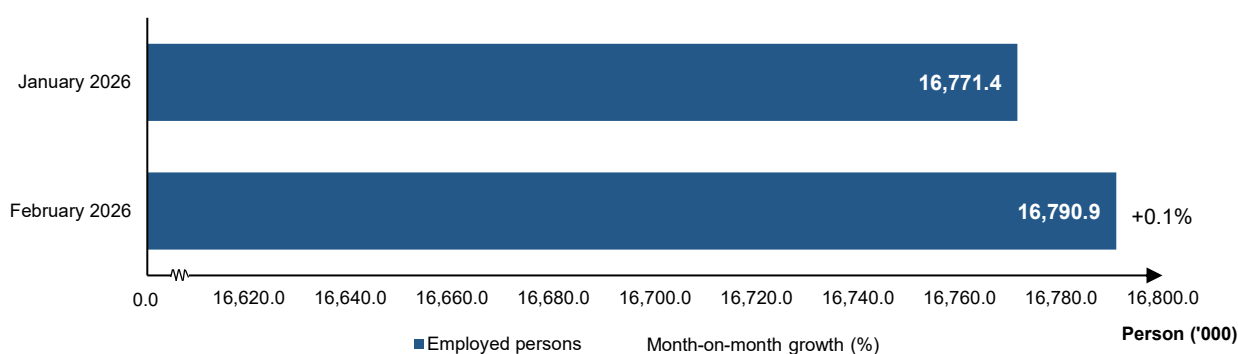


Chart 2: Unemployment, Malaysia, January and February 2026

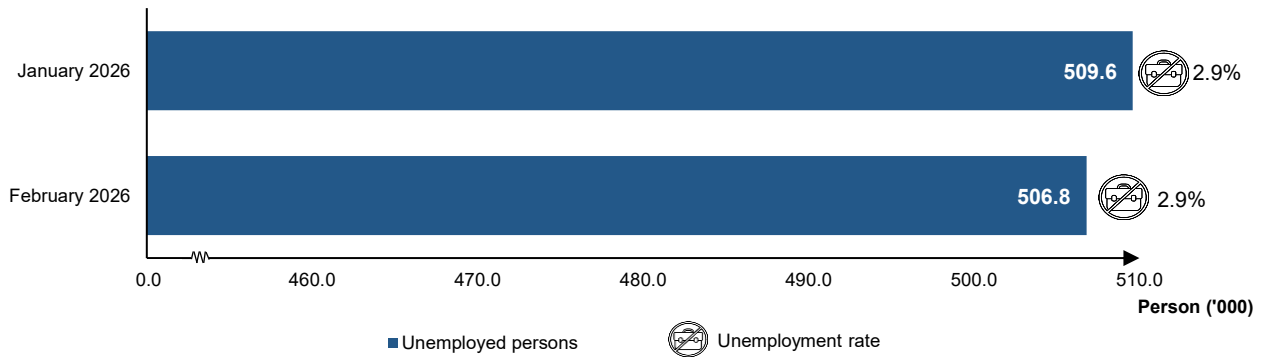
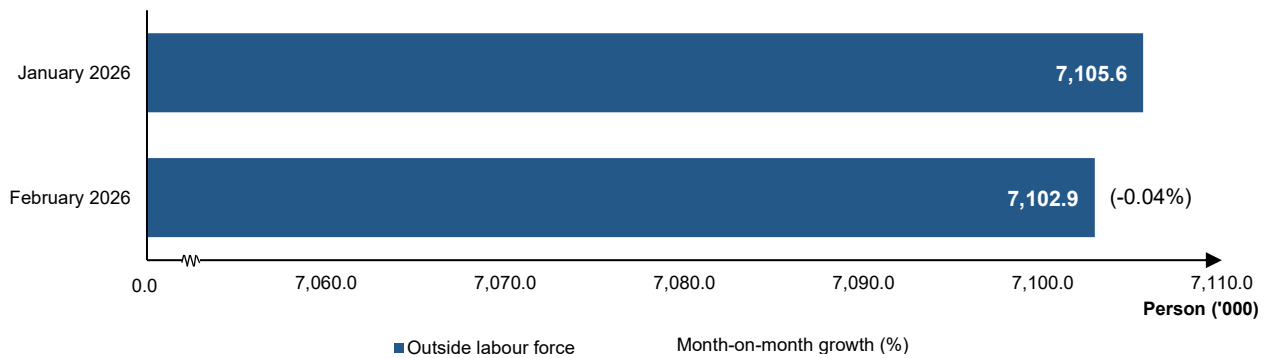


Chart 3: Outside labour force, Malaysia, January and February 2026



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

Released by:

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