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MEDIA STATEMENT

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SABAH EXTERNAL TRADE 2025 JULY 2025

Sabah's trade remained resilient, exceeding RM100 billion for three consecutive years despite challenges in the economic landscape.

PUTRAJAYA, July 4th, 2025 – The Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM) has published ***Sabah External Trade Statistics, July 2025***. This publication presents statistics on the volume and value of Sabah's external trade with trading partners, along with detailed breakdowns by commodity classification.

Commenting on the report, Chief Statistician of Malaysia, Dato' Sri Dr. Mohd Uzir Mahidin said, "Sabah's trade remained resilient, registered a total trade value of RM107.8 billion in 2024, surpassing the RM100 billion mark for third consecutive years since 2022. In terms of year-on-year basis, Sabah's total trade registered a growth of 2.7 per cent. Exports amounted to RM61.3 billion in 2024, a decline of 2.3 per cent as compared to the previous year. Meanwhile, imports increased by 10.2 percent, from RM42.2 billion to RM46.4 billion. The higher growth in imports compared to exports resulted 27.9 percent decline in the trade balance, with a lower trade surplus of RM14.9 billion in 2024."

Dato' Sri Dr. Mohd Uzir Mahidin stated, the three main commodities contributing to Sabah's exports in 2024 were crude petroleum valued at RM21.3 billion, followed by palm oil (RM17.3 billion) and liquefied natural gas (RM4.6 billion). Overall, the exports of these main commodities amounted to RM43.2 billion or 70.4 per cent of Sabah's total export. As for imports, the main contributors were refined petroleum products at RM5.2 billion, manufactured fertilizers (RM1.0 billion), and palm-based oleochemicals (RM266.0 million).

The Chief Statistician of Malaysia also explained that Sabah's exports encompass both trade transactions on international and inter-regional (Peninsular Malaysia and Sarawak) based on physical transactions at the entry/exit points of the state of Sabah. From the international perspective, Sabah's exports increased by 0.9 per cent or RM338.8 million compared to RM38.9 billion in the previous year. However, exports from Sabah to Peninsular Malaysia recorded a decline of 7.2 per cent or RM1.6 billion, amounting to RM20.5 billion in 2024. This decrease was due to the decline in export of several major commodities, including crude petroleum (-RM1.9 billion, -10.6%), palm oil (-RM45.2 million, -6.5%), and palm-based oleochemicals (-RM17.2 million, -44.8%).

Meanwhile, the increase in Sabah's imports in 2024 was supported by higher imports from Peninsular Malaysia, rose 14.9 per cent or RM3.9 billion, from RM26.0 billion in the previous year. At global level, there was an increase in imports from Indonesia (+RM418.4 million, +49.7%), Thailand (+RM112.0 million, +7.5%), and China (+RM101.0 million, +2.4%). According to general categories, the increase in imports for Sabah is supported by the food and beverage category at 10.2 per cent and the industrial supplies category at 9.0 per cent.

Peninsular Malaysia contributed 46.8 per cent of Sabah's total trade. At the international level, Sabah's main trading partners were China, Thailand, Republic of Korea, Japan, and India, with a contribution of 26.8 per cent.

The department had also published the annual External Trade Statistics for 15 states providing international trade values for each state with other international countries for the period of 2019 to 2024. For Sabah, the values used are the international trade values of Sabah, excluding trade between Sabah with Peninsular Malaysia and Sarawak. For the year 2024, the total trade of Sabah based on these values recorded a growth of 3.6 per cent to RM43.0 billion from RM41.5 billion in 2023. This total trade was contributed by exports valued at RM32.1 billion and imports valued at RM10.9 billion. Sabah's exports increased by 3.2 per cent to RM32.1 billion in 2024 compared to RM31.1 billion in 2023. Imports in 2024 amounted to RM10.9 billion, marking an increase of 5.0 per cent over the previous year. The mentioned values differ from the report published on 16 June 2025 following the updates made based on the latest data.

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 198 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 will be 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>.

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THE OFFICE OF CHIEF STATISTICIAN MALAYSIA

DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICS MALAYSIA

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Chart 1: Exports, Imports, Trade Balance and Total Trade of Sabah, 2014 – 2024

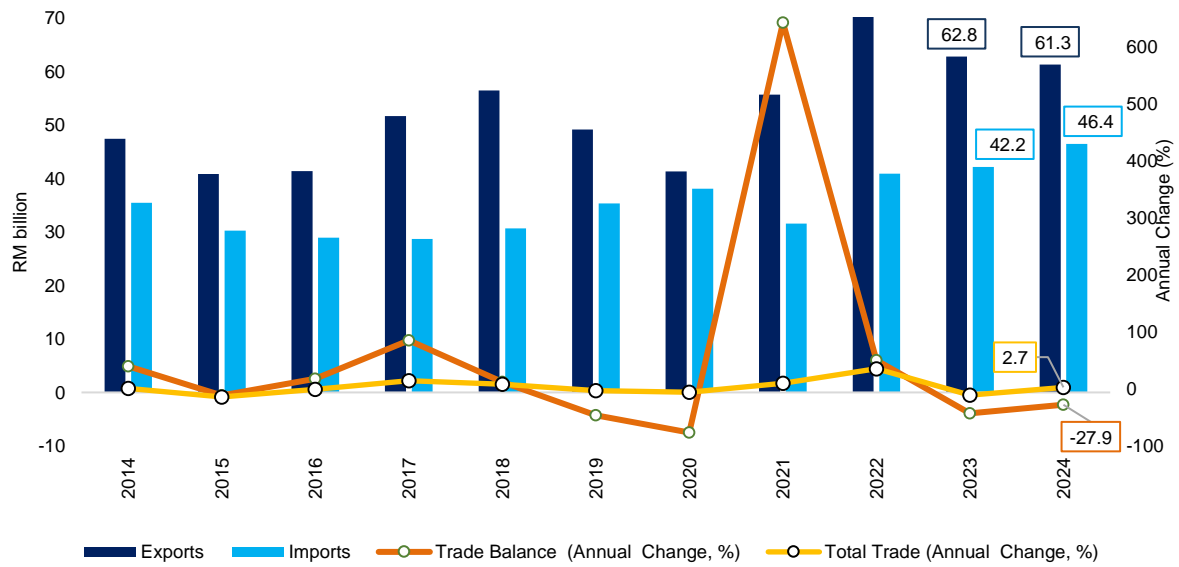


Table 1: Sabah Total Trade by Country and Region of Destination, 2022-2024 (RM Million)**EXPORTS**

COUNTRY/REGION OF DESTINATION	2022	2023	2024
INTERNATIONAL	50,466	38,846	39,185
SARAWAK	1,527	1,872	1,655
PENINSULAR MALAYSIA	25,102	22,079	20,491
TOTAL EXPORTS	77,095	62,798	61,331

IMPORTS

COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN	2022	2023	2024
INTERNATIONAL	15,818	16,038	16,458
SARAWAK	135	76	76
PENINSULAR MALAYSIA	24,972	26,043	29,913
TOTAL IMPORTS	40,925	42,158	46,447

TOTAL TRADE

COUNTRY/REGION	2022	2023	2024
INTERNATIONAL	66,284	54,885	55,643
SARAWAK	1,662	1,949	1,731
PENINSULAR MALAYSIA	50,074	48,123	50,404
TOTAL TRADE	118,020	104,956	107,778

Note: The export and import values refer to the value of physical transactions through the entry/exit points of Sabah.

Table 2 : Sabah Exports and Imports by Country of Destination/Origin, 2022-2024

Transaction	2022	2023 ^P	2024 ^P	Annual Percentage Change 2024 ^P /2023 ^P)
	RM (Million)			
Exports	48,897	31,084	32,067	3.2
Imports	10,170	10,379	10,903	5.0
Total Trade	59,067	41,463	42,970	3.6

**Source: Malaysia External Trade Statistics
by State, Sabah 2024**

Note:

The export value refers to exports to international destinations based on companies operating in the state of Sabah.

The import value refers to imports from the country of origin based on companies operating in the state of Sabah.