LABOUR FORCE STATISTICS 2024

The unemployment rate decreased by **0.2 percentage points** to **3.2** per cent with **534.1 thousand** unemployed persons
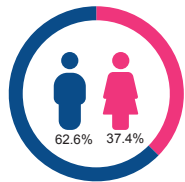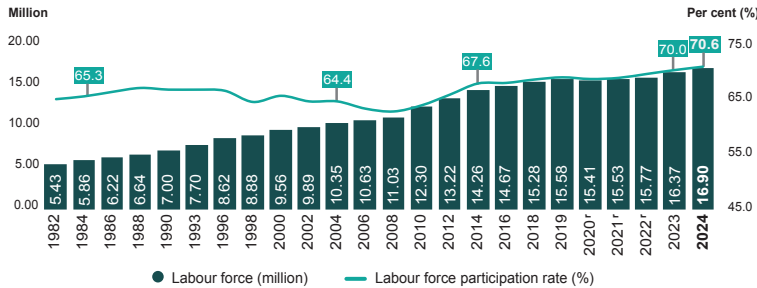
LABOUR FORCE

Malaysia's labour force in 2024 edged up by **3.3 per cent** to register **16.90 million persons**

16.90 million
2023 : 16.37 million

3.3%

Labour force, 1982 - 2024

Year	Labour force (million)
1982	5.43
1984	5.86
1986	6.22
1988	6.64
1990	7.00
1993	7.70
1996	8.62
1998	8.88
2000	9.56
2002	9.89
2004	10.35
2006	10.63
2008	11.03
2010	12.30
2012	13.22
2014	14.26
2016	14.67
2018	15.28
2019	15.58
2020ʳ	15.41
2021ʳ	15.53
2022ʳ	15.77
2023	16.37
2024	16.90

Labour force participation rate (%): 65.3, 64.4, 67.6, 70.0, 70.6

- Labour force (million)
- Labour force participation rate (%)

10.58 million
2023 : 10.19 million
62.6%

6.32 million
2023 : 6.18 million
37.4%

LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE

70.6% ▲0.6pp
2023 : 70.0%

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

3.2% ▼0.2pp
2023 : 3.4%

0.2pp

Unemployment, 1982 - 2024

Year	Unemployed (thousand)
1982	182.4
1984	295.8
1986	461.9
1988	479.8
1990	315.2
1993	316.8
1996	216.8
1998	284.0
2000	286.9
2002	343.5
2004	366.6
2006	353.6
2008	368.5
2010	404.4
2012	401.2
2014	411.1
2016	504.1
2018	504.3
2019	508.2
2020ʳ	686.6
2021ʳ	707.6
2022ʳ	614.5
2023	553.4
2024	534.1

Unemployment rate (%): 5.0, 3.5, 2.9, 3.4, 3.2

- Unemployed (thousand)
- Unemployment rate (%)

UNEMPLOYED

534.1 thousand ▼3.5%
2023 : 553.4 thousand

FIRED

EMPLOYED PERSONS

16.37 million ▲3.5%
2023 : 15.81 million

OUTSIDE LABOUR FORCE

7.02 million ▲0.4%
2023 : 7.00 million

% Percentage change (year-on-year)

r Revision based on the current population estimates from Population and Housing Census Malaysia, 2020

pp Percentage point

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

MINISTRY OF ECONOMY
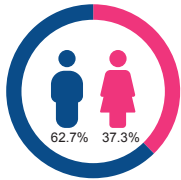DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICS MALAYSIA
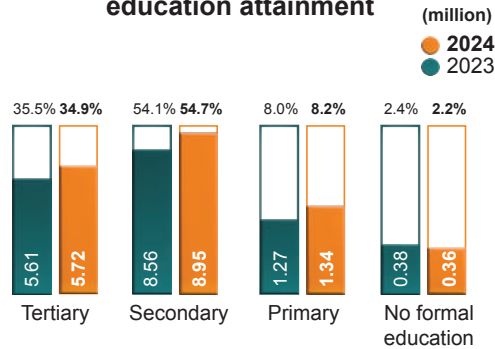
LABOUR FORCE STATISTICS 2024

EMPLOYED PERSONS

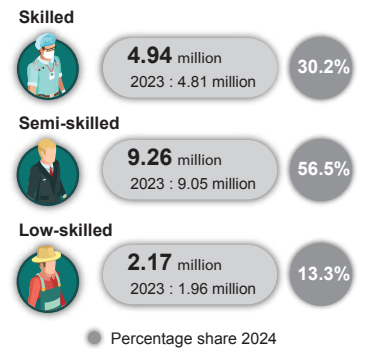Employed persons increased by **3.5 per cent** to record **16.37 million persons**

10.26 million
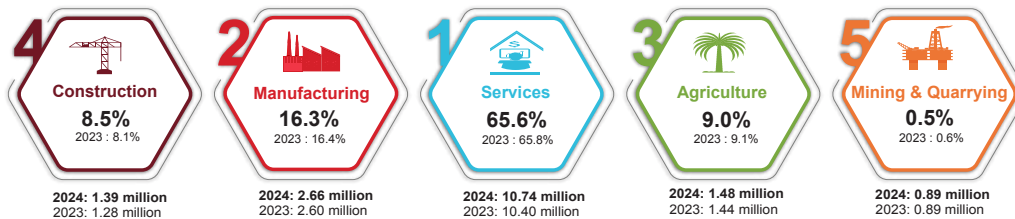2023 : 9.85 million

6.11 million
2023 : 5.96 million

62.7% 37.3%

Employed persons by education attainment

(million)
- 2024
- 2023

	Tertiary	Secondary	Primary	No formal education
2023	35.5% (5.61)	54.1% (8.56)	8.0% (1.27)	2.4% (0.38)
2024	**34.9%** (5.72)	**54.7%** (8.95)	**8.2%** (1.34)	**2.2%** (0.36)

Employed persons by skill level

Skilled
4.94 million
2023 : 4.81 million
30.2%

Semi-skilled
9.26 million
2023 : 9.05 million
56.5%

Low-skilled
2.17 million
2023 : 1.96 million
13.3%

Percentage share 2024

Employed persons by sector [1]

4 Construction
8.5%
2023 : 8.1%
2024: 1.39 million
2023: 1.28 million

2 Manufacturing
16.3%
2023 : 16.4%
2024: 2.66 million
2023: 2.60 million

1 Services
65.6%
2023 : 65.8%
2024: 10.74 million
2023: 10.40 million

3 Agriculture
9.0%
2023 : 9.1%
2024: 1.48 million
2023: 1.44 million

5 Mining & Quarrying
0.5%
2023 : 0.6%
2024: 0.89 million
2023: 0.89 million

The highest share by sub-sector in Services [2]

1 **28.5%** Wholesale and retail trade

2 **15.1%** Food & beverages and accommodation

3 **9.7%** Education

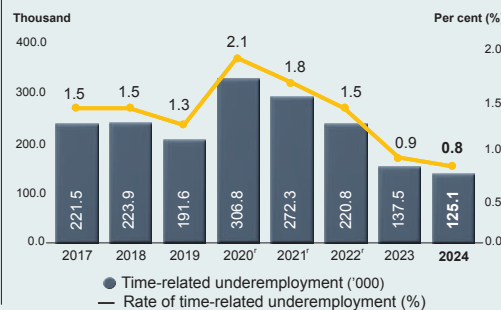[1] Figures in percentage in each sector refers to the percentage share of the total number of employed persons
[2] Figures in percentage in each sub-sector refers to the percentage share of the total number of employed persons in the Services sector
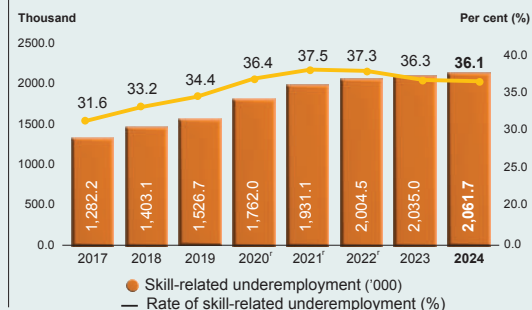
Employed persons by status of employment

(million)

0.39 (2.4%) Unpaid family workers

0.61 (3.7%) Employers

2.52 (15.4%) Own-account workers

12.86 (78.5%) Employees

UNDEREMPLOYMENT

Employed persons working less than 30 hours per week, 2017 - 2024

Thousand / Per cent (%)

Year	Employed persons working less than 30 hours ('000)	Rate (%)
2017	413.5	2.9
2018	437.5	3.0
2019	337.6	2.2
2020[r]	519.1	3.5
2021[r]	401.3	2.7
2022[r]	320.3	2.1
2023	226.3	1.4
2024	**212.5**	**1.3**

● Employed persons working less than 30 hours ('000)
— Rate of employed persons working less than 30 hours (%)

Time-related underemployment, 2017 - 2024

Thousand / Per cent (%)

Year	Time-related underemployment ('000)	Rate (%)
2017	221.5	1.5
2018	223.9	1.5
2019	191.6	1.3
2020[r]	306.8	2.1
2021[r]	272.3	1.8
2022[r]	220.8	1.5
2023	137.5	0.9
2024	**125.1**	**0.8**

● Time-related underemployment ('000)
— Rate of time-related underemployment (%)

Skill-related underemployment, 2017 - 2024

Thousand / Per cent (%)

Year	Skill-related underemployment ('000)	Rate (%)
2017	1,282.2	31.6
2018	1,403.1	33.2
2019	1,526.7	34.4
2020[r]	1,762.0	36.4
2021[r]	1,931.1	37.5
2022[r]	2,004.5	37.3
2023	2,035.0	36.3
2024	**2,061.7**	**36.1**

● Skill-related underemployment ('000)
— Rate of skill-related underemployment (%)

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

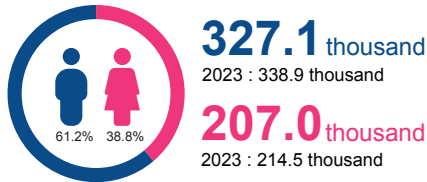# LABOUR FORCE STATISTICS 2024

UNEMPLOYMENT

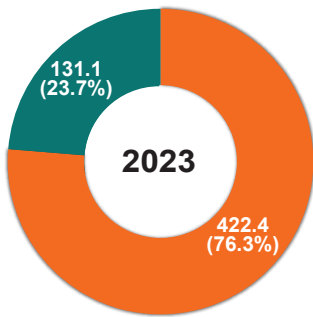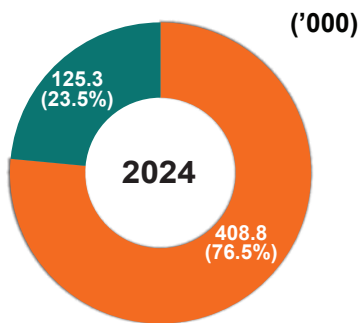Unemployment rate in 2024 declined to **3.2 per cent**

UNEMPLOYED

327.1 thousand
2023 : 338.9 thousand

61.2%   38.8%

207.0 thousand
2023 : 214.5 thousand

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

3.1%
2023 : 3.3%

3.3%
2023 : 3.5%

Unemployed category

('000)

2024
125.3 (23.5%)
408.8 (76.5%)

2023
131.1 (23.7%)
422.4 (76.3%)

● Actively unemployed
● Inactively unemployed

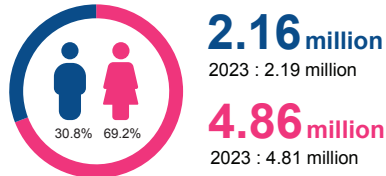### Actively unemployed persons by duration of unemployment

Duration	2024	2023	Percentage share 2024
More than 1 year	25.6	27.0	6.3%
6 months - less than 1 year	42.3	47.7	10.4%
3 months - less than 6 months	84.3	108.4	20.6%
Less than 3 months	256.6	239.2	62.8%

Thousand
20.0   60.0   110.0   160.0   210.0   260.0

■ 2023   ■ 2024   ▨ Percentage share 2024
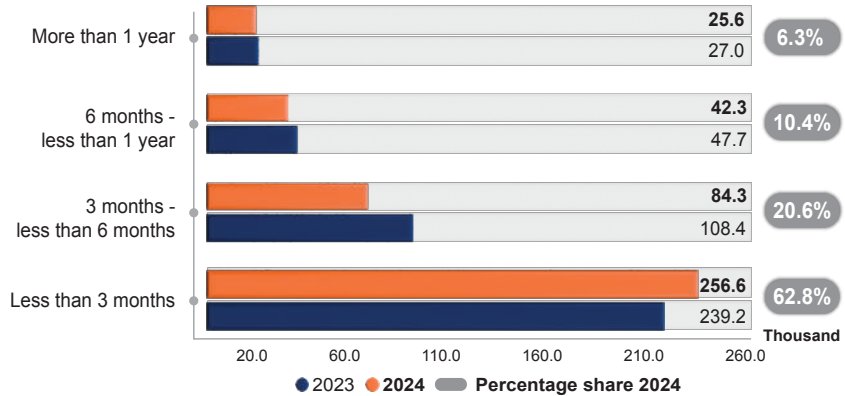
Unemployed by age group

The age group 15–24 contributed **53.3%** to the total unemployment

Thousand

● 2024
● 2023

Age	2023	2024
15-19	107.2	84.4
20-24	189.8	200.2
25-29	79.5	93.1
30-34	52.7	44.6
35-39	32.4	32.1
40-44	25.3	20.6
45-49	21.0	19.1
50-54	15.1	13.5
55-59	11.7	9.5
60-64	18.7	16.9
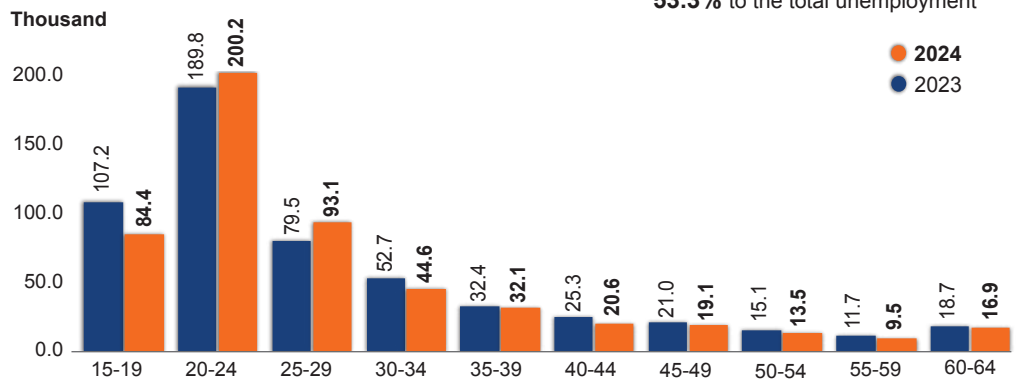
Youth unemployment, 2016-2024

Thousand   Per cent (%)

Year	Youth Unemployment (15-24) ('000)	Youth Unemployment (15-30) ('000)	Youth Unemployment rate (15-24) (%)	Youth Unemployment rate (15-30) (%)
2016	273.4	401.2	10.5	6.8
2017	283.9	402.6	10.8	6.7
2018	293.7	411.2	10.9	6.8
2019	295.8	416.4	10.5	6.7
2020 r	300.7	464.3	12.9	8.7
2021 r	315.1	484.5	12.2	8.6
2022 r	301.2	414.0	12.0	7.4
2023	297.0	392.6	11.0	6.7
2024	284.7	389.2	10.3	6.5

● Youth Unemployment (15-24) ('000)   — Youth Unemployment rate (15-24) (%)
● Youth Unemployment (15-30) ('000)   — Youth Unemployment rate (15-30) (%)

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

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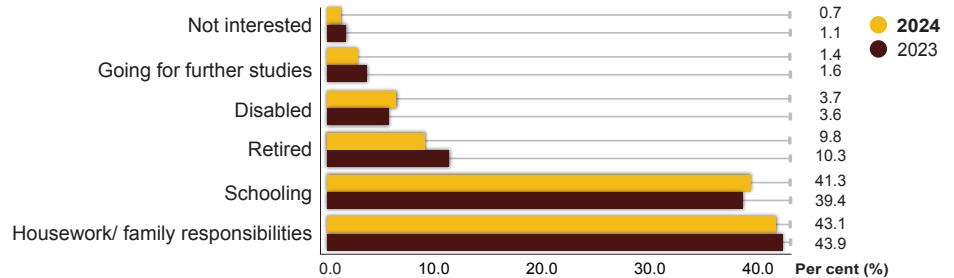20 October

GOALS MALAYSIA
2016 - 2030

LABOUR FORCE STATISTICS 2024

OUTSIDE LABOUR FORCE

Major composition of outside labour force by sex was female

2.16 million
2023 : 2.19 million

30.8%   69.2%

4.86 million
2023 : 4.81 million

Share of outside labour force by reasons for not seeking work

2024 (yellow) **2023** (dark red)

Reason	2024	2023
Not interested	0.7	1.1
Going for further studies	1.4	1.6
Disabled	3.7	3.6
Retired	9.8	10.3
Schooling	41.3	39.4
Housework/ family responsibilities	43.1	43.9

Per cent (%)

Main reason of outside labour force was due to housework/ family responsibilities

43.1%
Housework/ family responsibilities
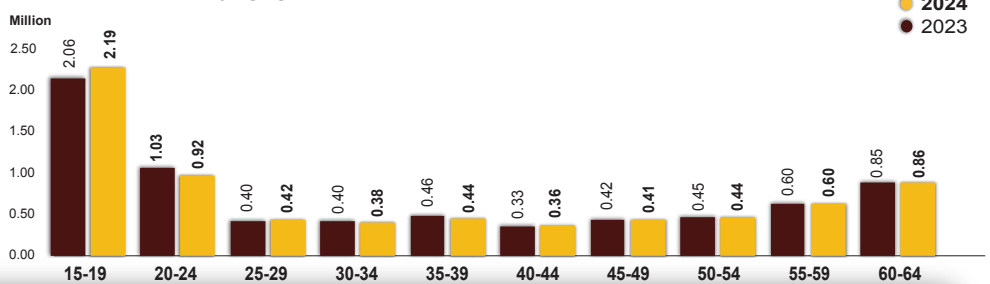
41.3%
Schooling/ training
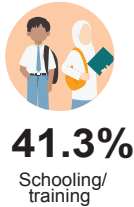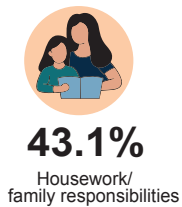
Outside labour force by age group

Million

2024 (yellow) **2023** (dark red)

Age group	2023	2024
15-19	2.06	2.19
20-24	1.03	0.92
25-29	0.40	0.42
30-34	0.40	0.38
35-39	0.46	0.44
40-44	0.33	0.36
45-49	0.42	0.41
50-54	0.45	0.44
55-59	0.60	0.60
60-64	0.85	0.86

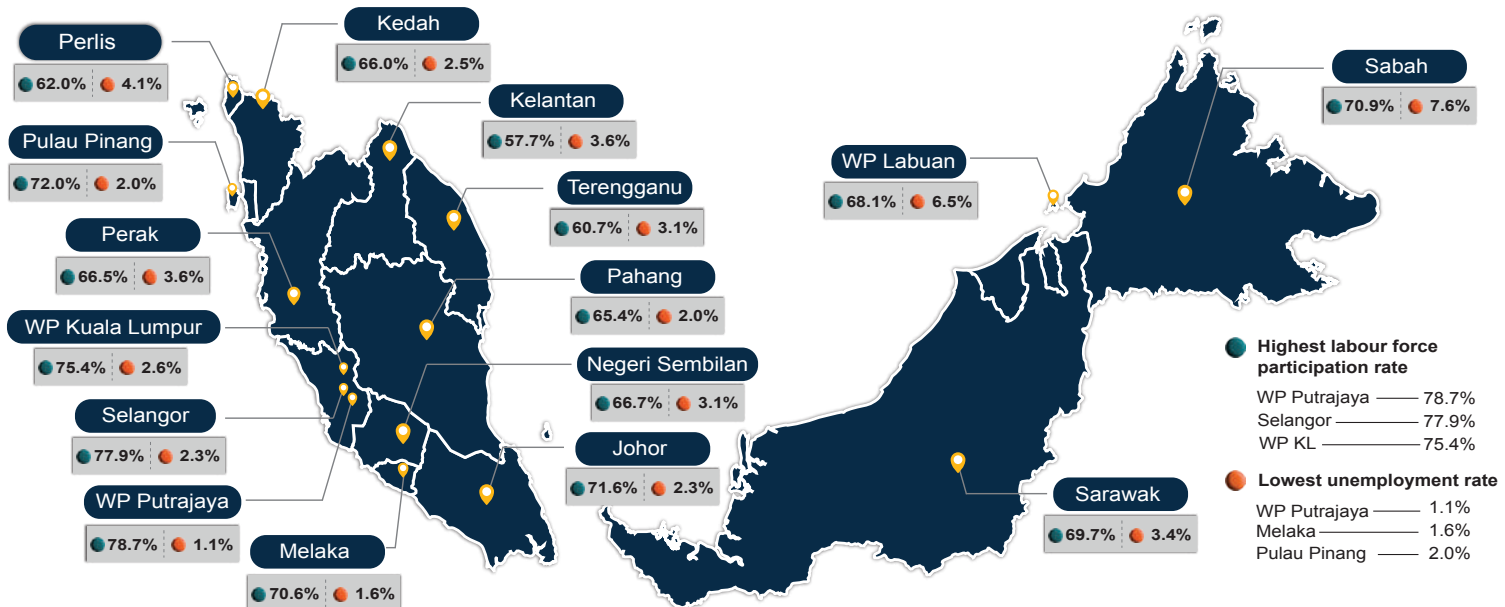## LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE AND UNEMPLOYMENT RATE BY STATE

WP Putrajaya recorded the highest labour force participation rate of 78.7 per cent and the lowest unemployment rate with 1.1 per cent

State	Labour force participation rate	Unemployment rate
Perlis	62.0%	4.1%
Kedah	66.0%	2.5%
Pulau Pinang	72.0%	2.0%
Kelantan	57.7%	3.6%
Perak	66.5%	3.6%
Terengganu	60.7%	3.1%
WP Kuala Lumpur	75.4%	2.6%
Pahang	65.4%	2.0%
Selangor	77.9%	2.3%
Negeri Sembilan	66.7%	3.1%
WP Putrajaya	78.7%	1.1%
Johor	71.6%	2.3%
Melaka	70.6%	1.6%
Sabah	70.9%	7.6%
WP Labuan	68.1%	6.5%
Sarawak	69.7%	3.4%

Highest labour force participation rate
WP Putrajaya — 78.7%
Selangor — 77.9%
WP KL — 75.4%

Lowest unemployment rate
WP Putrajaya — 1.1%
Melaka — 1.6%
Pulau Pinang — 2.0%

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

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