

## **Rising underemployment shows decline in skilled job creation**

ATTRACTING quality foreign direct investment is one of the ways to leverage skilled labour supply to address the rising underemployment issue in Malaysia.

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia Economics and Management Faculty senior lecturer Dr Wye Chung Khain said the number of tertiary-educated employed persons holding the job does not require knowledge and skill they possess is on the rise.

“They are actually working at a semi-skilled or low-level job despite that they are trained in the university. This is actually quite alarming and shows declining job creation, especially in a skilled job.

“Hence, it also leads to the issue of skill mismatch where employees just employ a position that does not match with the qualification. That’s why the salary they are going to receive is not reflective of their true abilities,” he said in a panel discussion during Labour Market Forum 2021 held virtually yesterday.

Labour Market Forum 2021 was jointly organised by the Malaysian Bureau of Labour Statistics, **Department of Statistics Malaysia (DoSM)** in collaboration with Yayasan Peneraju Pendidikan Bumiputera.

The forum with the theme of Stabilising the Labour Market towards Rejuvenating the Economy brought together panellists from diverse career backgrounds to share views and expertise on the challenges and directions in stabilising the country’s labour market situation.

Chief statistician Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Uzir Mahidin (picture) said the Covid-19 pandemic that hit the world in 2020 has affected the global labour market situation and Malaysia is no exception.

“Recently, the country’s labour market indicated a recovery trend by recording a lower unemployment rate of 4.3% in October 2021 with 705,000 unemployed persons.

“Nevertheless, the national labour market has not returned to pre-pandemic level. This situation is also experienced by most countries including developed countries such as the US, UK and Canada,” he said in his opening remarks.

Earlier, the DoSM launched the Malaysia Labour Market Interactive Data (MyLMID) which is the latest initiative to navigate national labour market recovery.

MyLMID is an interactive portal which provides a quick view of Malaysia’s labour market situation based on the labour market dimensions.

The 10 key labour market dimensions featured in MyLMID portal are labour supply, labour demand, annual economic statistics, districts statistics, labour productivity, labour cost, informal sector, graduates statistics, loss of employment and comparison by country.

These statistics can be accessed in the form of interactive tables and data visualisations for monthly, quarterly and annual time series.

Mohd Uzir said MyLMID is a new initiative in gathering labour market information into a single portal to facilitate the access, reference and statistical analysis in a more efficient manner and subsequently serve as inputs in decision making towards strengthening the national labour market.

“Despite various challenges, Covid-19 pandemic has also increased the awareness of various data users on the need for holistic and high-frequency information in supporting fast and accurate decision making.

“In this regard, the crisis has indirectly been a catalyst in realising DoSM’s aspiration to strengthen labour market information by leveraging administrative data from various agencies,” he added.

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