



ENCYCLOPEDIA OF WOMEN AND ISLAMIC CULTURES

Women's Employment: Malaysia

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- ❖ Malaysia is designated by the International Labor Organization as a high middle-income country, \$4,086-12,615 annual income. Malaysia has significant resource labor and resource capacity.¹
- ❖ The number of women in the work force or seeking employment is lower in Malaysia than in countries with similar income levels. The World Bank suggests that Malaysian women could be encouraged to join the work force if there were more flexibility in job scheduling and better access to childcare.²
- ❖ A survey carried out by the Association of Chartered Certified Accounts (ACCA)-the global body for professional accountants, indicated that 93% of Malaysian female respondents on sabbatical had contemplated returning to the workforce; however 63% found it difficult to do so. Only 30% of women surveyed considered their employers to have a flexible working arrangement and a mere 7% of the respondents had childcare support in their place of work.³
- ❖ According to the UN, 43.8% of the adult population of females in Malaysia participates in the labor force. Female "labor force" covers women ages 15 and older who meet the ILO's definition of the working and employed population.⁴
- ❖ In the computing and programming industry, women in Malaysia comprise between 50% and 60% of the industry's employees. Many of these women hold mid- and upper level management positions. In comparison, in the United States, fewer than 24 % of women hold computer -related jobs.⁵ In Malaysia women constitute almost half of all students pursuing tertiary degrees in computer science.⁶
- ❖ Similar to Norway, women in Malaysia tend to leave the workforce after starting a family. Women in their early twenties pursue careers but often do not return to work after leaving to raise families. Only 11% of women remain in the workforce.⁷
- ❖ By the 2015 an estimated 55% of the Malaysian workforce will be women. In response to this, the Malaysian ministry is working on a number of policy ideas such as more flexible working hours and affordable childcare arrangements.⁸

¹ <http://www.ilo.org/asia/countries/malaysia/lang-en/index.htm>

² <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2012/11/29/mem-nov-2012-unlocking-womens-potential-keyfindings>

³ <http://www2.accaglobal.com/allnews/national/malaysia/3538607>

⁴ <http://data.un.org/CountryProfile.aspx?crName=Malaysia>

⁵ <http://gender.stanford.edu/news/2011/malaysian-women-redefine-gender-roles-technology>

⁶ Lagesen, V. A. (January 01, 2008). A cyberfeminist utopia?: Perceptions of gender and computer science among Malaysian women computer science students and faculty. *Science Technology and Human Values*, 33, 1, 741-763.

⁷ <http://www.staffingindustry.com/row/Research-Publications/Daily-News/Malaysia-Importance-of-retaining-women-employees-26879>

⁸<http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/documents/projects/MYS/00062382/Women%20Participation%20in%20Labour%20Workforce.pdf>

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