

## International Students Account For 12.6 Pct Of Total Ipt Enrolment - MOHE

By BERNAMA 05 JULY 2026 03:14 PM



PUTRAJAYA- International students make up only 12.6 per cent of total enrolment in public and private higher education institutions (IPTs) in Malaysia as of Dec 31, 2025, according to the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE). Data from the MyMoHES system shows total enrolment at 1,264,541 students, comprising 159,138 international students (12.6 per cent) and 1,105,403 Malaysian students (87.4 per cent). The ministry was responding to a statement by Jitra assemblyman Dr Haim Hilman Abdullah, who claimed that international student admissions to public universities had reduced opportunities for local students. "The claim is unfounded, misleading and not reflective of the reality of the higher education system."

"In public universities, total enrolment stands at 634,706 students, of whom 56,565 (8.9 per cent) are international students and 578,141 (91.1 per cent) are Malaysians," MOE said in a statement today. By level of study, undergraduate programmes account for 520,105 students, including 502,212 Malaysians (96.56 per cent) and 17,893 international students (3.44 per cent). At postgraduate level, enrolment totals 114,601 students, comprising 75,929 Malaysians (66.26 per cent) and 38,672 international students (33.74 per cent). MOE said the figures show that most international students are enrolled at postgraduate level and are not competing for undergraduate places with SPM, STM, matriculation or diploma holders. On claims that international students at the five Research Universities – Universiti Malaya, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universiti Putra Malaysia and Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, are "taking away" local places, the ministry said total enrolment at these institutions is 186,824 students. Of this, 145,727 (78 per cent) are local students and 41,097 (22 per cent) are international students. said this aligns with the role of Research Universities, which focus on research, innovation, publications and international collaboration, where the presence of international students is part of strengthening the research ecosystem. The ministry added that Malaysia remains a preferred destination for international students, including 32,549 from China, reflecting the country's standing alongside other major destinations such as the United States, United Kingdom, Australia and Canada. It said Malaysia's appeal lies in the quality of its higher education system, lower costs of study and living, a peaceful environment, a multicultural society and the widespread use of English in education. MOHE added that protecting local students' access to education remains the government's priority, while continuing to advance the internationalisation of higher education to ensure Malaysian institutions remain competitive and globally recognised.

