REPORT ON THE INSTITUTION OF ENGINEERS MALAYSIA (IEM) 2025 EMPLOYMENT AND SALARY SURVEY

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The Institution of Engineers, Malaysia

April 2026

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ABSTRACT

This survey provides a comprehensive evaluation of the employment conditions, compensation structures, and professional sentiments within the Malaysian engineering sector. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, the study analyzes quantitative data from over 400 practitioners and qualitative thematic analysis to identify the critical challenges facing the profession.

The study is anchored in the Malaysia Standard Classification of Occupations (MASCO) 2020, ensuring alignment with International Labour Organization (ILO) standards. Data was collected across diverse disciplines and across various experience levels, with a significant cohort (45%) possessing over 15 years of professional practice.

Dominating the survey with an overwhelming 59.5% of responses, the theme of Salary and Compensation stands as the primary grievance of the Malaysian engineer. The data highlights a stagnant wage landscape where entry-level salaries have failed to keep pace with inflation or the rising cost of living for over two decades.

To ensure the sustainability of the nation's technical talent pipeline, a multi-stakeholder strategy is required. These reforms are essential to transform the sector into a high-value career path capable of driving Malaysia's industrial and technological ambitions.

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON WELFARE AND MEMBER SERVICES SESSION 2025/26

Report on The Institution of Engineers Malaysia (IEM) 2025 Employment and Salary Survey

Executive Summary

The Institution of Engineers Malaysia (IEM) conducted the 2025 Employment and Salary Survey from March 1 until March 31, 2026 to evaluate the current professional and economic landscape of the engineering sector. The survey gathered a total of 444 complete responses. The respondent profile reflects a predominantly male workforce, highly concentrated in the Klang Valley, with a significant representation of early-to-mid-career professionals.

To ensure global comparability and national relevance, the study is structured according to the Malaysia Standard Classification of Occupations (MASCO) 2020 framework. This alignment with ILO-sanctioned international standards (ISCO) provides a robust basis for analyzing Malaysia's engineering workforce. The adoption of MASCO 2020 allows the survey to capture the modern complexities of the profession, providing an updated and accurate representation of engineering roles as they adapt to emerging technologies and the shifting demands of the contemporary Malaysian market.

The largest IEM's respondent groups are Graduate Members (43.7%) and Corporate Members (MIEM) at 38.1%. Fellows (FIEM) constitute 4.1% of the sample. Nearly half of the respondents (46.85%) are registered as BEM Graduate Engineers. And a combined 49.1% hold senior registrations, split between Professional Engineers (P.Eng.) at 25.2% and Professional Engineers with Practicing Certificates (PEPC) at 23.9%

The results of the IEM 2025 Employment and Salary Survey offer a critical look at the current state of the engineering profession in Malaysia. This report presents the key findings, highlighting the strengths of the workforce and the systemic challenges that require urgent attention.

The second part of the IEM 2025 survey focused on the employment landscape; evaluating the organizational scale, financial compensation, and the broader sentiment regarding industry advocacy and government policy.

The Professional Backbone: Highly Qualified but Concentrated

The Malaysian engineering landscape is defined by academic excellence and professional commitment. With 98.4% of respondents holding a Bachelor's degree and over 30% possessing postgraduate qualifications (Masters or PhD), the sector is intellectually elite. Professionally, the "Big Three" disciplines — Civil (35%), Mechanical (30%), and Electrical (16%) — continue to drive the industry primarily through private-owned enterprises, large-scale private companies, Multinational Corporations and Government-Linked Companies.

Nearly 46% of the respondents is concentrated within the Klang Valley, indicating a heavy centralization of infrastructure and industrial projects in the nation's capital hub.

The Workforce Gap: Gender and Experience

The respondents consist of male engineers outnumbering their female counterparts by a ratio of more than 4 to 1. The survey captured an interesting "U-shaped" demographic; the respondents is anchored by a solid group of senior veterans (19.3% with more than 25 years' experience) and a similarly sized group of new entrants (19.3% with less than 5 years' experience).

Economic Realities: The Junior Struggle

One of the most pressing takeaways from the survey is the financial pressure on the younger generation. There is a direct, undeniable correlation between junior status and lower pay where 20.7% of the respondents — almost the exact percentage of those with less than 5 years of experience — earns between less than RM36,000 to RM60,000 annually.

This economic strain is exacerbated by an entrenched culture of uncompensated labor such as overtime claim. Furthermore, the lack of fixed allowances for nearly 70% of the workforce suggests that total remuneration packages are failing to keep pace with the rising cost of living in urban centers like the Klang Valley.

Management vs. Technical Paths

The survey reveals a clear organizational divide: 31% of engineers have transitioned into Management, largely in construction or senior executive roles (MDs/CEOs). While the remaining 69% are dedicated Professionals focused on technical design and consultancy. The higher salary brackets (above RM200k) are most frequently reached by those in senior leadership or those with over 25 years of experience. This highlights a potential "ceiling" for those who wish to remain in purely technical roles without moving into administration.

A Mandate for Change: Institutional and Policy Advocacy

The most striking aspect of the 2025 survey is the overwhelming consensus among engineers regarding the need for institutional reform. Engineers are no longer silent about systemic industry issues:

i. **Remuneration Reform: 89%** believe the Government must intervene to establish and review salary benchmarks.

ii. **Professional Protection: 93%** demand an end to the "race to the bottom" caused by fee undercutting in consultancy.

iii. **Technical Representation: 91%** advocate for engineers to take a leading role in the Administrative and Diplomatic Service (PTD), ensuring that national policies are grounded in technical reality.

iv. **STEM Sustainability: 88%** are concerned about talent drain, calling for stronger policies to ensure STEM graduates stay in engineering rather than migrating to finance or tech sales.

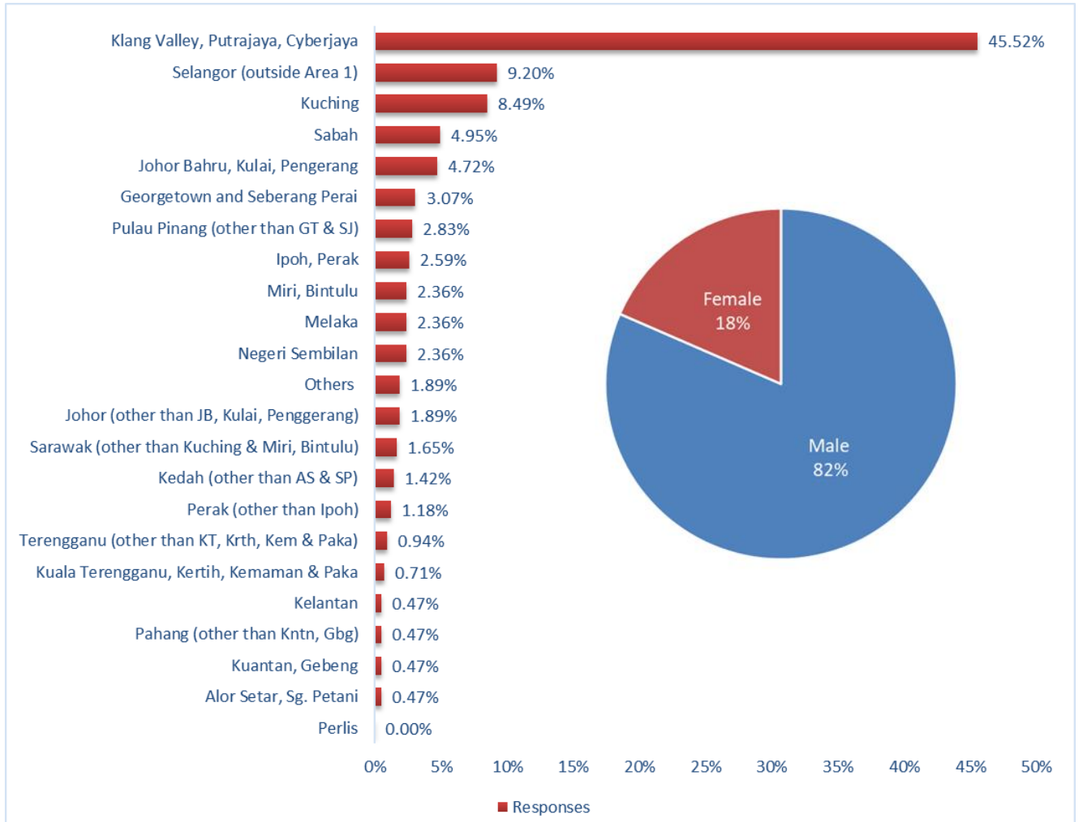
Engineering the Future

The 2025 survey paints a picture of a profession at a crossroads. While Malaysia possesses a highly skilled and loyal engineering workforce, the combination of low entry-level wages, uncompensated overtime, and consultancy fee wars threatens the long-term sustainability of the talent pool. The message from the IEM survey respondents is clear: for Malaysia to achieve its high-tech industrial goals, the **"human capital"** of the engineering sector must be better protected, fairly compensated, and given a louder voice in the nation's governance. Policymakers, the Board of Engineers Malaysia (BEM), the IEM, stakeholders and the private sector face a clear choice: continue on the current path of stagnation, brain drain, and declining interest in STEM, or act decisively to reform salary structures, enforce professional regulations, and restore the prestige of engineering in Malaysia. The time for incremental tweaks has passed. Malaysia's engineers are ready to build the nation – but they need the nation to build them up first.

Demography

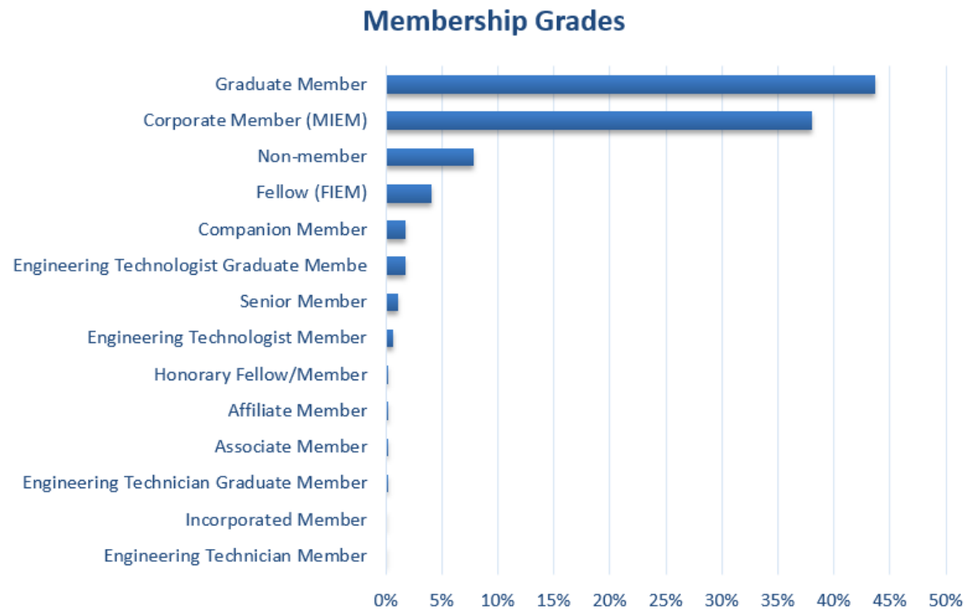
Gender and Geographic Distribution

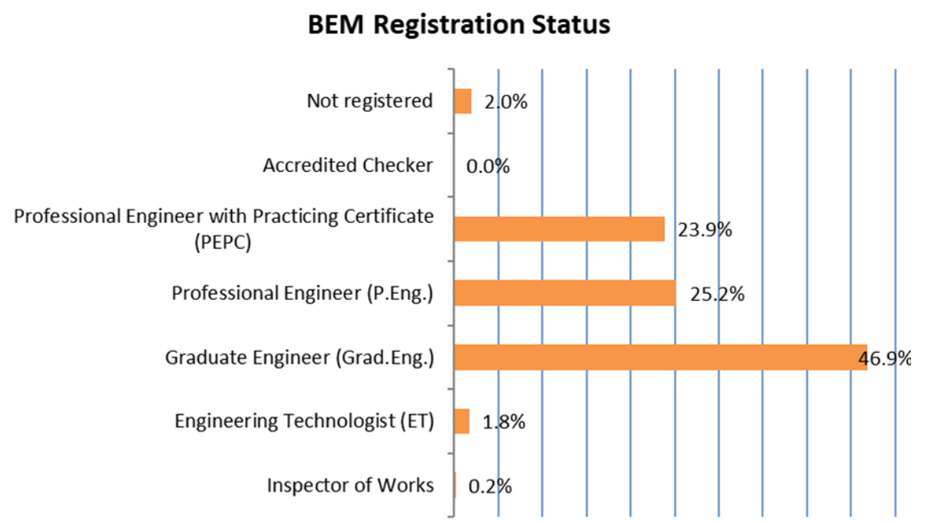
The survey respondents are predominantly male, accounting for 82% (362) of the total, while female engineers represent 18% (82). Geographically, the respondents are heavily concentrated in the central region of Malaysia. Approximately 45.5% of respondents are based in the Kuala Lumpur and Klang Valley areas, including Petaling Jaya, Shah Alam, and Putrajaya. Other notable clusters include Selangor (outside the primary central area) at 9.2% and Kuching, Sarawak, at 8.5%. The inclusion of respondents from locations such as Dubai, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Brunei and Indonesia within the "Others" category underscores the increasing global mobility of the Malaysian engineering workforce. The presence of respondents in major energy and infrastructure hubs — particularly in the Middle East and Southeast Asia — demonstrates that Malaysian engineers are highly sought after in the global market. Their involvement in large-scale international projects in the oil and gas, civil infrastructure, and telecommunications sectors serves as a testament to the high standard of technical education and professional accreditation maintained by the Board of Engineers Malaysia (BEM) and the IEM.



Professional Membership and Registration Status

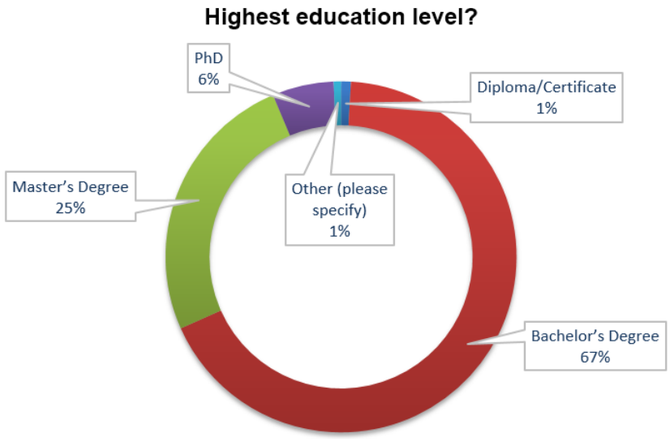
The professional maturity of the respondents is highlighted by their affiliations with IEM and the Board of Engineers Malaysia (BEM). The largest IEM respondent groups are Graduate Members (43.7%) and Corporate Members (MIEM) at 38.1%. Fellows (FIEM) constitute 4.1% of the sample. Nearly half of the respondents (46.9%) are registered as Graduate Engineers. However, a combined 49.1% hold senior registrations, split between Professional Engineers (P.Eng.) at 25.2% and Professional Engineers with Practicing Certificates (PEPC) at 23.9%.





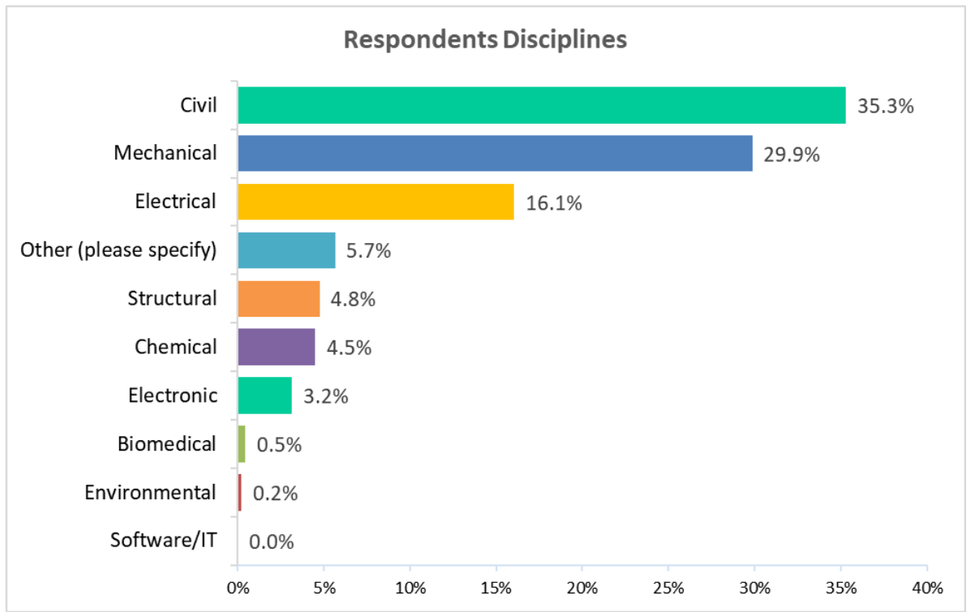
Academic and Technical Profile

The respondent base is academically robust, with 98.4% holding at least a Bachelor's degree with 67.4% hold a Bachelor's Degree, 25.3% have achieved a Master's Degree, and 5.7% possess a PhD.

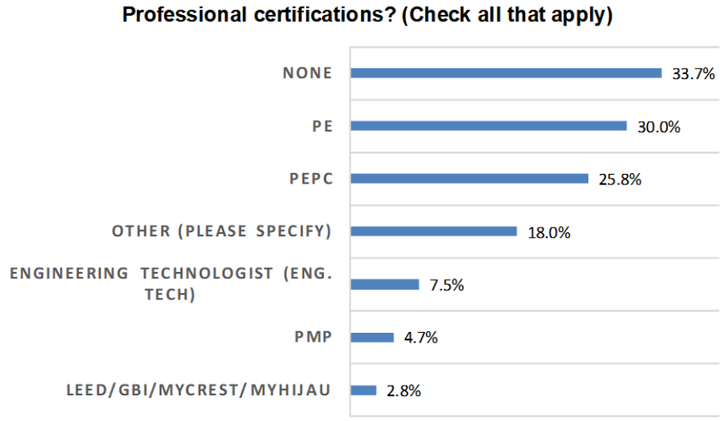


The three primary disciplines represented are Civil Engineering (35.3%), Mechanical Engineering (29.9%), and Electrical Engineering (16.1%). Other disciplines such as Structural, Chemical and Electronic engineering each represent less than 5% of the total.

The survey captured a diverse range of specialized disciplines under the 'Others' classification. Although many of these entries could be mapped back to major engineering disciplines, the granular data provided by respondents offers a more precise view of the industry's functional diversity. Reported specializations include corrosion, automotive, instrumentation and control, marine, and materials engineering, as well as the technical oversight of machinery installation. The survey successfully reflects the technical breadth of the traditional engineering fraternity; however, participation from the IT and AI sectors was non-existant. This granularity underscores the sophisticated nature of contemporary engineering roles that transcend standard disciplinary boundaries.



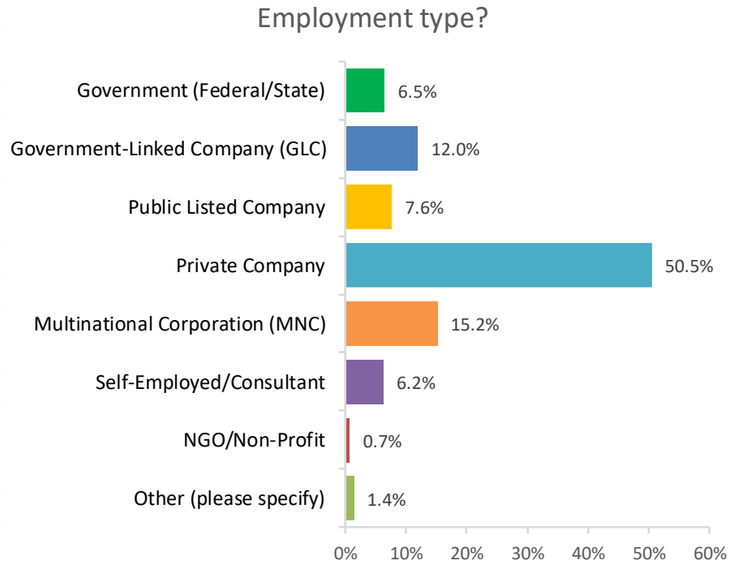
Beyond standard registrations, 30% of respondents hold PE certifications while 4.7% are Project Management Professionals (PMP). Notably, 33.7% reported having no additional professional certifications.

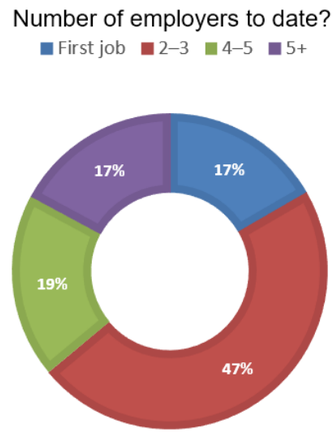


Work Experience and Employment Trends

The survey captures a broad spectrum of career stages, with a notable emphasis on experienced professionals. Professionals with 10–15 years of experience (19.6%) and those with over 25 years of experience (19.3%) form the largest segments. Early-career engineers with less than 5 years of experience account for roughly 19.3% of respondents.

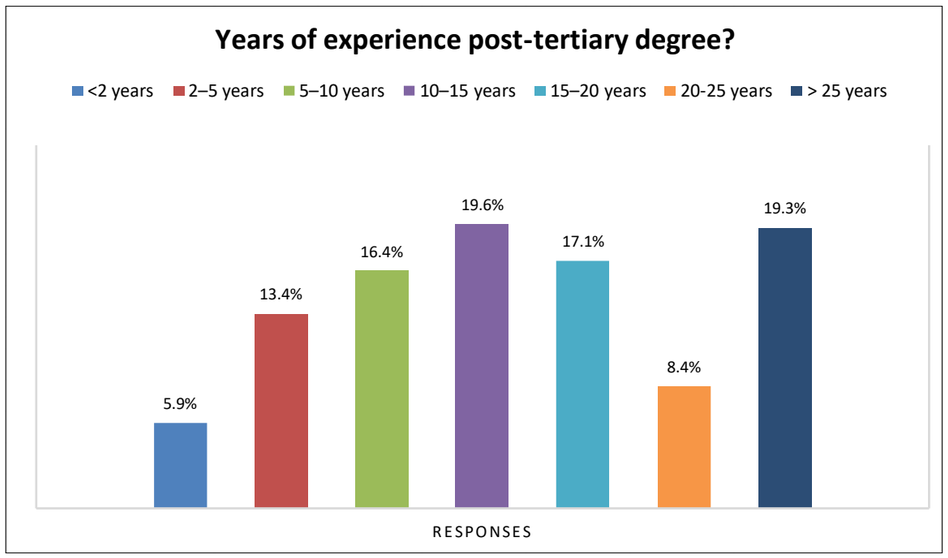
The private sector is the primary employer, with 50.5% of respondents working in private companies. Other significant employers include Multinational Corporations (15.2%) and Government-Linked Companies (11.9%).





Stability is evident in employment patterns, as 47.3% of respondents have had only 2–3 employers throughout their careers whilst 16.7% are still in their first job.

The 2025 survey demographic highlights an engineering sector that is academically well-qualified and professionally engaged through IEM and BEM. While the industry continues to be concentrated in the central economic hub of Malaysia, the diverse range of experience; from new graduates to veterans with over 25 years in the field, indicates a balanced professional ecosystem.



Job Categorization

A significant portion of the survey respondents occupy leadership and management positions within their respective organizations. According to the survey data, **31.3%** of respondents are categorized as **Managers**, while the remaining **68.7%** serve in **Professional** roles.

Analysis of Managerial Job Category

Under the MASCO 2020 framework, the 'Manager' category is defined by a dual mandate of strategic governance and operational leadership. Individuals in this classification are responsible for the high-level planning, analysis, formulation, and direction of organizational or governmental policies. Their roles extend beyond mere administrative oversight to encompass the comprehensive coordination and control of institutional activities, ensuring that the strategic objectives of an enterprise, department, or internal section are realized through disciplined leadership and resource management

I. Leadership Roles

The managerial group (comprising 128 respondents) reflects a high concentration of leadership in the technical and operational delivery of engineering projects.

Construction Managers represent the largest sub-category, representing 27.3% (35 respondents) of all managers. Within this group, 46.7% specifically identify as Construction Project Managers, followed by Construction Engineering Managers at 13.33%.

21.1% of the managers hold senior executive titles. The most common title in this tier is Managing Director (22.2%), followed by General Manager (14.8%) and a shared 11.1% each for Chief Executive Officers, Executive Directors, and Company Directors.

Manufacturing Managers accounting for 10.2% (13 respondents). This group includes Manufacturing Managers (23.1%), Production and Operation Managers (15.4%), and Electrical Managers (15.4%).

Business Services Managers comprising 9.4% (12 respondents), nearly half of this group (45.5%) focuses on Project Management.

II. Technical and Specialized Management

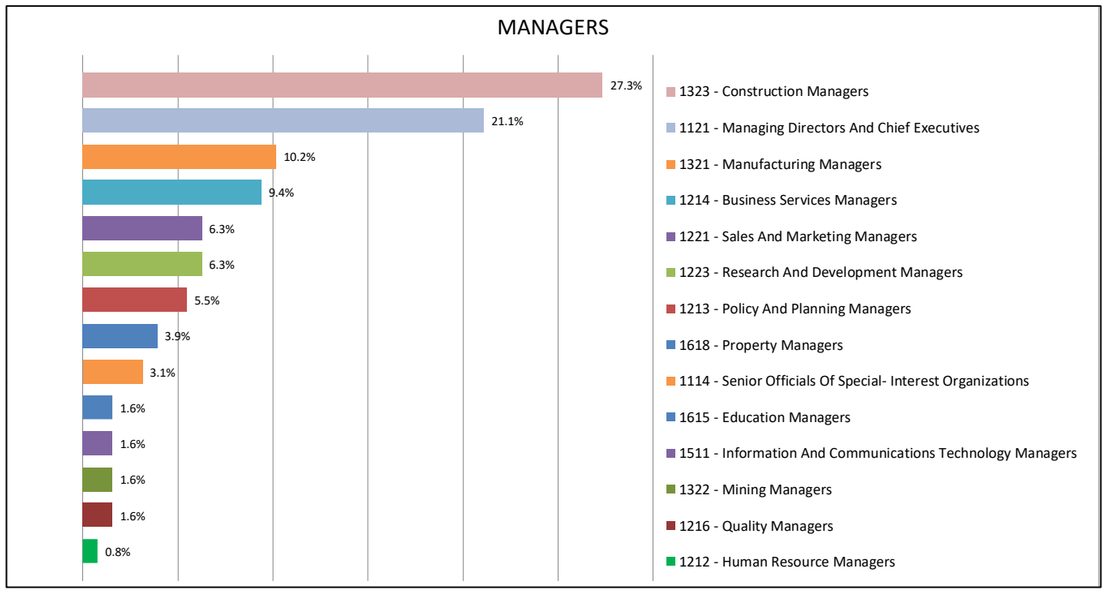
Beyond core construction and manufacturing, engineering leadership extends into specialized corporate and technical functions.

Both Sales and Marketing Managers and Research and Development Managers represent 6.3% each of the total managerial pool. In the R&D sector, 57.2% focus specifically on Research and Development Management.

5.5% of managers are engaged in Policy and Planning roles. The most frequent designations here are Project Planning Managers and Project Leaders; each making up 28.6% of this sub-category.

In Administrative and Support Management, smaller segments of the managerial workforce are dedicated to Property Management (3.9%), Quality Management (1.6%) and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Management (1.6%) respectively.

The categorization data illustrates a workforce where nearly one-third of the engineering talent has transitioned into formal management. The heavy weighting toward Construction and Project Management roles aligns with the high percentage of Civil and Mechanical engineers identified in the general demography. Furthermore, the presence of over 20% in "Managing Director" or "Chief Executive" roles indicates a strong entrepreneurial and senior leadership presence within the respondents.

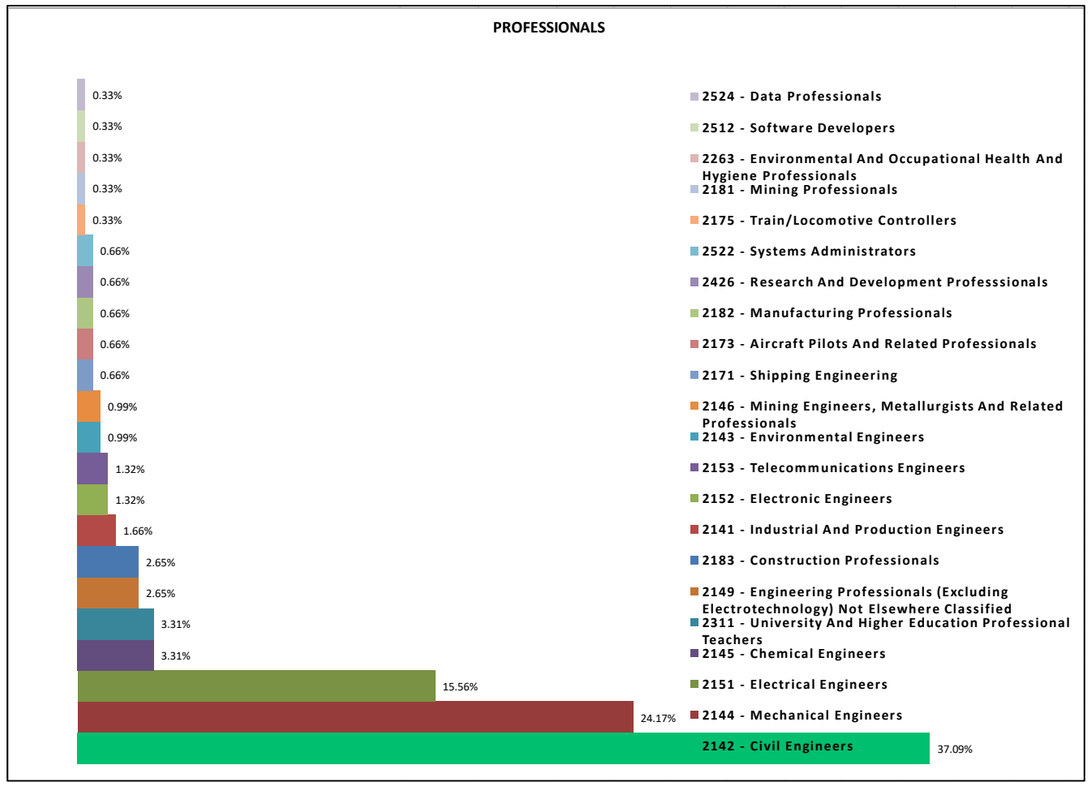


Analysis of the Professional Job Category

The "Professional" segment constitutes the majority of the survey participants, representing **68.7%** of the total respondents. This category, comprising **302 individuals**, is primarily dominated by core engineering disciplines that form the backbone of Malaysia's infrastructure and industrial sectors.

Under the MASCO 2020 taxonomy, a 'Professional' is defined by the commitment to advancing and applying the collective body of human knowledge. This classification encompasses individuals who undertake tasks designed to increase the existing stock of scientific or artistic knowledge, translate theoretical concepts into practical applications, or provide systematic instruction within these disciplines. Ultimately, the professional role is characterized by a sophisticated synthesis of research, theoretical application, and the dissemination of expertise.

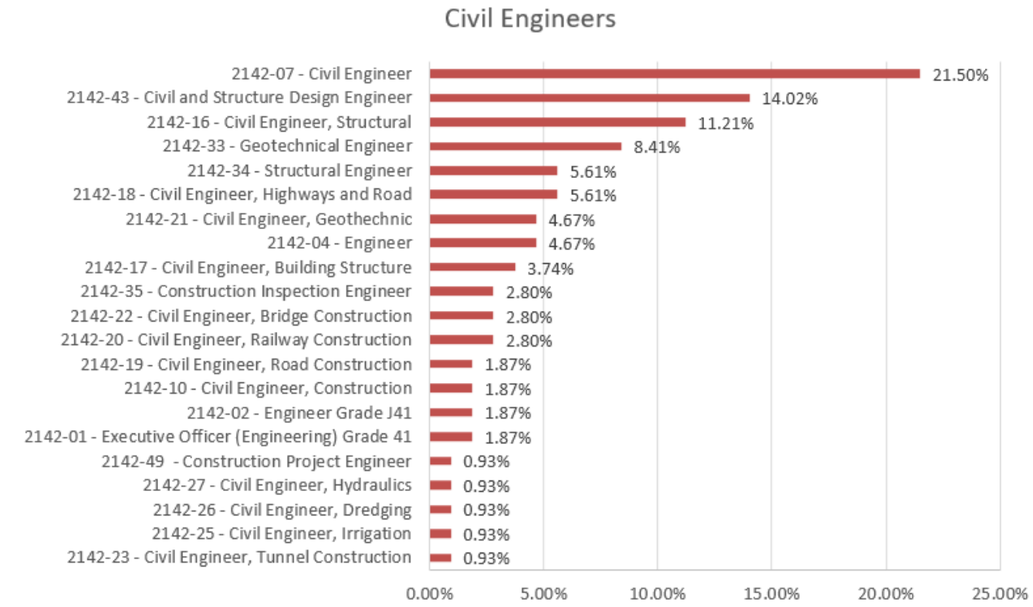
The data reflects a professional workforce that is deeply rooted in traditional engineering disciplines in Civil, Mechanical, and Electrical which aligns with the primary industry demands in Malaysia. The high percentage of Civil Engineers in structural and design roles, coupled with a steady presence of consultants and educators, underscores a sector that is well-positioned for both project delivery and the long-term development of the engineering profession. While the dataset captures a broad and diverse cross-section of engineering activities, representation from the Information Technology (IT) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) sectors remains statistically limited. Consequently, the current sample size for these emerging domains is insufficient to derive definitive conclusions or establish reliable industry-wide benchmarks at this stage.

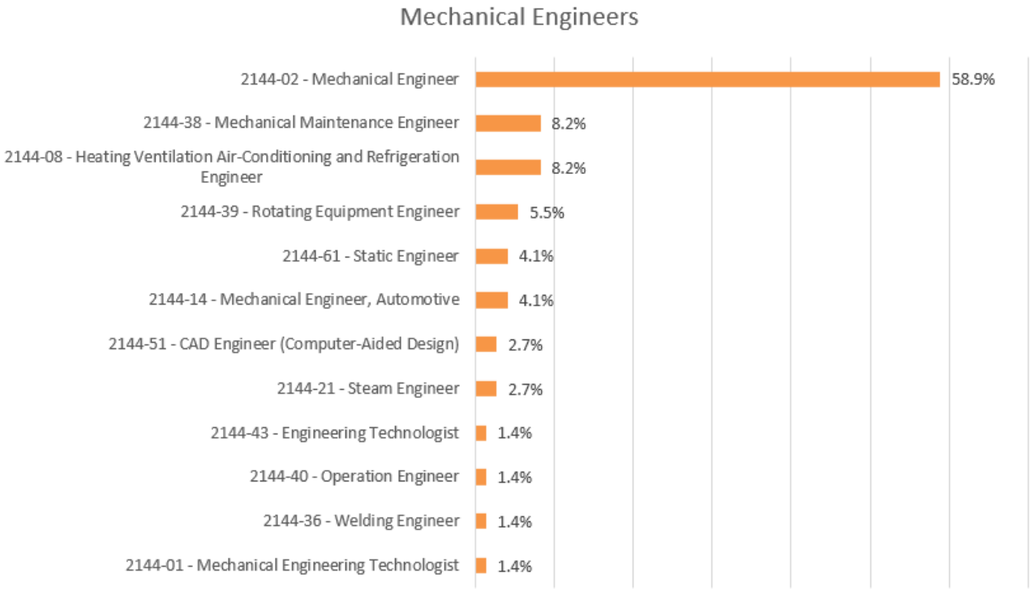


I. Dominant Engineering Disciplines

The professional landscape is characterized by three major engineering fields, which together account for over 75% of the respondents in this category:

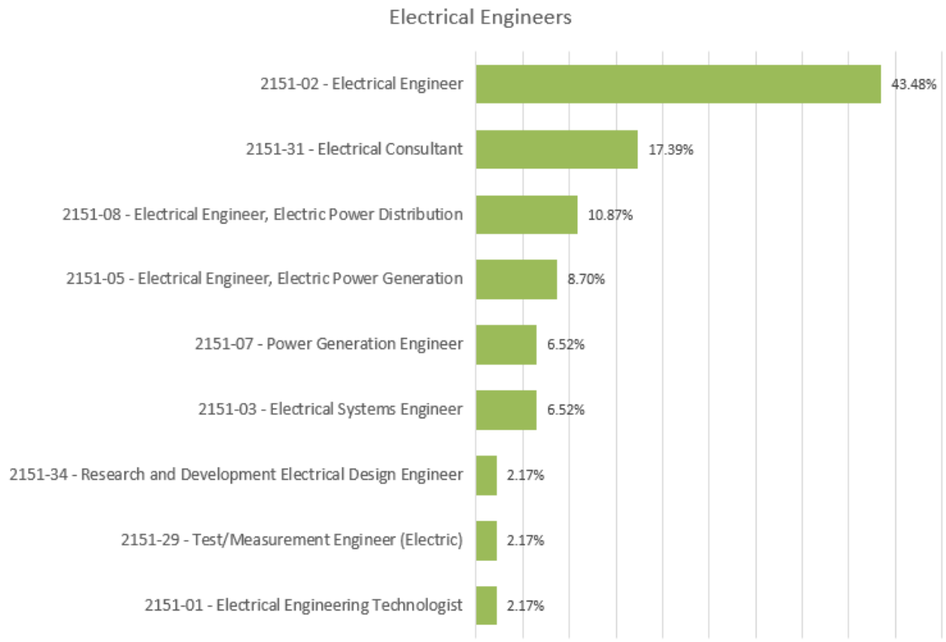
Civil Engineers is the largest professional group, representing 37.1% (112 respondents). Within this discipline, there is a strong focus on design and structural integrity, with 21.5% identifying as general Civil Engineers 14.0% as Civil and Structure Design Engineers, and 11.2% as Structural Specialists. Other significant sub-sectors include Geotechnical Engineering (8.4%) and Highways and Road Engineering (5.6%).





Mechanical Engineers representing 24.2% (73 respondents), this group shows a high concentration in general mechanical roles (58.9%). Specialized functions such as Heating, Ventilation, Air-Conditioning and Refrigeration (HVAC&R) and Mechanical Maintenance each account for 8.2% of the mechanical professional pool.

Electrical Engineers, comprising 15.6% (47 respondents), this segment is notable for its high proportion of Electrical Consultants (17.4%) and professionals focused on Power Distribution (10.9%) and Generation (15.2%).



II. Specialized Engineering and Technical Roles

The remaining respondents are distributed across diverse technical and specialized fields.

Chemical Engineers make up 3% (10 respondents), with a primary focus on general chemical and process engineering. Mining, Metallurgists, and related professionals account for approximately 1% of the respondents.

A segment of the workforce (2.6%) is categorized as Engineering Professionals (Excluding Electrotechnology) Not Elsewhere Classified, which includes roles such as Commissioning Engineers (28.6%), Factory and Machinery Inspectors, and Quality Control Engineers.

Construction Professionals (executives and site-based roles) represent 2.7%, while Manufacturing Professionals account for 0.7%.

Electronics and Telecommunications are represented as Electronic Engineers (Code 2152) comprising 4.3% of the respondents and Telecommunications Engineers (Code 2153) comprising 3.3% of the respondents. ICT Professionals, a related group, including Computer Network Professionals (Code 2523) and Systems Administrators (Code 2522), adds another ~1.5% to this high-tech cluster.

While they make up a smaller percentage of the total headcount compared to Civil Engineers (37%), they represent a specialized workforce often engaged in higher-value, R&D, and infrastructure-critical roles. Electronics engineers often populate this segment (10.2% of all managers), holding titles such as Electrical Manager or Production and Operation Manager. Electronics engineers are significant contributors to the Research and Development Managers (6.3% of managers) category, reflecting the innovation-heavy nature of the electronics sector in Malaysia.

III. Academia and Research

The survey also captures the involvement of engineers in higher education and knowledge development. In Education sector, 3.3% of the professional respondents are University and Higher Education Professional Teachers. Among these, 60% hold the rank of University Lecturer, while 20% are Professors.

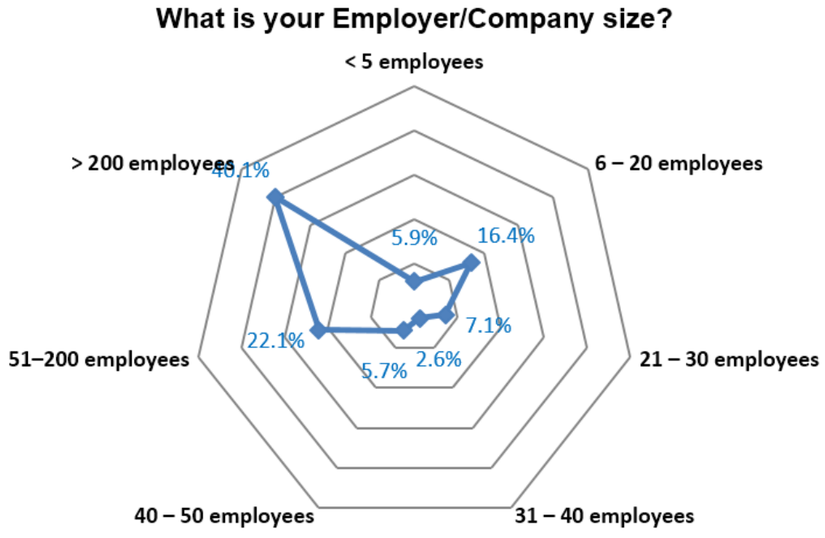
In Research & Development, a smaller segment, 0.7% of professional respondents are dedicated specifically to Research and Development.

Employment Conditions: Remuneration, Benefits, and Professional Advocacy

The second part of the IEM 2025 survey focused on the employment landscape, evaluating the organizational scale, financial compensation, and the broader sentiment regarding industry advocacy and government policy.

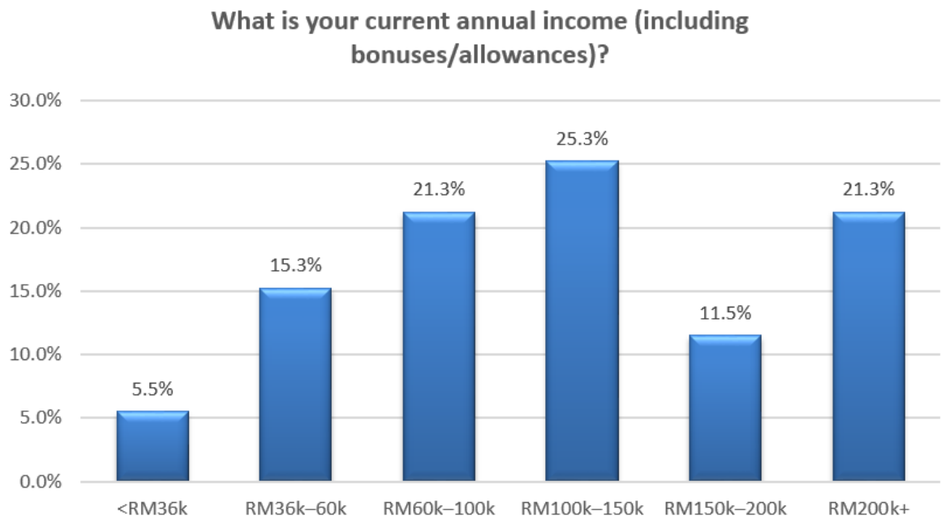
I. Employment Landscape and Organizational Scale

The respondents are primarily situated within large-scale organizations. Approximately 40.1% of respondents are employed by companies with over 200 employees, while 22.1% work in medium-to-large firms of 51–200 employees. This indicates that the majority of the respondents operate within established corporate structures that typically offer more formalized career paths. Only 37.7% of respondents work at small and medium scale enterprises participated in this survey.



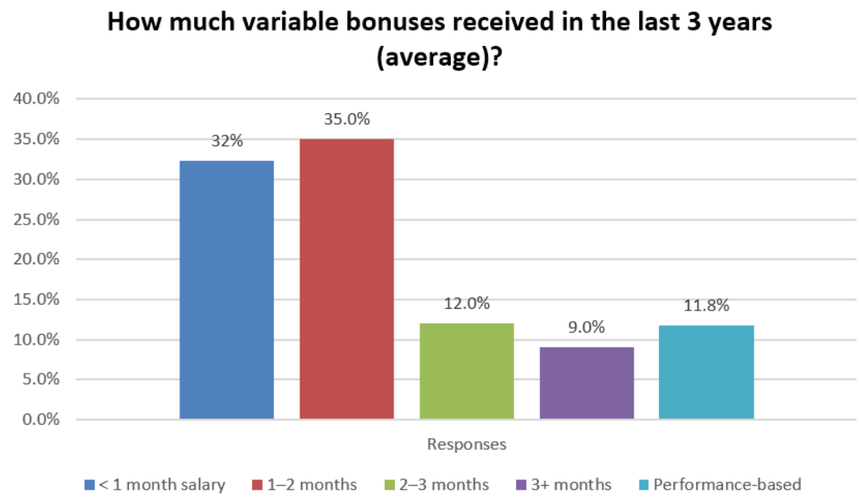
II. Remuneration and Financial Benefits

Financial compensation across the sector reflects a wide distribution, with a significant concentration in the middle-to-senior income brackets.



On Annual Income, the largest segment of respondents (25.3%) earns between RM100,000 and RM150,000 annually. Notably, 21.3% of the workforce earns more than RM200,000 per year, mirroring the segment with over 25 years of experience identified in the demographic section.

Fixed allowances (e.g., housing or transport) are not a standard feature for the majority, with 68.5% reporting they receive none. Regarding variable bonuses, 35% of engineers typically receive between 1–2 months of salary, while 32.3% receive less than one month. Performance-based ownership remains rare in the industry, as 89.5% of respondents do not participate in equity or profit-sharing schemes.



Correlation Between Experience and Remuneration

Based on a comparison of the demographic data and the employment conditions reported in the survey, there is a strong numerical correlation between engineers with less than 5 years of experience and the entry-level remuneration brackets.

The survey data reveals a clear alignment between the size of the early-career workforce and the lowest income segments. Engineers with less than 5 years of experience constitute 19.3% of the total respondents (comprising 5.9% with <2 years and 13.4% with 2–5 years). This closely mirrors the 20.7% of respondents who fall into the lowest two income brackets (<RM36k at 5.5% and RM36k–60k at 15.3%).

On Entry-Level Salaries (<2 Years), the 5.9% of respondents in their first two years of practice corresponds almost exactly with the 5.5% earning less than RM36,000 annually. This indicates that a starting salary of less than RM3,000 per month remains the standard for the newest entrants to the profession.

For Junior Professional Growth (2–5 Years), the 13.4% of engineers with 2–5 years of experience largely populate the RM36k–60k income bracket (15.3%). This suggests that after the initial two years, most engineers progress to a monthly salary range between RM3,000 and RM5,000.

Factors Influencing the Remuneration of Junior Engineers

The remuneration for this segment is further defined by several secondary factors identified in the report:

i. **Fixed Allowances:** 68.5% of all respondents receive no fixed allowances (such as housing or transport). Given that junior engineers typically have less negotiating power; they are the most likely to be affected by this lack of supplementary benefits.

ii. **Overtime Compensation:** Despite the high workload often associated with early-career roles, 85.8% of respondents reported that they are not paid for overtime.

iii. **Professional Status:** This experience bracket (under 5 years) aligns with the 46.6% of respondents registered as Graduate Engineers with the Board of Engineers Malaysia (BEM), many of whom are still working toward their Professional Engineer (P.Eng/MIEM) status.

The survey highlights significant dissatisfaction regarding these entry-level packages; a sentiment driven by the concern that current remuneration levels for junior engineers may lead to talent attrition in favor of other sectors.

III. Working Conditions and Career Development

Work-life policies and professional growth support vary across the industry. The IEM 2025 survey reveals a significant disparity between the standardized compensation packages and the actual secondary support provided to Malaysian engineers. Based on an analysis of the qualitative responses in the "Other Perks & Benefits" survey data, the following list represents the prevalence of secondary benefits among the 247 respondents who provided details.

Note that percentages are calculated based on the number of individuals who answered this optional question. Many respondents cited multiple benefits, while approximately 44% of the total survey population skipped this section, implying a lack of notable secondary perks for nearly half of the participants.

Rank	Benefit Category	Frequency (%)	Key Examples from Responses
1	**Medical & Healthcare**	**52.6%**	Hospitalization, Clinical coverage, Dental, Optical, Group Insurance, and Family medical benefits.

2	**Financial & Lifestyle**	**23.9%**	Higher EPF contributions (>13%), Annual Bonuses, Meal allowances, and Housing/Relocation support.
3	**Transportation & Mobility**	**22.7%**	Mileage claims, Parking reimbursements, Toll allowances, and Company-provided vehicles.
4	**Communication**	**10.9%**	Mobile phone allowances, Handphone bill reimbursements, and Internet/Data subsidies.
5	**No Additional Perks**	**11.7%**	Explicitly stated "None," "Nil," "No," or "Not Applicable."
6	**Professional Support**	**1.2%**	Reimbursement of professional membership fees (IEM/BEM) and specific technical training budgets.

The most frequently cited benefit across all respondents is Medical Insurance and Clinical Coverage. However, the depth of this benefit varies wildly.

i. Comprehensive Packages: Some engineers (likely in MNCs) report holistic "well-being" suites including Dental, Optical, and Group Life Insurance.

ii. The Bare Minimum: Conversely, many respondents noted restrictive caps, such as "RM50 for outpatient visits," which fails to cover even basic private clinic consultations in urban centers like the Klang Valley.

For engineers especially those in site-based or consultancy roles, transportation and communication are treated as supplementary perks rather than reimbursed business expenses.

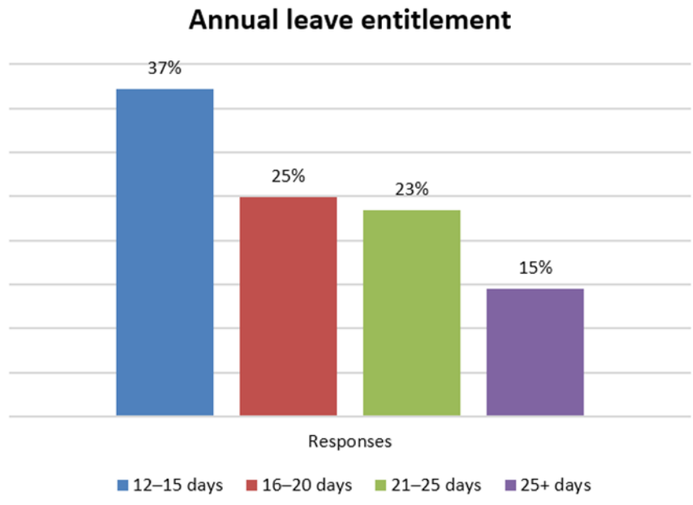
Fixed allowances are common, with many reporting "RM300 for transport" or "RM60–100 for phone bills." A significant number of respondents listed "Mileage and Parking Claims" as a "perk"; highlighting an industry mindset where standard work-related reimbursements are viewed as benefits rather than mandatory cost-coverage. A small minority (senior levels) reported Company Cars or Toll Allowances, indicating that mobility benefits are a key differentiator for senior retention.

A critical takeaway is the mention of Professional Membership Renewals. While some employers cover the annual fees for BEM (Board of Engineers Malaysia) and IEM membership, many engineers listed this as a "nil" or "missing" benefit. This suggests that a substantial portion of the engineering workforce is personally financing the costs of their professional compliance and lifelong learning. Continuous learning is largely supported through in-house training (35.9%) or dedicated training budgets (28%). However, 15.8% of respondents reported receiving no professional development support.

The qualitative data shows that engineers value indirect financial support to combat the rising cost of living: Some forward-thinking companies offer "Higher EPF contributions" (above the statutory 13%), which is highly prized for long-term financial security. Occasional mentions of Meal Allowances and Housing Provided (mostly for outstation projects) appear as vital supports for junior engineers who are struggling with the RM2,000–RM3,000 salary floor.

The most striking feature of the "Other Perks" document is the high frequency of the words "None," "No," "Nil," and "No Response." This creates a narrative of a "lean" industry where a significant segment of the workforce receives nothing beyond their basic salary and statutory EPF/SOCSO.

On Annual Leave and Overtime, most respondents (88%) receive sick leave as per Malaysian Labour Law, and 37% are entitled to 12–15 days of annual leave. Notably, 85% of respondents are not paid for overtime work.



Despite global shifts toward remote work, the engineering sector in Malaysia remains centered on the physical workplace, with 61% working full-time in the office and 30% utilizing a hybrid model. Only 2% reported fully remote model while the others cited partial WFH, flexible hours or as-required basis.

IV. Professional Sentiment and Advocacy

Respondents rated their agreement with four statements regarding their current roles.

1. Perceived Correlation Between Remuneration, Qualifications, and Experience

The survey reveals a polarized sentiment regarding the equity of current compensation structures. While a plurality of respondents (42.5%) expressed satisfaction; indicating that their salary adequately reflects their professional standing, a significant 30.1% reported a perceived disconnect between their expertise and financial reward. Notably, the 27.5% who remained neutral represent a critical "swing" demographic, suggesting that for nearly one-third of the workforce, salary satisfaction is likely conditional upon variable factors such as bonuses or cost-of-living adjustments. This data points to a need for more transparent, experience-based salary scaling across the industry.

2. Structural Alignment: Job Scopes vs. MASCO Standards

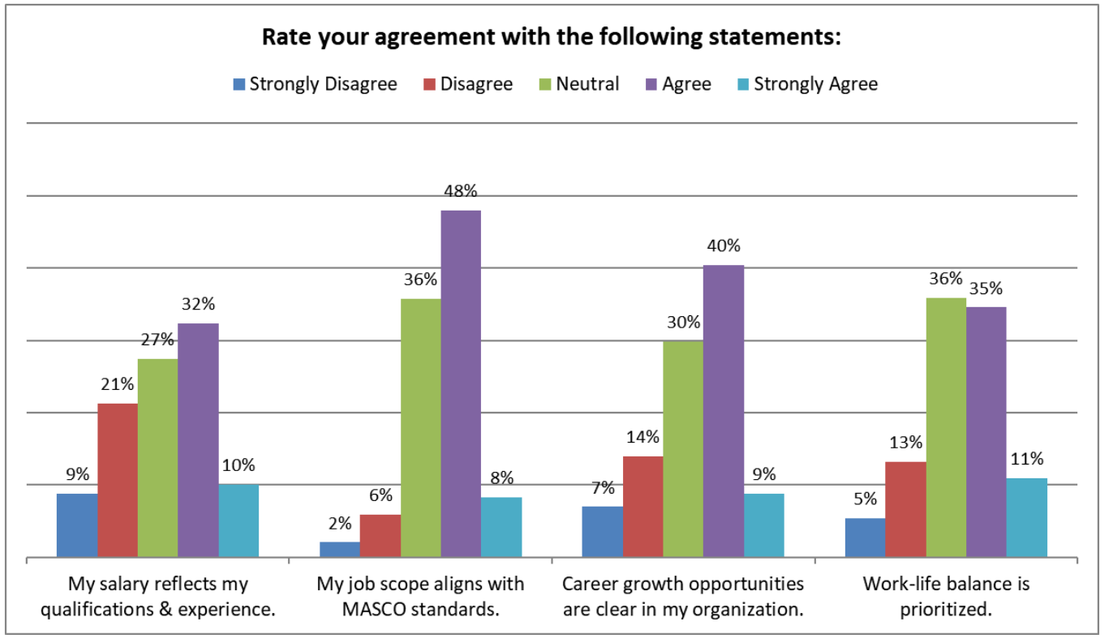
There is a strong professional consensus regarding the definition of engineering roles within the Malaysian landscape. A dominant 56.2% of respondents agree that their current job scopes are in alignment with the Malaysia Standard Classification of Occupations (MASCO). With a negligible disagreement rate of only 8%, this suggests that institutional standards have been successfully integrated into organizational structures, ensuring that engineers are largely performing duties consistent with their specialized training and professional ethics.

3. Transparency in Career Trajectory and Growth

While the majority of practitioners (49.2%) feel positive about their career prospects, the data highlights a transparency gap in professional progression. Approximately 21% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the clarity of their growth opportunities, and a further 30% remained neutral. This suggests that in nearly half of the surveyed participants, career pathways are either undefined or poorly communicated; presenting a potential risk for talent stagnation and a subsequent loss of high-value personnel to more structured sectors.

4. Institutional Prioritization of Occupational Wellness

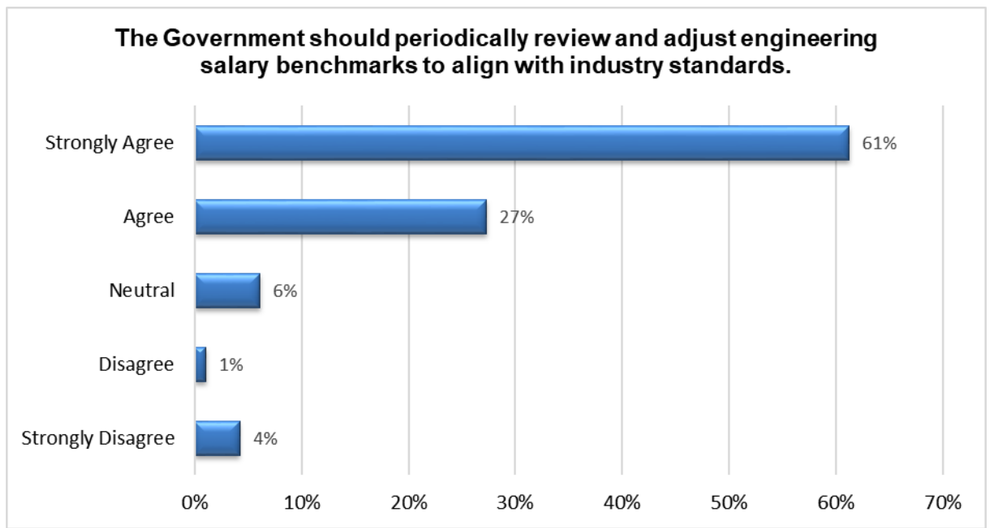
The data on work-life balance reveals a fragmented organizational culture. While 45.5% of the workforce feels supported in maintaining a healthy balance, the largest single response group is Neutral (35.8%). This high level of neutrality, coupled with a 18.7% disagreement rate, indicates that work-life balance in the Malaysian engineering sector is often treated as a reactive accommodation rather than a proactive institutional value. This inconsistency poses a long-term challenge for the industry as it competes for a generation of STEM talent that increasingly prioritizes mental well-being and flexible working conditions.

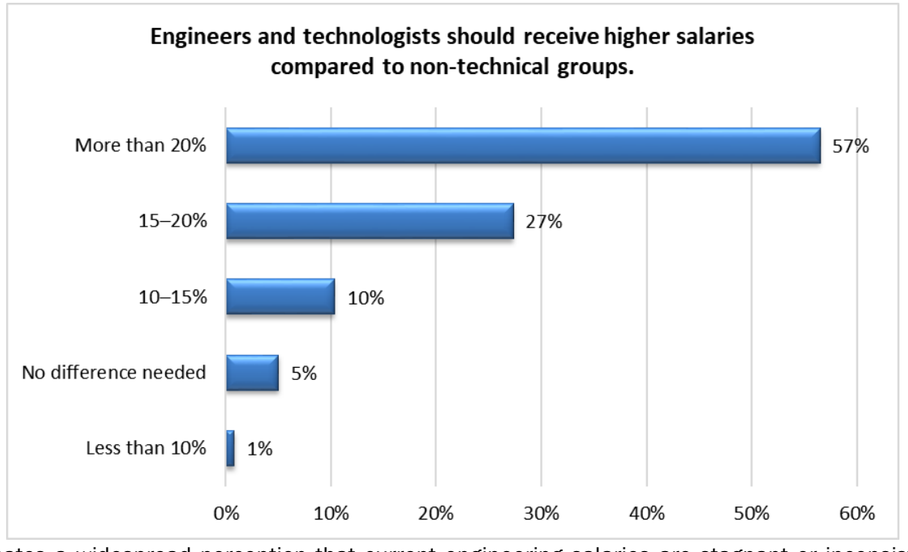


There is a strong consensus among respondents regarding the need for institutional and governmental intervention to elevate the profession:

Salary Benchmarks

A resounding 88.6% of engineers agree that the Government should periodically review and adjust engineering salary benchmarks to align with industry standards. Furthermore, over 83% believe that technical roles should command salaries at least 15% higher than non-technical groups.

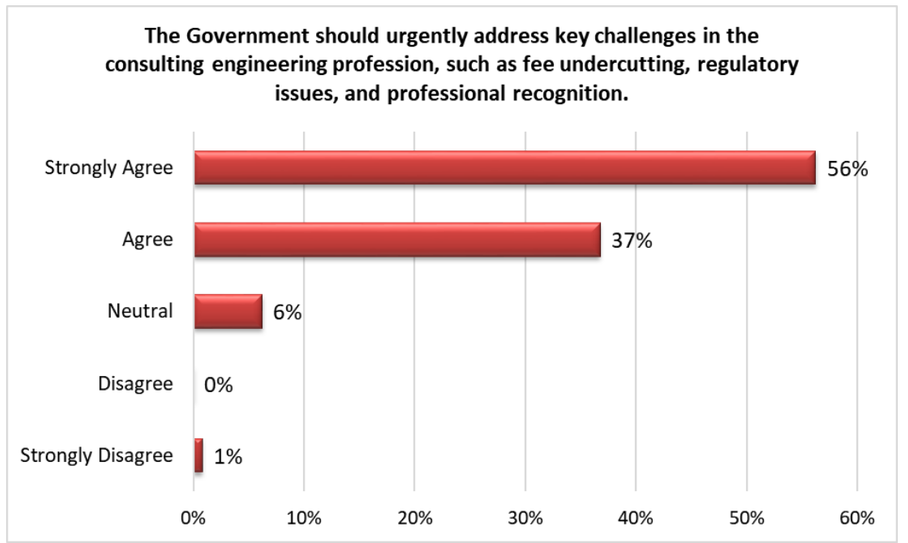




This indicates a widespread perception that current engineering salaries are stagnant or inconsistent. The nearly unanimous support suggests that engineers feel undervalued compared to other professional classes and view a standardized benchmark as a necessary tool for collective bargaining and professional dignity.

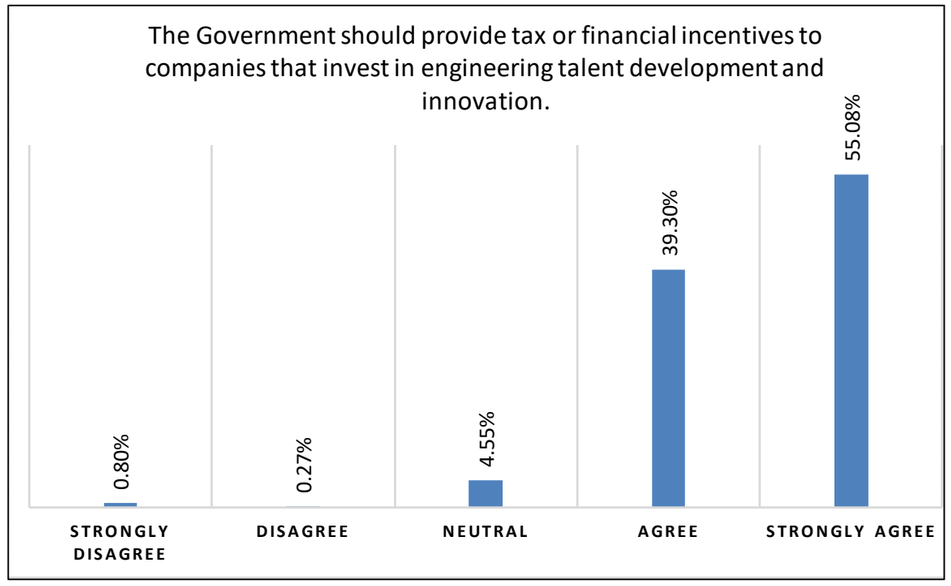
Consultancy Challenges

The profession faces critical systemic issues, with 93% of respondents urging the Government to address fee undercutting and regulatory challenges, particularly within the consulting sector. Engineers in the consultancy sector expressed intense concern regarding the "race to the bottom" in service pricing. Fee undercutting is viewed not just as a financial issue, but as a threat to the quality and safety of engineering works. The data suggests that the current competitive landscape is seen as "toxic," and there is a mandate for the Board of Engineers Malaysia (BEM) or the Government to enforce mandatory minimum fee scales. Similary, 88% Agree and Strongly Agree that Design & Build projects should be evaluated to prevent fee undercutting and ensure fair compensation for engineering consultants.

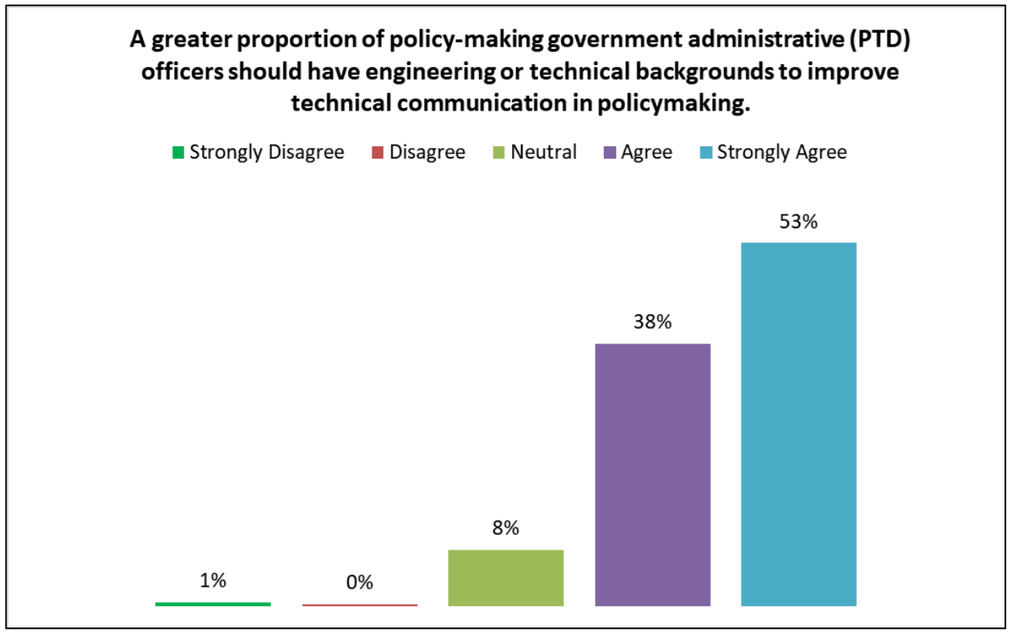


Policy and Technical Representation

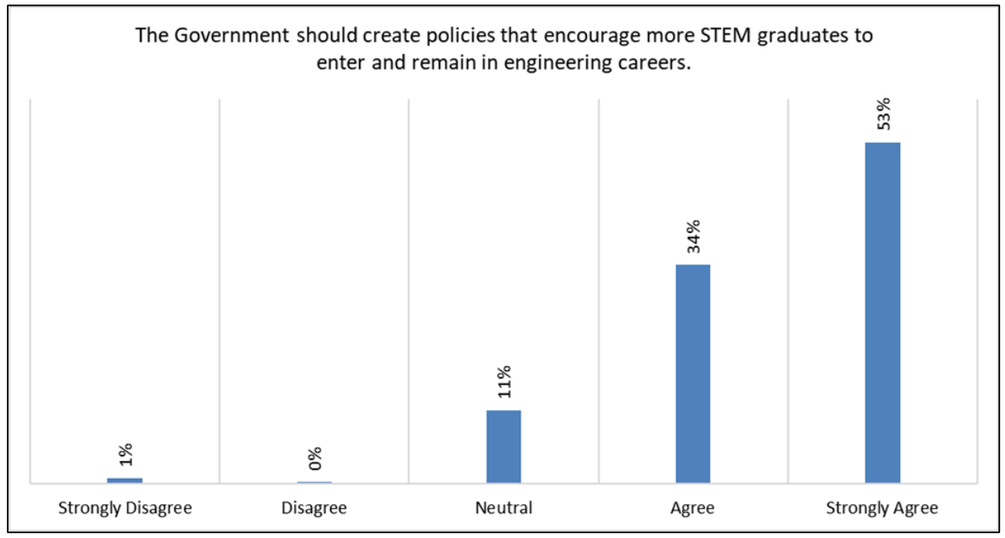
The survey data reveals a near-unanimous consensus among the engineering fraternity regarding the role of the state in fostering industrial growth and human capital. With a combined agreement of 94%, respondents have sent a clear signal that the responsibility for talent development and innovation should not rest solely on the private sector. The overwhelming support; characterized by a 55% "Strongly Agree" majority—suggests that engineers view tax and financial incentives as a vital catalyst for professional survival in a globalized economy. In an industry where private sector firms (50.5% of employers) operate on tight margins and face significant "fee undercutting," investing in cutting-edge R&D or advanced software training is often viewed as a financial risk. Respondents believe government incentives would lower the barrier to entry for innovation, allowing firms to modernize without compromising their bottom line.



There is overwhelming support (91%) for the inclusion of more technical and engineering backgrounds within the government administrative and diplomatic (PTD) service to improve technical communication in policymaking. This reflects a belief that national policies—particularly those involving infrastructure, energy, and industry—suffer from a "communication gap" between technical reality and administrative planning. Engineers believe that having "one of their own" in high-ranking civil service roles would lead to more pragmatic and efficient national development.

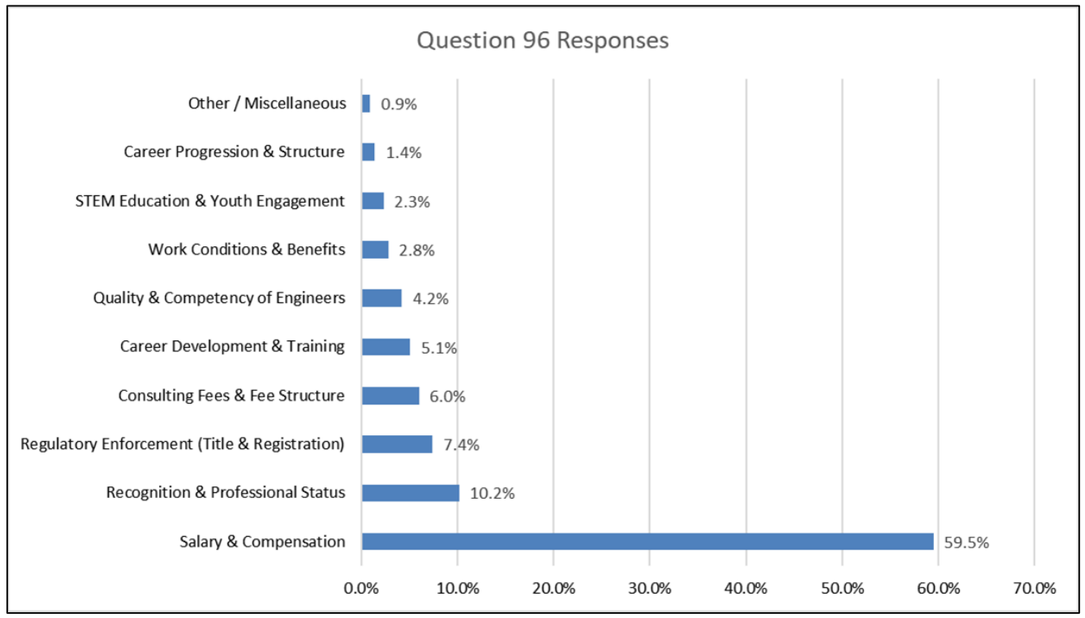


Additionally, 87.5% of respondent advocate for stronger policies to encourage STEM graduates to enter and remain in the engineering workforce. This suggests that while Malaysia produces sufficient STEM graduates, the industry struggle is with *retention*. The high agreement level indicates that engineers believe the current environment (likely due to the salary issues mentioned above) is driving talent away, and they look to the state for corrective intervention.



Most Important Improvement Sought and Conclusions

The final question of the survey asked a single open-ended question: *"**What is the single most important improvement you would like to see for engineers and technologists in Malaysia?**"* Over 215 valid responses were collected. The answers reveal a profession under significant strain, yet one that remains deeply committed to national development.



More than half of all respondents (60%) placed salary and financial compensation as their top concern. This is not a mere grumble about wanting more money; it is a systemic alarm about stagnant wages, eroding purchasing power, and a widening gap between engineering graduates and other professions.

One respondent captured decades of stagnation with painful clarity:

> *"Graduated in Chemical Engineering in 2004, received first salary in 2005 at RM1,800. Fast forward to 2025, 20 years later, starting salary for my student is still RM1,800?"* – ID 119071007120

Another pointed out the absurdity of an engineering graduate earning less than a supermarket cashier:

> *"Many fresh engineering graduates in Kuching earn as low as RM2,000, which is even lower than salaries for some supermarket cashiers. I believe fresh graduates should start at a minimum of RM2,800."* – ID 119071060989

The comparison with other professionals was a recurring theme. Engineers see themselves as problem-solvers who carry heavy responsibility, yet they feel undervalued relative to bankers, administrators, and even gig workers:

> *"The salaries of engineers in Malaysia should be on par with (if not higher than) those of other professionals and personnel in the banking industry, considering their importance, challenges, and contributions to the country's development."* – ID 119081509271

> *"Salary. Currently engineer salary is lower than gig workers."* – ID 119071093790

Many called for a mandated minimum salary for fresh graduates – figures ranged from RM2,800 to RM5,000–6,000. One respondent summarised the frustration of two decades of frozen entry-level pay:

> *"The increase in starting salary rate for graduate engineers. Since 2012 until today, the rate stucked +- RM2.5k per month."* – ID 119072706030

The second largest theme (10.2%) is not about money directly, but about respect. Engineers feel that society, employers and even government do not accord them the same esteem given to doctors, lawyers, or architects. This lack of recognition is both emotional and practical – it affects career satisfaction and public perception.

> *"Engineers are the backbone of national development – whether in transportation, infrastructure, energy, or technology – and their contributions must be recognized as vital to Malaysia's progress. When engineers in Malaysia stand tall with pride and deliver excellence, they strengthen the nation's competitiveness."* – ID 119076261795

Another respondent highlighted the imbalance of liability versus reward, especially in consultancy:

> *"Better appreciation (expressed in higher salary and incentives) for technical roles. In engineering consultancies, we see that contractors and business companies get a much larger % of the cut. But if something goes wrong, it is the Professional Engineer who is at fault since their chop is on the drawing. This is a great imbalance."* – ID 119086879040

A particularly striking comment called for status parity with the legal and medical professions:

> *"Uplift the status within society. At least at par with lawyer, doctor specialist and architect."* – ID 119071071665

A significant minority demanded stricter enforcement of the Registration of Engineers Act 1967. They are troubled by non-graduates, diploma holders, and even marketing graduates being hired into engineering roles, which dilutes the profession and depresses wages.

> *"Enforcement of restrictions on the use of the Engineer title for individuals without an engineering degree across all industries."* – ID 119086947978

> *"Enforcement for engineer/technologist graduate registration for an engineer/technologist job since some companies hire non-technical role for this job (e.g. Marketing degree for engineer role) – similar to medical profession. Need to obtain certain licence then only can do work."* – ID 119072414229

A well-articulated call for strict regulation concluded:

> *"Stricter regulation and enforcement to ensure the 'Engineer' title is only used by properly qualified and registered engineering graduates, to protect the profession's integrity. Do not equate 'Engineering Science' and 'Engineering Technology' qualifications with the 'Engineer' title without meeting proper requirements."* – ID 119049848521

Without enforcement, the engineering brand weakens; and with it the justification for higher pay and respect.

Respondents working in consultancy were particularly vocal about the corrosive effect of fee undercutting. When consultants slash fees to win tenders, engineering firms cannot pay competitive salaries, and the quality of work suffers.

> *"As a Consulting Engineer, the tender assessment shall be purely based on merit. Discounted fee shall not become the main criteria or culture in the tendering process."* – ID 119071790241

The link between low fees and poor compensation was made explicit:

> *"When professional fees are suppressed, consulting firms face difficulty offering competitive salaries, developing talent, and retaining experienced engineers, which ultimately affects the sustainability of the profession."* – ID 119071097591

> *"The most critical improvement needed is a comprehensive restructuring of the professional fee scale to address the industry's current brain drain. When compensation does not reflect the increasing complexity of technical work, it leads to a widespread lack of appreciation for the profession and causes graduates to abandon engineering careers entirely." – ID 119072753716*

One respondent compared the current market to a street bazaar:

> *"Professional fee now is at the lowest for C&S. Like pasar malam market."* – ID 119071000409

A mandated, enforced minimum scale of fees was repeatedly requested as a structural fix.

Engineers do not want only higher pay; they want opportunities to grow, upskill, and remain relevant. Several called for mandatory employer-funded training and stronger industry-academic collaboration. Investing in skills was seen not as a luxury but as a necessity to prevent obsolescence and brain drain.

> *"Strengthening competency-based development by providing more practical industry exposure and continuous professional training for engineers and technologists."* – ID 119075380599

> *"Government should make a policy for a company compulsory to send their engineer to a professional training and support the career development funded by government."* – ID 119074675418

A forward-looking respondent emphasised the need to keep pace with technology:

> *"Always learning on technology evolution e.g. AI to keep self updated and be competitive in the workforce."* – ID 119072678797

> *"The most important change I would like to see is an increase in the provision of training and professional development opportunities – more industry-related training programs, collaboration with universities, incentives to continue learning."* – ID 119071840113

A small but important minority offered a contrarian view; salary is not the root problem. Instead, they argued, the poor quality of many engineering graduates and practitioners holds the profession back.

> *"Salary is not an issue. Employers cannot pay well because the quality of engineers are not up to par! Hence they are stuck, but yet they complain. Take a good look around, many can demand high salary, explore why, instead of increasing the base pay without justification. Improve the quality instead, and reduce the numbers of unqualified engineers, PE, and graduates!"* – ID 119077537801

One respondent, who had written publicly on the matter, rejected the idea of a fixed minimum salary:

> *"I do not believe we should fix a minimum salary for engineers or technologists. Salary should ultimately be based on performance and merit. I have come across many low-quality engineers and technologists despite them holding the appropriate qualifications and certifications."* – ID 119071054696

Smaller but still significant themes included work-life balance, hybrid work, and fair overtime compensation. One respondent spoke for many who endure excessive hours:

> *"Hope the government can enhance the labour laws act, increase the right and provide a work-life balance for engineers in Malaysia. Force companies to align with the act and not let an engineer work overtime every day till 12am."* – ID 119049730699

Finally, STEM education and youth engagement appeared as a long-term concern. Engineers worry that young people are avoiding the field because of low pay and poor working conditions:

> *"Encourage younger generation to join this field as currently are dropping every year. Young generation doesn't have interest to join this industry anymore."* – ID 119072510975