The Global Financial Inclusion Index

Examining the foundational elements of financial security

The Global Financial Inclusion Index is sponsored by Principal Financial Group and created in partnership with the Center for Economics and Business Research.

Launched in 2022, The Global Financial Inclusion index is an annual study measuring access to financial security across 42 global markets. Using public and survey-based sources, the Index analyzes financial inclusion through three key pillars — government support, financial system support, and employer support — representing the key stakeholders responsible for promoting financial inclusion. The Index provides actionable insights to help drive greater financial inclusion across markets, ultimately building more resilient communities and economies.

Malaysia 2025 key findings[1]

- **Malaysia showed consistent improvement in overall scores across all pillars** and was one of only two markets to rise in all three pillars in 2025.
- **Like in 2024, employer support provided Malaysia's highest ranking, moving up seven rankings to no. 7—its first time in the top ten of any of the three supporting pillars,** driven by score increases in three out of four underlying indicators (and ranking gains in four).
- **Consumer sentiment remained strong, with 70.3% of the population feeling financially included** (ranked 8th globally).
- **Financial system indicator improvements led to a modest pillar score increase,** driven by enabling of business confidence, SME growth and success, and access to credit—despite a loss of three rankings.

Malaysia market indicator rankings

The three pillars—government support, financial system support, and employer support as measured in the Global Financial Inclusion Index—consist of multiple indicators.

	Indicator name	Rank	Change
Government support	**Overall government support**	**25**	**0**
	State of public pensions	27	0
	Deposit protection schemes	7	+1

[1] Source: principal.com/financial-inclusion

	Consumer championing regulations	21	+5
	Employment levels	29	0
	Awareness and uptake of government-mandated pension schemes	21	+6
	Education levels	29	0
	Complexity of taxation systems	24	0
	Availability of government-provided financial education	12	+5
	Financial literacy levels	28	-1
	Online connectivity	25	+2
	Vulnerable employment	30	-1
	Equal access to education	16	-2
	Finances in retirement	23	0
Financial system support	**Overall financial system support**	**19**	**-3**
	Real-time transactions	16	0
	Access to credit	18	0
	Borrowers' and lenders' protection rights	26	-12
	Access to bank accounts	26	0
	Presence and quality of fintechs	20	+4
	Access to capital	36	+3
	Enabler of small/medium enterprise (SME) growth and success	8	+4
	Enabler of general business confidence	10	+3
Employer support	**Overall employer support**	**7**	**+7**
	Provision of guidance and support around financial issues	23	+8
	Employee pension contributions	3	+3
	Employee insurance schemes	7	0
	Employer pay initiatives	13	+5

Consumer sentiment

The following research was conducted through an online survey among a sample size of 21,500 household financial decision makers across 42 global markets.

- Asian consumers continue to feel the most financially included of any region, with markets from the region occupying the joint 1st and 2nd highest scores in 2025.

- Malaysia shows strong overall financial inclusion sentiment with 70.3% of the population feeling financially included (ranked 8th globally).

- Government support perception is robust with 75.7% of Malaysians feeling the government acts in ways that support financial inclusion (ranked 7th globally).

- Employer support sentiment is also strong at 70.8% (ranked 18th globally), showing balanced support across all three pillars of financial inclusion.

Malaysia consumer sentiment	2022	2023	2024	2025	Net change since 2022
Percentage of household financial decision makers who feel financially included	76%	78%	69%	70%	**-6 percentage points**
Consumer sentiment ranking	20	15	8	8	**+12 spots**

Top 10 markets for financial inclusion

Market	Rank	Year-over-year (YoY) change
Singapore	1	0
Hong Kong	2	0
Switzerland	3	+1
South Korea	4	-1
Sweden	5	0
Denmark	6	0
United States	7	0
Thailand	8	0
Australia	9	0
United Kingdom	10	+1

To explore the full report and insights, visit principal.com/financial-inclusion

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