

IPSOS PRESS RELEASE: **IPSOS HAPPINESS INDEX 2026**

Understanding Happiness
among Malaysians

March 2026



Malaysia records higher Happiness Index Score in 2026

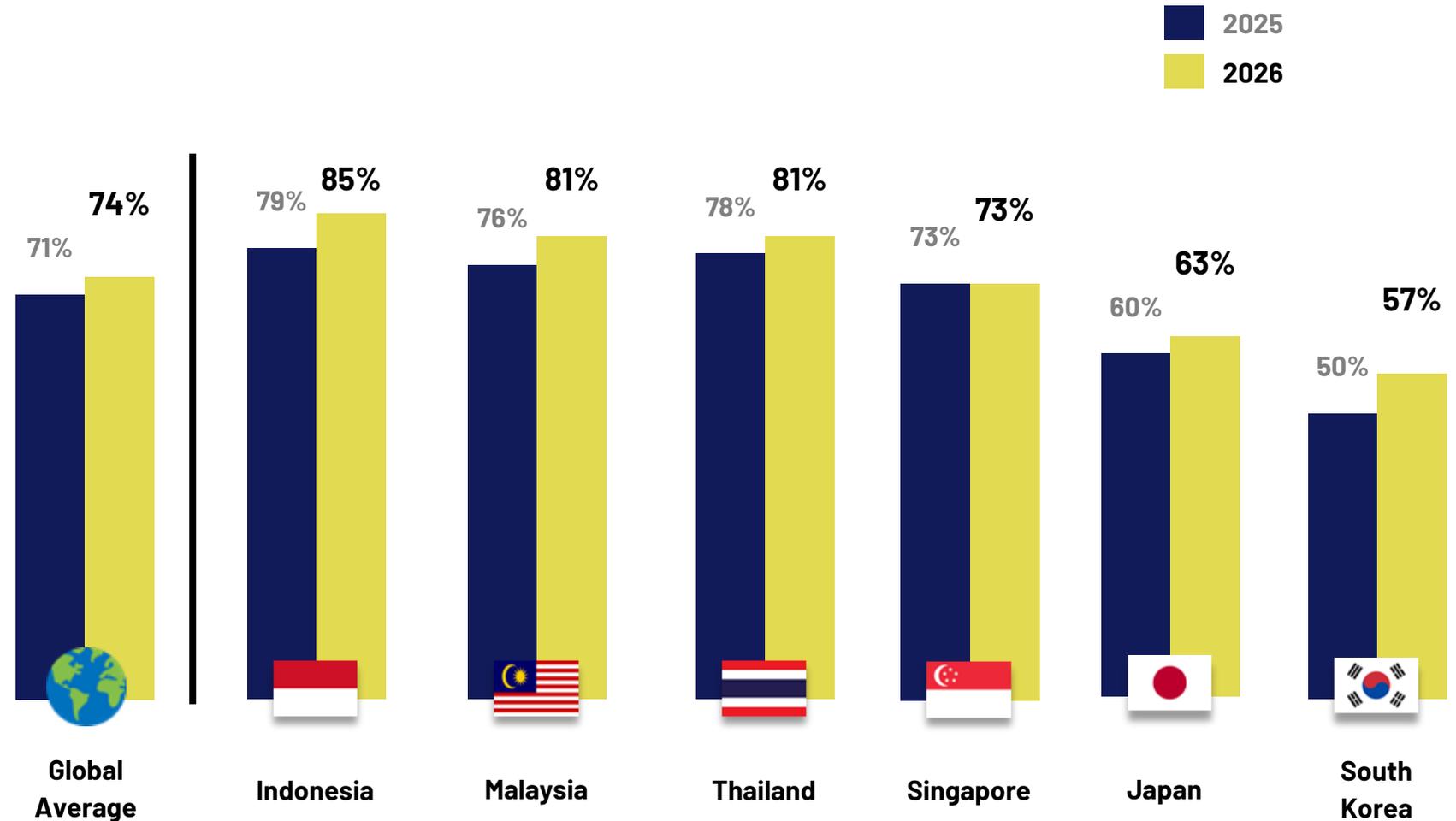
Malaysians report higher levels of happiness this year with an increase of 5% from 2025.

Similar increases are seen across most Southeast Asian countries, except Singapore. Indonesia records the highest level of happiness globally.

While happiness scores have also risen in Japan and South Korea, levels in these markets remain lower than both the global average and Southeast Asian counterparts.

Base: Representative sample of Malaysian adults aged 18-74: n=501; Global: n= 23,268. Survey conducted between Dec 24, 2025, and Jan 9, 2026

Happiness Index scores across Asia (% very happy / happy)



More than half of Malaysians say feeling appreciated drives happiness

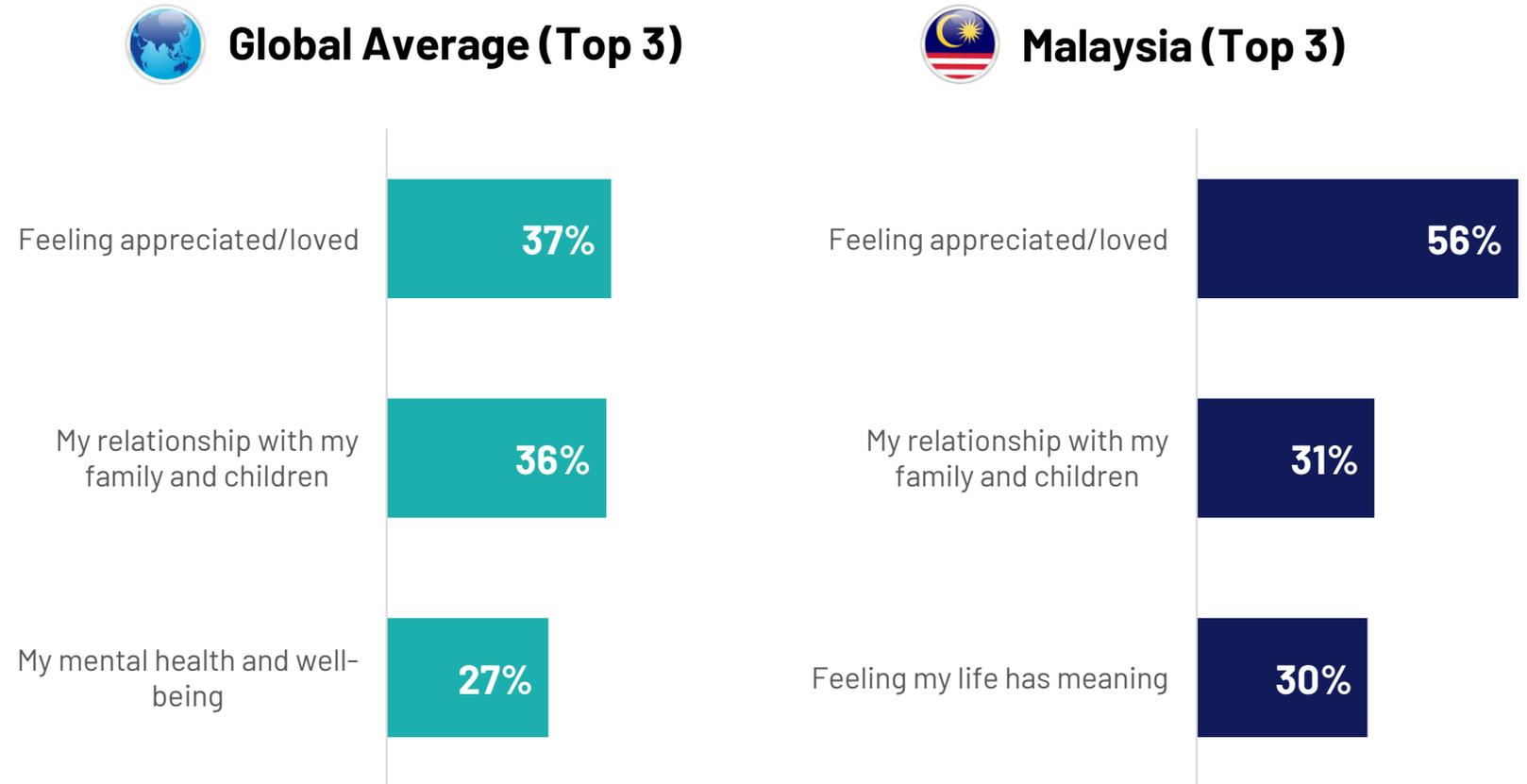
Globally, happiness is closely tied to personal relationships.

In Malaysia, this connection is even more pronounced, feeling appreciated and loved emerges as the strongest driver of happiness, and it is much higher than the global average.

3 out of 10 Malaysians also believe that feeling the meaning of their life is one of the sources of happiness in life, indicating a different view on life experience and happiness.

Base: Among respondents who reported 'very happy' or 'rather happy': Malaysia: n= 406; Global: n= 17,360. Survey conducted between Dec 24, 2025, and Jan 9, 2026

What Makes Us Happy (% of Agree) (among those who are "very happy/ rather happy")



Personal financial concerns greatly contribute to unhappiness

Personal finances are the leading source of unhappiness both globally and in Malaysia, far outweighing other factors.

In Malaysia, housing or living conditions and job-related issues round out the top three drivers, highlighting how individual financial stability shapes overall well-being.

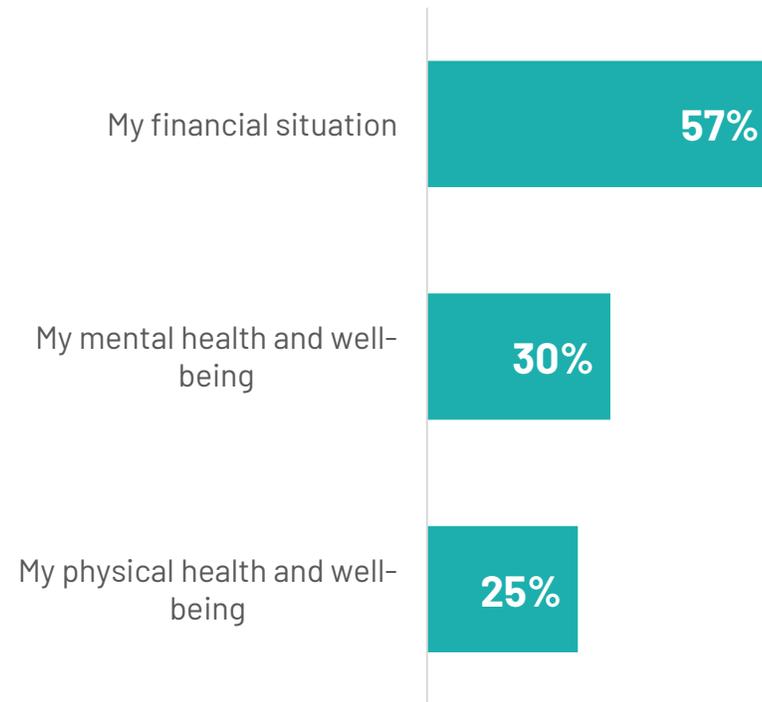
Globally, mental and physical well-being are the next most prominent contributors to unhappiness.

Base: Among respondents who reported 'not very happy' or 'not happy at all': Malaysia: n= 95; Global: n= 5,908. Survey conducted between Dec 24, 2025, and Jan 9, 2026

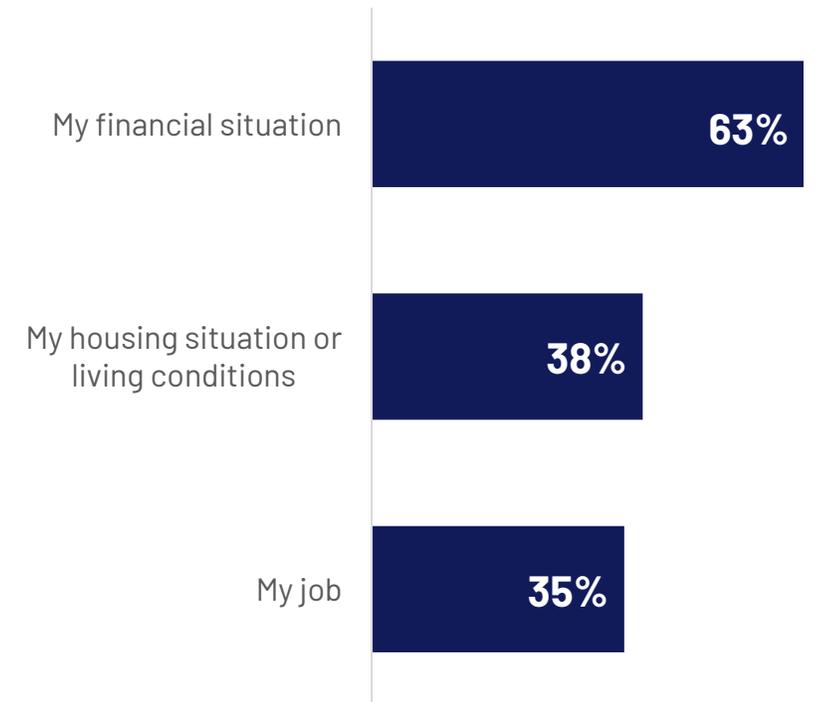
What Makes Us Unhappy (% of Agree) (among those who are "not very happy/ not happy at all")



Global Average (Top 3)



Malaysia (Top 3)



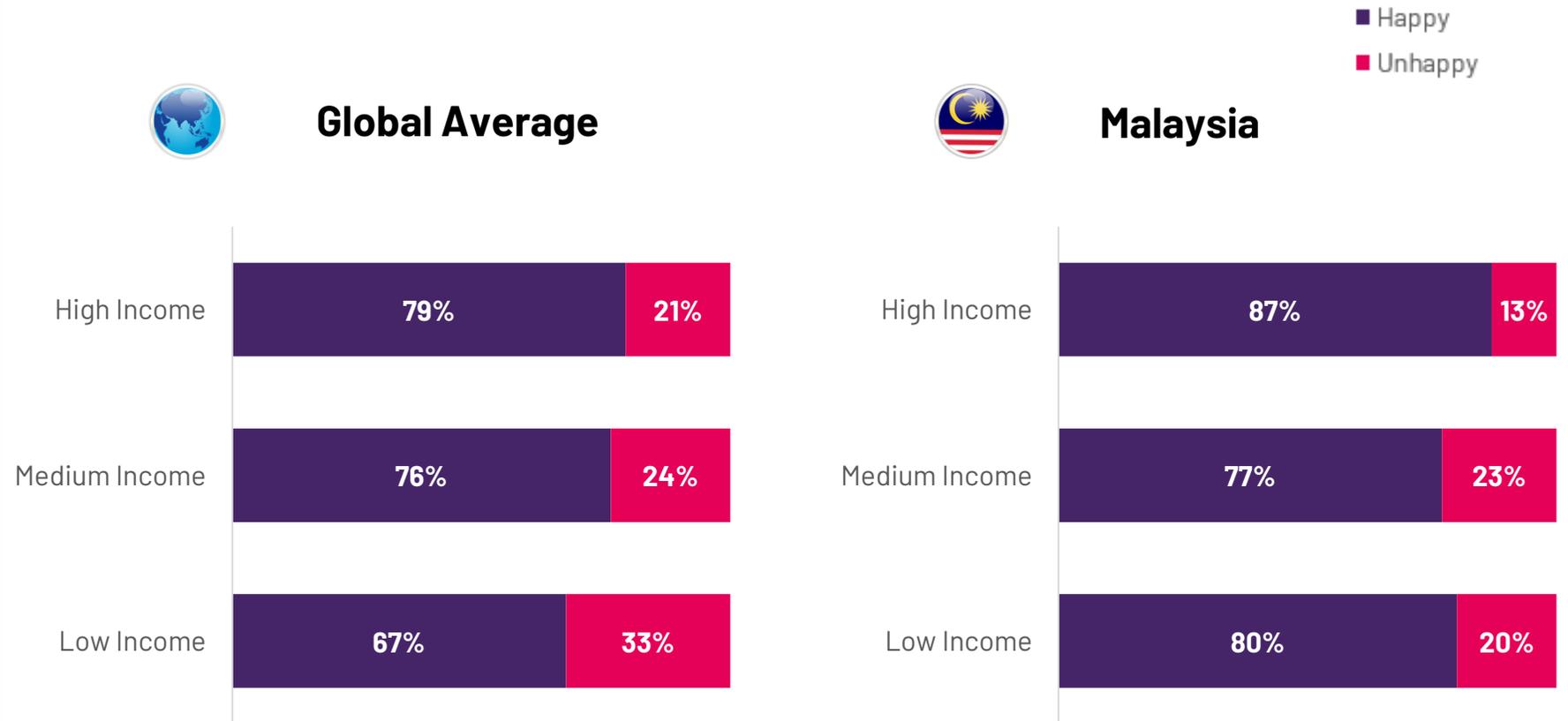
...while higher income levels correlate with stronger happiness outcomes

Higher-income groups report higher levels of happiness both globally and in Malaysia.

Malaysians in the high-income group are the most satisfied (87%), while unhappiness is more common among lower-income groups.

Base: Representative sample of Malaysian adults aged 18-74: n=501; Global: n= 23,268. Survey conducted between Dec 24, 2025, and Jan 9, 2026

Does money bring us happiness?





Ipsos
Happiness
Index 2026

Despite ongoing global uncertainties, Malaysians continue to report strong levels of happiness. Our latest findings show that Happiness Index scores in Malaysia increased by 5% this year, placing the country among the happier markets globally and reflecting a generally positive outlook among its people.

At the heart of Malaysians' happiness are close relationships and meaningful social connections. Feeling appreciated and loved emerges as the strongest driver of happiness, followed by relationships with family and children, highlighting the important role that community and belonging play in shaping well-being. Personal financial factors also influence how happy people feel, with it being the key driver to unhappiness across the world. Moreover, higher-income groups consistently report greater levels of happiness both globally and in Malaysia, with 87% of high-income Malaysians reporting they are happy.

These findings suggest that while Malaysians share global concerns around personal finances, strong social connections and supportive relationships remain as key anchors of well-being. As financial pressures come and go, these social foundations remain an important source of resilience for Malaysians.



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