

IPSOS PRESS RELEASE:

MALAYSIAN VIEWS ON SOCIAL MEDIA BAN

Public sentiment following policy
action: Strengthening protections for
children online

October 2026

Malaysia ranks second globally in support for an under-14 social media ban

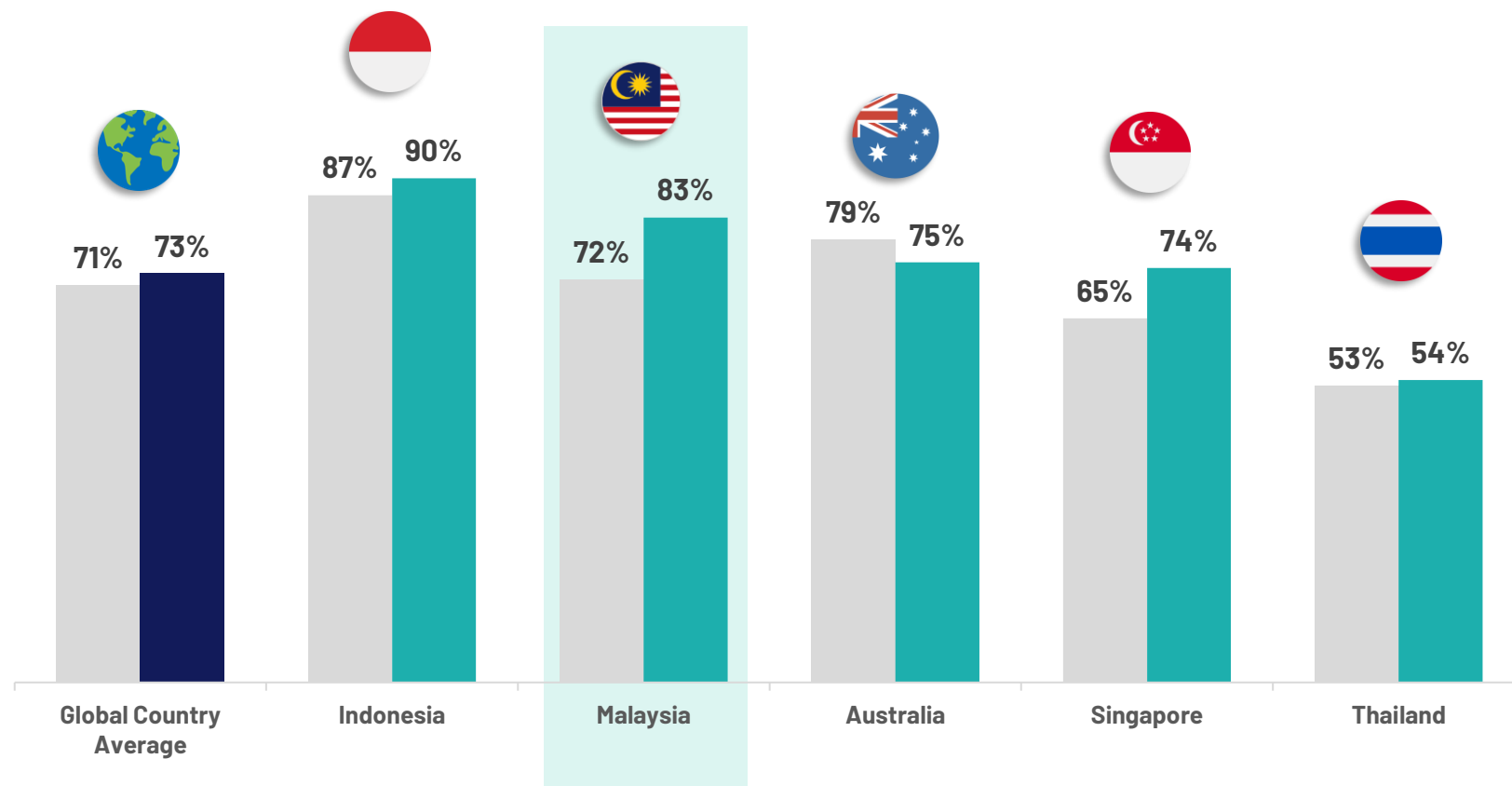
Indonesia lead in public opinion on an age-based social media ban.

But a larger shift is happening at home: support for a ban in Malaysia has climbed 11 percentage points, from 72% in 2025 to 83% this year, pointing to growing public sentiment for stronger protections for children online.

Base:

23,537 online adults under the age of 75 across 31 countries, interviewed 19 June – 3 July 2026.

Q. How much do you agree or disagree... Children under 14 should be banned from using social media both inside and outside of school?
(% Agree)



Malaysia joins a growing regional push for age-based social media restrictions

Across the region, strong public sentiment for protecting younger users is increasingly pushing for policy actions.

Indonesia, Malaysia, and Australia have introduced age-based social media restrictions.

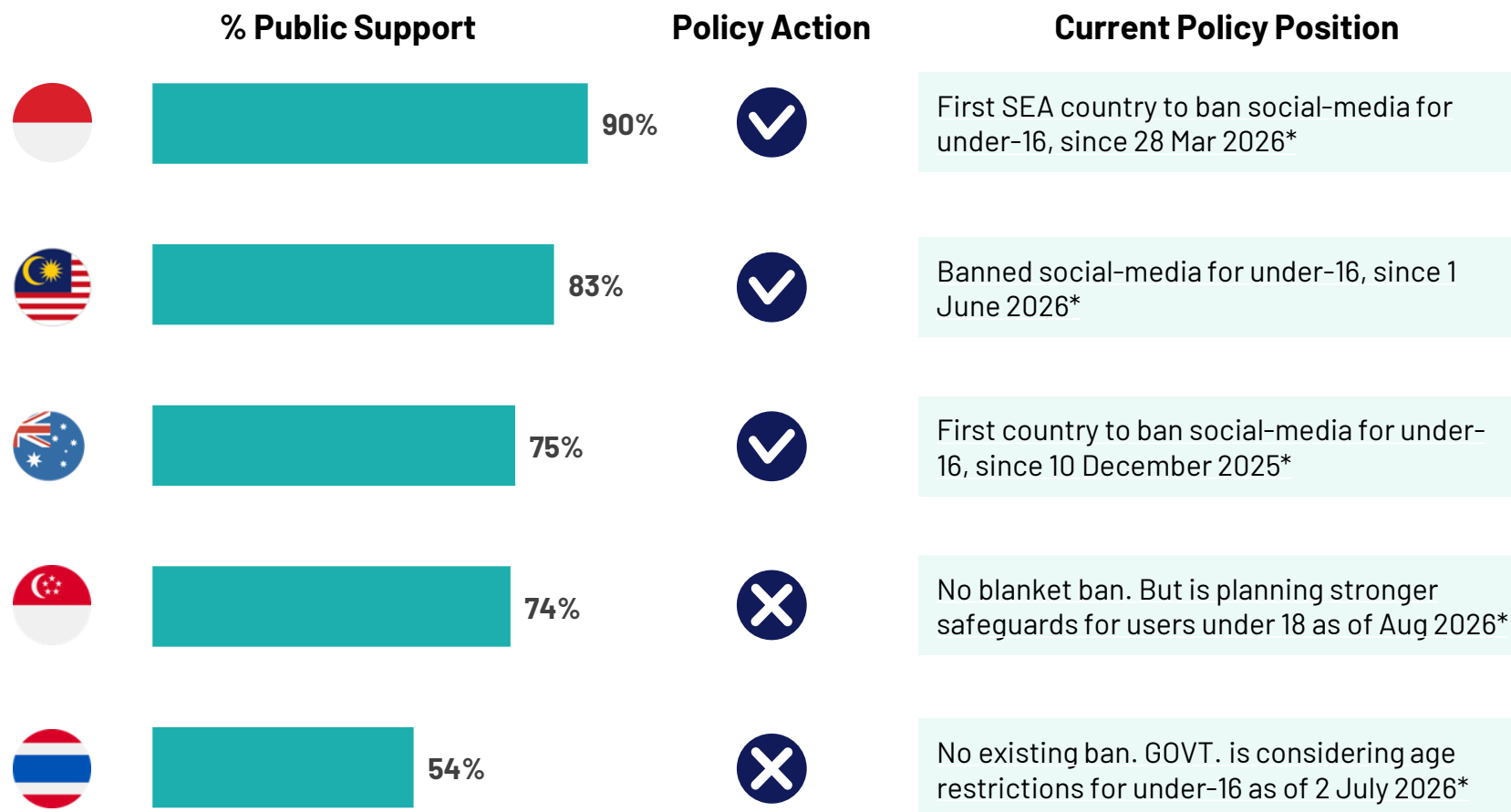
Singapore presents a different picture, with relatively high support but a more cautious policy approach.

Thailand stands out in the region, with lower public sentiment, while the policy step is still under consideration.

Base:

Malaysian adults aged 18-74 interviewed online; 2026: n=501 (19 June-3 July 2026), 2025: n=500 (20 June-4 July 2025).

Strong public support for age-based restrictions is reflected in different policy responses across the region



Source: Indonesia (*Channel News Asia*); Malaysia (*The Straits Times*); Australia (*eSafety Commissioner*); Singapore (*The Straits Times*); Thailand (*Thai PBS World*).

Those who are born into the Social Media age are increasingly calling for safeguards

Support for restricting social media access goes beyond parents. Gen Z, the digital natives, strongly backs the restrictions – up 14ppts from 2025.

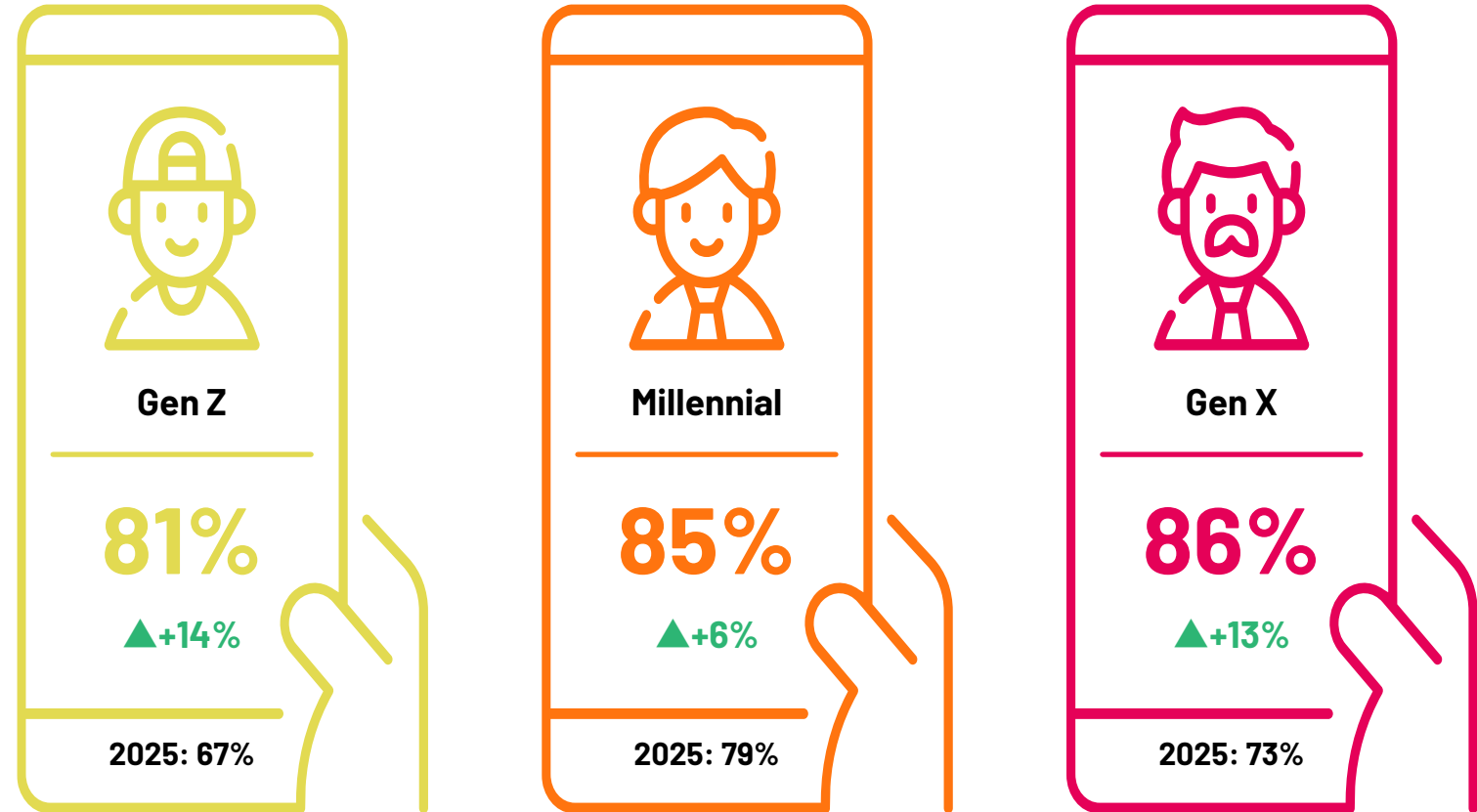
AI fakes, misinformation and scams are making the online world riskier, and concern for young users is rising. Support is even stronger among Millennials and Gen X.

Base:

Malaysian adults aged 18-74 interviewed online; 2026 Total=501 - Gen-Z=207, Millennial=179, Gen-X=85, Baby Boomer=30 (19 Jun-3 Jul 2026) | 2025 Total=500 - Gen-Z:177, Millennial:180, Gen-X:98, Baby Boomer=45 (20 Jun-4 Jul 2025).



Support for restricting children's social media access across generations





Age-based restrictions are one response to growing concern about children's safety online, but their effectiveness will depend on how they are put into practice. Platforms, parents and educators also have a role in promoting the safe and responsible use of social media and technology.

While many countries are still debating social media bans, only a handful have begun enforcing them. Southeast Asia has emerged as an early mover: after Australia, Indonesia and Malaysia are among the first countries to implement under-16 restrictions, and public sentiment in these markets strongly supports the move.

Notably, that support extends to Gen Z. The generation that grew up with social media appears to understand its downsides firsthand, and to recognise that today's children face greater risks than they once did, as AI deepfakes and misinformation blur the line between what is real and what is not. Data cited by the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) shows that 70% of Malaysian teenagers have already been exposed to harmful online content.

Whether restrictions alone can keep children safe remains an open question for governments and society alike. The conversation is shifting from whether children should have access to social media to how to make that access safer. Age-based safeguards and policy measures provide important guardrails. However, parents, educators, and trusted adults play a critical role in helping children use technology responsibly as they navigate an increasingly complex online world.



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