

PERCEPTION TOWARDS ICERD & ETHNIC RELATIONS IN MALAYSIA

24 February – 20 March 2022

Prepared by
Merdeka Center for Opinion Research

Project Background

In 2018, the newly elected Pakatan Harapan led government was unsuccessful in implementing the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) following a series of considerable rejection and refusal from Malay groups.

However, many including independent non-governmental organizations have taken the effort to educate the public about ICERD and work through misinformation and fear towards the international framework to eliminate discrimination.

This survey attempts to measure the perception of Malaysian adults towards the implementation of ICERD.



Content

PART 1: AWARENESS AND PERCEPTION ON ICERD

AWARENESS ON ICERD

PERCEPTION TOWARDS ICERD

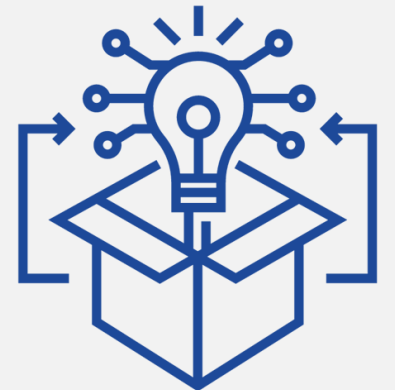
ATTITUDE TOWARDS ICERD

PART 2: INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONSHIP

IDENTITY

EXPERIENCE OF UNFAIR TREATMENT

IN-GROUP & OUT-GROUP ATTITUDE

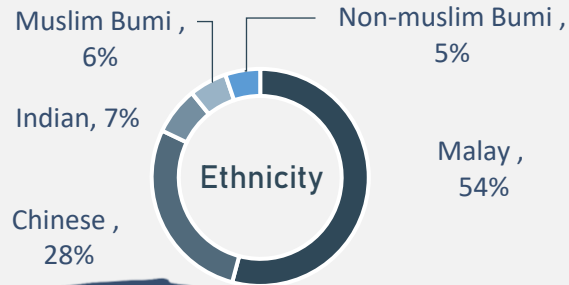


Survey Methodology

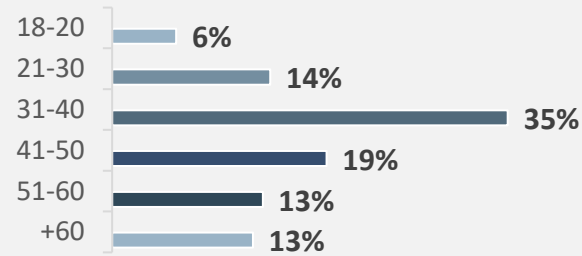
- **1202** respondents aged 18 and above were interviewed via telephone (fixed and mobile lines)
- The survey respondents are from all states across Peninsular Malaysia includes Sabah and Sarawak
- Respondents were selected through random stratified sampling method along the lines of ethnicity, gender, age and states.
- Almost all of the constituencies (**14** states and across **222** parliament constituencies) were surveyed and the selection of the respondents is proportional with respect to the population in each parliament constituency.
- Respondents were interviewed in their own language of preferences
- Survey margin of error estimated at **±2.83**
- The survey was conducted on **24 February – 20 March 2022**

Respondent Profile

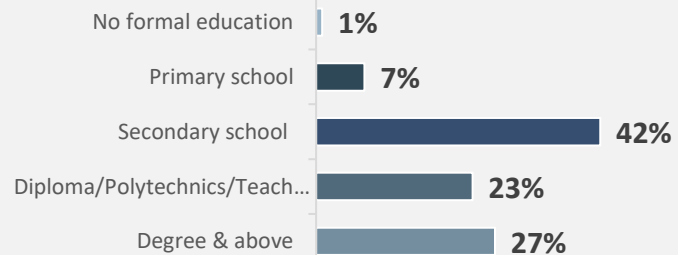
Ethnicity



Age



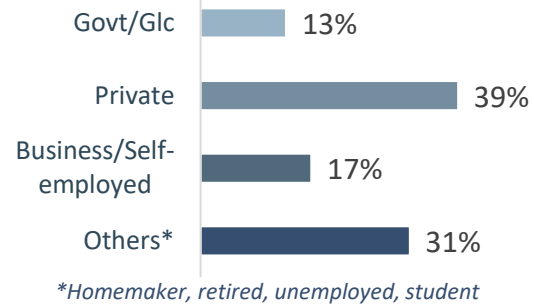
Education



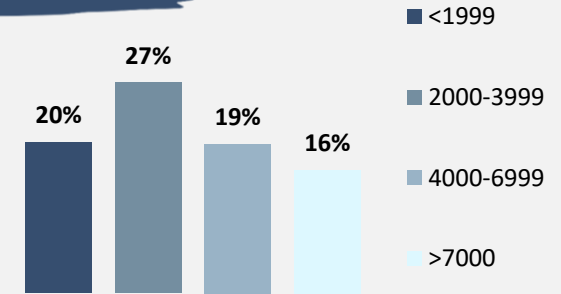
Settlement Type



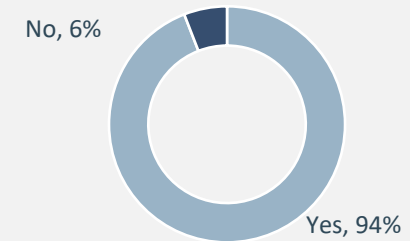
Employment Sector



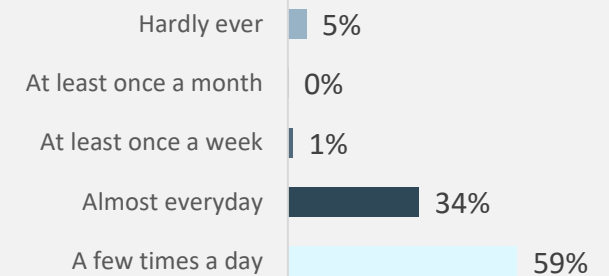
Household Income



Internet Access




Internet Usage



Part 1:
Awareness and Perception on
ICERD





**PART 1:
AWARENESS
AND
PERCEPTION ON
ICERD**

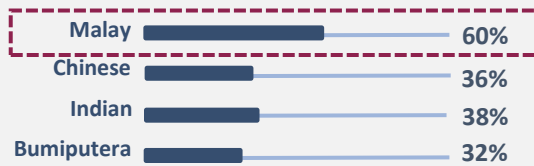
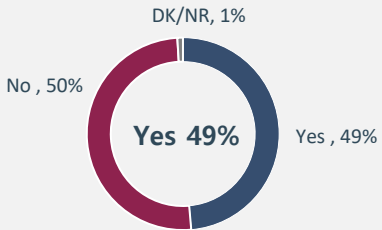
AWARENESS ON ICERD

PERCEPTION TOWARDS ICERD

ATTITUDE TOWARDS ICERD

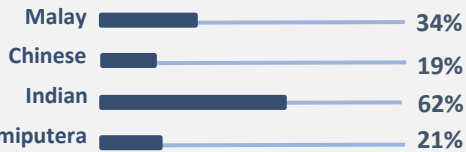
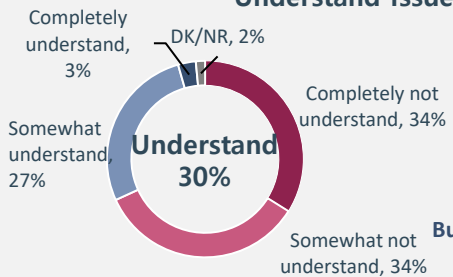
Awareness on ICERD

Heard about ICERD



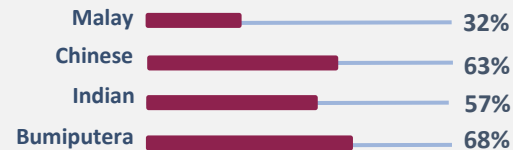
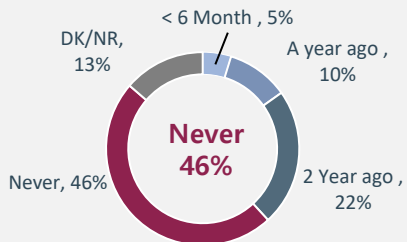
Q. Have you heard about the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination also known as ICERD?

Understand Issues Related to ICERD



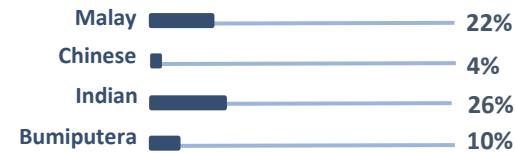
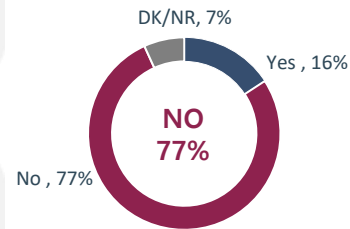
Q. Do you understand the issue surrounding the topic of The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)?

Last heard of any news or discussion about ICERD



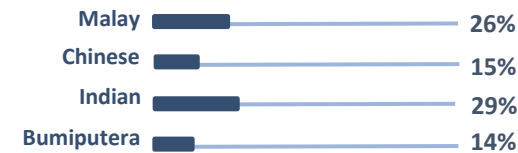
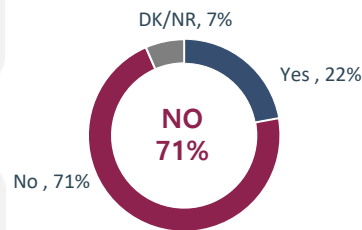
Q. When was the last time you heard of any news or discussion about ICERD?

Heard of Campaigns against Discrimination



Q. In the past few years, have you come across campaign that advocate against discrimination in Malaysia?

Heard of Campaigns Organized by IDEAS



Q. Have you heard of campaigns such as "Kempen Kita Bukan Kami" atau tanda pagar #SamaSama, #TanpaPerkauman, #AkarUmbiKita, #BangsaMalaysia"?

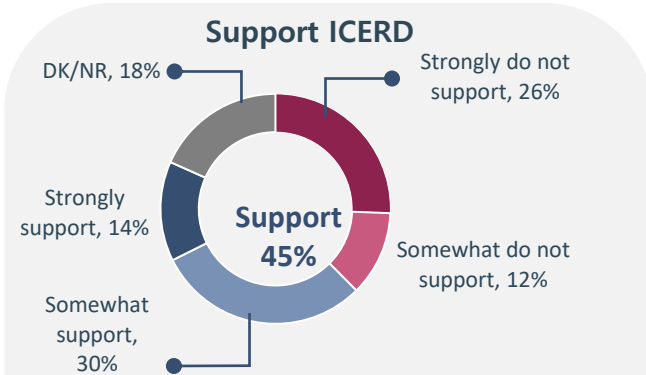
Half report awareness but much higher among Malays as issue was mobilized in Peninsular Malaysia

Despite recording a moderate level of awareness, yet most (almost 70%) do not understand the issue.

The issues surrounding ICERD has faded into the background

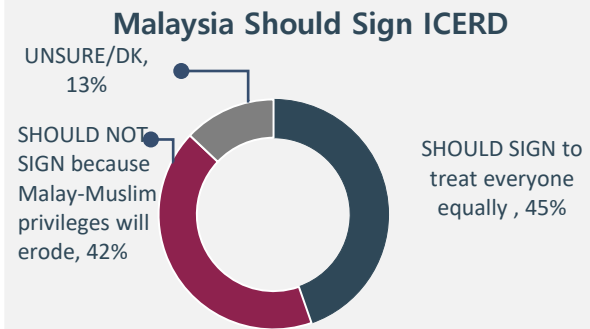
Campaigns could not draw a reasonable attention from the public.

Perception towards ICERD



Q. To what extent do you support or not support ICERD to be ratified in Malaysia?

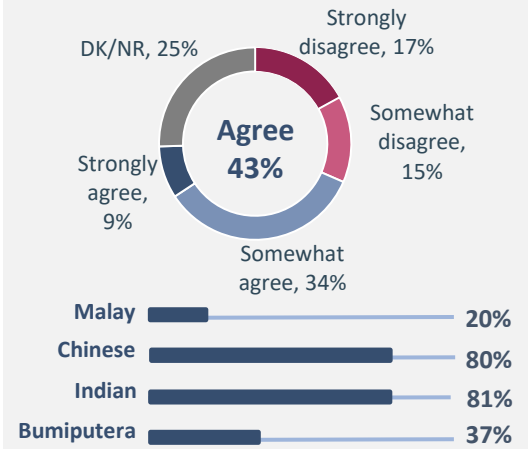
Malay	16%	60%
Chinese	89%	1%
Indian	91%	5%
Bumiputera	35%	40%



Q. I am going to read two statements to you. Between these two statements, please tell me which one is closer to your opinion.

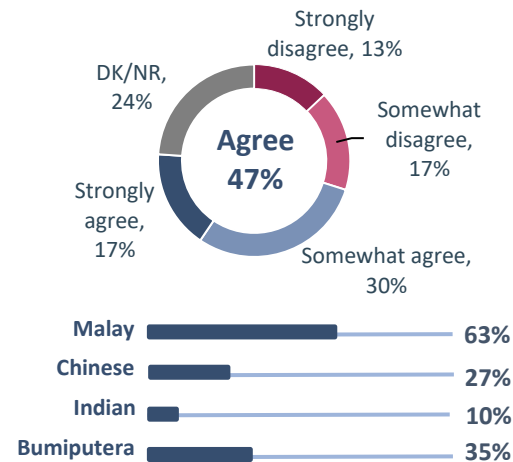
Malay	13%	70%
Chinese	91%	3%
Indian	99%	
Bumiputera	47%	33%

ICERD Bring More Benefit Than Harm



Q. In general, do you agree with the statement that "Ratification of ICERD will bring more benefit than harm"?

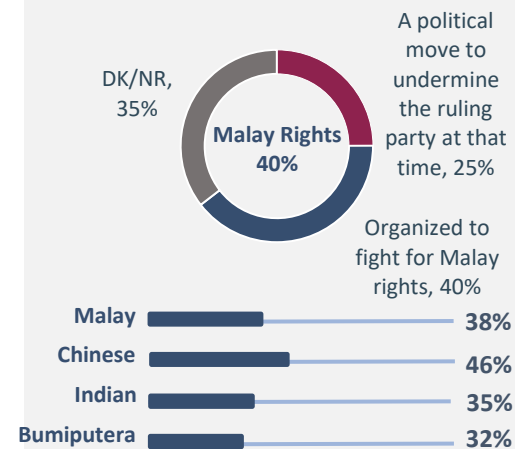
ICERD Threaten Status of Islam



Q. Do you think that the ratification of ICERD will threaten the status of Islam as the religion of the federation?

Malay	63%
Chinese	27%
Indian	10%
Bumiputera	35%

ICERD Rally



Q. Thinking about the rally that was organized by PAS and UMNO on 8 December to protest the ratification of the convention on anti-discrimination, do you think the rally was...

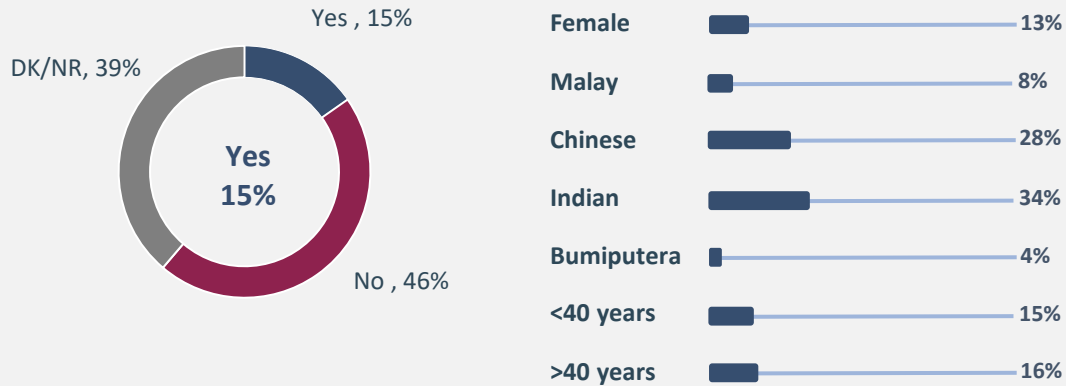
Malay	38%
Chinese	46%
Indian	35%
Bumiputera	32%

Views on ICERD remain ethnically dichotomous

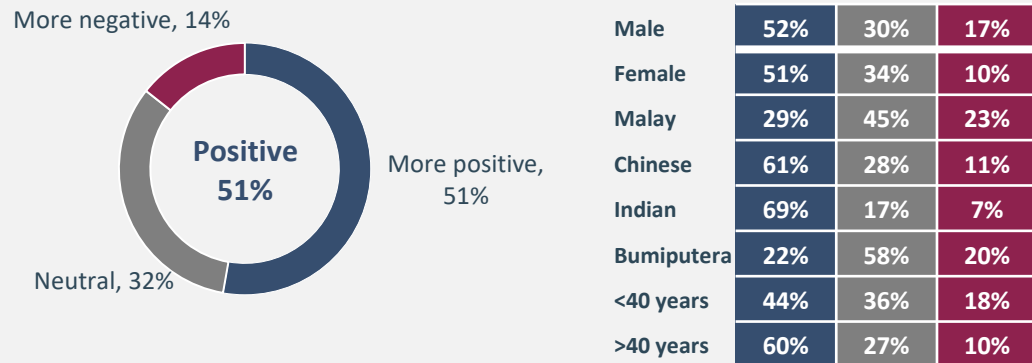
Consequently, a majority of Malays believe that Malaysia should not sign ICERD as it will cause Malay-Muslim privileges to erode.

Attitude towards ICERD

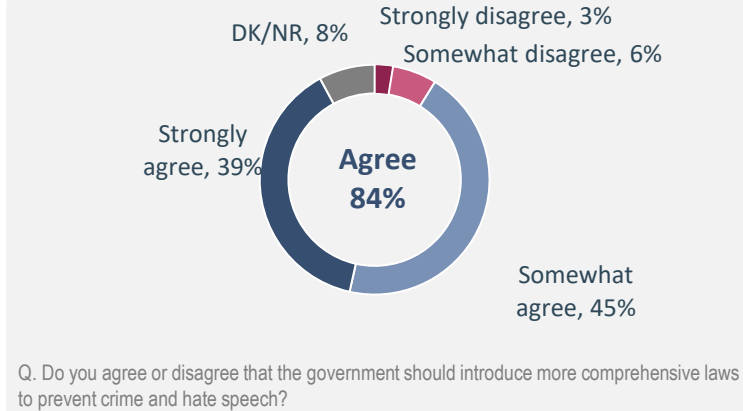
Change in Perception towards ICERD



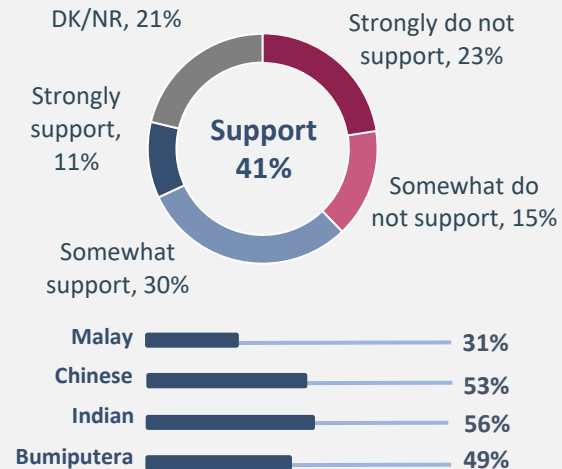
Change in Perception towards ICERD (n=184)



Government Introduce Comprehensive Laws To Prevent Crime And Hate Speech



Support ICERD if Article 153 is also protected



Changes in attitudes are taking place, mostly for the better at a slow pace. 1 in 10 Malays report change

Support for ICERD among Malays improve if Article 153 is guaranteed

Overwhelming support for hate speech legislation

Part 2:
**Attitude towards Inter-Ethnic
Relationship**





**PART 2:
ATTITUDE
TOWARDS
INTER-ETHNIC
RELATIONSHIP**

LEVEL OF RELIGIOSITY

IDENTITY

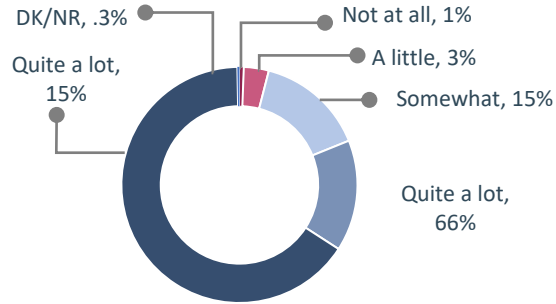
EXPERIENCE OF UNFAIR TREATMENT

IN-GROUP & OUT-GROUP ATTITUDE

STANCE ON MALAY SPECIAL PRIVILEGES

Level of Religiosity

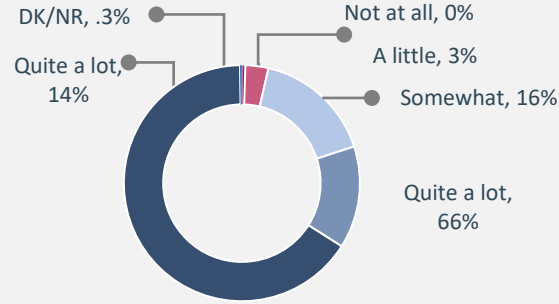
Importance of Religion in Guiding Daily Life



ADD4. How far do you consider [Respondent's religion] as to be important in guiding the way you live your daily life?

	Very Much- Quite A lot Important	Somewhat Important	A Little – Not At All Important
Male	81%	13%	6%
Female	80%	17%	2%
Malay	99%		
Chinese	36%	50%	13%
Indian	88%	8%	4%
Bumiputera	99%	1%	
<40 years	83%	13%	4%
>40 years	78%	17%	5%

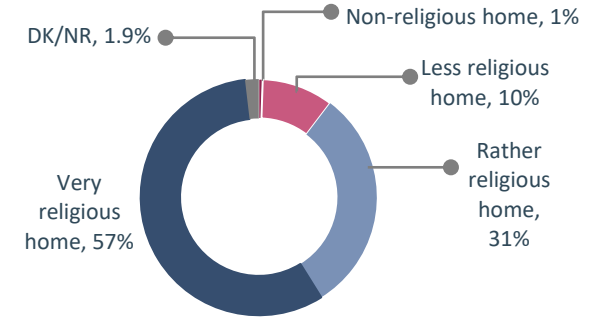
Religion as an Important Part of You



ADD5. How far do you consider being a [follower of your] religion as an important part of who you are?

	Very Much- Quite A lot Important	Somewhat Important	A Little – Not At All Important
Male	81%	14%	5%
Female	78%	19%	2%
Malay	99%		
Chinese	37%	52%	11%
Indian	71%	22%	7%
Bumiputera	98%	2%	
<40 years	82%	15%	3%
>40 years	77%	19%	4%

Family Religiosity



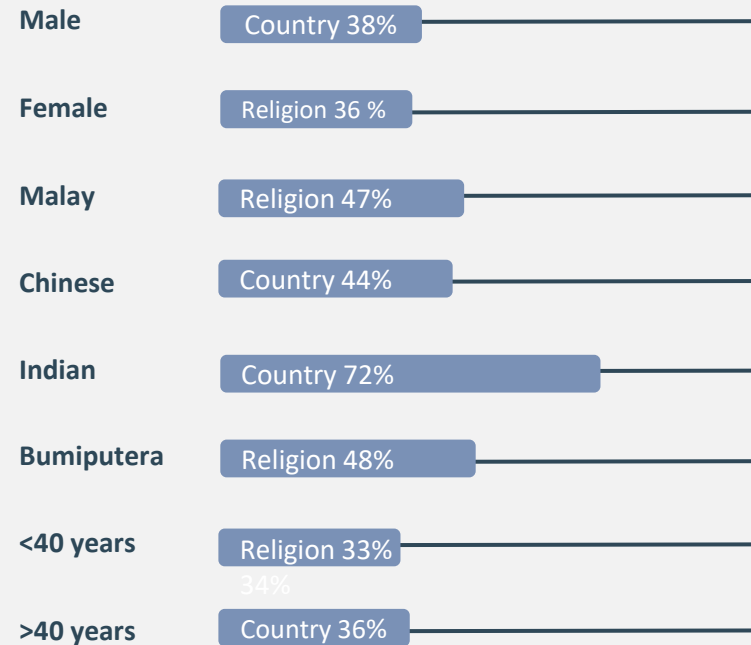
ADD6. How important is religion in your parental home? Do you come from a...?



Identity

Things You Identify Yourself With

First Mention



TOTAL

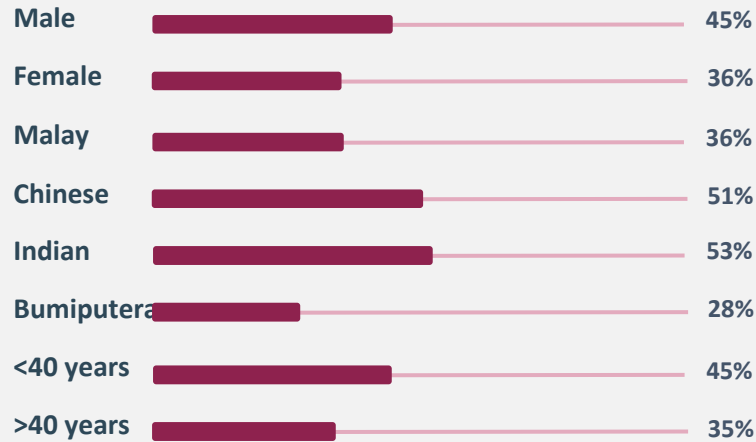
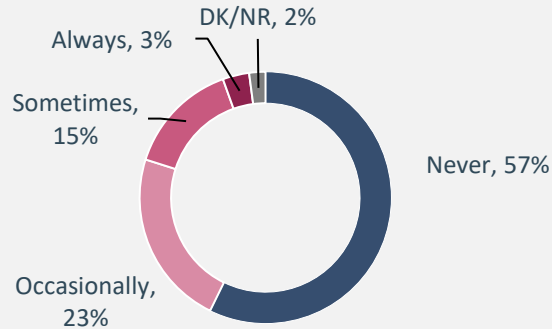
	Total	FIRST	SECOND	THIRD
Country	67%	34%	13%	20%
Religious	66%	31%	23%	13%
Occupation	43%	8%	14%	21%
Ethnicity	41%	8%	19%	13%
State	33%	7%	15%	12%
Town	12%	2%	5%	4%
Region	11%	2%	4%	5%
Gender	10%	2%	3%	5%
Political party allegiance	8%	1%	2%	6%
Others	4%	2%	1%	1%

Q. Based on the list below, please choose 3 in order of important of what are the things you mainly identify yourself?

National and religious identity are equally strong among Malaysians.

Experience of Unfair Treatment

How Frequent Do You Feel Been Treated Unfairly



Reasons For Being Treated Unfairly (n=489)

First Mention



	Total	First	Second	Third
Race	81%	55%	16%	10%
Financial background	76%	16%	25%	34%
Religion	57%	4%	38%	15%
Age	20%	5%	3%	12%
Gender	19%	6%	7%	6%
Mental health	6%	1%	5%	1%
Sexuality	6%	1%	1%	4%
Disability	5%	1%	1%	3%
Others	25%	8%	3%	14%

Q. In order of importance, choose 3 reasons for being treated unfairly?

Nearly 41% Malaysians perceived being treated unfairly, mostly due to their ethnic and socio-economic class.

Nearly same levels across all ethnic groups

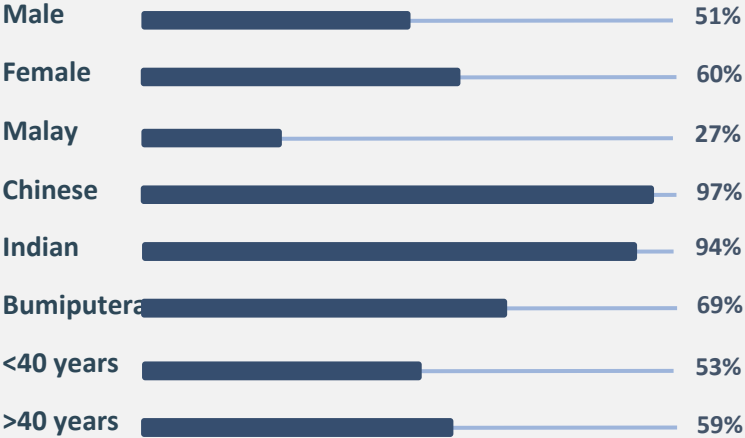
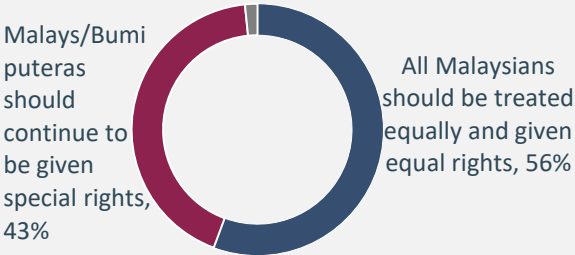
Other significant variables include gender and age

Q. How frequent do you feel been treated unfairly?

Stance on Malay Special Privileges

How Frequent Do You Feel Been Treated Unfairly

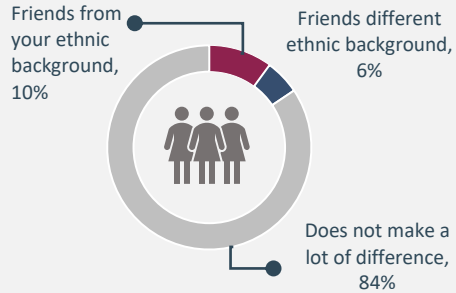
DK/NR, 2%



	I don't approve & cannot accept Malay special rights and privileges; thus, they should be abolished immediately	I don't approve of Malay special rights and privileges, but we have to be patient for the sake of national unity; thus,	Malay special rights and privileges are still helpful in promoting social and economic development of the Malays;	Malay special rights and privileges are a core feature of our society and should stay in place forever
TOTAL	10.2%	21.1%	13.0%	49.8%
Malay	1%	3%	12%	81%
Chinese	22%	50%	16%	4%
Indian	37%	49%	2%	1%
Bumiputera	7%	19%	18%	44%

In-group/ Out-group Attitude

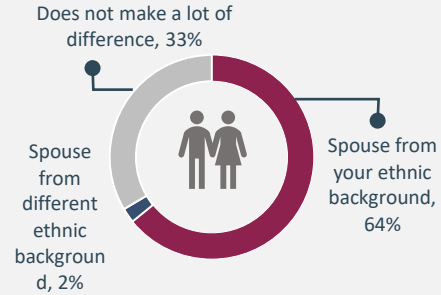
Friend Preference



Malay	12.9%	5.0%	81.6%
Chinese	7.2%	2.1%	90.7%
Indian	8.5%	4.4%	85.9%
Bumiputera	3.8%	17.4%	78.1%

Q. Based on the following items, which one is closer to your preference? -Friend

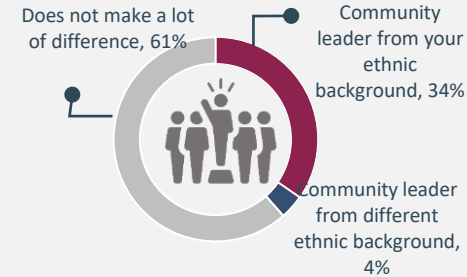
Spouse Preference



Malay	70%	3%	27%
Chinese	66%		34%
Indian	84%		14%
Bumiputera	16%	9%	75%

Q. Based on the following items, which one is closer to your preference? -Spouse

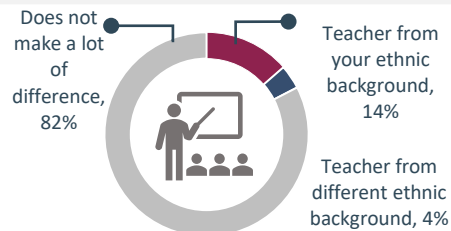
Community Leader Preference



Malay	57%	3%	39%
Chinese	10%	2%	89%
Indian	2%	2%	94%
Bumiputera	7%	13%	80%

Q. Based on the following items, which one is closer to your preference? -Community leader

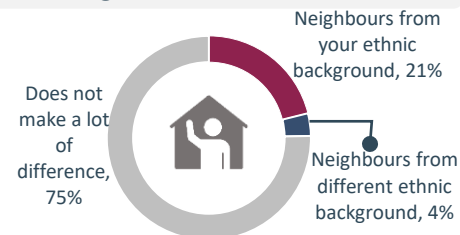
Teacher Preference



Malay	20%	4%	76%
Chinese	8%	1%	91%
Indian	3%	1%	94%
Bumiputera	2%	12%	85%

Q. Based on the following items, which one is closer to your preference? -Teacher

Neighborhood Preference



Malay	29%	3%	68%
Chinese	17%	2%	81%
Indian	2%	1%	97%
Bumiputera	4%	11%	83%

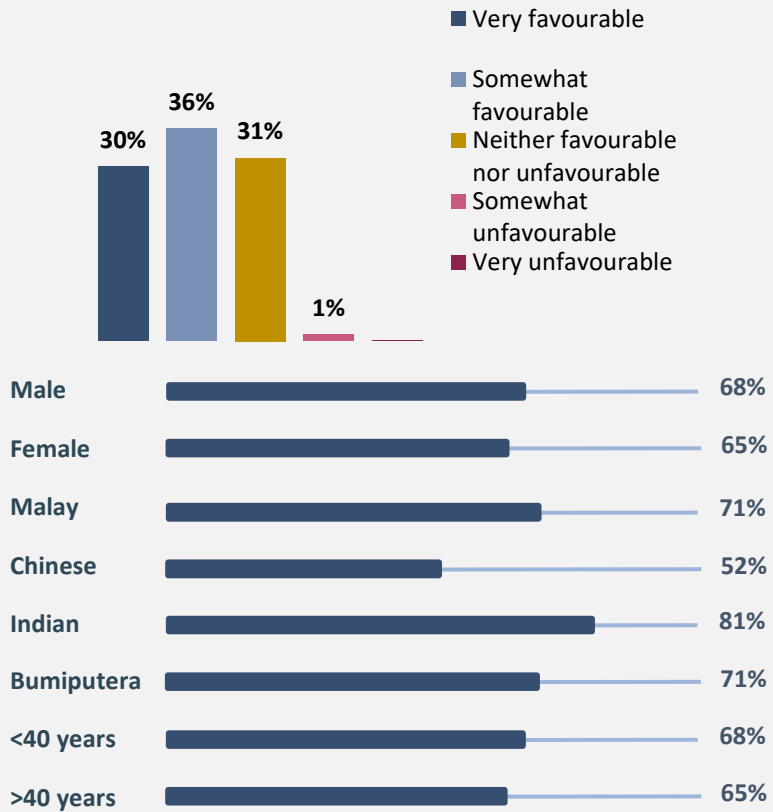
Q. Based on the following items, which one is closer to your preference? -Neighborhood

Attitudes towards in-group and out-groups for friendships show some similarity across all most except Sabah and Sarawak who exhibit most openness towards spouse preference.

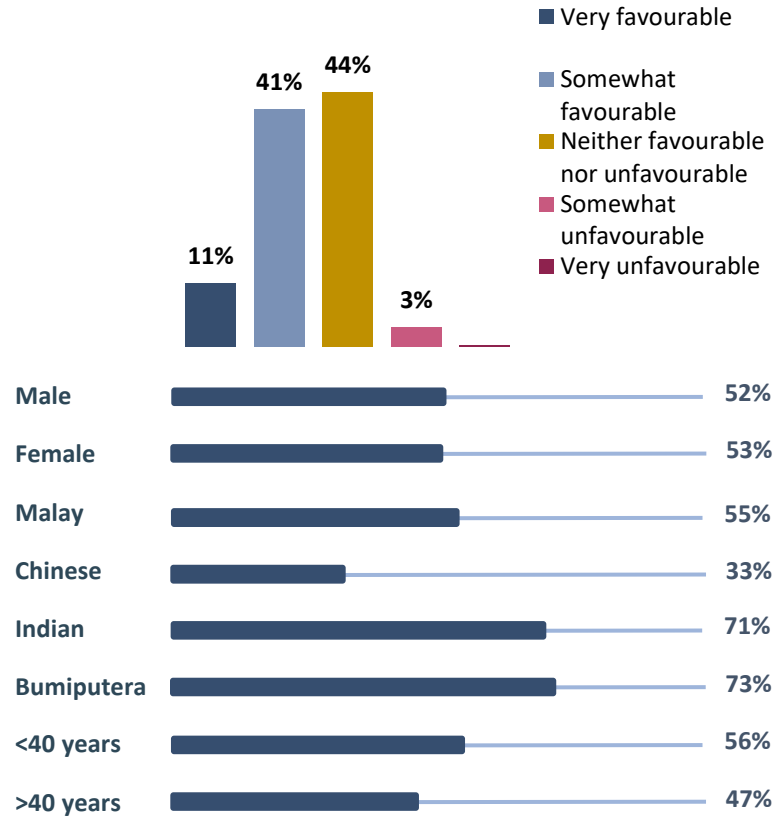
Malays exhibit higher in-group preference for community leaders, teachers and neighborhoods.

In-group/ Out-group Attitude

In-group Sentiment



Out-group Sentiment



Overall in-group sentiments outweigh out-group ones.

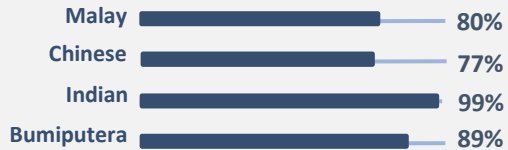
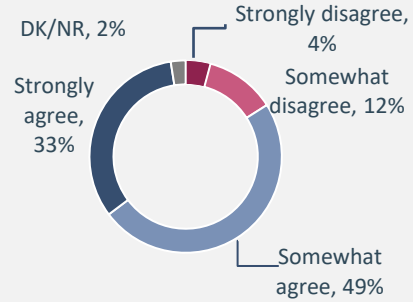
Indians and Bumiputera Sabah and Sarawak hold highest favorability for out group sentiments

Q. Thinking about People from your ethnicity, do you feel favourable or unfavourable towards them ?

Q. Thinking about People from different ethnicity, do you feel favourable or unfavourable towards them ?

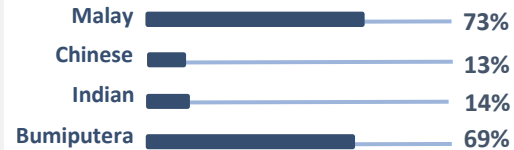
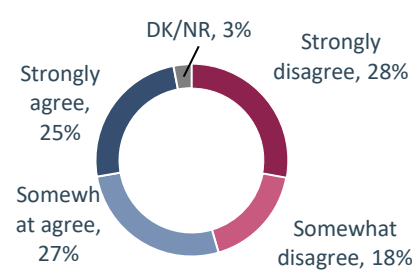
Improve Inter-ethnic Relationship

Create Racially Mixed Neighbourhood



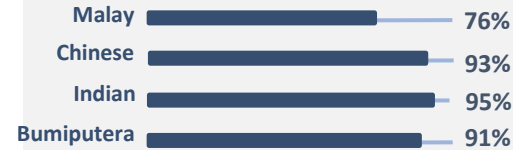
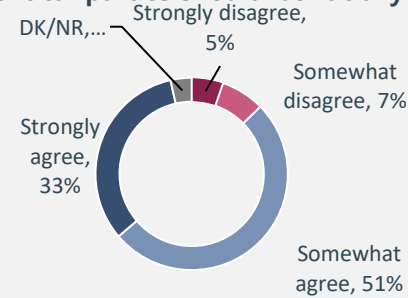
Q. Please say whether you agree or disagree with the following options: -Create more racially-mixed neighbourhoods so that people do not only live with people from their own racial group

Abolish Vernacular Primary School



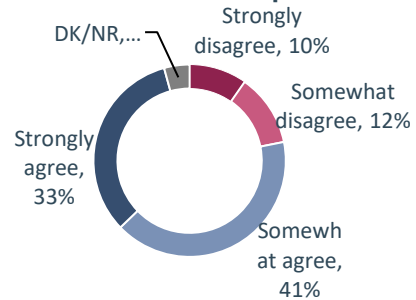
Q. Please say whether you agree or disagree with the following options: -Do away with vernacular education at the primary school level so that all primary schools are racially-mixed

All political parties should be racially-mixed



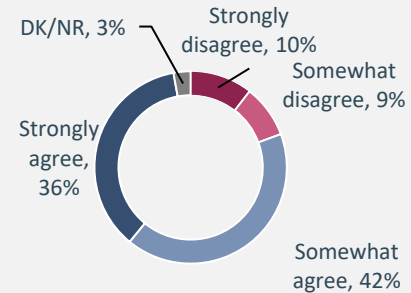
Q. Please say whether you agree or disagree with the following options: -All political parties should be racially-mixed

Introduce Fair Competition



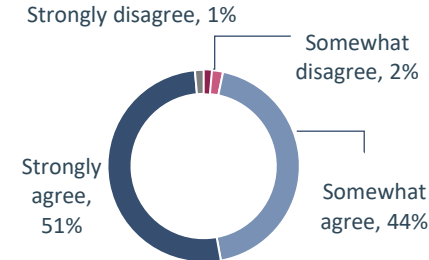
Q. Please say whether you agree or disagree with the following options: -Introduce fair competition for everyone so that no one group gets special privileges

Polices Treat All Religions Equally



Q. Please say whether you agree or disagree with the following options: -All religions should be treated equally in government policy.

Assist Based on Need Not Ethnicity



Q. Please say whether you agree or disagree with the following options: -Government should assist people based on their need and not based on their ethnic background

Mixed views on actions to strengthen inter-ethnic relations.

All groups support racially mixed neighborhoods, political parties, fair competition and affirmative action based on need.

But minorities oppose halting vernacular schools

Thank You