



FAMILY FRONTIERS

## Persatuan Kebajikan Sokongan Keluarga Selangor & KL (PPM-011-10-24072020)

Association of Family Support & Welfare Selangor & KL (Family Frontiers)

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Press Statement - For Immediate Release

Kuala Lumpur, 17 May 2023

### **A MAJORITY OF MALAYSIANS SUPPORT THE AMENDMENT OF ARTICLE 14 OF THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTION TO ALLOW MALAYSIAN MOTHERS TO CONFER THEIR CITIZENSHIP ONTO THEIR OVERSEAS-BORN CHILDREN**

The Association of Family Support & Welfare Selangor & KL (Family Frontiers) conducted a nationwide public perception survey from 16th to 19th November 2022 via Vase.ai's survey panel, involving 808 Malaysian respondents. The survey aimed to understand the Malaysian public's perception regarding the equal citizenship rights of Malaysian women and their overseas-born children, as well as their levels of agreement towards a constitutional amendment.<sup>1</sup>

The survey results revealed that a significant majority of Malaysians, regardless of race and gender, believe that it is crucial to amend the existing citizenship law to grant Malaysian women equal rights to confer automatic citizenship on their overseas-born children. This survey engaged a diverse cross-section of the Malaysian population from all parts of the country. Across all demographics, citizens have voiced their unwavering support for gender equal citizenship rights, recognising the urgent need to address this fundamental inequality.

The unity government and previous administrations have repeatedly expressed their commitment to amend the Federal Constitution to uphold gender equal citizenship rights for Malaysian women. However, attempts to table the amendment have been delayed, and it is now expected to be tabled in September. It is critical that the government fulfils its promise and tables the amendment without further delay, granting Malaysian women equal citizenship rights.

We commend the Malaysian public for their unwavering support for gender equality and urge the government to listen to the voices of the people and honour its commitment by amending the Federal Constitution to grant Malaysian women equal citizenship rights without any further delay. **Family Frontiers calls upon all Members of Parliament, regardless of political affiliation, to stand together with Malaysian women and vote in support of this amendment when tabled in Parliament.**

The urgency of the amendment cannot be overstated. Denying citizenship to children born outside the country to Malaysian women leaves them with unequal access to basic rights, such as education, healthcare, and social services, with some being at high risk of statelessness. These laws also leave women trapped in situations of violence and precarity. It is critical that the government takes immediate action to end this inequality and ensure that all Malaysian citizens, regardless of their gender or circumstances, are granted equal rights and protections under the law.

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<sup>1</sup>Malaysian men married to foreign women can confer citizenship by 'operation of law' on their overseas-born children via Article 14(1)(b) of the Federal Constitution. Malaysian women must "apply" for citizenship by registration via Article 15(2), a process fraught with delays, inconsistencies, and rejections without reasons. This process does not offer a guarantee of securing citizenship for these children of Malaysian descent.

## SURVEY FINDINGS

Please find the link to the online briefier containing more information on the survey findings here:

1. [English version](#)
2. [Malay version](#)

## Methodology

Survey questions were developed by Family Frontiers. The survey was administered from 16 November 2022 to 19 November 2022. The survey questions were available in English and Bahasa Melayu. The survey was answered by 808 Malaysians aged 18 years old and above. They were quota sampled according to census statistics by race, gender, age and region of residence. The survey was administered on Vase.ai's online platform in the form of an online questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed via email from Vase.ai's database, each with a unique link to avoid duplicate responses.

## Demographics

Out of 808 respondents:

- **Race breakdown**
  - Malays: 52.6%
  - Chinese: 32%
  - Non-Malay Bumiputera: 9%
  - Indian/ Others: 6%
- **Gender breakdown**
  - Male: 45%
  - Female: 55%
- **Regional breakdown**

*The results were obtained from a diverse sample of Malaysians with respondents from all regions.*

  - Central: 25%
  - East Malaysia: 27%
  - Northern: 18%
  - Southern: 15%
  - East Coast: 14%
- **Age breakdown**
  - 18-24: 27%
  - 25-29: 15%
  - 30-34: 14%
  - 35-39: 14%
  - 40-44: 12%
  - 45-100: 18%

## Key Findings

1. **82% agreed that the existing citizenship law in Malaysia needs to be amended.**

Percentage of those who agreed/ strongly agreed (agreed) based on race and gender:

- a. 75% of Malay respondents agreed; 89% of non-Malay respondents agreed.
- b. 77% of male respondents agreed; 86% of females agreed.

2. **77% agreed that Malaysian women should be granted equal rights to automatically transmit citizenship to their children born outside Malaysia, on an equal basis as men, 13% were undecided, 10% disagreed.**

Percentage of those who agreed/ strongly agreed (agreed) based on race and gender:

- a. 67% of Malay respondents agreed; 88% of non-Malay respondents agreed.
- b. 72% of male respondents agreed; 82% of female respondents agreed.

3. **77% agreed that children born outside Malaysia to Malaysian women are Malaysians by blood and hence should be able to hold Malaysian citizenship automatically, 14% were undecided, 9% disagreed.**

Percentage of those who agreed/ strongly agreed (agreed) based on race and gender:

- a. 69% of Malay respondents agreed; 85% of non-Malay respondents agreed.
- b. 70% of male respondents agreed; 82% of female respondents agreed.

4. **81% of voters said it was important that their MPs support the amendment.**

Of that number, the split was relatively even across race (approximately 49% were Malay, 51% were non-Malays) and gender (43% were male, 57% were female).

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About Family Frontiers: The Association of Family Support & Welfare Selangor & KL (Family Frontiers) is a registered entity established with the aim of advancing, promoting and strengthening the family unit so that no family is left behind. It acts as an umbrella body for the Foreign Spouses Support Group (FSSG), that supports and advocates for the rights of foreign spouses married to Malaysian citizens and mobilizes action for the Malaysian Campaign for Equal Citizenship.

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