

Consumer Attitudes and Behavior in Relation to Counterfeit Goods Survey Results from Six ASEAN Countries

A brief overview ACE 2024

Commissioned by WIPO on behalf of The Japanese Patent Office
Report prepared by Mike Clubbe, Independent Market Researcher

WIPO Toolkit

In 2017 we developed a toolkit to enable monitoring and analysis of IP Infringement behaviour.

The Toolkit enables simple survey construction, is available for anyone to use, was refined and published in 2021.

The Japanese Patent Office kindly funded this survey.

The survey questionnaire was constructed using the WIPO toolkit.

Fieldwork was conducted by Nielsen.



- We spoke to a representative sample of consumers in 6 countries across the ASEAN region
 - Indonesia
 - Malaysia
 - Philippines
 - Singapore
 - Thailand
 - Vietnam
- Nationally representative sample
- Online methodology*
- Fieldwork conducted in August and September 2022
- Target 1,000 Respondents in each country

* The actual sample recruited was representative of the online population in each territory; an online methodology was significantly cheaper than a fully representative sample recruited through a face-to-face methodology. An appropriate weighting was applied to the data-set to bring it into line with known Nationally Representative demographic profiles.

Overall, we observed high levels of visibility of counterfeit goods and purchase.

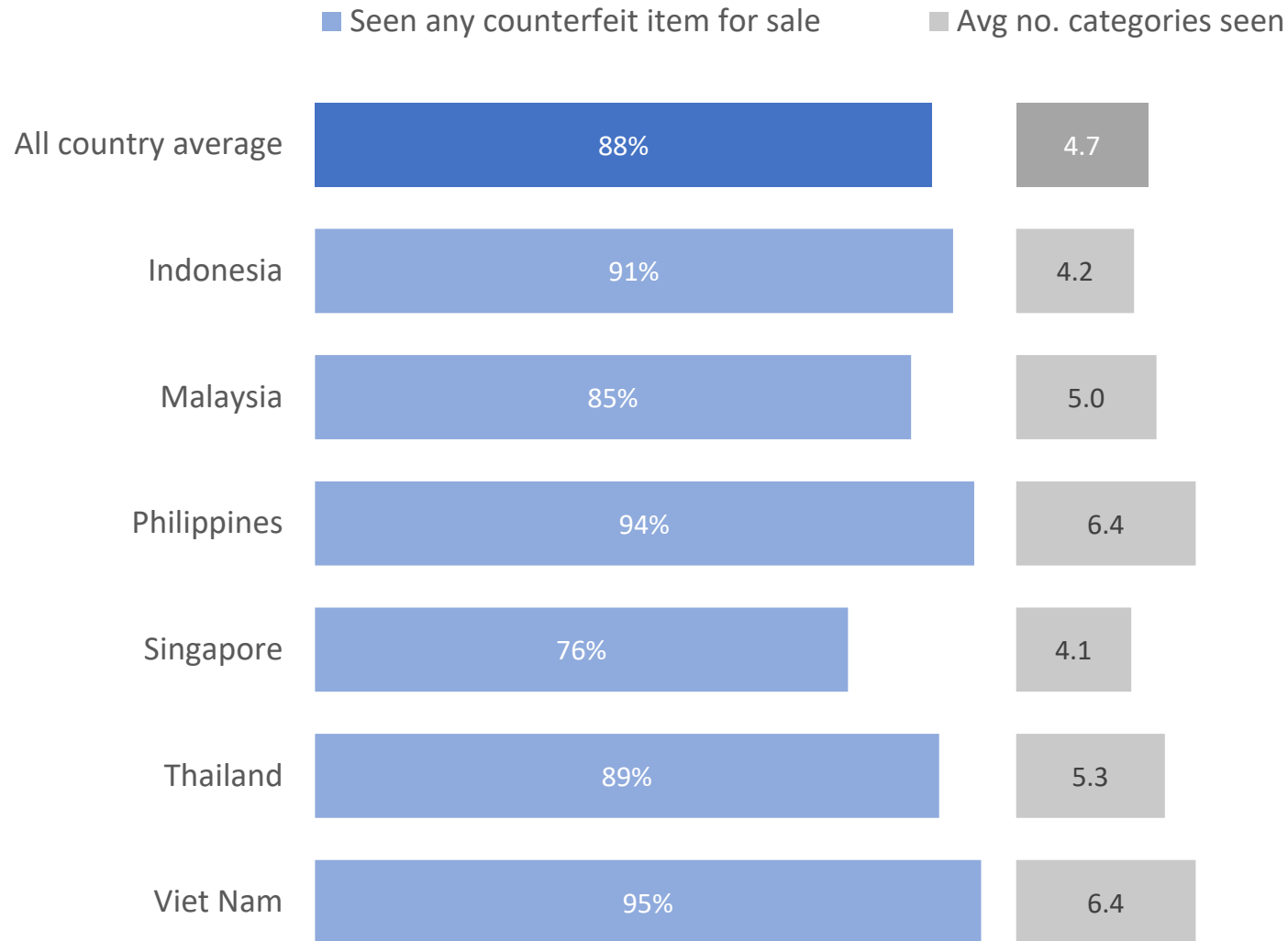
19% of respondents said they had bought counterfeit goods knowing beforehand that they weren't genuine.

A further 50% of respondent had bought counterfeit goods in the past 12 months without necessarily knowing that the goods weren't genuine.



While many claim to be against the idea of counterfeit goods, few seemed sufficiently concerned to curtail their purchasing behavior.

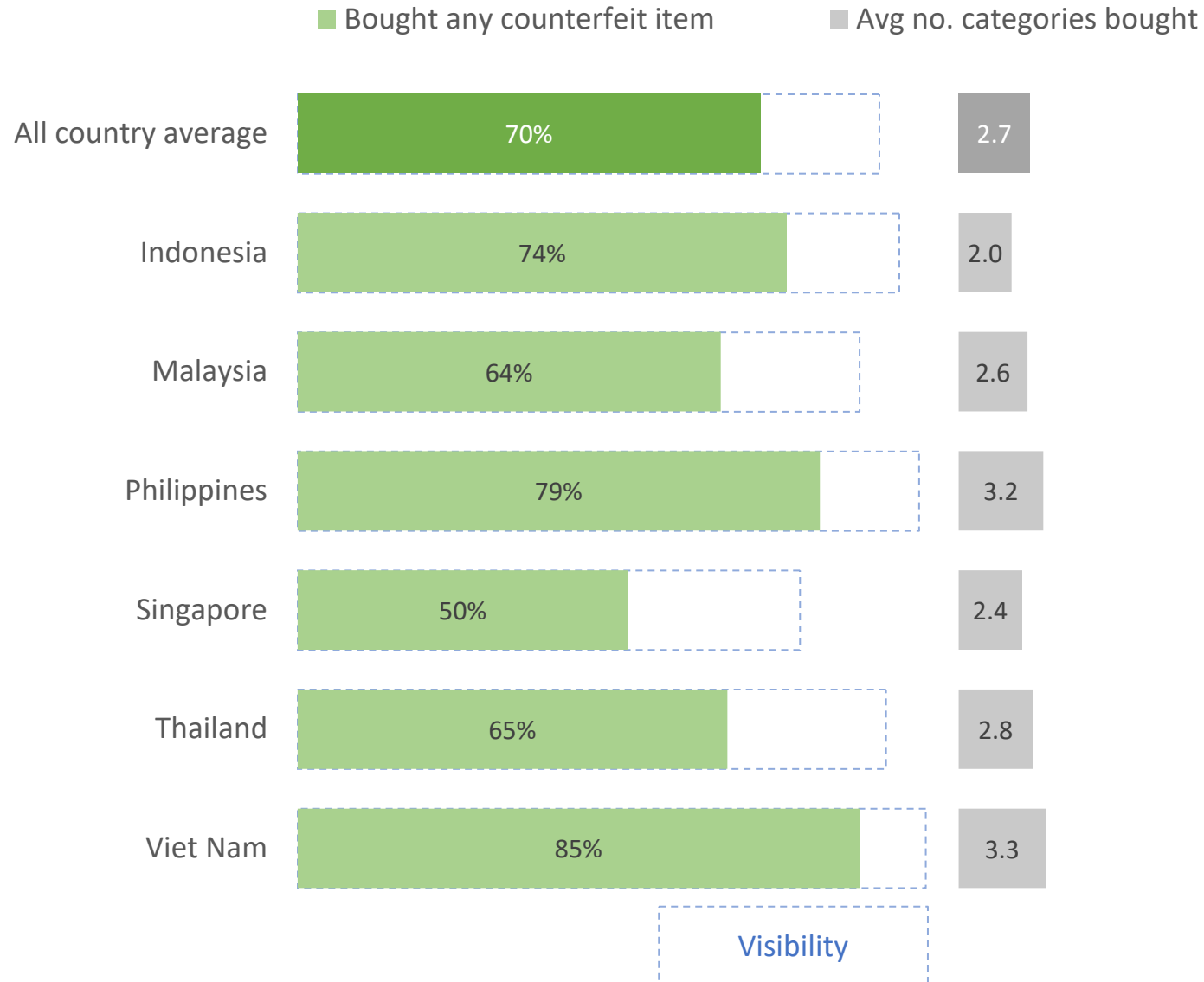
Counterfeit goods widely available across the region



The survey data paints a picture of a region with very high levels of visibility of counterfeit goods.

Not only are they widely seen, our respondents reported seeing on average nearly 5 different categories of counterfeit goods for sale in the past 12 months.

Counterfeit goods are also widely purchased across the region

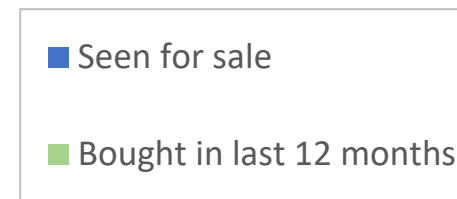
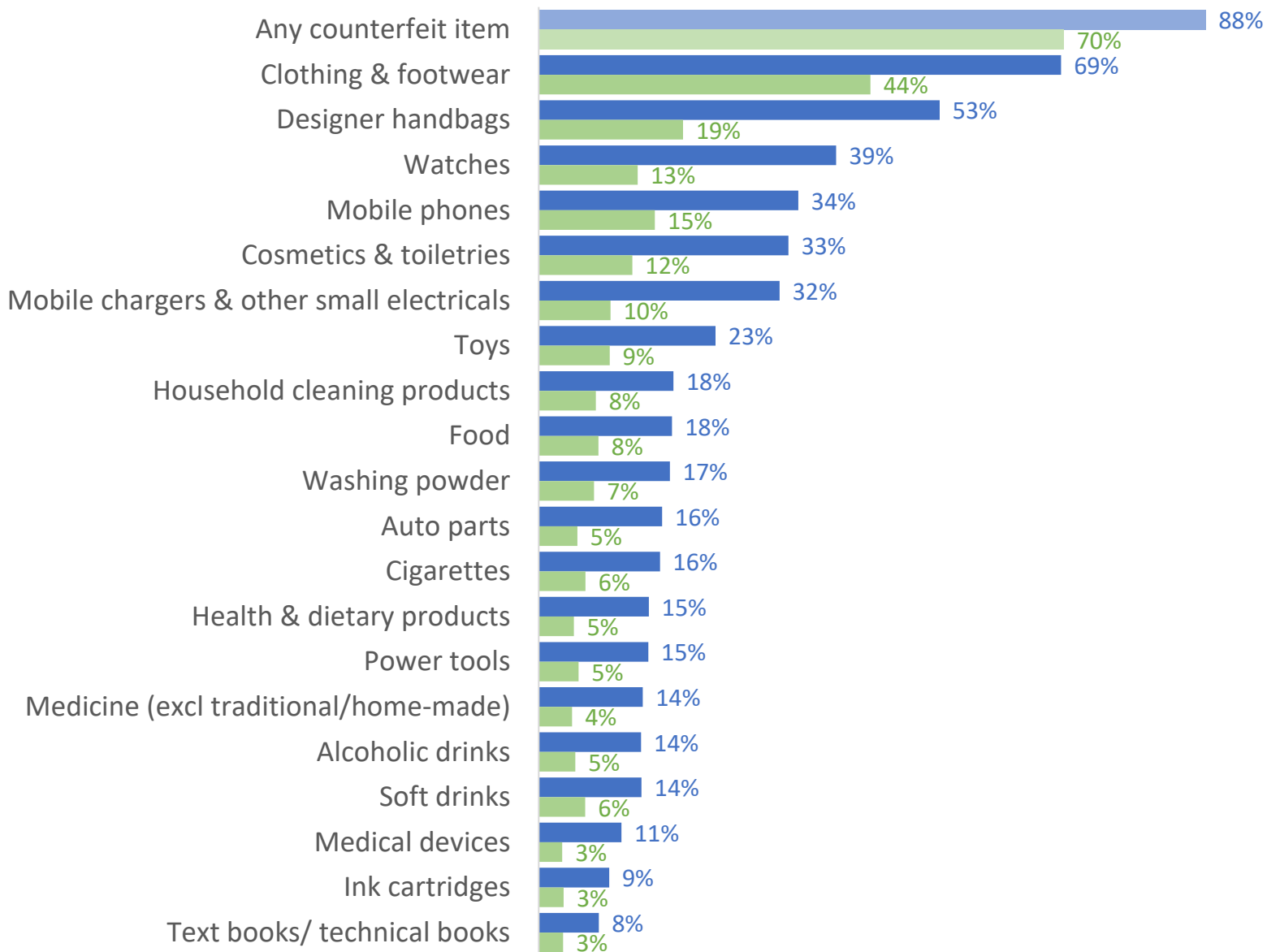


Purchasing is also very common; 70% reported buying at least one category of counterfeit goods in the past 12 months.

Amongst those who had bought at least one category of goods, the average number of categories bought was 2.7.

Although purchasing is common across the region, there is considerable variation between countries.

**Visibility of counterfeit items / Percentage of respondents purchased category in last 12 months
(All Respondents – 6 Country Average)**



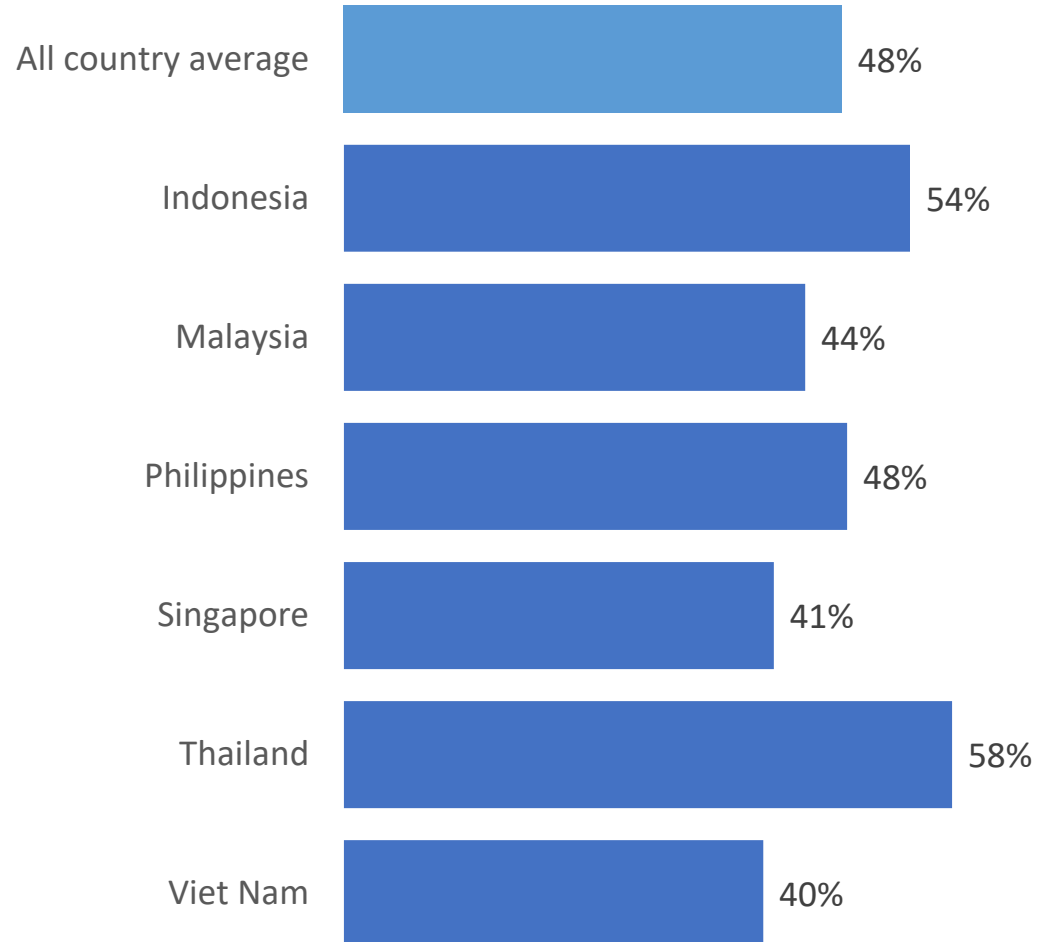
Clothing & Footwear was by far the most prevalent category.

Large numbers of respondents also reported buying Designer Handbags (especially women), Mobile phones, Mobile Chargers & Small Electrical items, Watches and Cosmetics & Toiletries.

Some differences between countries; Purchase of clothing & footwear particularly high in The Philippines and Viet Nam.

High levels of purchasing counterfeit goods despite a general rejection of the idea

I'm against the idea/ I think it's wrong to buy Counterfeit Goods:
Net Agree (T3B) (All countries, 10 point scale)

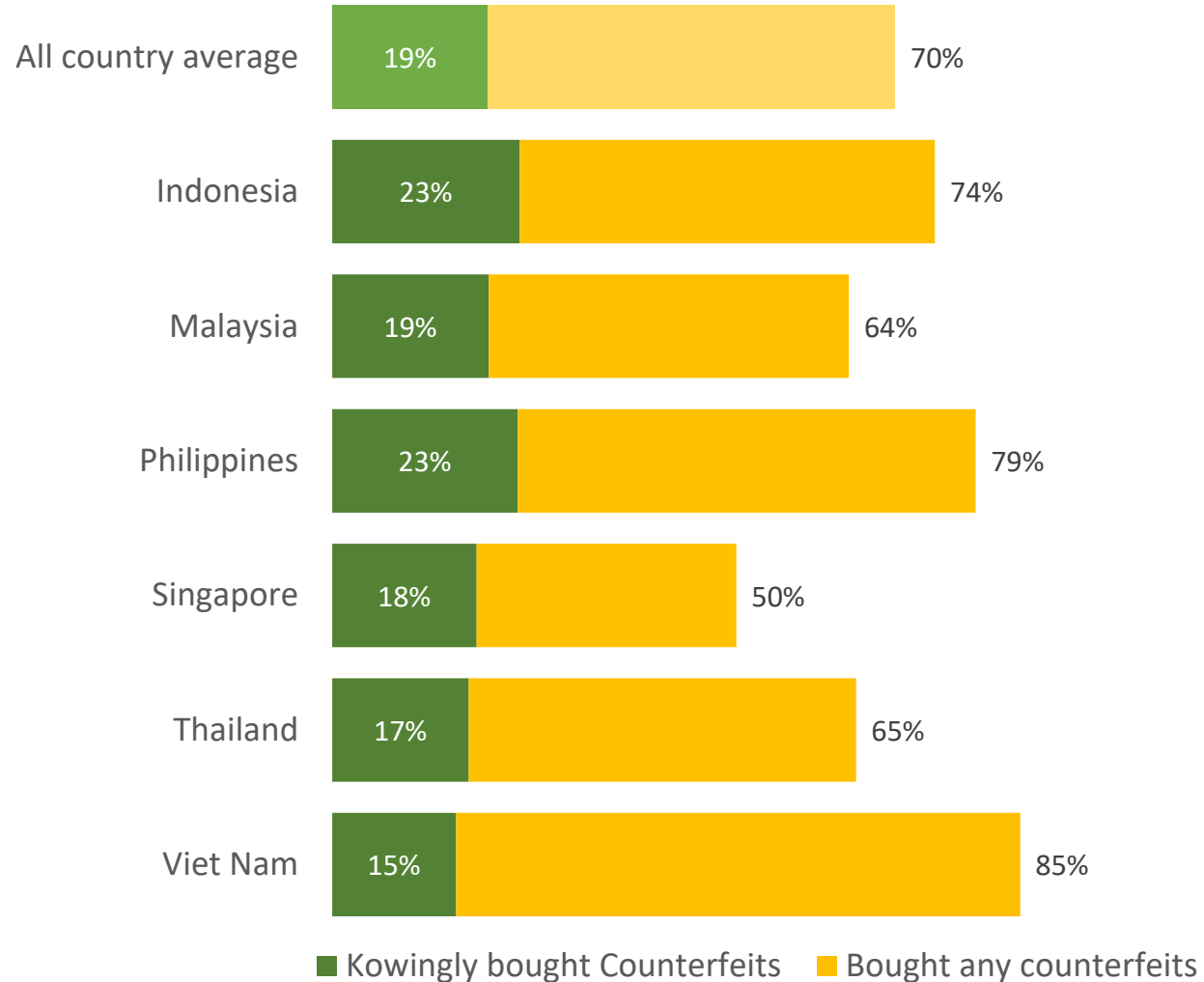


Our survey suggests that about half of people claim to be against the idea of counterfeit goods.

But 70% have bought at least one counterfeit item in the past 12 months.

High levels of purchasing counterfeit goods despite a general rejection of the idea

Purchasing behavior; bought in the past 12 months/ knew beforehand that they weren't genuine (all respondents)



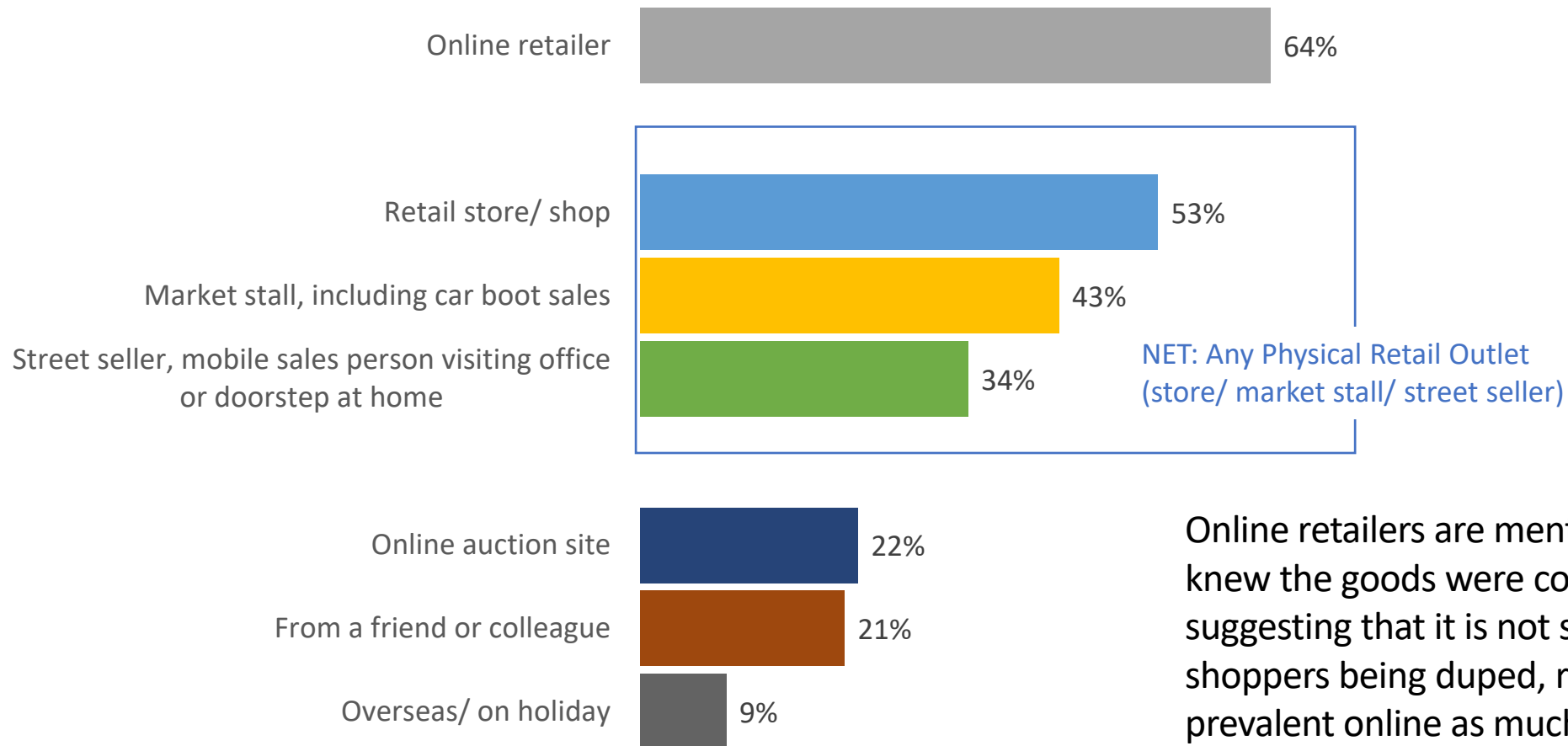
Over 1 in 4 buyers said they knew for sure that the items were not genuine at the time of purchase.

Although respondents generally have a negative view of counterfeiting, the issue isn't sufficiently high in their priorities to actively do much about it.

When we analyze purchase behavior by the respondents' household incomes there is no evidence to suggest that low incomes force people to choose counterfeits.

Online retail is the single most mentioned distribution channel although physical outlets still lead

NET: Bought at least one category of counterfeit goods from distribution channel
All respondents who have bought at least once category of counterfeit goods in the past 12 months



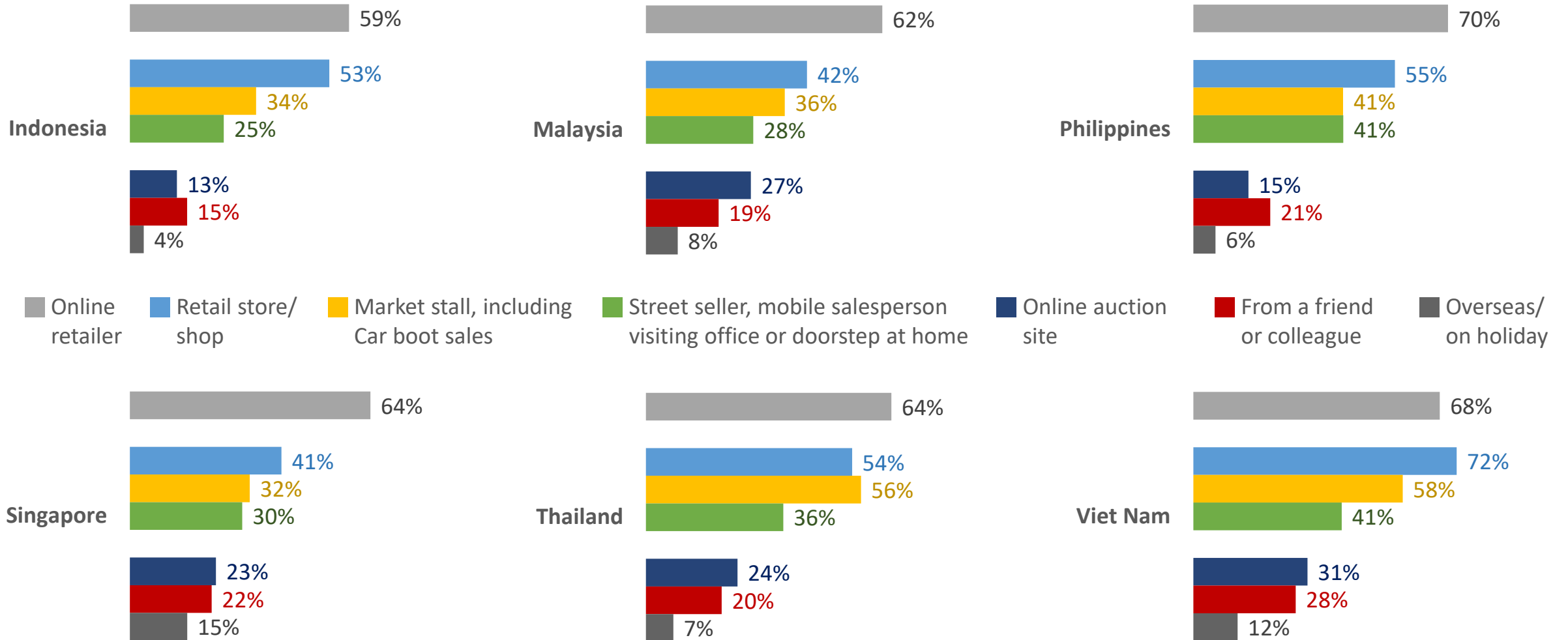
Online retailers are the most mentioned source of counterfeit goods.

However, taken together, physical retail outlets are the most mentioned type of distribution channel.

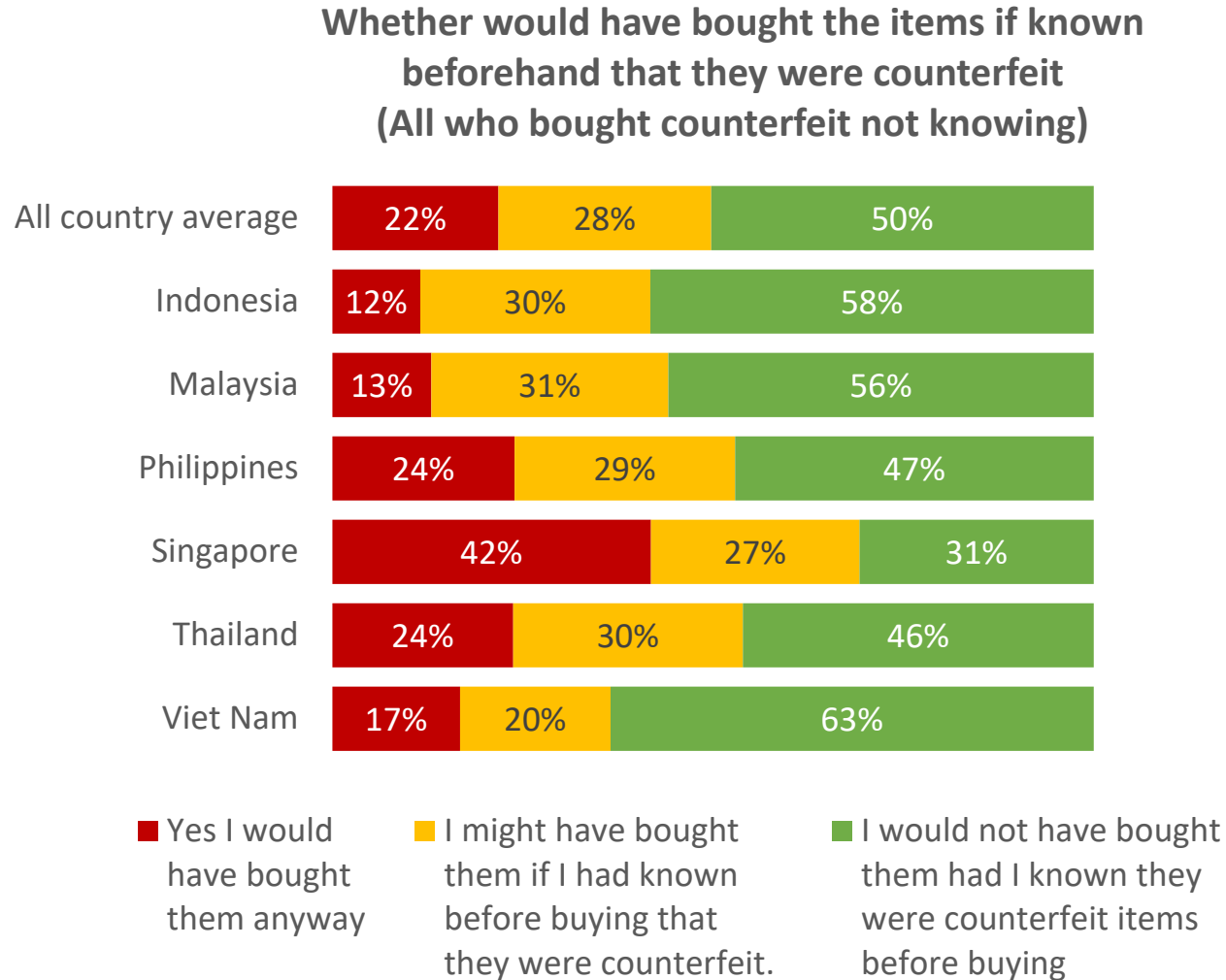
Online retailers are mentioned by 65% of those who knew the goods were counterfeit before buying suggesting that it is not simply a case of online shoppers being duped, rather the problem is as prevalent online as much as in physical channels.

Viet Nam is the only country where Retail Store/ Shop is more prevalent than Online Store

NET: Bought at least one category of counterfeit goods from distribution channel
 All respondents who have bought at least once category of counterfeit goods in the past 12 months



Half of those buying counterfeit goods without knowing say they wouldn't have bought if they had known; only 22% say they would have bought anyway



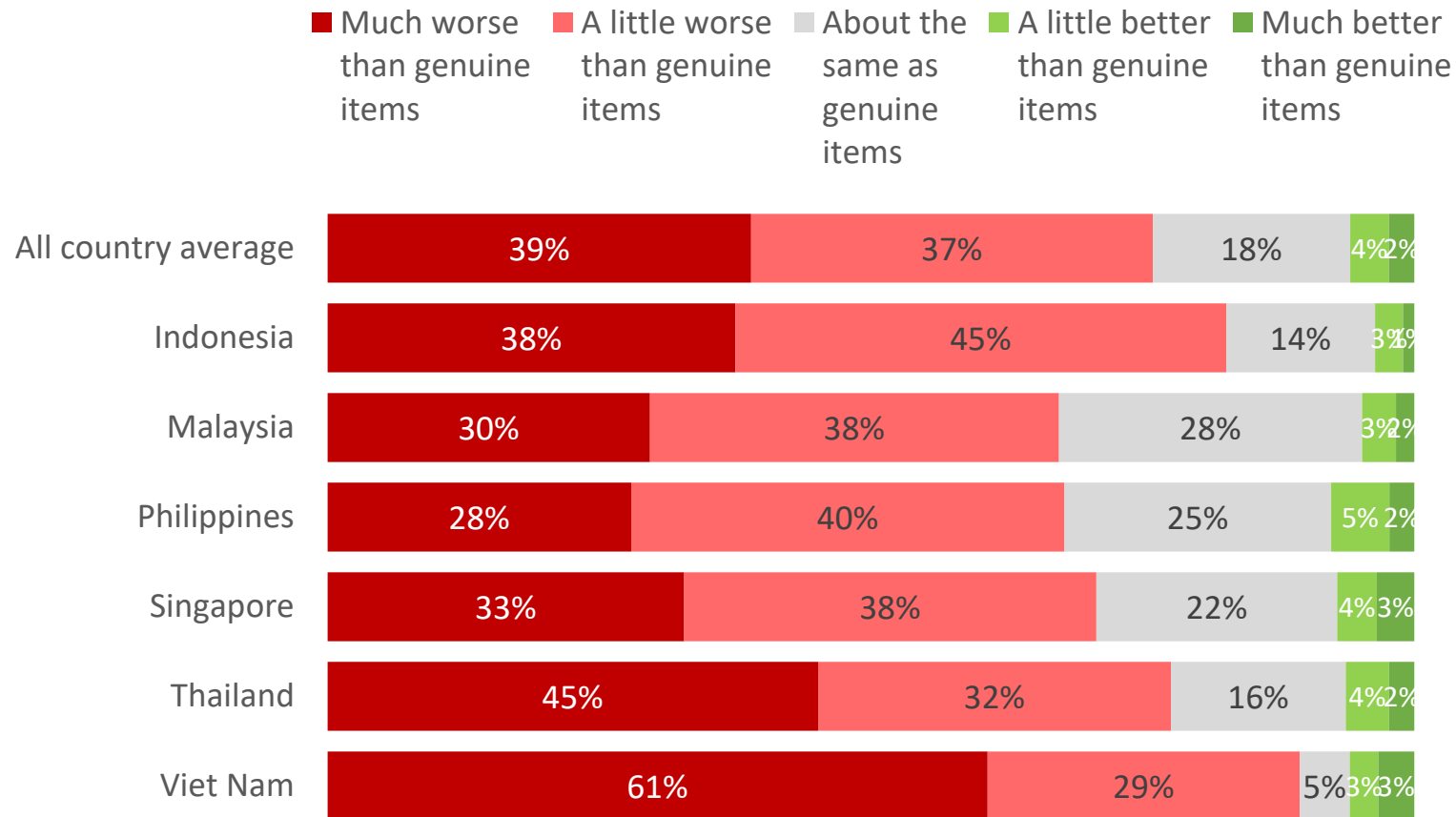
Respondents in Singapore appear less concerned about unwittingly buying counterfeit goods than in other countries.

Relatively fewer in Singapore bought counterfeit goods in the first place so perhaps those who reject the idea are better able to filter them out.

Even in countries with very high levels of purchase such as Viet Nam there are significant numbers who say that had they known, they would not have bought at least some of the counterfeit goods they had bought.

Most think the quality of counterfeits is worse than genuine branded items

Respondent's personal opinion of how the quality of counterfeit goods compares to genuine branded items
(All respondents)



The vast majority of our survey respondents feel that the quality of counterfeit goods is inferior to genuine branded goods.

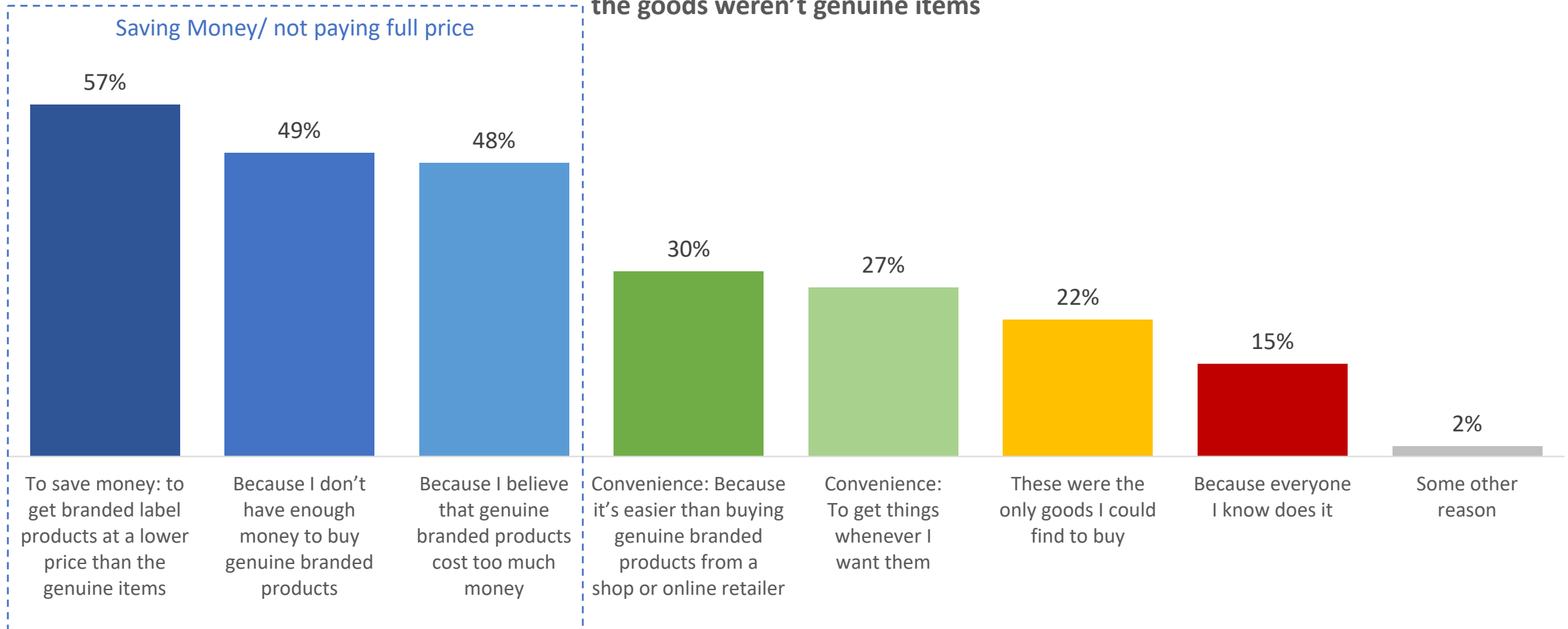
That does not mean that the goods are not of sufficient quality for the purposes in hand and that may be a factor behind some respondents choosing to buy them.

Certainly, in some territories there are a significant minority who feel the quality is at least equivalent to genuine items.

Saving money / not paying full price are the key reasons given for knowingly buying counterfeit goods

NET: Claimed reasons for purchase of counterfeit goods

All respondents who have bought counterfeit goods in the past 12 months knowing before purchase that the goods weren't genuine items

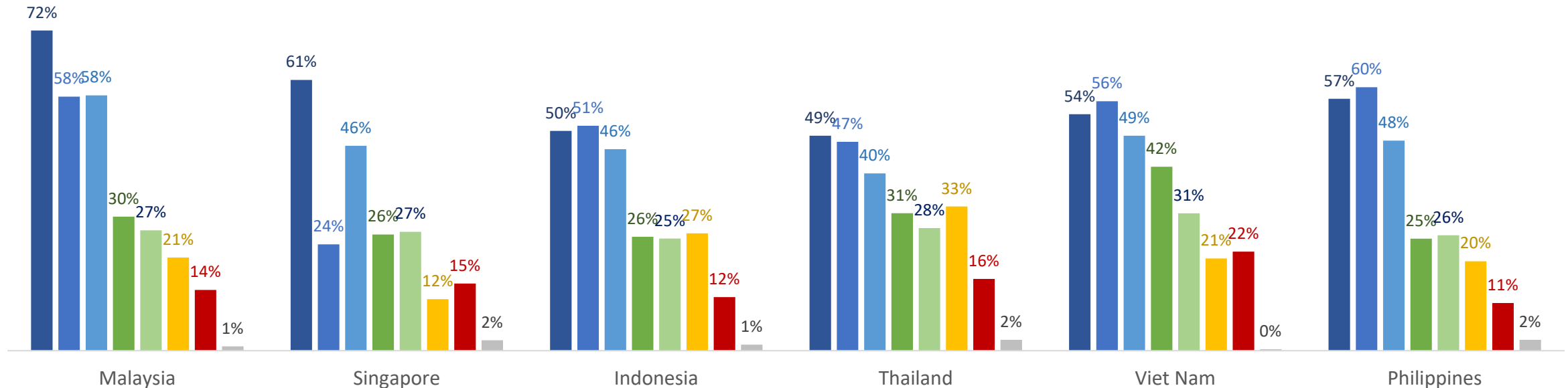


Saving money / not paying full price are the key reasons given for knowingly buying counterfeit goods

NET: Claimed reasons for purchase of counterfeit goods

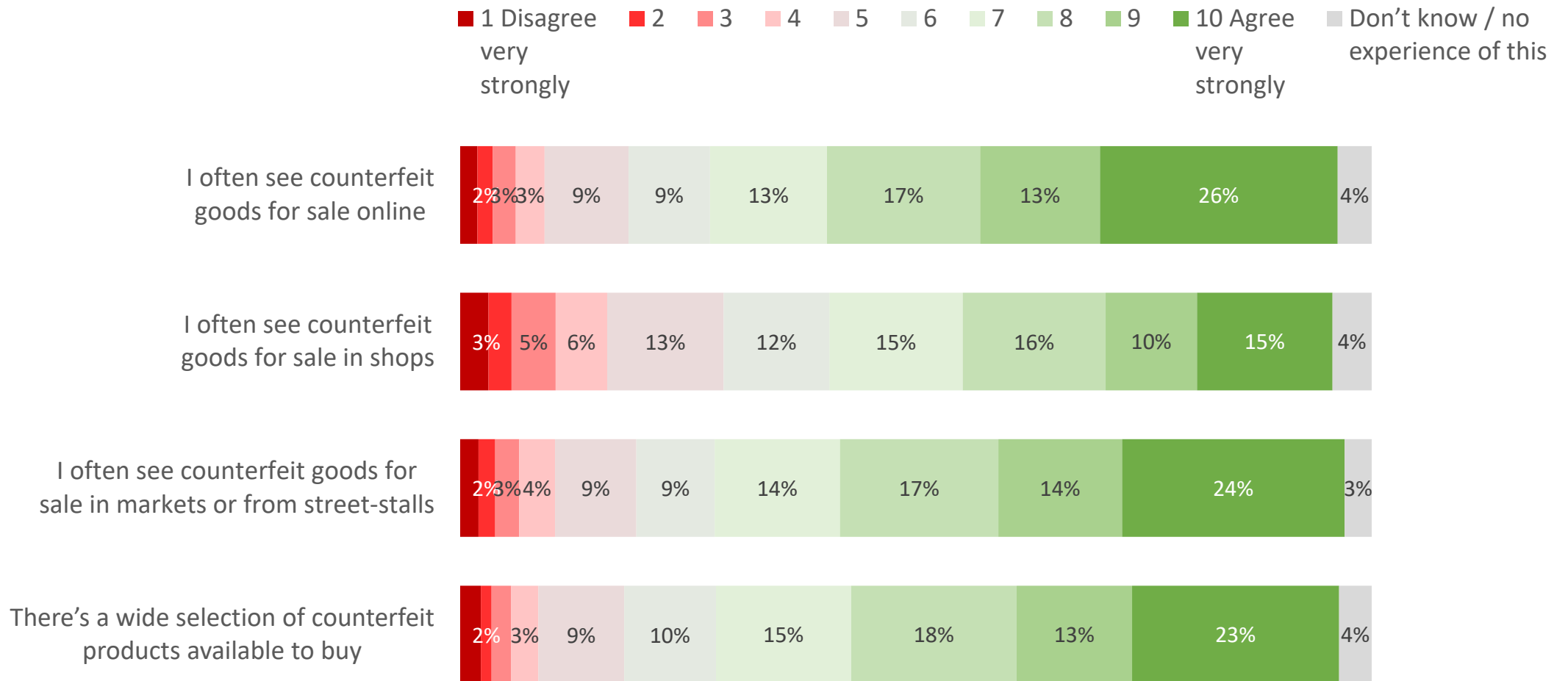
All respondents who have bought counterfeit goods in the past 12 months knowing before purchase that the goods weren't genuine items

- To save money: to get branded label products at a lower price than the genuine items
- Because I don't have enough money to buy genuine branded products
- Because I believe that genuine branded products cost too much
- Convenience: Because it's easier than buying genuine branded products from a shop or online retailer
- Convenience: To get things whenever I want them
- These were the only goods I could find to buy
- Because everyone I know does it
- Some other reason



Respondents say that counterfeit goods are widely available

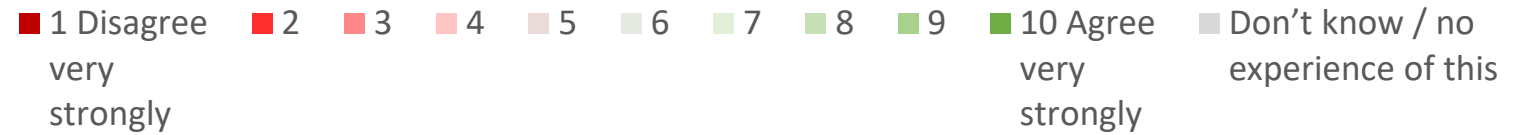
Agreement with attitudinal statements



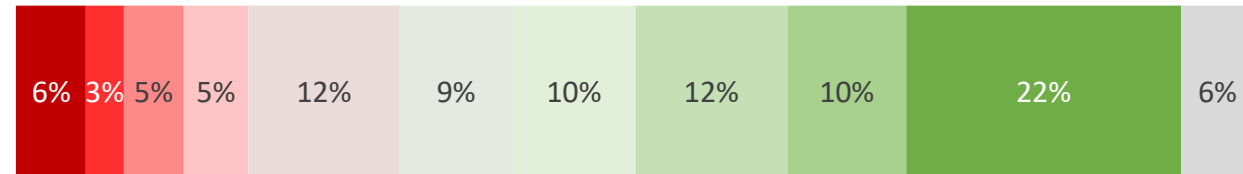
Q11 I am now going to show you a series of statements people have made about counterfeit versions of the sort of goods you might buy in a supermarket or high street store
 Base: All respondents, straight-line responses removed (4,816)

Some are concerned about potential prosecution and put off by publicity; but less than half

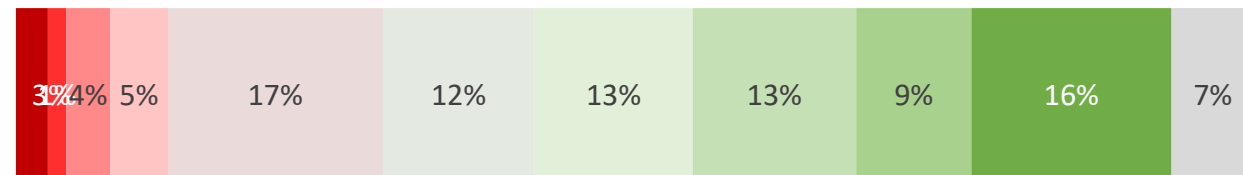
Agreement with attitudinal statements



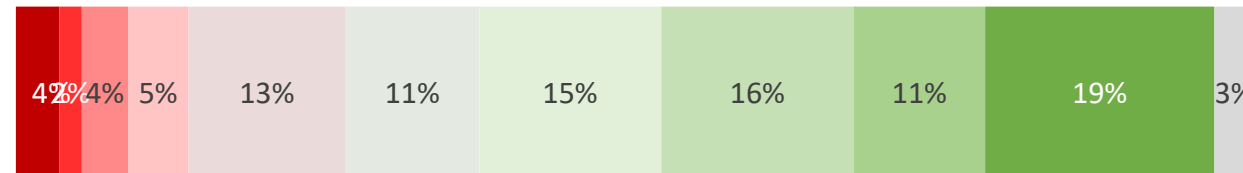
I would be worried about being prosecuted and fined if I was caught buying counterfeit goods



Recent publicity or advertising about buying counterfeit goods has put me off

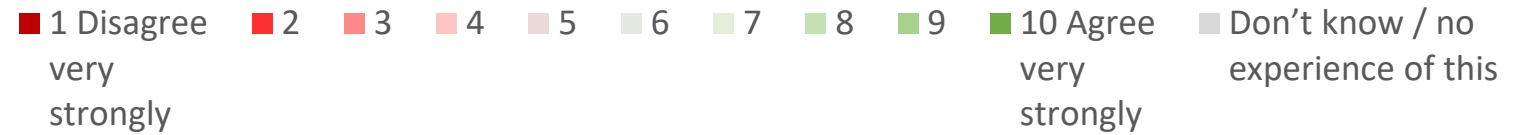


Buying counterfeit goods is a bit 'downmarket'

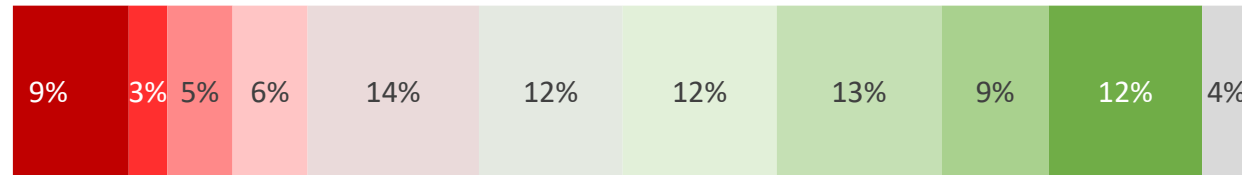


For many, counterfeit goods just seem to be a way of life

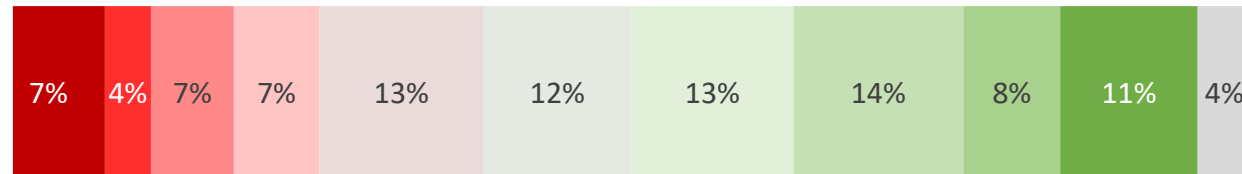
Agreement with attitudinal statements



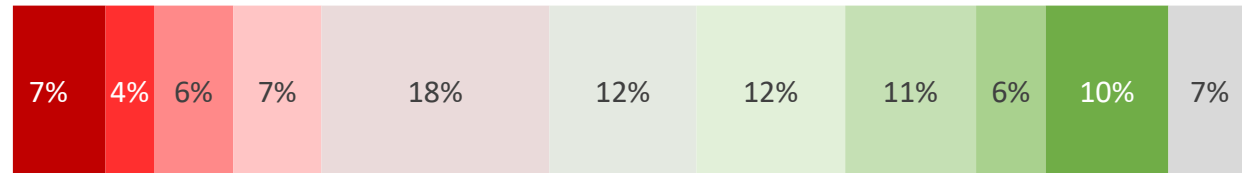
Getting counterfeit goods is less hassle than the genuine articles



I cannot tell the difference between the flavour of counterfeit groceries and the genuine article



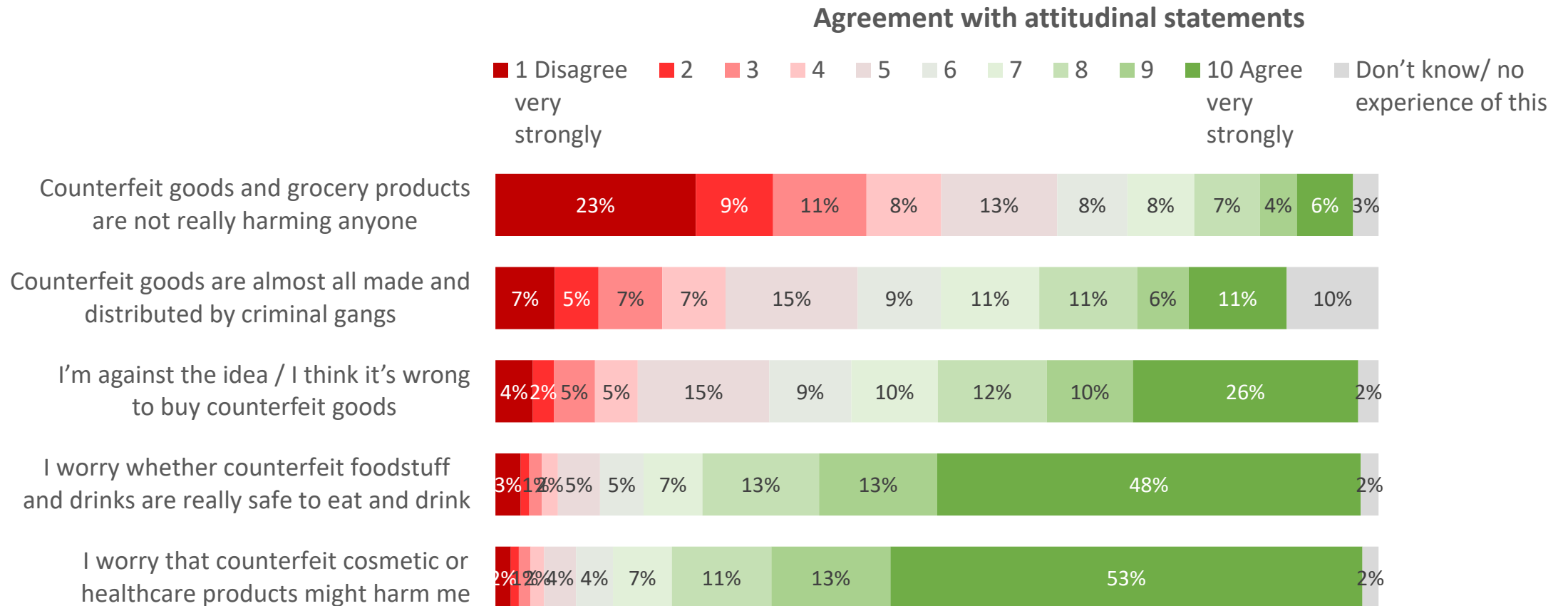
It takes too much time to find counterfeit goods for sale / I can't be bothered



Relatively few respondents feel that counterfeit goods are a victimless crime

Nearly half think it's wrong to buy counterfeit items and most are concerned about the safety of counterfeit food, drink and healthcare products.

Although many consumers recognize the illegality of counterfeit products, it isn't sufficiently high up their list of priorities to significantly change their behavior.



Concluding remarks

- Widespread and open availability of counterfeit goods across the whole region,
 - both online and in physical stores.
- Large number of people have bought counterfeit goods;
 - 1 in 4 buyers knew that the goods were not genuine.
 - Saving money was the key driver when respondents knew they were buying counterfeit items.
- Less than half of respondents expressed any concern around prosecution for buying counterfeit items.
- Anti-piracy/ pro-IP publicity has impacted less than half of respondents.
- Relatively low association of counterfeit goods with criminal elements (only 28% are convinced).
- Up to 3 in 4 respondents say they worry that counterfeit foodstuffs, drinks or cosmetics may cause harm,
 - but very few (1 in 6) agree that counterfeit goods are harming anyone.

Concluding remarks

- Many respondents buying counterfeit goods without knowing said they would not have bought the goods if they had known before purchase that they were not genuine.
- The data suggests that a large number of respondents consider counterfeit products just a fact of life:
 - Although they know they're wrong, they aren't sufficiently concerned to actively avoid them and change their purchasing behaviour.
- There is nothing in the data to suggest that the situation will change in the shorter term.

Final thoughts

The survey clearly illustrates the scale of the problem of counterfeit goods in the countries surveyed and highlights the need for further consumer awareness campaigns and enforcement action.

The high level of visibility of counterfeit items presents a real challenge for market regulators and enforcement officers, particularly when many consumers are unaware that they are purchasing counterfeit items.

Consumer awareness campaigns need to focus their attention on:

- Helping consumers more easily identify counterfeit items.
- Explaining their rights to return the non-genuine goods.
- Education on the connections with criminal elements.

This is a difficult thing to achieve when counterfeit goods can often be substantially cheaper than their respective genuine items with cost-of-living pressures.

Further research is recommended (perhaps more qualitative) to understand how respondents become aware that goods they have bought are counterfeit when they weren't aware at purchase, and this might help inform a consumer education campaign.

Thank You.

For more information, please contact
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