



# National Policing Survey

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April 2026

# Research Purpose

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Assess general opinions on policing, including topics such as police in the news, police communications, distinctions between local and federal police, police as a profession, and AI in policing.

# Methodology



- Online national survey of N=666 adults in the United States



- Conducted April 2–9, 2026;  
15 minutes to complete



- A combination of quotas and weighting by gender, age, race, education, and household income were used to match the demographic makeup of the general population in the United States based on U.S. Census data.

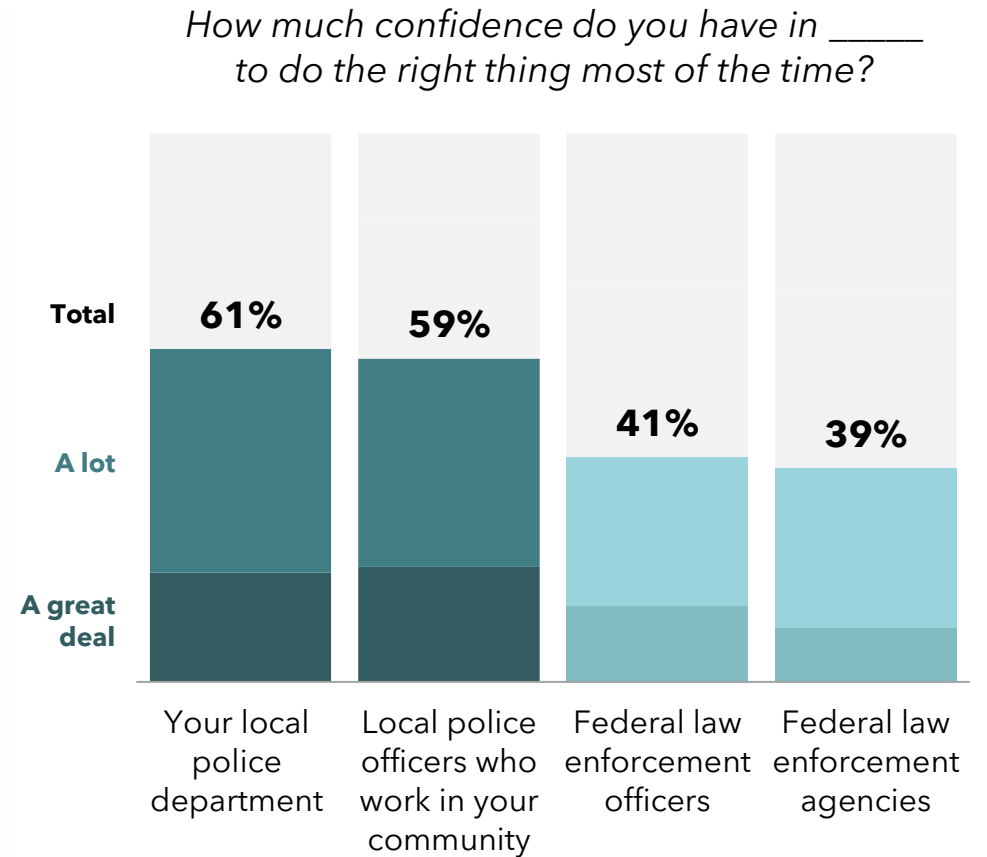
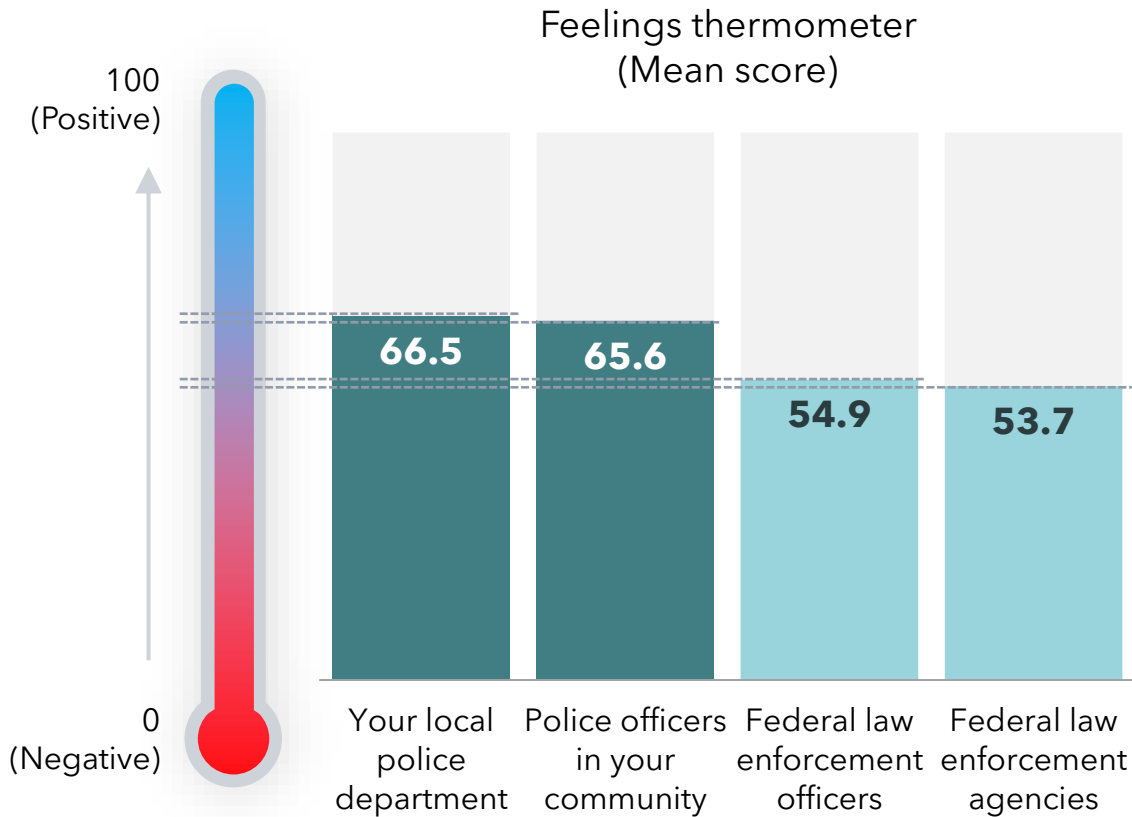


- Margin of error  $\pm 3.8\%$



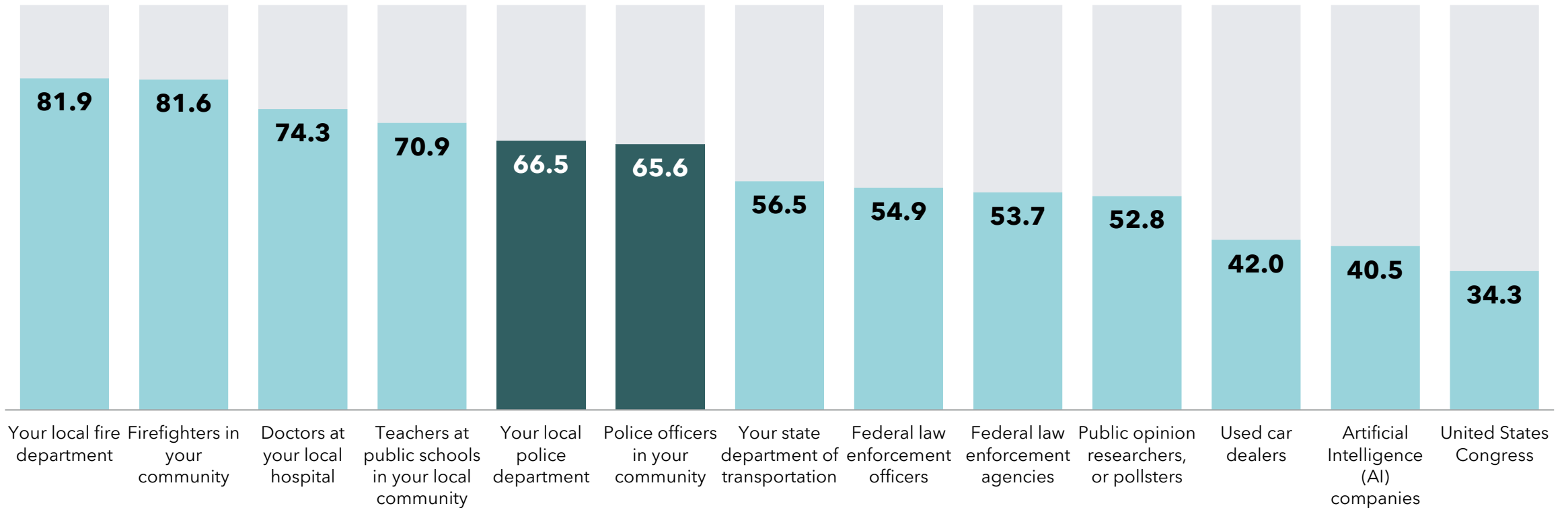
- Due to rounding, some totals may differ by  $\pm 1$  from the sum of separate responses

# Americans view local police **more favorably** and with **more confidence** than federal law enforcement.



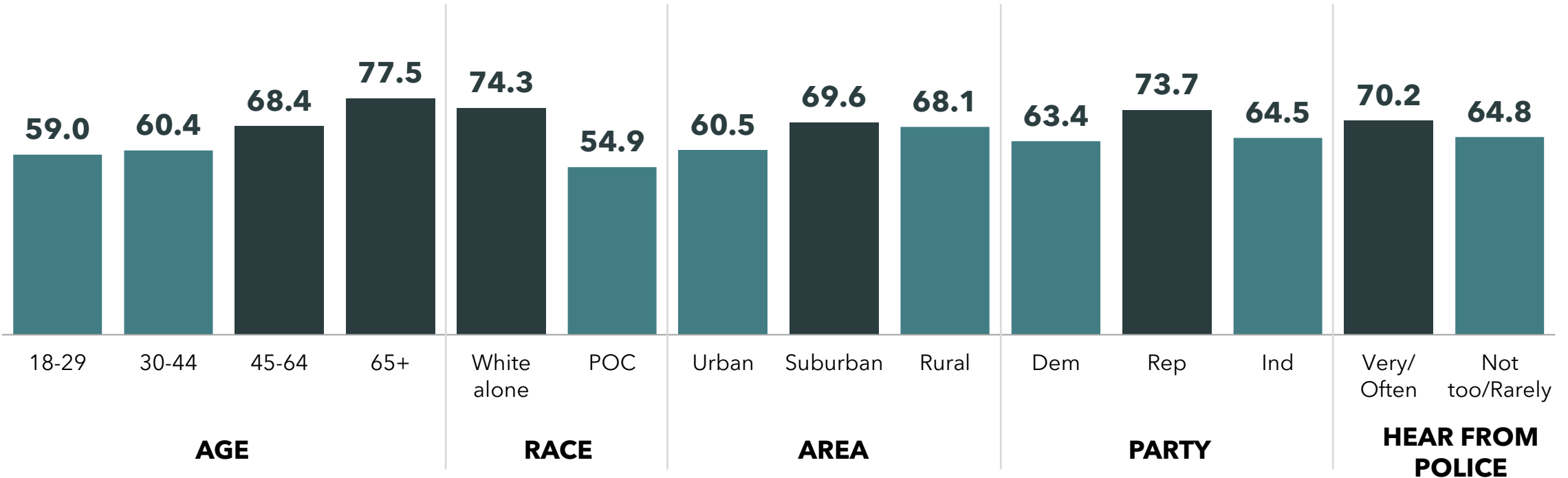
# Local police rank **in the middle of the pack** among groups and institutions.

Feelings thermometer  
(**Mean score**; higher = more positive)



# Older residents, white individuals, suburban residents, Republicans, and those who frequently hear from local police **tend to have a more positive view** of local police departments.

Feelings thermometer: Your local police department  
(**Mean score**; higher = more positive)



# Americans see local police coverage as mostly **positive or fair**, while national coverage of federal law enforcement is less so.



## **TONE** OF NEWS COVERAGE

### Very / Somewhat positive



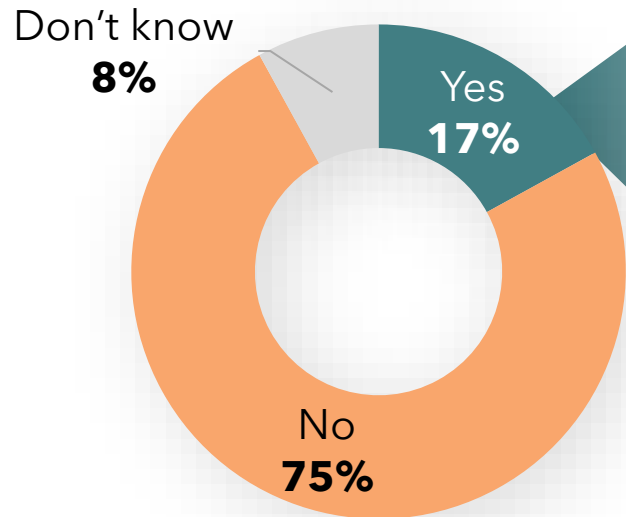
## **FAIRNESS** OF NEWS COVERAGE

### Very / Somewhat fair

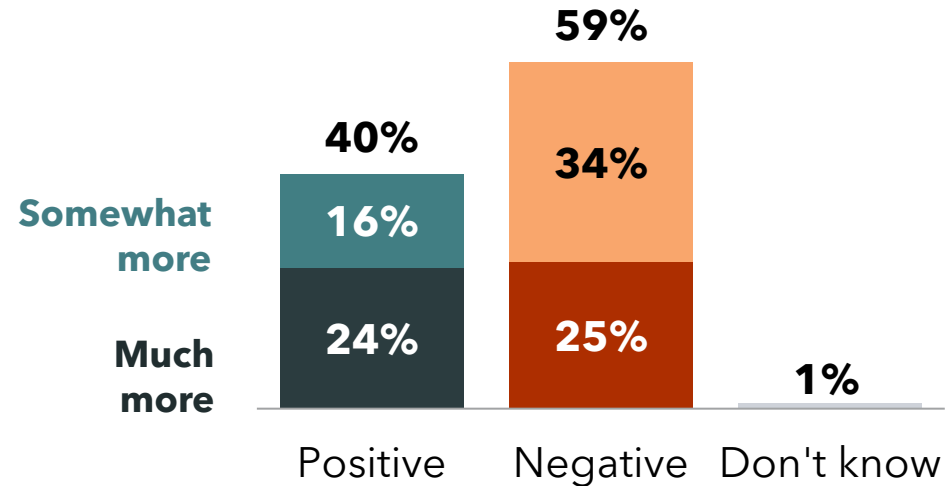


# News rarely changes views of local police, but when it does, it more often makes opinions more negative.

Has your opinion about local police in your community changed at all because of news you have seen or heard in any way?



Did the news generally make you feel more positive or negative about local police in your community?



Most don't hear from local police often, but they rate communications **more positively than negatively.**

## ! POLICE COMMUNICATIONS

**35%**

Hear or see communications from local police departments in their community (% often / somewhat often)

**70%**

Say local police departments in their community do a good job communicating with the public

**57%**

Are confident that their local police departments can communicate effectively during an emergency

**55%**

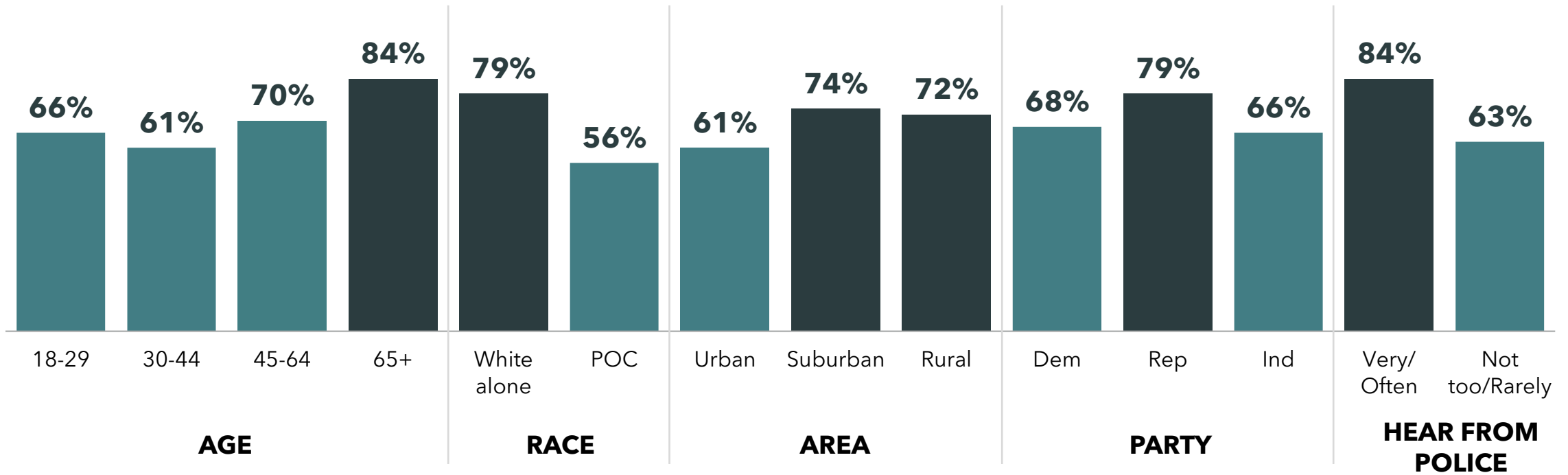
Trust information shared by local police departments in their community

**55%**

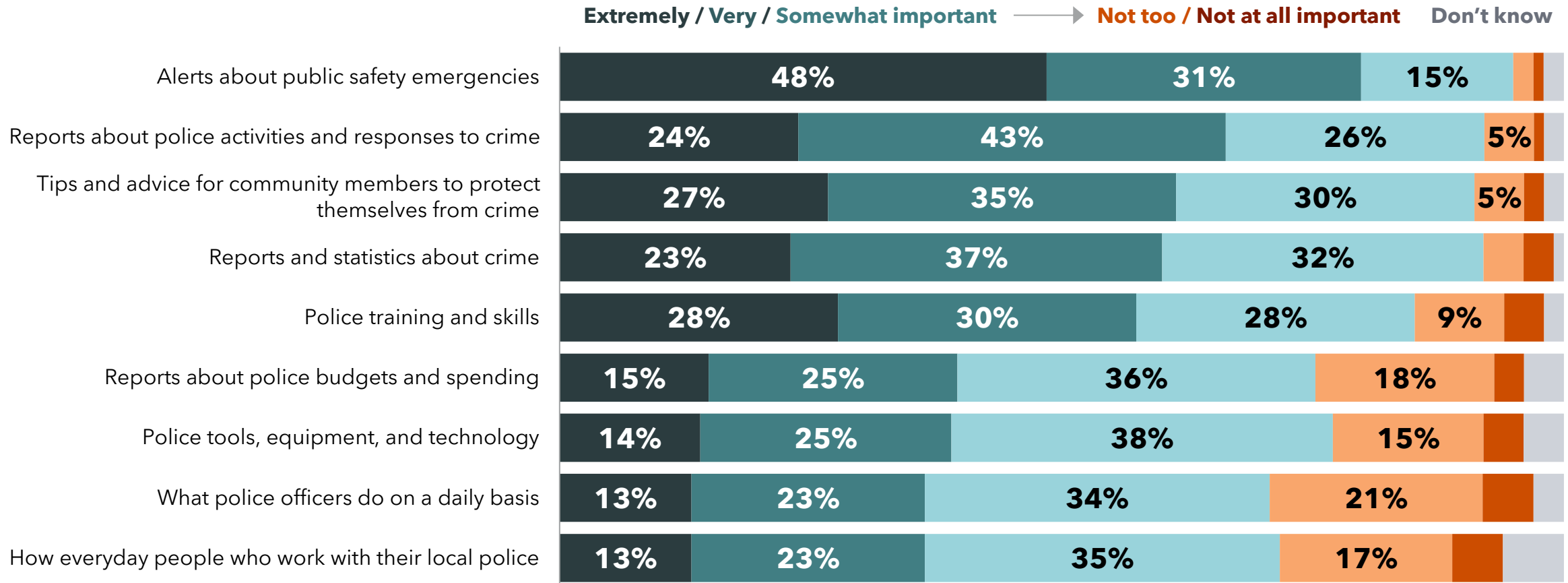
Say local police departments do a better job communicating with the public than other public agencies

Older residents, white individuals, non-urban residents, Republicans, and those who often hear from local police tend to **view general police communications more positively.**

% who say local police departments in their community do a good job communicating with the public



# Emergency alerts and crime response updates are the **most important things** people want from police communication.



# Accountability, both in crime response and spending, are top communication priorities.



*Which of the following is most important to you for local police departments in your community to communicate?*

What local police are doing to investigate crime and hold criminals accountable

**51%**

What local police are doing to prevent crime from happening

**42%**

How local police departments spend money

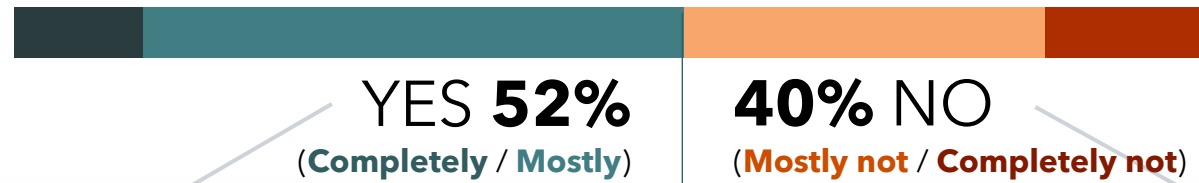
**62%**

**22%**

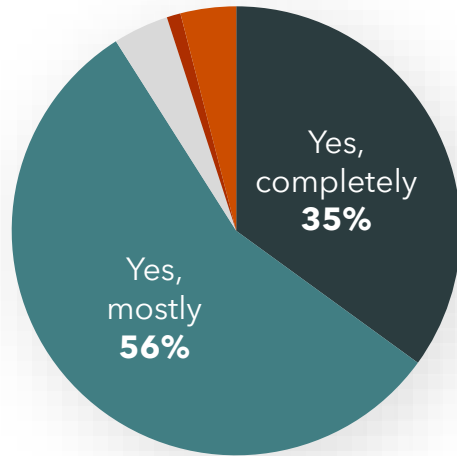
How local police departments are funded

# Americans are divided on whether local and federal agencies share a mission. Those who disagree align more with local police.

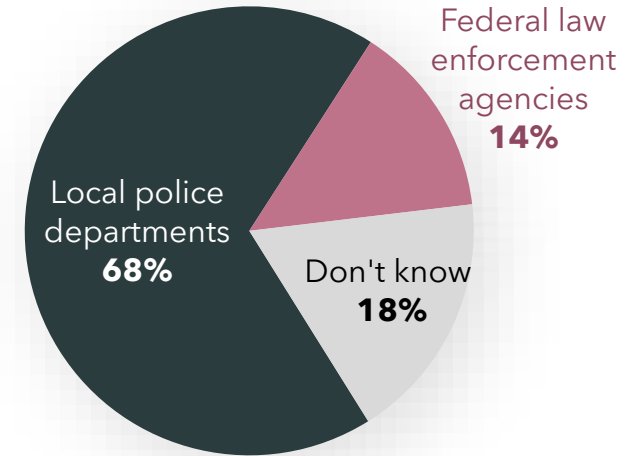
Do you think local police departments in your community and federal law enforcement agencies share the same public safety mission?



Do you personally support this public safety mission?

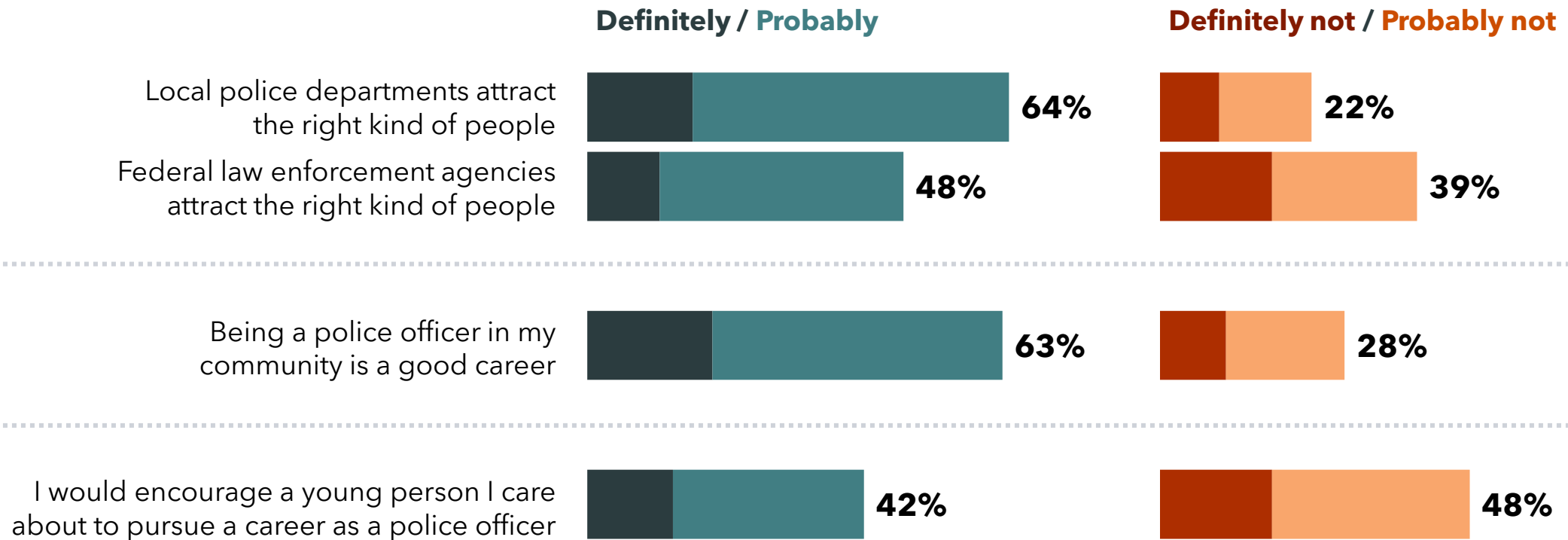


Do you personally align more closely with the public safety mission of the local police departments in your community or federal law enforcement agencies?



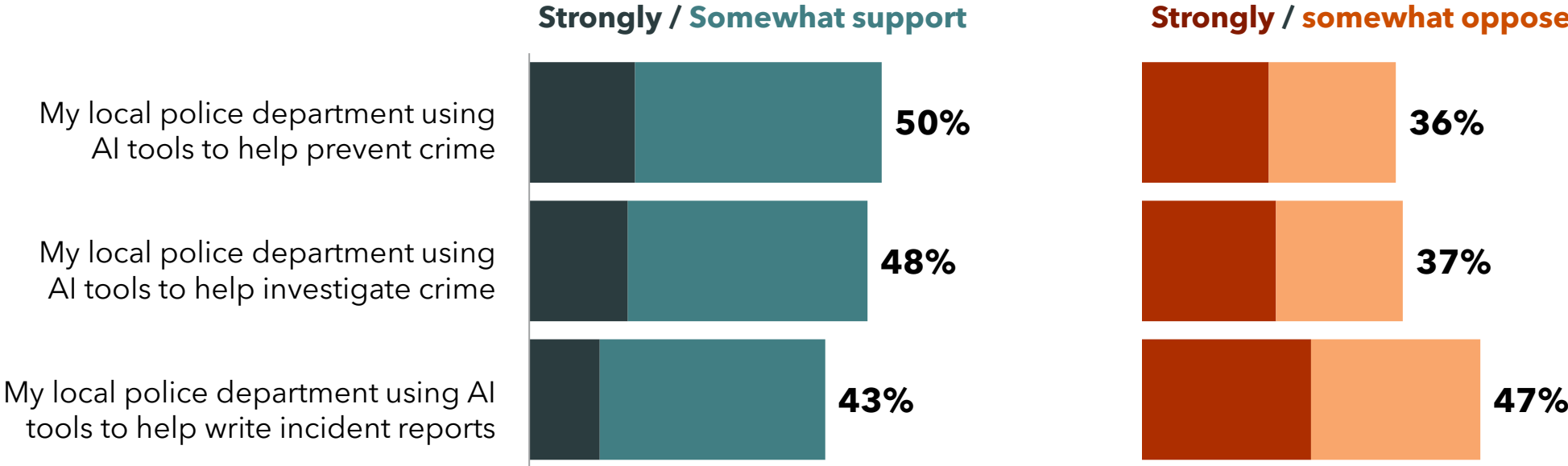
# Many see policing as a good career, but fewer would encourage people they know to pursue it.

## POLICE AS A CAREER



# Support for police use of AI depends on the task, with the strongest backing for crime prevention.

## ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE





# Thank You

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