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Life in Hampton Roads Survey Press Release #2: Police, Race Relations and Attitudes Regarding the Homeless and Mentally Ill in Hampton Roads

Social Science Research Center, Old Dominion University

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Life in Hampton Roads Survey Press Release #2

Police, Crime, Race Relations and Attitudes Regarding the Homeless and Mentally Ill in Hampton Roads

This report examines regional and sub-regional perceptions of crime and police from the 2017 Life In Hampton Roads survey (LIHR 2017) conducted by the Old Dominion University Social Science Research Center. Data from prior years is also provided when available to show comparisons in responses over time. Responses were weighted by city population, race, age, gender, and phone usage (cell versus land-line) to be representative of the Hampton Roads region. For additional information on survey methodology, and analyses of other issues, please see the SSRC website at www.odu.edu/ssrc.

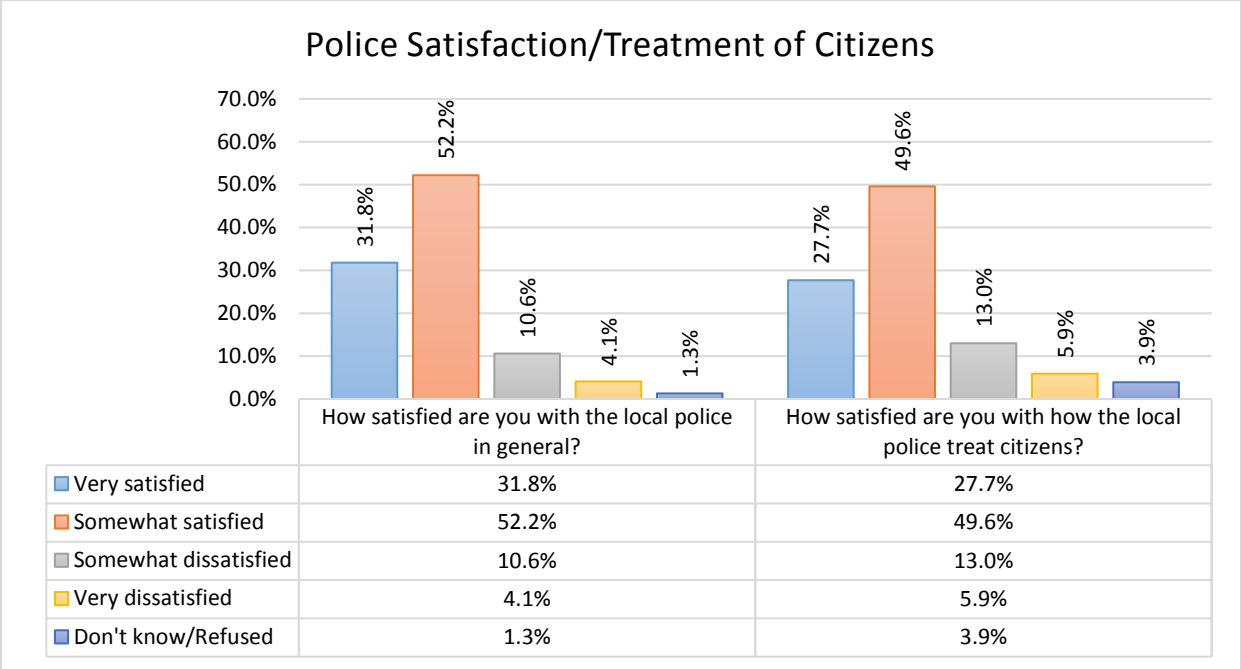
Control of crime and public safety are an important precondition for a high quality of life, and a significant concern among survey respondents. The 908 respondents were asked about various topics concerning local police and crime.

Satisfaction/Trust of Local Police and Perception of Crime

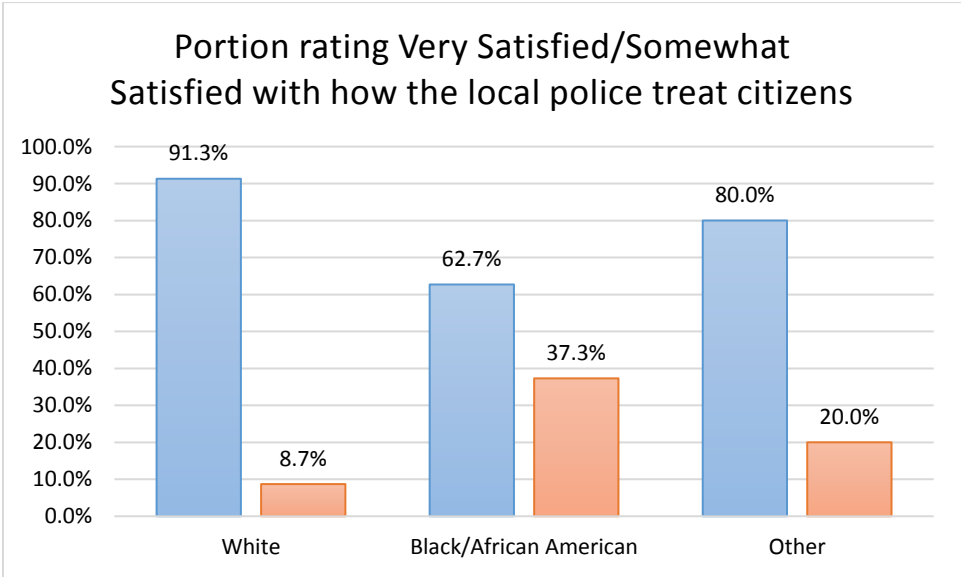
Respondents were asked how satisfied they were with the local police in general¹. The majority of respondents reported being somewhat satisfied (52.2 percent) and very satisfied (31.8 percent). Only 10.6 percent reported being somewhat dissatisfied and 4.1 percent reported being very dissatisfied with the local police. Additionally, 1.3 percent either did not know or declined to answer.

Respondents were asked how satisfied they are with how the local police treat citizens. The majority of respondents (77.3 percent) said they either were somewhat satisfied (49.6 percent) or very satisfied (27.7 percent) with how the local police treat citizens. Another 13 percent reported being somewhat dissatisfied and 5.9 percent were very dissatisfied with how the local police treat citizens.

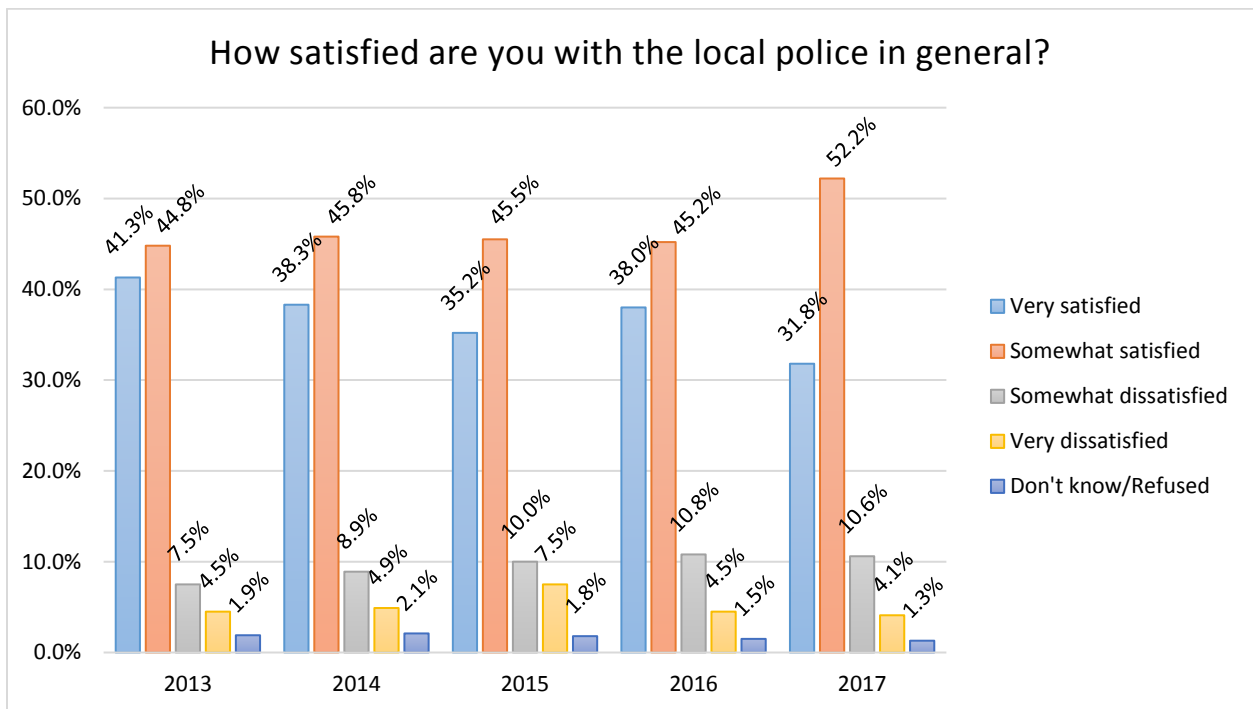
¹ Due to a programming error, those respondents who indicated don't know, refused, or some other living arrangement besides owning or renting a home (n=39) were excluded from the questions about satisfaction with and trust of police, how police treat citizens, and concerns about having their home broken into while they are away.



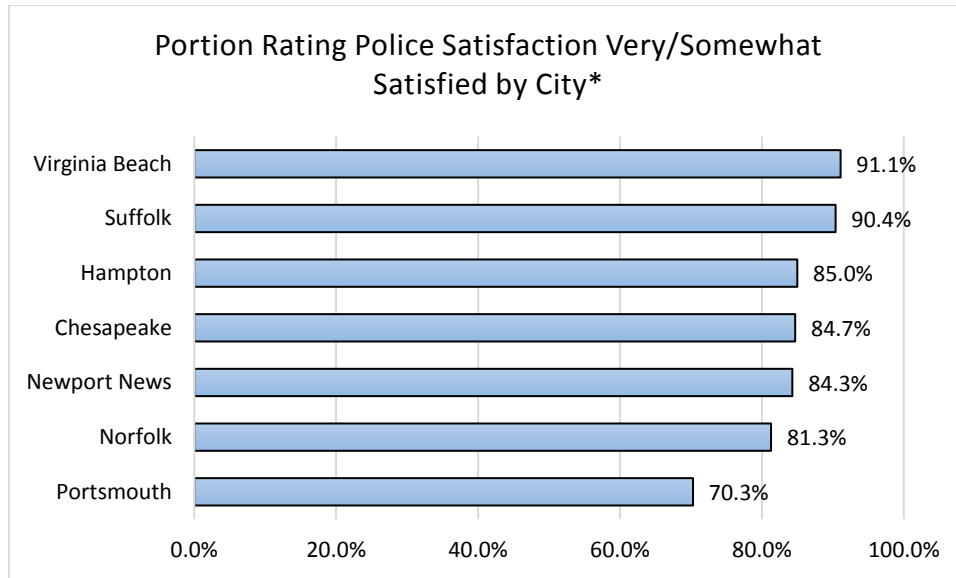
White respondents were much more likely to give a positive rating for how the local police treat citizens than other races. In fact, 91.3 percent of white respondents reported being very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with how the local police treat citizens compared to only 62.7 percent of African American respondents. Combining all other races, 80 percent reported being very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with how police treat citizens.



While overall satisfaction with the police remained fairly consistent with previous years, those reporting they are very satisfied with the local police decreased by just over 6 percent (6.2 percent) since last year. However, those who reported being somewhat satisfied with the local police increased by a similar percentage (7 percent). In the five years the LIHR survey has asked about satisfaction with the local police, the portion reporting that they are very or somewhat dissatisfied was at its highest in 2015, but has decreased the past two years by 2.2 percent and 2.8 percent, respectively.

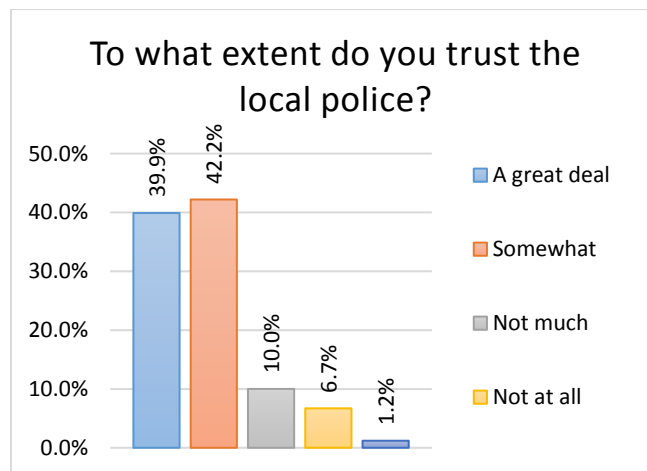


Looking at police satisfaction across the seven cities in Hampton Roads revealed significantly different levels of satisfaction. At the high end, Virginia Beach and Suffolk respondents gave the highest ratings for police satisfaction (91.1 percent and 90.4 percent, respectively). Conversely, the two lowest ratings for police satisfaction, though more than 70 percent, were Norfolk (81.3 percent) and Portsmouth (70.3 percent).

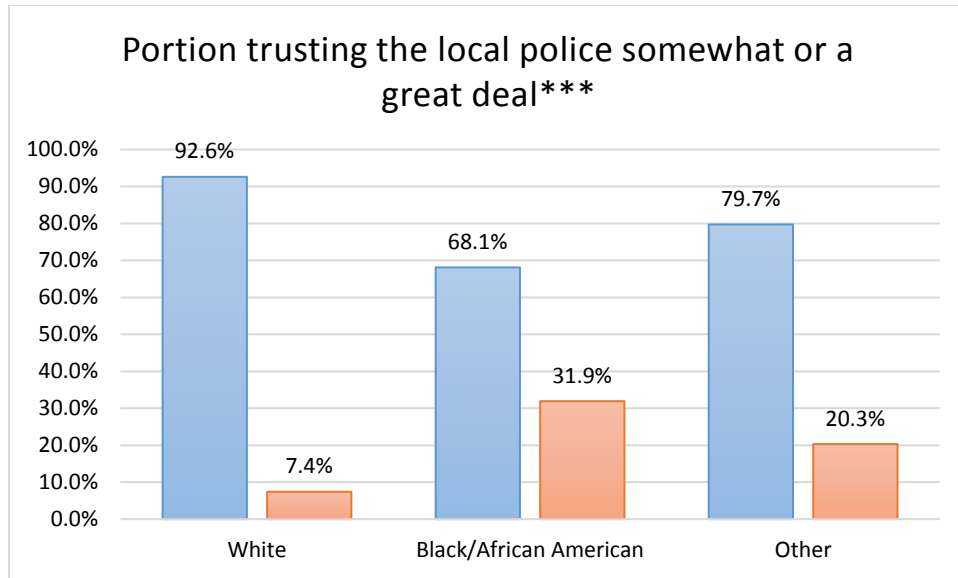


*p<.05 statistically significant, 2-tailed test

Respondents were also asked how much they trust the local police. The majority of respondents (82.1 percent) indicated they either trust the local police somewhat (42.2 percent) or trust the police a great deal (39.9 percent). Only 6.7 percent reported not trusting the police at all and another 10 percent reported not trusting the police much.



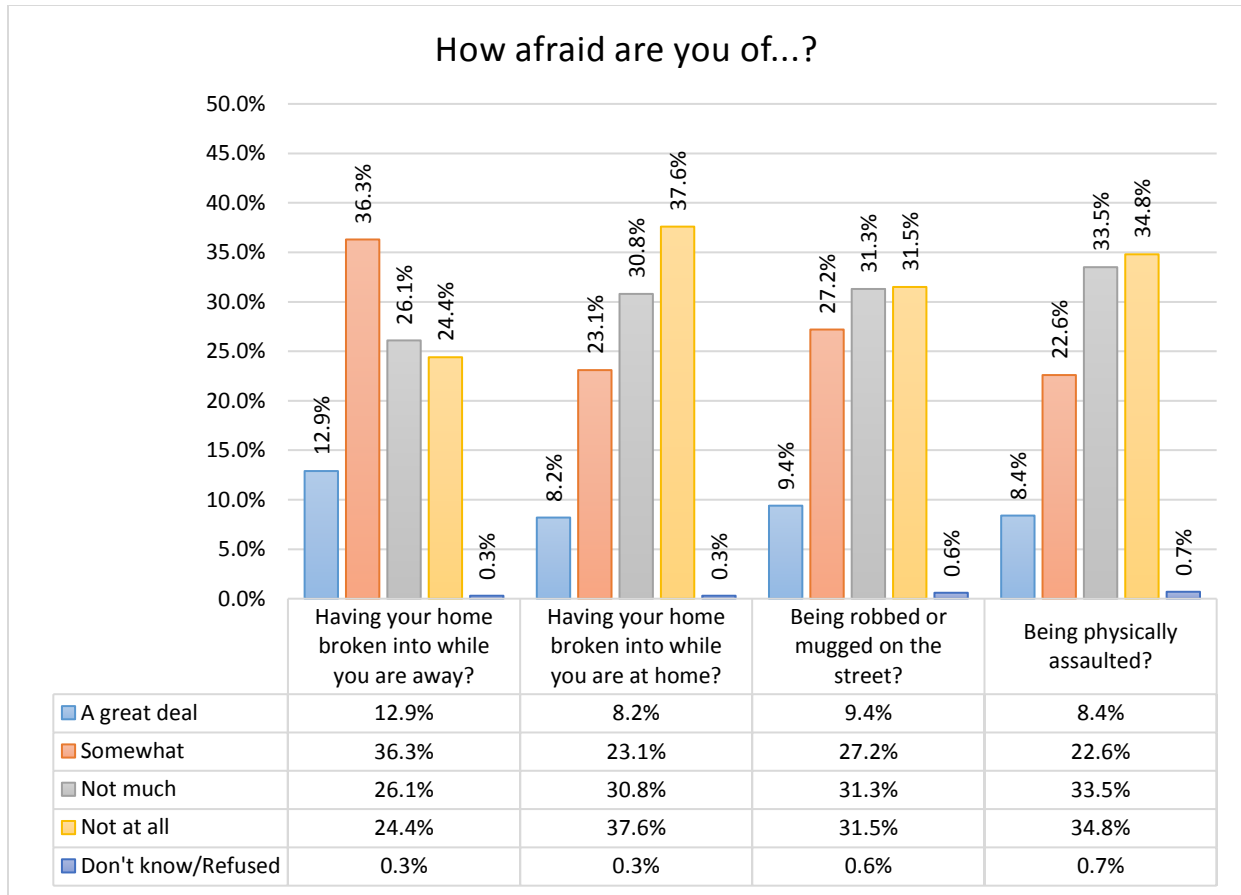
As might be expected, there were significant differences in trust of local police across races. While 92.6 percent of white respondents said they trust local police somewhat or a great deal, only 68.1 percent of African American respondents said they trust local police somewhat or a great deal. Combining all other races, 79.7percent said they trust the local police somewhat or a great deal.



***p<.000 statistically significant, 2-tailed test

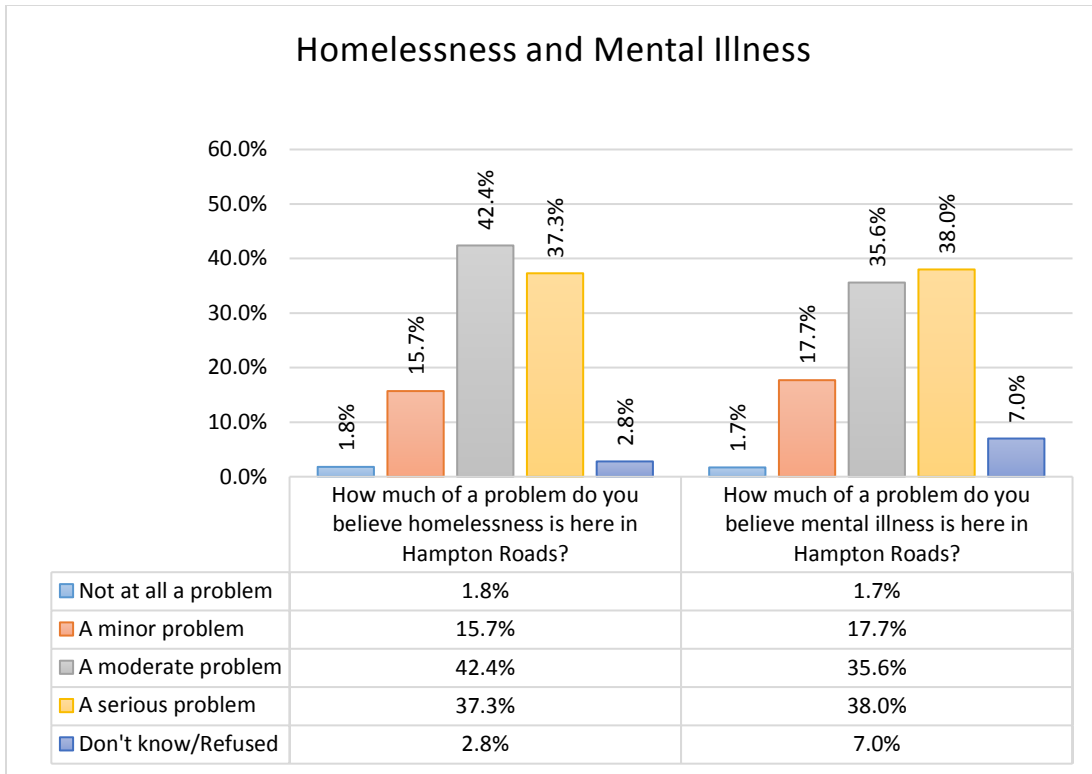
Respondents were asked to answer how afraid they are of certain crimes in Hampton Roads.

Respondents reported being either somewhat afraid (36.3 percent) or afraid a great deal (12.9 percent) of having their home broken into while they are away (49.2 percent). Respondents were less afraid of having their home broken into while they are home (31.3 percent). About two-thirds of respondents (62.8 percent) reported either being not afraid at all (31.5 percent) or not much afraid (31.3 percent) of being robbed or mugged on the street. Additionally, 68.3 percent of respondents reported being either not at all afraid (34.8 percent) or not much afraid (33.5 percent) of being physically assaulted.



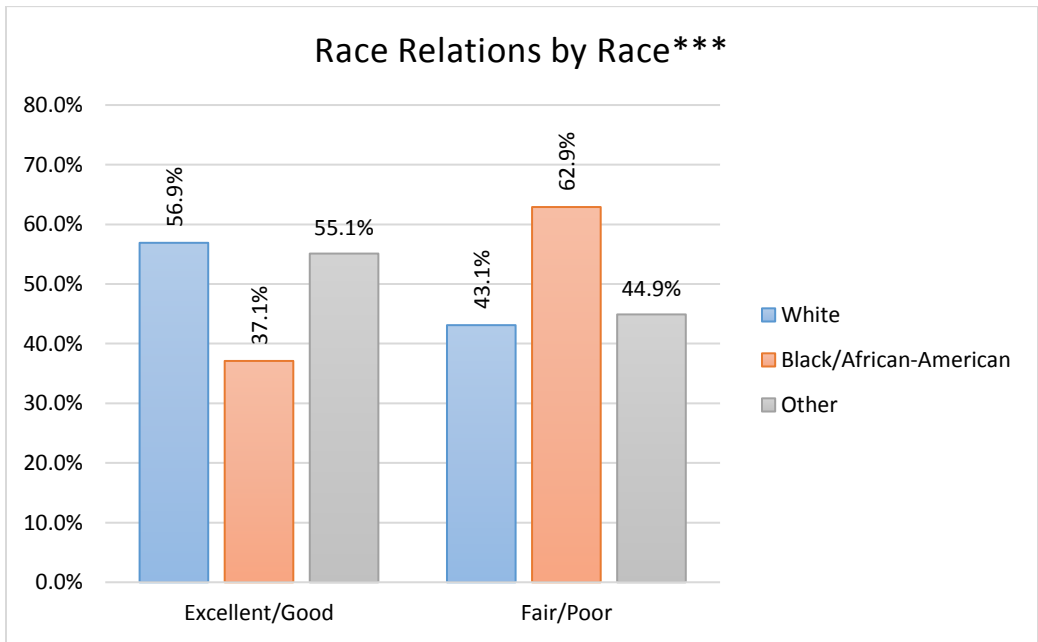
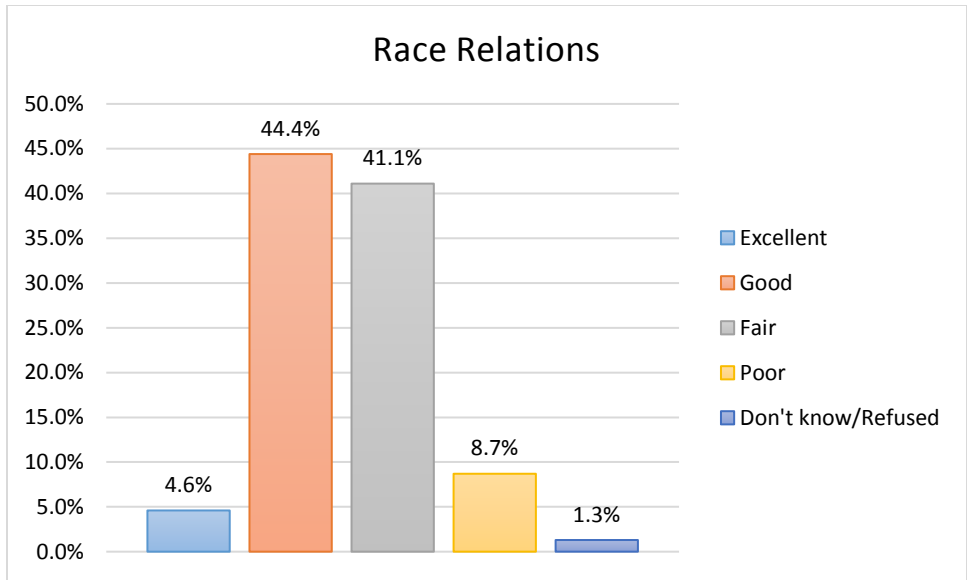
Homelessness and Mental Illness

Respondents were asked how much of a problem they think homelessness and mental health are in Hampton Roads with the majority of respondents reporting they perceive homelessness and mental illness as problematic in Hampton Roads. More than three-quarters of respondents (79.7percent) said they thought homelessness in Hampton Roads was either a moderate problem (42.4 percent) or a serious problem (37.3 percent). Another 15.7 percent thought that homelessness in Hampton Roads is a minor problem. Similarly, 73.6 percent of respondents thought mental illness in Hampton Roads was either a serious problem (38 percent) or a moderate problem (35.6 percent). Another 17.7 percent thought that mental illness in Hampton Roads was a minor problem.



Perceptions of Hampton Roads' Communities and Race

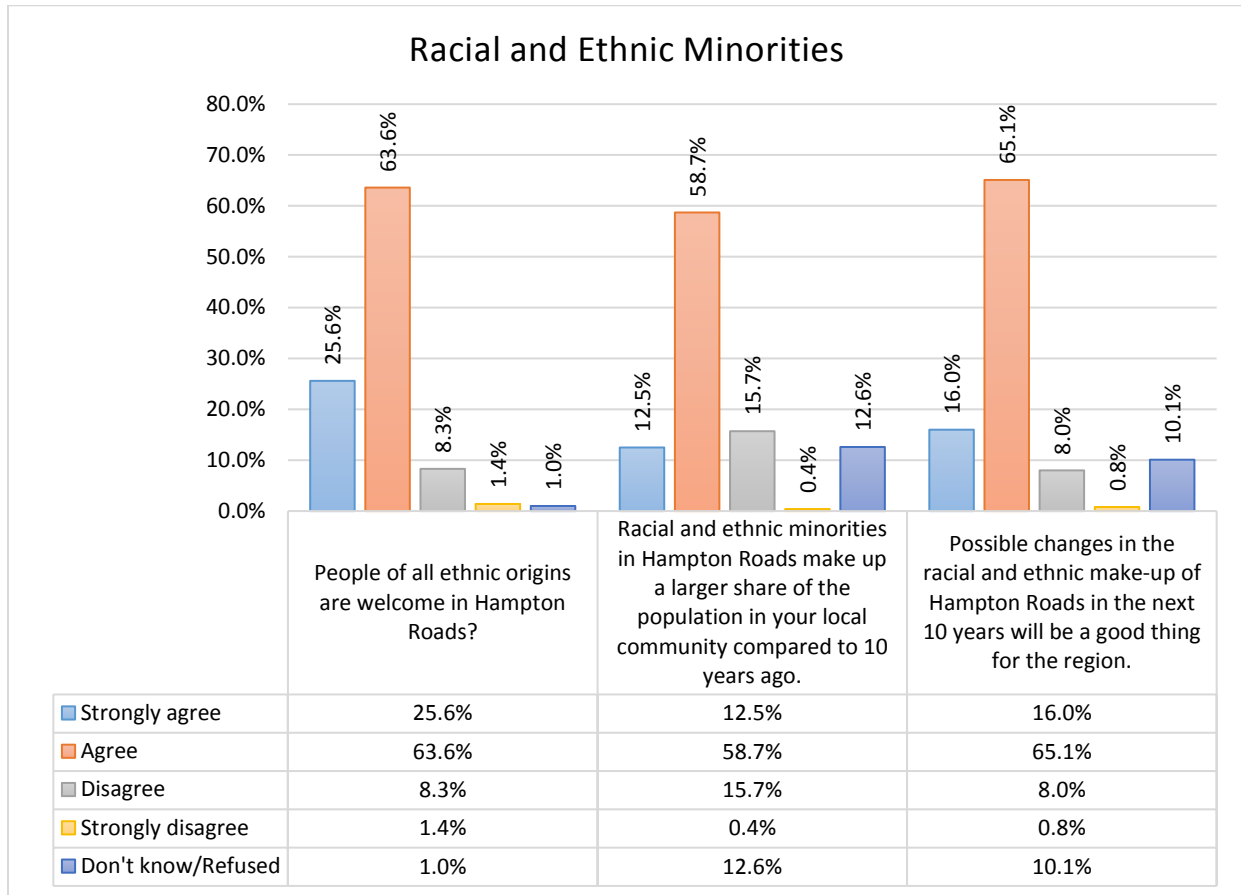
In this year's Life in Hampton Roads survey respondents were asked several questions about race and race relations in Hampton Roads. Respondents were split on race relations in Hampton Roads. In fact, less than one percent separated those that rated race relations as excellent or good (49 percent) and those that rated race relations as fair or poor (49.8 percent). Black respondents were significantly less likely (37 percent) than white respondents (57percent) to report race relations were excellent or good. Those reporting their race as "other" fell in between those percentages (55 percent).



***p<.000 statistically significant, 2-tailed test

Respondents were asked if “people of all ethnic origins are welcome in Hampton Roads?” and the vast majority (89.2 percent) either strongly agreed (25.6 percent) or agreed (63.6 percent). Respondents were then asked if racial and ethnic minorities in Hampton Roads make up a larger share of the population in their local community compared to ten years ago. Over 70 percent (71.2 percent) either strongly agreed (12.5 percent) or agreed (58.7 percent). Similarly, the majority of respondents either

strongly agreed (16 percent) or agreed (65.1 percent) that “possible changes in the racial and ethnic make-up of Hampton Roads in the next ten years will be a good thing for the region.”

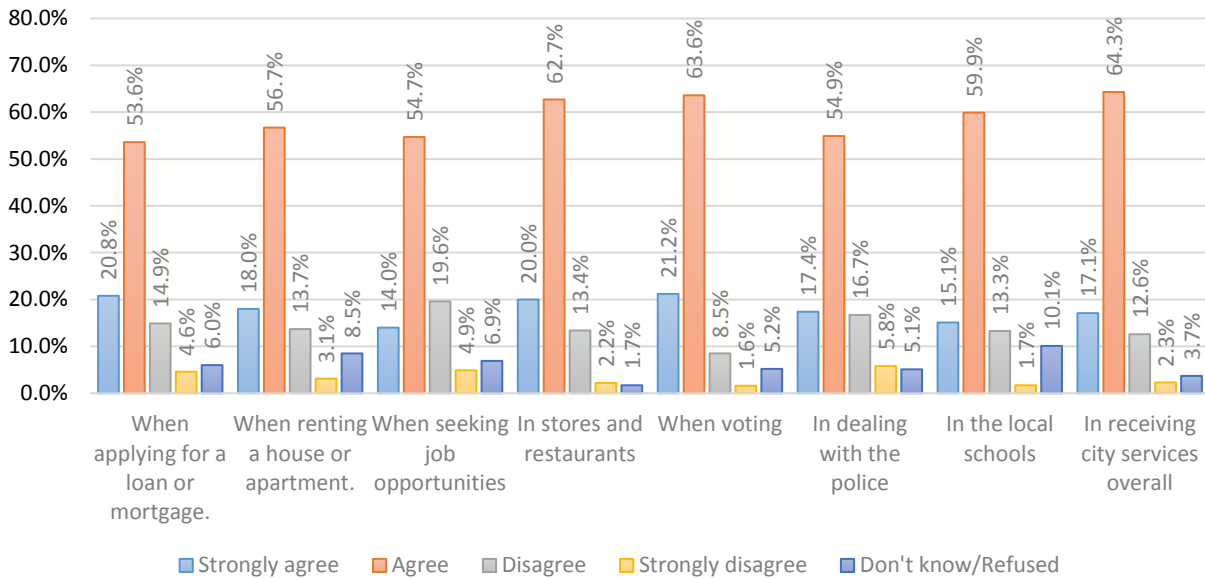


These three questions were analyzed across race and showed some differences among respondents. While only 7.3 percent of white respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that people of all ethnic origins are welcome in Hampton Roads, 15.2 percent of African American respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed. Similarly, when asked if “possible changes in the racial and ethnic make-up of Hampton Roads in the next 10 years will be a good thing for the region,” 12.1 percent of white respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed, compared to only 6.3 percent of African American respondents.

Questions about Racial and Ethnic Minorities by Race				
	White		Black/African-American	
	% Strongly agree/Agree	%Strongly disagree/Disagree	% Strongly agree/Agree	%Strongly disagree/Disagree
People of all ethnic origins are welcome in Hampton Roads?	92.7%	7.3%	84.8%	15.2%
Racial and ethnic minorities in Hampton Roads make up a larger share of the population in your local community compared to 10 years ago.	80.5%	19.5%	81.9%	18.1%
Possible changes in the racial and ethnic make up of Hampton Roads in the next 10 years will be a good thing for the region.	87.9%	12.1%	93.7%	6.3%

Respondents were asked to agree or disagree with a variety of statements about how they are treated in various situations while working and living in Hampton Roads. The majority agreed or strongly agreed that “people like me” are treated in fair, non-discriminatory manner when applying for a loan or mortgage (74.4 percent), renting a house or apartment (74.7 percent), and when seeking job opportunities (68.7percent). Similar percentages reported being treated fairly when dealing with police (72.3 percent) and in the local schools (75 percent). More than 80 percent agreed that “people like me” are treated fairly when voting (84.8 percent), in stores and restaurants (82.7 percent), and in receiving city services overall (81.4 percent). Similar to other items in the Life in Hampton Roads survey, these questions differed significantly by race with blacks and other minorities being much more likely to disagree with all statements when compared to white respondents. Among the largest differences were those items related to applying for a loan or mortgage, seeking job opportunities and dealing with police.

People like me are treated in a fair, non-discriminatory manner in Hampton Roads...



People like me are treated in a fair, non-discriminatory manner in Hampton Roads...(by race)

	White		Black/African-American		Other	
	% Strongly agree/Agree	% Strongly disagree/Disagree	% Strongly agree/Agree	% Strongly disagree/Disagree	% Strongly agree/Agree	% Strongly disagree/Disagree
When applying for a loan/mortgage	92.4%	7.6%	59.6%	40.4%	70.8%	29.2%
When renting a house or apartment	92.5%	7.5%	67.7%	32.3%	71.2%	28.8%
When seeking job opportunities	86.9%	13.1%	54.1%	45.9%	73.1%	26.9%
In stores and restaurants	93.2%	6.8%	70.0%	30.0%	81.4%	18.6%
When voting	94.6%	5.4%	81.0%	19.0%	90.5%	9.5%
In dealing with the police	93.1%	6.9%	50.2%	49.8%	66.7%	33.3%
In the local schools	92.5%	7.5%	70.4%	29.6%	77.6%	22.4%
In receiving services overall	89.8%	10.2%	76.2%	23.8%	82.6%	17.4%

***p<.000 statistically significant, 2-tailed test

Overall, satisfaction with the local police is high among Hampton Roads residents. The percentage of respondents expressing satisfaction with the local police has decreased every year since 2012, but showed a small increase in 2016 and 2017. Satisfaction with local police, satisfaction with how local police treat citizens, and trust of local police is fairly high among Hampton Roads residents. However, satisfaction and trust are significantly higher among white respondents compared to black/African-American respondents. This year, respondents were asked about race relations and whether or not people “like me” are treated fairly in various situations. White respondents rated race relations in Hampton Roads higher than black/African-American respondents and white respondents said people who look like them are treated fairly more than black/African-American respondents in every scenario given. While most Hampton Roads residents were not afraid of having their home broken into, they reported being slightly more fearful of having their home broken into while they are away. The majority of respondents also indicated that they believed both homelessness and mental illness were a moderate or serious problem in Hampton Roads.

All Life in Hampton Roads data summaries will be placed on the Social Science Research Center website as they are released (<http://www.odu.edu/al/centers/ssrc>). Follow-up questions about the 2016 Life in Hampton Roads survey should be addressed to:

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