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**Ipsos Reid**



## Focus on Career in Policing Draft Report

July 2010

- Ipsos Reid conducted an online study among n=1,580 youth, ages 16 to 27 years, across Canada. Fieldwork was conducted online, using the Ipsos Reid Online Panel, between May 4 and May 17, 2010. The breakdown of respondents by region is as follows:
  - British Columbia, n=201
  - Alberta, n= 188
  - Saskatchewan/Manitoba, n= 111
  - Ontario, n= 606
  - Quebec, n= 366
  - Atlantic Provinces, n=108
  
- In terms of the survey data preparation, the data are examined against the population in question's characteristics and adjusted by region, age and gender to ensure representativeness by these key variables. Data for this study was weighted and is representative of Canada's regional, age and gender composition for 16 to 27 year olds in accordance with Census data.
- Note to the reader: In several instances you will notice that there are a number of respondents who are not accounted for on a slide (where agree and disagree total less than 100%). Respondents were provided with both 'don't know' and 'refused' options. In some cases there were a higher number of youth who selected these options. These numbers are available in the detailed tables.



## Overview - Career Area

- **Interest in pursuing a career in policing remains relatively low, few say policing offers the most employment opportunities.**
  - When asked to select from a list, only three percent of youth say they would be most interested in pursuing a career in policing; males and those younger (16-17 years of age) were most likely to express interest. Only two percent say policing offers the most employment opportunities.
  
- **A majority recognize that policing is more than a job, it's a profession.**
  
- **Most also say that policing is a steady job with a good pay - roughly eight in ten of those who feel they have what it takes to be a police officer agree that policing offers stable employment and good remuneration.**
  
- **A majority (57%) believe their family and friends would encourage their interest in becoming a police officer.**
  - Perhaps not surprisingly, those who feel they have what it takes to become a police officer are also more likely to say their family and friends would be supportive.
  
- **Roughly two in three (63%) believe getting hired as police officer is a long and difficult process.**
  
- **The Internet (33%) is considered the most important source of career information followed by parents (11%), teachers/professors(10%) and career counsellors (9%).**



# Overview - Benefits and Negative Aspects of the Job

- Generally speaking respondents are aware of the benefits associated with a career in policing, including long-term stability, good remuneration and a wide variety of career options within the field. This is especially true of those who acknowledge being interested in pursuing a policing career.
- There is recognition that becoming a police officer also means becoming a role model for others and playing a positive role in society in general, as well as within their own communities.
- Despite acknowledging the more positive aspects a career in policing can offer, youth are aware of the potentially negative facets associated with this type of work. Interestingly, those who say they are most interested in a career policing express higher levels of agreement that the field often comes with long work hours and shift work and is a dangerous career choice.

## Overview - Recruitment Factors

- Youth named **health/fitness level, background/criminal record check, physical capabilities**, as well as **education and intelligence**, as the most significant factors they believe police recruiters consider when evaluating applications.
- Regarding what *should be the most important factor* recruiters consider when interviewing potential police officers, however, youth pointed to **background/criminal record check, mental health and stability, personality/character** and **integrity/morality**.
- Canadian youth rely most on **first-hand contact with police officers (both excluding and including family/friends)** and **websites** for information about the police hiring process.
- Youth are most likely to say they heard/read police recruitment advertising for the **RCMP** (39%), followed by their **Local/Municipal Police Service** (22%), **Provincial Police Service** (19%) or for **any other Local/Municipal Police Service** (16%).

## Conditioning levels, eyesight, language and physical attributes considered most important in getting hired as a police officer, with most estimating the hiring process as one to three months

- Youth were presented with 13 factors and asked the extent to which each are important when it comes to obtaining a job as a police officer. Those considered most significant include:
  - **Conditioning level** (physical conditioning);
  - **Eye sight**;
  - **Language**; and
  - **Physical attributes** (height/weight).
  
- Most youth expect the hiring process to take between **one and three months**.



# For most, drugs, race, religious convictions, sexual orientation and provenance have little impact on one's chances of being hired as a police officer

- Overall there is fairly low agreement that drugs, race, religious convictions, sexual orientation and provenance can have an impact on an individual's chances of being hired.
- Nearly half of youth polled believe that people are more likely to be hired as a police officer if they know someone who is already employed with a police force.



- ❑ **Drugs** – Just over two in five believe that if you have experimented with drugs you do not have a chance of being hired as a police officer.
- ❑ **Race** – Slightly less than two in five agree that a person's race can affect their chances of getting hired.
- ❑ **Religious convictions** – Less than one third of youth agree that a person's religion can affect their likelihood of obtaining employment as a police officer.
- ❑ **Heterosexual** – Approximately three in ten feel that being heterosexual improves your chances of getting hired.
- ❑ **Less affluent neighbourhood** – Less than a quarter believe that coming from a less affluent neighbourhood means you are less likely to be hired in the policing field.





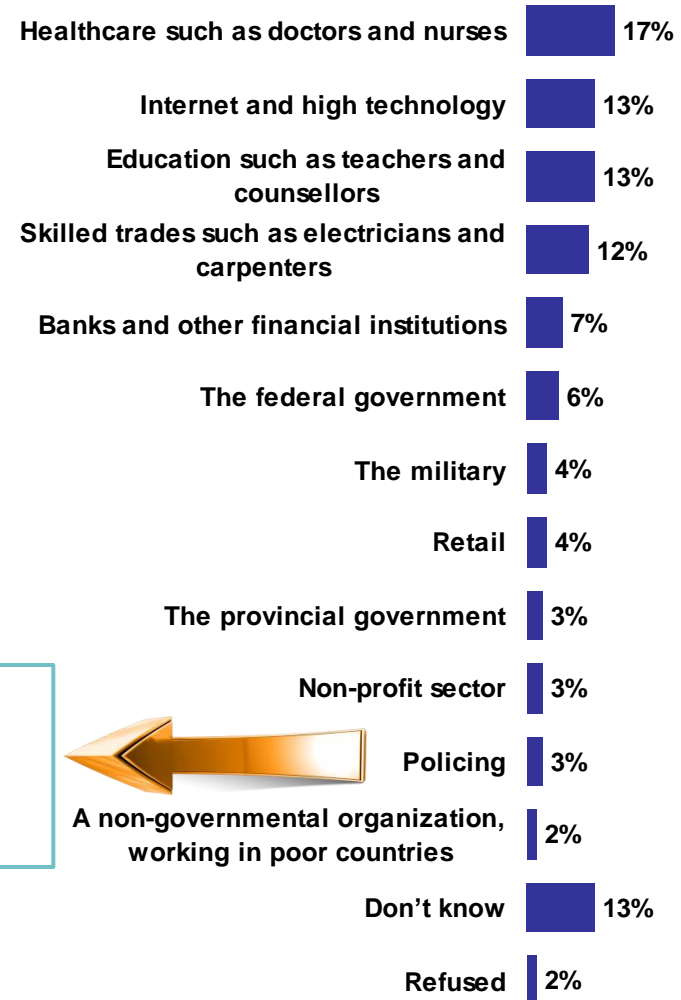
**Ipsos Reid**



**Detailed Findings**

# Only 3% of Canadian youth name policing as primary career choice, down one point from 2009

- Healthcare (17%) topped the list of potential career choices for youth, followed by internet and high technology (13%), education (13%) and skilled trades (12%). Policing (3%), meanwhile, tied for second-least desired industry, along with employment in the provincial government and non-profit sector.
- Those most likely to express an interest in a policing career are:
  - Aged 16-17
  - Has/had a member of family employed as a police officer
  - Male



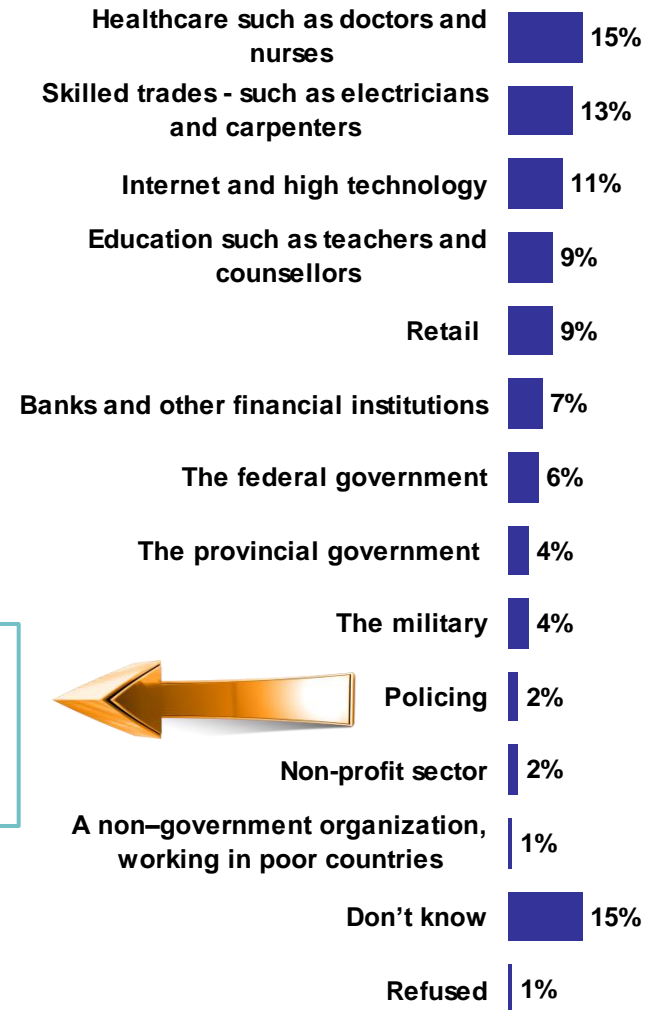
In 2009, 4% of youth stated they were most interested in a policing career.



# Only 2% of respondents categorize policing as offering the most employment opportunities for someone like themselves

- Healthcare (15%), skilled trades (13%) and internet and high technology (11%) received highest ranking in comparison to policing (2%) as the field respondents suggest offers the most opportunity.
- Those who were more interested in a career in policing were also most likely to feel policing offers them the most employment possibilities. This group includes:
  - Those who have/had a member of family employed as a police officer
  - Those aged 16-17
  - Males

In 2009, 3% of youth said policing offers the most opportunities for someone like themselves.



## Three in five youth (57%) feel loved ones would support a policing career, while only two in five (39%) would encourage others to do the same

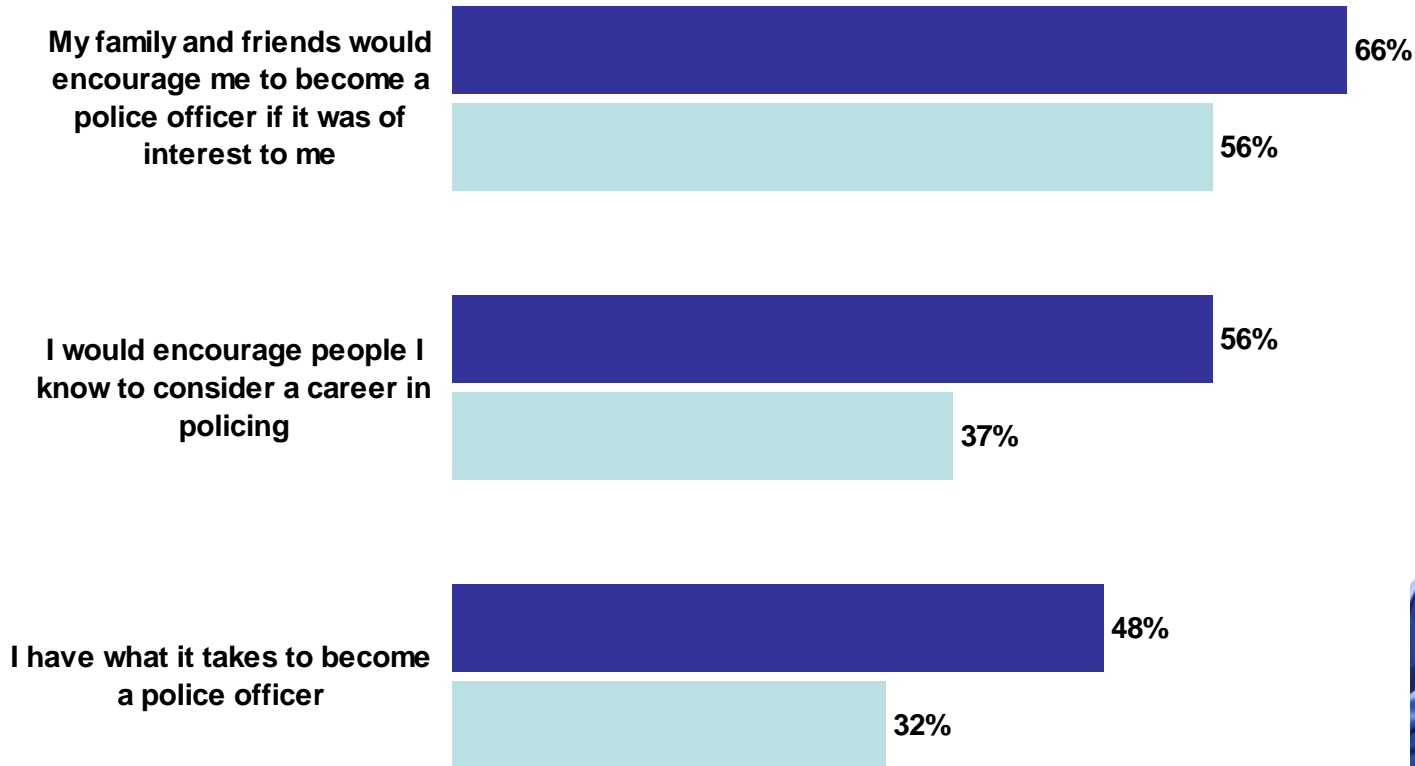
- **The majority of respondents (57%) at least somewhat agree friends and family would encourage their interest in becoming a police officer.**
  - That number increases amongst those with a relative already serving (66%), as well as those who believe they have what it takes to join the police (74%).
  - One third of youth, however, disagree. (17% strongly disagree).
- **Youth were divided on whether they would encourage others to pursue a policing career (39% in favour versus 41% against).**
  - Two in three respondents (63%) who believe they have what it takes to become a police officer, however, provided more positive feedback.



## Those who strongly/somewhat agree

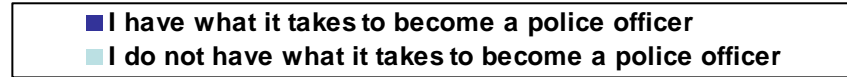
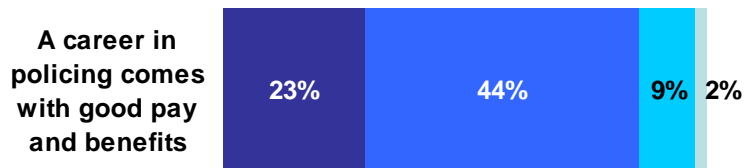
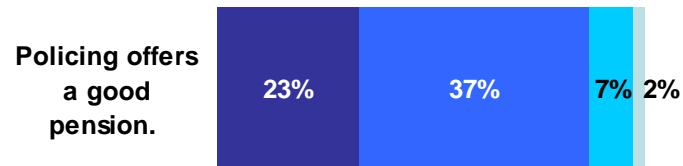
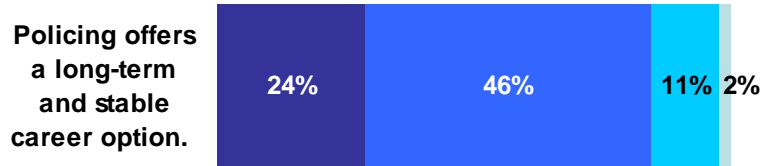
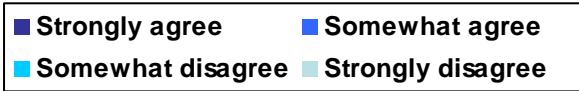


■ Yes family member is a police officer
 ■ No family member is a police officer





# Two-thirds of youth identify long-term stability (70%), good pension program (60%), benefits (57%) in becoming police officer

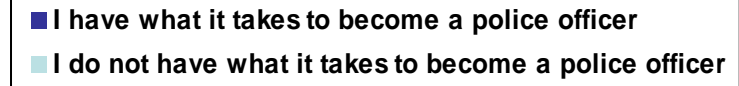
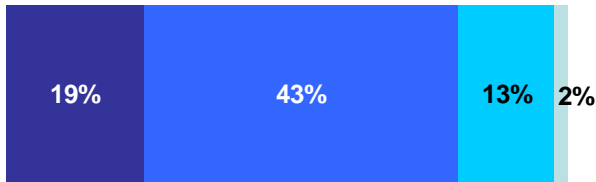




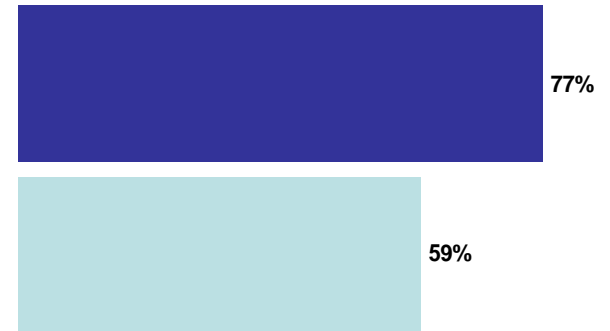
# Three in five (62%) highlight variety in policing field, though one in four (27%) point to lack of advancement opportunities



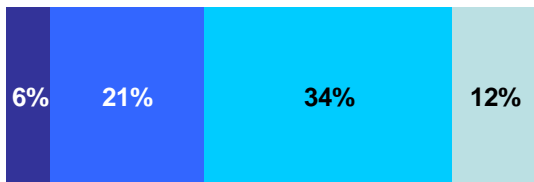
There are a wide variety of career options within policing.



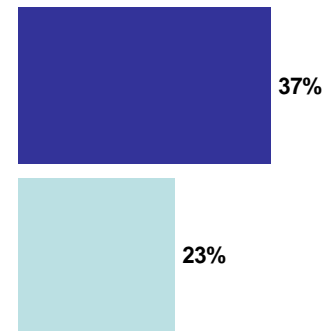
There are a wide variety of career options within policing.



There are limited opportunities for career advancement in policing.

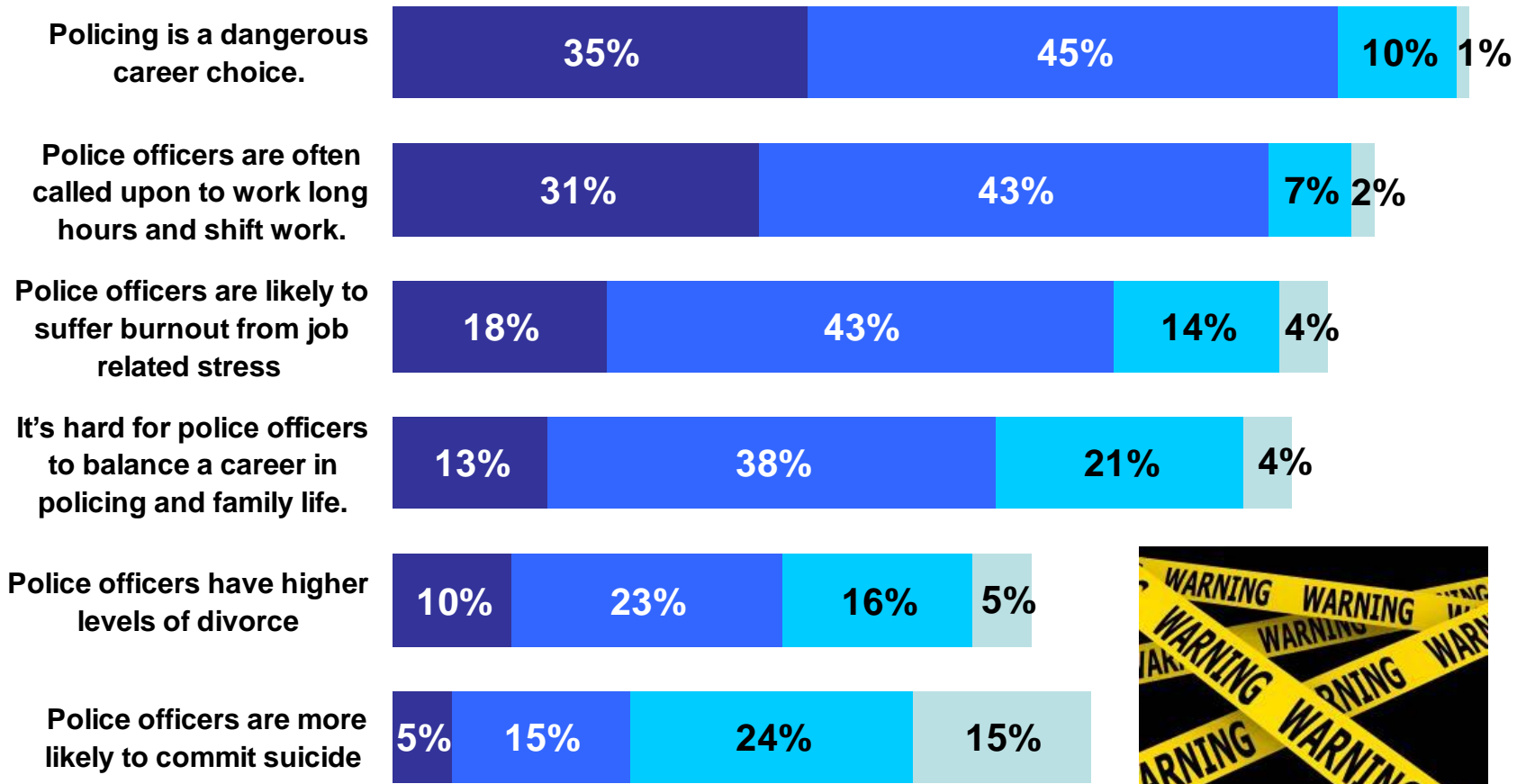


There are limited opportunities for career advancement in policing.



# Four in five youth (80%) call policing a “dangerous career choice”; three-quarters (74%) highlight long hours/shift work

■ Strongly agree 
 ■ Somewhat agree 
 ■ Somewhat disagree 
 ■ Strongly disagree

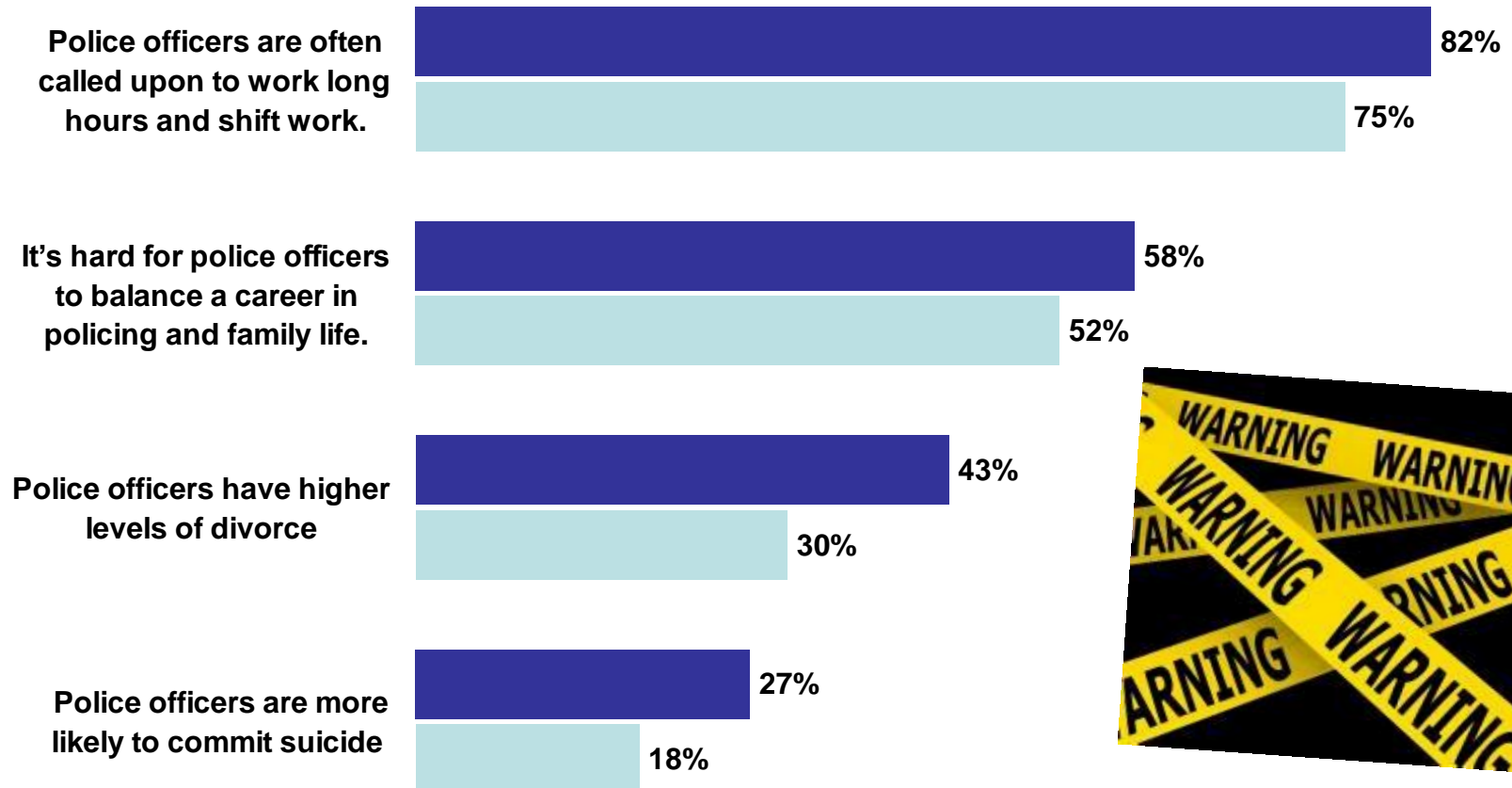




# Policing categorized by long hours and shift work (75% to 82%), difficulty balancing home/work life (52% to 58%) and higher divorce rates (30% to 43%)

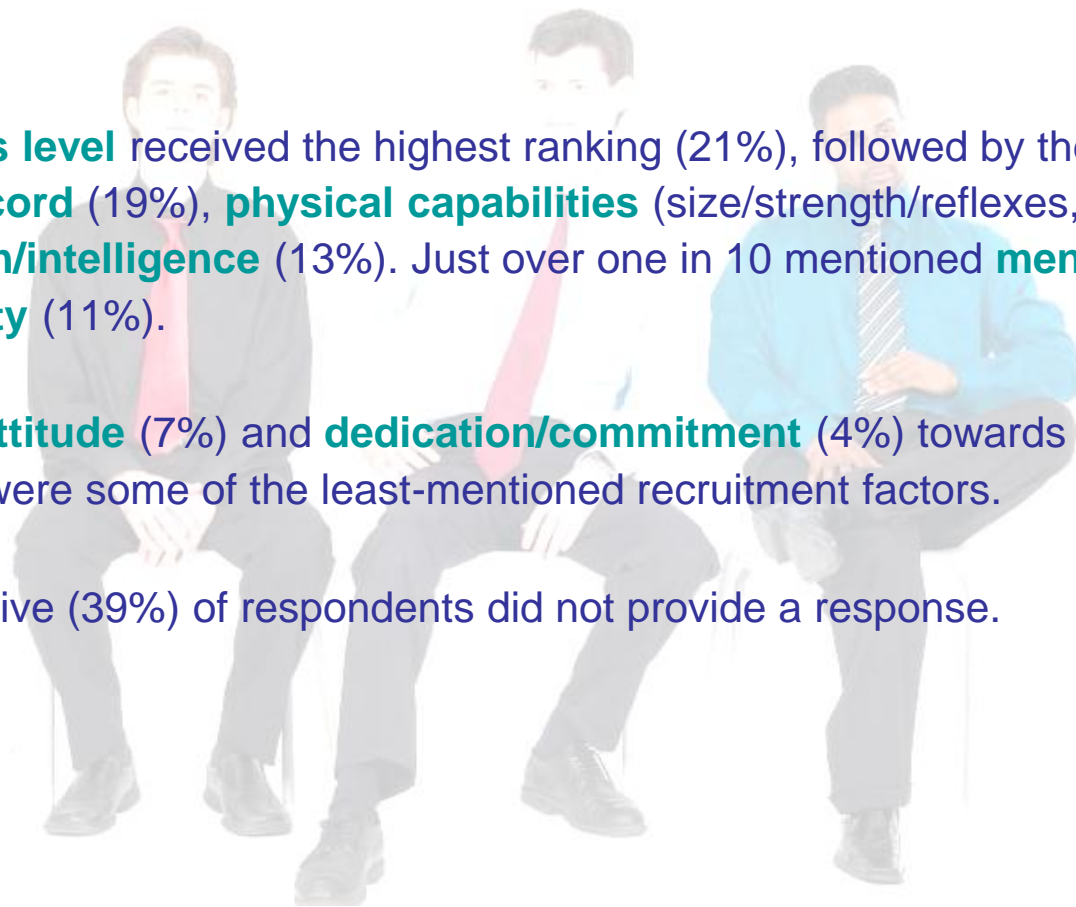
## Those who strongly/somewhat agree

■ I have what it takes to become a police officer   ■ I do not have what it takes to become a police officer

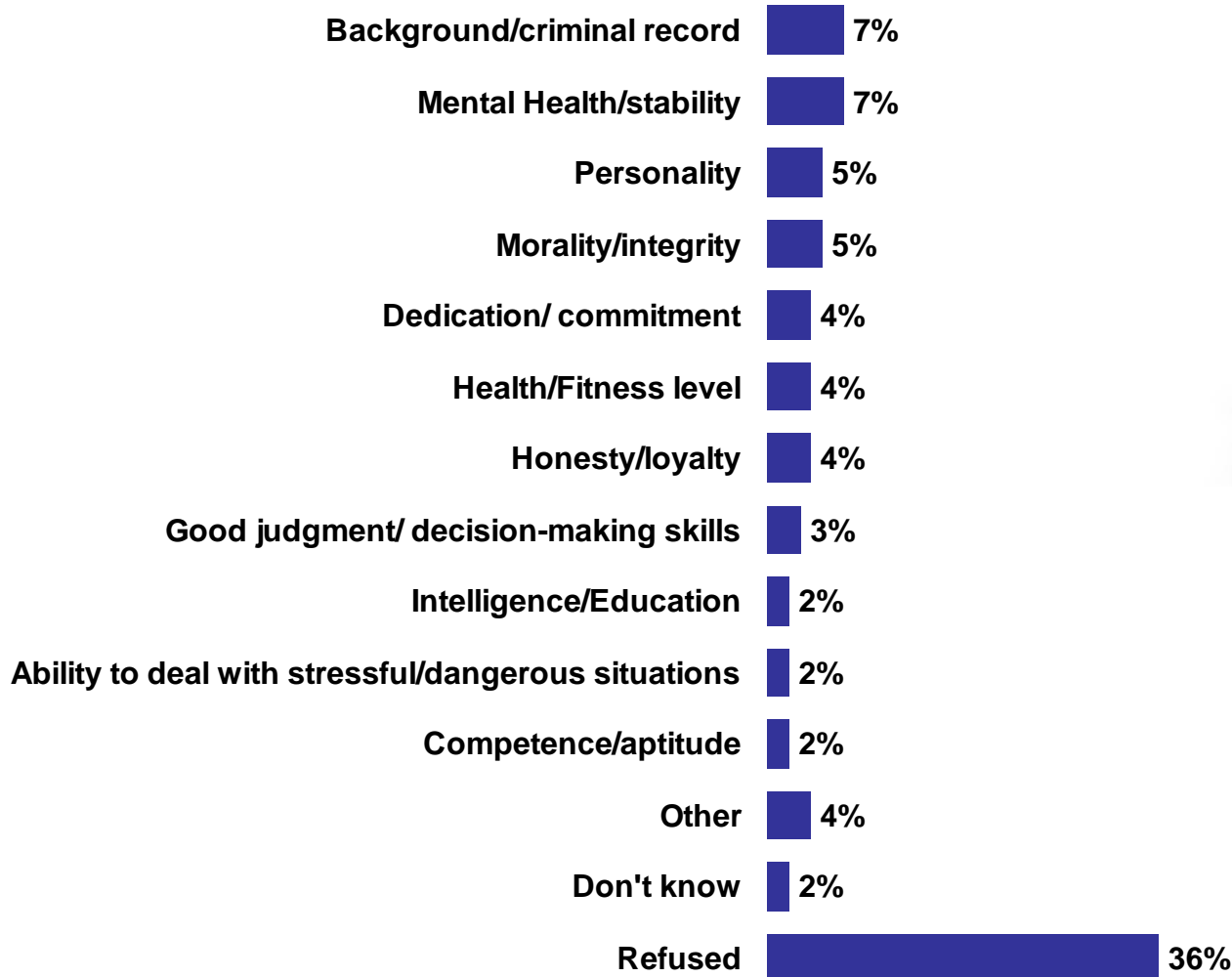


## Health/fitness level (21%), criminal record (19%) and physical capabilities (13%) most-considered recruitment factors, youth believe

- Youth were asked, on an open-ended basis, what they consider to be some of the factors looked at by recruiters when reviewing an individual's application to become a police officer.
- **Health/fitness level** received the highest ranking (21%), followed by the presence of a **criminal record** (19%), **physical capabilities** (size/strength/reflexes, etc.) (13%) and **education/intelligence** (13%). Just over one in 10 mentioned **mental health/stability** (11%).
- **Personality/attitude** (7%) and **dedication/commitment** (4%) towards becoming a police officer were some of the least-mentioned recruitment factors.
- Nearly two in five (39%) of respondents did not provide a response.



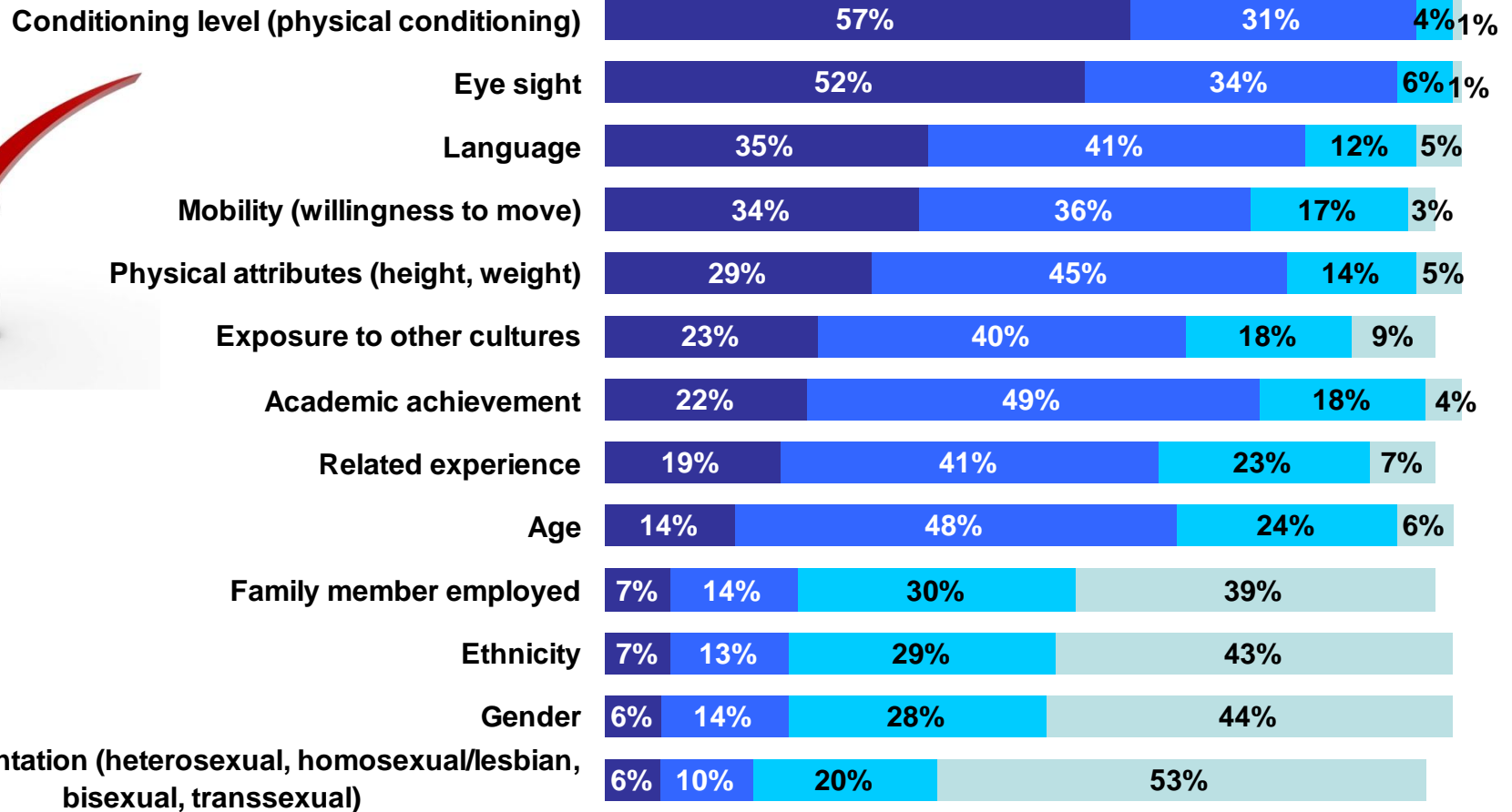
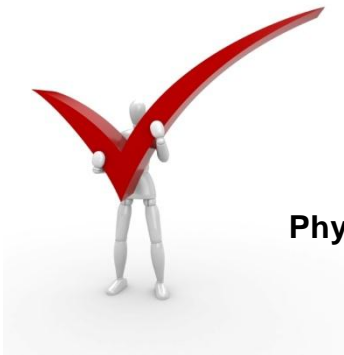
# Background/criminal record check and mental health/stability (7% each) *most important* recruitment criteria cited by youth



In 2009, the highest mentions were character/integrity and mental health/stability, both at 7%.

# Conditioning level (88%), eye sight (86%), language (76%) key to obtaining policing job; ethnicity and gender (20% each), sexual orientation (16%) least significant

■ Very important 
 ■ Somewhat important 
 ■ Not very important 
 ■ Not at all important





# Conditioning level maintains top ranking as most important factor in joining the police for youth (92% in 2009 to 88% in 2010)

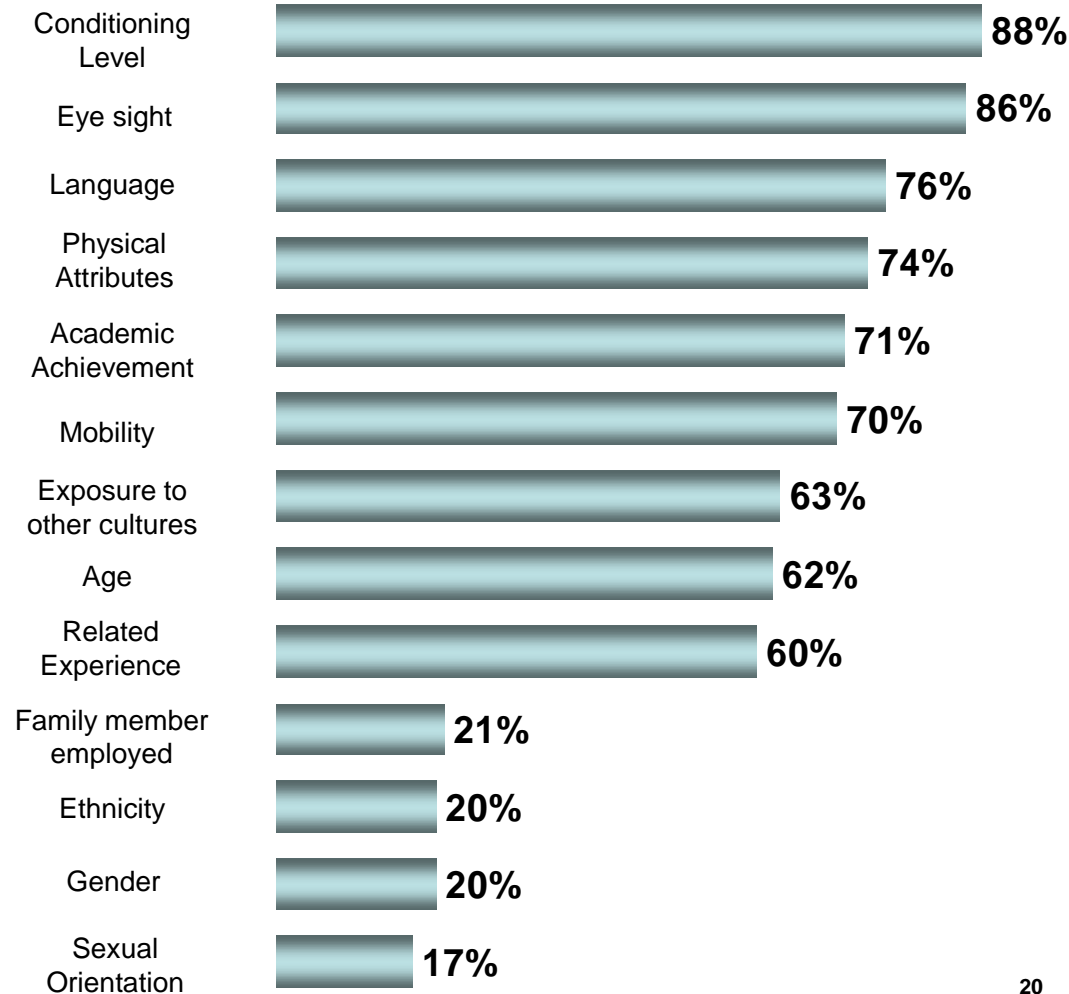
## 2009

- In 2009, **conditioning level** was mentioned by 92% of youth.
- **Eye sight** and **past behaviour** were the second-highest mentions, each at 89%.
- **Academic achievement** and **physical attributes**, at 76% and 75% respectively, were also popular choices.
- **Mobility** and **related experience** rounded out the most frequent mentions (70% and 69% each).
- Less than a quarter of youth believed that **gender** (20%), **ethnicity** (19%) or **sexual orientation** (14%) were important factors when it comes to obtaining a job as a police officer. These numbers varied little in the 2010 survey.

NB. Factors such as **exposure to other cultures**, **age**, and **having a family member employed** were not options in 2009, so there was no comparative data.

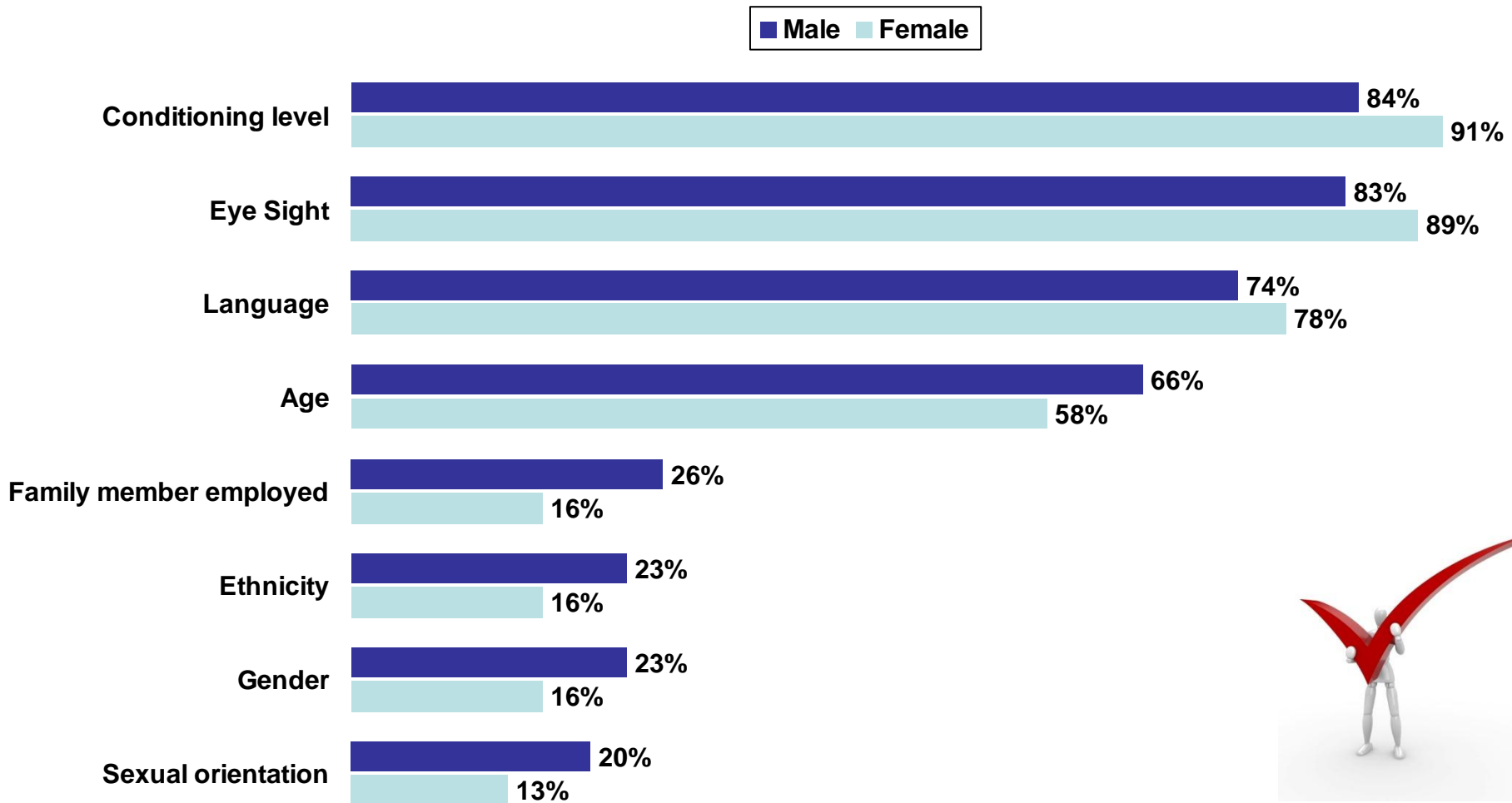
## 2010

■ Important



# Women more likely to choose conditioning level (91%), eye sight (89%), language (78%) as significant factors versus men; sexual orientation (13%) least important

## Those who statement felt very/somewhat important

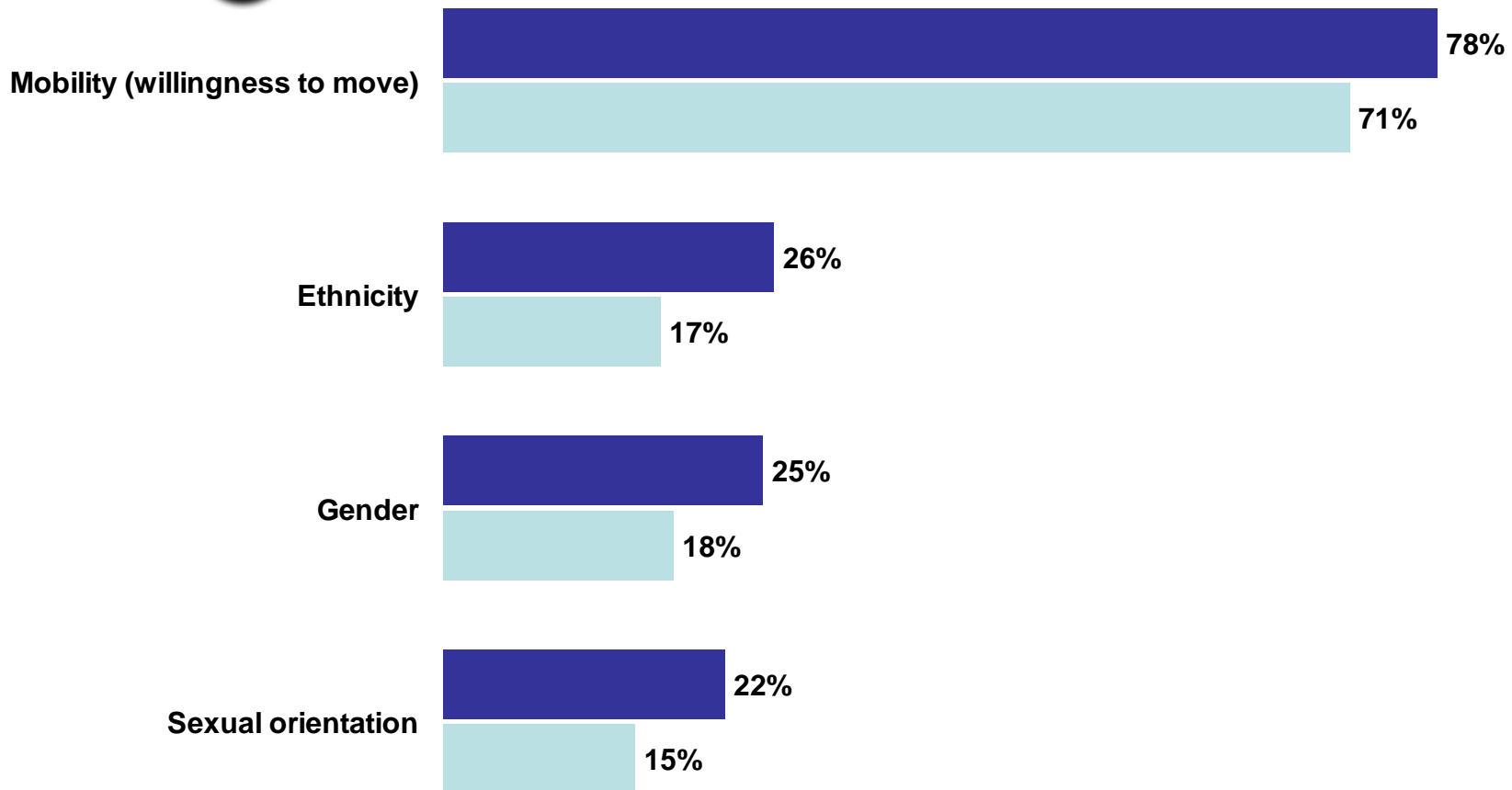


# Mobility (78%), ethnicity (26%), gender (25%) and sexual orientation (22%) all ranked *more* important in obtaining a job for youth who feel they “have what it takes” to join policing field

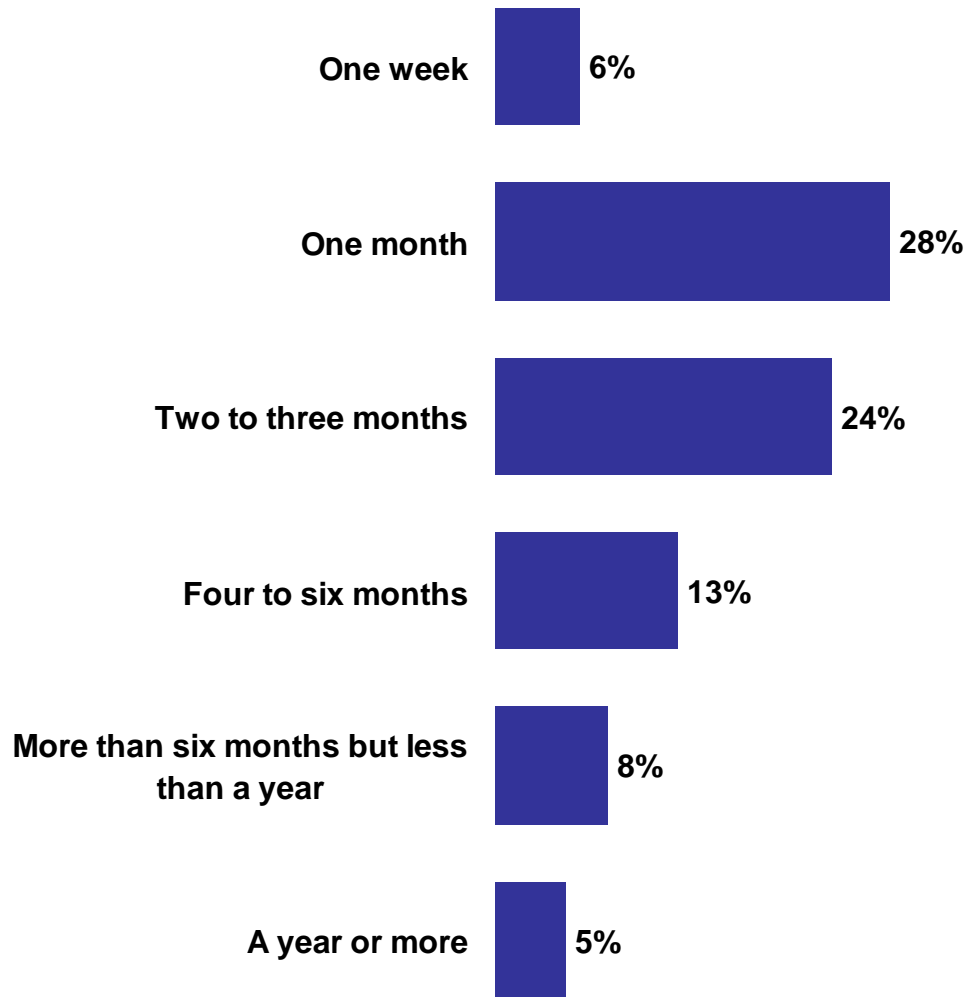
## Those who felt statement very/somewhat important



■ I have what it takes to become a police officer  
■ I do not have what it takes to become a police officer



# Youth most likely to say the hiring process should take no more than three months.



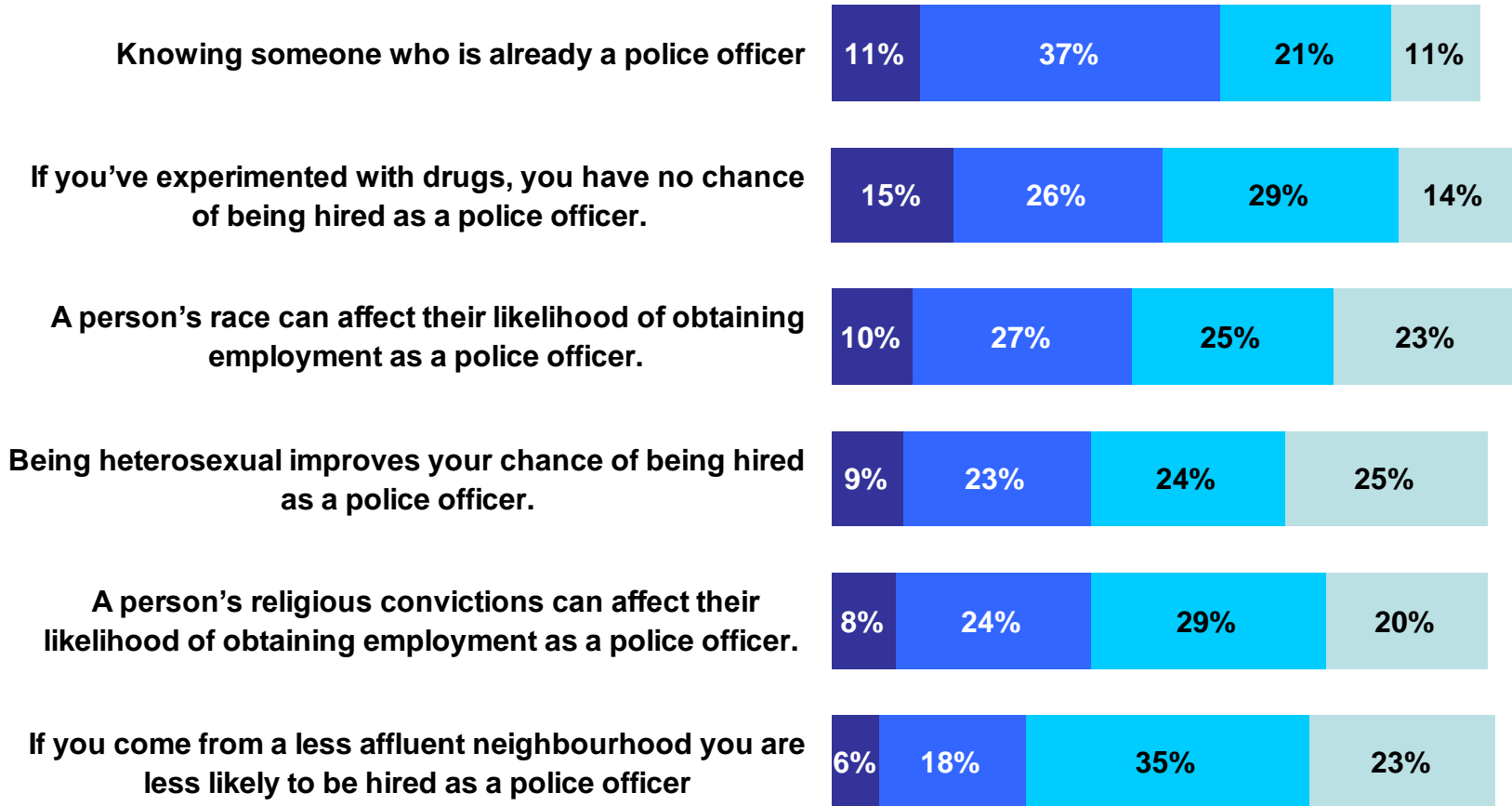
*NOTE: In 2009, using the same time scale, responses were as follows; 7%, 33%, 25%, 12%, 7%, and 3%, respectively.*



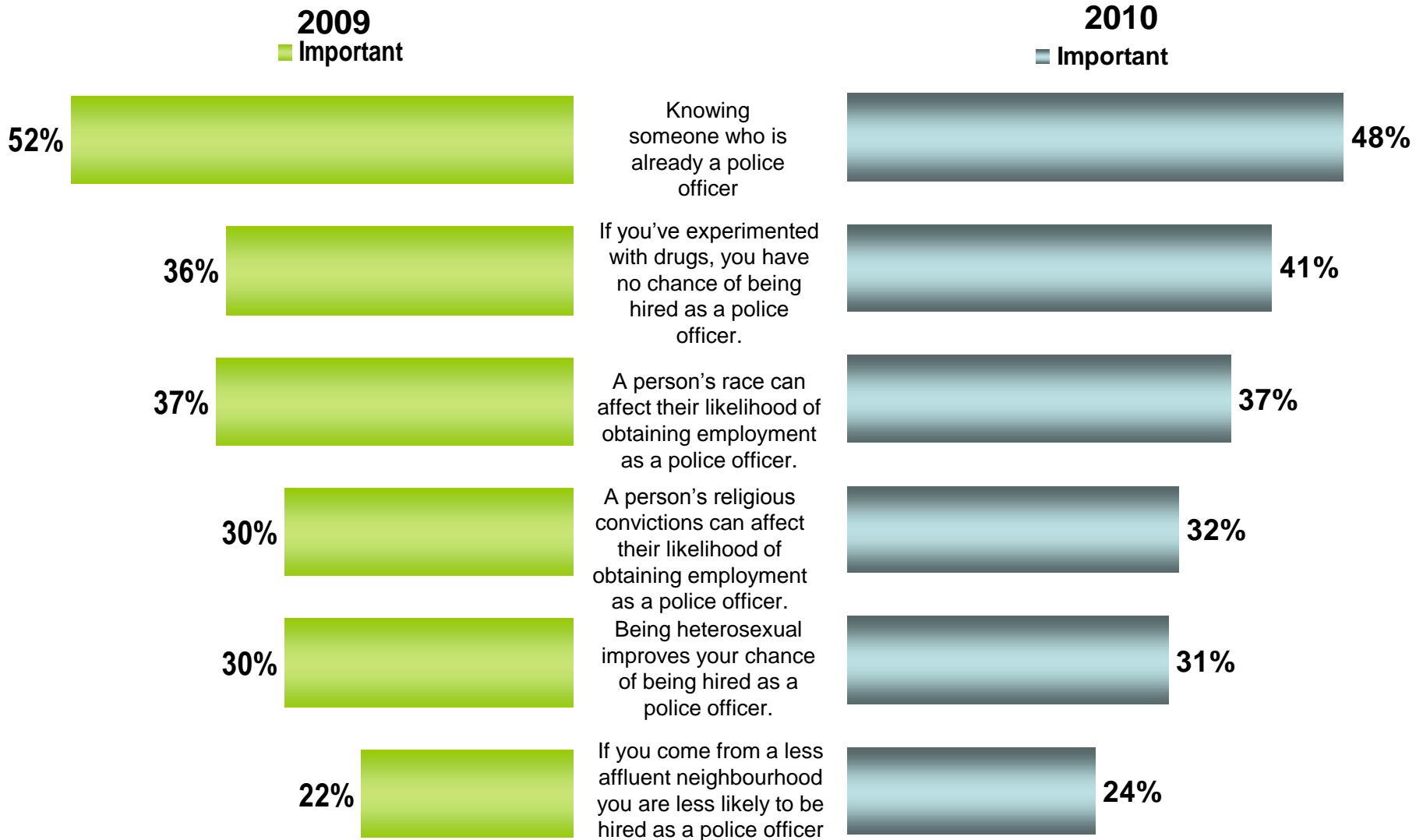


# Almost half of youth believe knowing a current police officer increases hiring chances (48%); coming from a lower-income neighbourhood, religion not considered hiring deterrents

■ Strongly agree 
 ■ Somewhat agree 
 ■ Somewhat disagree 
 ■ Strongly disagree



# Factors impacting on likelihood of being hired 2009 VS. 2010



# Visible minorities more likely to agree race (51%), religion (48%), economic background (36%) affects policing employment

## Those who strongly/somewhat agree

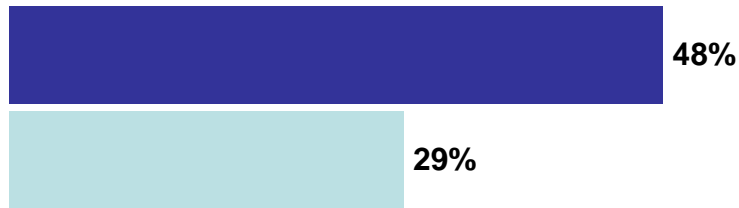


■ Visible minority   ■ Non visible minority

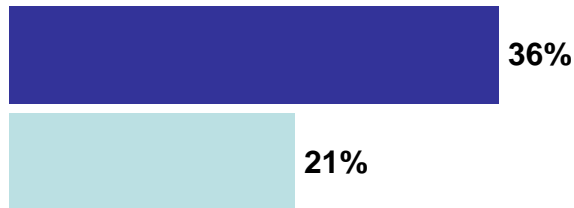
**A person's race can affect their likelihood of obtaining employment as a police officer.**



**A person's religious convictions can affect their likelihood of obtaining employment as a police officer.**



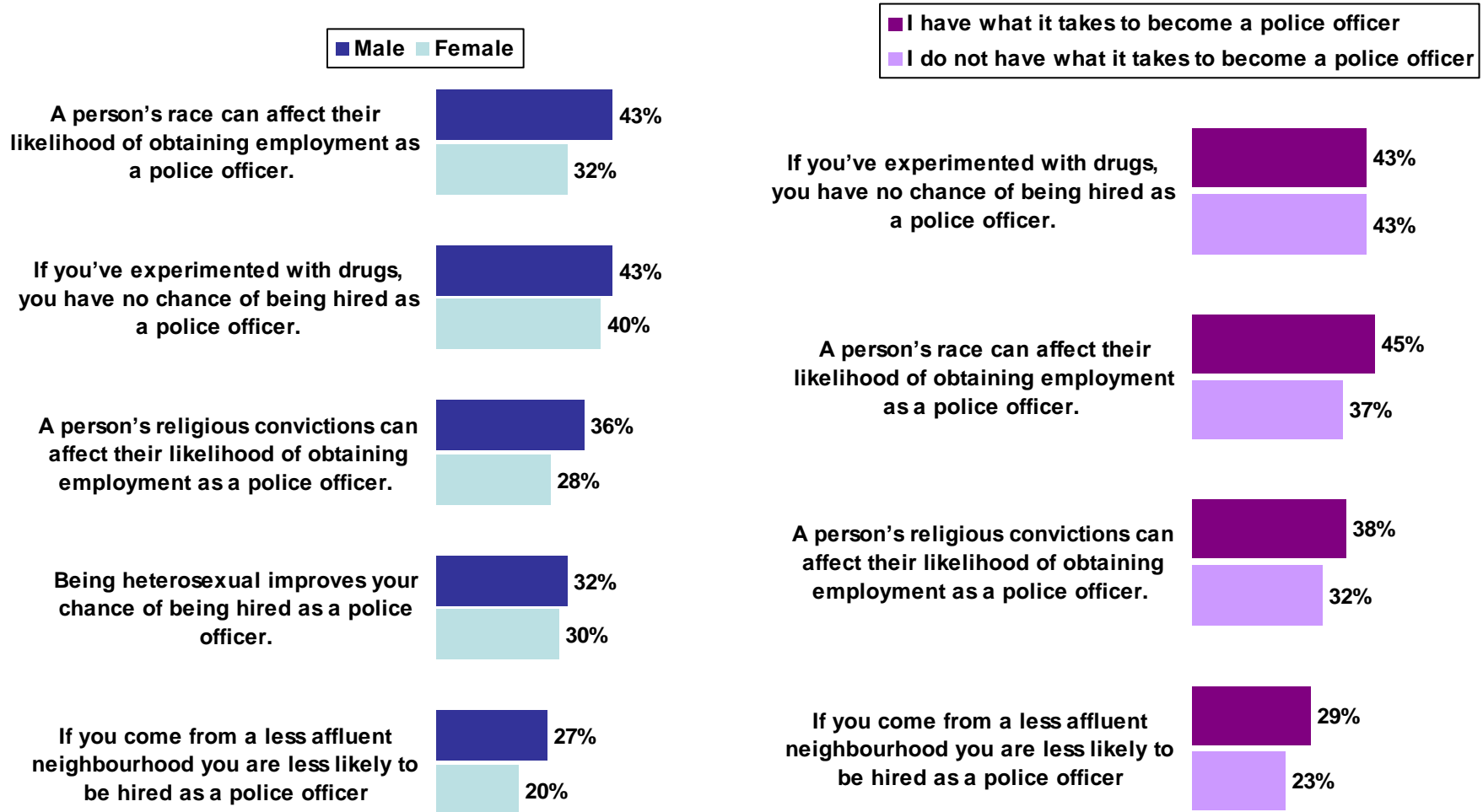
**If you come from a less affluent neighbourhood you are less likely to be hired as a police officer**





# Men more likely to feel race and drug use (43% each), religion (35%) help determine chances of policing career; women point to experimentation with drugs (40%) as most significant factor

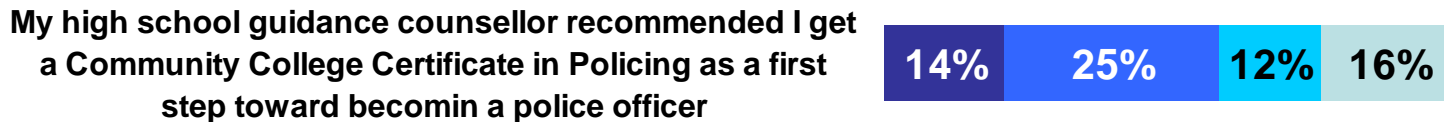
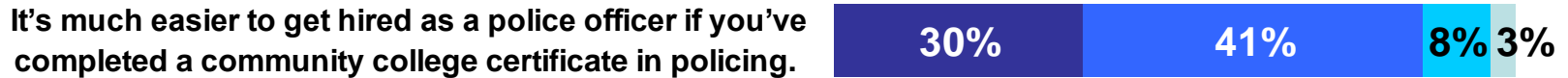
## Those who strongly/somewhat agree





# Three-quarters of youth categorize policing studies (71%), military training (68%) as helpful in seeking job; half of respondents (50%) also believe security guard experience useful

■ Strongly agree   ■ Somewhat agree   ■ Somewhat disagree   ■ Strongly disagree





# Fewer youth believe becoming police officer “much easier” with community college certificate (82% in 2009 versus 71% in 2010), military training (77% in 2009 versus 67% in 2010)

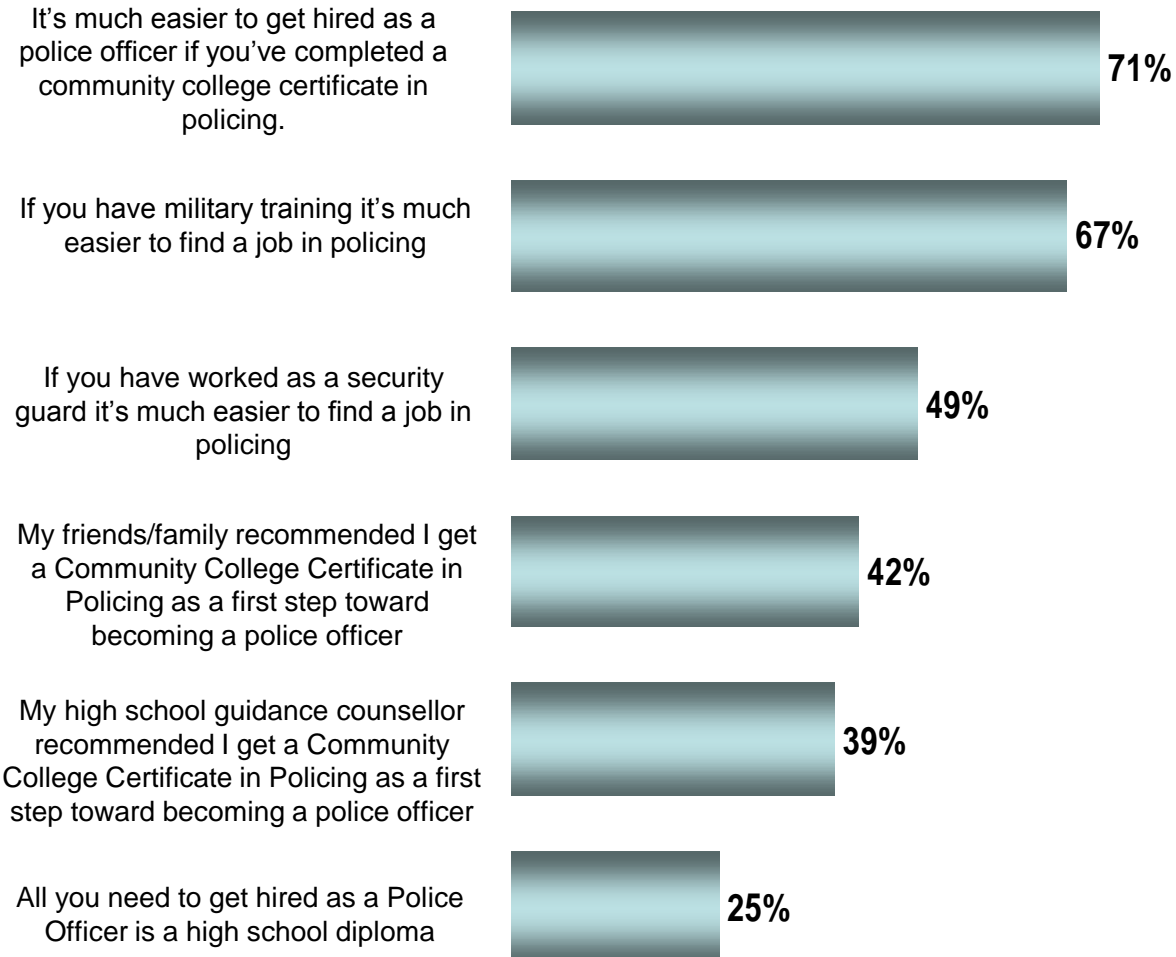
## 2009

- In 2009, 82% of youth felt having a community college certificate in policing made it easier to get hired as a police officer.
- More than three quarters (77%) of youth in 2009 felt having military training would make it easier to find a job in policing.
- In 2009, more than half (55%) of youth believed that it would be beneficial to have work experience as a security guard when pursuing a career in policing.

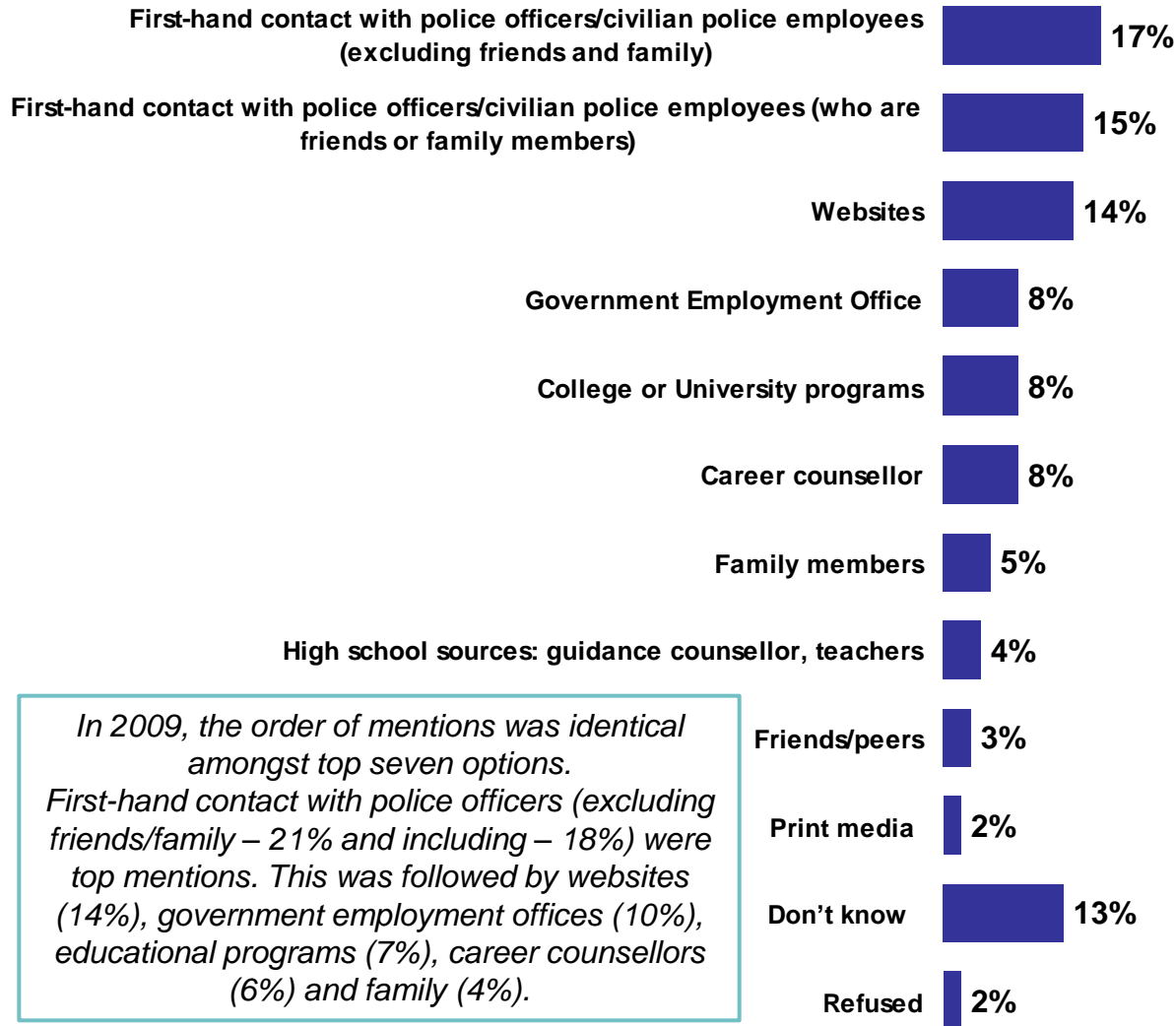
*NB. The final three statements in the 2010 survey were not asked in 2009, and have no comparative values.*

## 2010

■ Important



# First-hand contact with police officers and police employees (32%), websites (14%) most relied-on information sources for youth regarding hiring process



*In 2009, the order of mentions was identical amongst top seven options. First-hand contact with police officers (excluding friends/family – 21% and including – 18%) were top mentions. This was followed by websites (14%), government employment offices (10%), educational programs (7%), career counsellors (6%) and family (4%).*

