

12.16.2022

Whatcom County

Research Report

Justice Project Survey
Findings

Presented by



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Introduction

Background

Whatcom County is experiencing stress on its criminal legal system including facilities and services. In 2022, building upon previous efforts, the Whatcom County Council, Executive, Sheriff, and Prosecutor began a project to develop a needs assessment and established a Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) to guide its development. The Needs Assessment report aims to provide guidance on infrastructure, facilities, and services before, during, and after incarceration, including behavioral health, substance use disorder and re-entry services. The County wants to engage the public in this project and hear their feedback on elements of the criminal legal system in our community. Additionally, the SAC needs to hear and consider public feedback as it guides the development of the Needs Assessment Report. To accomplish this effort, The Vida Agency (TVA) was contracted in 2022 to develop a county-wide digital survey to gather feedback from Whatcom County community members.

Survey Methodology

Priority Audience

The goal was to gather feedback from all community members to represent the diverse voices in Whatcom County, so the survey provided a forum for all Whatcom County residents to share their feedback. Because previous justice project survey efforts did not capture significant feedback from non-white residents, TVA expanded their recruitment efforts, outlined below, to increase visibility of the survey opportunity among historically underserved communities.

Research Goals

Primary Goals

- Learn if Whatcom County communities are familiar with current legal system services and limitations, and what they believe those services and limitations mean for their community.
- Gather community priorities and recommendations for County justice system updates, including, but not limited to, services and facilities to fulfill the SAC Needs Assessment.
- Understand community priorities around rehabilitation versus incarceration.
- Gather community recommendations for service center locations.
- What more is needed to reduce incarcerations and recidivism in our community?

Secondary Goals

- Understand if the SAC's current visions, values, and goals align with the community's.
- Educate Whatcom County communities on current justice system services and limitations.
- How can the County rebuild community trust?

Survey Tactics

TVA developed one (1) digital survey (see *Appendix A*) through the Qualtrics platform to address our research goals. All survey questions were created by TVA and reviewed by Whatcom County staff. In addition, the survey was launched in English and Spanish because these are the two most common languages spoken in Whatcom County according to the [2021 American Community Survey data](#).

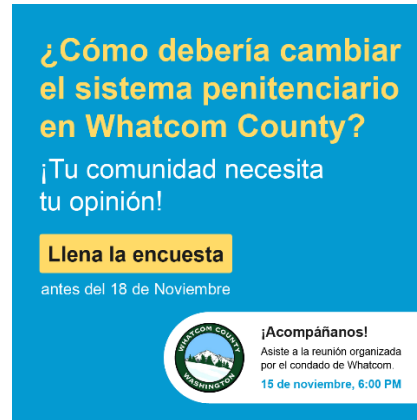
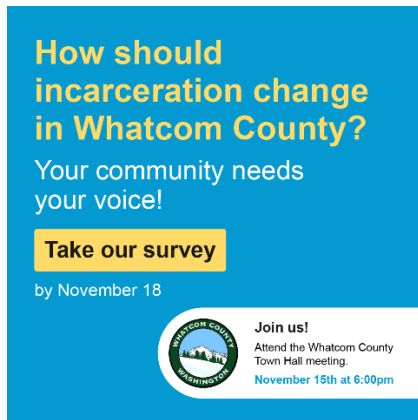
The intention was to keep the survey open for participation from October 24th through November 18th. However, because live engagements were still taking place after November 18th, TVA elected to keep the survey open through November 22nd. Overall, the survey aimed to gather responses from as many community members as possible. All participants had to indicate they were residents of Whatcom County to proceed with the survey.

Participant Recruitment Tactics

To recruit survey participants, TVA and Whatcom County utilized community-based organization (CBO) partnerships (Appendix B), media outlets, digital advertisements, a project landing page with a link to the survey, a survey recruitment flyer (Appendices C and D) with a QR code to the survey, a project informational sheet (Appendices E and F) with a QR code to the survey, and a press release with the link to the survey.

TVA inquired with twelve local CBOs that serve Whatcom County residents. This list was created from Whatcom County's suggestions and from TVA's personal relationships. Of the twelve CBO's TVA contacted, three organizations agreed to share the survey opportunity with the communities they serve. Each CBO was provided with a digital outreach toolkit that included toolkit instructions, the survey recruitment flyer, informational sheet, Instagram and Facebook advertisements with suggested post copy, the project landing page link, and e-mail templates. CBO partners were not required to report back to TVA how they used the toolkit or how many participants they recruited. Whatcom County staff conducted additional survey recruitment efforts including delivering posters to 49 locations across the county and sending outreach toolkits to over 80 CBOs and partner agencies.

TVA also launched a comprehensive digital marketing campaign using English and Spanish advertisements calling readers to take the survey. All advertisements through digital and media outlets were live from October 24th – November 18th.



Social media advertisements were launched on Facebook and Instagram and digital advertisements were geotargeted to both the Spanish-speaking and Native populations throughout Whatcom County. Overall, these ads accumulated well over one million impressions and were seen multiple times by a large audience. TVA also launched advertisements in three local and multicultural media outlets: The Bellingham Herald, The Front, and Cascadia Daily News.

Finally, participants from TVA’s live engagement sessions were provided with survey recruitment flyers and informational sheets to take home with them. They were encouraged to share the survey opportunity with their own communities.

Survey Performance

Recruitment Performance

Display and social media advertisements yielded 1,303,331 impressions with 1,996 total clicks and an average click-through-rate (CTR) of 0.38%. Impressions are the total number of exposures to the content that we ran. Given that Whatcom County's population is under 250,000, this means that a considerable amount of people were able to view the ads multiple times. Additionally, with a CTR of 0.38% – which is well above the industry benchmark of 0.20% – we would consider this campaign a success. Our call-to-action generated significant interest and engagement within the population. To note, English social media ads were flagged by Meta as overtly political, so we could not launch them through our account, as we are not registered as a political entity. Spanish ads were not flagged by Meta and were therefore able to run.

Digital display ads via large mainstream and hyper-local media outlets yielded 340,026 impressions with 2,210 clicks and an average click-through-rate (CTR) of .62%. For small, hyper local outlets such as Cascadia Daily News and The Front a CTR of 0.17% is considered strong. The average CTR for digital display ads via the Bellingham Herald is 0.21%. The overall average CTR of 0.62% reveals strong engagement from the community for the campaign.

Exhibit 1: Display and Social Ad Performance

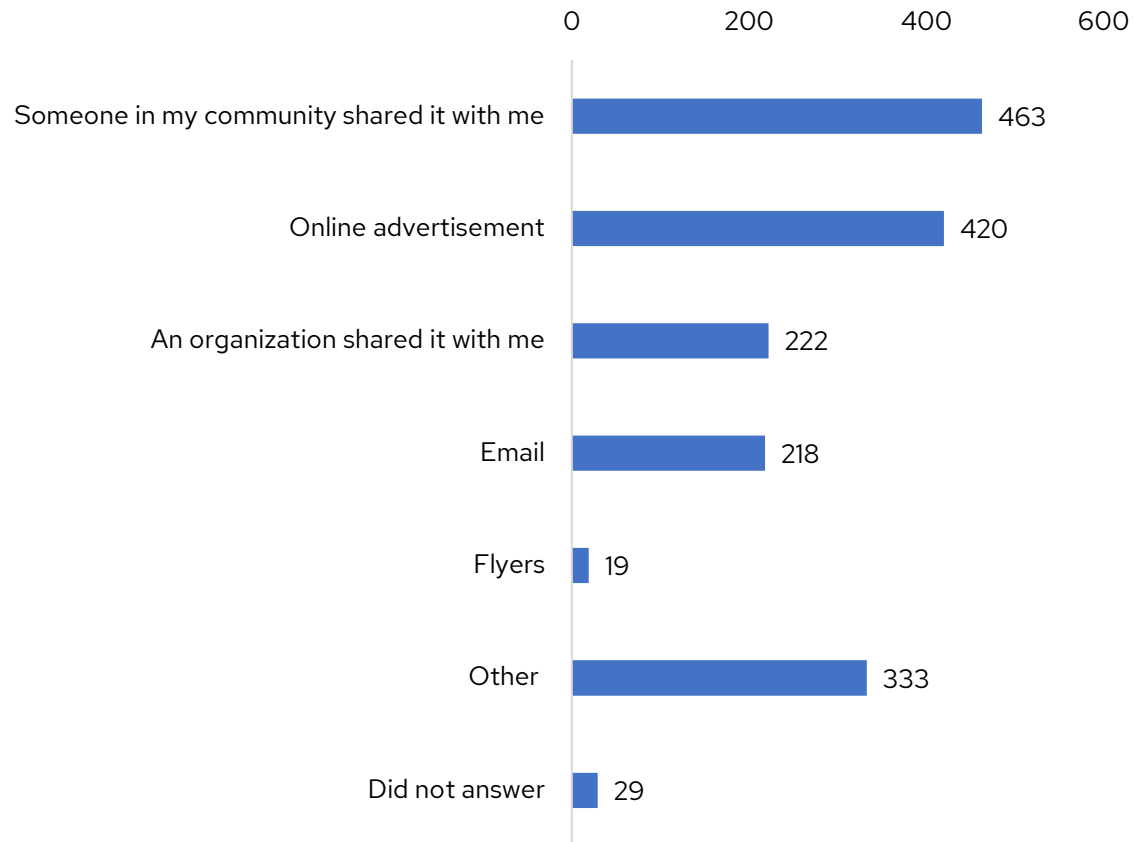
Ad Type	Impressions	Clicks	CTR
Display (English)	144,175	434	0.30%
Display (Spanish)	1,029,158	823	0.08%
Social (Spanish)	129,998	739	0.75%
Total	1,303,331	1,996	0.38%

Exhibit 2: Local Media Ad Performance

Media Outlet	Language	Estimated Reach	Clicks	CTR
The Bellingham Herald	English	209,426	2,079	0.99%
Cascadia Daily News	English	81,600	14	0.02%
The Front	English	49,000	27	0.06%
Total		340,026	2,120	0.62%

As demonstrated in Exhibit 3, of those who reported their survey discovery method, most participants (52%) found the survey through an online advertisement or through someone in their community sharing it with them. Only 1% of participants (19) found the survey through a flyer.

Exhibit 3: Survey Discovery Method by Respondents



For the 333 respondents that selected "Other", 326 provided a write-in response:

- 167 respondents discovered the survey on social media. The top platforms are:
 - Facebook – 98 respondents
 - Reddit – 28 respondents
 - Nextdoor – 24 respondents
- 128 discovered the survey through a news outlet. The top outlets are:
 - Cascadia Daily – 51 respondents
 - KGMI Radio – 33 respondents
 - Cascadia Weekly – 7 respondents
- 13 found the survey through someone they know or an organization they are a part of.
- 9 found the survey by chance.
- 4 received text messages about the survey
- The remaining 5 respondents didn't remember or did not provide a clear answer.

Survey Completion Report

A total of 2,341 responses were collected through the survey. The 2,341 results were then quality checked using:

- Google's reCAPTCHA technology
- Imperium's RelevantID®
- Geo-location through GeoIP

Responses flagged by these services as potential bots, fraud, or duplicates were removed from the survey analysis. *Incomplete surveys were also removed from analysis.*

Finally, a total of 1,704 valid responses from individuals across Whatcom County remained. This report and related analysis use exclusively the responses of these 1,704 respondents.

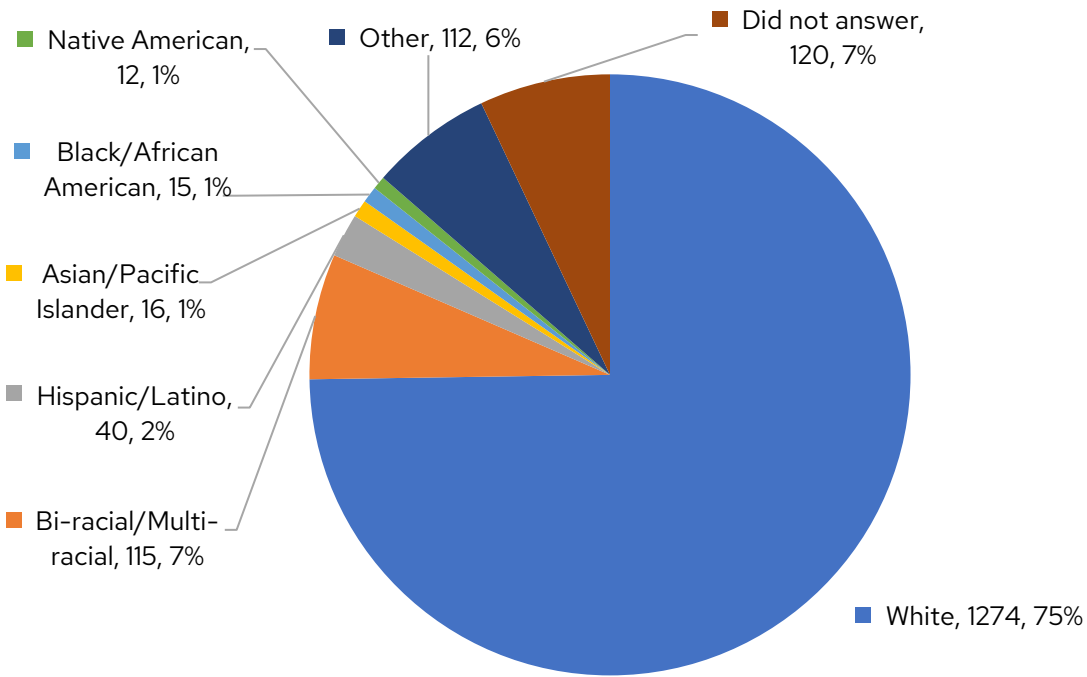
Respondent Demographics

The following sections and charts exhibit self-reported demographic information of the 1,704 respondents.

Respondent Race and Ethnicity

Overall, 75% (1274) of respondents identify as white only, compared to 78% of Whatcom County residents (US Census 2020).

Exhibit 4: Race/Ethnicity of Respondents



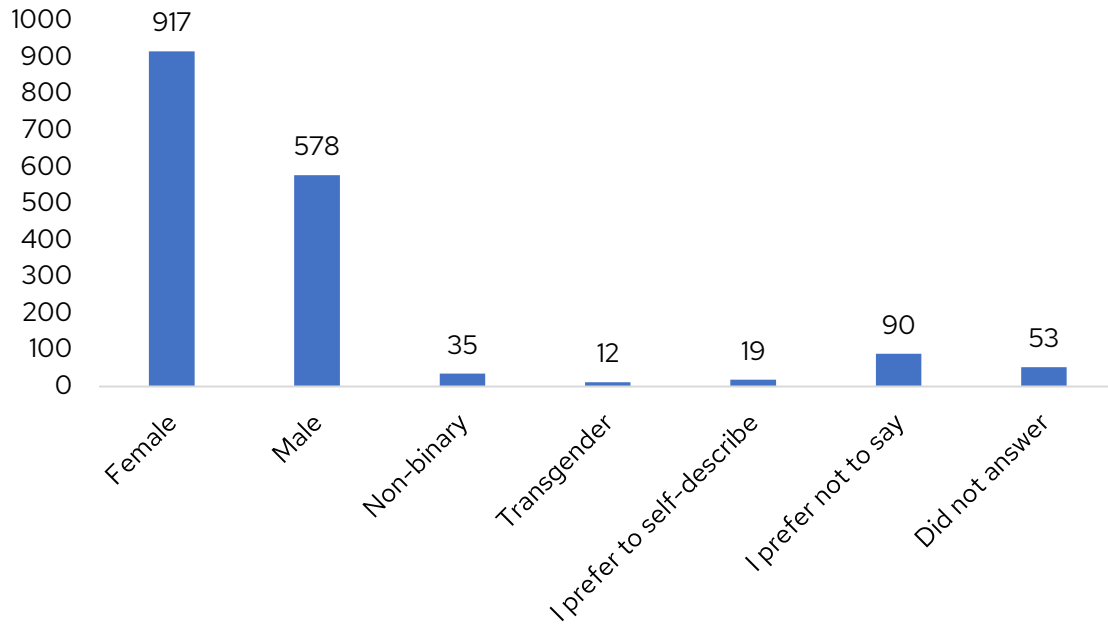
Of the 112 that chose "Other", 91 shared a writing in response:

- No Answer, American, or Human – 56 respondents
- European decent - 16 respondents
- Mixed - 7 respondents
- Middle Eastern - 6 respondents
- Jewish - 4 respondents
- First Nation - 1 respondents
- Frisian -1 respondents

Respondent Gender

The survey sample is overrepresented by female respondents, over half (54%) of respondents self-identified as female. Only 34% of respondents self-identified as male.

Exhibit 5: Gender of Respondents

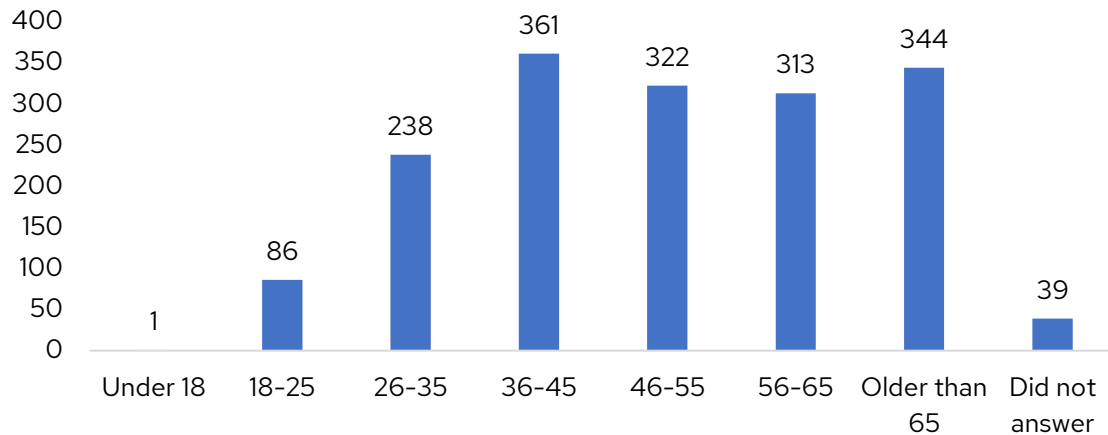


Among those self-describing, 1 identified as queer, while the remaining responses were unclear as to the gender they identify as.

Respondent Age

Overall, the survey representation leans towards the middle-aged population, as only 19% (325) of respondents are 35 or younger, and 20% are older than 65.

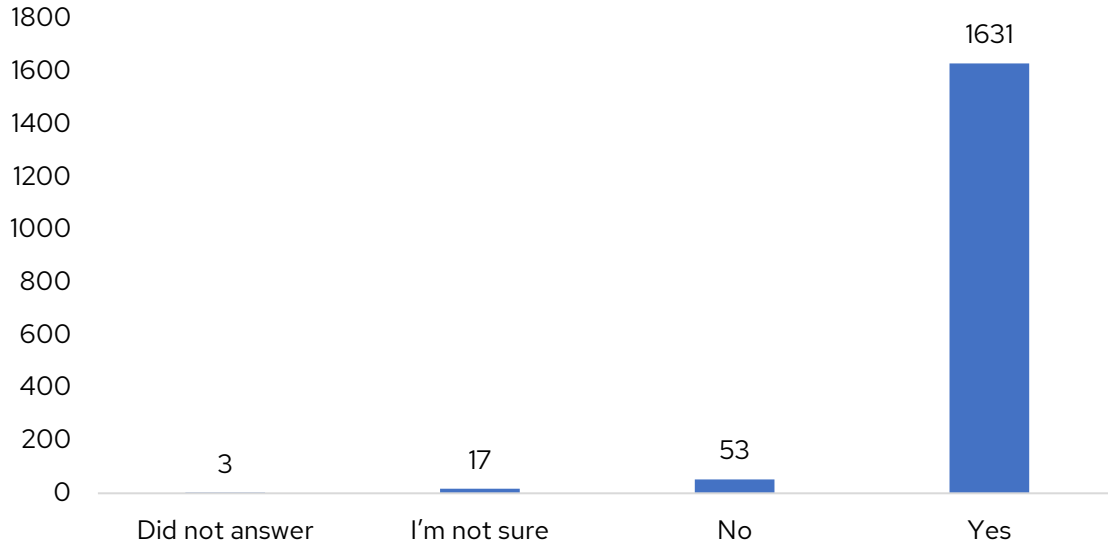
Exhibit 6: Age of Respondents



Respondent Voter Registration

96% (1631) of respondents are registered voters.

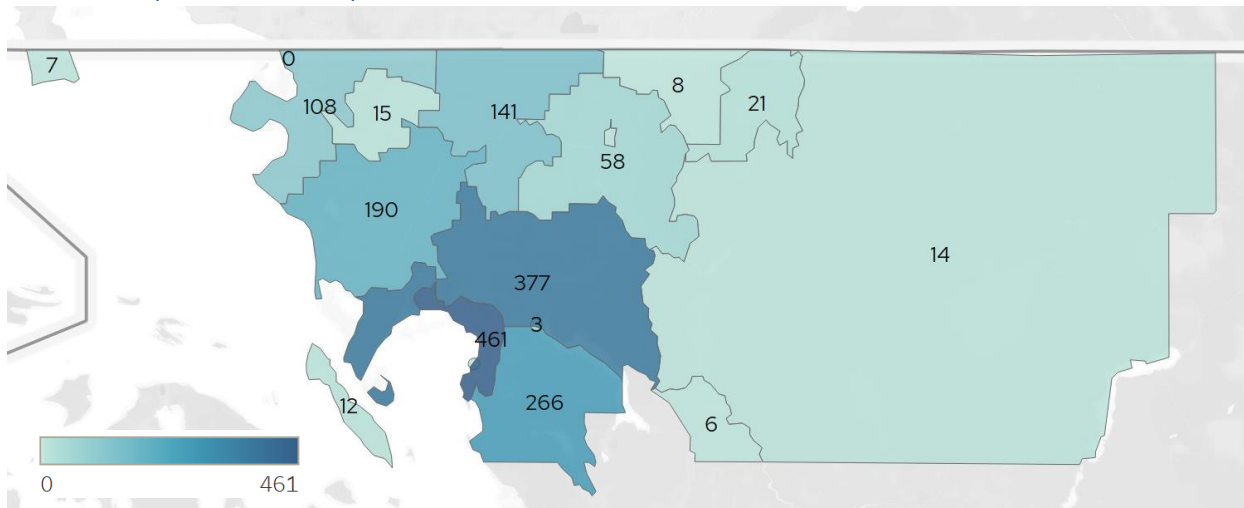
Exhibit 7: Voter Registration Status of Respondents



Respondent Geography

The survey gathered responses from all across Whatcom County, with the majority coming from Bellingham and surrounding areas.

Exhibit 8: Zip Codes of Respondents



Respondents represented the following zip codes:

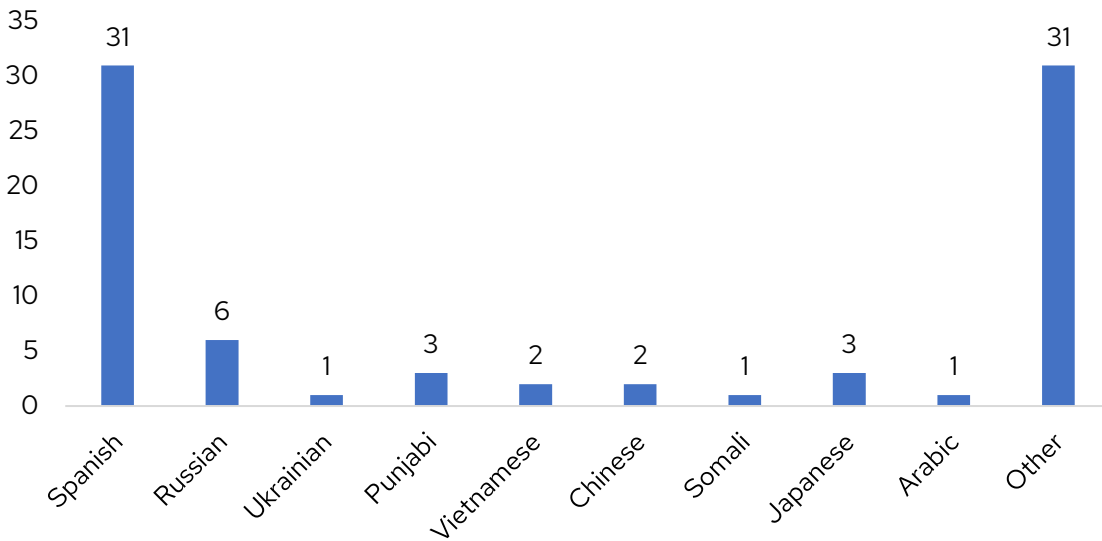
- 98220 – 6 respondents
- 98225 – 461 respondents

- 98226 – 377 respondents
- 98227 – 3 respondents
- 98228 – 3 respondents
- 98229 – 266 respondents
- 98230 – 108 respondents
- 98240 – 15 respondents
- 98244 – 14 respondents
- 98247 – 58 respondents
- 98248 – 190 respondents
- 98262 – 12 respondents
- 98264 – 141 respondents
- 98266 – 21 respondents
- 98276 – 14 respondents
- 98281 – 7 respondents
- 98295 – 8 respondents

Respondent Languages

1625 (95%) respondents spoke primarily English, among the 81 that spoke another language, Spanish is the most common language.

Exhibit 9: Other Languages Spoken by Respondents



Of respondents that selected “Other”, their responses were:

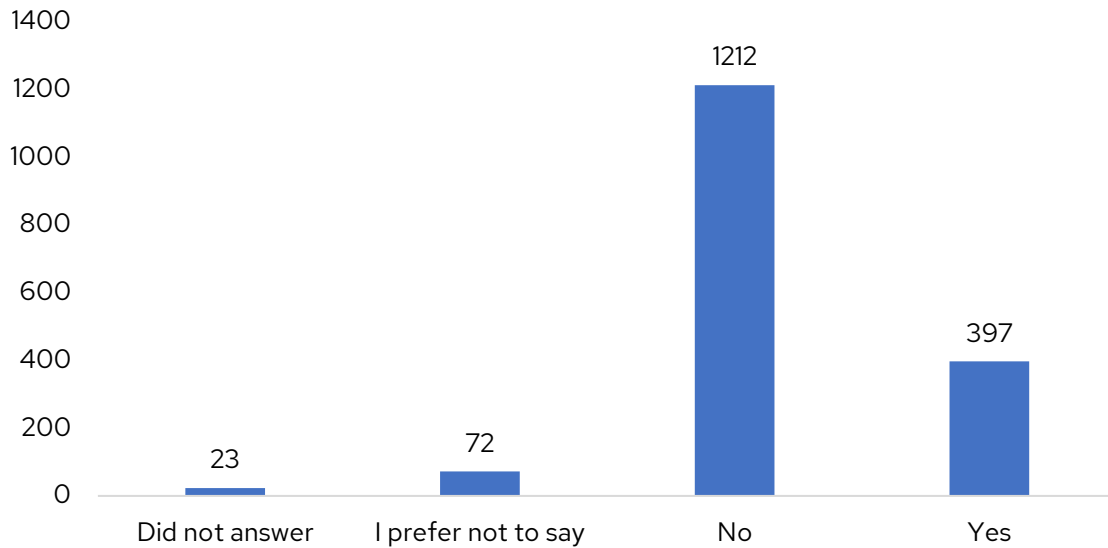
- French - 3 respondents
- Tagalog - 3 respondents
- German - 2 respondents
- American Sign Language - 2 respondents
- Salish - 1 respondents

- Q'anjob'al - 1 respondents
- Farsi - 1 respondents
- Norwegian - 1 respondents
- Bengali - 1 respondents
- Chinese Dialect - 1 respondents
- Tamil - 1 respondents
- Frisian - 1 respondents
- The remaining did not provide an answer.

Respondents Who Have Been, or Have Family Members Who Have Been, Incarcerated in Whatcom County

The majority (1212, 71%) of respondents have not been, or didn't have family members who have been, incarcerated in Whatcom County.

Exhibit 10: Number of Respondents Who Have Been, or Have Family Members Who Have Been, Incarcerated in Whatcom County



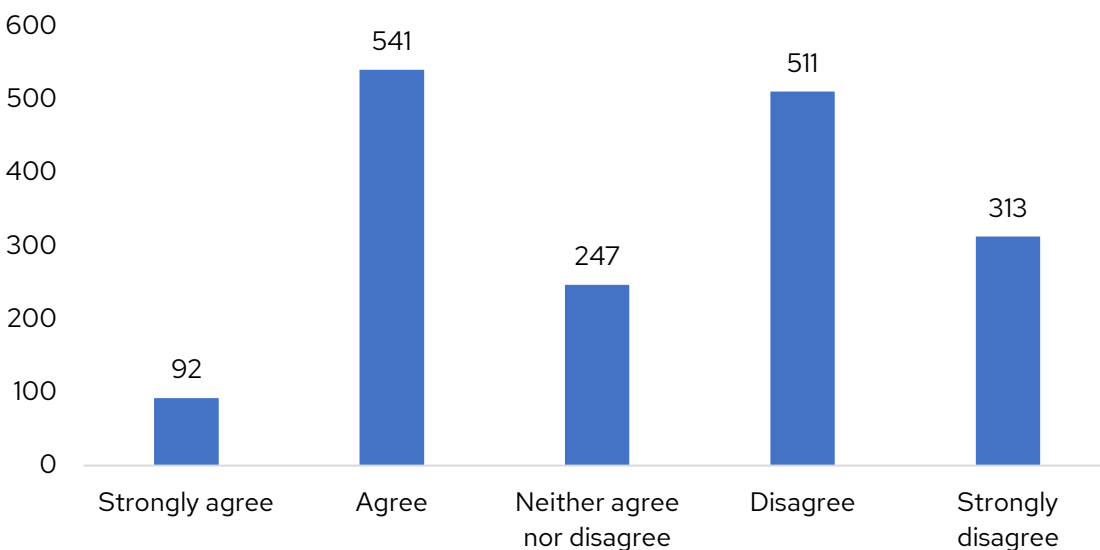
Respondent Psychographics

The following sections and exhibits explore the psychographics of the 1,704 survey respondents, including their attitude towards and familiarity with the criminal legal system in Whatcom County, and how safe they feel in their community.

Safety

Respondents were asked how much they agreed with the statement **"I feel safe in my community."** We can see two groups from the data below. 37% (633) of respondents agree or strongly agree that they feel safe in their community compared to 48% (824) who disagree or strongly disagree that they feel safe in their community. Only 14% (247) of respondents don't have an opinion on this issue.

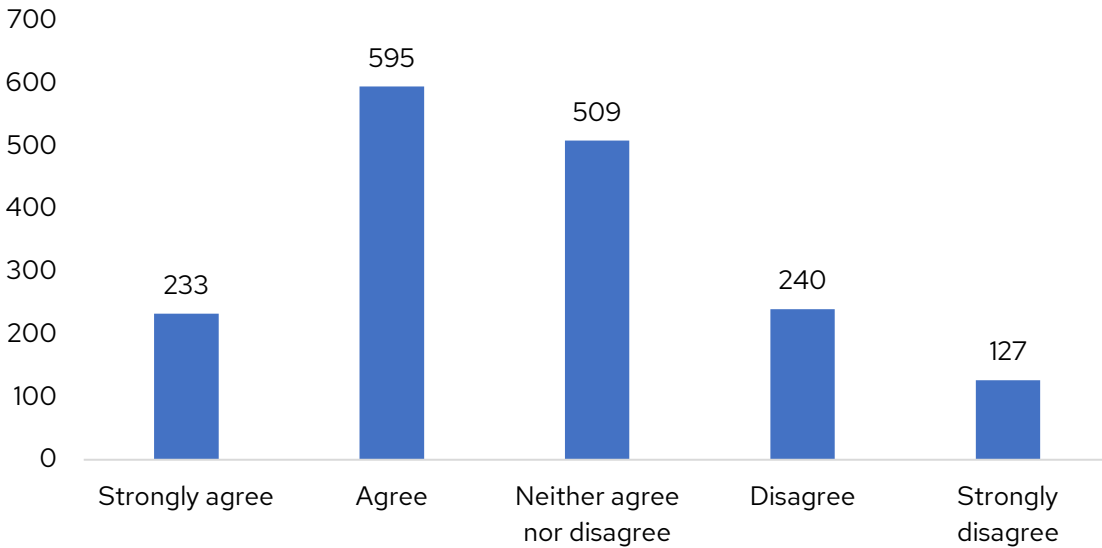
Exhibit 11: How Respondents Agree with the Statement "I feel safe in my community."



Fairness

When asked if they agreed with the statement, **"I trust that I will be treated fairly by Whatcom County's criminal legal system,"** around half (828, 49%) of respondents agree or strongly agree that they will be treated fairly, while 22% (367) disagree or strongly disagree. The remaining 30% (509) neither agree nor disagree with the statement.

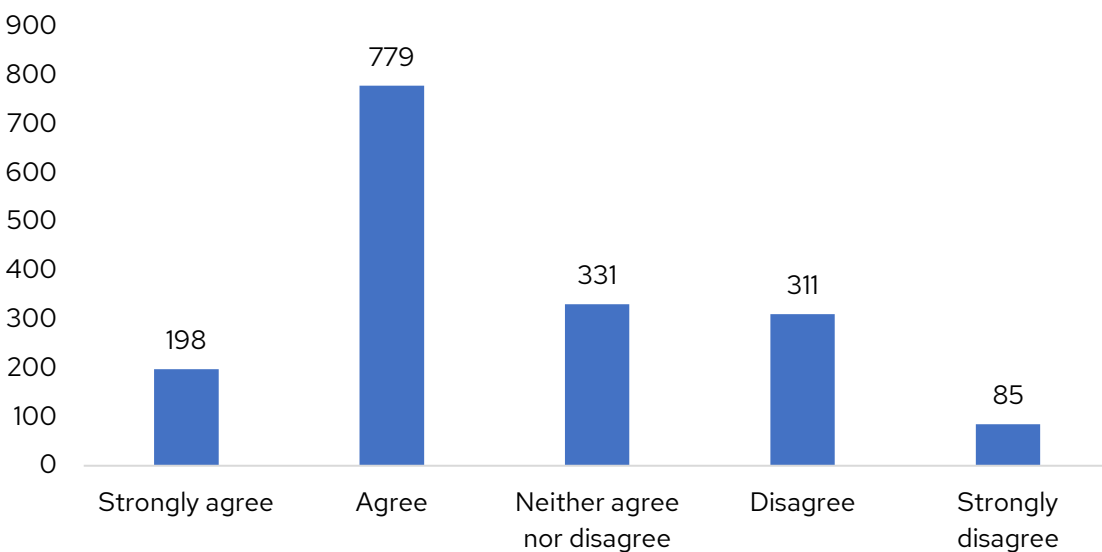
Exhibit 12: How Respondents Agree with the Statement "I trust that I will be treated fairly by Whatcom County's criminal legal system."



Familiarity with Current Services

The majority of respondents (57%, 977) think they are familiar with some of the services that the Whatcom County criminal legal system provides. While 23% (396) disagree or strongly disagree. 19% (331) neither agree nor disagree with the statement.

Exhibit 13: How Respondents Agree with the Statement "I am familiar with some of the services that the Whatcom County criminal legal system provides."



Findings

Analysis Methodology

The analysis of the survey data uses a combination of respondent demographic and psychographic information. We will look at all respondent segments listed below when analyzing the data to paint a clear picture of the people and mindset behind each opinion.

The analysis sections below will only highlight data and findings that are significant. If a segment is not mentioned in the analysis, it means it has very little or no significance regarding a certain opinion or topic. The sample of respondents were self-selected and therefore the results are not statistically significant or representative of Whatcom County as a whole. However, the findings are important and helpful to broaden the discussion and feedback on the Justice Project.

The demographic and psychographic segmentation will be as follows:

Respondent Race and Ethnicity

- White-only identifying respondents (n=1274)
- BIPOC respondents (n=430)

Due to the limited number of minority/BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) respondents, in the analysis all non-white identifying respondents (including those that selected "Other" or "None") are categorized into one segment. It is important to recognize that BIPOC respondents represent a variety of views and opinions, so this analysis only serves as a guide.

Respondent Gender

- Male identifying respondents (n=578)
- Female identifying respondents (n=917)

The sample size for other gender identification is too small for analysis. This segmentation is primarily to see if the overrepresentation of female respondents had impacted or skewed our results.

Respondent Age

- Respondents 18-25 (n=86)
- Respondents 26-35 (n=238)

- Respondents 36-45 (n=361)
- Respondents 46-55 (n=322)
- Respondents 56-65 (n=313)
- Respondents older than 65 (n=344)

Respondent Voter Registration

Because 96% of all respondents are registered to vote, the report and analysis will work under the assumption that the results are representative of registered voters in Whatcom County.

Respondents Who Have Been, or Have Family Members Who Have Been, Incarcerated in Whatcom County

- Respondents that have been, or have family members who have been incarcerated (n=397)
 - Shortened to *"Familiar with Incarceration"* in the analysis.
- Respondents that have not been, and have no family members who have been incarcerated (n=1212)
 - Shortened to *"Not Familiar with Incarceration"* in the analysis.

Safety

- Respondents that agree or strongly agree that they feel safe in their community (n=633)
 - Shortened to *"Feels Safe"* in the analysis.
- Respondents that disagree or strongly disagree that they feel safe in their community (n=824)
 - Shortened to *"Doesn't Feel Safe"* in the analysis.

Fairness

- Respondents that agree or strongly agree they will be treated fairly by Whatcom County's criminal legal system (n=828)
 - Shortened to *"Will be Treated Fairly"* in the analysis.
- Respondents that disagree or strongly disagree that they will be treated fairly by Whatcom County's criminal legal system (n=367)
 - Shortened to *"Won't be Treated Fairly"* in the analysis.

Familiarity with Current Services

- Respondents that agree or strongly agree that they are familiar with some of the services that the Whatcom County criminal legal system provides (n=977)
 - Shortened to *"Familiar with Services"* in the analysis.

- Respondents that disagree or strongly disagree that they are familiar with some of the services that the Whatcom County criminal legal system provides (n=396)
 - Shortened to “Not *Familiar with Services*” in the analysis.

Key Respondent Insights

Community members agree change is necessary, but the vision for the changes and investments proposed by the SAC is polarizing.

- 92% of respondents believe improvements are needed in Whatcom County’s criminal legal system.
- 62% of respondents say it closely matches or is similar to their vision.
- 38% say they have a little or completely different vision for the criminal legal system.
- All respondents prioritize the following values:
 - Protecting public health and safety
 - Using evidence-based decision making
 - Evaluating if current programs, interventions, and processes are working as intended

Regardless of demographics or psychographics, respondents prioritize investing in mental health and substance abuse services.

- All respondents prioritize investing in incarceration prevention community services and investing in community services that provide substance abuse and mental health support.
- Most support some investment in jail facilities.
- When it comes to specific jail improvements, respondents prioritize:
 - Ensuring there are enough beds for every inmate,
 - Space and resources to support those with serious mental or physical conditions
 - Updated equipment and building infrastructure that meets safety codes
- The majority of respondents prioritize the following behavioral health improvements:
 - Services to help connect those leaving jail to mental health and substance use disorder treatment
 - In-jail substance use disorder and mental health counseling services
 - Community-based services for substance abuse and mental health disorders

In terms of psychographics, respondents’ views and opinions on the SAC vision, values, and future investments are most influenced by their perception of safety in their community and whether they believe they will be treated fairly by the criminal legal system in Whatcom County.

- The 48% of respondents who **do not feel safe** in their communities prioritize law enforcement and incarceration.
 - 58% do not believe the SAC vision statement matches their own vision.
 - They are 29% more likely to prioritize jail facility investments.
 - They are 43% more likely to prioritize law enforcement investments.
 - 59% consider incarceration to be extremely important, compared to 29% that consider rehabilitation to be extremely important.
- The 37% of respondents who **do feel safe** in their communities prioritize community services, rehabilitation, re-entry, and incarceration prevention.
 - 83% believe the SAC vision statement matches their own vision.
 - They are 39% more likely to prioritize actively addressing inequities and discrimination in the legal system
 - They are 29% more likely to prioritize incarceration prevention community services.
 - They are 31% more likely to prioritize re-entry services.
 - 54% consider rehabilitation to be extremely important, compared to 21% that consider incarceration extremely important.
- The 22% of respondents who believe they **will not be treated fairly** by the criminal legal system are less likely to prioritize more investment in the criminal legal system, law enforcement, and jail facilities.
 - They are 29% more likely to prioritize actively addressing inequities and discrimination in the legal system
 - They are 12% more likely to prioritize incarceration prevention community services.
 - They are 16% more likely to prioritize re-entry services.
 - 55% consider rehabilitation to be extremely important, compared to 28% that consider incarceration extremely important.
- The 49% of respondents who believe they **will be treated fairly** by the criminal legal system prioritize more law enforcement and jail facility investments.
 - They are 34% more likely to prioritize jail facility investments.
 - They are 30% more likely to prioritize law enforcement investments.
 - 51% consider incarceration to be extremely important, compared to 33% that consider rehabilitation extremely important.

In terms of demographics, respondents' views and opinions on the SAC vision, values, and future investments are most influenced by their age and ethnicity.

- The 25% of respondents who **self-identified as non-white** prioritize law enforcement and incarceration.
 - 56% do not believe the SAC vision statement matches their own vision.
 - They are 9% more likely to prioritize law enforcement investments.

- 56% consider incarceration to be extremely important, compared to 31% that consider rehabilitation to be extremely important.
 - They are also 14% more likely to report feeling unsafe in their communities.
- Of the 75% of respondents that **self-identified as white** their opinions generally match that of the survey average.
- The 19% of respondents who **self-reports as 35 or younger** are less likely to prioritize more investment in the criminal legal system, law enforcement, and jail facilities.
 - 72% believe the SAC vision statement matches their own vision.
 - They are 10% more likely to prioritize actively addressing inequities and discrimination in the legal system
 - They are 18% less likely to prioritize law enforcement investments.
 - They are 9% less likely to prioritize jail facility investments.
 - 52% consider rehabilitation to be extremely important, compared to 29% that consider incarceration extremely important.
 - They are 10% less likely to report feeling unsafe, but only 5% more likely to agree or strongly agree to feeling safe in their community.
 - They are 33% more likely to believe they will not be treated fairly by the criminal legal system.
- The 57% of respondents who **self-reports as 45 or older** slightly prioritize law enforcement and jail facility investments.
 - They are 7% more likely to prioritize law enforcement investments.
 - 44% consider incarceration to be extremely important, compared to 37% that consider rehabilitation extremely important.
 - Respondents between 46 and 65 are 12% more likely to feel unsafe in their communities. However, respondents 65 and older are 11% more likely to feel safe in their community.
 - Respondents 46 and older are 19% more likely to believe they will be treated fairly by the criminal legal system.

Vision and Values

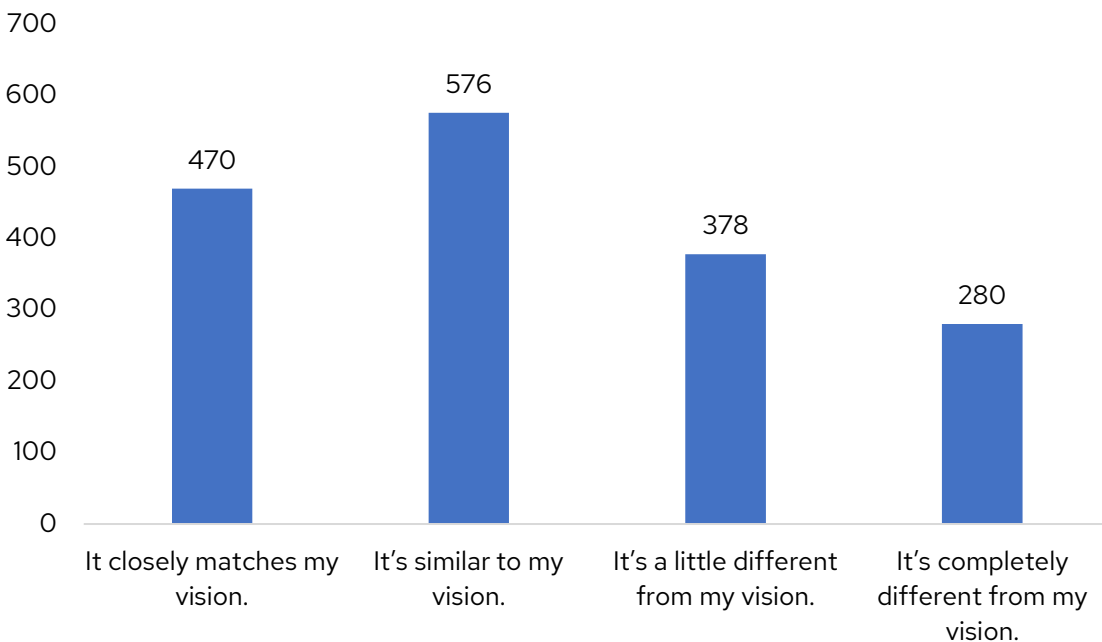
SAC Vision vs. Community Vision

The following vision statement was developed by the SAC and shared with survey respondents for feedback:

“Whatcom County is a model for community safety, health, and justice by reducing the need for incarceration through early intervention and long-term investments in people and programs that support prevention, rehabilitation, and accountability in the community and within the criminal legal system.”

The survey explores how closely this vision matches the respondents’ visions for the criminal legal system. Overall, 62% of respondents had a positive reaction to the statement; 28% (470) of respondents say it closely matches their vision and 34% (576) believe it is similar to their vision. 22% (378) say it’s a little different from their vision and 16% (280) have a completely different vision for the criminal legal system.

Exhibit 14: How Closely SAC’s Vision Statement Matches the Community’s Vision



This vision most closely matches the vision of respondents who feel safe within their community, with around 83% of them saying they feel the vision is similar or closely matches their own vision. Only 5% think it’s completely different from their vision.

Among those that don’t feel safe within their community, only 13% believe this vision closely matches theirs, and 58% think it’s a little or completely different from their vision (Exhibit 15).

Female respondents are also slightly more likely to say this vision closely matches their vision (Exhibit 16).

Among different age groups, those 35 and younger are also more likely to agree with this vision, while those 46 to 65 are more likely to disagree with SAC’s vision (Exhibit 17).

Exhibit 15: How Closely SAC’s Vision Statement Matches the Community’s Vision by Feeling of Safety in their Community

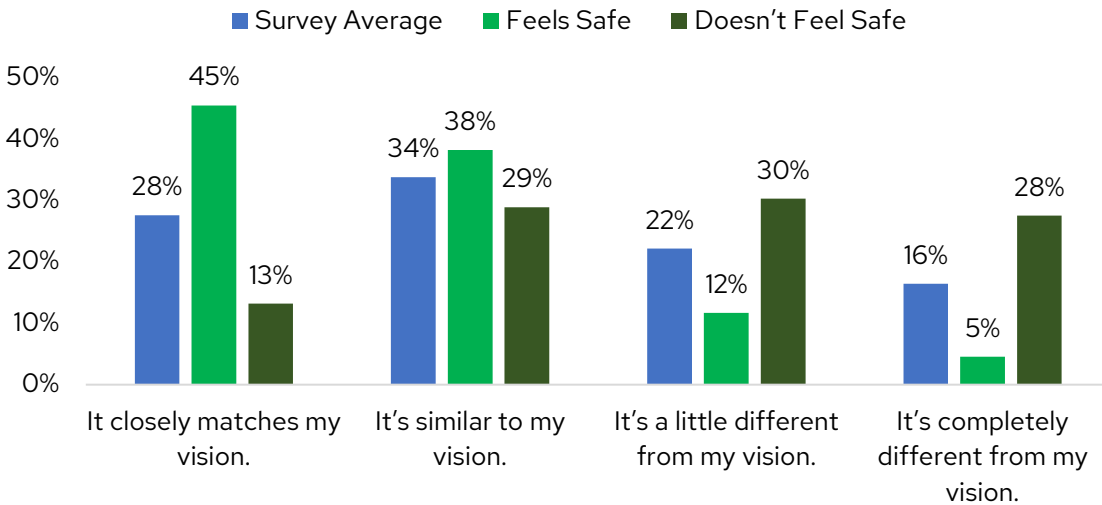


Exhibit 16: How Closely SAC’s Vision Statement Matches the Community’s Vision by Gender

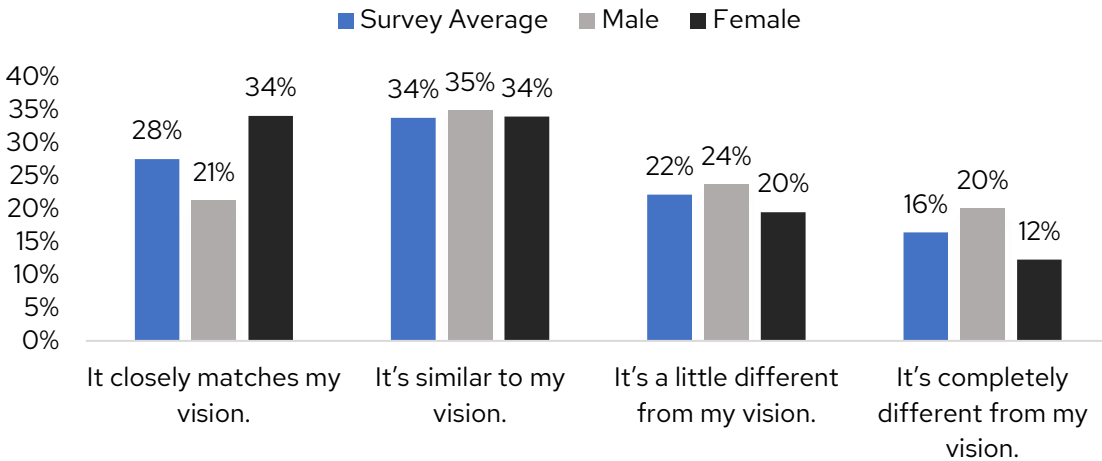
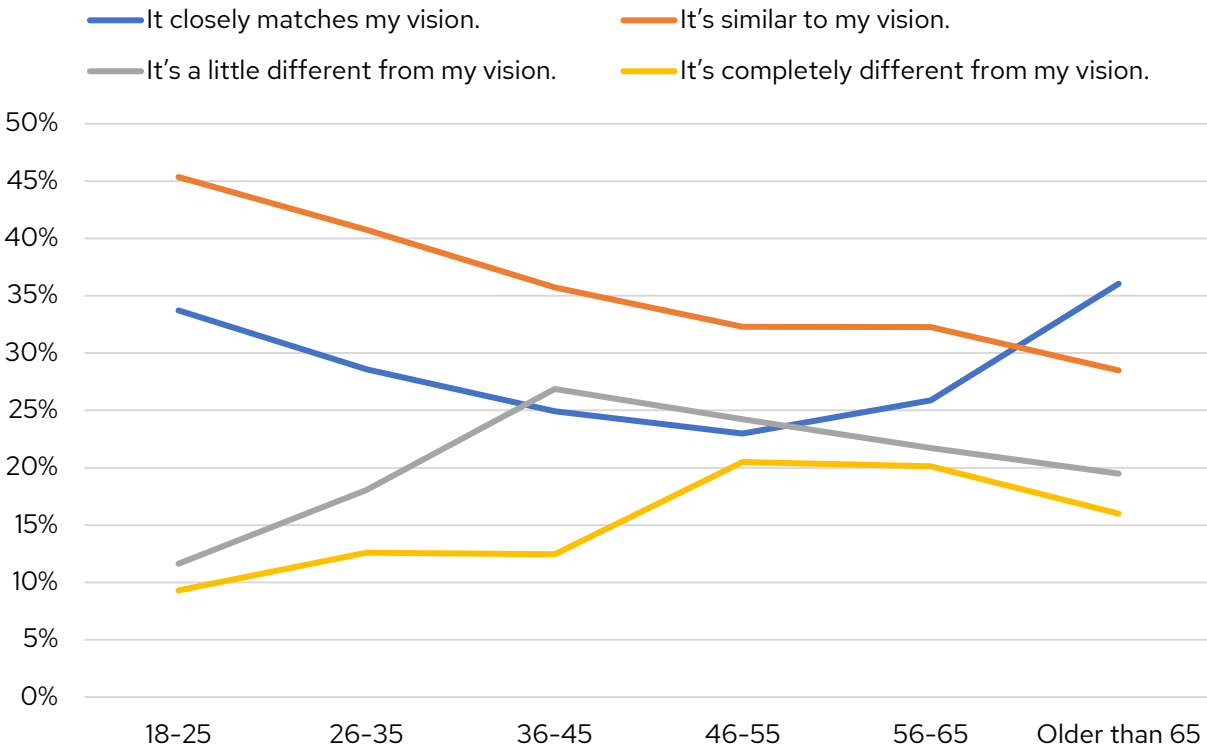


Exhibit 17: How Closely SAC’s Vision Statement Matches the Community’s Vision by Age



SAC Values vs. Community Values

The survey tested 9 statements based on SAC provided value statements. Respondents were asked to rate and prioritize these value statements. Exhibit 18 outlines the community’s priorities for these values, in order:

1. Protecting public health and safety
2. Using evidence-based decision making
3. Evaluating if current programs, interventions, and processes are working as intended
4. Early interventions
5. Honoring the humanity of everyone using the criminal legal system
6. Making decisions that reflect community priorities
7. Actively addressing inequities and discrimination in the legal system
8. Ensuring the system can easily change based on changing needs
9. Saving money over the long term

When it comes to different respondent segments, the following values statements are the most controversial:

- Early interventions

- Honoring the humanity of everyone using the criminal legal system
- Actively addressing inequities and discrimination in the legal system

For respondents that feel they will be unfairly treated by the criminal legal system, “honoring the humanity of everyone using the criminal legal system” (71%), “early interventions” (67%), and “actively addressing inequities and discrimination in the legal system” (66%) are almost as important as “protecting public health and safety” (72%) (Exhibit 19). Similarly, for respondents that feel safe in their community, these three values are significantly more important to them. (Exhibit 20)

Conversely, for respondents that don’t feel safe within their community, these values are among the least prioritized. These values are also slightly less prioritized by BIPOC and male respondents (Exhibit 21 and 22).

Lastly, we can see in Exhibit 23 that younger respondents (35 and under) and older respondents (older than 65) prioritize “honoring the humanity of everyone using the criminal legal system” and “actively addressing inequities and discrimination in the legal system” more than respondents between 36 and 65.

Exhibit 18: How Closely SAC's Values Matches the Community's High Priority Values

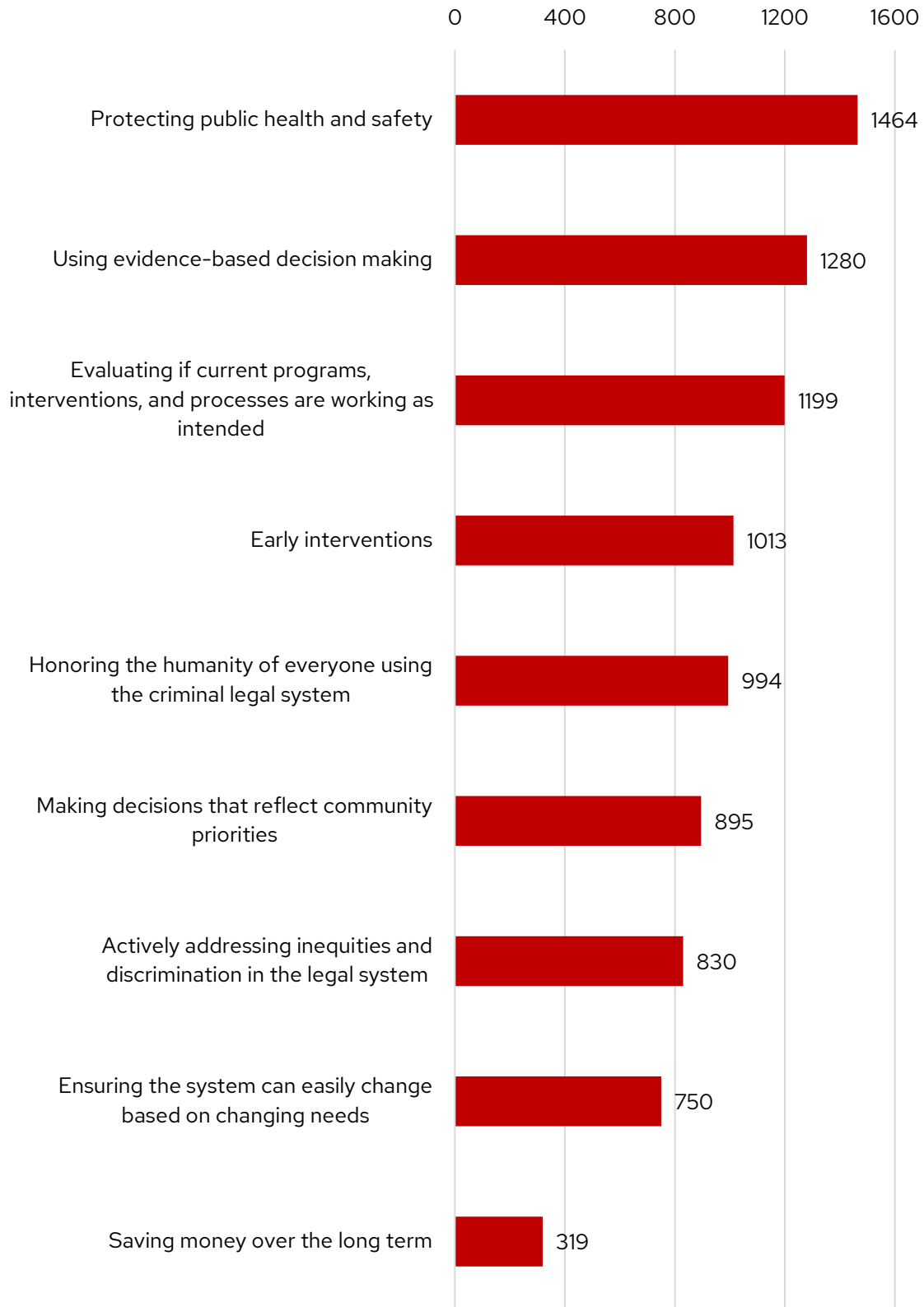


Exhibit 19: How Closely SAC's Values Matches the Community's High Priority Values by Feeling of Fairness Regarding their Treatment by the Criminal Legal System

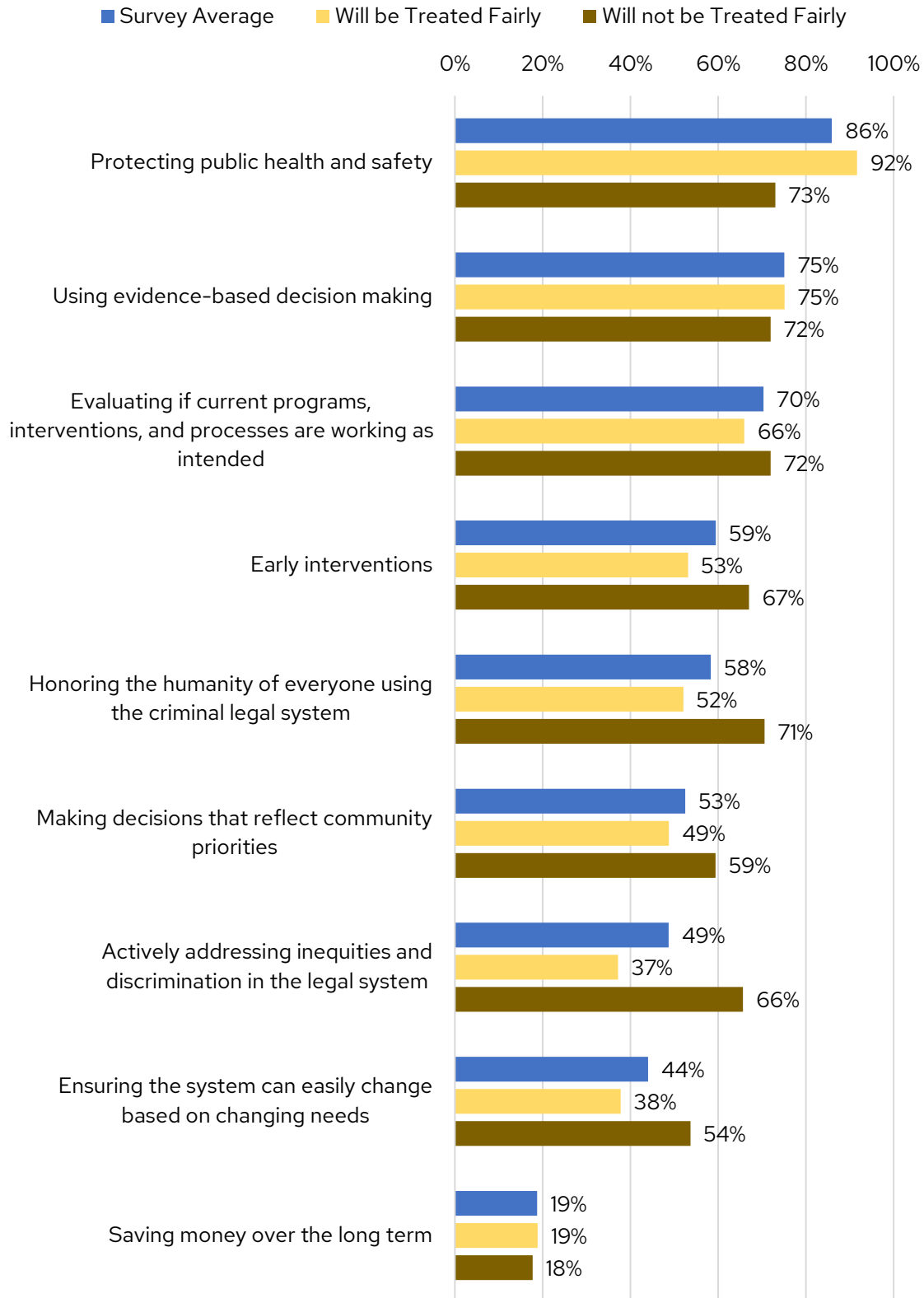


Exhibit 20: How Closely SAC's Values Matches the Community's High Priority Values by Feeling of Safety in their Community

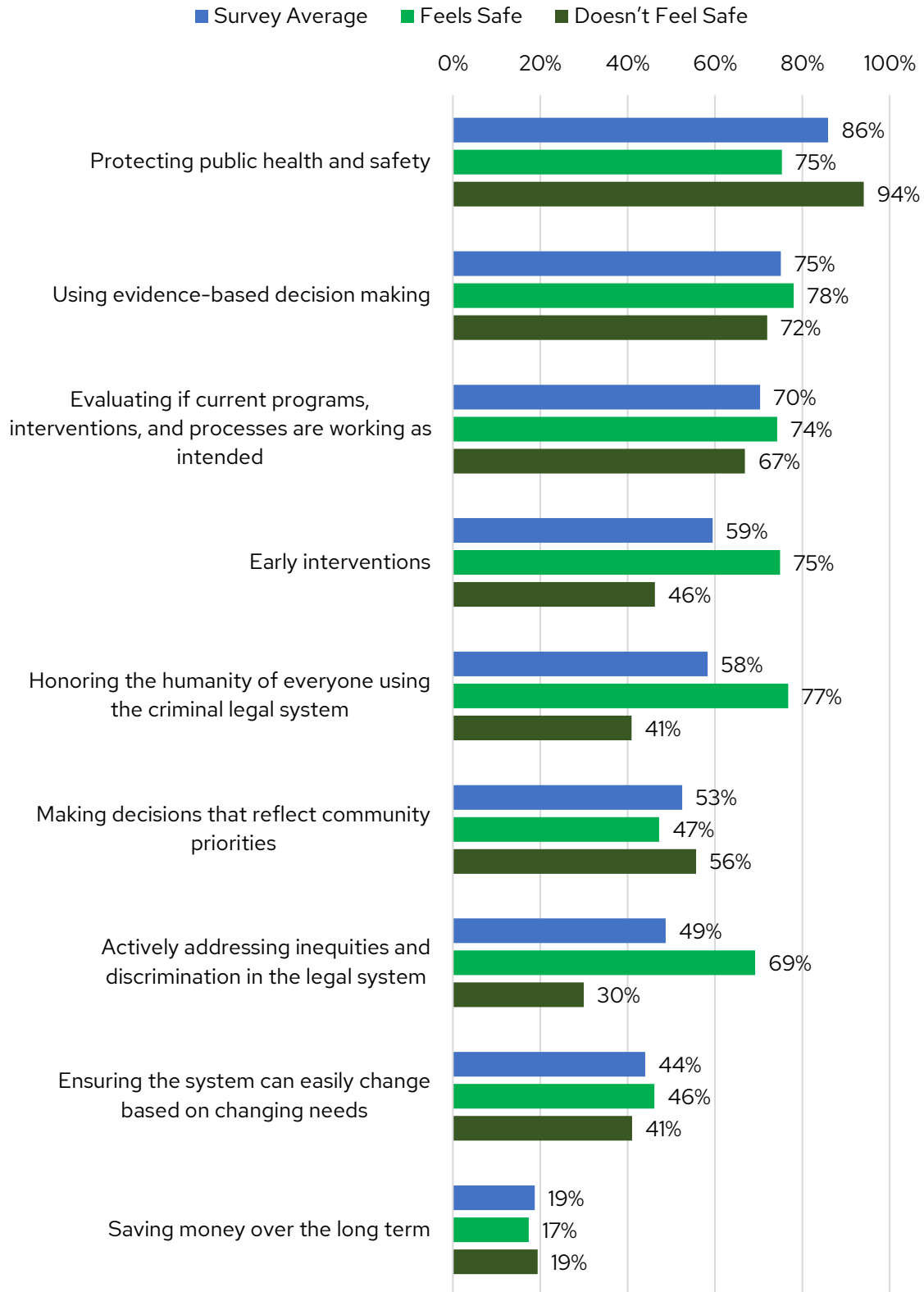


Exhibit 21: How Closely SAC's Values Matches the Community's High Priority Values by Race and Ethnicity

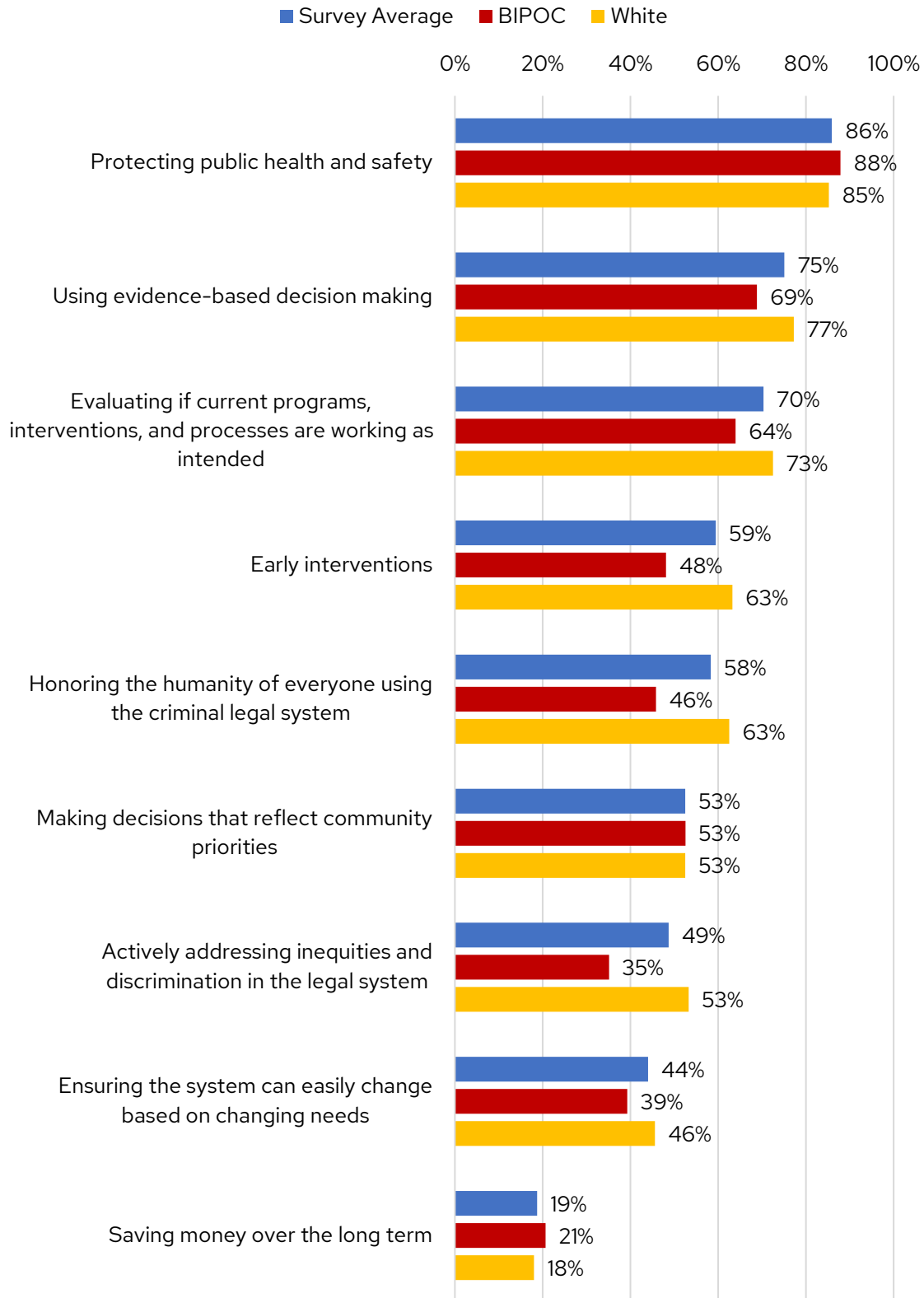


Exhibit 22: How Closely SAC's Values Matches the Community's High Priority Values by Gender

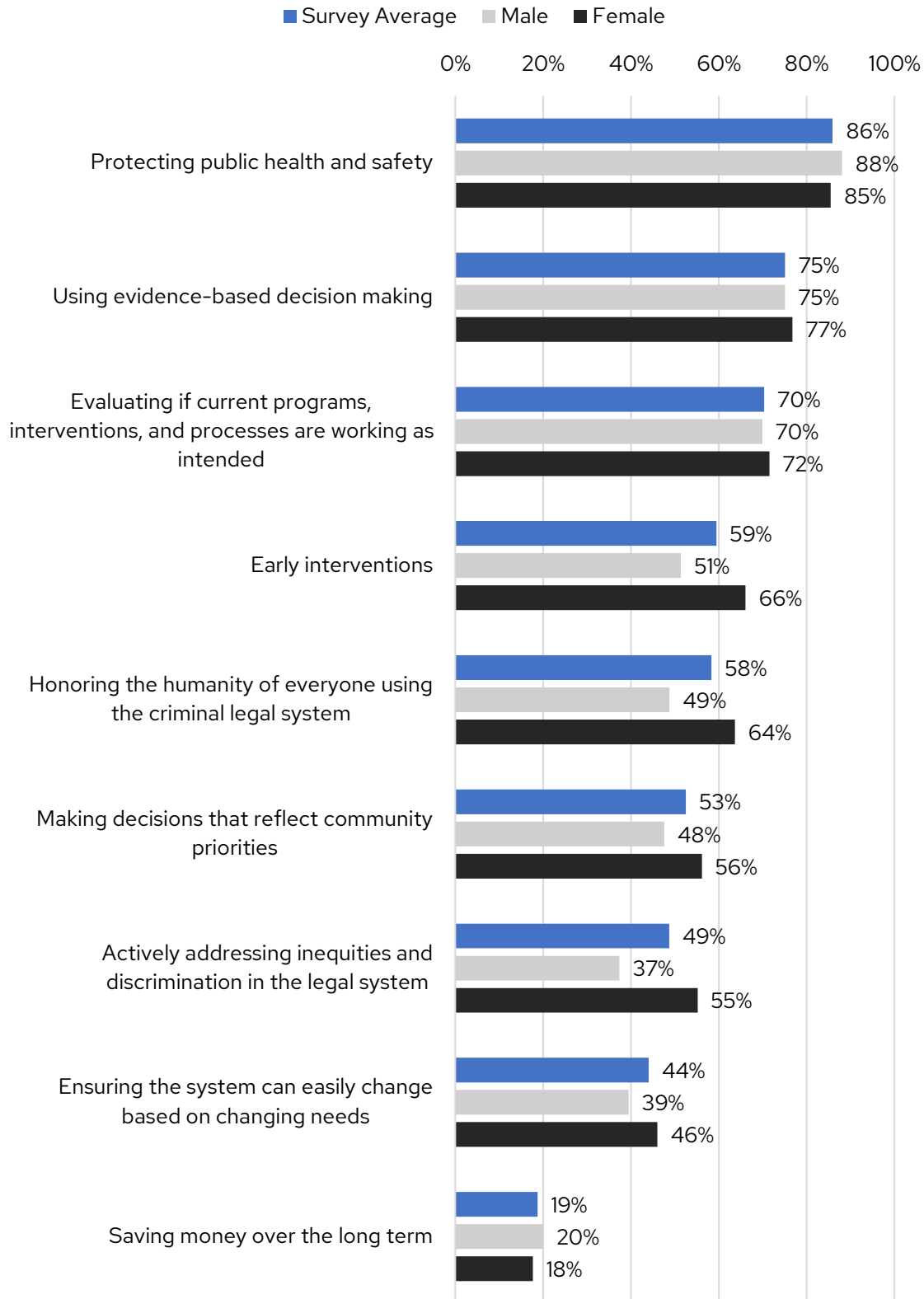
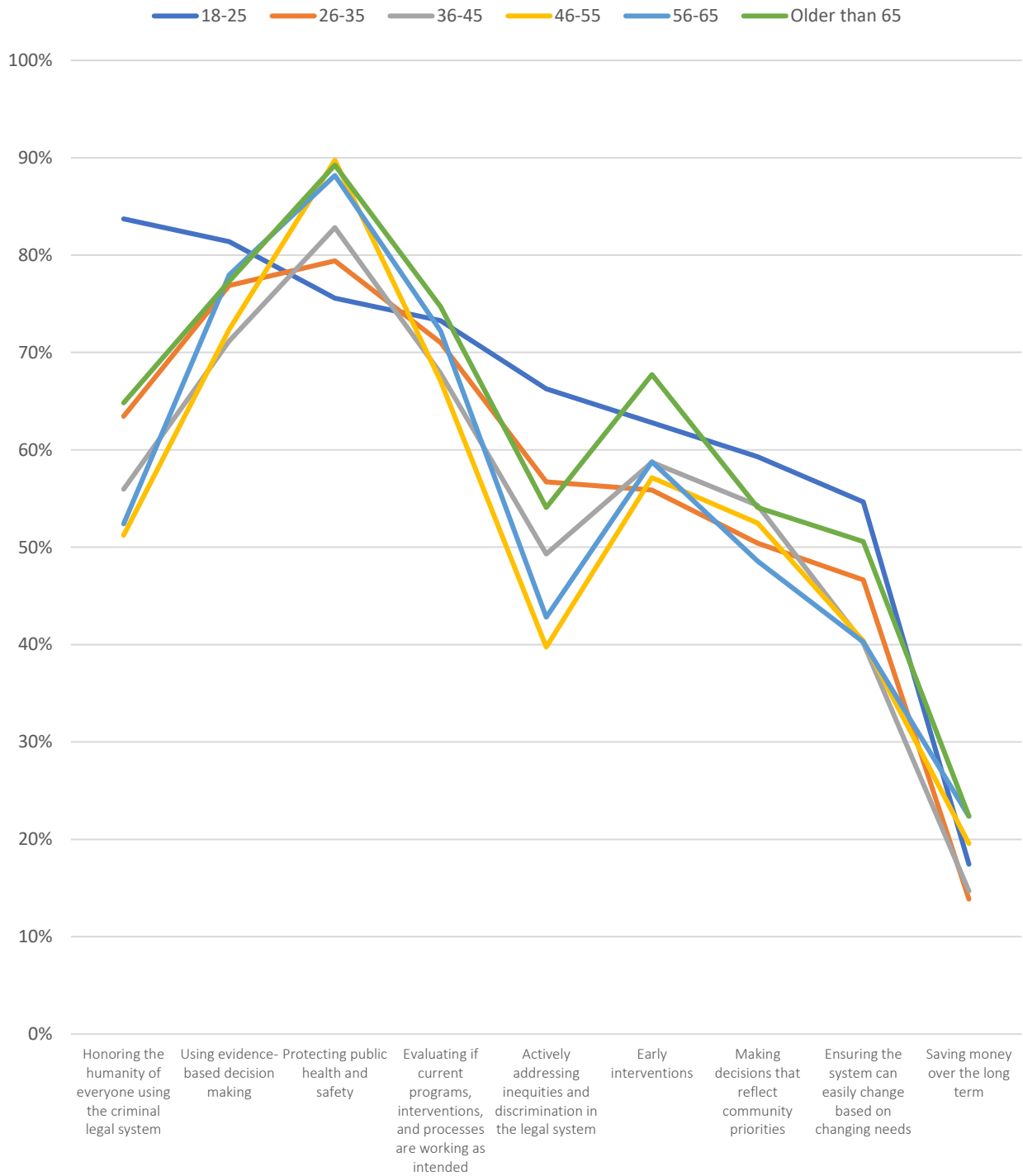


Exhibit 23: How Closely SAC's Values Matches the Community's High Priority Values by Age

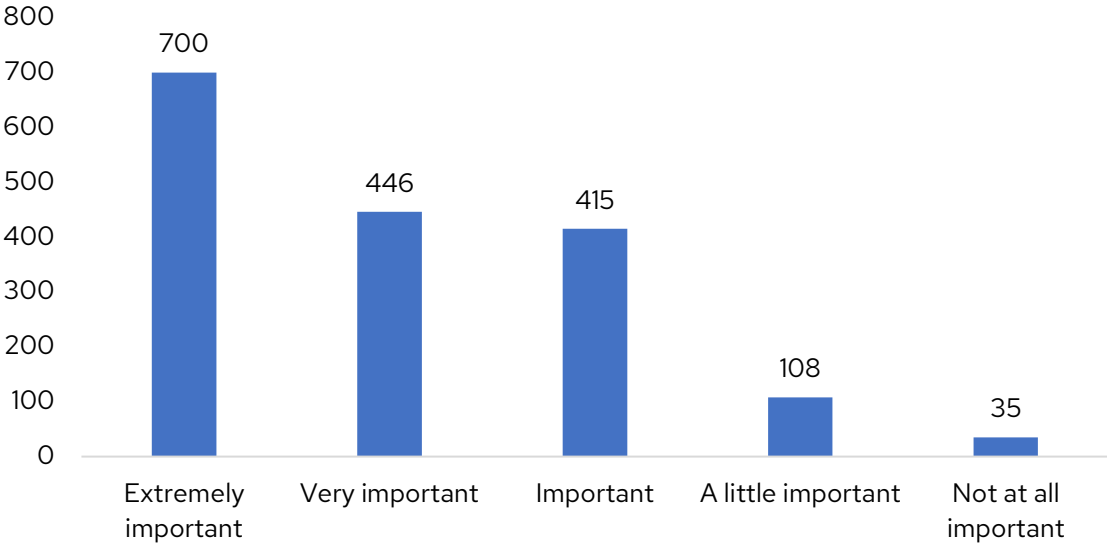


Rehabilitation vs. Incarceration

Rehabilitation

In general, survey respondents believe in the importance of rehabilitation. 67% (1146) of respondents believe rehabilitation is very (26%) or extremely (41%) important, and only 8% believe it's a little or not at all important.

Exhibit 24: Importance of Rehabilitation



The respondent segments of note here are respondents that feel they will not be fairly treated by the criminal legal system and respondents that feel safe in their community. Over half of them (54% and 55%, respectively) believe rehabilitation is extremely important (Exhibit 25 and 26). On the other hand, among those that believe the criminal legal system will treat them fairly and/or feel unsafe in their community, only around 30% of them think rehabilitation is extremely important.

This trend is also true for BIPOC respondents, where 30% believe rehabilitation is extremely important. Among white respondents, 45% believe rehabilitation is extremely important (Exhibit 27).

Among different age groups, over half of respondents 35 and younger think rehabilitation is extremely important, while only around 35% of respondents between 46 and 65 believe the same (Exhibit 28).

Exhibit 25: Importance of Rehabilitation by Feeling of Fairness Regarding their Treatment by the Criminal Legal System

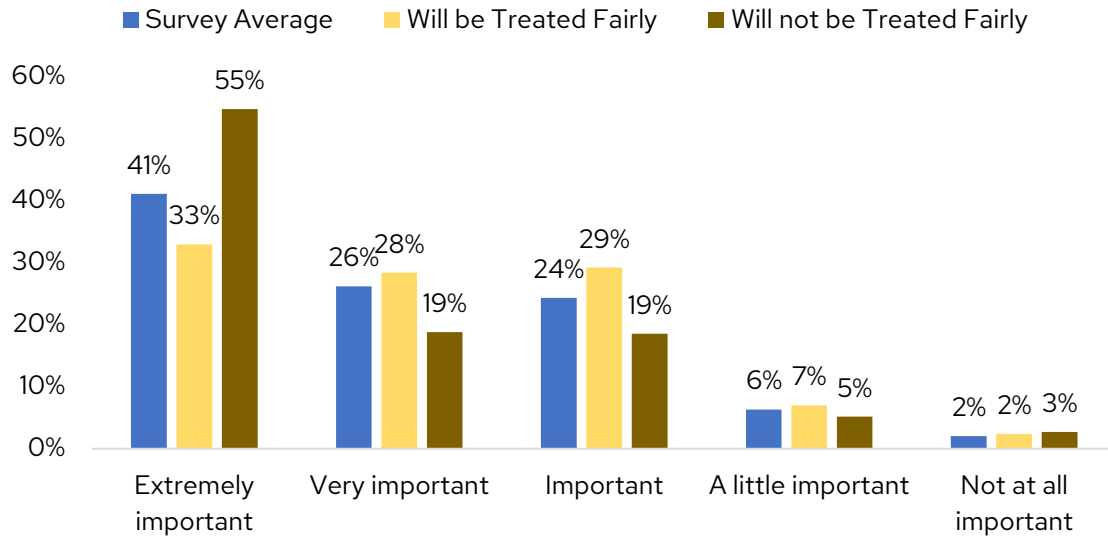


Exhibit 26: Importance of Rehabilitation by Feeling of Safety within their Community

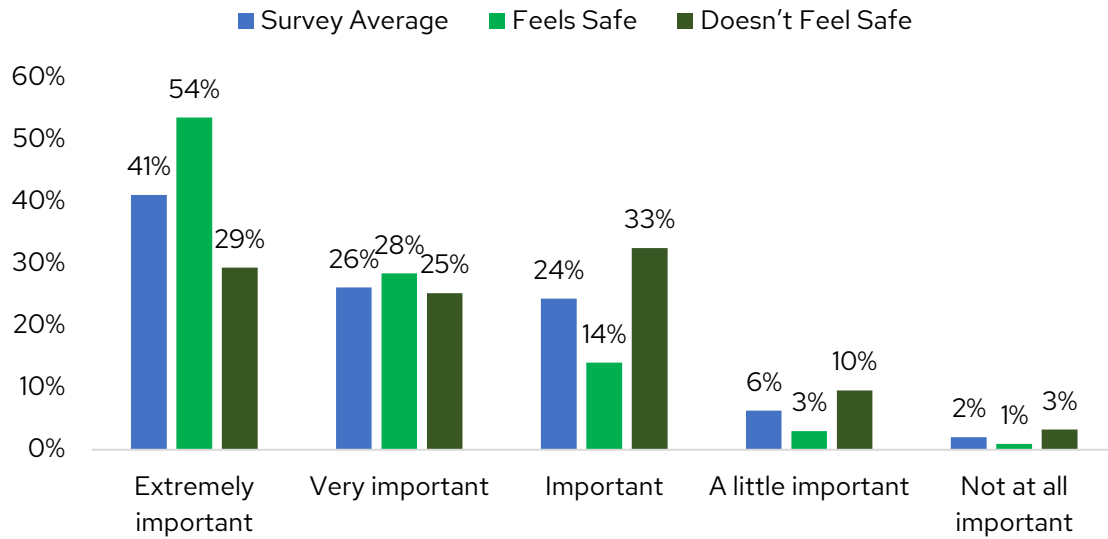


Exhibit 27: Importance of Rehabilitation by Race and Ethnicity

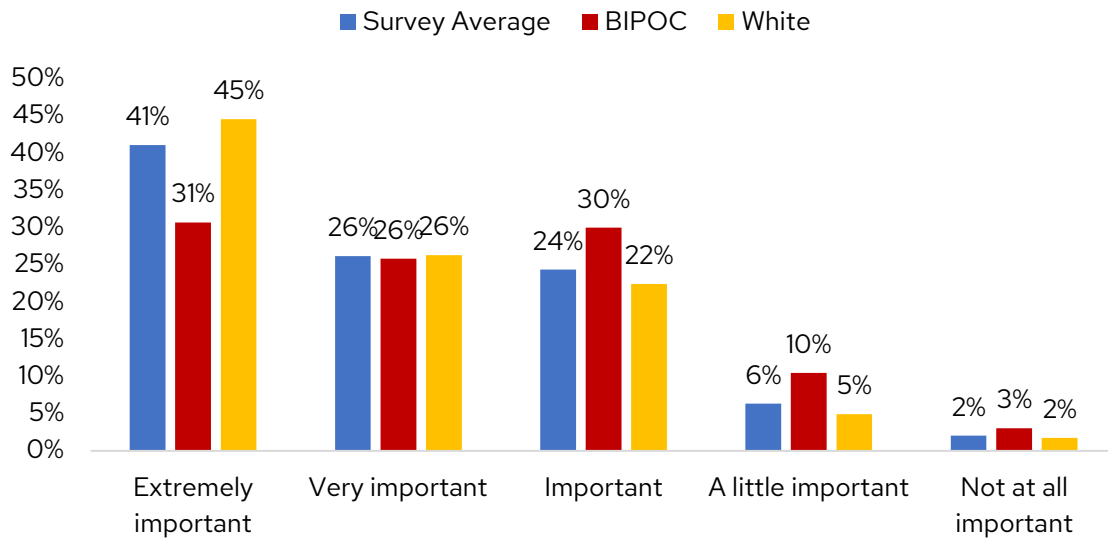
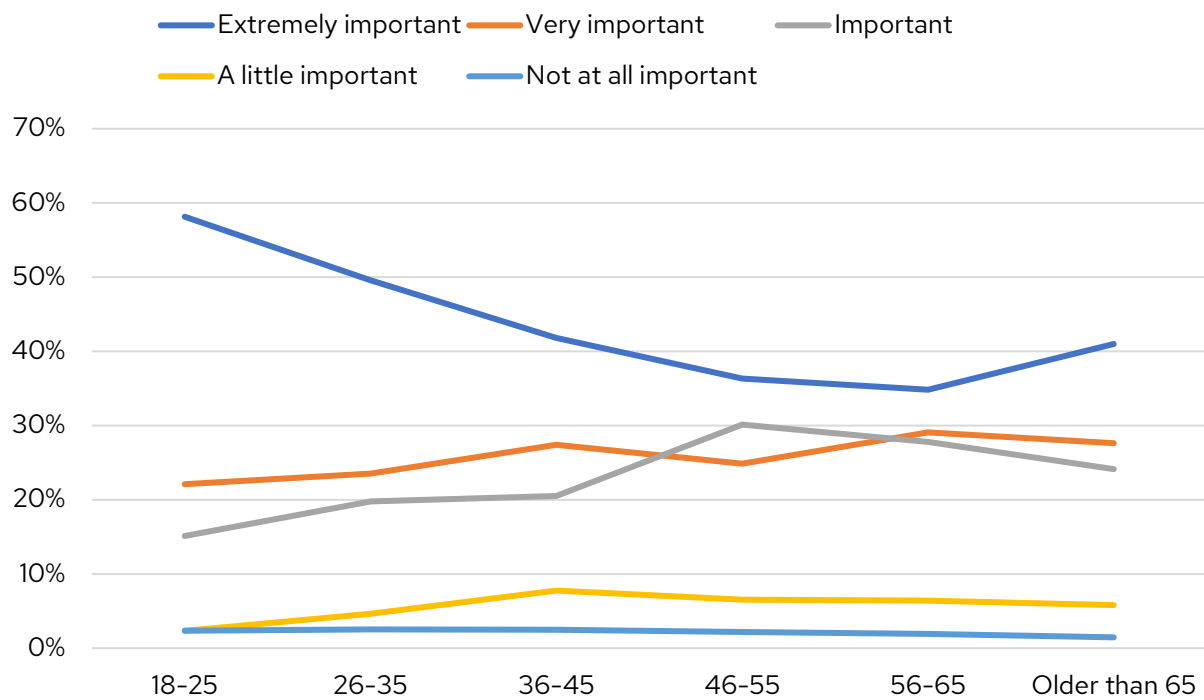


Exhibit 28: Importance of Rehabilitation by Age

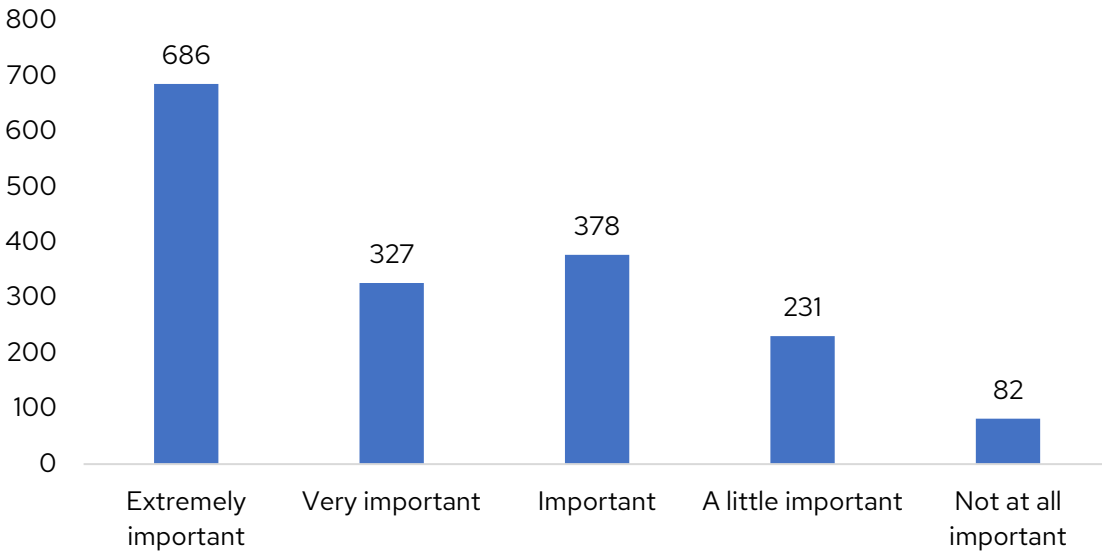


Incarceration

Roughly 40% of respondents (686) believe incarceration is extremely important. 18% (313) of respondents believe incarceration is only a little or not at all important, suggesting incarceration

is a more polarizing topic compared to rehabilitation, where only 8% (143) say rehabilitation is only a little or not at all important.

Exhibit 29: Importance of Incarceration



Opposite of respondents who believe rehabilitation is extremely important, the respondent segments that are more likely to think incarceration is extremely important are respondents that feel they will be fairly treated by the criminal legal system and respondents that feel unsafe in their community. Over half of them (51% and 59%, respectively) believe incarceration is extremely important (Exhibit 30 and 31). Among the respondents that believe the criminal legal system will treat them unfairly and/or feel safe in their community, less than 30% of them think incarceration is extremely important.

This finding is also true for BIPOC and White respondents, and between the different age groups (Exhibit 32 and 33). 56% of BIPOC respondents and around 46% of respondents between 46 and 65 believe incarceration is extremely important.

Exhibit 30: Importance of Incarceration by Feeling of Fairness Regarding their Treatment by the Criminal Legal System

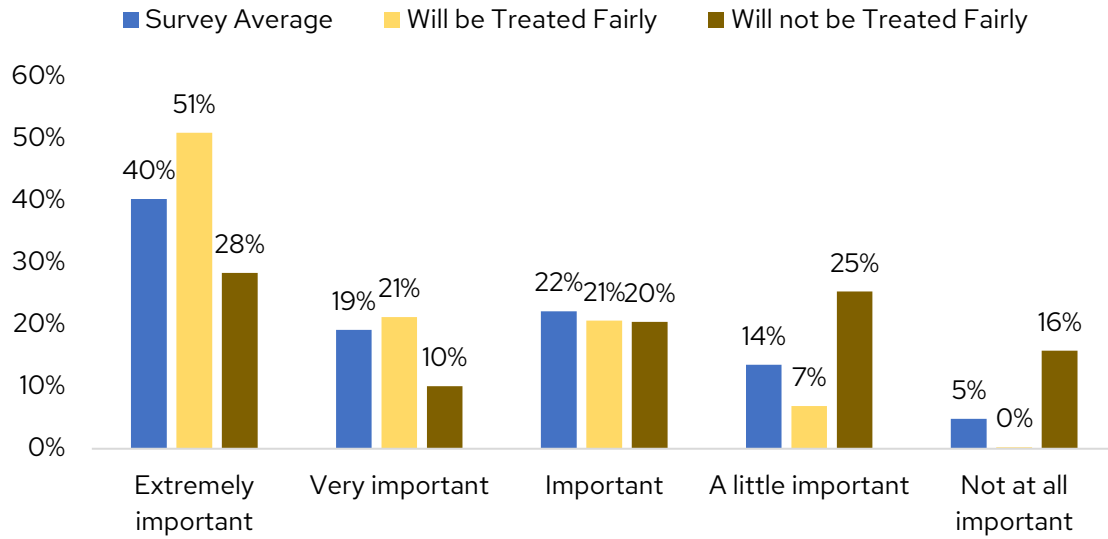


Exhibit 31: Importance of Incarceration by Feeling of Safety within their Community

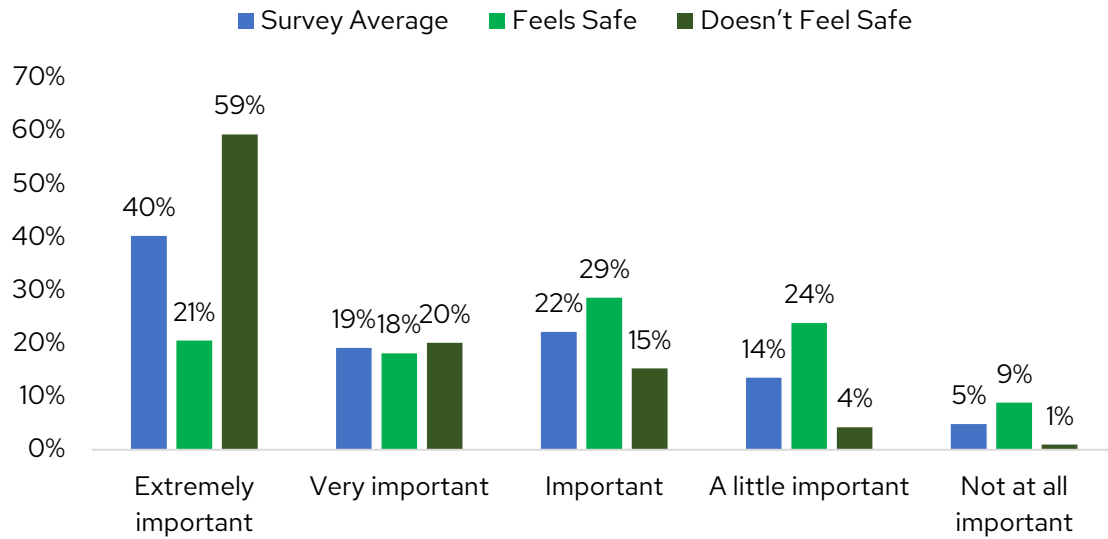


Exhibit 32: Importance of Incarceration by Race and Ethnicity

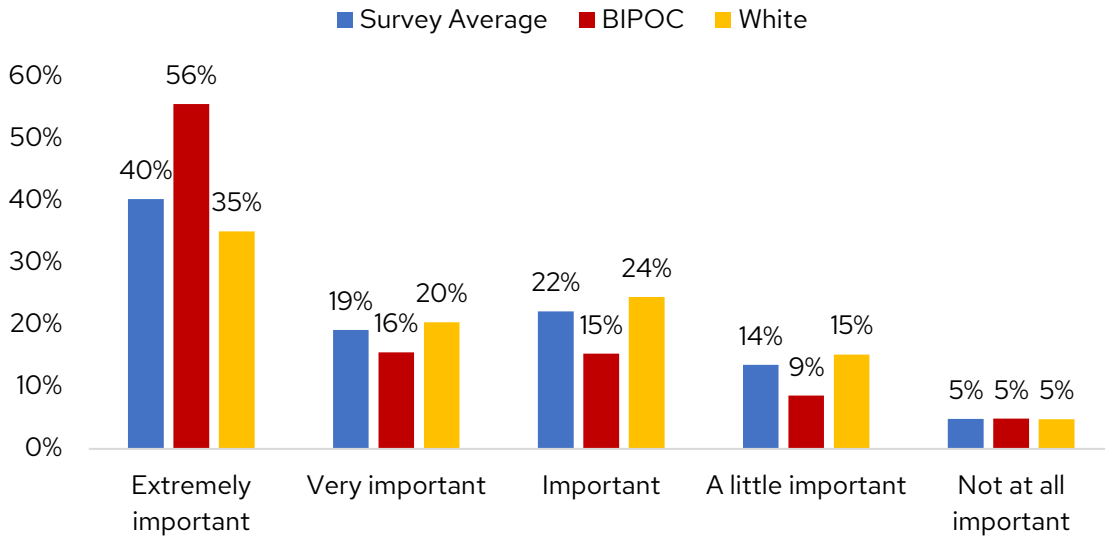
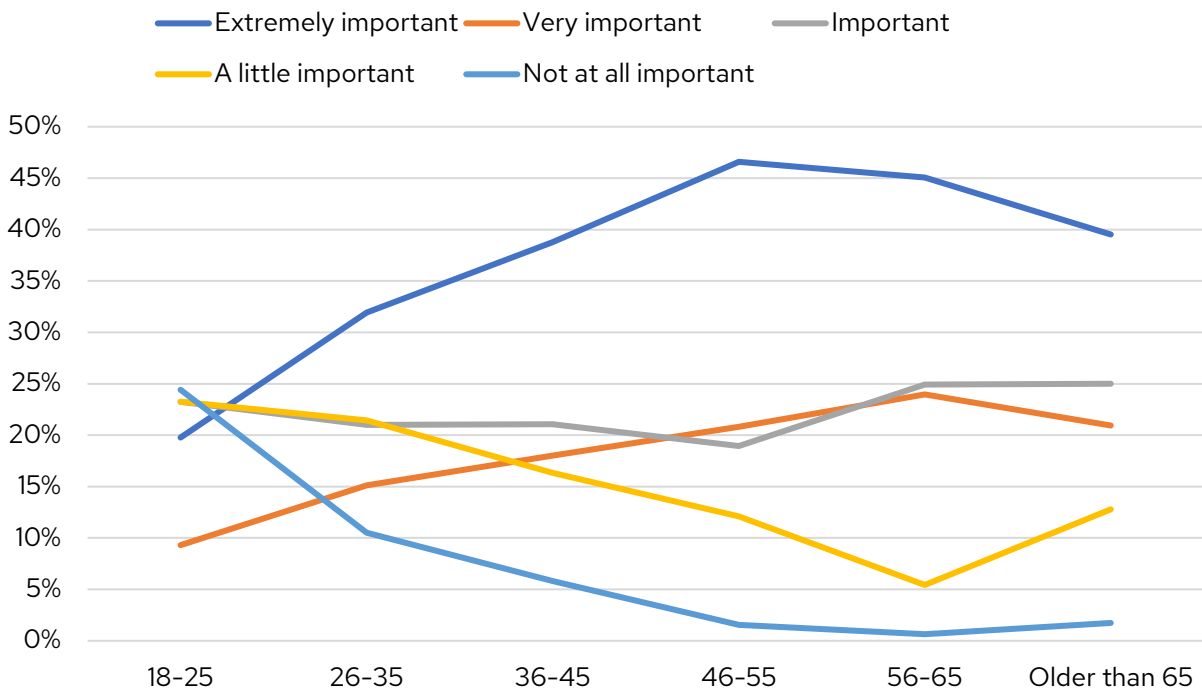


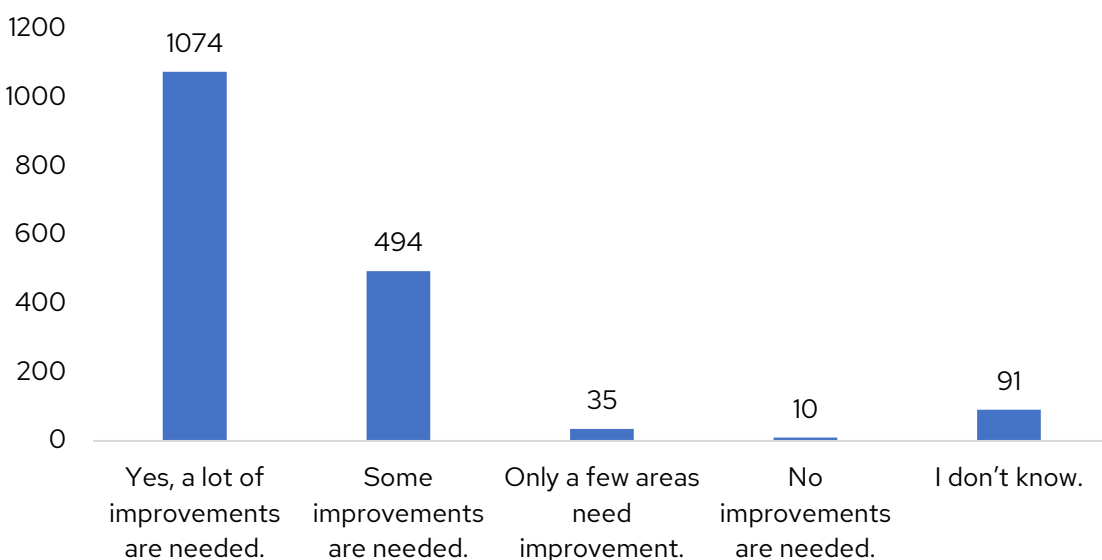
Exhibit 33: Importance of Incarceration by Age



Improvements

92% (1568) of respondents believe at least some improvements are needed by Whatcom County’s criminal legal system, with 63% saying a lot of improvements are needed. The following sections explore community improvement priorities.

Exhibit 34: Improvements Needed by Whatcom County’s Criminal Legal System



Community Investment Priorities

Investment priorities as identified by respondents are, in order (Exhibit 35):

1. Community services for incarceration prevention, such as support for people dealing with substance abuse, mental illness, and homelessness
2. Jail facility
3. Law enforcement
4. Re-entry and post-incarceration services
5. Court system
6. Pre-trial services (when someone is detained and awaiting trial)
7. Other

While overall respondent top priorities are listed above, the top 2 options vary depending on the respondent segment. In Exhibits 36 through 40, we see respondents who feel they will be fairly treated by the criminal legal system, respondents that feel unsafe in their community, BIPOC respondents, male respondents, and respondents 36 and older are likely to have “jail facility” and “law enforcement” as their top two investment areas.

Respondents who feel they will be unfairly treated by the criminal legal system, respondents that feel safe in their community, White-identifying respondents, female respondents, and

respondents 36 and younger are likely to have “community services for incarceration prevention, such as support for people dealing with substance abuse, mental illness, and homelessness” and “Re-entry and post-incarceration services” as their top two investment areas.

Exhibit 35: Whatcom County Criminal Legal System Investment Priorities

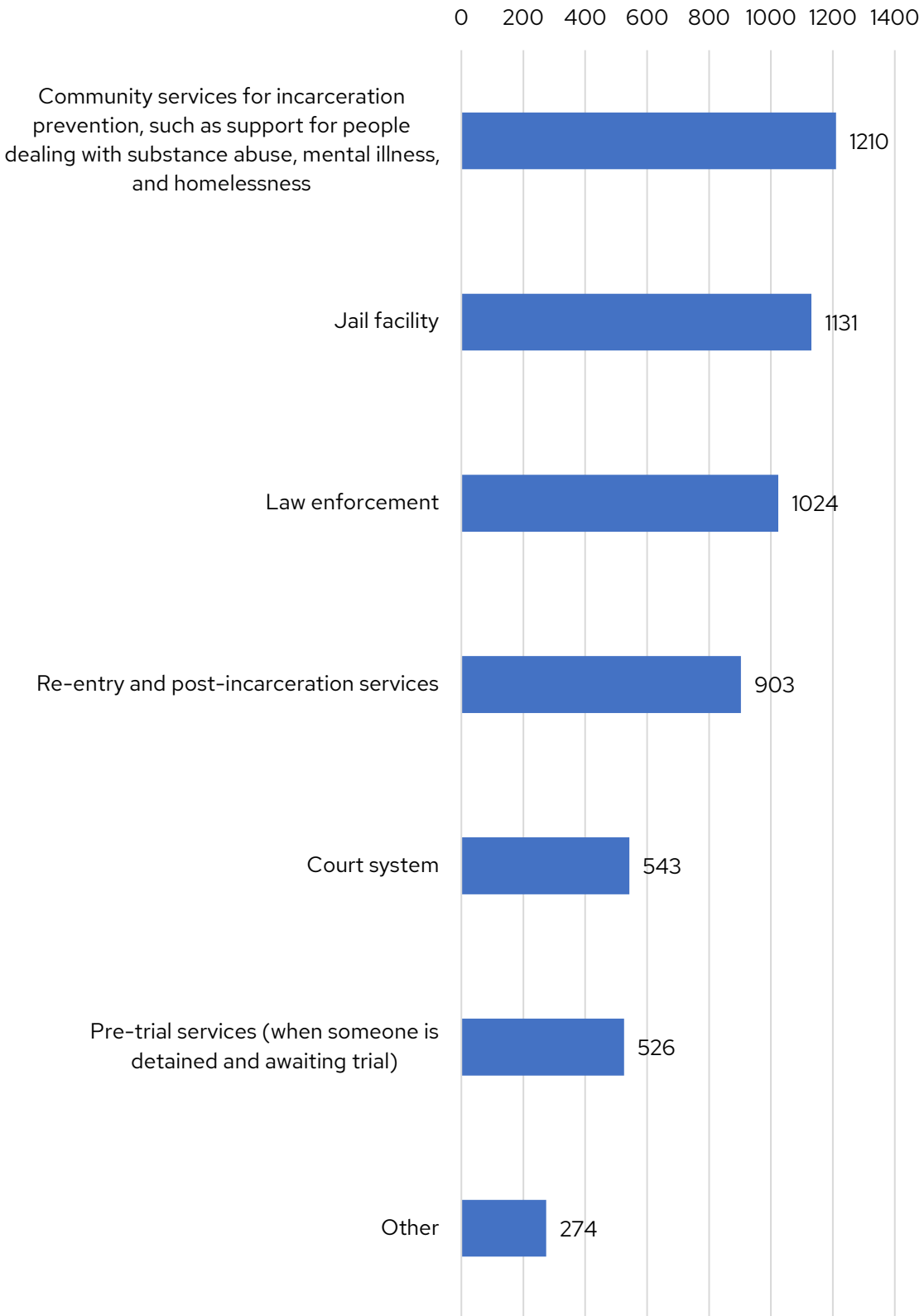


Exhibit 36: Whatcom County Criminal Legal System Investment Priorities by Feeling of Fairness Regarding their Treatment by the Criminal Legal System

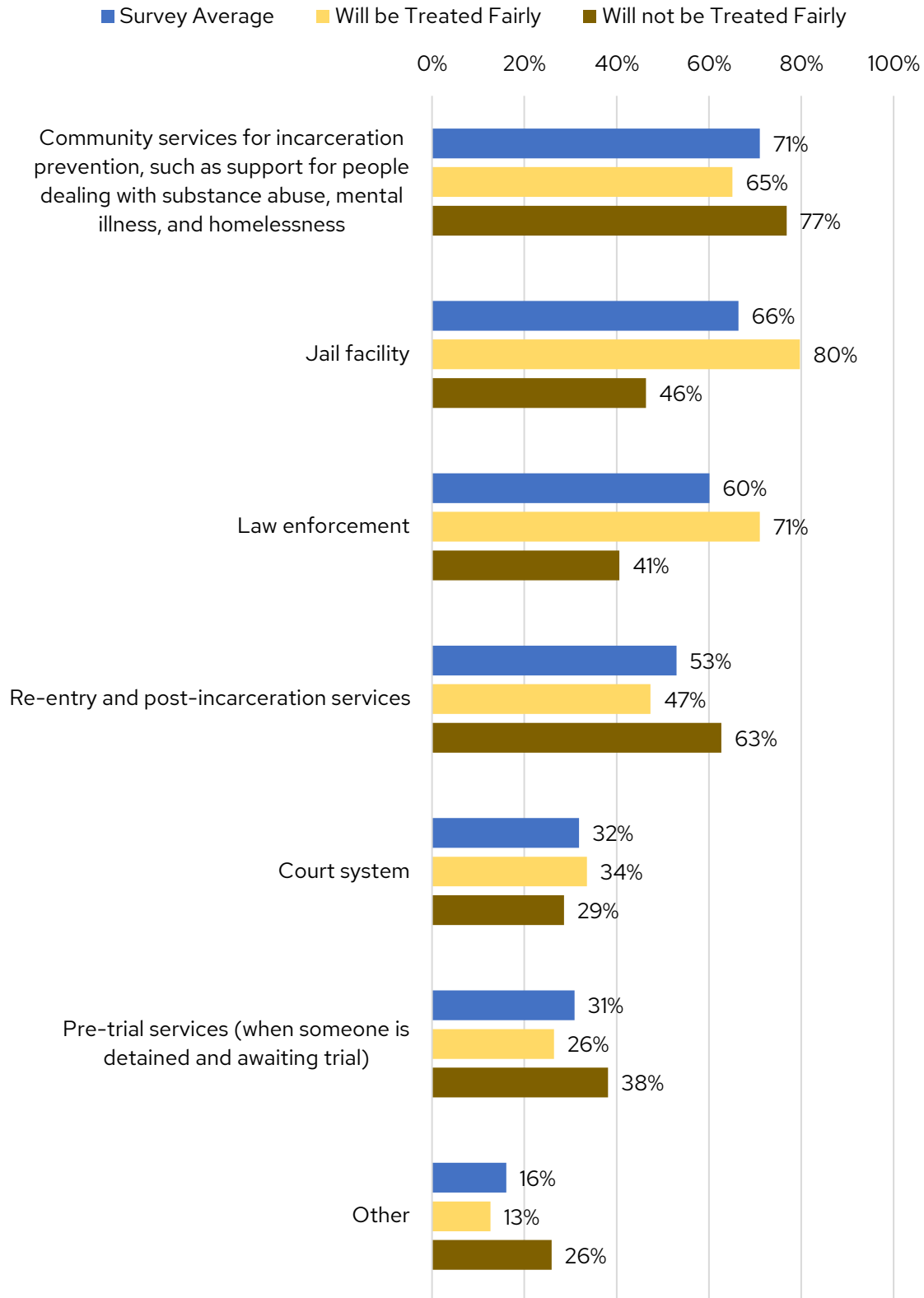


Exhibit 37: Whatcom County Criminal Legal System Investment Priorities by Feeling of Safety within their Community

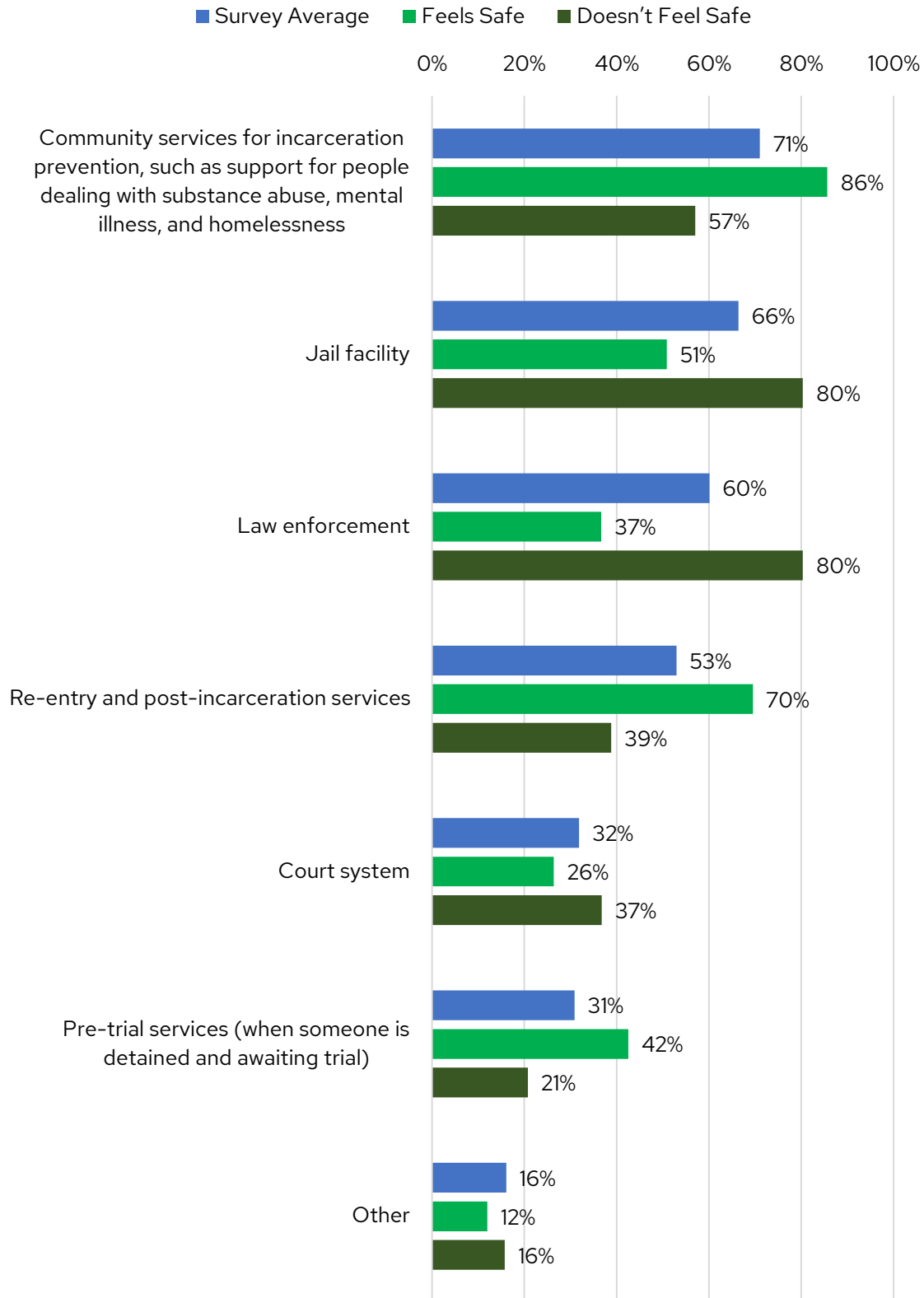


Exhibit 38: Whatcom County Criminal Legal System Investment Priorities by Race and Ethnicity

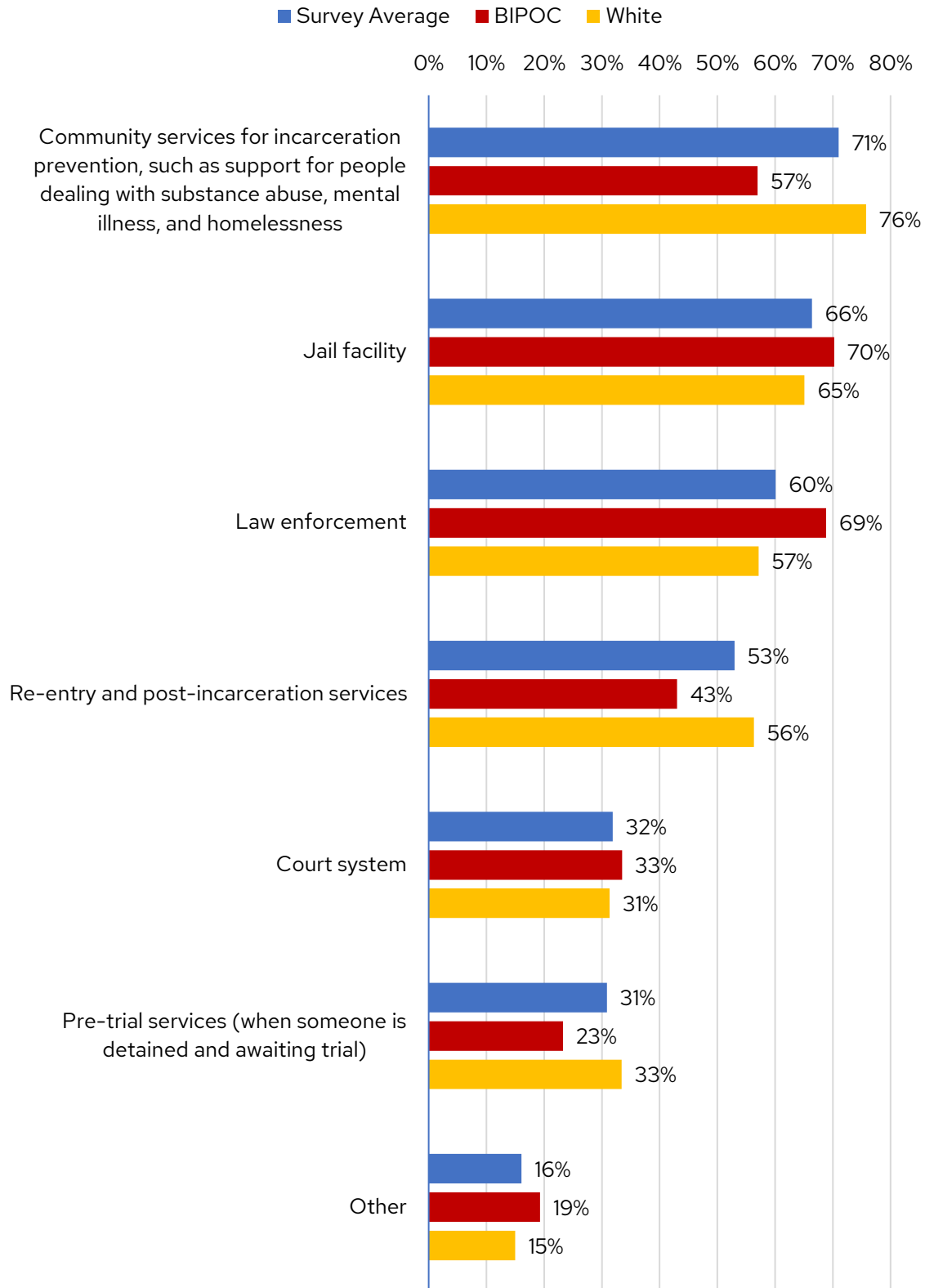


Exhibit 39: Whatcom County Criminal Legal System Investment Priorities by Gender

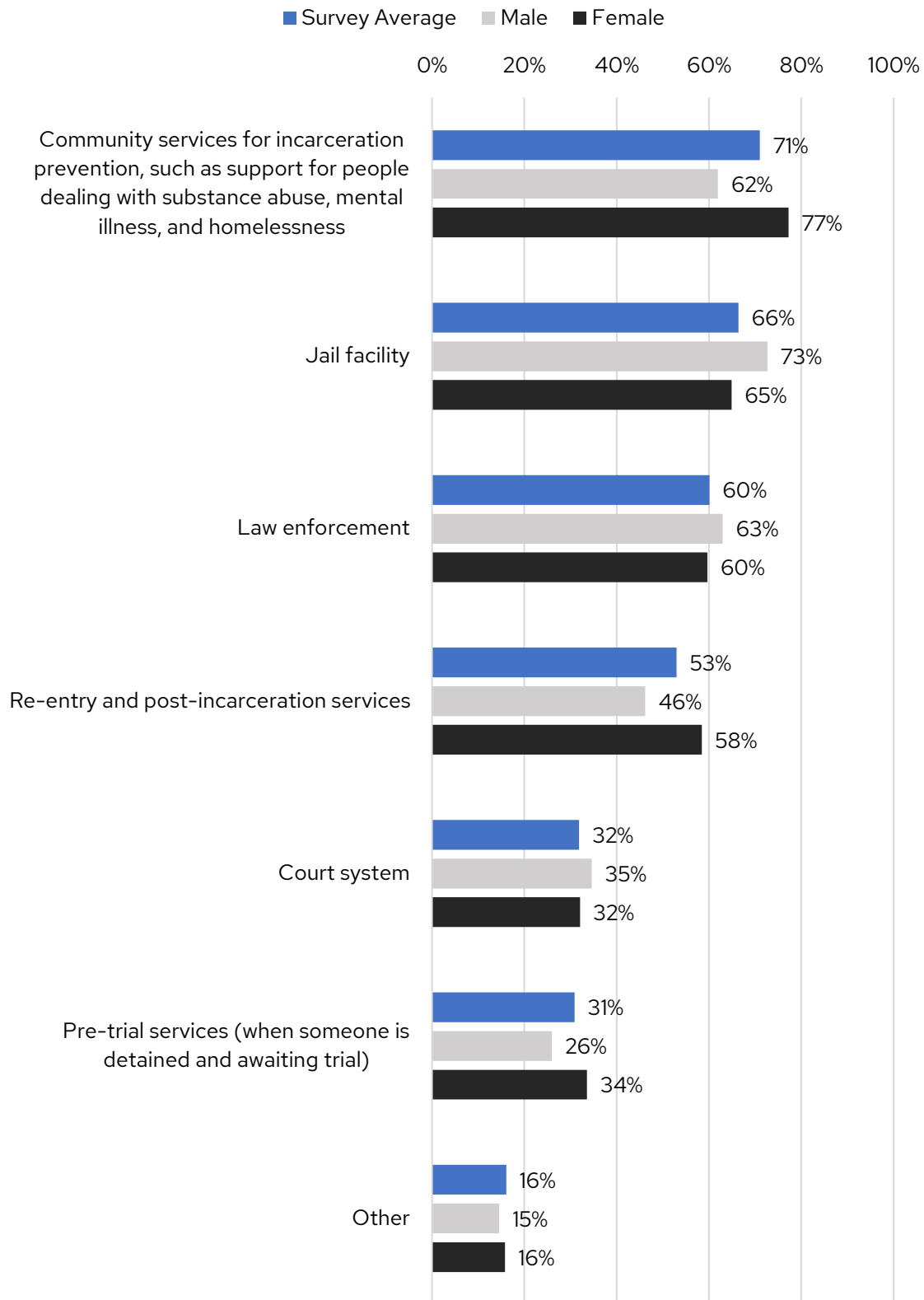
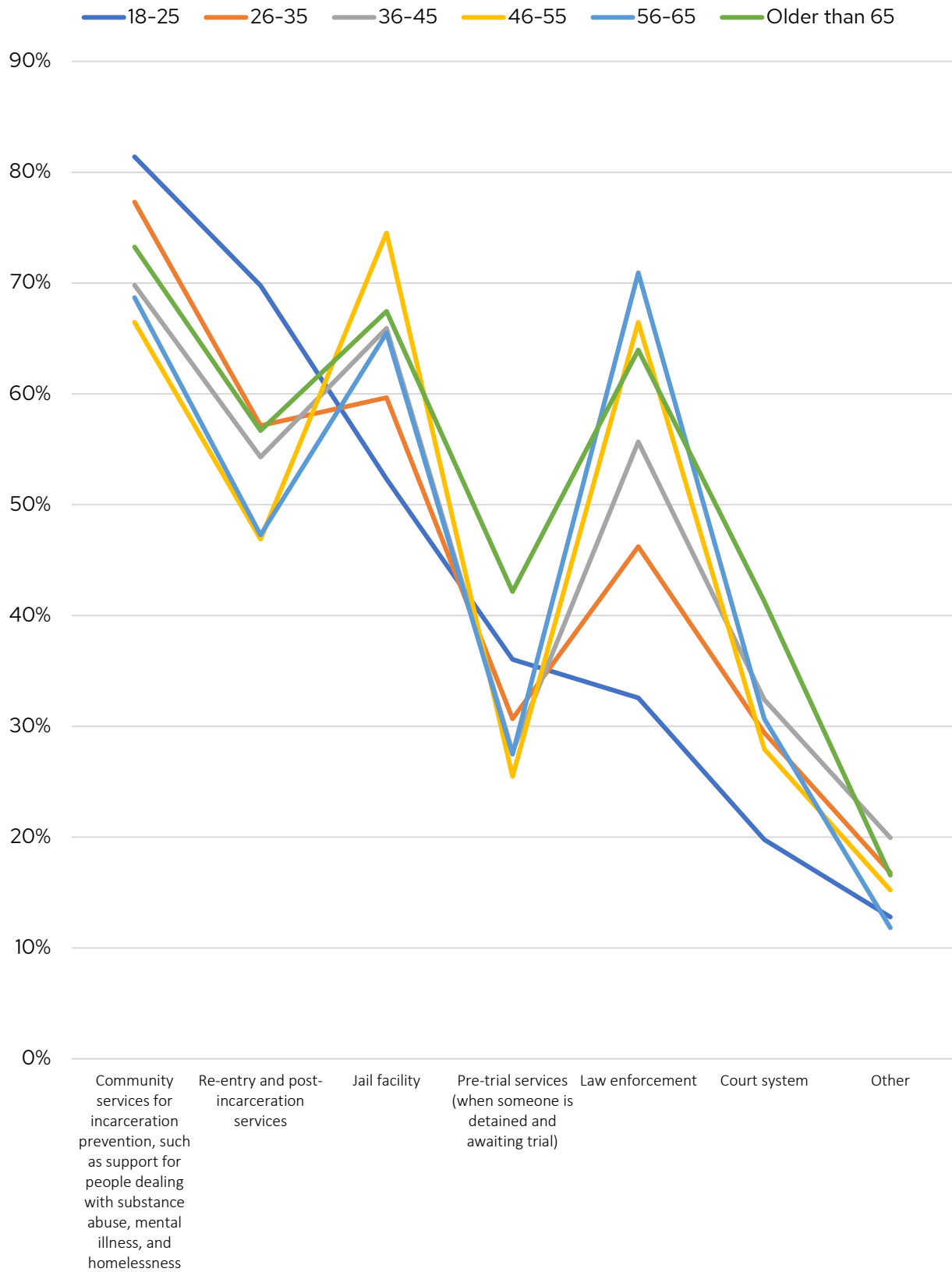


Exhibit 40: Whatcom County Criminal Legal System Investment Priorities by Age



Jail Improvements

When asked about the jail and related service improvements, respondents prioritized the following, in order (Exhibit 41):

1. Beds to accommodate all inmates
2. Space and resources to support those with serious mental or physical conditions
3. Updated equipment and building infrastructure that meets safety codes
4. A new jail facility should be built to address these updates
5. Spaces for confidential meetings and phone calls (with doctors, counselors, lawyers, etc.)
6. Space and resources to support educational and employment services
7. Enough medical exam and procedure rooms, including specialized rooms for the highly contagious (e.g., COVID-19)

The biggest area of contention is "a new jail facility should be built to address these updates." For respondents who feel they will be fairly treated by the criminal legal system and respondents that feel unsafe in their community "a new jail facility" is one of their top improvement choices (Exhibit 42 and 43). Conversely, for respondents who feel they will be unfairly treated by the criminal legal system and respondents that feel safe in their community "a new jail facility" is their bottom choice.

BIPOC respondents, respondents that feel unsafe in their community, and respondents 36 to 65 are also much less interested in "spaces for confidential meetings and phone calls (with doctors, counselors, lawyers, etc.)", "space and resources to support educational and employment services", and "enough medical exam and procedure rooms, including specialized rooms for the highly contagious (e.g., COVID-19)" (Exhibit 43, 44, and 45).

Exhibit 41: Whatcom County Jail Improvement Priorities

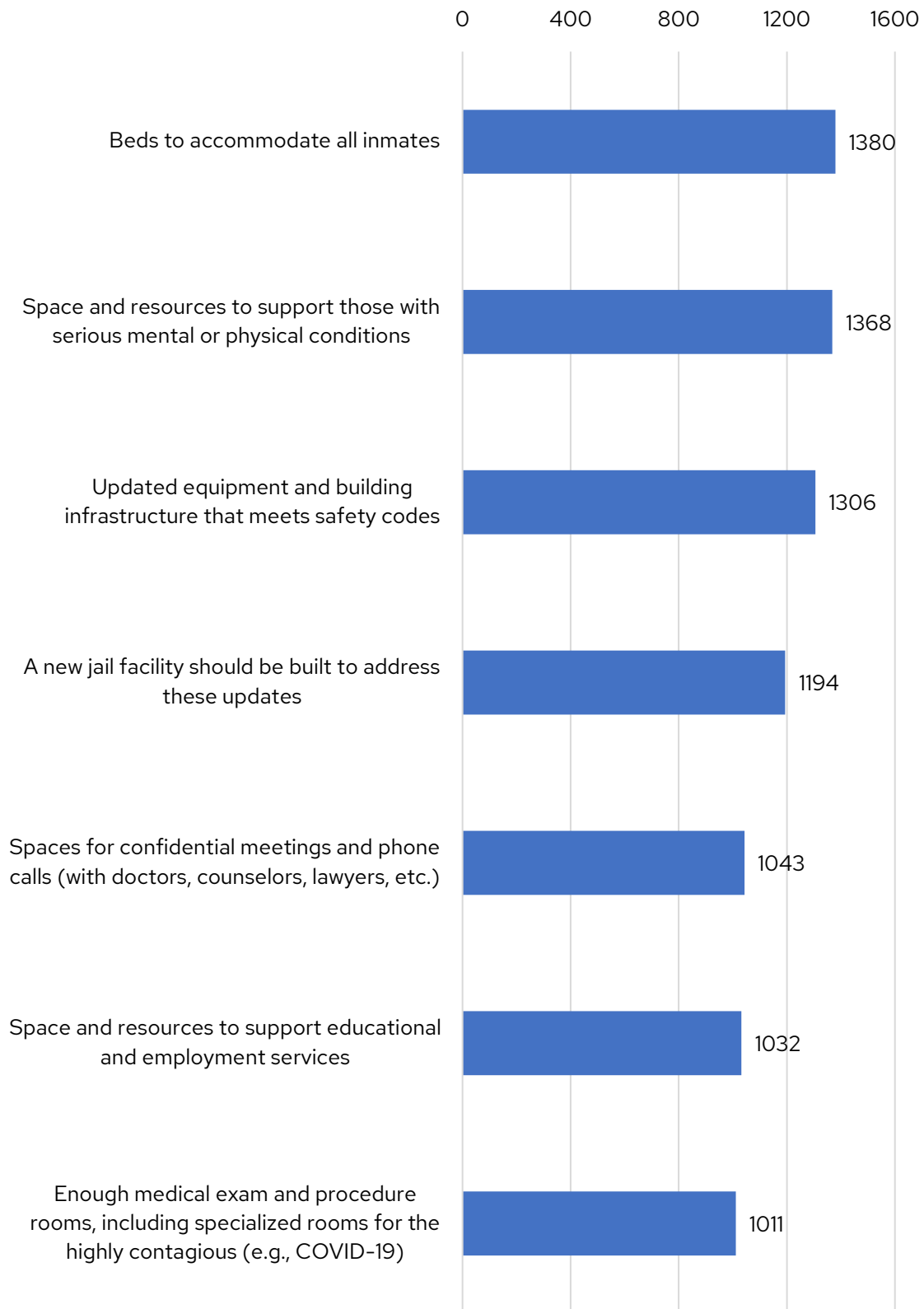


Exhibit 42: Whatcom County Jail Improvement Priorities by Feeling of Fairness Regarding their Treatment by the Criminal Legal System

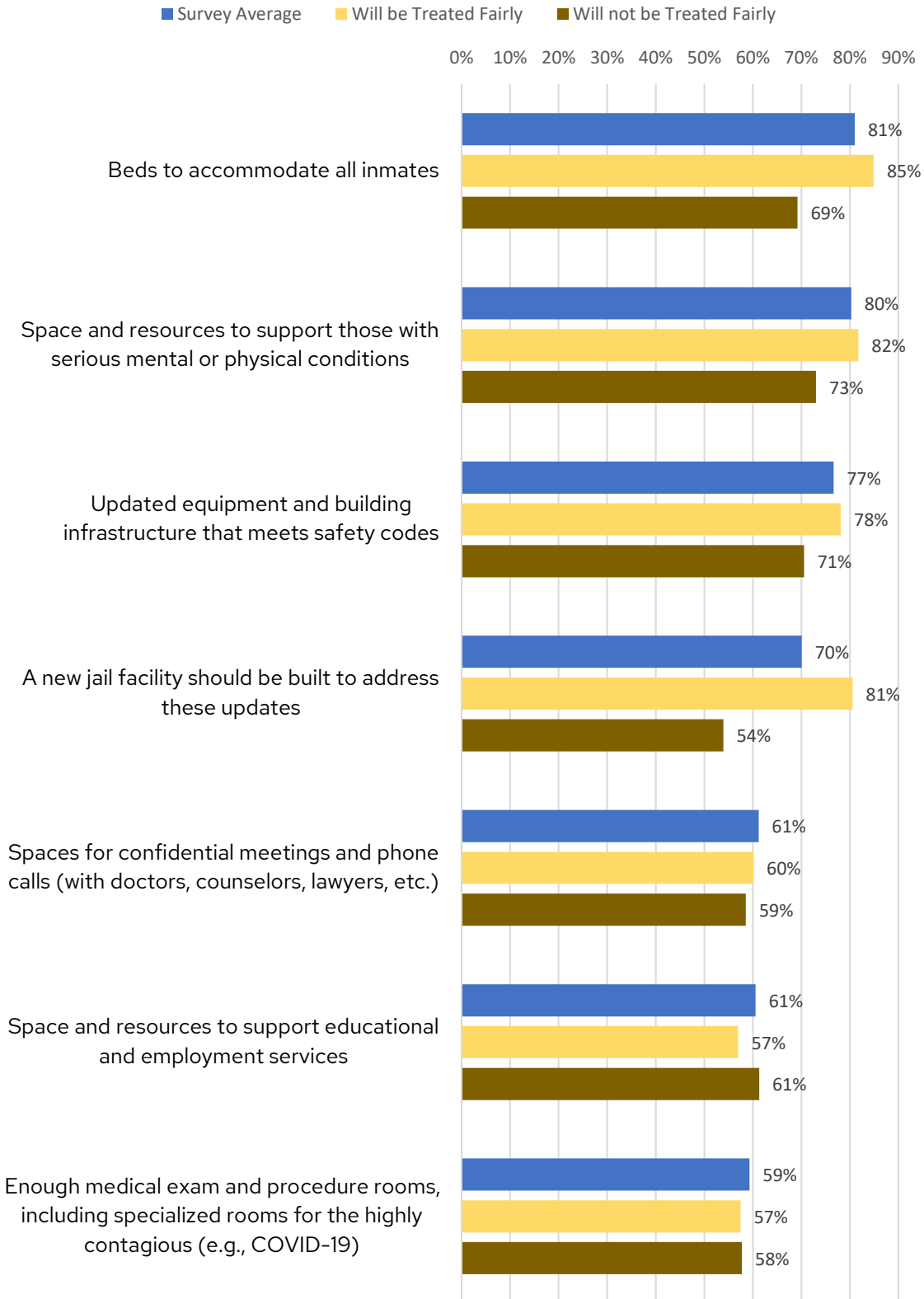


Exhibit 43: Whatcom County Criminal Legal System Investment Priorities by Feeling of Safety within their Community

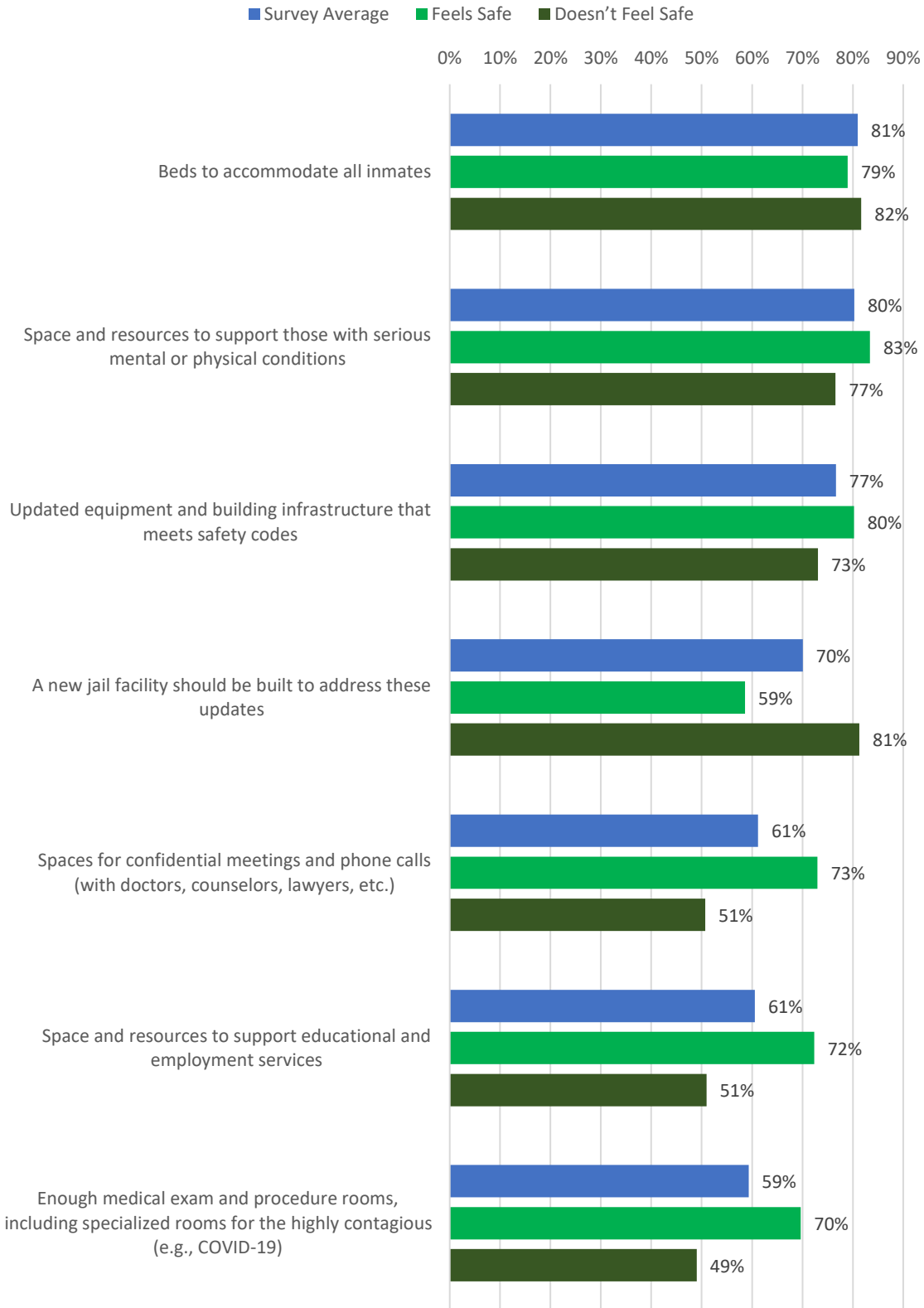


Exhibit 44: Whatcom County Jail Improvement Priorities by Race and Ethnicity

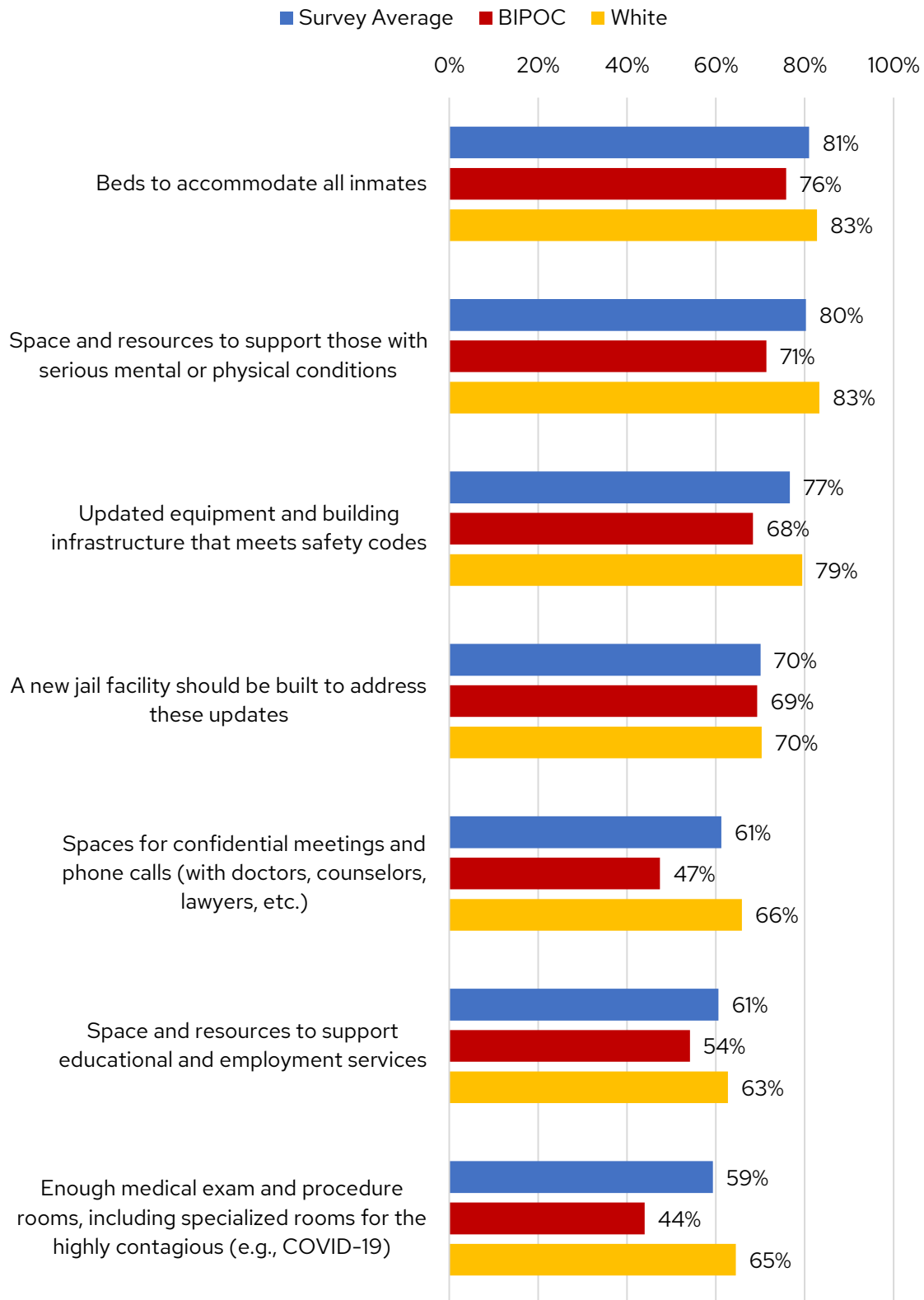
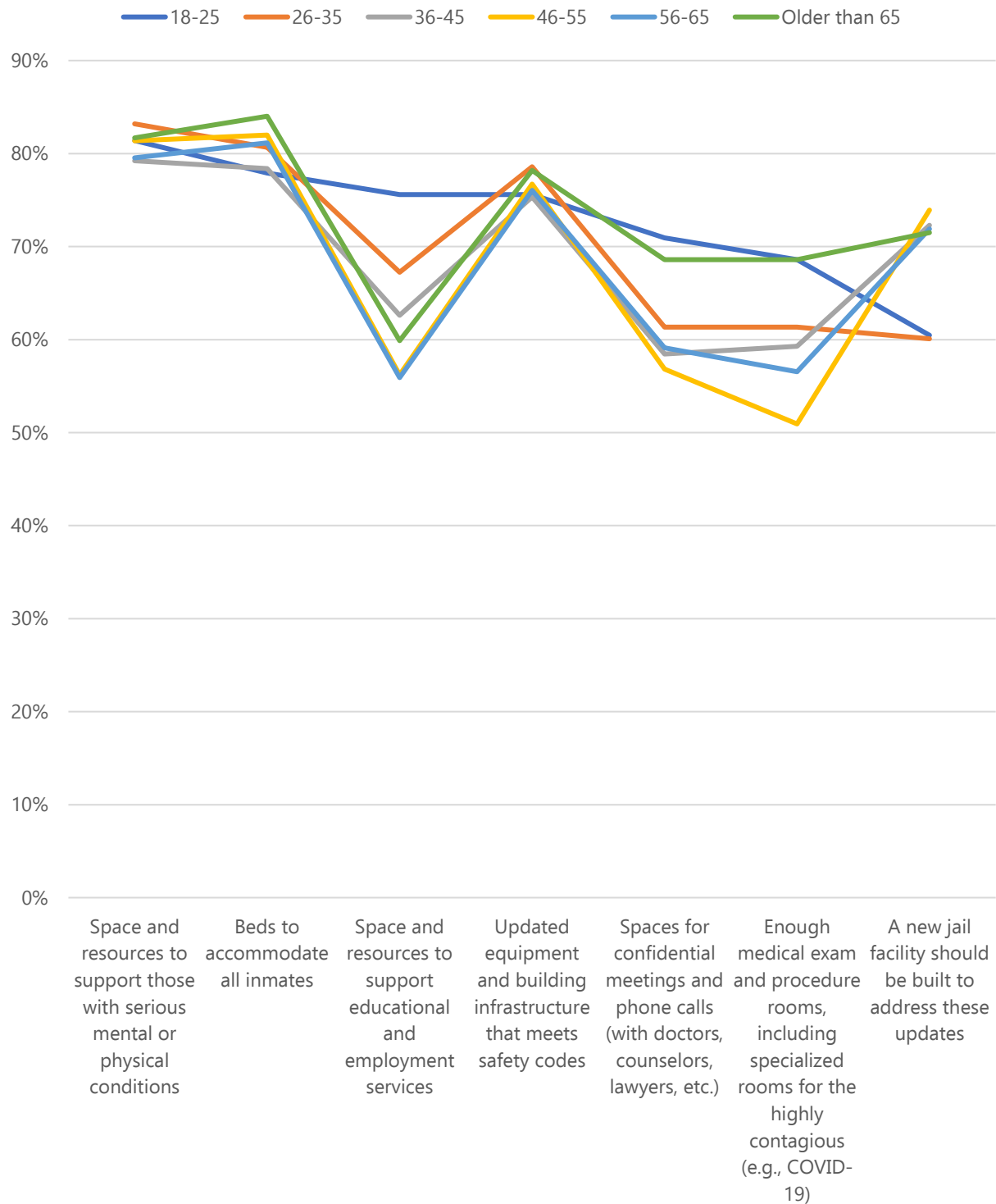


Exhibit 45: Whatcom County Jail Improvement Priorities by Age



Behavioral Health Improvements

Regarding behavioral health improvements, respondents picked the following options, in order (Exhibit 46):

1. Services to help connect those leaving jail to mental health and substance use disorder treatment
2. In-jail substance use disorder and mental health counseling services
3. Community-based services for substance abuse and mental health disorders
4. Educational and vocational preparation services in the jail to prepare inmates for re-entry
5. Supportive housing services to improve housing stability
6. In-jail physical health services
7. Recovery services for violent behavior
8. Other

The main differences among respondent segments are that respondents who feel they will be unfairly treated by the criminal legal system, respondents that feel safe in their community, and respondents under 35 are more likely to prioritize “supportive housing services to improve housing stability” and “recovery services for violent behavior” (Exhibit 47, 48, and 51).

These respondent groups, as well as White identifying respondents (Exhibit 49), and female respondents (Exhibit 50) are also more likely to pick more behavioral health improvements than their counter parts, suggesting they are more interested in these kinds of improvements.

Exhibit 46: Whatcom County Behavioral Health Improvement Priorities

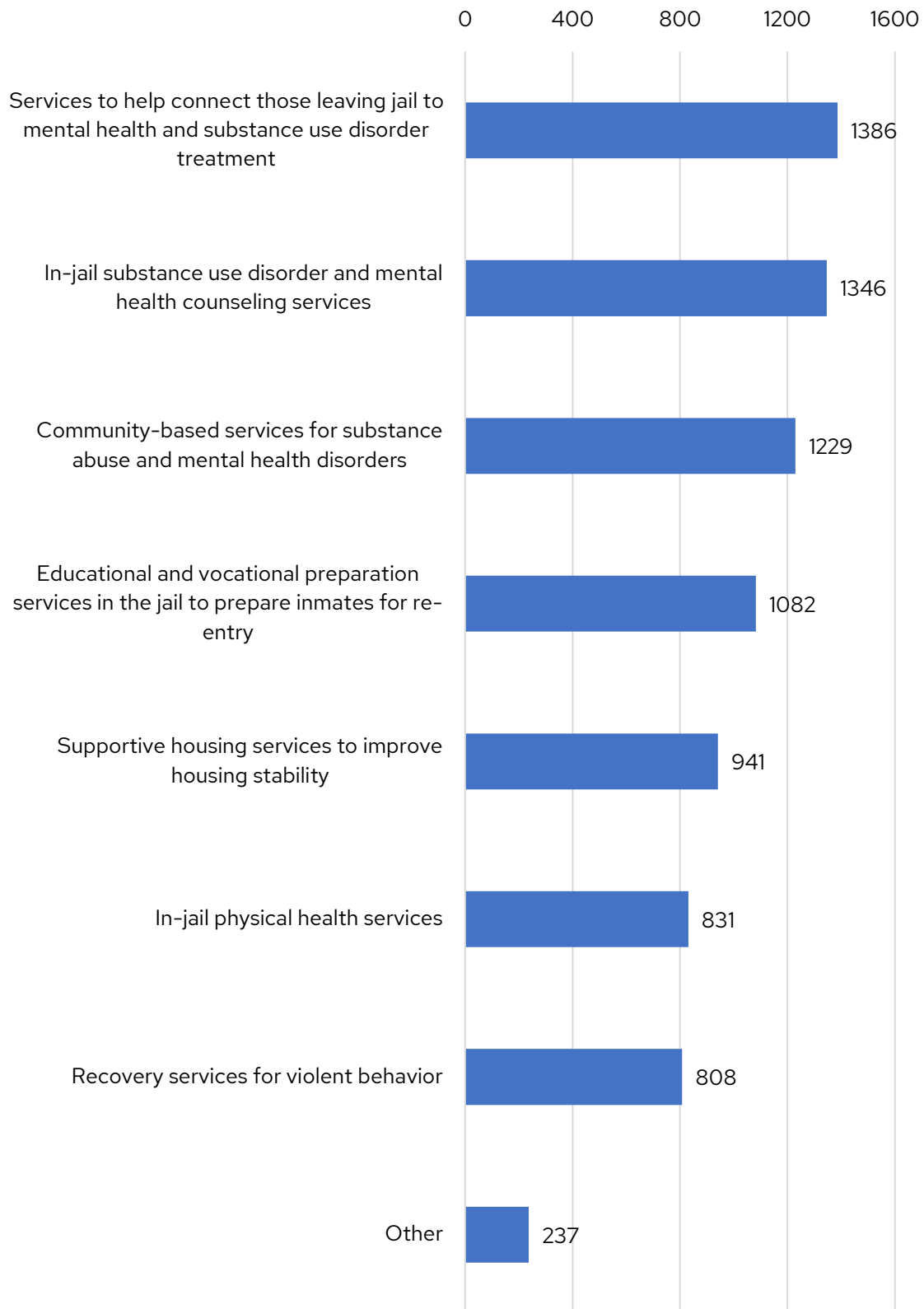


Exhibit 47: Whatcom County Behavioral Health Improvement Priorities by Feeling of Fairness Regarding their Treatment by the Criminal Legal System

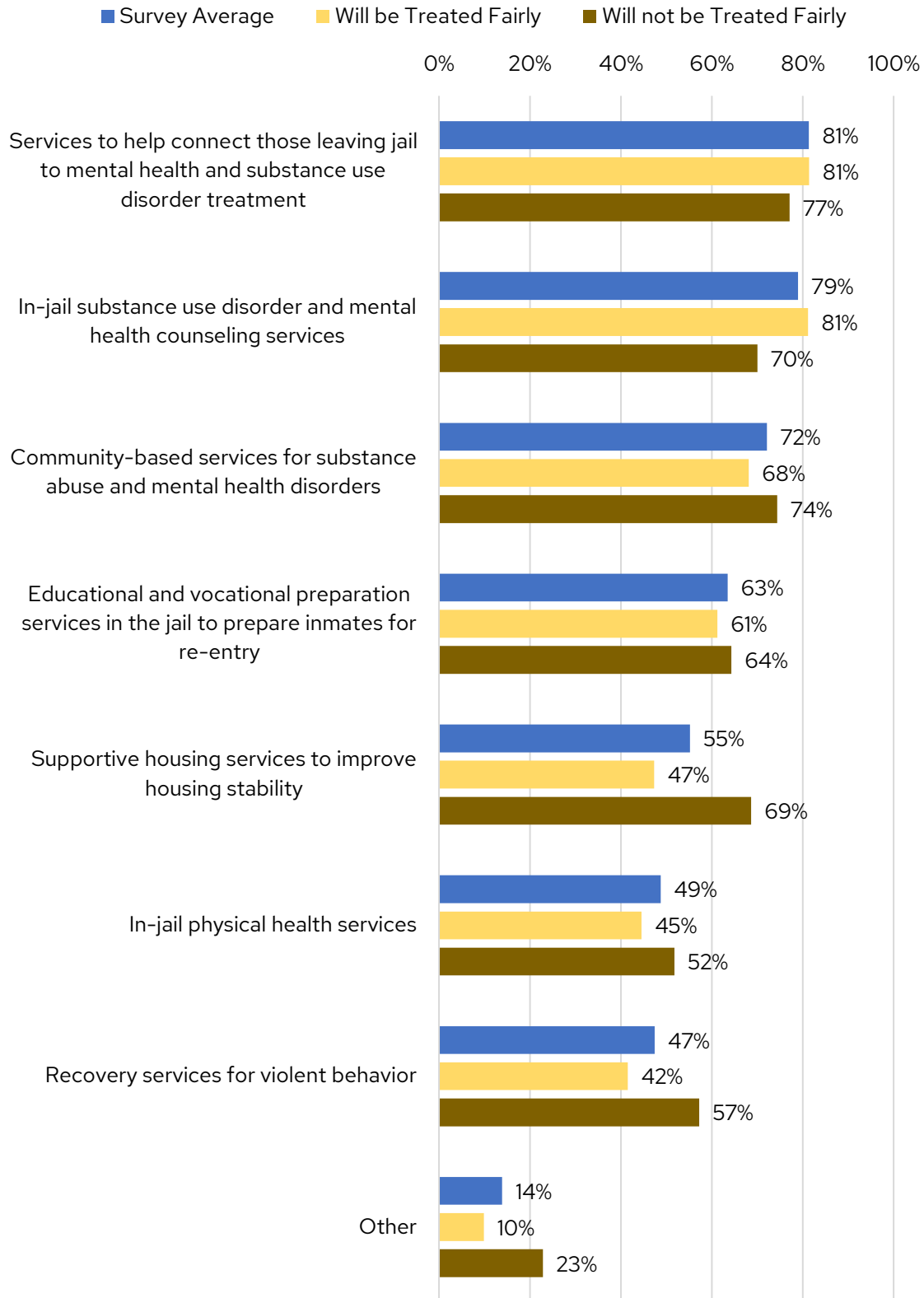


Exhibit 48: Whatcom County Behavioral Health Improvement Priorities by Feeling of Safety within their Community

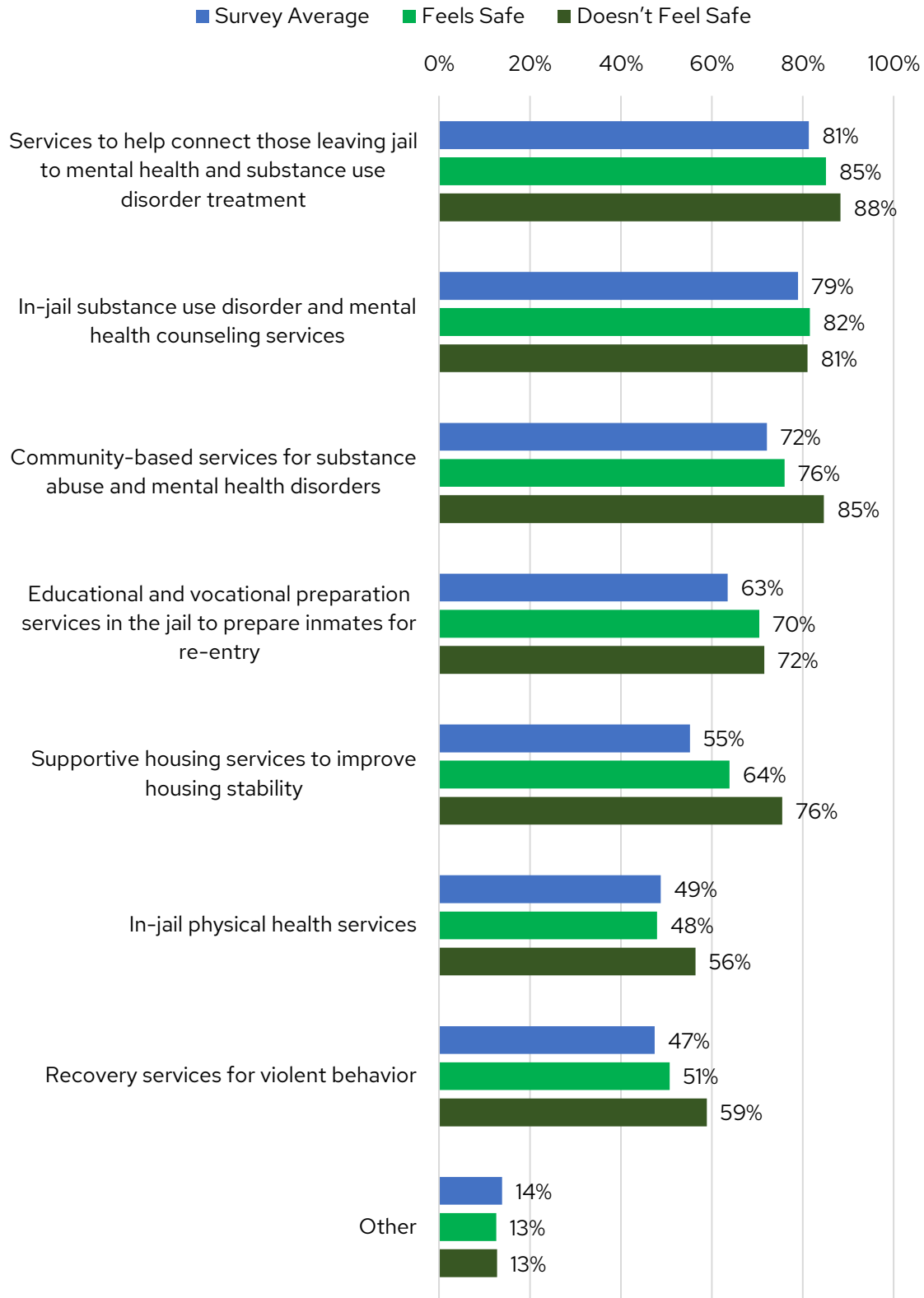


Exhibit 49: Whatcom County Behavioral Health Improvement Priorities by Race and Ethnicity

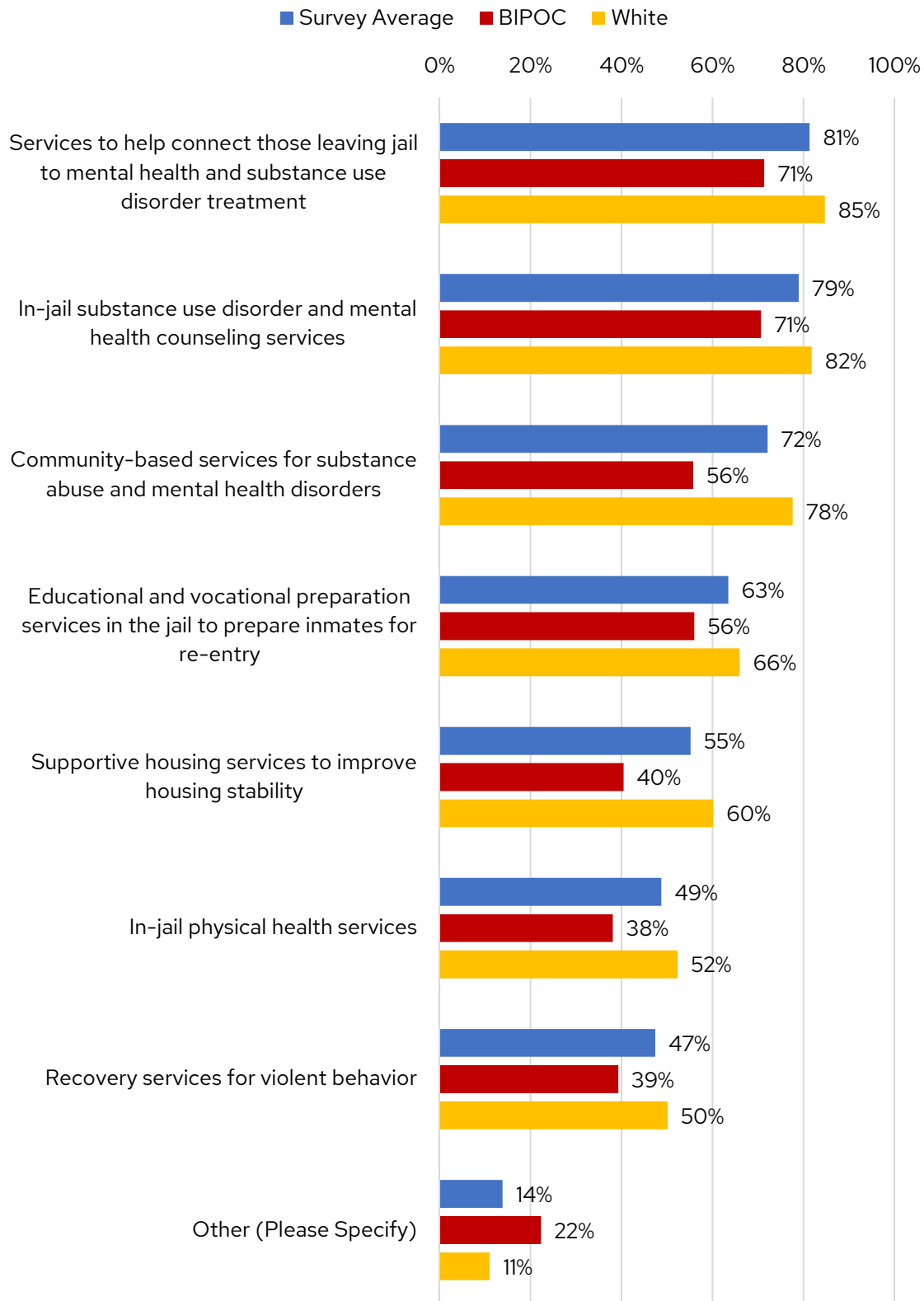


Exhibit 50: Whatcom County Behavioral Health Improvement Priorities by Gender

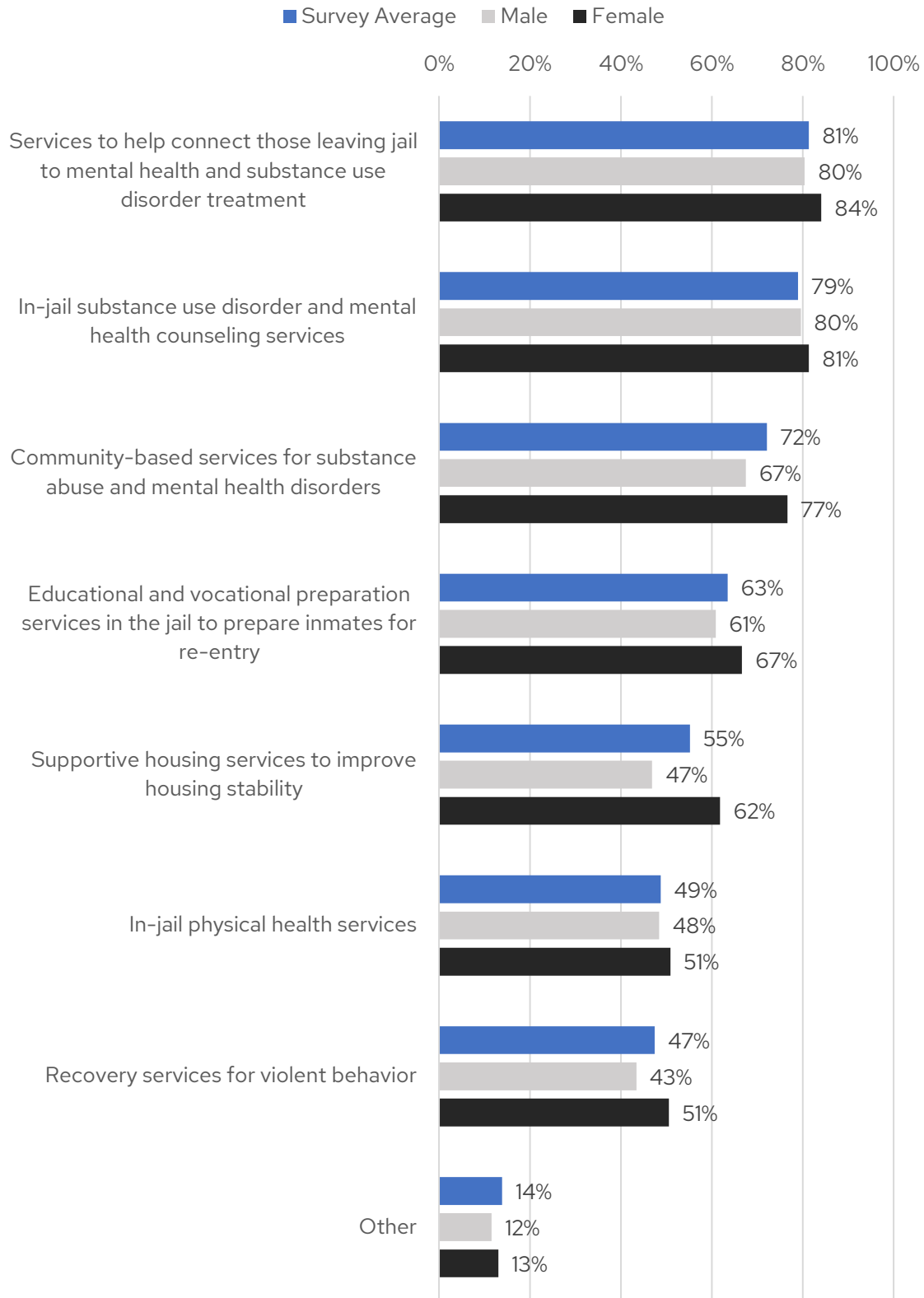


Exhibit 51: Whatcom County Behavioral Health Improvement Priorities by Age

