E Pluribus Unum
Survey Of Black, Latino and White Adults In The American South

May 2021
GBAO conducted a survey of 1,200 Black, white, and Latino adults in the American South from May 14-18, 2021. The interviews were conducted by telephone (landline and cell phones) and text-to-web. The margin of error for each racial group is +/- 4.9 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level.

- 400 White Adults
- 400 Black Adults
- 400 Latino Adults
Executive Summary And Key Findings
An overwhelming majority of Black, Latino, and white Southerners agree with the jury’s verdict that found Derek Chauvin guilty of murdering George Floyd. However, one year after George Floyd’s murder, attitudes and perceptions about the police, systemic racism, and the public protests after the murder continue to diverge sharply along racial lines in the American South.

These divergent attitudes and perceptions, not surprisingly, begin with the different personal experiences that individuals have encountered or expect to encounter with the police in the United States.

Previous E Pluribus Unum research has shown clear divisions among Black, Latino, and white adults on their perceptions of systemic racism, and these divisions are on vivid display when examining the intersection of systemic racism and policing.
The largest divides continue to be the different views between Black and white adults, while Latino adults’ attitudes tend to fall in the middle. Depending on the issue, there are many instances – particularly on questions related to systemic racism – where Latino Southerners’ views are closer to white Southerners than Black Southerners.

Despite these different attitudes expressed by Black, Latino, and white adults, there is a significant amount of common ground across race on the path forward. Numerous policy proposals for changing the criminal justice system receive strong support among Southerners, regardless of race. It appears that when presented with solutions focus on specific, undeniable problems that were brought to light in the video of George Floyd’s murder, people across race find reforms compelling. This common ground distinguishes itself from the more divisive views about the pervasiveness of systemic racism.
Key Findings – Perceptions Of The Police

- Majorities of Black (66 percent), Latino (78 percent), and white (84 percent) Southerners have favorable views of the police in their community.

- Perceptions of the police change significantly among Black adults when respondents are asked their favorability toward “police in the United States.” Favorability drops to 40 percent among Black Southerners and has modest shifts among Latino Southerners (64 percent favorable) and white southerners (75 percent favorable).

- Unlike white (14 percent) and Latino (37 percent) Southerners, Black Southerners (71 percent) express deep concerns about whether a family member or themselves will be a victim of police brutality.
Black Southerners express concerns over systemic racism on a variety of measures, while white Southerners do not. Latino attitudes about systemic racism are in the middle, but often lean closer to white attitudes.

White Southerners divide evenly on whether the deaths of Black people and other people of color during encounters with police are signs of a broader problem (43 percent) or isolated incidents (44 percent).

A plurality of Latinos (49 percent) think these deaths are signs of a broader problem instead of being isolated incidents (36 percent).

A large majority of Black Southerners (71 percent) think the deaths are signs of a broader problem, not isolated incidents (18 percent).

Similarly, 87 percent of Black Southerners think the criminal justice system discriminates against Black people and other people of color, compared to 58 percent of Latinos and 35 percent of whites.
Key Findings – George Floyd Verdict

- Most Southerners, regardless of race, agree with the guilty verdict of Derek Chauvin. Black (91 percent) and Latino (80 percent) adults overwhelmingly agree with the verdict, and a large majority of white adults (66 percent) agree as well.

  Younger white adults (74 percent) are much more likely than older white adults (58 percent) to agree with the verdict.

- White and Latino adults share similar views on whether the Chauvin verdict is a step in the right direction that will impact how police conduct themselves (60 percent of whites; 62 percent of Latinos) instead of not having any impact (29 percent of whites; 32 percent of Latinos). Black adults are not as optimistic about the impact of the verdict (53 percent step in right direction/42 percent will not have any impact).

- The protests that took place after the Floyd murder were viewed very differently by Black and white Southerners, while Latinos’ view were split evenly on whether the protests had a positive or negative effect on race relations.

  Black: 66 percent positive effect / 26 percent negative effect
  White: 28 percent positive effect / 67 percent negative effect
  Latino: 45 percent positive effect / 45 percent negative effect
Key Findings – Criminal Justice Reform Proposals

- Despite the different views among Black, Latino, and white Southerners on issues related to policing and systemic racism, there is a great deal of common ground on a range of policy proposals to reform the criminal justice system.

- The strongest reforms center on addressing the use of force, holding police accountable, and increasing the funding and training hours for police officers. These policies receive strong support across race.

  Open-ended responses also reveal a desire for doing what is necessary to have well-trained police who will do their job properly and end the mistreatment of Black people.

- There is broad opposition, regardless of race, to “defund the police.” Also, white adults strongly oppose reducing the size of police forces by not replacing police who retire or leave the force, and using the savings for community anti-violence programs (27 percent support / 72 percent oppose). A slight majority of Black Southerners support this reform (52 percent support / 41 percent oppose) and a slight majority of Latinos oppose it (44 percent support / 52 percent oppose).
Race is the clear dividing line on attitudes toward police conduct, systemic racism, and discrimination in the criminal justice system, but there are additional notable dynamics based on gender, partisanship, and age.

Latinas are considerably more likely to see systemic racism than Latinos. There is a similar dynamic among Black women and men, but it is not as stark. Gender differences are not very apparent among whites.

Partisanship is closely connected to Southerners views toward race. White Democrats’ attitudes resemble those of Black and Latino Democrats more than white Independents and white Republicans.

Younger whites hold more progressive views on race than older whites, but younger whites are not nearly as enlightened on race as Black and Latino Southerners of all ages.
Local Police Received Well; Large Divide On Views Of Police Across U.S.

Police In Your Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Favorable</th>
<th>Unfavorable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Police In The US

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Favorable</th>
<th>Unfavorable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Black Adults Personally Worry About Police Brutality, Unlike White And Latino Adults

Do you ever worry about yourself or a member of your family being the victim of police brutality, or not?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Across Race, Younger People More Concerned With Police Brutality

Do you ever worry about yourself or a member of your family being the victim of police brutality, or not?

- Black under 50: Yes 73, No 26
- Black over 50: Yes 67, No 31
- Latino under 50: Yes 58, No 39
- Latino over 50: Yes 67, No 32
- White under 50: Yes 76, No 21
- White over 50: Yes 88, No 8
Systemic Racism
Do you think the deaths of Black people and other people of color during encounters with police in recent years are isolated incidents or signs of a broader problem?

- **Isolated Incidents**
- **Signs of a broader problem**
- **Both/Neither**

### Deaths In Police Custody

- **Black**
  - 18 Isolated Incidents
  - 71 Signs of a broader problem
  - 8 Both/Neither

- **Latino**
  - 36 Isolated Incidents
  - 49 Signs of a broader problem
  - 6 Both/Neither

- **White**
  - 44 Isolated Incidents
  - 43 Signs of a broader problem
  - 7 Both/Neither
Do you think the deaths of Black people and other people of color during encounters with police in recent years are isolated incidents or signs of a broader problem?

- **Isolated Incidents**
- **Signs of a broader problem**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Isolated Incidents</th>
<th>Signs of a broader problem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black Dems</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Inds</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino Dems</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino Inds</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino Reps</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Dems</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Inds</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Reps</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
College Educated Adults More Likely To Find Deaths In Custody To Be Signs Of Broader Problem

Do you think the deaths of Black people and other people of color during encounters with police in recent years are isolated incidents or signs of a broader problem?

- **Isolated Incidents**
- **Signs of a broader problem**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Black college</th>
<th>Black non-college</th>
<th>Latino college</th>
<th>Latino non-college</th>
<th>White college</th>
<th>White non-college</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deaths In Police Custody</strong></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>76</strong></td>
<td><strong>70</strong></td>
<td><strong>60</strong></td>
<td><strong>47</strong></td>
<td><strong>50</strong></td>
<td><strong>41</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Black Women And Latinas More Likely To ID Systemic Racism

**Deaths In Police Custody**

Do you think the deaths of Black people and other people of color during encounters with police in recent years are isolated incidents or signs of a broader problem?

- **Isolated Incidents**
- **Signs of a broader problem**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Isolated Incidents</th>
<th>Signs of a broader problem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black men</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black women</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latinos</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latinas</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White men</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White women</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One Year After Floyd’s Murder, Slight Increase In Whites And Latinos Holding Victims Responsible For Their Own Deaths In Police Custody

Do you think the deaths of Black people and other people of color in police custody are the result of the behavior of those in custody, the result of bad police officers, or the result of a racist police system?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>October 2020</th>
<th>May 2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Black</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Latino</strong></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>White</strong></td>
<td>39</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Behavior of those in custody**
- **Bad police officers**
- **Racist police system**
Do you think the criminal justice system in the United States...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Latino</th>
<th>White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...too often discriminates against Black people and other people of color.</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...generally treats all citizens equally, regardless of race or ethnicity.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Aftermath Of George Floyd’s Murder
As you may know, a jury in Minneapolis recently found police officer Derek Chauvin guilty for the murder of George Floyd. Do you agree or disagree with the jury’s verdict to convict Chauvin?

Strong Majorities Across Race Agree With The Chauvin Verdict

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black under 50</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black over 50</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino under 50</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino over 50</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White under 50</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White over 50</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Latinos And Whites More Optimistic About Verdict’s Impact On Policing

(AMONG PEOPLE WHO AGREE WITH VERDICT) Do you think the guilty verdict in this case is a step in the right direction that will impact how police conduct themselves or do you think the guilty verdict will not have any impact on how police conduct themselves?

Verdict Impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Step in the right direction</th>
<th>Will not have any impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thinking about the protests that took place last year following the death of George Floyd, do you think the protests and broader discussions have had a positive or negative effect on race relations in the United States?

- **Black men**: 59 Positive, 32 Negative
- **Black women**: 73 Positive, 20 Negative
- **Latinos**: 39 Positive, 56 Negative
- **Latinas**: 52 Positive, 34 Negative
- **White men**: 26 Positive, 67 Negative
- **White women**: 28 Positive, 67 Negative
Agreement Across Racial Lines That Lawmakers Have Not Done Enough, But Much Greater Concern Among Black Adults

Lawmakers’ Response

In the aftermath of George Floyd’s death, do you think lawmakers have done enough to address the killing of unarmed Black people and other people of color by police officers?

- **Black**: 83% Yes, 13% No
- **Latino**: 59% Yes, 31% No
- **White**: 47% Yes, 36% No
Black Adults Concerned Lawmakers Will Not Do Enough; Whites Concerned They Will Go Too Far; Latinos Shifting Some

Thinking about lawmakers’ response to the protests that have continued after the death of George Floyd, which concerns you more?

- Lawmakers will **not go far enough** in addressing police brutality and bias against Black Americans and other people of color throughout the criminal justice system.
- Lawmakers will **go too far** in addressing these issues and will take steps that end up weakening our ability to enforce law and order, and will make our communities less safe.

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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>35</td>
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The Path Forward
Criminal Justice Proposals

- Require officers to step in when they see other officers using excessive force and holding them responsible if they don’t.
- Reform the police use of force standards, by limiting the types of force they can use in certain situations and require reporting of all instances of deadly force in a national database.
- Increase the funding and training hours for police officers across the country.

**Figure 30**

Broad Support On Reform Related To Deadly Force And Increased Investment In Quality Of Policing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposal</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Latino</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Total favor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Require officers to step in when they see other officers using excessive force and holding them responsible if they don’t.</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reform the police use of force standards, by limiting the types of force they can use in certain situations and require reporting of all instances of deadly force in a national database.</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase the funding and training hours for police officers across the country.</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Strongly favor**

- Black: 85
- Latino: 87
- White: 91
- Total favor: 92
Broad Support On Accountability Measures

Criminal Justice Proposals

End immunity for police officers, and prosecute them civilly if they break the law.

Strongly favor
- Black: 70
- Latino: 54
- White: 49
- Total favor: 81

Require police departments or police officers to carry liability insurance that other professions like teachers and social workers have, so taxpayers don't have to pay for expensive settlements when police officers are found guilty of misconduct.

Strongly favor
- Black: 59
- Latino: 51
- White: 37
- Total favor: 81

Mandate citizen oversight and public input into policing accountability.

Strongly favor
- Black: 50
- Latino: 38
- White: 29
- Total favor: 74
Less Support For Shifting Police Resources And Responsibilities, Especially Among Whites

**Criminal Justice Proposals**

Ensure police officers only deal with violent crime and robbery, while assigning non-violent situations to mental health professionals and other experts.

Move money from police budgets to fund alternative policing initiatives, including prevention programs, community development, and social and health services.

Legalize recreational marijuana and end the War on Drugs.
Regardless Of Race, Lack Of Support For Defunding Police And Ending Cash Bail

Criminal Justice Proposals

- **Reduce the size of police forces by not replacing police who quit or retire, and then use the savings for community-based anti-violence programs.**
  - Total: 52
  - Black: 20
  - Latino: 27
  - White: 44

- **End cash bail.**
  - Total: 43
  - Black: 20
  - Latino: 45
  - White: 35

- **Defund the police.**
  - Total: 38
  - Black: 16
  - Latino: 29
  - White: 16
High Support Holds For Requiring Officers To Stop Others Using Excessive Force; Slight Increase In Support For More Police Training and Funding

**Reform Proposal Tracking**

*Increasing the funding of and training hours for police officers across the country*

- **Strongly Favor**
  - Black: Oct '20 - 52, May '21 - 64
  - Latino: Oct '20 - 59, May '21 - 63
  - White: Oct '20 - 63, May '21 - 64

- **Total Favor**
  - Black: Oct '20 - 74, May '21 - 85
  - Latino: Oct '20 - 72, May '21 - 74
  - White: Oct '20 - 69, May '21 - 66

- **Require officers to step in when they see other officers using excessive force and holding them responsible if they don't.**
  - Black: Oct '20 - 88, May '21 - 92
  - Latino: Oct '20 - 90, May '21 - 87
  - White: Oct '20 - 90, May '21 - 91
Slight Decline In Support For Ending Police Immunity, Though Remains Favorable Across Race

Reform Policies Over Time

End immunity for police officers and prosecute them civilly if they break the law.
Appendix: Demographic Profile Of Black Southerners
Demographic Profile of Black Southerners:
Very Democratic, Non-College Educated, More Women Than Men, Mixed Ages

**Party**
- Democrat: 72
- Independent: 20
- Republican: 4

**Education**
- HS or Less: 45
- Vo-Tech/Some Coll/Assoc: 34
- College: 13
- Grad School: 8
- 79% Non-College

**Gender**
- Men: 46
- Women: 53

**Age**
- 18 to 29: 26
- 30 to 39: 19
- 40 to 49: 17
- 50 to 64: 24
- 65+: 15
Demographic Profile Of Black Southerners: Suburban, Ideologically Diverse, Working-And-Middle-Class

**Ideology**
- Liberal: 22
- Moderate: 38
- Conservative: 28

**Area Type**
- Urban: 28
- Suburban: 45
- Rural: 27

**Marital Status**
- Married: 32
- Unmarried: 64

**Kids**
- Yes: 35
- No: 63

**Income**
- Below 50K: 49
- 50K-75K: 16
- 75K or more: 19
Appendix:
Demographic Profile Of Latino Southerners
Demographic Profile of Latino Southerners: Democratic, Non-College Educated, Even Gender Mix, Very Young

**Party**
- Democrat: 47
- Independent: 27
- Republican: 23

**Education**
- HS or Less: 52
- Vo-Tech/Some Coll/Assoc: 27
- College: 13
- Grad School: 6
- Non-College: 79%

**Gender**
- Men: 50
- Women: 49

**Age**
- 18 to 29: 27
- 30 to 39: 22
- 40 to 49: 20
- 50 to 64: 20
- 65+: 11
Demographic Profile of Latino Southerners: Suburban/Urban Mix, Ideologically Diverse, Majority Lower Income

### Ideology
- Liberal: 20
- Moderate: 40
- Conservative: 32

### Area Type
- Urban: 43
- Suburban: 41
- Rural: 16

### Marital Status
- Married: 47
- Unmarried: 50

### Kids
- Yes: 38
- No: 60

### Income
- Below 50K: 49
- 50K-75K: 14
- 75K or more: 27
Appendix: Demographic Profile Of White Southerners
Demographic Profile Of White Southerners: Republican, Mostly Non-College Educated, Even Gender Mix, Older

### Party
- Democrat: 24
- Independent: 30
- Republican: 43

### Education
- HS or Less: 38
- Vo-Tech/Some Coll/Assoc: 31
- College: 19
- Grad School: 10

### Gender
- Men: 49
- Women: 51

### Age
- 18 to 29: 20
- 30 to 39: 16
- 40 to 49: 16
- 50 to 64: 25
- 65+: 23

69% Non-College
Demographic Profile Of White Southerners: Heavily Rural/Suburban, Ideologically Conservative, Middle Class

### Ideology
- Liberal: 16
- Moderate: 29
- Conservative: 47

### Area Type
- Urban: 18
- Suburban: 39
- Rural: 43

### Marital Status
- Married: 54
- Unmarried: 44

### Kids
- Yes: 27
- No: 71

### Income
- Below 50K: 36
- 50K to 75K: 16
- 75K or more: 33