

JULY 2024

# FINAL REPORT 2024 COMMUNITY SURVEY

Prepared for the Lethbridge Police Service by PRA Inc.



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Overall perceptions of the Lethbridge Police Service are more positive**

Residents appear to be satisfied with LPS, most notably that 84% are satisfied with LPS in 2024, which is higher than 2023 (83%) and 2022 (78%).

- **Changes in perceptions of the Lethbridge Police Service**

Although overall perceptions are higher, there were a few changes in perceptions in other areas, such as **the job LPS is doing policing the community** (85% in 2024 versus 86% in 2023), **meeting expectations** (83% in 2024 versus 83% in 2023), **professionalism of LPS** (85% in 2024 versus 89% in 2023), and that **LPS is adequately staffed** (55% in 2024 versus 50% in 2023).|

- **Majority feel safe in their community, but there are perceptions of changes in safety**

Although 70% say they feel safe in Lethbridge (up from 65% last year), **more** say they **feel less safe** (31%) than more safe (13%) compared to a year ago.

- **Greater need for community policing**

Residents have a **strong desire for more community policing**, with 54% indicating LPS should be doing more compared to 5% who say they should be doing less in this area. In fact, the 54% who want LPS doing more is the highest to date. In terms of specific areas for more policing, **crime prevention** ranks as the highest priority at 70%, while **traffic enforcement** ranks last at 28%. In addition, the three biggest priority areas continue to be **drug crime** (77%), **crimes against persons** (72%), and **property crime** (72%).

# SECTION 1: BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

# BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

- An annual survey of citizens is conducted to assess their satisfaction with the Lethbridge Police Service and their perceptions of crime and public safety in the community. For the 2024 survey, LPS hired PRA Inc.
- A total of 400 Lethbridge citizens aged 18 years and over were interviewed by telephone between July 2 and 16, 2024. The sample included both landlines (~40%) and cell phone numbers (~60%). The margin-of-error for this telephone survey of 400 adults is +/- 4.9%, 19 times out of 20. The margin-of-error is higher for sub-populations analyzed in these results.
- For this study, the sample is weighted to the general population data for Lethbridge to correct for differences in age, gender, and income. Proportions in this report are weighted. For a profile of respondents, please see Appendix A.
- Where applicable and available, this report compares the results of the 2024 survey with the results of previous citizen satisfaction surveys.

## REPORT NOTES

- The percentages shown for questions report may not add up to exactly 100%, due to rounding.
- Value labels less than 3% for categories may not be shown in graphs for readability.
- All differences between groups have a p-value of less than .001, unless otherwise stated.
- For some questions, changes five percentage points or greater from the previous year are shown using the following symbols: ↓ for decreases of five percentage points or greater and ↑ for increases of five percentages points or greater.

# SECTION 2: PERCEPTIONS OF LETHBRIDGE POLICE SERVICE

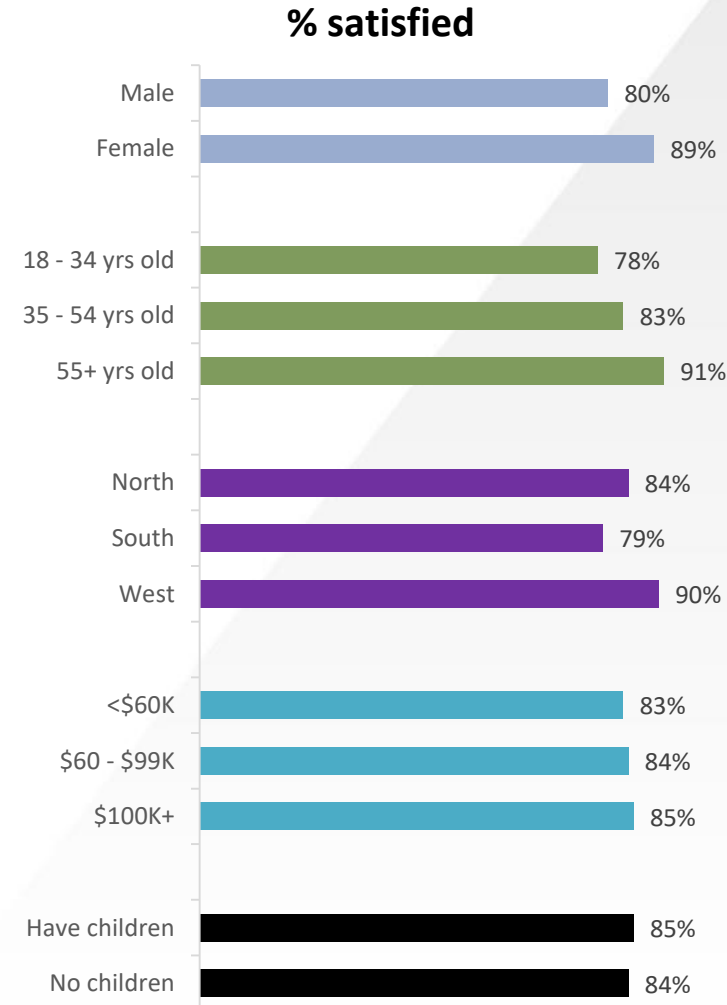
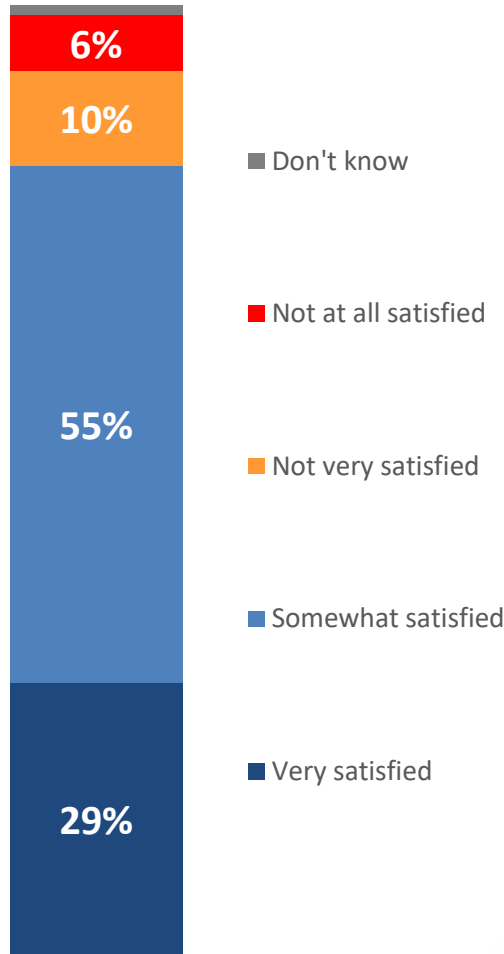
# OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH LETHBRIDGE POLICE SERVICE

Q1. Taking everything into account, including your own personal experience and anything you may have read, seen or heard, how satisfied are you with the services provided by the Lethbridge Police Service overall?

- Overall, more than 8 in 10 residents are satisfied with the Lethbridge Police Service, including 29% who are very satisfied.

## Demographic insights:

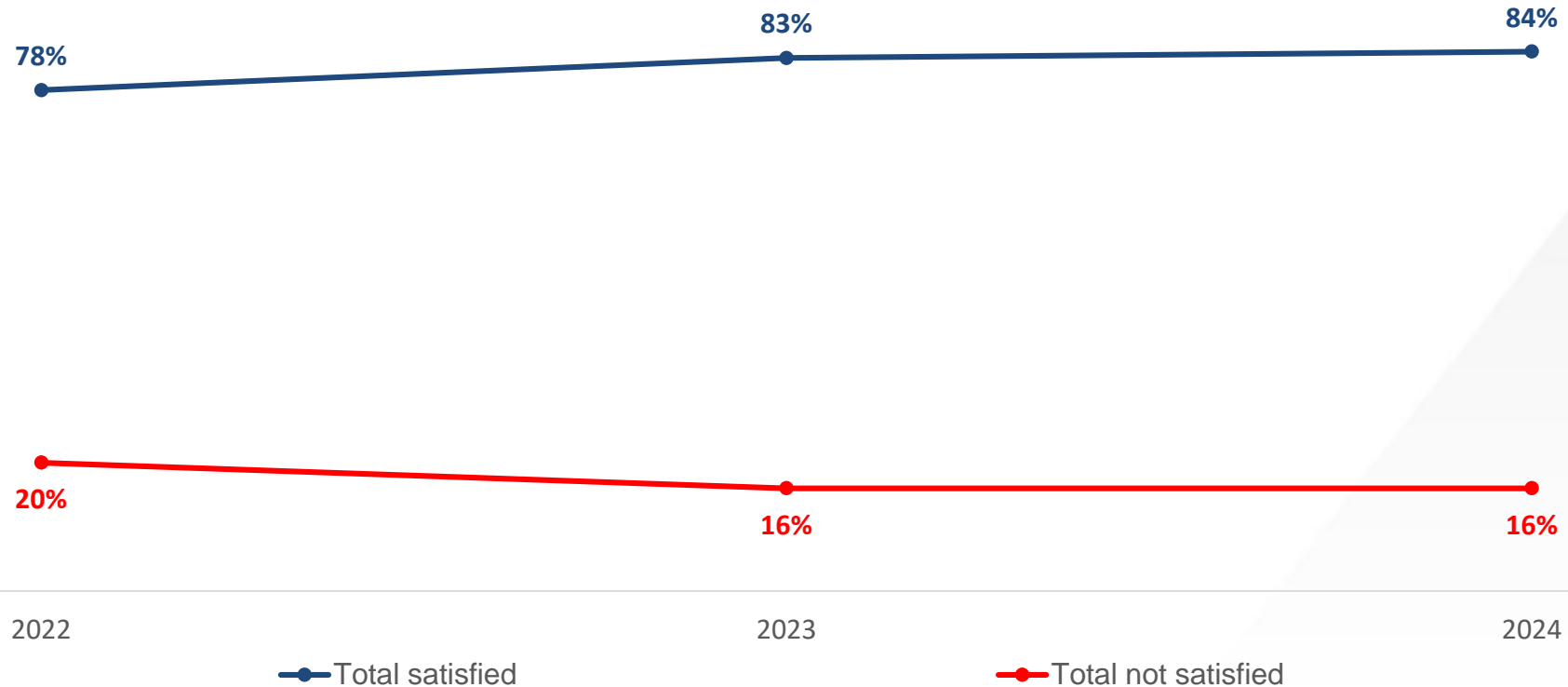
- Although the differences are not statistically significant, results indicate that older residents are more likely to be satisfied with the Lethbridge Police Service.
- There is also some evidence to suggest that those living in the west are more satisfied than those living in the north or south.



# OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH LPS OVER TIME

Q1. Taking everything into account, including your own personal experience and anything you may have read, seen or heard, how satisfied are you with the services provided by the Lethbridge Police Service overall?

- Results indicate a slightly positive shift in perceptions of Lethbridge Police Service over the past three years, although this year saw just a one percentage point increase from 2023.



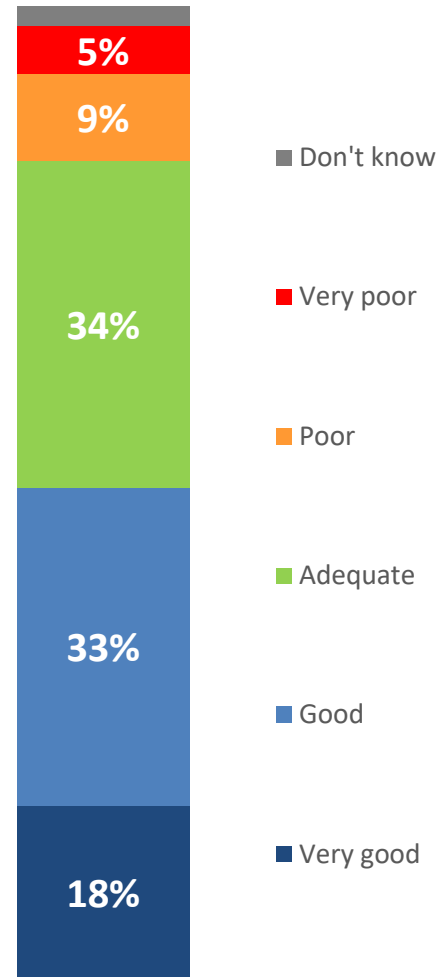
# JOB LETHBRIDGE POLICE SERVICE IS DOING POLICING COMMUNITY

Q2. How would you rate the job the Lethbridge Police Service is doing in policing the community?

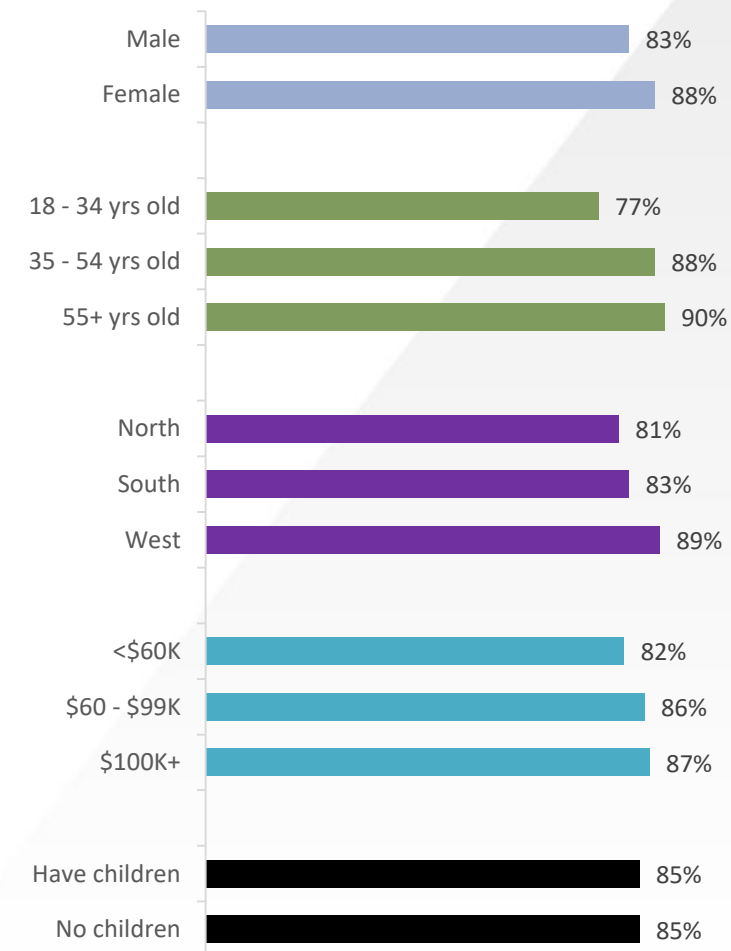
- In terms of rating the job the Lethbridge Police Service is doing policing the community, almost 9 in 10 say LPS is doing at least an adequate job. This includes 18% who say it is doing a very good job.

## Demographic insights:

- Although the differences are not statistically significant, there is some evidence to suggest that residents 35 and older and living in west Lethbridge have more positive views about how well LPS is policing the community than their counterparts.



## % adequate or higher

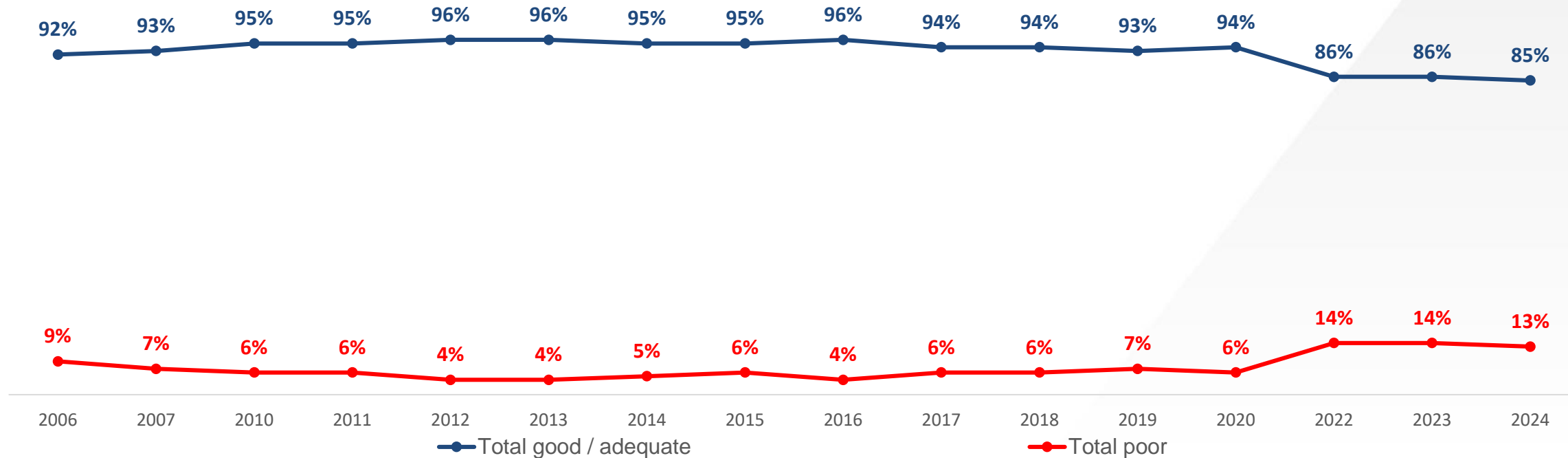




# JOB LPS IS DOING POLICING COMMUNITY OVER TIME

Q2. How would you rate the job the Lethbridge Police Service is doing in policing the community?

- After seeing a decline in positive ratings in 2022, ratings for how well residents believe Lethbridge Police Service is policing the community have been virtually unchanged over the past three years.



# REASONS FOR DOING GOOD JOB POLICING COMMUNITY

Q3. What is the main reason why you say the Lethbridge Police Service is doing a GOOD job in policing the community?  
 (BASE: Those who rated the LPS good or very good in policing the community; n = 205)

- For resident who rated Lethbridge Police Service good or very good, when asked to explain their response three themes were common: *being satisfied/not having any issues, LPS is doing the best they can/have a difficult job, and they are fast/quick to respond.*
- Compared to previous years there are slight changes, with one notable decline is the proportion who mentioned *low crime rate* year over year.

	2022	2023	2024
Satisfied/no issues	17%	9%	17% ↑
Doing the best they can/difficult job	6%	18%	15%
Fast/quick to respond	12%	10%	12%
Have a visible presence in community	11%	12%	10%
Keep community/public safe	6%	12%	9%
Professional	2%	6%	5%
Could do better/room for improvement	-	-	5% ↑
Low crime rate	11%	7%	4%
Help/support community	5%	3%	4%
Heard good things/positive word of mouth	1%	2%	3%
Don't know	6%	1%	12% ↑

# REASONS FOR DOING POOR JOB POLICING COMMUNITY

Q4. What is the main reason why you say the Lethbridge Police Service is doing a POOR job in policing the community?  
 (BASE: Those who rated the LPS poor or very poor in policing the community; n = 52)\*

- For resident who rated Lethbridge Police Service poor or very poor, when asked to explain their response the most common reasons were *having a poor personal experience with LPS* or *LPS is not doing enough to address drug activities*.
- There are many changes year over year; however, because of the small sample (~ 50 respondents) changes should be interpreted with caution.

	2022	2023	2024
Poor personal experience	-	-	14%
Not doing enough to address drug activities	8%	8%	13% ↑
Understaffed	-	-	8%
High crime rate	23%	18%	8% ↓
Not a visible presence in community	-	-	7%
Are not keeping community/public safe	-	-	7%
Slow response time	10%	9%	6%
Poor response to homelessness	-	4%	5%
Calls ignored/not answered	9%	14%	5% ↓
Poor enforcement of laws/regulations	8%	7%	4%
Doing a poor job (general)	-	-	4%
Corruption	4%	3%	3%

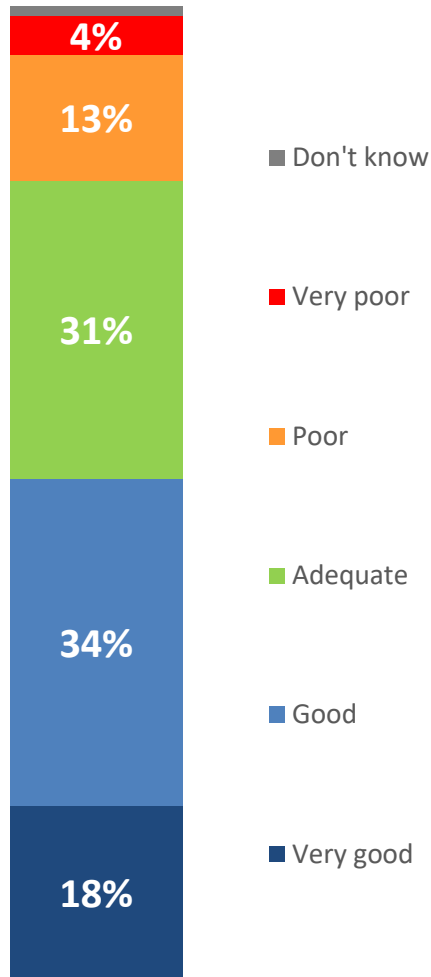
# MEETING EXPECTATIONS ABOUT KEEPING LETHBRIDGE SAFE

Q5A. How would you rate the Lethbridge Police Service in each of the following areas - Meeting your expectations about what the police should be doing to keep Lethbridge a safe and secure place to live and work?

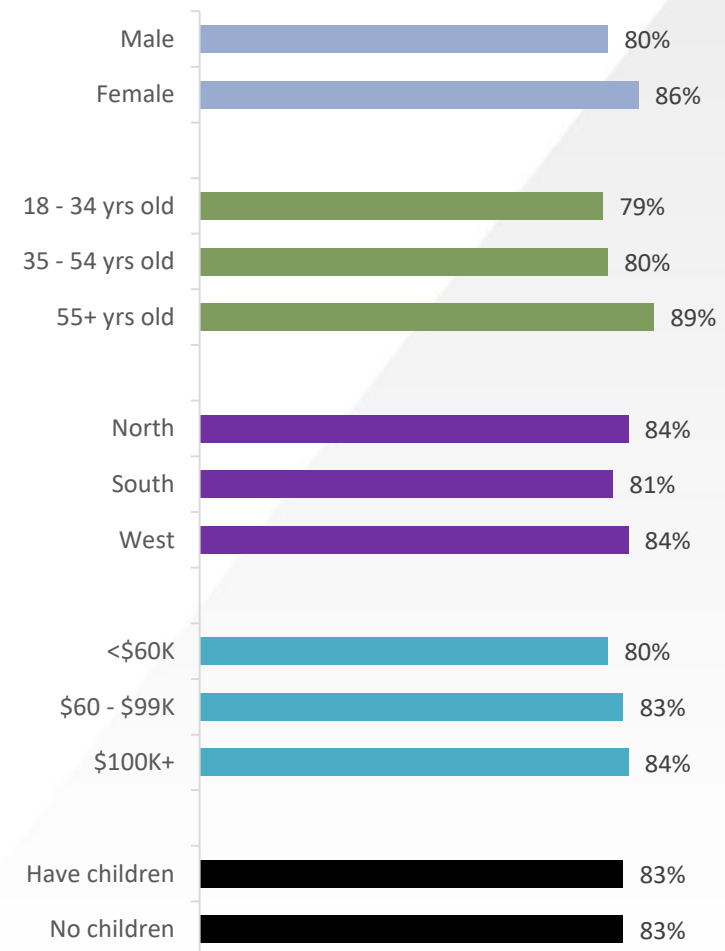
- When asked how well LPS is doing meeting their expectations about what the police should be doing to keep Lethbridge safe and secure, more than 8 in 10 say LPS is doing at least an adequate job. This includes 18% who say it is doing a very good job.

## Demographic insights:

- Although not statistically different, results indicate that those 55 and older are more likely to rate LPS as adequate or higher in terms of meeting their expectations.



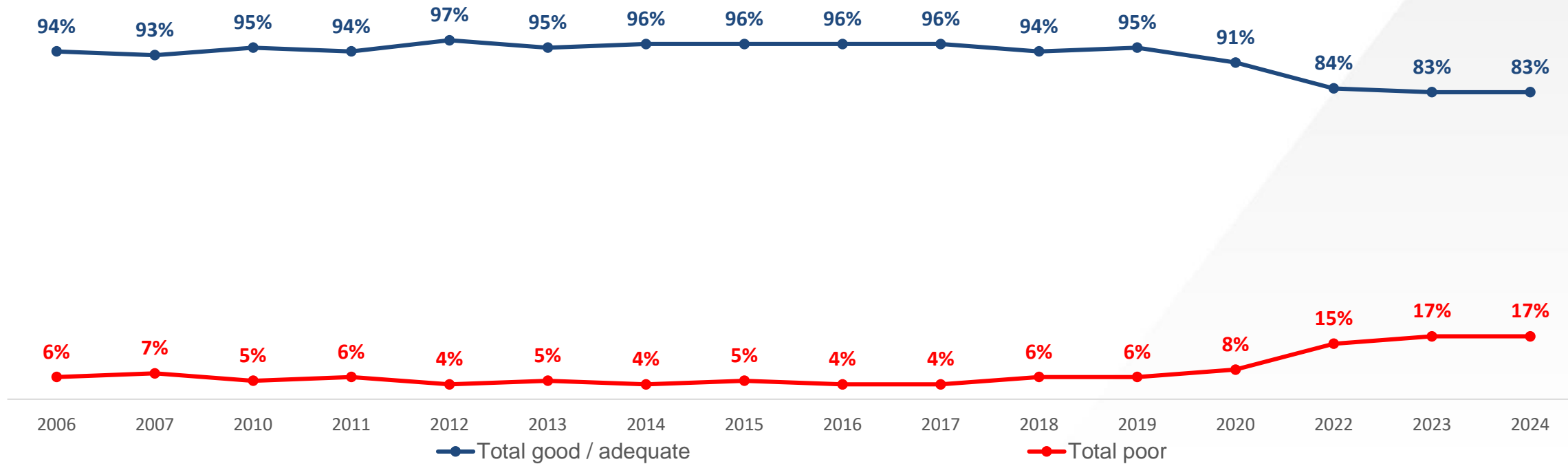
## % adequate or higher



# MEETING EXPECTATIONS OVER TIME

Q5A. How would you rate the Lethbridge Police Service in each of the following areas - Meeting your expectations about what the police should be doing to keep Lethbridge a safe and secure place to live and work?

- After seeing a decline in positive ratings from 2019 to 2022, ratings have been very similar over the past three years.



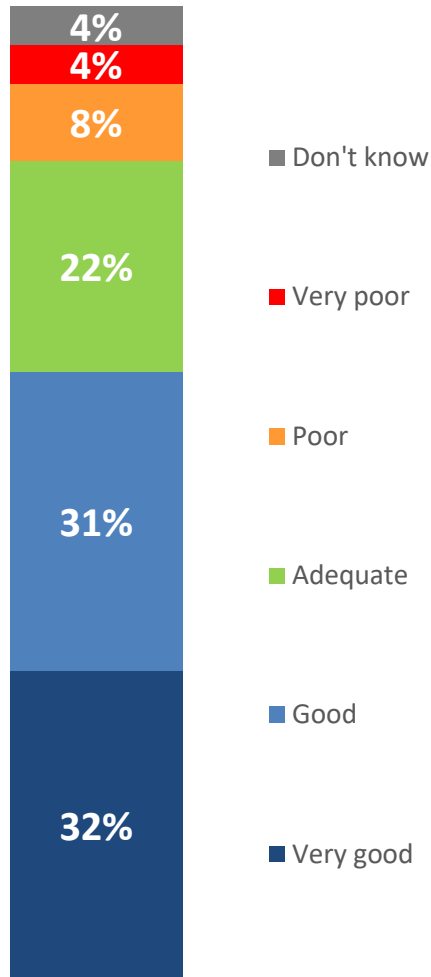
# LEVEL OF PROFESSIONALISM OF LPS PERSONNEL

Q5B. How would you rate the Lethbridge Police Service in each of the following areas - Level of professionalism of Lethbridge Police Service personnel?

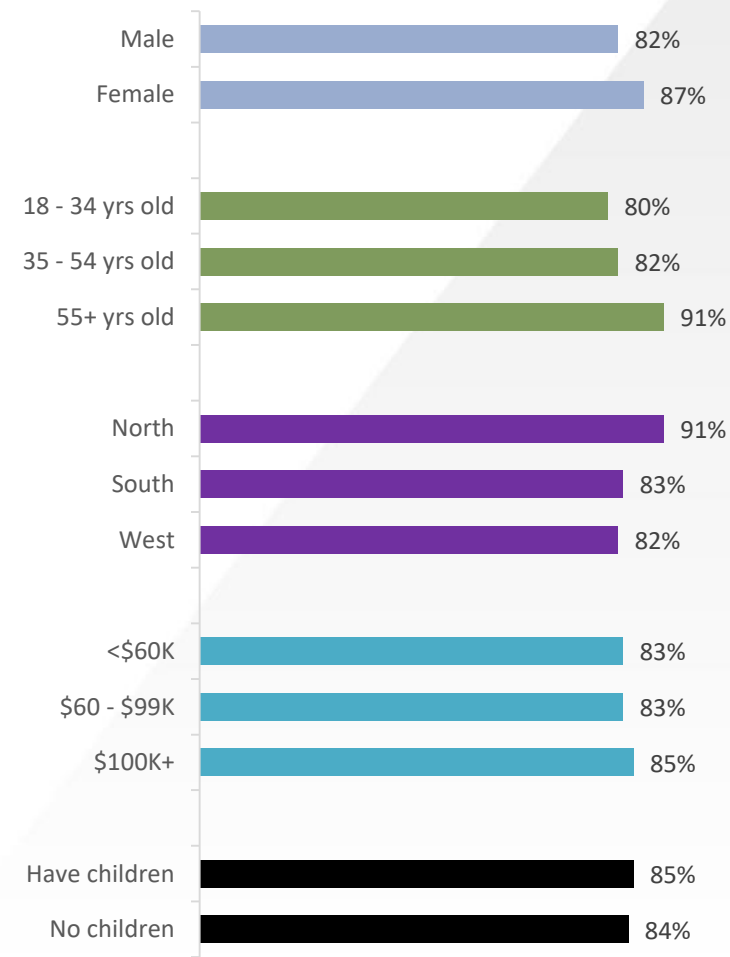
- More than 8 in 10 rate the level of professionalism of Lethbridge Police Service personnel as at least adequate, including 32% who rate it as very good.

## Demographic insights:

- Although not statistically different, results indicate that those 55 and older and living in north Lethbridge are most likely to rate LPS as adequate or higher in terms of their level of professionalism.



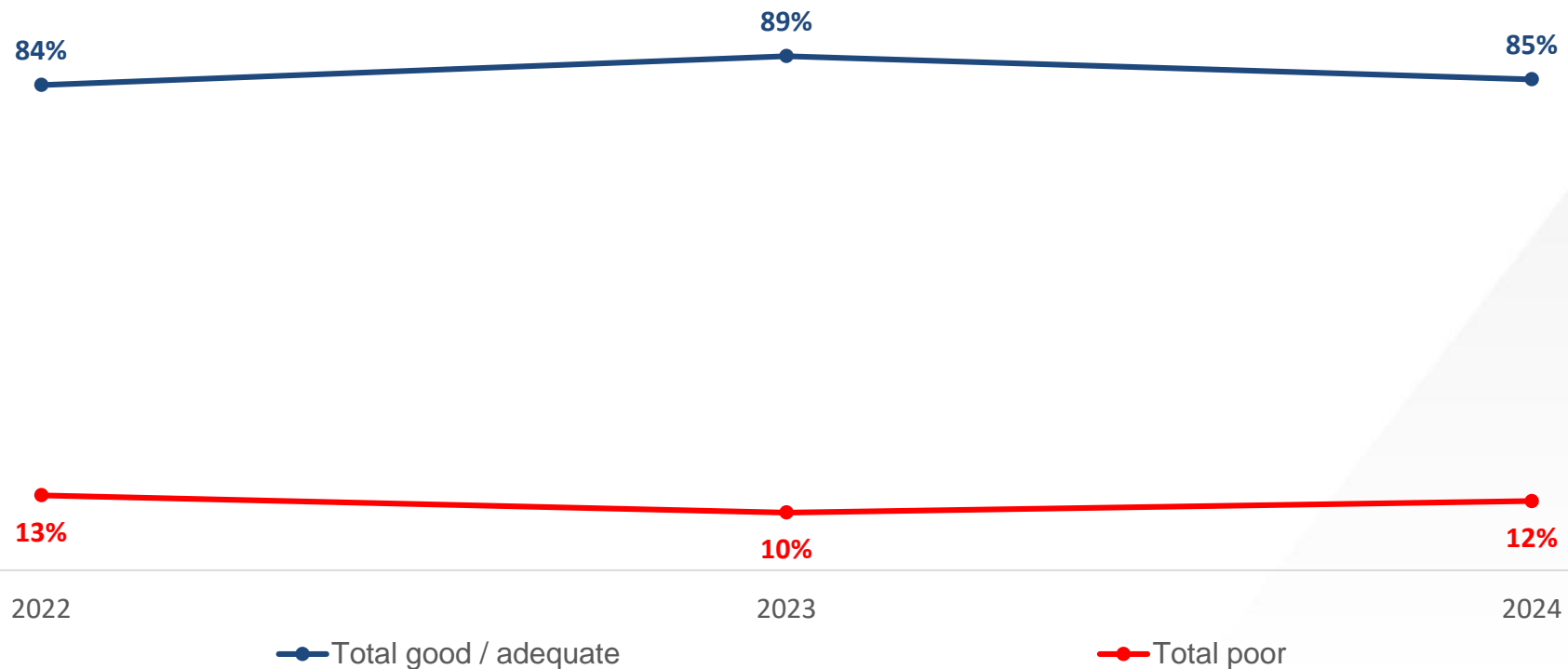
## % adequate or higher



# LEVEL OF PROFESSIONALISM OF LPS PERSONNEL OVER TIME

Q5B. How would you rate the Lethbridge Police Service in each of the following areas - Level of professionalism of Lethbridge Police Service personnel?

- After seeing an increase last year in terms of ratings of LPS' professionalism, positive/adequate ratings declined by four percentage points from last year.



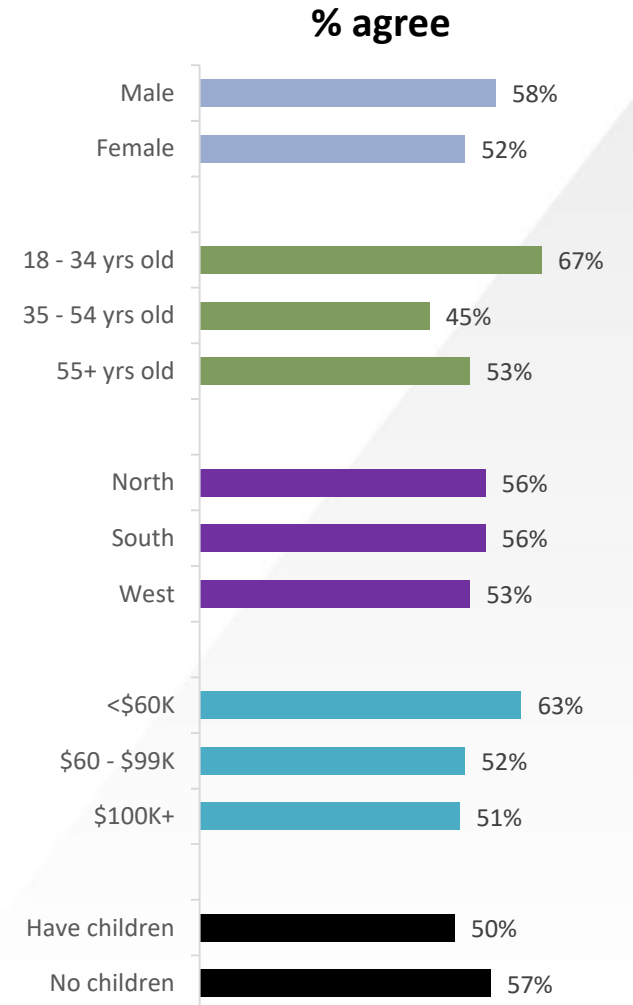
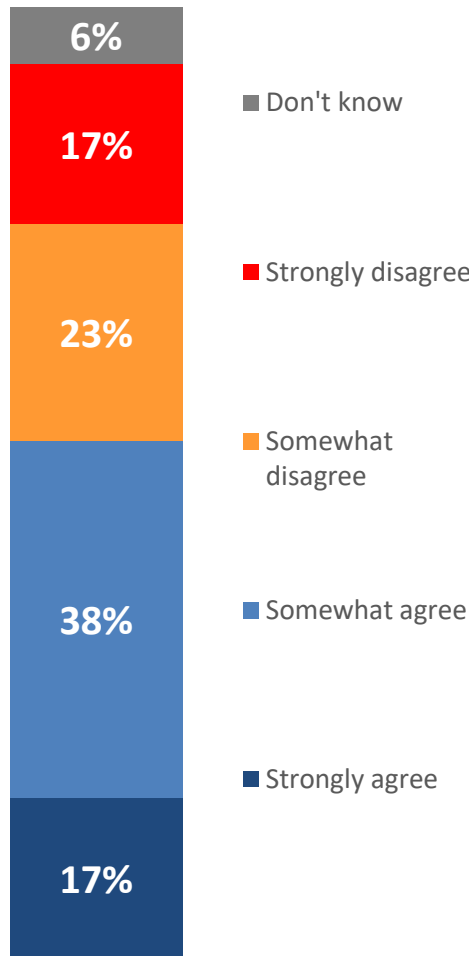
# AGREEMENT THAT LPS IS ADEQUATELY STAFFED

Q6. Do you agree or disagree that the Lethbridge Police Service is adequately staffed to respond to calls for service and provide a safe community?

- Residents are more likely to agree than disagree that Lethbridge Police Service is adequately staffed to respond to calls for service and provide a safe community by about a ratio of 1.5:1 (55% versus 40%).

## Demographic insights:

- Residents 18 to 34 years of age are most likely to agree that LPS is adequately staffed.
- Although not statistically different, there is also some evidence to suggest that those in the lowest income households are more likely than their counterparts to believe that LPS is adequately staffed.

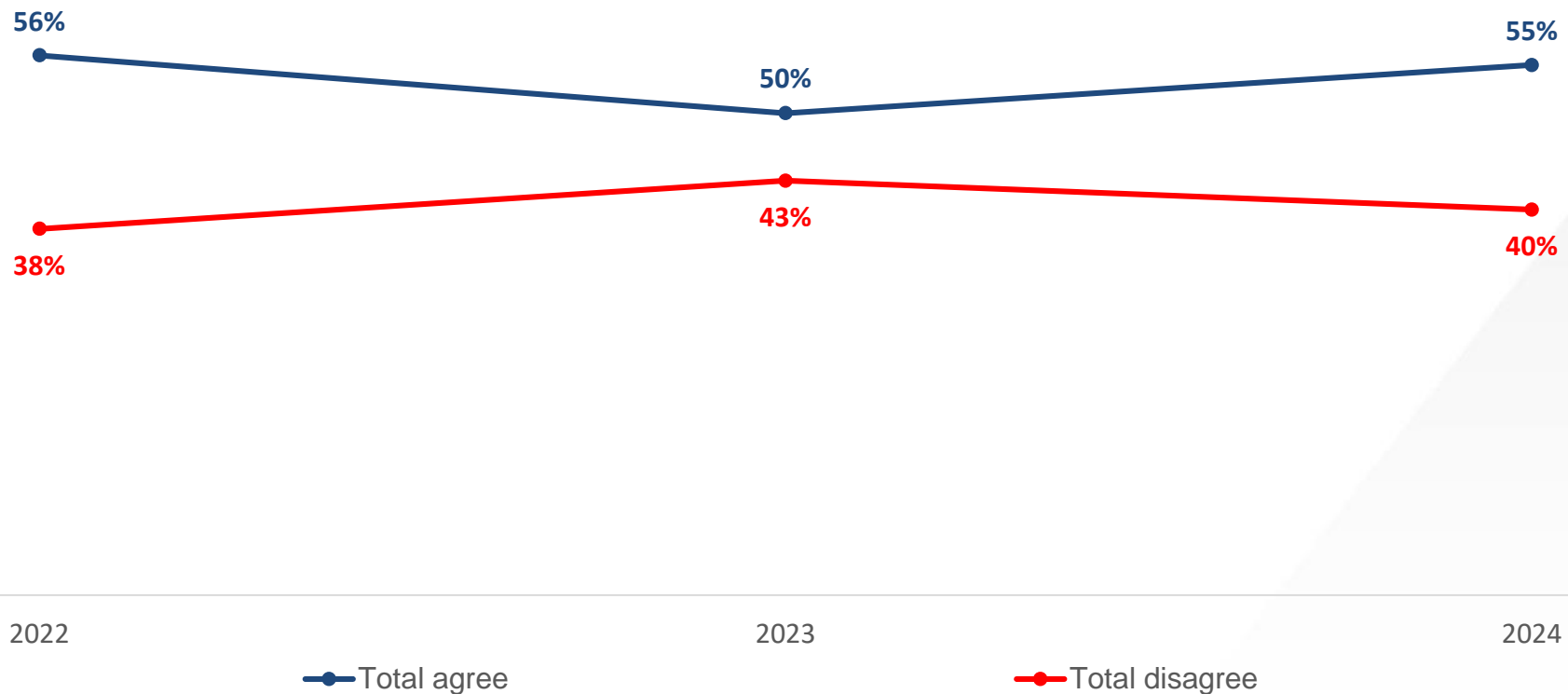




# AGREEMENT THAT LPS IS ADEQUATELY STAFFED OVER TIME

Q6. Do you agree or disagree that the Lethbridge Police Service is adequately staffed to respond to calls for service and provide a safe community?

- Over the past three years this question has been asked, there have been some fluctuations, but the majority have agreed year over year that LPS is adequately staffed.



# **SECTION 3: CONTACT WITH LETHBRIDGE POLICE SERVICE**

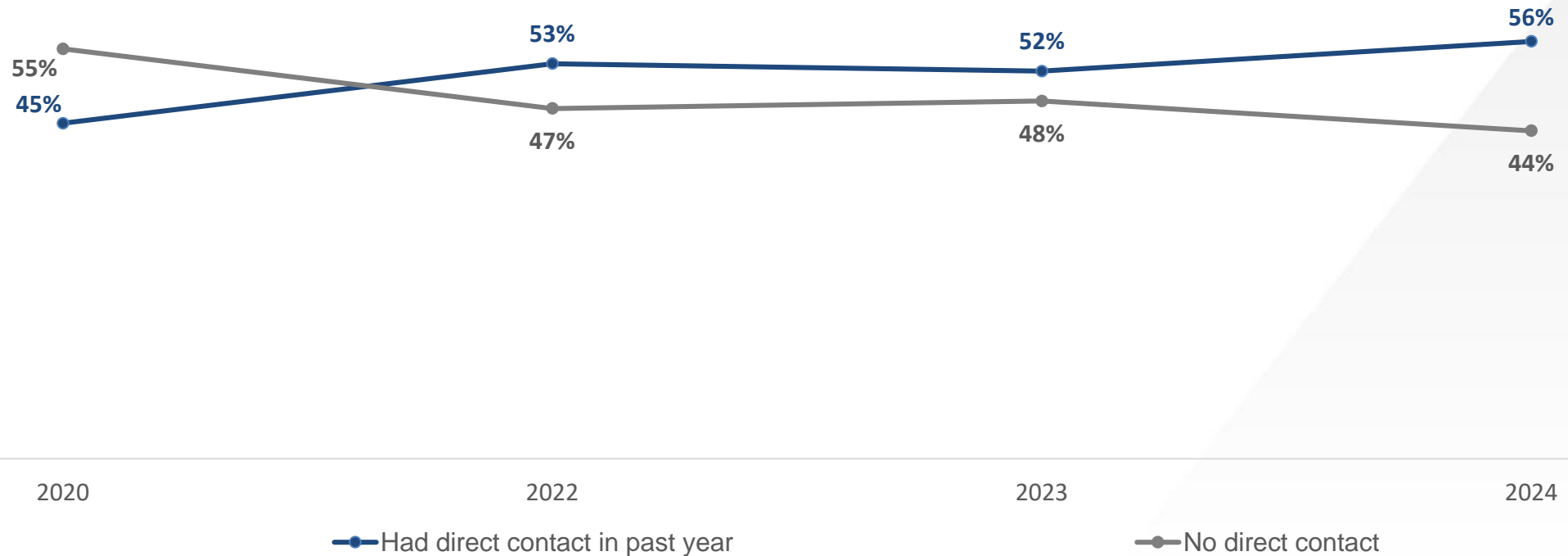
# CONTACT WITH LPS IN PAST YEAR OVER TIME

Q8. Have you had direct contact with a Lethbridge Police Service officer in the past year? This could be in-person, face-to-face, telephone, or online, for any reason.

- Over the past three surveys, the majority of residents say they have had direct contact with LPS in the past year, including 56% this year.

## Demographic insights:

- Younger residents are more likely to have had contact with LPS in the past year, declining from 66% of those 18 to 34 to 42% of those 55 and older.



# SECTION 4: PERCEPTIONS OF COMMUNITY SAFETY

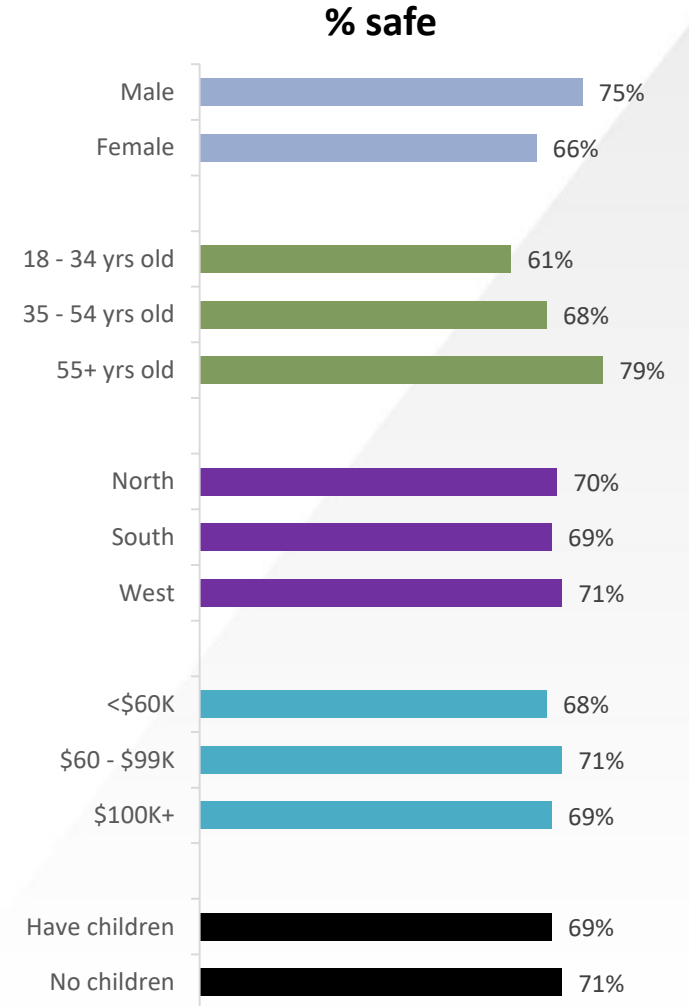
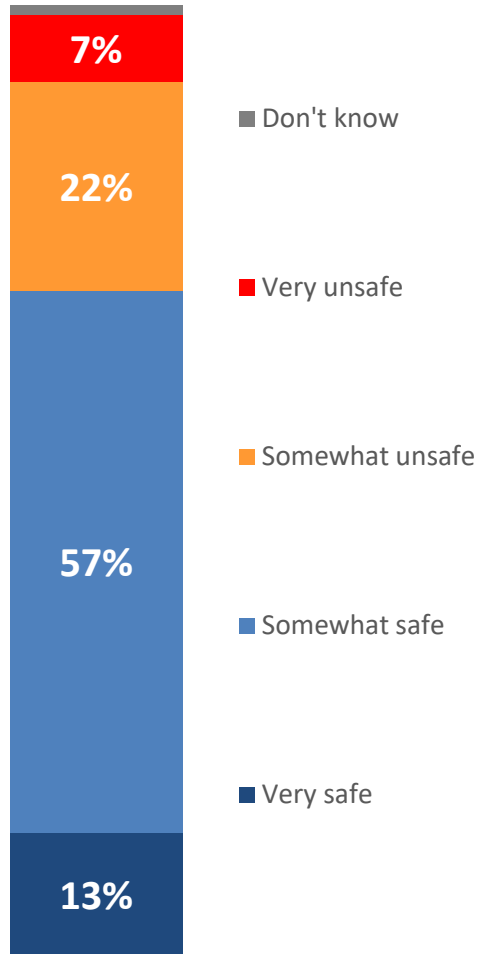
# PERCEPTION OF OVERALL SAFETY IN LETHBRIDGE

Q9. Overall, would you describe Lethbridge as a very safe, somewhat safe, somewhat unsafe, or very unsafe community?

- Overall, 7 in 10 residents say that Lethbridge is at least a somewhat safe community, with 13% rating it as very safe.

## Demographic insights:

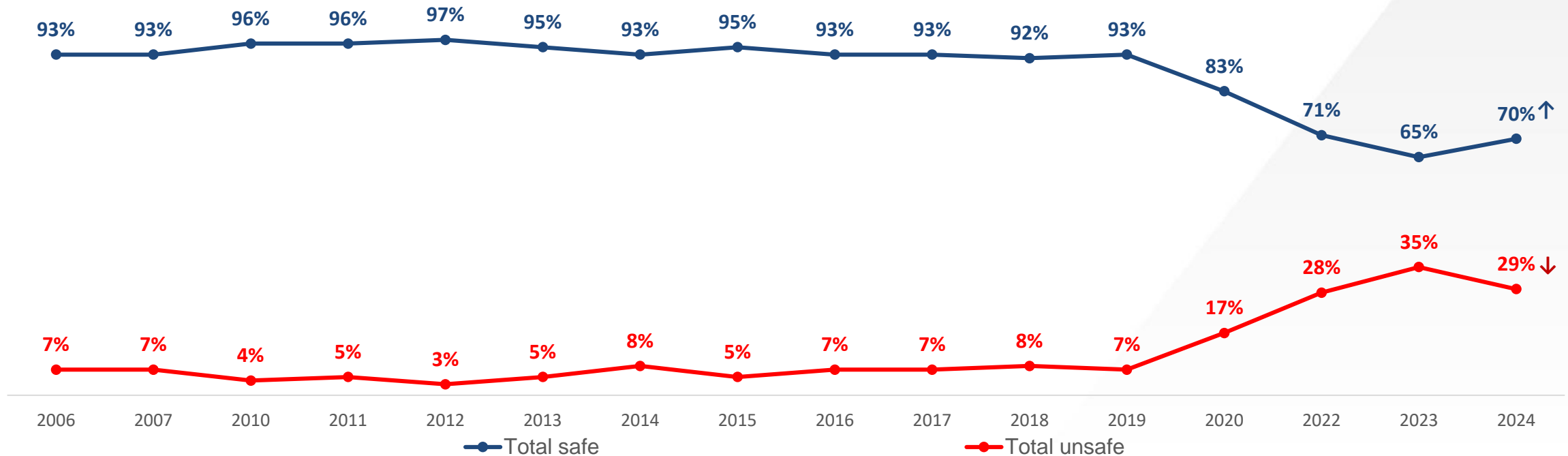
- Although not statistically different, residents 55 and older and men are most likely to rate Lethbridge as safe.



# PERCEPTION OF OVERALL SAFETY IN LETHBRIDGE OVER TIME

Q9. Overall, would you describe Lethbridge as a very safe, somewhat safe, somewhat unsafe, or very unsafe community?

- After seeing a decline in ratings for safety for three consecutive years from 2020 to 2023, perceptions of safety rose this year from 65% to 70%; however, still well below ratings from 2006 to 2019.



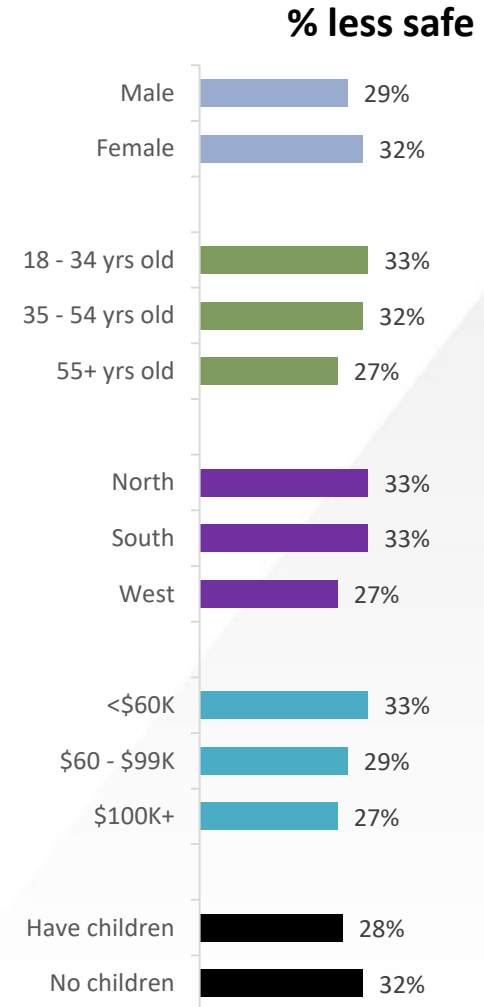
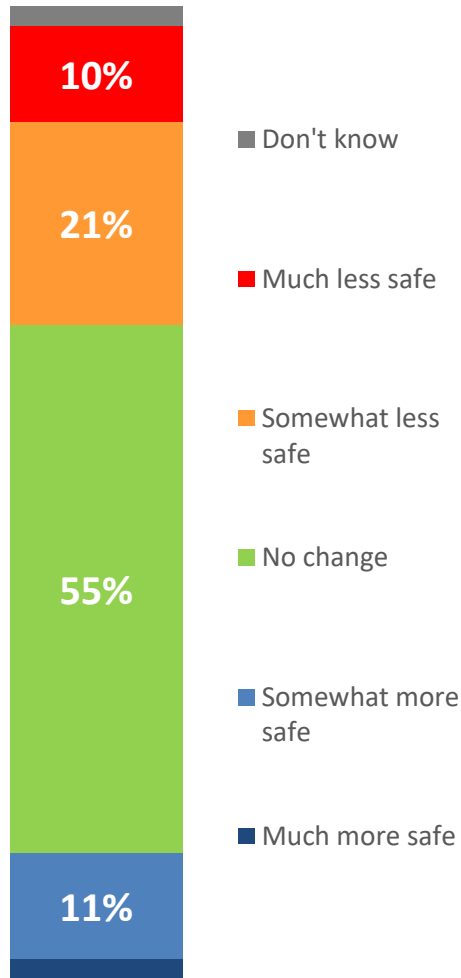
# CHANGE IN COMMUNITY SAFETY IN PAST 12 MONTHS

Q10. Over the past 12 months, do you think Lethbridge has become more safe, less safe, or has there been no change?

- More residents believe that Lethbridge has become less safe than more safe by about a 3:1 ratio (31% versus 13%).

## Demographic insights:

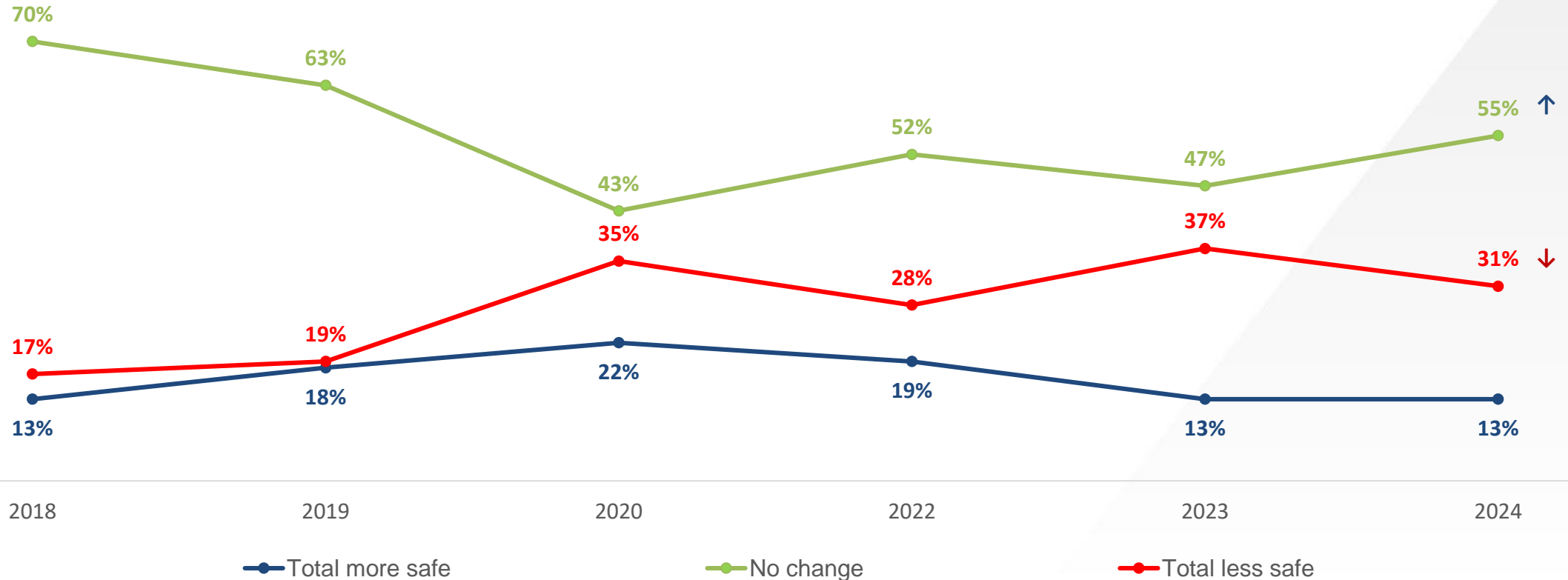
- There is very little difference amongst demographic groups and the proportion who believe that Lethbridge is less than safe over the past 12 months.



# CHANGE IN COMMUNITY SAFETY IN PAST 12 MONTHS OVER TIME

Q10. Over the past 12 months, do you think Lethbridge has become more safe, less safe, or has there been no change?

- There have been changes year over year, with the biggest changes typically in those who say there has been no change. This is most often coupled with changes in those who say it has become less safe. For instance, in 2024 there was an eight-point increase in those who said no change in safety (compared to 2023), and a six-point decrease in those who said it has become less safe.





# REASONS LETHBRIDGE HAS BECOME LESS SAFE

Q11. Why do you think Lethbridge has become less safe?

(BASE: Those who said Lethbridge has become less safe in the past 12 months; n = 123)

- Amongst those who said Lethbridge has become more unsafe in the past 12 months, three reasons tend to dominate: *drugs*, *crime/increase in crime*, and *homelessness*.
- Compared to 2023, there was an increase in comments related to *racial overtones* and *injection sites*, but a decline in mentions of *drugs* and *homelessness*.

	2022	2023	2024
Drugs	48%	53%	35%↓
Crime/increase in crime	29%	26%	29%
Homelessness	14%	36%	24%↓
Racial overtones	-	-	9%
Downtown area is unsafe	4%	9%	8%
Police staffing issues (not enough police)	14%	8%	8%
City growth/increased population	9%	6%	6%
Police not enforcing the laws	6%	8%	5%
Injection sites	-	-	5%
Decrease in public safety/feel unsafe	19%	6%	3%
Police not enforcing the traffic laws	-	2%	2%
Courts not enforcing the laws	2%	3%	1%
Don't know	1%	1%	5%

# SECTION 5: PRIORITIES

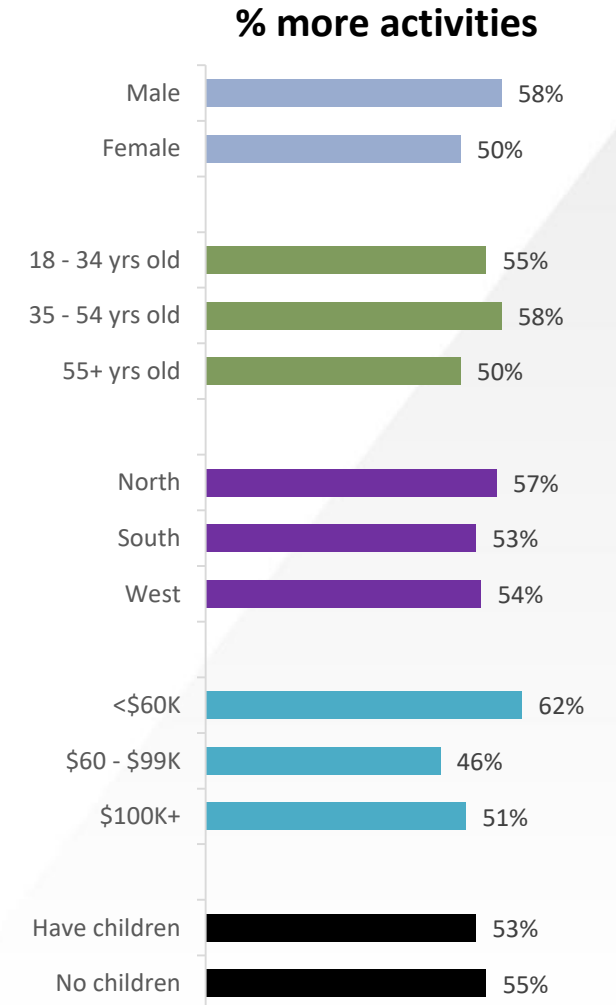
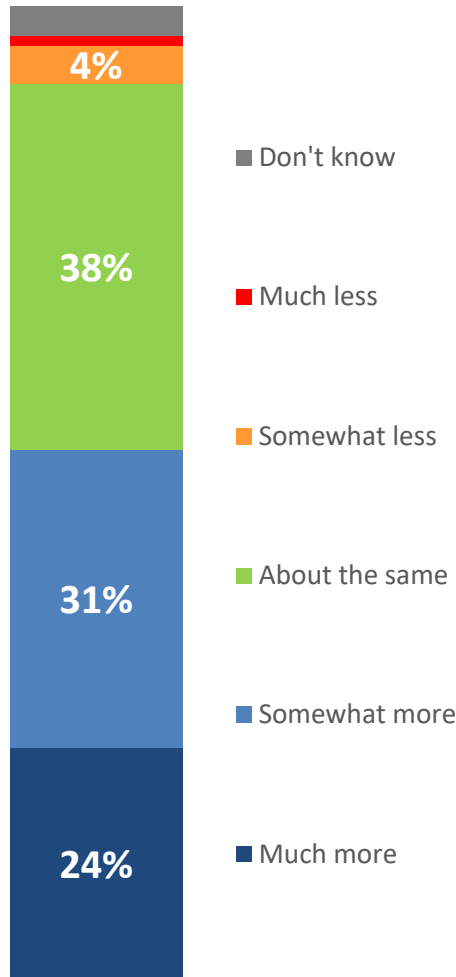
# CHANGES IN COMMUNITY POLICING ACTIVITIES

Q7. As part of their regular duties, Lethbridge Police Service officers engage in community policing activities such as making regular foot and bicycle patrols and meeting with community groups, business owners and other residents. Do you think Lethbridge Police Service officers should be doing more, about the same, or less of these types of community policing activities while on duty?

- More residents believe that LPS should be doing more community policing activities by a ratio of 11:1 (54% versus 5%), while 38% say they should be doing about the same amount.

## Demographic insights:

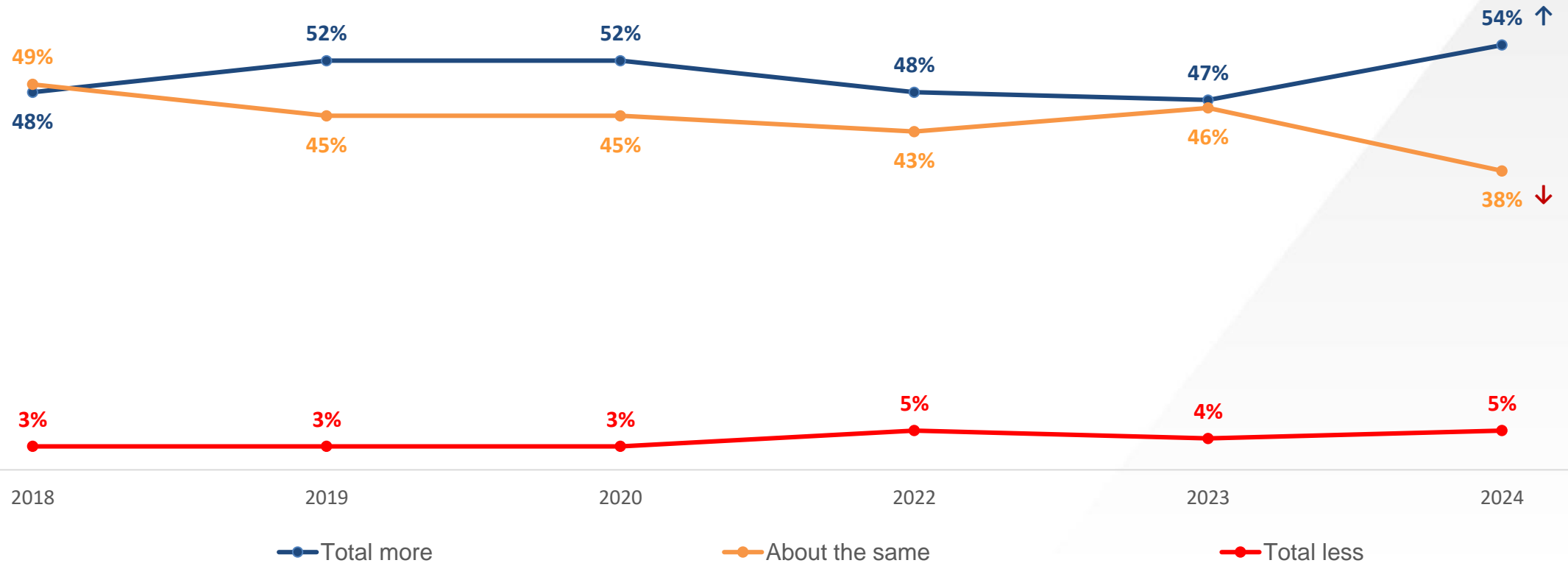
- Those in the lowest income households are most likely to say the LPS should be doing more community policing activities, although the difference amongst groups is not statistically different.



# CHANGES IN COMMUNITY POLICING ACTIVITIES OVER TIME

Q7. As part of their regular duties, Lethbridge Police Service officers engage in community policing activities such as making regular foot and bicycle patrols and meeting with community groups, business owners and other residents. Do you think Lethbridge Police Service officers should be doing more, about the same, or less of these types of community policing activities while on duty?

- Compared to last year, there was a marked increase in those who wanted LPS to be more community policing activities compared to last year. In fact, the proportion who want more community policing is the highest to date. This was offset by a decrease in those who said LPS should be doing about the same amount.



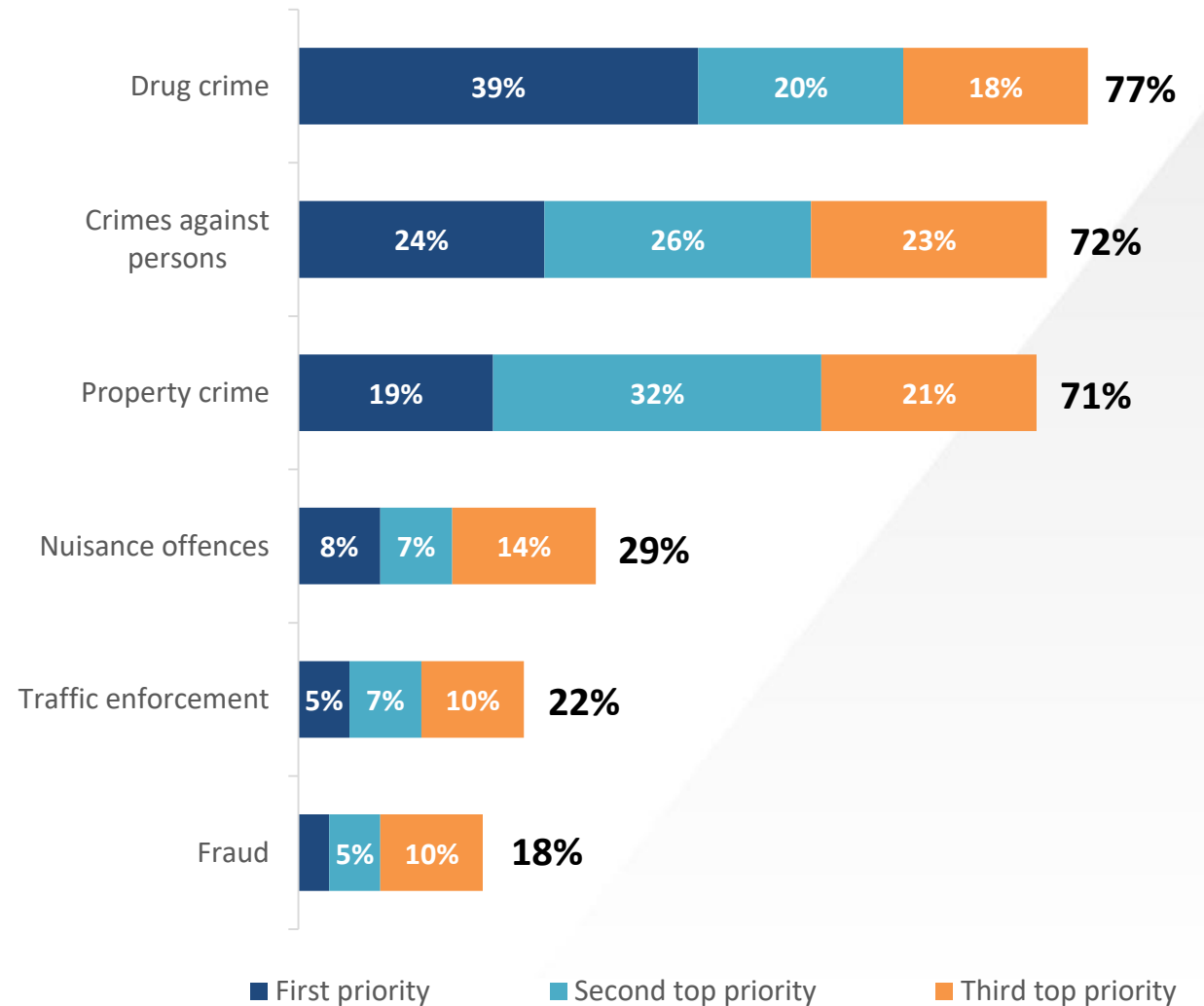
# TOP PRIORITIES FOR LPS OVER NEXT FOUR YEARS

Q12. Which of the following is your top priority for the Lethbridge Police Service to devote greater effort to over the next four years?

- When asked to rate their top three priorities amongst six options, three priorities stand out amongst the rest: *drug crime*, *crimes against persons*, and *property crime*, with each selected as a top three priority by more than 7 in 10.
- Within those top three, *drug crime* does seem to have the highest priority with 39% rating it as their top priority.

## Demographic insights:

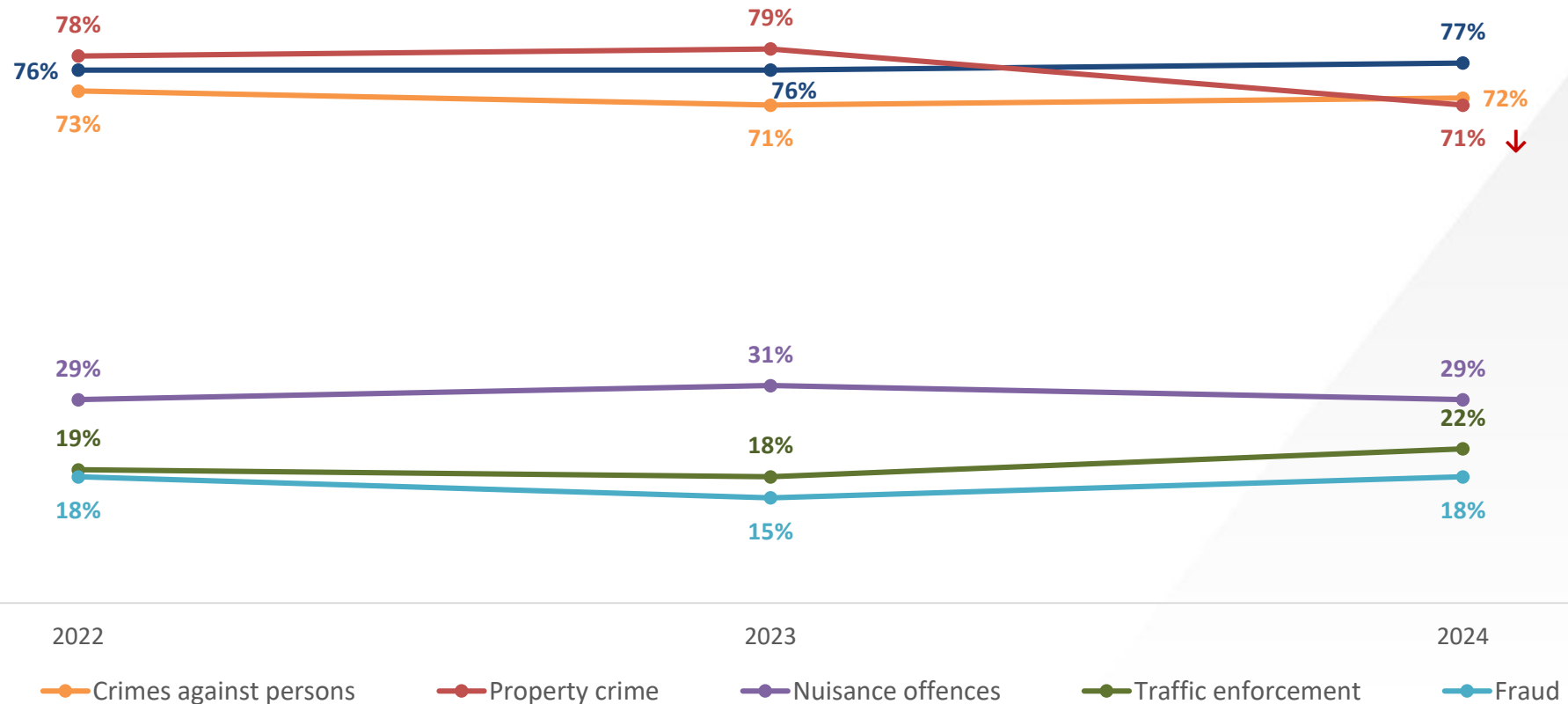
- Older residents tend to rate *crimes against persons* a lower priority than younger residents. Also, residents in the west (48%) tend to rate *drug crime* as a top priority more often than those in the south (37%) or north (29%), although these differences are not statistically significant.



# TOP PRIORITIES FOR LPS OVER NEXT FOUR YEARS OVER TIME

Q12. Which of the following is your top priority for the Lethbridge Police Service to devote greater effort to over the next four years?

- Over the past three years, there has been a clear separation in the top three priorities from the bottom three. Year over year, there have not been major changes, although this year saw an eight-percentage point decline in *property crime* being selected as a top three priority, with slight increases across a few other areas.



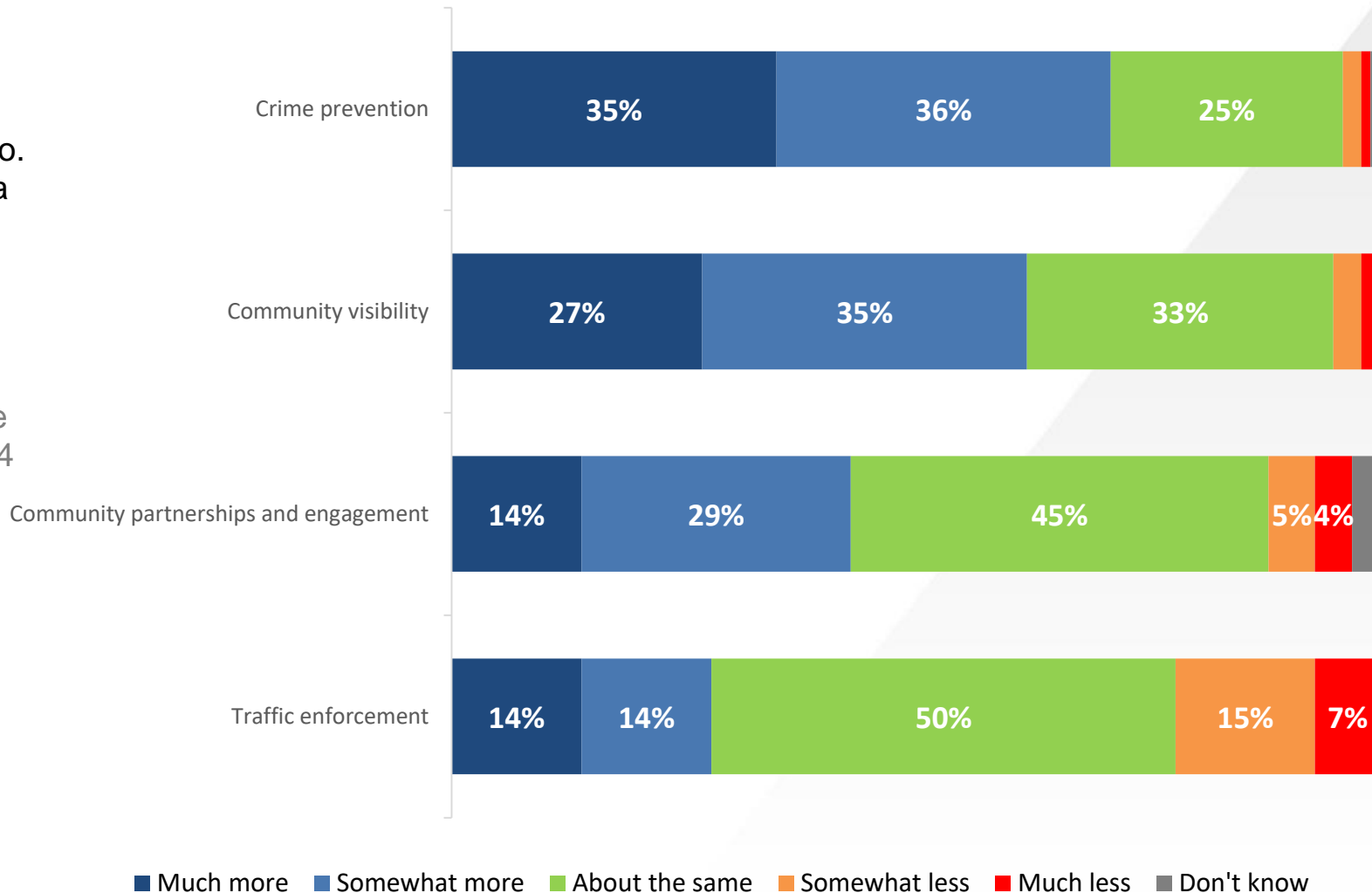
# DESIRED CHANGES IN POLICING ACTIVITIES

Q13. The Lethbridge Police Service is looking for recommendations from the community about how to improve its performance and services in meeting residents' expectations and concerns. Keeping in mind that like all public services, the Lethbridge Police Service must prioritize what services are delivered based on the limited resources that are available, do you think the Lethbridge Police Service should be doing more, about the same, or less of each of the following policing activities? (Is that much or somewhat more/less?)

- Amongst four policing activities, residents put greater emphasis on wanting to see more efforts on *crime prevention* and *community visibility* relative to the other two. With that being said, for all four activities, a higher percentage indicate they would like more than less efforts in each area.

## Demographic insights:

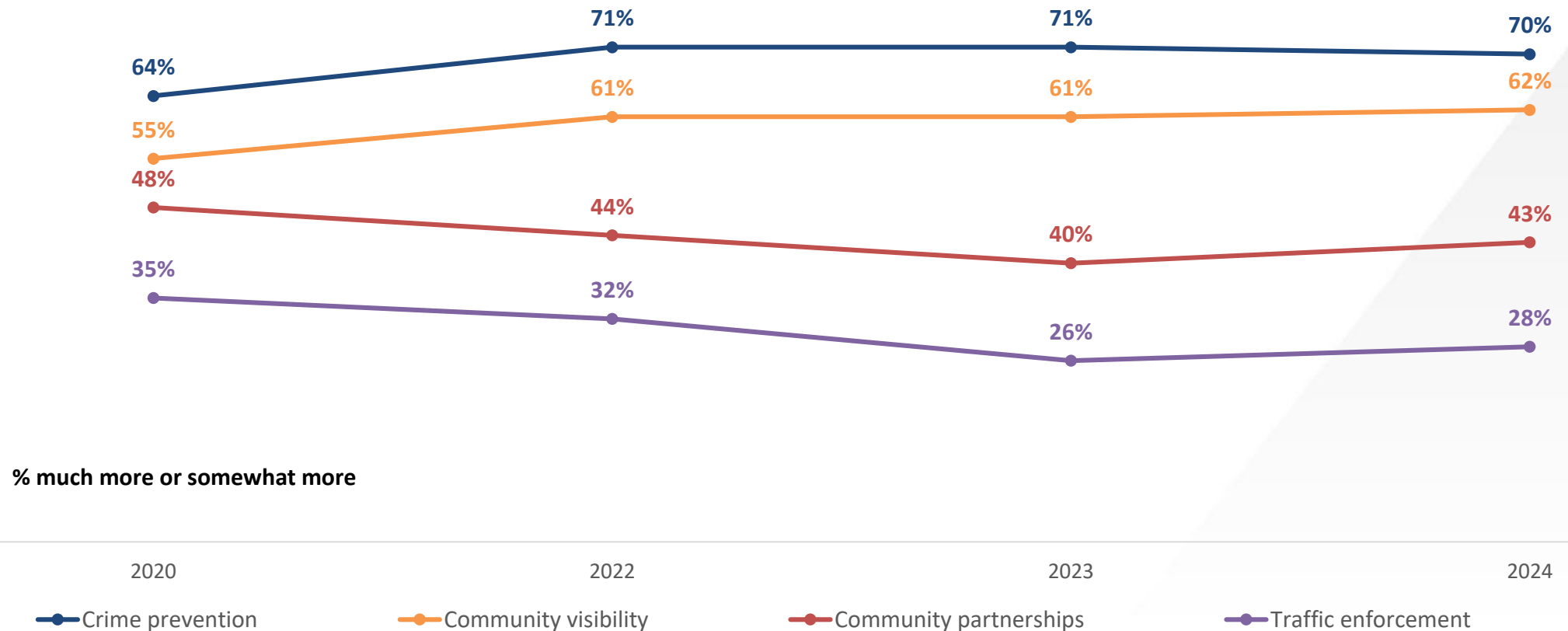
- Residents 18 to 34 (33%) would like to see less *traffic enforcement* than those 35 to 54 (26%) or 55 and older (9%).
- Men (30%) would like to see less *traffic enforcement* than women (14%).
- Although not statistically significant, for all four activities those in the lowest income households are more likely than their counterparts to want more policing.



# MORE POLICING ACTIVITIES OVER TIME

Q13. The Lethbridge Police Service is looking for recommendations from the community about how to improve its performance and services in meeting residents' expectations and concerns. Keeping in mind that like all public services, the Lethbridge Police Service must prioritize what services are delivered based on the limited resources that are available, do you think the Lethbridge Police Service should be doing more, about the same, or less of each of the following policing activities? (Is that much or somewhat more/less?)

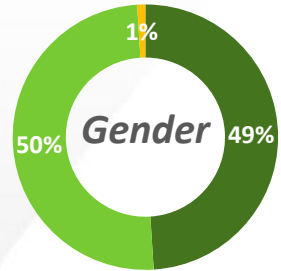
- Compared to 2023, there was very little change in the proportion of residents who would like to see more policing activities in the four areas.



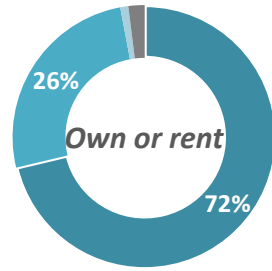


# **APPENDIX A: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE**

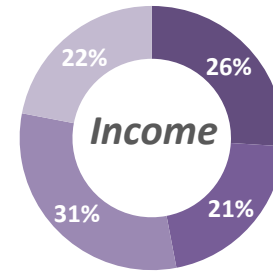
# DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS



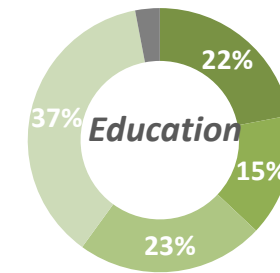
- Male
- Female
- Other gender identity
- Don't know



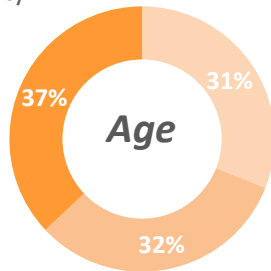
- Own
- Rent
- Live with family
- Don't know



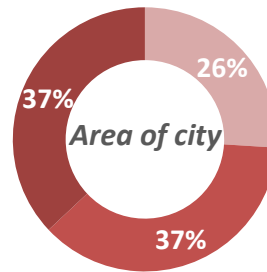
- <\$60K
- \$60K to <\$100K
- \$100K+
- Don't know



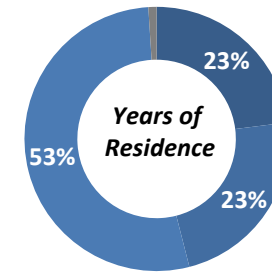
- High school or less
- Some post-secondary
- College/trade school grad
- University grad
- Don't know



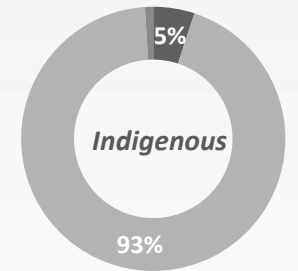
- 18 to 34
- 35 to 54
- 55 or older
- Don't know



- North
- South
- West



- 10 years or less
- 11 to 20 years
- 21+ years
- Don't know



- Indigenous
- Not Indigenous
- Don't know