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Introduction

This report summarizes the findings of the 2015 Empire State Poll (ESP), conducted by the Survey Research Institute at Cornell University. The 2015 ESP queried New York State residents' opinions of the police. Results of other findings can be found at <http://sri.cornell.edu/sri/esp.reports.cfm>.

Methodology

- In total, 800 telephone interviews were conducted between January 20, 2015 and March 14, 2015, equally divided by upstate/downstate, and then weighted to reflect the actual population distribution within the state.
- For regional comparisons, "downstate" is defined as New York, Rockland, Kings, Richmond, Westchester, Suffolk, Queens, Nassau, and Bronx counties, with the remaining counties of the state defined as "upstate."
- The ESP utilizes a dual-frame random digit dial (RDD) sample of NYS households - covering landline and cell phone numbers. Eligible respondents must be residents of NYS and at least 18 years old.
- The margin of error (MOE) for questions with two response options among 800 respondents is 3.5% and is 4.9% for comparisons based on 400 respondents. The MOE may be smaller for some questions depending on the number of response options.

See Report 1: Introduction & Methodology for a full description at <http://sri.cornell.edu/sri/esp.reports.cfm>.

Interactions with the Police Department

New York State residents were asked two questions about their experiences with police over the past year. The first question states: *Have you had any interactions with your local police department in the past year?* The second question states: *If so, was your most recent interaction a positive, or negative experience overall?*

Table 1 Police Interactions over the Past Year

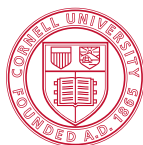
	Percent of respondents citing ...			
	Yes, Positive Interaction	Yes, Negative Interaction	Yes, Neither Positive nor Negative	No Interaction
Region				
-Downstate	16	11	7	67
-Upstate	32	5	5	59
-NYS	24	8	6	63
Race				
-Hispanic or Latino	13	10	5	71
-Caucasian	28	7	6	59
-Black	13	12	5	70
-American Indian	15	11	7	67
-Asian	7	10	7	76
-Other	4	4	4	88
-All Races	24	8	7	63

*Due to rounding, distributions may not add up to 100

- Upstate residents reported twice as many positive interactions than Downstate residents (32% vs. 16% respectively).
- Downstate residents (11%) reported over twice as many negative interactions as Upstate residents (5%).
- Black residents were more likely to have no interaction with the police (70%) compared to Caucasian residents (59%).
- Caucasians were more likely to report a positive interaction rather than a negative one (28% positive vs. 7% negative).
- Black residents were as likely to report positive interaction (13%) as a negative interaction (12%) with the police.

Police Trust

New York State residents were also asked about how much they trust the police. The question states: *How much trust do you have in your local police department to keep you and your family*



safe? This was measured on a 1-5 scale, with 1 being “do not trust the police at all” and 5 being “trust the police a great deal”. In Table 2, we collapsed the answers into three categories, where a 1 or 2 is low trust, a 3 is medium trust, and a 4 or 5 is high trust.

Table 2 Trust in Local Police

	Percent of respondents citing a level of trust of...		
	Low Trust	Medium Trust	High Trust
Region			
-Downstate	16	26	58
-Upstate	12	18	71
-NYS	14	22	64
Race			
-Hispanic or Latino	24	18	58
-Caucasian	12	20	68
-Black	23	27	50
-American Indian	26	15	59
-Asian	15	34	51
-Other	17	17	67
-All Races	14	22	64
Political Party			
-Democrat	14	25	62
-Independent	18	21	62
-Republican	9	15	76
-Total	14	22	64

*Due to rounding, distributions may not add up to 100

- 64% of all New York State respondents reported having a high level of trust in the police department.
- Residents in Upstate New York were more likely to report having a high level of trust than residents in Downstate New York (71% vs. 58% respectively).
- 23% of black respondents and 24% of Hispanic or Latino residents reported a low level of trust, compared to only 12% of Caucasians and 15% of Asian respondents.
- Conversely, fewer black respondents (50%) reported having a high level of trust in the police compared to Caucasians (68%).
- Republicans were more likely than members of any other political group to report having a high level of trust in the police to keep them safe (76% of Republicans vs. 62% of Independents and. 62% of

Democrats).

- Across New York State, residents are more likely to report having trust in their local police department than having low trust (6 out of 7 trust their police).

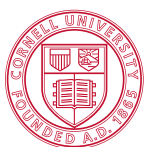
Overall Impression of Law Enforcement

The ESP then queried New York residents about their opinion on police. The question states: *Would you say your overall impression of the police in this country is very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable?* In Table 3, we collapsed the answers into two categories: favorable (very favorable and somewhat favorable) and unfavorable (*somewhat unfavorable and very unfavorable*)

Table 3

Overall Impressions of Police in this Country

	Percent of respondents citing a(n)... impression	
	Favorable	Unfavorable
Region		
-Downstate	67	33
-Upstate	76	24
-NYS	72	28
Race		
-Hispanic or Latino	61	40
-Caucasian	75	25
-Black	55	45
-American Indian	56	44
-Asian	76	24
-Other	70	30
-All Races	72	28
Age		
-18-24	56	44
-25-34	61	39
-35-44	74	26
-45-54	76	24
-55-64	77	23
-65+	78	22
-Total	72	28
Income		
-Less than \$30,000	63	37



-\$30,000 to \$50,000	68	32
-\$50,000 to \$100,000	74	26
-More than \$100,000	78	22
-Total	72	28
Political Party		
-Democrat	66	34
-Independent	70	30
-Republican	85	15
-Total	72	28

*Due to rounding, distributions may not add up to 100

- Overall the majority, 72% of New York residents reported having a favorable impression of the police in this country.
- Upstate respondents were more likely to have a favorable disposition than Downstate respondents (76% vs. 67% respectively).
- Caucasians and Asian residents (75% and 76% respectively) were more likely to have favorable impressions of the police compared to blacks (55%).
- Although still the plurality, only 56%, respondents between the ages of 18 and 24 reported a favorable disposition toward the police. The older the respondent, the more likely to have a favorable impression of the police.
- Residents with a household income of more than \$100,000 were more likely to report having a favorable impression of the police than residents with a household income of less than \$30,000 (78% vs. 63% respectively).
- Respondents who identified as being Republican were most likely to report having a favorable impression of the police (85% vs. 70% of Independents and. 66% of Democrats).

Videotaping

NYS respondents were also asked about videotaping uniformed police officers. The question states: *Do you agree or disagree that you should be allowed to videotape uniformed police officers who are arresting, restraining, or involved in an altercation with people in public?* This was measured on a 1-5 scale, with 1 being “strongly agree” and 5 being “strongly disagree”. In Table 4, we collapsed the answers into three categories, where a 1 or a 2 is agree, a 3 is neither agree nor disagree, and a 4 or a 5 is disagree.

Table 4 Videotaping Police Interactions

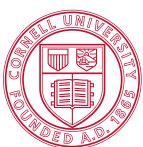
	Percent of respondents saying they...		
	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree
Region			
-Downstate	84	6	10
-Upstate	82	5	13
-NYS	83	6	11
Race			
-Hispanic or Latino	86	4	10
-Caucasian	81	6	12
-Black	89	6	5
-American Indian	78	7	15
-Asian	83	2	15
-Other	92	0	8
-All Races	83	6	11
Social Ideology			
-Liberal	88	5	7
-Moderate	83	5	12
-Conservative	78	6	16
-Total	83	6	11

*Due to rounding, distributions may not add up to 100

- Residents of Upstate New York were about as likely as residents of Downstate New York to agree with citizens being allowed to videotape a police interaction (82% vs 84%).
- Caucasian residents were more than twice as likely as black residents to disagree with the notion of the public videotaping police interactions (12% vs 5% respectively).
- Liberals were most likely to agree to allow individuals to videotape the police (88%) compared to 78% of conservatives.

Police Possession of Video Cameras

NYS respondents were then asked about police officers having to wear video cameras on duty. The question states: *Do you agree or disagree that police officers should carry video cameras for the purposes of filming their activities while on duty?* This was measured on a 1-5 scale, with 1 being “strongly agree” and 5 being “strongly disagree”. In Table 5, we collapsed the answers



into three categories, where a 1 or a 2 is agree, a 3 is neither agree nor disagree, and a 4 or a 5 is disagree.

Table 5 Police Officers Should Carry Video Cameras

	Percent of respondents saying they...		
	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree
Region			
-Downstate	88	6	6
-Upstate	87	4	9
-NYS	87	5	8
Race			
-Hispanic or Latino	90	4	6
-Caucasian	86	6	9
-Black	90	6	4
-American Indian	89	4	7
-Asian	90	2	7
-Other	96	0	4
-All Races	87	5	8

**Due to rounding, distributions may not add up to 100*

- Downstate residents were about as likely as Upstate residents to agree with police officers wearing video cameras on duty (88% vs. 87% respectively).
- There were no significant differences by race, with the majority of all racial groups agreeing that police officers should carry video cameras for the purpose of filming their activities while on duty.

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Citing Results from the ESP:
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