2025

The Connection Opportunity

Insights for Bringing Americans Together Across Difference

Spotlight on Pittsburgh

More in Common

About More in Common

More in Common seeks to understand the forces driving us apart, find common ground, and help bring Americans together to tackle shared challenges. We work with over 200 groups across civil society, business, education, and philanthropy to conduct actionable research that informs policymakers, community leaders, and the public.

Website: www.moreincommonus.com
Email: us@moreincommon.com

Authors
Daniel Yudkin, Ph.D. — Senior Advisor
Calista Small — Research Manager
Jordan Wylie, Ph.D. — Research Fellow
Ashley Fabrizio, Ph.D. — Head of Research
Kate Carney — Deputy Director

Foreword

Research shows that social connection isn't just important for individual well-being—it's also essential to societal and democratic health as well. Yet, these days, Americans are increasingly disconnected and divided, reporting record high levels of loneliness and also distrust in both institutions and each other.

One solution to this problem is clear: Americans need to reconnect, especially across lines of difference. But: do they want to? Do they value connecting with those who have different backgrounds and beliefs? And if so, what's preventing them from forging those ties?

To answer these questions, More in Common conducted a wide-ranging investigation of Americans' attitudes toward connection across difference, involving more than 6,000 survey respondents across the United States, with a regional spotlight on three metro areas: Kansas City, Houston, and Pittsburgh.

This publication focuses specifically on findings from the Pittsburgh metro area and provides broad recommendations for how to foster more connections across lines of difference in the region. We hope these insights help stakeholders working to build a stronger culture of connection in Pittsburgh engage new audiences in their work.

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Insights for Bringing Americans
Together Across Difference

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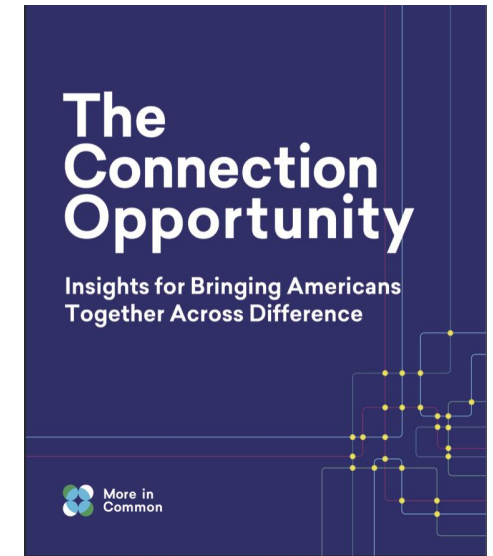
This deck serves as a companion piece to our main report. To explore all the insights from this project, visit our website.

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Sections

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Our Approach

Defining Terms

— ## What is "connection across difference"?

Connection across differences refers to meaningful engagement or communication between individuals from different social, cultural, political, or demographic groups. These interactions help bridge divides and promote understanding and trust across lines of difference.

— ## A focus on four lines of difference

This deck examines connection across four lines of difference: race/ethnicity, political viewpoint, socioeconomic status, and religion.

— ## Why Pittsburgh?

This deck highlights insights from the Pittsburgh metro area and makes comparisons to the US national average. Pittsburgh was selected as one of three regions of focus for this study due to its history as an industrial city as well as its recent demographic changes.

As a case study, this research attempts to identify broad trends and is not seeking to capture the full complexity of connection across difference in the greater Pittsburgh region. Future work should continue to investigate topics studied in this report at a more granular level.

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Pittsburgh MSA

The Pittsburgh metropolitan statistical area (MSA) is made up of eight counties, with the city of Pittsburgh at its center.

Learn more about the population of Pittsburgh MSA via data from the US Census Bureau here.
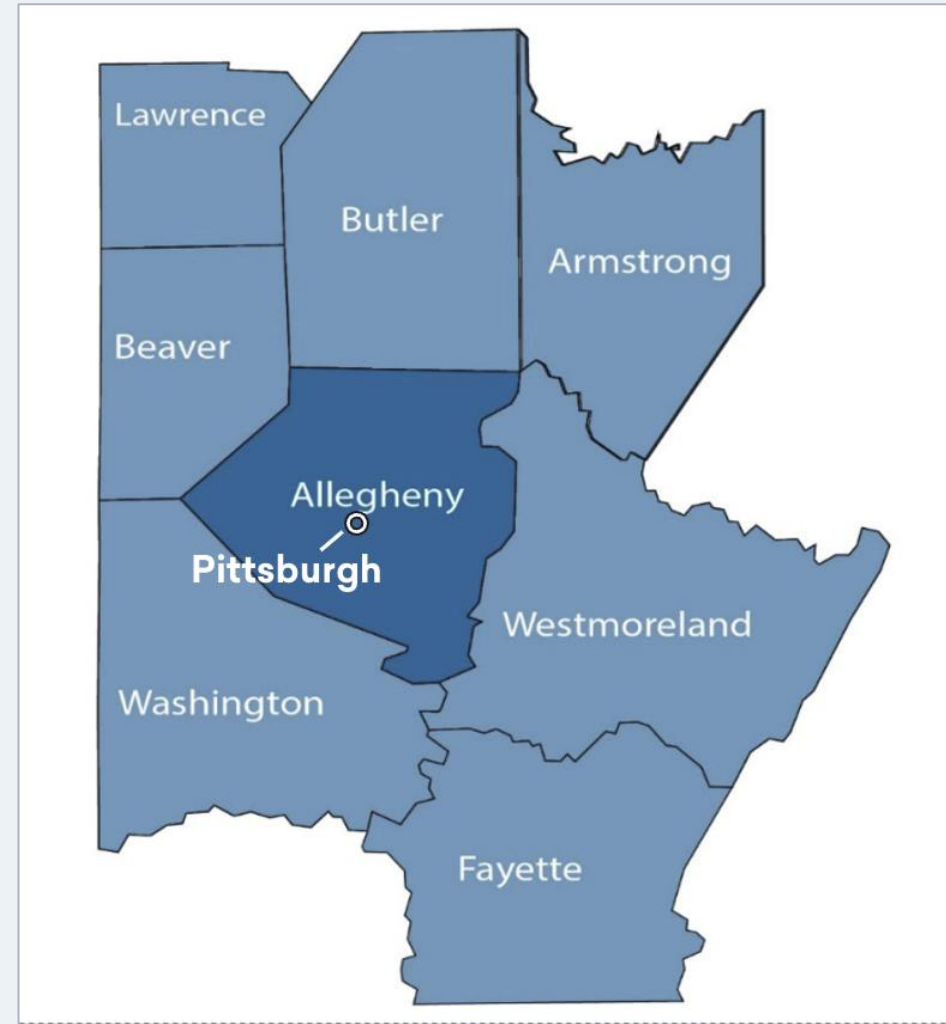
Map of Pittsburgh MSA

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Quantitative Research

More in Common partnered with the international polling firm YouGov to conduct quantitative survey research.

For the **national survey**
- N = 4,522 US adults
- The data collection period was from December 21, 2023 to January 18, 2024
- The margin of error for the US average is ±1.46%

For the **Pittsburgh MSA Survey**
- N = 750 adults from Pittsburgh MSA
- The data collection period was from April 30 to May 16, 2024
- The margin of error for the Pittsburgh MSA average is +/- 3.56%

Qualitative Research

More in Common partnered with the qualitative research firm ROI Rocket to convene five focus groups of Pittsburgh residents.

Residents were grouped by:
1. Party ID (Democrat, Republican, Independent)
2. Feelings of belonging in Pittsburgh (high vs. low)

Focus groups consisted of 6 to 8 residents each. Discussions were held online from July to August 2024.

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Executive Summary

Interest in Connection

- The majority of Pittsburgh residents value connecting across lines of difference:

  - They believe they have a responsibility to connect across difference (73 percent vs. 70 percent nationally)

  - They are interested in activities that build connections across difference (59 percent vs. 56 percent nationally)

- Pittsburgh residents, on average, are most interested in activities involving working across lines of difference "to achieve a mutual goal in their community" (over 7 in 10 express interest) and are least interested in "talking about group tensions" (about 6 in 10 express interest).

- Pittsburgh residents are least interested in connecting across differences of political viewpoint, a finding that aligns with national trends.

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What predicts interest in connection?

In our main <u>report</u>, we identified three strong predictors of interest in connection. These are highlighted in below, along with data from the Pittsburgh metro area.
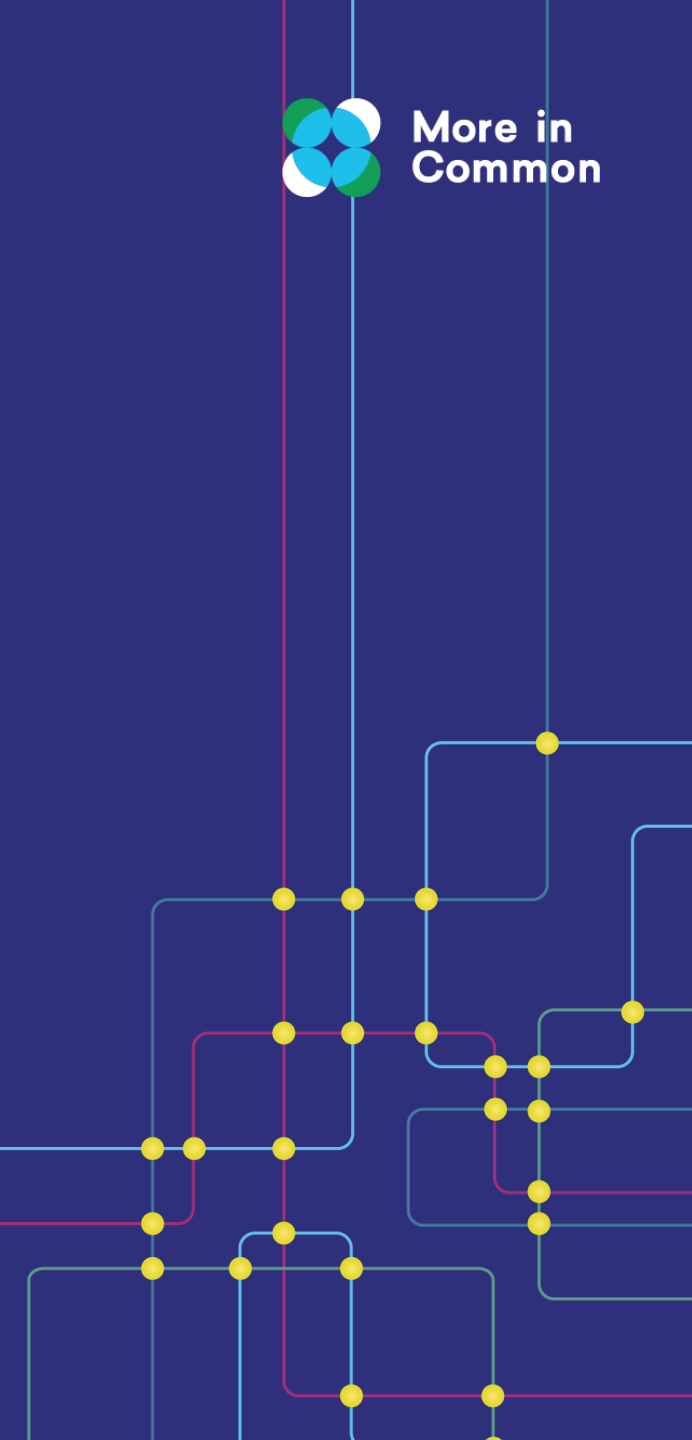
1. **Perceived Community Norms of Connection**: The more people think others in their community are connecting across lines of difference (the more they feel this is a "social norm"), the more interested they are to connect as well. Only 57 percent of Pittsburgh residents agree or are "neutral" that people in their community support cross-group connection; even fewer (48 percent) think this type of connection is common in the region.

2. **Frequency of cross-group interaction**: How much someone currently interacts across lines of difference is positively correlated to interest in future connection. Only 36 percent of Pittsburgh residents report "frequently" engaging across lines of socioeconomic difference, compared to 47 percent who report "frequently" interacting with people from difference races/ethnicities.

3. **Belonging**: Feeling a sense of local community belonging is related to interest in connection across lines of difference. 55 percent of Pittsburgh residents report a strong sense of community belonging (similar to national trends).

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Barriers to Connection & Trusted Messengers

- Pittsburgh residents most commonly cite a "lack of opportunity" as a barrier to connection for all lines of difference– except politics.

  - For politics, residents say that the interactions are "not important" (25 percent).

  - Many also discuss a sense of disorder in certain places of the city, making them more nervous about walking around and interacting with others, generally.

- Pittsburgh residents place the most trust in close connections, doctors, and local business owners—while local social media influencers, the mayor, and city government officials are trusted the least.

- Respondents seek out local TV news the most to know what is happening locally.

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Connecting Across Difference

Section Three Topics

01 **Connective responsibility**

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02 **Interest in connection across difference**

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03 **Attitudes towards integrated communities**

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Section Three Topics

01   **Connective responsibility**

02   **Interest in connection across difference**

03   **Attitudes towards integrated communities**

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What is connective responsibility?

UNDERSTANDING CONNECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

Connective responsibility refers to the belief that individuals have a moral obligation to engage with people from different backgrounds.

MEASURING CONNECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements: [1- Strongly disagree to 7 - Strongly agree]

1. In a complex society, we all have a shared responsibility to engage with people whose backgrounds and viewpoints are different from our own.
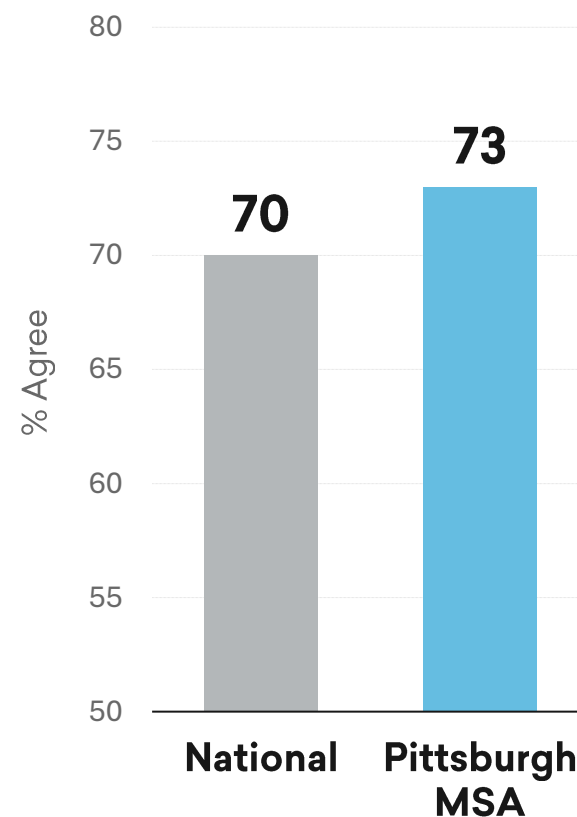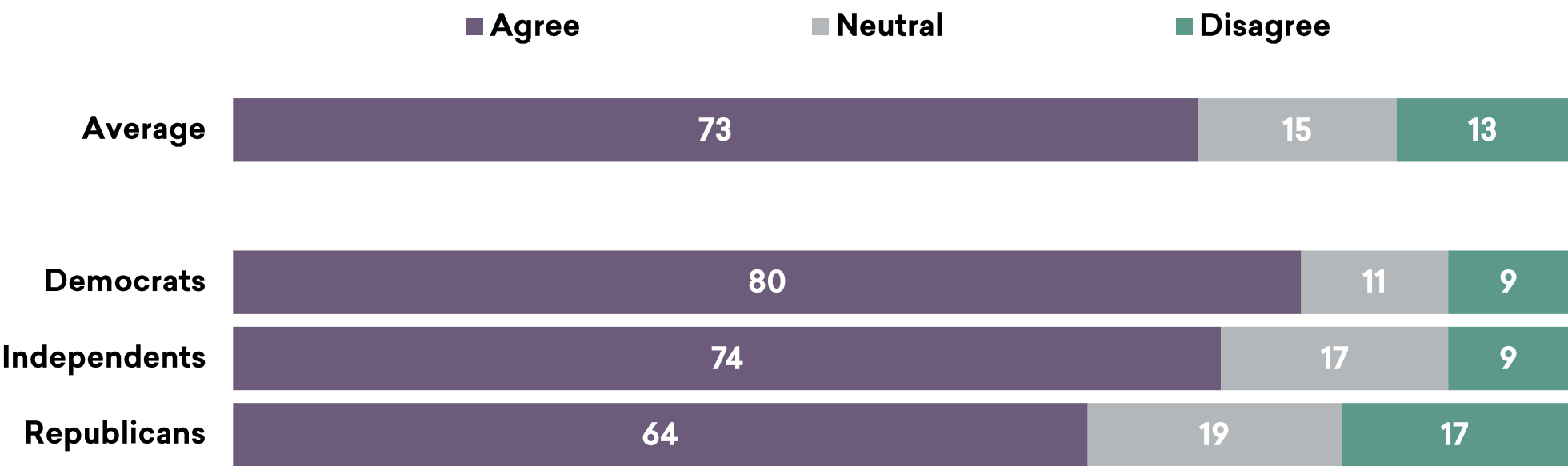
73%

of Pittsburgh MSA residents agree that we have a shared responsibility to connect across difference.

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There is broad bipartisan agreement among Pittsburgh MSA residents that we have a shared responsibility to engage with others who have different backgrounds and beliefs.

Numbers indicate percentages of Pittsburgh MSA residents.

"In a complex society, we all have a shared responsibility to engage with people whose backgrounds and viewpoints are different from our own."

■ **Agree**　　■ **Neutral**　　■ **Disagree**

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Average	73	15	13
Democrats	80	11	9
Independents	74	17	9
Republicans	64	19	17

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Some think that people have a responsibility to connect in order to learn from others and be generous to them.

"I think it's really important to talk to everybody regardless of background, what they look like, anything like that. I think it's how you learn from each other. I think it's just being a considerate and thoughtful person… **You should be wanting to talk to everybody—the world's so much bigger than just you.**"

Amanda, Gen Z white woman from Pittsburgh

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Section Three Topics

01 Connective
responsibility

02 **Interest in connection
across difference**

03 Attitudes towards
integrated communities

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We asked respondents to report how interested they would be in participating in a range of activities. We then averaged their responses together.

MEASURING INTEREST

Thinking about the near future, please indicate how interested you are in doing each of the following with someone from a different [group] than you:* [1 - Not at all interested, 2 - Slightly interested, 3 - Moderately interested, 4 - Very interested, 5 - Extremely interested]

1. Engaging in an extended conversation
2. Talking about [group] tensions
3. Forming a close friendship
4. Inviting into your home as a guest
5. Working in the same work group
6. Going to a function or social event
7. Working to achieve a mutual goal that improves your community

*This question was repeated for each line of difference. Items have been edited for clarity.

59%

of Pittsburgh MSA residents are at least moderately interested in activities involving connecting across differences.

PITTSBURGH MSA VS. USA

A slightly greater proportion of Pittsburgh MSA residents are interested in activities involving connecting across differences, compared to the national average.
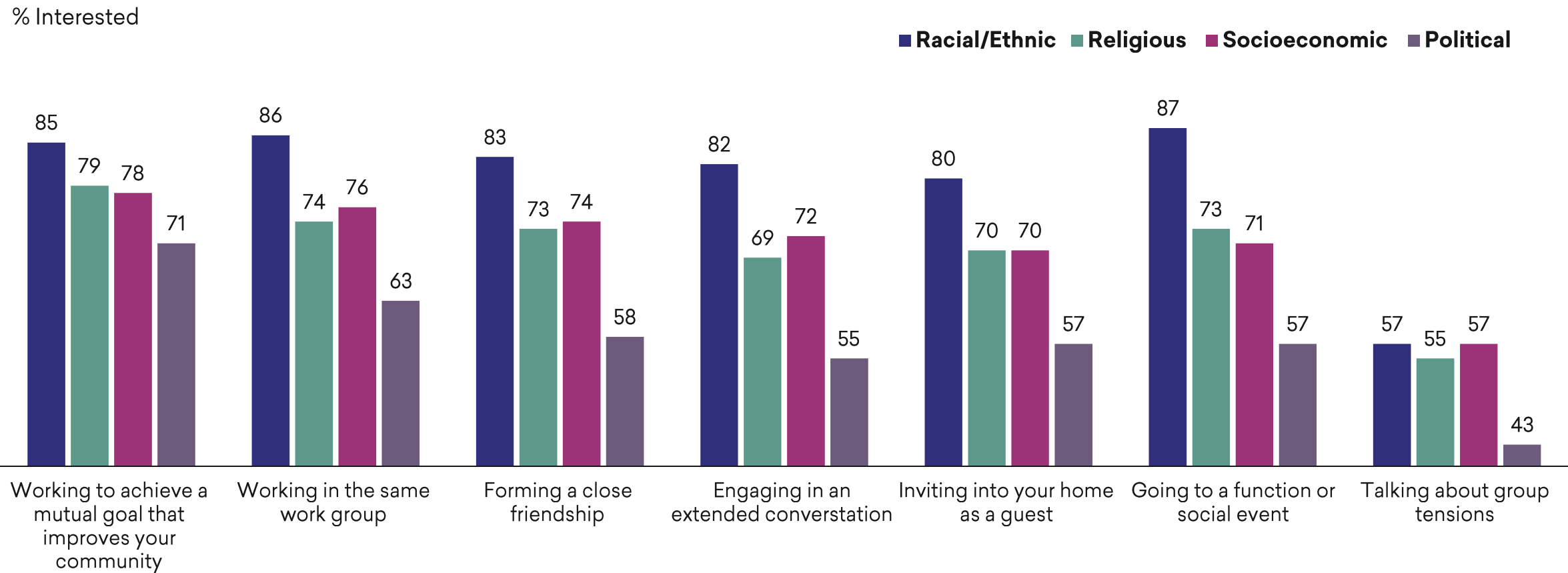
% of people at least moderately interested in activities involving cross-group connection (on average)*
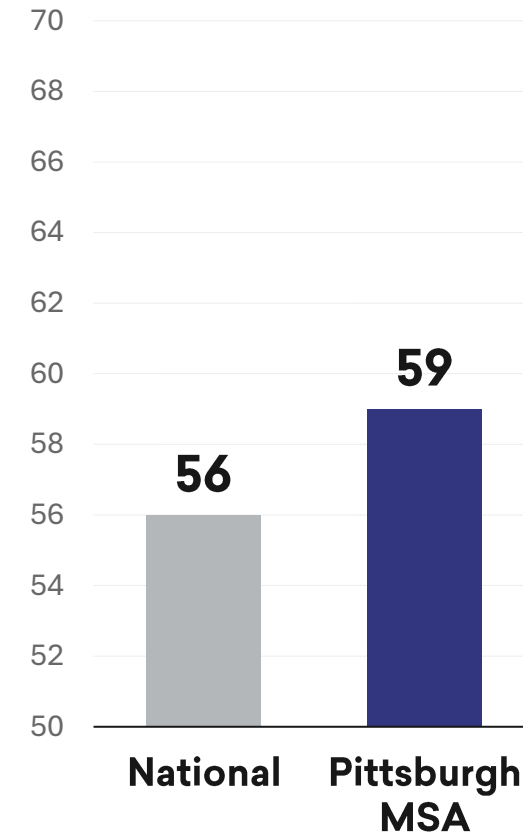
National: 56
Pittsburgh MSA: 59

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Pittsburgh MSA residents are most interested in connecting across lines of difference by engaging in activities that involve working together.

"Thinking about the near future, please indicate how interested you are in doing the following with people from a different [group] than you."

% Interested

■ Racial/Ethnic ■ Religious ■ Socioeconomic ■ Political

	Racial/Ethnic	Religious	Socioeconomic	Political
Working to achieve a mutual goal that improves your community	85	79	78	71
Working in the same work group	86	74	76	63
Forming a close friendship	83	73	74	58
Engaging in an extended converstation	82	69	72	55
Inviting into your home as a guest	80	70	70	57
Going to a function or social event	87	73	71	57
Talking about group tensions	57	55	57	43

Note: % Interested = "Moderately Interested" + "Very Interested" + "Extremely Interested." Item wording has been edited lightly for clarity.
Source: More in Common (2025). Survey of 750 adults in the Pittsburgh MSA conducted in 2024.

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Compared to other lines of difference, Pittsburgh MSA residents are most interested in connecting across racial and ethnic lines.
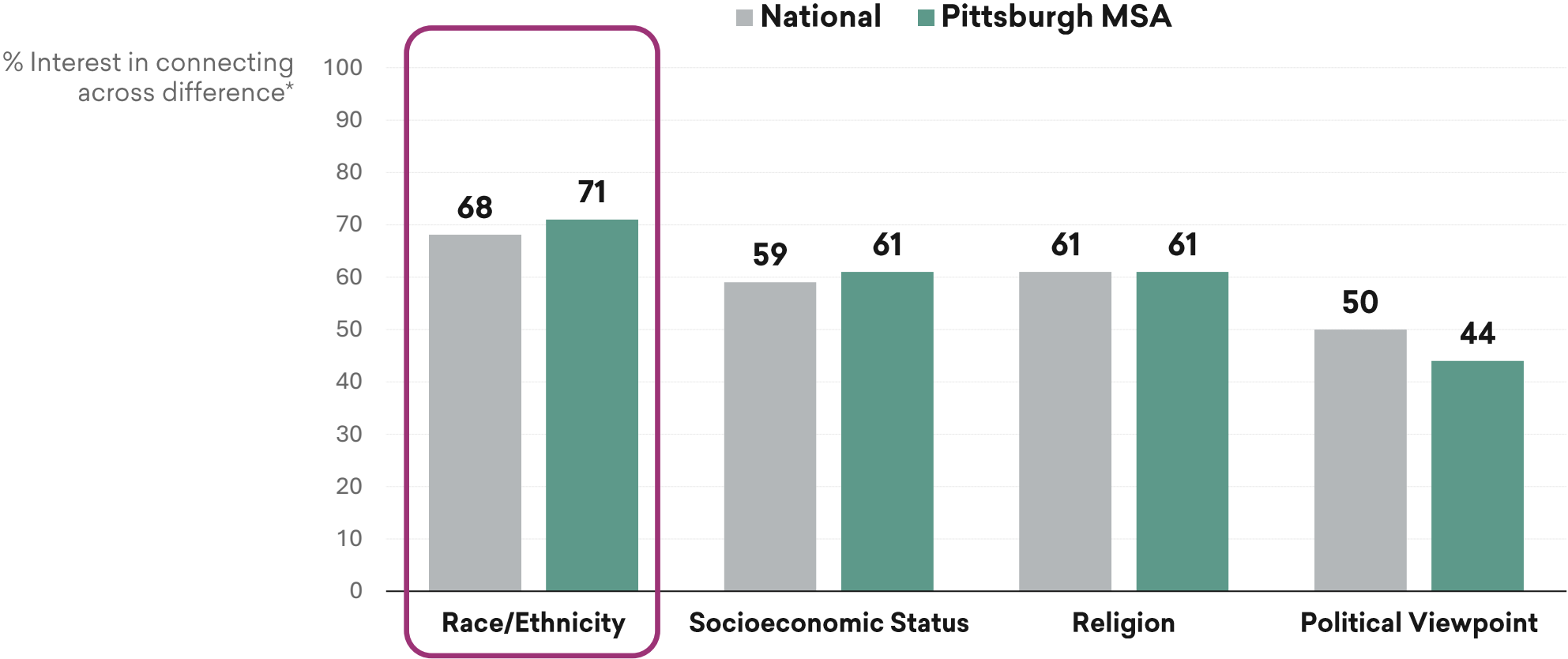
% Interest in connecting across difference*

Legend: ■ National ■ Pittsburgh MSA

Category	National	Pittsburgh MSA
Race/Ethnicity	68	71
Socioeconomic Status	59	61
Religion	61	61
Political Viewpoint	50	44

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Some mention how they are interested in connecting because they think they share a lot in common with everyone, regardless of background.

"I am just super social, I think, that when I'm out, I don't care where I am—whether I'm in the restaurant, in the grocery store—I talk to anybody and everybody... and I just feel that [the] **more people share, [the] more than they realize, if you just talk to someone, that you have more in common than you actually realize**. Even on the political views, I mean, they matter personally, to yourself...but at the end of the day...we all want the same things."

Donna, Gen X biracial (Hispanic and white) woman from Pittsburgh

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Section Three Topics

01   Connective responsibility

02   Interest in connection across difference

03   **Attitudes towards integrated communities**

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DEFINING TERMS

We asked respondents how much they would support greater mixing and integration of people with different backgrounds in their community.

MEASURING ATTITUDES TOWARDS INTEGRATED COMMUNITIES

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:* [1 - Strongly disagree to 7 - Strongly agree]

1. Greater integration of people with different [group] viewpoints/backgrounds would make the greater Pittsburgh region a better place to live.

2. I would like to live in a community where there is greater mixing and interaction among people with different [group] viewpoints/backgrounds than what exists where I live today.

*This question was repeated for each line of difference.

63%
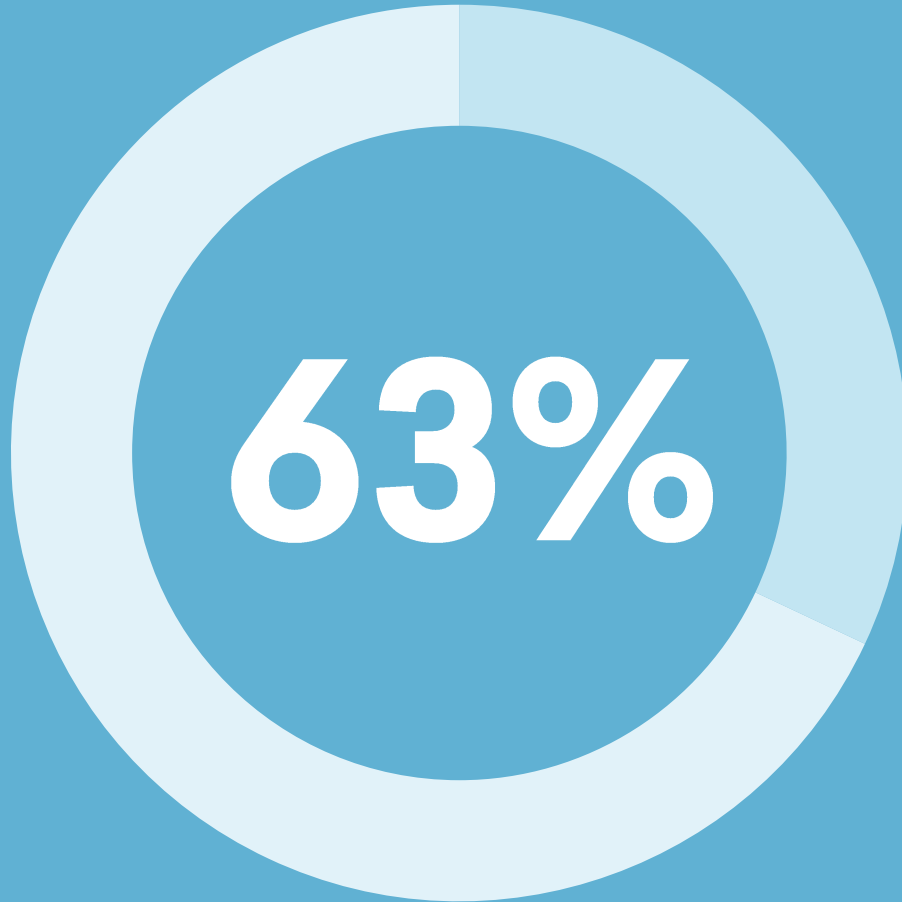
of Pittsburgh MSA residents support greater integration in their communities.

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PITTSBURGH MSA VS. USA

The proportion of Pittsburgh MSA residents that support greater integration is the same as the US average.

Percentage of people that support integrated communities *

National: 63
Pittsburgh MSA: 63
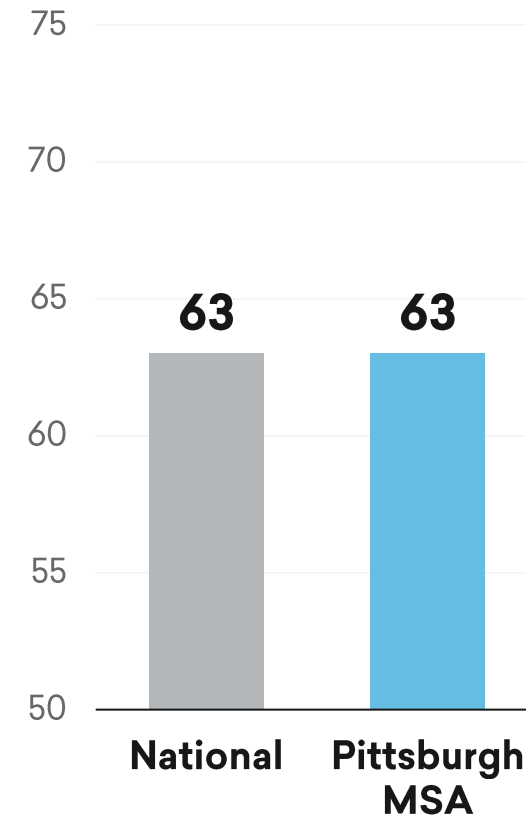
*Note: This is based on an average score higher than "4" on a composite measure of attitudes toward integration.
Source: More in Common (2025). Surveys of 4,522 U.S. adults and 750 adults in the Pittsburgh MSA conducted in 2024.

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Looking at each line of difference: a majority of Pittsburgh MSA residents support greater racial/ethnic integration in their neighborhoods (61 percent), and about 1 in 2 support greater socioeconomic and religious integration.

Numbers indicate percentages of Pittsburgh MSA residents.

"Greater integration of people from a different [group] would make my community a better place to live."
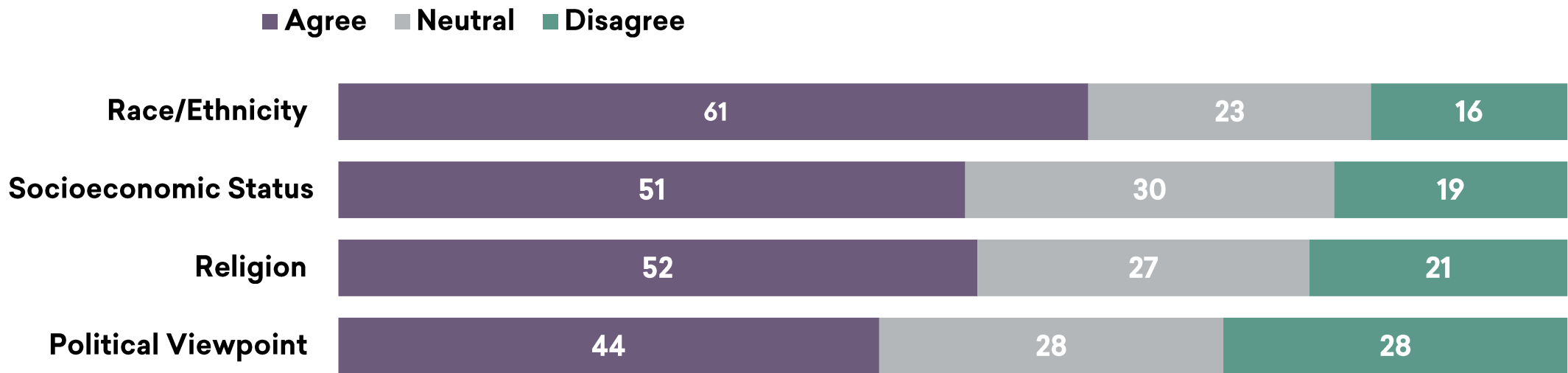
■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Race/Ethnicity	61	23	16
Socioeconomic Status	51	30	19
Religion	52	27	21
Political Viewpoint	44	28	28

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Predictors of Interest in Connecting Across Difference

Predictors of Interest

01 **Perceived Community Norms of Connection**

02 Frequency of Cross-Group Interaction

03 Belonging In Pittsburgh MSA

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What are perceived community norms of connection?

UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY NORMS OF CONNECTION

Norms are informal standards that describe typical or desirable behavior—and have a powerful influence over how people behave in a society. In this report, we focus specifically on perceived community norms of cross-group interaction, meaning beliefs about how common and acceptable it is to connect across differences in one's community.

MEASURING PERCEIVED COMMUNITY NORMS OF CONNECTION

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:* [1 - Strongly disagree to 7 - Strongly agree]

1. If given the choice, people should spend time with people from different [group] backgrounds than them because it is the right thing to do.
2. People in my local community often spend time with people whose [group] is different than them.

*This question was repeated for each line of difference.

57%
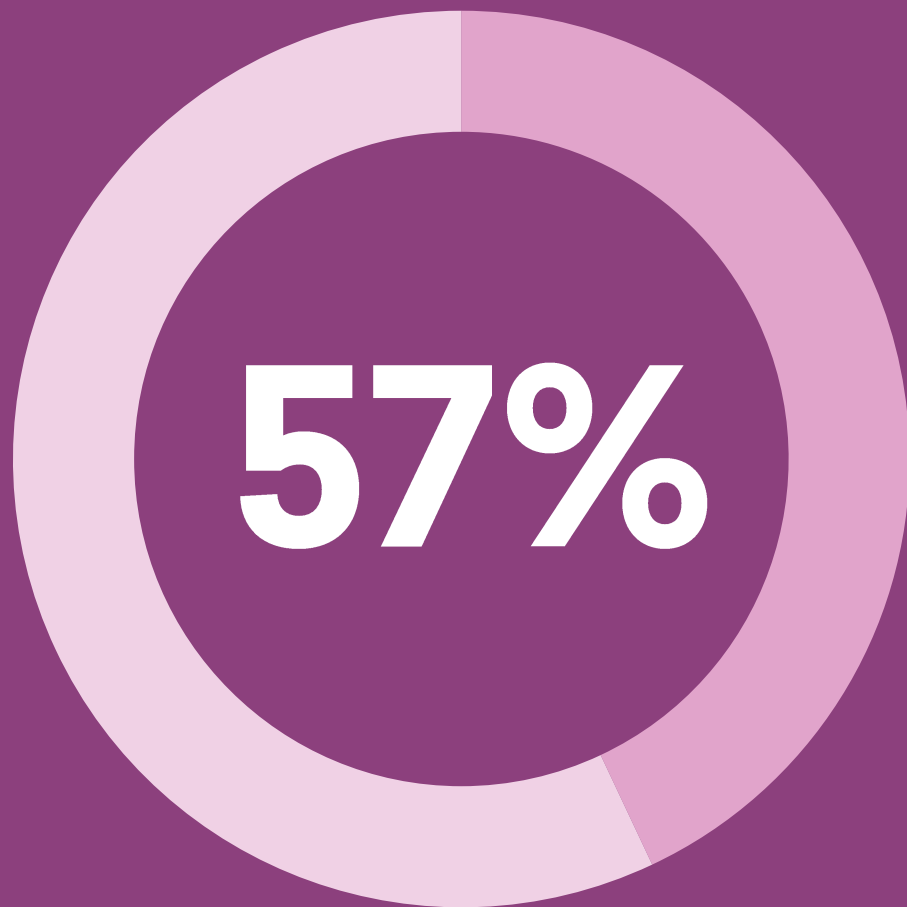
of Pittsburgh MSA residents agree that connecting across lines of difference is the "right thing to do."

PITTSBURGH MSA VS. USA

The proportion of people in Pittsburgh MSA who think connection is common in their community is lower than the US average.

% of people who say connecting across difference is common in their community*
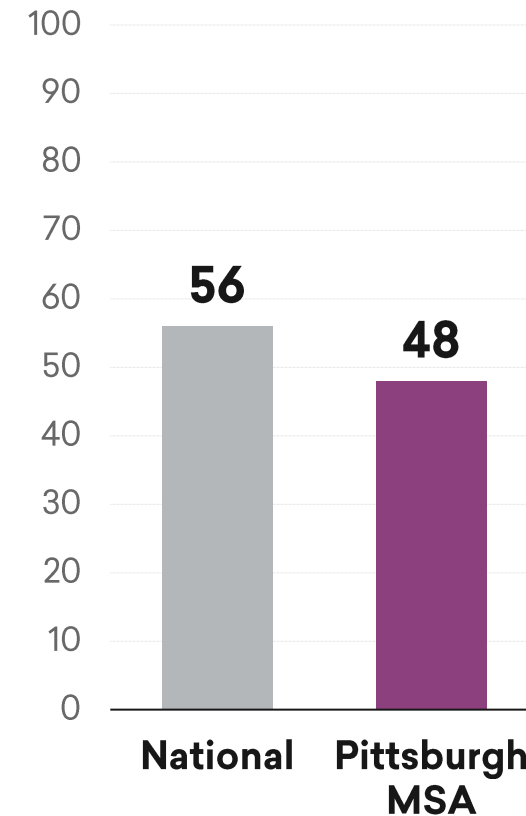
*Note: Percentage is based on people having a score of "4" or higher on a composite score on the first norm item, after averaging across all four lines of difference. The difference is statistically significant.
Source: More in Common (2025). Surveys of 4,522 U.S. adults and 750 adults in the Pittsburgh MSA conducted in 2024.

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The more people think *others* in their community are crossing lines of difference, the more interested they are to do so as well.
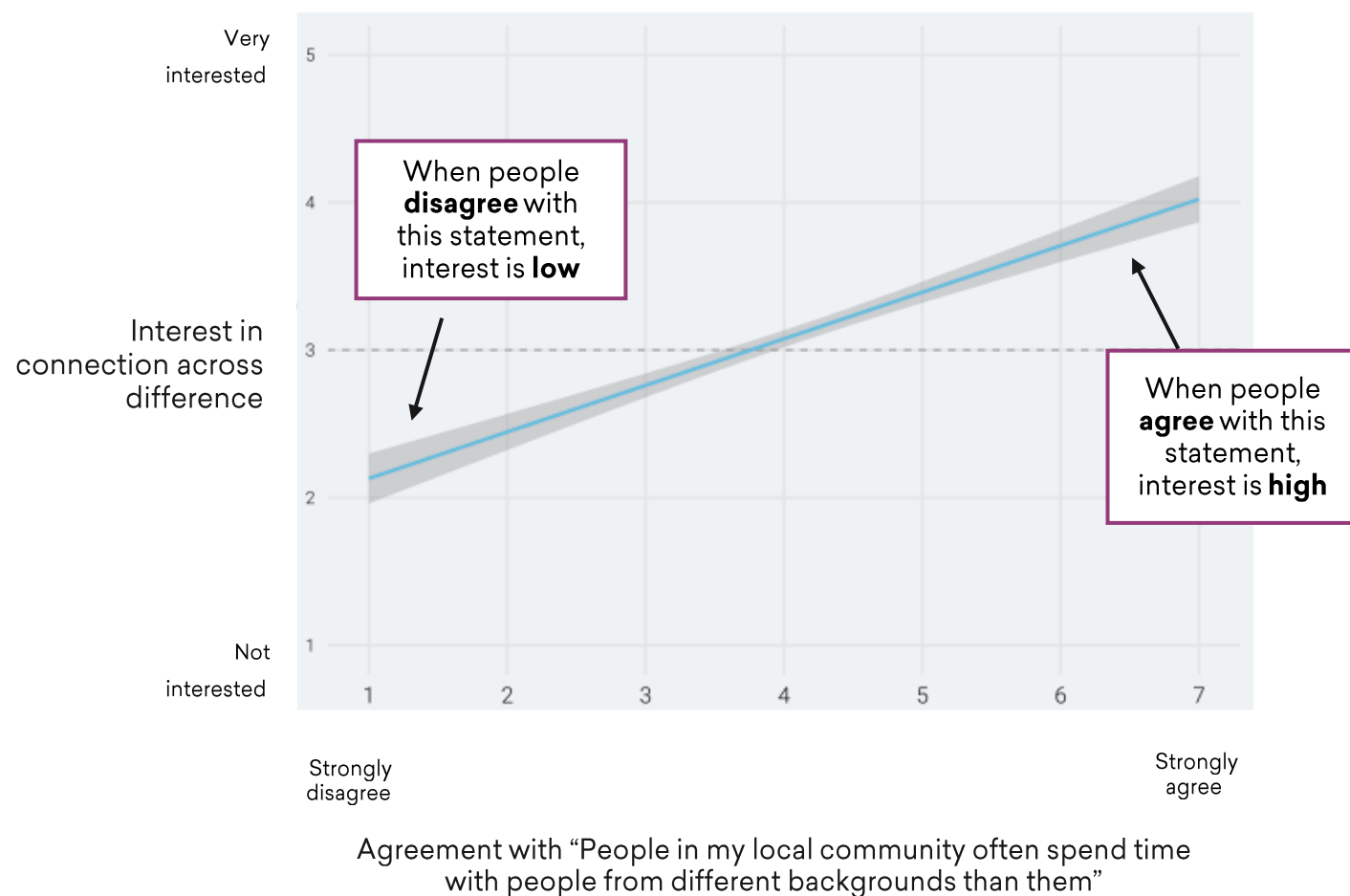
Very interested

Interest in connection across difference

Not interested

When people **disagree** with this statement, interest is **low**

When people **agree** with this statement, interest is **high**

5

4

3

2

1

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

Agreement with "People in my local community often spend time with people from different backgrounds than them"

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FURTHER INSIGHTS FROM FOCUS GROUPS

Some residents discuss how different industries in Pittsburgh draw in people from around the world, making connections with people from different backgrounds and beliefs seem common in the city.

"I have a lot of diverse friends from different countries, different parts of the United States, that have located to Pittsburgh to practice medicine or go to medical school. So that whole group of people is one section of people that I hang around with and, basically, learn so much [about] different countries and just different ways of living from them...I've met people from literally all over the world... so it just pretty much reflects Pittsburgh with the medical center and Carnegie Mellon and different workplaces, just a variety of people that have come from all over."

Vera, Baby Boomer white woman from Pittsburgh

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Others mention how they think the city lacks racial diversity, which likely affects how they perceive norms of connection.

"Pittsburgh has a very distinct ethnic background. Unfortunately, we're like 98% white here–we're probably 85% [white] because of the African-American [population]–but we have no Hispanics here at all. You go to Dallas, you go to Florida, you go to Chicago, there's a thriving Hispanic population. We don't have that here."

Jacon, Millennial Native American man from Pittsburgh

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Predictors of Interest

01   **Perceived Community Norms of Connection**

02   **Frequency of Cross-Group Interaction**

03   **Belonging In Pittsburgh MSA**

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How do we measure frequency of cross-group interaction?

DEFINITION

Frequency of cross-group interaction is a measure of how often individuals themselves report contact with people from different racial and ethnic, political, socioeconomic, and religious backgrounds than them.

MEASUREMENT

In your day-to-day life, how often do you find yourself interacting with people from a different [group] than you?*

1 - Never
2 - Rarely
3 - Sometimes
4 - Often
5 - All the time
6 - I don't know

*This question was repeated for each line of difference. People who reported "I don't know" were removed.

43% of Pittsburgh MSA residents self-report that they connect frequently across lines of difference.

Pittsburgh MSA residents report interacting most frequently across racial/ethnic and religious lines of difference.

Numbers indicate percentages of Pittsburgh MSA residents.

"In your day-to-day life, how often do you find yourself interacting with people from different _____ backgrounds than you?"
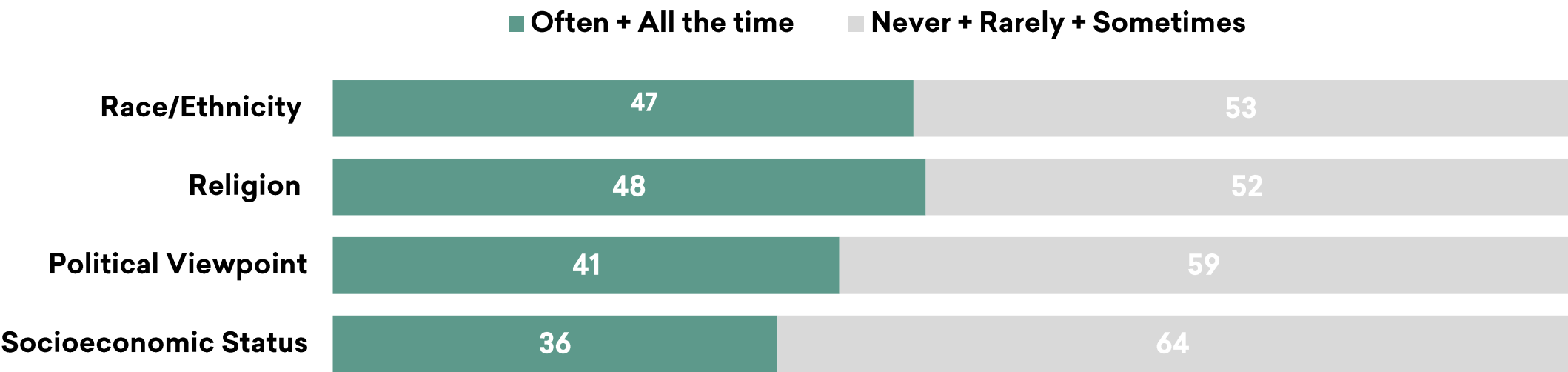
■ Often + All the time   **■ Never + Rarely + Sometimes**

Category	Often + All the time	Never + Rarely + Sometimes
Race/Ethnicity	47	53
Religion	48	52
Political Viewpoint	41	59
Socioeconomic Status	36	64

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The more frequently people interact across lines of difference in their community, the more interested they are in connection in the future.
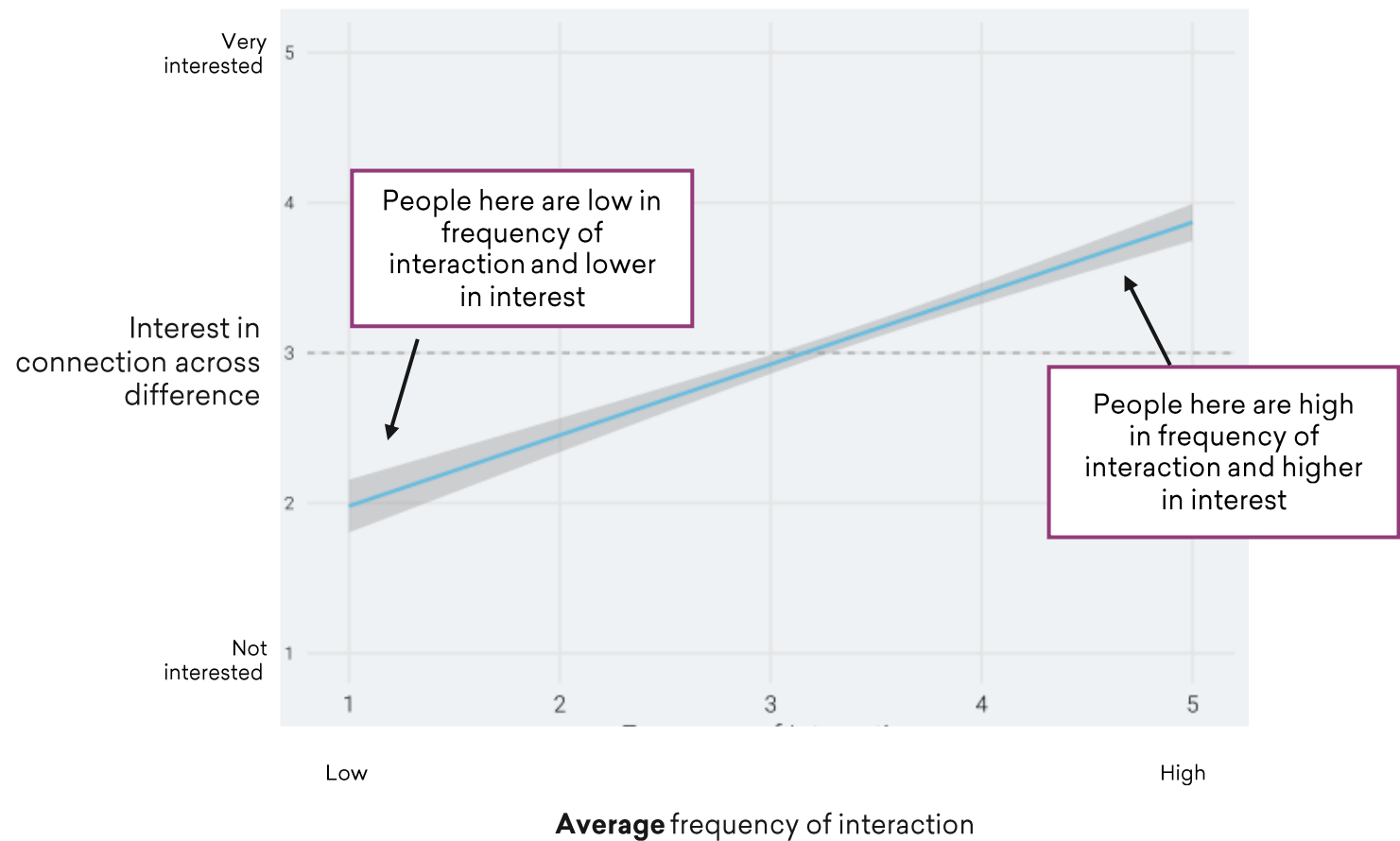
People here are low in frequency of interaction and lower in interest

People here are high in frequency of interaction and higher in interest

Very interested

Interest in connection across difference

Not interested

Low

High

Average frequency of interaction

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Predictors of Interest

01   Perceived Community Norms of Connection

02   Frequency of Cross-Group Interaction

03   **Belonging In Pittsburgh MSA**

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What does it mean to feel local community belonging?

DEFINITION

The feeling of being socially connected, accepted, and valued within one's local group or community

MEASUREMENT

Think about your relationship with your **local community**. Please indicate your agreement/disagreement with the following statements: [1 - Strongly disagree to 7 - Strongly agree]

1. People in my community welcome and include me in activities.
2. People in my community value me and my contributions.
3. My relationships with others in my community are as satisfying as I want them to be.
4. I feel like an "insider" who understands how my community works.
5. I am comfortable expressing my opinions in my community.
6. When interacting with people in my community, I feel like I truly belong.

55%

of Pittsburgh MSA residents report a strong sense of local community belonging.
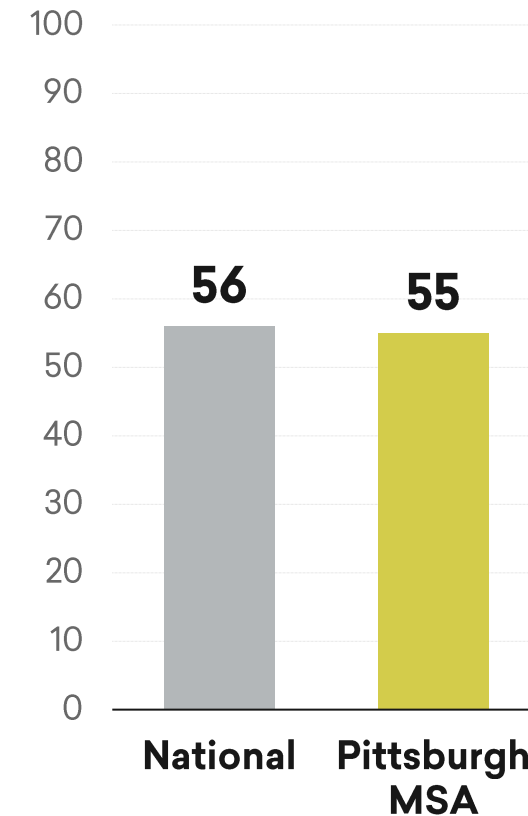
Levels of agreement with local community belonging statements is similar for Pittsburgh MSA residents as for Americans at large.

Numbers indicate percentages.

"Think about your relationship with your local community. Please indicate your agreement/disagreement with the following statements:"

■ National Average ■ Pittsburgh MSA Average

Statement	National Average	Pittsburgh MSA Average
When interacting with people in my community, I feel like I truly belong.	74	68
I am comfortable expressing my opinions in my community.	77	75
I feel like an "insider" who understands how my community works.	62	63
My relationships with others in my community are as satisfying as I want them to be.	79	81
People in my community value me and my contributions.	70	74
People in my community welcome and include me in activities.	73	76

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The more belonging people feel at the local community level, the more interested they are to engage across lines of difference.
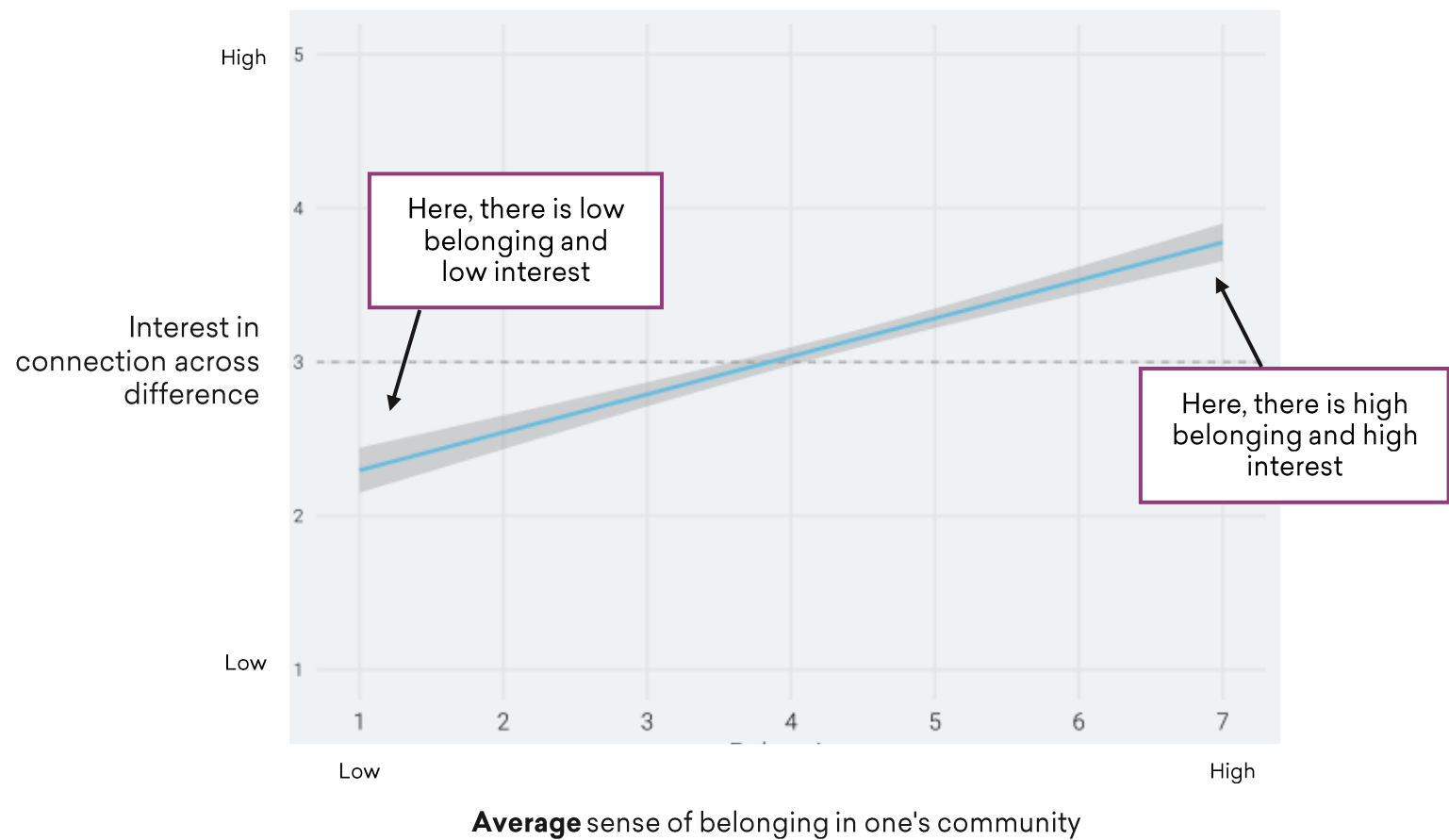
Interest in connection across difference

High 5

4

3

2

Low 1

Here, there is low belonging and low interest

Here, there is high belonging and high interest

Low 1   2   3   4   5   6   7   High

Average sense of belonging in one's community

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Section Five

Barriers to Connecting Across Difference
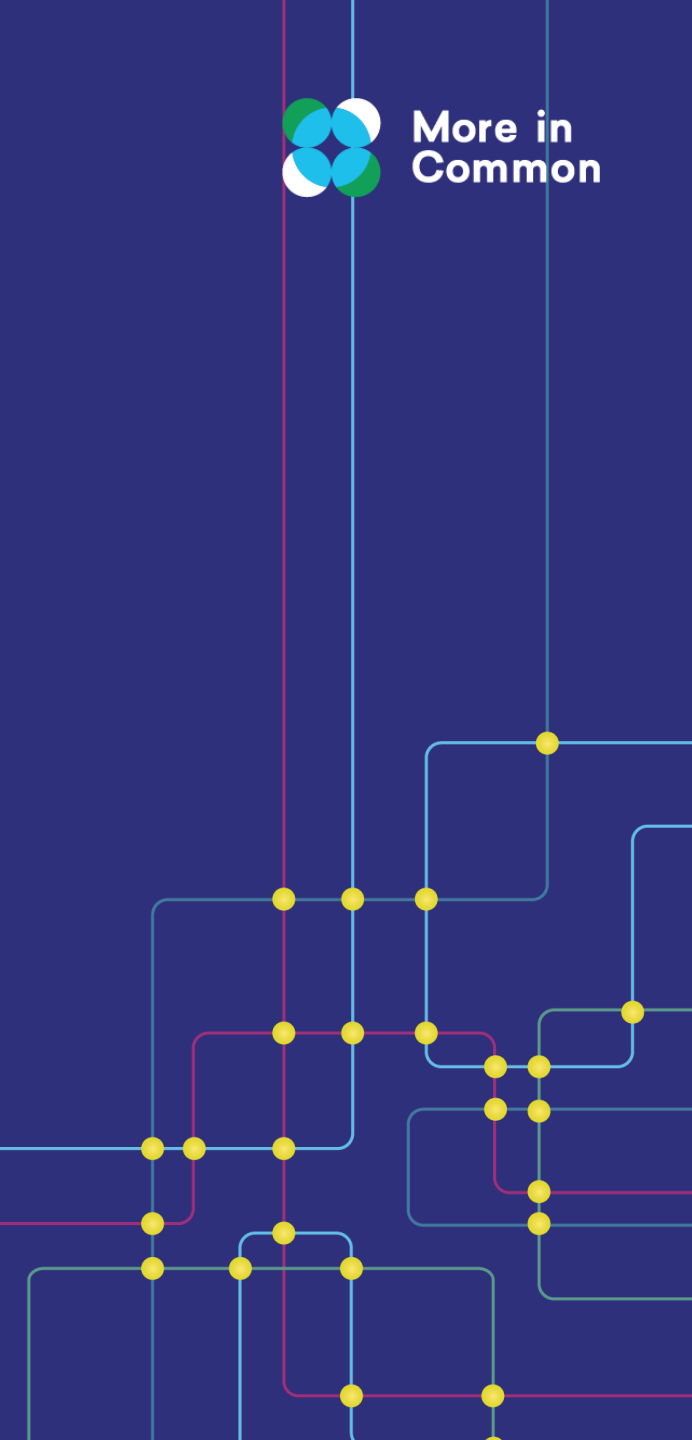
What are barriers to connection across difference?

UNDERSTANDING BARRIERS TO CONNECTION

Factors that hinder meaningful interactions across people from different social groups. These can be psychological (e.g. prejudice, anxiety about the interaction), social (e.g. threats to safety), environmental (e.g. lacking opportunity, time constraints), or a combination of one or more of the above.

MEASUREMENT

Which of the following factors best reflects what might make it challenging for you to interact with people of a different___than you? (Please select all that apply)*

1. Lacking opportunity
2. Not important
3. Lacking energy
4. I think it would be uncomfortable
5. They won't understand me
6. Other people won't approve
7. Lacking social support
8. I don't think they want to interact with me
9. I'm afraid to offend them
10. Not enough time
11. They don't live in my community
12. Concerns for my personal safety
13. I don't really like them
14. No reason
15. Another reason

*This question was repeated for each four lines of difference. Item wording has been shortened here for brevity.

Pittsburgh MSA residents most frequently cite a "lack of opportunity" to connect across lines of difference.

"Which of the following factors best reflects what might make it challenging for you to interact with people of a different [group] than you? (Please select all that apply)"

This is the most frequently selected barrier to connecting across difference, averaged across all four lines of difference

% of participants selecting each response, averaged across all four lines of difference

Response	Value
Lacking opportunity	29
No reason	28
Not important	21
I don't think they want to interact with me	13
Lacking energy	12
They don't live in my community	12
Another reason	10
Not enough time	10
I'm afraid to offend them	10
I think it would be uncomfortable	10
They won't understand me	9
I don't really like them	6
Concerns for my personal safety	5

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The barriers to connection that Pittsburgh MSA residents cite vary by line of difference.
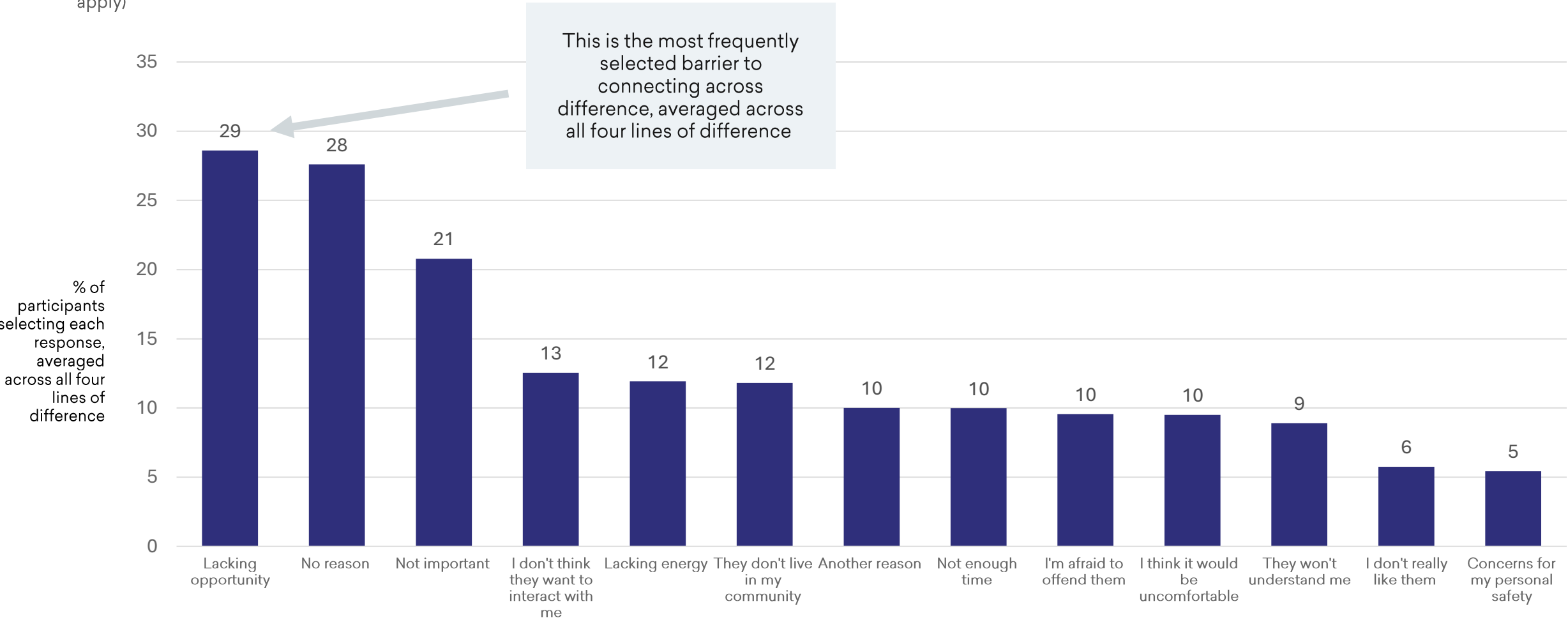
"Which of the following factors best reflects what might make it challenging for you to interact with people of a different [group] than you? (Please select all that apply)"

% of participants selecting each response

Legend: Race/Ethnicity, Political, Religion, Socioeconomic

Response	Race/Ethnicity	Political	Religion	Socioeconomic
Lacking opportunity	38	22	27	28
No reason	26	22	32	31
They don't live in my community	21	7	7	12
Not important	19	25	18	21
I don't think they want to interact with me.	12	17	9	11
Not enough time	10	9	10	10
I'm afraid to offend them	10	13	9	7
Lacking energy	8	18	12	9
Another reason	6	7	5	3
They won't understand me	5	16	8	6
I think it would be uncomfortable	5	16	7	10
Concerns for my personal safety	3	14	2	2
I don't really like them	2	14	5	3

Note: Percents do not add to 100 due to multiple response. The items "I don't think other people in my life would approve" and "I don't have the social support to do this" were omitted due to low percentages across all lines of difference.
Source: More in Common (2025). Survey of 750 adults in the Pittsburgh MSA conducted in 2024.

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Pittsburgh MSA residents are hesitant to connect across political differences due to perceived discomfort, lack of energy, safety concerns, general dislike, and a sense that interaction is unimportant.
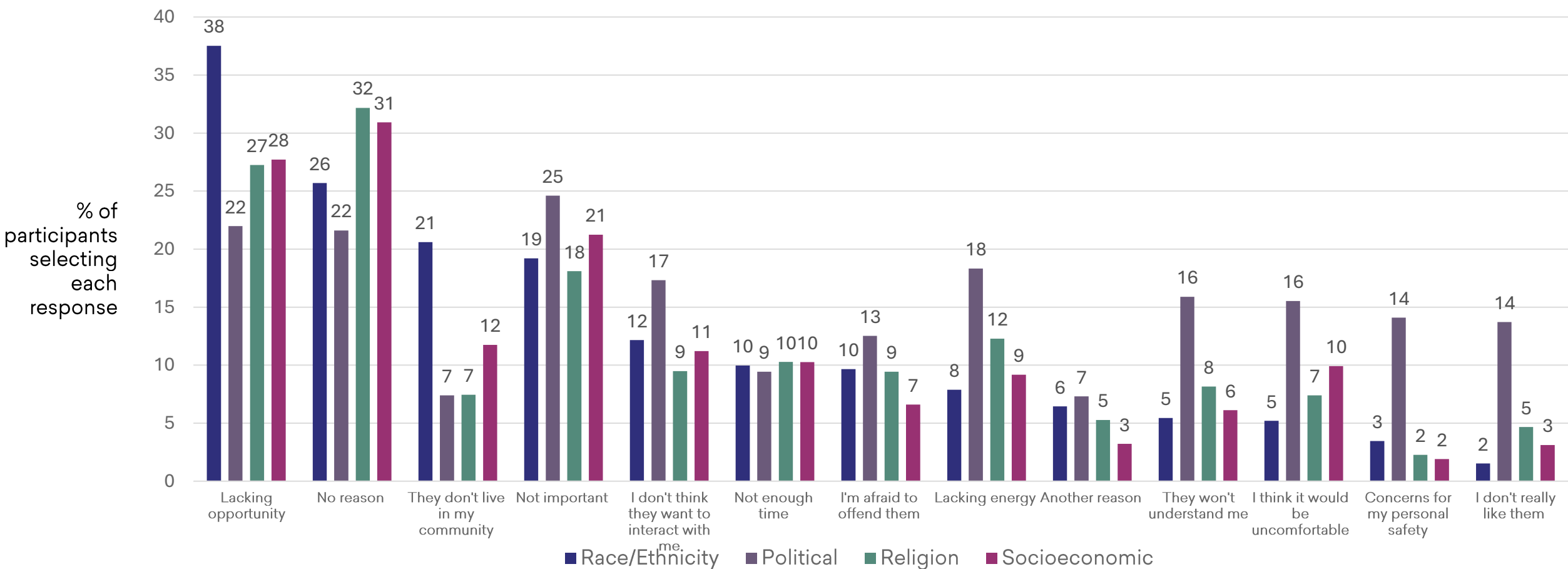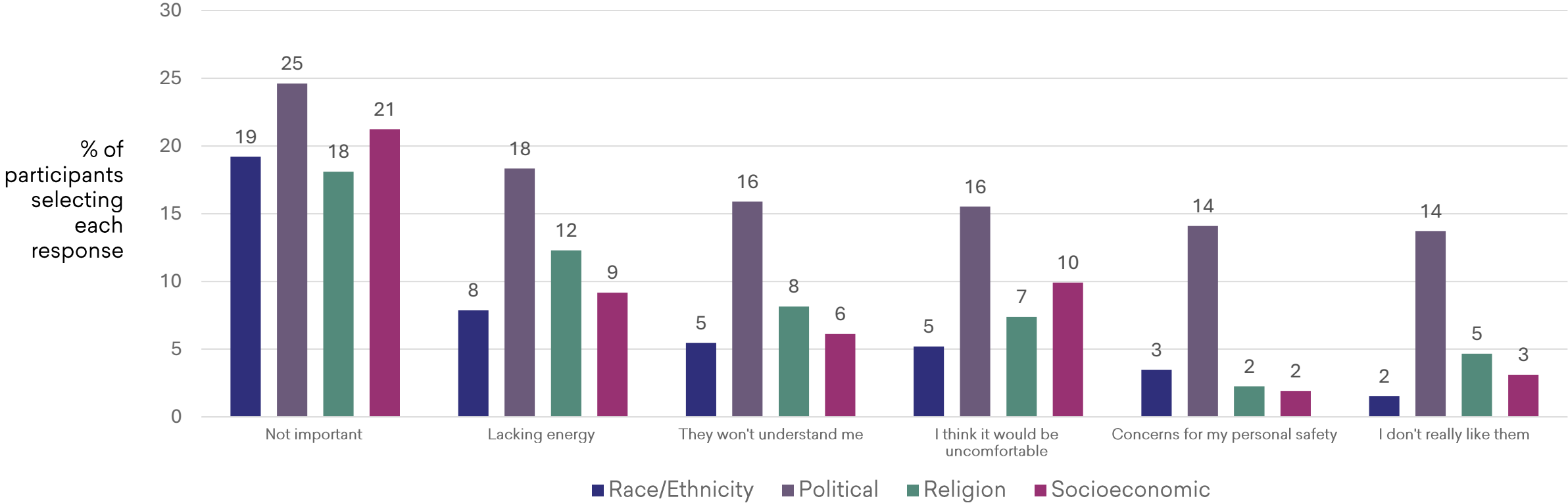
"Which of the following factors best reflects what might make it challenging for you to interact with people of a different [group] than you? (Please select all that apply)"

% of participants selecting each response

Legend: Race/Ethnicity, Political, Religion, Socioeconomic

Response	Race/Ethnicity	Political	Religion	Socioeconomic
Not important	19	25	18	21
Lacking energy	8	18	12	9
They won't understand me	5	16	8	6
I think it would be uncomfortable	5	16	7	10
Concerns for my personal safety	3	14	2	2
I don't really like them	2	14	5	3

More in Common

Pittsburgh residents mention political tensions as a barrier to authentically connecting with others in the community.

"I'm 43. I don't ever remember it being this divided, where people cannot even listen to other people's opinions—which I think is very, very scary. I think that you are certainly entitled to your opinion, but that you should at least be able to listen to somebody else. It has come to the point where there are so many different areas in my life—like co-workers, family, friends from high school, friends from different areas—we just have to not talk about it at all because people feel so strongly and they get so upset. They just can't even hear another point of view, which I find terrifying."

Rose, Millennial white woman from Pittsburgh

FURTHER INSIGHTS FROM FOCUS GROUPS

Residents also frequently mention the disorder they see in certain places in the city—and how this affects their desire to walk around and interact with others.

"I don't work downtown anymore, but I did for about eight years. And as time went on, you see more issues that aren't being taken [into account]. Even garbage cans overflowing and stuff. And people, for one reason or another, passing out from drugs. And we lost a lot of restaurants over time. It's kind of like [is] a family of four with a couple of young children safe to go downtown for hours of the day? I've seen over years how it's kind of deteriorated a little bit."

Jullian, Millennial white man from Pittsburgh

Places of Connection
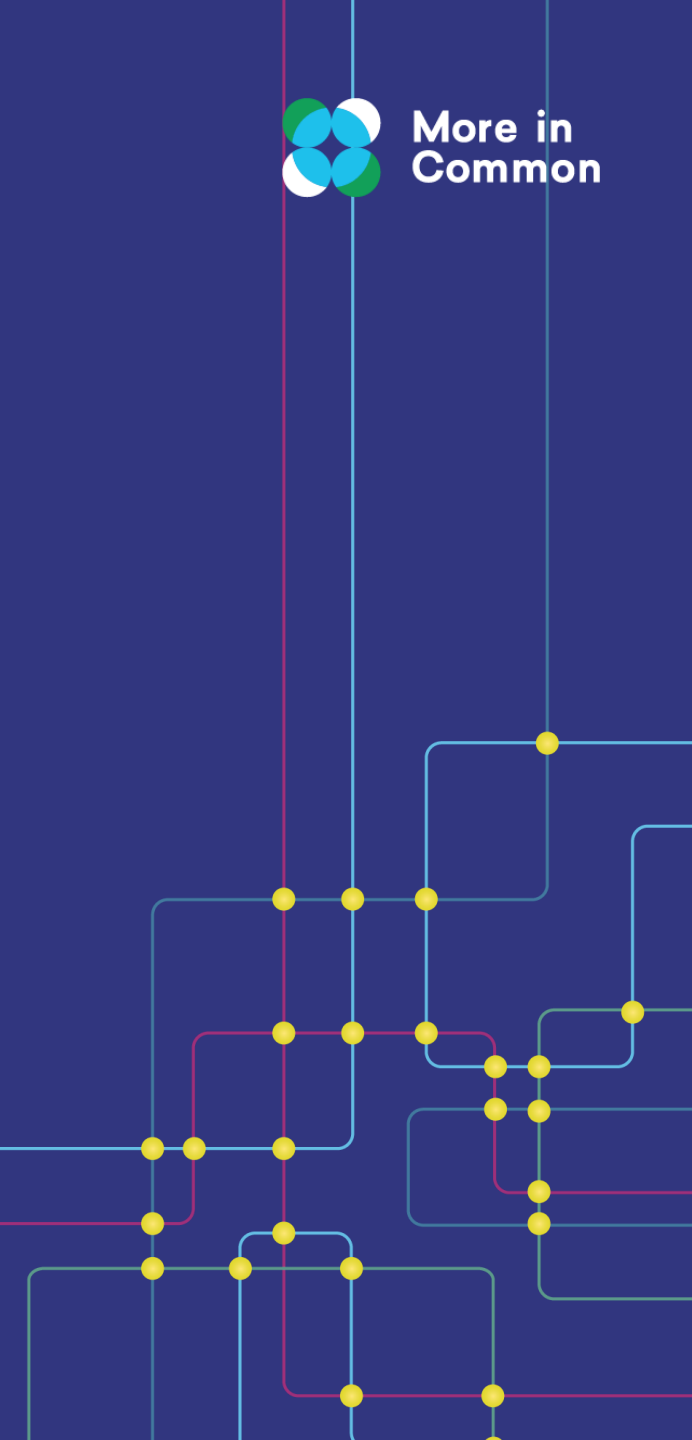
WHERE PEOPLE SELF-REPORT THEY CONNECT

People report the most connections happening in public spaces and at social gatherings.

Social media and family gatherings stand out as frequent places to connect across political differences.

Question: We would like you to think about your day-to-day interactions—if any—with people from different [group] than you. Where do these interactions usually take place? [Select as many that apply]
Source: More in Common (2025). Source: More in Common (2025). Surveys of 4,522 U.S. adults and 750 adults in the Pittsburgh MSA conducted in 2024.
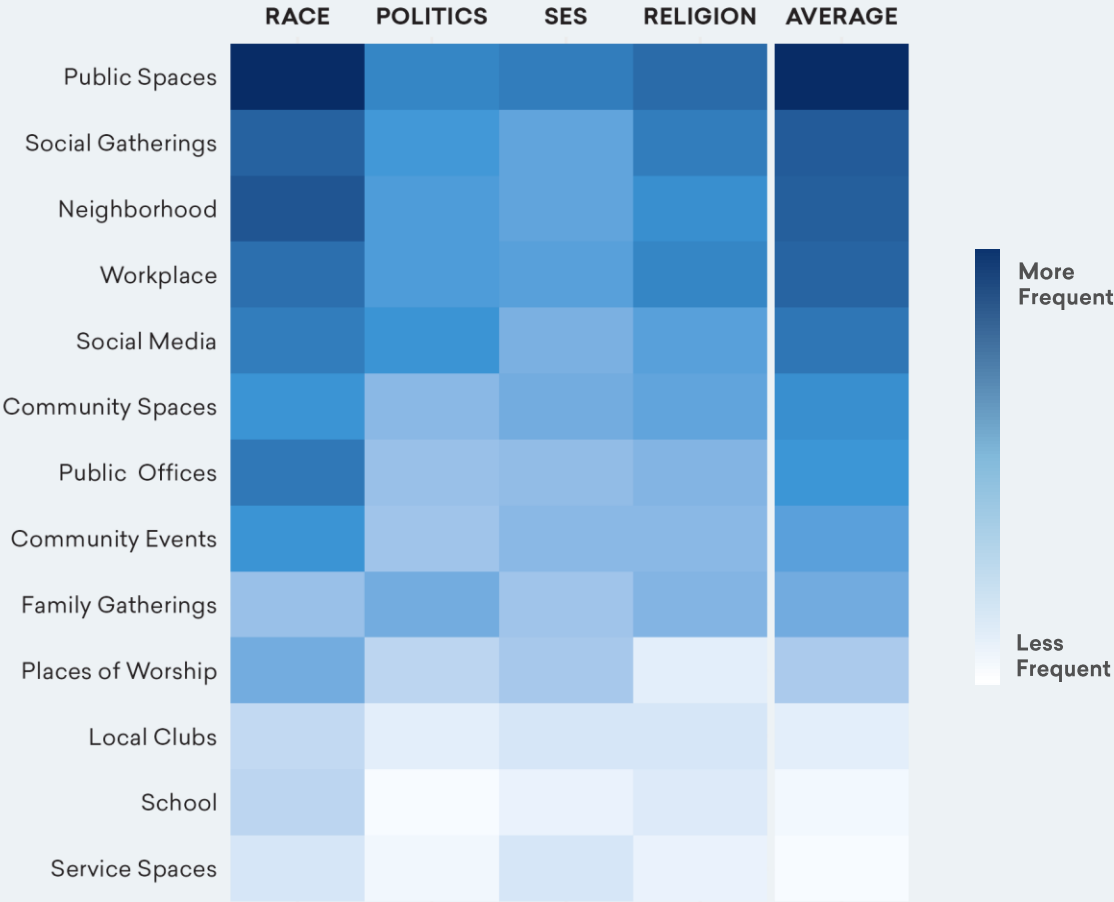
Trusted Messengers

TRUSTED MESSENGERS

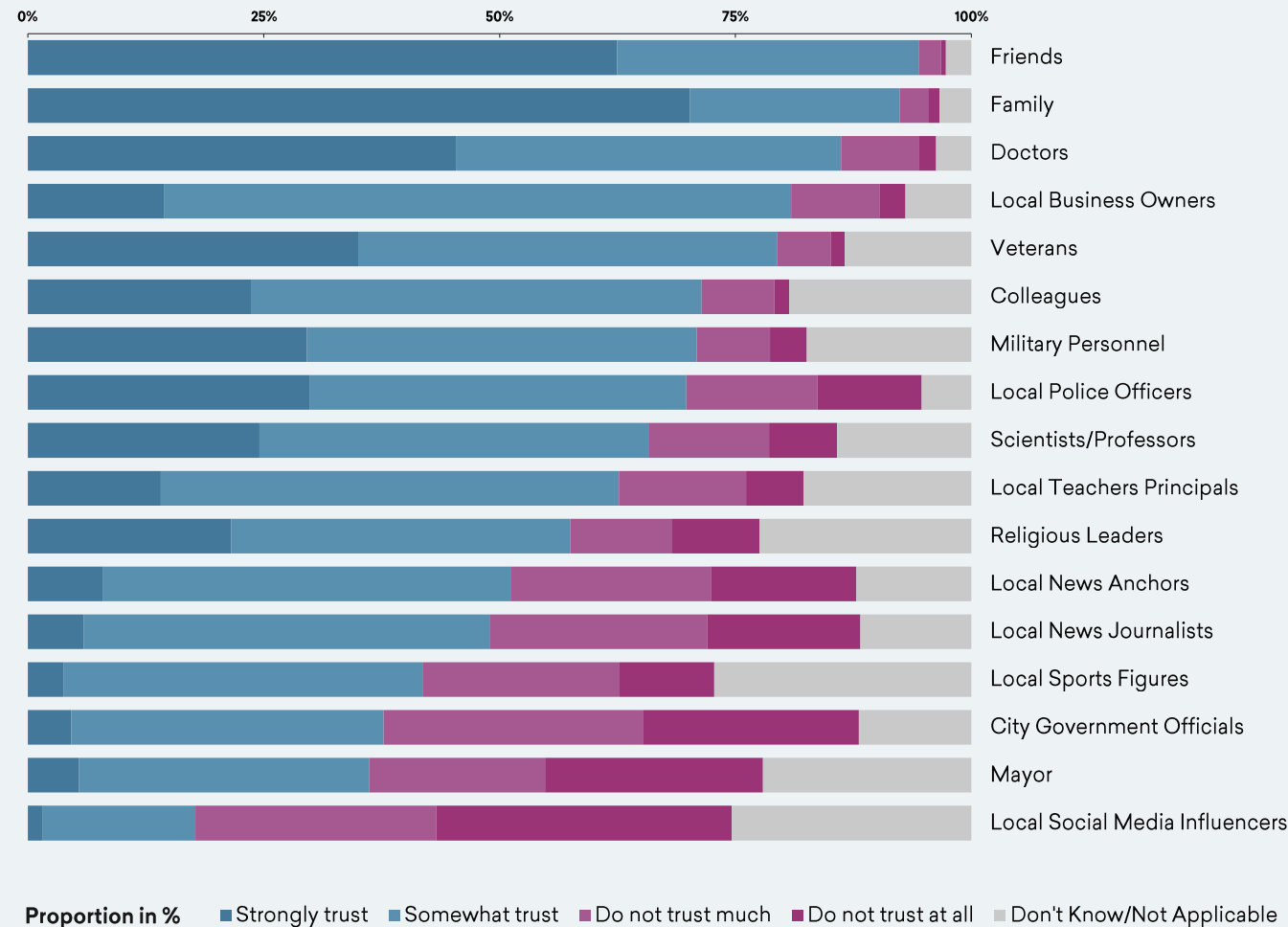In the Pittsburgh MSA, people place the most trust in close connections, doctors, and business owners— while city government officials and local social media influencers are trusted the least.

| Proportion in % | Strongly trust | Somewhat trust | Do not trust much | Do not trust at all | Don't Know/Not Applicable |

Friends
Family
Doctors
Local Business Owners
Veterans
Colleagues
Military Personnel
Local Police Officers
Scientists/Professors
Local Teachers Principals
Religious Leaders
Local News Anchors
Local News Journalists
Local Sports Figures
City Government Officials
Mayor
Local Social Media Influencers

More in Common

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Respondents seek out local TV news the most to know what is happening locally

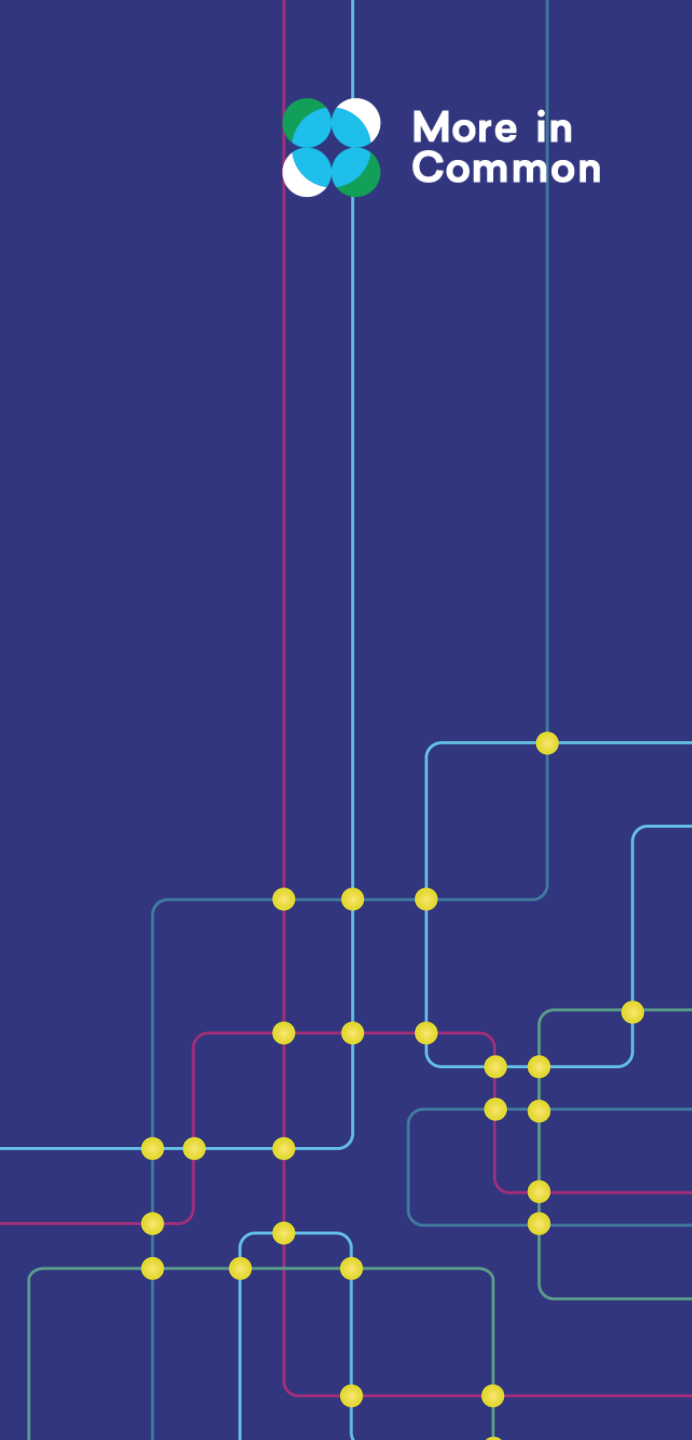Question: If you want to find out what is happening locally in the greater Pittsburgh region, including news on sports, traffic, weather, politics, events, lifestyle, etc., what source are you most likely to turn to? [Select one]

Source	
Local TV News	68%
Word of Mouth	52%
Social Media	45%
Local Newspapers	40%
Digital Newsletters	14%
Local Ads & Bulletins	9%
Podcasts	7%
Other	6%
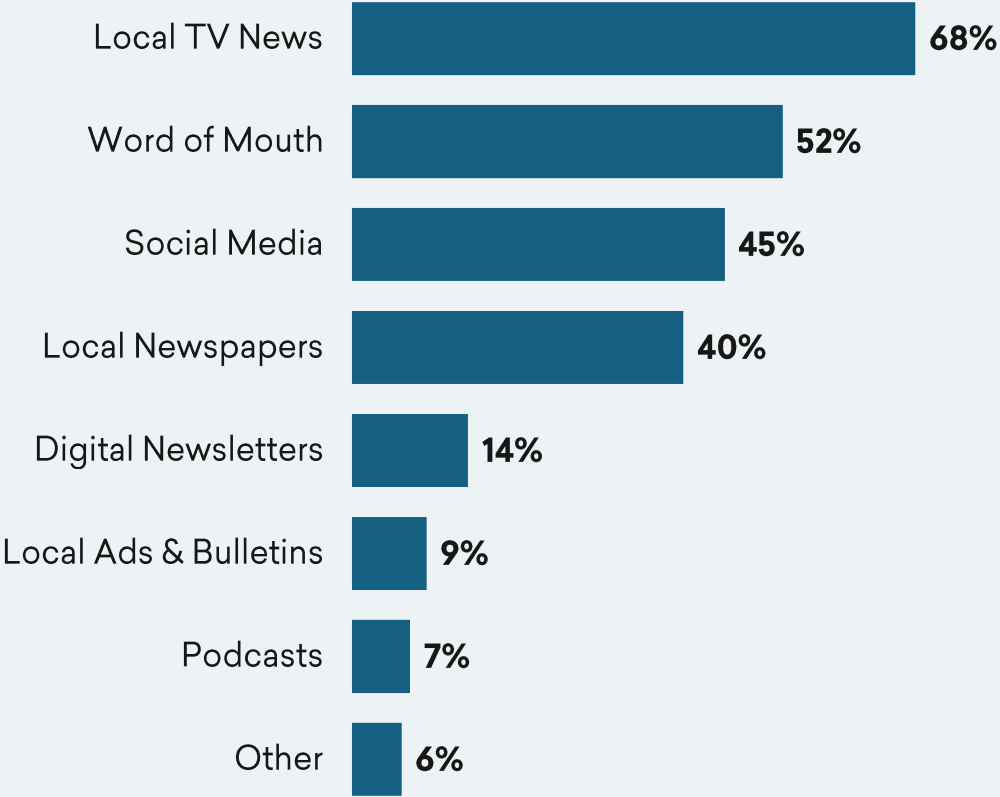
Levers of Change

Six recommendations for fostering more connection across difference

1 **Provide more opportunities for Pittsburgh residents to connect across lines of difference.**

Our research identifies a "lack of opportunity" as the most frequently cited barrier to building these connections, especially for differences of race/ethnicity, region, and socioeconomic status. One clear strategy for resolving this is also the most straightforward: create more opportunities for people to make connections in their daily lives. This can be done in two main ways: 1) provide more opportunities for meaningful connection in spaces where people are already coming together, and 2) design environments where new connections can happen naturally.

2 **Increase the perception that connecting across difference is the "community norm."**

Perceived community norms that support connection across difference are the strongest predictor of interest in connecting across all four lines of difference we explored. This suggests that strengthening these norms of connection can be a powerful lever for change. See our main report for practical guidance on how to achieve this.

More in Common

Six recommendations for fostering more connection across difference

3 **Foster community belonging in Pittsburgh.**

Our data show that the more people feel like they belong in their local community, the more they express interest in connecting across lines of difference. Therefore, fostering a sense of community belonging is likely an important aspect of supporting people's willingness to bridge differences.

4 **Focus on commonalities, like shared goals, to broaden the appeal of bridging activities.**

Pittsburgh residents report that they would be more interested in connecting across lines of difference if the interactions focused on working to achieve a mutual goal in the community. As such, creating opportunities that emphasize shared community goals and activities may draw in more community members. In contrast, programs that invite people to come together to talk about potential sources of tension or conflict—which is frequently the focus of some traditional bridge-building efforts—may inadvertently "preach to the choir" and only entice those who already feel comfortable addressing group differences.

More in Common

Six recommendations for fostering more connection across difference

5 **Emphasize the importance of "connective responsibility."**

A majority of Pittsburgh residents agree that they have a responsibility to connect across lines of difference. Community leaders can highlight this in public messages and also discuss ways in which collaboration across differences has been essential to advancements in the area.

6 **Create longstanding programming to reinforce connections, as opposed to one-off events.**

Our research finds that the more people engage across lines of difference (their "frequency of cross-group connection"), the more interested they are to do so again in the future. This suggests that experiences of and interest in connection may build on themselves in a self-reinforcing cycle. To take advantage of such cascading interest, organizations need to create sustained opportunities for engagement and bridging.

More in Common

See our full [report](#) for more guidance on how to turn these insights into action.

If you have any questions about this study, please contact us at us@moreincommon.com
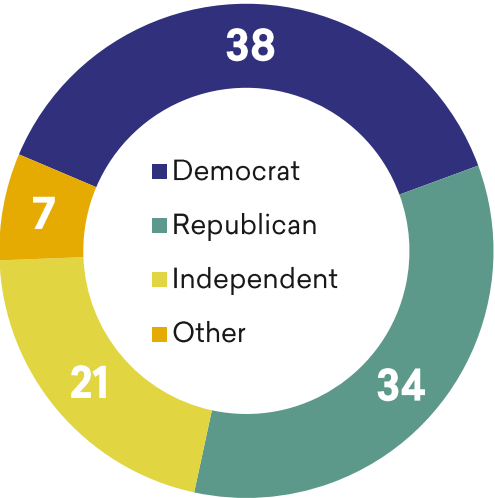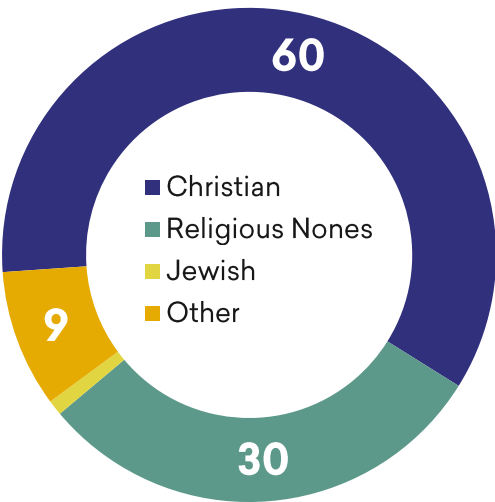
Appendix

The Pittsburgh MSA sample consists of 750 adults. 87% have lived in the area for over 10 years.

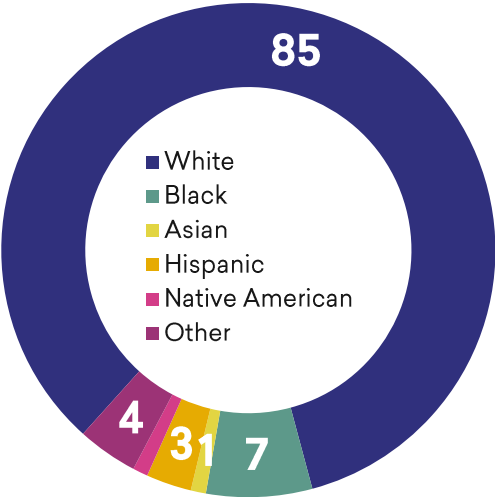Numbers indicate percentages.

Political Party Identification

- 38 Democrat
- 34 Republican
- 21 Independent
- 7 Other

Legend:
- Democrat
- Republican
- Independent
- Other

Religion

- 60 Christian
- 30 Religious Nones
- 9 Other

Legend:
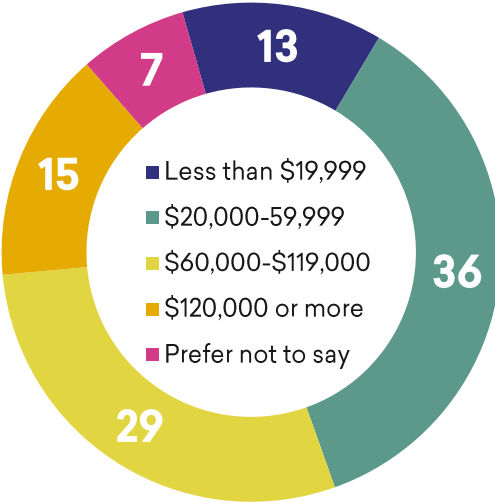- Christian
- Religious Nones
- Jewish
- Other

Christian = Protestant, Catholic, LDS. Religious Nones = Atheist, Agnostic, "Nothing in Particular" . Other = Buddhist, Hindu, "Something Else". There were no Muslim participants in the sample.

Race

- 85 White
- 7 Black
- 3 Asian
- 1 Hispanic
- 4 Other

Legend:
- White
- Black
- Asian
- Hispanic
- Native American
- Other

Other = Two or more races and "Other". There were no Middle Eastern participants in the sample.

Family Income

- 13 Less than $19,999
- 36 $20,000-59,999
- 29 $60,000-$119,000
- 15 $120,000 or more
- 7 Prefer not to say

Legend:
- Less than $19,999
- $20,000-59,999
- $60,000-$119,000
- $120,000 or more
- Prefer not to say

More in Common

More in Common