



## MOST COOK COUNTY RESIDENTS BELIEVE INFLUX OF MIGRANTS STRAINS LOCAL RESOURCES, BUT THAT LOCAL COMMUNITIES SHOULD SUPPORT MIGRANTS RATHER THAN TURNING THEM AWAY

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CHICAGO, IL. –Over 34,000 migrants have arrived in Chicago since Texas sent the first bus of migrants seeking asylum to Chicago in August of 2022, in need of shelter, clothing, work documents, medical care, food, and more. As migrants continue to arrive, costs for the city have added up, and some local residents have voiced concerns about shelters located within their neighborhoods, citing the strain they place on local public resources and for the disruption they can cause within the community. Still, the city of Chicago remains a Welcoming City and Mayor Brandon Johnson has pledged to continue to welcome and aid these migrants. Additionally, Johnson and leaders in other cities receiving migrants have requested more funding and aid from the federal government to help these migrants.

Over the past month (January 10-February 16, 2024) we fielded a survey to offer insight on what Cook County residents (N = 2,581) think about this issue. We asked residents what they think their communities should be doing to about the inflow of migrants and how assistance to migrants might affect current residents. We used a descriptively representative sample of Cook County residents from 3 online panel providers (Dynata, Qualtrics, and Cint). The results reported below were weighted to mirror Census estimates of the Cook County population (see Methodology section).

Respondents were asked “In the last year, many migrants from Central and South America have entered the United States seeking asylum. As far as you know, are any of these migrants currently being housed in temporary shelters in your neighborhood?” Of the Cook County residents surveyed, about 29% of respondents indicate migrants are being housed temporarily in their neighborhood, with 32% indicating migrants are not being housed in their neighborhood, and 39% indicating they are not sure. Cook County residents residing in Chicago were more likely to say migrants were living in their neighborhood (44%) than suburban Cook County residents (13%).

Most Cook County residents believe the surge of migrants has strained local services. We asked respondents “How do local efforts to help migrants seeking asylum affect efforts to help other area residents who may be in need?” As reported in Table 1, almost three-fourths of respondents believe local efforts to help migrants seeking asylum are making it difficult to help area residents.

**Table 1. Perceived effects of migrant arrivals on efforts to serve others in the community.**

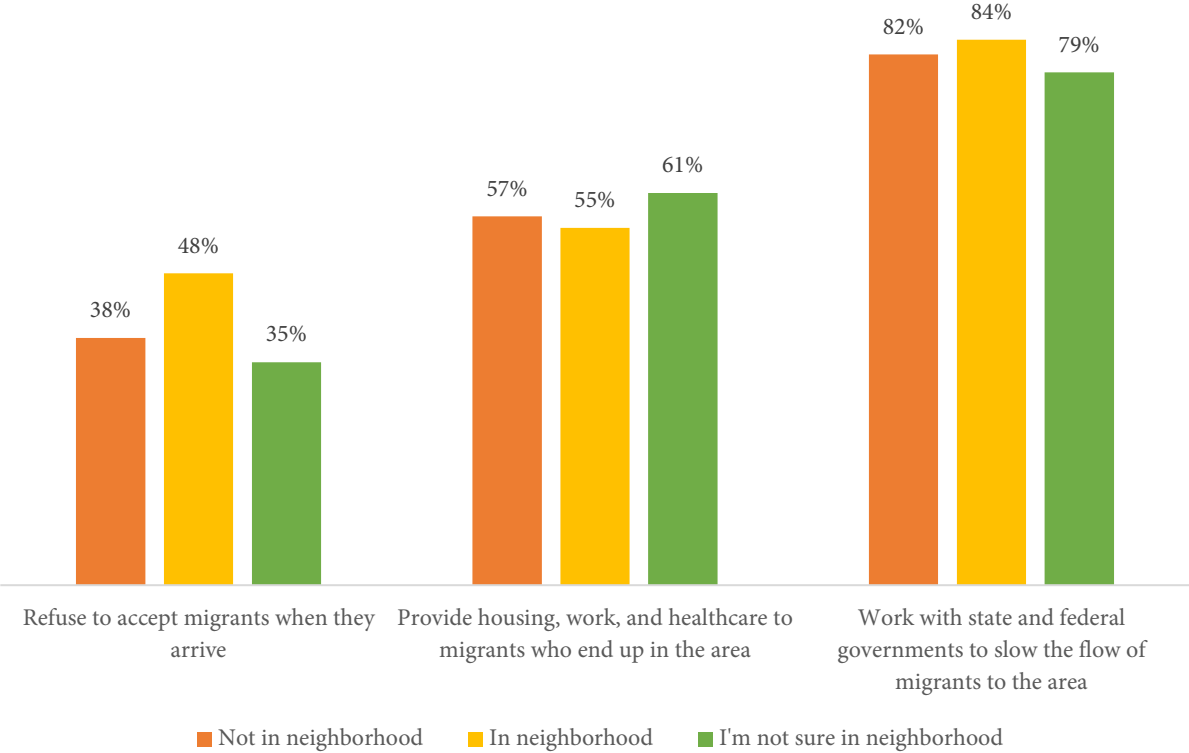
|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Makes it much more difficult to help other residents     | 41% |
| Makes it somewhat more difficult to help other residents | 32% |
| Does not affect help for other residents                 | 19% |
| Makes it somewhat easier to help other residents         | 5%  |
| Makes it much easier to help other residents             | 3%  |

Respondents were asked to consider what communities in the area should do with respect to the migrants from Central and South America who have come to the Chicago area and are seeking asylum. Most residents—60 percent—opposed the notion that communities should simply refuse to accept migrants when they arrive. Most (58%) said that communities should provide housing, work, and healthcare to migrants who end up in the area. This pattern of majority opposition to refusing to accept migrants and majority support for providing housing and other services appears across all of the subgroups we examine, with the exception of Republican respondents. This said, 82% of Cook County residents think communities should work with state and federal governments to slow the flow of migrants in the area.

We report support for each of these three courses of action, broken down by subgroups of respondents in Figures 1-6 below.

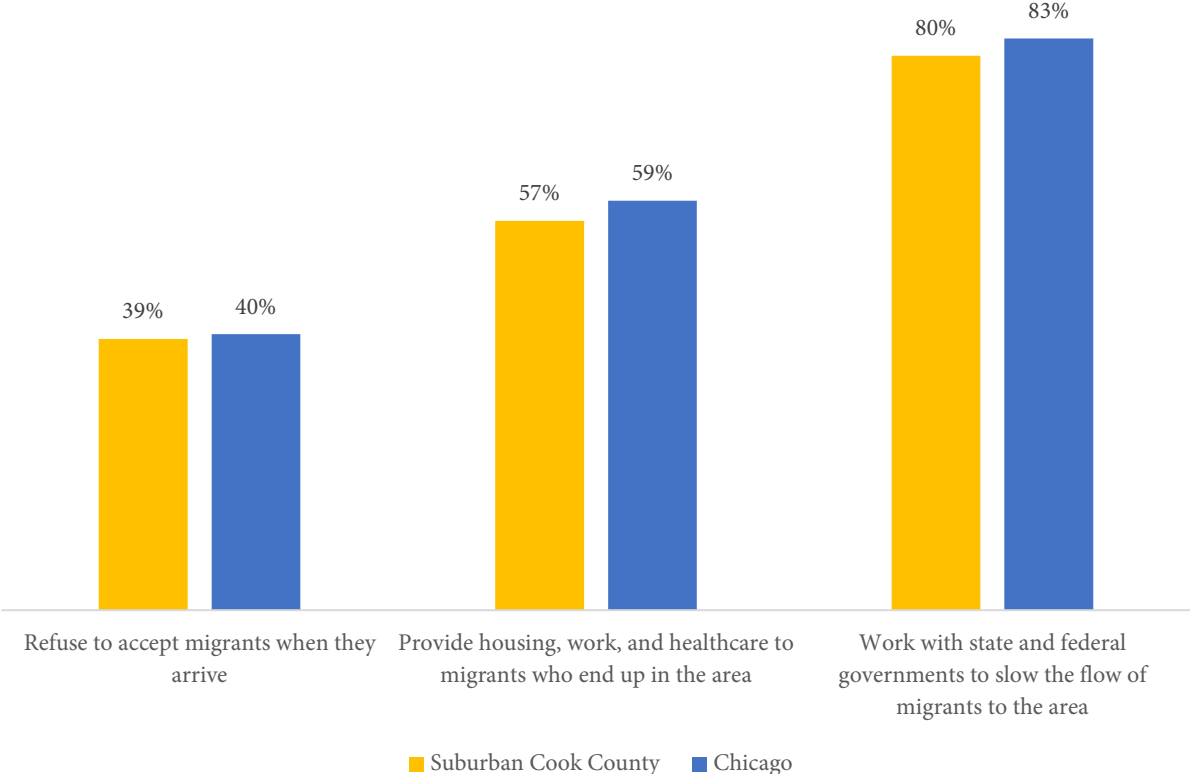
In Figure 1, we consider whether respondents' perceptions regarding whether migrants were being housed in their neighborhood were associated with support. We find some evidence that those who believed migrants were being housed in their neighborhood were more inclined to say communities in the area should refuse to accept more migrants (48%) than those who did not believe this was the case in their neighborhood (38%). However, we find only small differences across groups on the other two items.

Figure 1. Support for Proposals by Perceptions of Whether Migrants are Being Housed in Neighborhood



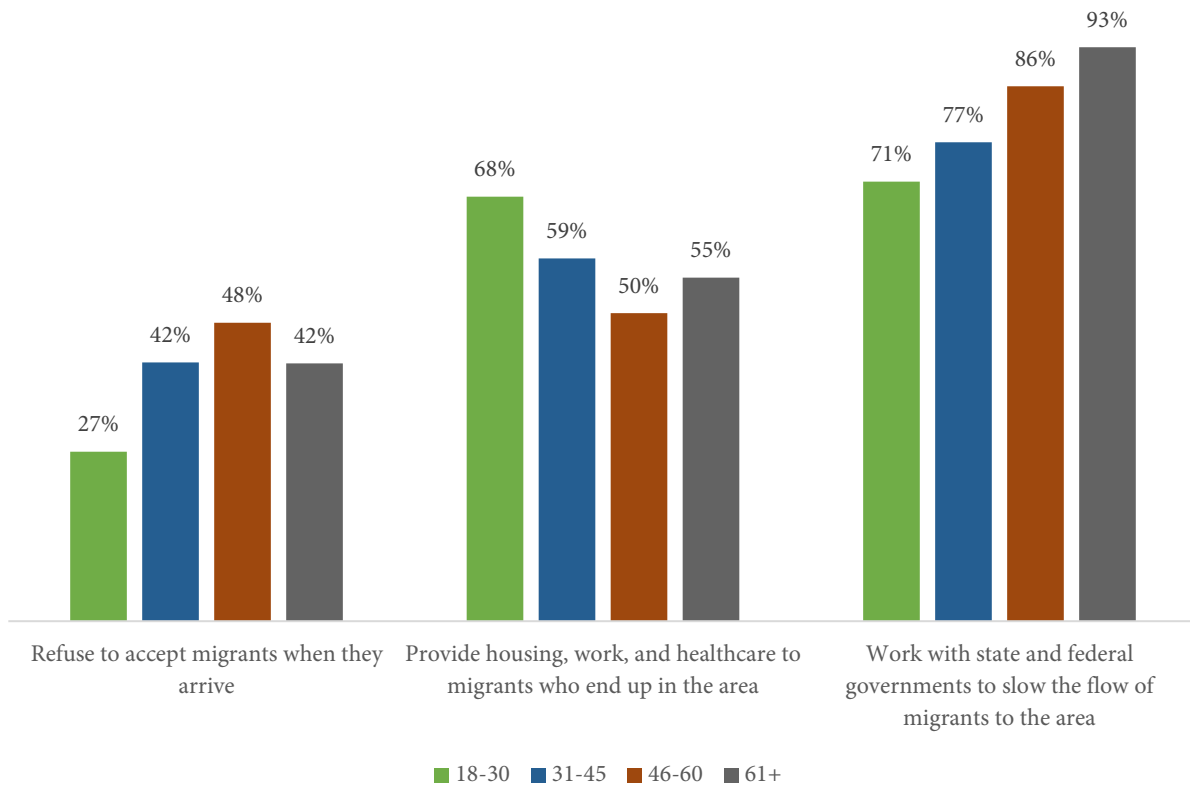
In Figure 2, we compare support for the three courses of action among Chicago residents and Cook County residents residing outside of the city limits. Although, as noted above, suburban residents were far less likely to believe migrants were being housed in their neighborhood, support for each of the three proposals was virtually identical across these groups.

Figure 2. Support for Proposals: Chicago versus Suburbs



In Figure 3 we report support by age groups. Here we find notable variation in support across all three policies. Residents ages 18-30 gave responses that were most welcoming to migrants. Only 27% of this group said communities in the area should refuse to accept more migrants, compared with 42% of 31- to 45-year-olds and 48% of those 46-60. Support for refusing to accept additional migrants was slightly lower among respondents 61 and older (42%). We see a similar, but inverted pattern on the item asking whether communities should provide housing, work, and healthcare access to migrants. Almost 70% of the youngest respondents supported this course of action—a percentage that declines to 50% among those aged 46-60, then increases modestly to 55% among respondents over 60 years old. Finally, although majorities of each group agreed that communities in the area should work with the state and federal governments to slow the flow of migrants, support for this proposal steadily increases with age, with 9 out of 10 respondents in the oldest group supporting this course of action.

Figure 3. Support for Proposals by Age



In Figure 4 we show levels of support across ethnoracial groups. With the exception of respondents who identified as Asian, we find only modest variation in support across these groups. Asian respondents were notably less likely than other groups to say local communities should refuse to accept migrants when they arrive, but only modestly more likely to say local communities should provide housing, worth, and healthcare.

Figure 4. Support for Proposals by Ethnoracial Identity

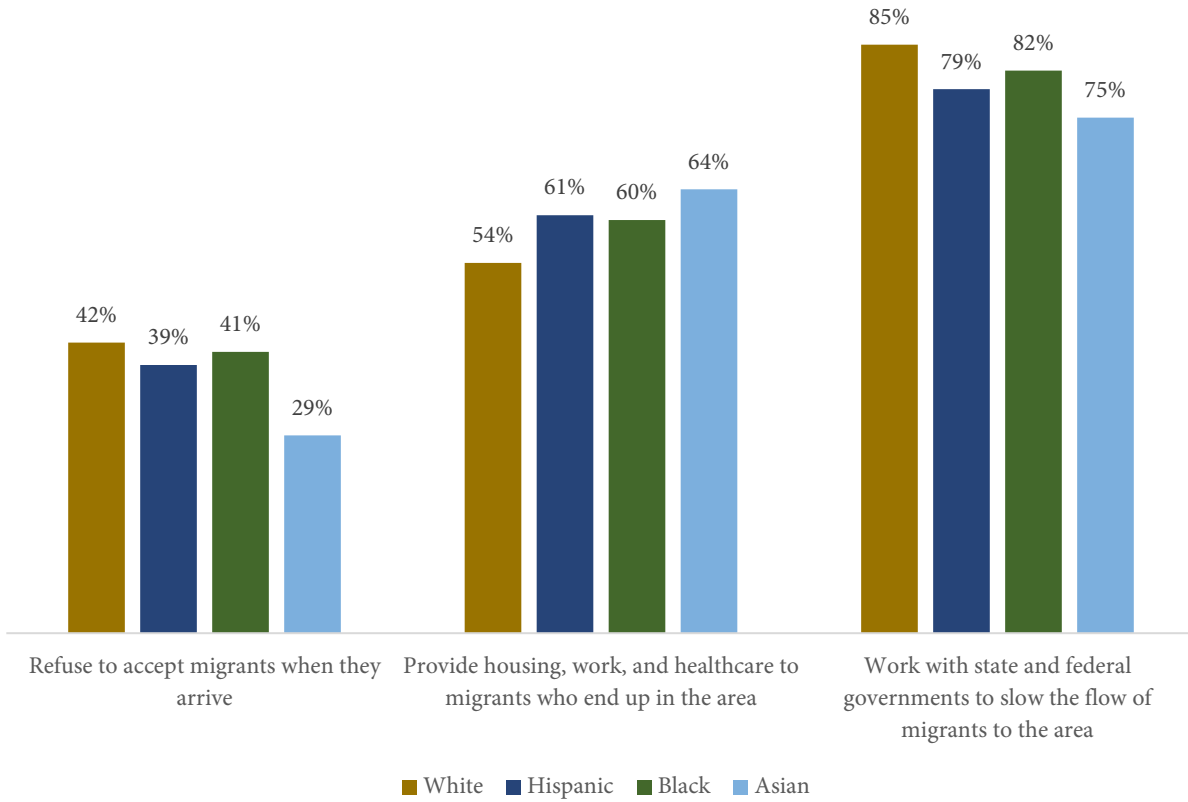
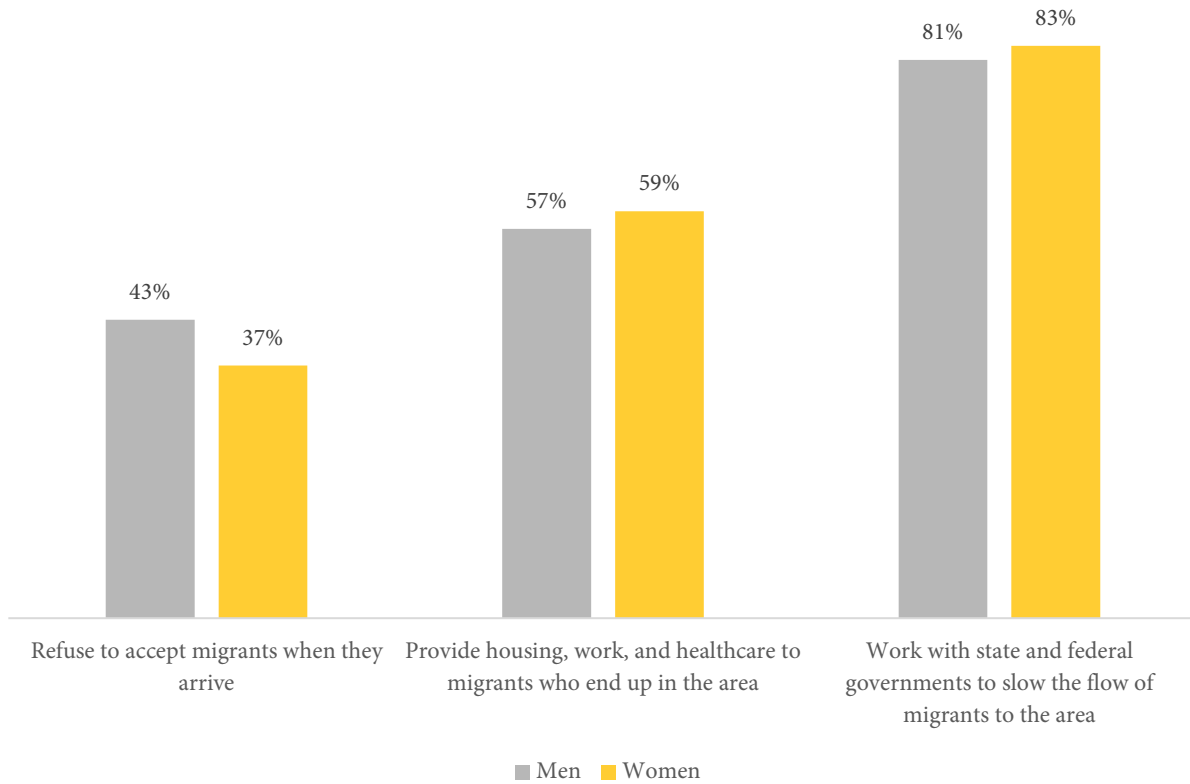


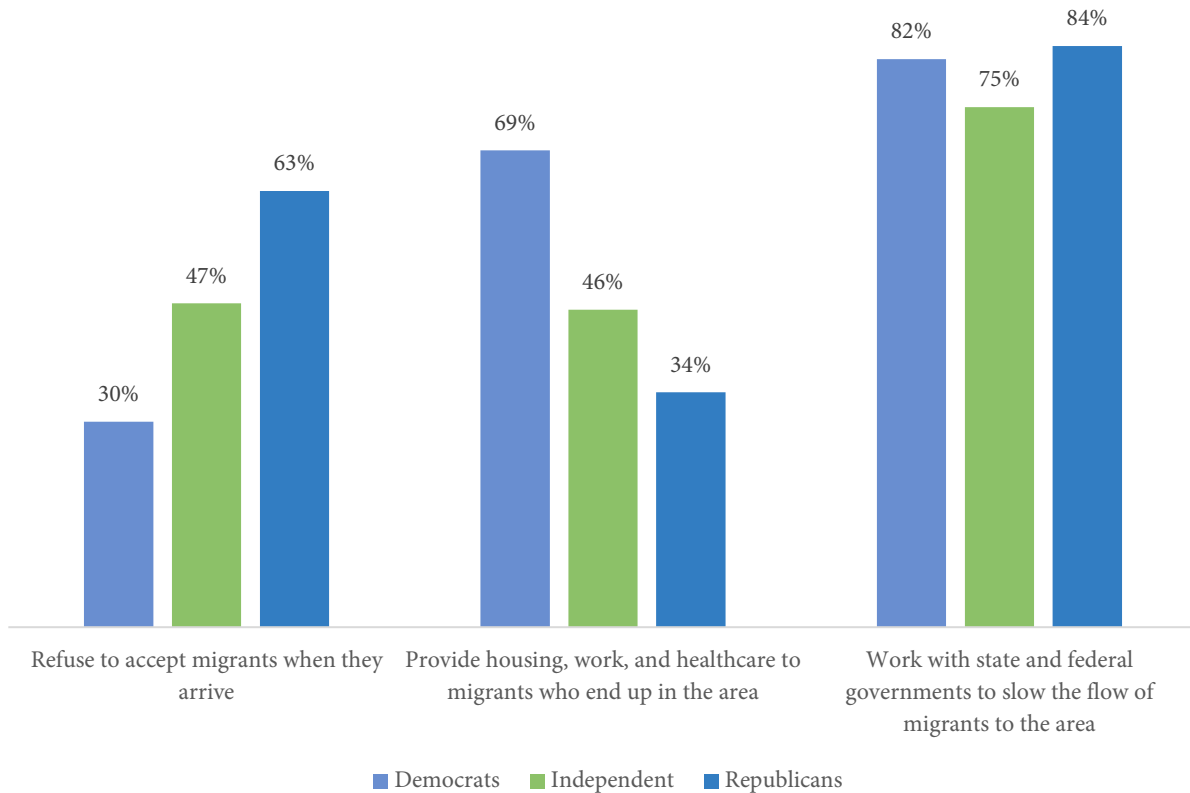
Figure 5 reports breakdowns by gender. As with the comparison between suburban and Chicago residents, we do not see substantial, systematic differences between these groups on attitudes regarding these three proposals (though women were modestly less likely than men to say communities should refuse to accept migrants).

Figure 5. Support for Proposals by Gender



In Figure 6, we show results broken down by respondents' reported party affiliation (treating "partisan leaners" as partisans).<sup>1</sup> On the first two items, the patterns conform to familiar national patterns of partisan polarization on the issue of immigration. Republicans (63%) were far more likely than Democrats (30%) to say communities should refuse to accept migrants. Conversely, Republicans (34%) were far less likely than Democrats (69%) to say communities should provide housing and other services. Notably, partisan gaps do not emerge on the question that asked whether local communities should work with other levels of government to slow the flow of migrants: over 80% of both Democrats and Republicans supported this proposal.

Figure 6. Support for Proposals by Party Identification



<sup>1</sup> Consistent with the political leanings of the county, approximately 63 percent of our weighted sample reported a preference for Democrats, 15 percent described themselves as Independents with no party preference, and 22 percent identified as Republican or Republican leaners.



## Methodology

The Cook County Community Survey (CCCS) is an annual survey housed in the Center for Data Science and Consulting (CDSC) at Loyola University Chicago. The survey is supported by generous funding from the Leibman family. The sample of respondents is provided by Dynata, Qualtrics, and Cint. Each provider recruited respondents from a large pool of potential respondents residing in Cook County to be demographically representative of adults residing in Cook County. Although the recruitment procedure yielded a sample of Cook County residents that roughly approximates demographics reported by the Census (ACS, 2021), we report findings with post-stratification weights applied to match target demographics. Weights were based on respondent's self-reported gender, crossed with, ethnoracial identity, age, Chicago/suburban Cook County residence, and educational attainment (leveraging Census estimates of the share of residents 25 years old and older who have a college degree). Below, we report the raw number of respondents with various demographic characteristics, as well as the unweighted and weighted percentages of the sample in each group.

### *Ethnoracial identity and Gender*

| Unweighted Distribution |                 |                 |              |                  |
|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|------------------|
|                         | Man             | Woman           | Other        | Total            |
| White                   | 22.0%<br>(567)  | 26.5%<br>(684)  | 0.2%<br>(6)  | 48.7%<br>(1257)  |
| Hispanic                | 7.6%<br>(196)   | 11.9%<br>(308)  | 0.3%<br>(7)  | 19.8%<br>(511)   |
| Black                   | 10.4%<br>(268)  | 14.7%<br>(380)  | 0.1%<br>(2)  | 25.2%<br>(650)   |
| Asian                   | 2.0%<br>(52)    | 3.2%<br>(82)    | 0.0%<br>(1)  | 5.2%<br>(135)    |
| All Other               | 0.7%<br>(17)    | 0.4%<br>(10)    | 0.0%<br>(1)  | 1.1%<br>(28)     |
| Total                   | 42.6%<br>(1100) | 56.7%<br>(1464) | 0.7%<br>(17) | 100.0%<br>(2581) |

| Weighted Distribution |       |       |       |        |
|-----------------------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
|                       | Man   | Woman | Other | Total  |
| White                 | 20.1% | 20.8% | 0.2%  | 41.1%  |
| Hispanic              | 13.1% | 12.6% | 0.2%  | 26.0%  |
| Black                 | 9.8%  | 12.5% | 0.1%  | 22.4%  |
| Asian                 | 3.6%  | 4.0%  | <0.1% | 7.6%   |
| All Other             | 1.5%  | 1.5%  | <0.1% | 3.0%   |
| Total                 | 48.1% | 51.3% | 0.6%  | 100.0% |

*Raw counts show in parentheses.*

### Age

|       | Raw Frequency | Raw Percent | Weighted Percent |
|-------|---------------|-------------|------------------|
| 18-24 | 312           | 12.1%       | 11.3%            |
| 25-34 | 556           | 21.5%       | 20.3%            |
| 35-44 | 567           | 22.0%       | 17.6%            |
| 45-54 | 367           | 14.2%       | 15.8%            |
| 55-64 | 309           | 12.0%       | 15.7%            |
| 65-74 | 338           | 13.1%       | 11.3%            |
| 75+   | 132           | 5.1%        | 8.0%             |
| Total | 2,581         | 100.0%      | 100.0%           |

### Educational Attainment

|                        | Raw Frequency | Raw Percent | Weighted Percent |
|------------------------|---------------|-------------|------------------|
| 25+, No College Degree | 1,160         | 44.9%       | 42.1%            |
| 25+, College Degree    | 1,109         | 43.0%       | 46.6%            |
| 18-24 years-old        | 312           | 12.1%       | 11.3%            |
| Total                  | 2,581         | 100.0%      | 100.0%           |

### Chicago/Suburbs

|         | Raw Frequency | Raw Percent | Weighted Percent |
|---------|---------------|-------------|------------------|
| Suburbs | 997           | 38.6%       | 47.9%            |
| Chicago | 1,584         | 61.4%       | 52.1%            |
| Total   | 2,581         | 100.0%      | 100.0%           |

Please contact David Doherty ([ddoherty@luc.edu](mailto:ddoherty@luc.edu)) with questions about the survey.