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Trust in Justice Project

National Survey Overview Report



Abstract: *Public trust in American institutions has been declining for decades. The purpose of this white paper is to briefly review trends in trust reduction related to the justice system institutions - law enforcement, the courts, corrections, and Congress – and to present new survey research on Americans’ views on the justice system, the significant drop in the public’s confidence in the system, and potential reforms that might restore that trust and confidence in these important institutions.*

The decline in trust and confidence in American institutions is well documented. A Pew Research Center study has shown that the public who stated they trust government to do *what is right* “just about always” or “most of the time” peaked at 77% in 1964 and has dropped to just 20% as of last year.¹ Gallup polling in 2022 demonstrated that only 27% of American respondents showed “a great deal” or “quite a lot” of confidence in fourteen major institutions – including the military, the Supreme Court, and the church/organized religion; this reflected the lowest point since Gallup started measuring these attitudes in 1979.²

One of many institutions experiencing a decline in public confidence is law enforcement. According to a recent Washington Post/ABC News poll, only 39% of the public feel confident that the police are properly trained to avoid the use of excessive force.³ The public’s overall confidence in the police has dropped to the lowest levels since these polls have started. Given that there are 240 million 911 calls where police are dispatched a majority of the time⁴, this decline in trust has had ramifications on policing practices and recruitment of officers.⁵

In 2022, the National Center for State Courts conducted their yearly poll, which showed similar declines in American trust in our court system.⁶ A Gallup poll about the judicial branch showed a drop of 20% in public trust in just two years and the Supreme Court’s approval ratings are at 25% compared with a two-thirds approval rating as recently as 2020.⁷ Our nation’s courts have traditionally enjoyed higher confidence ratings than some of the more publicized and contentious political institutions, such as the legislative and executive branches of government. And while much has been written about the causes of the polarized political climate in the country, less has been written about the effects of recent political and cultural changes on our justice system.

Eighteen million criminal cases are resolved every year⁸ and over one hundred million lawsuits are filed each year.⁹ We are reliant on our justice system and the rule of law to uphold our Constitutional and civil rights, and to maintain as Daniel Webster said, “... the ligament which holds civilized beings and civilized nations together.” So, what does it mean when the main constituents of the justice system, the public, mistrust the very system that is supposed to keep them safe in their communities, ensure a decent living wage, safe food, safe water, safe workplaces, and safeguards for their rights as workers, consumers, patients, and citizens of all races, religions, sexual orientation, gender, or abilities?

Mistrust in institutions can create cynicism, loss of hope, disrespect for laws, lack of citizenship participation, and withdrawal from community involvement. When we don’t trust in

the systems that are supposed to uphold our rights as citizens, we end up mistrusting each other. This damages many of the democratic principles that are the foundation of our society.

The *Trust in Justice Project* is a collaboration between the *Online Courtroom Project*, *The American Society of Trial Consultants*, and the *American Board of Trial Advocates* to better understand the experiences and attitudes of the public that have contributed to their eroding trust in the justice system. More importantly, the project will also look at specific reforms and practices that would assist in restoring the public's trust.

The project is designed to take place in three separate phases. The first phase is a national survey to identify and measure the specific attitudes and experiences of the public toward the justice system, which is the subject of this executive report. This report will address the preliminary findings from the survey results.

Among other issues, the survey was designed to measure:

- The public's trust and confidence in the justice system
- The perceived bias of law enforcement and the courts
- How well the public believes the justice system works
- The public's perception of media coverage of the justice system
- Whether the public believes perceived problems are systemic or individual
- The public's perceived fairness of the justice system broadly
- The public's perception of the treatment of various groups in the justice system
- The public's overall understanding of how the justice system operates
- The public's personal experiences with the justice system

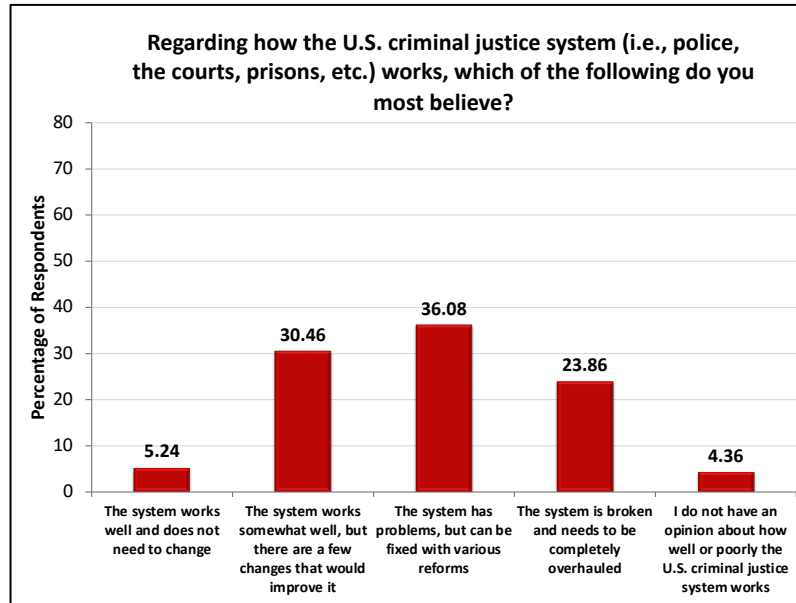
The second phase of this project will be a series of focus groups with the public and discussions with constituent groups in the justice system. The focus groups with the public are geared toward in-depth discussions about citizens' understanding and expectations of the justice system, as well as what would enable them to have greater confidence and trust in the system. The discussions with institutional agents in the justice system – such as members of law enforcement, judges, court staff and lawyers – will also help to explore their understanding of their roles, limitations, and the challenges of operating in the system.

The third phase is a series of recommended reforms to address the concerns that have led to the public's eroding trust. We anticipate publishing in-depth reports on the findings at each of these phases. This report is summary of some of the initial findings from the first phase – the national survey.

Trust in Justice Survey Findings

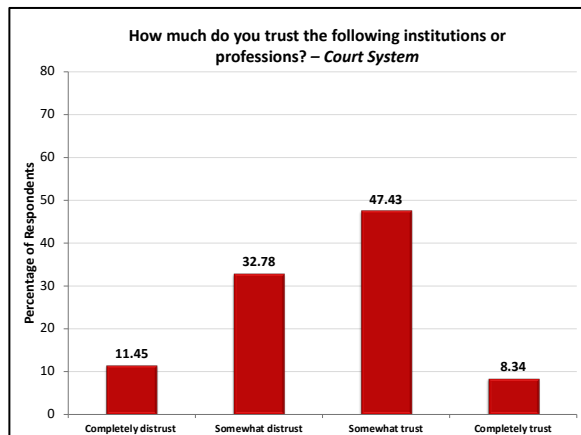
We asked respondents how well they believed the criminal and civil justice systems work, and we observed that most respondents felt significant changes were called for. Five percent thought the criminal justice system worked well and did not need any changes, 30%

felt the system worked well, but could do with a few changes, 36% percent thought the system has problems, but could be fixed with various reforms, and almost 24% thought the system was broken and would need to be completely overhauled. Respondents gave similar ratings to the civil justice system.



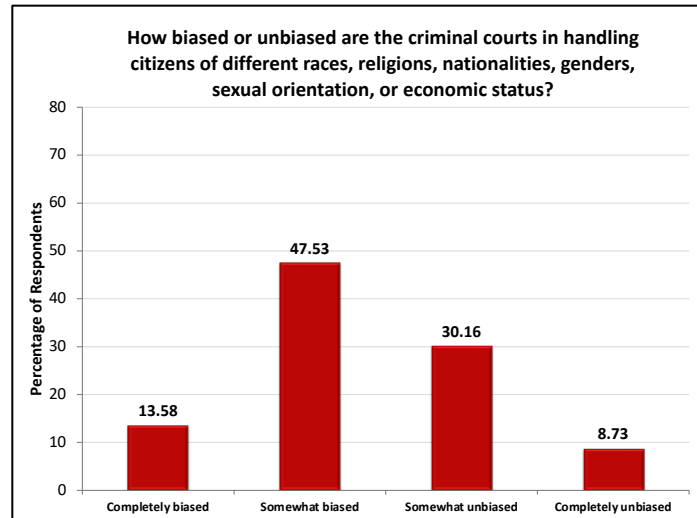
Fairness and Bias in the Courts

We also found that many Americans consider the criminal court system unfair and biased. For example, when asked about criminal court system in the United States, 60% felt the system was somewhat or very fair, with 40% believing it was somewhat or very unfair. Similarly, survey respondents also believed that the criminal courts were somewhat or very biased when handling citizens of different races, religions, nationalities, genders, sexual orientation, and economic status. Two-thirds stated they somewhat or completely trusted the criminal courts to deliver justice, while a third said they somewhat or completely distrusted the courts to deliver



justice. Three-quarters of our respondents felt that the courts treated criminal defendants somewhat or very fairly, with a quarter feeling they were treated unfairly. Slightly less (70%) felt that the average victims of a crime were treated fairly. When asked how much they would trust presented evidence as a juror, around 80% said they would trust completely or somewhat trust evidence presented by both prosecuting and defense attorneys, with 20% stating they would somewhat or completely distrust the presented evidence by these respective attorneys.

When asked how different groups were treated in the justice system compared to the average citizen, almost 54% felt that people of color were treated worse than the average citizen, 52% felt that non-U.S. citizens and people of lower socio-economic status were treated worse, 42% felt that LGBTQ citizens were treated worse, and 47% felt that Muslims were treated worse. By contrast, 64% felt that people with higher economic status were treated better, 47% thought that white people were treated better, and around a quarter of the respondents felt that Christians and straight/heterosexual people were treated better than the average citizen.



When asked how confident they were in specific parties to deliver justice, around 70% of the respondents stated they were somewhat or very confident in law enforcement, judges, and juries, with 65% stating they were confident in lawyers to deliver justice. In testing the presumption that juries deliver fair and reasonable verdicts, 55% percent of our respondents stated they believed juries did deliver fair and reasonable verdicts most or all of the time, with 45% stating that they delivered fair verdicts only sometimes (37%), rarely (6%), or never (2%).

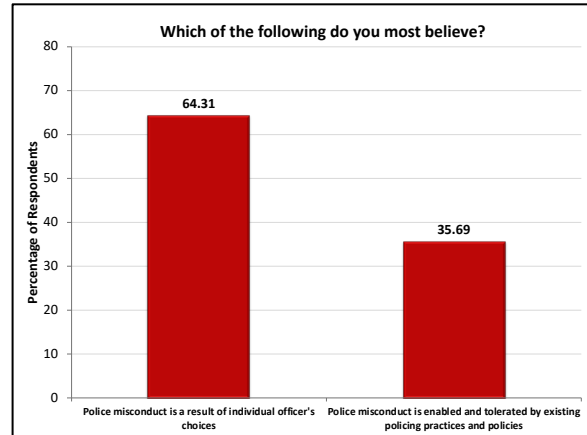
Public Trust and Confidence, But Police Biased Against Minorities

Our respondents expressed a fair amount of trust in the police regarding basic competency. Seventy percent indicated they completely or somewhat trusted the police as opposed to 30% who distrusted them. Almost 80% had confidence in the police to handle an emergency situation and would feel comfortable calling them in an emergency. However, in rating how biased or unbiased the police were in handling different groups, almost two-thirds of the respondents felt the police were somewhat or completely biased against people of different races, immigrants, and people of different economic status, with around 57% believing that the police were biased against the LGBTQ community, and 48% believing they were biased in handling people with different religious preferences.

Respondents were surveyed about whether they considered police misconduct to be rare or individualized, compared to common and systemic. When asked about police misconduct, slightly more than 70% felt that misconduct was perpetrated by only a handful of officers while less than 30% felt that many officers engage in misconduct. Less than two-thirds of respondents believed that misconduct was a result of individual officer's choices, while more

than a third believed that police misconduct is enabled and tolerated by police policies and practices. Forty percent of respondents believe that police officers are held accountable for misconduct all or most of the time, while 60% believed that officers were only occasionally or rarely held accountable for their misconduct.

Regarding their personal experience with the police, a third of respondents reported a positive experience, 10% had a negative experience, another third had both positive and negative experiences, and a quarter reported no experiences at all with the police. However, when asked about those close to them, a quarter of the respondents reported a positive experience and almost 20% reported a negative experience of those close to them. When asked about their feelings about safety, almost 80% of the respondents stated they felt somewhat or very safe in their neighborhoods, with more than 20% feeling unsafe.



Perceptions of Guilt, Innocence, and Punishment

In testing the presumptions that only guilty people would plead guilty to a crime or innocent people would be acquitted, almost three-quarters of respondents felt that innocent people plead guilty sometimes (57%), most (10%), or all the time (5%). Almost 80% also believe guilty people are acquitted sometimes (66%), most (10%), or all of the time (4%).

Regarding prison sentences, 30% of the respondents felt that sentences for criminal convictions are too harsh, 18% feel they are too lenient, and more than 50% feel they are about right. When asked about their personal experience with the corrections system, almost 10% had been in jail or prison, 30% know someone, and another 10% have themselves and someone they know been in the corrections system. When respondents are asked about the primary purpose of the corrections system, a third thought the purpose was to punish defendants who have been convicted of a crime, more than a third thought it would be to keep dangerous criminals away from people they may hurt, and less than 30% thought the purpose would be to rehabilitate convicted defendants.

Media Coverage and Public Understanding of System

When asked about media coverage of the police, 11% thought the coverage was positive, almost 40% felt it was negative, and almost 50% thought the coverage was mixed or neutral. Slightly more than half of the respondents felt that media portrayals of the police were fair, with slightly less than half believing the media unfairly covered the police. About 55% of respondents feel that the news media does a good job of providing the public with an accurate and thorough account of high-profile cases, while 45% feel they do a poor job.

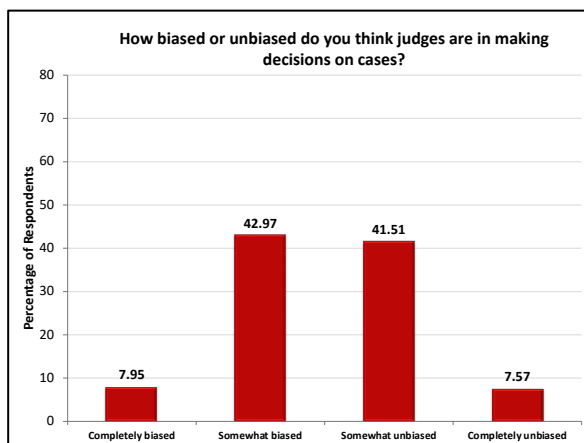
In measuring comprehension of the criminal justice system, only 14% of the population felt they had a strong and specific understanding of how the system worked, 64% felt they had a general understanding, and 22% said they had a vague understanding or did not understand the system at all.

Attitudes Toward Civil Lawsuits

In measuring attitudes about the civil justice system, 57% felt there were too many lawsuits. However, more than 80% felt that lawsuits hold defendants accountable for their actions, more than 60% felt that lawsuits repair the harms done to a plaintiff, 75% felt that lawsuits punish a defendant for their actions or send a message to similar defendants to stop future misconduct. However, three-quarters of respondents also believe that lawsuits tended to make products and services more expensive for consumers, and 65% felt that most filed lawsuits contain exaggerated or falsified claims and are filed mainly to make plaintiffs and their lawyers money rather than compensation for legitimate harm.

Regarding personal experience with the courts, 18% of respondents reported they had a positive experience, 12% reported they had a negative experience, and 25% stated they had both positive and negative experiences (nearly 46% claimed to never have had a personal experience with the courts). For anyone close to the respondents, 15% have had a positive experience, 18% have had a negative experience with a slightly more than 25% with both positive and negative experiences (40% said they did not know anyone who had experience in the court system.)

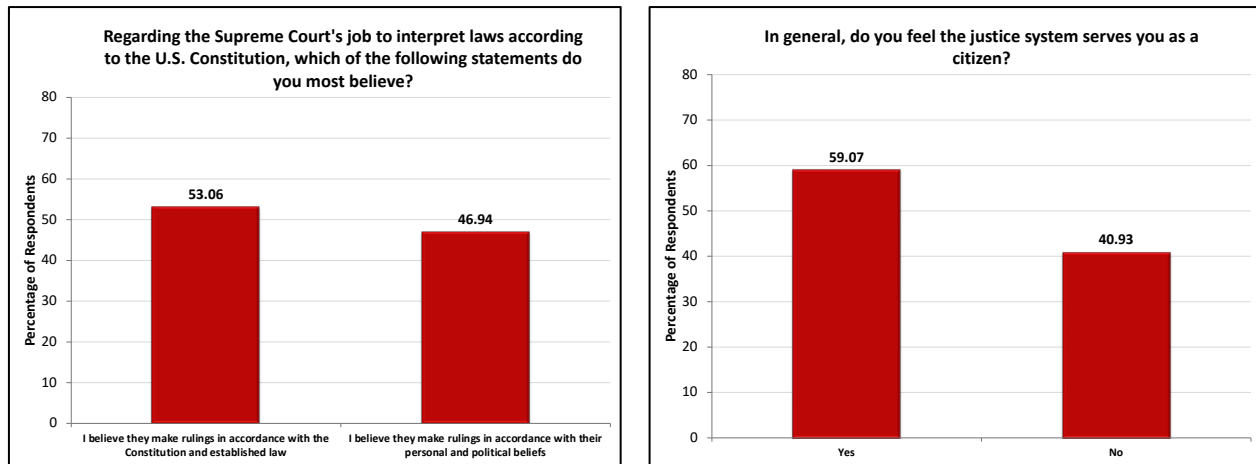
Attitudes Toward Judges, the Supreme Court and Congress



When asked how biased or unbiased they felt judges were in making decisions in cases, half of the respondents felt judges were somewhat or completely biased and half felt they were somewhat or completely unbiased. More than 70% of the respondents felt that judges allowed their personal biases or politics to interfere with their judgement sometimes, most, or all of the time, with less than 30% believing that a judge's biases or politics rarely or never interfered with their judgement.

Regarding respondents' opinions of the job of the Supreme Court, slightly more than 50% believe that the Court makes rulings in accordance with the Constitution and established law, and slightly less than 50% believe they make rulings in accordance with their personal and political beliefs. Almost two-thirds of the respondents think that Supreme Court justices are somewhat or completely biased in their decision making. Almost 80% believe that Supreme Court rulings affect their lives some or a great deal.

Trust in Congress to make laws that are fair and just was equally split, with approximately 50% completely or somewhat trusting Congress and 50% distrusting the legislative branch. Almost 70% believe that Congress makes and passes laws to serve the interests of politicians and donors rather than the interests of the survey respondents and most people. When asked whether the justice system overall serves them as citizens, 60% said yes, and 40% said no.



Finally, the survey asked respondents what would increase their confidence and trust in the justice system. Respondents were shown a number of different potential reforms, such as greater police training on race, bias, and mental illness; more rehabilitative approaches in the prison system; simplification of legal proceedings; and greater transparency in the justice system.

The respondents had widely varying views on what reforms would improve their confidence in the justice system. While no single proposed reform was supported by a majority of participants, the most popular reforms were related to police and corrections. Specifically, there was substantial support for giving greater bias training to the police (45.5% support),¹ having greater transparency in the operations of the justice system broadly (39.8% support),² and having more rehabilitation options for prison inmates (39.3% support).³

¹ For reference, the text of the reform question was: "Which of the following suggestions would INCREASE your confidence and trust in our justice system? (Please read each option carefully and check any that apply.)" The most commonly marked reform was: "Provide greater training to the police on race, bias, different cultures, religion, sexual orientation, and mental illness."

² The full text of this response option was: "Provide greater transparency in the operations and decisions by the police, prosecution agencies, courts and corrections."

³ The full text of this response option was: "Provide more rehabilitative options to prison inmates to reduce re-offending and integrate those convicted of crimes back into society."

Preliminary Statistical Analysis

We have only just begun to explore the many ways in which people’s attitudes toward and experiences with the justice system intersect with their demographic characteristics. However, we do have a few preliminary findings to highlight.

Broadly, we found a number of differences in how participants responded to the survey depending on both race and political affiliation. For example, Black respondents had a relatively low trust in law enforcement, while White respondents had a relatively high trust in law enforcement, reflecting a similar trend in racial differences that we have seen in numerous polls in the last several years. White respondents also showed *less* trust in criminal defense lawyers and plaintiff lawyers compared to other racial groups.

When looking at political preferences, we found Republicans held higher trust ratings for law enforcement and the Supreme Court, but lower trust ratings for Congress and lawyers compared to people with other political affiliations.

Part of our analysis also included comparing institutions of justice to each other across measures of perceived trust. While we found some differences in institutional trust, our most striking finding was the relatively low average trust rating for all institutions. On average, none of the institutions of justice we asked about — law enforcement, courts, Congress, etc. — were rated on as “completely” or even “somewhat” trustworthy.

Another notable result was the finding that respondents showed relatively high confidence in juries. Specifically, when rating their confidence in lawyers, judges, law enforcement and juries, respondents on average indicated they had the highest confidence in juries to deliver justice. In contrast, respondents had the *lowest* confidence in lawyers.

Conclusion

These survey results indicate a widespread distrust and lack of confidence in numerous aspects of the justice system, with concerning implications for the public and those who work in law enforcement, the courts, corrections, and Congress.

The polling demonstrates that the public feels comfortable enough with the police to call them in an emergency, yet believes the police are biased toward a number of minority groups. There is a substantial percentage of the population that believes the courts are also biased toward those groups. A large percentage of the public also has concerns about the fundamental fairness of the court system and its ability to deliver justice.

The public also questions the impartiality of judges, and a substantial number believe that the Supreme Court and Congress serve their own personal or political interests, or those of special interests rather than the interests of those they serve. A vast majority believes that the

decisions made by the high court affect their personal lives, but a large group also believes that the justice system does not serve them as citizens.

Many also do not believe they are getting accurate information about the justice system from the media in their reporting on police incidents or high-profile trials. As citizens, most have a general, but little specific, understanding of how the justice system works. As a result, when asked about what reforms might help to rebuild their trust in the justice system, we found that there was no single suggested reform measure that a majority of participants endorsed. One possible explanation for this reluctance to endorse particular reforms could be a lack of clarity on what reforms would look like when implemented. It may be hard for respondents to agree that a particular reform would grow their trust if they have trouble picturing the application of the reform in the first place.

The overall attitudes may be the result of the public's personal experiences, impressions from news and social media coverage of events such as the George Floyd or other high profile police cases, questions about controversial Supreme Court decisions or ethical concerns, or actual knowledge about disparities in the system. But when it comes to public distrust of the justice system, it is important to acknowledge that, for several reasons and within several groups, there may be potentially good reasons to distrust the justice system. Nevertheless, it is concerning that there is so much mistrust of a system that is foundational to our democracy and the rule of law. This disturbing trend merits additional research, analysis, and discussion of reform efforts to make the justice system more fair, transparent and independent.

A rehabilitation of the public's trust in our process for delivering justice will need to occur at both the symbolic and the substantive levels. For that, these survey responses give rise to a number of questions that will be addressed in the subsequent phases of this project – the focus groups and discussions with different stakeholders in the justice system. Among these questions:

- What would give the public greater confidence that the main institutions of justice (i.e., police, the court system, state and federal judges, and the Supreme Court) were unbiased and impartial in dealing with those they serve?
- What would give the public greater trust in the fairness of the justice system?
- What would give the public greater confidence that all citizens would be treated equally by the police and the courts?
- What would help the public have greater faith in the jury trial system?
- What would help the public better understand the components and processes of the justice system, including law enforcement, the courts, corrections, Congress, and the Supreme Court?
- How could the media most accurately and fairly cover the justice system in order to give the public the most realistic picture of the justice system – including both strengths and weaknesses?

- What would help the public have greater trust and overall confidence in the police that protect their communities, the judges that decide their cases, and their elected representatives that make the laws?

Given the volatility of our political culture and news cycles these days, the results of this survey may not surprise many people. But the erosion of confidence and trust in institutions has real-world ramifications. If certain groups do not trust the police, they may not call the police when needed, may not view the authority of police as legitimate, and may react negatively to police presence, even in an emergency. The recent increase in threats to both politicians and judges¹⁰ are no doubt tied to heated rhetoric in the media and political forums. The erosion of trust can affect the willingness of criminal defendants to take a case to trial, the willingness of jurors to respond to jury summons or sit on trials, or the willingness of civil litigants to use the court system to resolve disputes.

Restoring trust and confidence in the justice system will increase participation in the system and citizen ownership of their Constitutional rights. More importantly, it will assist in restoring faith in the principles of fairness, justice, and equity. We hope that further research and open conversations on this topic can help identify promising paths forward for restoring public trust in justice.

About the project: For the Trust in Justice Survey, we collected opinion data about the legal system from respondents residing in the United States. Participants were asked an array of questions about their attitudes, beliefs and experiences related to the law enforcement, the court system, the corrections system, Congress, and the media. Data collection occurred from March 10th to March 22nd of 2023 via the platform Qualtrics. A total of 1031 valid responses were collected. All participants were 18 years or older and indicated that they were comfortable completing a survey in English before participating. The data collection process included standard quality checks, including an attention check question and screens for speeding.

Notes

¹ “Public Trust in Government: 1958-2022,” *Pew Research Center* (2022), date accessed April 14, 2023, <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2022/06/06/public-trust-in-government-1958-2022/>.

² Jeffrey Jones, “Confidence in U.S. Institutions Down; Average at New Low,” *Gallup* (2022), <https://news.gallup.com/poll/394283/confidence-institutions-down-average-new-low.aspx>.

³ Emily Washburn, “America Less Confident in Police Than Ever Before: A Look At The Numbers,” *Forbes*, February 3, 2023, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/emilywashburn/2023/02/03/america-less-confident-in-police-than-ever-before-a-look-at-the-numbers/?sh=5f198f5d6afb>.

⁴ “Most 911 Calls Having Nothing To Do With Crime. Why Are we Still Sending Police?” *Vera Institute of Justice*, <https://www.vera.org/news/most-911-calls-have-nothing-to-do-with-crime-why-are-we-still-sending-police#:~:text=So%2C%20it%27s%20not%20surprising%20that,too%20often%20dispatched%20to%20respond>.

⁵ Sid Smith, “A Crisis Facing Law Enforcement: Recruiting in the 21st Century,” *The Police Chief*, June, 2016, <https://www.policechiefmagazine.org/a-crisis-facing-law-enforcement-recruiting-in-the-21st-century/>.

⁶ “State of the State Courts Survey Reveals Declining Public Trust, Growing Confidence in Remote Hearings,” *State of the State Courts 2022 Poll*, *National Center for State Courts*, <https://www.ncsc.org/newsroom/at-the-center/2022/state-of-the-state-courts-survey-reveals-declining-public-trust,-growing-confidence-in-remote-hearings>.

⁷ Jeffrey Jones, “Supreme Court Trust, Job Approval at Historical Lows,” *Gallup*, September 29, 2022, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/402044/supreme-court-trust-job-approval-historical-lows.aspx>.

⁸ Brian Ostrom, Lydia Hamlin, Richard Schaufler, Nia Raaen, “Timely Justice in Criminal Cases: What the Data Tells Us,” *National Center for State Courts*, Page 6, Accessed April 12, 2023, https://www.ncsc.org/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/53218/Timely-Justice-in-Criminal-Cases-What-the-Data-Tells-Us.pdf.

⁹ Over 100 million cases each year in state trial courts, around 400,000 cases filed in federal trial courts. “FAQs Judges in the United States.” *Quality Judges Initiative*. University of Denver Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System, https://iaals.du.edu/sites/default/files/documents/publications/judge_faq.pdf.

¹⁰ Vera Bergengruen, “The United States of Political Violence,” *TIME*, November 4, 2022. <https://time.com/6227754/political-violence-us-states-midterms-2022/>.



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National Survey: Confidence & Trust in Justice

1031 Completed Responses

March 2023

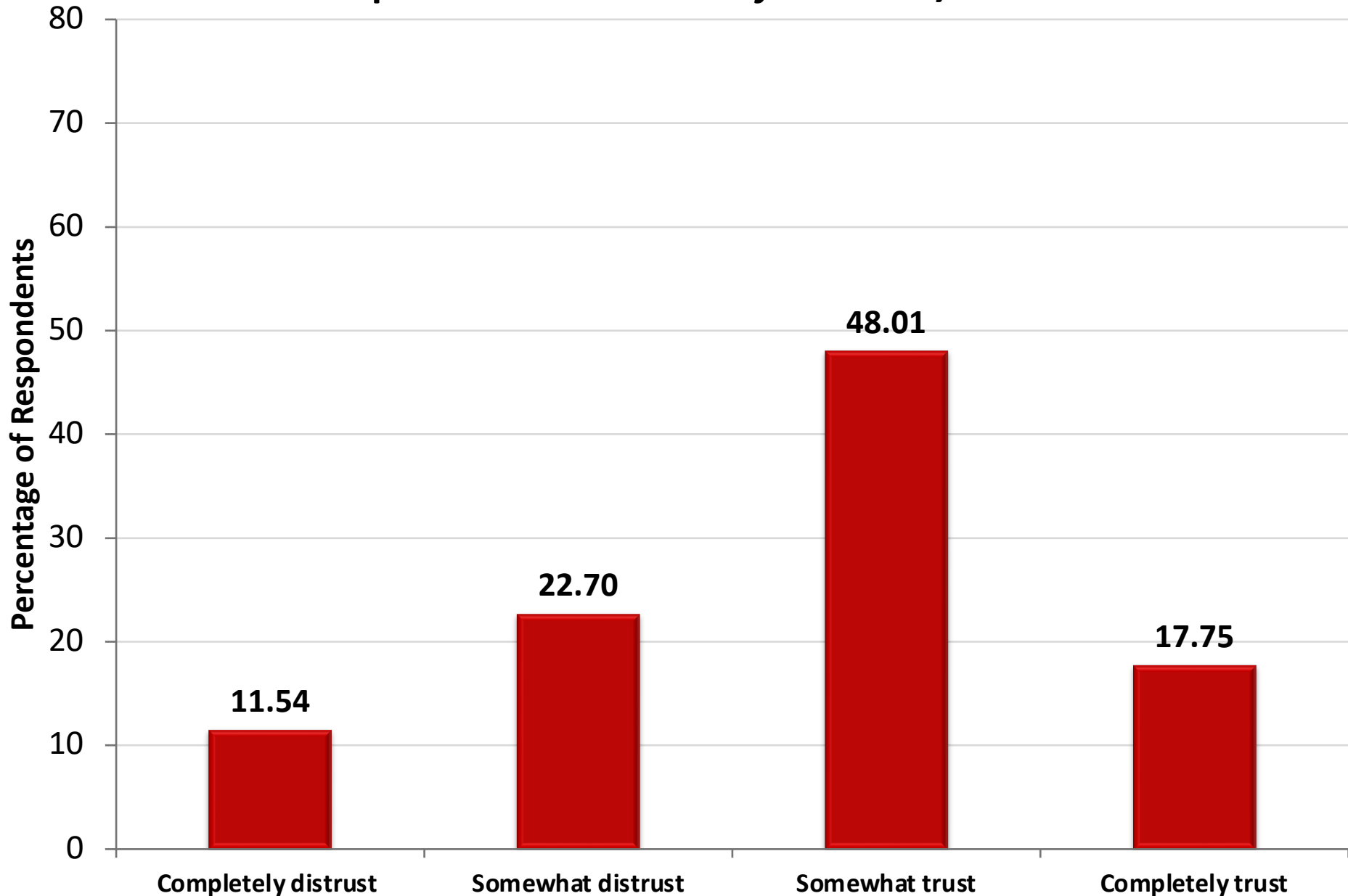
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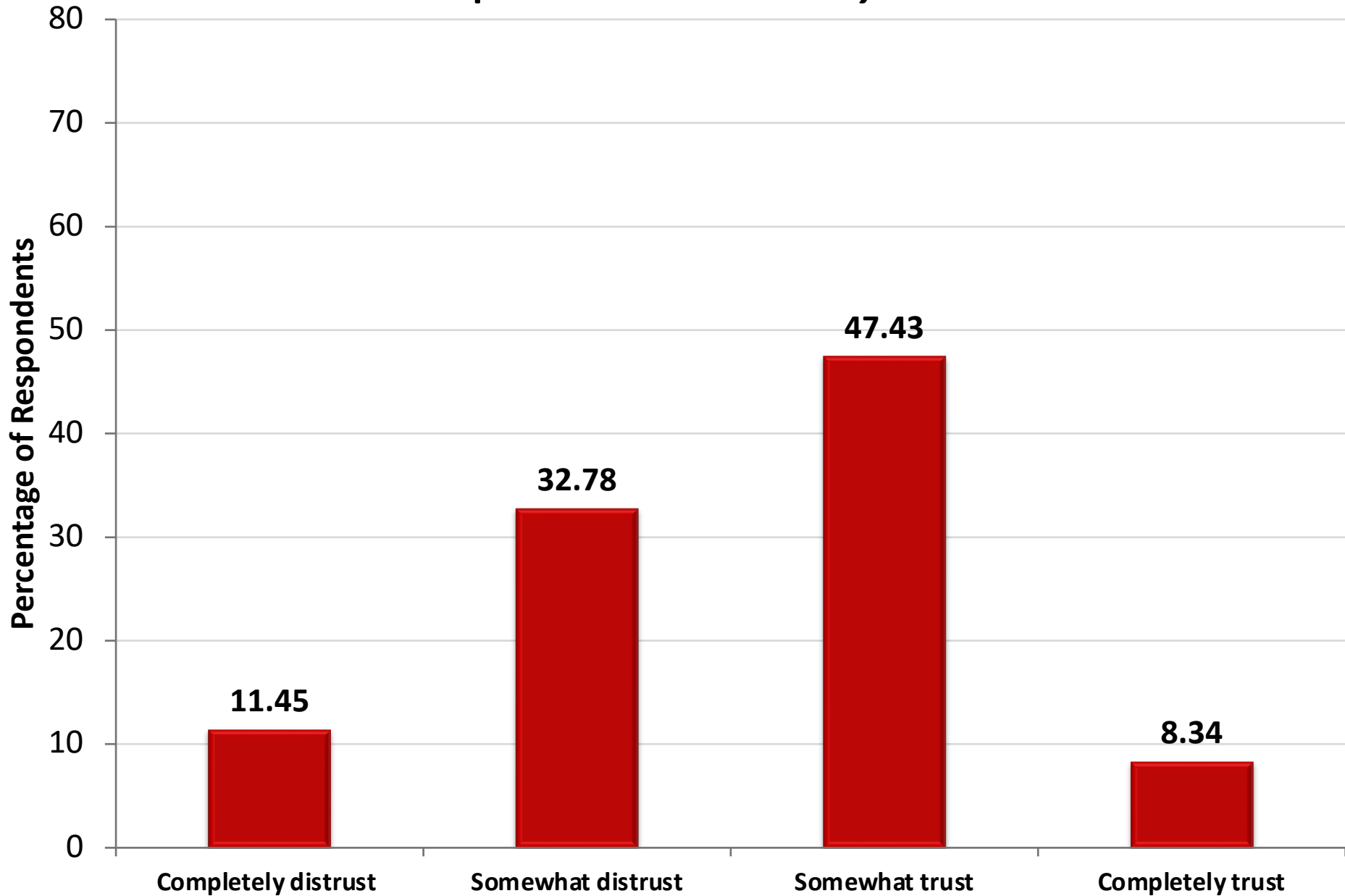
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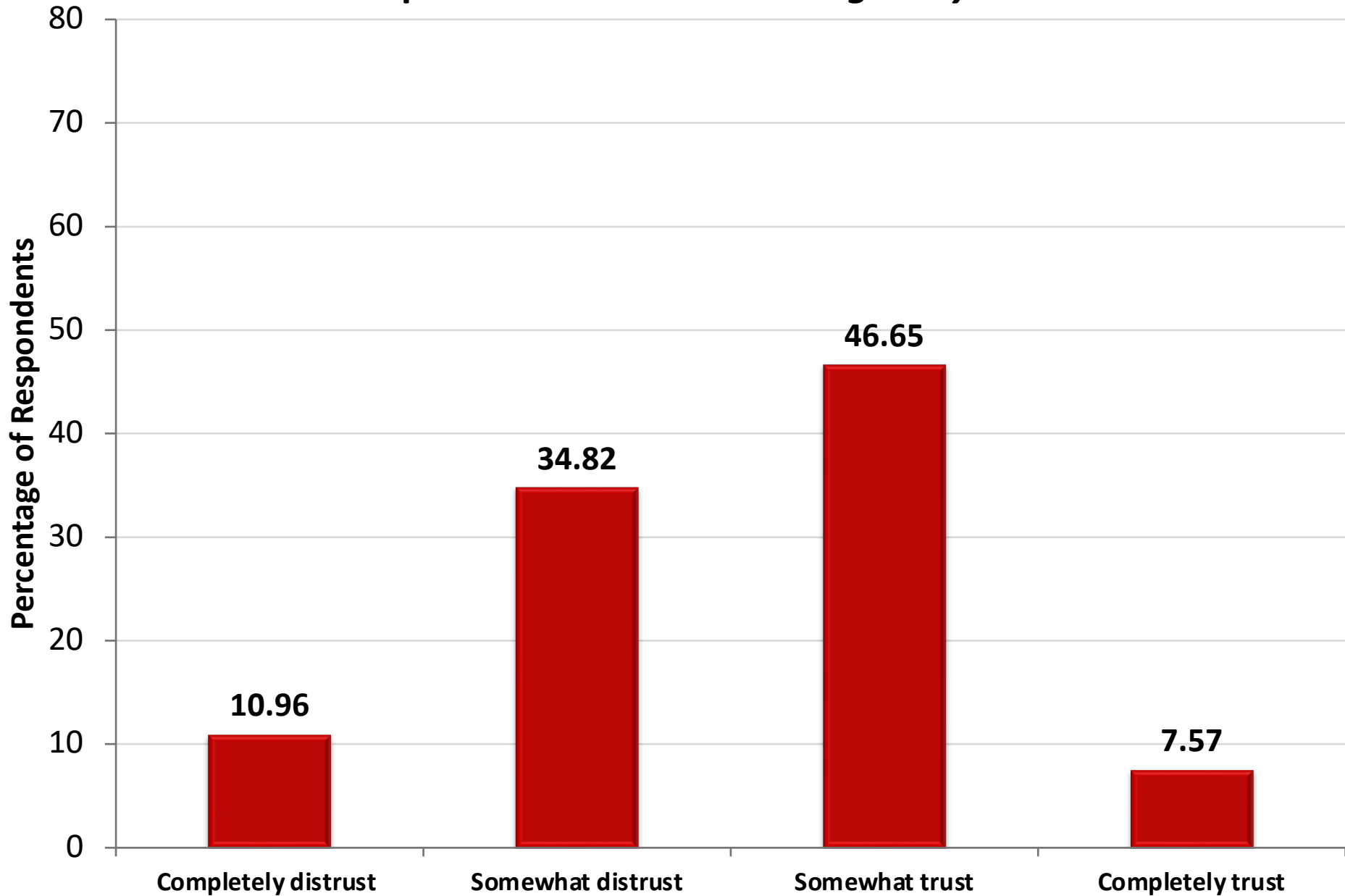
How much do you trust the following institutions or professions? – *Law Enforcement/Police*



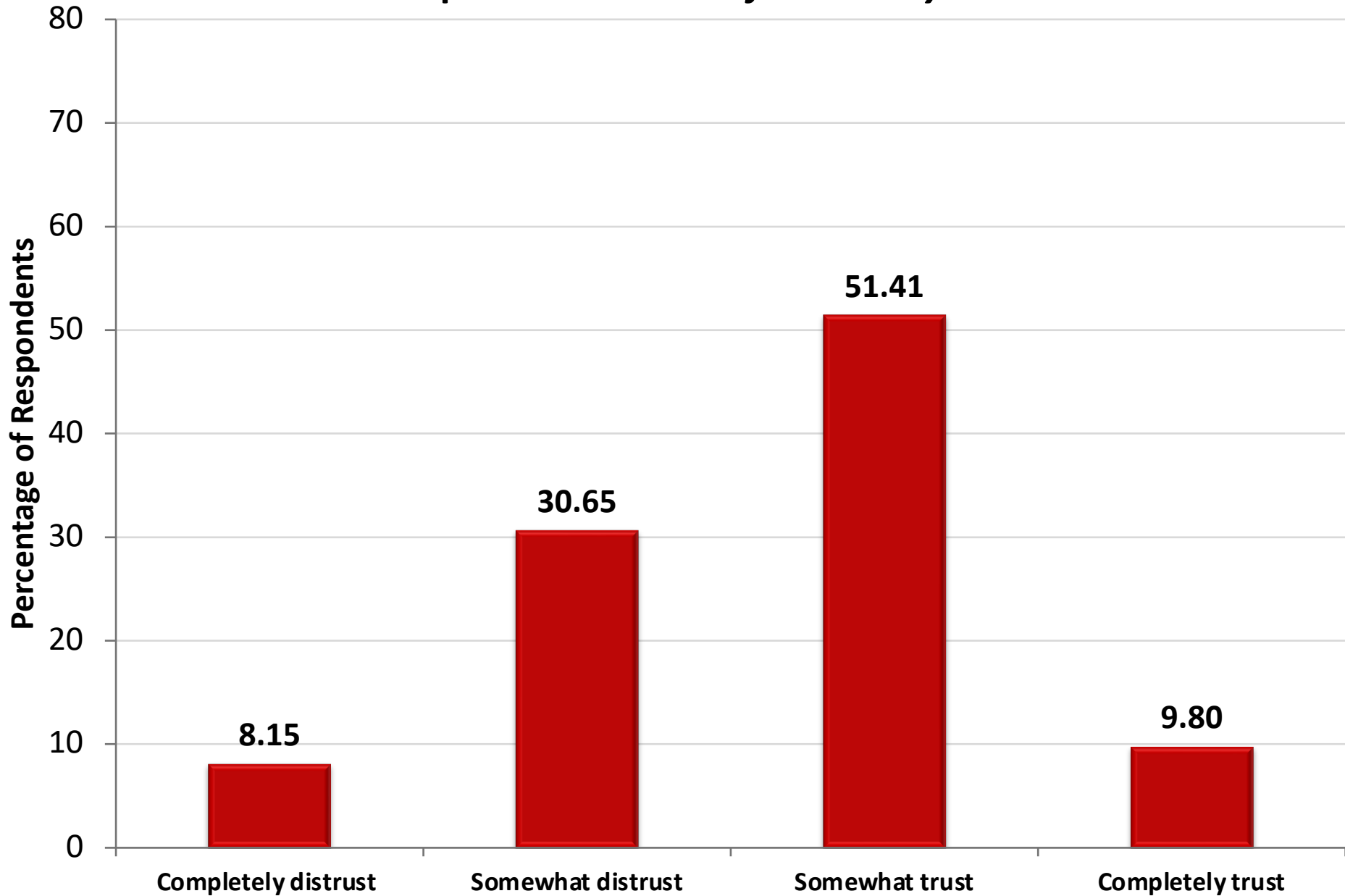
How much do you trust the following institutions or professions? – *Court System*



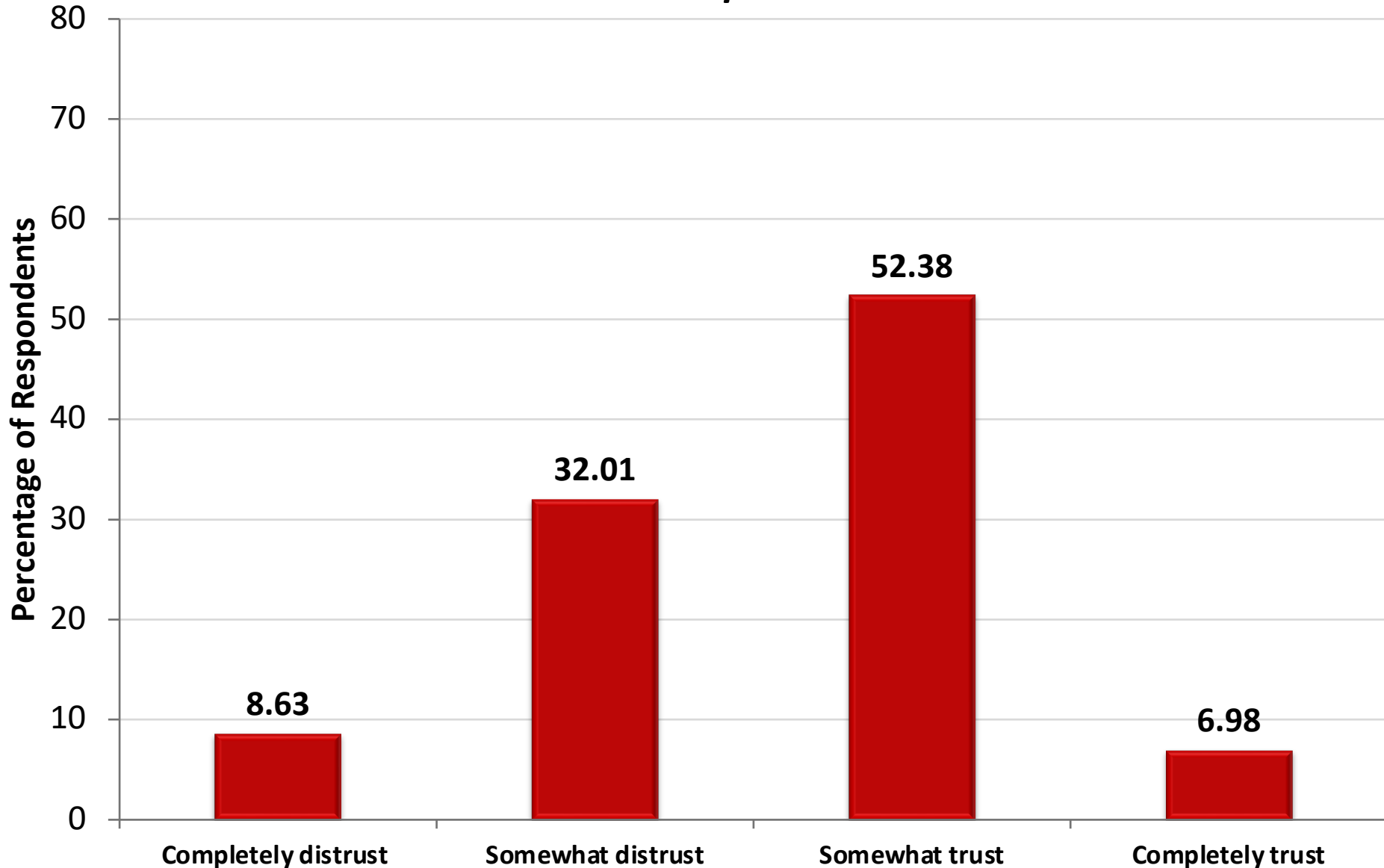
How much do you trust the following institutions or professions? – *Prosecuting Lawyers*



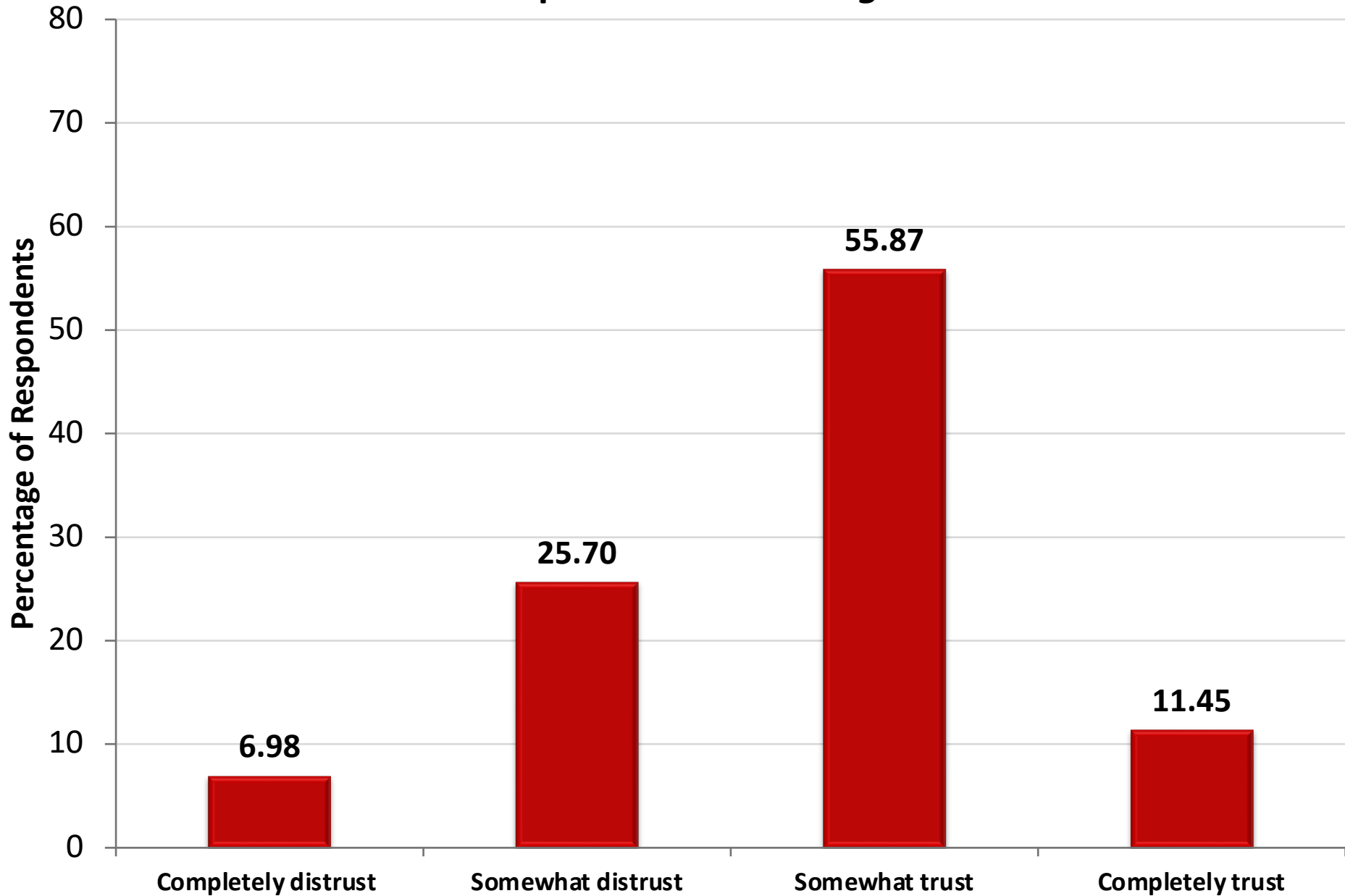
How much do you trust the following institutions or professions? – *Defense Lawyers*



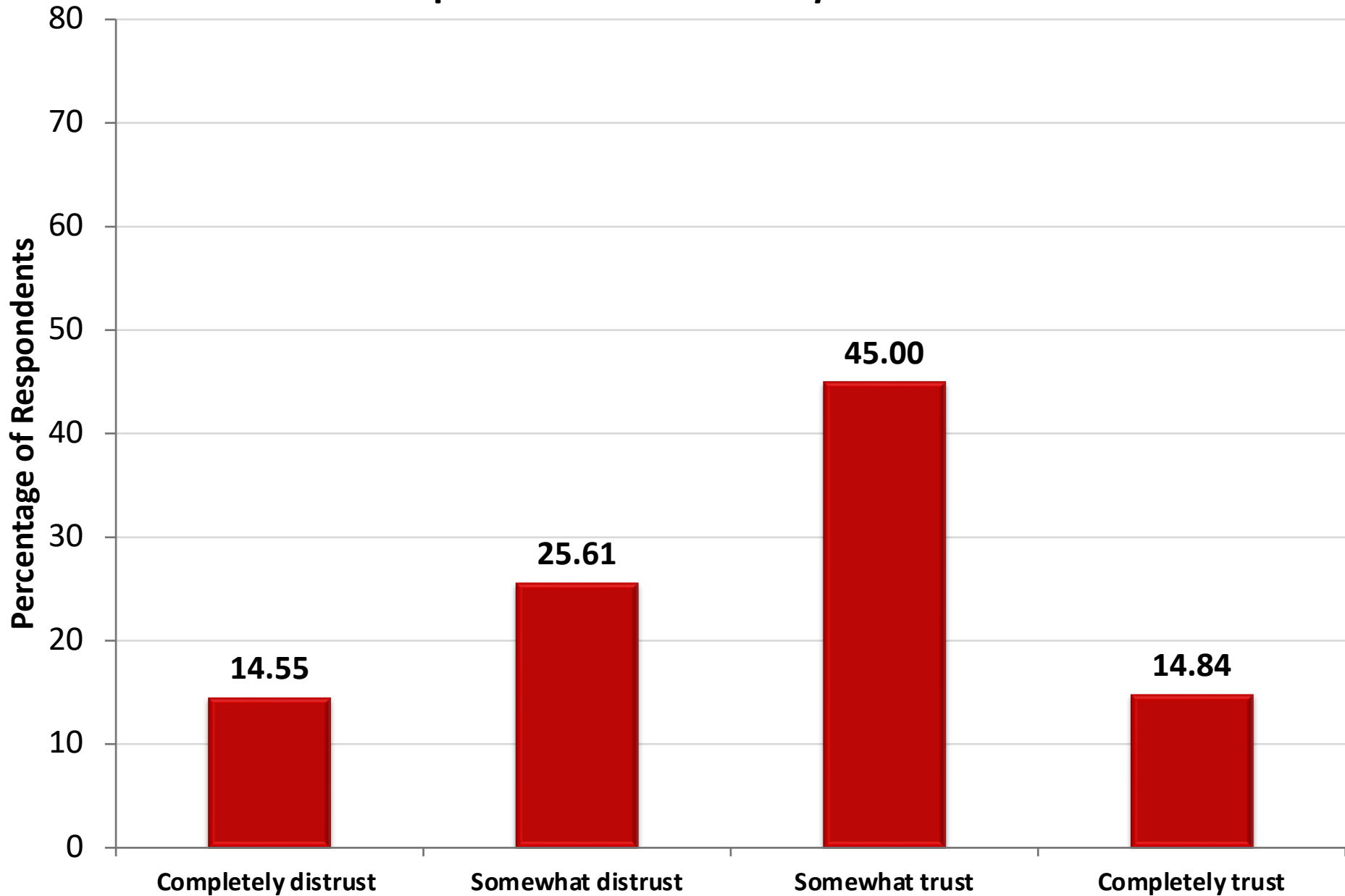
How much do you trust the following institutions or professions? – *Lawyers who file lawsuits for individuals and companies*



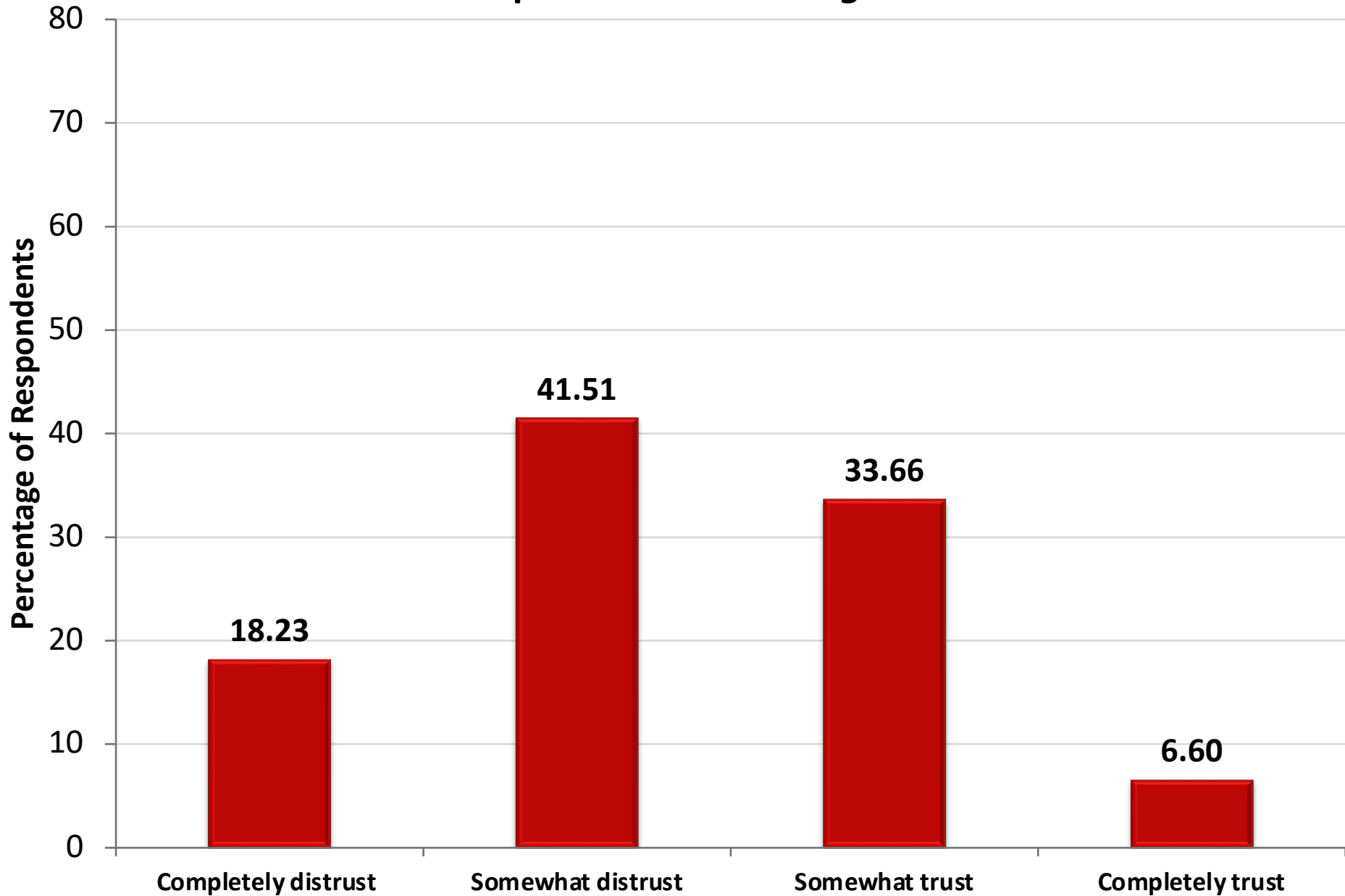
How much do you trust the following institutions or professions? – *Judges*



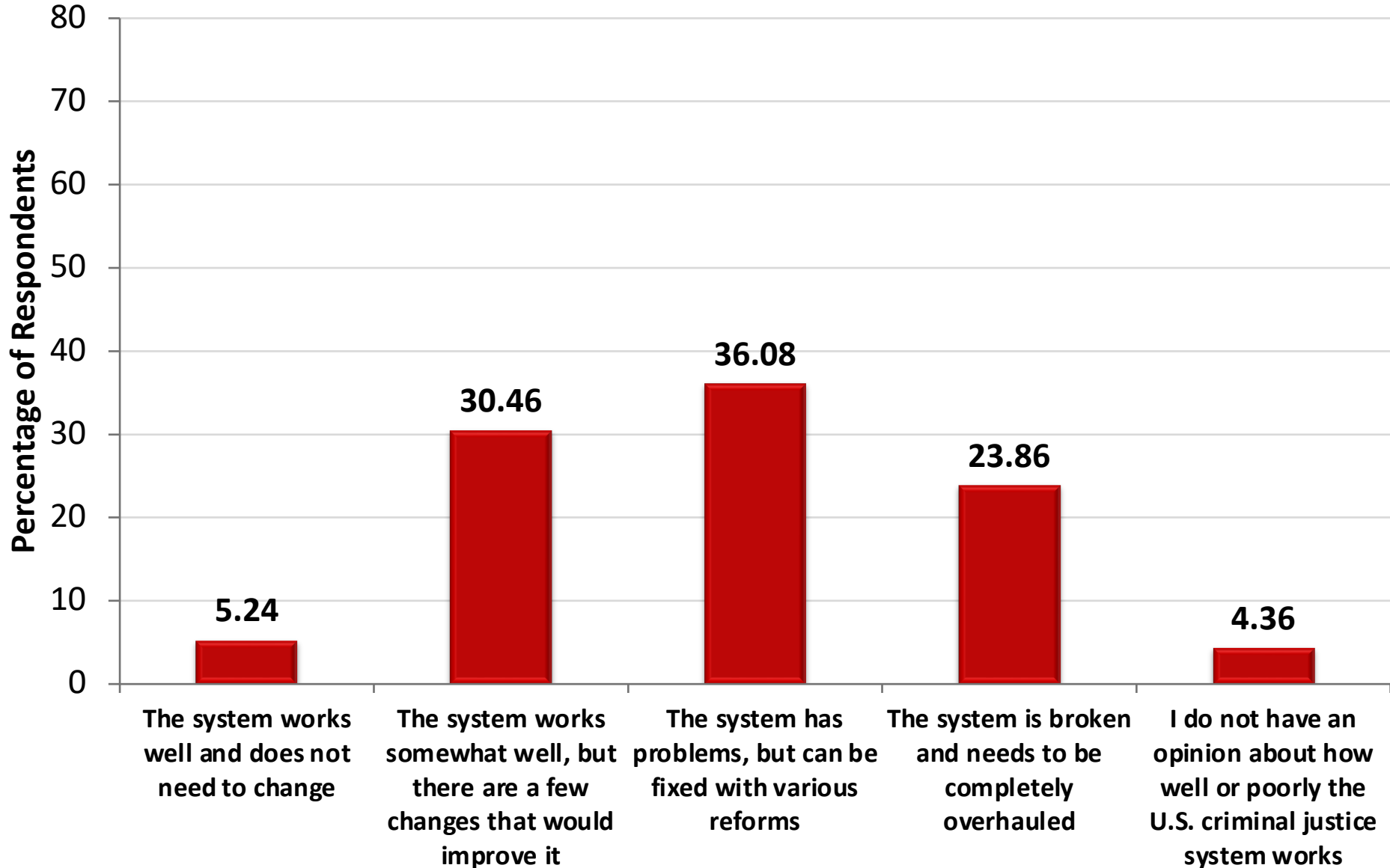
How much do you trust the following institutions or professions? – *U.S. Supreme Court*



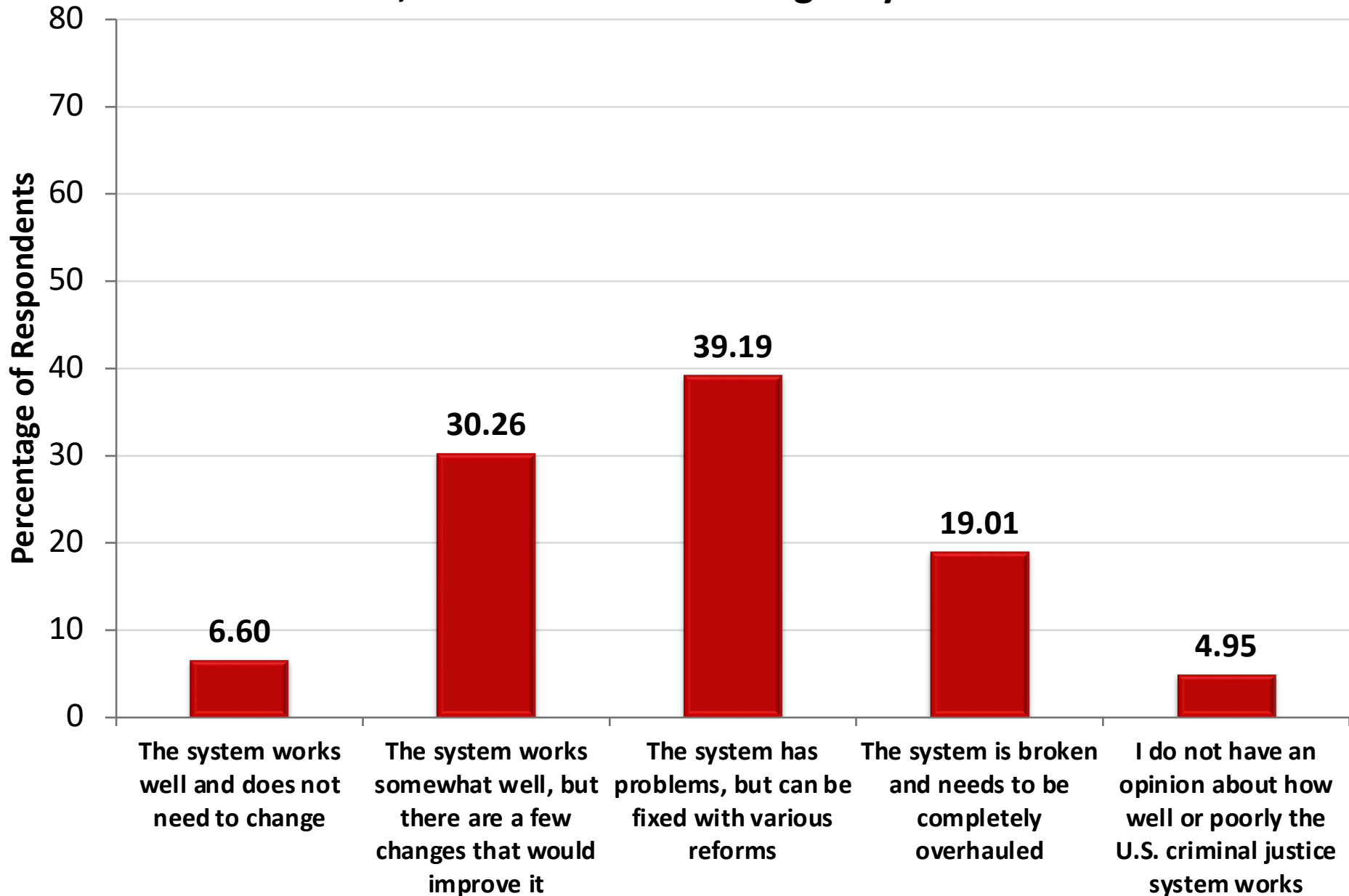
How much do you trust the following institutions or professions? – *Congress*



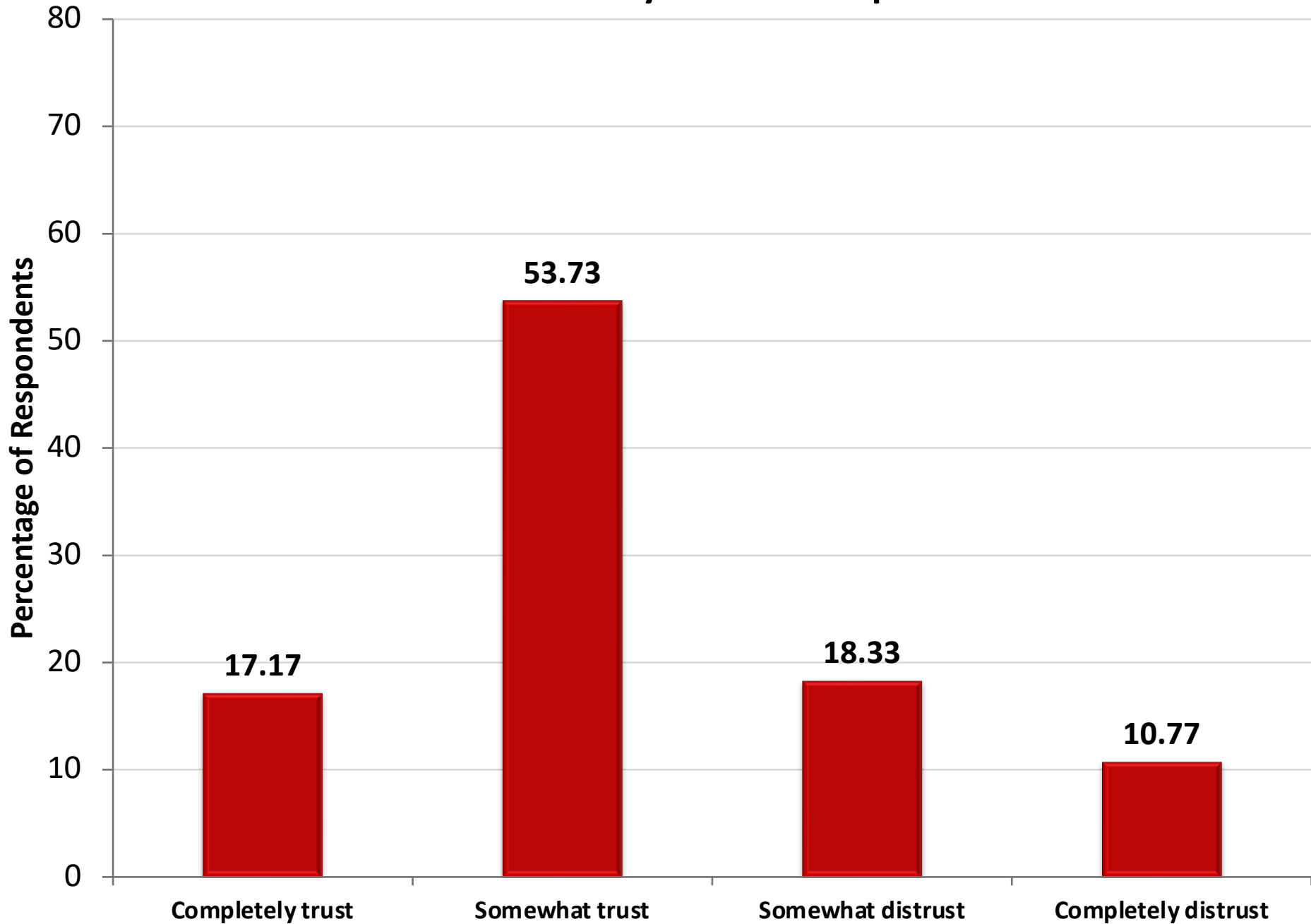
Regarding how the U.S. criminal justice system (i.e., police, the courts, prisons, etc.) works, which of the following do you most believe?



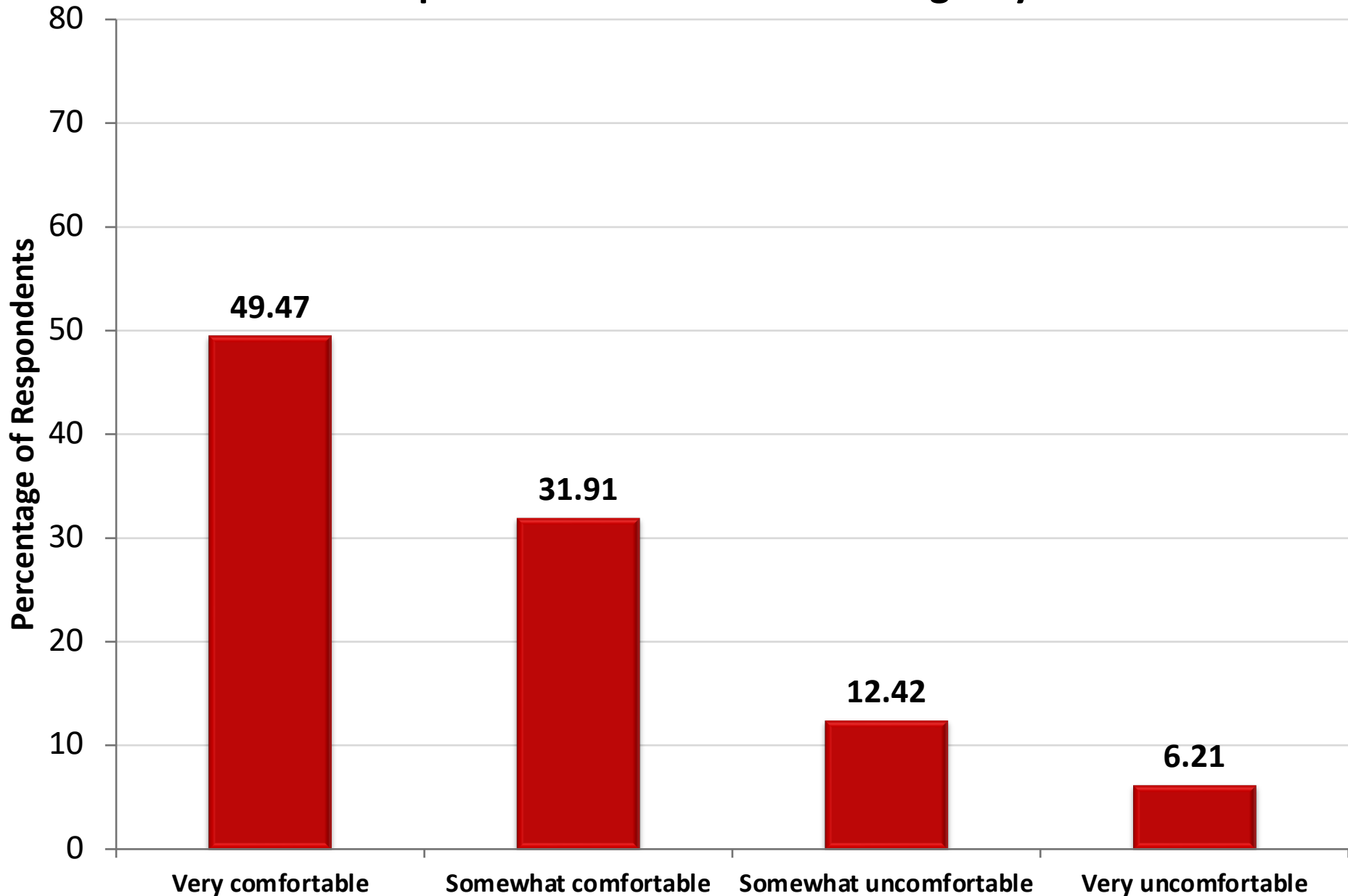
Regarding how the U.S. civil justice system (i.e., lawsuits) works, which of the following do you most believe?



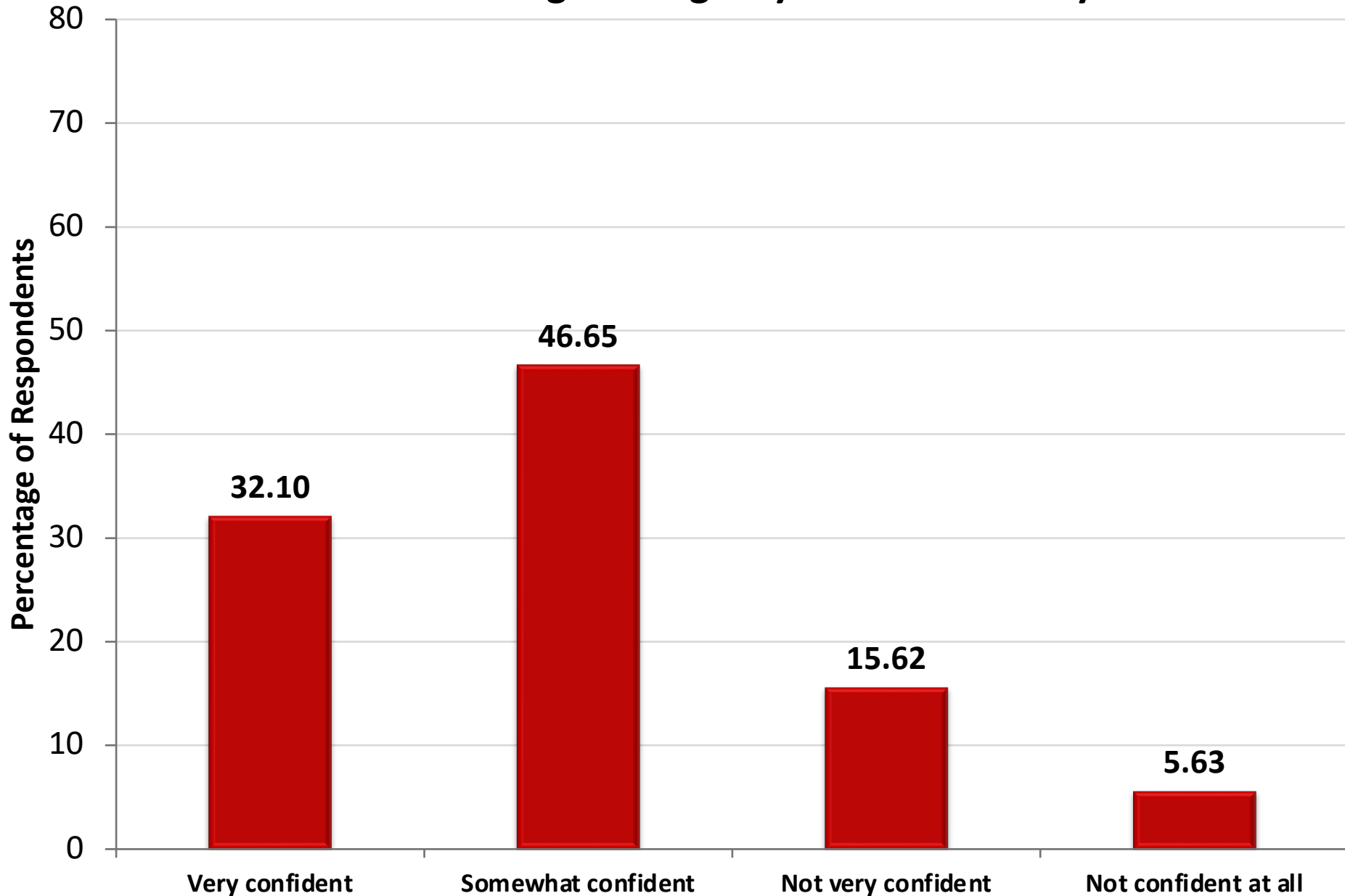
How much do you trust the police?



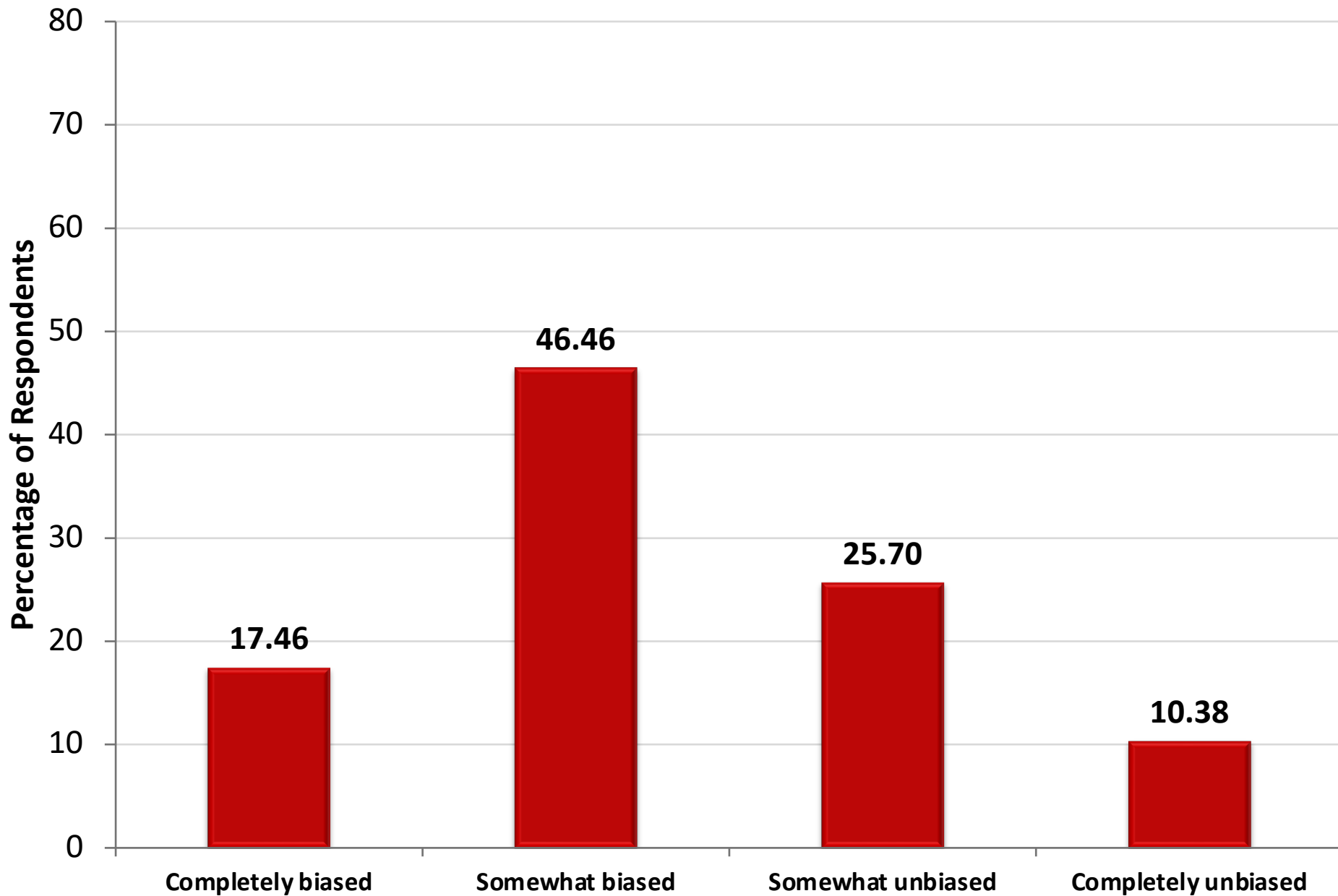
How comfortable or uncomfortable would you feel calling the police when there is an emergency?



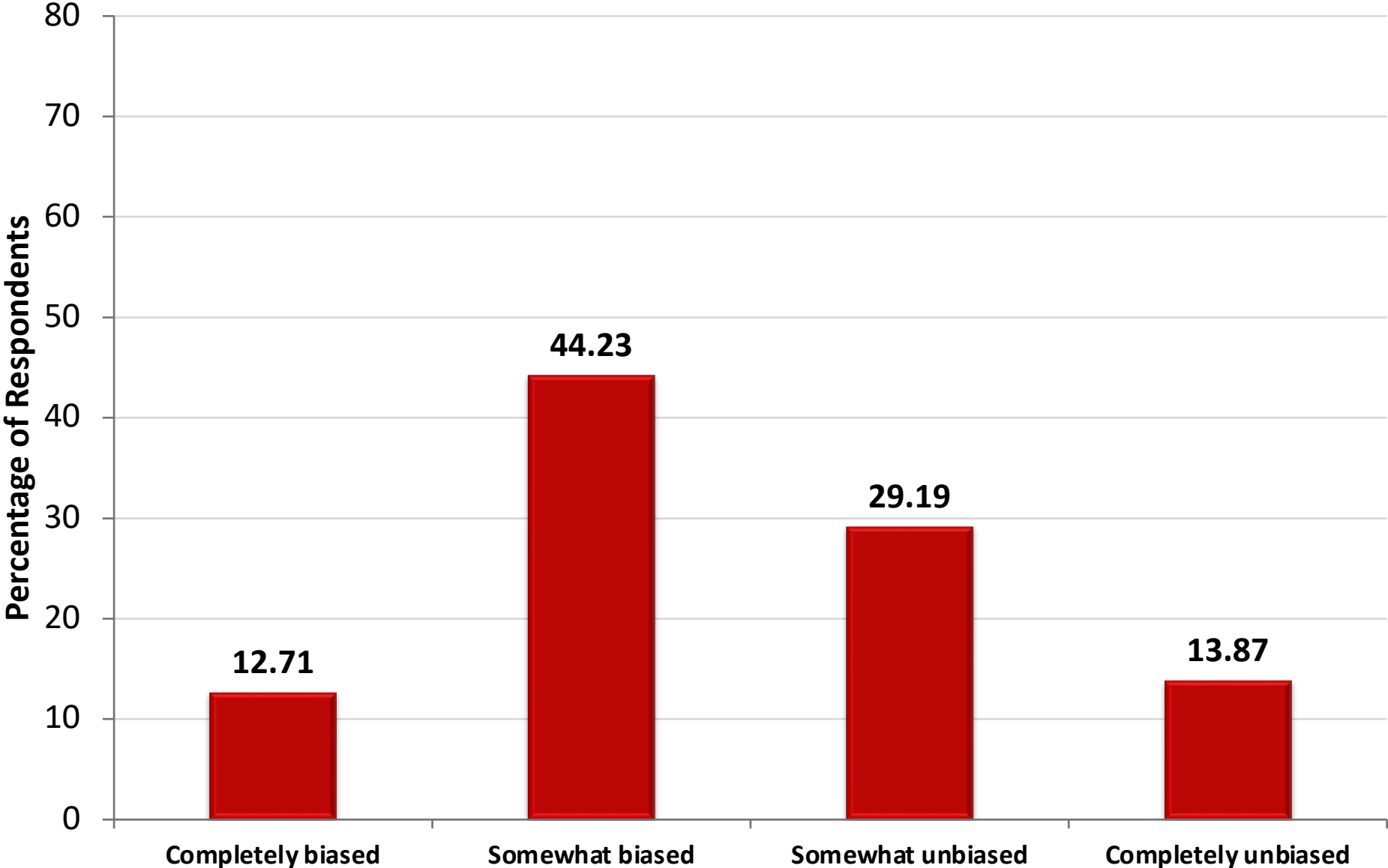
How much confidence do you have in the police to effectively resolve the average emergency or situation they handle?



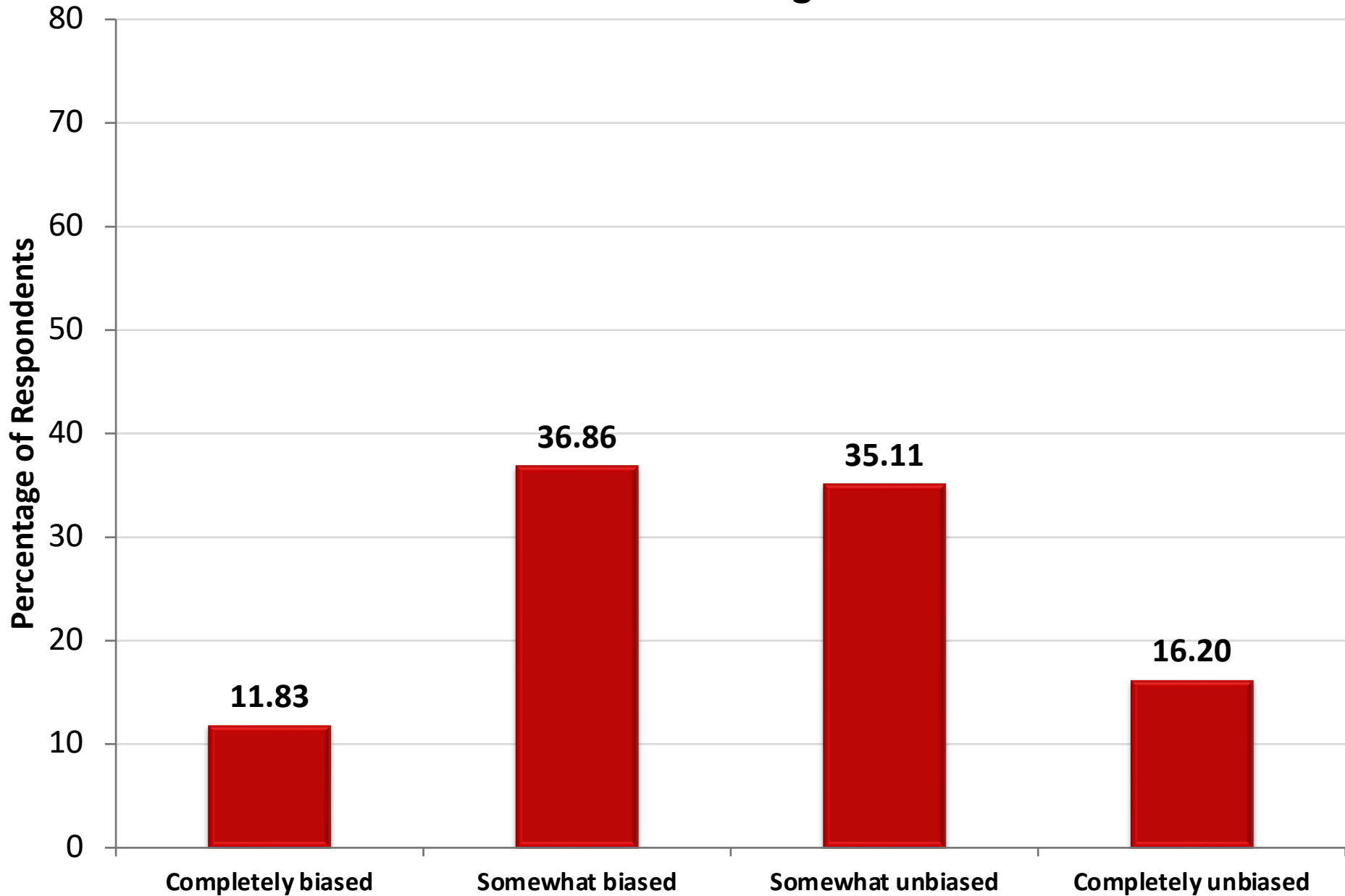
How biased or unbiased are the police in handling people of different races?



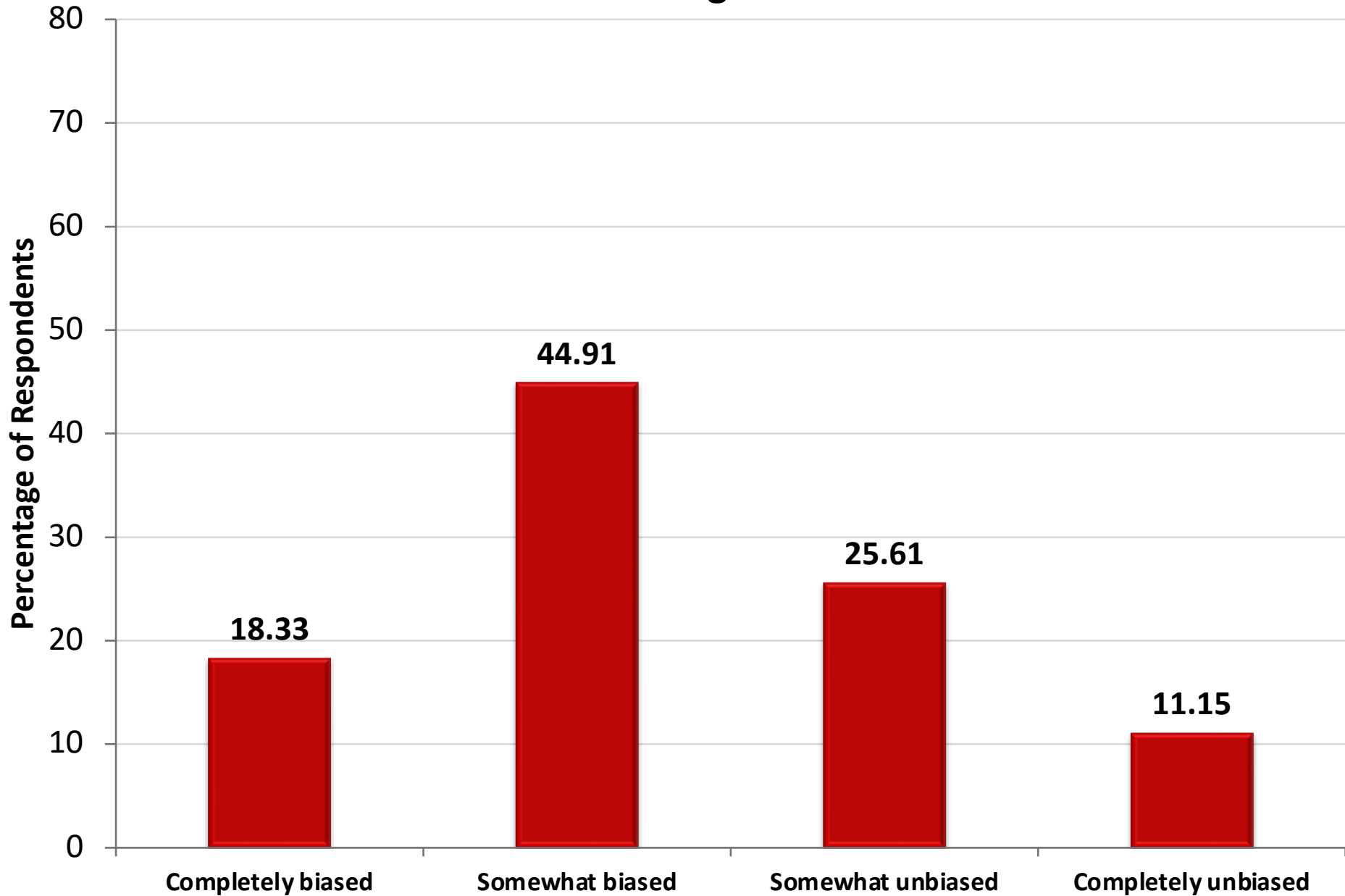
How biased or unbiased are the police in handling LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and other) individuals?



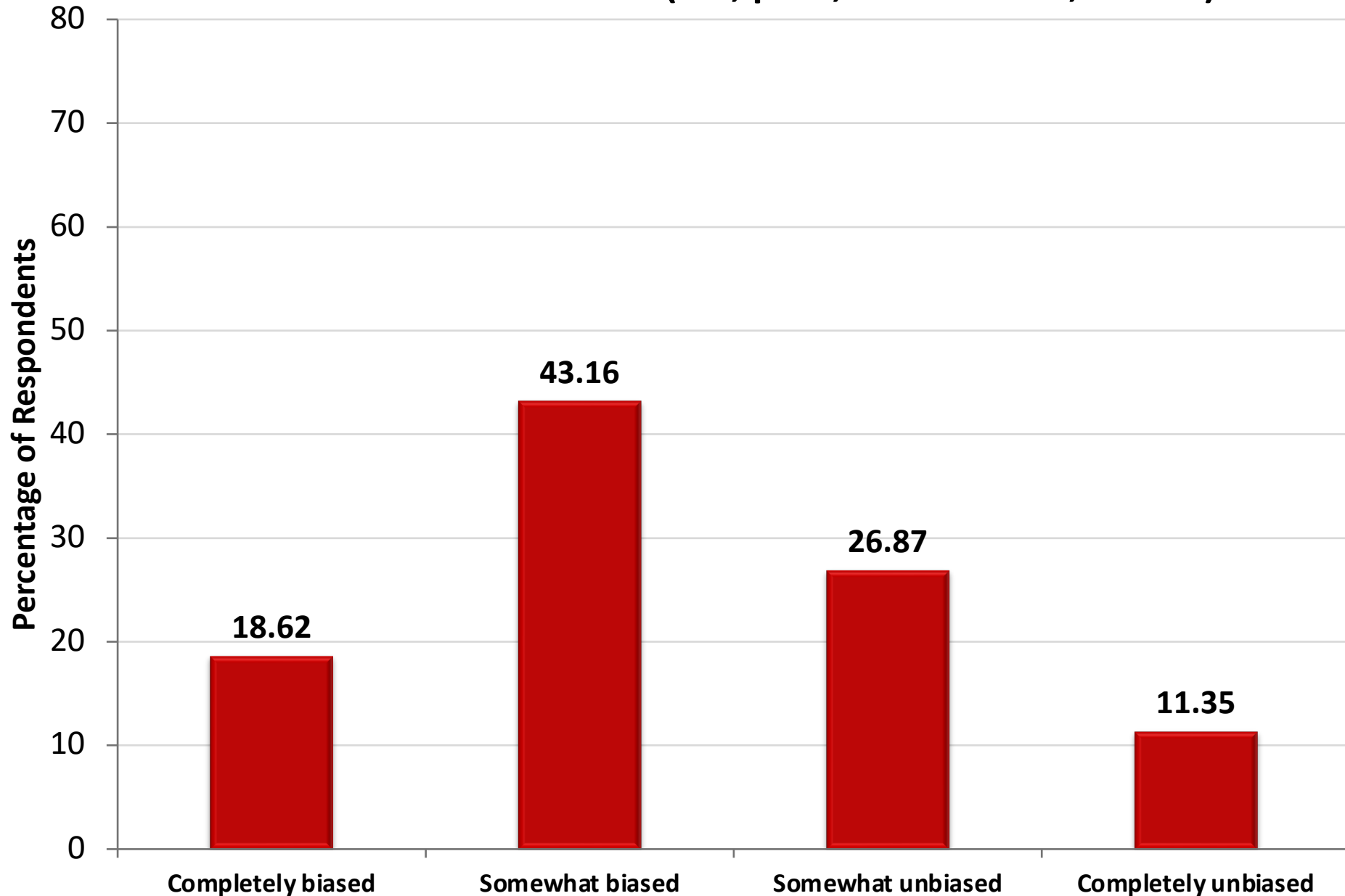
How biased or unbiased are the police in handling people of different religions?



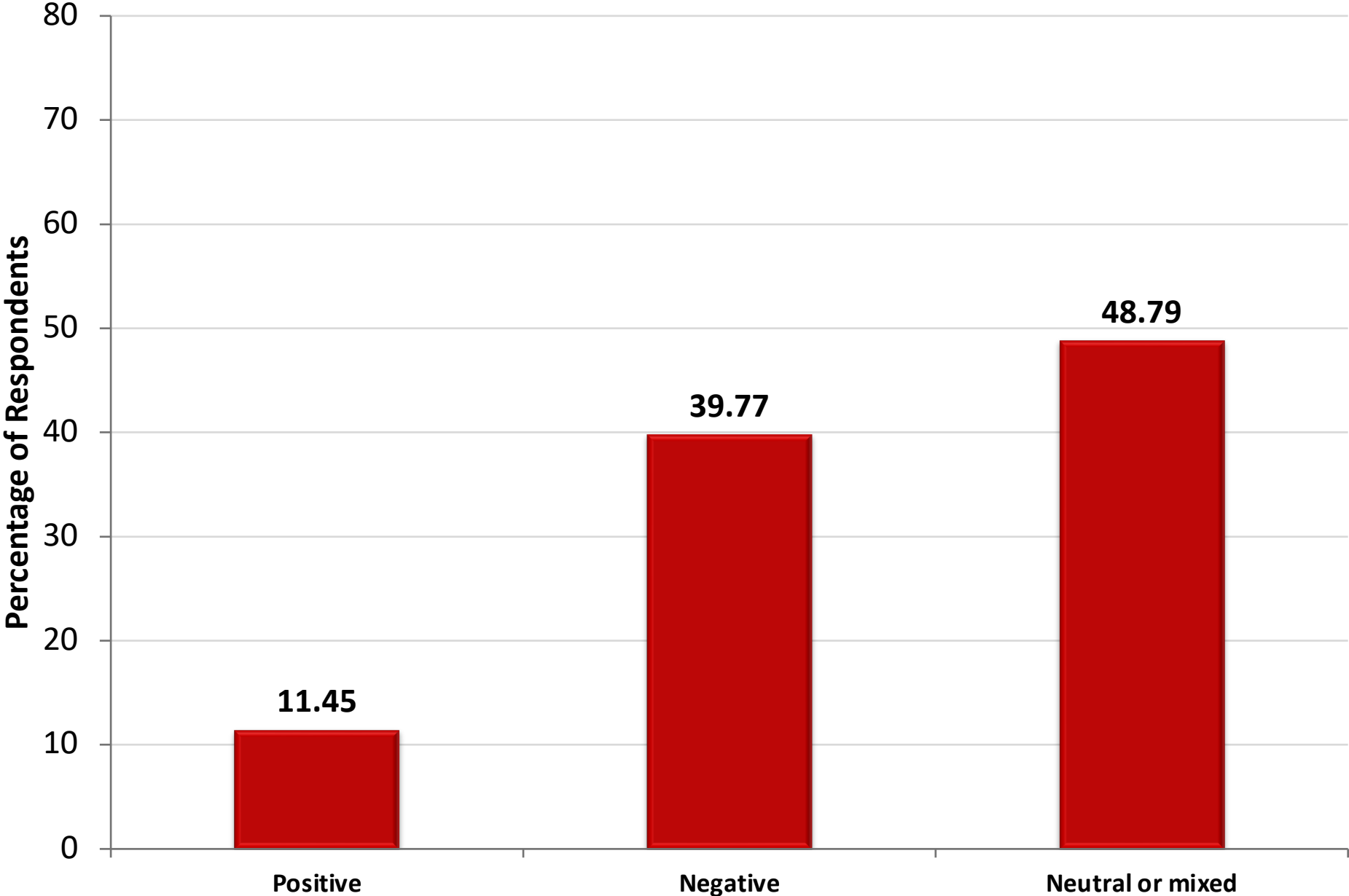
How biased or unbiased are the police in handling immigrants?



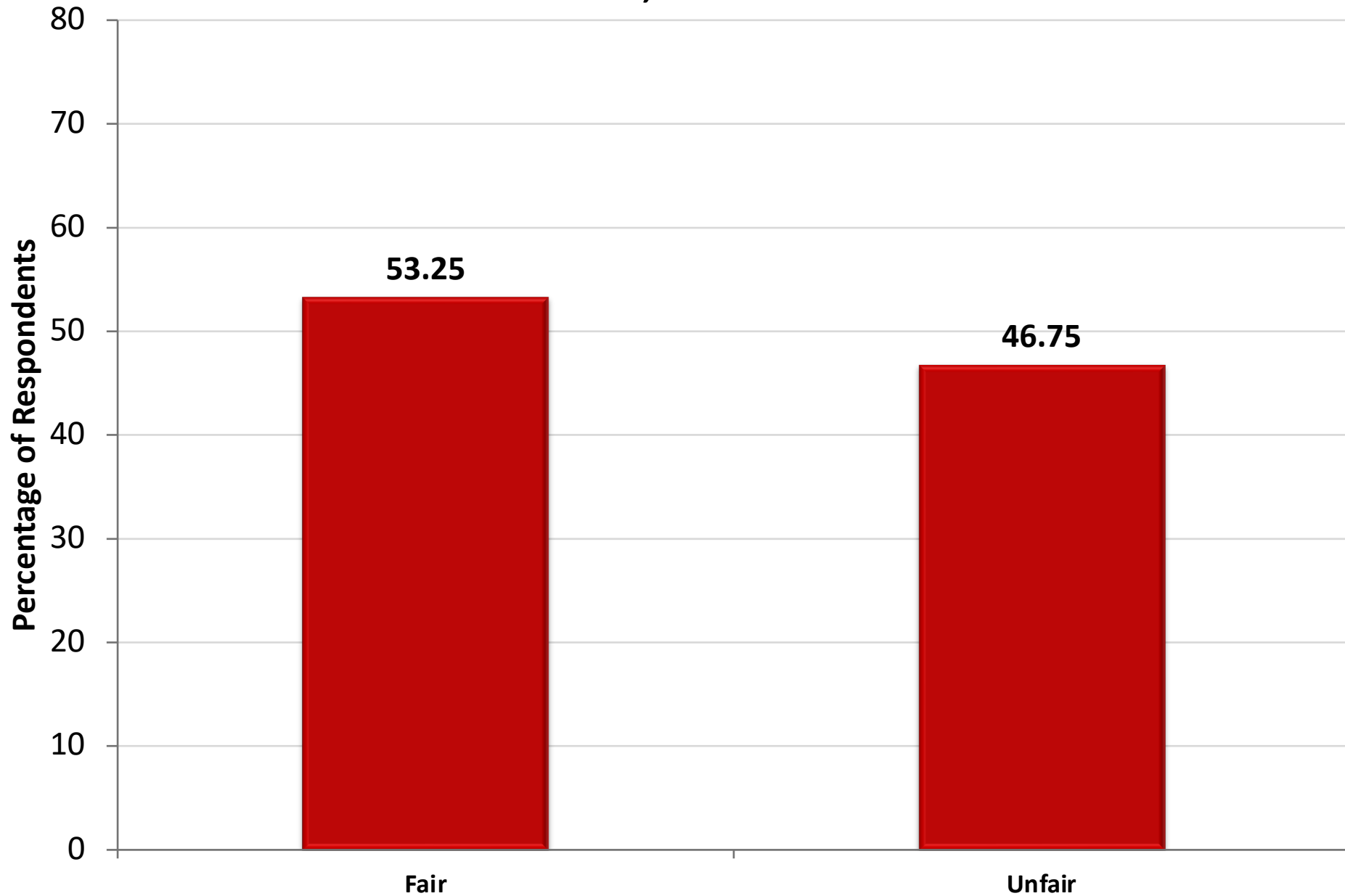
How biased or unbiased are the police in handling people of different economic status (i.e., poor, middle class, or rich)?



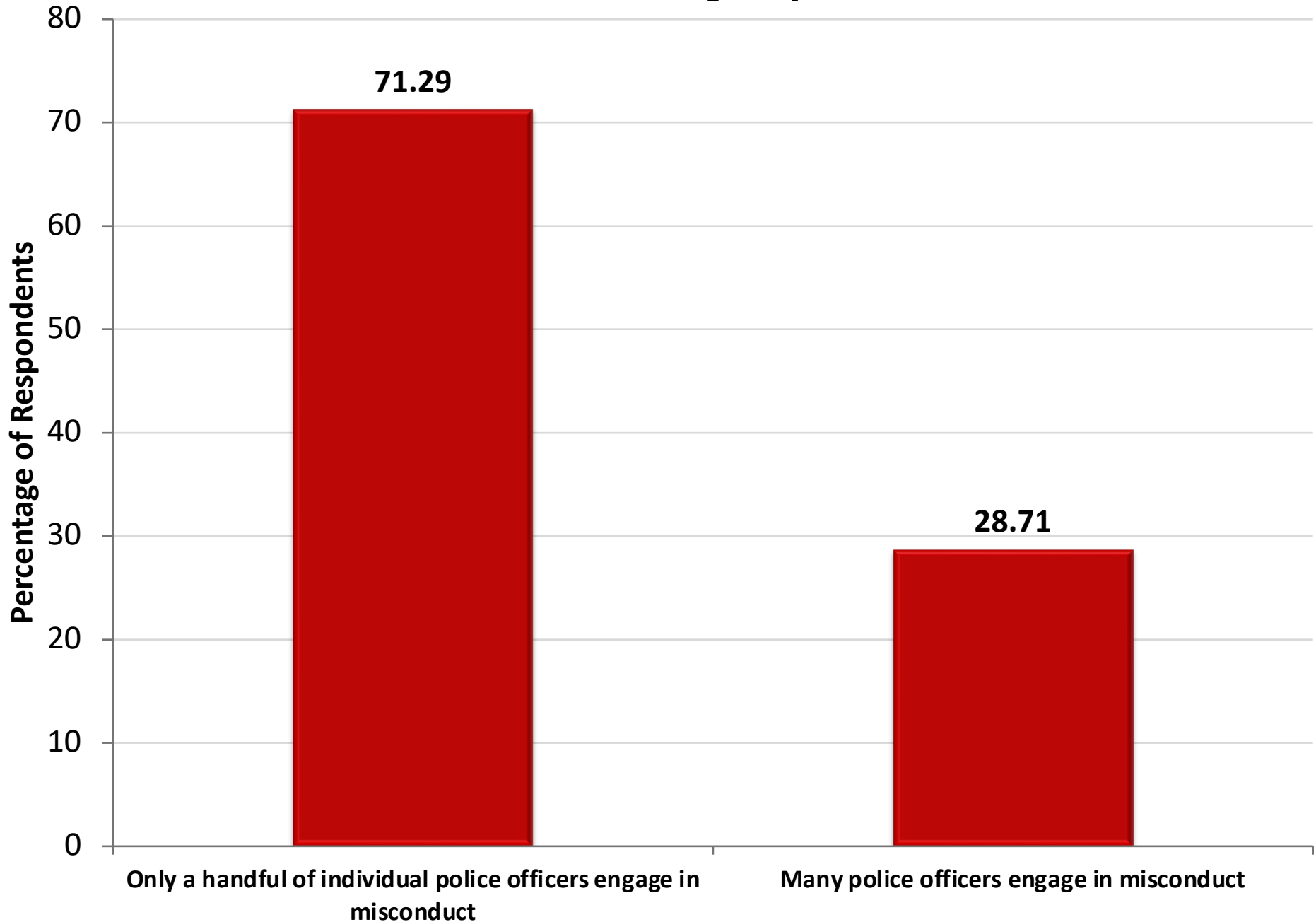
Do you feel that media coverage of the police is mainly positive, negative, or neutral/mixed?



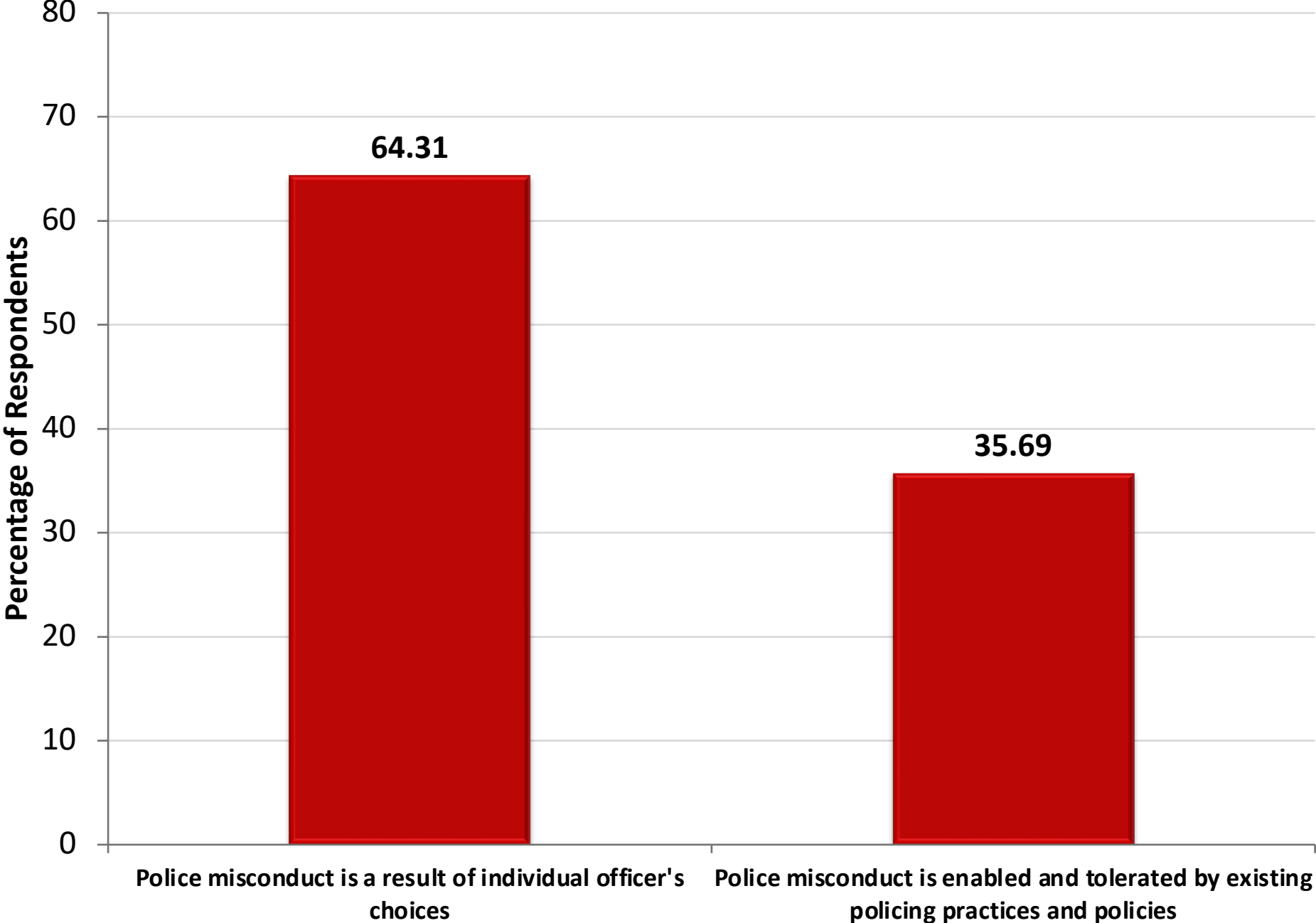
Do you feel that media portrayals of the police are, on the whole, fair or unfair?



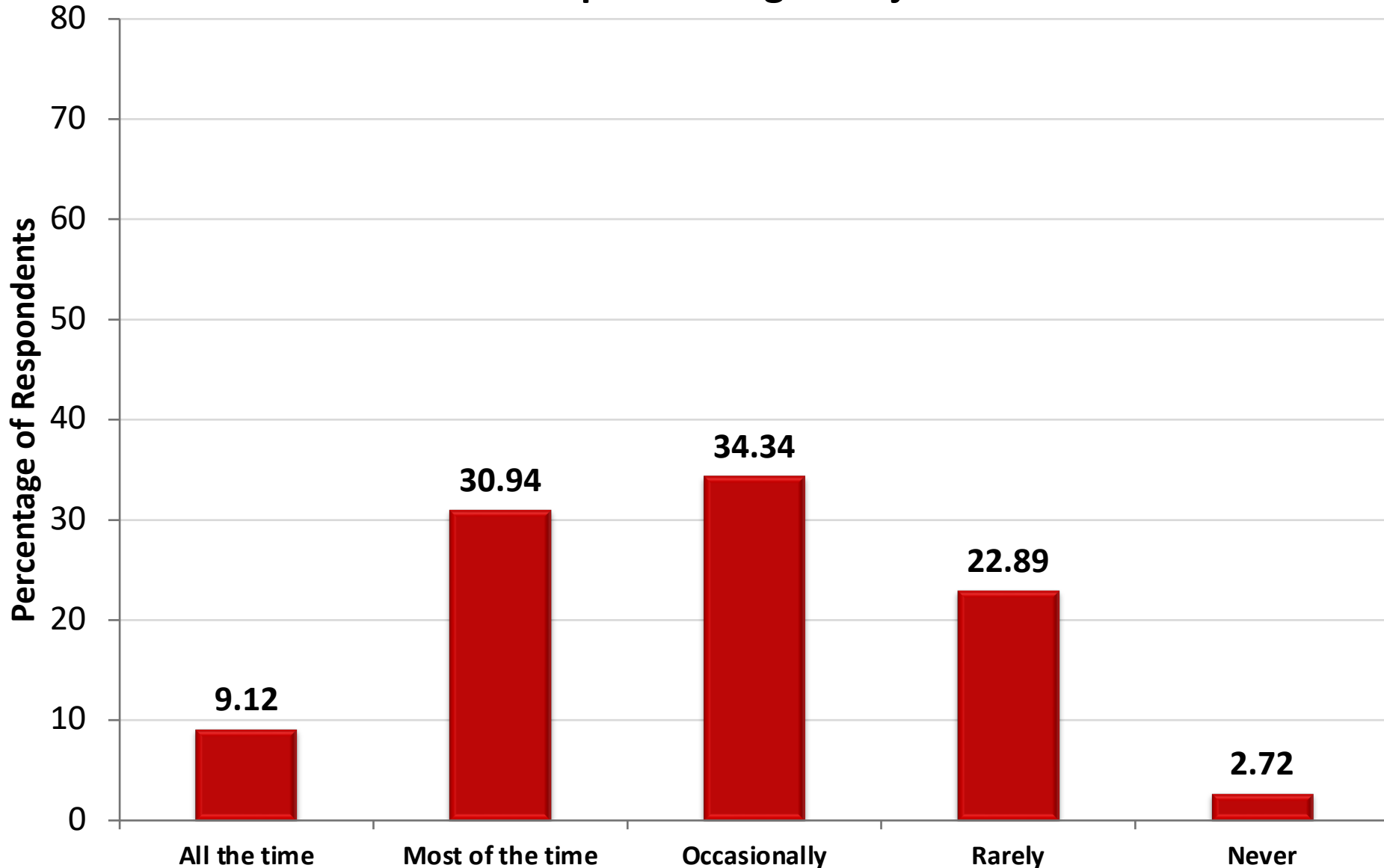
Which of the following do you most believe?



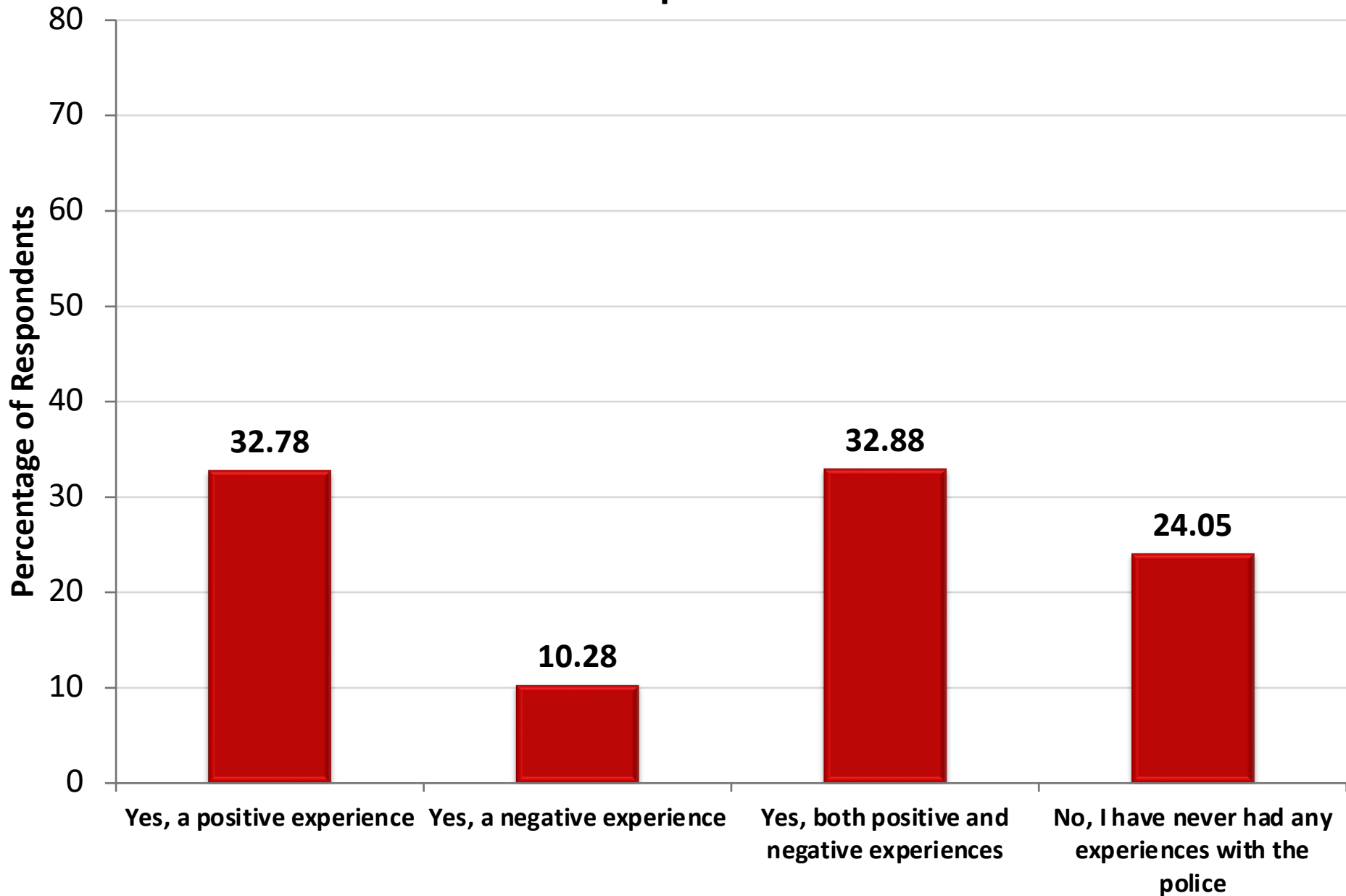
Which of the following do you most believe?



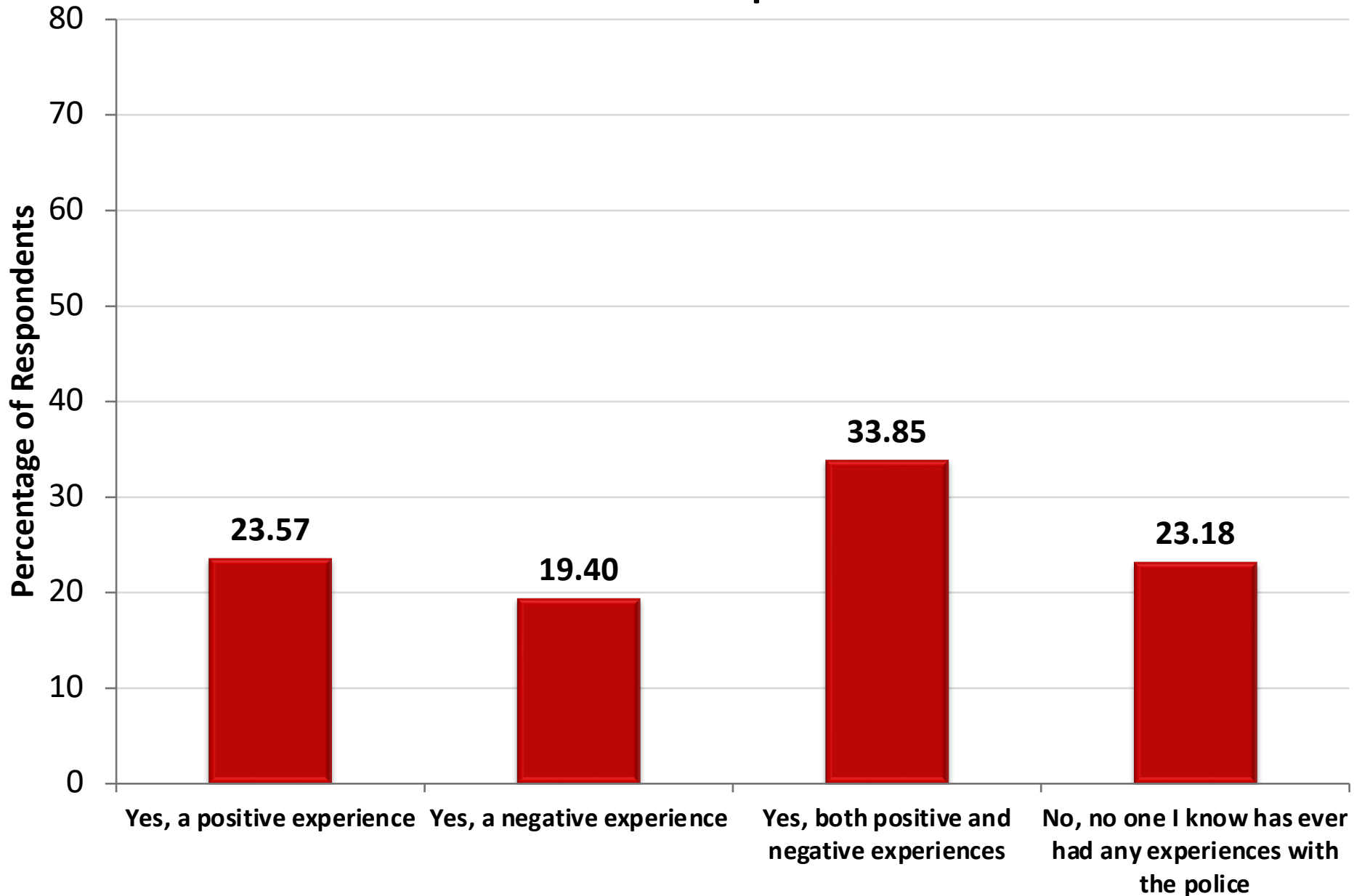
How often, if at all, do you believe police officers are held accountable when they engage in misconduct or break the law in performing their job?



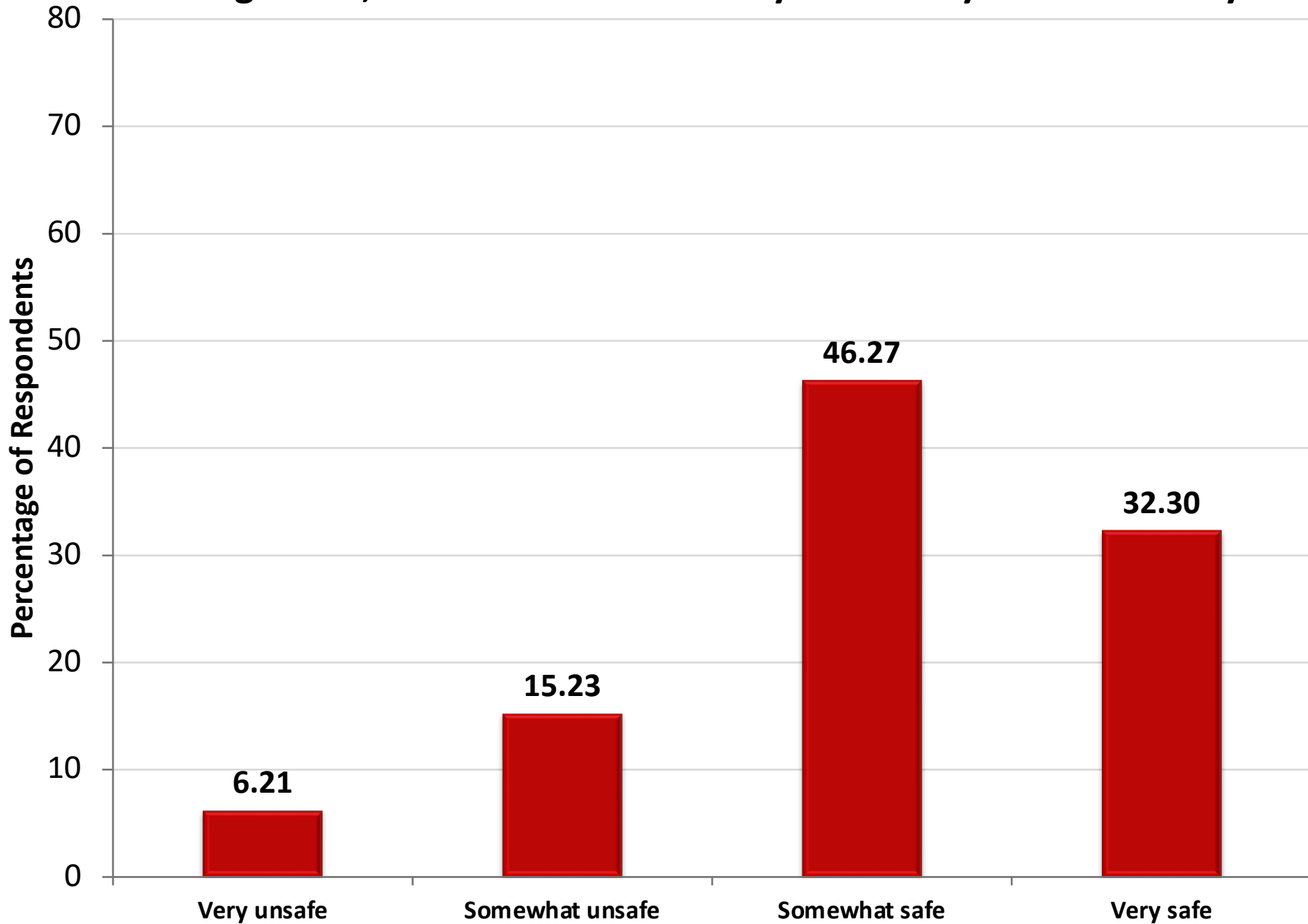
Have you had a positive or negative experience with the police?



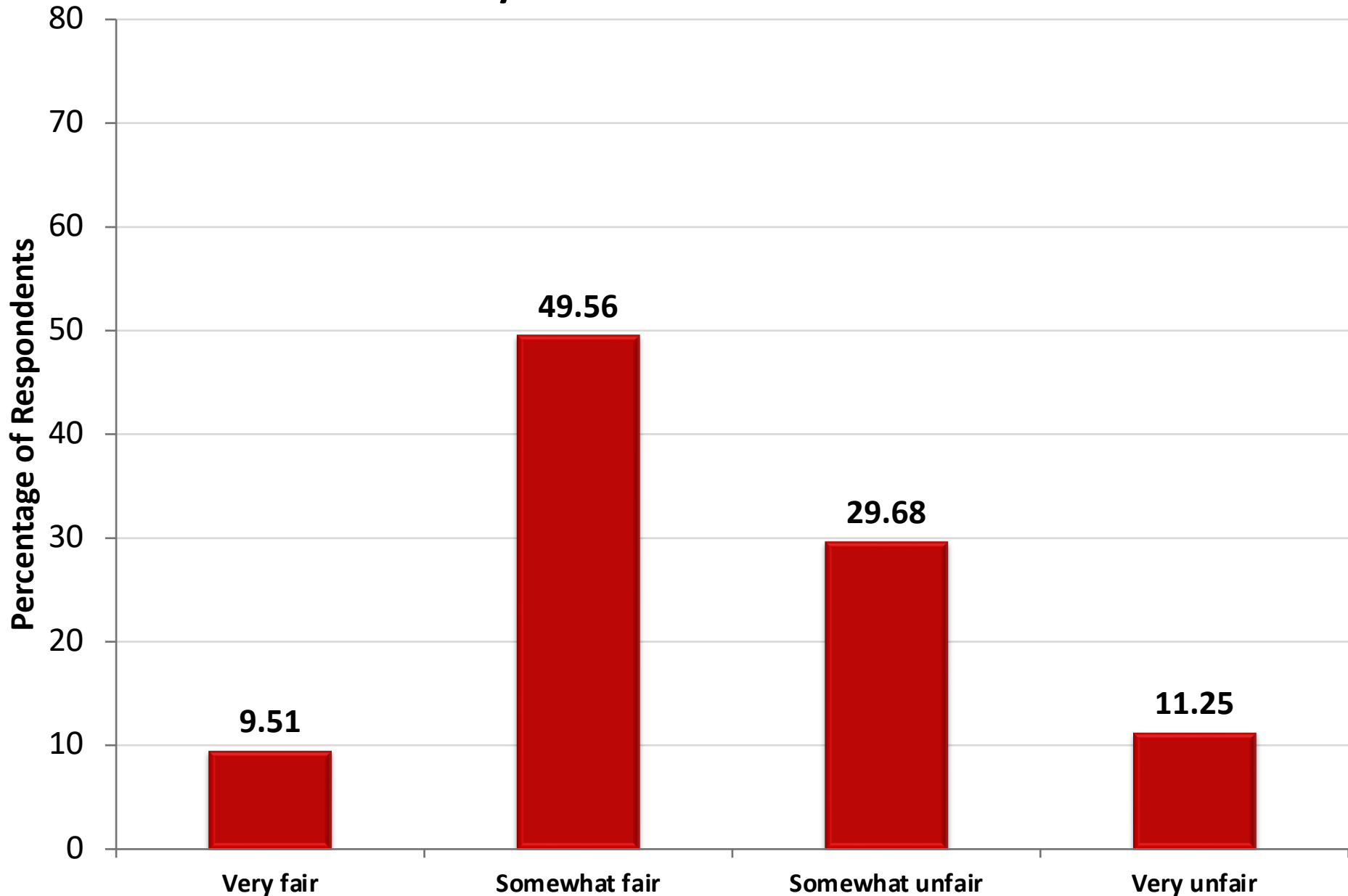
Has anyone close to you had a positive or negative experience with the police?



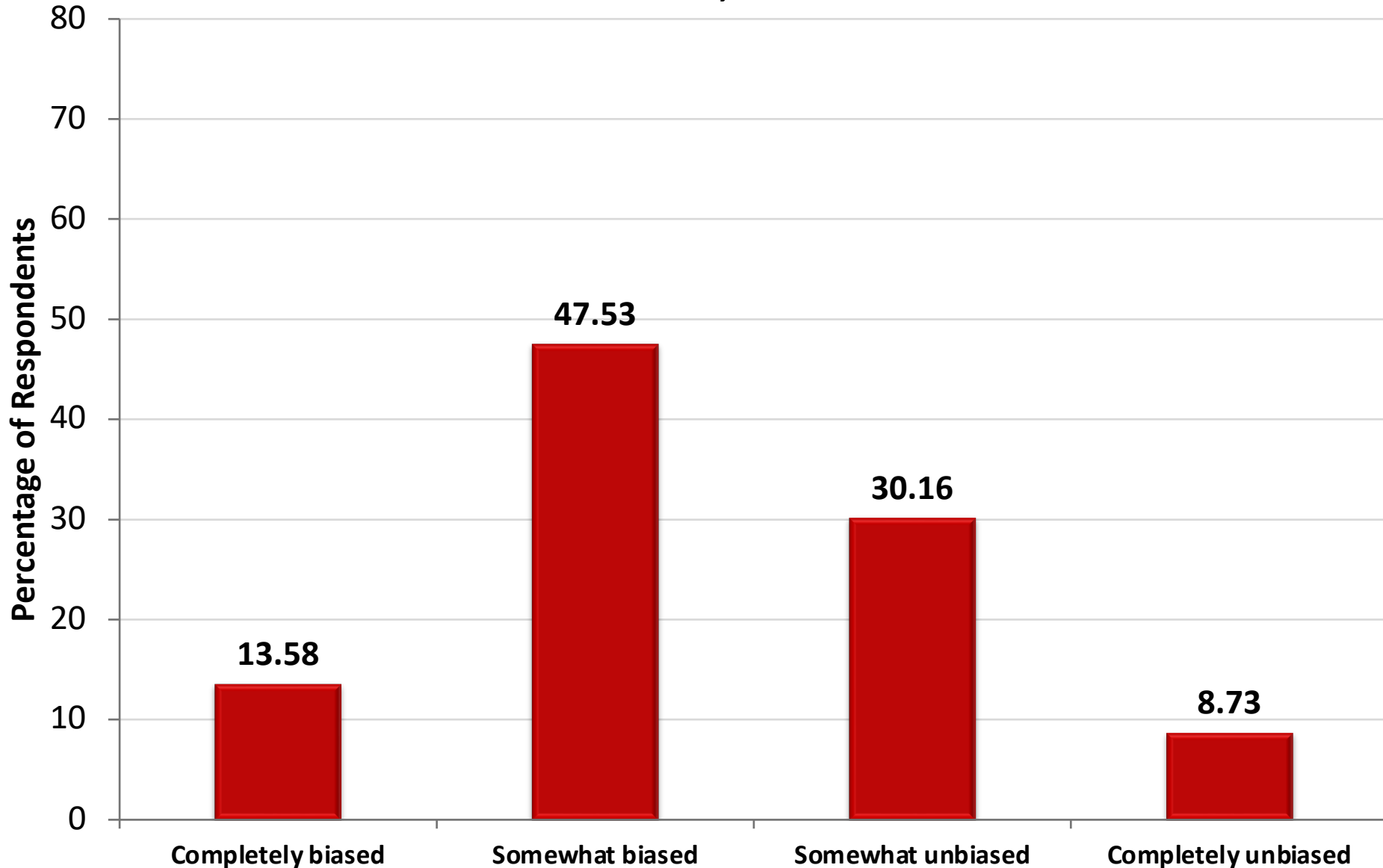
In general, how safe or unsafe do you feel in your community?



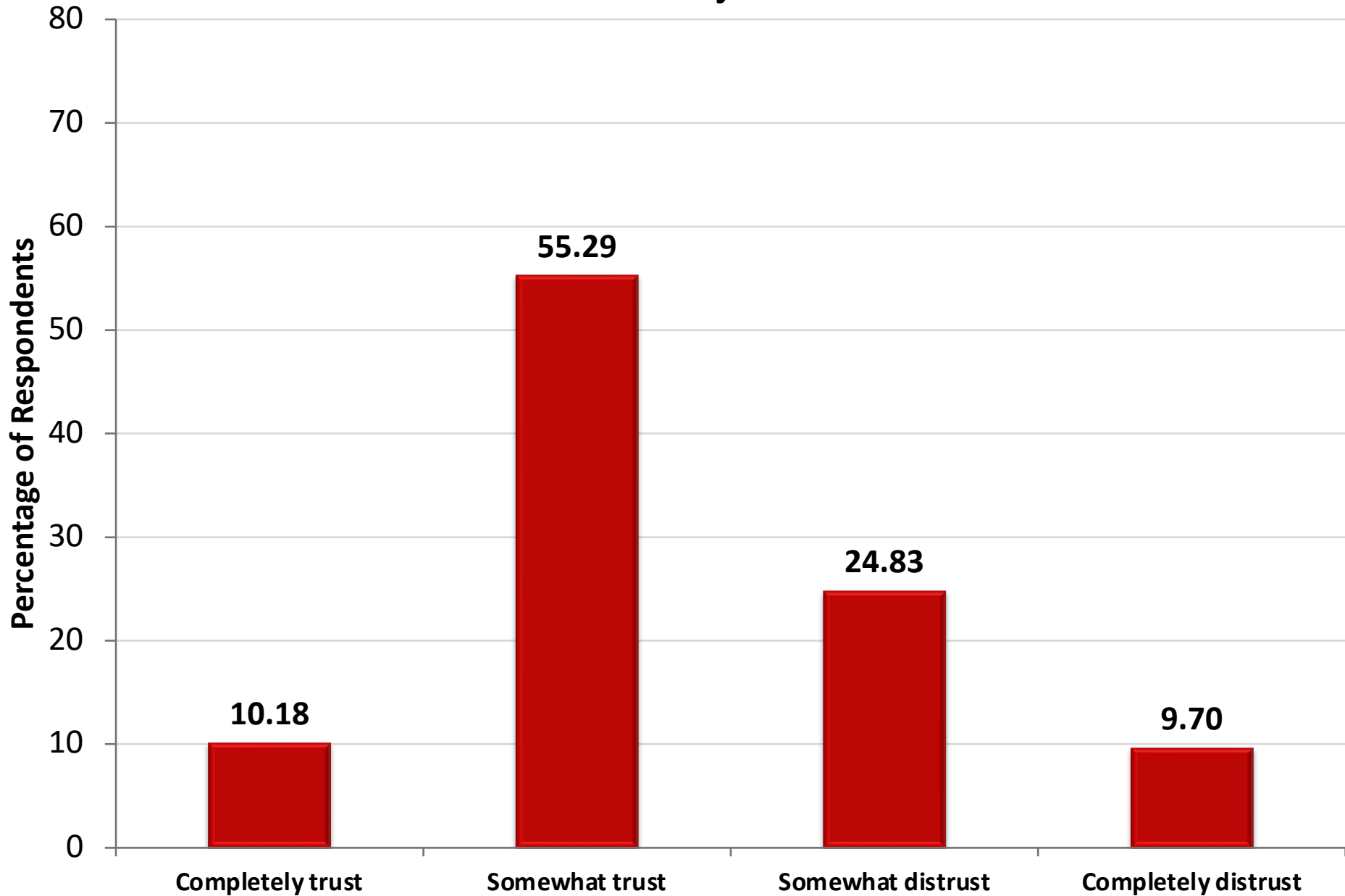
In general, how fair or unfair do you believe the criminal court system is in the United States?



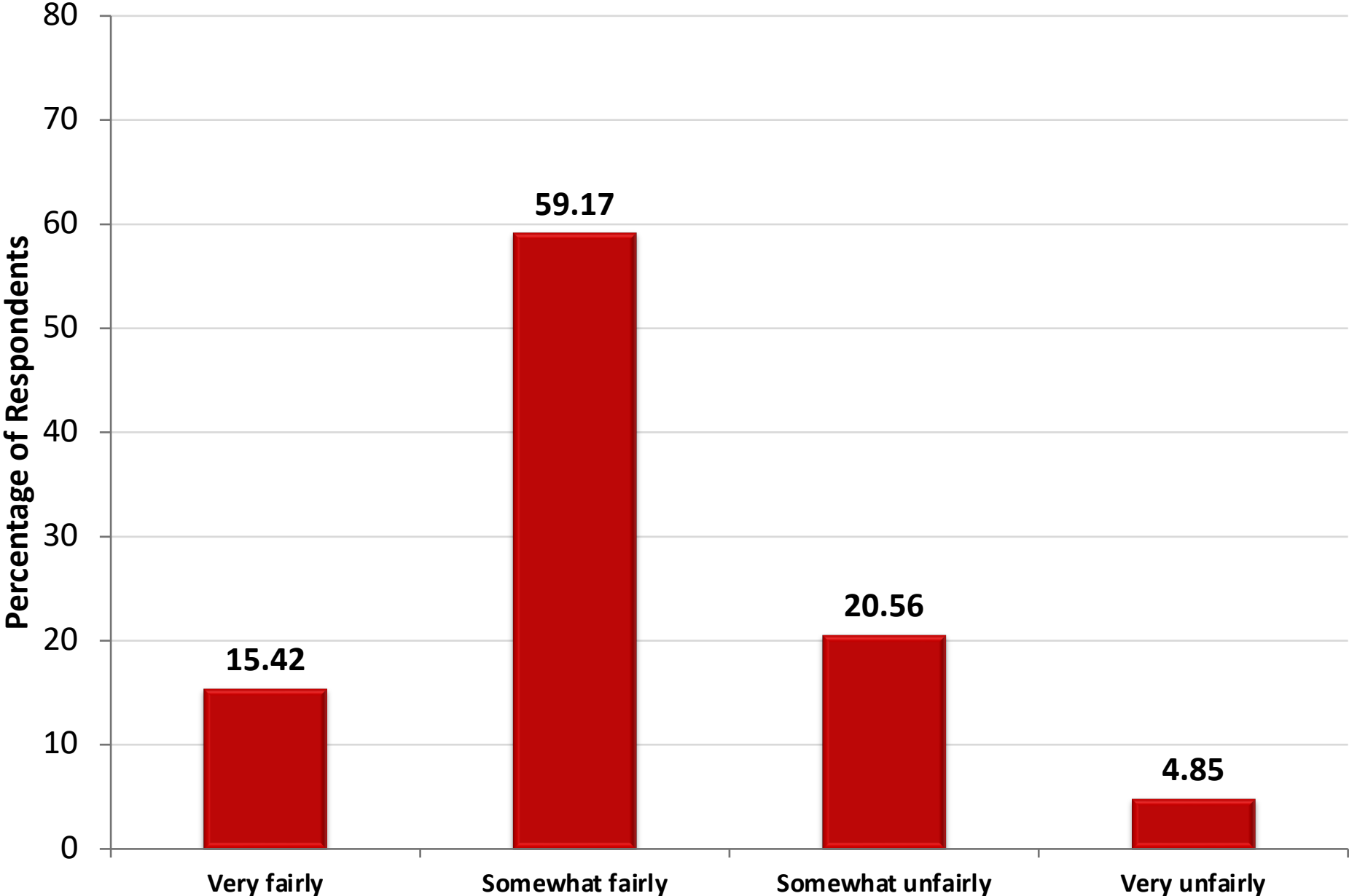
How biased or unbiased are the criminal courts in handling citizens of different races, religions, nationalities, genders, sexual orientation, or economic status?



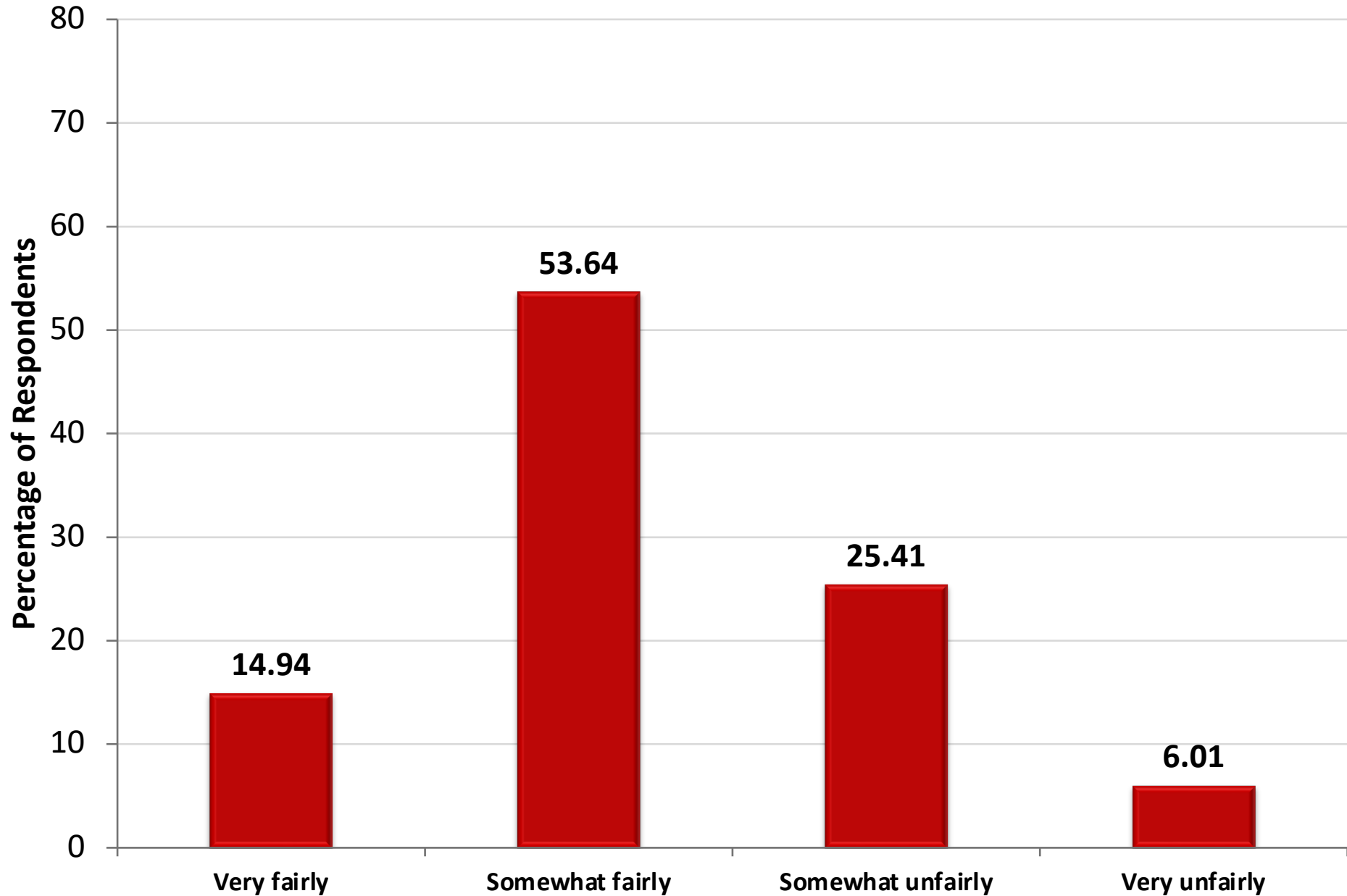
How much trust do you have in the criminal court system to deliver justice?



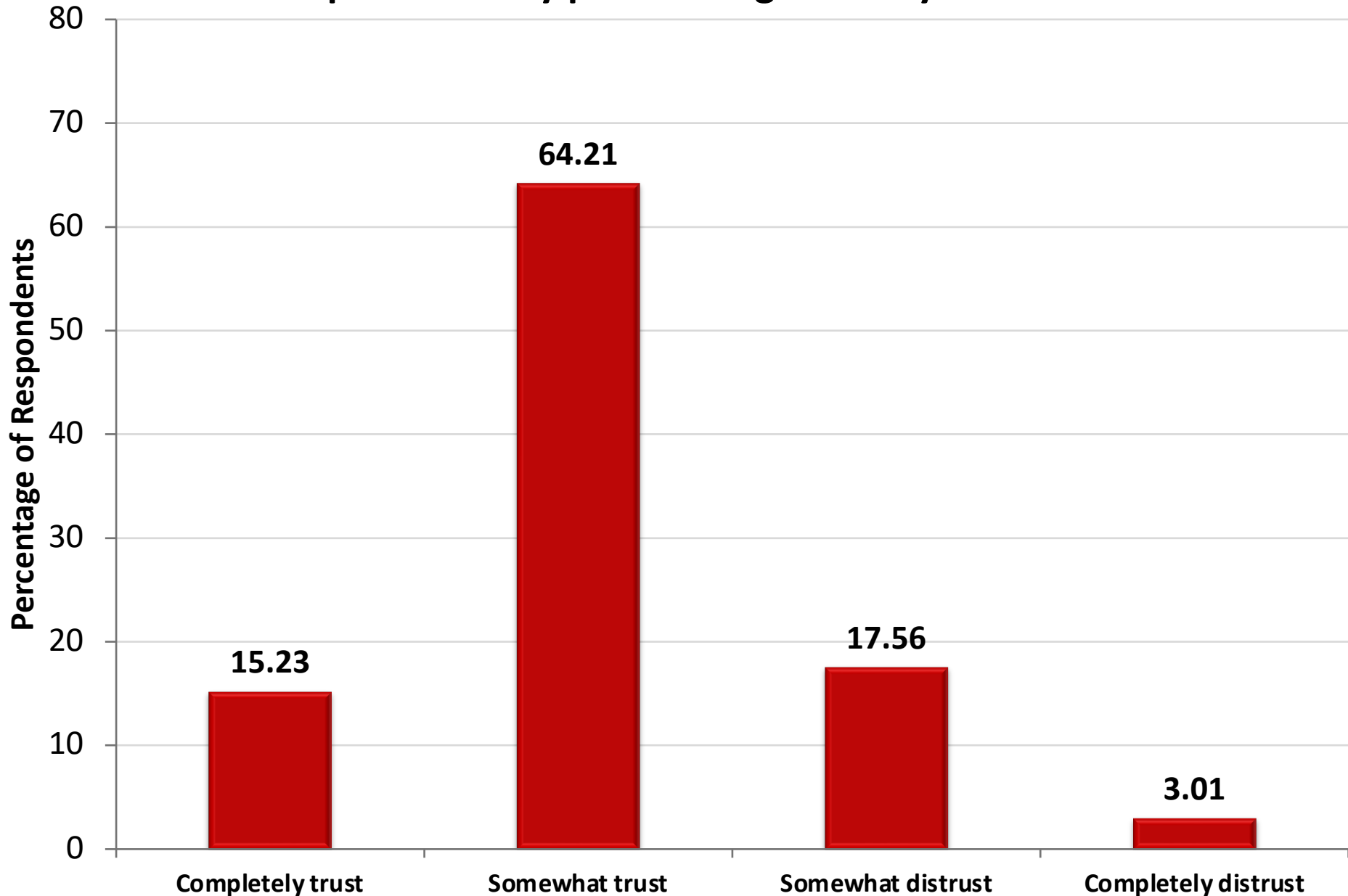
How fairly is the average defendant accused of crimes treated by the courts?



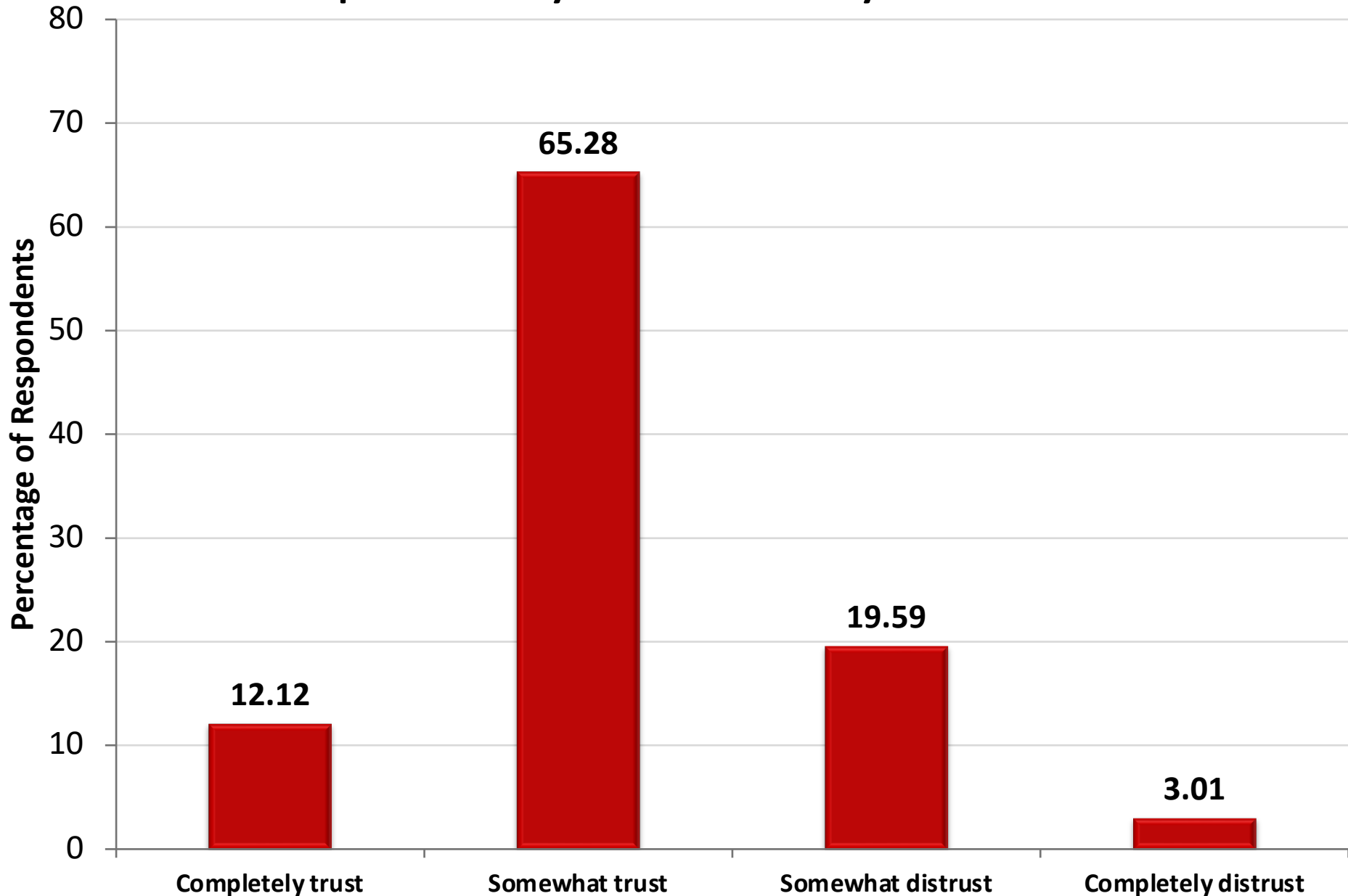
How fairly is the average victim of a crime treated by the courts?



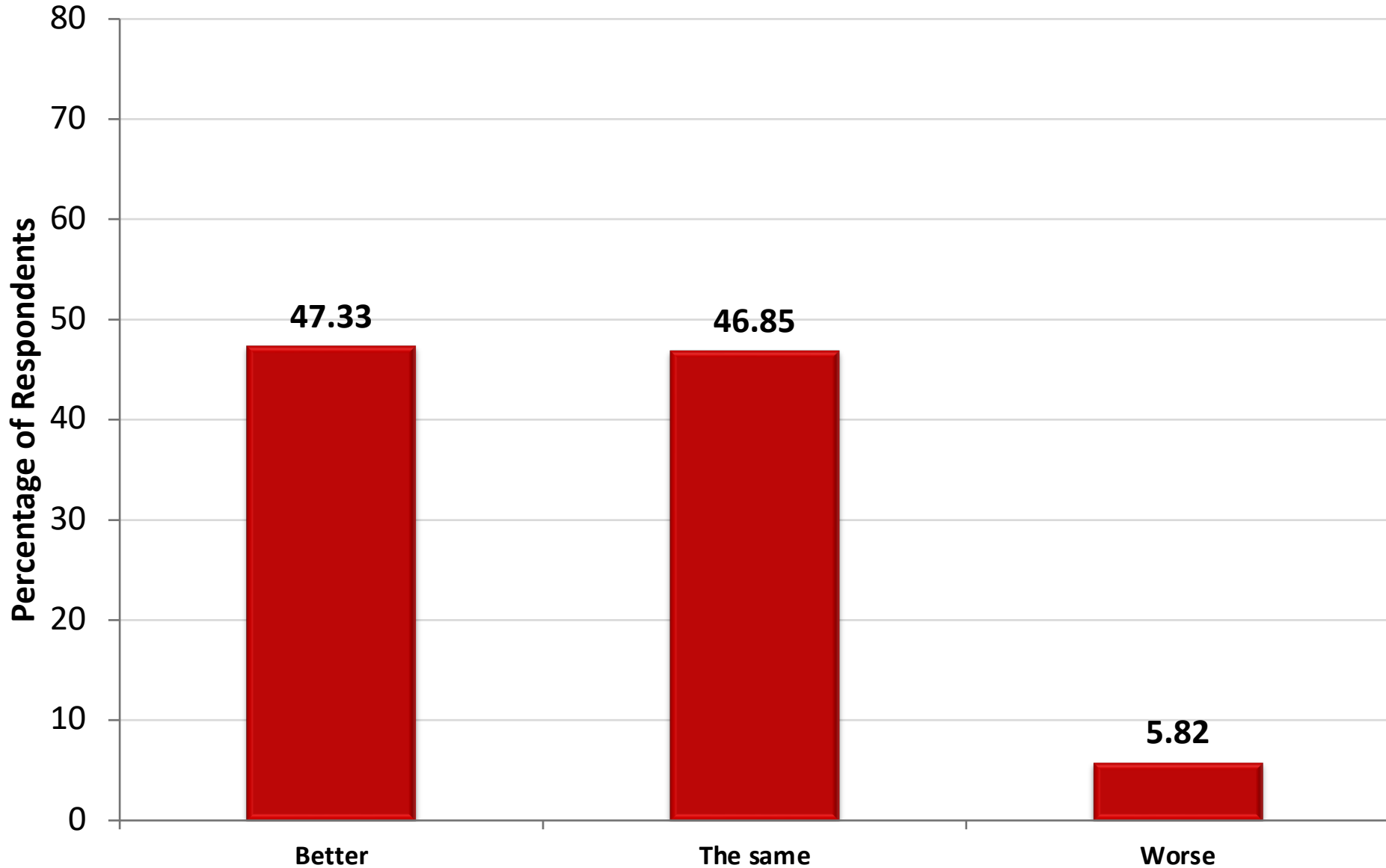
If you were a juror, how much would you trust the evidence that is presented by prosecuting attorneys in a criminal trial?



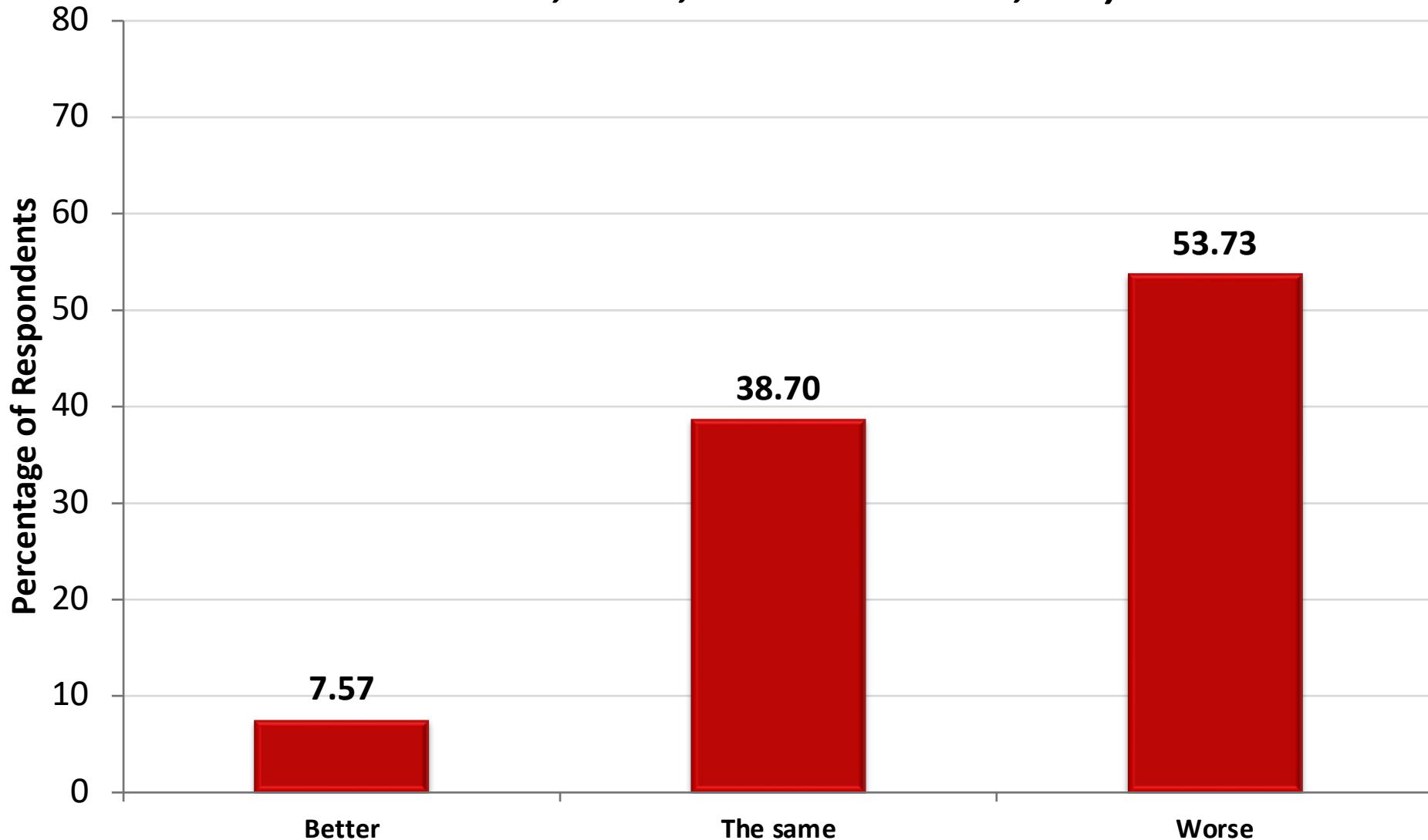
If you were a juror, how much would you trust the evidence that is presented by defense attorneys in a criminal trial?



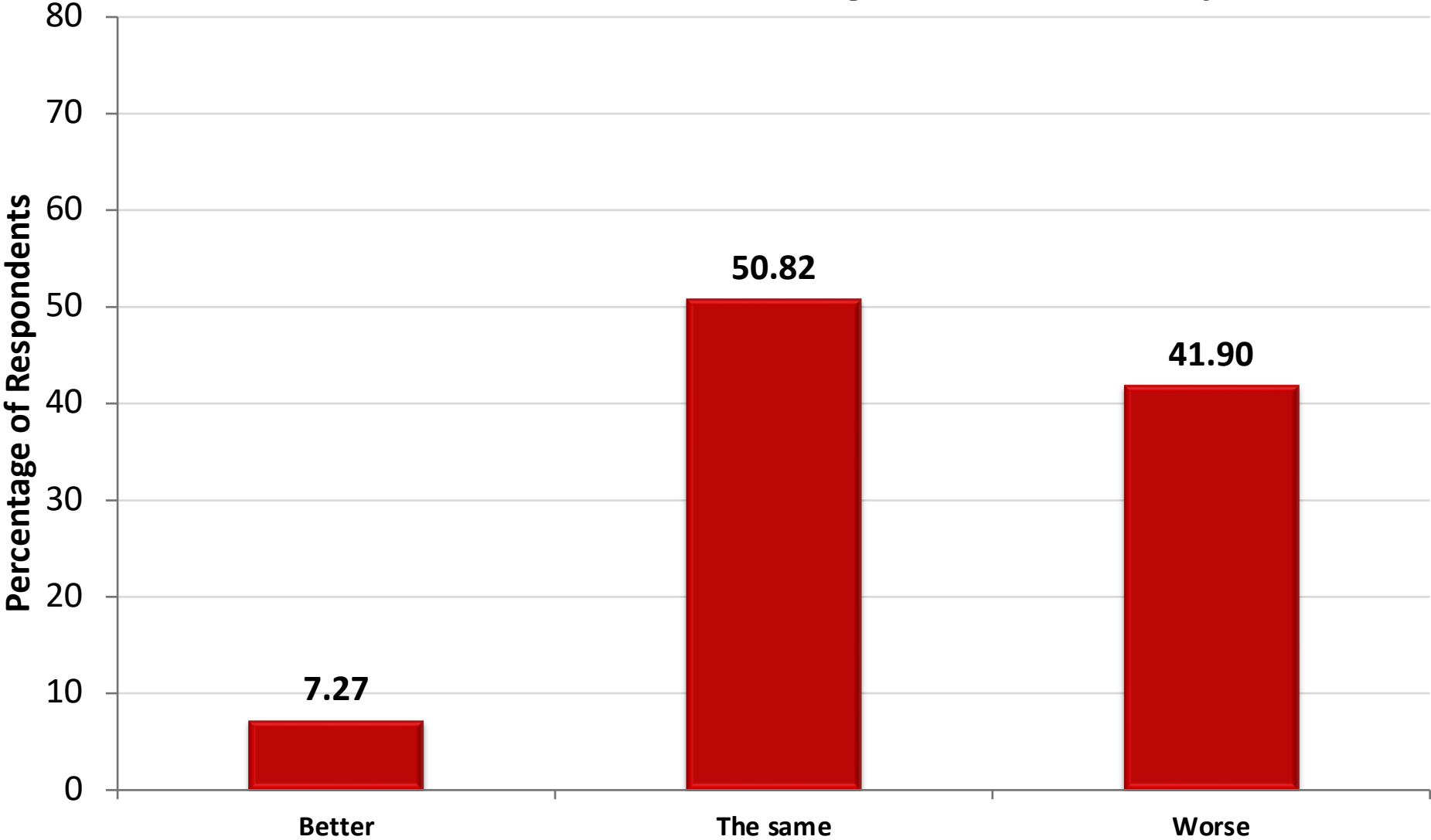
Regarding how the following groups are treated in the justice system, please indicate whether they are treated better, the same, or worse than an average citizen: *White people*



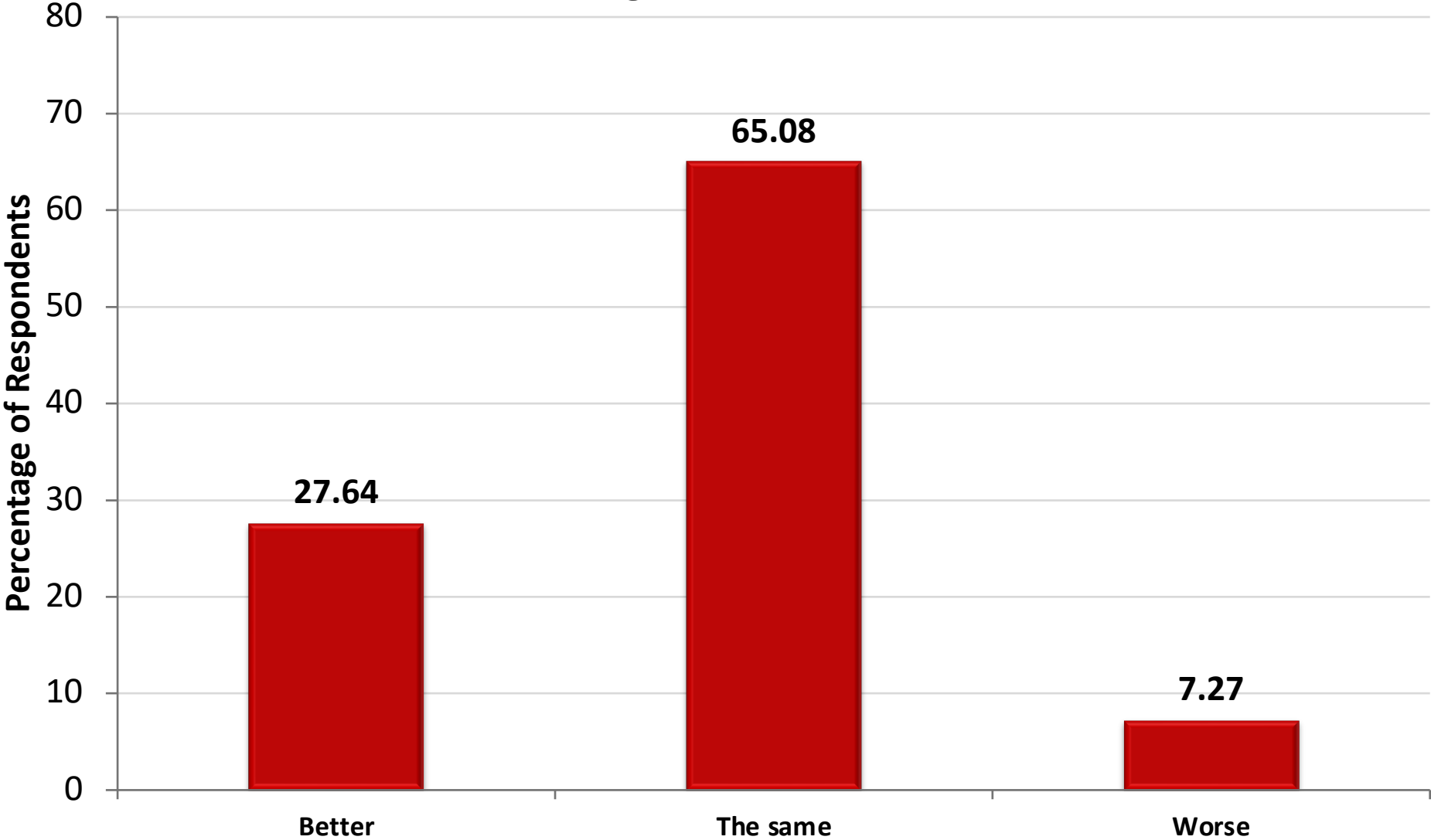
Regarding how the following groups are treated in the justice system, please indicate whether they are treated better, the same, or worse than an average citizen: *People of color (Black, Latinx, Asian, Native American, etc.)*



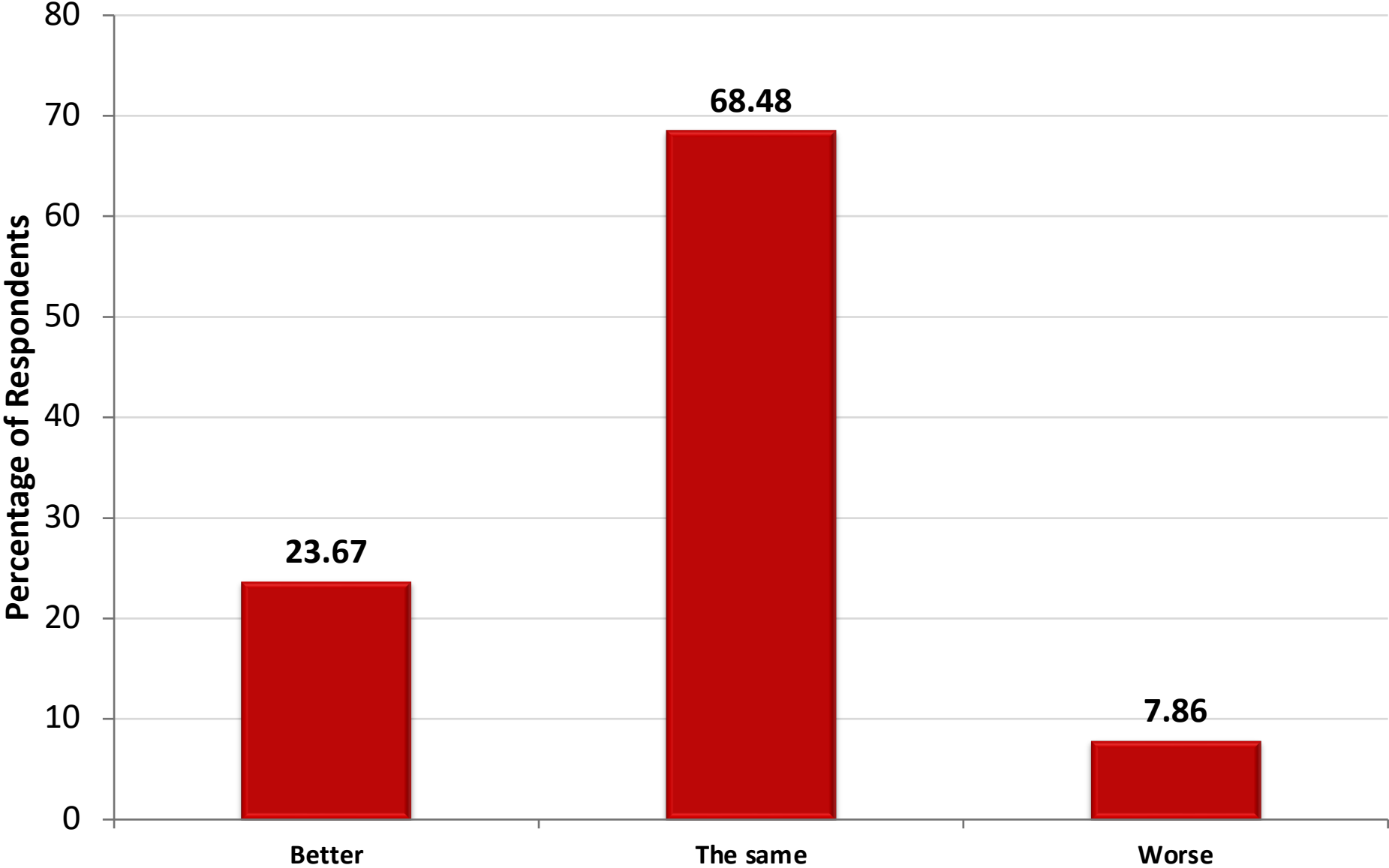
Regarding how the following groups are treated in the justice system, please indicate whether they are treated better, the same, or worse than an average citizen: *People who are homosexual / bisexual / transgender / non-binary*



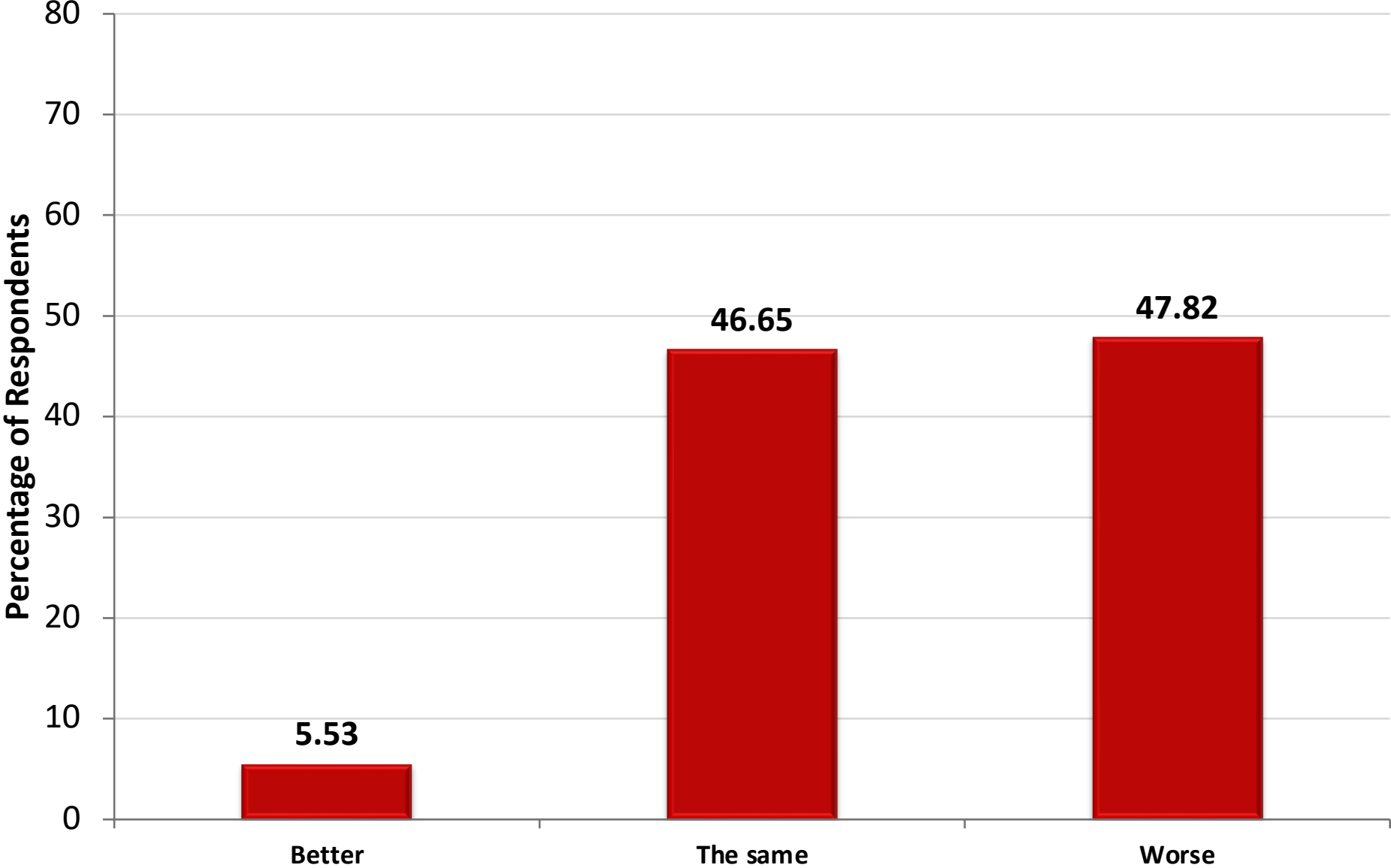
Regarding how the following groups are treated in the justice system, please indicate whether they are treated better, the same, or worse than an average citizen: *People who are straight / heterosexual*



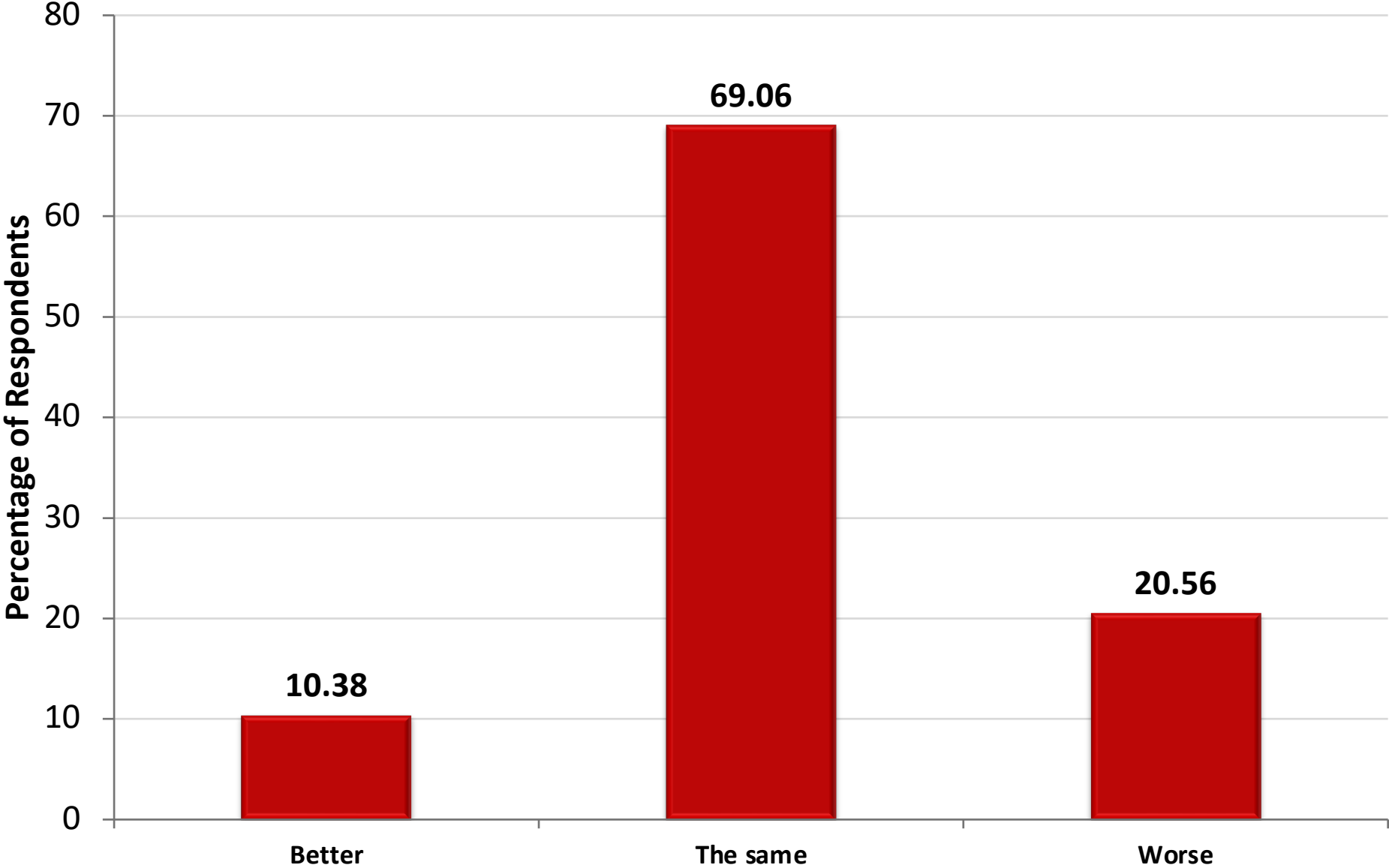
Regarding how the following groups are treated in the justice system, please indicate whether they are treated better, the same, or worse than an average citizen: *Christians*



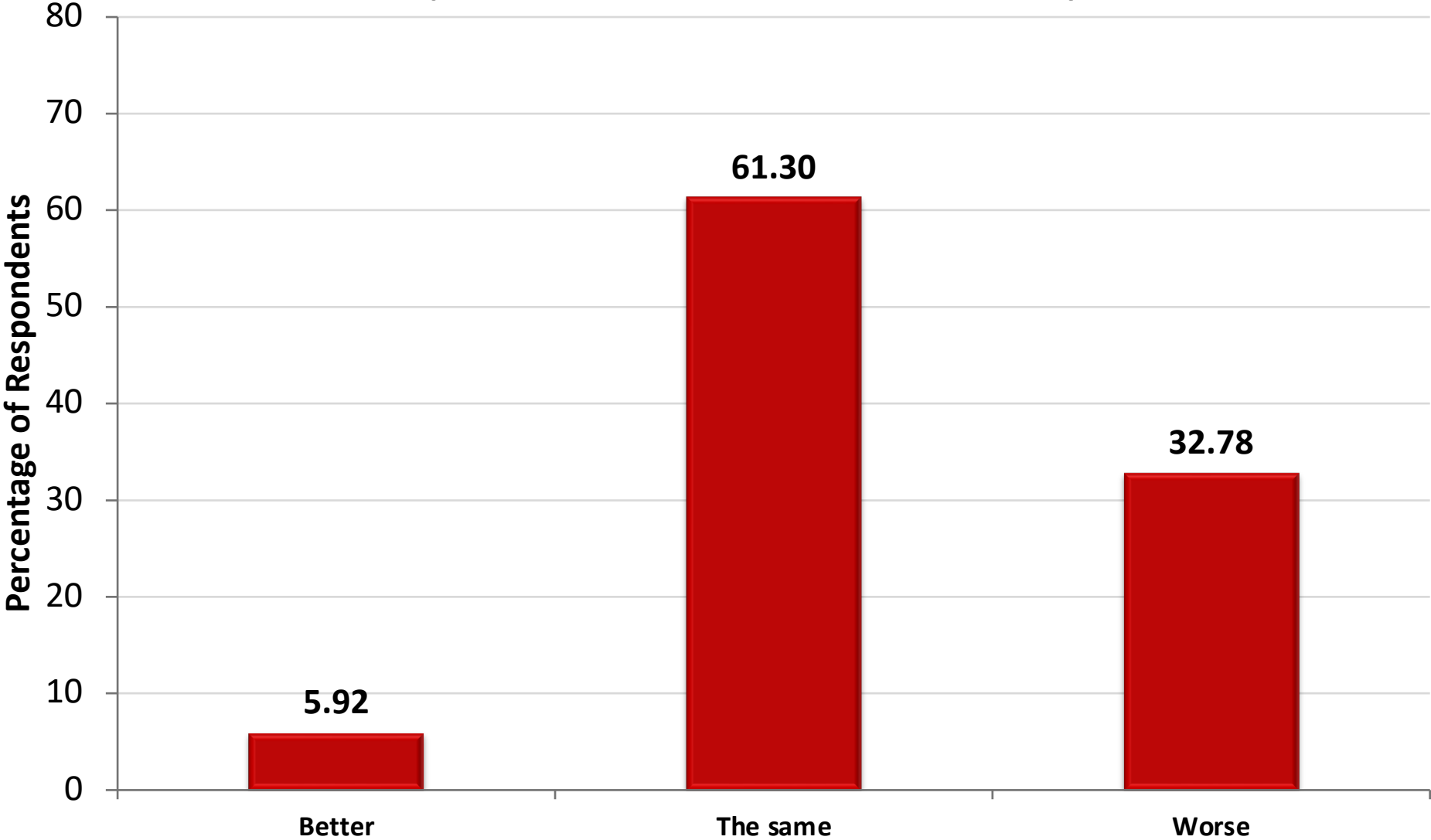
Regarding how the following groups are treated in the justice system, please indicate whether they are treated better, the same, or worse than an average citizen: *Muslims*



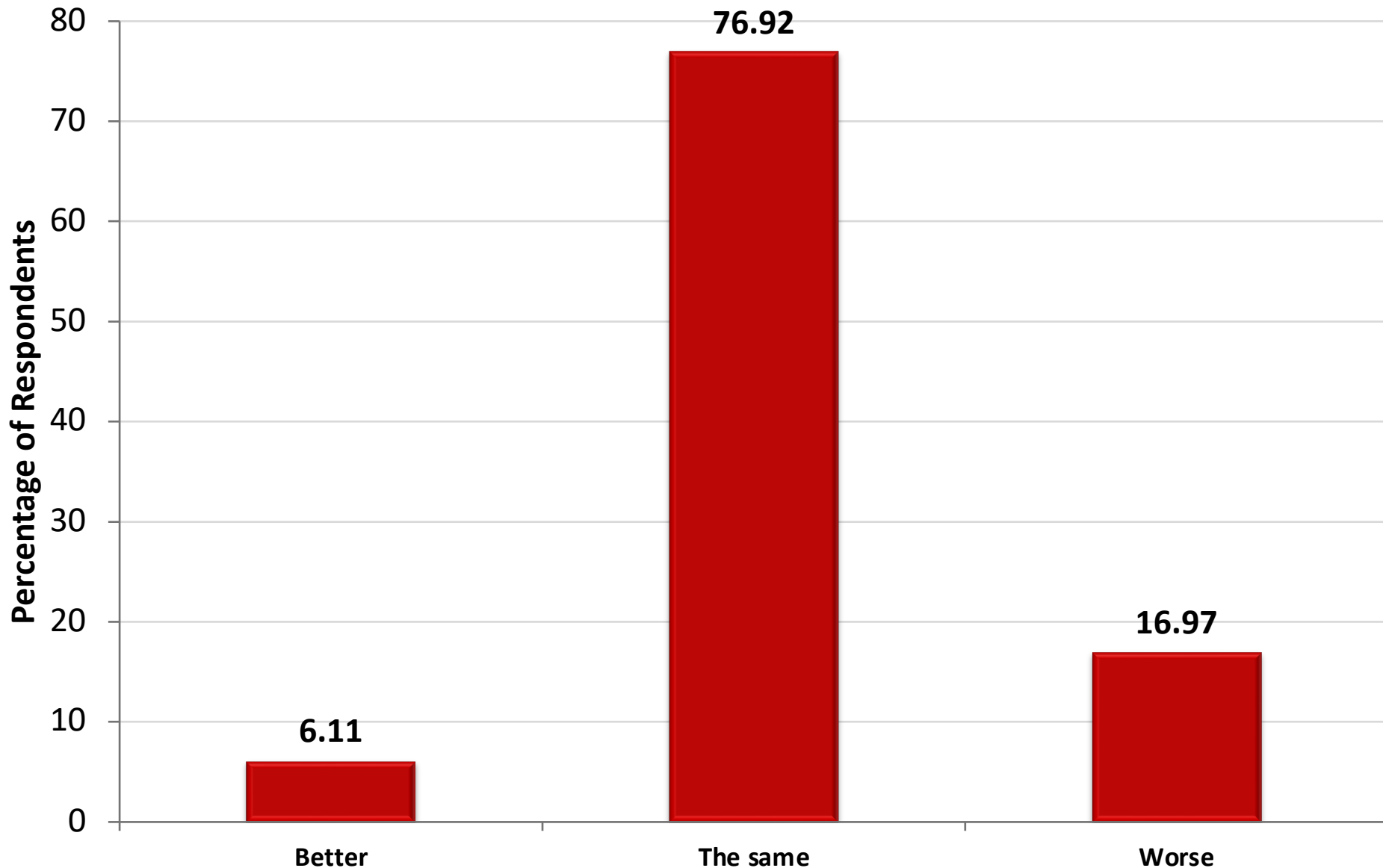
Regarding how the following groups are treated in the justice system, please indicate whether they are treated better, the same, or worse than an average citizen: *Jewish people*



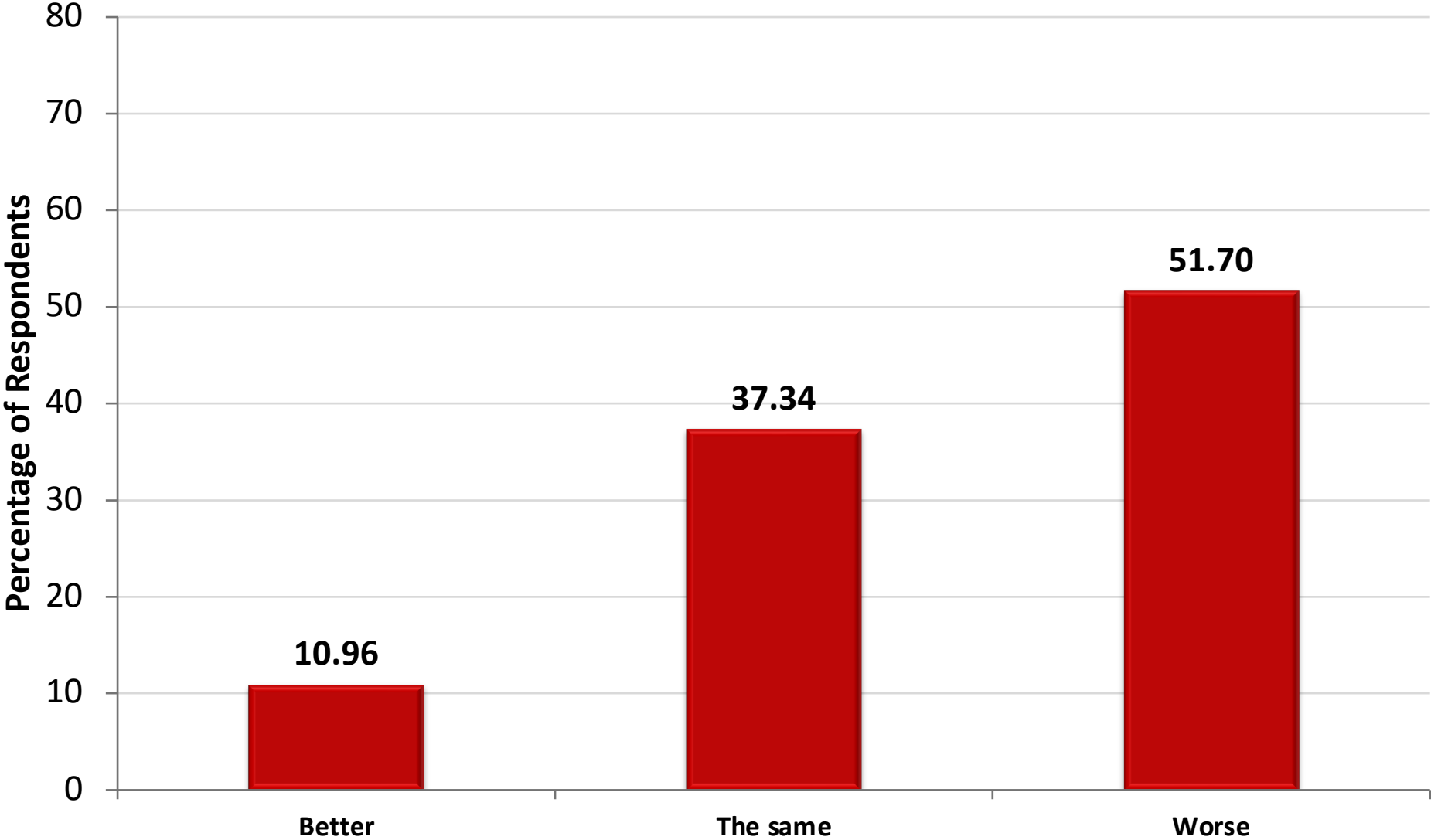
Regarding how the following groups are treated in the justice system, please indicate whether they are treated better, the same, or worse than an average citizen: *Other religions (Mormons, Hindus, Buddhists, etc.)*



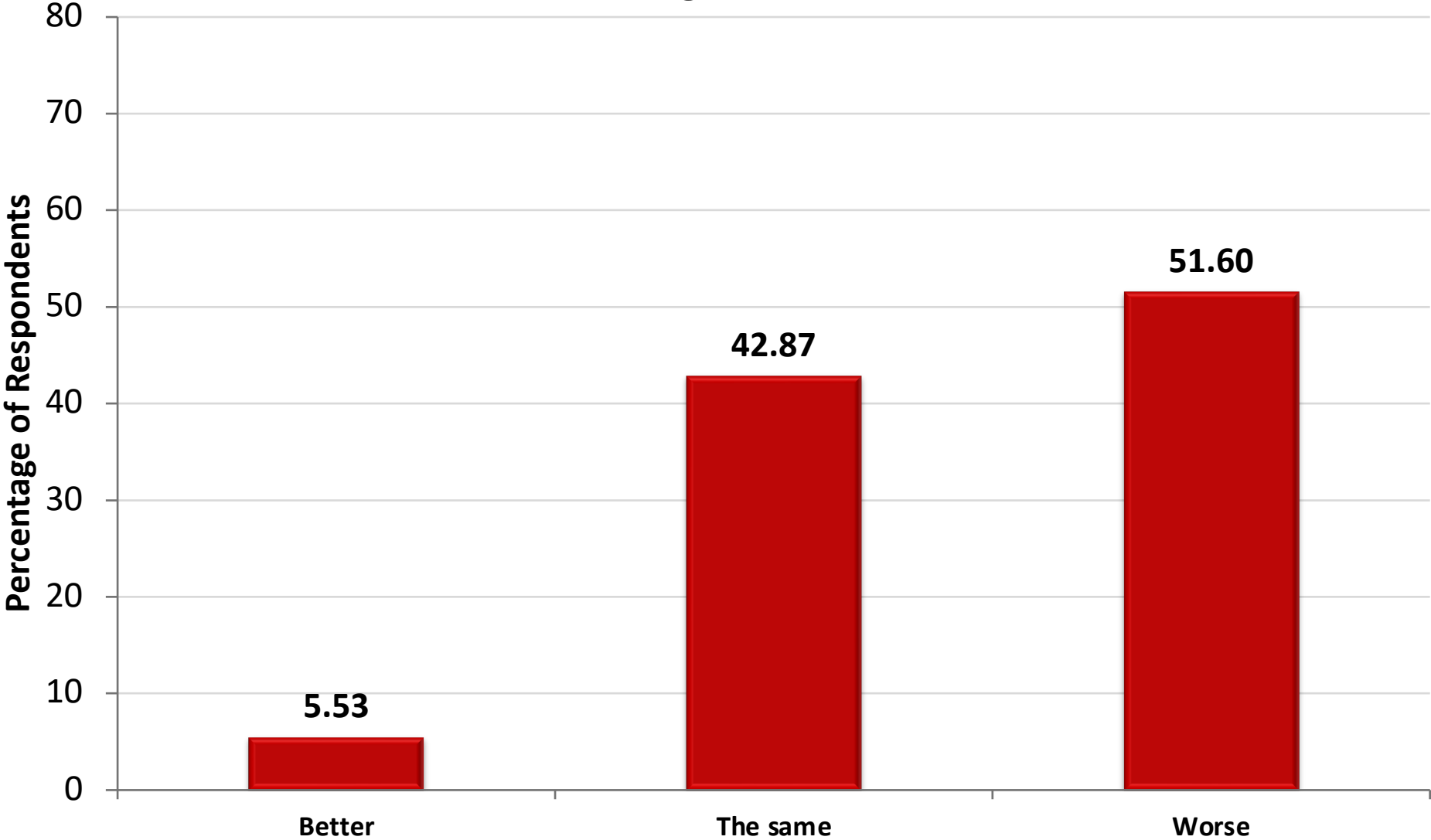
Regarding how the following groups are treated in the justice system, please indicate whether they are treated better, the same, or worse than an average citizen: *Atheists*



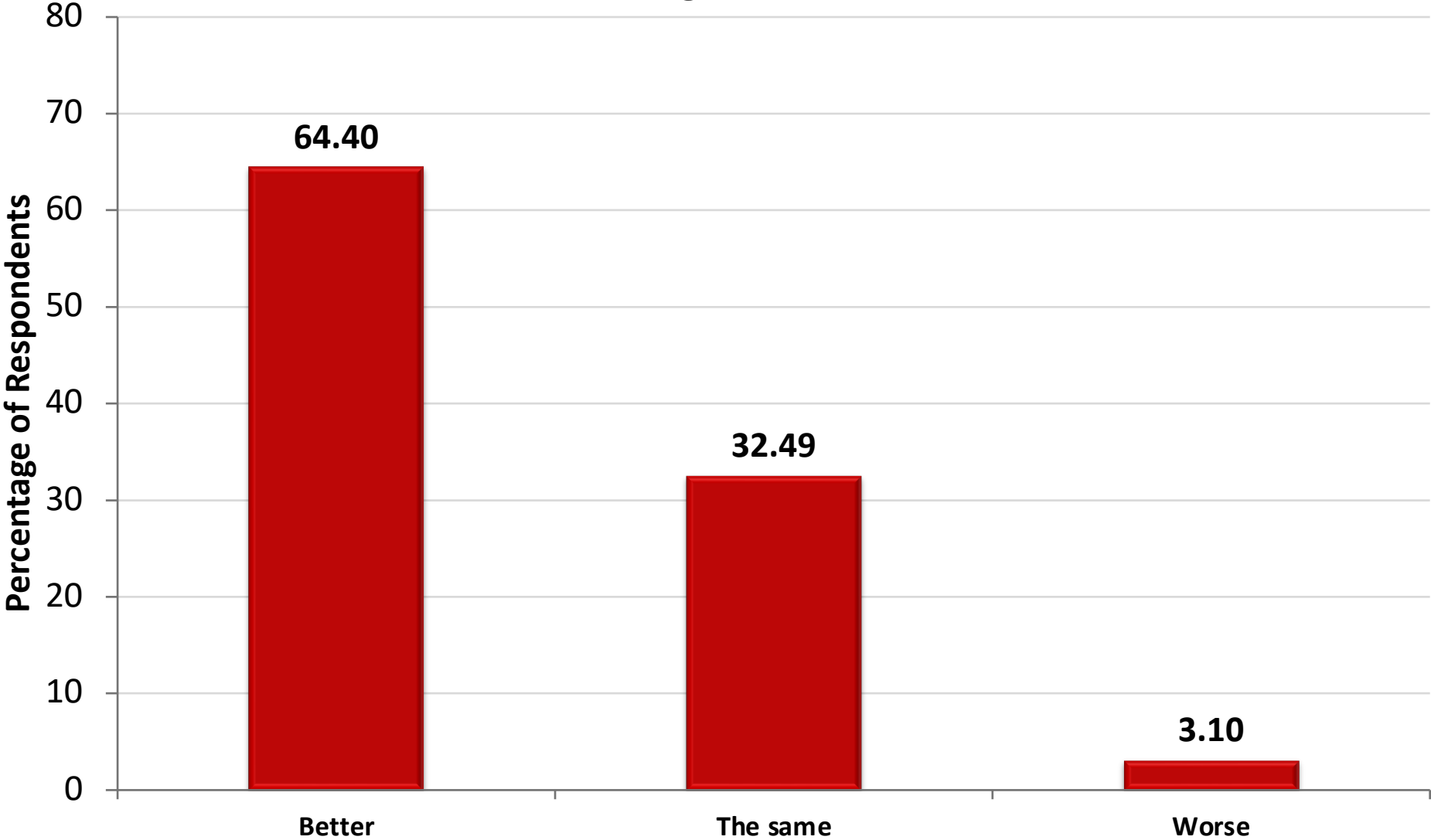
Regarding how the following groups are treated in the justice system, please indicate whether they are treated better, the same, or worse than an average citizen: *People who are not U.S. citizens*



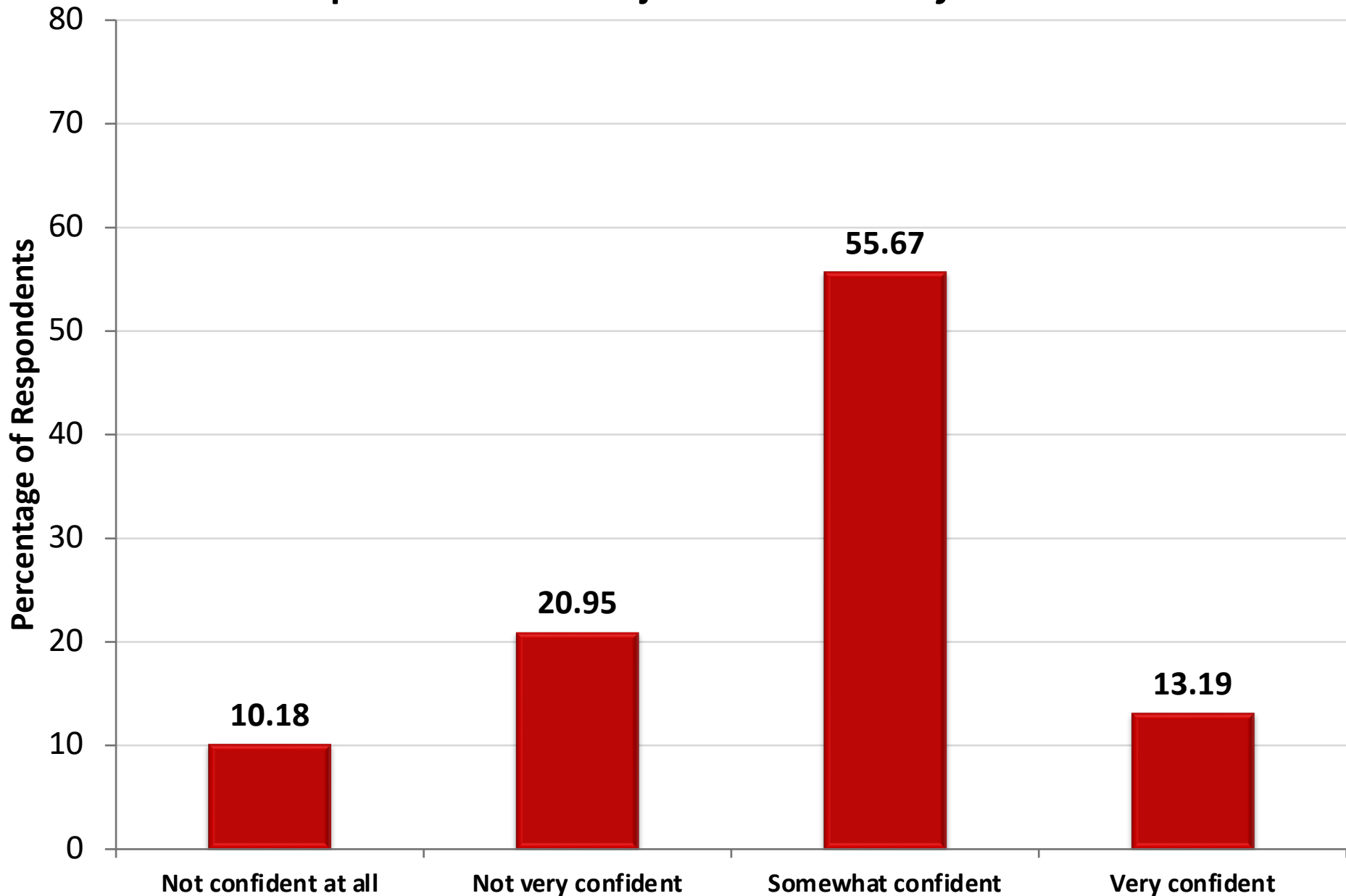
Regarding how the following groups are treated in the justice system, please indicate whether they are treated better, the same, or worse than an average citizen: *People with lower-than-average economic status*



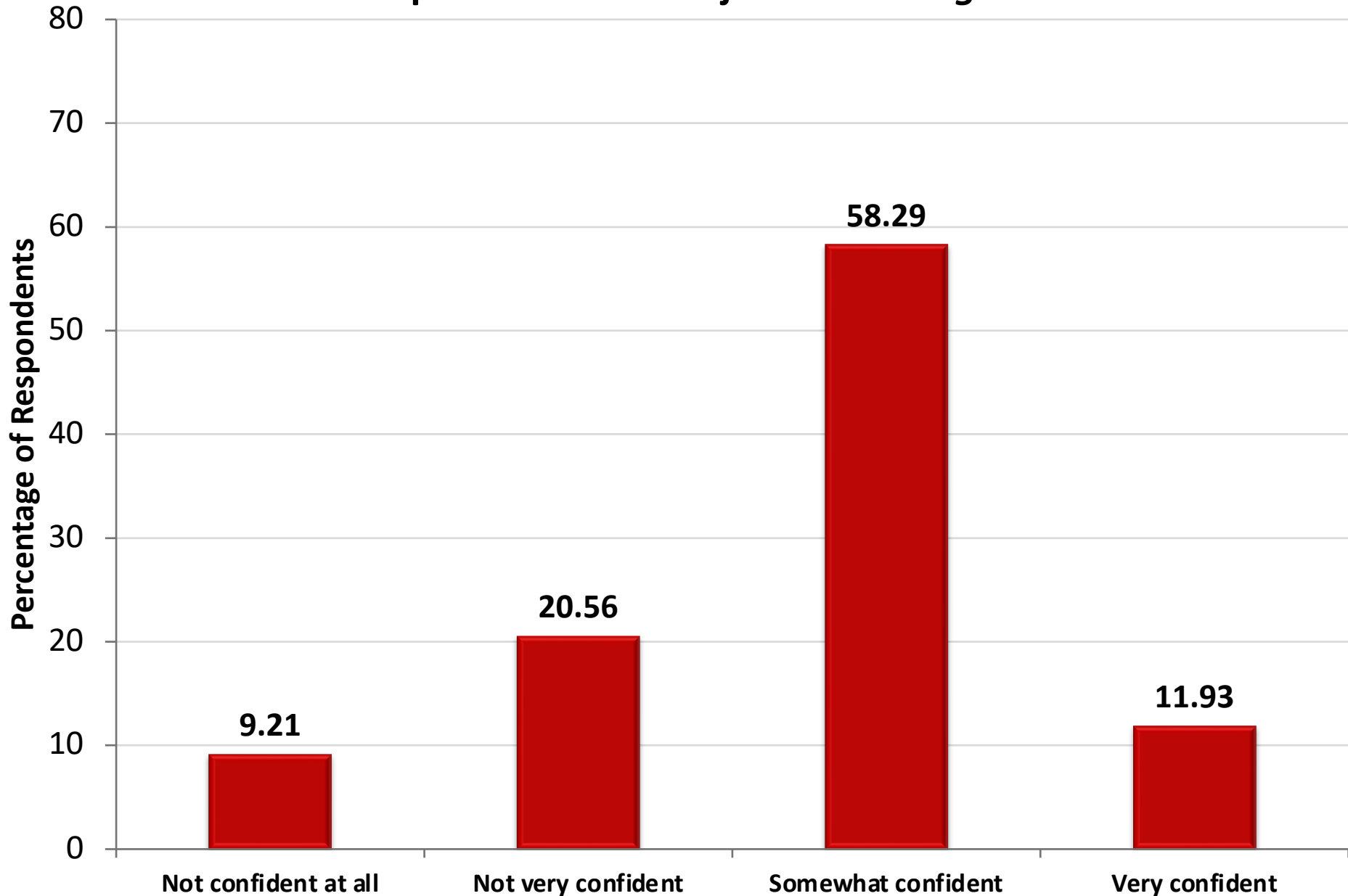
Regarding how the following groups are treated in the justice system, please indicate whether they are treated better, the same, or worse than an average citizen: *People with higher-than-average economic status*



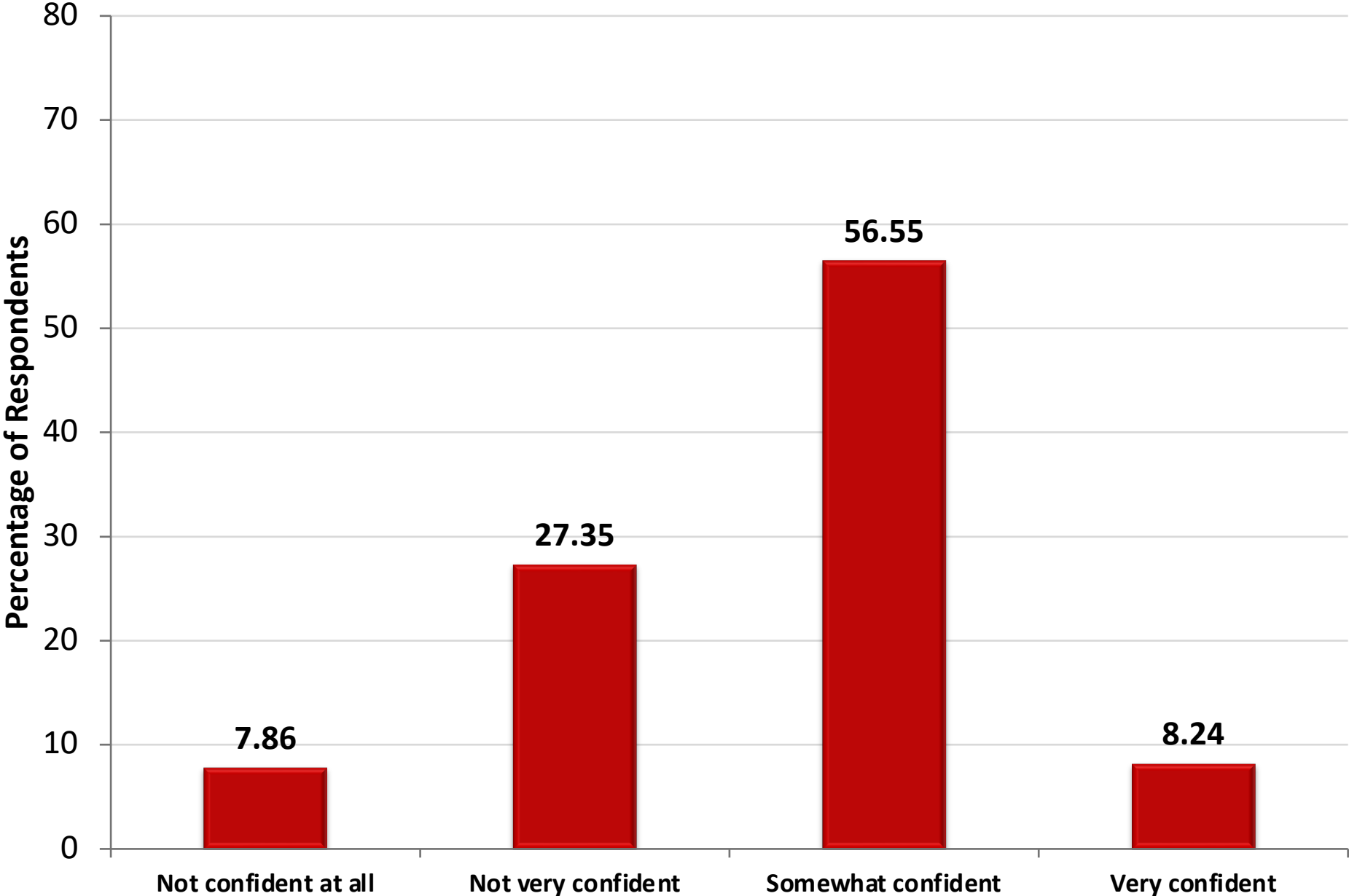
How much confidence do you have in each of the following parties to deliver justice? – *Law enforcement*



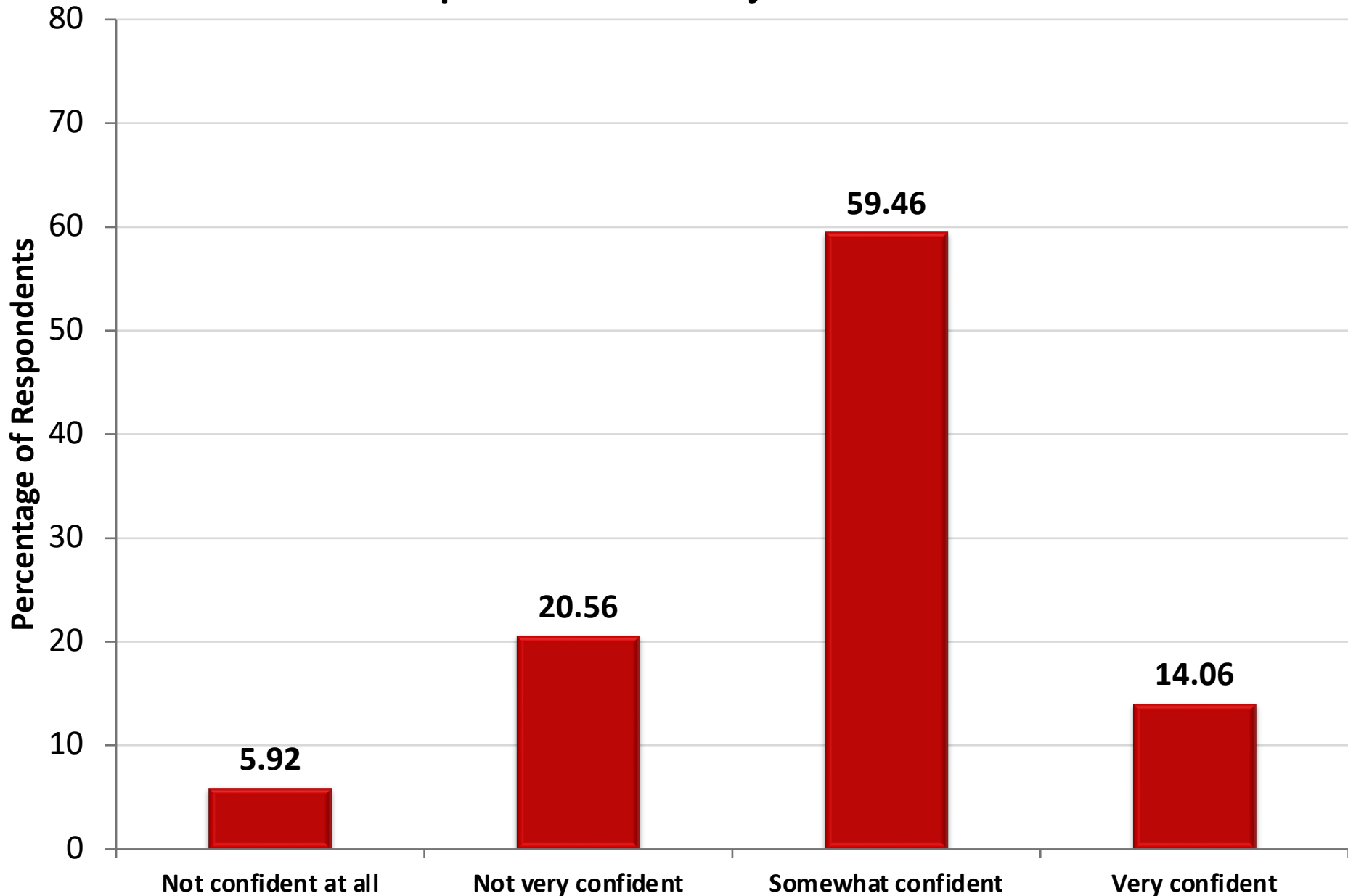
How much confidence do you have in each of the following parties to deliver justice? – *Judges*



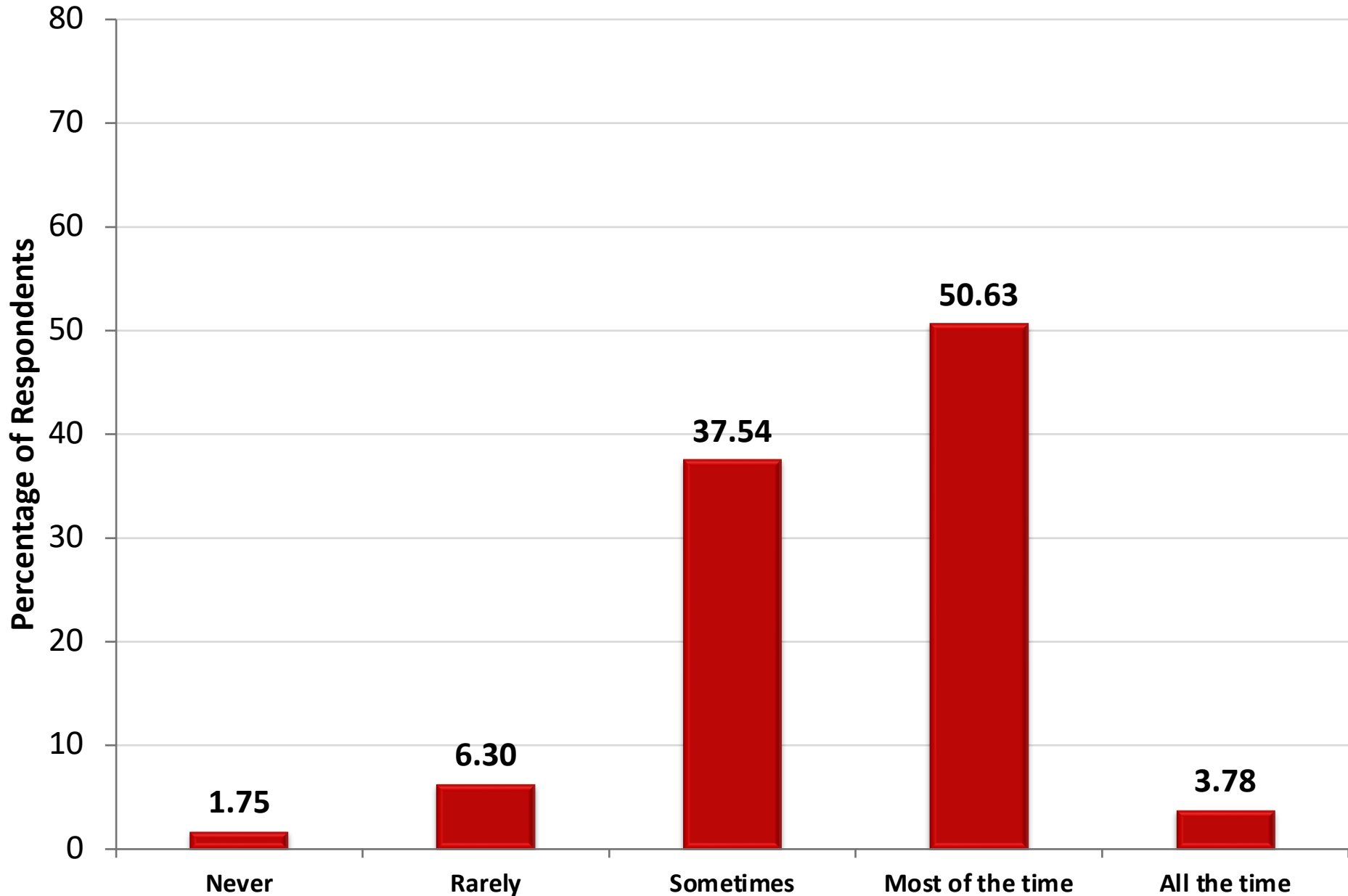
How much confidence do you have in each of the following parties to deliver justice? – *Lawyers*



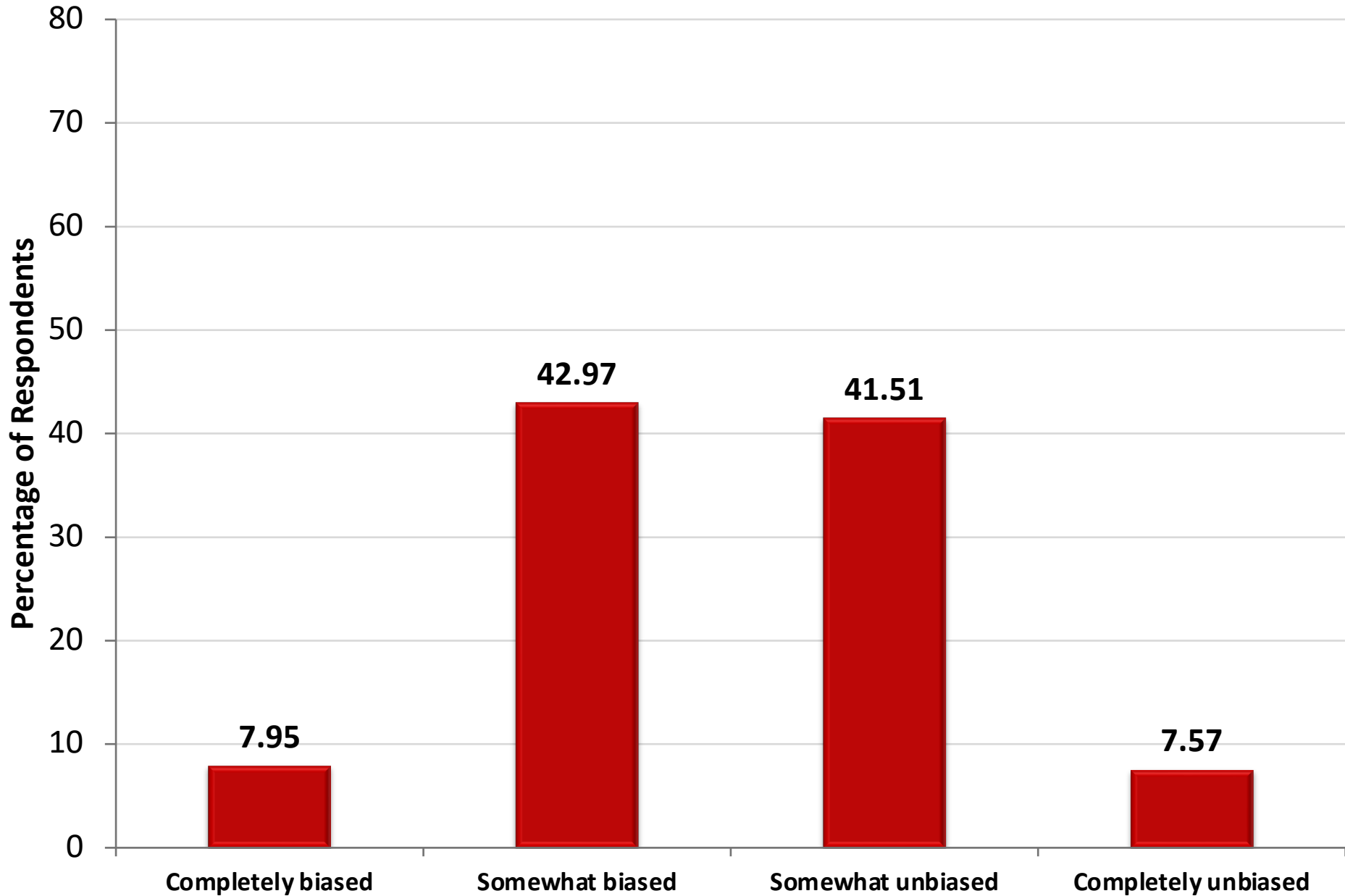
How much confidence do you have in each of the following parties to deliver justice? – *Juries*



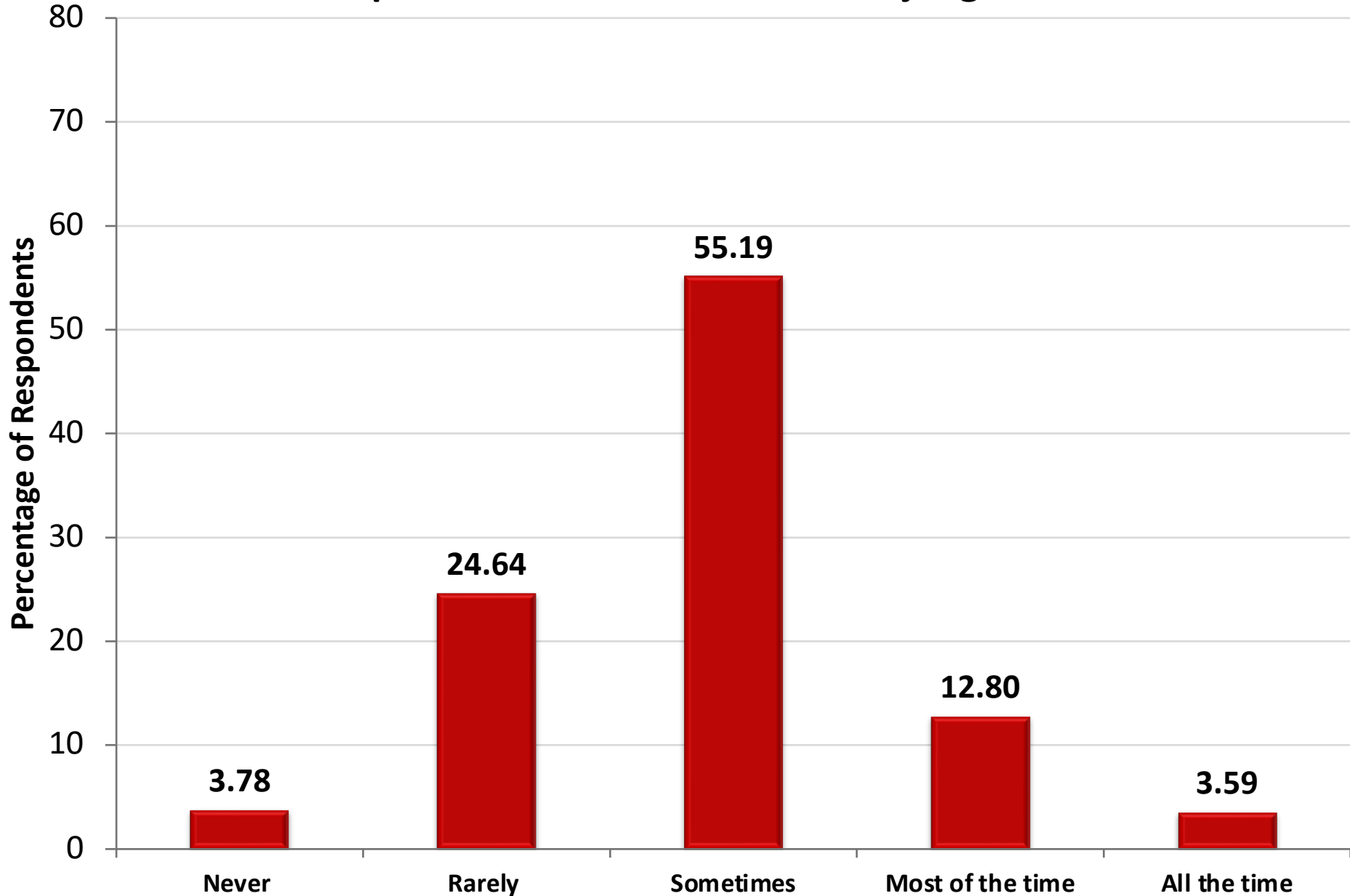
How often, if at all, do you believe juries deliver fair and reasonable verdicts?



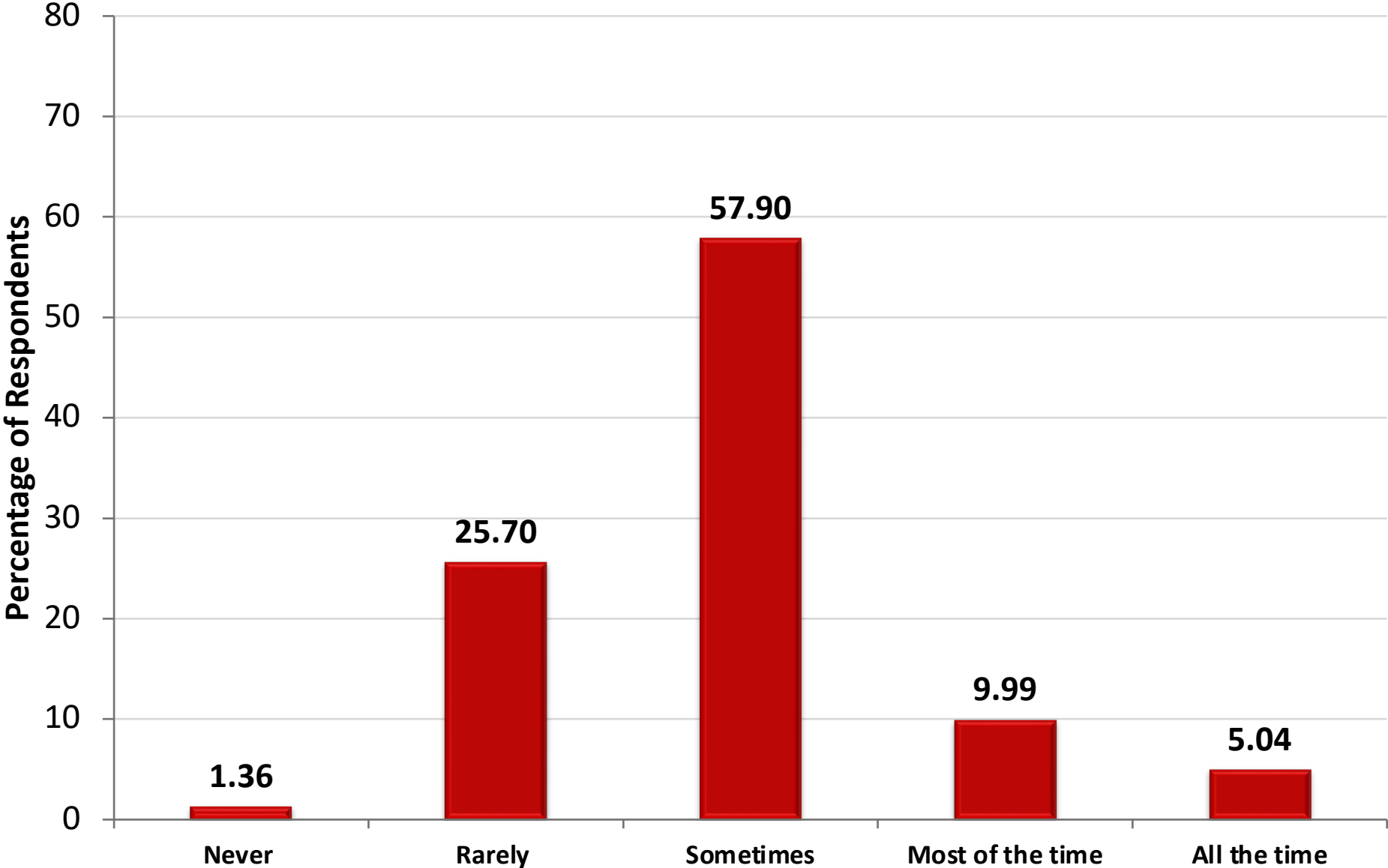
How biased or unbiased do you think judges are in making decisions on cases?



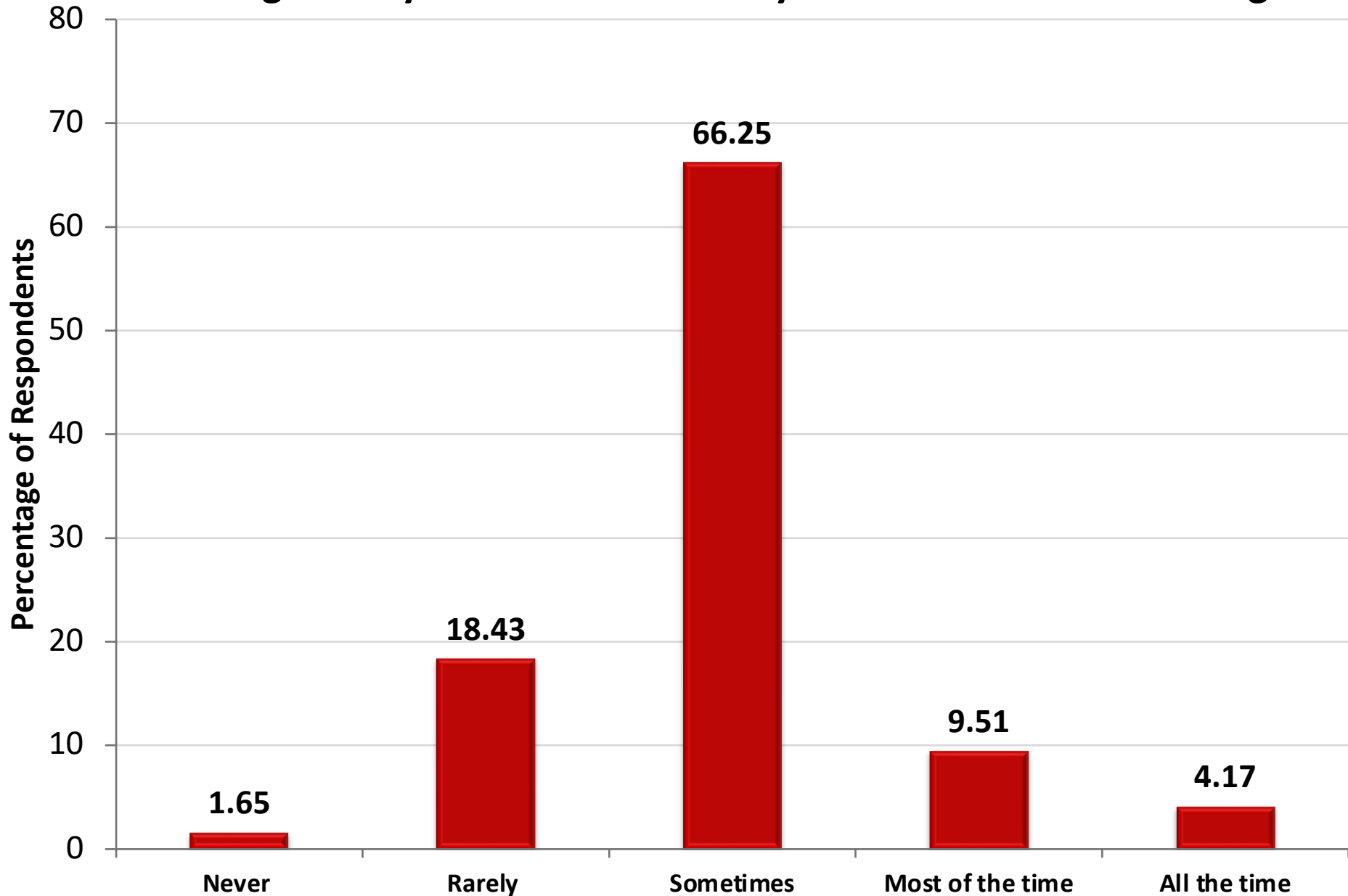
How often, if at all, do you believe judges allow their personal biases or politics to interfere with their judgment on cases?



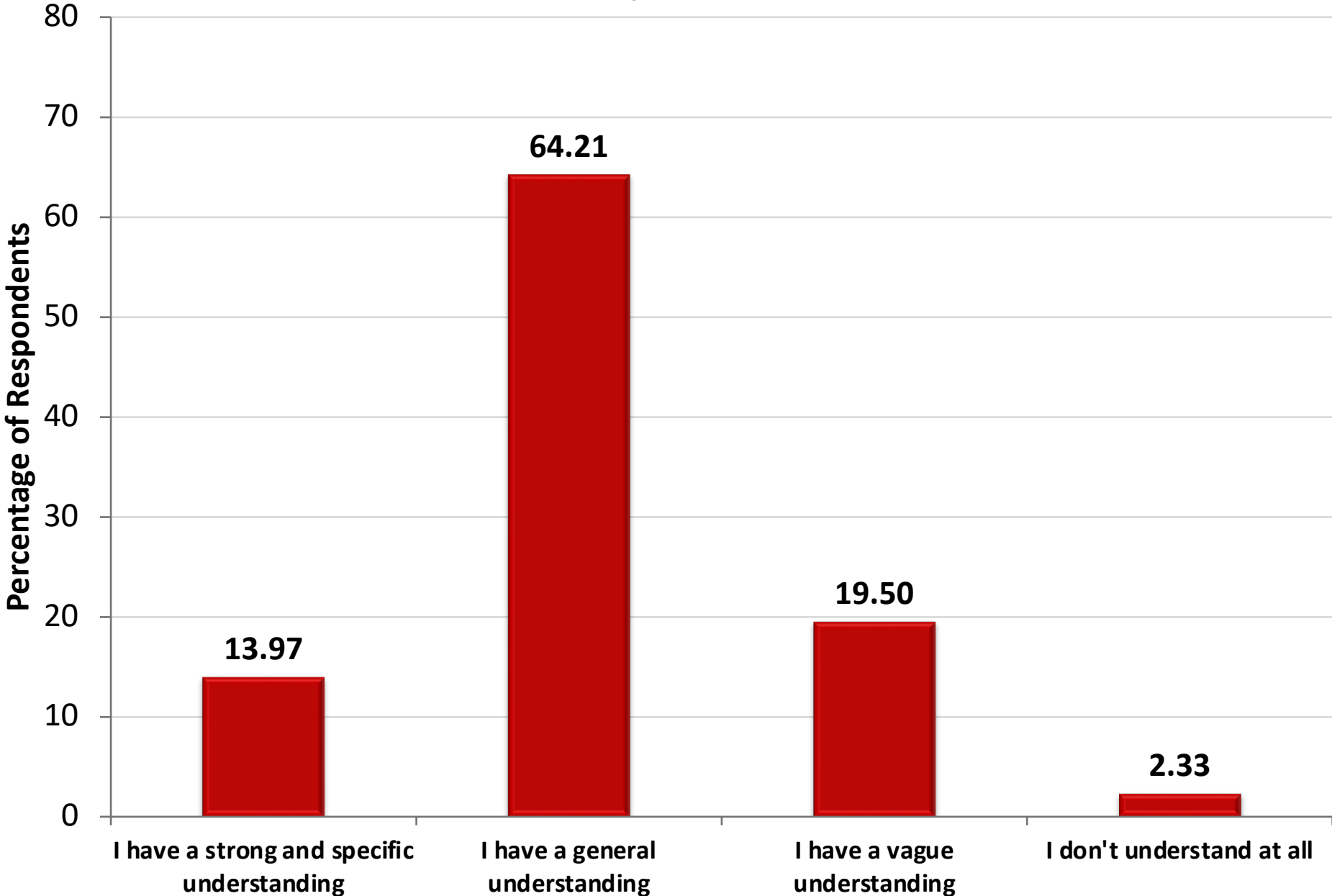
How often, if at all, do you believe innocent people plead guilty or are convicted and sent to jail for crimes they did not commit?



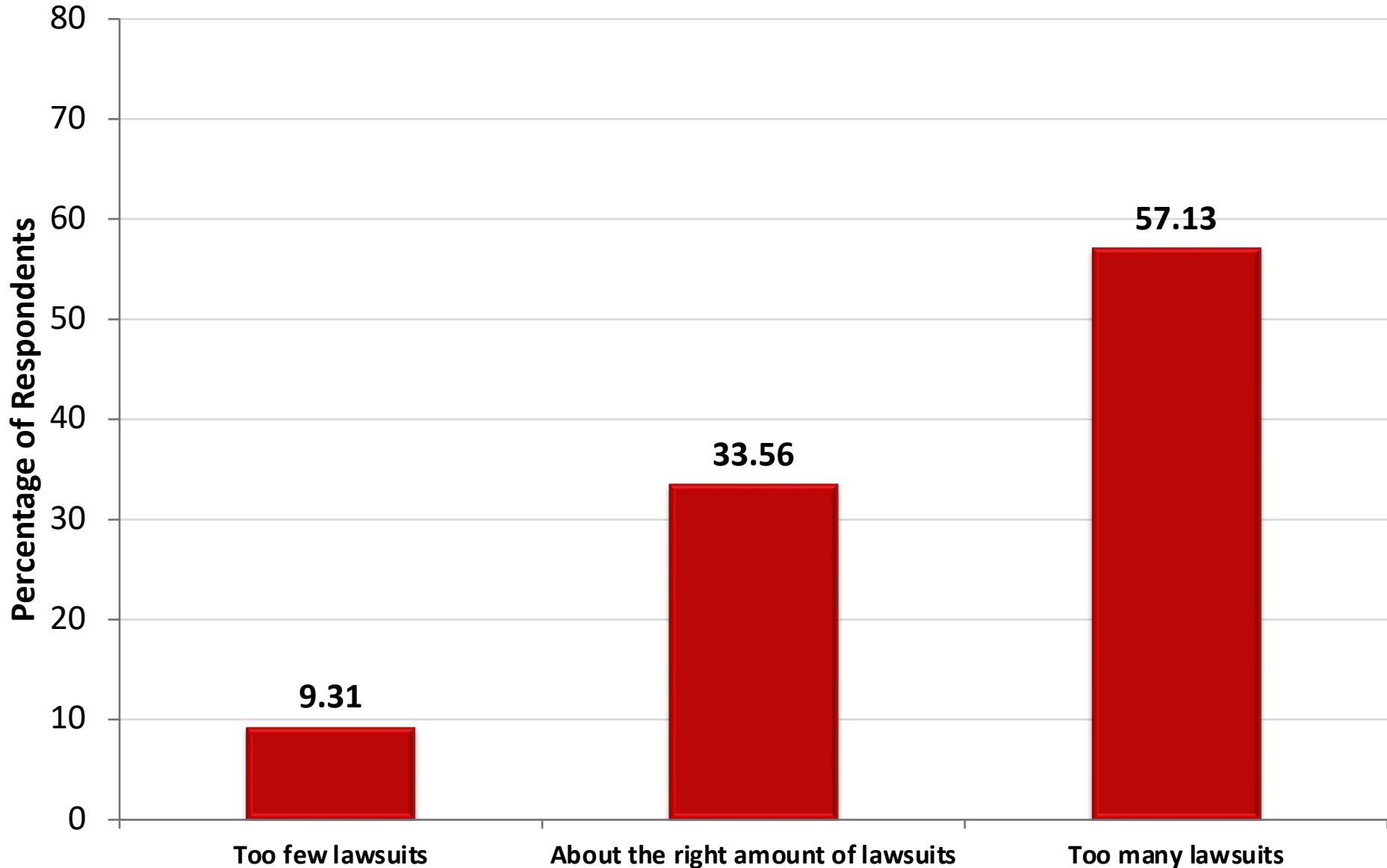
How often, if at all, do you believe guilty people are acquitted and get away with the crimes they are accused of committing?



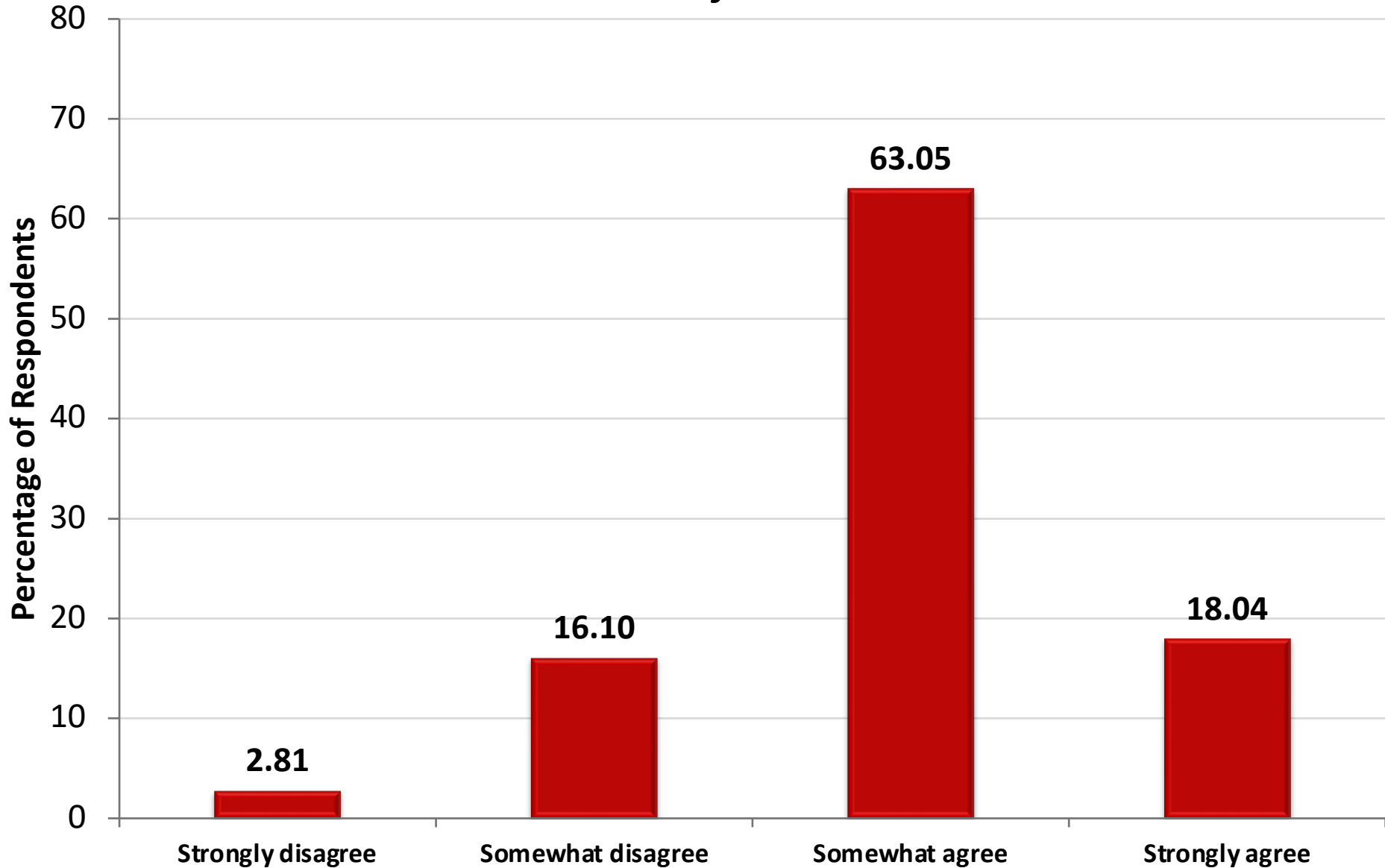
How well do you think you understand how the criminal justice system works?



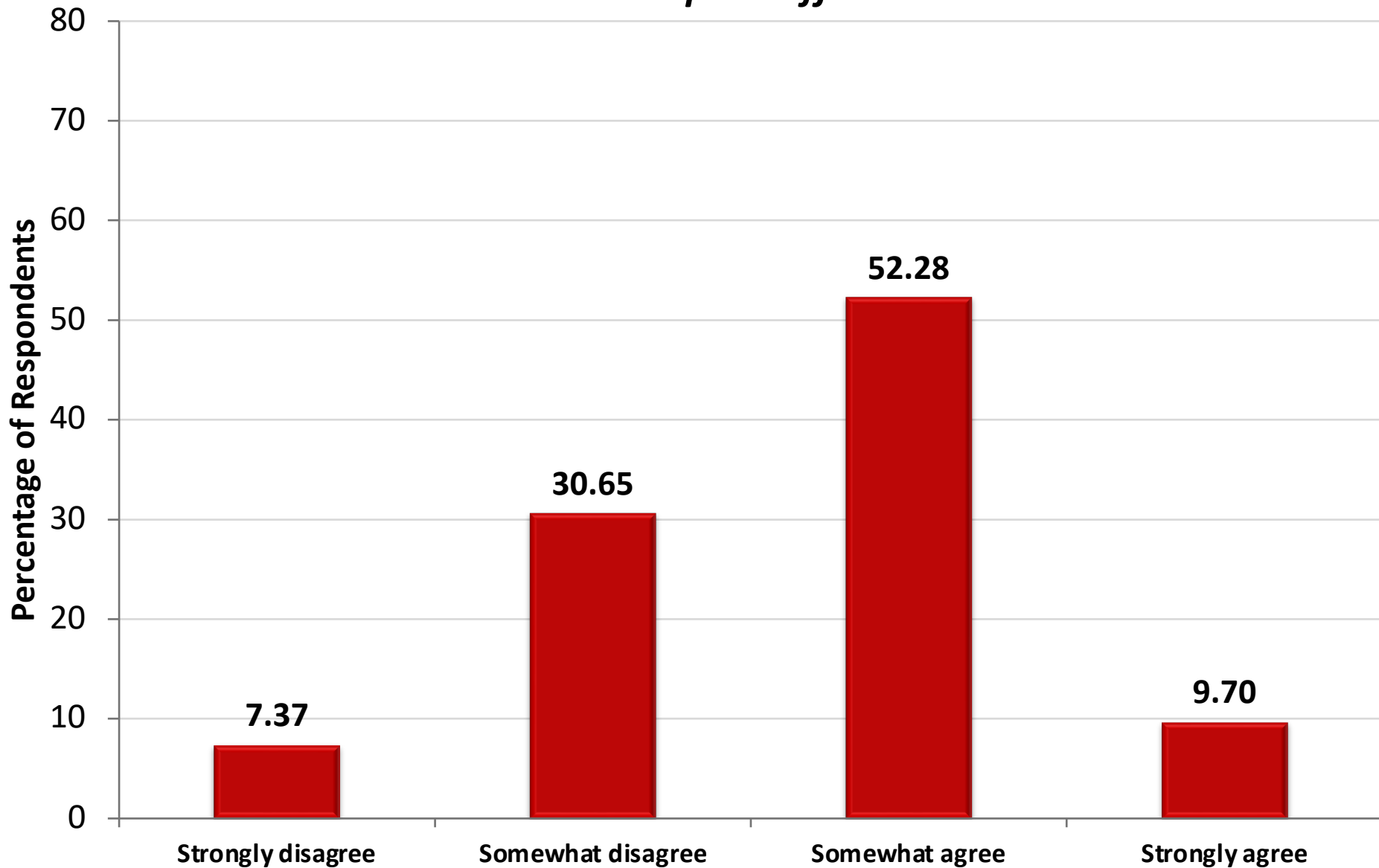
In most civil lawsuits, a plaintiff sues a defendant and seeks money damages for harms they feel were caused by a defendant's negligence. Do you believe there are:



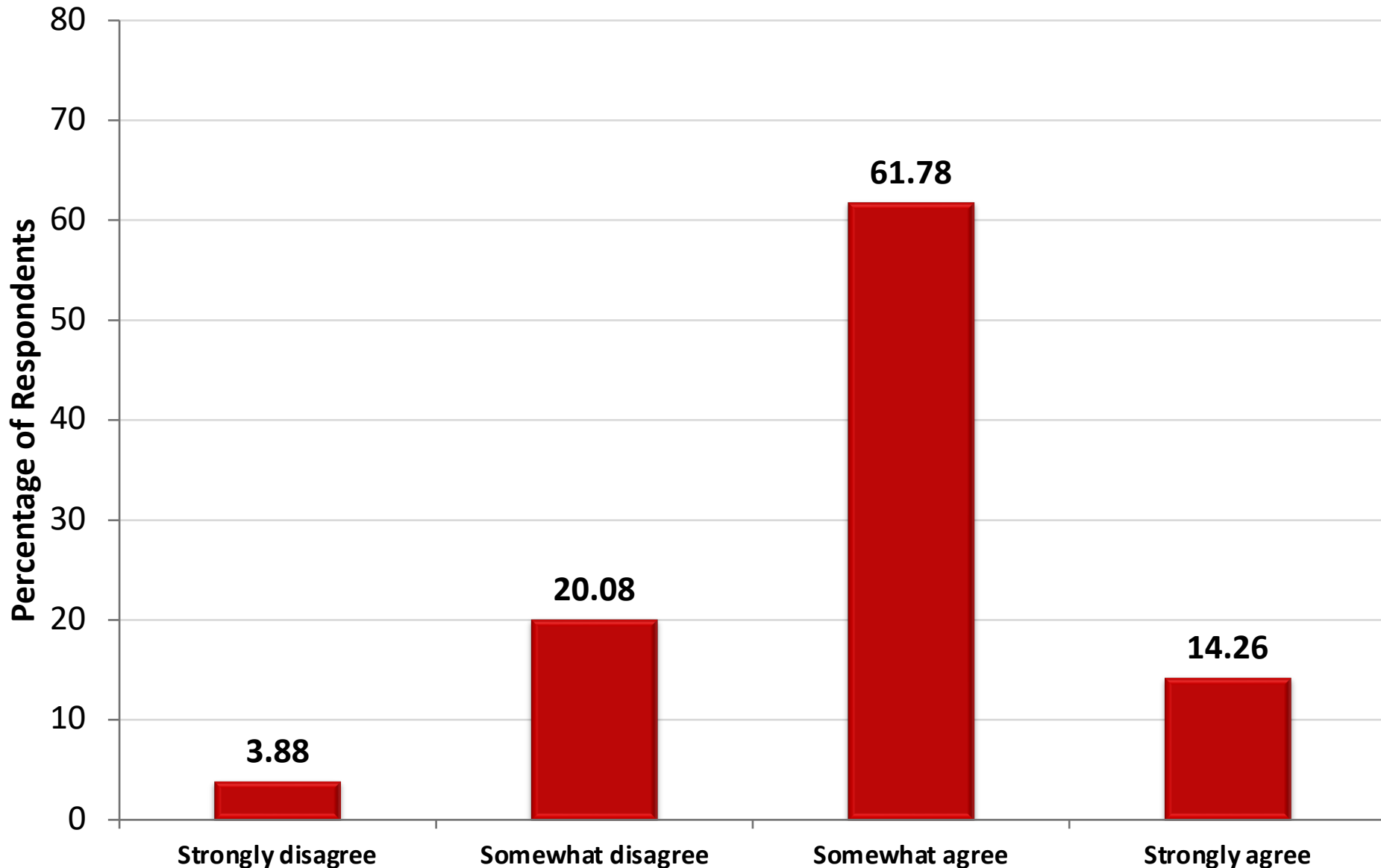
**Do you agree or disagree with the following statements
regarding civil lawsuits? – *Lawsuits hold defendants
accountable for their actions***



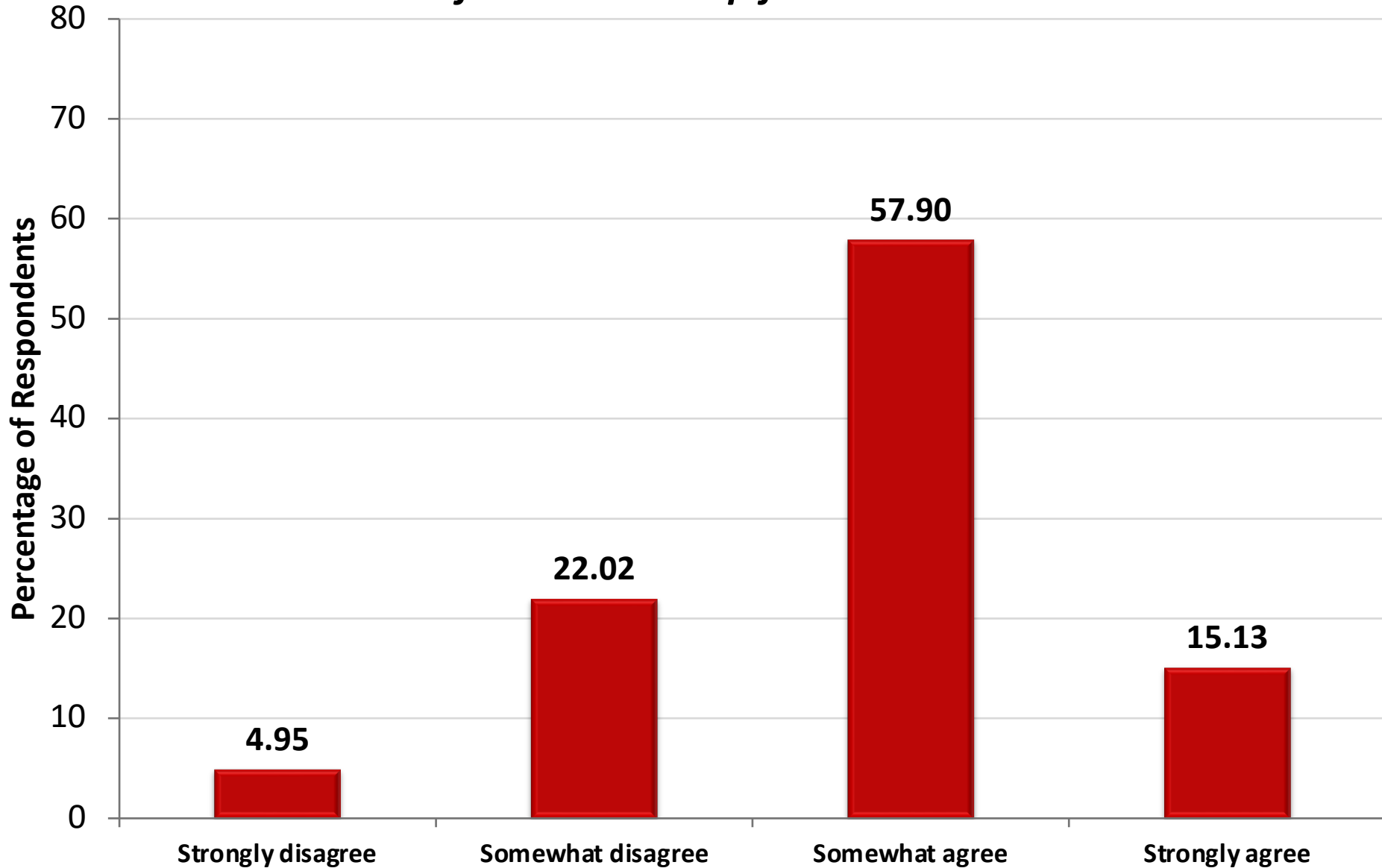
Do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding civil lawsuits? – *Lawsuits repair the harms done to a plaintiff*



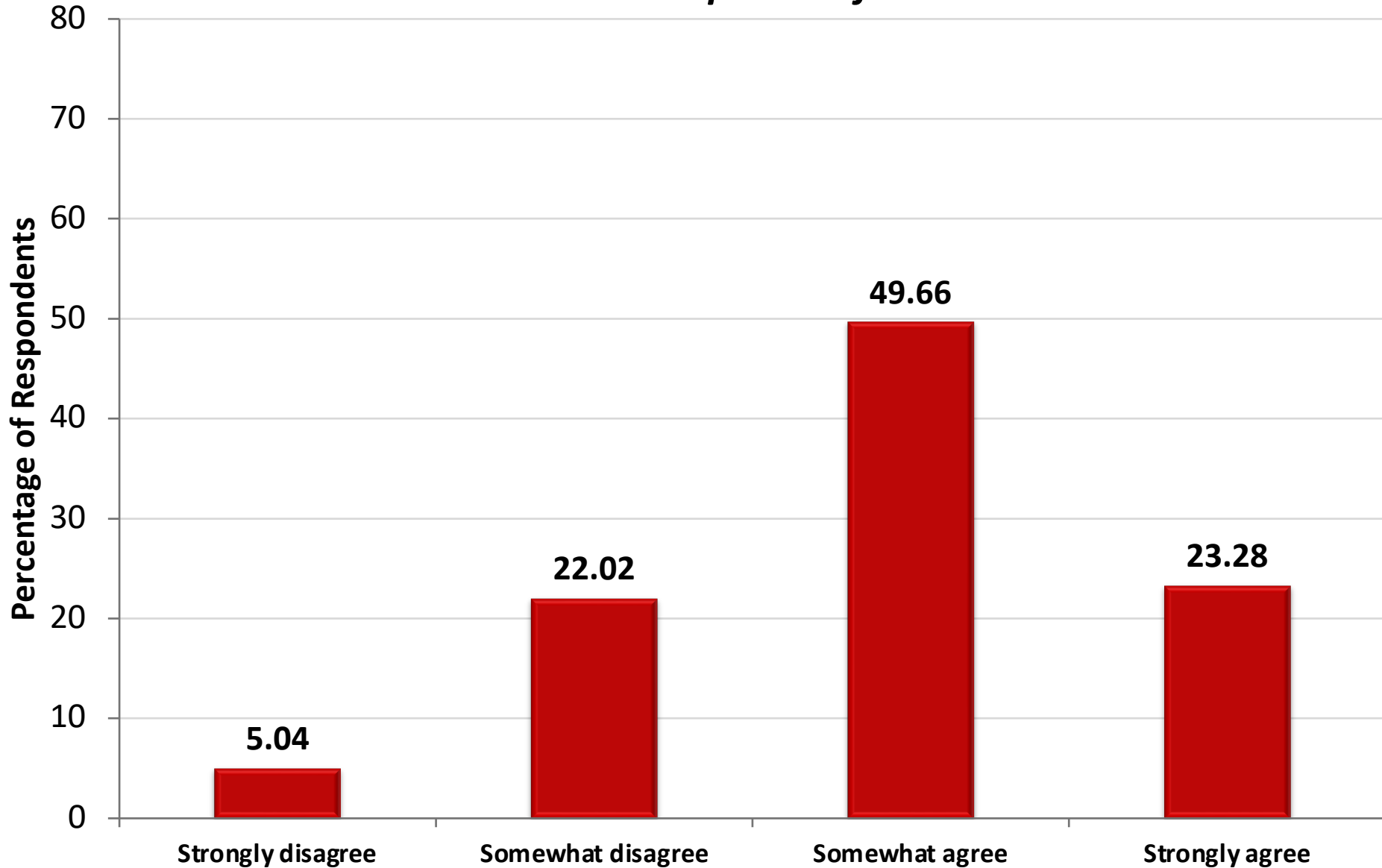
**Do you agree or disagree with the following statements
regarding civil lawsuits? – *Lawsuits punish a defendant for
their actions***



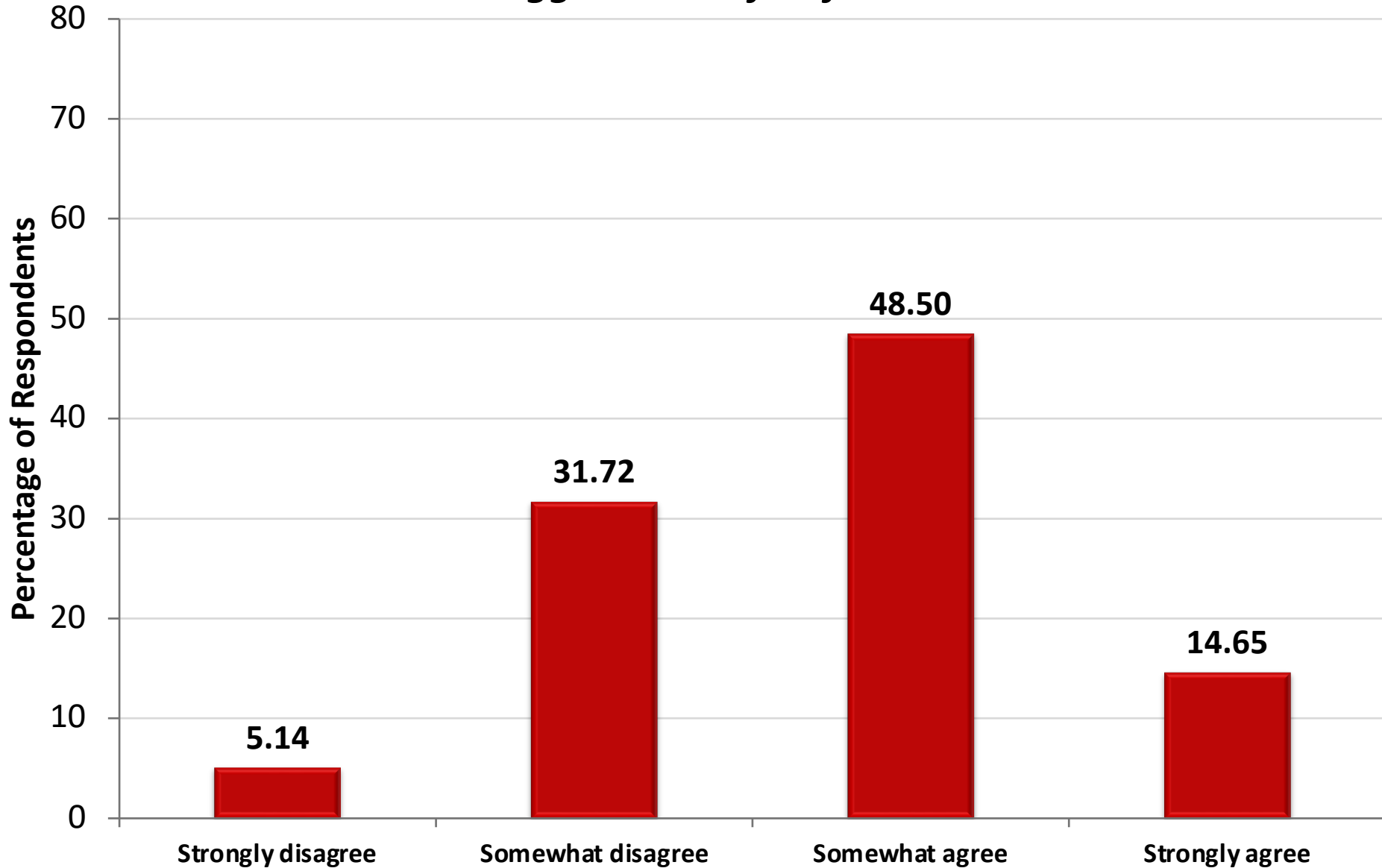
Do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding civil lawsuits? – *Lawsuits send a message to similar defendants to stop future misconduct*



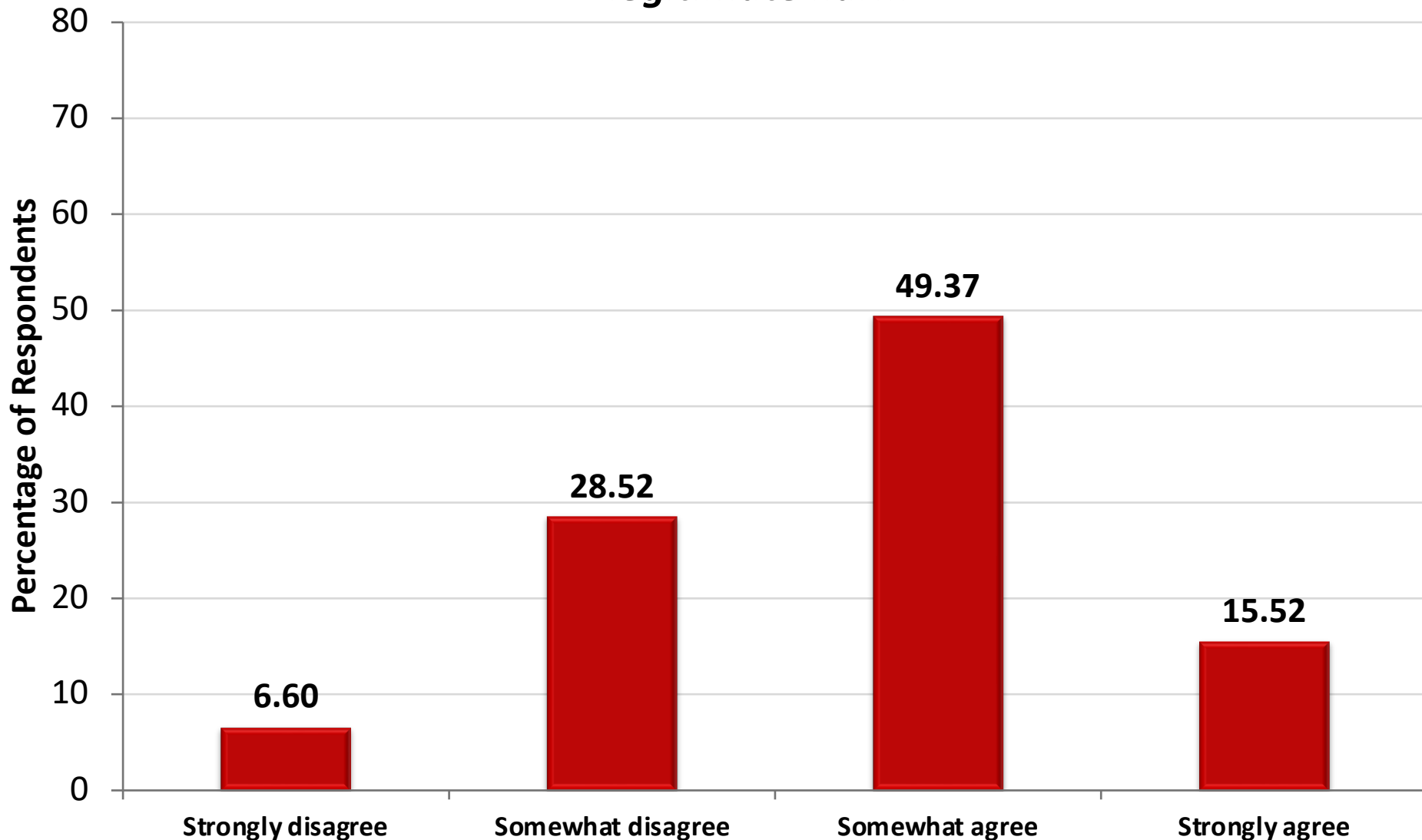
Do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding civil lawsuits? – *Lawsuits tend to make products and services more expensive for consumers*



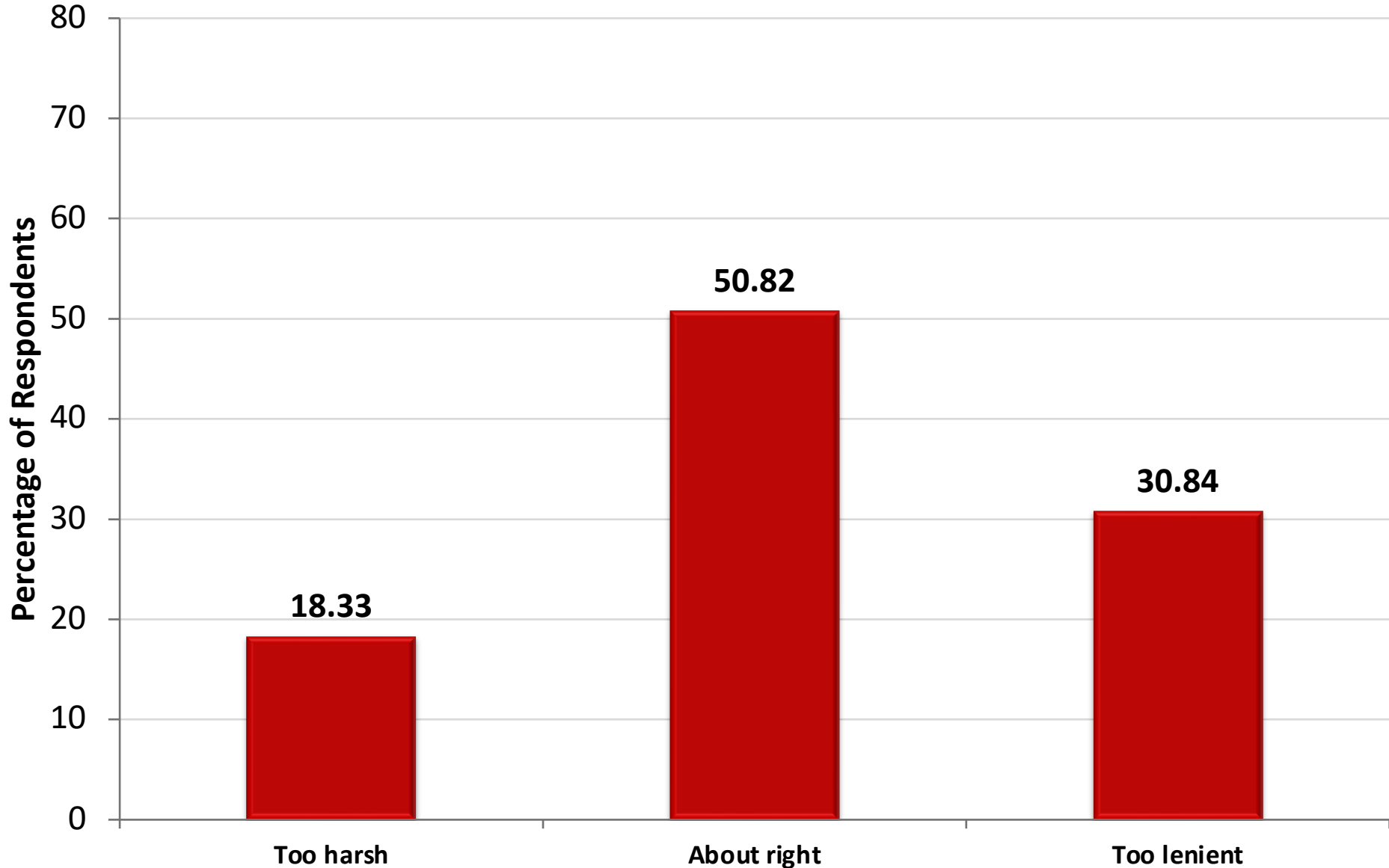
Do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding civil lawsuits? – *Most lawsuits are filed for exaggerated or falsified claims*



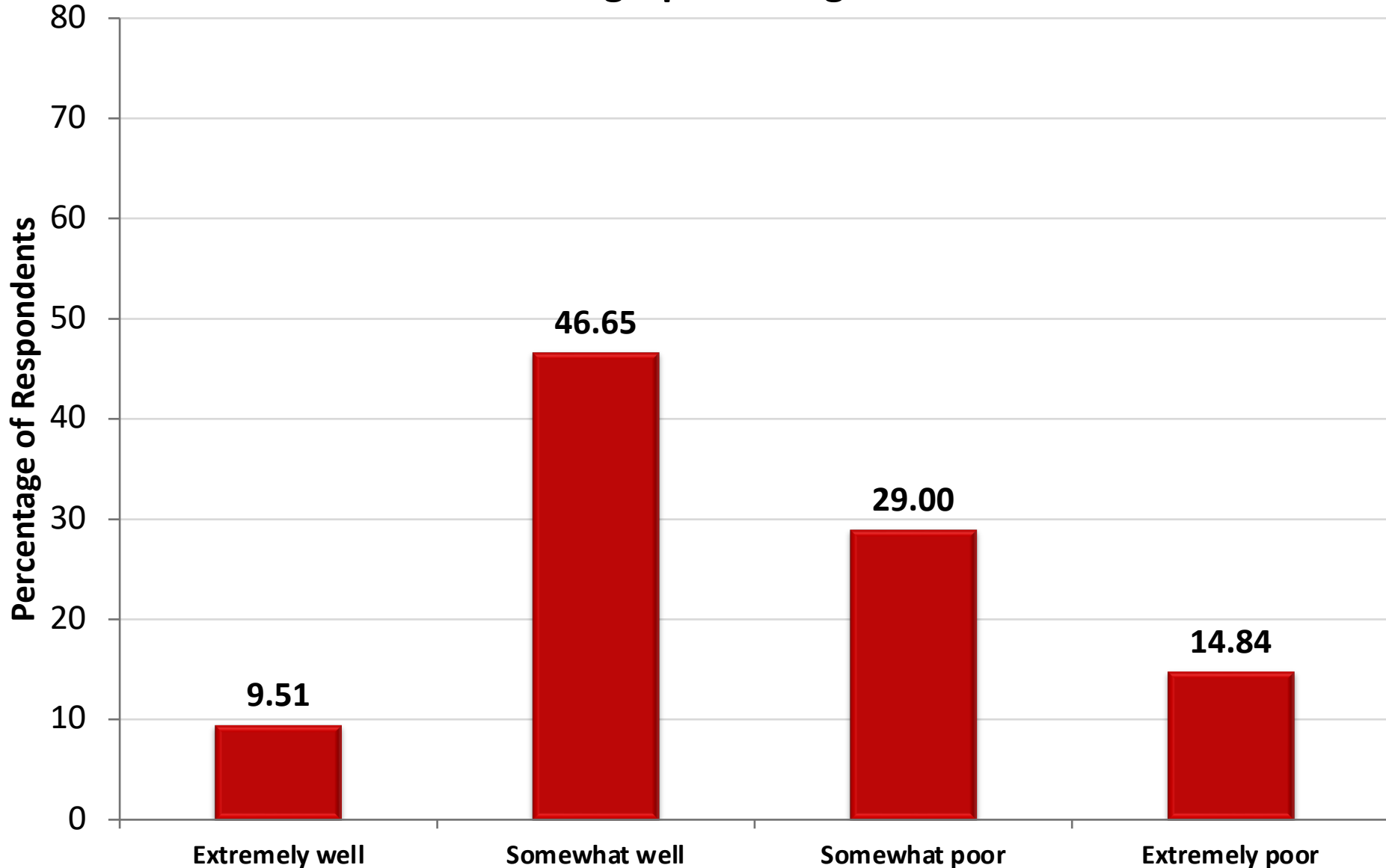
Do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding civil lawsuits? – *Lawsuits are mainly filed to make the plaintiff and their attorneys money rather than for legitimate harm*



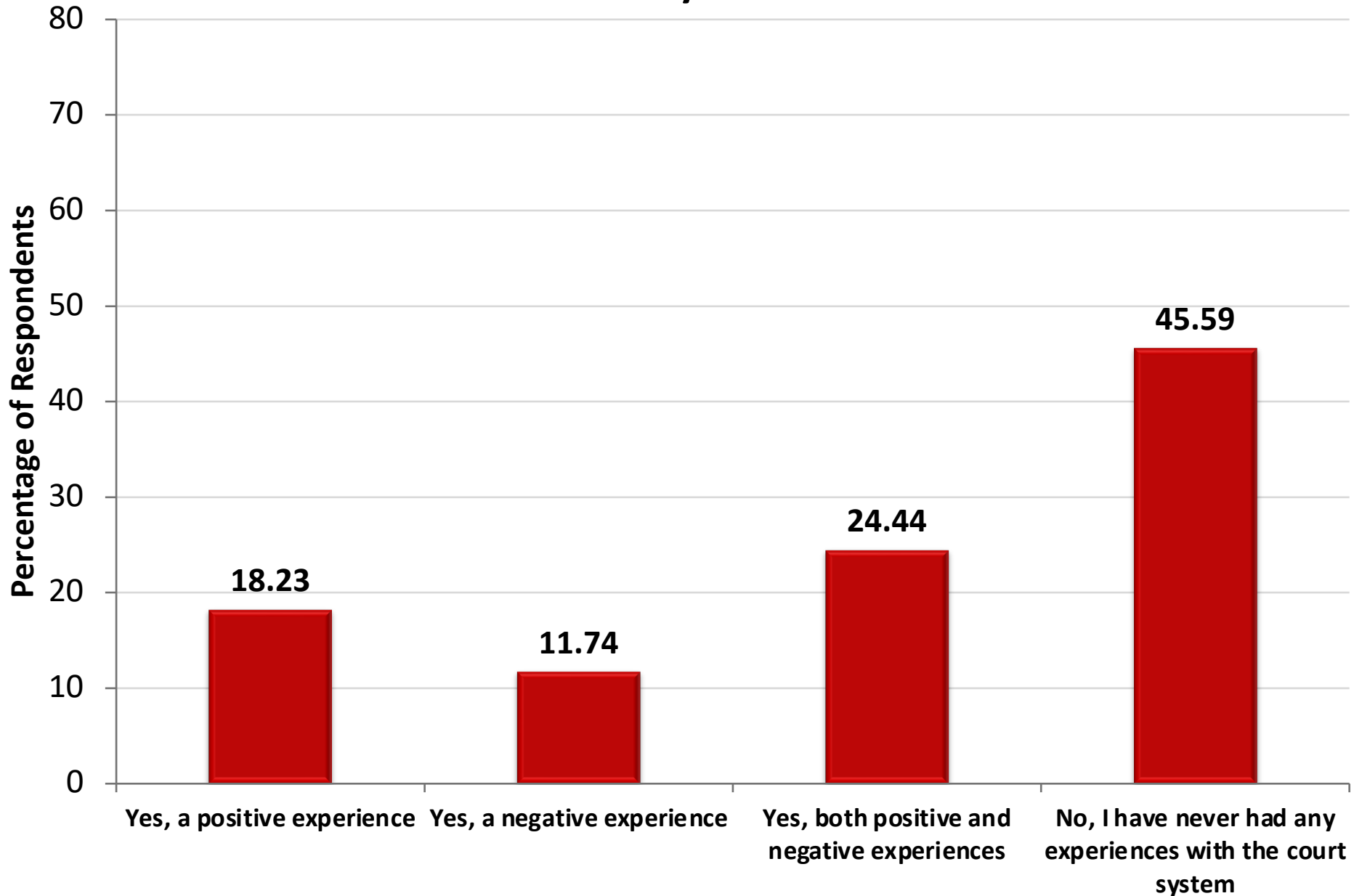
Regarding the sentencing of criminal defendants who have been convicted of a crime, do you believe prison sentences are:



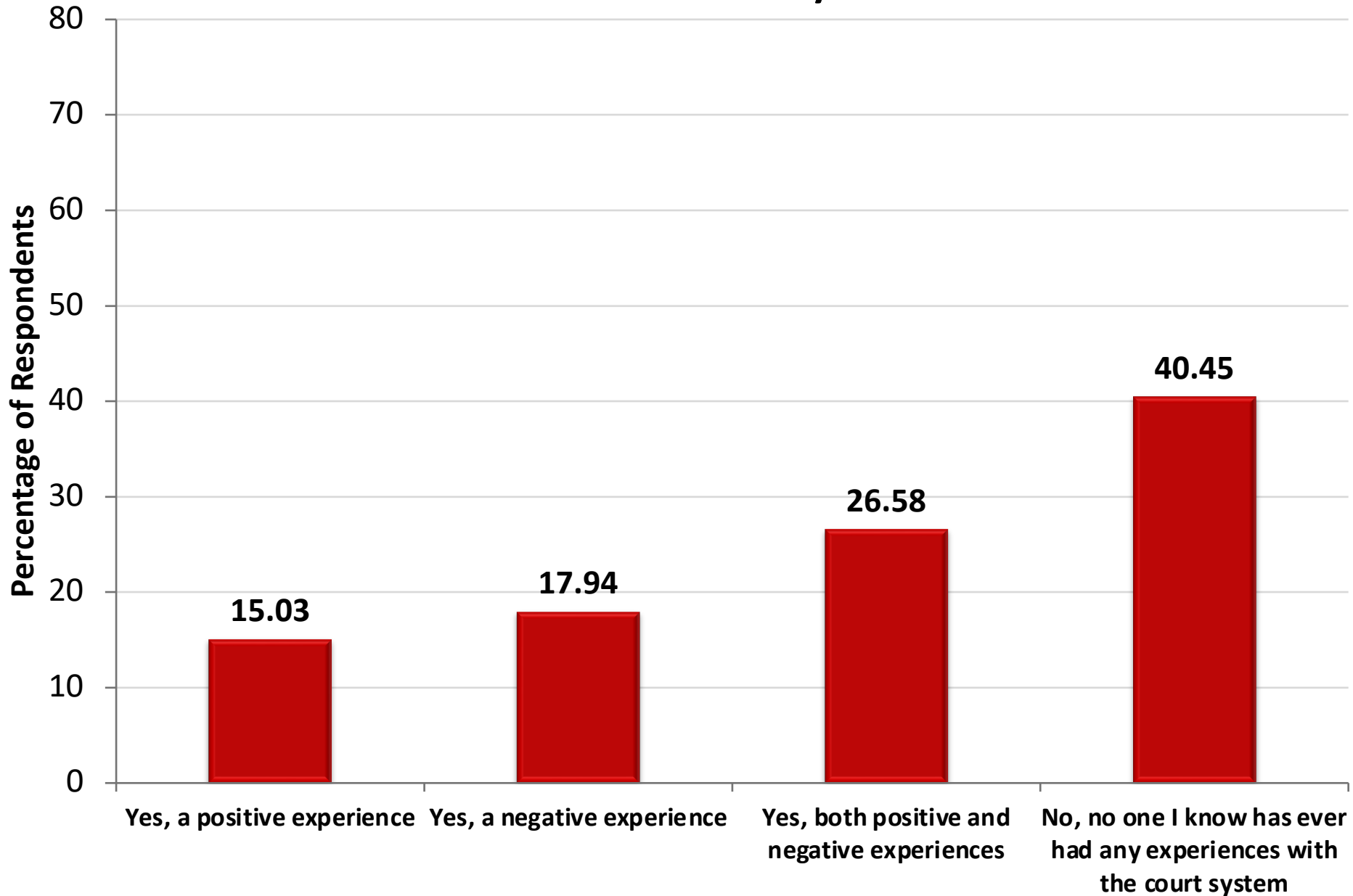
How well or poor of a job do you think the news media does in providing the public with an accurate and thorough account of high-profile legal cases?



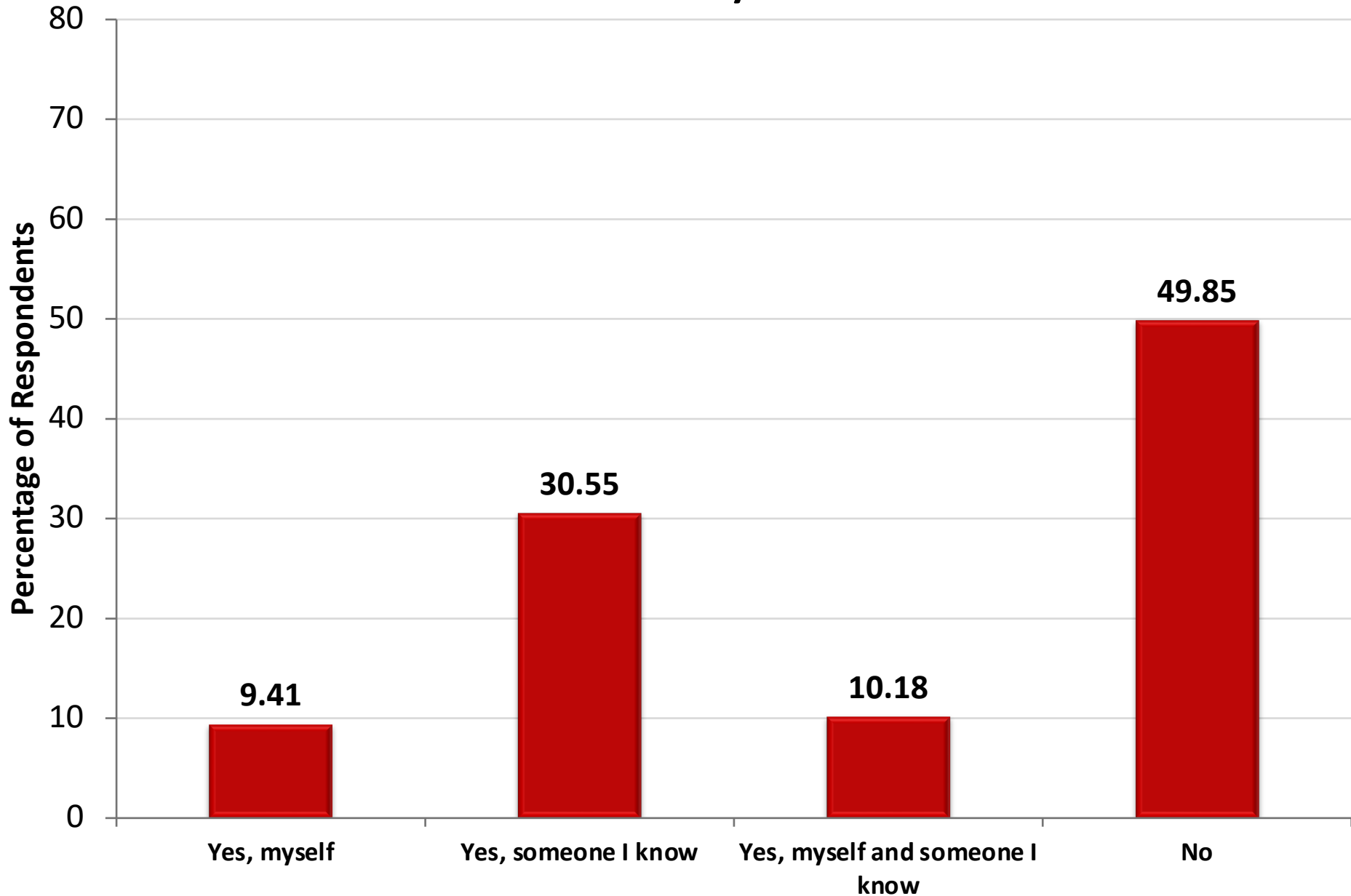
Have you had a positive or negative experience with the court system?



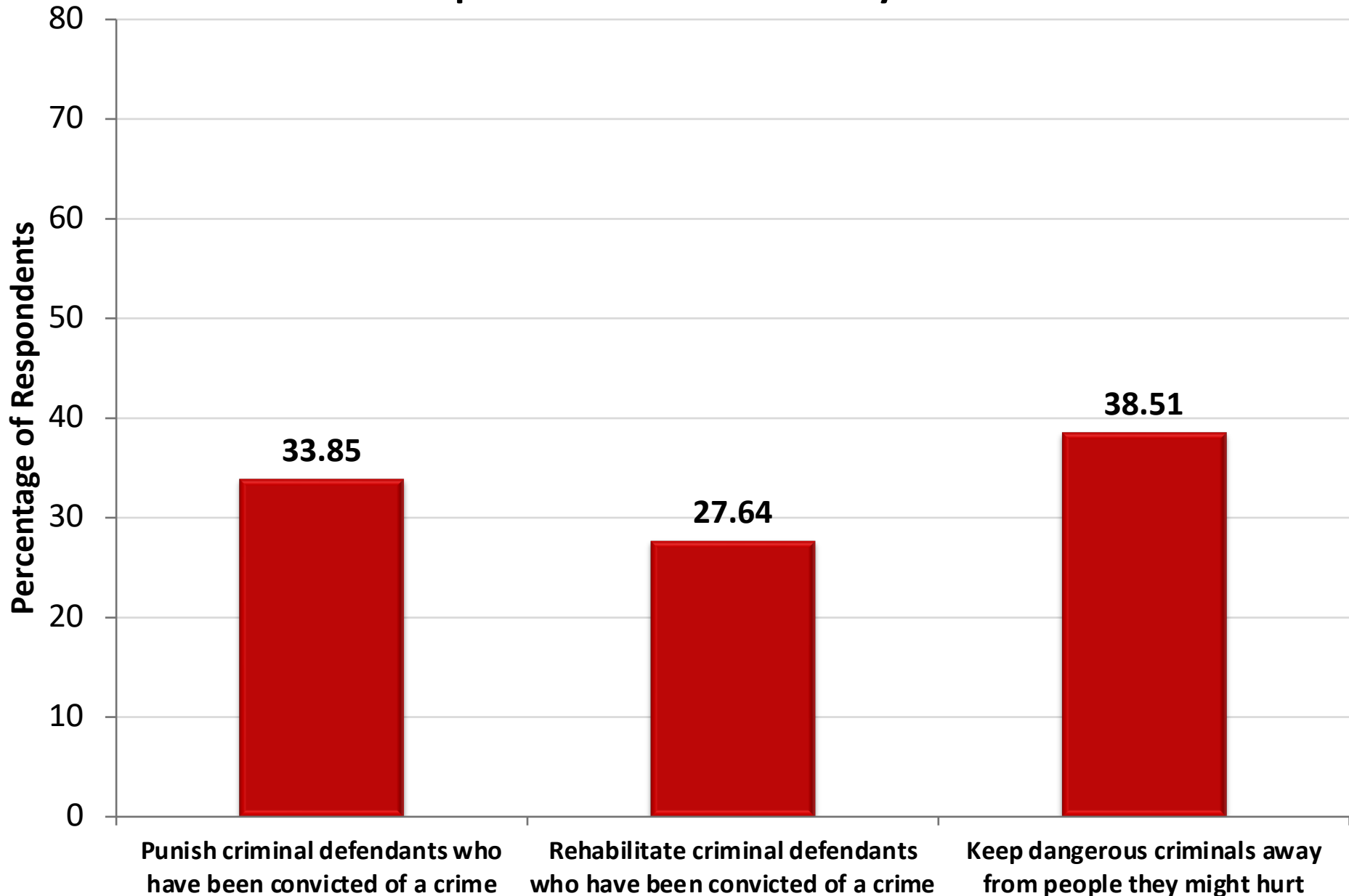
Has anyone close to you had a positive or negative experience with the court system?



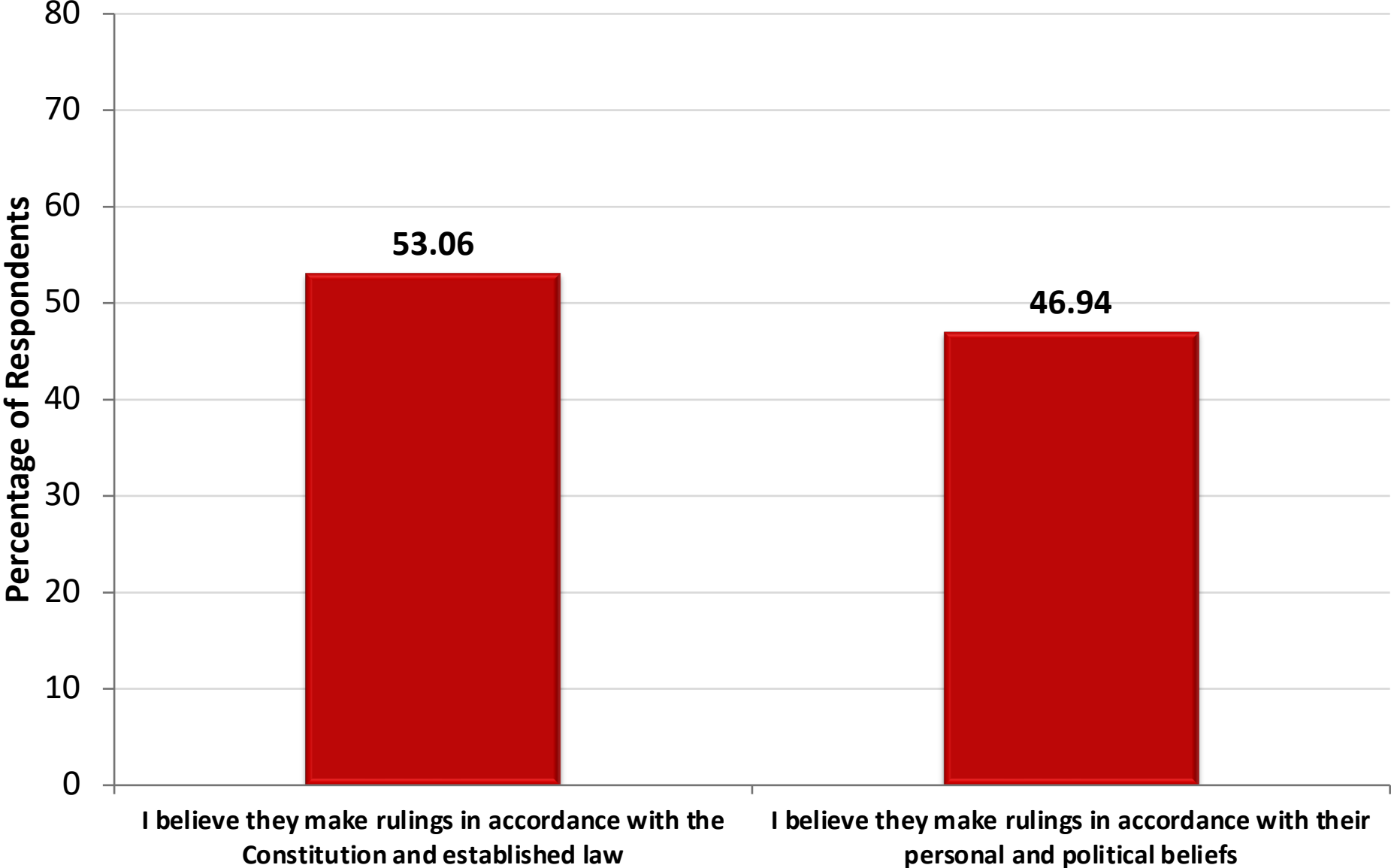
Have you or anyone close to you ever been in jail, prison, or in the corrections system in the U.S.?



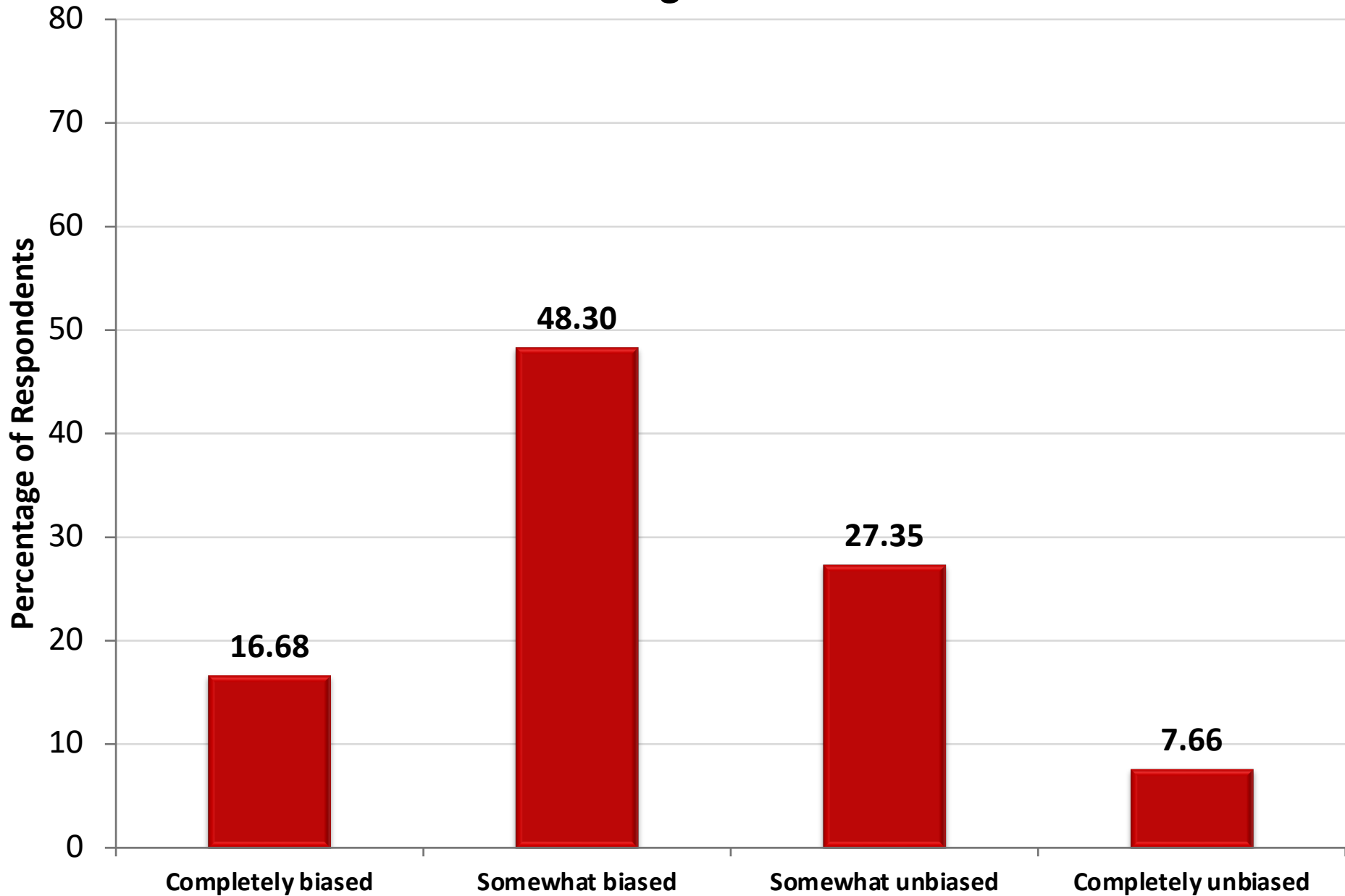
Which do you think should be the primary purpose of the prison and corrections system?



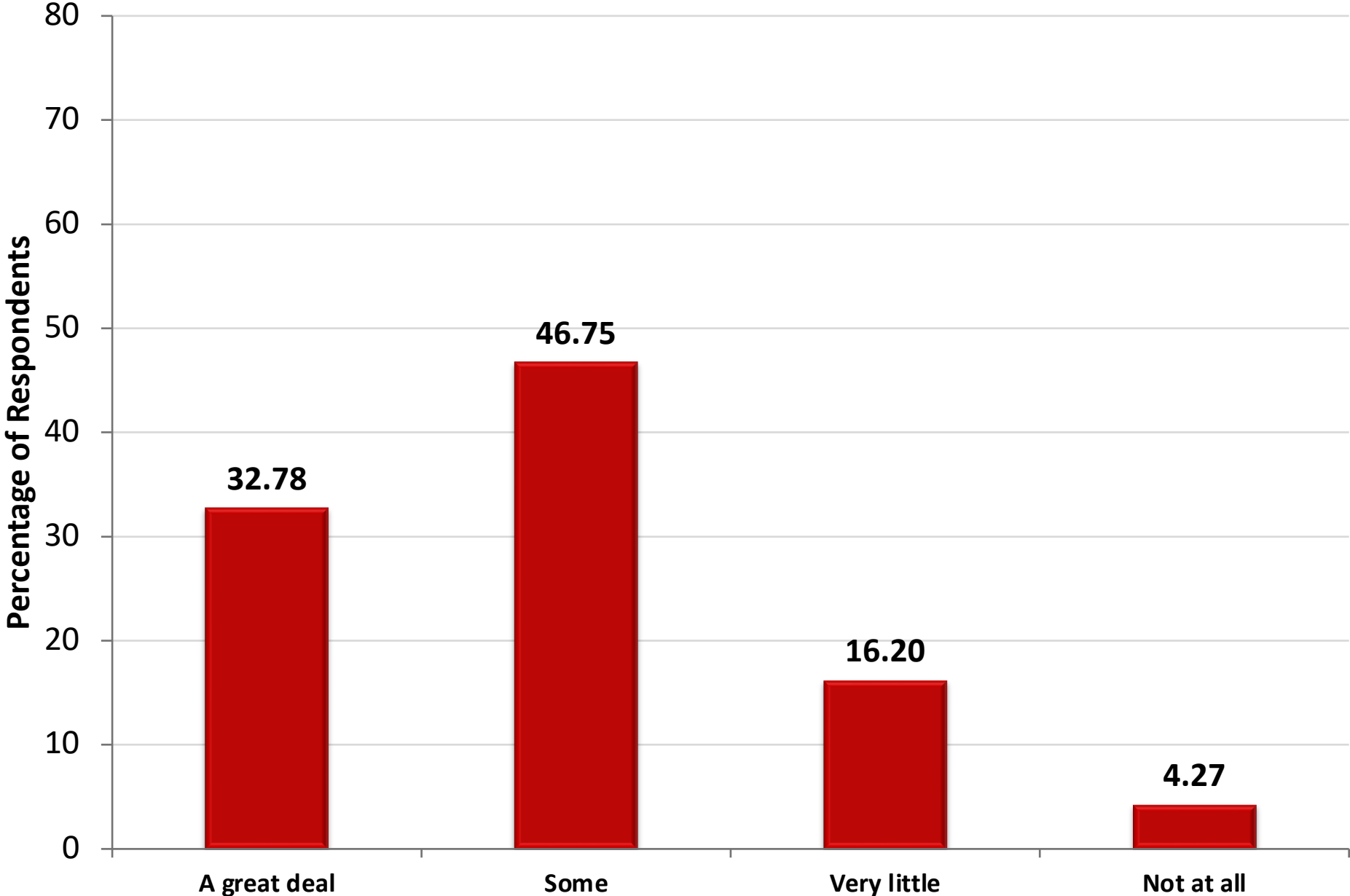
Regarding the Supreme Court's job to interpret laws according to the U.S. Constitution, which of the following statements do you most believe?



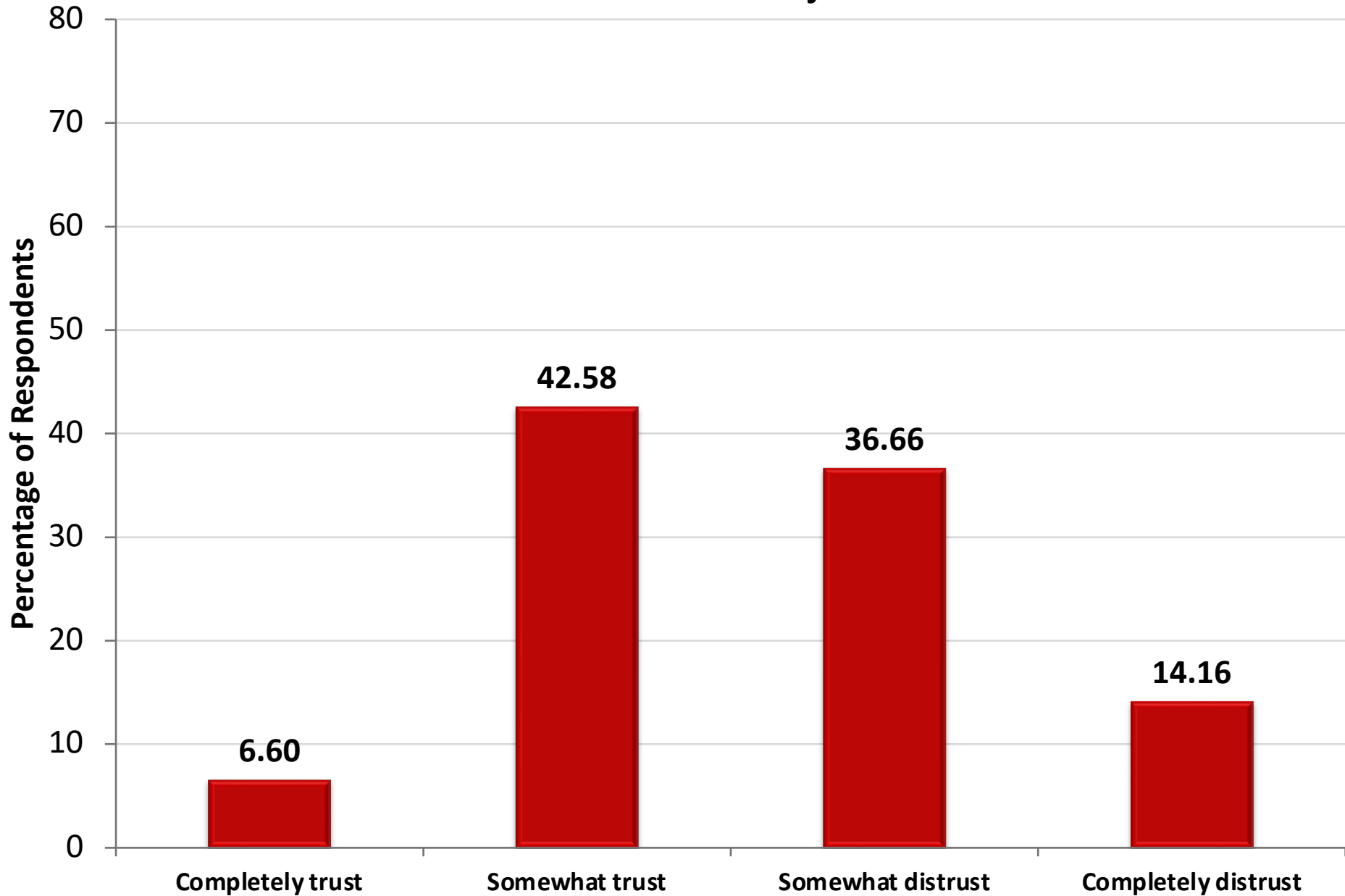
How biased or unbiased do you think Supreme Court Justices are in making decisions on cases?



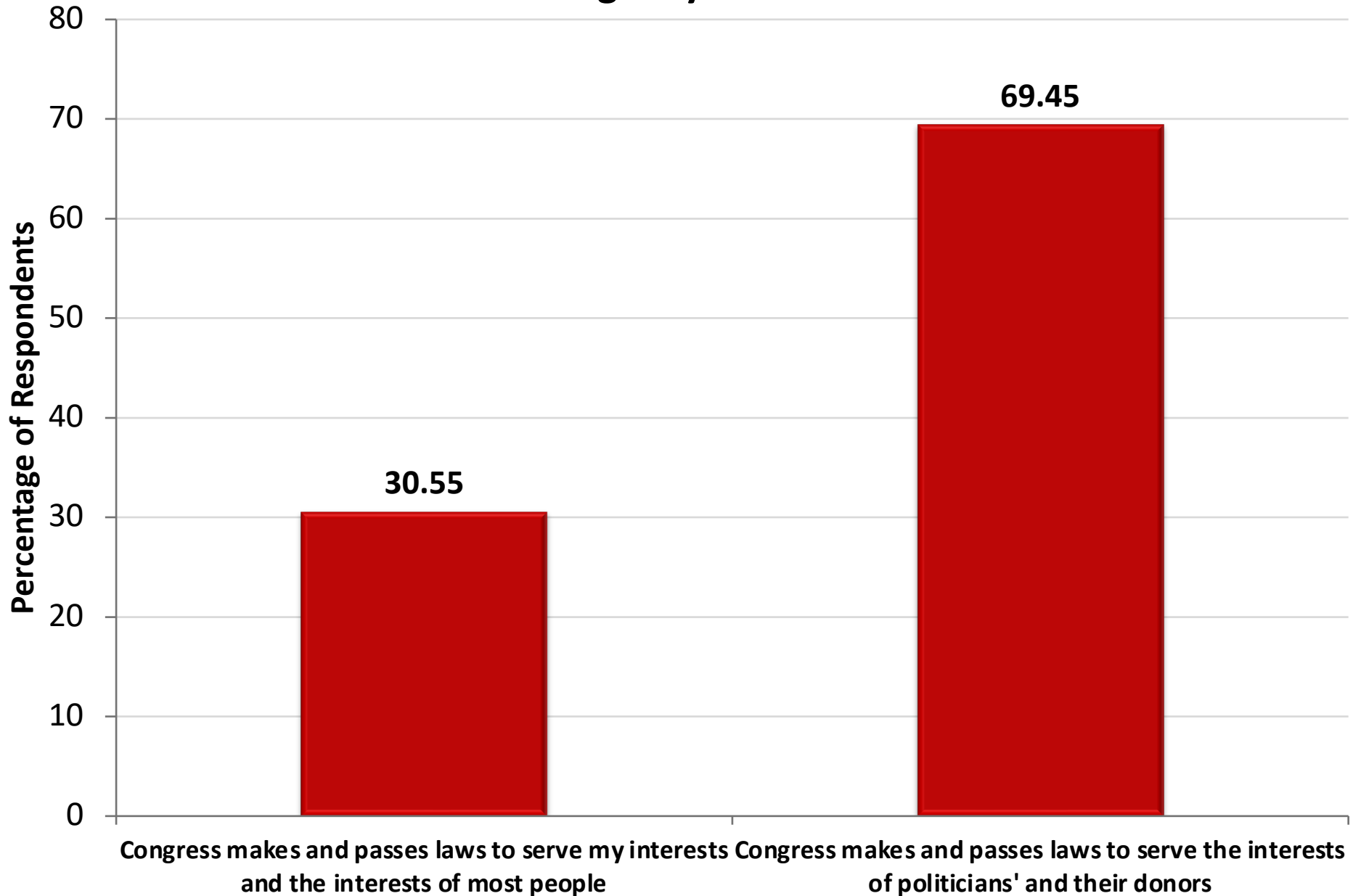
How much, if at all, do you believe Supreme Court rulings affect your life as a citizen?



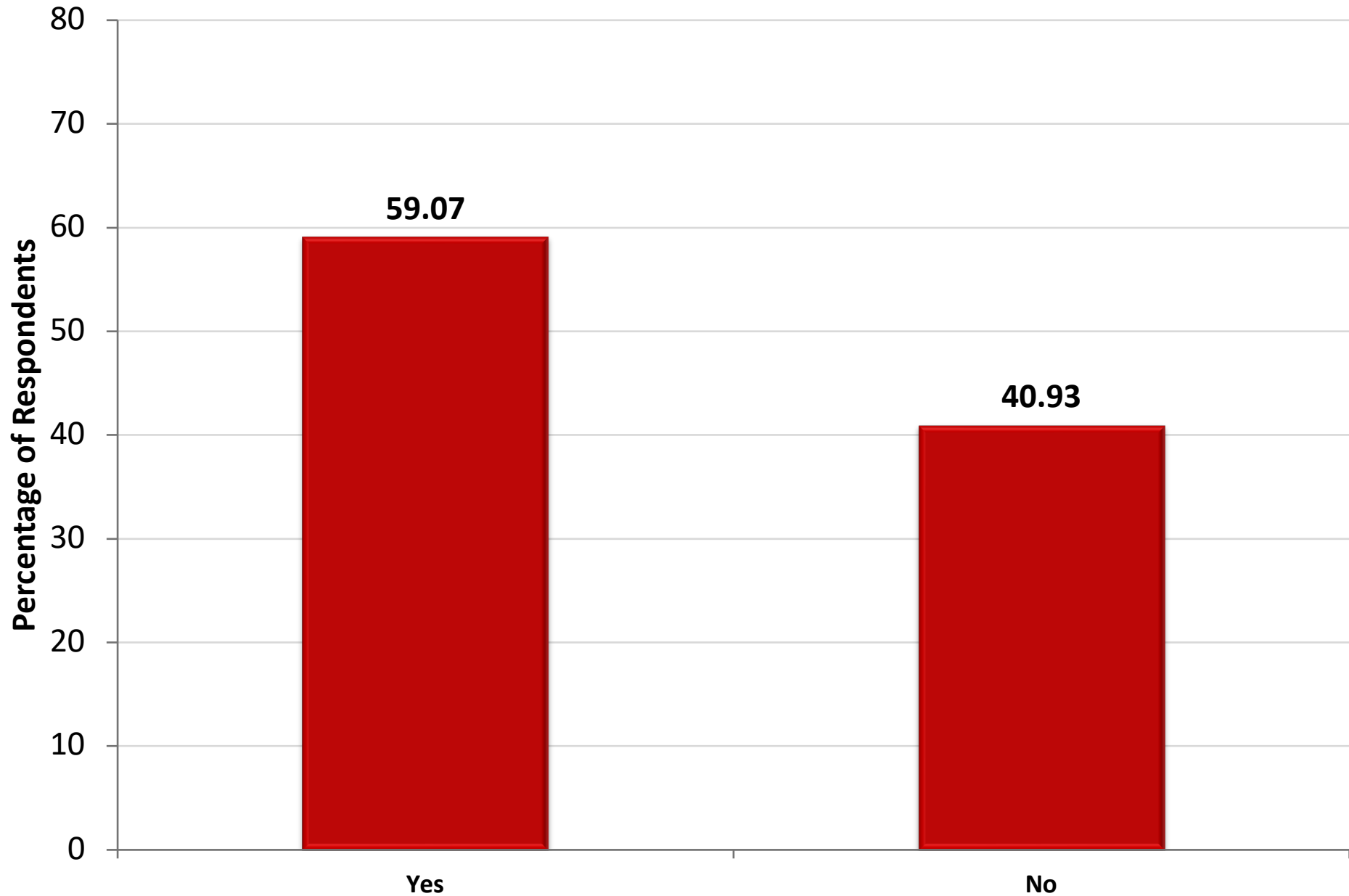
How much trust do you have in Congress to make laws that are fair and just?



Regarding Congress' job to make and pass laws, which of the following do you most believe?



In general, do you feel the justice system serves you as a citizen?



Which of the following suggestions would INCREASE your confidence and trust in our justice system? (Please read each option carefully and check any that apply.)

	Answer Choice	%
	Provide greater community voice in policing needs and standards	5.05%
	Provide greater training to the police on race, bias, different cultures, religion, sexual orientation, and mental illness	8.81%
	A stronger crackdown on crime by the police	6.63%
	Provide more funding to local police departments	6.33%
	Provide more rehabilitative options to prison inmates to reduce re-offending and integrate those convicted of crimes back into society	7.61%
	Provide more sentencing options for judges, other than imprisonment	6.14%
	Give longer sentences for criminal defendants	4.68%
	Create restorative justice programs to resolve conflicts and facilitate healing between criminal defendants and victims	4.58%
	Provide greater online access to handle legal filings and remote participation in courtroom proceedings	3.31%
	Simplify legal proceedings and procedures to make them more understandable for the general public	6.74%
	Restricting the "rights" of criminal defendants to keep them from getting off on legal technicalities	6.12%
	Provide better civic education in schools and communities about the justice system	6.39%
	Provide greater transparency in the operations and decisions by the police, prosecution agencies, courts, and corrections	7.70%
	Provide more televised access to state and Federal court, appellate, and Supreme Court proceedings	3.47%
	Provide greater pay and flexibility to citizens for jury service	4.79%
	Improve the technology infrastructure in the court system	4.09%
	Implement reforms to make the justice system more efficient	7.21%
	Other (please specify):	0.34%

Which of the following suggestions would INCREASE your confidence and trust in our justice system?

“Other” Responses

Bring back bail in CA. Do not have a revolving door for criminals and practice the death penalty as it exists. Ban news media and individuals from posting videos of arrests since they are rarely accurate and leave out the most important pieces of arrest. Teach all people including children what to do when stopped by a police officer, to avoid the arrestee running and participating in activities that are expected of criminals such as fighting the police and running from them.

unbiased Supreme Court

I don't know.

Quicker execution on death sentences

not sure

More coverage on news

when they arrest the criminal Democrats

Nothing

Make the prison system non political, take away the private business aspect. Release the non violent "criminals"

Na

No opinion

Illegal Immigrants that deserve getting papers

Provide the schools police.

Proper vetting of those in authoritative positions and not just letting anyone be in these posit

More mental health facilities instead of jails.

Pay politicians average wage in america and make it illegal for them to accept donations. They need to live the same way the rest of America does.

Train officers better.

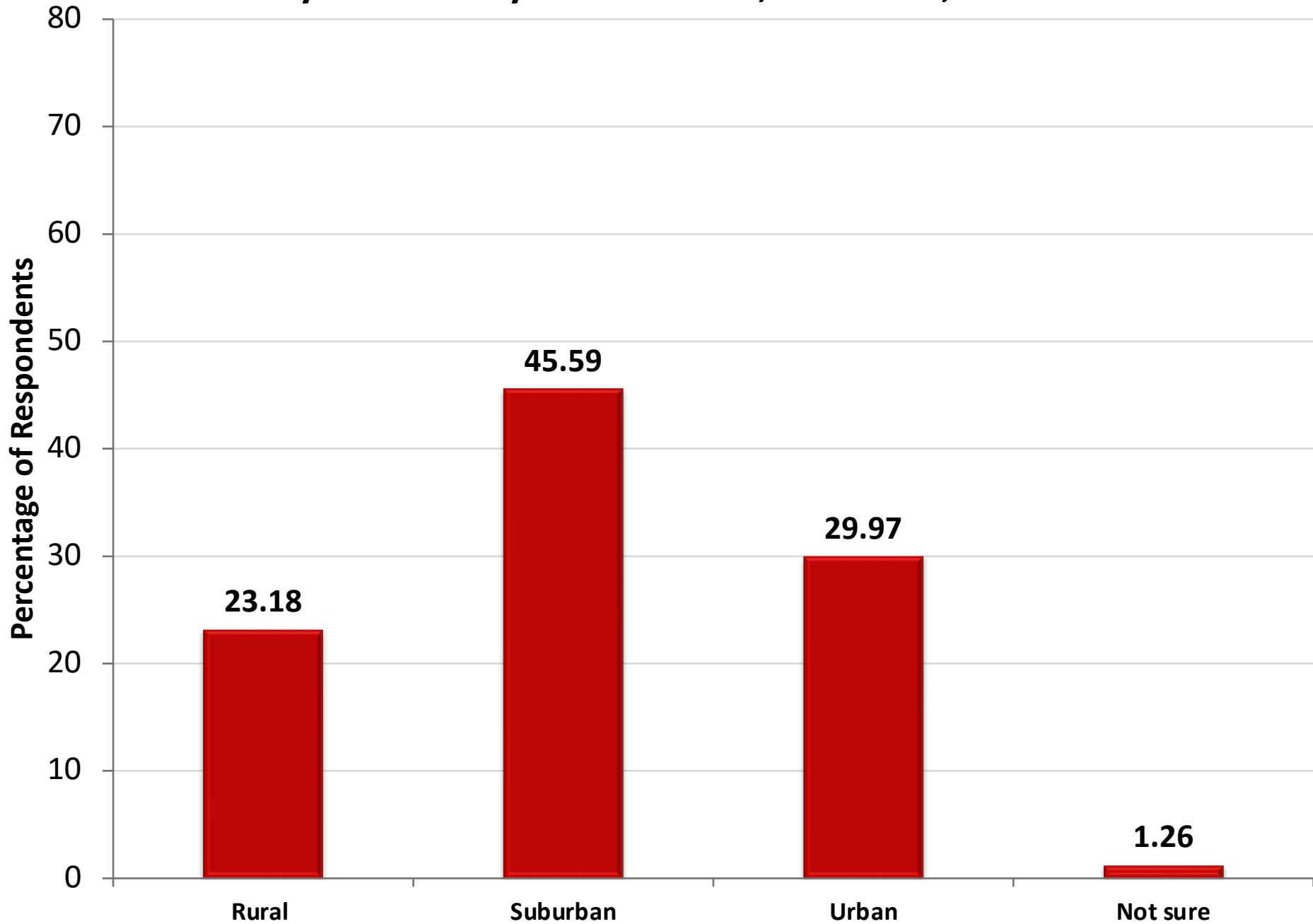
None

In which state do you currently reside?

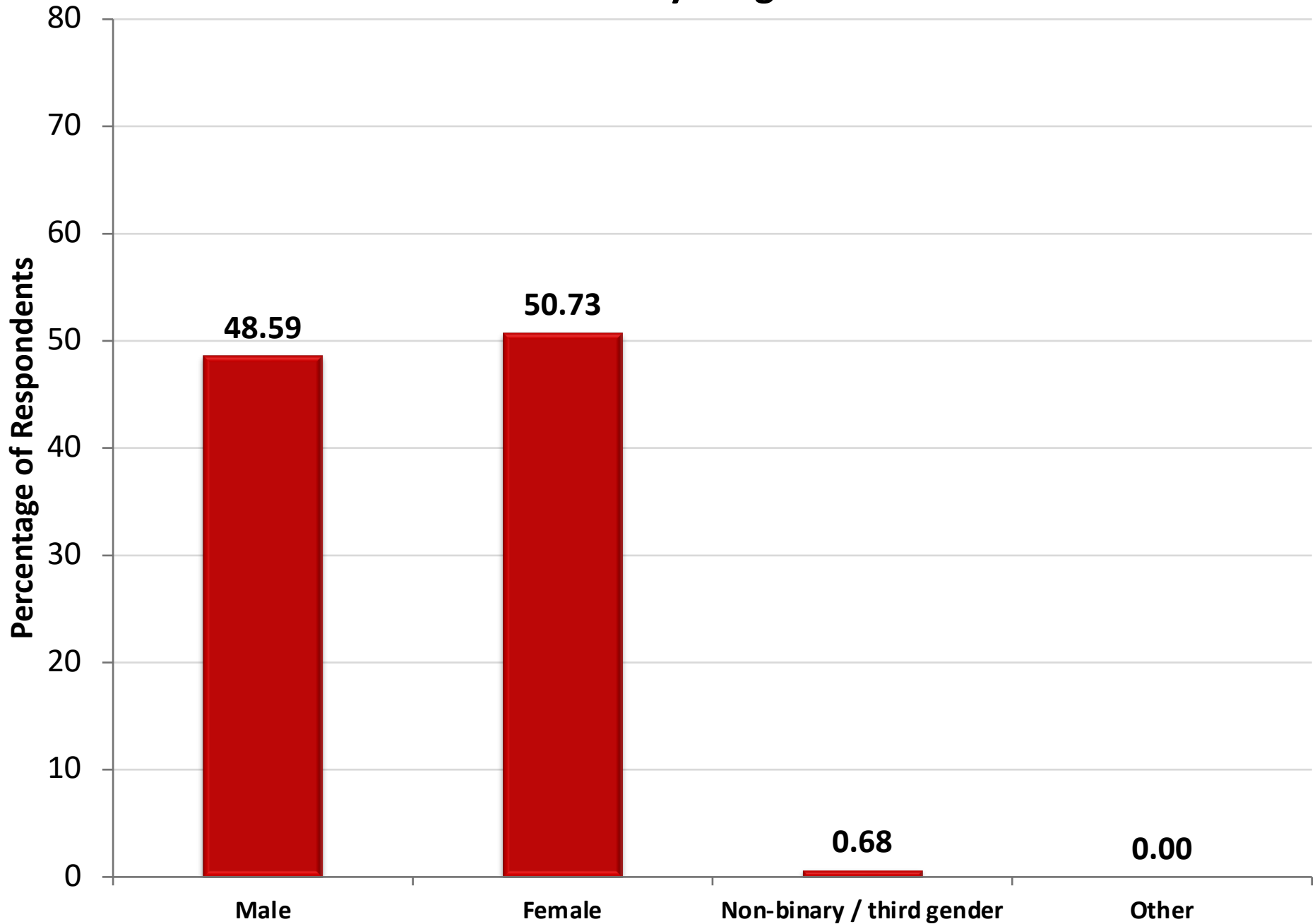
Answer Choice	%
Alabama	1.65%
Alaska	0.10%
Arizona	3.10%
Arkansas	0.68%
California	12.51%
Colorado	1.26%
Connecticut	0.87%
Delaware	0.48%
District of Columbia	0.19%
Florida	6.98%
Georgia	3.30%
Hawaii	0.10%
Idaho	0.58%
Illinois	5.24%
Indiana	1.55%
Iowa	0.78%
Kansas	1.07%
Kentucky	1.36%
Louisiana	1.36%
Maine	0.39%
Maryland	0.87%
Massachusetts	1.36%
Michigan	3.39%
Minnesota	1.36%
Mississippi	0.68%
Missouri	1.45%

Answer Choice	%
Montana	0.29%
Nebraska	0.68%
Nevada	0.48%
New Hampshire	0.10%
New Jersey	2.33%
New Mexico	0.87%
New York	6.30%
North Carolina	2.52%
North Dakota	0.39%
Ohio	3.10%
Oklahoma	1.26%
Oregon	1.26%
Pennsylvania	5.72%
Puerto Rico	0.00%
Rhode Island	0.10%
South Carolina	1.16%
South Dakota	0.29%
Tennessee	2.42%
Texas	9.99%
Utah	0.68%
Vermont	0.00%
Virginia	2.81%
Washington	1.65%
West Virginia	0.87%
Wisconsin	1.84%
Wyoming	0.19%

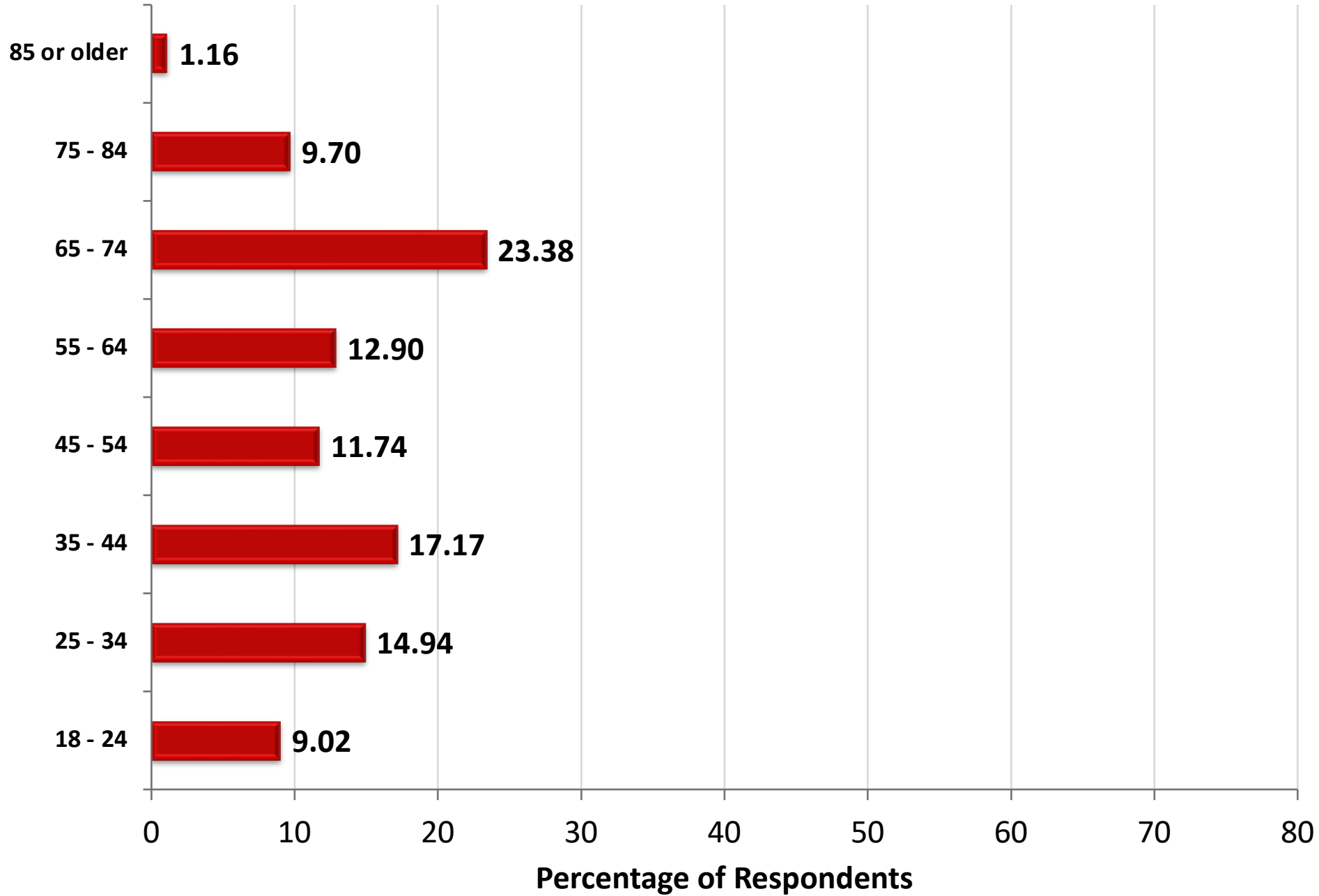
Do you currently live in a rural, suburban, or urban area?



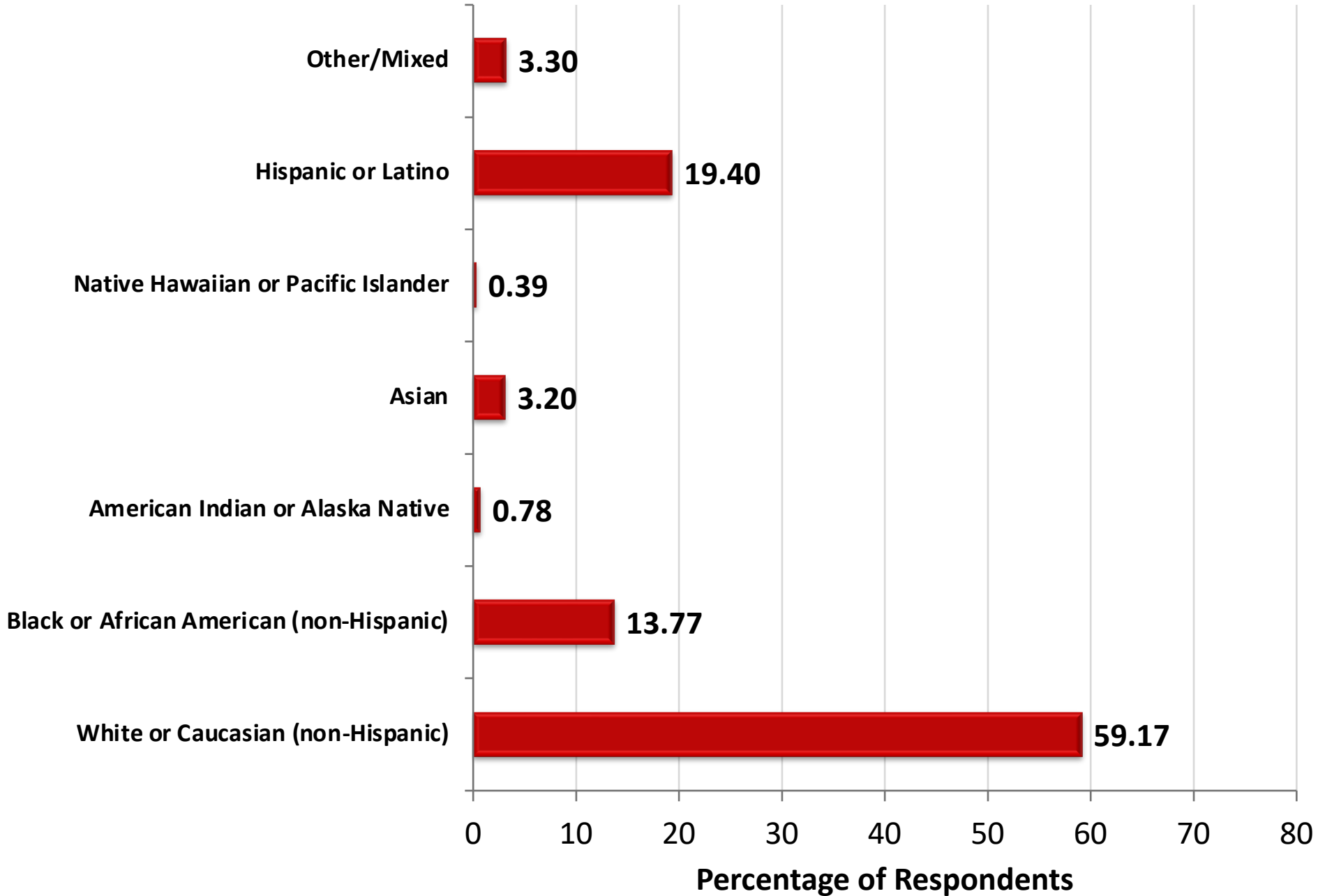
What is your gender?



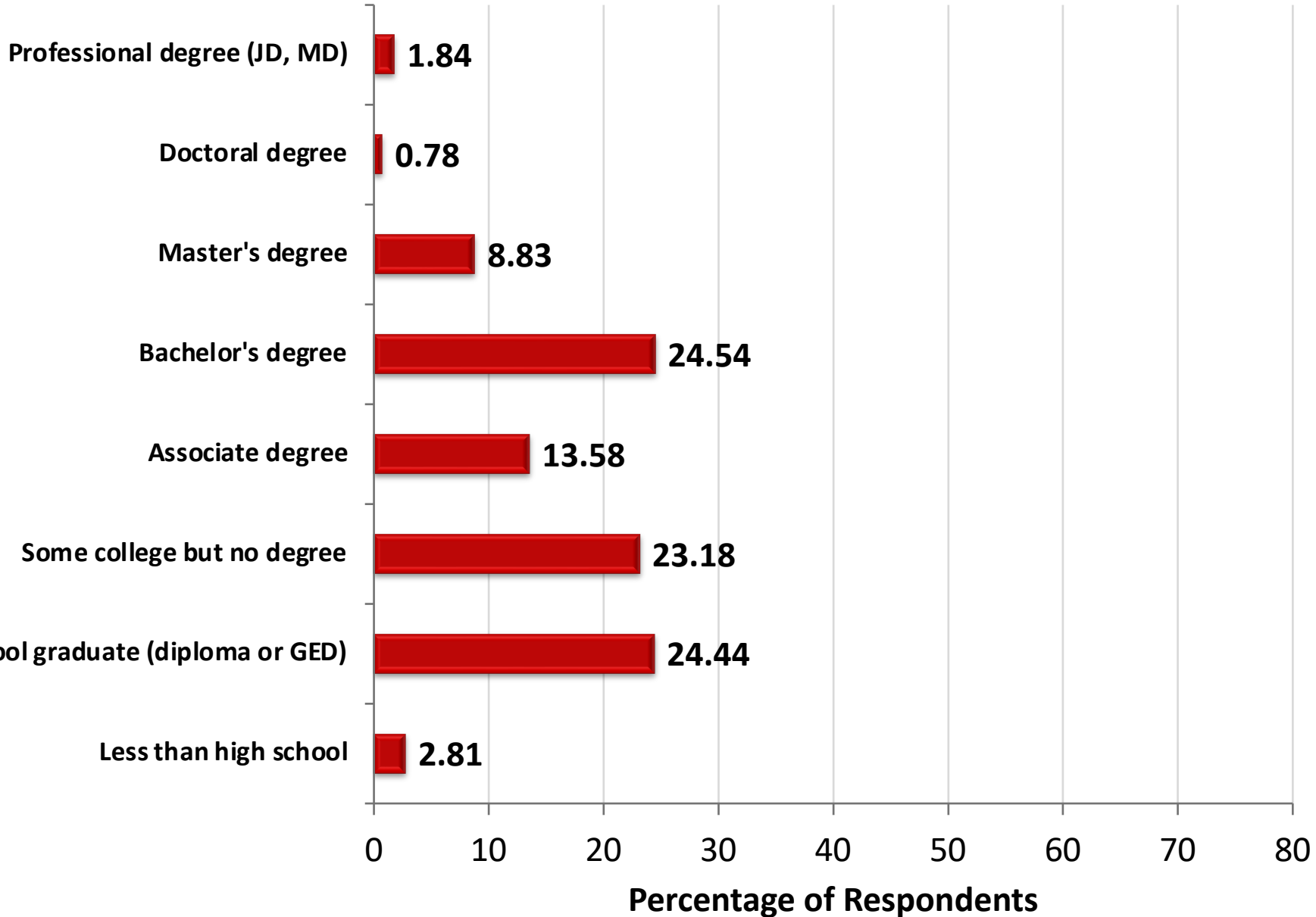
What is your age?



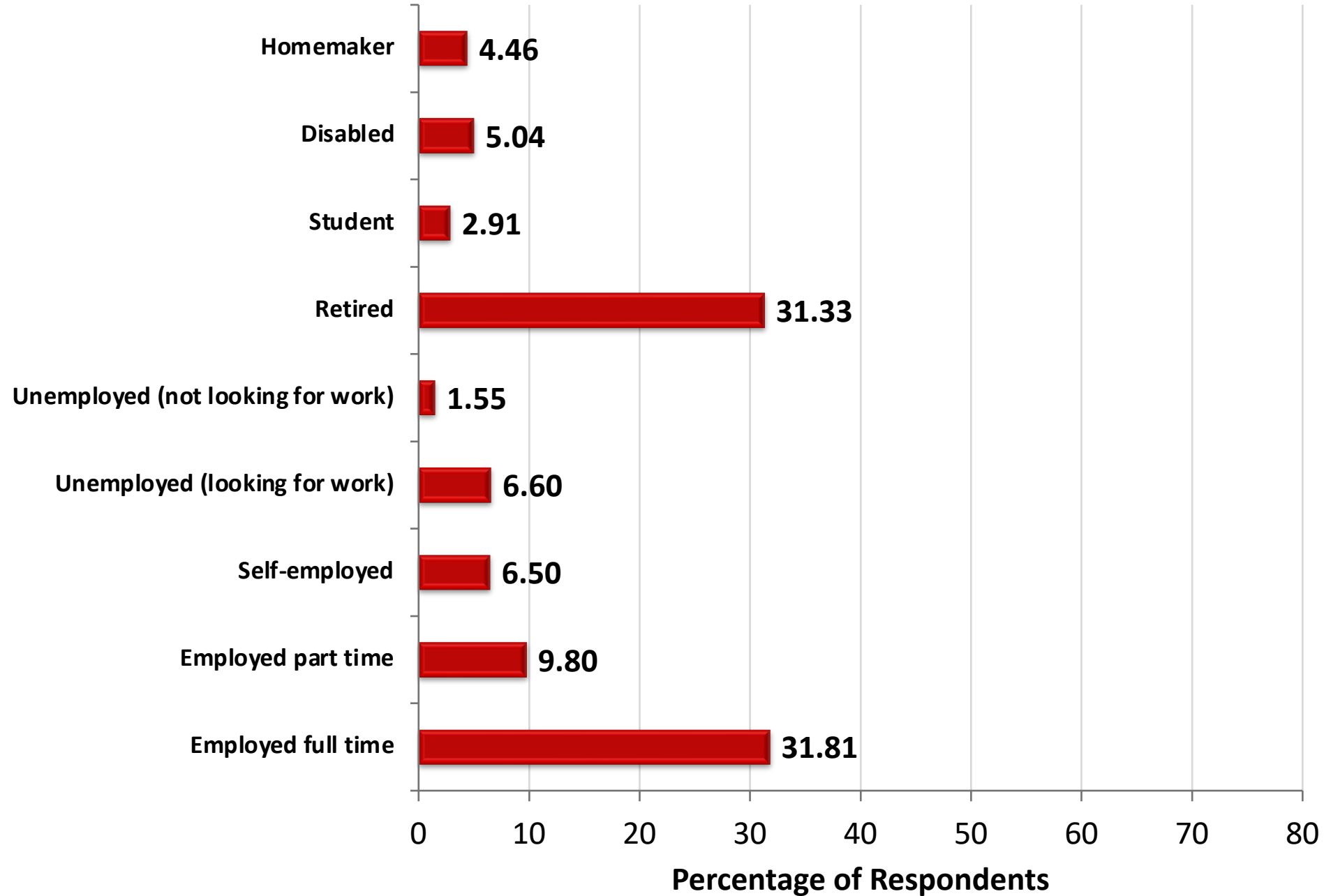
What is your racial background?



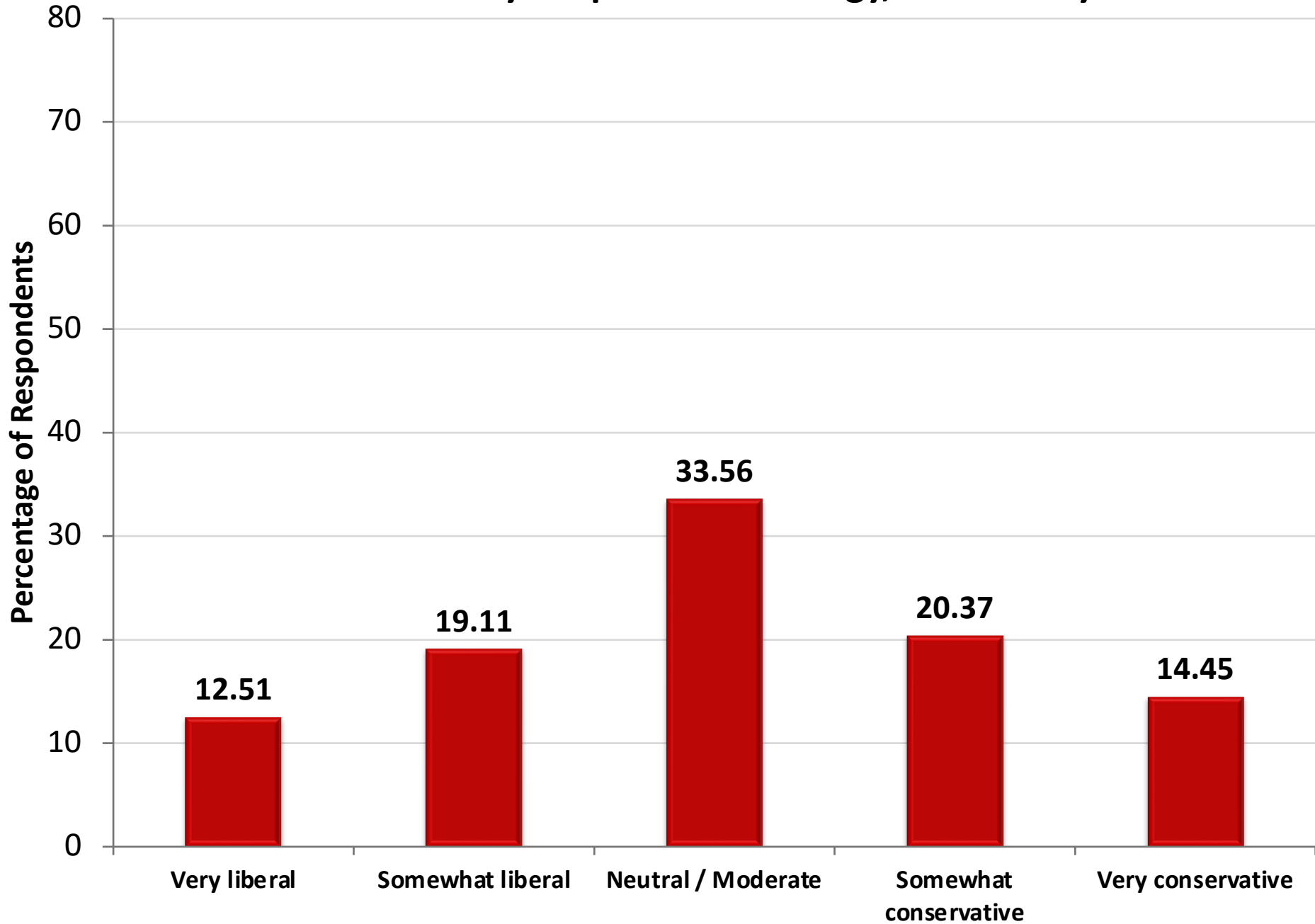
What is the highest level of education that you have completed?



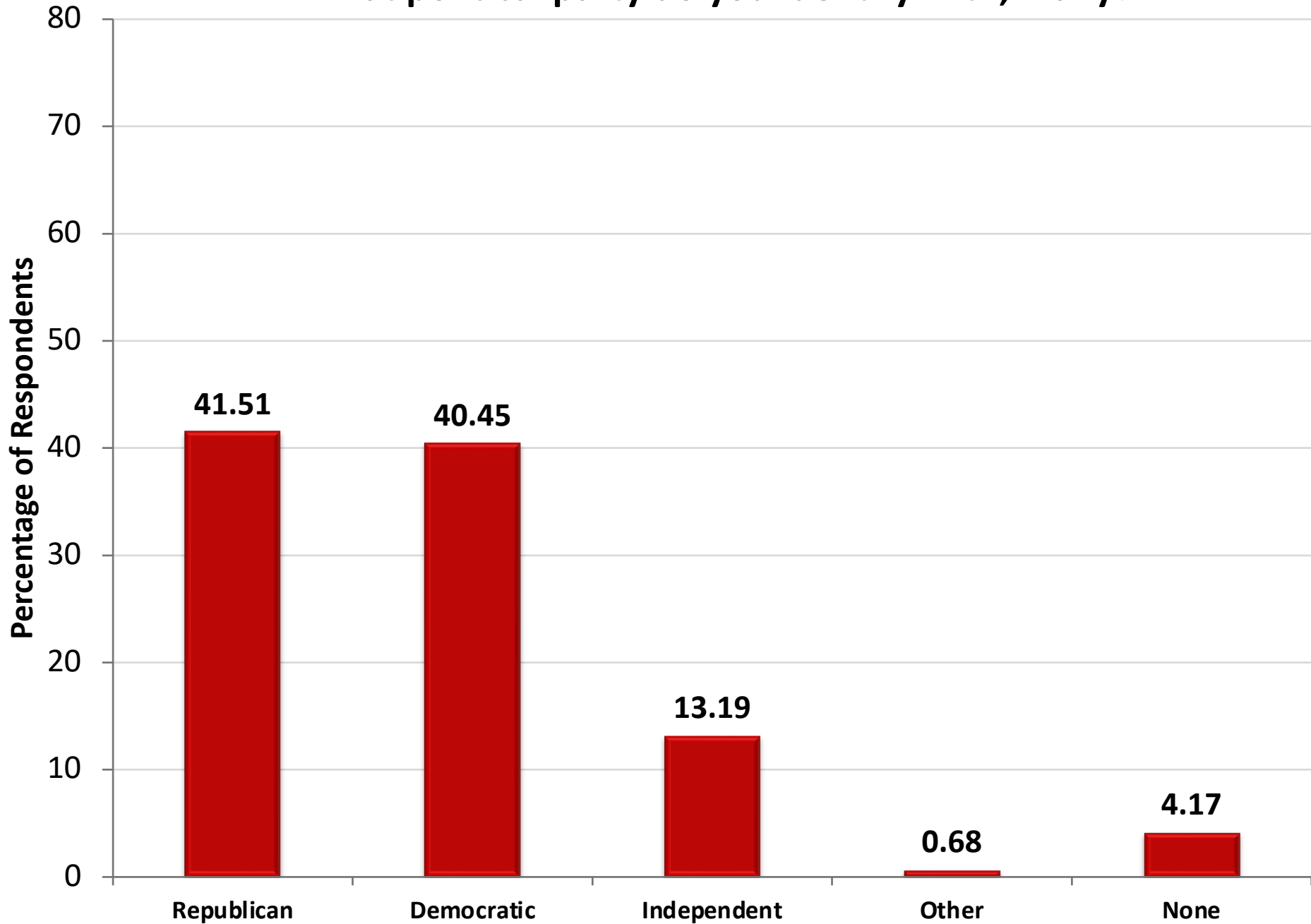
What is your current employment status?



When it comes to your political ideology, where do you lean?



What political party do you identify with, if any?



What political party do you identify with, if any?

"Other" Responses
Libertarian
Socialist
Neutral
US Pirate Party
Democrat Socialist
Libertarian
Libertarian