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Life in Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Nebraskan Communities [Research Brief]

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Nebraska Rural Poll Research Brief

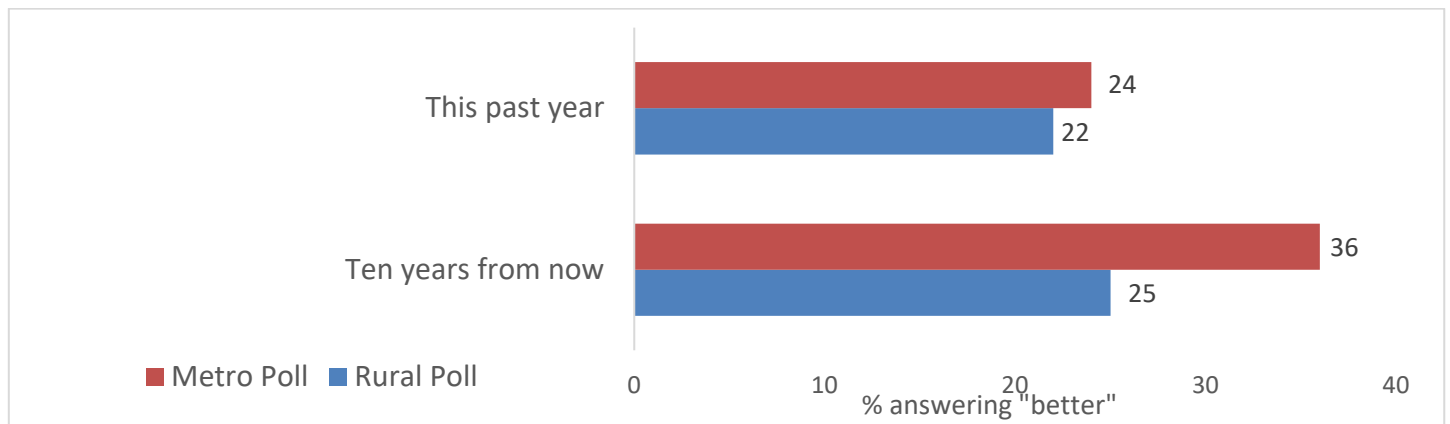
Life in Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Nebraskan Communities

Community Change

To examine perceptions of community change, respondents were asked two questions.

1. "Communities across the nation are undergoing change. When you think about this past year, would you say...My community has changed for the..." (Answer categories were better, no change or worse).
2. "Based on what you see of the situation today, do you think that, ten years from now, your community will be a worse place to live, a better place or about the same?"

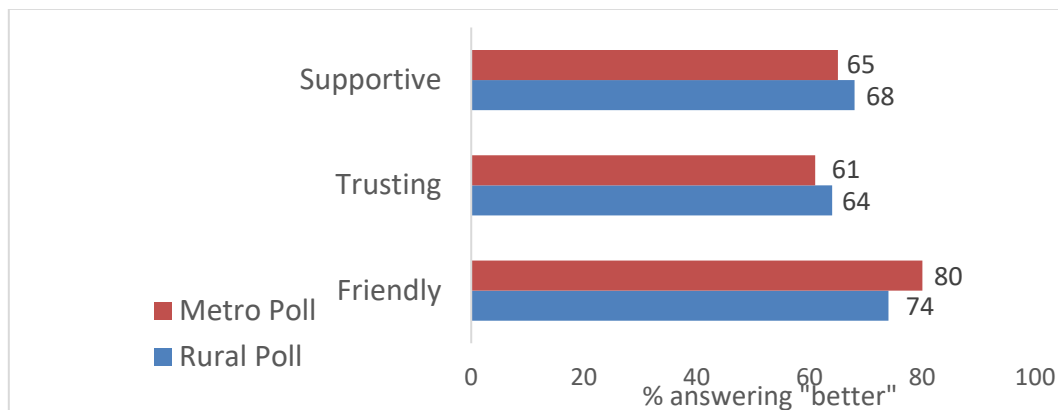
- Residents of metropolitan counties are more likely than residents of nonmetropolitan counties to believe their community will be a better place to live ten years from now.



Community Social Attributes

Respondents were also asked if they would describe their communities as friendly or unfriendly, trusting or distrusting, and supportive or hostile. For each of these three dimensions, respondents were asked to rate their community using a seven-point scale between each pair of contrasting views.

- Residents of metropolitan counties are more likely than residents of nonmetropolitan counties to rate their community as friendly.

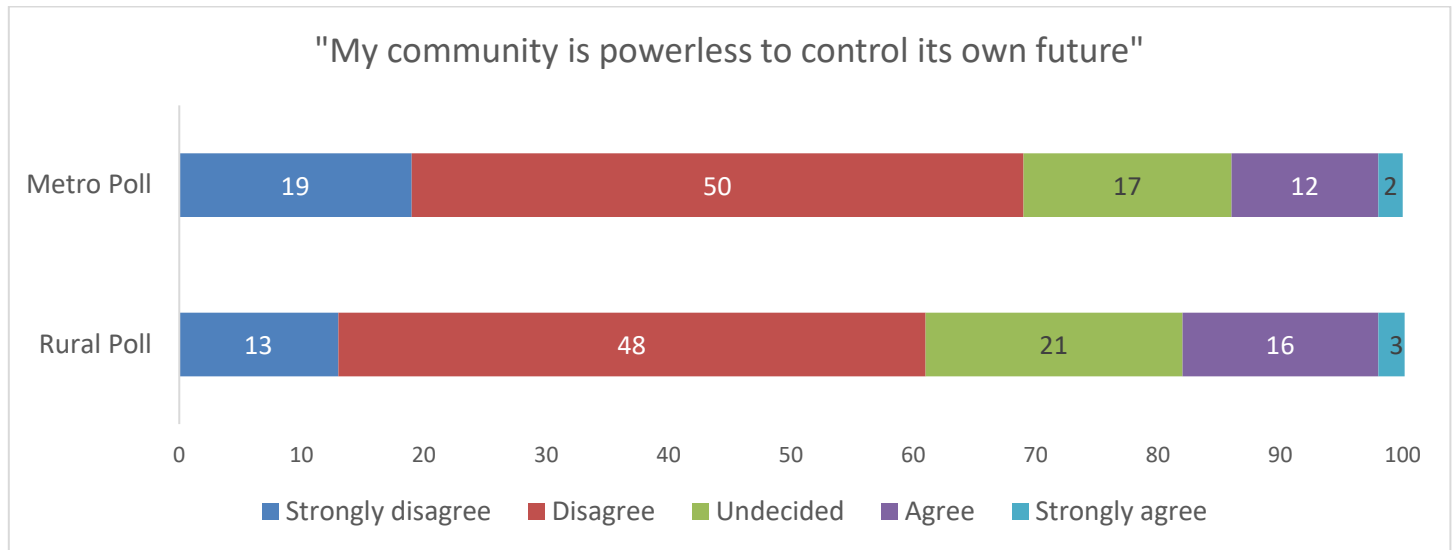


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Community Powerlessness

Respondents were next asked if they view their community as powerless. They were asked, “Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? My community is powerless to control its own future.”

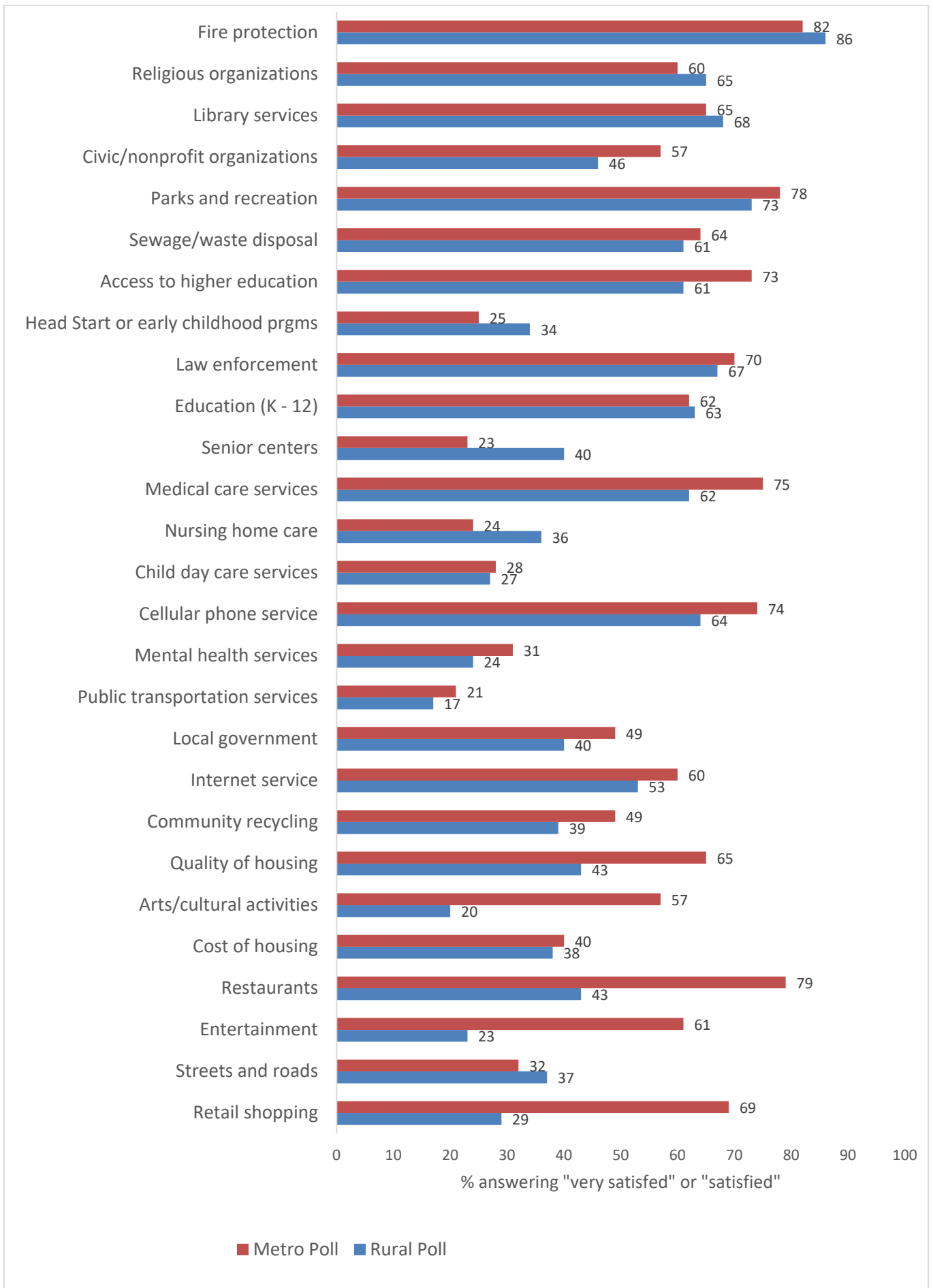
- *Metropolitan residents are more likely than nonmetropolitan residents to disagree that their community is powerless to control its own future.*



Satisfaction with Community Service and Amenities

Respondents were asked to rate how satisfied they are with 27 different services and amenities, taking into consideration cost, availability, and quality.

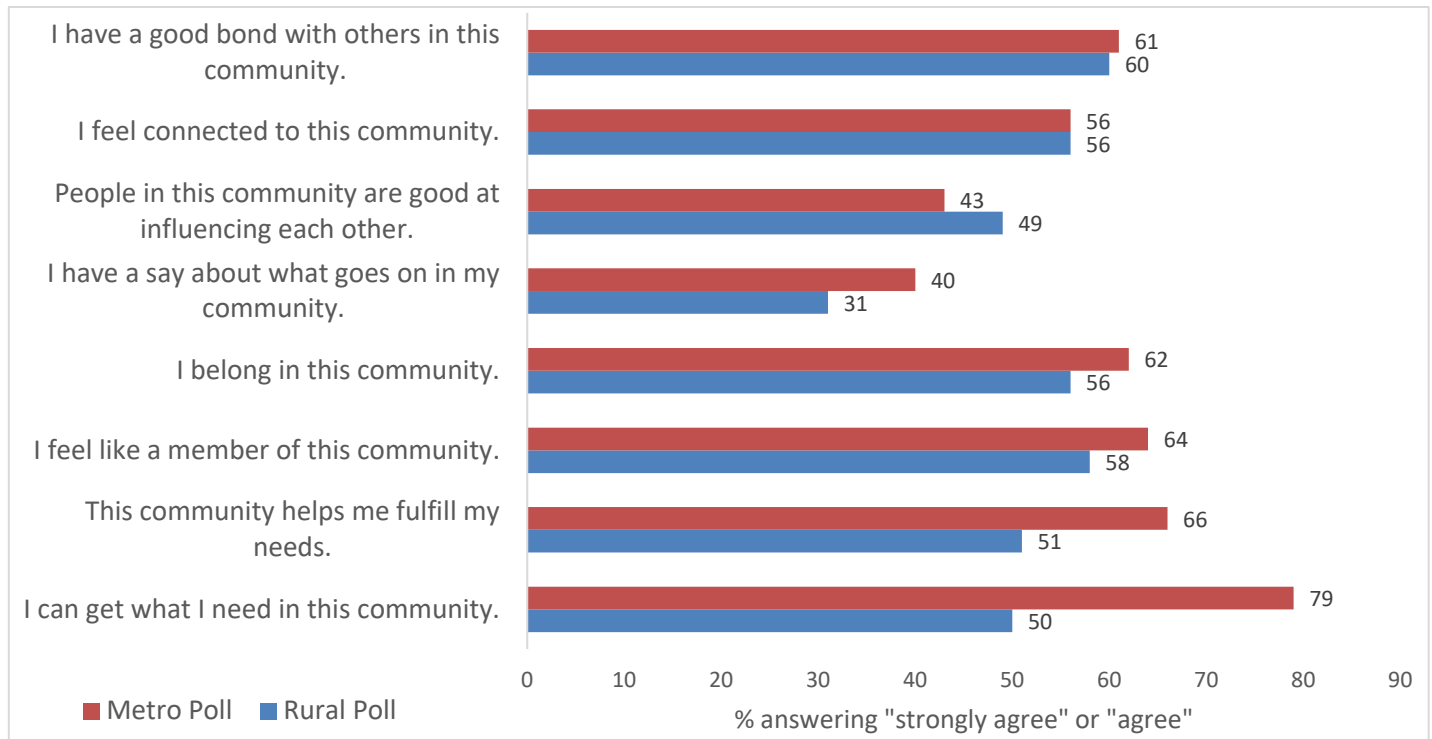
- *There were no differences in satisfaction levels between metropolitan residents and nonmetropolitan residents for 11 of the items listed.*
- *Metropolitan residents are more likely than nonmetropolitan residents to be satisfied with the following items: civic/nonprofit organizations, access to higher education, medical care services, cellular phone service, mental health services, local government, Internet services, community recycling, quality of housing, arts/cultural activities, restaurants, entertainment and retail shopping.*
- *Nonmetropolitan residents are more likely than metropolitan residents to be satisfied with: Head Start or early childhood education programs, senior centers, and nursing home care.*



Attachment to Community

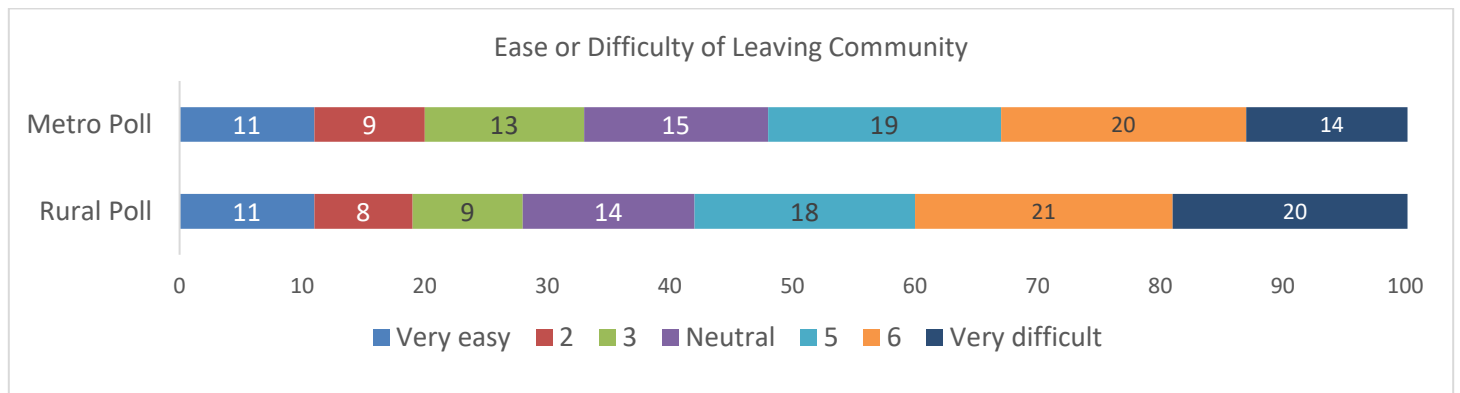
Respondents were asked the extent to which they agree or disagree with various statements about their community.

- *Metropolitan residents are more likely than nonmetropolitan residents to agree with the following statements: I have a say about what goes on in my community, I belong in this community, I feel like a member of this community, this community helps me fulfill my needs, and I can get what I need in this community.*
- *Nonmetropolitan residents are more likely than metropolitan residents to agree that people in this community are good at influencing each other.*



Respondents were asked a question about how easy or difficult it would be to leave their community. The exact question wording was “Assume you were to have a discussion in your household about leaving your community for a reasonably good opportunity elsewhere. Some people might be happy to live in a new place and meet new people. Others might be very sorry to leave. How easy or difficult would it be for your household to leave your community?” They were given a seven-point scale where 1 indicated very easy and 7 denoted very difficult.

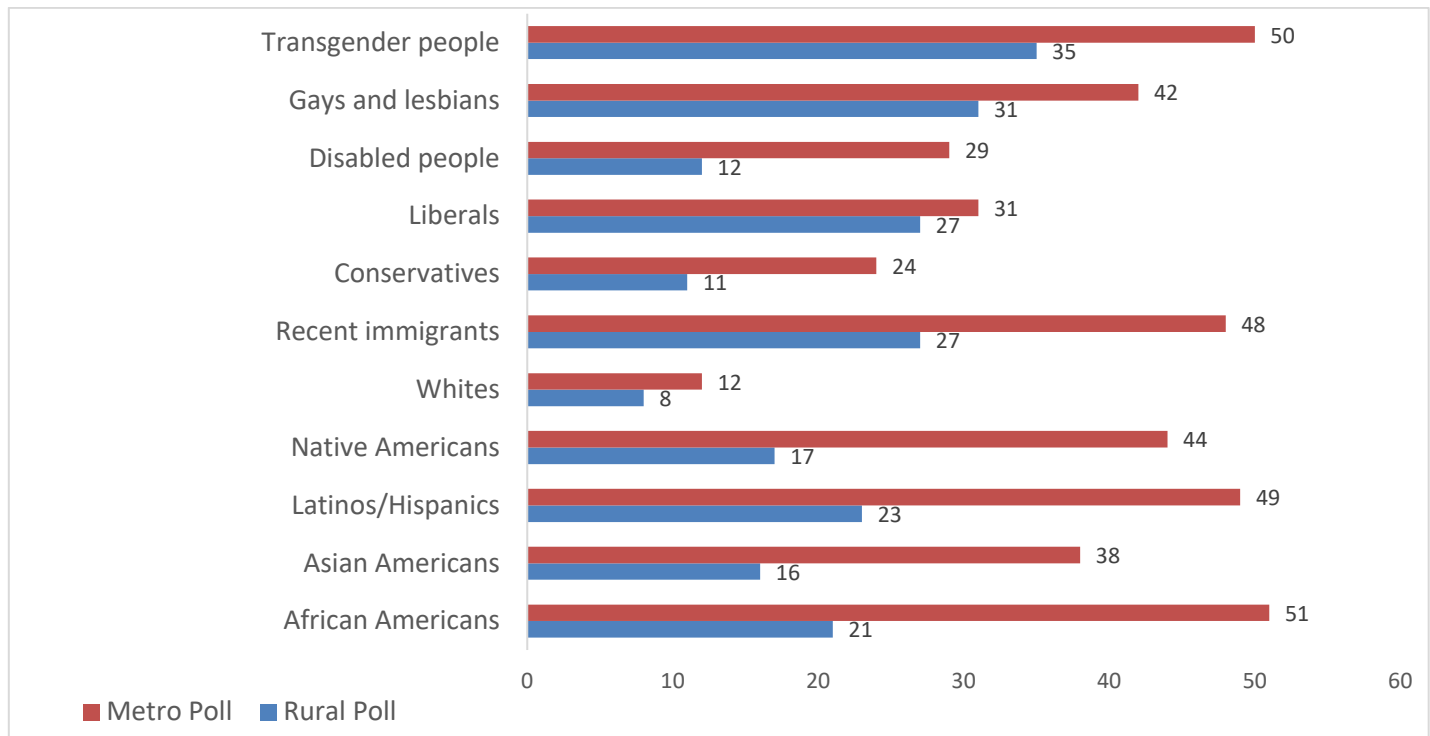
- *Answers for metropolitan and nonmetropolitan residents were very similar.*



Discrimination in Community

Respondents were next asked about discrimination in their community. Specifically, they were asked, “Generally speaking, do you think individuals in each of the following groups are discriminated against in your local community, or not?”

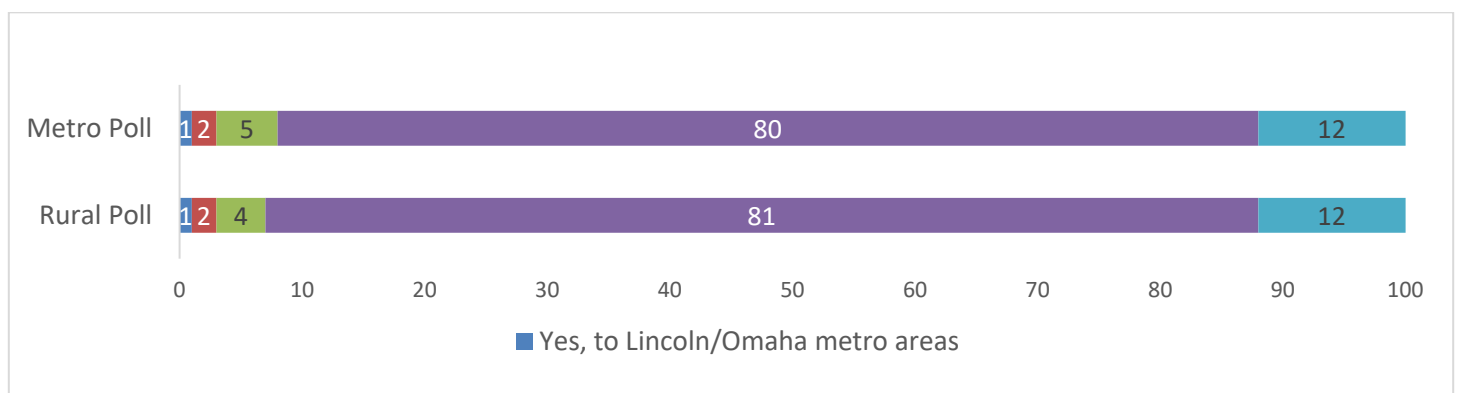
- *Metropolitan residents are more likely than nonmetropolitan residents to say the following groups are discriminated against in their community: transgender people, gays and lesbians, disabled people, conservatives, recent immigrants, Native Americans, Latinos/Hispanics, Asian Americans, and African Americans.*



Plans to Leave Community

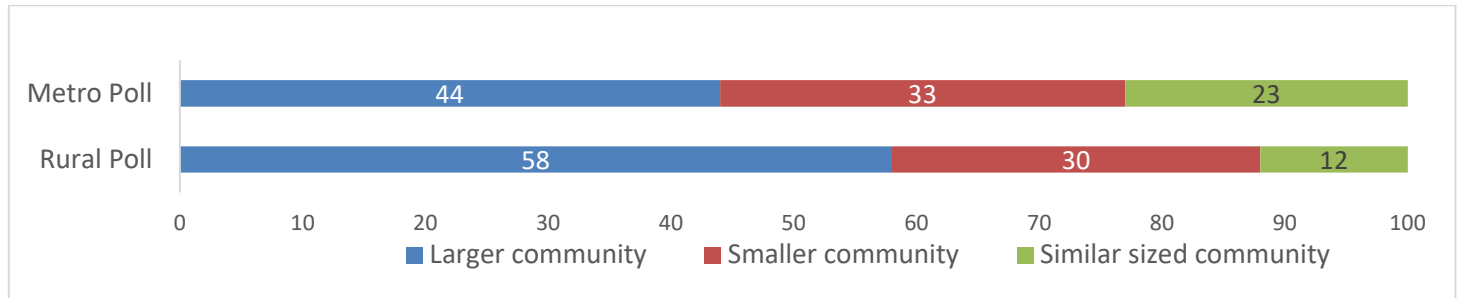
To determine respondents’ migration intentions, they were asked, “Do you plan to move from your community in the next year?” Response options included: yes, to the Lincoln/Omaha metro areas; yes, to someplace in Nebraska outside the Lincoln/Omaha metro areas; yes, to some place other than Nebraska; no; and uncertain.

- *Answers for metropolitan and nonmetropolitan residents were very similar.*



A follow-up question (asked only of those who indicated they were planning to move) asked to what size of community they were planning to move. The answer categories for this question were: in or near a community larger than your current one, in or near a community smaller than your current one, and in or near a community of the same size as your current one.

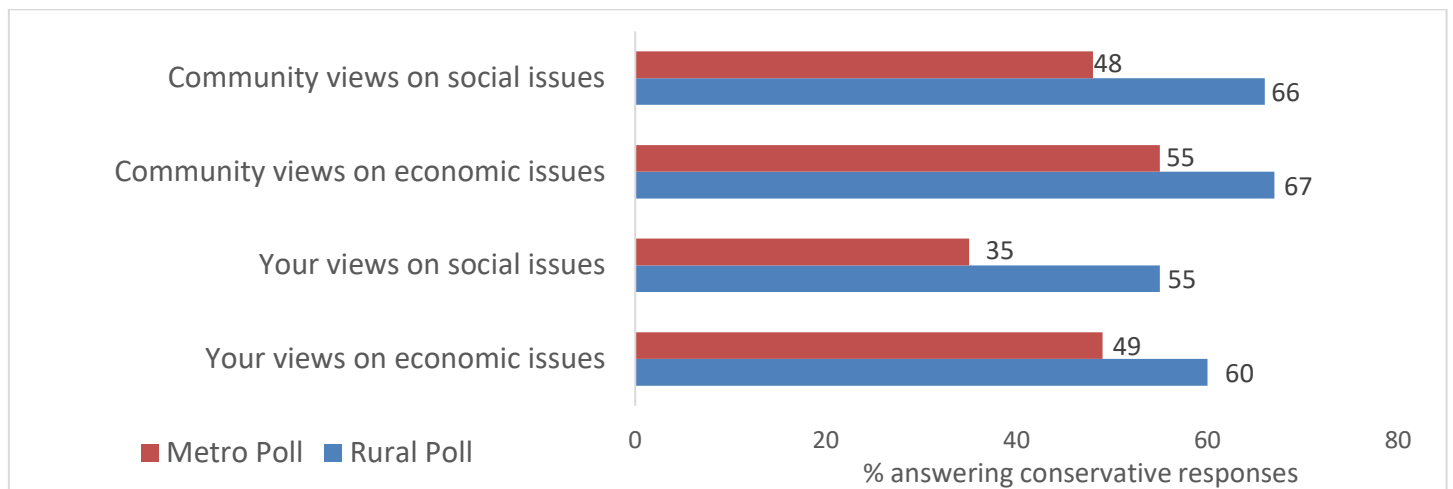
- *Nonmetropolitan residents are more likely than metropolitan residents plan to move to a larger community than their current one. Metropolitan residents are more likely than nonmetropolitan residents to plan to move to a similar sized community as their current one.*



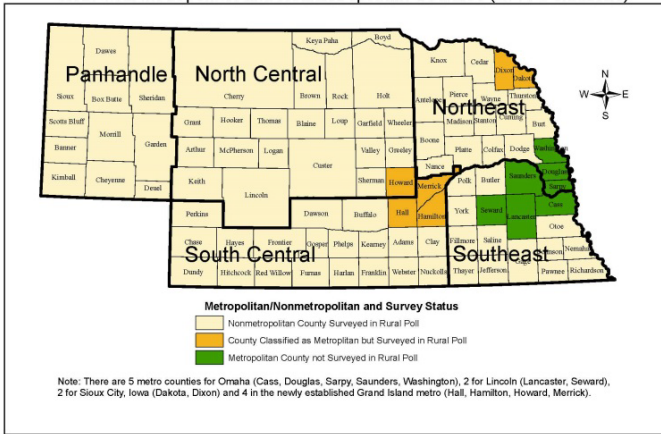
Individual and Community Political Views

Respondents were also asked to rate the political views they hold as well as the views of their community on social and economic issues. The specific question wording was, “Where would you place yourself and your community on the following scale of political views that people might hold?” They were given an eight-point scale ranging from extremely liberal to extremely conservative along with a don’t know option.

- *Nonmetropolitan residents are more likely than metropolitan residents plan to rate their views and their community views on both economic and social issues as conservative.*



Nebraska Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Counties (2013 Definitions)



Source: 2013 Metropolitan and Micropolitan Definitions, Office of Management and Budget, released 2-28-13
 Prepared by: David Drozd, Center for Public Affairs Research, University of Nebraska at Omaha - August 11, 2014

Methodology

The Nebraska Rural Poll sampled residents from non-metropolitan counties and regional trade centers in the state.

The Nebraska Metro Poll sampled the seven counties that comprise the Lincoln and Omaha metropolitan areas.

Both polls sent 4 mailings regarding or containing the surveys in the spring of 2021 and had an online response option.