



Perceptions of Gun Violence in the Sacramento Region



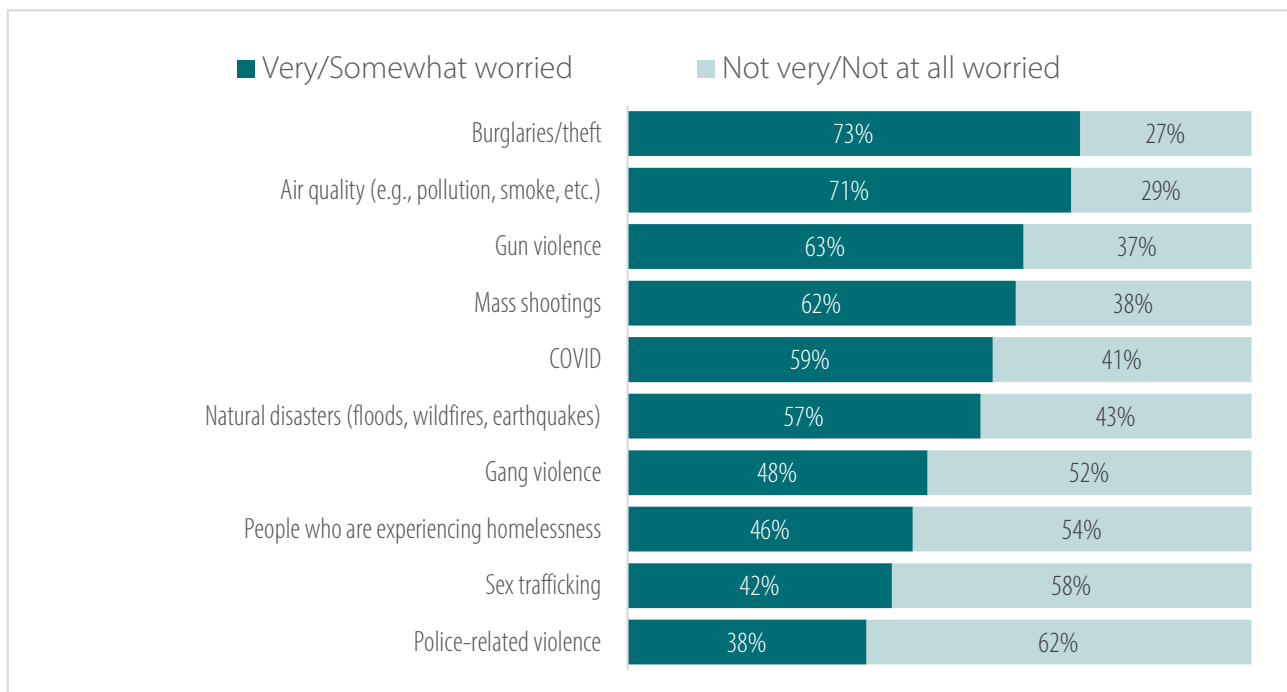
SACRAMENTO
STATE

COMMUNITY BRIEF | SEPTEMBER 2022

The Institute for Social Research at Sacramento State surveyed 1,948 residents across the Sacramento Region (El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba Counties) to better understand residents’ perceptions and experiences related to gun violence. This poll was conducted in May 2022 following the April 3rd mass shooting in Downtown Sacramento to inform the region’s efforts in addressing the statewide trend of escalating violence. In 2021, there were 98 homicides in the Sacramento Region involving firearms and the firearm related homicide rate for residents of the Sacramento Region was 4.1 deaths per 100,000 population. However, the rate of firearm related homicides varies dramatically by race and ethnicity. For example, the firearm related homicides were 2.8 for White individuals, 5.1 for Hispanic individuals, and 21.9 for Black individuals.¹

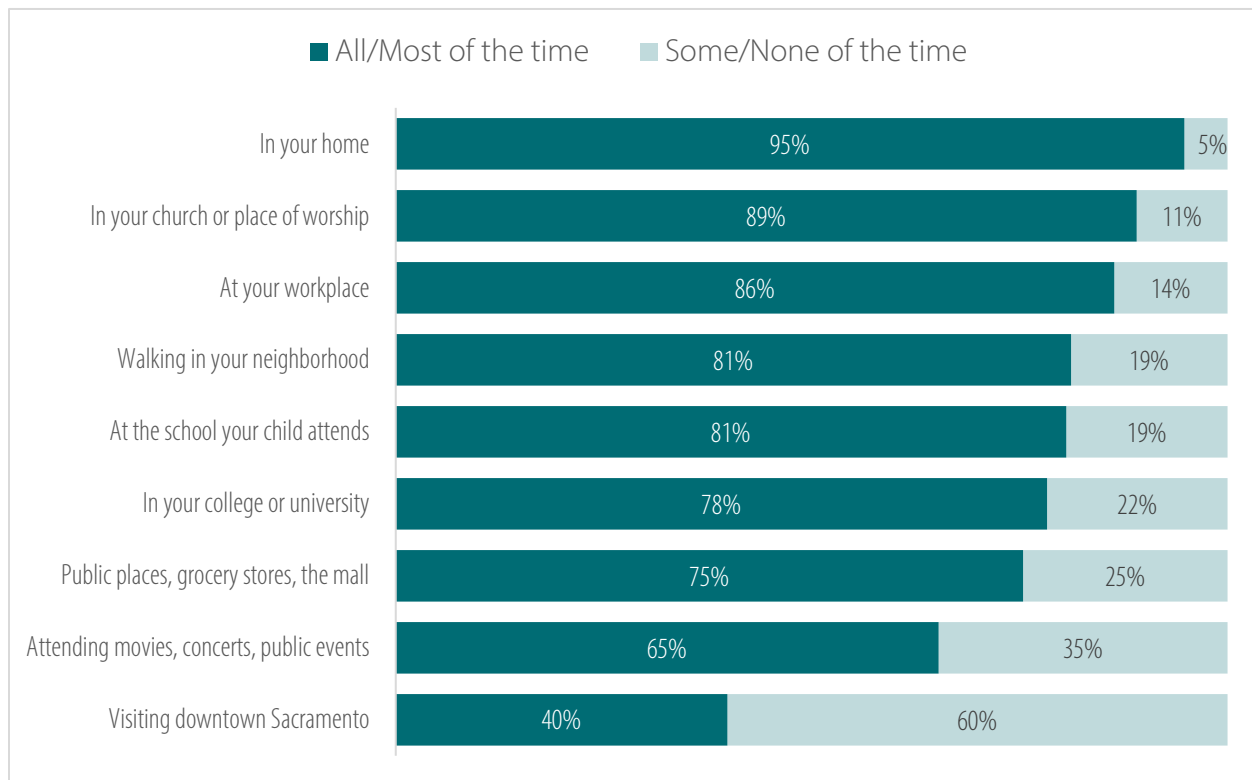
The majority of residents in the region are worried that gun violence will impact themselves or their families. Residents were asked how worried they are about the likelihood they or someone in their family would be impacted by a series of public safety issues. Most residents are worried about gun violence (63%) and mass shootings (62%). Property crimes top the list of concerns across the region, with nearly three-quarters (73%) of residents indicating that they are “very” or “somewhat worried” about burglaries and theft. In addition to concern about crime and violence in their communities, public health and environmental worries are among the most common public safety issues identified in the region.

Figure 1 | Level of Worry that Safety Issue Will Impact You or Your Family



Residents generally feel safe in those locations where they spend most of their time, such as their homes, workplaces, and neighborhoods. Residents were asked how often they generally felt safe at each of the following locations or during a particular activity. Most residents across the region feel safe “all” or “most of the time” while in their homes (95%), at their church or place of worship (89%), and at their place of work (86%). Four-out-of-five residents (81%) feel safe walking in their neighborhoods and at the school their child attends. By contrast, 60 percent of residents say they do not feel safe or only feel safe some of the time when visiting Downtown Sacramento. As noted above, the poll was conducted a month after a mass shooting occurred there.

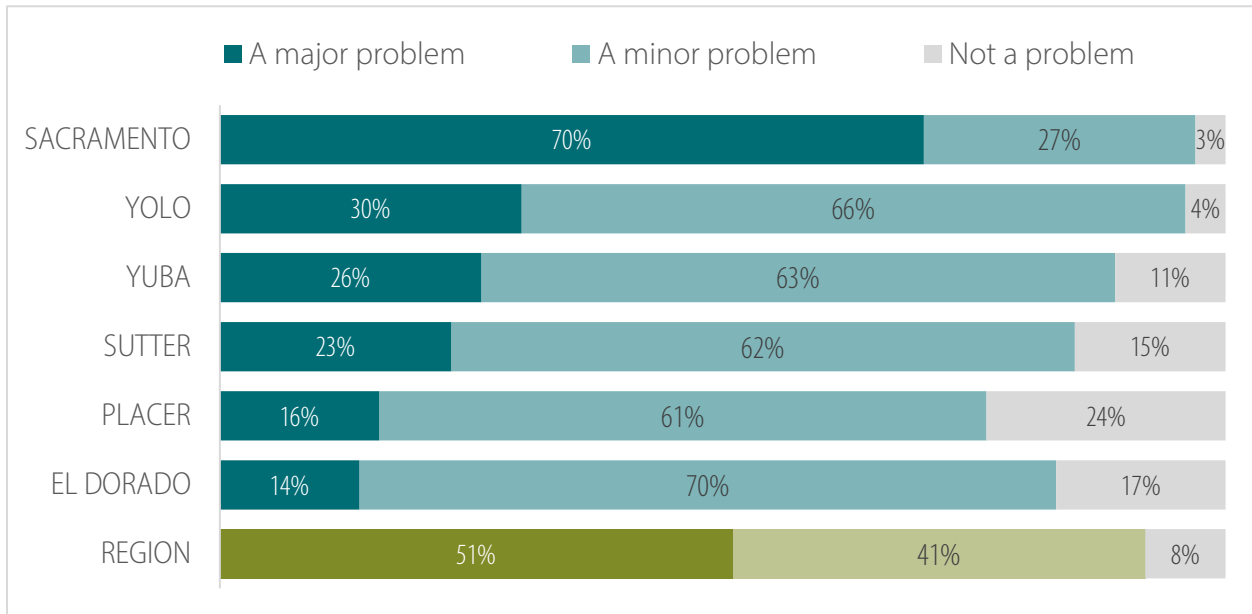
Figure 2 | General Feelings of Safety by Type of Location



Most residents are not aware of what is being done locally to address gun violence in their communities. Panelists were asked about their level of knowledge regarding the work of local governments and organizations to address gun violence. Most residents (43%) know “very little” and or have “just some” (29%) knowledge of local efforts.

Across the region, residents see gun violence as a local problem. Over 90 percent of residents indicate that gun violence is a problem within their county, with 51 percent indicating it is “a major problem” and 27 percent “a minor problem”. Almost all Sacramento County residents (97%) feel that gun violence is a problem, with 70 percent reporting that gun violence is a “major problem”. Almost all of Yolo County (96%) similarly felt that gun violence was an issue, however only 30 percent felt it is “a major problem”.

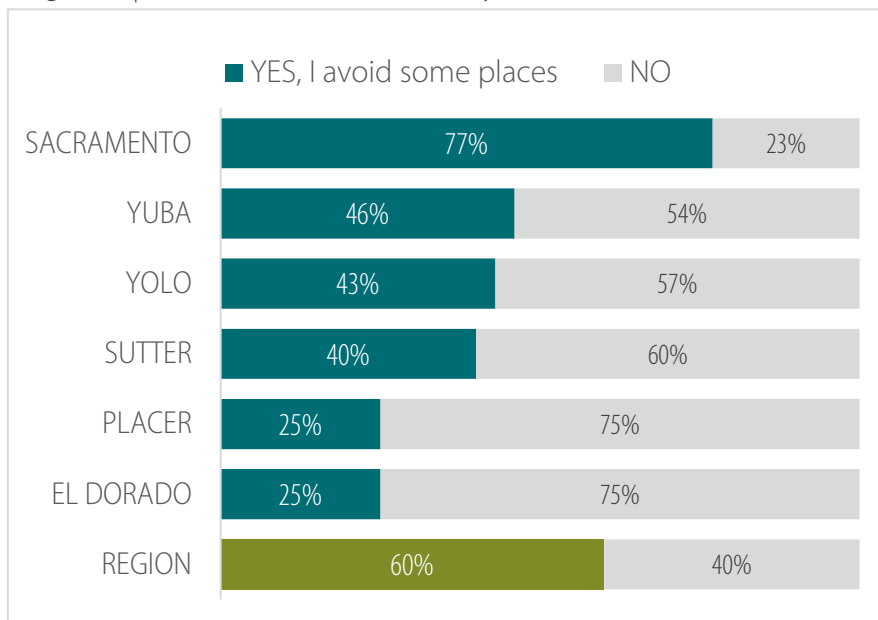
Figure 4 | Perceived Seriousness of Gun Violence within County



A majority of the region’s residents report avoiding local places due to concerns about gun violence.

Three-out-of-five (60%) residents across the region avoid specific areas in their county due to concerns of gun violence. Over three-quarters (77%) of Sacramento County residents avoid neighborhoods or other places. The majority of residents in El Dorado, Placer, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba counties do not avoid places in their county due to safety concerns. When asked to identify the specific neighborhoods they avoid due to gun violence, Sacramento County residents most frequently identify South Sacramento, Downtown Sacramento, Del Paso Heights, Oak Park, and North Highlands.

Figure 5 | Avoidance of Areas in County Due to Perceived Gun Violence



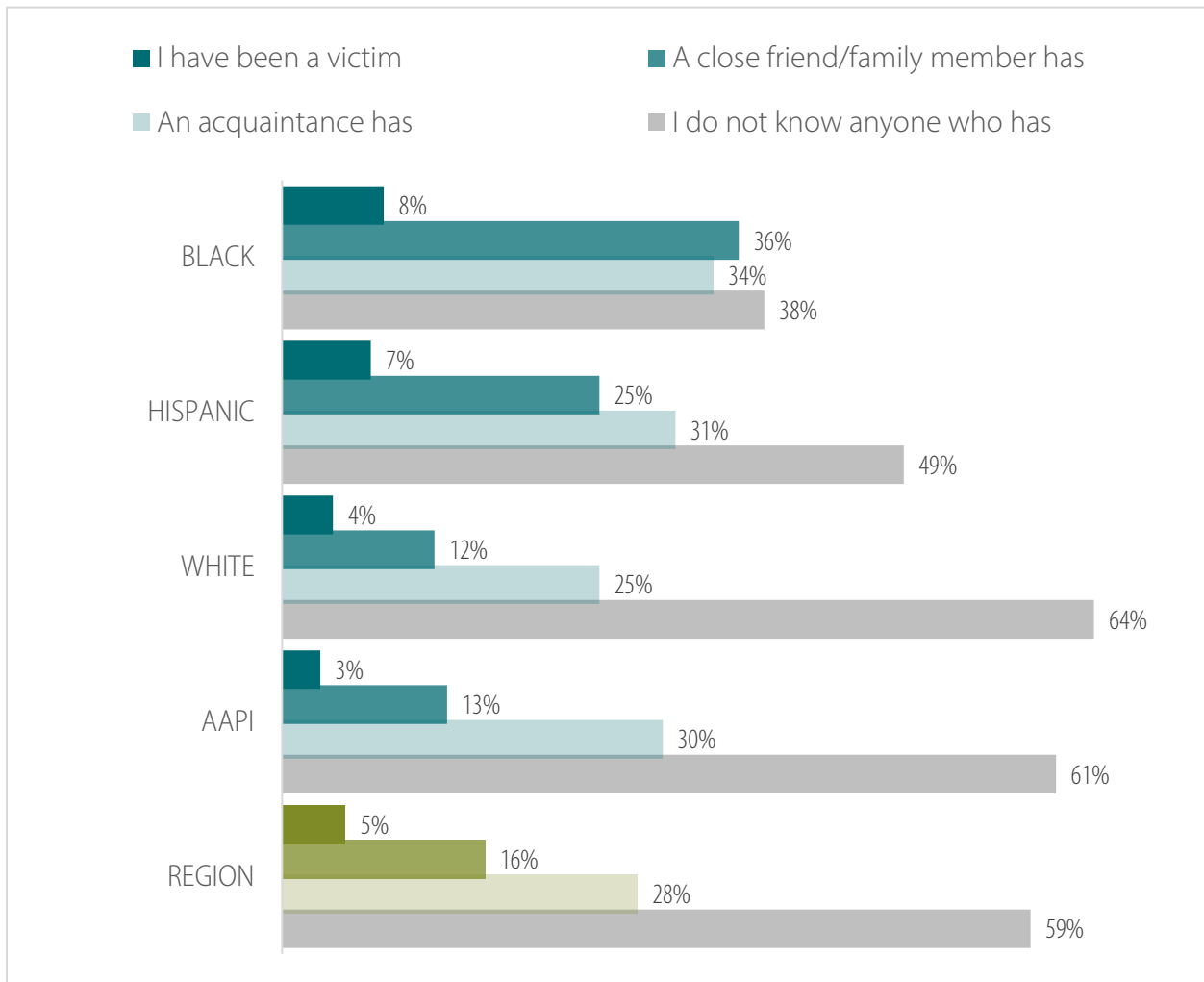
“I don't like attending New Year's or 4th of July Events in Downtown Sacramento, worried about fights breaking out or someone trying to bring a gun to these sorts of events.”

“I live in Del Paso Heights [and have lived] in other areas in Northern Sacramento and I never have walked around in my 20 years of living here.”

Four-in-ten residents in the region report a personal experience with gun violence.

Residents were asked if they or someone that they know had been a victim of gun violence. Forty-one percent of residents have some type of personal experience with gun violence. A total of five percent of the region report being a victim of gun violence themselves. Sixteen percent have had a close friend or relative who has been a victim, and another 28 percent report knowing an acquaintance who has been a victim of gun violence.

Figure 6 | Personal Experience with Gun Violence by Race/Ethnicity



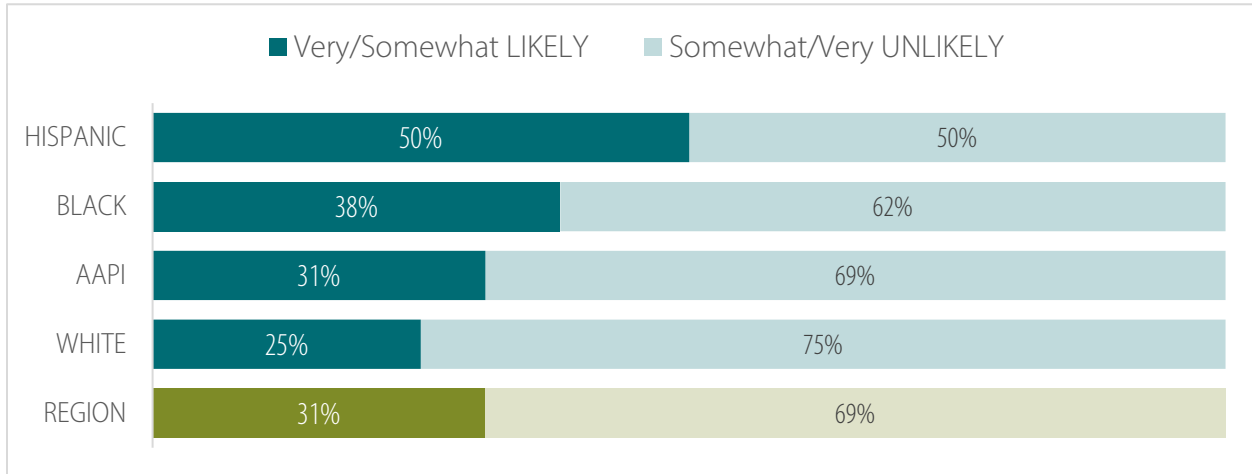
Gun violence in the region has a disproportionate impact on residents of color.

A significantly higher proportion of residents of color report personal experiences with gun violence. Eight percent of Black and seven percent of Hispanic residents have been personally victimized by gun violence compared to four percent of White residents.

Residents were also asked about the likelihood that they would personally, or someone in their family would be, a future victim of gun violence. Half (50%) of Hispanic residents and 38 percent of Black residents felt it was “very likely” or “somewhat likely” that they would have a personal experience with

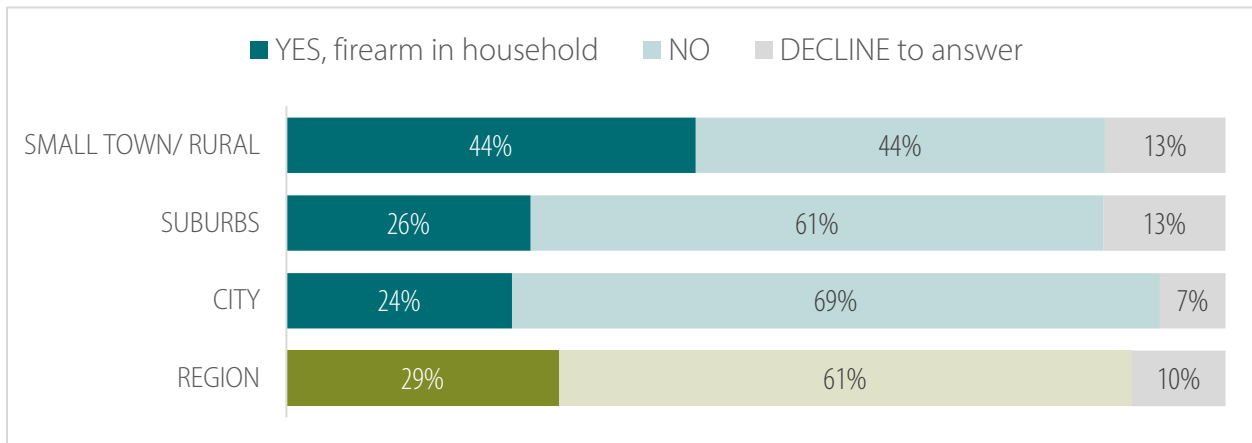
gun violence in the future. By comparison, 25 percent of White residents felt like there was a likelihood that they would be victimized by gun violence in the future.

Figure 7 | Perceived Likelihood of Experiencing Gun Violence in the Future



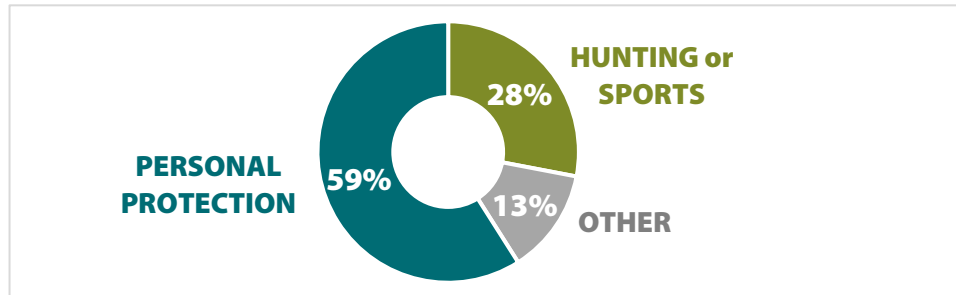
Residents in the region who report having a firearm in their home, mostly do so for personal protection. Panelists were asked if they kept firearms in or around their home and the main reason for owning one. Across the region, about 29 percent of residents report having a firearm in their home. More residents living in small towns or rural areas own a firearm (44%) compared to those who live in a city (24%).

Figure 8 | Resident Has a Firearm In or Around Home by Urbanicity



Residents reporting a firearm in their household were asked the main reason for possession. More than half (59%) of residents in the region indicated the primary reason for firearm ownership is for personal protection. An additional 28 percent report that their firearms are primarily for hunting or sports. Among gun owners, a large majority (71%) report feeling safer in their homes because they have a firearm.

Figure 9 | Primary Reason for Firearm in Home



The region's perception of gun violence has been greatly impacted by current events and the frequency of mass shootings, both nationally and locally. Gun violence has grown in our communities and is perceived by the majority of residents as a local problem, especially in the more urban counties in the region. Overall, gun violence has touched a high proportion of the region's residents, with victimization and the concern about future victimization disproportionately impacting people of color. There is clear need for continued dialogue between community members, policy makers, and advocates to create equitable policies and programs that create safe neighborhoods for all residents.

Local law enforcement, governments, and organizations in the region have a considerable amount of work ahead to mitigate the rising levels of gun violence in our communities, but also to communicate to the public about the work that is already underway to address these threats to public safety. While not explicitly linked to the increase in gun violence within the region, the majority of residents with a firearm in their household report that it makes them feel safer in their homes. Perceptions of gun violence in the Greater Sacramento region underscore the importance of efforts by governments and community leaders to address residents' persistent concerns about public safety. The safety and well-being of every individual across the region in their day-to-day life fundamentally impacts the community's long-term ability to thrive and prosper.



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The Sacramento Regional Panel is an ongoing research collaboration between the Institute for Social Research and Valley Vision. Survey data informs policymakers and stakeholders on key regional issues by providing on-the-ground public engagement data. The survey panel is made up of approximately 3,000 randomly selected households from Sacramento, Yolo, El Dorado, Placer, Sutter, and Yuba counties. Read more about ISR's survey panels at www.csus.edu/isr. This brief on the Perceptions of Gun Violence is the last in a series of three highlighting findings from a poll conducted in May 2022 about issues of community safety and well-being. The poll's margin of error is +/- 2.2%.

¹ CDC Provision Mortality Statistics, 2021

The majority of residents are worried that gun violence will impact themselves or their families.

Table 1 | How worried are you that you or someone in your family will be impacted by the following issues?

Issues	Very worried		Somewhat worried		Not very worried		Not at all worried		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	#	%	#	%	%
Air quality (e.g., pollution, smoke, etc.)	517	27%	857	44%	379	20%	180	9%	1,933	100%
Mass shootings	456	24%	737	38%	502	26%	223	12%	1,918	100%
Gun violence	434	23%	774	41%	476	25%	221	12%	1,904	100%
Burglaries/theft	450	23%	947	49%	432	22%	97	5%	1,927	100%
COVID	367	19%	756	39%	490	26%	305	16%	1,917	100%
Gang violence	332	17%	588	31%	658	34%	337	18%	1,915	100%
Sex trafficking	315	17%	484	26%	571	30%	516	27%	1,886	100%
People who are experiencing homelessness	299	16%	562	30%	494	26%	528	28%	1,882	100%
Natural disasters (floods, wildfires, earthquakes)	290	15%	796	41%	593	31%	240	13%	1,918	100%
Police-related violence	236	12%	499	26%	537	28%	651	34%	1,923	100%

Residents generally feel safe in those locations where they spend most of their time, such as their homes, workplaces, and neighborhoods.

Table 2 | In general do you feel safe ...

Location	All of the time		Most of the time		Some of the time		None of the time		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	#	%	#	%	%
In your home	1,002	51%	844	43%	95	5%	7	<1%	1,948	100%
In your church or place of worship	399	50%	315	39%	74	9%	14	2%	802	100%
At your workplace	479	39%	584	47%	159	13%	9	1%	1,230	100%
At the school your child attends	262	35%	338	45%	133	18%	12	2%	744	100%
Walking in your neighborhood	627	32%	947	49%	318	16%	48	2%	1,940	100%
In your college or university	147	25%	319	54%	125	21%	4	1%	596	100%
In public places, such as grocery stores or the mall	273	14%	1,186	61%	435	22%	41	2%	1,936	100%
Attending movies, concerts, and other public events	152	8%	1,025	57%	536	30%	90	5%	1,803	100%
Visiting Downtown Sacramento	64	4%	651	36%	828	46%	251	14%	1,794	100%

Across the region, residents see gun violence as a problem.

Table 3a | How serious of a problem do you think gun violence is in your **immediate neighborhood**?

Gun Violence in Neighborhood	A major problem		A minor problem		Not a problem		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
EL DORADO	5	3%	51	37%	83	60%	140	100%
PLACER	14	5%	73	24%	213	71%	300	100%
SACRAMENTO	255	22%	490	43%	407	35%	1,152	100%
SUTTER	7	10%	24	36%	36	54%	66	100%
YOLO	23	14%	58	36%	81	50%	162	100%
YUBA	13	21%	26	43%	23	37%	62	100%
REGION	316	17%	723	38%	842	45%	1,882	100%

Results are significant at the $p < .001$ level.

Table 3b | How serious of a problem do you think gun violence is in areas close to **where you live and/or work**?

Gun Violence in Areas Nearby	A major problem		A minor problem		Not a problem		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
EL DORADO	7	5%	64	46%	67	49%	139	100%
PLACER	39	13%	117	39%	144	48%	299	100%
SACRAMENTO	378	33%	536	47%	226	20%	1,141	100%
SUTTER	17	26%	29	44%	20	30%	66	100%
YOLO	35	21%	77	47%	51	31%	162	100%
YUBA	12	20%	31	51%	17	29%	60	100%
REGION	488	26%	854	46%	525	28%	1,867	100%

Results are significant at the $p < .001$ level.

Table 3c | How serious of a problem do you think gun violence is in **other areas within your county**?

Counties	A major problem		A minor problem		Not a problem		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
EL DORADO	19	14%	95	70%	23	17%	136	100%
PLACER	46	16%	179	61%	70	24%	295	100%
SACRAMENTO	790	70%	308	27%	34	3%	1,132	100%
SUTTER	15	23%	40	62%	10	15%	65	100%
YOLO	48	30%	104	66%	6	4%	158	100%
YUBA	14	26%	34	63%	6	11%	54	100%
REGION	932	51%	760	41%	149	8%	1,840	100%

Results are significant at the $p < .001$ level.

A majority of the region's residents report avoiding local places due to concerns about gun violence.

Table 4 | Are there any neighborhoods or places within your county that you try to avoid due to concerns about gun violence?

Avoid Areas in County Due to Gun Violence	Yes		No		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
EL DORADO	33	25%	100	75%	133	100%
PLACER	74	25%	216	75%	290	100%
SACRAMENTO	855	77%	260	23%	1,115	100%
SUTTER	27	40%	39	60%	66	100%
YOLO	68	43%	90	57%	158	100%
YUBA	28	46%	34	54%	62	100%
REGION	1,085	60%	738	40%	1,823	100%

Results are significant at the $p < .01$ level.

Table 4a | [By Urbanicity] Are there any neighborhoods or places within your county that you try to avoid due to concerns about gun violence?

Avoid Areas in County Due to Gun Violence	Yes		No		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
CITY residents	520	67%	255	33%	775	100%
SUBURBS residents	404	60%	265	40%	669	100%
SMALL TOWN/RURAL residents	157	42%	218	58%	375	100%

Results are significant at the $p < .001$ level.

Four-in-ten residents in the region report a personal experience with gun violence.

Table 5 | Have you or someone that you know personally been a victim of gun violence? (Select all that apply)

Victim of Gun Violence	SACRAMENTO County		ALL OTHER Counties		REGION	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
I have been a victim of gun violence.	48	4%	37	5%	86	5%
A close friend or family member has been the victim of gun violence.	201	18%	90	13%	291	16%
An acquaintance (e.g. coworker, neighbor, a friend-of-a-friend, etc.) has been a victim of gun violence.	361	32%	153	21%	513	28%
I do not know anyone who has been a victim of violence.	615	54%	478	67%	1,093	59%
Total	1,136	100%	713	100%	1,849	100%

Gun violence in the region has a disproportionate impact on residents of color.

Table 5a | [By Race] Have you or someone that you know personally been a victim of gun violence? (Select all that apply)

Victim of Gun Violence	White		Hispanic		Black		Asian and Pacific Islanders		Other	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
I have been...	46	4%	23	7%	8	8%	8	3%	-	-
A close friend or family member...	130	12%	85	25%	35	36%	32	13%	8	17%
An acquaintance...	280	25%	108	31%	33	34%	77	30%	16	35%
I do not know anyone	711	64%	169	49%	37	38%	155	61%	22	48%
Total	1,107	100%	346	100%	97	100%	254	100%	45	100%

Table 6 | How likely do you think you or someone in your family will be a future victim of gun violence?

Future Victim of Gun Violence	Very/Somewhat LIKELY		Somewhat/Very UNLIKELY		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
EL DORADO	34	26%	100	74%	134	100%
PLACER	66	22%	227	78%	292	100%
SACRAMENTO	385	35%	718	65%	1,103	100%
SUTTER	14	22%	50	78%	64	100%
YOLO	41	26%	117	74%	159	100%
YUBA	21	35%	38	65%	58	100%
REGION	561	31%	1,249	69%	1,810	100%

Results are significant at the $p < .05$ level.

Table 6a | [By Race] How likely do you think you or someone in your family will be a future victim of gun violence?

Future Victim of Gun Violence	Very/Somewhat LIKELY		Somewhat/Very UNLIKELY		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
HISPANIC	170	50%	173	50%	343	100%
BLACK	33	38%	52	62%	85	100%
OTHER	15	37%	26	63%	42	100%
ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER	74	31%	167	69%	240	100%
WHITE	270	25%	830	75%	1,100	100%
REGION	561	31%	1,249	69%	1,810	100%

Results are significant at the $p < .001$ level.

Most residents are not aware of what is being done locally to address gun violence in their communities.

Table 7 | How much do you know about the work local governments and organizations are doing to address gun violence?

Knowledge of work addressing gun violence	REGION	
	#	%
A lot	91	5%
Just some	543	29%
Very little	795	43%
Nothing at all	433	23%
Total	1,862	100%

Residents who report having a firearm in their home, mostly do so for personal protection.

Table 8 | Are any firearms kept in or around your home? Including those kept in a garage, outdoor storage area, car, truck, or other motor vehicle?

Counties	Yes		No		Decline to Answer		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
EL DORADO	68	12%	63	5%	14	7%	144	8%
PLACER	105	19%	156	14%	36	19%	297	16%
SACRAMENTO	295	54%	754	65%	116	60%	1,165	61%
SUTTER	35	6%	21	2%	11	6%	67	4%
YOLO	24	4%	126	11%	13	6%	163	9%
YUBA	21	4%	36	3%	5	3%	62	3%
REGION	547	100%	1,155	100%	195	100%	1,898	100%

Results are significant at the $p < .001$ level.

Table 8a | [By Urbanicity] Are any firearms kept in or around your home? Including those kept in a garage, outdoor storage area, car, truck, or other motor vehicle?

Firearm Possession	CITY		SUBURBS		SMALL TOWN/RURAL		REGION	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Yes	194	24%	179	26%	174	44%	547	29%
No	556	69%	422	61%	172	44%	1,150	61%
Decline to answer	57	7%	88	13%	50	13%	195	10%
Total	808	100%	689	100%	396	100%	1,892	100%

Results are significant at the $p < .001$ level.

Table 9 | What is the main reason there are firearms in or around your home?

Reason for Firearm Possession	REGION	
	#	%
Personal Protection	324	59%
Hunting or Sport	153	28%
Inherited or Heirloom	31	6%
Work	22	4%
Decline or Other	18	3%
Total	547	100%

Table 10 | Do you feel safer because there are firearms in or around your home?

Feelings of Safety Among Firearm Owners	REGION	
	#	%
Owner feels safer	372	71%
Owner does not feel safer	150	29%
Total	522	100%

Cross tabulations were tested for statistical significance with chi-square tests of independence using SPSS Complex Samples. The results of testing are noted below each table when applicable. Note: In some tables, the total frequencies do not equal the sum of the individual variables (i.e., the total differs by a factor of one). This is due to the rounding of weighted data and does not represent an error in the calculations.

Survey Demographics

A total of 1,948 survey panelists responded to the survey. Survey responses are weighted to reflect the demographics of the region. The poll's margin of error is +/- 2.2%.

COUNTY of RESIDENCE	RESPONDENTS	
	#	%
Sacramento	1,187	61%
Placer	309	16%
Yolo	170	9%
El Dorado	148	8%
Sutter	72	4%
Yuba	62	3%
Total	1,948	100%

AGE	RESPONDENTS	
	#	%
18 to 24	176	9%
25 to 34	369	19%
35 to 44	341	18%
45 to 54	305	16%
55 to 64	329	17%
65 and over	428	22%
Total	1,948	100%

RACE & ETHNICITY	RESPONDENTS	
	#	%
White	1148	59%
Hispanic	374	19%
Asian & Pacific Islander	270	14%
Black or African American	105	5%
Other	50	3%
Total	1,948	100%

POLITICAL IDEOLOGY	RESPONDENTS	
	#	%*
Very conservative	77	4%
Conservative	302	16%
Moderate	809	42%
Progressive	534	28%
Very progressive	219	11%
Total	1,940	100%
No response	8	-

URBANICITY	RESPONDENTS	
	#	%*
City	834	43%
Suburbs	703	36%
Small Town/Rural	406	21%
Total	1,943	100%
No Response	5	-

* Only valid % shown

GENDER	RESPONDENTS	
	#	%
Male	852	44%
Female	1,096	56%
Total	1,948	100%

EDUCATION	RESPONDENTS	
	#	%
Up to HS Diploma	485	25%
Some College	552	28%
Associate's Degree	217	11%
Bachelor's Degree +	693	36%
Total	1,948	100%

HOUSEHOLD INCOME	RESPONDENTS	
	#	%
Less than \$15,000	125	6%
\$15,000-\$20,000	36	2%
\$20,000-\$25,000	62	3%
\$25,000-\$30,000	56	3%
\$30,000-\$40,000	132	7%
\$40,000-\$50,000	125	6%
\$50,000-\$75,000	305	16%
\$75,000-\$100,000	259	13%
\$100,000-\$150,000	393	20%
\$150,000-\$200,000	202	10%
\$200,000 or above	254	13%
Total	1,948	100%

* Only valid % shown.