
The Ottawa Police Service Traffic
Stop Race Data Collection Project
**Race Data and Traffic Stops in
Ottawa, 2013-2015**

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TSRDGP: Accountability, Transparency & Leadership by the OPS

- This project constitutes the largest and most comprehensive race data collection in Canadian policing history
- It is based on human rights principles, reflected in part with the partnership with the Ontario Human Rights Commission
- The design of the project is built on community engagement, especially with racialized communities in Ottawa
- Independent experts led the design and undertook the analysis and reporting for the TSRDGP
- The findings enable evidence-based policy and decision making with regard to bias-free policing

Progressive Policing, Community Engagement & Race Data Collection

In our view, the TSRDCP is a reflection of the commitment of the Ottawa Police Service to enhanced professionalism that meets the needs of a mixed and multicultural population by –

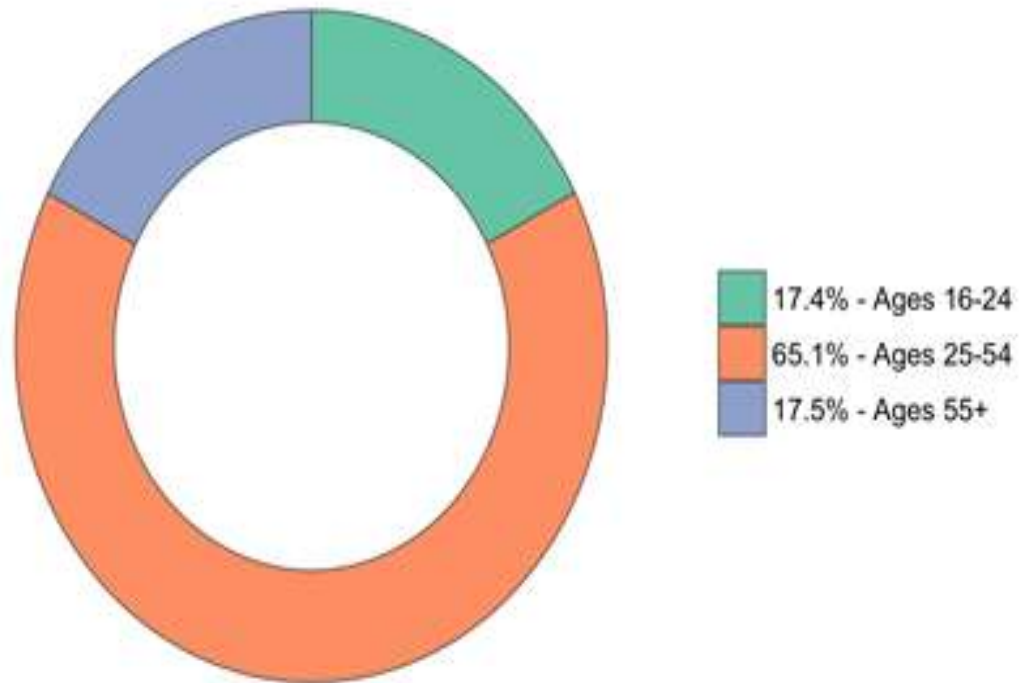
- Promoting mutual respect between law enforcement and community members.
- Providing responsive, effective and equitable policing to all residents.
- Ensuring all persons have the right to live and work in an environment that is free of police action based on racial bias and racial profiling.

Race Data and Traffic Stops in Ottawa, 2013-2015

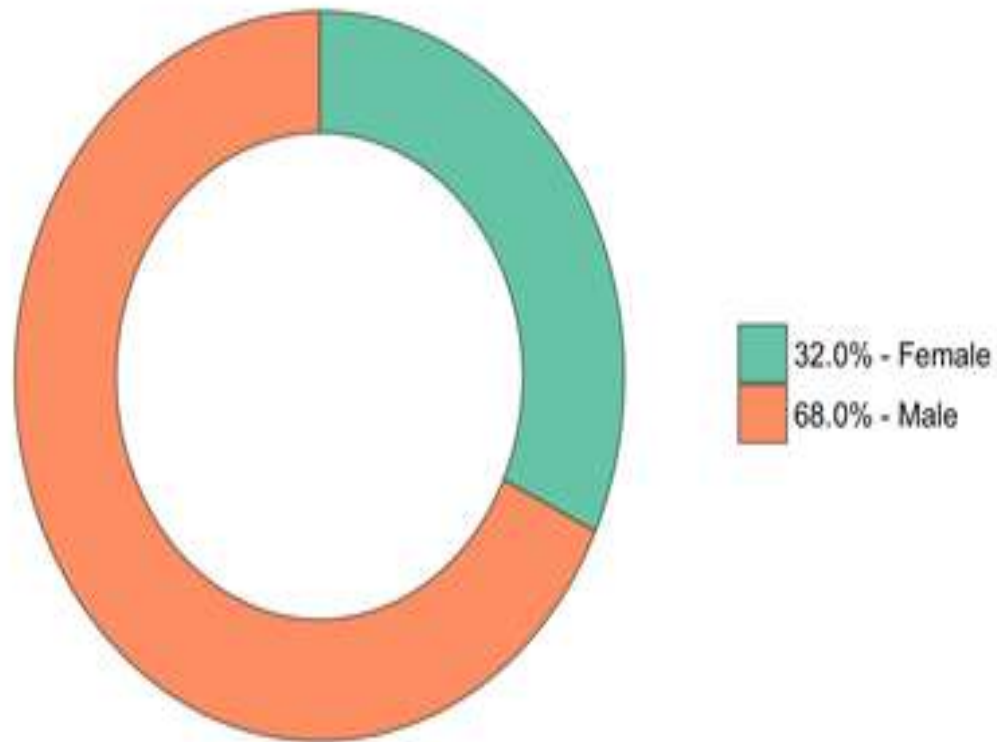
- Police officers recorded their perception of the driver's race, by observation only, for traffic stops over a two-year period from June 27, 2013 to June 26, 2015.
- A total of 81,902 records of traffic stops were examined for this Report. Each record included complete information on race, sex and age, along with complete information on police districts, reasons for traffic stops and outcomes. The record did not include the time of day nor the neighbourhood where the stop occurred.
- The officers entering the race data reported perceiving the race of the driver prior to the stop in 11.4% of the cases.

- The study examines 81, 902 traffic stops where officers recorded their perception of the driver's race: 69.3% White (56,776) , 12.3% Middle Easterner (10,066), 8.8% Black (7,238), 4.7% E.Asian/SE Asian (3,875), 2.7% S. Asian (2,195), 1.9% Other racialized minorities (1,545), and .3% Indigenous Peoples (207).
- This study is a correlational study on the relationship between race, sex, age, and traffic stops in Ottawa. It does not deal with the issue of causality. That is to say, it does not explain why and how these factors are related or not related. For this reason, the findings only provide a big picture of traffic stops in the entire capital city of Ottawa – a picture which provides a fresh and pioneering perspective on race and traffic stops in Canada.

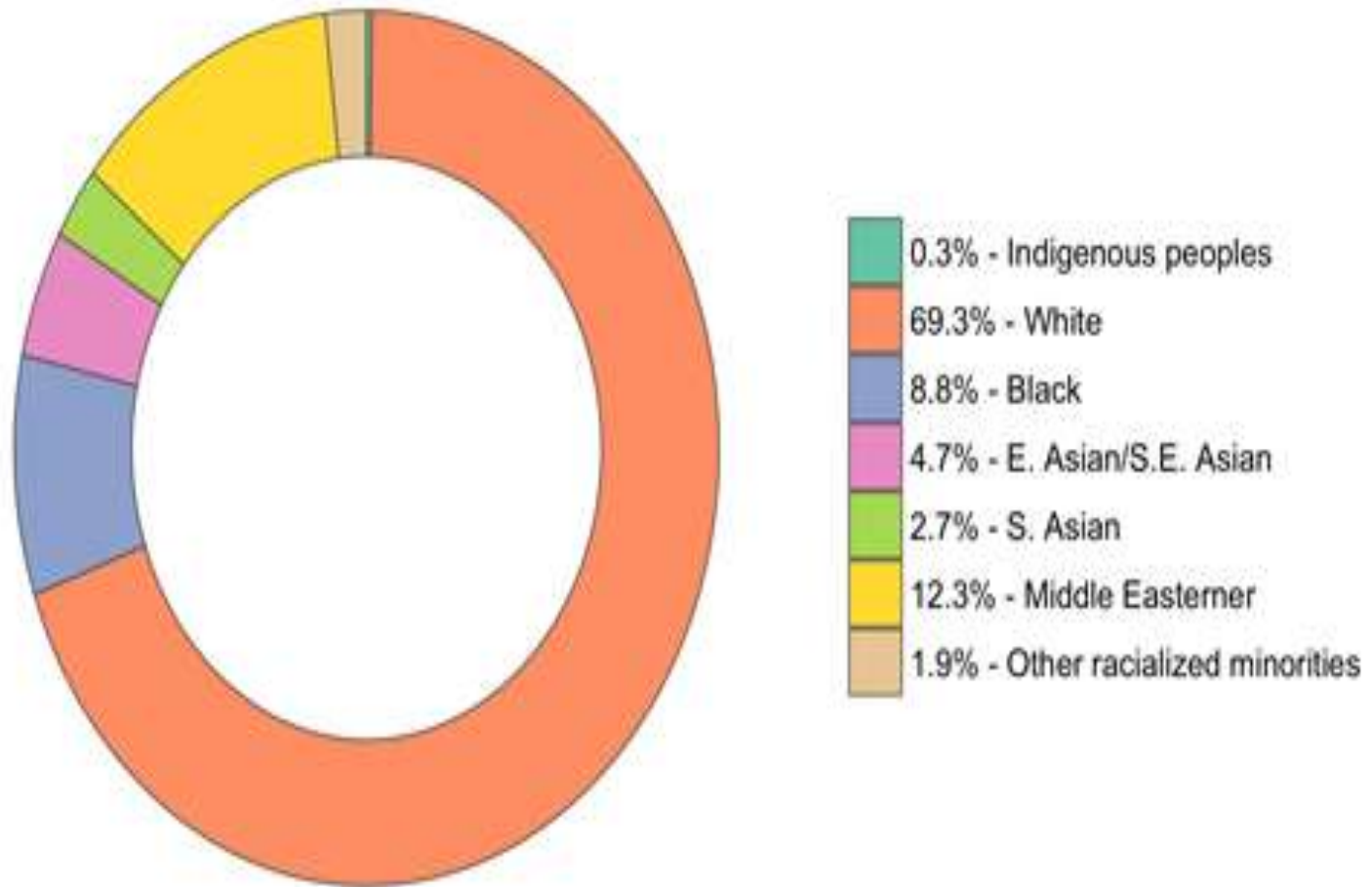
Age of Driver Distribution Among Traffic Stops



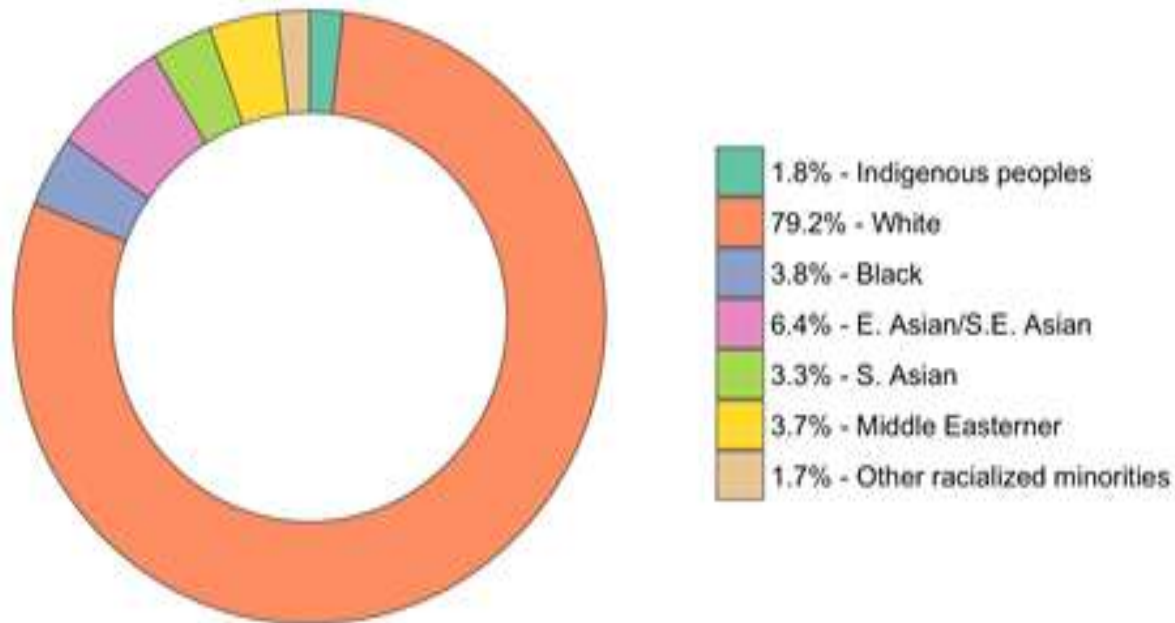
Sex of Driver Distribution Among Traffic Stops



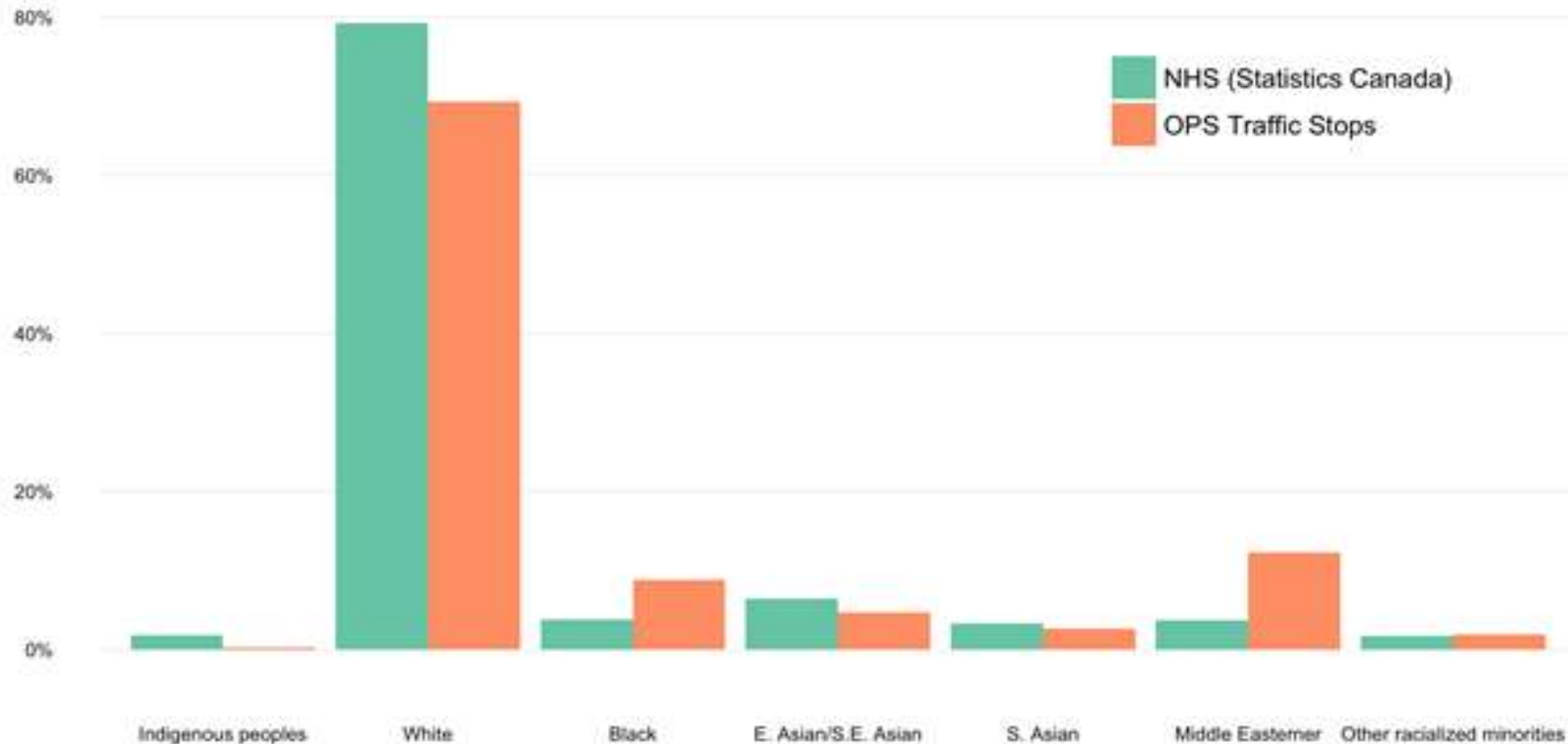
Race of Driver Distribution Among Traffic Stops



Race of Driver Distribution In Ottawa, Based on National Household Survey, 2011

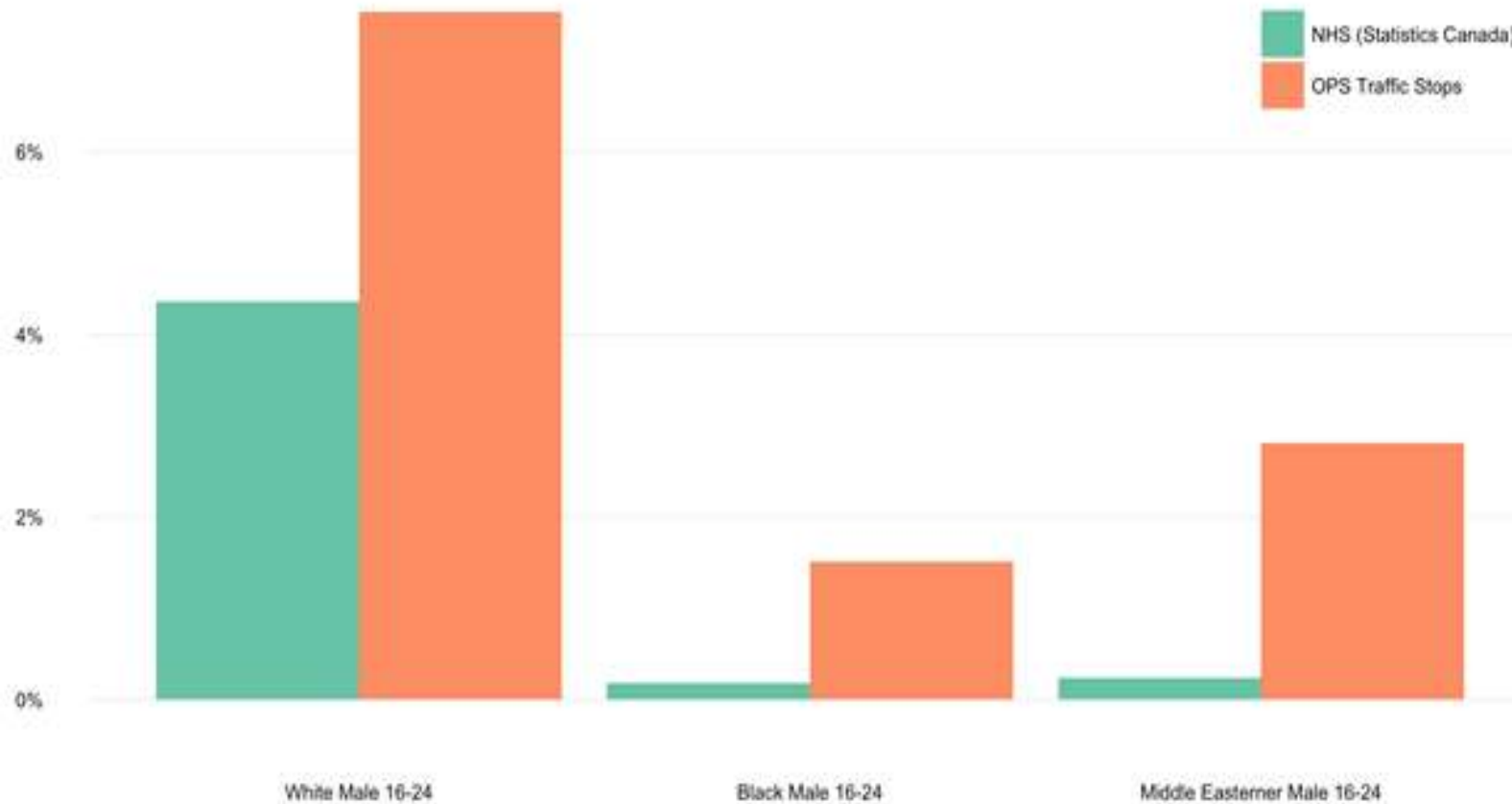


Comparison of Race of Driver Distribution Among Traffic Stops and NHS



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- In Ottawa, Middle Easterner and Black groups, irrespective of their sex and age, are the two race groups with disproportionately high incidences of traffic stops.
 - Middle Easterner Drivers were stopped 10066 times, which constituted about 12.3% of the total stops over the two year period. However, these drivers represent less than 4% of the total driving population in Ottawa. This means that Middle Easterner Drivers were stopped 3.3 times more than what you would expect based on their population.
 - Black Drivers were stopped 7238 times, which constituted about 8.8% of the total stops over the two-year period. However, these drivers represent less than 4% of the total driving population in Ottawa. This means that Black Drivers were stopped 2.3 times more than what you would expect based on their population.

Comparison of Drivers 16-24 Based on Race

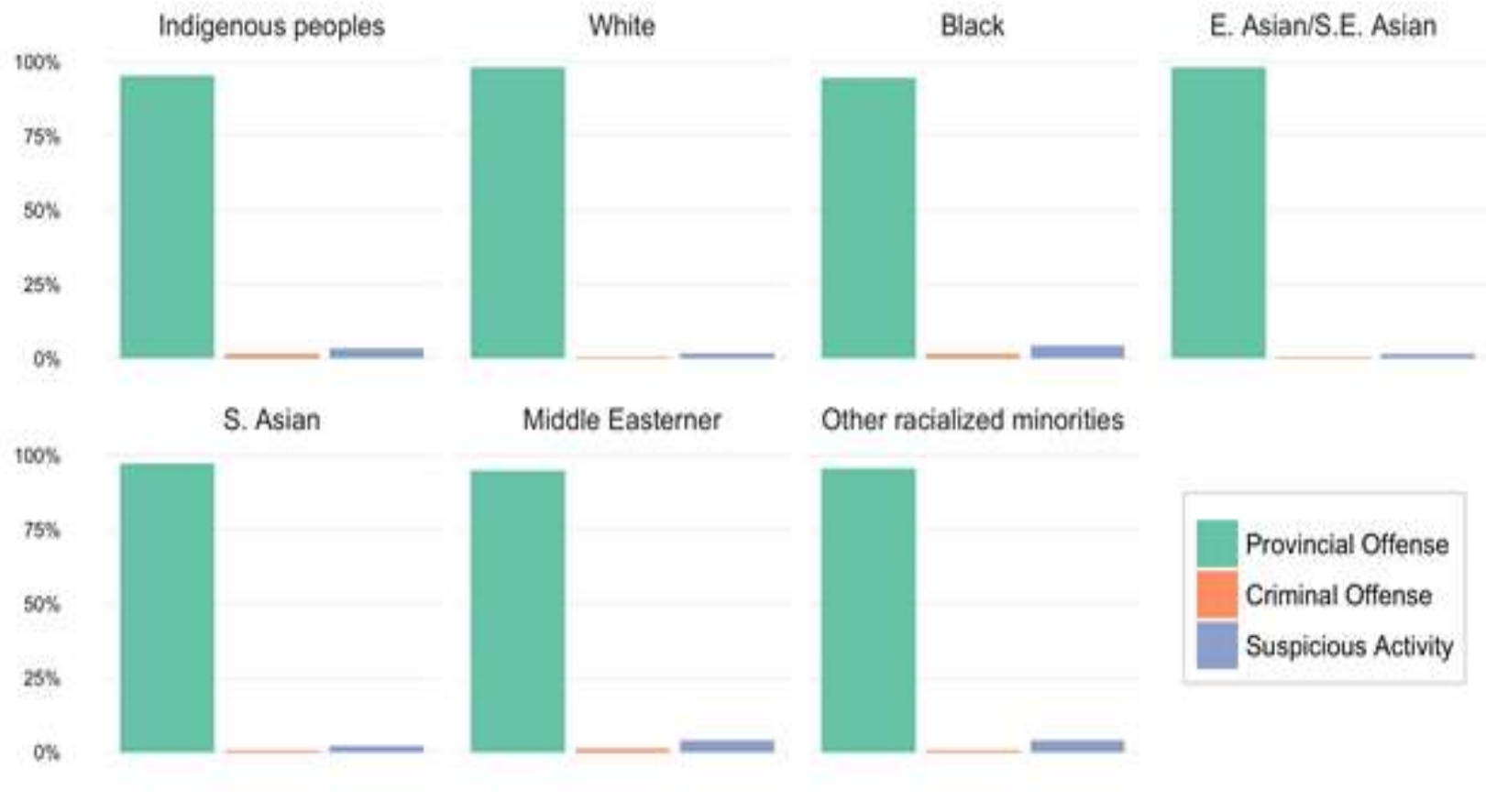


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- With the exception of Indigenous peoples, men aged 16-24 of all race groups (including White) have disproportionately high incidences of traffic stops.
 - Middle Easterner Male Drivers aged 16-24 were stopped 2302 times, which constituted about 2.8% of the total stops over the two year period. However, these drivers represent less than 0.25% of the total driving population in Ottawa. This means that they were stopped 12 times more than what you would expect based on their population.
 - Black Male Drivers aged 16-24 were stopped 1238 times, which constituted about 1.5% of the total stops over the two year period. However, these drivers represent less than 0.2% of the total driving population in Ottawa. This means that they were stopped 8.3 times more than what you would expect based on their population.
 - White Male Drivers aged 16-24 were stopped 6172 times, which constituted about 7.5% of the total stops over the two year period. However, these drivers represent about 4.3% of the total driving population in Ottawa. This means that they were stopped 1.7 times more than what you would expect based on their population.
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Reasons for Stops

- Three major reasons for traffic stops: (a) criminal offenses, (b) provincial and municipal offenses, and (c) suspicious activities. Police officers identified the reason for each traffic stop.
- The findings showed that the reason most used by police officers in traffic stops is “provincial and municipal offenses”. It was used in 79,603 of the 81,902 traffic stops (97.19%). Police officers did not utilize “provincial and municipal offenses” for traffic stops in a disproportional manner for any racial minority groups.
- The rationale of “suspicious activities” was used in 1837 stops (2.24%) and “criminal offenses” in 462 stops (0.56%).

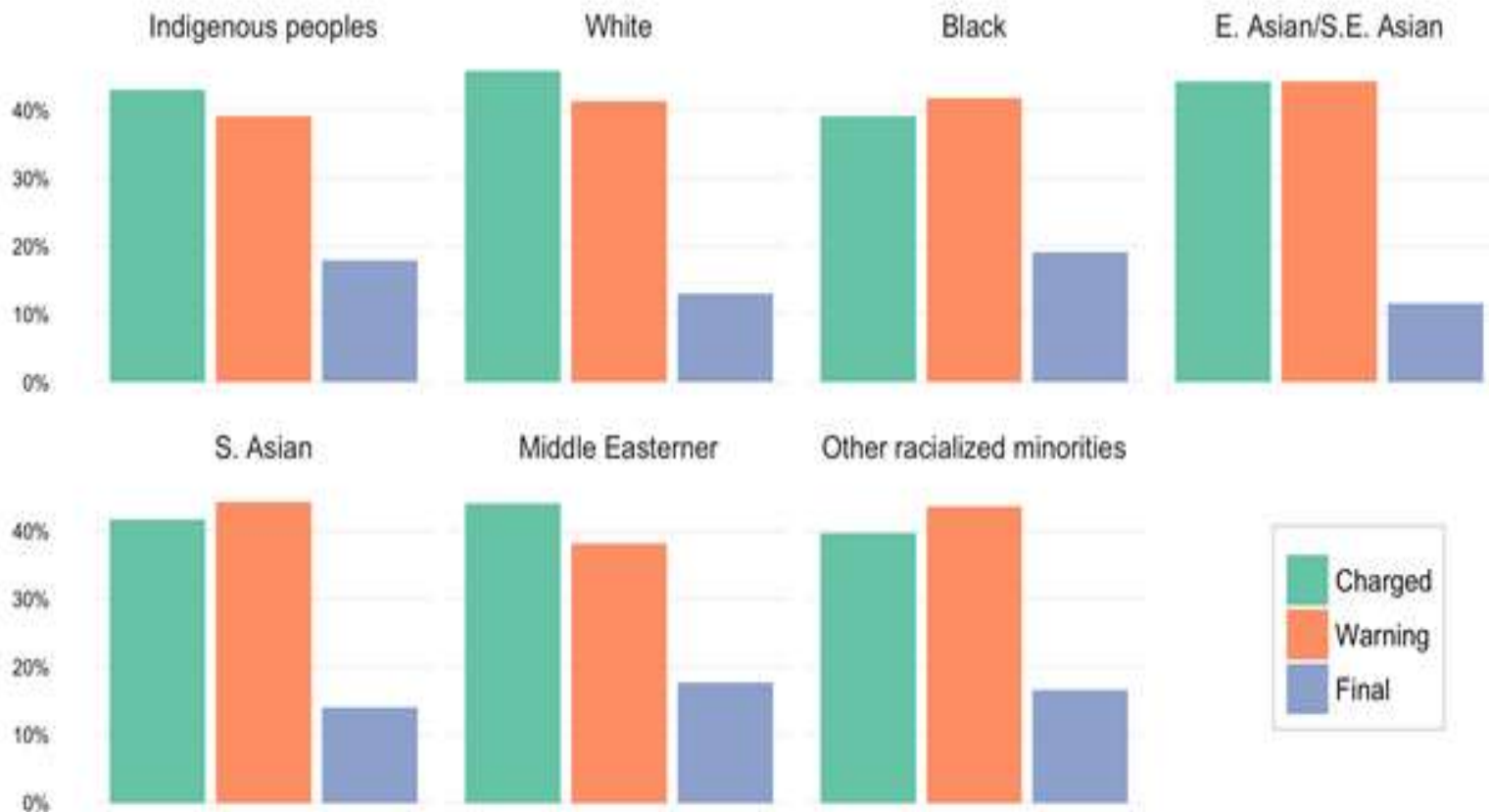
Reasons for Traffic Stops Among Race Groups



Outcomes of Traffic Stops

- Three major outcomes of traffic stops: (a) “final (no action)”, (b) “warned”, and (c) “charged”.
- Most outcomes of traffic stops were either “warned” (41.20%) or “charged” (44.65%). “Final (no action)” outcomes constituted 14.15%.
- All race groups (including White) have received similar proportions of charges (44.65%) from police officers after traffic stops.
- All race groups (including White) have received similar proportions of warnings (41.29%) from police officers after traffic stops.
- Indigenous peoples (37.77%), Black (47.28%), Middle Easterner (36.84%), and other racialized minorities (28.21%) groups experienced disproportionately high incidences of “final (no action)” outcomes of traffic stops.

Outcomes of Traffic Stops Among Race Groups



Recommendations

The TSRDCP and the OPS approach
to progressive organizational change

Determine Sources of Disproportionality

(1) Determine the sources of the disproportionately high incidences identified in this study through additional research on psychological, organizational, and social issues within the Ottawa Police Service – systemic biases in police practices; police leadership and corporate culture; organizational policing strategies and tactics; human resources policies and practices; institutional mindsets about the association between race and crime; the diversity of the Ottawa Police Service workforce; and race relations dynamics with the diverse communities that constitute the City of Ottawa.

Develop and Implement Solutions

(2) Develop and implement solutions to address the anomalies of disproportionately high incidences through a review of research findings gathered through the implementation of Recommendation # 1 in consultation with stakeholder groups, race and ethnic communities, and the public.

Increase Police-Community Consultation

(3) Increase positive police-community contact by holding monthly, or regular, relationship-building meetings; train officers and community members together; promote joint police and community committee work particularly in advisory areas; and hold “critical incident” discussions and trainings and annual conferences on police-community relations.

Continue Race Data Collection

(4) Continue collecting race data in traffic stops with improved tools and processes; monitor regularly traffic stops issues; place data reports as a regular agenda item on meetings at the level of staff, senior management, and board; and communicate data related to race and traffic stops regularly to the public through quarterly bulletins, press releases, annual reports, and other media.

Build on Community Engagement Infrastructure

(5) Build on its extensive and successful experience with community engagement and develop a multi-year action plan to address the issues of racial disparities in traffic stops raised in this report.

Make Race Data Available

(6) Make readily available the data collected for this research project on race and traffic stops. The raw data made available should allow for analysis that goes beyond the scope and methodology of this report, but within the legal limits of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Conclusions

Race-neutral justice is a shared value and goal of communities throughout Canada. The very undertaking of a racial profiling study within a community is essentially a reaffirmation of this multicultural community value. Such a process promises to promote effective bias-neutral policing and strengthen community-police relations, even apart from the exact findings of the study itself.