

NOLA-YURP Survey – July/August 2008
Preliminary Findings
(N = 328 Completed Interviews)
This Draft: August 23, 2008

The Samples.

The NOLA-YURP Survey was conducted in July and August, 2008, of members of the professional networking website, <http://www.nolayurp.org>. YURP stands for “Young Urban Rebuilding Professionals.”

There are two subsamples, people who live in Greater New Orleans, and people who live outside Greater New Orleans but are considering moving there. In this document, the first group is called “NOLA YURPs” and the second group is called “Prospective YURPs.”

About three quarters of people who began the survey completed it entirely: that is, 434 people began the survey, and 328 people completed it. Although most people completed most of the survey, they did so in varying degrees. Here, we only present findings of the full completes. Of the 328 completed interviews, 263 are with “NOLA YURPs,” and 65 are with “Prospective YURPs,” for a ratio of about 80/20.

The YURP samples were “weighted” or adjusted to approximate the joint age-gender proportions of the membership of the nolayurp.org website. Age did not change much as a result of this weighting, but gender changed from a roughly 70/30 to a 58/42 female to male ratio, which reflects the nolayurp.org membership. The sample proportion of women to men is typical of most surveys; whether the adjusted proportion accurately reflects the proportion of women among young professional newcomers is unknown. We can only say that it accurately reflects the proportion of website members. The sample is about 80 percent white, 10 percent African American, and the remainder Asian and other. There is no full information about the race of website members, so it is unknown how accurate the sample is on race; and no adjustments were made.

The YURP sample is compared here to a larger sample of the general population of Greater New Orleans, of people who lived there prior to the storm. The “General Sample” is the result of interviewing from summer, 2006, to spring, 2008, and includes over 2,300 interviews. (This interviewing continues to the present and, with the interviews conducted over the summer of 2008, includes about 3,000 interviews. However, the recent interviews have not yet been merged into the sample.) The General Sample was collected under extremely challenging conditions, especially because telephone land lines – the most common way to conduct interviews – have been so incomplete and unreliable. Thus, data collection proceeded by a number of methods, including on the internet, door-to-door and face-to-face, by distribution of

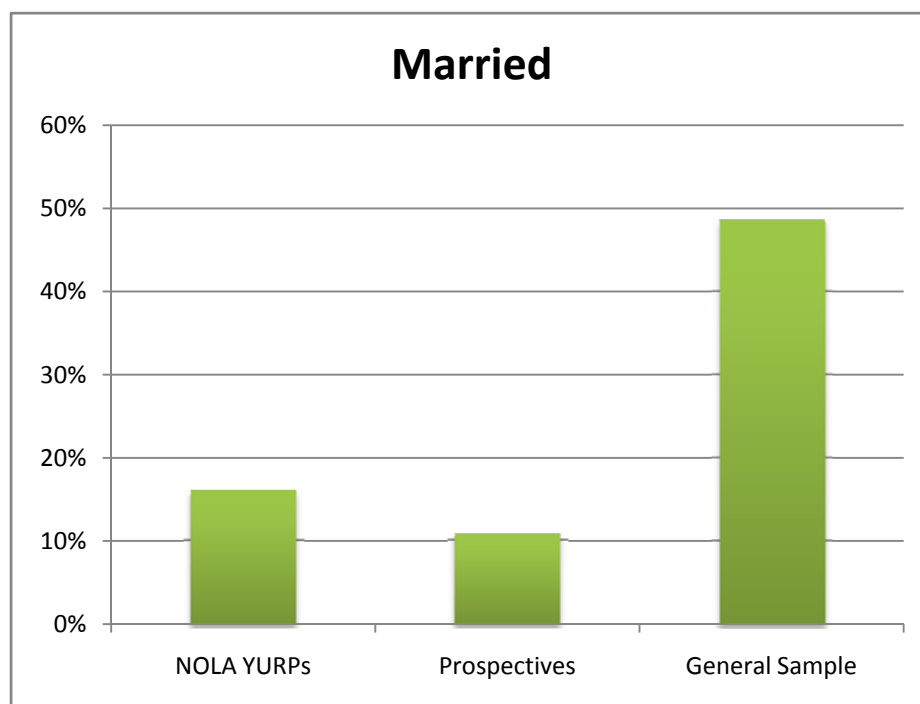
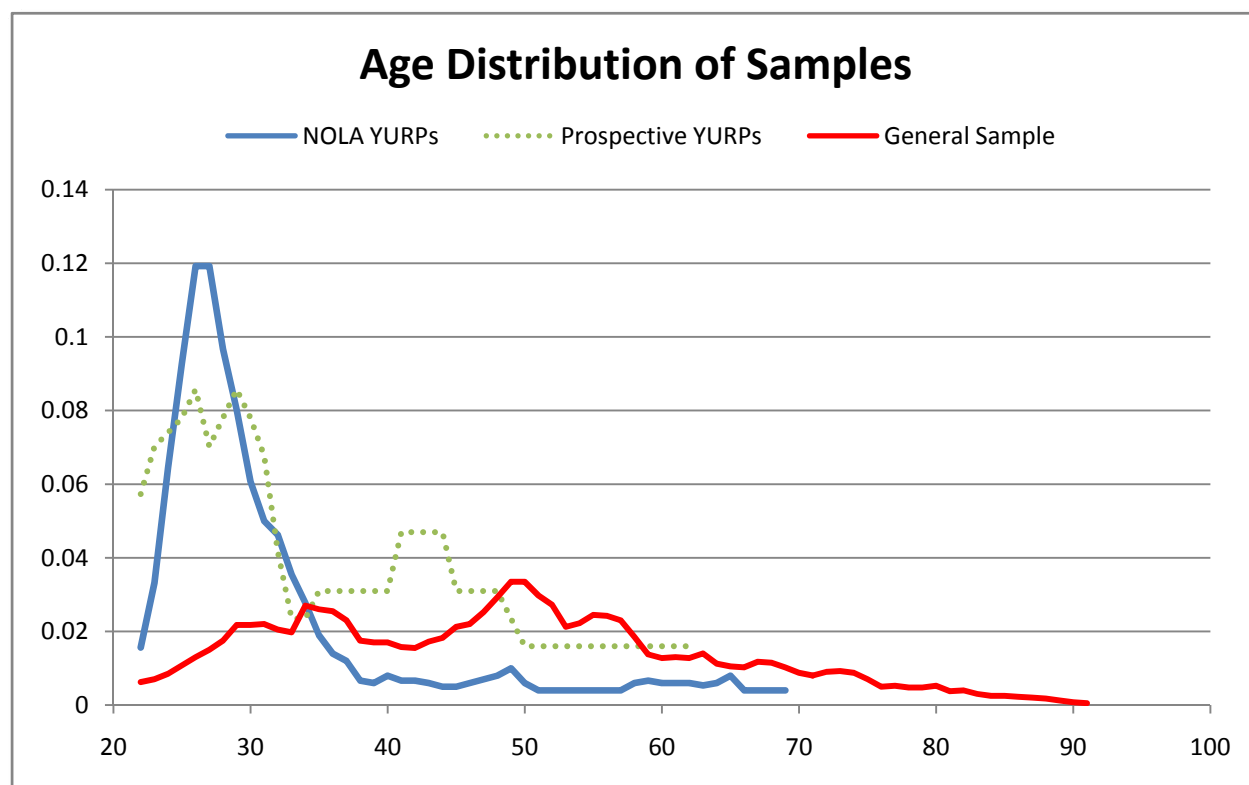
paper questionnaires among selected groups and organizations, and including both people who have returned to Greater New Orleans and people who have not.

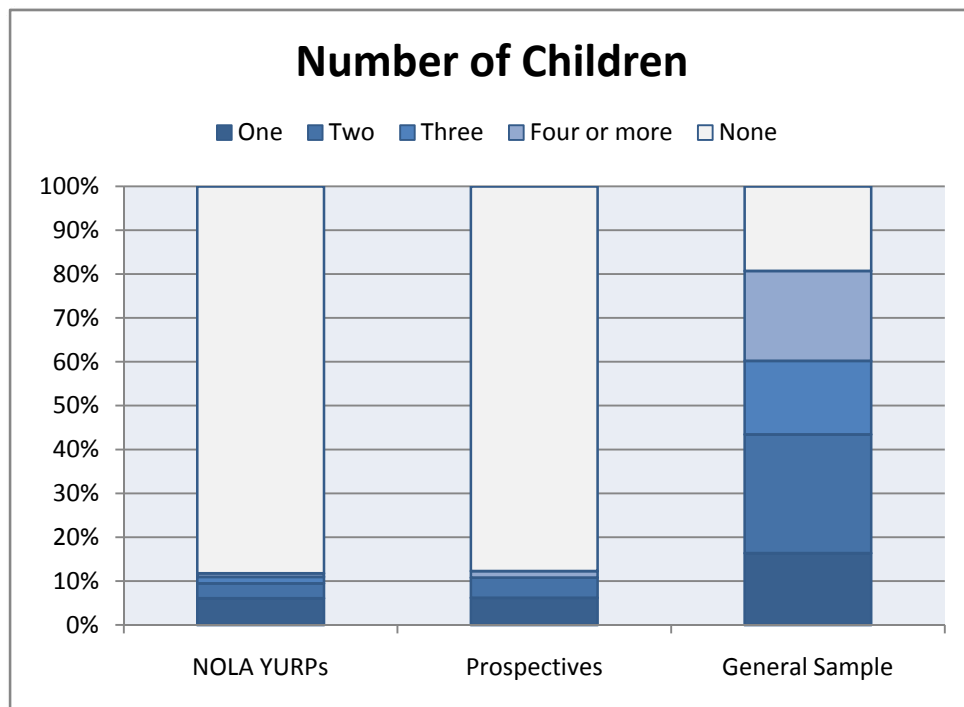
The General Sample is also “weighted” or adjusted to approximate the joint age-gender-race proportions of the pre-Storm population of Greater New Orleans, according to pre-Storm Census statistics. In addition, a large sample of the Jewish community was “weighted” down to somewhat approximate its relative size in the general community. After these adjustments, the proportion of women to men in the General sample was also about 58/42. This probably over-estimates the true number of women in the general population (true numbers are very difficult to ascertain at present), but again, it is common in almost all surveys.

Finally, it should be noted that only about 3-5 percent of any of the samples are Latino. This proportion is not radically different from the pre-Storm percentage of the general population, but it clearly does not capture the influx of Latinos since the Storm. There is also no systematic information about the percentage Latino of the full nolayurp.org website membership, but it probably is not dramatically higher than the sample percentage. Thus, the YURP sample represents mostly *non-Latino* newcomers, and indeed, it probably does not capture much of the rest of the population of construction workers who have come since the Storm, whether Latino or not. The YURP sample is indeed composed of young professionals, not all young newcomers.

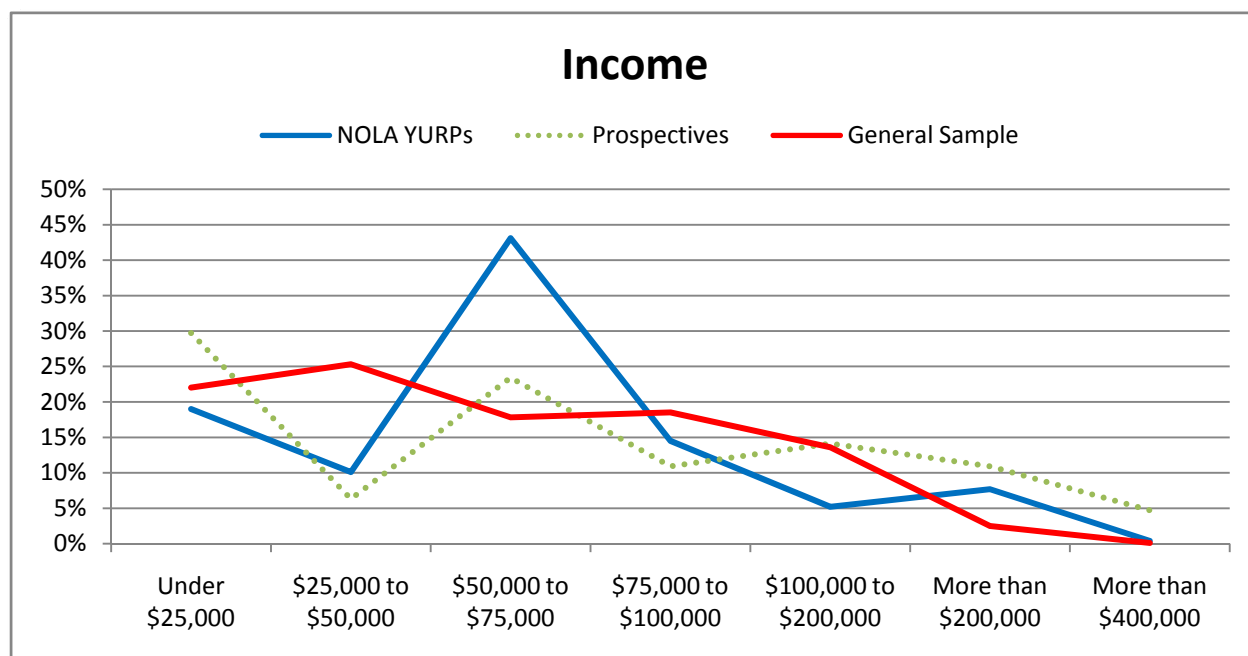
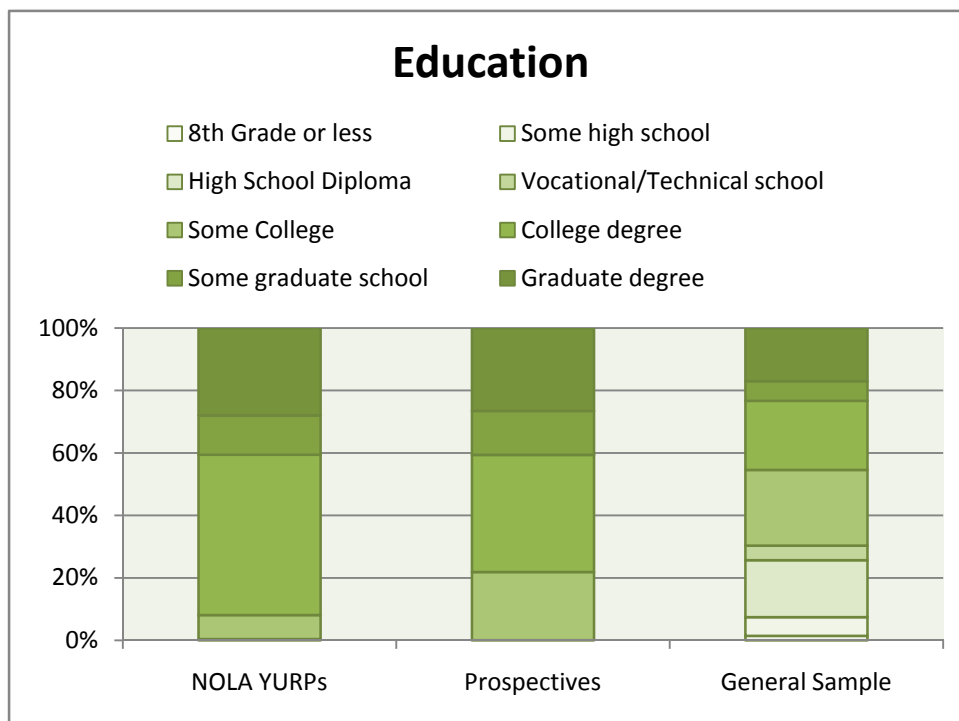
Exact percentages and numbers of all these groups are very difficult to ascertain, and this is not attempted here. (Even the Census Bureau is struggling with this; and their best estimates for summer, 2008, will not be available for some time.) Rather, the numbers presented here give portraits of certain groups, whose absolute and relative sizes are only roughly known.

Age and Family Structure. As expected, the YURPs are a good deal younger than the general population. And as is typical of younger people, fewer are married or have children.



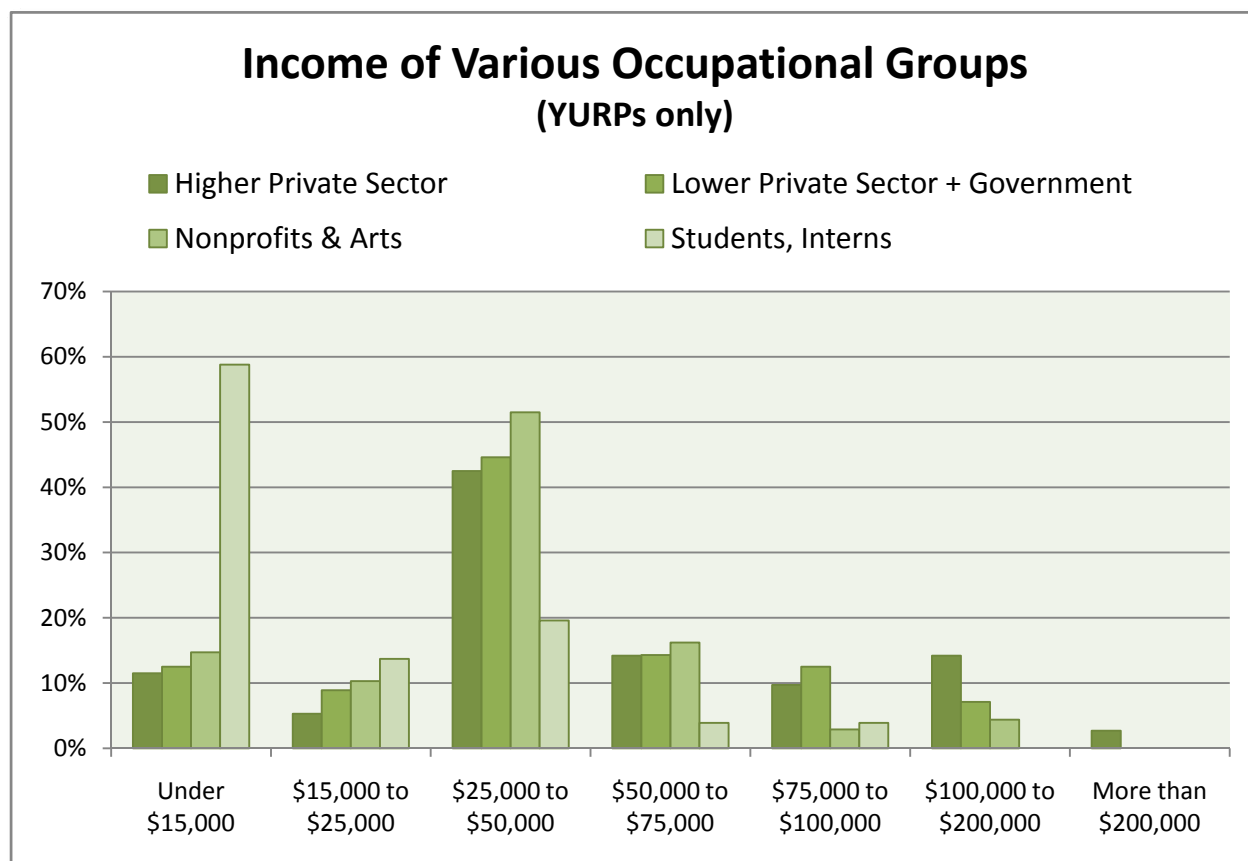


Education and Income. The YURPs are young professionals, and they are much better educated than the general population. However, since they are just starting out and often work in nonprofits, their income is not much higher than the general population. Their income will probably rise above average as they become older and enter different occupations than they now have.

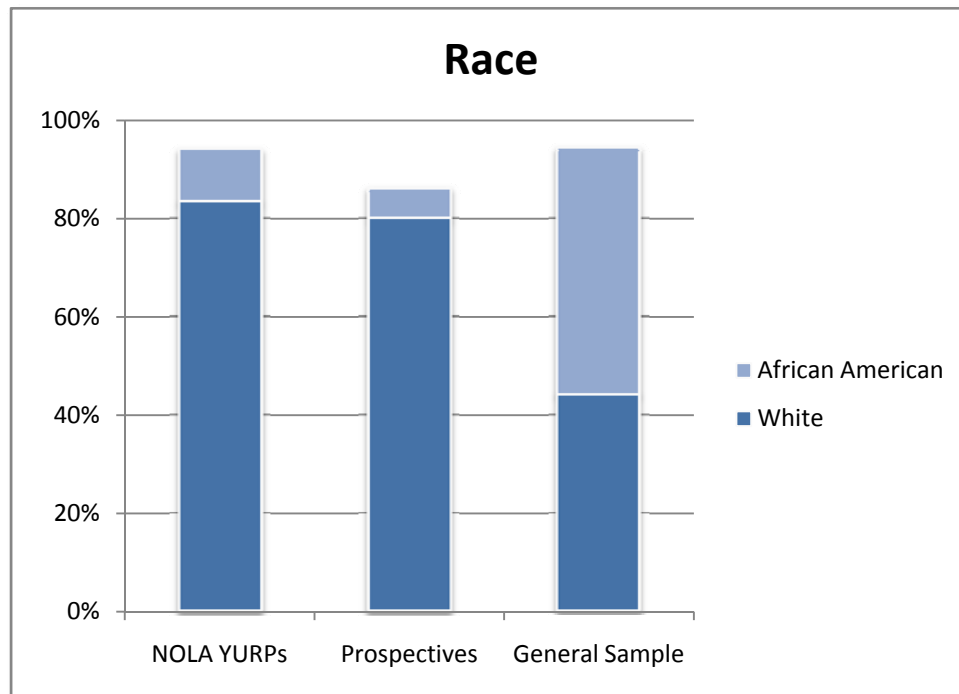


Occupation and Income among the YURPs. The YURPs hold various occupations in the private, public, and nonprofit sectors; and some are students or interns. Their income varies widely, with private and public sector workers earning most, followed by those in nonprofits and the arts. Students and interns earn the least.

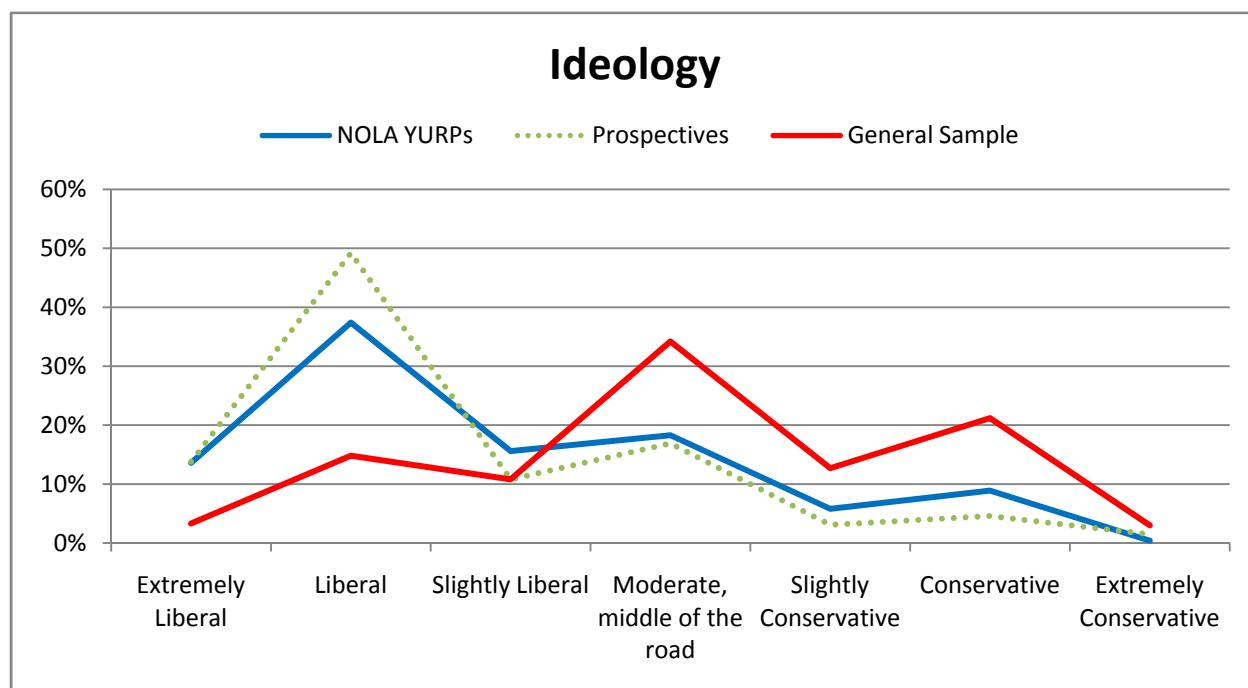
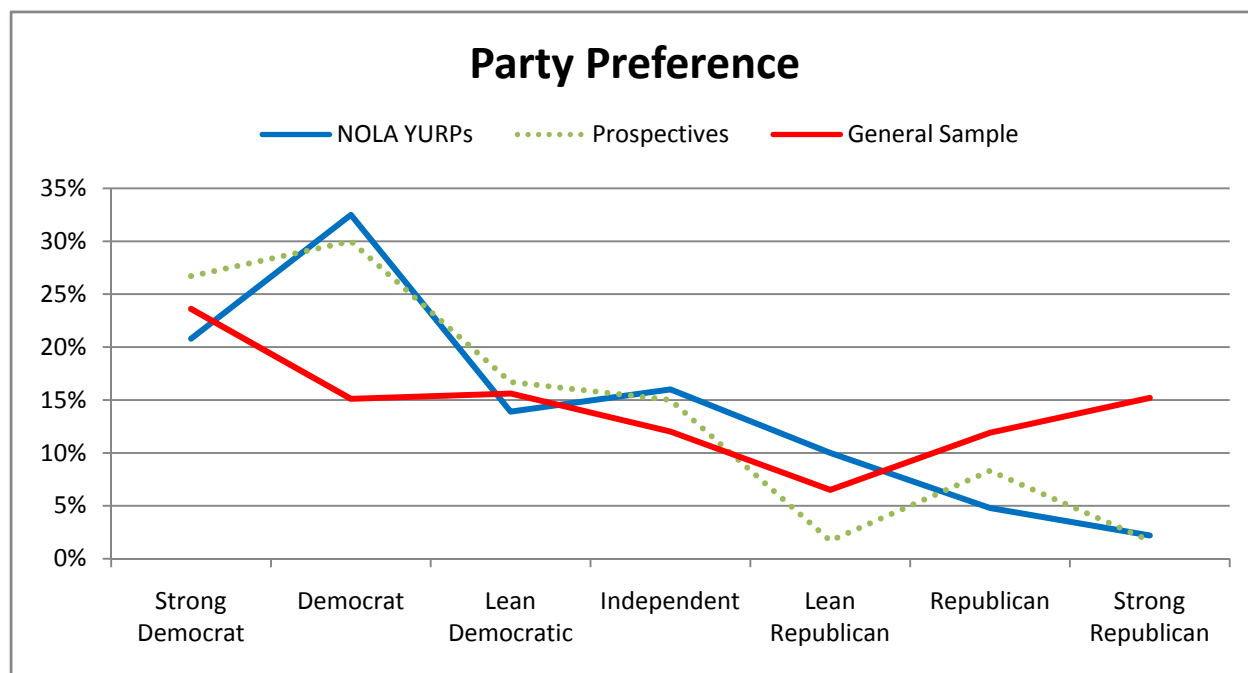
Higher Private Sector (36%)	Lawyers (2%); Professor, University Admin, Scientist (3%); Business Owner (2%); Manager or Exec, Business (2%); Finance, Accounting, Advertising, Insurance, Marketing (9%); Real Estate (2%); Sales, Retail (3%); Engineer (1%); Computers, IT, Web Devel (3%); Architect, Urban Planner (2%); Analyst, Consultant, Researcher, PR (7%)
Lower Private Sector + Government (17%)	Secretary, Admin Asst (2%); Service Industry (0.3%); Blue-collar worker (1%); Medical Support, Nurse (2%); Teacher, Other Educ (7%); Psychology, Social Work, Therapy (2%); Government worker (2%)
Nonprofits & Arts (22%)	Nonprofit, Community Organizer (14%); Artist, Musician, Actor, Writer, Journalist, Arts Business (8%)
Students, Interns (17%)	Student (12%); Intern, Volunteer (5%)
Other (8%)	Other (2%); Unemployed (5%)



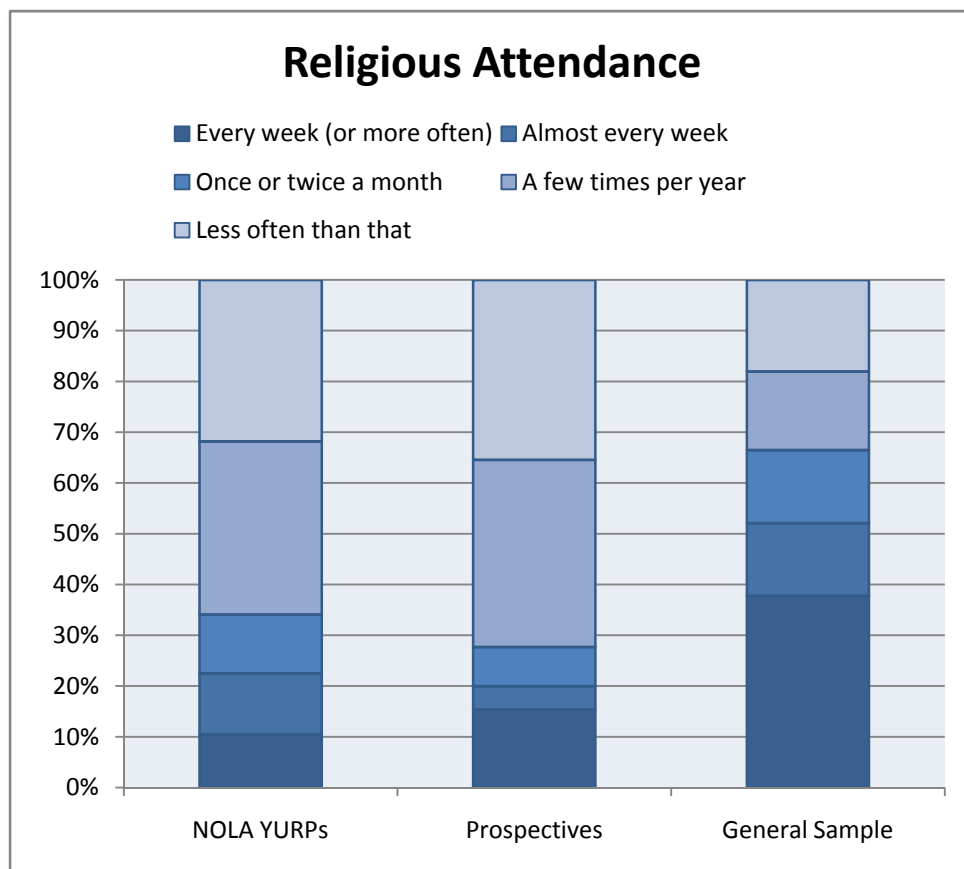
Race. A much larger percentage of the YURP samples is white than the general sample. This may also be true of the full membership of the nolayurp.org website, but it is unknown how well either reflects all young newcomers to the city.



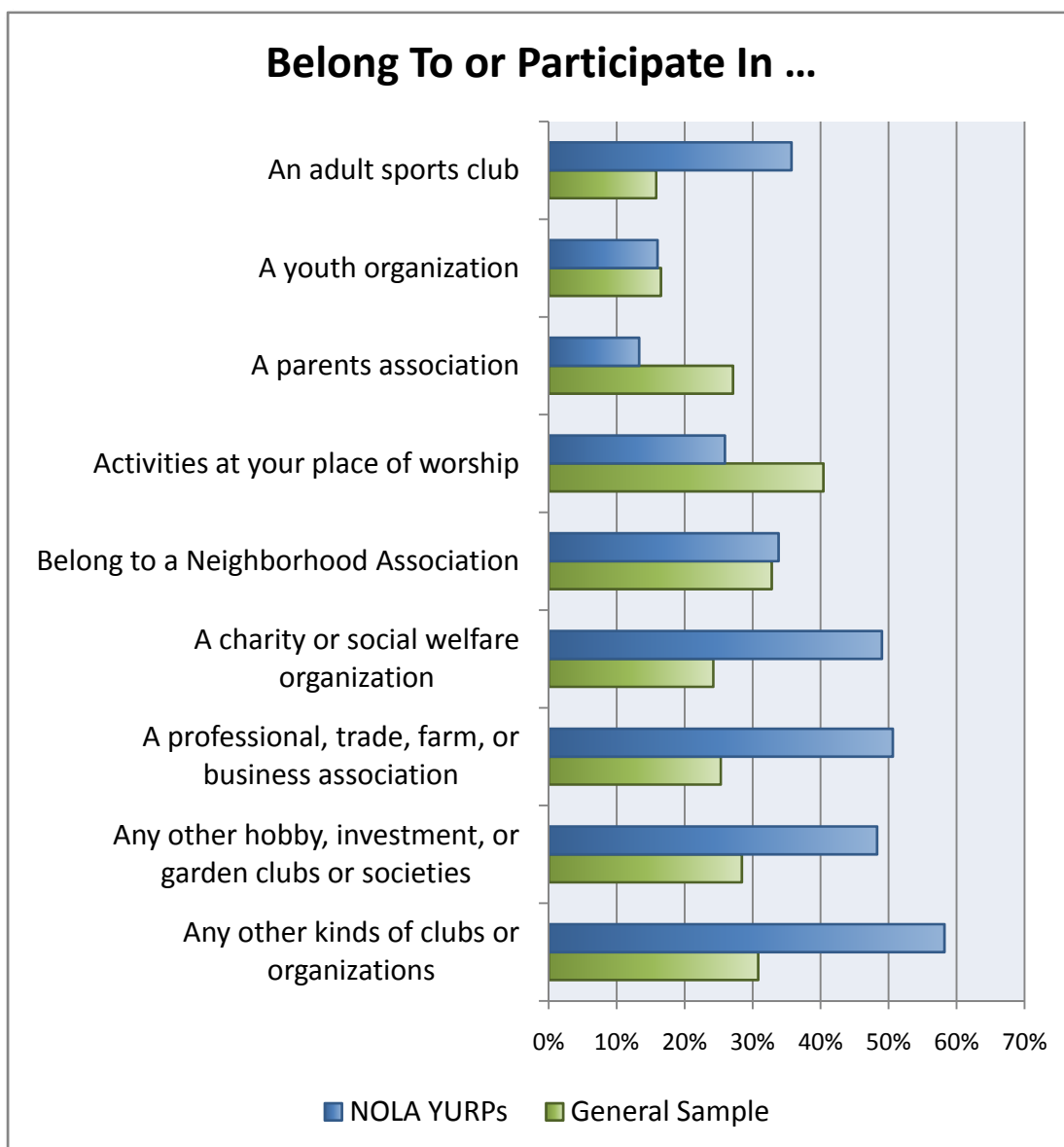
Party Preference and Ideology. Not surprisingly, the young, well-educated YURPs, many of whom work in nonprofits, are more heavily Democratic and liberal than the general population, which includes more Republicans – though just as many strong Democrats – and is ideologically more centrist.

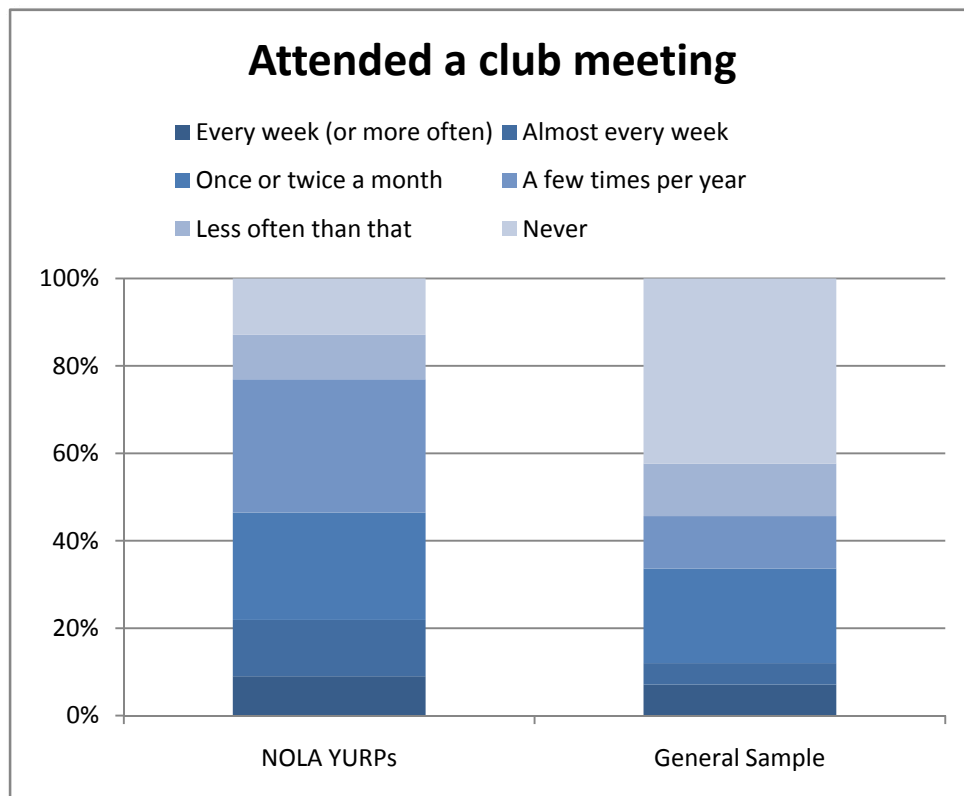
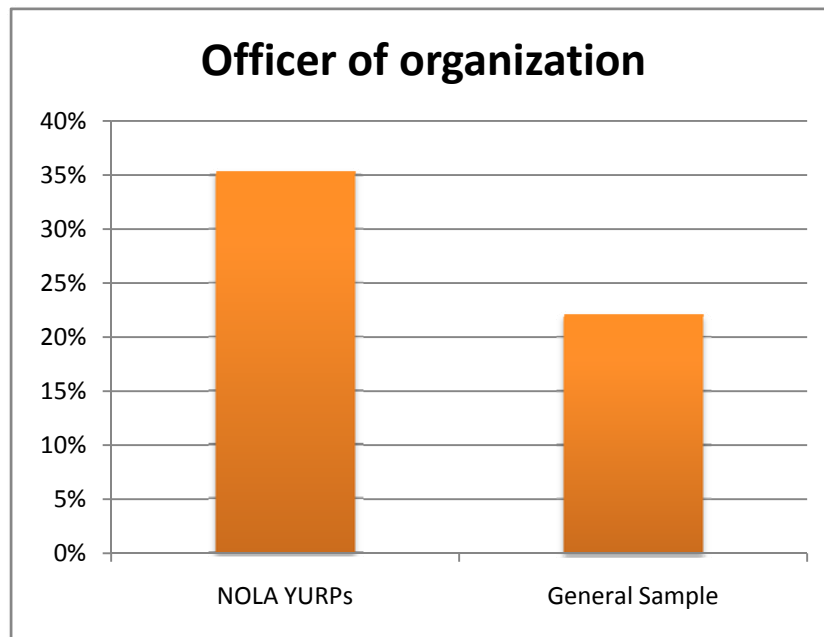


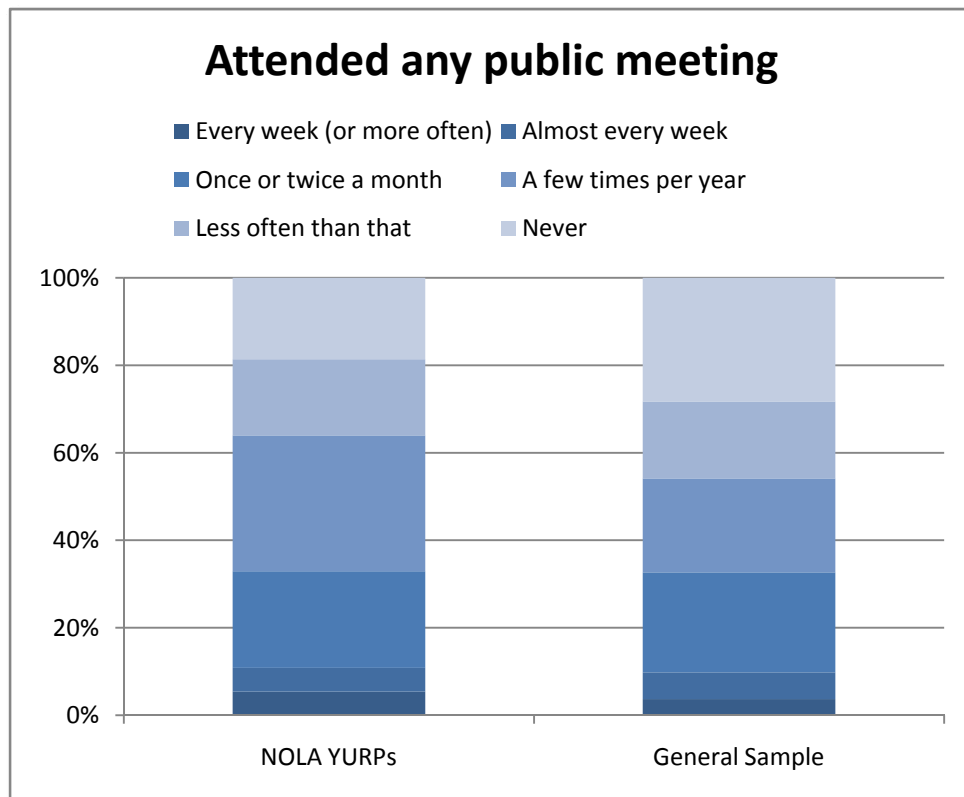
Religiosity. Again, not surprisingly, the young, well-educated YURPs are much more secular than the general population. As measured by attendance at services, the general population is much more religious than the YURPs.



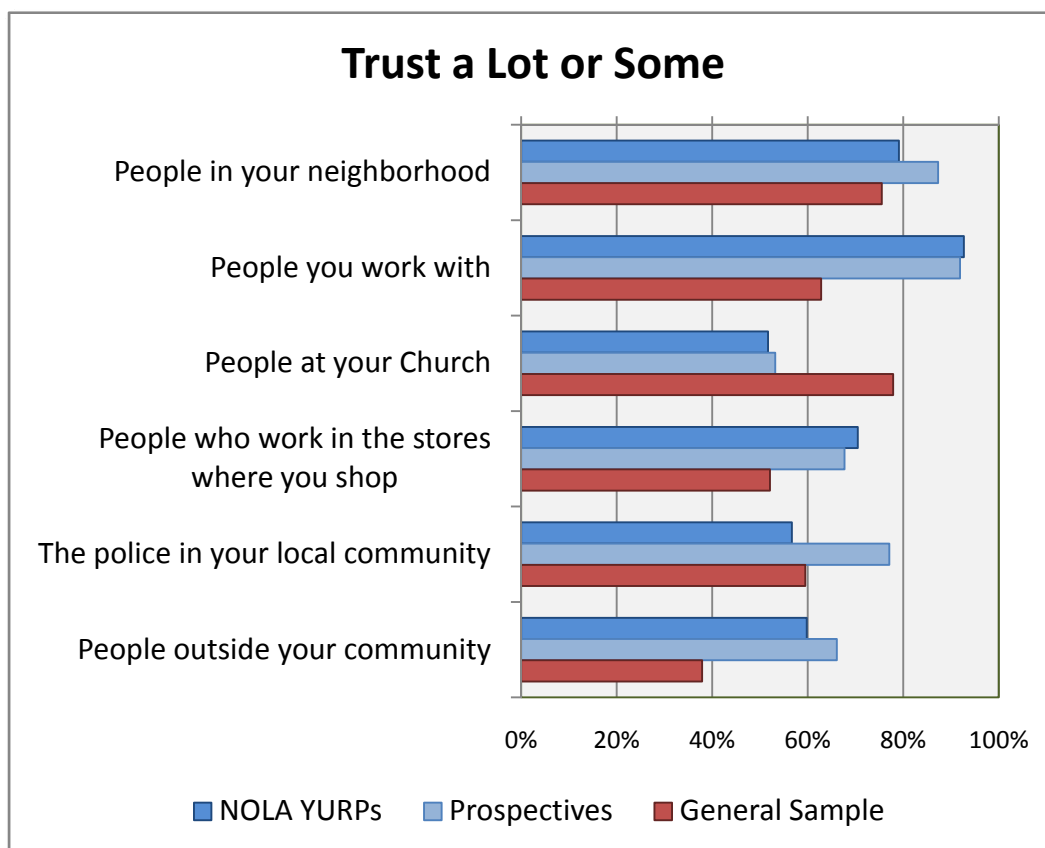
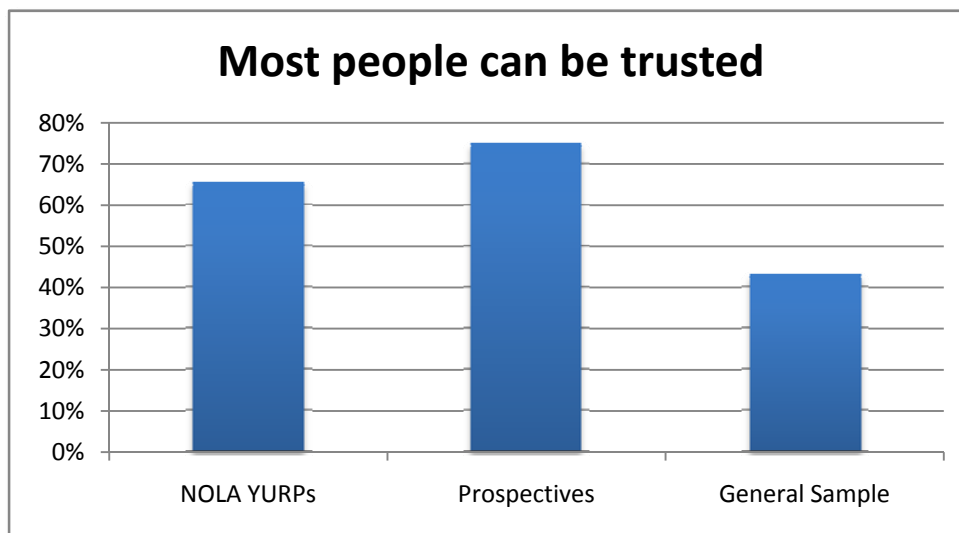
Civic Participation. The YURPs are highly engaged in civic affairs. Civic engagement is very high in post-Katrina New Orleans, and these young idealistic newcomers are generally as, or more, engaged than the general population – except as parents or at their place of worship.



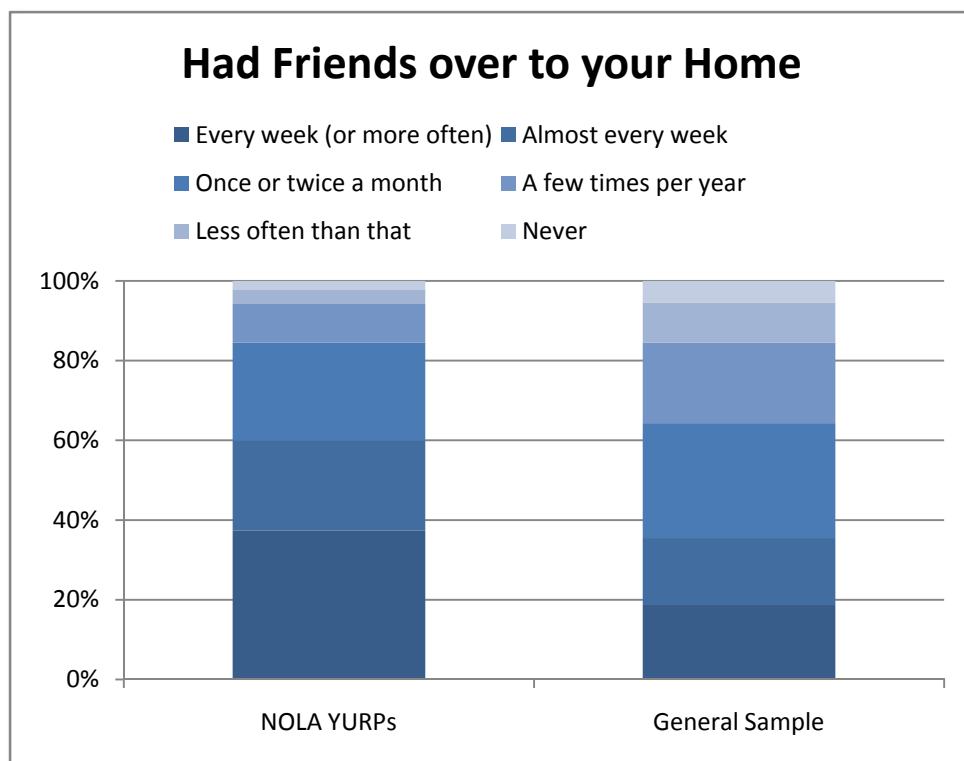


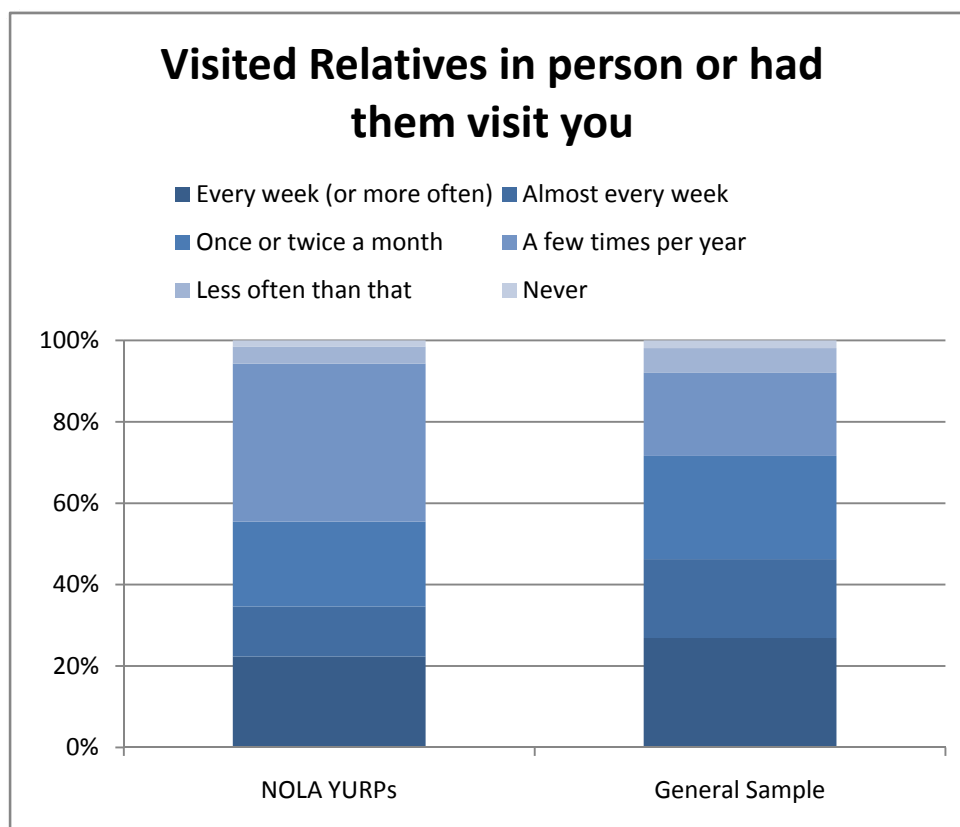
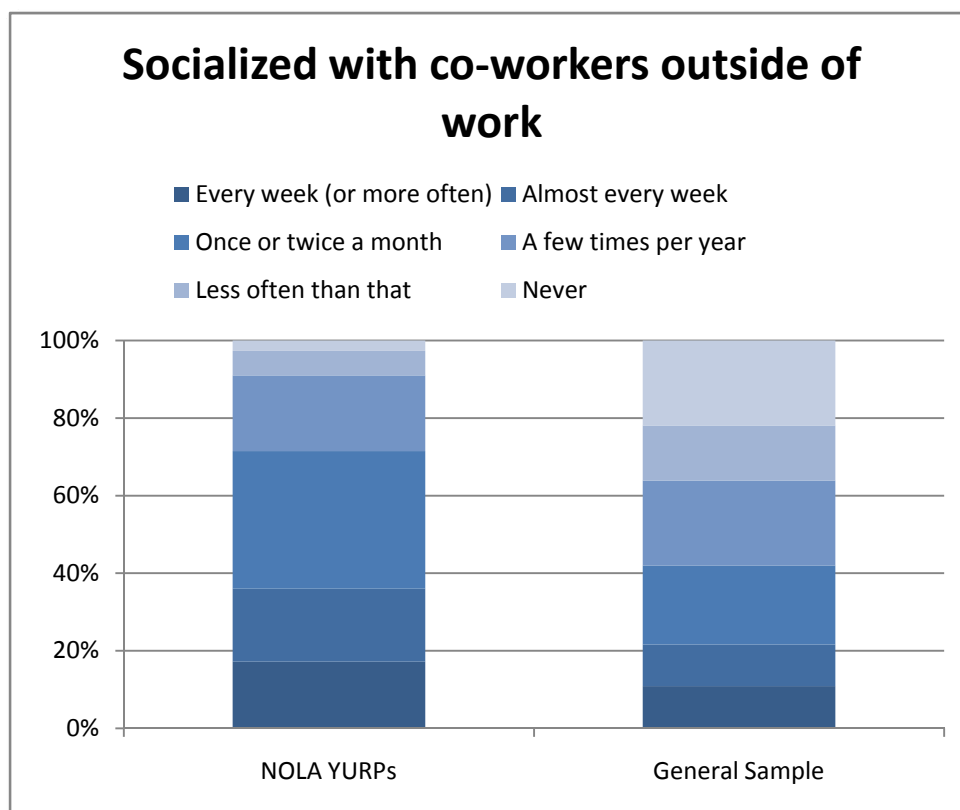


Social Trust. Trust is often thought to be closely related to civic engagement: trusting people feel safer to engage in civic activities. The surveys show that, in most instances, YURPs are more trusting than the general population. YURPs more often say that most people can be trusted. And they more often trust people in the public or professional realm (co-workers, people in stores, people outside their communities). However, long-term New Orleanians trust people at their church more than secular YURPs do.

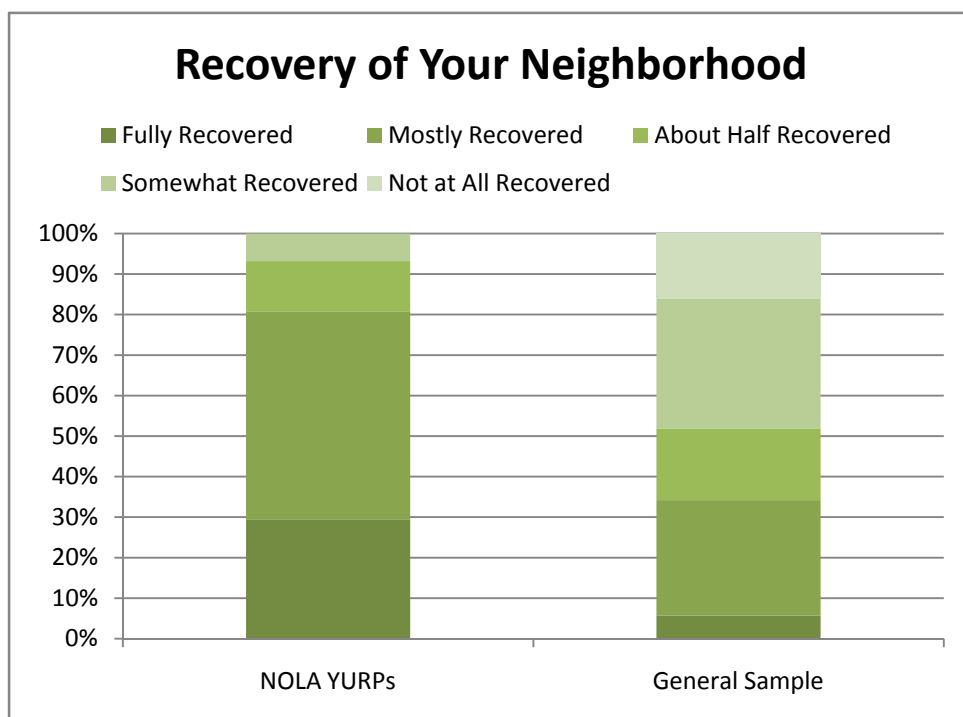
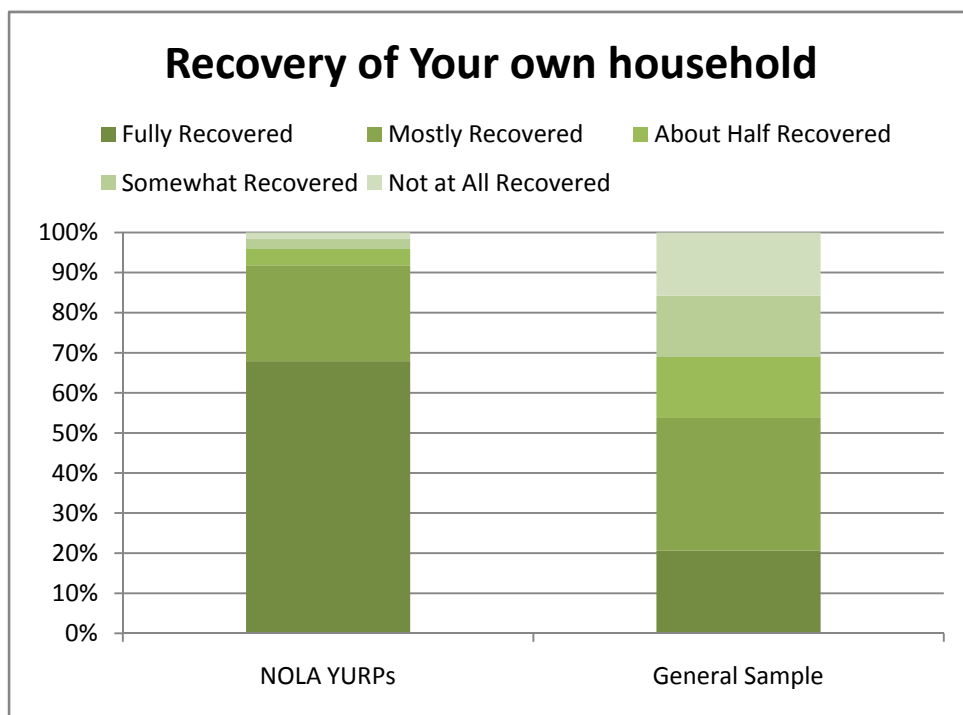


Informal Socializing. The YURPs are also very sociable. They see friends and work colleagues somewhat more than do members of the general population – in a city known for its socializing. But as newcomers, they visit with relatives somewhat less often than long-term residents.

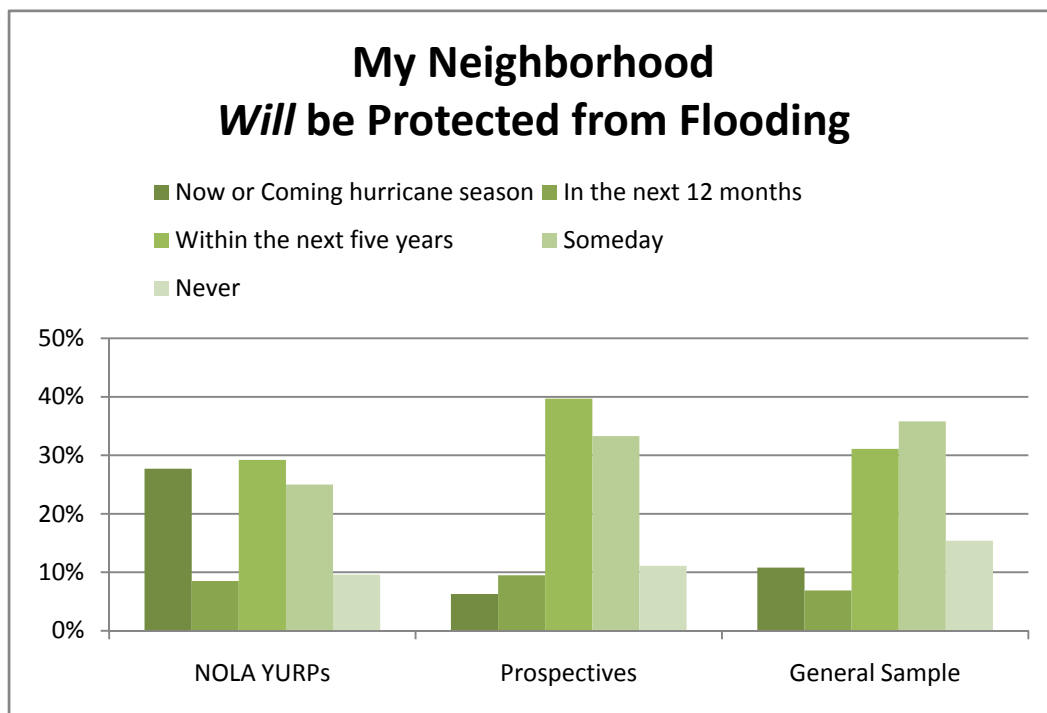
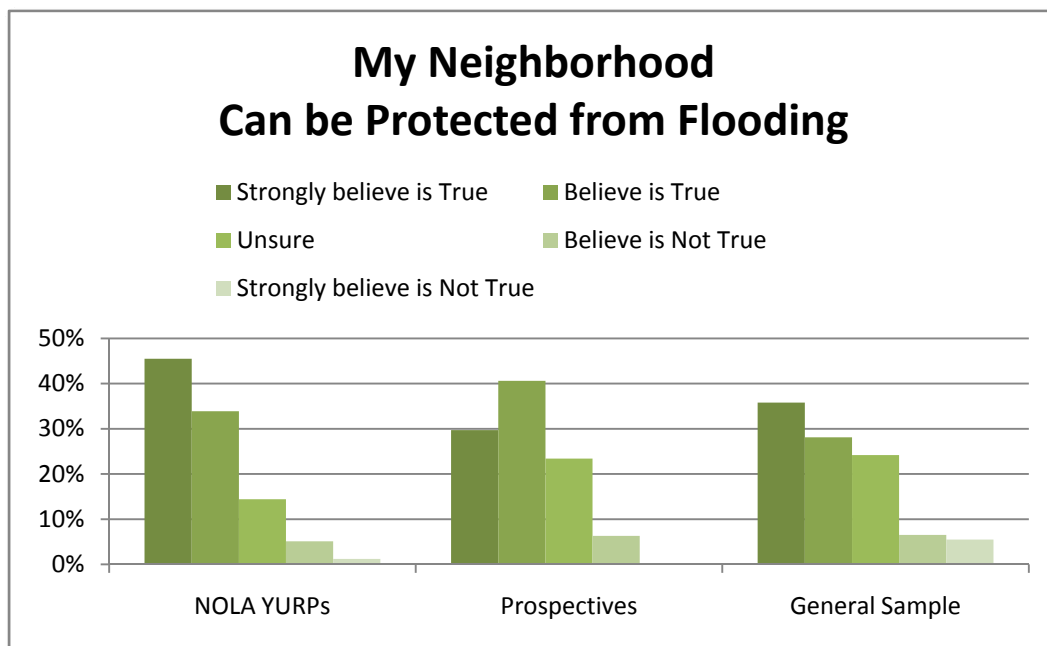


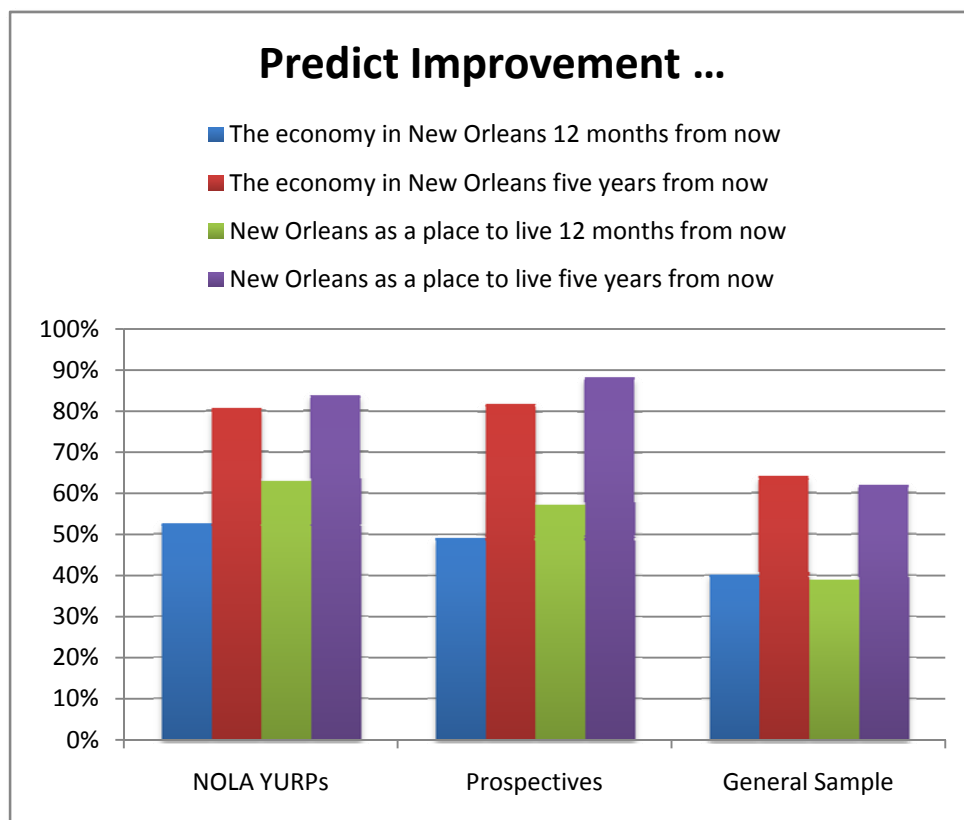


Storm Recovery. Most YURPs are newcomers (some are longer-term residents), and of course, most of them moved into habitable housing. Larger percentages also moved into less damaged neighborhoods. Thus, even though they may be working on recovery, YURPs' own houses and neighborhoods are better recovered than those of the general population.

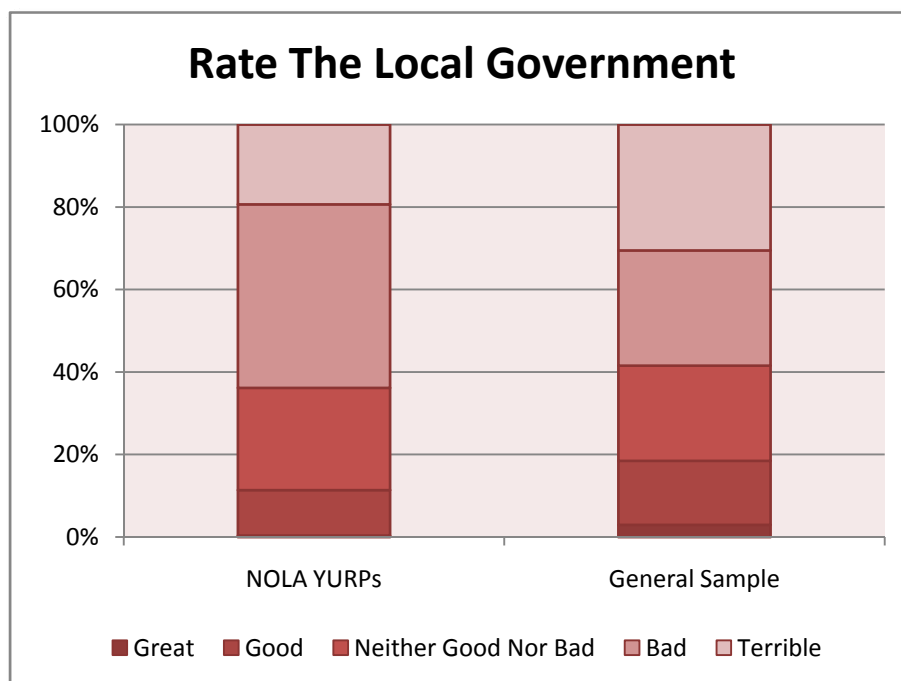
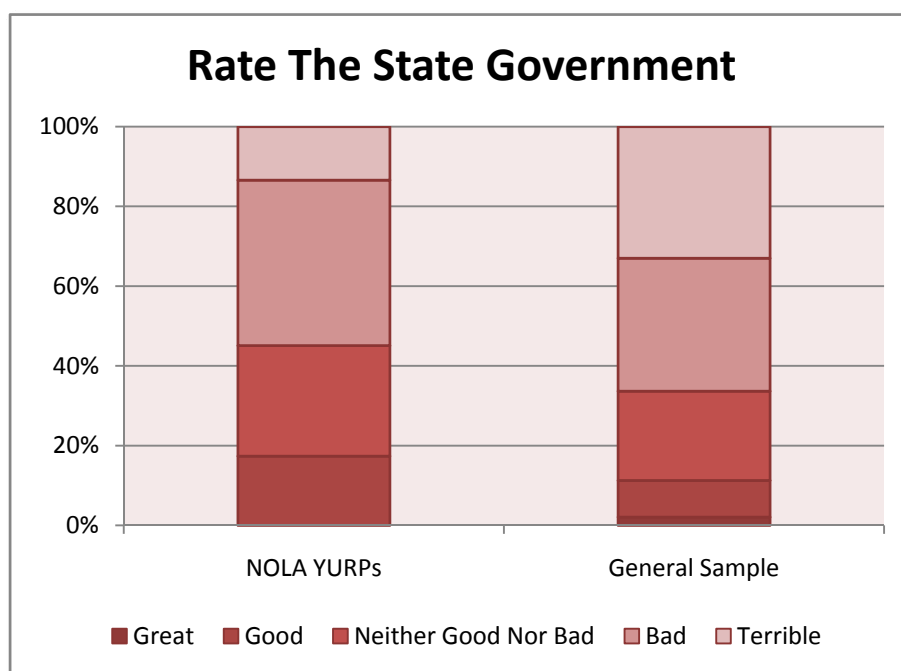


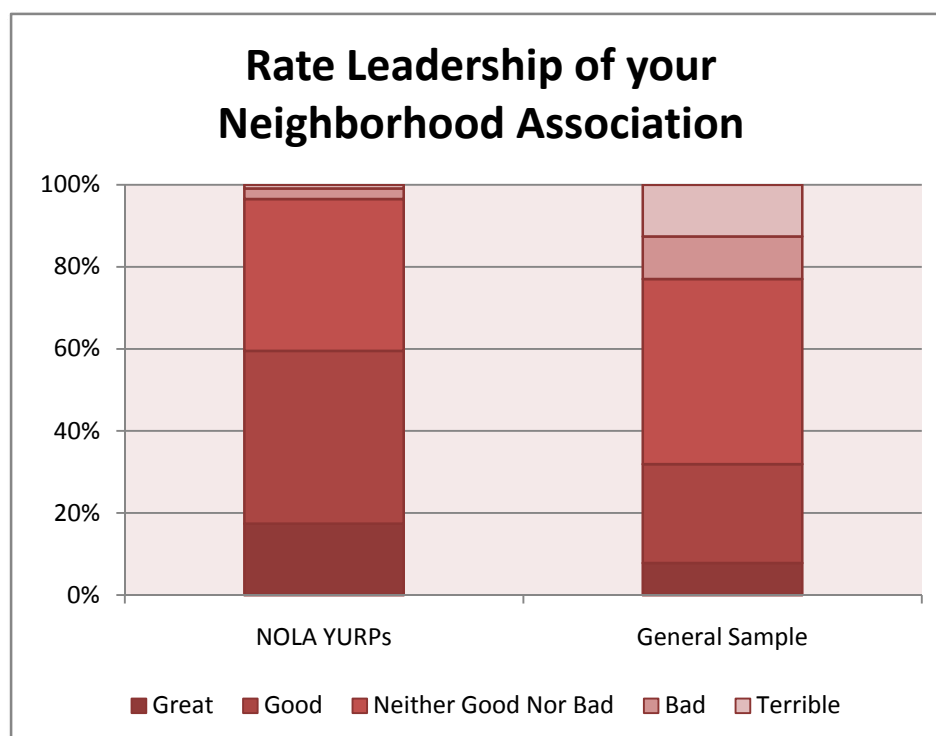
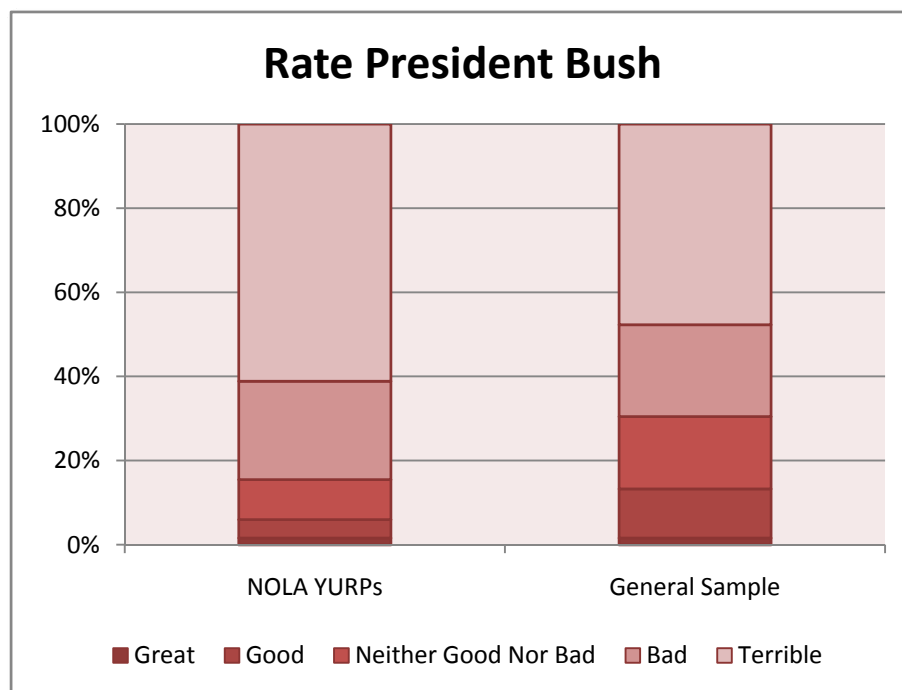
Optimism about Recovery. Most YURPs who moved to New Orleans are optimistic about recovery, almost by definition. They certainly came with the intention of trying to help recovery. As such, they are somewhat more optimistic about the future than the general population. What is perhaps most notable is how optimistic the general population is, especially considering how much many people lost.



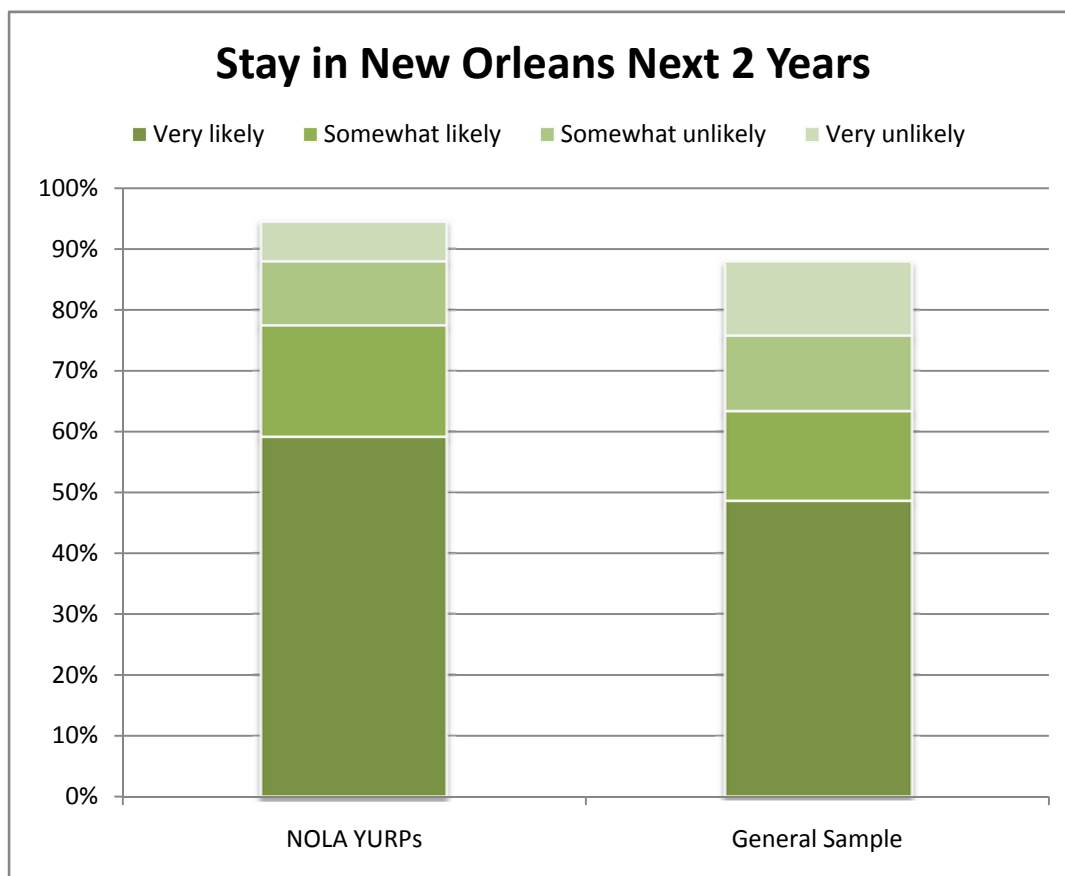


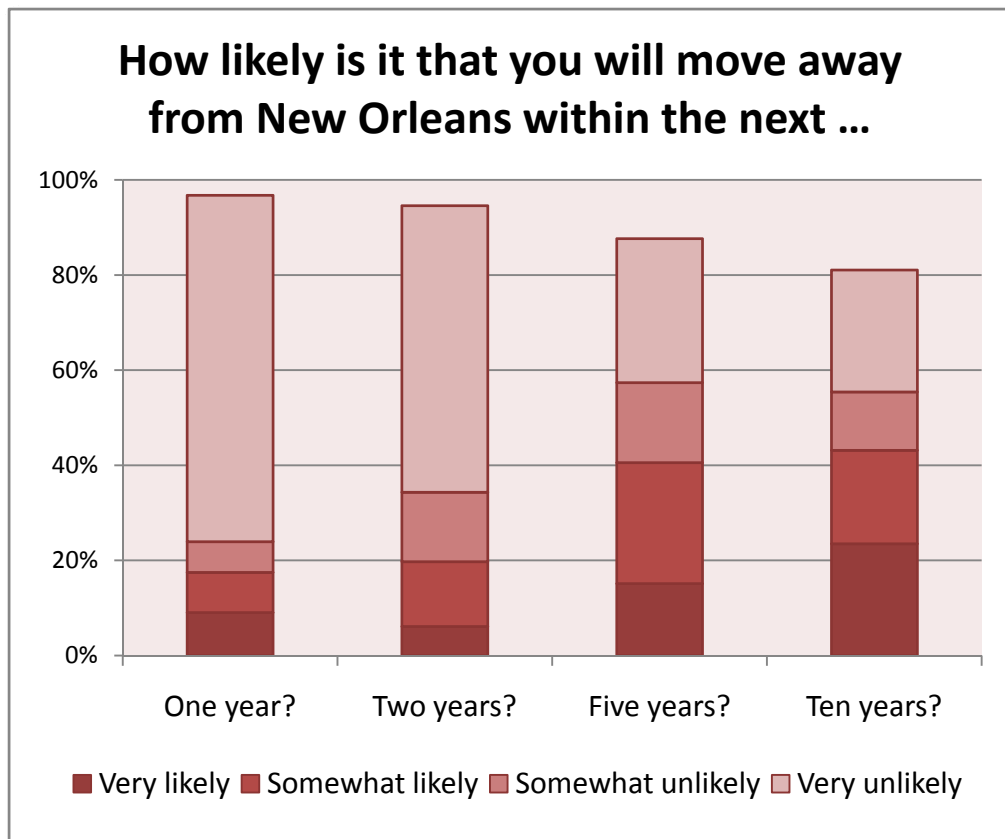
Ratings of Leaders. Survey after survey shows how critical people are of the government, at all levels, yet how much they approve of the efforts of nonprofits. The present surveys reflect these patterns. The YURPs are perhaps slightly less critical of state and local leaders than the general population, though more critical of President Bush. And they rate neighborhood leaders somewhat higher, though religious leaders not quite as highly (so many YURPs are secular that this may not be a reliable measure and is therefore not shown here).



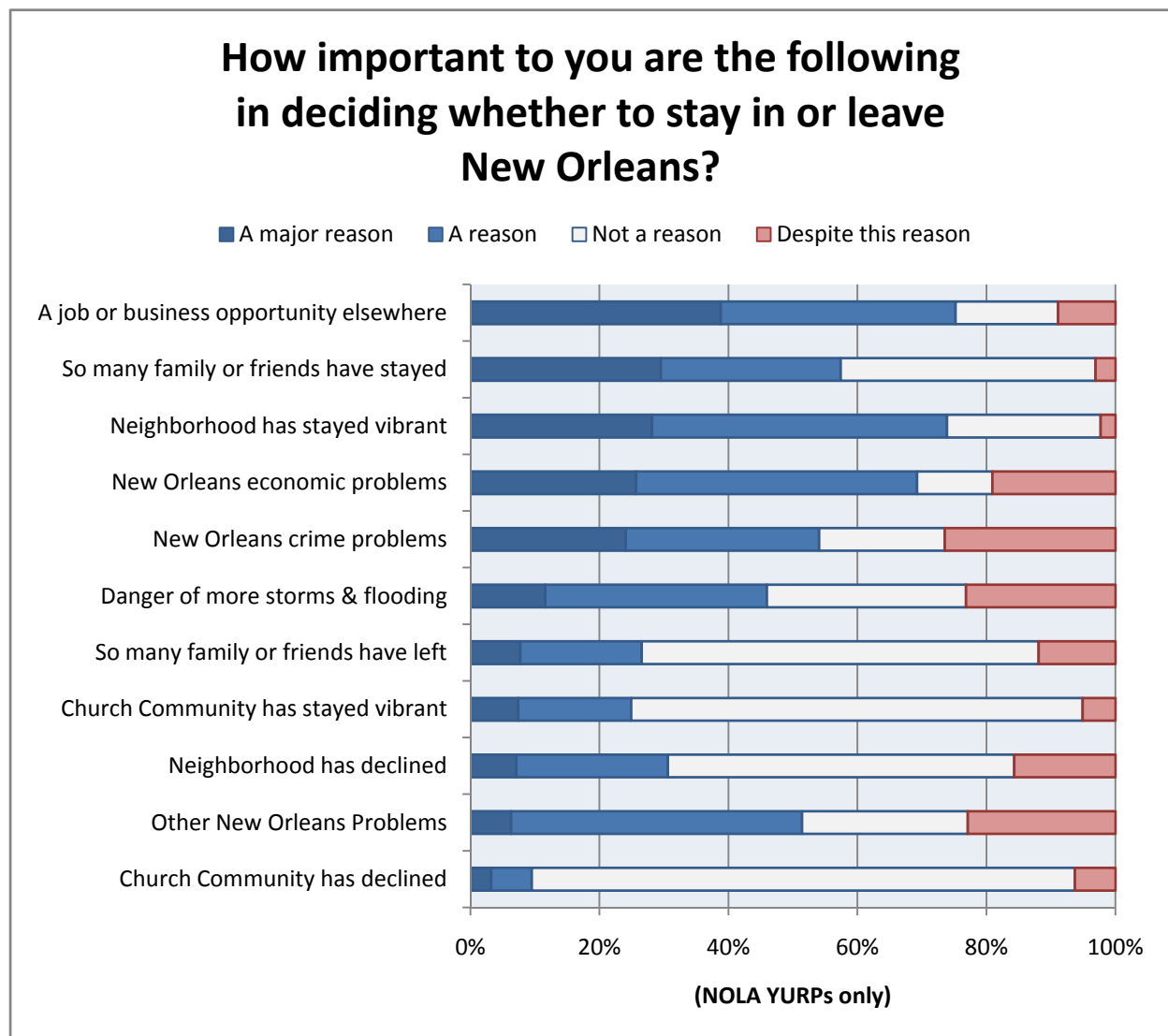


Intention to Stay. Significantly, the young professional newcomers to the city seem to be as committed to staying – possibly more so – than the general population. This cannot be an absolutely solid conclusion because of vagaries of sampling. Of course, when they consider the longer term, they are less certain, but it is significant that as many YURPs express their intention to stay as do.

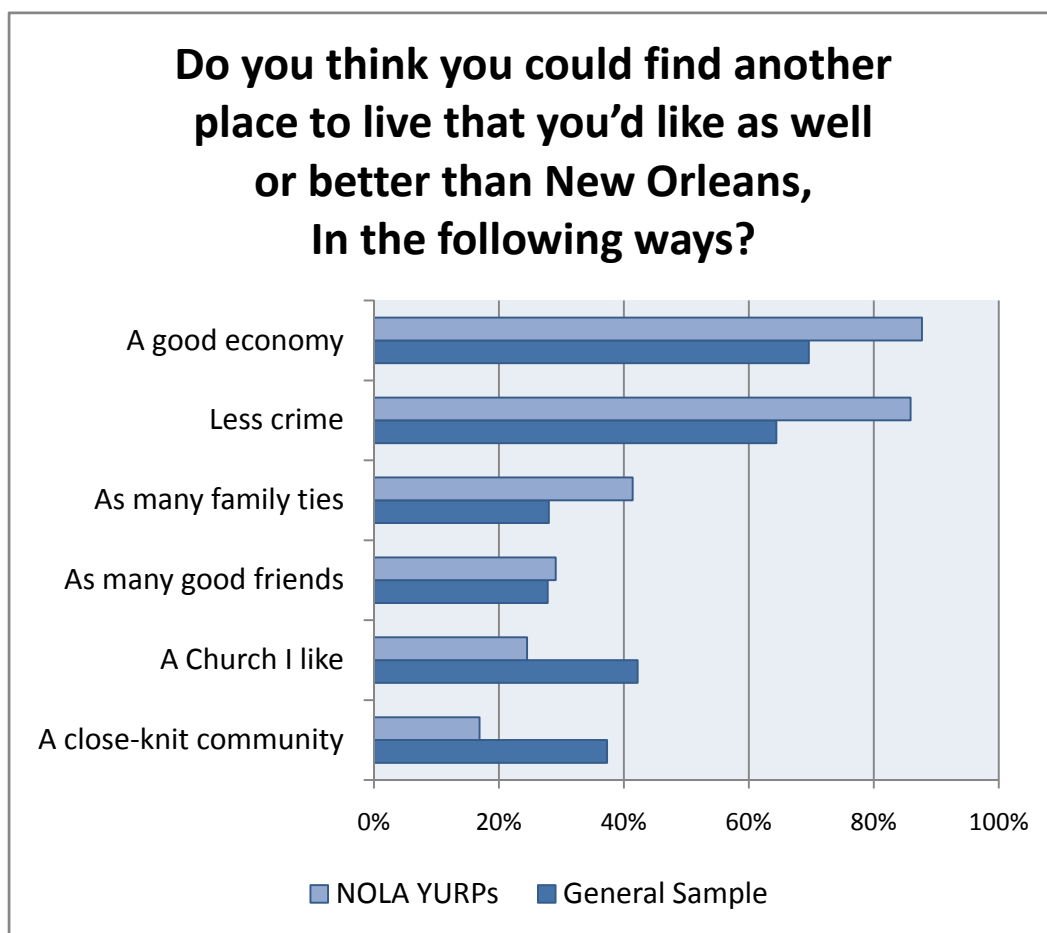




Reasons for Staying or Leaving. We asked survey respondents their reasons for deciding whether to stay in New Orleans or leave. Unfortunately, our question wording was unintentionally ambiguous (we were trying to address both stayers and leavers and fell short). Thus, some answers are hard to interpret, and it is hard to see clear patterns.



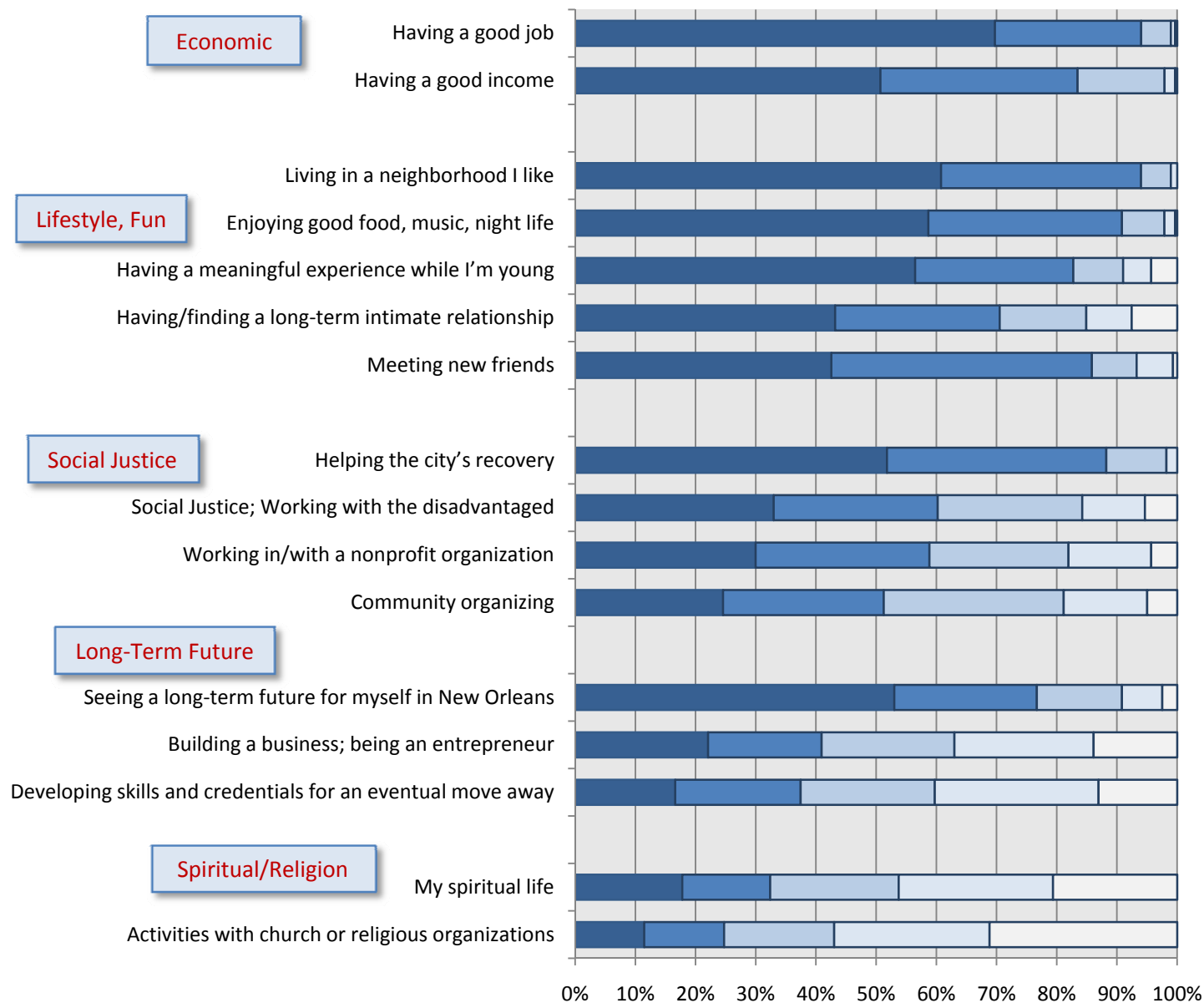
Other Locations Compared to New Orleans. We asked survey respondents if they think they could find another place to live they'd like as well or better than New Orleans, in a variety of ways. Clearly, most people think other places have better economies and less crime; and the YURPs, who mostly came from other places, are more certain of that than are New Orleans natives. However, most people doubt that other places offer as much community closeness, including friends, family, and church. Significantly, while the YURPs have better family ties elsewhere than do native New Orleanians, they are more skeptical that they could find as a close-knit community elsewhere – perhaps having experienced standard American reality intimately in the places they came from.



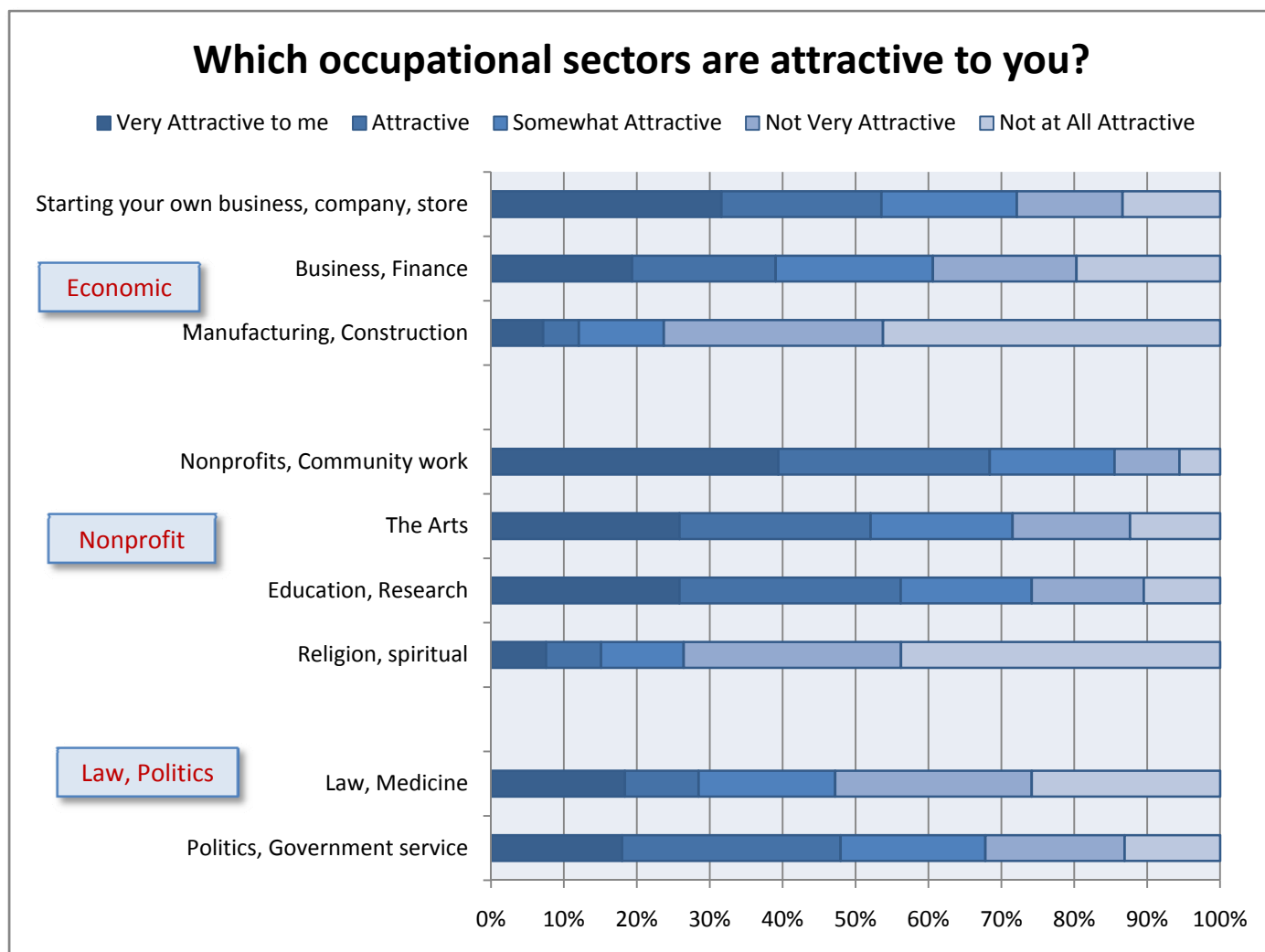
A Profile of YURP Values. We asked survey respondents what is important to them in New Orleans. A statistical method called factor analysis suggests that several realms of importance can be distinguished, in roughly this order of importance: Economic considerations, Lifestyle and Fun, Social Justice considerations, thoughts of the Long-Term Future, and Spiritual and Religious factors.

How important are the following to you in New Orleans?

■ Very Important to me ■ Important ■ Somewhat Important ■ Not Very Important ■ Not at All Important

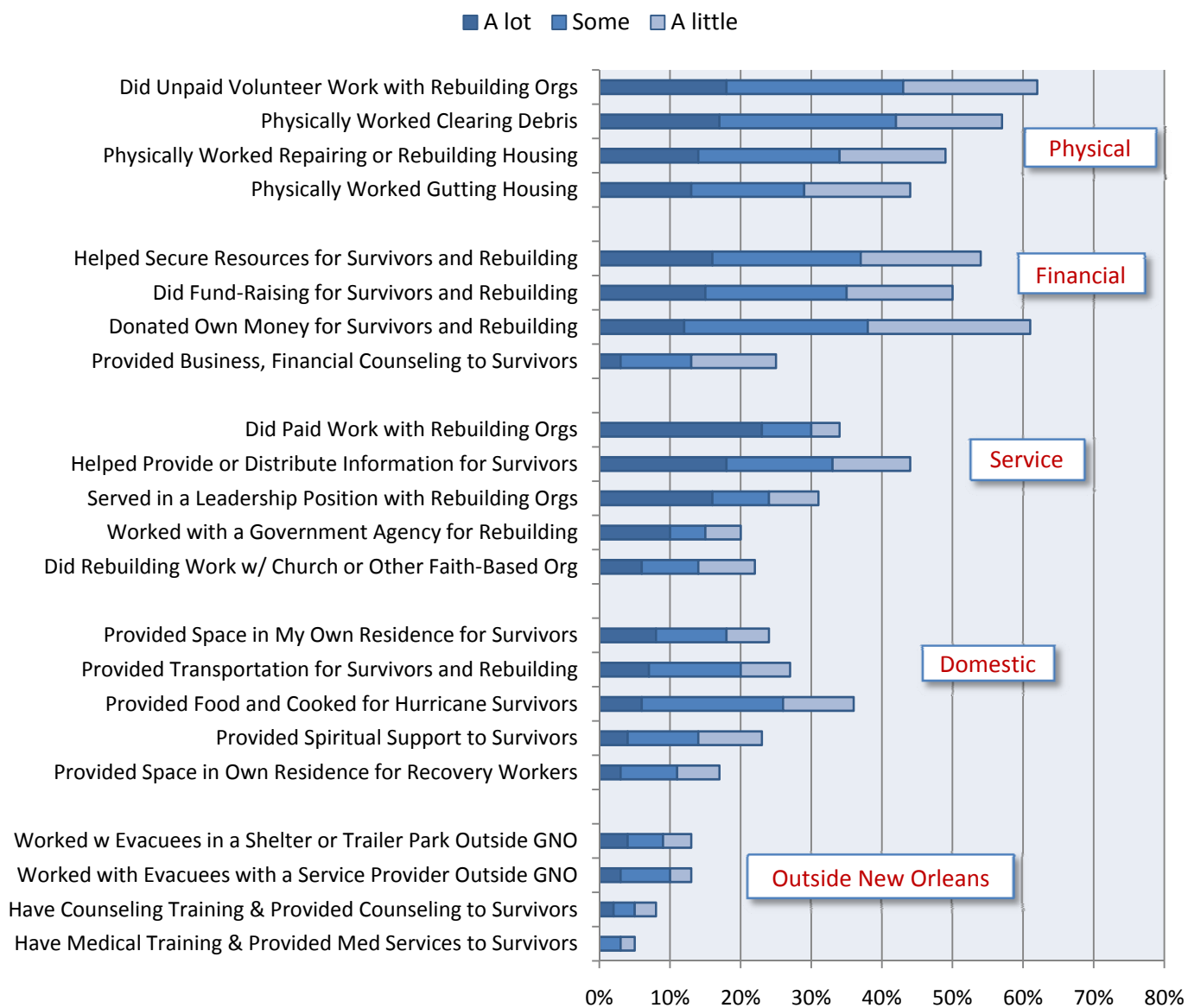


A Profile of YURP Occupational Aspirations. We also asked survey respondents what occupations are attractive to them. Again, factor analysis suggests that several occupational areas can be distinguished, in roughly this order of attractiveness: Business and Entrepreneurial occupations, Nonprofit occupations, and the Professions and Government Service.



YURP Rebuilding Activities after the Storm. The YURPs have been very active in recovery work. Most of them have done physical rebuilding and helped raise money. Many have also performed service work with nonprofits or government agencies, either as volunteers or as interns or paid workers. Smaller numbers provided space in their own residence or provided professional or volunteer services for survivors, both in and outside Greater New Orleans.

How much did you yourself do any of the following in the aftermath of the Hurricanes?



NOLA YURPS: Young Urban Rebuilding Professionals: Where are they from?

Where are Potential Newcomers Now?

- + 1 Person
- + 2 People
- + 3 People
- + 4 - 8 People

Where Did Newcomers Come From?

- 1 Person
- 2 - 4 People
- 5 - 9 People
- 10 - 15 People
- 16 - 21 People

