

Elected Officials' Perceptions of Civic Discourse with and among Residents across the Urban-Rural Spectrum

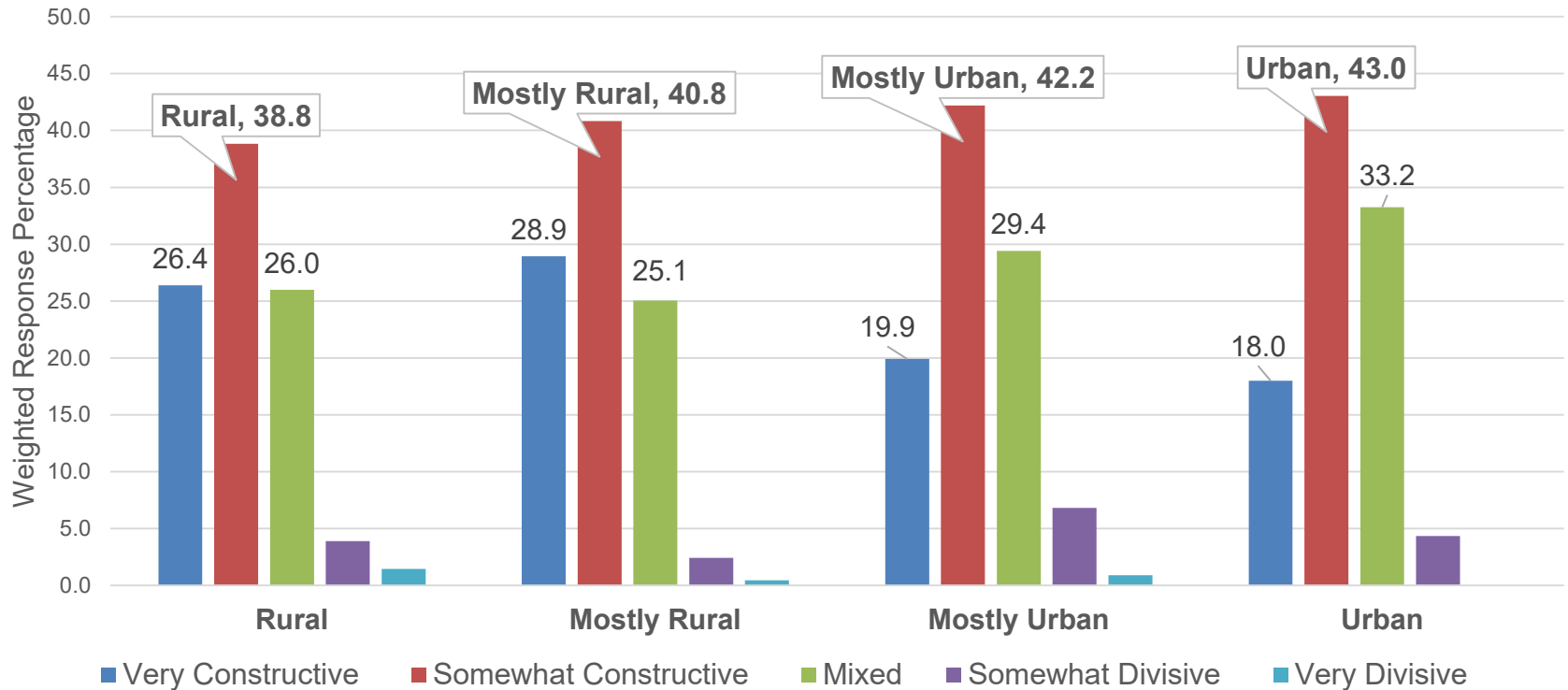
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Methods

- Survey Questions from Spring 2018
- Urban and rural jurisdictions were determined by survey responses, yielding variables: Rural, Mostly Rural, Mostly Urban, Urban, and Don't Know
- Survey responses were weighted and cross-tab analysis was done

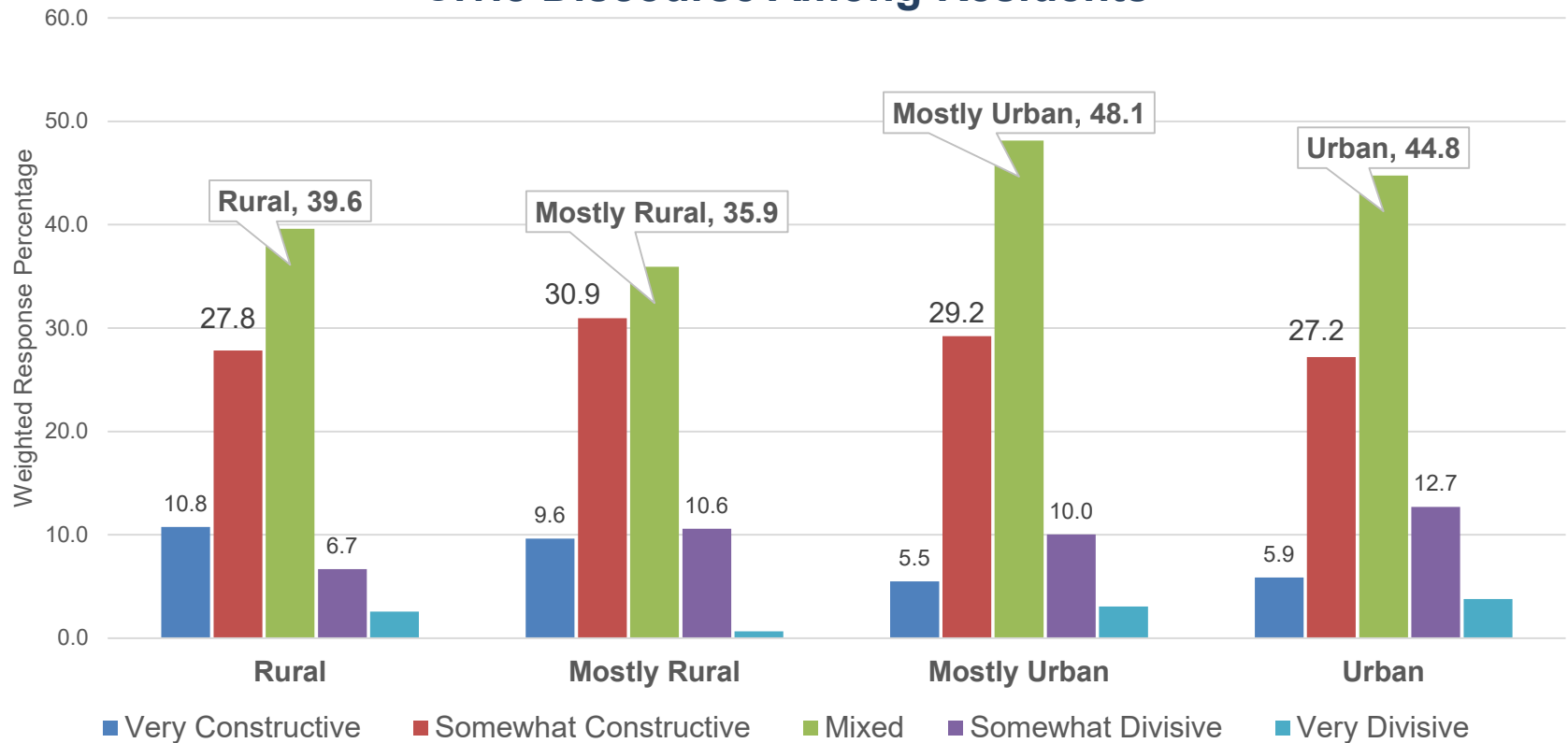
Civic Discourse Between Elected Officials & Residents



Finding:

Urban & rural jurisdictions similarly believe discourse between elected officials and residents is “Somewhat Constructive” (Plurality)

Civic Discourse Among Residents



Finding:

Urban & rural similarly believe discourse among residents is “Mixed” (Plurality)

How has this changed in the last 5 years, when looking at civic discourse through tone of discussion?

Tone of Discussion Compared to 5 Years Ago

Elected officials & Residents	Rural	Mostly Rural	Mostly Urban	Urban
Significantly More Civil	14.7%	13.8%	7.7%	7.2%
Somewhat More Civil	20.2%	20.3%	22.8%	15.9%
Neither More nor Less Civil	49.6%	49.6%	50.2%	59.7%
Somewhat Less Civil	7.5%	9%	11.4%	10.3%
Significantly Less Civil	1.6%	1.5%	3.1%	4%

Among Residents	Rural	Mostly Rural	Mostly Urban	Urban
Significantly More Civil	7.5%	6.7%	3.1%	2.9%
Somewhat More Civil	17.1%	16.6%	11.7%	16.9%
Neither More nor Less Civil	46.6%	45.4%	48.4%	37.9%
Somewhat Less Civil	11.6%	14%	18%	24%
Significantly Less Civil	3.5%	3.9%	9.2%	10.7%

Elected officials feel civic discourse is more positive when they are involved

State of Public Discourse	Constructive
Elected Officials & Residents	~66%
Among Residents	~38%
Tone of Discussion Compared to 5years ago	More Civil
Elected Officials & Residents	~34%
Among Residents	~23%

Why does this matter?

- Elected officials along the urban-rural spectrum think similarly about the civic discourse
- Knowing this can change the perception that how elected officials' feel about civic discourse depends on urbanity or rurality
- Allowing research to better assess more pertinent factors in why civic discourse across jurisdictions is the way it is