

FEDERAL RESERVE BANK *of* CHICAGO

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FORUM

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**Milwaukee** 4.6.2016

**Madison** 5.12.2016

FEDERAL RESERVE BANK  
OF CHICAGO



# BARRIERS TO UNEMPLOYMENT: Who Are Milwaukee's Unemployed Jobseekers?



**PUBLIC POLICY FORUM**

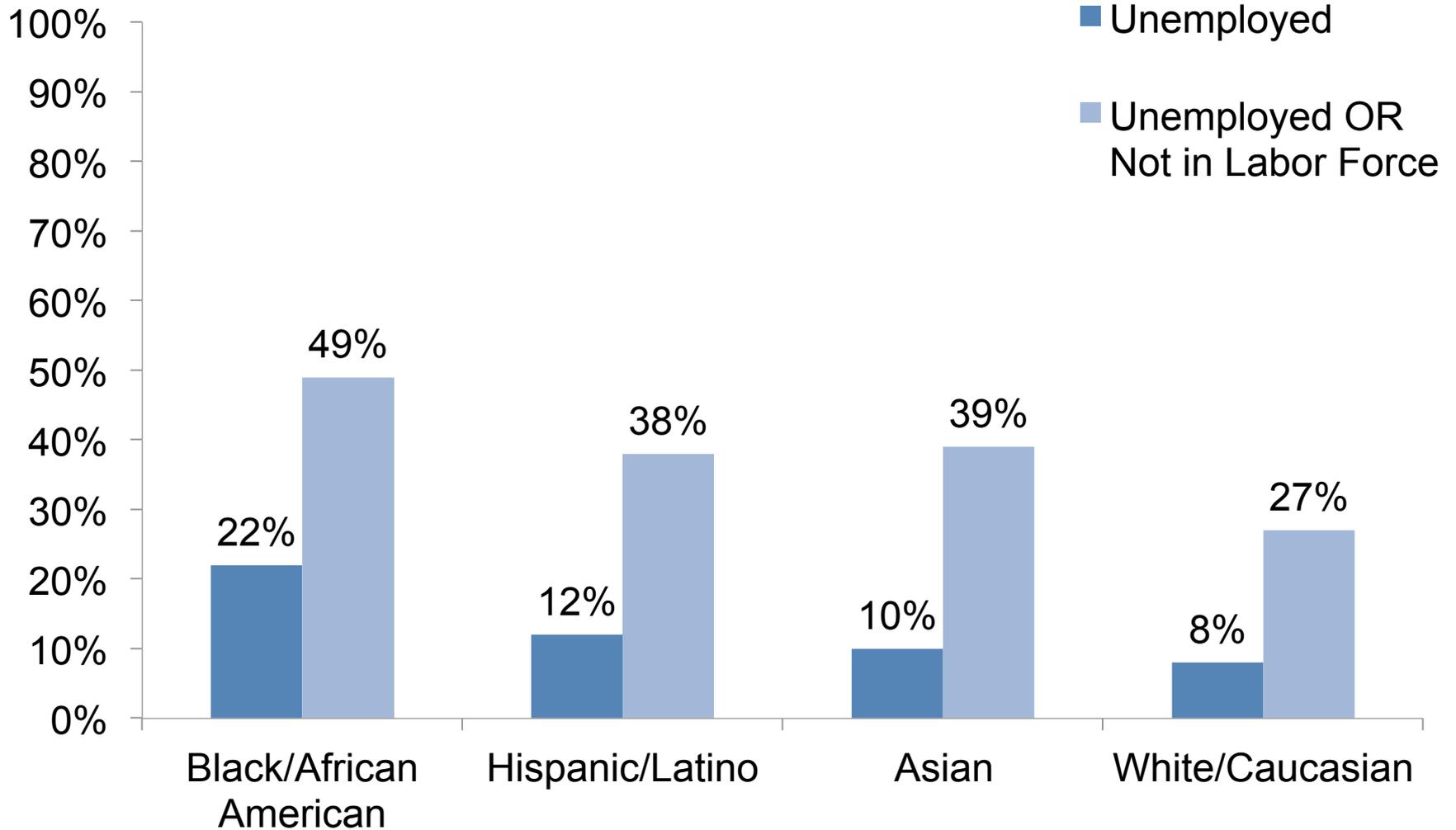
IMPARTIAL RESEARCH. INFORMED DEBATE.

# PRIMARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

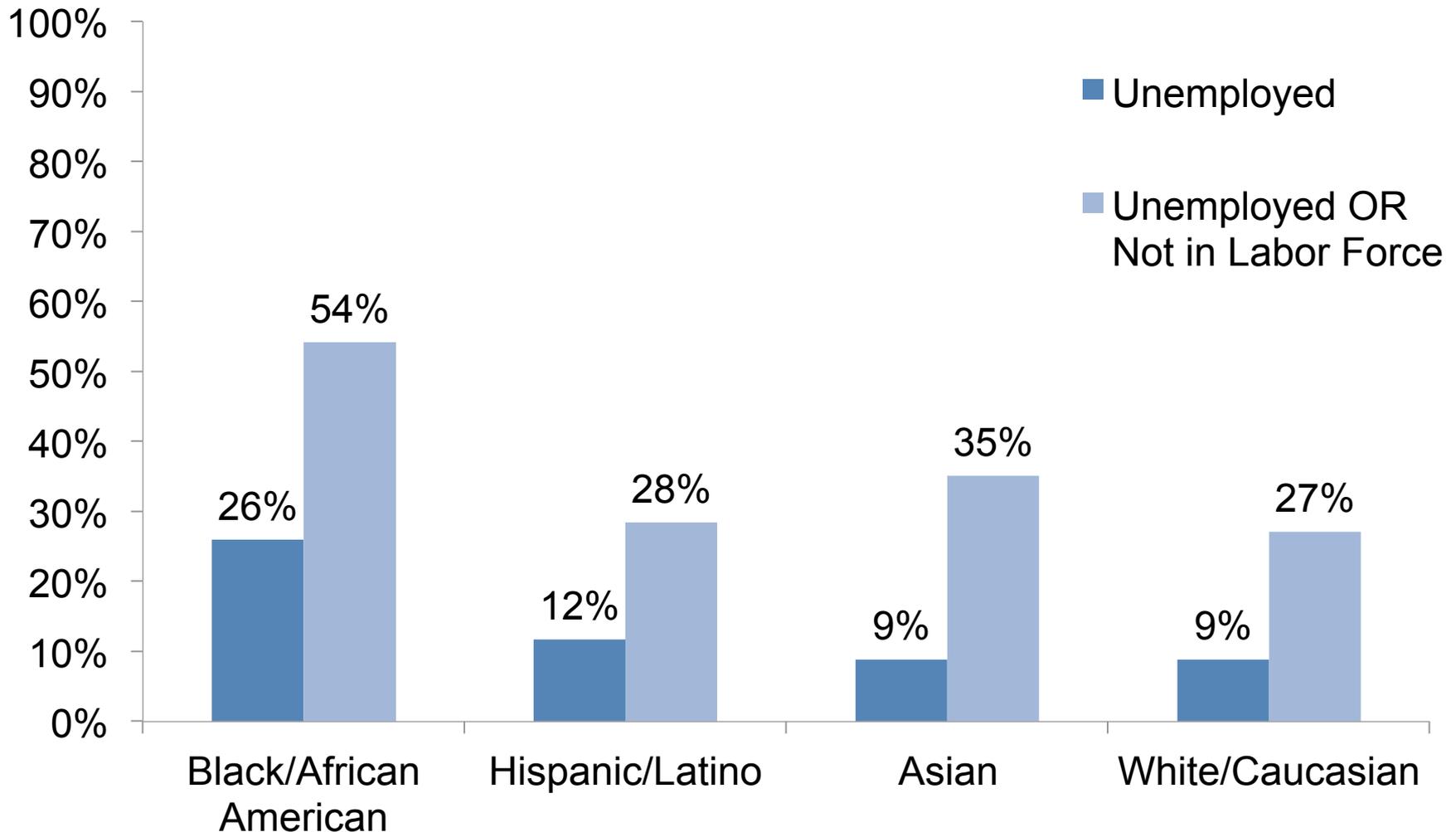
Are certain barriers to employment particularly common among the chronically unemployed in Milwaukee?

If so, what policy changes could be considered?

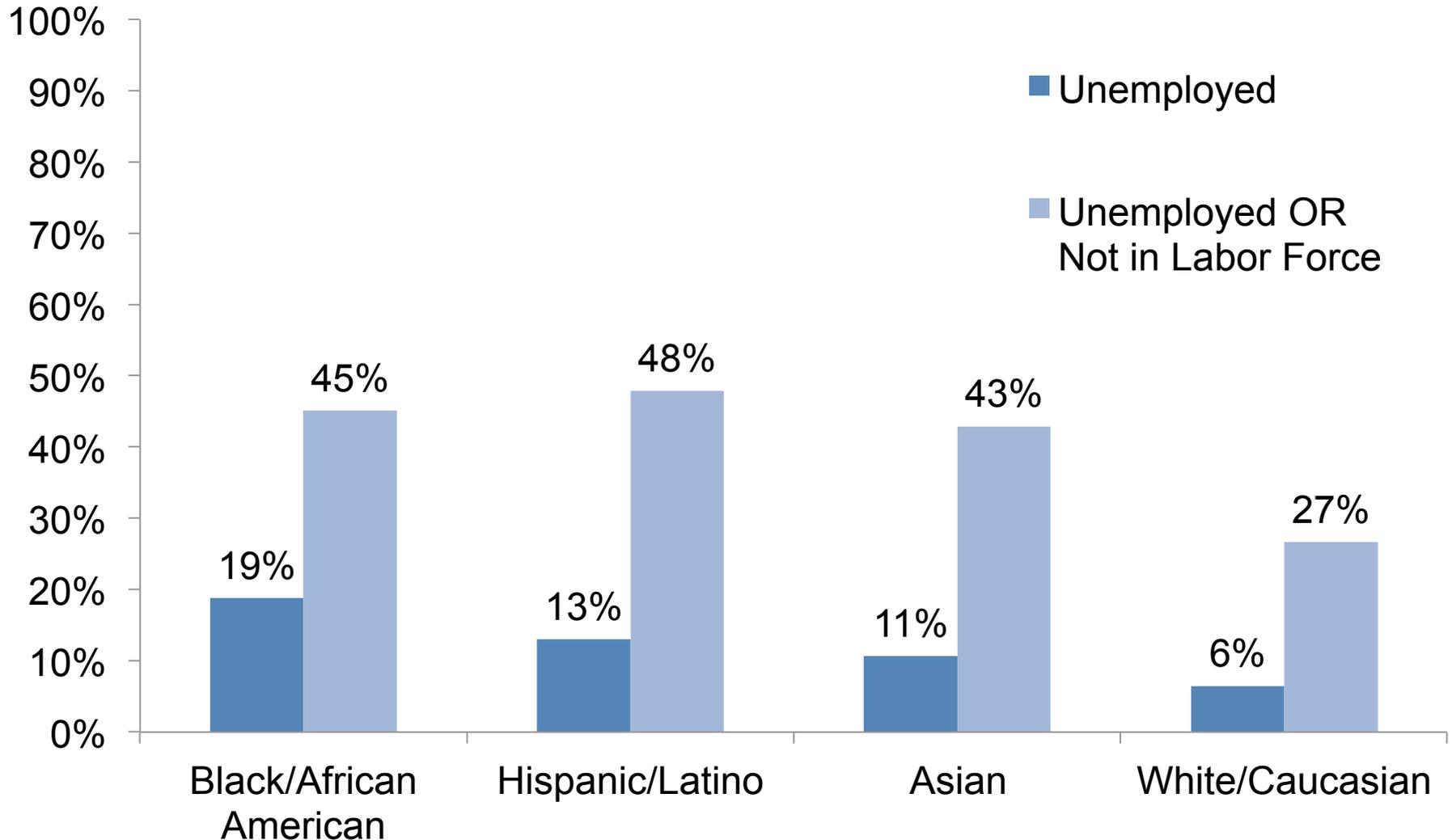
# UNEMPLOYMENT & LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION - 2013



# MALE UNEMPLOYMENT & LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION - 2013

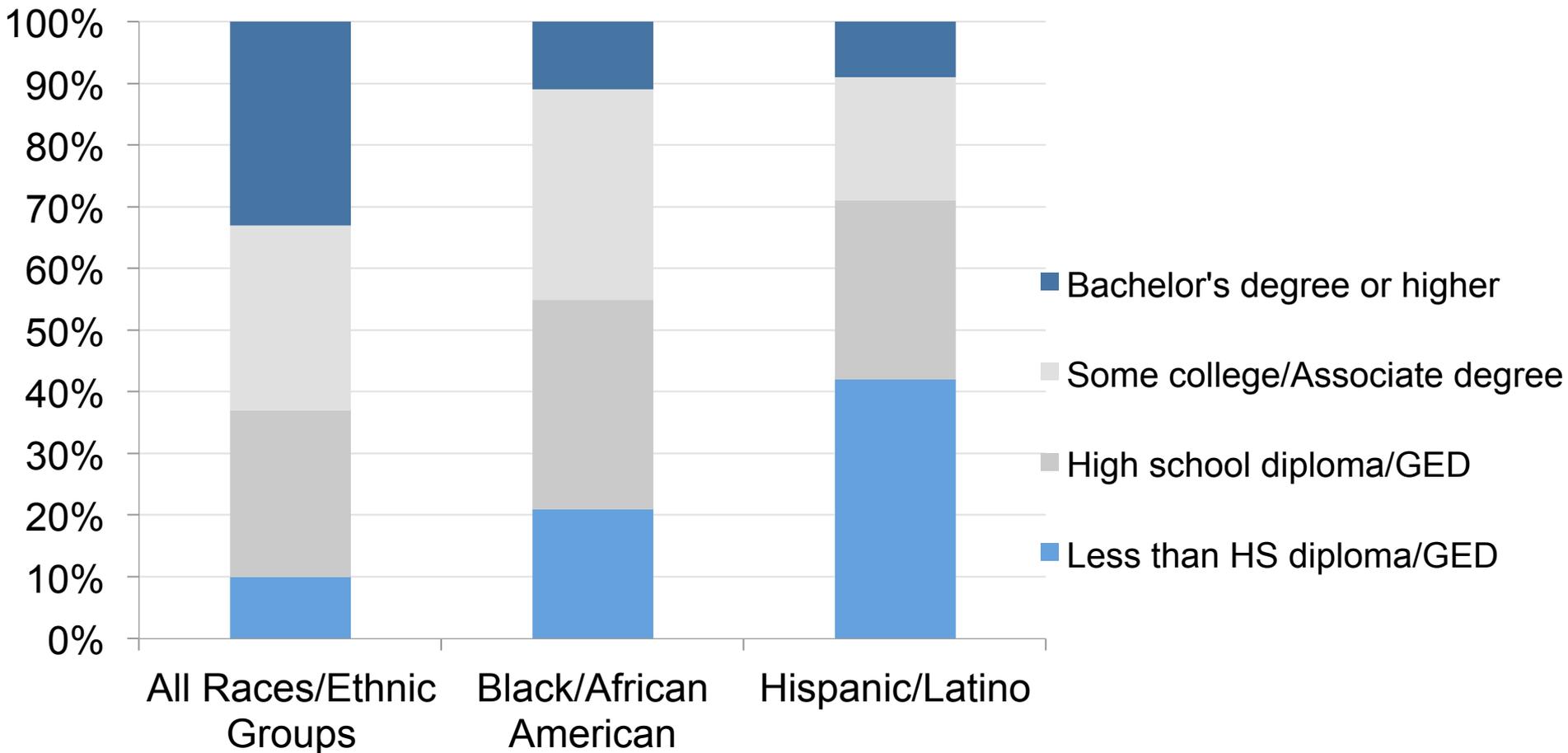


# FEMALE UNEMPLOYMENT & LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION - 2013



# EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT BY RACE

## 2014



# DATA SOURCES/PROGRAMS ANALYZED

## Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board

- WIOA Adult
- WIOA Dislocated Worker
- FoodShare Employment and Training
- Windows to Work

## Wisconsin Department of Children and Families

- Transform Milwaukee Jobs

## YWCA Southeast Wisconsin

- Enhanced Transitional Jobs Demonstration

# EMPLOYMENT BARRIERS

## Limited education/skills

- No high school diploma or GED

## Limited transportation options

- No valid driver's license

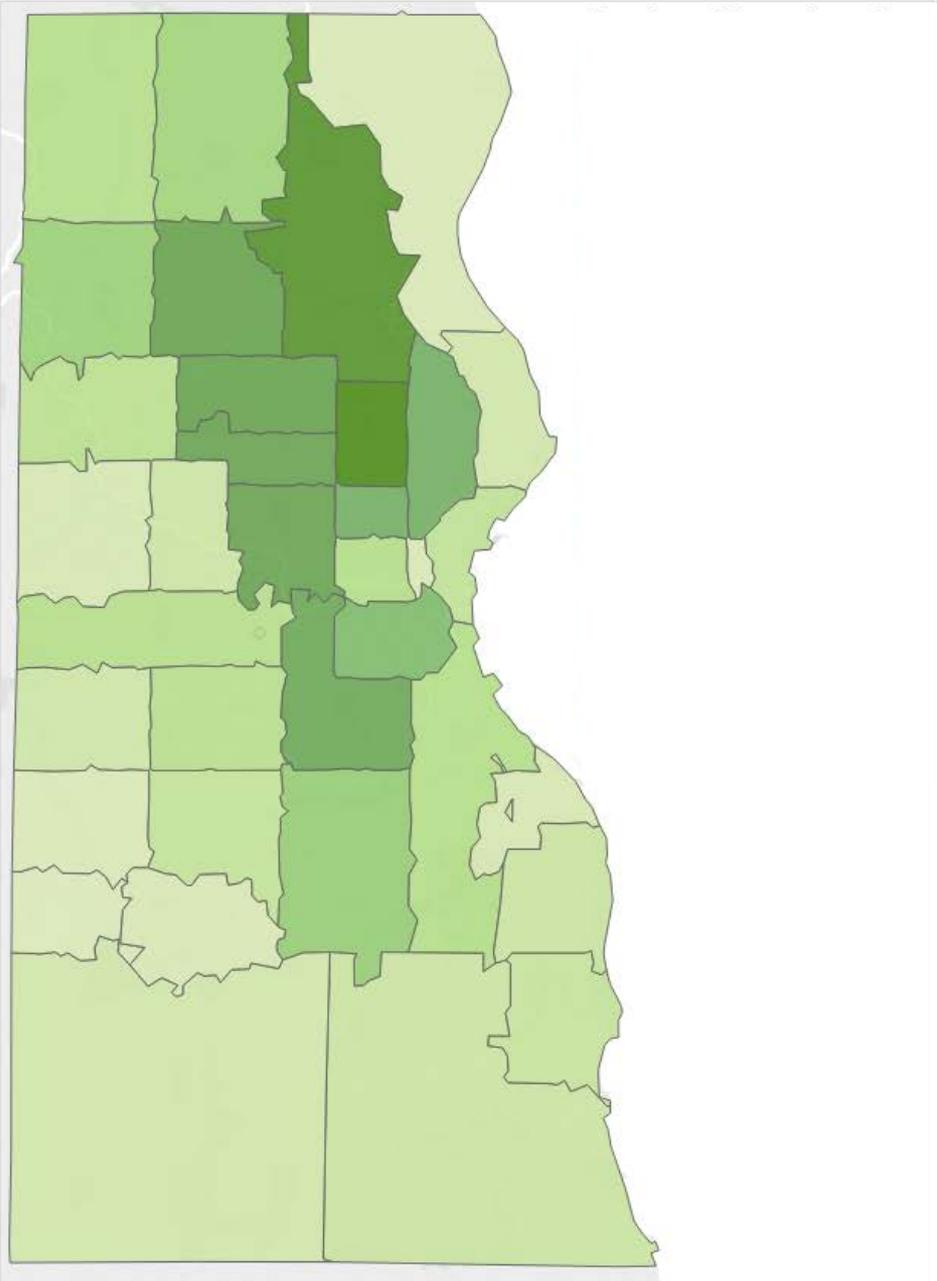
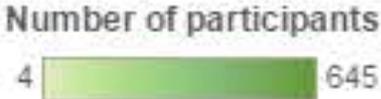
## Criminal backgrounds

## Parental status and responsibilities

- Head of household / Non-custodial parent

# MAWIB PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

(N = 6,948)



# WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA) – ADULT

## Participation

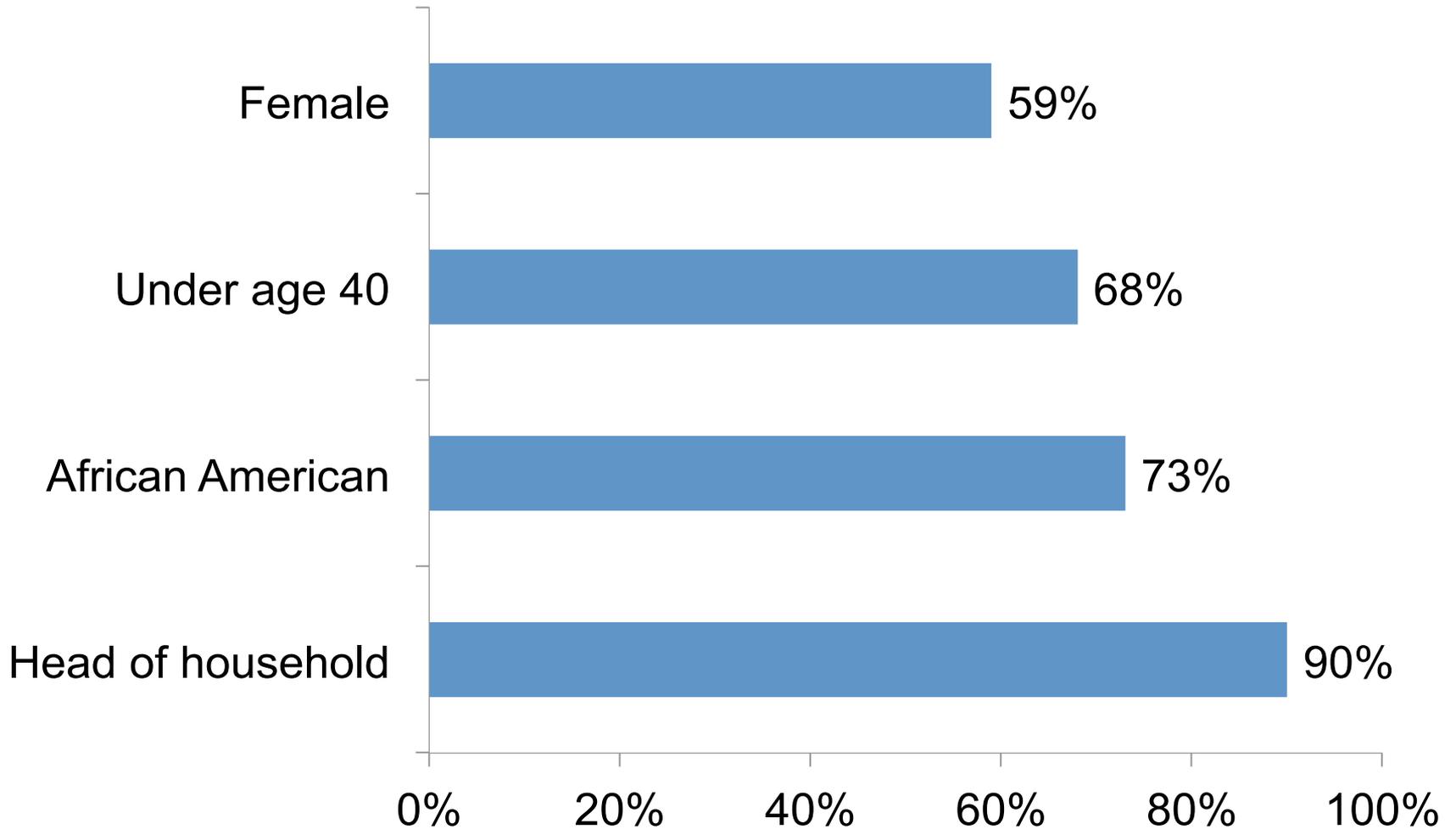
1,295 total participants in 2014

## Qualifications

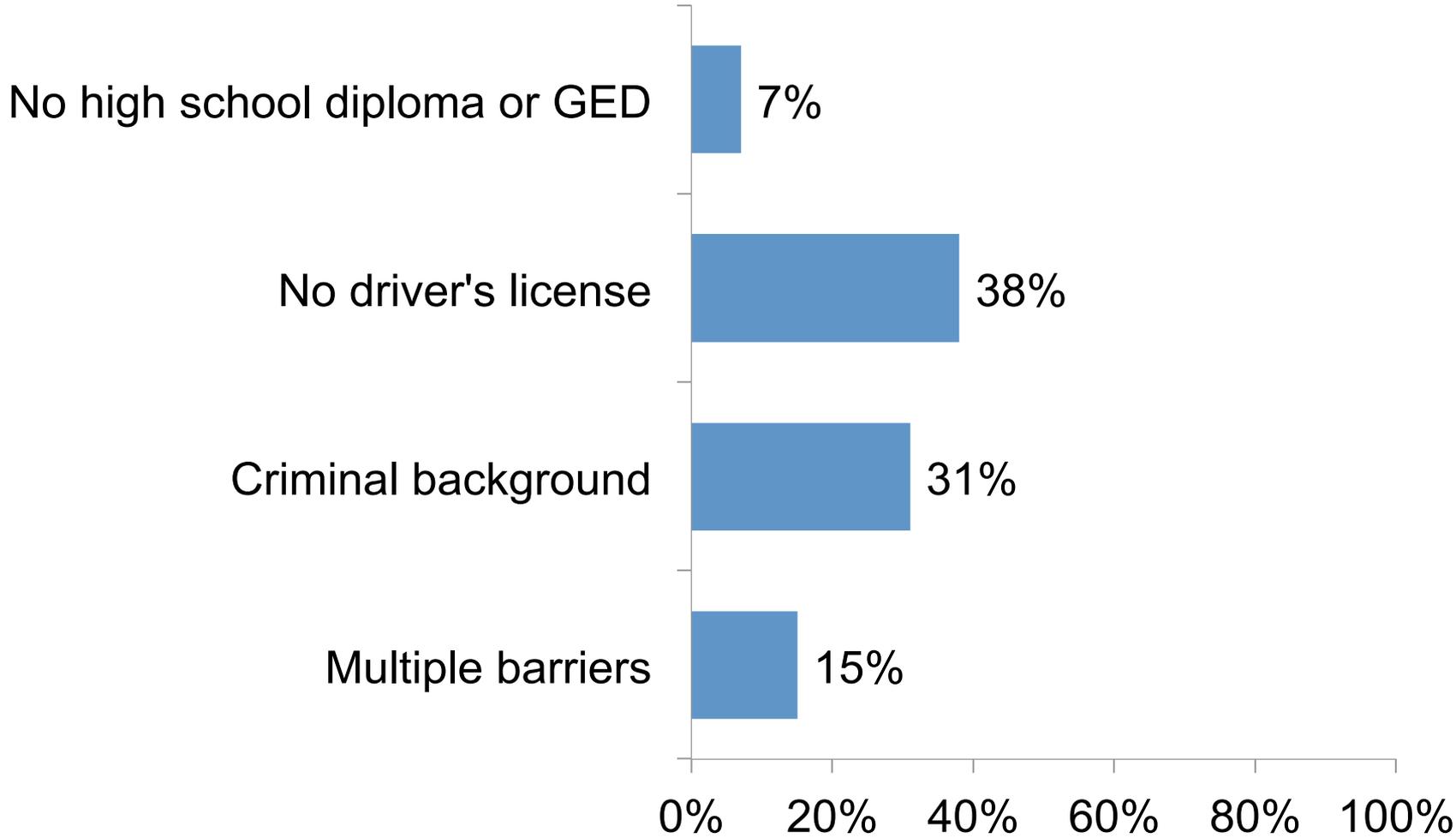
- 18 years of age or older
- Citizen or noncitizen authorized to work in US
- Meet military registration requirements (males only)

*Priority is given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and veterans and eligible spouses.*

# WIOA ADULT – DEMOGRAPHICS



# WIOA ADULT PARTICIPANTS – BARRIERS



# FOODSHARE EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING PROGRAM (FSET)

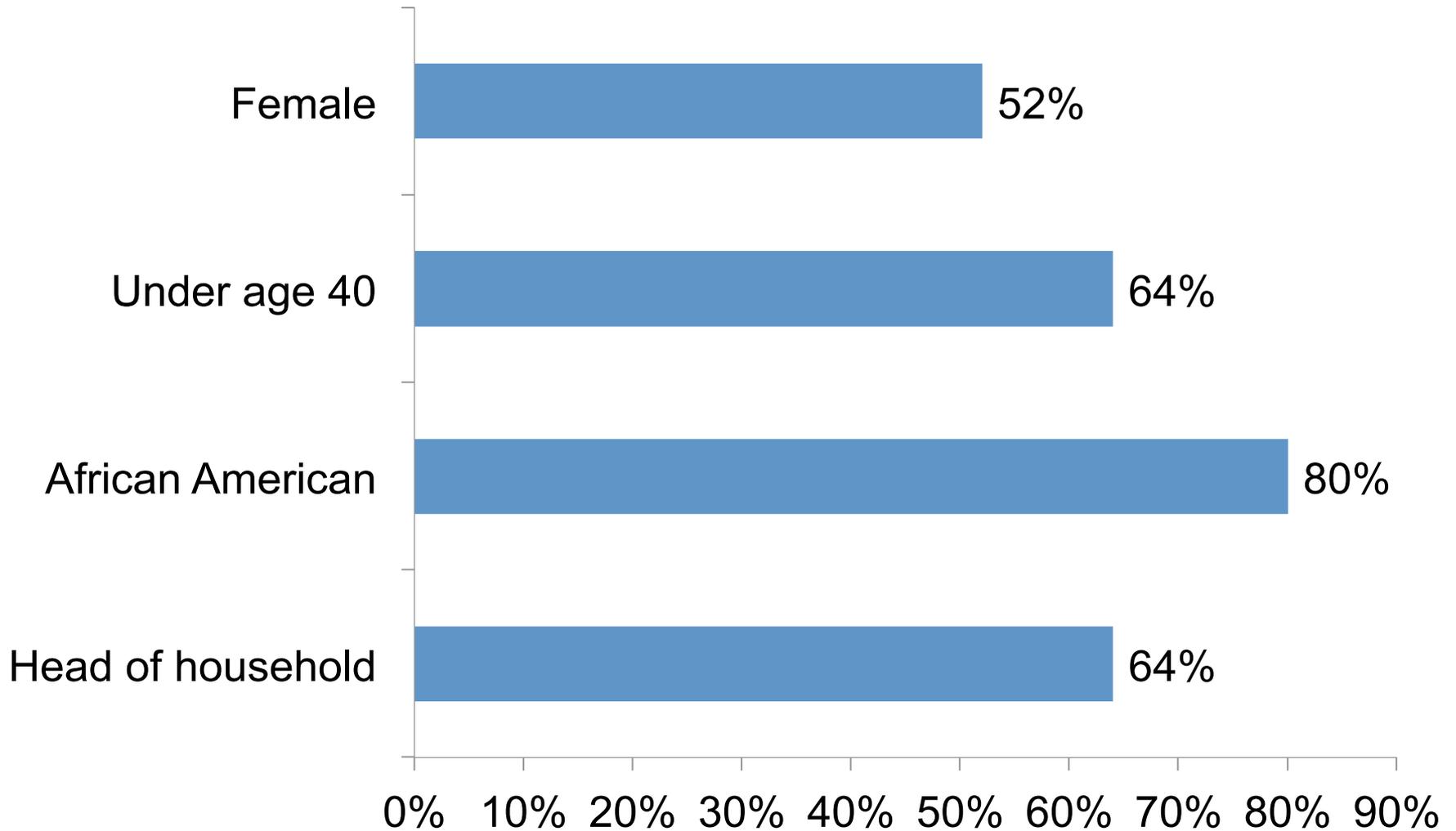
## Participation

3,915 total participants in 2014

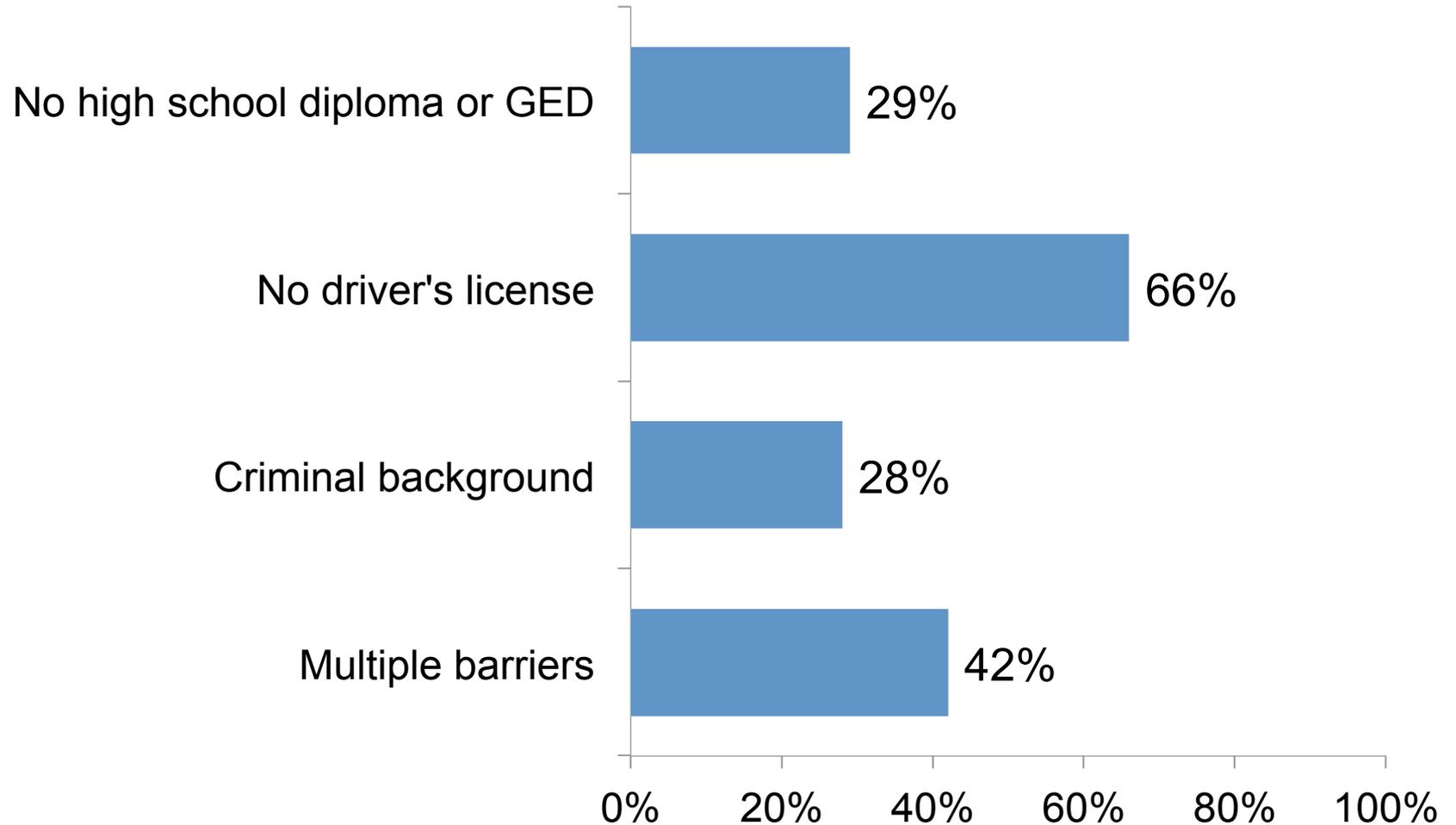
## Qualifications

- 18 years of age or older
- FoodShare recipient
- Citizen or noncitizen authorized to work in US

# FSET — DEMOGRAPHICS



# FSET – BARRIERS



# TRANSFORM MILWAUKEE JOBS

## Participation

964 total participants (January 2014 – June 2015)

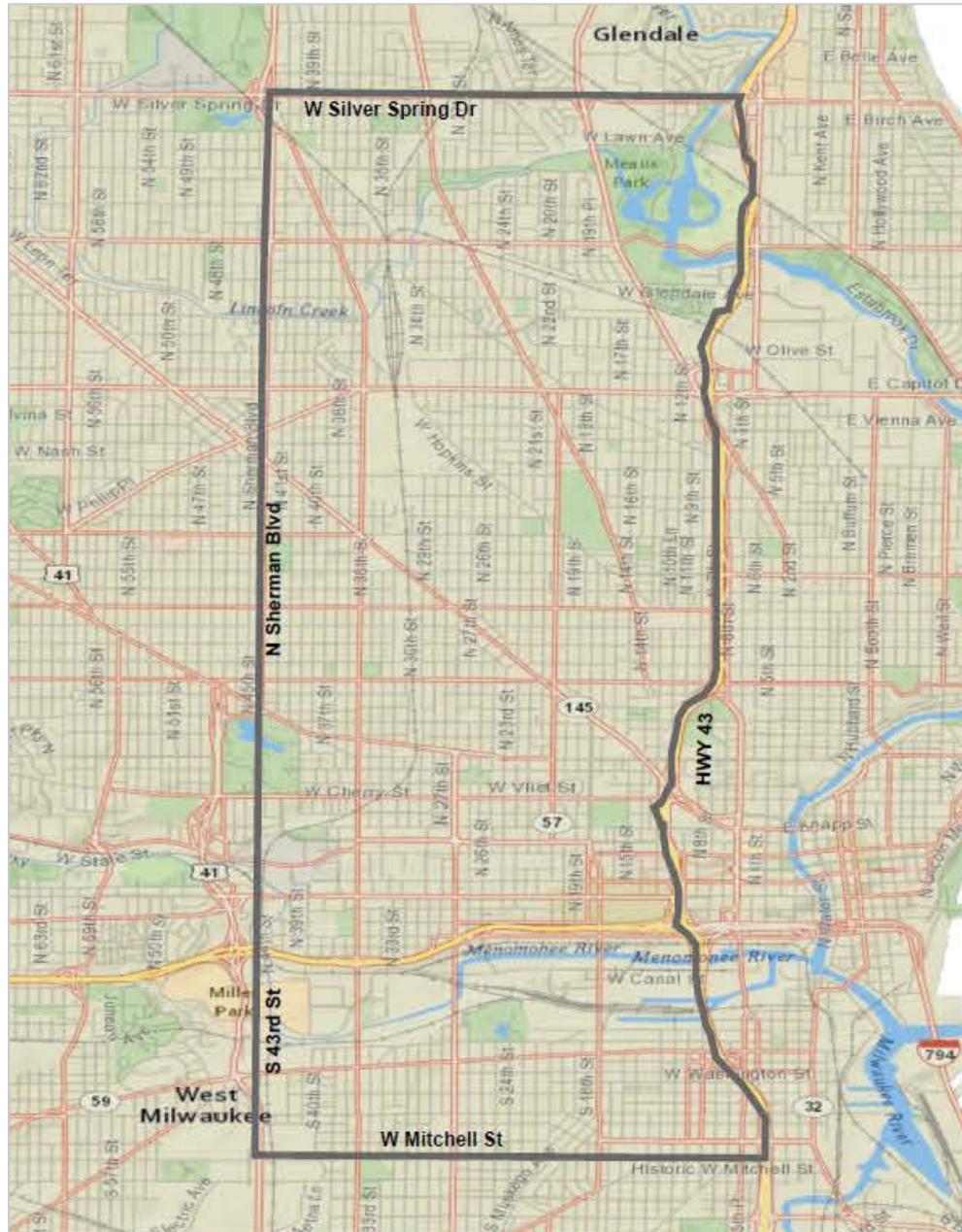
## Qualifications

- 18 years of age or older
  - If age 24 or older, at least one dependent child
- Unemployed for previous four weeks or longer
- Ineligible for unemployment compensation and not receiving W-2

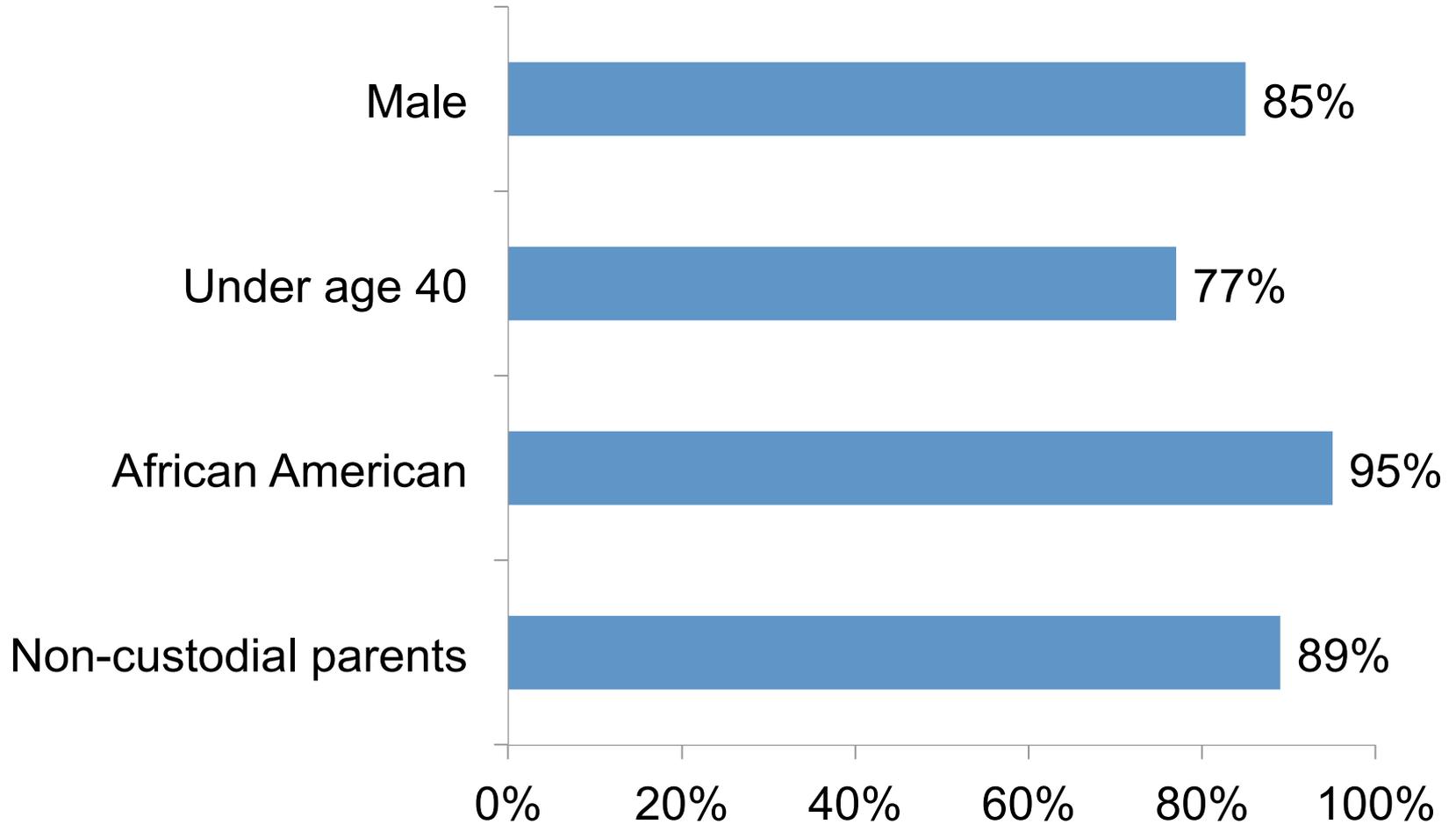
At least one of the following:

- Child support order in place
- Child reunification plan in place
- Ex-offender

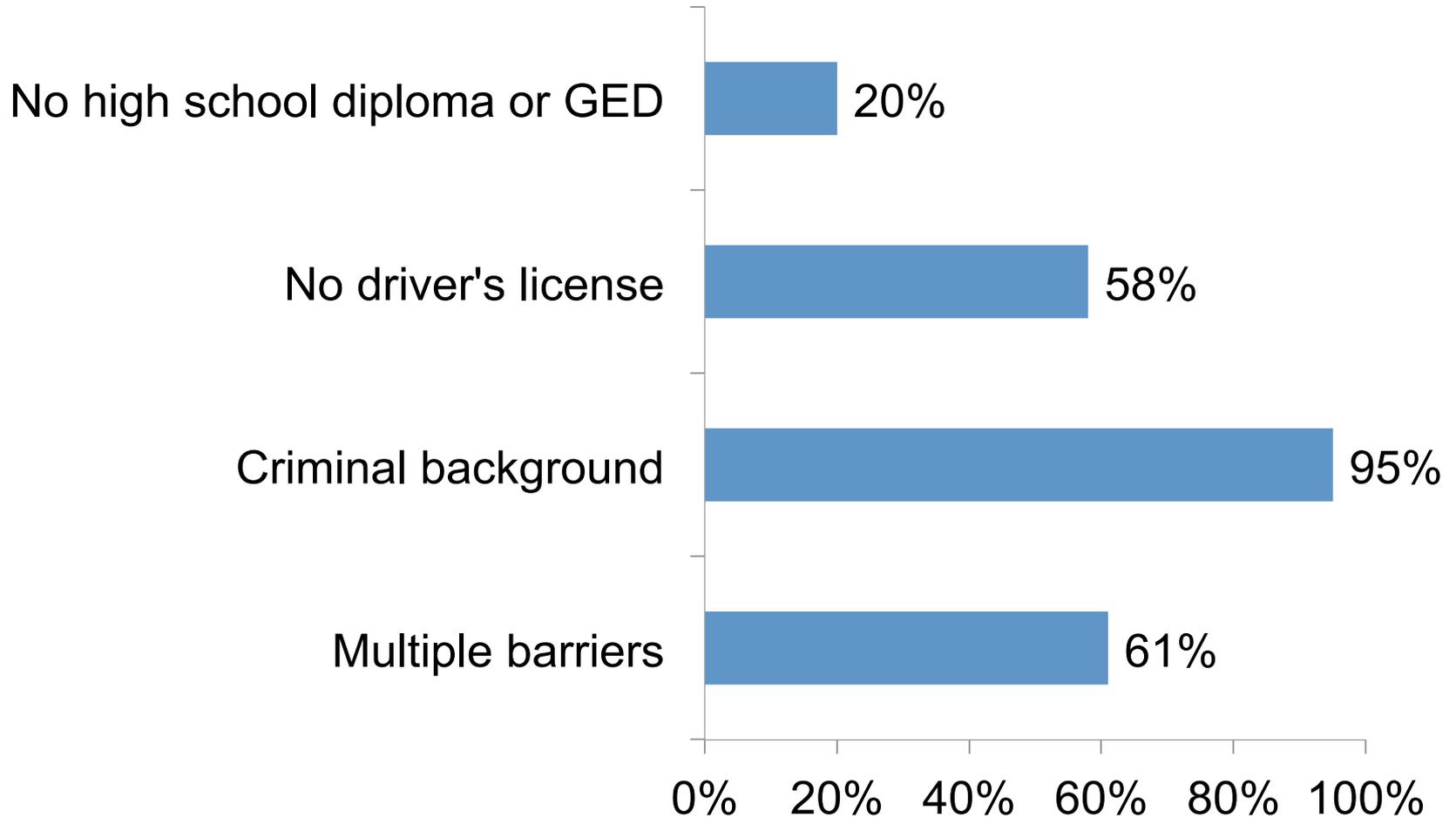
# TRANSFORM MILWAUKEE JOBS



# TRANSFORM MKE JOBS DEMOGRAPHICS

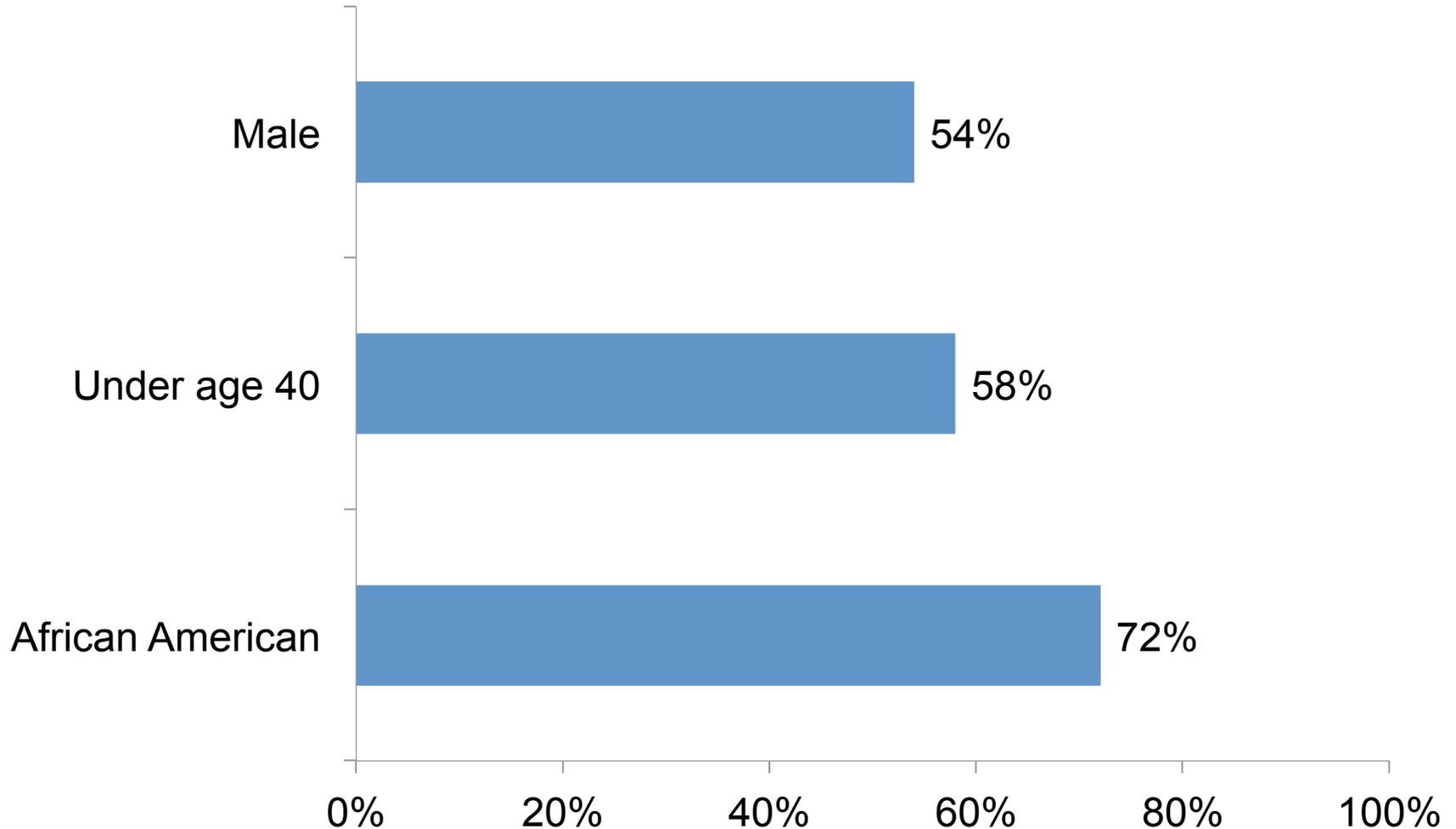


# TRANSFORM MKE PARTICIPANTS BARRIERS



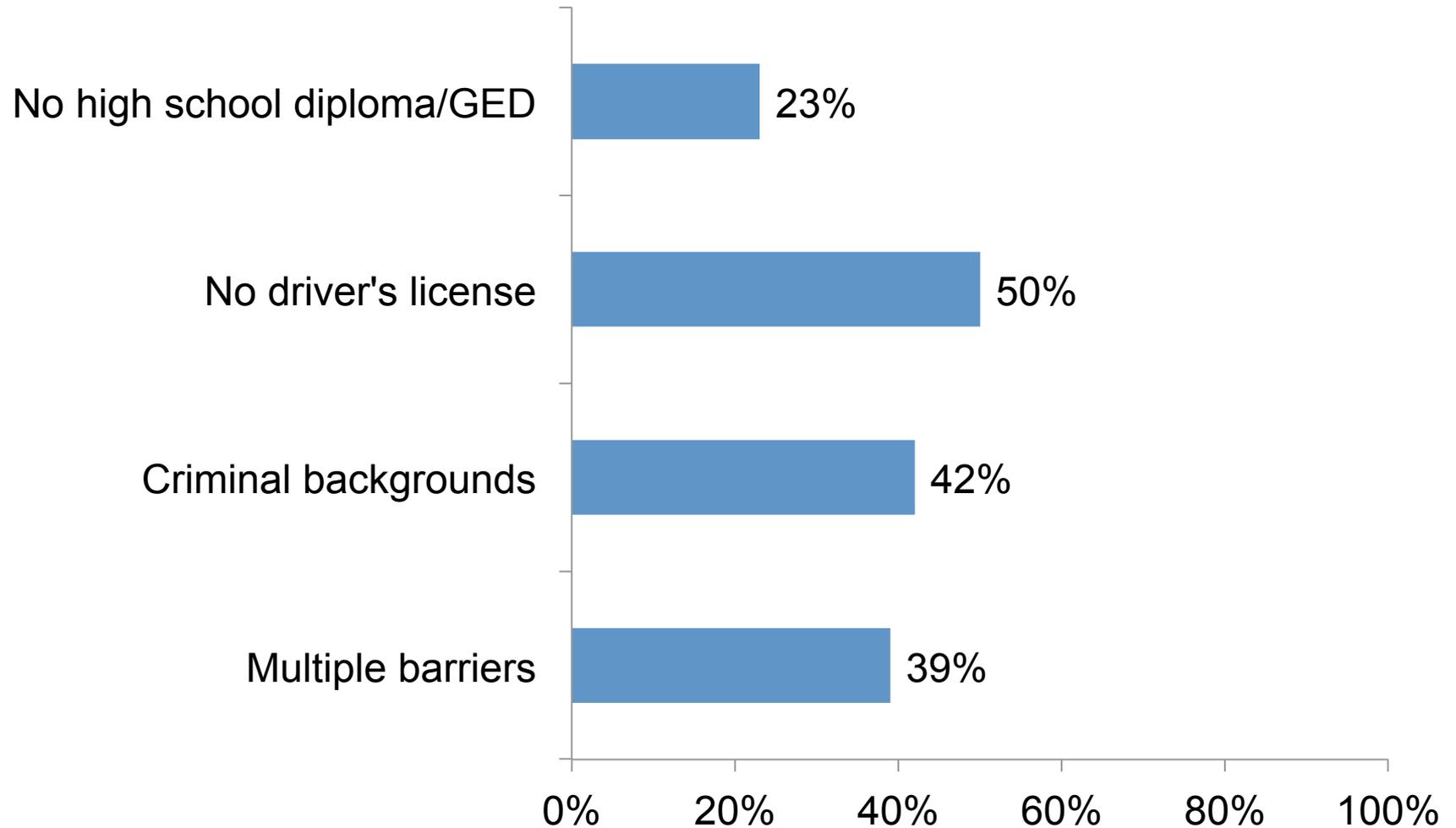
# ALL 6 PROGRAMS – DEMOGRAPHICS

N = 8,668

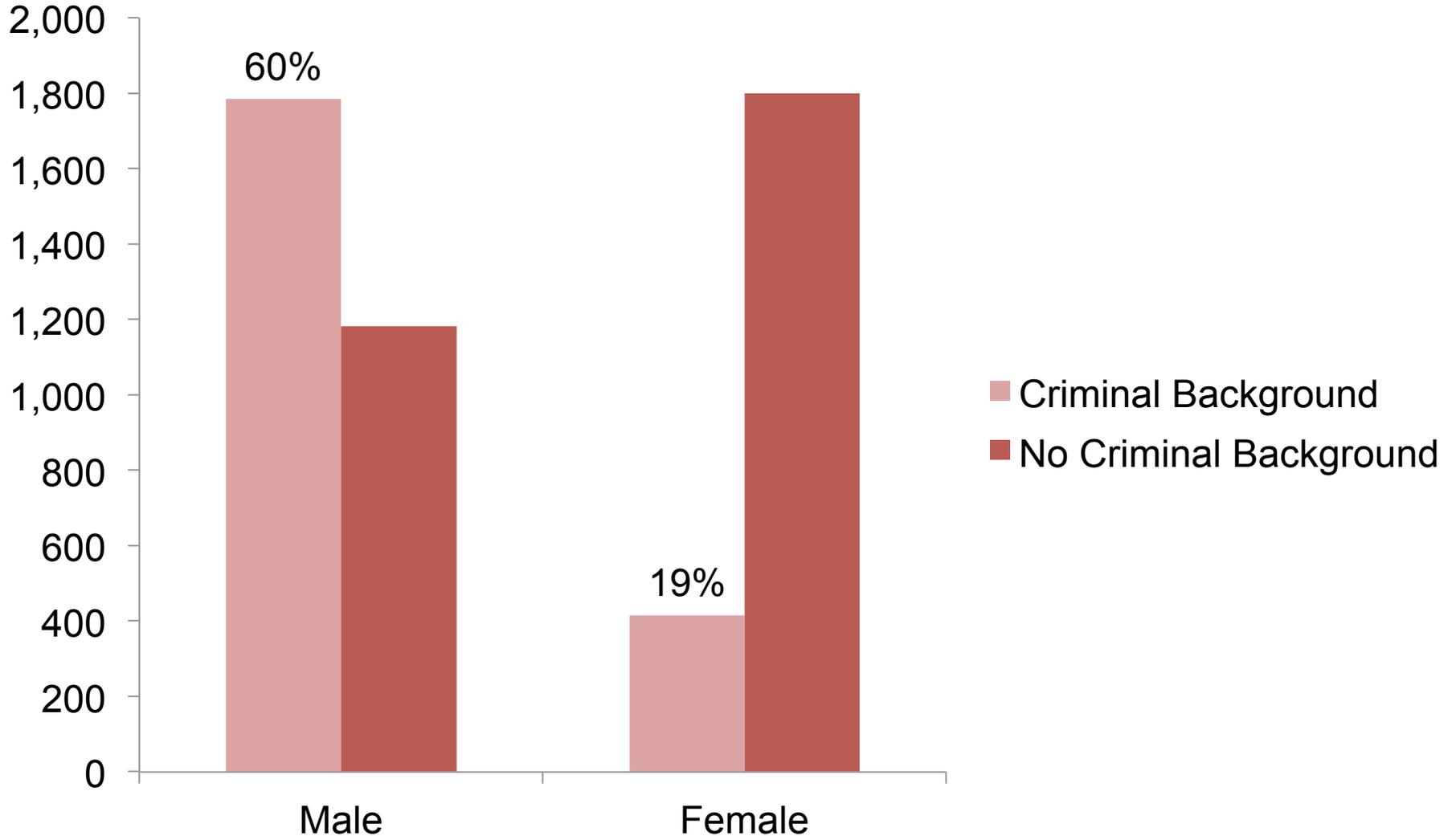


# ALL 6 PROGRAMS – BARRIERS

N = 8,668



# ALL 6 PROGRAMS – BARRIERS



# POTENTIAL BARRIERS

- Limited education/skills
- Limited transportation options
- Criminal backgrounds and incarceration
- Parental status and responsibilities
- Lack of work history
- Length of unemployment
- Poor basic employment (“soft”) skills
- Physical and mental health issues/disabilities
- AODA issues/drug testing
- Lack of stable housing/affordable housing near jobs
- Limited spoken and/or written English
- Discrimination for any reason

# OBSERVATIONS

1. Half (50%) of the unemployed Milwaukee residents who take part in workforce development programs lack valid driver's licenses.
2. Criminal backgrounds are an issue for a majority of men (60%) who participate in workforce programs in Milwaukee.
3. Lack of high school diploma/GED is an issue for fewer people (23%), but may be more difficult to overcome with new GED exam.
4. Data on many workforce barriers is not tracked by agencies, and in some cases, would be difficult to measure.

# TRANSIT RESEARCH

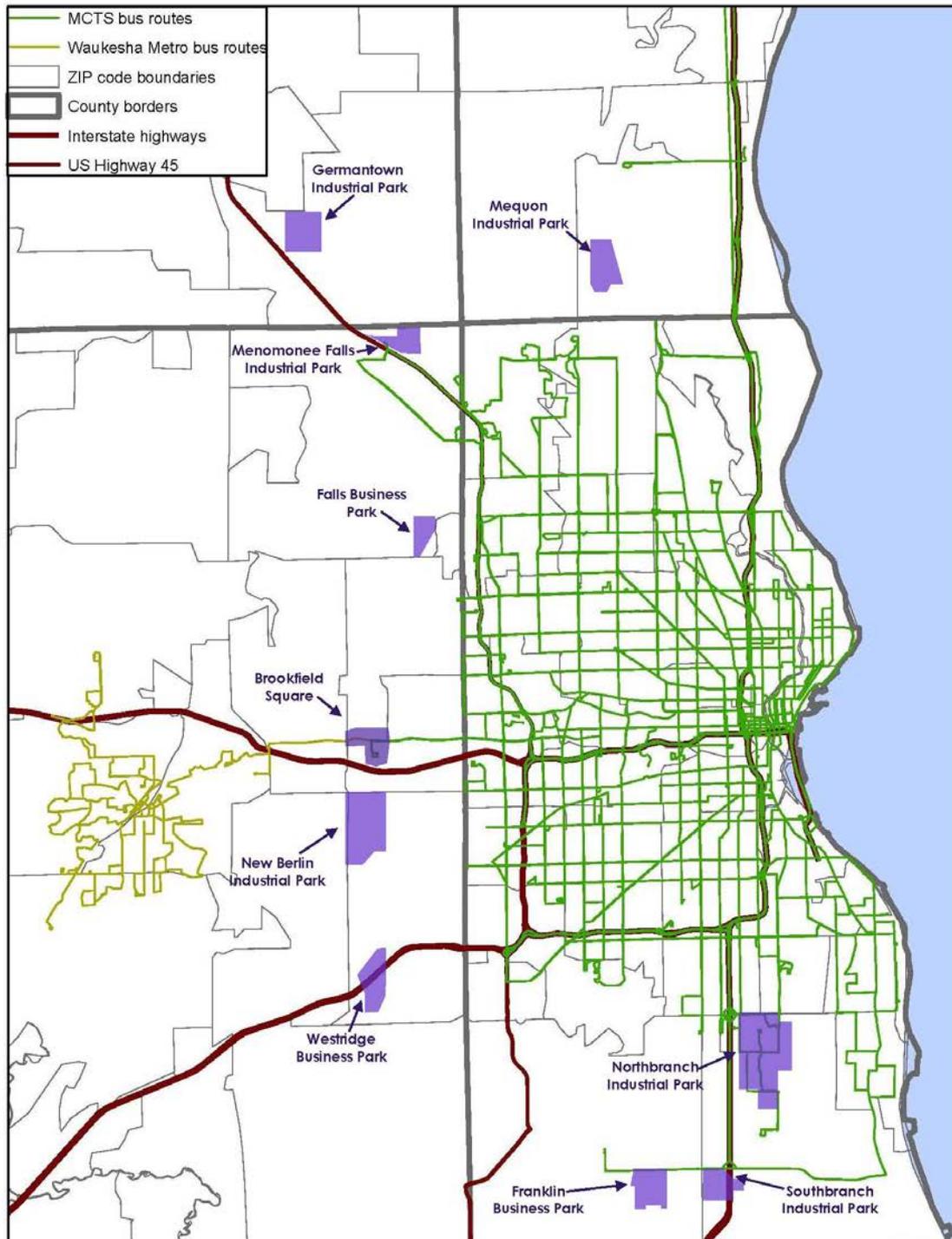
## Getting to Work:

Opportunities and obstacles to improving transit service to suburban Milwaukee job hubs



## PICKING UP THE PACE:

An analysis of best practices for improving bus speeds and their potential applicability to Milwaukee



# COMMON TRANSIT CHALLENGES

**Trip time on transit is prohibitive**

- Brookfield

**Last mile challenge**

- Oak Creek, Mequon

**Bus service was attempted before but eliminated**

- New Berlin, Menomonee Falls, Franklin

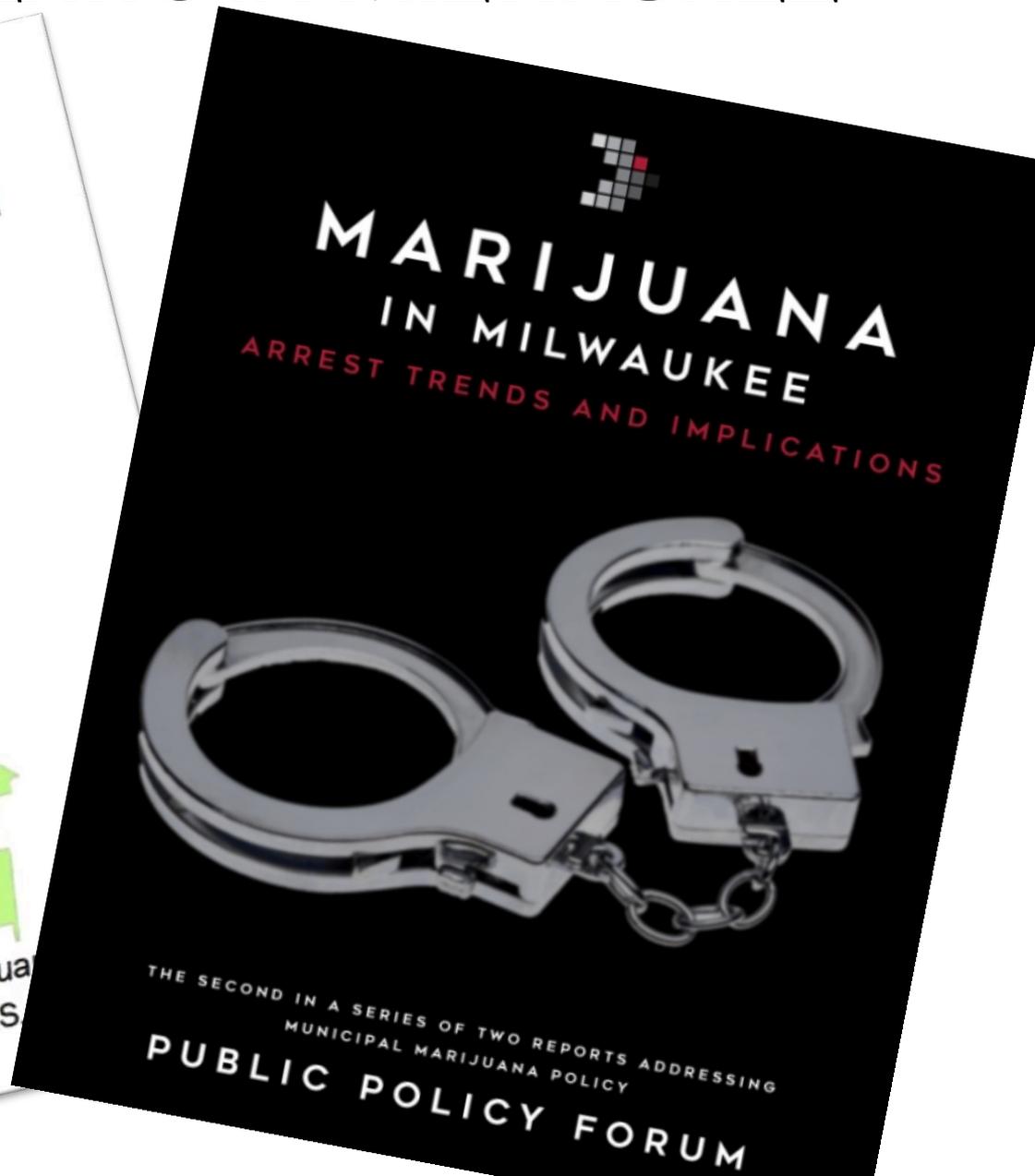
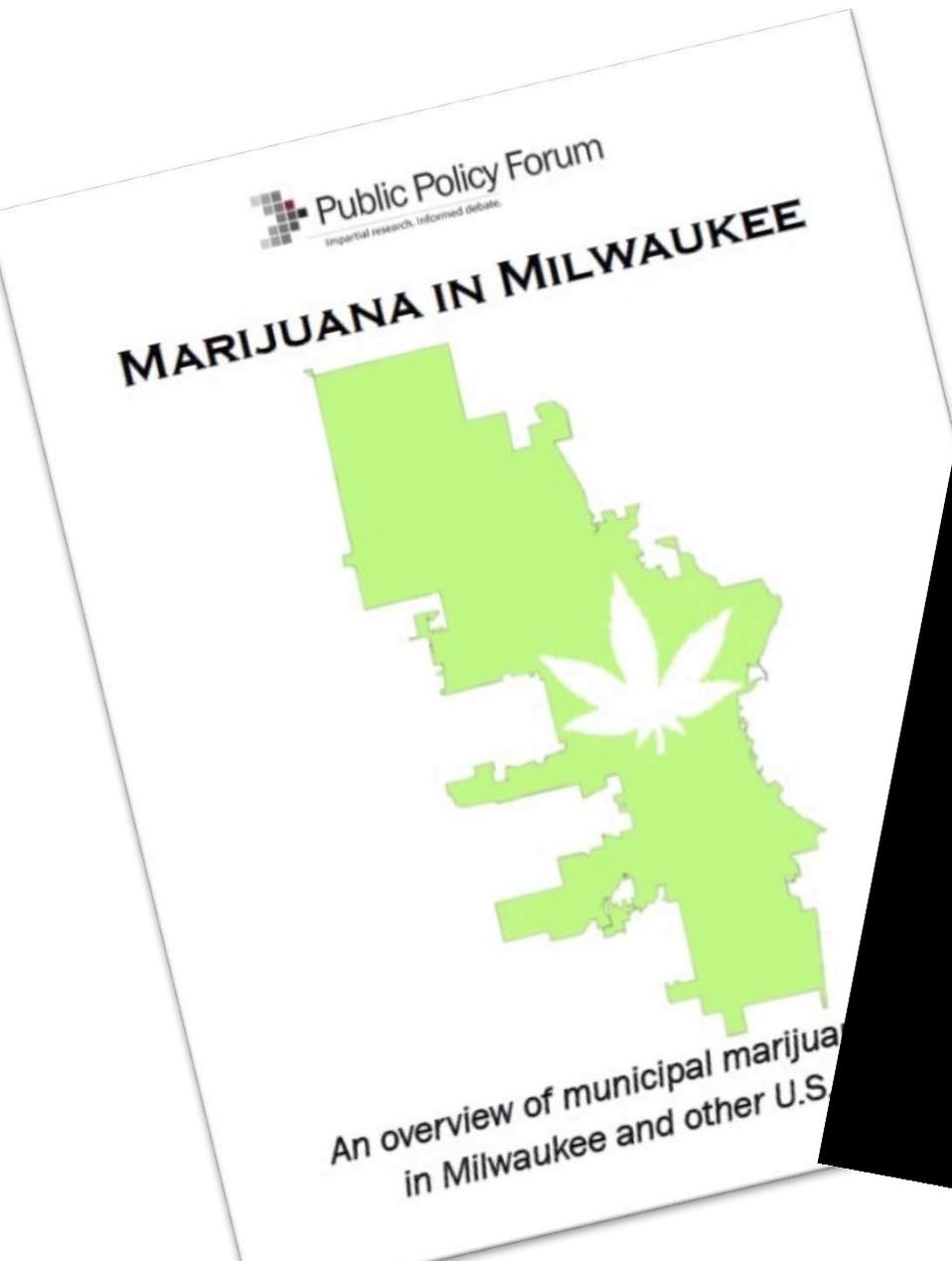
**Transit exists, but not designed for reverse commuters**

- Menomonee Falls

# POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO IMPROVE TRANSIT SPEED & EFFICIENCY

- Bus stop consolidation
- Transit signal prioritization
- Bus-only lanes or shoulders
- Bus rapid transit (BRT)

# MARIJUANA LAWS IN MILWAUKEE



# Marijuana Laws in Milwaukee

## 1<sup>st</sup> Time Marijuana Possession Cases

January  
2012

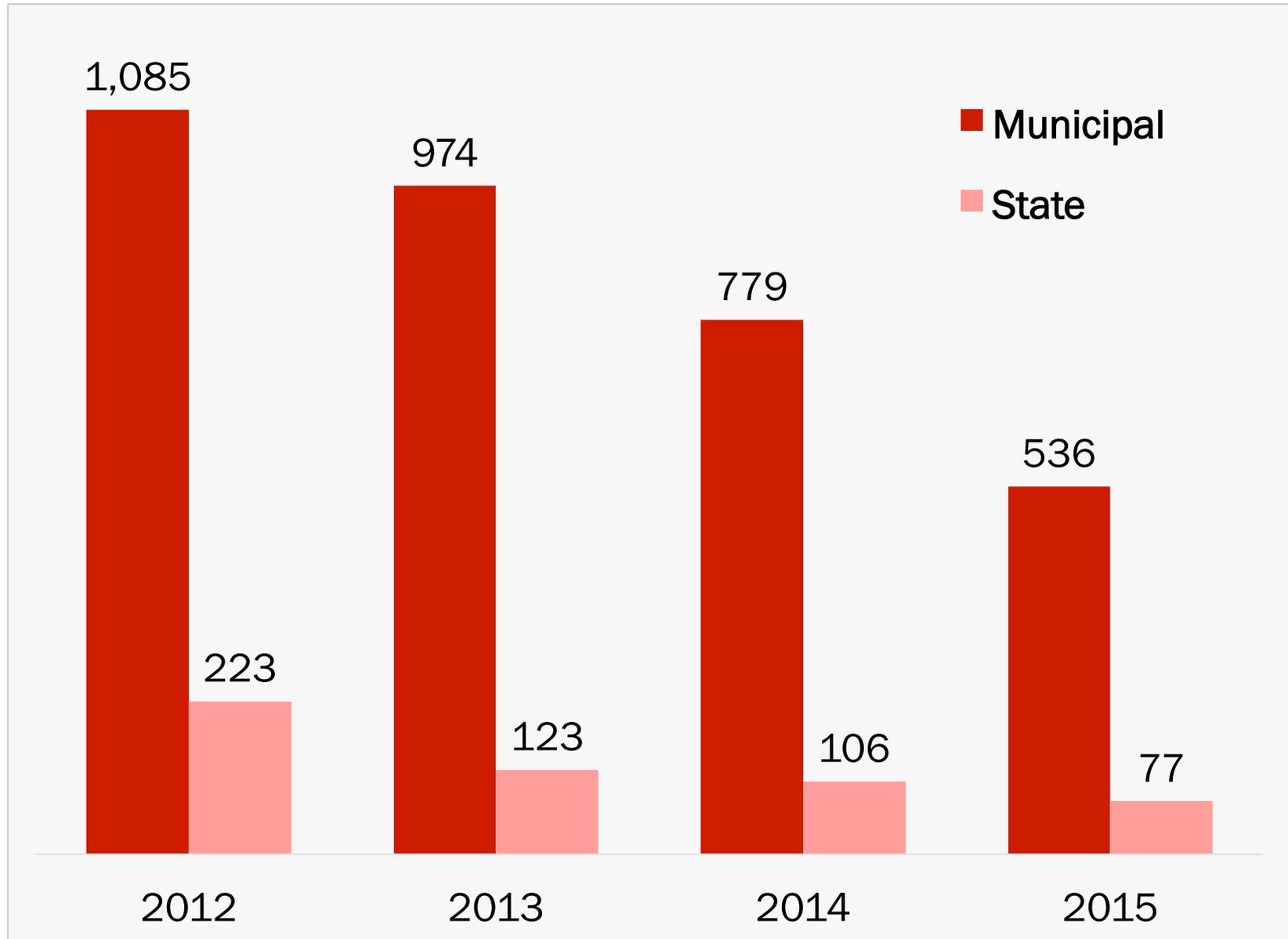
March  
2015



**4,554 total** (first-time) marijuana possession cases

**12 cases** (11 individuals) resulted in jail sentences

# SMALL-SCALE MARIJUANA ARRESTS





# Next Steps

- Transit “last mile” study
- Research on policy options to address criminal backgrounds



Public Policy Forum

Impartial research. Informed debate.