

INDEPENDENT OFFICE FOR POLICE CONDUCT (IOPC)

IOPC Stakeholder Research 2022

September 2022

.YONDER

Aims and approach

Methodology & research objectives

Exploring stakeholder perceptions towards the IOPC

- + This report summarises the findings from online and in-depth telephone interviews with stakeholders, conducted by Yonder between March 2022 – May 2022.
- + These stakeholders were taken from a longlist identified by the IOPC as those whose views are important to the overall success of the organisation and its reputation.
- + The in-depth interviews were 30-minute discussions using Microsoft Teams, Zoom or the telephone, and quotes in this report are taken from those interviews. The online interviews were quantitative, and numerical data in this report is taken from those interviews.
- + The online survey was conducted between 24 March 2022 – 9 May 2022. The in-depth interviews were conducted between 9 March 2022 – 21 April 2022.
- + Both the online survey and the in-depth interviews covered overall perceptions of the IOPC, perceptions of its performance on key measures and specific areas of its work, the quality of its communications and engagement with stakeholders, and perceptions of the organisation's overall strategy.



Sampling approach

Stakeholders are categorised into three groups throughout this report:

1

Police stakeholders

99 quantitative interviews and 9 in-depth qualitative interviews

2

Non-police stakeholders

88 quantitative interviews and 8 in-depth qualitative interviews

3

Police accountability framework stakeholders

49 quantitative interviews and 8 in-depth qualitative interviews

A NOTE ON THE SAMPLING

Similar research was last undertaken in 2017, 2019 and 2021. The samples in each study are different and for some sub-groups are based on small numbers of stakeholders.

Where relevant, we have shown changes in the findings between 2017, 2019, 2021 and 2022, for indicative purposes.

Any changes year on year should be treated with caution and interpreted in conjunction with the qualitative findings. Some sub-groups (in particular police accountability framework stakeholders) are based on small samples.

In 2020, Yonder and the IOPC took a more focussed approach to sampling. Abiding by GDPR legislation, stakeholders that the IOPC had not recently engaged with were not contacted. Only those whom the IOPC had engaged with over the last 18 months were contacted. This means there has been some sample change between 2017, 2019 and 2021, particularly among non-police and police accountability framework stakeholders.

No parliamentarians were interviewed qualitatively and just 10 were interviewed online. Due to this small sample size, we have not shown this data in the report. See data tables for parliamentarian responses.

Summary and recommendations

Executive summary

The IOPC remains highly regarded by its stakeholders, but they continue to highlight similar areas for improvement as in 2021. The wider context of policing (with high-profile cases reported in the media) has only served to reinforce these in the past year.

Stakeholders are more favourable than unfavourable towards the IOPC and its engagement with stakeholders is highly praised. The focus on sharing lessons has been very well-received, and reports and bulletins are widely liked by stakeholders. Most would speak highly of the IOPC and almost all stakeholders think the IOPC is completely, or at least somewhat, independent of the police.

Nevertheless, some key concerns raised in previous research still remain:

- + Stakeholders continue to question the level of public confidence in, and awareness of, the IOPC. In the context of policing today, they see the IOPC as having a pivotal role in helping increase public confidence in policing, but think a lack of awareness of the IOPC hinders its ability to do so.
- + Stakeholders still question the timeliness (and sometimes quality) of the IOPC's investigations. Some stakeholders have seen signs of improvement, but many continue to call for more evidence that investigations are being carried out faster and to a high standard.
- + Stakeholders also question the effectiveness of the IOPC in embedding learnings into police practice. They think more needs to be done to ensure police forces are acting upon IOPC recommendations.

Recommendations (1/3)

- 1. Demonstrate public engagement**
- 2. Continue focussing on investigation timeliness (and quality)**
- 3. Work more closely with police forces to ensure the IOPC's recommendations are implemented**

Stakeholders are concerned about levels of public confidence in policing and the police complaints system.

They are calling for the IOPC to push public engagement further and seek to drive up awareness in a way that is focussed on the public benefits the IOPC brings, in order to increase public confidence in policing.

Stakeholders think the IOPC should increase engagement with the whole public, but should also target groups that have the lowest confidence in the police such as young and Black people.

The IOPC needs to show stakeholders that it is engaging with the public – increasing awareness of the organisation and confidence in it, specifically among young people and ethnic minorities.

Recommendations (2/3)

1. **Demonstrate public engagement**
2. **Continue focussing on investigation timeliness (and quality)**
3. **Work more closely with police forces to ensure the IOPC's recommendations are implemented**

Stakeholders are still concerned about the IOPC's investigations – especially the time it takes to conduct them, but also the standard to which they are conducted.

Stakeholders acknowledge that the IOPC has tried to reduce the time investigations take and many have seen improvements. They also recognise that the IOPC is dealing with a high number of cases at the moment. Nevertheless, there are still lingering perceptions that investigations take too long.

There is a recognition by stakeholders that the IOPC has improved in sharing lessons and they have welcomed a more thematic approach by the IOPC, but they emphasise the importance of completing day-to-day investigations in a timely manner and to a high standard.

The IOPC needs to further show evidence of reduced investigation times and assure police stakeholders about the quality of investigations.

Recommendations (3/3)

1. **Demonstrate public engagement**
2. **Continue focussing on investigation timeliness (and quality)**
3. **Work more closely with police forces to ensure the IOPC's recommendations are implemented**

The focus on sharing lessons is now well embedded among stakeholders. They believe the IOPC is very good at sharing lessons learnt and that it is consistently producing high quality outputs.

However, question marks remain about the extent to which these learnings are implemented across police forces and the extent to which they lead to real change.

A majority of stakeholders believe the IOPC has enough power to enforce its recommendations. Rather than getting new powers, they think the IOPC should utilise its resources to follow up on recommendations to ensure changes are being implemented. They would like to see more evidence of the IOPC engaging directly with police forces.

The IOPC needs to show stakeholders that it is working with police forces to ensure that the lessons it shares can lead to real change.

Overall perceptions and impressions

OVERALL PERCEPTIONS AND IMPRESSIONS

Favourability towards the IOPC is similar to that found in the 2021 research.

Stakeholders praise the IOPC's open, collaborative and honest engagement. However, concerns linger about its resource and capacity to investigate in a timely manner and embed learnings into police practice.

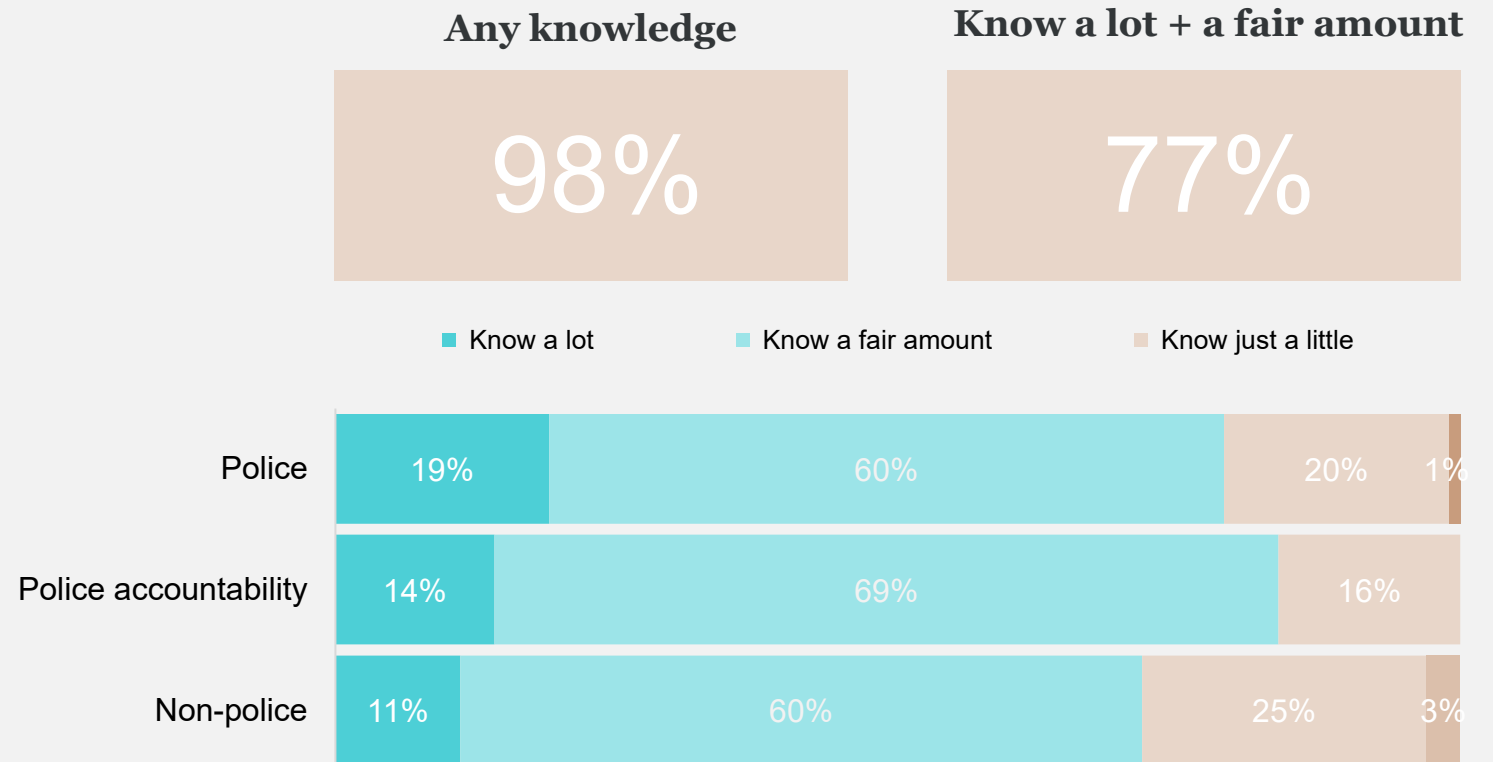
Familiarity with the IOPC is high among all stakeholders

Q. How much, or little, do you know about the Independent Office for Police Conduct?

At an overall level, knowledge of the IOPC is high.

The vast majority of all three stakeholder groups say they know at least a fair amount about the IOPC. Of all three, police accountability stakeholders are most likely to have some knowledge.

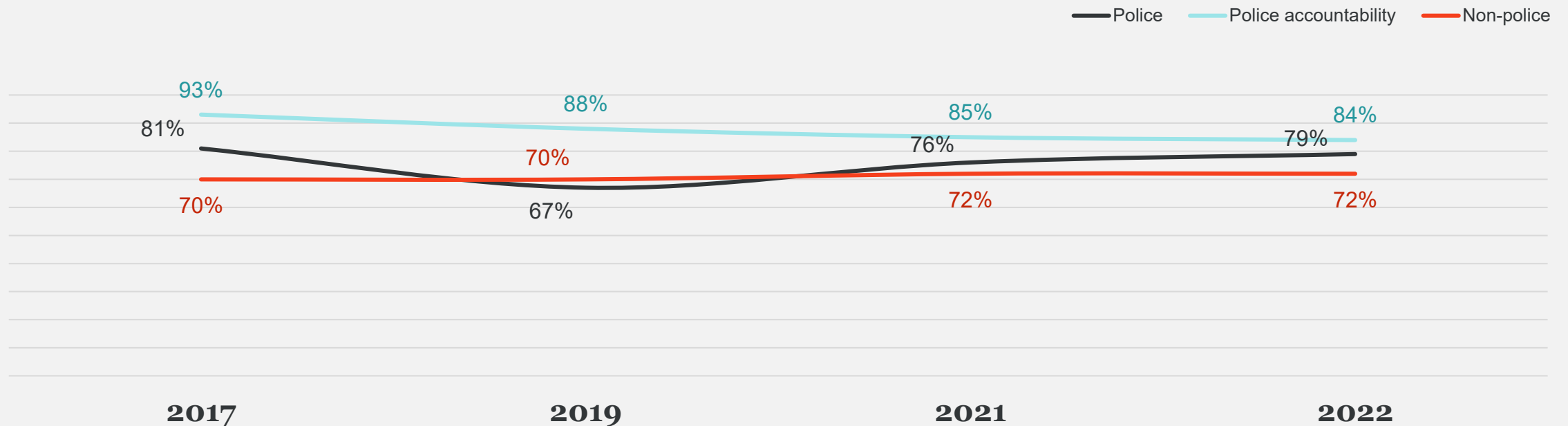
Only a minority across all three groups, however, say they know a lot about the IOPC.



Familiarity is broadly in line with previous years

Q. How much, or little, do you know about the Independent Office for Police Conduct?

Knowledge of the IOPC over time (‘a lot’ + ‘a fair amount’)



Most stakeholders understand the IOPC's key roles and responsibilities

Stakeholders think that the IOPC's role is to **hold the police to account; share relevant learnings from its work to improve policing; maintain public confidence in policing; and do all of this while maintaining its independence.**

Regarding sharing learnings, stakeholders think the IOPC should pick up themes from clusters of complaints and share learning from these with police forces to understand systemic issues and to prevent future misconduct.

Stakeholders also mention the IOPC's role in investigating the most serious complaints.

Some stakeholders mention the IOPC's role in overseeing the police complaints system.

Hold the police to account & share relevant learnings

"They're there to give the public the reassurance that the **police are being held to account** and that they've got oversight of the **more serious cases**, death and serious injury, things that are recordable. [...]. I think they've also got a role in **sharing learning** or directing learning."

Police stakeholder

"I think a really important role for the IOPC is things like the **taser report** that they've recently issued, so not just looking at those individual cases but also **bringing it together and looking more thematically** as well."

Non-police stakeholder

Be independent

"They're an **independent body** that provides the **trust and reassurance for the public** that there are misconduct processes and systems in place."

Police stakeholder

Maintain confidence in policing

"I would paraphrase their responsibilities as being **providing independent investigation** and therefore independent assurance on **particularly serious** - and serious can be because it's a very bad accusation or it's particularly sensitive - complaints against policing related to misconduct. All of those related to **increasing public confidence** in the system of policing more widely, actually."

Police accountability framework stakeholder

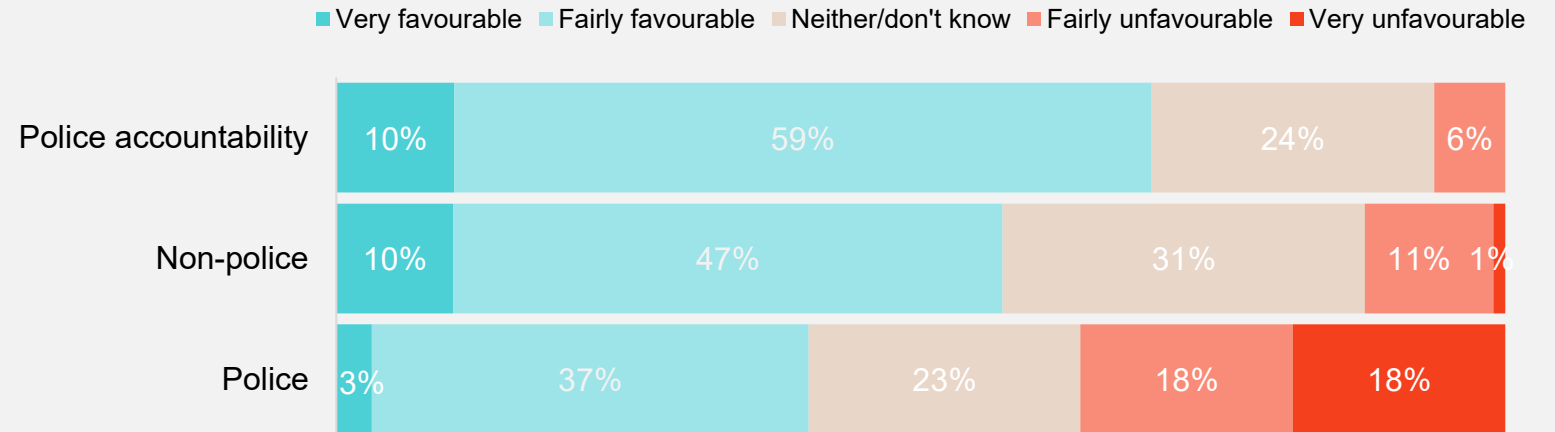
Most stakeholders are favourable towards the IOPC

Q. How favourable or unfavourable is your overall opinion of the IOPC?

Across all three stakeholder groups, stakeholders are more favourable than unfavourable towards the organisation.

Stakeholders describe the IOPC as having improved in the last few years, but it still has areas to improve on.

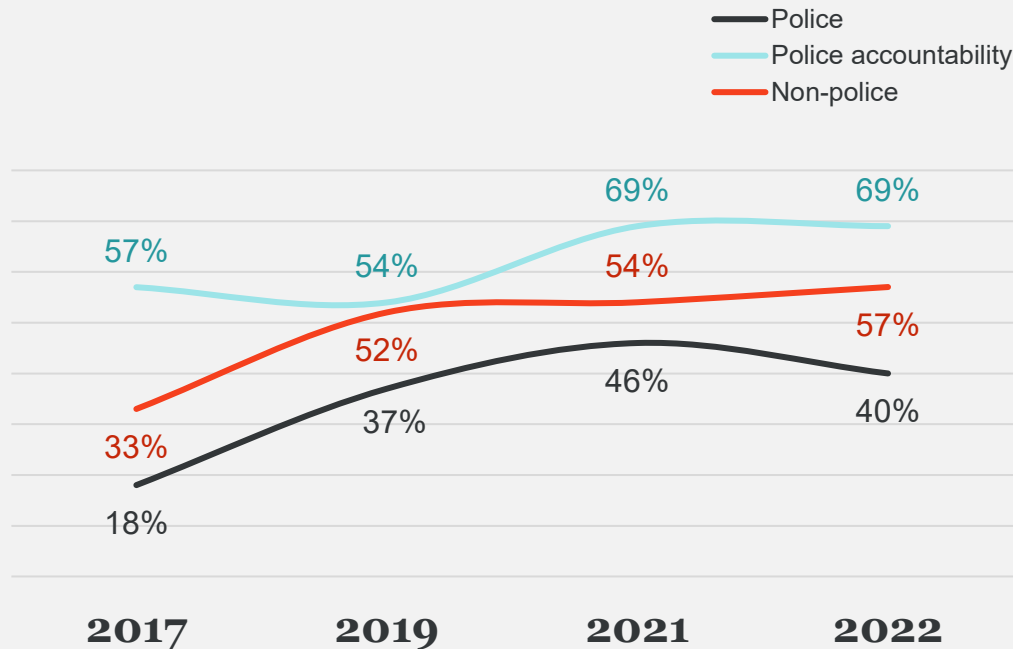
Stakeholders praised the IOPC's engagement with stakeholders and the thematic work done by the IOPC to help address wider issues within policing, but as in previous years they believe the timeliness and quality of investigations could be improved.



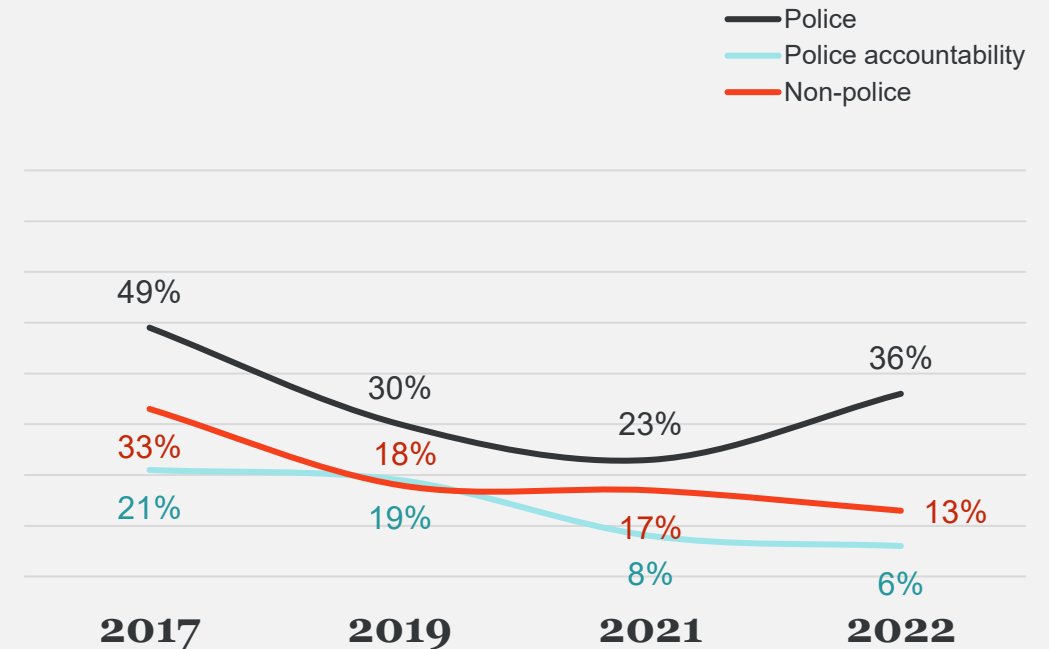
Favourability is broadly in line with 2021 and 2019, except amongst police stakeholders who feel slightly more unfavourable

Q. How favourable or unfavourable is your overall opinion of the IOPC?

Favourability over time
(‘very’ + ‘fairly’ favourable)



Unfavourability over time
(‘very’ + ‘fairly’ unfavourable)



Over a third of stakeholders would speak highly of the IOPC

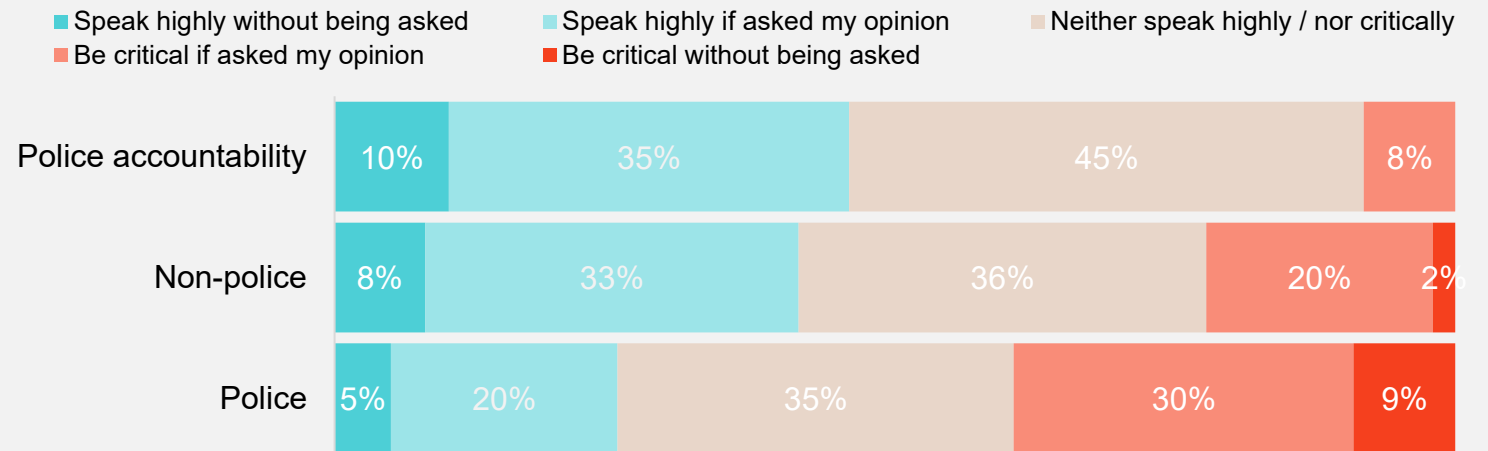
Q. Which of these statements best describes how you would speak about the Independent Office for Police Conduct?

Stakeholders speak similarly highly about the IOPC as in 2021 research.

Police accountability stakeholders are the group most likely to speak highly of the IOPC and police stakeholders are the group most likely to speak critically of the IOPC.

Those who are still critical (particular police stakeholders) tend to focus on three main areas: 1) the perception of slow investigations, 2) low public awareness and perceived lack of community engagement, and 3) IOPC recommendations not being embedded in police practice.

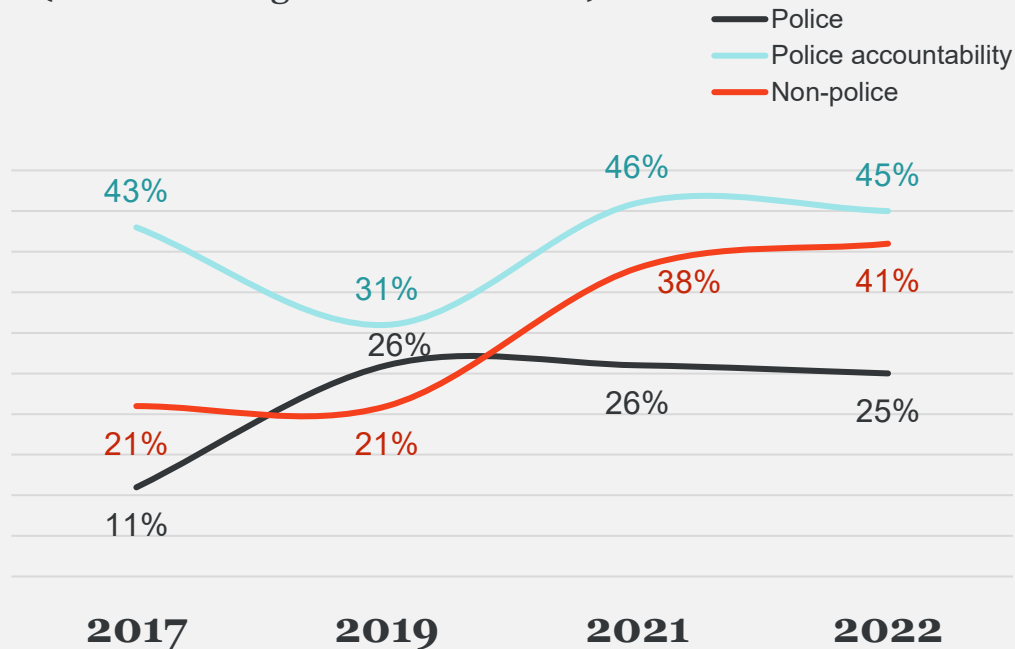
'Would speak highly' (across all groups) **35%**



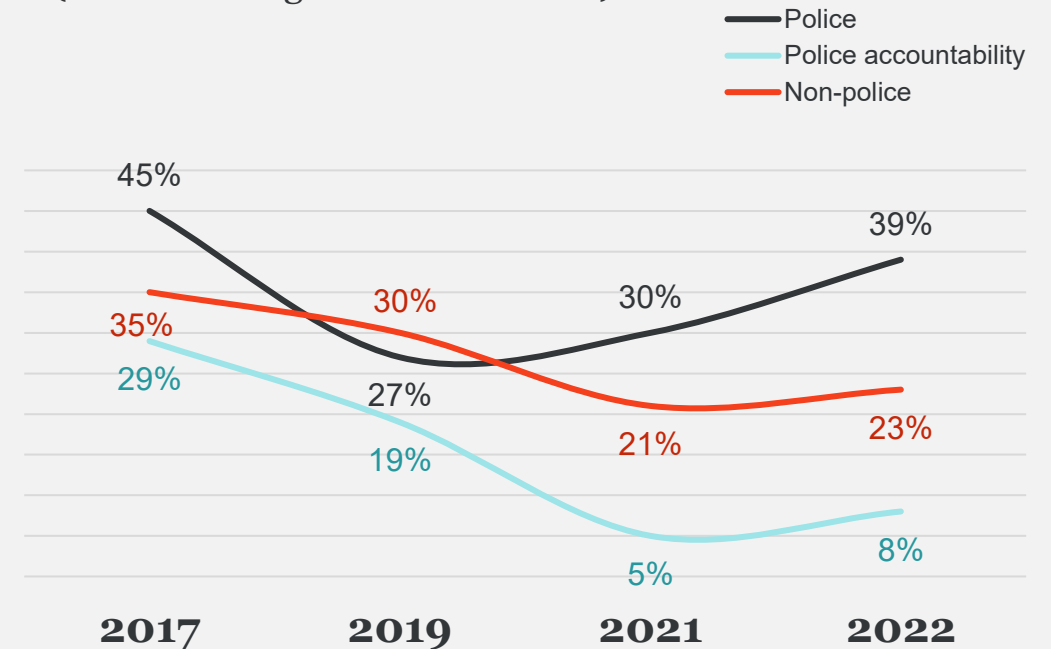
Stakeholders would speak in a similar way about the IOPC as in 2021 research

Q. Which of these statements best describes how you would speak about the Independent Office for Police Conduct?

Speak highly of over time (‘without being asked’ + ‘if asked’)



Be critical of over time (‘without being asked’ + ‘if asked’)



Favourability vs. unfavourability: in stakeholders' own words...

High favourability driven by strong working relationships and improvements in IOPC work

“They've made massive changes and difference recently, I know they get a lot of bad press, but I hold them in really high regard. They are absolutely well-intentioned. They're very open to listening. I'm quite happy that I can express my opinion and I know that my thoughts will be listened to.”

Police stakeholder

“I find the working relationship with them is really, really good and they're very intelligent people and they... Yes, we work very well together, I think.”

Police accountability framework stakeholder

“Well, on a professional level, they've been really, really good, really responsive, and it feels like there's a genuine desire to understand issues around policing and to look at that at an organisational level.”

Non-police stakeholder

But some concern about speed & quality of investigations and the police not acting upon IOPC recommendations

“It's phenomenally important that you've got someone independent who can do it. So in terms of independence, I would give them full marks. In terms of how I feel about their ability, though, to do investigations quickly and then to embed those recommendations in policing practice and to work with them, that will be a three [out of five].”

Police accountability framework stakeholder

“I think one of the reasons why that rating is a little bit less is due to the timeframes of investigations, sometimes, and the impact that that can have on people that are waiting for that outcome.”

Non-police stakeholder

“I don't think there's anything that the IOPC won't be aware of here, but certainly the families that I was working with [had] concerns about the timeliness of the investigations [and had] concerns about the competency of the investigations.”

Non-police stakeholder

“I think sometimes, the timeliness is a problem and is too long, but I don't know the reasons for that. [...] In terms of their effectiveness, [...] police forces don't show to me signs of properly reviewing and implementing recommendations from IOPC investigations.”

Police accountability framework stakeholder

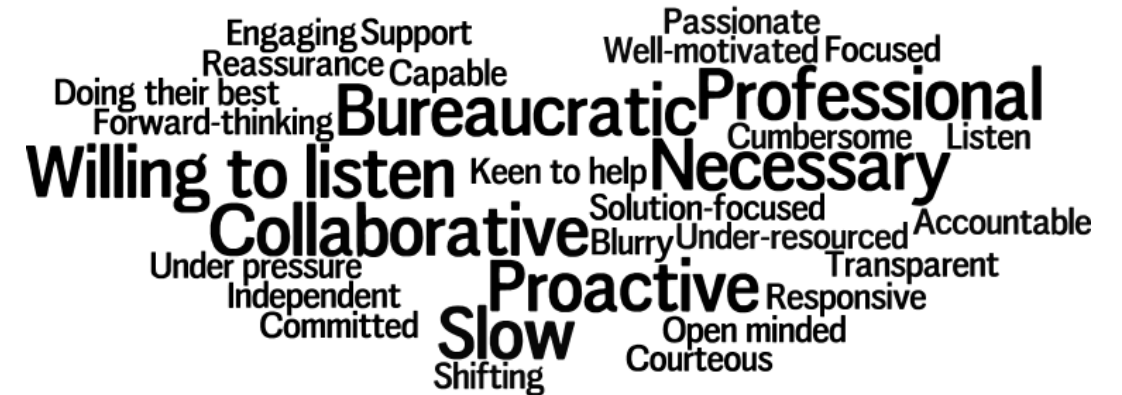
Most stakeholders associate the IOPC with words such as ‘independent’ and ‘professional’, but also ‘slow’

Q. Which, if any, of the following words or phrases do you think best describe the IOPC? Please choose up to three words.

Prompted words from questionnaire



Unprompted words from interviews



Professional, collaborative and independent

Professional, collaborative

The IOPC's staff and leadership are praised for their professional attitude and collaborative way of working with stakeholders.

"There is really good engagement. It's **professional**, it's **collaborative**, it's **open** and fair."

Police accountability framework stakeholder

"I've always found anyone that I have interacted with to be really **professional** and transparent. [...] The relationship we have is pretty good and it's been quite mutually beneficial [...] We can have that **two-way dialogue** from one organisation to another."

Non-police stakeholder

Independent

The IOPC is widely seen as independent in the way it works.

"From what I see it's **really independent**. I've got no concerns about that at all."

Police accountability framework stakeholder

"I find it **very independent** from the police or indeed from government. I've never heard them say anything that I would consider dodgy or inappropriate."

Police accountability framework stakeholder

"I think the IOPC are **truly independent of the police**. In terms of structurally and hierarchy and everything else, absolutely, it would be a five [out of five]. They are completely independent of us."

Police stakeholder

But can ex-officers be completely independent?

Some question whether the number of ex-police officers in the IOPC means it can be completely independent?

"The only reservation about independence would be around some of the **ex-officers**, that's where there **could be some bias coming in**. [...] I suppose whenever you come from a policing background, you're **more likely to empathise or understand what that officer maybe went through** and you're more likely to take on board some of the mediation that they'll put forward."

Police stakeholder

"It's probably **very difficult for any organisation to be truly independent**, but just by nature of doing investigations and having to talk to officers, PC officers are often going to be **convincing and giving you credible explanations**."

Non-police stakeholder

Slow: lingering concerns remain about the speed of investigations – but resource restrictions are acknowledged

Stakeholders think a lack of resources and capacity impacts the timeliness of investigations.

Many stakeholders have direct or indirect experience of lengthy investigations. Where in the past, stakeholders have often attributed slow investigations to the abilities of those investigating them, they are now more forgiving of the IOPC in light of the sheer volume of cases it is required to deal with, though some still question the quality of investigations.

Some stakeholders acknowledge the IOPC's efforts to speed up the investigations process, however they worry that the volume of investigations the IOPC has to deal with is only going to increase. They think the increased scrutiny of policing in the media will result in the IOPC having a greater number of cases to process.

Slow

“They have **resource restrictions**, as many other places do, that **restrict some of the timeliness** or ability to help us with things.”

Police accountability framework stakeholder

“They seem and probably are **under resourced**, which can **impact the timeliness** of things, and that's only a minor criticism really because from the staff that I speak to, they seem to be doing a really good job, but like most of us, just **up against it with resource**.”

Police accountability framework stakeholder

“They **need capacity to do more**. [...] I don't understand it to be a massive team, and there's been a hell of a lot of media on the police and their practices, so **I can imagine they're overwhelmed**.”

Non-police stakeholder

“I think even though **there have been improvements on timeliness**, complaints or serious complaints that the IOPC investigates are still **taking too long**. [...] I think the IOPC itself is definitely showing some improvements, but I think **there's still a way to go**.”

Police stakeholder

“I think the biggest challenge is **the volume challenge**, volume and complexity, and the **consequences of that volume and complexity on timeliness**.”

Police accountability framework stakeholder

Most stakeholders (particularly police accountability) are confident that the IOPC does a good job

Q. How confident, if at all, are you that the IOPC does a good job?

Police stakeholders are less confident that the IOPC does a good job than other stakeholder groups.

“It’d be great if they had a few more boots on the ground to help tackle some of the issues, but I think they do a very difficult job pretty well from what I can tell.”

Police accountability framework stakeholder

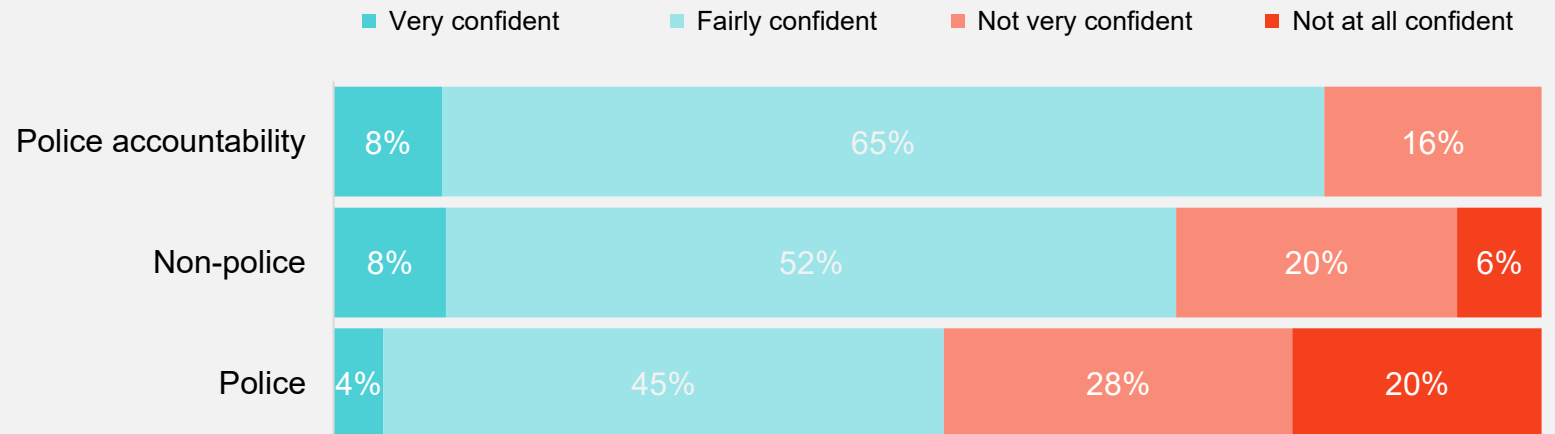
“Overall, I would say they do a good job. They’ve got a clear mission and a clear purpose.”

Police stakeholder

“They are effective at what they do. [...] They seem to be doing a really good job.”

Police accountability framework stakeholder

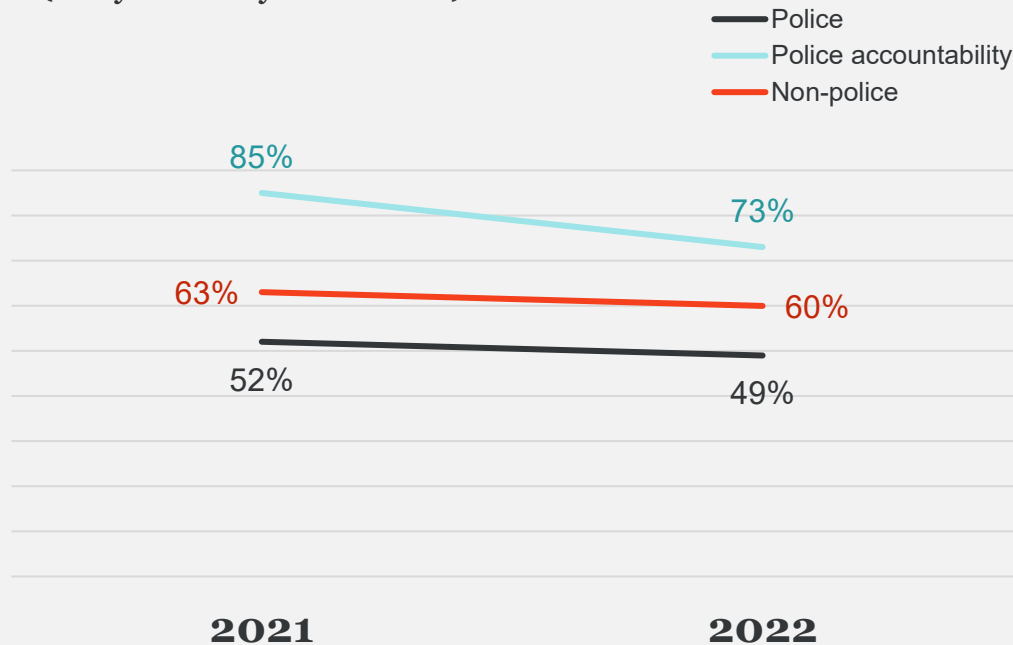
Total confidence (across all groups) **58%**



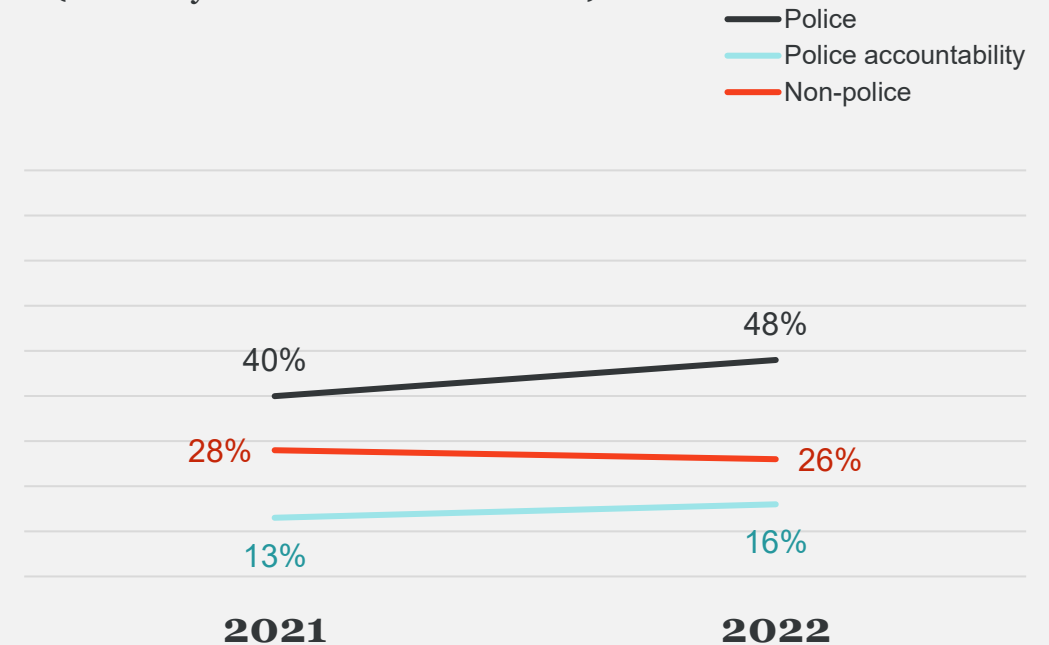
Confidence that the IOPC does a good job has fallen slightly among police accountability and police stakeholders

Q. How confident, if at all, are you that the IOPC does a good job?

Confidence over time
(‘very’ + ‘fairly’ confident)



Lack of confidence over time
(‘not very’ + ‘not at all’ confident)



Almost all stakeholders see the IOPC as independent, but some are not sure it is completely impartial

Q. Do you think the IOPC is independent of the police?

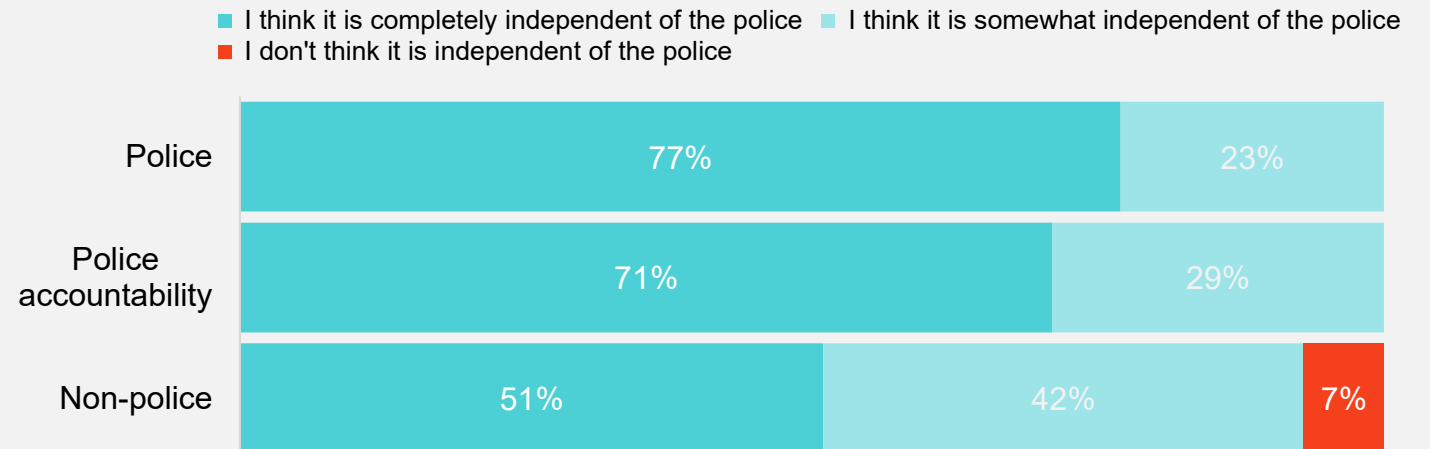
Although only a very small number of stakeholders question the independence of the IOPC, views around impartiality are mixed.

Some stakeholders have not experienced or witnessed any bias so are confident the IOPC works in an impartial way.

There are however a few non-police stakeholders that believe the IOPC favours the police. These beliefs are most often based on first-hand experience of cases in which police officers were not, in their view, sufficiently punished. Some believe that the IOPC needs to 'stay on the right side' of police perceptions, so are therefore less critical of the police. Some stakeholders also worry that a high number of ex-police officers at the IOPC reduces its ability to act impartially.

On the other hand, a few police stakeholders believe that the IOPC and its investigators implicitly favour the public. They point towards cases of officers being reprimanded in ways they believed were undeserved.

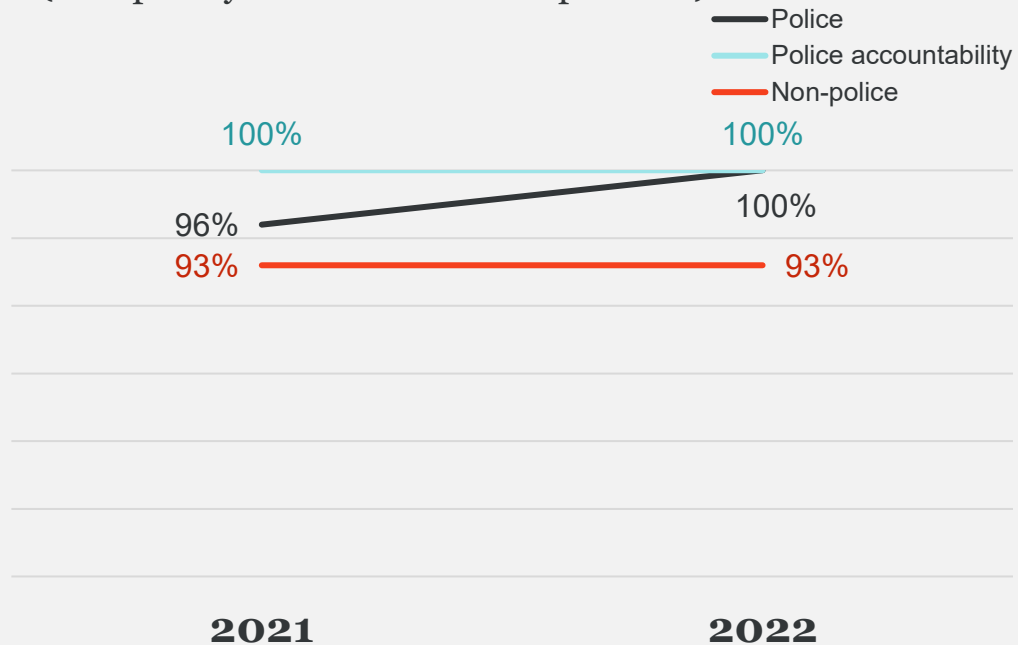
Total: completely or somewhat independent of the police **97%**



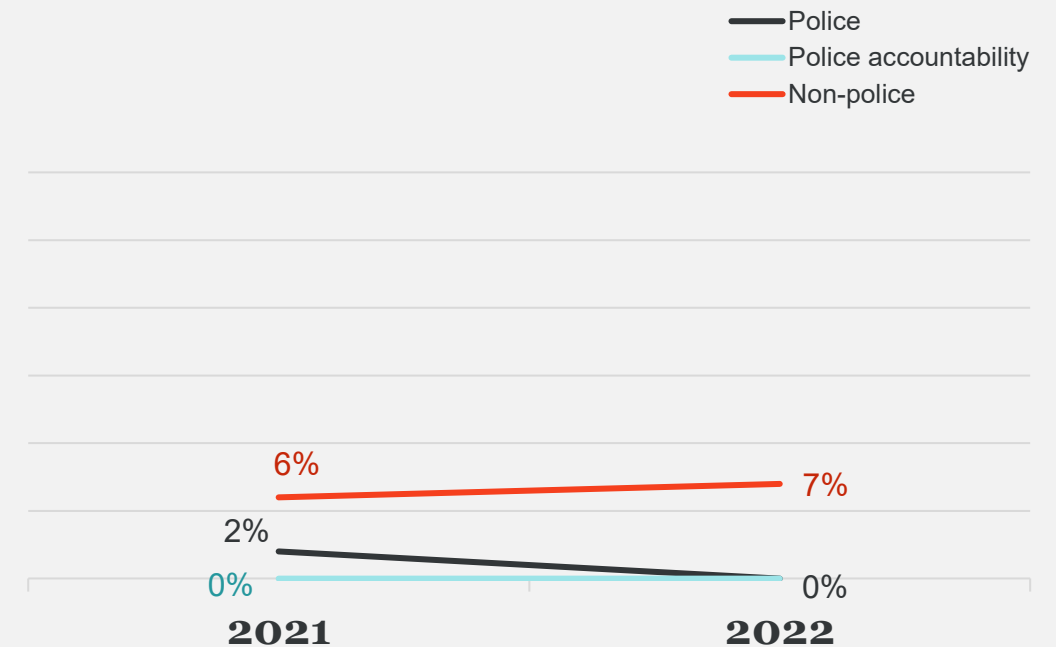
Perceptions about the IOPC's independence have remained consistently strong

Q. Do you think the IOPC is independent of the police?

Independent over time (‘completely’ + ‘somewhat’ independent)



Not independent over time



Independence and impartiality: in stakeholders' own words...

Many stakeholders say the IOPC is impartial

“They do [deal with their work in an impartial way]. Going back to the experience many years ago where I was reassured that **there are controls in place to make sure there is that impartiality** and that it's not a police-run or ex-police-run organisation.”

Non-police stakeholder

“Yes. I do [think the IOPC works in an impartial way]. Because **in all their independent investigations they act impartially** and even if they come out in the early stages of an investigation, it's their impartiality that's important.”

Police stakeholder

But some question whether the IOPC shows bias (there isn't agreement on whether the IOPC favours the public or the police)

“I think what goes on in the mindset of the IOPC leadership is **they want to appear independent**, and then there is a desire to, when they succeed in securing a misconduct finding against an officer, that **it's almost a cause célèbre rather than what I would describe as what is the balanced reporting** and what was found.”

Police stakeholder

“I know there's not always a great perception of them within policing, because obviously they're seen as the big bad guy and officers don't want an IOPC investigation. But, I think they **really try to stay on the right side of police perceptions**, but sometimes I think that almost drags them into not always feeling like **they're on the side of the complainant**. I've never heard anyone say they're not independent, but I have heard people be like, ‘oh **they're trying to make sure the police don't look too bad**’ and things like that.”

Non-police stakeholder

“I understand that the IOPC have these kind of **subject matter experts** and networks that they draw on. I do appreciate the need for that, but **quite often these are police officers** as I understand it. Obviously then **that isn't an impartial independent source**. I do think there's a need for them to be **careful who they're consulting on with that advice**, if I have understood that correctly.”

Non-police stakeholder

Strength, weaknesses and detailed attitudes

The recent context of policing in the UK has impacted stakeholder opinions of the IOPC's effectiveness.

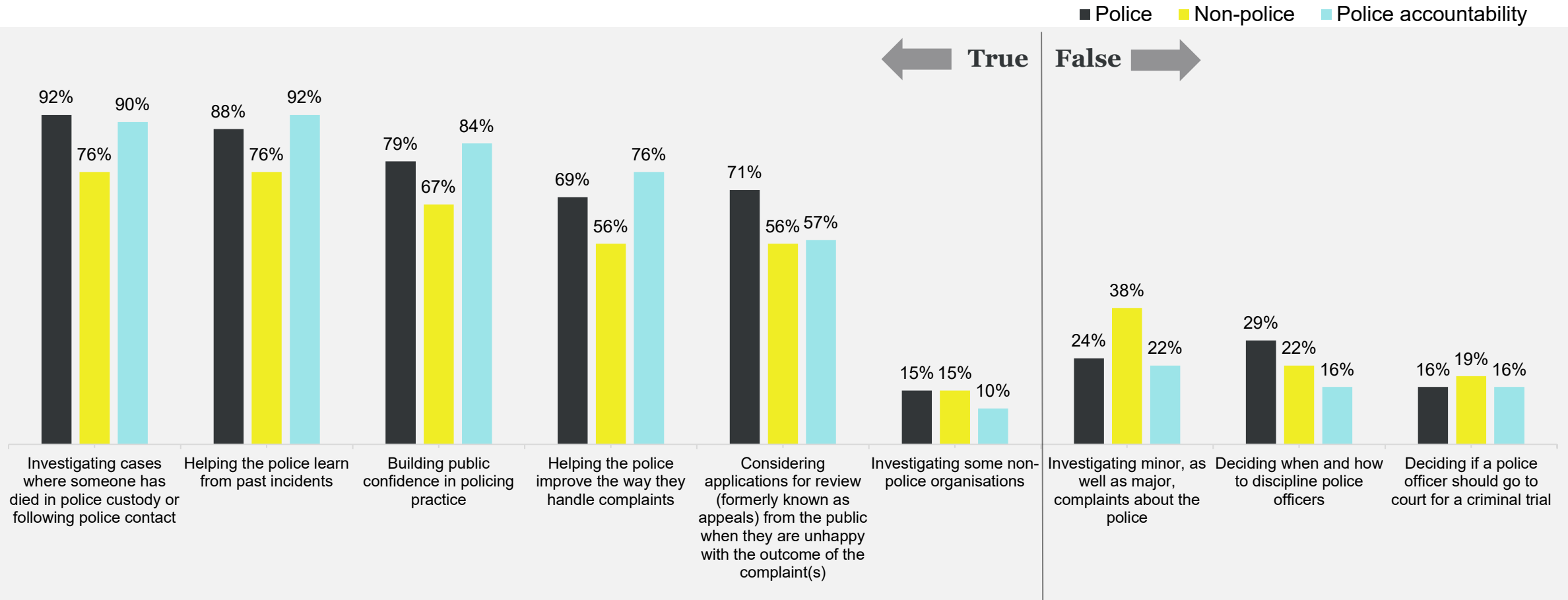
Most effectiveness measures have decreased since 2021 research.

Police accountability stakeholders are the group that think the IOPC is most effective.

Stakeholders think there is more to do to embed learnings throughout police forces and engage with the public.

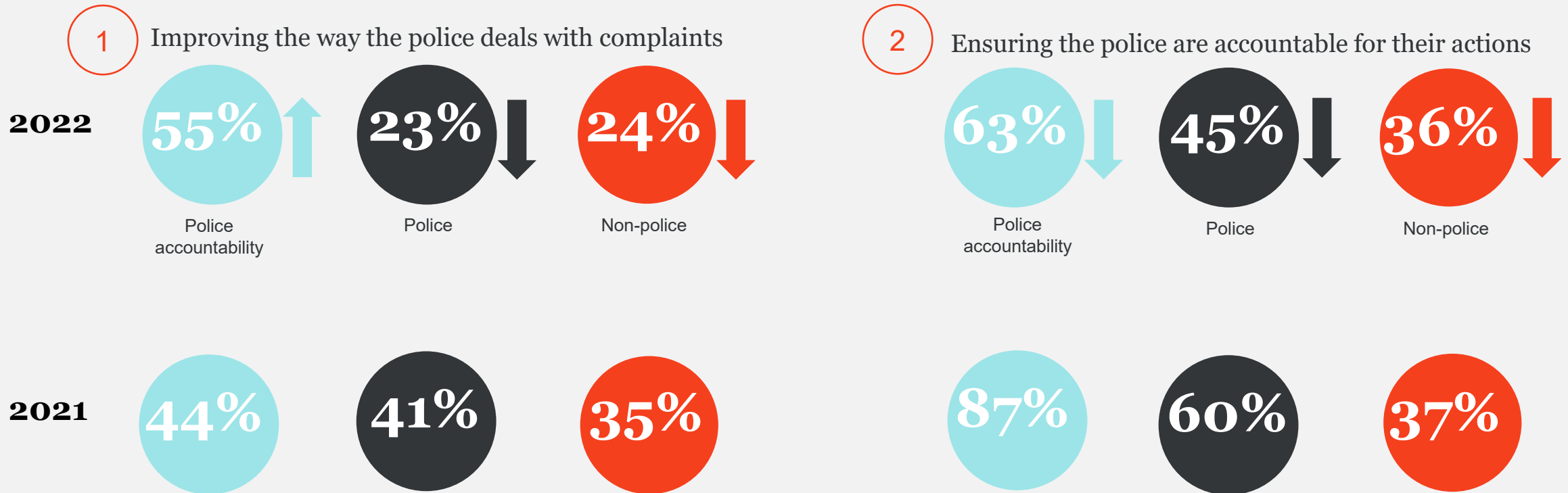
Overall, most stakeholders understand the IOPC's main responsibilities – but some think it has powers it doesn't

Q. Which, if any, of the following do you think the IOPC is responsible for?



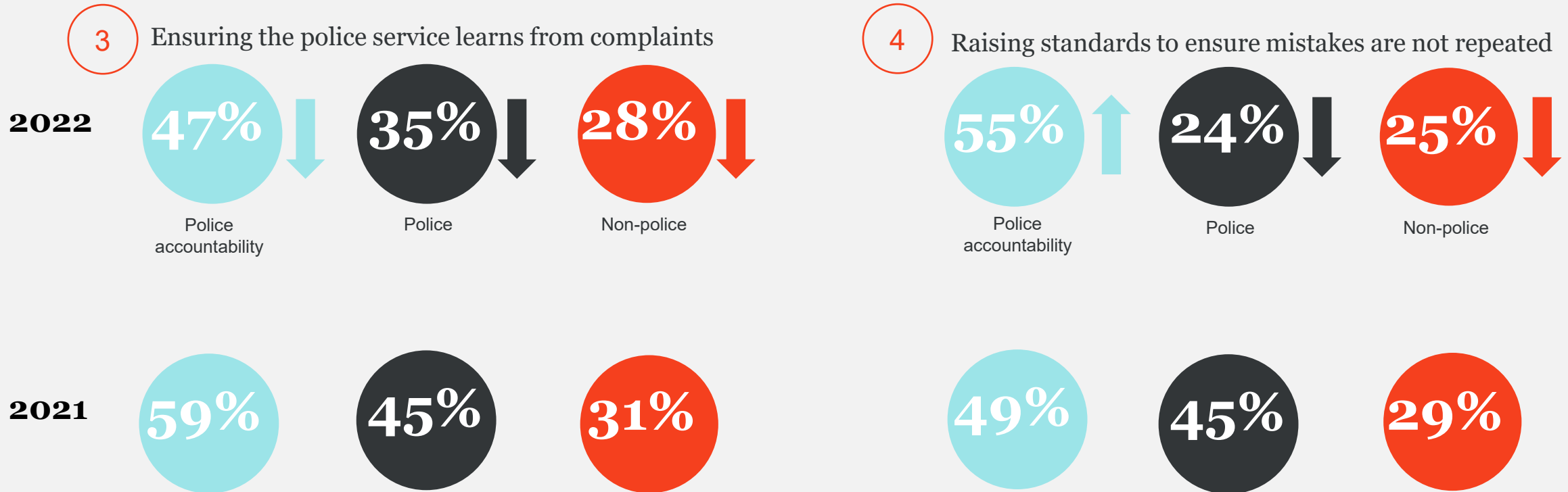
Effectiveness scores have decreased for improving the way the police deals with complaints and police accountability

Q. How effective, or ineffective, do you think the IOPC is in the following areas? % who say 'effective' MINUS % who say 'ineffective'



Ensuring the police learn from complaints and ensuring mistakes aren't repeated have also decreased

Q. How effective, or ineffective, do you think the IOPC is in the following areas? % who say 'effective' MINUS % who say 'ineffective'



Some stakeholders wonder how well-embedded the recommendations and lessons are

Although all stakeholder groups agree that the IOPC have improved, some still have concerns about a few areas...

Ensuring the police are accountable for their actions

- + Some feel the IOPC truly holds the police accountable
- + However, some worry that the IOPC's recommendations are not fully implemented, claiming that police officers are not always reprimanded after the IOPC investigations suggest they are guilty of wrongdoing

“Stakeholders that we work with sometimes feel that accountability could be ramped up a bit. [...] There are very **rarely punishments or accountability when things go wrong.**”

Police accountability framework stakeholder

Ensuring the police service learns from complaints

- + Most stakeholders believe that the IOPC has made sharing learning a key priority and is very good at producing learning materials such as reports and bulletins
- + However, some stakeholders wonder whether lessons from these materials are being adopted and used in police forces to the extent that they would like
- + Resourcing constraints and the police forces operating in silos are reasons why stakeholders think lessons are not being adopted as effectively as they could be

“The IOPC can make recommendations, but **policing doesn't always have to take them on board.**”

Police stakeholder

Raising standards to ensure mistakes are not repeated

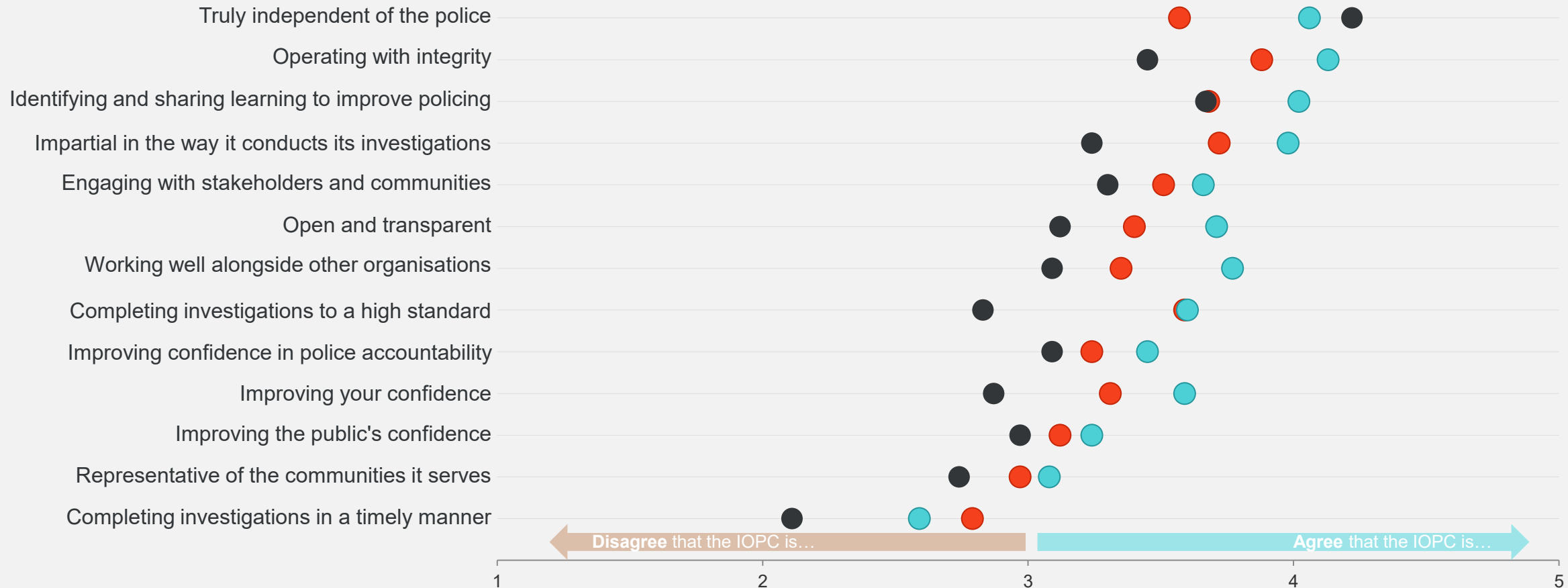
“In terms of **do policing then learn from it, I'm not sure that that's consistent.** In some forces, they really do take account of recommendations and consider them, **in others, they don't.**”

Police accountability framework stakeholder

Overview of strengths and weaknesses

Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the IOPC is ...?

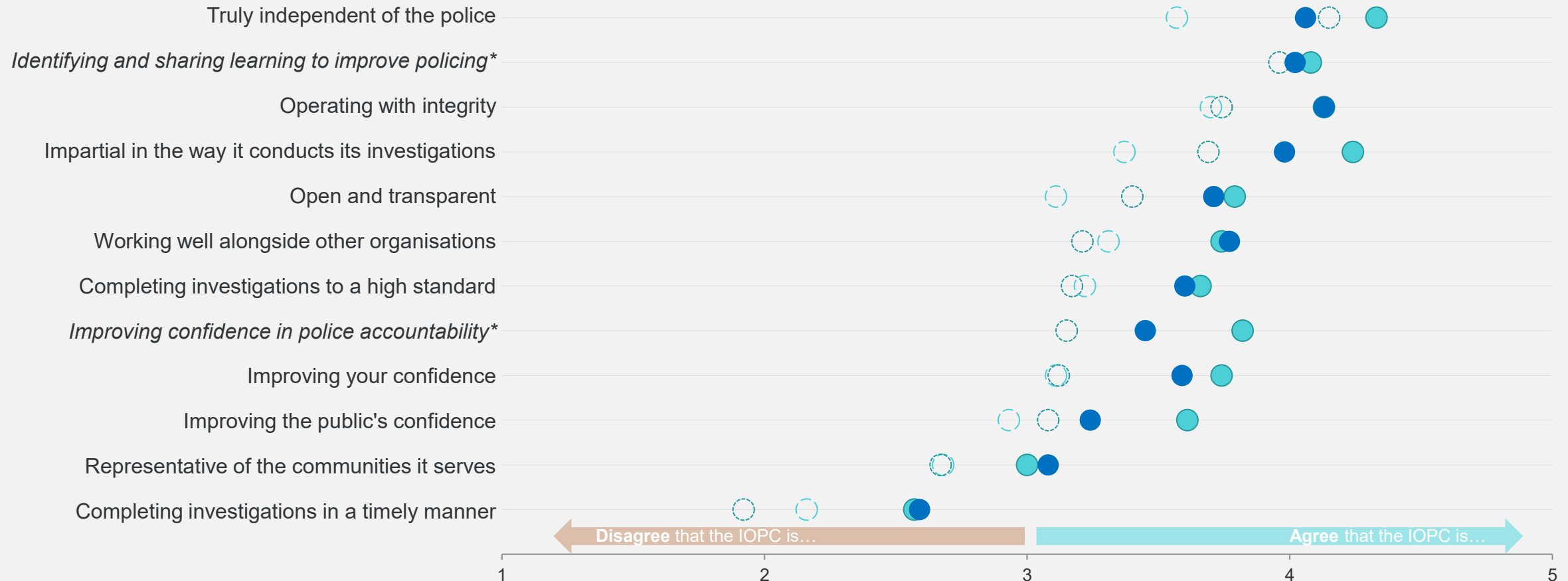
● Non-police ● Police accountability ● Police



Changes over time: police accountability stakeholders sometimes rate the IOPC slightly lower compared to last year

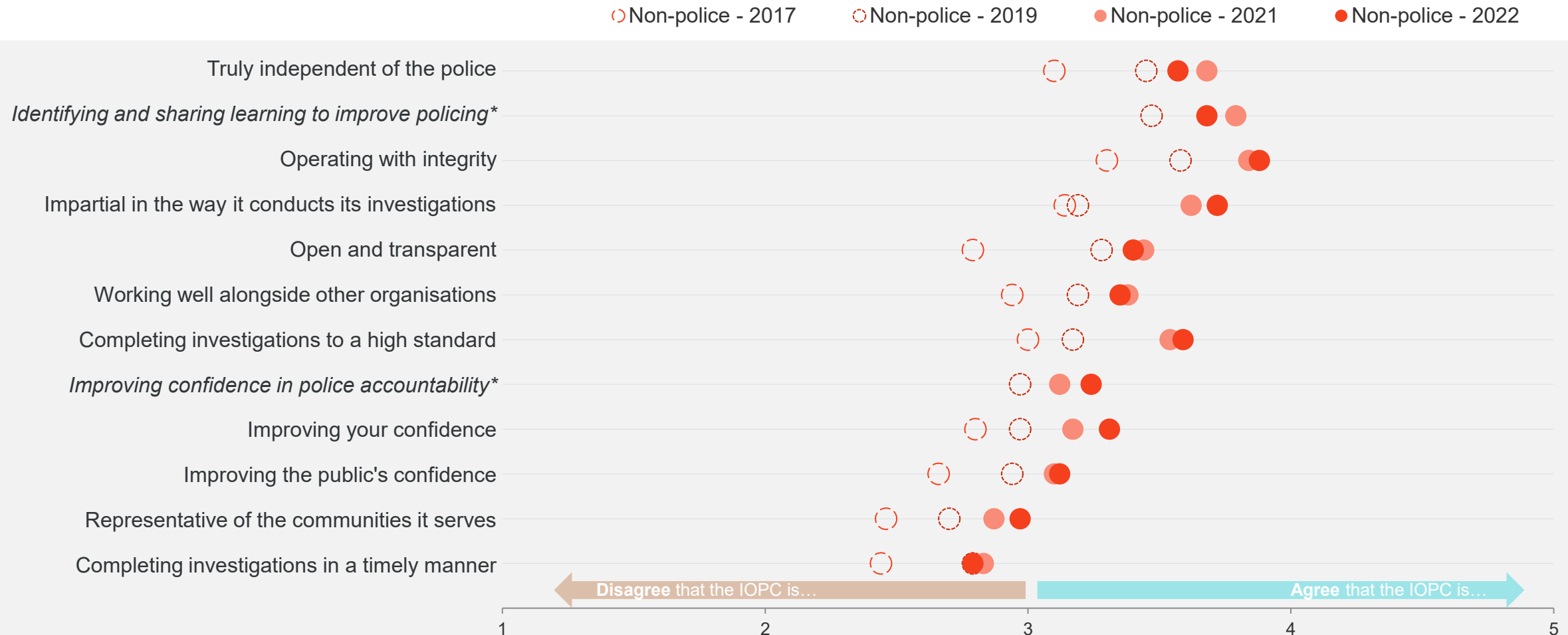
Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the IOPC is ...?

○ Police accountability - 2017 ○ Police accountability - 2019 ● Police accountability - 2021 ● Police accountability - 2022



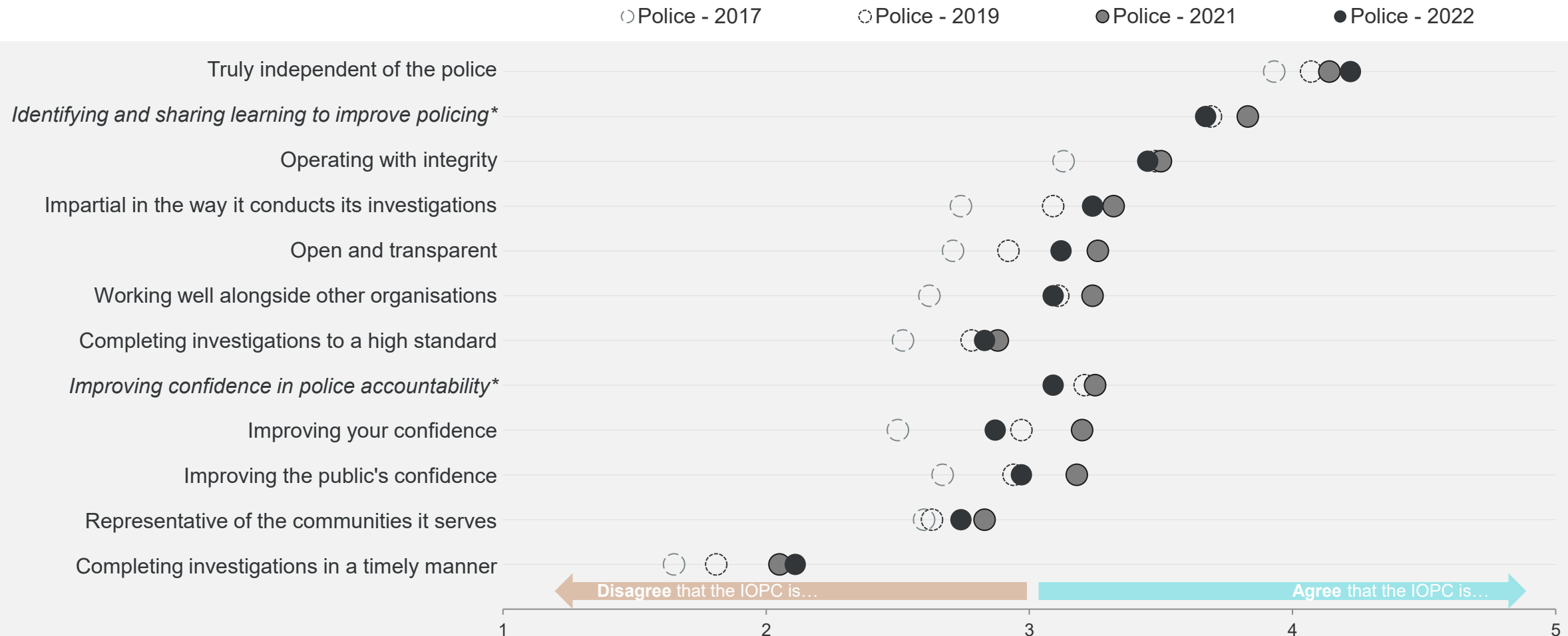
Changes over time: non-police stakeholders rate the IOPC similarly compared to last year

Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the IOPC is ...?



Changes over time: police stakeholders also rate the IOPC similarly compared to last year, though sometimes slightly lower

Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the IOPC is ...?



The measure on which stakeholders believe there is most room for improvement is improving public confidence

Q. How effective, or ineffective, do you think the IOPC is in the following areas?

Stakeholders recognise that it is a difficult time for public confidence in policing, however all stakeholder groups view improving public confidence as a relative weakness of the IOPC.

Stakeholders think that the public has low awareness of the IOPC and that it does not do enough to engage with communities.

Some stakeholders think that increased public awareness of the IOPC in recent high profile cases (e.g. Sarah Everard's murder and Partygate) has decreased public confidence in policing.

"I think they're **fighting a very hard battle** because obviously police have not been good over the last couple of years, and very much [in the] public eye."

Non-police stakeholder

5

Improving public confidence in policing

% who say 'effective'
MINUS
% who say 'ineffective'

31%

Police accountability

0%

Police

14%

Non-police

"That's **their biggest challenge, trying to get that confidence in the public** and how they get their messages out. I think from a public point of view, you only ever hear from them for the really serious cases and actually, then people ask the question, 'Well, **who is the IOPC**' and '**what do they do?**' So, they've got a lot of work to do around that."

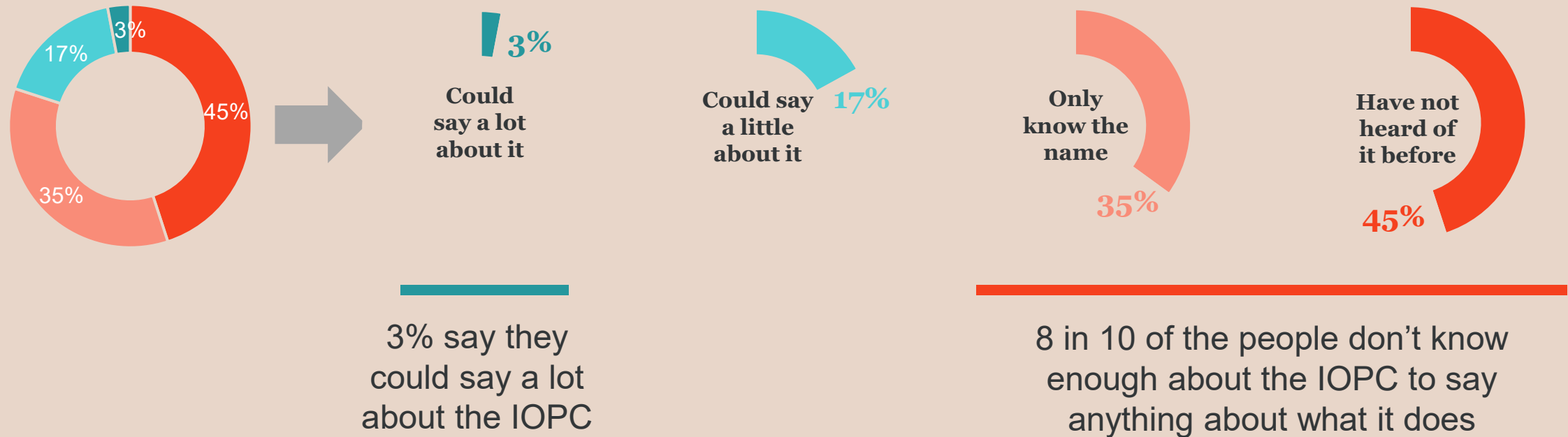
Police accountability framework stakeholder

"This is a really difficult one because in a sense **their job is to investigate complaints** and to shine a light where there are complaints. Inevitably **when you do that public confidence goes down** because you are exposing what's hidden in the system. In a sense what we're seeing at the moment is public confidence taking a significant knocking as a result of publication of these public cases now. It's absolutely right that they are in the public domain, but I think **we just have to be realistic that public confidence is going to take a significant knocking every time the IOPC are in the media.**"

Police stakeholder

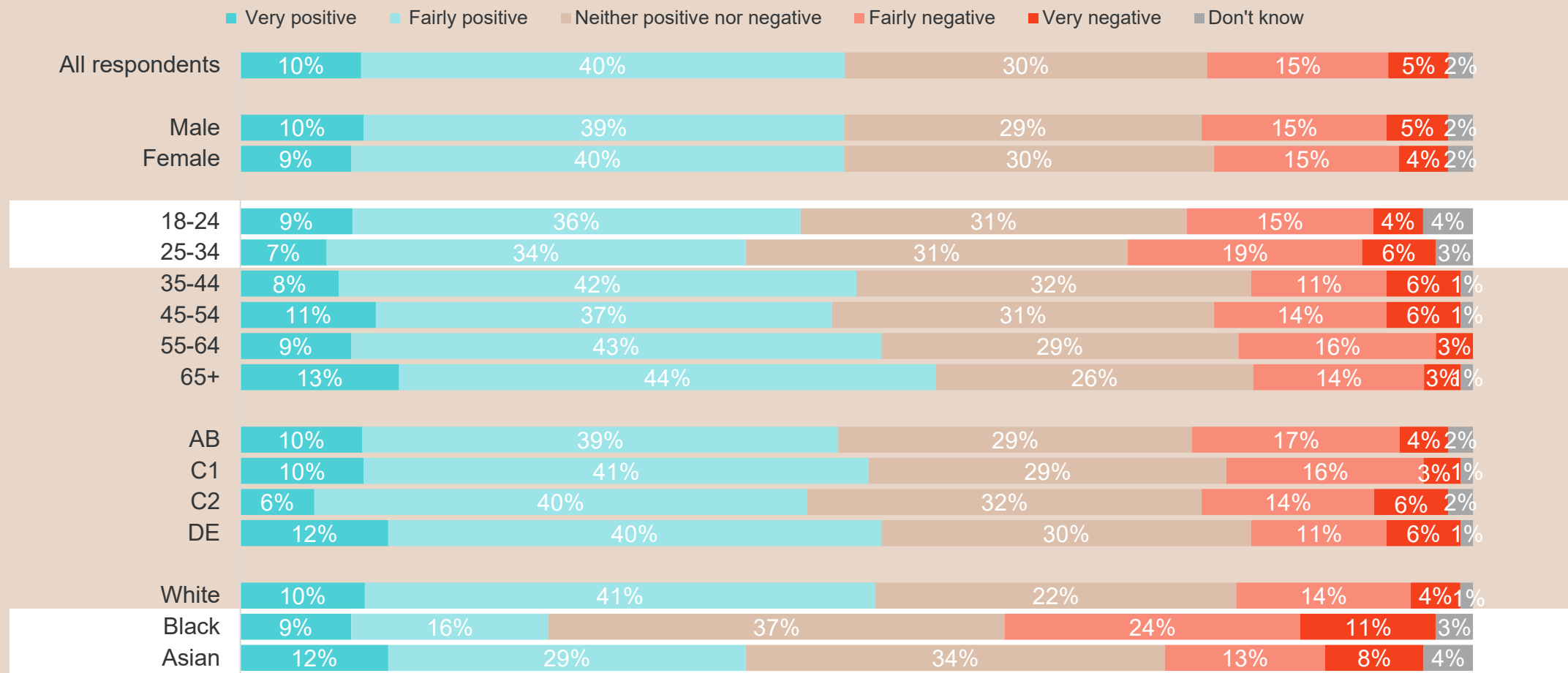
Low public awareness of the IOPC has been evidenced in previous public perceptions research

Q. Have you heard of the IOPC (the Independent Office for Police Conduct)?



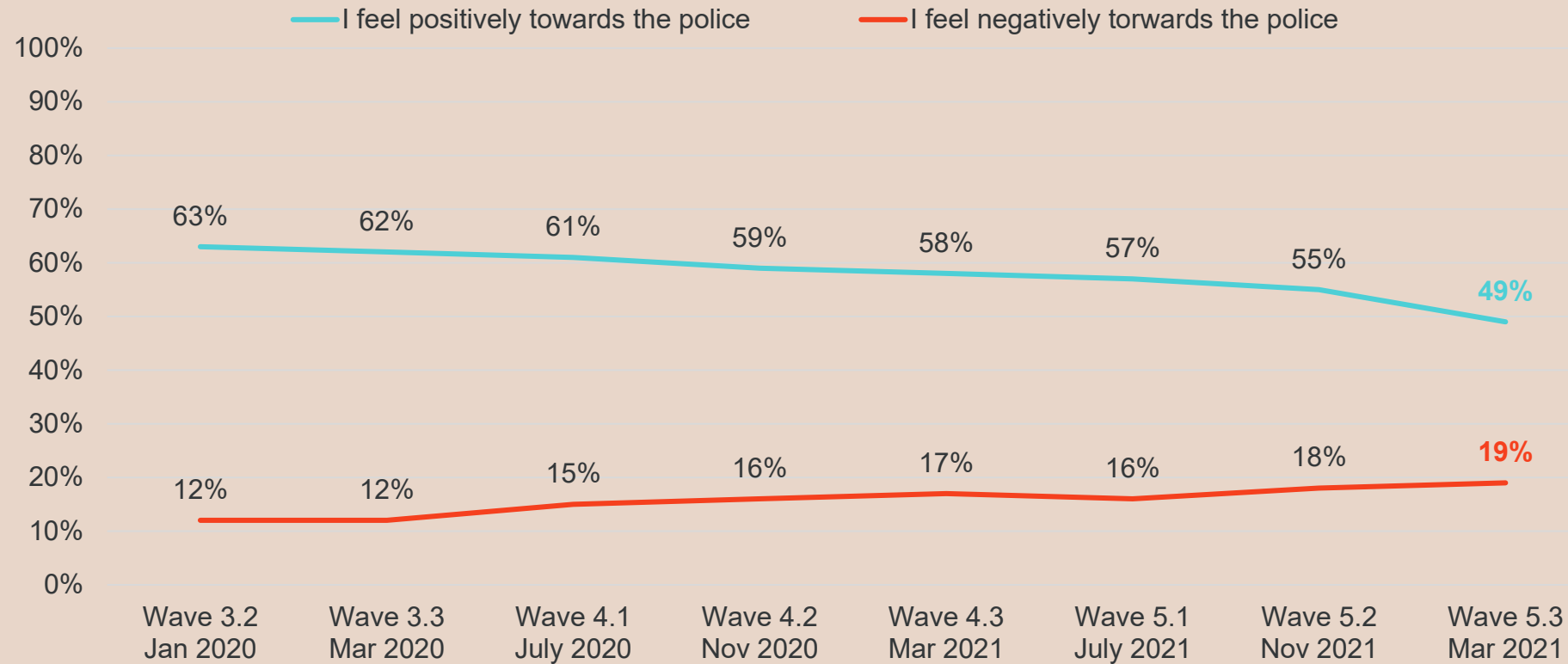
Our research has also shown that young people and Black and Asian people have low confidence in the police

Q. How positive or negative do you feel towards the police?



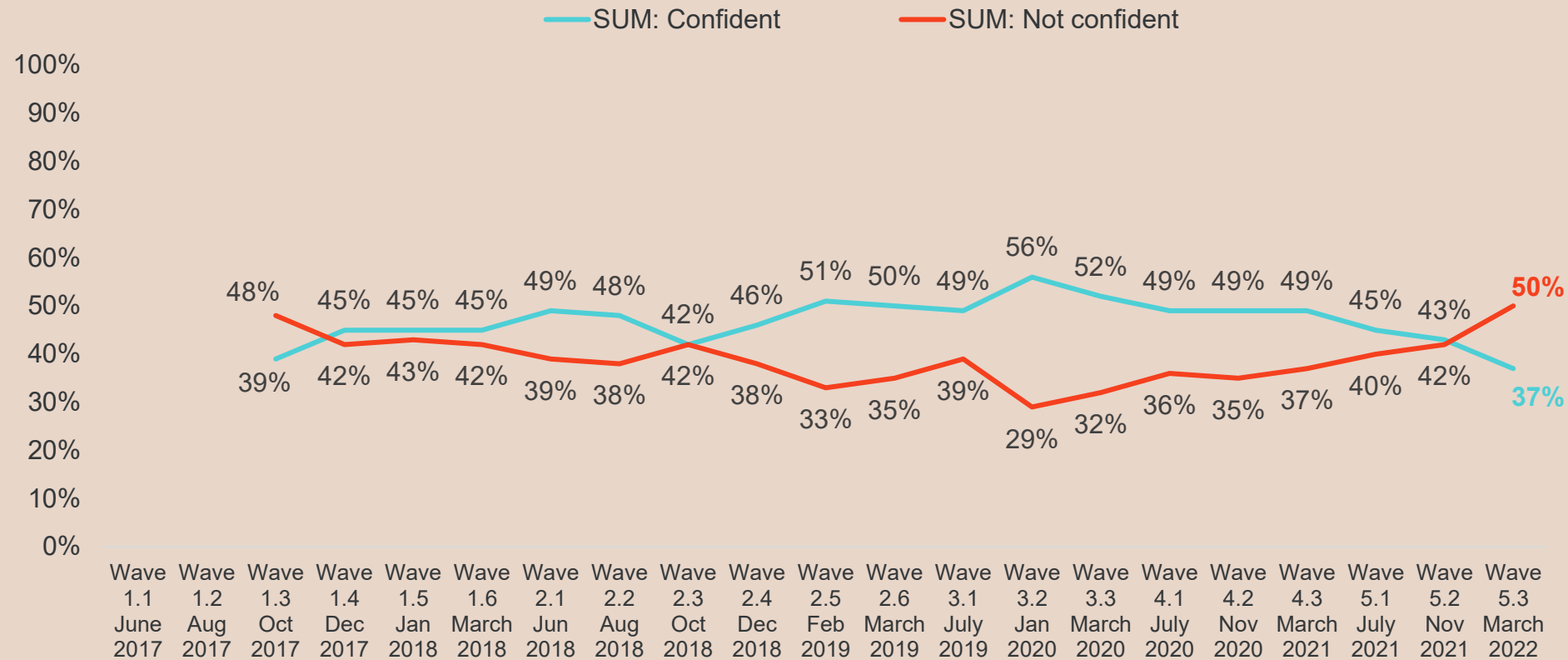
Our research has also shown that positivity towards policing has been declining

Q. How positive or negative do you feel towards the police?



And that confidence in the police dealing fairly with complaints has decreased

Q. How confident, if at all, are you that the police deal fairly with complaints made against the police?



Communications and engagement

Stakeholders have appreciated the IOPC's open, accessible, and more proactive engagement. It is seen as a key strength of the organisation.

They want the IOPC to focus on engaging more with the public and the media.

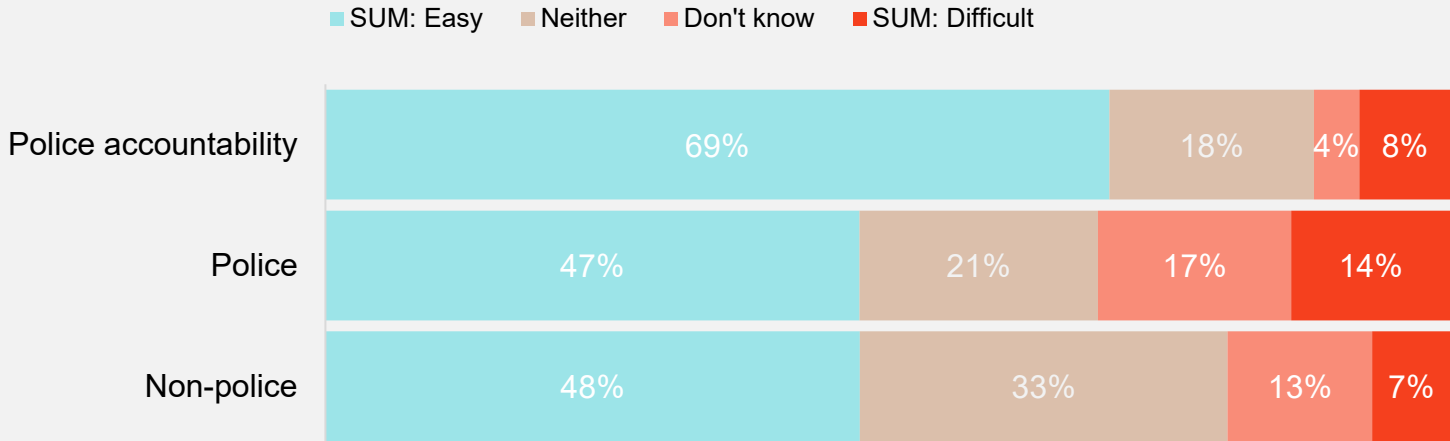
Around half of stakeholders say the IOPC is easy, rather than difficult, to engage with

Q. How easy or difficult do you find engaging with the Independent Office for Police Conduct?

Police accountability stakeholders are most likely to think the IOPC is easy to deal with, but around half of police and non-police stakeholders believe so too.

Overall, the majority also agree that the engagement is very good and that the channels and frequency of communications are right.

Total 'easy' across all groups **52%**



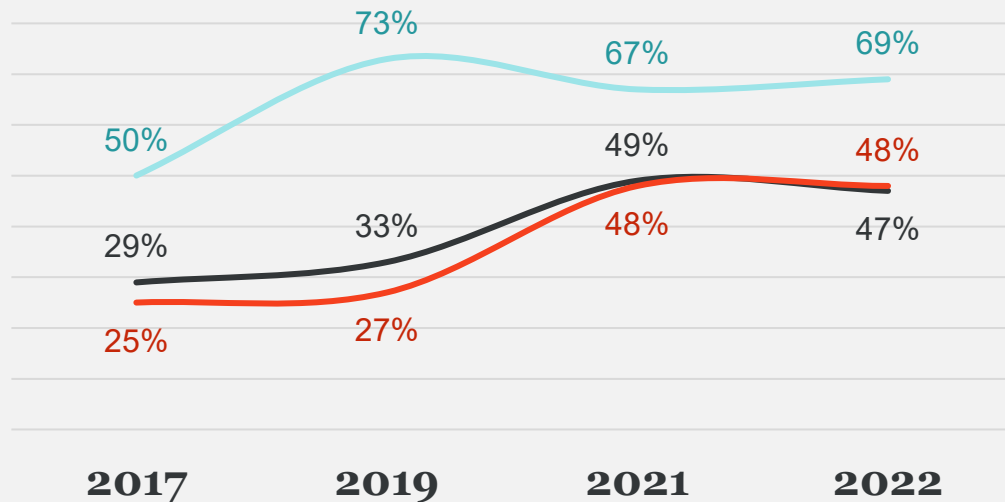
Similar engagement scores to 2021

Q. How easy or difficult do you find engaging with the Independent Office for Police Conduct?

Easy to engage with, over time

(‘very’ + ‘quite’) easy

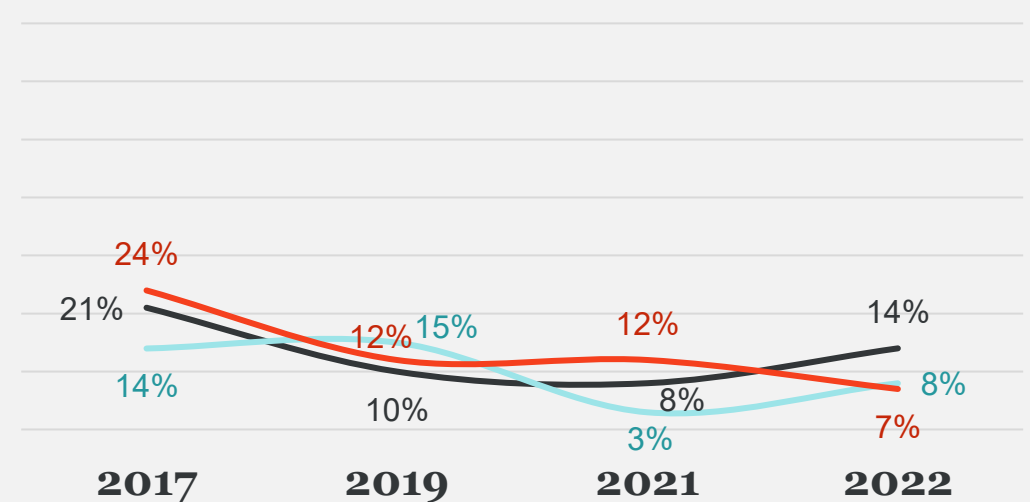
— Police
— Police accountability
— Non-police



Difficult to engage with, over time

(‘quite’ + ‘very’) difficult

— Police
— Police accountability
— Non-police



Engagement is open, friendly and the IOPC listens to stakeholders

Open, friendly and approachable engagement

“We have a **great relationship**. We have personal contacts which is always helpful as well. My engagement with them has been great. They're very **open**, they're very **friendly**, **they listen**.”

Non-police stakeholder

“I think they're doing a good job. They're very **approachable**, very **responsive**, restricted by some resourcing needs, and the limitations within their remit of how they can influence policing, which I think is a really difficult thing to influence, but very **cooperative** and good from a stakeholder engagement perspective.”

Police accountability framework stakeholder

“There are **brilliant people** at the IOPC. We have very, very good relationships with individual people. Our regional director is **superb**. We have very **constructive, honest** conversation with him and a couple of the staff that link in.”

Police stakeholder

“I had a really good experience and I think for me that **started my relationship with the IOPC on a really good footing** because I've always found anyone that I have interacted with to be really **professional and transparent**.”

Non-police stakeholder

“I have most to do with Michael Lockwood the Chief Exec and some of his senior team and they're **always very open and engaging**.”

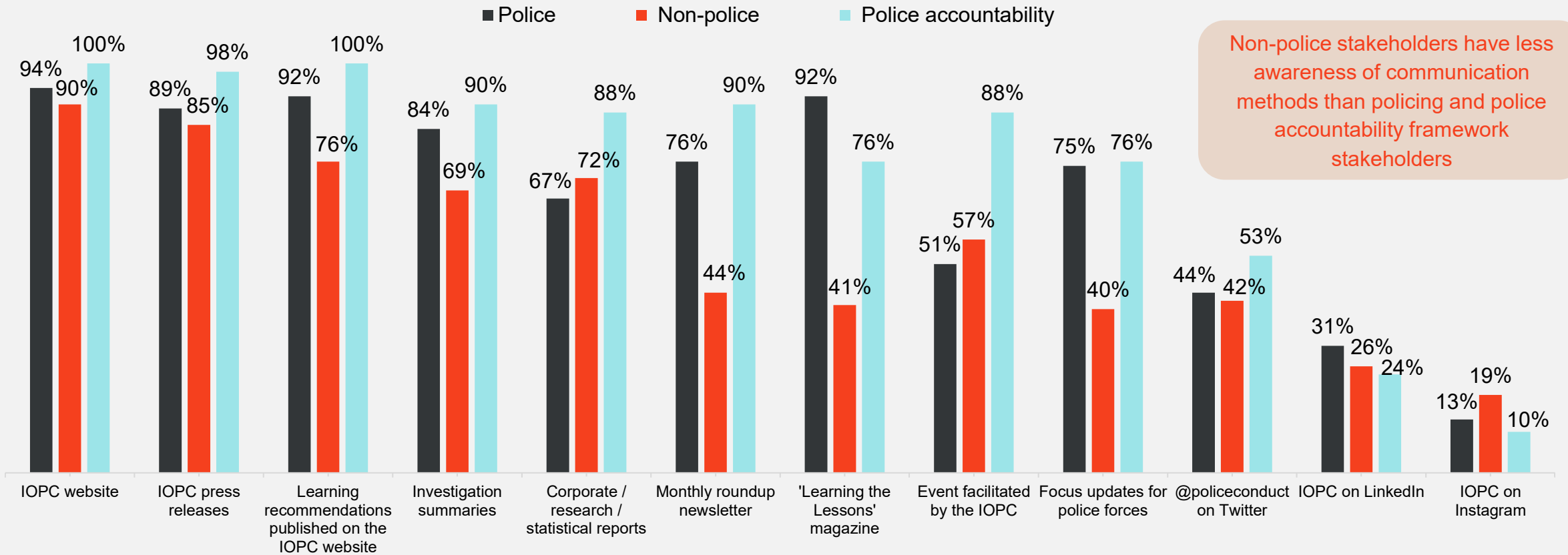
Police stakeholder

“I think they're **good to deal with**. We come at things from a different perspective so we're not going to agree on everything, but we have **good discussion** and disagree when we disagree.”

Police accountability framework stakeholder

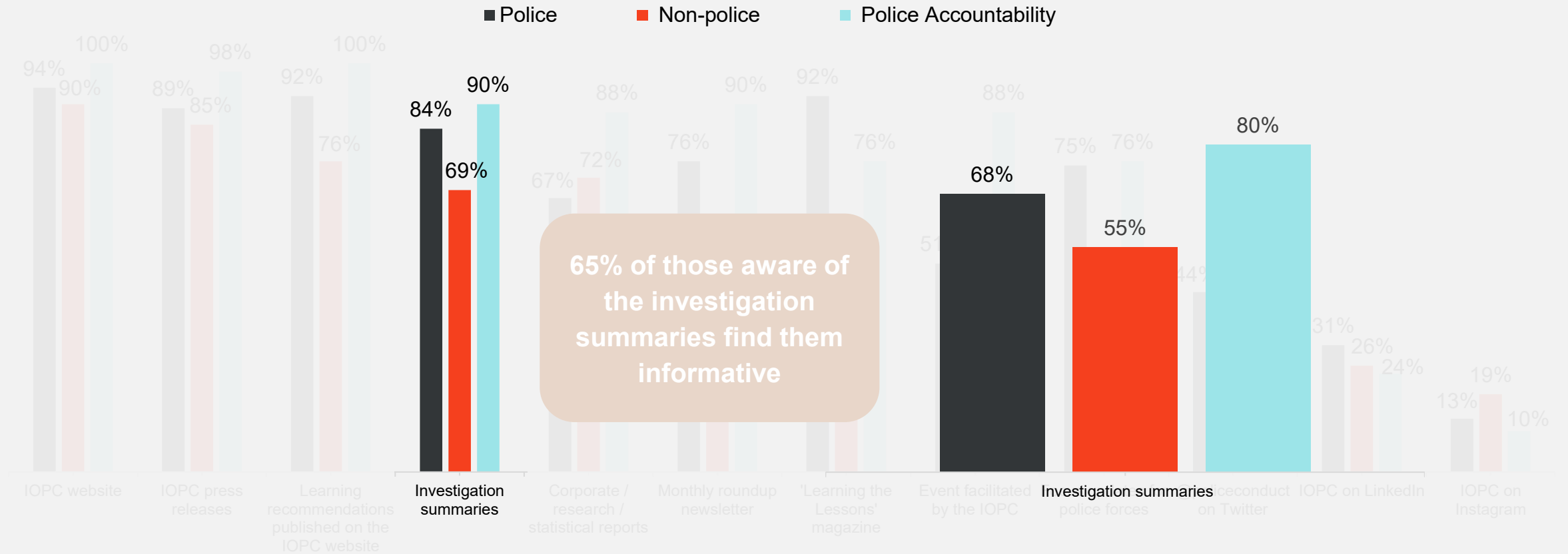
Most IOPC communication methods are widely known, but IOPC LinkedIn and Instagram accounts are less known

Q. Which of the following communication products provided by the IOPC are you aware of?



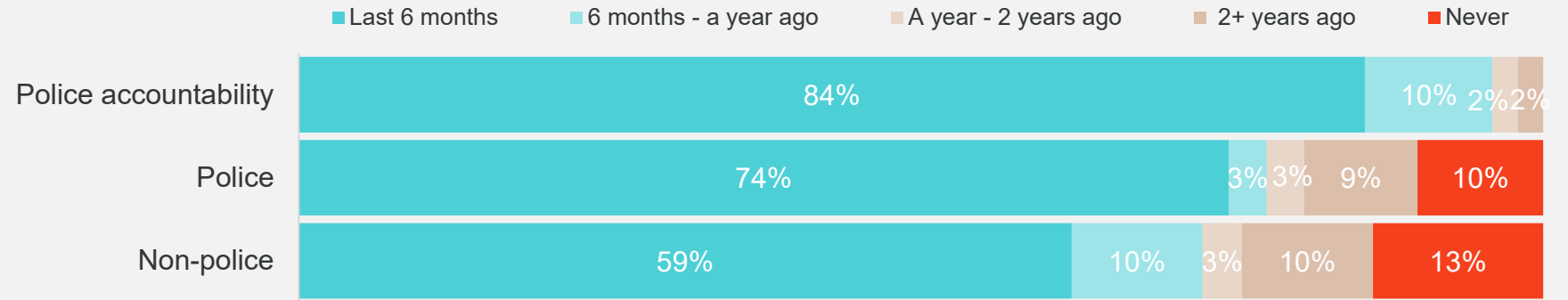
Investigation summaries are viewed positively

Q. Which of the following communication products provided by the IOPC are you aware of? To what extent do you find the investigation summaries informative or uninformative?



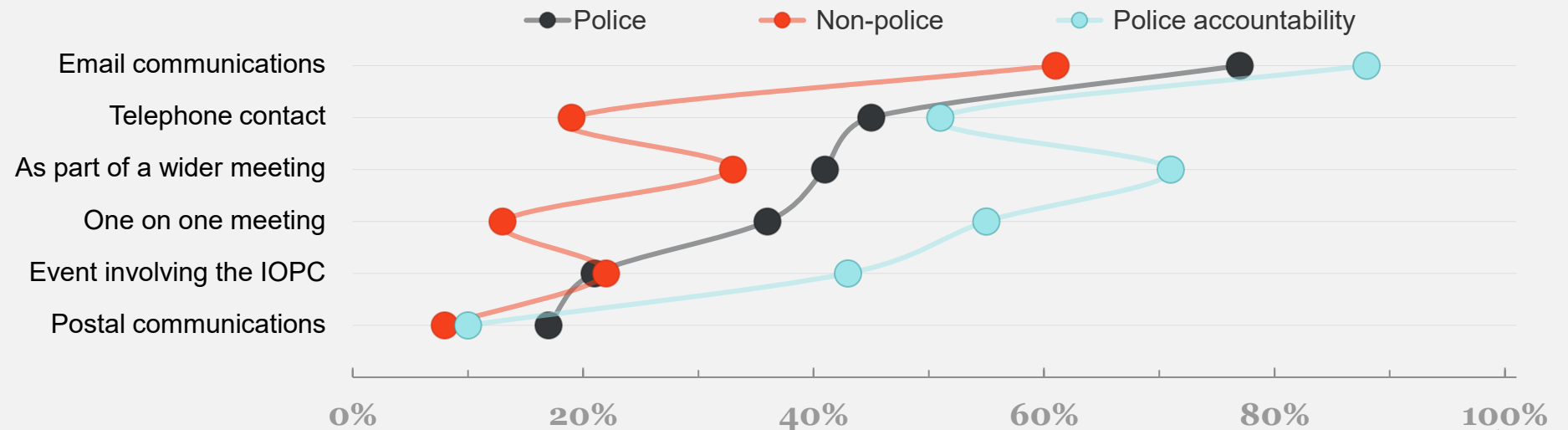
Most stakeholders have had contact with the IOPC in the last 6 months, mostly via email

Q. When was the last time you had contact with the IOPC?



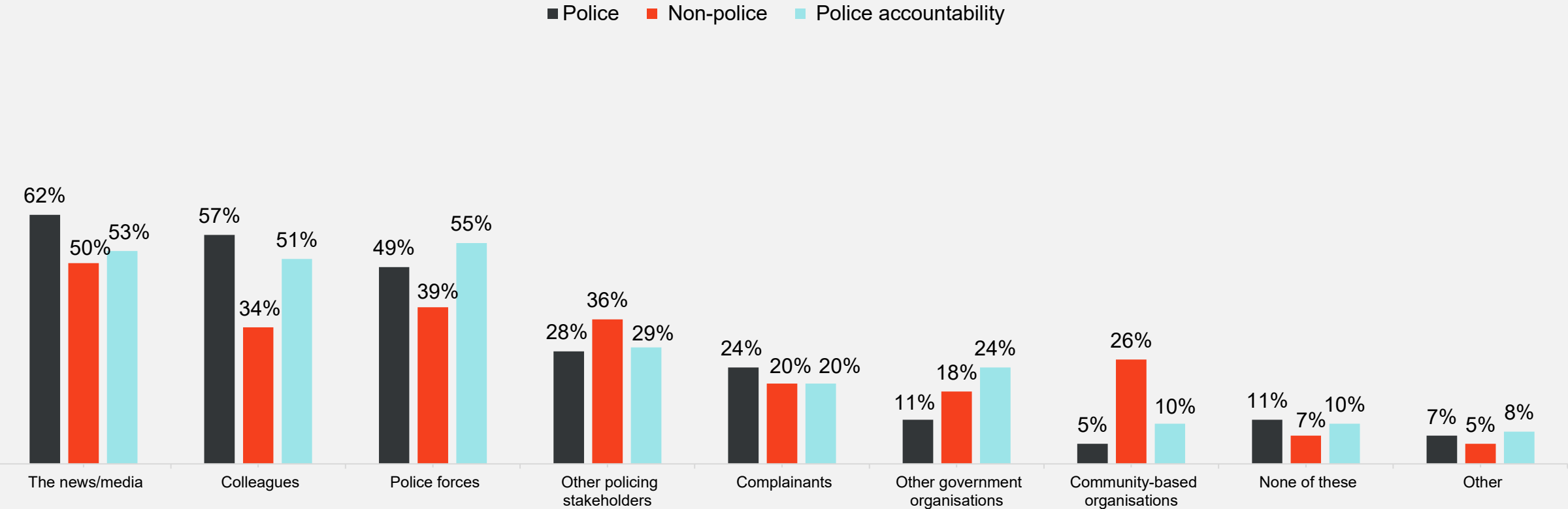
Q. On average, how frequently, if at all, do you engage with the IOPC through the following methods?

[Showing the % who engage twice a year+ via each method]



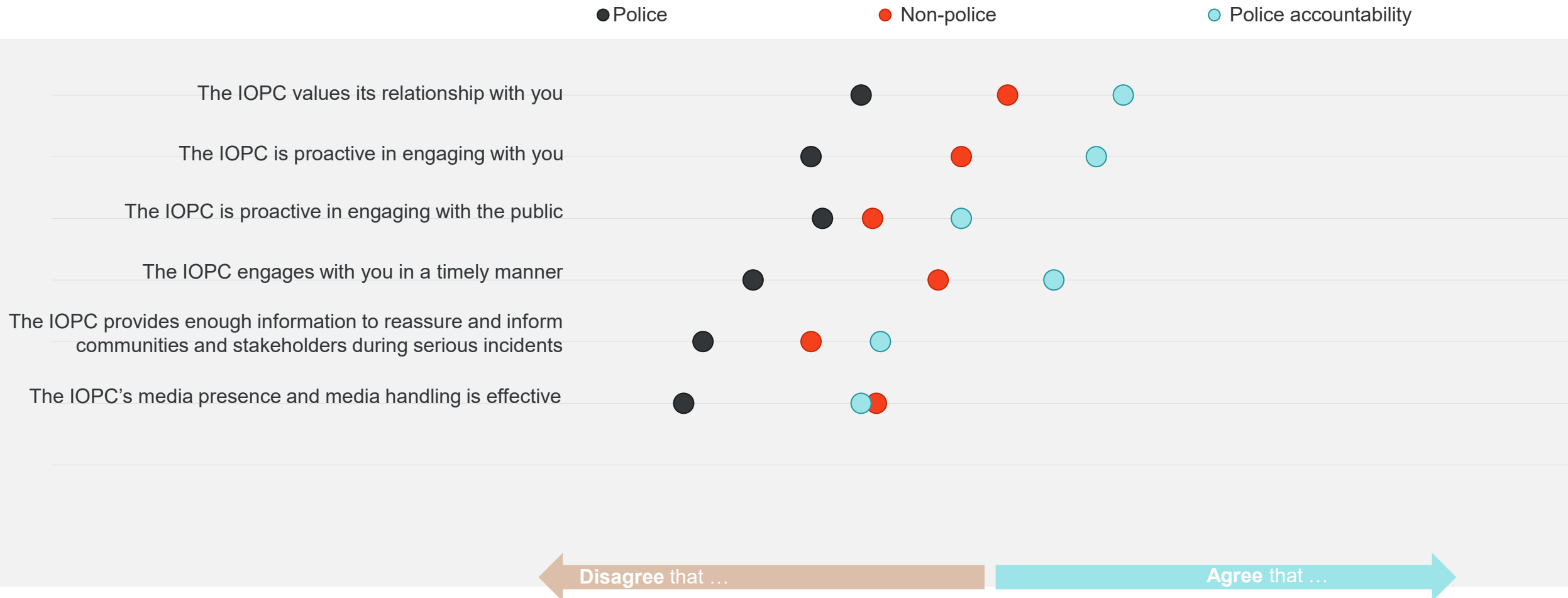
Apart from the IOPC itself, most stakeholders receive information about the organisation from the news and media

Q. Apart from the Independent Office for Police Conduct itself, from where or who do you get information about the IOPC?



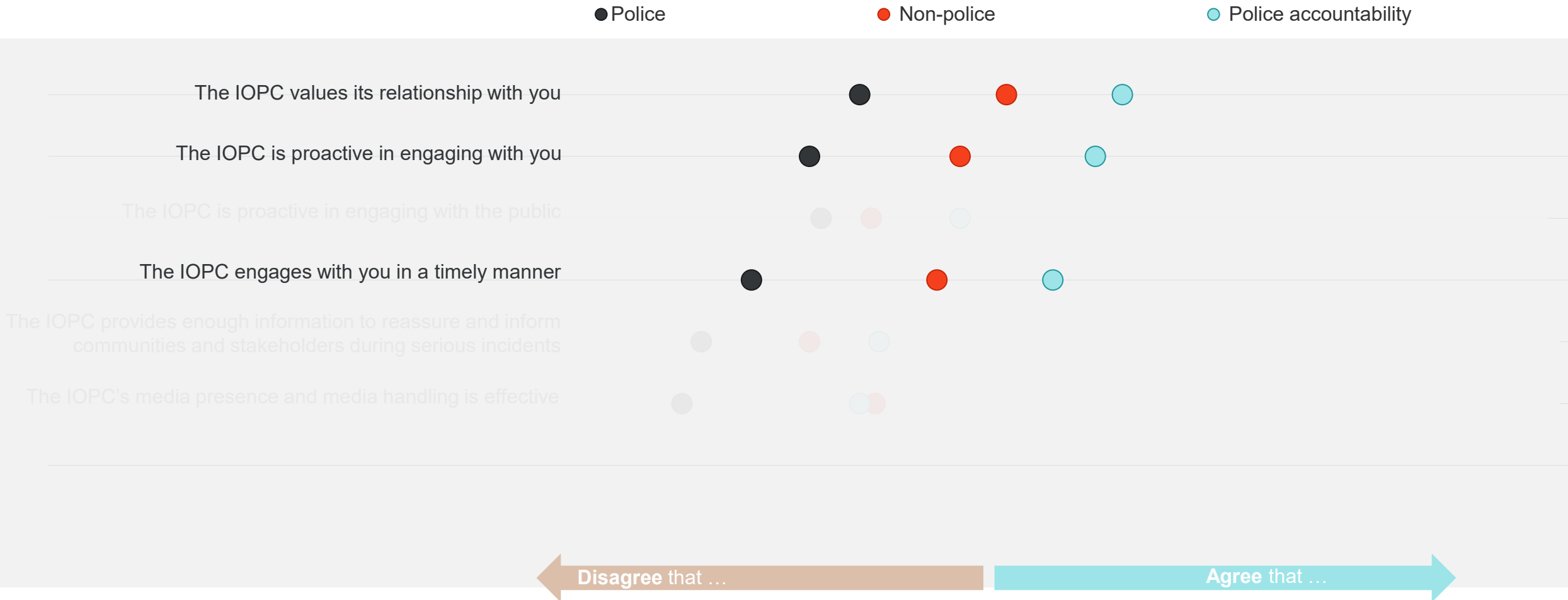
Police accountability stakeholders are the most positive about the IOPC's communication

Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements...?



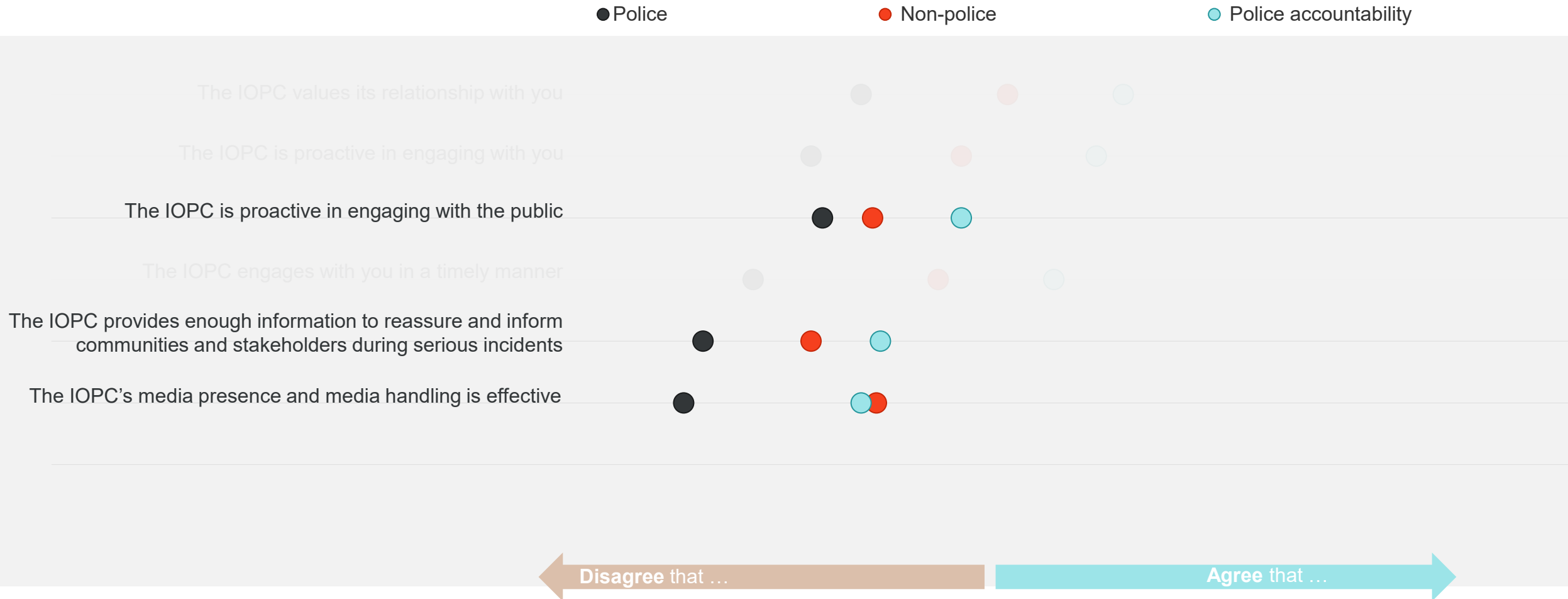
The IOPC is rated highly for engagement with stakeholders, but timeliness could still be improved

Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements...?



Stakeholders rate its engagement with the public, communities, and the media less highly

Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements...?



Stakeholders think the IOPC's engagement is a strength of the organisation, but it can be reactive at times

Stakeholders praise the IOPC's engagement as open, honest, and collaborative, however some believe it can be more proactive with communications around investigations.

Stakeholders widely believe that senior staff are accessible and proactive, but some suggest that this behaviour is not prevalent throughout the organisation, especially regarding specific cases.

Therefore, few stakeholders see the IOPC as proactive overall and some call for more communication around investigations.

"I think there's a split. I think at the level of my counterpart and of the chief exec and things like this, it's proactive and **more junior ones are more reactive.**"

Police accountability framework stakeholder

"Their engagement is good but something to improve on is **not waiting until we call on them.** We are not asking that they give too much information but regular updates on issues would be good. [...] I've had a complaint to me about their engagement with families when they're affected by an incident."

Non-police stakeholder

"When it comes to lessons learned and oversight meetings, I'd say they're proactive. When it's about **investigations**, or things to do with a particular case, **they're a little bit reactive.**"

Police stakeholder

"There's always information in respect to specific cases which obviously can't be shared with everybody, but **open communication about specific cases, with regular updates needs to happen.** More broadly, lessons learned, lessons picked up, themed issues, the rationale for why certain things happen or didn't happen, and what the role of the IOPC was in the particular investigation. That information is quite few and far between, so being able to see that and understand that in the wider organisation would be good."

Police stakeholder

Stakeholders say the IOPC's main comms/engagement weakness is its engagement with the public

Stakeholders think there is a lot of room for improvement when it comes to the IOPC's communication and engagement with the public.

Stakeholders think the public are largely unaware of the IOPC and more needs to be done to explain its role, purpose and independence to help increase public confidence in policing.

Stakeholders call for more community engagement as well as TV, radio and social media presence.

"With the public, I'm not sure that people understand the distinction between the IOPC and policing, and the role that the IOPC has in managing and overseeing complaints. **I don't think the IOPC really engage with the public.** Obviously, they publish stuff but I'm not sure I really see much of it. I think there's room for more."

Police stakeholder

"The IOPC need to **make more people aware who they are** and that they're not part of the police. Then more people will know how they can put in a complaint and follow the complaint through. They should do more publicity, **more marketing and more radio and TV adverts.**"

Non-police stakeholder

"I think that they have to take the opportunity to **contribute to debates** that are ongoing, and **make their voice heard.** If there's a report that comes out on a particular subject area, they should do a **press release** and offer people up to speak further on it."

Police accountability framework stakeholder

"I'd wager money that if you lined up 100 people randomly walking down the street and said, 'Do you know who the IOPC is?' you'd have a **low percentage of positive responses.**"

Police stakeholder

Stakeholders highlight the need to specifically engage with groups that have low confidence in policing

Stakeholders understand that communicating to the whole public could be a resource challenge for the IOPC, so some suggest targeting communications to groups who are most likely to need to engage with the IOPC.

Stakeholders acknowledge the low levels of confidence young people and ethnic minority groups have for both the police and in turn the police complaints system. Therefore they think it is crucial to engage more deeply with these communities moving forward.

“I’ve heard from youngsters that don’t have any confidence within the police complaints system. The IOPC need to do some targeted media campaigns, social media campaigns, and try to get into schools to reach that younger generation.”

Non-police stakeholder

“They need to find a way to better engage more with the communities that are impacted by negative policing so that the community can be confident in them. Those communities should know that these people are actually on their side, challenging the police performance, conduct and misconduct, rather than the other way round.”

Non-police stakeholder

“Engagement with the community could be better. It should be a blended approach, in person, in the media, doing some stuff in the newspaper. It’s thinking differently, looking at where some of those other minority communities might actually get that message in front of them. Social media is a big opportunity for engagement as well.”

Police stakeholder

Stakeholders have differing views on the IOPC's engagement with the media

Only 25% of stakeholders agree that the IOPC's media presence and handling is effective.

There is an understanding by all stakeholders that the IOPC is in a difficult position, and it needs to approach its media engagement carefully.

Some policing stakeholders think the IOPC's media engagement can be detrimental to police forces and public confidence in policing, whereas some non-police stakeholders think the IOPC needs to call out more police conduct in the media.

However, some stakeholders think the IOPC engages well with the media, and it produces clear messages around its investigations and recommendations.

"The IOPC could be **more thoughtful in their media messages**. It's **always standing against the officers** even in the very early stages of an investigation where you don't know a lot of information. However, I also accept that its focus is on public trust and transparency. It's very difficult because whatever you put to the media, they put their slant on it. **You're damned if you do and you're damned if you don't.**"

Police stakeholder

"From what I've seen in the media, **they're very clear around their messaging in terms of the findings and the recommendations that they've made**. That will have served them well in terms of increasing public confidence in the role that they are undertaking. What I've seen coming out from the organisation is **quite balanced and fair** and not police bashing in any way at all."

Police stakeholder

"During the most recent investigation into the complaints about the police in relation to murders of Nicole Smallman and Bibaa Henry, they basically came out and said we found no evidence of racism, which is a bit of a leap, considering. Communications like that **does make them look like they're not willing to be bold on police criticism.**"

Non-police stakeholder

Stakeholders believe that public engagement and improving timeliness are important in increasing public confidence

When stakeholders are asked for the greatest thing the IOPC could do to improve public confidence in policing practices, the most common answers are public engagement and timeliness.

Many stakeholders (24%) think that increasing public awareness and engagement is key to improving the public's confidence in policing practices.

The second most common response (19%) is increasing the timeliness of investigations. 8% also suggest that the IOPC should focus on transparency.

“There have been so many misconduct-related issues and high-profile media cases at the moment, that actually it **would have been a good opportunity for the IOPC to be somewhat more front footed in explaining their role and purpose.**”

Police accountability framework stakeholder

“What would I need to see in terms of timeliness is quicker investigation. The **timeliness of the flow of information back to the public is not quick enough to help with public confidence.** High-stake cases take too long and of course then have a long tail in terms of that engagement and public confidence.”

Police stakeholder

“**The IOPC are just very slow.** You see these terrible things the police are doing, and then ten months later they come out with quite a wishy-washy report. **I'd really recommend that they show more of what they're doing in the meantime,** because otherwise the public perception is that there was horrendous racism, sexism, discrimination two years ago, and now you're telling us.”

Non-police stakeholder

Stakeholders think the IOPC should do more to engage with police forces

Stakeholders think the IOPC has improved its engagement with police stakeholders but think there is still work to do.

There is an understanding by all stakeholders that the IOPC should remain completely independent from the police, however stakeholders think that the IOPC should do more to engage with members of police forces.

Stakeholders think police officers have a negative view of the IOPC and it needs to visit police stations, explain its role and demonstrate that it will investigate in a fair and independent way.

“It's not about compromising your independence to merely go along and understand. **They've made strides** in changing the mindset around that. As we come on to the negatives, **there's still a way to go.**”

Police stakeholder

“Their thematics are helpful and informative for my work, but **other stakeholders like the police federation might be very critical.** The IOPC have got a difficult job to do as an independent body and they're **bound to disagree with chiefs and forces** every now and then.”

Police accountability framework stakeholder

“If police officers are under investigation, **I don't think they've got confidence in the IOPC.** The police think if the IOPC are investigating them, then **they will be very harsh** and that they **don't understand policing.** I think to improve its about **engagement with the staff** networks and sharing some **good news stories** of people that have been under investigations.”

Police stakeholder

Assessing organisational change, and other strategic issues

The IOPC is praised for its continued focus on sharing lessons. Stakeholders tend to think it has the right amount of power to enforce recommendations, though some think it needs additional resources to follow up on them.

Stakeholders think public confidence in policing, an increase in the volume of complaints, and funding and resource restrictions are the biggest challenges facing the IOPC.

Most stakeholders think that the IOPC is somewhat effective in sharing learnings to improve police practice

Q. How effective or ineffective do you think the IOPC is in sharing learning to improve police practice?

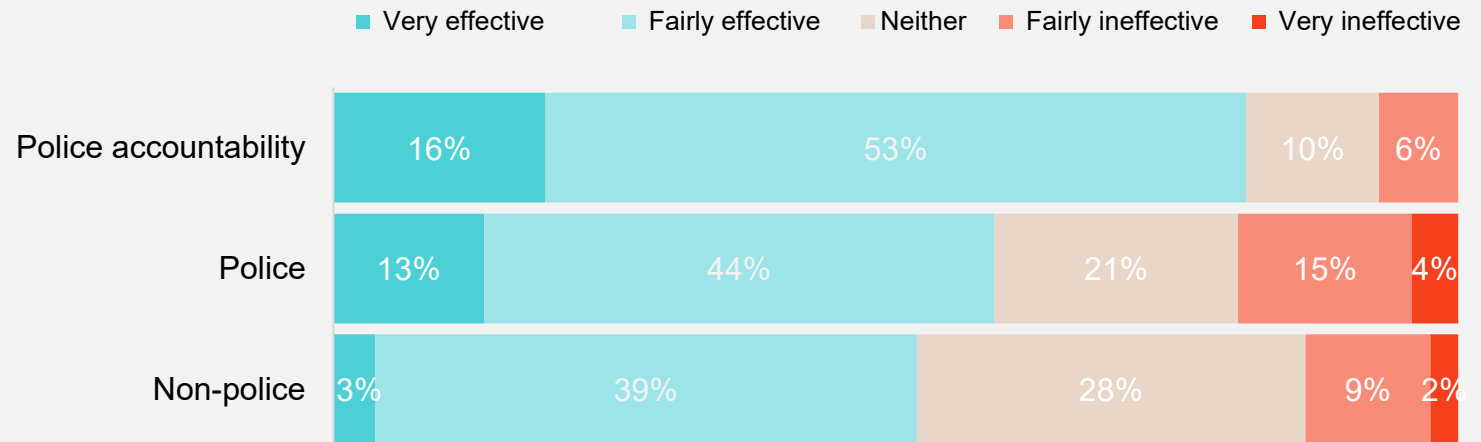
All three stakeholder groups think the IOPC is effective at sharing learnings.

Most stakeholders believe that the IOPC is very good at sharing learning materials such as reports and bulletins.

However, some wonder whether lessons from these materials are being adopted and used consistently in police forces.

Therefore, these stakeholders call on the IOPC to provide evidence of learnings leading to improvement.

Total 'effective' across all groups **54%**



Most stakeholders believe that the IOPC has the right amount of power to enforce its recommendations

Q. Which of the following statements regarding the IOPC's powers comes closest to your view?

This holds true for police (64%), police accountability (49%) and non-police stakeholders (39%) alike.

Police stakeholders are the group most likely to believe that the IOPC has too much power to enforce its recommendations. On the other hand, police accountability and non-police stakeholders are more likely to think that the IOPC does not have enough power.

A few stakeholders say that this perceived lack of power means the IOPC is not as effective as it could be at putting learnings into practice. Most of these stakeholders suggest the level of power that the IOPC has cannot and should not be changed, but the IOPC should have more resources to follow-up on investigations where recommendations haven't been acted upon.

The IOPC has an appropriate level of power to enforce its recommendations

51%

The IOPC does not have enough power to enforce its recommendations

26%

The IOPC has too much power to enforce its recommendations

9%

Don't know 13%

However, some stakeholders think the IOPC needs more resources to follow up on recommendations

They think the IOPC has an appropriate amount of power, however think the IOPC should follow-up with police forces to check whether recommendations have been acted upon.

“They should be able to see through some of the recommendations they make. It shouldn't be that policing can decide whether to take it on board or not. HMIC have similar powers where they can actually put them on different levels and I think a tighter relationship between HMIC and IOPC would help. HMIC can be more proactive around the kind of putting things in place, putting forces and special measures, but the IOPC should be able to feed into that a little bit more.”

Police stakeholder

“There's a bit of a debate about whether these types of organisations should have more power. I think it's more about having the resource to follow up, rather than them having additional powers. Having the resource to make it transparent where things aren't happening as they should, or as they might expect them to as a result of an investigation or something. I think it's that extra layer of capacity to follow up.”

Police accountability framework stakeholder

“I think it could probably do with extra powers to allow them to scrutinise the implementation of the recommendations, but it has to go further than that. They have to then be able to do something if they don't think that it has gone far enough.”

Police accountability framework stakeholder

“I don't think I would suggest statutory or other regulatory powers. I suppose it's the resourcing that would enable them to make better use of the softer powers. Linking back to what I said before around their ability to do more thematic learning or run events for policing or share their learning more widely than they already do, because I do know some of the stuff they do there, I think would allow them to make better use of explaining to different forces how the learning from one investigation, which might be quite specific, how does that apply to their force? That kind of thing takes resource to do it. Not new statutory powers, but more resource.”

Police accountability stakeholder

Stakeholders consider public confidence, volume of complaints and the IOPC having sufficient resources to be key challenges

Q. In your view, what is the biggest challenge facing the IOPC in the coming months?

Many stakeholders (24%) believe low public confidence in policing to be the biggest challenge facing the IOPC in the coming months.

The emphasis they place on public confidence stems from the numbers of cases of police misconduct in the last year. Stakeholders think the volume of complaints as a result of increased scrutiny of policing is also going to be a big challenge facing the IOPC (14%).

13% think having sufficient resources to deal with increased demand is going to be a challenge for the organisation. Some also mention more cases of police misconduct (9%).

Increasing public confidence

“Public confidence and making sure they are able to have the correct funding for the right resources that they need because without that, they’re not going to be as effective as they could be. Gaining that public confidence and having the resource to do those high-level investigations, that need to be done.”

Police accountability framework stakeholder

Funding and resource constraints

“Funding and resourcing. I think that’s going to be one of the biggest issues that they’re facing across the board with everything else that’s going on. I think it’s how you’re going to end up managing, possibly with a budget that isn’t fit for purpose.”

Police stakeholder

Dealing with increased number of complaints

“I think the biggest thing is going to be the volume of reports and investigations. We are seeing across policing, partly because of the rightful focus on violence against women and girls and the tragic murder of Sarah Everard, a real upsurge in people calling out inappropriate behaviour, which is a really good thing. That means that our Professional Standards Departments are working really hard. They’re running hot around their investigations. That is no doubt affecting the IOPC as well, so I think for me, it’s probably resourcing and the ability to respond quickly and maintain the legitimacy, trust and confidence in the overall complaints process by doing that well.”

Police stakeholder

Yonder Consulting
Northburgh House
10 Northburgh Street
London EC1V 0AT

www.yonderconsulting.com

.YONDER