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Southwest Louisiana Resident Sentiment

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LOUISIANA'S PLAYGROUND

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Introduction and Methodology

Longwoods International's Resident Sentiment Research looks at public perceptions from all sides, including the positives and negatives of economic development, environmental impacts, overtourism, quality of life, and other areas.

This research will provide destinations with a unique opportunity to create a well-informed engagement strategy with locals on the subject of tourism in their communities. By understanding where public opinion lies from both positive and negative perspectives, destinations can work more effectively with local partners to increase support for tourism development efforts.

A self-completion survey was completed by 696 adults (18 years and older) residing in Southwest Louisiana (Calcasieu and Cameron Parishes).

Fieldwork was completed between February 20 – March 9, 2024.

Visit Lake Charles and their community partners distributed the survey via social media and other distribution channels. A \$100 Visa gift card was offered as an incentive to participate in the survey. Respondents provided their email address to enter the drawing.

A separate national study was conducted in July 2023, which provides regional and national norms against which Southwest Louisiana's results are compared.



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Key Findings

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Key Findings

- For variables taken from the national study that have regional and national benchmarks, **an overwhelming share of Southwest Louisiana residents than their national or regional counterparts support tourism, its development, growth, and positive attributes, throughout the study.** Please note that nine in ten residents have no one in their households employed in the tourism and hospitality industry, so these positive results aren't fueled by direct connections with the sector.
- **There's strong support of tourism in Southwest Louisiana.** Nine in ten Southwest Louisiana residents think tourism is good for their local area, while eight in ten cares about the success of the tourism industry in their local area and believe the positive benefits of tourism outweigh the negative impacts.
- **Tourism growth and the development of additional tourism assets is supported by residents, especially if it's part of a planned and controlled development.** Around nine in ten residents believe tourism should be encouraged in Southwest Louisiana and support tourism growth. Nine in ten support developing/hosting more major events and eight in ten support building new tourism facilities to attract tourists to the area. Eight in ten agree planned and controlled tourism development is needed. **However, please note that only three in ten residents think they are consulted when major tourism development takes place.**
- **Most residents understand the importance of promoting Southwest Louisiana.** Seven in ten residents like the way local tourism advertising represents their home and six in ten believes the local government should support/help fund the promotion of tourism. Over half support using public funds to partially fund tourism marketing efforts.

Key Findings, Continued

- **Southwest Louisiana residents have a better grasp on how tourism financially benefits the local economy overall as opposed to their individual households.** Eight in ten residents agree that tourism is important to the local economy and seven in ten believe tourism attracts new businesses to the community. However, half assert that without the tourism tax revenues locals would pay higher state and local taxes, and four in ten believe the sales tax that tourists pay on their purchases adequately compensates for the wear and tear they create on Southwest Louisiana's infrastructure. **More significantly, only two in ten Southwest Louisiana residents believe their standard of living is higher because of the money tourists spend in the community.**
- **Most Southwest Louisiana residents have a positive view of jobs in the sector.** Almost six in ten residents agree that there are opportunities for career advancement in the tourism industry. Over half of Southwest Louisiana residents agree that there are jobs in the tourism industry with desirable pay and benefits, while over three in ten assert most jobs in the tourism industry are low-paying and seasonal.
- **Most Southwest Louisiana residents believe their quality of life is better because of tourism, though there are opportunity costs.** Eight in ten residents agree that tourism supports the preservation of local culture and protects the community's authenticity and half believe they have more things to see and do in Southwest Louisiana because of tourism. Almost half agree that the quality of life in Southwest Louisiana has improved because of increased tourism. **However, there are acknowledged opportunity costs for tourism as well** – a quarter assert that tourists add to traffic congestion and parking problems, while two in ten believe uncontrolled tourism growth is jeopardizing local heritage and culture.

Key Findings, Continued

- **The community sees that tourism could have a positive impact on the environment.** Three in four Southwest Louisiana residents believe long-term planning can limit environmental impacts caused by tourism, while almost seven in ten agree that tourism can help the environment as local governments and people seek to protect sensitive and scenic areas. Six in ten also think it is a good alternative to more environmentally damaging development. Only one in ten thinks overcrowding by tourists is spoiling Southwest Louisiana's natural areas.
- **The community is proud of living in Southwest Louisiana and interested in tourism.** Half of Southwest Louisiana residents are proud of what the area offers tourists, and over half have found that visiting other places gave them a greater appreciation for their local area. Seven in ten recommend local tourist sites to people who are visiting the area and nine in ten are interested in finding out what's happening when they come across local tourism news.
- **There is opportunity for both the city and parish governments to improve perceptions regarding Hurricane Laura rebuilding efforts.** Only four in ten Southwest Louisiana residents agree that their city and parish governments did a good job responding to the community's needs in the rebuilding efforts after Hurricane Laura.



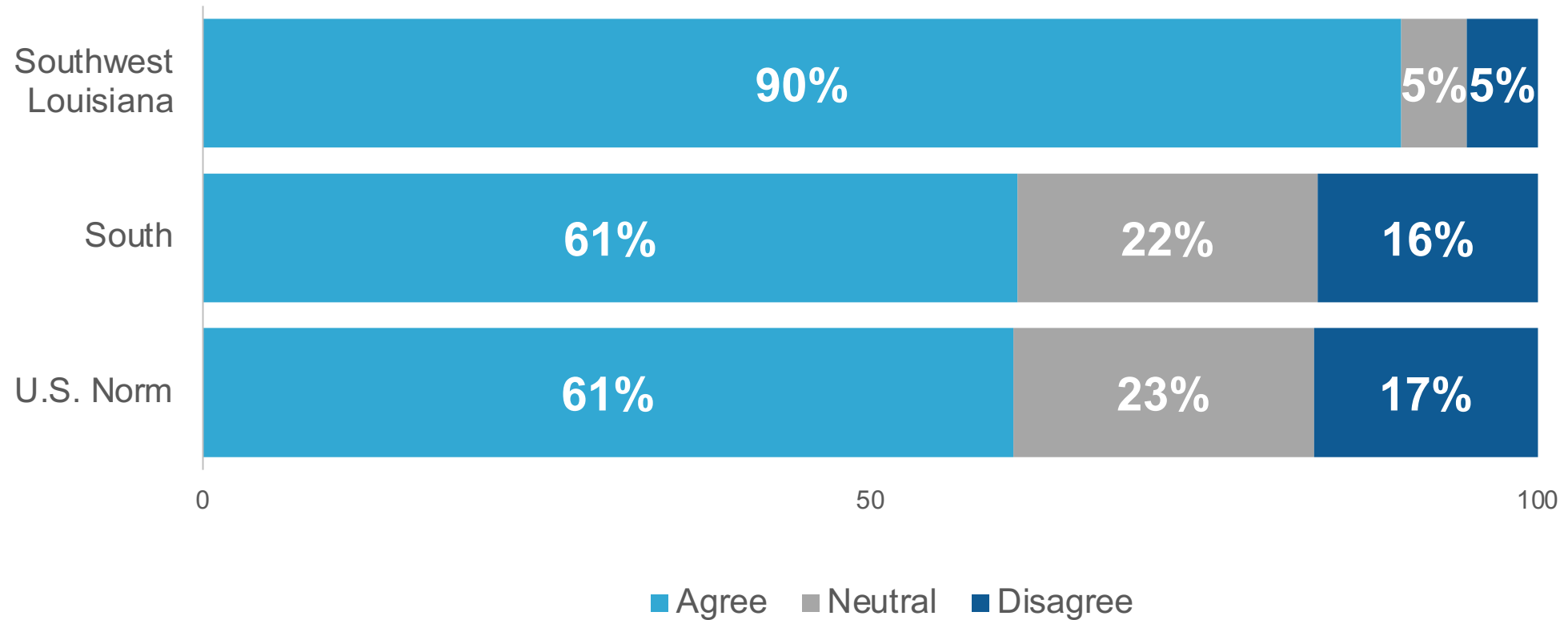
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Overall Sentiment About Tourism

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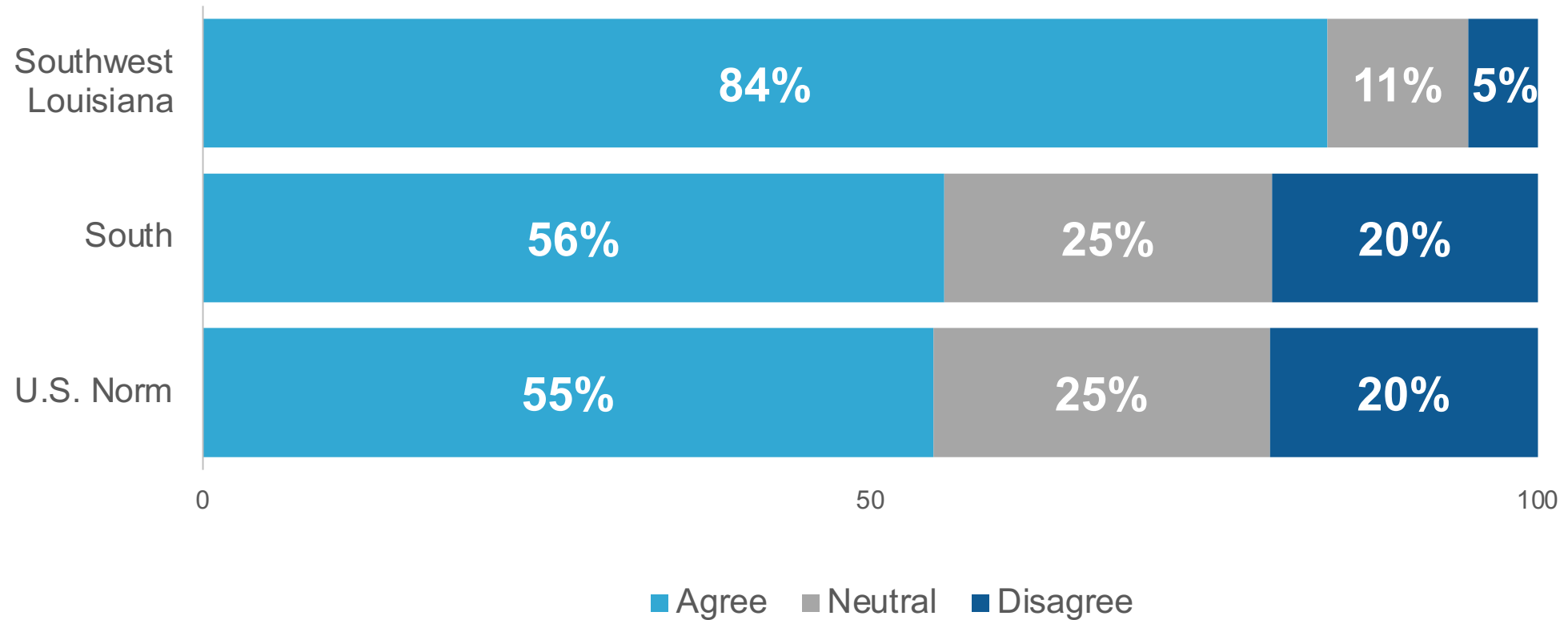
Overall Sentiment About Tourism

Overall, I think tourism is good for my local area



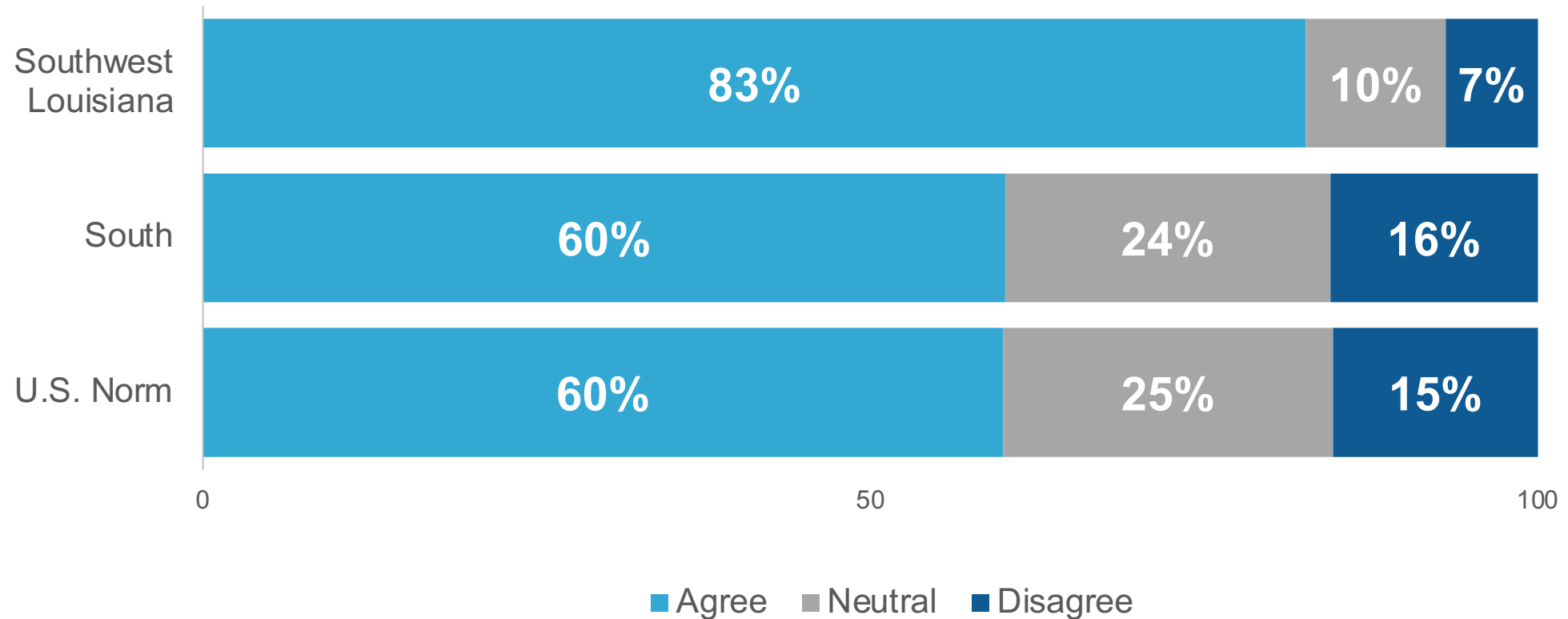
Overall Sentiment About Tourism

I want tourism to be important in my local area



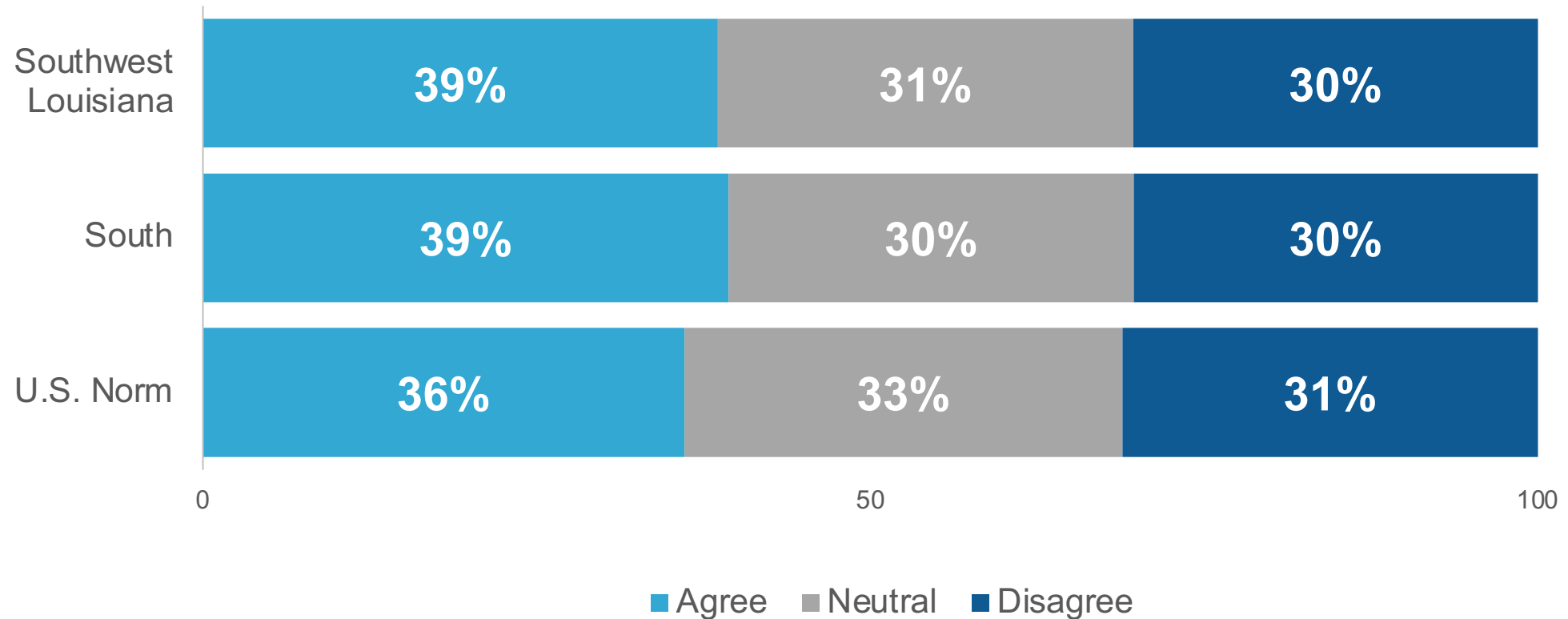
Overall Sentiment About Tourism

In general, the positive benefits of tourism outweigh the negative impacts



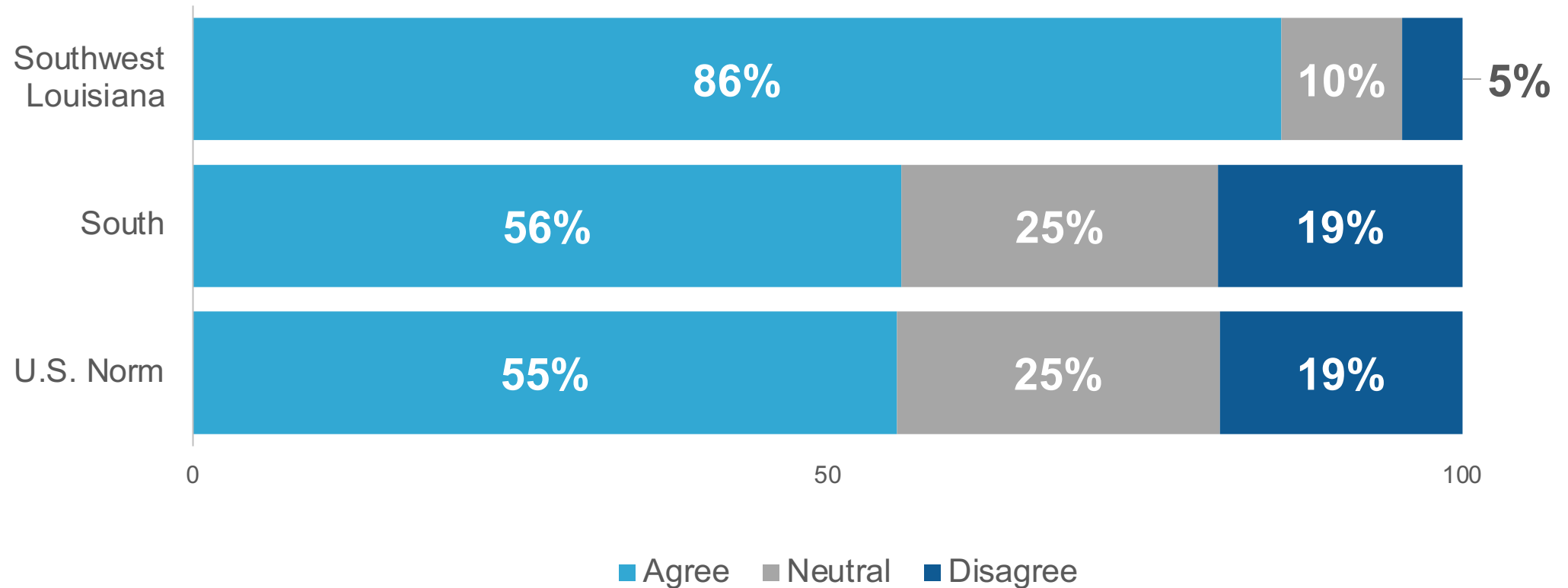
Overall Sentiment About Tourism

My local government is doing a good job balancing resident quality of life and visitor satisfaction



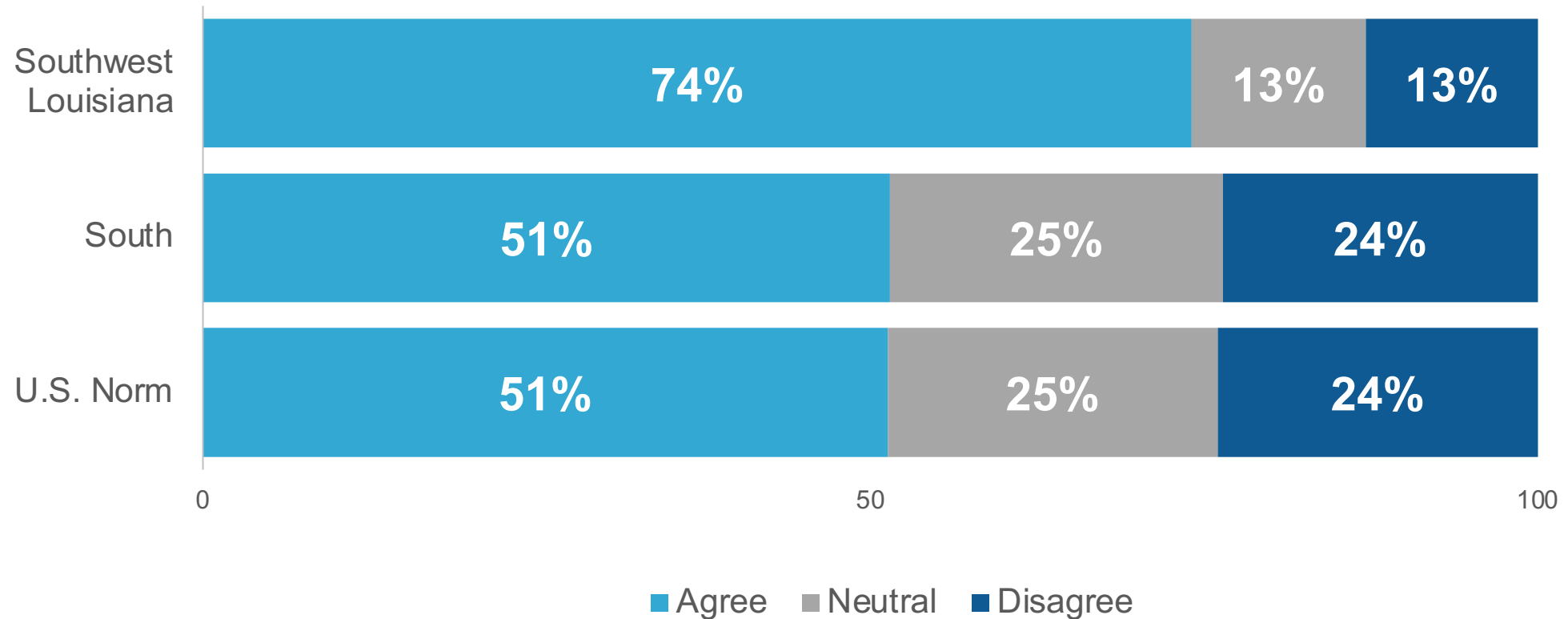
Overall Sentiment About Tourism

I care about the success of the tourism industry in my local area



Overall Sentiment About Tourism

My local area benefits from a strong tourism industry





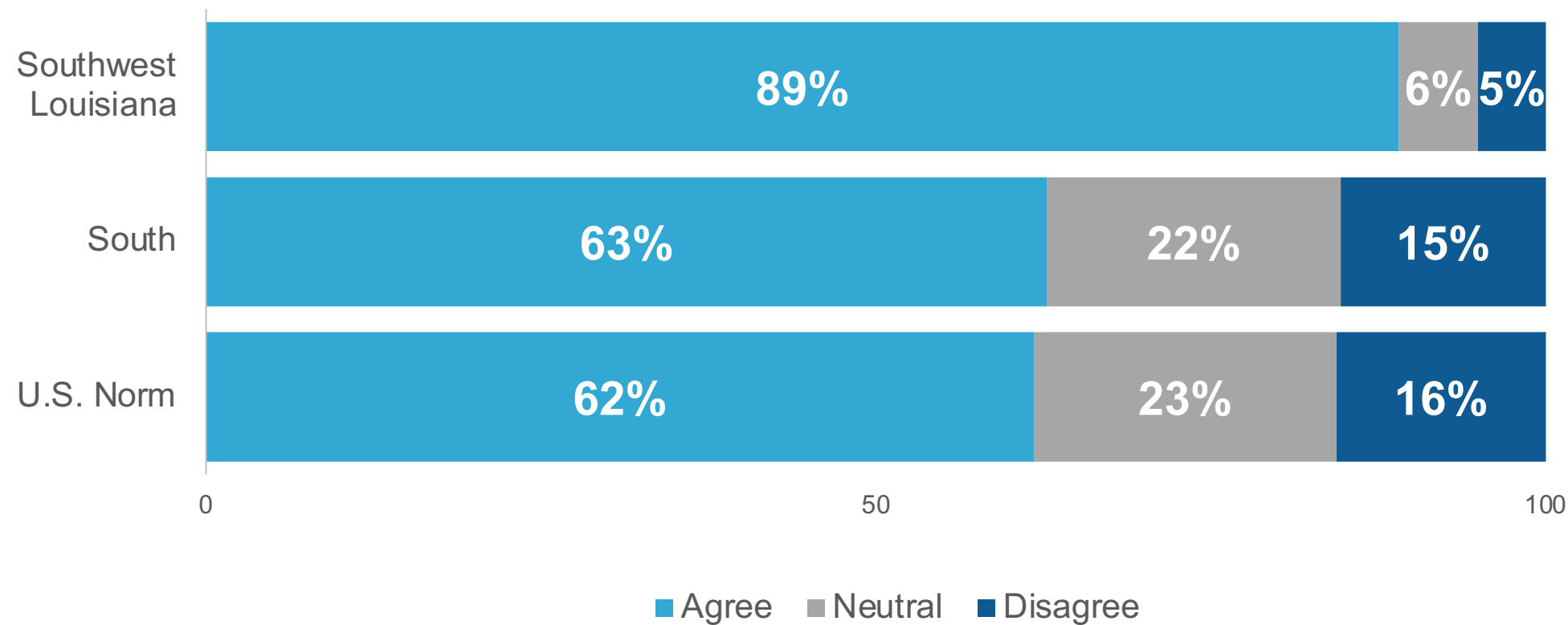
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Tourism Development and Growth

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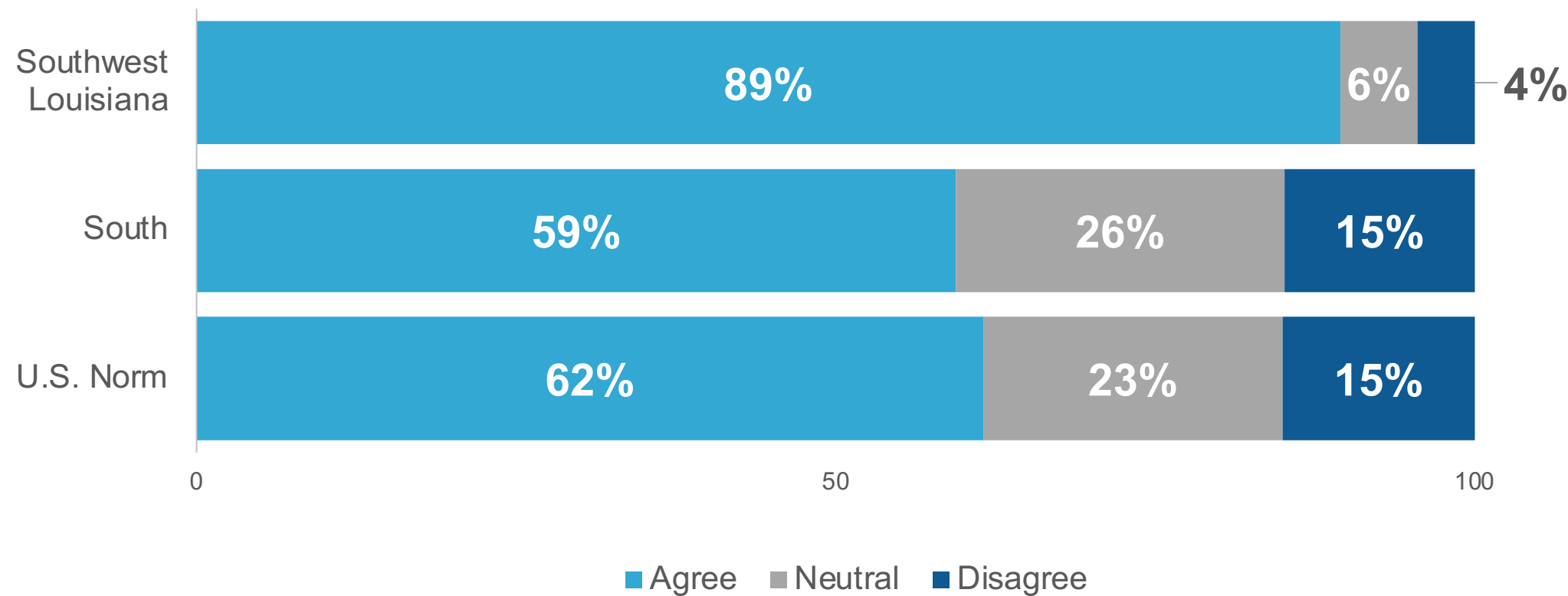
Tourism Development and Growth

I believe tourism should be encouraged here



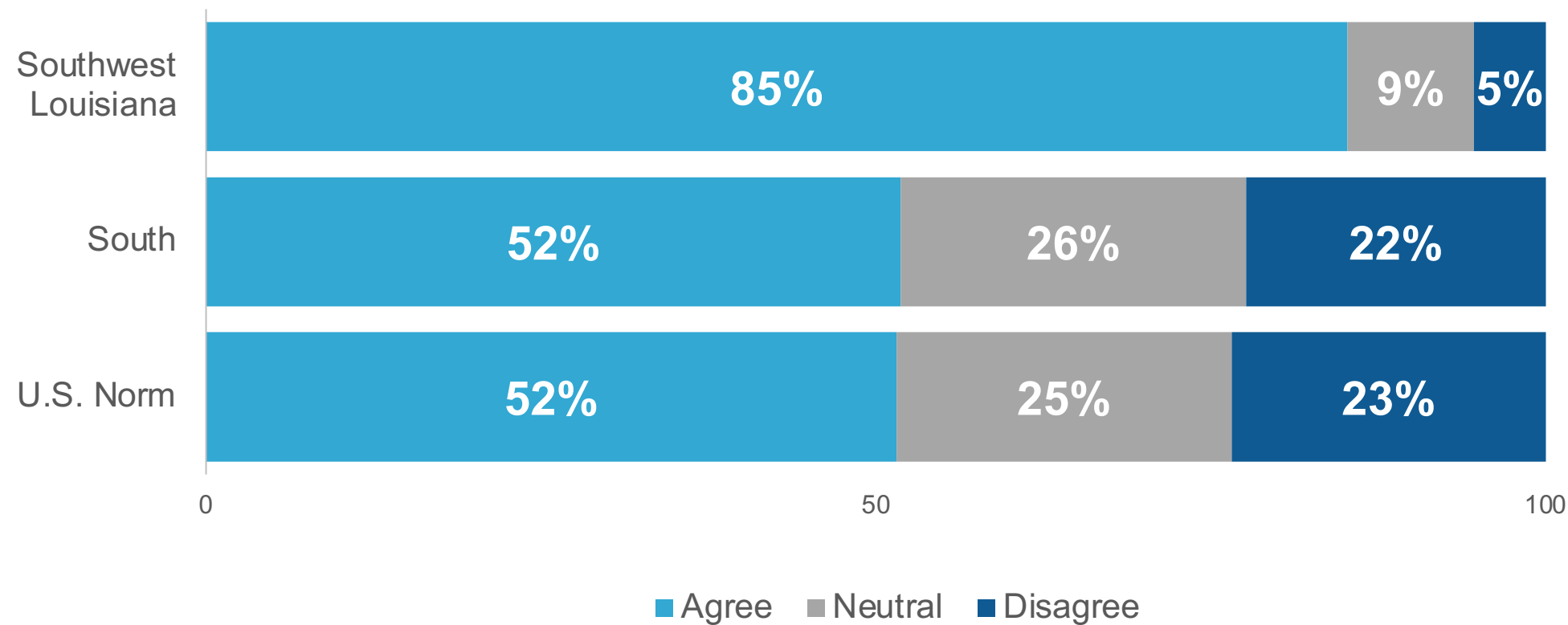
Tourism Development and Growth

I support tourism growth



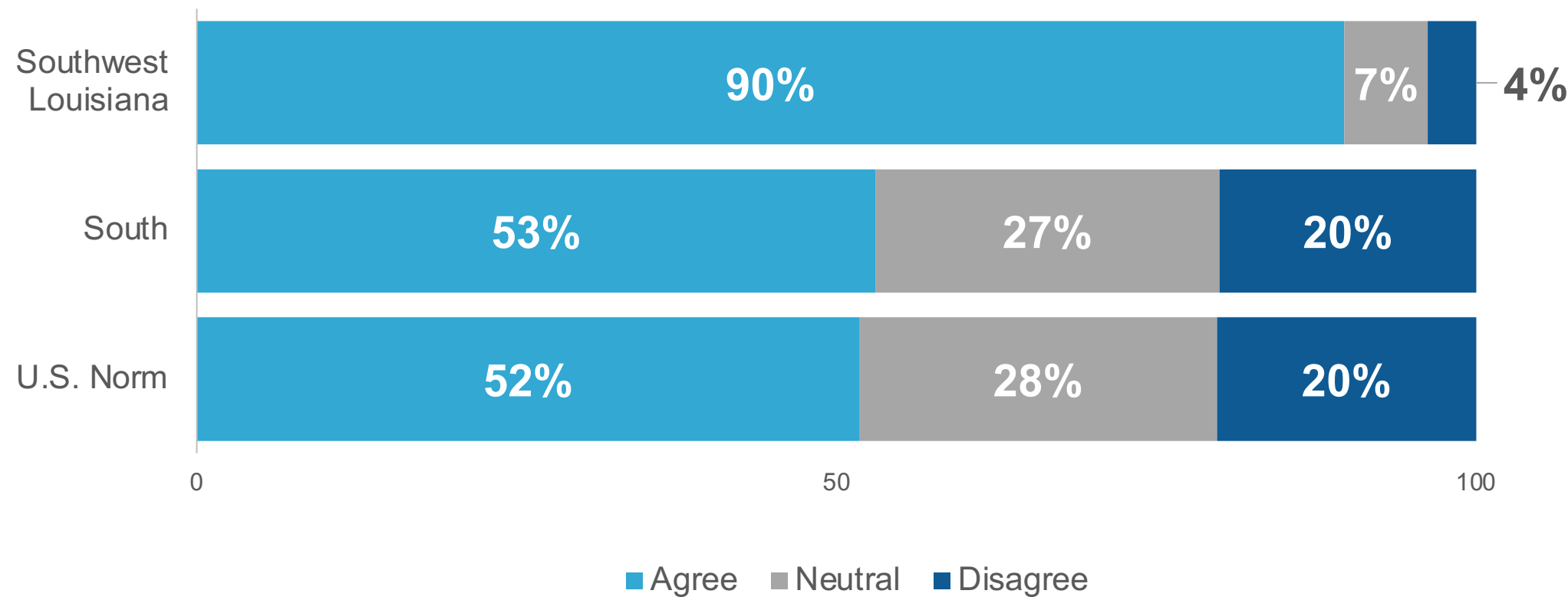
Tourism Development and Growth

I would like to see more tourists coming to our local area



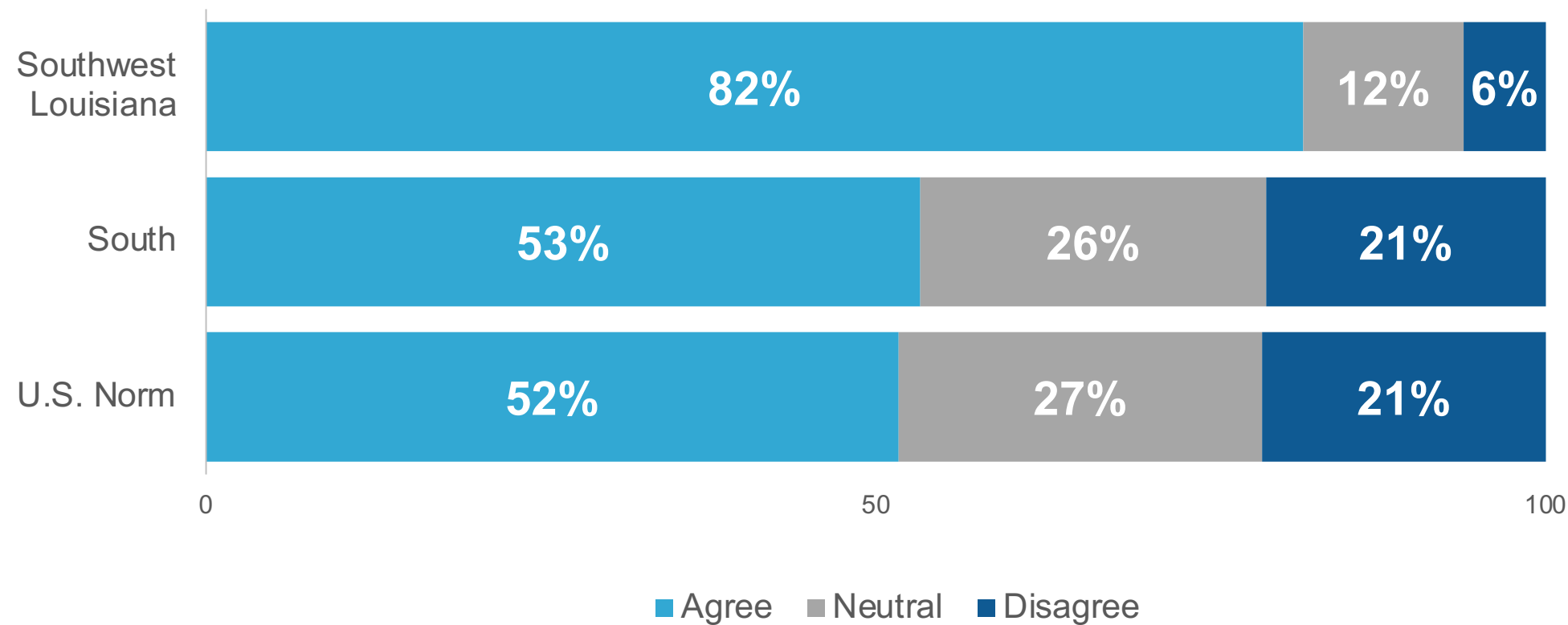
Tourism Development and Growth

We should develop/host more major events to attract tourists to our area



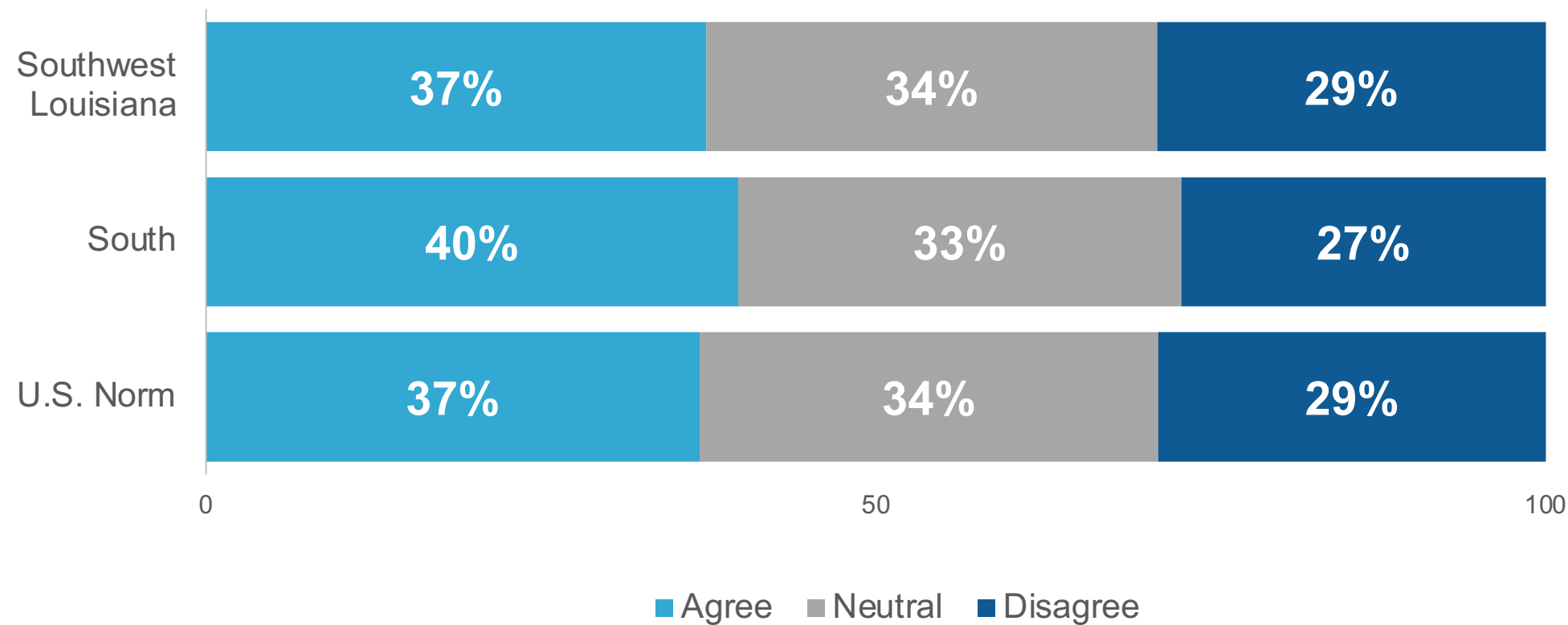
Tourism Development and Growth

I support building new tourism facilities that will attract visitors to this area



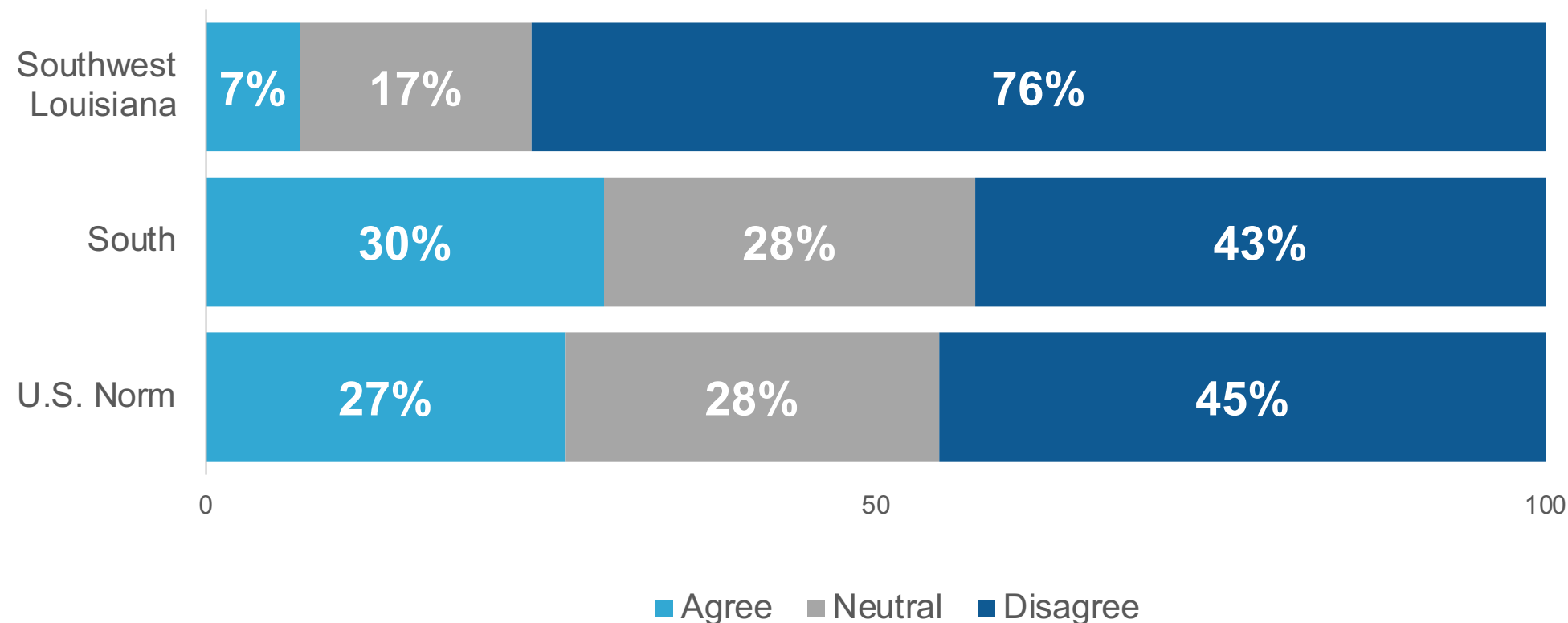
Tourism Development and Growth

My local government is doing a good job managing the pace of tourism development



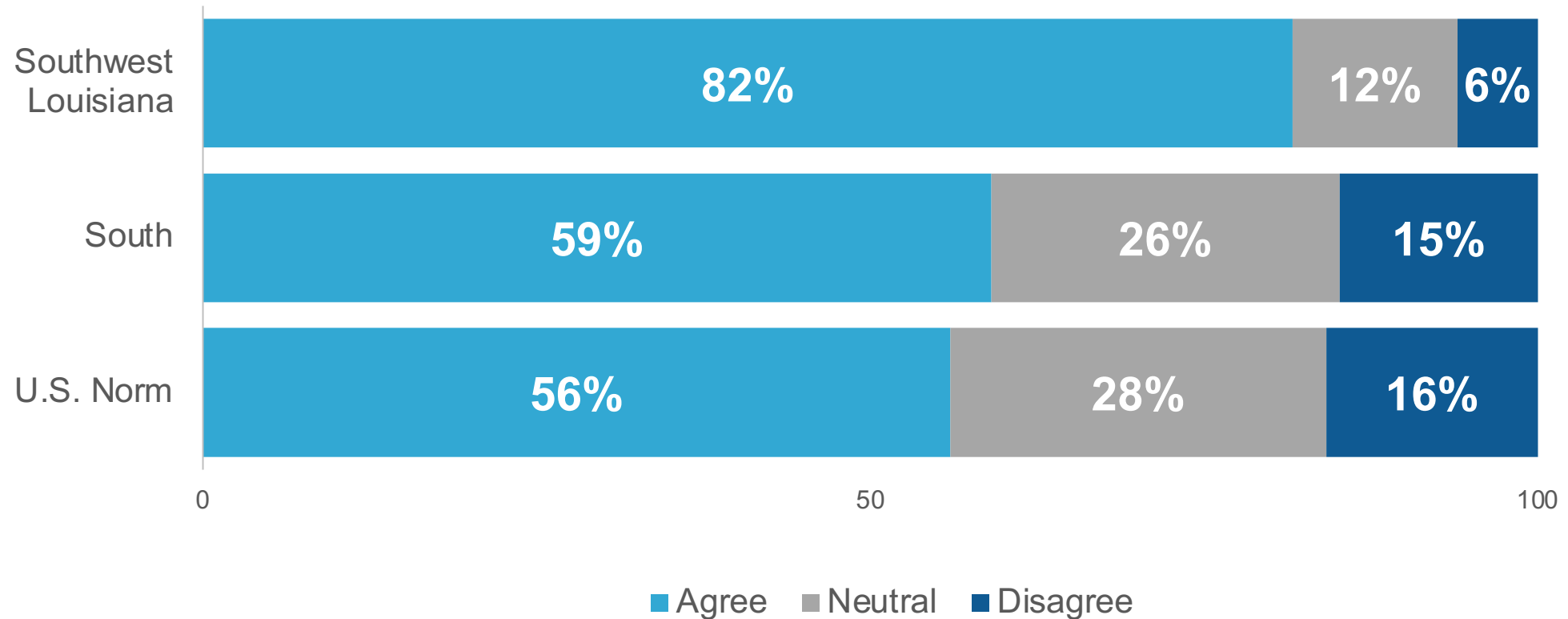
Tourism Development and Growth

Tourism development is happening too fast in this area



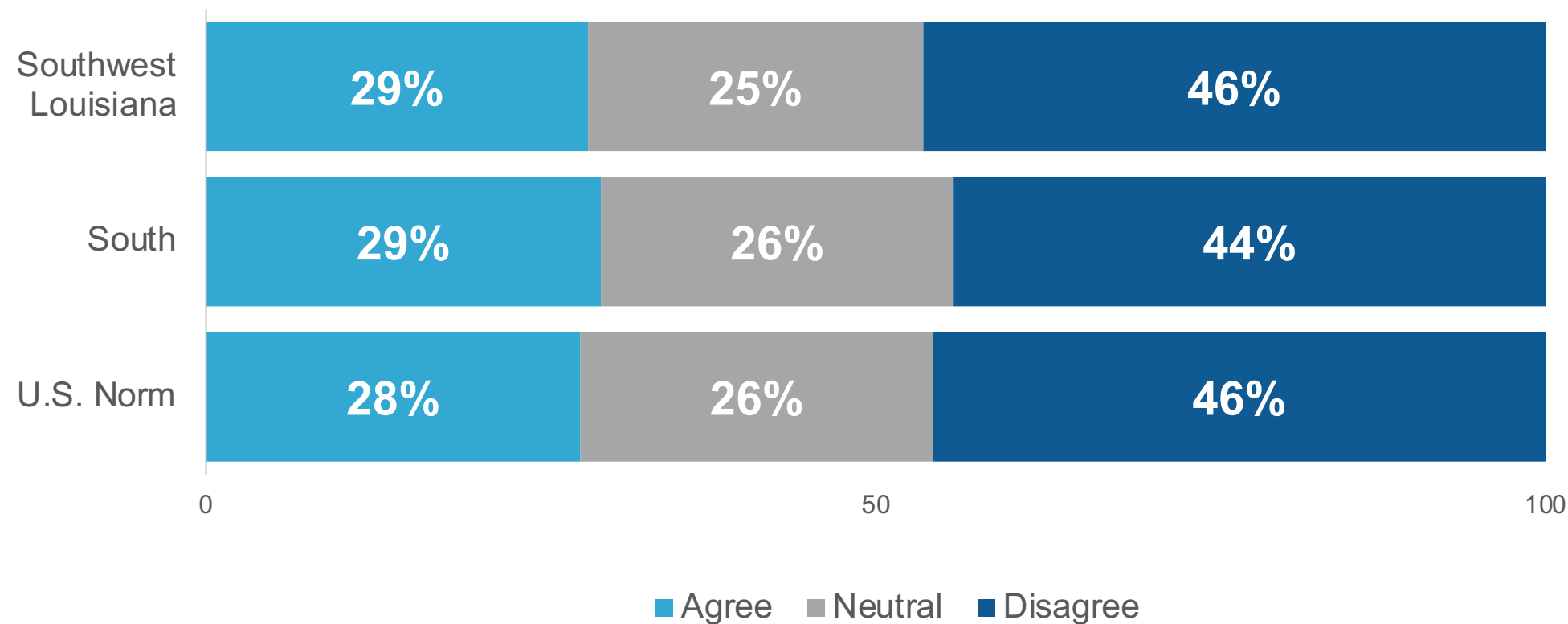
Tourism Development and Growth

We need planned and controlled tourism development



Tourism Development and Growth

Residents are consulted when major tourism development takes place in this area





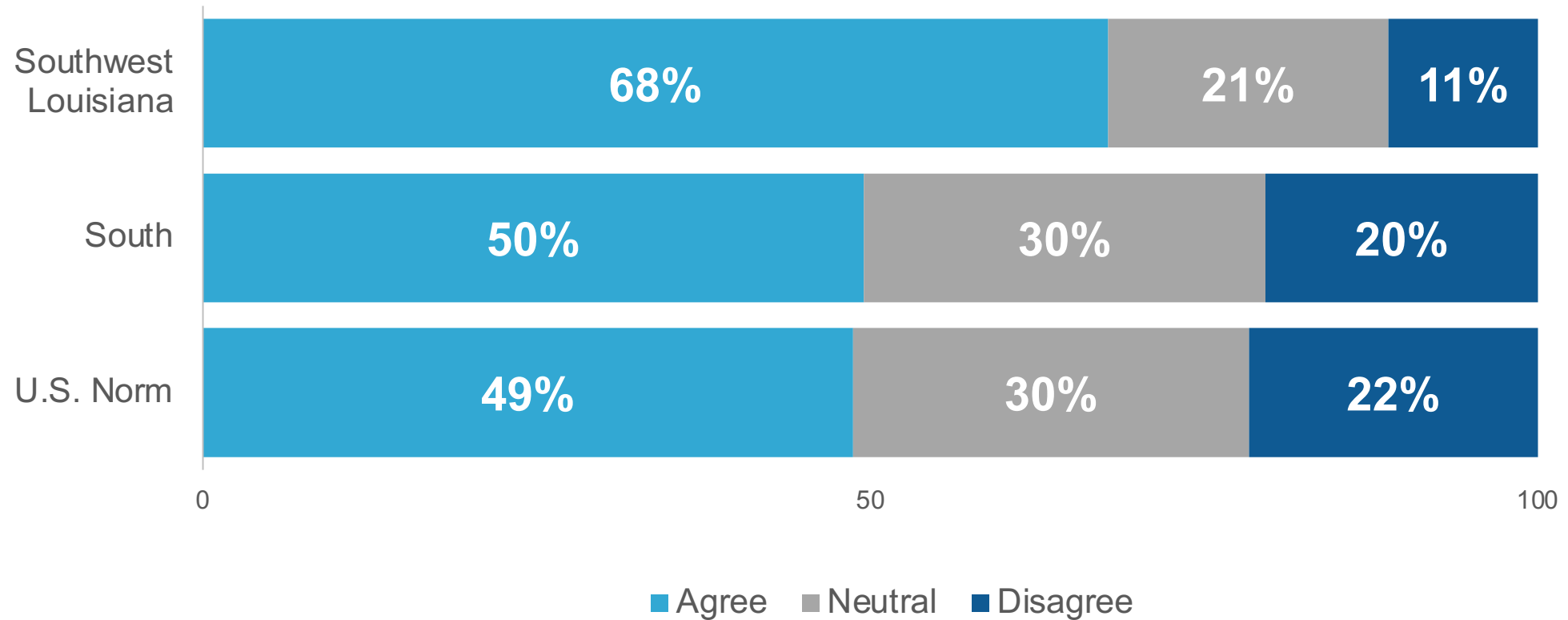
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Tourism Promotion

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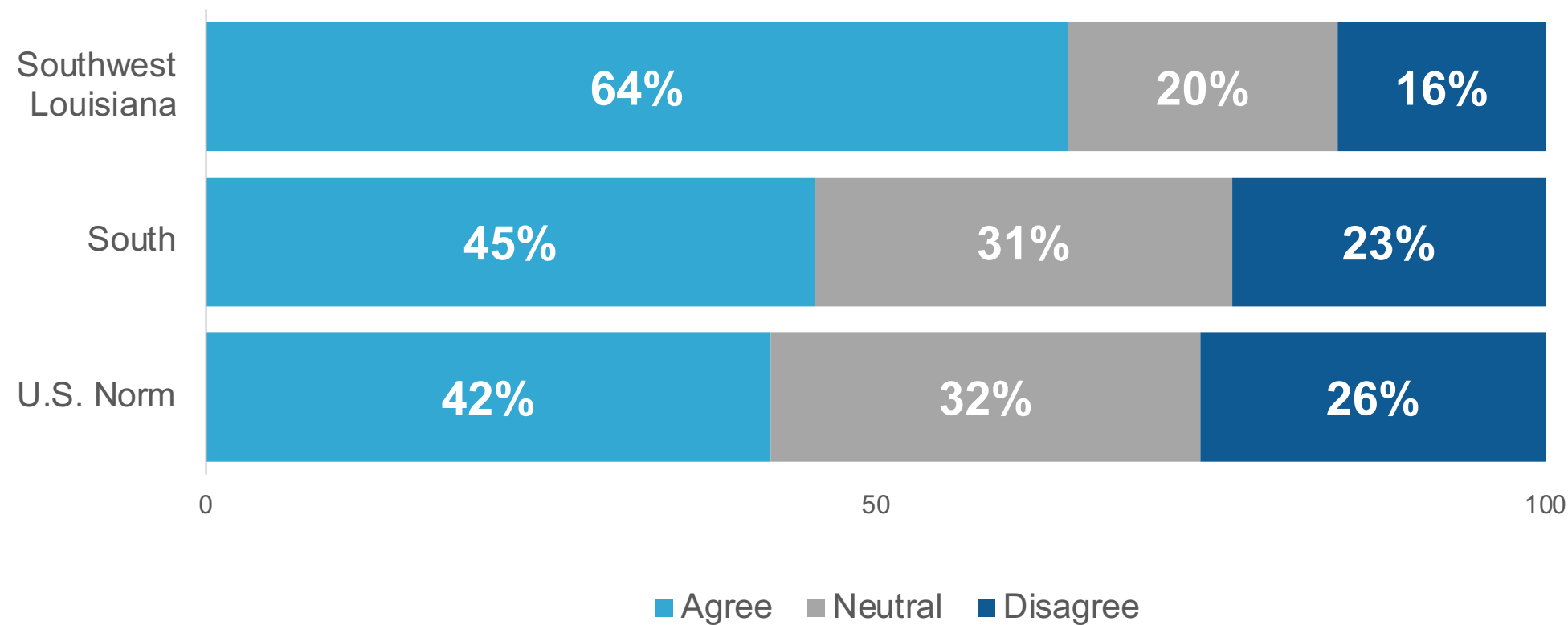
Tourism Promotion

I like the way local tourism advertising represents my home



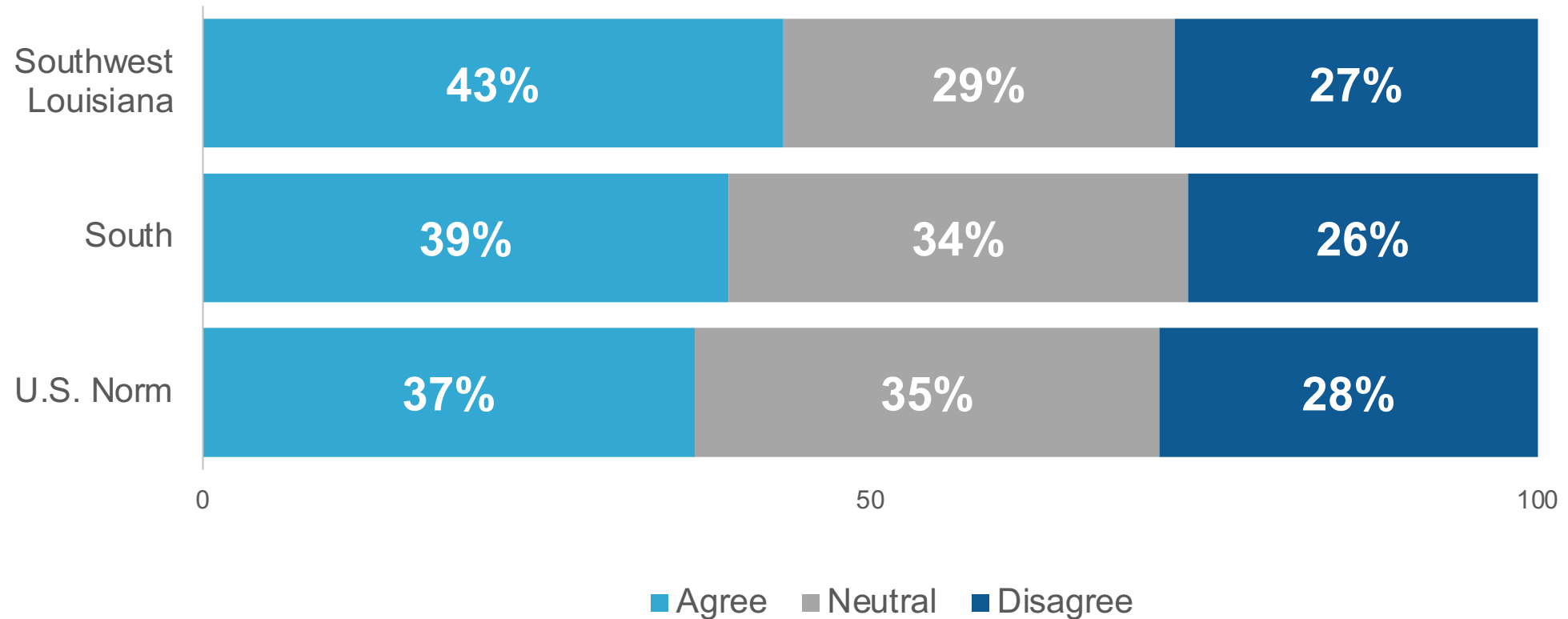
Tourism Promotion

My local government should support/help fund the promotion of tourism



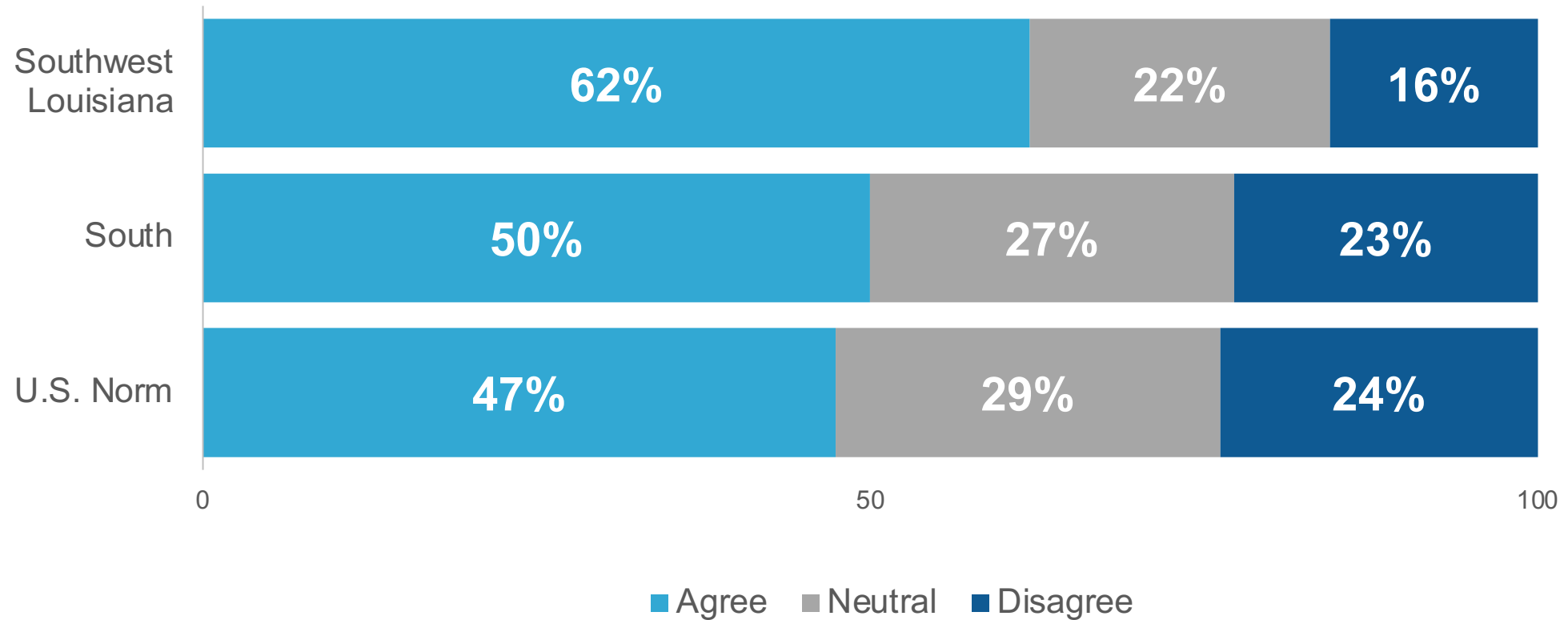
Tourism Promotion

My local government is doing a good job at promoting tourism to this area



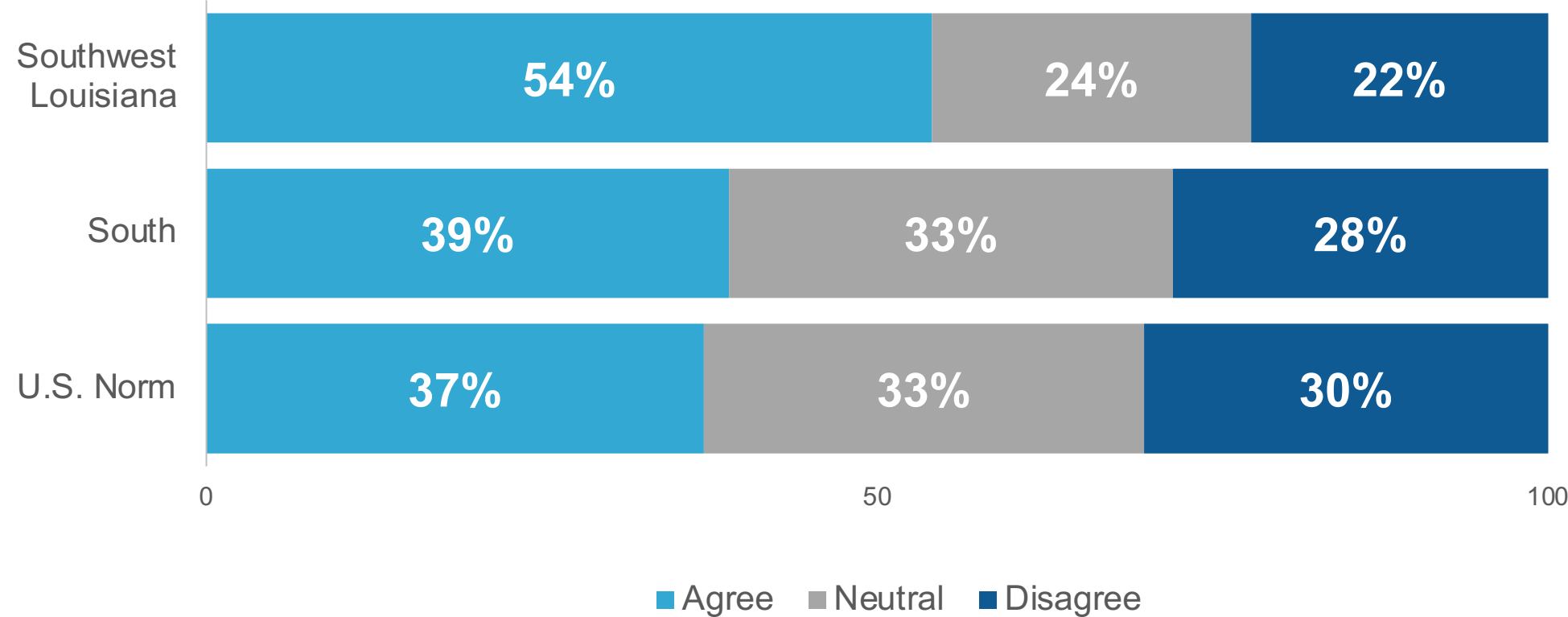
Tourism Promotion

Tourism marketing reflects the diversity in my local area



Tourism Promotion

I support using public funds to partially fund tourism marketing efforts



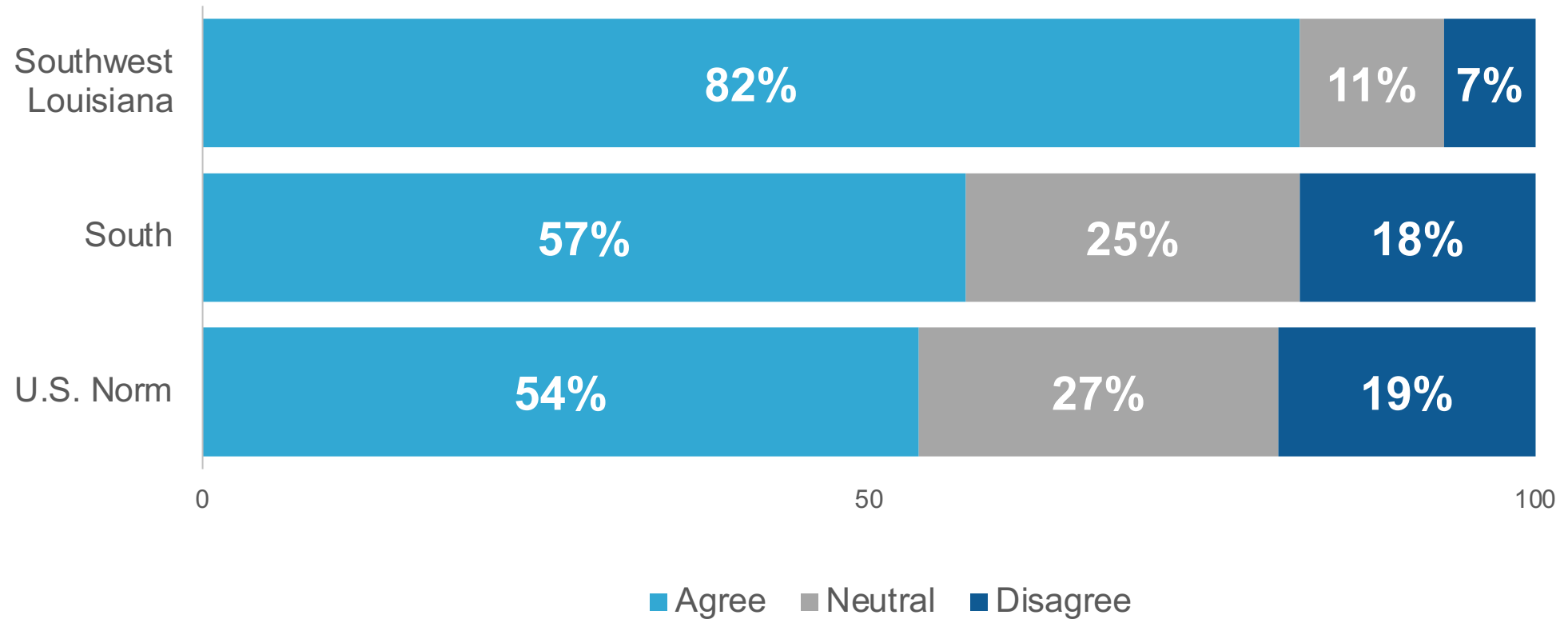


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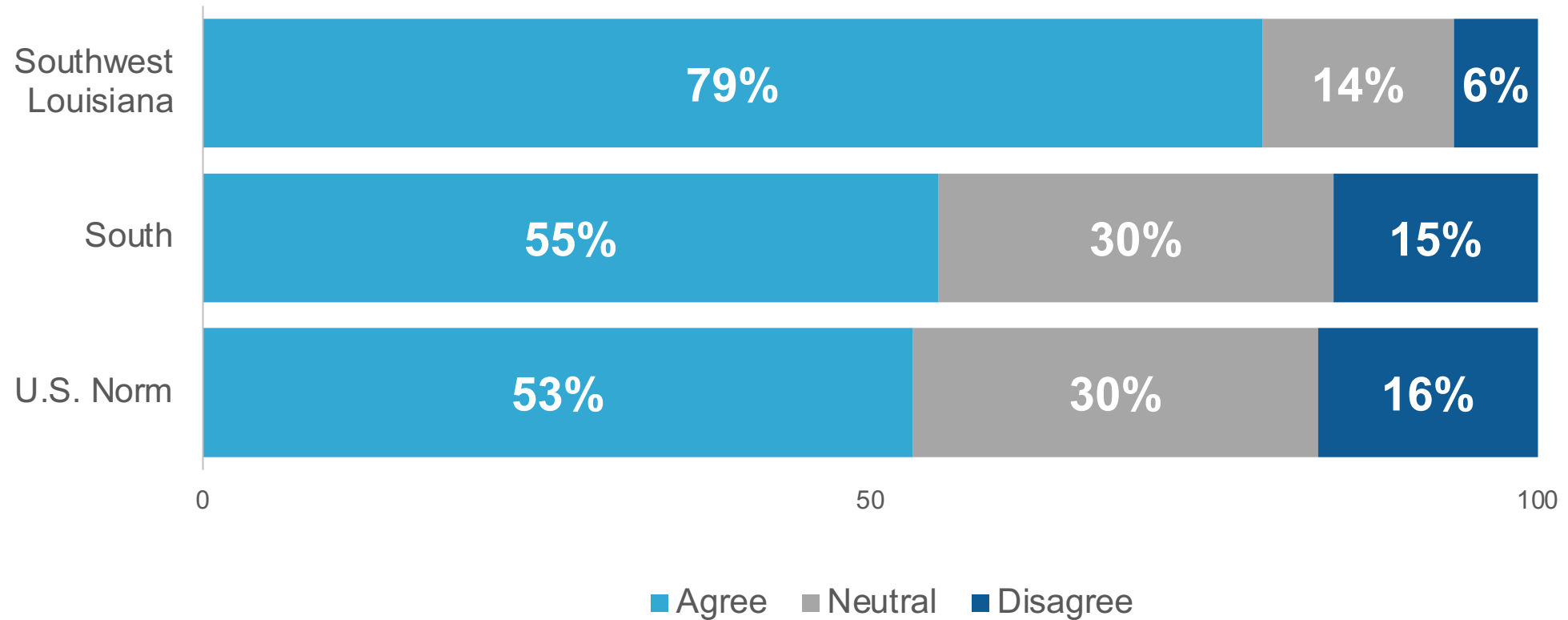
Economy

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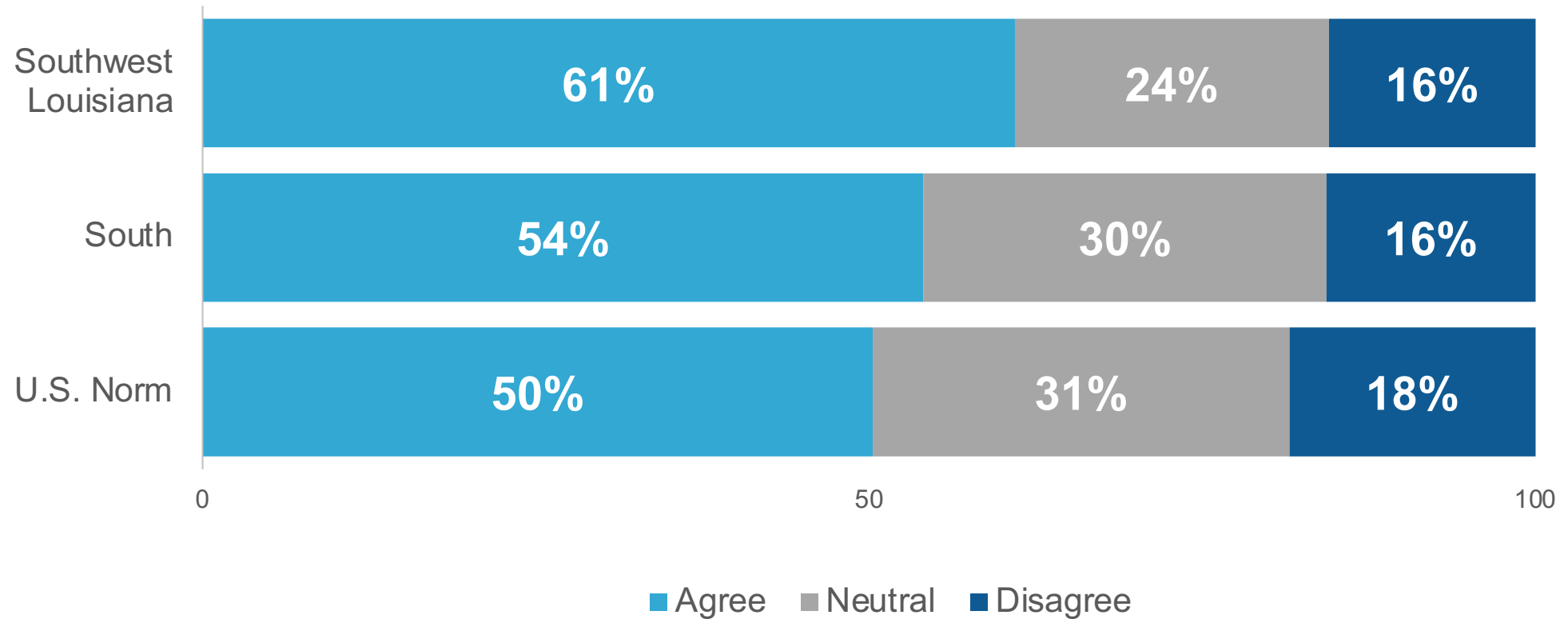
Tourism is important to my local economy



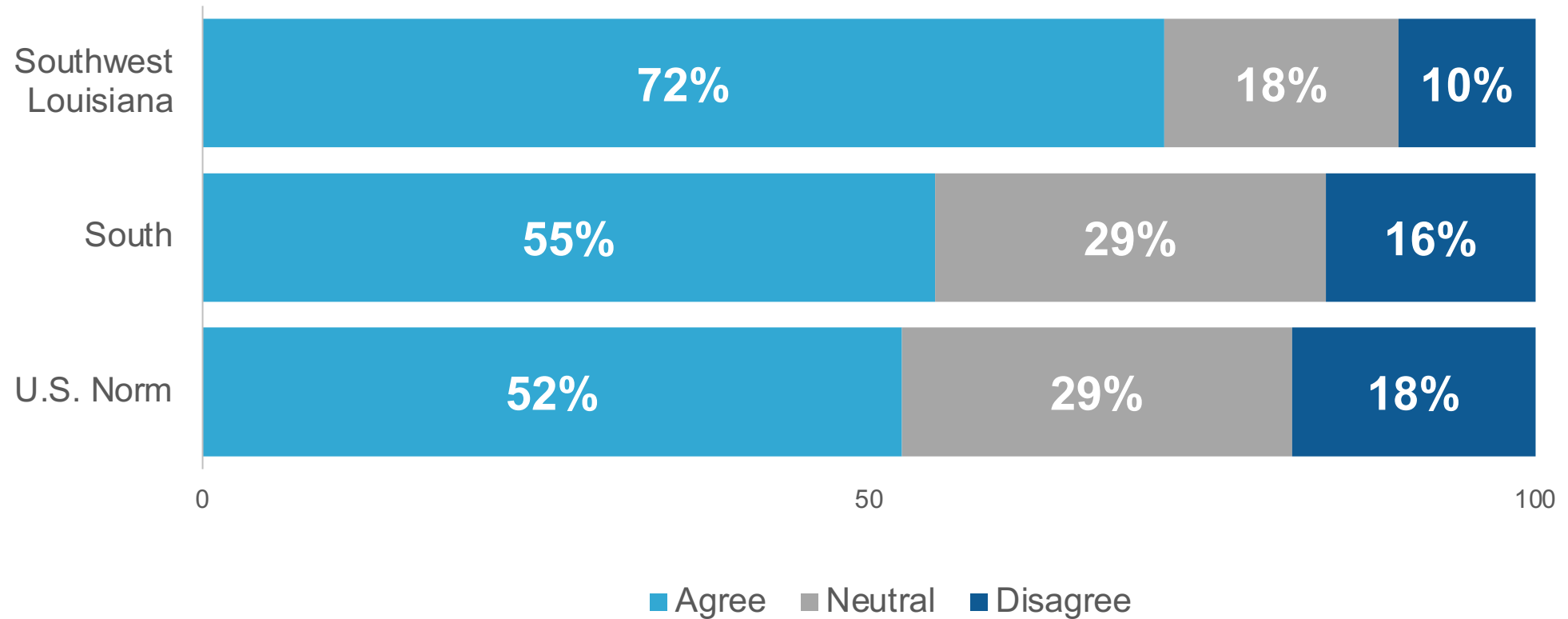
Tourism encourages investment in our local economy



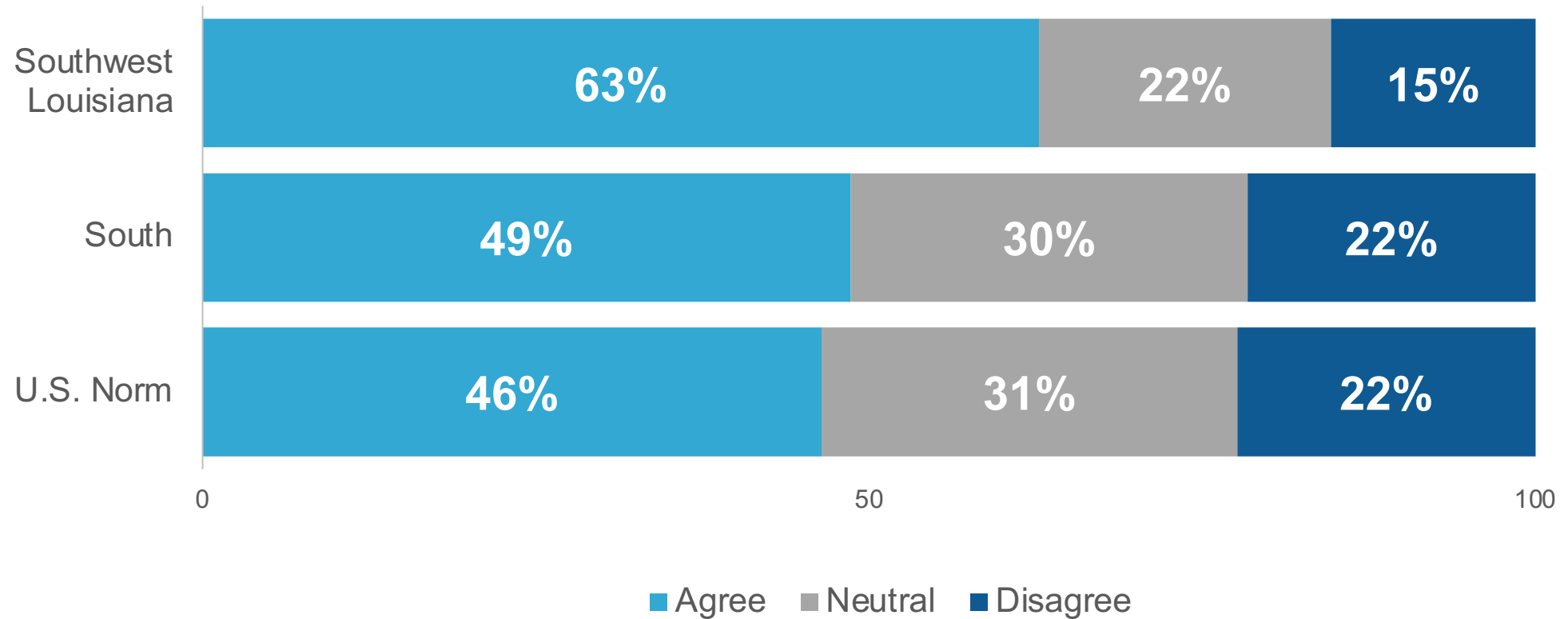
Tourism attracts new residents to our local area



Tourism attracts new businesses to our local area

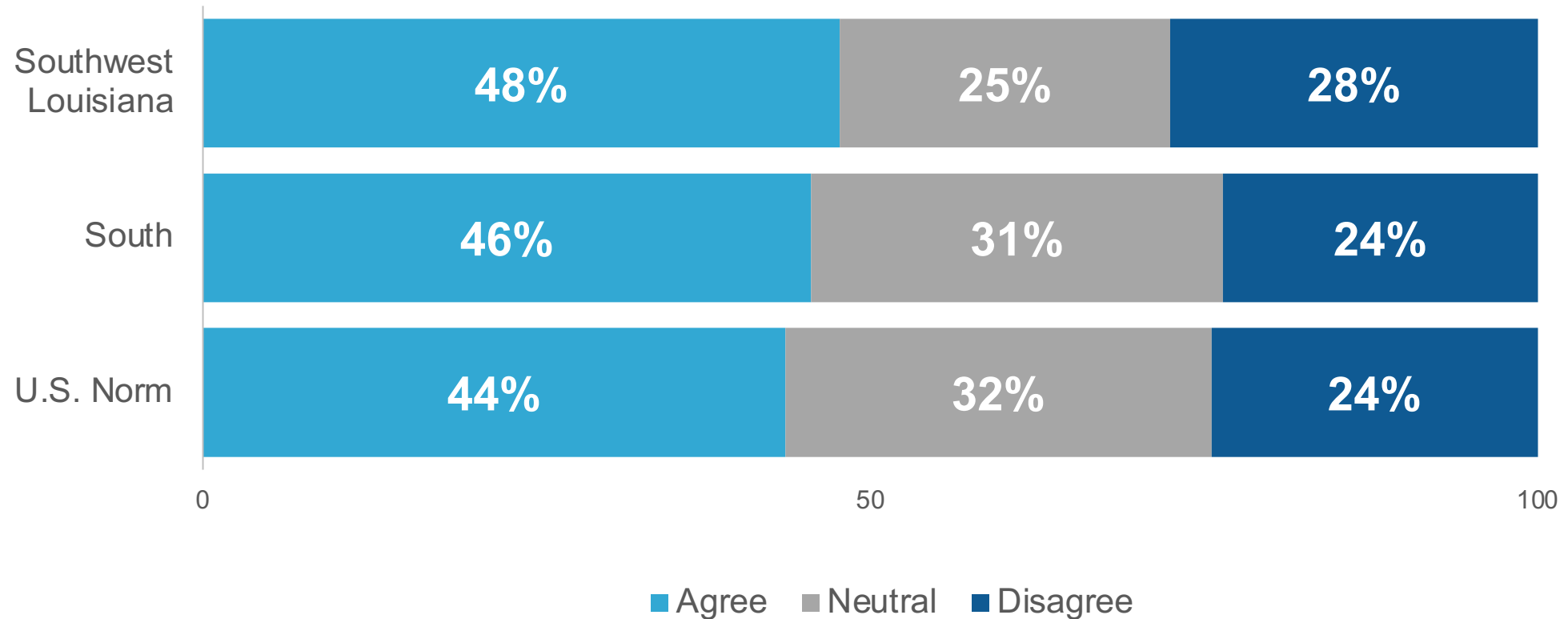


Tourism helps to recruit workforce to our local area

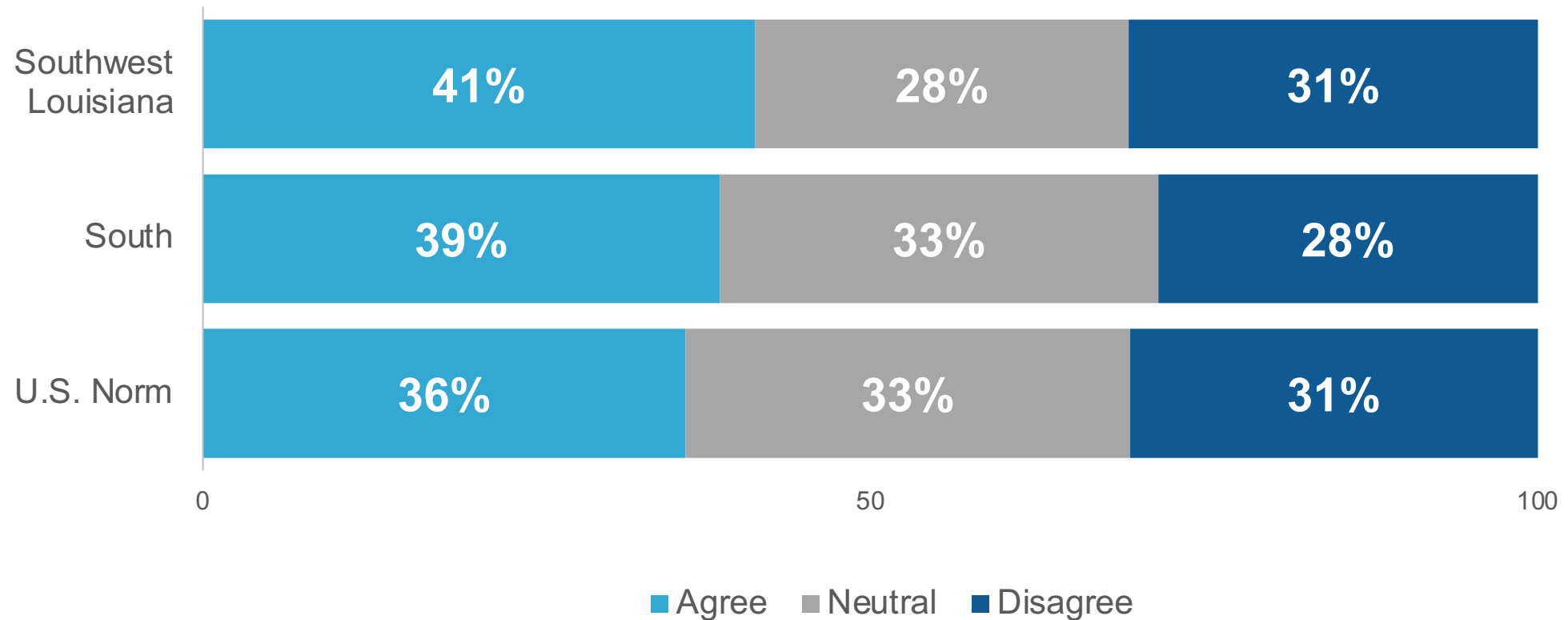


Economy

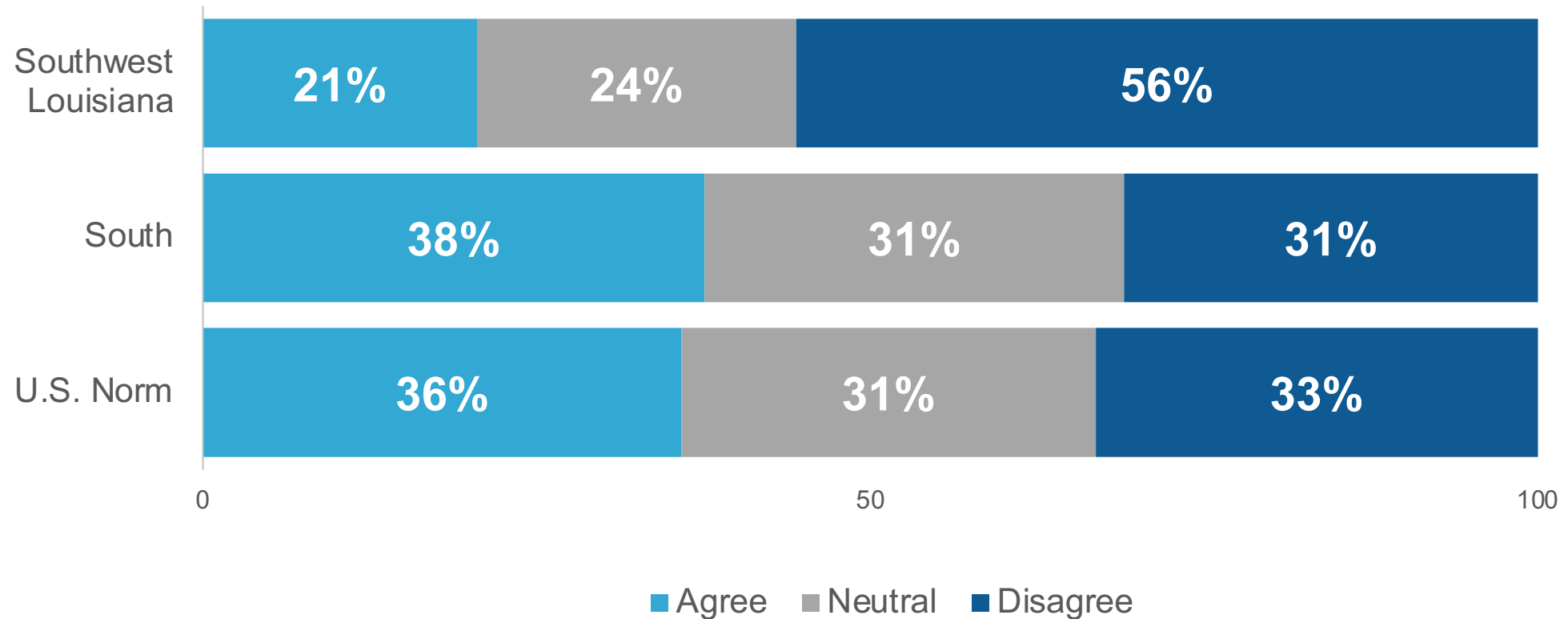
Without the tax revenues we get from tourists, we would have to pay higher state and local taxes for government programs and services



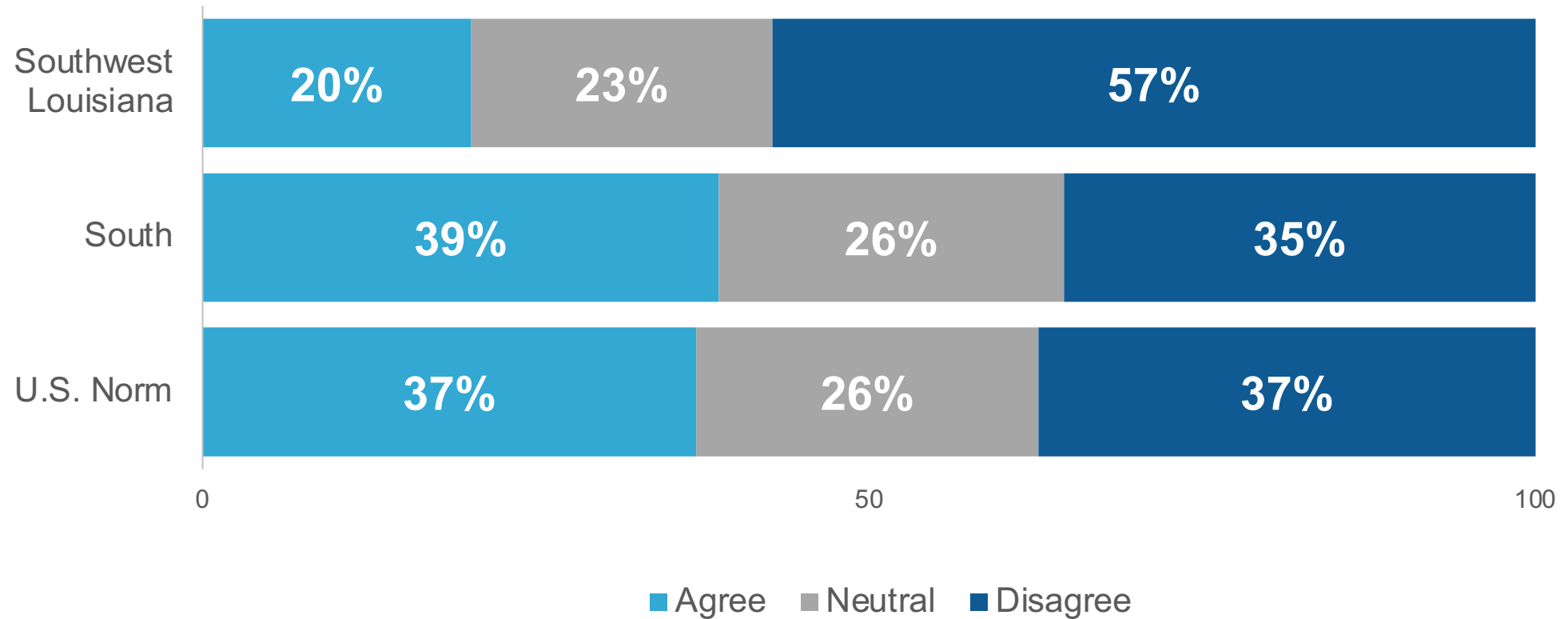
The sales tax that tourists pay on their purchases adequately compensates for the wear and tear they create on our infrastructure



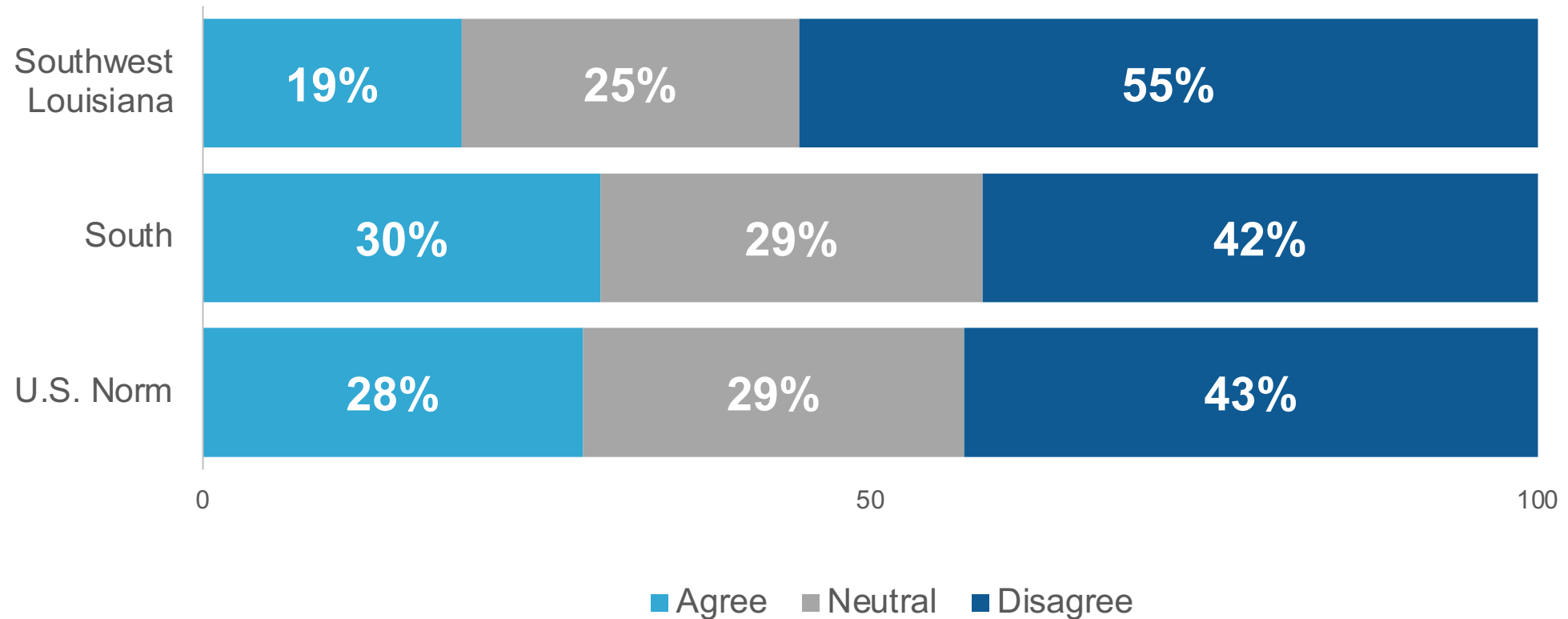
The growth in tourism is causing prices to rise, making things less affordable for residents



Housing is becoming less affordable in this area due to tourism



My household standard of living is higher because of the money tourists spend here





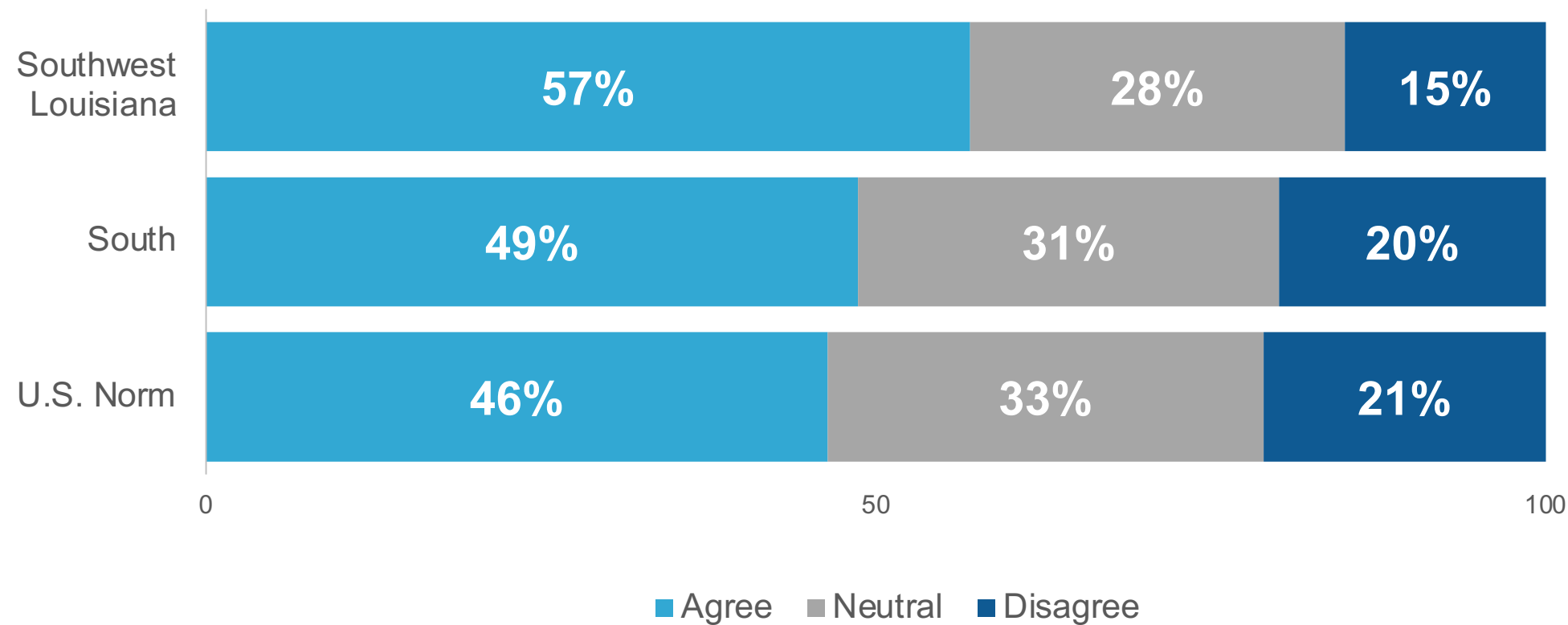
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Tourism Employment

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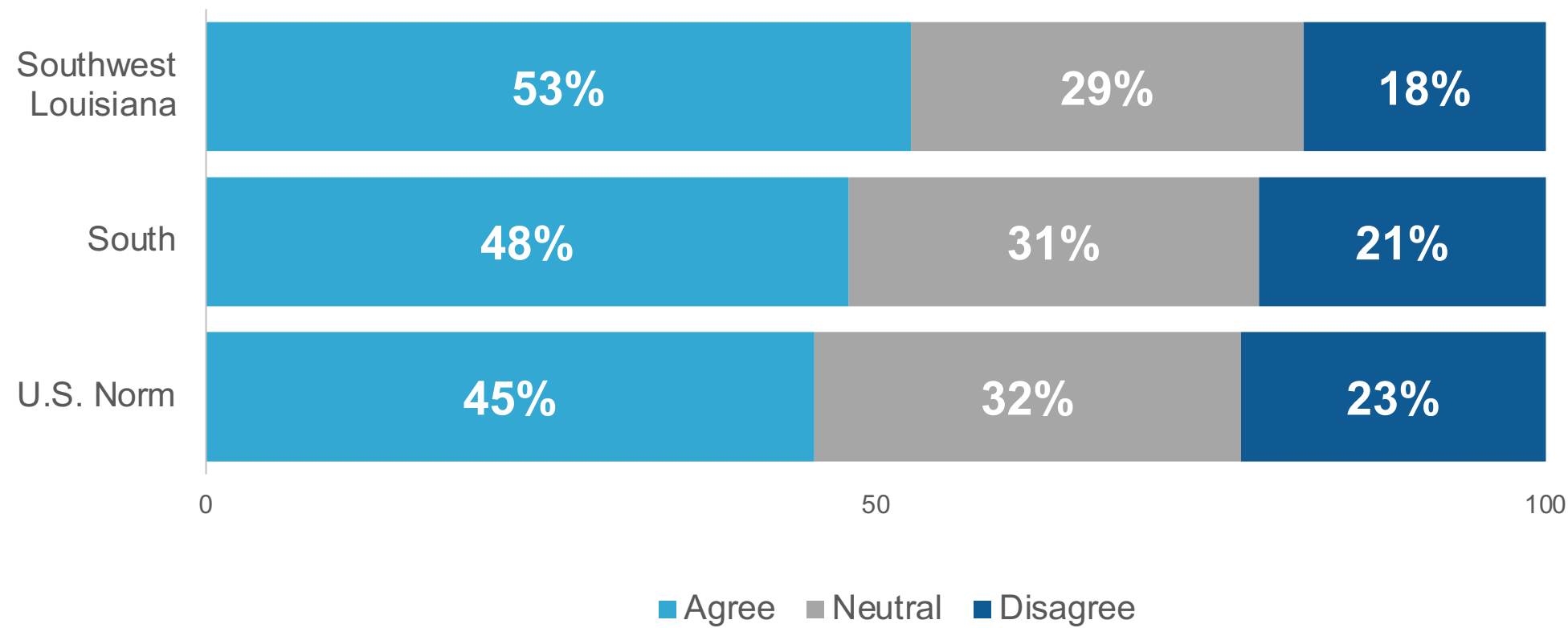
Tourism Employment

There are opportunities for career advancement in the tourism industry



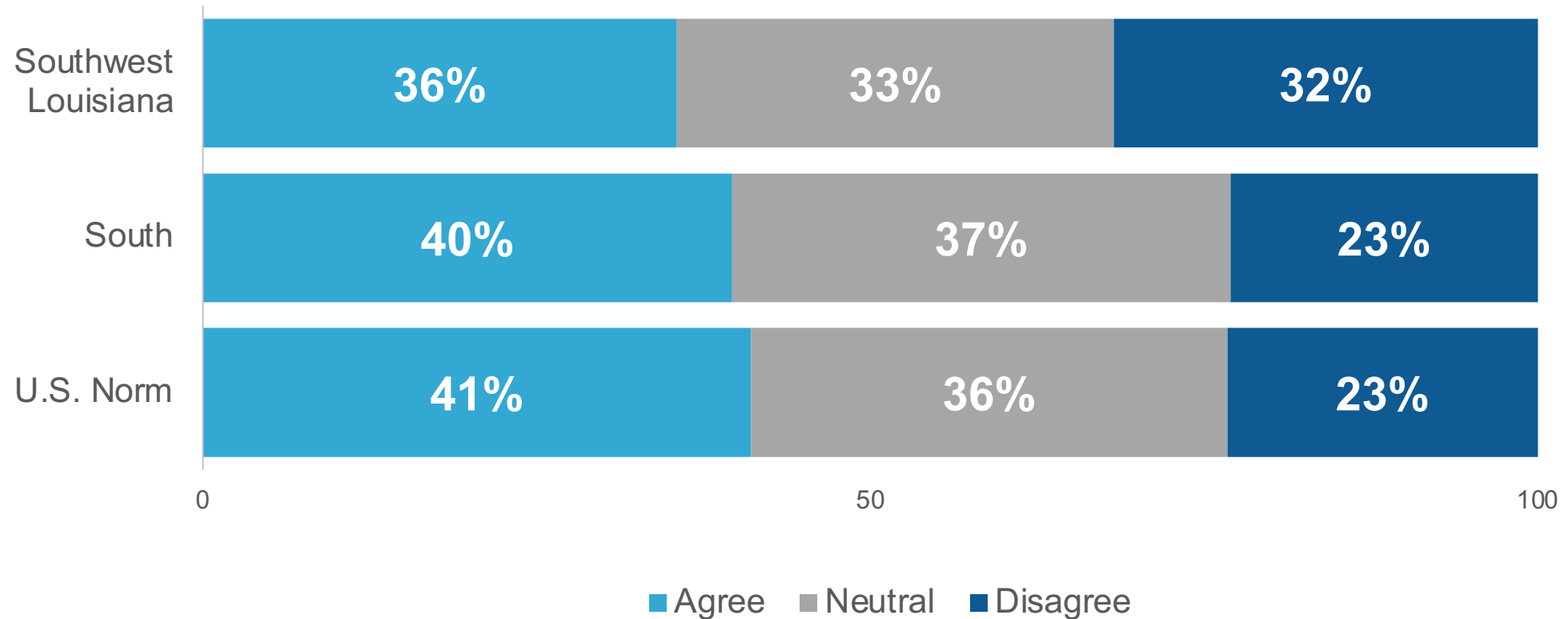
Tourism Employment

There are jobs in the tourism industry with desirable pay and benefits



Tourism Employment

Most jobs in the tourism industry are low-paying and seasonal





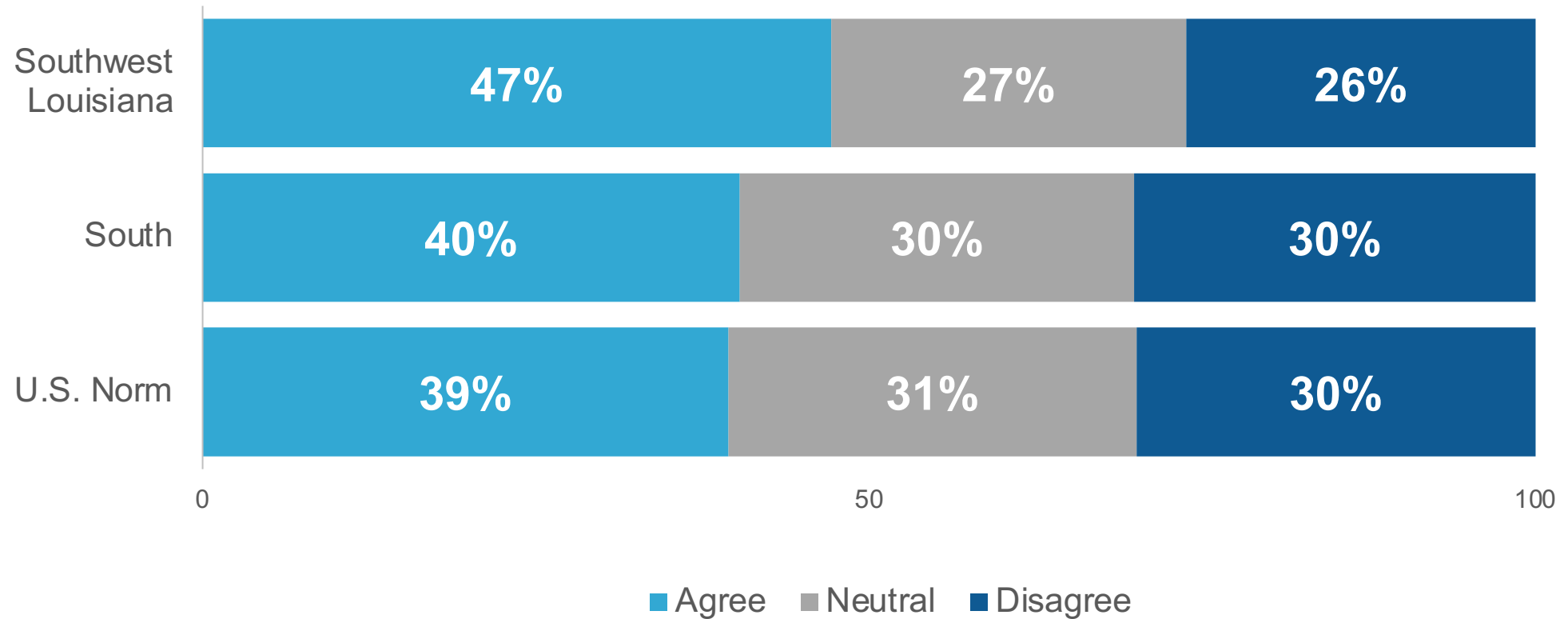
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Quality of Life

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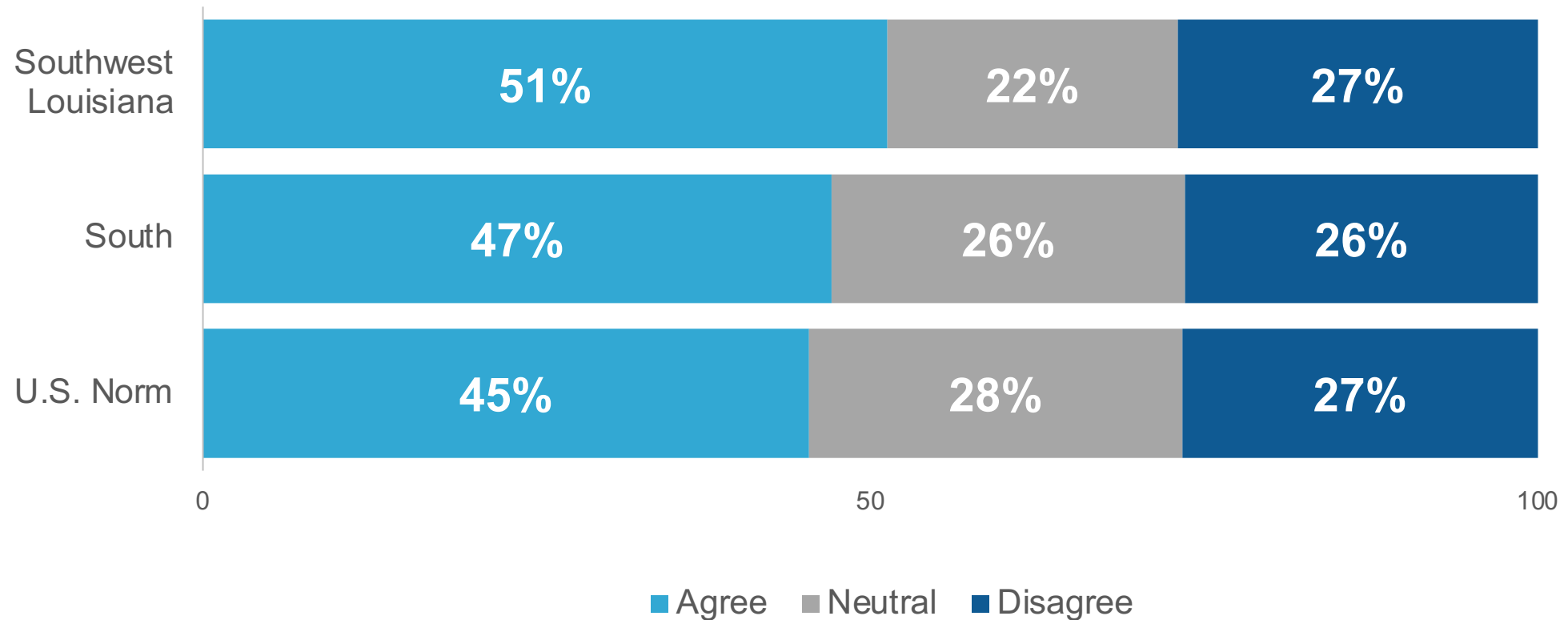
Quality of Life

Quality of life in my local area has improved because of increased tourism

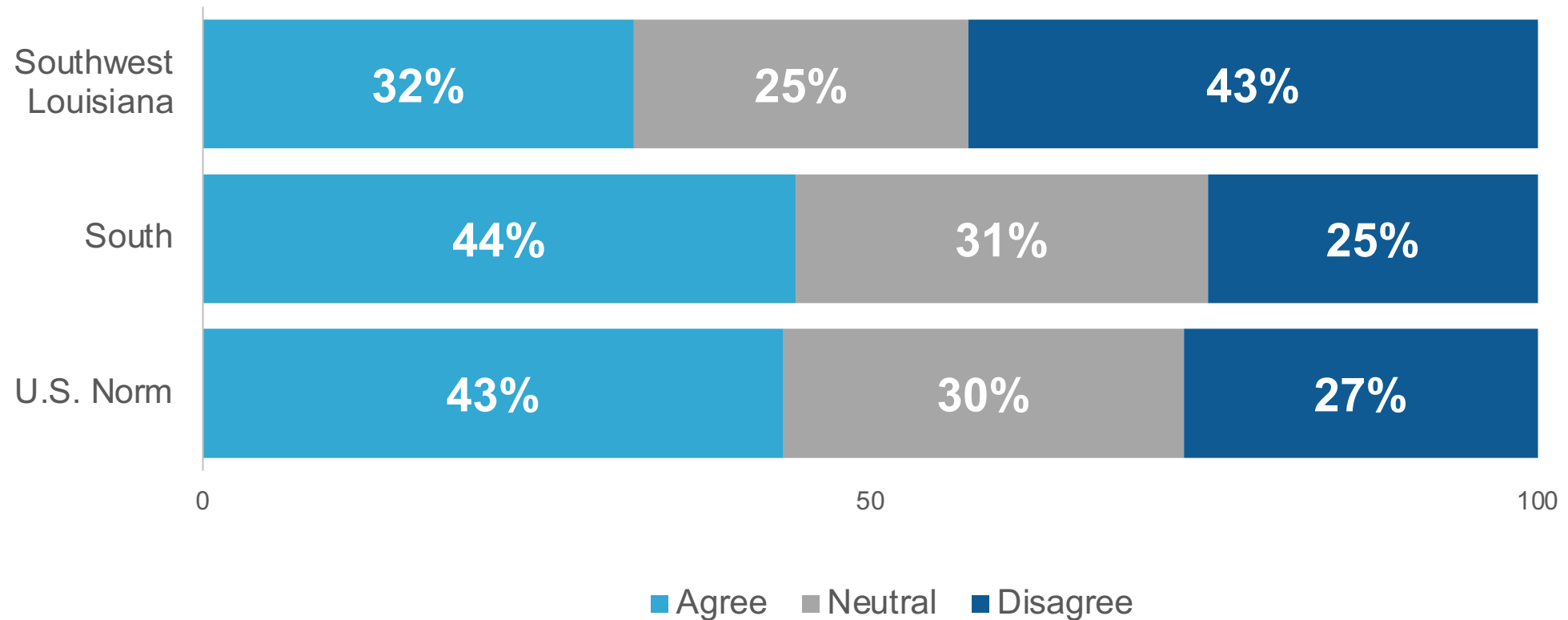


Quality of Life

I have more recreational opportunities (places to go and things to do) because of tourism in this area

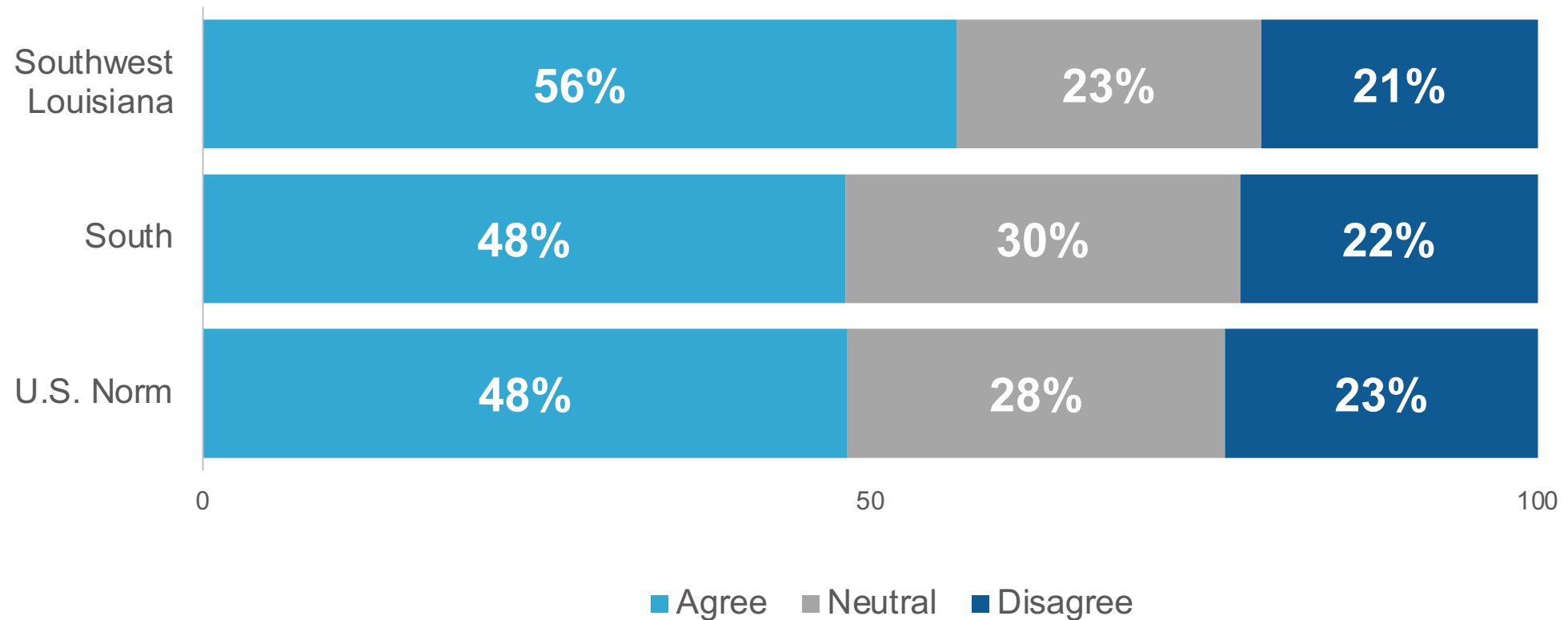


Shopping opportunities are better here as a result of tourism



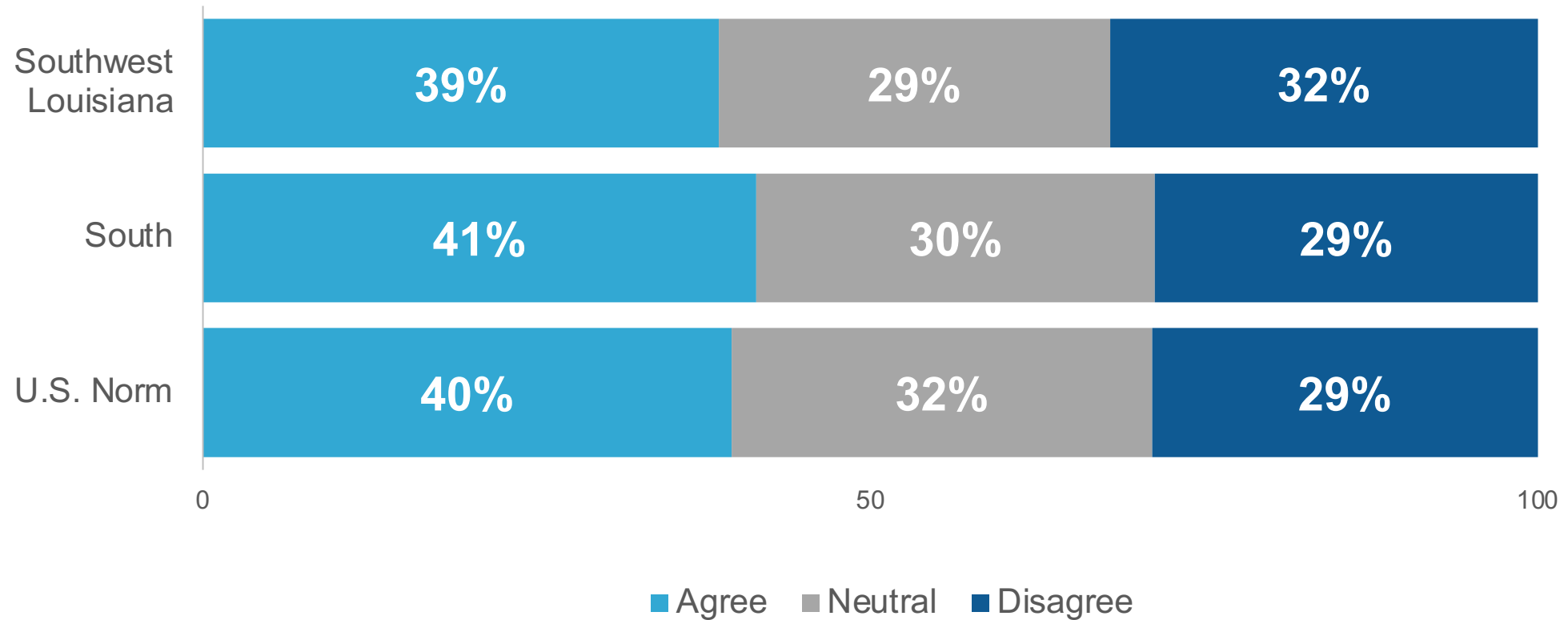
Quality of Life

Dining opportunities are better here as a result of tourism



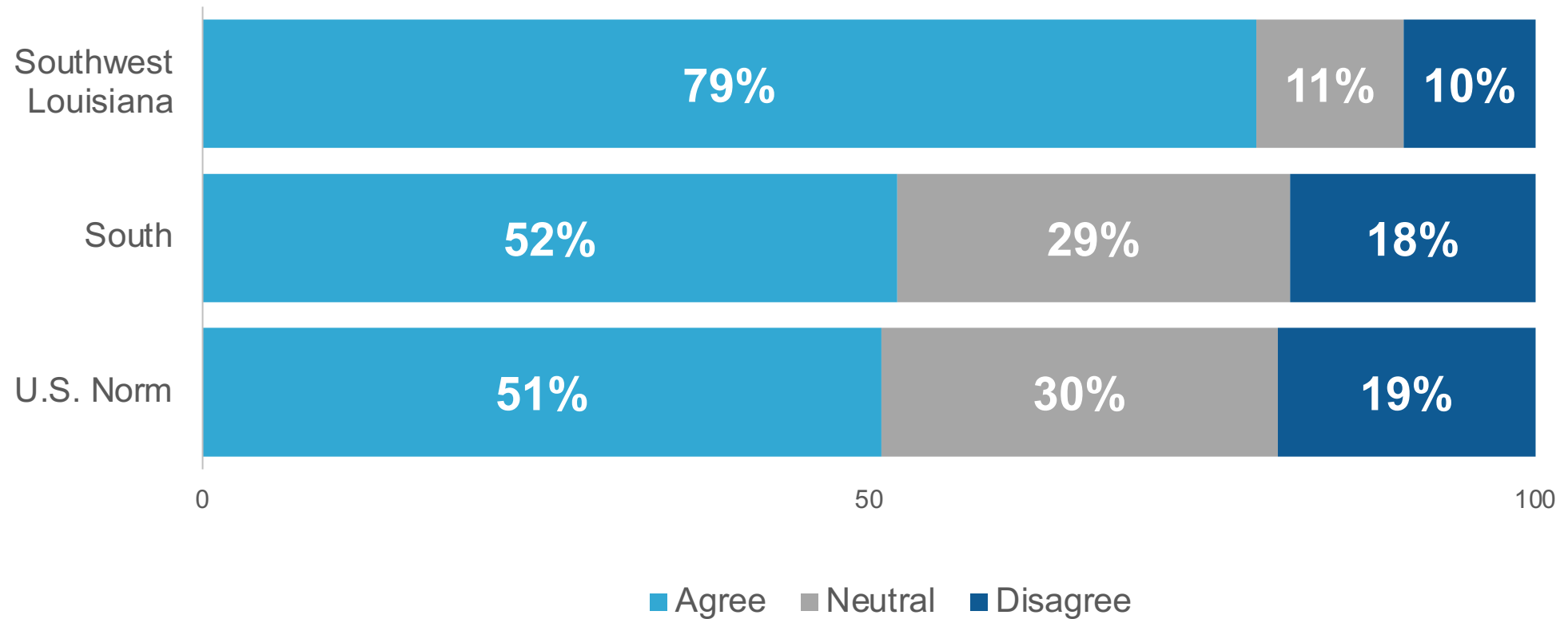
Quality of Life

The quality of public services has improved due to more tourism here



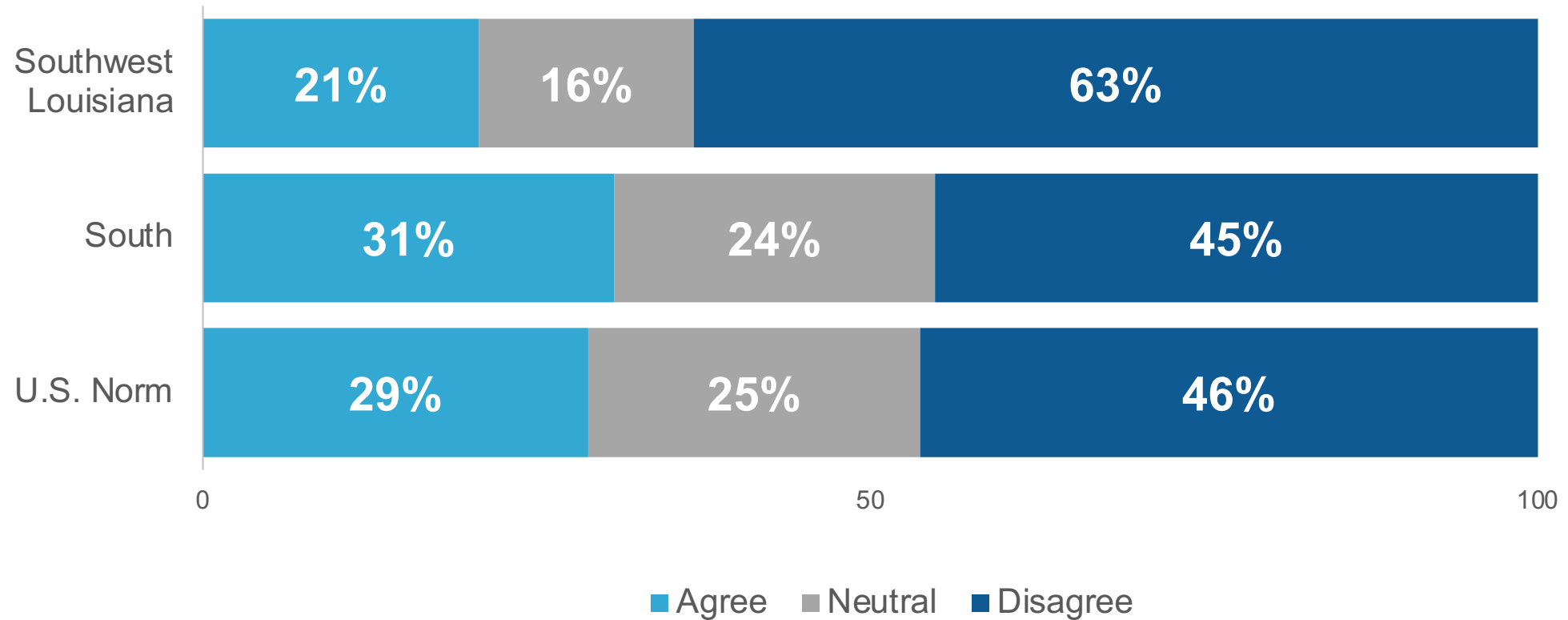
Quality of Life

Tourism supports the preservation of local culture and protects the community's authenticity



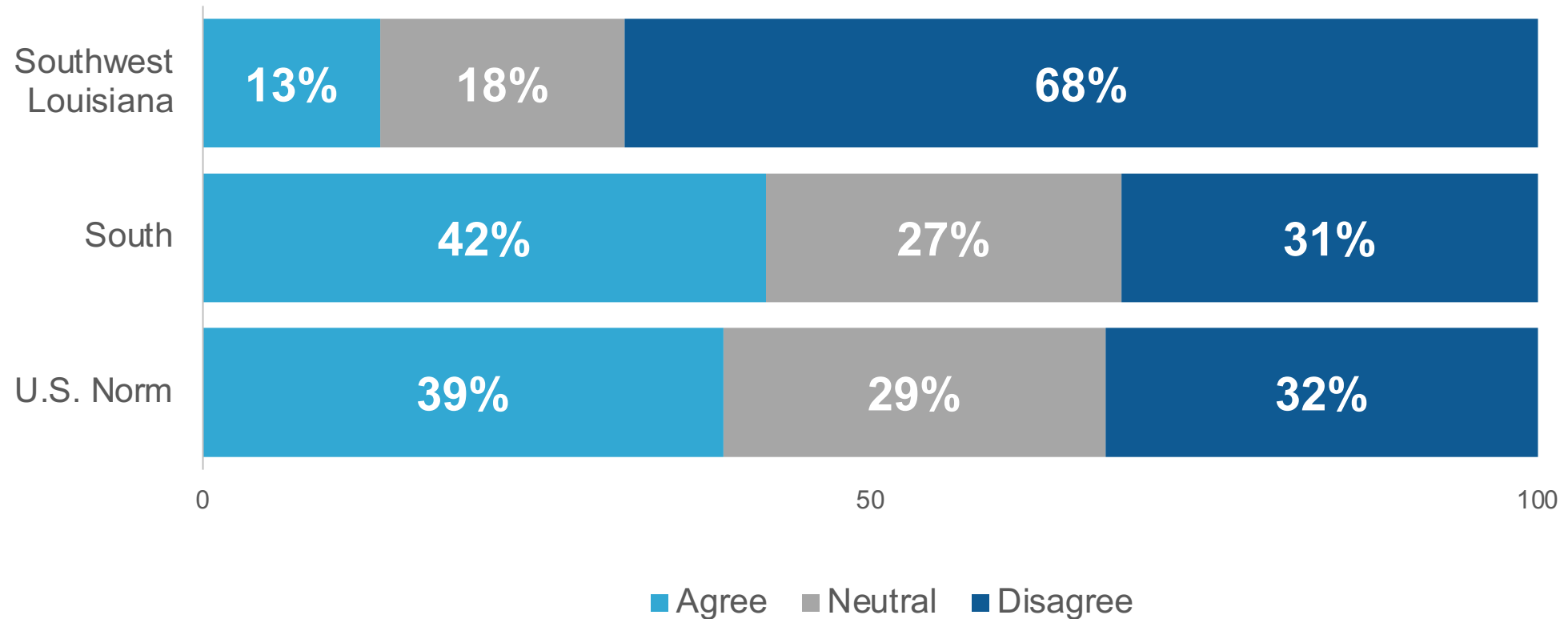
Quality of Life

Uncontrolled tourism growth is jeopardizing our heritage and culture



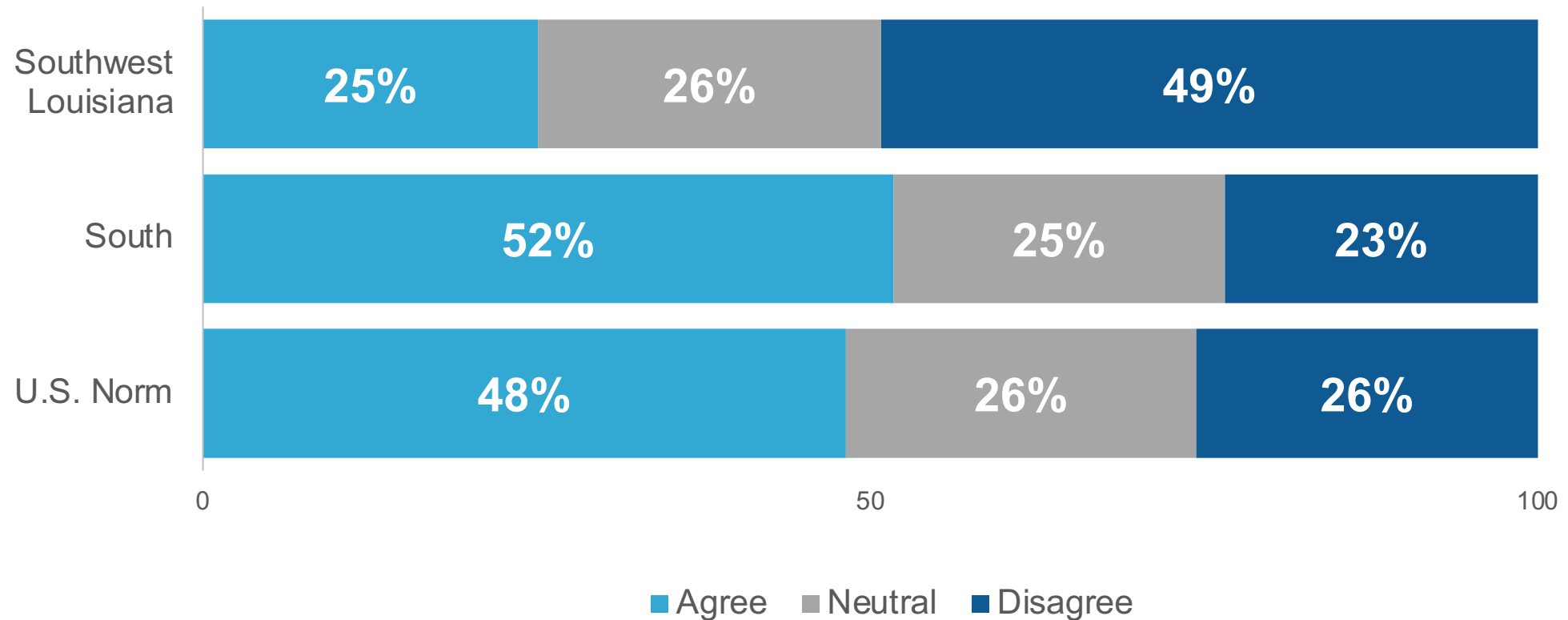
Quality of Life

Attractions and leisure facilities are becoming overcrowded because of more tourists



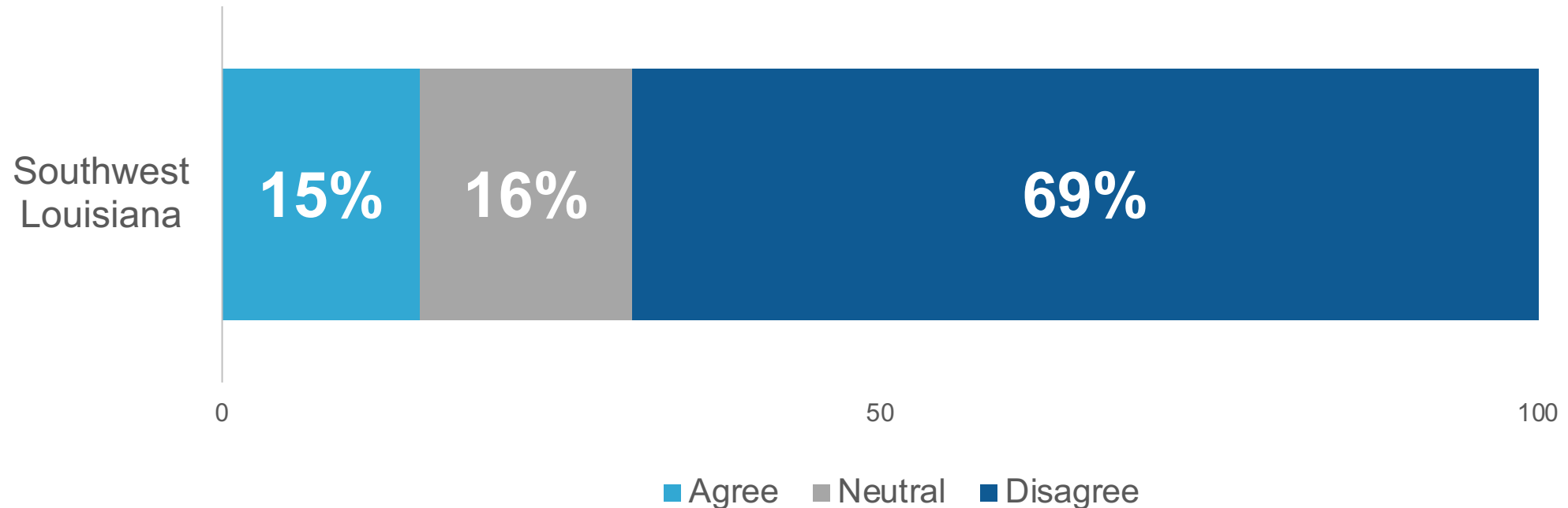
Quality of Life

Tourists add to traffic congestion and parking problems here



Quality of Life

Tourism has caused an increase in crime and social problems like alcohol and drug use in this area

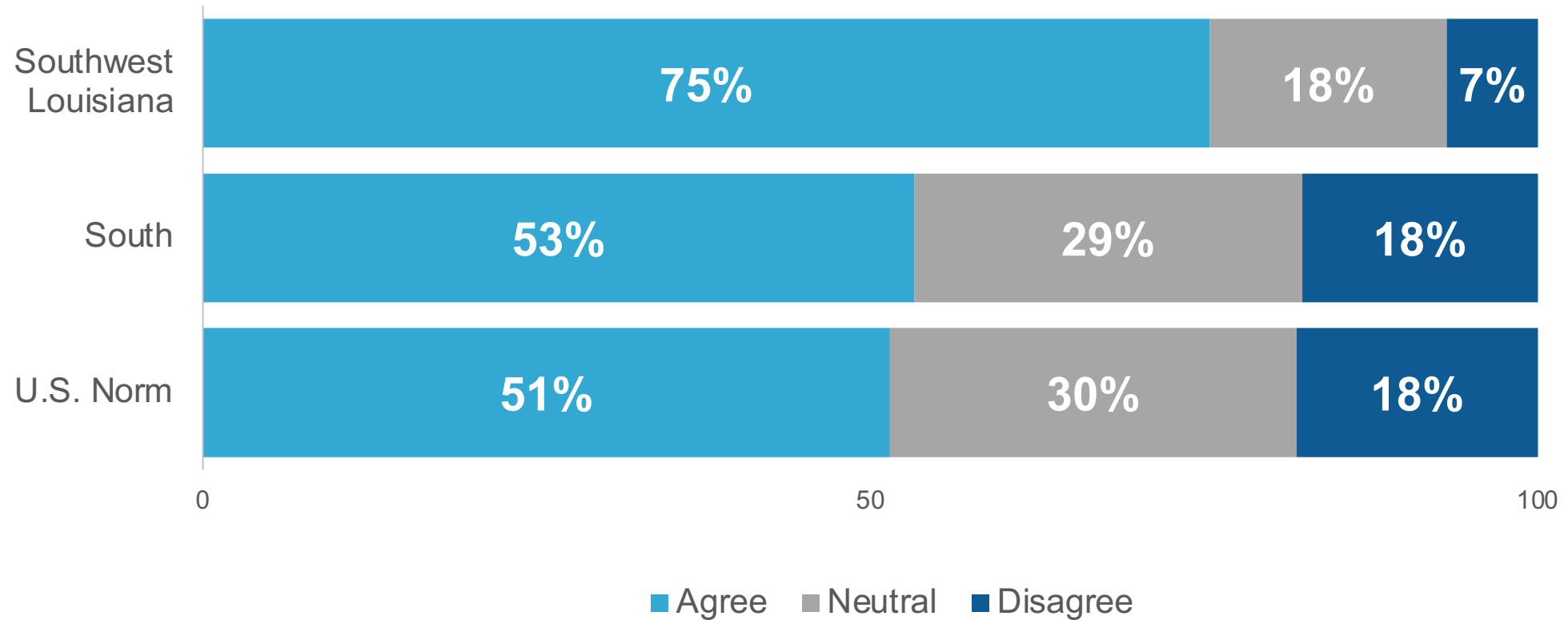




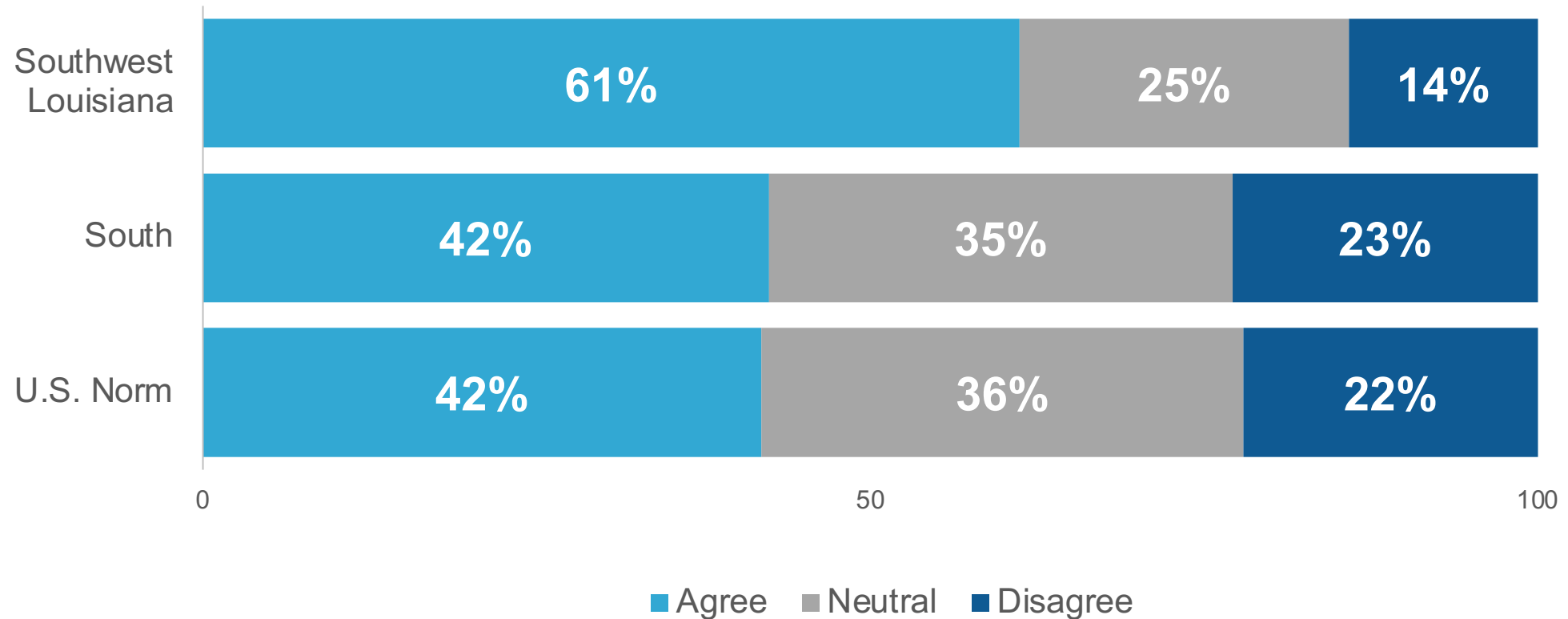
Environment



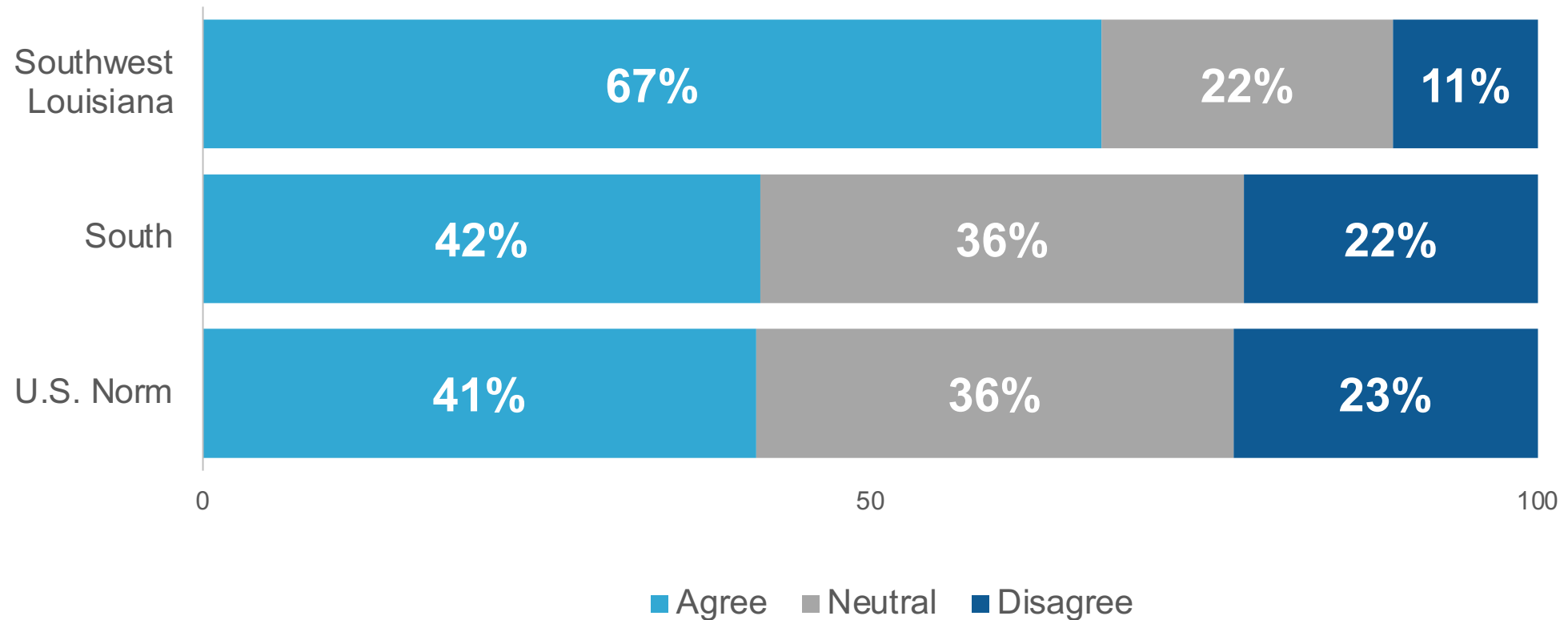
Long-term planning can limit environmental impacts caused by tourism



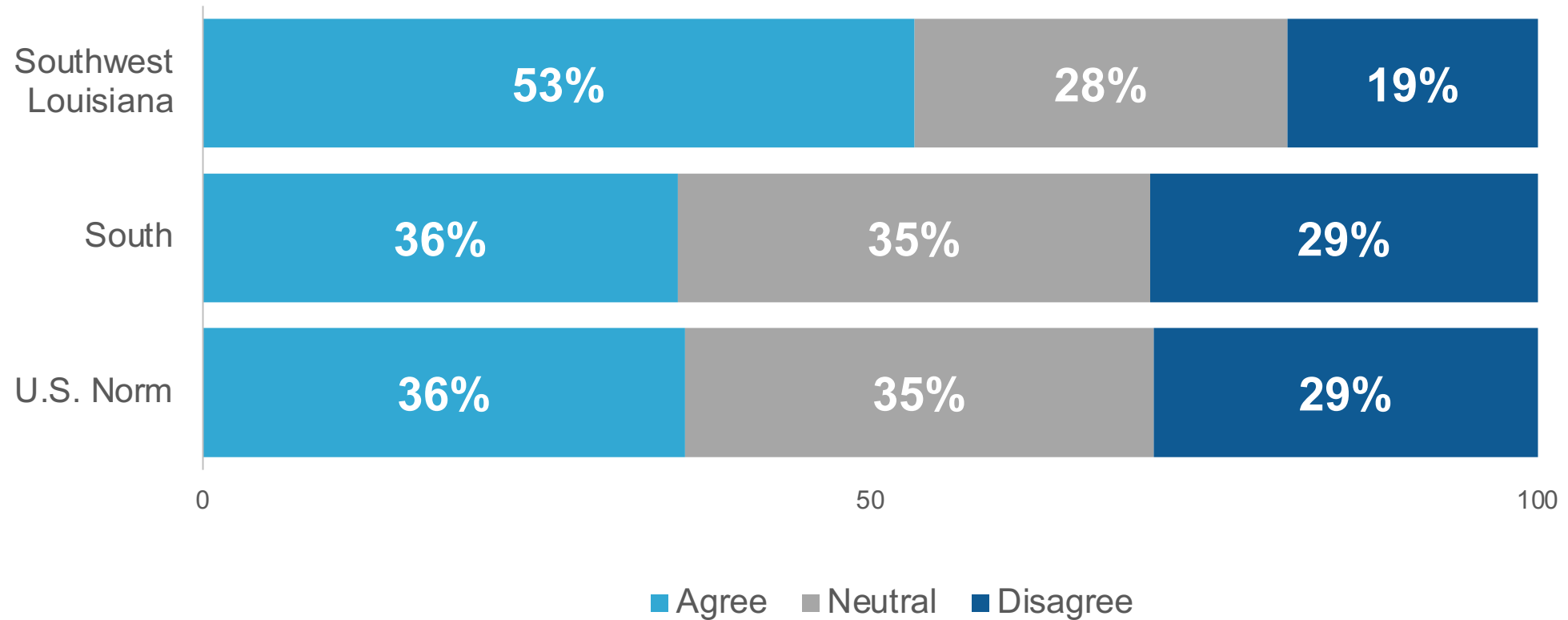
Tourism is a good alternative to more environmentally-damaging development



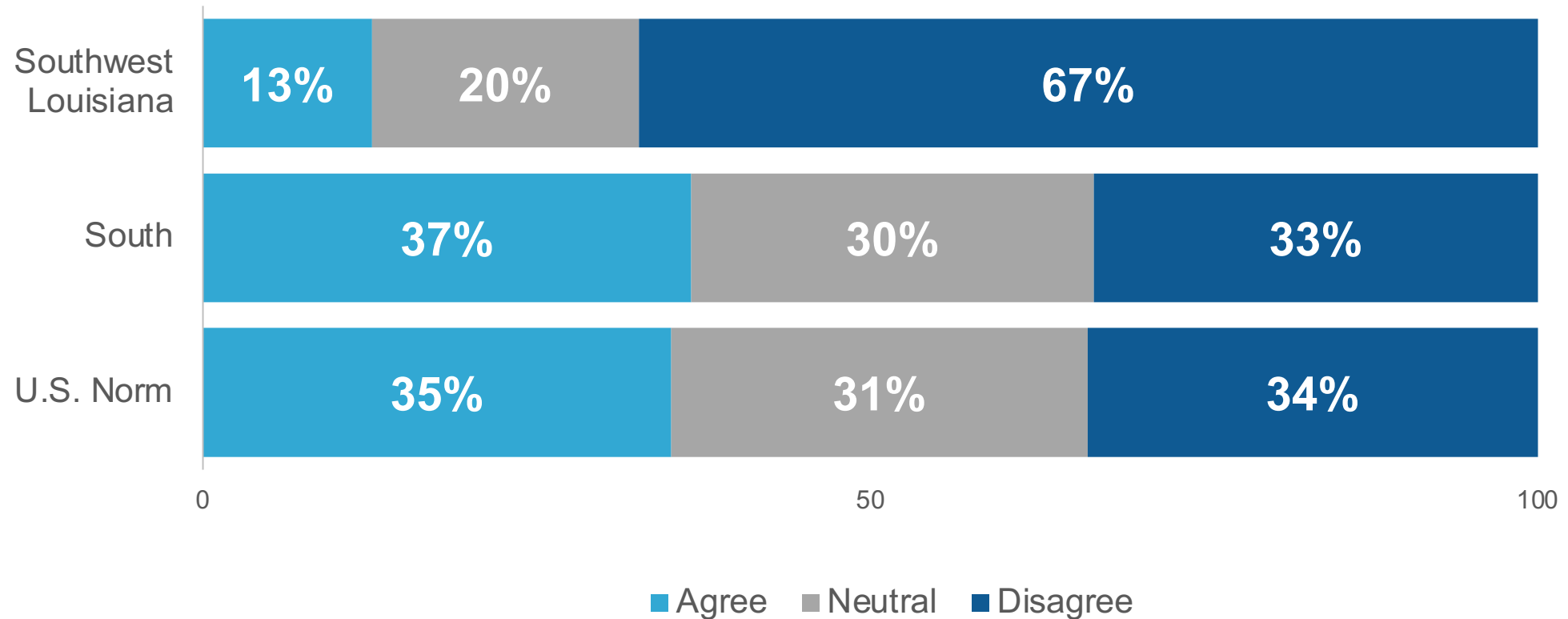
Tourism can help the environment as local governments and people seek to protect sensitive and scenic areas



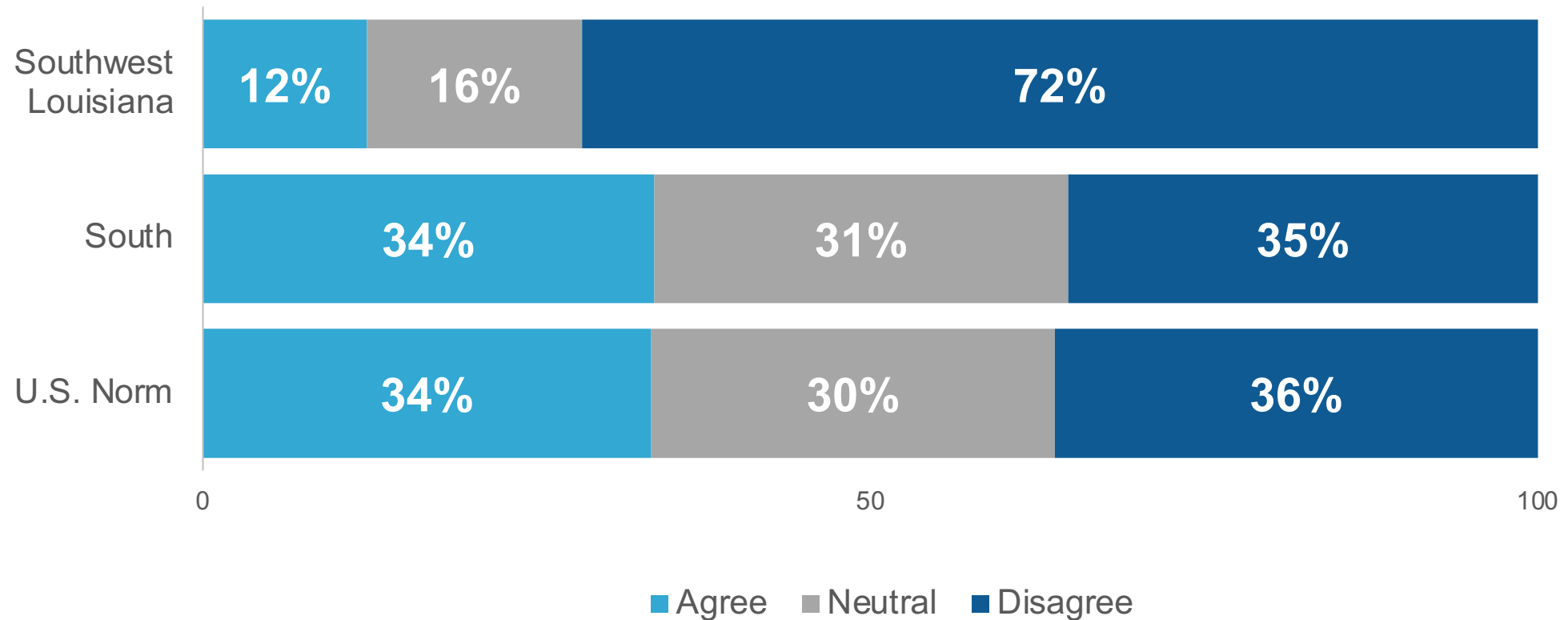
The tourism industry values sustainability and our natural resources



Overbuilding of tourism-related businesses is spoiling our natural areas



Overcrowding by tourists is spoiling our natural areas





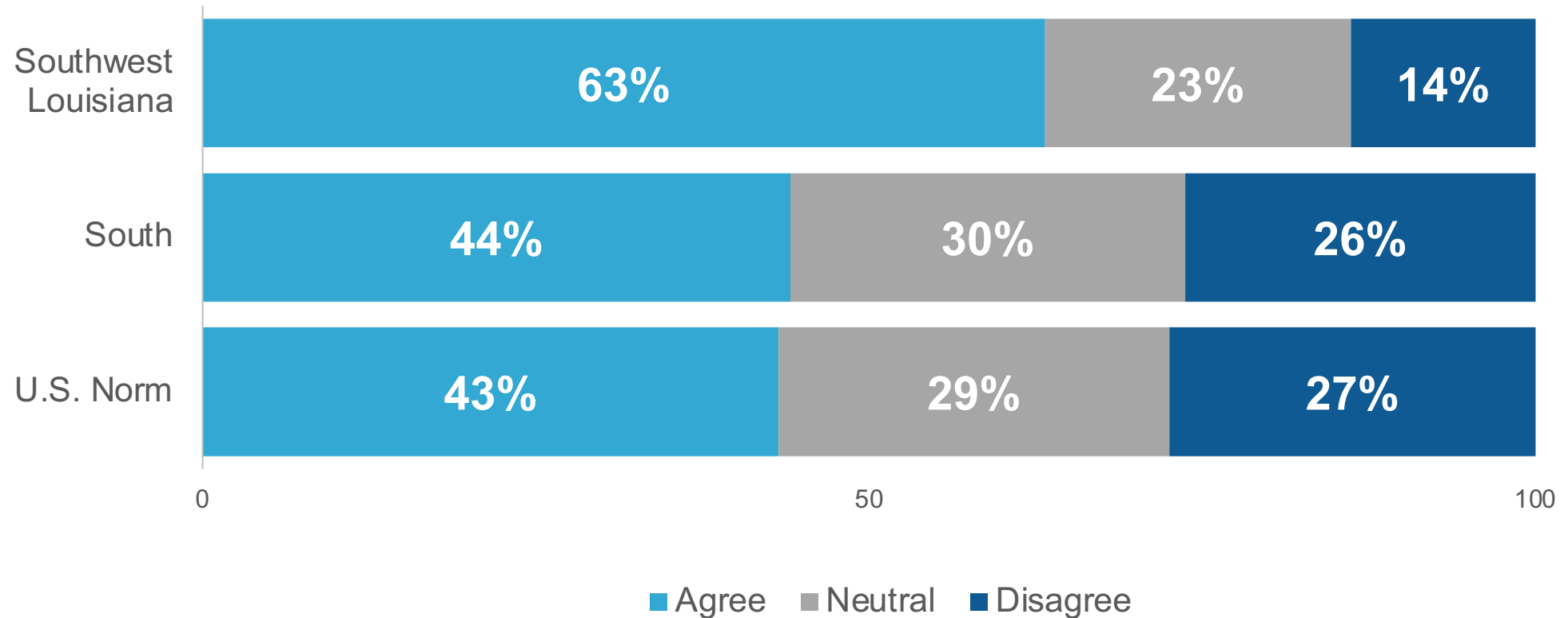
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Involvement/Engagement with Tourism

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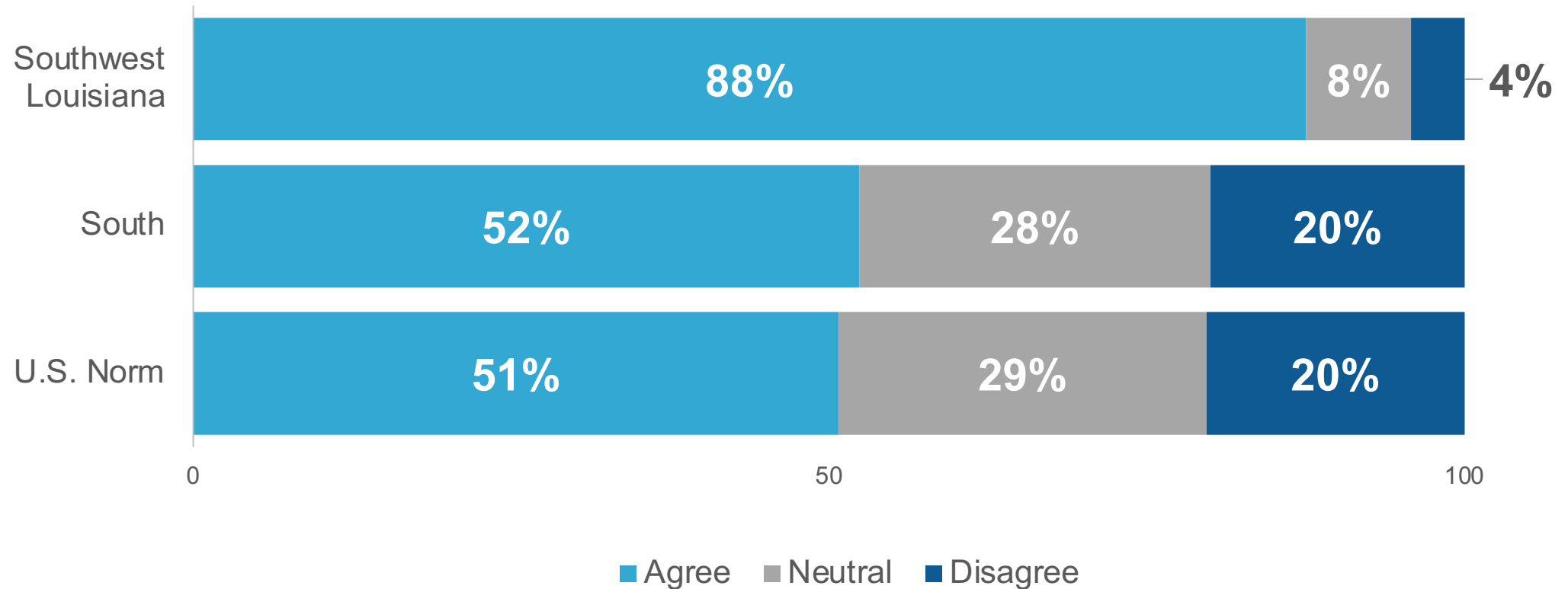
Involvement/Engagement with Tourism

I consider myself informed/up-to-date on news about tourism in this area



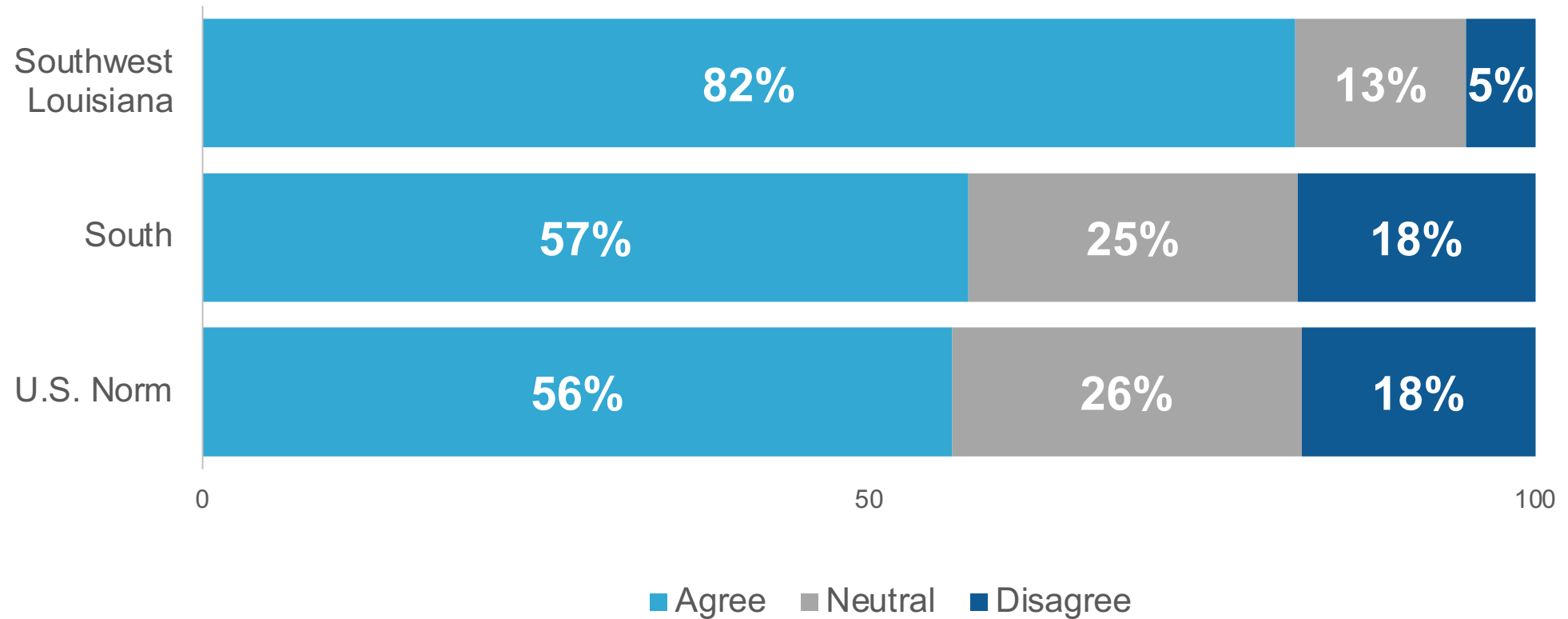
Involvement/Engagement with Tourism

When I come across local tourism news, I'm interested in finding out what's happening



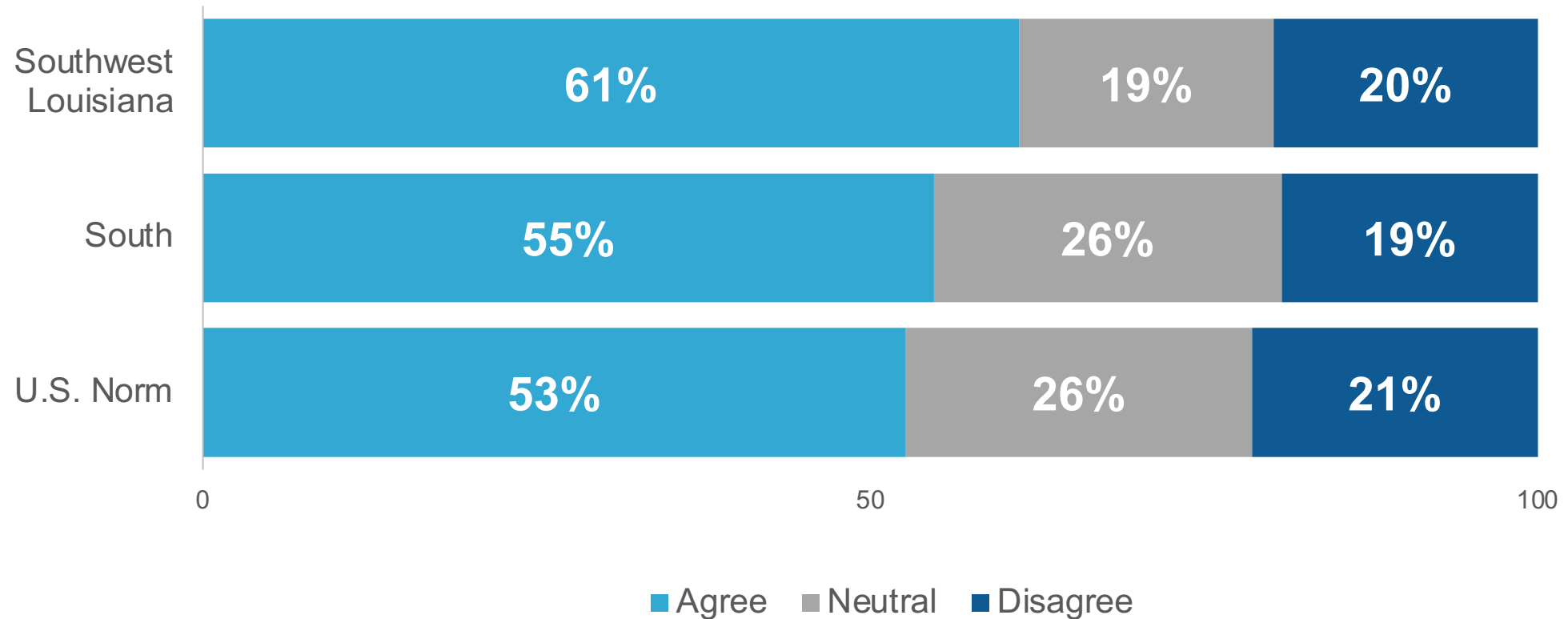
Involvement/Engagement with Tourism

I welcome tourists to this area



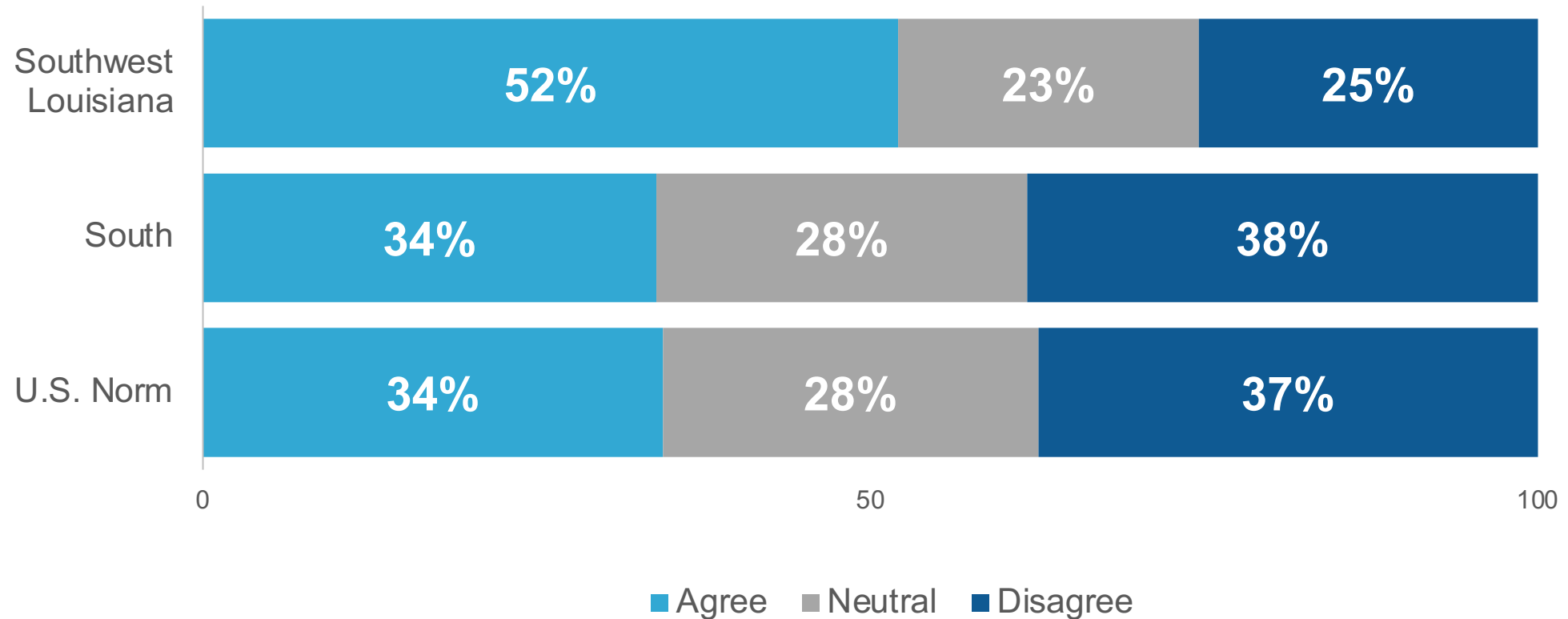
Involvement/Engagement with Tourism

I look forward to showing off this area when friends and family visit



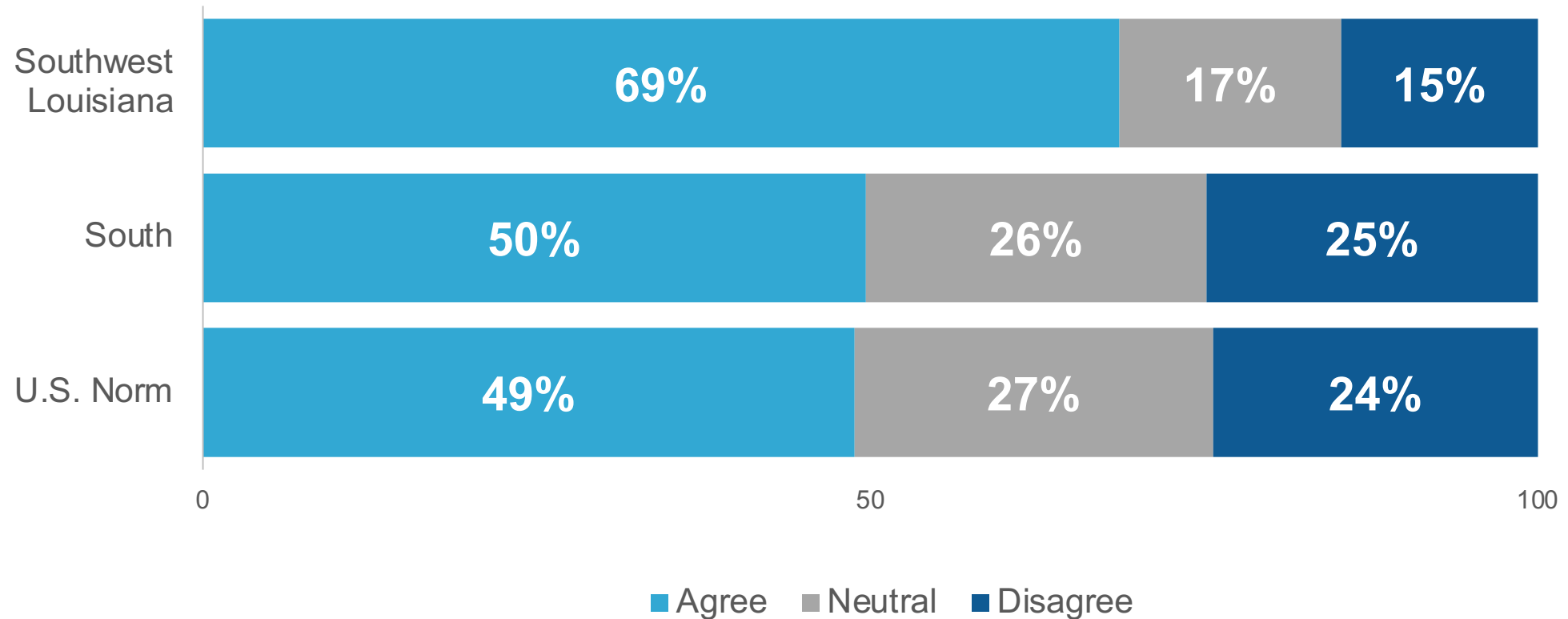
Involvement/Engagement with Tourism

I feel I am an ambassador for this area even among tourists I don't know



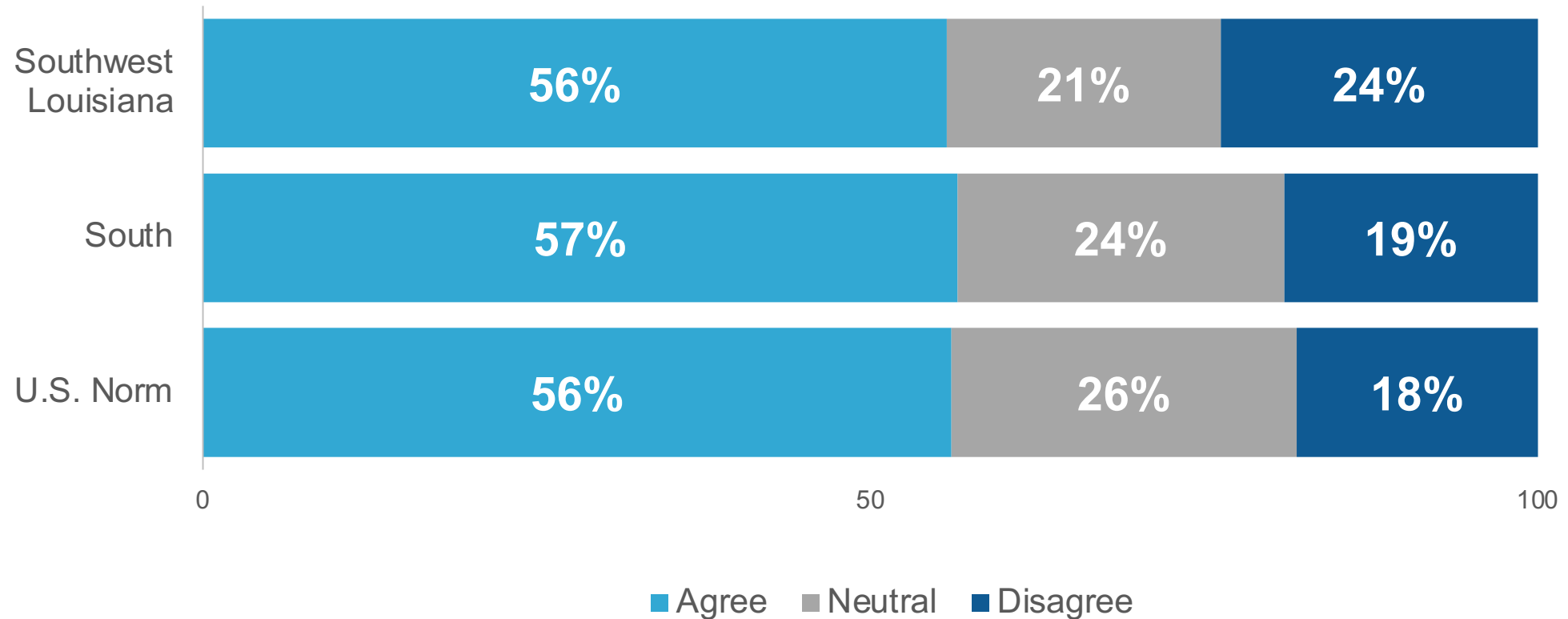
Involvement/Engagement with Tourism

I recommend local tourist sites to people who are visiting my area



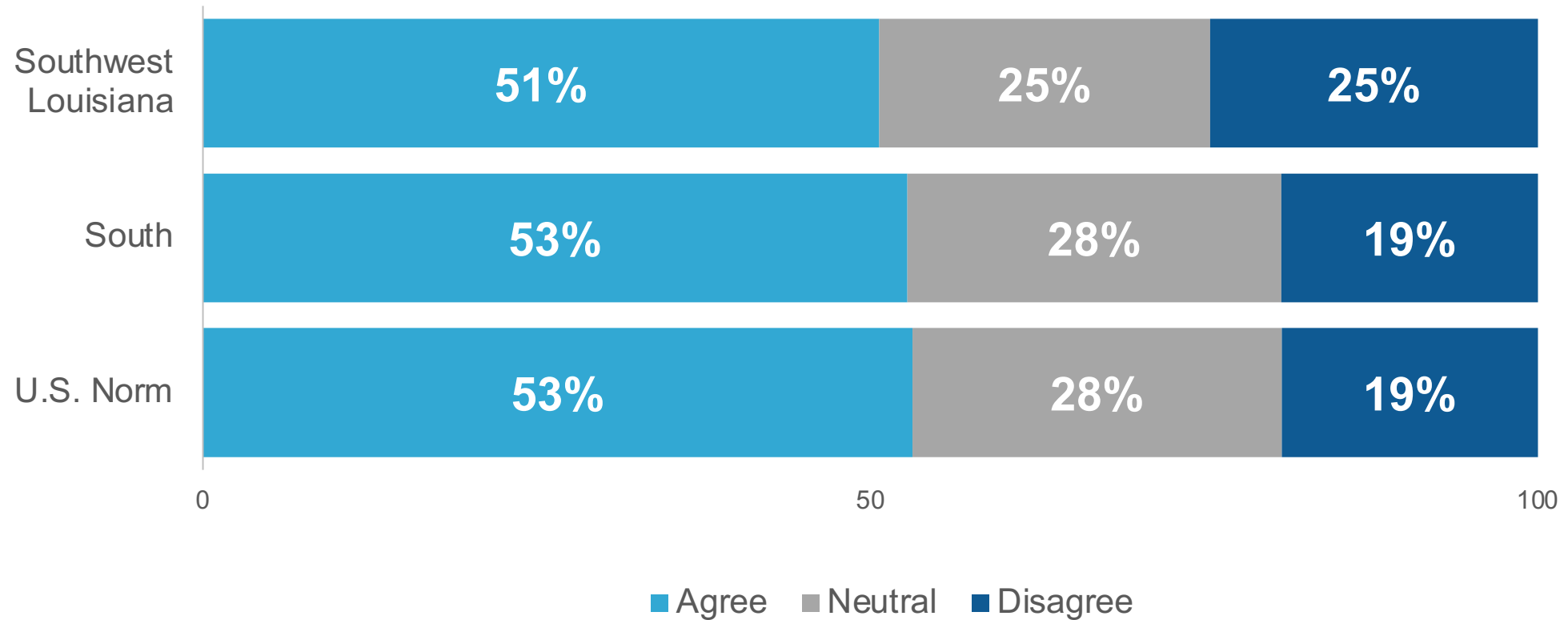
Involvement/Engagement with Tourism

Visiting other places gives me a greater appreciation for my local area

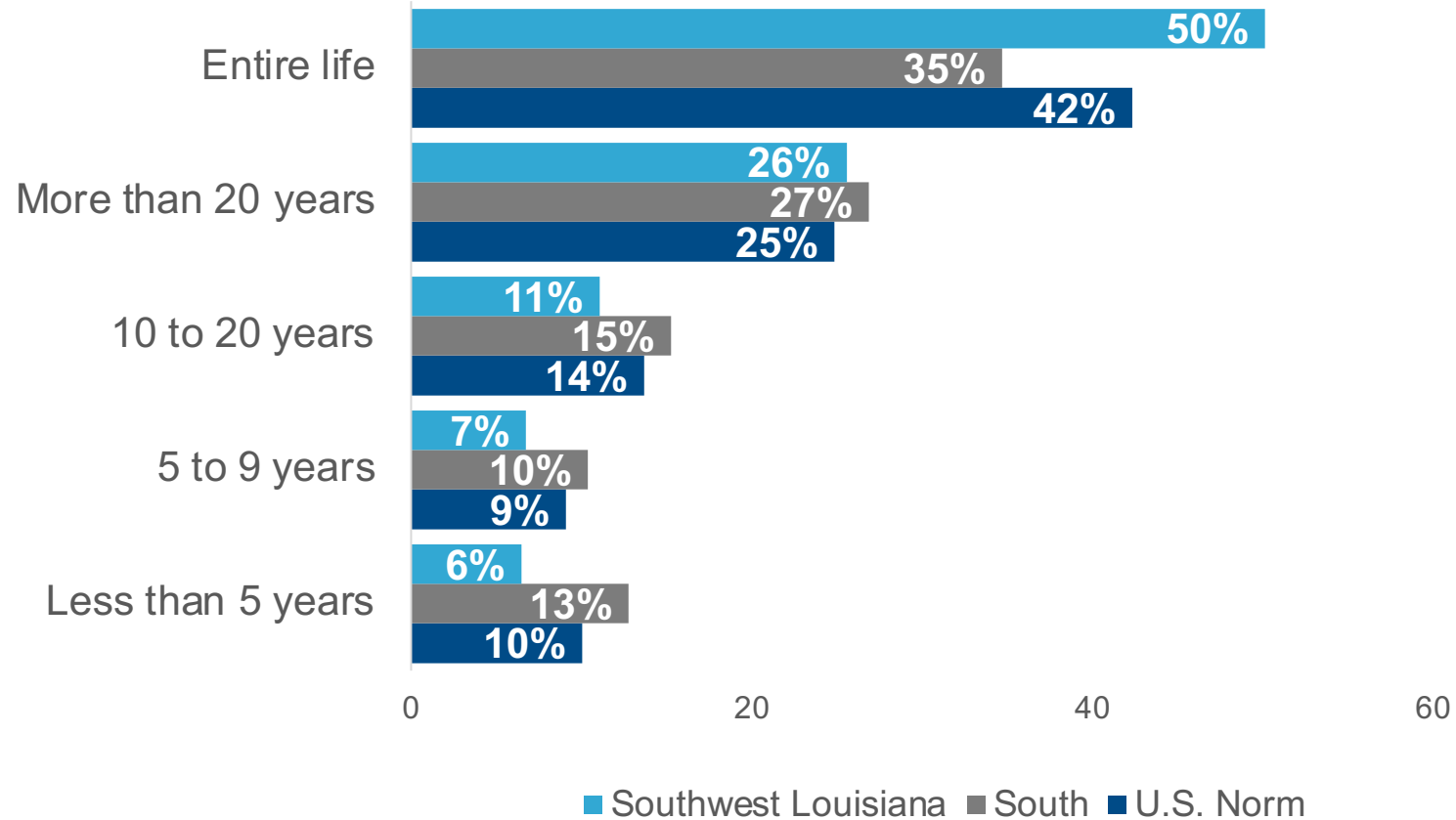


Involvement/Engagement with Tourism

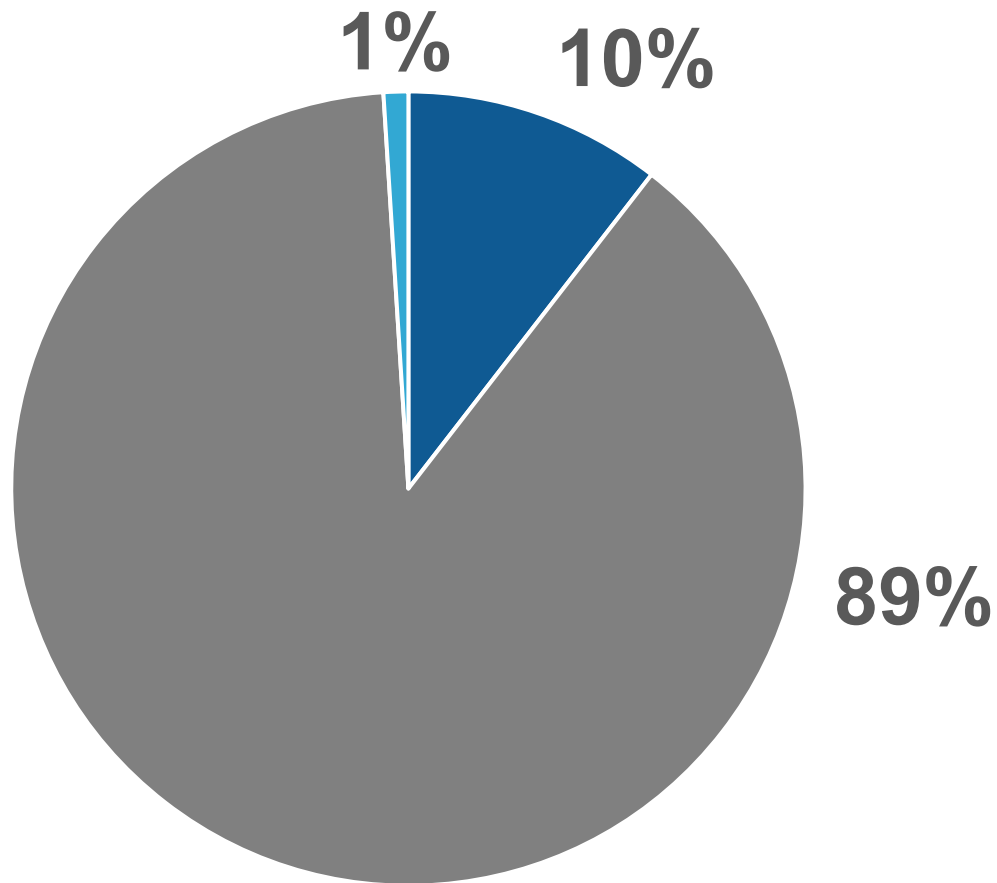
I'm proud of what this area offers tourists



Length of Residence in State



Employment in Tourism



- At least one person in household is employed in tourism and hospitality industry
- No one in household is employed in tourism and hospitality industry
- Don't know



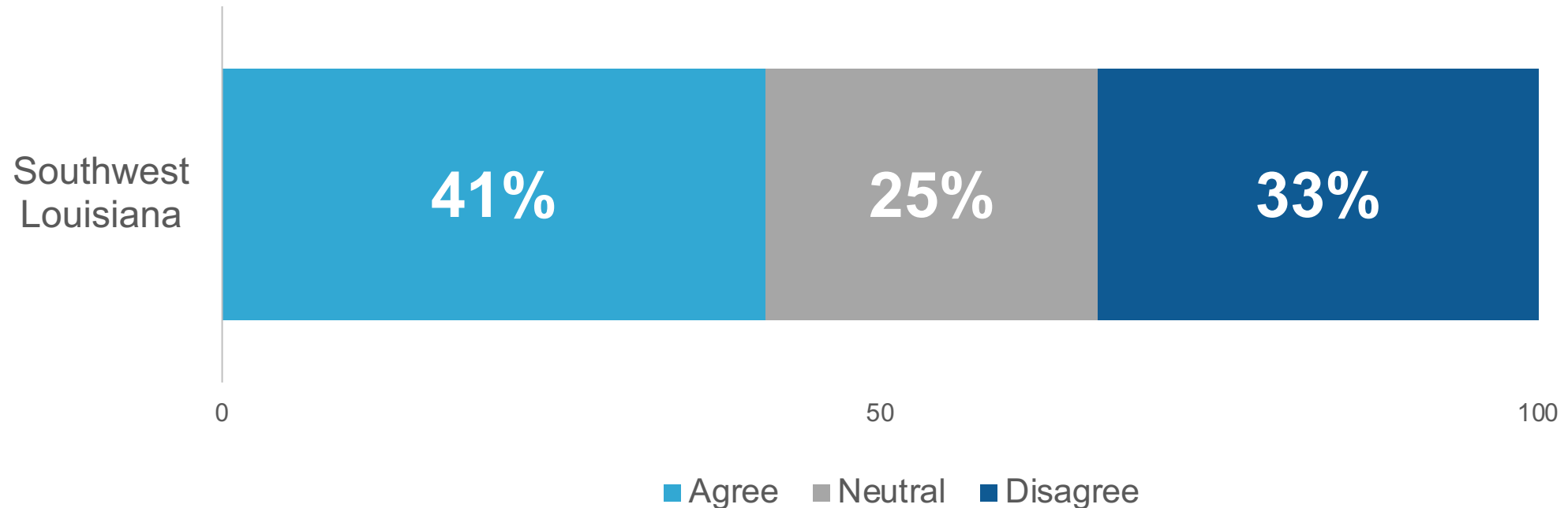
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Hurricane Laura Rebuilding Efforts

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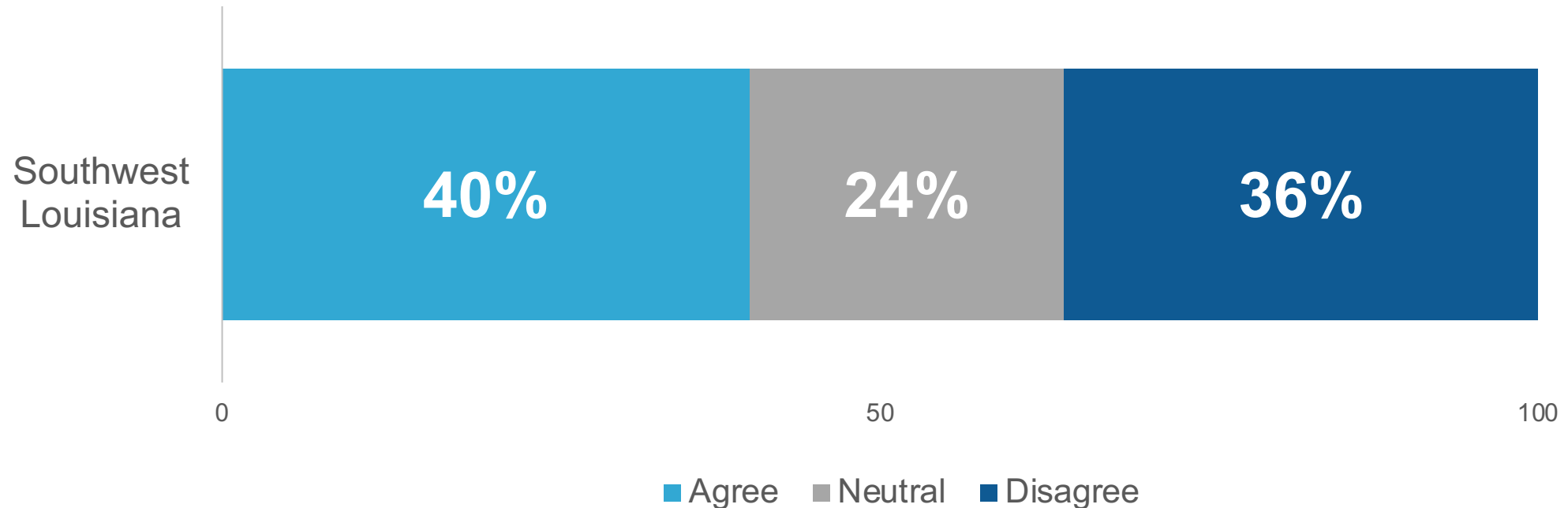
Hurricane Laura Rebuilding Efforts

My city government did a good job responding to the community's needs in the rebuilding efforts after Hurricane Laura



Hurricane Laura Rebuilding Efforts

My parish government did a good job responding to the community's needs in the rebuilding efforts after Hurricane Laura



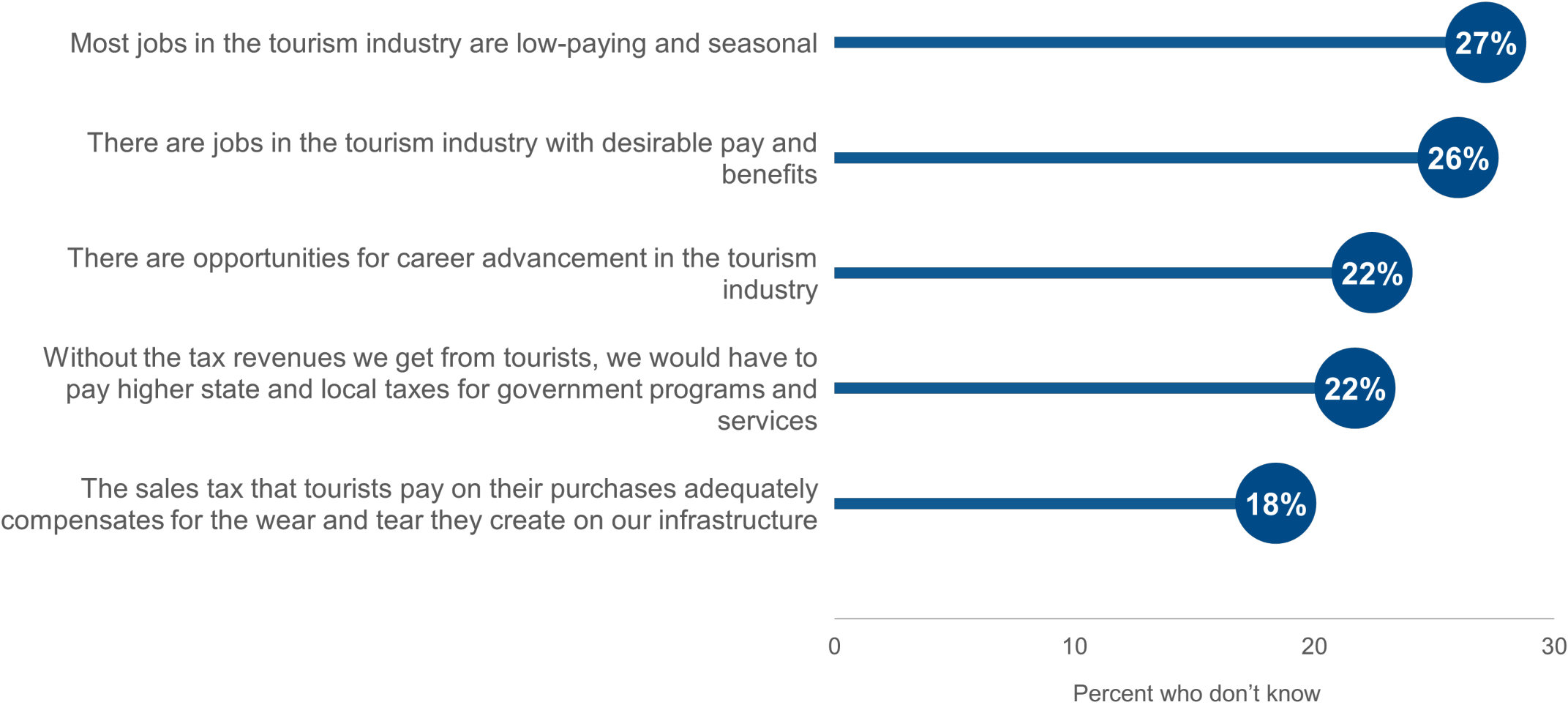


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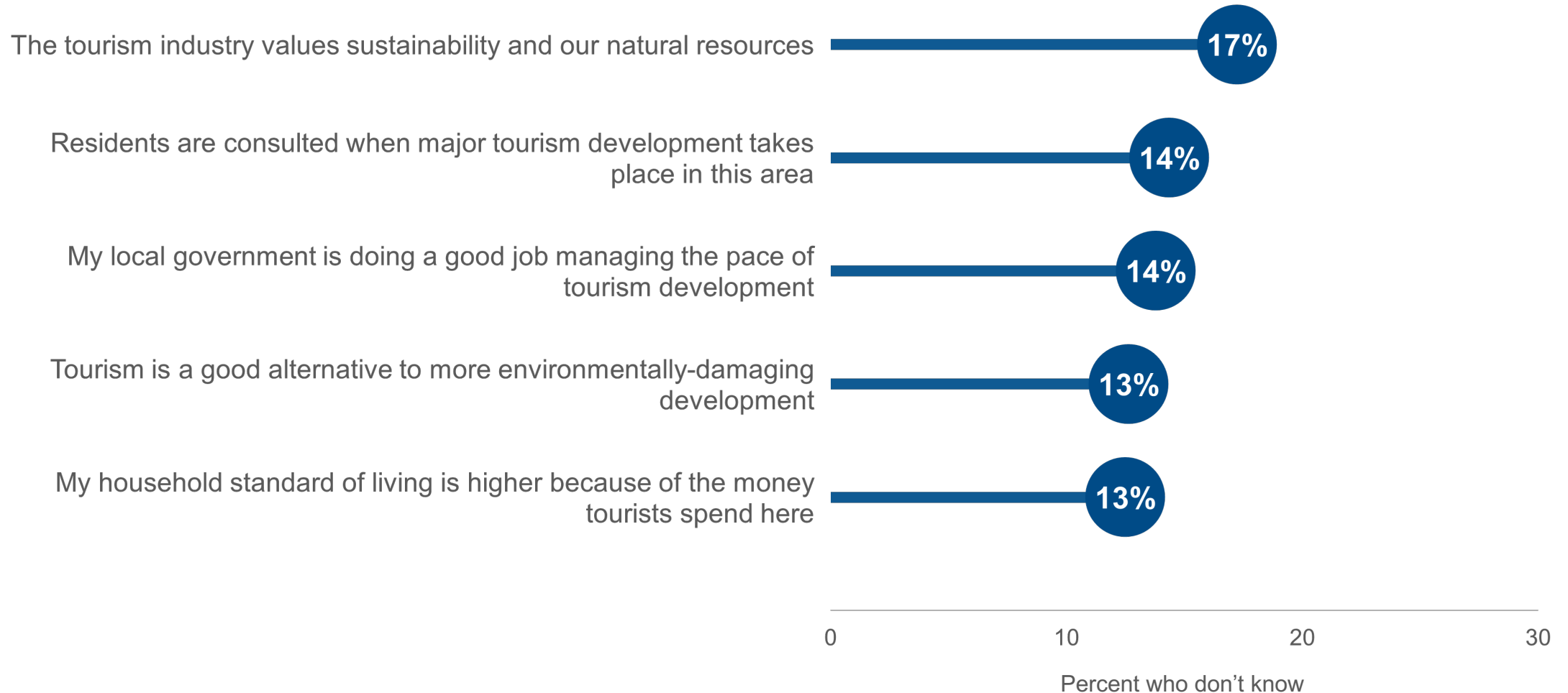
What Residents
Don't Know

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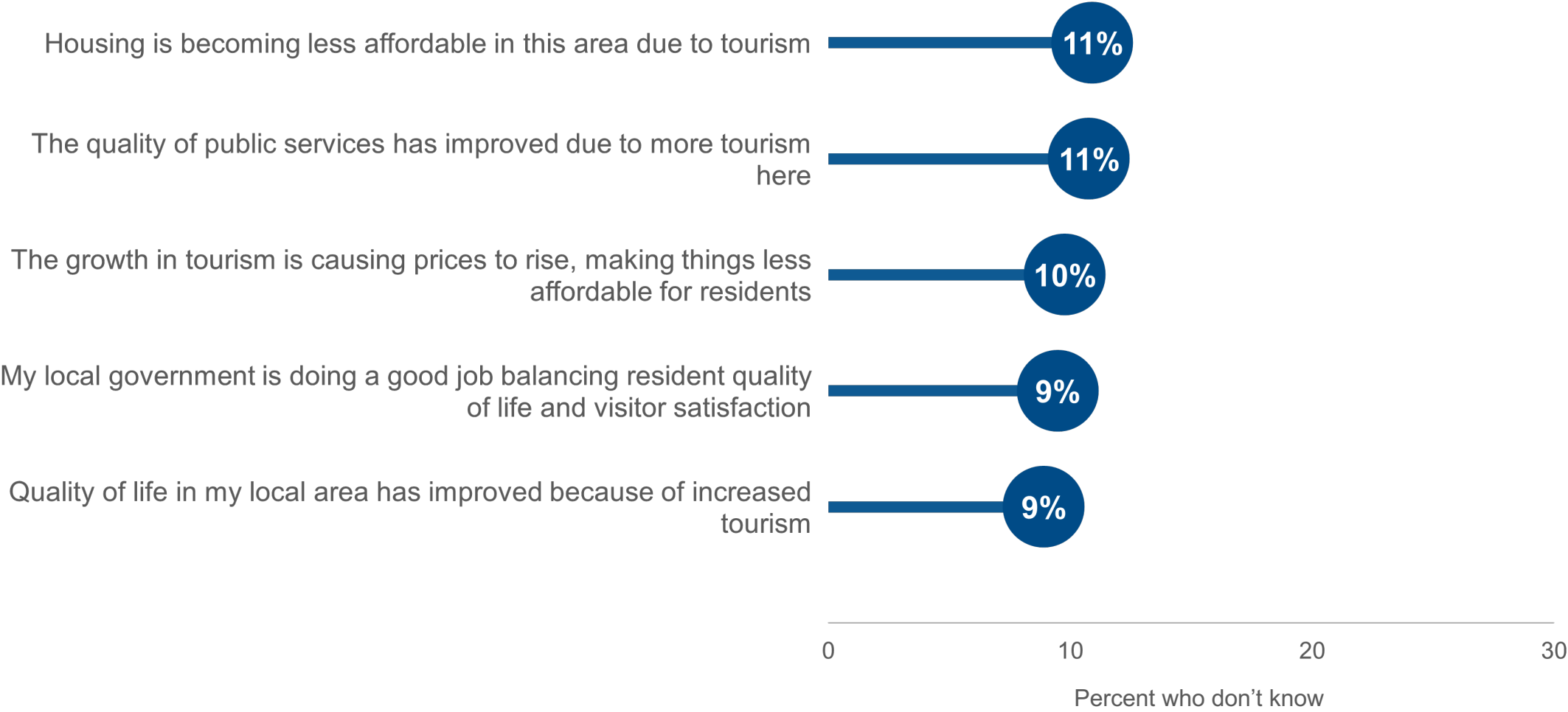
What Residents Don't Know



What Residents Don't Know (Cont'd)



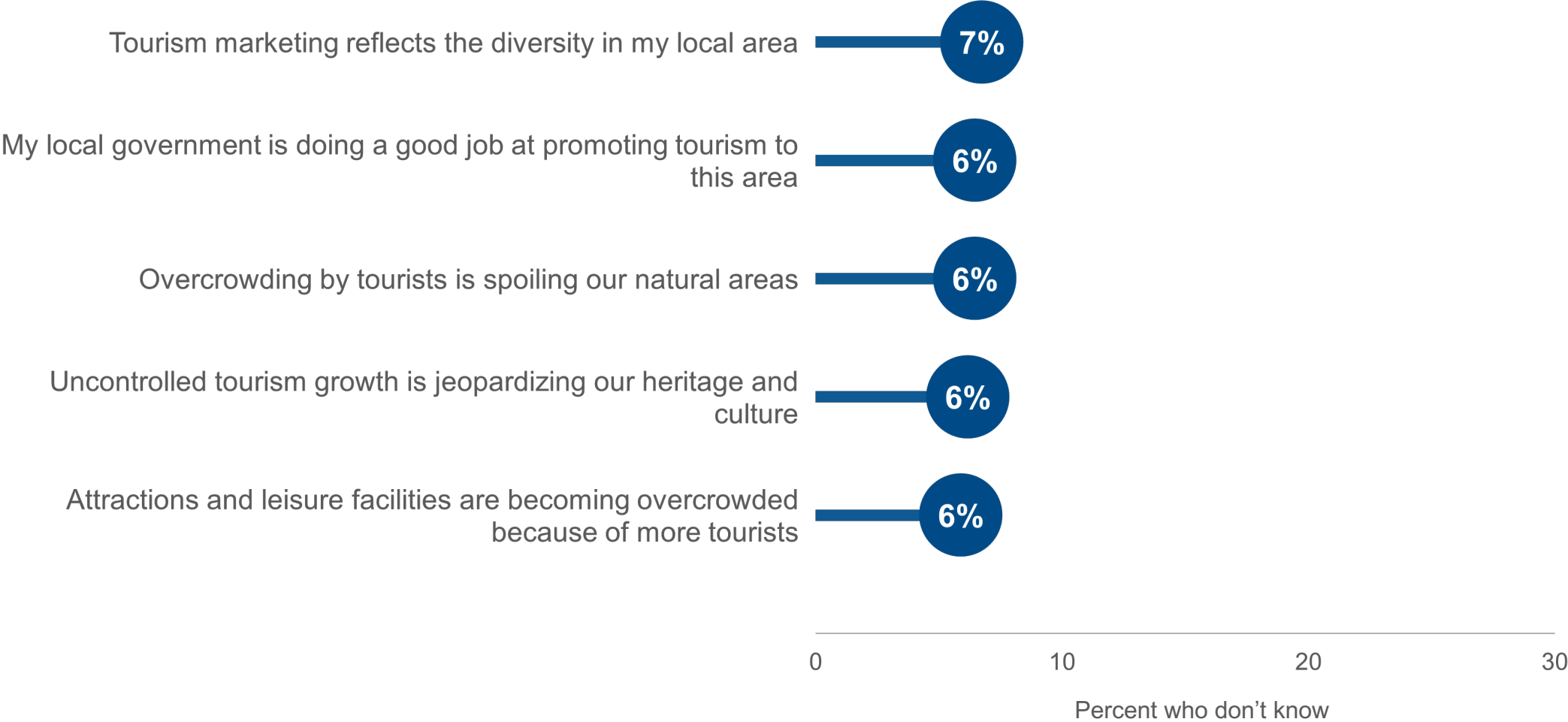
What Residents Don't Know (Cont'd)



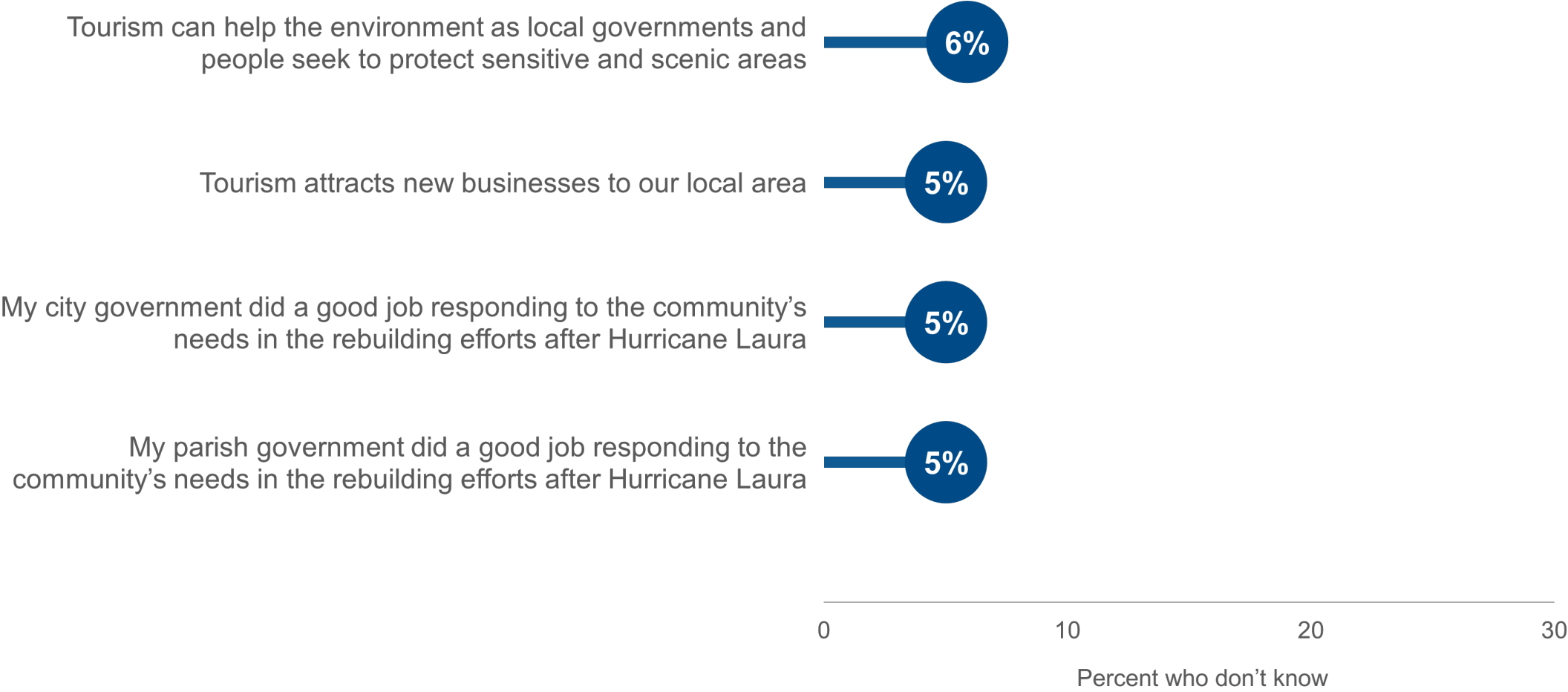
What Residents Don't Know (Cont'd)



What Residents Don't Know (Cont'd)



What Residents Don't Know (Cont'd)





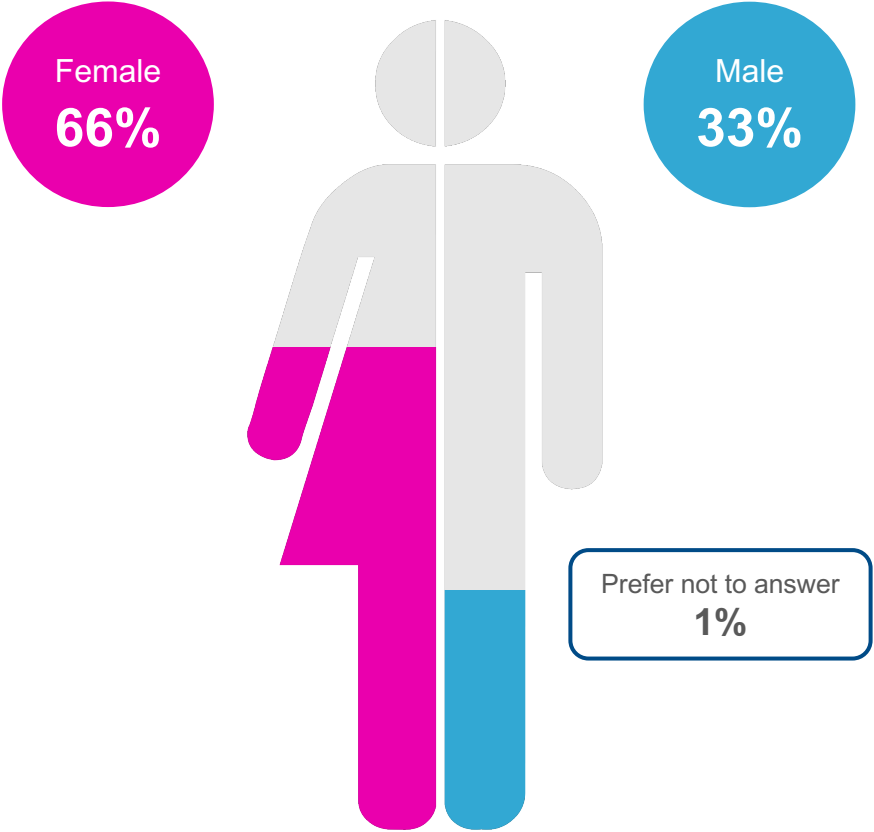
Longwoods
INTERNATIONAL

Demographic Profile

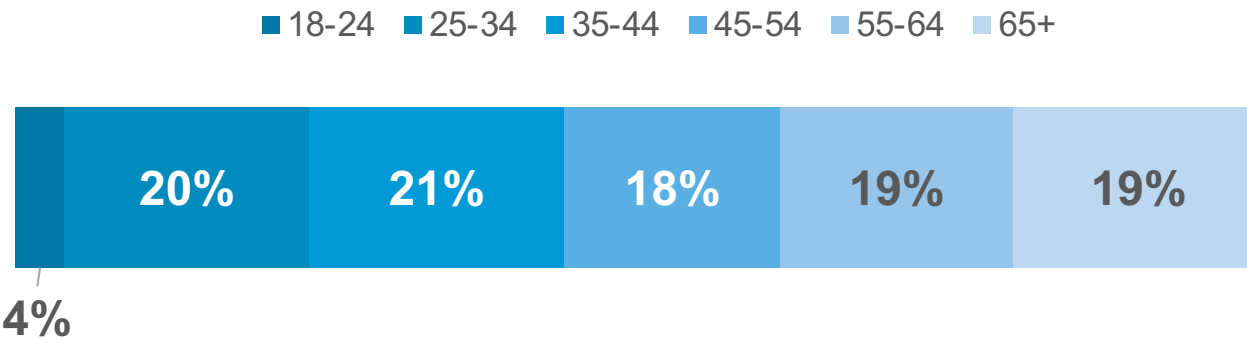
VISIT LAKE
CHARLES
LOUISIANA'S PLAYGROUND

Demographic Profile

Gender

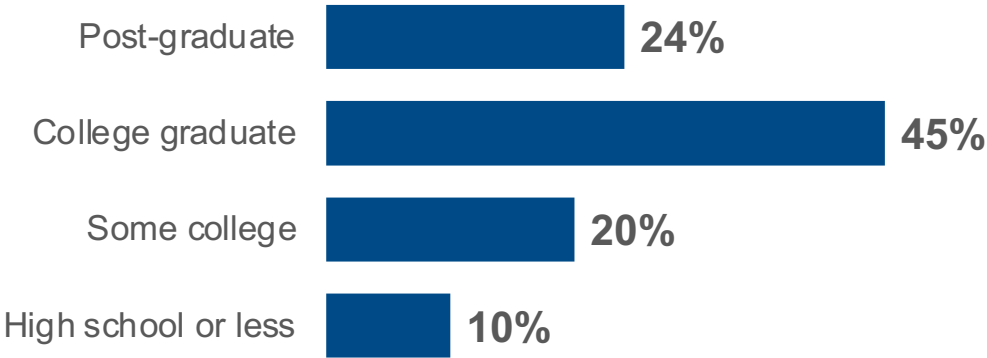


Age

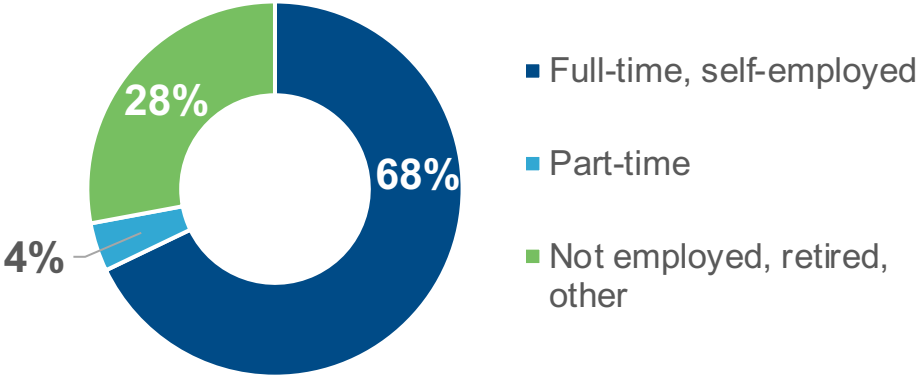


Demographic Profile

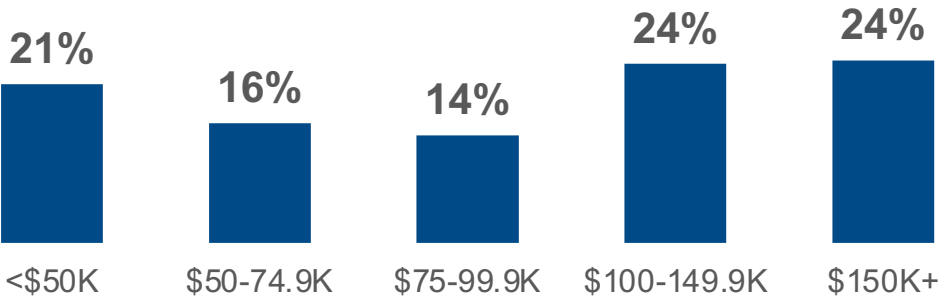
Educational Attainment



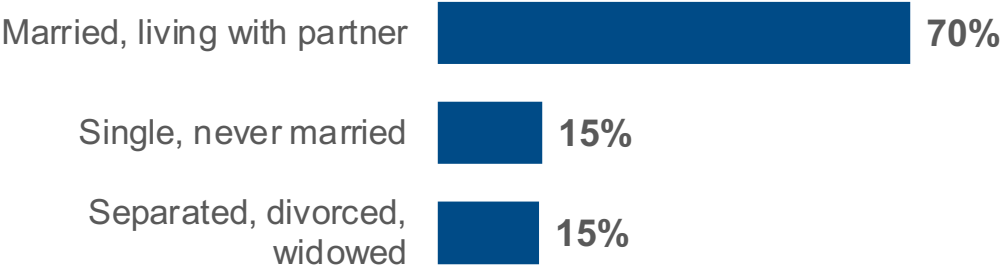
Employment



Household Income

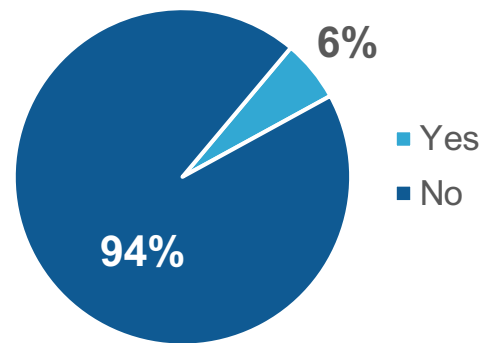


Marital Status

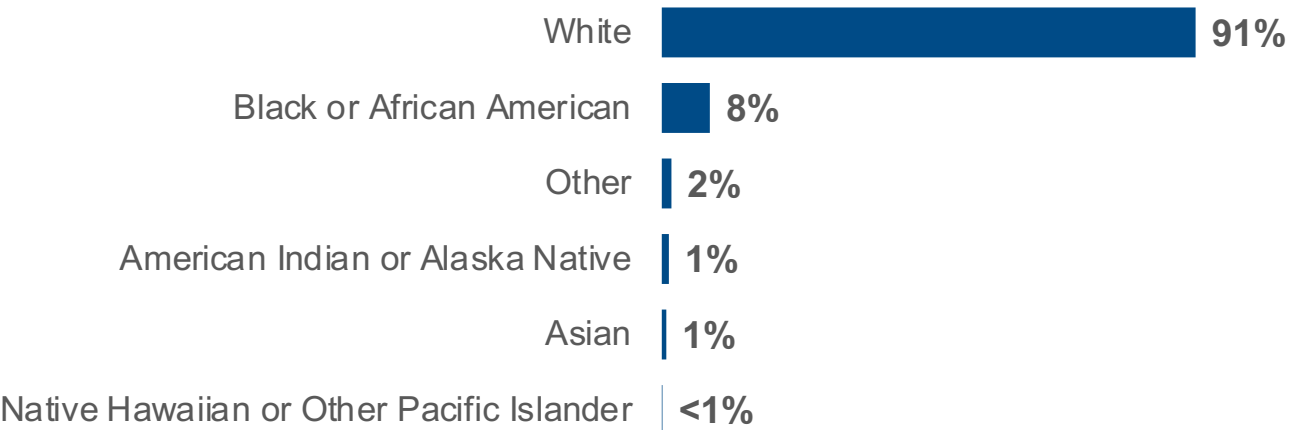


Demographic Profile

Hispanic Background



Race



Household Size



