

OMNIBUS
Provincial Public Opinion Survey

December 2001

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Prepared for:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Federal issues that Saskatchewan residents tend to be most concerned with include health care, jobs and unemployment, international issues and the economy.
- Provincial issues that Saskatchewan residents tend to be most concerned with include health care, agriculture, jobs and unemployment and the provincial economy.
- The majority of residents approve of the way the provincial government is handling the environment, education, the policing of communities and the economy.
- The majority of Saskatchewan residents approve of increased funding for a program called the Serious and Habitual Offender Comprehensive Action Program and to expand serious crimes units.
- More than three quarters of residents agree that human activities are causing climate change.
- One half of Saskatchewan residents think climate change is a very important issue; more than one third think it is important but not critical.
- The majority of Saskatchewan residents are confident that their drinking water is safe.
- The majority of residents agree they would be willing to pay higher rates to make their drinking water safe or to generally improve drinking water quality.
- The majority of residents think the post-secondary education and training system in Saskatchewan is the same or better than that of the rest of the country.
- The large majority of residents think the quality of Saskatchewan's training programs are adequate or better.

METHODOLOGY

Fast Consulting was retained by the Government of Saskatchewan to conduct the December 2001 public opinion survey with a representative sample of the Saskatchewan population. The December Omnibus Survey contains questions designed to explore public opinion in the areas of:

- federal issues of importance to Saskatchewan residents;
- provincial issues of importance to Saskatchewan residents;
- justice;
- Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management;
- SaskWater; and
- post-secondary education and skills training.

Questions for the survey were provided by Saskatchewan Executive Council and assembled into an interview format by Fast Consulting. The questionnaire was pre-tested to ensure that all of the questions being asked in the interview were understood by the general public and the information being gathered addressed the public opinion research objectives.

The sample frame for this public opinion research survey was constructed to obtain complete interviews from a random sample of 1,000 households throughout Saskatchewan. To ensure proportionate representation from all areas of Saskatchewan, the province was divided into nine geographic sampling districts. Interview respondents were selected randomly from Saskatchewan telephone directories in each region using standard polling practices to ensure random selection of households and respondents. The sampling frame was also constructed to ensure proportionate representation of other important demographic characteristics evident within the provincial population such as gender, age, occupation, level of education and level of household income. This ensures that the opinions of all the various types of people who reside in Saskatchewan are proportionately represented in the statistical measurements documented in this report.

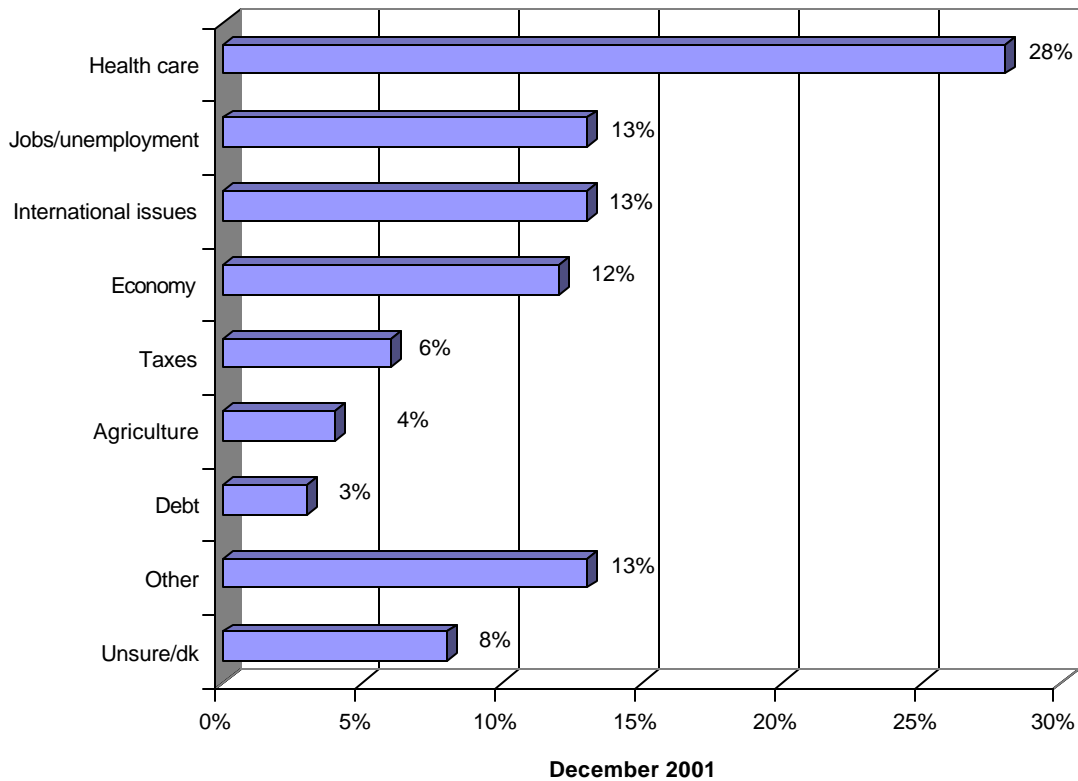
One thousand residents of the province were interviewed between Monday, December 10 and Wednesday, December 19, 2001. Interviews were conducted by telephone at times that were appropriate and convenient for respondents - weekdays between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. and weekends between the hours of 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. All interviews were conducted by Fast Consulting's in-house public opinion interviewers using our *Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing* (CATI) call centre.

The Omnibus survey sample size of 1,000 people yields public opinion measurements with a statistical level of confidence of 95 percent within an overall margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points: reliable results with low variability. Frequency charts for all public opinion issues are illustrated in this report.

Fast Consulting designed and implemented programs to facilitate the statistical analysis of data using the industry standard SPSS computer program (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). Data checking procedures were utilized at all times to ensure accuracy of the data. In addition, statistical tests were conducted on the demographics to check for reliability and validity of the survey data.

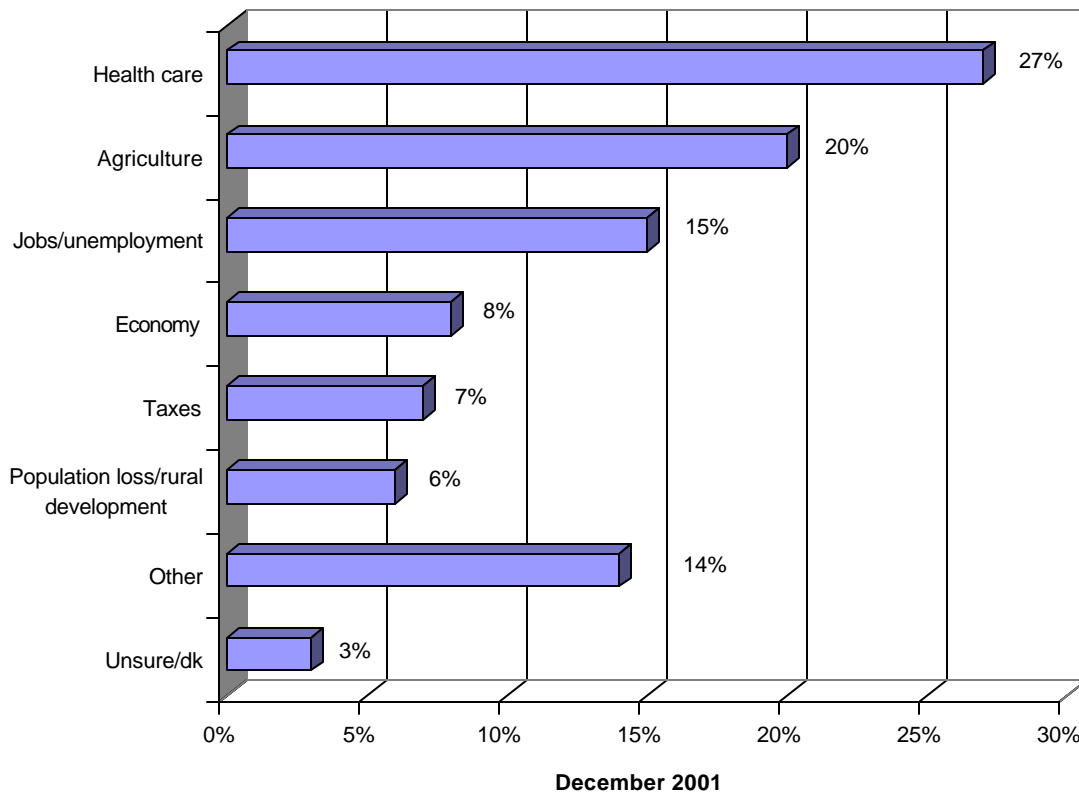
1.0 GENERAL ISSUES

Question 1. What do you think is the most important issue facing Canada today?



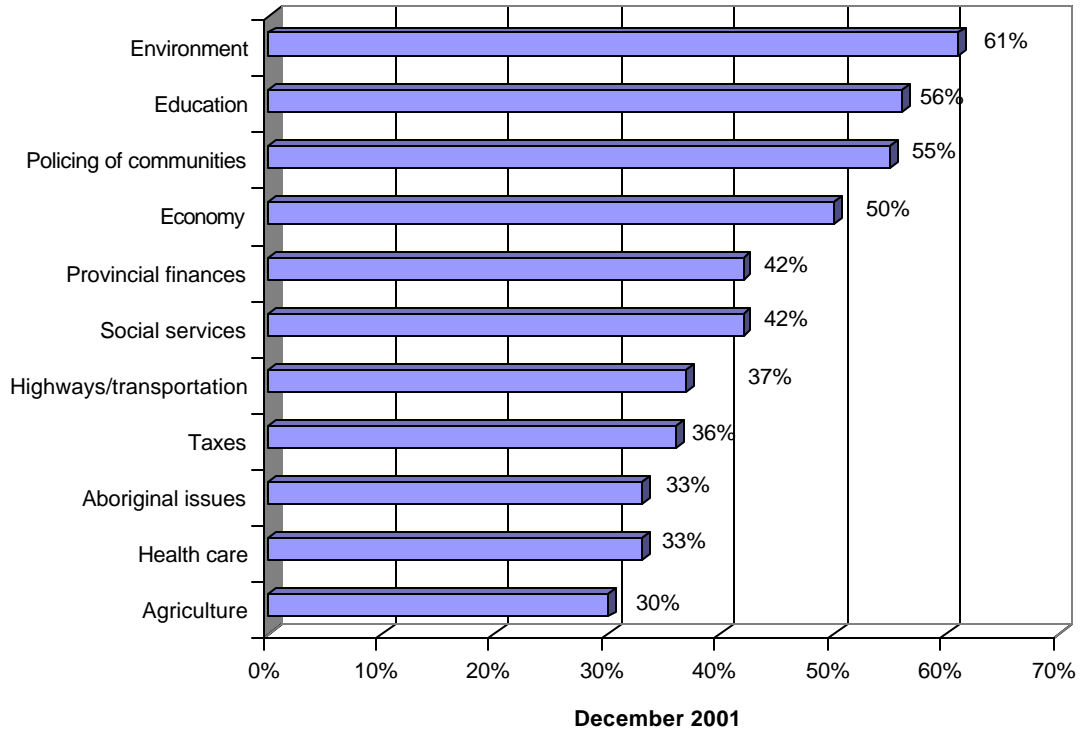
- According to 28% of Saskatchewan residents, the most important issue facing Canada today is the health care system. Other important issues include jobs and unemployment (13%), international issues (13%), the economy (12%), federal taxes (6%), agriculture (4%) and the national deficit and accumulated debt (3%).
- Approximately 13% of respondents are primarily concerned with 'other' issues such as the federal government in general (4%), crime and poverty (2%), national unity (1%), Native issues (1%) and education (1%).

Question 2. What do you think is the most important issue facing the province of Saskatchewan today?



- The most important issue facing the province today, according to 27% of Saskatchewan residents, is health care. Approximately 20% of residents are concerned primarily with agriculture, 15% with jobs and unemployment, 8% with the provincial economy, 7% with provincial taxes and 6% are concerned with population loss and rural development.
- Included among 'other' important issues identified by 14% of respondents are the provincial government in general (3%), the provincial debt (2%), Native issues (2%), crime and poverty (1%) and business and industry (1%).

Question 3. How much do you approve of the way the provincial government is handling the following...



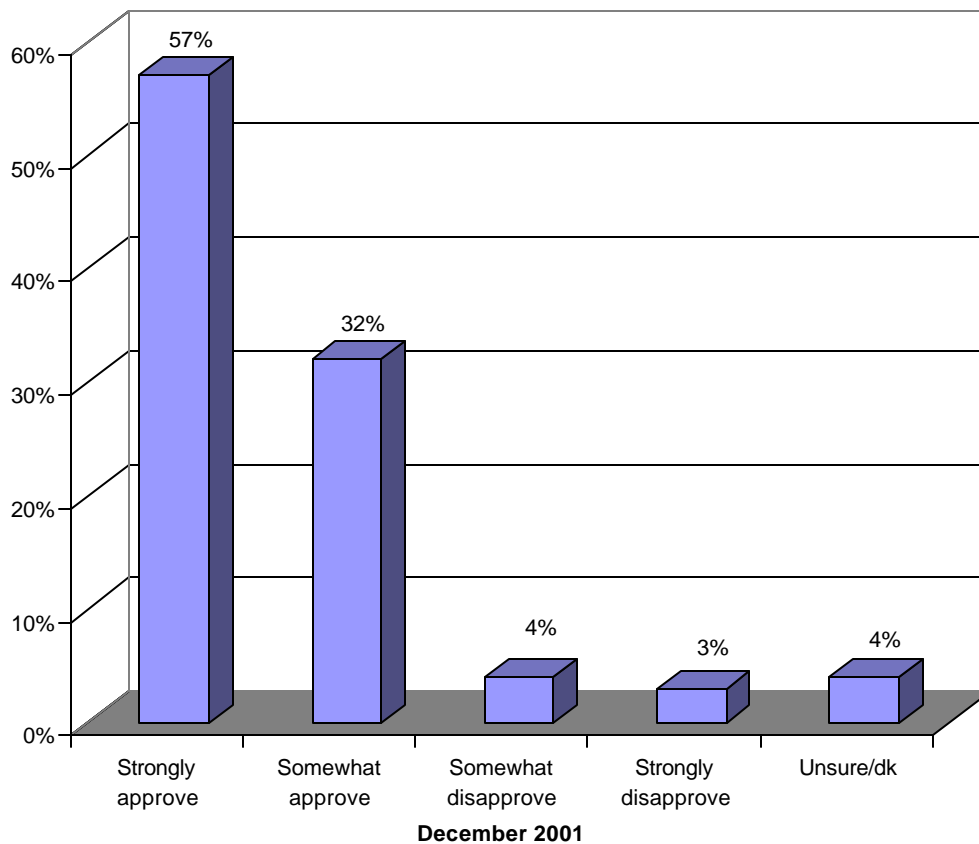
Note: the above chart combines strongly and moderately approve to give a combined approval rating.

- The majority of Saskatchewan residents approve of the way the provincial government is handling the environment (61%), education (56%), the policing of communities (55%) and the economy (50%).
- More than one third approve of the way the provincial government is handling provincial finances (42%), social services (42%), highways and transportation (37%), taxes (36%), Aboriginal issues (33%) and health care (33%).
- More than one quarter approve of the way the provincial government is handling agriculture (30%).

2.0 JUSTICE

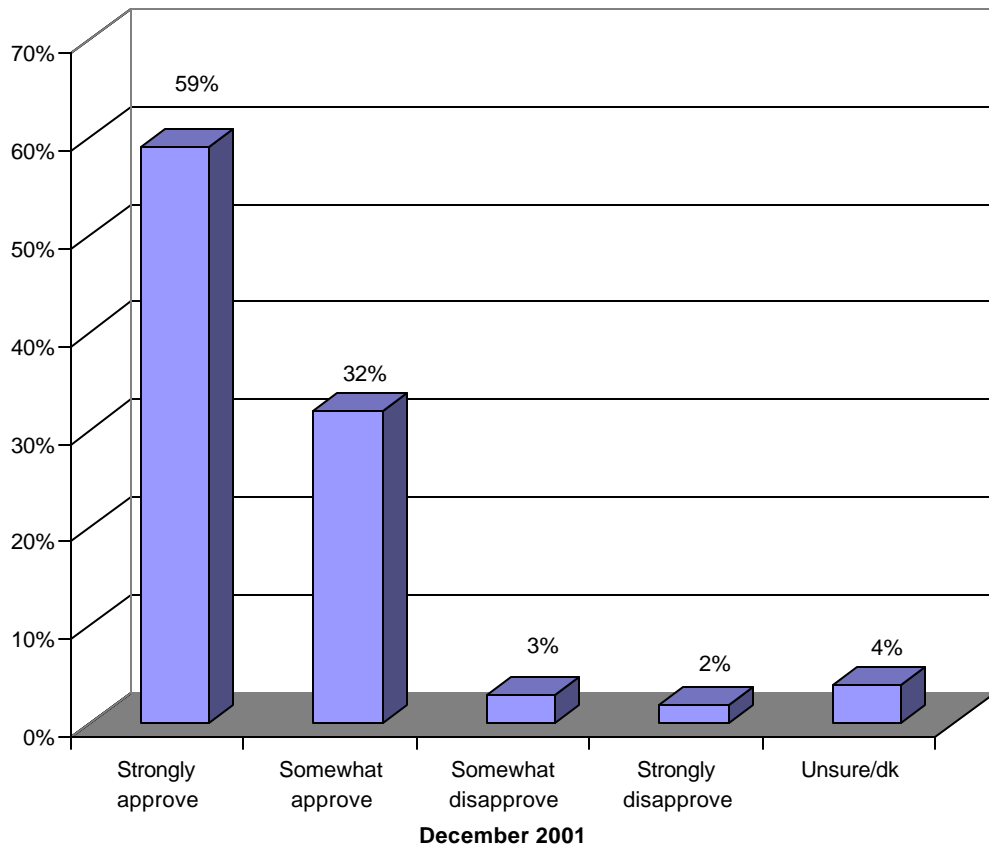
I'm going to outline some of the funding included in the 2001-2002 budget targeted for the justice system. I'd like you to tell me if you strongly approve, somewhat approve, somewhat disapprove or strongly disapprove of the following initiatives:

Question 6a. In the recent budget the government increased funding for the "Serious and Habitual Offender Comprehensive Action Program". It's a partnership between police and prosecutors aimed at identifying the minority of young offenders who commit most of the crimes, tracking them, and getting them off the streets.



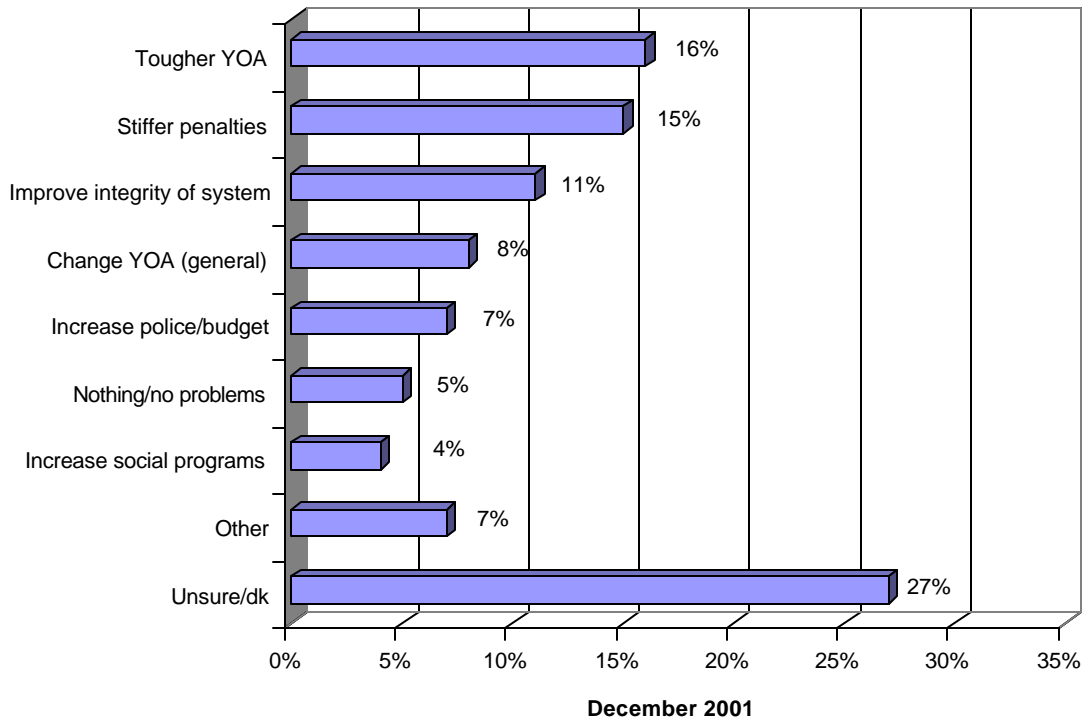
- The large majority (89%) of residents approve of increased funding for a program called the "Serious and Habitual Offender Comprehensive Action Program".

Question 6b. In the recent budget the government increased funding to expand serious crime units to Moose Jaw, Prince Albert, Estevan and Weyburn, to fight crimes like the drug and sex trade, child pornography, and money laundering committed by organized groups like motorcycle gangs. Serious crime units brings together the RCMP, city police forces, and a special prosecution team.



- The large majority (91%) of residents approve of increased funding to expand serious crime units in Saskatchewan.

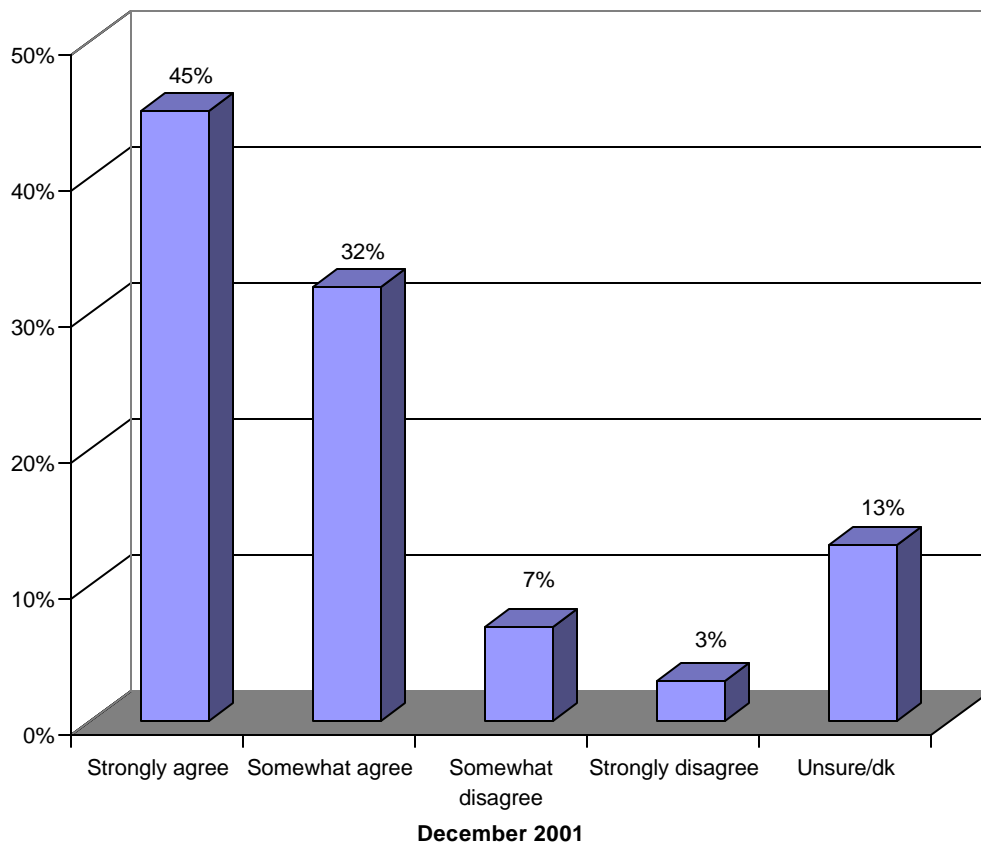
Question 7. What would you like to see changed about the way Saskatchewan's government manages policing and the justice system?



- Approximately 16% of Saskatchewan residents would like the government to enforce a tougher young offenders act, 15% would like stiffer penalties for offenders, 11% mention improving the integrity of the system, 8% would like changes to the young offenders act in general and 7% would like the government to increase the budget and hire more police.
- About 7% of respondents mention 'other' changes they would like to see in the justice system such as dealing with Native issues more effectively (2%), increasing communications with communities (2%) and increasing funding to all areas (1%).

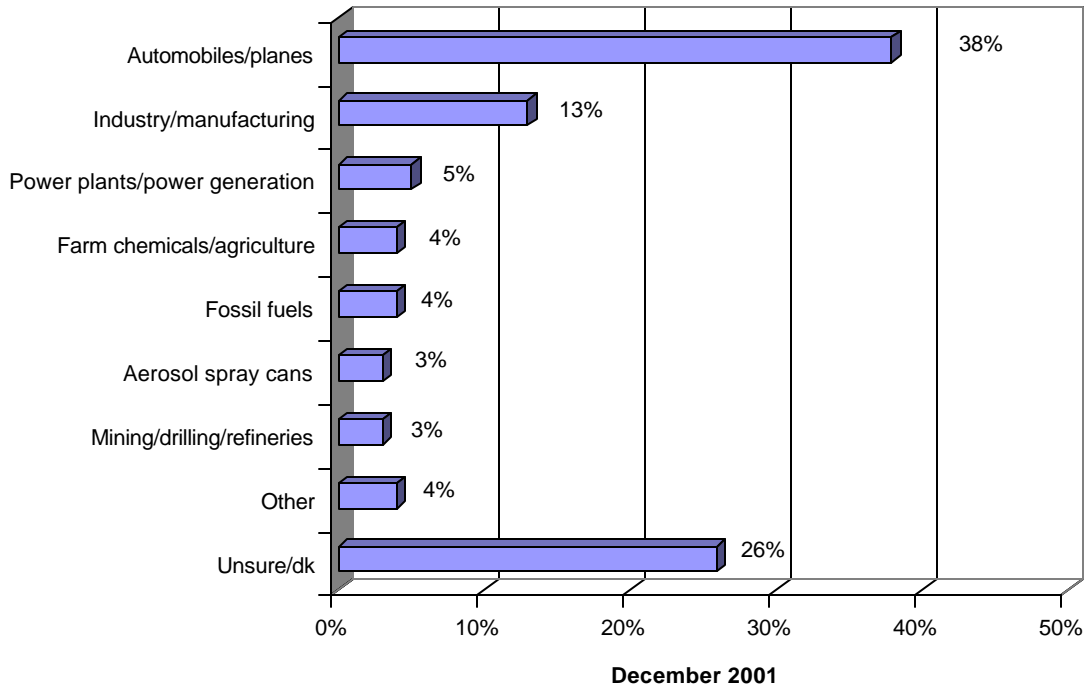
3.0 SASKATCHEWAN ENVIRONMENT & RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Question 8. You may have heard about climate change or global warming. Man made emissions of carbon dioxide and other substances, referred to as greenhouse gases (GHG), are said to be trapping heat from the sun within the earth's atmosphere and raising global temperatures, similar to how a greenhouse's window captures the sun's heat. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree that human activities are causing climate change?



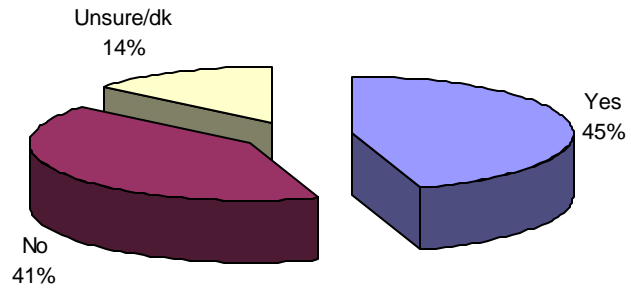
- More than three quarters (77%) agree that human activities are causing climate change.

Question 9. Which human activities are among the more important sources of greenhouse gas emissions in Saskatchewan?



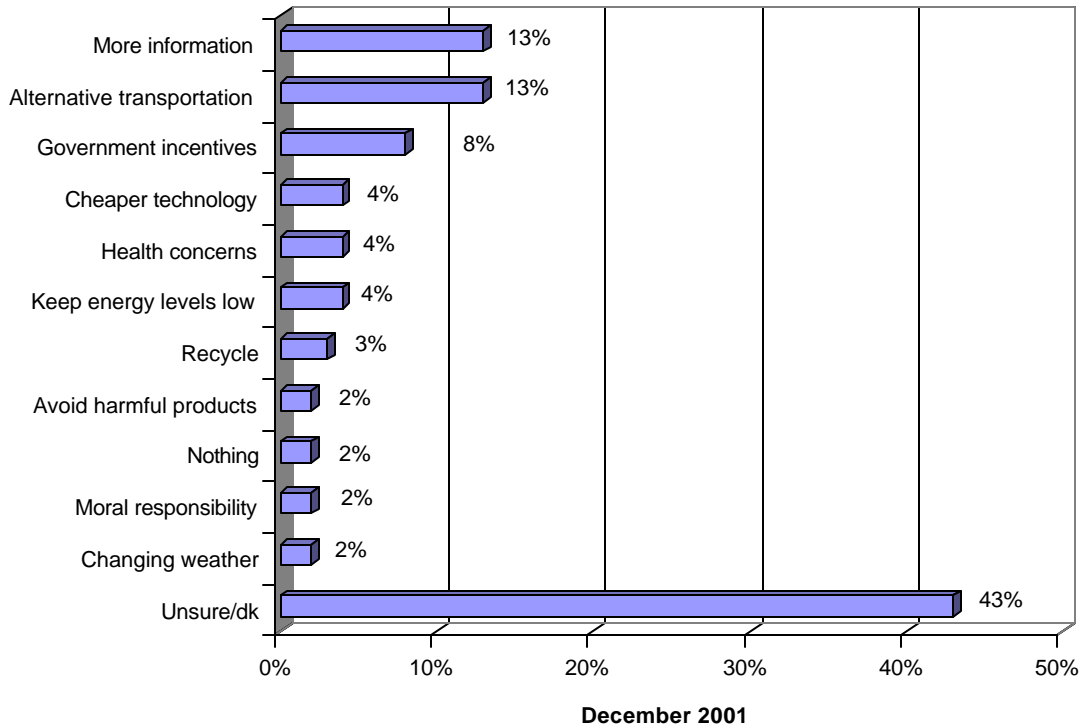
- More than one third (38%) of residents think automobiles and planes are the most important sources of greenhouse gas emissions in Saskatchewan.

Question 10. Have you changed any of your actions to reduce global warming?



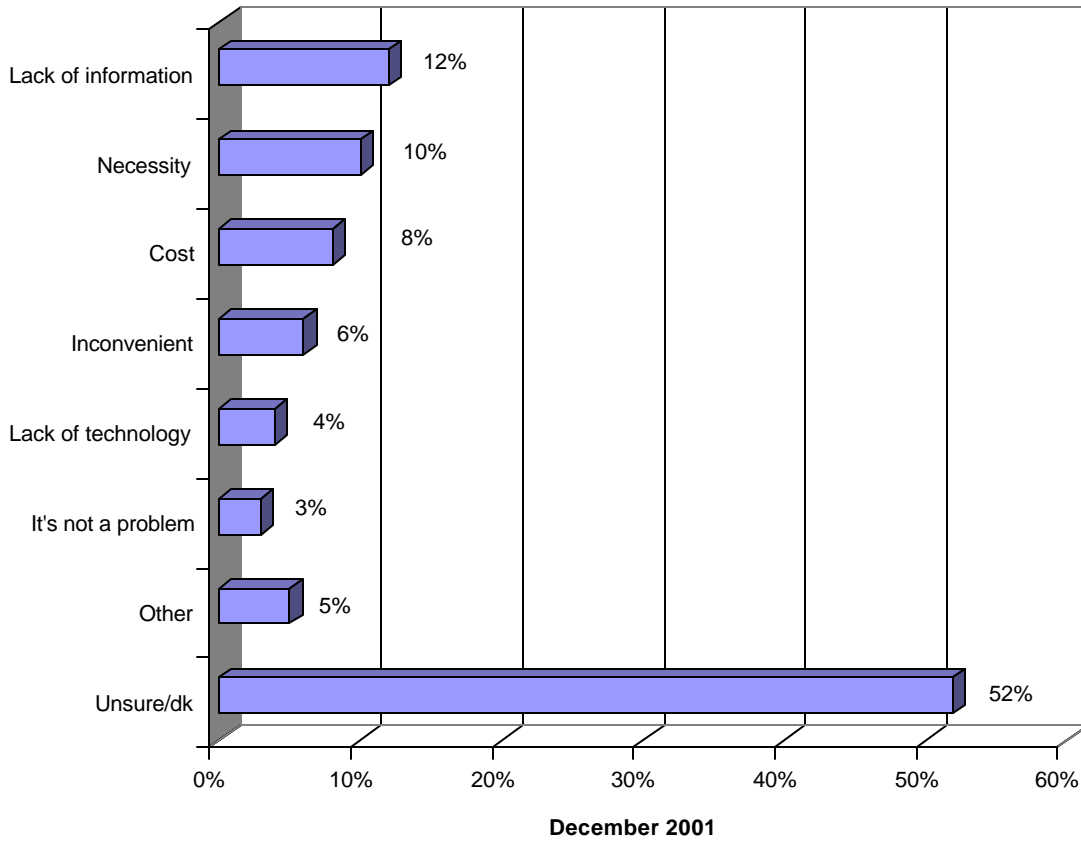
- Approximately 45% of Saskatchewan residents indicate they have changed some of their actions to reduce global warming.

Question 11. What might lead you to take personal action to reduce your emissions of greenhouse gases?



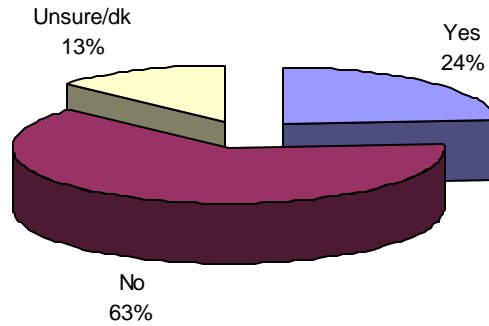
- Approximately 13% of Saskatchewan residents think more information about the effects of greenhouse gas emissions would encourage them to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and another 13% think more available alternative transportation such as public transportation, car pooling, walking and biking would encourage them to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

Question 12. What might be preventing you from taking personal action to reduce your emissions of greenhouse gases?



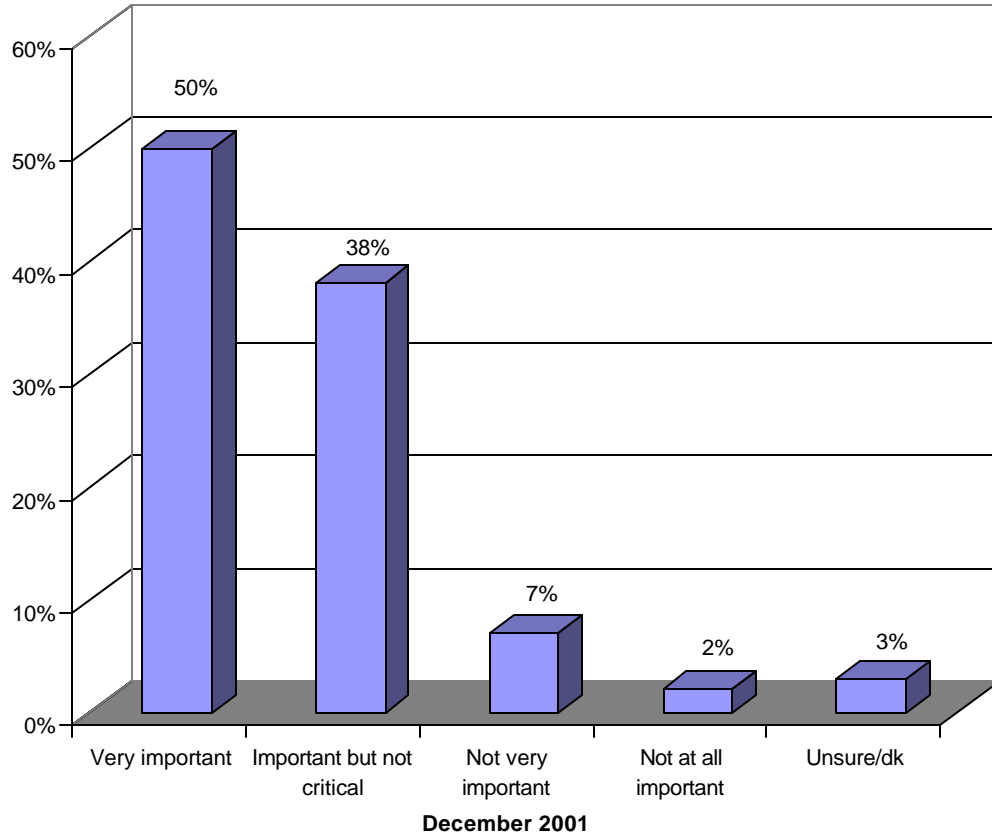
- Approximately 12% of Saskatchewan residents indicate a lack of information is preventing them from taking action on climate change and 10% think there is no necessity to take action.

Question 13. Are you aware of any actions that government or industry has taken to address climate change?



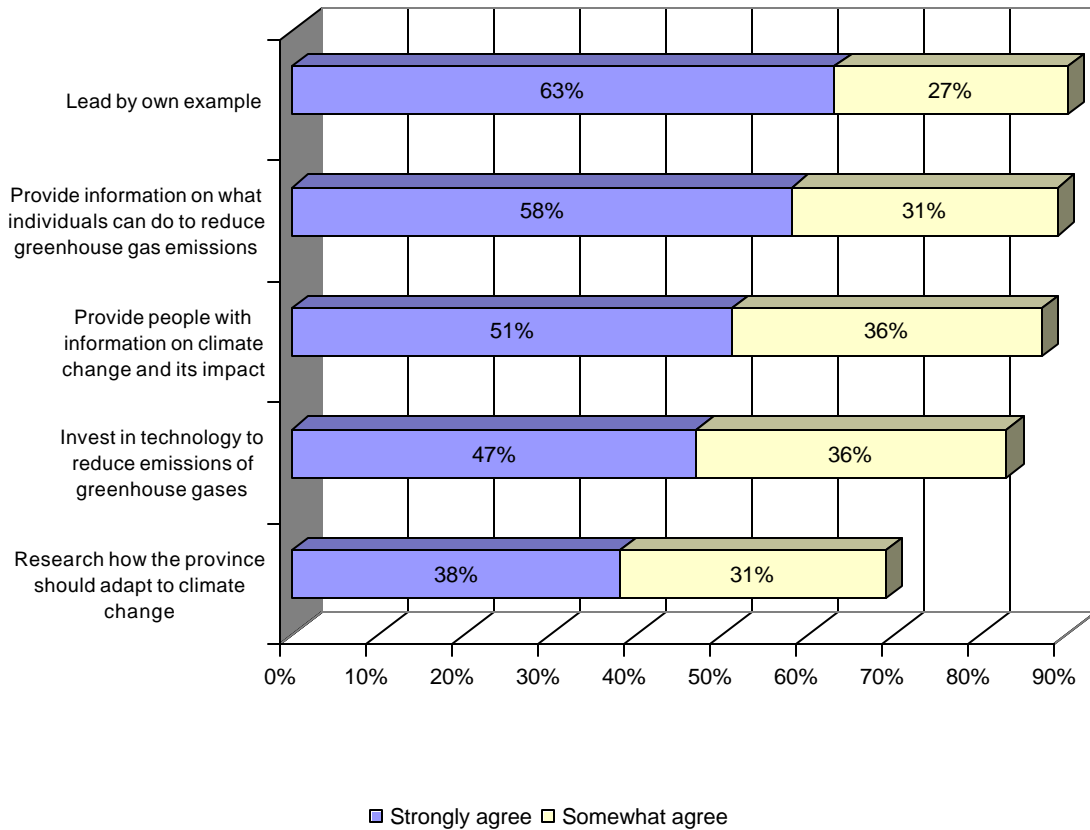
- One quarter (24%) of residents are aware of any actions that government or industry has taken to address climate change.

Question 14. Do you think climate change is a very important issue, important but not as critical, not very important or not at all important?



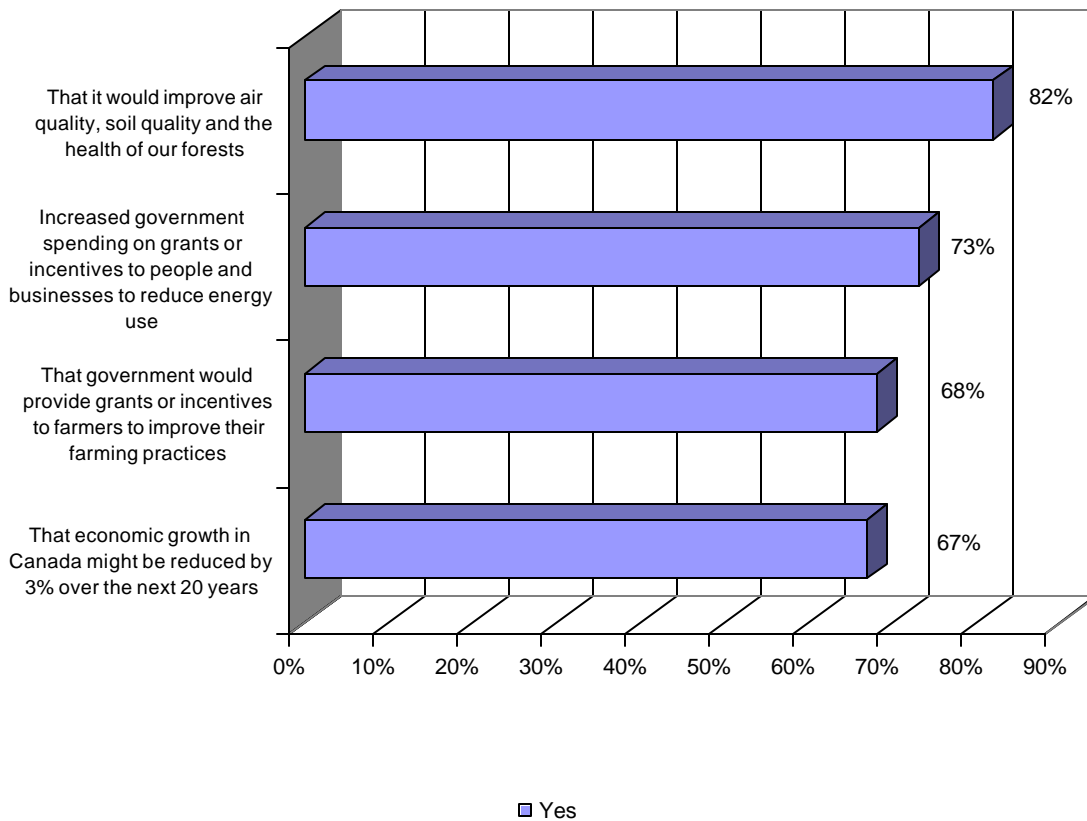
- One half (50%) of Saskatchewan residents think climate change is a very important issue, another 38% think it is important by not critical.

Question 15. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree that the province should:



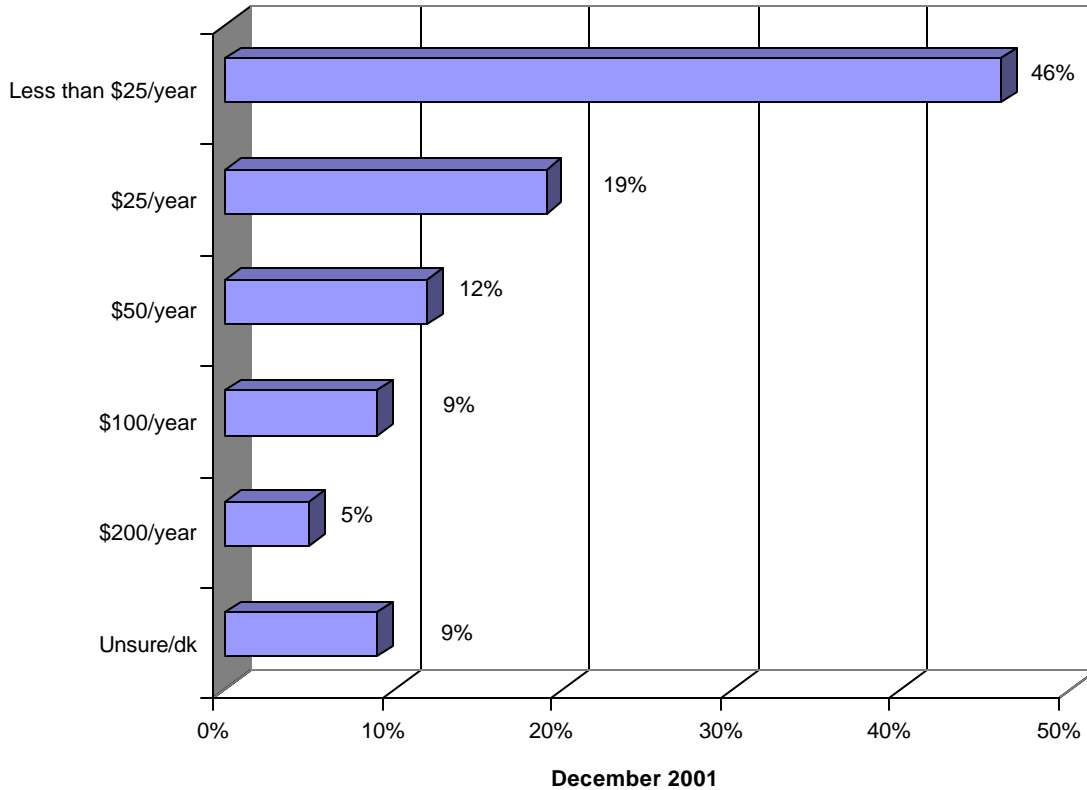
- The large majority of Saskatchewan residents agree the provincial government should lead by example by reducing its own greenhouse gas emissions (90%), the government should provide information on what individuals can do to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (89%), provide people with information on climate change and its impact (87%), invest in technology to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases (83%) and research how the province should adapt to climate change (69%).

Question 16. Should Saskatchewan support an international treaty that would require Canada as a whole to reduce its emissions of greenhouse gases if this means:



- More than two thirds of residents agree Saskatchewan should support an international treaty that would require Canada as a whole to reduce its emissions of greenhouse gases if it meant improving air quality in cities, soil quality on farms and the health of Saskatchewan forests (82%), increasing government spending on grants or other financial incentives to people and businesses to reduce energy use (73%), that government would provide grants or other financial incentives to farmers to improve their farming practices (68%) and that economic growth in Canada might be reduced by 3 per cent over the next 20 years (67%).

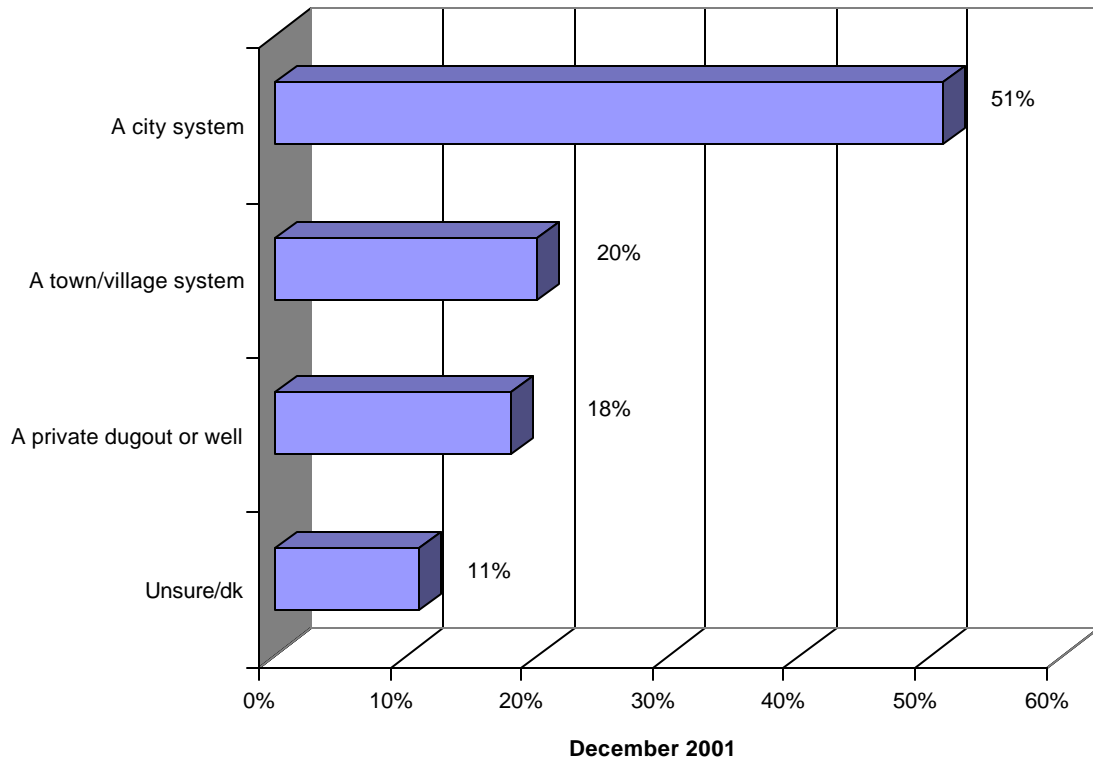
Question 17. Current analysis suggests that for Canada to meet its commitment in the Kyoto Protocol substantial efforts must be made to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from energy use. These efforts may increase the cost of electricity, natural gas or fuels. How much of an increase in your energy costs would you be willing to pay to support efforts to meet the greenhouse gas emission reduction targets that Canada may agree to in the Kyoto Protocol?



- Almost one half (46%) of Saskatchewan residents would be willing to less than \$25 a year to support efforts to meet the greenhouse gas emission reduction targets that Canada may agree to targets set out in the Kyoto Protocol.

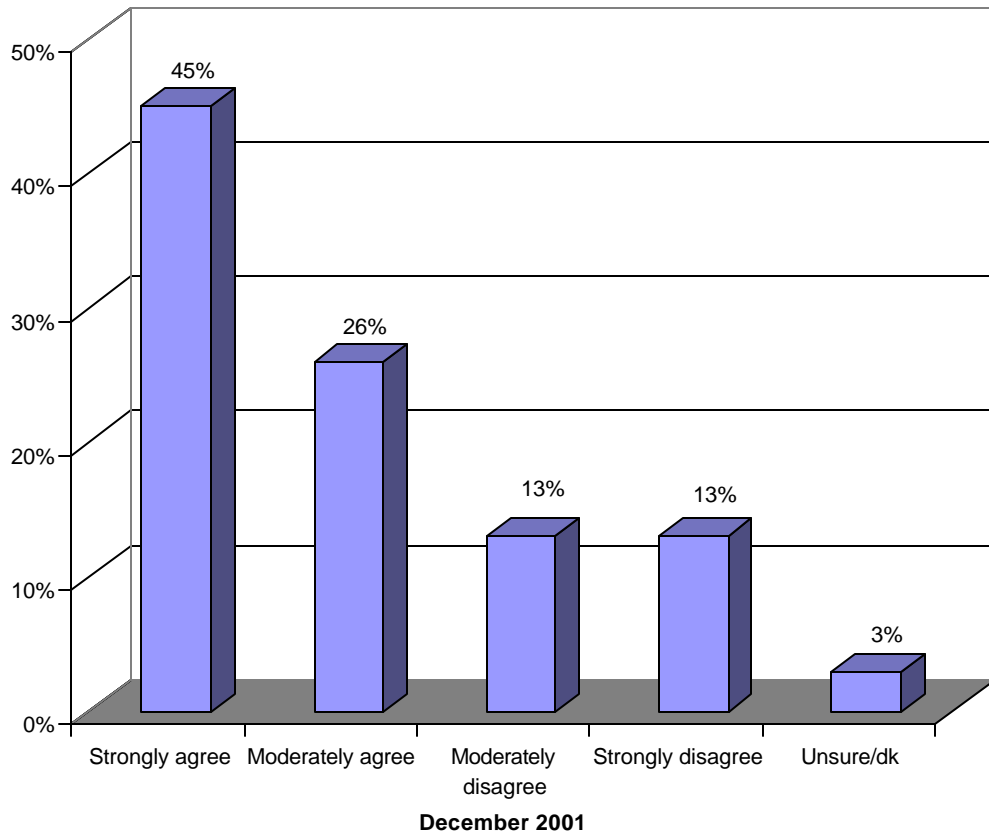
4.0 SASKWATER

Question 22. Can you tell me where your tap water comes from?



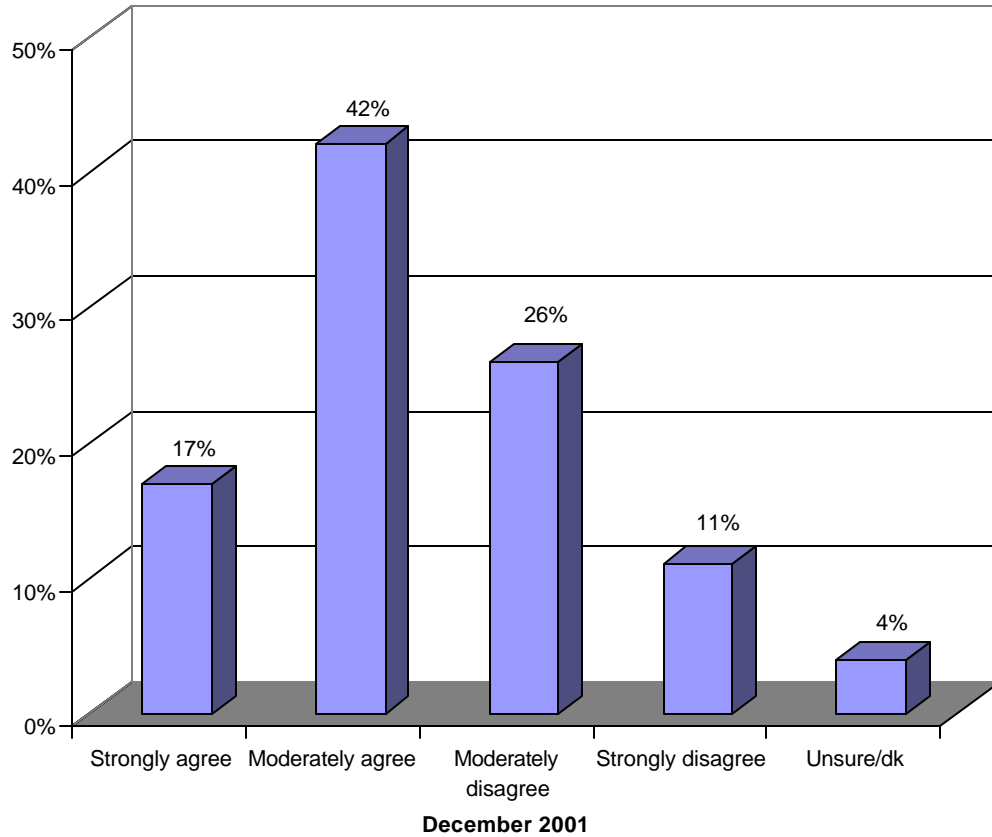
- The majority (51%) of Saskatchewan residents indicate their drinking water comes from a city system, 20% from a town or village system and 18% say their drinking water comes from a private dugout or well.

Question 23. Please tell me if you agree; I am confident that my drinking water is safe.



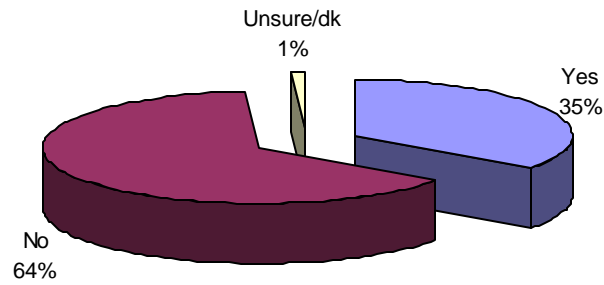
- The majority (71%) of Saskatchewan residents are confident that their drinking water is safe.

Question 24. Saskatchewan residents have safe drinking water.



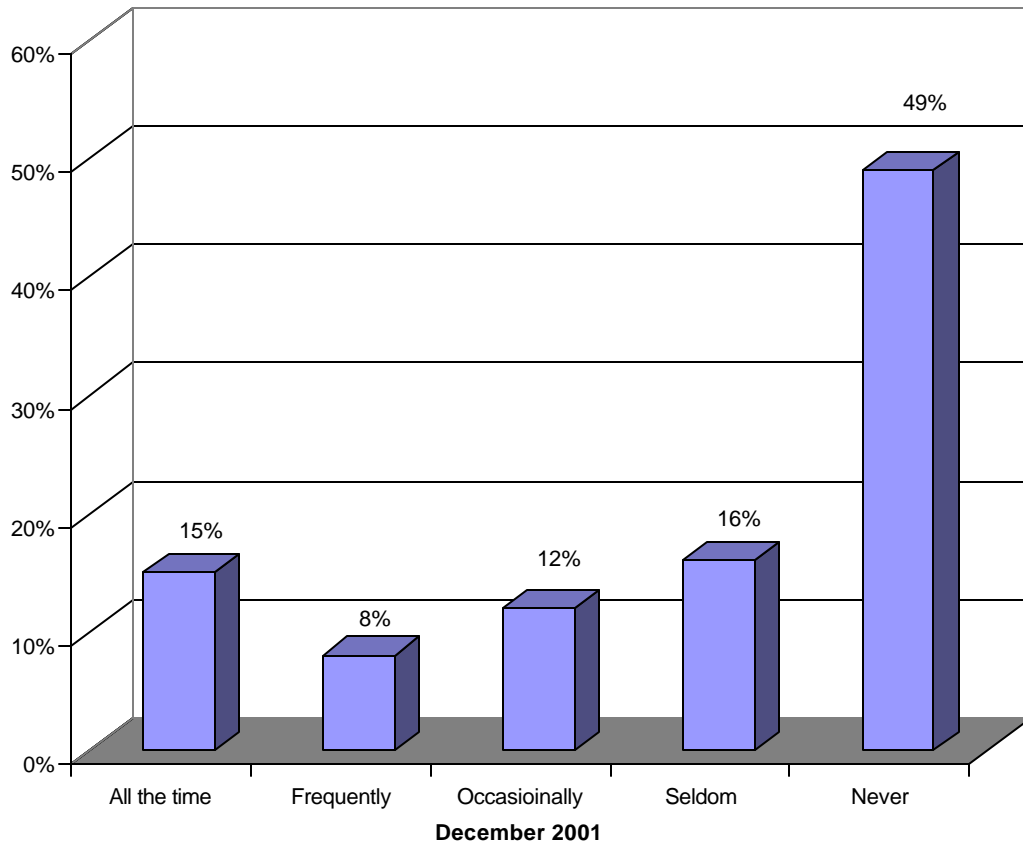
- The majority (59%) of residents agree Saskatchewan residents have safe drinking water.

Question 25. Do you use any additional in-house water purification system such as a filter attached to your tap or a reverse osmosis filter?



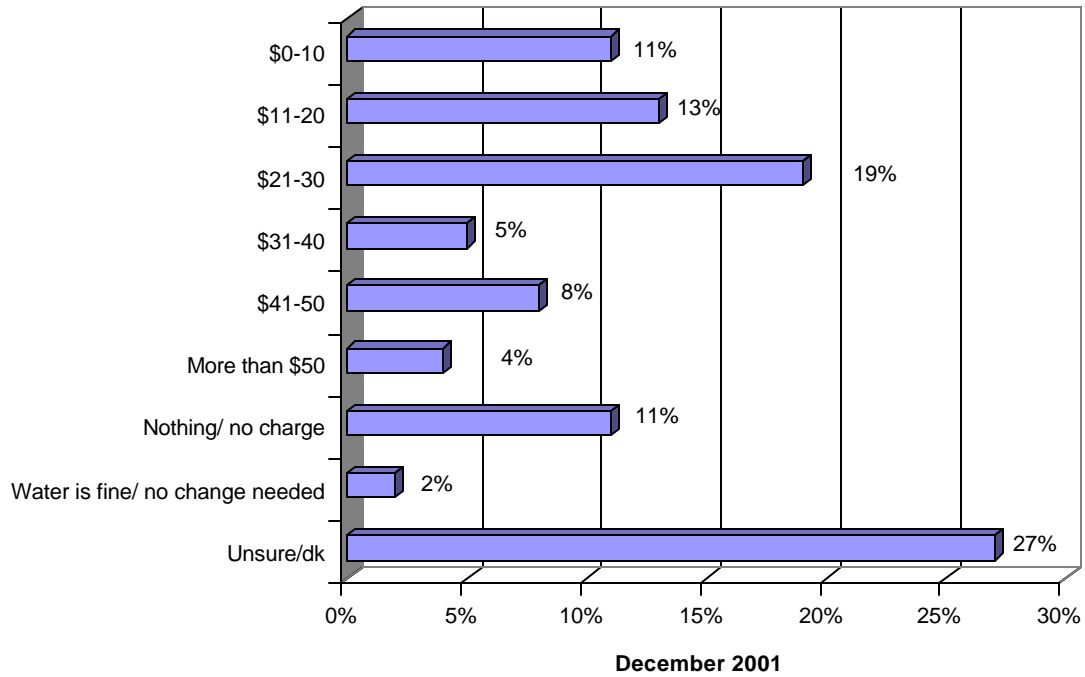
- More than one third (35%) of Saskatchewan residents use an additional in-house water purification system.

Question 26. How often do you purchase bottled water for use at home?



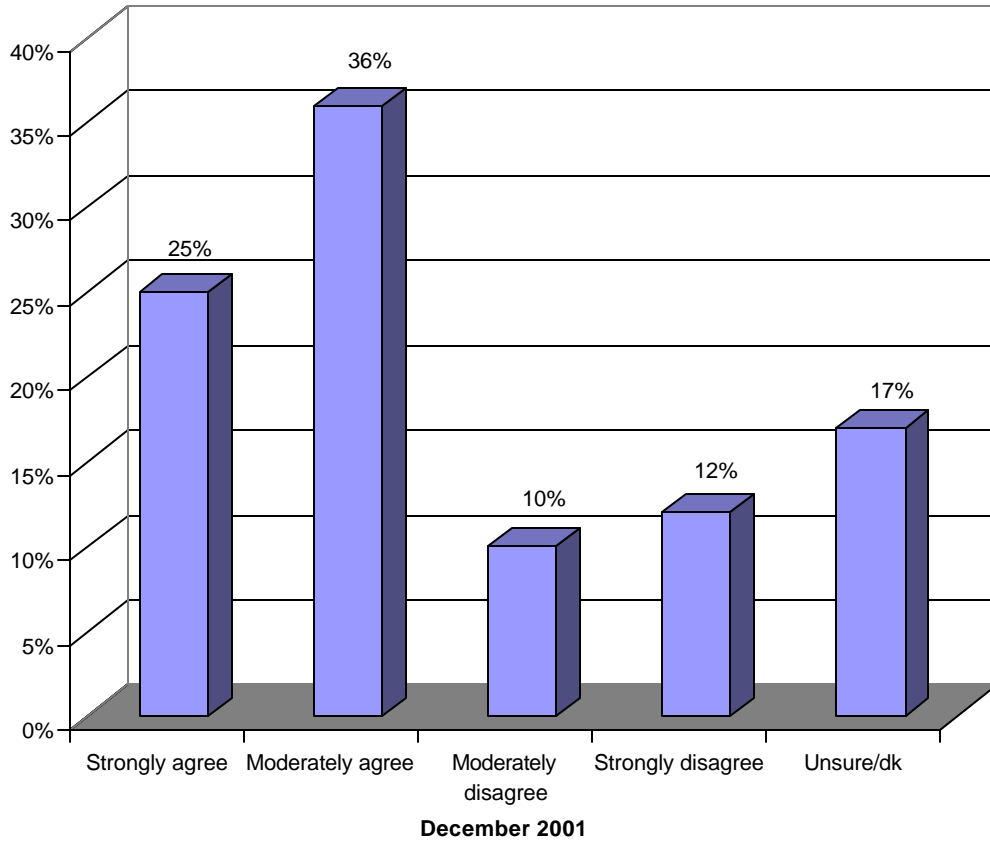
- Approximately one half (49%) of residents never purchase bottled water for use at home; 23% say they do frequently or all the time.

Question 27. What do you believe is a reasonable monthly household charge for quality drinking water from your tap?



- Approximately 43% of residents think \$30 or less is a reasonable monthly household charge for quality drinking water from their tap.

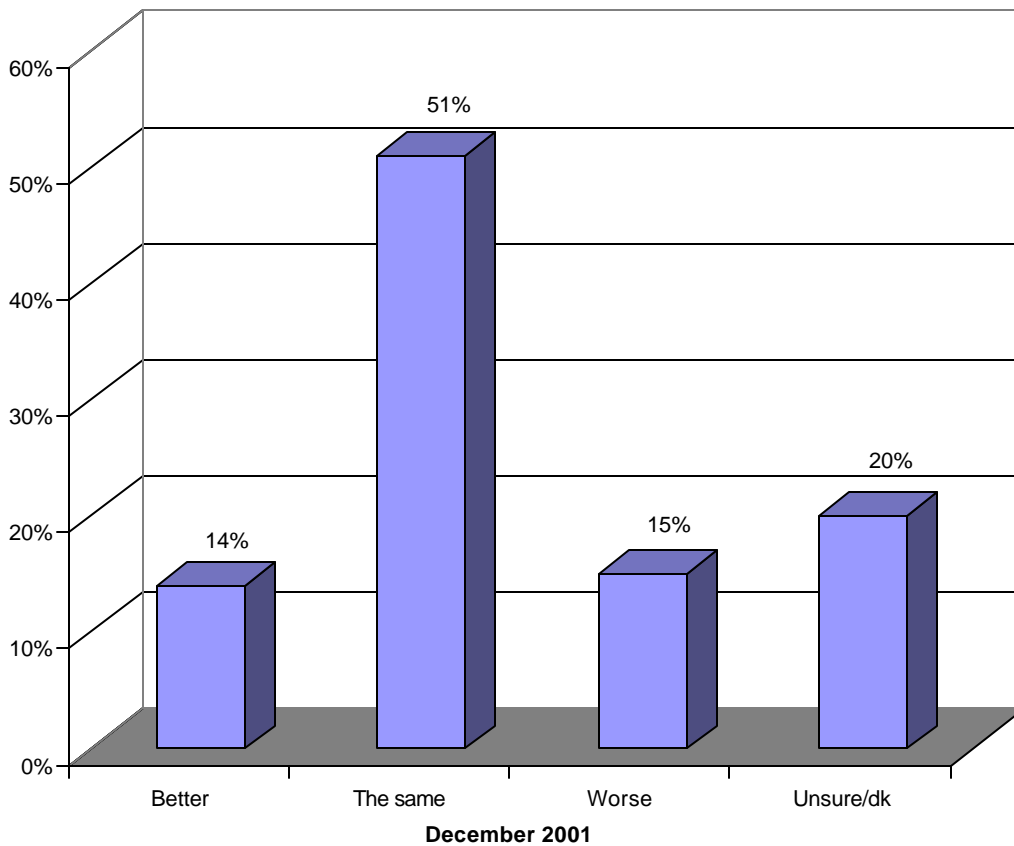
Question 28. If improvements are required to make my drinking water safe or to generally improve the drinking water quality, I would be willing to pay higher water rates.



- The majority (61%) of Saskatchewan residents agree they would be willing to pay higher water rates to make their drinking water safe or to generally improve the drinking water quality.

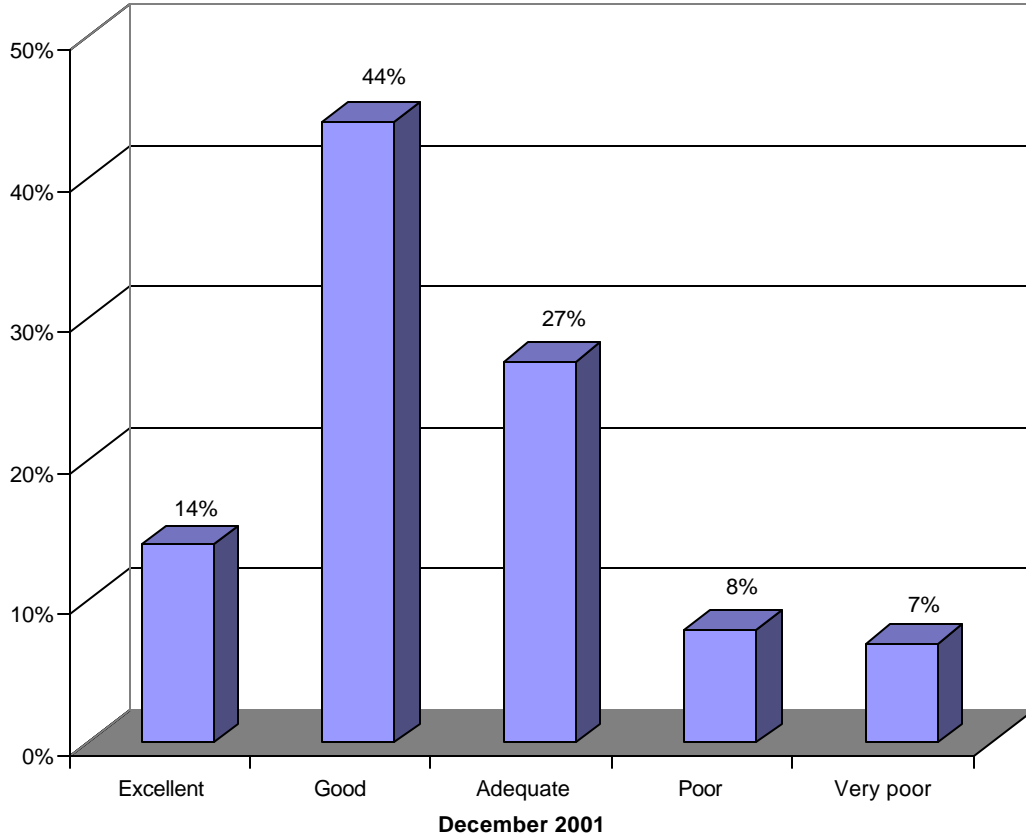
5.0 POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION & SKILLS TRAINING

Question 29. Compared to the rest of the country, do you think the post-secondary education and training system in Saskatchewan is better, the same or worse?



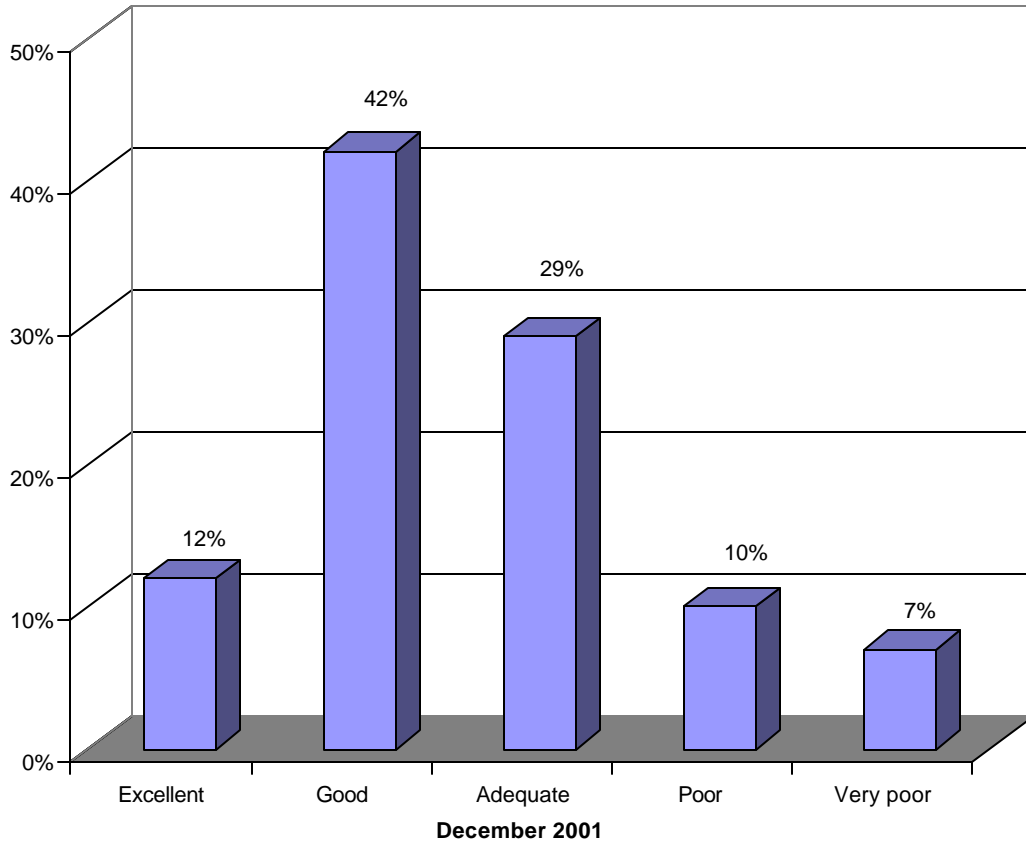
- The majority (65%) of residents think the post-secondary education and training system in Saskatchewan is the same or better than that of the rest of the country.

Question 30. Do you think the quality of Saskatchewan's post-secondary education and training is generally excellent, good, adequate, poor or very poor?



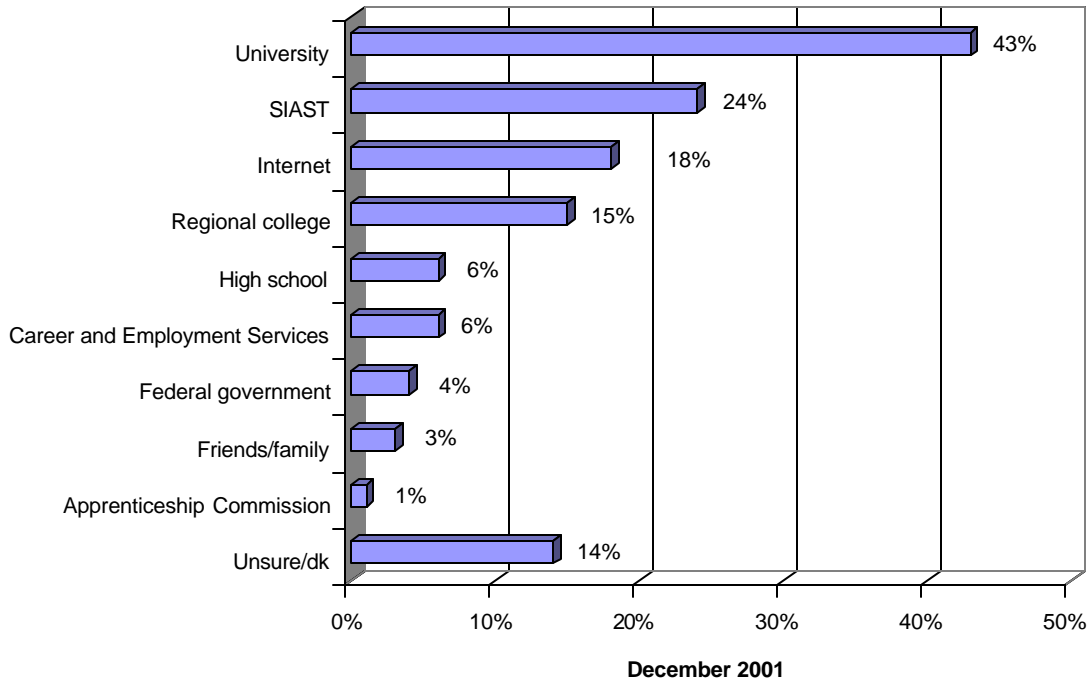
- The large majority (85%) of residents think the quality of Saskatchewan's training programs is adequate or better.

Question 31. How would you rate your level of awareness of Saskatchewan's post-secondary education and training system?



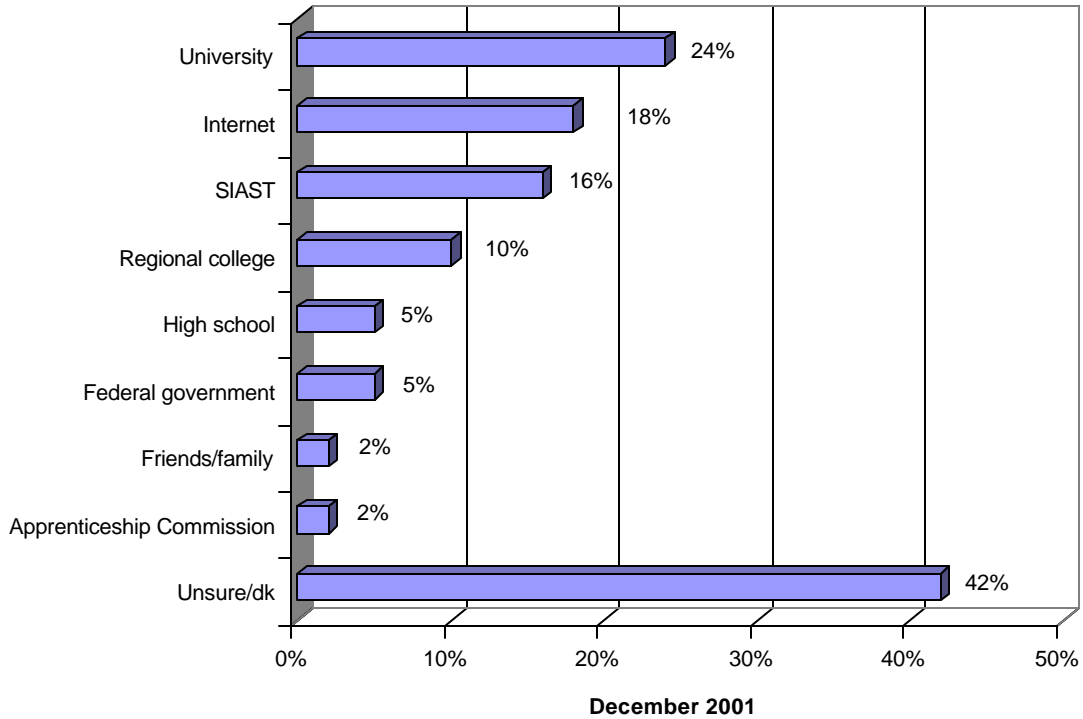
- The large majority (83%) of residents rate their level of awareness of Saskatchewan's post-secondary education and training system as adequate or better.

Question 32. Where would you go to get information about post-secondary education and training opportunities in Saskatchewan?



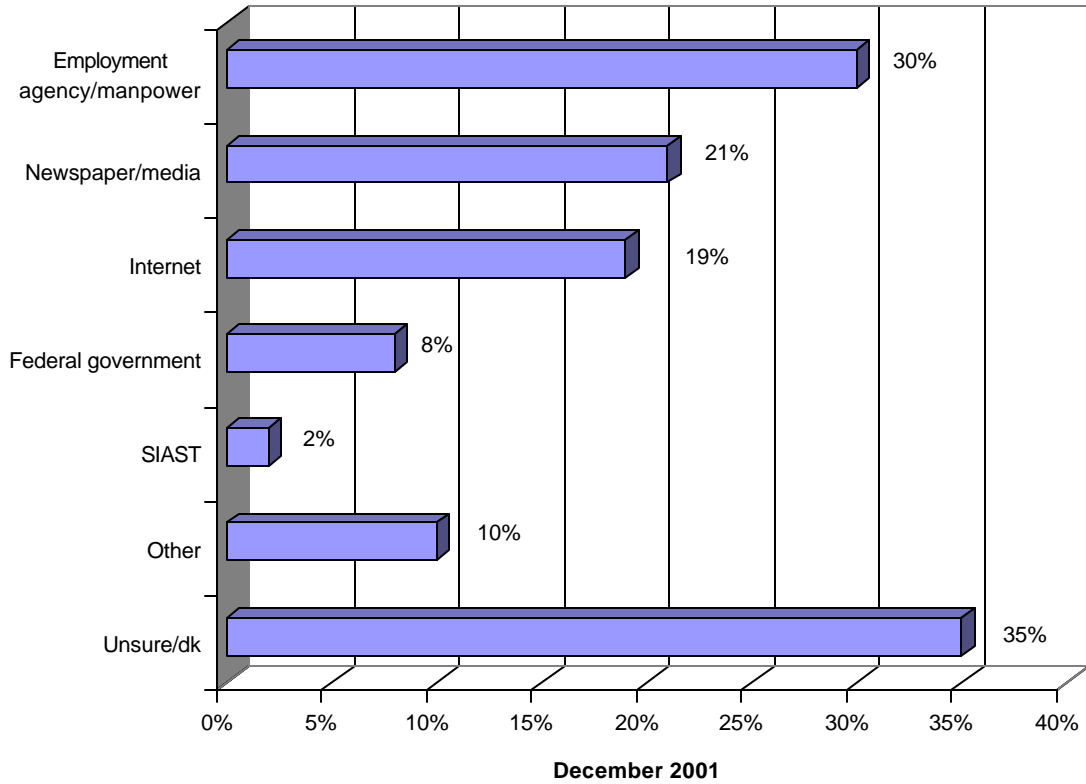
- Approximately 43% of residents would go to a university to get information about post-secondary education and training opportunities in Saskatchewan.

Question 33. Where would you go for career information?



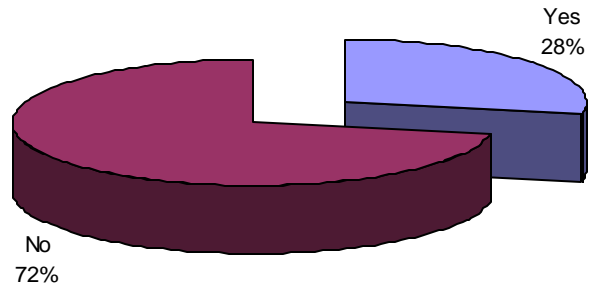
- Approximately one quarter (24%) of Saskatchewan residents would go to a university for career information, 18% would search the Internet, 16% would get information from SIAST and 10% would obtain information from a regional college.

Question 34. Where would you go for information about job opportunities or to find workers?



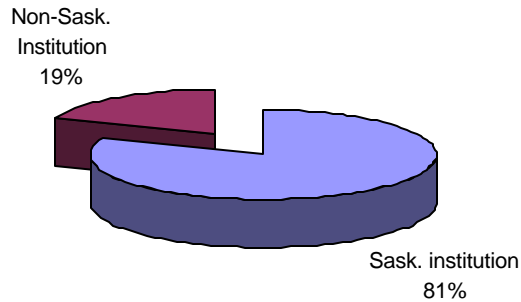
- Approximately 30% of residents would go to an employment agency or 'Manpower' (HRDC) to get information about job opportunities or to find workers, 21% would go to newspapers or media and 19% would search the Internet.

Question 35. In the past year, have you or one of your immediate family taken credited post-secondary education?



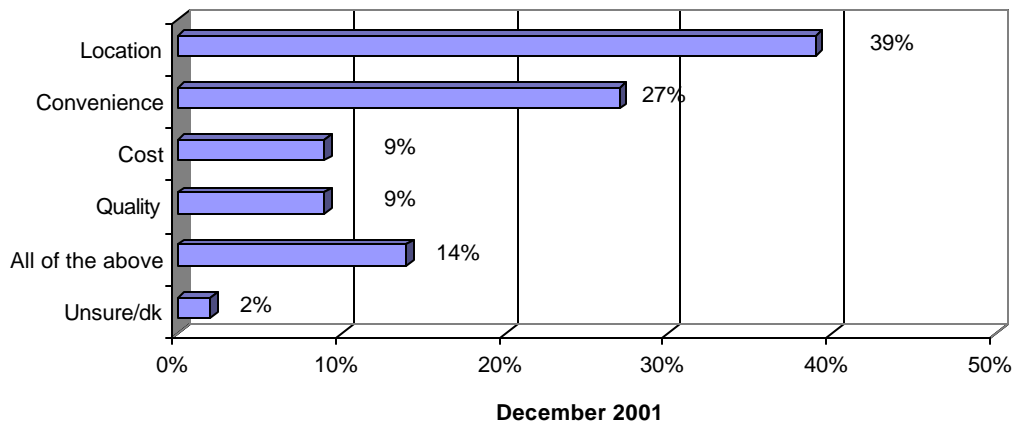
- More than one quarter (28%) of Saskatchewan residents indicate they or one of their immediate family have taken credited post-secondary education.

Question 36. Was this education from a Saskatchewan or a non-Saskatchewan institution?



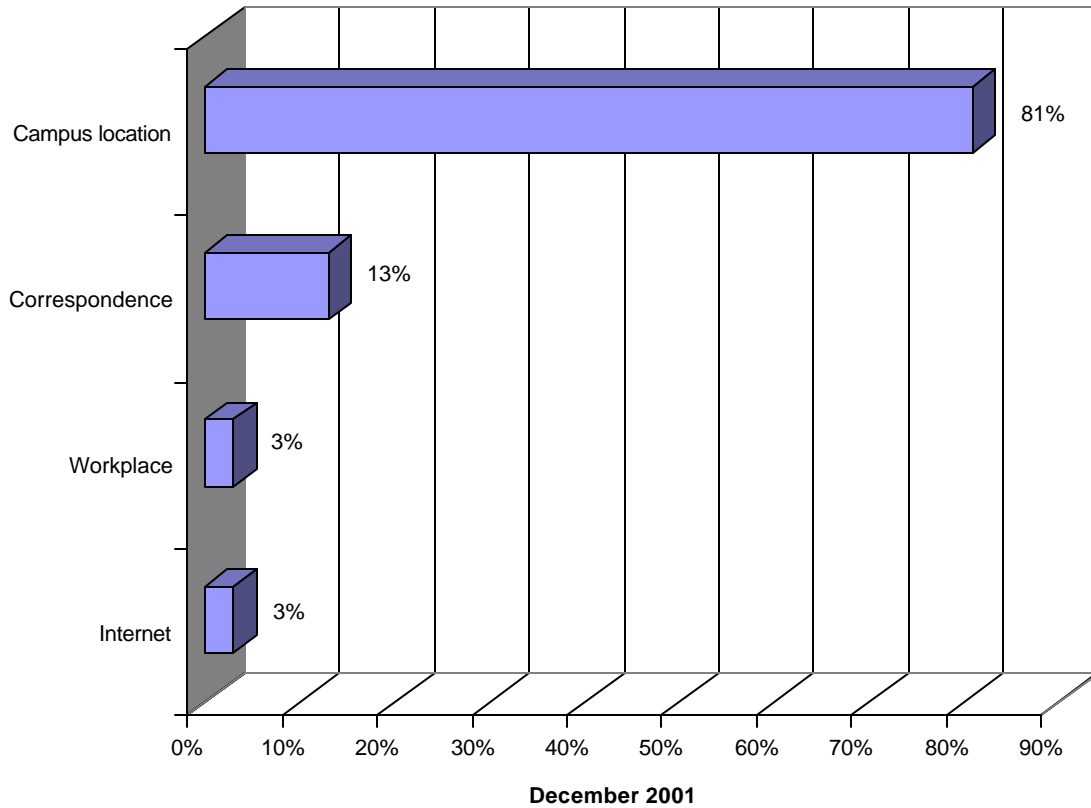
- Of those residents who indicate they or an immediate family member have taken credited post-secondary education, the large majority (81%) did so through a Saskatchewan institution (23% of all respondents).

Question 36b. Did you or your family member choose a Saskatchewan institution because of cost, convenience, location, quality, or other?



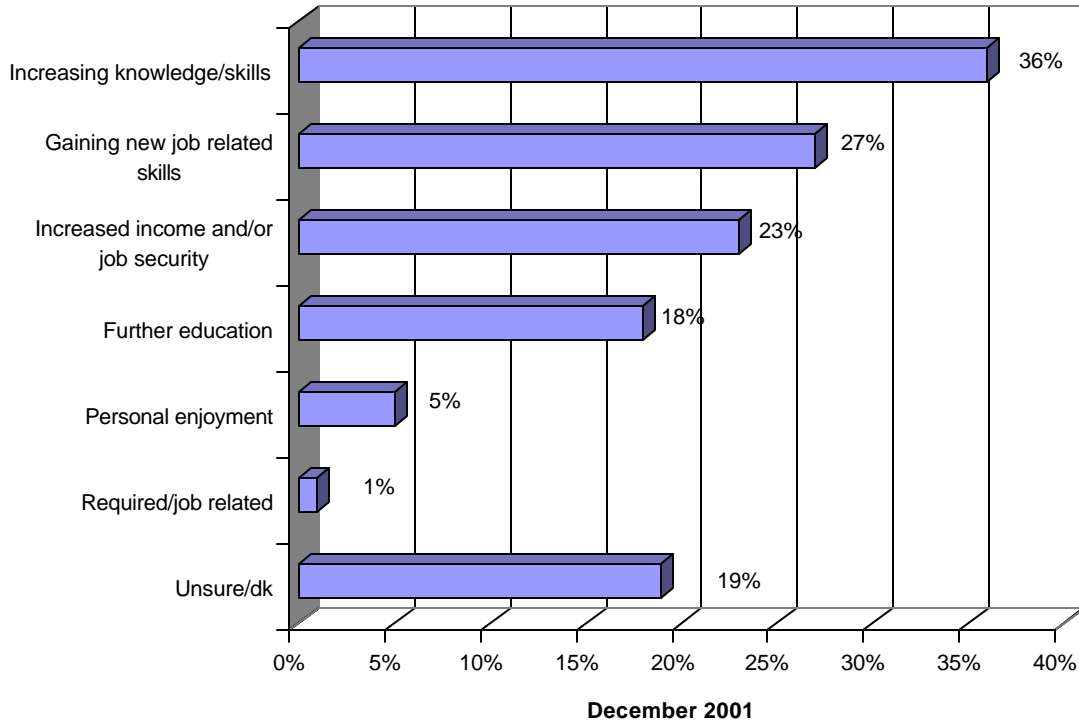
- Approximately 39% of those who chose a Saskatchewan institution for credited post-secondary education did so because of location (9% of all respondents) and 27% chose a Saskatchewan institution because of convenience (6% of all respondents).

Question 37. Did you or your family member take this training/education in person at a campus location, through correspondence, at the workplace, or via Internet?



- The large majority (81%) of those residents who indicate they or an immediate family member have taken credited post-secondary education took the training in person at a campus location (23% of all respondents).

Question 38. What were the primary reasons for your participation in post secondary education?

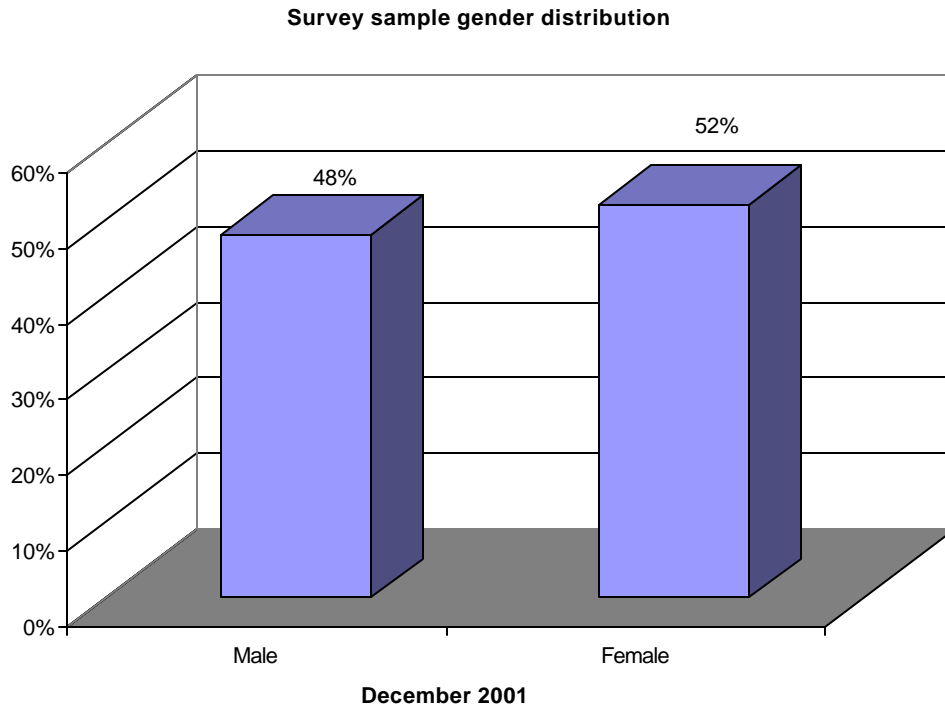


- Approximately 36% of those residents who indicate they or an immediate family member have taken credited post-secondary education did so to increase their knowledge and skills (10% of all respondents), 27% say it was to gain new job related skills (8% of all respondents) and 23% did so to increase their income and/or job security (7% of all respondents).

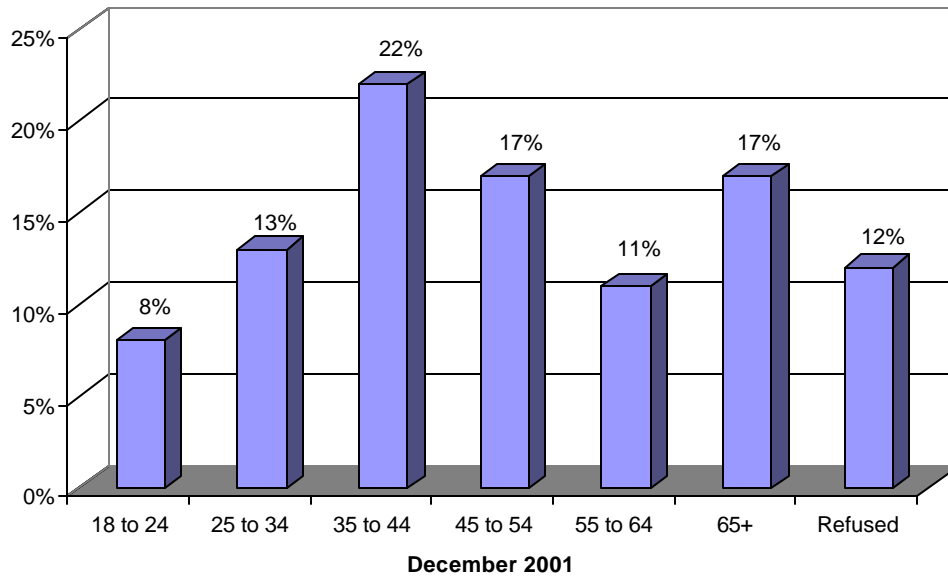
APPENDIX II SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

The omnibus public opinion sample frame is constructed to facilitate proportionate representation of various demographic characteristics evident within the province of Saskatchewan. This ensures that opinions of all the various types of residents in Saskatchewan are proportionately represented in the statistical measurements documented in this report. The demographic distributions from the survey sample generally parallel the province's actual population distributions, as measured by Statistics Canada census data.

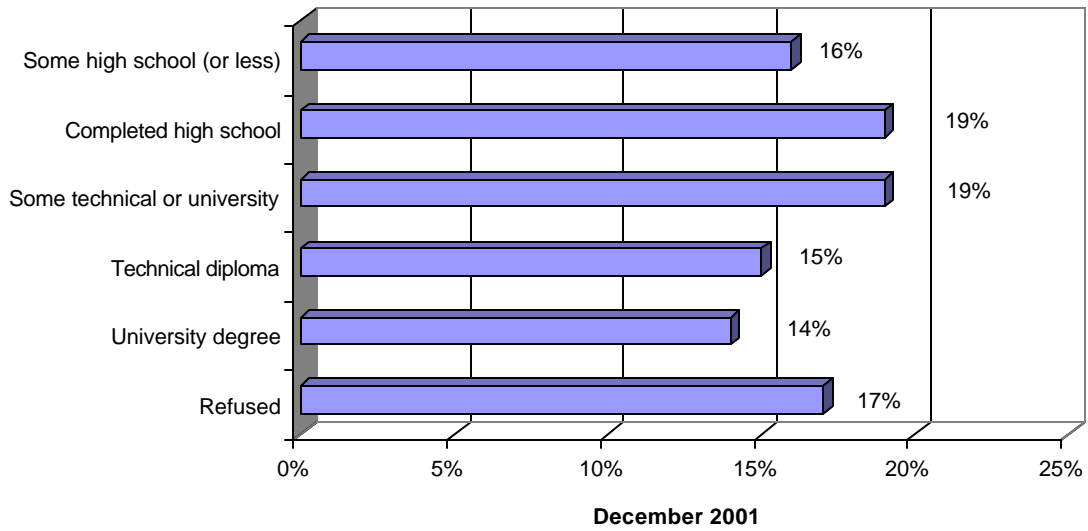
The omnibus survey sample size of 1,000 people yields public opinion measurements with a statistical level of confidence of 95 percent within an overall margin of error for the point estimates contained in this report of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points.



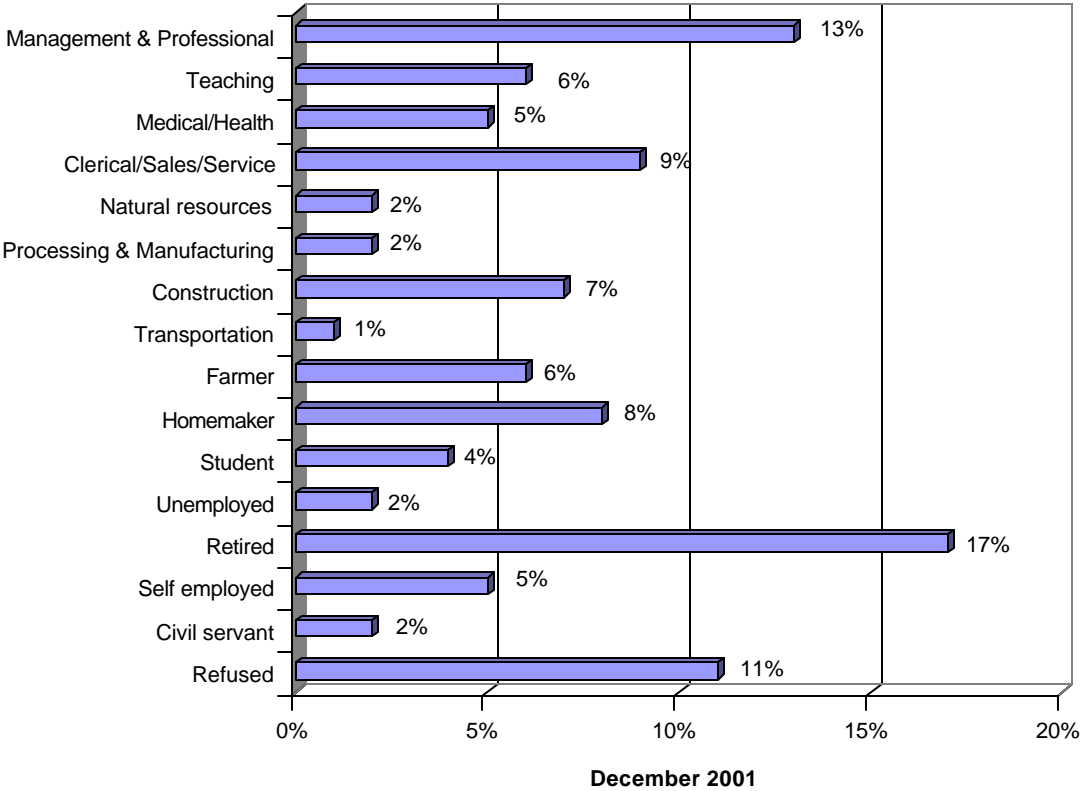
Survey sample age distribution



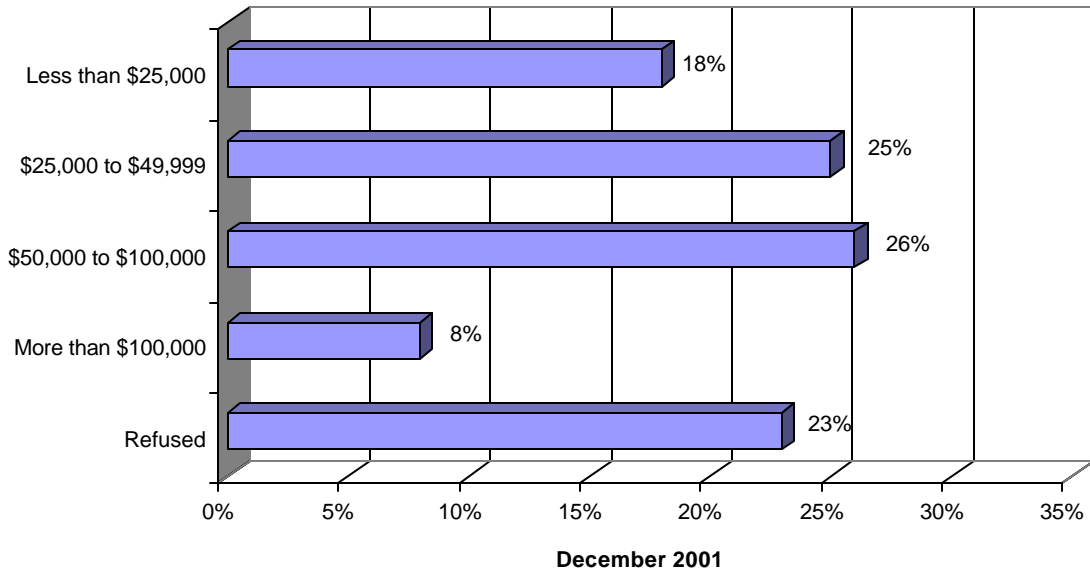
Survey sample education distribution



Survey sample occupation distribution



Survey sample income distribution



Survey sample regional distribution

