



Government of Saskatchewan

Public Opinion Polling

from April 1, 2002 – June 30, 2002

OMNIBUS
Provincial Public Opinion Survey

June 2002

Omnibus
Provincial Public Opinion Survey

Prepared for:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Federal issues that Saskatchewan residents tend to be most concerned with include health care, agriculture, the economy, jobs and unemployment and international issues.
- Provincial issues that Saskatchewan residents tend to be most concerned with include agriculture, health care, jobs and unemployment and population loss and rural development.
- More than two thirds of residents believe improving highways, support programs for disadvantaged children and forest fire control are valuable services provided by the provincial government.
- The majority of residents believe air ambulance service, environment protection, support for business development and job creation, housing programs for senior citizens and low-income families, training and apprenticeship programs and provision of crop insurance cost-shared with farmers are valuable services provided by the provincial government.
- More than one quarter of Saskatchewan residents indicate they or one of their immediate family has taken credited post-secondary education in the past year.
- Approximately one half of residents think the most important issue facing the post-secondary education and training system in Saskatchewan today is the cost of training. Perceived benefits associated with post-secondary education and training include better jobs and an educated workforce.
- Almost one half of residents think the number of people in Saskatchewan receiving welfare has been increasing over the past four years.

METHODOLOGY

Fast Consulting conducted the June 2002 public opinion survey for the Government of Saskatchewan with a representative sample of the Saskatchewan population. The June 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;
- learning, and
- social services.

Questions for the survey were provided by various departments within the Government of Saskatchewan 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.

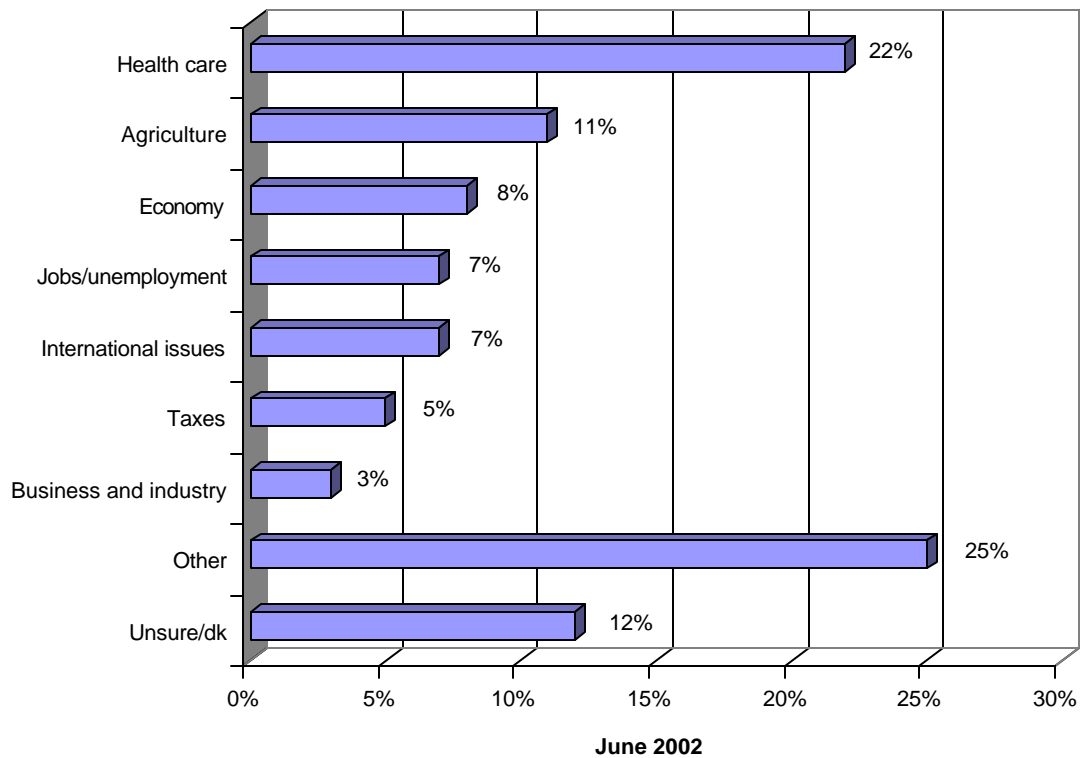
One thousand residents of the province were interviewed between Monday, June 17 and Sunday, June 30, 2002. Interviews were conducted by telephone at times that were appropriate and convenient for respondents - weekdays between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. and weekends between the hours of 11:00 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.

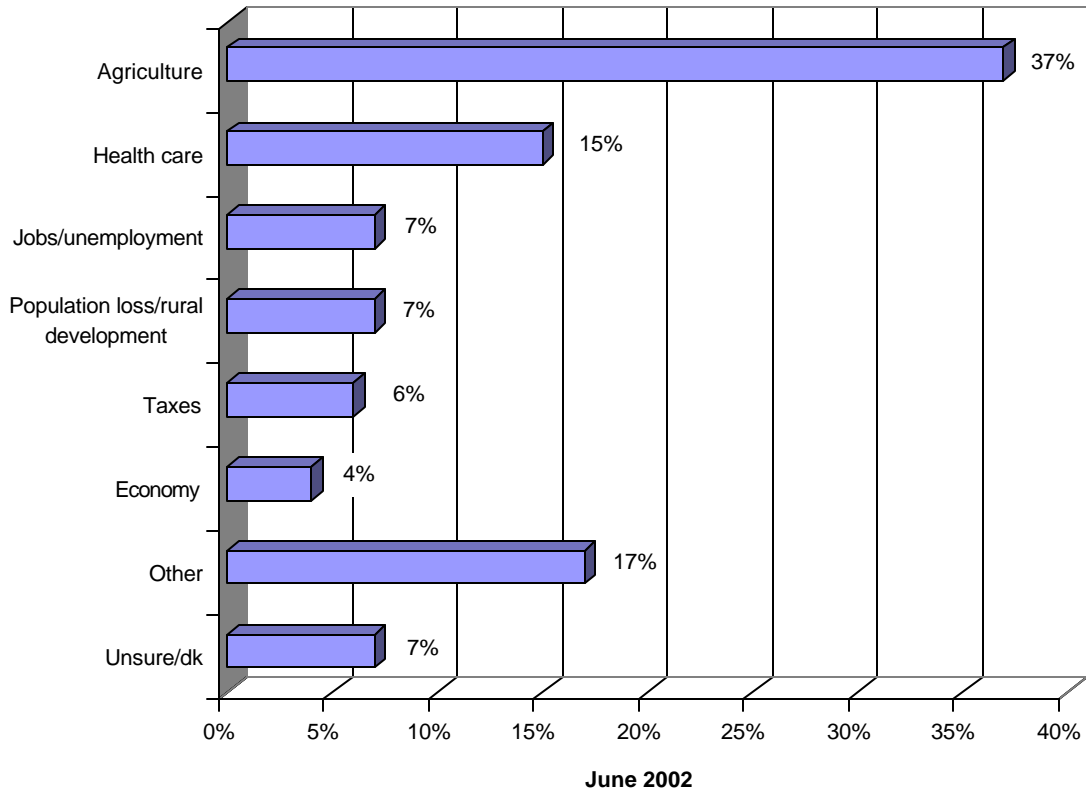
1.0 GENERAL ISSUES

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



- According to 22% of Saskatchewan residents, the most important issue facing Canada today is the health care system. Other important issues include agriculture (11%), the economy (8%), jobs and unemployment (7%), international issues (7%), federal taxes (5%) and business and industry (3%).
- Approximately 25% of residents are primarily concerned with 'other' issues such as the federal government in general (8%), the national deficit and accumulated debt (2%), the environment (2%), moral, social and religious issues (2%), Native issues (2%), crime and poverty (1%), education (1%) and economic development (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 37% of Saskatchewan residents, is agriculture. Approximately 15% of residents are concerned primarily with health care, 7% with jobs and unemployment, another 7% with population loss and rural development, 6% with provincial taxes and 4% with the provincial economy.
- Included among 'other' important issues identified by 17% of residents are the provincial government in general (3%), education (2%), Native issues (2%), the drought conditions (2%), business and industry (1%) and the provincial debt (1%).

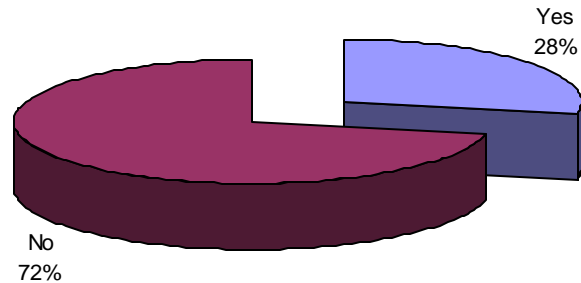
Question 3. I am going to list a number of services provided by the provincial government. I would like to know how valuable you believe these services are, not just to you personally, but to the people of Saskatchewan. Please rank the degree of value on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being of little or no value and 5 being of great value.

| | Valuable (rank of 4-5) |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Improving highways | 71% |
| Support programs for disadvantaged children | 70% |
| Forest fire control | 69% |
| Air ambulance service | 65% |
| Environment protection | 64% |
| Support for business development and job creation | 62% |
| Housing programs for senior citizens and low-income families | 62% |
| Training and apprenticeship programs | 59% |
| Provision of crop insurance cost-shared with farmers | 56% |
| Support for recreation, sports and cultural activities | 30% |

- More than two thirds of residents believe improving highways (71%), support programs for disadvantaged children (70%) and forest fire control (69%) are valuable services (rank of 4 to 5) provided by the provincial government.
- The majority of residents believe air ambulance service (65%), environment protection (64%), support for business development and job creation (62%), housing programs for senior citizens and low-income families (62%), training and apprenticeship programs (59%) and provision of crop insurance cost-shared with farmers (56%) are valuable services provided by the provincial government.

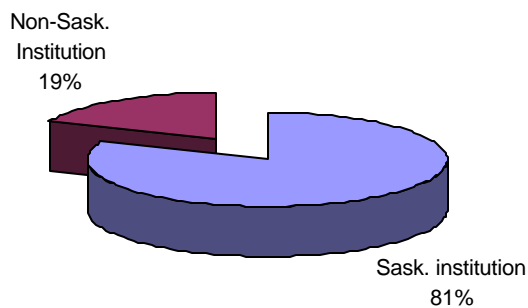
2.0 LEARNING

Question 4. In the past year, have you or one of your immediate family taken credited post-secondary education?



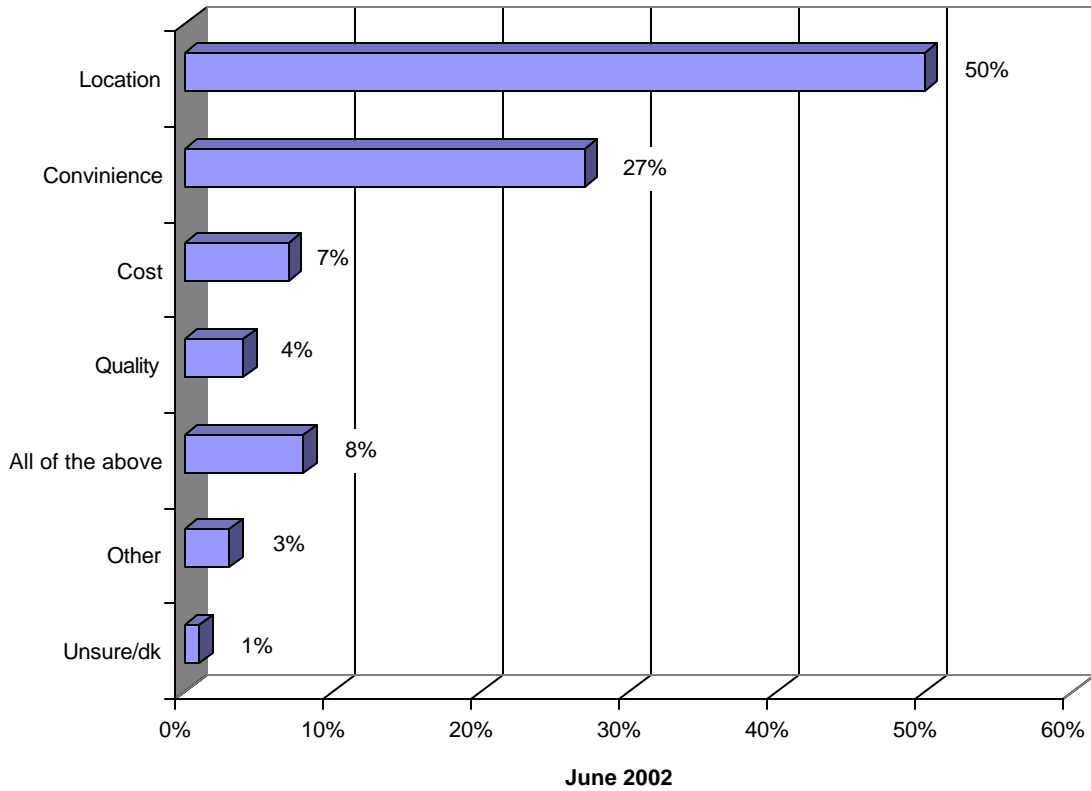
- More than one quarter (28%) of Saskatchewan residents indicate they or one of their immediate family has taken credited post-secondary education.

Question 5. Was this education from a Saskatchewan or a non-Saskatchewan institution?



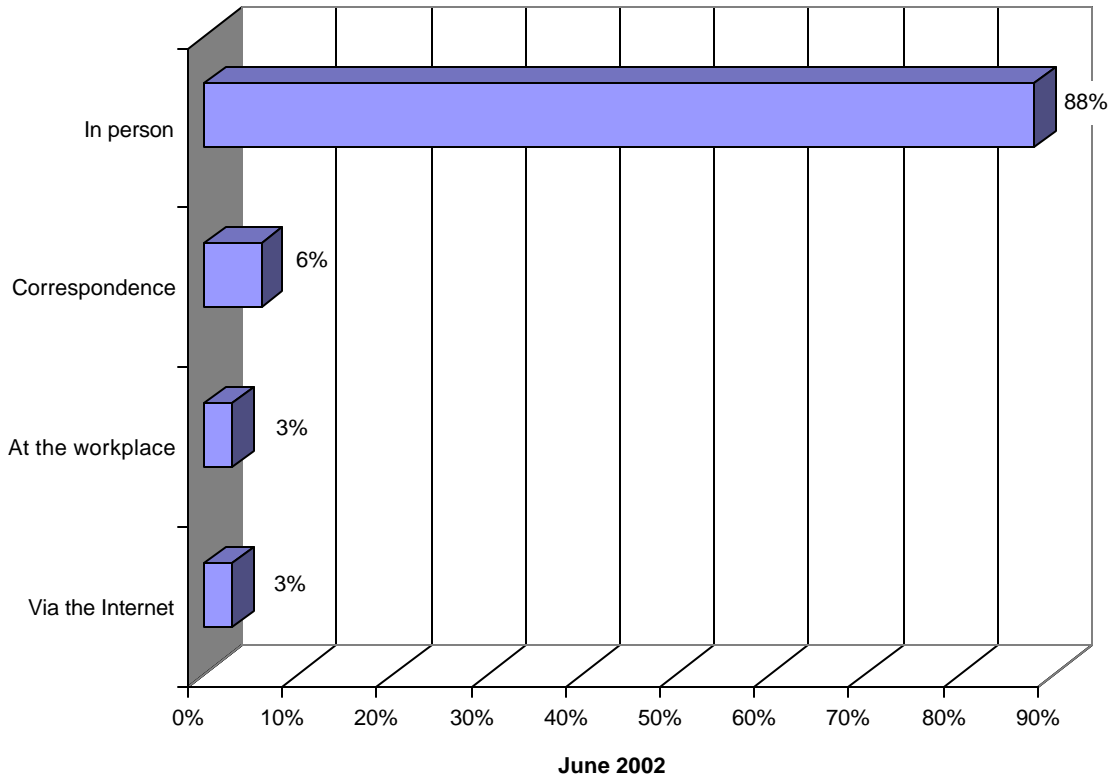
- Of those residents who indicate they or an immediate family member have taken credited post-secondary education, the large majority (81%) did so through a Saskatchewan institution (23% of all respondents).

Question 6. Did you or your family member choose a Saskatchewan institution because of cost, convenience, location, quality or other?



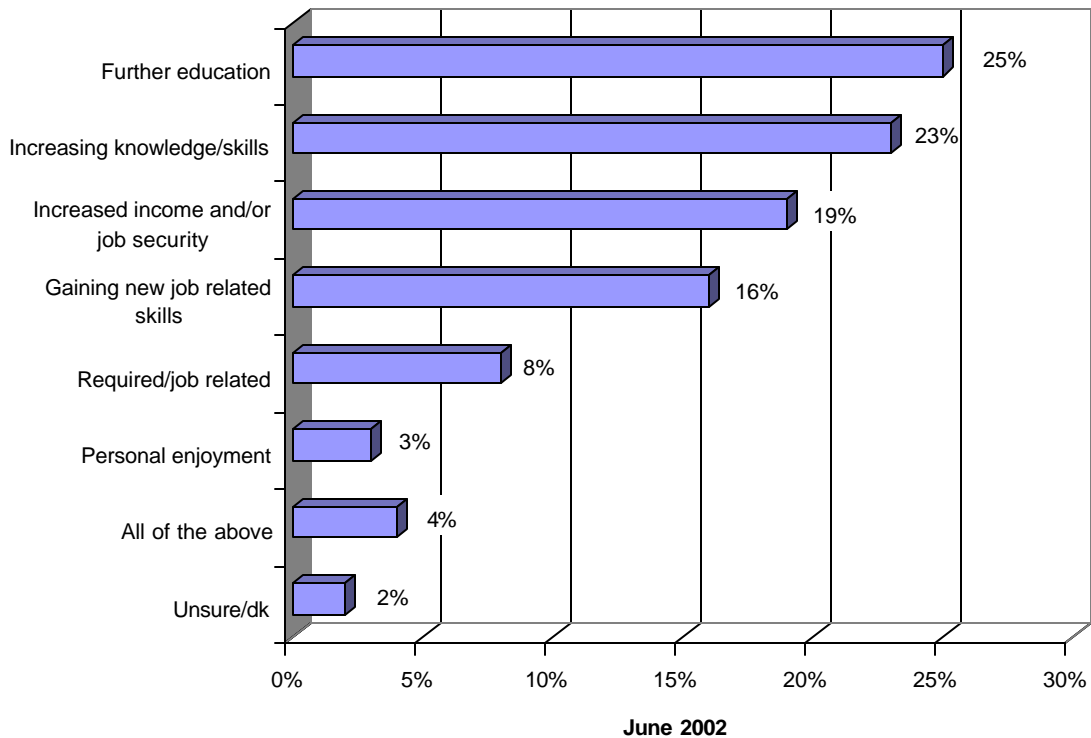
- One half (50%) of those who chose a Saskatchewan institution for credited post-secondary education did so because of location (11% of all respondents) and 27% chose a Saskatchewan institution because of convenience (6% of all respondents).

Question 7. Did you or your family member take this training/education in person at a campus location, through correspondence, at the workplace or via the Internet?



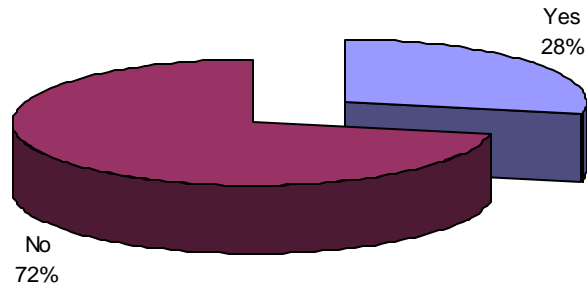
- The large majority (88%) of those residents who indicate they or an immediate family member have taken credited post-secondary education took the training in person at a campus location (25% of all respondents).

Question 8. What were the primary reasons for your participation in post-secondary education? Was it for increasing knowledge/skills, increased income and/or job security, personal enjoyment, gaining new job related skills, required/job related, further education or other?



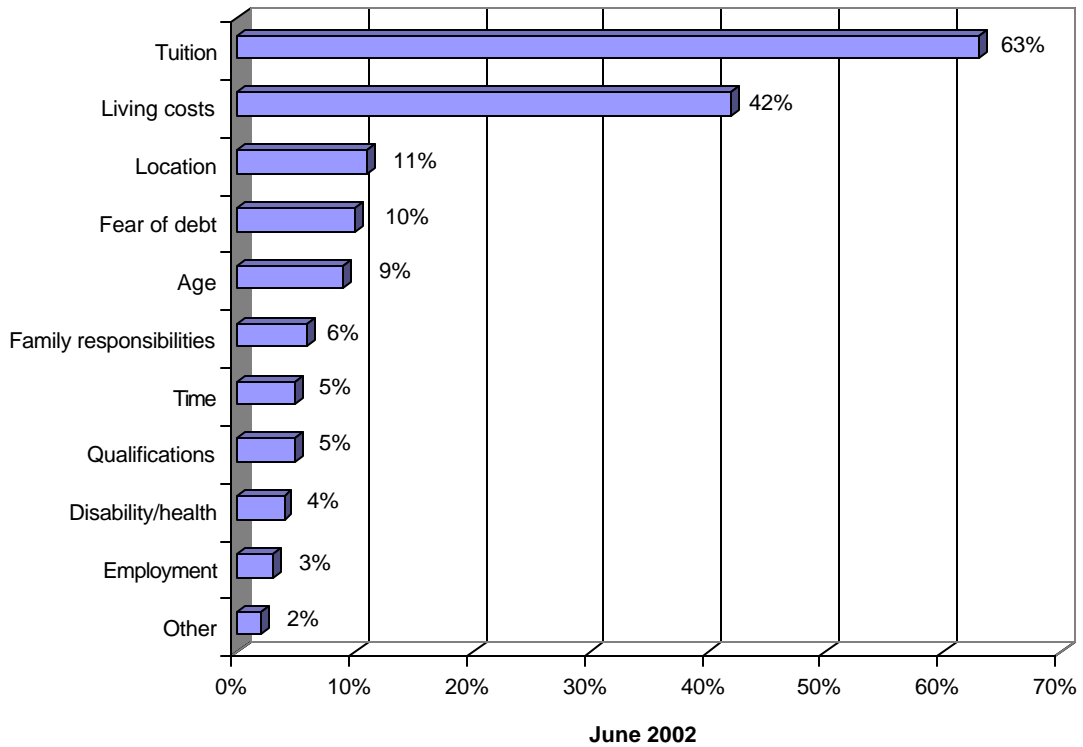
- One quarter (25%) of those residents who indicate they or an immediate family member have taken credited post-secondary education did so to further their education (7% of all respondents), 23% say it was to increase their knowledge and skills (6% of all respondents) and 19% say the primary reason was to increase their income and/or job security (5% of all respondents).

Question 9. Do you or your family members face any barriers that prevent you from taking post-secondary education and skills training?



- More than one quarter (28%) of Saskatchewan residents indicate they or their family members experience barriers that prevent them from taking post-secondary education and skills training.

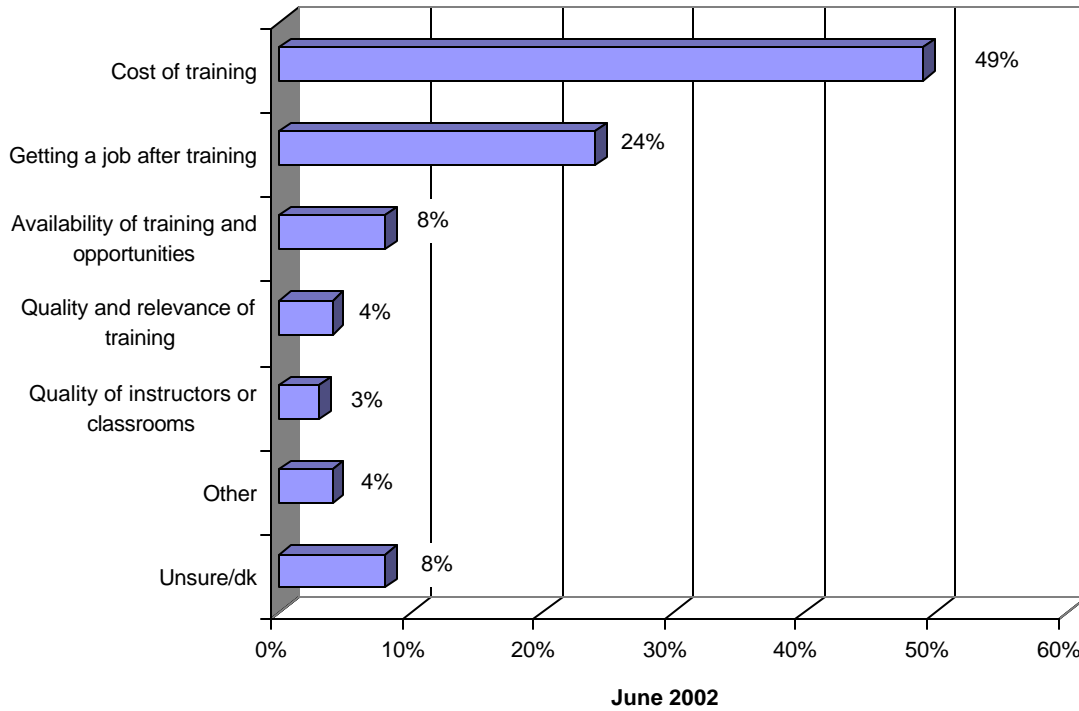
Question 10. What barriers do you or your family members experience, which prevent you from taking post-secondary education or training?



Note: multiple responses are allowed; therefore the above chart sum is greater than 100%.

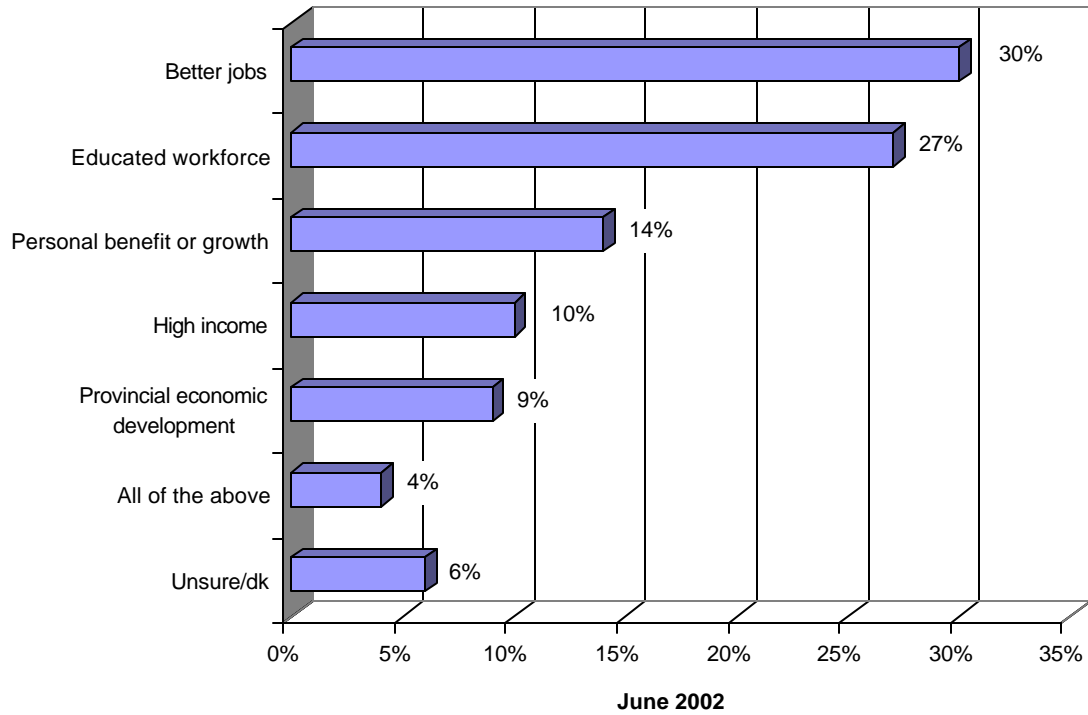
- The majority (63%) of those residents who experience barriers to post-secondary education and skills training identify tuition costs (18% of all respondents); 42% say living costs are a barrier (12% of all respondents).

Question 11. What do you think is the most important issue facing the post-secondary education and training system in Saskatchewan today?



- Almost one half (49%) of residents think the most important issue facing the post-secondary education and training system in Saskatchewan today is the cost of training; 24% think the most important issue is finding employment after completing training.

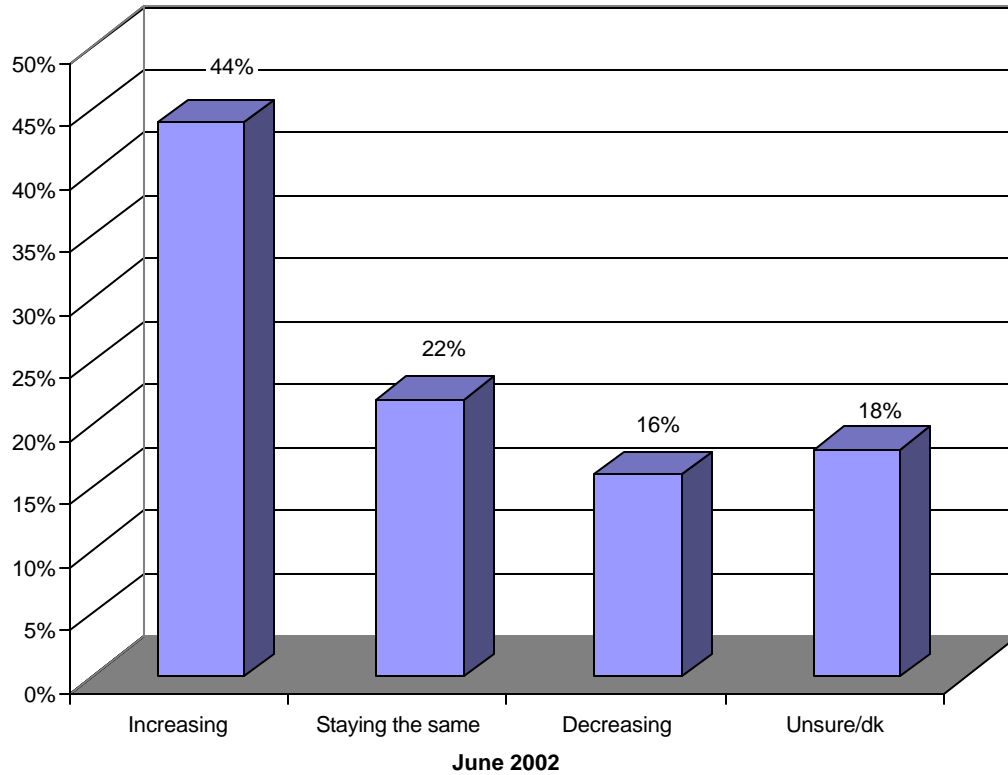
Question 12. What do you believe is the primary benefit or value derived from the post-secondary education and training system in Saskatchewan?



- More than one quarter (30%) of residents believe the primary benefit or value gained from the post-secondary education and training system in Saskatchewan is better jobs and 27% think an educated workforce is the primary benefit.

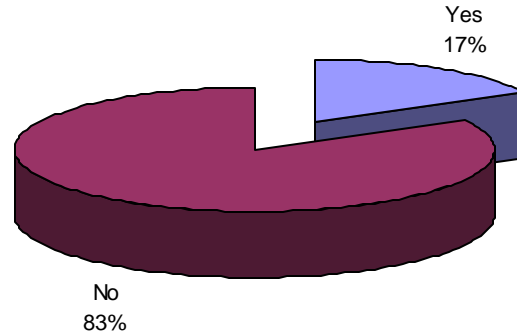
3.0 SOCIAL SERVICES

Question 13. On the whole, would you say the number of people in Saskatchewan receiving welfare has been increasing, decreasing or staying the same over the past four years?



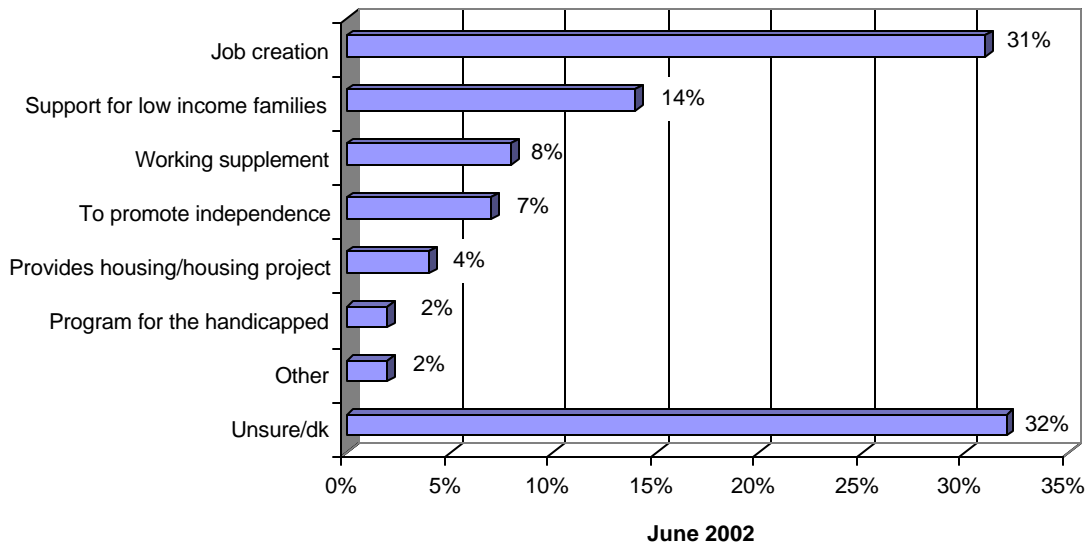
- Approximately 44% of residents think the number of people in Saskatchewan receiving welfare has been increasing over the past four years.

Question 14. Have you heard about the government program called “Building Independence”?



- Approximately 17% of Saskatchewan residents have heard about the government program called “Building Independence”.

Question 15. What kind of program is it?

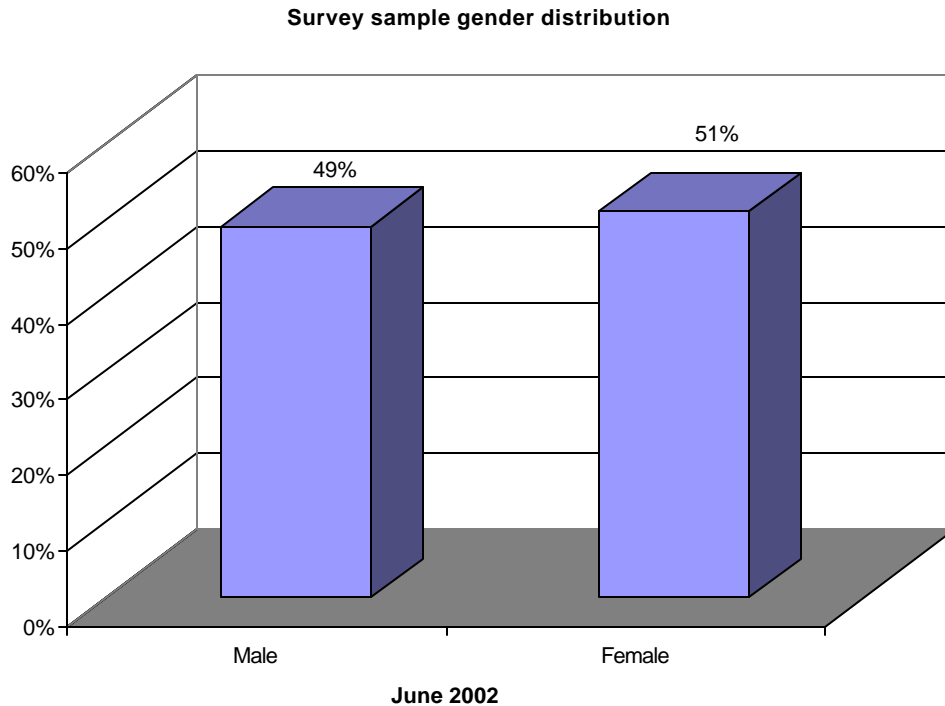


- Almost one third (31%) of those residents who have heard of the government program “Building Independence” think it is a job creation program (5% of all respondents).

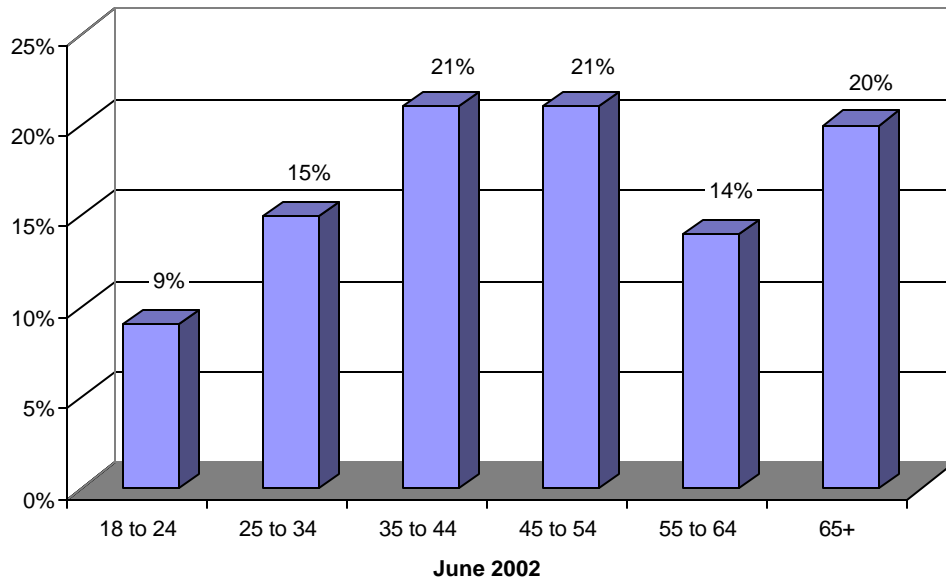
APPENDIX II SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

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.

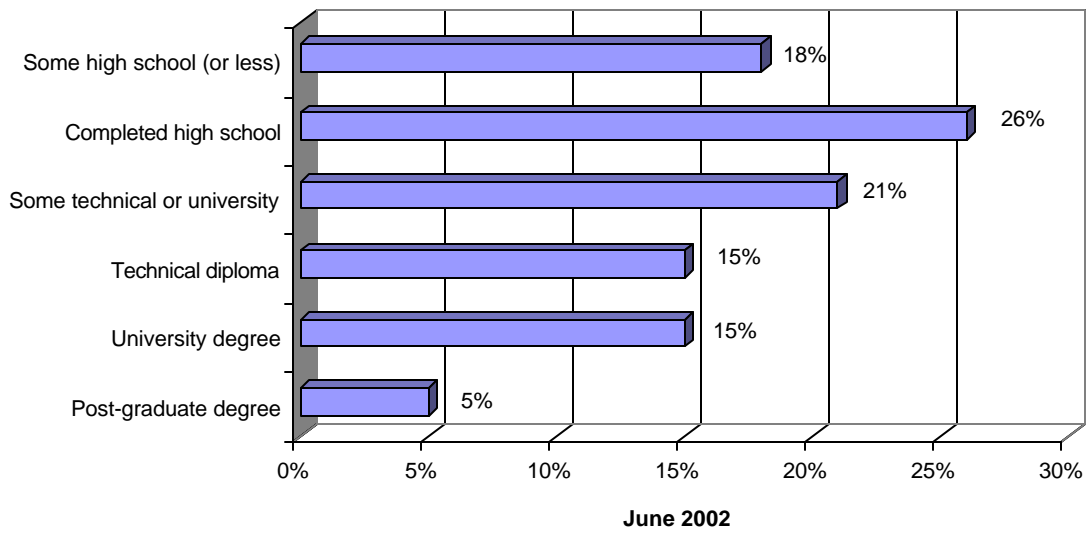
The omnibus survey sample size of 1,000 people yields public opinion measurements with a statistical level of confidence of 95 percent within an overall margin of error for the point estimates contained in this report of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points.



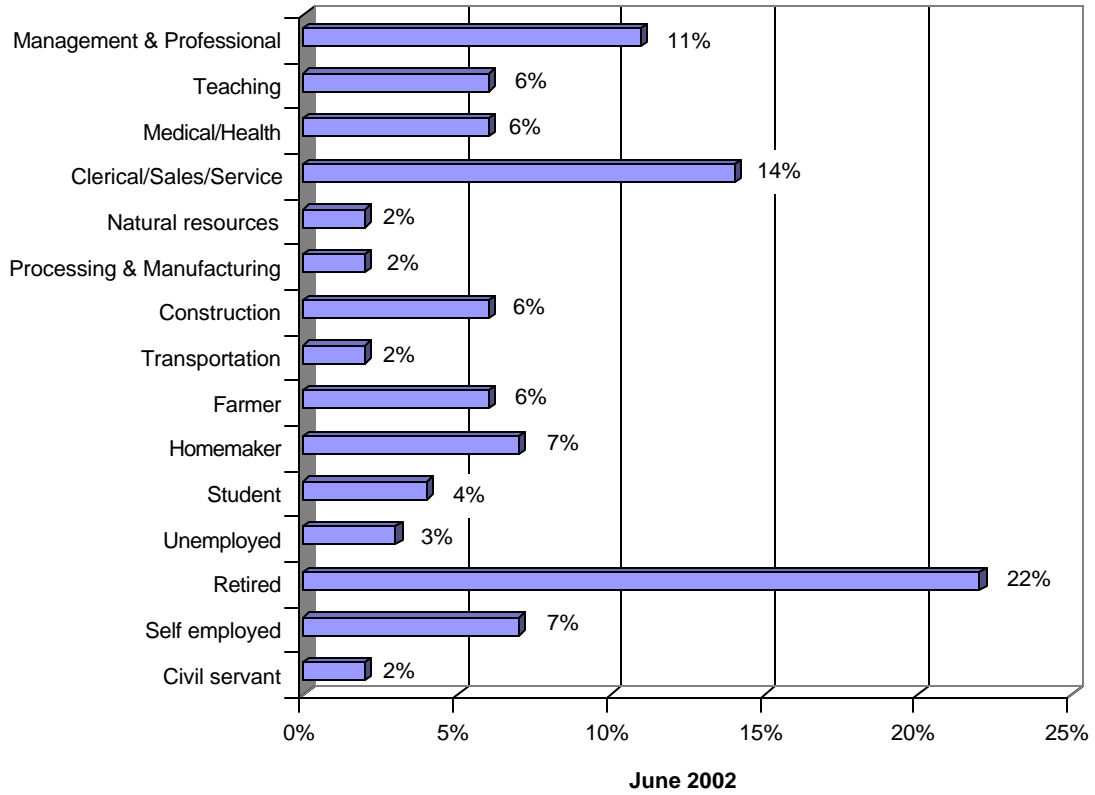
Survey sample age distribution



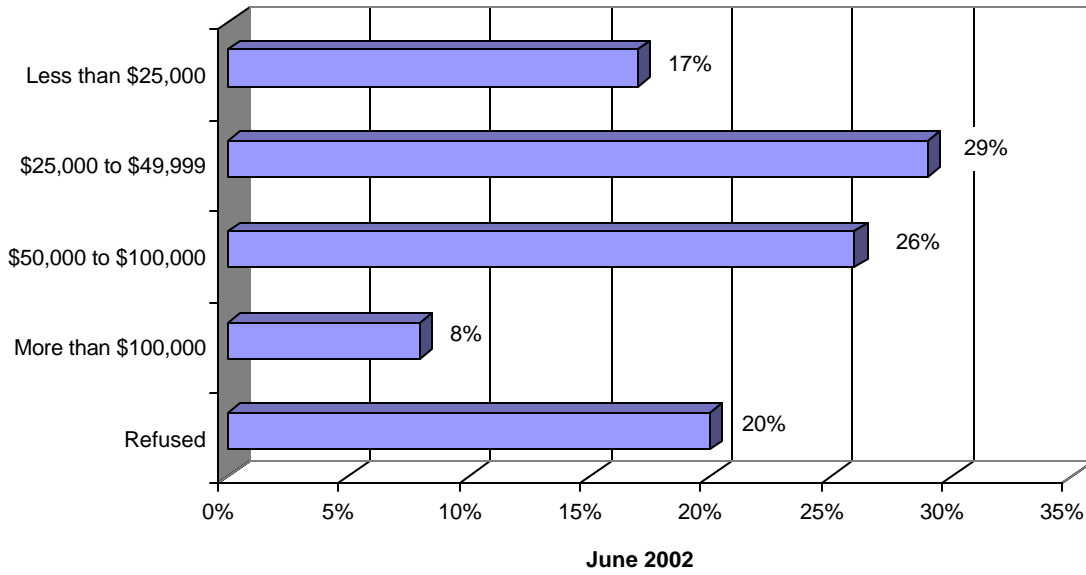
Survey sample education distribution



Survey sample occupation distribution



Survey sample income distribution



Survey sample regional distribution

