



Government of Saskatchewan

Public Opinion Polling

from April 1, 2002 – June 30, 2002

OMNIBUS
Provincial Public Opinion Survey

May 2002

Omnibus
Provincial Public Opinion Survey

Prepared for:

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May 2002

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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 the economy.
- Approximately one third of residents believe an independent review of provincial government policies, practices and systems for ensuring the security of confidential information at a cost of over \$100,000 is worthwhile.
- One quarter of Saskatchewan residents indicate they would call 1-888-SKPOWER in the event of a power outage.
- More than two thirds 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 post-secondary education and training system is adequate or better.
- Three quarters of residents think the post-secondary education and training system in Saskatchewan does an adequate or better job at meeting their needs for information about its programs and services.

METHODOLOGY

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

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.

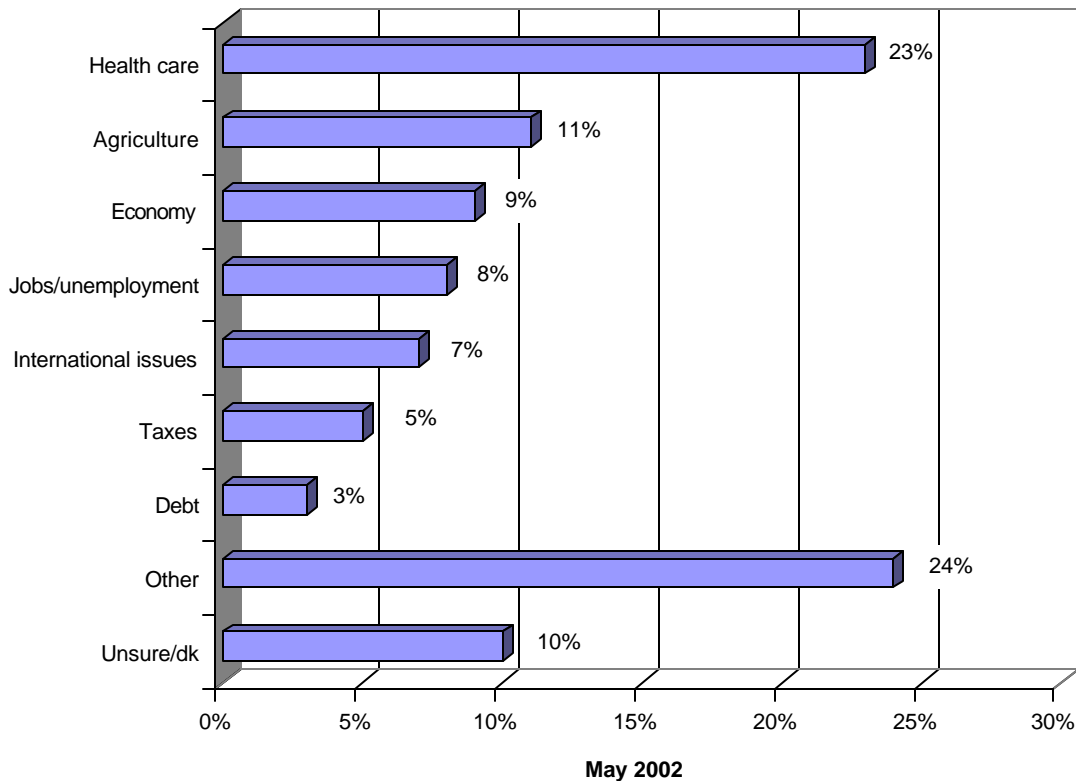
One thousand residents of the province were interviewed between Tuesday, May 22 and Tuesday, June 5, 2002. Interviews were conducted by telephone at times that were appropriate and convenient for respondents - weekdays between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. and weekends between the hours of 11:00 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.

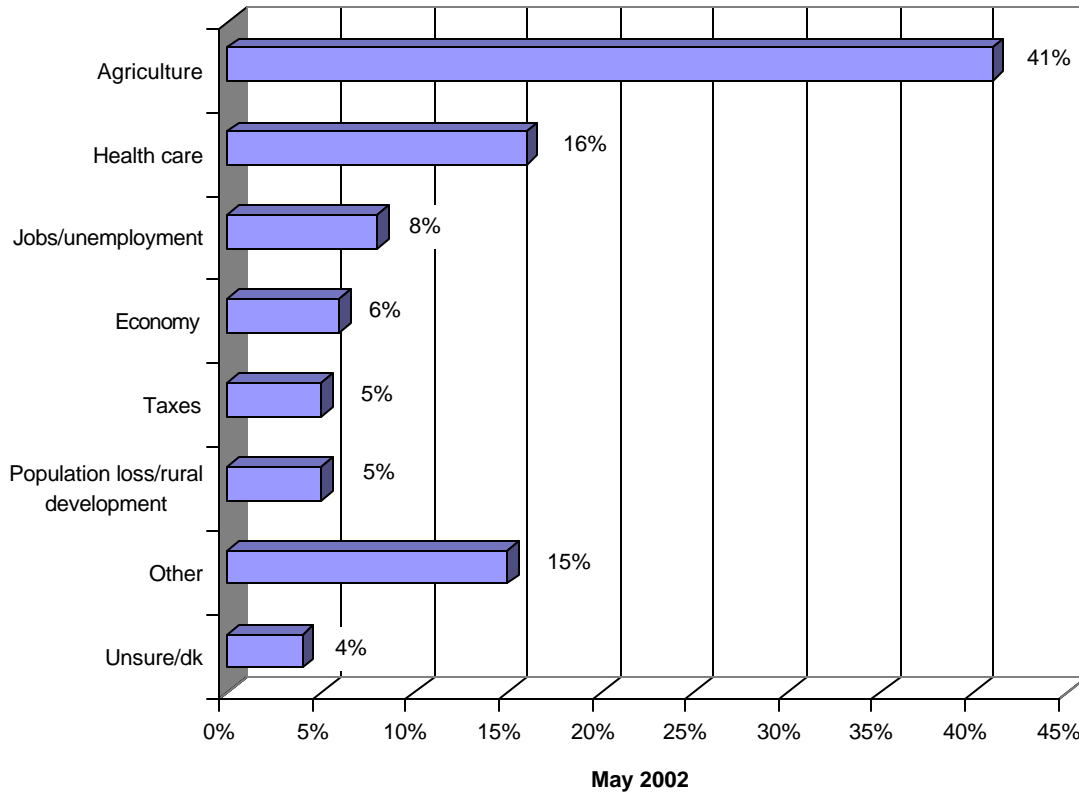
1.0 GENERAL ISSUES

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



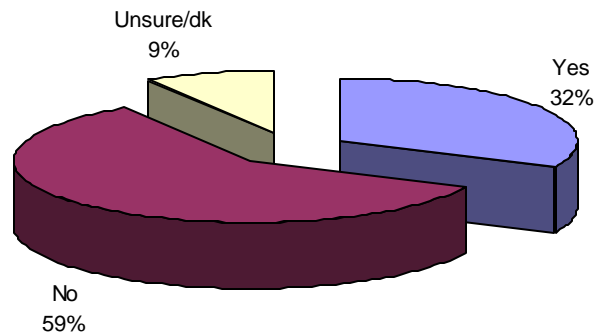
- According to 23% of Saskatchewan residents, the most important issue facing Canada today is the health care system. Other important issues include agriculture (11%), the economy (9%), jobs and unemployment (8%), international issues (7%), federal taxes (5%) and the national deficit and accumulated debt (3%).
- Approximately 24% of residents are primarily concerned with 'other' issues such as the federal government in general (10%), the environment (2%), business and industry (2%), crime and poverty (2%), education (1%), political salaries and benefits (1%) and Native issues (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 41% of Saskatchewan residents, is agriculture. Approximately 16% of residents are concerned primarily with health care, 8% with jobs and unemployment, 6% with the provincial economy, 5% with provincial taxes and another 5% with population loss and rural development.
- Included among 'other' important issues identified by 15% of residents are the provincial government in general (3%), the environment (2%), Native issues (2%), crime and poverty (1%), highways and transportation (1%) and the provincial debt (1%).

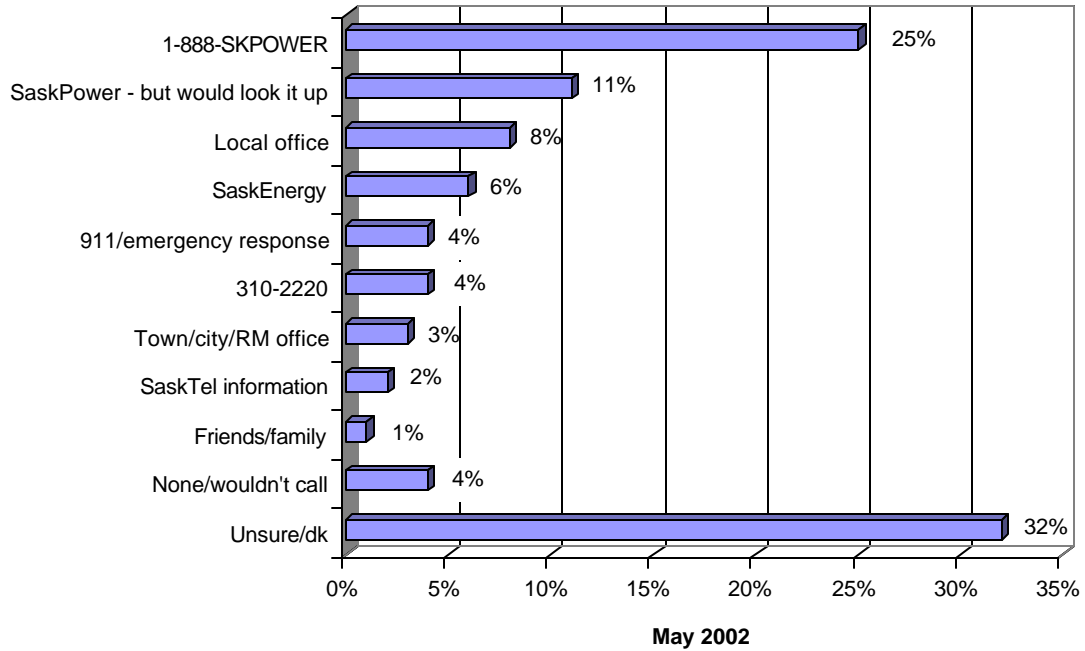
Question 3. The provincial government has contracted an independent company to review its policies, practices and systems for ensuring the security of confidential information. This review will cost over \$100,000. Do you believe such an independent review is worthwhile?



- Approximately one third (32%) of Saskatchewan residents believe an independent review of provincial government policies, practices and systems for ensuring the security of confidential information is worthwhile.

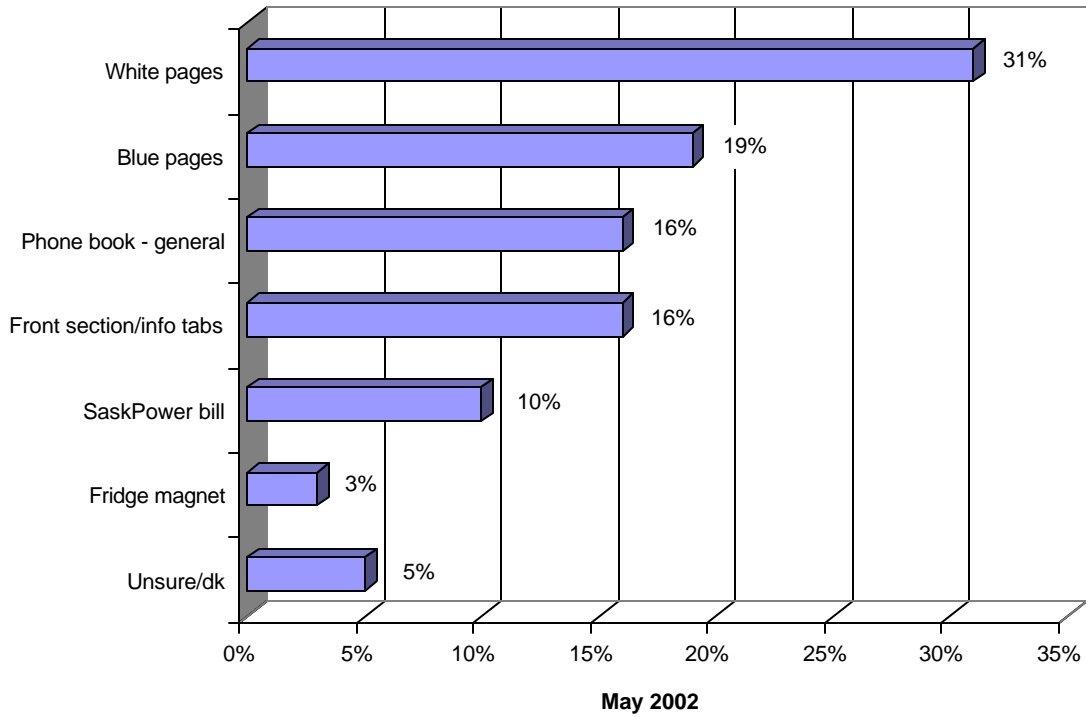
2.0 SASKPOWER

Question 4. What phone number would you call in the event of a power outage?



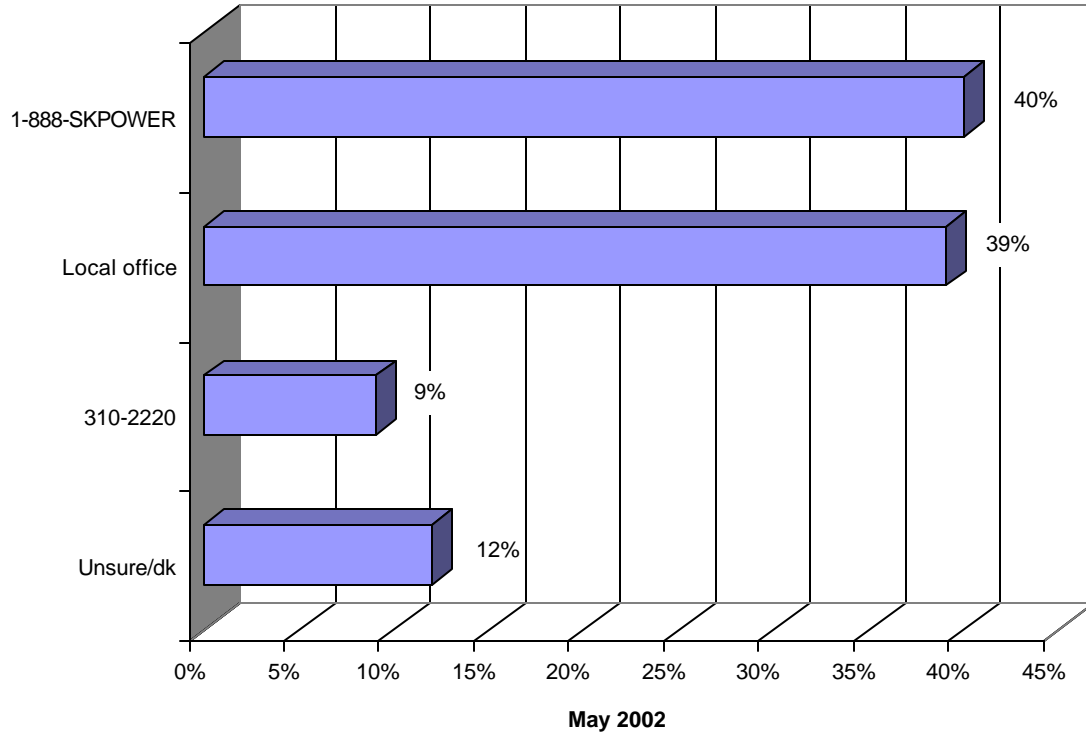
- One quarter (25%) of Saskatchewan residents indicate they would call 1-888-SKPOWER in the event of a power outage.

Question 5. From what source did you find or learn this phone number?



- Approximately 31% of those residents who would call 1-888-SKPOWER or 310-2220 in the event of a power outage found this number in the white pages of the phone book (9% of all respondents).

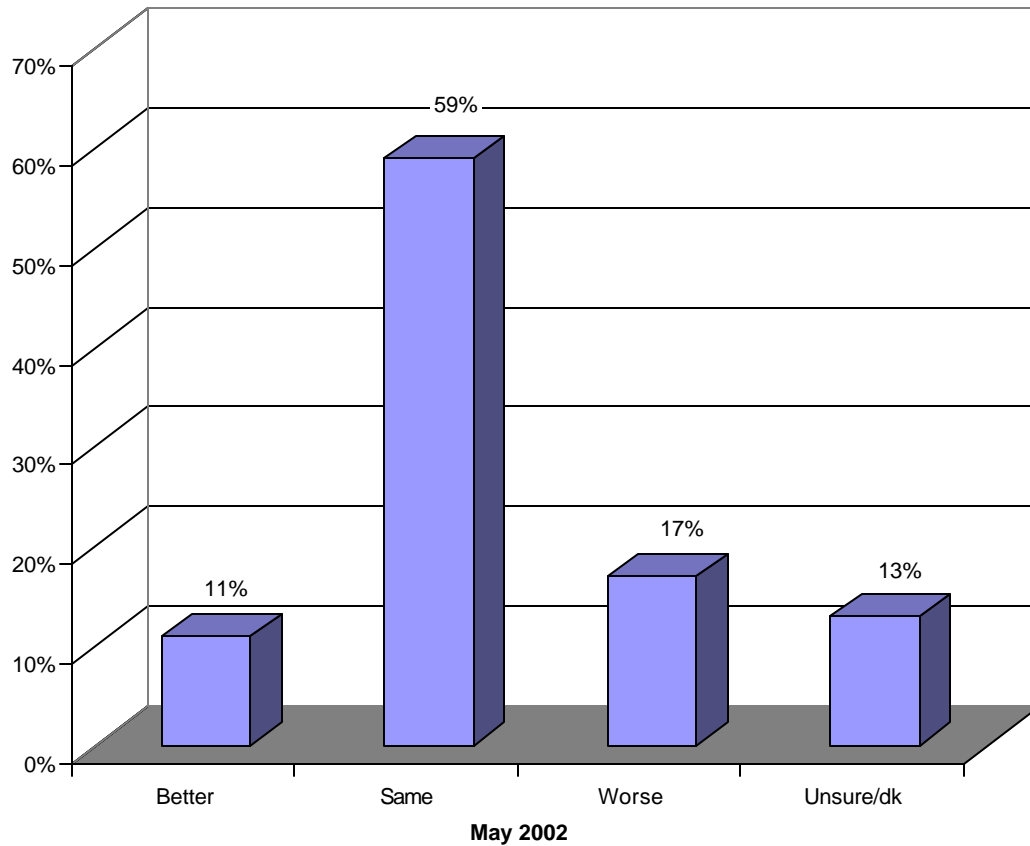
Question 6. From the following list, what phone number would you call in the event of a power outage?



- When read the above options, 40% of Saskatchewan residents would call 1-888-SKPOWER in the event of a power outage and 39% would call their local SaskPower office.

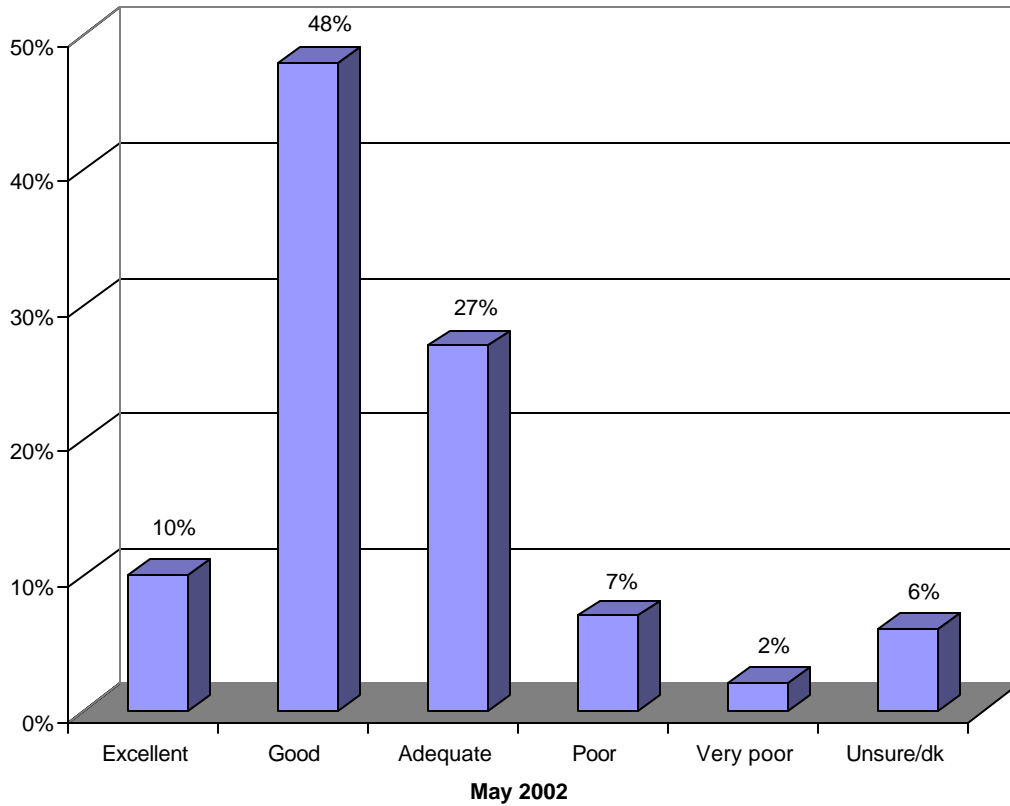
3.0 LEARNING

Question 7. 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?



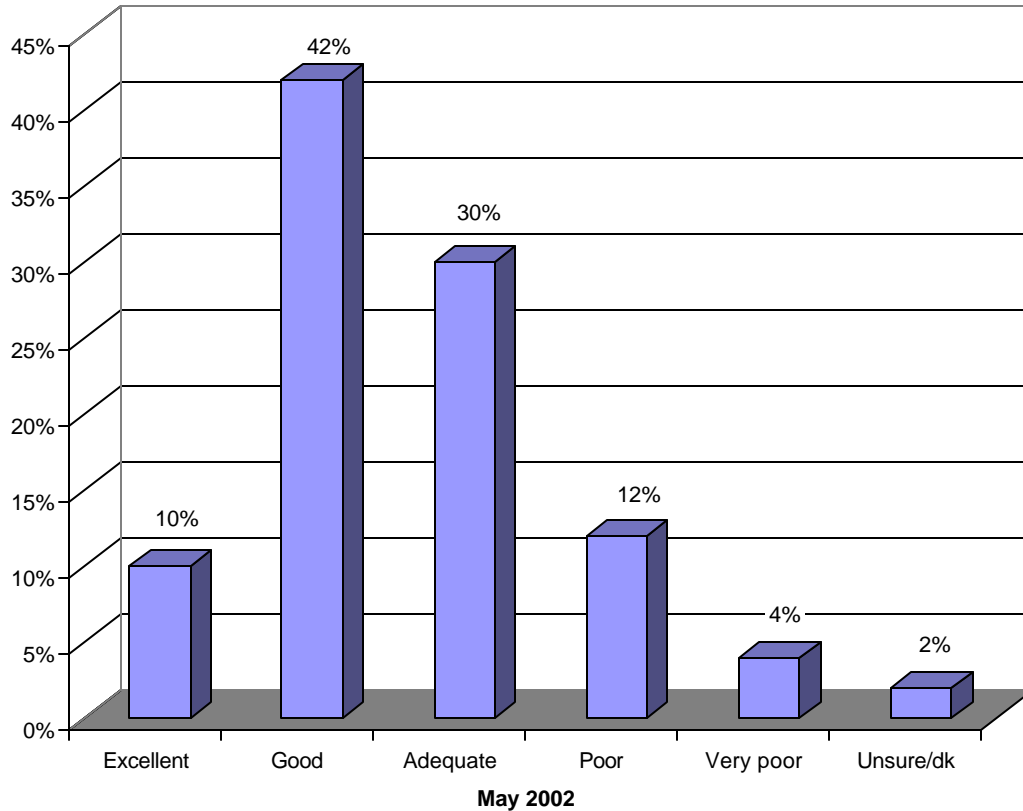
- More than two thirds (70%) of residents think the post-secondary education and training system in Saskatchewan is the same or better than that of the rest of the country.

Question 8. Do you think the quality of Saskatchewan's post-secondary education and training is generally excellent, good, adequate, poor or very poor?



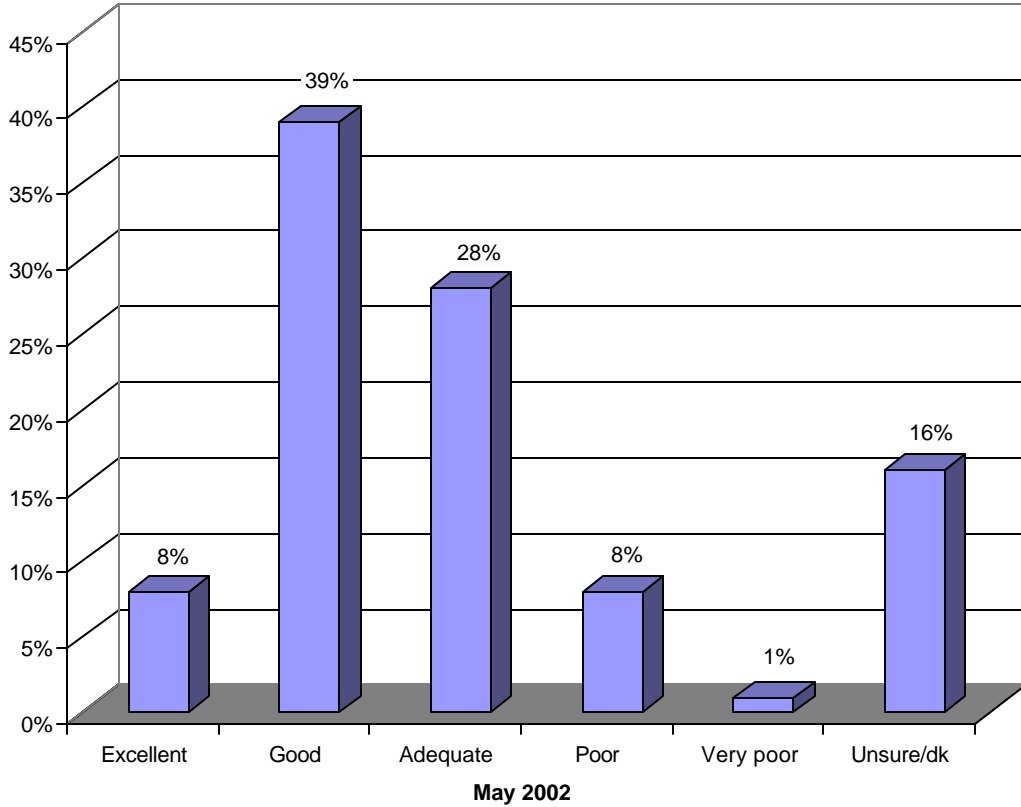
- The large majority (85%) of Saskatchewan residents think the quality of Saskatchewan's post-secondary education and training is adequate or better.

Question 9. How would you rate your level of awareness of Saskatchewan's post-secondary education and training system? Do you have excellent, good, adequate, poor or very poor awareness of programs and services?



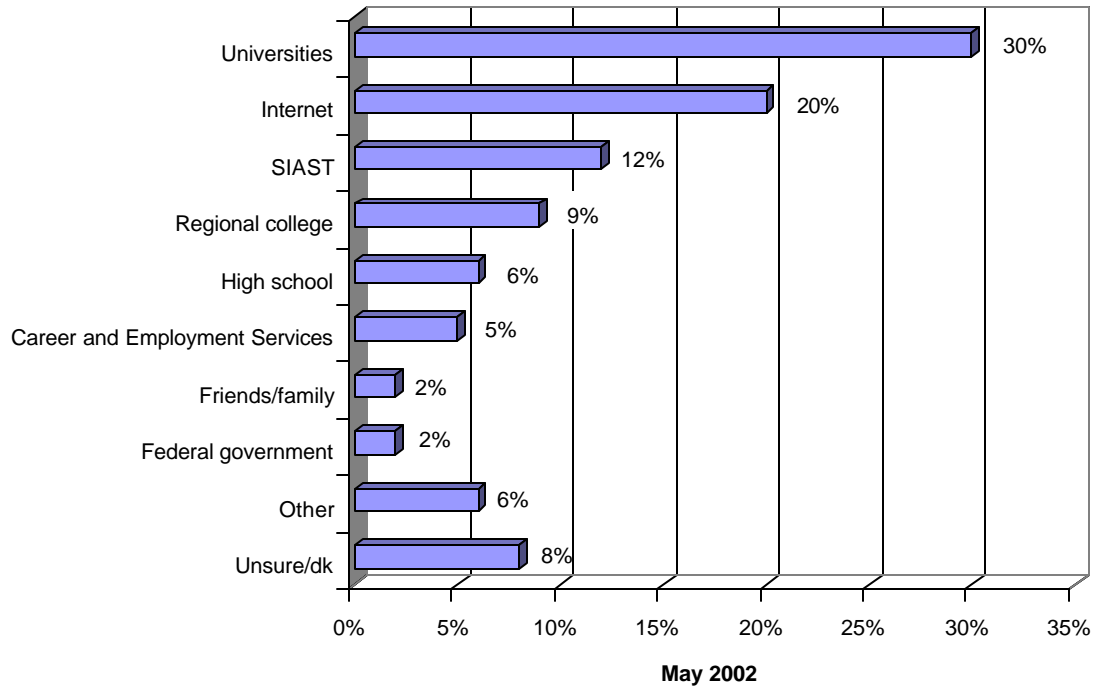
- The large majority (82%) of residents think their awareness of Saskatchewan's post-secondary education and training system is adequate or better.

Question 10. How well does the post-secondary education and training system in Saskatchewan meet your needs for information about its programs and services?



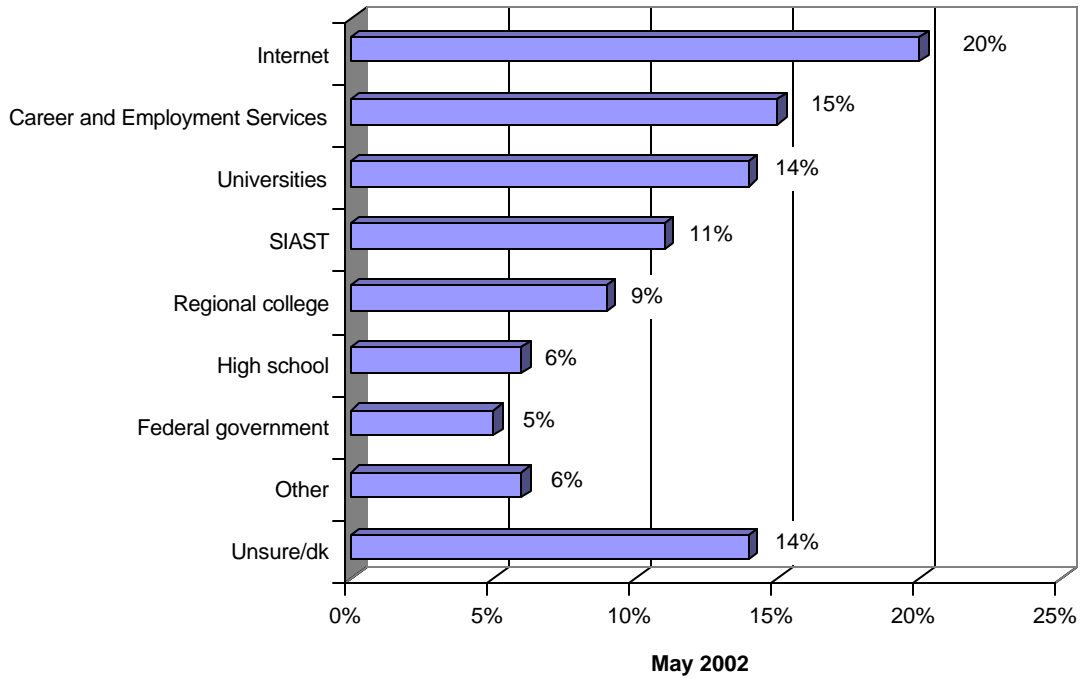
- Three quarters (75%) of residents think the post-secondary education and training system in Saskatchewan does an adequate or better job at meeting their needs for information about its programs and services.

Question 11. Where would you go to get information about post-secondary education and training opportunities in Saskatchewan?



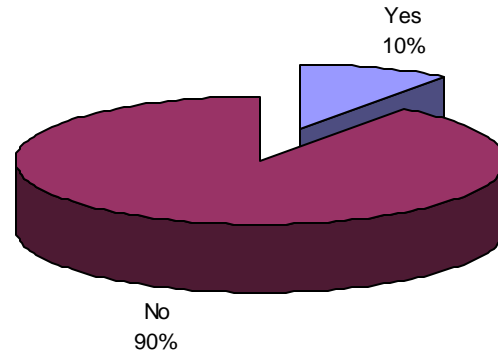
- Approximately 30% of residents would go to a university to get information about post-secondary education and skills training opportunities in Saskatchewan

Question 12. Where would you go for career information?



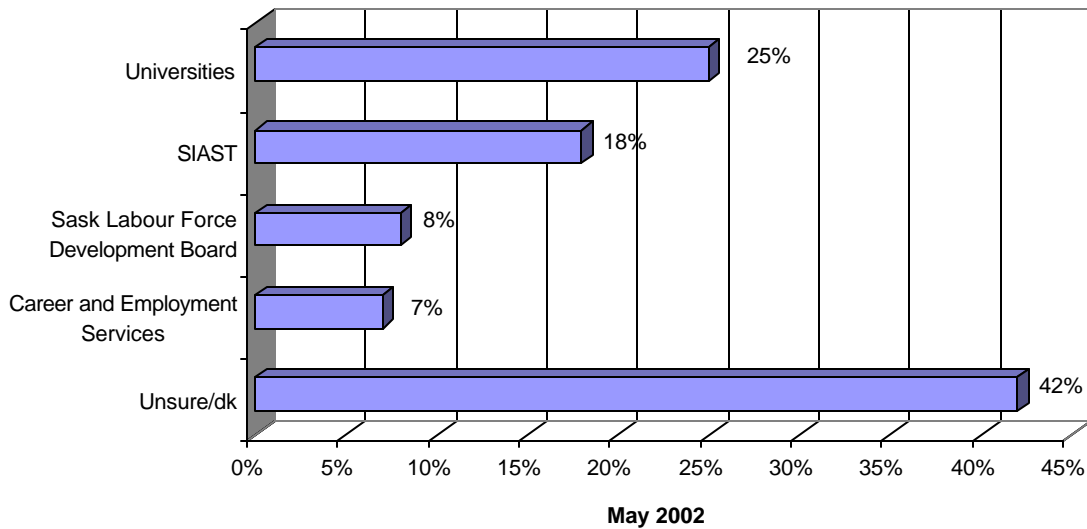
- Approximately 20% of Saskatchewan residents would search the Internet for career information, 15% would get information from Career and Employment Services and 14% would go to a university.

Question 13. Have you heard of Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition, or P.L.A.R.?



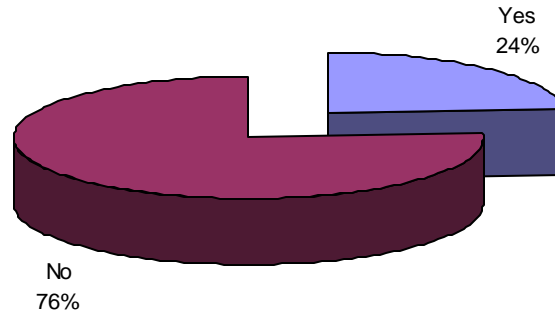
- Approximately 10% of Saskatchewan residents have heard of Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (P.L.A.R.)

Question 14. Where would you go to get more information about P.L.A.R.?



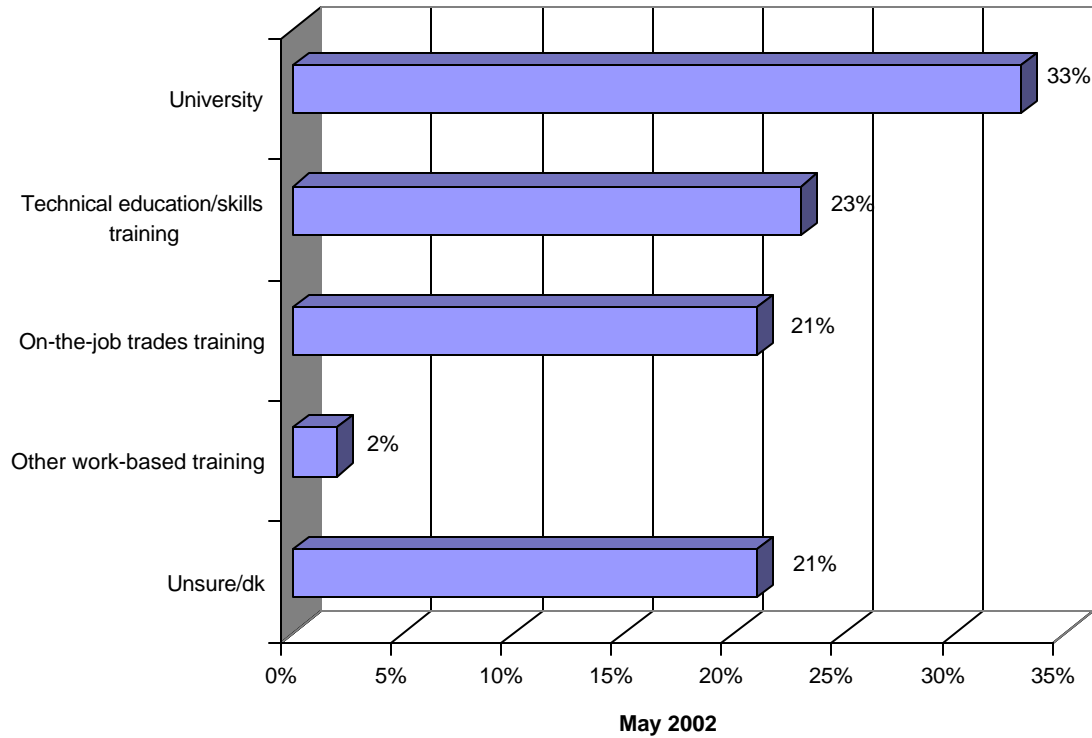
- One quarter (25%) of those residents who have heard of P.L.A.R. indicate they would go to a university to get more information (2% of all respondents) and 18% would go to SIAST (2% of all respondents).

Question 15. Have you, or someone you know, used the P.L.A.R. process?



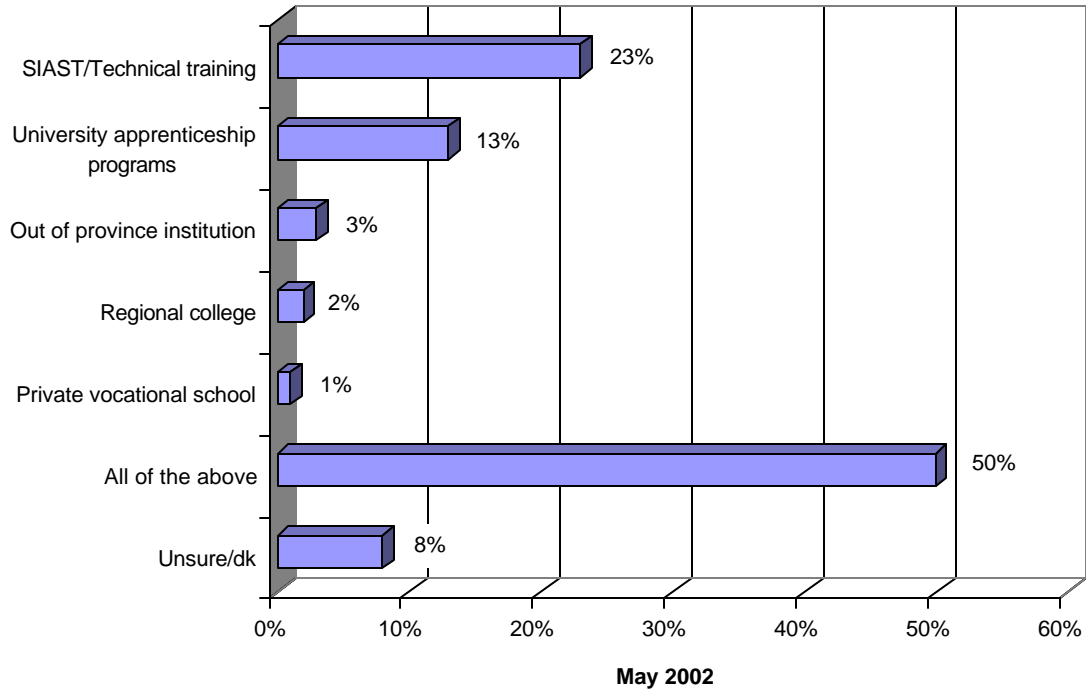
- Approximately one quarter (24%) of those residents who have heard of P.L.A.R. indicate they or someone they know has used the process (2% of all respondents).

Question 16. If you were advising a young person today, would you recommend they choose technical education and skills training, on-the-job trades training through apprenticeship, other work-based training or university?



- One third (33%) of Saskatchewan residents would recommend university if they were advising a young person today, 23% would recommend technical education and skills training and 21% would recommend on-the-job trades training.

Question 17. Which institution would you suggest they attend? Would you recommend SIAST/Technical training, university apprenticeship programs, out-of-province institution, regional college, private vocational school or all of the above?



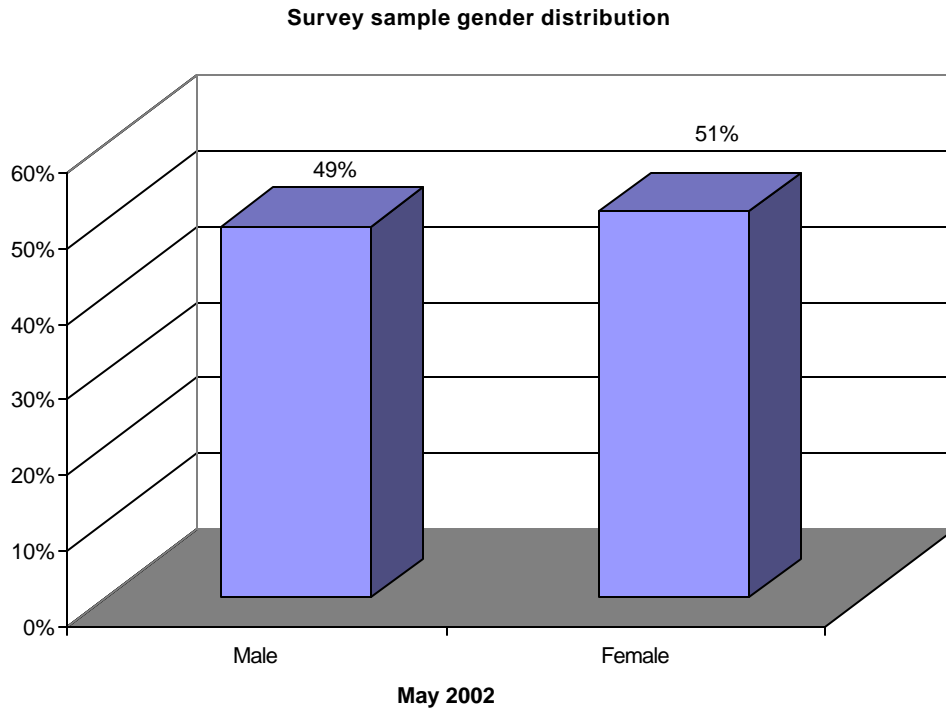
Note: In previous Government of Saskatchewan Omnibus surveys, university and apprenticeship programs were asked separately, in this survey they were combined.

- If they were advising a young person today, approximately 23% of Saskatchewan residents would recommend they attend SIAST or technical training school. One half (50%) would recommend a variety of post-secondary institutions.

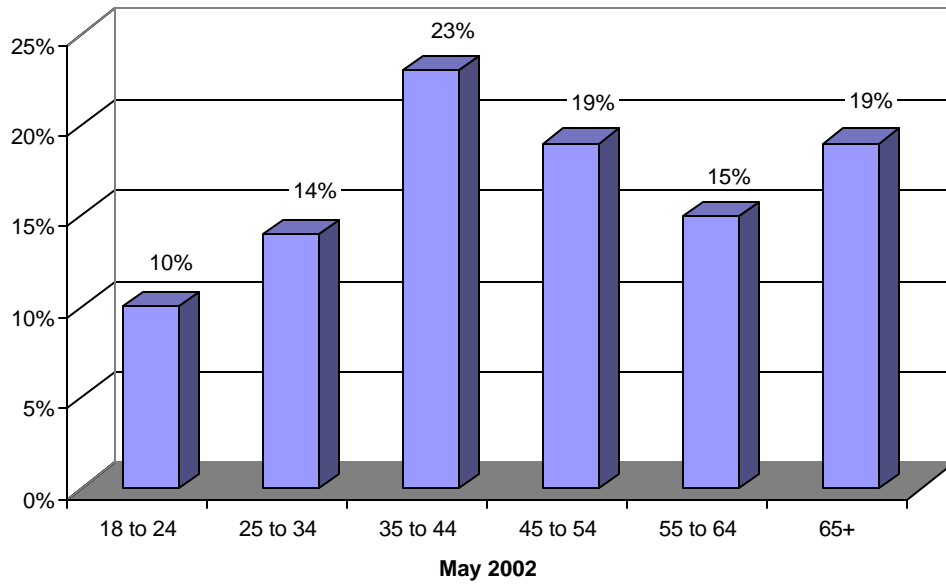
APPENDIX II SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

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.

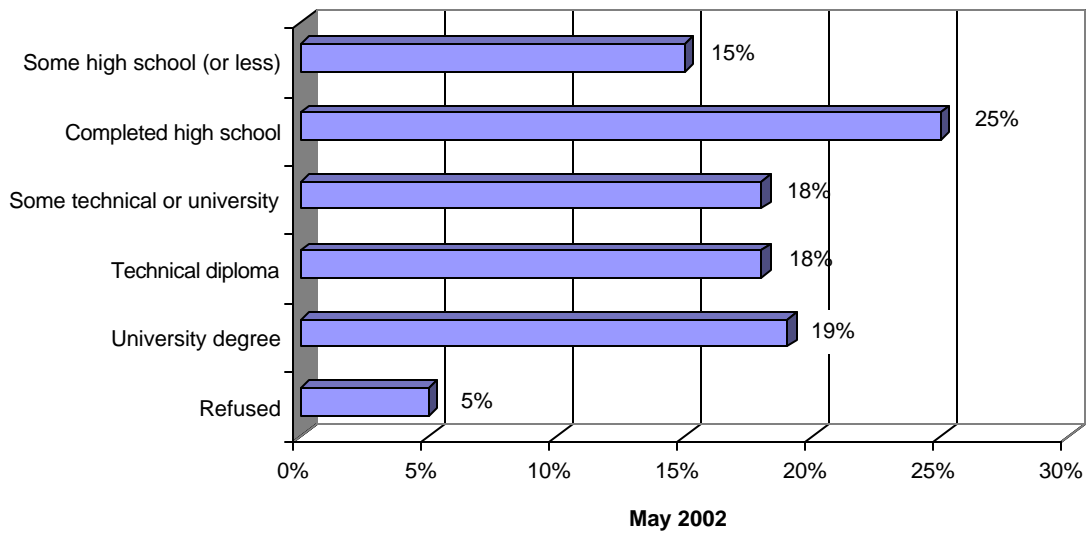
The omnibus survey sample size of 1,000 people yields public opinion measurements with a statistical level of confidence of 95 percent within an overall margin of error for the point estimates contained in this report of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points.



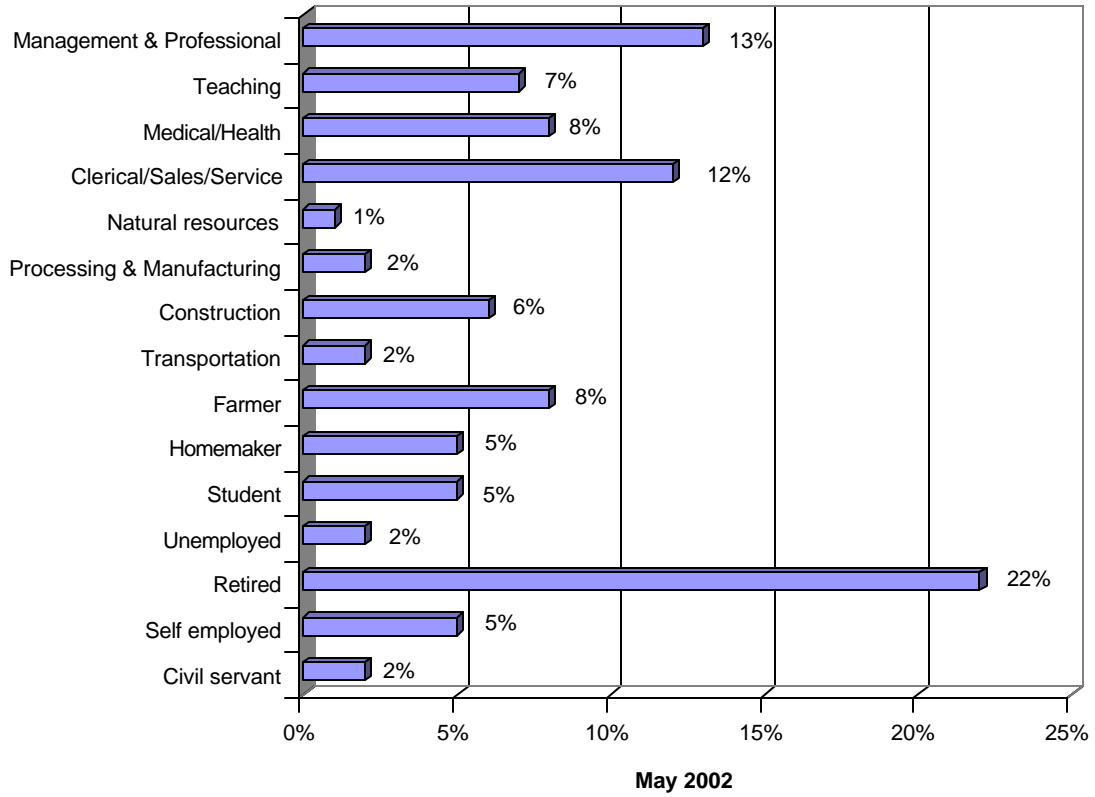
Survey sample age distribution



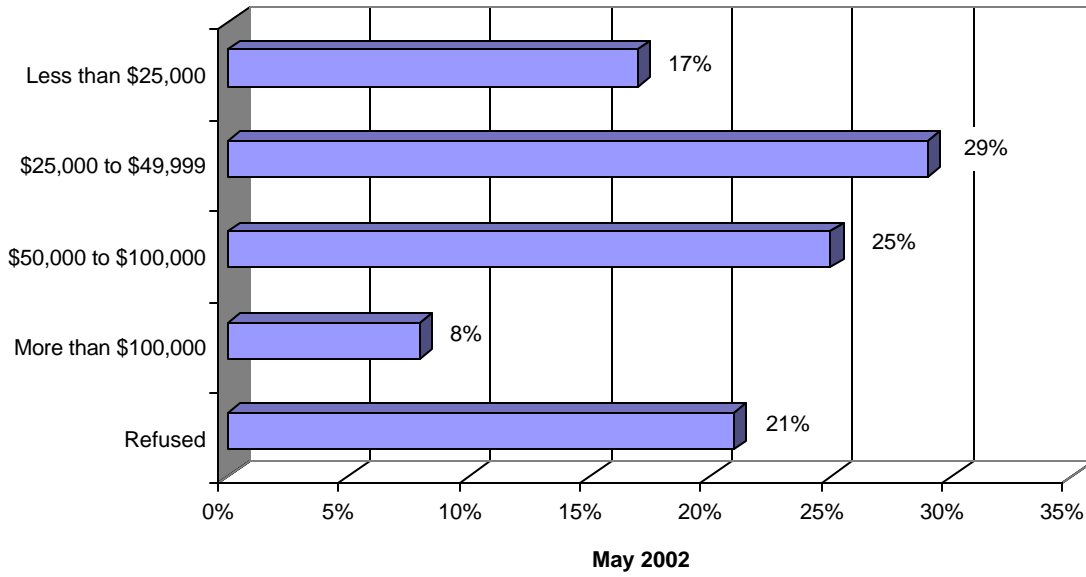
Survey sample education distribution



Survey sample occupation distribution



Survey sample income distribution



Survey sample regional distribution

