

Community Priorities and Satisfaction Research

Prepared for the Region of Waterloo



ENVIRONICS
R E S E A R C H G R O U P

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Background

The Region of Waterloo is in the process of reviewing its strategic plan and, as part of that effort, wanted to better understand residents' views on priorities for the years to come.

As part of the community consultation process – which includes town halls, public forums and online engagements – a statistically reliable survey was conducted with a representative sample of 1,200 Residents from January 24 and February 10, 2015.

In the course of the 20-minute telephone survey, residents were also asked to provide insights on quality of life, satisfaction with the Regional government and services, interactions with Region staff, communications preferences and priorities for the Region moving forward.

Taken together, the results of the survey provide the Region of Waterloo with both a current pulse on the community, and insights for designing a strategic plan that will align with the views, opinions and desires of its residents.

Summary

- The issue that is top-of-mind for residents is transit, and in particular, the LRT (page 9). While transportation is a priority issue, residents would most like to see their government working to build the local economy, while also protecting the environment and providing community and social services, as these are the big picture issues that will have the greatest long-term impact on life in the Region (p. 42).
- If the Region of Waterloo is looking to improve resident satisfaction with the government performance in the short-term, then improving customer service and engagement should be an area of focus. For residents, having opportunities to get involved and feeling that the Region is in touch with their needs are some of the strongest drivers of overall government satisfaction. Other drivers include economic development, well-maintained roads and adequate public transit, water conservation, waste collection and diversion, and public safety (p. 36).
- When it comes to spending, most residents are looking to maintain the status quo (p. 17), but if additional revenue is available, they would like to see those funds directed towards homelessness, public health, seniors and roads (p. 19).

Summary

- Waterloo Region residents are generally satisfied with life in their community. Most believe they have good quality of life, and they appreciate the access to technology and infrastructure, as well as the close-knit community spirit. Residents feel that Waterloo Region is a good and safe place to live, as well as raise a family. Those who live in the Region also report a strong sense of belonging to the community.
- Satisfaction with life in Waterloo Region also carries over to satisfaction with the regional government; three in four are happy with their government's performance. A majority of residents also believe that the Region is generally moving in the right direction.
- When it comes to balancing tax revenues and services, residents are most likely to prefer that taxes are raised around the rate of inflation in order to maintain services. There is also a slight preference that programs and services are paid for through general revenues, rather than service fees.
- Residents who have interacted with Region staff in the past year generally agree that staff are friendly and knowledgeable, and that in the end, they were able to get what they needed.

Summary

- A series of questions were asked about specific government services. According to residents . . .
 - Roads are said to be safe for drivers and pedestrians, and easy to navigate, but less safe for cyclists.
 - The Region has good quality drinking water and effective recycling programs.
 - The Region could do more to reduce income inequality and unemployment.
 - Promotion and development of the local economy is being handled well.
 - A majority like living in a growing community, but are less likely to agree that rural growth is well managed.
 - Local restaurants are safe and residents have opportunities to be active.
 - The Region is moving in the right direction, and meeting the needs of its residents, but residents would appreciate more opportunities to be involved in the decision-making process.

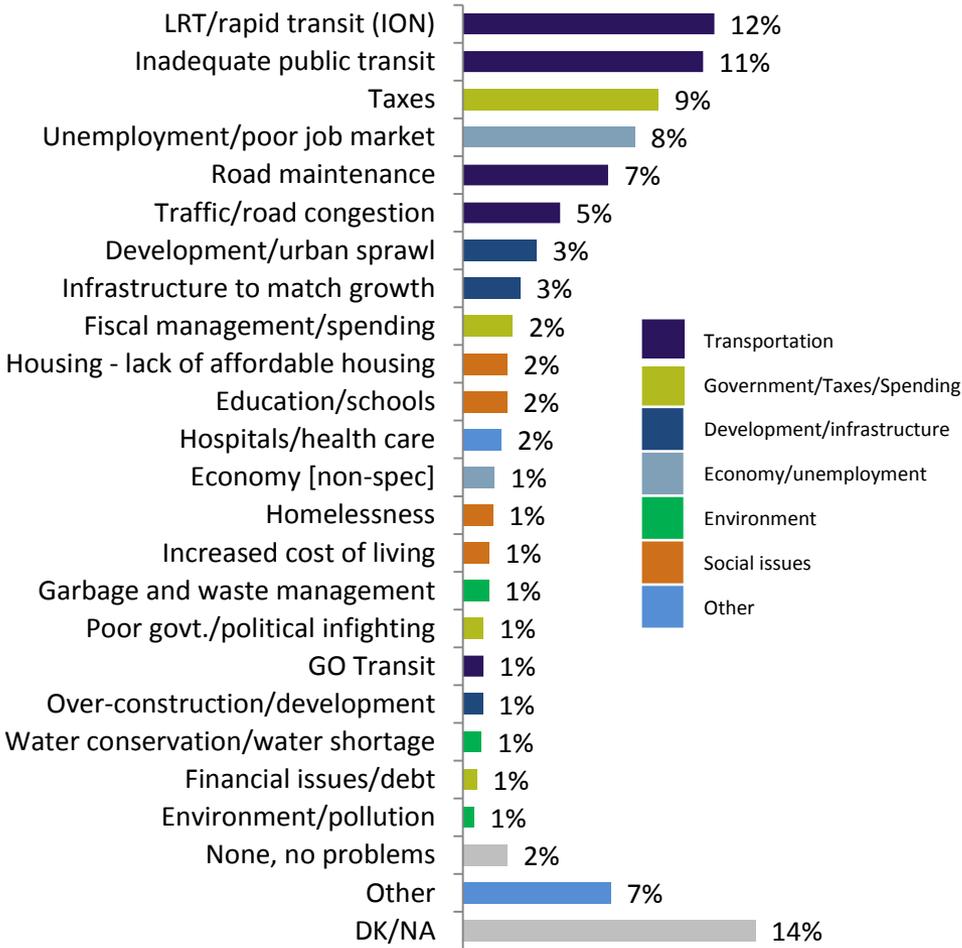
Life in Waterloo Region

Life in Waterloo Region

- The survey began with some general questions about life in the Waterloo Region, including what residents feel is the current top-of-mind local issue, how they would rate their quality of life, what appeals to them about the Region and the extent to which they feel a sense of belonging.
- The first question of the survey asked residents to name the most important local issue. This question provides a better understanding of what topics or concerns are at the forefront of residents' minds.

Public transit, including the LRT, is top-of-mind for Waterloo Region residents

Top-of-mind local issue



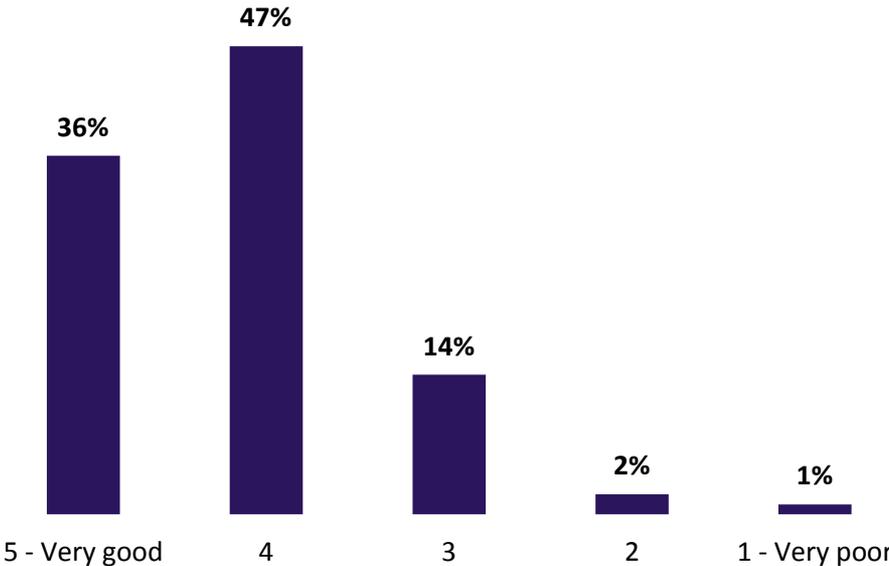
To begin the survey, residents were asked about the single issue they feel is important to Waterloo Region. The most common top-of-mind responses are the LRT (12%) and inadequate public transit (11%). (Mentions of inadequate public transit could be tied to the timing of the survey, as satisfaction with public transit typically decreases in the winter.) Other, non-transit issues mentioned by residents include taxes (9%), unemployment (8%), road maintenance (7%), traffic congestion (5%), over-development (3%) and infrastructure to keep up with population growth (3%).

Residents aged 60 and older are more likely to mention the LRT than younger residents, while those aged 18 to 29 are most likely to mention road maintenance or education/schools.

Q1. What, in your opinion, is the single most important local issue facing Waterloo Region today?

Residents believe Waterloo Region offers them a good quality of life

Overall quality of life in Waterloo Region



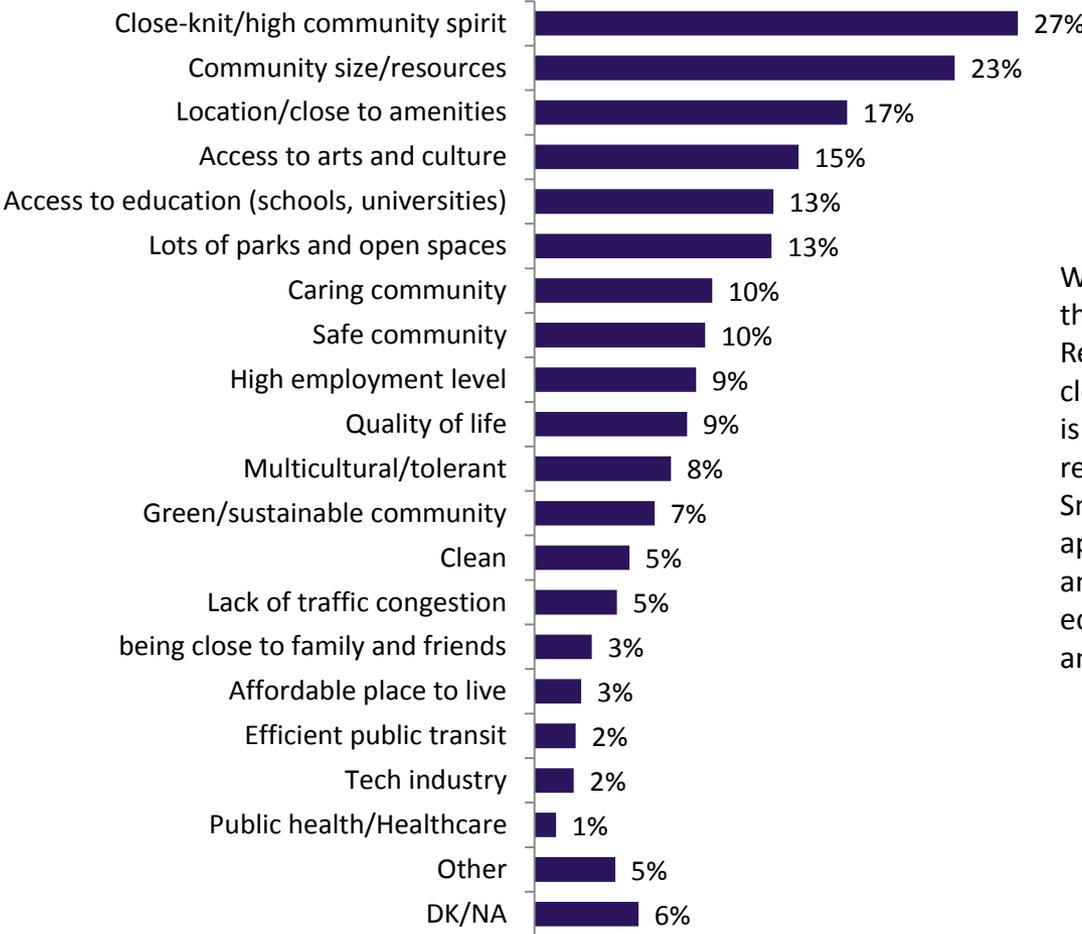
Eight in ten residents of Waterloo Region (83%) say that their quality of life is good or very good. Only three percent of residents would rate their quality of life as poor.

Those with higher incomes are more likely to rate their quality of life as good or very good (\$100K+: 91% 4 or 5 rating), but those with lower incomes are more likely to say that it is neither good nor poor.

Q2. Personally, how would you rate the quality of life that you experience in Waterloo Region?

The close-knit community, size and access to resources are what appeal most to Waterloo Region residents

Most appealing things about Waterloo Region

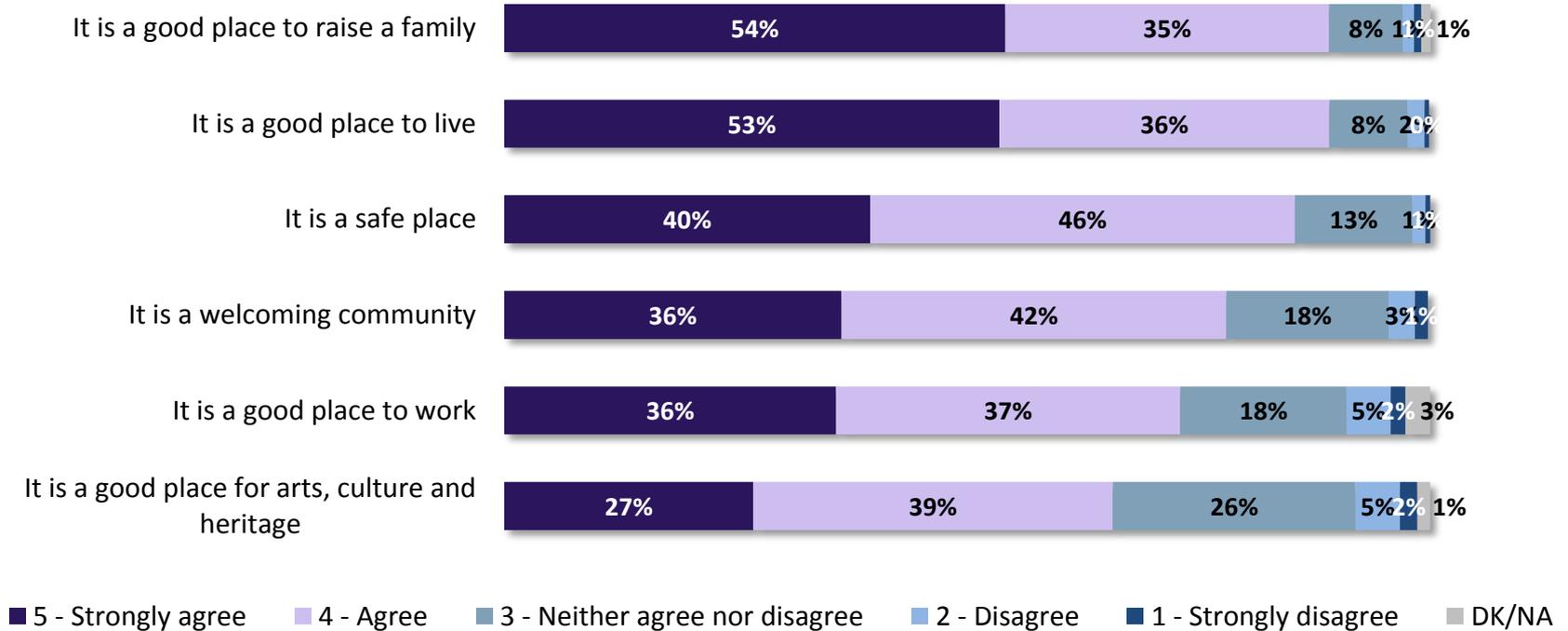


When residents are asked to name, top-of-mind, the most appealing aspects of life in Waterloo Region, they are most likely to talk about the close-knit community spirit, and that the Region is a good size – meaning that it offers plenty of resources, but maintains a small-town feel. Smaller proportions mention a variety of other appealing factors, including proximity to amenities, access to arts and culture, educational facilities, parks and open spaces, and the caring community.

Q3. What would you say are the most appealing things about Waterloo Region?

Agreement is highest that Waterloo Region is a good place to live and raise a family

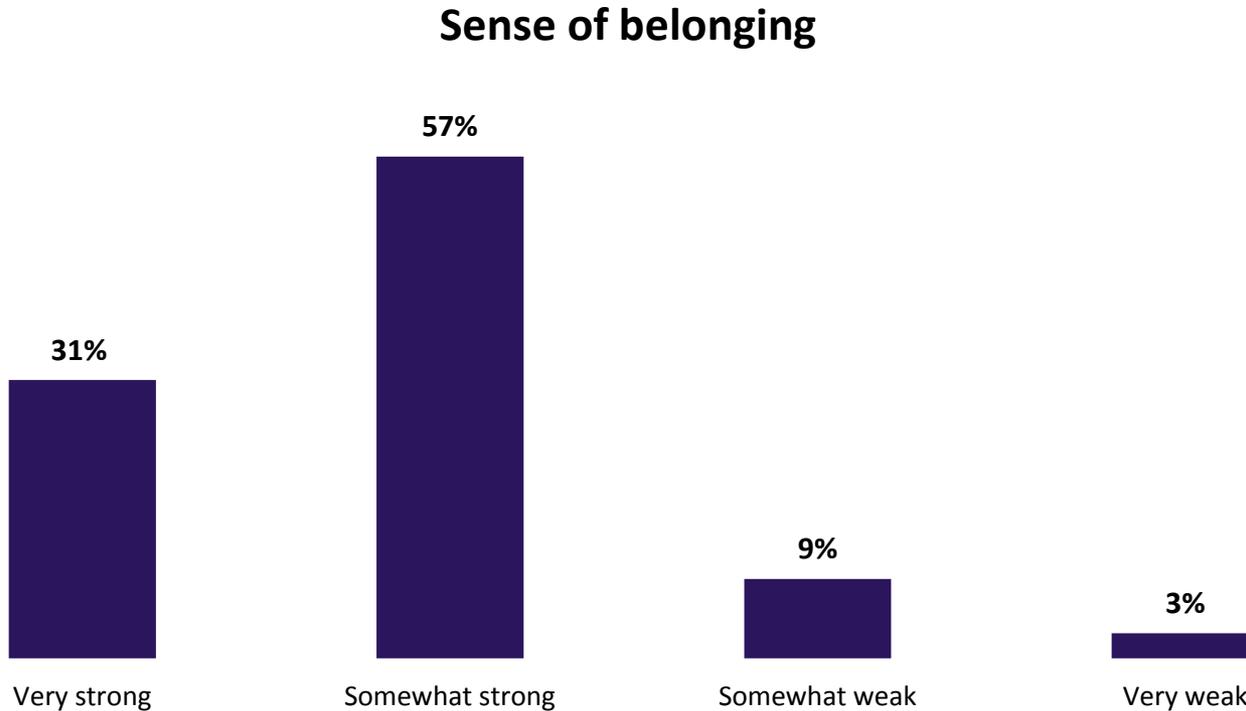
Waterloo Region quality of life statements



Nearly all residents strongly agree or agree that Waterloo Region is a good place to live (89%) and raise a family (89%). Large majorities of residents also agree that it is a safe place (85%) and a welcoming community (78%). More than seven in ten (73%) agree that the Region is a good place to work, while two in three (66%) agree that it is a good place for arts culture and heritage.

Q4. I am going to read some statements about life in Waterloo Region. Please tell me the extent to which you agree with the following on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is strongly disagree, and 5 is strongly agree.

A sense of belonging is high across the Region



Nine in ten residents (88%) describe their sense of belonging to the Waterloo Region as somewhat or very strong. The sense of belonging for residents is high across the Region, but those who live in Wellesley and Woolwich are most likely to describe their sense of belonging as strong. Newcomers to the Region are less likely to feel the same sense of belonging, as two in ten (23%) of those with less than five years in Waterloo Region describe their sense of belonging as somewhat or very weak.

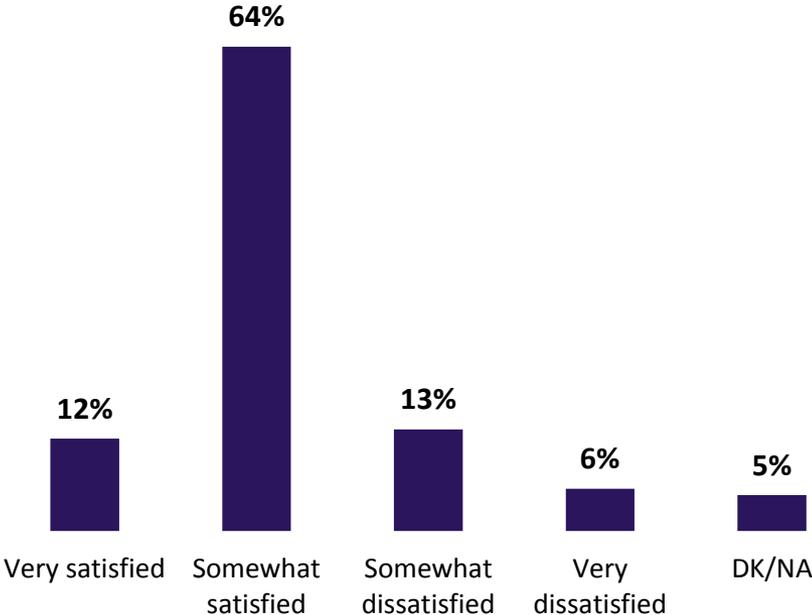
Q5. How would you describe your sense of belonging to Waterloo Region?

Government and Taxation

Government and Taxation

- This series of questions looked at overall satisfaction with the Region of Waterloo government, as well as preferences for taxation, service fees and funding for specific programs and services. Residents were also asked about their experiences interacting with Region staff in the past year.
- The results in this section may appear contradictory, as residents express a desire to maintain service levels and keep tax increases low, while also wishing to spend more on a variety of programs and services. Some external factors can explain the responses received, but in general, residents' spending preferences for specific programs and services are not their top priorities, but rather areas that it would be nice to see additional money used, if it was available to the Region.

Satisfaction with the Region of Waterloo Government



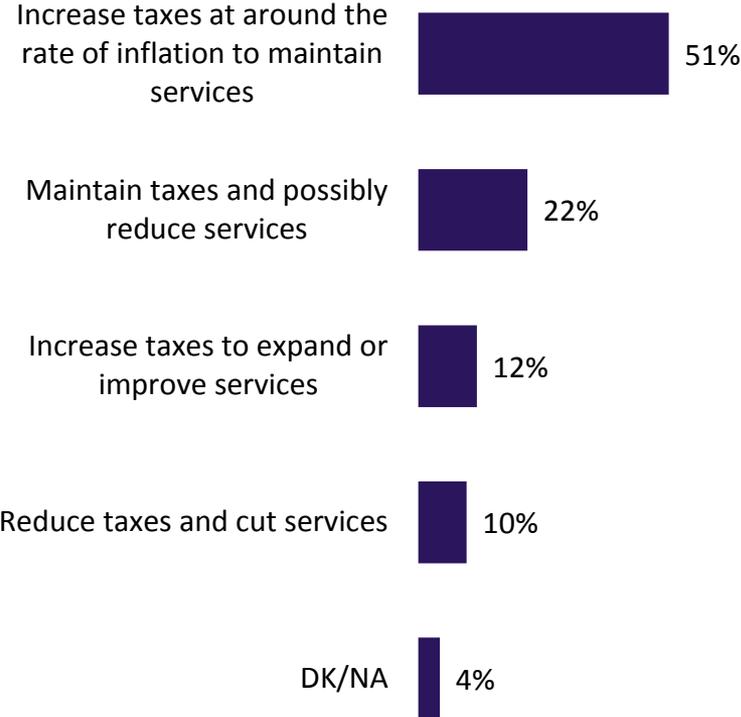
A total of 76 percent of residents are satisfied or very satisfied with the Region of Waterloo government, but just 12 percent say they are very satisfied. This level of satisfaction is consistent with what is seen in other Regions across Ontario.

Those who rate their quality of life and sense of belonging to the community as high are also more likely to be satisfied with the Region of Waterloo government.

Q6. Would you say that you are very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the Region of Waterloo government?

There is support for increasing taxes, but just at the rate of inflation to maintain current services

Balance delivering services with taxation

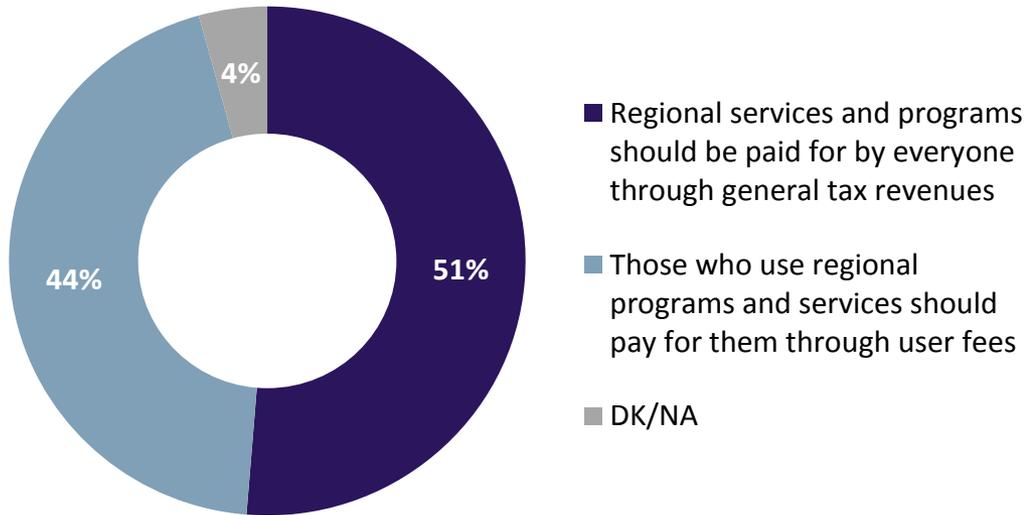


In order to balance service levels and taxation, half of residents (51%) would prefer that current service levels are maintained, and are willing to pay tax increases around the rate of inflation in order to do so. Two in ten (22%) want to maintain tax rates, even if it means service reductions. One in ten each are at the opposite ends of the spectrum, as 12 percent want services expanded and taxes increased, while 10 percent believe taxes should be reduced through service cuts. The results of this question are generally similar across municipalities and demographic subgroups.

Q7. Regional government must balance the cost of delivering services with taxation. Which of the following would you most prefer for property taxes in Waterloo Region?

A slight majority say regional services should be supported by tax revenues rather than user fees

Who should pay for services and programs?



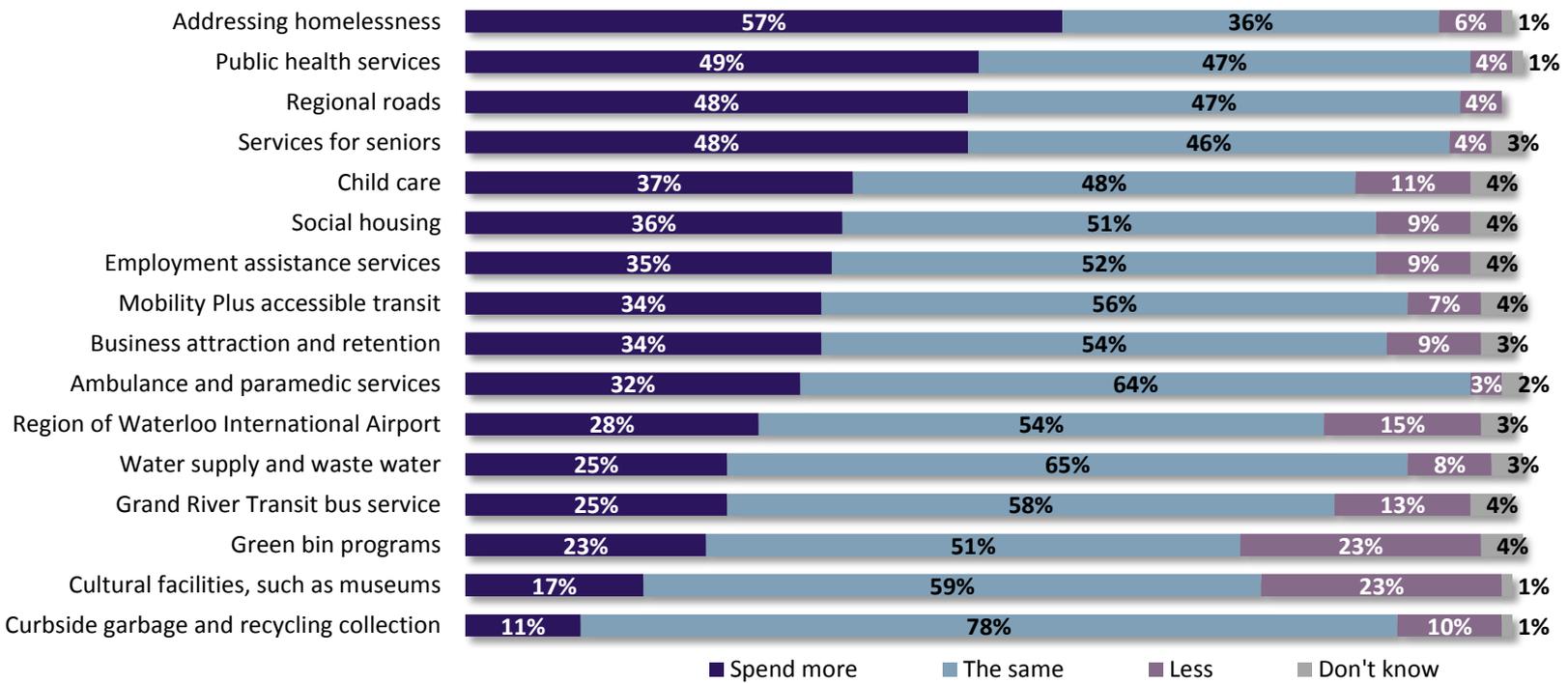
Waterloo Region residents are nearly split on how programs and services should be funded. A slight majority of 51 percent say regional services and programs should be paid for by everyone through general tax revenues, but 44 percent believe that these should be paid for through user fees.

Residents who expressed a desire for maintained or reduced taxes in Q7 are more likely to support user fees to pay for programs and services.

Q8. Which of the following is closer to your own opinion?

Homelessness, public health, roads and seniors are the areas in which residents would most prefer spending increases

Government spending on services

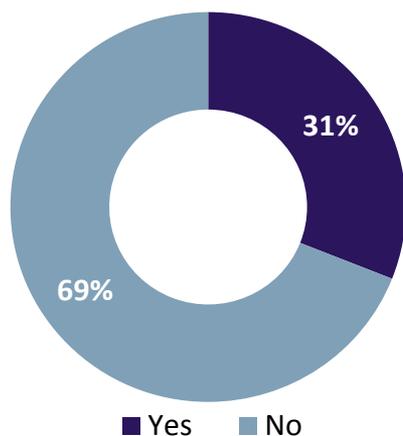


If government spending were to increase, residents would most prefer spending on homelessness, public health, regional roads and seniors. Cultural facilities such as museums are the one area where the net preference is for less spending. As social services are generally not top priorities for residents, other factors could be partly responsible for residents’ desires to see increased spending in those areas. Social desirability bias – meaning that participants respond in a way that they think is socially acceptable, rather than reflecting their true opinions – may have had an impact on results. That the survey was conducted during a particularly cold winter could also explain an above average desire to see the Region increase spending to address homelessness.

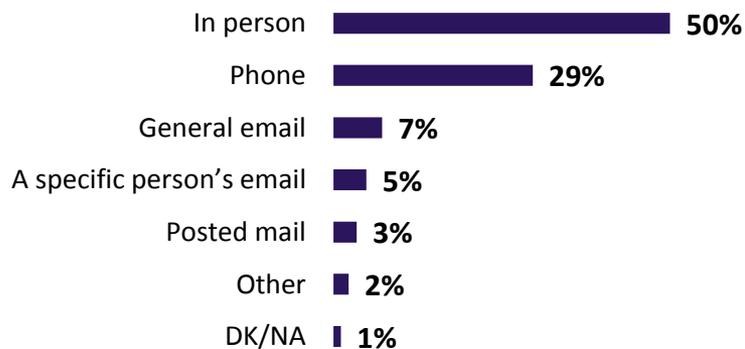
Q9. Keeping in mind that taxes may increase if spending increases, do you think that your regional government should be spending more, less or about the same as now on each of the following services?

Three in ten residents have interacted with Region staff, most often in person or by phone, and for a wide variety of reasons

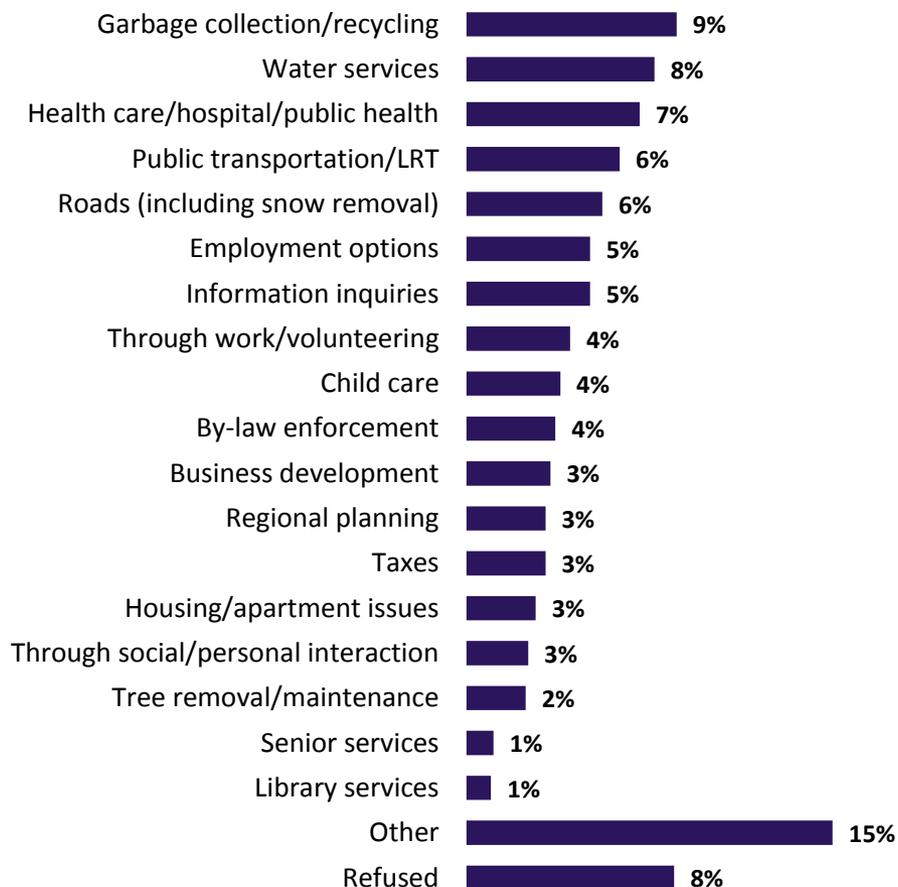
Interacted with Region staff in past year



Mode of interaction



Interaction regarding...



Q28. Have you interacted with any Region of Waterloo staff in the last 12 months?

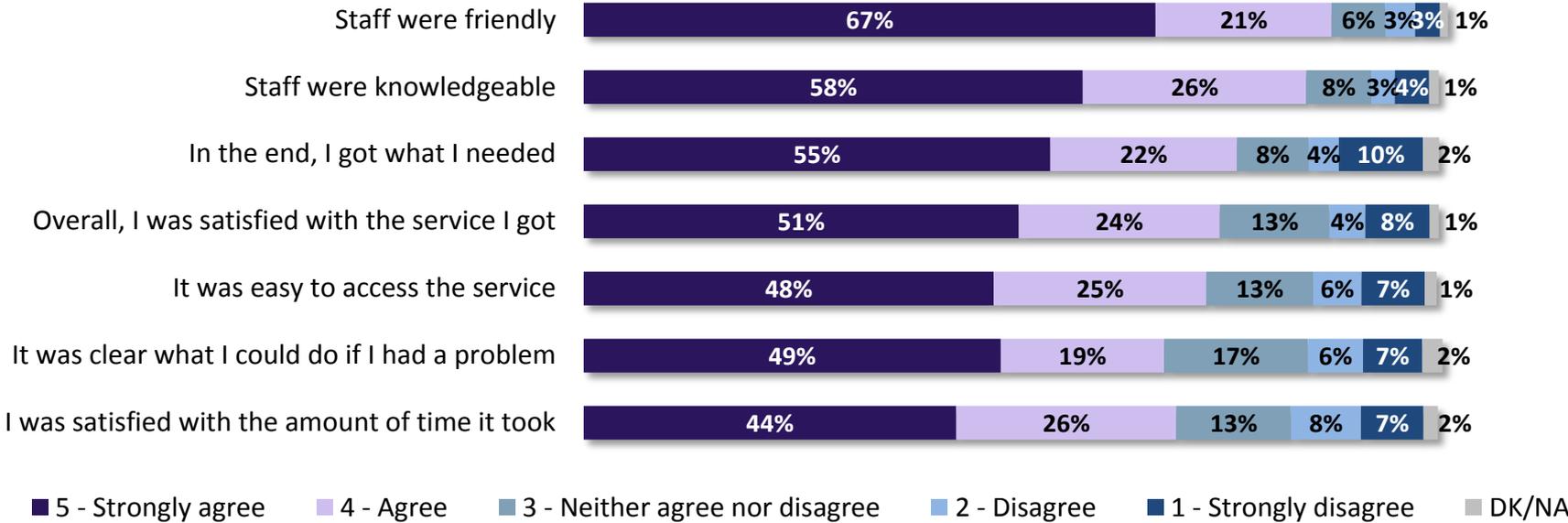
Q29. Thinking about your most recent interaction with Region staff, can you name or describe the service this was for?

Q30. And was this most recent interaction with Region staff by . . . ?

Nearly all residents who interacted with Region staff rate those interactions highly

Most recent interaction with Region staff

Among those who have interacted with Region staff in past year (n=376)



Region staff receive high marks from residents who interacted with them in the past year. More than eight in ten each strongly agree or agree that staff were friendly (88%) and knowledgeable (84%). Three in four each agree that they got what they needed from the interaction (77%), that they were satisfied overall with the service they received (75%) and that it was easy to access (73%). Agreement is slightly lower that residents were satisfied with the amount of time it took to get the service (70%) and that it was clear what they could do if there was a problem (68%), but more than two in three still agree with both statements. Ratings of Region staff are similar across municipalities, though younger residents (aged 18 to 29) are more likely to say that staff were knowledgeable, and that in the end they were able to get what they needed.

Q31. Still thinking about your most recent interaction with Region staff, to what extent do you agree with the following statements? 1 is strongly disagree, and 5 is strongly agree?

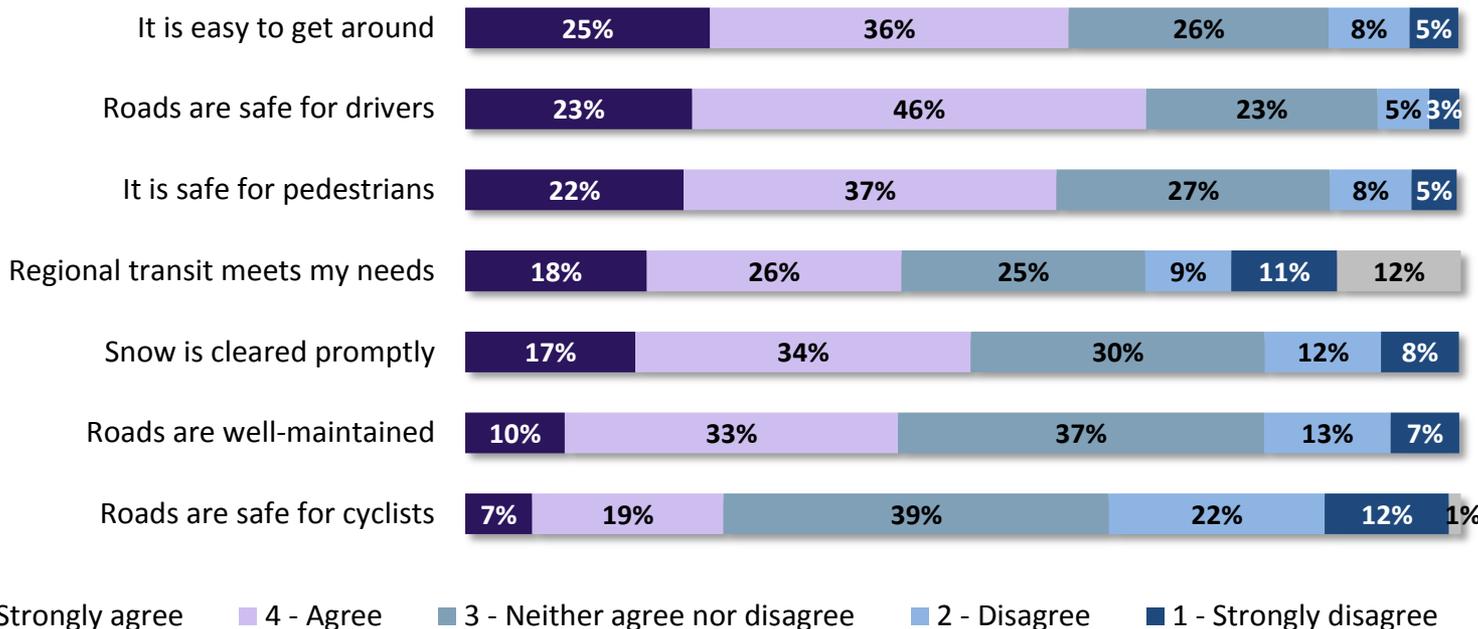
Regional Programs and Services

Regional Programs and Services

- Residents were asked the extent to which they agree or disagree with a battery of statements for seven different service areas – the economy, the environment, transportation, growth management, community and social services, public health and customer service and engagement.

Residents are most likely to agree that roads are safe for drivers and pedestrians, and that it is easy to get around

Transportation initiatives

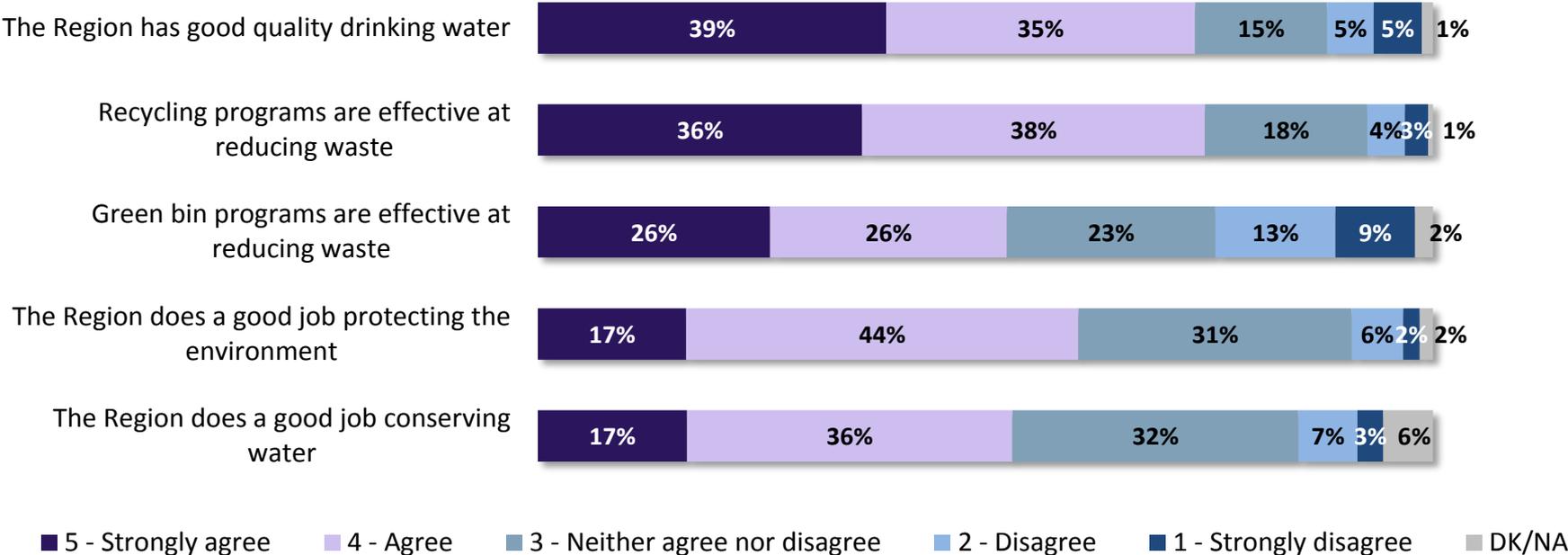


Majorities of residents strongly agree or agree that it is easy to get around in Waterloo Region, and that roads are safe for drivers and pedestrians. There is less agreement that snow is cleared promptly, roads are well-maintained and regional transit is meeting needs. Residents are more likely to disagree that roads are safe for cyclists. Eighteen- to 29-year-olds have higher than average levels of agreement that it is safe for pedestrians and cyclists, and that regional transit meets their needs. Among residents who regularly use public transit, 58 percent agree that the system meets their needs.

Q12. Please tell me the extent to which you agree with the following statements about transportation in the Region, using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is strongly disagree, and 5 is strongly agree.

Drinking water is said to be good quality, and residents feel that recycling programs are effective at reducing waste

Environmental stewardship

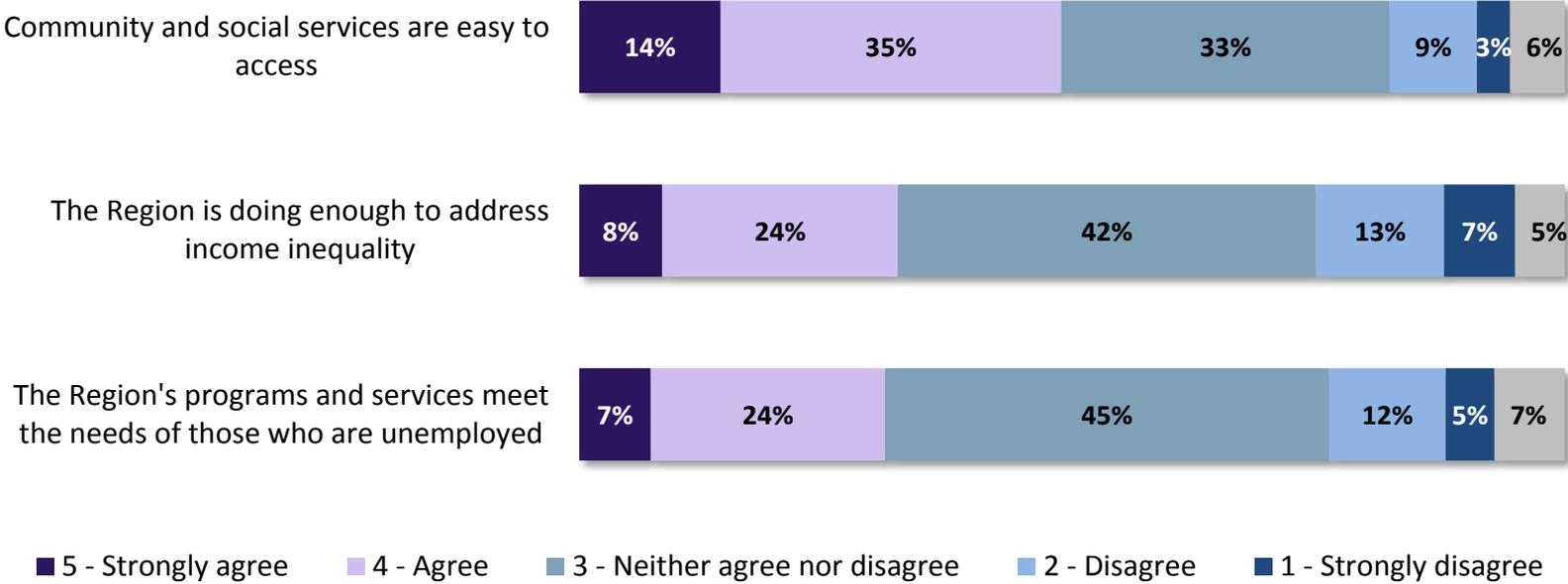


In general, residents of Waterloo Region appear satisfied with their government’s efforts to protect the environment, as majorities agree that the Region has quality water, is effective at reducing waste, and does a good job protecting the environment and conserving water. Residents have the highest agreement the drinking water is of good quality and recycling programs are effective. One subgroup difference to note is that men are more likely than women to agree that the Region has good quality drinking water. Compared to 2011, agreement that the Region does a good job protecting the environment is relatively unchanged.

Q14. Turning now to the environment, using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is strongly disagree, and 5 is strongly agree please tell me the extent to which you agree with the following statements about the Region of Waterloo.

Residents are less inclined to agree that the Region is doing enough to address inequality and help those who are unemployed

Community and social services

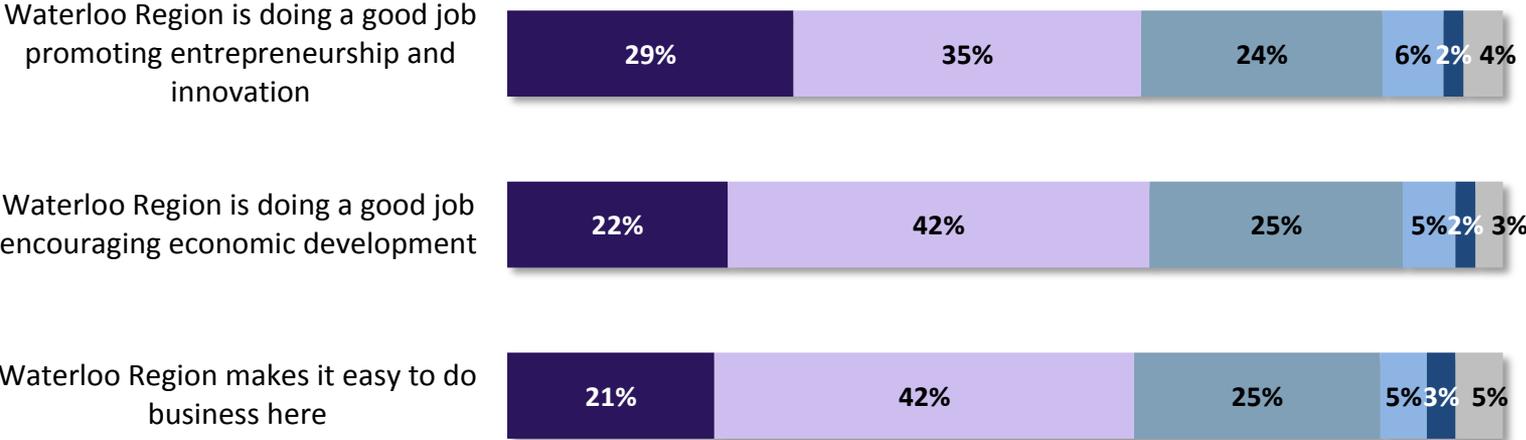


Half of residents (49%) agree that community and social services are easy to access, but many are unable to agree or disagree as to whether the Region is doing enough to address inequality, or that programs and services meet the needs of those who are unemployed. There is a clear age difference in agreement that social services are easy to access, as 56 percent of those aged 18 to 44 agree, compared to only 42 percent of those 45 and up. Men are also more likely than women to agree that the Region is doing enough to address inequality and that the services meet the needs of the unemployed.

Q16. Using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is strongly disagree, and 5 is strongly agree, to what extent do you agree with the following statements about the Region of Waterloo's efforts to provide community and social services.

Residents generally agree that the Region is doing a good job promoting and developing the local economy

Economic development



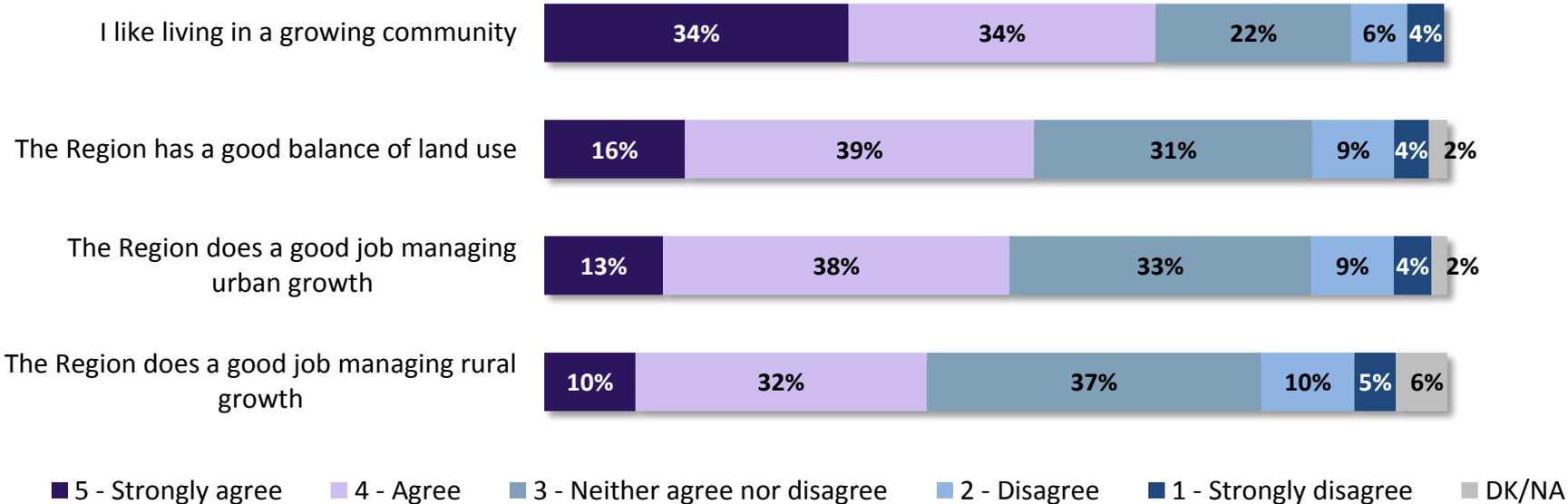
■ 5 - Strongly agree
 ■ 4 - Agree
 ■ 3 - Neither agree nor disagree
 ■ 2 - Disagree
 ■ 1 - Strongly disagree
 ■ DK/NA

More than six in ten residents agree that the Region is doing a good job encouraging economic development (65%), promoting entrepreneurship and innovation (64%), and making it easy to do business here (63%). Fewer than one in ten residents disagree with each of these statements and agreement is similar across demographic subgroups.

Q18. Using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is strongly disagree, and 5 is strongly agree, to what extent do you agree with the following statements about the Waterloo Region economy

Residents like living in a growing community, but are unsure if the Region is doing a good job managing growth in rural areas

Growth management initiatives

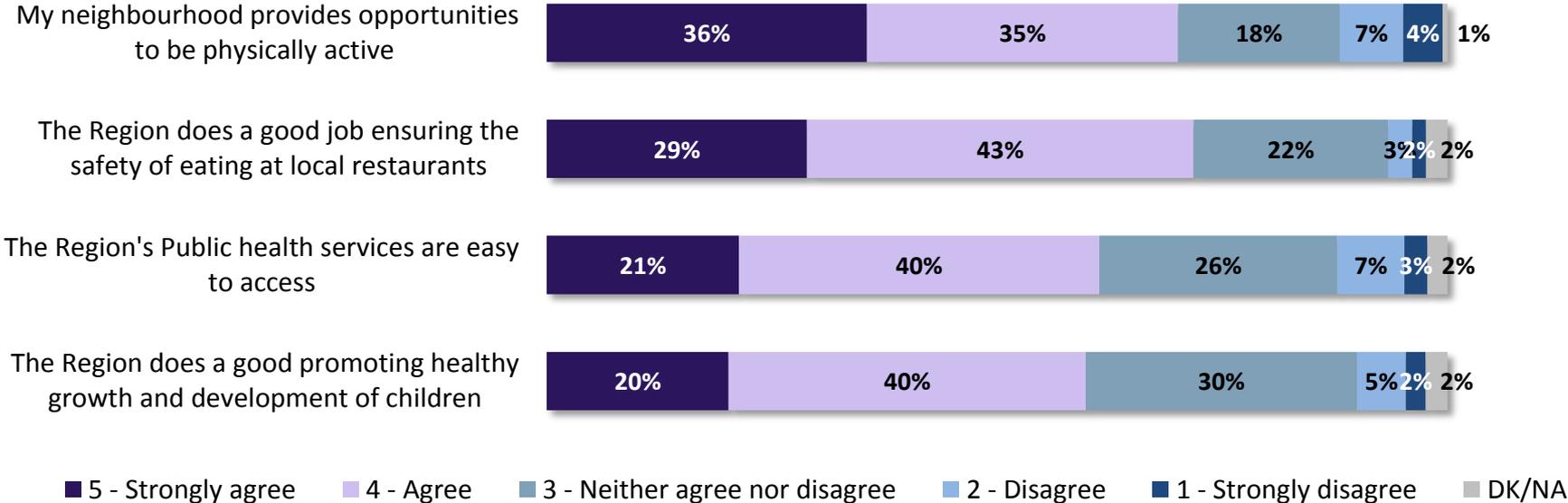


When asked about the growth and development of the Region, most residents agree that they enjoy living in a growing community. Just over half of residents agree that there is a good balance of land uses, and that the Region does a good job managing urban growth, while four in ten agree that rural growth is well managed. Residents aged 18 to 29, are the most likely to agree that they like living in a growing community. In 2011 residents were also asked their agreement with the statements “I like living in a growing community” and “The Region does a good job managing urban growth”. For both statements, the results are nearly identical between 2011 and 2015.

Q20. Thinking now about the growth and development of the Region, do you agree or disagree with the following using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is strongly disagree, and 5 is strongly agree?

The Region does a good job ensuring safety of restaurants, and there are opportunities for residents to be physically active

Promoting healthy living

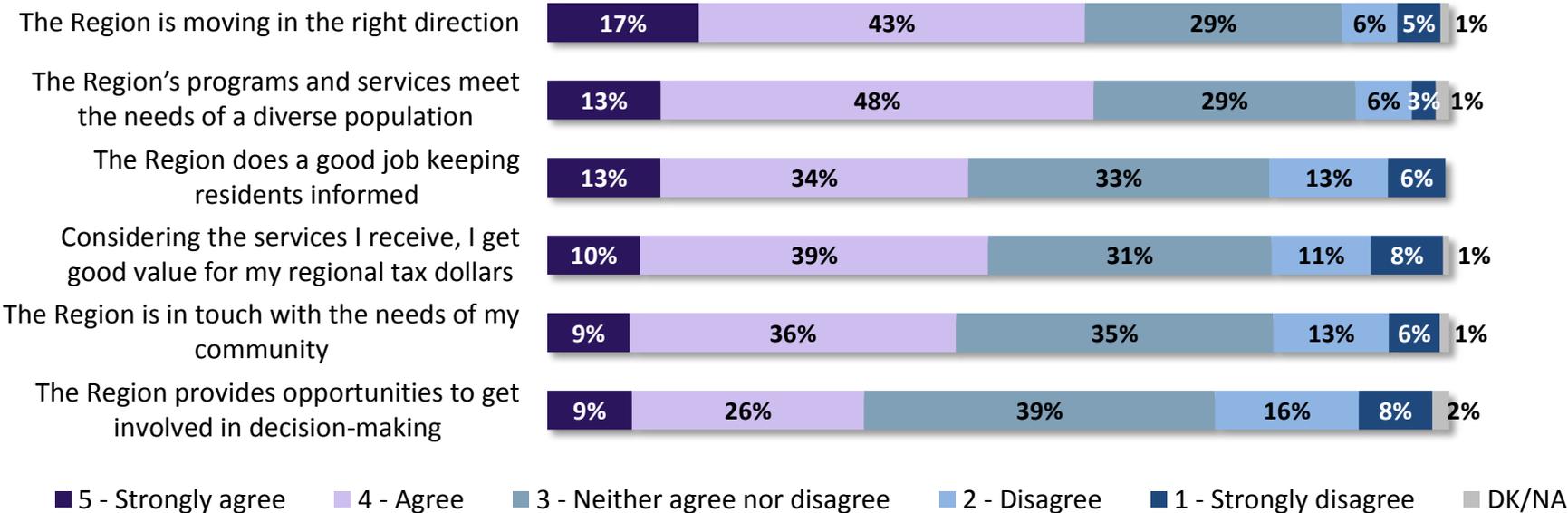


Agreement is high that the Region’s efforts to promote healthy living are successful. Seven in ten each agree that the Region does a good job ensuring the safety of eating at local restaurants (72%) and that the community provides opportunities to be active (70%). Six in ten also agree that public health services are easy to access (61%), and that the Region does a good job promoting health growth and development of children (60%). Agreement with these statements is similar across the Region.

Q22. Thinking about Region’s efforts to promote healthy living, please tell me if you agree or disagree with the following using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is strongly disagree, and 5 is strongly agree?

Residents agree that the Region is moving in the right direction and meeting the needs of a diverse population, but would like more opportunities to get involved

Service and engagement



Across Waterloo Region agreement is highest that the programs and services offered meet the needs of the diverse population (61%), and that the Region is moving in the right direction (60%). Agreement that the Region is moving in the right direction is highest among residents aged 18 to 29 (70%). Close to half of all residents agree that they received good value for their tax dollars (49%), that the Region does a good job keeping residents informed (47%) and that the Region is in touch with the needs of their community (45%). Residents are least likely to agree that they have opportunities to get involved in decision-making (35%). From 2011 to 2015, agreement that Region is in touch with the needs of various communities is unchanged, though agreement is down that the Region does a good job keeping residents informed and that the residents receive good value for their tax dollars.

Q24. Thinking about the Region's efforts to ensure residents are receiving good service and are engaged in decision-making, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is strongly disagree, and 5 is strongly agree, do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Drivers Analysis

Drivers Analysis

- This section looks to unpack satisfaction with the Region of Waterloo by determining what programs and services are most likely to drive, or influence residents' overall ratings of their regional government.
- The top drivers of government satisfaction can differ from what residents believe to be the top priorities for the Region for two reasons:
 - One is stated importance (in that residents tell us what they think the priorities should be) while the other is inferred (derived from the drivers analysis); and
 - One is looking ahead to the future of the region (priorities), while the other is about making an immediate impact on satisfaction with the government (drivers).

Explanation of drivers analysis

The Region of Waterloo aims to provide services that meet or exceed the expectations of its residents. It is important to understand what influences, or “drives,” general opinions of the Region’s performance in delivering these services.

A key drivers analysis is a statistical (multivariate) technique used to understand which factors most influence a given outcome. The drivers analysis identifies how strongly satisfaction with specific services provided by the Region are associated with overall satisfaction with the Regional government.

The technique works by finding patterns in the data that show how the dependent variable (overall satisfaction with the regional government) is linked up with independent variables (the services measured in the survey).

A linear regression is developed to build an overall model. Each of the independent variables (specific services) is paired with the dependent variable (overall satisfaction with the local government) to see how much each of them explains variation in the dependent variable. A list is produced assigning each of the independent variables with a Beta weight. These Beta weights are not percentages: they are units that tell you the relative importance of a factor in predicting the criterion (in this case, satisfaction with the Regional government).

The larger the absolute value of the beta weight, the more influence this factor has on predicting the criterion. In this case, the Beta weights tell us the relative importance of the specific services in predicting overall satisfaction with the local government. The larger the Beta weight, the more a specific service predicts overall satisfaction with the government.

Key drivers of satisfaction with regional government

Satisfaction, or agreement that the government is doing good work in the following service areas are the strongest predictors – or drivers – of overall satisfaction with the regional government as a whole:

TOP DRIVER: Customer service and engagement 

SECOND LEVEL DRIVERS:
Economic development
Transportation 

THIRD LEVEL DRIVERS:
Environmental stewardship
Public safety 

Key drivers of satisfaction with regional government

Satisfaction, or agreement that the government is doing good work in the following service areas are the strongest predictors – or drivers – of overall satisfaction with the regional government as a whole:

Customer service and engagement: The regional government provides opportunities to get involved in decision-making; the Region is in touch with the needs of the community; residents feel they are getting good value for their tax dollars.

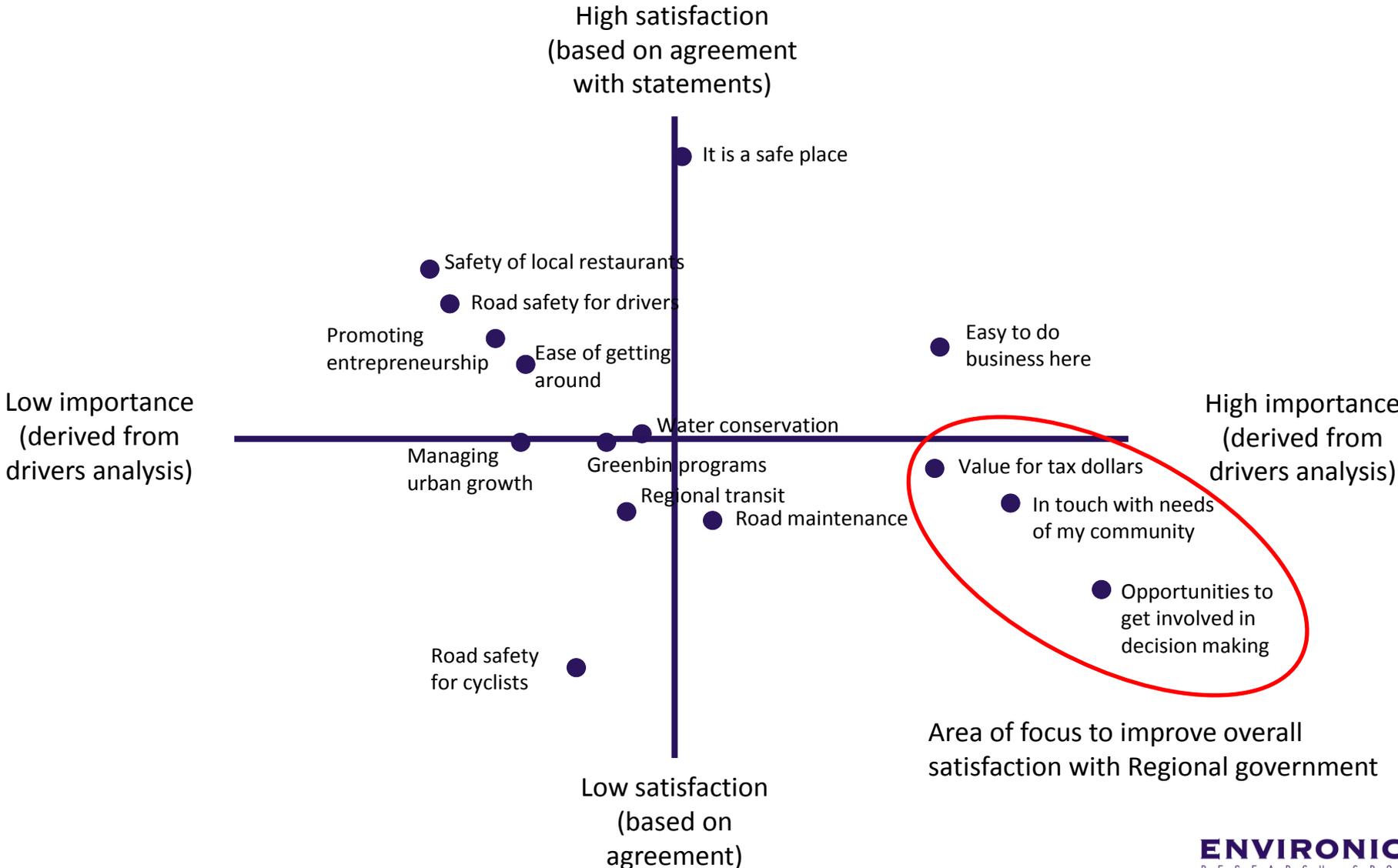
Economic development: The government is making it easy to do business in Waterloo Region.

Transportation: That roads are well-maintained and regional transit meets the needs of residents.

Environmental stewardship: Efforts to conserve water and divert waste from landfills through green bin and recycling programs.

Public safety: The Region is a safe place to live.

Improved customer service and engagement with residents will have the greatest impact on overall satisfaction with the Region of Waterloo



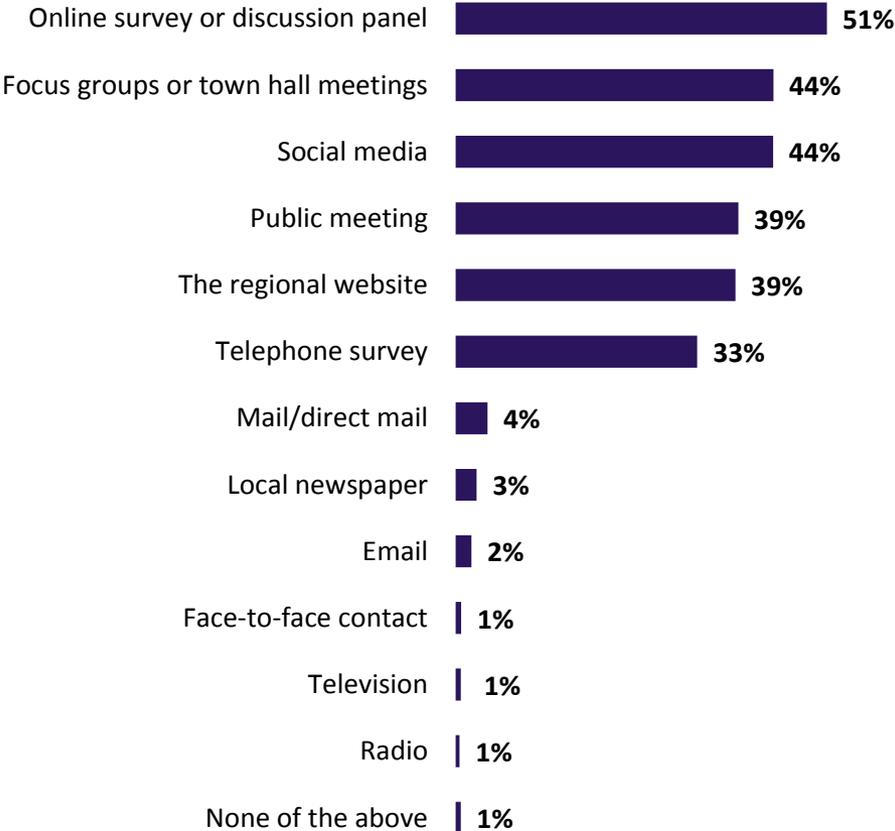
Community Engagement

Community Engagement

- As the previous section demonstrated the importance of community engagement, this section looks to understand how exactly residents would prefer to receive information from their regional government, as well as the best ways to solicit their opinions, so that they can feel involved in the decision making process.

Residents most want to give their input online or in person

Preferred method of public engagement



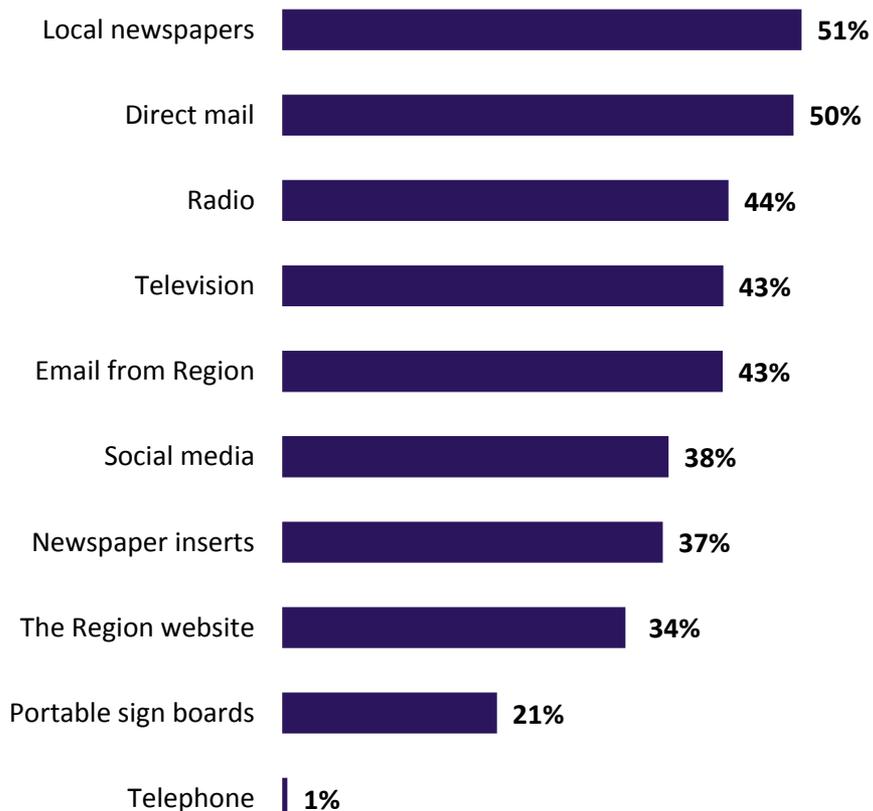
When residents are asked how they would like to give the government their input on specific issues, the largest proportions say they would be interested in completing an online survey (51%), taking part in a focus group or town hall (44%), or providing their input through social media (44%).

Some subgroup differences in preferences for public engagement appear in the results. Younger residents (18 to 29) are more likely to prefer using social media to provide input, while residents with children in the home would rather complete an online survey.

Q26. If the Region wanted to gather public input or engage you on major issues or decisions, what would be your preferred method

Traditional means of disseminating information to residents are still preferred

Preferred method of receiving information



For receiving information from the regional government, residents generally prefer traditional approaches, including local newspapers, direct mail, and local radio or television. Emails from the Region or use of social media are preferred by four in ten each.

Residents aged 60 and older prefer newspapers and television for information, while younger residents are more willing to receive updates and news through email or social media.

Q27. What is your most preferred method for receiving information from the Region about initiatives and decisions?

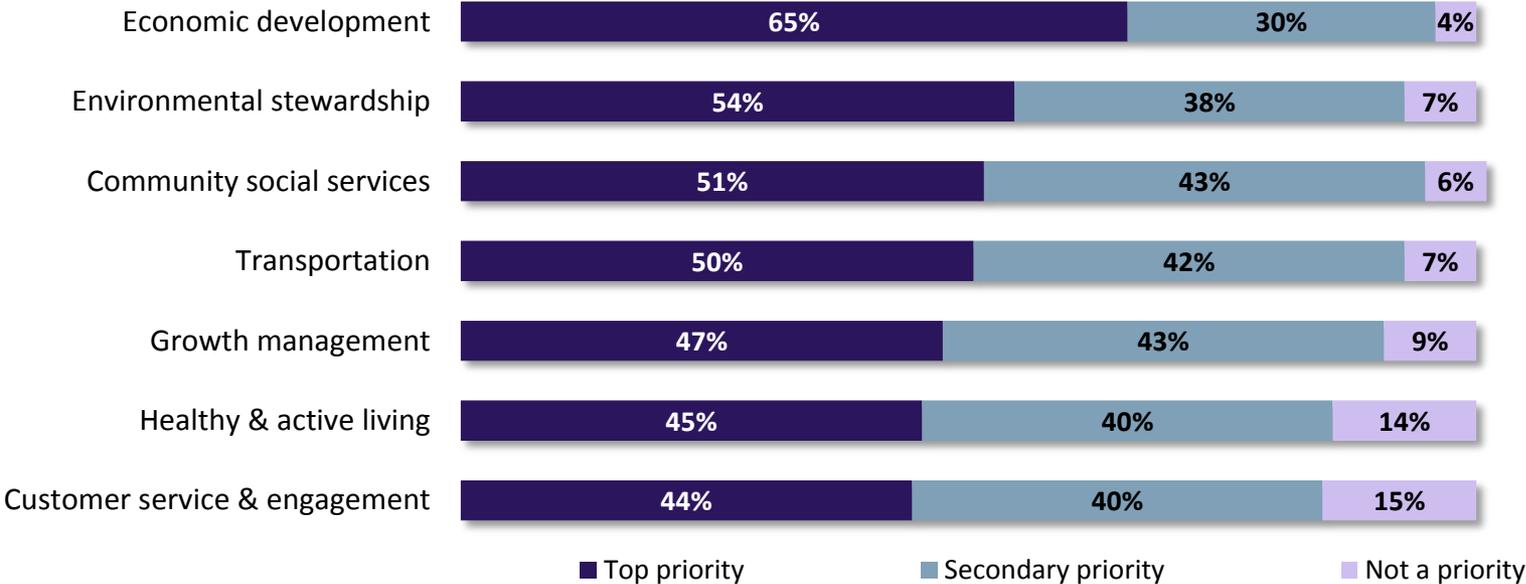
Priorities

Priorities

- To outline the Region's priorities moving forward, residents were given an explanation of seven broad priority areas – the economy, the environment, transportation, growth management, community and social services, public health and customer service and engagement – and asked to rank each one as either a top priority, secondary priority or not a priority. To ensure no major areas of focus were missed, residents were asked a follow-up question about priorities not included in the list; most were unable to name one.
- Following this exercise, residents were then given a series of potential initiatives within each of the larger priority buckets, and again asked to rank them as top, secondary or non-priorities.

Residents believe economic development and the environment should be the top priorities for the Region of Waterloo

Priorities for Region of Waterloo

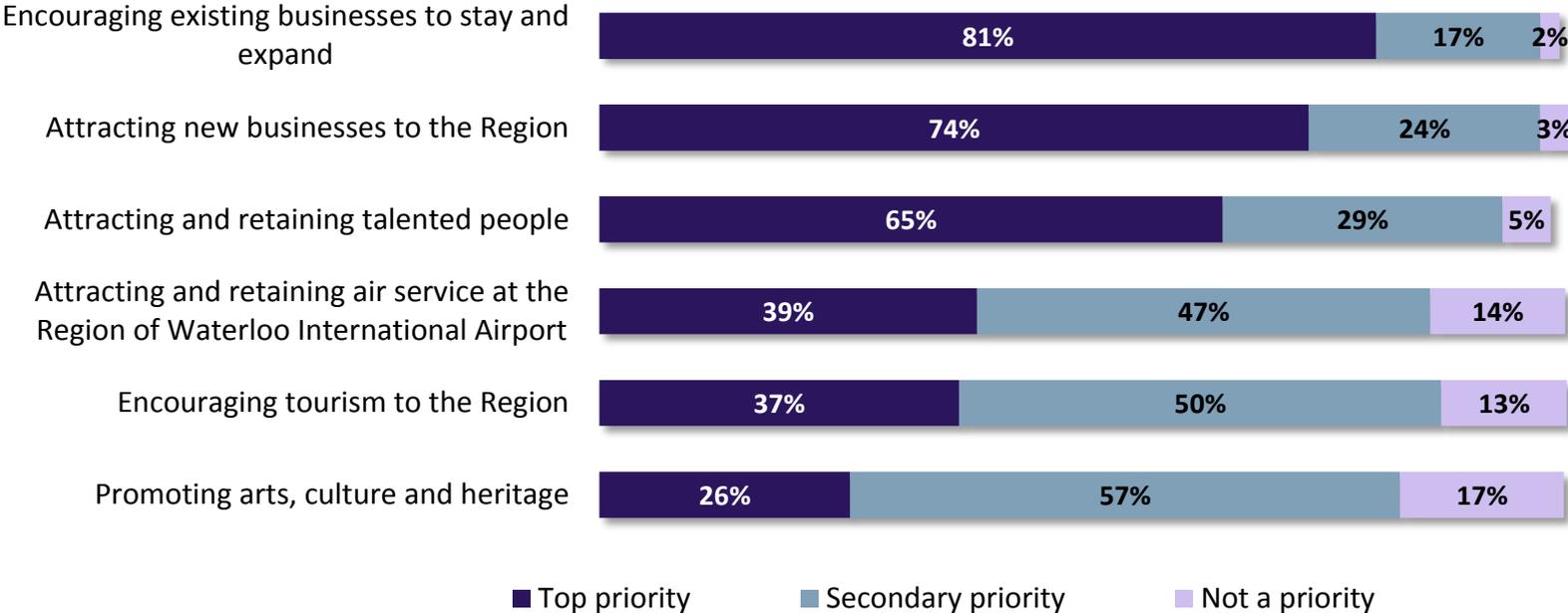


More than six in ten residents (65%) believe economic development should be a top priority for the Region of Waterloo. Younger residents are most likely to see the economy as a top priority, including three in four (76%) of those aged 18 to 29. Small majorities see environmental stewardship (54%) and community social services (51%) as top priorities, both of which are more likely to be seen as so by women than men. Women are also more likely to see healthy and active living as a top priority, while men place greater importance on growth management. When asked if there are other priority areas not covered under the above categories, most residents are unable to name one.

10. The Region of Waterloo is currently developing a strategic plan to help guide service plans and budgeting priorities for the next four years. For each of the following areas, please tell me if you think it should be a top priority for the Region, a secondary priority, or not a priority.

Residents want their regional government to focus on retaining and expanding existing businesses

Economic development

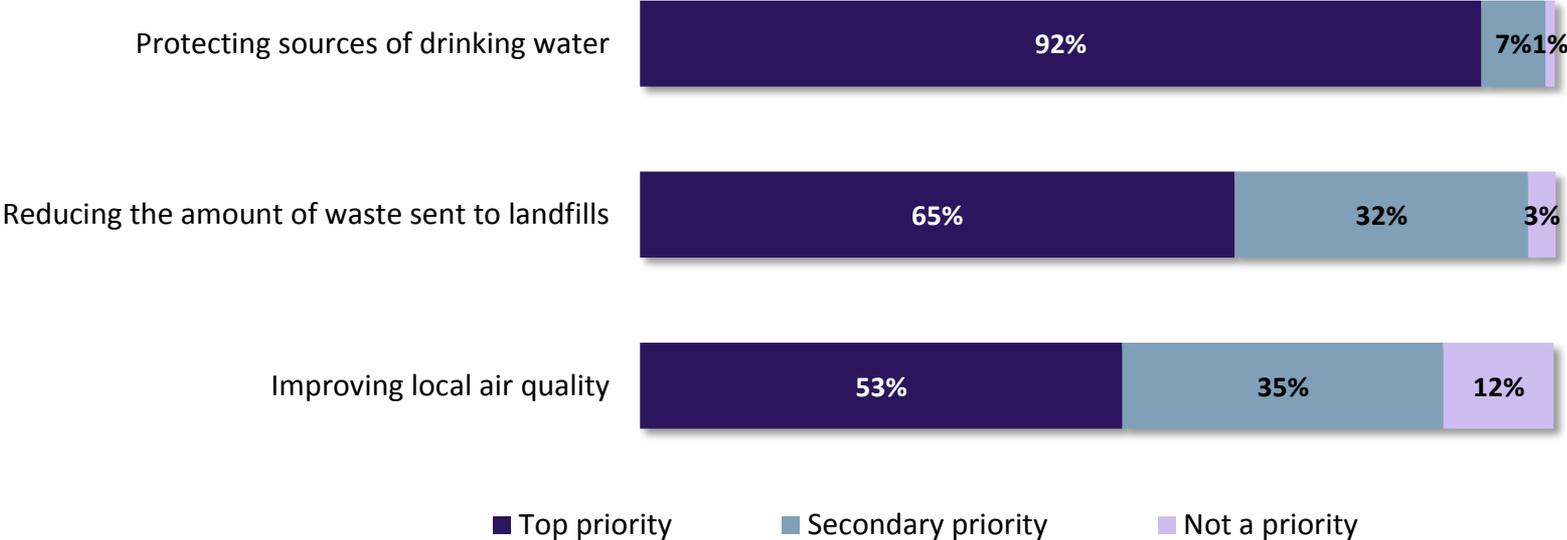


As the top priority area, Waterloo Region residents want their government to focus on encouraging existing businesses to stay and expand, drawing new businesses, and attracting and retaining talented people. Region of Waterloo International Airport, encouraging tourism, and promoting arts, culture and heritage are more likely to be seen as secondary priorities. Priorities are generally similar across municipalities and other subgroups, though residents aged 60 and up are most likely to see the airport and tourism as top priorities, while those aged 18 to 29 place a greater emphasis on promoting arts, culture and heritage.

Q19. Thinking about ways to improve the local economy, do you think the following initiatives should be a top priority, a secondary priority or not a priority?

Protecting sources of drinking water is the top environmental priority

Environmental stewardship

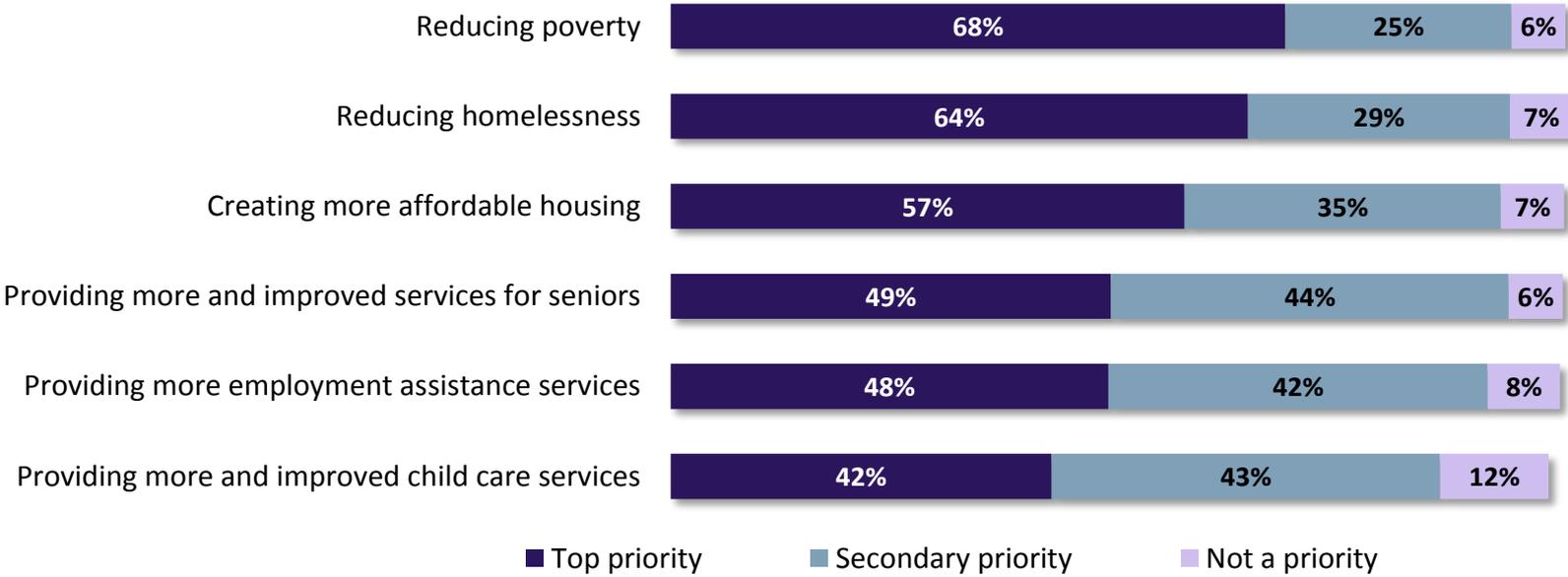


For environmental initiatives, nearly all residents agree that protecting sources of drinking water should be the top priority for the region. Results are similar across municipalities and other demographic subgroups. Reducing waste sent to landfills is a top priority for more than six in ten (65%), while half believe improving air quality should be a top priority. Results are similar across municipalities and other subgroups.

Q15. Thinking about the Region’s efforts to protect the environment, do you think each of the following should be a top priority, a secondary priority or not a priority?

Waterloo Region residents see reducing poverty and homelessness as the top priorities for community and social services

Community and social services

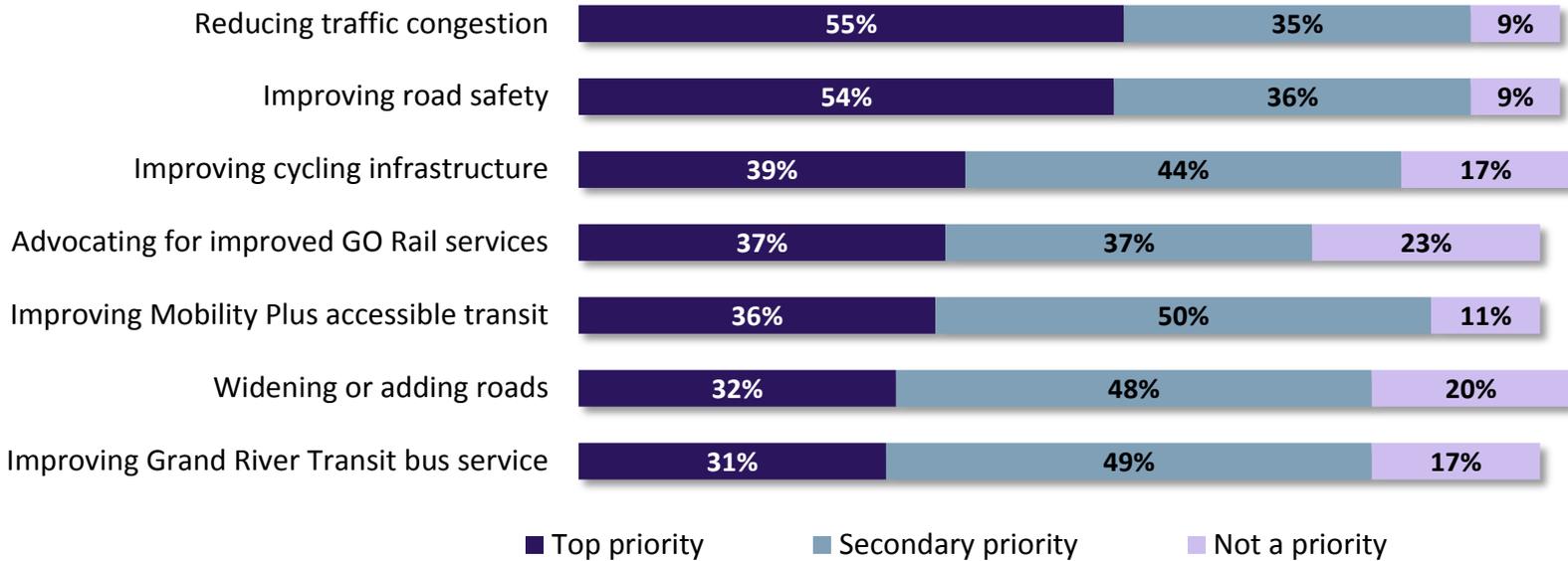


Within the area of community and social services, residents would like to see efforts to reduce poverty and homelessness as the top priorities for the Region. A majority of residents also feel that affordable housing should be a top priority, including about seven in ten of those with annual incomes of \$40,000 or less (73%), and those who are currently renting their home (72%). Residents aged 45 to 59 are the most likely to say that services for seniors should be a top priority (59%). Across all the above efforts, women are more likely than men to say that they should be a top priority for the Region. Providing improved child care services is seen as the lowest priority among social services.

Q17. Thinking about the Region’s efforts to provide community and social services, do you think the following initiatives should be a top priority, a secondary priority or not a priority?

Reducing congestion and improving road safety are named as the top transportation priorities, ahead of public transit and cycling infrastructure

Transportation initiatives

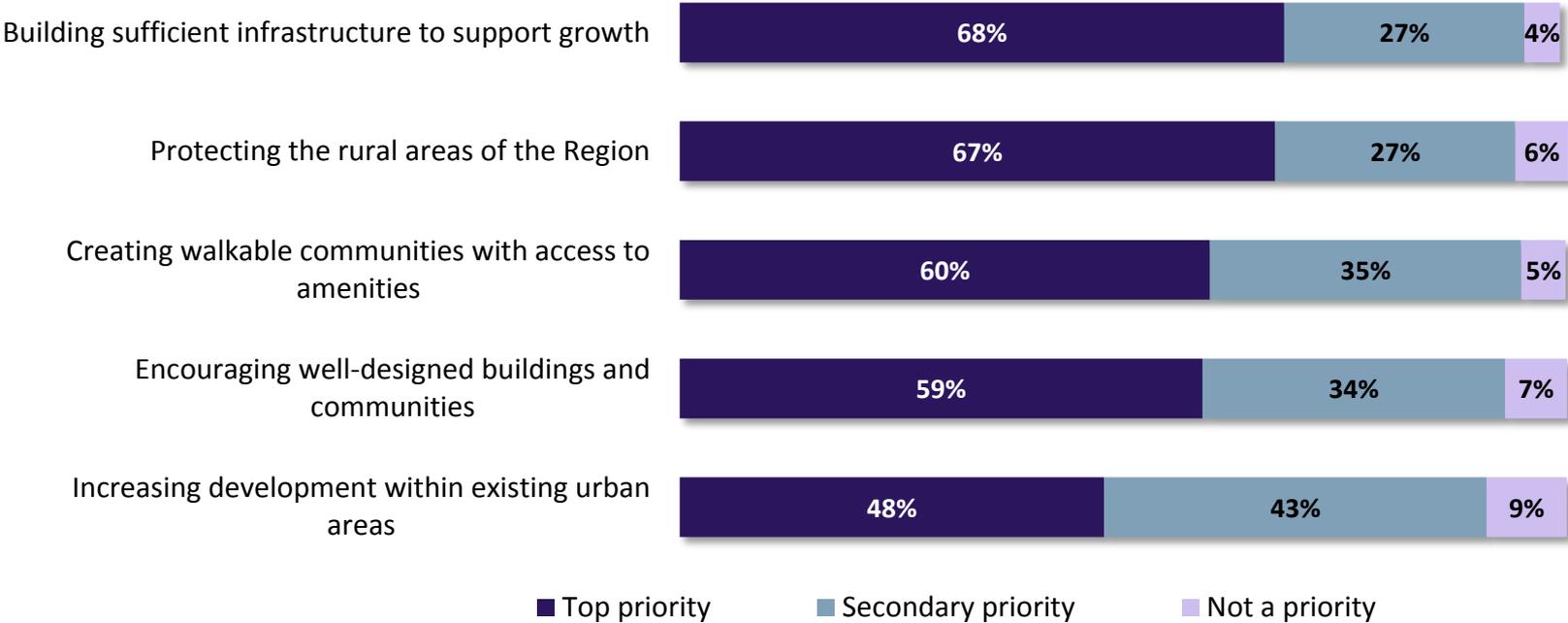


According to residents, the top transportation priorities for the Region should be reducing congestion, and improving road safety. Cycling infrastructure, advocating for GO Rail service, improving Mobility Plus, widening or adding roads, and improving bus services are all more likely to be seen as secondary priorities. Among non-transit users (which are 70% of all residents) just 24 percent see improved bus service as a top priority, compared to half (53%) of those who use transit regularly. Improving bus service is also a greater priority for residents between the ages of 18 and 29. Newcomers to the Region (those who have lived in Waterloo Region for less than 5 years) are the strongest supporters of cycling infrastructure, with 54 percent who believe it should be a top priority.

Q13. Looking ahead, do you think the following transportation initiatives should be a top priority, a secondary priority or not a priority for the Region of Waterloo?

Residents think that building sufficient infrastructure to support growth, but also protecting the rural areas, should be the top growth priorities for the Region

Growth management initiatives

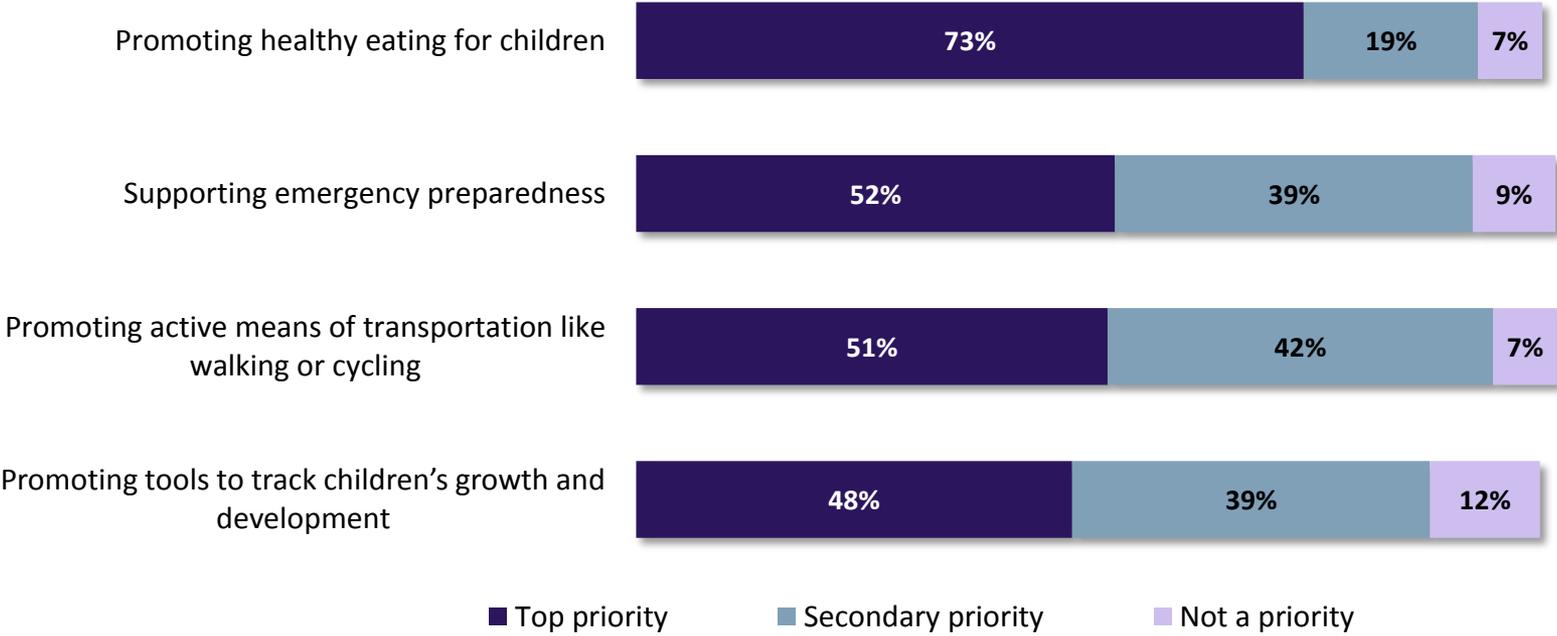


Within the area of growth management, residents feel the top priorities should be building sufficient infrastructure to support growth (68%), and protecting the rural areas of the Region (67%). Creating walkable communities (60%) and encouraging design excellence (59%) are also said to be top priorities by majorities of residents, while about half (48%) think that increasing development within existing urban areas should be a topic of focus.

Q21.To build and manage the growth of Waterloo Region, do you think each of the following should be a top priority, a secondary priority or not a priority?

For the Region’s health initiatives, residents say the top priority should be the promotion of healthy eating for children

Promoting healthy living

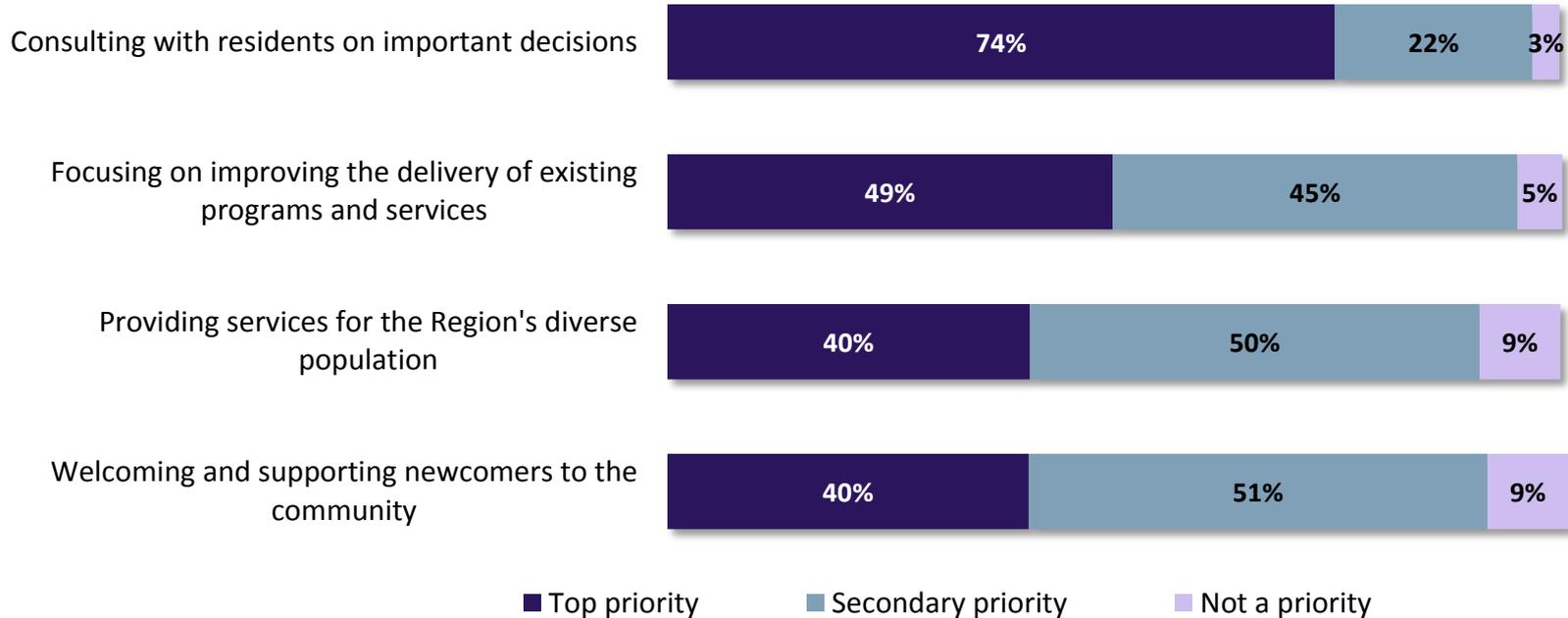


For the Region’s efforts to promote healthy living for residents, the top priority should be the promotion of healthy eating for children. Emergency preparedness, promoting active transportation, and tools to track children’s growth and development each receive similar levels of supports, as half of residents feel they should be top priorities. Women and those with annual incomes of less than \$40,000 are more likely than men and those with higher levels of income to say that all efforts should be top priorities.

Q23.To promote healthy living in the Region, do you think each of the following should be a top priority, a secondary priority or not a priority?

Residents want their regional government to make consultations with residents a focus of their plans for engagement and customer service

Service and engagement



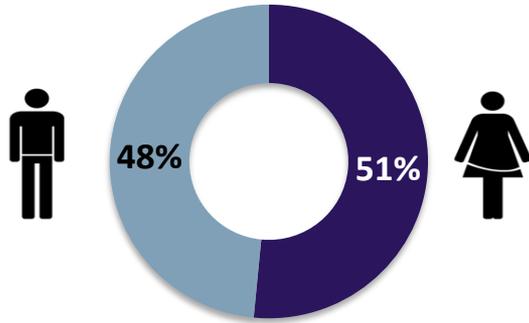
Three in four residents (74%) say that consultations with residents on important decisions should be a top priority for the regional government. Half (49%) believe improvement of service delivery should be a primary area of focus, while serving the diverse population and welcoming newcomers are more likely to be seen as secondary priorities. Majorities of residents aged 18 to 29, and with less than five years in the Region, are more likely to believe that providing services for the diverse population and welcoming new members of the community should be top priorities.

Q25. Do you think each of the following should be a top priority, a secondary priority or not a priority for the Region's efforts to keep residents engaged?

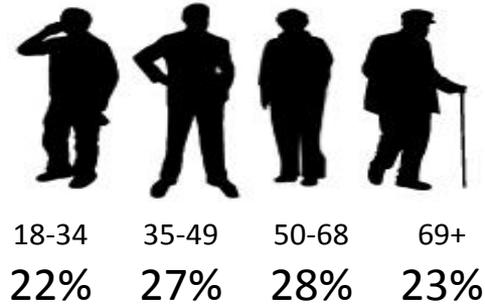
Demographics

Survey Participant Demographics

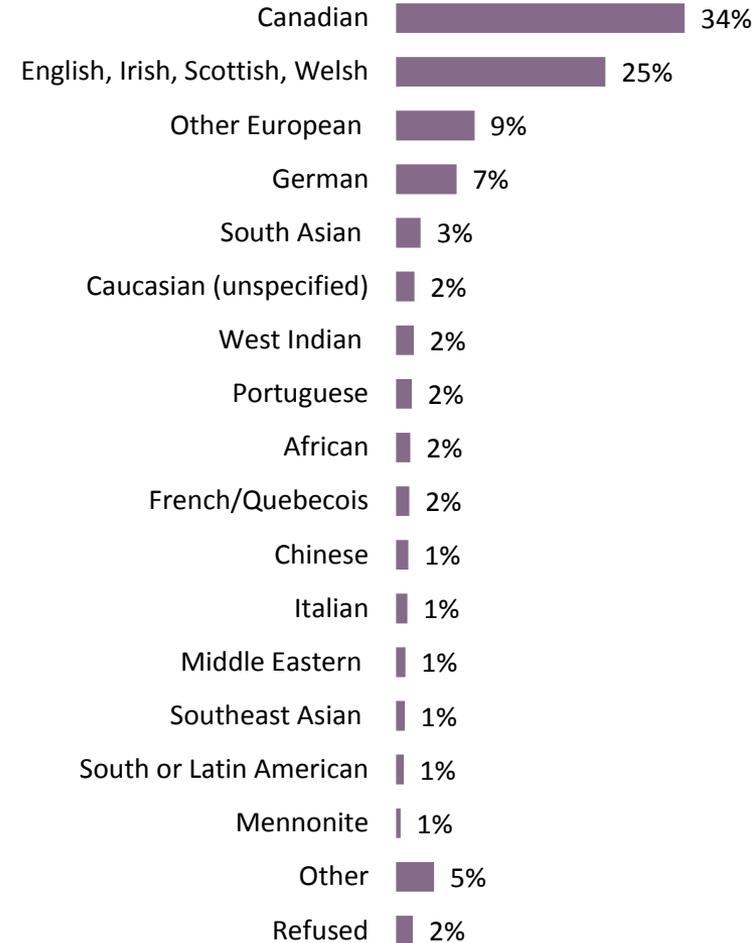
GENDER



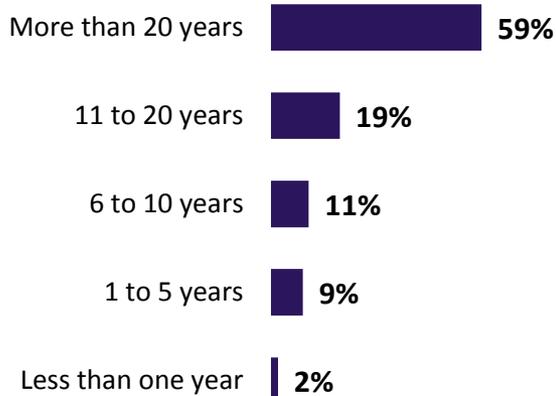
AGE DISTRIBUTION



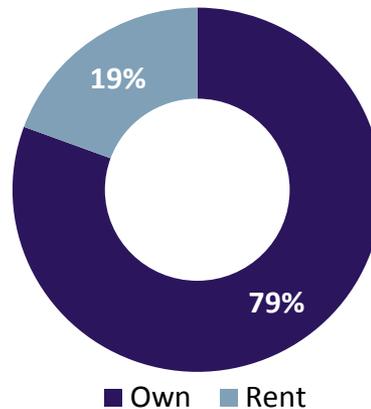
Ethnic or cultural background



Length of time in Region

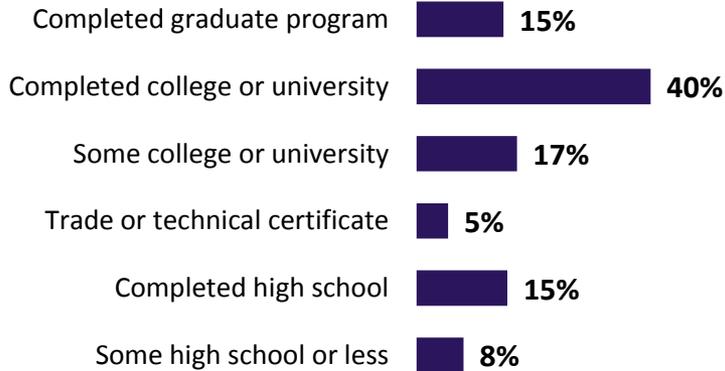


Rent or own home

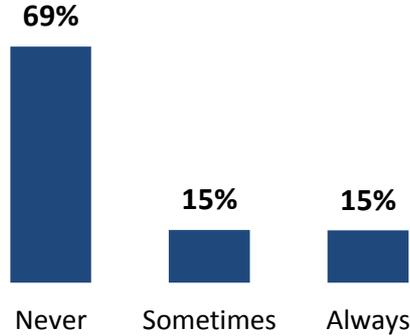


Survey Participant Demographics

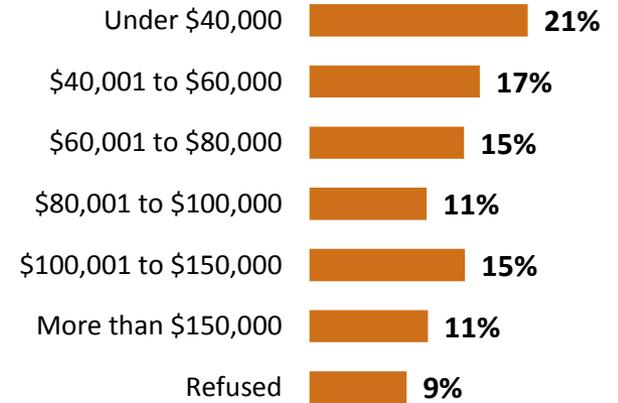
Education



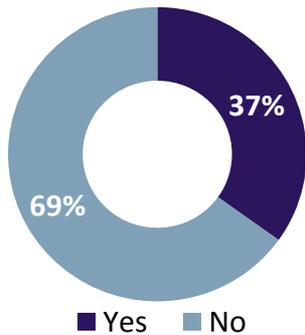
Person in household with disability



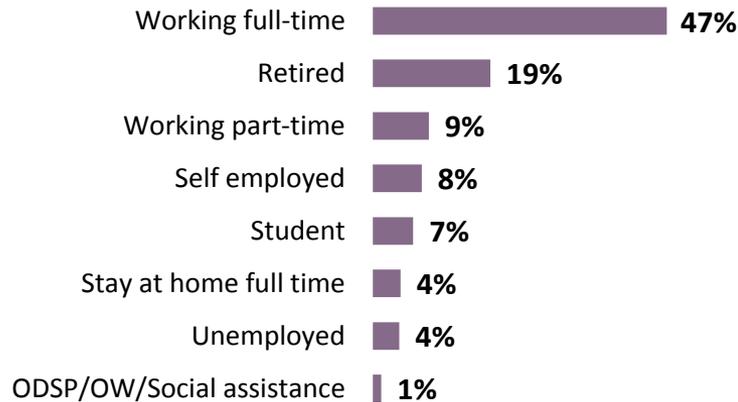
Annual income



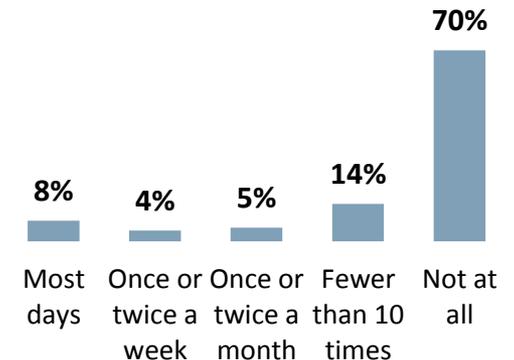
Children under 18 in the home



Employment status



Use of transit in past year



Methodology

Methodology

- The survey was conducted by phone among 1,211 residents of the Region of Waterloo between January 24 and February 10, 2015.
- The sample was designed to be representative of the Region's population. Representation from each of the Region's municipalities were included in the total sample.
- The results of this survey are weighted to ensure representativeness of the sample to the actual population, according to the 2011 Census.
- The margin of error for a phone sample of this size is ± 2.8 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.



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