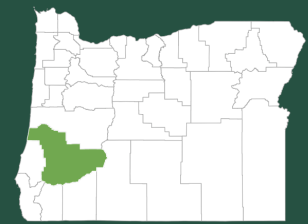




# DOUGLAS COUNTY

## Oregon Voices Data Summary



County Total Population

**110,015**

### About the Summary

Oregon Voices began in summer of 2021 when The Ford Family Foundation invited 18,000 randomly selected households — 500 in each Oregon county — to complete a survey online or by mailing back a paper response. We then reached out to Ford Family friends and partners, encouraging them to participate and invite others to do the same. In total more than 4,300 Oregonians from all walks of life responded to the survey, generously sharing their honest reflections on the question we posed: *What is it like to live in your corner of the state?*

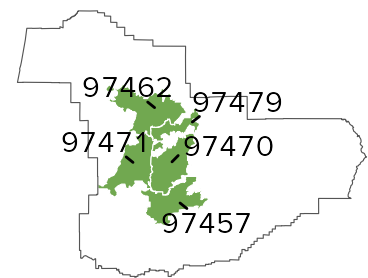
The following report provides a high-level summary of the survey data received from those who responded in Douglas County. Here the number of Ford Family respondents outnumbered the random household respondents. For clarity, the two data sets have been combined in the visualizations below, even though the two samples show differences in demographics and response patterns. Please interpret the findings with this in mind. Data have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

**Total number of Douglas County respondents: 499**  
Random household sample: 69, Ford Family sample: 430

### Key Highlights

- Home to The Ford Family Foundation’s headquarters, Douglas County had the highest rate of response of any of Oregon’s 36 counties.
- Respondents appreciate natural amenities and recreational opportunities, although but are concerned about wildfires that threaten forests and towns.
- Douglas County respondents reported high levels of income inequality and that there are negative views about those receiving government support. They are overwhelmingly concerned about homelessness in their communities and its impact on crime, mental health and drug use.

### All reporting zip codes

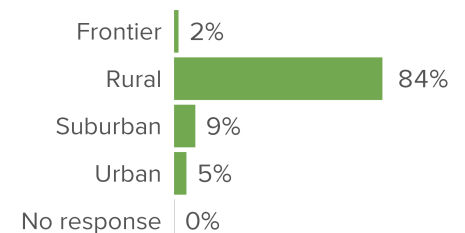


### Top 3 reporting zip codes

- 1 97471
- 2 97470
- 3 97479

### Rural/Urban

How respondents described their community, the immediate area where they live



Two of the early survey questions asked people to name something they appreciate or that concerns them about where they live. Their open-ended responses were coded into categories. These are the top two results for Douglas County.

What respondents **APPRECIATE** most about where they live



**Natural Environment**

Beauty, recreation, public land, parks, water, disasters, climate



**Community, People**

Culture, relationships conflict, size, leadership, change

What **CONCERNS** respondents most about where they live



**Services/Economy**

Housing, infrastructure, healthcare, education, jobs, industry, businesses, shopping, cultural events



**Community, People**

Culture, relationships conflict, size, leadership, change

*“I like living in my town. Lots of recreation, kayaking, the river, hiking, restaurants, community events, the library, and wineries and breweries.”*

*“We have lived all over the U.S. and have decided that right now, the benefits of being here (nature/near family) outweigh the drawbacks (poorer schools, fewer cultural/educational resources). It can be lonely to be a non-local, but we have found our tribe of like-minded folks.”*

*“We enjoy good friends, open space, access to most of what we need (VA, medical, groceries, auto maintenance, utilities). Good climate, beautiful scenery and a rural/small town way of life.”*

*“Great proximity to nature and the natural beauty. Community dedication to improvement.”*

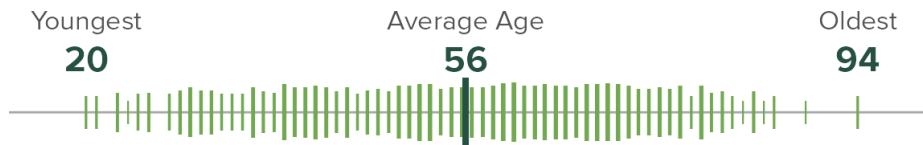
*“Ten years ago, there was very little visible litter anywhere I went. Now the roadsides are dotted with trash, regardless of if it’s a city street, I-5 or a more rural roadway.”*

*“The people are so nice.”*

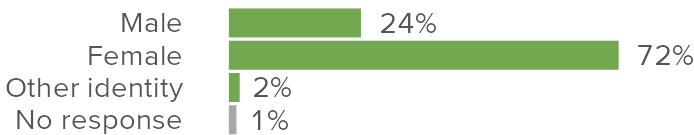
*“It is fun, safe and always entertaining!”*

**Respondent Demographics**

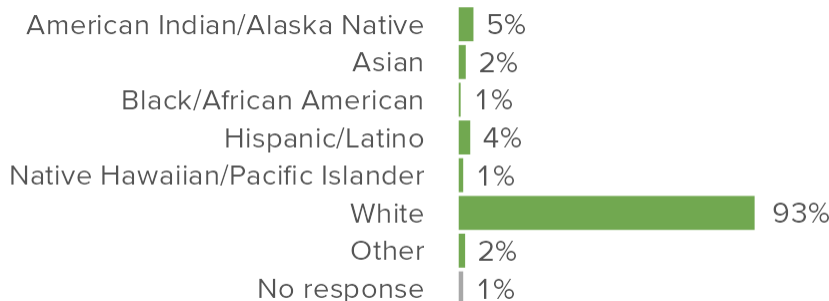
**Age of respondents**



**Gender**



**Race/Ethnicity**



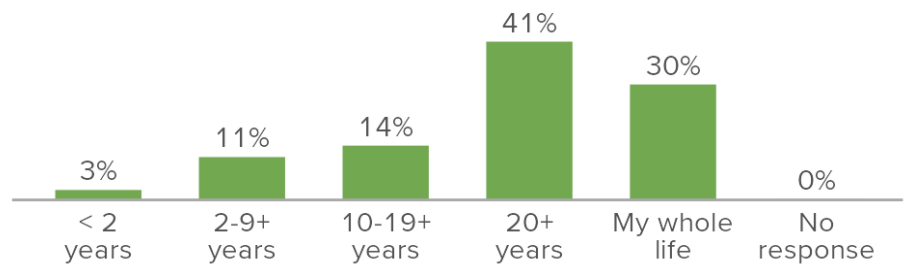
Percentages may sum to more than 100 if respondents selected multiple options.



**Years living in Oregon**

**72%**

of all respondents report living in Oregon for their whole life or 20 years or more



**Homeownership**

**8 out of 10**

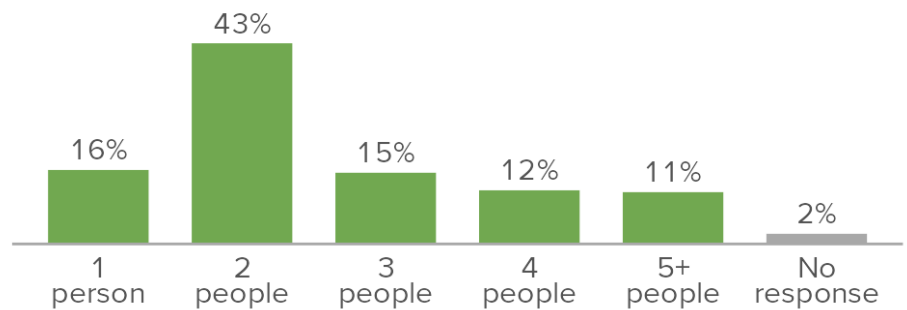
respondents own their home



**Household size**

**2.6**

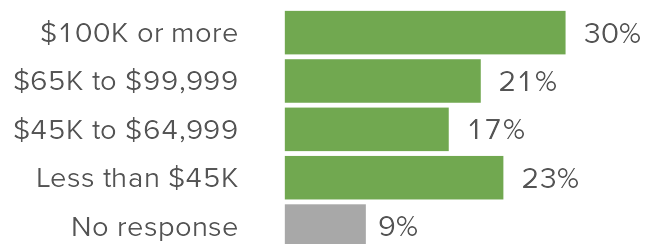
average number of people who live in the respondent's household



**Household annual income**

**23%**

of respondents reported household incomes falling under \$65K



**Emergency funds**

**18%**

of respondents would find it "difficult" or "very difficult" to get \$1,000 to pay for an emergency

**Trouble making ends meet**

**67%**

of respondents "agree" or "strongly agree" that "families are having trouble making ends meet"

**Homelessness**

**82%**

of respondents "agree" or "strongly agree" that "homelessness is a problem" in their community



# 5 out of 10

respondents  
LOVE where they live



## Community participation

*“People are friendly, and they do pitch in to help each other. Working with several organizations I find people are generous for volunteering to help with various opportunities available to them.”*

*“Although we love the size, beauty and many more things about this town, we are considering moving to a bigger town where people are more open-minded and accepting. I find the religious, conservative, political nature of many people here to be frustrating.”*

*“I appreciate the small community feel, knowing many people and neighbors being neighborly.”*

*“It’s lonely. I feel more isolated here than anywhere else I have lived.”*

*“Locals make it well known people from California are not welcome to their social circles, churches or community groups.”*

*“Homophobia is ever present.”*

Respondents indicated the extent to which they perceive that people where they live participate in their community in the following ways:

Results below 5% are not labeled due to space constraints.

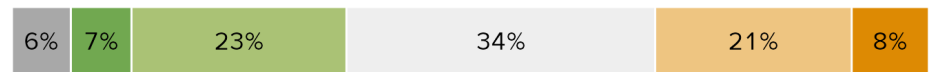
**STRONGLY AGREE**

**STRONGLY DISAGREE**

Take care of each other during hard times



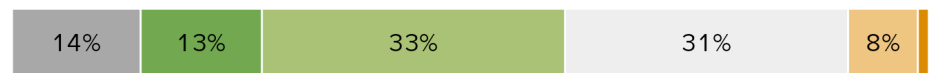
Come together to solve community problems



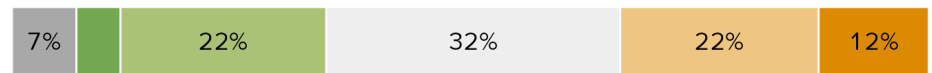
Attend community events



Go to church



Welcome newcomers



## Community traditions

**65%**

of respondents participate in community traditions or annual events

## Pride in community

**59%**

of respondents are “often” or “always” proud to tell others where they live

## Voting

**89%**

of respondents report that they “always” vote

## Community service

**54%**

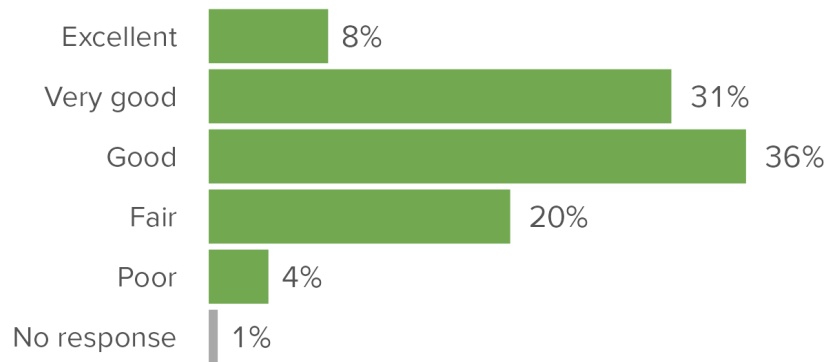
of respondents report that they volunteer at least once a month



**Physical health**

**75%**

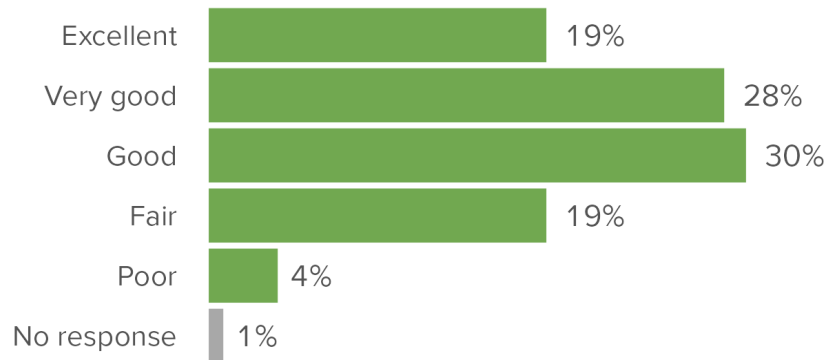
of respondents rated their physical health as “good” or better



**Mental health**

**77%**

of respondents rated their mental health as “good” or better



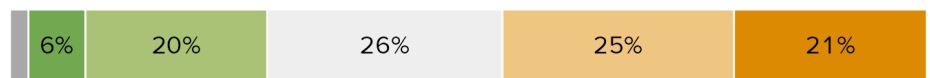
**Medical and dental care**

**26%**

of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that they have “enough medical and dental providers” in their community

**STRONGLY AGREE**

**STRONGLY DISAGREE**



Results below 5% are not labeled due to space constraints.

**Child abuse and neglect**

**61%**

of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that “child abuse and neglect is a significant problem” in their community”

**Substance abuse**

**78%**

of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that their community has “many residents struggling with substance abuse”

**Mental illness**

**70%**

of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that their community has “many residents struggling with mental illness”



**Education**

**68%**

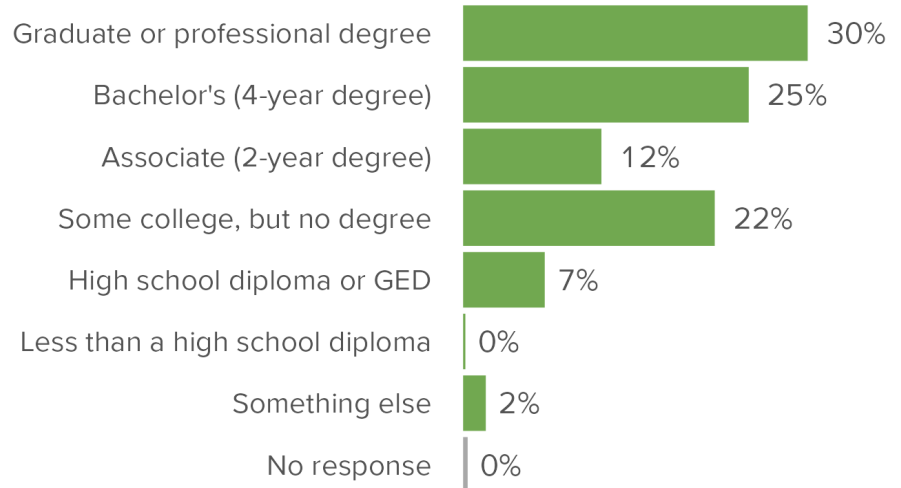
of respondents report having completed an associate degree or above

**Students**

**5%**

of respondents identified as a current student

**Respondents' highest level of education completed**



**Employment**

**Wages**

**56%**

of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that “jobs do not pay enough” in their community

**Perception of unemployment**

**53%**

of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that “a lot of people are unemployed” in their community

**Self-employment**

**15%**

of respondents identified as self-employed

**Employment status of respondents**

<b>Employed</b>	<b>62%</b>
Full-time	51%
Part-time	11%
<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>4%</b>
Looking for work	1%
Not looking for work	1%
Unable to work due to disability	2%
<b>Other</b>	<b>34%</b>
Homemaker/manage your home	3%
Retired	29%
Something else	2%
<b>No response</b>	<b>0%</b>

Due to rounding, percentages in grouped rows may differ from the sum of the individual rows below it.



**Services**

*“We need more small businesses in town and more opportunities for kids to work and play.”*

*“Arts and culture opportunities are underfunded by the local government.”*

*“While it’s beautiful here, it’s tough to enjoy the beauty here in town due to the lack of trails, lighting on the trails (a major safety issue the city ignores) and lack of healthy food options.”*

*“Very car dependent”*

*“I really wish there was more outlets of help for people with mental or substance abuse issues. Too often they’re left to wander the streets, likely homeless and not in the right mind, because there’s nothing our community will do for them until they’ve committed a severe crime. I recently lost my father due to him not getting the mental/medical help he needed. That’s not right. These people deserve help, and it shouldn’t take someone getting hurt for them to get help.”*

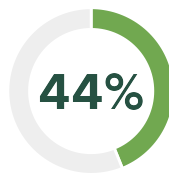
*“Financial stability means I have much more freedom to pursue opportunities and activities that make living here easier — hobbies, travel, etc.”*

*“I believe affordable and low-income housing are still essential to jump start our economy, and I hope that Douglas County will participate more to make housing more affordable.”*

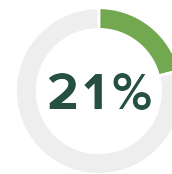
*“This community needs more mental health awareness and providers.”*

**Respondents who reported they “agree” or “strongly agree” the following services are available where they live:**

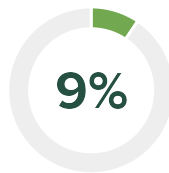
Good schools



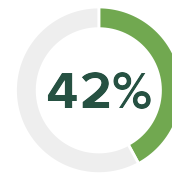
Enough places to shop



Affordable housing



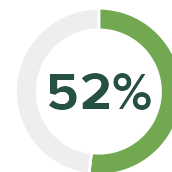
Good streets and roads



Reliable internet



Community-wide cell service



**Healthy food**

**49%**

of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that they have easy access to healthy foods

**Top 3 places respondents get food for weekly meals**

- 1 Grocery stores
- 2 Superstores
- 3 Farmers markets

**Lack of child care**

**65%**

of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that “child care is hard to find”

**Lack of places for youth to hang out**

**68%**

of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that “youth do not have places to hang out”



For data summaries for each county in Oregon,  
more research and to explore the data on your own, visit

**orvoices.org.**



Research conducted in partnership with ECONorthwest and  
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April 2023

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*Oregon Voices*. [www.orvoices.org](http://www.orvoices.org).

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