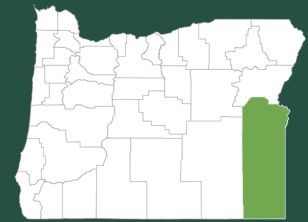




MALHEUR COUNTY

Oregon Voices Data Summary



County Total Population

30,632

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?*

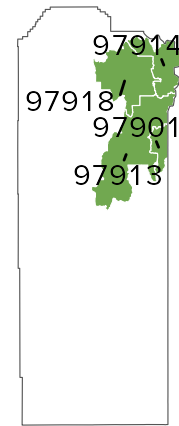
The following report provides a high-level summary of the survey data received from those who responded in Malheur County. Here the number of random household respondents outnumbered the Ford Family respondents. For clarity, the two data sets have been combined in the visualizations below, even though 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 Malheur County respondents: 70
Random household sample: 45, Ford Family sample: 25

Key Highlights

- Malheur County is 94 percent rangeland, two-thirds of which is controlled by the Federal Bureau of Land Management.
- Respondents appreciate that the local economy is agriculture-based and that people in the community are friendly and care about one another.
- Respondents feel their community is not represented in state government decision-making, which they perceive as mostly driven by the Willamette Valley.

All reporting zip codes

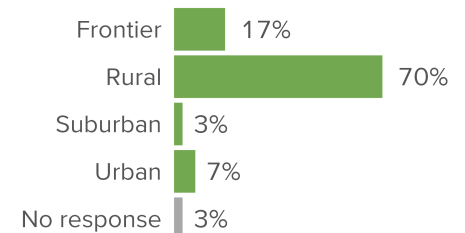


Top 3 reporting zip codes

- 1 97914
- 2 97918
- 3 97901

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 Malheur County.

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



Community, People

Culture, relationships conflict, size, leadership, change



Services/Economy

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

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

“People truly like each other, and we live in a friendly, giving community.”

“Our rural way of life is being taken over by influx of people. Farmland is being swallowed up at an alarming rate.”

“It’s great place to be retired. We have a low cost of living compared to other places.”

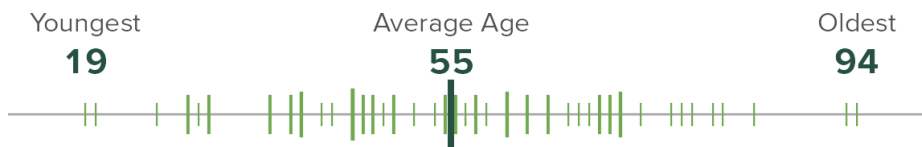
“Being rural and close to Idaho, we are often forgotten and misrepresented when it comes to being a part of Oregon.”

“I worry about the lack of jobs and economic opportunities available here.”

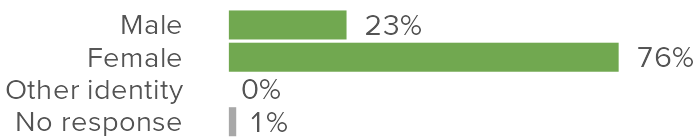
“It is rural, yet an abundance of services and cultural experiences are accessible in a short amount of time.”

Respondent Demographics

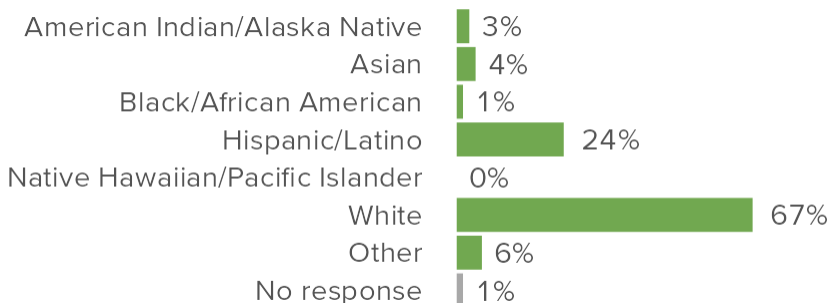
Age of respondents



Gender



Race/Ethnicity



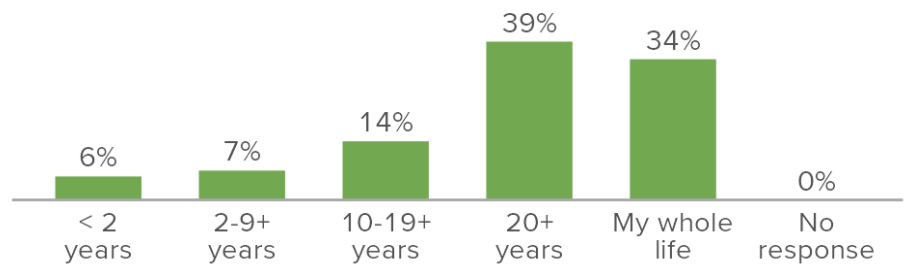
Percentages may sum to more than 100 if respondents selected multiple options.



Years living in Oregon

73%

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



Homeownership

8 out of 10

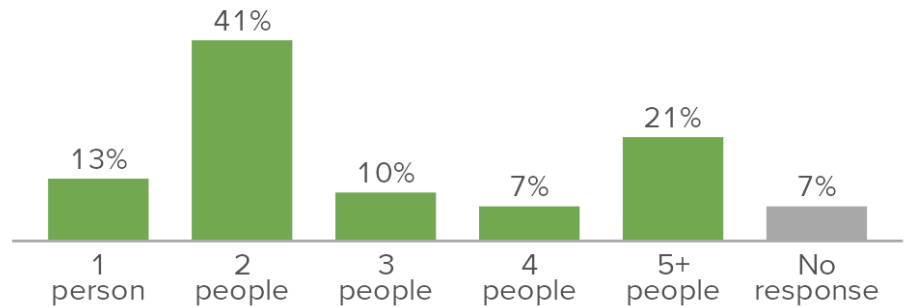
respondents own their home



Household size

3.0

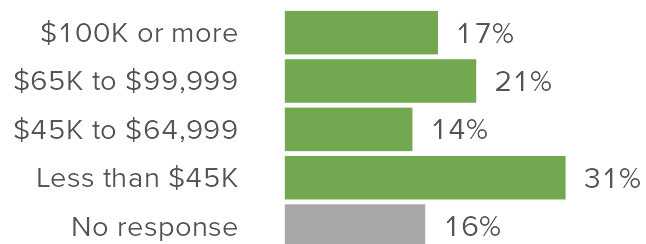
average number of people who live in the respondent's household



Household annual income

31%

of respondents reported household incomes falling under \$65K



Emergency funds

23%

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

Trouble making ends meet

61%

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

Homelessness

51%

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



4 out of 10

respondents
LOVE where they live



Community participation

"I appreciate the closeness of our community. Most individuals are involved and if they're not, they're bound to hear about an event going on from a friend."

"The school is the main connector of people in our community. Generally, people are willing to help out when they are aware of the need."

"There's a lack of diversity and appeal for younger age groups."

"Jordan Valley is a safe community. Neighbors truly look out for each other and lend a helping hand when necessary."

"It is very welcoming and local nonprofits do their best to ensure the community is involved."

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.

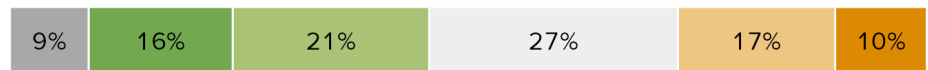
STRONGLY AGREE

STRONGLY DISAGREE

Take care of each other during hard times



Come together to solve community problems



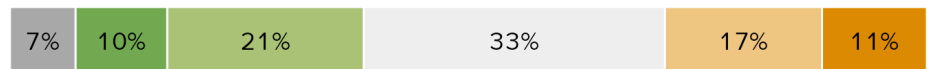
Attend community events



Go to church



Welcome newcomers



Community traditions

66%

of respondents participate in community traditions or annual events

Pride in community

57%

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

Voting

81%

of respondents report that they "always" vote

Community service

43%

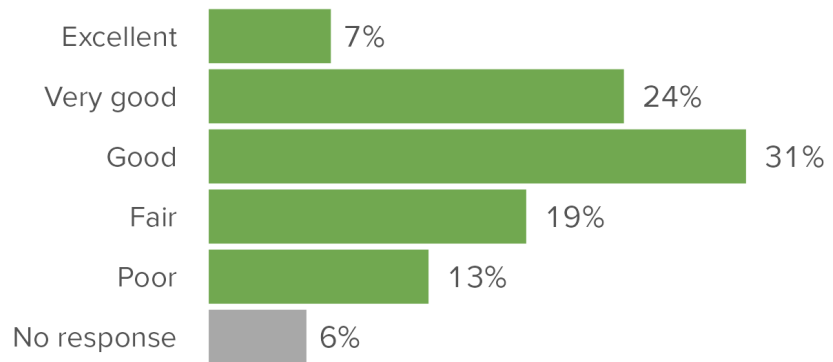
of respondents report that they volunteer at least once a month



Physical health

63%

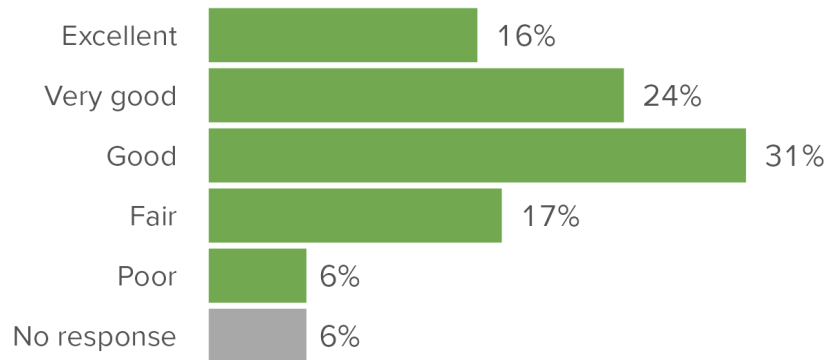
of respondents rated their physical health as “good” or better



Mental health

71%

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



Medical and dental care

47%

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

39%

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

Substance abuse

56%

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

Mental illness

43%

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



Education

57%

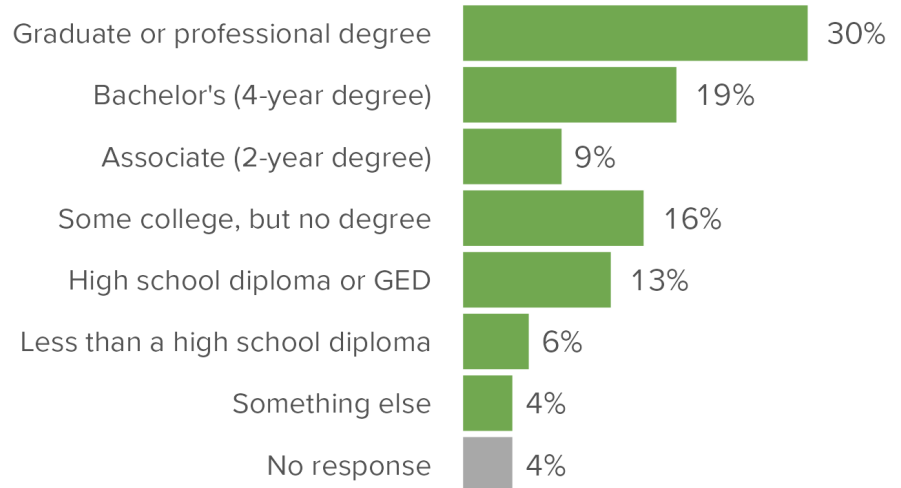
of respondents report having completed an associate degree or above

Students

7%

of respondents identified as a current student

Respondents' highest level of education completed



Employment

Wages

53%

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

Perception of unemployment

49%

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

Self-employment

20%

of respondents identified as self-employed

Employment status of respondents

Employed	56%
Full-time	46%
Part-time	10%
Unemployed	7%
Looking for work	0%
Not looking for work	1%
Unable to work due to disability	6%
Other	29%
Homemaker/manage your home	1%
Retired	26%
Something else	1%
No response	9%

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



Services

“There isn’t much to do. I look at the surrounding areas around my hometown and they have so much more to do. In order to go shopping for clothes or even get to a family fun center, you have to travel an hour away.”

“It is a difficult community to live in if you do not have transportation or the ability to drive.”

“We have to do the majority of our business, shopping, and doctoring in another state because of our location.”

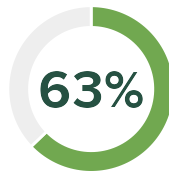
“It’s a great community, but we are lacking in workforce housing, low-income housing and jobs for kids when they come back from university.”

“For many in our community, there is no place to access higher-quality internet. There are no gathering places in town.”

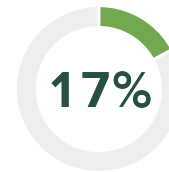
“The community does not have too many options for artistic interests the area. If a child does not want to enter sports, there are no music, art, dance, or theater classes for them to take.”

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

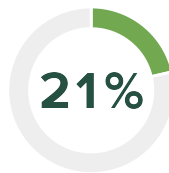
Good schools



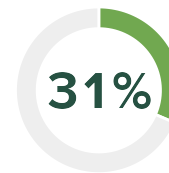
Enough places to shop



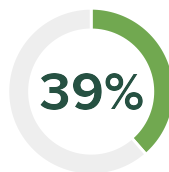
Affordable housing



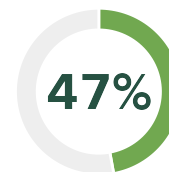
Good streets and roads



Reliable internet



Community-wide cell service



Healthy food

64%

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 Fast food restaurants

Lack of child care

59%

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

Lack of places for youth to hang out

71%

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
the Regional Research Institute for Human Services at Portland State University



April 2023

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