

Municipal Official Survey Technical Report



Karen Hutchins, IPhD candidate, Department of Communication and Journalism

Dr. Laura Lindenfeld, Associate Professor, Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center and Department of Communication and Journalism

Dr. Linda Silka, Professor, Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center

Dr. Jessica Leahy, Assistant Professor, School of Forest Resources

Dr. Kathleen P. Bell, Associate Professor, School of Economics

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarizes key findings from the Maine Municipal Official Survey, a statewide survey of Maine municipal officials conducted in August, 2010. The survey goals were to:

1. Gather information on the pressing issues and concerns of Maine municipalities in order to inform research practices at Maine universities and colleges;
2. Assess interests in community-university partnerships to deal with these issues;
3. Determine preferences for the structure of these partnerships (i.e. the level at which we collaboratively problem-solve, conduct research, and develop solutions) and the factors that impact these choices; and
4. Begin conversations about working together to promote a sustainable future for Maine.

Key Findings:

Municipalities rated reductions in state funding, rising health care costs, and rising energy costs as the top three economic issues in their communities. On average, these issues were rated as serious to moderate problems. Given these difficult economic times, these results are not surprising. They demonstrate that municipal officials have to conduct their work within significant economic constraints.

Municipalities rated rising unemployment, increasing drug and alcohol abuse, and the rising poverty rate as the top three social issues in their communities. On average, these issues were rated as moderate problems. At the time of this survey, unemployment rates in Maine reached approximately 8%. High unemployment rates cause ripple effects in communities. Unemployment can force people to leave their community in search of a job, depend more on social services within the community, and result in fewer resources coming into the municipality. These ripple effects strain both the municipal government and the citizens.

Municipalities rated increasing invasive insects and/or plants, loss of farm land, and increasing traffic congestion as the top three environmental issues in their communities. These issues were rated as moderate to small problems. Overall, municipalities did not rate environmental issues as serious problems. Further research is needed to determine why certain environmental issues were perceived as problems, while others, such as increasing risks of flooding and decreasing air and ground water quality, were not.

Municipalities rated land use planning and zoning regulations, shoreland zoning regulations, and regionalization as the top three debated public policy issues in their communities. On average, these issues were rated as being the focus of moderate to limited debate. Assessing present and future land-use patterns in communities is a primary role for planning and zoning boards and municipal planning staff in Maine. Regulations that guide

development and land-use are challenging for communities because, among other reasons, they create winners and losers and influence property rights. Regionalization was also discussed in the written comments, with some municipal officials indicating that Maine municipalities' strong sense of local control may impede regional collaborations.

Maine Municipal Association (MMA), state government agencies, and fellow municipalities are critical municipal resources. MMA, state government agencies, and fellow municipalities were selected most frequently as providing training, education, or support for day-to-day tasks by Maine municipal officials. MMA is clearly a significant resource for municipalities, with over 80% of respondents indicating that they helped them with their day-to-day tasks. Maine universities and colleges, cooperative extension, and other organizations were selected the least often as resources turned to for day-to-day support. It seems important for Maine universities and colleges to explore how they can improve their service to communities in the state, as well as understand the critical organizations with whom to collaborate when researching issues of interest to municipalities.

The benefits of working with University of Maine System (UMS) researchers are relatively unknown. Over half of the participants provided a rating of 'not sure' when asked if UMS researchers could assist them in resolving some of the issues in their municipalities. The same pattern of response held for the benefit of working with other organizations to resolve municipal issues. Statistical analyses conducted on this survey data indicate that this belief is a key determinant of respondents' interests in developing community-university partnerships. If increased partnerships are a goal, UMS researchers must help municipal officials better understand researchers' abilities to address municipal problems.

Over half of Maine municipalities are not and have not worked with Maine college and university faculty, staff, or student researchers. Exploring how and on what issues they can work together may be critical to promoting an economically viable, socially rich, and environmentally diverse future in Maine.

Participants who have worked with Maine college and university researchers had positive and helpful experiences. When universities and municipalities do collaborate, over half of the participants rated their experiences as very positive and moderately to extremely helpful. These findings are encouraging for conducting community-supported research and developing solutions that are meaningful and applicable to municipal decision-makers.

Overall, participants trust UMS researchers. Trust is a critical part of successful collaborations. The majority of respondents expressed that they have some or a lot of trust in UMS researchers and that their level of trust had not changed over time.

Overall, participants trust UMS researchers, especially for providing scientific and reliable information and having high technical competence. Statements that received the lowest ratings as motivations for trust of UMS researchers were sharing municipal official values, working for the UMS, and focusing on issues municipal officials want to know about. We

are hopeful that outreach efforts like this survey will help researchers focus on issues that are important to municipal officials.

Municipal officials prefer collaborative community-university partnerships, where municipal officials work with researchers to define problems and develop solutions.

Over 70% of municipal officials indicated that they prefer a partnership structure in which municipal officials and university researchers collaboratively identify the problem, university researchers conduct the research, and municipal officials implement solutions in their respective communities. Over one third of participants indicated that they would like university researchers to propose solutions to the problem, and over one third indicated that they would like to collaboratively develop proposed solutions. This information is critical for developing partnership strategies that work for municipal officials and researchers.

There are strong possibilities for developing community-university partnership in the future. Over half of the participants indicated that they or a colleague would be very likely or likely to be interested in pursuing a community-university partnership. Over 60% of respondents indicated that we may contact them to discuss partnership opportunities. Partnerships offer their participants numerous benefits, including combined and improved knowledge, learning opportunities, the development of capital, and expanded networks and resources.

Developing Partnerships:

We are sharing the research findings with municipal officials, interested state and non-profit agencies, and fellow researchers. We will be contacting municipal officials to further discuss issues addressed in the survey, so that we may deepen our understanding of municipality issues and factors that impact partnerships, and to explore and potentially facilitate partnerships between municipal officials whose needs match on-going research in the state.

We hope to collaboratively explore opportunities to work together on future research that meets municipality and researcher needs. We are hopeful that this survey is an initial step in an ongoing, statewide conversation about how people in Maine, who care about the future of Maine, can work together to sustain and improve our quality of life. We thank you all for taking the time to join the discussion and look forward to working with you in the future!

Contact information:

Karen Hutchins, IPhD candidate, Department of Communication and Journalism
Graduate Research Fellow, Maine's Sustainability Solutions Initiative
University of Maine
Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center
5784 York Complex, Bldg. #4
Orono, ME 04469-5784
karen.hutchins@umit.maine.edu
(207) 581-3859

INTRODUCTION

This technical report summarizes the findings from the statewide, 2010 Maine Municipal Official Survey, conducted by the University of Maine, as part of a research project funded by Maine's Sustainability Solutions Initiative (See Appendix B for a summary of SSI and its research goals), Maine EPSCoR, and the National Science Foundation. We had a 46% response rate (1176 respondents), representing 86% of the municipalities, plantations, and townships in Maine.

This research, as part of the Maine Municipality-University Partnership Needs Assessment, is a first step toward improving understanding of and research on partnerships with Maine municipalities and decision-makers. The goals of this survey were to:

1. Gather information on the pressing issues and concerns of Maine municipalities in order to inform research practices at Maine universities and colleges;
2. Assess interests in community-university partnerships to deal with these issues;
3. Determine preferences for the structure of these partnerships (i.e. the level at which we collaboratively problem-solve, conduct research, and develop solutions) and the factors that impact these choices; and
4. Begin conversations about working together to promote a sustainable future for Maine.

The results obtained through our study provide important and useful data that will enhance communication and partnerships with Maine municipalities, inform Maine's Sustainability Solutions Initiative's projects and research, and provide a foundation for future research as part of the Maine Municipality-University Partnership Needs Assessment.

STUDY ADMINISTRATION AND METHODS

Survey Administration

A statewide sample of Maine municipal officials received the mail survey in August and September, 2010.¹ We created a list of potential participants using the Maine Municipal Association's (MMA) mailing list. After deleting duplicate names for individuals who occupied positions in numerous communities, we mailed 2,553 surveys to 499 municipalities and townships throughout Maine and included participants from 13 different municipal positions; few towns actually had all 13 positions. Those surveyed include town or city managers, chief

¹ Dillman, D.A., Smyth, J.D. & Christian, L.M. (2009). *Internet, mail, and mixed-mode surveys: The tailored design method* (3rd ed.). Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

elected officials, community development, purchasing, assessing, finance, public safety, recreation, public works, welfare, code enforcement officers, and additional personnel.

Survey Development

The survey was developed from literature on municipal surveys, municipal interests, sustainability science research, and community-university partnerships. We acquired copies of other surveys targeting public officials, and we developed the questionnaire in collaboration with a small group of municipal officials and fellow researchers. We pre-tested the survey instrument on a small group of municipal officials and sought out feedback from key non-government organizations that work with staff from Maine municipalities.

The survey consisted of three main sections.

Background information:

- Municipal position,
- Years in the position,
- Characteristics of the municipality (rural/urban/suburban),
- Key collaborating organizations,
- Pessimism and optimism with regard to the future direction of the municipality and state,
- Level of public participation in the community, and
- Environmental-economic values.

Municipal issues and debates:

- Social issues,
- Economic issues,
- Environmental and natural resources issues,
- Public policies and regulations debates,
- Three most pressing issues,
- Barriers to addressing issues,
- Resources for addressing issues, and
- Future issues (20-30 years in the future)
- Belief that UMS researchers and other organizations can help resolve these issues.

Experience, trust, and partnership strategies and interests:

- Experience working with Maine university and college faculty, staff and student researchers,
- Negative or positive nature of the experience working with these researchers,
- Helpfulness of the experience working with these researchers,
- Overall trust in UMS researchers,
- Change of trust in UMS researchers,

- Agreement in reasons for trusting UMS researchers,
- Community-university partnership structure preferences,
- Interest in developing a community-university partnership.

Data Analysis

We analyzed the survey response data using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. To protect anonymity and confidentiality, identifying markers such as names, titles, and addresses were removed from the data set. For all survey items, we calculated descriptive statistics, such as mean, median, mode, standard deviation, percentages, and frequency; this data is reported in the results section of this report. We also compiled narrative comments, which will be analyzed in depth in the upcoming months, but is not included in this technical report. Appendix C summarizes raw data responses by survey question.

STUDY LIMITATIONS

As with any study, there are limitations to the data collected. First, surveys provide generalizable results, but do not explain the why, how, and where of these issues. In other words, surveys lack the depth to fully explain the meaning behind the responses. The open-ended questions provide some detail, but additional document analyses, interviews, and focus-groups will complement these data and findings. Second, the demands on municipal officials fluctuate with the time of year and the governing administration in the state. We recognize that the time of year may have influenced responses and that different issues may now be of concern given the change in administration in January, 2011. Follow-up research should help us determine if there are significant changes since sending the survey.

STUDY FINDINGS

A. Who are the participating stakeholders?

1,176 municipal officials, representing 86% of municipalities, plantations, and townships, responded to our survey. Respondents held a diverse range of positions, but appointed and elected officials and municipal employees were the most common (See Figure 1). While municipal managers did not represent the largest portion of respondents, it is important to keep in mind that only 193 municipalities in Maine have municipal managers. Out of the 193 city and town managers that we sampled, we received a 79% response rate, which provides a solid representation of Maine municipal management. On average, respondents had worked 13 years in their municipal position (SD 10.4; RANGE 0-70 years).

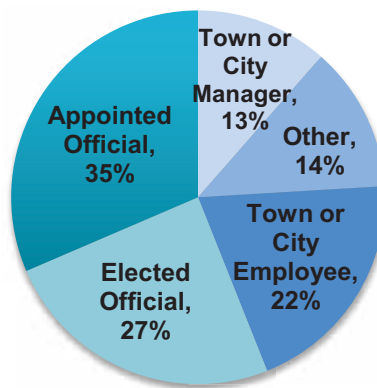


Figure 1 – Which of the following categories best describe your current municipal position?

The majority of respondents characterized their municipalities as rural, followed by outer-ring suburb (See Figure 2). This is representative of the municipal make-up in the state.

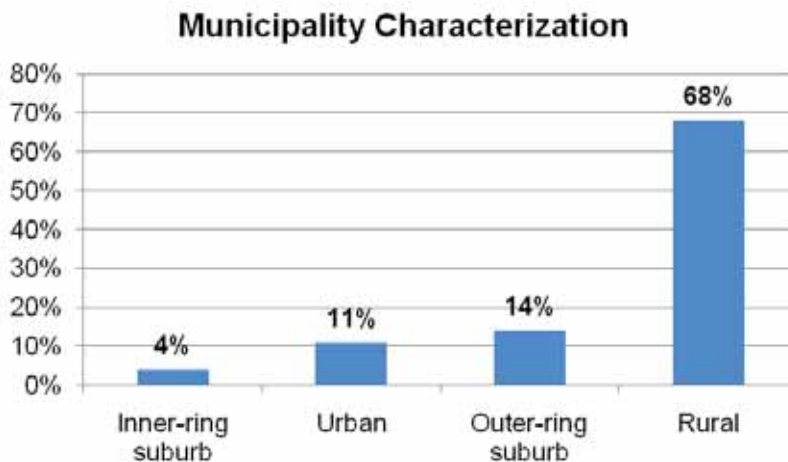


Figure 2 - How do you characterize your municipality in terms of its population size and location within the state of Maine?

B. Conditions within Municipalities

In order to get a sense of the present state of municipalities, we asked a series of questions about officials' pessimism and optimism about their municipality and the state of Maine (See Figures 3 and 4). In addition, we asked about the level of public participation in the municipality (See Figure 5), followed by a question asking about the balance between environmental and economic priorities in the municipality (See Figure 6).

Respondents were asked to rate their level of pessimism or optimism about the general direction of their municipality and the state of Maine on a five-point Likert scale (1 = very pessimistic, 5 = very optimistic). The mean ratings were 3.44 (SD 1.14) for the direction of the municipality and 2.14 (SD 1.01) for the direction of the state (See Figures 3 and 4). These results indicate a somewhat neutral to optimistic view of the direction for municipalities and a somewhat pessimistic view of the state of Maine's direction. In fact, approximately 56% of respondents indicated that they were *very* or *somewhat optimistic* about the direction of their municipality, but only 13% indicated that they were *very* or *somewhat optimistic* about the direction of Maine. This provides important information about municipal officials' attitudes and factors that could impact motivation, either for the positive or negative, and relationships with state officials. It is important to keep in mind that this survey was conducted prior to the 2011 gubernatorial administration inauguration and, thus, answers may vary under the new administration.

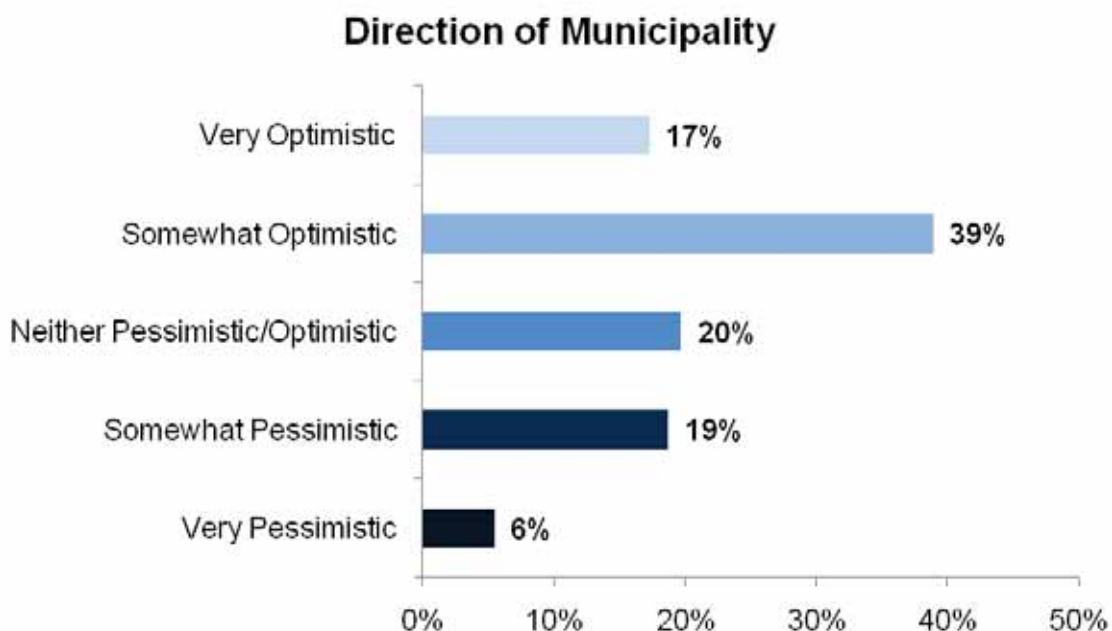


Figure 3 - How pessimistic or optimistic are you about the general direction in which your municipality is heading?

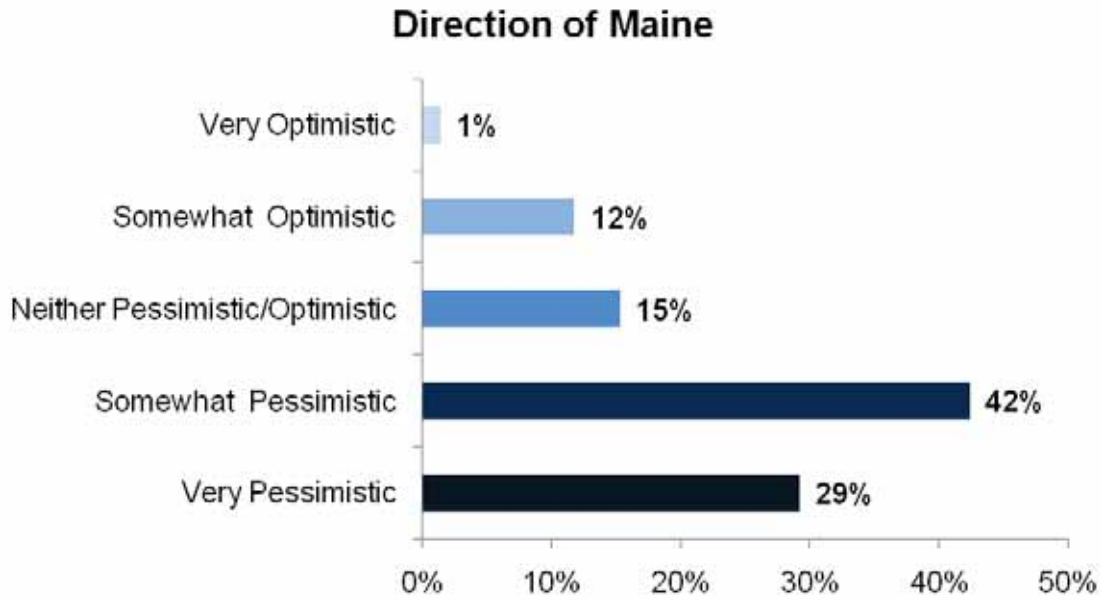


Figure 4 - How pessimistic or optimistic are you about the general direction in which the state of Maine is heading?

Using a five-point Likert scale (1 = no participation, 5 = very high participation), we asked municipal officials to rate the level of residents' participation on municipal committees or at municipal events, such as Town Meetings. This assessment was conducted because citizen participation is an important aspect of community life and can impact decision-making and resources in communities. The mean was 2.62 (SD 0.736), indicating that participation levels are moderate to low (See Figure 5).

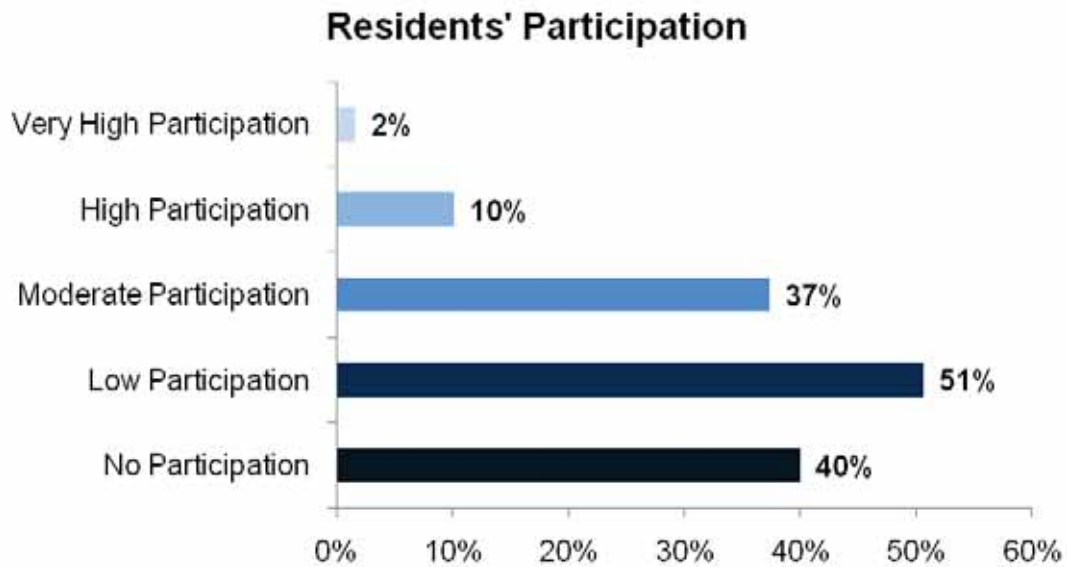


Figure 5 - What is your opinion about the level of residents' participation on municipal committees or at events such as Town Meeting?

Finally, community choices about environmental and economic needs impact how communities plan and function. Recognizing that municipalities face difficult trade-offs between environmental and economic conditions, we asked officials to locate their municipality on a five-point Likert scale (1 = prioritize environmental conditions over economic, 5 = prioritize economic conditions over environmental). The mean score, 2.93 (SD 0.89), indicates that respondents felt their municipality tried to balance environmental and economic protection, but tended toward protecting environmental conditions even if there were negative economic consequences (See Figure 6).

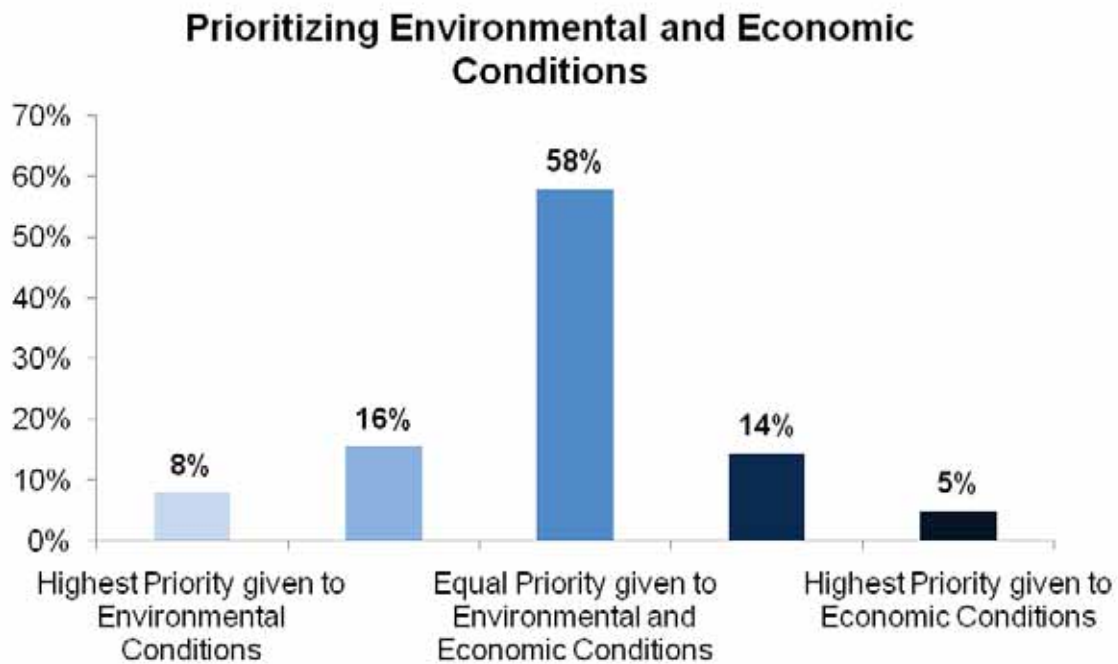


Figure 6 - Municipalities often face decisions that require difficult trade-offs between environmental and economic conditions. In general, where would you locate your municipality on the following scale?

C. Economic, Social, and Environmental and Natural Resource Issues

Respondents were presented with a series of potential economic, social, and environmental issues that were selected based on previous municipal surveys, knowledge of state issues, and input from current municipal officials and state employees. They were asked to rate the extent to which each issue is a problem in their municipality on a four-point scale (1 = serious problem, 4 = not a problem). If participants did not know if the issue was a problem for the municipality or if it was not applicable to the community, respondents had the option to select *Not Sure* or *Not Applicable*. The mean scores on each issue and the frequency counts across response categories are reported in Figures 7 - 12. A lower mean score value indicates a more serious problem. For the analysis of mean scores, selections of *Not Sure* and *Not Applicable* have been excluded.

Overwhelmingly, municipal officials designated reductions in state funding (mean 1.3), rising health care costs (mean 1.5) and rising energy costs (mean 1.7) as the top three economic issues facing the community (See Figure 7). The means indicate that these three issues were considered a *serious to moderate problem* for the municipality. The three issues reported as *small to not problems* included limited communication network access (mean 3.0), lack of education and training opportunities for residents (mean 3.0), and mismatch between the skills of the workforce and jobs (mean 2.8). In total, these scores demonstrate that economic issues are serious to small problems in Maine communities.

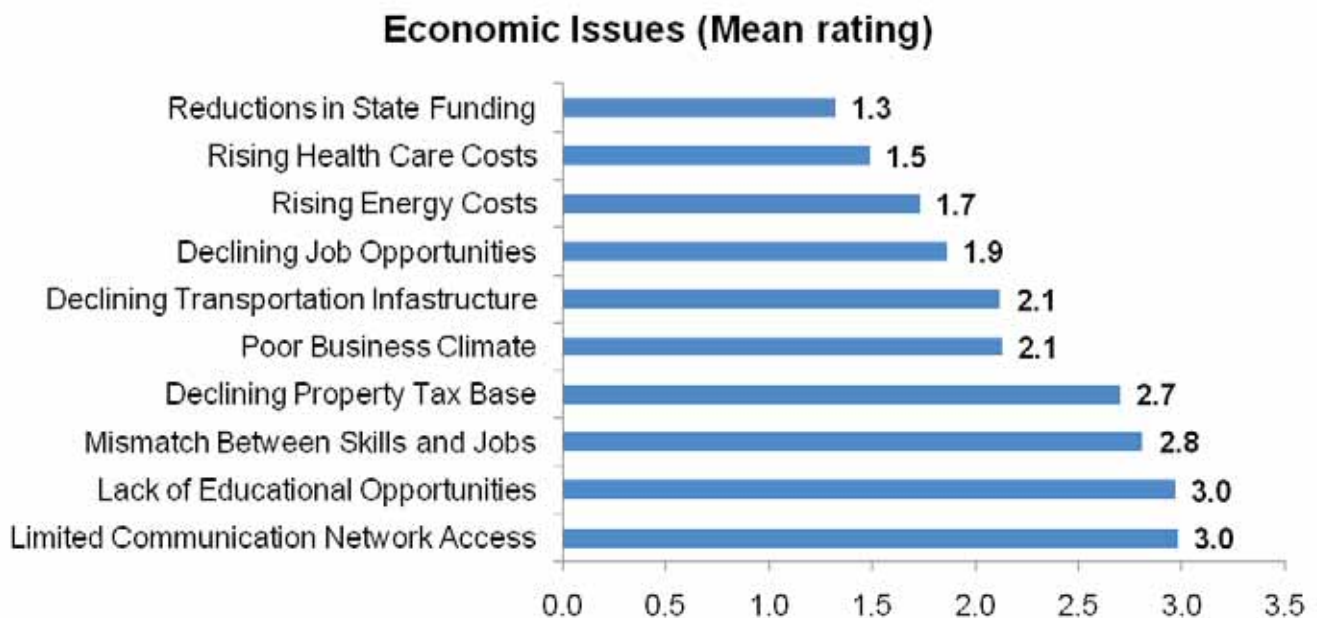


Figure 7 - How much do you consider each of the following to be a problem for your municipality?

A comparison of the distribution of responses across economic issues reveals strong patterns in the rating of problems (See Figure 8). More than 50% of respondents ranked the following as *serious* or *moderate* problems: reductions in state funding, rising health care costs, rising energy costs, declining job opportunities, poor business climate, and declining transportation infrastructure. Conversely, more than 50% of respondents rated limited access to communication networks or lack of education and training opportunities as a *small problem* or *not a problem* for their municipality.

Economic Issues

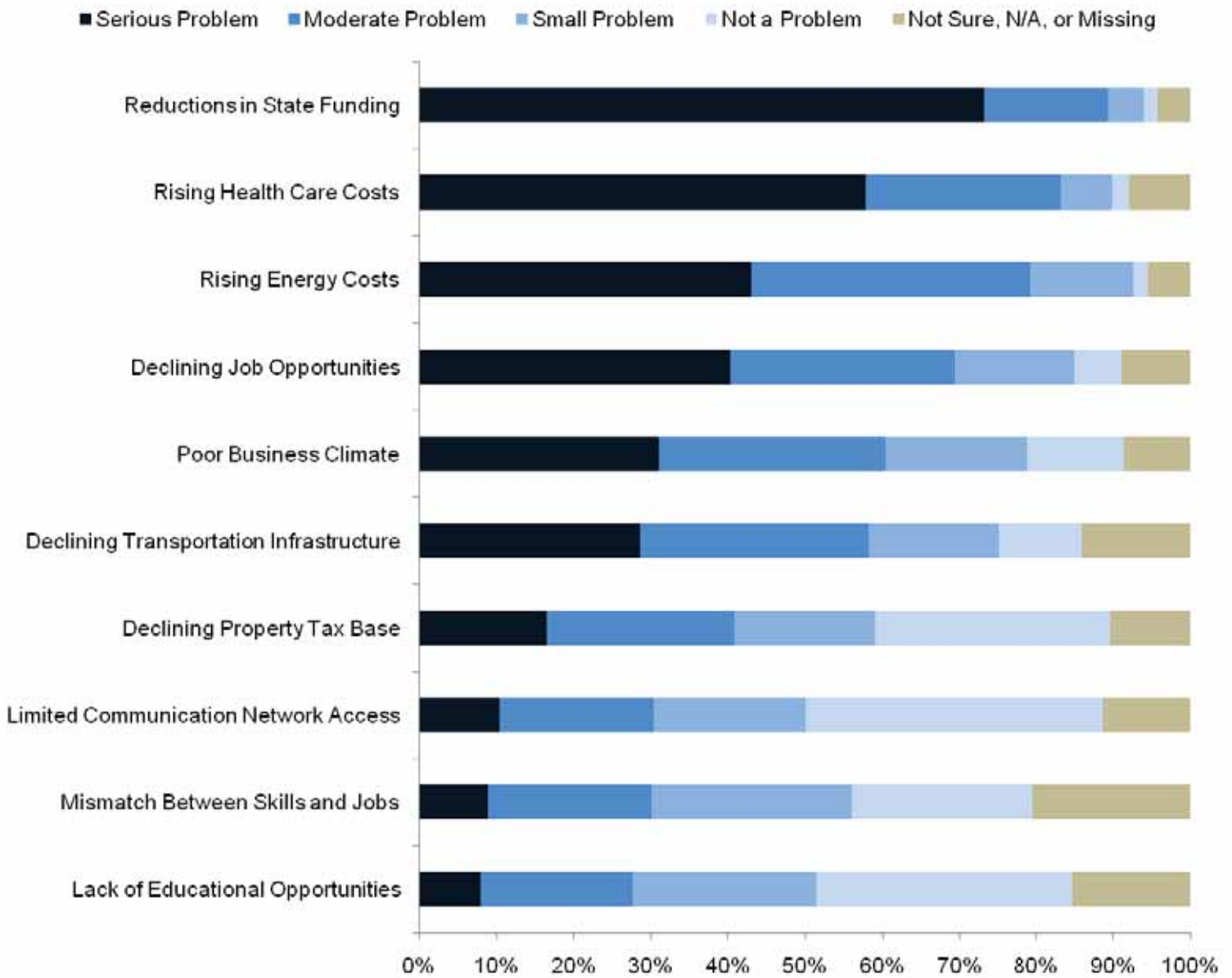


Figure 8 - How much do you consider each of the following to be a problem for your municipality?

The top three social issues received mean scores around 2.0, indicating that these are moderate problems for Maine municipalities (See Figure 9). The top three reported issues included rising unemployment rate (mean 2.0), increasing drug and alcohol abuse (mean 2.1), and rising poverty rate (mean 2.1). Three of the issues reported as *small to not problems*, included changing ethnic and cultural diversity (mean 3.7), increasing migration into their community (mean 3.4), and decreasing recreational opportunities (mean 3.3). In total, the scores demonstrate that these social issues are moderate to not problems in Maine communities.

Social Issues (Mean rating)

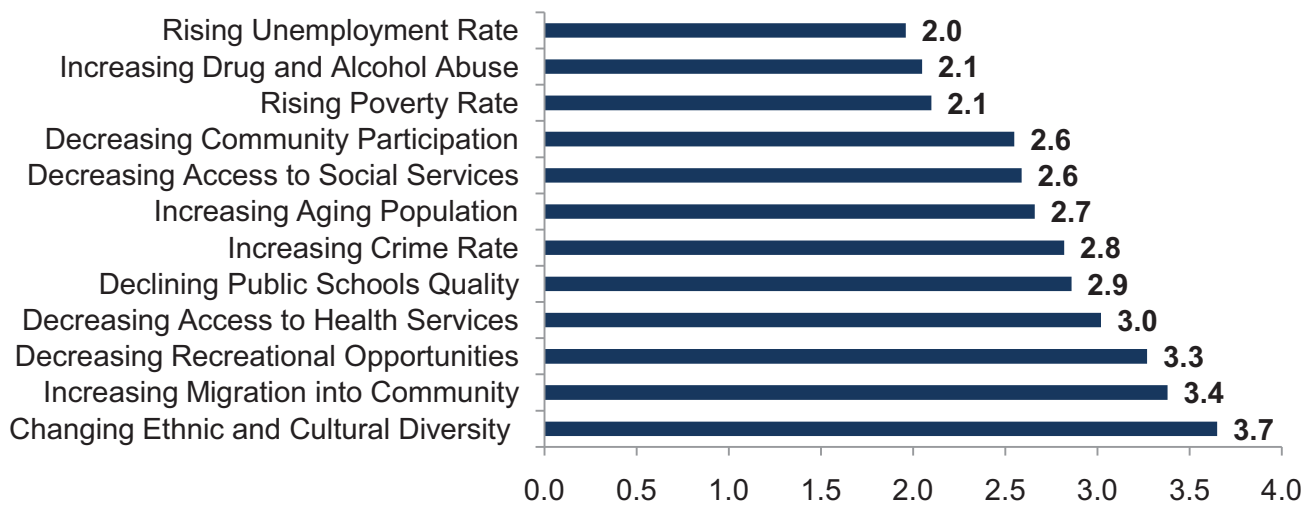


Figure 8 - How much do you consider each of the following to be a problem for your municipality?

A comparison of the distribution of responses across social issues reveals strong patterns in the rating of problems (See Figure 10). More than 50% of respondents ranked the following as *serious or moderate problems*: rising unemployment rate, increasing drug and alcohol abuse, and rising poverty rate. Conversely, more than 50% of respondents rated increasing migration and changing ethnic and cultural diversity as *not a problem* for their municipality. Decreasing community participation, decreasing access to social services, increasing aging population, and increasing crime rates are recognized as problems by the majority of respondents.

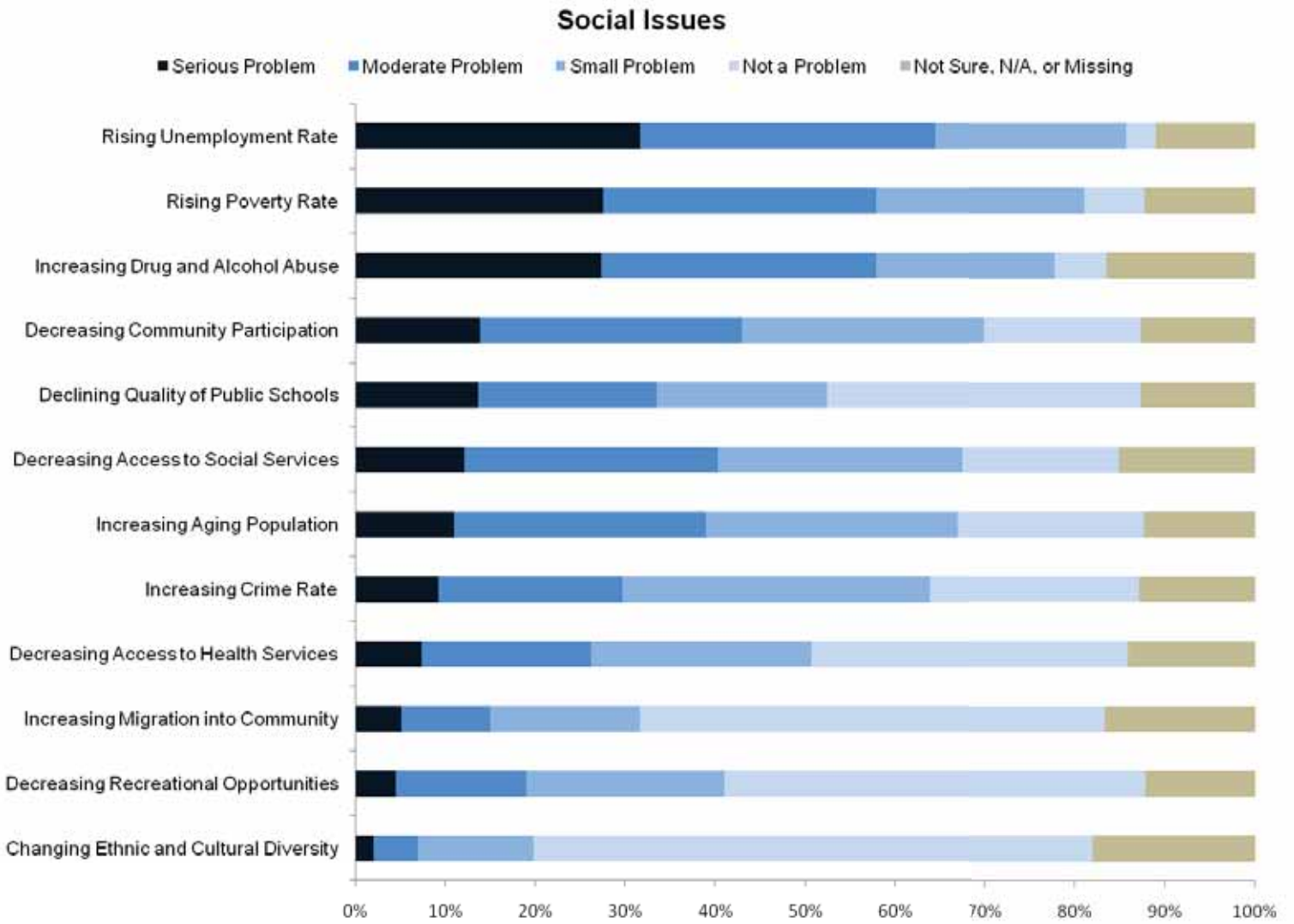


Figure 9 - How much do you consider each of the following to be a problem for your municipality?

Mean scores on environmental issues in municipalities indicate that officials felt that these issues were primarily small to not problems, with the increasing invasive insects and/or plants mean indicating a moderate problem in some communities (see Figure 11). The three most pressing environmental issues for communities were increasing invasive insects and/or plants (mean 2.9), loss of farm land (mean 3.0), and increasing traffic congestion (mean 3.0). The issues reported as the least pressing environmental issues included increasing risks of flooding (mean 3.4), decreasing air quality (mean 3.4), and decreasing ground water quality (mean 3.4). In summary, the scores demonstrate that on average environmental issues are moderate to not problems for Maine municipalities.

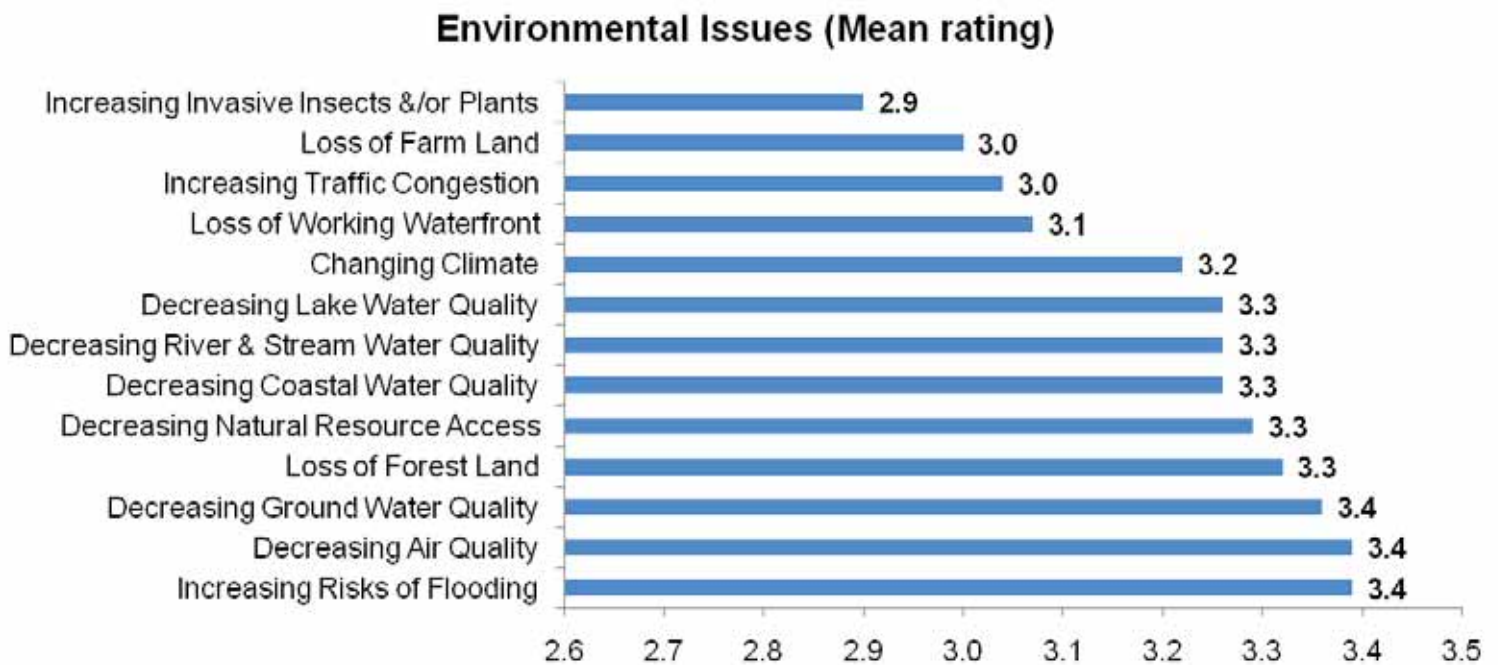


Figure 10 - How much do you consider each of the following to be a problem for your municipality?

A comparison of the distribution of responses across environmental issues reveals strong patterns in the rating of problems (See Figure 12). More than 50% of respondents ranked increasing invasive insects and/or plants, loss of farm land, and increasing traffic congestion as *small to serious problems* for their municipality. Responses to the remaining environmental issues are quite similar and suggest many of the listed problems are not viewed as problems for these municipalities. In some instances, the potential problem may not be applicable because the community lacks the natural resource targeted by the question. For example, further analysis may reveal unique concerns of coastal communities about loss of working waterfront and decreasing coastal water quality.

Environmental Issues

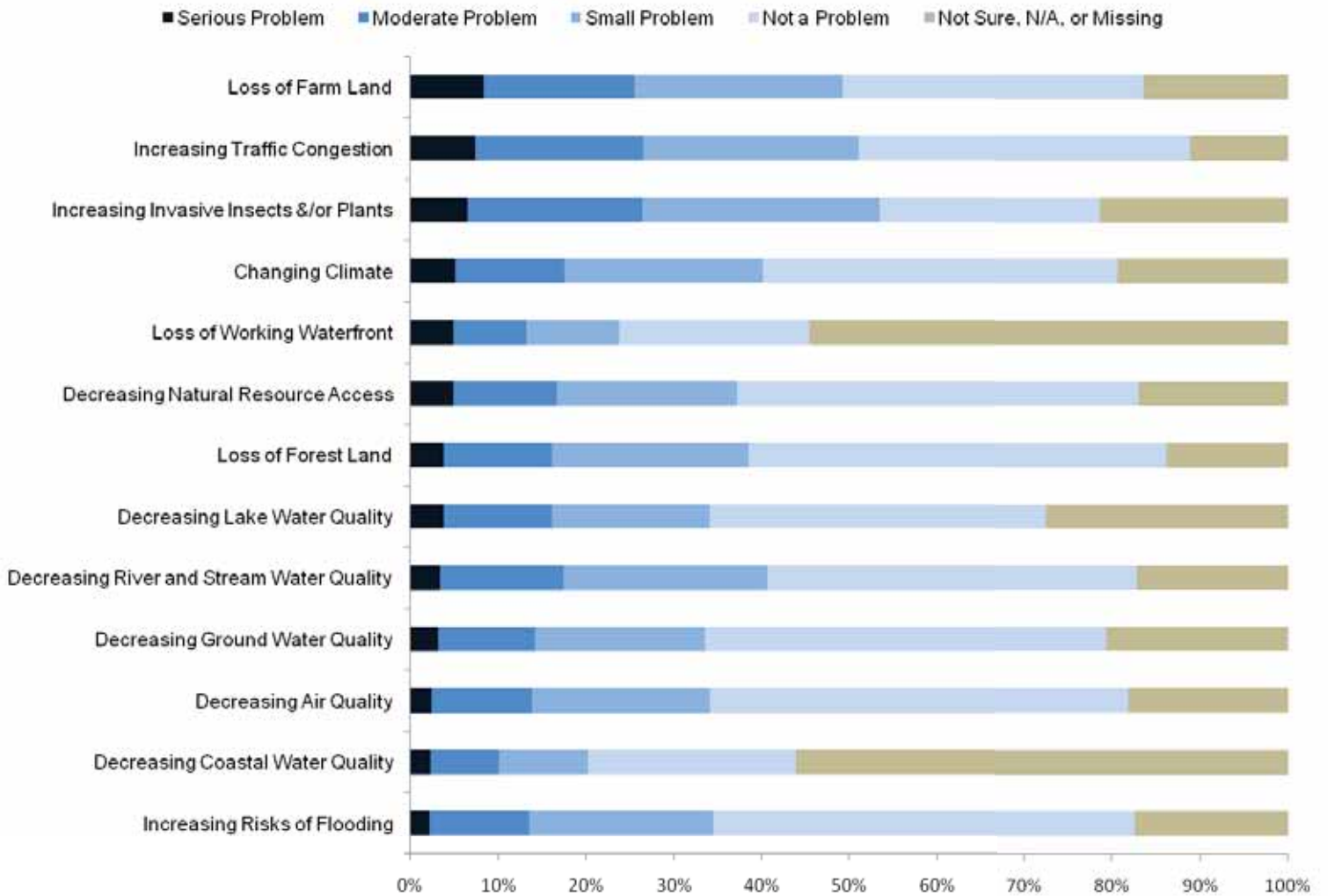


Figure 11 - How much do you consider each of the following to be a problem for your municipality?

Overall, findings in this section indicate that economic issues are the most pressing issues Maine municipalities are facing. On average, social issues are moderate problems, and environmental issues are small problems for municipalities. These findings are consistent with the challenging economic times in the United States, and specifically in Maine. Additional research is needed to explore the variation in and patterns of responses to these questions across municipalities.

D. Community Policy Debate

In an effort to understand the issues generating the most debate in communities, respondents were presented with a series of policy issues and were asked to indicate on a four-point scale (1 = extensive debate, 4 = no debate) how much debate is seen in the municipality about each issue. If participants did not know the debate level of the issue or if it was not applicable to the municipality, they had the option to indicate that by checking *Not Sure* or *Not Applicable*. The mean scores for each issue are reported in Figure 13. For the analysis of mean scores, selections of *Not Sure* and *Not Applicable* have been excluded.

Respondents indicated that the top three issues inspiring debate in their municipalities are land use planning/zoning regulations (mean 2.2.), shoreland zoning regulations (mean 2.3), and regionalization (mean 2.7) (See Figure 12). The three issues reported as causing the least debate were shorebird habitat regulations (mean 3.4), storm water regulations (mean 3.3), and the siting of energy transmission lines (mean 3.3).

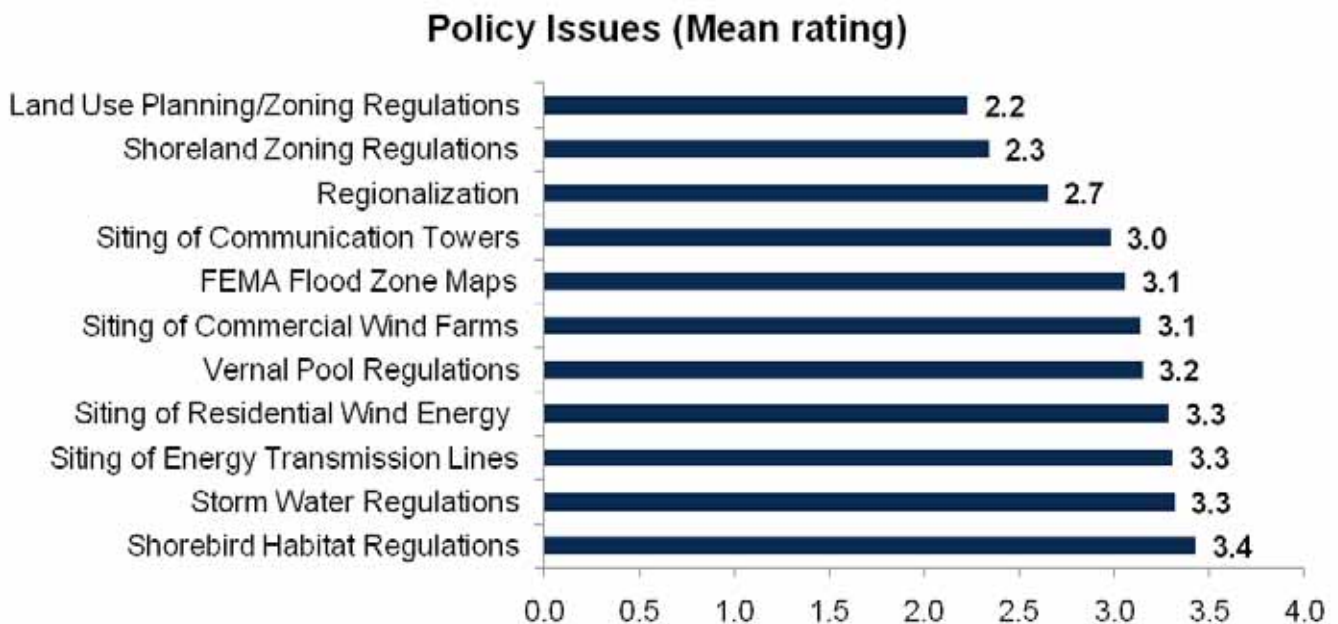


Figure 12 - Public policy issues may generate debate in municipalities. How much debate have you seen on the following policy issues in your municipality?

A comparison of the distribution of responses across policy issues that may generate debate reveals strong patterns in the rating of issues (See Figure 14). More than 50% of respondents ranked land use/zoning regulations and shoreland zoning as topics of *extensive to moderate debate*. Regionalization, FEMA flood zone maps, and siting of communication towers round out the next tier of public policy issues generating debate in municipalities.

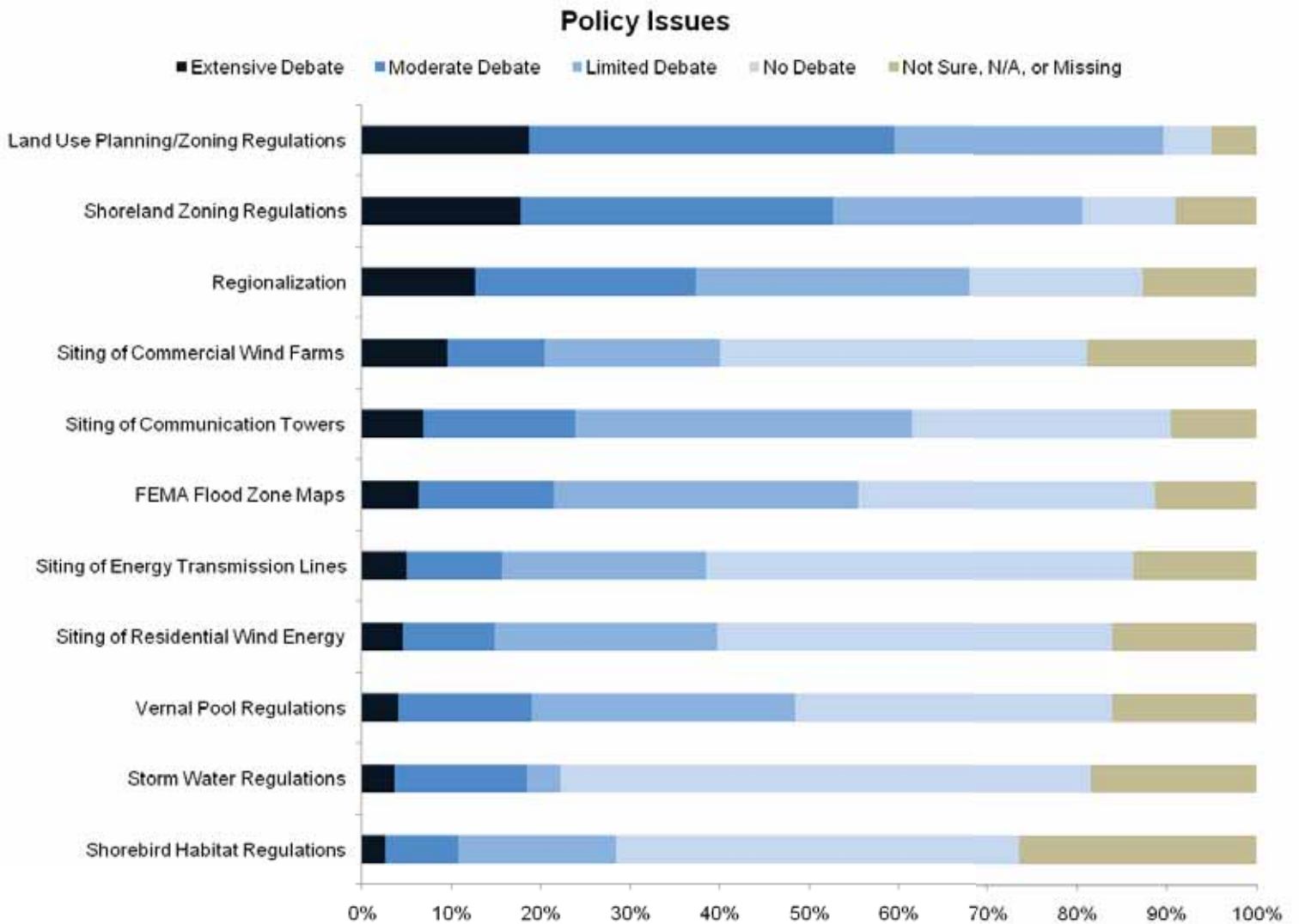


Figure 13 - Public policy issues may generate debate in municipalities. How much debate have you seen on the following policy issues in your municipality?

E. Community Networks

Social and resource networks serve important roles in society for sharing information, resources, and support. These networks can impact community resilience to deal with complex problems and adaptability to changing local, state, and global circumstances. Given their significant role, several questions asked in the survey were aimed at understanding Maine municipal networks. Respondents were first asked which organizations they utilize for training, education, and support for day-to-day tasks. Following questions that asked about the current issues facing municipalities and the resources and barriers to overcoming these issues, we asked respondents to indicate if they felt researchers from the University of Maine System and/or other organizations could be of assistance in resolving some of these issues. While these questions did not give insight into the present municipal networks, they were intended to help determine the possibilities for future network connections. Answers to these questions are summarized in Figures 15 and 16.

Overwhelmingly, municipal officials reported looking to the Maine Municipal Association (MMA) (88%), state government agencies (57%), and fellow municipalities (55%) for training, education, or support for day-to-day tasks. Organizations reported as relied on the least included Other Maine Universities and Colleges (4%), Chamber of Commerce (7%), and Cooperative Extension (10%). These latter results provide valuable information to the universities and colleges throughout Maine who hope to serve as a resource for municipalities. These data suggest that we need to take additional steps to establish community-university partnerships.

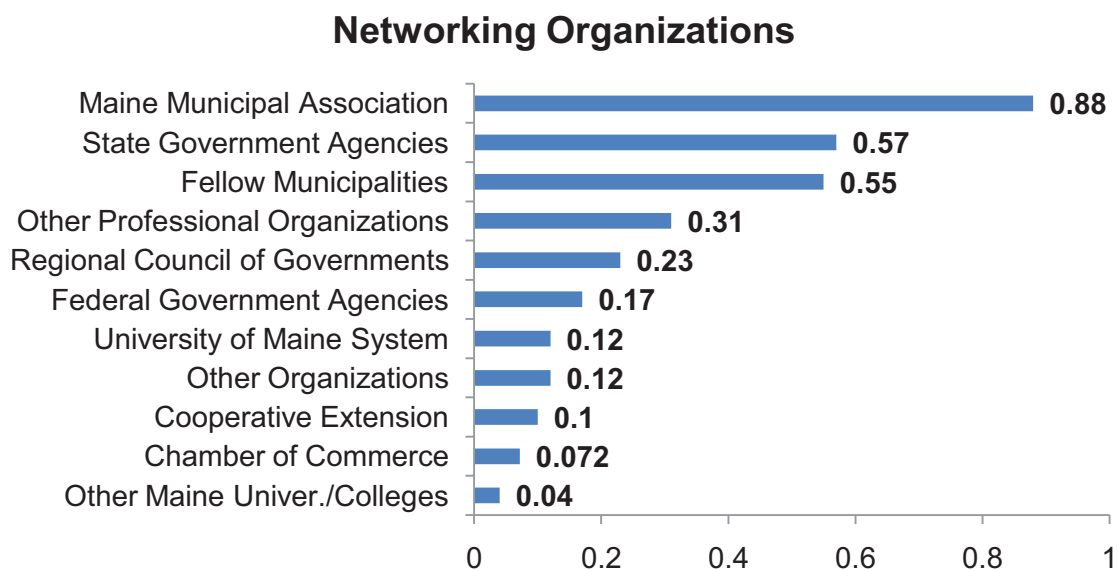


Figure 14 - What organizations do you consider helpful in terms of training, education, or support for your day-to-day tasks?

Results indicate that researchers from the University of Maine System are relatively unknown entities (See Figure 16). The majority of respondents (59%) indicated they were *Not Sure* if researchers could be of help in resolving current issues. 27% reported that they felt researchers could be helpful, and 14% indicated that they did not feel researchers could help. Again, this provides important data on the need to communicate with each other about potential partnerships with overlapping interests. The results for researchers were mirrored in the results for other organizations. 59% of respondents indicated that they were *Not Sure* if other organizations could help them resolve municipality issues. However, respondents were more confident in other organizations' than in researchers; 32% reported that they felt other organizations could help, and 9% indicated that they did not feel they could help.

Assistance in Resolving Municipal Issues

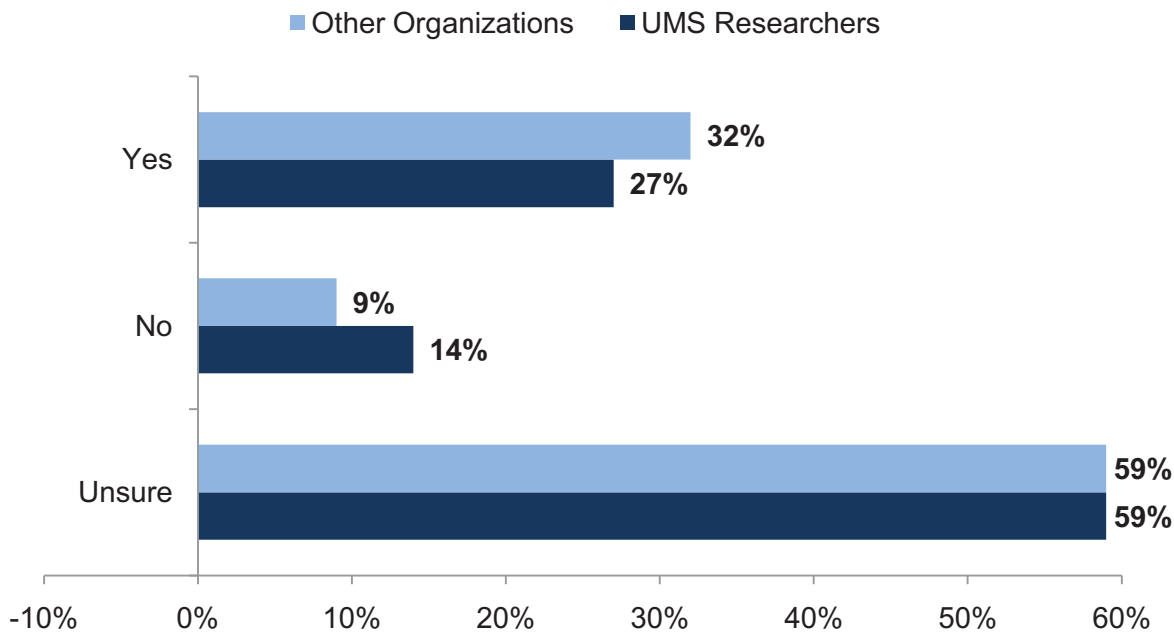


Figure 15 - Do you think researchers from the University of Maine System and other organizations could be of assistance in resolving some of the issues in your municipality?

F. Stakeholder Engagement Experiences with University and College Researchers

A section of the survey assessed past or current municipality experiences with researchers from Maine universities and colleges. These results are represented in Figures 17-19.

The majority of municipal officials indicated that they had not worked with Maine faculty and staff researchers (55%) or students (52%). 20% reported that they had worked with faculty and staff researchers, and 23% reported that they had worked with students (See Figure 17). This lack of experience with researchers may be one reason why respondents expressed that they did not know if researchers could help solve municipality issues.

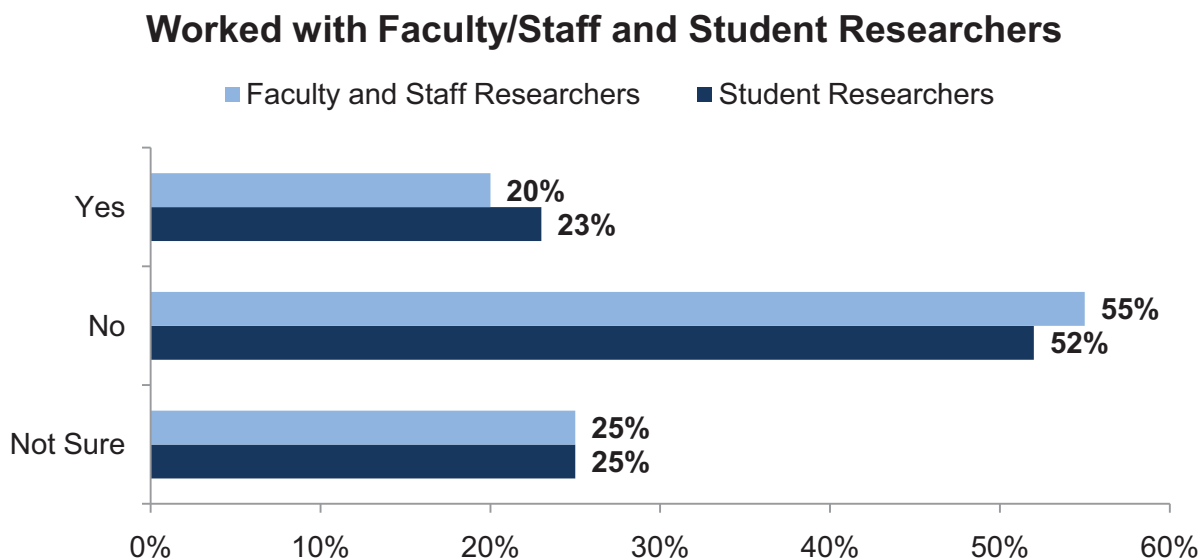


Figure 17 - Since you began your position, has your municipality worked with any faculty/staff or student researchers from a university or college in Maine?

Among the municipalities that had experience working with faculty and staff researchers, 60% of respondents rated the experience as *very positive*. Another 29% rated their experience as *somewhat positive* and only 11% rated their experience as *neutral*, *somewhat negative*, or *very negative* (See Figure 18). These results were mirrored for experience with student researchers, except that 0% had *very negative* experiences with student researchers, versus the 1% who had that experience with faculty and staff researchers.

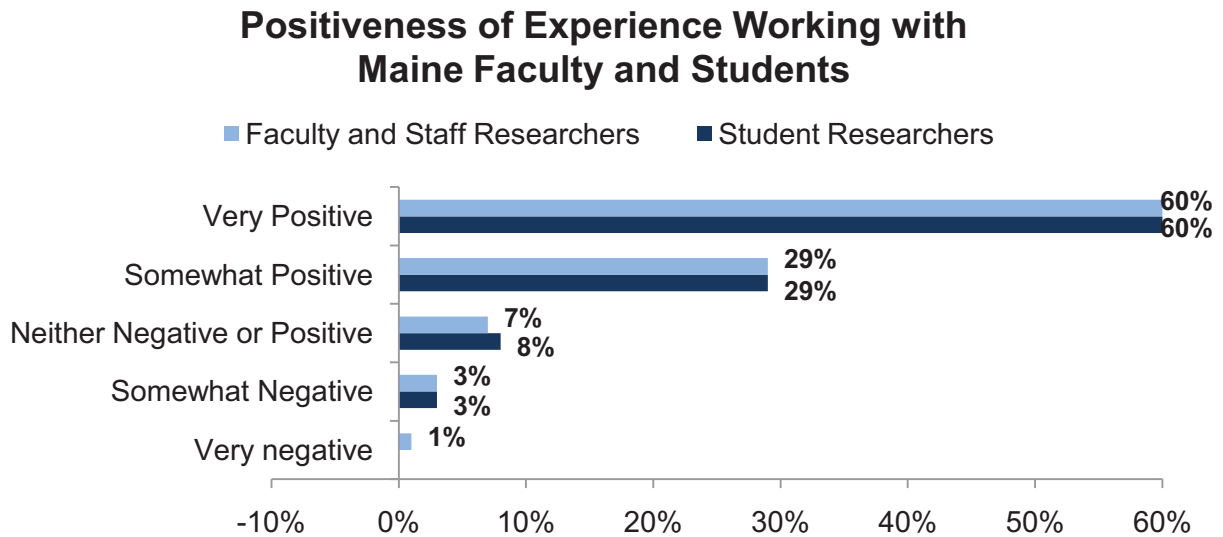


Figure 18 - How negative or positive was this experience with faculty/staff and student researchers?

Importantly, respondents from municipalities who had experience with faculty, staff, or student researchers rated the experience as helpful to them (See Figure 19). 41% rated the experience with faculty and staff researchers as *extremely helpful*, 31% as *moderately helpful* and 20% as *somewhat helpful*. Only 2% indicated that it was *not at all helpful*. Results were similar for respondents that had experience working with student researchers: 33% rated it as *extremely helpful*, 32% as *moderately helpful*, and 24% as *somewhat helpful*. Like their experiences with faculty and staff, only 2% of municipal officials rated their experience with students as *not at all helpful*. These results are promising for community-university partnerships, as they indicate that, when these partnerships exist, they are positive and helpful.

Helpfulness of Experience Working with Maine Faculty and Students

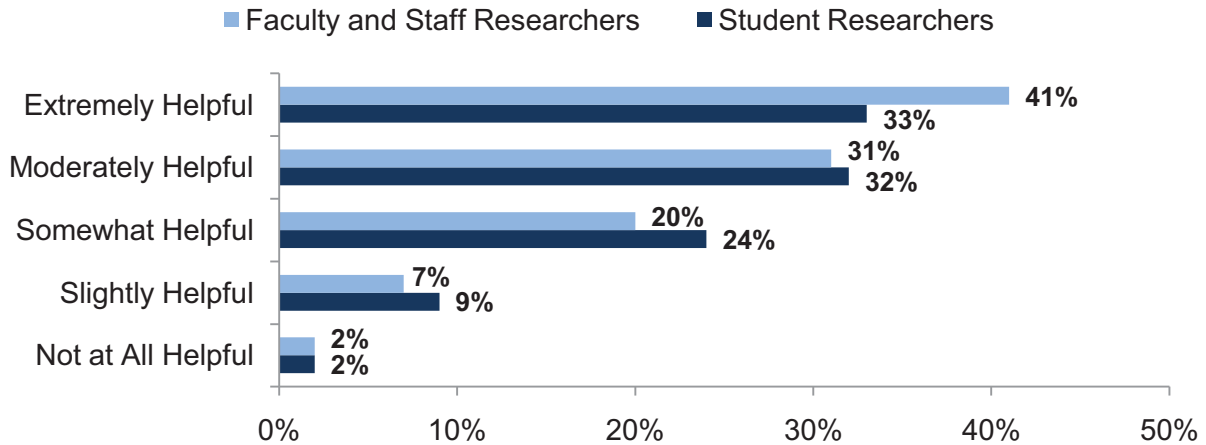


Figure 19 - How helpful was this experience with faculty/staff and student researchers?

G. Stakeholder Trust in Researchers from the University of Maine System

Research demonstrates that trust is an important factor in willingness to collaborate, as well as the success of the collaborations. In order for people to work together successfully, some level of trust should be established. Since trust may contribute to the willingness and interest of municipalities in developing community-university partnerships, we asked respondents to rate their present level of trust in University of Maine System researchers.

On a four-point scale (1 = not at all, 4 = a lot), officials were asked to indicate how much they trust researchers from the University of Maine System (UMS). Participants could also select *Not Sure*, although this number was excluded from the analysis when calculating the mean. Mean scores for participants' level of trust in University of Maine System researchers was 3.36 (SD .75), indicating that they somewhat trust researchers (see Figure 20).

On a five-point Likert scale (1 = worsened, 5 = improved), participants rated if their trust in University of Maine System researchers had changed over time. The mean score of 3.14 (SD .67) indicates that trust has not changed (see Figure 21).

Consistent with other findings in this survey, results also reveal that approximately one third (33%) of the respondents were *Not Sure* if they trusted UMS researchers or if their trust had changed over time.

Level of Trust in University of Maine System Researchers

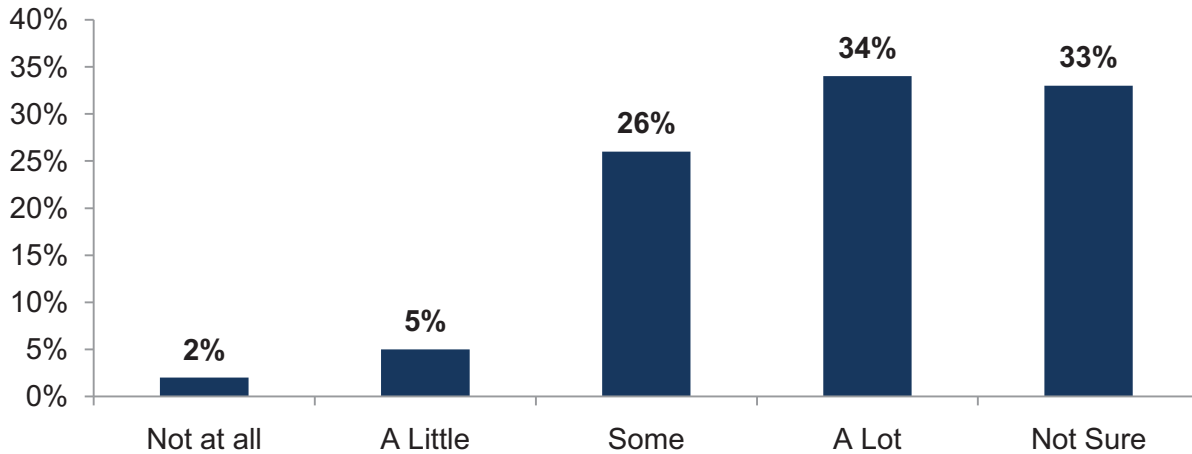


Figure 20 - How much do you trust researchers (faculty/staff) from the University of Maine System?

Change in Level of Trust in University of Maine System Researchers

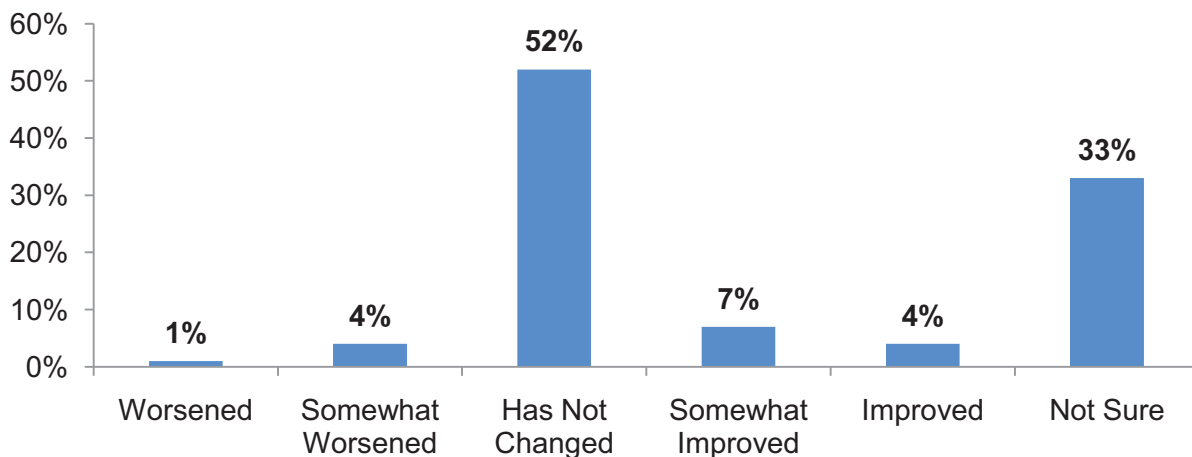


Figure 21 - Has your level of trust in researchers (faculty/staff) from the University of Maine System changed over time?

Respondents also rated factors that influenced their trust in University of Maine System (UMS) researchers by rating the statement “I trust researchers from the University of Maine system because they...”. They indicated their agreement with the sentence on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Respondents agreed the most with statements about researchers providing scientific information (mean 3.7), providing reliable information (mean 3.6), and having high technical competence (mean 3.6). The lowest rated trust factors were share my values (mean 3.1), work for the University of Maine system (mean 3.2), and focus on issues I want to know about (mean 3.3) (see Figures 22 and 23). These results are interesting because, while municipal officials may trust the quality of the research from the UMS researchers, they indicated that researchers are not addressing the issues they want to know about. This fit between research and community needs is critical to consider when developing community-university partnerships.

Level of Trust in Researchers from the University of Maine System (Mean Rating)

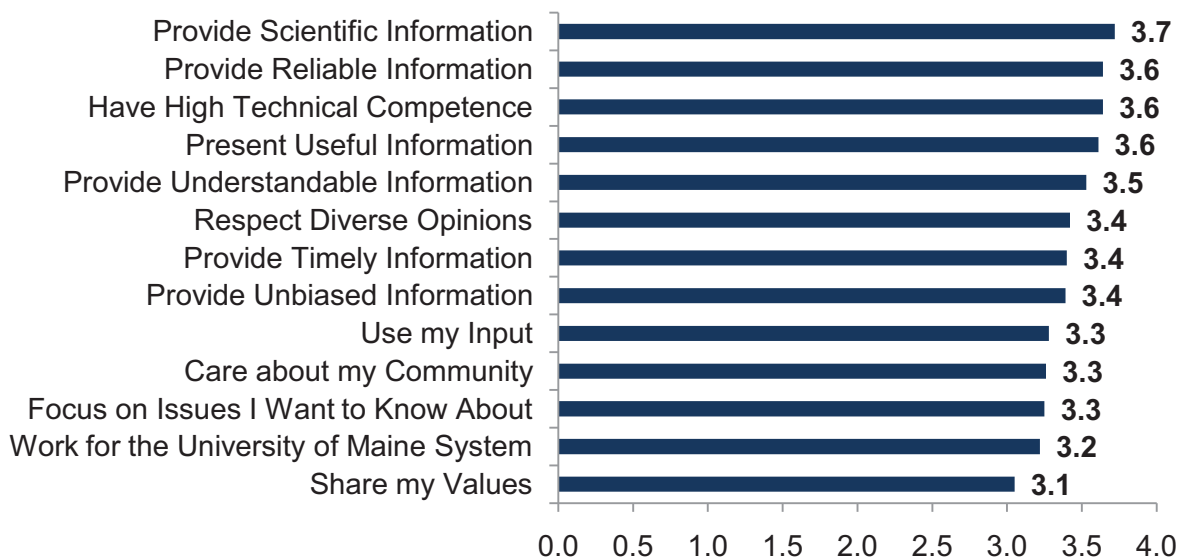


Figure 22 - To what extent do you disagree or agree with the following statements: "I trust researchers (faculty/staff) from the University of Maine System because they_____."

Reasons for Trusting University of Maine System Researchers

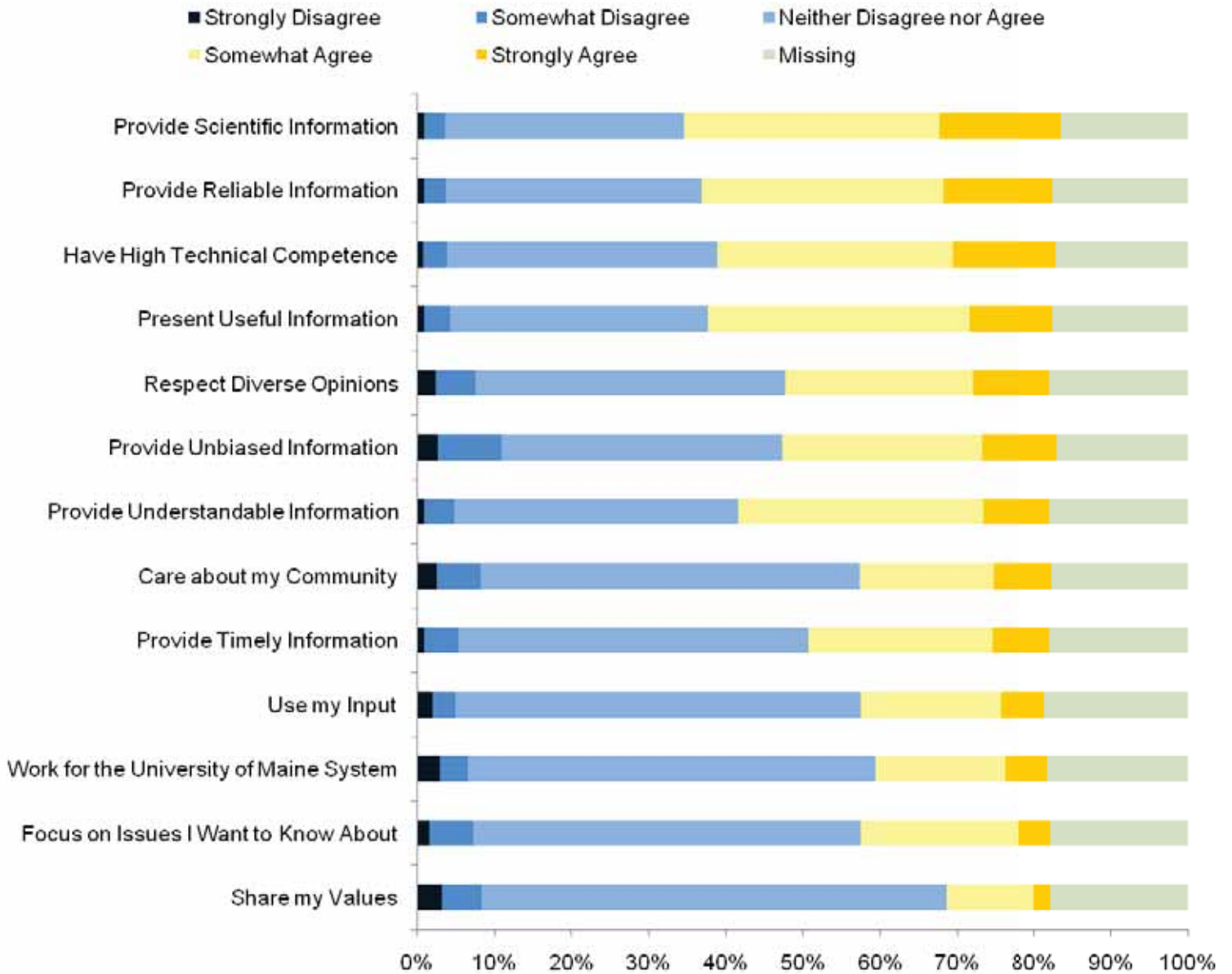


Figure 23 - To what extent do you disagree or agree with the following statements: "I trust researchers (faculty/staff) from the University of Maine System because they_____."

H. Stakeholder Collaboration Preferences for Community-University Partnerships

The last section of the survey asked municipal officials to rate their preferences for different collaborative research models. Participants were presented with the following table:

Type of partnership	Problem Identification	Research	Proposed Solutions	Implementation
A. University as Lead Partner	Univ. researchers	Univ. researchers	Univ. researchers	Municipal officials
B. University as Consulting Partner	Municipal officials Univ. researchers	Univ. researchers	Univ. researchers	Municipal officials
C. University as Facilitating Partner	Municipal officials Univ. researchers	Univ. researchers	Municipal officials Univ. researchers	Municipal officials
D. University as Full Partner	Municipal officials Univ. researchers	Municipal officials Univ. researchers	Municipal officials Univ. researchers	Municipal officials Univ. researchers

Participants were asked to rate each partnership model on a four-point scale (1 = not preferred, 4 = highly preferred) (see Figure 24). A comparison of the distribution of responses across preference categories reveals a strong distaste for the University as Lead Partnership Model and strong preference for community-university partnership models (Consulting, Facilitating, and Full) that balance responsibilities across municipal officials and university researchers.

Preferences for Community-University Partnerships

Not Preferred Somewhat Preferred Preferred Highly Preferred

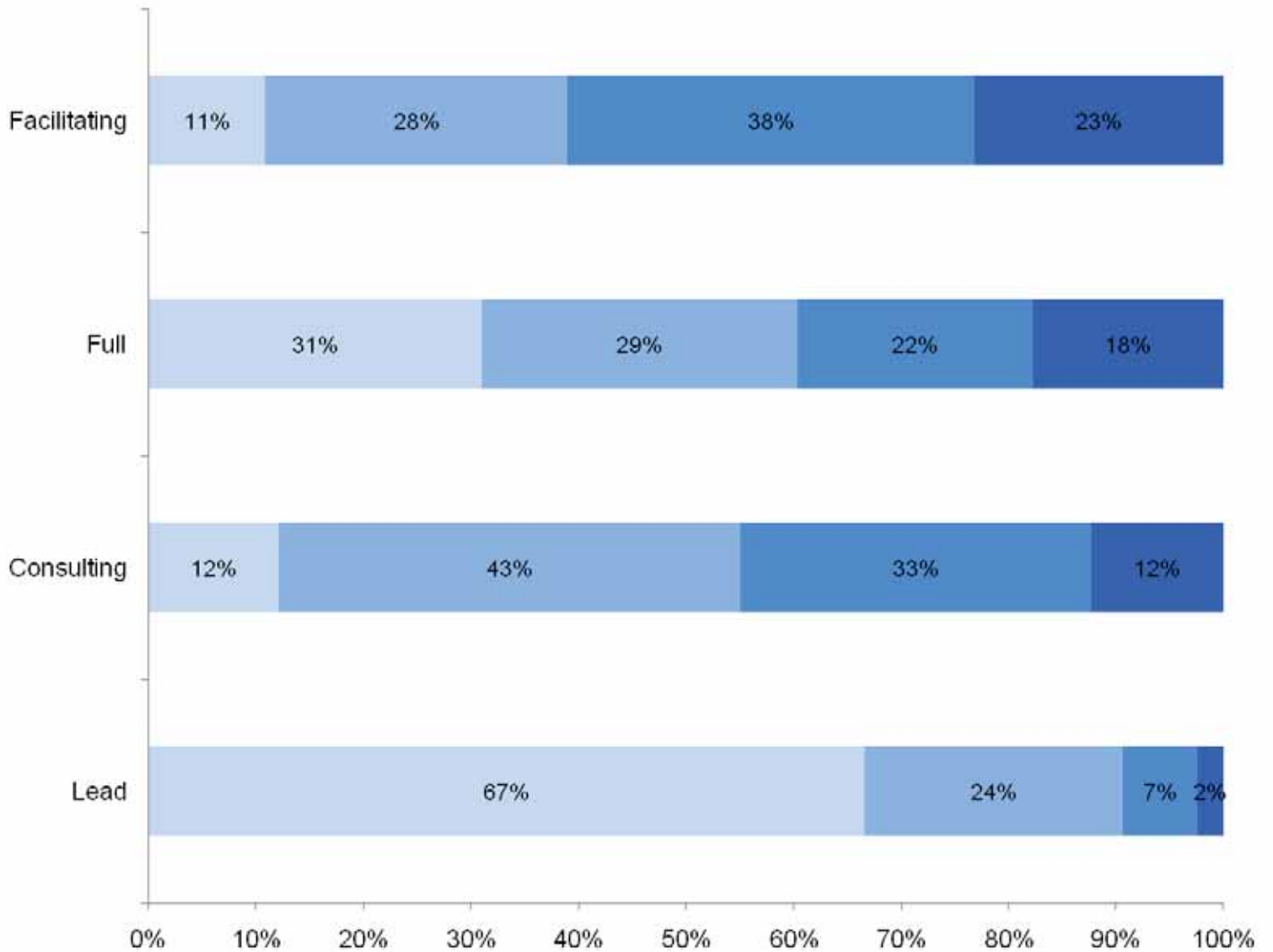


Figure 24 - Please rate your preference for the alternative strategies for community-university partnerships described above.

After rating each of the four partnership models, participants were asked to share their most preferred partnership strategy (see Figure 25). Results demonstrate that just over one-third of respondents (37%) preferred the consulting style, and just over one-third (36%) preferred the facilitating model of collaborative research. In these models, researchers and stakeholders work together to define the problems and research direction, then researchers carry out the research, and researchers or researchers and municipal officials, respectively, work together to identify science-based solutions. Importantly, respondents indicated that they do not prefer a lead collaborative model in which the university takes the lead throughout the research process leaving the implementation to the municipal officials without input prior to the final stage.

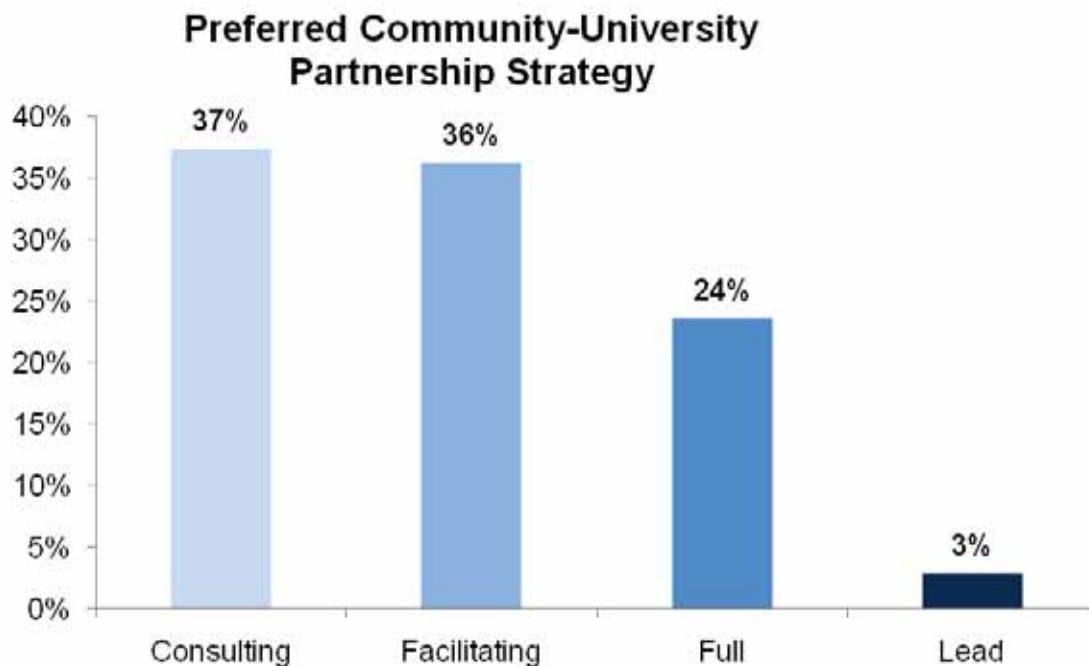


Figure 25 - Indicate the participation strategy you most prefer.

Finally, we asked municipal officials to rate on a five-point Likert scale (1 = very unlikely, 5 = very likely) their interest, and colleagues' interest, in pursuing a community-university partnership (see Figures 26 and 27). More than half of the respondents indicated that they are *likely* (35%) or *very likely* (19%) to be interested in pursuing a partnership. Similarly, over two-thirds of respondents reported that colleagues' would *likely* (45%) or *very likely* (20%) be interested in pursuing a community-university partnership. These results are encouraging given respondents' reported lack of experience with university or college researchers and uncertainty about if researchers can help municipalities with current municipal issues.

Respondent's Interest in a Partnership

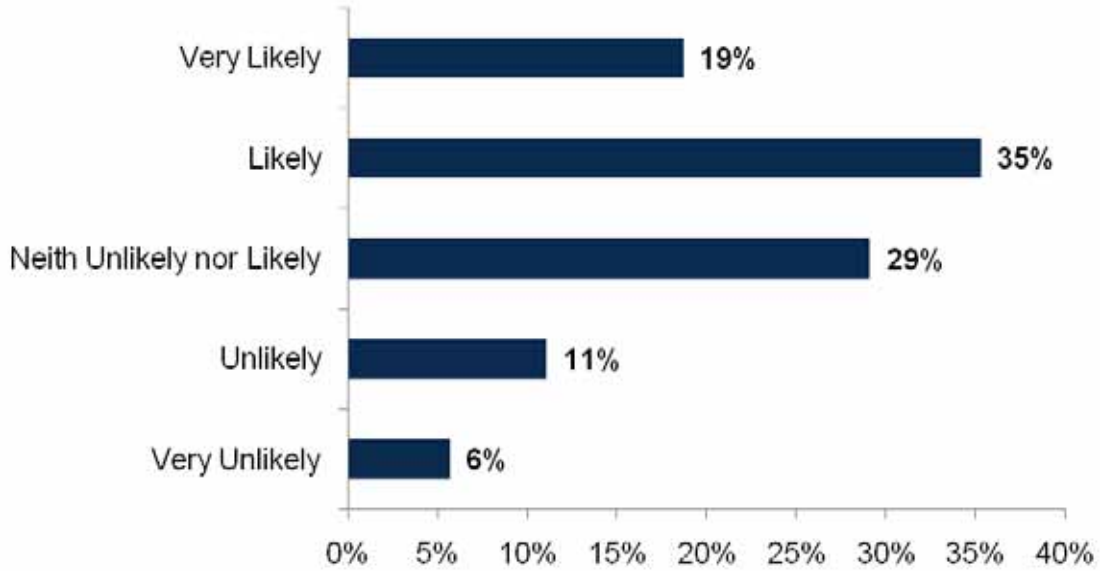


Figure 26 - Considering your current municipal position, how interested are you in pursuing a community-university partnership?

Other Municipal Officials' Interest in a Partnership

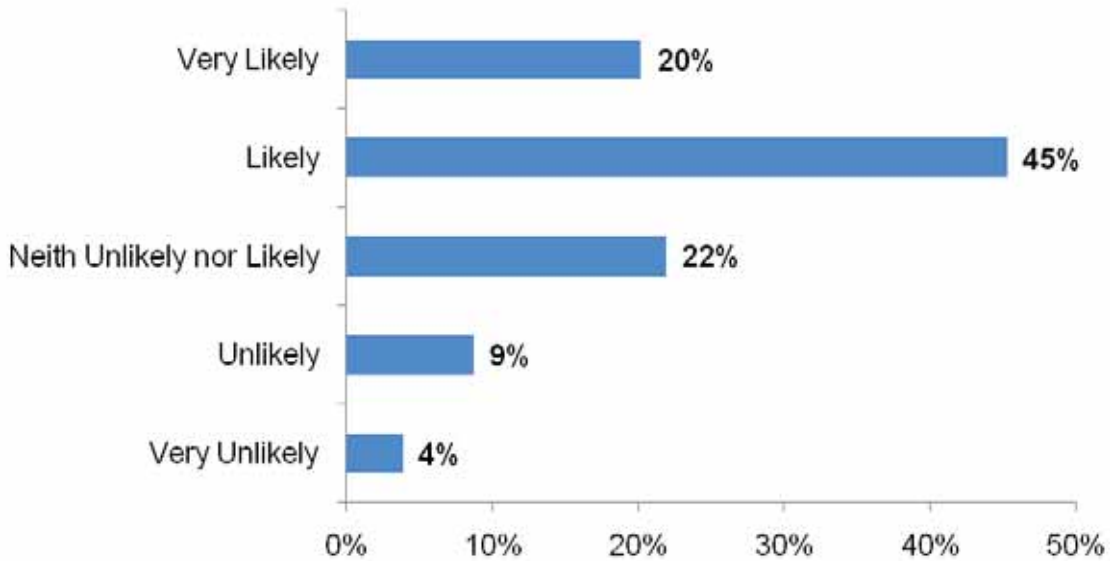


Figure 27 - How likely do you think it is that another municipal official from your community would be interested in pursuing a community-university partnership?

63% of respondents indicated that we could contact them at their office to talk further about opportunities for developing community-university partnerships (see Figure 28). Follow-up conversations will occur between July 2011 and May 2012.

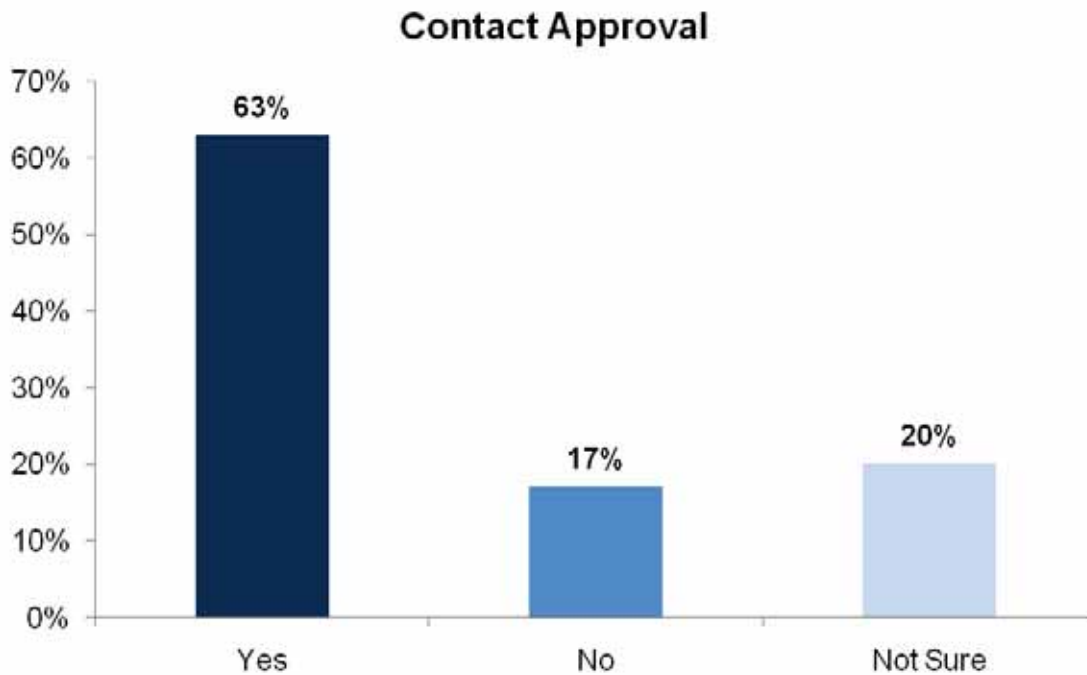


Figure 28 - May we contact you at your municipal office to talk with us further about opportunities for community-based research projects in your municipality?

CONCLUSION

The information gathered in this survey is essential for understanding the present and future needs of Maine municipalities, current networking within the state, and the potential for developing community-university partnerships. This survey served as a first step for the team in our research on the issues facing the state of Maine, the potential for partnerships, and the factors that might influence partnership success or failure. Further, it is a starting point for beginning our discussion with Maine municipal officials.

To quote Henry Ford, “Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.” We hope to continue our conversations with officials and researchers throughout Maine because of our belief in the importance of aligning university research with the needs of Maine communities and the success that can be discovered through these partnerships.

APPENDIX A - RESEARCH LITERATURE OVERVIEW

Background

This research is part of a grant program, Maine's Sustainability Solutions Initiative, which is studying and helping address sustainability issues in Maine. Recognizing that researchers cannot identify and solve these issues on their own², this survey seeks input from municipalities throughout Maine on the issues their communities are facing. Literature in the growing field of sustainability science recognizes that there is often a mismatch between the knowledge generated in higher education institutions and the needs of decision-makers in our communities, state, and nation³. The hope is that this survey will assist in closing that gap because the information generated will be communicated to researchers to inform them of issues in Maine and help them connect with municipalities.

In addition to studying community issues, this survey explores interest in and preferences for community-university partnerships. Research on collaborative approaches to management indicates that factors such as problem severity⁴, perceived benefits of the collaboration for solving problems⁵, and participant overall trust in the organizing institution⁶ influence decisions to enter into a collaboration. Further, research also demonstrates that similar factors, such as trust and perceptions of problem severity, influence the level of involvement people want to have in a partnership⁷ and that identifying these factors and preferences can influence the development of partnership trust⁸ and successfulness of partnerships⁹. Lubell et al. (2005) state

² Cash, D.W., Clark, W.C., Alcock, F., Dickson, N.M., Eckley, N., Guston, D.H., Jager, J., & Mitchell, R.B. (2003, July). Knowledge systems for sustainable development. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 100 (14), 8086-8091. doi: 10.1073/pnas.1231332100.

³ Sarewitz, P. and Pielke, R.A. (2007). The neglected heart of science policy: Reconciling supply of and demand for science. *Environmental Science and Policy* 10, 5-16. doi: 10.1016/j.envsci.2006.10.001.

⁴ Johnson, R.J. and Scicchitano, M.J. (2009). Willing and able: Explaining individuals' engagement in environmental policy making. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, 52(6), 833-846

⁵ Johnson, R.J. and Scicchitano, M.J. (2009). Willing and able: Explaining individuals' engagement in environmental policy making. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, 52(6), 833-846; Lubell, M. Sabatier, P.A., Vedlitz, A., Focht, W., Lubell, M., Trachtenberg, Z., , and Matlock, M. (2005). Conclusions and Recommendations. In P.A. Sabatier, W. Focht, M. Lubell, Z. Trachtenberg, A. Vedlitz, and M. Matlock. *Swimming Upstream: Collaborative Approaches to Watershed Management*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

⁶ Leahy, J.E. and Anderson, D.H. (2008). Trust factors in community-water resource management agency relationships. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 87, 100-107. doi: 10/1016/j.landurbplan.2008.05.004.

⁷ Focht, W. and Trachtenberg, Z. (2005). A trust-based guide to stakeholder participation. In P.A. Sabatier, W. Focht, M. Lubell, Z. Trachtenberg, A. Vedlitz, and M. Matlock. *Swimming Upstream: Collaborative Approaches to Watershed Management*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

⁸ Focht, W. and Trachtenberg, Z. (2005). A trust-based guide to stakeholder participation. In P.A. Sabatier, W. Focht, M. Lubell, Z. Trachtenberg, A. Vedlitz, and M. Matlock. *Swimming Upstream: Collaborative Approaches to Watershed Management*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

⁹ Lubell, M. Sabatier, P.A., Vedlitz, A., Focht, W., Lubell, M., Trachtenberg, Z., and Matlock, M. (2005). Conclusions and Recommendations. In P.A. Sabatier, W. Focht, M. Lubell, Z. Trachtenberg, A. Vedlitz, and M. Matlock. *Swimming Upstream: Collaborative Approaches to Watershed Management*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

that “Policy output effectiveness . . . is enhanced when stakeholder participation strategies embodied in policy processes appropriately match stakeholders’ participation preferences” (p. 87). Determining at what stages partners want to be involved in the research process and if they want researchers involved in solution implementation is critical in community-university partnerships. Results from this survey will be used to inform our approaches to collaborations, fellow teams’ researcher projects, and the broader research community, as it offers insight into how researchers may understand and begin to develop relationships with municipalities, or other organizations, in their states.

Matching Research with Community Needs

One of the expressed goals of the Sustainability Solutions Initiative is to “undertake innovative research to understand . . . processes that influence the use of scientific knowledge in decision-making. Our goal of linking knowledge and action (K-A) seeks to match the demand for, and supply of, scientific knowledge”¹⁰ (section 4.3). In order to create this balance, stakeholder needs must first be assessed. Hart and Calhoun (2009) argue that “a key step in effective knowledge-to-action initiatives is ensuring that stakeholders play a central role in defining the problem, identifying research needs or information gaps and helping to shape solutions” (p. 7). Using open ended questions in the survey “provide[ed] opportunities for communities to discuss the issues in their communities, using their language, and without being restricted to a predetermined list of issues. Listening to the communities and researchers helped develop a survey that incorporated community voice with ongoing university projects”¹¹ (p. 16).

Variables that Impact Partnership Interests and Design

Trust

Focht and Trachtenberg (2005) write that participant trust in fellow participants and policy officials, or lead organizing agencies, plays a central role in the manner that participants choose to engage in partnerships. For example, participants with high trust are more likely to trust in others to make “the right” decision and, thus, tend to take a less active role in the process than they would if they did not trust others to make quality decisions and look out for their best interests¹² (p. 92). Appropriately matching partnership preferences can enhance participant

¹⁰ University of Maine Orono, Maine’s Sustainability Solutions Initiative. (2008). *An EPSCoR RII Proposal to the National Science Foundation (NSF)*. Section 4.3.

¹¹ Hutchins, K., McGreavy, B., Lindenfeld, L. and Silka, L. (In Process). Science’s supply and demand: Listening to communities to inform university research and science communication processes.

¹² Focht, W. and Trachtenberg, Z. (2005). A trust-based guide to stakeholder participation. In P.A. Sabatier, W. Focht, M. Lubell, Z. Trachtenberg, A. Vedlitz, and M. Matlock. *Swimming Upstream: Collaborative Approaches to Watershed Management*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

trust, as it demonstrates care and listening, which, in turn, can influence partnership effectiveness¹³ (p. 87).

Leahy and Anderson (2008) demonstrate that trust is not a simple variable; there are numerous factors that comprise overall trust. They found that trust involved five major factors. These included trust in the governing agency, social trust in people in general, trust in the technical competence of the governing agency, trust in shared interests among members of the partnership, and trust related to feelings of being heard and having influence (p. 105). This survey tests several of these factors, including overall trust, competency, and shared interests.

Belief in the Partnership Effectiveness

Belief that the partnership is useful for solving or managing issues has been shown to influence the likelihood of participation in the collaboration¹⁴. Given the extensive time and resource requirements of collaborating, people need to believe that they will benefit and that the issue under discussion is best solved through collaboration.

Problem Significance Perceptions

Research demonstrates that people who perceive a problem to be severe are more likely to join a partnership that is addressing the issue than people who do not perceive a problem exists¹⁵. As, Johnson and Scicchitano (2009) argue, “individuals are not likely to support the imposition of stricter environmental standards unless they perceive an environmental problem exists” (p. 834). Similarly, we assumed that municipal officials will be hesitant to invest significant resources in a partnership focused on solving a problem they rated as “not a problem,” in the survey.

Community Capacity

Community capital refers to a “community’s ability to face changes”¹⁶ (p. 6), and is characterized through four categories including physical and financial infrastructure, social capital, human

¹³ Focht, W. and Trachtenberg, Z. (2005). A trust-based guide to stakeholder participation. In P.A. Sabatier, W. Focht, M. Lubell, Z. Trachtenberg, A. Vedlitz, and M. Matlock. *Swimming Upstream: Collaborative Approaches to Watershed Management*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

¹⁴ Lubell, M. (2004). Collaborative watershed management: A view from the grassroots. *Policy Studies Journal*, 32, 341-361.

¹⁵ Samuelson, C.D, Vedlitz, A. Witten, G.D, Matlock, M., Alston, L.T. Peterson, T.R., and Gilbertz, S.J. (2005). Citizen participation and representation in collaborative engagement processes. In P.A. Sabatier, W. Focht, M. Lubell, Z. Trachtenberg, A. Vedlitz, and M. Matlock. *Swimming Upstream: Collaborative Approaches to Watershed Management*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

¹⁶ Nadeau, S., Shindler, B.A., Kakoyannis, C. (2003). Beyond the economic model: Assessing sustainability in forest communities. In B. Shindler, T. Beckley, and C. Finley (Eds.). *Two Paths to Sustainable Forests: Public Values in Canada and the United States*. Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University Press.

capital, and environmental capital¹⁷. These four community aspects interact to influence the community's ability to face challenges, or their community capital. Given the ever-evolving social-ecological challenges we are facing, it is important to understand the role of community capital in the development of local, regional, and global sustainable solutions. In addition, Leach and Sabatier (2005) demonstrate that groups with strong human and social capital are more likely to agree on issues discussed in the collaboration. Although social capital was not directly related to project implementation, agreement is important in order for partnerships to develop solutions.

In this survey, physical and financial capital, such as physical community attributes and resources and financial capital, are partially evaluated using US Census data. Survey questions such as "what organizations do you consider helpful in terms of training, education, or support for your day-to-day tasks" and "What is your opinion about the level of residents' participation on municipal committees or at events such as Town Meeting" evaluate community social capital, or "the ability and willingness of residents to work together for community goals"¹⁸. Human capital is evaluated using US Census data, and environmental capital is assessed using Geographic Information System (GIS) analysis and survey responses to environmental problems.

Contextual Factors

There are numerous contextual factors that influence partnerships, including pre-existing trust¹⁹, existing social capital, such as social networks, history of the issue, political, biophysical, and economic conditions²⁰, and the longevity of the partnership²¹.

¹⁷ Nadeau, S., Shindler, B.A., Kakoyannis, C. (2003). Beyond the economic model: Assessing sustainability in forest communities. In B. Shindler, T. Beckley, and C. Finley (Eds.). *Two Paths to Sustainable Forests: Public Values in Canada and the United States*. Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University Press.

¹⁸ Nadeau, S., Shindler, B.A., Kakoyannis, C. (2003). Beyond the economic model: Assessing sustainability in forest communities. In B. Shindler, T. Beckley, and C. Finley (Eds.). *Two Paths to Sustainable Forests: Public Values in Canada and the United States*. Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University Press.

¹⁹ Focht, W. and Trachtenberg, Z. (2005). A trust-based guide to stakeholder participation. In P.A. Sabatier, W. Focht, M. Lubell, Z. Trachtenberg, A. Vedlitz, and M. Matlock (Eds.). *Swimming Upstream: Collaborative Approaches to Watershed Management*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

²⁰ Sabatier, P.A., Focht, W., Lubell, M., Trachtenberg, Z., Vedlitz, A., and Matlock, M. (2005). Collaborative approaches to watershed management. In P.A. Sabatier, W. Focht, M. Lubell, Z. Trachtenberg, A. Vedlitz, and M. Matlock (Eds.). *Swimming Upstream: Collaborative Approaches to Watershed Management*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

²¹ Leach, W.D. and Sabatier, P.A. (2005). Are trust and social capital the keys to success? Watershed partnership in California and Washington. In P.A. Sabatier, W. Focht, M. Lubell, Z. Trachtenberg, A. Vedlitz, and M. Matlock. (Eds.) *Swimming Upstream: Collaborative Approaches to Watershed Management*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

APPENDIX B – Maine’s Sustainability Solutions Initiative

The Maine Sustainability Solutions Initiative (SSI) is a team of over 35 faculty members from universities and colleges throughout Maine. The SSI is currently funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) EPSCoR program, a five-year \$20 million grant that will help the University of Maine System build an infrastructure for the study of sustainability science. One of the SSI’s overarching goals is to systematically examine its collective research processes and contribute to a growing body of literature on the process of linking knowledge with action (K↔A). The SSI’s research design includes repetitive cycles among field research, collaborative assessment, evaluation, communication, and reflexivity. This ongoing learning spiral, based on action and observation, feedback, and co-evolutionary development, will refine a replicable, place-based protocol for sustainability science that builds model research strategies and institutional innovations²² within a structure of collaborative stakeholder-university partnerships.

²² Kates, R.W., Clark, W.C., Corell, R., Hall, J.M., Jaeger, C.C., Lowe, I., McCarthy, J.J., Schellnhuber, H.J., Bolin, B., Dickson, N.M., Faucheux, S., Gallopin, G.C., Grubler, A., Huntley, B., Jager, J., Jodha, N.S., Kaspersen, R.E., Mabogunje, A., Matson, P., Mooney, H., Moore III, B., O’Riordan, T., and Svedin, U. (2001, April). Sustainability Science. *Science*, 292(5517), 641-642. Retrieved from www.sciencemag.org.

APPENDIX C – Survey Instrument and Raw Data Summary

In this appendix, we report detailed survey results. We summarize results by survey question. The survey matches one version we mailed to Maine municipal officials. The percentages reported are "valid response" percentages, meaning that the responses of *Don't Know*, *Not Applicable*, and missing responses are not included in the percentage calculation. We received 1176 completed surveys; the number of valid responses varies by question. Where appropriate, we report counts of "valid responses" and don't know, not applicable, and missing responses.

Maine Municipal Official Survey

This survey is part of a statewide study of municipal officials. **Your opinions are very important to us.** Hearing from people with different perspectives will help us characterize the range of opinions of municipal officials across Maine. Please respond to the survey based on **your experience with and opinions about the municipality in which you are employed.**

Section One – Background

In this section, we would like to learn about your municipal role and general information about your municipality.

1. How many years have you worked for your municipality? **Mean = 13 Years (Range = 1 to 55)**

2. Which of the following categories best describes your current municipal position(s)?

(Please check all boxes that apply.)

13% Town or City Manager

28% Town or City Employee

28% Elected Official

36% Appointed Official

14% Other *(please specify)*: _____

3. What organizations do you consider helpful in terms of training, education, or support for your day-to-day tasks? *(Please check all boxes that apply.)*

88% Maine Municipal Association

23% Regional Council of Governments

7% Chamber of Commerce

57% State Government Agencies

17% Federal Government Agencies

10% Cooperative Extension

12% University of Maine System

4% Other Maine Universities and Colleges

55% Fellow Municipalities

31% Professional Organization(s) *(please specify)*: _____

12% Other Organization(s) *(please specify)*: _____

4. How pessimistic or optimistic are you about the general direction in which your municipality and the State of Maine are heading? *(Please check one box for each category.)*

	Very Pessimistic	Somewhat Pessimistic	Neither Pessimistic nor Optimistic	Somewhat Optimistic	Very Optimistic
Municipality	6%	19%	20%	39%	17%
Maine	29%	42%	15%	12%	1%

5. How do you characterize your municipality in terms of its population size and location within the state of Maine? *(Please check only one box.)*

- 11% Urban area
- 4% Inner-ring suburb
- 14% Outer-ring suburb
- 68% Rural area

6. What is your opinion about the level of residents' participation on municipal committees or at events such as Town Meeting? *(Please check one box.)*

No Participation	Low Participation	Moderate Participation	High Participation	Very High Participation
40%	51%	37%	10%	2%

7. Municipalities often face decisions that require difficult trade-offs between environmental and economic conditions. In general, where would you locate your municipality on the following scale? *(Please check one box.)*

Highest priority to restoring and protecting environmental conditions even if there are negative economic consequences	Environmental and economic conditions are given equal priority in decision making	Highest priority to economic conditions even if there are negative environmental consequences
8%	58%	5%
	16%	14%

Section Two – Economic, Social, Environmental, and Policy Issues

In this section, we would like your professional opinion about the economic, social, environmental, and policy issues in your municipality.

Economic Issues

8. How much do you consider each of the following to be a problem for your municipality? (*Please check one box for each issue.*)

	Serious Problem	Moderate Problem	Small Problem	Not a Problem	Valid	Not Sure	N/A	Mis sin g
Declining property tax base	18%	27%	20%	34%	1053	37	26	60
Declining job opportunities	44%	32%	17%	7%	1072	25	31	48
Poor business climate	34%	32%	20%	14%	1075	30	22	49
Mismatch between skills of workforce and jobs	11%	27%	33%	30%	935	113	67	61
Lack of education and training opportunities for residents	9%	23%	28%	39%	996	84	48	48
Limited access to communication networks for residents and employers	12%	22%	22%	44%	1043	52	27	54
Rising health care costs for residents and employers	63%	28%	7%	2%	1082	32	15	47
Rising energy costs for residents and employers	46%	38%	14%	2%	1112	13	5	46
Reductions in state funding (e.g. school subsidy, revenue sharing)	76%	17%	5%	2%	1126	4	5	41
Declining transportation infrastructure	33%	35%	20%	13%	1010	33	83	50

Social Issues

9. How much do you consider each of the following to be a problem for your municipality? (*Please check one box for each issue.*)

	Serious Problem	Moderate Problem	Small Problem	Not a Problem	Valid	Not Sure	N/A	Missing
Declining quality of public schools	16%	23%	22%	40%	1028	40	20	88
Rising unemployment rate	36%	37%	24%	4%	1048	31	12	85
Rising poverty rate	31%	35%	26%	8%	1033	54	8	81
Increasing drug and alcohol abuse	33%	37%	24%	7%	983	94	13	86
Decreasing access to social services for elderly and low-income residents	14%	33%	32%	20%	999	79	12	86
Decreasing recreation opportunities	5%	17%	25%	53%	1033	34	27	82
Increasing crime rate	11%	24%	39%	27%	1025	54	13	84
Increasing migration to your community	6%	12%	20%	62%	980	63	43	90
Changing ethnic and cultural diversity	3%	6%	16%	76%	964	66	61	85
Decreasing access to health services	9%	22%	29%	41%	1010	61	23	82
Increasing aging population (persons 65 or older)	13%	32%	32%	24%	1031	58	5	82
Decreasing participation in community groups	16%	33%	31%	20%	1027	56	11	82

Environmental and Natural Resource Issues

10. How much do you consider each of the following to be a problem for your municipality? (*Please check one box for each issue.*)

	Serious Problem	Moderate Problem	Small Problem	Not a Problem	Valid	Not Sure	N/A	Missing
Decreasing lake water quality	5%	17%	25%	53%	853	55	181	87
Decreasing river and stream water quality	4%	17%	28%	51%	974	78	38	86
Decreasing coastal water quality	5%	18%	23%	54%	517	46	515	98
Decreasing ground water quality	4%	14%	24%	58%	933	134	28	81
Decreasing air quality	3%	14%	25%	58%	963	104	24	85
Loss of forest land	4%	14%	26%	55%	1013	50	29	84
Loss of farm land	10%	21%	28%	41%	983	53	54	86
Loss of working waterfront	11%	18%	23%	47%	534	48	501	93
Decreasing public access to natural resource areas	6%	14%	25%	55%	977	55	54	90
Increasing risks of flooding	3%	14%	26%	58%	971	58	61	86
Increasing invasive insects and/or plants	8%	25%	35%	32%	924	127	34	91
Increasing traffic congestion	8%	22%	28%	43%	1045	11	37	83
Changing climate	6%	15%	28%	50%	949	112	28	87

Policy Issues

11. Public policy issues may generate debate in municipalities. How much **debate** have you seen on the following policy issues in your municipality? (*Please check one box for each issue.*)

	Serious Problem	Moderate Problem	Small Problem	Not a Problem	Valid	Not Sure	N/A	Missing
Stormwater regulations	3%	13%	33%	51%	1013	66	74	23
Shorebird habitat regulations	4%	11%	24%	61%	864	73	213	26
Vernal pool regulations	5%	18%	35%	42%	987	94	70	25
Land use planning/zoning regulations	20%	43%	32%	6%	1117	29	6	24
Shoreland zoning regulations	19%	38%	31%	12%	1070	38	47	21
Siting of commercial wind farms	12%	13%	24%	51%	953	53	146	24
Siting of residential wind energy systems	6%	12%	30%	53%	986	63	108	19
Siting of communication towers	8%	19%	42%	32%	1063	47	48	18
Siting of energy transmission lines	6%	12%	27%	55%	1015	78	63	20
FEMA Flood Zone Maps	7%	17%	38%	37%	1043	83	28	22
Regionalization	14%	28%	35%	22%	1027	93	30	26

12. In your experience, what are the three most pressing issues your municipality is **currently** facing? *(Please list below.)*

a. Beyond limited budgets and staff, what are your municipality's greatest barriers to addressing these pressing issues? *(Please list below.)*

b. What are your municipality's greatest strengths or assets for addressing these pressing issues? *(Please list below.)*

13. Looking ahead 20-30 years to 2030-2040, what do you foresee as the most pressing issue for your municipality? *(Please list below.)*

14. Do you think researchers from the University of Maine System could be of assistance in resolving some of your municipality's issues? *(Please check one box.)*

Yes	No	Not Sure
27%	14%	59%

15. Do you think other organizations could be of assistance in resolving some of your municipality's issues? *(Please check one box.)*

Yes	No	Not Sure
32%	9%	59%

a. If "Yes", please list the organization(s):

Section Three – Community-University Partnerships

In this section, we would like to learn about your previous experience working with universities and colleges in Maine and your opinions about community-university partnerships. By partnerships, we mean the ways that university and college researchers and municipalities work together to address municipal issues.

16. Since you began your position, has your municipality worked with any researchers from a university or college in Maine? *(Please check one box for each category.)*

	Yes	No	Not Sure
Faculty/Staff	20%	55%	25%
Students	23%	52%	25%

If you answered “No” to previously working with Faculty/Staff or Students, please skip to question 17.

a. How negative or positive was this experience? *(Please check one box for each category.)*

	Very Negative	Somewhat Negative	Neither Negative nor Positive	Somewhat Positive	Very Positive
Faculty/Staff	1%	3%	7%	29%	60%
Students	0%	3%	8%	29%	60%

b. How helpful was this experience? *(Please check one box for each category.)*

	Not at All Helpful	Slightly Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Moderately Helpful	Extremely Helpful
Faculty/Staff	2%	7%	20%	31%	41%
Students	2%	9%	24%	32%	33%

c. Please list below the universities and colleges in Maine with which your municipality has worked:

17. How much do you trust researchers (faculty/staff) from the University of Maine System? *(Please check one box.)*

Not at All	A Little	Some	A Lot	Not Sure
2%	5%	26%	34%	33%

18. Has your level of trust in researchers (faculty/staff) from the University of Maine System changed over time? *(Please check one box.)*

Worsened	Somewhat Worsened	Has Not Changed	Somewhat Improved	Improved	Not Sure
1%	4%	52%	7%	4%	33%

19. To what extent do you disagree or agree with the following statements: **"I trust researchers (faculty/staff) from the University of Maine System because they ____."** *(Please check one box for each statement.)*

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
provide scientific information	1%	3%	37%	40%	19%
provide unbiased information	3%	10%	44%	31%	12%
provide reliable information	1%	5%	39%	37%	17%
use my input	2%	4%	65%	22%	7%
respect diverse opinions	3%	6%	49%	30%	12%
work for the University of Maine System	4%	4%	65%	21%	7%
provide understandable information	1%	5%	45%	39%	11%
present useful information	1%	4%	41%	41%	13%
provide timely information	1%	5%	55%	29%	9%
care about my community	3%	7%	60%	21%	9%
focus on issues I want to know about	2%	7%	61%	25%	5%
have high technical competence	1%	4%	42%	37%	16%
share my values	4%	6%	73%	14%	3%

20. Community-university partnerships are structured in many ways. We are interested in **your opinion** about four alternative strategies for community-university partnerships. The alternatives differ according to how municipalities and university researchers share responsibilities.

Type of Partnership	Problem Identification	Research	Proposed Solutions	Implementation
A. University as Lead Partner	Univ. researchers	Univ. researchers	Univ. researchers	Municipal officials
B. University as Consulting Partner	Municipal officials Univ. researchers	Univ. researchers	Univ. researchers	Municipal officials
C. University as Facilitating Partner	Municipal officials Univ. researchers	Univ. researchers	Municipal officials Univ. researchers	Municipal officials
D. University as Full Partner	Municipal officials Univ. researchers	Municipal officials Univ. researchers	Municipal officials Univ. researchers	Municipal officials Univ. researchers

Please **rate your preference** for the four alternative strategies for community-university partnerships described above. (*Please check one box for each strategy.*)

Strategy	Not Preferred	Somewhat Preferred	Preferred	Highly Preferred
A. Lead	67%	24%	7%	2%
B. Consulting	12%	43%	33%	12%
C. Facilitating	11%	28%	38%	23%
D. Full	31%	29%	22%	18%

21. Participation strategy you most prefer: _____ (*write-in one letter from the list above.*)

A – **3%**

B – **37%**

C – **36%**

D – **24%**

One of our team’s research objectives is to increase the relevance and responsiveness of university research to Maine communities. In line with that objective, we plan to work with Maine municipalities on community-based research projects. Our team includes researchers from many different fields with diverse expertise and skills, and we are interested in working with municipalities on a range of issues. We would like to continue talking with your municipality about the key issues in your community and ways that we can work together.

22. Considering your current municipal position, how interested are you in pursuing a community-university partnership? *(Please check one box.)*

Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Neither Unlikely nor Likely	Likely	Very Likely	Not Sure
6%	11%	29%	35%	19%	14%

23. How likely do you think it is that another municipal official from your community would be interested in pursuing a community-university partnership? *(Please check one box.)*

Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Neither Unlikely nor Likely	Likely	Very Likely	Not Sure
4%	9%	22%	45%	20%	19%

24. May we contact you at your municipal office to talk with us further about opportunities for community-based research projects in your municipality? *(Please check one box.)*

Yes	No	Not Sure
63%	17%	20%

25. Is there anything else you would like to tell us to help us identify opportunities for developing community-university partnerships, such as conditions that would need to be met?

26. Is there anything else you would like to tell us to help us better understand opportunities and challenges in Maine municipalities?

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS SURVEY!

Please return the completed survey in the postage paid, self-addressed envelope to: Municipal Officials Survey, Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center, 5784 York Complex #4, University of Maine, 168 College Avenue, Orono, ME 04473-1513