

Waterfront Toronto Marine Use Strategy

Public Information Centre #2 – Summary Report

October 26, 2020 – November 18, 2020

Via online questionnaire

Introduction

Waterfront Toronto, in partnership with the City of Toronto and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority prepared a draft updated Marine Use Strategy following an extensive process that included technical work, stakeholder consultations, and public consultation. The draft strategy creates alignment with new planning initiatives, ongoing and planned development projects, infrastructure investments and habitat restoration projects. The strategy also accommodates the growing user base and interest in water-based recreation and transportation. The draft strategy sets out to ensure that:

- The proper balance of marine uses is defined and maintained as waterfront revitalization progresses;
- Marine uses and users are accommodated in appropriate locations with adequate facilities in the context of Waterfront Revitalization;
- Implementation strategies are prioritized by order of urgency; and
- Implementation responsibilities are identified.

Public and stakeholder consultation is critical to ensuring that the update reflects the needs of our City. This report provides a summary of the themes that emerged at the second Public Information Centre (PIC) for Waterfront Toronto's Marine Use Strategy. The feedback summarized in this report will be used by Waterfront Toronto and the City of Toronto to refine the draft Marine Use Strategy.

PIC Purpose

An online PIC was hosted for members of the public regarding the draft Marine Use Strategy. The purpose of the meeting was to:

- Present the draft 2020 Draft Marine Use Strategy report;
- Present findings from feedback received from PIC #1;
- Provide a project update;
- Present the Marine Strategy Recommendations and Implementation Framework; and
- Communicate how to provide feedback on the 2020 Draft Marine Use Strategy report.

Meeting Format

The PIC was hosted virtually, and structured such that anyone could participate at a time most convenient to them. The supporting materials provided for the virtual PIC included a pre-recorded presentation, the draft Marine Use Strategy, and a summary guide. People were asked to review these materials and provide their feedback via an online questionnaire between October 26, 2020 to November 18, 2020. A total of 820 people responded to the questionnaire. An option to provide feedback via telephone was also provided.

What We Heard

The following is a summary of key themes that emerged from the feedback received from the 820 responses to the online questionnaire and from email submissions. These themes are

organized by the three anchors of the Marine Use Strategy: Mooring, Management, and Movement. This is not intended to act as a verbatim summary of all feedback received, but rather a high-level summary of participant input.

Mooring

The following section demonstrates the key points of participant feedback related to mooring.

Concerns were expressed about several future potential public marine transport nodes (notably points M6 to M11), including:

- Recreational uses at Cherry Beach and Ward's Island Beach being adversely affected.
- Mooring/public marine transport routes should not be expanded at the detriment of the safety and enjoyment of recreational uses (e.g. swimming, paddle boarding, parasailing, rowing, sailing, windsurfing, kite surfing, fishing, etc.).
- Adverse impacts upon the natural environment, wildlife (e.g. birds, aquatic life), and passive recreational uses at the Leslie Street Spit/Tommy Thompson Park.
- Not wanting a stop at the present location of the Water Rats Sailing Club.

It should be noted that while most comments noted the concerns mentioned above, some comments received were supportive of proposed plans for public marine transport in the outer harbour.

Suggestions were noted to:

- Create safe areas (i.e. 'no go' zones for motorized crafts) for non-motorized recreational uses.
- Phase in additional locations for mooring.
- Undertake further consultation before implementing any plans.
- Consider access points to launch canoes and kayaks and explore the implementation of "canoe racks" (similar to bike racks).
- Allow for temporary mooring, longer in duration than 10 minutes.
- Improve mooring opportunities in the outer harbour.

Additional concerns noted that:

- A cruise ship terminal would disrupt other uses, and perhaps to move it away from the city centre.
- A kayak share program would need to be administered differently than bike share due to additional safety considerations.

Movement

The following section demonstrates the key points of participant feedback related to movement.

Concerns were expressed about public marine transport in the outer harbour, including:

- Impacts of marine public transport routes on the natural environment (both habitat and wildlife) of Leslie Street Spit/Tommy Thompson Park.
- Impacts of motorized boats upon recreational uses (e.g. swimming, paddle boarding, parasailing, rowing, sailing, windsurfing, kite surfing, fishing, etc.)
- Impacts on passive recreational uses at Cherry Beach. Some suggested compromises to move M6 further east or west, or that M7 makes M6 redundant altogether.

- Impacts upon the Outer Harbour Sailing Federation, with members expressing concern of having public marine transport access at OHSF member clubs.

It should be noted that while most comments noted the concerns mentioned above, some comments received were supportive of proposed public marine transport routes.

Suggestions were noted to:

- Undertake additional consultation, specifically with recreational users.
- Provide further details for proposals, such as costs.
- Explore alternatives (where feasible) such as improving nearby trails and TTC routes.
- Provide for motorized boat-free times to enable recreational uses.

Management

The following section demonstrates the key points of participant feedback related to management.

Many points related to the public marine transport routes and nodes from the mooring section and movement section were reiterated in feedback related to management. Additional suggestions were noted to:

- Enforce speed limits and other safety issues in the harbour. Safety for all is important.
- Have a designated Harbourmaster that can plan, book, reserve, and manage the quayside areas for docking.
- Undertake further consultation prior to implementation of the recommendations.
- Plan to protect the shoreline/mitigate against wave action (invest in improving the seawall) and rising lake levels.
- Monitor for environmental impacts stemming from any implementation of plans.
- Continue to consult with First Nations in implementation of the recommendations.
- Include the TRCA as part of the implementation body.

Support was expressed for:

- The ownership map and ongoing updates to that.
- The idea of the Marine Coordination Committee modeled after the Aquatic Habitat Toronto Committee.

Additional Comments

The following section demonstrates the key points of participant feedback related to additional comments received.

Additional comments reiterated many of the previous points again (notably those from the mooring and movement sections). Additional suggestions were noted to:

- Listen to the input and feedback being provided.
- Continued the conversation and involve environmental and recreational perspectives as well.
- Consider for the provision of affordable access to the water for residents and visitors, including those with mobility and accessibility needs.

Appendix A – Optional Demographic Survey Responses

The following is a summary of the demographic responses from the questionnaire.

Postal Code

Participants were asked to input the first three digits of their postal code. The following is a summary list of the first three digits provided. Postal code locations in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) are also shown in Figure 1, below:



Figure 1: Map showing postal code locations in the GTA, n= 631

Age Range

Participants were asked to indicate their age range. As shown in Figure 2, the largest number of respondents were between the ages of 55 – 64 (27%), 45 – 54 (25%) and 30 – 44 (23%). The least number of responses were given by those 85 and older (0.4%).

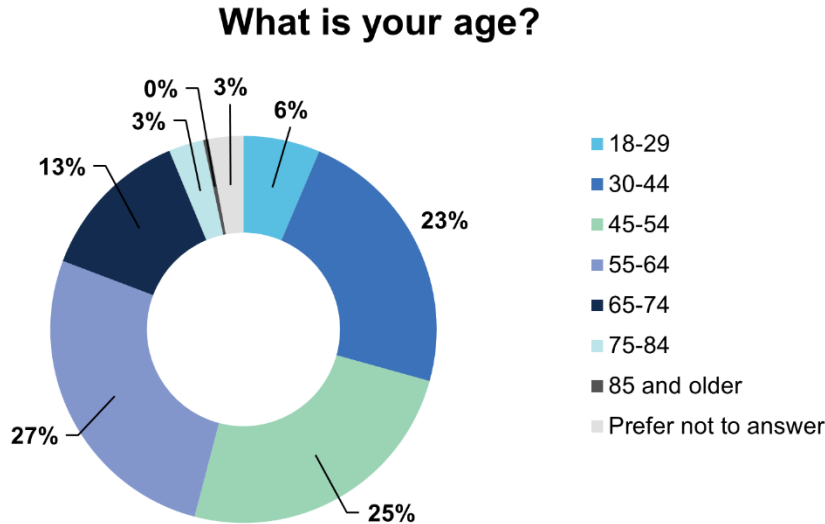


Figure 2: Graph showing participant responses for “What is your age?”, n= 686

Gender Identity

Participants were also asked to indicate their gender identity. As shown in Figure 3 below, the largest number of respondents identified as male (48%), followed by female (41%) and prefer not to specify (8%). The least number of responses were given by those who identified as transgender (0.15%).

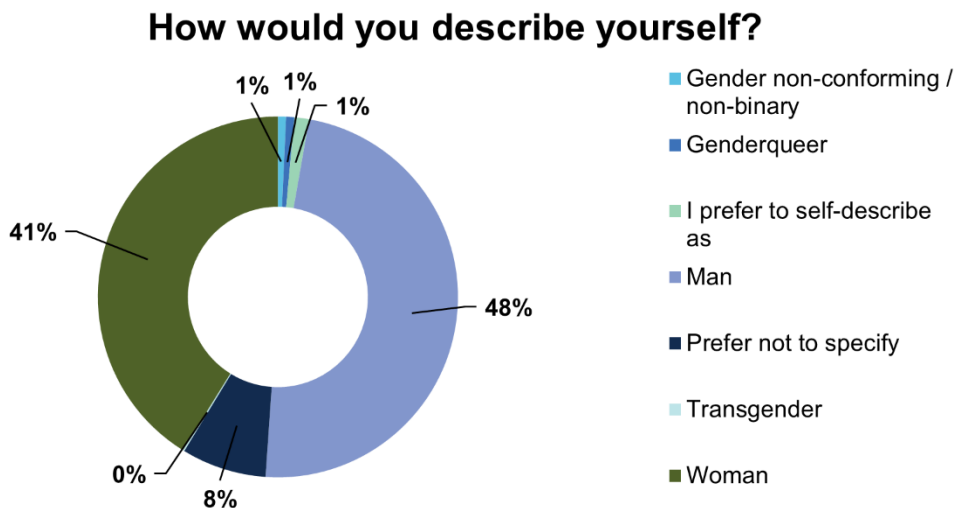


Figure 3: Graph showing participant responses for “How would you describe yourself?”, n= 683

Participants were also given the opportunity to indicate how they prefer to self-describe. The following is a list of provided responses:

- A person who lives in Toronto
- All Male
- An urban dweller who has enjoyed the Leslie Street Spit since the 1970s and who takes pride in its current status as a unique urban wilderness and who is actively engaged in keeping it that way.
- Concerned citizen against government waste on truly bad ideas
- It doesn't matter, I use the waterfront.

Household Income

Additionally, participants were asked to indicate their level of household income. As shown in Figure 4, the largest number of respondents indicated that they prefer not to answer (26%), followed by \$100,000 - \$149,000 (22%) and \$200,000 or more. The least number of responses came from individuals who earn a household income of under \$25,000.

What is your approximate total household income for 2020, before taxes and any deductions?

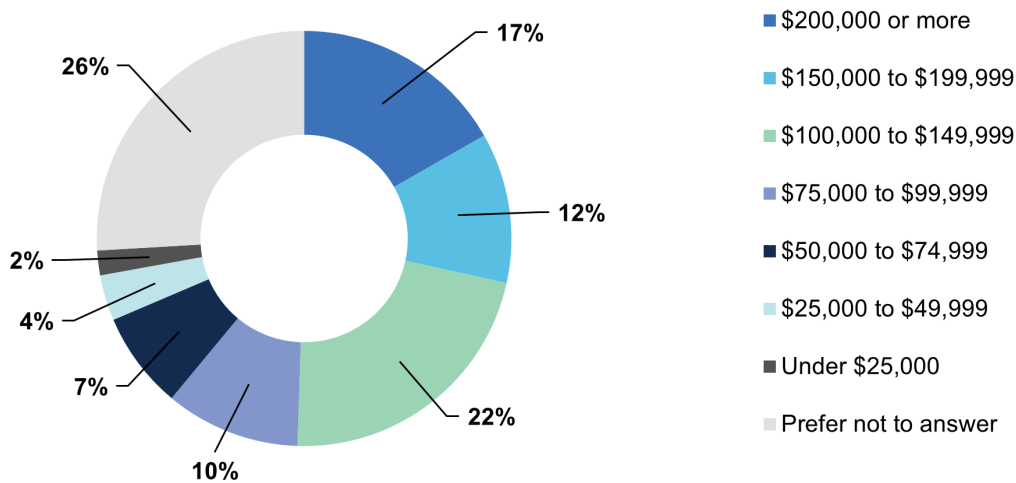


Figure 4: Graph showing participant responses for “What is your approximate total household income for 2020, before taxes and any deductions?”, n= 675

Education Level

Participants were then asked to indicate their education level. As shown in Figure 5, the largest number of participants indicated their highest level of education completed was College/University (42%), followed by Masters/ Professional Degree (41%) and PhD (7%). The least number of responses were received from individuals who indicated “Other” as their response.

What is your highest level of education completed?

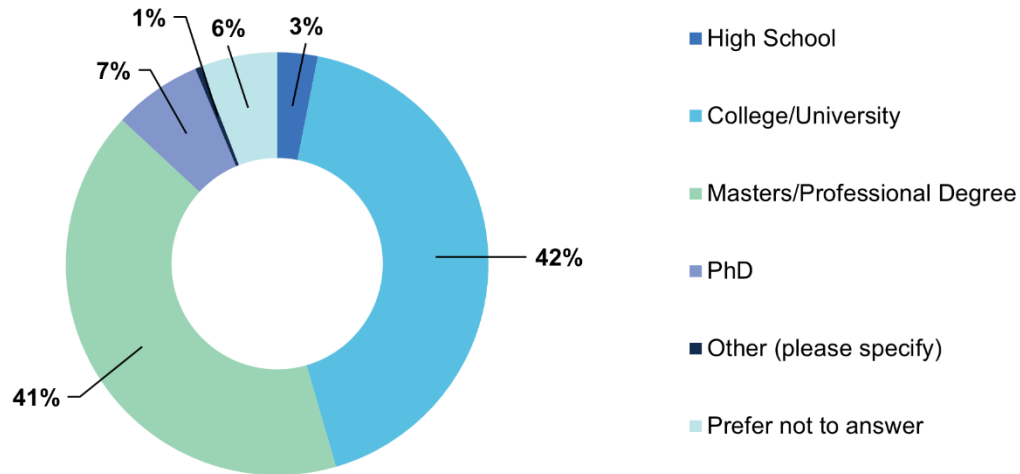


Figure 5: Graph showing participant responses for “What is your highest level of education completed?”, n= 679

Occupational Status

Participants were also asked to indicate their occupational status. As shown in Figure 6, below the majority of respondents indicated that they had full-time employment (61%), followed by Retired (17%) and Prefer not to answer (7%). The least number of responses were given by individuals who were Unemployed/seeking employment (1%) and Family Caregiver (1%).

What is your occupational status?

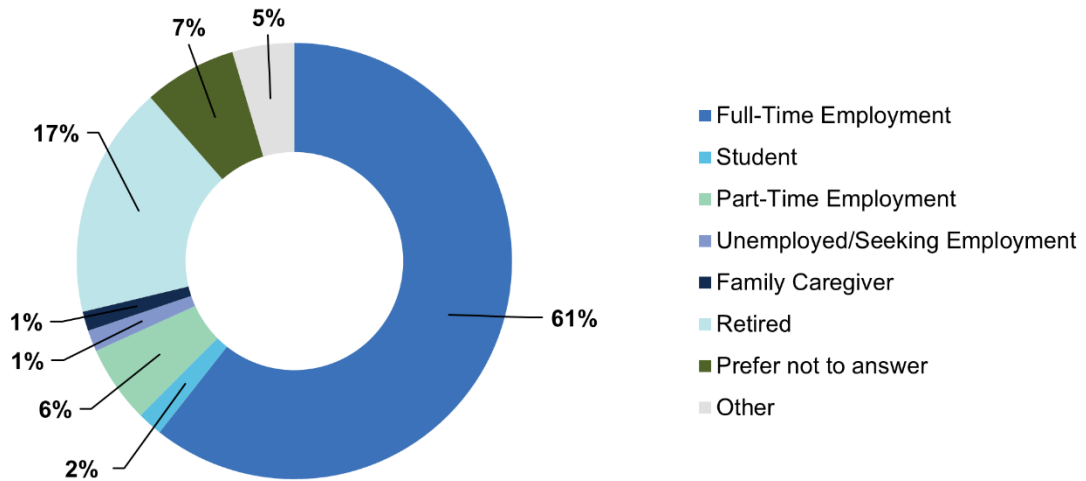


Figure 6: Graph showing participant responses for “What is your occupational status?”, n= 696

Participants were also given the opportunity to elaborate on their answer if they selected “Other”. The following is a list of provided responses:

- ARTIST
- Business owner
- Consultant
- Employed, on full disability
- Freelance
- Freelance contractor, impacted by COVID
- Full-time self-employed
- Investor and consultant
- Part-time self employed, mainly retired.
- Seasonal business owner
- Self employed
- Self employed
- Self in television
- Self-employed
- Self-employed
- Self-employed
- Self-employed entrepreneur
- Self-employed/Retired
- Semi Retired
- Semi-retired.

Racial Identity

Participants were asked to indicate their racial identity. As shown in Figure 7 below, the majority of respondents identified as white (64%), followed by Prefer to not respond (22%) and Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Filipino and Southeast Asian. The least number of respondents identified as Black (1%), Aboriginal (First Nations, Inuit and Métis) (1%), Arab, West Asian (1%), South Asian (1%) and Do not know (1%).

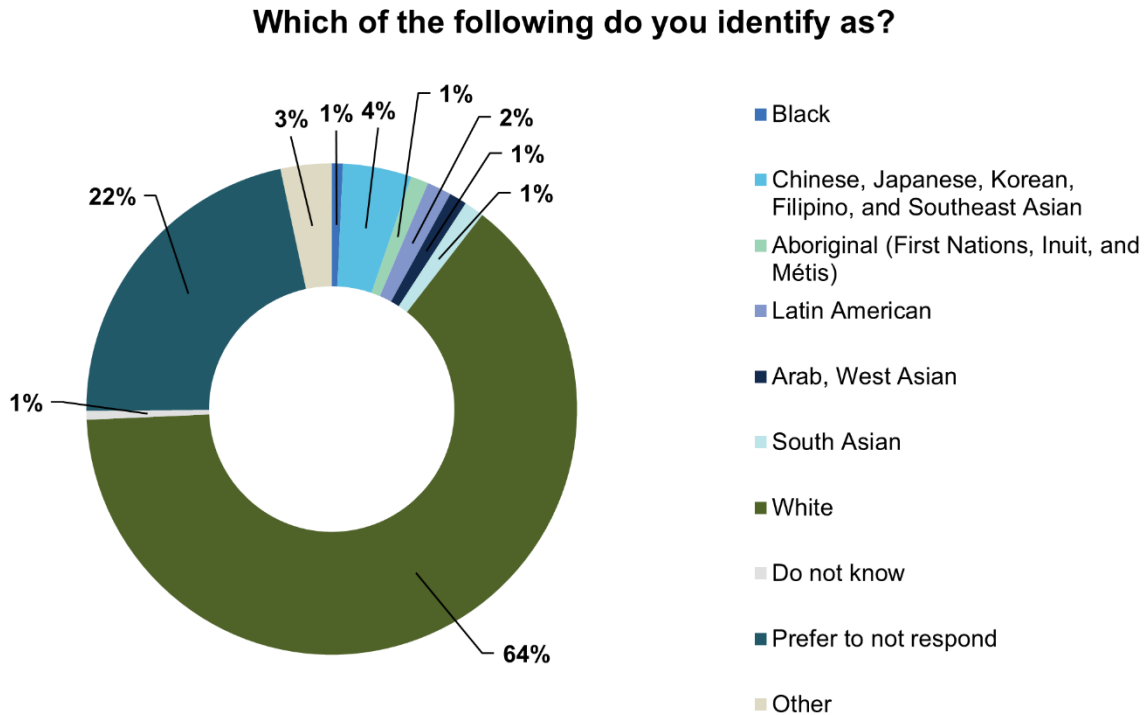


Figure 7: Graph showing participant responses for “Which of the following do you identify as?”, n= 662

Participants were also given the opportunity to elaborate on their answer if they selected “Other”. The following is a list of provided responses:

- A person who lives in Toronto
- Bi-racial
- Canadian
- Canadian
- Eastern European
- Eastern European Jewish
- Filipino
- Half White, half Chinese
- Human Being
- Irish-American
- Jewish
- Mixed
- Mixed (Black and white)

- Mixed Euro heritage
- Mixed race
- West Indian
- White and Latino

Disability

Participants were then asked to indicate whether they had a disability. As shown in Figure 8, the majority of respondents indicated “no” (81%), followed by “Prefer to not respond” (12%) and “yes” (7%).

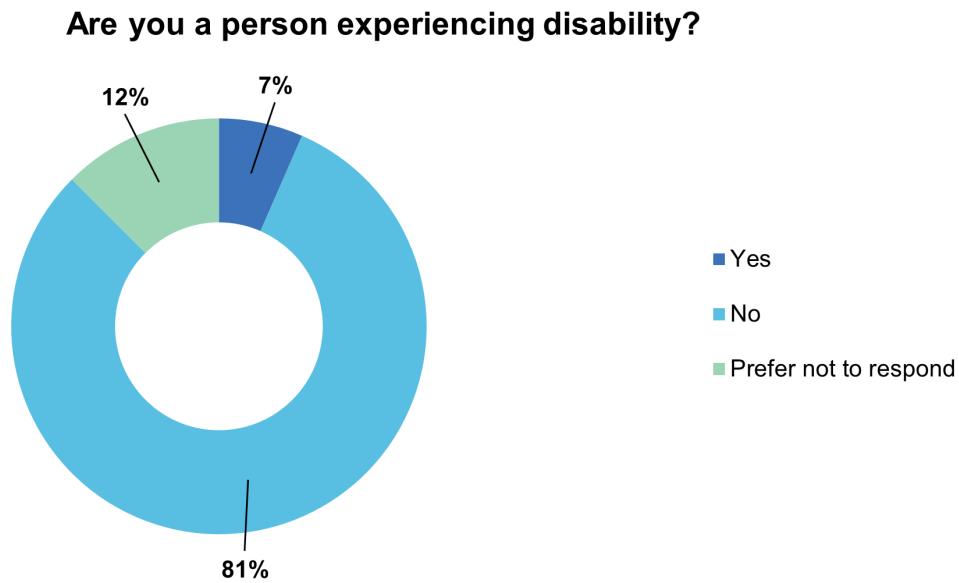


Figure 8: Graph showing participant responses for “Are you a person experiencing disability?”, n= 671

Mobility Issues

Additionally, participants were asked to indicate whether they had mobility issues when navigating the city. As shown in Figure 9, the majority of respondents indicated “no” (82%), followed by “Prefer not to respond” (10%) and “yes” (8%).

Do you sometimes experience mobility issues when navigating the city (such as travelling with a mobility device, stroller, or other device)?

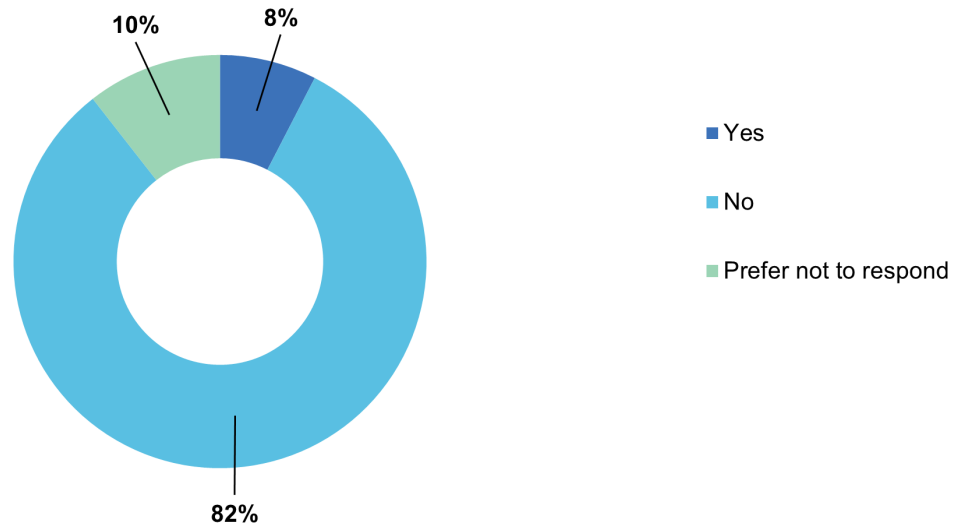


Figure 9: Graph showing participant responses for “Do you sometimes experience mobility issues when navigating the city (such as travelling with a mobility device, stroller, or other device)?”, n=672

Home Rental or Ownership Status

Lastly, participants were asked to indicate whether they were a renter or a home owner. As shown in Figure 10 below, the majority of respondent indicated that they were a homeowner (80%) and 20% of participants indicated they were a renter.

Are you a homeowner or a renter?

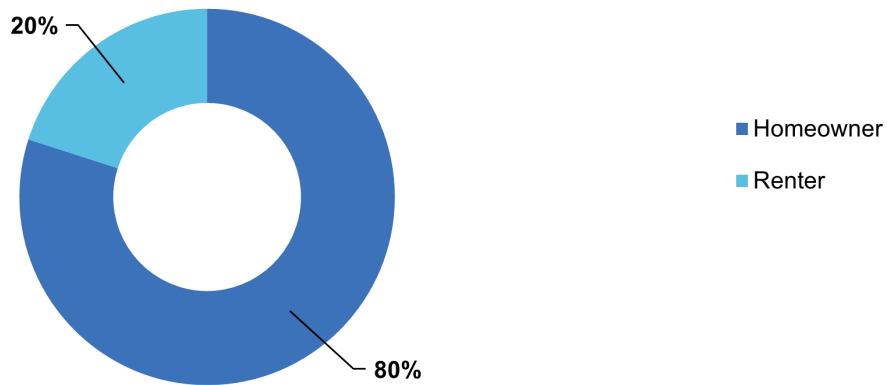


Figure 10: Graph showing participant responses for "Are you a homeowner or a renter?", n= 663