

TallahasseeVoices

City and County Revenues, Expenditures and Budgets

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And The Tallahassee Democrat

TallahasseeVoices is a pro bono Internet survey panel sponsored by Kerr & Downs Research and The Tallahassee Democrat. There were 719 responses to the survey sent out on June 12 and 13, 2007. Panel results have been weighted to reflect the demographics of Leon County and results are representative of all local residents who have access to the Internet at home, work, or school. Go to our website at www.tallahasseevoices.com to join our panel and let your voice be heard.

TallahasseeVoices surveys have accurately predicted local votes on:

- The coal plant
- Sales tax increase for healthcare
- Switching City elections from Fall to the Spring
- Nearly all local elections it has covered

TallahasseeVoices, an experiment in democracy

To join, go to: www.tallahasseevoices.com

TallahasseeVoices panelists were given the following information taken from City budget materials:

- City government's operating revenues and expenditures have grown from \$341 million in 1997 to \$730 million in 2007. To put this into the perspective of an average household would be like saying that household income had increased from \$34,100 in 1997 to \$73,000 in 2007.
- When combining City government's operating and capital budgets into one total budget, the City's budget increased 18.5% in 2006 and is projected to increase 15.2% in 2007. For a household, this would be like increasing income from \$60,000 in 2005 to \$81,907 in 2007.

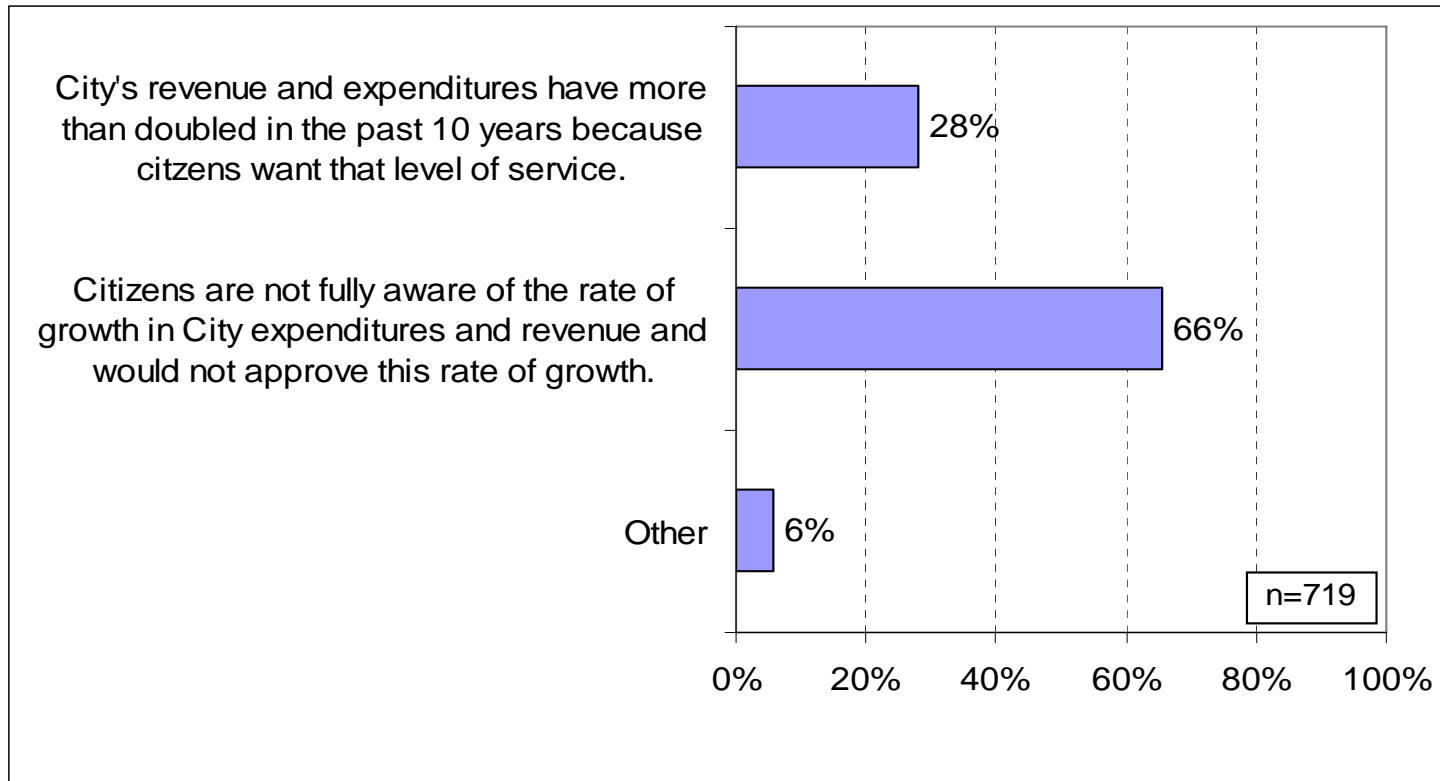
TallahasseeVoices panelists were given the following information taken from County budget materials:

- County government's operating revenues and expenditures have grown from \$123 million in 1997 to \$196 million in 2007. To put this into the perspective of an average household would be like saying that household income has increased from \$34,100 in 1997 to \$54,423 in 2007.
- When combining County government's operating and capital budgets into one total budget, the County's budget increased 9.9% in 2006 and is projected to increase 11.8% in 2007. For a household, this would be like increasing income from \$60,000 in 2005 to \$73,720 in 2007.

Survey Results

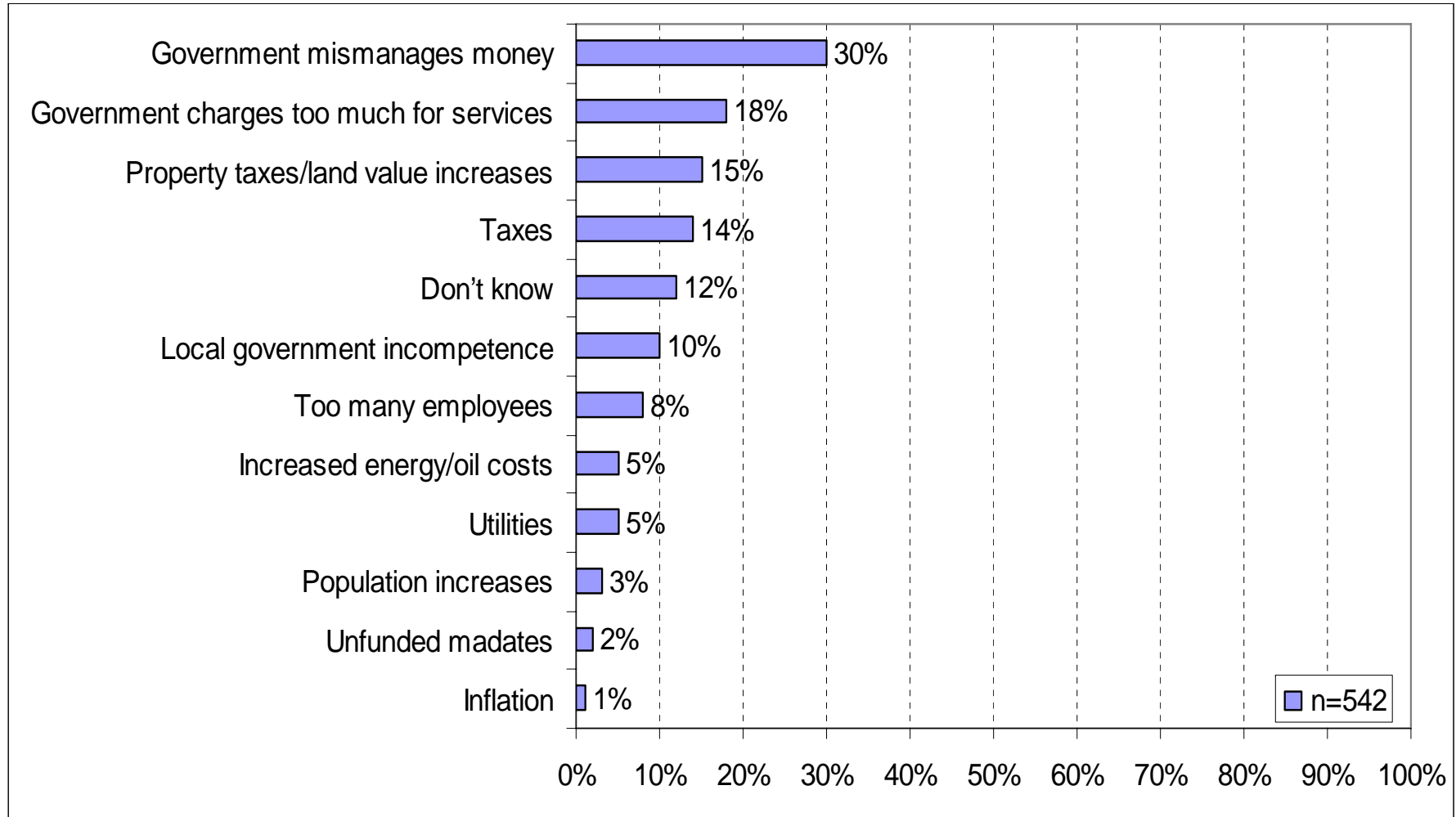
- Only 28% of residents believe City revenues and expenditures have increased from \$341 million in 1997 to \$730 million in 2007 because the City is responding to citizens' needs and providing what they want.
- Only 32% of residents believe County revenues and expenditures have increased from \$123 million in 1997 to \$196 million in 2007 because the County is responding to citizens' needs and providing what they want.

Which statement is closer to your opinion?*



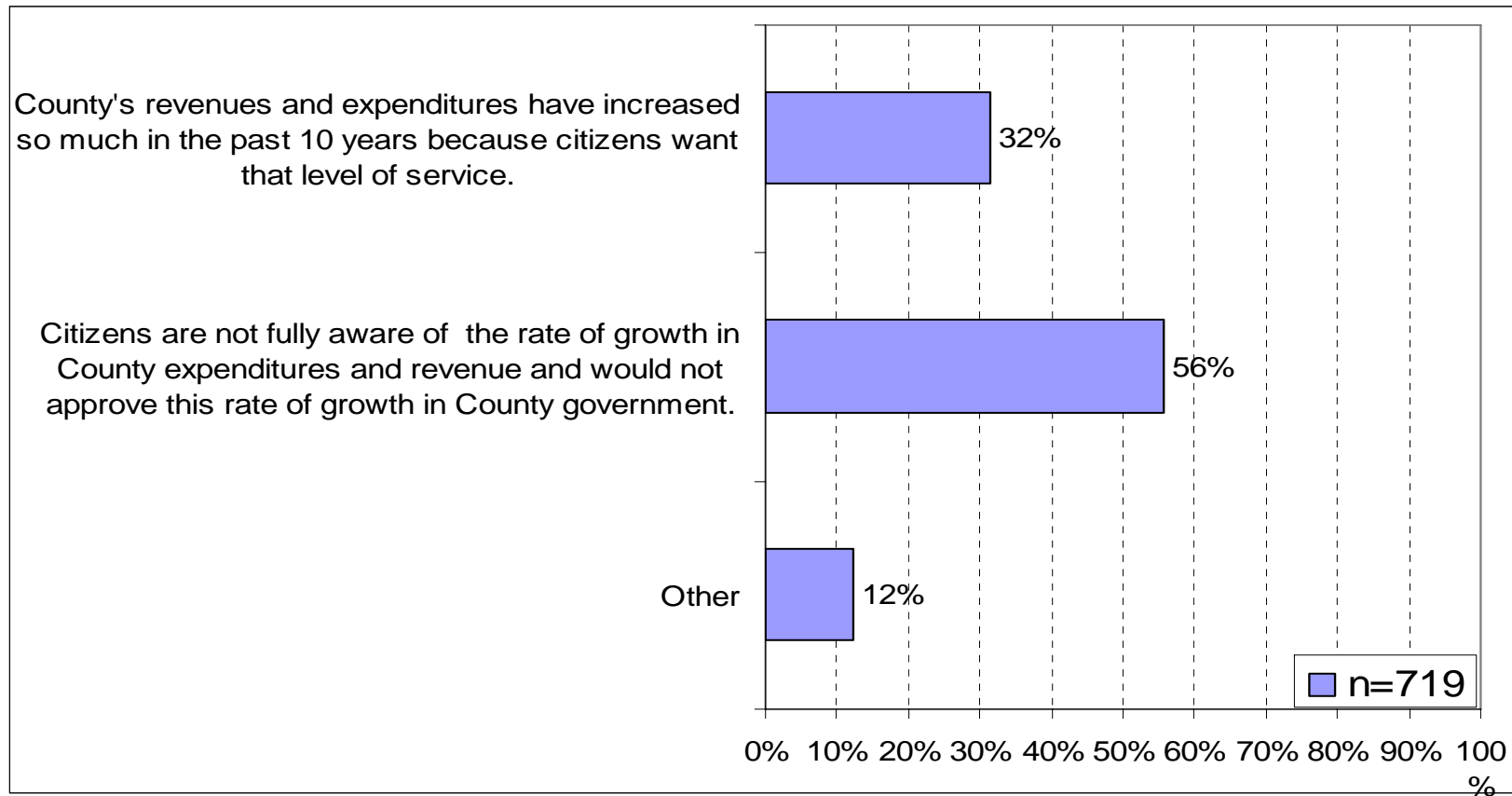
* Actual question read: City government's revenues from taxes and fees were \$341 million in 1997 and are projected to be \$730 million in 2007. Some people claim the City is providing residents with the services and programs they want and that's why revenues and expenditures have more than doubled over the past decade. Some people say citizens are not fully aware of the growth in City expenditures and revenue and would not approve this rate of growth in City government. With which group do you agree?

Why do you think City revenue and expenses increased so much more rapidly than population and inflation from 1997 to 2006?*



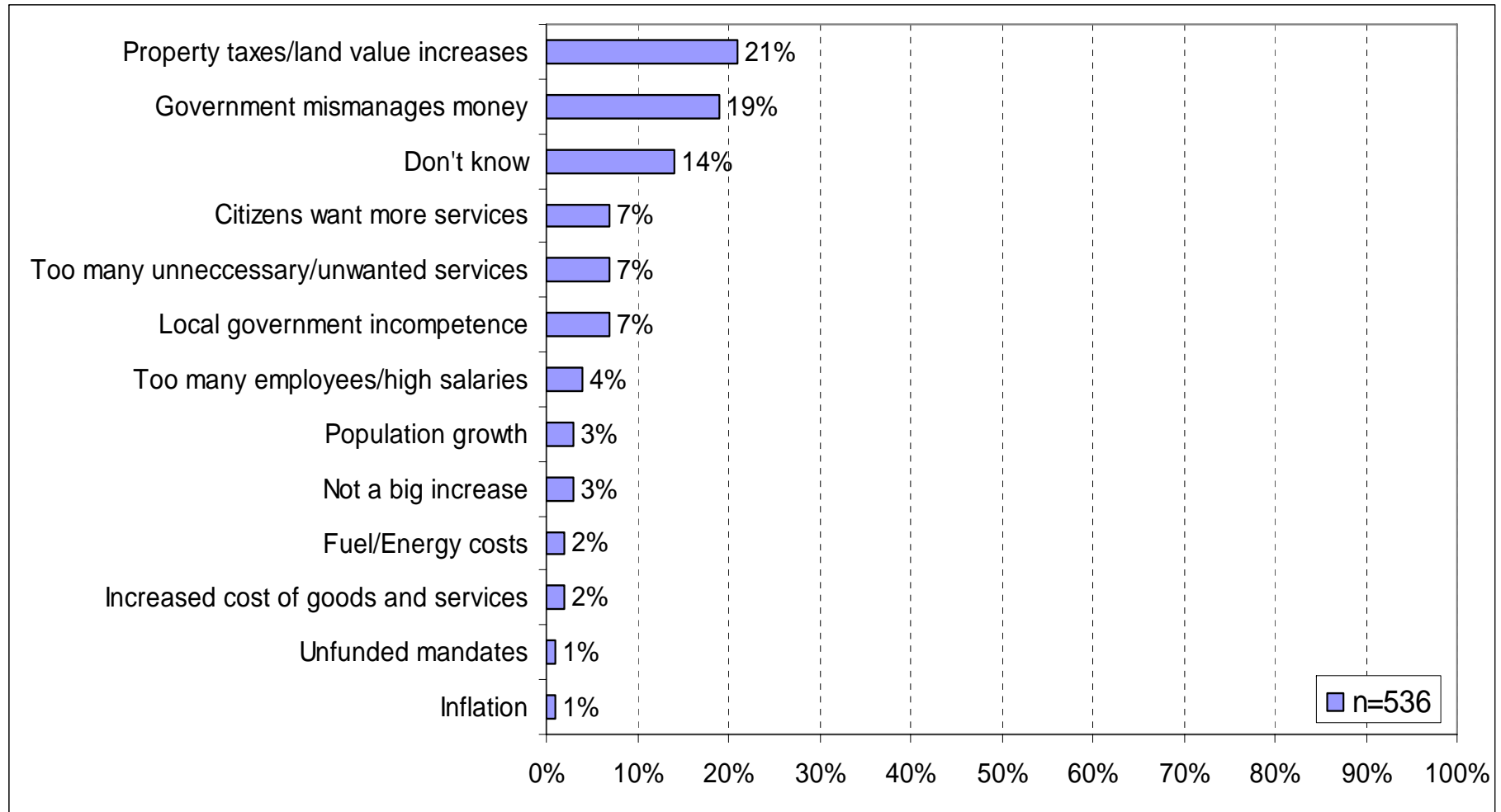
*Here respondents were asked to write in their own opinion.

Which statement is closer to your opinion?*



*Actual question read: Leon County government's revenues from taxes and fees was \$123 million in 1997 and are projected to be \$196 million in 2007. Some people claim the County is providing residents with the services and programs they want and that's why revenues and expenditures have increased so much over the past decade. Some people say citizens are not fully aware of the growth in County expenditures and revenue and would not approve this rate of growth in County government. With which group do you agree?

Why do you think City revenue and expenses increased so much more rapidly than population and inflation from 1997 to 2006?*

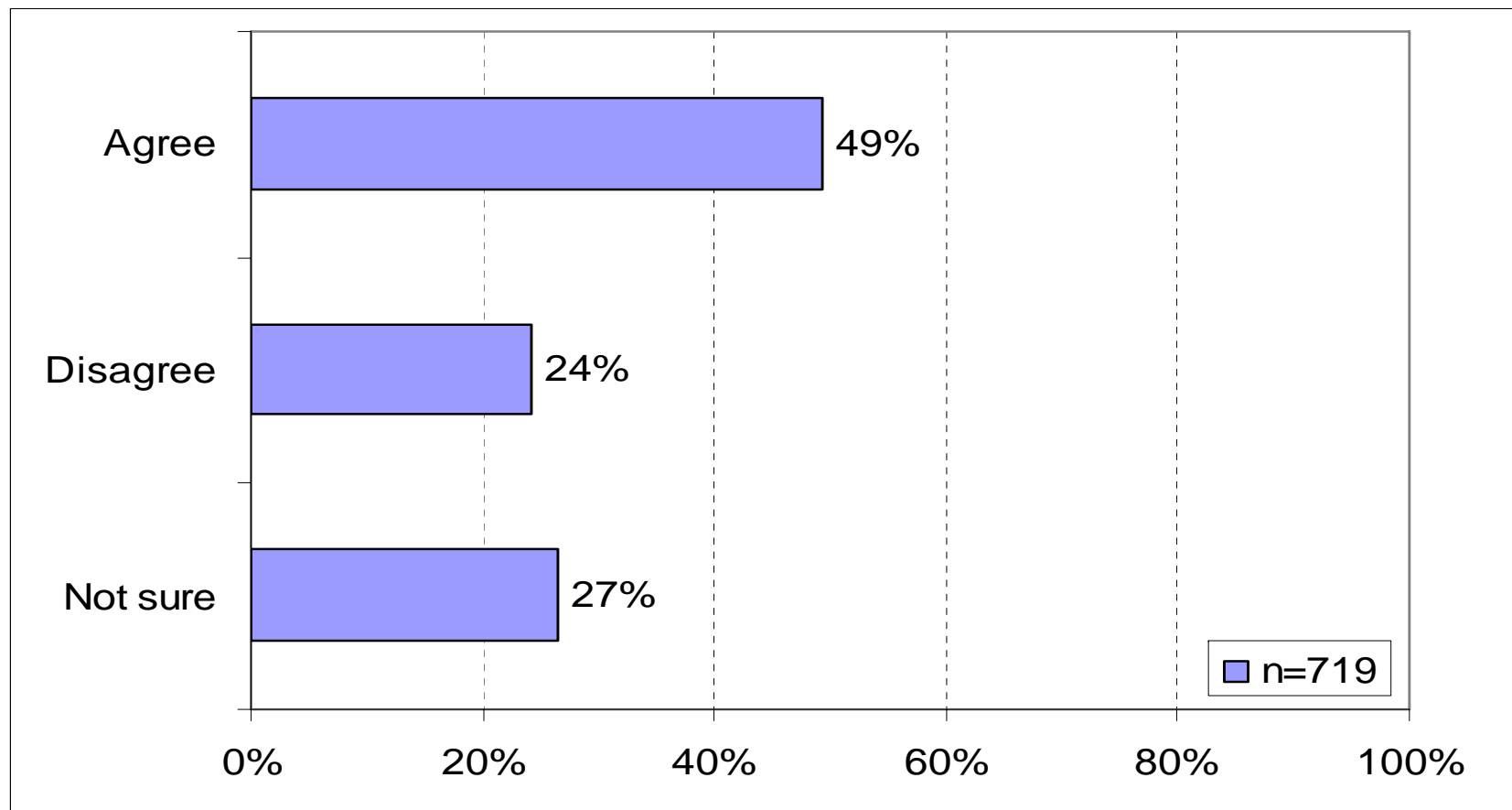


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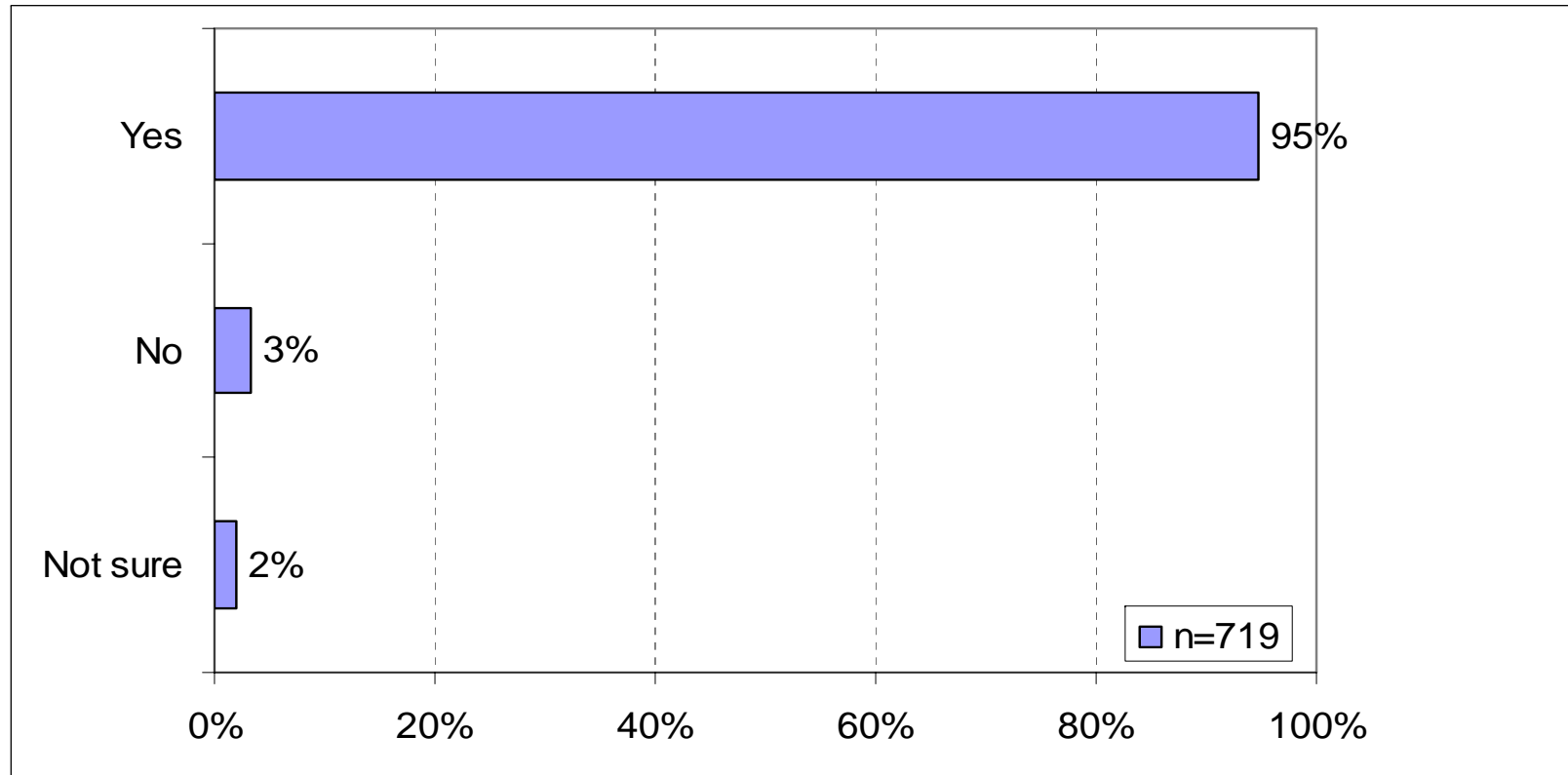
Survey Results

- Only 24% of residents disagree with reducing City and County revenues and expenditures to 1997 levels adjusted by population increases and inflation.
- Almost all residents (95%) agree that City and County officials should give taxpayers detailed accounts of what programs, services, employees, etc. have been added or enhanced since 1997 that required local government revenues and expenditures to increase so much faster than population growth and inflation combined.

Do you agree or disagree that City and County revenues (and expenditures) should be reduced to levels more in line with 1997 figures adjusted by population increases and inflation?



Should City and County officials give taxpayers a detailed account of what has been added or enhanced since 1997 that required such an increase in revenues and expenditures?*

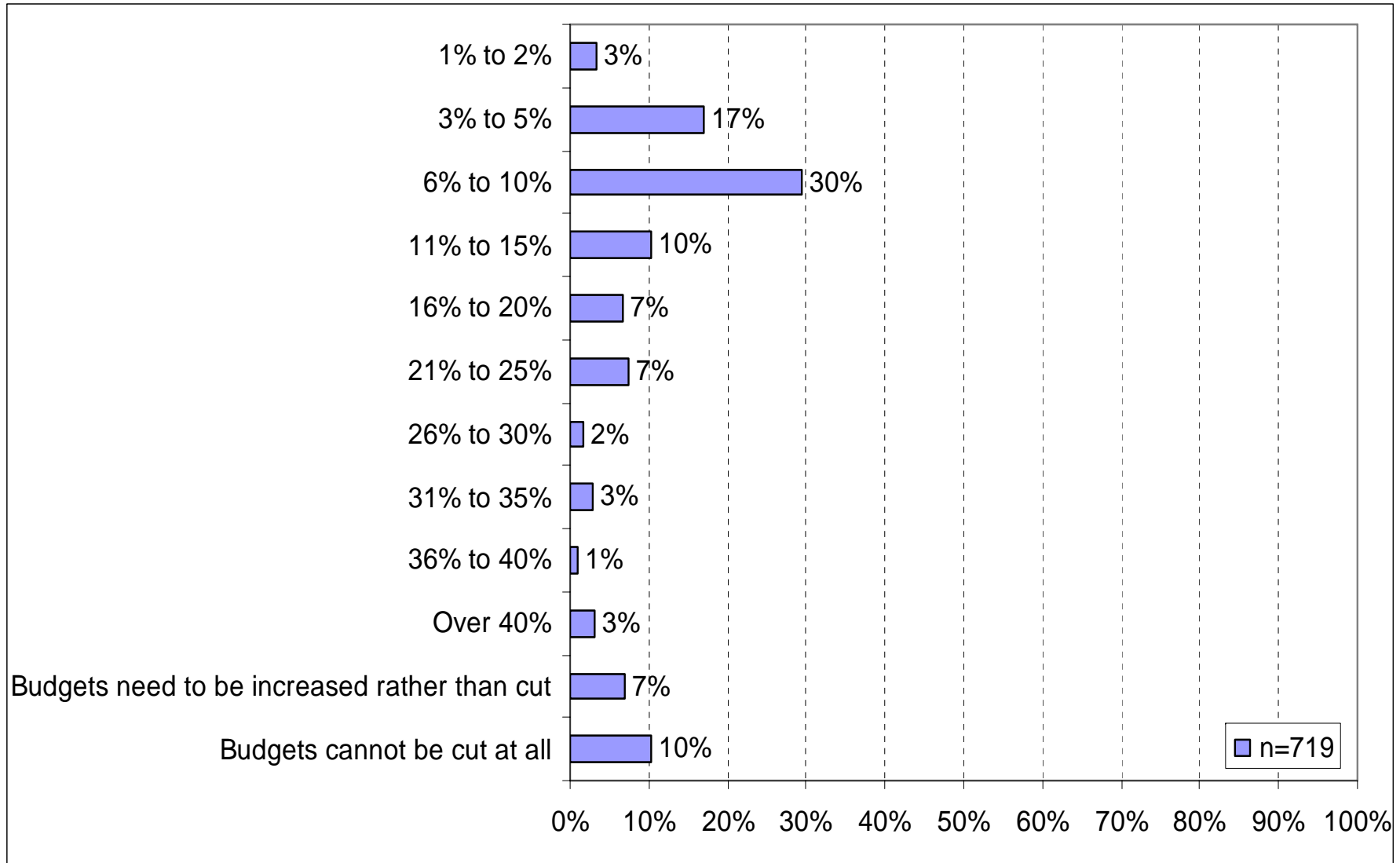


*Actual question read: Do you believe City and County officials should give taxpayers a detailed account of what programs, services, employees, etc. have been added or enhanced since 1997 that required City and County revenues and expenditures to have increased so much faster than population and cost of living increases since 1997?

Survey Results

- Residents believe that City and County expenditures can be cut 9% while continuing to provide services that citizens want and need.
- Only 17% of residents think local government revenues and expenditures are on target or too low.

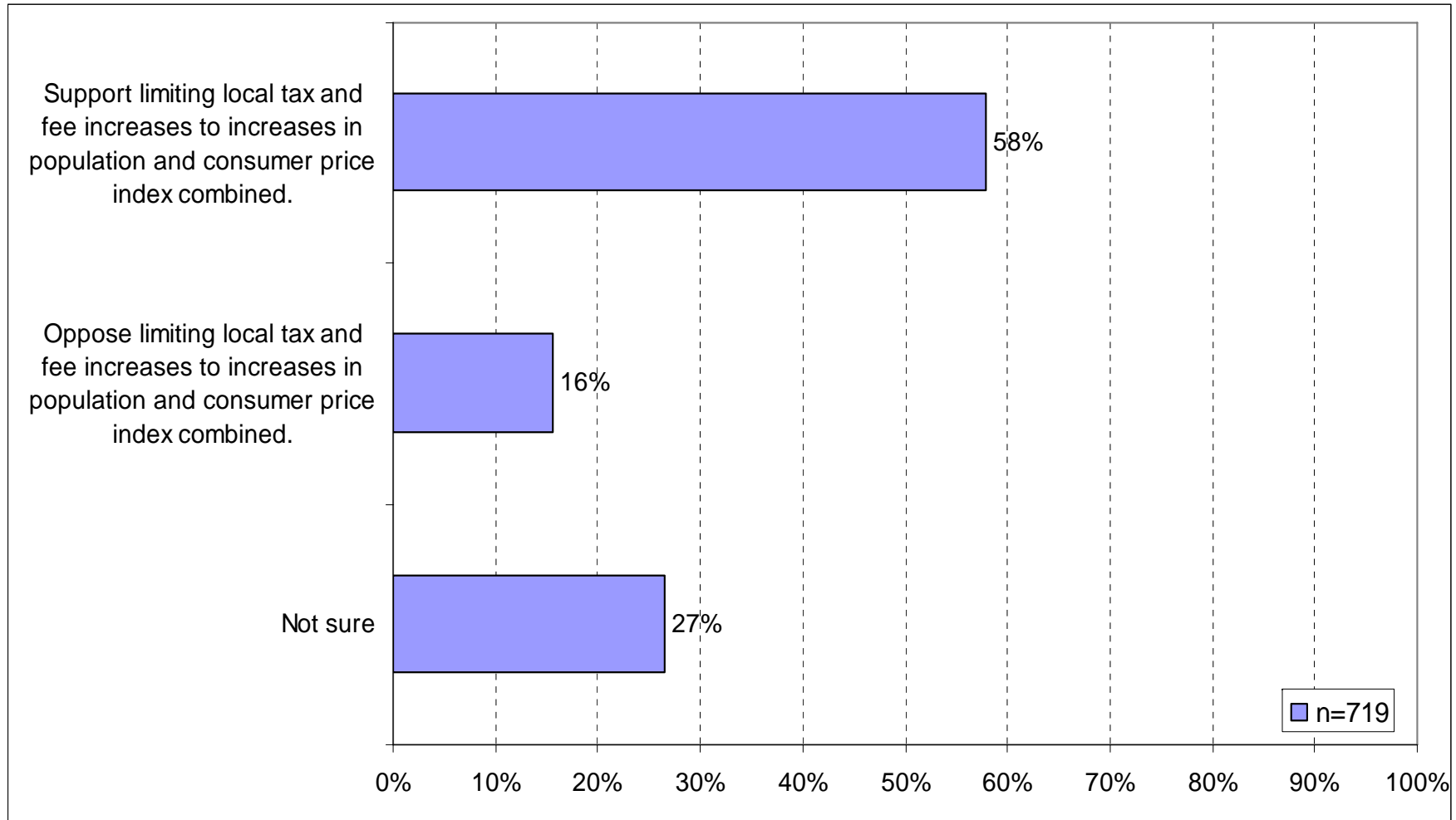
For City and County governments to continue to provide the services that citizens need, how much do you think City and County governments' budgets can be cut?



Survey Results

- Nearly 6 in 10 residents (58%) think increases in City and County taxes and fees should be limited to population increases plus increases in the consumer price index.
- Only 16% of residents feel that local government revenue and expenditures should not be limited by population and inflation dynamics.
- Nearly half of residents (45%) believe that local governments provide too many services and programs, while 40% disagree.

Do you support or oppose limiting increases in taxes and fees?*



*Actual question read: Do you support or oppose limiting increases in taxes and fees that city and county governments can collect to a factor equal to population growth + increases in the consumer price index?

Do you think City and County governments provide too many services and programs?

