NEBRASKA'S EXIT SURVEY

2020

GREATER OMAHA CHAMBER

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

A project from the Greater Omaha Chamber's Young Professional Council and the Center for Public Affairs Research at the University of Nebraska at Omaha

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA
CENTER FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS RESEARCH

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ABOUT US:

The Center for Public Affairs Research at the University of Nebraska at Omaha is a research and community outreach unit in the College of Public Affairs and Community Service. Our mission is to provide and support the collection and wide dissemination of public affairs knowledge to directly improve the quality of life of residents of Nebraska and support the capacity of other agencies to do so as well.

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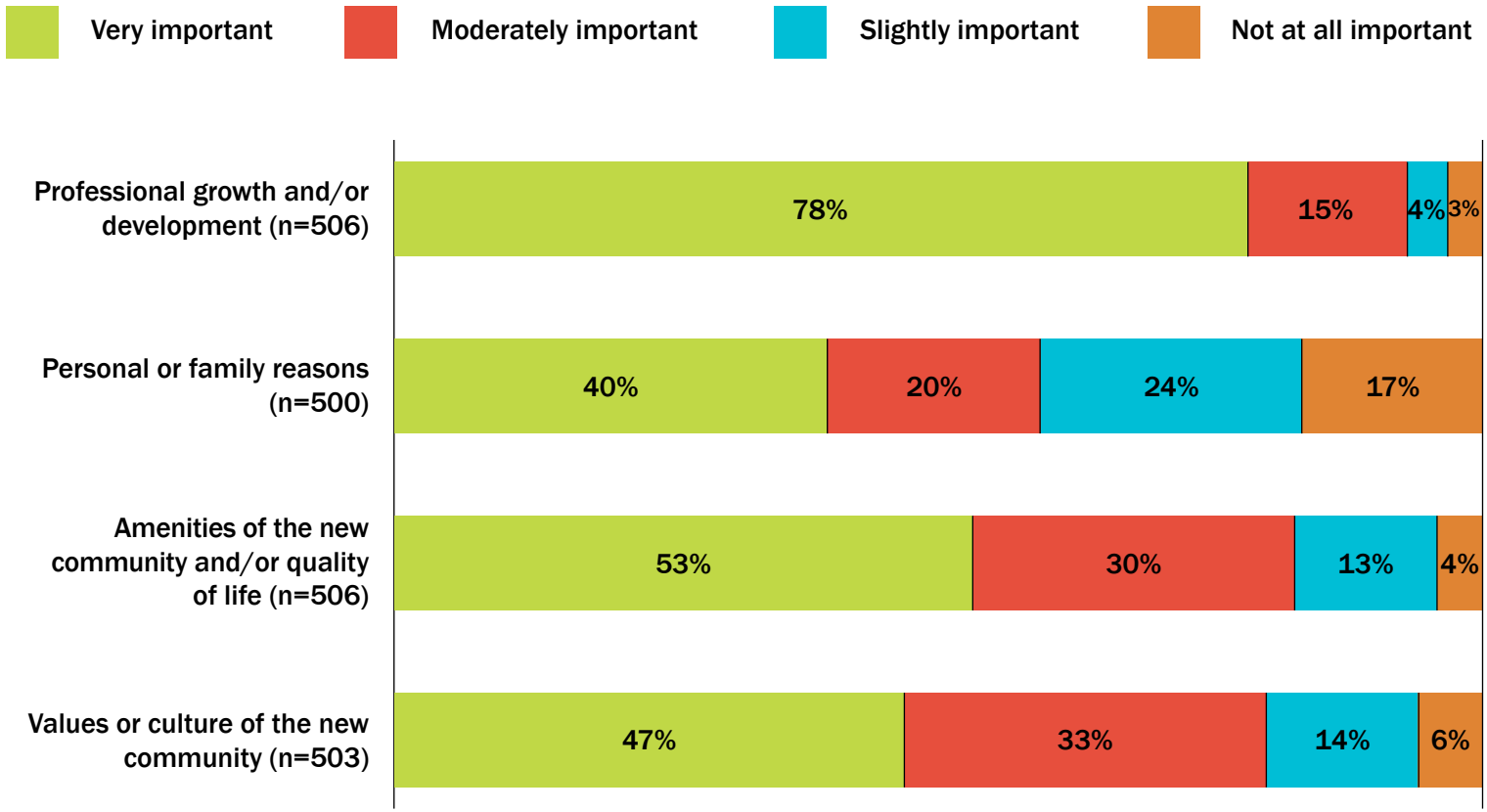
The data, statements, findings, and conclusions in this report do not reflect the views and policies of the Greater Omaha Chamber.

RELOCATION

When deciding to relocate, how important were each of the following factors?



COSTS

When you decided to leave Nebraska, were any of these costs a determining factor? *Select all that apply.*

	PERCENT YES	n
Cost of housing	16%	88
Cost of property taxes	14%	79
Cost of income taxes	12%	66
Cost of sales taxes	8%	43
Cost of healthcare	7%	40
Cost of utilities	6%	31
Cost of insurance	6%	33
Other	2%	6

Other consisted of: car registration, cost of higher education, cost of transportation, cost of cable, general cost of living, taxes are ridiculously high in Nebraska

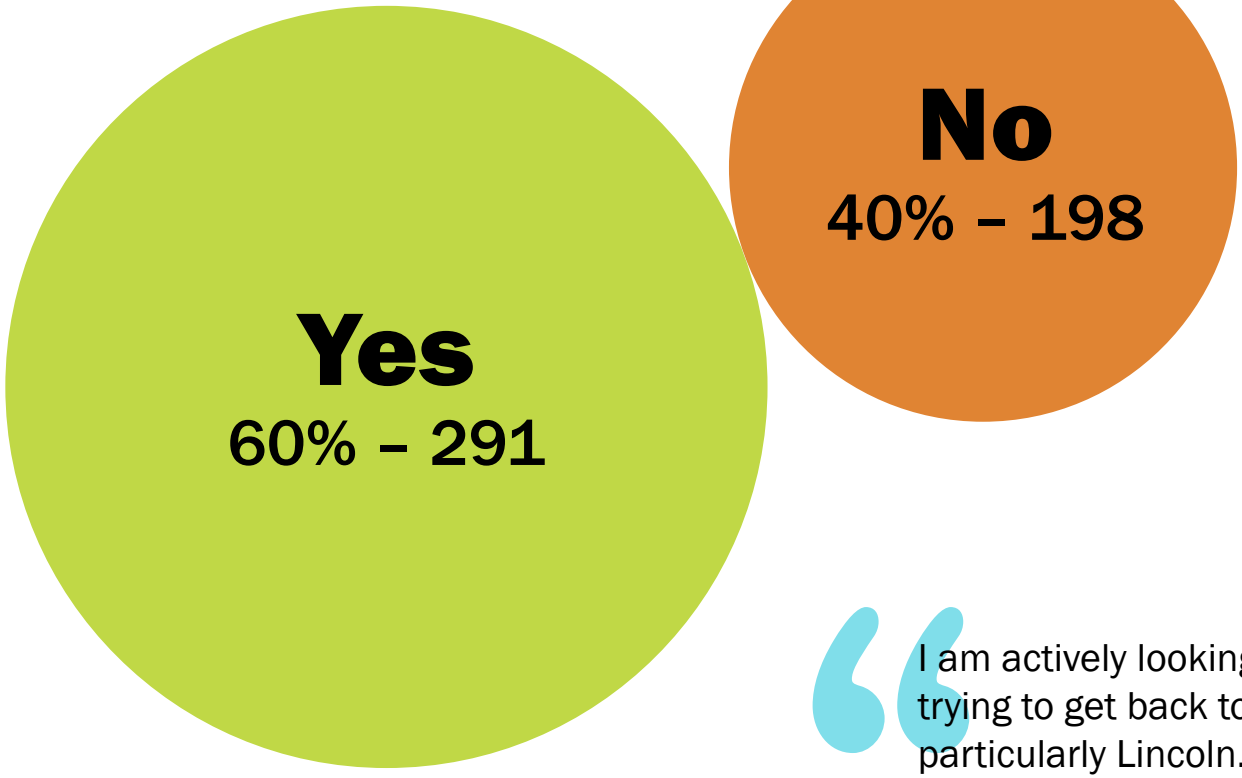
10 people specifically said that **cost** was **lower** in Nebraska and **not** the reason

> A lot of the cost was the reason to stay.

> None of these are of importance. Nebraska young professionals are leaving to explore or to find places that better reflect their progressive values. The latter describes me.

OMAHA

Would you consider returning to the Omaha-Council Bluffs region?



> I am actively looking and trying to get back to Nebraska, particularly Lincoln. A good job opportunity and I would leave without question…I am glad I left, got out of my comfort zone but now I'm ready to come back.

WHERE YOU LIVE

In the place you live now ...

is your professional life worse, the same, or better? (n=507)

is your personal life worse, the same, or better? (n=499)

are the community amenities worse, the same, or better? (n=497)

are the community values worse, the same, or better? (n=496)

86%

of persons that said **their professional life is better** in the place they live now **earn over $50,000**

PROFESSIONAL

What aspect(s) of your professional life is/are better in the place you live now? *Select all that apply.*

	PERCENT YES	n
Job opportunities	61%	562
Pay	56%	562
Industry options	43%	562
Benefits	33%	562
Company culture	31%	562
Leadership in the company	27%	562
Training and development	25%	562
Educational opportunities	24%	562
Partner's professional opportunity	15%	562
Other	5%	562

Other consisted of: more strategic management, advancement opportunities, advanced for executive women, work/life balance, culture of acceptance, meaningful work

73% of women

83% of men

said that **professional reasons** were very important

PERSONAL LIFE

What aspect(s) of your personal life is/are better in the place you live now? *Select all that apply.*

	PERCENT YES	n
Improved physical health and well-being	31%	177
Stronger friendships	18%	101
Educational enrichment	17%	93
Place to raise a family	13%	75
Spiritual growth	13%	73
Other	12%	67
Closer to family members	12%	66

Other consisted of: diversity, weather, culture, progressive

44% **of women**

said that **personal reasons** were very important

36% **of men**

> Culture that promotes work-life balance and healthy lifestyle [is better in the place that I live now].

COMMUNITY

What aspect(s) of the community is/are better in the place you live now? *Select all that apply.*

	PERCENT YES	n
Entertainment	45%	255
Recreation	44%	250
Diverse populations	44%	245
Dining	41%	231
Public transit	39%	218
Weather, climate and/or access to natural features	35%	196
Economic development	31%	175
Welcoming-ness	13%	71
Cost of living	6%	34
Other	2%	11
Smaller city	2%	9

Other consisted of: beaches, politics, global hub, professional sports

57% **of women** said that **amenities** were very important **50%** **of men**

VALUES

What values are better in the place you live now?

Select all that apply.

	PERCENT	n
Diversity	26%	147
Inclusivity	24%	136
Politics	21%	118
History/heritage	14%	81
Sense of community pride	13%	75
Religion	8%	45
Other	2%	10

Other consisted of: environmentally aware, government support for start ups, value placed on quality education

50% **of women**

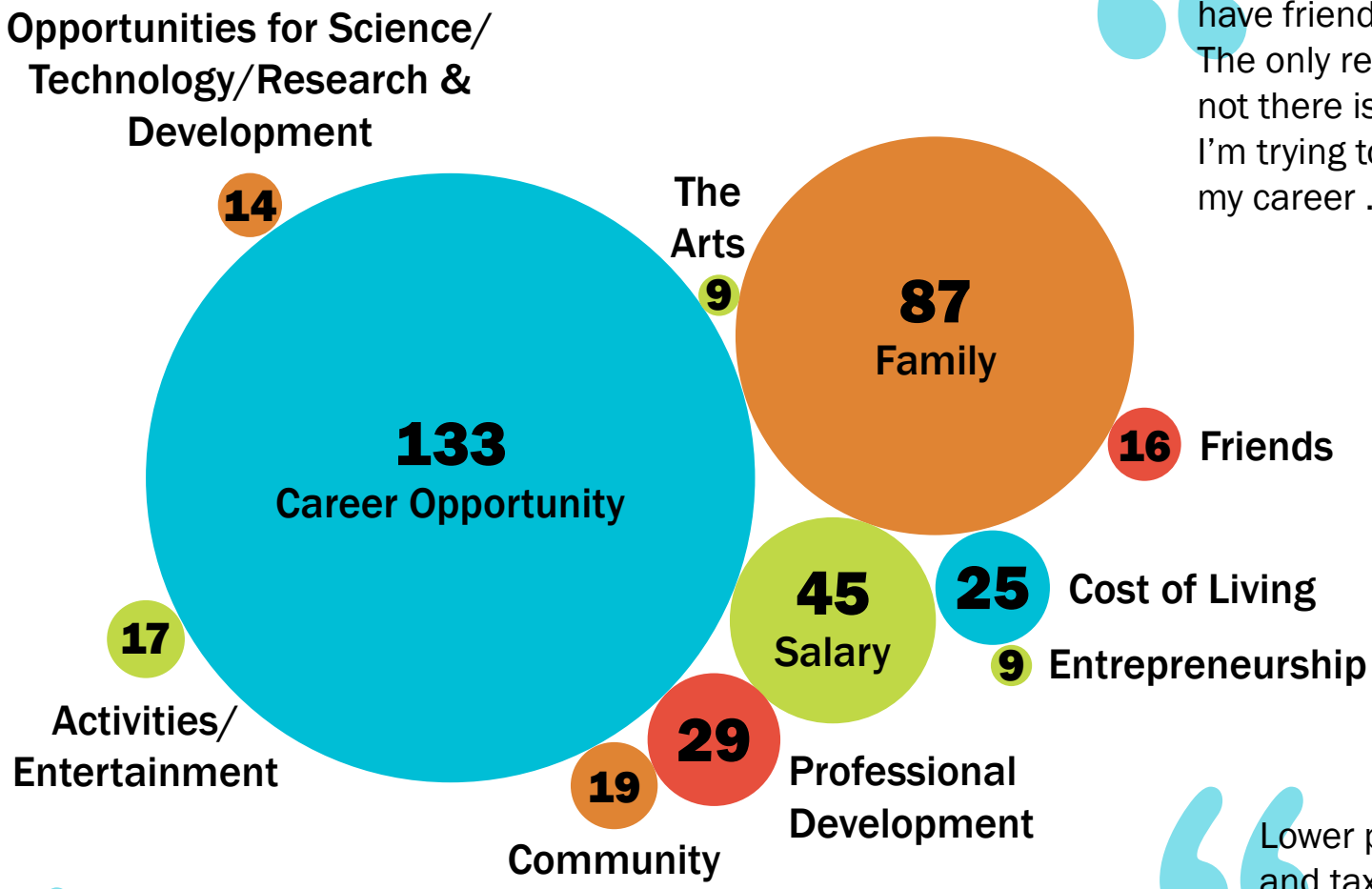
said that **values of the new community** were very important

43% **of men**

"The creative, unique, and diverse trends of the young/creative people in Denver is so much fun. Whether it be art (ex: Crush the Walls Festival/Meow Wolf), restaurants (diverse/quality offerings in every neighborhood), drinks (I have 6 breweries within a 5 minute walk of my house), or events (ex: Art Walks in 15 neighborhoods). It is the mindset of neighbors choosing to spend money at local stores that gets me excited. Denverites have raised their taxes multiple times to support the public Museums. Financial support of public art is amazing. The blooming international cultures here are super fun to experience!

Reasons People Would Consider Moving Back to Omaha

Number of write in responses by theme



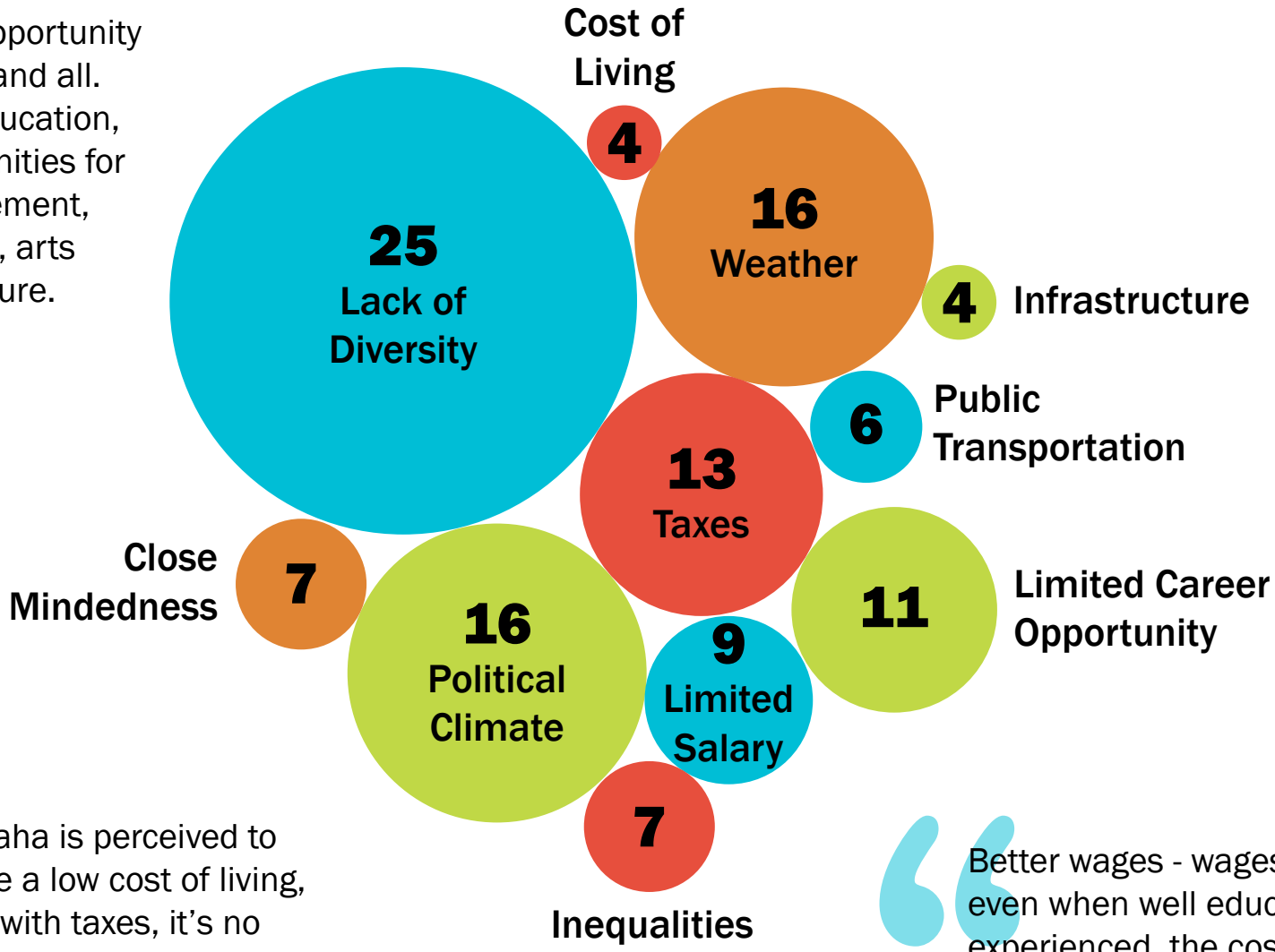
"My family is there. I have friends there. The only reason I'm not there is because I'm trying to further my career ..."

"I loved Nebraska and Omaha. We would consider moving back if there was a comparable job for both my husband and myself."

"Lower property taxes, and taxes overall. Car registration is out of control. Median salaries are still lower than many like-sized cities."

Reasons People Would Be Against Moving Back to Omaha

Number of write in responses by theme



"Equal opportunity for one and all. Jobs, education, opportunities for advancement, diversity, arts and culture.

"Omaha is perceived to have a low cost of living, but with taxes, it's no longer the bargain it was 20 years ago."

"Better wages - wages are so low even when well educated and experienced, the cost of living is not low enough to overcome the low, low, low professional wages.

YEAR LEFT

What year did you leave Nebraska?

	PERCENT	n
1999	3%	17
2000	1%	8
2001	1%	5
2002	1%	7
2003	1%	5
2004	1%	8
2005	3%	14
2006	2%	10
2007	3%	15
2008	3%	15
2009	2%	11
2010	5%	25
2011	5%	25
2012	5%	26
2013	6%	26
2014	8%	33
2015	9%	44
2016	11%	47
2017	13%	62
2018	13%	70
Other	13%	68

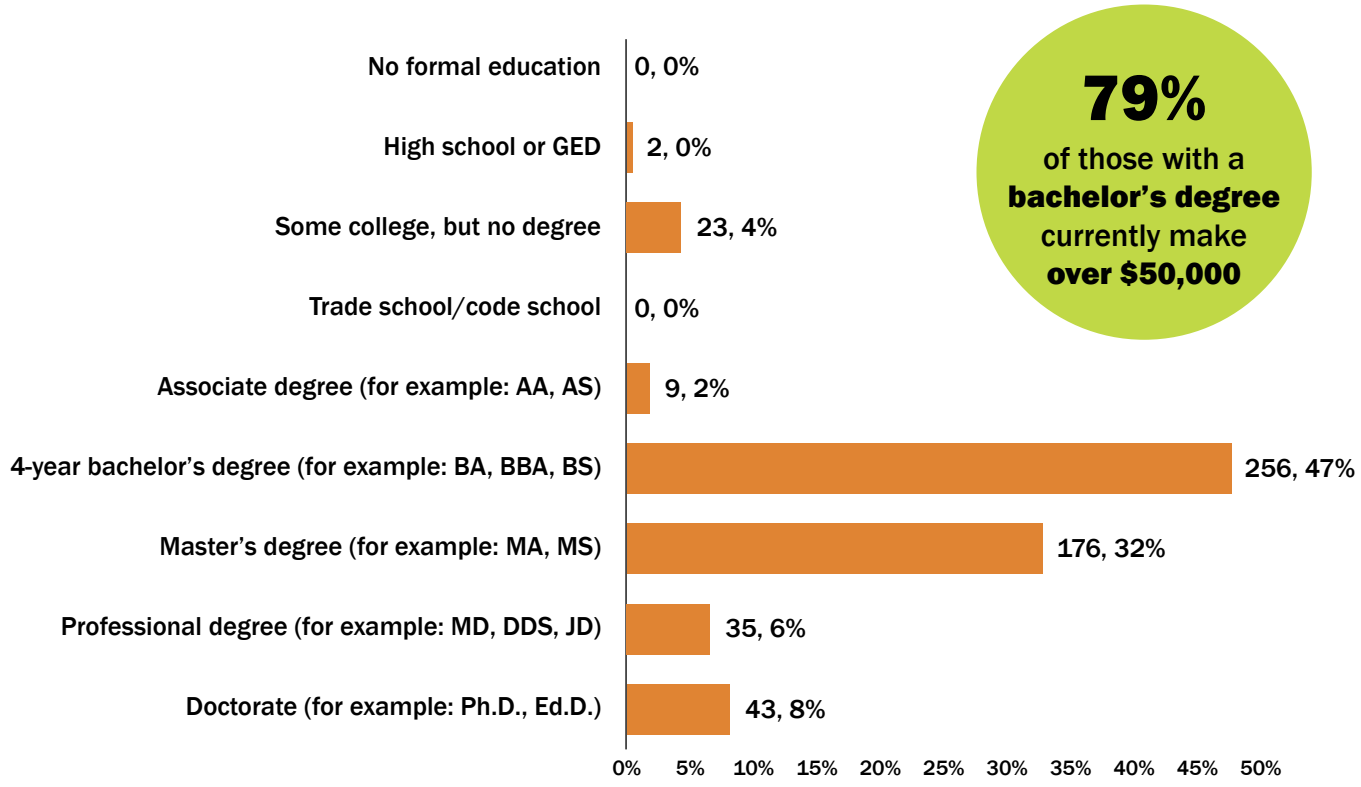
Using data from the U.S. Census Bureau

6.64%

of adults **migrated away from Nebraska in 2014**. The highest rate between 2000 and 2018.[4]

EDUCATION

What is the highest level of education you have completed?



79% of those with a **bachelor's degree** currently make **over $50,000**

89% of those with a **master's or professional degree** currently make **over $50,000**

35% of those with a **doctorate** currently make **over $100,000**

UNIVERSITY

What is the name of the college or university where you received your bachelor's degree?

NAME	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
University of Nebraska - Lincoln	169	30%
University of Nebraska at Omaha	68	12%
Creighton University	37	7%
Bellevue University	9	2%
Doane University	8	1%
Nebraska Wesleyan University	4	1%
University of Nebraska Medical Center	4	1%
Oklahoma State University	3	1%
University of Phoenix	3	1%
University of Iowa	3	1%

"I did enjoy going to college there...[UNO].

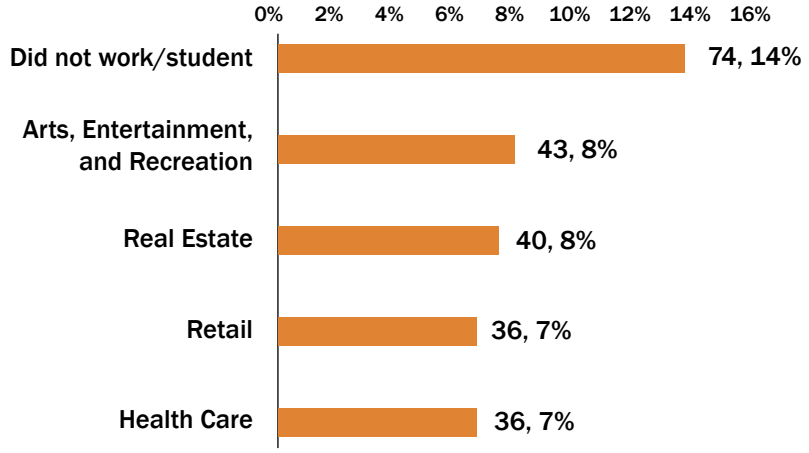
"Overall great place to visit and go to College.

"If you could guarantee a Husker Football, national championship this year, I might make a deal!

INDUSTRY

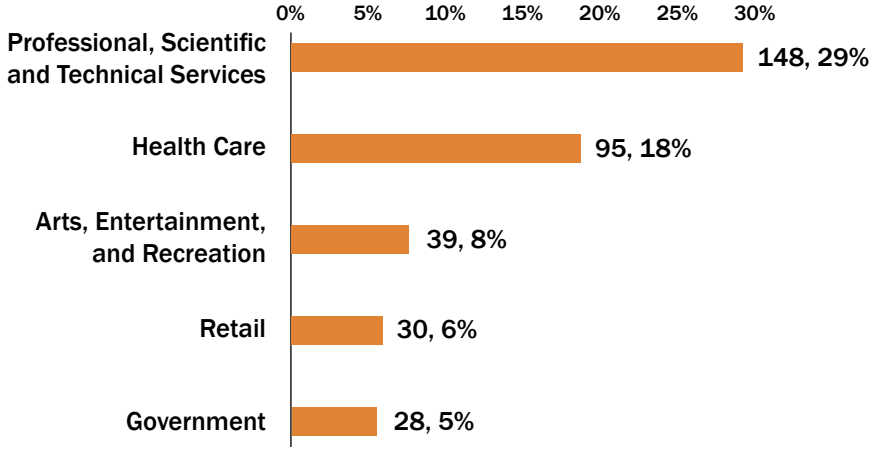
In what industry did you work when you lived in Nebraska?

Other responses include, retail (7%), educational services (5%), research (5%), transportation and warehousing (4%).



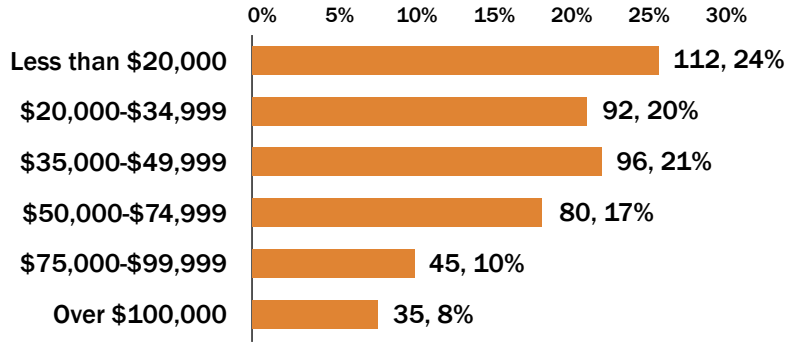
What industry do you work in now?

Other responses include, educational services (5%), do not work/retired/ student (4%), information (3%), transportation and warehousing (3%).

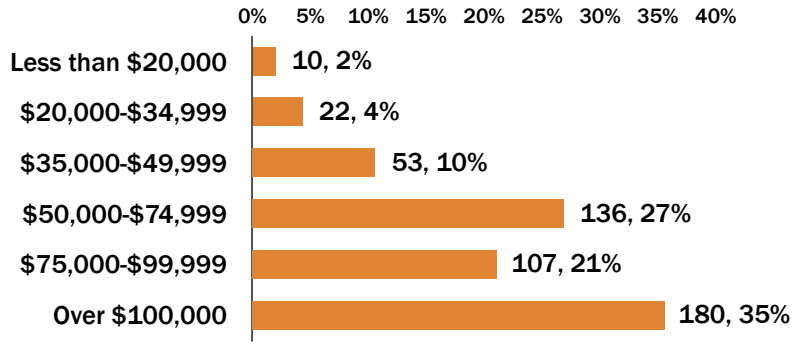


SALARY

What was your approximate annual salary at the last place you worked in Nebraska?

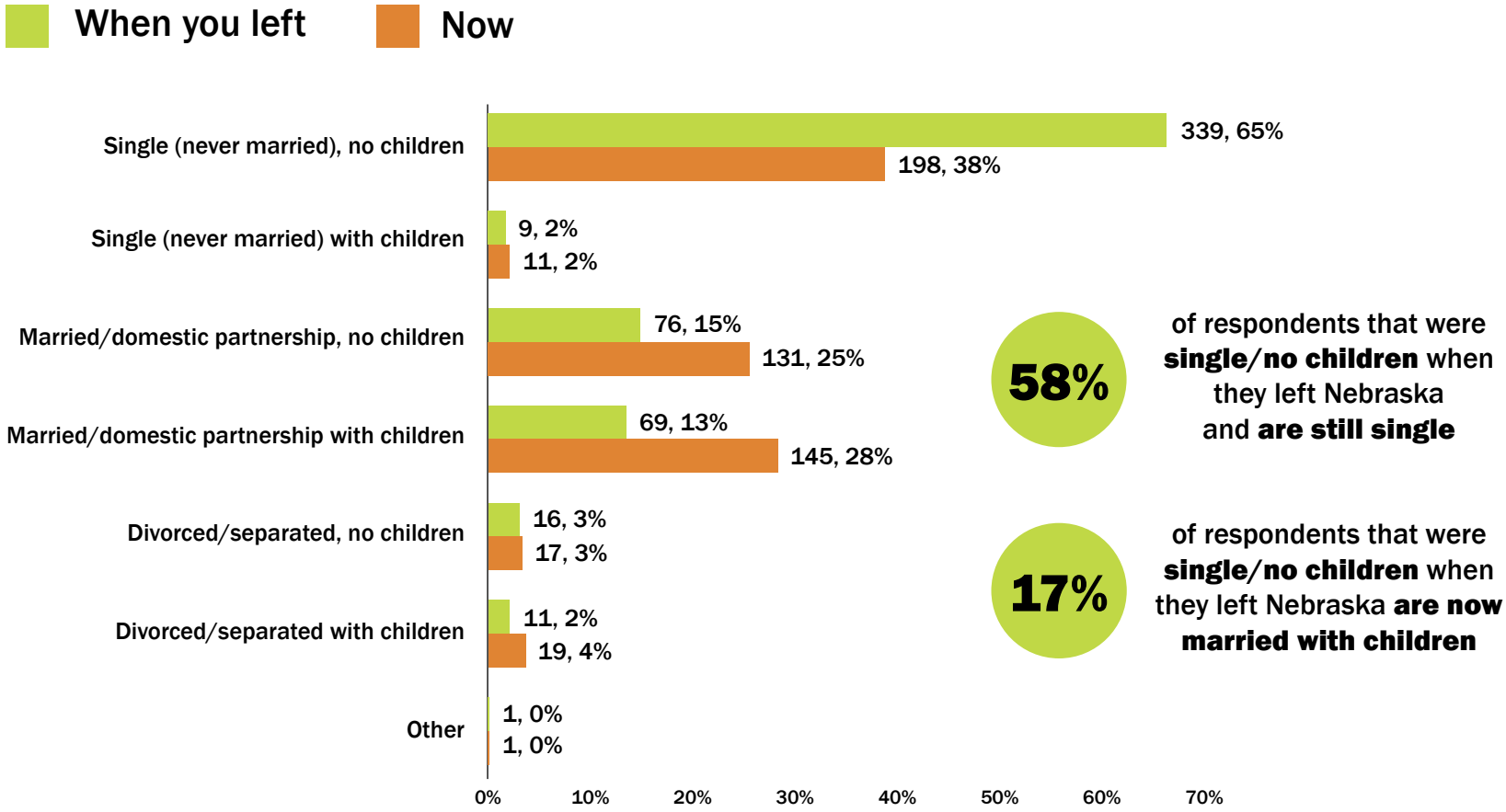


What is your approximate annual salary in your current position?



FAMILY

What was your marital and family status when you left Nebraska vs. what it is now?

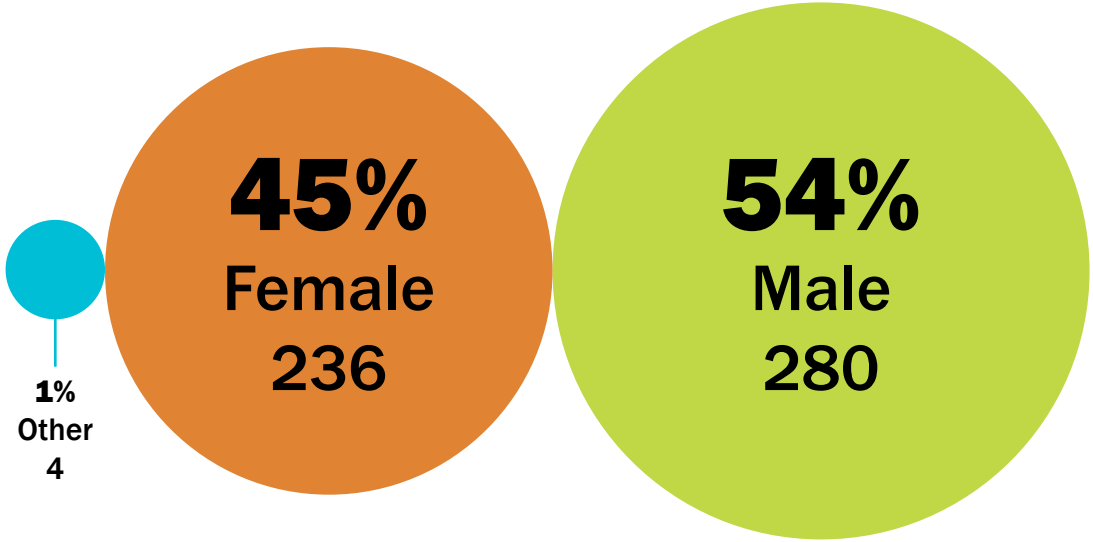


58% of respondents that were **single/no children** when they left Nebraska and **are still single**

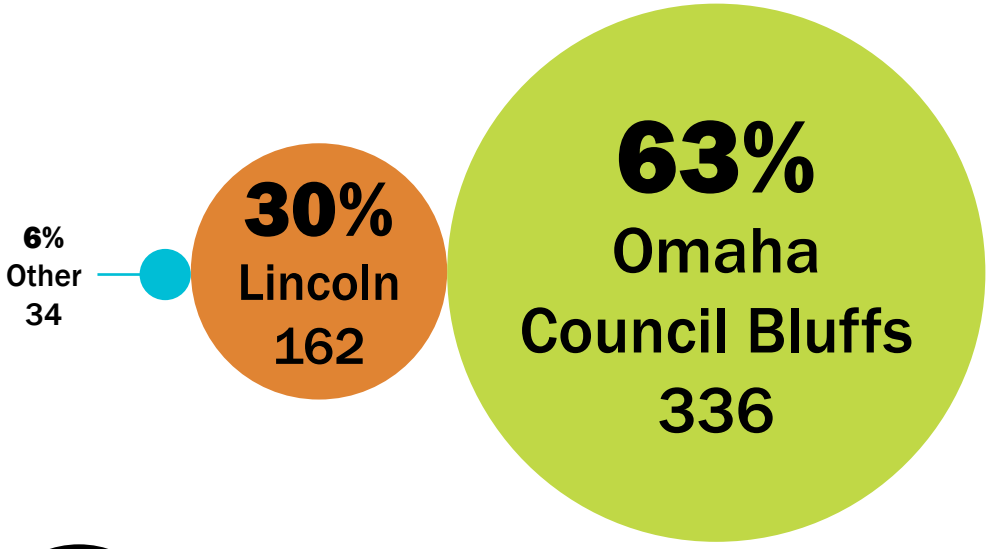
17% of respondents that were **single/no children** when they left Nebraska **are now married with children**

DEMOGRAPHICS

With what gender do you identify?



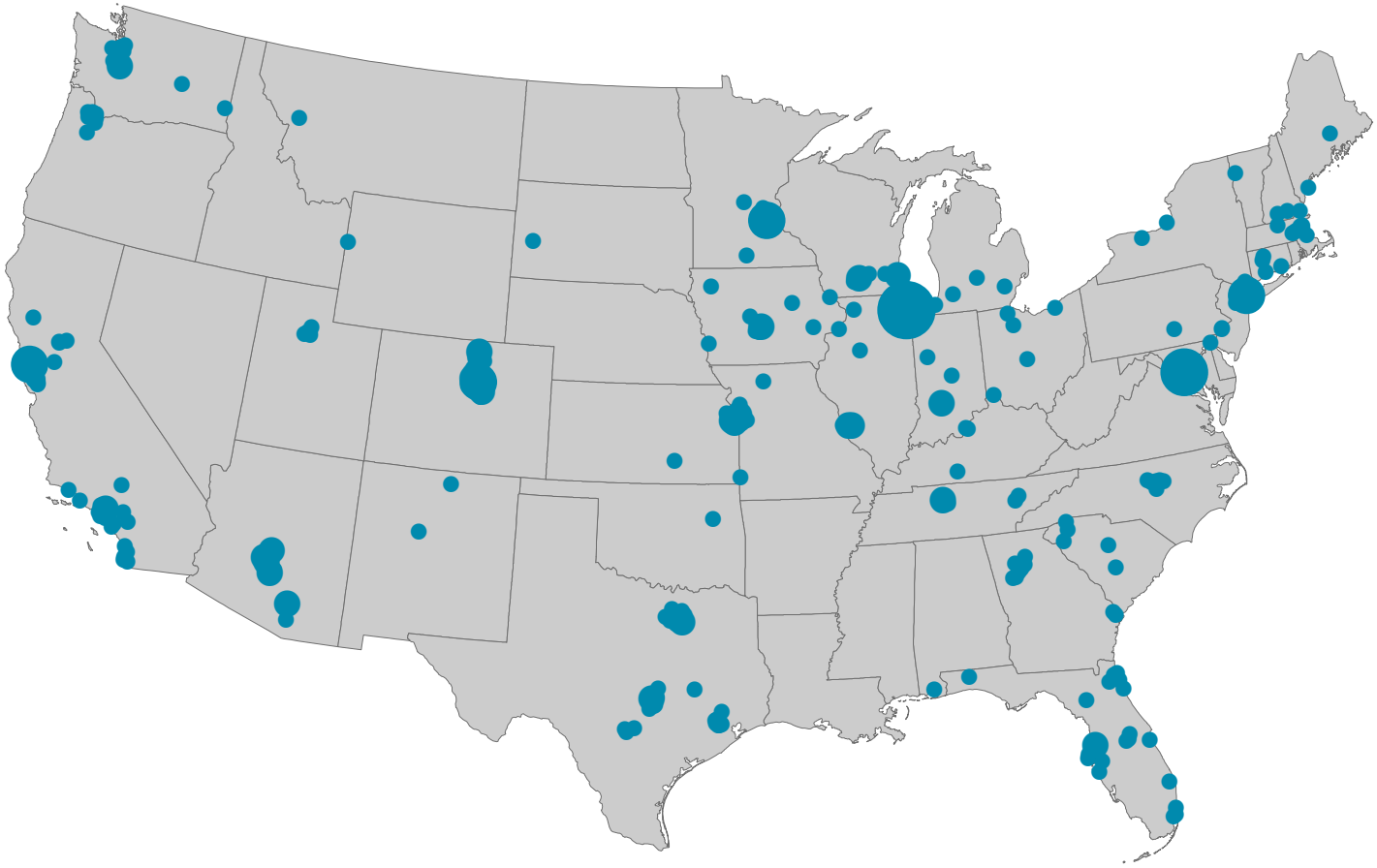
In what area of Nebraska did you live most recently?



DEMOGRAPHICS

What zip code do you live in now?

> I have lived in 3 different states so far and the people and quality of life in Nebraska is unmatchable.



Icon size varies from one to five based on the number of respondents at each zip code.
Sample responses for this question was 477.

METHODOLOGY

Overview

In May of 2019, representatives of the Greater Omaha Chamber and their Young Professionals Council began conversations around an effort to understand why people leave Nebraska, an "exit" survey for Greater Omaha and surrounding areas. The survey was developed in consultation with partners and completed in late August. Simultaneously, a new and unique means to sample the target population was identified. LinkedIn, a social media platform, offers a premium subscription option that allows users to filter LinkedIn profiles for certain criteria and send a direct message known as InMail. By identifying appropriate filters, we were able to find adult persons that previously lived in Nebraska and now live in other locations. We received 386 usable responses from the LinkedIn distribution. In addition, we also distributed the sample using a judgment, convenience sample, where members of the Young Professional Council identified persons that fit the criteria of having lived in Nebraska and now live elsewhere, on other social media platforms and prompted them to participate using an unrestricted, self-selection link. We received 176 responses through this distribution method. In all, we have responses from 562 persons that have lived in Nebraska that no longer did during the time frame the survey was distributed.

Sampling

A survey gauges the opinions of a target population with data from a sample, a subset of the population. Thus, identifying a representative sample is a critical feature of survey methods. In this study, the population we are concerned with is adult persons (18+) that live in states other than Nebraska but at some point lived in the state, or domestic out-migrants from Nebraska. We narrowed that population to persons that have left the state between 1999 and 2018. We use data from the American Community Survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau from 2007 to 2018 to estimate the average domestic out-flow of adult persons. We average outflow to be 39,000 per year, 799,122 persons between 1999 and 2018. The net outflow (persons in minus persons out) is much lower at 20,860 persons over 20 years; however, since the sample could include any adult persons that lived in Nebraska in the past 20 years the population of interest is those 799,122 persons. See Table 1.

Sampling (cont.)

Sampling frames are most useful for generalizing when every person in the population has the same probability of being surveyed. However, while we can approximate the numbers of adult persons that have left Nebraska, we cannot easily identify a means to develop a random, probability sample of this group. Yet, the interest in population decline[1], brain drain[2] and workforce shortages[3] in Nebraska is great enough to warrant any effort to understand why people leave.

Considering the importance of the information to inform critical and timely discussions in the state and the obvious challenges in sampling the population of interest, we identified a means to capture a convenience sample with a low barrier distribution method. However, a major concern about the use of a convenience or non-probability sample is coverage error - that the sample that responds is different from the population and thus spurious inferences about the population are likely drawn (Fricker, 2016). Our sample is a non-probability sample for a few reasons. First, we know that not all of our target population will be on social media, thus our distribution method limits the probability that some in our target populations is surveyed. Moreover, we had to make "judgments" in identifying who can participate.

For the LinkedIn survey, the Greater Omaha Chamber in consultation with LinkedIn and Young Professional council members developed filters to identify persons that lived in Nebraska between 1999-2018 and no longer do. In addition to having a biased sampling frame (those on LinkedIn) the method of selecting within the frame is prone to user judgment. Notably, the panel size, meeting the criteria as of 12/19/2019, is 73,000, far less than our actual population. Furthermore, only about 1/4th of that number were active users. In addition, due to limitations of the subscription service provided by LinkedIn, we could only send a certain number of InMails per month dependent on account credits. Thus, more judgment had to be made about who to contact, and how long to wait for their response. Finally, persons had to opt-in to participate adding to the possibility of nonresponse bias, which is when those who choose to take the survey are different from those that choose not to take the survey. Once someone responded or declined, the team's LinkedIn account would be credited, allowing another InMail to be sent to an additional person. We received 386 responses from the LinkedIn distribution that met all the criteria.

The 'other' social media survey also used a non-probability, judgment sampling method. The survey distribution was unrestricted, self selected, meaning anyone who saw the survey could take the survey, but judgment was used in who to send the survey link. Members of the Young Professionals Council chose to share the survey link with those that they knew fit the criteria of having lived in Nebraska in the past 20-year, but not at present. They also shared via the Omaha YP social channels and monthly newsletter. This means to take the survey, the respondent had to be in contact with the young professionals council. Certainly, there is not an equal probability that all 799,000 people in the population would have had the same chance of knowing a present council member or subscribing to their online channels and/or newsletter. We received 176 responses through this distribution method.

Given all the challenges in the sampling design and distribution of the survey, we should have concerns about the ability to make inferences about the population of persons that have moved away from Nebraska in the past 20 years. We explore survey respondents next in order to understand the extent of the bias in our sample.

Table 1 | Nebraska adult domestic migration

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	12-YEAR AVERAGE	ESTIMATED 20 YEAR TOTAL
AGE 18+ INFLOW	41,543	39,658	41,740	34,258	39,963	34,673	38,673	38,908	40,418	38,988	41,770	44,795	39,999	799,982
AGE 18+ OUTFLOW	41,234	40,224	34,576	36,317	41,818	38,961	37,909	34,345	41,270	37,561	39,495	43,763	38,956	779,122
AGE 18+ NETFLOW	309	-566	7,164	2,958	-2,560	-3,998	764	4,563	-852	1,427	2,275	1,032	1,043	20,860

Survey Respondents

We collected demographics in the survey in order to assess how similar or different survey respondents are to the population at large, as well, as our specific target population. Since the target population is not in Nebraska, we report demographics for the United States and Nebraska, for comparison purposes. However, the focus is our estimates of the target population, the demographics of persons that ever lived in Nebraska, sometime between 1999 and 2018, and, now live in another state. To estimate the demographics of the target population we used data from IPUMS USA[4], American Community Survey, from 2000-to-2018[5]. The data is the percent of the adult population, at each category, using the average from 2000-2018, that migrated to another state from Nebraska. Note these percentages are based on the total outflow of persons from Nebraska, not the net flow, which the Center for Public Affairs Research often reports.[6] We keep the LinkedIn and other social media survey respondents distinct in effort to identify differences in respondents across the two surveys. Data for the U.S. and Nebraska comes from the United State Census Bureau's American Community Survey 2018, 5-year estimates. See Table 2.

Survey Respondents cont.

Our sample respondents largely come from the Greater Omaha area (62% | 69%). As of 2018, 39% of the population of Nebraska live in the two counties that make up most of Omaha, Douglas and Sarpy Counties.[7] Thus, our respondents come from the Omaha area at a higher rate than the Nebraska population. This is similarly true for the City of Lincoln but to a smaller extent. In contrast, a smaller percent of our sample comes from other places in Nebraska than is true of the current population of Nebraska.

Concerning educational attainment, our respondents have a higher rate of post-secondary education, of any kind, compared to national and Nebraska rates. About 50% of survey respondents had a bachelor's degree while rates for bachelor's degrees, as the highest level of education in the broader population is closer to 20%. Our target population is a slightly closer at 24%. However, we can conclude our sample does not represent the target population for educational attainment.

Concerning individual annual earnings, survey respondents had a higher rate of high income than the general population. For instance, about 20% of survey respondents had annual individual earnings between $75,000 and $99,999; however, national and state rates for this earnings bracket are closer to 10%. In the target population, 5% had incomes over $100,000. Thus, our sample does not represent the target population by educational attainment.

The analysis in Table 2 confirms that our survey respondents' demographics are not similar to our target population. Our analysis will not accurately represent persons not on social media, those that come from areas of Nebraska outside of Omaha and Lincoln, those with less than a bachelor's degree, and those earning less than $50,000 a year. According to Fricker (2016) confidence intervals and margin of error should not be calculated for convenience samples, even if they are large samples. Thus, we do not report those here; however, we have included additional analysis to see if and how the bias sample impacts survey responses.

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[1] Olberding (2019) "Census: Nebraska's big counties keep growing, while rural counties decline" https://journalstar.com/business/local/census-nebraska-s-big-counties-keep-growing-while-rural-counties/article_c411fa3b-af1a-5659-91c9-87d6ef290247.html
[2] Ruggles (2018) " Nebraska's brain drain problem: Why do young, educated workers leave the state? https://www.omahachamber.org/omahayp/2018/01/omaha-intercept-reversing-brain-drain/
[3] Ricketts (2020) "Finding 2020 Vision for Nebraska" https://governor.nebraska.gov/press/finding-2020-vision-nebraska
[4] IPUMS USA, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org.
[5] IPUMS, 2000-2018 returns 21,609 cases for Nebraska, 4,113 of them that have moved away from Nebraska.
[6] When CPAR calculates net migration trends for Nebraska the net flow out tends to be from metro areas, more educated and wealthier. See cpar.unomaha.edu/NebraskaByTheNumbers for this data.
[7] We do not include parts of Iowa for this part of the analysis.

Table 2 | Comparison of the demographics of Nebraska to various populations

	LinkedIn	Other Social	U.S.	Nebraska	Target Population Estimates
LAST LOCATION IN NEBRASKA					
Greater Omaha Area	62% (227)	69% (109)	NA	39%	Not Calculated
Lincoln	30% (111)	31% (51)	NA	16%	
Other Nebraska	9% (33)	1% (1)	NA	45%	
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF THOSE 25 YEARS AND OLDER					
High School Graduate or GED	0% (0)	1% (2)	27%	26%	21%
Some College	3% (11)	7% (12)	20%	23%	21%
Associates Degree	3% (8)	1% (1)	8%	11%	9%
Bachelor's Degree	44% (170)	55% (86)	19%	21%	24%
Master's Degree	36% (140)	22% (36)	12%	11%	9%
Professional Degree	5% (22)	14% (13)			4%
Doctorate	8% (34)	5% (9)			23%
EARNINGS					
Less than $19,999	1% (5)	3% (5)	33%	35%	51%
$20,000-$34,999	4% (13)	6% (9)			17%
$35,000-$49,999	9% (32)	14% (21)	20%	23%	11%
$50,000-$74,999	24% (88)	36% (48)	22%	24%	11%
$75,000-$99,999	22% (79)	20% (28)	10%	9%	5%
Over $100,000	40% (143)	26% (37)	15%	10%	6%
GENDER					
Female	43% (159)	51% (77)	51%	50%	50%
Male	57% (212)	47% (68)	49%	50%	50%

Examining Non-Response Bias

Following our analysis of sample bias, we examine non-response bias. Non-response bias is the concern that persons who respond to the survey have views that differ substantially from those who do not respond to the survey. We, of course, can't examine the responses of those who could have but did not respond to the survey. However, we can examine differences in how different demographics groups, those noted above, answer the survey questions. The purpose is to insure validity of the findings for generalizing about the sample and not just those groups that most commonly respond to the survey. Chi-square tests are used to detect the difference in the responses among different groups. The chi-square statistic is used to identify a p-value. A p-value that equals .000 indicates a significant difference between groups, in how they answer a question. Anything above .05 indicates no significant difference. Tables 3 and 4 report how different groups answered two questions in the survey and the results of the chi-square tests for group differences.

Five of the tests conducted, across two questions, show significant differences in how demographically different groups respond to a question. Three from the other social media survey and two from the LinkedIn survey.

These three questions from the other social media survey show significance differences:

- people who last lived in Lincoln were more likely to consider moving back to the Omaha area;
- those with more education were more likely to move back to the Omaha area; and
- men were more likely to move back to the Omaha area.

Two tests from the LinkedIn survey show significant differences:

- men were more likely to consider moving back to the Omaha area; and,
- the more individual, annual earnings someone made the more likely they were to say that their professional life in the place they live now is better.

The analyses in Table 3 and Table 4 confirm that the sampling frame does not accurately represent all demographic groups, particularly in the other social media category. However, we do not see pervasive differences in how demographically different groups answered survey questions; thus, we chose not to weight the final survey results. Rather we offer that the respondent sample does not represent all people that move out of Nebraska, particularly, those from non-metro areas in Nebraska, those with lower levels of educational attainment, and those at lower income levels.

Table 3 | Tests for nonresponse bias

* = significant differences

QUESTION: WOULD YOU CONSIDER MOVING TO THE OMAHA-COUNCIL BLUFFS REGION?	LinkedIn		Chi2 p-value	Facebook		Chi2 p-value
	Yes	No		Yes	No	
LAST LOCATION IN NEBRASKA			0.218			**0.04
Greater Omaha Area	64%	36%		48%	52%	
Lincoln	54%	46%		68%	32%	
Other Nebraska	61%	39%		0%	100%	
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT			0.956			*0.164
High School or GED	No Responses	No Responses		0%	100%	
Some College	56%	44%		40%	60%	
Associates Degree	50%	50%		0%	100%	
Bachelor's Degree	62%	38%		50%	51%	
Masters	60%	37%		67%	33%	
Professional Degree	68%	31%		56%	44%	
Doctorate	63%	38%		88%	13%	
EARNINGS			0.681			0.64
Less than $19,999	40%	60%		80%	20%	
$20,000-$34,999	67%	33%		63%	38%	
$35,000-$49,999	66%	34%		53%	47%	
$50,000-$74,999	56%	44%		45%	55%	
$75,000-$99,999	58%	42%		67%	33%	
Over $100,000	64%	35%		53%	47%	
GENDER			**0.0005			*0.039
Female	52%	48%		47%	53%	
Male	68%	32%		62%	38%	

Table 4 | Test for nonresponse bias

QUESTION: IN THE PLACE YOU LIVE NOW, IS YOUR PROFESSIONAL LIFE WORSE, THE SAME, OR BETTER?	LinkedIn			Chi2 p-value	Facebook			Chi2 p-value
	Worse	Same	Better		Worse	Same	Better	
LAST LOCATION IN NEBRASKA				.632				.858
Greater Omaha Area	7%	16%	77%		5%	12%	83%	
Lincoln	7%	14%	79%		2%	16%	81%	
Other Nebraska	0%	19%	81%		0%	0%	100%	
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT				.519				.878
High School or GED	No Responses				0%	0%	100%	
Some College	0%	10%	90%		0%	27%	73%	
Associates Degree	0%	0%	100%		0%	0%	100%	
Bachelor's Degree	7%	16%	75%		5%	12%	82%	
Masters	5%	19%	77%		3%	6%	91%	
Professional Degree	0%	18%	82%		8%	17%	75%	
Doctorate	9%	9%	81%		0%	25%	75%	
EARNINGS				**.000				.221
Less than $19,999	0%	20%	80%		0%	20%	80%	
$20,000-$34,999	31%	23%	46%		25%	12%	63%	
$35,000-$49,999	13%	28%	59%		0%	15%	85%	
$50,000-$74,999	7%	13%	80%		4%	16%	80%	
$75,000-$99,999	3%	18%	79%		8%	12%	81%	
Over $100,000	2%	11%	87%		0%	9%	91%	
GENDER				.123				.605
Female	8%	21%	72%		5%	10%	85%	
Male	5%	13%	83%		3%	16%	81%	

Limitations

As with all surveys, this study has limitations that should be considered when interpreting and reporting results.

1. As mentioned, the sample is a non-probability sample and inferences for the whole population should not be made using these results.
2. Some wording and choice options on the survey could have been confusing to participants causing error in the reporting of information.
3. Occasionally, there may be inconsistencies in the results. Inconsistencies arise from missing data. Therefore, refer to both the percentage and the n (number of individuals) when interpreting results. Sample sizes (n=) do vary across questions.
4. The data reflect a snapshot of the current opinions of those in the sample. Opinions do change.