

**1998-1999
Illinois Rural Life Panel Survey**

**Arts and Cultural Activities,
Participation, and Opportunities**

**Sponsored by
Illinois Arts Council
Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, Western Illinois University
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Table of Contents

Report

| | |
|---|----|
| Summary..... | 6 |
| Introduction..... | 9 |
| Who Are the Illinois Rural Life Panelists?..... | 11 |
| Arts and Cultural Activities in Rural Illinois..... | 13 |
| Rural Youth Arts Education and Activities..... | 18 |
| Rural Residents’ Participation in the Arts..... | 21 |
| Strengthening Rural Arts and Cultural Life..... | 23 |

Appendices

| | |
|--|----|
| Appendix A: Respondent Demographics..... | 26 |
| Appendix B: Panelists’ Comments..... | 29 |
| Appendix C: Methodology..... | 38 |

Table of Figures

| | |
|---|------------|
| Figure 1: 1998-1999 Illinois Rural Life Panel Respondent Demographics (n=1,659)..... | Appendix A |
| Figure 2: Illinois Map Showing Illinois Arts Council Regions and Metropolitan and Non-metropolitan Counties..... | 10 |
| Figure 3: Population of Panelists' Communities (n=1,621)..... | 11 |
| Figure 4: Panelists Indicating Availability of Organizations and Services in Their Communities..... | 13 |
| Figure 5: Panelists Indicating Availability of Organizations and Services in Their Communities by Illinois Arts Council Region..... | 15 |
| Figure 6: Panelists Indicating Availability of Organizations and Services in Their Communities by Community Population..... | 16 |
| Figure 7: Miles Panelists Would Have to Travel to Organizations and Services Not Available in Their Communities..... | 17 |
| Figure 8: Panelists' Opinions about the Importance of Educating Children in the Arts in School (n=1,629)..... | 18 |
| Figure 9: Panelists Indicating Provision of Arts and Cultural Activities for Children in Schools and Community Groups..... | 19 |
| Figure 10: Activities and Manner in Which Panelists Participate in the Arts (n=1,659)..... | 21 |
| Figure 11: Panelists' Opinions about the Need to Strengthen Arts and Cultural Activities in Their Communities (n=1,549)..... | 23 |

Summary

The Applied Social Research Unit (ASRU) of Illinois State University, the Illinois Arts Council, and the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs of Western Illinois University sponsored the 1998-1999 Illinois Rural Life Panel Survey. The survey sought the experience and opinions of rural Illinois residents—persons living in non-metropolitan counties whose communities do not exceed 50,000 residents—about arts and cultural activities, public library services, community housing conditions, and economic and workforce development. This summary and the following report present information for the arts-related questions. A full report that summarizes all survey results will be published fall 1999.

In 1998-1999, 1,659 Illinois Rural Life Panelists responded to the survey; the response rate was 32 percent. The geographic distribution of Panelists generally represents the distribution of Illinois non-metropolitan residents. Panelists tend to be older, have higher annual incomes, and be better educated than non-metropolitan residents as a whole. Panelists responded to several questions about the presence of arts and cultural activities in their communities and about their own participation in such activities.

Do Illinois' rural residents have access to arts and cultural activities in or near their home communities?

Nearly all Panelists indicated the presence of at least one or more arts-related organizations or services in their rural communities. The majority (more than 50%) of Panelists, if they choose, can access community and senior centers, participate in craft fairs and community theater or music groups, take membership in historical societies, tour or work in museums, or take private art or music lessons in their communities. Fewer Panelists are able to participate in arts in the park activities or community arts festivals, go to movie or live theaters, or join an art league in their home communities. Fortunately, with a few exceptions, the majority of Panelists who indicate absence of organizations and arts-related services, also indicate having to drive less than 25 miles to access organizations and services.

In some cases, Panelists are unaware of the existing arts opportunities. Panelists are least aware of availability of arts in the park programs, community arts festivals, art leagues, and private lessons.

According to Panelists, some Illinois Arts Council regions (non-metropolitan counties only) fair better than others with regard to available arts opportunities. The southern, south central, and central regions stand out as having the lowest overall availability of arts-related programming when compared to the other regions. Panelists living in the north and south region more often report “don't know” to the availability of organizations and services than Panelists from other regions. Increased marketing may raise awareness of arts and cultural activities in Illinois.

Generally, Panelists living in the smaller rural communities have the least access to arts-related organizations and services. Programming and outreach in small communities should be emphasized if opportunities in under-served areas are to be increased.

Do young people in rural Illinois have access to arts and cultural activities in community schools and other organizations? Is it important to educate children in the arts in school?

In addition to specifying available organizations and services for the general community population, Panelists indicated their attitudes and knowledge about arts and cultural opportunities for children in their communities. Nearly all Panelists (97%) think it is at least “somewhat important” to educate children in the arts in school. The majority of Panelists report that children in their communities are offered arts and cultural activities through all school levels (except pre-school) and can take part in such opportunities through organized youth groups and religious organizations if they choose to do so.

Despite the perceived high availability of arts opportunities for children, more Panelists “don’t know” about opportunities for children than about other community organizations and arts-related services. This presents an opportunity to rural Illinois schools and other organizations to raise general community awareness about arts activities taking place in the community, for example, through display of youth art projects, community-wide invitation to student performances, and communication with community groups and local media about activities and events.

Do Illinois Rural Life Panelists participate in the arts as performers or artists, leisure activity, audience members, or volunteers?

Overall, 84 percent of Panelists report participation in at least one arts activity. More Panelists participate in the categories of movies, film, or video, music (all types), dance, museums, photography, and literature than in any other types of arts activities. Panelists’ responses suggest their participation varies with their income and age. With increasing age, Panelist participation in many arts events or activities declines. With increasing income, Panelist participation increases as audience members in many arts events (i.e., for theater performances, vocal and instrumental music events, movies, and visual arts activities).

About 12 percent of Panelists support arts and cultural organizations, events, and activities as volunteers. They volunteer as sponsors (including monetary), planners, and organizers; artists, performers, and directors; instructors and demonstrators; chaperones, janitors, ushers, and technicians; board and committee members; salespersons and grant writers; and in other ways.

Is there a need to strengthen arts and cultural activities in Panelists’ communities?

The majority of Panelists see at least a moderate need to strengthen arts and cultural activities in their communities. A larger percentage of Panelists from the southern-most region (24%) than from any other region report a great need to strengthen the arts. A few Panelists comment that arts and cultural activities should not be a priority in their communities. Some Panelists express satisfaction about arts and cultural activities in their communities; others present a “don’t know” or “don’t care” attitude. Generally, the largest numbers of Panelists say they want to see more 1) activities for

youth; 2) arts and crafts (e.g., painting, pottery, sculpture, photography, woodworking, sewing); 3) music-related activities (e.g., vocal, popular, instrumental); and 4) theater (e.g., plays, musicals, movies). Their comments suggest they want increased opportunities to participate in a number of ways—as performers or artists, for leisure activity, and as audience members.

As noted by Panelists, there are some barriers to accessing or providing arts and cultural activities in rural communities. They cite limited availability and expense of arts classes for adults and/or children; others say organizational funding and staffing issues limit arts provision.

The availability or lack of availability of arts and cultural activities, Panelists' arts participation, and their interest in strengthening arts and cultural programming where they live offer clues to help the Illinois Arts Council support arts and cultural life in rural communities and regions. In light of Panelists' responses to the 1998-1999 Illinois Rural Life Panel Survey, the Illinois Arts Council may consider:

- Marketing its own mission and values in rural communities to increase awareness among rural residents about the Council and the benefits of arts and cultural activities;
- Emphasizing Council outreach in the two southern and the central arts regions and in the smaller rural communities;
- Encouraging organizations' communication about arts and cultural activities in their communities and suggesting communication strategies to organizations;
- Encouraging schools and other organizations with a youth focus to educate and raise awareness of the arts in their communities generally by highlighting youth art projects;
- Suggesting collaboration strategies for groups and organizations within and among rural communities to make arts and cultural activities available;
- Providing volunteer development training for organizations whose missions support arts and cultural life in the community;
- Sharing information about arts-related programs, projects, events, and organizations available in rural areas that may serve as models or resources for other rural communities;
- Consulting on and facilitating the development of arts and cultural projects in rural communities and regions; and
- Earmarking funding for rural communities and regions.

Introduction

Since 1989, the Illinois Rural Life Panel Survey (IRLPS) has served as a tool for gaining and sharing information about non-metropolitan county residents' opinions and experiences about quality of life issues. Non-metropolitan counties have communities of 50,000 or less population and are defined as "rural" by the IRLPS project. Broadly, the projects' goals are to:

- identify trends regarding rural quality of life in Illinois; and
- meet information needs of researchers, advocacy and professional organizations, and community groups.

Many of the opportunities and challenges facing rural communities are different from those confronting urban and suburban areas. In a state where metropolitan interests often dominate policy-making, the Rural Life Panelists' perspectives can inform development of state and local policies and programs.

In 1998-1999, the Illinois Rural Life Panel Survey project received generous support and interest from two sponsors in addition to the Applied Social Research Unit of Illinois State University: the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency, and the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, Western Illinois University. The 1998-1999 IRLPS sought the experience and opinions of rural Illinois residents about arts and cultural activities, public library services, community housing conditions, and economic and workforce development. Of special interest to the Illinois Arts Council, and the topic for this report, are rural arts and cultural activities, participation, and opportunities.

The Illinois Arts Council strives, as part of its mission and values, to serve the diverse needs and interests of Illinois residents in the arts and to support artistic programming in under-served rural areas. To inform the Council's mission, the 1998-1999 Illinois Rural Life Panel Survey questions addressed:

- Arts and cultural activities and organizations available to children and adults in Panelists' communities;
- The importance of educating children in the arts in school;
- Panelists' participation in the arts as performers or artists, leisure activity, audience members, and volunteers; and
- Needs and opportunities for strengthening arts and cultural activities in Panelists' communities.

The following report summarizes Panelists' responses to these questions and provides Panelists' commentary about their participation in and ideas about arts activities and programming in their communities.

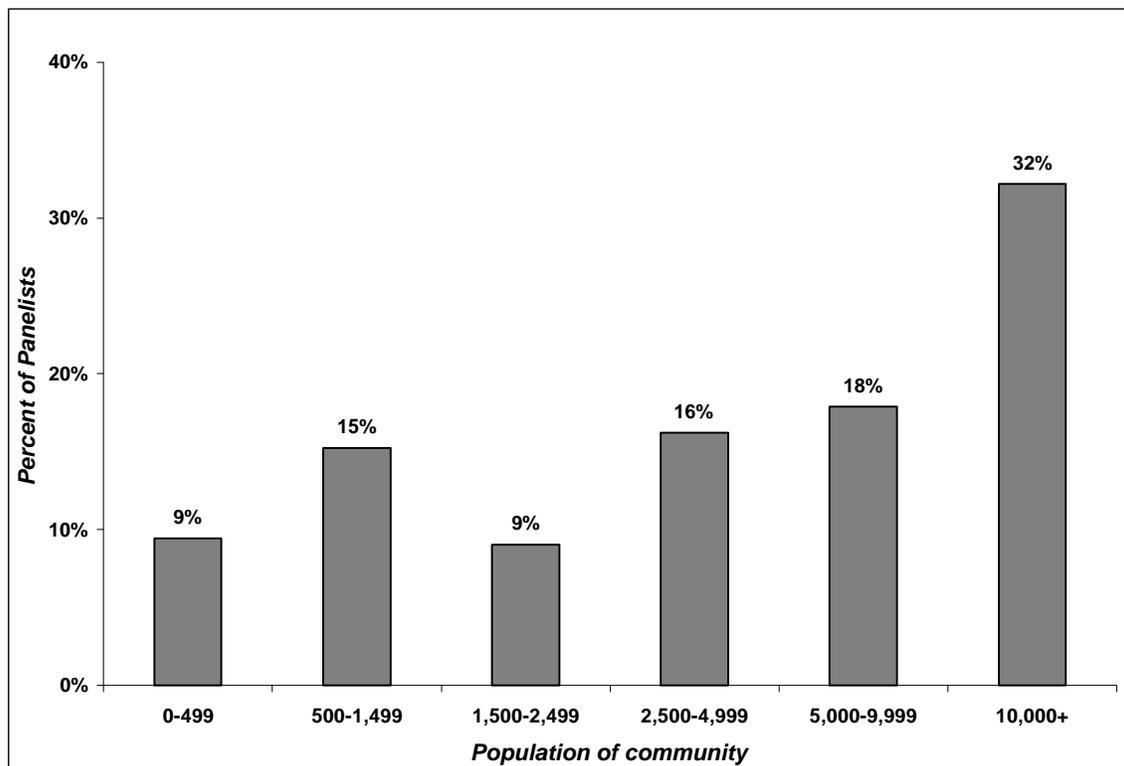
Who Are the Illinois Rural Life Panelists?

Survey questionnaires were sent in November 1998 to adult residents (age 18 or older) living in Illinois' 74 non-metropolitan counties. Of the 5,467 Panelists sent a survey, 349 proved to be ineligible for the Panel because they had moved out of a non-metropolitan Illinois county or died; thus, the eligible sample was 5,118. Panelists returned 1,659 completed surveys for a response rate of 32 percent (1,659/5,118). See Appendix A for a demographic profile of 1998-1999 Panelists.¹

The geographic distribution of the 1998-1999 IRLPS respondents mirrors that of the State's adult (age 18 or older) non-metropolitan population as a whole. Using the Illinois Arts Council regions for categorization, the percentage of responding Panelists from each region is fairly equal to the percentage of the Illinois adult non-metropolitan population living in each region (differences between percentages of Panelists and the general population in each region is less than three percent).² See Figure 2 for a map outlining these regions and the percentage of Panelists responding from each region.

Slightly more survey respondents live in small communities than Illinois' non-metropolitan residents as a whole. Thirty three percent of Panelists, compared to 31 percent of non-metropolitan residents, live in communities with 2,499 or less population; 32 percent of Panelists, compared to 35 percent of non-metropolitan residents, live in communities with populations of over 10,000.³

Figure 3: Population of Panelists' Communities (n=1,621)



Source: 1998-1999 IRLPS Question 43

About three-quarters of Panelists have lived in their communities for 21 years or more; about 14 percent of Panelists have lived in their communities for fewer than 10 years. The majority of Panelists (66%) describe themselves as living “in town/city”; however, one-quarter say they live “in the country, not on a farm” (13%) or “on a farm” (12%). Perceptions of what “rural” means varies: in the past, some Panelists living “in town” have commented they do not consider themselves “rural”; some Panelists living in the larger non-metropolitan county communities also do not consider themselves “rural.”

The majority of Panelists are white (91%) and male (55%). Males are slightly over-represented compared to the total non-metropolitan adult male population (49%).⁴ Panelists tend to be older than Illinois’ non-metropolitan residents; 51 percent of Panelists are between ages 50 and 79 compared to the 36 percent of non-metropolitan residents in this age range in 1997.⁵ About three-quarters of Panelists are married (74%); 11 percent are widowed; and the remaining 15 percent are single, separated, divorced, or living with a domestic partner. One-third of Panelists (34%) have children under age 18 in the household.

Panelists tend to have more formal education than non-metropolitan residents as a whole. Only six percent of Panelists have less than a high school education compared to 26 percent of total non-metropolitan residents. The majority of Panelists (64%) have some college education or a degree, compared to 36 percent of non-metropolitan county residents.⁶

Survey respondents also tend to have somewhat higher incomes than Illinois’ non-metropolitan residents do in general. Only one-quarter of Panelists compared to 52 percent of non-metropolitan residents have annual incomes of less than \$25,000. About 32 percent of Panelists compared to 13 percent of non-metropolitan residents have annual incomes of \$50,000 or greater.⁷ Most Panelists (80%) derive no income from farming. Farm income accounts for 25 percent or more of household income for 9 percent of Panelists; the remaining 11 percent of Panelists earn less than one-quarter of their income from farming. About three-quarters of Panelists are employed either full- (62%) or part-time (12%).

¹ The demographic table includes the percentage of respondents who did not answer specific questions. The percentages described in “Who Are the Illinois Rural Life Panelists?” include only those specifying demographic information; hence, there are slight differences between the percentages in the report narrative and the demographic table. For the 1998-1999 IRLPS, less than three percent of the 1,659 respondents chose not to answer each demographic question with the exception of the near eight percent who did not indicate their household income within a range.

² U.S. Bureau of the Census, Estimates of the Population of Counties by Age and Gender: 1990-1997, Internet Release Date: September 4, 1998.

³ U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population and Housing, STF3A, 1990.

⁴ U.S. Bureau of the Census, Estimates of the Population of Counties by Age and Gender: 1990-1997, Internet Release Date: September 4, 1998.

⁵ *Ibid.*

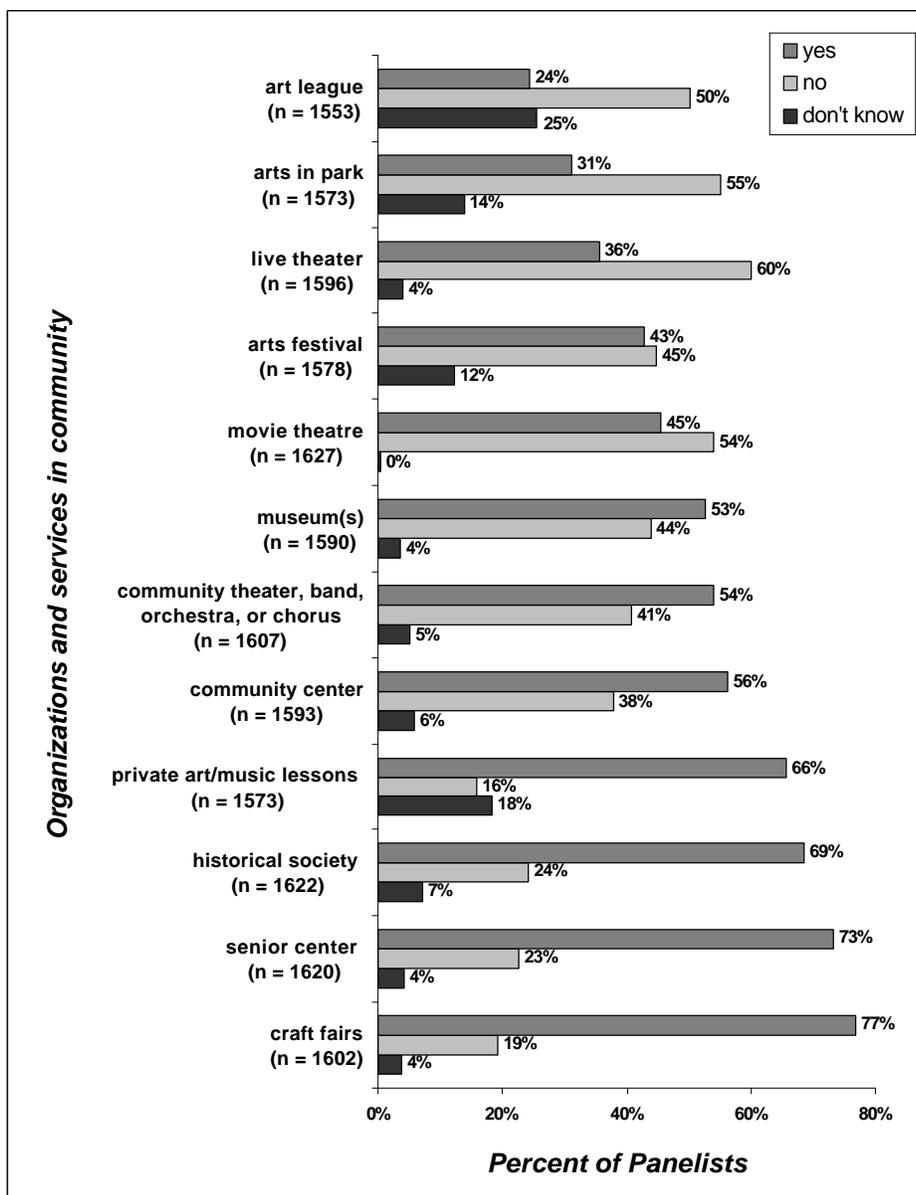
⁶ U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population and Housing, STF3A, 1990.

⁷ *Ibid.*

Arts and Cultural Activities in Rural Illinois

Do Illinois' rural residents have access to arts and cultural activities in or near their home communities? Figure 4 presents the percentage of “yes,” “no,” and “don't know” responses to the question, “Please indicate whether or not your community has the following organizations or services.” Nearly all Panelists indicated the presence of at least one or more organizations or services in their communities. Less than one percent of Panelists reported either not knowing the availability of or not having all the listed organizations and services.

Figure 4: Panelists Indicating Availability of Organizations and Services in Their Communities



Source: 1998-1999 IRLPS Question 1

Less than one-third of Panelists say there is an arts in the park program (31%) or an art league (24%) in their community. It should be noted that these types of activities also received high responses of “don’t know” in relation to other organizations and services. The use of the specific terms “arts in the park” and “art league” may be unfamiliar to Panelists; even if such opportunities existed in their communities, they may be called by different names or may not be strongly promoted. This could partially account for the high “don’t know” response and suggests that organizations or individuals coordinating such programming recognize the importance of communicating about arts opportunities. Also receiving many “don’t know” responses were annual community arts festival (12%) and private art/music lessons (18%).

According to Panelists, other organizations or services with limited availability in their communities include an annual community arts festival (43% said available), movie theater (45% said available), and live theater (36% said available). Compared to the other organizations and services, craft fairs (77%), senior center (73%), historical society (69%), and private art/music lessons (66%) are most often present in Panelists’ communities. The perceived unavailability of arts festivals and availability of craft fairs indicates an opportunity to encourage display of art works and artists at craft fairs.

Presence of a senior center (73%) or a community center (56%) does not guarantee that residents have exposure to arts and cultural activities through these organizations or know about these activities when they take place. Such centers, though, may be natural outlets for arts and cultural programming. In addition to community or civic centers, Panelists suggest other outlets for arts and cultural programming when commenting on the types of private art and music lessons available in their communities. Some say art and music lessons are available through local schools, local or regional community colleges and universities, music stores, art/frame shops, and private individuals.

The most often cited available lessons were piano followed by music, band, or instrumental (nonspecific). The next most often cited lessons, listed here by their frequency of comment, were vocal/choral, guitar, art (nonspecific), and dance. Dance was cited by less than one percent of Panelists who commented about lessons. About 40 percent of the 1,659 responding Panelists commented about private arts/music lessons.

Does availability of arts and cultural programming vary according to community size and location? Responses to the question about the presence of arts-related programming were explored by Illinois Arts Council regions (see page 10 for the map that outlines these regions) and by size of Panelists’ communities. Cook County, one of the Illinois Arts Council regions, was not included in analysis—the IRLPS sample does not include residents of Illinois metropolitan counties.

The IRLPS data suggest that arts and cultural activities are better represented in some regions of Illinois than in others; see Figure 5. Compared to other regions, Panelists from the north and west Illinois Arts Council regions more often report that arts and cultural programming, organizations, and services are available in their communities. There are a few exceptions within these regions. In the north region, Panelists report a lower availability of senior centers than that reported in four of the other regions. A smaller percentage of Panelists from the western region report availability of annual community arts festivals and private art/music lessons in their communities compared to the non-metropolitan counties in other Illinois Arts Council regions. It should be noted, though, that the difference in availability of arts festivals and private lessons across all regions is small.

Figure 5: Panelists Indicating Availability of Organizations and Services in Their Communities by Illinois Arts Council Region

| Organization or Service | % of all respondents | % of respondents by arts (*dark shading = largest %s; light shading = smallest %s) | | | | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|---|------|---------|------|------------|-------|
| | | North | West | Central | East | S. Central | South |
| Arts in the park | 31% | 41% | 39% | 28% | 37% | 19% | 22% |
| Community center | 56% | 63% | 56% | 46% | 55% | 58% | 66% |
| Senior center | 73% | 65% | 79% | 64% | 67% | 86% | 81% |
| Arts festival | 43% | 44% | 43% | 40% | 45% | 43% | 44% |
| Craft fairs | 77% | 89% | 80% | 77% | 67% | 83% | 68% |
| Theater, band, chorus | 54% | 60% | 59% | 57% | 57% | 47% | 41% |
| Movie theater | 46% | 56% | 45% | 45% | 51% | 33% | 44% |
| Live theater | 36% | 45% | 46% | 31% | 40% | 27% | 26% |
| Art league | 24% | 26% | 36% | 20% | 27% | 16% | 19% |
| Historical society | 69% | 78% | 71% | 65% | 67% | 69% | 66% |
| Museum | 53% | 58% | 59% | 43% | 50% | 52% | 56% |
| Private art/music lessons | 66% | 65% | 64% | 67% | 69% | 67% | 61% |

Source: 1998-1999 IRLPS Question 1

*Some percentages are tied due to rounding; shading reflects one decimal place.

Three regions stand out as having the lowest overall availability of arts-related programming; see Figure 5. The south central, south, and central regions have the lowest availability of specific types of programming compared to other regions. In both of the southern regions, arts in the park, community theater, band, orchestra, or chorus, movie theaters, live theater, and art leagues are less available according to Panelists. In both regions, though, Panelists report a significant presence of senior centers compared to reports from other regions.

The central region, compared to other regions, is also less represented in specific ways; namely, Panelists report that this region has the lowest availability of community and senior centers, historical societies, arts festivals, and museums.

Finally, it is interesting to note the regions in which the highest percentages of “don’t know” responses most often occurred. In the north and south regions, the highest percentages of “don’t know” occur for arts in the park, community theater, band, orchestra, or chorus, live theater, art leagues, and private lessons. Panelists living in the north region also report high percentages of “don’t know” for senior centers, arts festivals, and museums compared to Panelists from other regions. South region Panelists also most often report “don’t know” for craft fairs and historical societies. These responses suggest a need for communication about arts activities in these regions.

There is a strong relationship between community size and presence of arts and cultural programming and services; see Figure 6. As one might expect, generally, the smaller the community, the less available are many types of organizations and services. One exception to this relationship is the availability of community centers. The relationship between community size and presence of the arts suggests that the Illinois Arts Council should emphasize programming and outreach in the smaller rural communities if they are to increase access to arts and cultural activities in under-served rural areas.

Figure 6: Panelists Indicating Availability of Organizations and Services in Their Communities by Community Population

| | % of respondents by community size (*dark shading = largest %s; light shading = smallest %s) | | | | | | % of all respondents |
|---------------------------|---|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------|----------------------|
| | 0 -499 | 500 -1,499 | 1,500 -2,499 | 2,500 -4,999 | 5,000 -9,999 | 10000+ | |
| Arts in the park | 3% | 9% | 16% | 21% | 27% | 62% | 31% |
| Community center | 45% | 47% | 44% | 51% | 58% | 70% | 56% |
| Senior center | 28% | 51% | 62% | 79% | 90% | 89% | 73% |
| Arts festival | 12% | 22% | 33% | 36% | 47% | 66% | 43% |
| Craft fairs | 35% | 50% | 75% | 81% | 87% | 94% | 77% |
| Theater, band, chorus | 8% | 19% | 39% | 45% | 62% | 88% | 54% |
| Movie theater | 10% | 8% | 15% | 21% | 50% | 92% | 46% |
| Live theater | 4% | 9% | 14% | 26% | 30% | 72% | 36% |
| Art league | 4% | 4% | 5% | 18% | 24% | 48% | 24% |
| Historical society | 18% | 42% | 61% | 73% | 84% | 87% | 69% |
| Museum | 12% | 28% | 36% | 50% | 68% | 74% | 53% |
| Private art/music lessons | 28% | 46% | 58% | 64% | 74% | 84% | 66% |

Source: 1998-1999 IRLPS Question 1

Fortunately, the majority—at least 50 percent—of Panelists who indicate the absence of arts and cultural opportunities in their communities also indicate having to travel less than 25 miles to access such opportunities. There are three exceptions: slightly more than 50 percent of Panelists would have to travel more than 25 miles for arts in the park, an art league, and live theater. Figure 7 shows the number of miles specific percentages of Panelists would have to travel to access opportunities not available in their communities.

Figure 7: Miles Panelists Would Have to Travel to Organizations and Services Not Available in Their Communities

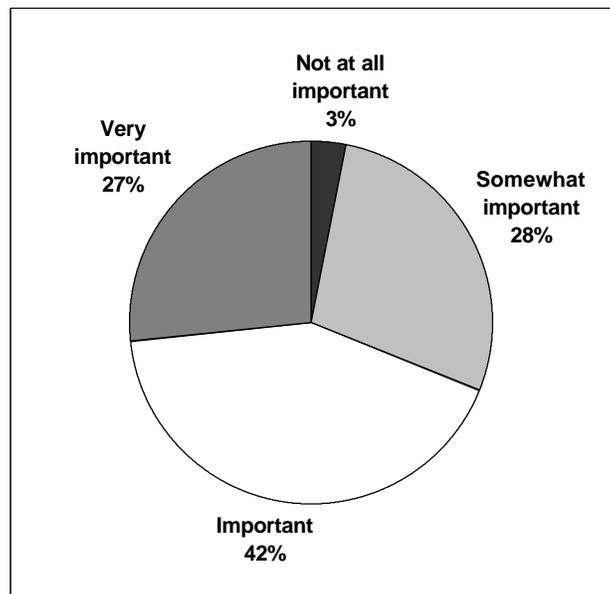
| Organization/Service | 0-24 miles | 25-49 miles | 50+ miles |
|---------------------------|------------|-------------|-----------|
| Arts in the park | 48% | 37% | 15% |
| Community center | 72% | 25% | 4% |
| Senior center | 84% | 15% | 0% |
| Arts festival | 56% | 33% | 11% |
| Craft fairs | 71% | 25% | 5% |
| Theater, band, chorus | 62% | 30% | 8% |
| Movie theater | 74% | 24% | 2% |
| Live theater | 47% | 34% | 19% |
| Art league | 48% | 38% | 14% |
| Historical society | 80% | 17% | 2% |
| Museum | 52% | 26% | 22% |
| Private art/music lessons | 74% | 22% | 4% |

Source: 1998-1999 IRLPS Question 1

Rural Youth Arts Education and Activities

The organizations and arts-related opportunities mentioned in the previous section may be available to both adults and young people living in Panelists' communities. In addition to these opportunities, Panelists specifically indicated availability of arts and cultural activities for youth through the schools, youth groups, and religious organizations in their communities. They also gave their opinions about the importance of educating children in the arts in school. Nearly all Panelists (97%) think educating children in the arts in school is at least "somewhat important." Figure 8 presents the percentage of Panelists who believe arts education to be important.

Figure 8: Panelists' Opinions about the Importance of Educating Children in the Arts in School (n=1,629)



Source: 1998-1999 IRLPS Question 2

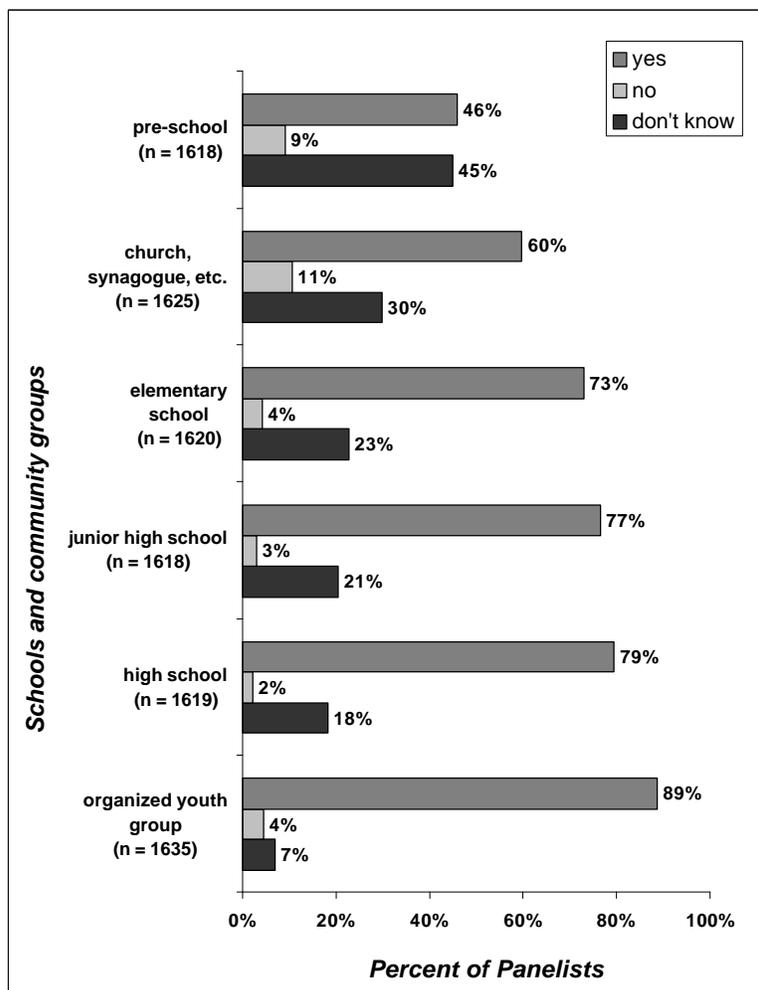
Panelists' opinions about the importance of arts education do not seem to be related to the presence of a person(s) under age 18 in the household (about one-third of Panelists have children in the household) or related to household income. A slightly greater percentage of males than females see arts education in the schools as either "not at all important" or "somewhat important" (36 percent of males compared to 25 percent of females). These attitudes may reflect traditional gender roles.

Educational degree attainment bears some relationship to opinions about arts education. Generally, as the level of formal education increases, importance placed on arts education also increases slightly. Regardless of educational attainment, though, the largest percentages of Panelists at each level of education give arts education in the schools a rating of "important." The exception is for those Panelists who have completed some graduate work or have earned a graduate degree. The largest percentages of these Panelists see arts education as "very important."

In their general comments at the end of the survey, some Panelists expressed concern with educating children in the arts in school at the expense of educational focus in other areas. One Panelist commented, “. . . I do not think art and culture is as important as the three ‘Rs.’ It is very depressing when you hear that skills in the three ‘Rs’ are decreasing every year. Shouldn’t school resources be concentrated on the basics until they are mastered, then art and culture?” See Appendix B for this comment and other general comments that refer to arts and/or cultural activities.

Rural young people appear to have moderately good access to arts and cultural activities; at least 60 percent of Panelists indicate availability of opportunities through each school level (except pre-school), youth groups, or religious organizations. Figure 9 presents the percentage of Panelists stating “yes,” “no,” or “don’t know” to the presence of arts and cultural opportunities for youth.

Figure 9: Panelists Indicating Provision of Arts and Cultural Activities for Children in Schools and Community Groups



Source: 1998-1999 IRLPS Questions 3 through 5

The high percentages of “don’t know” in Figure 9 may indicate a need for increased communication about arts opportunities in Panelists’ communities; it is noteworthy that approximately 20 percent or more of Panelists indicate they do not know about most opportunities for youth arts activities. Unlike Panelists’ attitudes about the importance of arts education, Panelists’ knowledge of arts opportunities appears to be related to having children in the home. A larger percentage of Panelists with household members under age 18 indicate presence of arts and cultural activities through schools, youth groups, and religious organizations compared to the percentage of Panelists without children in the household.

Other associations between Panelists’ knowledge of youth arts opportunities and selected Panelist demographic characteristics include the following:

- Panelists, ages 35 to 49, who are more likely to have elementary or high school age children than older Panelists, report the highest availability of arts activities at each school level.
- The oldest Panelists, age 80 or more, report the least availability; and, more often than other Panelists, these Panelists report they “don’t know” about school arts opportunities.
- The youngest Panelists, ages 18 to 34, report the highest availability of arts and cultural opportunities through youth groups and religious organizations.
- Panelists from the largest non-metropolitan county communities—populations of 10,000 to 50,000 people—report the largest percentage of availability of youth arts and cultural activities through schools, youth groups, and religious organizations.
- Panelists from the smallest rural communities—up to 499 people—report for all youth arts venues (i.e., schools, youth groups, and religious organizations) the least availability of opportunities and the most “don’t know” responses.
- According to Panelists’ responses, the north arts region enjoys the greatest overall availability of youth arts programming through community institutions compared to other regions.
- Panelists indicate the southern-most region has the lowest availability of arts and cultural activities through each community institution (i.e., at each school level, for youth groups, and in religious organizations). It should be noted, though, that “yes” responses from this region are only slightly lower than the overall “yes” responses presented in Figure 9. The differences between the total percents and south region percents range from five to eight percent. In all but one case, the percentages of “don’t know” in the south region are the highest compared to the other regions.

Rural Illinois schools and other organizations could raise awareness about the arts in their communities generally in light of rural residents’ knowledge about youth arts activities. Potentially, schools and other organizations could display youth art projects in public buildings, invite community members to student performances, and communicate with community groups and the media about arts and cultural activities taking place in schools and other settings.

Rural Residents' Participation in the Arts

Illinois rural adult residents participate in arts and cultural activities in numerous ways: as performers and artists, as audience members, for leisure activity, and as volunteers. Figure 10 indicates types of activities in which Panelists participated in the last 12 months and their manner of participation. Definitions of “performer/artist,” “leisure activity,” and “audience member” were not provided for Panelists; therefore, Panelists participating in the arts in similar ways may have indicated their participation differently. For example, one church choir member may have identified him- or herself as a performer while another may have considered this participation leisure activity. Museum visitors and movie watchers may have indicated this participation as “audience member” or “leisure activity.”

Overall, 84 percent of Panelists report participation in at least one arts activity in the last 12 months. The greatest participation of Panelists (as performers or artists, leisure activities, or audience members) is in the categories of movies, film, or video, music (all types), dance, museums, photography, and literature. Examples of literature participation provided for Panelists in the survey instrument included writing and story or poetry reading. Panelists may or may not have included their interest in reading in this category. Movies, musical events, theater, dance performance, and museums involve the greatest numbers of Panelists as audience members.

**Figure 10: Activities and Manner in Which Panelists Participate in the Arts
(n=1,659)**

| Activity | % Total Participation | % Artist/ Performer | % Leisure Activity | % Audience Member |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Sculpture | 10% | 1% | 2% | 7% |
| Other arts and crafts | 15% | 4% | 8% | 5% |
| Woodworking/carving | 22% | 4% | 12% | 8% |
| Visual arts | 25% | 3% | 9% | 14% |
| Needlework, knitting, etc. | 25% | 5% | 13% | 7% |
| Literature | 26% | 4% | 16% | 8% |
| Dance | 30% | 2% | 11% | 19% |
| Photography | 30% | 4% | 19% | 8% |
| Popular music event | 31% | 2% | 8% | 23% |
| Museums | 32% | 1% | 13% | 19% |
| Instrumental music | 40% | 3% | 4% | 36% |
| Theater/ Drama | 40% | 2% | 3% | 37% |
| Vocal music | 44% | 6% | 4% | 37% |
| Movies, film, video | 64% | 2% | 23% | 44% |

Source: 1998-1999 IRLPS Question 6

Panelists' participation in the arts does not relate in a meaningful way to any demographic characteristic except for household income and age. Although income and age can not be construed as causal factors for arts participation based on the 1998-1999 IRLPS, Panelists' responses suggest that arts participation generally varies in these ways:

- With increasing age, participation as leisure activity in many arts events or activities decreases (i.e., dance, instrumental and popular music, photography, movies, woodworking, literature, and other arts and crafts).
- With increasing age, especially after age 65, participation as an audience member for movies and popular music events decreases.
- With increasing income up to \$99,999, participation for leisure activity increases for photography and museums. Panelists with less than \$15,000 annual household income participate in movies and woodworking as leisure activities less than those with higher incomes.
- With increasing income, participation as an audience member increases for theater performances, vocal and instrumental music events, movies, and visual arts activities. Panelists with less than \$15,000 annual household income participate in dance performance and popular music events as audience members less than those with higher incomes.

About one out of ten Panelists supports arts activities as a volunteer (12%). Panelists' written comments demonstrate they volunteer for arts-related activities, programs, and events in various organizations and ways. They support arts and culture in schools, libraries, hospitals and nursing homes, foundations, associations, councils, and clubs, parks, churches, historic preservation sites and societies, museums, community centers, social service organizations, and youth organizations. Panelists volunteer as:

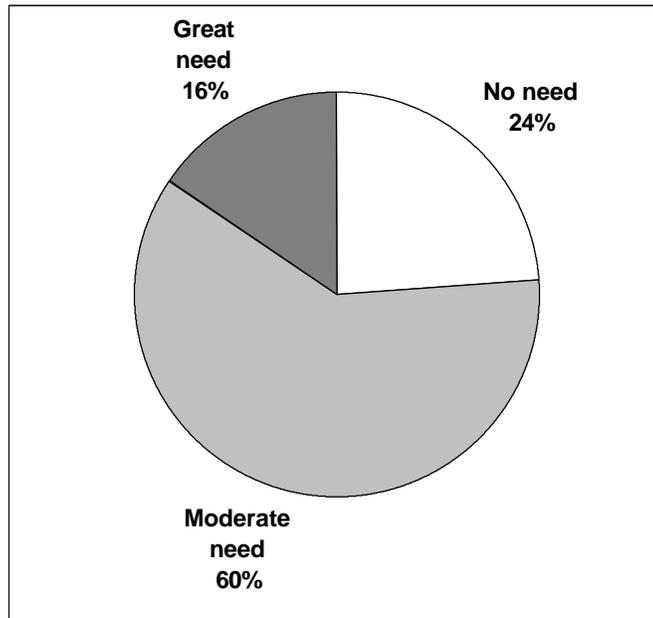
- developers, planners, fundraisers, organizers, and financial contributors;
- artists and performers;
- directors, producers, sponsors, and leaders;
- instructors, demonstrators, and tour guides;
- chaperones, janitors, decorators;
- ushers, safety personnel, and technicians (e.g., props, set construction, lights, sound);
- board members, chairpersons, committee members; and
- salespersons and grant writers.

The numerous ways in which Panelists participate in arts and cultural activities—as volunteers, audience members, leisure activity, and performers or artists—suggests that the Illinois Arts Council has many options for supporting and strengthening arts and cultural life in Illinois rural communities and regions.

Strengthening Rural Arts and Cultural Life

Although about one in four Panelists see no need to strengthen the arts in their communities, the majority of Panelists perceive at least a moderate need to strengthen arts and cultural activities. Figure 11 presents the percentage of Panelists reporting “no need,” a “moderate need,” or a “great need” to increase their communities’ arts focus.

Figure 11: Panelists’ Opinions about the Need to Strengthen Arts and Cultural Activities in Their Communities (n=1,549)



Source: 1998-1999 IRLPS Question 9

When comparing Illinois Arts Council regions, a larger contingency of Panelists from the southern-most region (24%) than from any other region report a great need to strengthen the arts; only six percent of the Panelists from the north region report such a need. The largest percentages of Panelists perceiving no need to strengthen the arts come from either the smallest (0-499 population) or largest (10,000 or more population) non-metropolitan county communities (31 and 30 percent of Panelists from each community size respectively).

When asked to make comments about any survey topic or other issues, a few Panelists said other community issues should be addressed before focussing on the arts. After stating several county problems, one Panelist said, “. . . Do not worry about arts/library. Take care of the important immediate needs. It is a joke when we do a survey for the arts. . . .” Another stated, “. . . Prop up the arts after these more important items are corrected.” See Appendix B for general comments with arts references.

What kinds of arts or cultural activities would Panelists like to see more of in their communities? One-third of all Panelists replied to this question; their comments were categorized to enable summary. Generally, the largest numbers of Panelists—more than 50 in each of the following categories—said they want to see more 1) activities for youth; 2) arts and crafts (e.g., painting, pottery, sculpture, photography, woodworking, sewing); 3) music-related activities (e.g., vocal, popular, instrumental); and 4) theater (e.g., plays, musicals, movies). Panelists’ comments suggest they want increased opportunities for participation as performers or artists, leisure activity, and audience members.

Smaller numbers of Panelists—less than 50 in each category—would like to see more of the following arts and cultural activities: 1) any or all arts or cultural activities; 2) arts or cultural activities for adults or older adults; 3) dance; 4) literary (e.g., writing, poetry reading, story telling); or 5) museums, historic preservation or education, or activities focussing on culture or ethnic diversity. Some Panelists—also less than 50 in each case—say 1) they are satisfied with the arts and cultural activities provided or see no need for more activities or 2) they don’t know, don’t care, or have no interest in having more activities in their communities.

In their general comments, some Panelists expressed a desire for increased arts and cultural programming but mentioned barriers to arts opportunities in their areas. Several Panelists cited limited availability and expense of arts classes for adults and/or children; others said that funding and staffing issues limit arts provision. One Panelist commented:

“ . . . Since Lincoln Land has an extension building here right near our Industrial park, (about 2 years) they did have art workshops available but not widely enough, or reaching enough local children. Of course, costs limited access for some parent’s children to participate as well as faculty and time constraints for Lincoln Land College personnel as well.”

Another Panelist wrote:

“Small towns are struggling to survive. We recently were turned down for a grant to remodel and add on to our Carnegie library. Seems like all the grants go to larger communities. We are on the National Trail Highway and we are trying to promote tourism. We have a wealth of heritage but little help in preserving it. Our Historical Society is doing its best but due to an elderly membership we are progressing very slowly. . . .”

The availability or lack of availability of arts and cultural activities, Panelists' arts participation, and their interest in strengthening arts and cultural programming where they live provide clues to help the Illinois Arts Council serve arts and cultural life in rural communities and regions. In light of Panelists' responses to the 1998-1999 Illinois Rural Life Panel Survey, the Illinois Arts Council may consider:

- Marketing its own mission and values in rural communities to increase awareness among rural residents about the Council and the benefits of arts and cultural activities;
- Emphasizing Council outreach in the two southern and the central arts regions and in the smaller rural communities;
- Encouraging organizations' communication about arts and cultural activities in their communities and suggesting communication strategies to organizations;
- Encouraging schools and other organizations with a youth focus to educate and raise awareness of the arts in their communities generally by highlighting youth art projects;
- Suggesting collaboration strategies for groups and organizations within and among rural communities to make arts and cultural activities available;
- Providing volunteer development training for organizations whose missions support arts and cultural life in the community;
- Sharing information about arts-related programs, projects, events, and organizations available in rural areas that may serve as models or resources for other rural communities;
- Consulting on and facilitating the development of arts and cultural projects in rural communities and regions; and
- Earmarking funding for rural communities and regions.

Appendix A: Respondent Demographics

Figure 1: 1998-1999 Illinois Rural Life Panel Respondent Demographics (n=1,659)

| Variables/Values | Number | *Percent |
|---------------------------------------|--------|----------|
| Age (What year were you born?) | | |
| 18 - 34 | 276 | 16.6% |
| 35 - 49 | 430 | 25.9% |
| 50 - 64 | 444 | 26.8% |
| 65 - 79 | 397 | 23.9% |
| 80+ | 97 | 5.8% |
| No response | 15 | 0.9% |
| Gender | | |
| Female | 736 | 44.4% |
| Male | 914 | 55.1% |
| No response | 9 | 0.5% |
| Marital status | | |
| Single | 111 | 6.7% |
| Married | 1221 | 73.6% |
| Domestic partner | 14 | 0.8% |
| Separated/divorced | 114 | 6.9% |
| Widowed | 185 | 11.2% |
| No response | 14 | 0.8% |
| Race | | |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 5 | 0.3% |
| Black/African American (Non-Hispanic) | 7 | 0.4% |
| Hispanic (Latino/a) | 10 | 0.6% |
| Native American | 110 | 6.6% |
| White (Non-Hispanic) | 1482 | 89.3% |
| Other | 11 | 0.7% |
| Checked more than one | 10 | 0.6% |
| No response | 24 | 1.4% |

Source: 1998-1999 IRLPS Questions 38 through 41

*Percents will add to 99%-101% due to rounding. The demographic table includes the percentage of respondents who did not answer specific questions ("No response"). The percentages described in "Who Are the Illinois Rural Life Panelists?" in the report narrative include only those specifying demographic information; hence, there are slight differences between the percentages in the report and this table.

Figure 1: 1998-1999 Illinois Rural Life Panel Respondent Demographics (n=1,659)

| Variables/Values | Number | *Percent |
|--|--------|----------|
| Community size (Approximately how many people live in your community?) | | |
| 0 - 499 | 153 | 9.2% |
| 500 - 1,499 | 247 | 14.9% |
| 1,500 - 2,499 | 146 | 8.8% |
| 2,500 - 4,999 | 263 | 15.9% |
| 5,000 - 9,999 | 290 | 17.5% |
| 10,000+ | 522 | 31.5% |
| No response | 38 | 2.3% |
| Years in community (How many years have you lived in your community?) | | |
| Less than one | 8 | 0.5% |
| 1 - 5 | 111 | 6.7% |
| 6 - 10 | 109 | 6.6% |
| 11 - 20 | 226 | 13.6% |
| 21+ | 1193 | 71.9% |
| No response | 12 | 0.7% |
| Where respondent lives (Which of the following best describes where you live?) | | |
| In town/city | 1099 | 66.2% |
| On a farm | 191 | 11.5% |
| In the country, but not on a farm | 211 | 12.7% |
| In a rural subdivision | 104 | 6.3% |
| Other | 39 | 2.4% |
| No response | 15 | 0.9% |
| Anyone under 18 at home (Is there anyone living in your household who is under age 18?) | | |
| Yes | 550 | 33.2% |
| No | 1090 | 65.7% |
| No response | 19 | 1.1% |
| Employment | | |
| Full-time | 889 | 53.6% |
| Part-time | 169 | 10.2% |
| Unemployed and looking for work | 36 | 2.2% |
| Unemployed and not looking for work | 352 | 21.2% |
| No response | 213 | 12.8% |

Source: 1998-1999 IRLPS Questions 19, 31, and 43 through 45

*Percents will add to 99%-101% due to rounding. The demographic table includes the percentage of respondents who did not answer specific questions ("No response"). The percentages described in "Who Are the Illinois Rural Life Panelists?" in the report narrative include only those specifying demographic information; hence, there are slight differences between the percentages in the report and this table.

Figure 1: 1998-1999 Illinois Rural Life Panel Respondent Demographics (n=1,659)

| Variables/Values | Number | *Percent |
|---|--------|----------|
| Education (How far did you go in school?) | | |
| Less than a high school degree | 94 | 5.7% |
| High school degree/GED | 455 | 27.4% |
| Some college, but no degree | 421 | 25.4% |
| Associates degree | 138 | 8.3% |
| Bachelors degree | 171 | 10.3% |
| Some graduate work | 92 | 5.5% |
| Graduate degree | 159 | 9.6% |
| Other (e.g., vocational training) | 31 | 1.9% |
| Checked more than one | 82 | 4.9% |
| No response | 16 | 1.0% |
| 1997 gross household income | | |
| Less than \$15,000 | 178 | 10.7% |
| \$15,000 - \$24,999 | 211 | 12.7% |
| \$25,000 - \$34,999 | 306 | 18.4% |
| \$35,000 - \$49,999 | 352 | 21.2% |
| \$50,000 - \$74,999 | 324 | 19.5% |
| \$75,000 - \$99,999 | 84 | 5.1% |
| \$100,000+ | 73 | 4.4% |
| No response | 131 | 7.9% |
| How much of your 1997 gross household income was derived from farming? | | |
| None | 1299 | 78.3% |
| Less than 25% | 175 | 10.5% |
| 25 to 49% | 53 | 3.2% |
| 50 to 74% | 36 | 2.2% |
| 75%+ | 58 | 3.5% |
| No response | 38 | 2.3% |

Source: 1998-1999 IRLPS Questions 46 through 48

*Percents will add to 99%-101% due to rounding. The demographic table includes the percentage of respondents who did not answer specific questions ("No response"). The percentages described in "Who Are the Illinois Rural Life Panelists?" in the report narrative include only those specifying demographic information; hence, there are slight differences between the percentages in the report and this table.

Appendix B: Panelists' Comments

At the end of the 1998-1999 Illinois Rural Life Panel Survey instrument, respondents had an opportunity to provide written comments about any survey topic, other issue, or suggestions for future surveys. Of the 367 respondents who made general comments, 50 Panelists made reference to arts and cultural activities. Their comments are provided in full below. In some cases, comments have been altered to protect the identity of the respondent.

I would like to see more cultural activities for children and less importance put on sports and sport activities in our community.

I have a problem with government subsidized or school art programs. Throughout history the arts have challenged conformity and have ridiculed complacency. Good art challenges the intellect. Government subsidized art will of course have to adhere to the taste and social agenda of the ruling body and school art, having to take care not to offend anyone or tread on anyone's toes, is of necessity going to be vapid and dishwatery. Thus we breed a generation of beanie baby/precious moments art. Maybe my views are a bit cynical, but lets face it, Thoreau was right when he said "the government is best that governs least." Give students the ability to read and write or appreciate the visual or symphonic arts, but don't choose their agenda of what to appreciate. Let them discover art on their own.

Re: Arts in town—we have a very active theater & light opera group, a very active art league & museum societies, a good city rec. dept., and very active private sports leagues & teams. "DO IT IN DANVILLE" was a city motto for a long time, but I say "DO IT IN THE MIDWEST." Central Illinois/Indiana has a high quality of life. [Name]

I think [east central Illinois community] is a kind of stay-the-same situation. It is a kind of established thing. The doctors, lawyers, businessmen have been here for years. Ministers, school teachers come & go. Rent is very high & taxes are high yet there is low income housing, very few factories. High school graduates seem to disappear to live & work elsewhere. The same established farmers are on the school board (some) year after year. Service jobs are available & big turn over there as they find better jobs. [East central Illinois community] may not be a true sample as Mattoon, Champaign, Decatur, Springfield, Effingham are all so close to find all the amenities. Many go out of town to do their trading. To use the expression the streets fold & close down about sundown here. Drug traffic is a problem everywhere but some better now. One couple had a retirement property bought near Nashville, TN—sold out here to retire there but came back & re-established here. Things had changed so much for the worse near the big cities they found the standard of living was better here. Some in Mattoon sellout go to Arizona etc. to live then come back here & re-buy back here after all those years living here. I don't know if there could be a come back for the barber shop quartet—band in the park—no Barnes & Noble store here.

Living in our rural farm community, arts are of little importance to MOST people. Also with the current market prices for all commodities it is becoming increasingly more important to retrain farmers in other business & technical fields. Many of our friends who are farming are also looking for a job elsewhere to help support their families and in some cases in order to hang onto farms that have been in their families for generations. I personally hate to see farm ground being sold in order to put up another sub-division.

Thanks for the opportunity to finish this survey. Sorry you had to send me another. Olney is a unique town for the arts. A lot of people deserve credit but perhaps [local couple] deserve the most.

5600 in county—1 school. Our needs—good support for medical needs. A doctor—MEC. Our county has no hospital—consolidate county wide—1 large excellent hospital. Mental health needs attention. Teen/babies/drugs/unemployed are the problems. Do not worry about arts/library. Take care of the important immediate needs. It is a joke when we do a survey for the arts. Train parents to be parents—which would help out the teachers to improve the education system.

1. Train parents to be parents.
 2. Medical needs
 3. Improve the needs for seniors, worry about the arts when we have everything.
- The State needs to look at funding. This is a waste of money for our state.
-

Its hard to live in a small town. Everyone knows everyone and their business. Everyone complains but no one steps forward during elections so the same tiny mind gets in over and over. There is nothing for the kids but trouble. Very few would consider work but they work very hard at getting into trouble. The government won't let you make them mind then smack their hand when they go astray. They don't like and have no respect for anyone. Some of the teachers act the same way and parents are absent so they, the kids, haven't got a chance. At least the ones that need guidance. There are a few exceptional kids that do well despite absent parents—only 1 parent and teachers that only worry about the paycheck and staying out of the way because they aren't allowed to make them mind either. I really believe this is a much bigger problem than the lack of arts. They need discipline and respect. If they get these 2 things and see the results of getting and giving, the arts will find their way.

I think we are doing well in all four areas. However improvements each year or so is good. I just heard that our civic art center will be closed early next year for some improvements to the lower level. Hope I have been a help.

There is a greater need for higher paying jobs closer to home for non-college graduates, more skills. Training for same should be correlated with schools for same training and businesses that need such skilled people—some of this is now available at Gillespie, IL. Through Vatterot College extension and Lincoln Land Extension new bldg here. However, some from our area (Hillsboro nearby 6-7 miles) are traveling to night school in St. Louis or Springfield to secure special training—re-training often after working all day or part-time locally to help pay bills, because of shutdown of Hillsboro Glass Factory. Some of the wives have secured or had jobs and some husbands have stayed home during day (or night) while wives work to care for children during summer and then they go to night classes here or in St. Louis or Springfield. Note: Since Lincoln Land has an extension building here right near our Industrial park, (about 2 years) they did have art workshops available but not widely enough, or reaching enough local children. Of course, costs limited access for some parent's children to participate as well as faculty and time constraints for Lincoln Land College personnel as well.

We need to provide more housing in the community in order to attract business. Need more cultural activities in the community.

We are 2 hr in any given direction to a large mall for shopping—1-2 hr to a surgeon (I would want to operate on me) or specialist. 2 hr to live entertainment—theater or music event. Like most communities we have federal housing—have lived here 44 years—If I was to drive all around town I would say most older homes are in worse shape today than 10 years ago. Like all towns some areas are better than others—very little new housing. A new apartment complex (many Units) small [sic] area. Will be interesting to see what it looks like when all units are filled with families, cars, pets, etc. College grads move on, all but a few teachers who get hired locally. We set up house keeping in the mid early 50's—when times were much different. A dollar went farther—of course we paid our rent and bills first. Having renters that is not how it is done today. They play first, then try to pay their bills. There's no education on how to manage a household, to budget or how to shop for food or stretch a food dollar. Young couples today are very ignorant when it comes to managing money.

Paris is a small town w/lots of potential. However, it's easier to travel (25-100 miles) & get what you need w/o the hassle of special ordering. We have a wonderful young people's theatre group, excellent parks (& numerous), a great historical society & a very competitive art league. It is a great town to raise families, but it does not have the higher paying jobs, but we are near (25-60 miles) to larger work areas.

We need something for young kids to do in our community. We have no movie theater, skating rink, YMCA. Nothing.

I know I'm not qualified, but when I was in a sociology class, I did some estimating and I figured if all the working class would cut back to 4 day a week jobs that would give all the non-working people jobs, which in turn would help stop a lot of welfare, which in turn we wouldn't have to make as much money because government wouldn't need it if everyone worked and if they didn't work, then they get NO help. It's not fair that people like myself work day and night and can't afford insurance have to support people who sit on their behinds waiting for gov. check and a medical card. People are reinforced NOT to work. I know some people who quit jobs for less paying jobs just to get a medical card. People wake up, this is not right. People who work and contribute to society don't have anything and people who don't get it all. Just like the majority of people on welfare are the ones having children. Working people know they can't afford very many children, some are opting not to have any. So inevitably the majority of our society will be welfare children; which statistically has been proven will be welfare people also. Then who is going to work to pay for all the welfare? Just look at all the arts you could afford if you could take all the welfare only and use it for that purpose. Long-term, the system is going to be a DISASTER, WAKE UP AMERICA.

The only opportunity adults have to indulge in hands-on-art is to pay for classes through the college or local craft shop. These classes are limited and expensive. There are opportunities for adults to try-out for seasonal concerts or quarterly live-theater performances but again the opportunities are limited; teens can try-out for these performances as well, however, there are not nurturing programs to promote talent or the arts in youth, and these opportunities are limited and low-profile.

The Dollar General and Family Dollar have a lot of stock in stores and appear to do a thriving business. There are some things they do not carry in stock. I hear people remark they can buy things here that they can only get in larger towns. The ONE grocery store does a good business. There are items needed, such as—Vicks Vaporub, darning needles with big eyes, paper clips, mentholatum, computer paper, ink also the kind of ink you put on pads to stamp things, cards of buttons, zippers, galvanized buckets and small tubs with a bail, cloth table cloths, spices and flavoring (a variety) not so expensive, more arts, crafts and ceramics. I am a retired senior and crippled. My activities are limited, was formerly active in many things. I am sorry that I haven't been of much help this time. They do teach art in schools and colleges. There does [need] to be more employment for people just out of high school. There is employment, but not enough for everyone. Prices seem on the rise. Our Coast to Coast store closed suddenly and it was doing a thriving business. Need a shop that repairs lawn and riding mowers fast. The store that sold and repaired [word unclear] has closed. I meant to get out and ask questions about all your questions so I could send you an answer. I have had serious [health] problems for several months. Also a death of a relative. Sorry about the delay. Sincerely, [Name]

Public transportation: (1) In town: smaller buses, more frequent runs, more routes, 24/7 service, better advertised, subsidized by MFT funds, and (2) 50-mile radius—from & to smaller communities to hub community and bus/rail transportation between hub communities, e.g. interurban “trolley” making frequent runs on existing track between Galesburg, Macomb, Quad cities, Peoria, for commuters, shoppers, and to attend cultural events; well-publicized to attract riders.

Illinois Arts Council: I do not think art and culture is as important as the three “Rs.” It is very depressing when you hear that skills in the three “Rs” are decreasing every year. Shouldn’t school resources be concentrated on the basics until they are mastered, then art and culture? [Name]

Recreational opportunities in community & surrounding areas. Expansion of public transportation to access cultural opportunities in areas beyond the local area.

Small towns are struggling to survive. We recently were turned down for a grant to remodel and add on to our Carnegie library. Seems like all the grants go to larger communities. We are on the National Trail Highway and we are trying to promote tourism. We have a wealth of heritage but little help in preserving it. Our Historical Society is doing its best but due to an elderly membership we are progressing very slowly. With all these research programs etc. one would think we in small towns would receive more help than we do. [Name]

Thanks for surveying the arts.

Freeport is very arts/culture conscious—We have—Art Museum/Dance Company/Historical Museums/Library/Community Concert Series/Community Theater Group/Community Choir/Orchestra/Community Band (summer)/Theater, band orchestra & dance in high school and community college. Many churches sponsor concerts from time to time.

Our area suffers economic downturn due to low prices in oil & agricultural commodities and EPA restrictions on Illinois coal. Rec. import fees in order to save small farms and the associated communities around rural America. Domestic oil producers are going out of business due to cheap oil. Place \$5 import fee on imported oil and send this to military in order to fund Persian Gulf military efforts. ALSO: if any money is available subsidize small town grocery stores. Elderly in these communities must have a place to buy food, etc. Prop up the arts after these more important items are corrected. Please call anytime.

Everything was fine on here except question #41. I am a white male but simply object to the ongoing fragmentation of our great society. We have ceased to live as one country made of different parts and have become a bunch of parts trying to live as one county. I also do not see the need of the arts being introduced through public education, it should be up to the parents to introduce such things as they deem necessary. I also object to the category of “domestic partner” in question #40. This too is a further fragmentation of the morality that made this country strong. Please don’t get me wrong, there is certainly a place for the arts in the world, but with all due respect, it should not be a societal absolute such as reading, writing and arithmetic.

Concerning arts in my community, there are many opportunities for older children and adults, however, being the parent of a pre-schooler, I don’t think there are as many activities for children not yet in school. I would be interested in ways to get my 4 year old involved in cultural activities. Or is there a place to get information on activities I might not know about. My wife would be interested in a survey dedicated to the needs of working mothers and their children. Ex. Day care business, support groups, work leaves, etc.

Arts in my community is particularly active and supported. Issues such as access to healthcare, transportation concerns (lack of adequate highway access), and “quality of life” are some issues I’d like to see addressed. Living in a rural area is primarily an issue when there is grave difficulty finding the basics of life.

I believe that Charleston, IL would be better served with a community center, such as a YMCA, there are several groups looking into this matter at this time.

Our small community has a very large contingent of artists of all stripes, studio & performance. Most either are working professionally (full or part time), or have worked professionally & have chosen not (mostly to have more secure income). Anyone of any age who does not participate in or patronize art of any kind simply are not interested. Even the lobby of our city hall, as well as MANY businesses have art displays that are changed at least monthly. Performance: Active, private theater, dance, orchestra, academic: all, H.S. & University.

My thoughts are that arts should be a part of the community. They have the ability to show the beauty from another’s eyes. I also think the state & fed taxes should be lower. Far too long has the working men & women supported the others that do not work, or the wealthy that find legal loop holes that beat or cheat the tax laws.

Community Center—for all ages. A place where games or cards could be played, where art lessons, any kind of club meeting could be held. I feel that people should not, necessarily, be segregated by AGE. We have an excellent library. It serves all ages.

On the arts part, my kids have it in school. Also, there are a lot of business closings in our area, last June my wife's job went to Mexico and then there was another area business that closed a few months later. Another of the big factories closed. We live in a small town and few good paying jobs. The health ins. benefits are awful and to get insurance on your own cost an arm and a leg.

I referenced a town 30 miles as my community. As this is where my husband and I work, shop, etc. We live in a small rural town and children belong to a different school district than that referenced as my community. I believe the arts are an important part in any community, but many times feel they are reserved more for higher income families.

Our community is blessed to have an active arts council that provides programs for the schools & community alike. But like many organizations they struggle to maintain programs because of financial reasons. It would benefit all if more city & county developmental dollars would go to arts programs. It's ironic that small communities can receive support for sports from businesses & government & individuals with little trouble and arts programs (community concert, theater, music & visual) seem to suffer. Threaten to eliminate Little League & and you have an uproar but threaten to have art & music once a week in the schools and people say, "Oh too bad!" Aren't they both equally important to our children? Truthfully those kinds of attitudes frighten me.

Only true arts exposure is provided by SIU college and community (35 miles) in this area or 2 1/2 hour trip to St. Louis (100 miles).

There is only one movie theater in the area and it is out of state, overcrowded, needs to be updated and is expensive. Housing could be better. A lot of the homes are old and in need of repair but cost the same as a brand new home for no apparent reason. As a student, the fact that I have to drive more than 50 miles to get to an "in-state" university is really frustrating.

Our town is affected by presence of a university. My answers would be very different most places in Southern Illinois. We are very involved w/ the arts. My husband is a painter, my older son has a jazz band, my daughter is a music teacher.

I live in Carbondale, which is a very diverse community, culturally speaking. It's also got a wide array of age groups living here, as the home of SIUC, college students and the school are the main source of revenue for the town. Two areas I'd like to see improve are 1) The quality of housing, particularly rental property, (much of it is substandard compared to other college towns) and 2) A push to bring more businesses to the town/surrounding area. I might emphasize the need for better restaurants (both chain and local) and the need for employers to consider the wealth of college grads available to work in decent paying jobs with benefits. Thanks, Carbondale, IL Resident

I am a self-employed restaurant owner for the past 21 years in the same county and area. My wife and I are both very interested in our community and in the arts and education. We have 2 grown sons and are very satisfied our area did offer them many if not all education & activities they were interested in and they are both proud of their community and are wanting to stay in the area in the future. If we were not so busy in our business we would be using the activities in our area very often.

We are fortunate in my community to have Southern Illinois University, and a very good junior college—John A Logan—nearby. These two schools provide many arts, cultural, and training opportunities for the people of Southern Illinois. However, with the reduction in coal mining jobs, and no influx of manufacturing or high-tech jobs, it is difficult for educated, native, Southern Illinoisans to find adequate job opportunities.

Future surveys—food styles (i.e., Vegetarianism). Health care vs. holistic care. Anything to raise cultural awareness would be an improvement. I would like to see programs to support fine art & textiles for adults as well as children. The adults have nothing to do—other than eat fried chicken & go to the bars. It's very sad. Something to expand horizons. Personally, I need work space, somewhere to go to paint, draw, sculpt, create, the kind of environment you usually only get if you take a college level art class. Somewhere creative types could get together & work. Of course, with gallery space to show! Thanks for the opportunity to tell SOMEONE this. [Name]

We moved to this area from the St. Louis area, so we are used to a lot of art & music activities. This area is very different & lacks the availability for choices. We are used to a much higher quality (museums, library, movie, theater, etc.).

Danville, IL is a good town. We need more culture however. Nicer restaurants, gallery, etc. The class of people are somewhat lower, due to the fact that high paying jobs are scarce. I feel taxes are very high in the area. One line. Over all taxes are terrible in Danville (real estate). We don't have nice toy shops, dining, coffee, cooking, shopping. That must go to Champaign, Indy or Chicago.

Regarding arts—we have a wonderful county theatre. Because we have chosen to live in a small community we cannot expect to have museums, concerts, etc. We drive to those kind of events. In my opinion, I don't think our taxes should raise to help fund any other organizations. I would not welcome any tax increase for anything. Our family lives within our means—the government should have to do that too.

Our schools do need more arts in lower grades. Teachers are limited on time and there is no art teacher for lower grades. High school has an art teacher.

Question #2 art in school: I think it is more important to spend as much time as possible teaching children good basic math, reading, and spelling. I'm afraid our children are dependent too much on computers to do their daily living and will not know if the computer is right or wrong.

Art is not important to people in areas like this.

My husband and I are retired and both have developed serious health problems in the past year. The questions regarding arts and culture were difficult to answer due to our circumstances. Living in a very small community, we are not as knowledgeable as you need to ascertain a more complete survey regarding this subject, especially in the area aforementioned, the topics probably need attended by the younger generation. I am concerned greatly about the issue that deals with social and spiritual aspects. I am gravely concerned at the way our country is headed. I do not particularly like government intruding in our private personal lives. The youth need to be taught the work ethic. Taught to take responsibility for own actions. Of course, the same needs to be applied to the adults as well. There are many issues that need attention but arts and culture is not a top priority in this home.

We live in a wonderful community with varied individuals whose talents bring art & culture to us. But they struggle on volunteered time. Many enjoy the efforts of a few. Because of our rural setting, we draw a lot of low income people here. The community is very charitable compared to others and with six churches in our town alone, there are many supporting missions. "Our community" really encompasses those in our consolidated school district. Bottom line, we support our children—arts, programs, athletics. These draw the community together. Topics: Why people don't attend church. Are they faithful?

The Hoopeston Art Association holds monthly meetings and sponsors an Art Show held during Hoopeston Sweet Corn Festival. Also give lesson on some form of art at monthly meetings. We take field trips to Art museums at least once a year.

Appendix C: Methodology

Survey Development

The Applied Social Research Unit, Illinois State University, worked with staff members of sponsor organizations to generate topics and questions for the 1998-1999 Illinois Rural Life Panel Survey. Sponsors for this survey include: the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs of Western Illinois University, the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency, and the Applied Social Research Unit. A copy of the survey follows the project methodology.

Sample

In fall 1998, the existing sample of 3,467 Panelists was augmented with 2,000 new contacts, ages 18 to 34, obtained from Survey Sampling, Inc. Because older adults have historically been over-represented on the Illinois Rural Life Panel due to their higher response rate, the 2,000 18 to 34 year olds were added to the 1998-1999 survey sample in an attempt to increase representation of the experience and opinions of this age group. All Illinois Rural Life Panelist samples have been selected randomly and include adult residents (over age 18) of Illinois' non-metropolitan counties. Samples are representative of non-metropolitan residents with listed telephone numbers.

Survey administration

In November 1998, survey questionnaires were mailed to both continuing and new Panelists with an attached cover letter inviting participation. The survey was mailed a second time in February 1999 to Panelists who had not returned a survey.

The sample size for the first mailing was 5,467 Panelists. Of these, 349 contacts proved to be ineligible for the Panel because persons had moved to a metropolitan county of Illinois, moved out of state, had a change of address that could not be traced, were temporarily away, or died. Thus, the final number of eligible Panelists was 5,118.

Survey response

Panelists returned 1,659 questionnaires yielding a response rate of 32 percent (1,659/5,118). Figure 1 in Appendix A provides demographic information (e.g., age, gender, income, education) for these respondents.

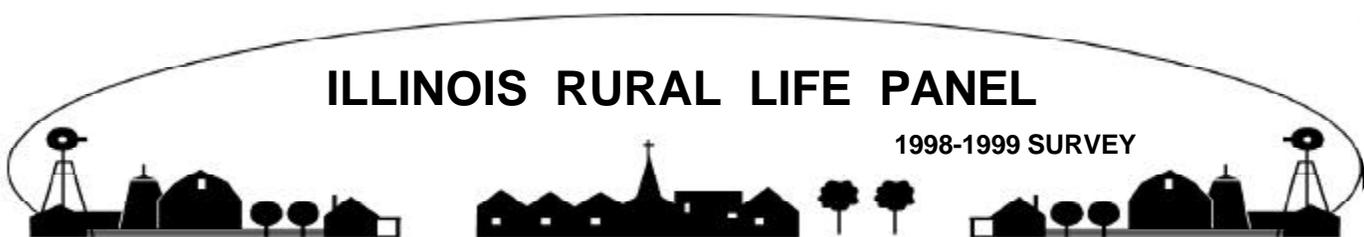
Data analysis

Quantitative survey data were entered and analyzed in SPSS 8.0 for Windows. Frequencies were generated for each question on the survey. In addition, crosstabulations were computed for selected items.

Respondents' written comments were entered in Microsoft Access 97 for Windows. Comments were categorized by content to enable their summary and reporting.

ILLINOIS RURAL LIFE PANEL

1998-1999 SURVEY



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Introduction

This questionnaire asks about your experience as a rural resident with arts and cultural activities, public libraries, housing, and economic and workforce development. You are considered a rural resident for this survey because you live in a nonmetropolitan county—a county that has no community with more than 50,000 people. Many questions refer to "your community." If you live in a town, that town is "your community" for this survey. If you live outside of town, please consider the town closest to you as "your community" (or consider the place to which your mail is addressed if you feel that is more appropriate). *Please be assured your individual responses will remain confidential.*

Arts and cultural activities

The Illinois Arts Council, a state agency, is trying to increase access to and funding for the arts throughout Illinois. The Council wants to know about your interest in and access to arts in your community.

- Please indicate whether or not your community has the following organizations or services. If **no**, please indicate the distance in miles to the nearest such organization or service.

| | yes | no | don't know | if no, miles to nearest organization or service |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Arts in the park..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| Community center..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| Senior center..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| Annual community arts festival..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| Craft fairs..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| Community theatre, band, orchestra, or chorus.. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| Movie theater..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| Live theater..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| Art league..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| Historical society..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| Museum(s)..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| Private art/music lessons..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |

Please specify available lessons _____

- On a scale from "not at all important" to "very important," how important do you think it is to educate children in the arts in school?

**not at all
important**

**somewhat
important**

important

**very
important**

3. Please indicate whether or not local schools provide children with arts and cultural activities.

| | yes | no | don't know |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Pre-school..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Elementary school..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Junior high school..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| High school..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4. Does your community have an organized youth group (e.g., Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4-H, other) that gives children access to arts and cultural activities? yes no don't know

5. Does your community have a church, synagogue, or other religious organization that gives children access to arts and cultural activities? yes no don't know

6. During the last 12 months, which of the following events/activities have you participated in as . . .

A) performer or artist?

B) leisure activity?

C) audience member? Please check all that apply in columns A, B, and C.

| | A) performer/ artist | B) leisure activity | C) audience member |
|---|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Dance..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Theatre/drama..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Vocal music (choral, solo)..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Instrumental music (orchestra, band, solo)..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Popular music event (e.g., Rock-N-Roll, Pop, Golden Oldies)..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Photography..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Movies, film, video..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sculpture..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Visual arts (e.g., painting, drawing, other visual arts)..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Museums..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Needlework, knitting, quilting, crocheting..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Woodworking/carving..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Literature (e.g., writing, story or poetry reading)..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other arts and crafts..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (please explain other arts and crafts) _____ | | | |

7. Do you support any arts activity(ies) as a volunteer? yes no

8. If you answered **yes** to question 7, for what activity(ies) do you volunteer?

9. Is there a need to strengthen arts and cultural activities in your community?

no need

moderate need

great need

10. What kinds of arts or cultural activities would you like to see more of in your community?

Public library services

11. Is there a public library in your community? yes no don't know
12. If **no** to question 11, approximately how many miles away is the nearest public library?
 0-4 miles 5-9 miles 10-24 miles 25-49 miles 50+ miles don't know
13. Do you have a current library card?
 yes
 no  13a. If **no**, are you eligible for a library card? yes no don't know
 don't know
14. Do you use the public library?
 yes  14a. How often? once/week twice/month once/month less than once/month
 no  14b. If **no**, skip to question 19.
15. How do you make use of the library? Check all that apply.
- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> information for my business | <input type="checkbox"/> use the copy machine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> recreational reading | <input type="checkbox"/> use the Internet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> access to newspapers, magazines, or other periodicals | <input type="checkbox"/> use a FAX machine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> locate reference information | <input type="checkbox"/> gather information for my hobby |
| <input type="checkbox"/> attend training programs | <input type="checkbox"/> attend meetings of social groups |
| <input type="checkbox"/> children participate in summer reading program | <input type="checkbox"/> attend business meetings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other (please specify) _____ | |
16. Are you satisfied with the services the library provides? yes no
17. What are the most important things you would like to see the library change? Check all that apply.
- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> more current recreational reading or hobby materials | <input type="checkbox"/> more current newspapers and magazines |
| <input type="checkbox"/> information on job opportunities and careers | <input type="checkbox"/> more information about my community |
| <input type="checkbox"/> more access to materials in other libraries | <input type="checkbox"/> more help with using the Internet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> more assistance in finding library materials | <input type="checkbox"/> more access to computers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> better seating, lighting, or work space | <input type="checkbox"/> access to more videos |
| <input type="checkbox"/> more space for programs or meeting rooms | <input type="checkbox"/> distance learning classes available |
| <input type="checkbox"/> more programs for youth | <input type="checkbox"/> more programs for adults |
| <input type="checkbox"/> open more hours | <input type="checkbox"/> ability to search library's card catalog with home computer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other (please specify) _____ | |
18. How do you access library materials? Check all that apply.
- access library card catalog from home computer
 - go to the actual library building
 - order items from other locations in the state to be picked up at local library
 - use a community information network created by library
 - use library's Internet home page
 - other (please specify) _____
19. Is there anyone living in your household who is under age 18?
 yes  Go to question 20.
 no  Go to question 22.

20. How often do these individuals (under age 18) use the local public library?

- once/week twice/month once/month
 less than once/month only when school assignments require never

21. If these individuals do not use the library, why not? Check all that apply.

- school assignments do not require it use computer/Internet at home
 usually purchase reading materials do not read books very much
 library does not have needed/enough materials library not open at convenient times
 no programs offered for child's age group programs offered at inconvenient times
 materials ordered by my library from other libraries do not arrive in timely manner
 other (specify) _____

22. Do you think having a public library . . .

- | | yes | no | don't know |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. makes a community a better place to live?..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. helps attract businesses to a community?..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. helps attract residents to a community?..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

23. Would you pay higher property taxes to improve the library?

- yes  23a. **If yes, how much more per month?** \$1 \$2 to \$5
 no \$6 to \$10 more than \$10
 don't know

Housing conditions, availability, and affordability

The following questions concern housing (houses, apartments, mobile homes, condominiums, etc.) in your community.

24. Do you live in a: house mobile home apartment/condominium
 other (specify) _____

25. Do you: pay a mortgage own house/mobile home/condominium outright
 rent other (specify) _____

26. Please indicate whether or not the government should . . .

- | | yes | no | don't know |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. help homeowners finance repairing their homes..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. assist first-time homebuyers in purchasing a home..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. assist low-income persons in making rent payments..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

27. Please indicate which of the following statements accurately describes your community's response to housing issues? Check all that apply.

- do not expect population growth in community so housing should be adequate
 new private subdivisions are planned which should meet expected housing demands
 community has planned housing developments to meet housing needs
 community recognizes a housing issue but has not yet formulated a response
 don't know about a community response
 other (specify) _____

28. Please indicate whether or not each of the following statements generally describes housing in your community.

| | yes | no | don't know |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. The housing is in better repair now than it was ten years ago..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Housing is in good repair..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Housing is in substandard condition..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Incoming residents cannot find suitable housing in town..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. There is more available housing now than ten years ago..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. There is enough housing to meet the demand..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g. Communities in this area have a surplus of housing..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| h. Housing is less affordable now than ten years ago..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| i. Many residents cannot afford local housing..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| j. It is easy to obtain a mortgage..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| k. Homeowners can afford to make repairs..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| l. Renters can get landlords to make needed repairs..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| m. The housing needs of older adults are adequately served..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| n. The needs of the homeless are adequately served..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| o. The housing needs of persons with physical disabilities are adequately served..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| p. The housing needs of persons with developmental or mental disabilities are adequately served (e.g., retarded, chronically mentally ill)..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| q. Businesses do not locate in town because of inadequate housing for employees..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Economic and workforce development

29. Compared with five years ago, have local economic conditions:

- improved remained the same worsened

30. Please indicate whether or not each of the following statements generally describes **your community and surrounding areas**.

| | yes | no | don't know |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. High paying jobs are available..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Low paying jobs with benefits are available..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Low paying jobs without benefits are available..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. High school graduates can find jobs..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. College graduates can find jobs..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. Adults over age 40 can find jobs..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g. Many people have lost their jobs in the last few years due to business closures..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| h. Many people have lost their jobs or been laid off in the last few years due to business cutbacks..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| i. Many people have left the area in the past few years because they could not find a job in their chosen field/profession..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| j. Many people have left the area in the past few years because they could not find any job..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| k. Training is available for people who want to improve their job skills..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Information about Panelists

The following questions are for research purposes only. All responses are strictly confidential and are never associated with individual respondents. Data regarding age, gender, income, etc. are used to combine respondents with similar characteristics and analyze their responses to various items. By comparing these smaller sub-groups of respondents, a more accurate and representative picture of the opinions and feelings of rural residents can be obtained.

38. What year were you born? 19_____

39. Are you: Female Male

40. Are you: Single Married Domestic partner
 Separated/divorced Widowed

41. Are you:

Asian/Pacific Islander Native American
 Black/African American (Non-Hispanic) White (Non-Hispanic)
 Hispanic (Latino/a) Other (please specify)_____

42. In what Illinois county do you live? _____

43. Approximately how many people live in your community?

0-499 500-1,499 1,500-2,499
 2,500-4,999 5,000-9,999 10,000 or more

44. How many years have you lived in your community?

less than one 1-5 6-10
 11-20 21 or more

45. Which of the following best describes where you live? Chose one.

in town/city on a farm in the country, not on farm in a rural subdivision
 other (please explain)_____

46. How far did you go in school?

Less than a high school degree Bachelors degree
 High school degree/GED Some graduate work
 Some college, but no degree Graduate degree
 Associates degree Other (e.g. vocational training)_____

47. What was your 1997 gross household income?

Less than \$15,000 \$50,000 to \$74,999
 \$15,000 to \$24,999 \$75,000 to \$99,999
 \$25,000 to \$34,999 \$100,000 or more
 \$35,000 to \$49,999

48. How much of your 1997 gross household income was derived from farming?

none less than 25% 25 to 49% 50 to 74% 75% or more

