

First Unitarian Church Board of Trustees Congregational Survey: 2015 Results

Led by the Board of Trustees, the First Unitarian Church of Portland conducts an annual survey of its congregants (“Board Survey”). The 2015 Board Survey was conducted during February 2015 and two hundred and fifteen (215) congregants responded (“Respondents”).

The 2015 Board Survey focused on three areas: (1) how well First Church meets the elements of its Mission, (2) whether Respondents preferred new statements of Mission elements over older or “original” elements, and (3) demographic information about our congregation. Results are summarized in the sections that follow.

The Board of Trustees welcomes suggestions to improve its annual survey, including ideas for specific questions and ideas to improve participation. The Board’s Communication Committee is preparing the 2016 Board Survey and plans to conduct it during March 2016. Please provide your suggestions and feedback to Board at board@firstunitarianportland.org.

Topic Area 1: How Well is First Church Meeting the Elements of its Mission?

The Mission of First Unitarian Church is:

Given our long and distinguished history in Portland, we covenant: to create a welcoming community of diverse individuals; to promote love, reason and freedom in religion; to foster lifelong spiritual growth; and to act for social justice.

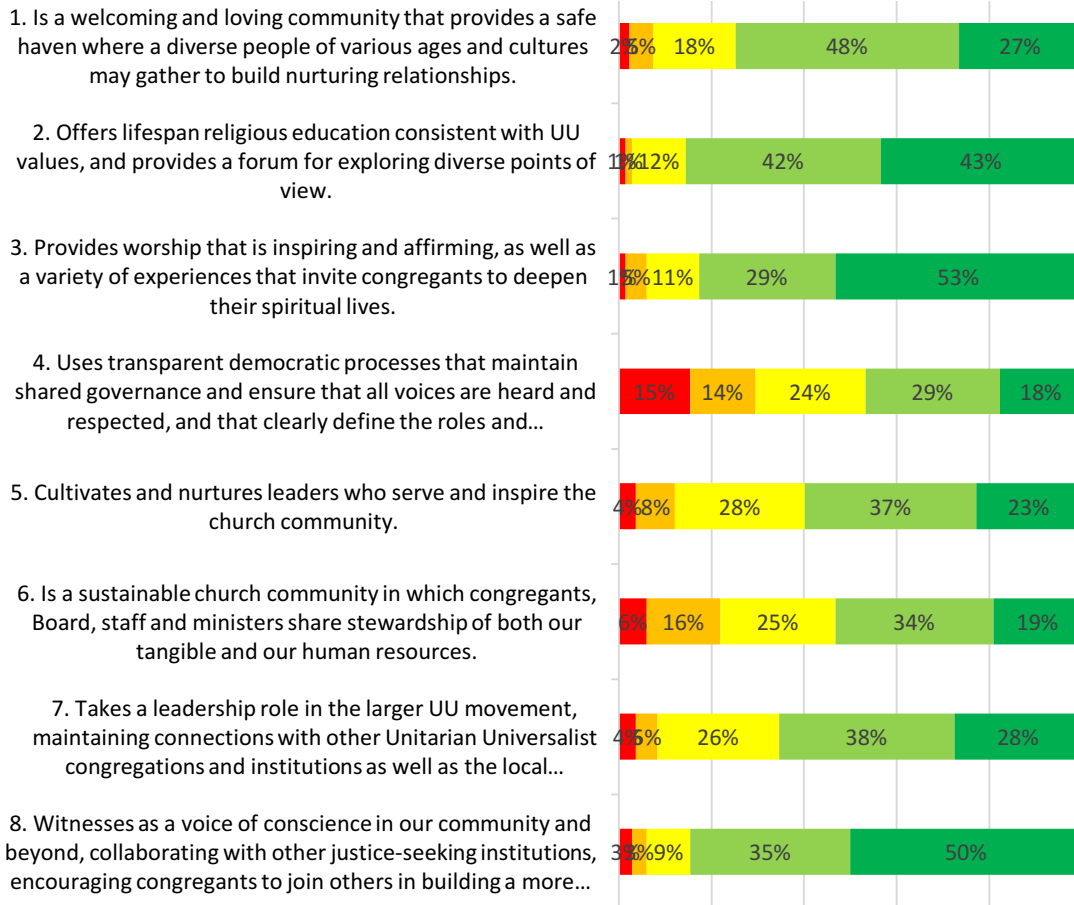
To realize its Mission, the Board has identified eight (8) elements. These elements are meant to be tangible and to provide the basis of measuring performance of the Board and the Church’s executive team. The 2015 Board Survey asked respondents to rate how the Church is performing with respect to each these elements. The following chart shows each Mission element and Respondent scores. Scores of 4 and 5 (i.e., “well” and “extremely well”) are shown in light and dark green. Scores of 1, 2, and 3 are shown in red, orange, and yellow, respectively. For this question, 214 of the 215 Respondents answered.

Elements of our Mission

First Unitarian Church:

Ratings from 1 (Not Very Well) to 5 (Extremely Well)

(% share of responses totaling 100%)



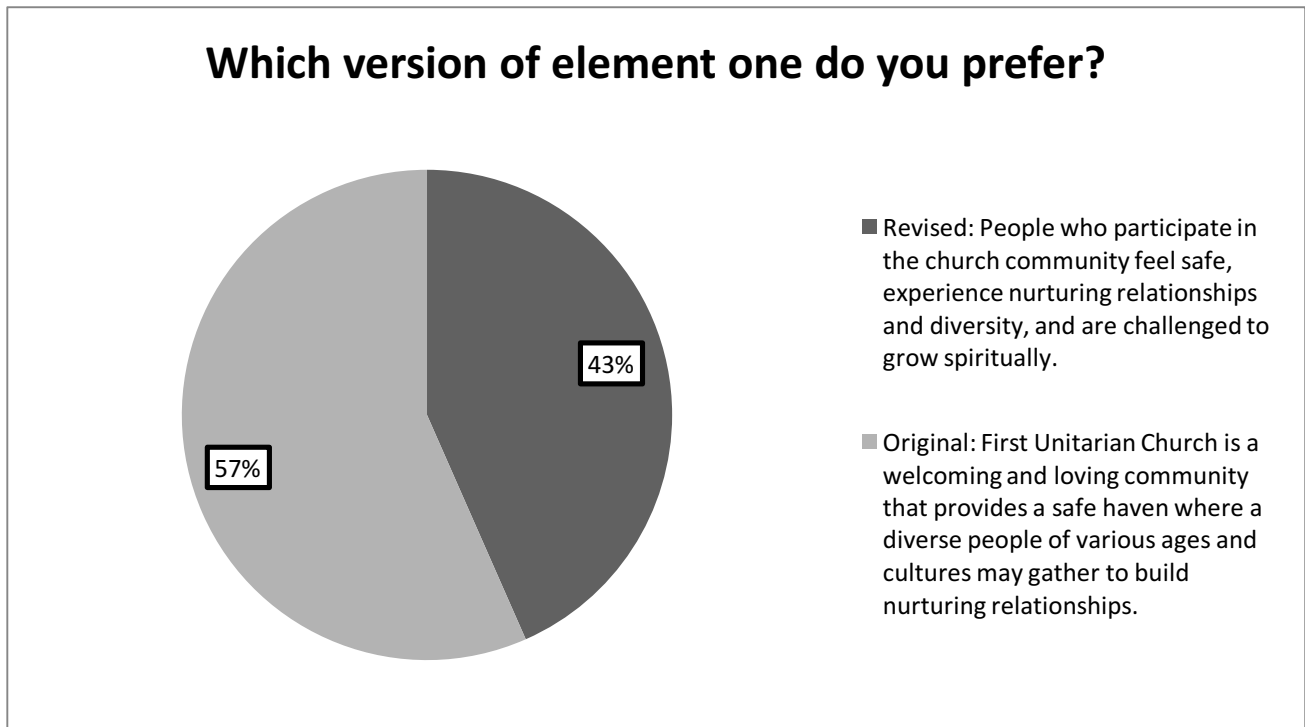
■ 1 (not well) ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 (extremely well)

Topic Area 2: Comparing New and Original Mission Elements:

During 2014, the Board proposed revisions to six of its eight Mission elements. No changes to elements no. 6 (sustainability and stewardship) and 8 (conscience and justice) were proposed. (See prior section for a complete list of the eight Mission elements.) Respondents were asked whether they preferred the new element over the original. The following shows that the revised elements were favored except in the case of Mission element 1 (welcoming community) and 4 (democratic processes and shared governance). The following tables and pie charts show the results by Mission element and how many Respondents answered the question.

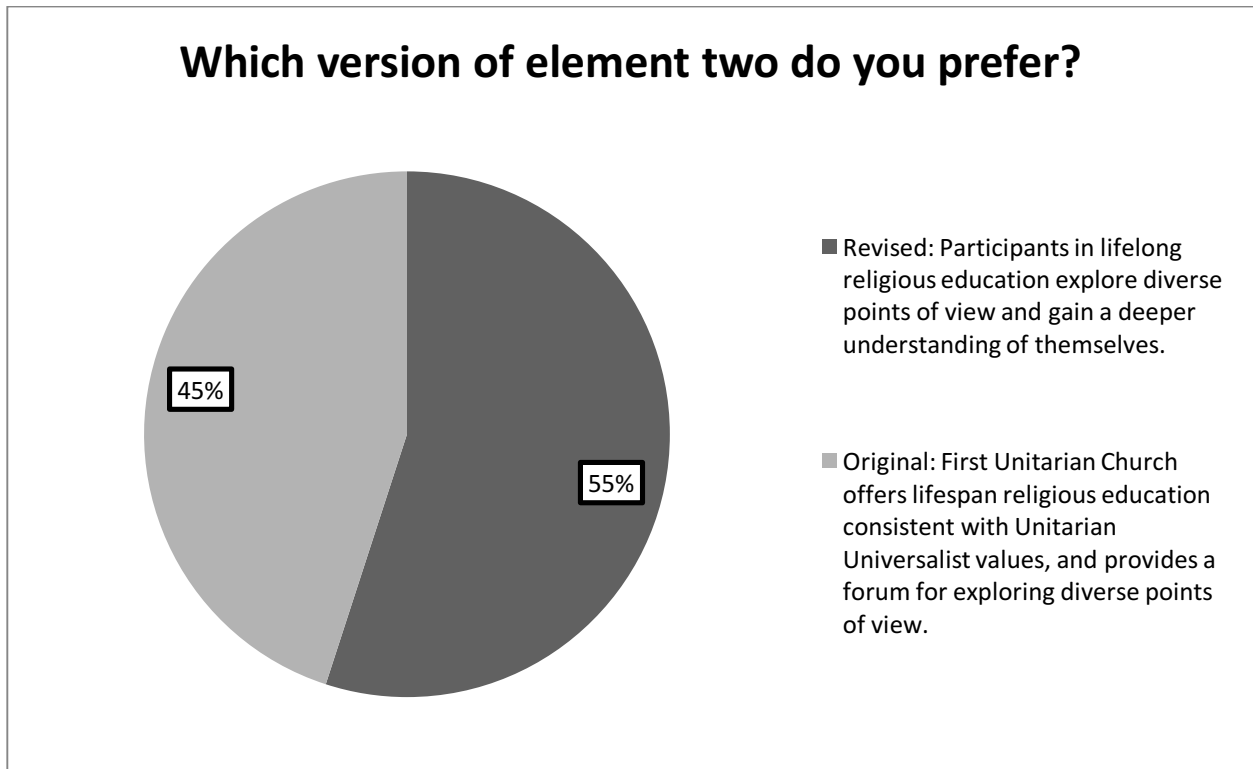
Element One – More Respondents Preferred the Original Version

Which version of element one do you prefer?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Revised: People who participate in the church community feel safe, experience nurturing relationships and diversity, and are challenged to grow spiritually.	43.4%	82
Original: First Unitarian Church is a welcoming and loving community that provides a safe haven where a diverse people of various ages and cultures may gather to build nurturing relationships.	56.6%	107
<i>answered question</i>		189
<i>skipped question</i>		26



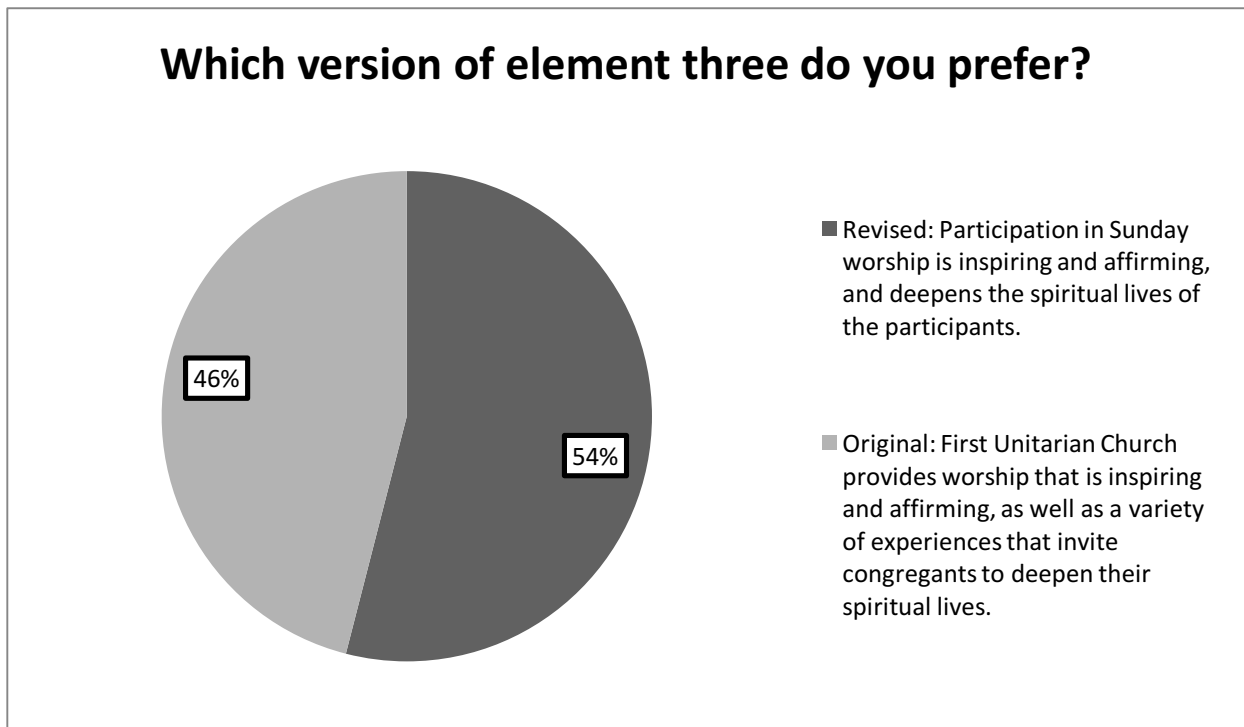
Element Two – More Respondents Preferred the Revised Version

Which version of element two do you prefer?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Revised: Participants in lifelong religious education explore diverse points of view and gain a deeper understanding of themselves.	55.0%	104
Original: First Unitarian Church offers lifespan religious education consistent with Unitarian Universalist values, and provides a forum for exploring diverse points of view.	45.0%	85
<i>answered question</i>		189
<i>skipped question</i>		26



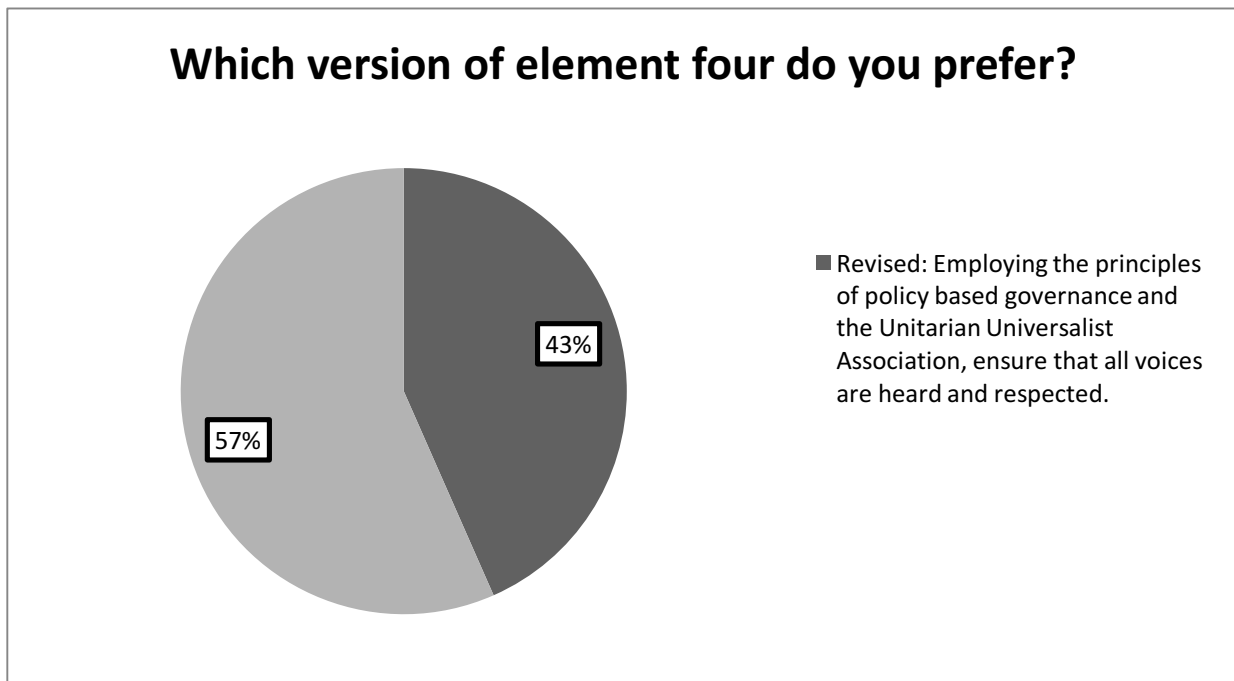
Element Three – More Respondents Preferred the Revised Version

Which version of element three do you prefer?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Revised: Participation in Sunday worship is inspiring and affirming, and deepens the spiritual lives of the participants.	54.0%	102
Original: First Unitarian Church provides worship that is inspiring and affirming, as well as a variety of experiences that invite congregants to deepen their spiritual lives.	46.0%	87
<i>answered question</i>		189
<i>skipped question</i>		26



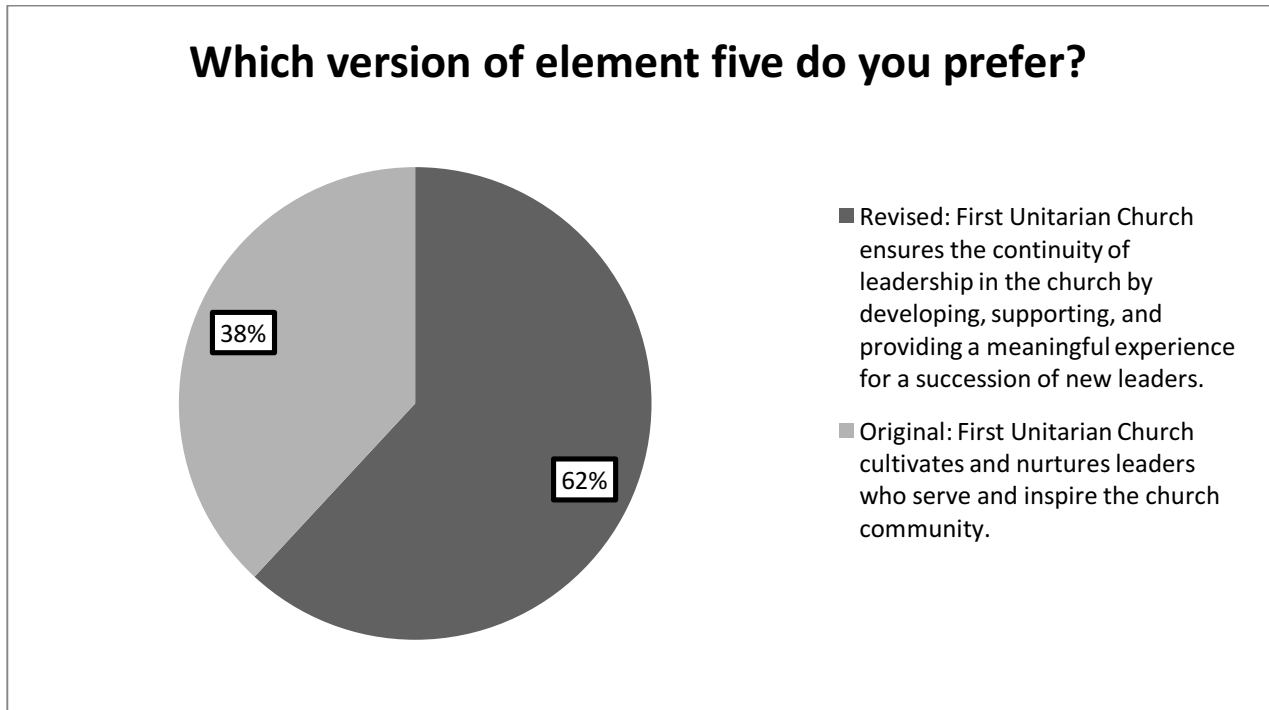
Element Four – More Respondents Preferred the Original Version

Which version of element four do you prefer?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Revised: Employing the principles of policy based governance and the Unitarian Universalist Association, ensure that all voices are heard and respected.	43.4%	82
Original: First Unitarian Church uses transparent democratic processes that maintain shared governance and ensure that all voices are heard and respected, and that clearly define the roles and responsibilities of congregants, the Board, staff, and ministers.	56.6%	107
<i>answered question</i>		189
<i>skipped question</i>		26



Element Five – More Respondents Preferred the Revised Version

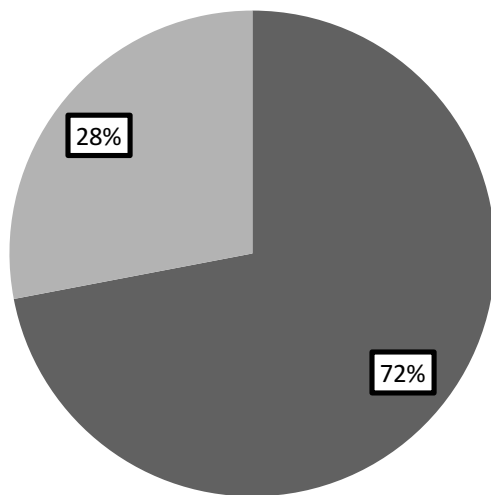
Which version of element five do you prefer?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Revised: First Unitarian Church ensures the continuity of leadership in the church by developing, supporting, and providing a meaningful experience for a succession of new leaders.	61.9%	117
Original: First Unitarian Church cultivates and nurtures leaders who serve and inspire the church community.	38.1%	72
<i>answered question</i>		189
<i>skipped question</i>		26



Element Seven – More Respondents Preferred the Revised Version

Which version of element seven do you prefer?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Revised: The ministers and congregation develop and maintain relationships with other Unitarian Universalist congregations and institutions and the local interfaith community, helping to provide leadership in the larger Unitarian Universalist movement and community.	72.0%	136
Original: First Unitarian Church takes a leadership role in the larger Unitarian Universalist movement, maintaining connections with other Unitarian Universalist congregations and institutions as well as the local interfaith community.	28.0%	53
<i>answered question</i>		189
<i>skipped question</i>		26

Which version of element seven do you prefer?



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- Original: First Unitarian Church takes a leadership role in the larger Unitarian Universalist movement, maintaining connections with other Unitarian Universalist congregations and institutions as well as the local interfaith community.

Topic Area 3: Information about Respondents to the 2015 Board Survey

Demographics

What is your gender?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
gender fluid	1	0.5%
queer	1	0.5%
heterosexual	2	0.9%
n/a	3	1.4%
did not answer	30	14.0%
male	47	21.9%
female	131	60.9%

With which racial/ethnic group(s) do you identify?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Jewish	1	0.5%
Asian	2	0.9%
African-American	4	1.9%
Biracial	6	2.8%
n/a	6	2.8%
did not answer	30	14.0%
Caucasian	166	77.2%

What is your age?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
less than 18	0.0%	0
18 to 25	1.1%	2
26 to 40	7.6%	14
41 to 55	20.5%	38
56 to 70	44.9%	83
Did not answers	14.0%	30
71 or older	25.9%	48