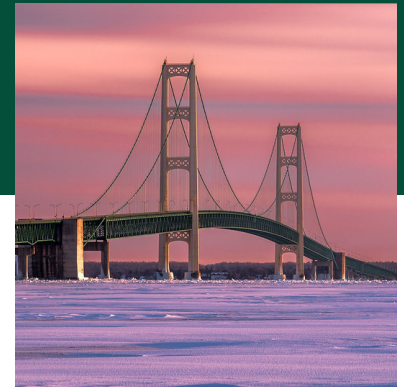


85th State of the State Survey (SOSS) Brief Report October 2022

Institute for Public Policy and Social Research, IPPSR
Michigan State University



Conducted by the:

Office for Survey Research
Institute for Public Policy and Social Research



Office for Survey Research
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

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Overview

This report summarizes key findings from the most recent State of the State Survey (SOSS), a Michigan general adult population survey. SOSS has been conducted since 1994 by the Office for Survey Research, and the Institute for Public Policy and Social Research (IPPSR) at Michigan State University. Initially conducted as a Random Digit Dialing (RDD) telephone survey (1994 - 2020), SOSS now utilizes a YouGov web panel survey (2020 - current). Due to the differences in methodology between the previous telephone and current web panel modes, comparisons between the different methods will not be reported.

The current survey (Wave 85) was completed as a YouGov panel survey with data collection spanning September 2 to September 15, 2022. Invitations were sent to 3,124 adult Michigan residents, and 1,156 interviews were completed. The response rate for this round of SOSS was 38.3%. After calibrating the data to assign weight the final dataset included 1,000 cases. Data was weighted using the “weight” variable for all analysis unless otherwise stated.

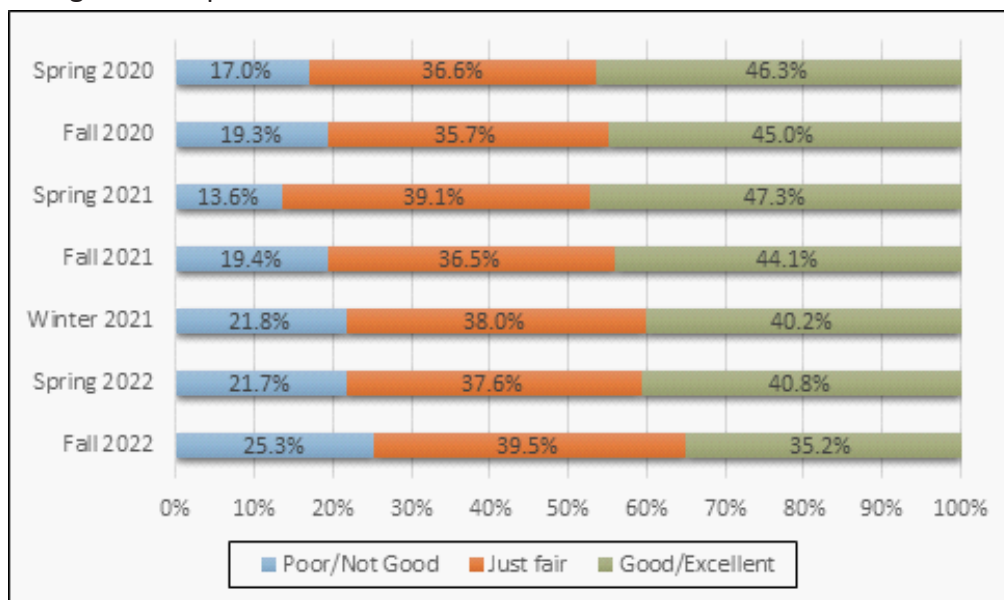
Section A. Economic Optimism

This series of questions is related to multiple areas of economic optimism and has been included in SOSS surveys since the first SOSS in the fall of 1994 (Wave 1). Respondents were asked three questions about their financial situation for three time periods:

- “How would you rate your household’s overall financial situation these days?” (Current)
- “Would you say that you (and your family living with you) are better off or worse off financially than you were a year ago?” (Current to past);
- “Now looking ahead, do you think that a year from now, you and your family living with you will be better off financially or worse off financially?” (Current to future).

The responses to current household financial situation are reported in Figure 1. This figure also compares the current round (Fall 2022) to rounds over the last three years.

Figure 1. Reported Assessment of Current Household Financial Situation



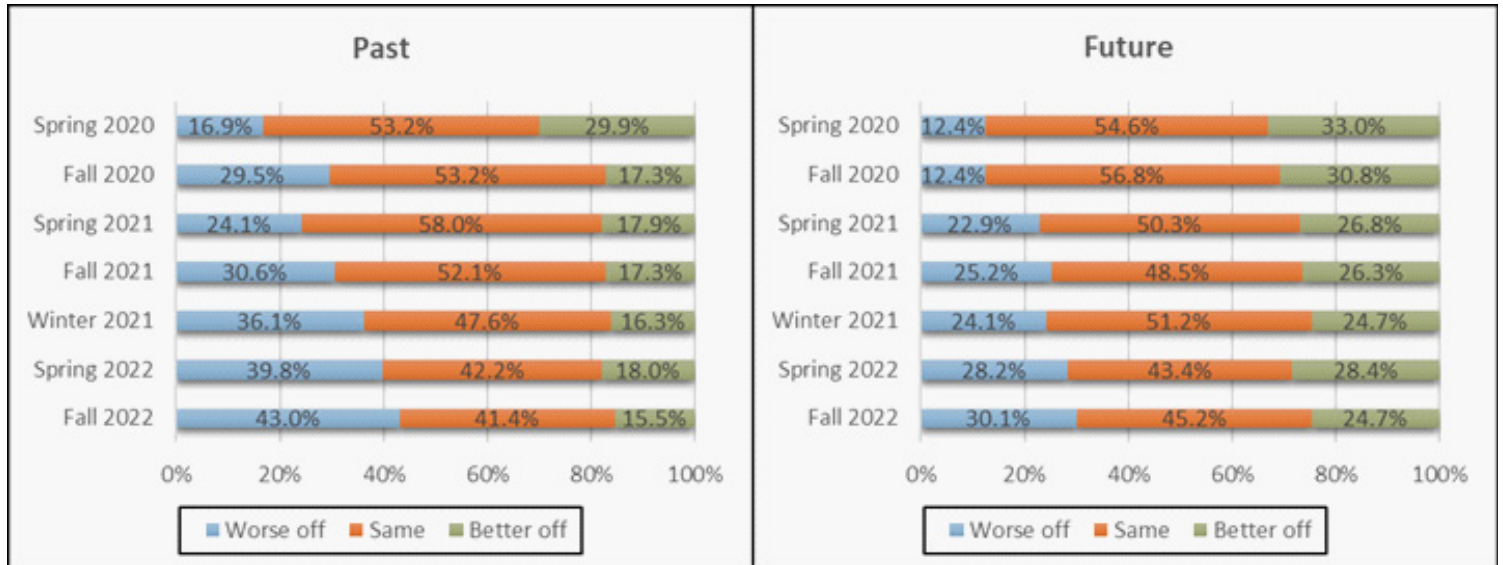
SOSS Sample size = 999-1499

Figure 1 shows a general decrease in SOSS respondents’ views of their personal household finances. It is unclear why Spring 2021 does not appear to follow the same trends as the previous and subsequent SOSS surveys.

- The trend continues to have an increasing number of respondents report that their household situation is poor/not good or just fair.

Respondents' evaluations of their current situation compared to their past financial situation and anticipated future financial situation are reported in Figure 2 for the same time periods.

Figure 2. Reported Assessment of Current Financial Situation Compared to Past/Future



In terms of present conditions compared to 12 months ago (Figure Labeled “Past”):

- Almost 85 percent of respondents reported that they were worse off (43 percent) or the same (41 percent) than they were a year ago.
- The trend continues that more respondents are reporting being worse off than they were a year ago.

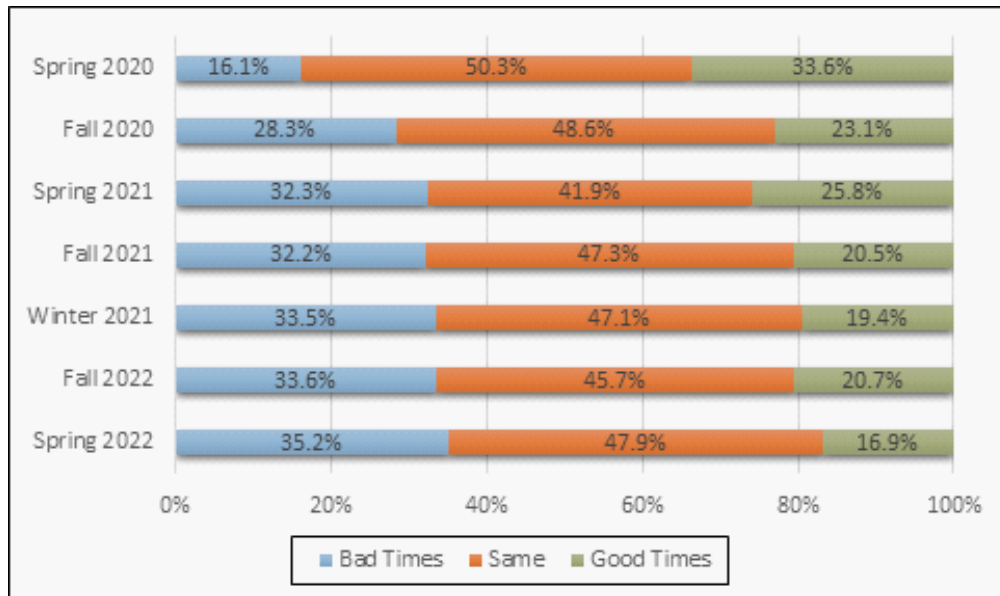
In terms of present conditions compared to those conditions expected 12 months into the future (Table Figure Labeled “Future”):

- Over 75 percent of the respondent believed that they would be worse off or the same financial in the following year as they are now.
- An increasing number of respondents continue to report that they believe they will be worse off next year.

SOSS respondents were also asked, “Now, turning to business conditions in your community, do you think that during the next 12 months, your community will have good times financially or bad times financially?”

The responses to this item for the past six waves of SOSS are summarized in Figure 3 which shows that respondents were somewhat more pessimistic in their expectations about their communities’ financial situations in Winter 2021 than in Fall 2021.

Figure 3. Reported Expected Financial Situation in Community During Next 12 Months



SOSS Sample sizes: 996-1499

In particular:

- 83 percent of respondents expected that the financial situation in their community would be worse off or the same in the coming year as now.

SOSS respondents were then asked about their expectations for specific economic indicators involving the country as a whole during the next 12 months. The questions asked were:

- “Twelve months from now, do you expect the unemployment situation in this country to be better than, worse than, or about the same as it was in the last 12 months?”
- “During the next 12 months, do you think the rate of inflation in this country will go up, will go down, or will stay about the same as it was in the past 12 months?”

Figure 4. Reported Expected Change in Economic Indicators, Over Next 12 Months

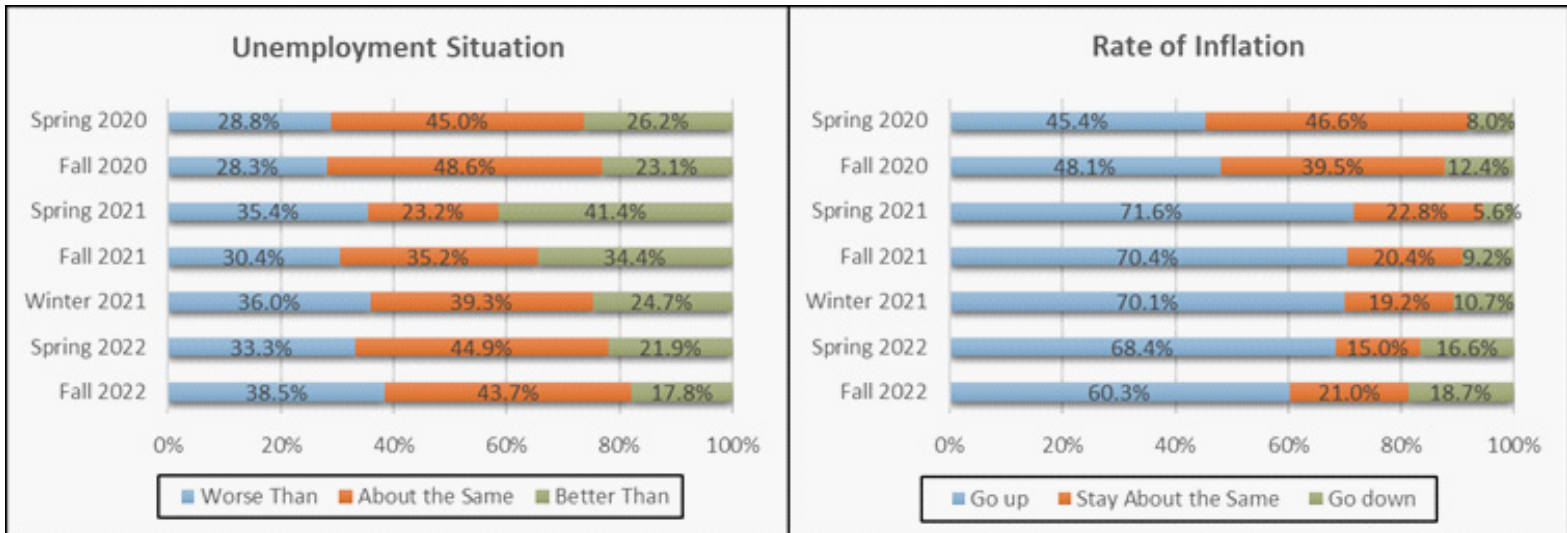


Figure 4 reports the results for these two variables over the past several waves of SOSS.

Specifically, the figure for unemployment shows:

- Respondents believed that the unemployment situation would worsen over the next 12 months.

Figure 4 also reports respondents’ outlook on changes in the rate of inflation during the next 12 months.

In particular,

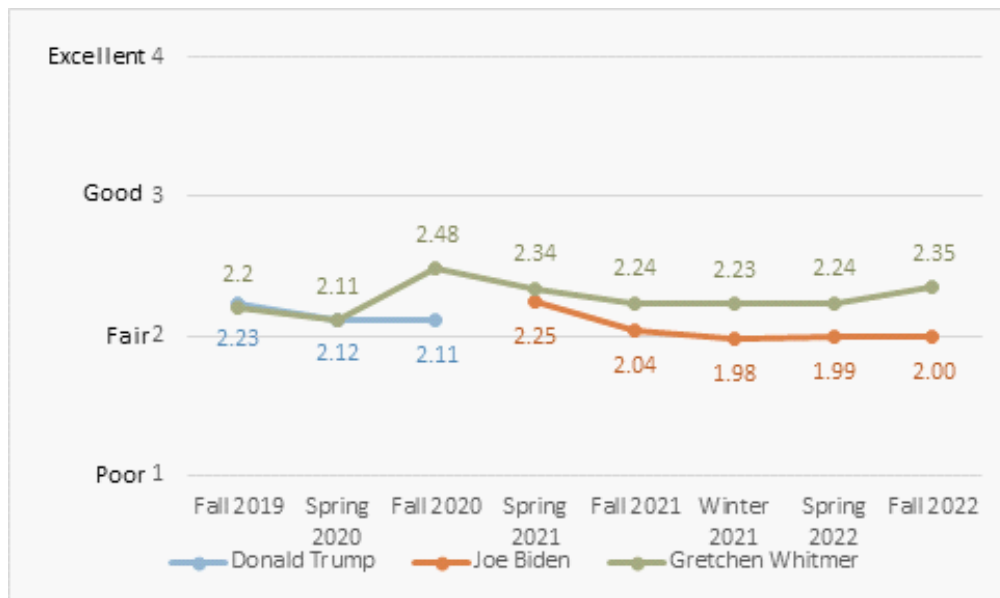
- There was a decrease in the percentage of respondents who felt that inflation would continue to increase within the next 12 months.
- The percentage of respondents who felt that the rate of inflation would stay the same or go down increased from the previous round of SOSS.

Section B. Assessment of Political Leaders

The questions assessing the current U.S. president and Michigan governor were first asked about President Bill Clinton and Governor John Engler in the Winter 1995 SOSS survey (Wave 2). Since Wave 2, the standing Michigan Governor and the U.S. President have been rated using a four-point performance scale of poor (1), fair (2), good (3), and excellent (4).

Figure 5 shows the mean approval rating at the end of President Donald Trump’s term and the beginning of President Joe Biden’s term, as well as the majority of Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer’s term .

Figure 5. Mean Approval Ratings of Executives, Tracked Over Time



As can be seen in Figure 5:

- President Trump’s approval rating decreased over his last year in office but stayed within the Fair to Good range.

² Ratings prior to Fall 2019 were collected as part of telephone interviews and are not included due to methodological differences.

Section C. 2022 State of Michigan Election Expectations

SOSS respondents were asked a series of questions about their expectations for the 2022 Michigan Governor, Attorney General, and Secretary of State.

First, respondents were asked, “How likely are you to vote in the general election on November 8, 2022?”. Of those who answered, 89 percent stated that they were at least somewhat likely.

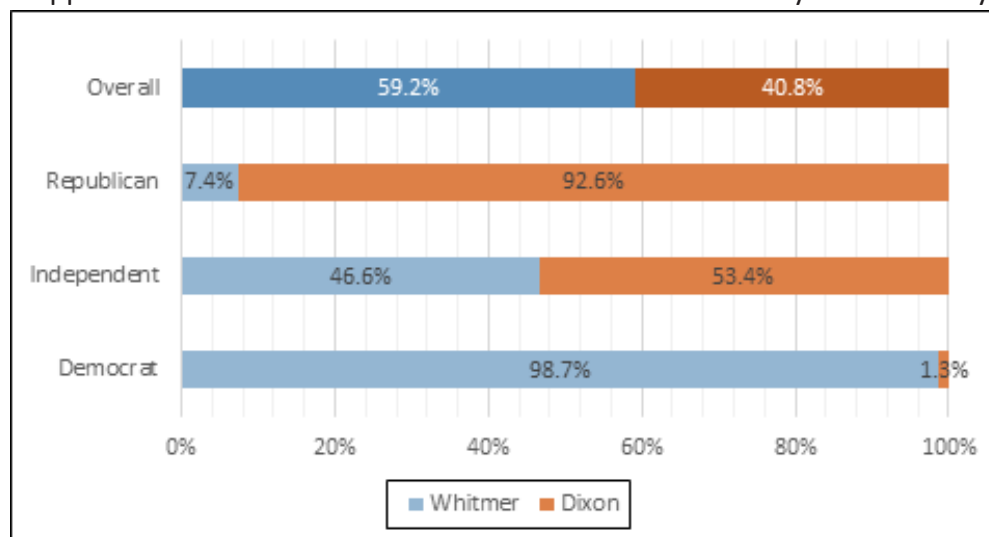
Respondents were then asked:

- Which candidate would you most support for Governor, Gretchen Whitmer, a Democrat, or Tudor Dixon, a Republican?
- Which candidate do you most support for Michigan Attorney General?
- Dana Nessel, a Democrat, or Matthew DePerno, a Republican?
- Which candidate do you most support for Michigan Secretary of State?
- Jocelyn Benson, a Democrat, or Kristina Karamo, a Republican?

Each respondent that answered “I don’t know” for any of these questions was then asked, “If you absolutely had to decide today, who are you most leaning toward? [candidate’s name], a Democrat or [candidate’s name], a Republican?” These two questions were then combined to measure overall support for each candidate. The findings reported are only for those who said that they were at least somewhat likely to vote.

Respondents were then asked which of the two current top candidates - Gretchen Whitmer (Democrat) and James Craig (Republican) - they would support if that candidate won their party’s nomination. Those who initially responded “Don’t Know”, were then asked a follow-up question regarding which candidate they were leaning toward. Figure 7 reports the overall distribution of those that support or lean toward each candidate along with party affiliation differences. Those who were still undecided are not reported in the results.

Figure 6: Support for MI Governor Candidates for the 2022 Election by Political Party Affiliation



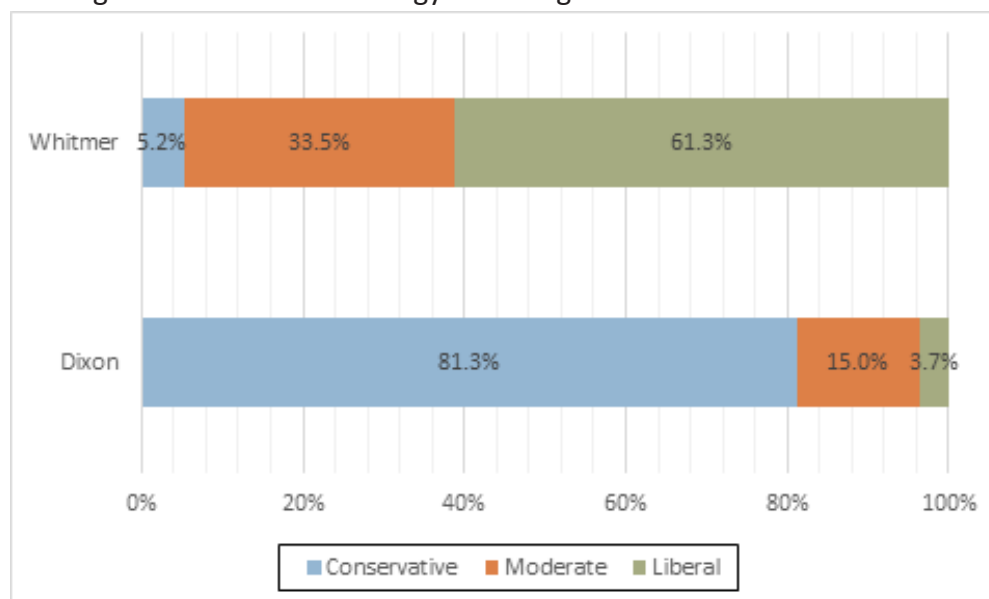
Sample Size = 770

Figure 6 shows:

- Current Governor Whitmer received more support than Tudor-Dixon in general.
- Support generally followed party affiliation, with Independents being more supportive of Tudor-Dixon (Republican).

Respondents were also asked where on a scale of highly conservative to highly liberal would they put the two major party candidates (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Perceived Ideology of Michigan Gubernatorial Candidates



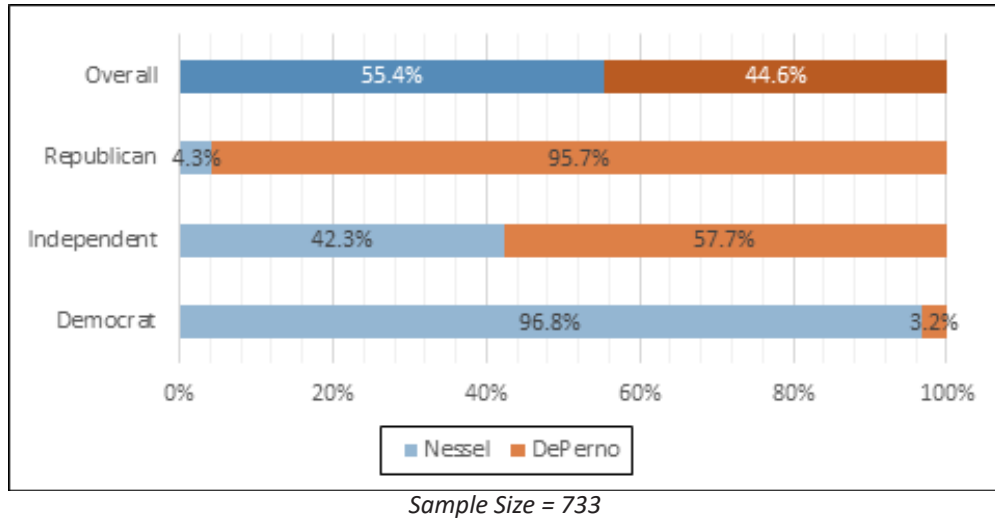
Sample Size = 808/752

In general,

- Tudor-Dixon was seen as being much more conservative than moderate or liberal.
- Whitmer was also seen as being more liberal than either moderate or conservative but was seen as more moderate than Tudor-Dixon.

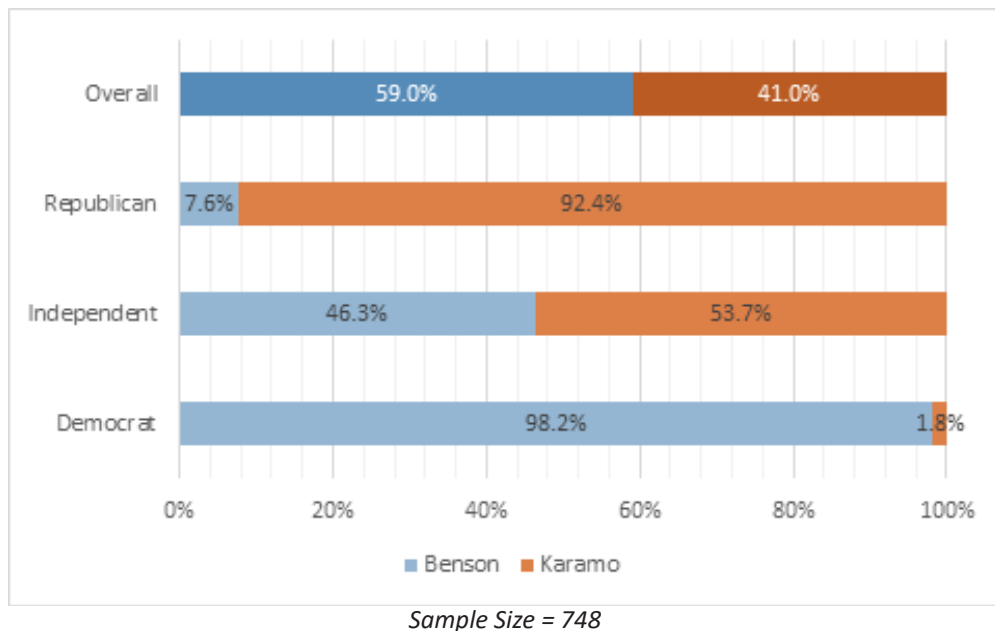
In terms of the Attorney General race, Nessel had the higher level of support reported (Figure 8). Again, support was along party affiliation, and Independents were more supportive of DePerno (Republican).

Figure 8: Support for MI 2022 Attorney General Candidates by Political Party Affiliation



The Secretary of State race again showed more support for the incumbent (Benson) (Figure 9). Party lines were the strongest predictor, and Independents were more likely to favor Karamo (Republican).

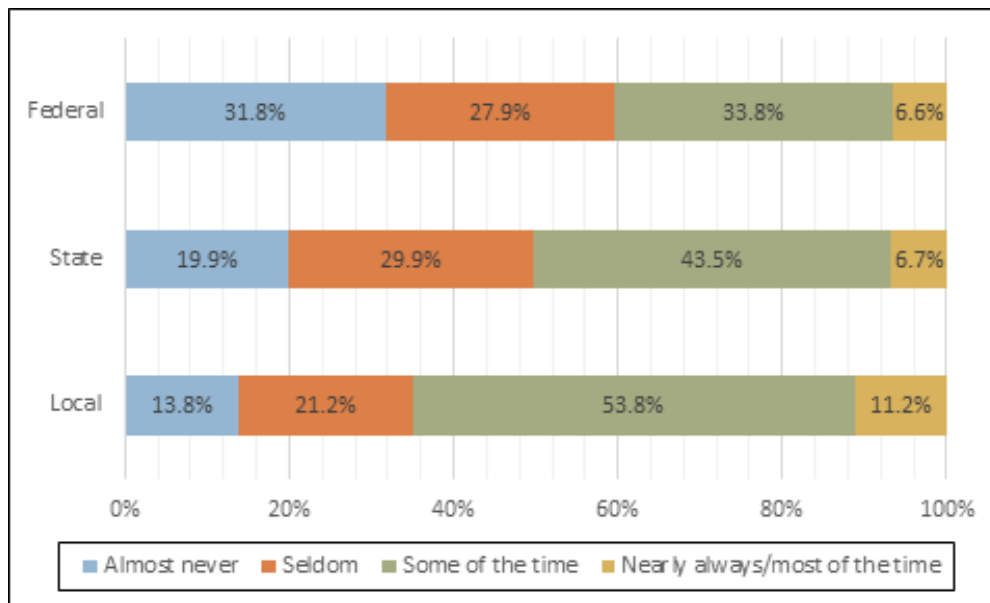
Figure 9: Support for MI 2022 Secretary of State Candidates by Political Party Affiliation



Section D. Trust in Government

Respondents were asked how much of the time they trust the federal and state governments, as well as the level of trust they have in their local government. The amount of trust varied by level of government (Figure 10).

Figure 10: Level of Trust of Governments



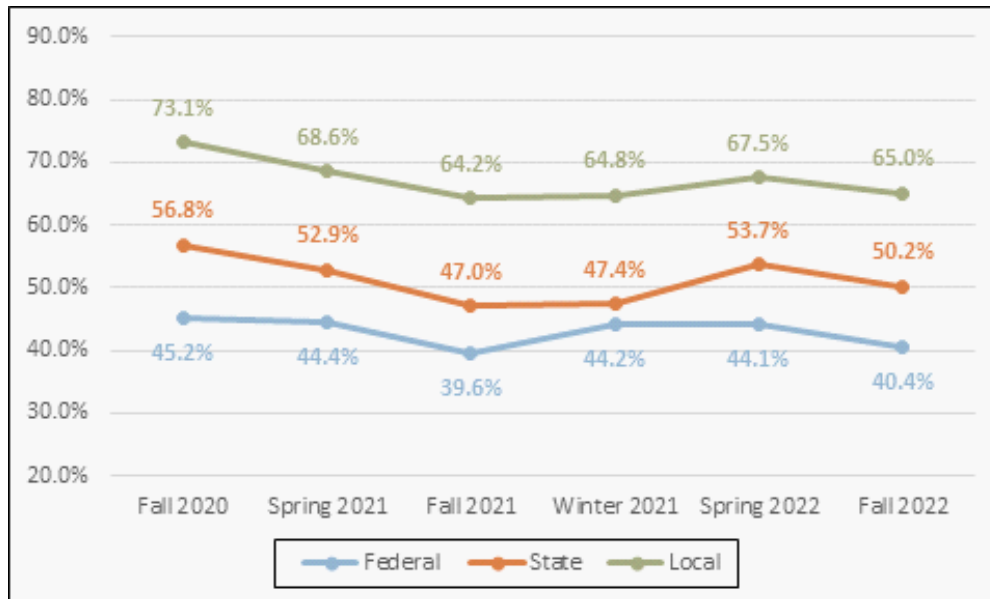
Sample Size = 999/1000/998

In particular,

- The Federal government was the least trusted, with only 40 percent stating that they trusted it.
- Fifty percent of the respondents reported that they trust the State government some of the time or nearly always.
- Local governments were the most trusted level of government, with 65 percent of the respondents stating that they trusted it some of the time or nearly always.

Historically, the same patterns of Local government being the most trusted and Federal government being the least trusted can be seen (Figure 11). The same decreases and increases at one level are also normally mirrored by the other level of government over time.

Figure 11: Historical View of Level of Trust of Governments



Section E. Reproductive Rights Including Abortion Rights

Respondents were asked questions related to Michigan’s Proposal 3 (ballot initiative establishing reproductive rights), their views on abortion, and on the Supreme Courts’ reversal of Roe vs. Wade.

- Are you likely to vote for or against the ballot initiative establishing reproductive rights, including abortion rights?
- Do you think abortions should be legal under any circumstances, legal only under certain circumstances, or illegal in all circumstances?
- How much do you approve or disapprove of the Federal Supreme Court’s decision to overturn Roe vs. Wade?

Figure 12 reports the general support for the reproductive rights ballot initiative (Proposal 3). In general, the majority of respondents supported the initiative, with two-thirds either supporting it or leaning towards supporting it.

Figure 12: Voting Position on the Reproductive Rights Ballot Initiative

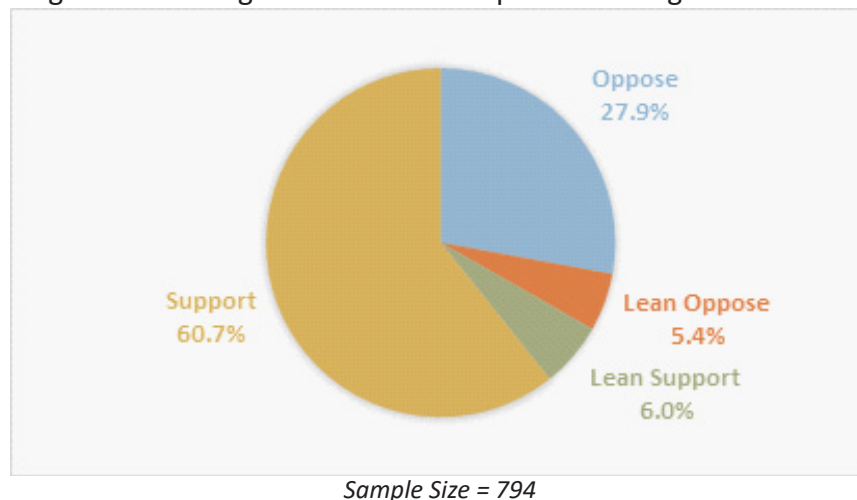
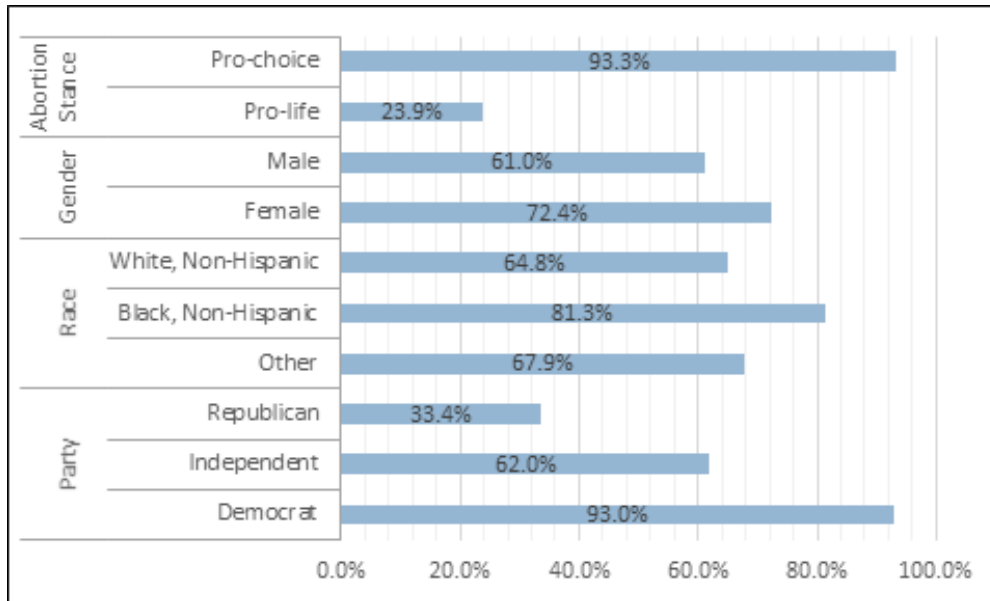


Figure 13 breaks the support down by demographic characteristics. Those who supported the ballot were more likely to be:

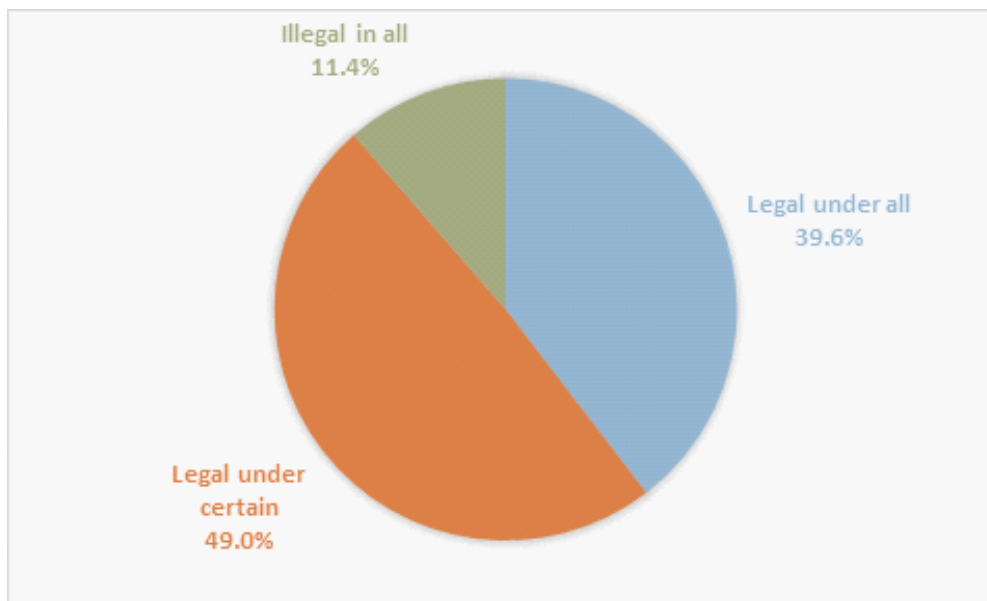
- Pro-choice
- Female
- Black, Non-Hispanic
- Democrat

Figure 13: Support for the Reproductive Rights Ballot Initiative by Demographics



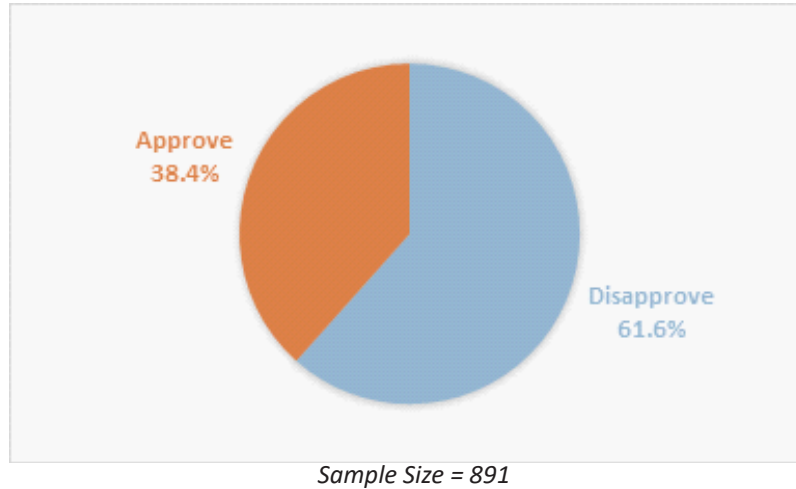
When asked under what circumstances abortion should be allowed, that it should be legal only under certain circumstances was chosen by almost half of the respondents, followed by legal under all circumstances. Only 11 percent felt that it should be illegal under all circumstances (Figure 14).

Figure 14: Circumstances Abortion Should be Allowed



When asked where they stood on the overturning of Roe vs. Wade, the majority disapproved of the decision (Figure 15).

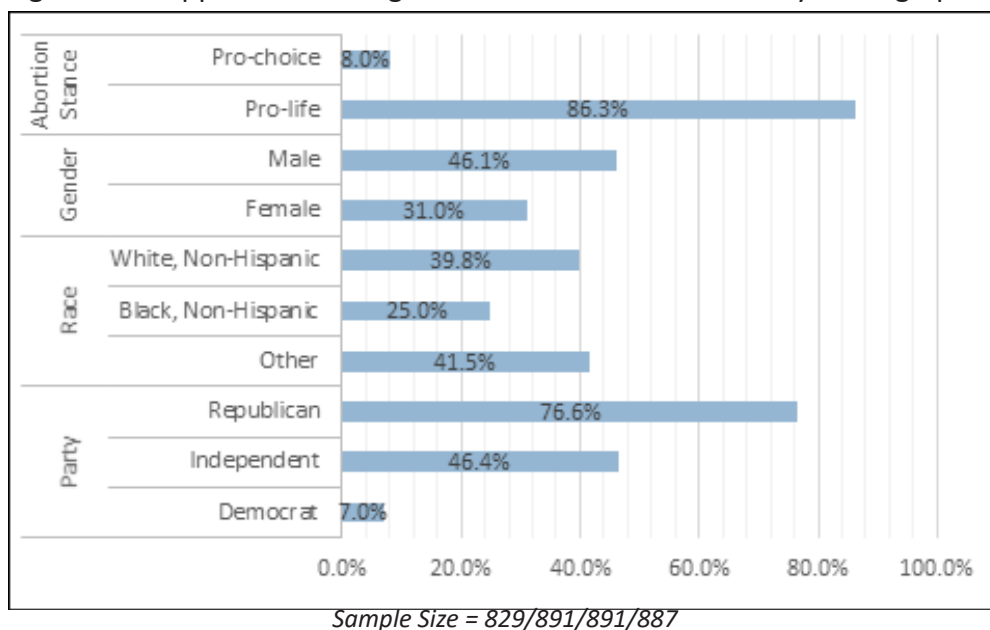
Figure 15: Position on the Overturning of Roe vs. Wade Decision



Support for the overturning of Roe vs. Wade was different by demographics. Those supporting the overturn were more likely to be:

- Pro-life
- Male
- A race other than Black/Non-Hispanic or White/Non-Hispanic
- Republican

Figure 16: Support for Turning Over Roe vs. Wade Decision by Demographics



Summary

Section A: Economic Optimism

- Respondents continue to have a relatively pessimistic view of their current and future financial situations. The only positive trend was the expectation that inflation may decrease over the next 12 months.

Section B: Assessment of Political Leaders

- Governor Whitmer's approval rating climbed from the last round of SOSS in Spring 2022 and is still within the Fair to Good range. President Biden's rating is nearly the same as the previous survey, a rating of Fair.

Section C: 2022 State of Michigan Election Expectations

- Based on respondent support, the positions of Governor, Attorney General, and Secretary of State will all be won by Democratic candidates (Whitmer/Nessel/Benson).

Section D: Trust in Government

- The Federal government continues to be the least trusted level of government, and Local governments remain the most trusted.

Section E: Reproductive Rights Including Abortion Rights

- The Reproductive Rights Ballot Initiative (Proposal 3) appears to have sufficient support to pass. Almost half of respondents believe that abortion should be legal only under certain circumstances.
- Over 60 percent of respondents disapproved of the overturning of Roe vs. Wade.

Appendix

Table A1: Demographic Description of SOSS Respondents

Demographic Characteristics ^a		
Party	Republican	25.6%
	Independent	39.6%
	Democrat	34.9%
Race/Ethnicity ^b	White	83.6%
	Black	13.0%
	Asian/Pacific Islander	1.5%
	Native American/Alaska Native	2.7%
	Other Race	3.0%
	Hispanic	4.8%
Gender ^c	Male	48.7%
	Female	51.3%
	Intersex	0.0%
Education	Less than 4-year Degree	73.1%
	4-Year Degree	16.7%
	Graduate Degree	10.3%
n		1,000
^a SOSS percentages are weighted using survey weights provided by YouGov. ^b Racial/ethnic categories are not mutually exclusive, and respondents may have selected more than one. ^c Due to the small percentage of Intersex respondents, they were not included in the analysis related to gender.		



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