

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

HOBBY SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

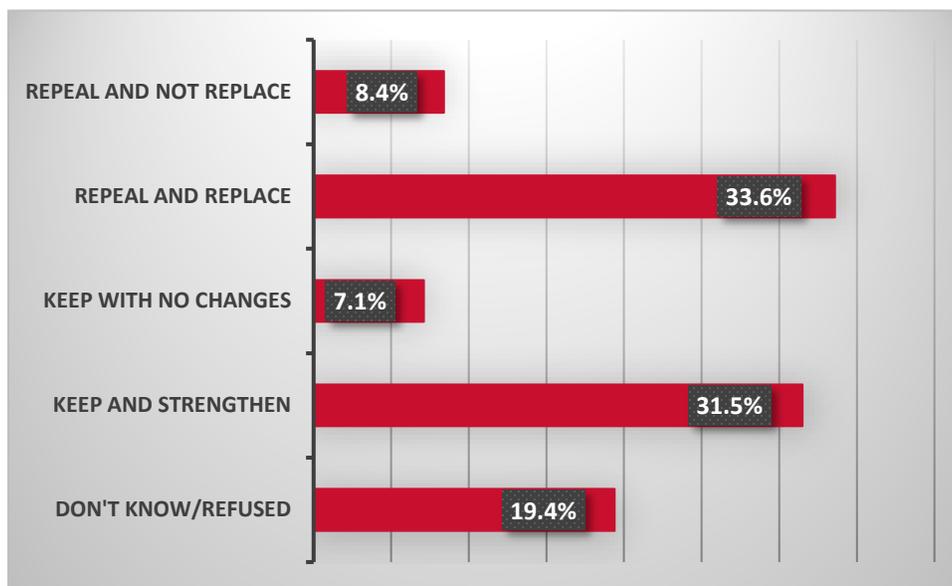
Harris County and City of Houston Survey of Registered Voters May 2017

As the Texas Legislature winds down its regular session and matters are being debated on Capitol Hill and in City Hall, the University of Houston Hobby School of Public Affairs conducted live telephone interviews with 600 registered voters in Harris County concerning pressing public policy issues.

The interviews were conducted by Consumer Research International of San Marcos, Texas between May 1 and May 8, 2017 on landline phones (66 percent) and cell phones (34 percent). The sample was weighted to reflect the composition of Harris County registered voters who live inside and outside of the City of Houston (see Appendix on page 9). The margin of error for the Harris County survey is +/- 4% (at the 95 percent confidence level), and the error rate for the City of Houston sample of 424 registered voters is +/- 4.7%. The survey was conducted under the supervision of Robert Stein, research associate at the Hobby School, in consultation with executive director Jim Granato and associate director Renée Cross. Assistance with this report was provided by Hobby School associates Scott Mason, Ching-Hsing Wang, and Isaiah Warner.

HARRIS COUNTY VOTERS (N=600, MOE +/- 4%)

Preferences Regarding the Affordable Care Act / Obamacare



Harris County registered voters are closely split about what, if anything, to do with President Obama's signature Affordable Care Act:

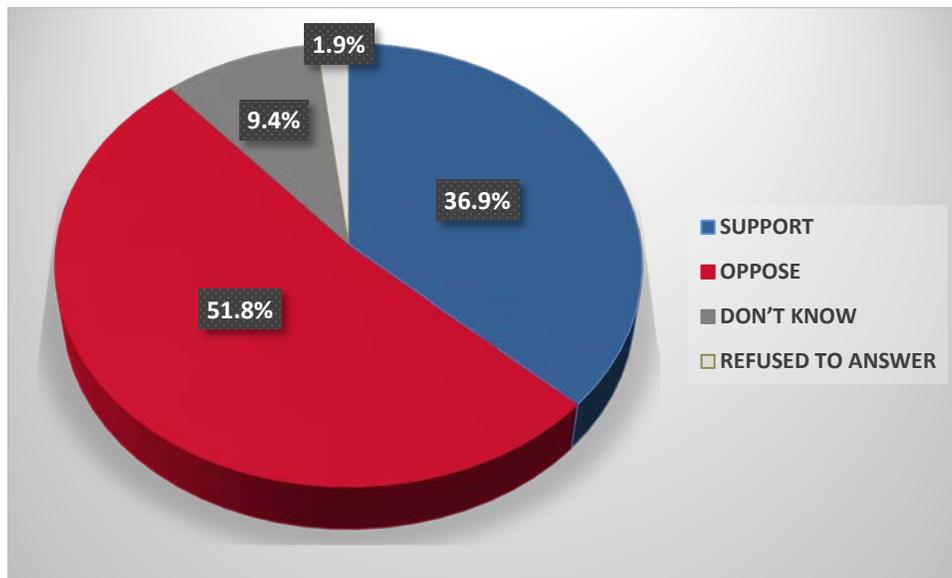
- Forty-two percent favored repealing or repealing and replacing the Affordable Care Act
- Thirty-nine percent favor keeping the Affordable Care Act or strengthening it
- Nineteen percent are undecided or refused to reveal their preferences about the Affordable Care Act

Seventy percent of Harris County Republicans favor repealing and/or replacing the Affordable Care Act while 68 percent of Harris County Democrats favor keeping and/or strengthening it.

Males in Harris County are significantly more likely to support either repeal or repeal with replacement of the Affordable Care Act than women. Registered voters in the City of Houston favor keeping or strengthening the Affordable Care Act in higher numbers than their counterparts in the county.

Support for Sanctuary Cities

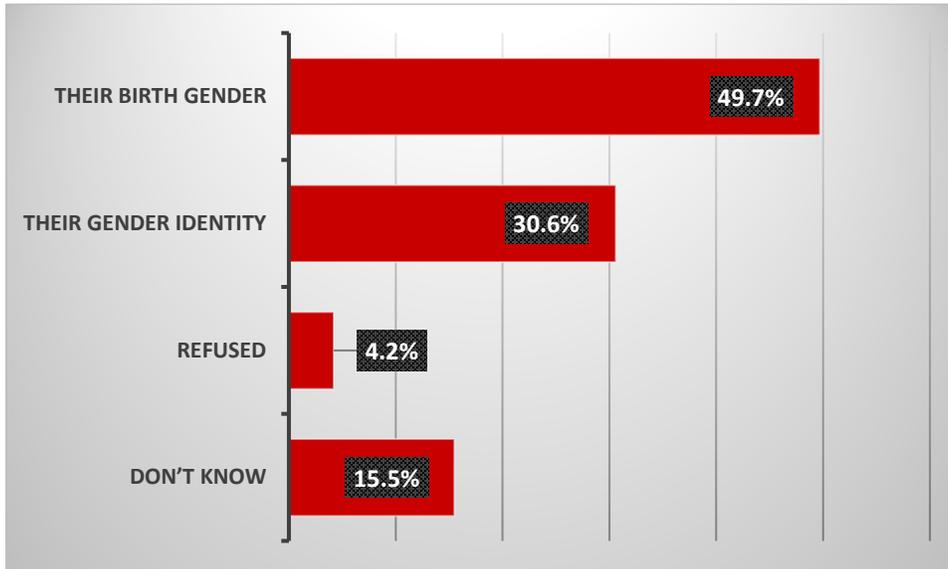
"Some cities in the United States act as "sanctuary cities." That means that when local police or city government employees learn that someone is in the country illegally, they do not automatically turn that person over to federal immigration enforcement officers for possible deportation. Do you support or oppose sanctuary cities?"



A majority (52 percent) of Harris County registered voters oppose sanctuary cities.

Support for sanctuary cities is highest among Hispanics (55 percent), African-Americans (50 percent) and Asians (53 percent). In contrast, only 30 percent of Anglo voters in Harris County support sanctuary cities.

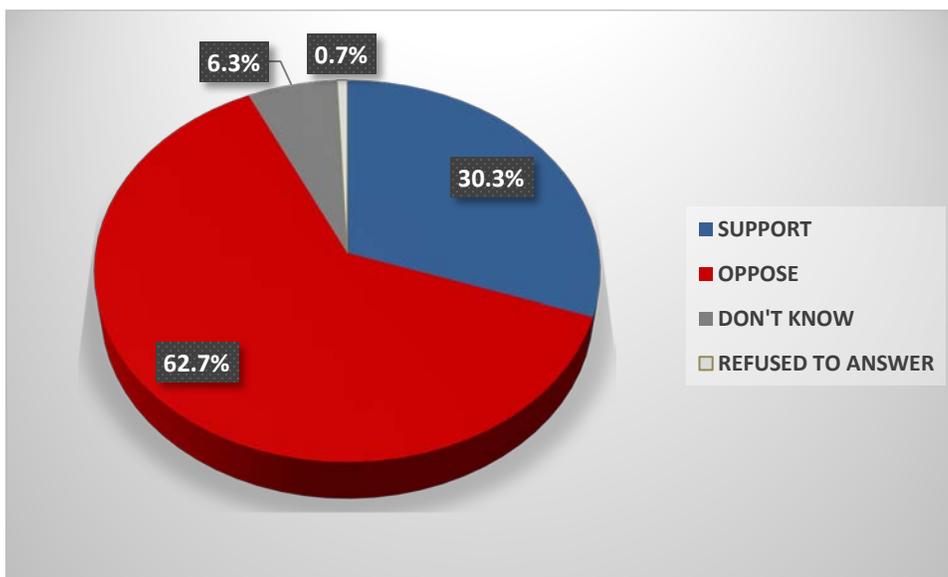
Transgender Access to Public Restrooms



Half (50 percent) of Harris County registered voters believe that access to public restrooms should be based on birth gender, with close to one-third (31%) believing gender identity is the basis. About one-fifth (19%) refused to reveal their preferences or don't know.

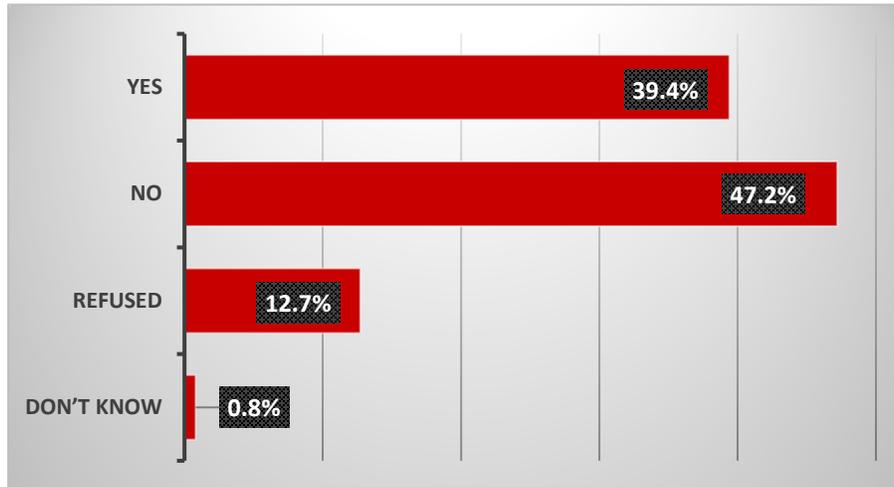
The majority of men (54 percent) support birth gender as the basis for using public bathrooms. In contrast, a majority of women (55 percent) favor using gender identify as the basis for access to public bathrooms or are undecided.

Support for School Vouchers



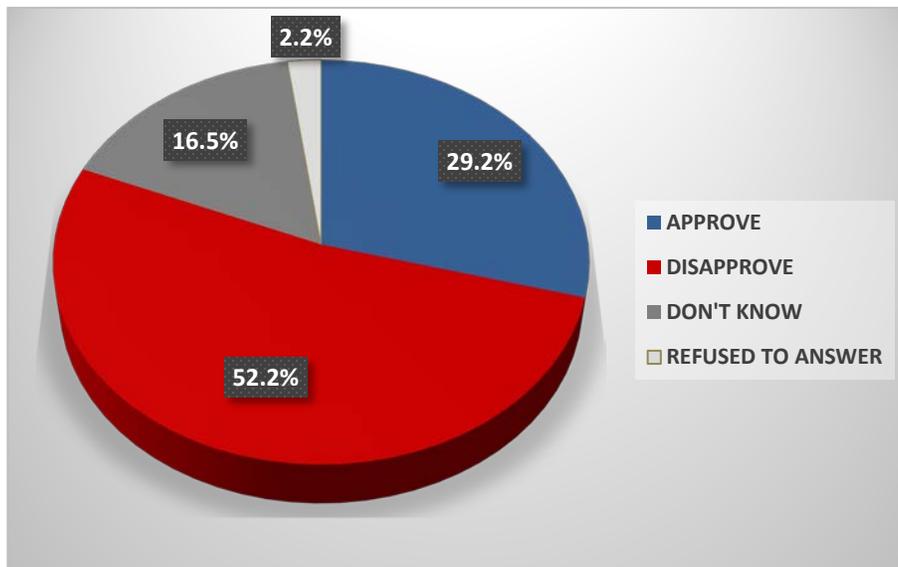
A majority (63 percent) of Harris County registered voters oppose using state funding for private schools. When considering gender, women oppose the use of state funds to support private and parochial schools (69 percent), while males oppose redirecting state tax revenues to support families with children in private and parochial schools by only 57 percent.

Using the Rainy Day Fund to Avoid Budget Cuts



Harris County voters are divided on the issue of tapping the state’s Rainy Day Fund to avoid potential cuts in the state’s budget. Close to half of Harris County registered voters — 47 percent — oppose using the state’s Rainy Day Fund to support the budget while 39 percent support using the fund to avoid budget cuts.

State Nullification of Local Government Laws

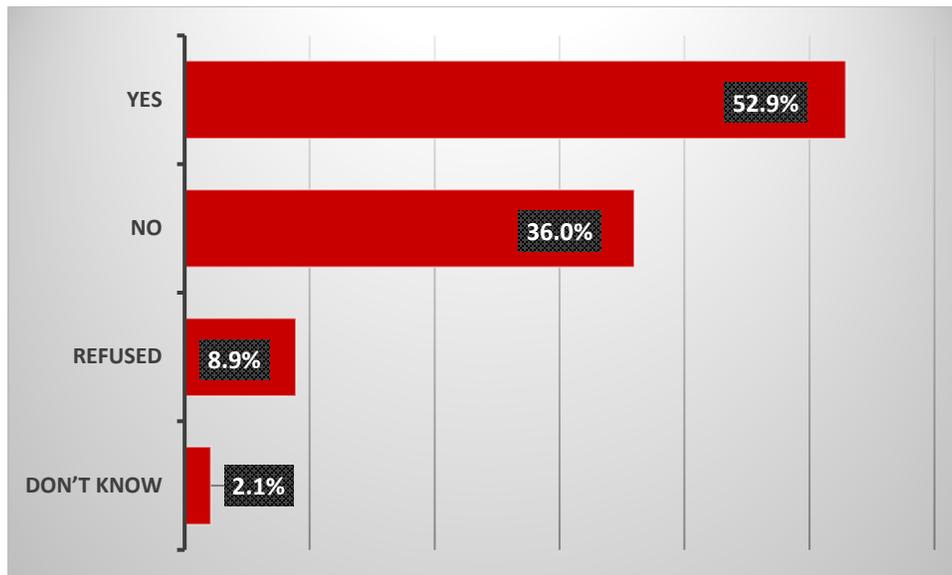


A majority (52 percent) of Harris County registered voters disapprove of the Texas Legislature passing laws to override local measures.

Partisanship differentiates Harris County voters on support of state nullification of local laws. While the majority of those considering themselves a Republican, a Democrat or an Independent oppose the state overriding local laws, 42 percent of Independents and 40 percent of Republicans approve of this practice by the state compared to only 21 percent of Democrats.

CITY OF HOUSTON SAMPLE (N=425, MOE +/- 4.7%)

Support for City of Houston Pension Bond Proposal

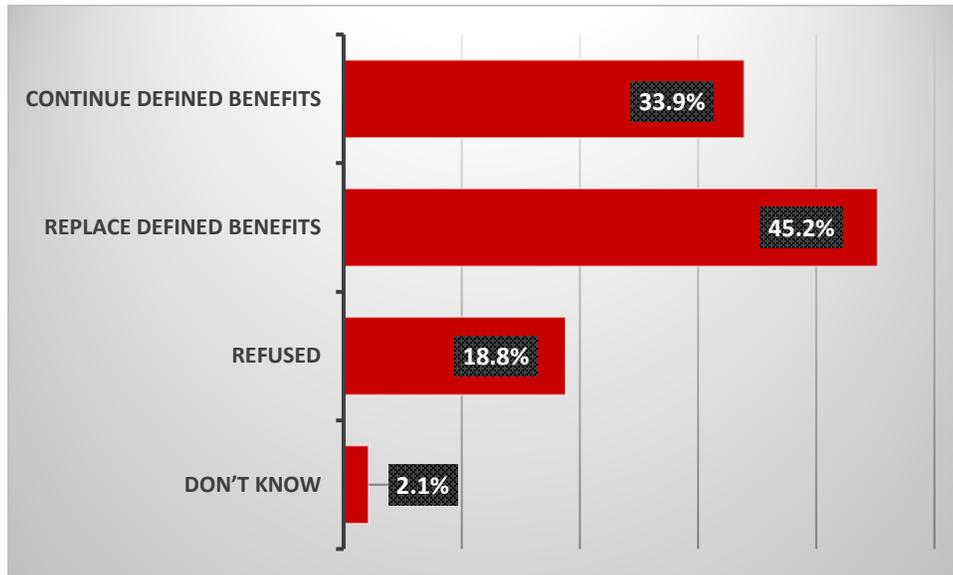


The majority of registered voters in the City of Houston support the issuance of general obligation bonds to pay down the city's debt obligation to the pension fund of city employees by a margin of 53 percent to 36 percent, or 17 points in favor of adoption.

Among registered voters who voted in the 2015 City of Houston municipal election, 59 percent support the \$1 billion bond compared to 46 percent who reported supporting the bond, but did not vote in the 2015 City of Houston municipal election, resulting in a margin of 13 percent points favoring adoption among those who voted in the last municipal election.

Men are significantly more likely to support the pension bond (58 percent) than women (42 percent).

Eliminating the Defined Benefit Retirement Plan for City Employees



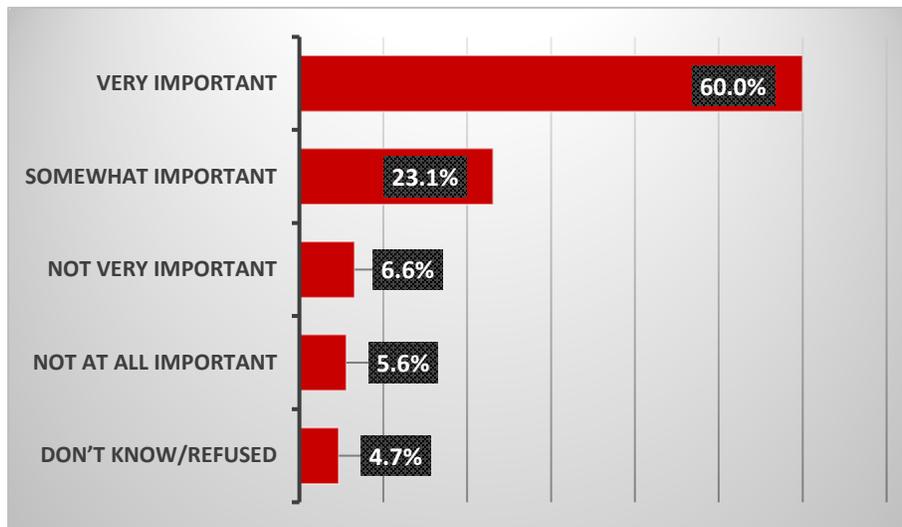
A plurality (45 percent) of registered voters support replacing a defined benefits pension for city employees with a system based on investment income from employee and employer contributions to an investment fund.

Men (54 percent) are significantly more likely to support the replacement of the city's defined benefits pension system with one based on investment income from employee and employer contributions to an investment fund than women (46 percent).

Support for the changing municipal employee pensions plans from a defined benefit to one based on investment earnings from employee and employer contributions is undifferentiated by the respondent's voting history in the 2015 City of Houston municipal election.

Only 31 percent of registered voters in the City of Houston said they will vote for the issuance of a \$1 billion bond and also vote to continue a defined benefit retirement system for city employees. Half (50 percent) of City of Houston voters favor both the bond and replacing a defined benefit pension.

Lowering Property Taxes for Homeowners

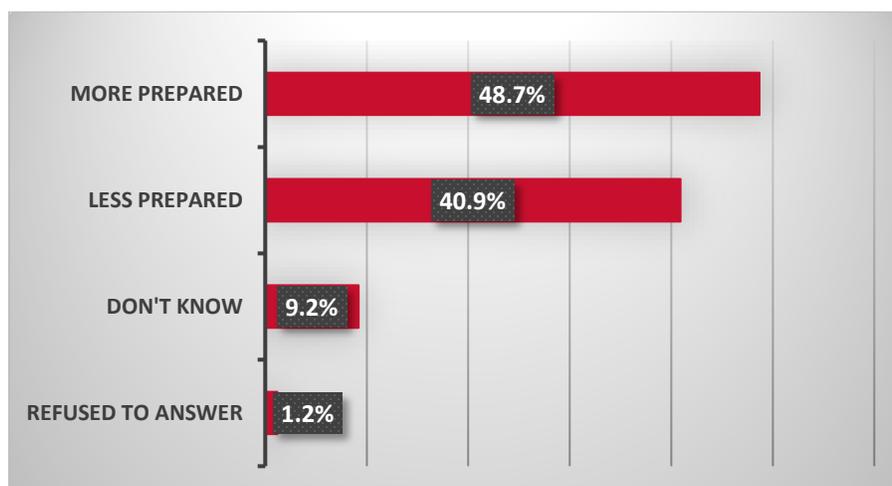


A strong majority (60 percent) of registered voters think legislation to lower property taxes is very important with an additional 23 percent saying it is somewhat important.

Houston registered voters who reported that their family's economic situation was worse than compared to a year ago (i.e., 20 percent of all city voters) were significantly more likely (71 percent) to say it was very important that the Texas Legislature pass lower property tax bills for homeowners. Even among voters who reported their family's economic situation had improved over the last year, 55 percent reported it was very important that the Texas Legislature pass lower property tax bills for homeowners.

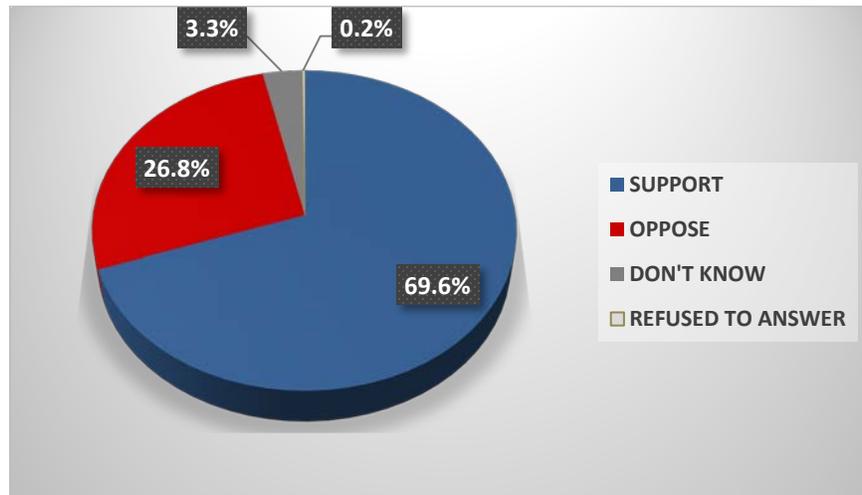
Flooding Preparedness

"Do you think the City of Houston has made your neighborhood more or less prepared for flooding during tropical storms, hurricanes, and other severe rainfalls?"



Close to a majority (49%) of Houston registered voters believe that the City of Houston has made their neighborhood more prepared for flooding incidents.

Support for the City of Houston Drainage Fee



Over two-thirds (69.6 percent) of registered voters support the City of Houston's drainage fee.

Support for the City of Houston drainage fee is significantly greater among voters (80 percent) who reported that they think the City of Houston has made their neighborhood more prepared for flooding episodes than those who feel the city has made their neighborhood less prepared (60 percent).

APPENDIX

Respondent Demographics (by percentage)

Race/Ethnicity	
Anglo	51.9
African American	20.4
Hispanic	8.6
Asian	3.3
Other	11.7
Don't know	0.9
Refused to answer	3.1

Age	
18-34	8.4
35-44	8.2
45-64	32.4
65+	51.0

Party ID	
Democrat	34.5
Republican	32.9
Independent	26.2
Don't know	3.0
Refused to answer	3.4

Education	
< H.S.	2.3
High School	14.1
Some college	23.3
College degree	34.2
Post grad	24.7
Don't know/Refused	1.3

Gender	
Male	50
Female	50