



**BENDIGO REGIONAL ETHNIC
COMMUNITIES COUNCIL^{INC.}**

Registration No. A0039067P

BRECC PUBLIC SURVEY 2006 REPORT

By

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Bendigo - Victoria
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Appendix 1: BRECC Public's Survey 2006

Executive Summary

To assist the BRECC (Bendigo Regional Ethnic Communities Council) Executive committee with its strategic planning for providing services to migrants in regional Bendigo, we were commissioned to survey the migrants in Bendigo area, to identify their profile, and reasons for choosing Bendigo to live, and what experiences they had when they first settled in the region, and what they would like to see BRECC should do in the future for them.

316 interviews were conducted over the three days (21st to 23rd of April 2006), using both closed and open ended questions. The location included Hargreaves Mall, Coles, Bi-Lo, and Prince of Wales Showground Sunday market. The data was collated and analysed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and other statistical methods.

Some of the significant highlights include:

- 47.8 % of responses related to some form of socialisation difficulties.
- Approximately 30% of non-English speaking background respondents reported experiencing language difficulties.
- BRECC is not well known by the respondents
- There is a large demand for multicultural events and services
- There is a large demand for legal assistance services
- There is a large demand for immigration legal services
- There is a large demand for English language conversation services
- There is a large demand for qualification conversion services

1. Introduction

The report outlines the basis of the questions asked and the administration of the survey over the three days. It then presents the findings. We then discuss and reflect on these findings, before concluding with a number of recommendations on ways in which the BRECC Committee can proceed.

2. Aims and Research Methodology

The aim of the BRECC Survey was to discover reasons why migrants come to live in Bendigo region, and to identify their opinions and suggestions about what they have experienced and what they would like to see BRECC should provide for them in the future. The survey is attached in Appendix 1.

The survey itself was limited to two pages, printed both sides for ease of administration (Appendix 1). In order to obtain maximum coverage over the three days, the researchers approached 6 final year business students from Latrobe University to assist with survey administration over the three days. These students were trained professionally by the researchers. The students were supervised at all times by two researchers, who are members of BRECC. Students administered the survey in several different “busy” (as identified by the researchers) locations around the shopping centres and Showground. Students were asked to target people in the 18+ years category. There were 316 surveys received.

We chose to use both closed and open-ended questions and to classify the responses into categories that came directly from the data, as well as imposing our own categories.

In order to get some sense of where people came from, respondents were asked for their postcode. The data was coded and loaded into SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) for analysis.

3. Brief Profile of Respondents

Based on the data collected by the survey, the majority of migrants have a permanent resident status. This data relates to Questions 1, 2, 3, 22, 23, 24 and 25 of the survey.

The summary of respondents is presented in the following table.

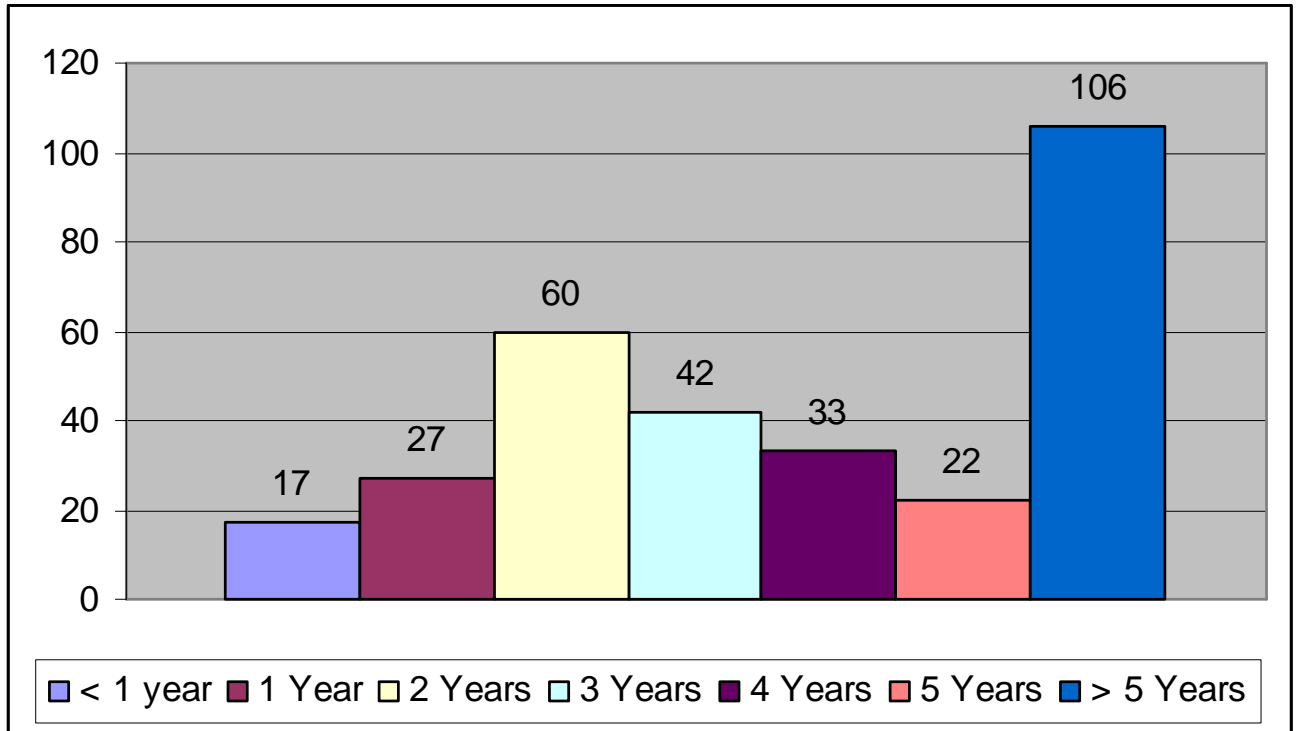
	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Permanent resident status		
Yes	273	86.4
No	43	13.6
Visiting or living in the Bendigo region		
Living	312	99
Visiting	3	1
Age group		
Under 20s	12	3.9
20s	70	22.7
30s	102	33
40s	74	23.9
50 plus	51	16.5
Level of education		
Primary	8	2.6
Secondary	111	36
TAFE	31	10.1
Uni (U/G)	62	20.1
Uni (P/G)	51	16.6
Other college	43	14
Other	2	.6
Number of people in household		
1 - 4	271	87.7
Above 4	38	12.3
Gender		
Male	188	60.8
Female	121	39.2
Postcode		
3450	3	1
3517	1	.3
3539	1	.3
3550	212	67.3
3551	27	8.6
3554	1	.3
3555	55	17.5
3556	14	4.4
3557	1	.3

Responses to other survey questions are listed on the following pages.

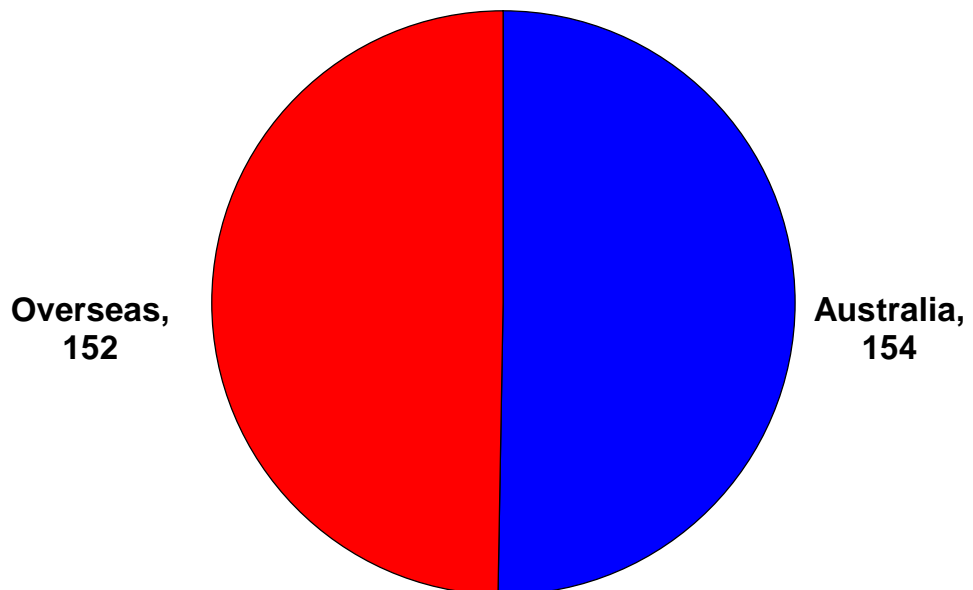
1. Survey responses

Question 4

How long have you lived in the Bendigo Region?

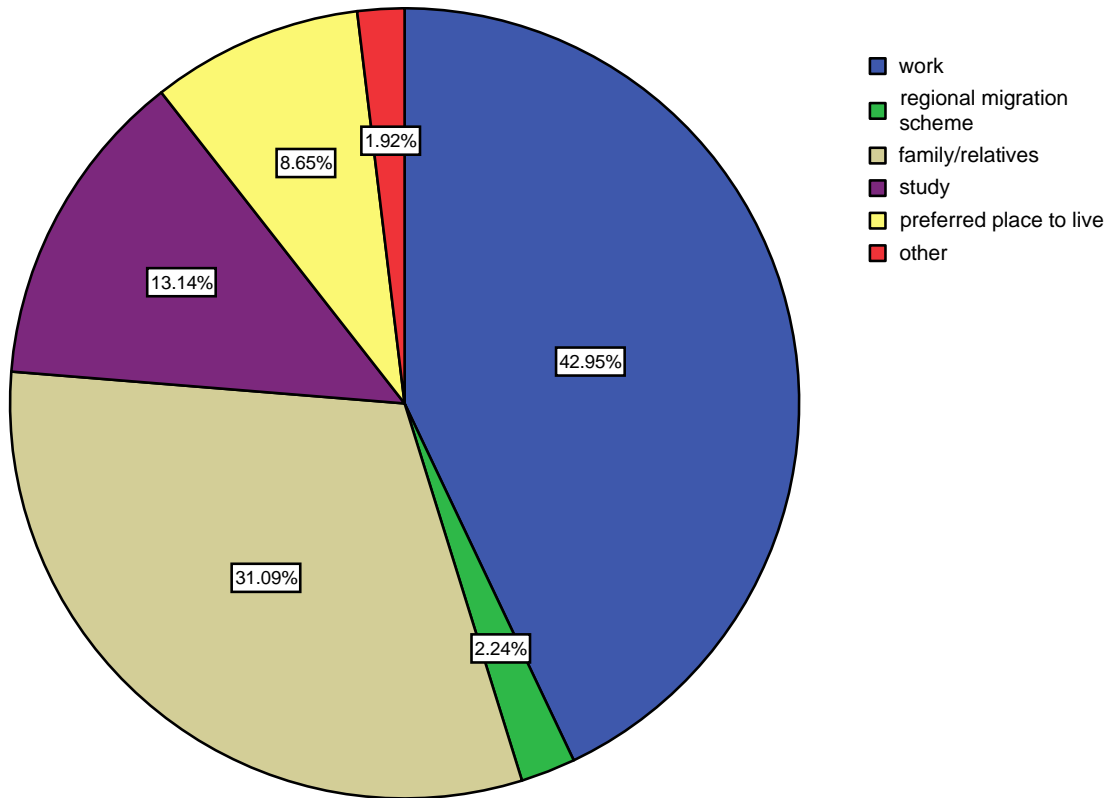


Where did you live before?



Question 5

What was the main reason for you to come to Bendigo?

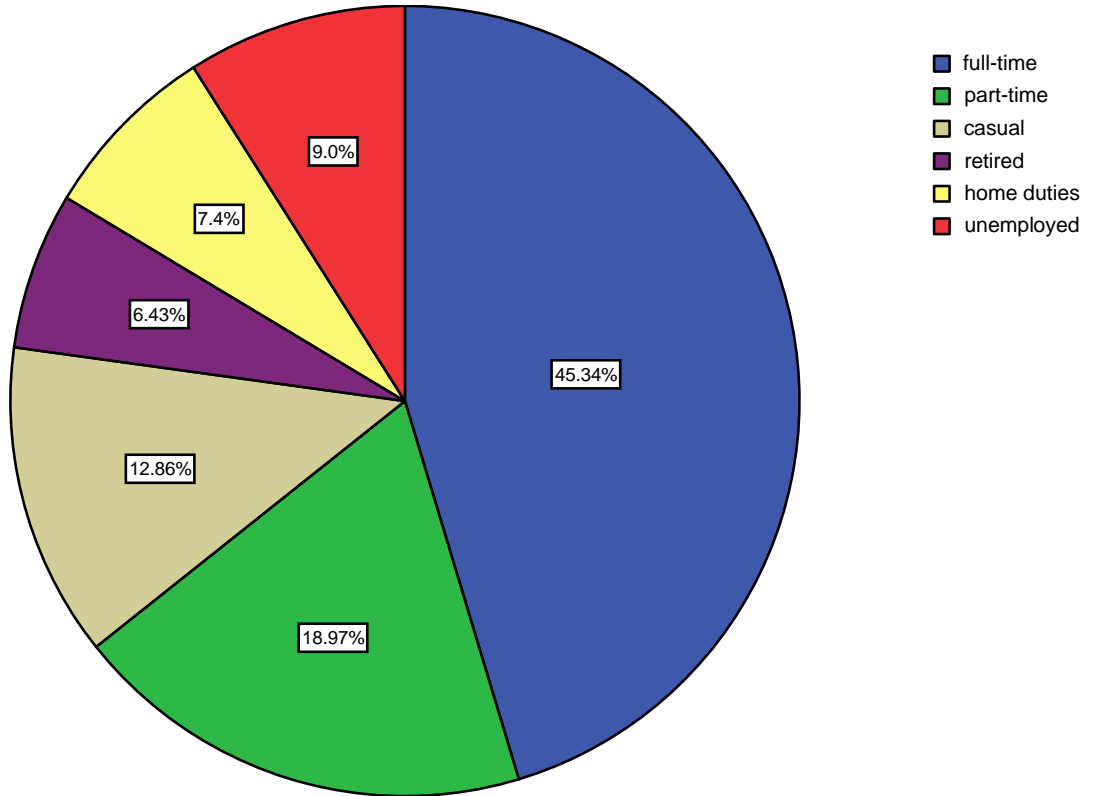


N=312

It was found that the main reasons for migrants to come to Bendigo were work (43%) and family (31%) commitment.

Question 6

What is your current employment status?

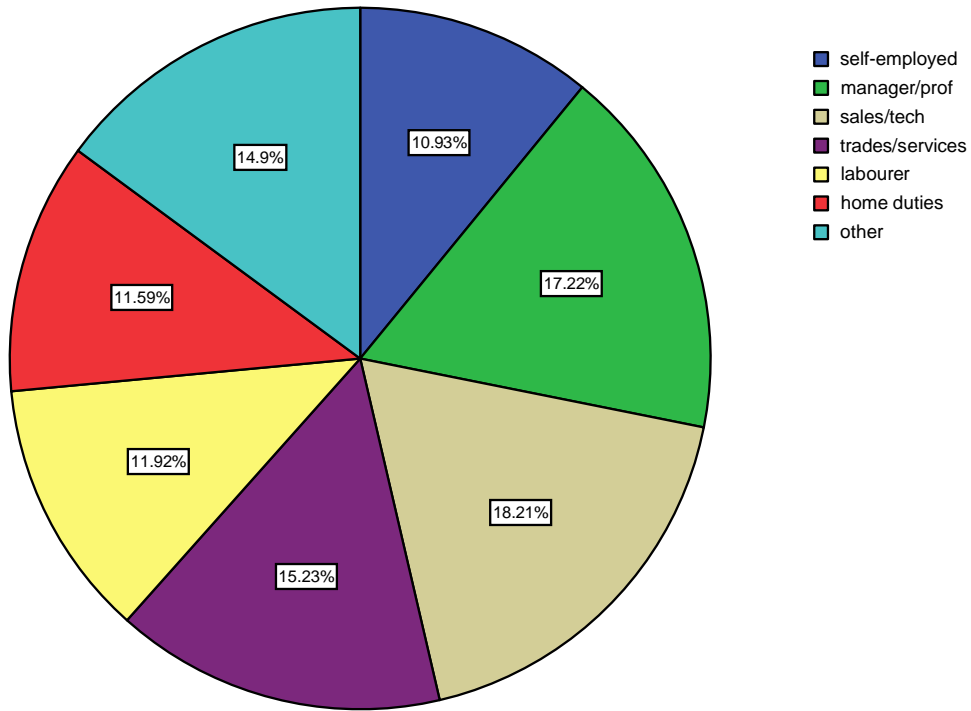


N=311

The survey revealed that the majority of respondents (45%) were working full-time, followed with part-time (19%).

Question 7

What type of work do you do?

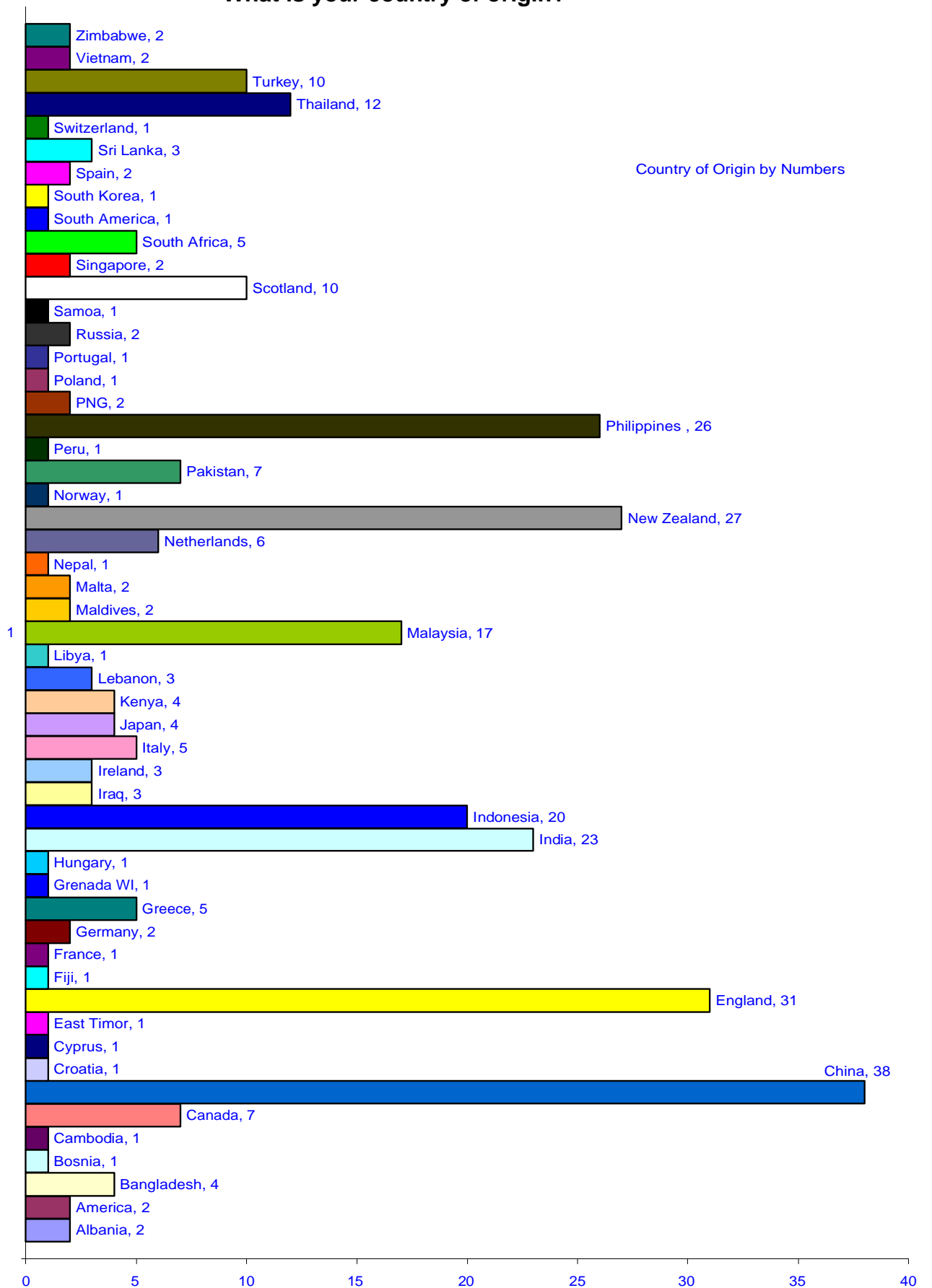


N=302

Respondents were asked 'what type of work do you do?' Sales/technical jobs were the largest single category at 18%, with manager/professional at 17% and trades/services at 15%.

Question 8

What is your country of origin?



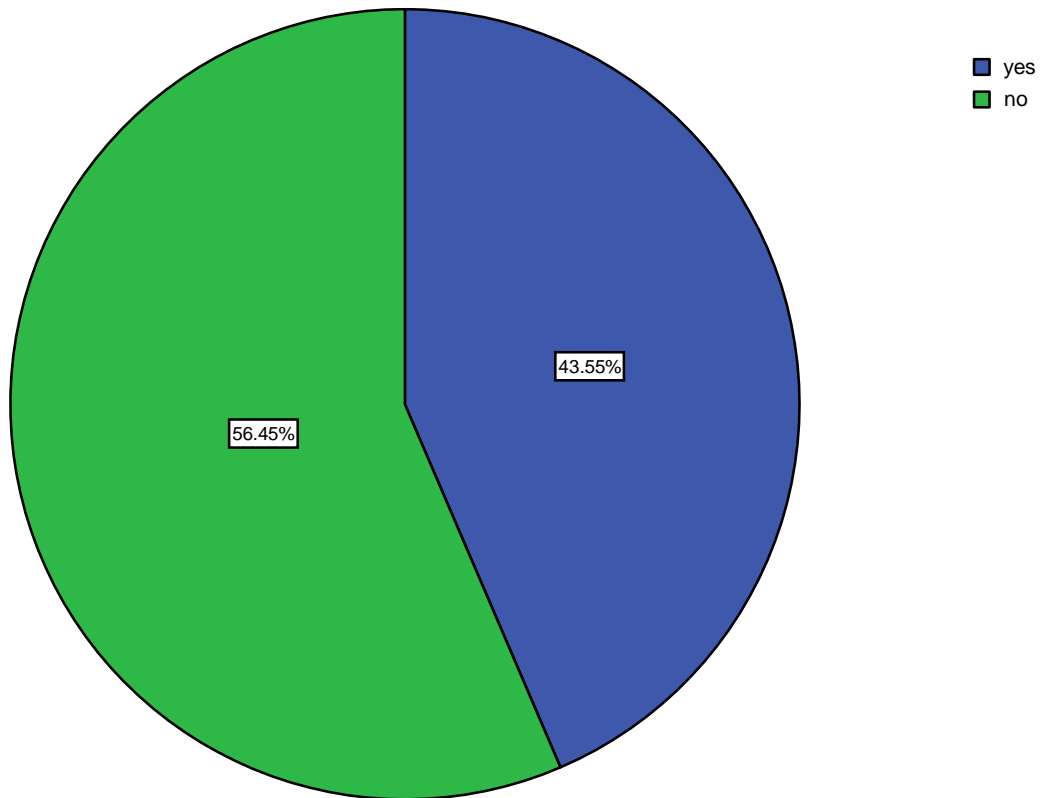
Question 9

What area in that country are you from?

The responses to this question did not result in any useful data.

Question 10

Are you from a specific ethnic background?

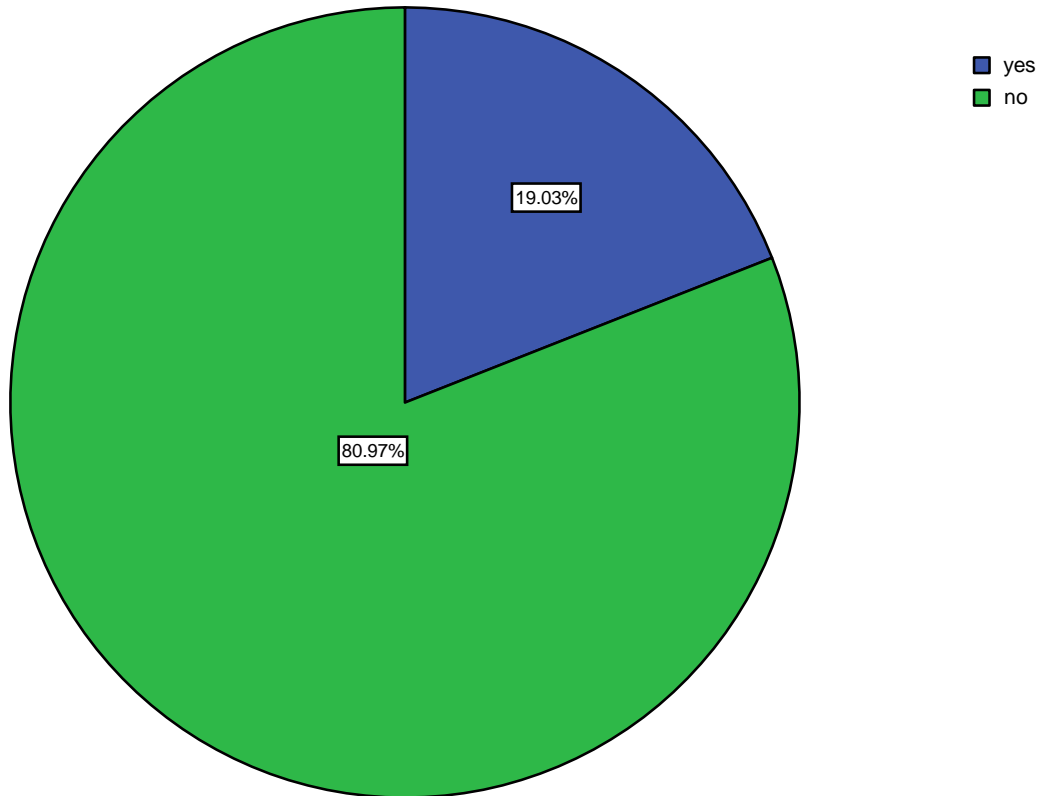


N=310

Almost 60% of respondents are not from a specific ethnic background.

Question 11

Do you belong to an ethnic community group?

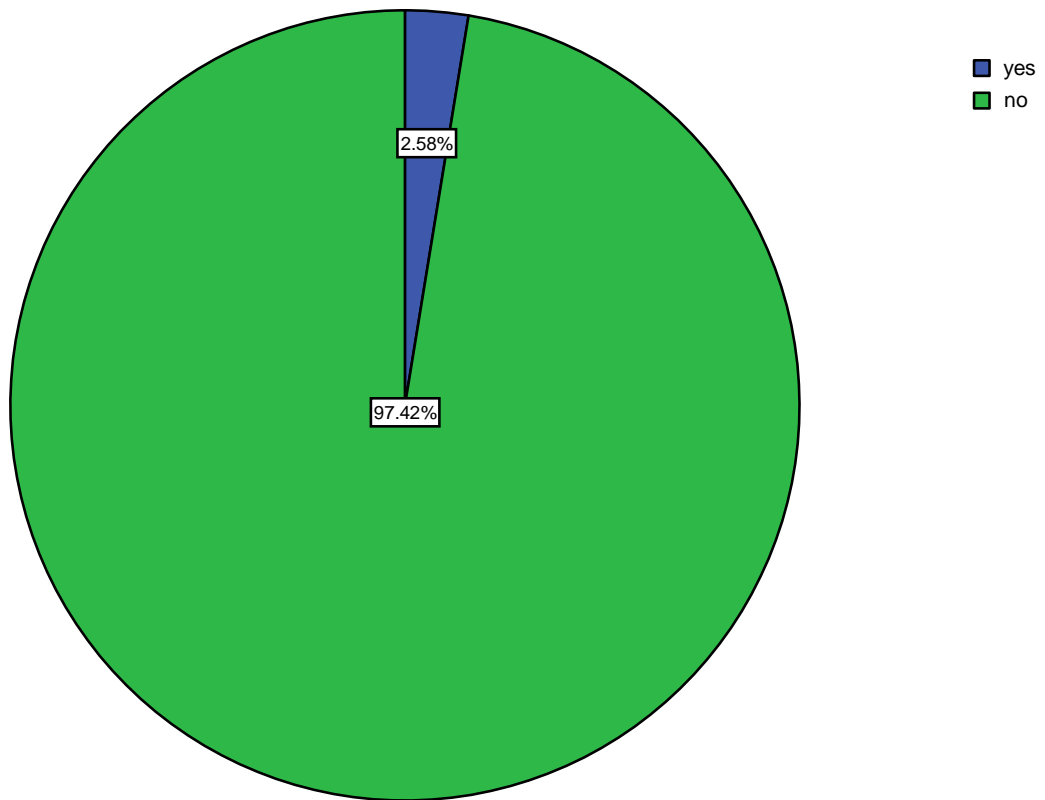


N=310

Around 80% of respondents do not belong to an ethnic community group.

Question 12

Do you belong to an informal ethnic community group?

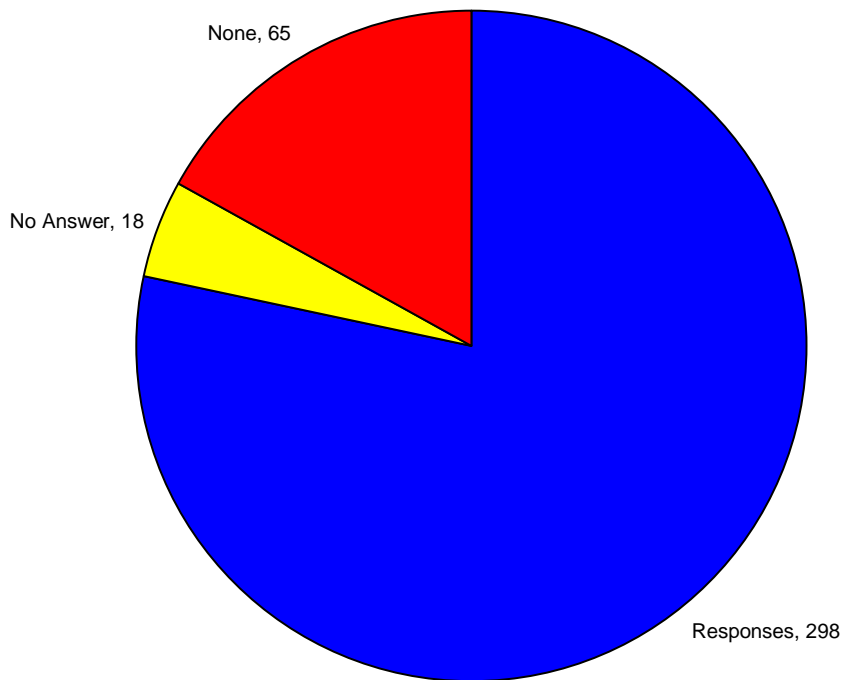


N=310

Almost all the respondents do not belong to an informal ethnic community group.

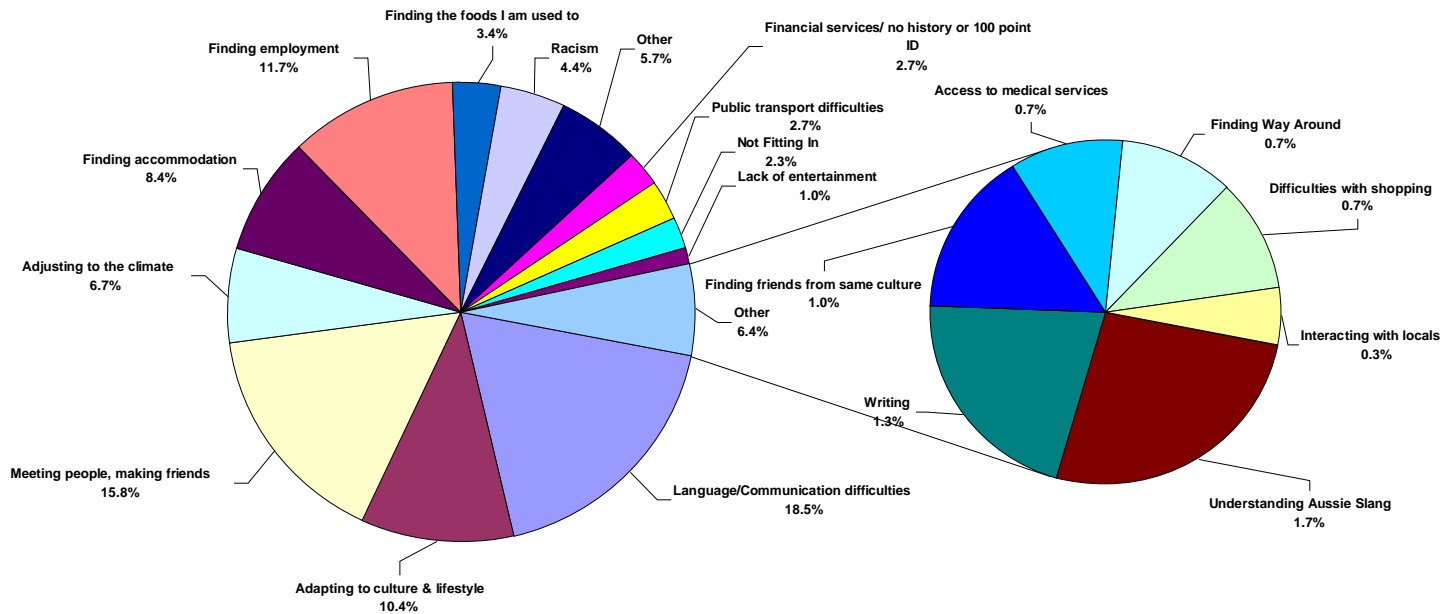
Question 13

What were the specific difficulties you experienced when you first settled in Bendigo?



N=381

This is an open-ended question, and the respondent is free to express his/her views. Therefore, multiple responses were recorded and each individual response was included in the total responses. Out of the 313 persons interviewed, 381 responses were recorded due to multiple responses. 18 respondents did no answer the question and 65 reported no difficulties. The remaining 298 responses are shown in the next graph. The majority of respondents with no difficulties were from English speaking countries.



The above graphs show a breakdown of the 298 responses referred to earlier. Answers were collated in groups with similar responses, for example making friends, making new friends, meeting people, meeting new people, etc, were placed in the 'Making friends and meeting people' response.

The other category (6.7%) represents a number of responses which were one offs and did not have a great relevance to the overall outcome. Examples of these answers were 'Ex wife' and 'Traffic lights'.

The largest percentages of difficulties were found to be in the socialisation and English language areas. If we combine the socialisation related areas, such as:

- Making friends, meeting people 16.9 %
- Adapting to culture and lifestyle 10.4 %
- Finding friends from same culture 1.0 %
- Not fitting in 2.3 %
- Interacting with locals 0.3 %

we then find that these difficulties represent **47.8 %** of the total.

If we combine the English language related areas, such as:

- Language and communication difficulties 18.5 %
- Writing 1.3 %
- Understanding Aussie slang 1.7 %

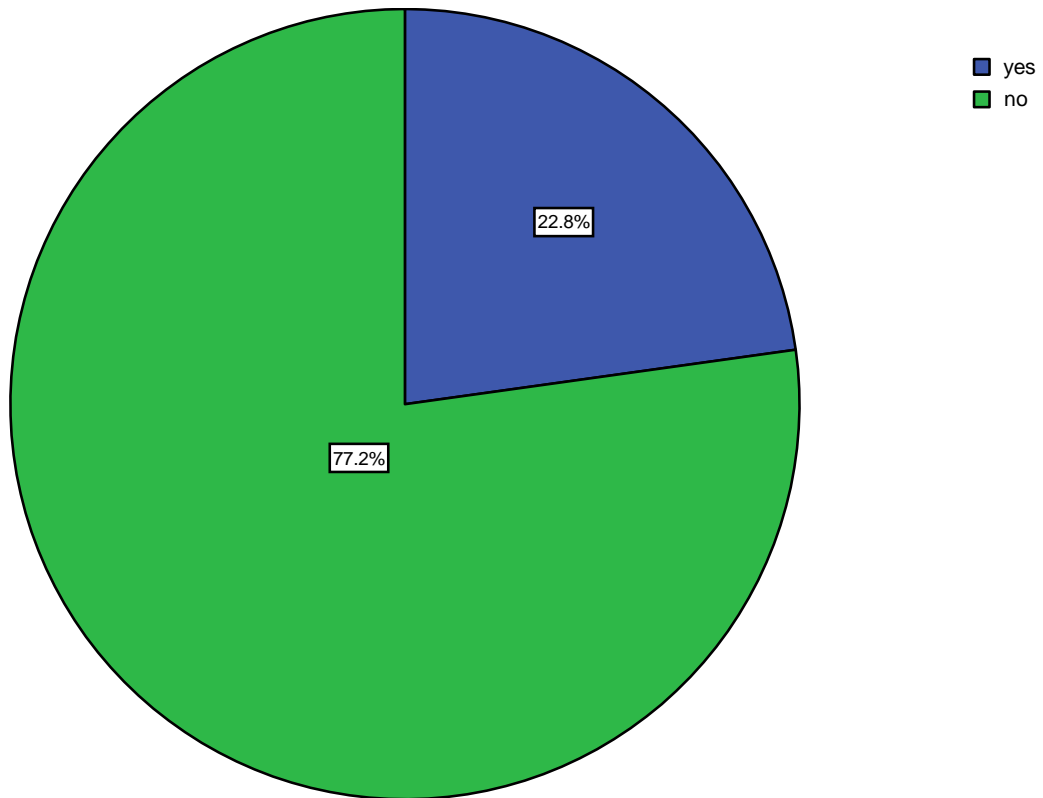
we then find that these difficulties represent **21.5 %** of the total.

None of the respondents from English speaking countries recorded language difficulties (89 in total). This figure will therefore be higher for the respondents from a non-English speaking background, and based on various calculations can be assumed to be as high as **30 %** for this group.

The other main difficulties, 'Finding employment', 11.7 % and 'Finding accommodation', 8.4 %, do not appear to be out of the ordinary for the Bendigo Region.

Question 14

Did you know about BRECC before this survey?

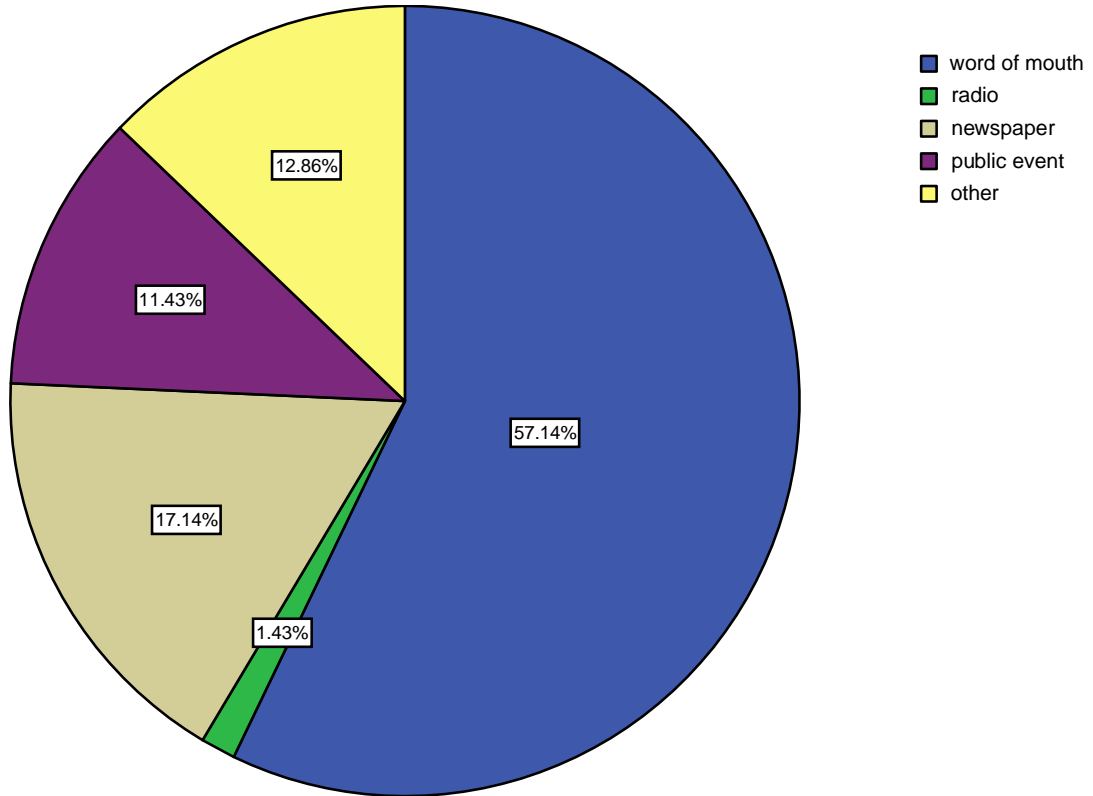


N=307

It was found that the majority of the respondents (77%) were not aware of BRECC.

Question 15

How did you first hear about BRECC?



N=70

Of those who were aware of BRECC, almost 60% of them heard from word of mouth.

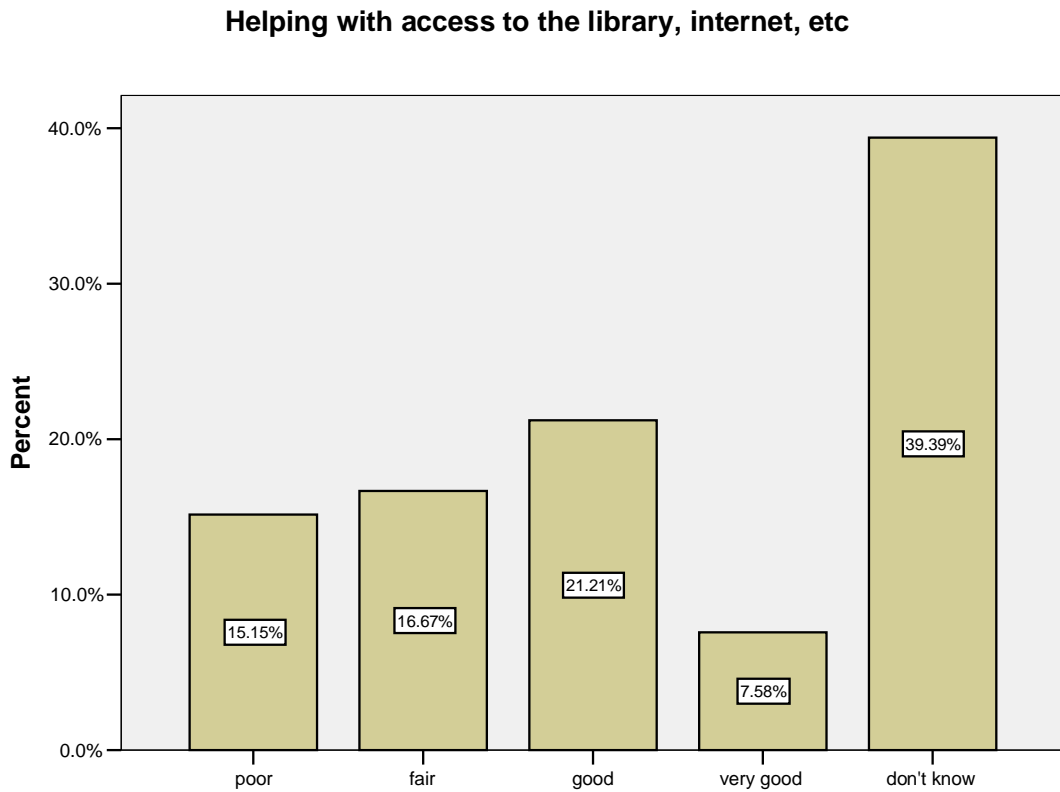
Question 16

What other way did you find out about BRECC

The responses to this question did not provide any useful results.

Question 17

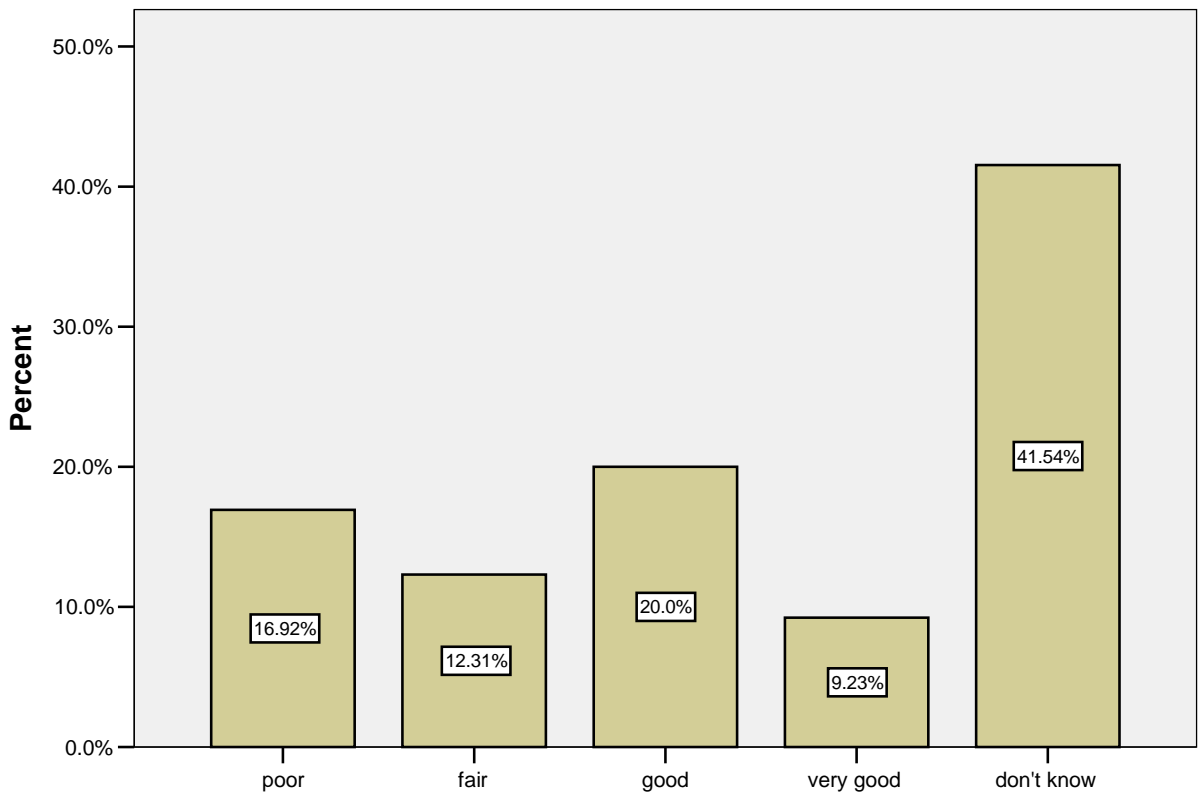
Those respondents who had knows about BRECC prior to the survey were asked to rate the services currently provided by BRECC. The responses are listed below.



N=66

The above figure shows that of those who were aware of BRECC, almost 40% did not know that BRECC provides help with access to the library, internet and information services. Around 30% rated this service as poor and fair, and about the same proportion rated as good and very good.

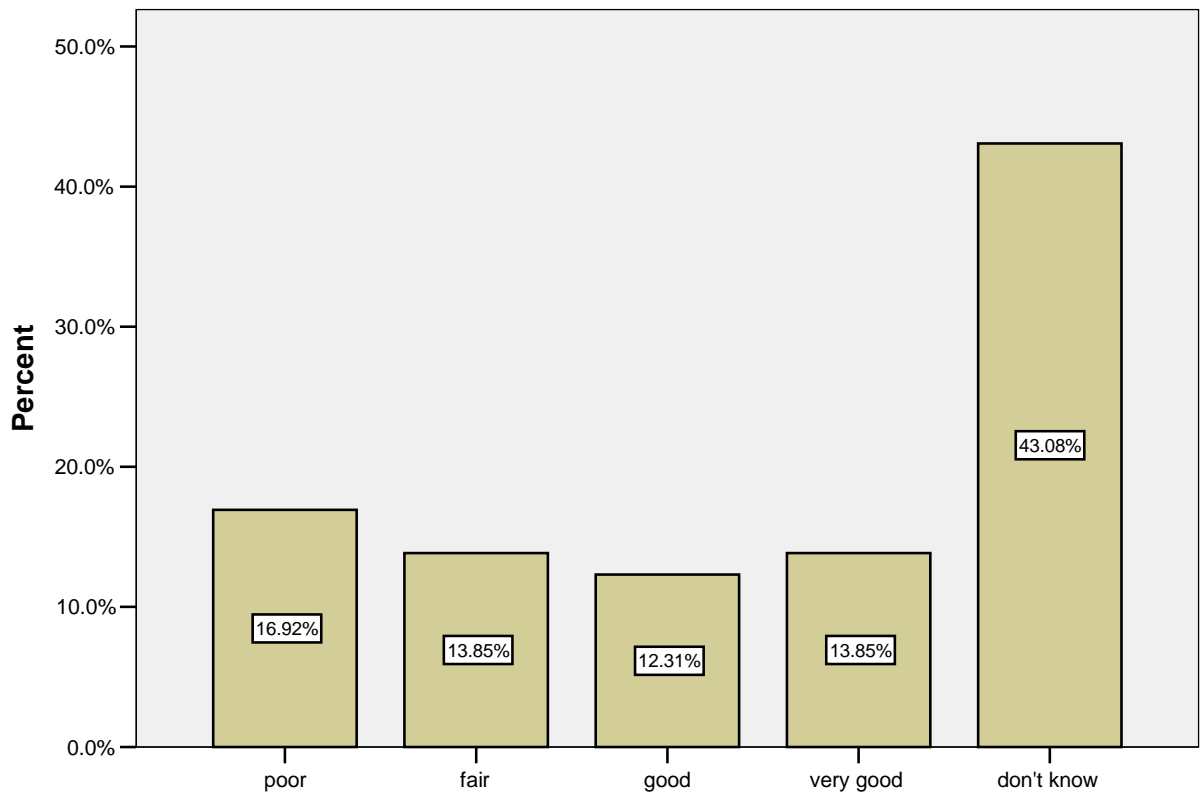
Referrals to Education, Health, Social Services



N=65

This figure shows the same pattern as the previous one.

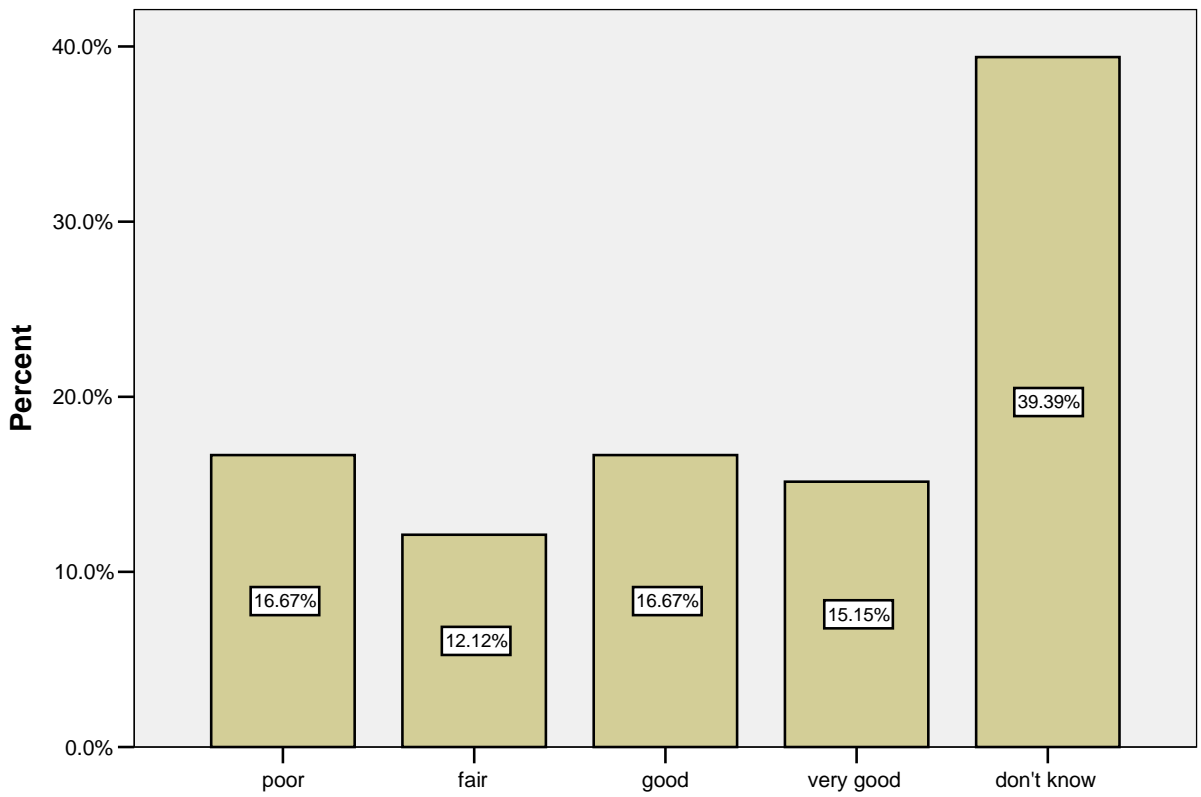
Organising interpreter services



N=65

This figure again shows the same patter as the previous ones.

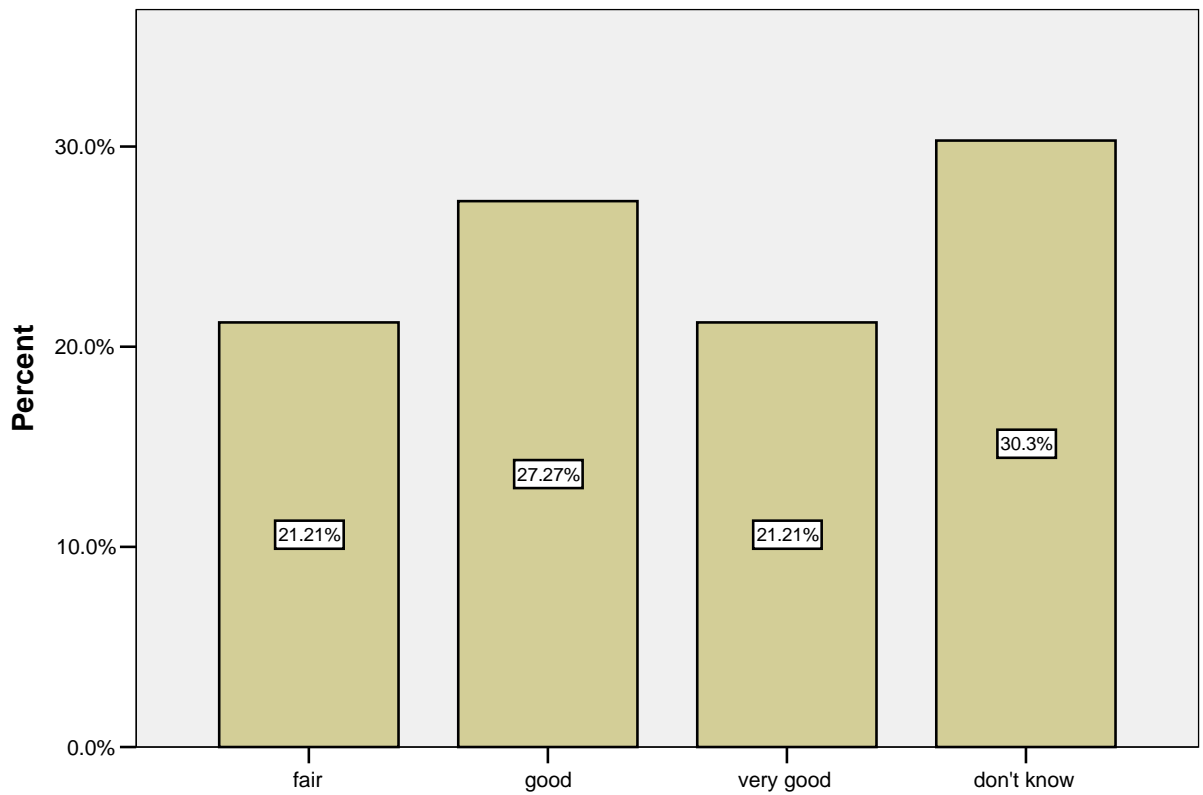
Providing advocacy assistance



N=66

This figure shows the same pattern as the previous ones.

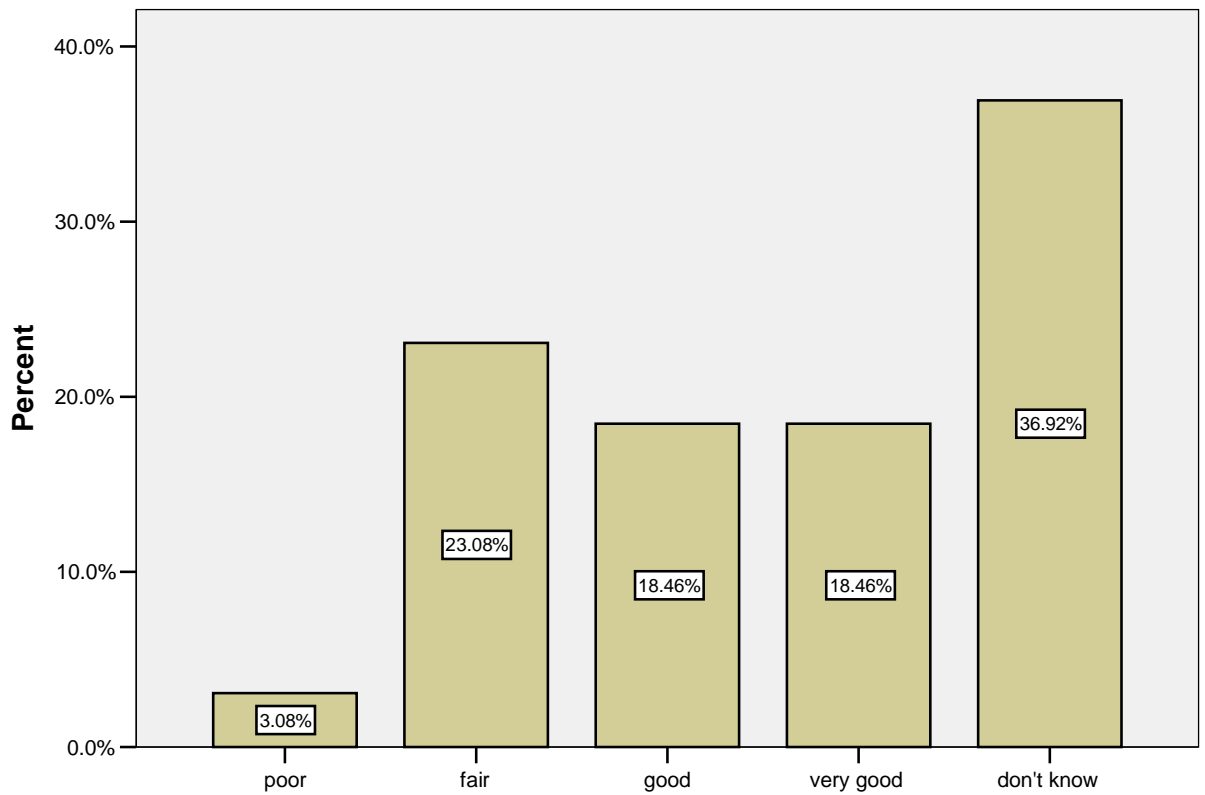
Promoting different cultures in Australia



N=66

In terms of BRECC promoting the different cultures in Australia, the figure shows that 70% of the respondents rated this service from fair to very good.

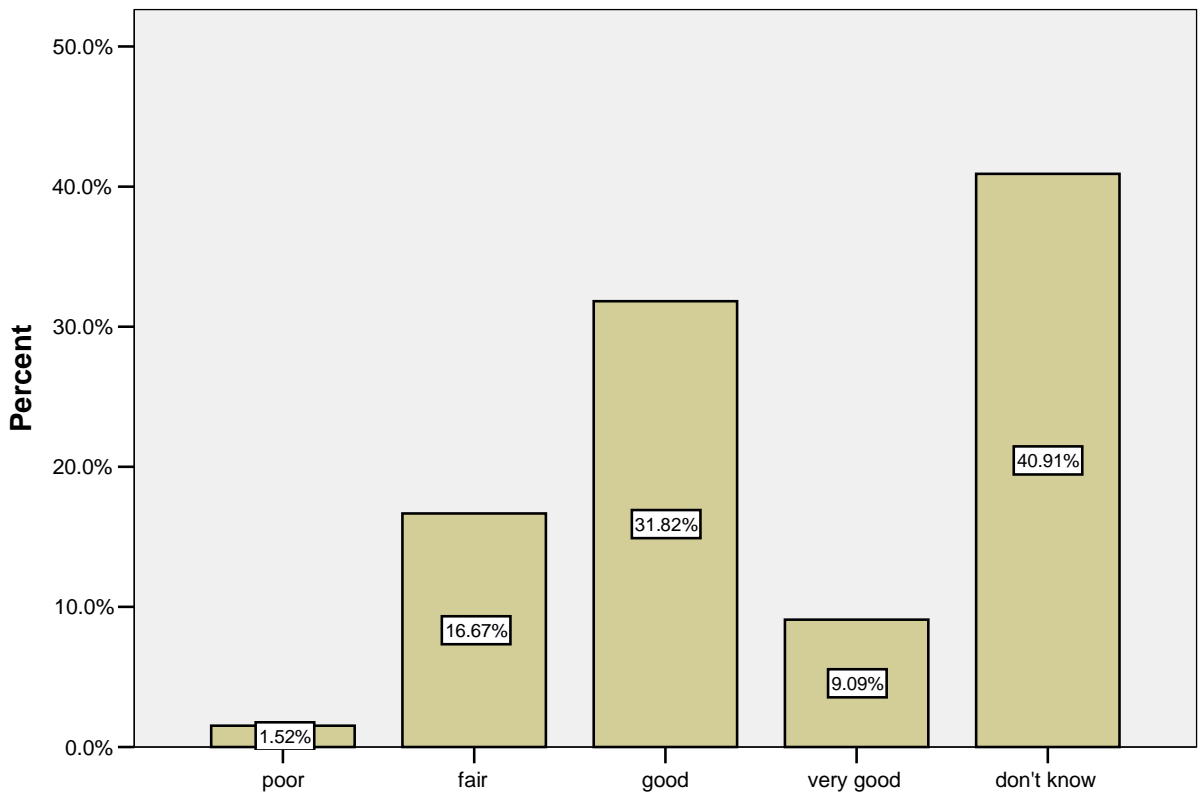
Providing health information specific to your culture



N=65

Although around 37% of the respondents did not know about this service, approximately 63% of them rated from fair to very good, and only a small proportion rated as poor.

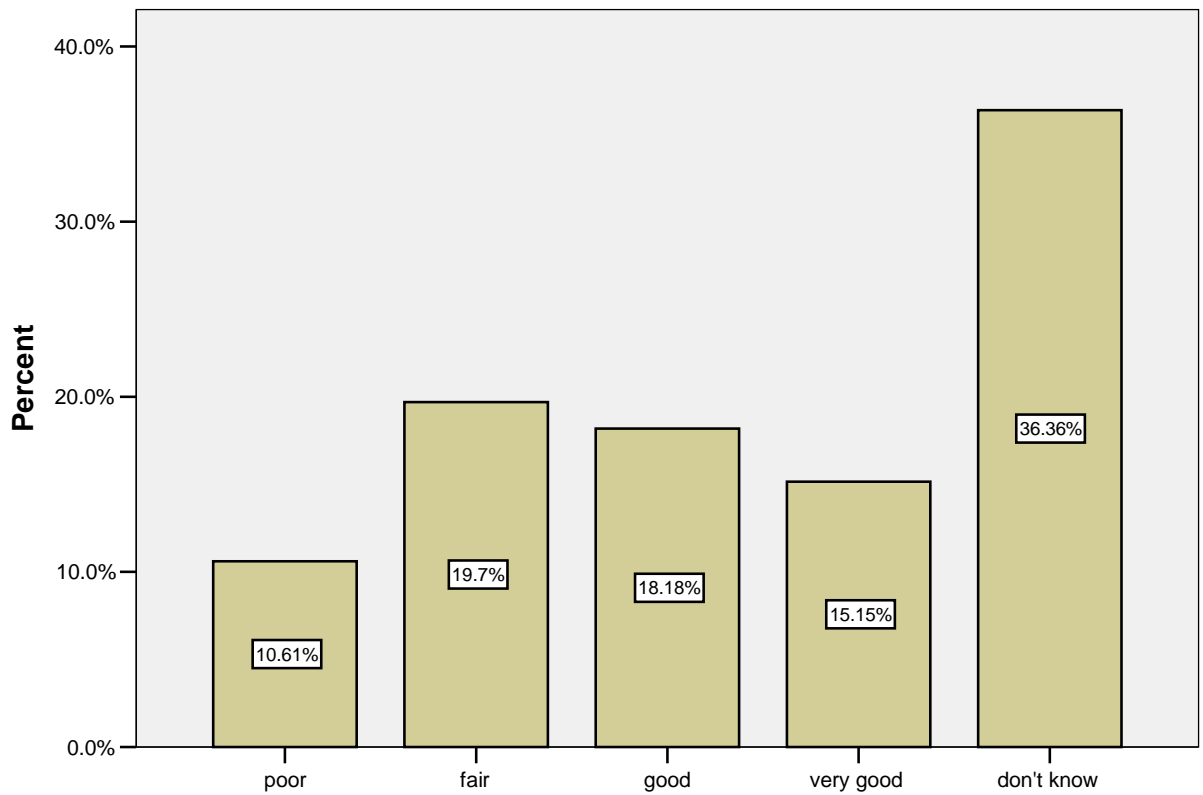
Providing training and information session



N=66

Although around 40% did not know about this service, around 56% rated from fair to very good.

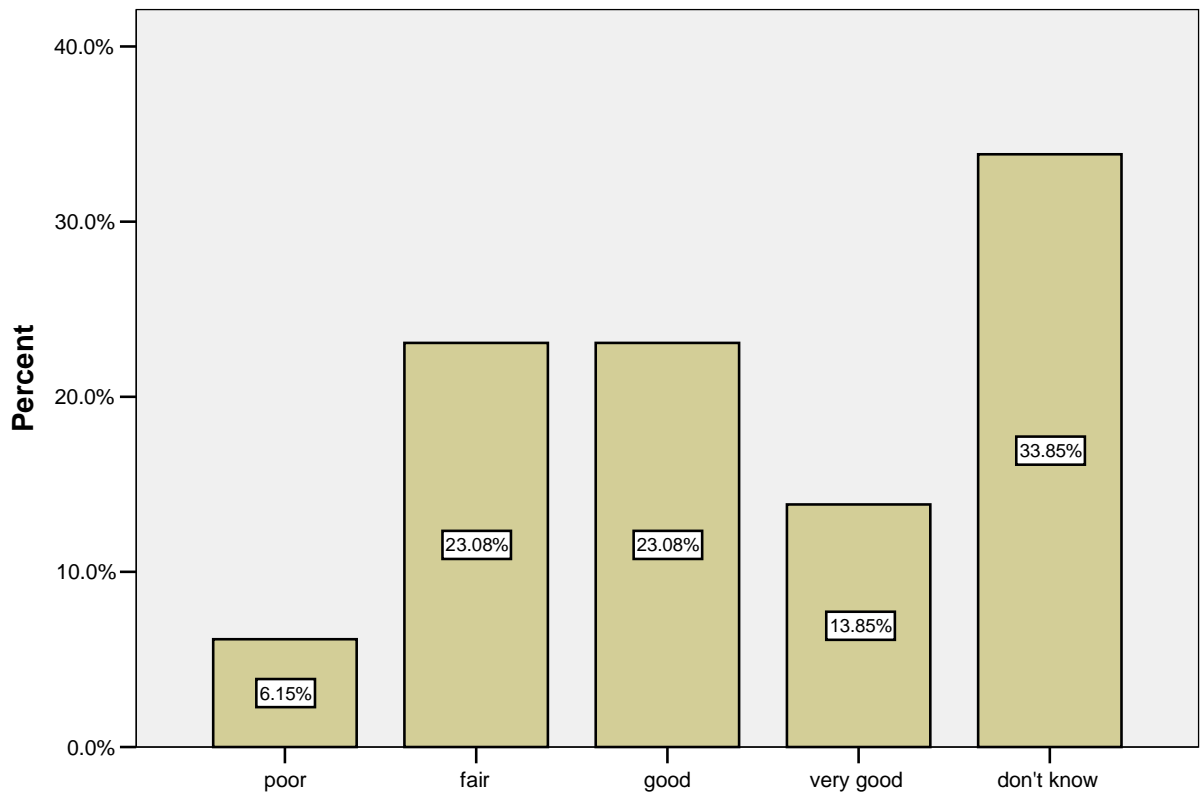
Linking new arrivals with ethnic groups



N=66

Around 50% of the respondents rated this service from fair to very good. However, 10% rated this service as poor, and 36% did not know about this service.

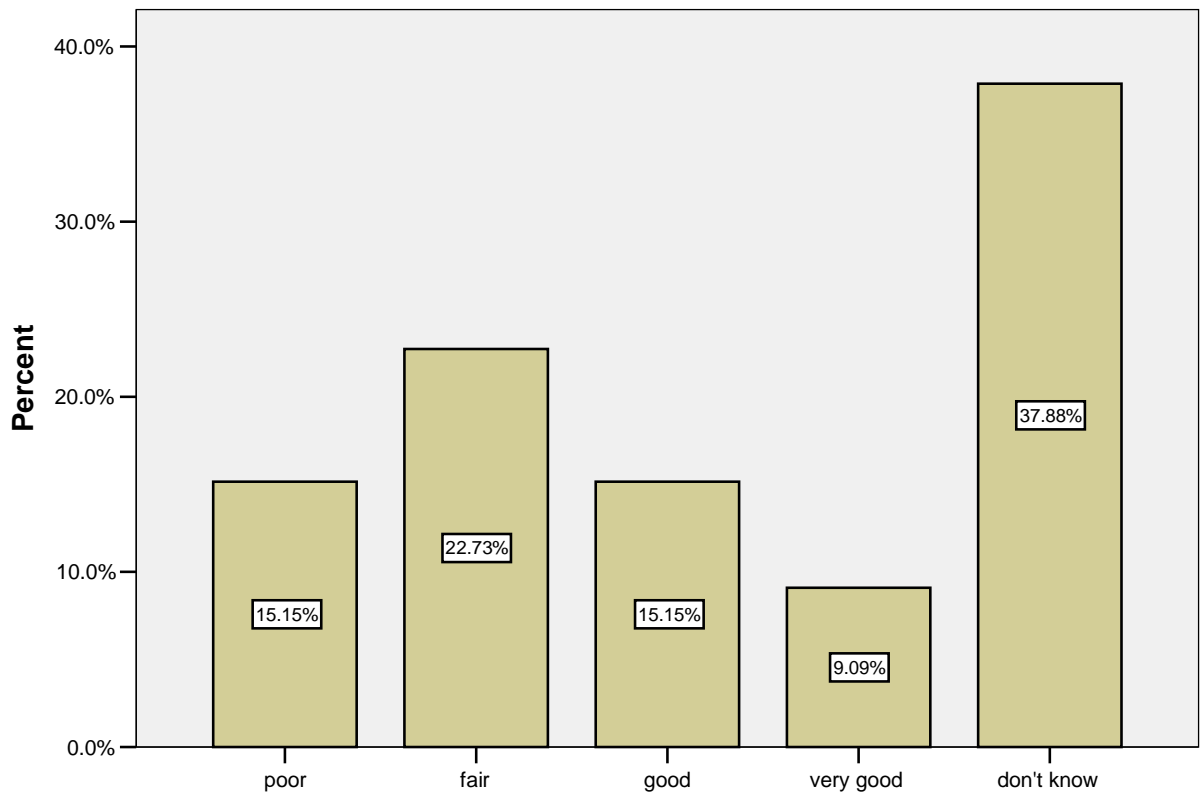
Providing support to ethnic groups



N=65

This figure shows the same pattern as the previous one.

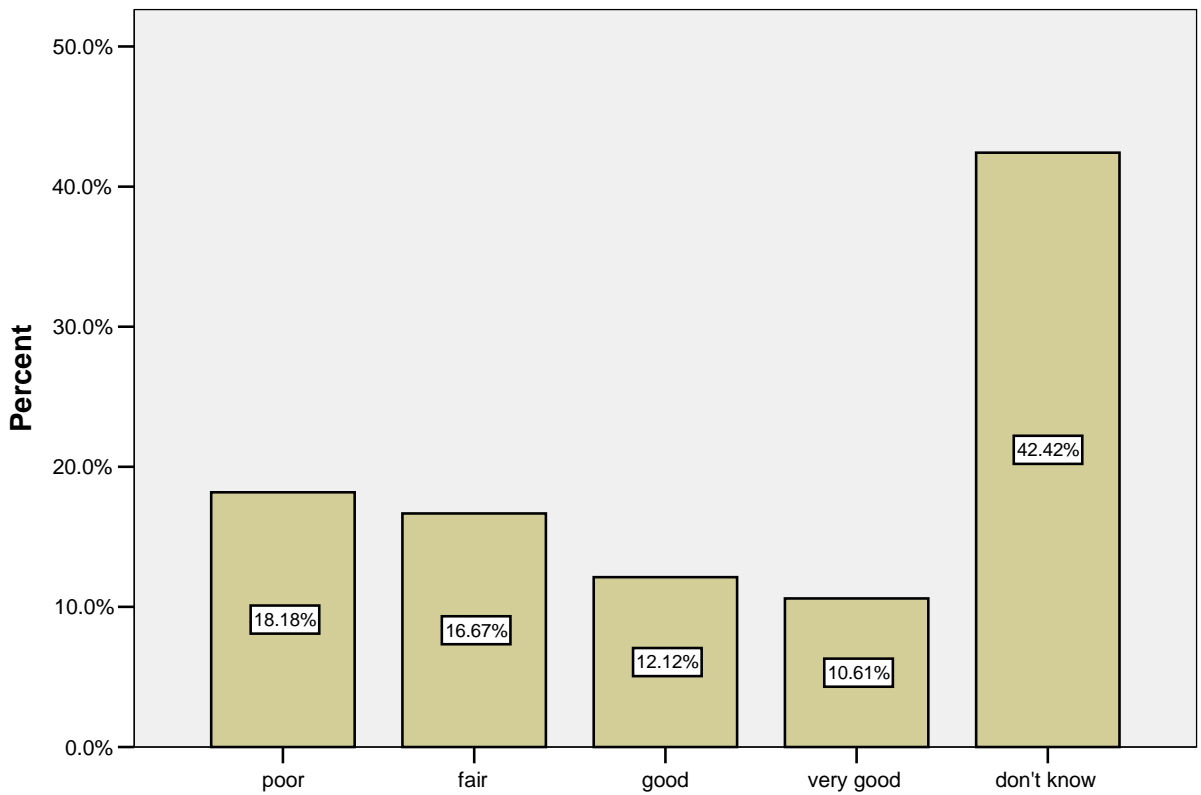
Helping migrants and their families settle in Bendigo



N= 66

Surprisingly, 15% of the respondents rated this service as poor, and 38% were not aware of this service. Around 47% rated this service from fair to very good.

Home and community care services



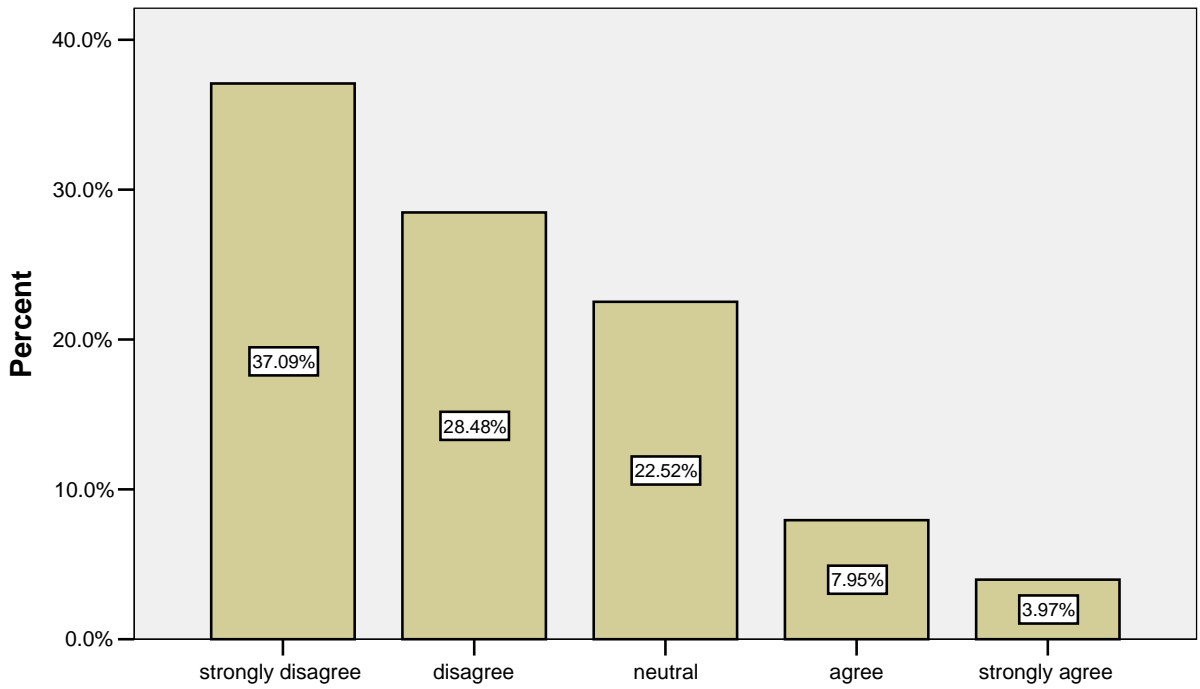
N=66

It was found that 18% of the respondents rated this service as poor, and 42% were not aware of this service. The rest of the respondents (40%) rated this service from fair to very good.

Question 18

When I first settled in Bendigo,

I received help from City of Greater Bendigo

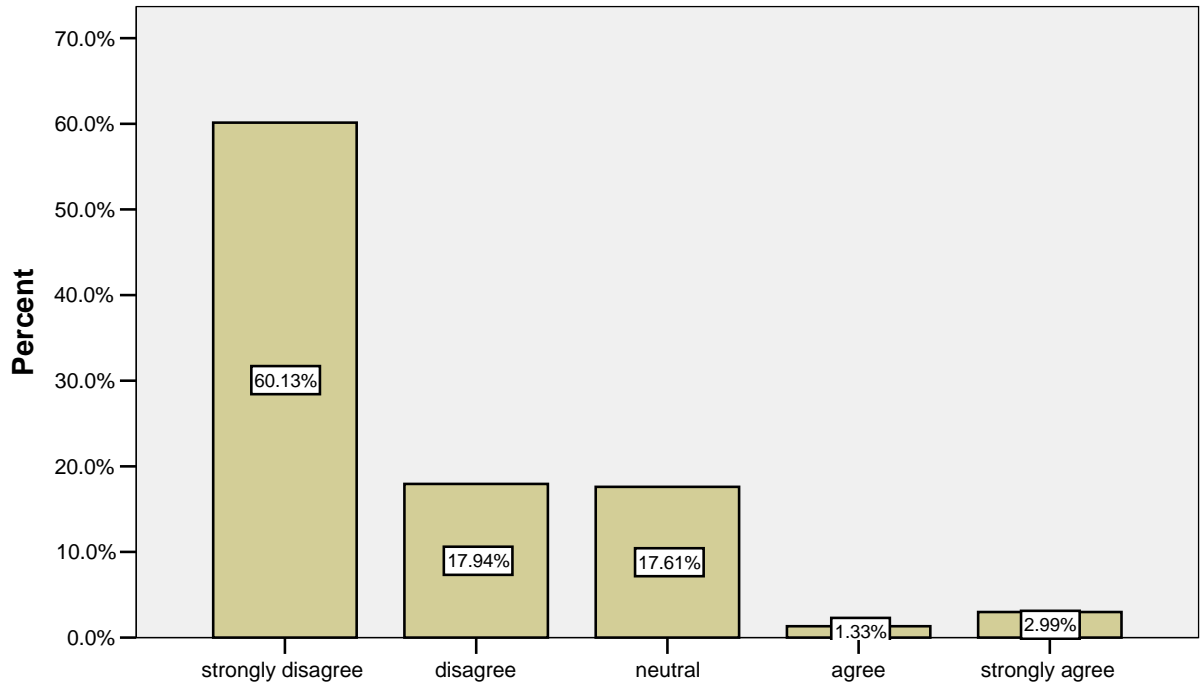


N=302

This table shows that around 65% of the respondents did not receive help from the City of Greater Bendigo (COGB) when they first settled in Bendigo. Only around 11% agreed that they received help from the COGB.

When I first settled in Bendigo,

I received help from BRECC

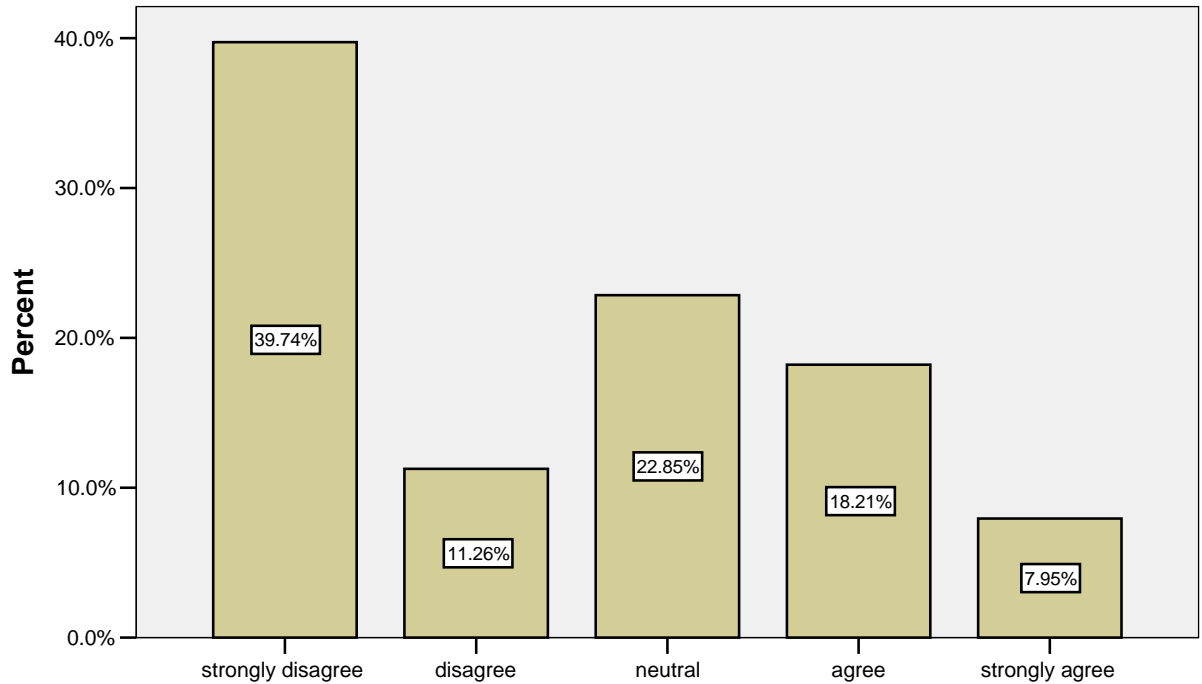


N=301

The majority of respondents (78%) did not receive any help from BRECC when they first settled in Bendigo. Only less than 5% agreed that they received help from BRECC.

When I first settled in Bendigo,

I received help from Centrelink

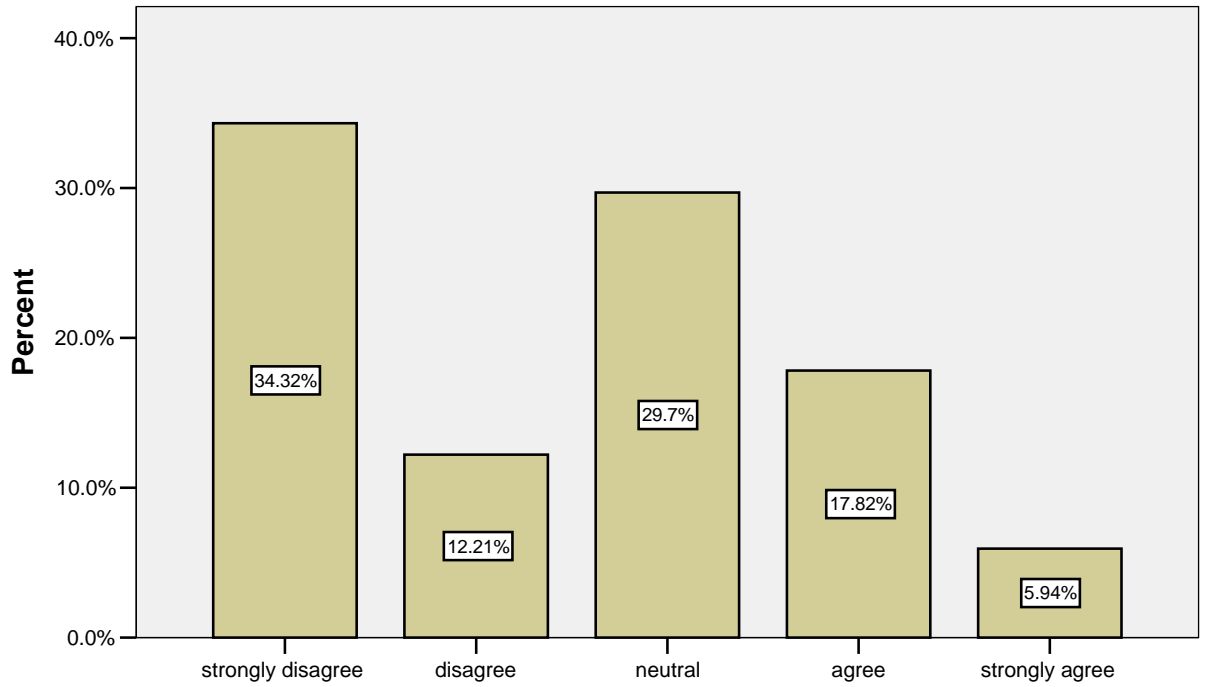


N=302

Around 51% of respondents disagreed that they received help from Centrelink. However, around 25% agreed that they received help from Centrelink.

When I first settled in Bendigo,

I received help from Dimia

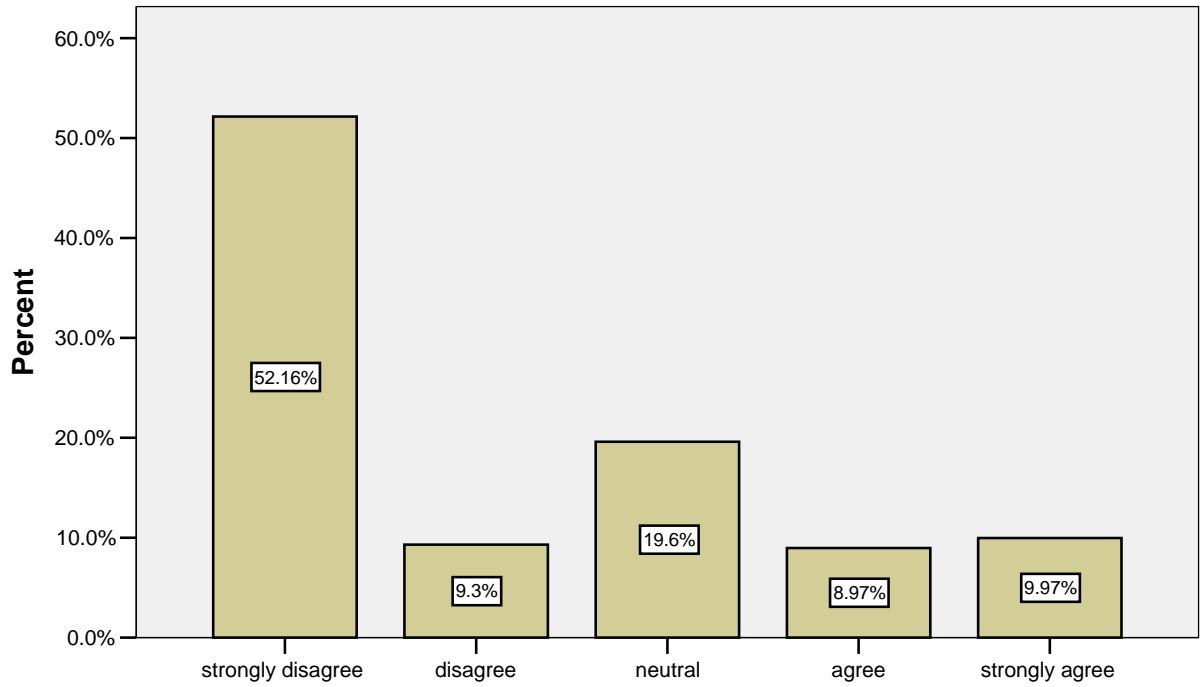


N=303

46% of respondents disagreed that they received help from DIMIA. Almost 25% agreed that they received help from DIMIA

When I first settled in Bendigo,

I received help from TAFE

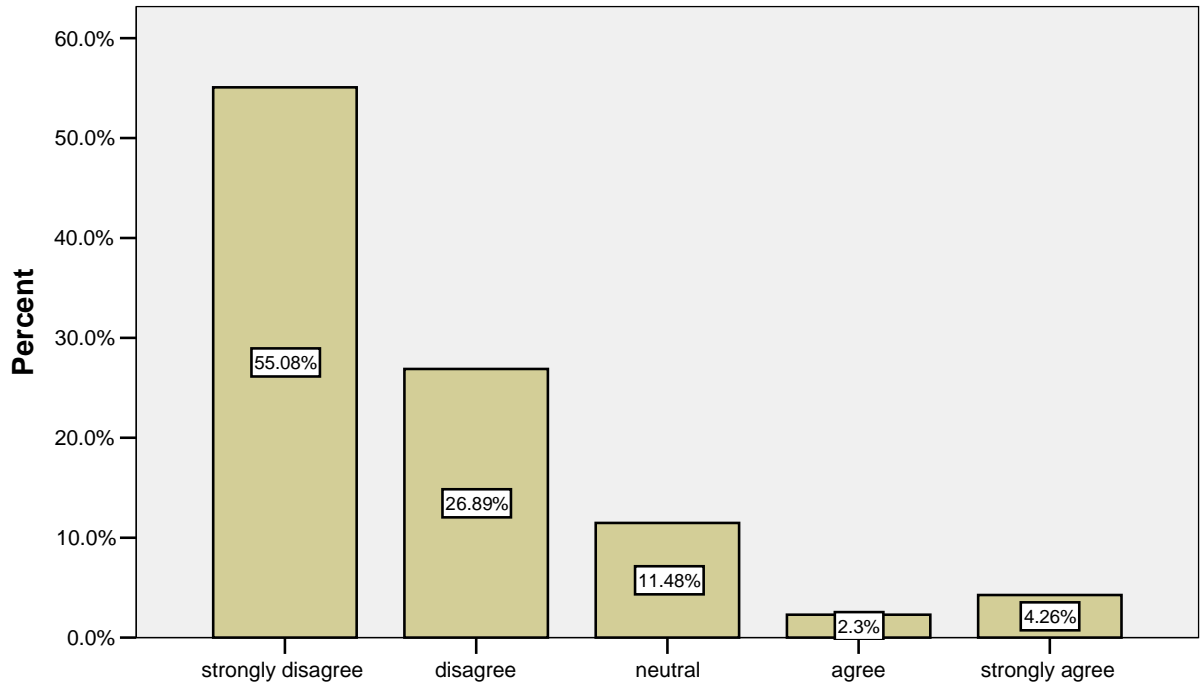


N=301

Around 60% of respondents disagreed that they received help from TAFE. Only less than 20% agreed that they received help from TAFE.

When I first settled in Bendigo,

I received help from Salvation Army

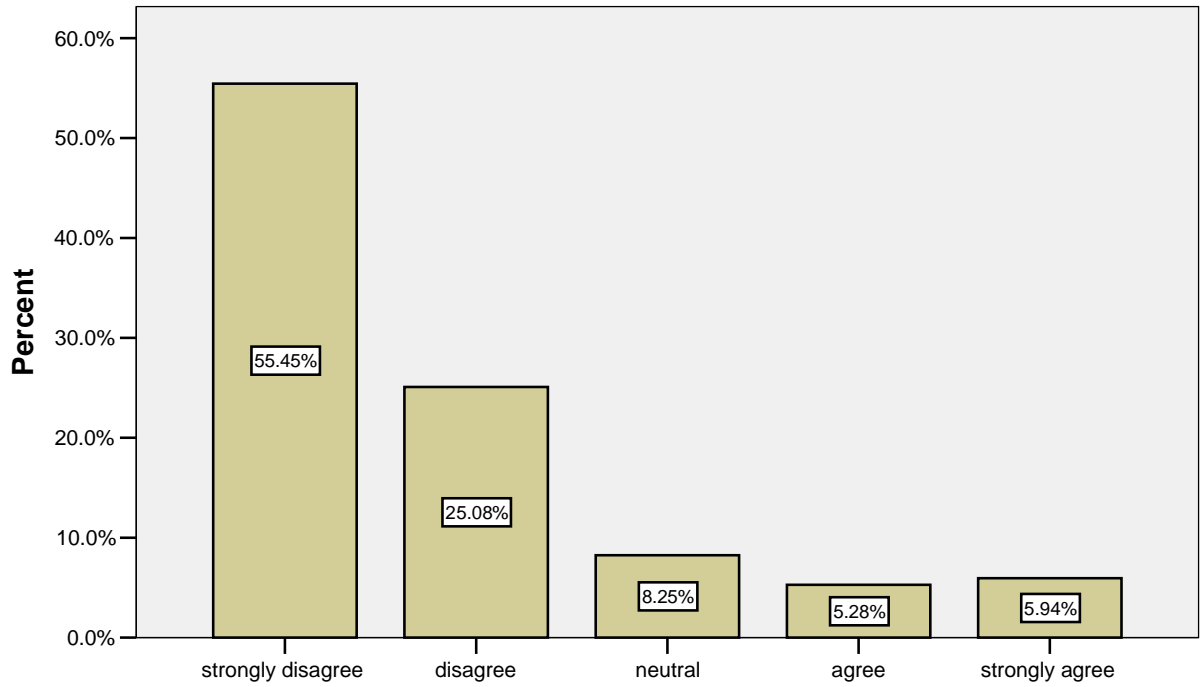


N=305

Less than 10% of respondents agreed that they received help from the Salvation Army.

When I first settled in Bendigo,

I received help from religious organisation

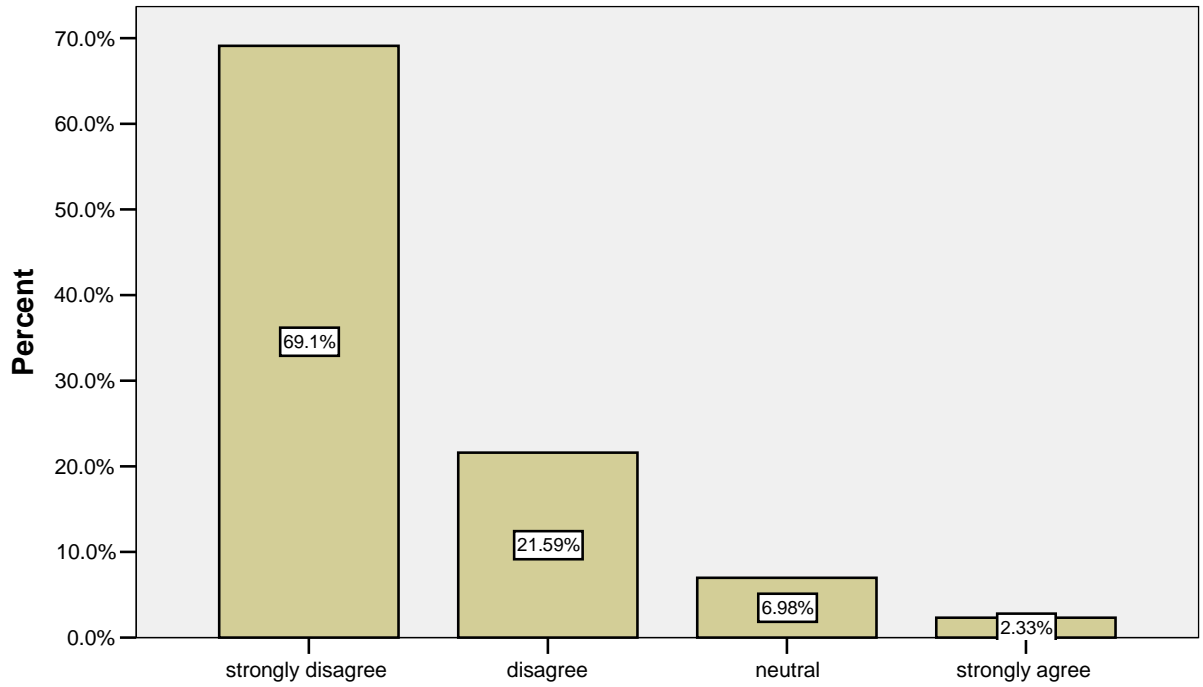


N=303

Around 10% of respondents agreed that they received help from religious organisation.

When I first settled in Bendigo,

I received help from refugee organisation



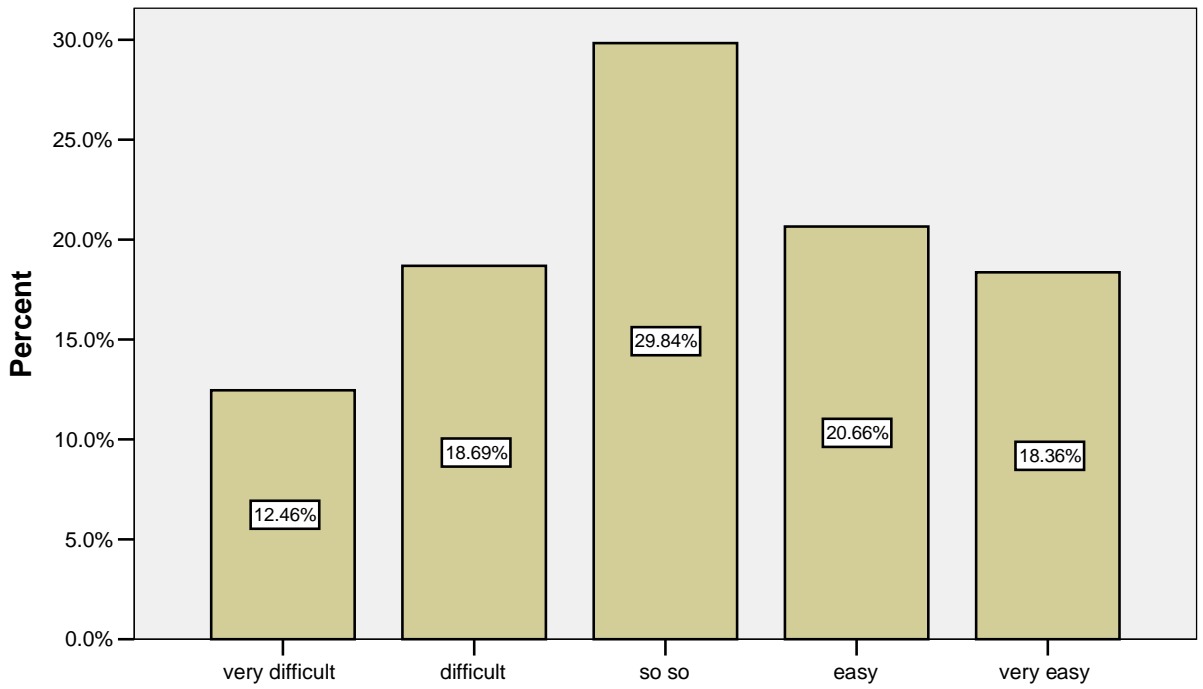
N=301

Only less than 5% of respondents agreed that they received help from refugee organisation.

Question 19

How difficult it is for you to

access social services

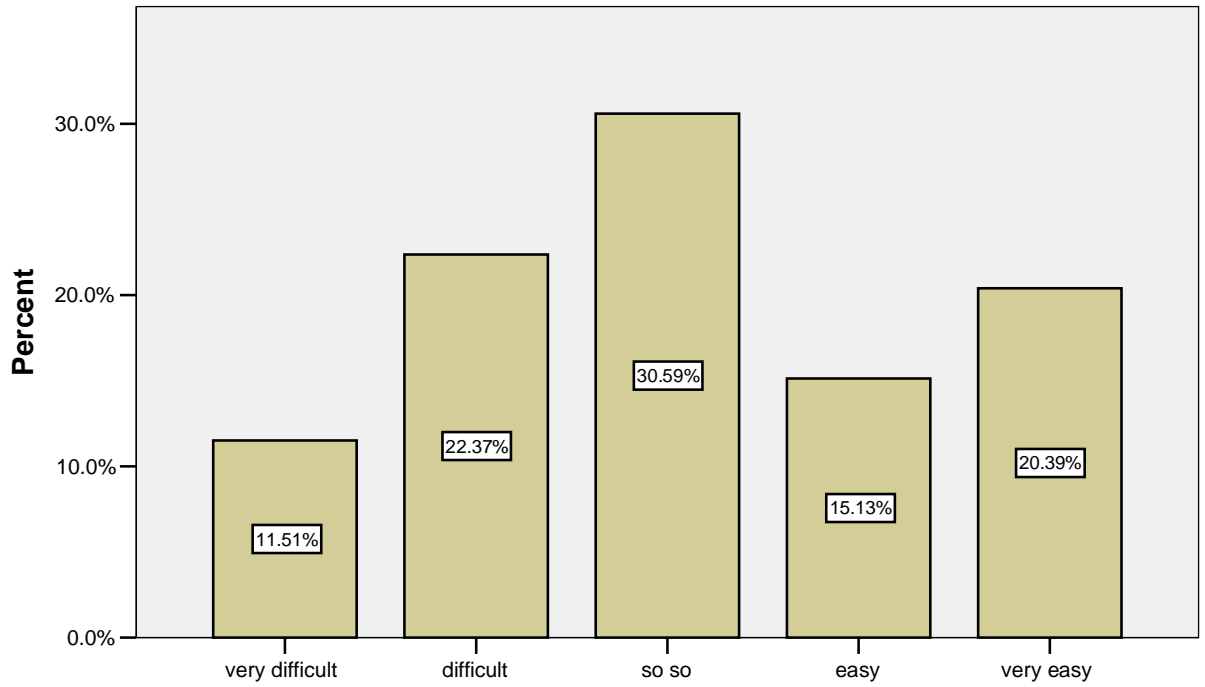


N=305

Most people (69%) found access to social service so so to very easy. Around 31% found it difficult to very difficult.

How difficult it is for you to

access legal services

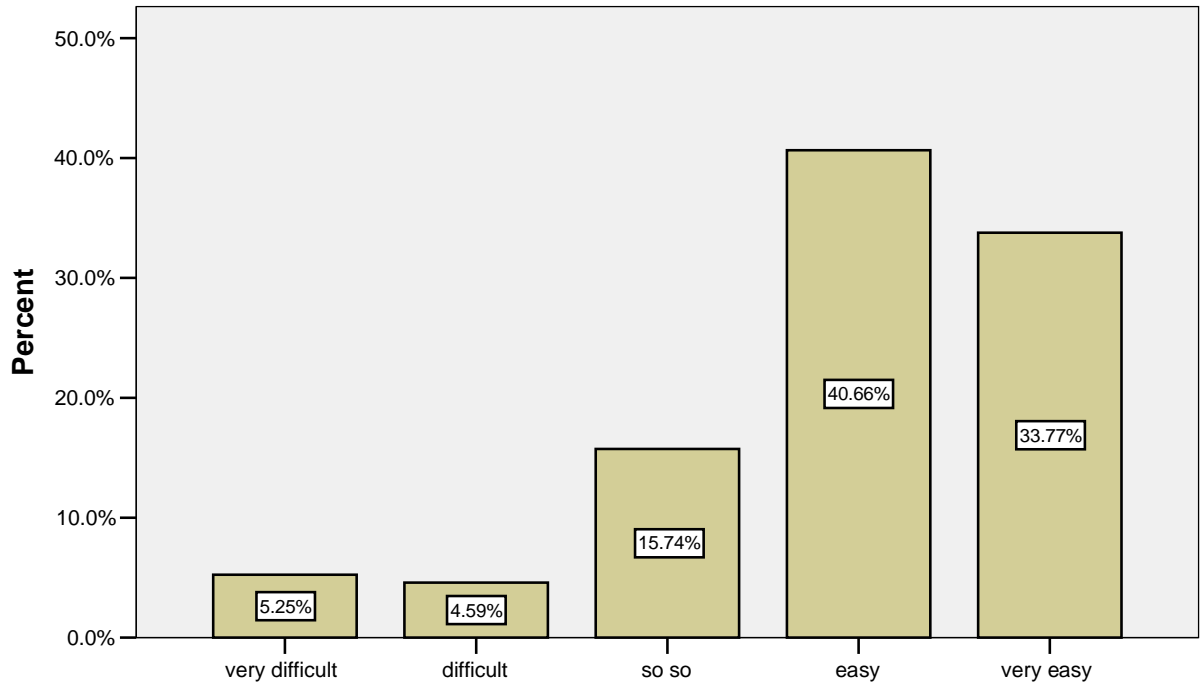


N=304

In terms of access to legal services, the same pattern also applies as the previous one.

How difficult it is for you to

deal with utilities (phone, gas, electricity)

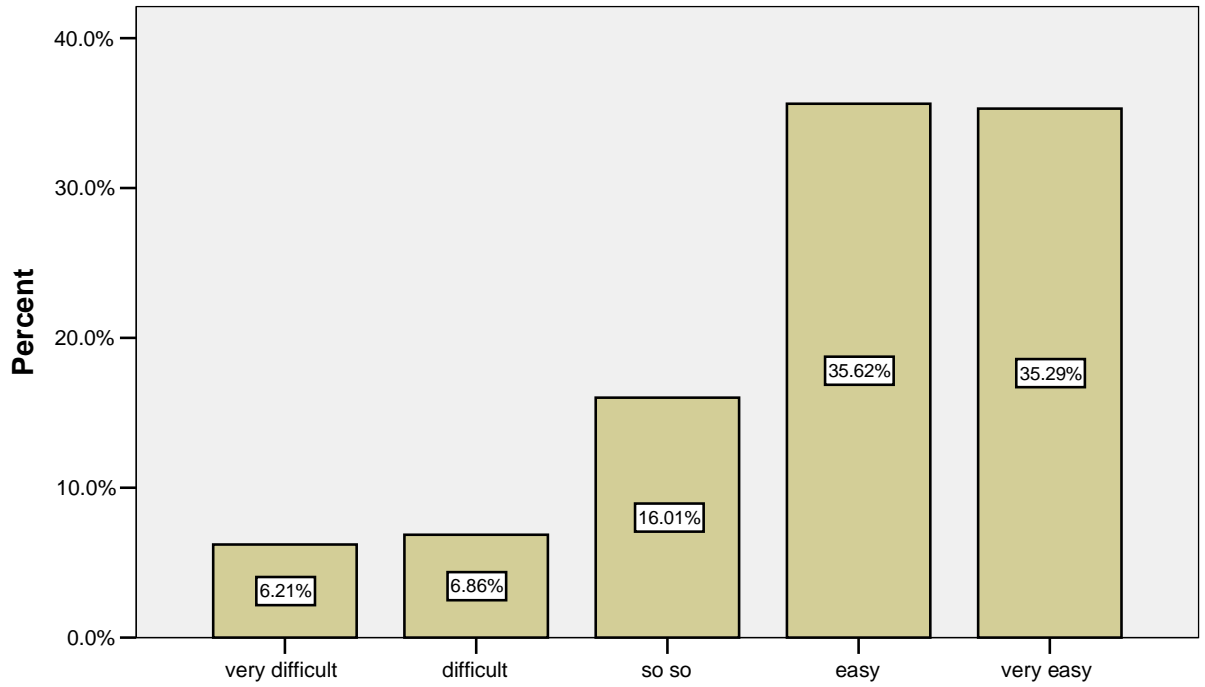


N=305

Dealing with utilities, only less than 10% of respondents found it difficult to very difficult. Most people found it easy to very easy.

How difficult it is for you to

deal with banks and finance companies

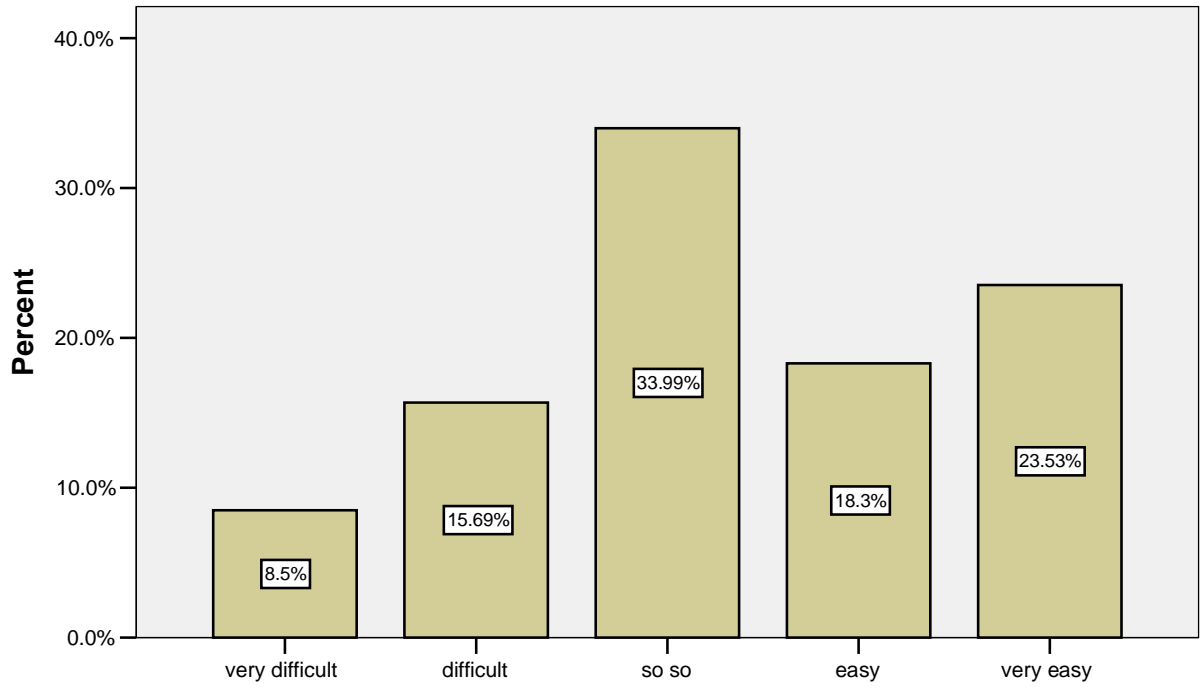


N=306

In terms of dealing with banks and finance companies, less than 15% found it difficult to very difficult. Most people found it so so to very easy.

How difficult it is for you to

access health services

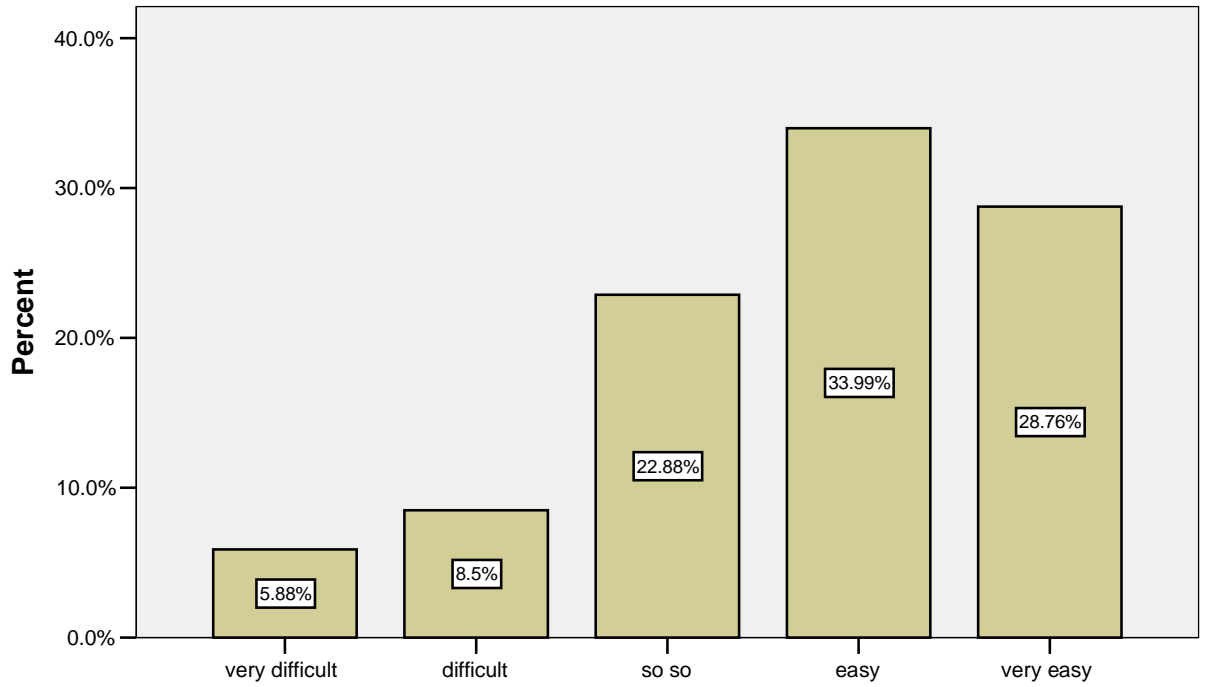


N=306

Less than 25% of respondents found it difficult and very difficult in terms of accessing health services. The rest found it so so to very easy.

How difficult it is for you to

understand traffic rules

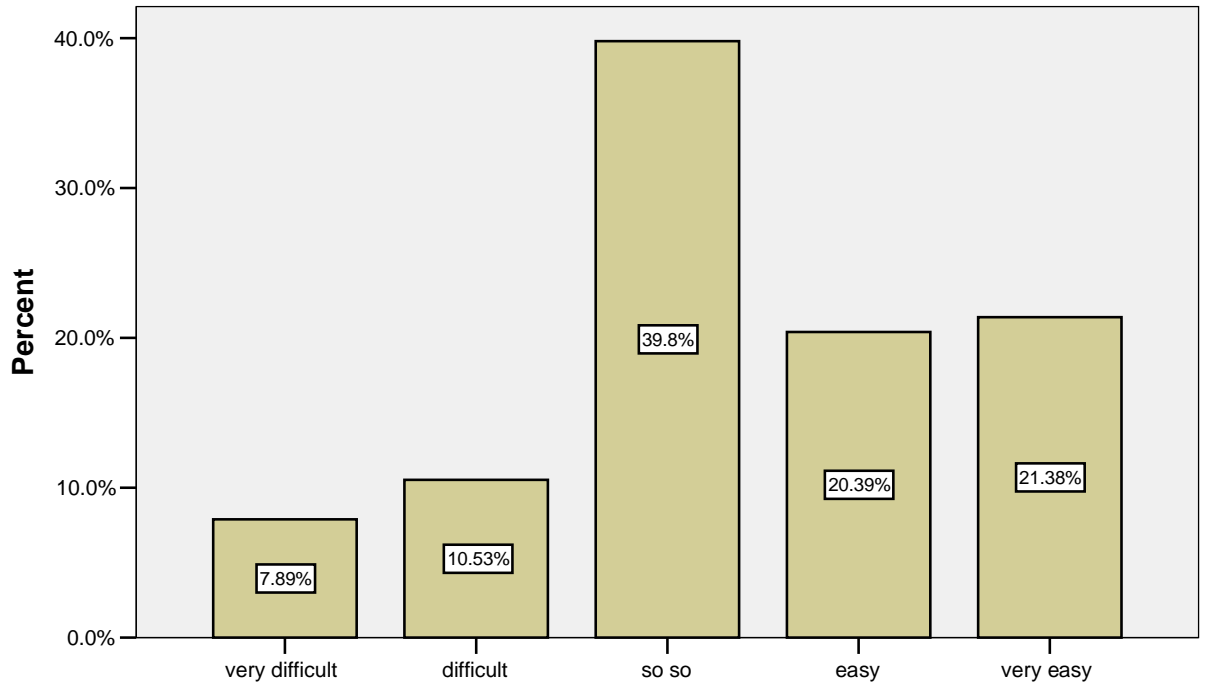


N=306

Only less than 15% of respondents found it difficult and very difficult in regard to understanding traffic rules.

How difficult it is for you to

use public transport

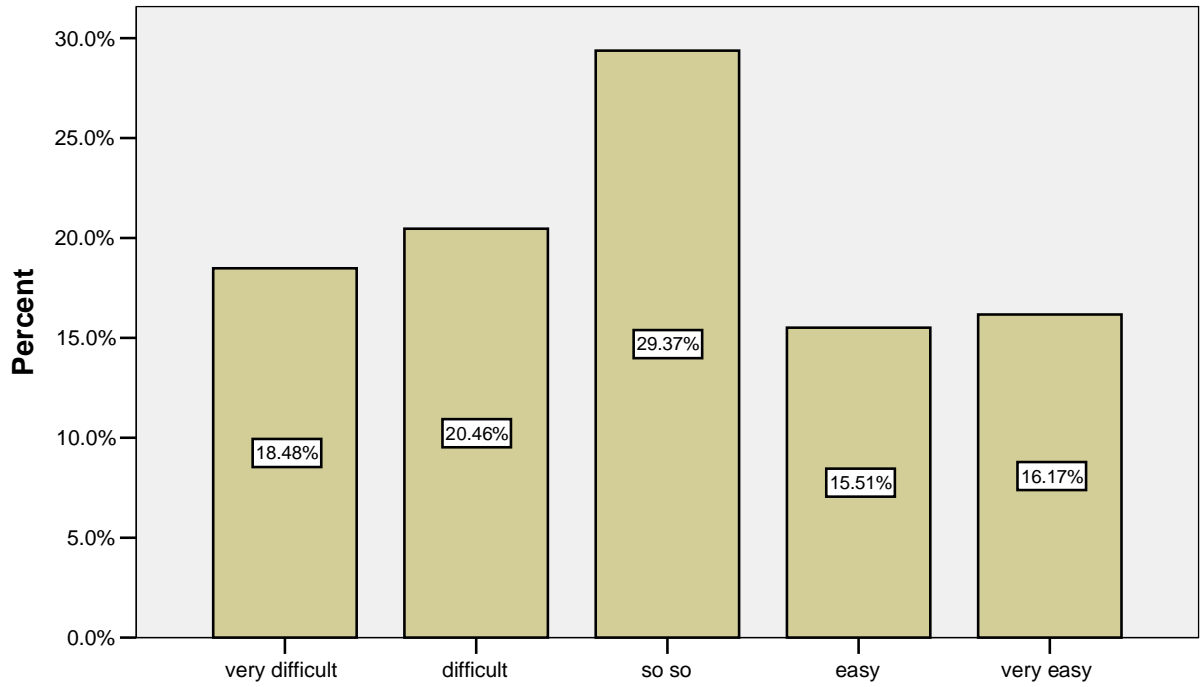


N=304

Less than 20% found it difficult and very difficult when using public transport.

How difficult it is for you to

find a job

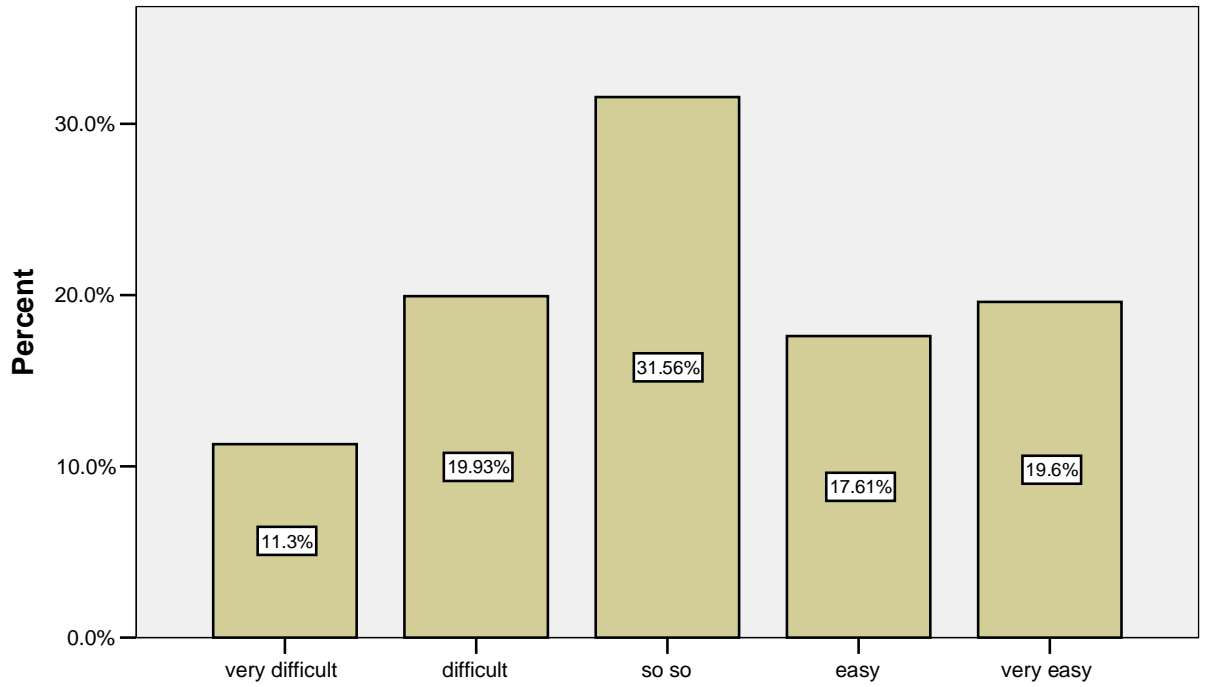


N=303

Less than 40% of respondents found it difficult and very difficult to find a job. The rest ranged from so so to very easy.

How difficult it is for you to

find or rent a house

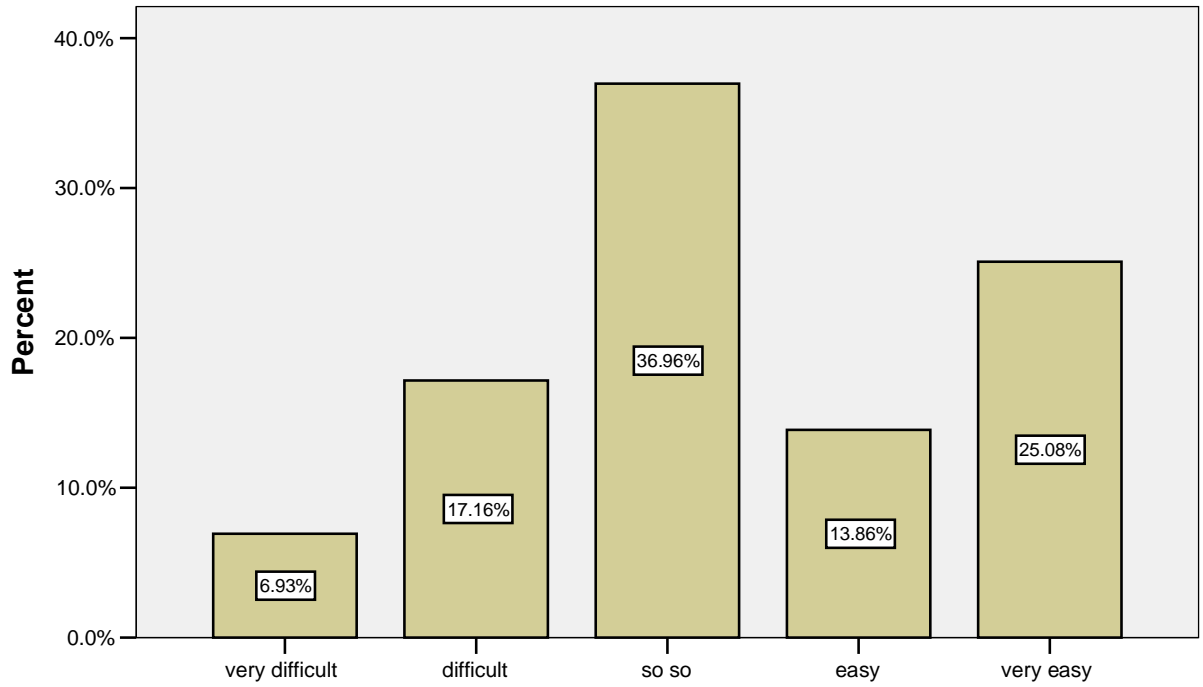


N=301

Around 30% of respondents found it difficult and very difficult to find or rent a house.

How difficult it is for you to

access schools, colleges and universities

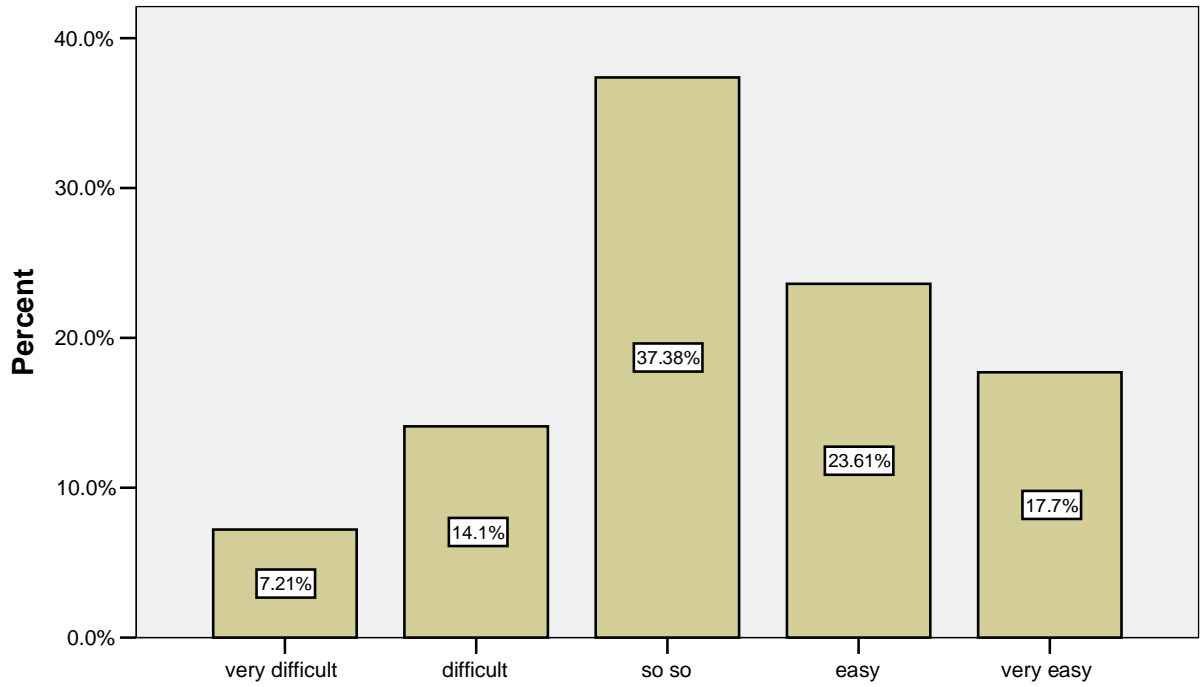


N=303

Less than 25% of respondents found it difficult and very difficult to access schools, colleges and universities.

How difficult it is for you to

adapt to Australian culture and lifestyle

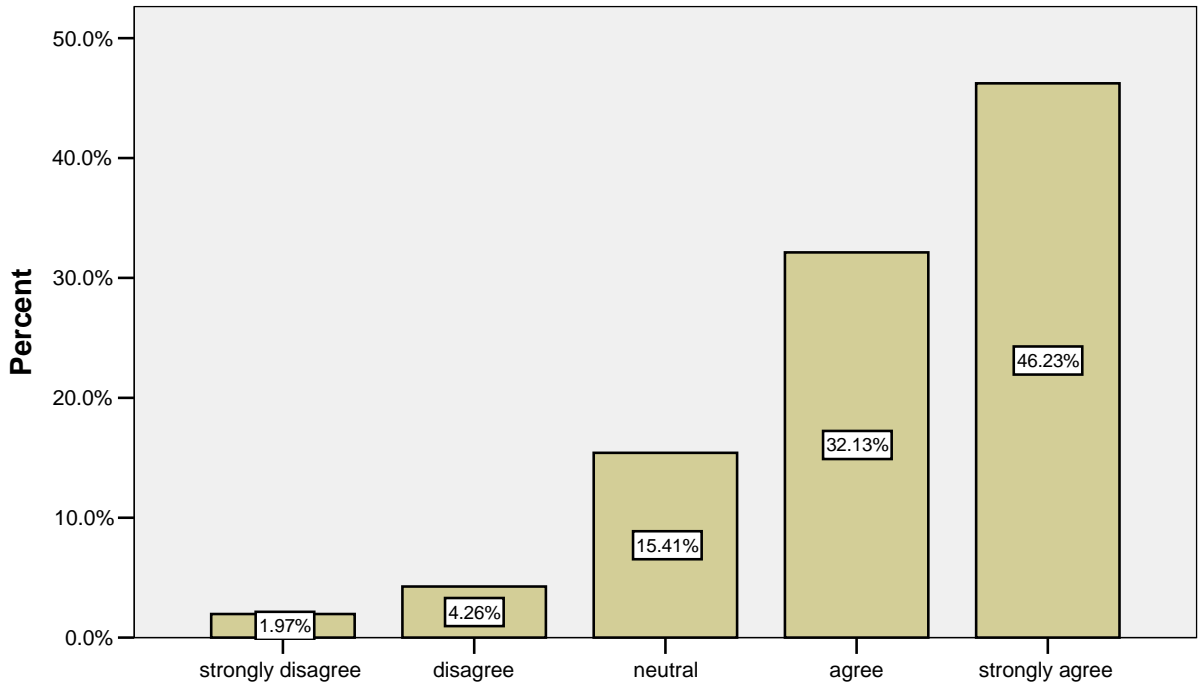


N=305

Only less than 25% of respondents found it difficult and very difficult to adapt to Australian culture and lifestyle.

What do you think BRECC should provide?

Multicultural events and services



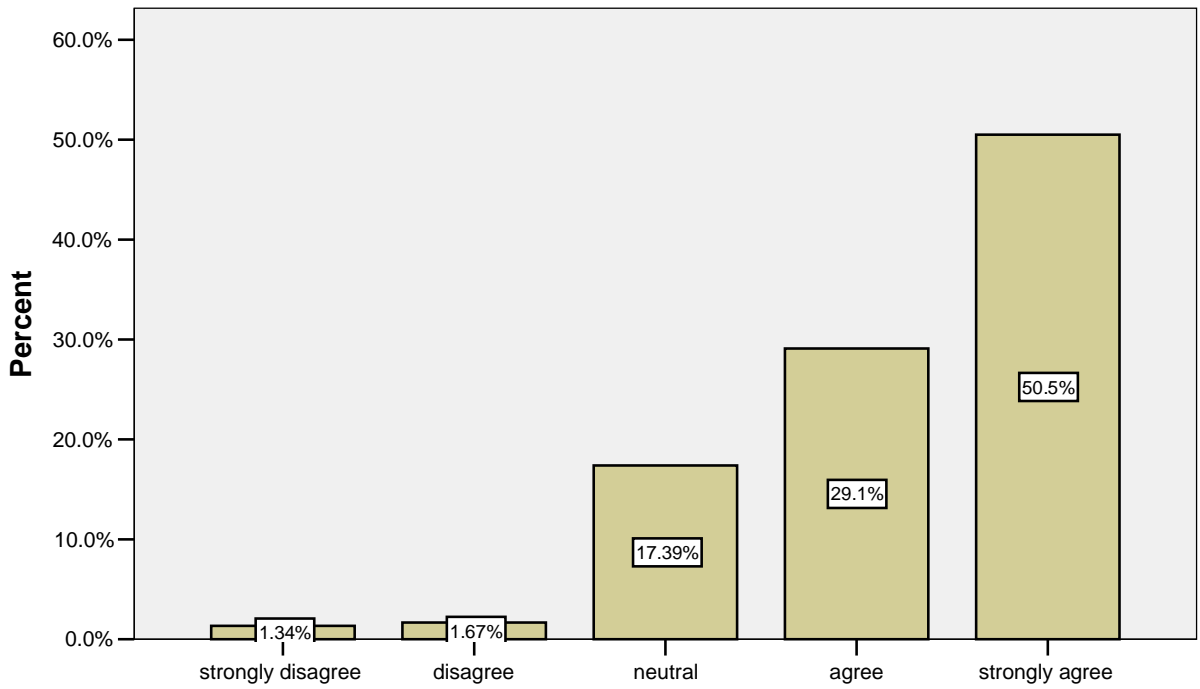
N=305

The majority of respondents (78%) agreed that BRECC should provide multicultural events and services.

Question 20

What do you think BRECC should provide?

Legal assistance services

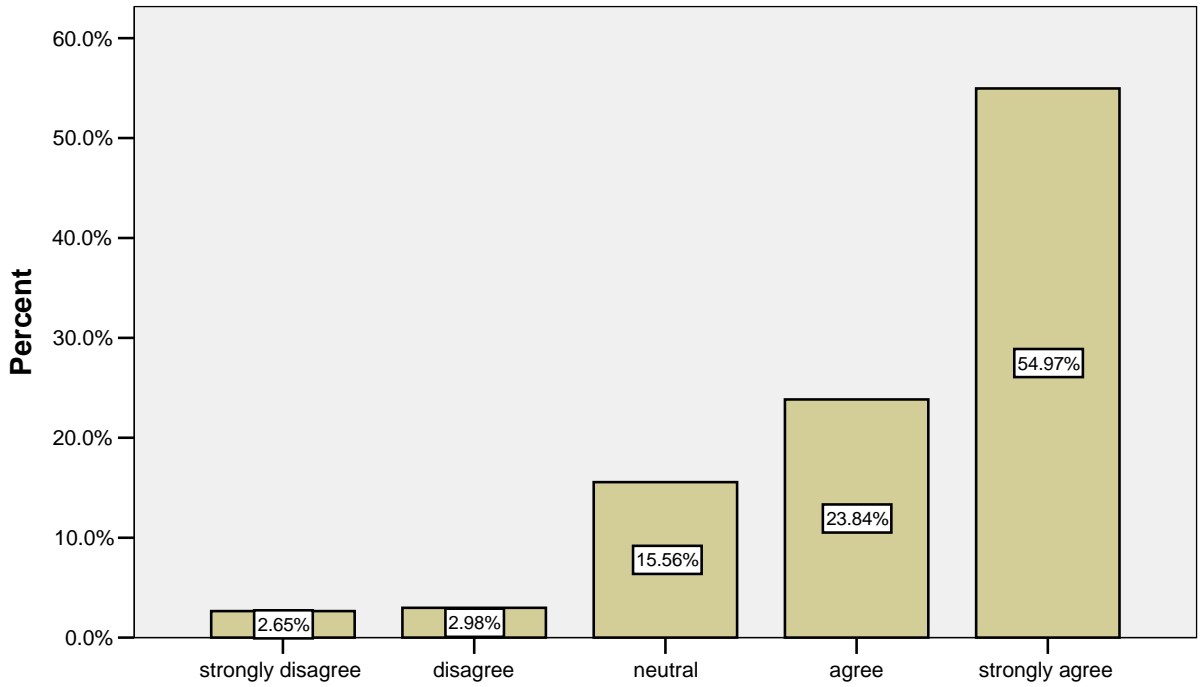


N=299

Almost 80% of respondents agreed that BRECC should provide legal assistance services.

What do you think BRECC should provide?

Immigration legal services

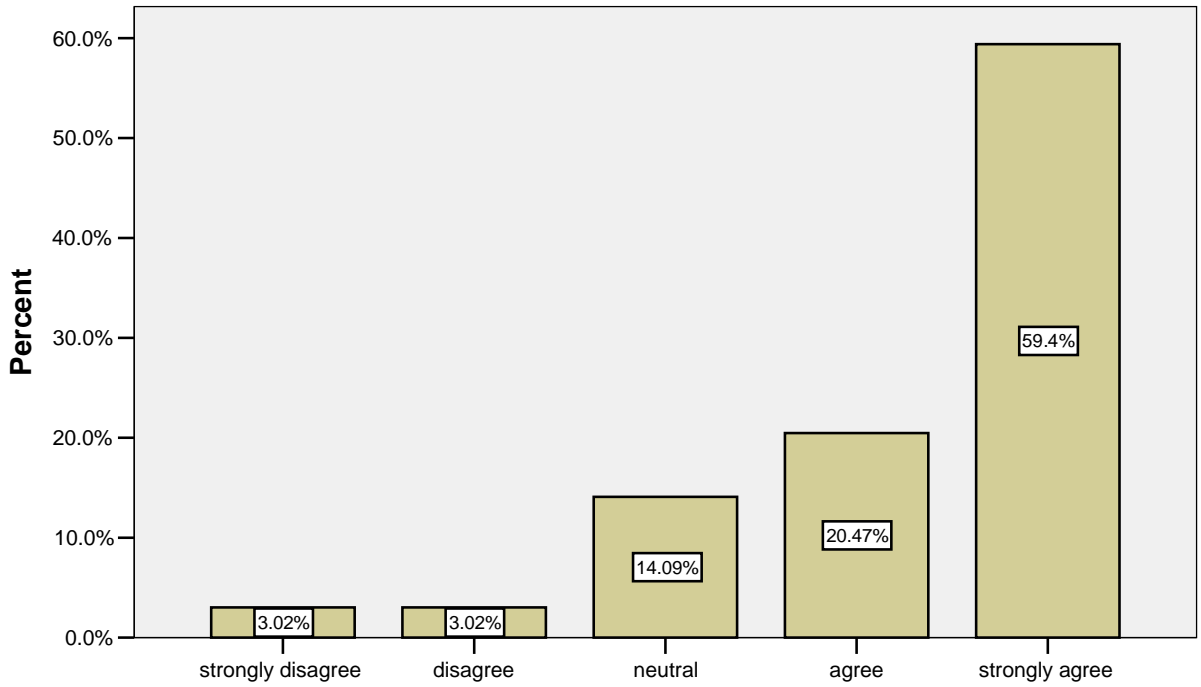


N=302

Almost 80% of respondents agreed that BRECC should provide immigration legal services.

What do you think BRECC should provide?

English language services

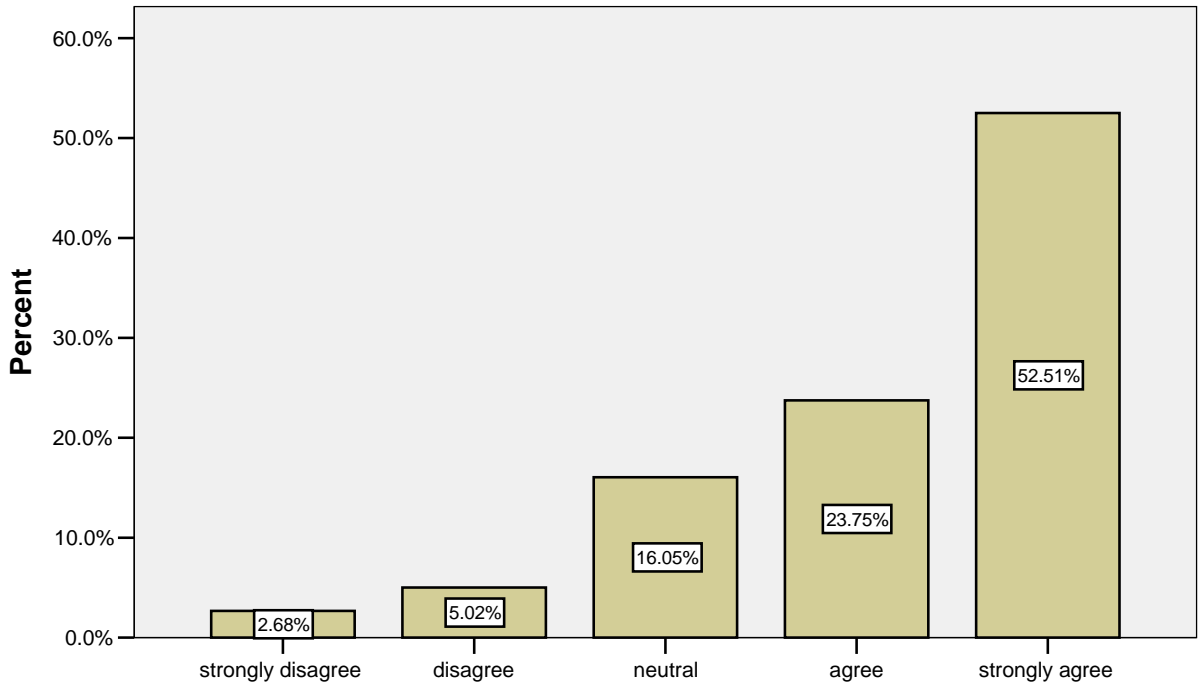


N=298

Again, almost 80% of respondents agreed that BRECC should provide English language services.

What do you think BRECC should provide?

Qualifications conversion services



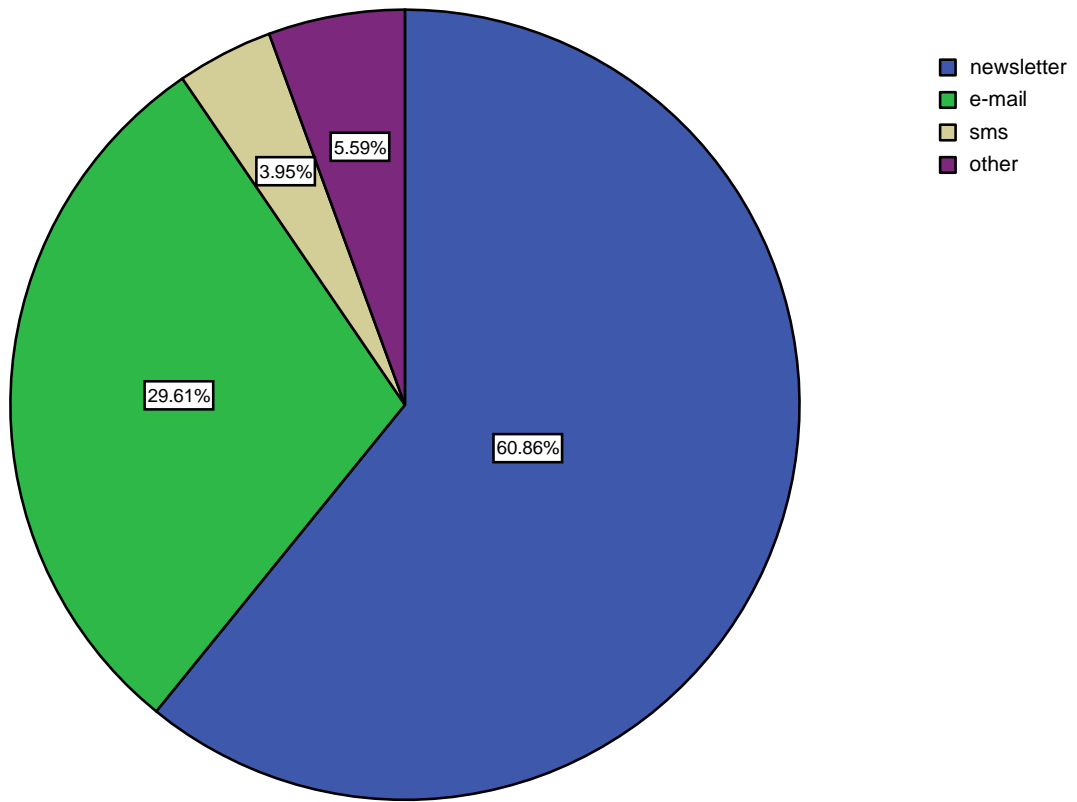
N=299

Almost 80% of respondents agreed that BRECC should provide qualifications conversion services.

A small number of respondents requested other services:

- Providing job opportunities 2
- Mosque, Halal meat shop 2
- Information sessions 1
- Help with Police and Ambulance services 1

What is the best way to keep you informed?



N=304

Newsletter (60%) was the most favourite tool to keep migrants informed, followed with e-mail (30%).

5. Results and Discussion

Of the respondents from 52 countries who were interviewed, approximately 66% have lived in the Bendigo Region for less than 5 years.

About 50% of the respondents arrived in the region via another Australian location and about 50% arrived directly from their country of origin.

The findings shows that a larger proportion of recent arrivals have come directly to the Bendigo Region from their country of origin.

The large number of countries represented in this survey and the low numbers of respondent from most countries seems to indicate that the migrant community in the region is fractionalised. It is for that reason that relatively few respondents belong to a formal or informal ethnic community group.

We tried to establish whether respondents from certain countries of origin belonged to a certain area or ethnic group within that country. The data collected was so diverse that categorising respondents beyond country of origin is impossible, which is a further indication of fractionalisation of the migrant population in the region.

The majority of respondents came to the region for work opportunities and the second largest group moved here to join friends or family. Around 9% of the respondents are unemployed and those that are employed are fairly evenly divided across the different types of employment.

When asked what their specific difficulties in settling in the region were, 47.8% of the responses were related to socialisation issues, whilst 21.5% were related to language difficulties. After further examination of the data we believe that the language difficulties are more likely to be in the 30% range for migrants coming from a non-English speaking background. It is our observation from the individual responses that this does not relate to formal language skills, but to conversational skills.

Responses to question about service delivery by BRECC and other agencies are for the information of these agencies. Responses to the level of difficulty in accessing a variety of services do not appear to be of great concern with some very good results for the banks and the utility companies.

Demand for multicultural events and services, legal assistance services, migrant legal services, English language services and qualification conversion services was rated very high.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

It appears from this research that the most difficult issues for migrants in the Bendigo Region are to become part of the community and make social connections and friends. There is also a language difficulty, which is an added impediment in making these social connections. For migrants to feel at home in this region and wanting to stay here, these are very important issues that need to be addressed.

The region's fractionalised migrant structure adds to the difficulties and makes it more attractive for them to move to the larger population areas where there are more people from their home country.

A significant number of migrant services are not available in the region, which also makes it more attractive for migrants to leave the region. The lack of ethnic community groups and the fragmentation of the ethnic community provide a great opportunity for BRECC to become the multicultural centre in the region.

To become this multicultural centre in the first instance, plans should be developed to organise social events for migrants. In order to assist with integration in Bendigo community, public cultural events should be organised to create a larger awareness and acceptance of migrants.

Conversation and other activity groups should be organised to assist with English conversation skills, and social links with Australian groups and families should be facilitated.

In the second instance BRECC should investigate the possibilities of creating linkages with legal and qualification conversion service providers with the aim to provide some or all of the required services initially on a part time basis from the BRECC offices.

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Appendix 1: BRECC Public' Survey 2006