



# **SURVEY FINDINGS**

## **The Great Recession and the State and Local Government Workforce**

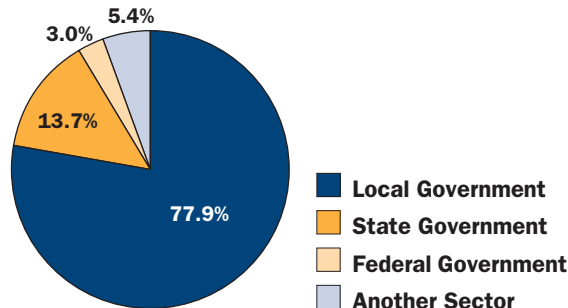
**January 2010**

# The Great Recession and the State and Local Government Workforce

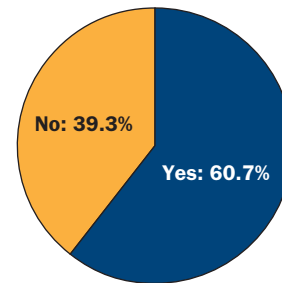
An electronic survey was conducted by the Center for State and Local Government Excellence [www.slge.org] among members of the International Public Management Association for Human Resources (IPMA-HR)<sup>i</sup> and the National Association of State Personnel Executives (NASPE)<sup>ii</sup> from November 18, 2009, to December 14, 2009. Three hundred and ninety-six (396) members took part in the survey.

## Participants

1) You work for... (N = 335)<sup>iii</sup>

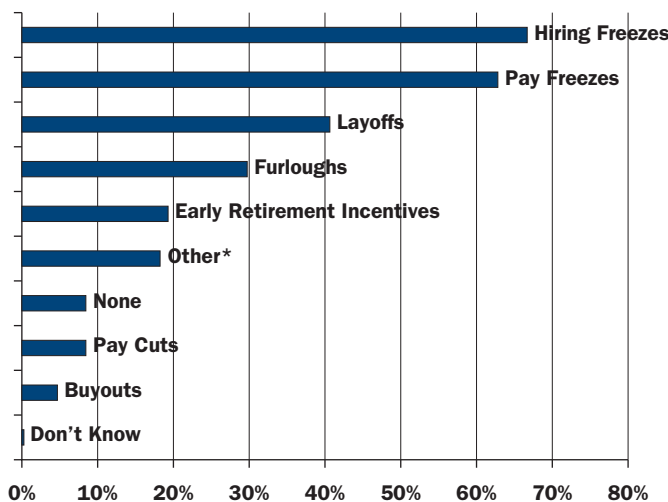


3) If your government has implemented **furloughs**, have the estimated savings been achieved? (N = 117)



## Workforce Changes and Savings

2) Which of the following workforce changes has the current economic climate caused your government to implement? (N = 396)



\*Note: "Other" workforce changes offered were: no cost of living adjustments; elimination of vacant positions; centralized position review to determine if vacant positions should be filled; voluntary furloughs; delaying wage adjustment decisions; in exchange for pay cuts, reducing the number of hours and days to be worked during the week; position consolidation and elimination; performance pay freezes.

## Unfilled Positions

4) What **positions**, if any, do you continue to have a hard time filling throughout the current economic climate? (N = 188)

- Engineers (all types)
- Environmental, chemical, forensic, credentialed professionals
- Water treatment plant operators
- Most skilled trades
- Trained mechanics
- Information technology professionals
- Nurses
- Physicians
- Paramedics
- Health Instructors
- Social service case workers
- Finance
- Acquisition specialists

<sup>i</sup> 8,378 members

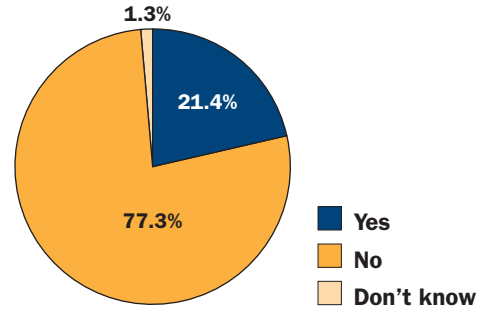
<sup>ii</sup> 110 members

<sup>iii</sup> (N = number of respondents to each question)

- Correctional officers
- Animal control officers
- Police officers
- Police/emergency radio operators
- Top management
- Department heads

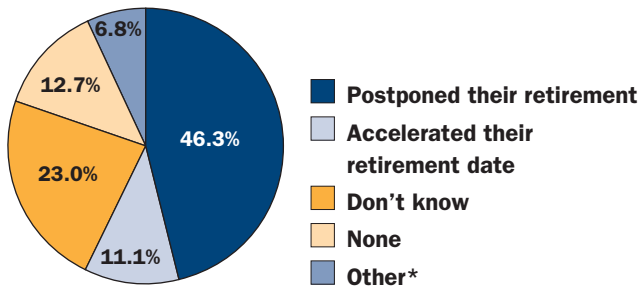
## Retirement Plan Changes

7) Has your government made any changes to the retirement plans you offer to your employees, since the beginning of the recession?



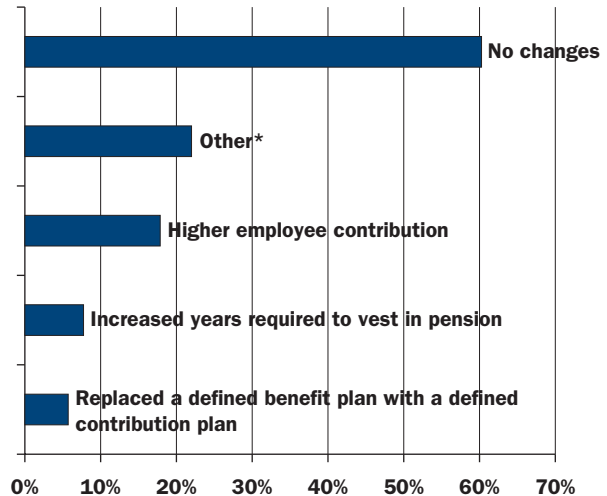
## Postponed Retirements

5) What **changes**, if any, have your retirement-eligible employees made regarding their plans for retirement? (N = 395)



\*Note: "Other" respondents also noted that some employees have shifted their employment status to part-time or contract work.

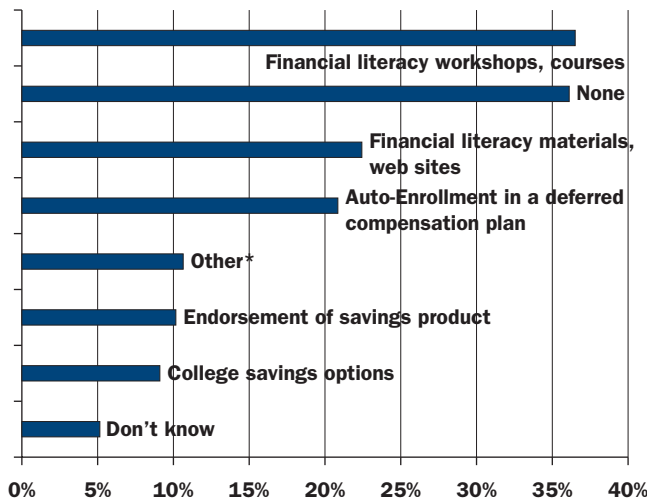
8) If your government has made **changes to the retirement plans**, has your government made any of the following changes to retirement benefits for new hires?



\*Note: "Other" changes to the retirement plans for new hires offered were: increased years to vest for retiree health benefits; elimination of retiree health care; older retirement without penalty; decreased benefits across the board; formula changes.

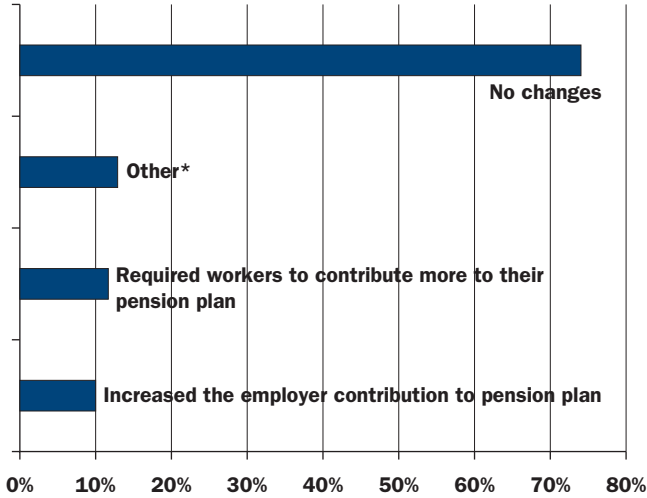
## Employee Saving

6) Please indicate which of the following your government has instituted to encourage employee saving:



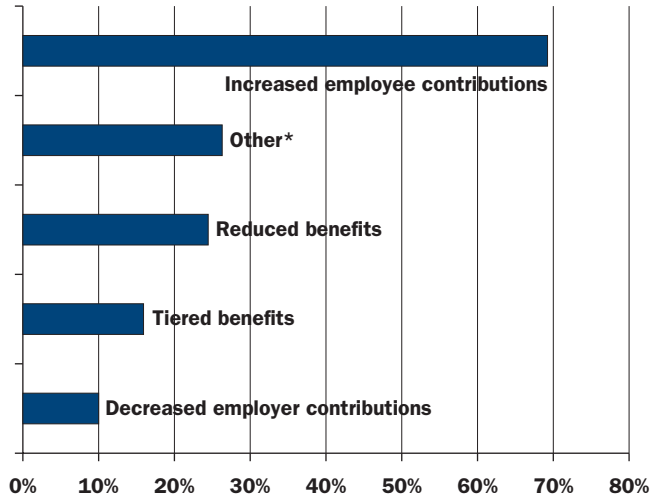
\*Note: "Other" initiatives related to **encouraging employee saving** were: access to health-related savings accounts; information about the health of financial institutions with which employees may have accounts; information and access to IRAs, savings bonds, and other savings products; publicized access to credit union.

9) If your government has made **changes to the retirement plans**, has your government taken any of the following actions to address pension funding for current workers?



\*Note: “Other” changes to the retirement plans for current workers offered were: increased cost sharing for retiree health care; decreased employer contribution to deferred compensation pension plans.

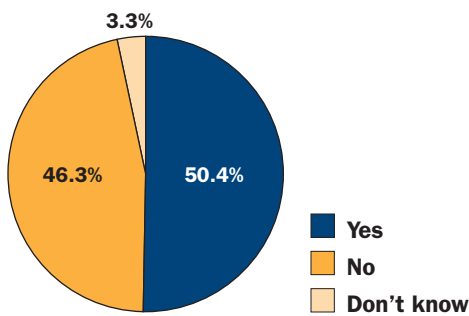
11) If your government has made changes to the health care plans, **what changes?**

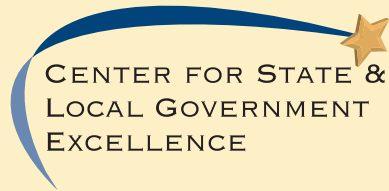


\*Note: “Other” changes to the health care plans offered were: added other types of health plans; made employee cost adjustments to plans based on weight and smoking status; increasing use of wellness, on-site clinics, and 24-hour nurse line; added an option where the employee can receive a payout if they use another health care plan they have access to elsewhere; increased the years needed to vest for retiree health care.

## Health Care Plan Changes

10) Has your government made any **changes to the health care plans** you offer to your employees and retirees since the beginning of the recession?





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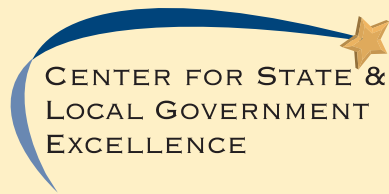
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## About the Center for State and Local Government Excellence

The Center for State and Local Government Excellence helps state and local governments become knowledgeable and competitive employers so they can attract and retain a talented and committed workforce. The Center identifies best practices and conducts research on competitive employment practices, workforce development, pensions, retiree health security, and financial planning. The Center also brings state and local leaders together with respected researchers and features the latest demographic data on the aging work force, research studies, and news on health care, recruitment, and succession planning on its web site, [www.slge.org](http://www.slge.org).

The Center's five research priorities are:

- Retirement plans and savings
- Retiree health care
- Financial education for employees
- Talent strategies and innovative employment practices
- Workforce development

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