



Shifting Sands on the Same Beach

2016 Results Overview

Comparisons between Years and Counties where applicable/ available

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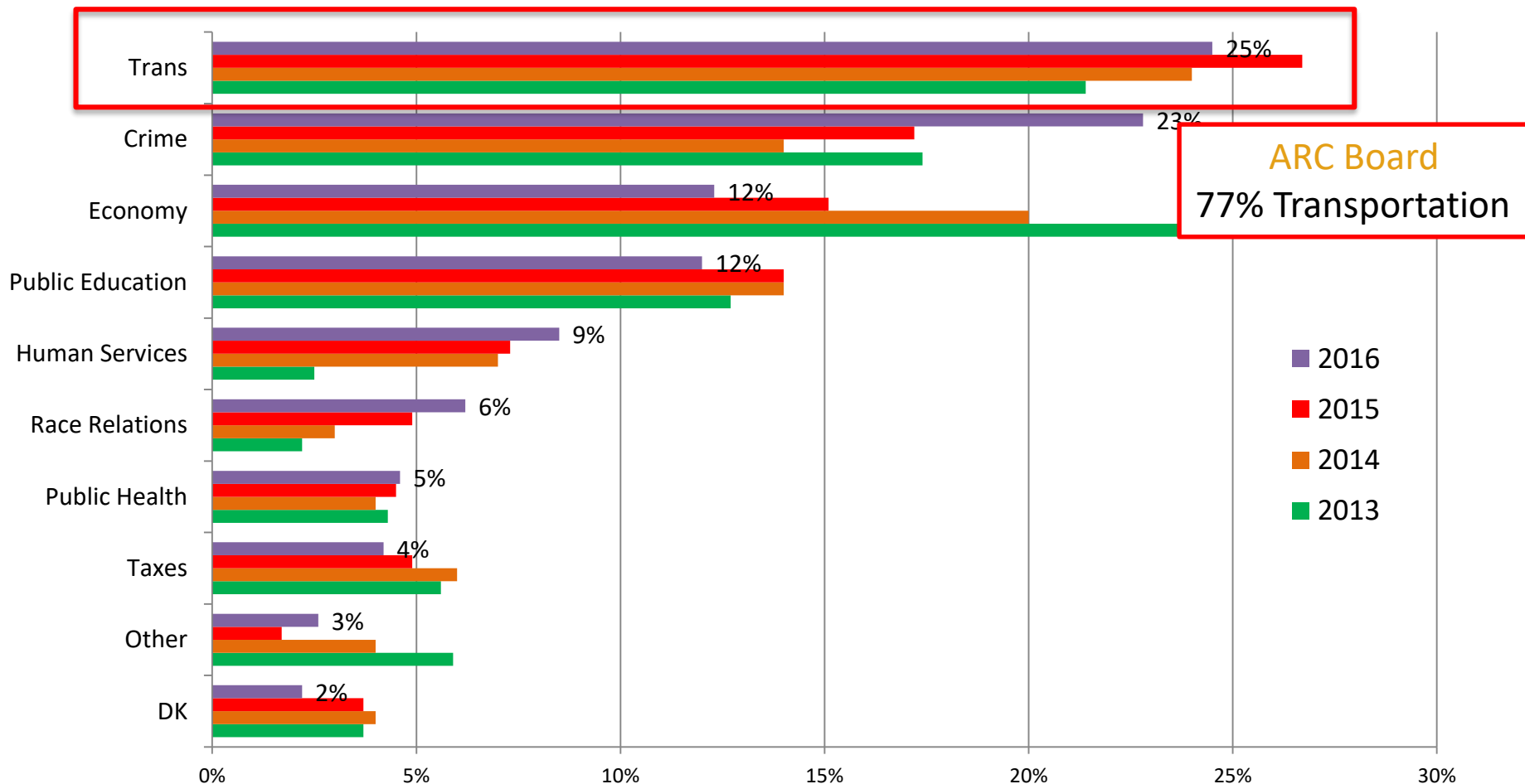
November, 2016

2016 Headlines

- **Transportation** stays the #1 concern
 - Transit support ticking up
- *Caveat:* Concern with **Crime** Rising...
 - BUT we feel safe in our own communities
- **Economy** is getting better and better
 - Was the #1 concern in 2013, now #4
- Optimism for **The Future** Remains
 - 1/3 See Things “Better next 3-4 years”

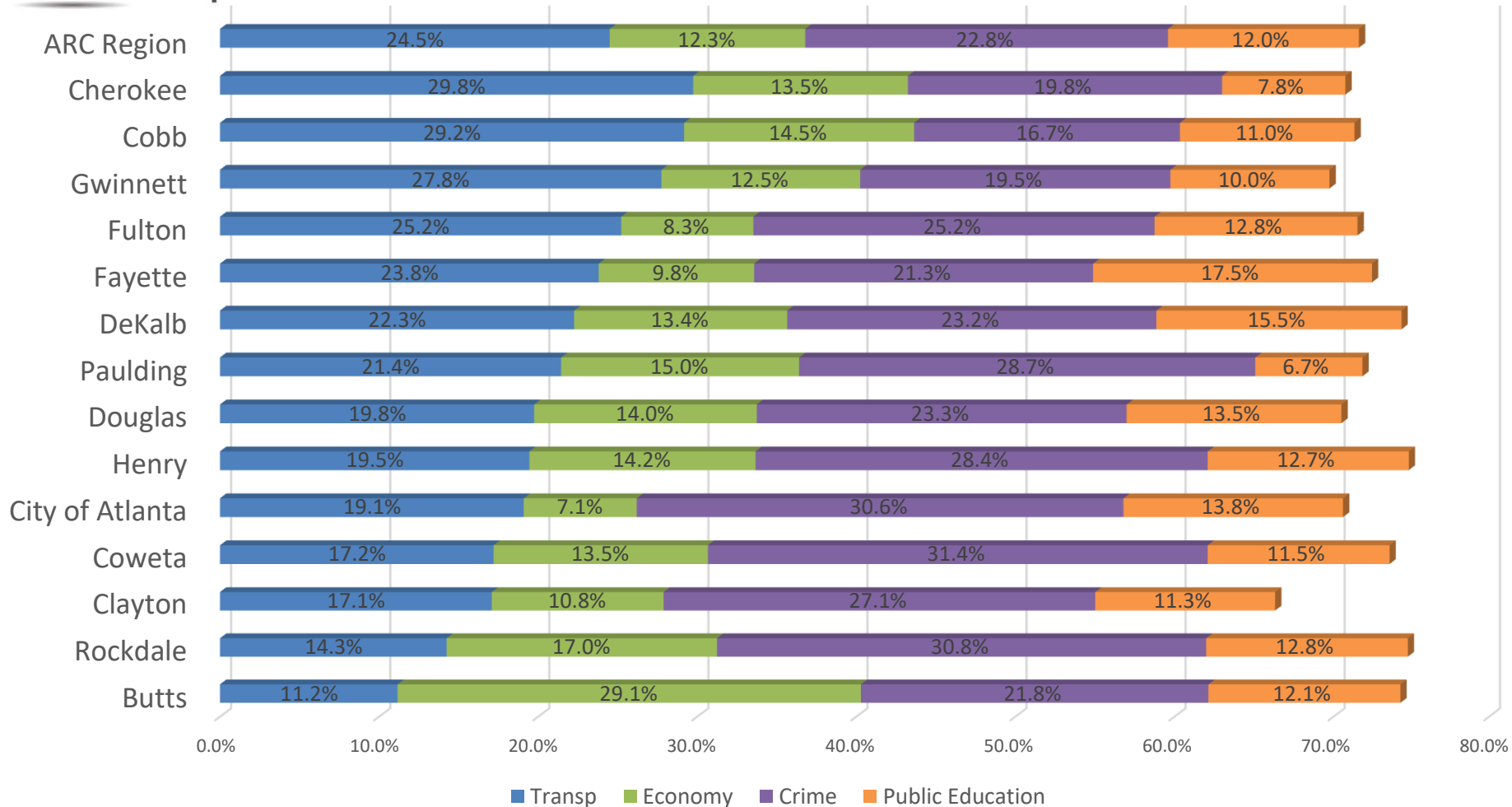
TRANSPORTATION

Biggest Problem Facing Residents in Metro Atlanta: Responses - 2013-2016



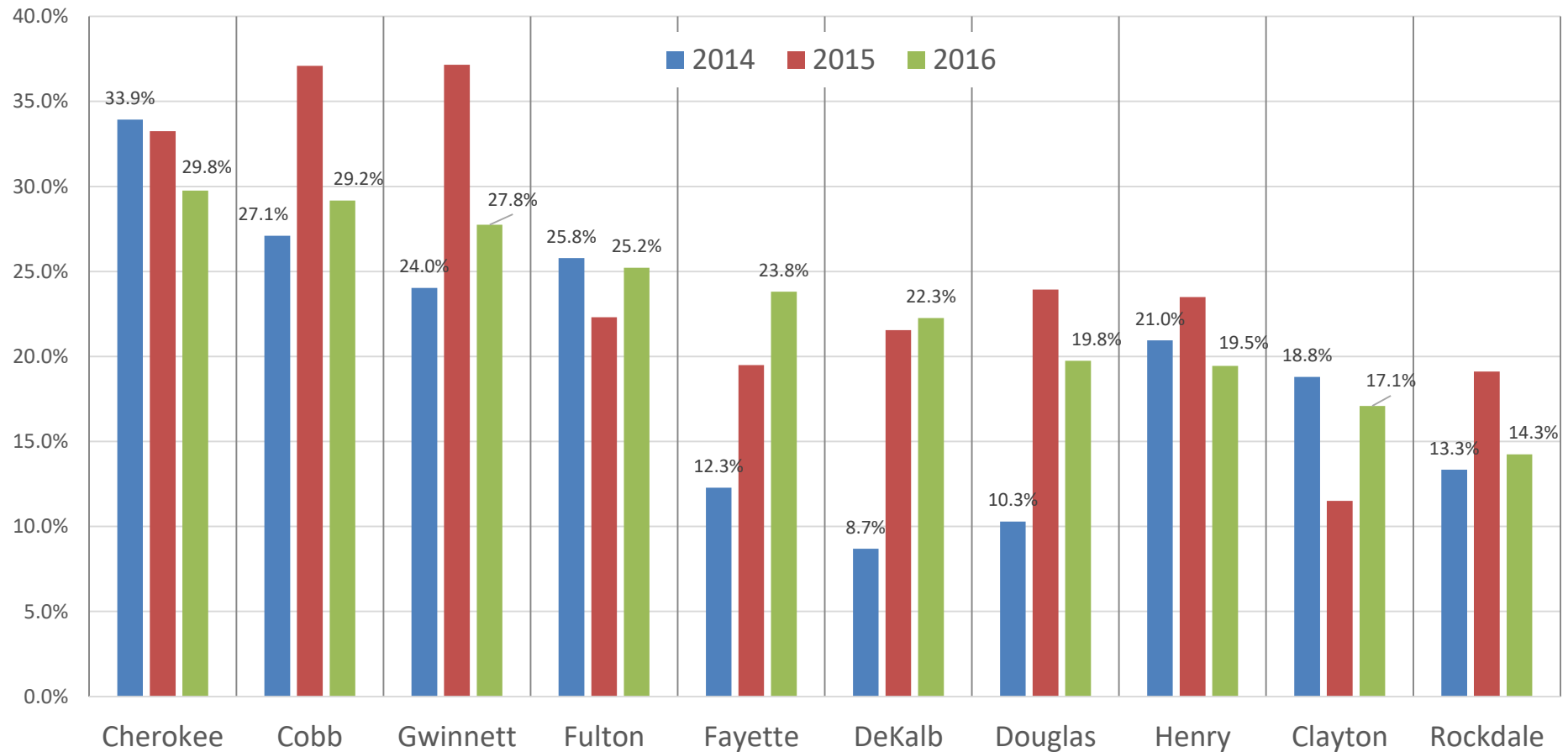
Transportation is again the #1 problem in the 2016 survey, as it has been every year since 2014. In 2013, with the region still coming out of the Great Recession, residents rated “the economy” the #1 problem.

Biggest Problem for Metro Atlanta: 2016



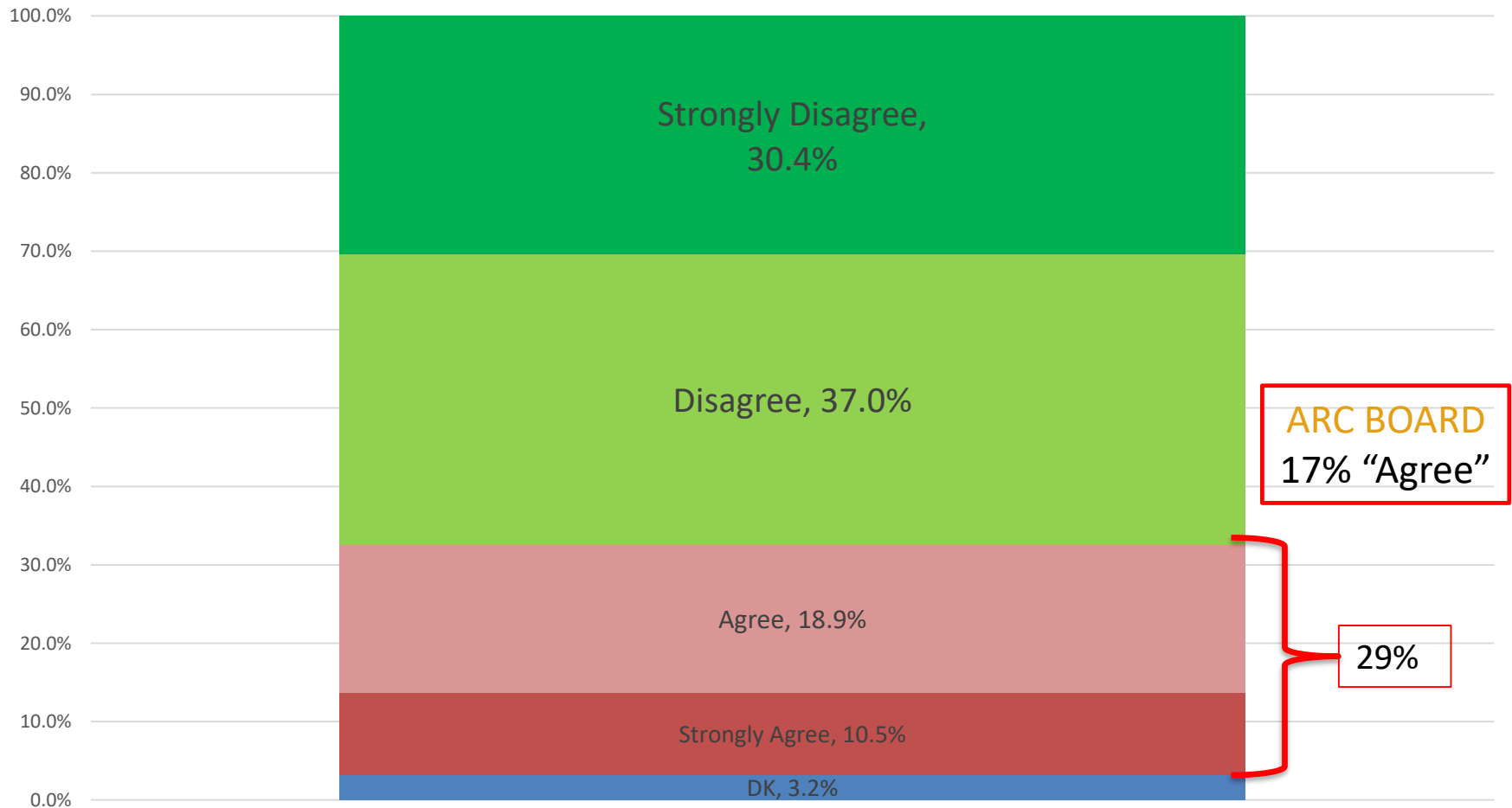
At the county level in 2016, Transportation is the biggest problem for five of the fourteen jurisdictions for which data was gathered. In half of the jurisdictions, fewer than 20 percent of respondents rated transportation as the biggest problem for the metro area.

Share by County: Transportation as Biggest Problem 2014-2016



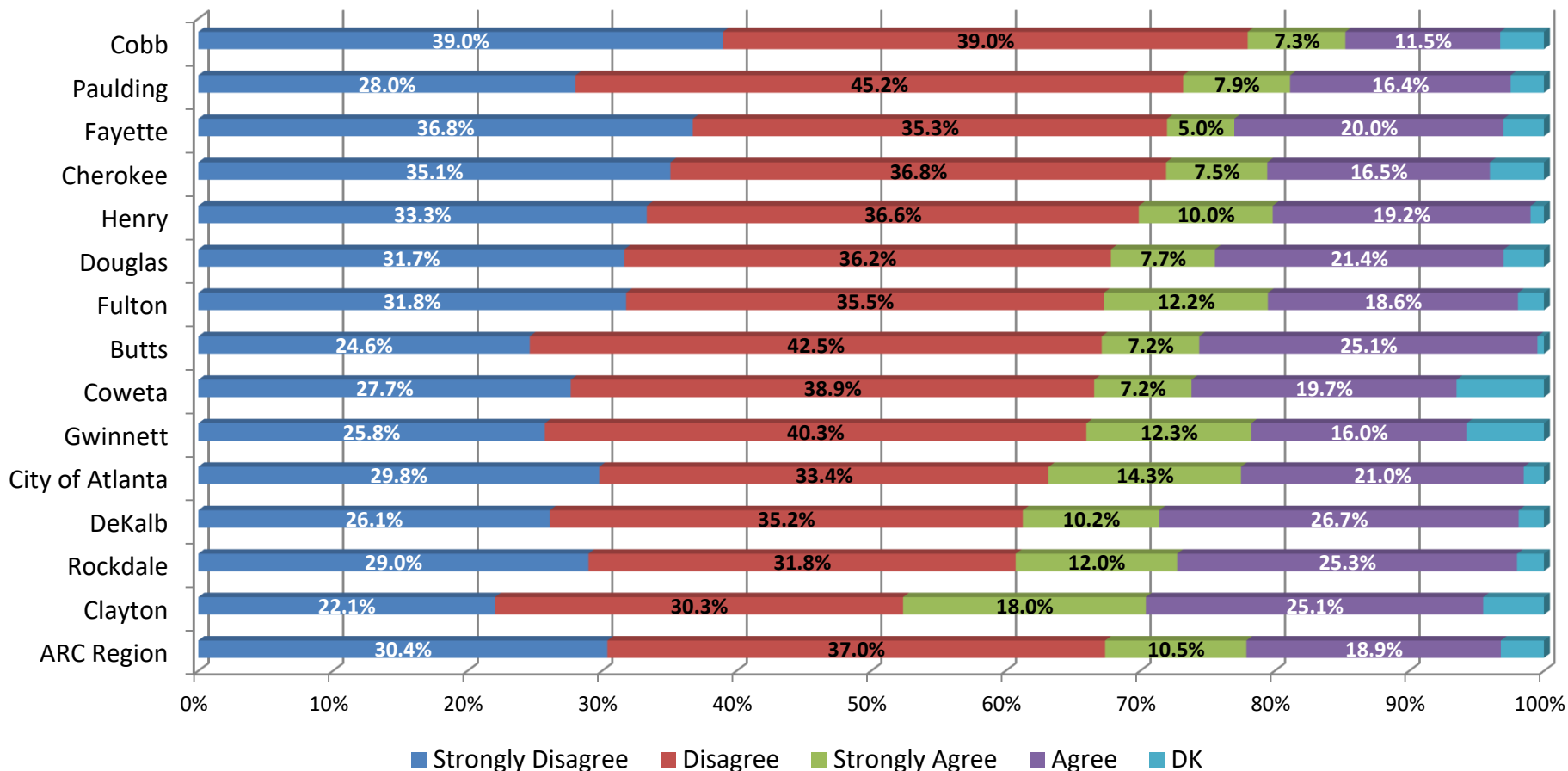
From 2015 to 2016, the overall regional responses rating transportation the #1 problem ticked down from a 27% share to 25%. Looking at the trends by county, between 2015 and 2016, the share of residents rating transportation the biggest problem declined in all but four of the jurisdictions. In Fulton, Fayette, DeKalb, and Clayton, transportation was assessed a bigger problem (relatively) in 2016 than it was in 2015.

"I Frequently Lack Transportation to Get to Places I Need to Go..."



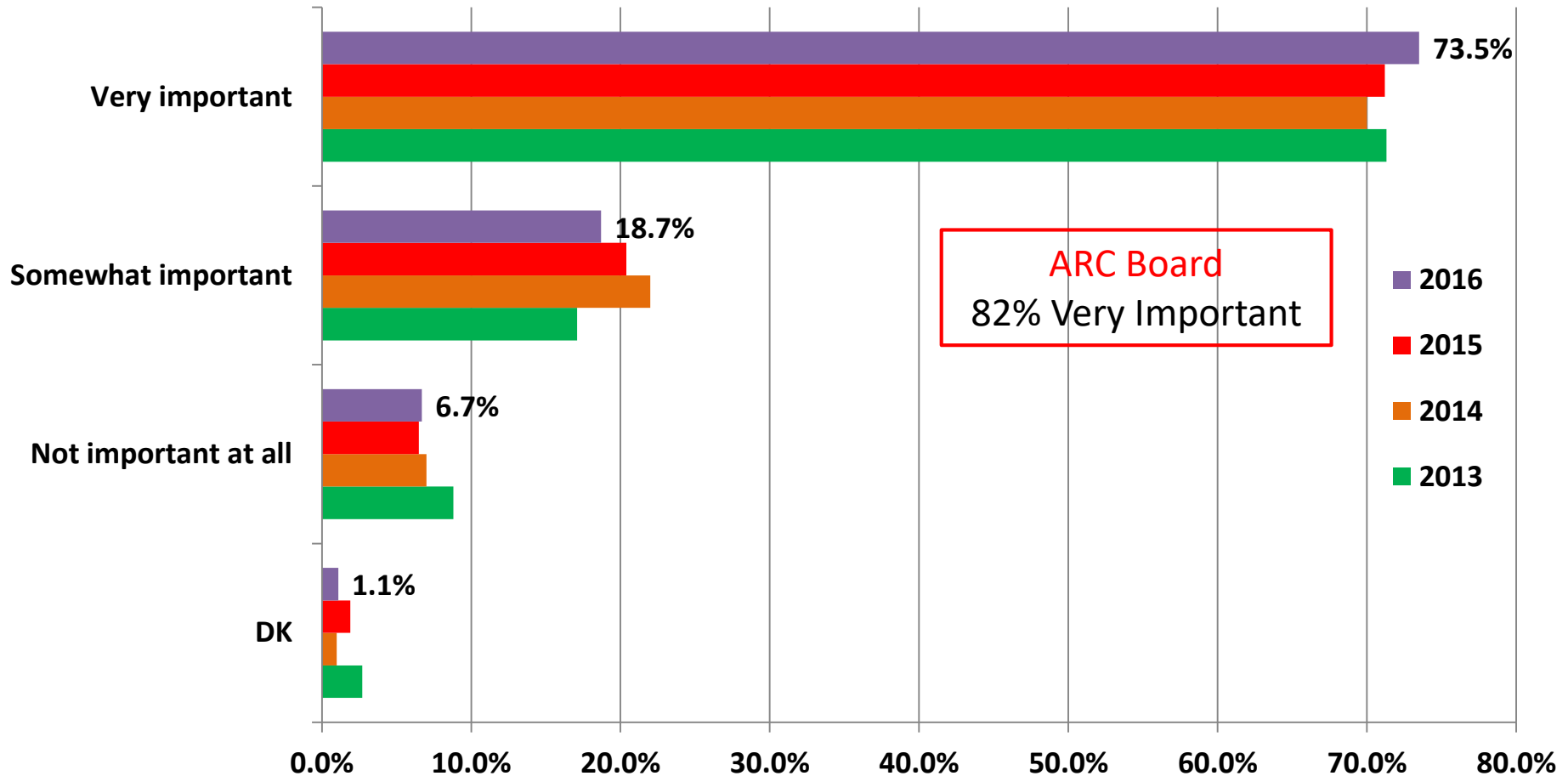
A new question this year asks whether residents frequently lack transportation to get to where they need to go. In 2016, almost 30% agreed or strongly agreed that they *lacked* this access to transportation. This 30%, interestingly, is even higher than the 25% share of regional residents that rate transportation as the biggest problem in the region.

"I Frequently Lack Transportation to Get to Places I Need to Go..." (By County)



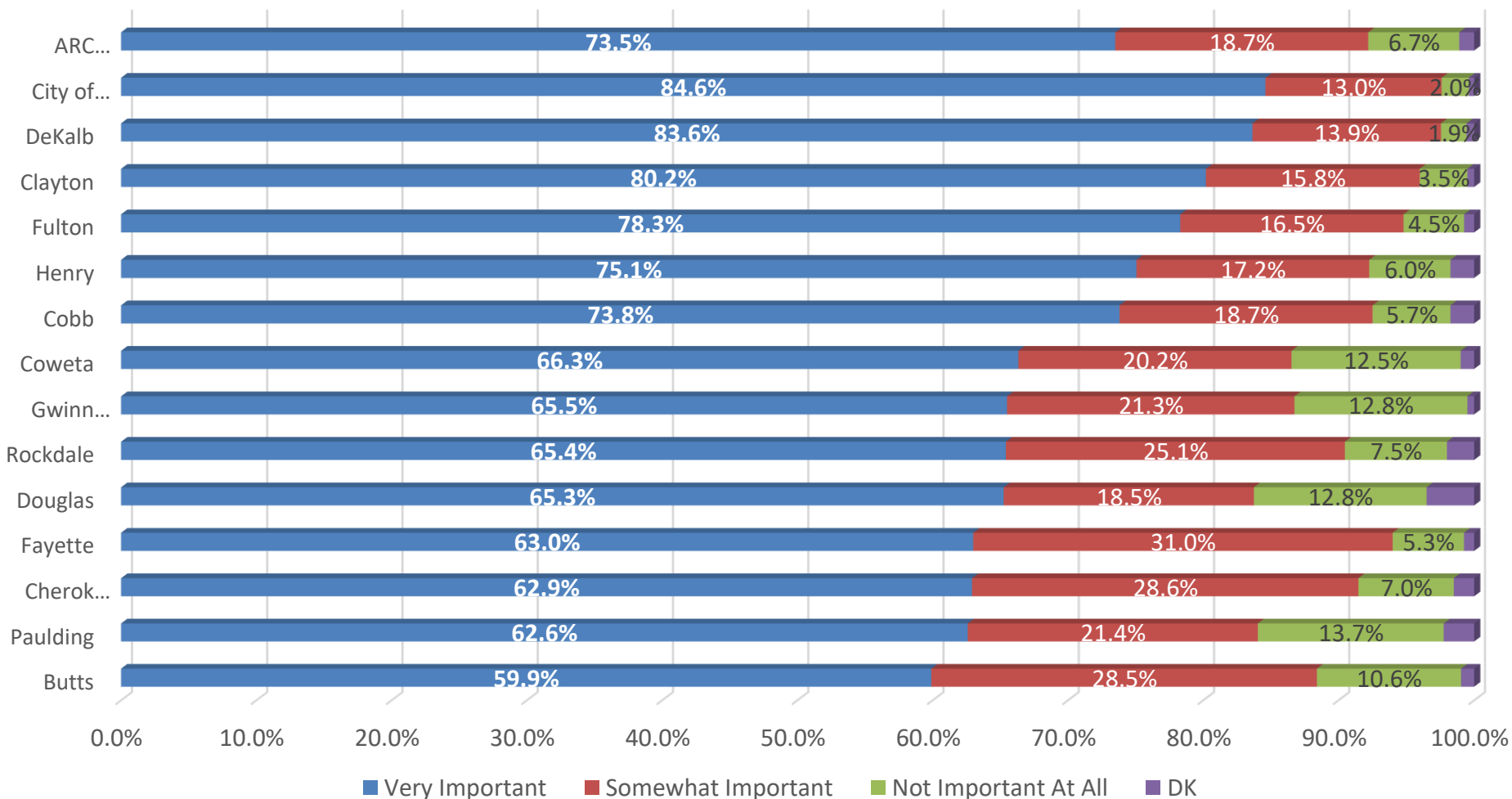
At the jurisdiction level, the areas of Clayton, Rockdale, DeKalb, and the City of Atlanta feel that they have the greatest challenges accessing transportation to get to where they need to go. For example, about 43% of Clayton residents frequently lacked transportation. The suburban counties of Paulding, Fayette, and Cherokee felt that they had the least problems with access to transportation. Only 24% of Paulding residents said that they frequently lacked transportation.

Importance of Public Transit: Responses 2013-2016



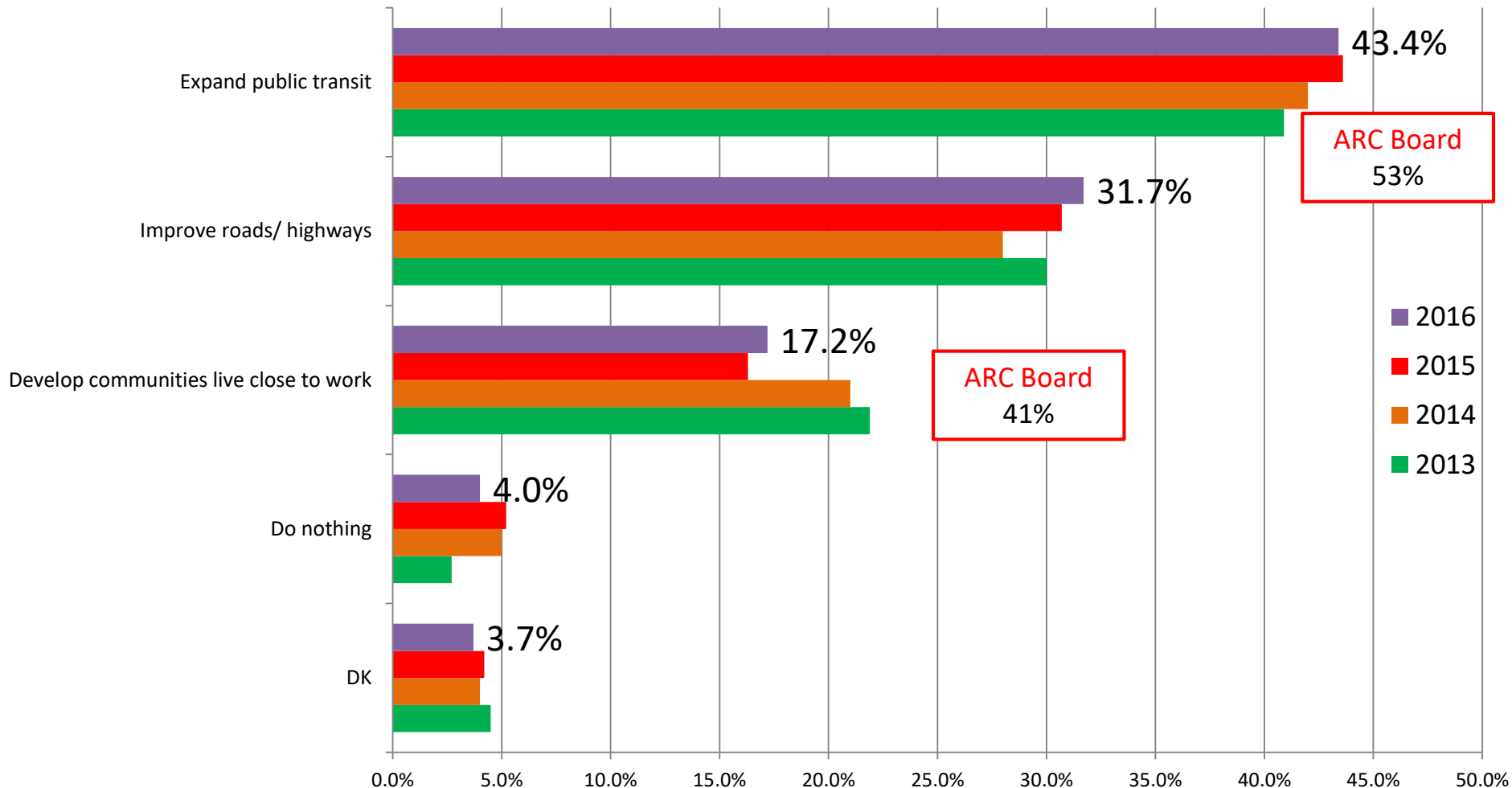
An overwhelming percentage of regional residents continue to feel that public transit is “very important” or “somewhat important” to the region. 92% said so in 2016, up from 88% in 2013. A declining share, from about 9% in 2013 down to 6.7% in 2016, said that public transit was “not important at all”.

Importance of Public Transit to the Region: 2016



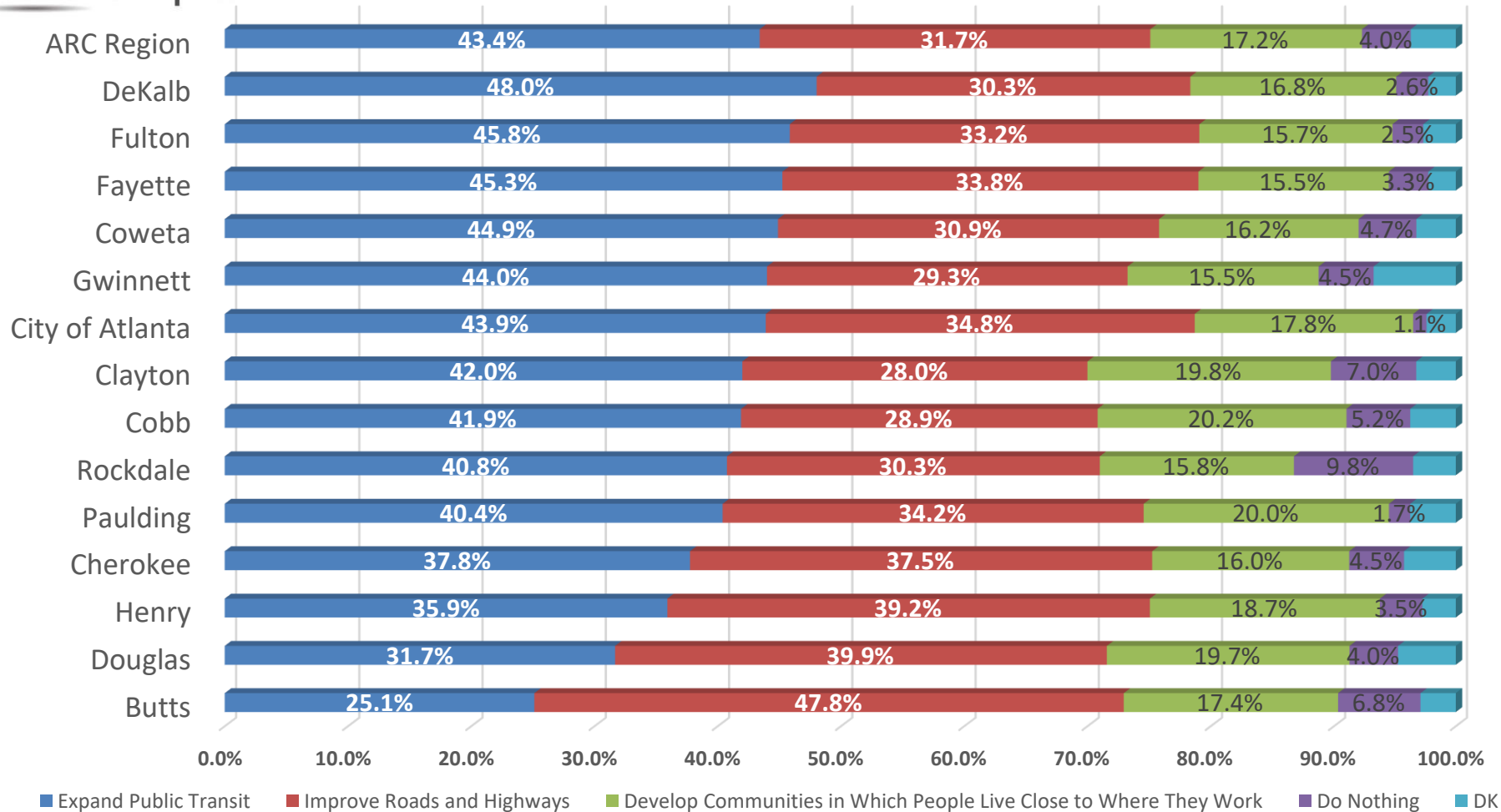
At the county level in 2016, in seven of the fourteen jurisdictions, more than two-thirds of residents said that public transit is “very important” to the region. In five (City of Atlanta, DeKalb, Clayton, Fulton, and Henry, more than three-fourths said so.

Best Way to Fix Traffic? Responses 2013-2016



A plurality (i.e. the highest share among possible options) of regional residents continue to feel that expanding public transit is the best way to fix traffic. 43% said so in 2016, up very slightly from 41% in 2013. Overall, from 2013 to 2016, slightly increasing shares prefer transit or road improvements than favor developing live-work communities.

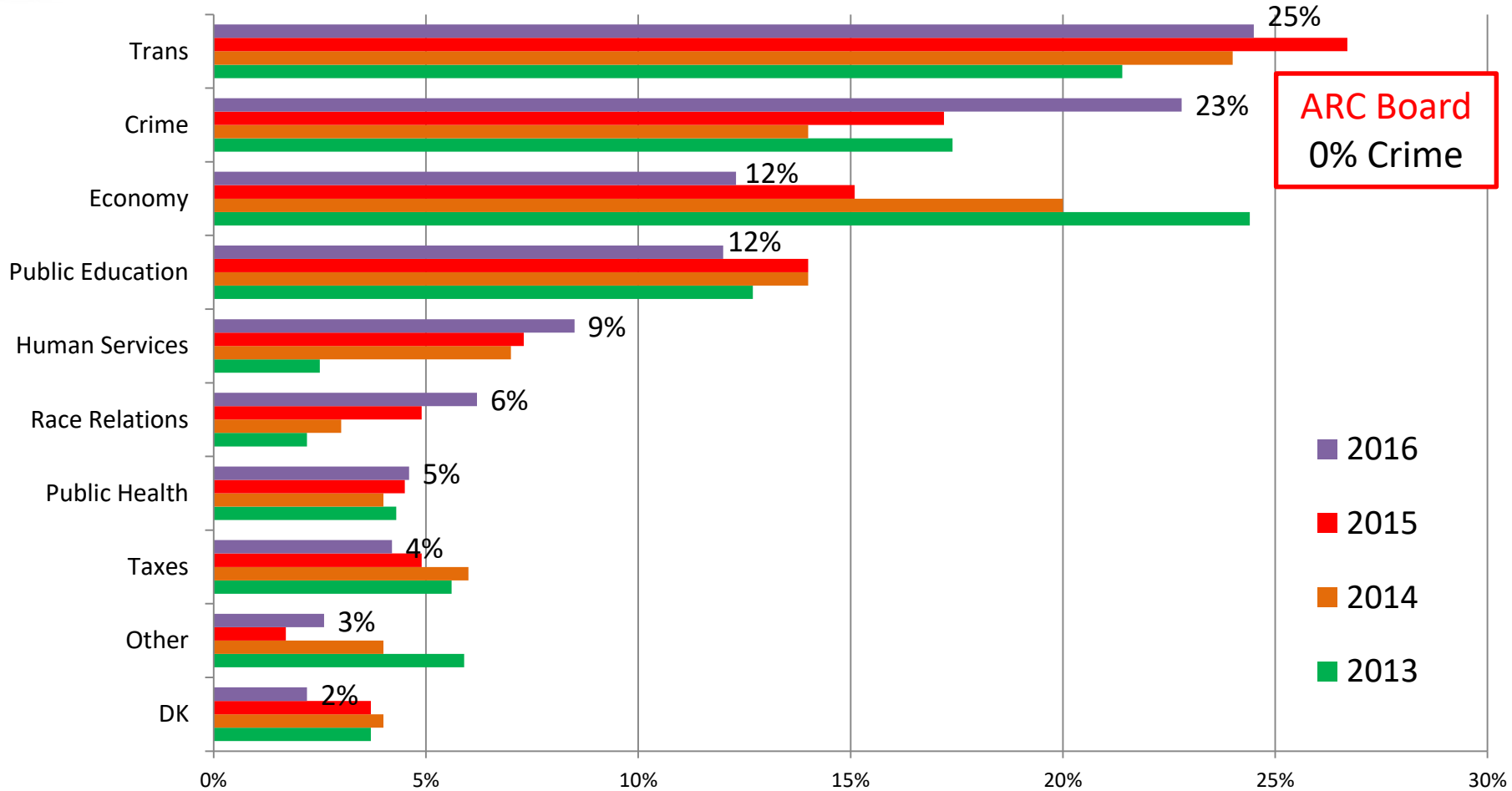
Best Long-Term Solution to Traffic?: 2016



In DeKalb, Fulton, and Fayette, over 45% of residents feel that expanding public transit is the best way to fix traffic. Public transit is the preferred alternative in eleven of the fourteen jurisdictions surveyed. Residents in Butts, Douglas, and Henry felt that improving roads and highways was a better long-term solution.

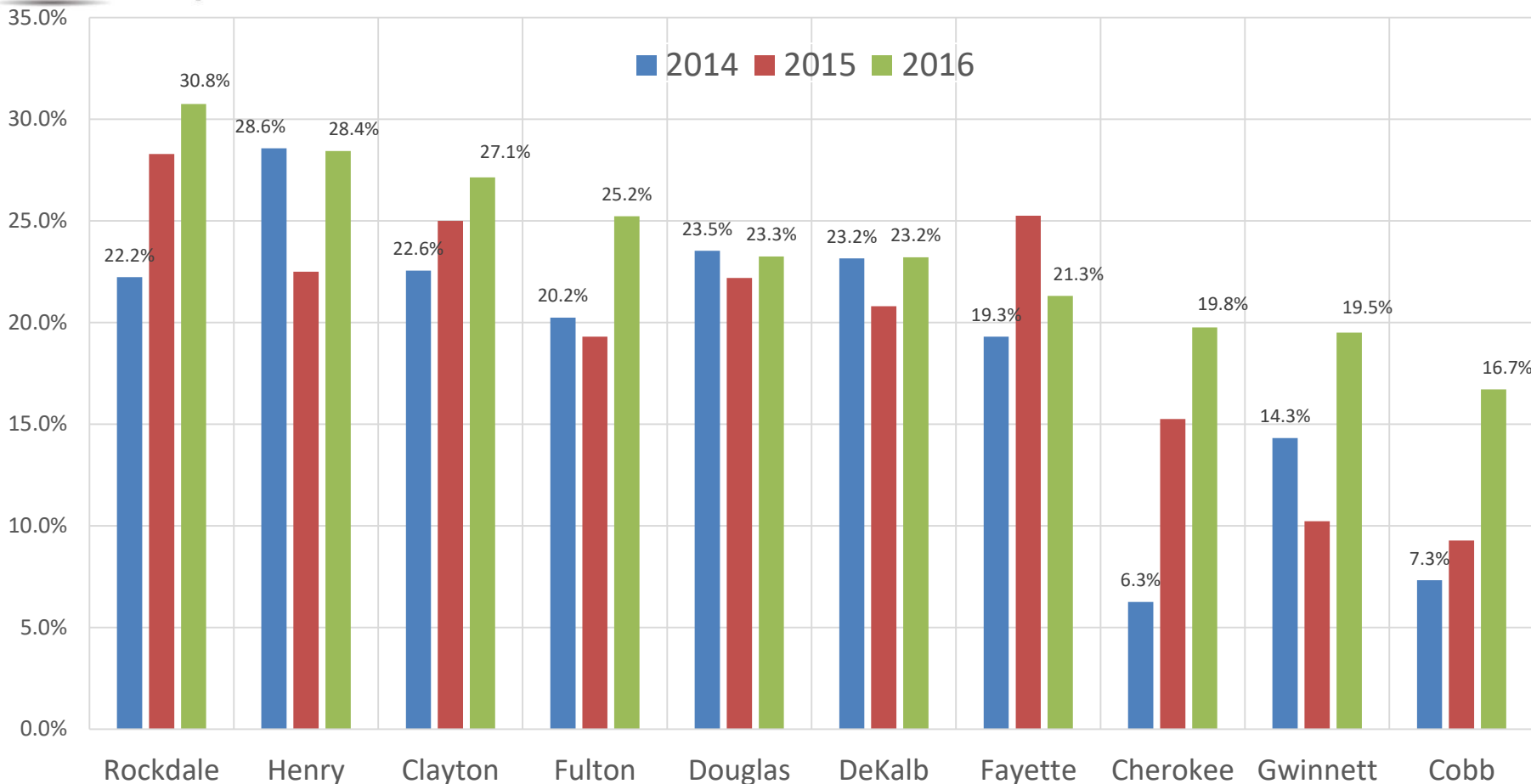
CRIME

Biggest Problem Facing Residents in Metro Atlanta: Responses - 2013-2016



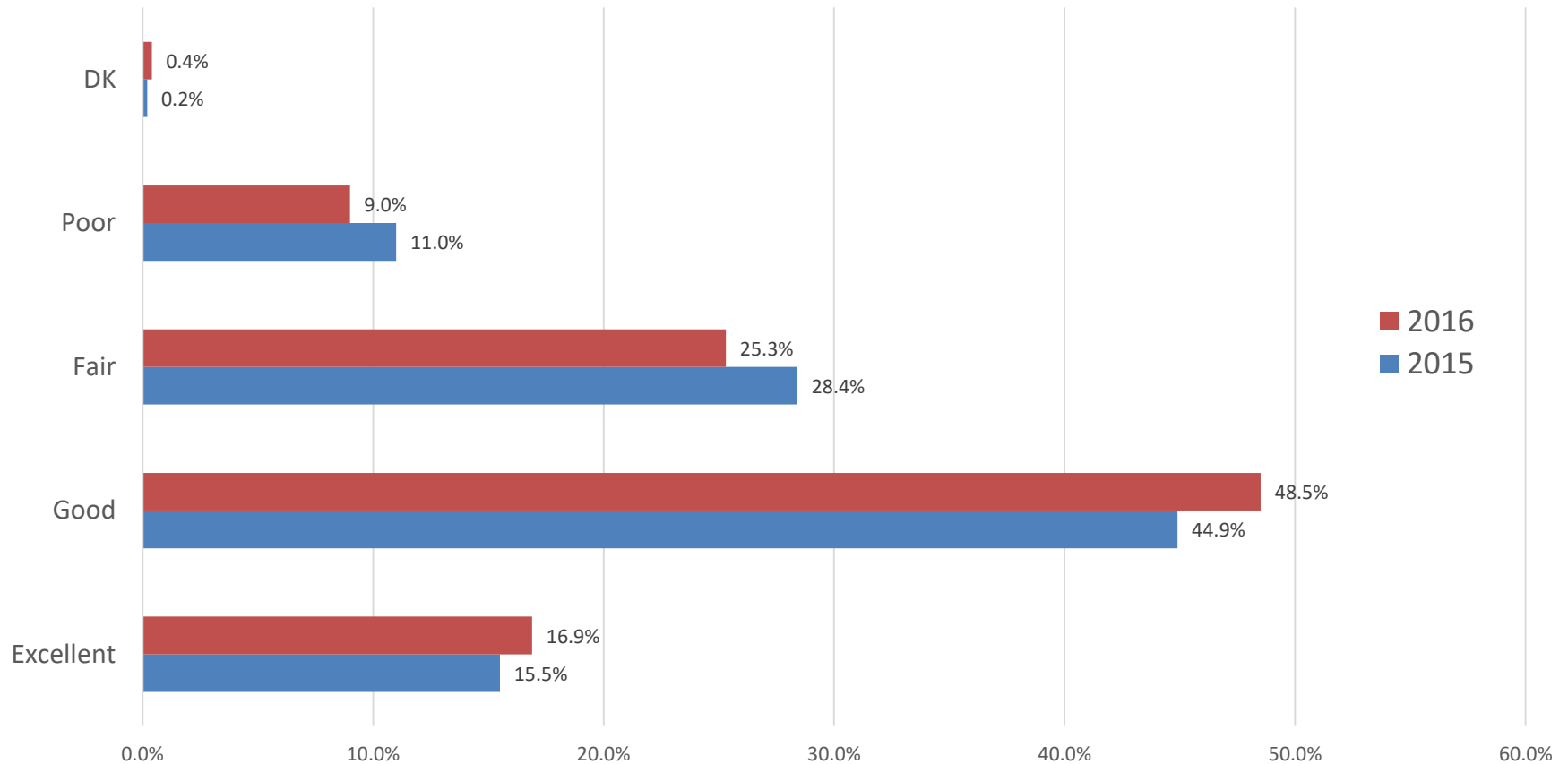
Crime is the #2 rated problem (after transportation) in the 2016 survey, as it was in 2015. However, there was a six percentage point increase (from 17% in 2015 to 23% in 2016) in the share of residents that felt that crime was the biggest problem in the region. And the “gap” in the shares selecting transportation and crime (as #1 problems) was 10 percentage points in 2015; in 2016, it is only two percentage points (25% transportation compared to 23% crime).

Share by County: Crime as Biggest Problem 2014-2016



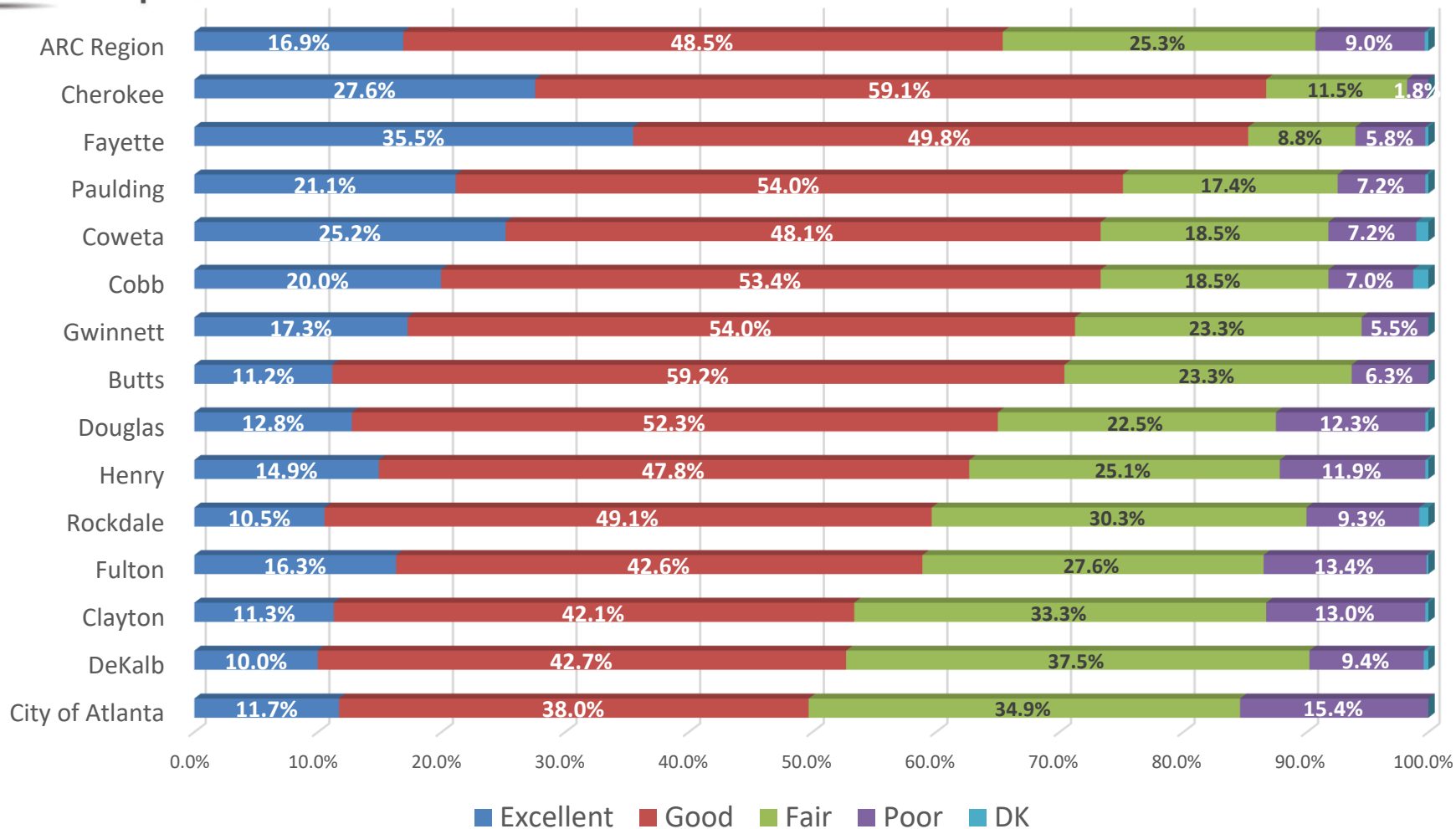
From 2015 to 2016, the overall share of regional population rating transportation the #1 problem rose from 17% to 23%. Looking at the trends by county, between 2015 and 2016, the share of residents rating crime the biggest problem rose in all jurisdictions except Fayette County. In all fourteen areas, crime is seen as an increasingly significant problem for the region over the 2014-2016 period.

Safety of Residents in Community: 2015-2016



Yet crime seems to remain a greater issue for the region than for local communities. While the share of residents rating crime the #1 problem increased from 17% to 23%, 2015-2016, across the region, the share of residents rating safety in their own communities “good” or “excellent” increased from 60% to 65%.

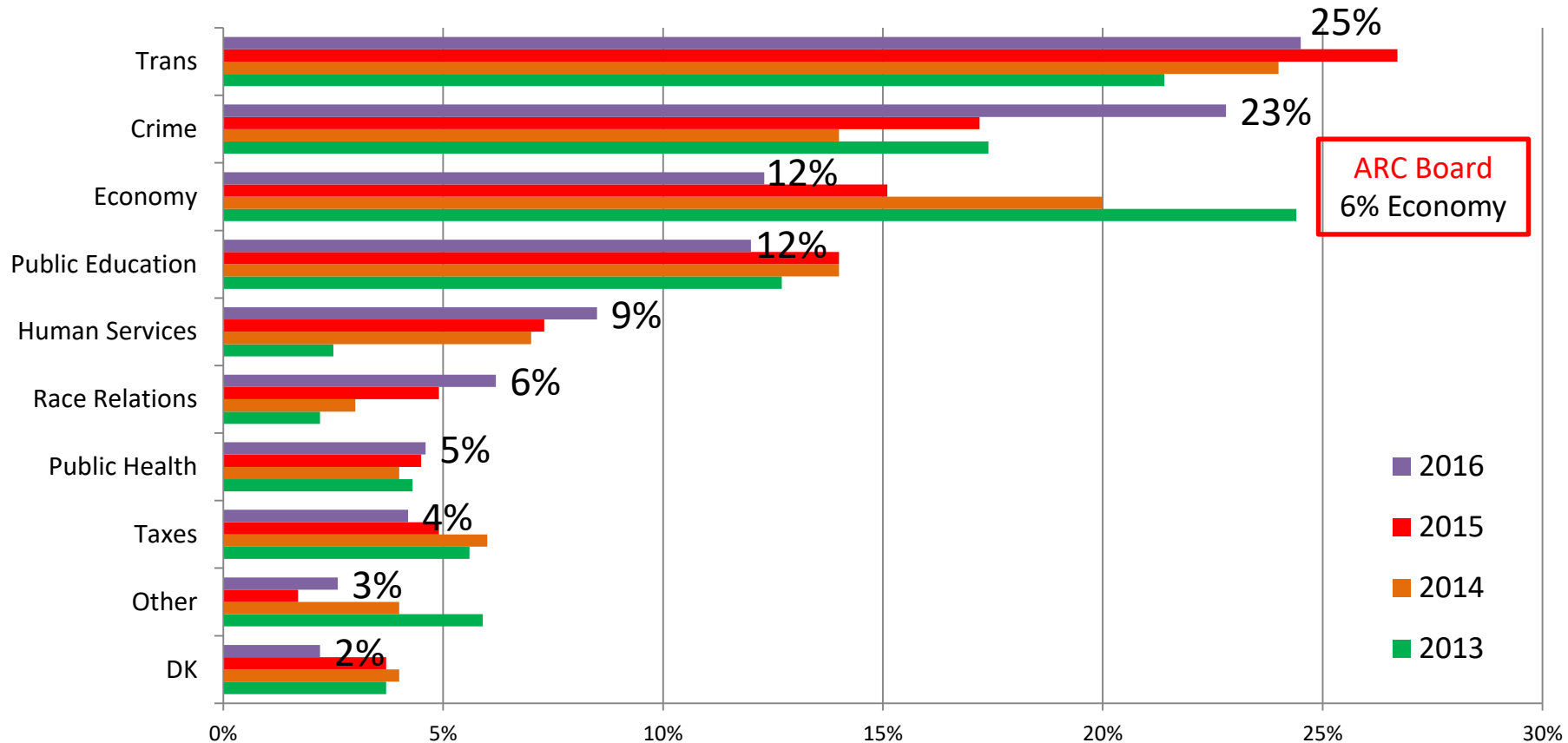
Rate Resident Safety in your Community: 2016



At the jurisdiction level, in thirteen of fourteen jurisdictions, more than half of residents rated their local safety “good” or “excellent”. In three jurisdictions (Cherokee, Fayette, and Paulding), over three-fourths of residents did so.

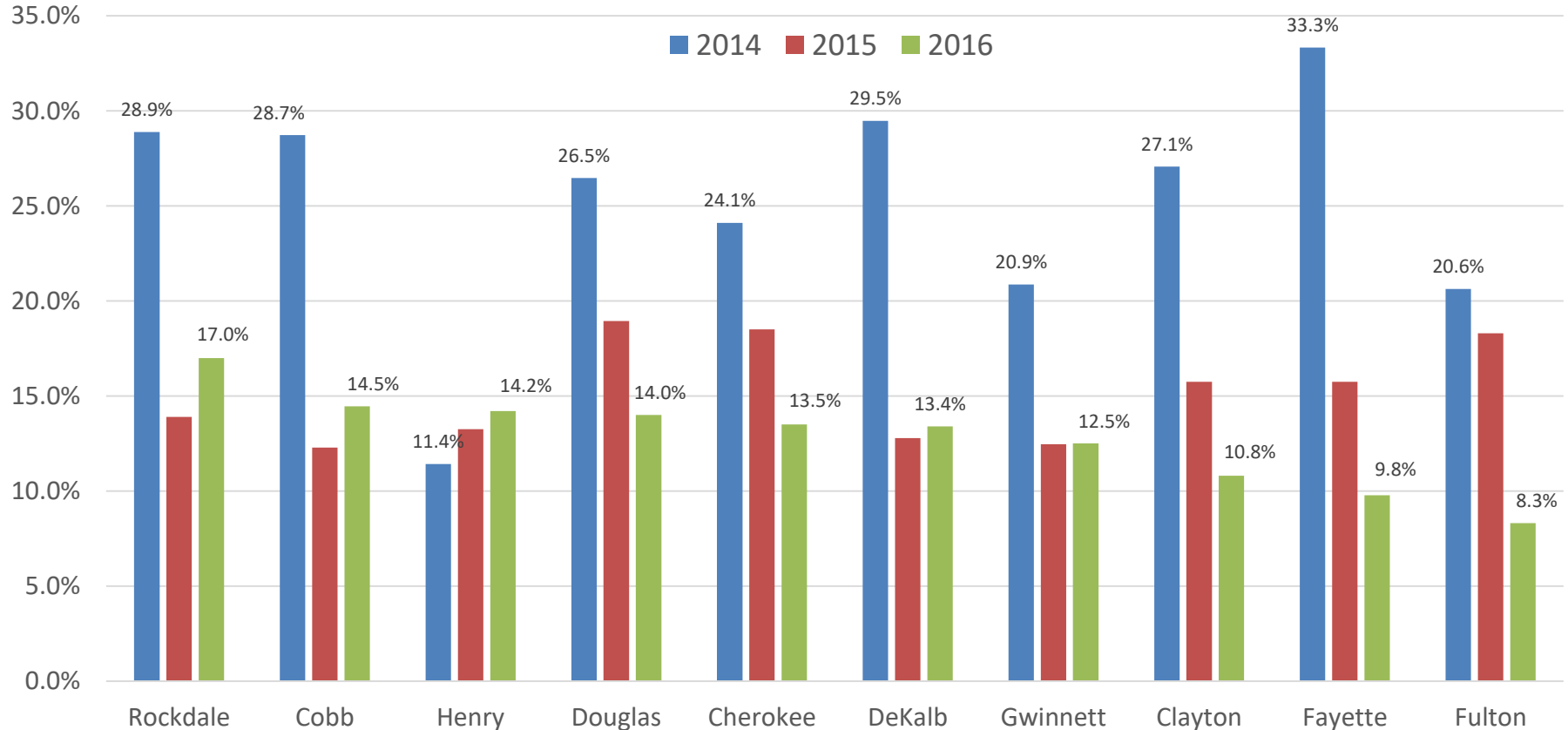
ECONOMY

Biggest Problem Facing Residents in Metro Atlanta: Responses - 2013-2016



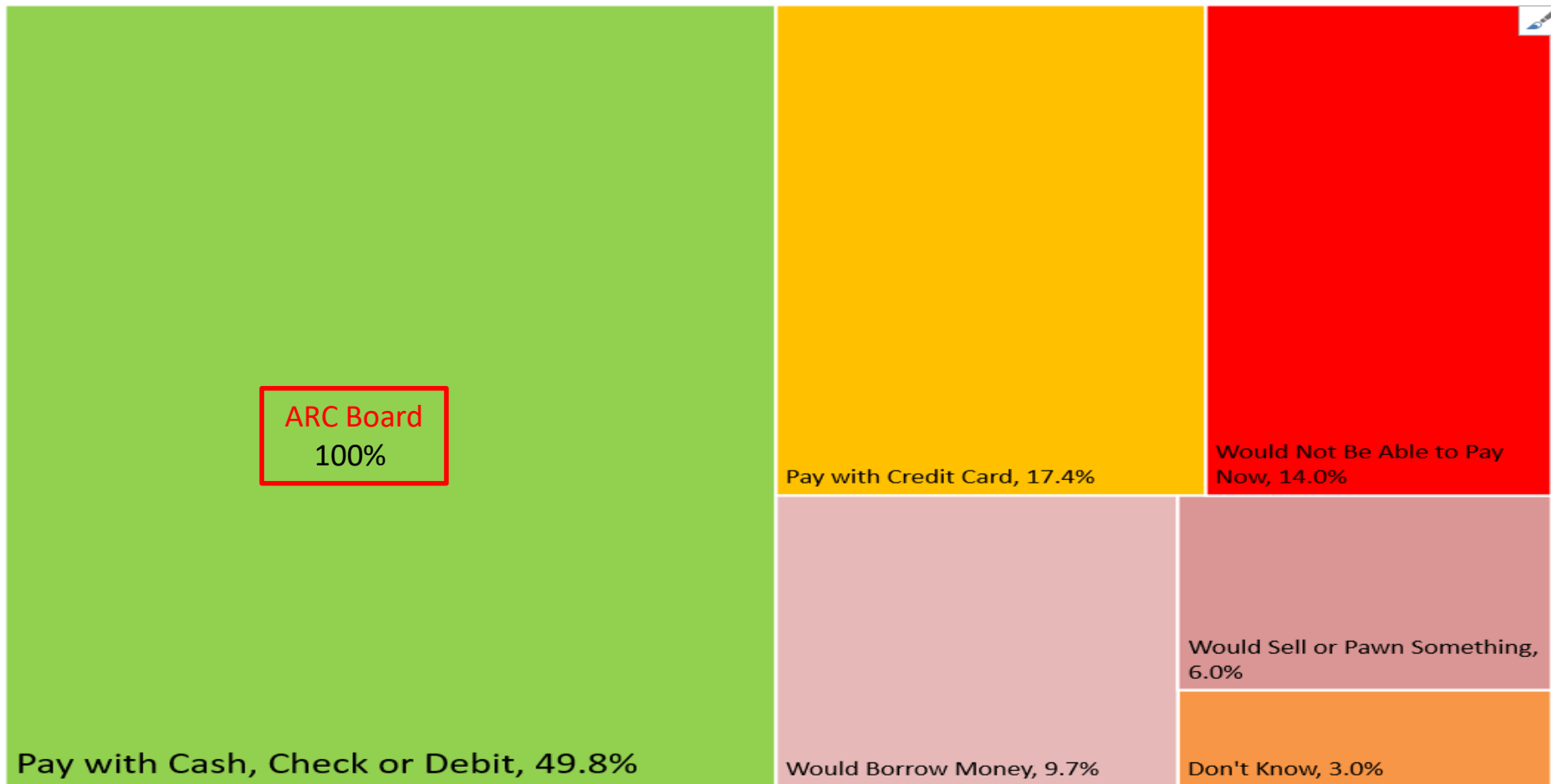
Unemployment rates have plummeted in the last five years, and job levels have now fully recovered from the declines of the Great Recession. Residents have noticed. The economy is the #3 rated problem (just above public education) in the 2016 survey. The share rating economy the biggest problem in the region has fallen from 24% in 2013 (when it was the #1 problem, overall) to 12% in 2016.

Share by County: Economy as Biggest Problem 2014-2016



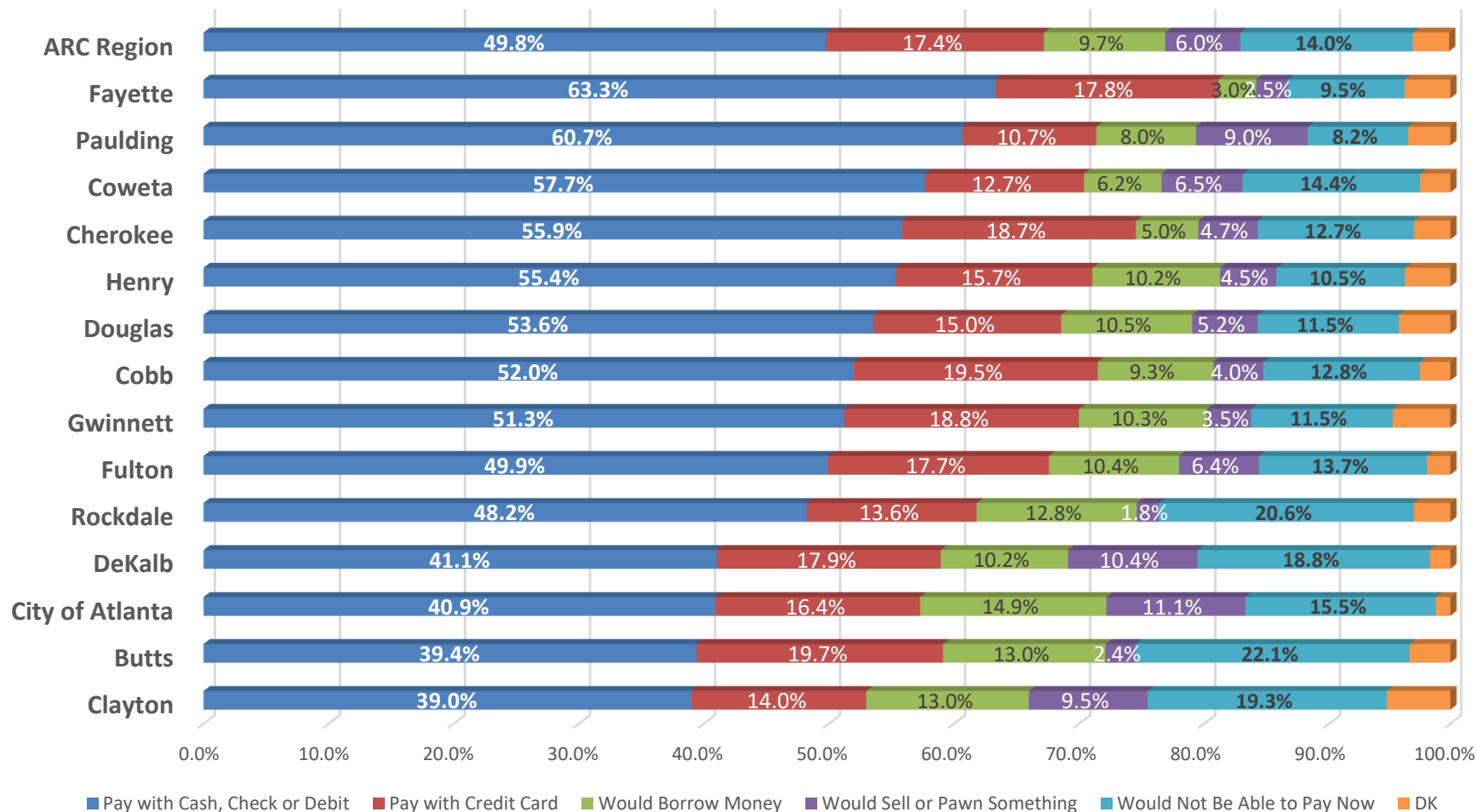
From 2014 to 2016, the overall regional population rating economy the #1 problem plummeted from 24% to 12%. Looking at the trends by county over that period, the share of residents rating economy the biggest problem declined in all fourteen jurisdictions. The declines were most significant between 2014 and 2015. Between 2015 and 2016, the share stayed the same or ticked up in five of the fourteen areas (Cobb, DeKalb, Henry, Gwinnett, and Rockdale).

Methods of Paying for a \$400 Financial Emergency



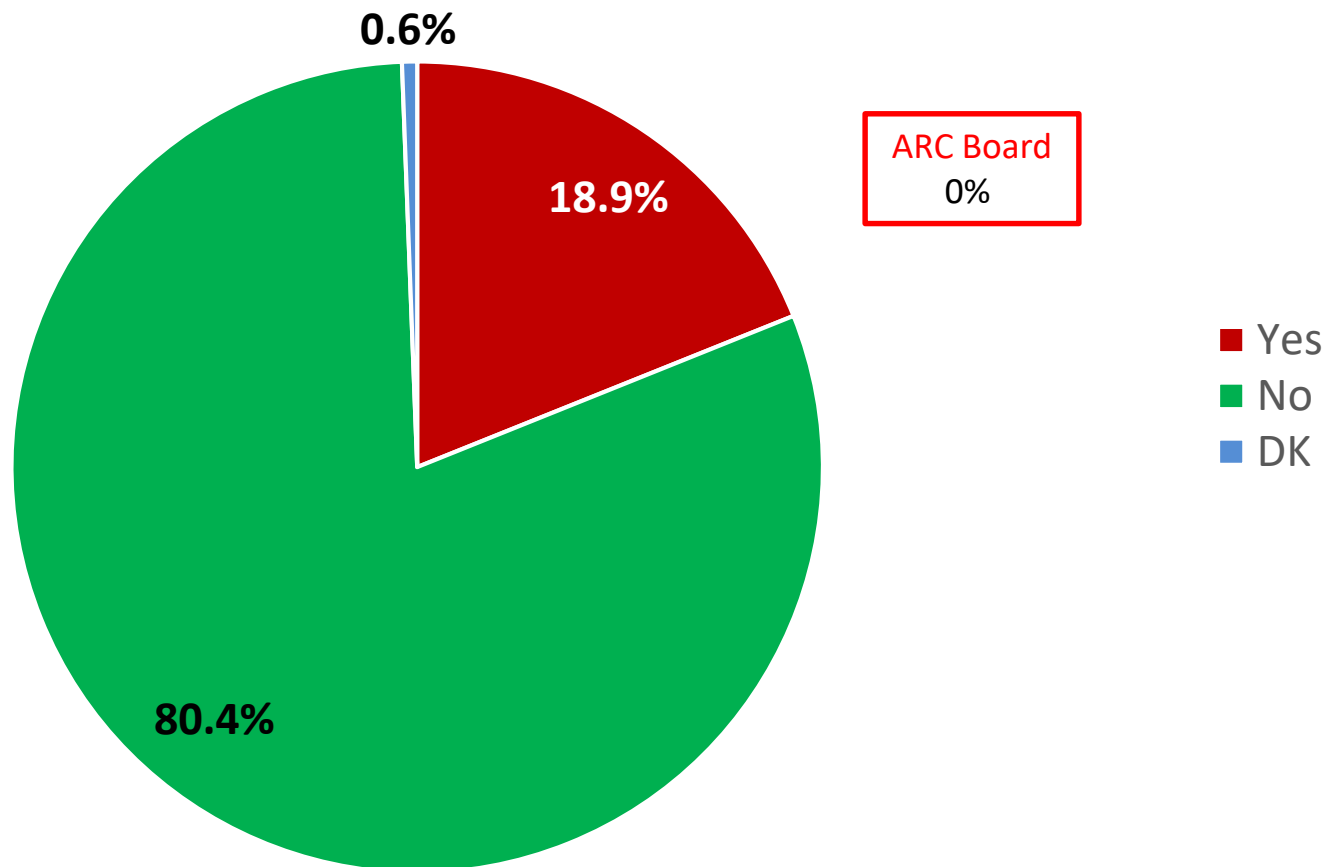
So trends are positive in terms of how residents view economic opportunity. But economic stressors remain, and the “safety margins” for consumers remain small. A new question this year asks residents to say how they would respond to a \$400 financial emergency. Only 50% would pay with cash, check, or debit. Fully 1 in 5 would either have to sell or pawn something or not be able to pay at all.

Financial Emergency: 2016



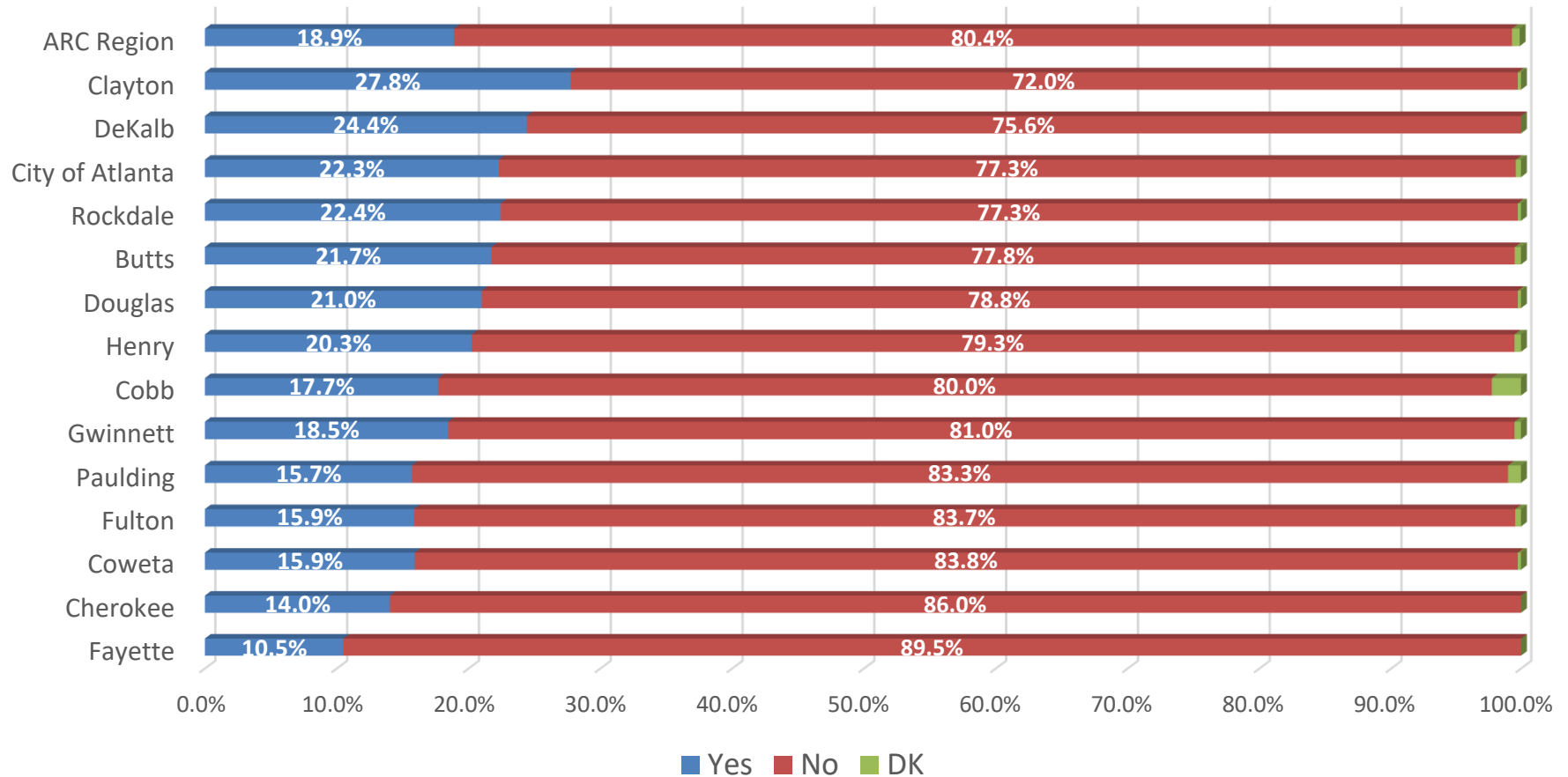
At the county level, residents in suburban, relatively higher income/ lower poverty counties like Fayette and Cherokee are more likely to be able to handle a \$400 financial emergency with cash, check, or debit. In more urban and higher poverty areas such as Clayton and Butts, a relatively higher share would have to sell something or would not be able to pay at all.

Skipped Meals or Reduced Portions re: Lack of Money



Another new question probes whether residents ever go hungry. And even with improvement in the economy, the answer surprisingly is yes, for one in five. 20% of respondents regionwide in 2016 have had to skip meals or reduce portions due to lack of money. So again, economic “safety margins” appear low.

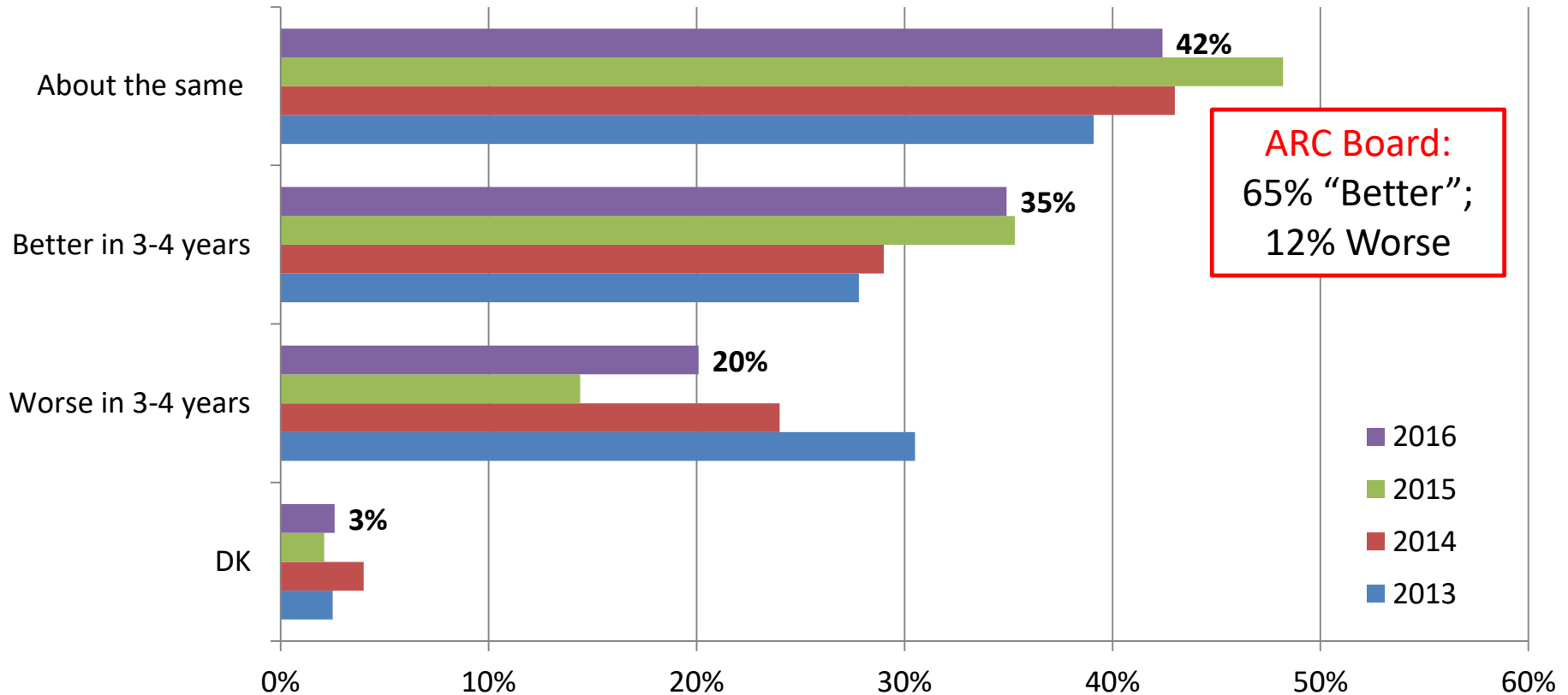
Skipped Meals or Reduced Portions: 2016



As seen in the distribution of responses to the financial emergency question, the residents of more urban, higher poverty counties are more likely to have to skip meals or reduce portions due to lack of money. In Clayton and in DeKalb, around 1 in 4 have had to, compared to 1 in 5 across the region as a whole. In suburban and higher-income Fayette, only 1 in 10 have had to go hungry at times

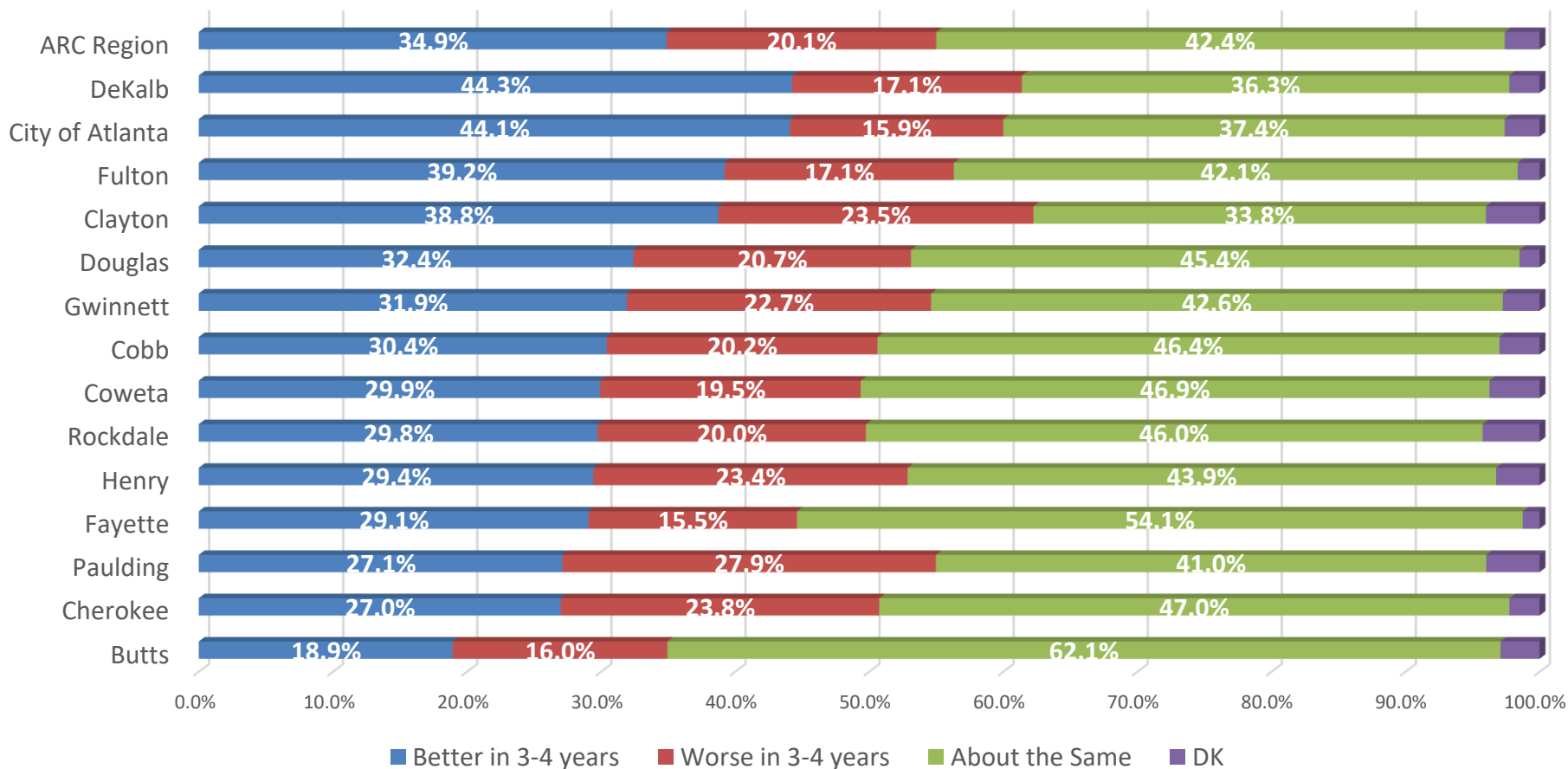
THE FUTURE?

Future Assessment of Living Conditions: Responses 2013-2016



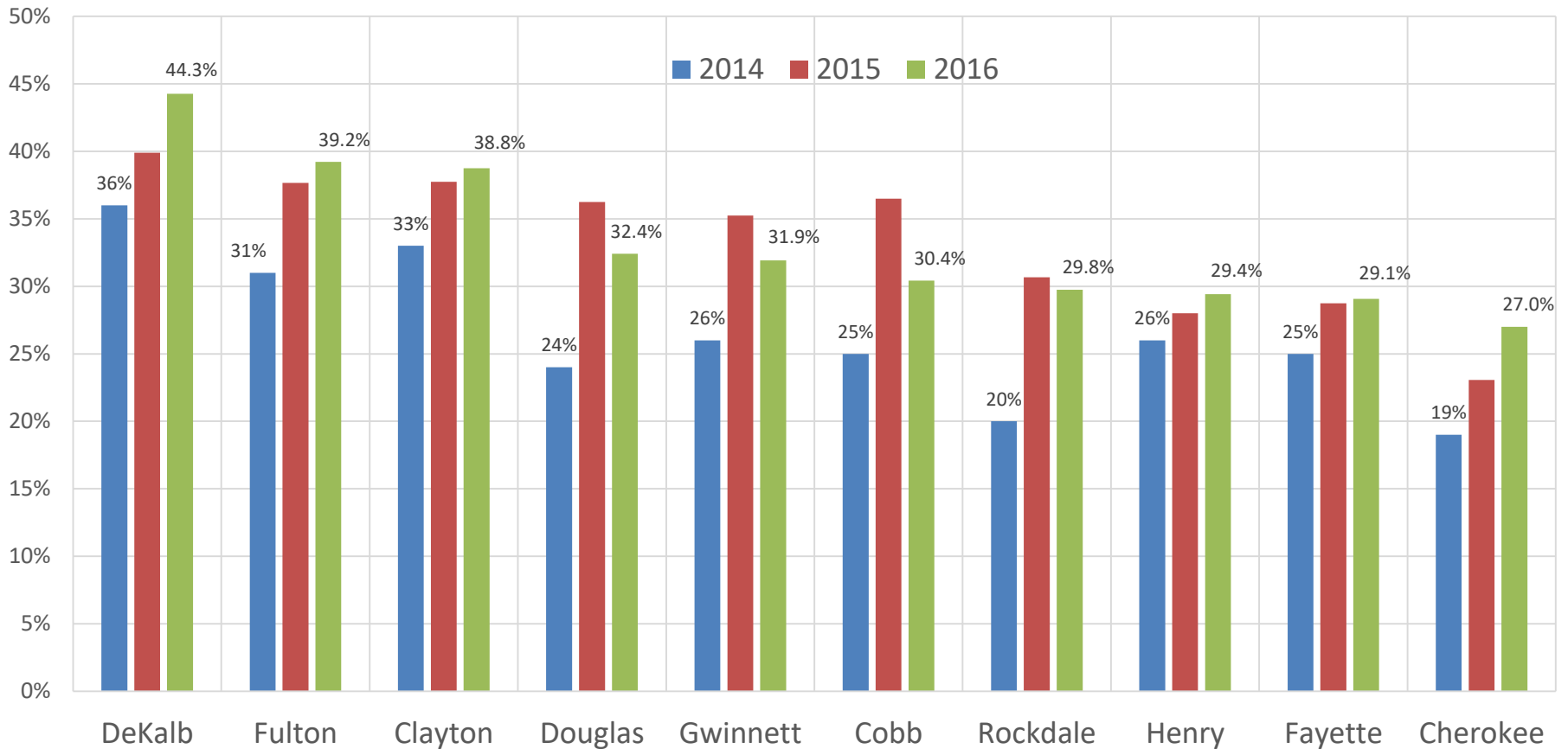
As a region, we have gotten increasingly optimistic about the future, from 2013 to 2016. In 2013, 28% of residents felt that things would get better in the next three to four years; this share had risen to 35% by 2016. While the overall trend is positive, from 2015 to 2016, there has been a six percentage point increase in the share that think things in our region might get worse over the next three to four years BUT this share is still down a lot since 2013 (from 31% to 20%).

Things in the Future Will Be... (by County): 2016



At the county level, very interestingly, we are more optimistic in more urban, higher poverty areas such as DeKalb and Clayton—areas which are less positive about neighborhood quality of life and less likely to be civically engaged. Conversely, residents in higher-income counties like Cherokee, Paulding, and Fayette are relatively less optimistic about the next three to four years.

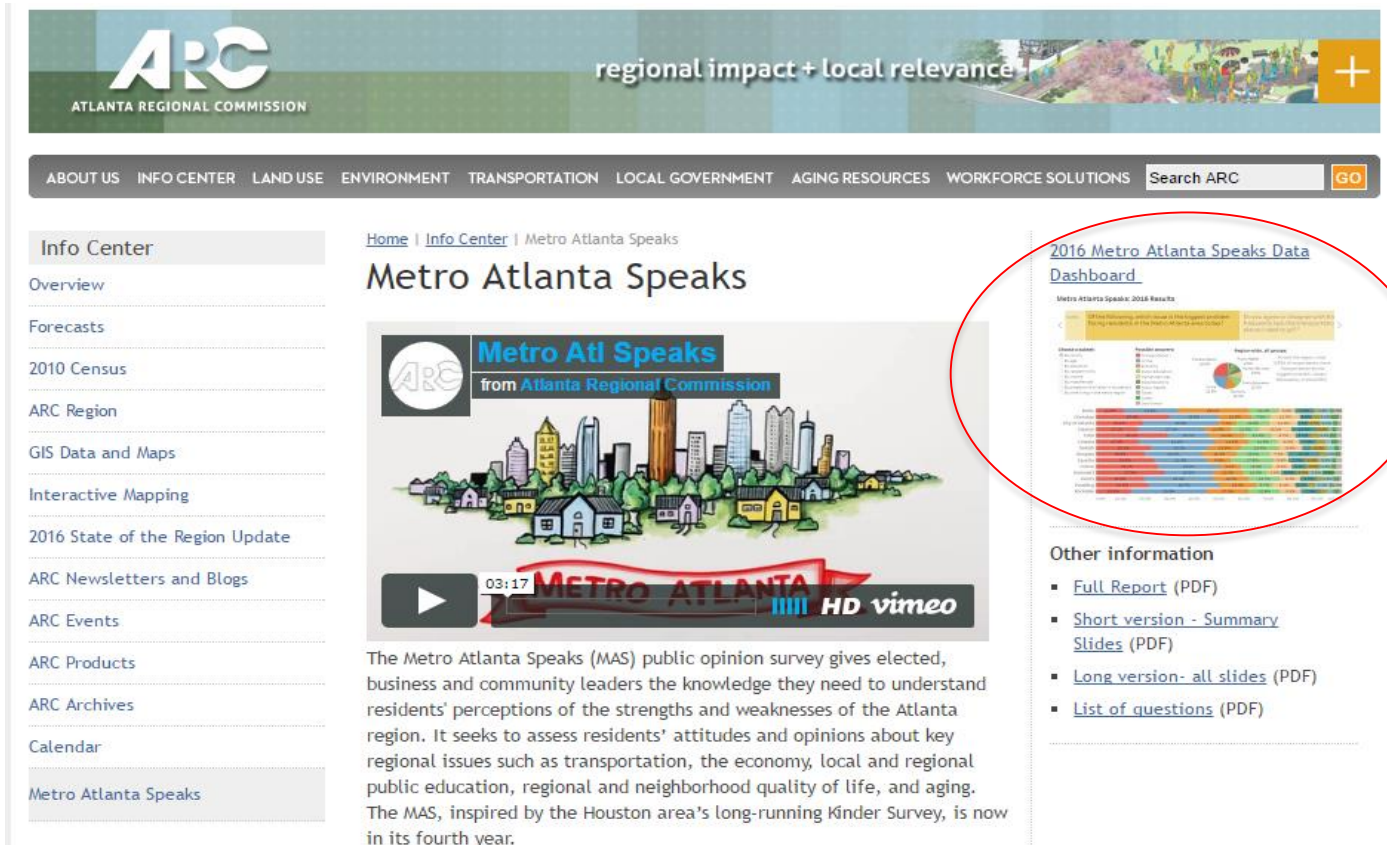
Share by County: Things Better Next 3-4 Years 2014-2016



Finally, we look at time trends at the county level, for the share of residents who believe that things will be better in three to four years. In each of the ten jurisdictions, a larger share are optimistic in 2016 than in 2013. In six jurisdictions, shares of “optimistic” residents have increased every year from 2013 to 2016—including counties like Fayette and Cherokee that are, overall, relatively pessimistic.

For More Information

<http://www.atlantaregional.com/info-center/metro-atlanta-speaks>



The screenshot shows the Metro Atlanta Speaks website. The header includes the ARC logo and the tagline 'regional impact + local relevance'. A navigation bar lists various categories: ABOUT US, INFO CENTER, LAND USE, ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORTATION, LOCAL GOVERNMENT, AGING RESOURCES, and WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS. The main content area is titled 'Metro Atlanta Speaks' and features a video player for 'Metro Atl Speaks from Atlanta Regional Commission'. To the right, a '2016 Metro Atlanta Speaks Data Dashboard' is highlighted with a red circle. The dashboard displays various charts and data points. Below the dashboard, there is a section for 'Other information' with links to 'Full Report (PDF)', 'Short version - Summary Slides (PDF)', 'Long version- all slides (PDF)', and 'List of questions (PDF)'.

The (many) slides you just reviewed are only a taste of the extensive information available from the 27 questions in the 2016 survey—as well as from comparisons to past years. Check out our Metro Atlanta Speaks web page (as shown above) Watch the video, look at reports and slides, and also visit the dashboard (red circle above), where you can do your own custom queries on how the answers to selected questions break down, regionally, by factors like age, race, income, and educational attainment. Finally, if you have any questions, contact Jim Skinner at jkskinner@atlantaregional.com

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