



# Community Assessment 2024



# Purpose and Scope

Black River Area Development Corporation (BRAD), a Non-Profit Community Action Agency, serves the communities of Clay, Lawrence, and Randolph Counties in Arkansas. As part of our commitment to fostering growth and development within these regions, we undertake regular assessments to gain a thorough understanding of the needs and challenges faced by our community members.

This Community Assessment Report is a crucial component of our ongoing efforts to evaluate and address the diverse needs of our communities. Through detailed analysis and careful consideration of the findings, we ensure that our strategic planning aligns with the current and emerging needs of those we serve. The insights derived from this assessment guide our decision-making processes and shape the future work of BRAD, ensuring that we remain true to our mission and values.

The Community Assessment merges research and data with feedback from BRAD clients, parents, staff, community leaders, and others to identify the most critical needs and gaps in the area. The assessment primarily concentrates on the challenges and obstacles faced by low-income families within the service area.

The Community Assessment provides a basis for the Agency to develop strategic goals and objectives to address the findings revealed from the data collected herein.

Data collection was performed over a duration of four months in the service area and was available electronically and physically.

A thorough effort to gather diverse input was made to achieve maximum feasible participation from the community.

## **Mission:**

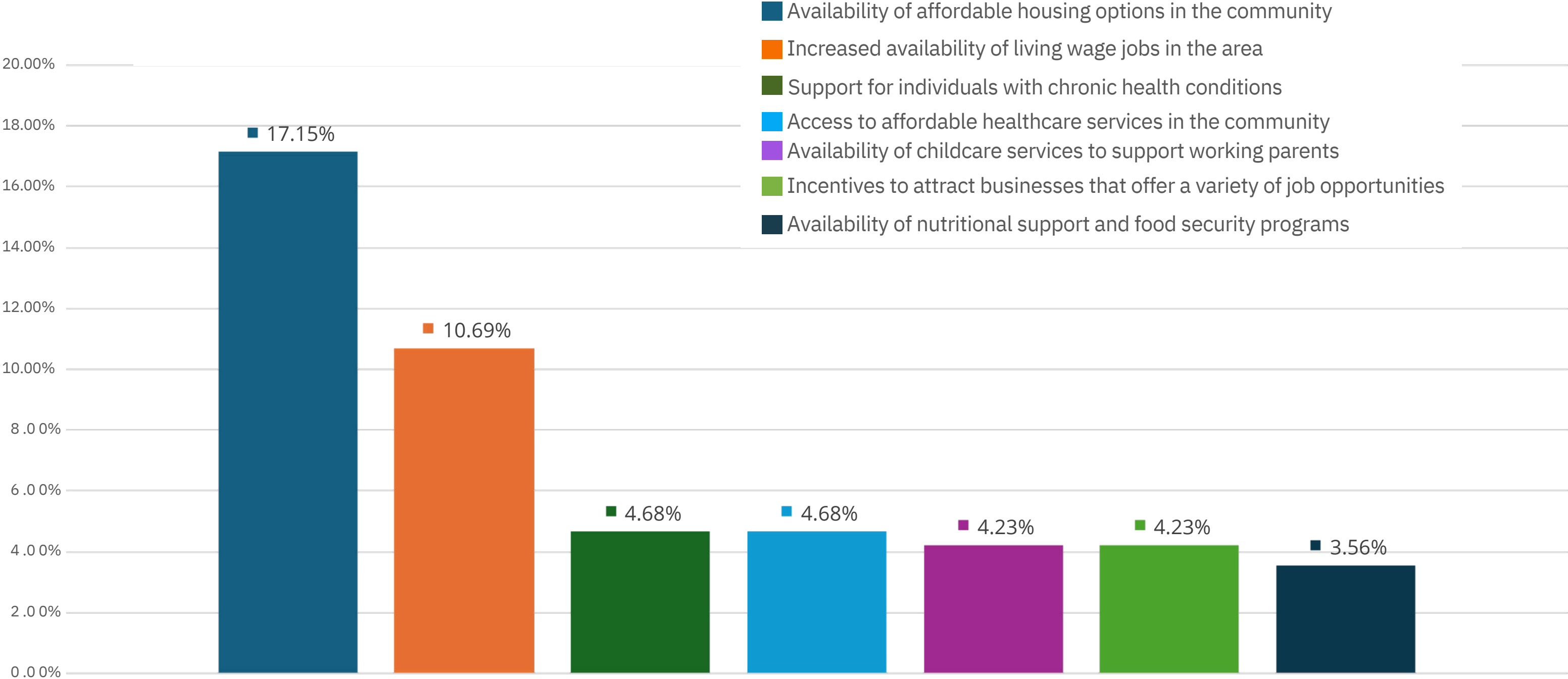
BRAD empowers individuals and families to overcome barriers, enhance lives, and build self-sufficiency through innovative programs and strong community partnerships.

## **Vision:**

Communities where people have a brighter future.

# Findings

Surveys conducted in the community resulted in the following areas identified as of most need. A total of 467 responses were recorded.

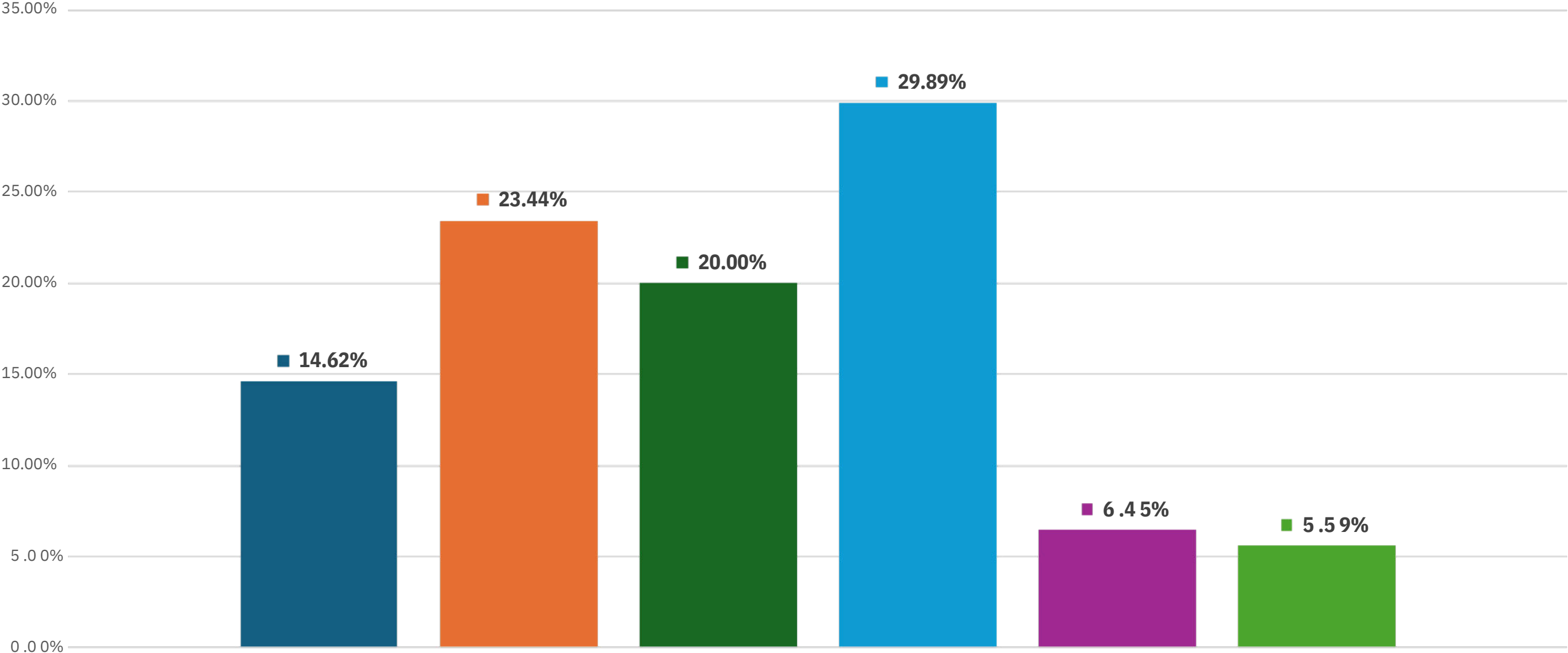


# Findings

## Domains

Domains are grouped categories that can encompass one or more different aspects of reported needs. Surveys resulted in the following calculations.

- Education (access to quality education, for either children or adults)
- Employment (availability of living wage jobs, training, employer recruitment)
- Health (access to affordable care, can include nutrition, mental/behavioral health, or addiction)
- Housing (available, affordable housing, energy efficiency, safe housing, homelessness resources)
- Income/Asset Building (resources for financial security, resources for acquiring financial or physical assets)
- Civic Engagement (community resource enhancement and awareness, positive social change)



# Findings

## **Analysis of Textual Responses**

Respondents were given the option to provide input in a descriptive, open-ended manner. The following analysis highlights the most common themes.

**Childcare and Education:** There is a significant lack of child care and after-school programs, along with a need for more educational opportunities and resources. The importance of good education is highlighted, and there is a noted lack of summer programs for children, as well as high costs and limited availability of early childhood spots.

**Community Resources and Support:** The community expresses a need for more activities and support, including resources for families and children, better support for seniors and those with health issues, and a desire to bring the community together. There is also limited access to public transportation.

**Employment and Job Opportunities:** Many feel there is a lack of good-paying jobs and a need for more job opportunities. The high cost of living versus low wages is a concern, along with the limited availability of jobs locally. There is a call for job training programs.

**Health Care:** The high cost of health insurance and lack of affordable health care options are major issues. There is a need for better access to medical services and the importance of health insurance is emphasized.

**Housing:** Affordable housing is in short supply, with high rent prices and limited availability of rental properties. The poor condition of available housing is also a concern.

**Economic Issues:** High inflation and the cost of living are major economic concerns, alongside struggles with financial security and budgeting. There is a need for living wages to address these issues.

**Government and Leadership:** There is a perceived lack of support from local government and a need for better administrative leadership. The community desires leaders who can attract businesses and drive development.

**Social Issues:** Poverty and financial struggles are prevalent, along with homelessness and the need for shelters. There is a lack of familial support and community unity, and a need for motivation and access to information.

**Health and Wellness:** Chronic illnesses and the need for support for those affected are important issues. There is also a need for mental health services and the availability of health programs and support.

**Infrastructure and Development:** The community requires further development and improved infrastructure to support a growing population. There is an importance placed on improving community facilities.

# Findings

## Child Development Programs Addendum

The following information constitutes a supplementary examination specific to the Child Development Program. This addendum integrates partial data from the ongoing Community Assessment and was updated in June 2024.

### Licensed Child Care Facilities

#### Clay County

- Total Facilities: 9
- Infant/Toddler Facilities: 4
  - Funding Sources:
    - 3 Early Head Start
    - 2 ABC funding
    - 2 State Voucher Funding
    - 0 facilities with paid spots available
- Pre-K Facilities: 8
  - Funding Sources:
    - 3 Head Start
    - 5 ABC
    - 6 State Vouchers
    - 1 facility with paid spots available

#### Lawrence County

- Total Facilities: 14
- Infant/Toddler Facilities: 5
  - Funding Sources:
    - 2 Early Head Start
    - 1 ABC
    - 2 facilities with paid spots available
- Pre-K Facilities: 8
  - Funding Sources:
    - 4 ABC
    - 1 Head Start
    - 6 State Voucher
    - 5 facilities with paid spots available

#### Randolph County

- Total Facilities: 12
- Infant/Toddler Facilities: 9
  - Funding Sources:
    - 4 Early Head Start
    - 1 ABC
    - 5 State Voucher
    - 4 facilities with paid spots available
- Pre-K Facilities: 10
  - Funding Sources:
    - 1 Head Start
    - 3 ABC
    - 5 State Voucher
    - 6 facilities with paid spots available
    - 2 Day treatment facilities available

### Community Demographics

Population Changes:  
 Average increase of 1% in Clay and Randolph Counties  
 1% decrease in Lawrence County  
 Children under Age 5:  
 1.02% increase in Lawrence County  
 1.08% decrease in Clay and Randolph Counties  
 Ethnicity:  
 92.5% White  
 0.87% Black  
 0.48% Islander  
 1.6% Hispanic  
 5% Other ethnic/mixed race groups  
 Languages:  
 Up to 2.5% speak a language other than English

### Homelessness under the McKinney-Vento Act

Total Homeless Individuals: 414

Clay County: 69

Lawrence County: 165

Randolph County: 180

Shelter Status:

16 in shelters

380 doubled up

13 unsheltered

5 in hotels/motels

BRAD Programs: Currently servicing 57 homeless children

Foster Care

Children Served: 17

### Poverty

Average Poverty Rate: 29.3% (Clay, Lawrence, and Randolph counties)

Children under Age 5 Living in Poverty: 30.3%

BRAD Services: 53% of children under age 5 in poverty

### BRAD Agency Community Assessment

Respondent Demographics:

36.4% Head Start parents

Main Concerns:

29.24% Affordable housing availability

24.11% Increase in living wage jobs

19.87% Access to affordable healthcare services

14.73% Availability of childcare services to support working families

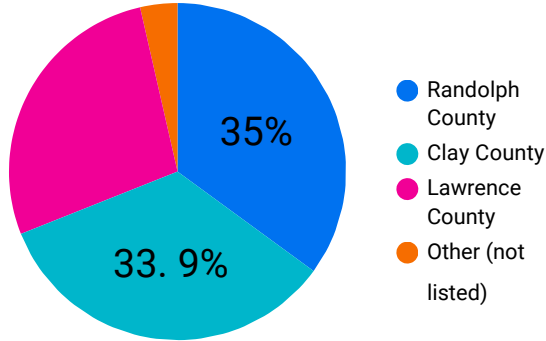
6.25% Income/asset building

5.8% Civic engagement

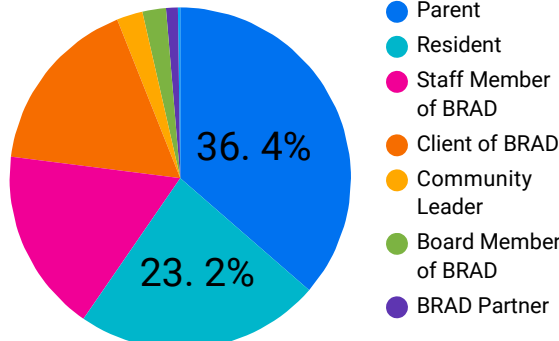
# Survey Detail

## Overall Detail - Total Responses (467)

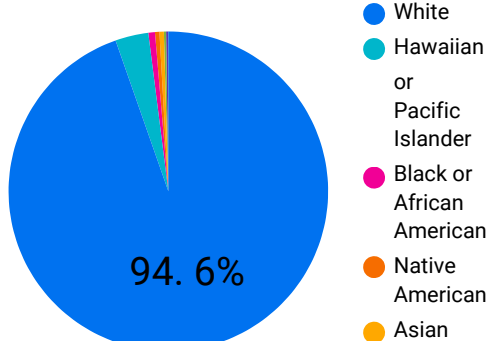
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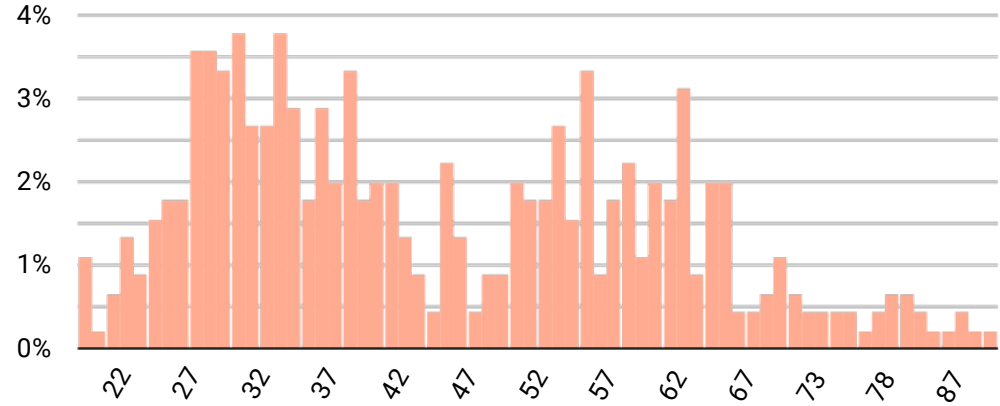
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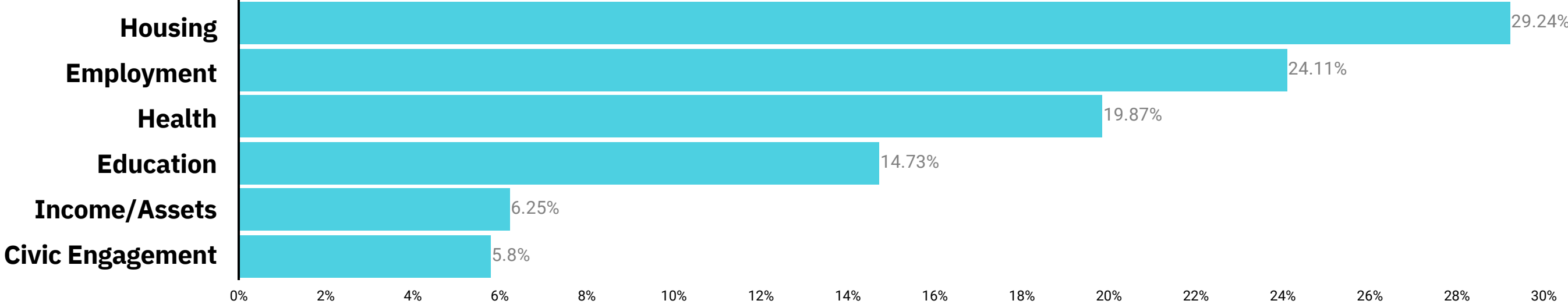
Race



Age



### TOP NEED DOMAINS REPORTED



### DETAILED NEEDS FROM DOMAINS

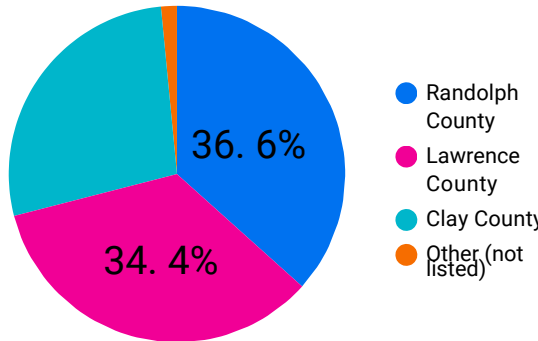
Availability of affordable housing options in the community	17.19%
Increased availability of living wage jobs within the community	10.71%
Support for individuals with chronic health conditions	4.69%
Access to affordable healthcare services in the community	4.69%
Incentives to attract businesses that offer a variety of job opportunities	4.24%

# Survey Detail

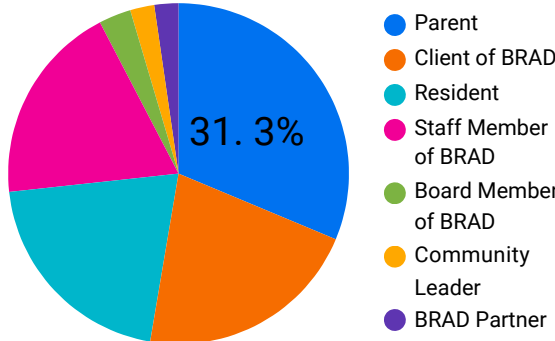
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## Housing Domain Detail

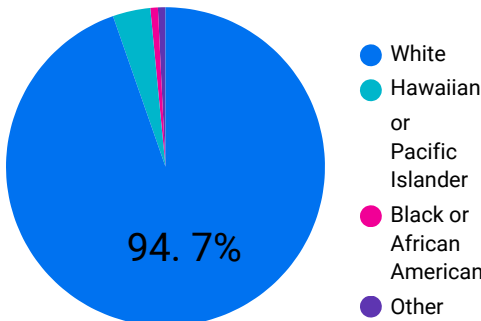
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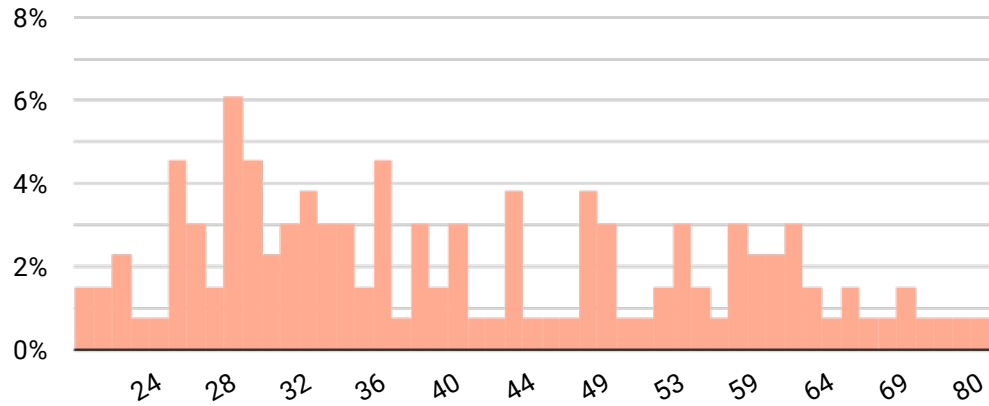
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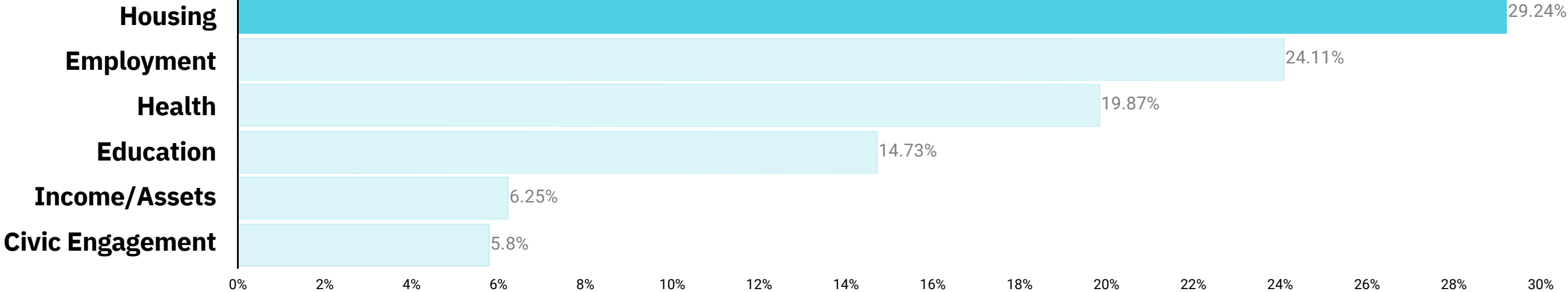
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Age



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### DETAILED NEEDS FROM DOMAINS

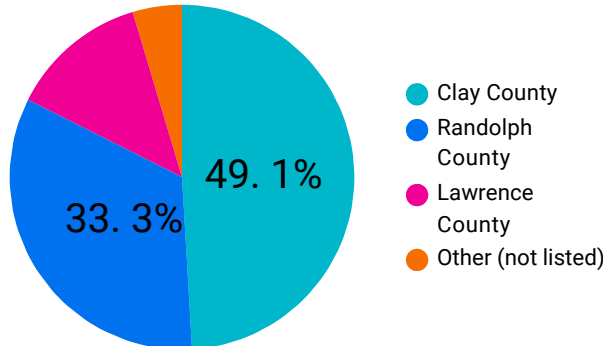
Availability of affordable housing options in the community	58.78%
Accessibility of emergency shelters and temporary housing assistance	11.45%
Support for individuals seeking assistance with rent or mortgage payments	9.92%
Resources and support for individuals experiencing homelessness	6.87%
Programs specifically designed to help low-income households cover energy-related costs, such as heating and cooling expenses	4.58%

# Survey Detail

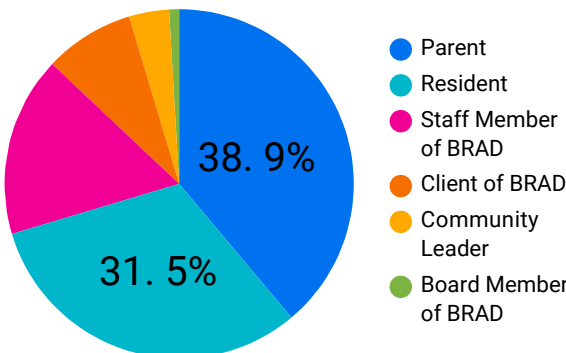
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## Employment Domain Detail

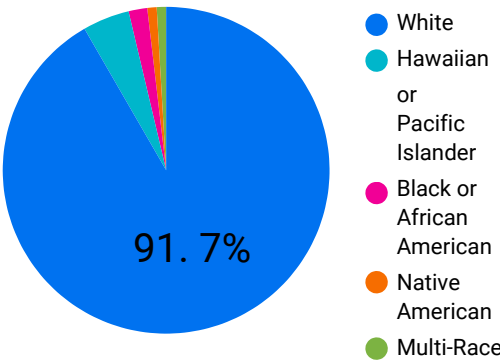
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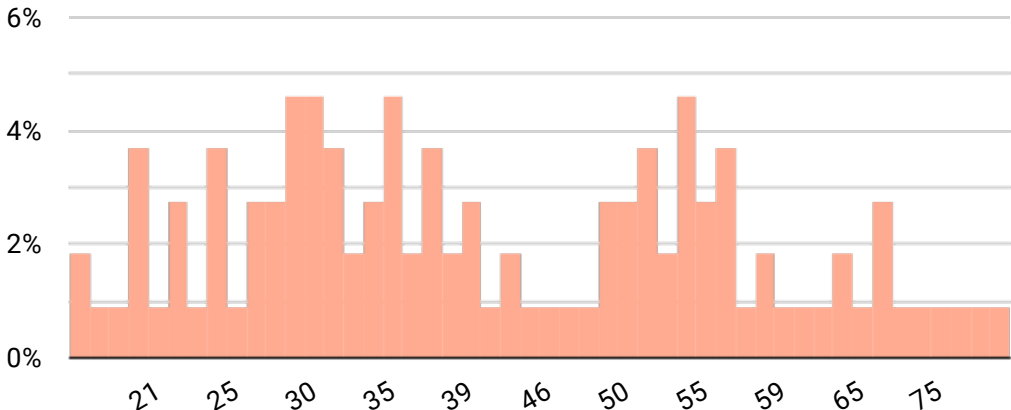
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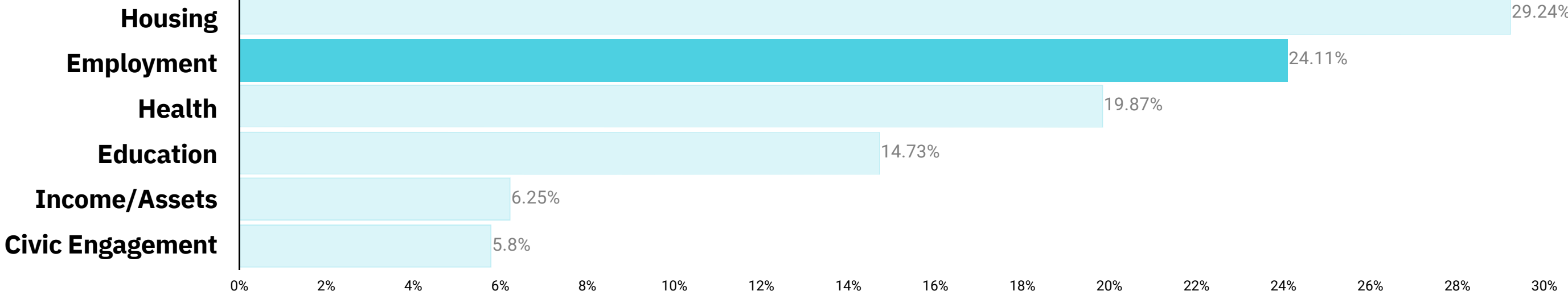
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Age



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### DETAILED NEEDS FROM DOMAINS

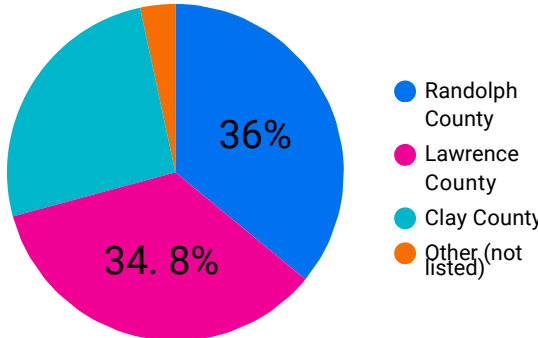
Increased availability of living wage jobs within the community	44.44%
Incentives to attract businesses that offer a variety of job opportunities	17.59%
Childcare options to support residents seeking employment	12.96%
Job training or skill development programs to prepare residents for available jobs	8.33%
Support for entrepreneurs and small business development	5.56%

# Survey Detail

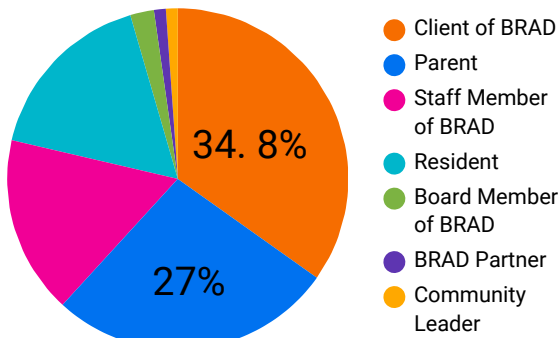
Note: Selection of Top Need Domain dynamically alters other blended data in this graphic.

## Health Domain Detail

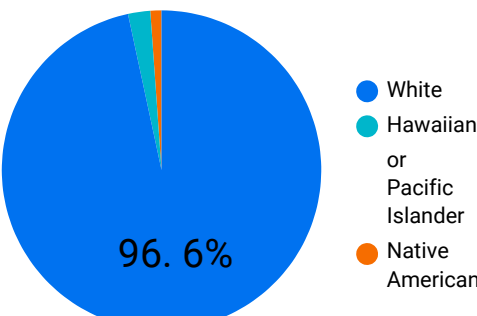
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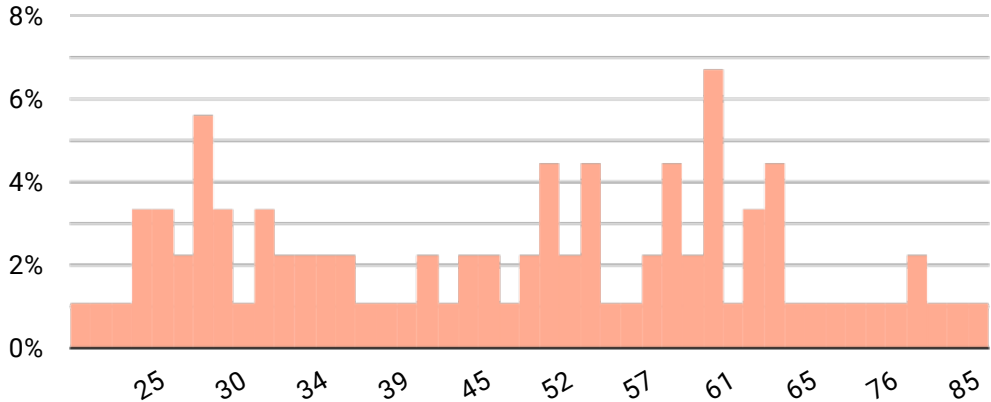
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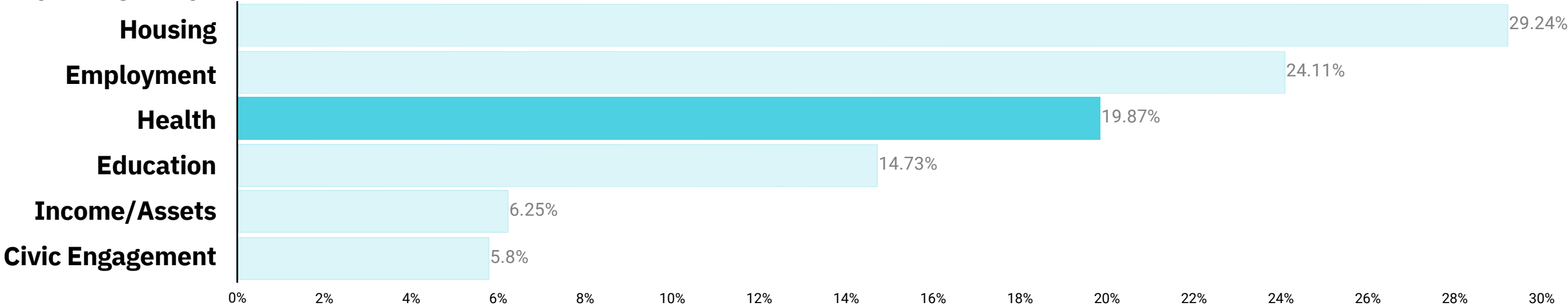
Race



Age



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### DETAILED NEEDS FROM DOMAINS

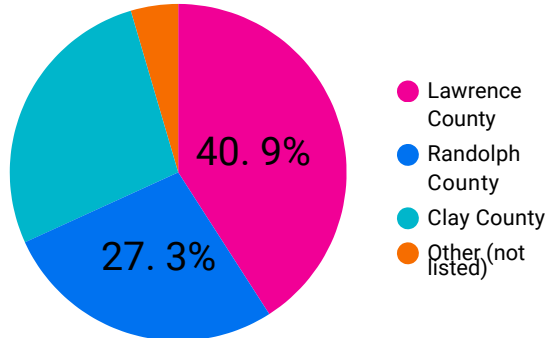
Support for individuals with chronic health conditions	23.6%
Access to affordable healthcare services in the community	23.6%
Availability of nutritional support and food security programs	17.98%
Accessibility of community health clinics and resources	12.36%
Programs and activities tailored for senior citizens' physical and mental well-being	6.74%

# Survey Detail

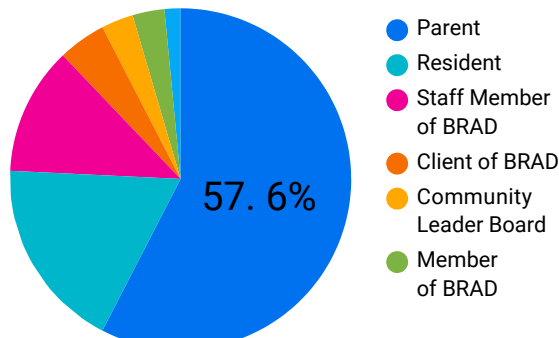
Note: Selection of Top Need Domain dynamically alters other blended data in this graphic.

## Education Domain Detail

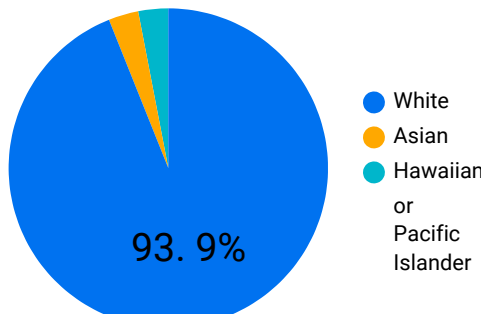
County



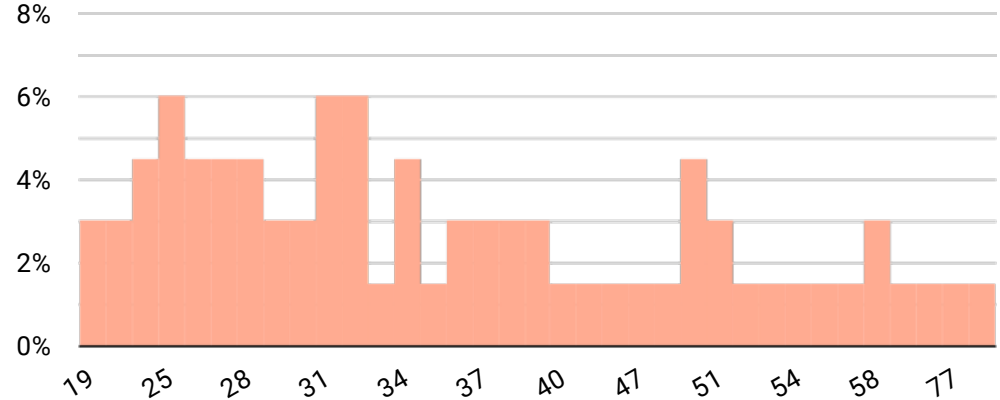
Role



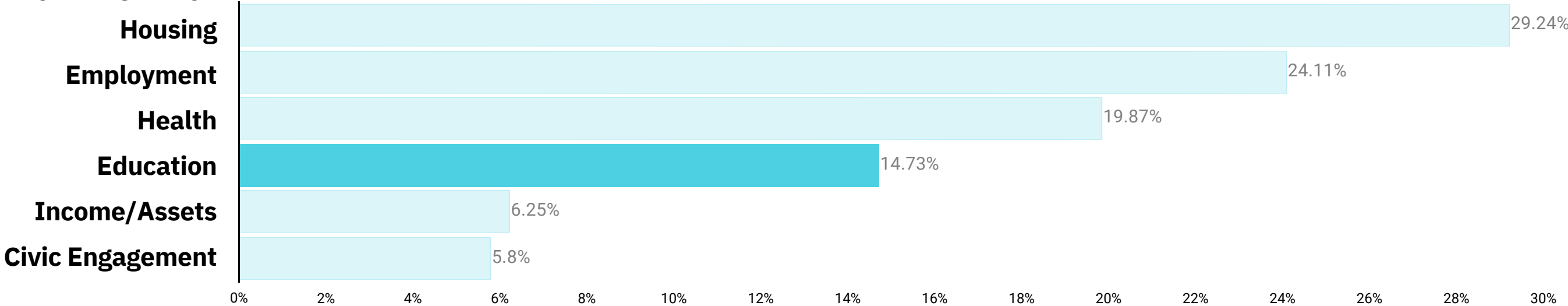
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Age



### TOP NEED DOMAINS REPORTED



### DETAILED NEEDS FROM DOMAINS

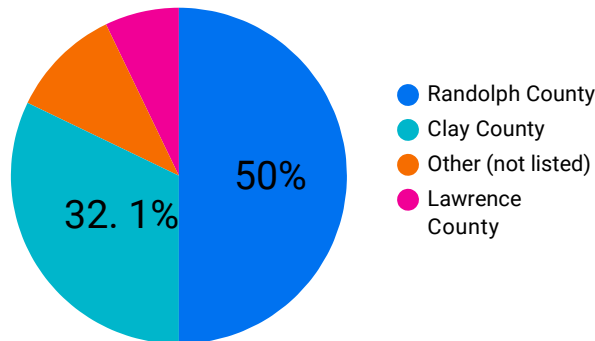
Availability of childcare services to support working parents	28.79%
Quality of local schools and educational resources for children	21.21%
Early Childhood Education programs and resources	15.15%
Extracurricular activities and educational programs for children	10.61%
Access to adult education programs, including vocational training	6.06%

# Survey Detail

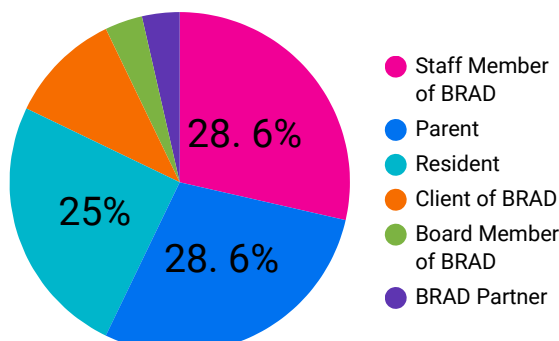
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## Income/Asset Building Domain Detail

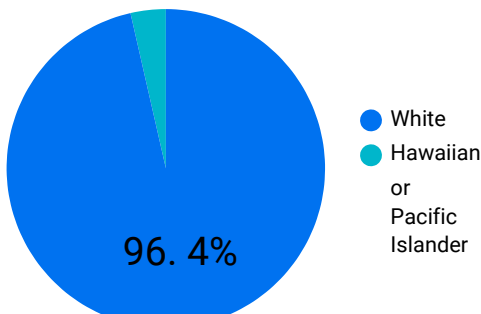
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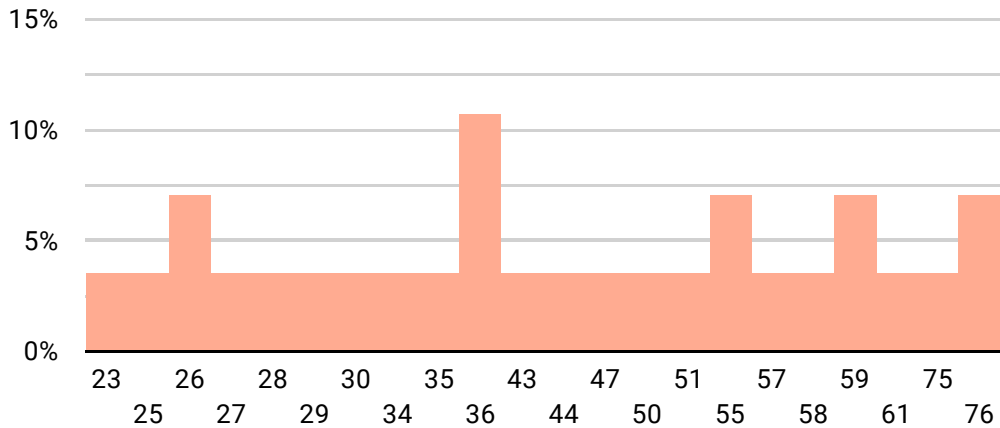
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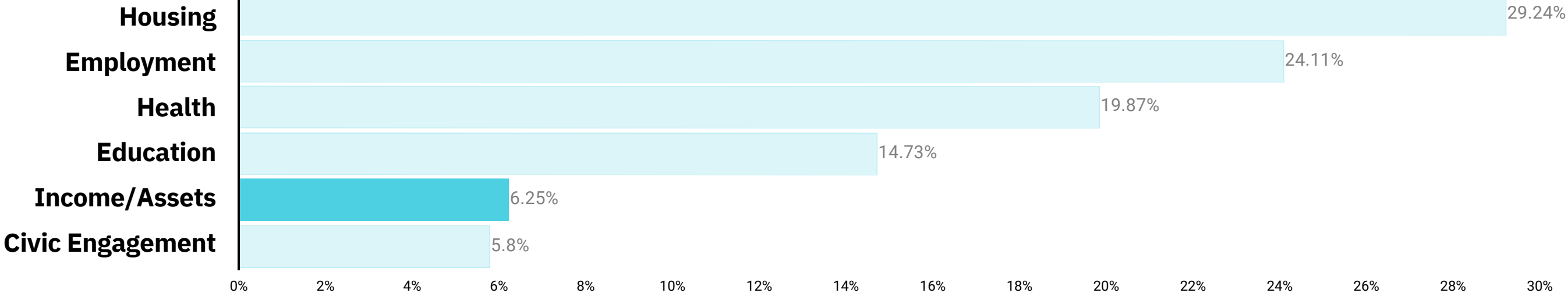
Race



Age



### TOP NEED DOMAINS REPORTED



### DETAILED NEEDS FROM DOMAINS

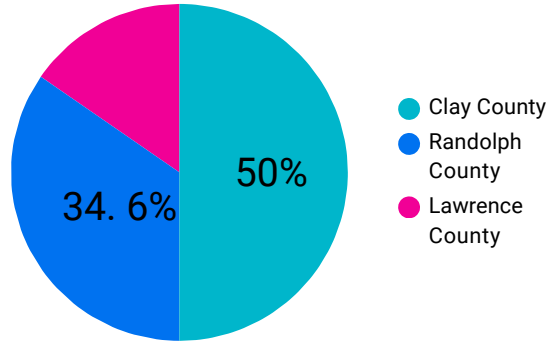
Resources and programs assisting individuals in finding stable employment and enhancing overall financial security	42.86%
Educational initiatives providing guidance on budgeting, saving, and managing finances effectively	21.43%
Access to microfinance programs or small business support services for aspiring entrepreneurs	14.29%
Initiatives promoting savings accounts, investment opportunities, or retirement plans to foster financial growth	10.71%
Workshops and seminars focused on building assets, such as homeownership, entrepreneurship, and investments	7.14%

# Survey Detail

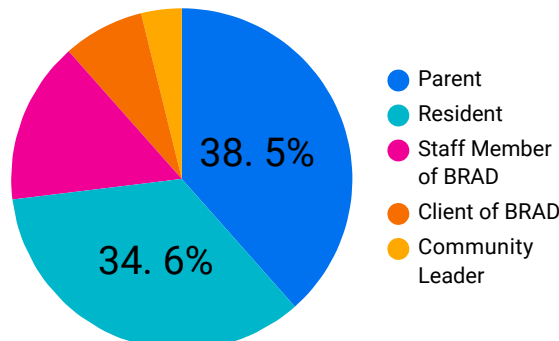
Note: Selection of Top Need Domain dynamically alters other blended data in this graphic.

## Civic Engagement Domain Detail

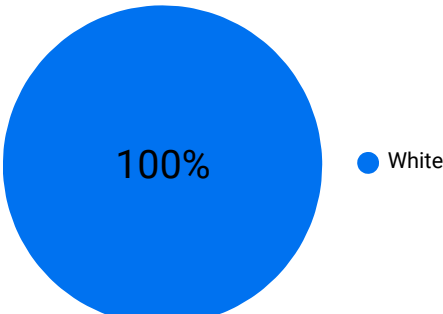
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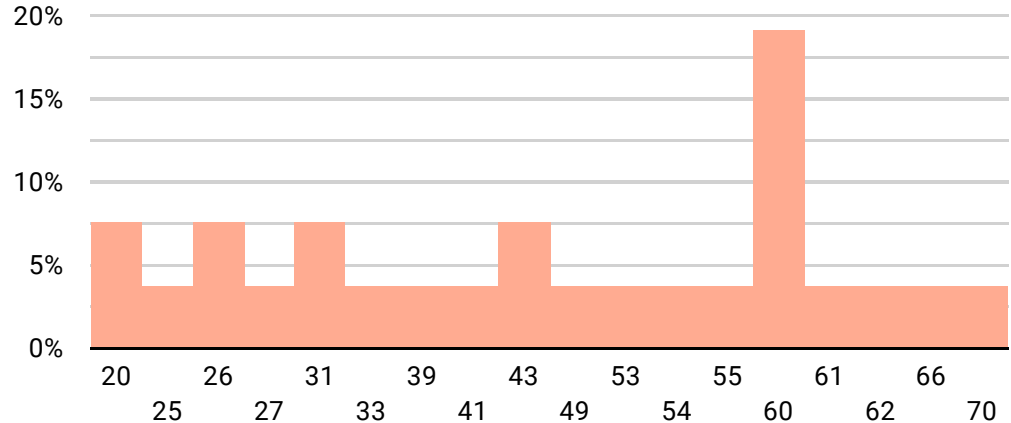
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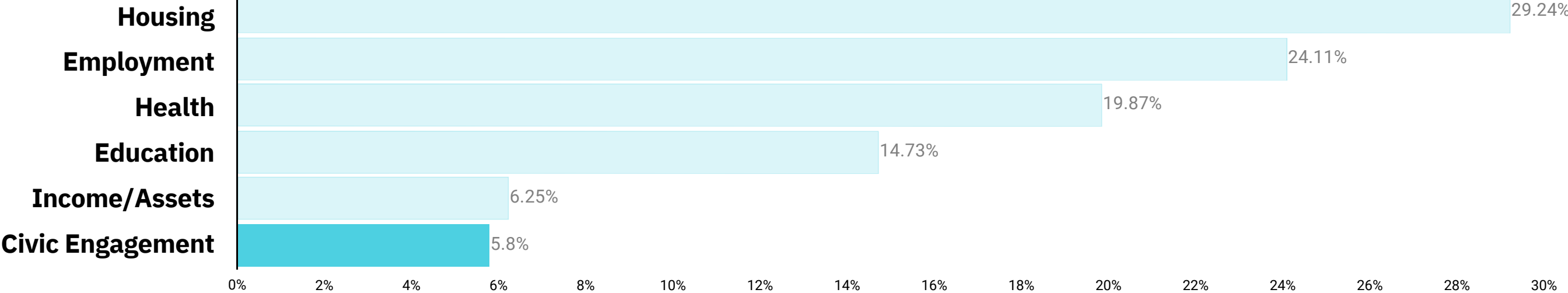
Race



Age



### TOP NEED DOMAINS REPORTED



### DETAILED NEEDS FROM DOMAINS

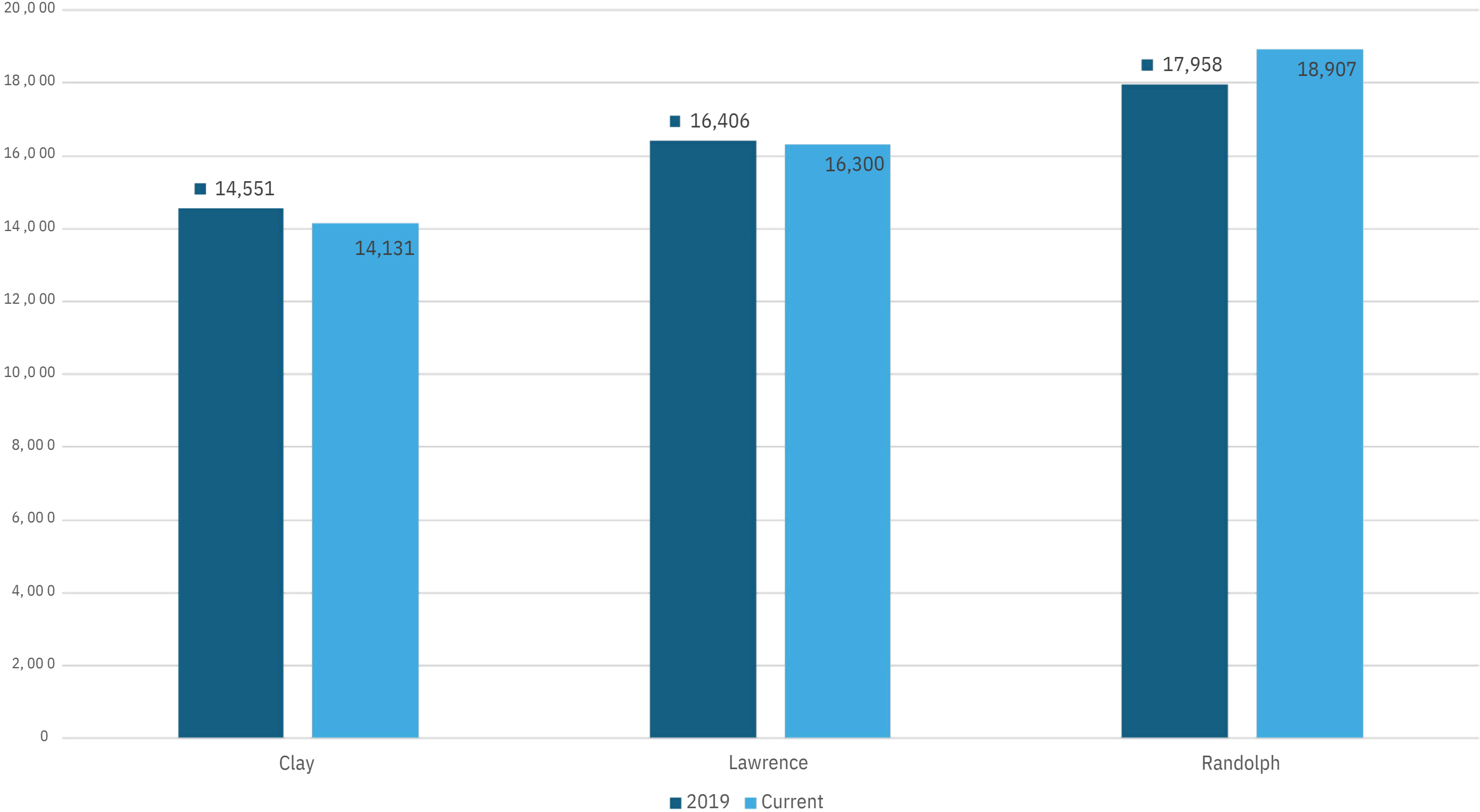
Initiatives providing opportunities for residents to actively participate in community service and contribute to civic betterment	38.46%
Projects and efforts dedicated to fostering positive social change within the community, addressing issues, and promoting inclusivity and equity.	26.92%
Programs and activities aimed at enhancing community resources and increasing awareness of available services and opportunities.	19.23%
Educational workshops focused on civic engagement, empowering residents with knowledge on community involvement,	11.54%

# Service Area Data

## Population

(Estimated changes since previous Community Needs Assessment)

**Sources**  
-<https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-counties/ar/clay-county-population>  
-[https://data.census.gov/profile/Lawrence\\_County,\\_Arkansas?g=050XX00US05075](https://data.census.gov/profile/Lawrence_County,_Arkansas?g=050XX00US05075)  
-<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/AR,randolphcountyarkansas/POP815222>  
-<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/claycountyarkansas/HSG860215>



# Service Area Data

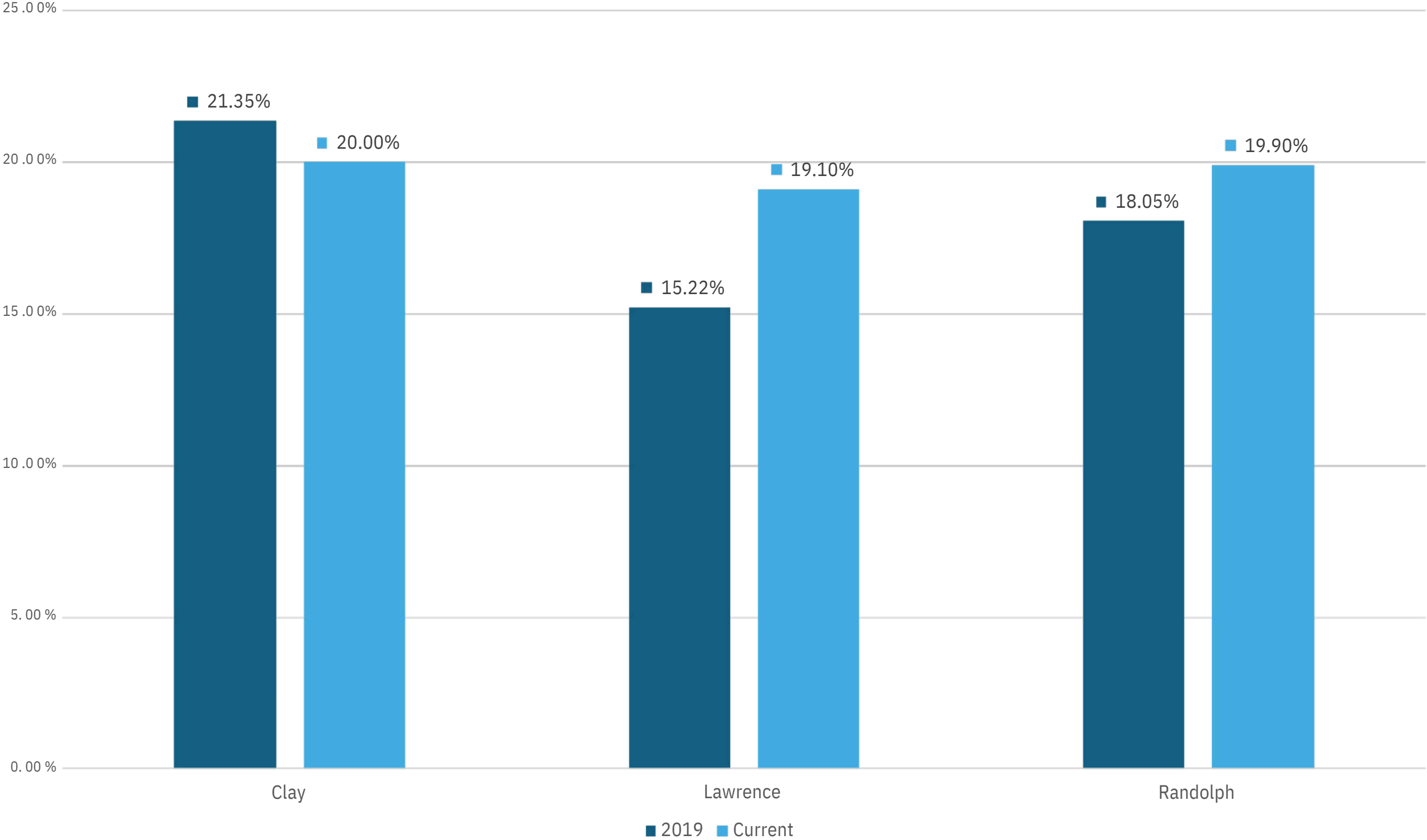
Sources

-U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates S1701

-<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/lawrencecountyarkansas,claycountyarkansas,randolphcountyarkansas/RHI825223>

## Percentage of Poverty

(Estimated changes since previous Community Needs Assessment)



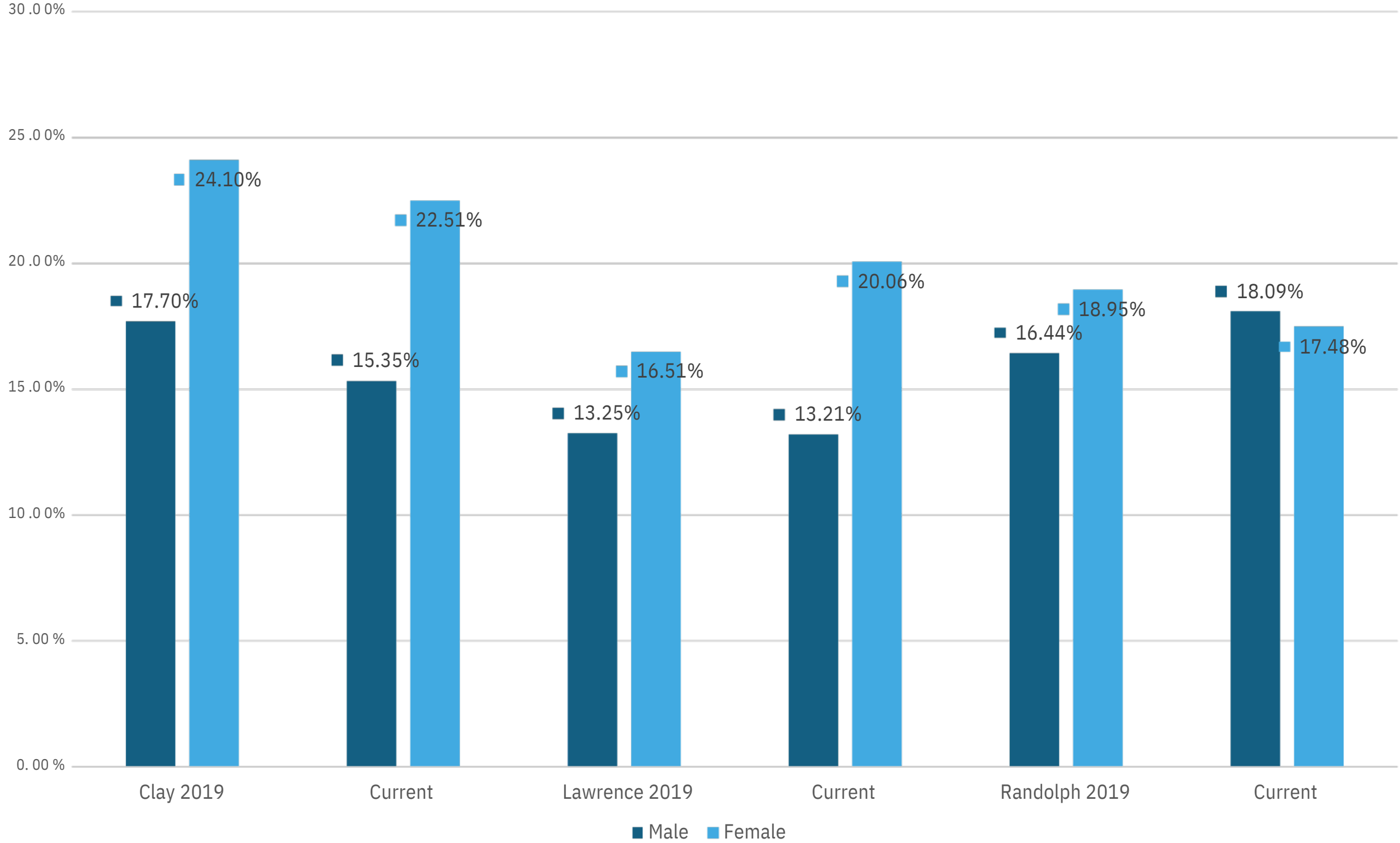
# Service Area Data

## Percentage of Poverty (Gender)

(Estimated changes since previous Community Needs Assessment)

**Sources**

- <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/clay-county-ar>
- <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/lawrence-county-ar>
- <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/randolph-county-ar>



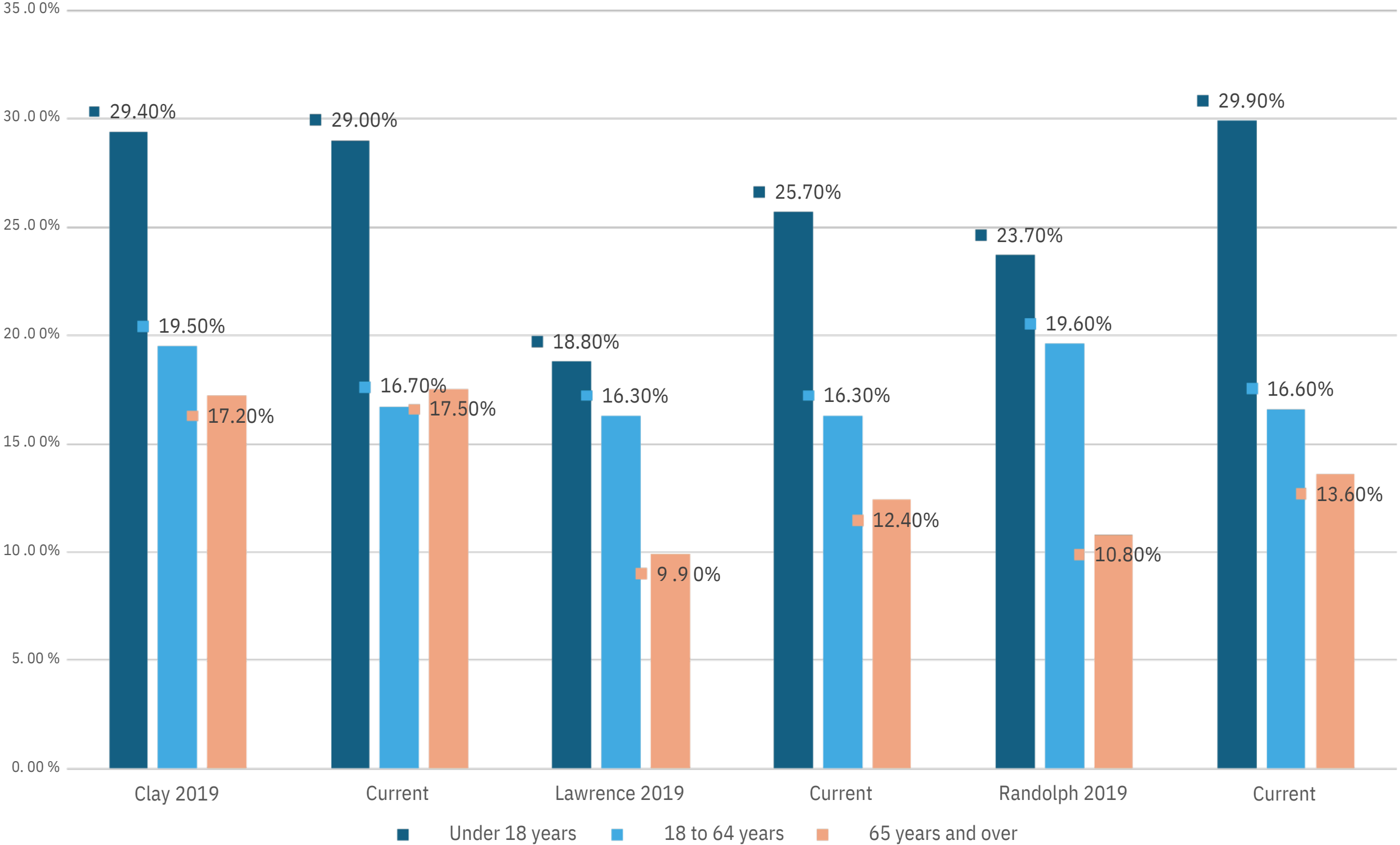
# Service Area Data

Sources

-<https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2019.S1701?q=poverty&g=050XX00US05021,05075,05121>  
 -<https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2022.S1701?q=poverty&g=050XX00US05021,05075,05121>

## Percentage of Poverty (Age)

(Estimated changes since previous Community Needs Assessment)



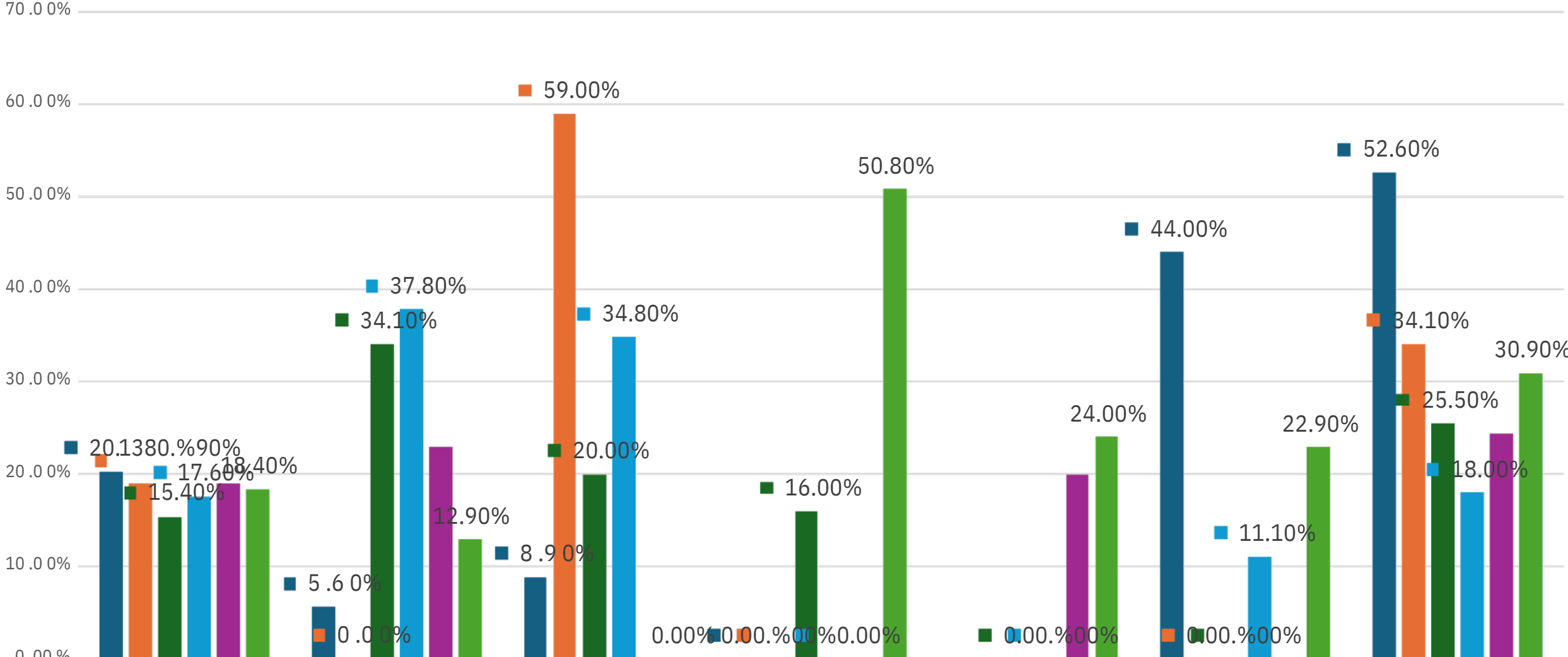
# Service Area Data

Sources

-<https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2019.S1701?q=poverty&g=050XX00US05021,05075,05121>  
 -<https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2022.S1701?q=poverty&g=050XX00US05021,05075,05121>

## Percentage of Poverty (Race)

(Estimated changes since previous Community Needs Assessment)



	White	Black	Am.Ind.AK Native	Asian	Haw.Pacif.Islan.	O ther	Multi
Clay 2019	20.30%	5.60%	8.90%	0.00%		44.00%	52.60%
Current	18.90%	0.00%	59.00%	0.00%		0.00%	34.10%
Lawrence 2019	15.40%	34.10%	20.00%	16.00%	0.00%	0.00%	25.50%
Current	17.60%	37.80%	34.80%	0.00%	0.00%	11.10%	18.00%
Randolph 2019	18.90%	22.90%	0.00%	0.00%	20.00%	0.00%	24.40%
Current	18.40%	12.90%	0.00%	50.80%	24.00%	22.90%	30.90%

■ Clay 2019 ■ Current ■ Lawrence 2019 ■ Current ■ Randolph 2019 ■ Current

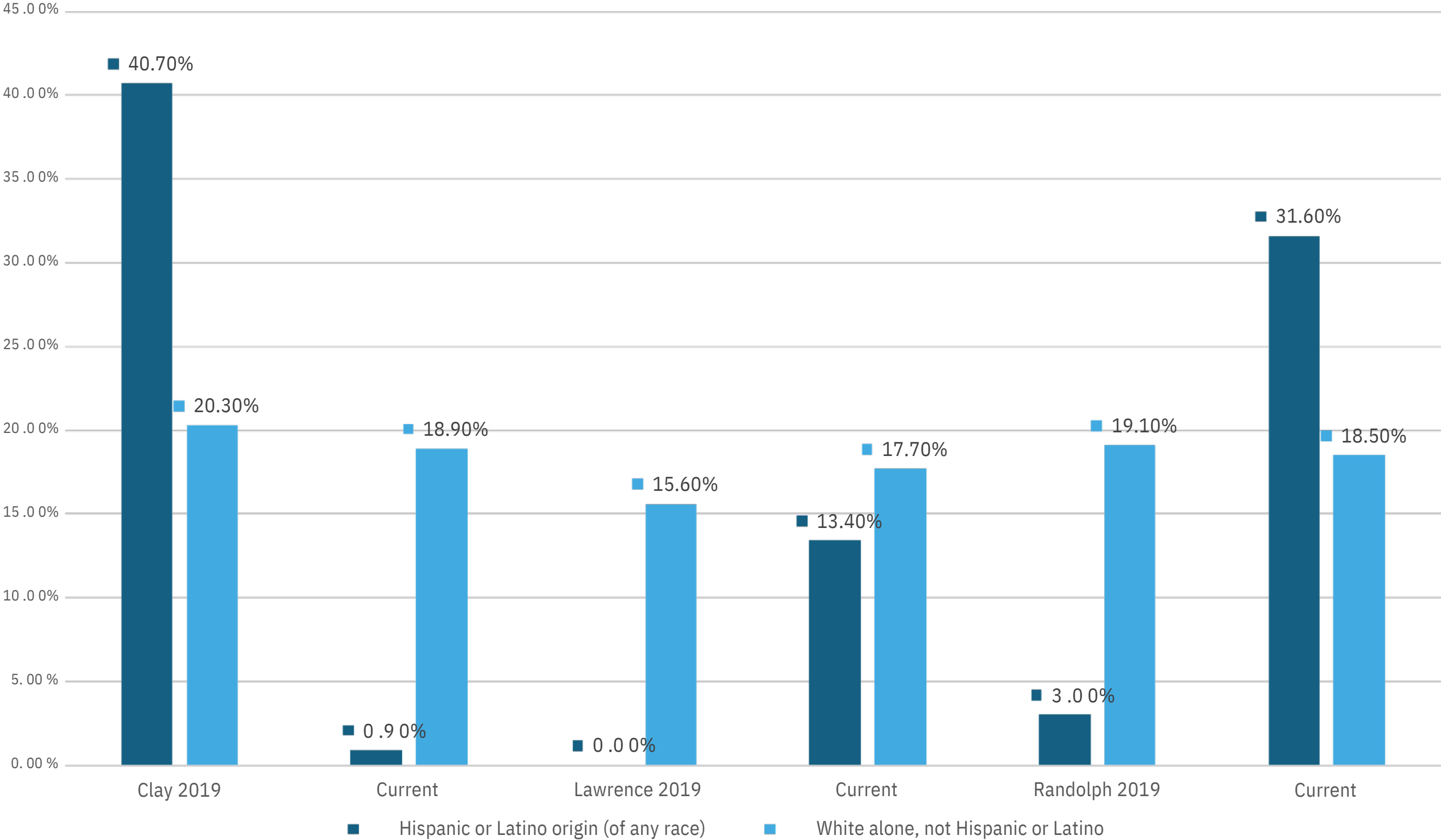
# Service Area Data

Sources

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-<https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2022.S1701?q=poverty&g=050XX00US05021,05075,05121>

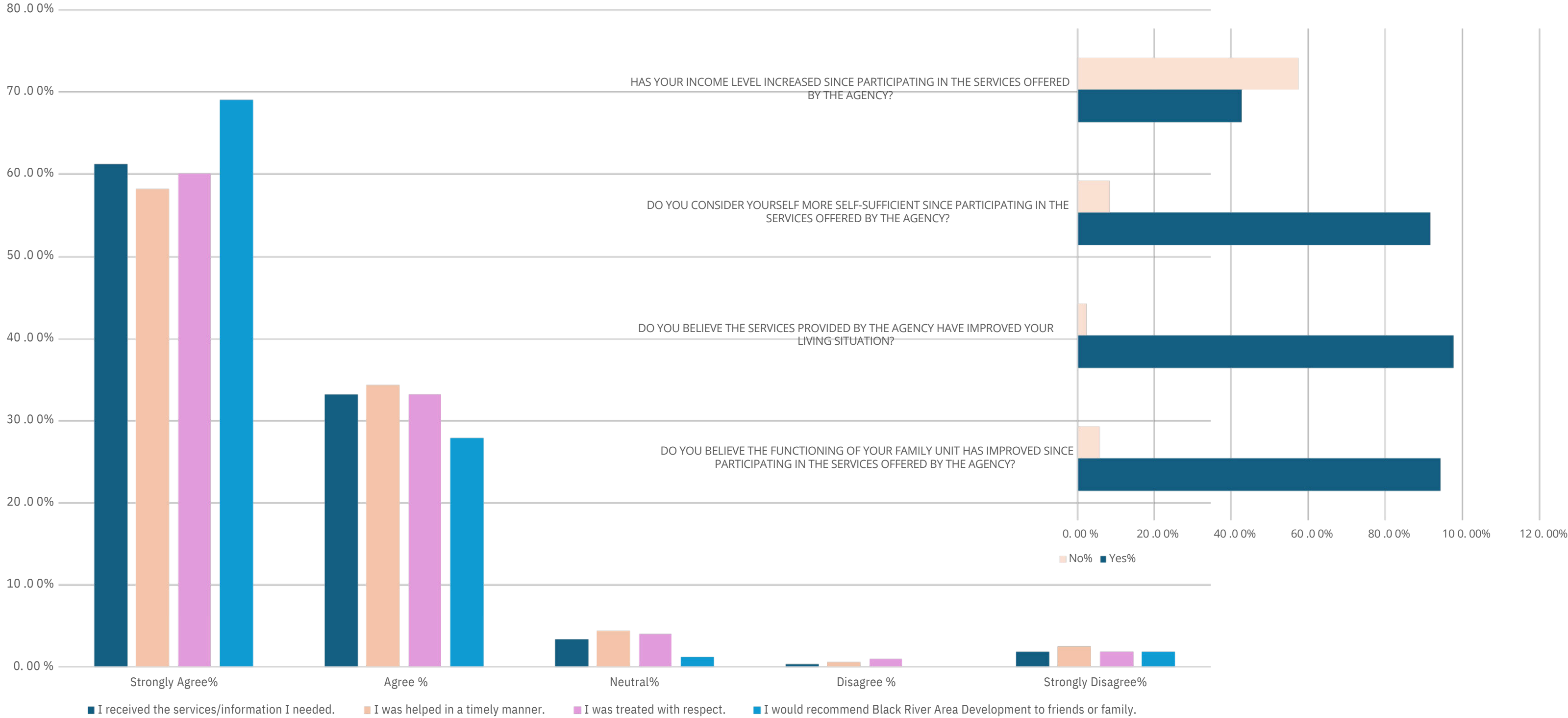
## Percentage of Poverty (Ethnicity)

(Estimated changes since previous Community Needs Assessment)



# Satisfaction Data

During the course of 6 months, clients were encouraged to provide input into their experiences with the Agency.



# Relevant Standards

Provided are Center of Excellence developed Community Services Block Grant Organizational Standards related to Community Assessment practices.

## Standard 1.2

The organization analyzes information collected directly from low-income individuals as part of the community assessment.

## Standard 1.3

The organization has a systematic approach for collecting, analyzing, and reporting customer satisfaction data to the governing board.

## Standard 2.2

The organization utilizes information gathered from key sectors of the community in assessing needs and resources, during the community assessment process or other times. These sectors would include at minimum: community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, private sector, public sector, and educational institutions.

## Standard 3.1

The organization conducted a community assessment and issued a report within the past 3 years.

## Standard 3.2

As part of the community assessment, the organization collects and includes current data specific to poverty and its prevalence related to gender, age, and race/ethnicity for their service area(s).

## Standard 3.3

The organization collects and analyzes both qualitative and quantitative data on its geographic service area(s) in the community assessment.

## Standard 3.4

The community assessment includes key findings on the causes and conditions of poverty and the needs of the communities assessed.

## Standard 3.5

The governing board formally accepts the completed community assessment.

## Standard 4.2

The organization's Community Action plan is outcome-based, anti-poverty focused, and ties directly to the community assessment.

## Standard 6.4

Customer satisfaction data and customer input, collected as part of the community assessment, is included in the strategic planning process.





BRAD CORP.  
1403 HOSPITAL DRIVE  
POCAHONTAS, AR 72455

870.892.4547

[bradcorp.org](http://bradcorp.org)

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