



RICE | KINDER
INSTITUTE FOR URBAN RESEARCH

Prophetic City: The Houston Region on the Cusp of a Changing America

Tracking Responses to the Economic and Demographic
Transformations through 39 Years of Houston Surveys

Dr. Stephen L. Klineberg
slk@rice.edu

Fort Bend Economic Development
Council, 20 August 2020.

The Kinder Houston Area Survey (1982-Present)

These 39 years of systematic interviews with successive representative samples of Harris County residents have explored the way the general public is responding to three fundamental new realities:



The Rise of the Knowledge Economy



The Epic Demographic Transition

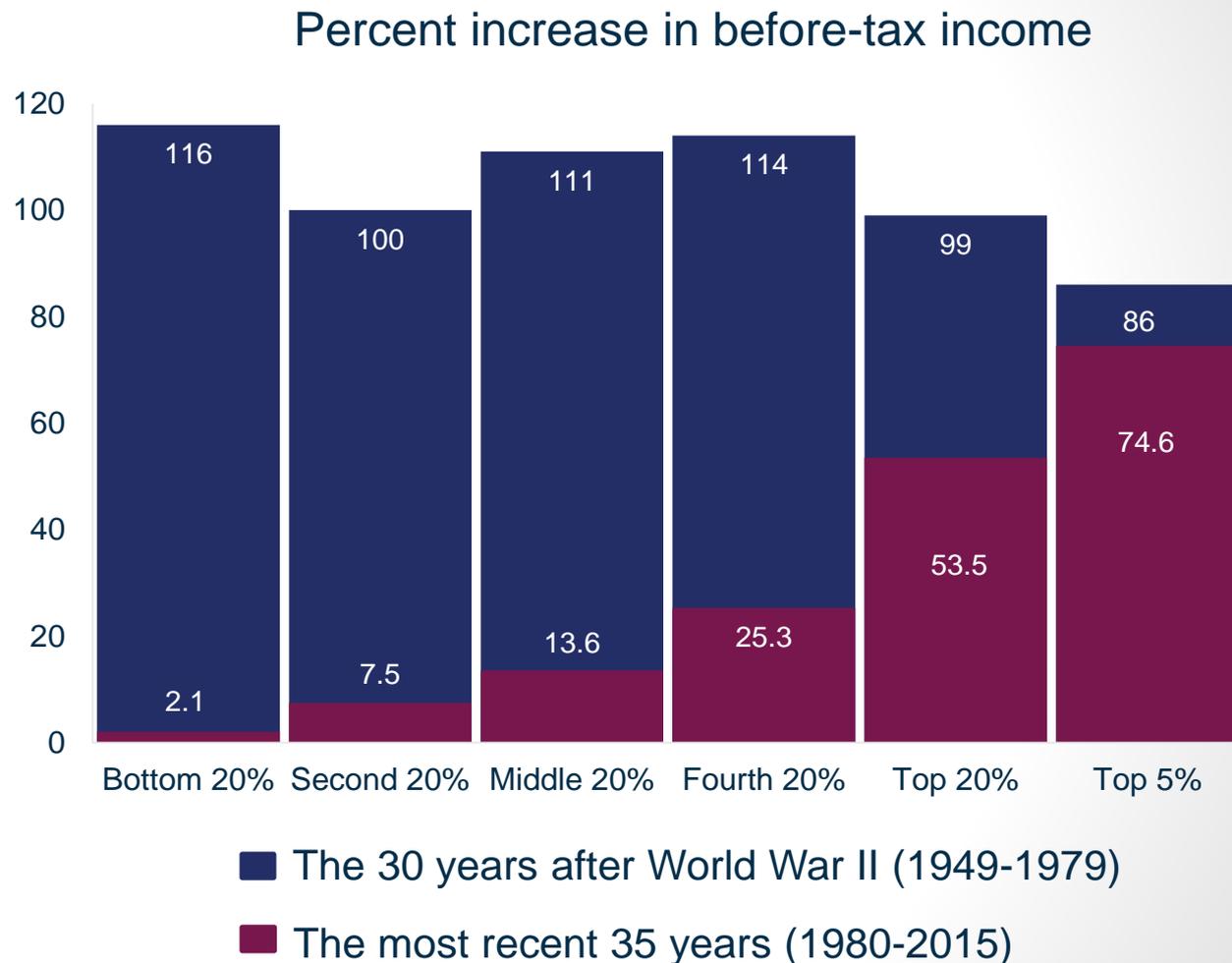


The New Salience of Quality of Place

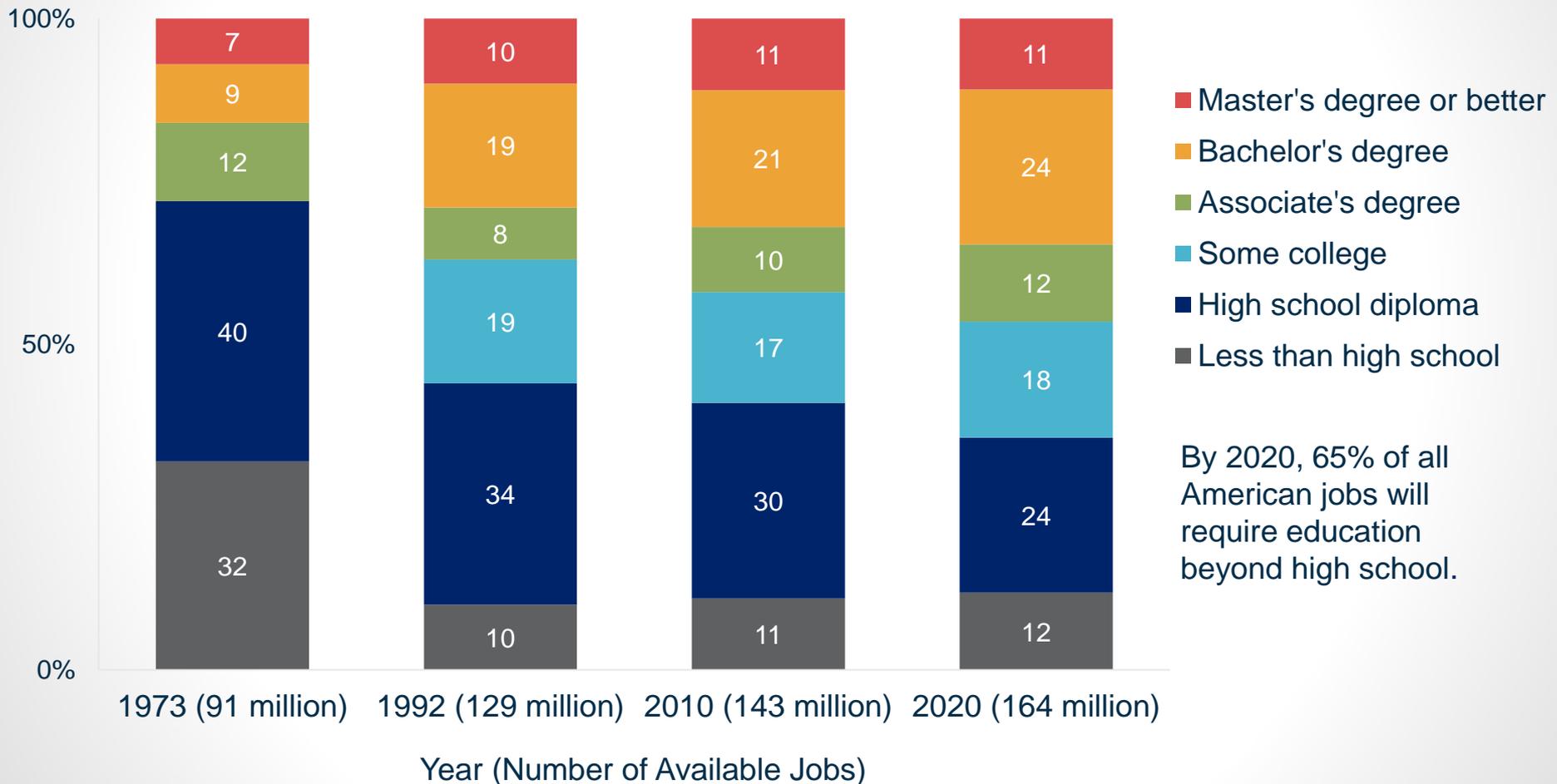
Two contrasting economic eras (1949 to 1979; and 1980 to the present)

The 30 years after World War II were a period of broad-based prosperity.

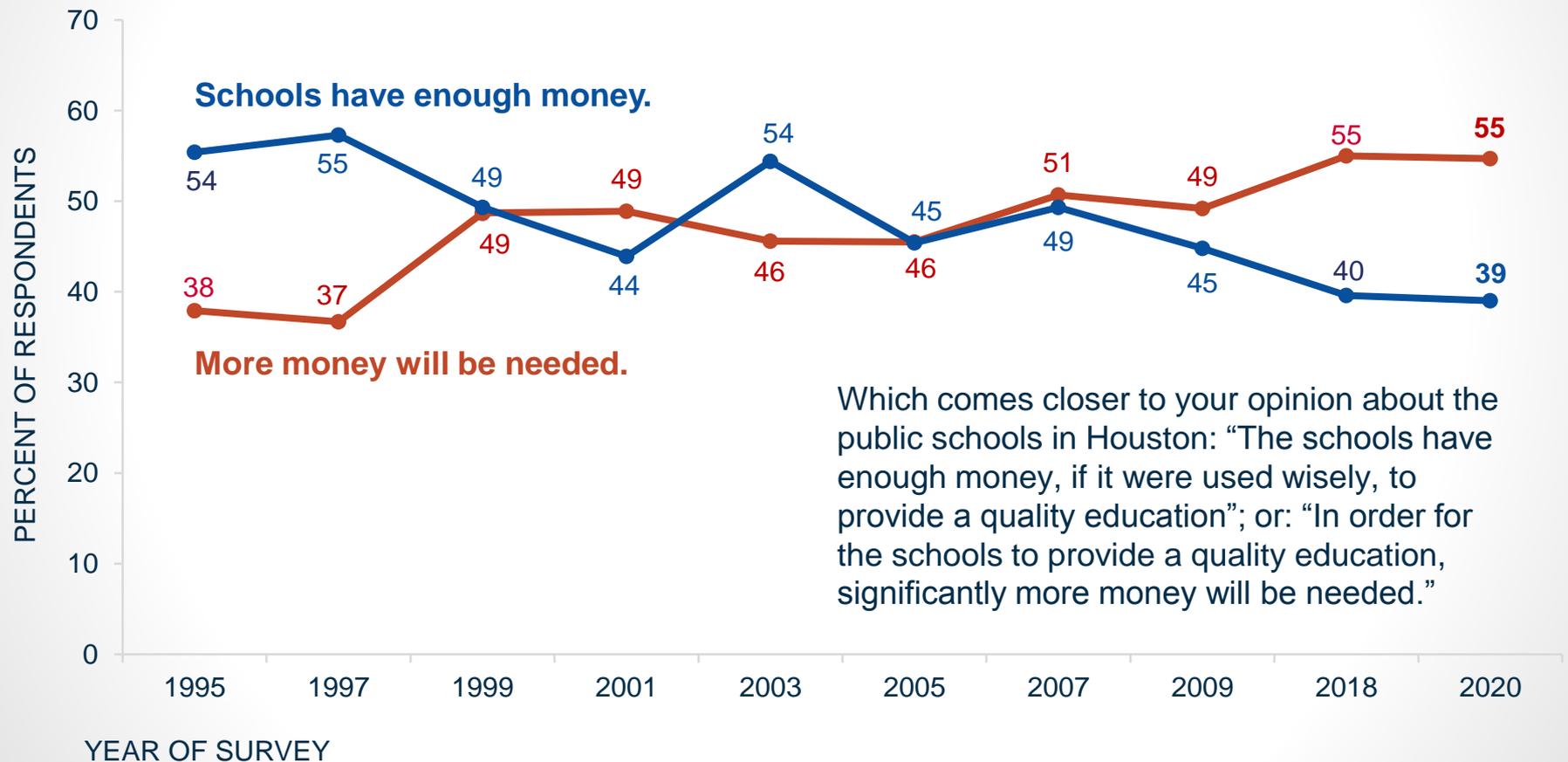
The past 35 years have seen increasing inequalities in income and wealth.



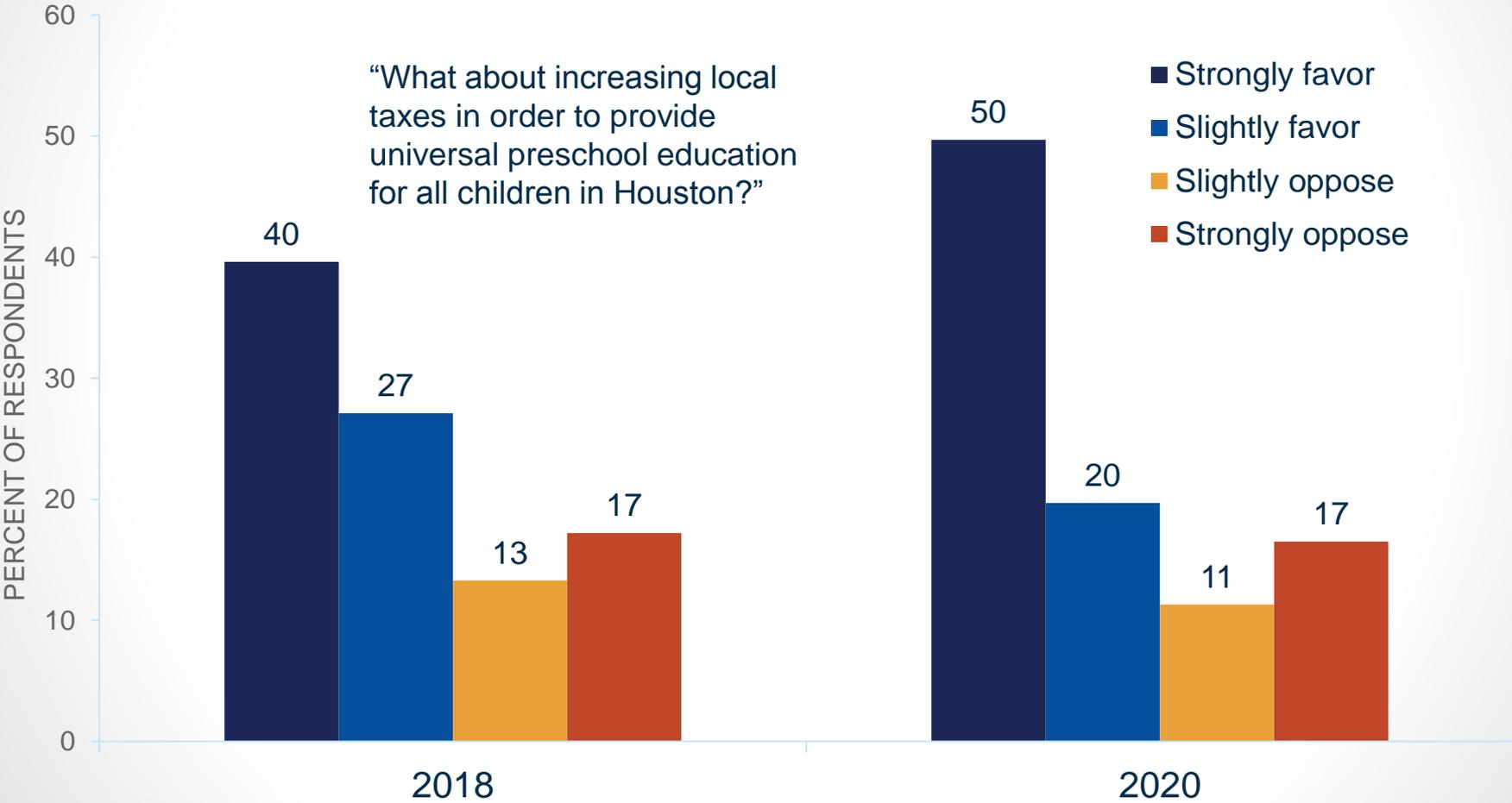
The educational requirements for jobs across America (1970-2020)



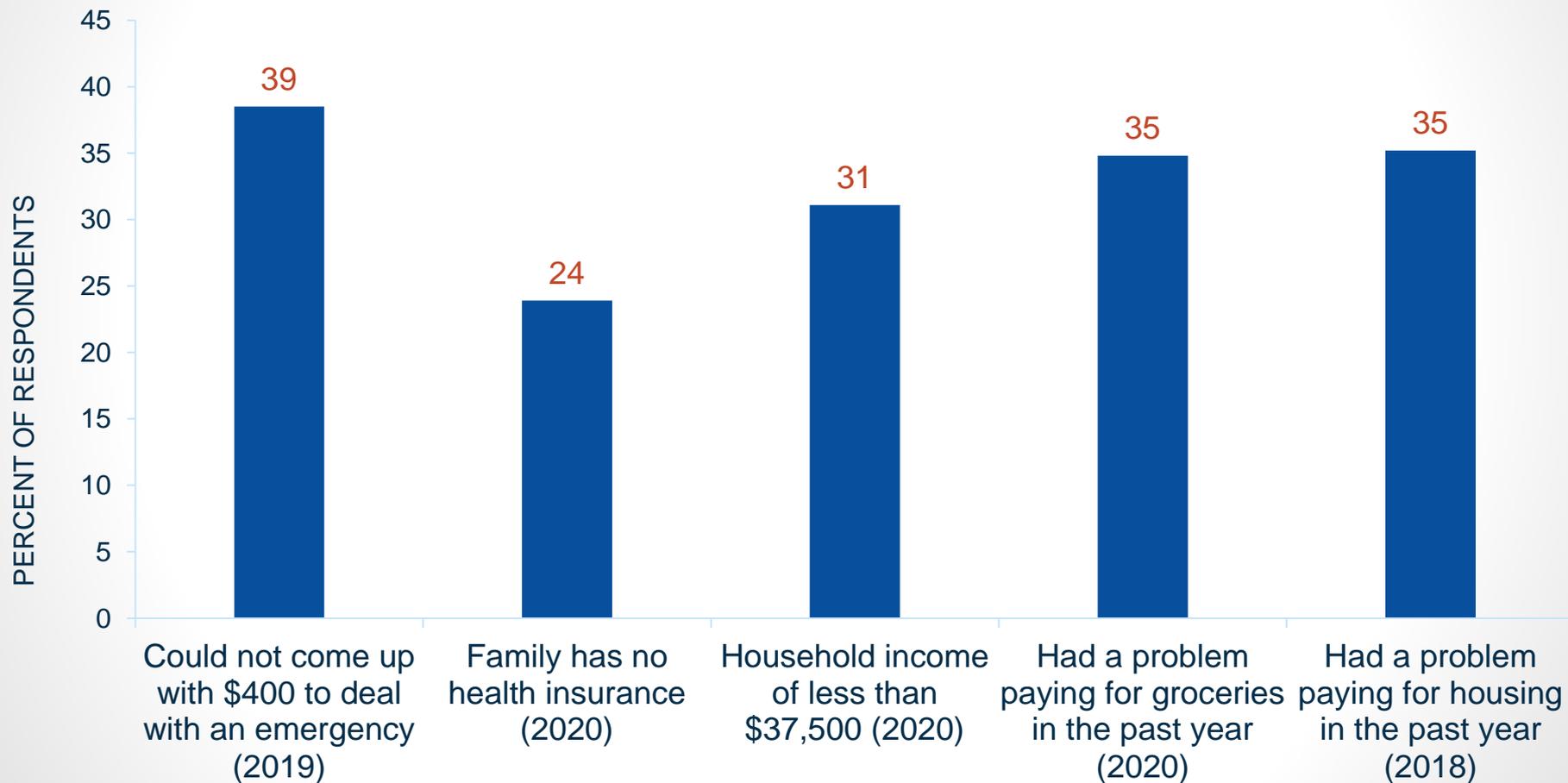
The adequacy of funding for the Houston public schools (KHAS, 1995-2020)



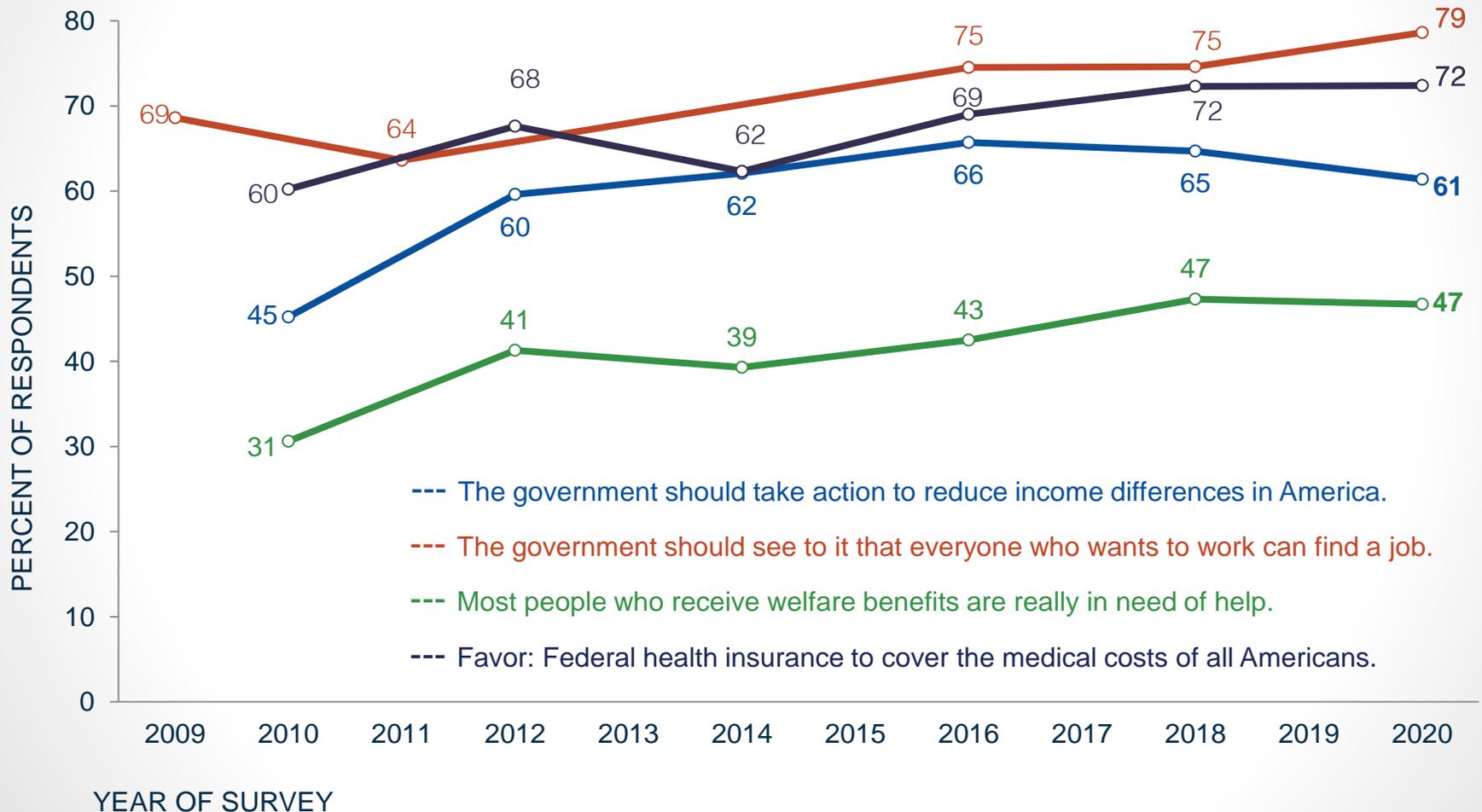
Support for more taxes to provide preschool education for all children in Houston (2018, 2020)



The prevalence of economic hardship among Harris County residents (KHAS, 2018-2020)

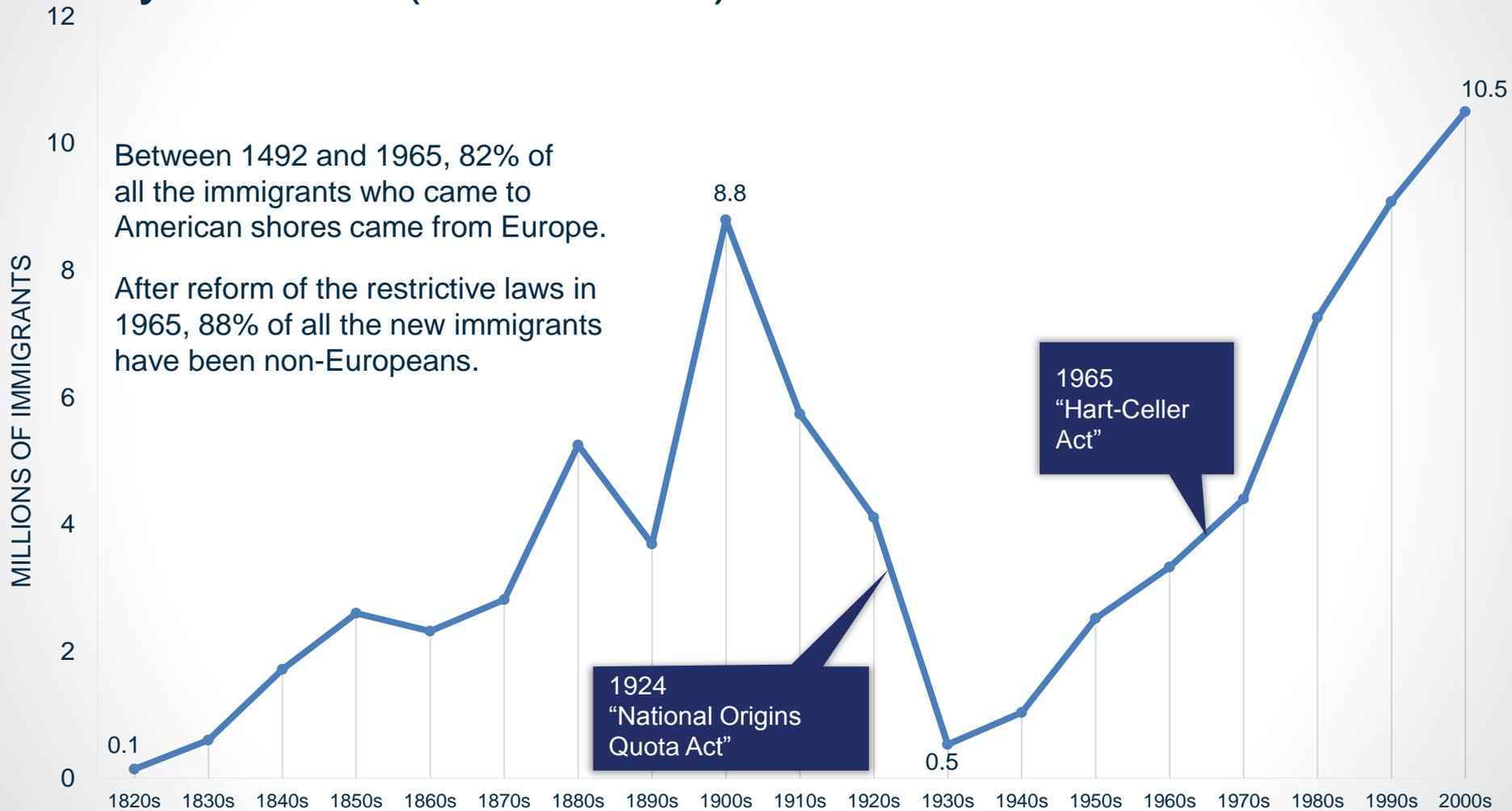


Support for government programs to reduce the inequalities in American society (2009-2020)

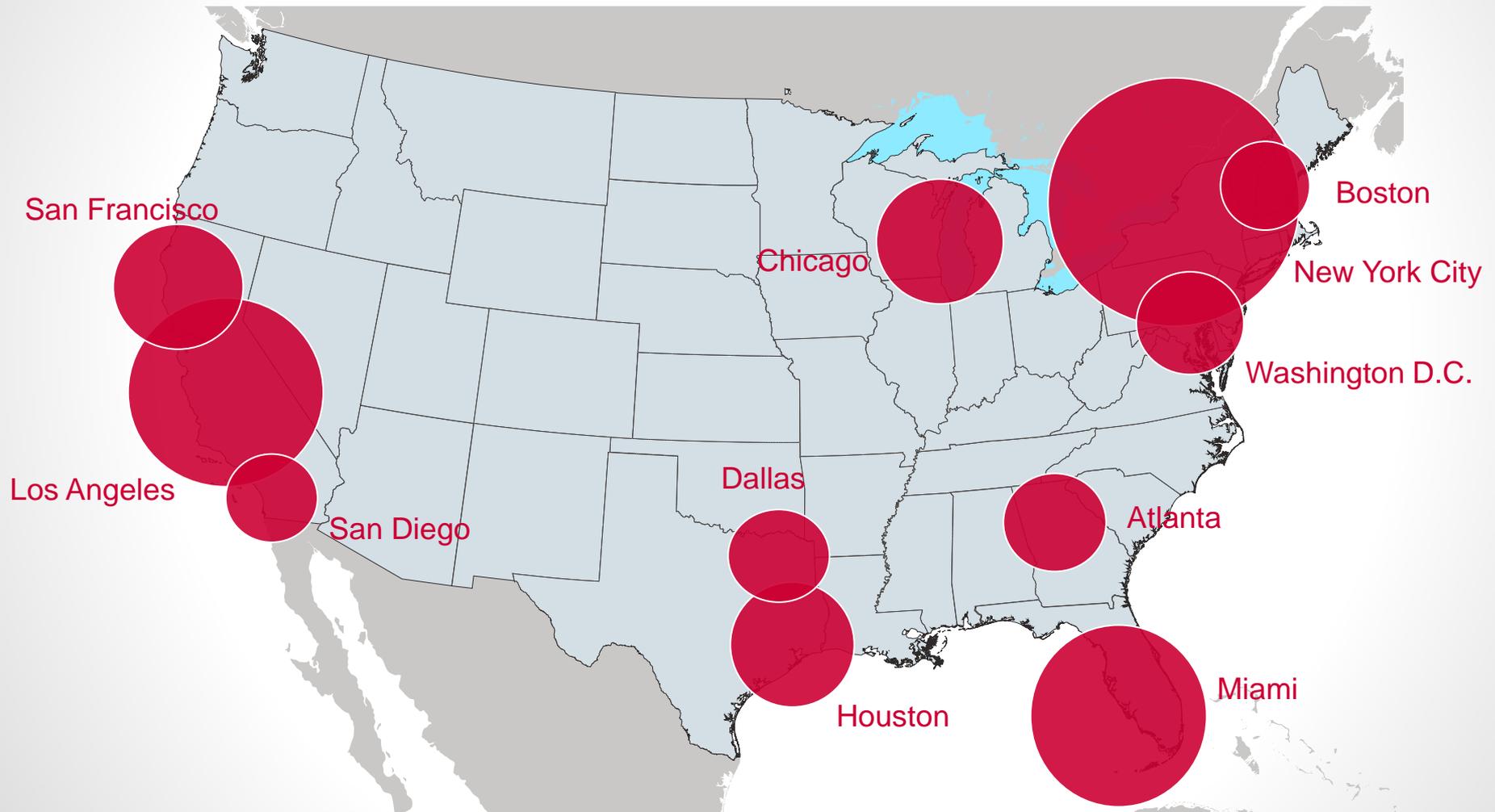




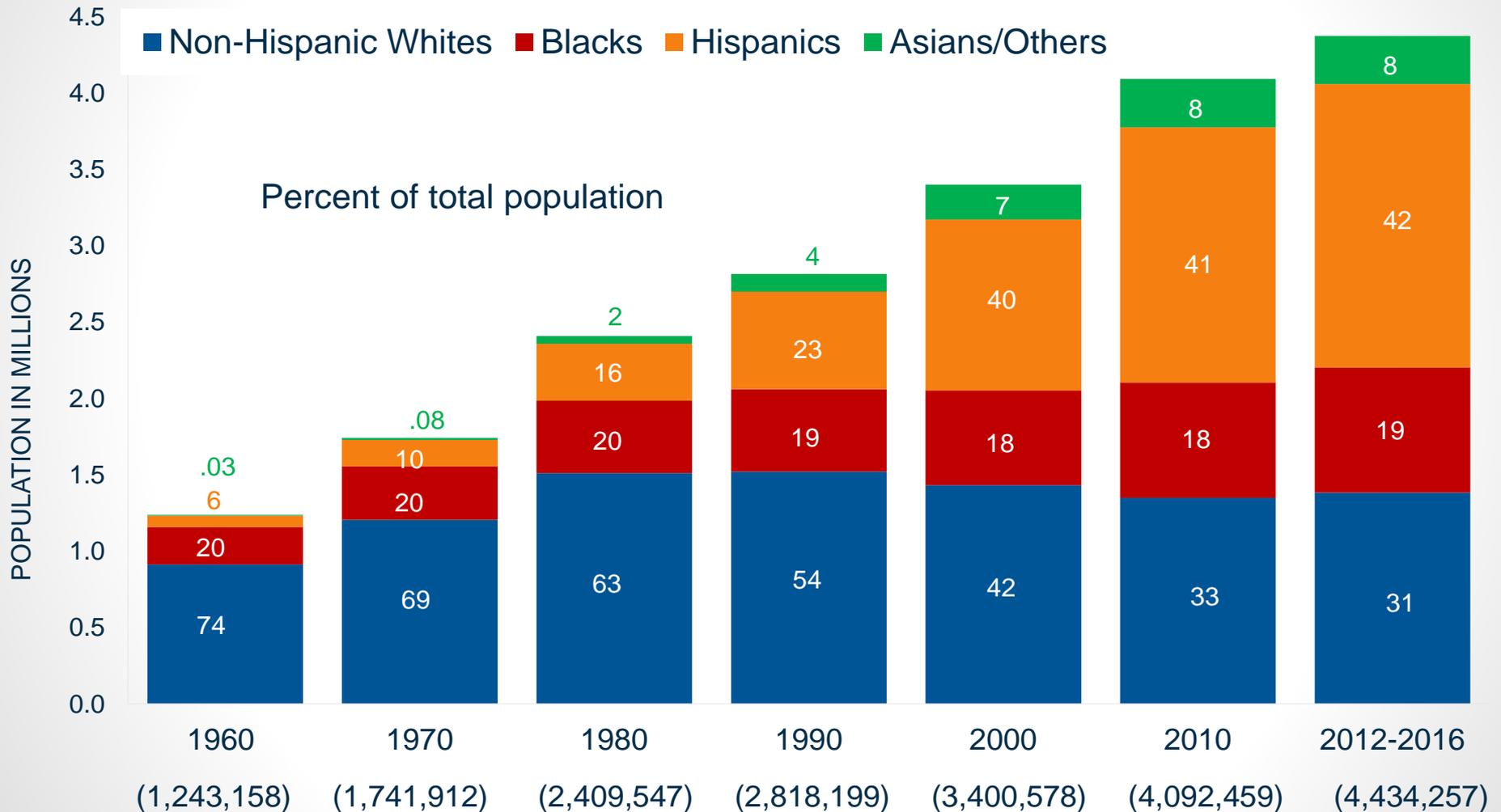
The number of documented U.S. immigrants, by decade (1820-2010)



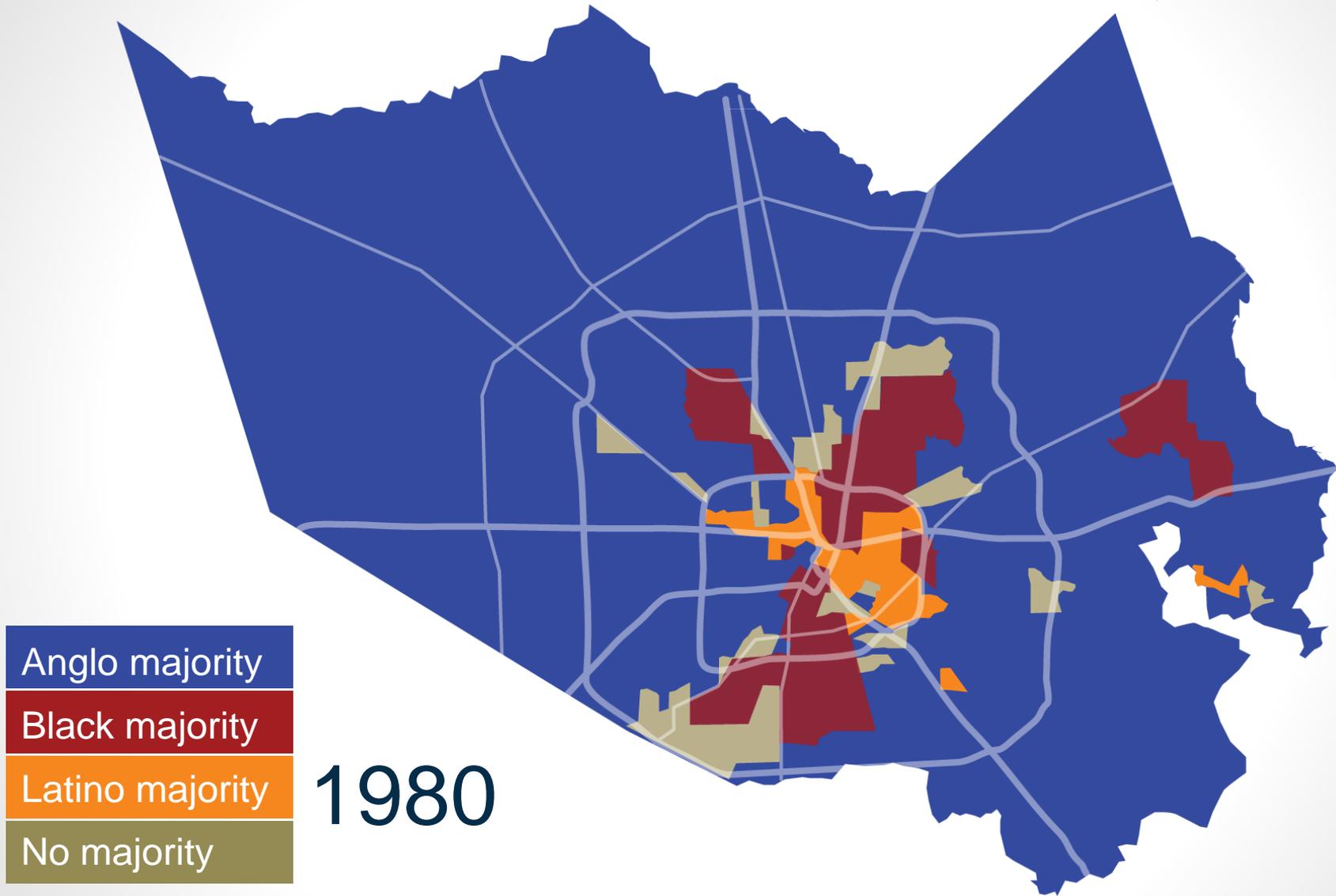
Cities with the largest numbers of foreign-born residents (2010-2014)



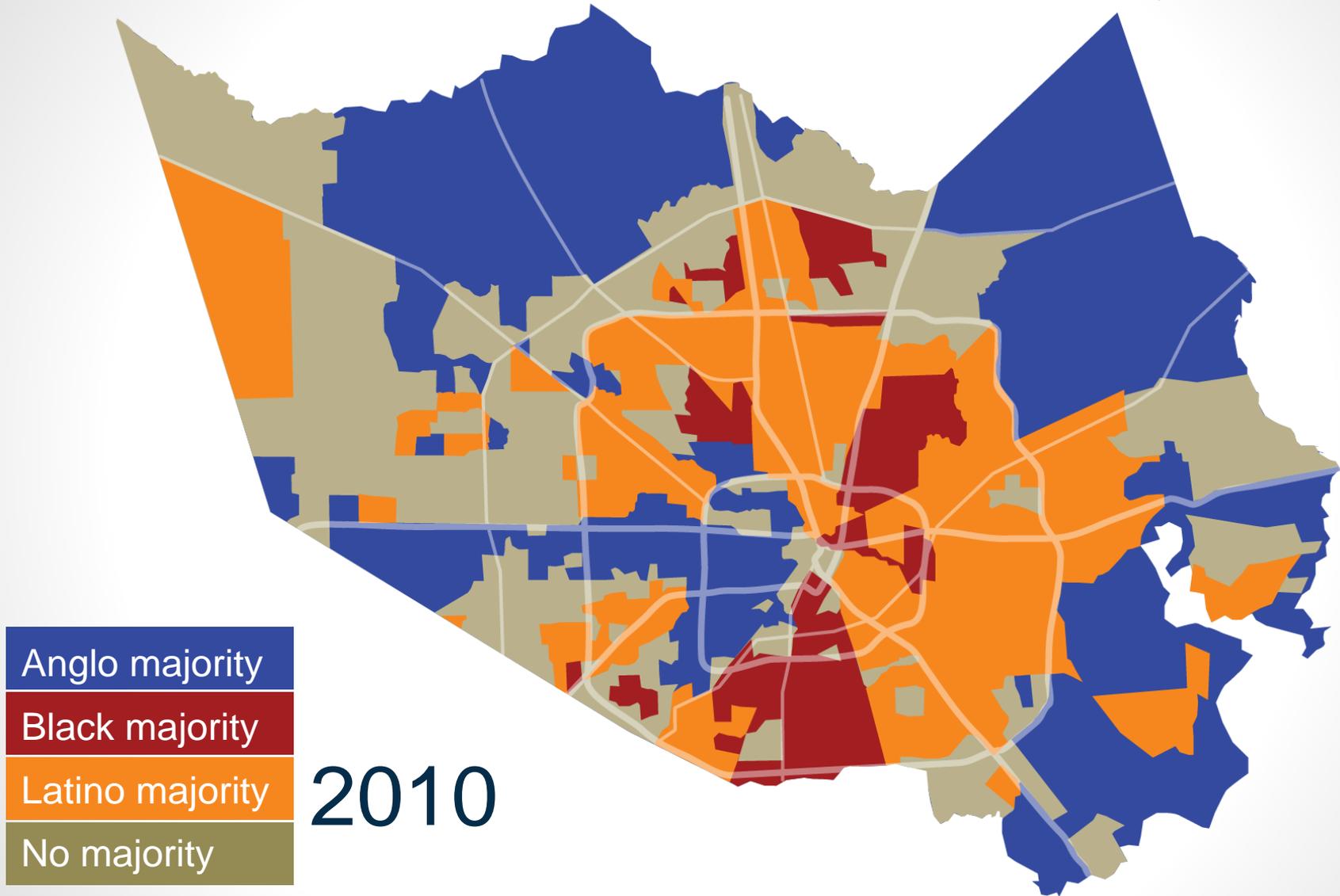
Demographic changes in Harris County by decade (1960-2010) and the ACS estimates for 2012-2016



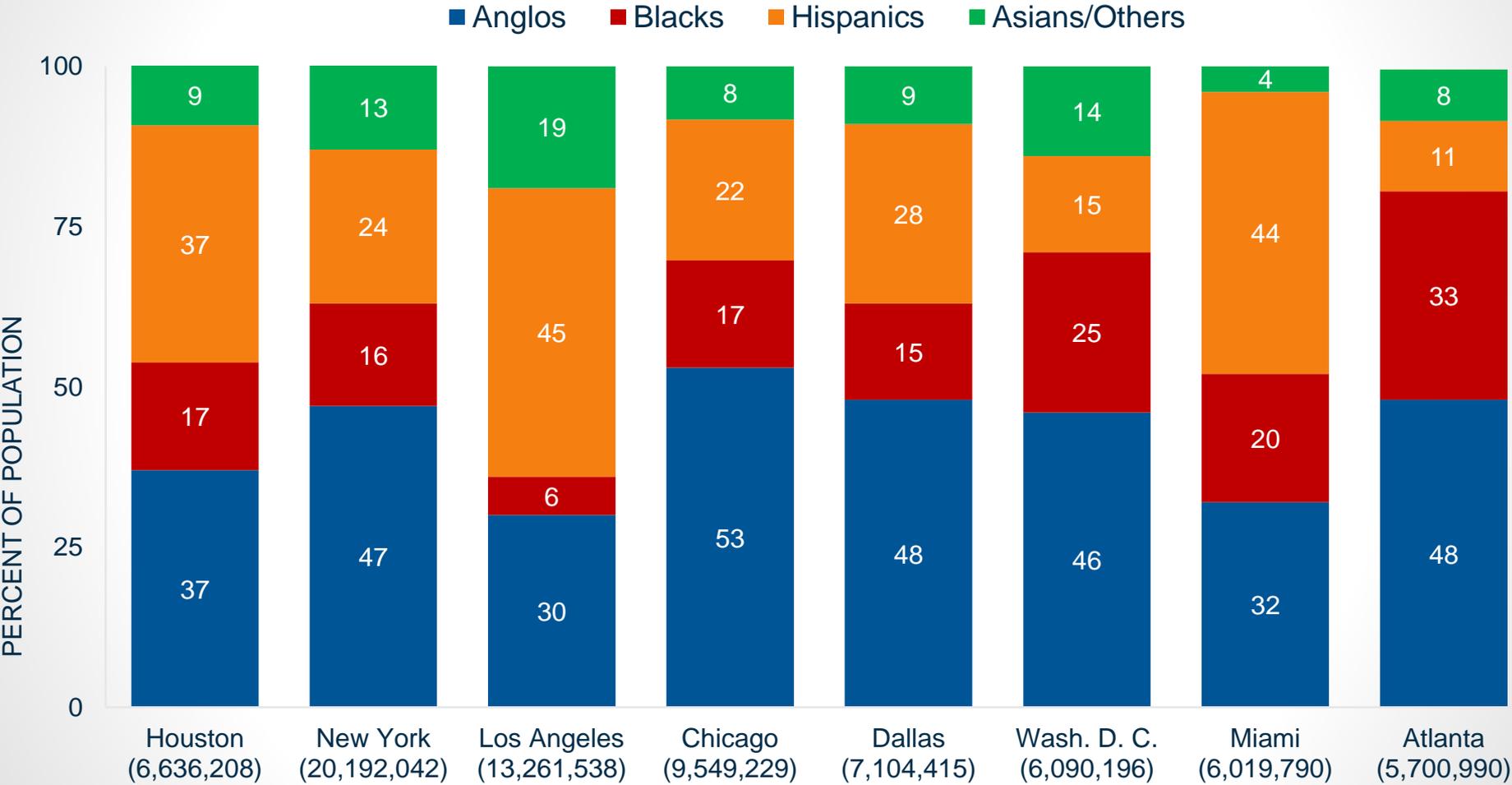
The ethnic distribution across Harris County



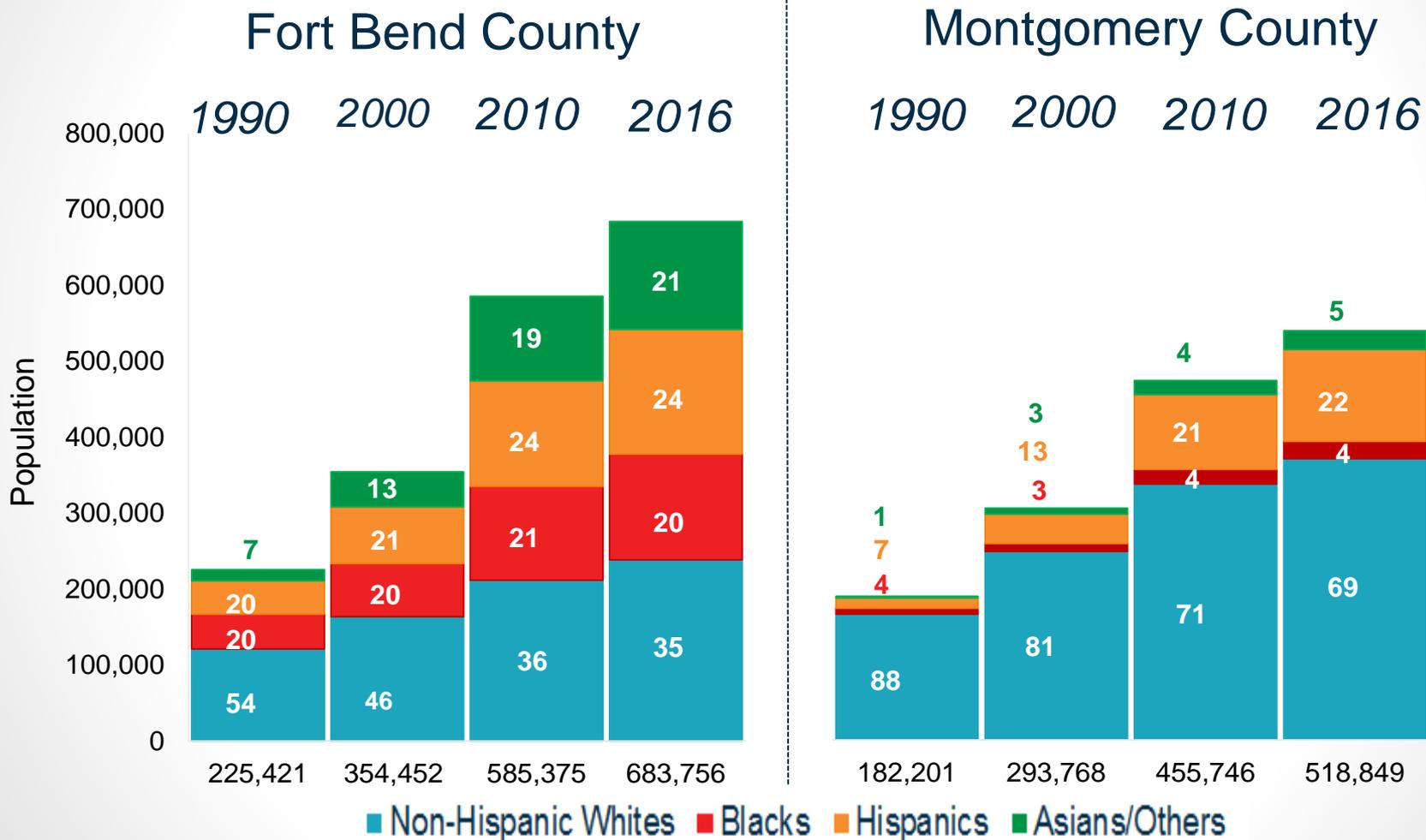
The ethnic distribution across Harris County



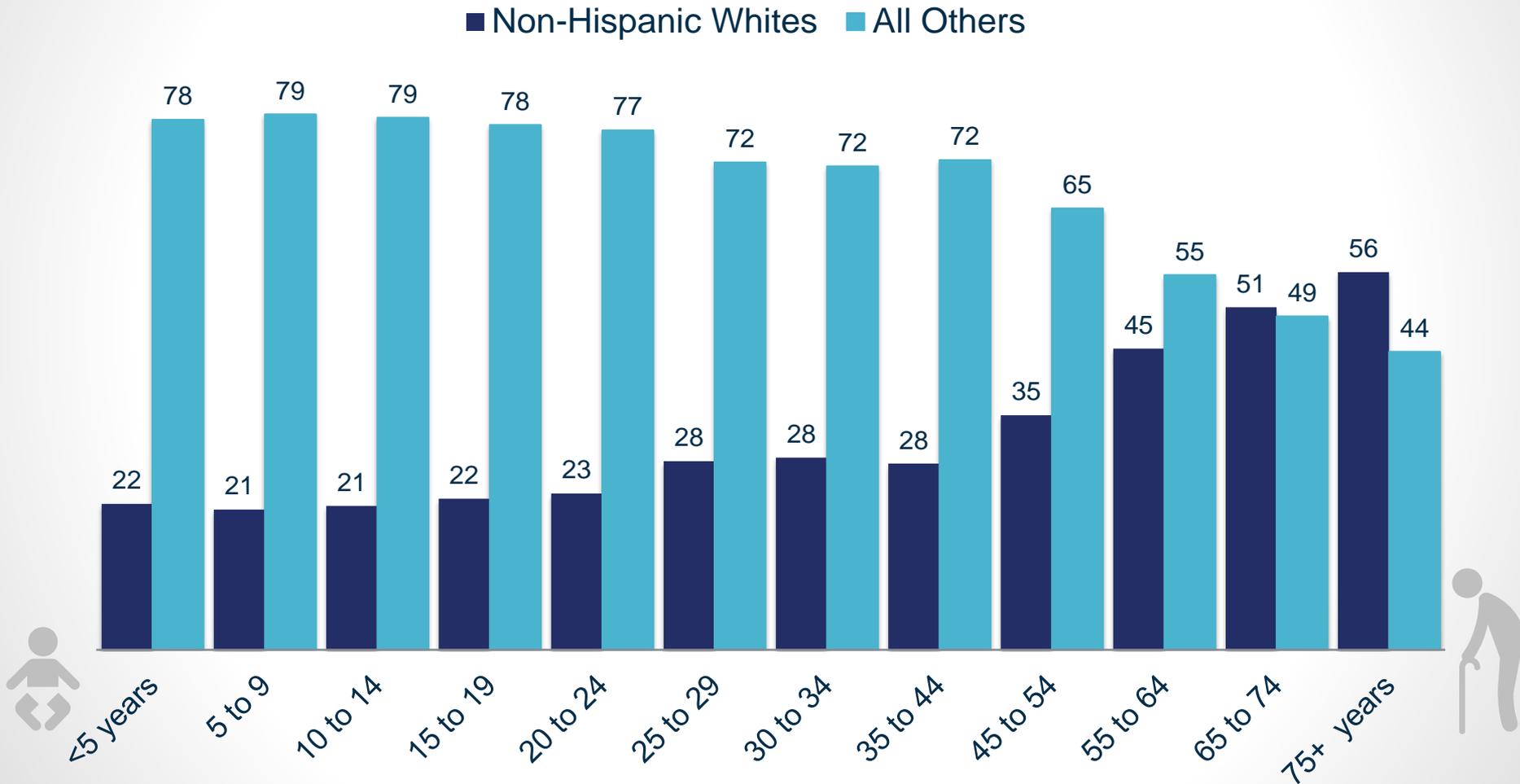
The demographics of the eight most diverse large metro areas in America (ACS, 2013-2017)



The demographics of Fort Bend and Montgomery Counties (U.S. Census, 1990-2016)

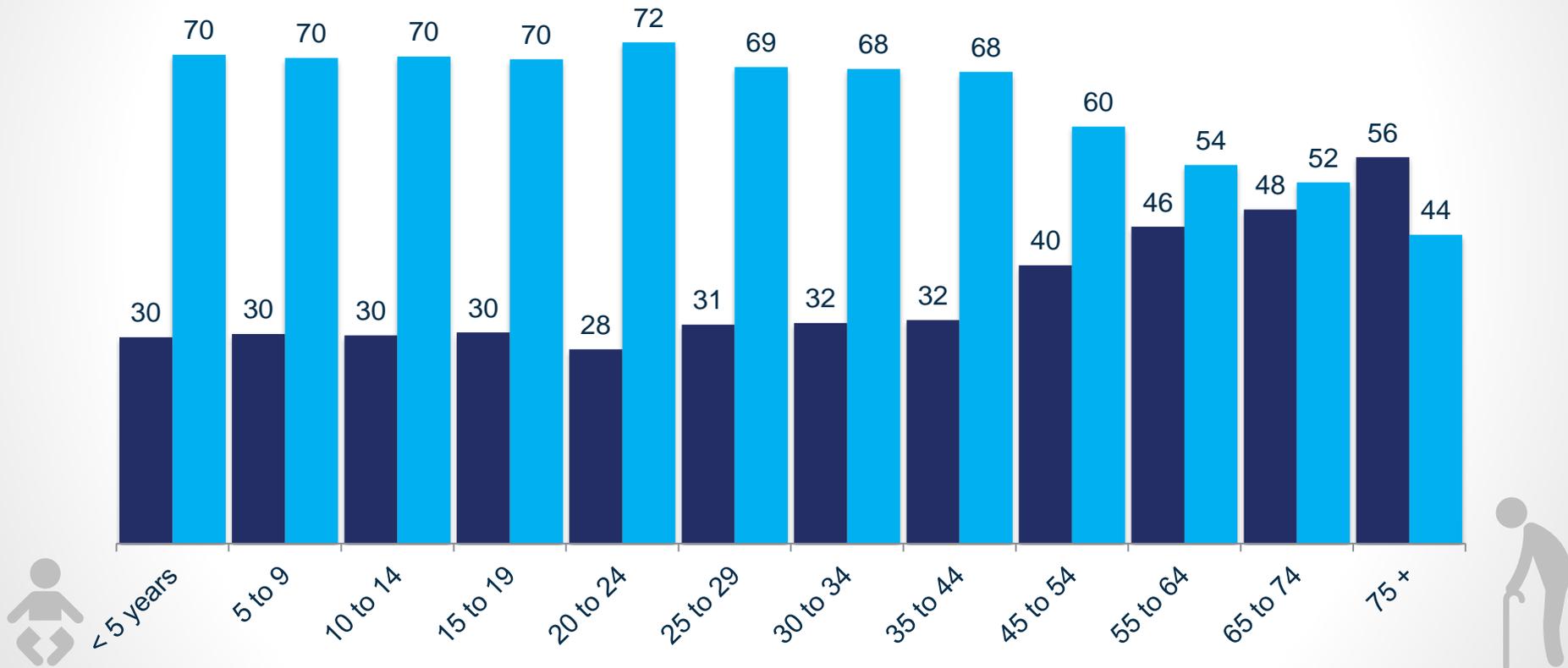


The current population of Harris County by age group and ethnicity (ACS, 2013-2017)



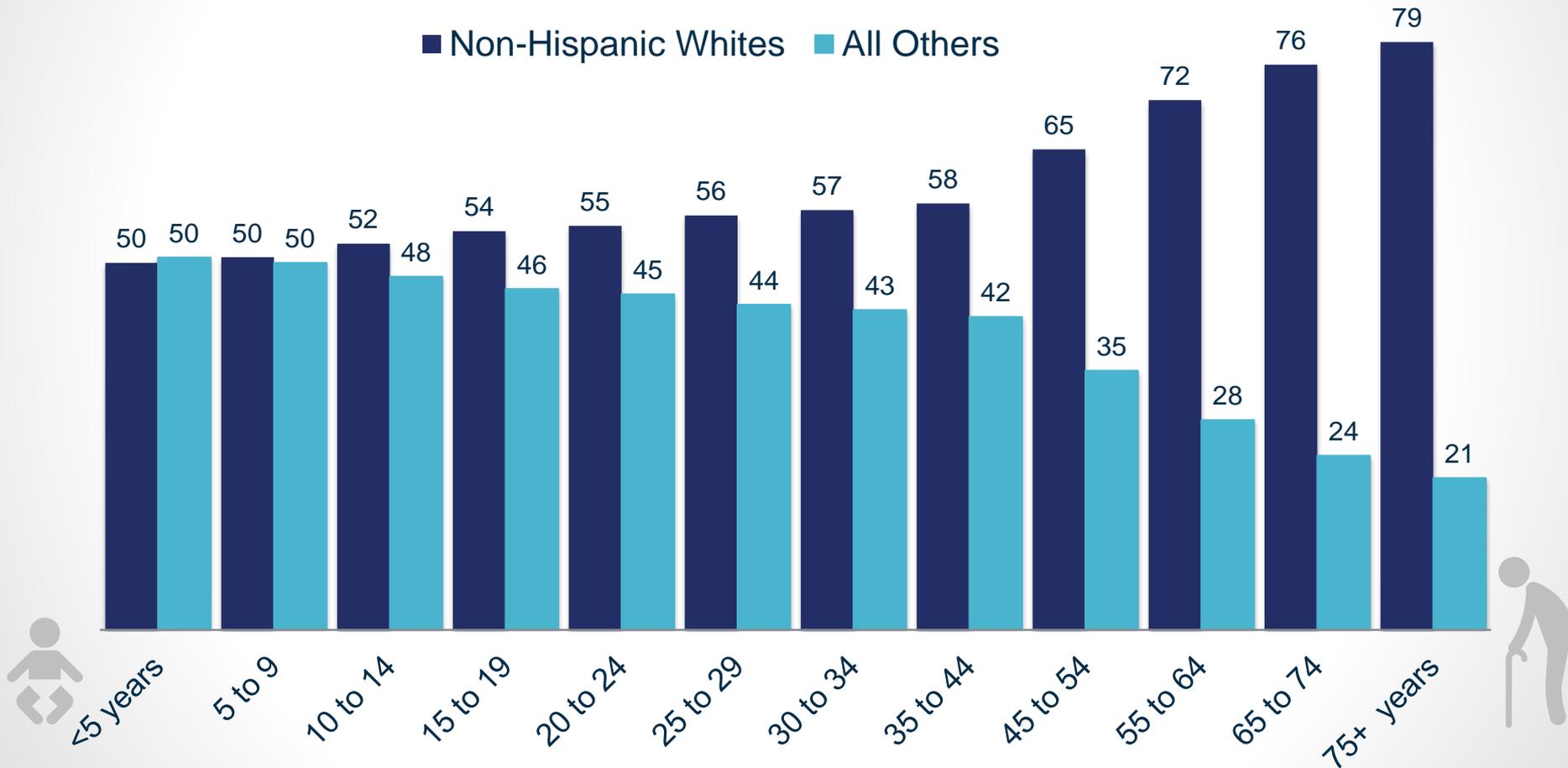
The current population of Fort Bend County by age group and ethnicity (ACS, 2013-2017)

■ Non-Hispanic Whites ■ All Others

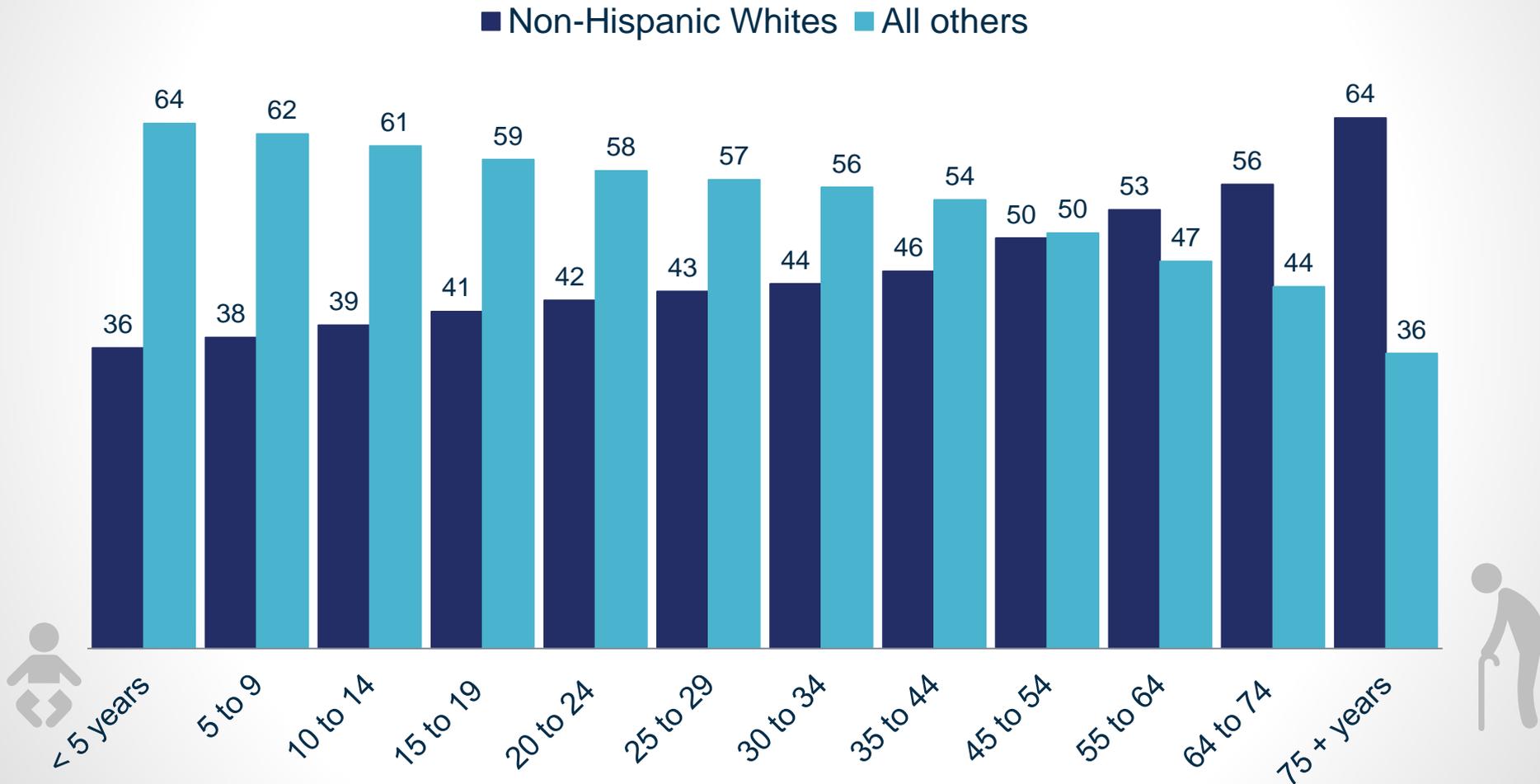


Total Population: 632,946

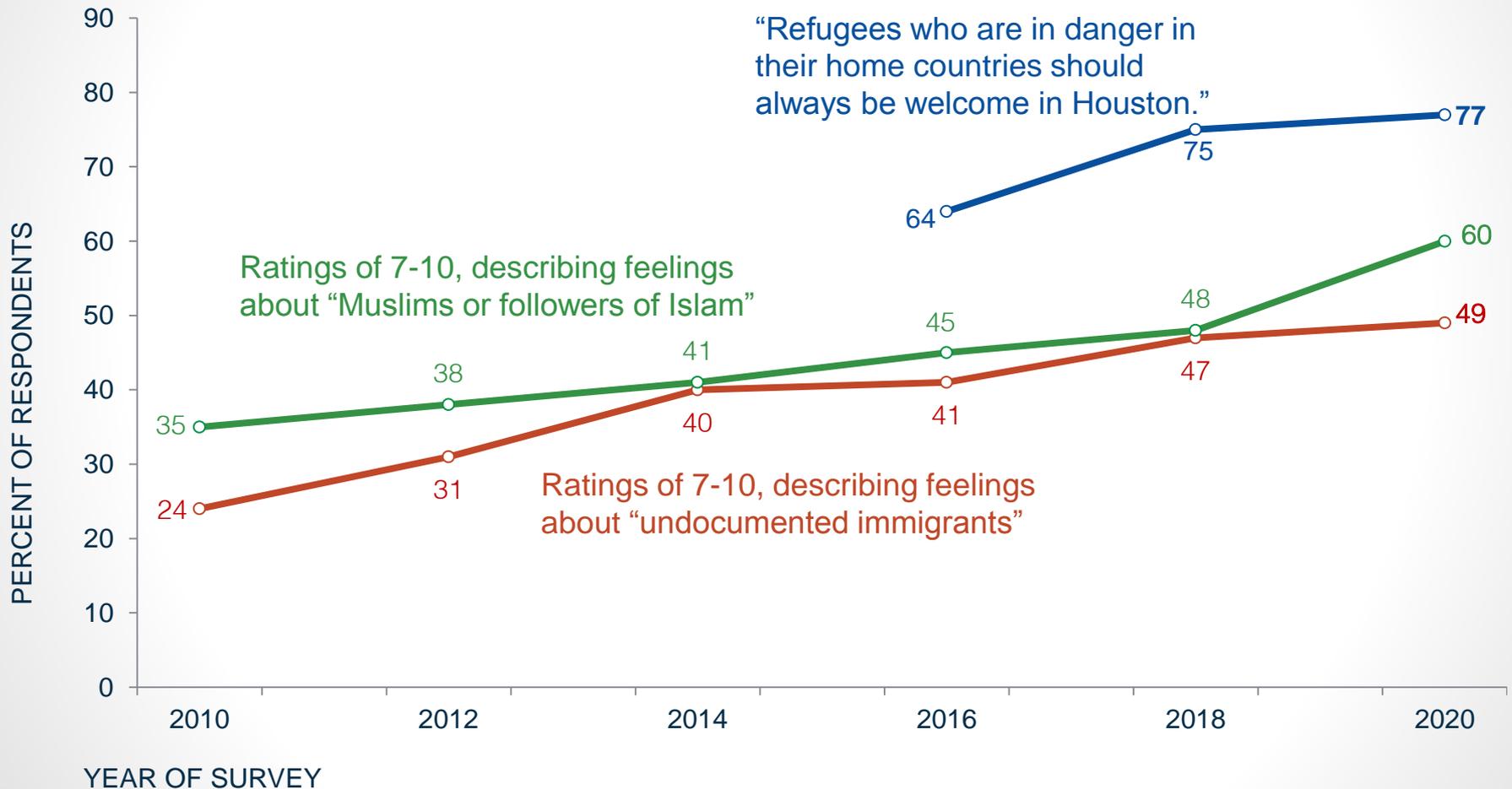
The current population of the United States by age group and ethnicity (ACS, 2013-2017)



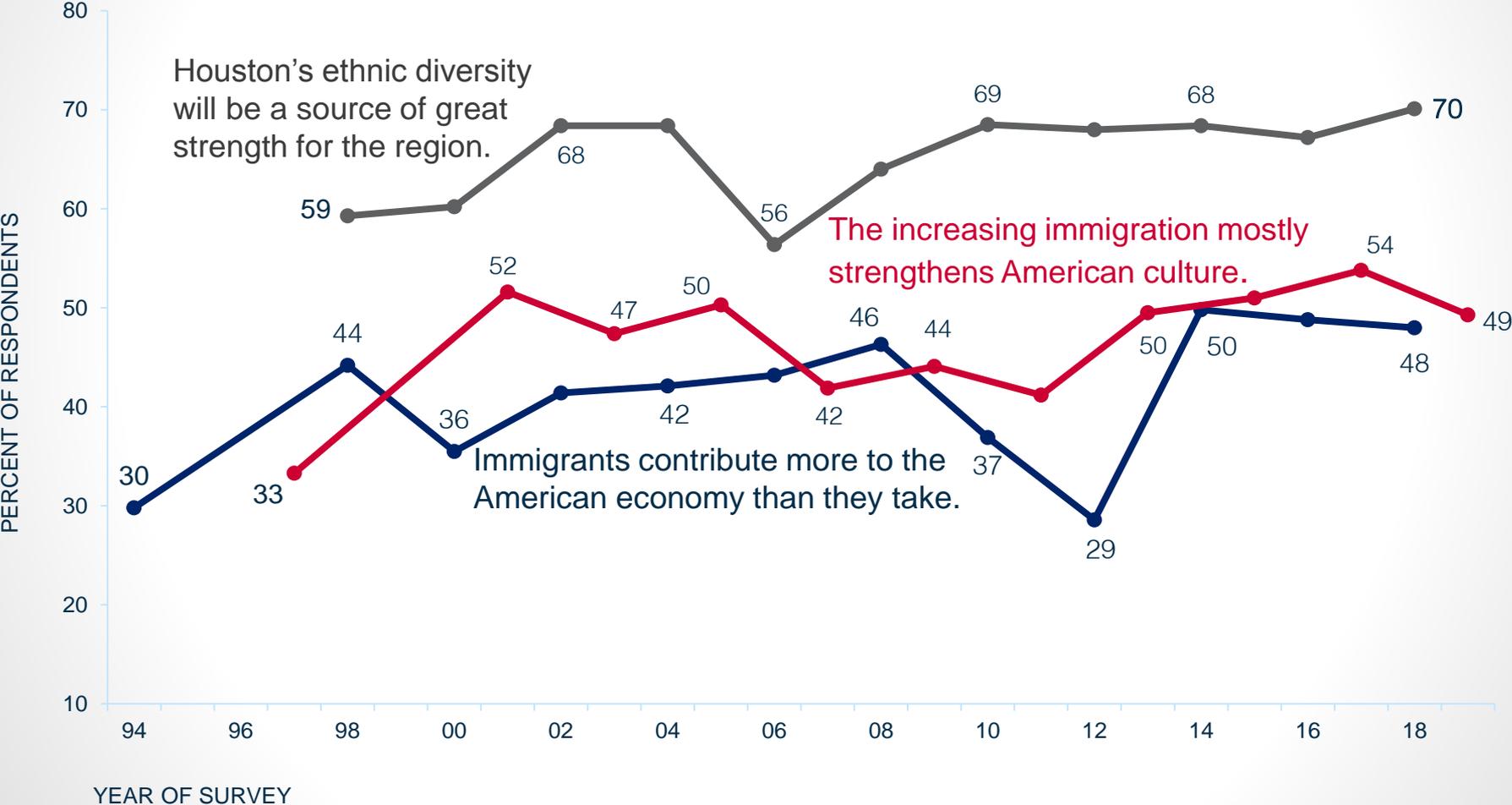
The projected population of U.S. by age group and ethnicity in 2050, assuming no change in immigration



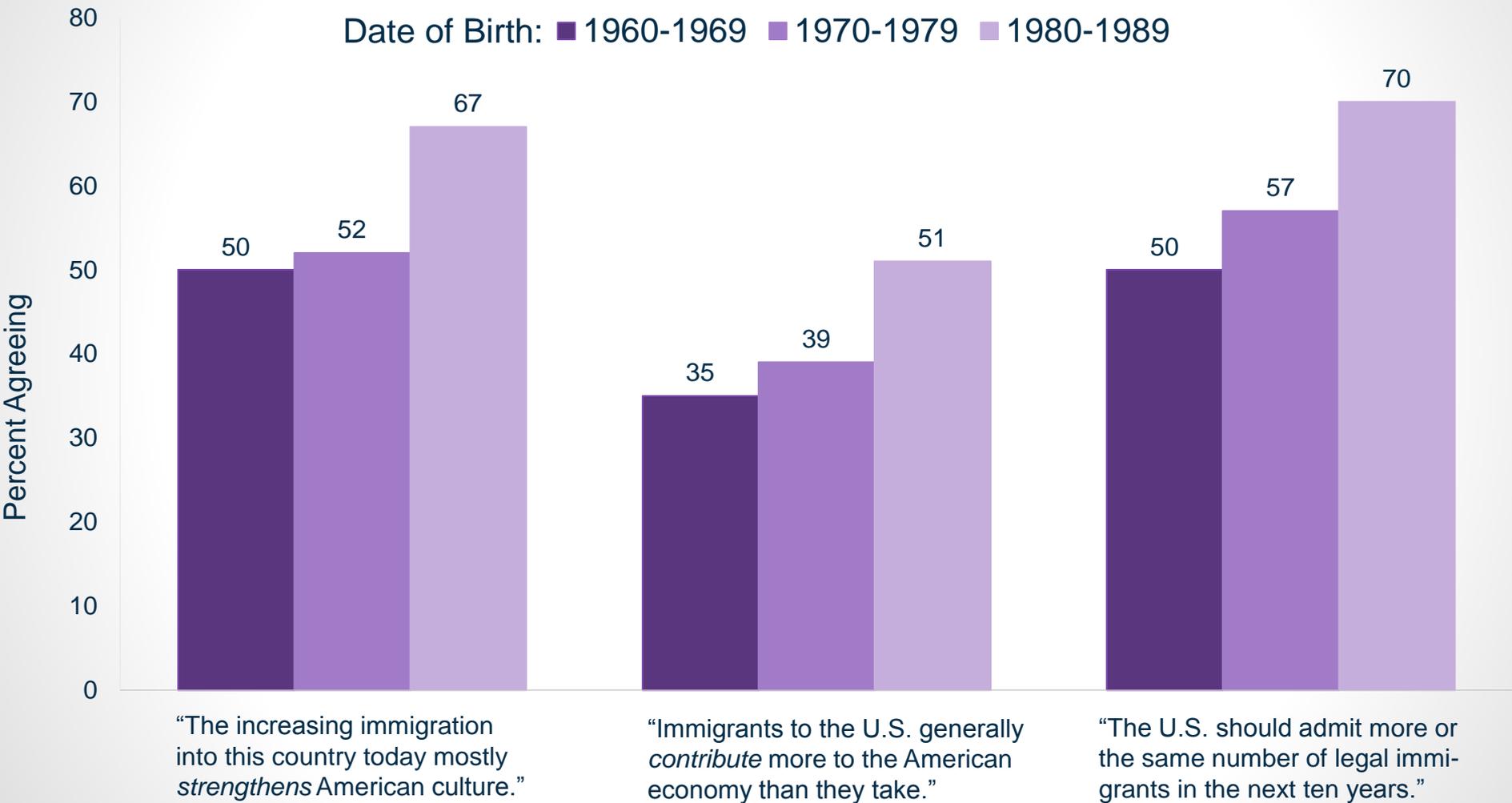
Favorable feelings toward immigrant communities (KHAS, 2010-2020)



Attitudes toward immigrants among U.S.-born Anglos in Harris County (KHAS, 1994-2019)

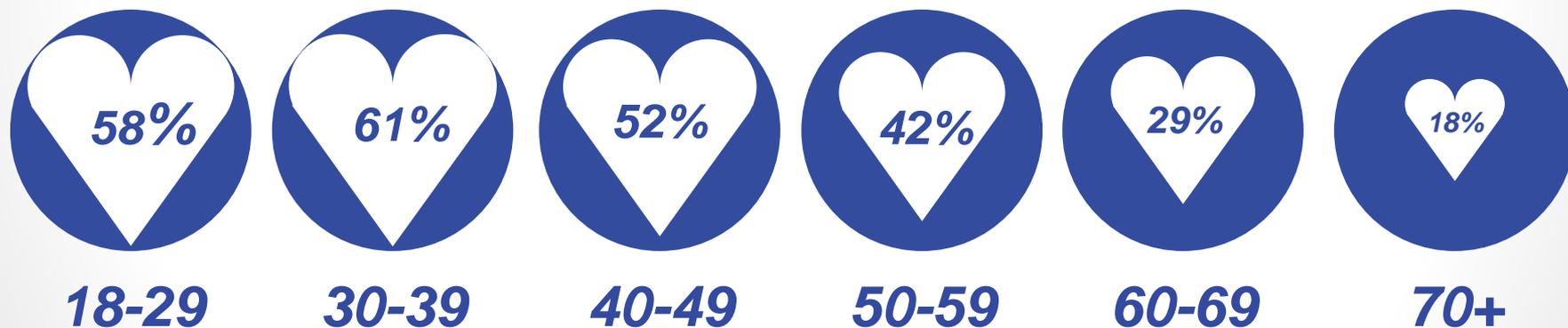


Attitudes toward immigration among three cohorts of Harris County Anglos, all aged 25-35

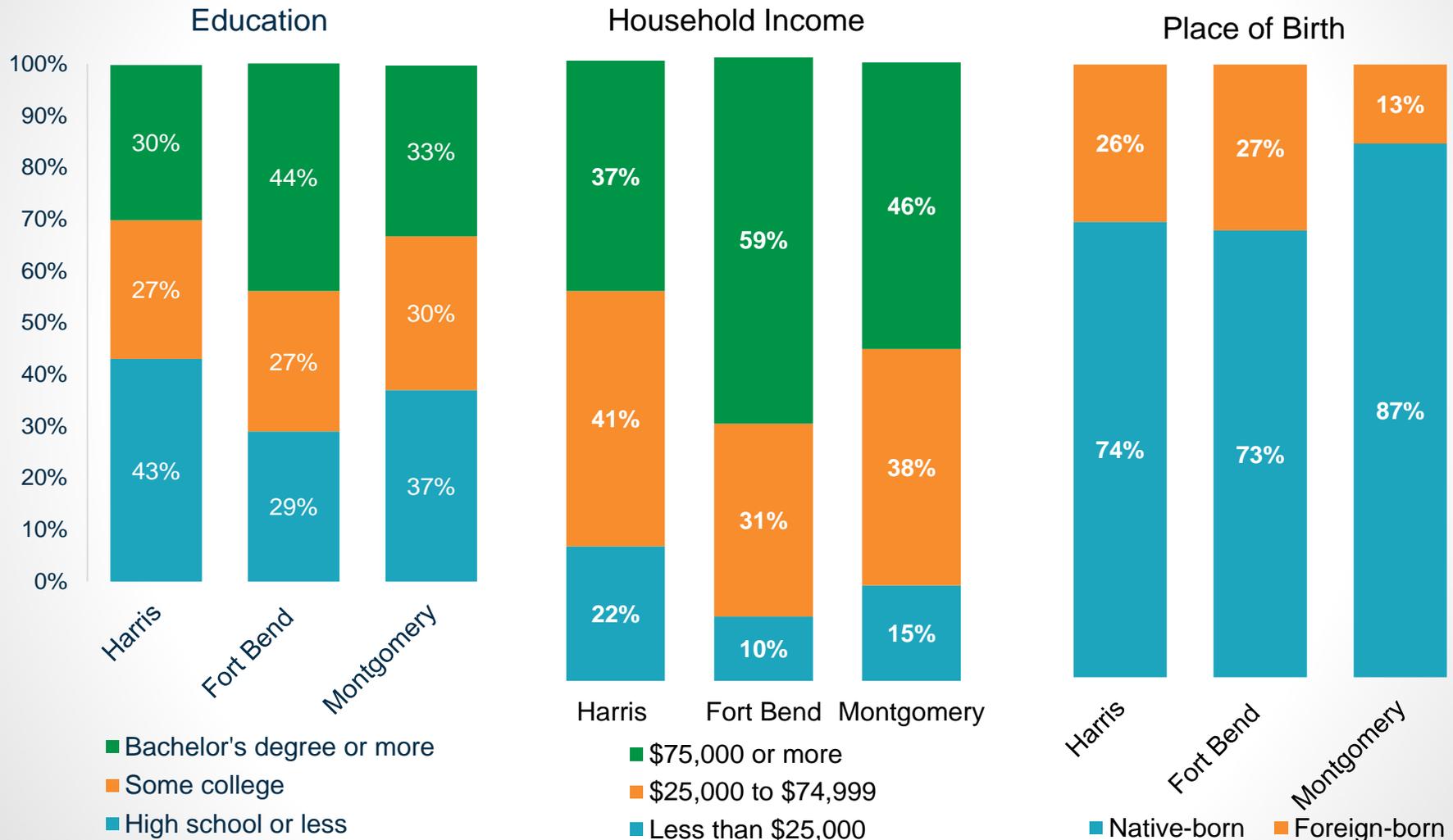


Interethnic romantic relationships by age among Anglos (2007, 2011, 2014, 2016, 2018 combined)

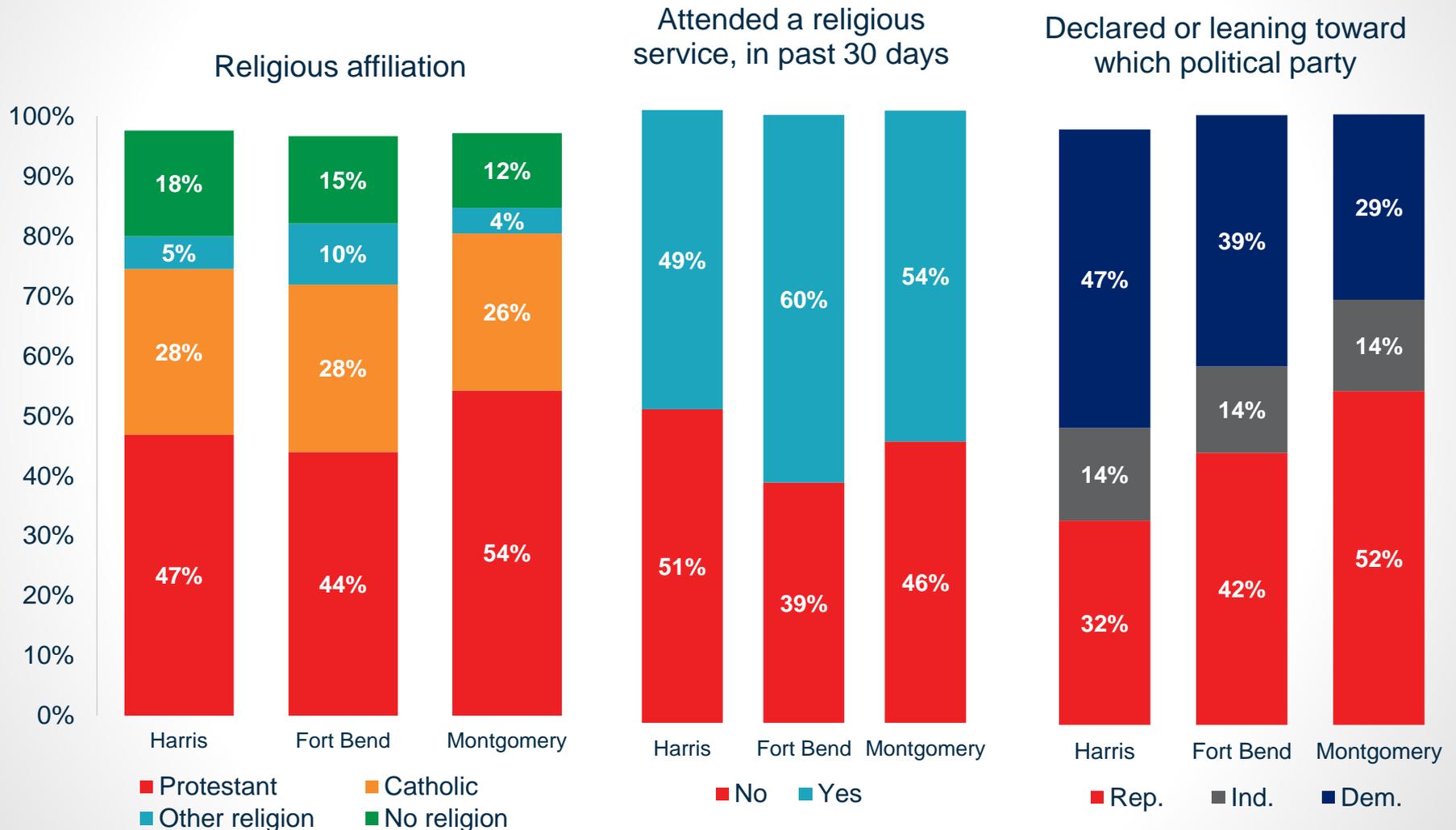
“Have you ever been in a romantic relationship with someone who was not Anglo?”
(Percent saying, “Yes, I have”:))



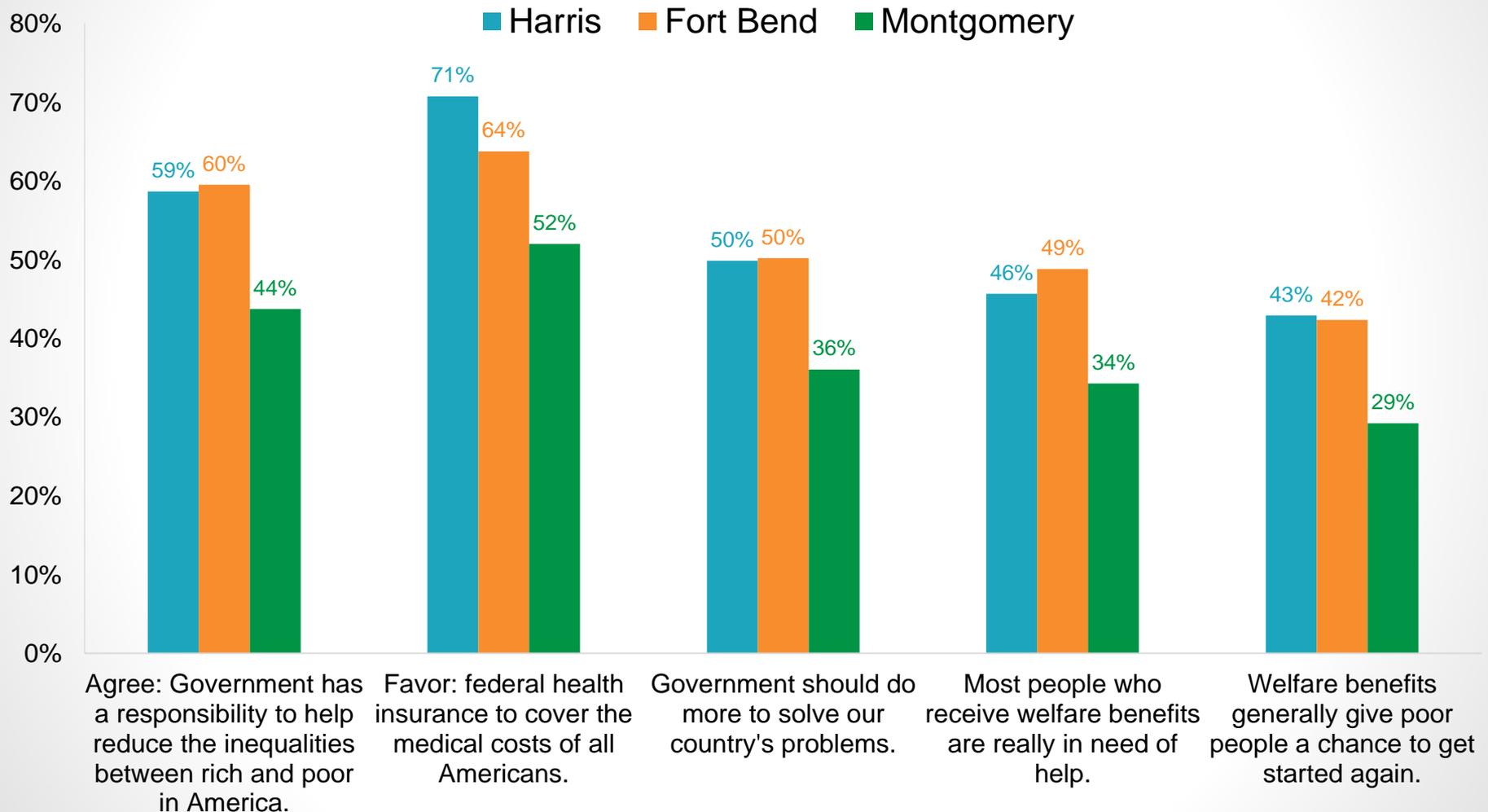
County differences in income, education, and the percent of foreign-born (KHAS, 2015-2018)



County differences in religiosity and party affiliation (KHAS, 2015-2018)

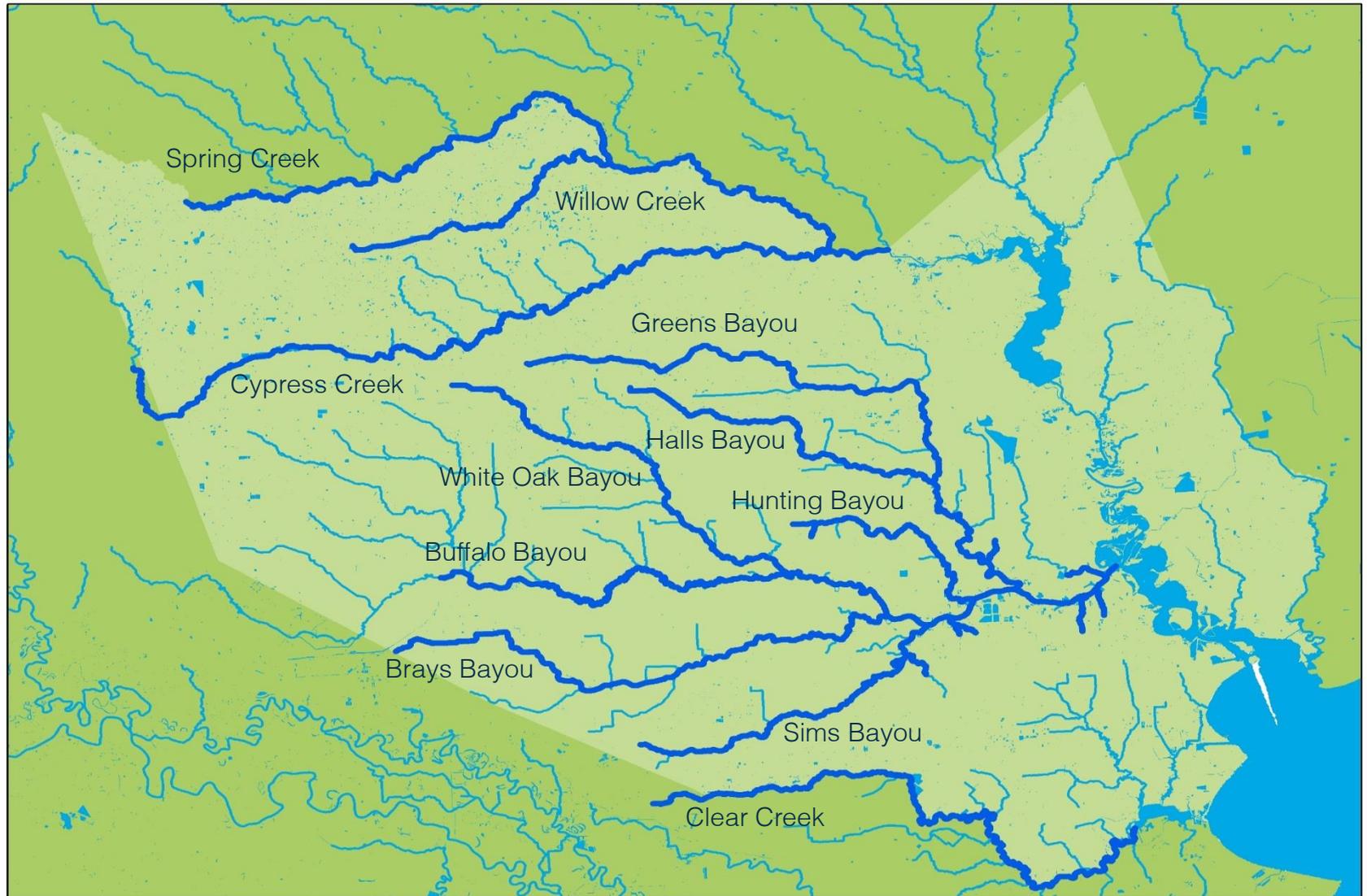


County differences in support for government programs to address the inequalities (2015-2018)

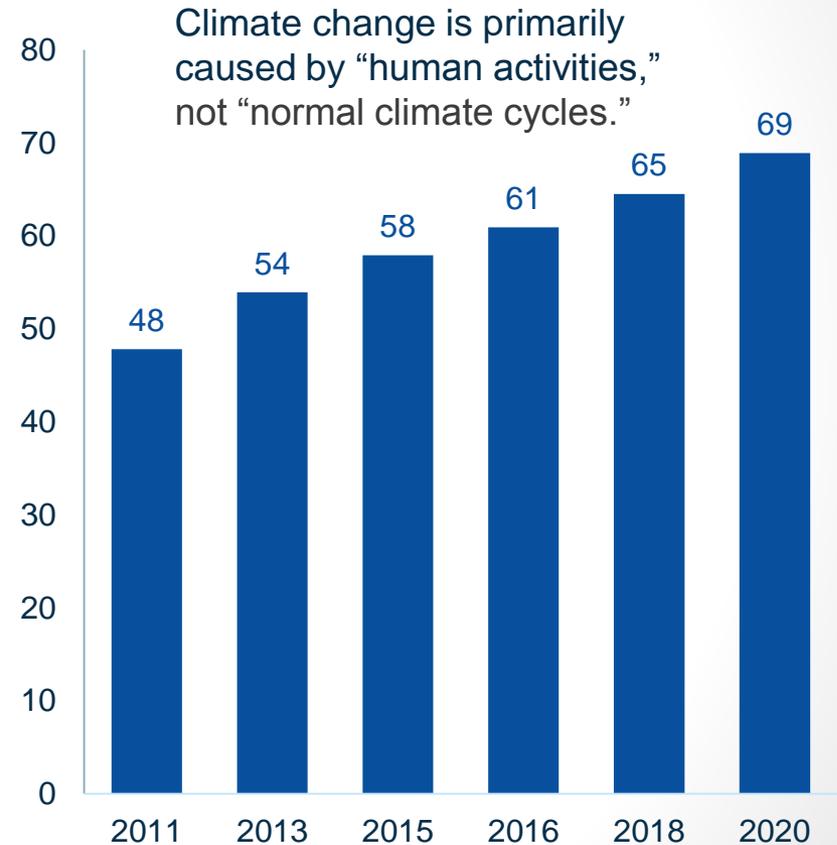
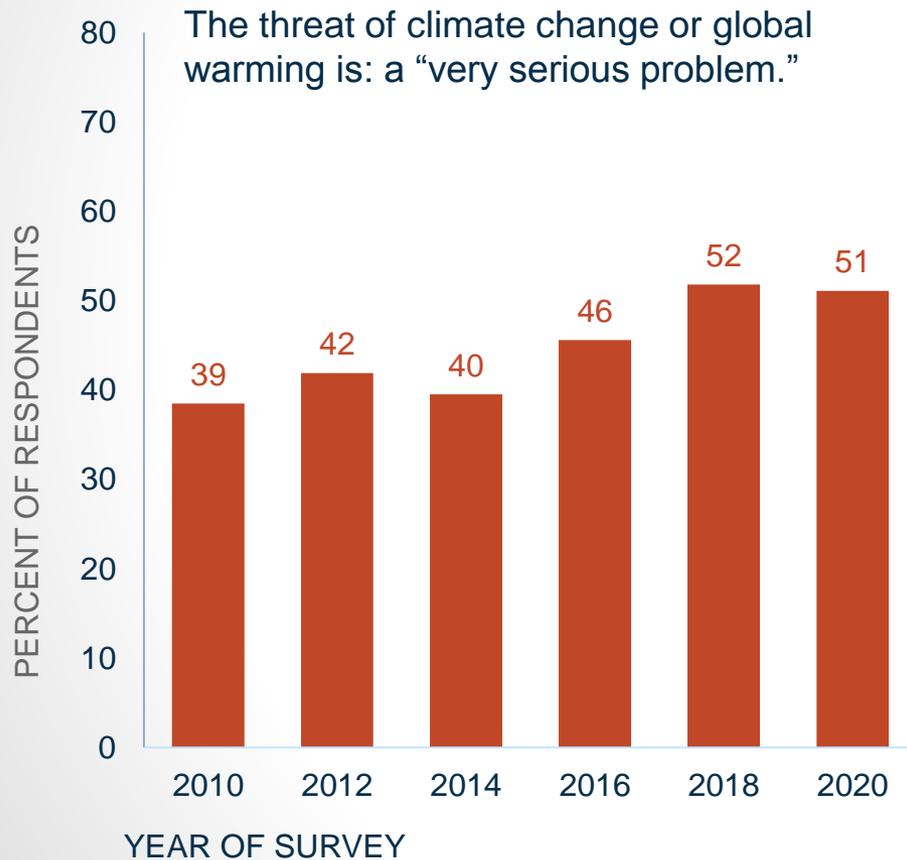




The eleven major bayous of Harris County



Concerns about climate change and the role of human activities (2010-2020)



Houston's urban sprawl

2.2 million
600 sq. mi.

Baltimore

0.6 million
81 sq. mi.

Chicago

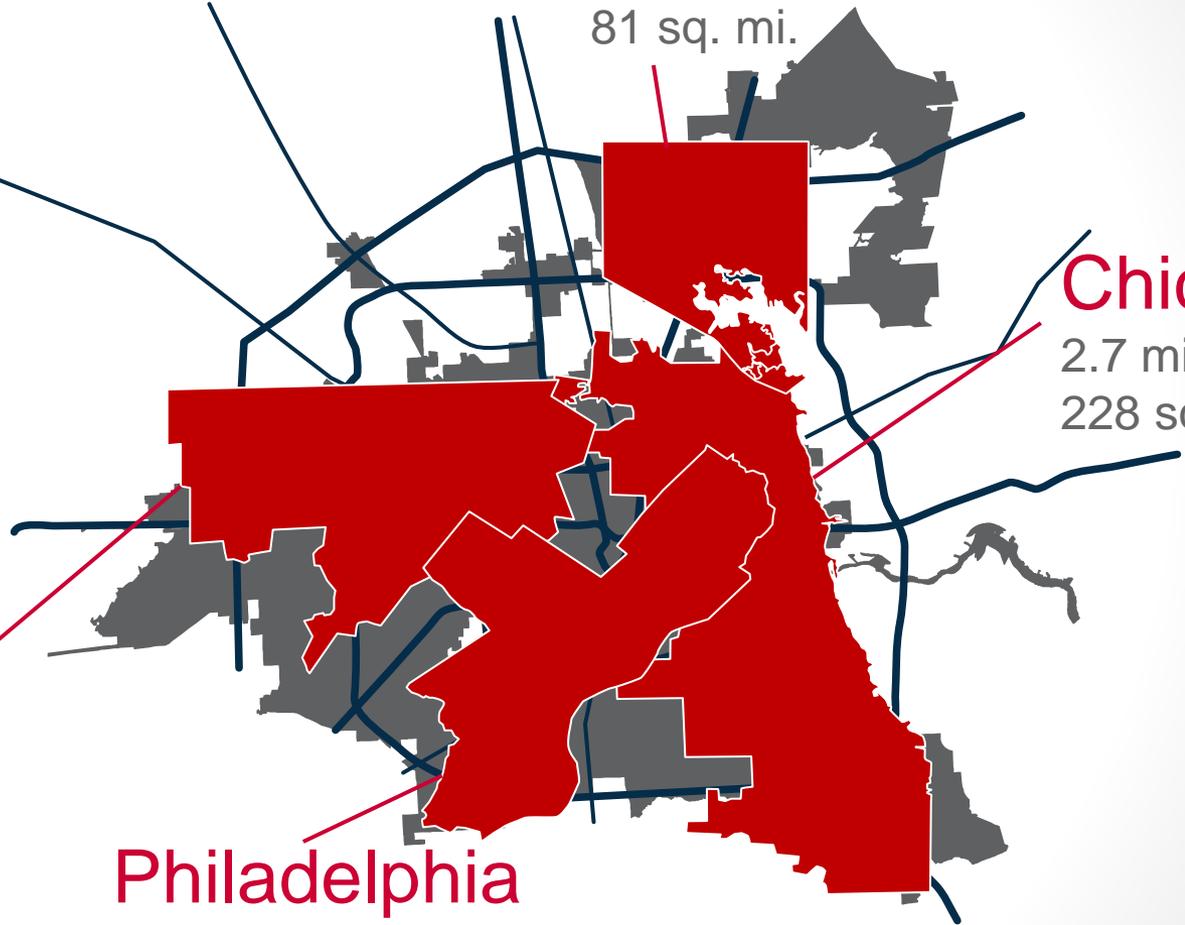
2.7 million
228 sq. mi.

Detroit

0.7 million
139 sq. mi.

Philadelphia

1.6 million
134 sq. mi.



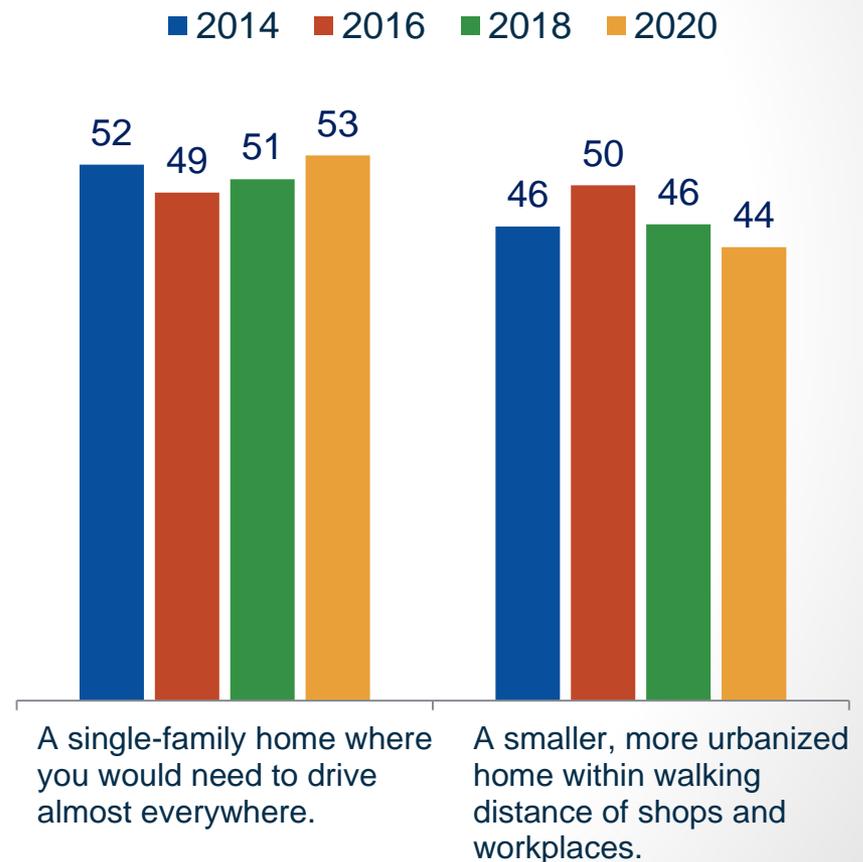
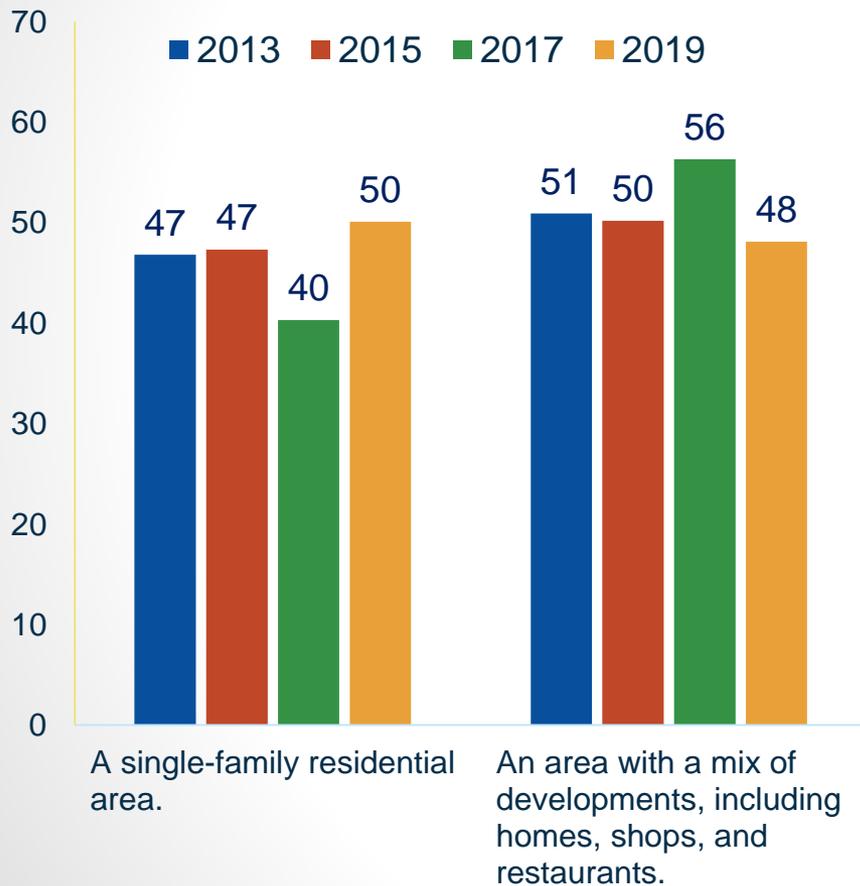
The nine-county Houston metropolitan area

6.5 million
10,072 sq. mi.

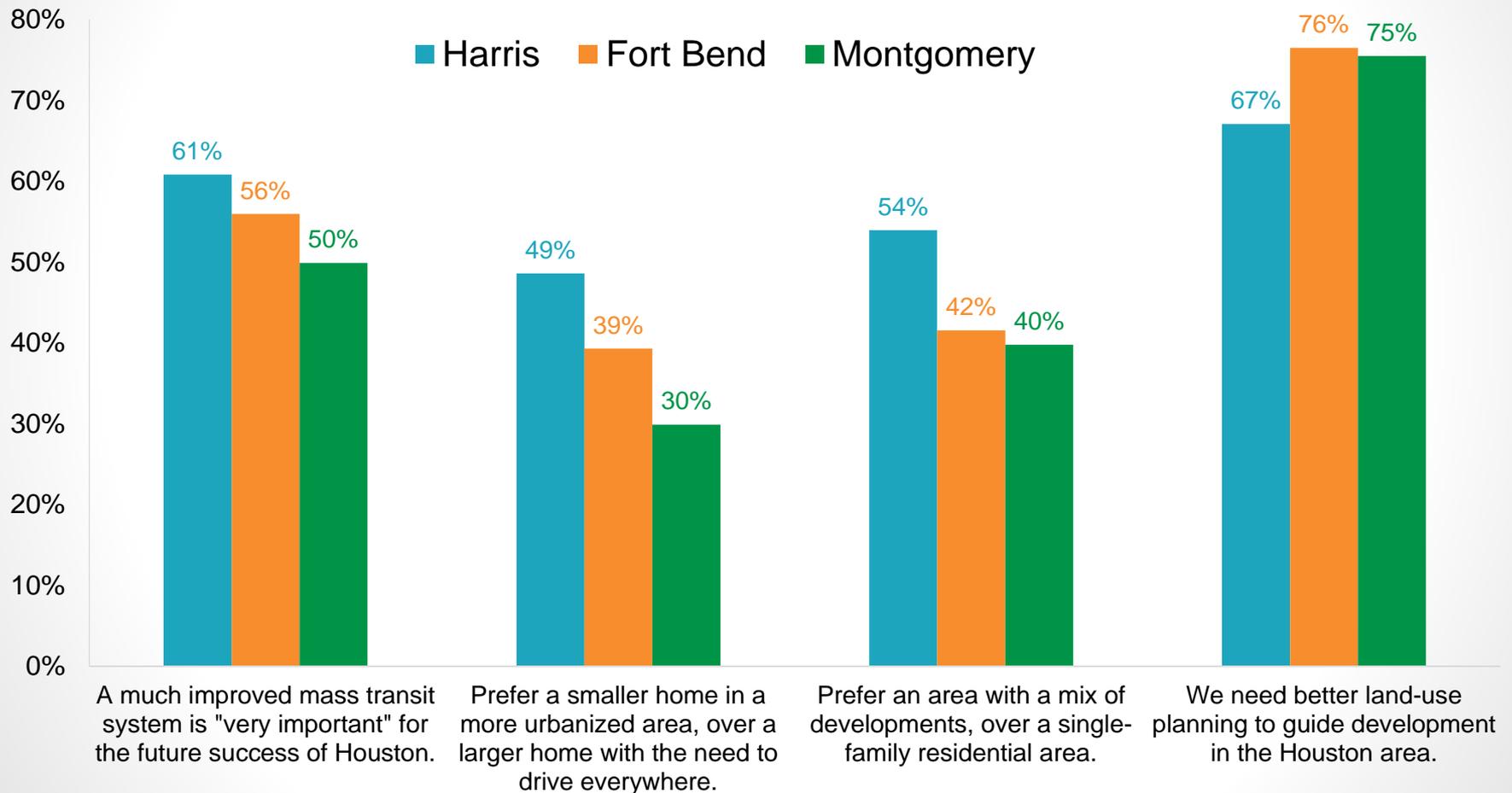
Massachusetts
6.7 million
10,550 sq. mi.

New Jersey
8.9 million
8,729 sq. mi.

The preference for walkable urbanism among Harris County residents (2013-2020)



County differences in the perceived importance of transit, “walkability,” and land-use planning (2015-18)



Concluding Notes (1)

This research has documented significant changes over the years in area residents' responses to the major issues facing the region:

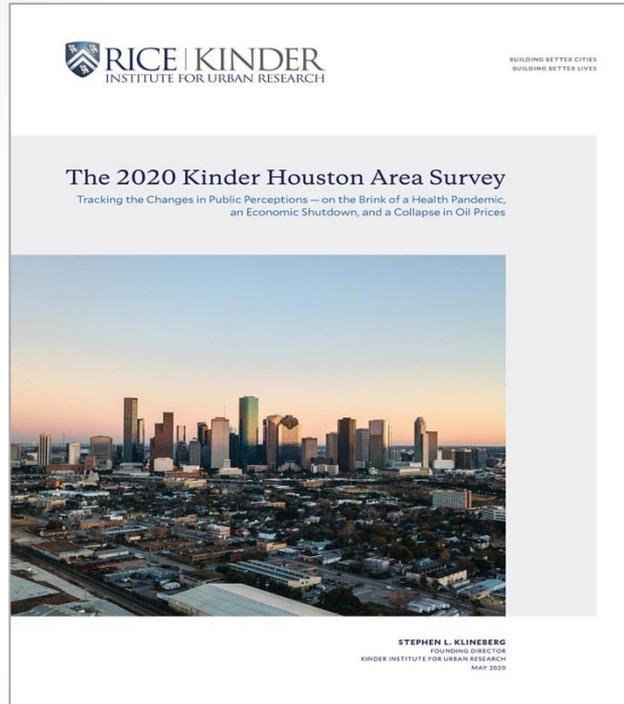
- The survey participants are calling for more investments to improve the public schools and to redress the rising inequalities.
- They are more in support of new initiatives to mitigate future storms and to develop more walkable neighborhoods.
- They are increasingly embracing Houston's diversity and feeling more comfortable with the region's continuing immigration.

Concluding Notes (2)

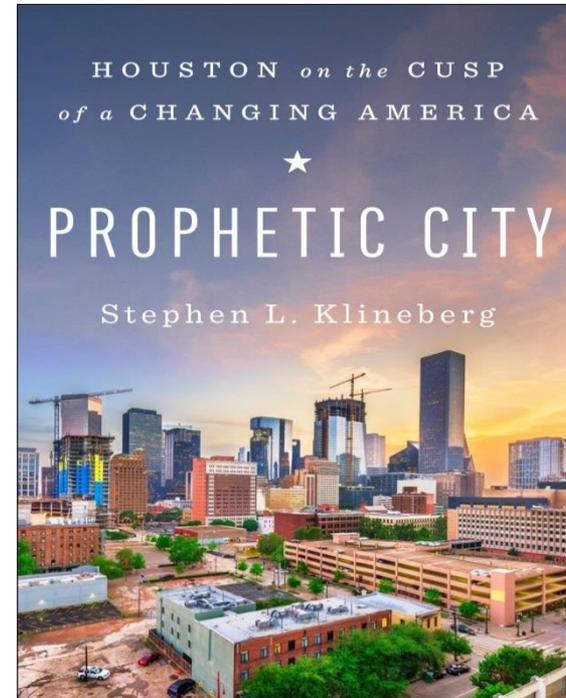
- It remains to be seen whether Houston's business and civic leaders can build on these attitude changes to make the sustained commitments needed for prosperity in the new era of economic, demographic, and technological transformation.
- As the region copes with the “triple whammy” of daunting short-term challenges, it is good to be reminded of the way area residents have changed in their broader concerns and their support for the longer-term investments that will ultimately determine Houston's (and America's) future.

Stay tuned. Thank you very much!

For further information:



To download the 2020 report:
[kinder.rice.edu/
houstonsurvey2020](https://kinder.rice.edu/houstonsurvey2020)



To purchase the new book:
[simonandschuster.com
/books/Prophetic-City](https://simonandschuster.com/books/Prophetic-City)



RICE | KINDER

INSTITUTE FOR URBAN RESEARCH

kinder.rice.edu

www.datahouston.org/khas

kinder@rice.edu

713-348-4132



[/InstituteForUrbanResearch](https://www.facebook.com/InstituteForUrbanResearch)



[@RiceKinderInst](https://twitter.com/RiceKinderInst)