



PEOPLE'S SURVEY REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Two surveys of Georgia residents identify recurring concerns about household energy affordability and substantial interest in programs that could reduce energy costs. In the smaller survey, 76% of respondents answering the relevant question said utility bills had become harder to afford over the previous year. In the larger survey, 60% of the 414 respondents answering the utility-experience question reported high electricity costs.

Respondents also expressed considerable interest in energy-efficiency and affordability programs. Nearly nine in ten respondents to the smaller survey's question supported expanding low-income efficiency programs. In the larger survey, roughly seven in ten respondents to relevant questions expressed interest in government energy incentives, utility discounts, appliance rebates and community solar, while discounted rates were the most frequently selected utility action for advancing energy equity.

The PSC is viewed as consequential, but respondents' knowledge and perceptions of the institution are uneven. Most respondents to the smaller survey recognized several major PSC responsibilities and viewed the Commission as having substantial influence over utility bills, although only about half correctly identified commissioners as elected officials. In the larger survey, respondents were divided over whether the PSC prioritizes the public, responds to citizen concerns or keeps people informed; 63% of the 424 respondents to the PSC perception questions agreed that the Commission prioritizes the interests of regulated companies.

Both surveys also indicate substantial interest in cleaner and renewable energy. Nearly 87% of respondents answering the smaller survey's transition question supported reaching 100% clean energy, although preferred timing varied. In the larger survey, the median desired renewable-energy share among 420 respondents was 75%, and 91% selected a transition period of 15 years or less.

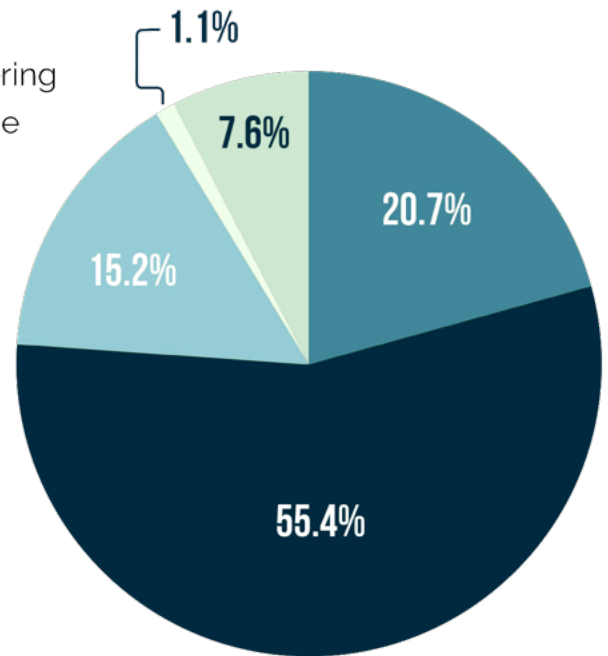
The findings should be interpreted as the views of survey participants rather than estimates of all Georgia residents. The surveys reached notably different populations and demographics: the smaller survey was heavily composed of adults 65 and older, while a majority of respondents answering the larger survey's age question were between 26 and 41. The recurrence of several themes across those different samples is therefore noteworthy, but the results should not be pooled into a single statewide percentage.

1

ENERGY AFFORDABILITY IS ONE OF THE **CLEAREST** RECURRING THEMES

In the smaller survey, **76.1%** of the 92 respondents answering the affordability question said their utility bills had become harder to afford during the previous year:

- Much more difficult - **20.7%**
- Somewhat more difficult - **55.4%**
- No change - **15.2%**
- Easier - **1.1%**
- Unsure - **7.6%**



The larger survey measures affordability differently.

Among the 414 respondents who answered the utility-experience question, 247 (59.7%) reported experiencing high electricity costs.

SYNTHESIS: Energy affordability emerged as a recurring concern across both surveys. More than three-quarters of respondents answering the smaller survey's affordability question reported that utility bills had become harder to afford, while roughly six in ten respondents answering the larger survey's utility-experience question reported high electricity costs.

2

RESPONDENTS ALSO EXPRESSED SUBSTANTIAL INTEREST IN SOLUTIONS THAT COULD REDUCE HOUSEHOLD ENERGY COSTS

This is another area where the two surveys reinforce each other.

In the smaller survey, **88.5%** of 104 respondents supported requiring energy providers to expand programs that help low-income households obtain energy-efficiency upgrades such as insulation, efficient appliances, and smart thermostats.

In the larger survey, **404 people answered the benefits/programs question**. Interest included:

Government rebates/tax credits/incentives	73.5%
Utility-provider discounts/programs	72.3%
Community solar	71.8%
Energy-efficient appliance rebates	71.5%
Residential solar	63.1%
Community wind	56.4%
Residential wind	52.5%

The energy-equity question (#37) gives us even more detail. Among **414 respondents**, the most frequently selected actions utilities could take were:

- 61.4%** - subsidies or discounted rates for low-income households
- 51.9%** - expand renewable-energy access in underserved communities
- 47.6%** - financing for efficiency upgrades
- 46.9%** - better transparency/communication with vulnerable communities
- 43.5%** - partnerships with community organizations

Respondents could choose up to three. The survey defines the question around ensuring access to both affordable and clean energy.

SYNTHESIS: Concern about energy affordability is accompanied by substantial interest in concrete cost-saving measures. Across the two surveys, respondents expressed support or interest in efficiency assistance, utility discounts, rebates, financing, and other programs intended to reduce household energy costs.

3

THE PSC IS VIEWED AS CONSEQUENTIAL, WHILE UNDERSTANDING AND PERCEPTIONS OF IT ARE UNEVEN

SMALLER SURVEY: PSC KNOWLEDGE

Among the 100 respondents answering the PSC-responsibilities question:

82% identified approving utility plans, including new power plants

70% identified protecting consumers from unfair utility practices

69% identified setting electricity rates

46% identified regulating phone and gas services

16% incorrectly selected maintaining roads and bridges

16% said they were unsure



Knowledge about commissioner selection was weaker. **Among 96 respondents:**

54.2% correctly said commissioners are elected

35.4% said they didn't know

10.4% thought they were appointed by the governor

Among 110 respondents, 70.9% rated its influence over their monthly utility bill a 4 or 5 on a five-point scale. Nearly half - 48.2% - selected the maximum score of 5.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★
70.9%

★ ★ ★ ★ ★
48.2%

That creates an interesting finding: People may understand that the PSC matters financially without necessarily having complete knowledge of how the institution works.

LARGER SURVEY: PSC PERCEPTIONS

The larger survey lets us explore what respondents think about the Commission rather than testing factual knowledge. Each of these items received **424 responses**:

PSC PERCEPTION	AGREE / STRONGLY AGREE	DISAGREE / STRONGLY DISAGREE	UNSURE
Addresses citizens' problems and concerns	44.1%	39.2%	14.2%
Takes an independent stance from regulated companies	43.6%	36.1%	17.7%
Keeps me informed about decisions affecting me	42.7%	41.0%	14.4%
Prioritizes interests of the public	41.3%	42.2%	13.4%
Prioritizes my interests	38.9%	42.2%	15.1%
Cares what people like me think	41.3%	40.6%	13.7%
Prioritizes interests of regulated companies	63.4%	19.1%	13.2%

The strongest of these perceptions is therefore about regulated companies:

269 of 424 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the PSC prioritizes the interests of the companies it regulates. That should be reported explicitly as a **respondent perception**, rather than as a conclusion about the Commission itself.

The related Question 17 had 433 responses regarding whether PSC decisions match the respondent's interests or views:

 **30.5%** yes
  **25.6%** unsure
 **36.7%** no
  **7.2%** prefer not to say

The questionnaire explicitly frames these questions as attempts to understand whether respondents feel informed about PSC decisions and their impacts.

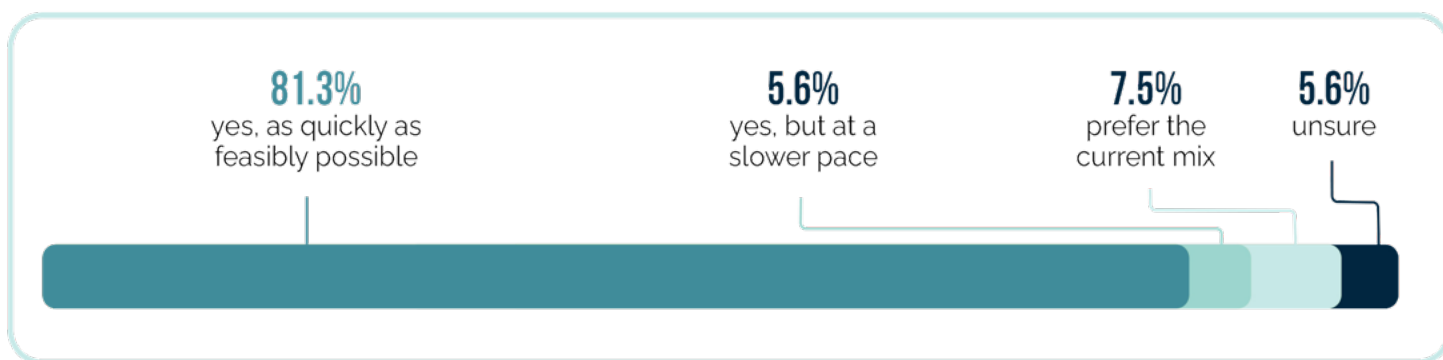
SYNTHESIS: Respondents see the PSC as consequential, but both knowledge and perceptions of the institution are uneven. The smaller survey shows substantial recognition of several PSC responsibilities and strong perceived influence over utility bills, alongside gaps in understanding how commissioners are selected. The larger survey shows divided views of PSC responsiveness, independence and public orientation, while nearly two-thirds of respondents agreed that the Commission prioritizes the interests of regulated companies.

4

BOTH SURVEYS INDICATE SUBSTANTIAL INTEREST IN CLEANER AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

The smaller survey asks about a transition to 100% clean energy by 2050.

Among 107 respondents:



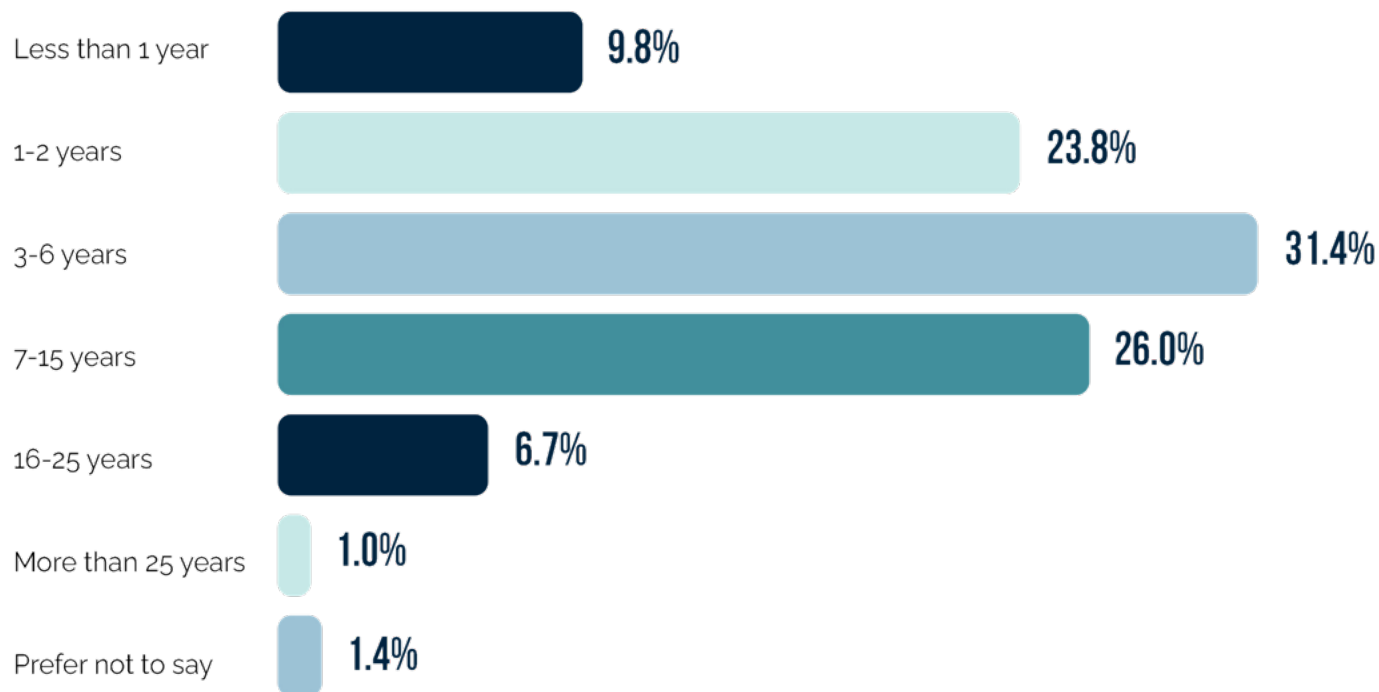
So **86.9%** supported reaching 100% clean energy, although respondents differed on timing. The larger survey asks a somewhat different question: respondents specify what percentage of their own energy they would want to come from renewable sources.

Among 420 respondents:

75% Median desired renewable share
73% Mean

45.2% Selected **80%** or more
21.9% Selected exactly **100%**

The following question asks when they would like that transition to occur. **Among 420 responses:**



Thus **91% of all respondents to the question selected a timeline of 15 years or less.**

The questionnaire intentionally pairs desired renewable share with desired transition timing.

SYNTHESIS: Both surveys indicate substantial interest in increasing clean and renewable energy, although they measure that preference differently. The smaller survey found broad support among respondents for reaching 100% clean energy by 2050, while respondents in the larger survey selected a median desired renewable share of 75% and generally favored transition timelines of 15 years or less.

5

RESPONDENTS OFTEN ASSOCIATED CLEAN ENERGY WITH ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

The smaller survey directly asks about jobs. **Among 90 respondents:**

63.3% | said clean-energy expansion would definitely create more jobs

21.1% | said probably



84.4%

expected expanding solar, wind and battery-storage industries to create more Georgia job opportunities

The larger survey approaches the issue using forced choices. **Among 397 respondents:**

Solar-energy jobs vs. gas-pipeline jobs

Solar-energy jobs: **75.1%**
Gas-pipeline jobs: **19.9%**
Prefer not to say: **5.0%**

Community-owned vs. corporate-led energy projects

Community-owned projects: **70.5%**
Corporate-led projects: **25.4%**
Prefer not to say: **4.0%**

Solar land use vs. nuclear plants

Solar/large-scale solar farms: **64.0%**
Nuclear plants: **30.5%**
Prefer not to say: **5.5%**

Incentives for current Georgia residents vs. businesses coming to Georgia

Current Georgia residents: **67.5%**
Businesses coming to Georgia: **30.0%**
Prefer not to say: **2.5%**

These questions were explicitly designed as paired choices where respondents could select only one.

SYNTHESIS: Respondents frequently connected clean energy with economic opportunity. Most respondents answering the smaller survey expected clean-energy expansion to create Georgia jobs, while the larger survey's paired-choice questions showed substantially more respondents choosing solar-energy jobs than gas-pipeline jobs.

6

CLIMATE AND POLLUTION CONCERNS RECUR ACROSS THE TWO SURVEYS

In the smaller survey, among **89 respondents** answering the climate-concern question:

77.5% | very concerned

7.9% | somewhat concerned



85.4%

concerned about climate change's impact on Georgia communities

On pollution, **88.2%** of the **102 respondents** answering the question said it was very important for Georgia leaders to reduce pollution from coal and gas plants. Another **2.9%** said **somewhat important**.

The larger survey asks climate questions in considerably more detail, including extreme weather, biodiversity, coastal flooding, health, future generations, and environmental impacts.

The general urgency question received **422 responses**:

53.1% extremely urgent

28.2% moderately urgent

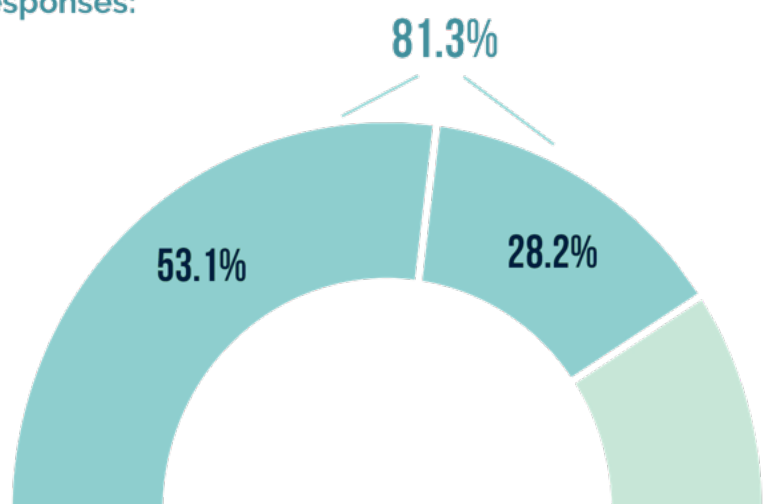
10.2% slightly urgent

3.8% not urgent at all

3.3% unsure

1.4% prefer not to say

So: **81.3%** characterized climate action as **extremely or moderately urgent**.

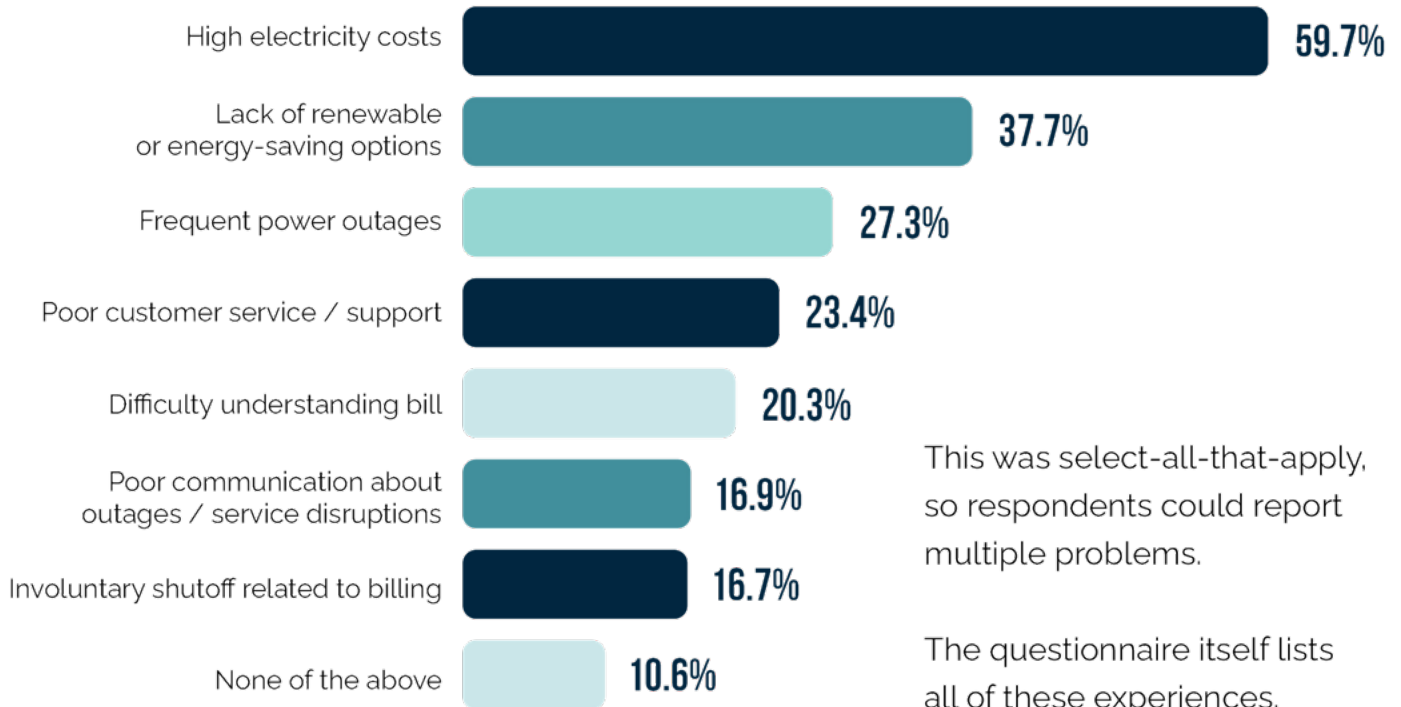


SYNTHESIS: Concern about climate and pollution appears in both surveys. More than eight in ten respondents to the relevant questions in each survey expressed substantial concern or urgency, although the questions used different measures.

7

THE LARGER SURVEY SHOWS THAT UTILITY PROBLEMS EXTEND BEYOND AFFORDABILITY

This is one of the areas where **the larger GCV survey enriches the smaller poll**. Among the **414 respondents** answering Question 35:



SYNTHESIS: Affordability is the most frequently reported utility challenge, but it is not the only one. Respondents also reported challenges related to reliability, customer service, bill comprehension, communication and access to efficiency or renewable-energy programs.

8

LARGER SURVEY ASKS AWARENESS OF DATA CENTERS, BUT NOT OPINIONS

The larger survey asks respondents: How familiar are you with "Data centers within Georgia"?

Among 418 respondents:



35.9%
very familiar



41.6%
somewhat familiar



18.4%
not familiar



4.1%
prefer not to say

So: **77.5%** reported at least some familiarity with data centers in Georgia.

But we cannot infer from this question whether they:

- Support data-center development
- Oppose it
- Believe it raises rates
- Think data centers should bear infrastructure costs, or want the PSC to handle them differently.

This survey establishes awareness, but additional polling would be needed to establish attitudes about specific data-center policies.

9

THE DIFFERENT DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES OF THE SURVEYS ARE CRUCIAL TO INTERPRETATION

The smaller survey and larger GCV survey reached **very different populations**.

SMALLER SURVEY

Among those answering the age question:

72.0% were 65+

Race/ethnicity:

75.2% White

10.1% Black/African American

Its geography also leans fairly heavily toward several larger counties:

17.1% - DeKalb

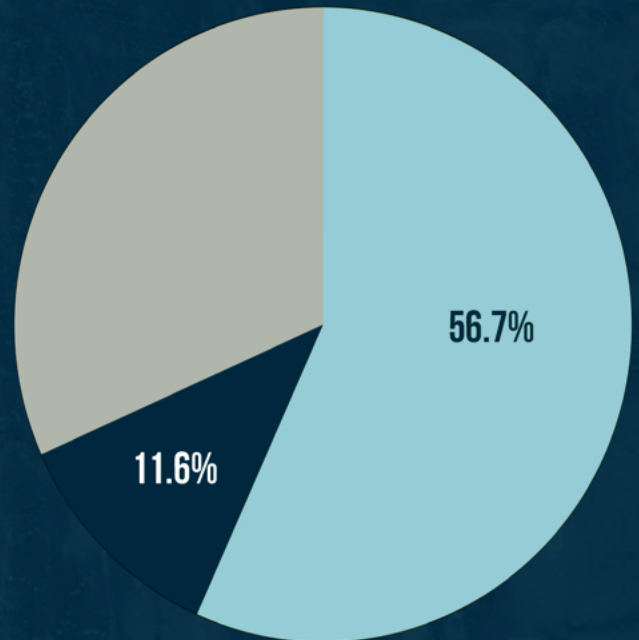
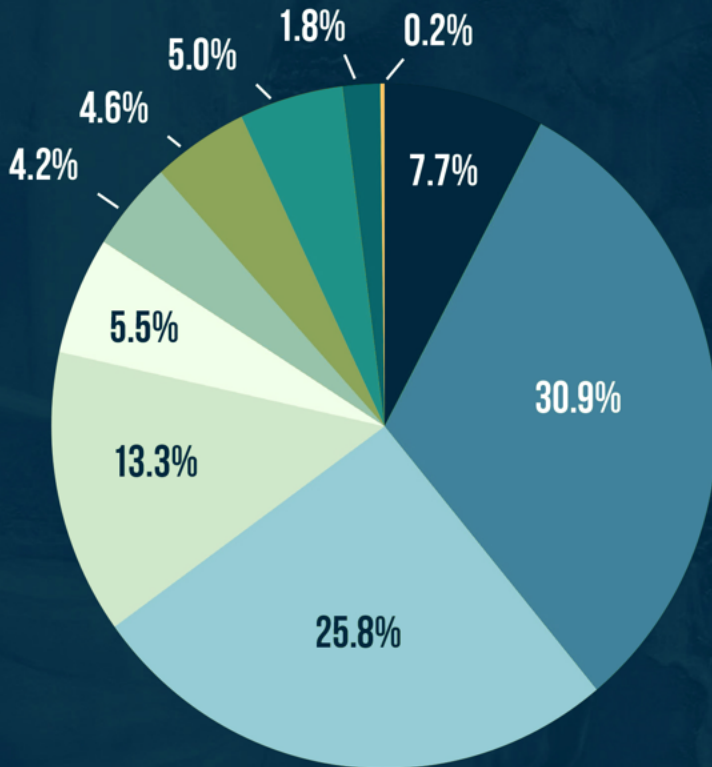
15.4% - Fulton

10.3% - Chatham

7.7% - Gwinnett

LARGER SURVEY

Using everyone who answered the age question, N=457:



So 56.7% were ages 26–41, while about 11.6% were 65+.

Among the **457 respondents** supplying a race response:

54.5% selected White

30.9% selected African descent/Black

The larger survey allowed respondents to select multiple racial identities, so those categories should not be interpreted as mutually exclusive.

This matters analytically because the convergence across the surveys becomes interesting precisely because the respondent groups are so different.

SYNTHESIS: Although the two surveys reached substantially different respondent populations, several themes recur across both, including affordability, energy-efficiency assistance, clean-energy interest, and concern about climate and pollution.