

uality of Life 7 Survey 2023/24

7 March 2025

Stats SA Data for Human Rights – Understanding Human Rights through Data

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The Gauteng City-Region Observatory (GCRO)

Who we are and what we do

- **GCRO helps to build the knowledge base** that government, business, labour, civil society and residents all need to shape appropriate strategies that will advance a competitive, integrated, sustainable and inclusive Gauteng City-Region.
- **GCRO is an institutional collaboration** between:
 - University of Johannesburg (UJ),
 - University of the Witwatersrand (Wits),
 - Gauteng Provincial Government, and
 - Organised local government in Gauteng
- A purpose-designed vehicle for **policy-oriented research**.



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Overview of the Quality of Life Survey 7 (2023/24)



Overview of QoL 7 (2023/24)

What is the GCRO's Quality of Life Survey?

**One of South Africa's
largest and longest-
running social surveys**

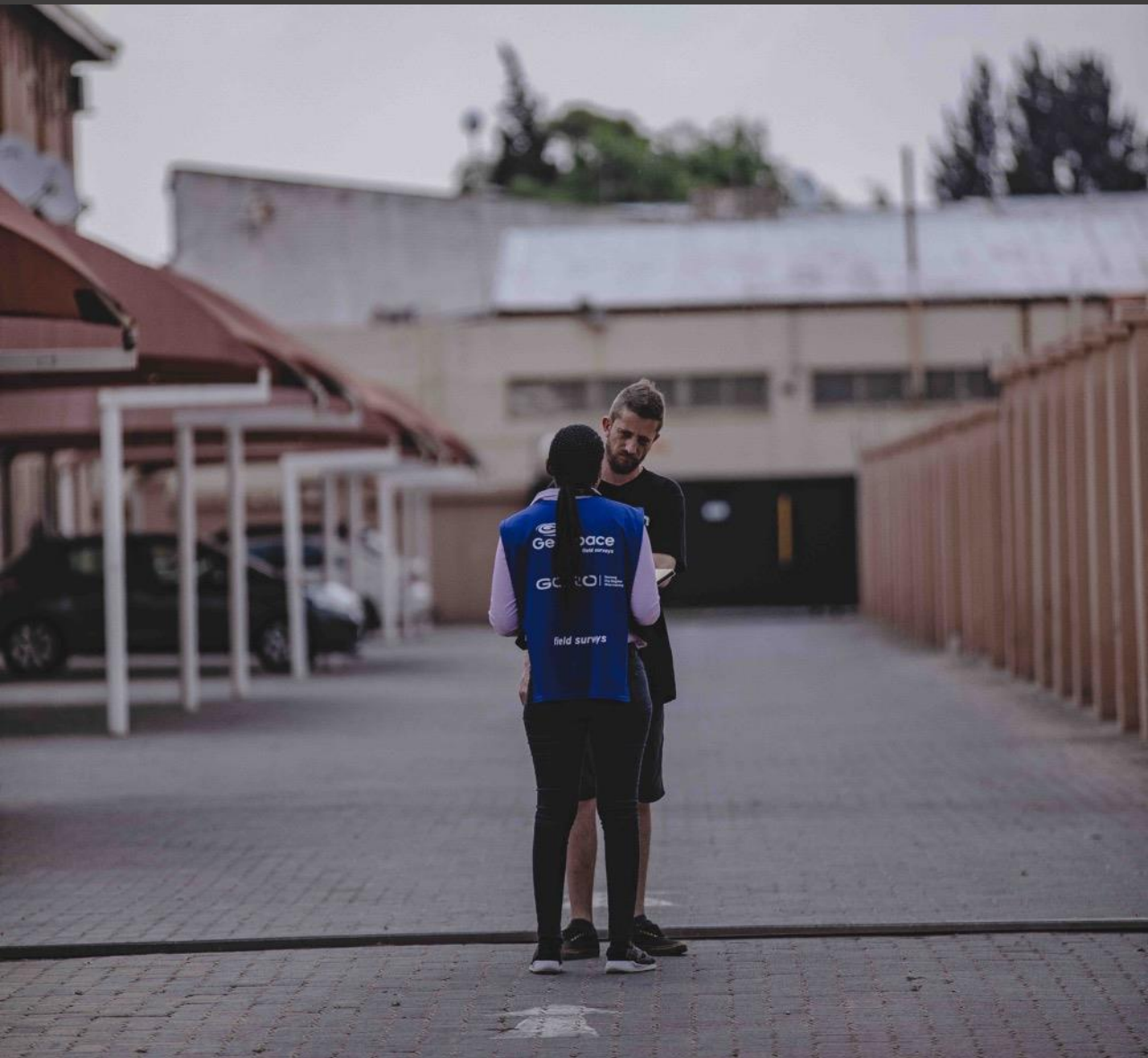
(2009, 2011, 2013/14, 2015/16, 2017/18, 2020/21, 2023/24)

**Randomly sampled adults
are interviewed at their
homes**



Overview of QoL 7 (2023/24)

What is the GCRO's Quality of Life Survey?



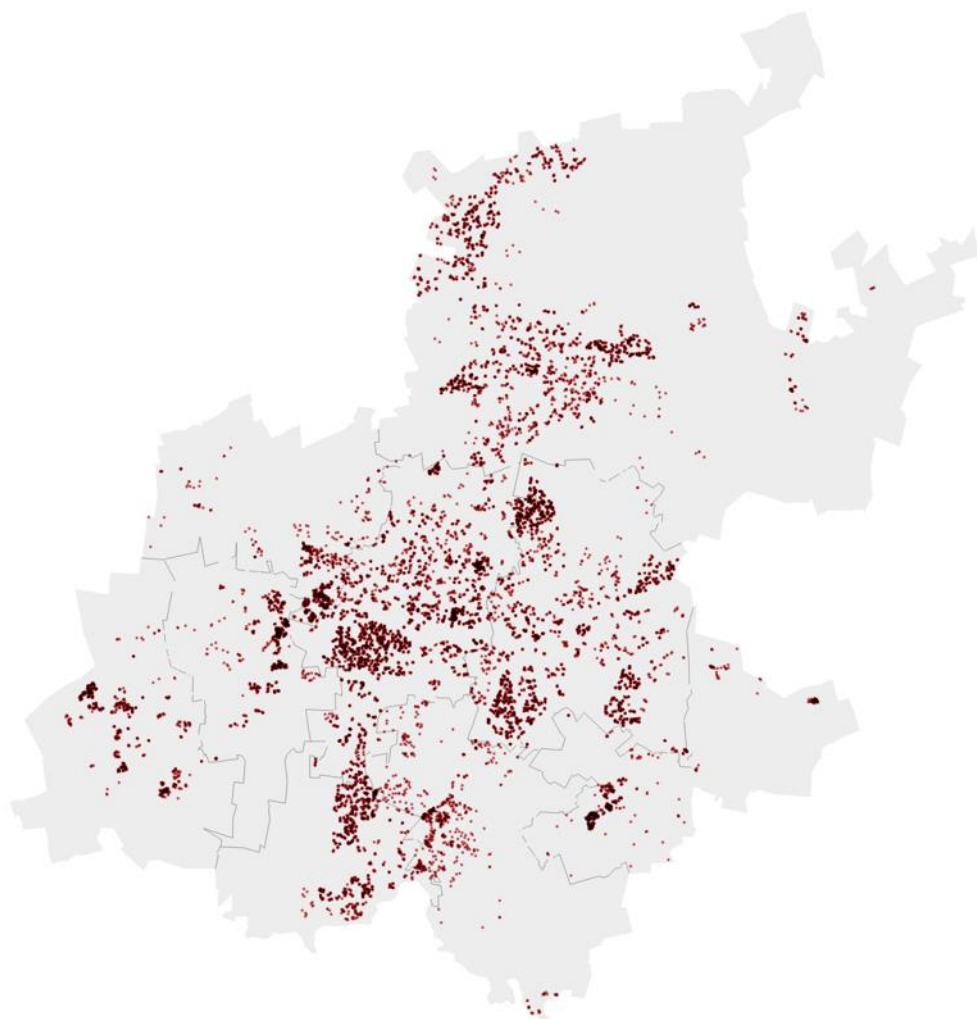
Data is representative at ward, municipal and provincial levels

Data can be mapped in many ways, and is comparable over time

Overview of QoL 7 (2023/24)

Number of interviews

QoL 7 (2023/24): All interview points



13 795
respondents

600
or more interviews per municipality (lowest
was Lesedi at 625)

529 wards
with at least 20 interviews in each (highest was
66 because of deliberate oversampling of
'coloured' and Indian respondents)

GCRO Quality of Life survey

Sample process before going into the field



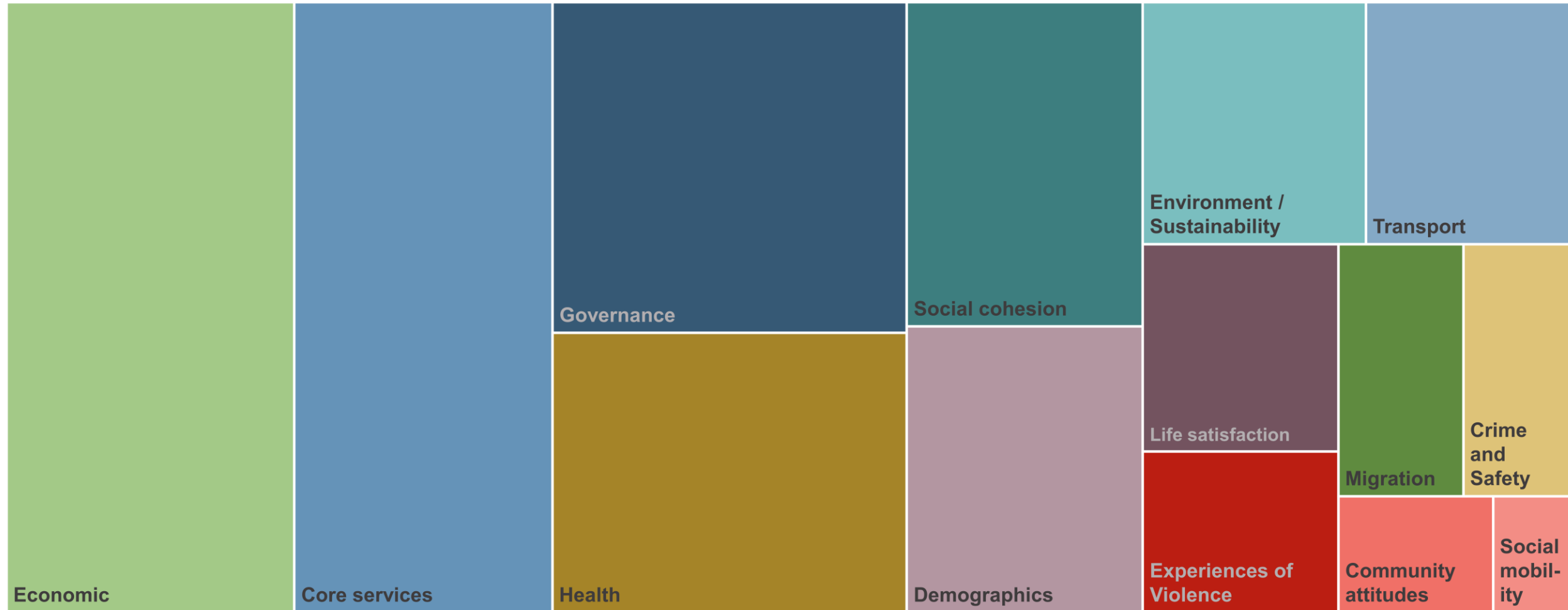
**EA-based clusters were
randomly sampled in wards**



**Residential dwellings were randomly
sampled in EA-based clusters**

Overview of QoL 7 (2023/24)

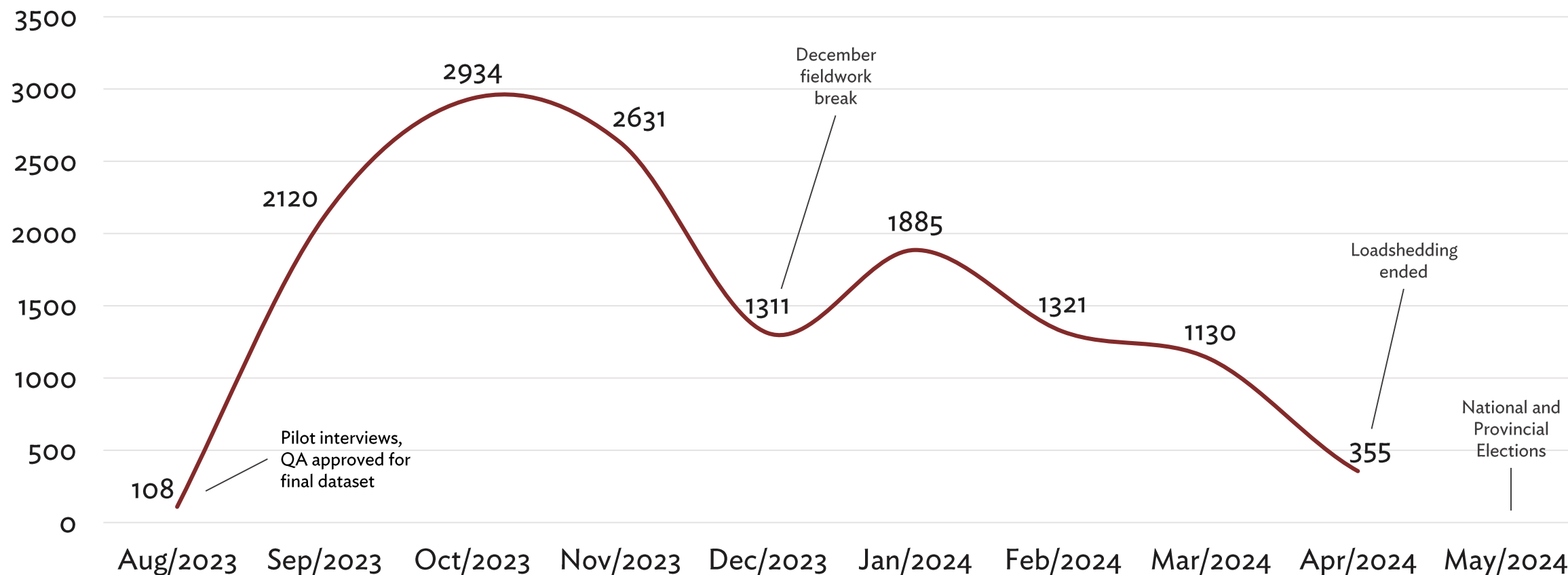
The breadth of the survey



Over 200 questions

Overview of QoL 7 (2023/24)

Fieldwork progress



After data collection, the data was weighted in line with the estimated adult population per ward as well as race-by-gender numbers per municipality

28 159 visit attempts were made to sampled points, yielding 13 795 QA approved surveys

Overview of QoL 7 (2023/24)

The overall story

- 15 years of data gives us a remarkable longitudinal perspective
- The data suggests marginal improvements between 2009 and 2017/18 across many indicators
- But the COVID-19 global pandemic threw the GCR into crisis, as it did the rest of the world
- The COVID-19 pandemic arrived in a society already struggling with low economic growth, acute unemployment levels and weakened governance capacity
- We were hoping for signs of a post-COVID recovery
- However it is clear from the QoL 7 (2023/24) survey results that Gauteng continues to face serious challenges across many dimensions – a **poly-crisis at the household level**
- Negative sentiments have deepened as a result

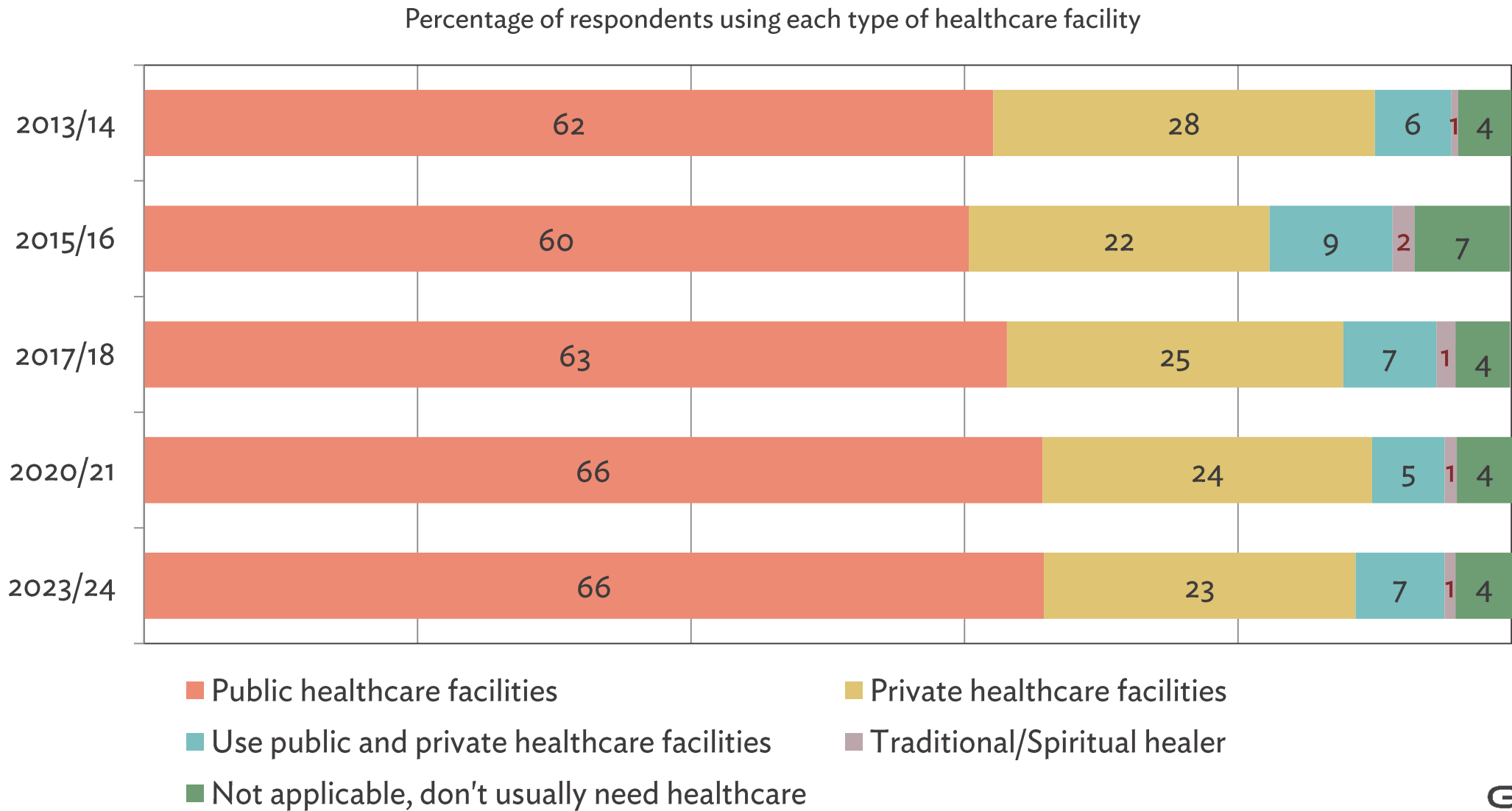


Health



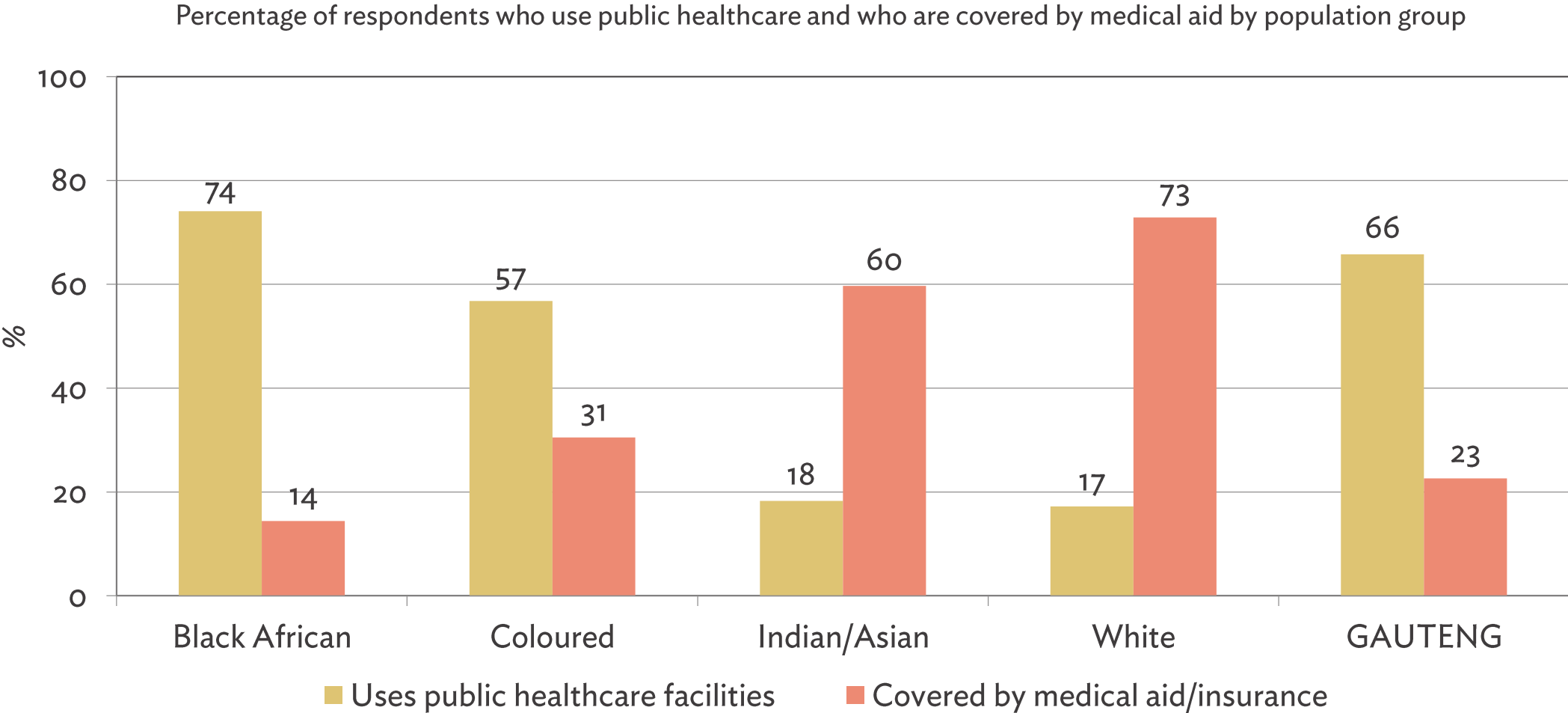
Health

The percentage of those using public healthcare facilities has increased over time



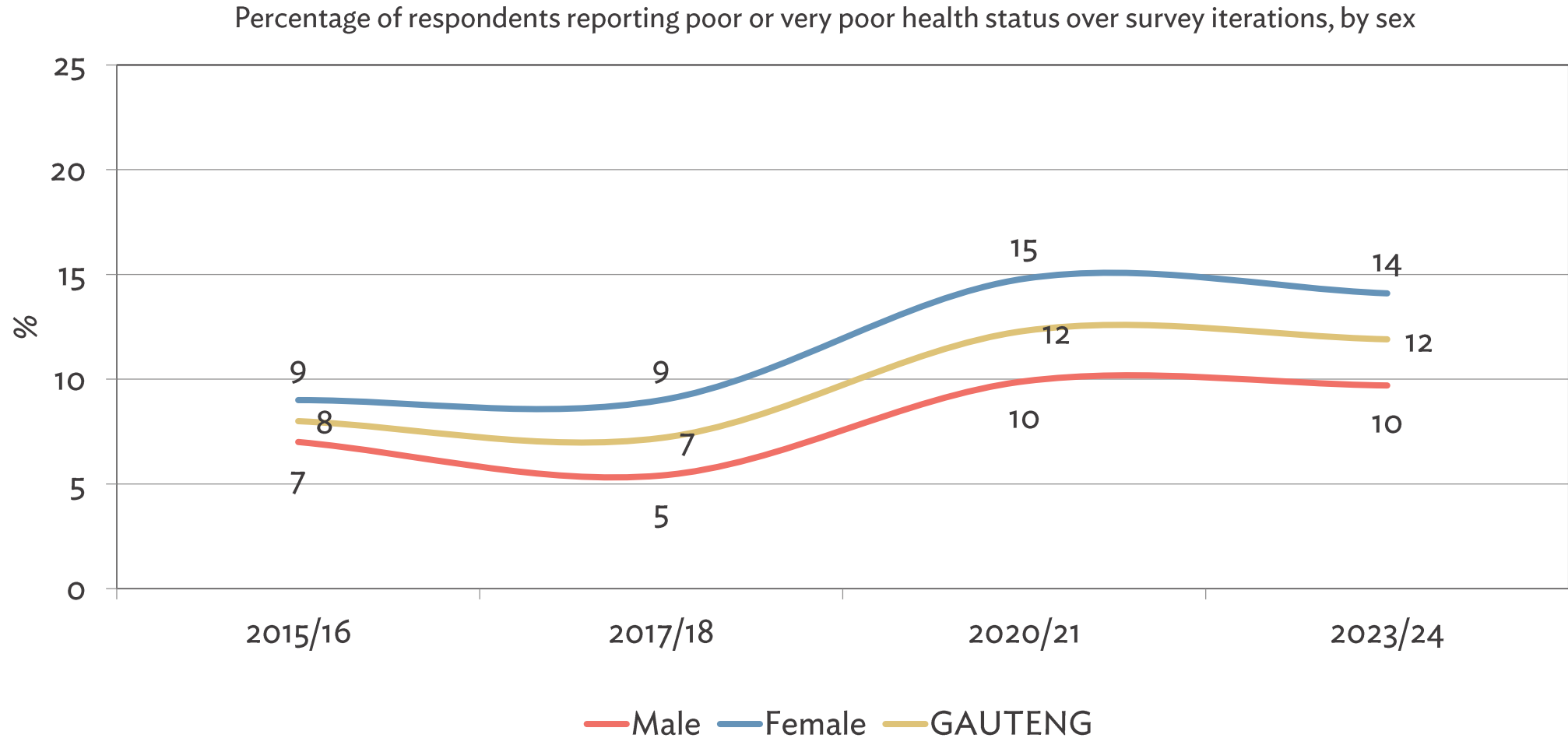
Health

Continued huge disparities in health access and protection by population group



Health

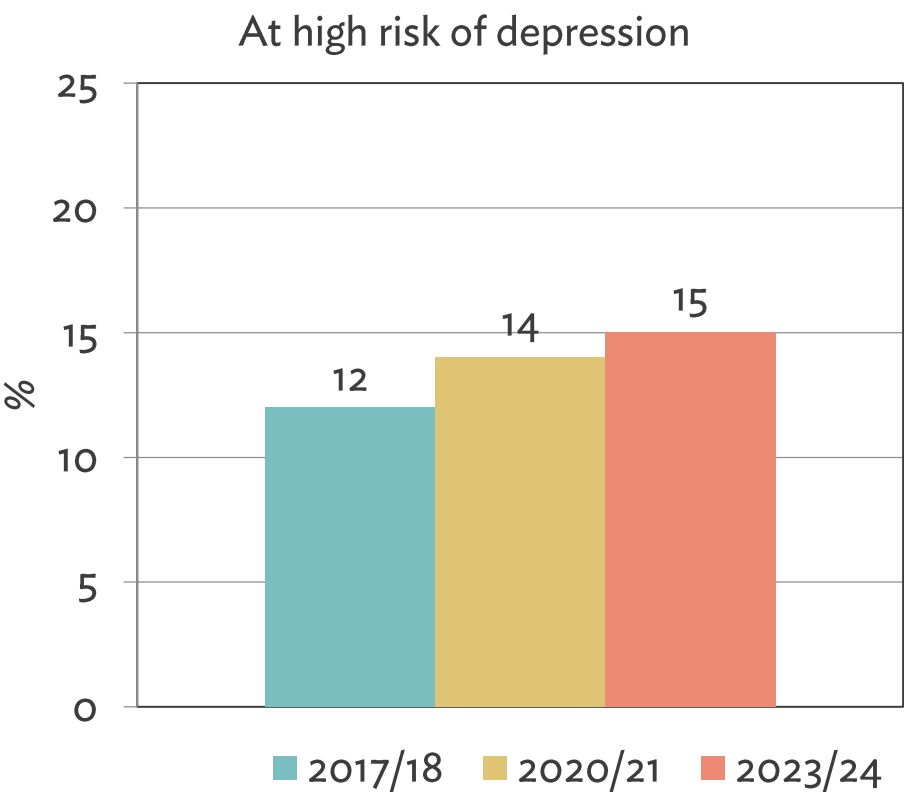
QoL shows a remarkable split between male and female poor health status, increasing through COVID



Health

Population at high risk of depression continues to rise

(PHQ-2) diagnostic	Over the past two weeks how many days have you been bothered by ...	
	... little interest or pleasure in doing things?	... feeling down, depressed or hopeless?
Not at all	0	0
A few days	1	1
More than half the days	2	2
Nearly every day	3	3
Across 2 questions, combined score out of 6:	0 to 2 = low risk of depression	
	3 to 6 = high risk of depression	

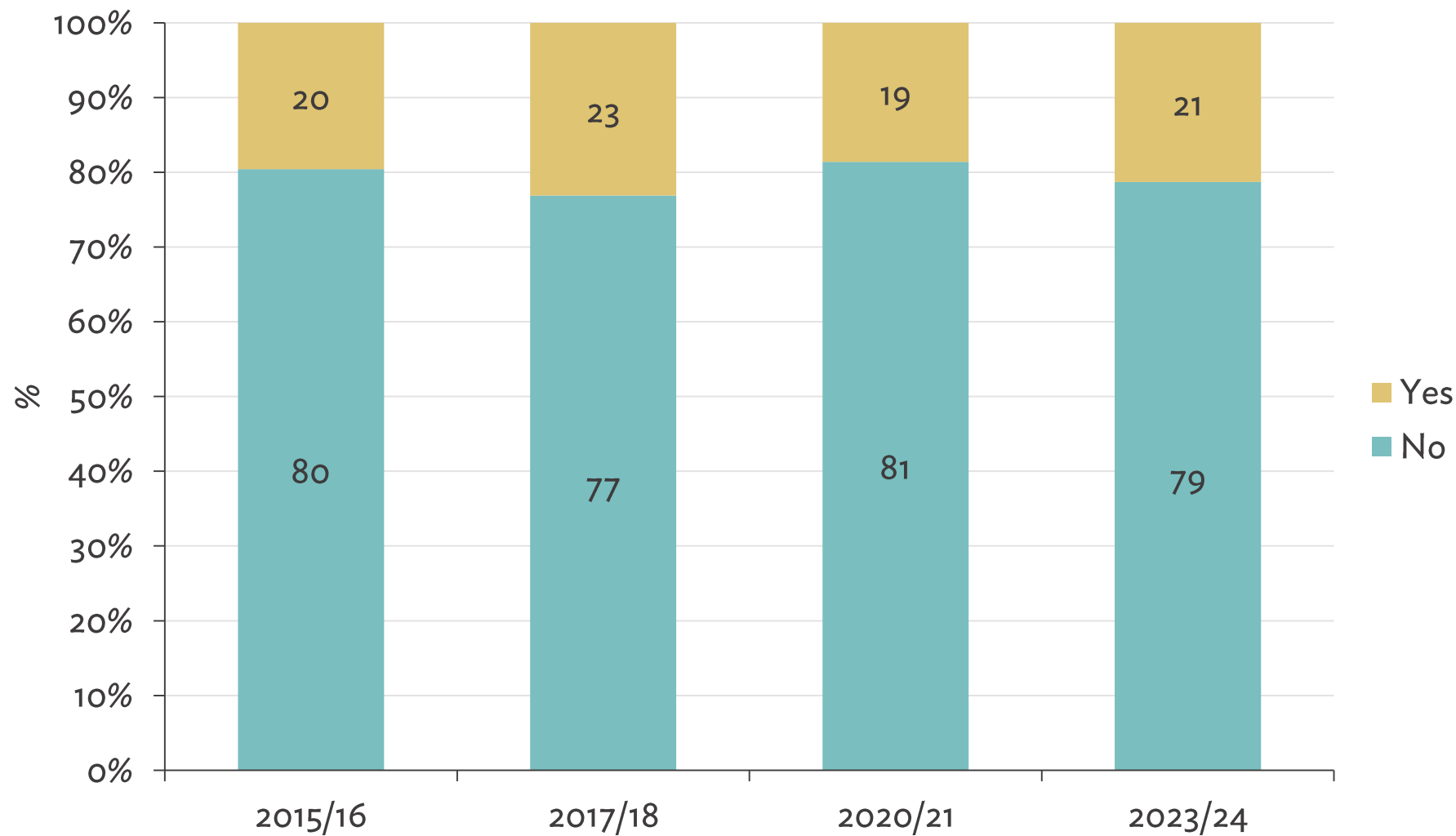


Safety



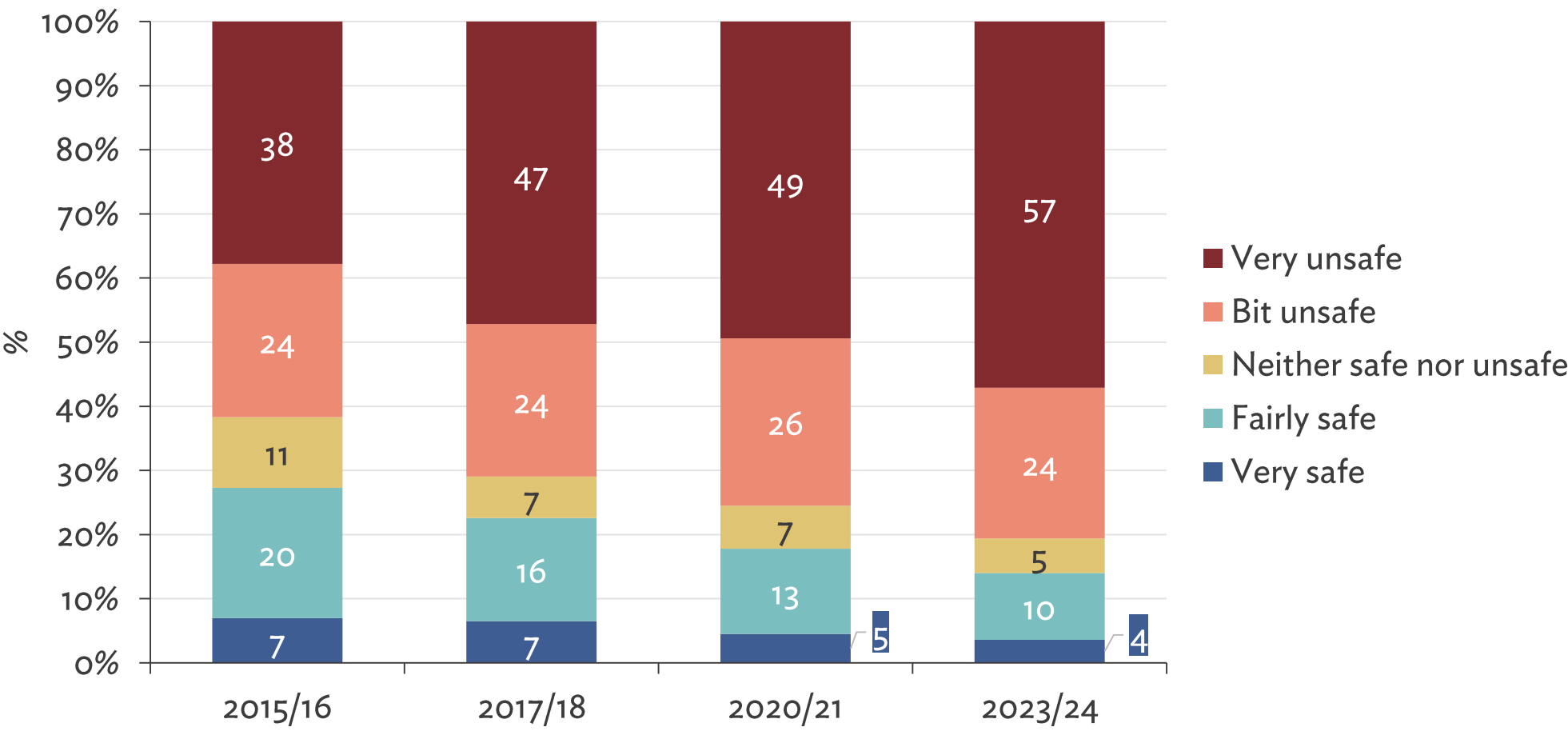
Safety

Increase in % who have been a victim of crime in the last year, though not at pre-COVID levels



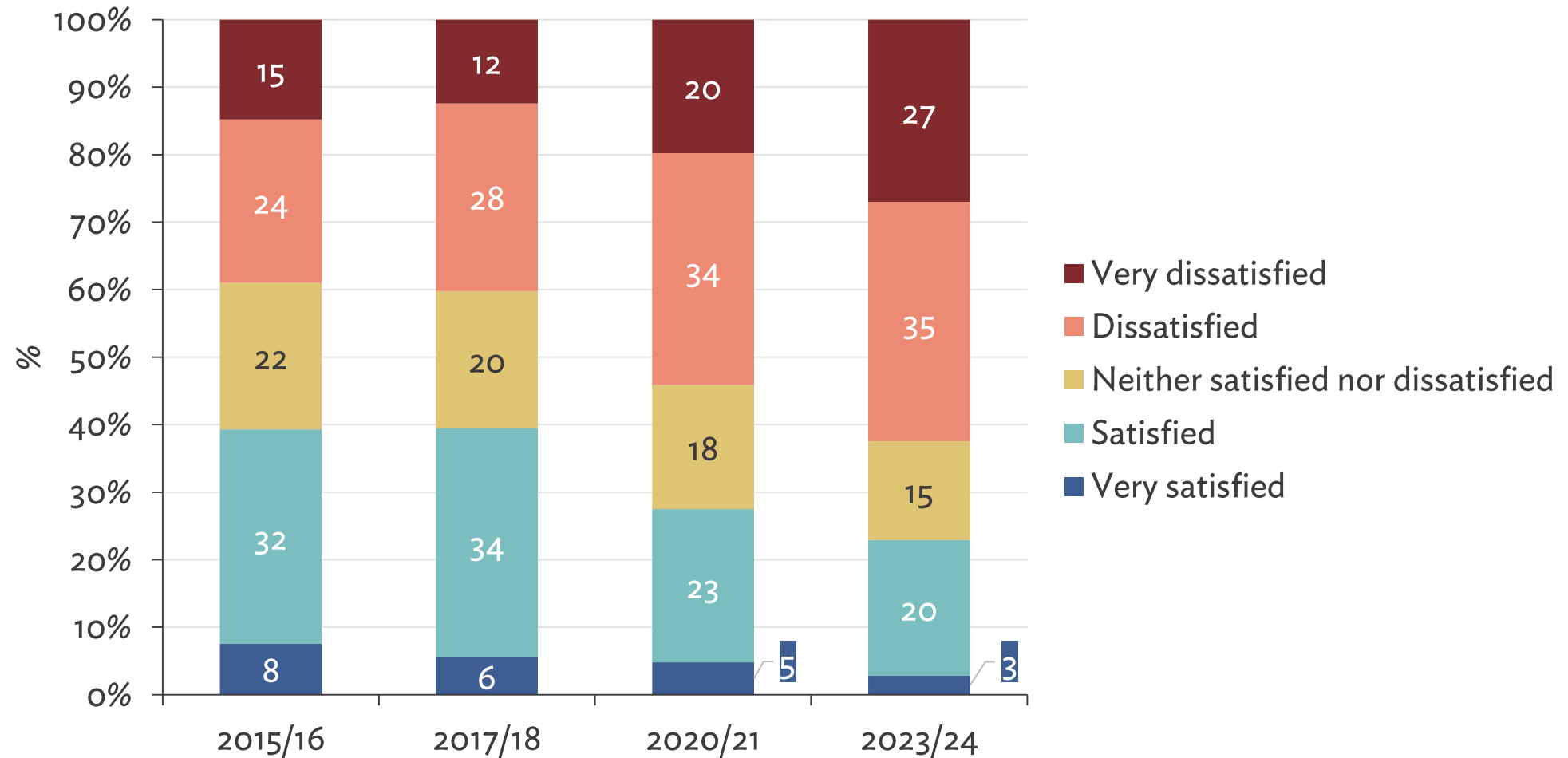
Safety

A significant increase in the percentage feeling unsafe walking in their area at night



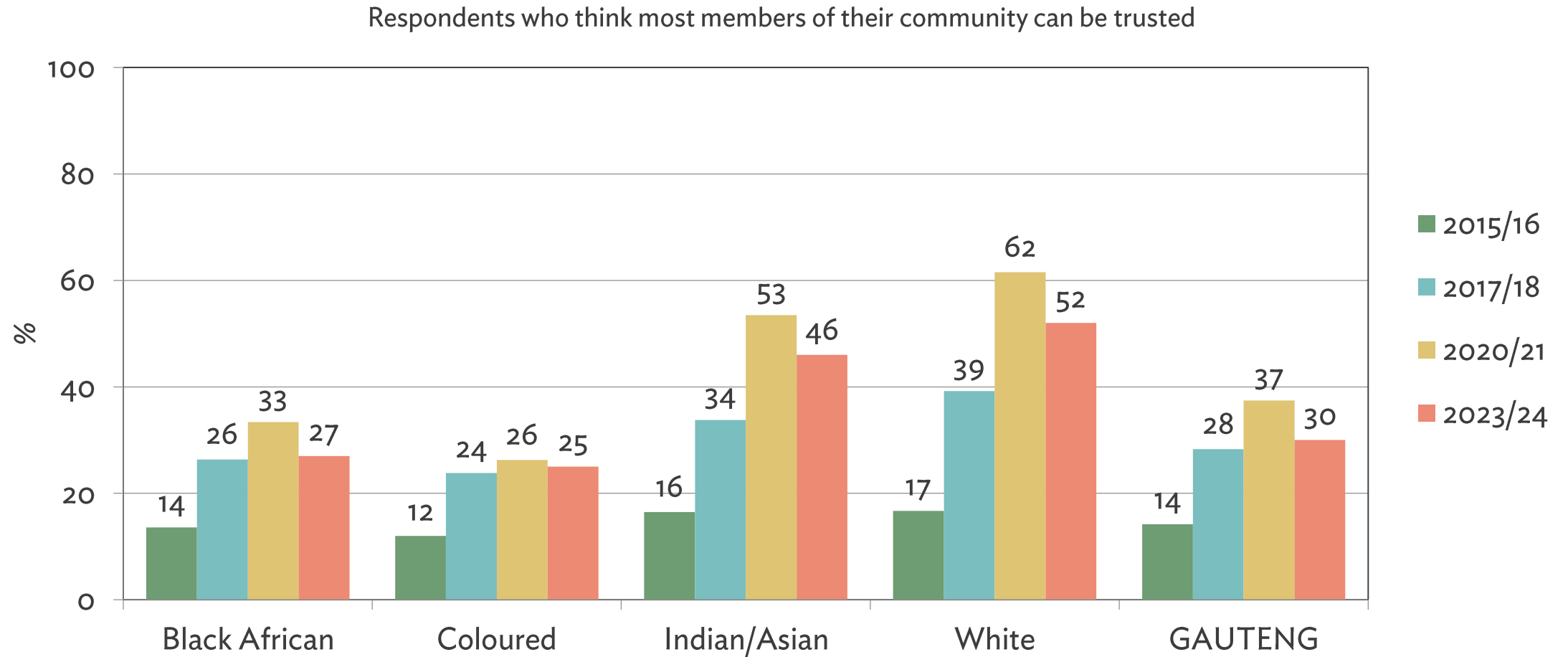
Safety

Big increase in the percent dissatisfied with government provided safety & security services



Safety

The sense of social solidarity felt during COVID has dissipated, with a decrease in community trust



Socio-economic conditions

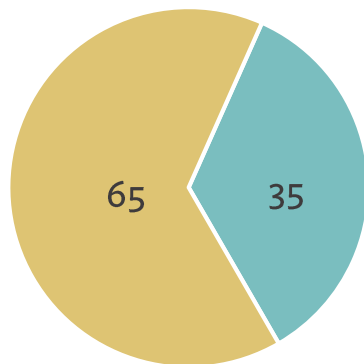


Socio-economic conditions

Enhanced social protection following COVID-19 crisis: expanded access to SRD grant

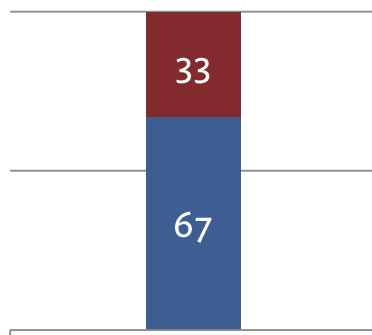
QoL 6
2020/21

% who applied for COVID-19 grant



■ Yes ■ No

Of those who applied,
% who received it



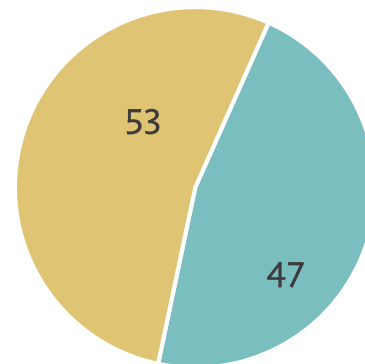
■ Yes ■ No

23%

Of all households
receiving the COVID-
19 R350 SRD grant

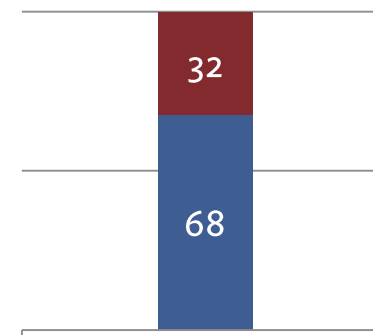
QoL 7
2023/24

% who applied for COVID-19 grant



■ Yes ■ No

Of those who applied,
% who received it



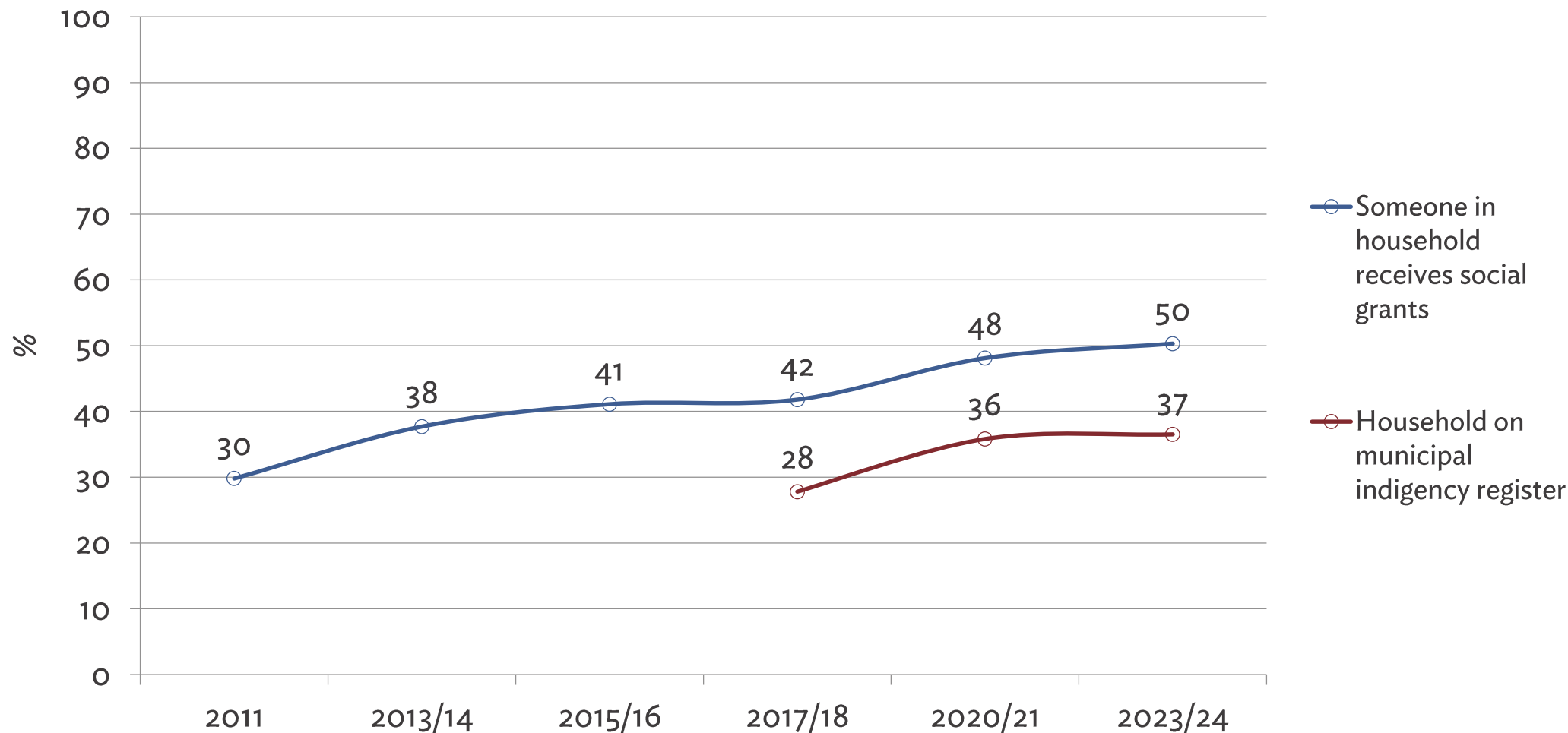
■ Yes ■ No

32%

Of all households
receiving the COVID-
19 R350 SRD grant

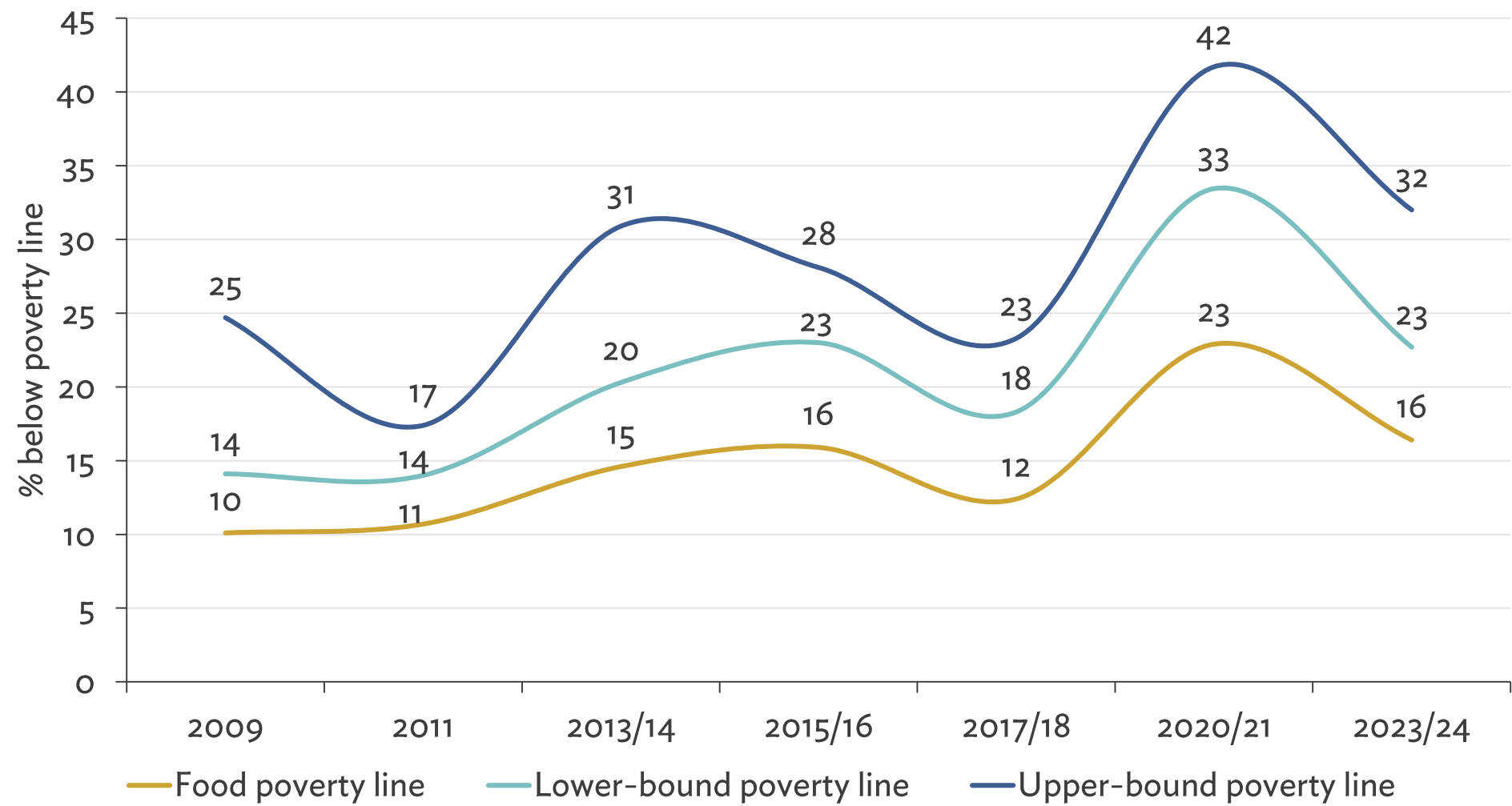
Socio-economic conditions

Enhanced social protection following COVID-19 crisis: access to any grants and indigency support



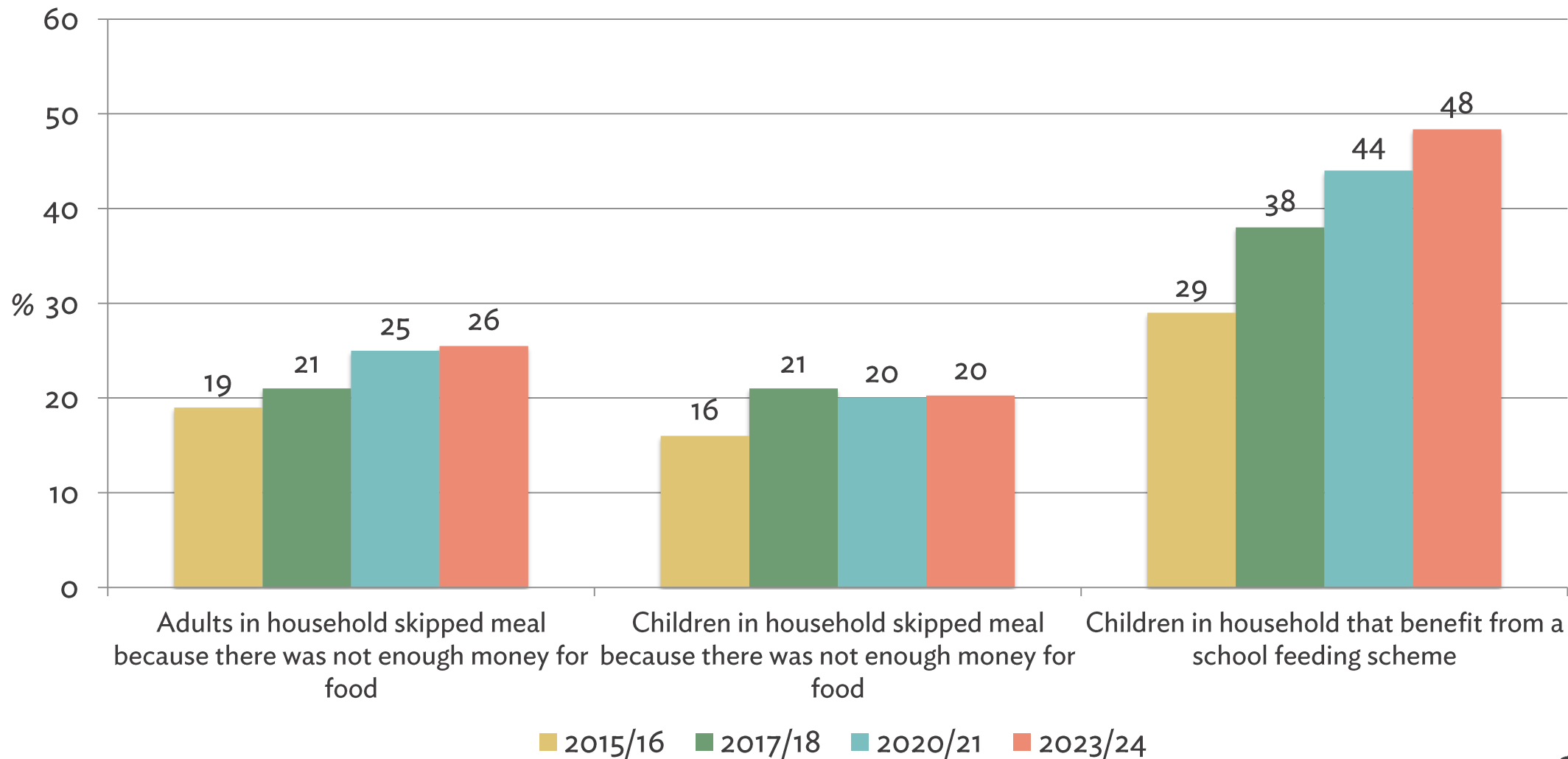
Socio-economic conditions

Some improvement but poverty rates still above pre-COVID levels – % of respondents in poverty



Socio-economic conditions

Despite improvements, increase in food insecurity for adult respondents ... The cost of food?

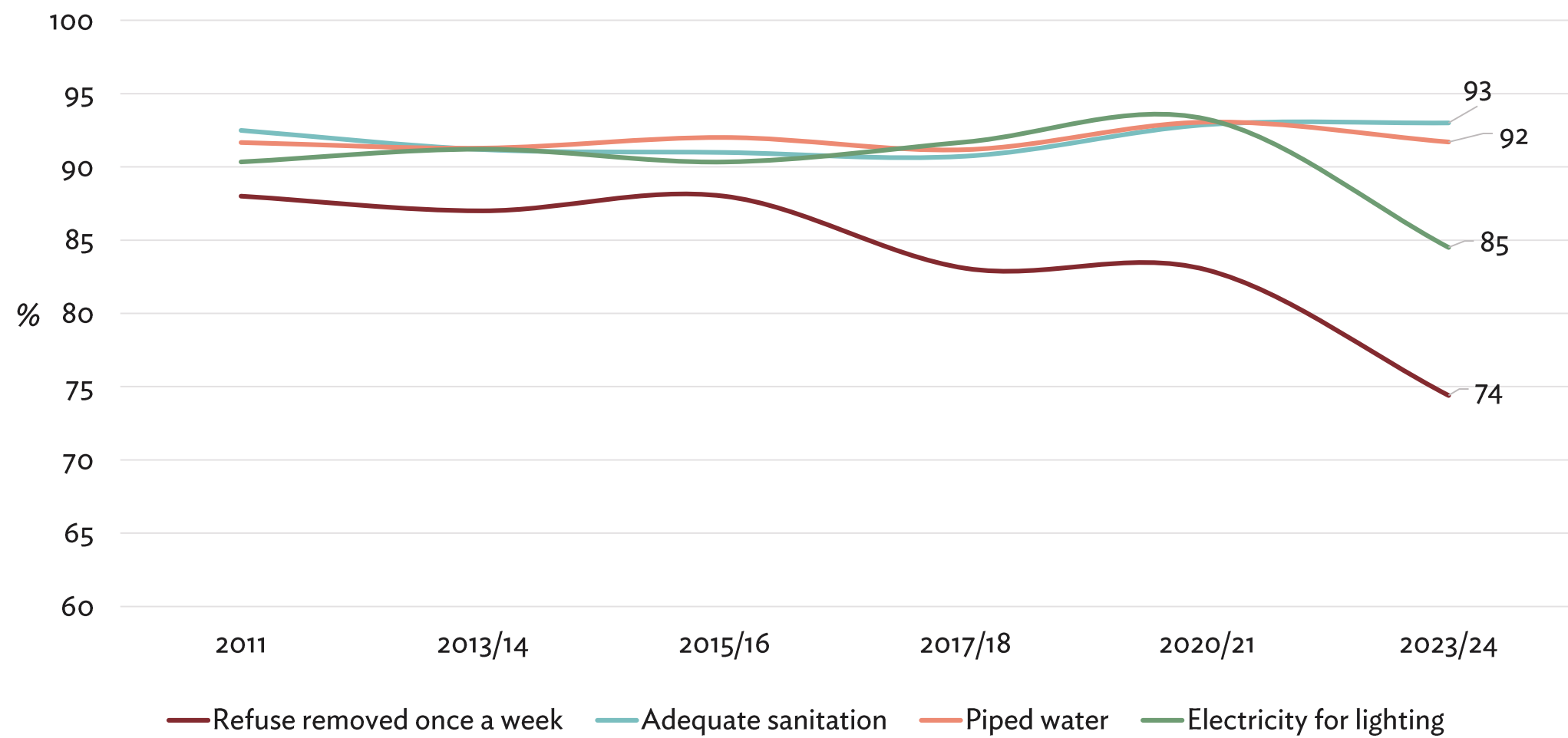


Access to and satisfaction with basic services



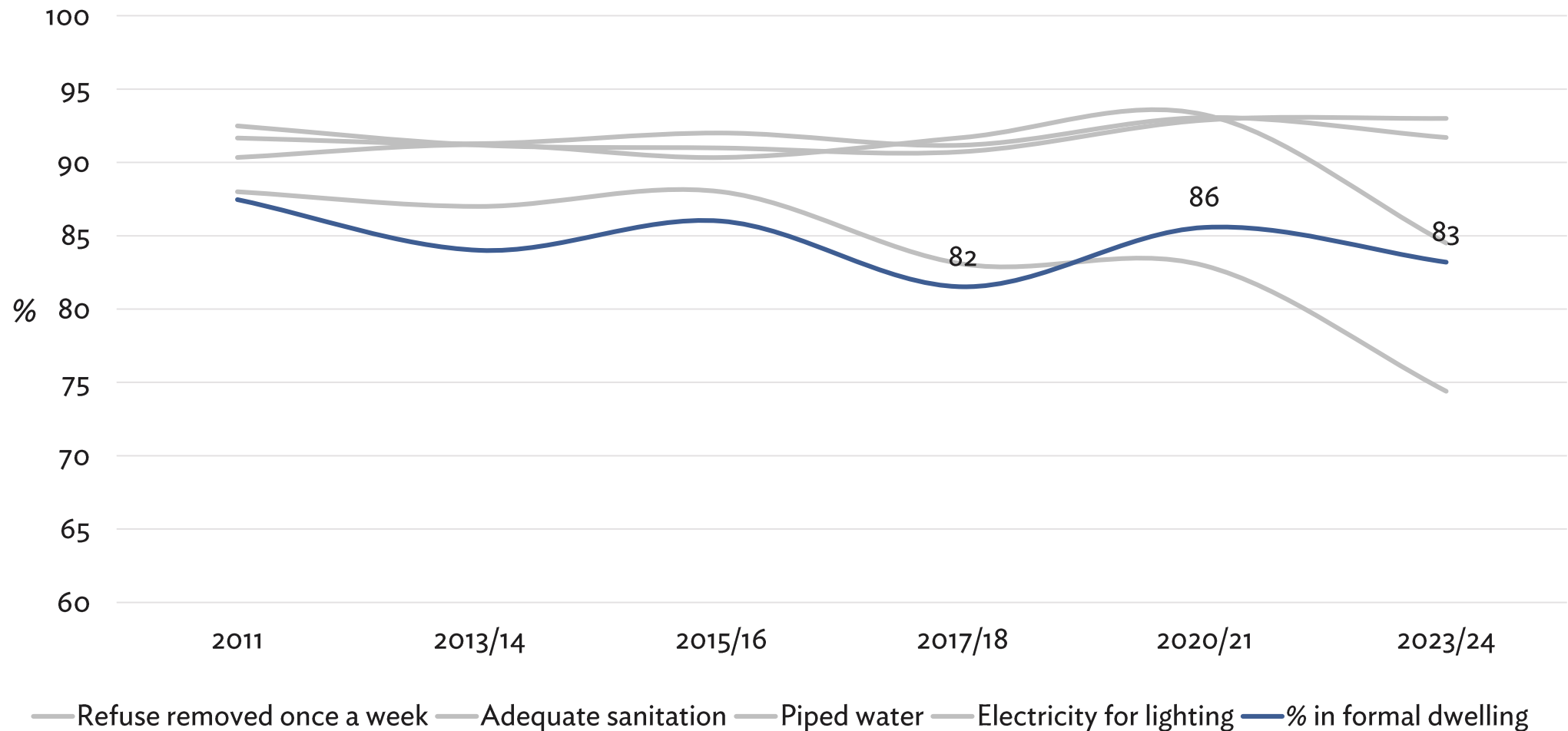
Access to and satisfaction with basic services

% access to some key household services has *apparently* declined but



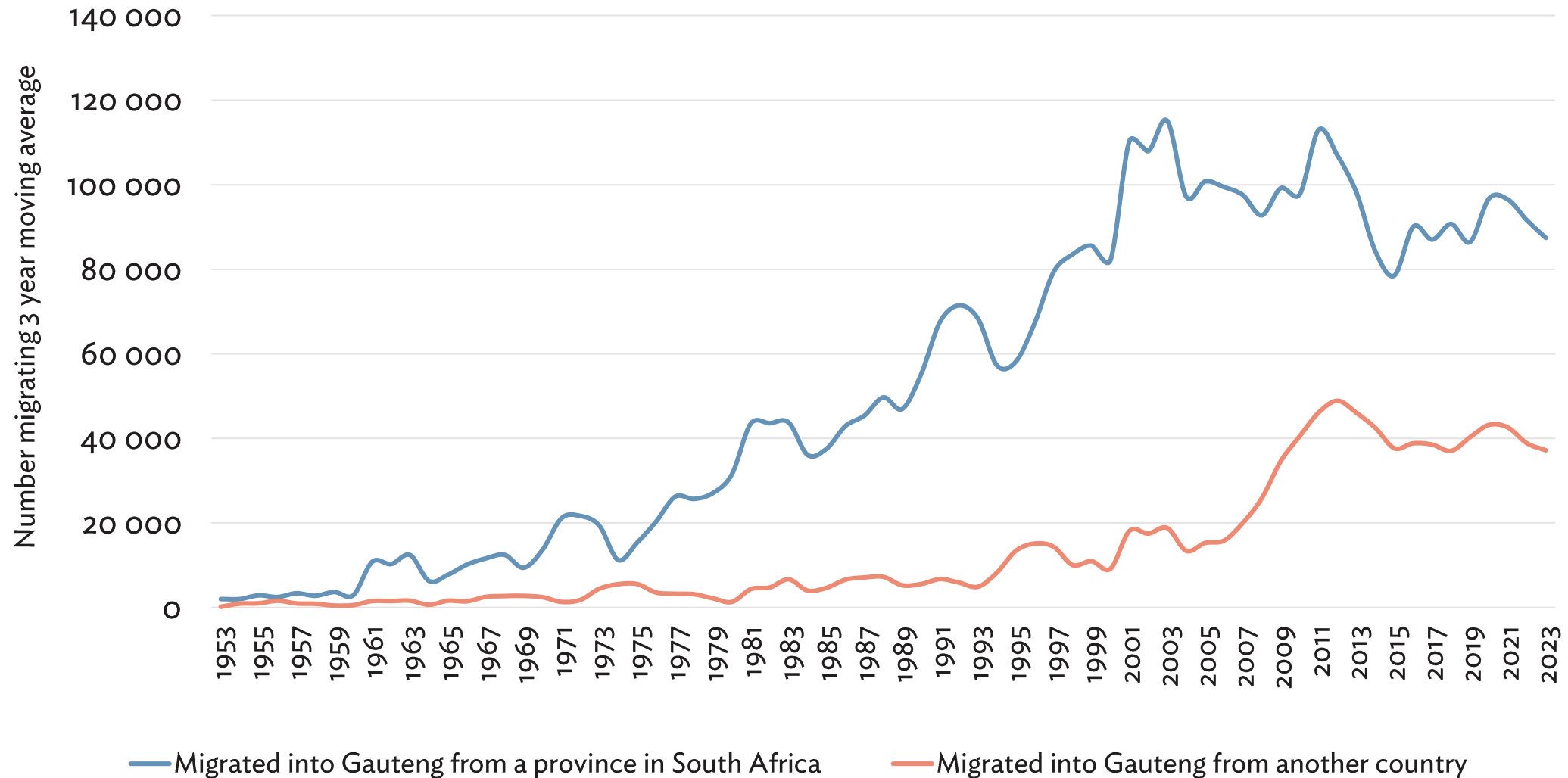
Access to and satisfaction with basic services

... but seemingly not because of dramatic increases in informality, or ...



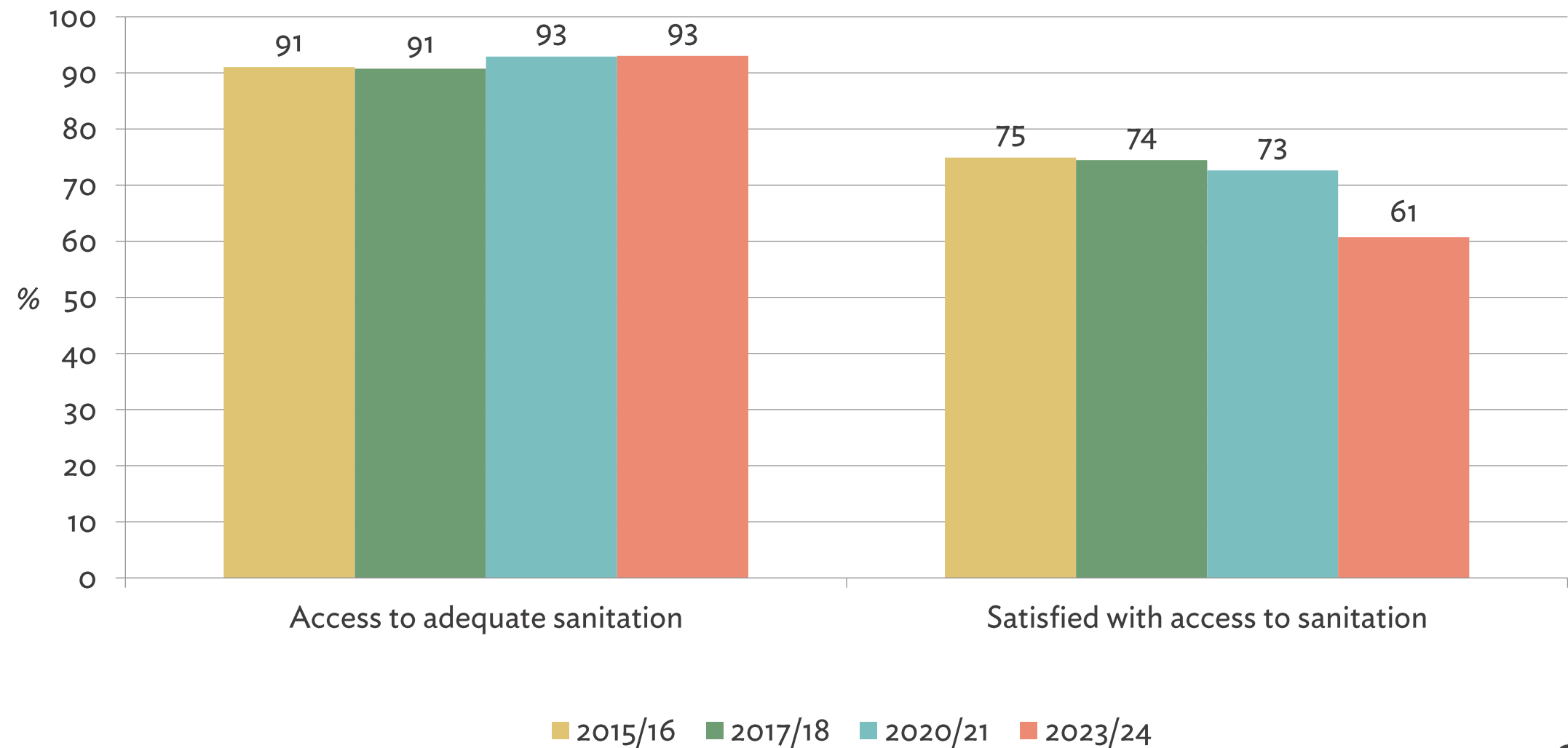
Access to and satisfaction with basic services

... or because the number of in-migrants into Gauteng continues to *accelerate*



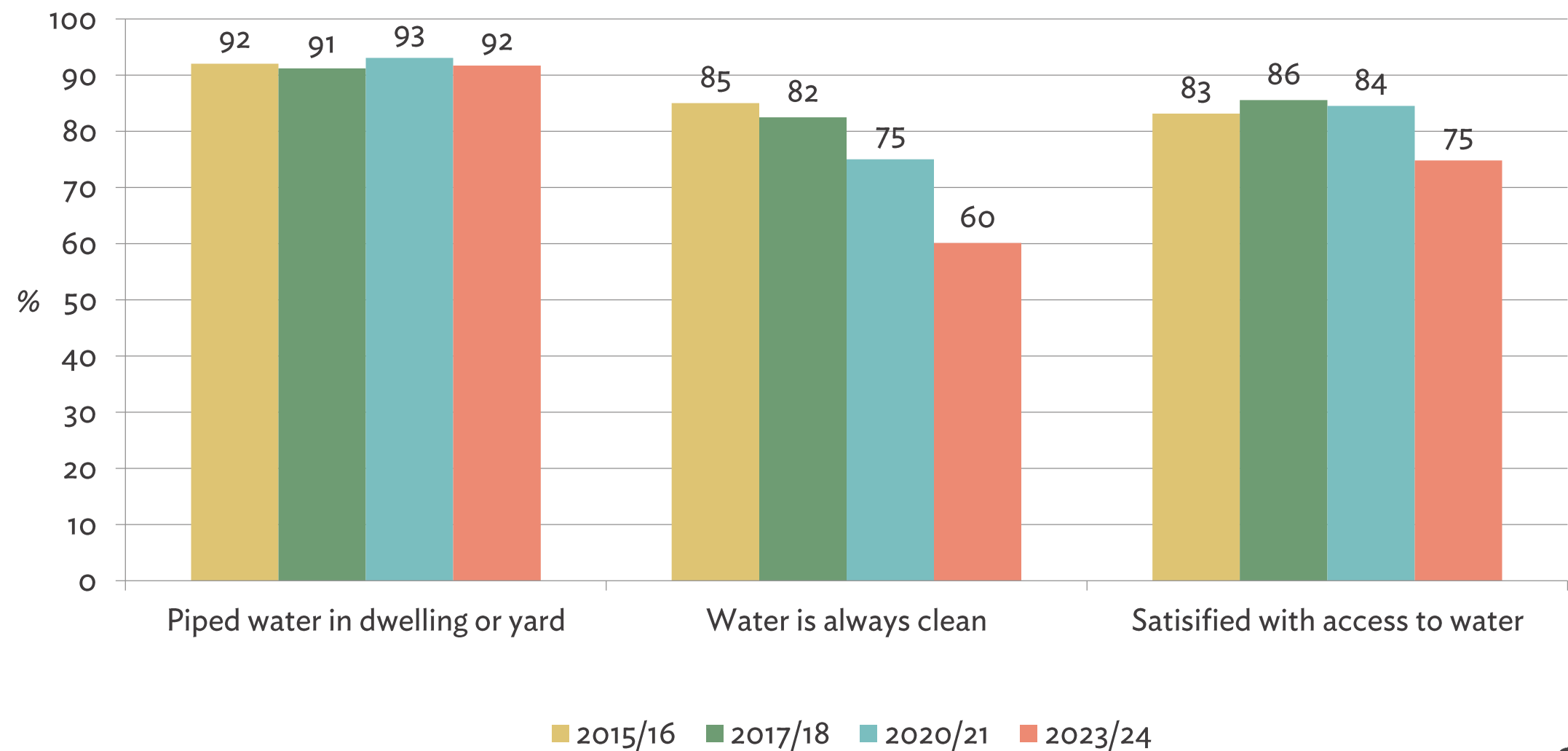
Access to and satisfaction with basic services

Access to and satisfaction with sanitation



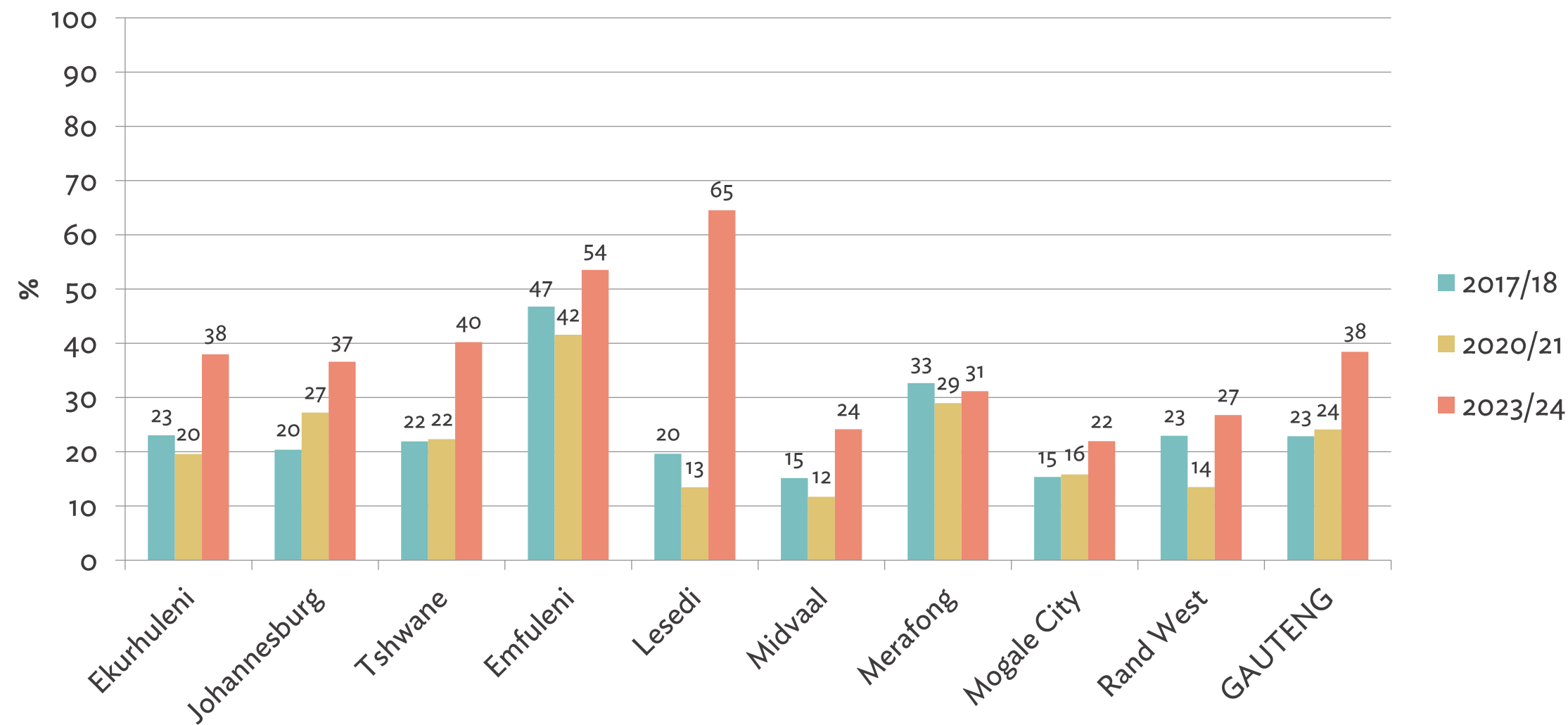
Access to and satisfaction with basic services

Access to and satisfaction with water services



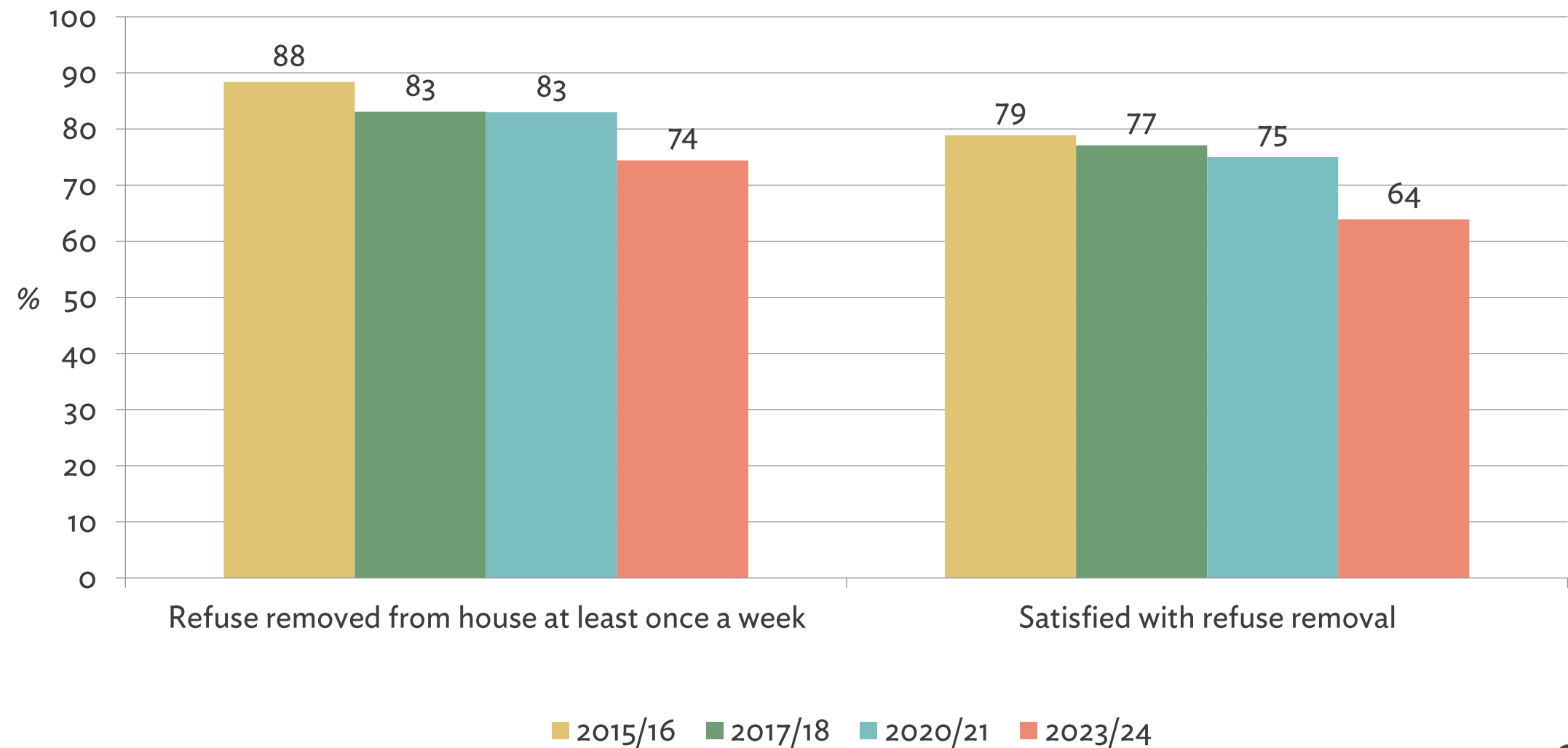
Access to and satisfaction with basic services

The next crisis? Big increase in % reporting water interruptions weekly or a couple of times a month



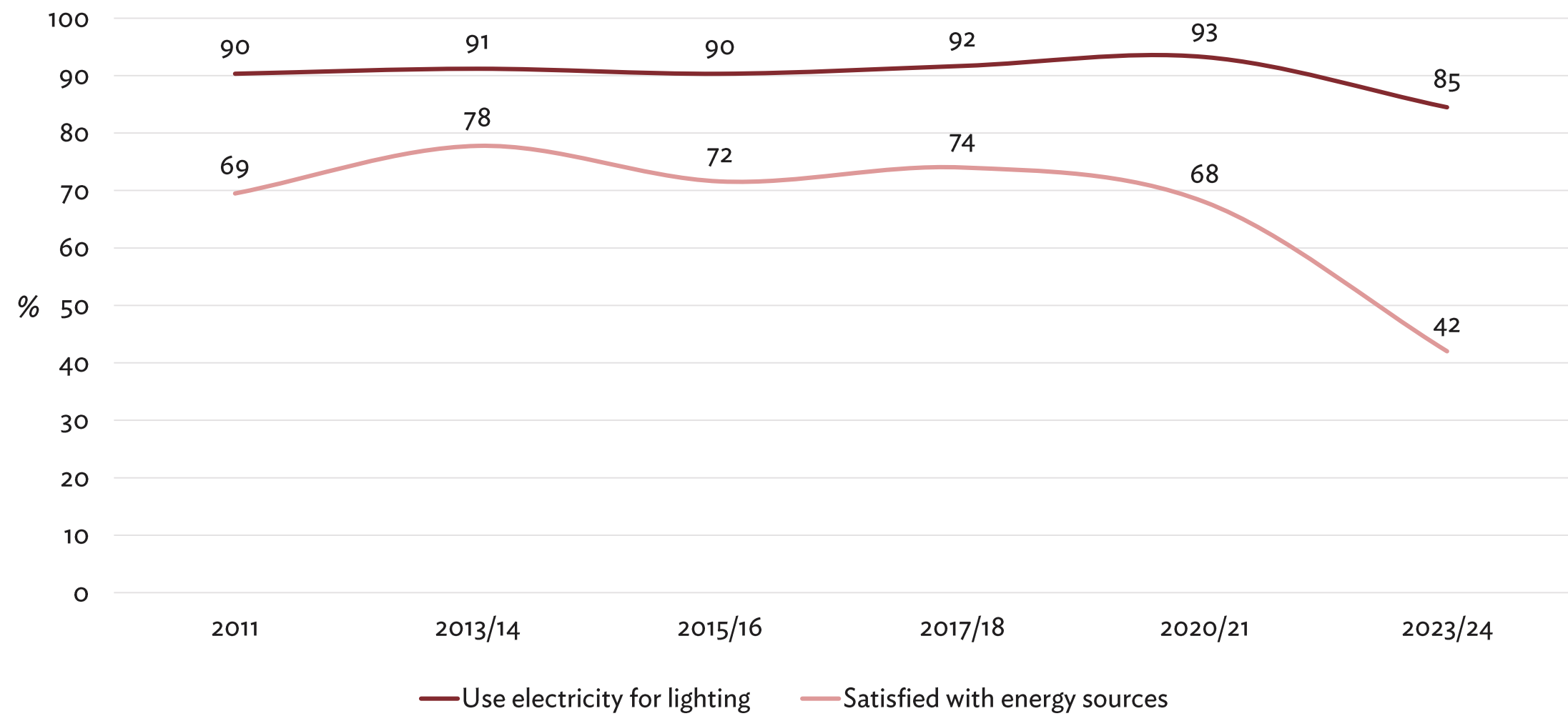
Access to and satisfaction with basic services

Access to and satisfaction with refuse removal



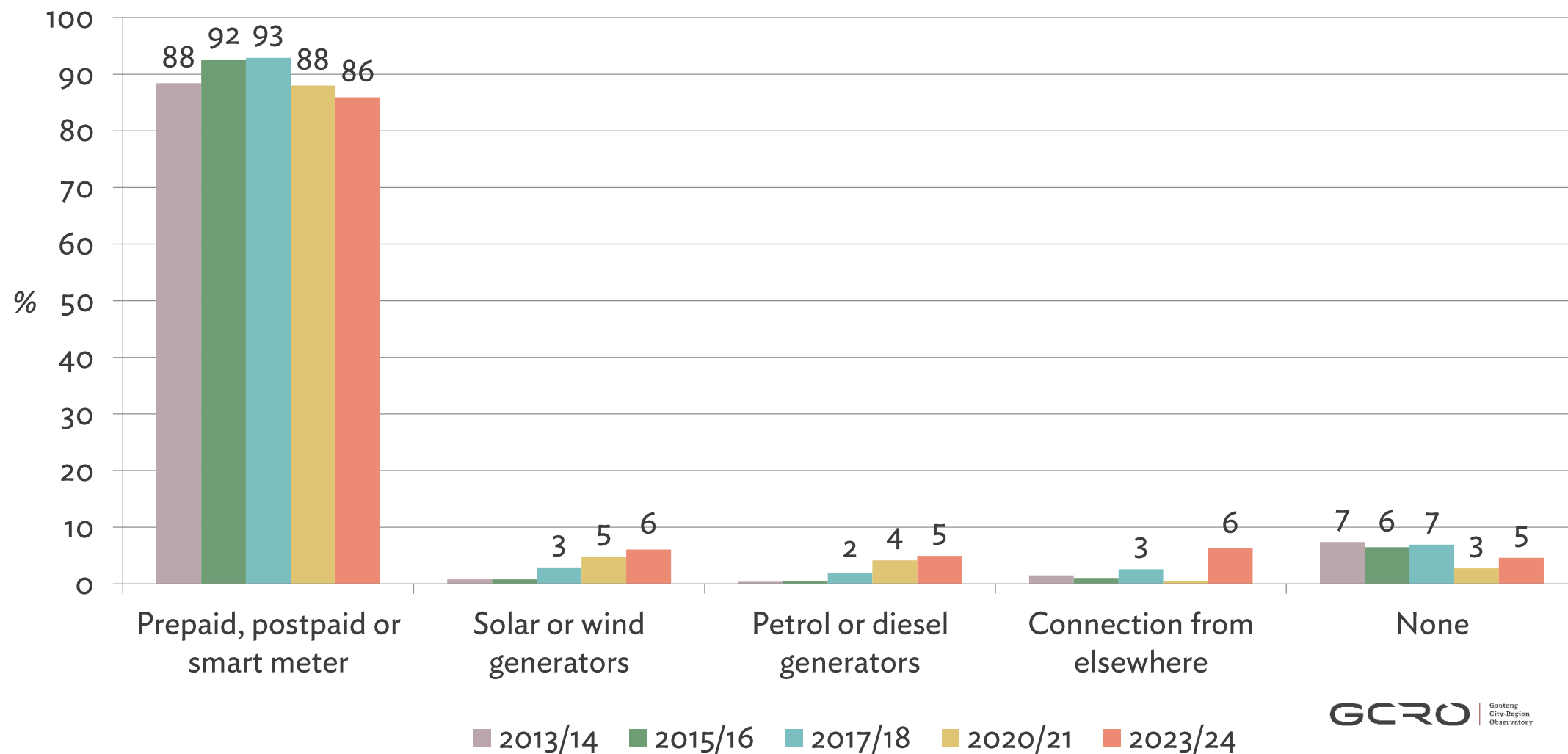
Access to and satisfaction with basic services

% saying they use electricity for lighting declines, along with satisfaction with energy sources



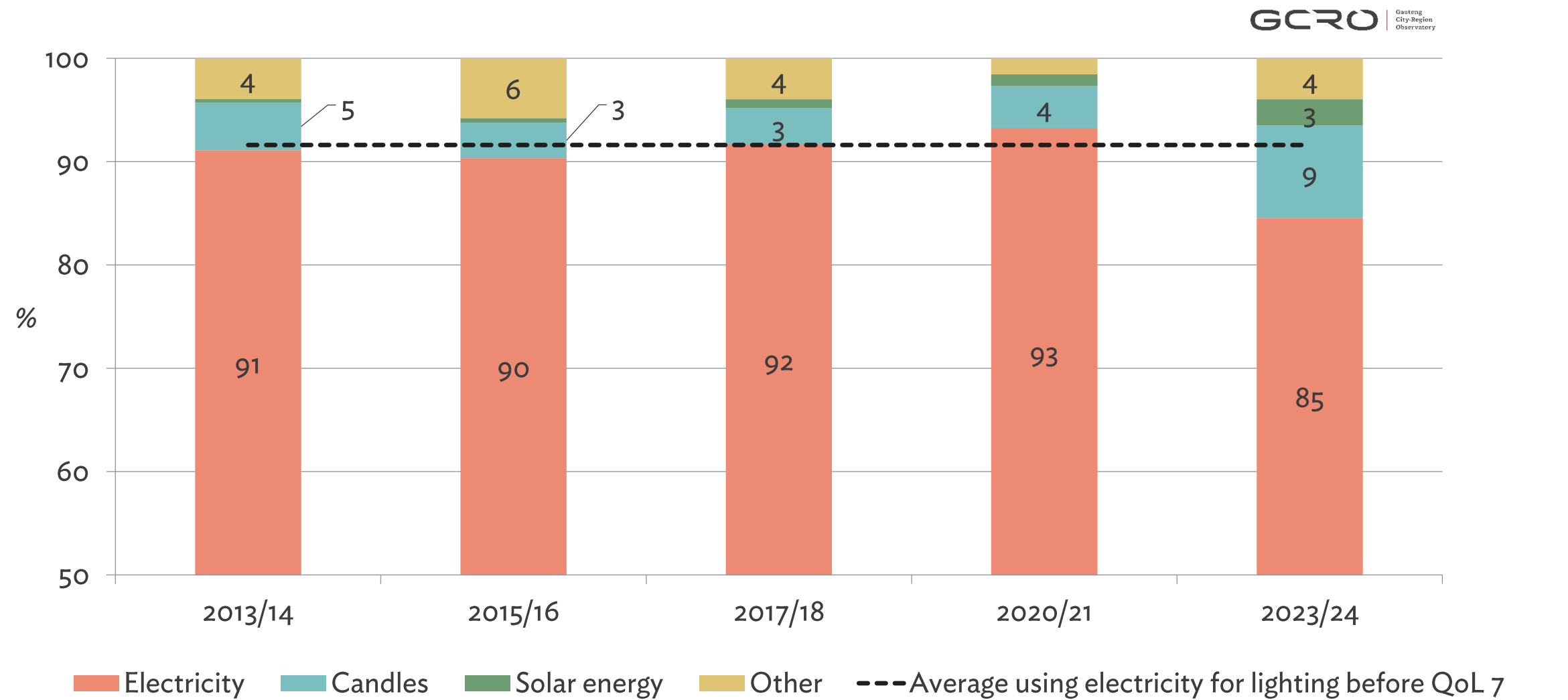
Access to and satisfaction with basic services

Use of “Grid electricity” declines and alternative energy sources increases



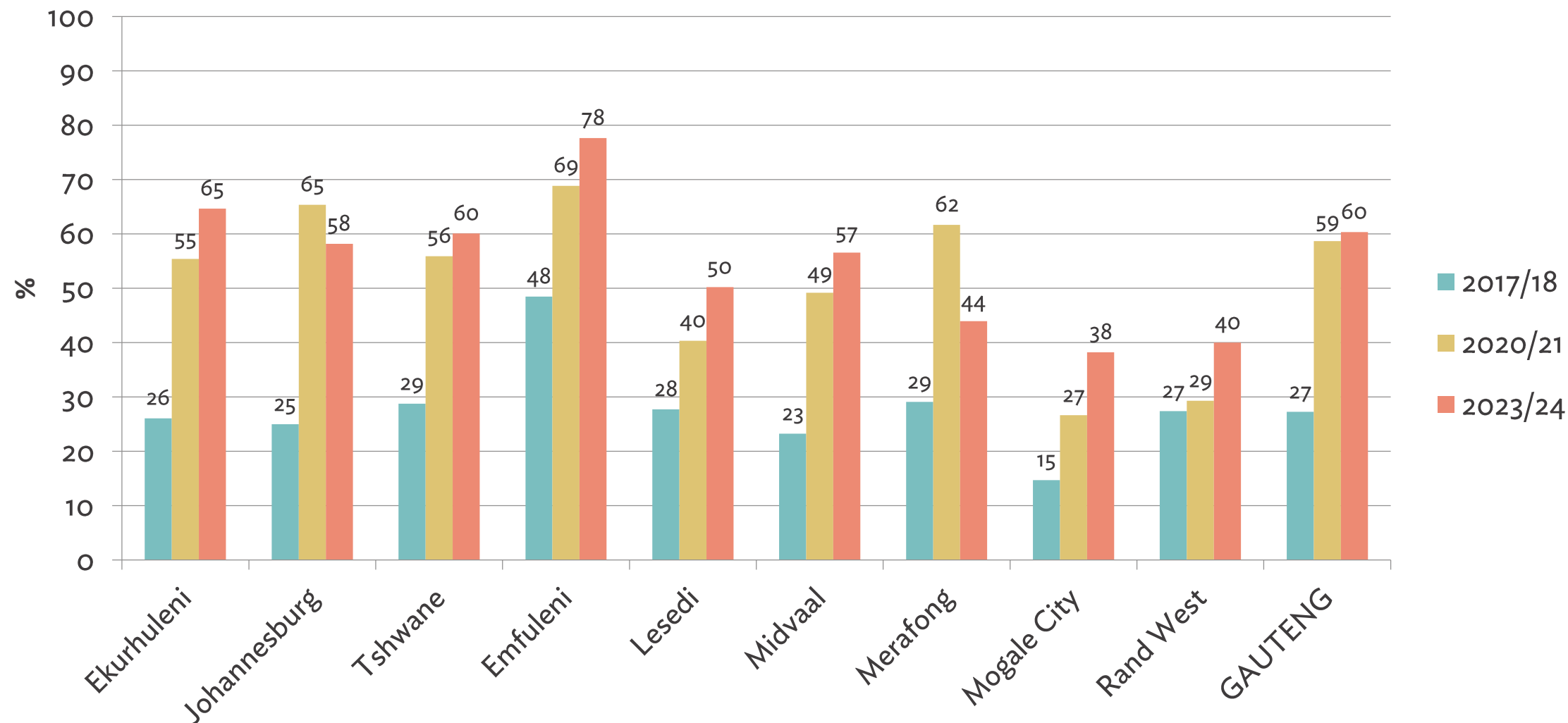
Access to and satisfaction with basic services

% saying they use electricity for lighting declines, and a big increase in use of candles



Access to and satisfaction with basic services

Very high % reporting electricity interruptions (not load-shedding) weekly or a couple of times a month



Satisfaction with government



Satisfaction with government

Low levels of trust in government

QoL 6
2020/21

54%



QoL 7
2023/24

68%

**Say they do not
trust the current
leaders of
government**

55%



61%

**Don't think that
leaders from
different parts of
government in
Gauteng work
well together**

51%

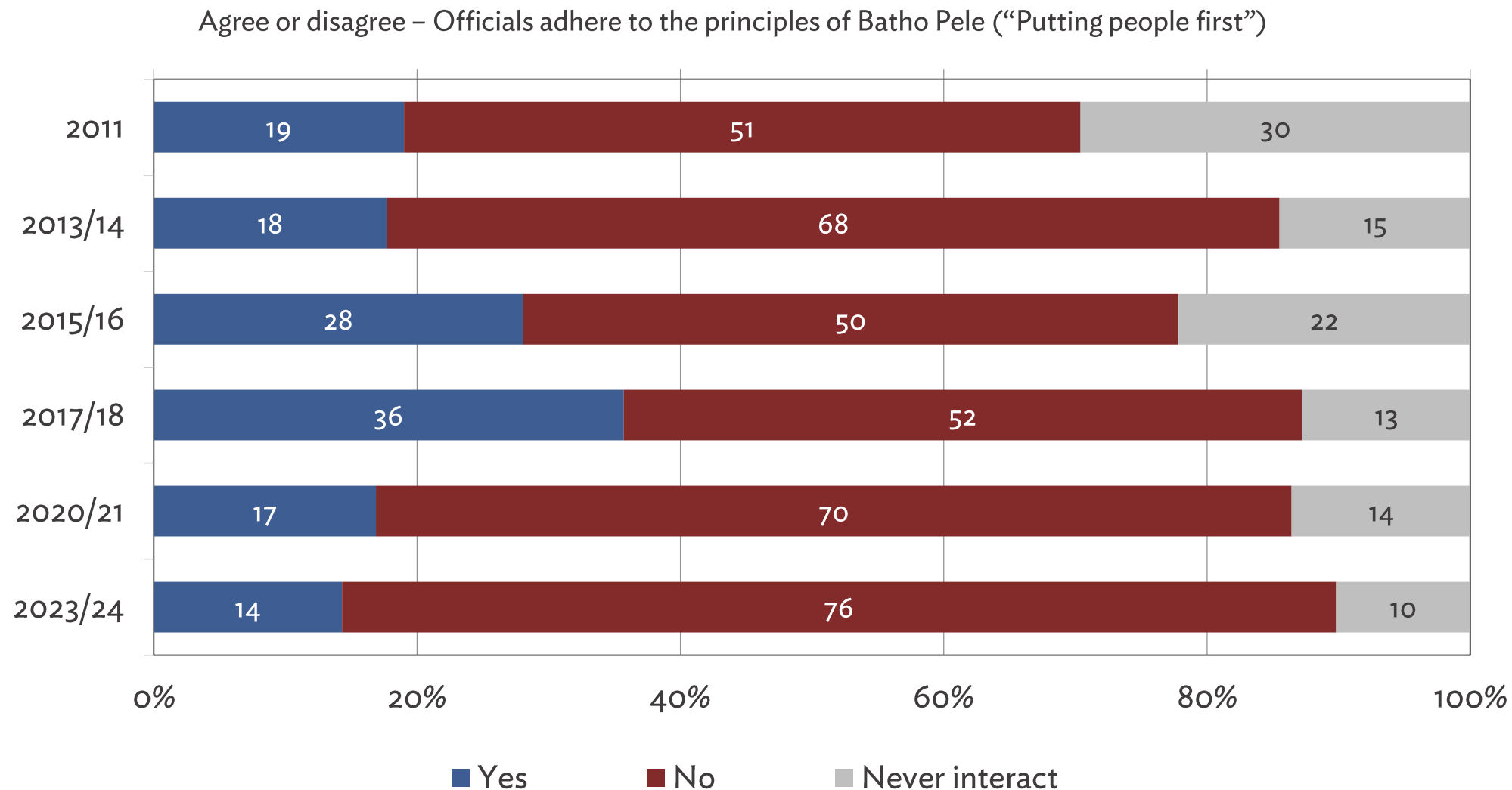


52%

**Don't think that
leaders include
most
stakeholders in
govt. decision-
making**

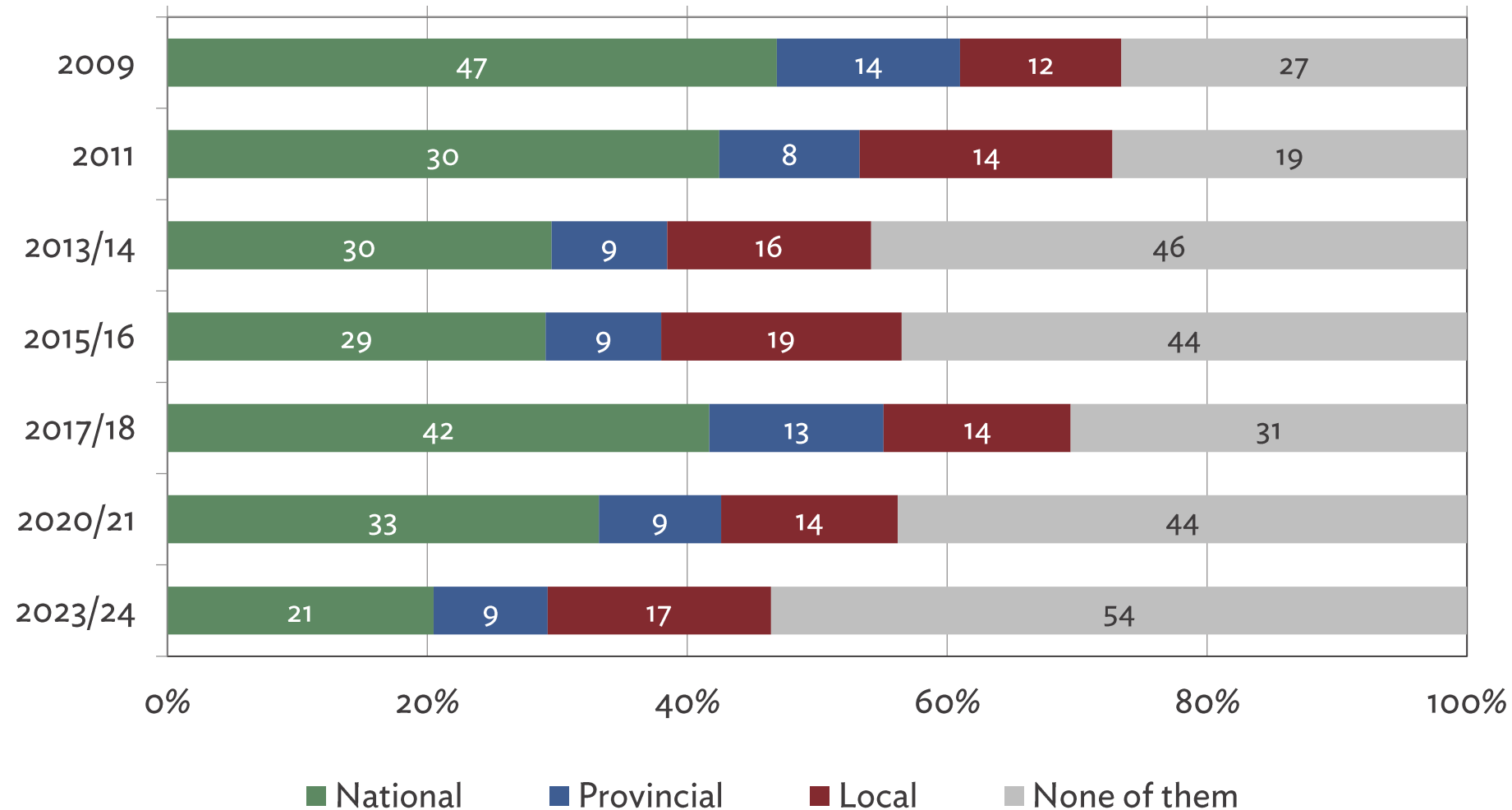
Satisfaction with government

Perceptions of poor frontline service – ‘Do officials adhere to Batho Pele principles’?



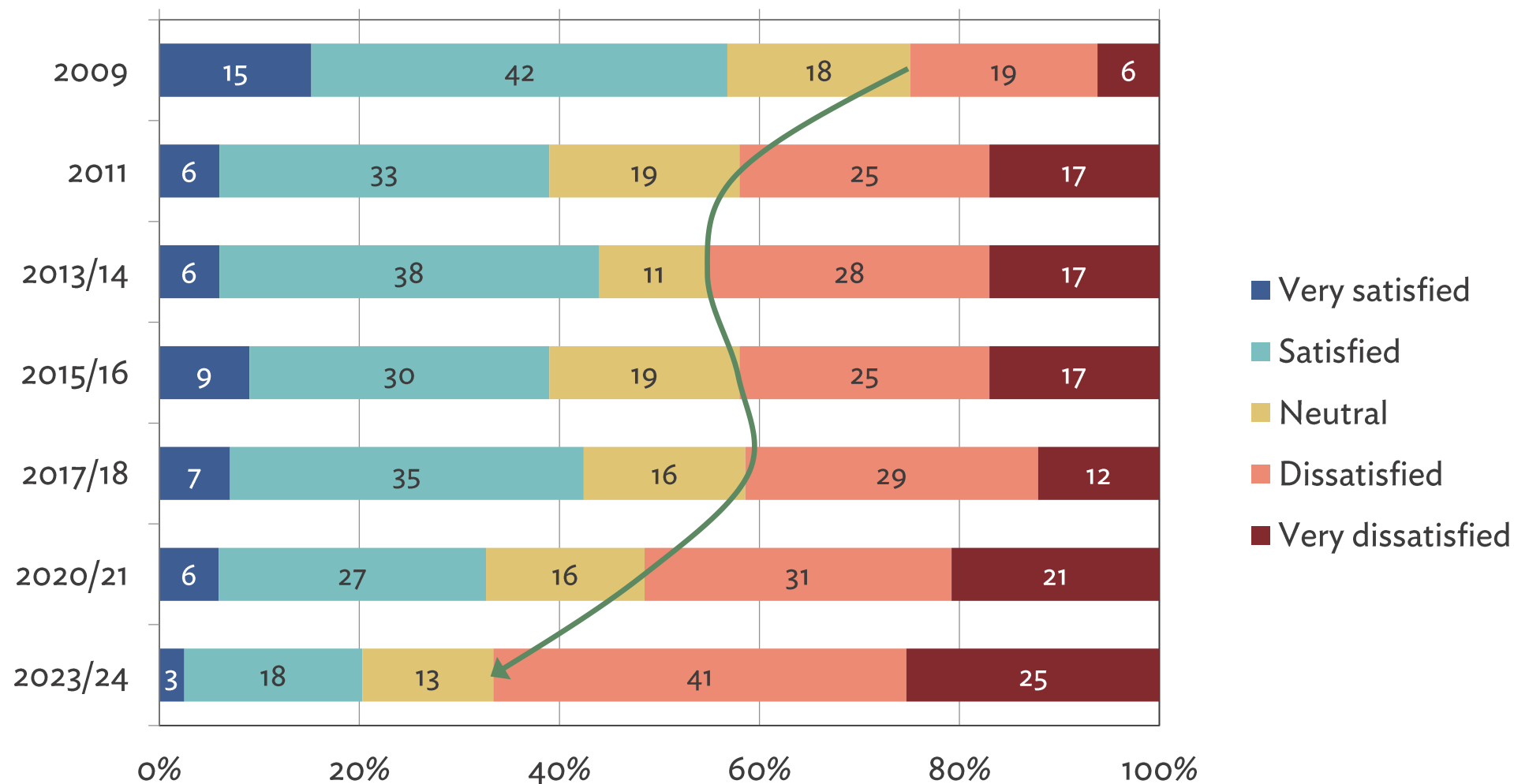
Satisfaction with government

‘Which sphere has done the most to improve quality of life?’ – large increase in % saying ‘none’



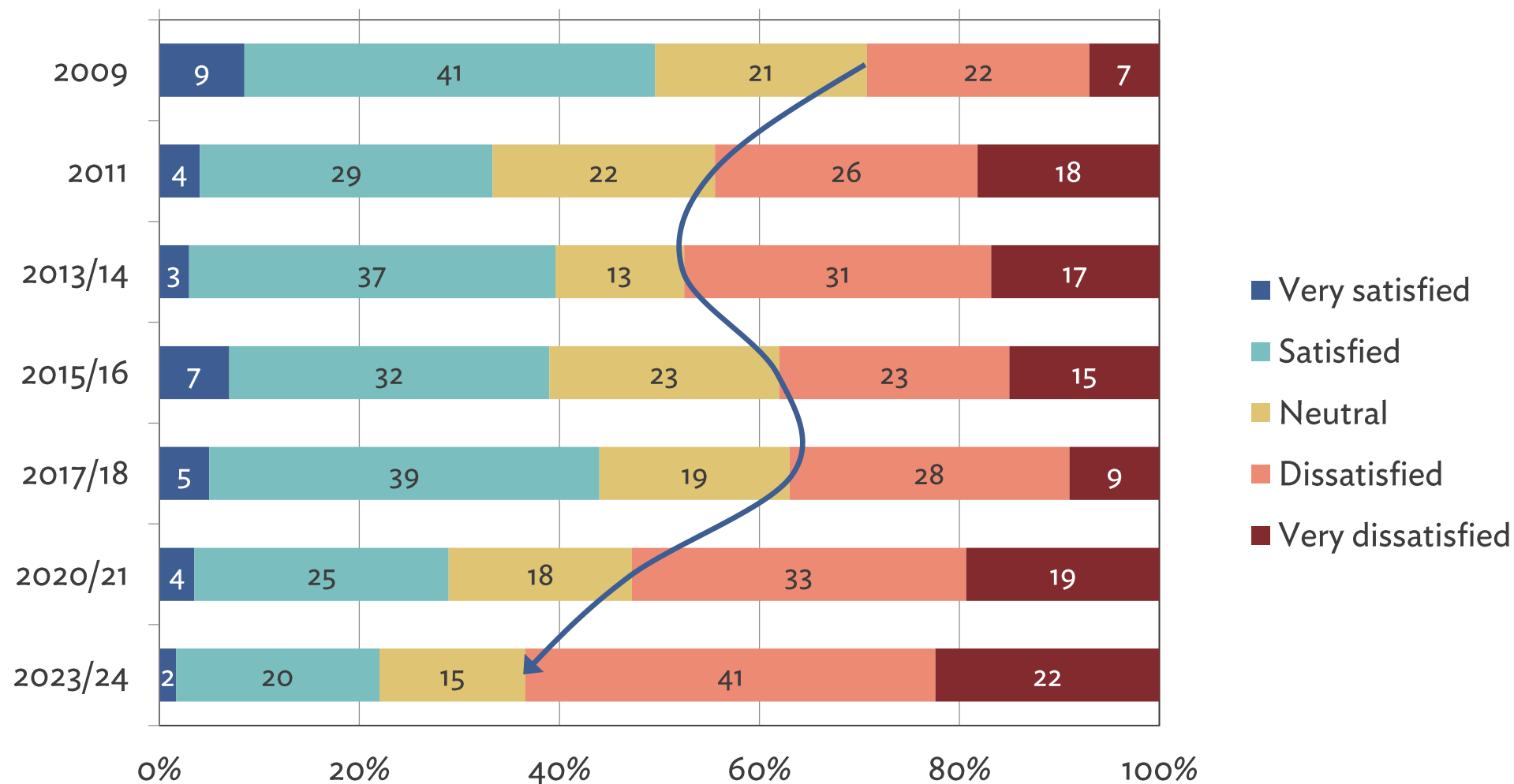
Satisfaction with government

Satisfaction levels: Satisfaction with national government



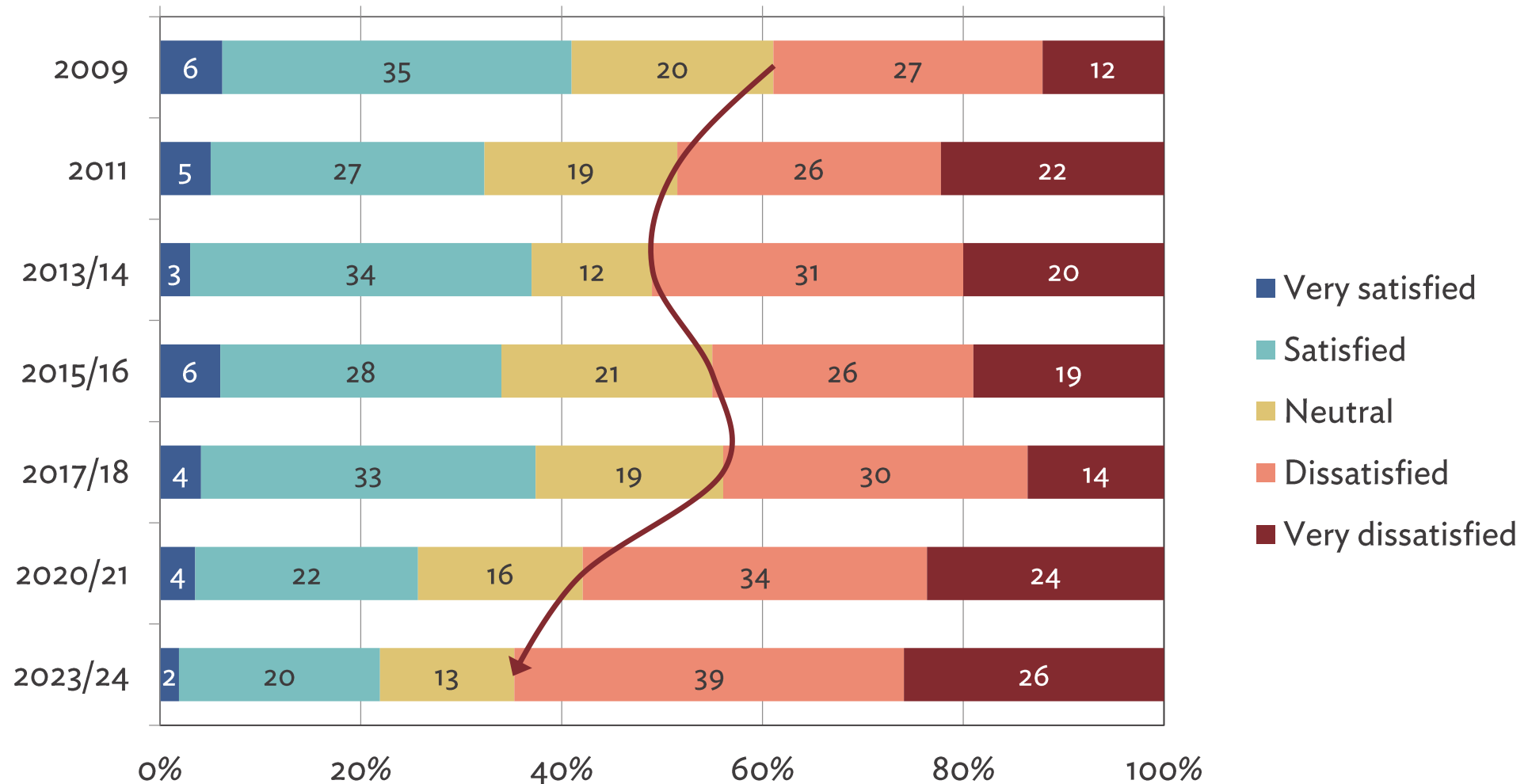
Satisfaction with government

Satisfaction levels: Satisfaction with provincial government



Satisfaction with government

Satisfaction levels: Satisfaction with local government

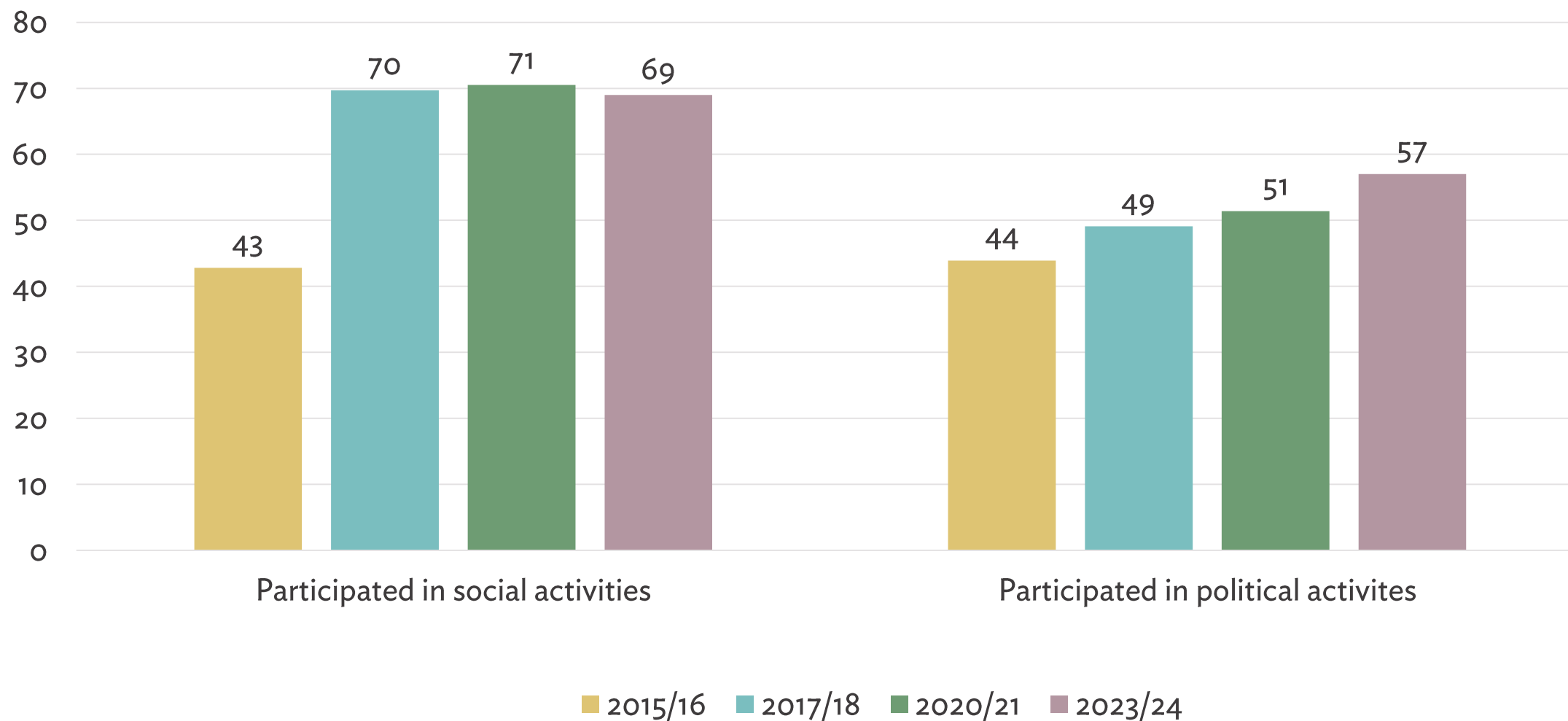


Participation in social and political life



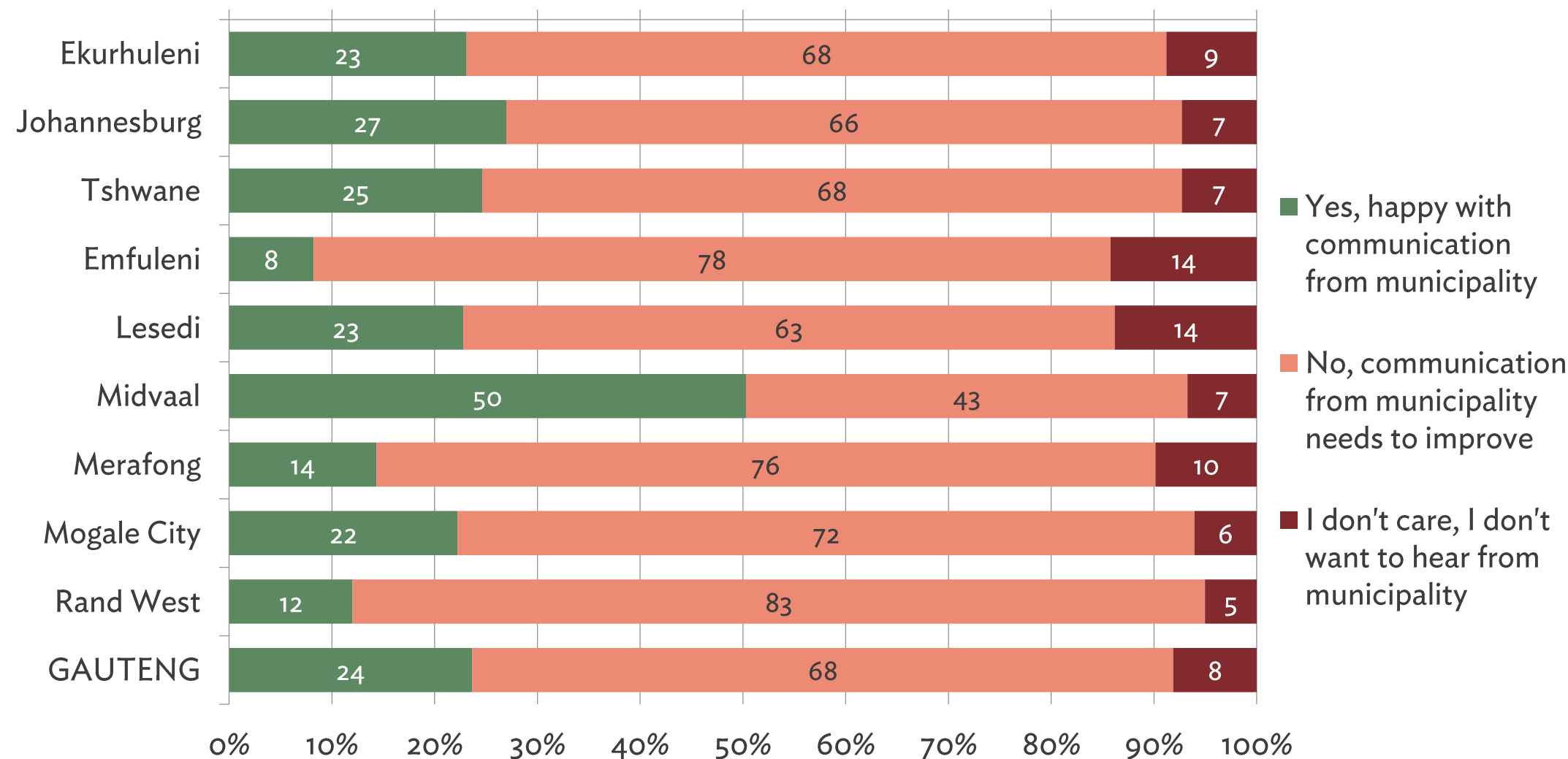
Participation

Engagement: Participation in social and political activities



Participation

Disengagement: Interest in hearing from municipality



Participation

Disengagement: Correlation between dissatisfaction & no interest in hearing from municipality

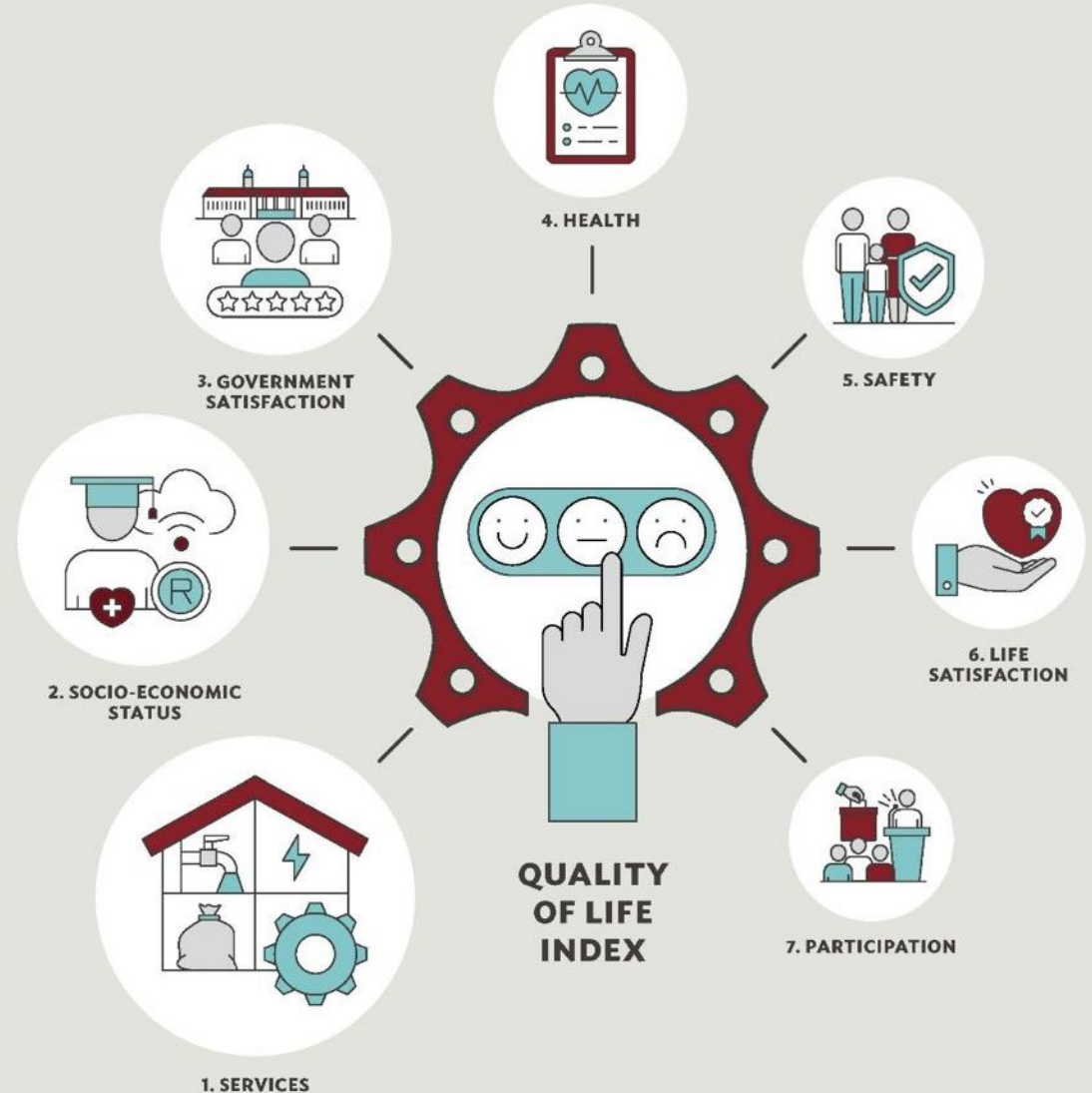


The Quality of Life Index scores – a measure of human progress



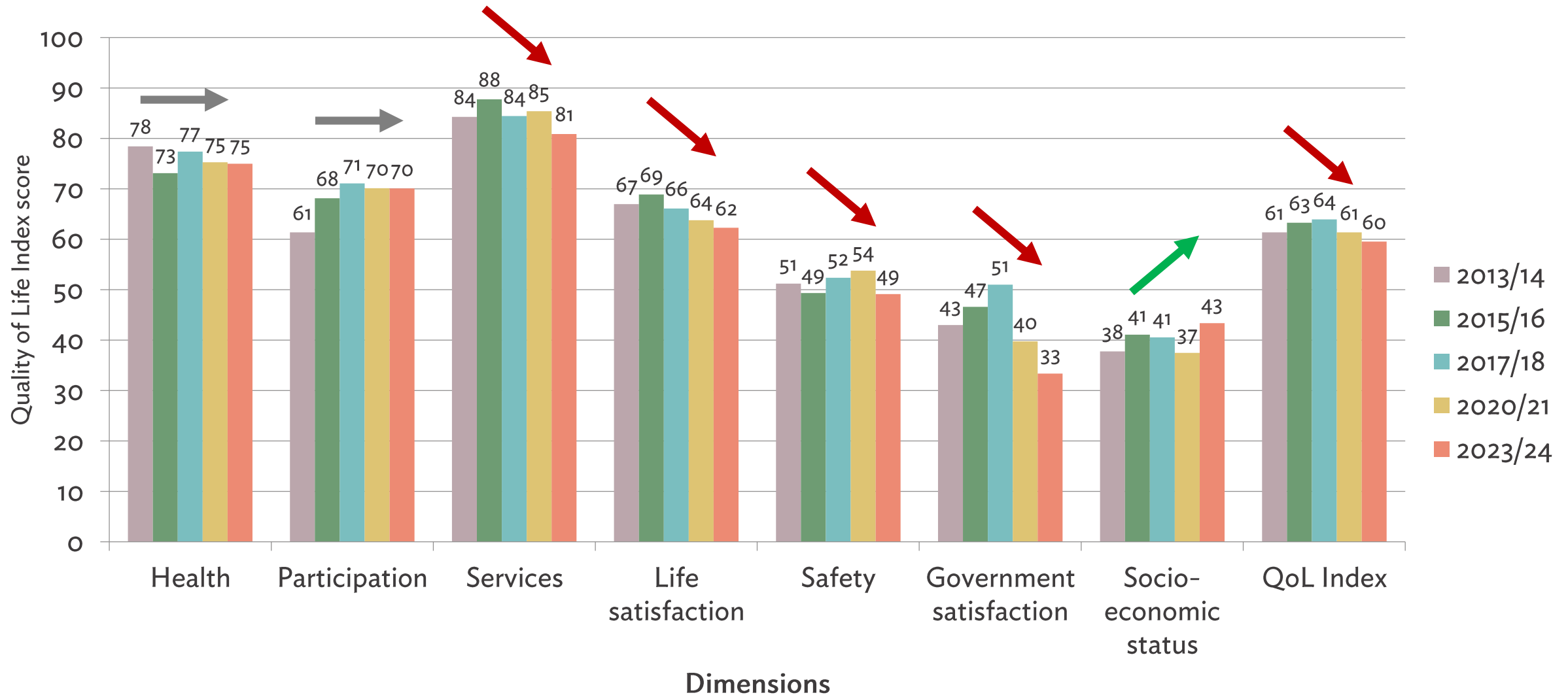
The Quality of Life Index scores

- Drawing on the GCRO Quality of Life survey data.
- A data-driven Quality of Life Index drawing on **33 different variables, grouped into 7 dimensions.**
- QoL Index Methodology



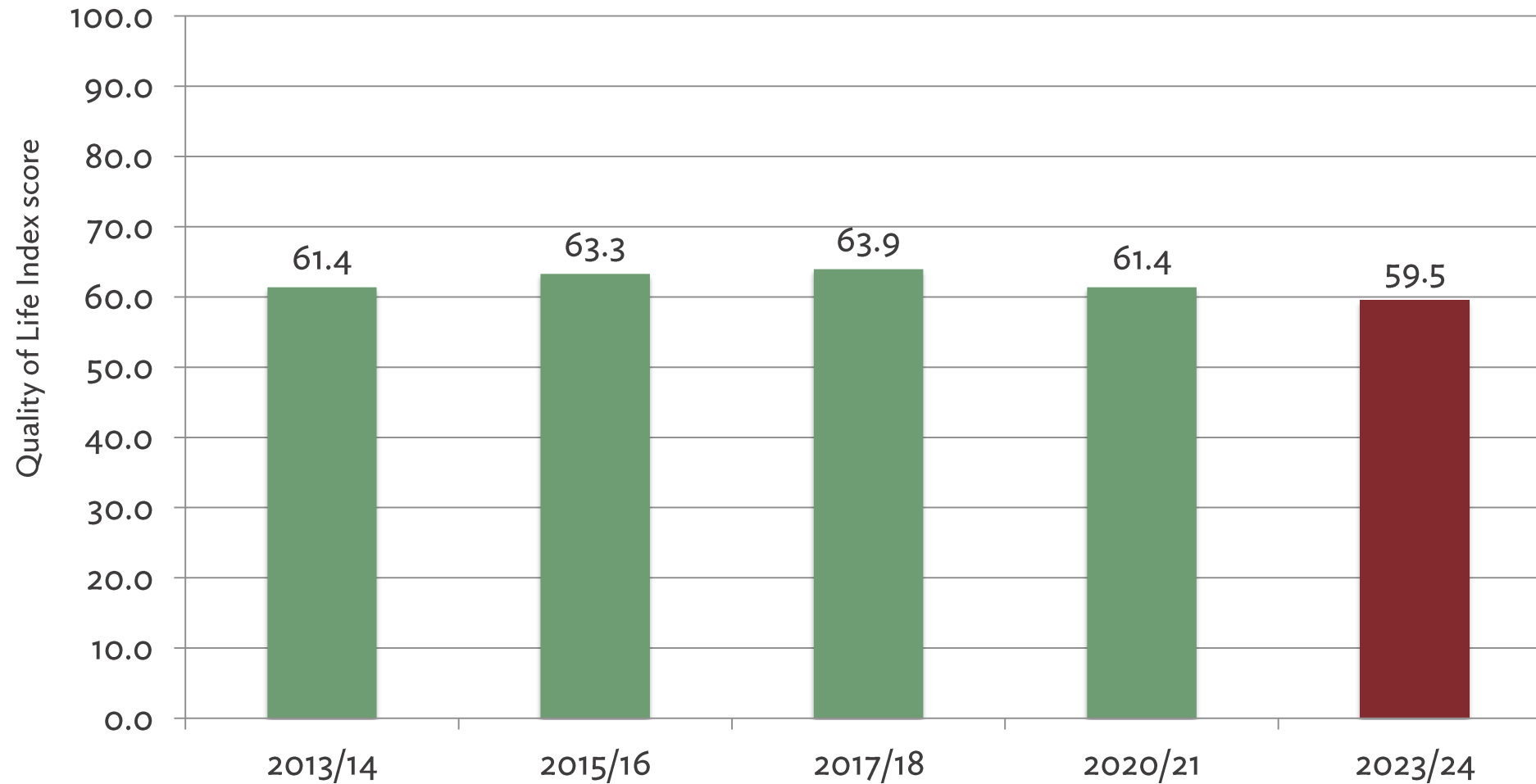
The Quality of Life Index scores

Changes to the Quality of Life index components and overall change



The Quality of Life Index scores

The overall QoL Index score dropped 2 points, and stands below 60 for the first time



Thank You

<https://www.gcro.ac.za/research/project/detail/quality-life-survey-7/>

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