

navigator*

Shutdown Week 3
Wednesday, October 22nd

The Government
Shutdown: A Guide for
Advocates



Credit: Shutterstock/Lucky Photographer

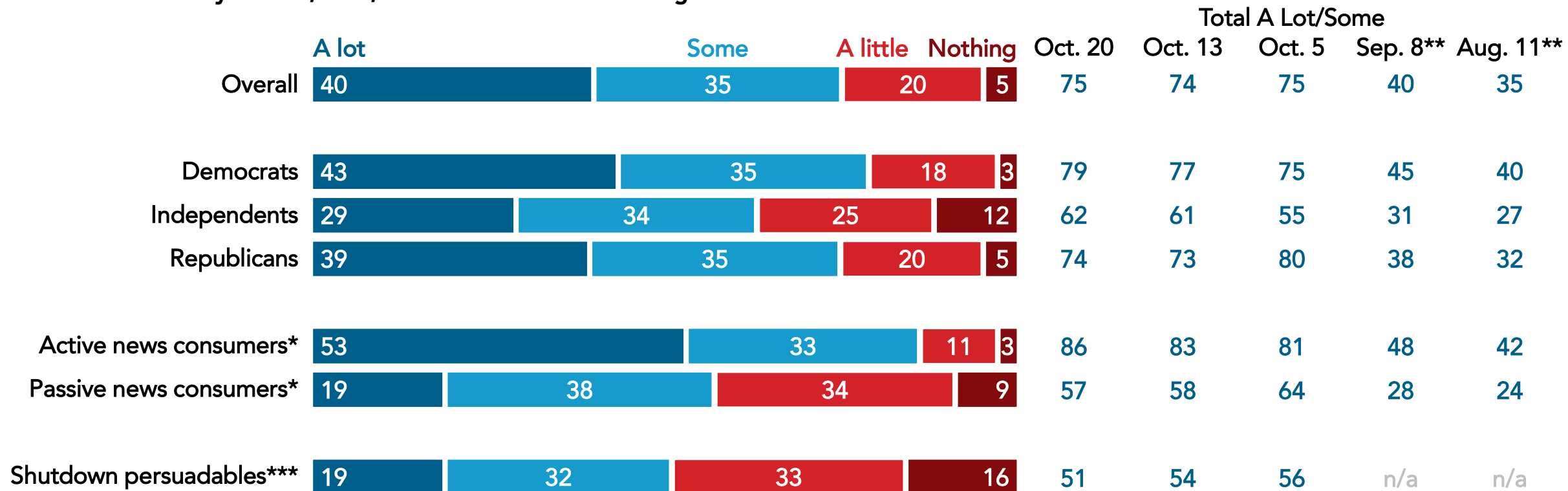
Key Takeaways:

- Americans continue to hear a good deal about the government shutdown. More blame Trump and Republicans than Democrats for the shutdown – and, even more Americans say the power to end the shutdown lies more so with Trump and Republicans than with Democrats.
- More Americans want to see Trump and Republicans compromise to end the shutdown than say the same of Democrats.
- Consequences of health care costs rising are more concerning than the indefinite nature of the shutdown itself. Health care also dominates the conversation around what Democrats in Congress are fighting for in the shutdown, as well as negative information heard about what Trump and Republicans are fighting for.

Three in Four Americans Continue to Hear “A Lot” or “Some” About the Government Shutdown

Higher shares of Democrats continue to report hearing “a lot” or “some” (79%) than Republicans (74%) – three in five independents continue to report hearing “a lot” or “some” (62%) compared to last week (61%).

How much have you seen, read, or heard about the current government shutdown?

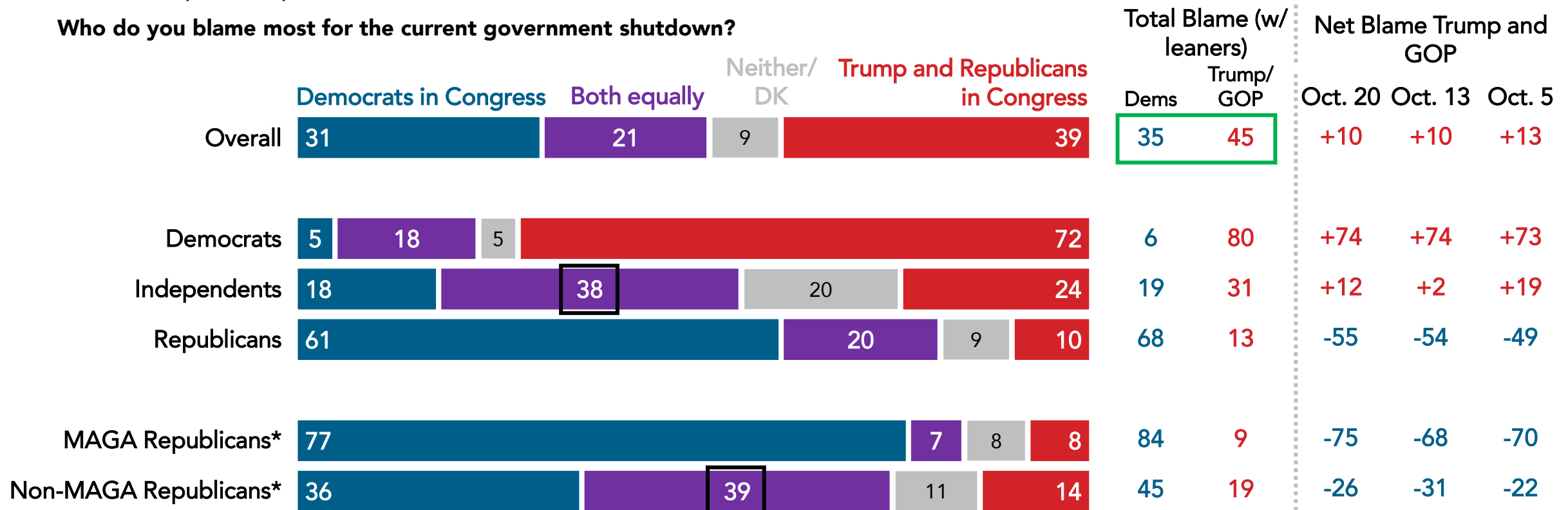


*“Passive news consumers” are those who say, “News comes to me,” while “active news consumers” say, “I seek out news.” **Previous question text said, “How much have you seen, read, or heard about a potential government shutdown in the coming months if Congress cannot pass their annual spending bills?” ***“Shutdown persuadables” are defined as those who say they do not blame the shutdown on either Democrats or Trump and Republicans, blame both of these equally, or don’t know, and excludes leaners towards either group on a follow-up ask. Nationwide surveys of registered voters; Each wave represents approximately 1,000 interviews taken over the prior three-five days. Latest wave conducted October 16-October 20, 2025. For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

Attitudes on Shutdown Blame Are Stable – With More Blaming Trump and Republicans for the Shutdown Than Democrats

In the initial ask, 38% of independents blame both equally as do 39% of non-MAGA Republicans*; after a follow-up question among those who do not blame one side more than the other initially, 19% of independents blame Democrats in Congress more while 31% blame Trump and Republicans in Congress more.

Who do you blame most for the current government shutdown?

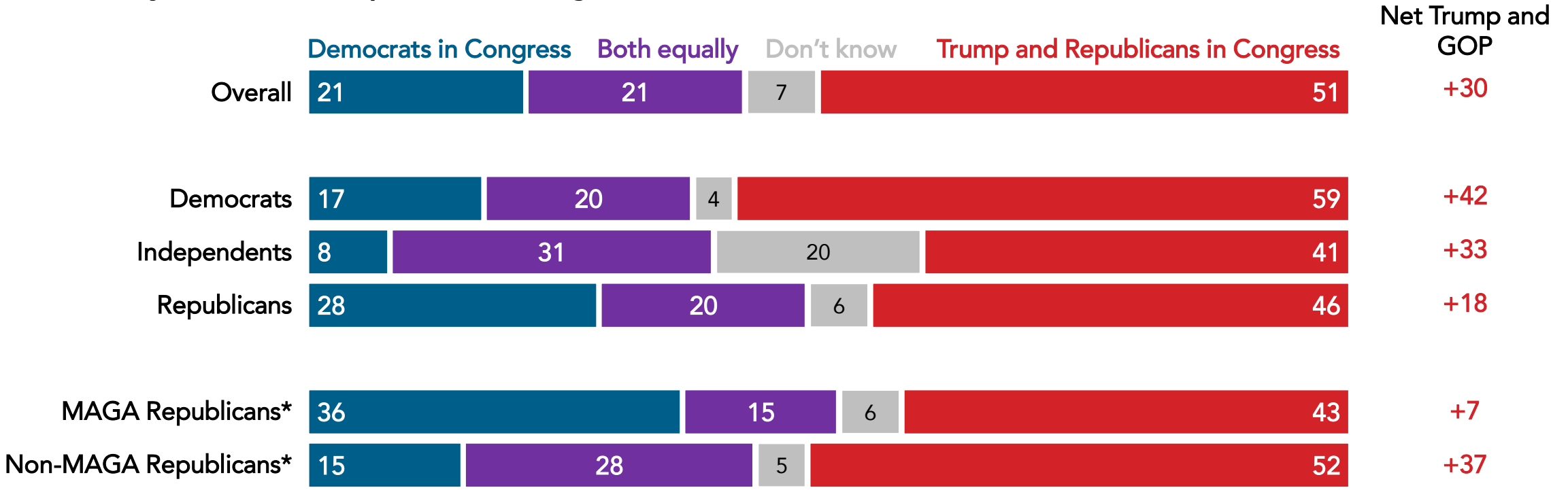


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A Majority of Americans Believe Trump and GOP Have the Power to End the Shutdown, Far More Than Say So for Democrats

Unlike when it comes to which party to blame, which falls more clearly along partisan lines, a plurality of partisans on both sides say Trump and Republicans have the power to end it (net +42 Trump and Republicans among Democrats, net +18 among Republicans).

Who do you think has more power to end the government shutdown?



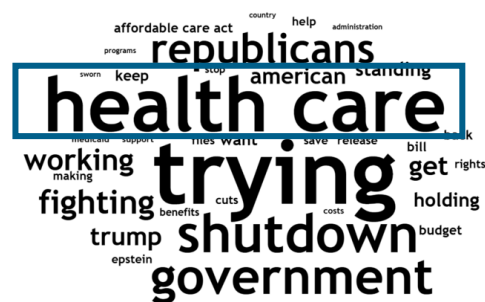
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The Shutdown Remains Top of Mind on Congress; the Middle East Pops on Positive for Trump & Health Care for Democrats

Americans hearing positive information about Democrats in Congress continue to cite health care.

[If hearing positive/mixed information] In a few words, what **positive things have you seen, read, or heard recently about...**

Democrats in Congress (45% hearing positive)



Republicans in Congress (44% hearing positive)



Donald Trump (51% hearing positive)

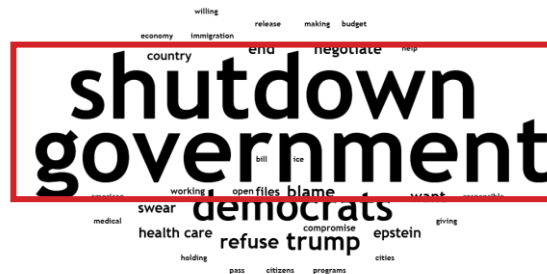


[If hearing negative/mixed information] In a few words, what **negative things have you seen, read, or heard recently about...**

Democrats in Congress (64% hearing negative)



Republicans in Congress (65% hearing negative)



Donald Trump (66% hearing negative)



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Congressional Lack of Action to Prevent Health Care Costs from Rising Remains More Concerning Than the Shutdown Itself

Please indicate how concerned you are about each one, where 1 means you're not at all concerned about that item and 5 means you're extremely concerned about that item.

	/ Split Sample		% Total Concerning (% 4-5)				MAGA Reps.*	Non-MAGA Reps.*
	% 5 – Extremely concerning	% 4	Overall	Dem	Ind	Rep		
***Health care costs rising and Americans losing health care coverage if Congress does nothing to prevent it	59	18	77	93	80	60	53	70
**Health care costs rising and Americans losing health care coverage	55	19	73	91	62	58	54	64
The U.S. government giving \$20 billion to Argentina to bail out its economy	49	18	67	78	65	57	56	60
The government shutdown entering its third week with no clear end in sight	48	20	68	84	65	54	46	66
Federal workers not receiving their paychecks	48	20	68	84	66	52	48	58
The National Guard continuing to be deployed to American cities	45	12	57	85	57	29	22	39
New tariffs being put in place as the trade war with China grows	43	19	61	85	61	38	27	53
A new Pentagon rule that says reporters could have their press passes revoked if they publish information that has not been authorized by the Pentagon	40	14	54	77	49	32	25	43
Republicans refusing to swear in Democratic Congresswoman-elect Adelita Grijalva	35	13	48	75	36	23	16	33

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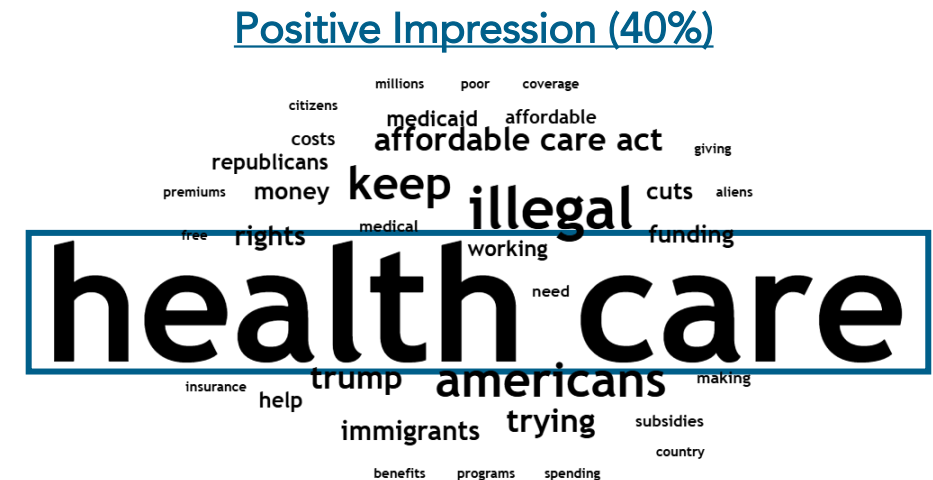
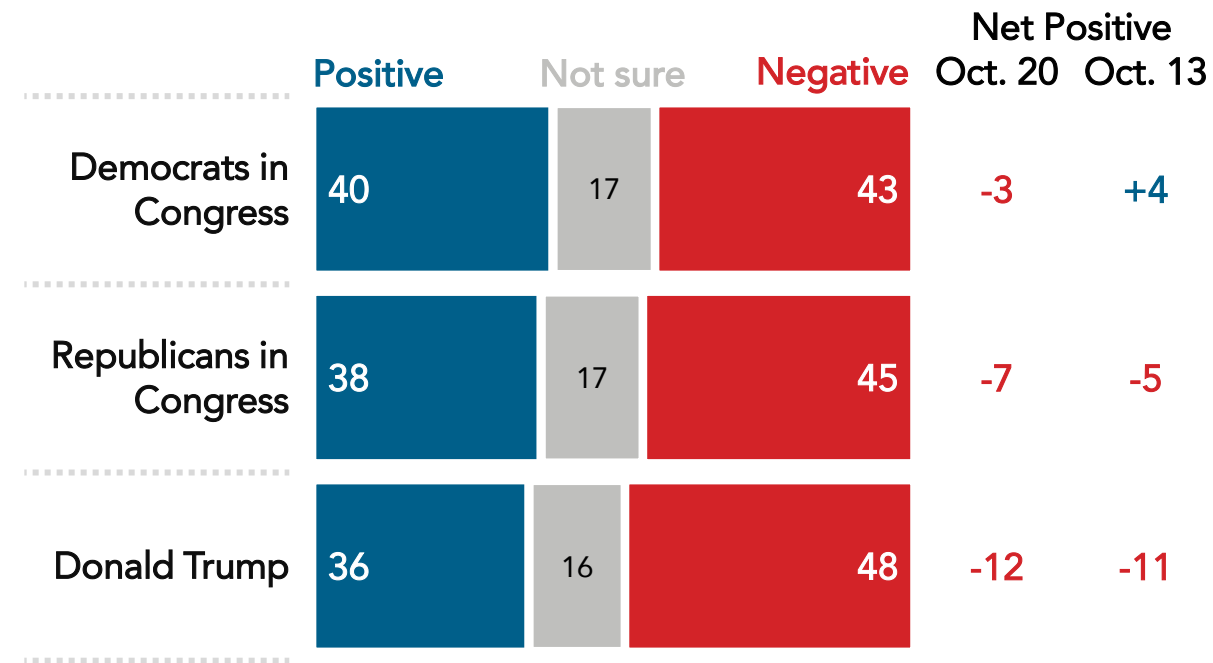
Americans Continue to Have a More Negative View of Trump and GOP in the Shutdown Than Democrats

The greatest decline in the share who have a positive impression of what Democrats in Congress are fighting for comes from Republicans, who rated Democrats at net -53 positive last week and net -64 this week.

- Those with a positive impression of what Democrats are fighting for continue to cite health care as the main reason.

Do you have a positive or negative impression of what _____ is/are fighting for in this government shutdown?

[If a positive or negative impression] And what, specifically, do you think the Democrats in Congress are fighting for in this government shutdown?



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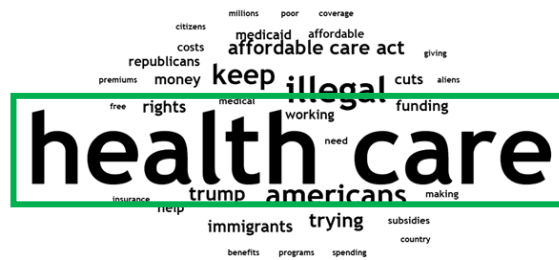
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Health Care Dominates Information on Democrats in Congress, as Well as Negatives Around Trump/GOP in Shutdown

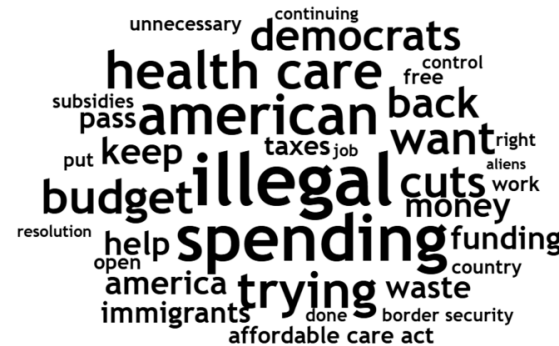
Americans report hearing about health care negatively when it comes to what Trump and Republicans in Congress are fighting for.

And what, specifically, do you think _____ is/are fighting for in this government shutdown?

Democrats in Congress (Positive, 40%)



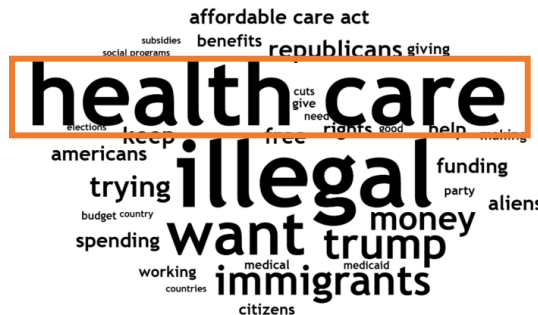
Republicans in Congress (Positive, 38%)



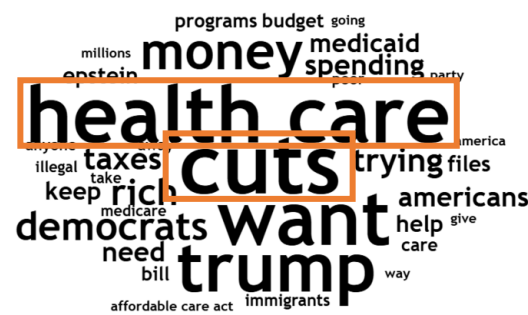
Donald Trump (Positive, 36%)



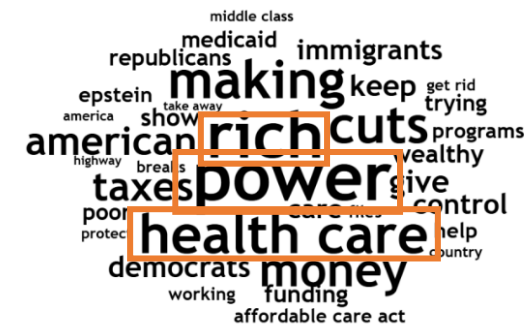
Democrats in Congress (Negative, 43%)



Republicans in Congress (Negative, 45%)



Donald Trump (Negative, 48%)



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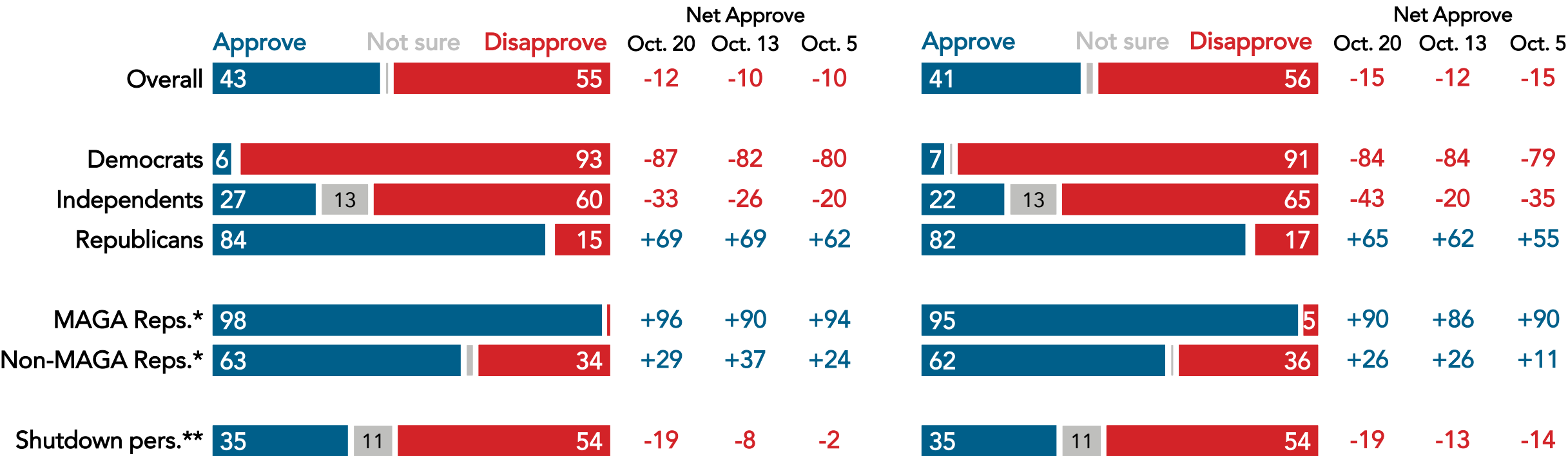
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Trump Remains Deeply Underwater Both on His Overall Approval Rating and on the Economy

Among independents, Trump is at net -33 approve overall and net -43 on the economy.

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as president?

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling the economy?



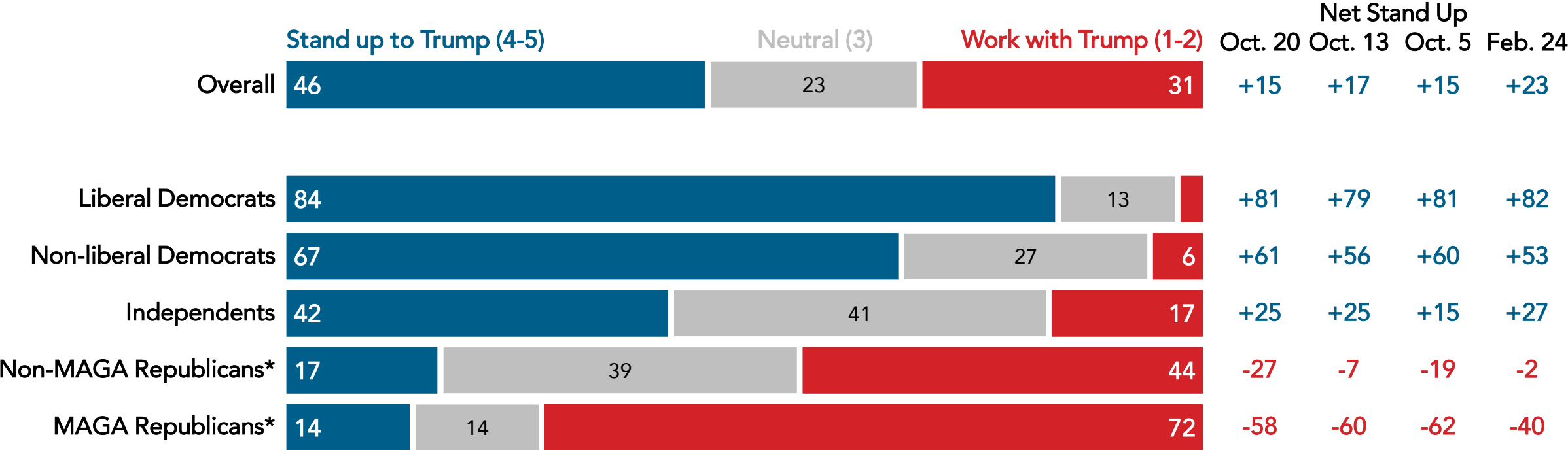
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Nearly Half Continue to Want to See Congressional Democrats Stand Up to Trump

Two in five independents (42%) want to see Democrats in Congress stand up to Trump.

On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means "work with President Trump all the time" and 5 means "stand up to President Trump all the time," what do you think Democrats in Congress should do?

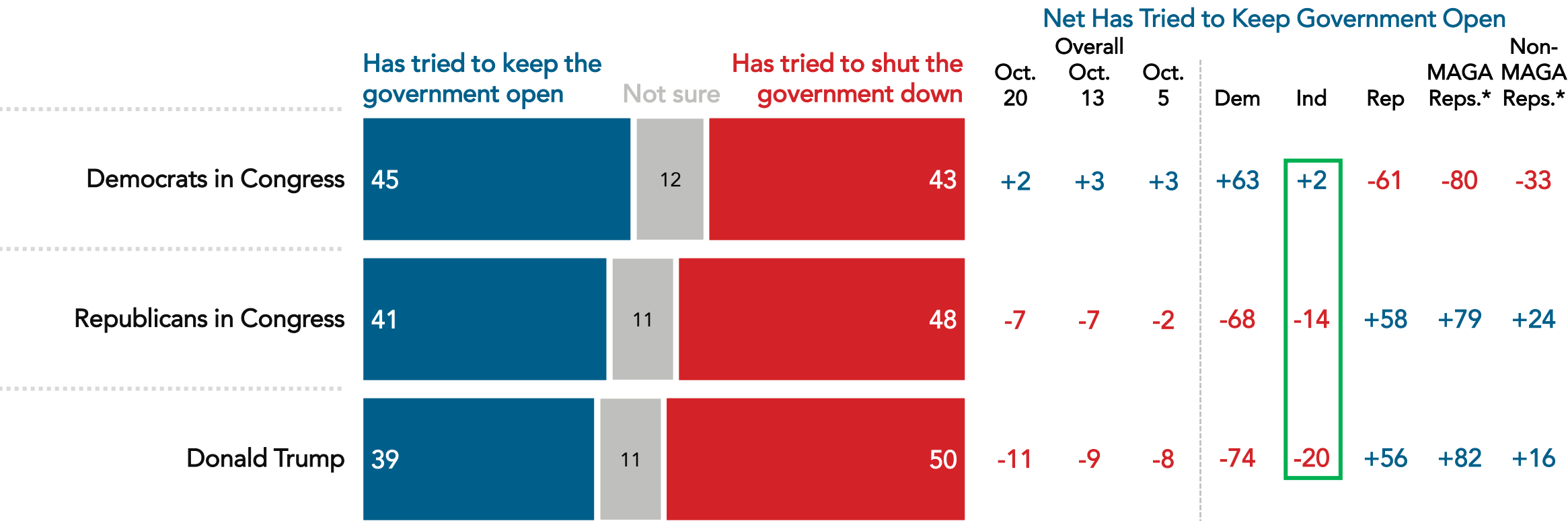


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More Continue to See Democrats in Congress Trying to Keep the Government Open Than Trump or Republicans

Among independents, while more see Democrats in Congress trying to keep the government open rather than shutting it down (net +2 keep open), they say the opposite of Republicans in Congress (net -14) and Trump (net -20).

Please indicate whether you think each has tried to keep the government open or has tried to shut the government down.



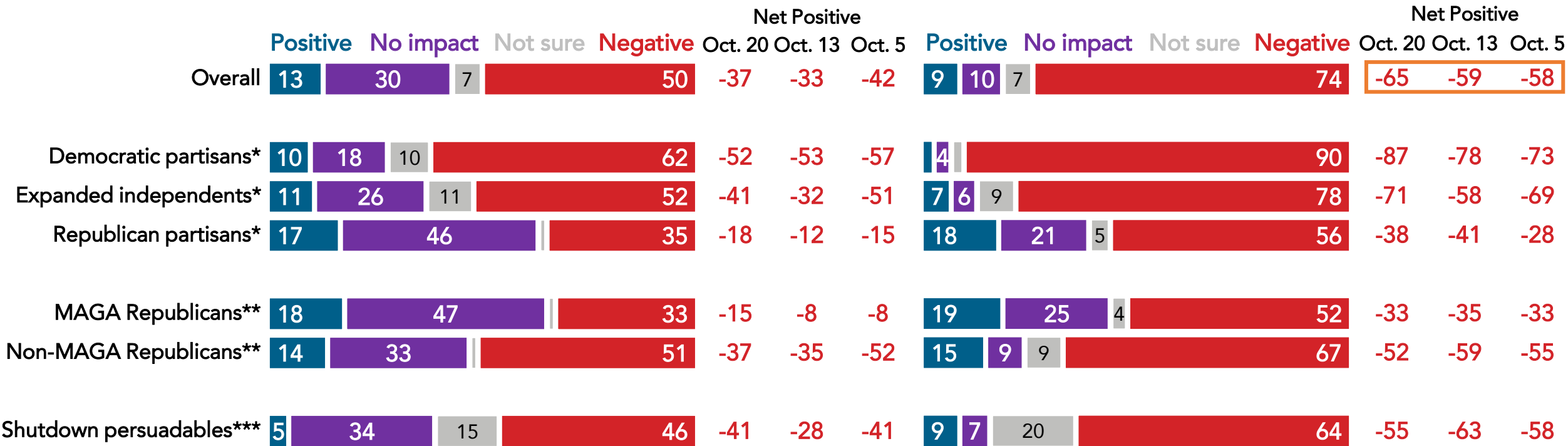
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Growing Majorities Say the Shutdown Will Have a Negative Impact on the Country; Half Say the Same of Personal Impacts

A growing share of Americans think the shutdown will have a negative impact on the country, from net -58 positive impact in early October to net -65 now.

(Split Sample) Regardless of how much you have heard about the government shutdown, which of the following best describes the impact you think it will have on **you personally**?

(Split Sample) Regardless of how much you have heard about the government shutdown, which of the following best describes the impact you think it will have on **the country**?

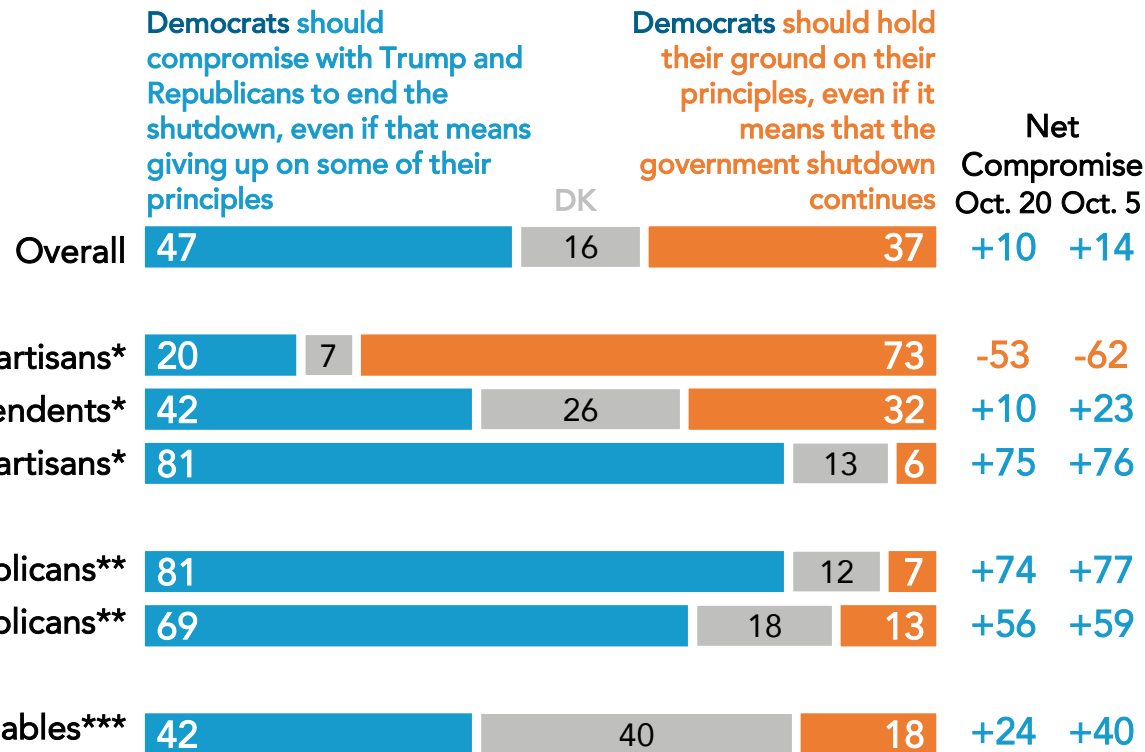


*"Democratic partisans" are strong Democrats or weak Democrats who say they always vote for Democratic candidates; "Republican partisans" are MAGA-identified Republicans who say they always vote for Republicans; "expanded independents" are weak Democrats who don't always vote for Democrats, independents, and non-MAGA Republicans who don't always vote for Republicans. **"MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who identify as "a supporter of the MAGA movement" on a separate question, while "non-MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who do not consider themselves supporters of the MAGA movement or are not sure. ***"Shutdown persuadables" are defined as those who say they do not blame the shutdown on either Democrats or Trump and Republicans, blame both of these equally, or don't know, and excludes leaners towards either group on a follow-up ask. Nationwide surveys of registered voters; Each wave represents approximately 1,000 interviews taken over the prior three-five days. Latest wave conducted October 16-October 20, 2025. For more info, visit navigatortresearch.org.

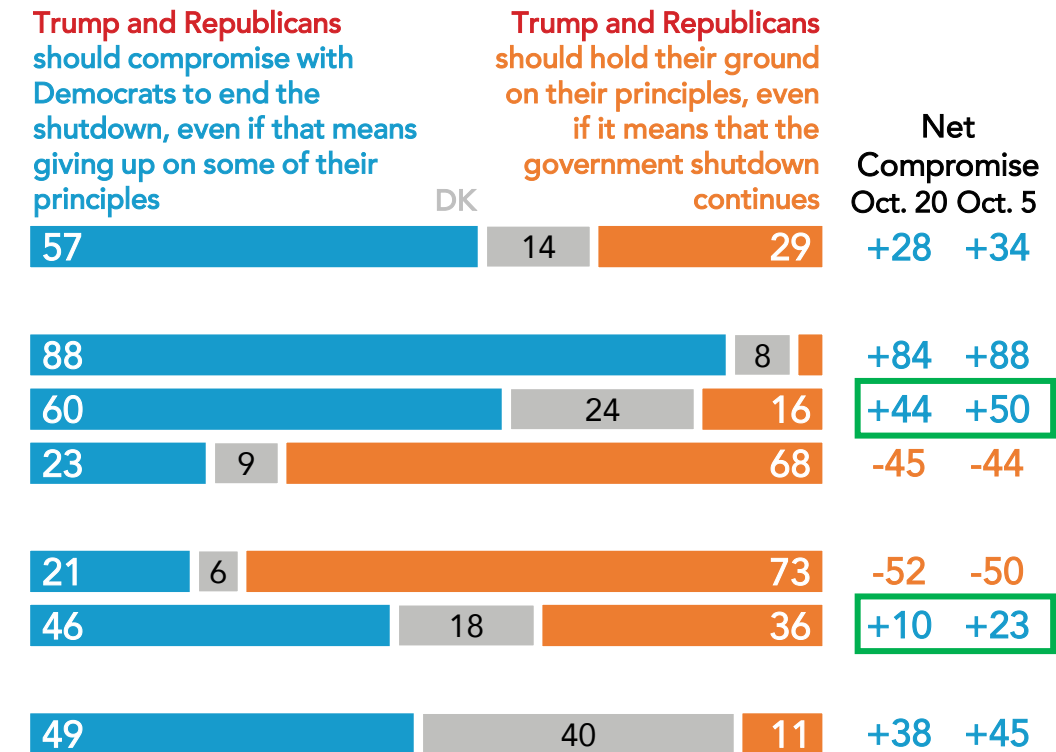
More Americans Continue to Want to See Trump and GOP Compromise on Shutdown Than Democrats

Two in five expanded independents* want to see Democrats compromise (42%) compared to 60% who say the same of Trump and Republicans in Congress.

(Split Sample) What do you think **Democrats in Congress** should do in relation to the government shutdown?



What do you think **President Trump and Republicans in Congress** should do in relation to the government shutdown?



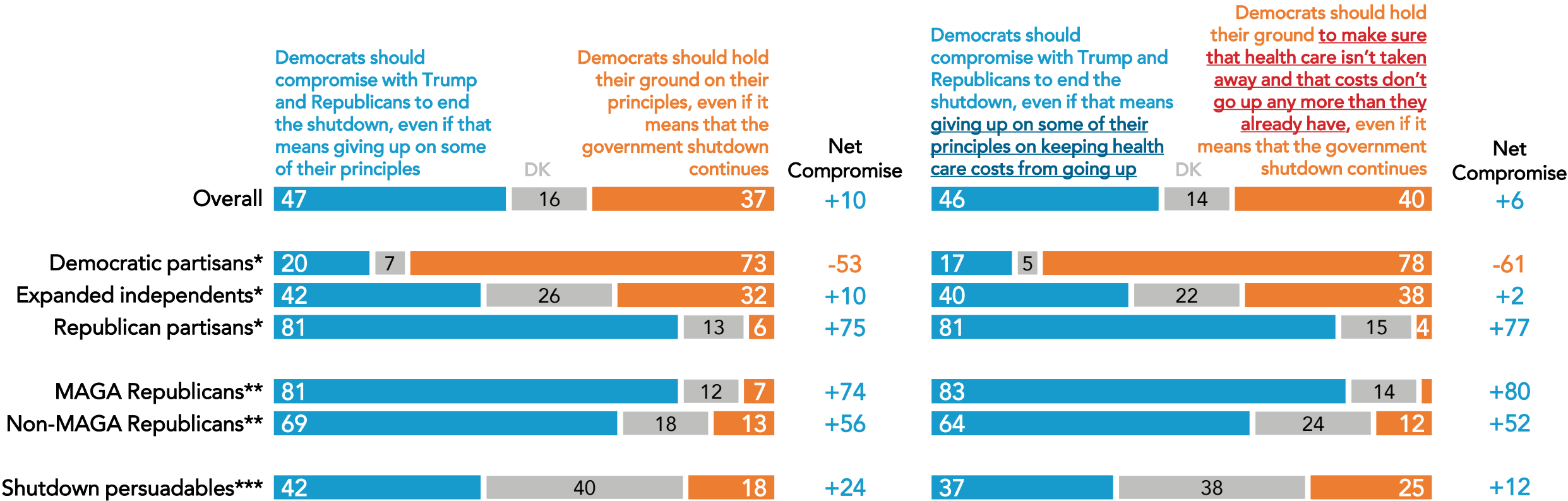
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Health Care Remains a Helpful Wedge for Democrats in Shutdown

Expanded independents* are more supportive of Democrats holding the line when health care is involved (38%) than without it (32%).

What do you think Democrats in Congress should do in relation to the government shutdown? [Split Sample]



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Democrats Continue to Hold Their Advantage on Health Care, Lagging Trump and Republicans on Other Shutdown Issues

Since last week, the share who say they trust Democrats more to “look out for people like me” has grown (from net +1 trust Democrats more to net +7). Trump and Republicans continue to lead on “getting things done” and “bringing needed change to Washington.”

Please indicate who you personally trust more to handle each one.

Please indicate who you personally trust more to handle each one.					Net Trust the Democratic Party								
	The Democratic Party	Neither	DK	Trump and the Republican Party	Overall						MAGA Reps.*	Non-MAGA Reps.*	
					Oct. 20	Oct. 13	Oct. 5	Dem	Ind	Rep			
Health care	44	19	8	29	+15	+13	+15	+82	+8	-52	-69	-25	
Looking out for people like me	39	23	6	32	+7	+1	+6	+74	+1	-61	-78	-36	
Fighting for what is right	39	18	5	38	+1	+2	n/a	+76	-7	-72	-90	-47	
Acting responsibly	36	24	5	35	+1	+1	+4	+69	-2	-68	-86	-39	
Inflation and the cost of living	35	21	7	37	-2	-2	-2	+64	-8	-67	-82	-45	
Handling the government shutdown	30	29	8	33	-3	-5	-2	+55	-5	-62	-78	-38	
Fixing a broken political system	29	30	7	34	-5	-7	-6	+56	-11	-64	-82	-38	
Being fiscally responsible	30	24	9	37	-7	-7	-5	+54	-8	-69	-86	-43	
Bringing needed change to Washington	29	25	7	39	-10	-9	-8	+56	-15	-75	-91	-48	
Getting things done	28	26	5	41	-13	-10	-10	+53	-19	-78	-91	-57	

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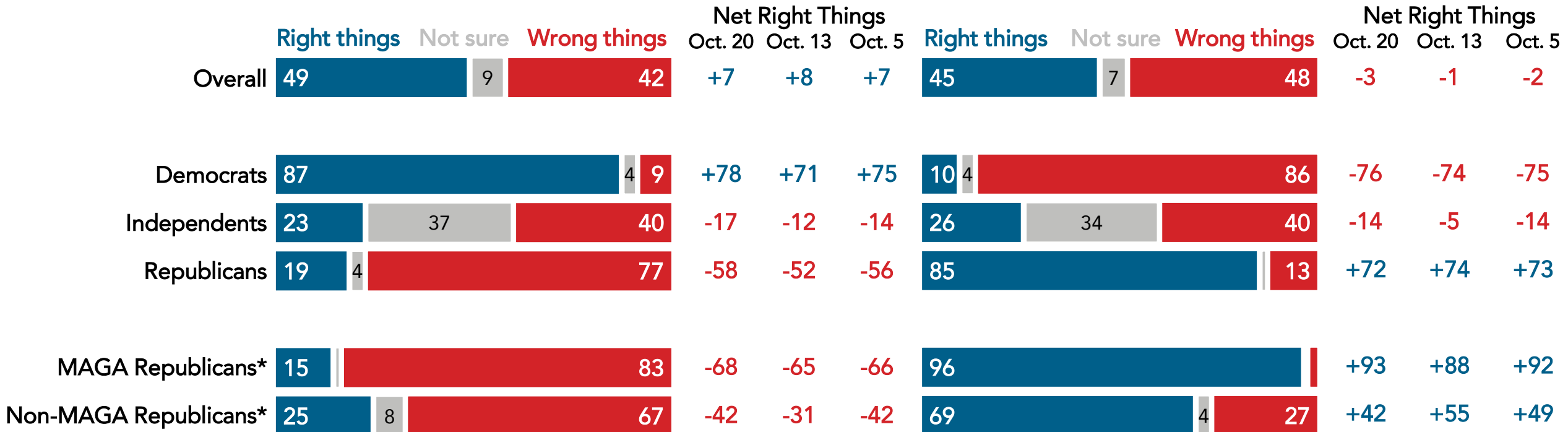
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More Continue to Say Democrats Are Focused on the Right Things Than Say Republicans Are

Two in five (40%) independents say each party is focused on the wrong things.

Do you think the **Democratic Party** is focused on the right things?

Do you think the **Republican Party** is focused on the right things?



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About Navigator

In a world where the news cycle is the length of a tweet, our leaders often lack the real-time public-sentiment analysis to shape the best approaches to talking about the issues that matter the most. Navigator is designed to act as a consistent, flexible, responsive tool to inform policy debates by conducting research and reliable guidance to inform allies, elected leaders, and the press. Navigator is a project led by pollsters from Global Strategy Group and GBAO along with an advisory committee, including: Jessica Floyd, The Hub Project; Christina Reynolds; Mike Podhorzer; Jesse Ferguson, progressive strategist; Navin Nayak; Stephanie Valencia, EquisLabs; and Melanie Newman, Planned Parenthood Action Fund.

About the Study

Global Strategy Group conducted a public opinion survey among a sample of 1,000 registered voters from October 16-October 20, 2025. The survey was conducted online, recruiting respondents from an opt-in online panel vendor. Respondents were verified against a voter file and special care was taken to ensure the demographic composition of our sample matched that of the national registered voter population across a variety of demographic variables. The margin of error for the full sample at the 95 percent level of confidence is +/- 3.1 percentage points. The margin of error for subgroups varies and is higher.

For Press inquiries contact:

press@navigatorresearch.org

To learn more about Navigator:

<http://navigatorresearch.org>

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