

navigator*

Update:
Friday, December 18

Communicating in Crisis



Key Takeaways:

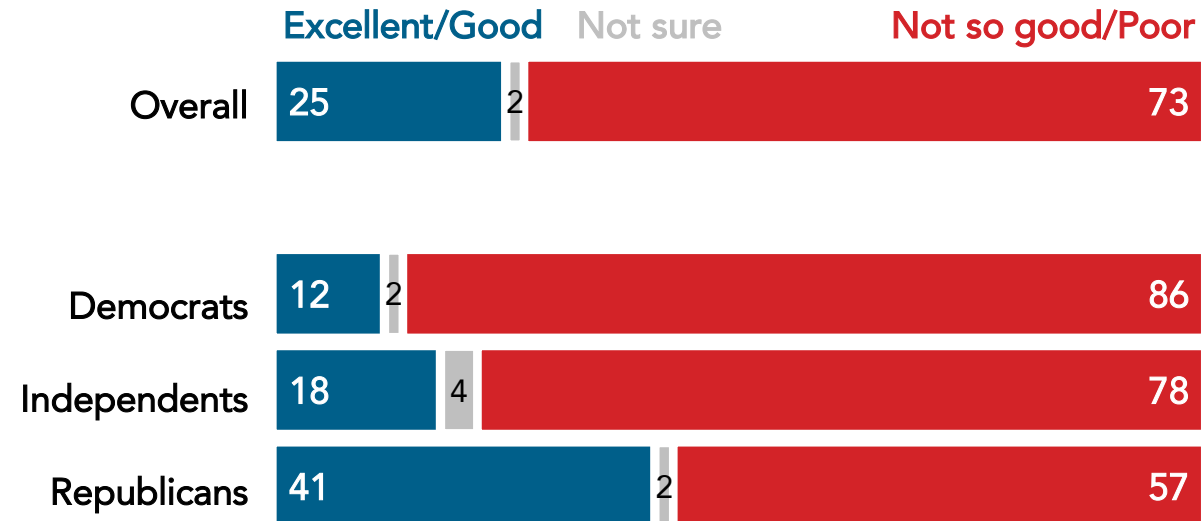
- Three in four Americans say the economy is “not so good” or “poor” and a majority are uneasy about their personal finances.
- The public overwhelmingly supports a new round of economic relief and is worried about the lack of help from the federal government for those in need.
- A majority support canceling student loan debt, and the most convincing reasons for canceling student loan debt include economic stimulus and closing the racial wealth gap.

Americans Are Pessimistic About the State of the Economy

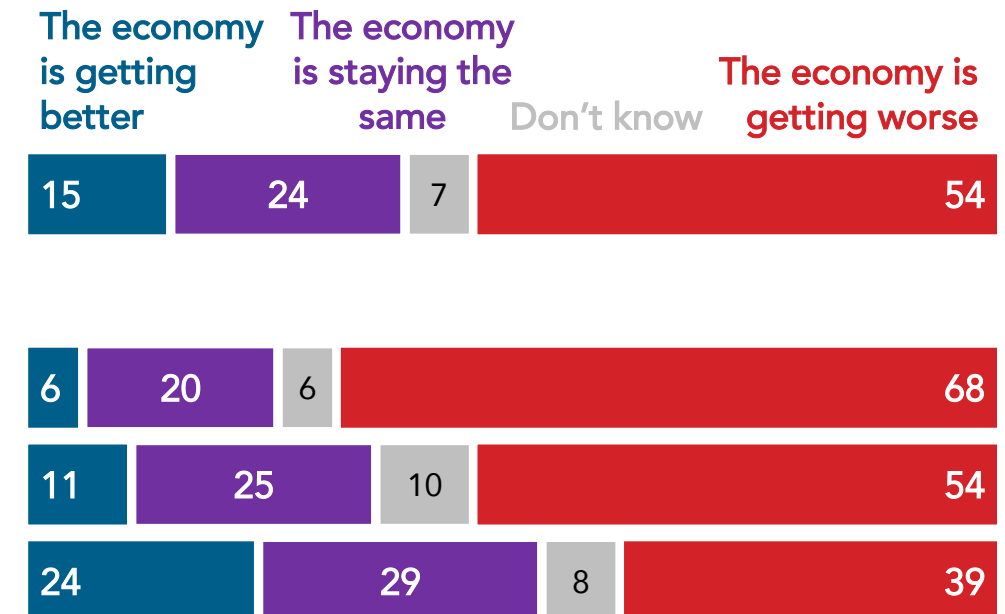
Three in four Americans say the economy is currently “not so good” or “poor,” and more than half say the “economy is getting worse.”

- Republicans remain the most optimistic about the state of the economy: 41% say the economy is “excellent” or “good,” and 53% say the economy is either “getting better” or “staying the same.”

How would you rate the state of the U.S. economy today?



And, which of the following best describes the current state of the U.S. economy:

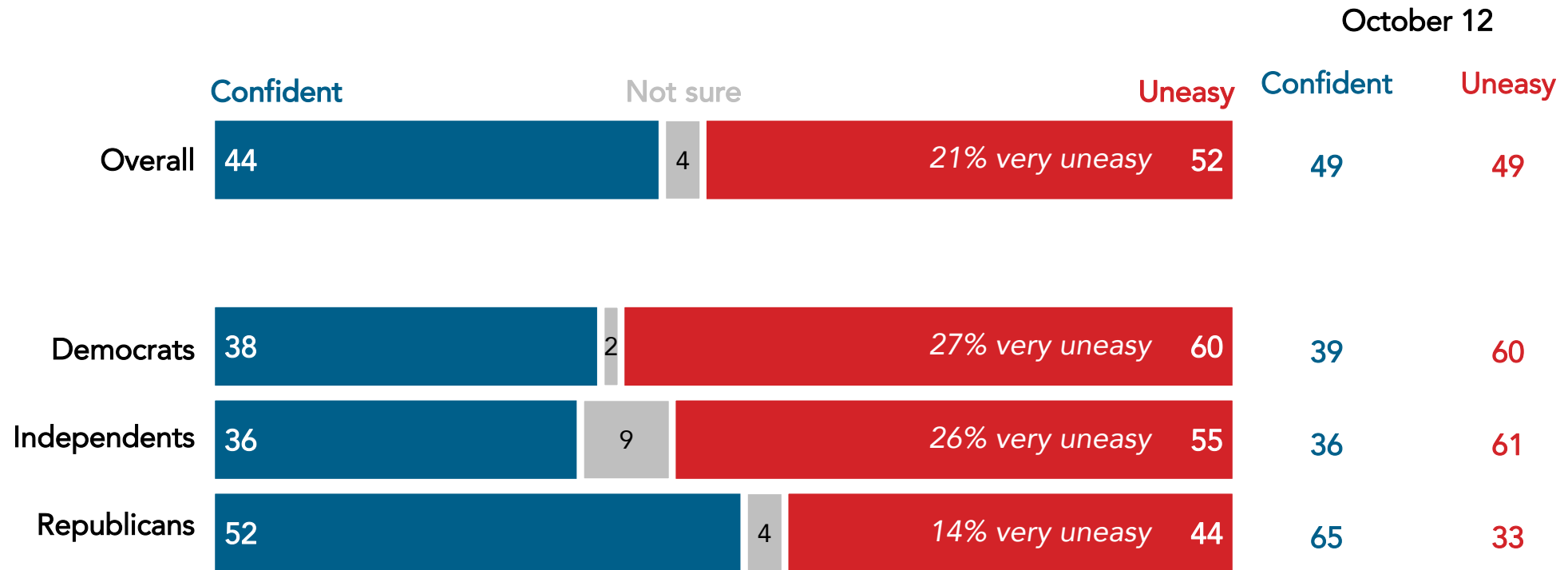


Nationwide survey of registered voters conducted Dec. 10-14, 2020. For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

A Majority of Americans Uneasy About Their Personal Finances

Americans have grown 5 points less confident in their personal financial situation since October 12, driven largely by pessimism among Republicans (down to 52% from 62% confident).

Thinking about your personal financial situation over the next few months, do you feel confident or uneasy?



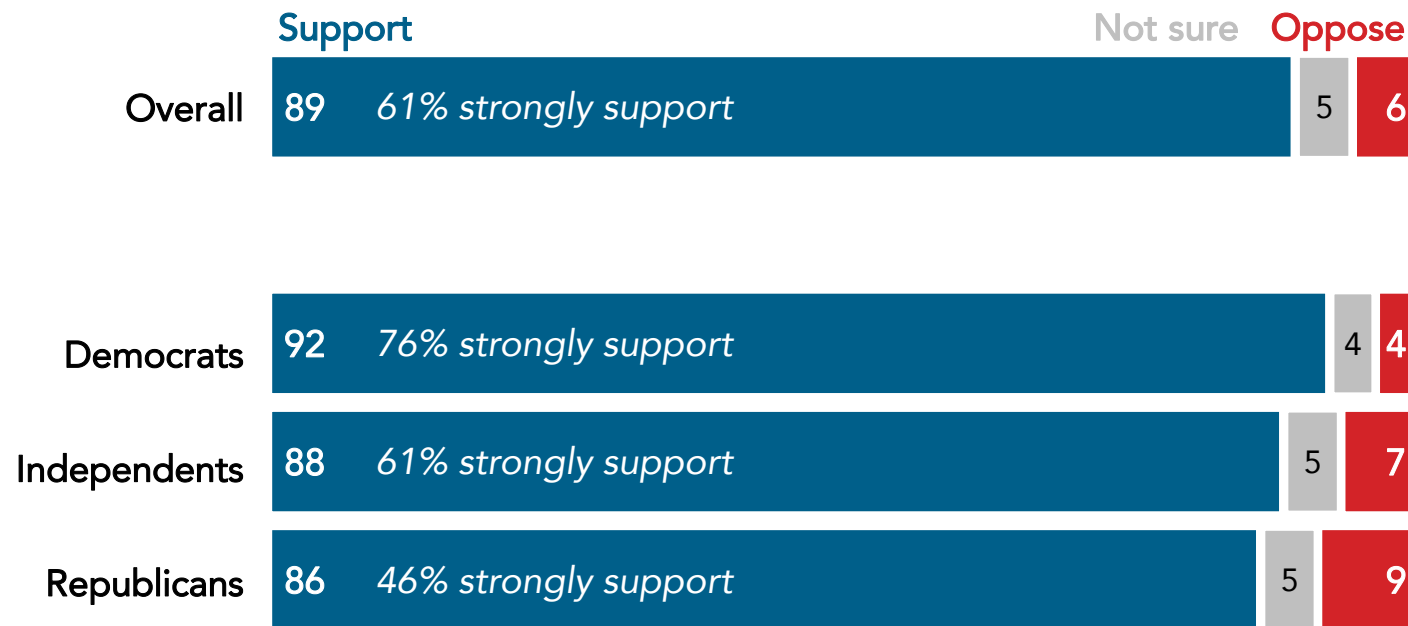
Nationwide surveys of registered voters conducted Dec. 10-14, 2020, and Oct. 8-12, 2020
For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

New Economic Relief Enjoys Nearly Unanimous Support

Nearly nine in ten Americans support a new round of economic relief, including three in five who “strongly support.”

- On a separate question, Americans are split on who to blame for lack of relief (41% blame Democrats in Congress, 41% Republicans in Congress). Among those who “strongly support” new relief, 51% blame Republicans for lack of progress on a new round of coronavirus relief, while just 34% blame Democrats.

As you may know, Congress has passed a series of bills to provide economic relief for individuals and businesses impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. Do you support or oppose passing a new round of economic relief?

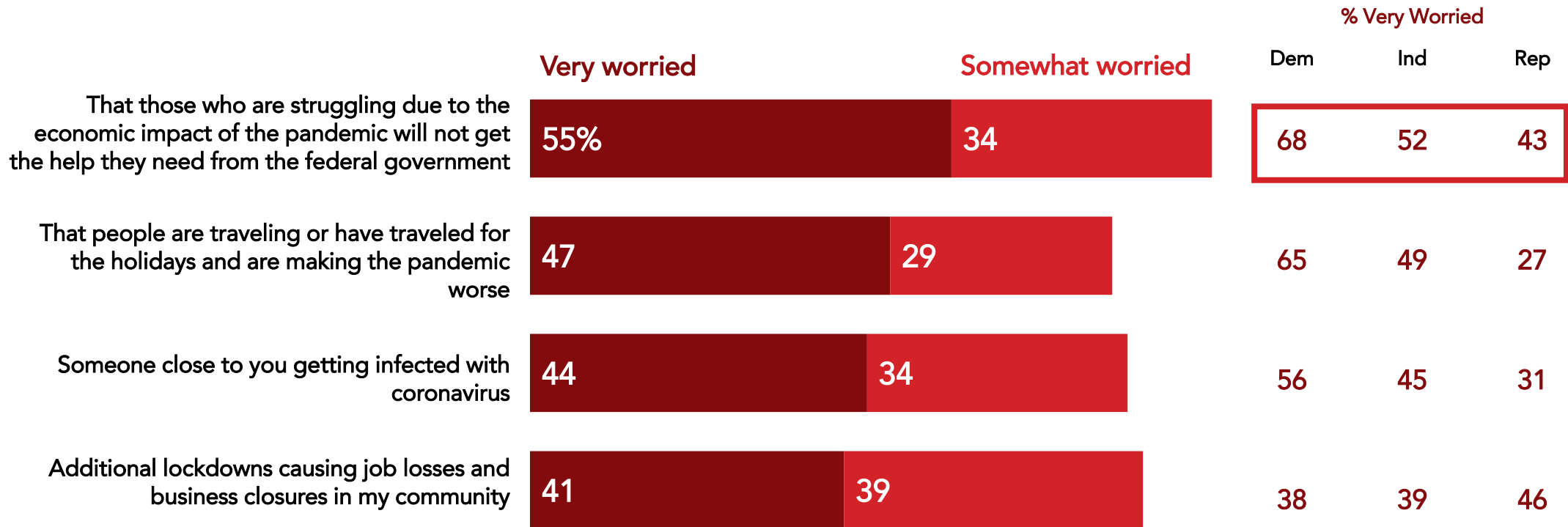


Nationwide survey of registered voters conducted Dec. 10-14, 2020.
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The Economic Impact of the Pandemic and Lack of Federal Aid Are Americans' Top Worries

While a majority of Americans are worried about a range of issues related to the pandemic, including the economic impact and holiday travel, lack of aid from the federal government is a top worry across party lines.

Please indicate how worried you are about each item.

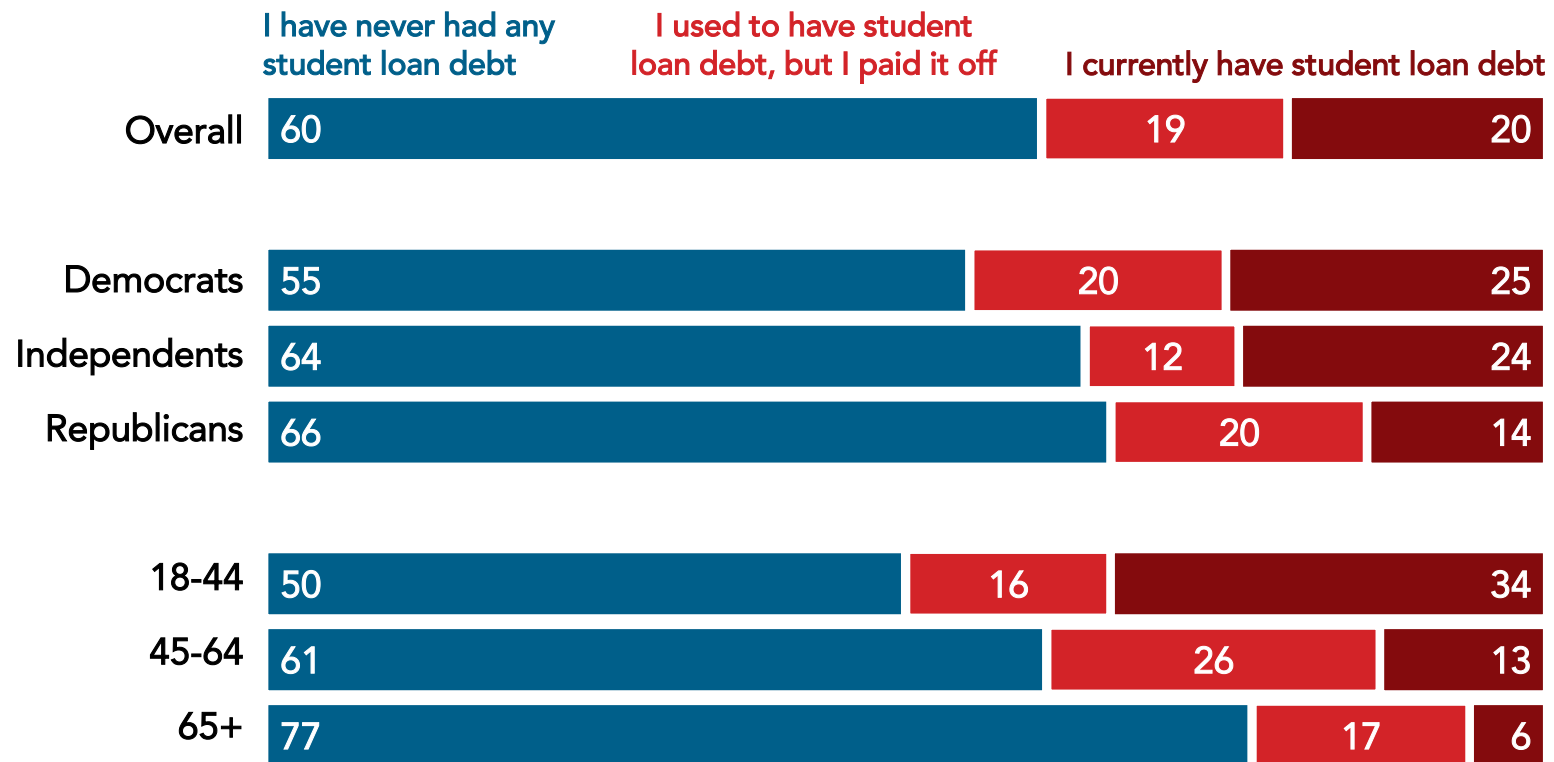


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Two in Five Americans Have Had or Currently Have Student Loan Debt

Groups more likely to currently have or have had student loan debt include Americans 18-44 (50%) and Democrats (45%). Nearly half (45%) who currently have student loan debt owe \$25,000 or more.

Have you ever or do you currently have student loan debt?



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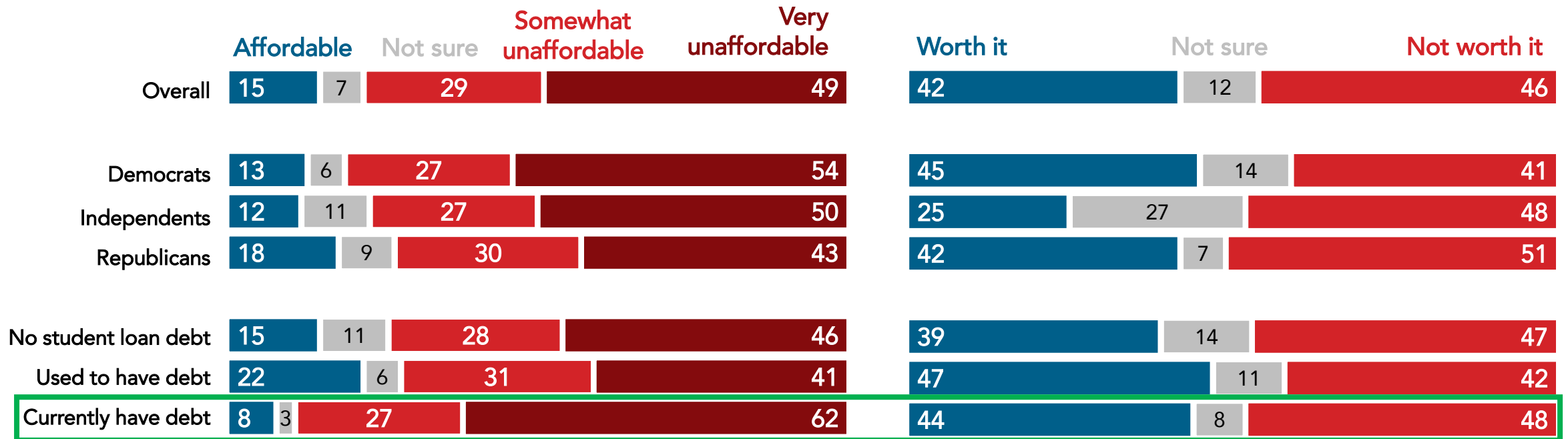
College Degrees Seen as Unaffordable, With Mixed Views on Whether or Not They Are Worth It

Nearly half of Americans say college degrees today are “very unaffordable,” with a plurality saying they are “not worth” the cost of taking out loans.

- Among those currently with debt, 62% say it is “very unaffordable” and 48% say it is “not worth it.”

Thinking about four-year undergraduate college degrees today, which of the following best describes your views?

These days, would you say that getting a college degree is worth the cost of taking out loans?



“No student loan debt” includes respondents who do not currently have and never had any student loan debt. “Used to have debt” includes those who previously had student loan debt but have paid it off. “Currently have debt” includes respondents who have student loan debt now. Nationwide survey of registered voters conducted Dec. 10-14, 2020. For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

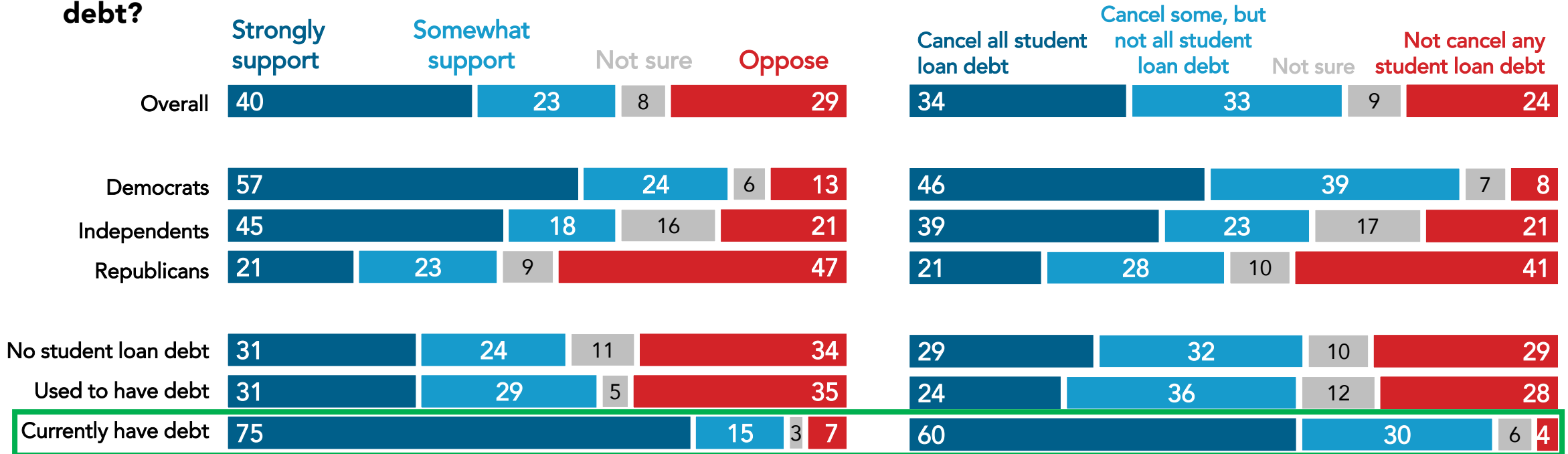
Two in Five Strongly Support Canceling Some Student Debt

A plurality of Americans “strongly support” canceling a portion of student loan borrowers’ debt, with a third saying the federal government should cancel all student loan debt and another third saying they should cancel some.

- Among those who currently have student loan debt, a resounding 75% “strongly support” canceling a portion of student loan debt, and among those who used to have debt who paid it off, 60% support overall.

Would you support or oppose the federal government canceling a portion of federal student loan borrowers’ debt?

Which do you agree with most? The federal government should...



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Economic Stimulus and Closing the Wealth Gap are the Most Convincing Reasons to Cancel Student Loan Debt

The top reasons Americans see for canceling student loan debt are that it is a form of stimulus amid an economic crisis and that canceling student loan debt would help lessen wealth inequality.

- Among those who support canceling some, not all debt, these are also the top reasons to cancel student debt.

Which two of these do you think are the most convincing reasons to cancel student loan debt?

| | | Dem | Ind | Rep | Cancel Some, Not All | Cancel None |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------------------------|----------------|
| It is a way to stimulate the economy in the middle of an economic crisis caused by the pandemic | 37% | 44 | 39 | 29 | 48 | 20 |
| Canceling student loan debt would help many low-income, Black, or Hispanic Americans who are disproportionately affected by student loan debt while reducing the racial wealth gap | 33 | 48 | 29 | 18 | 43 | 9 |
| It would help a generation of young people facing an especially difficult job market | 29 | 34 | 28 | 25 | 33 | 14 |
| Getting a college education is expensive and this would help people deal with the costs | 24 | 26 | 15 | 24 | 24 | 12 |
| Much of the debt will end up canceled anyway after 20-25 years, and now is a good time to do it given the pandemic | 21 | 19 | 23 | 22 | 23 | 12 |
| None of these | 19 | 5 | 26 | 32 | 4 | 60 |

"Cancel some, not all" includes those who support canceling some student loan debt, but not all.

"Cancel none" includes those who do not support canceling any student loan debt.

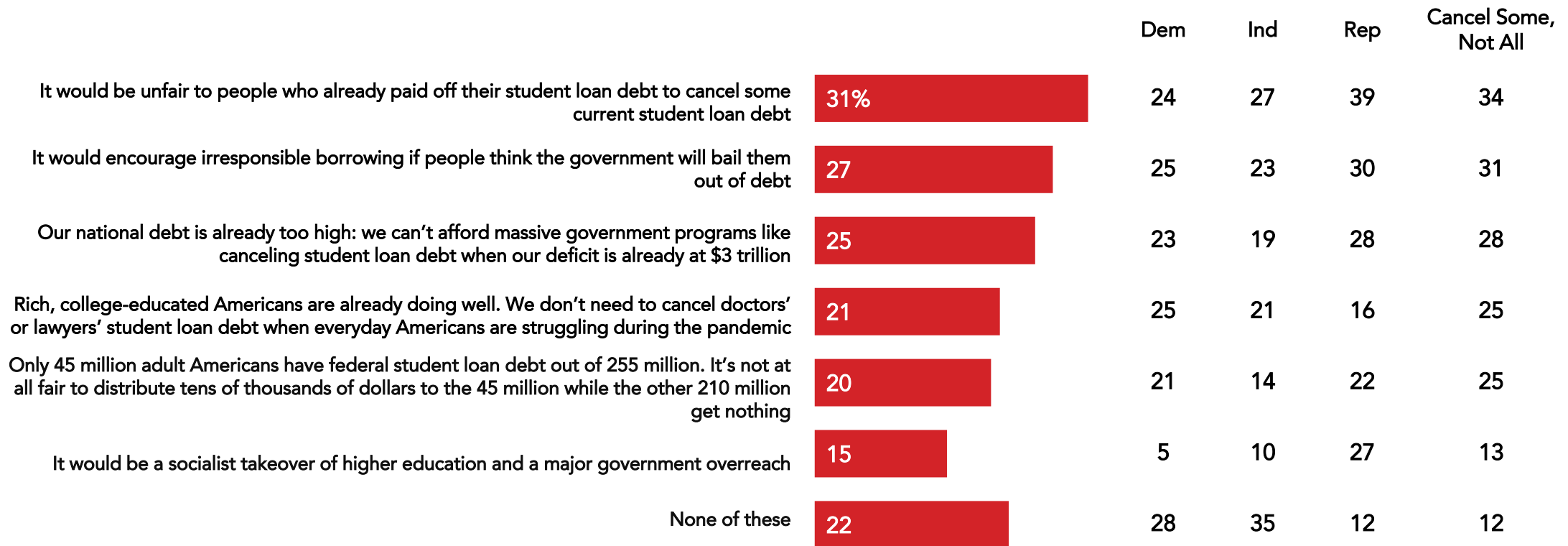
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Top Concerns About Canceling Debt: Unfairness to Those Who Have Already Paid, Irresponsible Borrowing, National Debt

The most concerning items about canceling student debt include unfairness to those who have already paid off their student loan debt, that it would encourage irresponsible borrowing, and the national debt.

Which of the following two reasons concern you the most about canceling student debt?

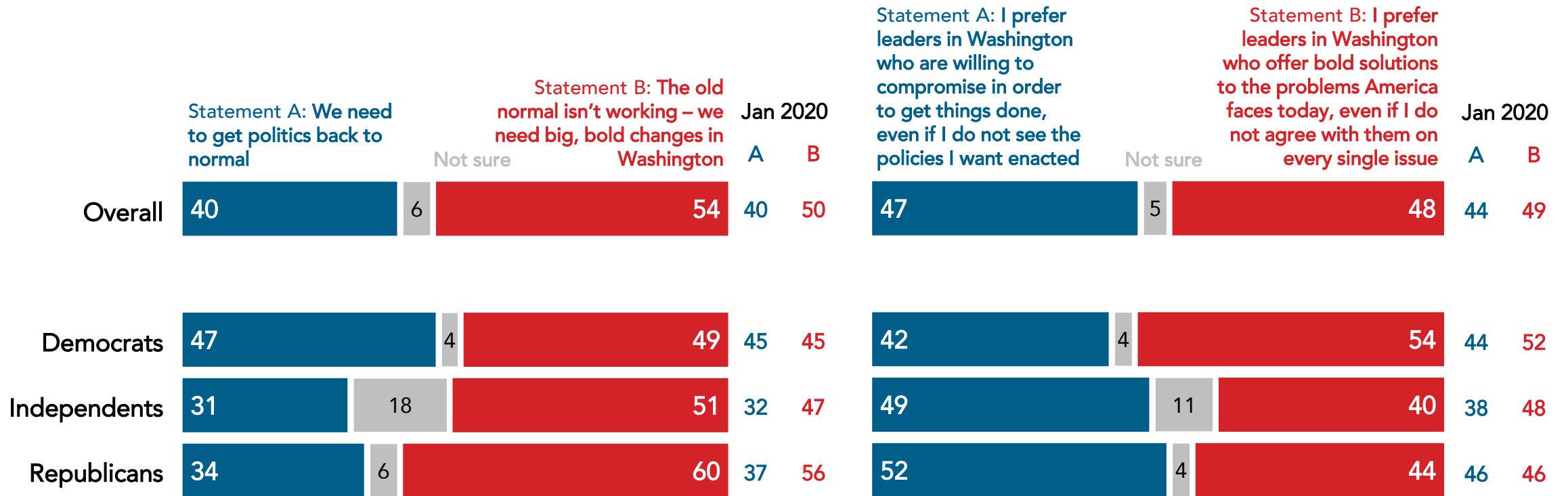


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Most Want Big, Bold Changes in Washington, But "Compromise" Still Has Some Appeal

Since January 2020, an increasing majority say the "old normal" is not working and that bold political changes are needed, while just two in five say they prefer politics to get back to normal. At the same time, Americans are split between compromise to get things done and bold solutions to take on today's challenges.

Which statement do you agree with more, even if neither fully represents your view?



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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: Andrea Purse, progressive strategist; Arkadi Gerney, The Hub Project; Joel Payne, The Hub Project; Christina Reynolds, EMILY's List; Delvone Michael, Working Families; Felicia Wong, Roosevelt Institute; Mike Podhorzer, AFL-CIO; Jesse Ferguson, progressive strategist; Navin Nayak, Center for American Progress Action Fund; Stephanie Valencia, EquisLabs; and Melanie Newman, Planned Parenthood Action Fund.

About the Study

Global Strategy Group conducted public opinion surveys among a sample of 1,003 registered voters from December 10-14, 2020. 102 additional interviews were conducted among Hispanic voters. 105 additional interviews were conducted among African American voters. 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.

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To learn more about Navigator:

<http://navigatorresearch.org>

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