

navigator*

Thursday, September 2nd

Communicating on the End
of the Twenty-Year War: A
Guide for Advocates



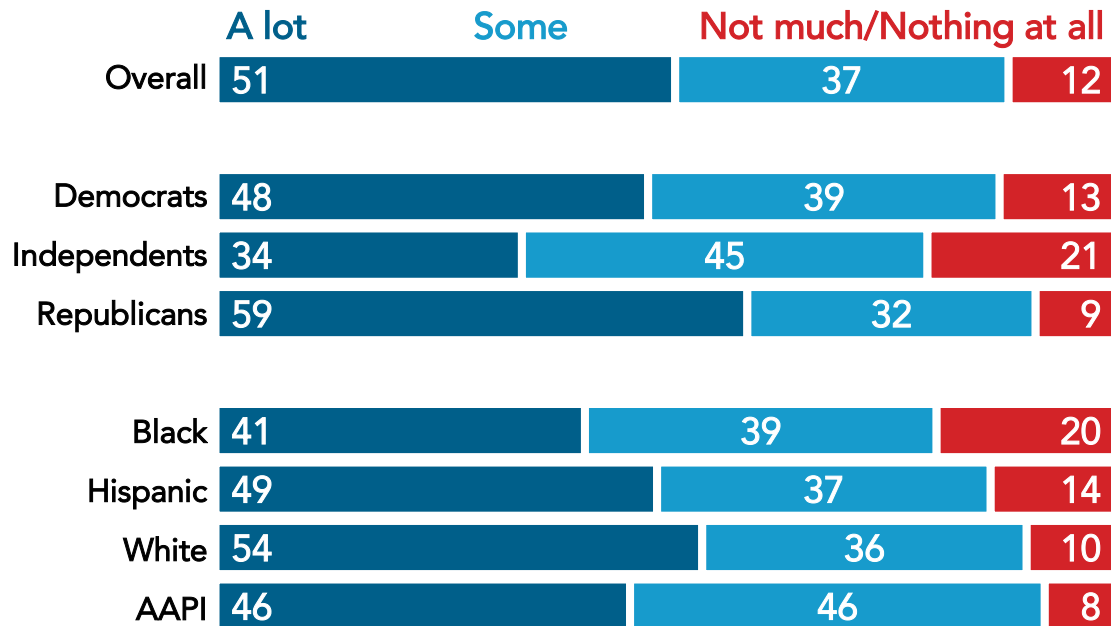
Key Takeaways:

- Most Americans are hearing about the situation in Afghanistan, and a majority support withdrawing American troops.
- Only one in four support returning American troops to Afghanistan.
- The most convincing reasons to support Biden's withdrawal of the troops focus on the human and financial costs from twenty years of war.

Nearly Every American Is Hearing About Afghanistan, Including About the Taliban, American Troops, and Casualties

Almost nine in ten Americans are hearing “a lot” or “some” about the ongoing situation in Afghanistan, including 87% of Democrats, 79% of independents, and 91% of Republicans.

How much have you heard about the ongoing situation in Afghanistan?



[If heard something] What have you heard about the ongoing situation in Afghanistan?



"The **Taliban** has overridden the country."

"There was a **bombing today that killed American military people.**"

"I think all of it, including the **attack at the Kabul airport.**"

"That the **Taliban has taken control.** Severe **issues for women and children.**"

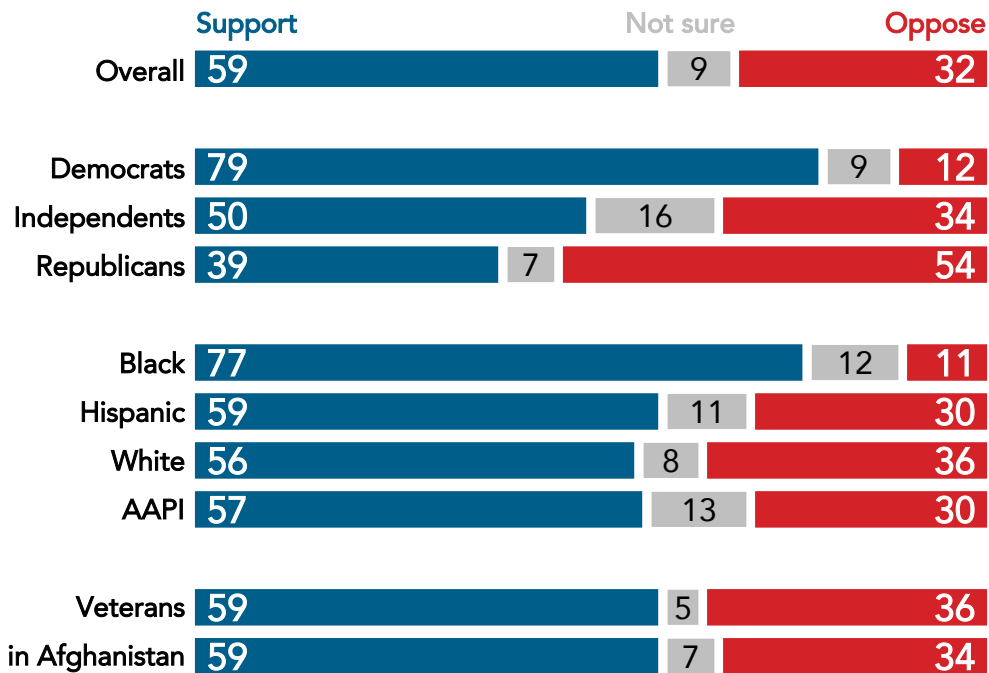
"[Biden] has vowed to **withdraw US troops** from there by **August 31st.**"

Nationwide survey of 1,002 registered voters conducted August 26-August 30, 2021. For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

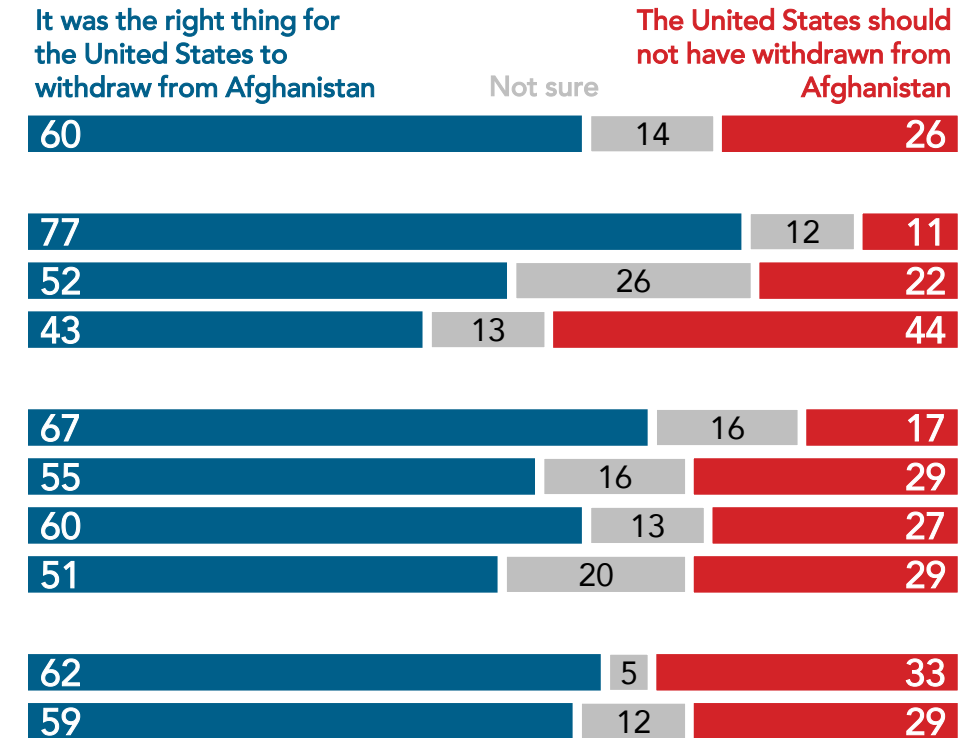
By a Large Majority, Americans Support the United States Withdrawing from Afghanistan

Majorities of Americans who have served in the armed forces broadly (59%) and who know someone personally who has served in Afghanistan (59%) support the withdrawal of U.S. troops.

As you may know, President Biden ordered a withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Afghanistan. Do you support or oppose the United States withdrawing all of its troops from Afghanistan?



Which of the following comes closest to your view?

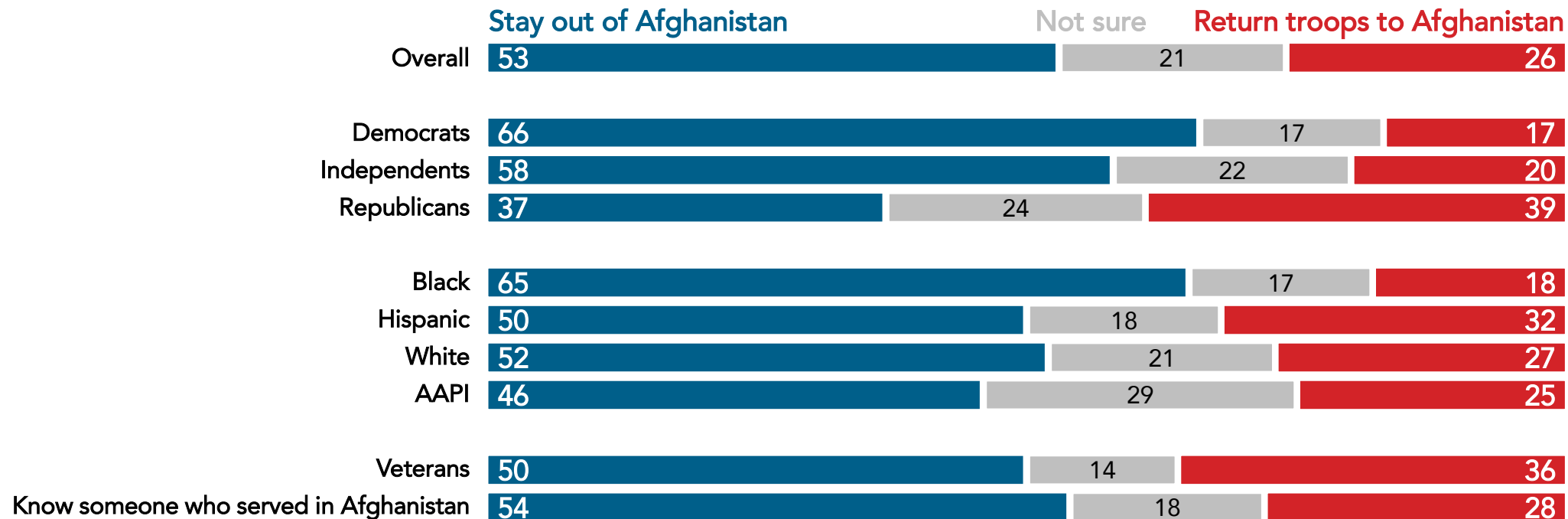


Nationwide survey of 1,002 registered voters conducted August 26-August 30, 2021. For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

Only One in Four Americans Support Sending Troops Back into Afghanistan

Following the Taliban's capture of Kabul, a majority support keeping American troops out of Afghanistan, including nearly three in five independents (58%). A majority (54%) who know someone who served in Afghanistan agree.

As you may know, the Taliban recently captured Kabul, Afghanistan's capital, and now controls nearly all of Afghanistan. In response, some have proposed returning American troops back into Afghanistan. What do you think the United States should do?

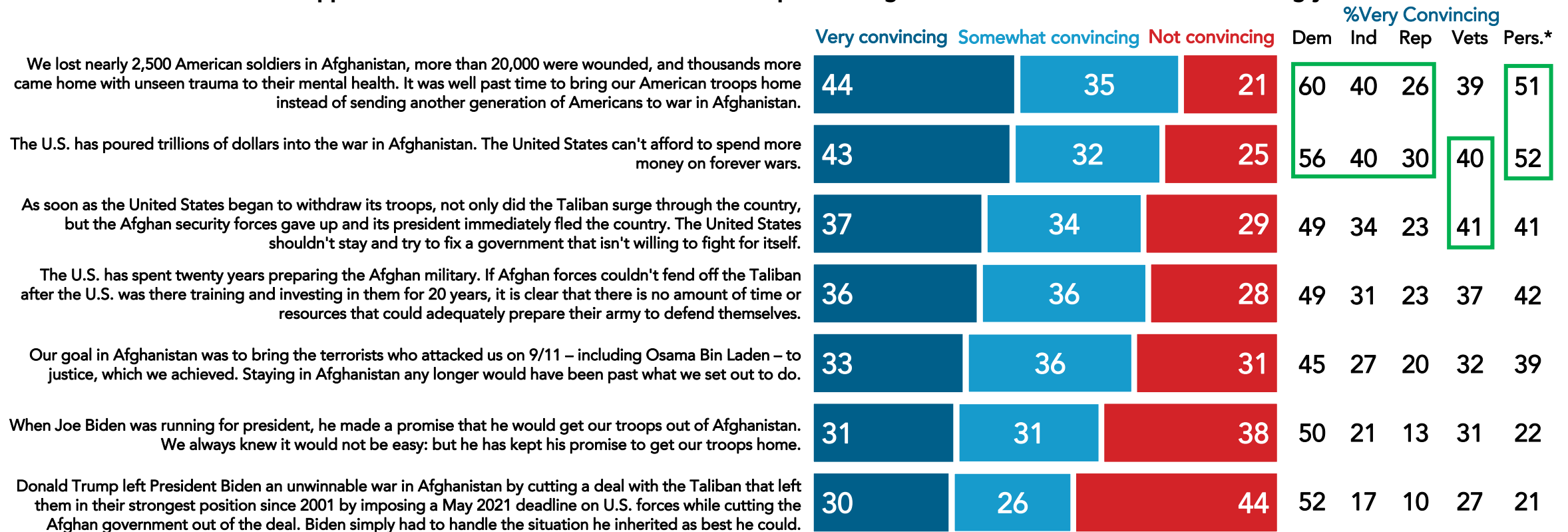


Nationwide survey of 1,002 registered voters conducted August 26-August 30, 2021.
For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

Financial and Human Costs Suffered in Afghanistan War Are Top Reasons to Support Biden's Withdrawal of Troops

Among persuadable Americans* who disapprove of Biden's handling of Afghanistan but support withdrawing troops, messaging focused on the casualties of the war and the financial costs are most convincing.

Below are statements from supporters of Biden's decision to withdraw troops from Afghanistan. Please indicate how convincing you find each one.



*"Persuadable Americans" are those who disapprove of Biden's handling of Afghanistan, but support withdrawing American troops from Afghanistan on separate questions. Nationwide survey of 1,002 registered voters conducted August 26-August 30, 2021. For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

Emphasizing the Loss of American Life in Afghanistan and the Well-Being of Troops Is Strongest Lane for Support

Again, among persuadable Americans* who support the withdrawal of American troops from Afghanistan but disapprove of Biden’s handling of the withdrawal, focusing on American casualties and financial costs is strongest.

Below are summaries of the statements you read previously. Please indicate which two you find most convincing as a reason to support Biden's decision to withdraw the troops from Afghanistan.

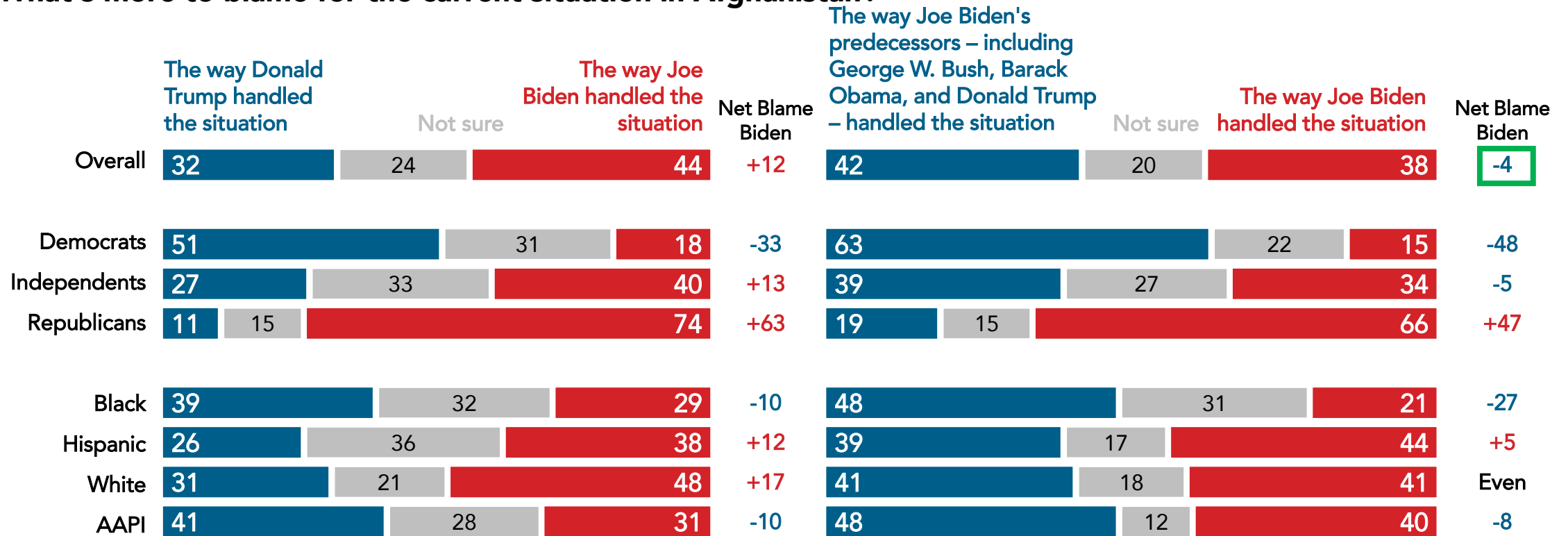
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Persuadable*
We lost nearly 2,500 American soldiers in Afghanistan, more than 20,000 were wounded, and thousands more came home with unseen trauma to their mental health	34%	38	37	30	37
Our goal in Afghanistan was to bring the terrorists who attacked us on 9/11 to justice, which we achieved	28	31	23	27	36
The U.S. spent twenty years preparing the Afghan military	23	22	24	25	28
As the Taliban surged through the country, the Afghan security forces gave up and its president left the country	20	19	20	22	23
The U.S. poured trillions of dollars into the war in Afghanistan	20	19	26	20	23
Donald Trump left President Biden an unwinnable war in Afghanistan and Biden handled it the best he could	18	32	13	3	12
When Joe Biden was running for president, he made a promise that he would get our troops out of Afghanistan	17	22	14	12	14

*"Persuadable Americans" are those who disapprove of Biden’s handling of Afghanistan, but support withdrawing American troops from Afghanistan on separate questions. Nationwide survey of 1,002 registered voters conducted August 26-August 30, 2021. For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

On Blame for Afghanistan Situation, All of Biden's Predecessors Earn More Blame Than Just Citing Trump

While more independents blame Biden for his handling of the situation in Afghanistan than Donald Trump, more independents blame a combined Bush, Obama, and Trump more than Biden.

What's more to blame for the current situation in Afghanistan?



Nationwide survey of 1,002 registered voters conducted August 26-August 30, 2021. For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

Emphasizing Trump's Role in Afghanistan Is Slightly More Effective Response Than Biden's Campaign Promise to Withdraw

A rebuttal to criticism of the Afghanistan situation that focuses on the Trump peace deal that imposed a May 2021 withdrawal is slightly stronger than one that focuses on Biden's promise in his presidential campaign to pull the troops out. Among independents, the former wins by 3 points, while messaging on Biden's campaign promise loses by 11.

Which side do you agree with more?

Statement 1: Those who say the situation in Afghanistan is a failure by the Biden administration. By publicly announcing a hard deadline to remove all U.S. troops, it was inevitable that the Taliban was going to quickly take control of Afghanistan once we left.

Statement 2: Those who say that Joe Biden inherited an unwinnable war in Afghanistan, including a peace deal made by the Trump administration that strengthened the Taliban and imposed a May 1, 2021 deadline on removing U.S. Forces. President Biden was simply left to do damage control on a dangerous situation.

Statement 1:	40%
Statement 2:	45%
Net Statement 2:	+5

Statement 3: Those who say that since announcing his candidacy for President, Biden promised that he would get our troops out of Afghanistan, even if it wasn't going to be easy. Biden did the best he could in a situation that was inevitably going to be chaotic.

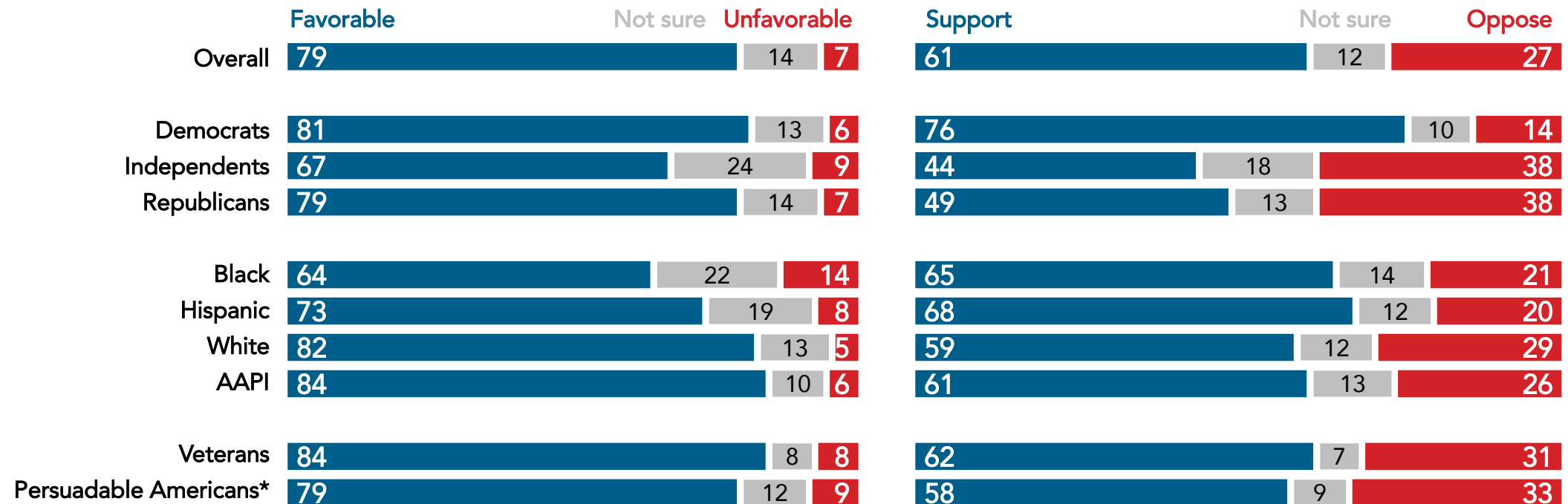
Statement 1:	42%
Statement 3:	45%
Net Statement 3:	+3

Afghan Citizens Who Helped the U.S. Viewed Deeply Favorably as Majority Support Allowing Them into the U.S.

Pluralities of independents and Republicans support allowing more Afghan refugees into the United States.

Please indicate how favorable or unfavorable you are to: Afghan citizens who have assisted the U.S. military.

Do you support or oppose allowing more Afghan refugees into the United States?



*"Persuadable Americans" are those who disapprove of Biden's handling of Afghanistan, but support withdrawing American troops from Afghanistan on separate questions. Nationwide survey of 1,002 registered voters conducted August 26-August 30, 2021. For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

Both Are Effective, But America's Moral Duty to Take in Afghan Refugees Is More Compelling Point Than Republican Hypocrisy

A progressive response that America is morally obligated to take in Afghan refugees after so many of them have "risked their lives to help keep us safe" is more convincing than one that criticizes Republicans for complaining Biden is not doing enough, while also opposing the U.S. accepting Afghan refugees, against a conservative argument.

Which side do you agree with more?

Statement 1: Those who say that the United States should not be resettling Afghan refugees in our country. We already have an influx of migrants at the Southern border, and letting in mass numbers of Afghan refugees will only make our country less safe and divide us even more.

Statement 2: Those who say it is our moral duty to take in Afghan refugees: many Afghan people, such as the translators who worked with the American military, have risked their lives to help keep us safe. We promised we'd do what we had to so we could keep them safe because they were our partners and we must live up to that commitment.

Statement 1:	25%
Statement 2:	58%
Net Statement 2:	+33

Statement 3: Those who say that many of the same people who are complaining Biden isn't doing enough to evacuate the Afghan people also hypocritically do not want the United States to accept them as refugees. Our Afghan allies kept our troops safe in Afghanistan for 20 years. We owe them for their service to the United States.

Statement 1:	27%
Statement 3:	54%
Net Statement 3:	+27

Nationwide survey of 1,002 registered voters conducted August 26-August 30, 2021.
For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

navigator*

navigator*

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 1,002 registered voters from August 26-August 30, 2021. 105 additional interviews were conducted among Hispanic voters. 77 additional interviews were conducted among Asian American and Pacific Islander voters. 104 additional interviews were conducted among African American voters. 100 additional interviews were conducted among independent 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.

For Press inquiries contact:

press@navigatorresearch.org

To learn more about Navigator:

<http://navigatorresearch.org>

@NavigatorSurvey on Twitter