

# navigator\*

Friday, January 13<sup>th</sup>

The Economy and the  
Debt Ceiling: A Guide  
for Advocates



## Key Takeaways:

- Support for the Inflation Reduction Act remains strong, with overwhelming and bipartisan majorities supporting the insulin price cap for seniors on Medicare.
- Public support jumps significantly for recent IRS funding when framed as “cracking down on wealthy tax cheats.”
- Republican elected officials who oppose raising the debt ceiling are best described as putting Americans' livelihoods at risk and only seeking political gains.

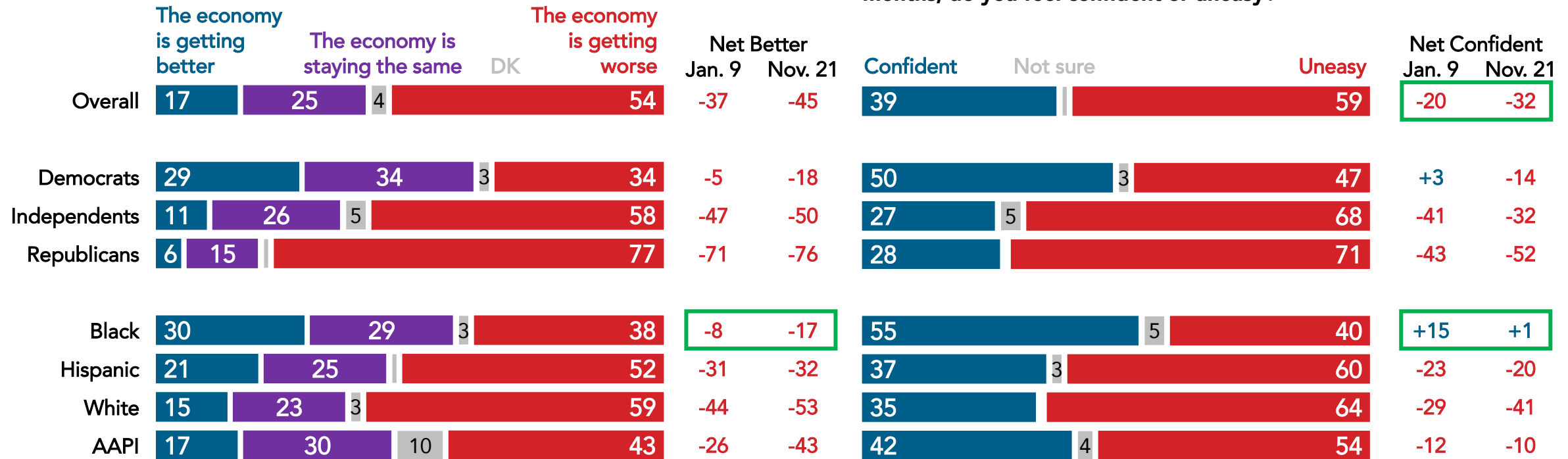
# Though Americans Are Still Pessimistic About the Economy, Fewer Say It Is Getting Worse or Personally Financially Uneasy

A majority (54%) of Americans still say the economy is getting worse, though the share is down from 60% in late November.

- Three in five (59%) say they are “uneasy” about their personal financial situation, down from 64% in November, while 39% say they are “confident.” A majority of Black Americans (55%) say they are confident in their personal financial situation.

Which of the following best describes the current state of the U.S. economy:

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



Nationwide surveys of registered voters; Each wave represents approximately 1,000 interviews taken over the prior three-five days. Latest wave conducted January 5-January 9, 2023. For more info, visit [navigatorresearch.org](http://navigatorresearch.org)

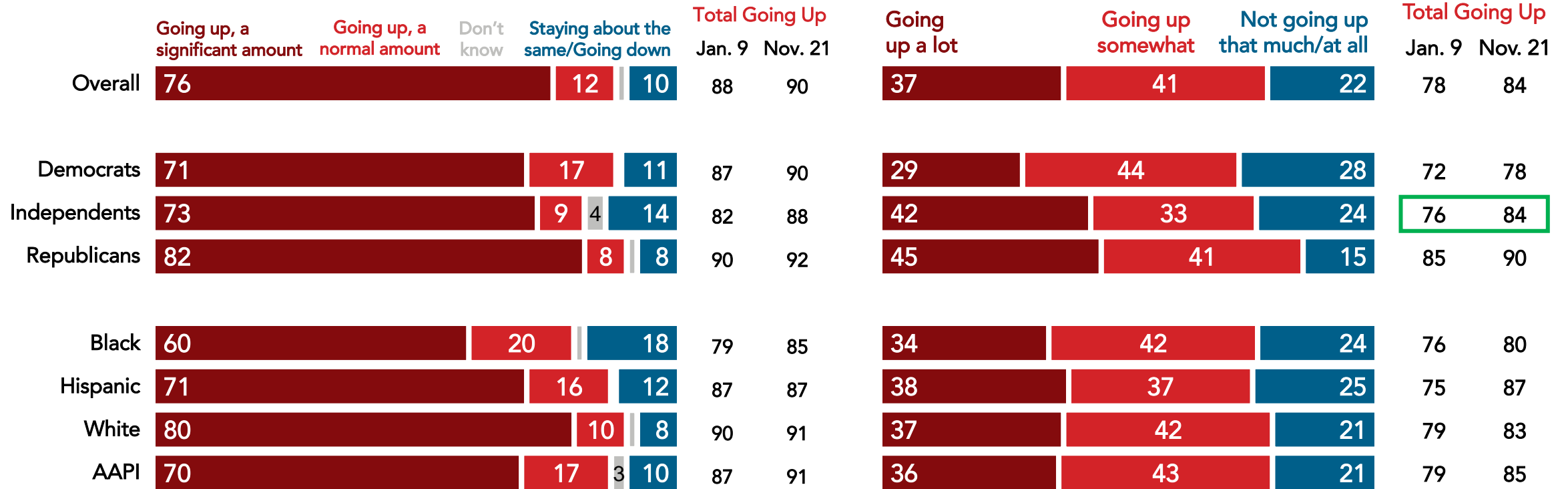
# Perceptions of Rising Grocery Costs Remain High While Declining Shares Say Gas Prices Are Going Up

Republicans are most likely to report grocery costs “going up, a significant amount” (82%) compared to 71% of Democrats and 73% of independents.

- The share of independents who say the price of gas is going up has fallen by 8 points since late November (from 84% to 76%).

When it comes to the costs of everyday goods like groceries, do you think costs are:

Do you feel the price of gas is going up?



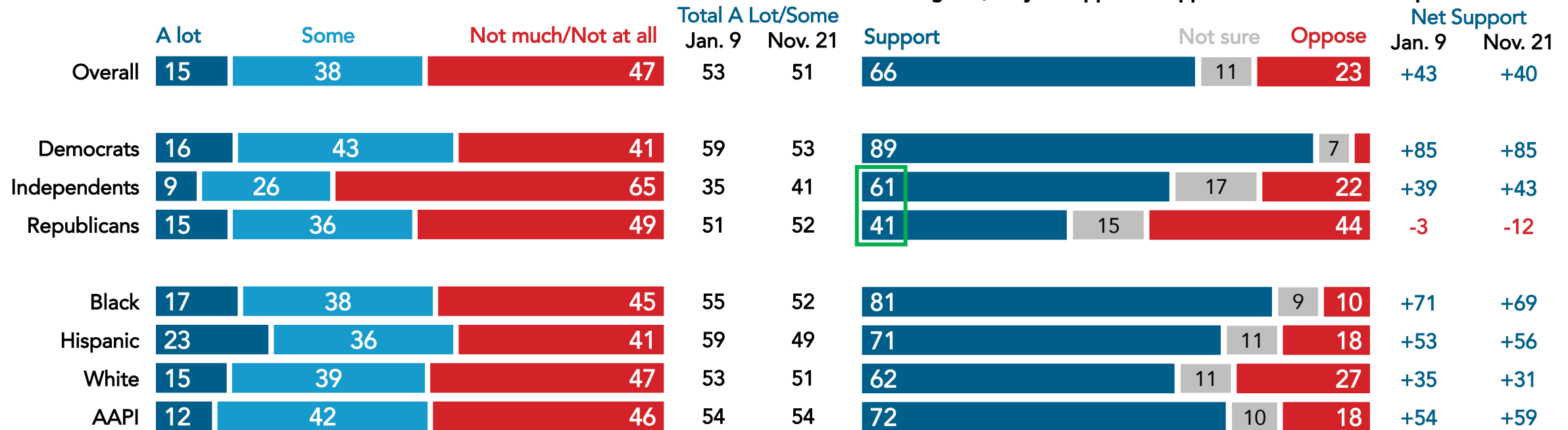
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# Two in Three Continue to Support the Inflation Reduction Act, Including Three in Five Independents

Despite Republican attacks on increased IRS funding from the Inflation Reduction Act, more than two in five Republicans continue to support the plan (41%).

How much have you seen, read, or heard about the new legislation called the Inflation Reduction Act passed by Democrats in Congress and signed by President Biden?

As you may know, Biden and Democrats' new legislation that has been passed by Congress is called the Inflation Reduction Act, which will give Medicare the power to negotiate lower drug prices, bring down health insurance premiums, and invest in clean energy like wind and solar power. Knowing this, do you support or oppose this new economic plan?



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# The Inflation Reduction Act's Newly Enacted Insulin Price Cap Is Popular Among Bipartisan Majorities

Majorities of every partisan, racial, and age group support the insulin price cap, including independents (67% support) and Republicans (71%). Americans over the age of 65 (83%) are most likely to support it, though at least three in four 18-44 year-olds (75%) and 45-64 year-olds (79%) also support the policy.

As a part of the Inflation Reduction Act, starting this month, out-of-pocket costs for insulin will be capped at \$35 a month for seniors on Medicare. Do you support or oppose capping the monthly out-of-pocket costs for insulin for Medicare patients?



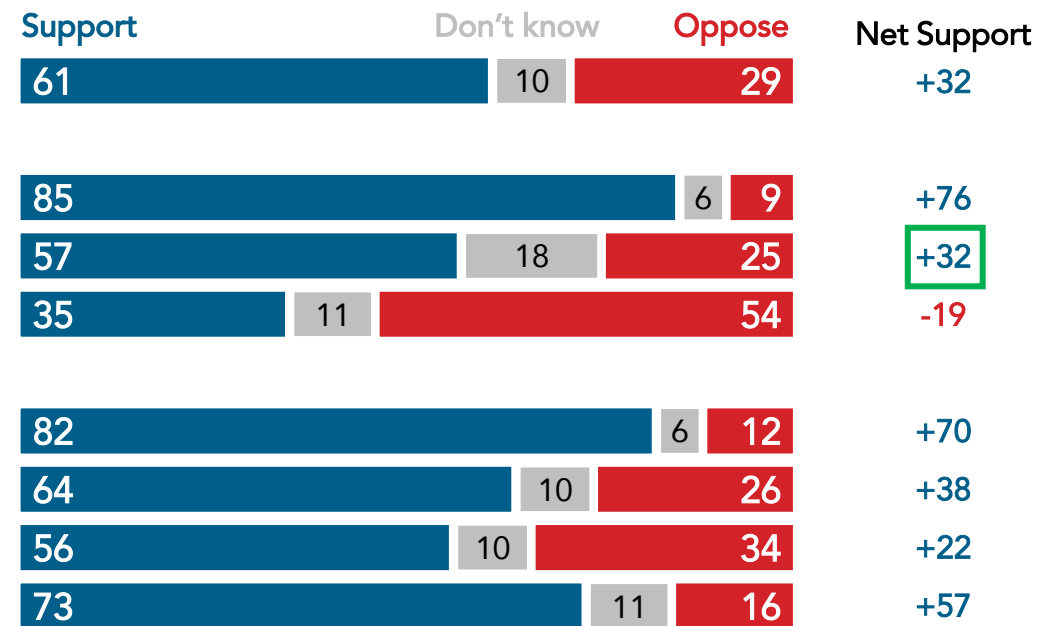
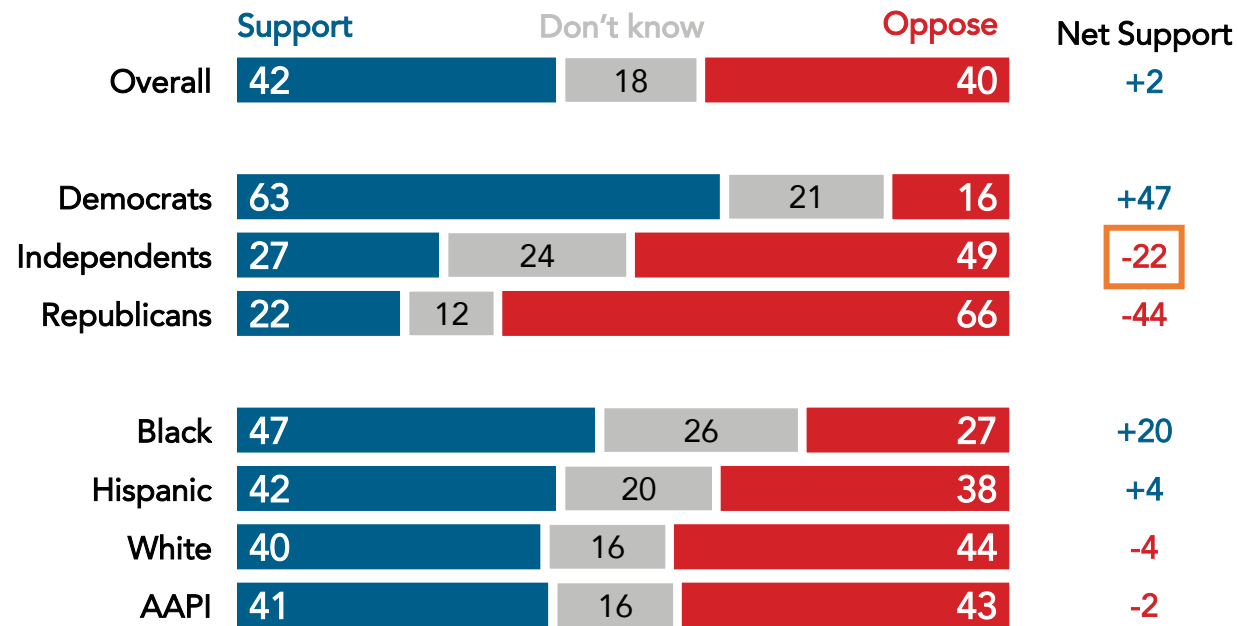
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# Framing Increased IRS Funding as Helping to “Crack Down on Wealthy Tax Cheats” Notably Increases Support

Independents are a net 54 points more likely to support new funding for the IRS in order to “crack down on wealthy tax cheats” (net +32 support) than without this context (net -22 support).

**(Split sample)** The Inflation Reduction Act also provides \$80 billion in new funding for the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Do you support or oppose providing this new funding to the IRS?

**(Split sample)** The Inflation Reduction Act also provides \$80 billion in new funding for the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to crack down on wealthy tax cheats. Do you support or oppose providing this new funding to the IRS?



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# Best Responses to Conservative IRS Funding Attacks Focus on GOP Protecting Rich Donors, Tax Cheats

The strongest rebuttals to a conservative criticism about increasing IRS funding focus on making the rich pay their fair share while stopping Republicans from protecting their rich donors (+6 progressive statement) and going after tax cheats (+4).

Which side do you agree with more?

**Statement 1:** Those who say Biden and the Democrats are planning to use the \$80 billion to double the size of the IRS and hire an army of 87,000 new IRS agents, allowing them to conduct over 700,000 additional audits of middle-class Americans.

**Statement 2:** Those who say **Republicans** are intentionally misleading Americans about IRS funding, which will actually be used to modernize the agency and focus on auditing the wealthy and big corporations that are avoiding paying their fair share.

**Statement 1:** 50%  
**Statement 2:** 50%  
Net Statement 2: 0

**Statement 3:** Those who say **Republicans** are lying about IRS funding to protect their rich donors. This funding will be used to make the wealthy and big corporations pay their fair share while not increasing audits on those making less than \$400,000 a year.

**Statement 1:** 47%  
**Statement 3:** 53%  
Net Statement 3: +6

**Statement 4:** Those who say **Republicans** just want to make it easier for tax cheats to continue cheating our system. This funding will help the IRS to hold big corporations and the wealthy accountable when they try to avoid paying the taxes they owe.

**Statement 1:** 48%  
**Statement 4:** 52%  
Net Statement 4: +4

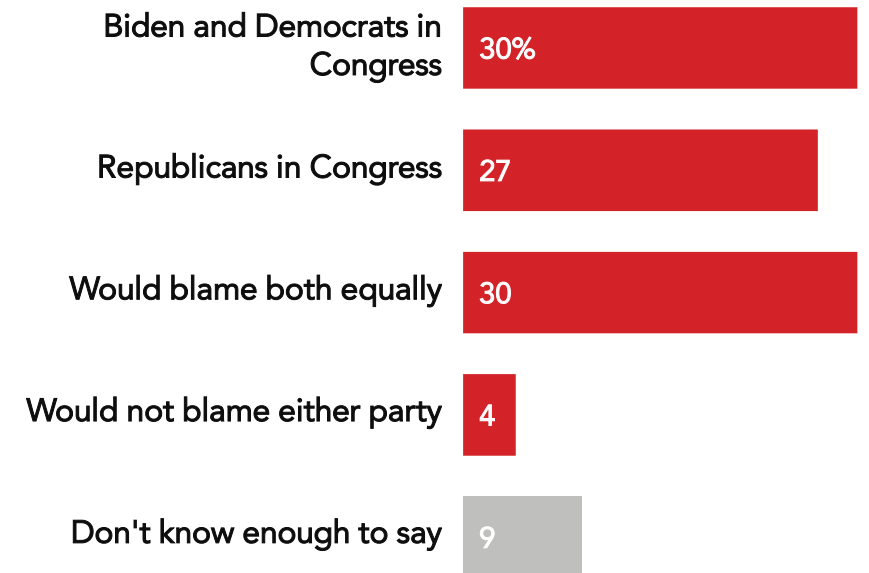
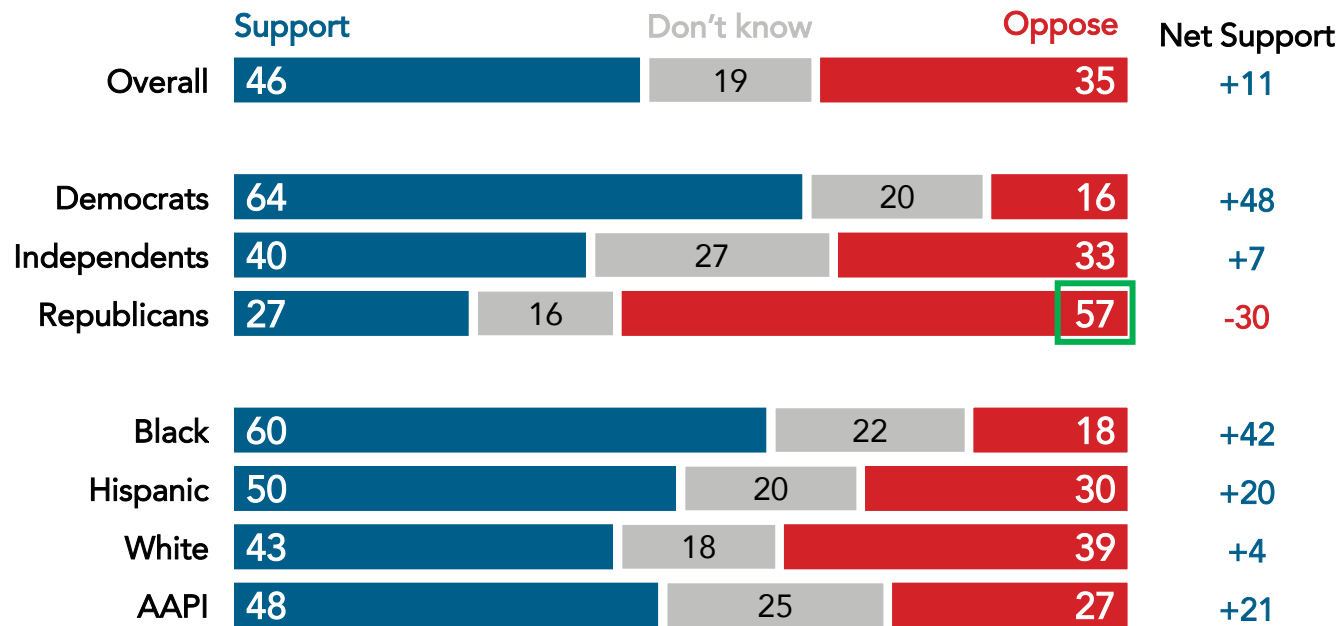


# One in Five Are Not Sure About Congress Raising the Debt Ceiling Though a Plurality Support It; Blame Is Diffuse If They Fail

Republicans are the only partisan or racial group in which a majority (57%) oppose increasing the debt ceiling, though more than a quarter of Republicans (27%) do support it.

As you may know, the United States can only pay outstanding debts for what the federal government is spending up to a maximum, known as America's "debt ceiling." It is expected that the federal government will exceed that debt ceiling in the coming months, and Congress is considering passing a law to raise the debt ceiling so the government can continue paying its obligations. Do you support Congress increasing the debt ceiling?

If Congress fails to pass a bill to deal with the debt ceiling to avoid a default and a government shutdown, who would you blame more?

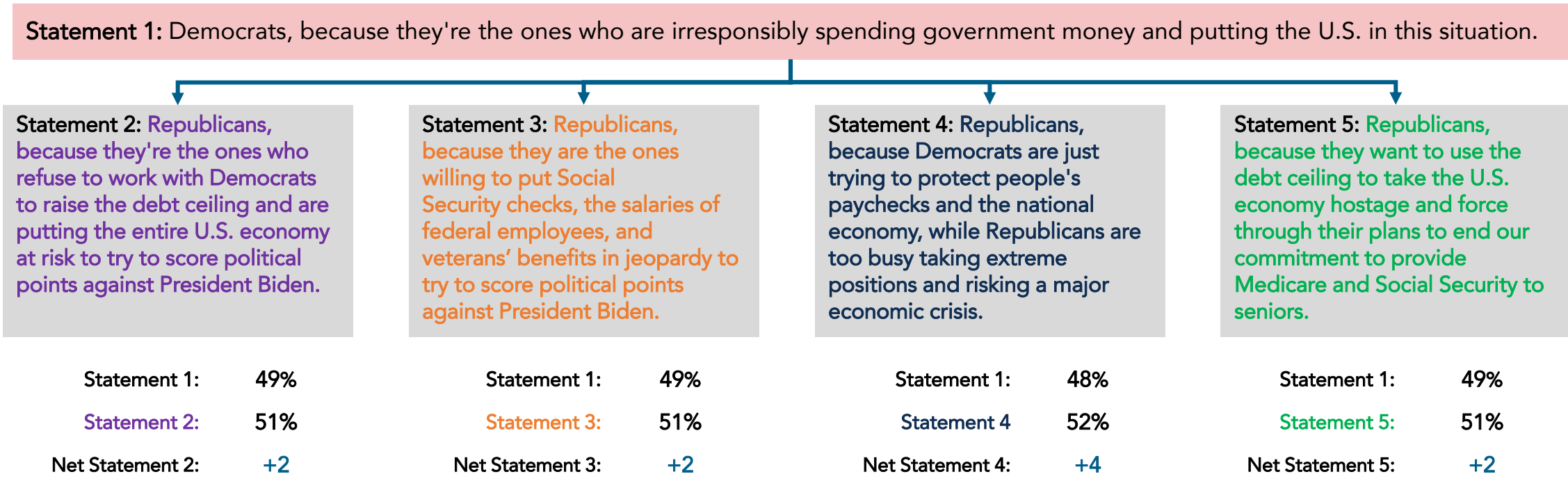


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# A Range of Responses to a Conservative Argument Bring the Debt Ceiling Debate to a Draw

Each of four progressive rebuttals tested was competitive with a conservative argument blaming Democrats if Congress fails to reach a new deal on the debt ceiling for “irresponsibly spending government money.”

Which side would you blame more if Congress fails to reach a new deal to increase the national debt ceiling?

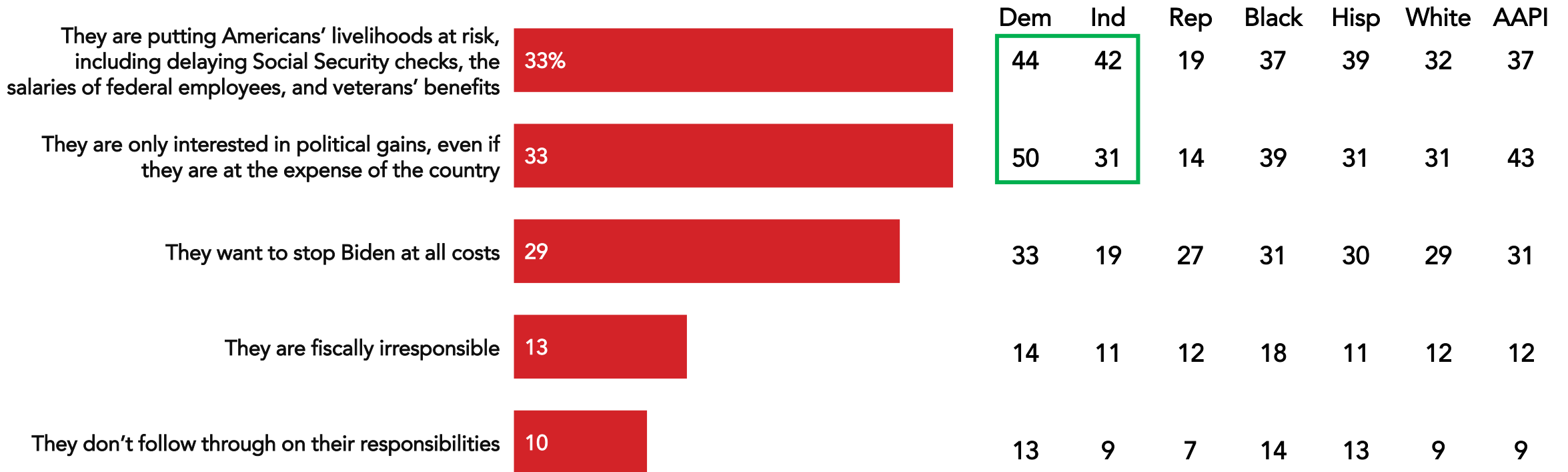


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# Republicans Best Described As Putting Livelihoods At Risk, Seeking Political Gains in Debt Ceiling Debate

Democrats and independents are most likely to describe Republicans as “putting Americans’ livelihoods at risk” (44% and 42%, respectively) and being “only interested in political gains, even if they are at the expense of the country” (50% and 31%).

If Republicans refuse to work with Democrats to come to a new agreement to suspend or raise the debt ceiling, which do you think best describes Republicans’ actions?



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# The Economy Is the Prevailing Issue Americans Consider in Their Evaluation of the Country's Path, Whether Good or Bad

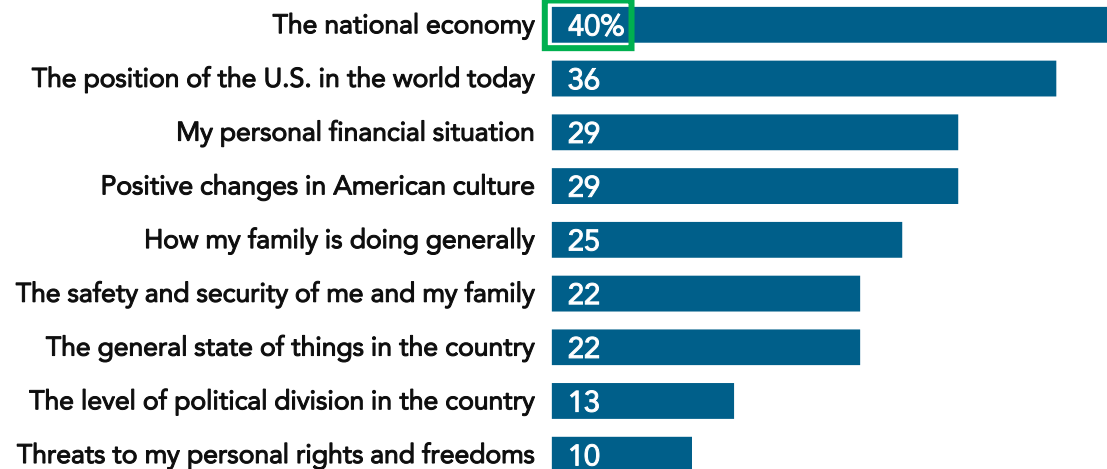
"The national economy" is top-of-mind among both those who say the country is headed in the right direction (40% say it is an issue they are thinking about the most) and those who say it is off on the wrong track (59%).

- Democrats who say the country is headed on the wrong track cite political division (47%) and the economy (50%) nearly equally, while Republicans are more clearly focused on the economy (63%).

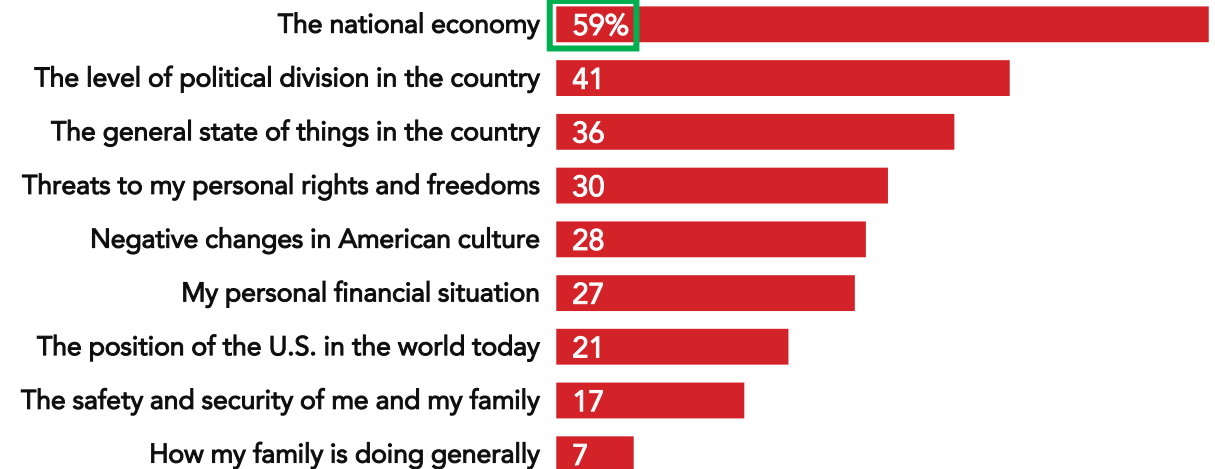
Generally speaking, would you say the country today is...



[IF RIGHT DIRECTION] When you say you think the country is headed in the right direction...which of the below are you thinking about most?



[IF WRONG TRACK] When you say you think the country is headed on the wrong track...which of the below are you thinking about most?



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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, EMILY's List; 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 1,000 registered voters from January 5-January 9, 2023. 100 additional interviews were conducted among Hispanic voters. 74 additional interviews were conducted among Asian American and Pacific Islander voters. 100 additional interviews were conducted among African American voters. 101 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.

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To learn more about Navigator:

<http://navigatorresearch.org>

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