

# navigator\*

Wednesday, August 14<sup>th</sup>

## Young Americans: Ideological and Policy Assessment

This poll was in the field during the first presidential debate, but fielded entirely before the attempted assassination of Donald Trump, the announcement of Joe Biden's departure from the 2024 presidential race, and his endorsement of Kamala Harris for president.



Credit: Elliot Reyna /Unsplash

# Methodology

Global Strategy Group conducted a public opinion survey among 4,000 nationwide registered voters between the ages of 18 and 34, between June 18<sup>th</sup> through July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024. 800 interviews were conducted per mode, using each of the following five methodologies:

- Live phone interviews (verified against a voter file)
- Text-to-web interviews (verified against a voter file)
- Online panel interviews (verified against a voter file)
- Online panel interviews (NOT verified against a voter file)
- Online interviews where participants were recruited via social media platforms (NOT verified against a voter file)

Each set of 800 interviews was individually weighted and special care was taken to ensure the demographic composition of our samples in each mode matched that of the national registered voter population across a variety of demographic variables. The same process was then done to the combined dataset. Some questions were asked of all respondents except live phone interviews for time's sake. In those cases, the other four modes were weighted using the same process.

Unless otherwise indicated, data throughout refers to the total of all five modes wherever possible, and on questions asked on all but phone interviews, the total of those four modes.

## Key Takeaways:

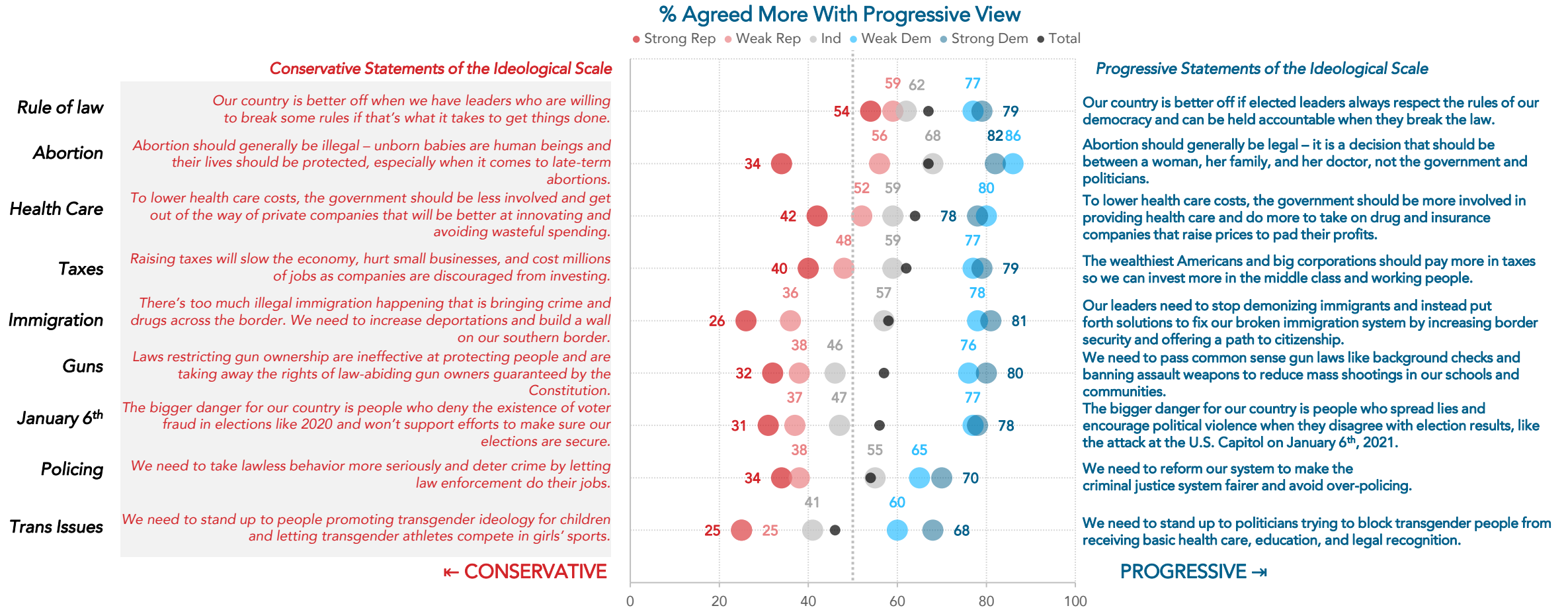
- Younger Americans side with the more progressive viewpoint on a number of major topical issues, by margins that are often larger than the Democratic advantage on party identification or the liberal advantage on self-described ideology.
- Younger Americans are most likely to agree with the progressive position in debates related to the economy and democracy, with narrower margins when it comes to culture issues like immigration and policing.
- Among younger men and white Americans, their issue positions tend to be more progressive than their political identity. For younger Black Americans and those describing themselves as liberal, the reverse is true: they identify more with the Democratic Party more than they agree with some progressive issue positions.

## Issue Landscape:

- On the economy, younger Americans widely favor higher taxes for the wealthy and big corporations and government to be more involved in the health care system.
- Two in three young Americans think our country is better off if elected leaders always respect democracy rather than break rules to get things done.
- Nearly three in five Americans in this age group take the more progressive position on policing and immigration.
- Economic frustration can play a role in the way younger Americans feel about a range of issues, including climate change, foreign policy, and retirement policies. Placing a progressive position in tension with the younger generation's financial well-being erodes support.
- A third of younger Americans have "very strong" feelings about the war in Israel and Gaza, and they are more likely to show sympathy for the Palestinians over the Israelis.

# On Many Issues, Young Independents Side With Progressive Positions

Weak Republicans agree with more progressive positions on issues like the rule of law, abortion, and health care.

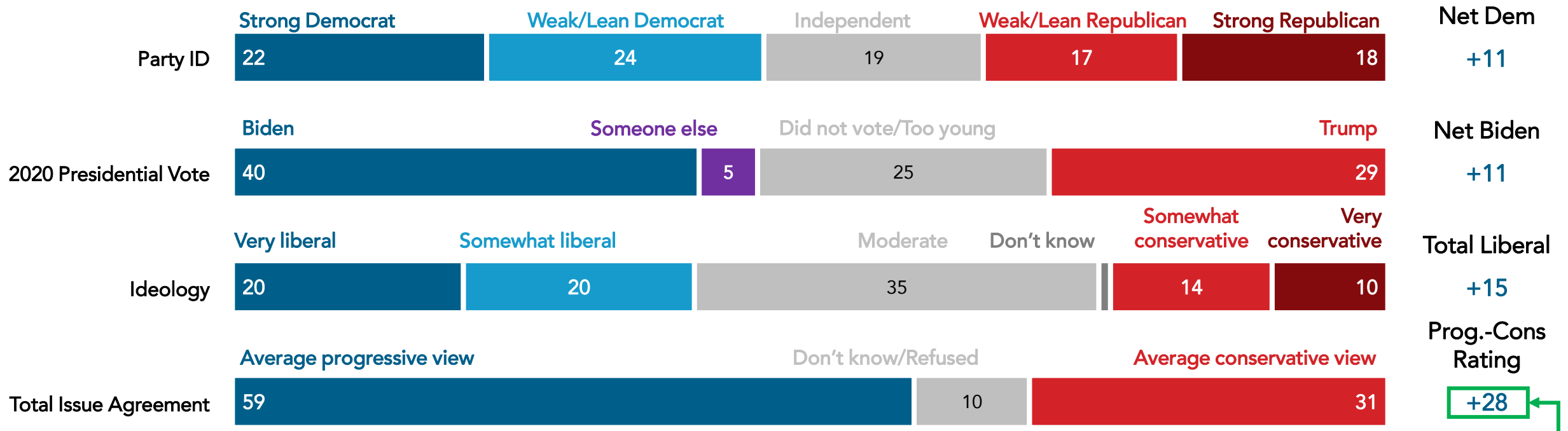


Nationwide surveys of registered voters; Each wave represents approximately 1,000 interviews taken over the prior three-five days. Latest wave conducted June 20-June 24, 2024. For more info, visit [navigatorresearch.org](https://navigatorresearch.org).

# On the Whole, Young Americans' Policy Preferences Lean Further to the Left Than Their Partisan or Ideological Self-Identification

While young Americans lean towards the Democratic party on self-identification by 11 points and towards identifying as liberal by 15 points, their total ideology score\*, or net lean towards progressive viewpoints on a range of issues, is +28 progressive.

## Political Demographics

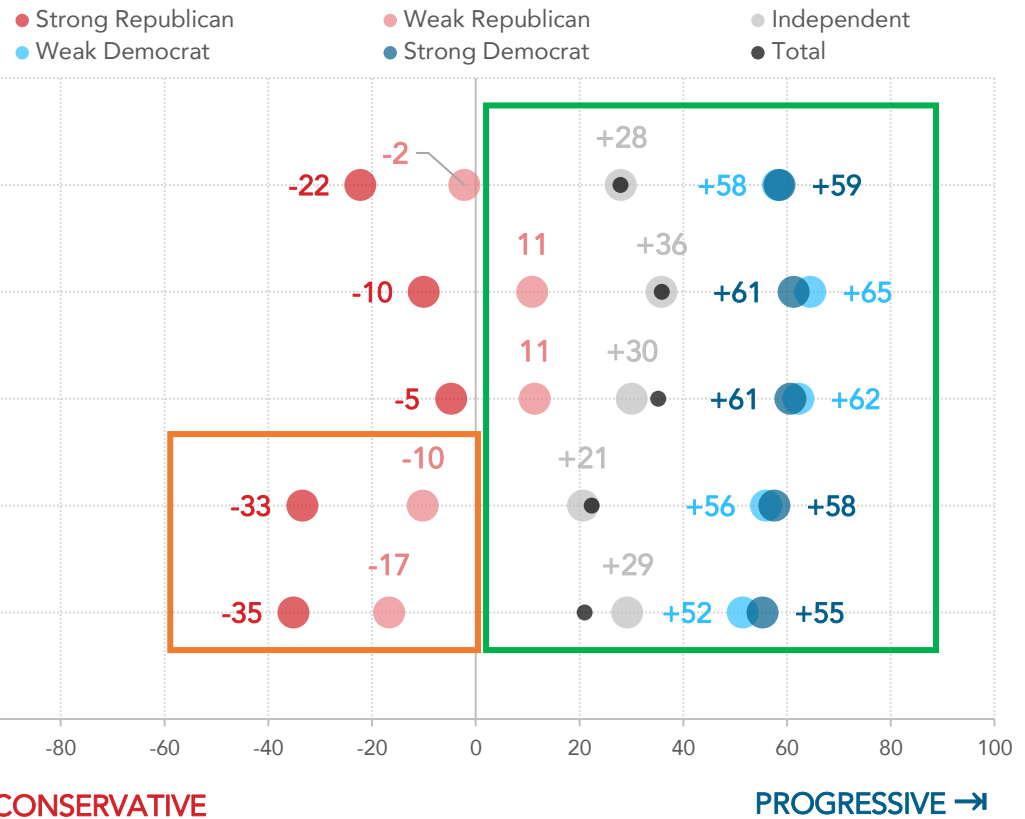


\*Progressive-Conservative Rating throughout is calculated by taking the average of 9 ideological statement pair tests and net lean towards the progressive statement of the two options in each one.

Nationwide survey of 4,000 registered voters conducted June 18-July 11, 2024. For more info, visit [navigatorresearch.org](http://navigatorresearch.org).

# Young Americans Across the Political Spectrum Lean Progressive on Issues, Especially Around the Economy and Democracy

Weak and strong Democrats alike overwhelmingly fall on the progressive end of the ideological scale, while independents also lean towards progressive positioning across issues and even weak Republicans do on the economy and on democracy issues.



**Progressive-Conservative Rating**  
*(Taxes, Health care, January 6<sup>th</sup>, Rule of law, Trans issues, Abortion, Guns, Immigration, Policing)*

**Economy**  
*(Taxes, Health care)*

**Democracy**  
*(January 6<sup>th</sup>, Rule of law)*

**Culture**  
*(Trans issues, Abortion, Guns)*

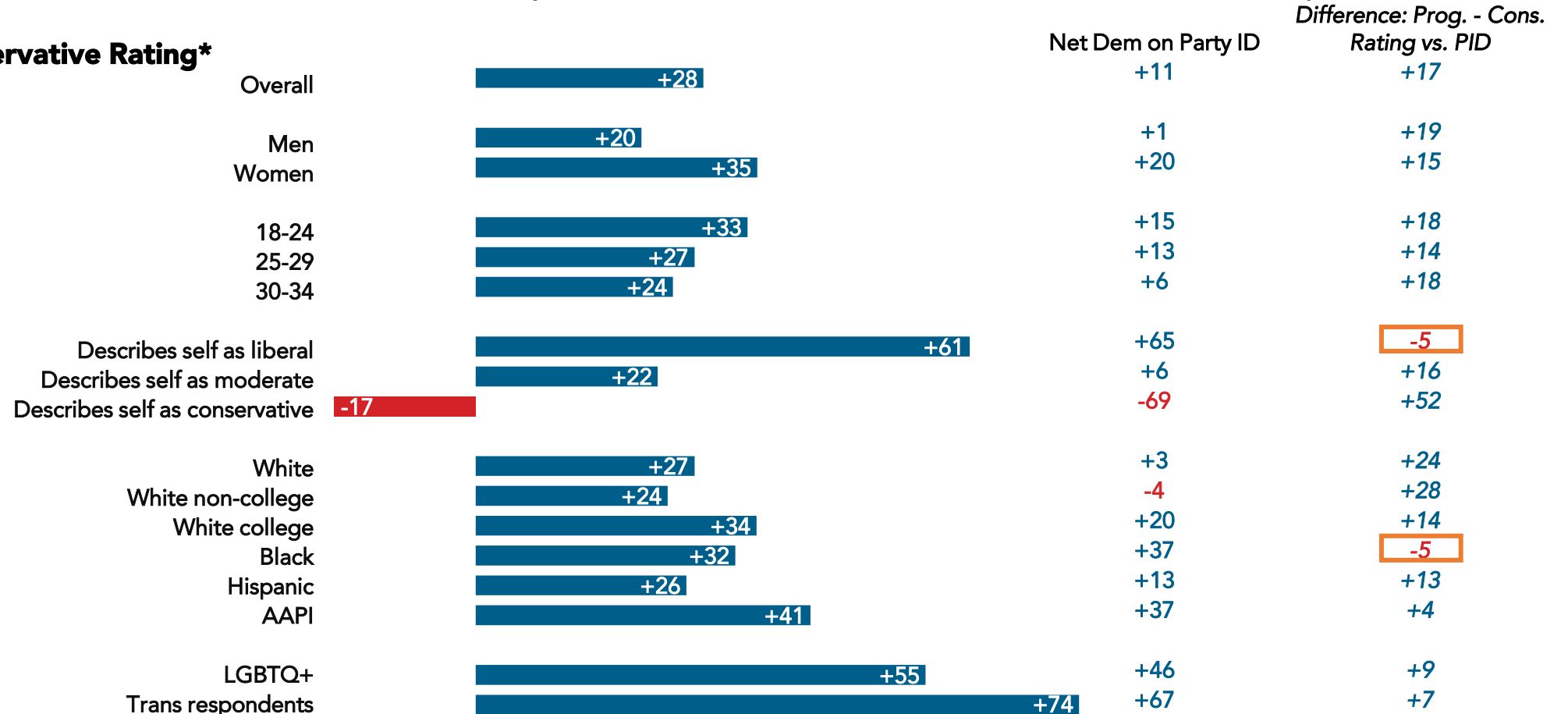
**Social contract**  
*(Immigration, Policing)*

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# Young Americans Lean More Progressive Than Their Party ID Suggests, Outside of Black Americans

Black Americans and self-identified liberals are the only group who identify more strongly as Democrats than they do as progressive on a range of issues.

## Progressive-Conservative Rating\*



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# On the Economy, Holding the Rich and Health Care Companies Accountable Is a Priority For Younger Americans

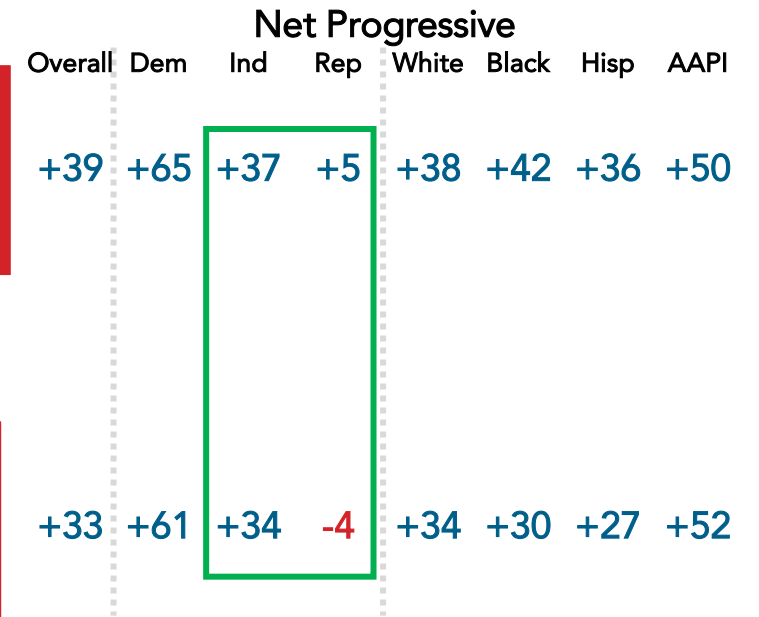
Independents and many Republicans both side more with progressive economic views than conservative ones when it comes to taxes and health care; Republicans only narrowly agree more with conservative views on taxes.

## Which statement do you agree with more?

To lower health care costs, the government should be more involved in providing health care and do more to take on drug and insurance companies that raise prices to pad their profits

To lower health care costs, the government should be less involved and get out of the way of private companies that will be better at innovating and avoiding wasteful spending

Health Care



The wealthiest Americans and big corporations should pay more in taxes so we can invest more in the middle class and working people

Raising taxes will slow the economy, hurt small businesses, and cost millions of jobs as companies are discouraged from investing

Taxes

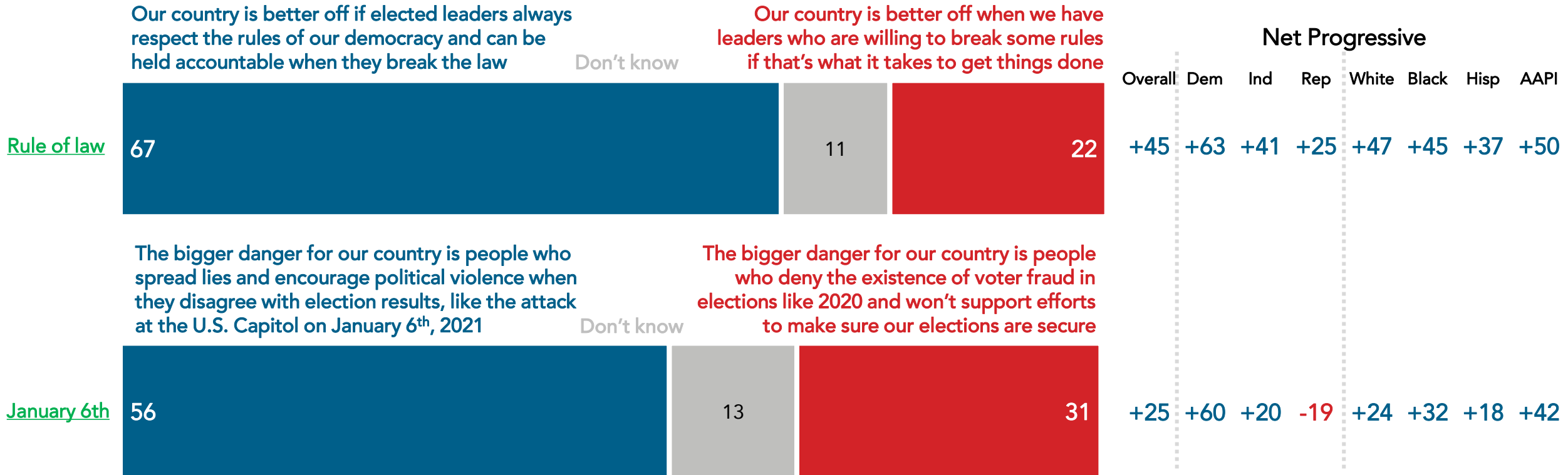


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# Young Americans Stand Against Political Violence and Believe in Democracy Over Autocracy

While Republicans agree that it is better for elected leaders to respect democracy than break rules to get things done (+25), they agree the bigger danger for our country is voter fraud, rather than election lies and events like January 6<sup>th</sup> (net +19).

Which statement do you agree with more?



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# On Guns and Abortion, Young Americans Are More Progressive; On Transgender Issues, They Are More Evenly Divided

Young Americans across the board are more conservative on transgender issues than abortion or guns.

## Which statement do you agree with more?

Abortion should generally be legal – it is a decision that should be between a woman, her family, and her doctor, not the government and politicians

Abortion should generally be illegal – unborn babies are human beings and their lives should be protected, especially when it comes to late-term abortions

Abortion

67

Don't know

7

26

We need to pass common sense gun laws like background checks and banning assault weapons to reduce mass shootings in our schools and communities

Laws restricting gun ownership are ineffective at protecting people and are taking away the rights of law-abiding gun owners guaranteed by the Constitution

Guns

57

Don't know

7

36

We need to stand up to politicians trying to block transgender people from receiving basic health care, education, and legal recognition

We need to stand up to people promoting transgender ideology for children and letting transgender athletes compete in girls' sports

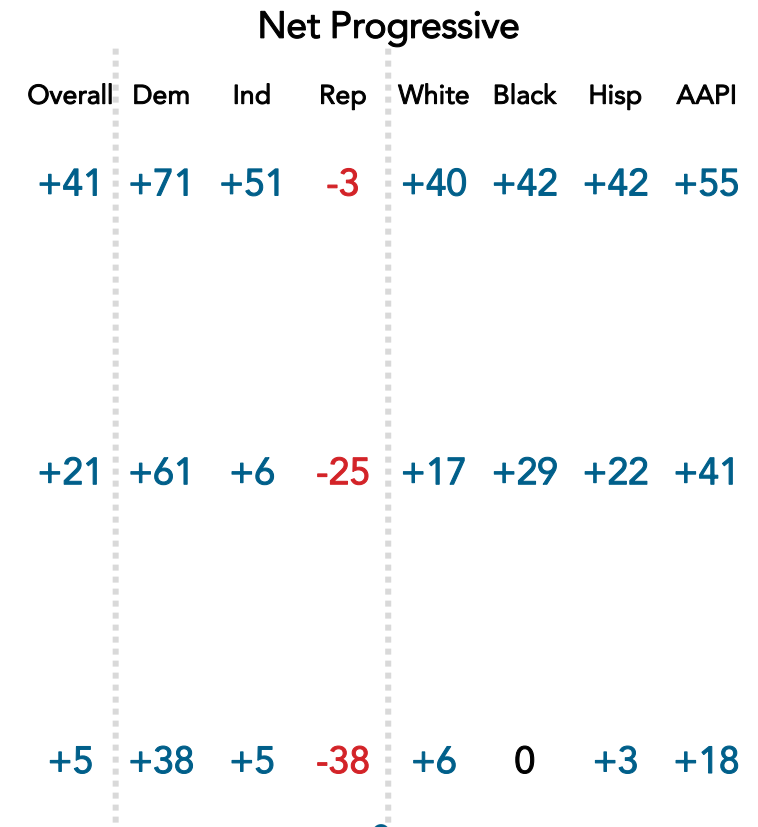
Trans issues

46

Don't know

13

41



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# At Least Half of Voters Take the More Progressive View on Both Immigration and Policing

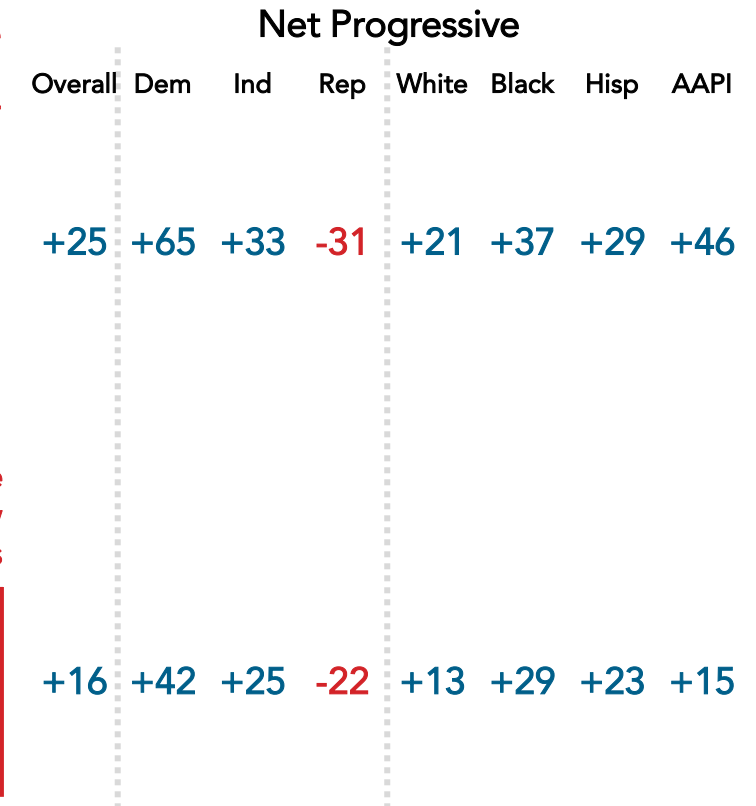
Across racial groups, more young Americans agree with a progressive approach to both immigration and policing.

**Which statement do you agree with more?**

Our leaders need to stop demonizing immigrants and instead put forth solutions to fix our broken immigration system by increasing border security and offering a path to citizenship

There's too much illegal immigration happening that is bringing crime and drugs across the border. We need to increase deportations and build a wall on our southern border

Don't know



Immigration

58

9

33

Policing

54

8

38

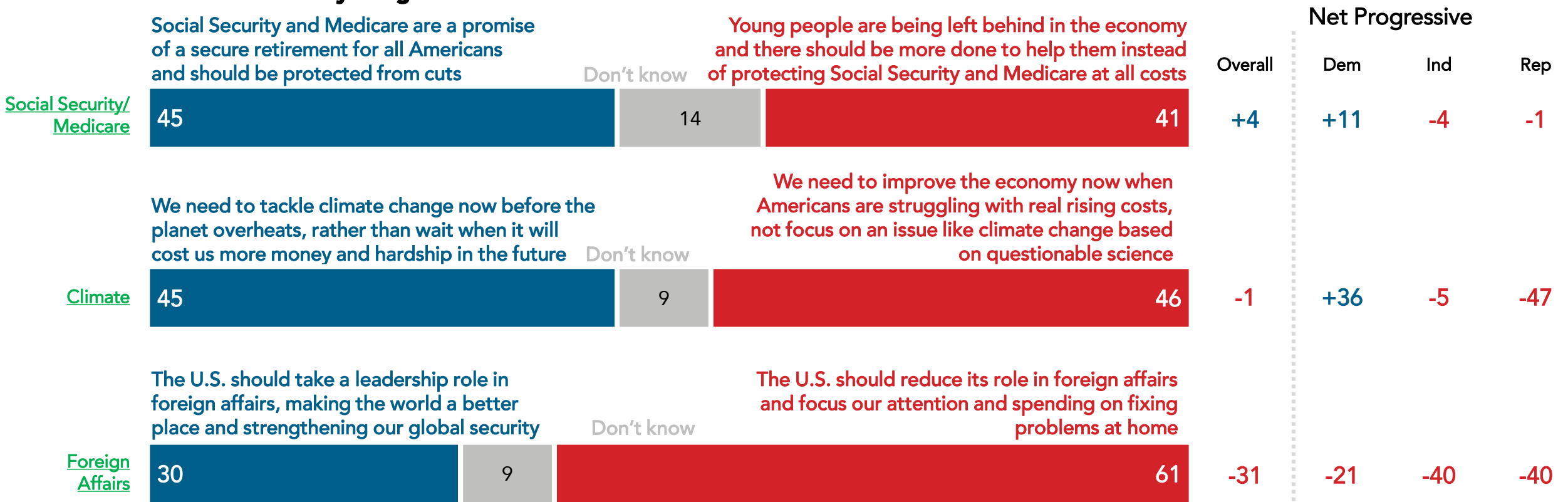
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# Younger Americans Have a Nuanced, Financially-Focused Position on Social Security, Medicare, Climate, & Foreign Affairs

These young Americans report feeling uneasy about their personal finances, and when framing issues like Social Security, foreign policy, and climate change in a present-day, economic framework, the conservative angle wins out across the board.

Which statement do you agree with more?

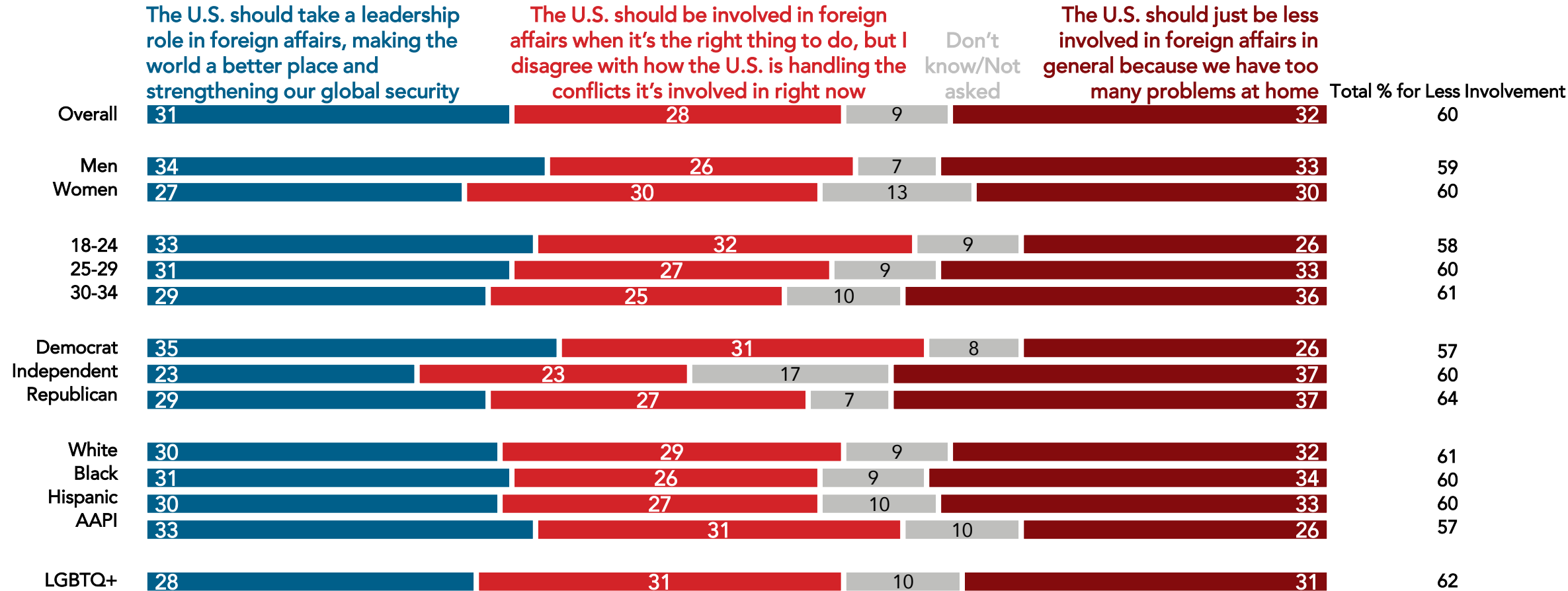


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# Young Americans Are Split Across Various Foreign Policy Positions

Roughly a third support U.S. involvement abroad, just not in current conflicts (28%), and 32% say we should be less involved generally.

You indicated you think the U.S. should reduce its role in foreign affairs. Which of these statements better represents your view on that?

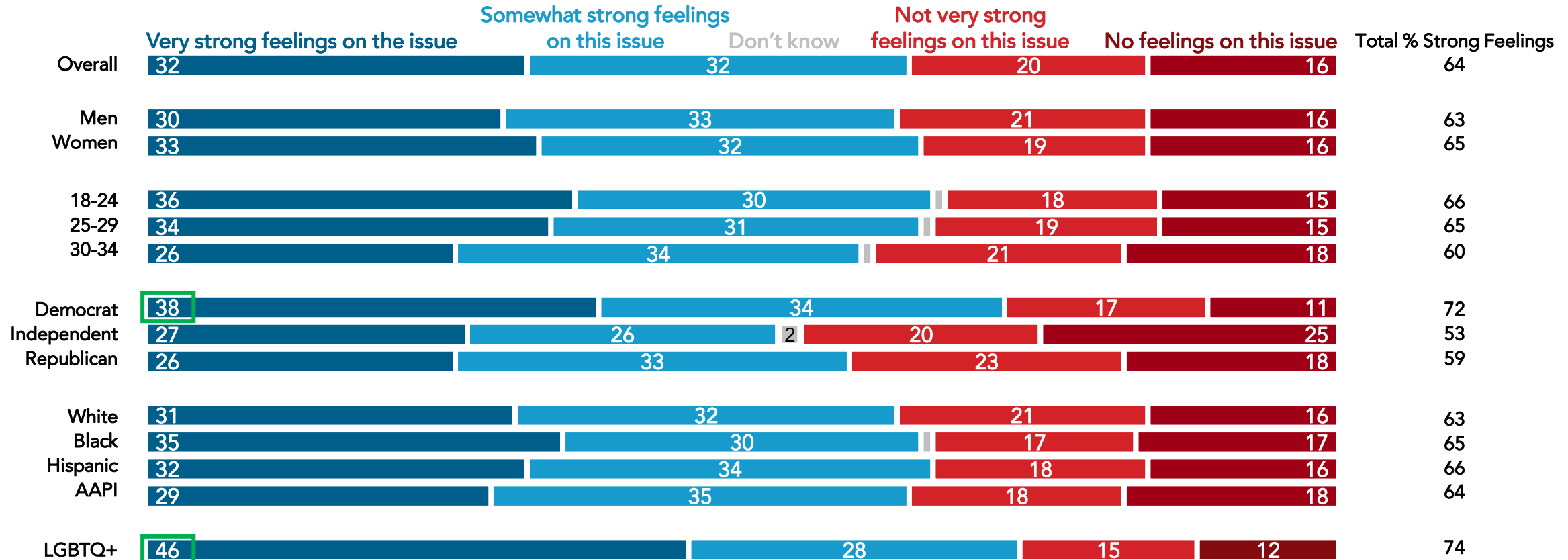


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# Two in Three Young Americans Have Strong Feelings About Israel-Gaza, But Only a Third Have “Very Strong” Feelings

Democrats (38% very strong feelings) and LGBTQ+ (46%) report having the strongest feelings about the war in Israel and Gaza.

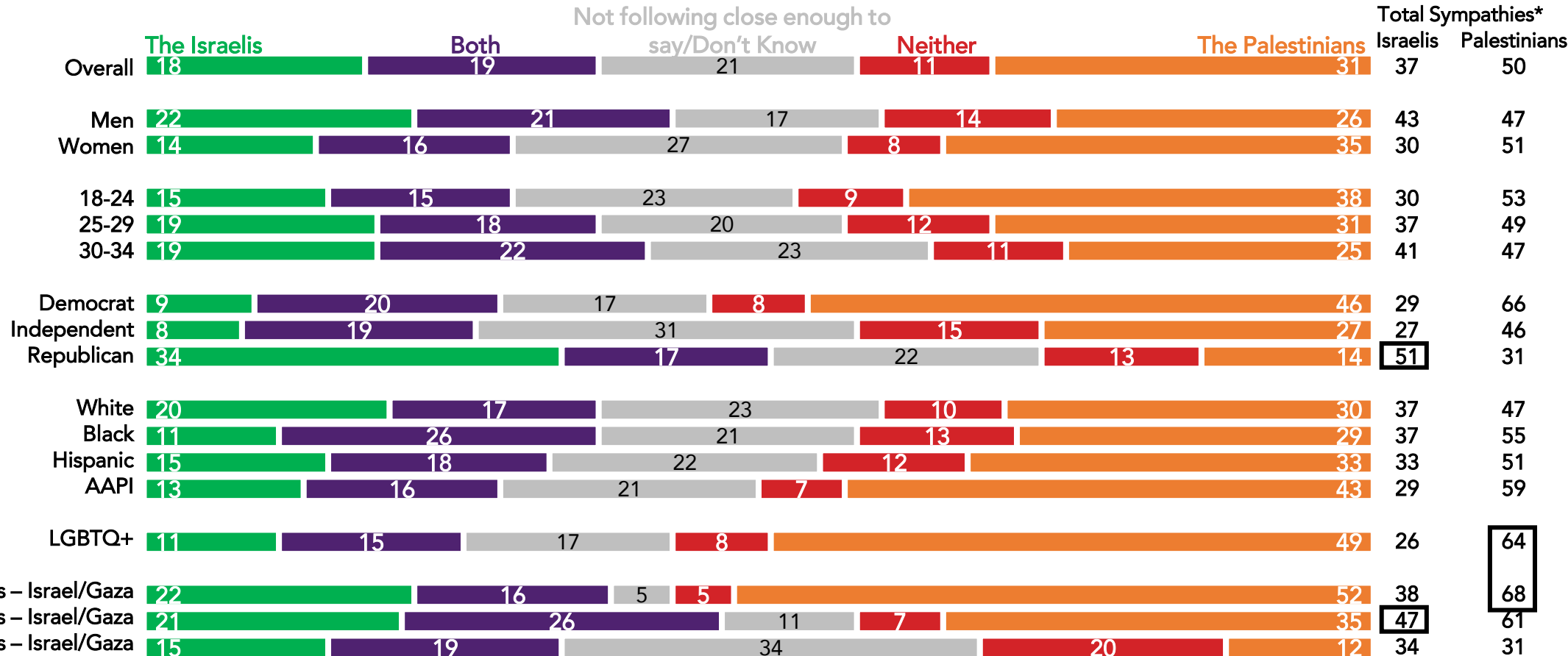
When it comes to the war in Israel and Gaza, is this an issue about which you have strong feelings?



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# A Third of Young Americans Sympathize More With Palestinians in the Israel-Gaza Conflict, One in Five More With the Israelis

In the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are your sympathies more with the Israelis or the Palestinians?



\*Total sympathies are the sum of each respective group plus the share who say both – so for total Israelis, Israelis combined with both, and for total Palestinians, Palestinians combined with both. Nationwide survey of 4,000 registered voters conducted June 18-July 11, 2024. For more info, visit [navigatorresearch.org](https://navigatorresearch.org).



# A Slim Majority Across Age Groups Believes School Closures in the Pandemic Were Necessary

Young Americans with college degrees or currently pursuing college degrees are more supportive of school closures than non-college.

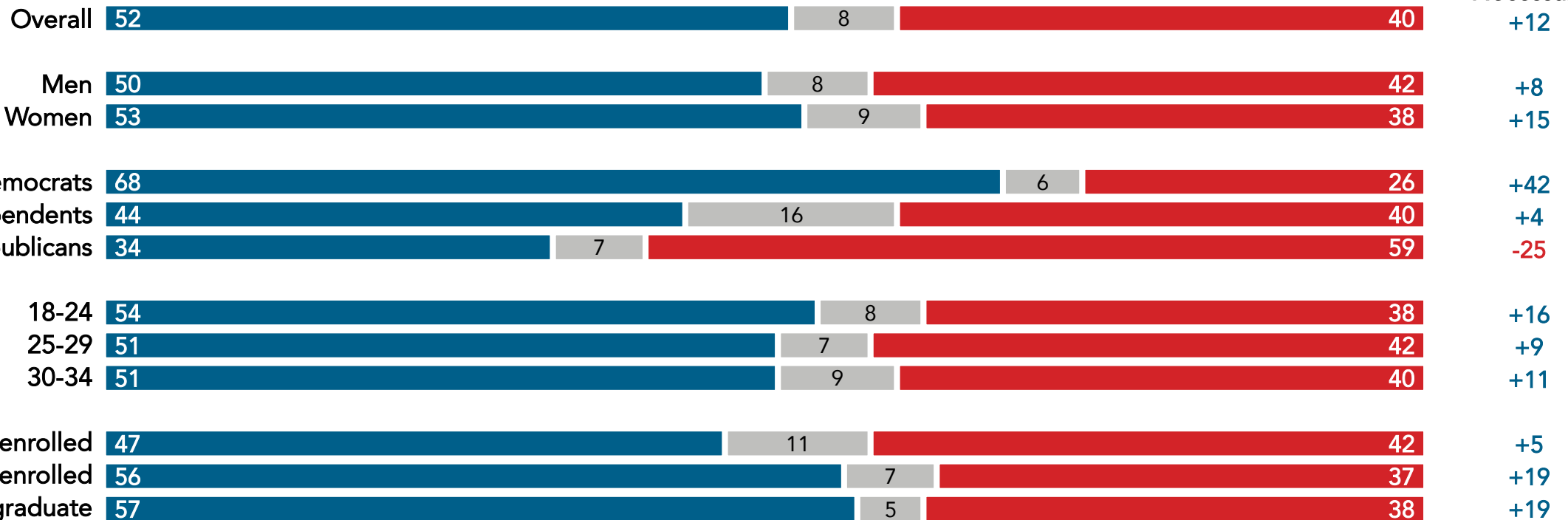
**Which statement do you agree with more?**

School closures during the coronavirus pandemic were necessary before vaccinations were readily available to prioritize the health and safety of our children

Don't know

School closures during the coronavirus pandemic did more harm than good, setting many students back in their academic and social development

Net Closures Necessary



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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.

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<http://navigatorresearch.org>

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