

navigator*

Tuesday, January 21st

Trump Tariffs: A Guide for Advocates



Credit: Shutterstock/Valery Evlakhov

Key Takeaways:

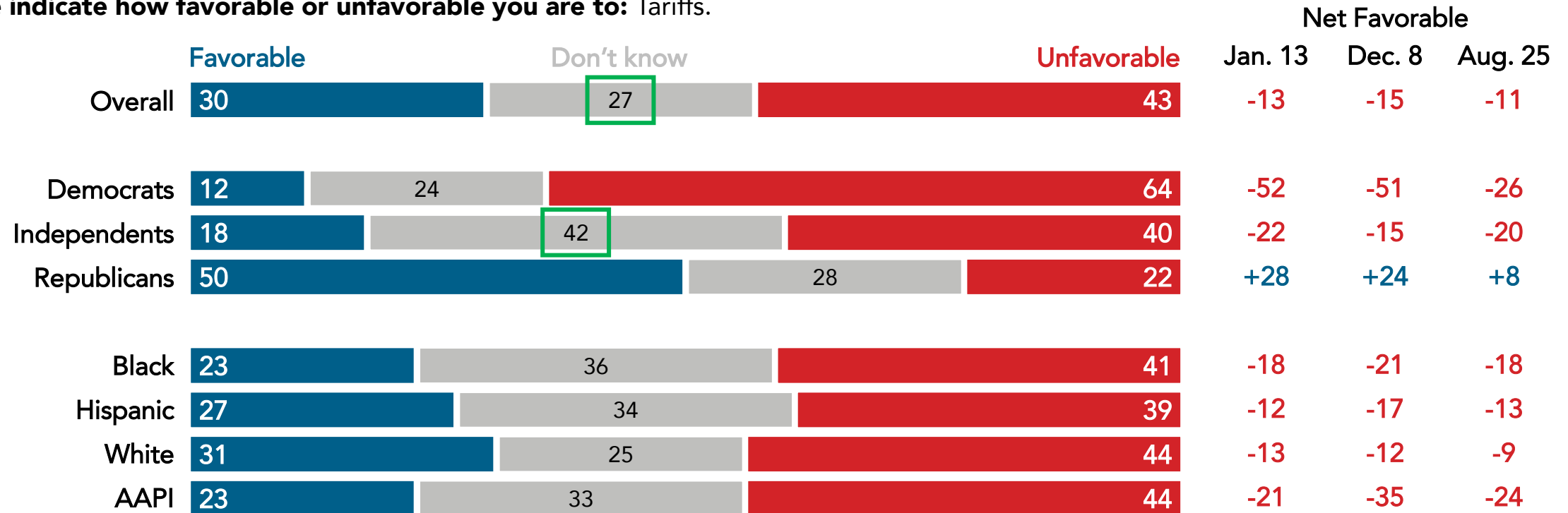
- A plurality of Americans continue to view tariffs negatively, with views that have polarized along party lines since August.
- Nearly three in five say that Trump's tariffs will cause costs to go up, though two in five Americans say that it would be worth it for their costs to go up if tariffs protect American manufacturing and jobs.
- More than four in five are more concerned about their costs going up than their taxes, with two in three saying that it is likely that Trump's new tariffs will cause their costs to go up (just about half say the same of the proposal raising their taxes).
- Americans' top concern about Trump's tariff plan is that it will cost middle class families more, followed by it being a new tax on almost everything we buy.

A Plurality Continue to View Tariffs Negatively, As Do Many Independents; But, Tariffs Remain Undefined for One in Four

Tariffs are viewed more negatively among Democrats than positively among Republicans: two in three Democrats view them unfavorably (net -52 favorable, down from net -26 in August), while just half of Republicans view them favorably (net +28, up from net +8 in August).

- Independents view tariffs unfavorably by 22 points, though 42% say they are not sure.

Please indicate how favorable or unfavorable you are to: Tariffs.



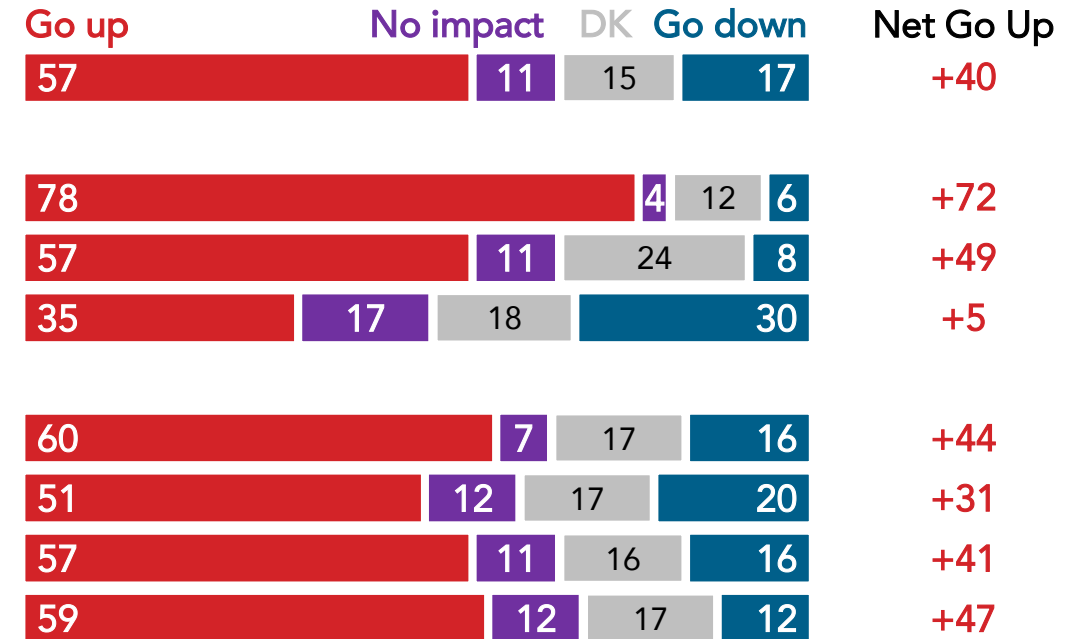
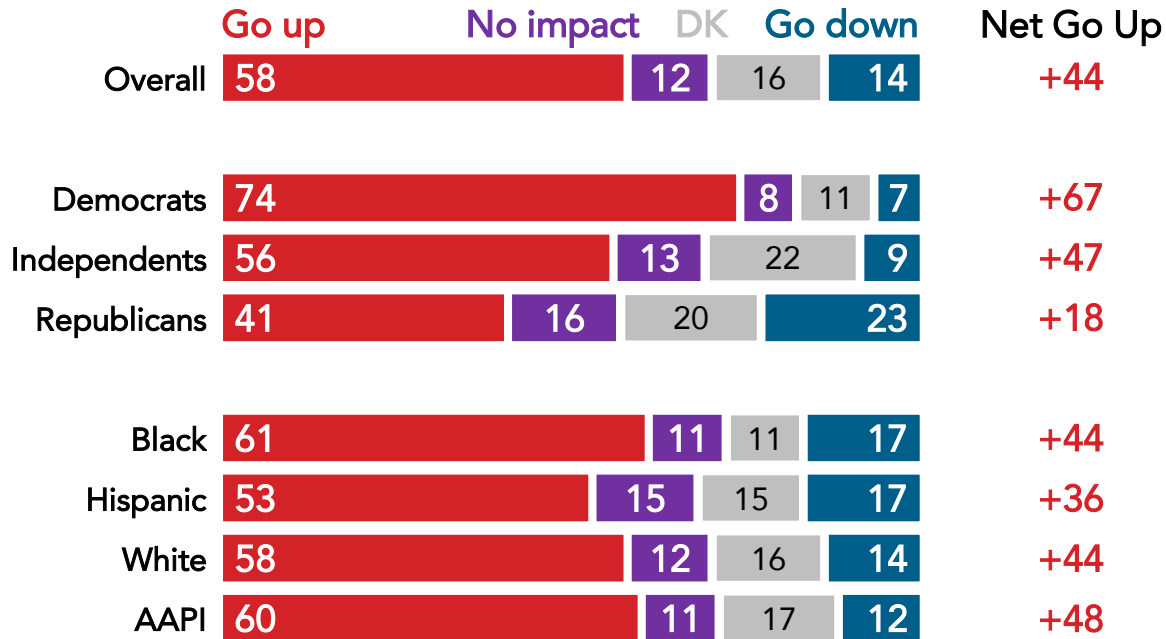
Nationwide surveys of registered voters; Each wave represents approximately 1,000 interviews taken over the prior three-five days. Latest wave conducted January 9-January 13, 2025. For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

Nearly Three in Five Say Costs Will Go Up With New Tariffs, With or Without Mention of Trump

Clear majorities say that tariffs would make the cost of things they buy go up, with and without the context of Trump’s tariff proposal included (58% go up without Trump context, 57% with Trump context).

If new tariffs were put in place, what do you think is most likely to happen? Would it make the cost of things you buy go up, go down, or would it have no impact?

As you may know, Trump has proposed new tariffs. If new tariffs were put in place, what do you think is most likely to happen? Would it make the cost of things you buy go up, go down, or would it have no impact?



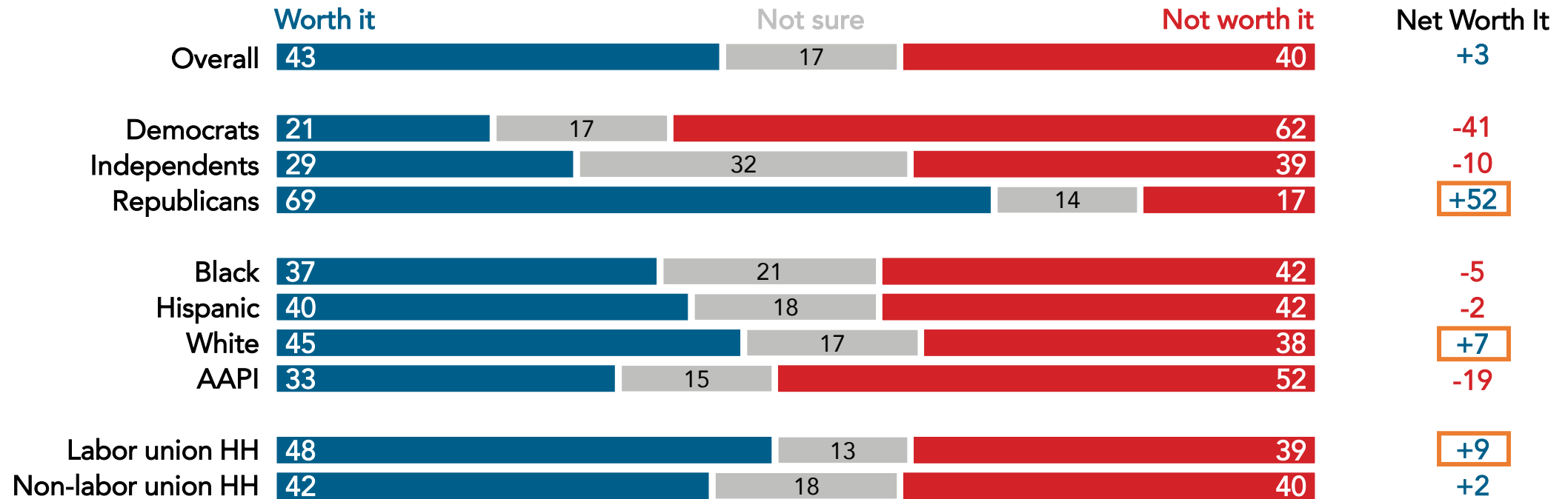
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A Slim Plurality Say That Higher Costs From Tariffs Are Worth It If They Protect American Manufacturing and Jobs

While a slight plurality say the increase in costs would be worth it, this share is driven by Republicans, the vast majority of whom say it would be worth it (69%), while a plurality of independents and most Democrats say it would not be worth it (39% and 62%, respectively).

- Those in labor union households (net +9 worth it) are also more likely to say the higher costs would be worth it.

And if these new tariffs caused the cost of things you buy to go up, do you think the cost increase would be worth it if it helped to keep American manufacturing strong and protected American jobs?



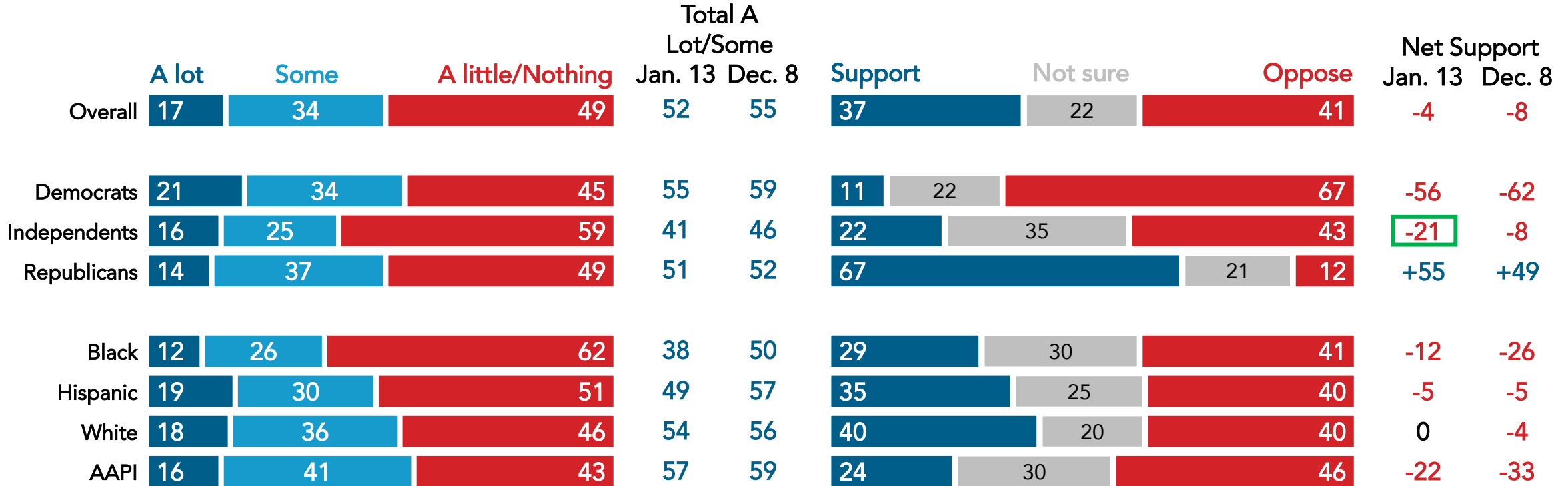
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Half of Americans Have Heard About Tariffs Recently, With Views Divided on Trump's Tariff Plan

Independents are the least likely partisan group to report having heard about tariffs lately (41% hearing "a lot" or "some"), while a plurality oppose Trump's tariff plan (net -21 oppose, down from net -8 in December).

How much have you seen, read, or heard about tariffs lately?

Do you support or oppose Trump's tariff plan?



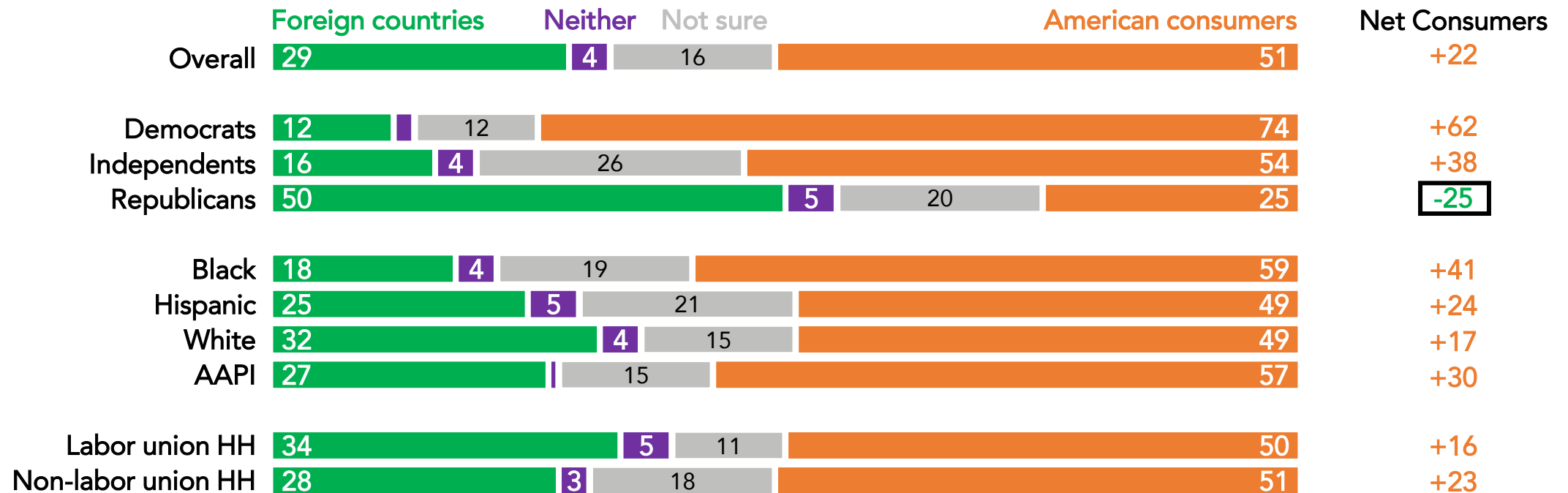
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A Majority Say That New Tariffs Will Hurt American Consumers More Than Foreign Countries

Majorities of Democrats and independents say imposing new tariffs will hurt American consumers more (net +62 and net +38 hurt consumers more, respectively), as do both those in labor union households (net +16) and those in non-labor union households (net +23).

- Republicans are the only partisan or racial group of which a majority say tariffs will hurt foreign countries more (net +25).

Who do you think imposing new tariffs will hurt more: foreign countries or American consumers?

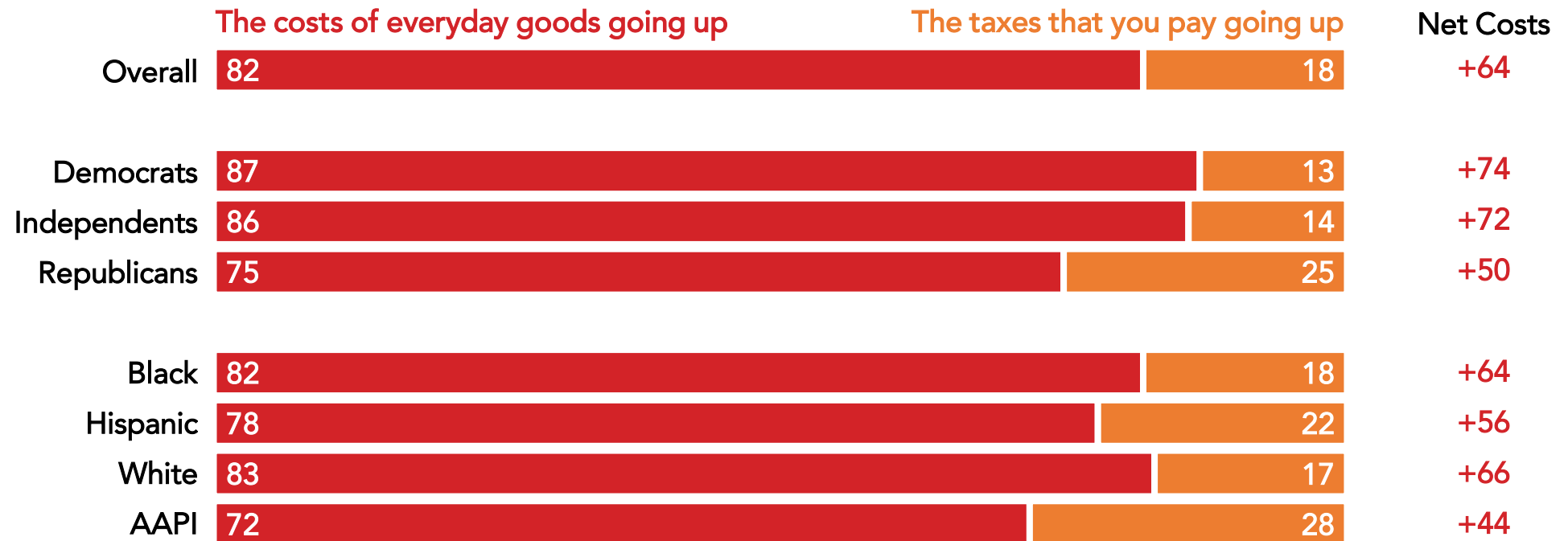


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Vast Majorities Across Party Lines Are More Concerned About Their Costs Going Up Than Their Taxes

More than four in five Democrats and independents say they are more concerned about the costs of everyday goods going up (87% and 86%, respectively), while three in four Republicans say the same (75%).

Which is more concerning to you?



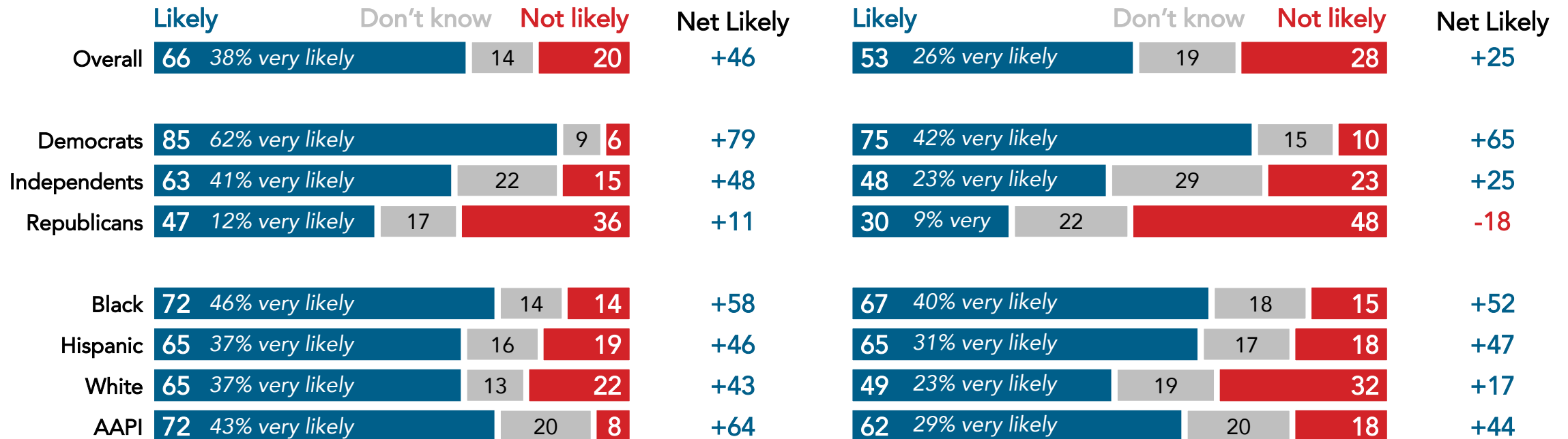
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Two in Three Say It Is Likely That Trump's New Tariffs Will Raise Costs; Fewer Say It Will Cause Taxes to Go Up

A plurality of Republicans agree it is likely that Trump's tariffs will cause the costs of everyday goods to go up (47% likely), while they are less likely to agree that tariffs will cause their taxes to go up (30%).

How likely do you think it is that Trump's new tariffs will cause **the costs of everyday goods** to go up?

How likely do you think it is that Trump's new tariffs will cause **the taxes that you pay** to go up?



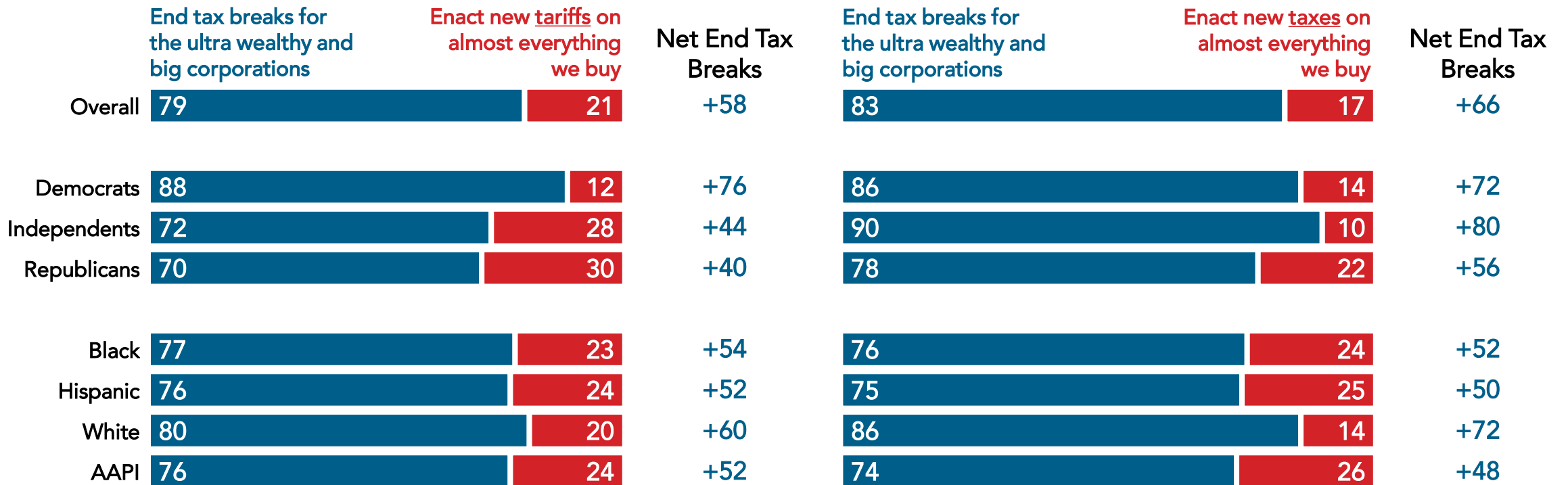
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Ending Tax Breaks For the Rich Is Preferable to Both New Tariffs or New, Far-Reaching Taxes

Large majorities across partisan and racial lines prefer the government “end tax breaks for the ultra wealthy and big corporations” over enacting new tariffs or taxes “on almost everything we buy.”

(Split sample) To fund government programs, which would you prefer the government do?

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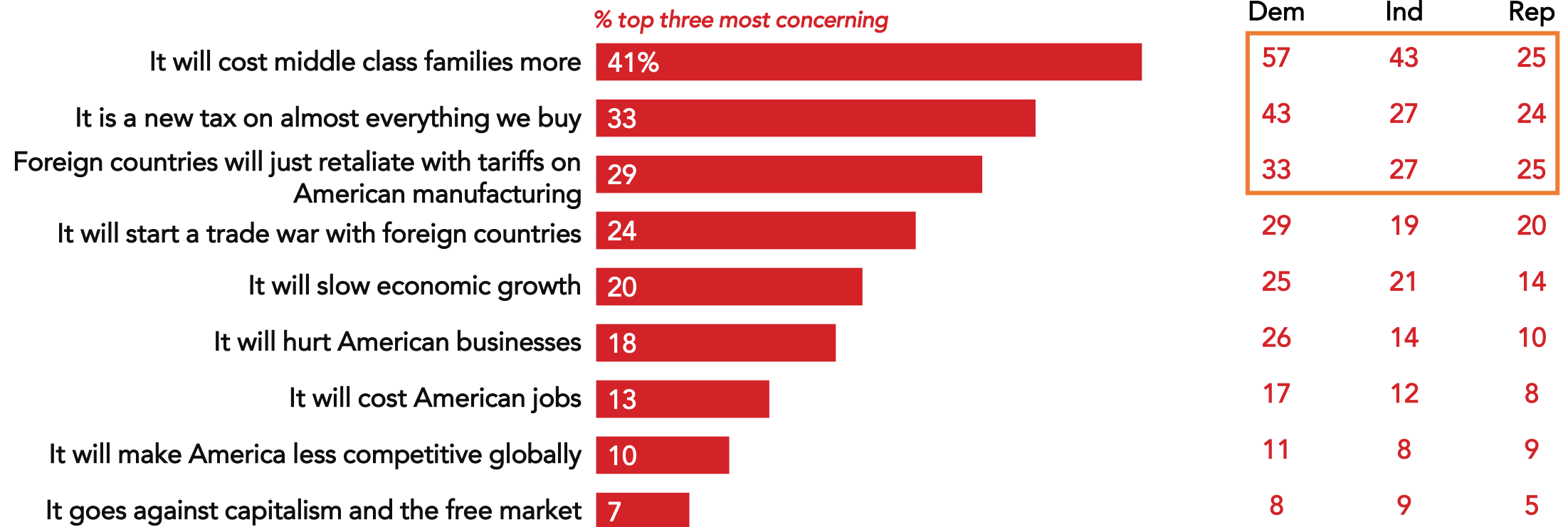


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The Most Concerning Consequences of Trump's Tariffs: Higher Middle-Class Costs, New Taxes, Foreign Countries Retaliating

Democrats and independents are most concerned that Trump's tariff plan "will cost middle class families more" (57% and 43% top three concern), while the next-highest concerns are that it is "a new tax on almost everything we buy" and that "foreign countries will just retaliate with tariffs on American manufacturing."

Which of the following potential impacts raise the most concerns for you about Trump's tariff plan, if any?



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Democrats' Arguments on Tariffs Are Competitive with Trump and Republicans'

(Split sample) Which side do you agree with more?

Democrats who say that Trump's tariffs will increase the costs of almost everything we buy, like clothing, cars, and washing machines. The average American would pay thousands more a year in higher prices, with the middle class footing the bill

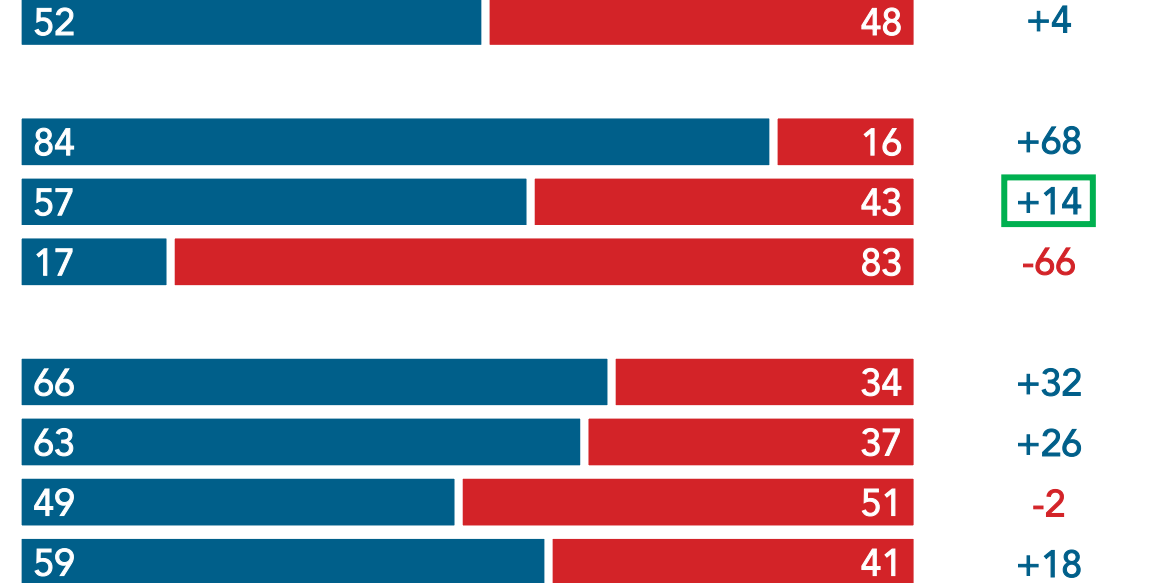
Trump and Republicans who say that tariffs will make American-made products more competitive, protecting American manufacturing and bringing new companies to the U.S. They will be a tool to bring other countries to the negotiating table on issues like immigration



(Split sample) Which side do you agree with more?

Democrats who say that Trump's tariffs will create a new tax that will get passed onto middle class Americans on almost everything we buy, like clothing, cars, and washing machines. The new taxes resulting from tariffs will cost the average American thousands of dollars a year

Trump and Republicans who say that tariffs will make American-made products more competitive, protecting American manufacturing and bringing new companies to the U.S. They will be a tool to bring other countries to the negotiating table on issues like immigration



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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 a public opinion survey among a sample of 1,000 registered voters from January 9-January 13, 2025. 100 additional interviews were conducted among Hispanic voters. 61 additional interviews were conducted among Asian American and Pacific Islander voters. 103 additional interviews were conducted among African American voters. 102 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. 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.

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