

navigator*

Wednesday, October 15th

The Government Shutdown: A Guide for Advocates



Credit: Shutterstock/Lucky Photographer

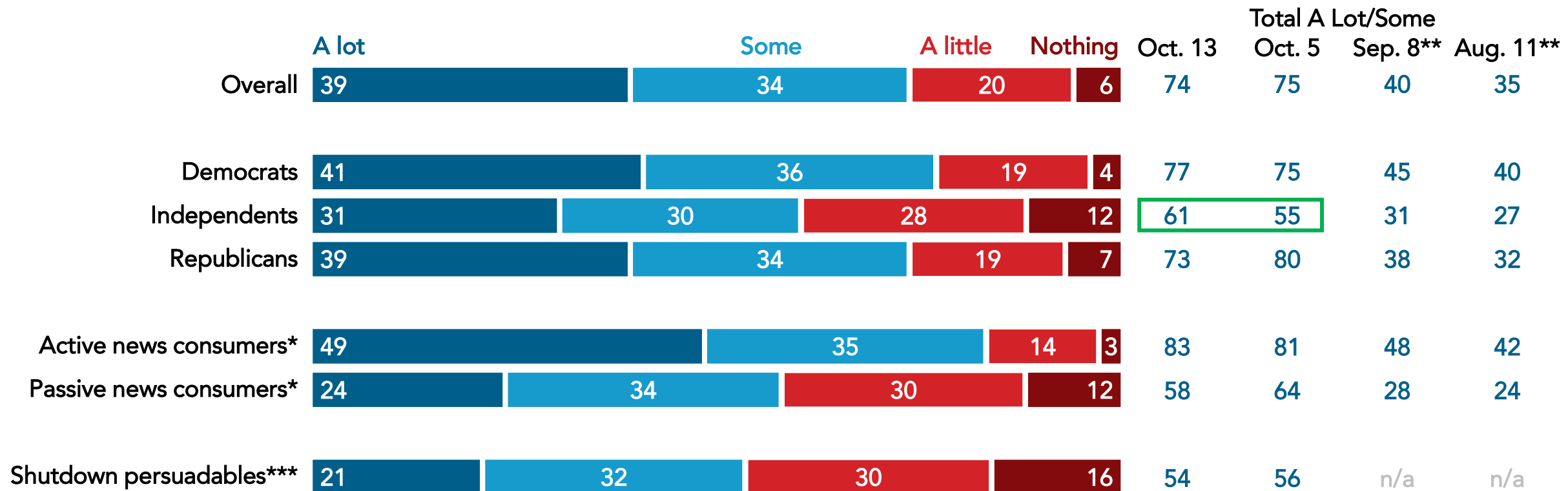
Key Takeaways:

- The government shutdown is still breaking through with Americans – including somewhat higher awareness among independents – and is dominating what Americans hear about Congress. Meanwhile, Trump's headlines have shifted toward praise for his role in brokering a Middle East ceasefire.
- Americans continue to blame Trump and Republicans more than Democrats for the shutdown.
- Americans see Democrats in Congress fighting for something that matters: health care. Their focus on protecting health care gives them the edge in this fight and reinforces that Democrats are the party most trusted on health care.

Awareness Remains High About the Government Shutdown

Compared to a week prior, independents are hearing more about the shutdown (from 55% “a lot” or “some” to 61% now) – though fewer Republicans report hearing about it (from 80% “a lot” or “some” to 73%).

How much have you seen, read, or heard about the current government shutdown?

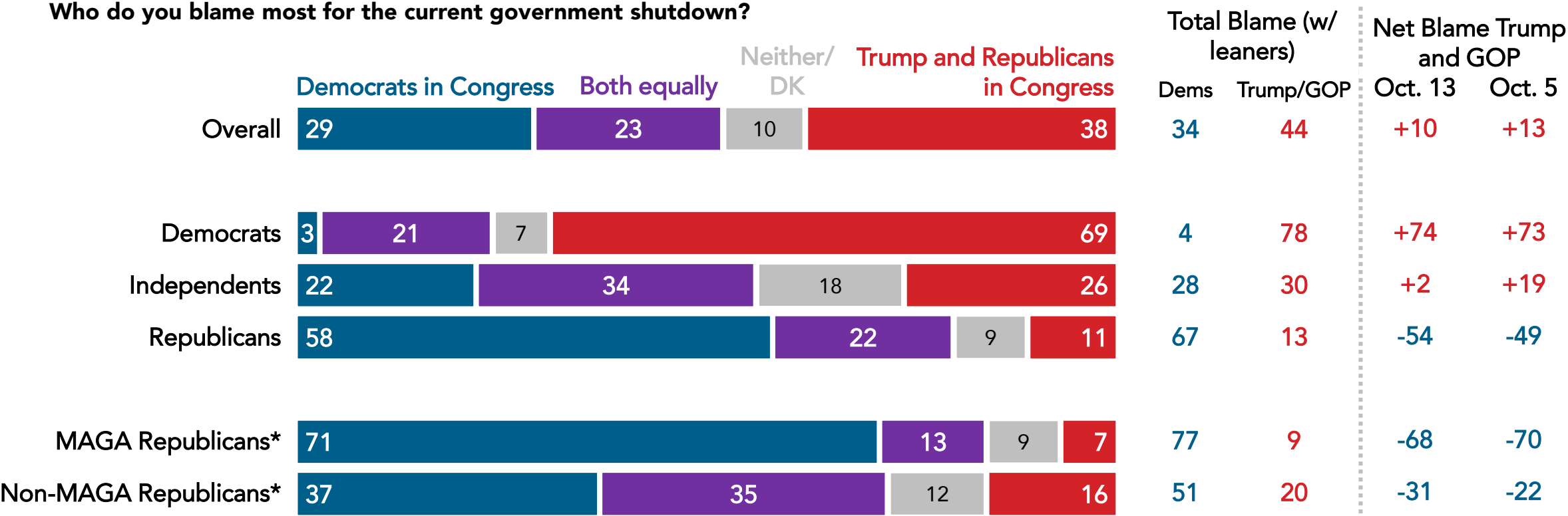


*“Passive news consumers” are those who say, “News comes to me,” while “active news consumers” say, “I seek out news.” **Previous question text said, “How much have you seen, read, or heard about a potential government shutdown in the coming months if Congress cannot pass their annual spending bills?” ***“Shutdown persuadables” are defined as those who say they do not blame the shutdown on either Democrats or Trump and Republicans, blame both of these equally, or don’t know, and excludes leaners towards either group on a follow-up ask. Nationwide surveys of registered voters; Each wave represents approximately 1,000 interviews taken over the prior three-five days. Latest wave conducted October 9-October 13, 2025. For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

Americans Continue to Blame the GOP More for the Shutdown Than Democrats – Though the Gap Has Narrowed Slightly

Republicans have grown more consolidated in their blaming of Democrats in Congress for the government shutdown, from net -49 blame Trump and Republicans last week to net -54 this week.

Who do you blame most for the current government shutdown?



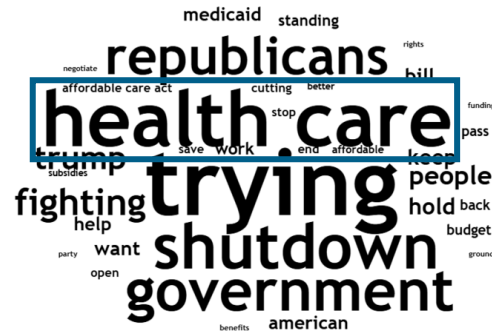
*"MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who identify as "a supporter of the MAGA movement" on a separate question, while "non-MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who do not consider themselves supporters of the MAGA movement or are not sure. Nationwide surveys of registered voters; Each wave represents approximately 1,000 interviews taken over the prior three-five days. Latest wave conducted October 9-October 13, 2025. For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

On Congress, the Conversation Remains on Shutdown; for Trump, Mix of Other Negatives, Plus Middle East on Positives

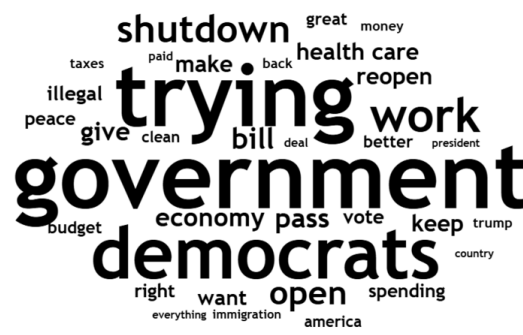
Americans hearing positive information about Democrats in Congress continue to cite health care.

[If hearing positive/mixed information] In a few words, what **positive** things have you seen, read, or heard recently about...

Democrats in Congress (45% hearing positive)



Republicans in Congress (44% hearing positive)



Donald Trump (49% hearing positive)

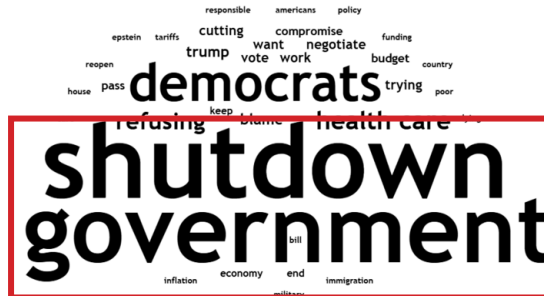


[If hearing negative/mixed information] In a few words, what **negative** things have you seen, read, or heard recently about...

Democrats in Congress (64% hearing negative)



Republicans in Congress (62% hearing negative)



Donald Trump (70% hearing negative)



Nationwide survey of 1,000 registered voters conducted October 9-October 13, 2025.
For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

navigator.*

Shutdown Impacts Are More Worrying Than the Shutdown Itself

More Americans are “extremely worried” about health care costs rising (51%) than “the government shutdown” on its own (32%).

Please indicate how worried you are about each item, where 1 means you’re not at all worried about that item and 5 means you’re extremely worried.

	% 5 – Extremely worried		% Extremely Worried (5)				Shutdown Pers.*
		% 4	Dem	Ind	Rep		
Health care costs rising and Americans losing health care coverage	51	22	71	49	32	48	
Tariffs raising costs of everyday goods	47	21	66	46	28	40	
Political violence in the United States	45	29	52	38	40	42	
Federal workers not receiving a paycheck	38	22	50	32	29	36	
The National Guard being deployed to American cities	38	16	64	26	16	31	
ICE conducting mass deportation raids	34	16	58	28	11	27	
The government shutdown	32	24	46	21	20	30	
AI (artificial intelligence) threatening American jobs	32	21	34	26	32	29	
The ongoing conflict in Israel and Gaza	20	21	27	15	15	21	

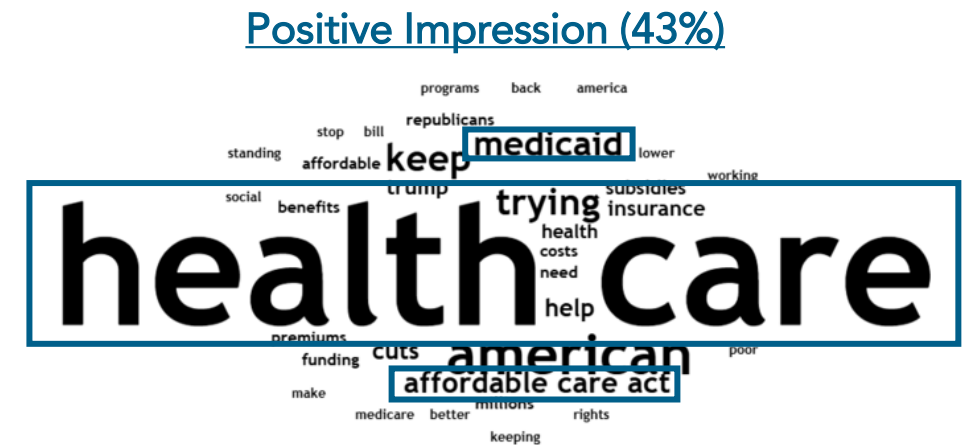
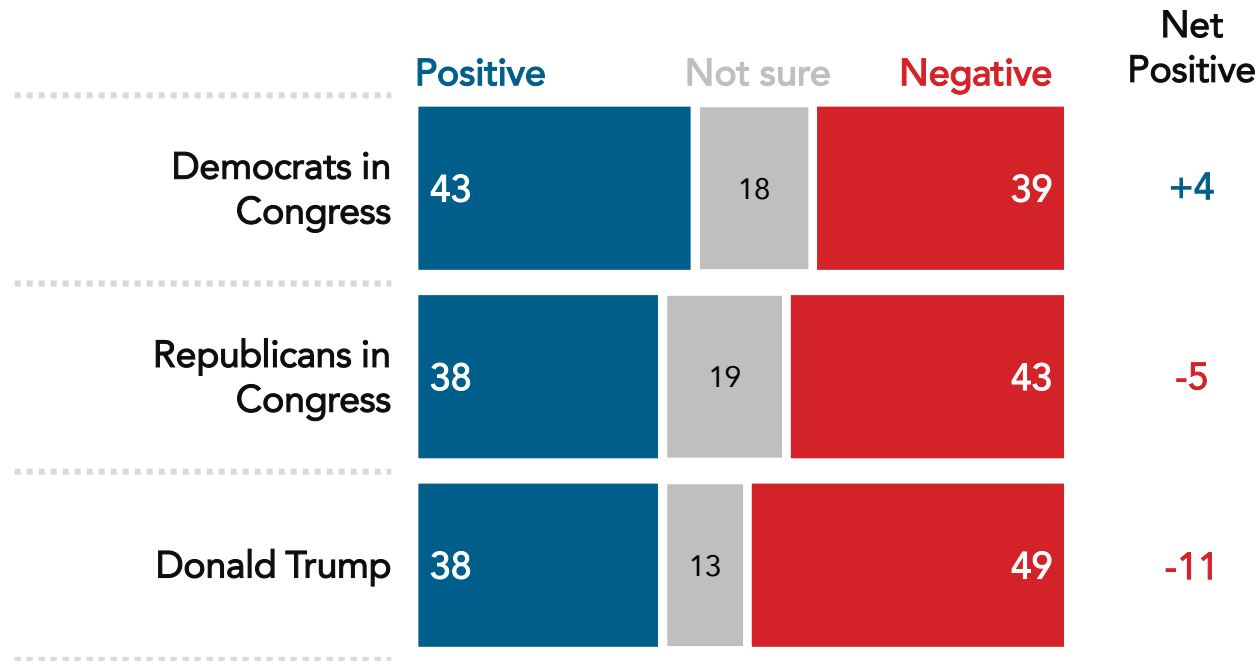
*“Shutdown persuadables” are defined as those who say they do not blame the shutdown on either Democrats or Trump and Republicans, blame both of these equally, or don’t know, and excludes leaners towards either group on a follow-up ask. Nationwide survey of 1,000 registered voters conducted October 9-October 13, 2025. For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

More Have a Positive Impression of What Democrats Are Fighting for Than GOP/Trump, Bolstered by Their Position on Health Care

A slim plurality have a positive impression of what Democrats in Congress are fighting for in the government shutdown (net +4 positive), compared to more negative views of Republicans (net -5) and Trump (net -11). Most who rate Democrats positively mention health care.

Do you have a positive or negative impression of what _____ is/are fighting for in this government shutdown?

[If a positive or negative impression] And what, specifically, do you think the Democrats in Congress are fighting for in this government shutdown?



*"Shutdown persuadables" are defined as those who say they do not blame the shutdown on either Democrats or Trump and Republicans, blame both of these equally, or don't know, and excludes leaners towards either group on a follow-up ask. Nationwide survey of 1,000 registered voters conducted October 9-October 13, 2025. For more info, visit navigatortresearch.org.

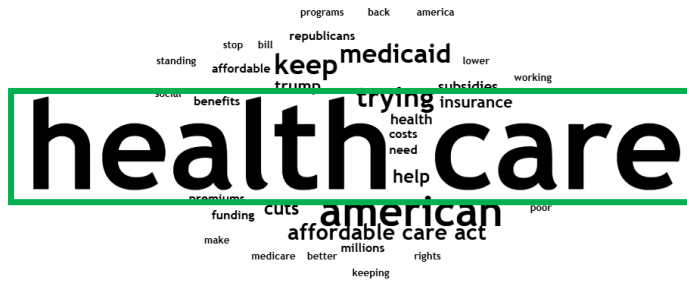
navigator*

Health Care Dominates the Conversation Around Both Parties in Congress on the Shutdown; on Trump, Power, Cuts, Control

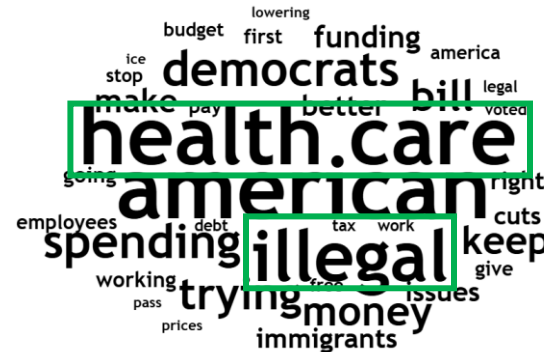
Americans report hearing about Democrats' positive position on health care, as well as negative information about them protecting health care for illegal immigrants.

And what, specifically, do you think _____ is/are fighting for in this government shutdown?

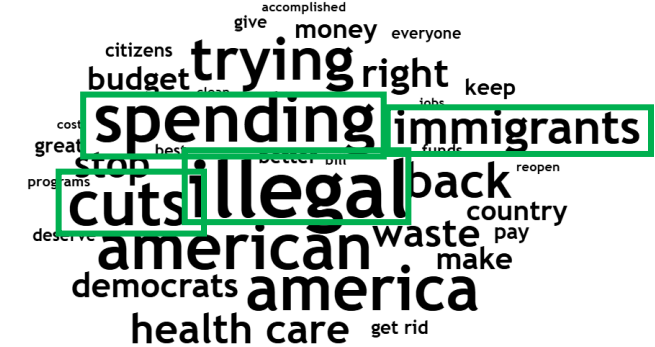
Democrats in Congress (Positive, 43%)



Republicans in Congress (Positive, 38%)



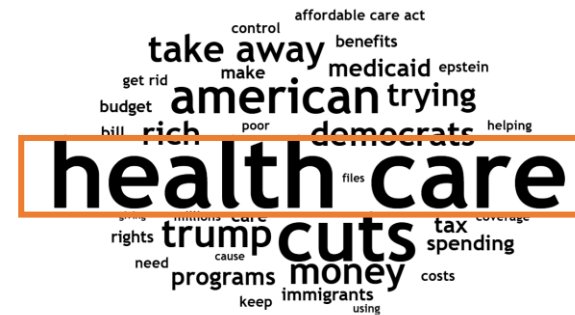
Donald Trump (Positive, 38%)



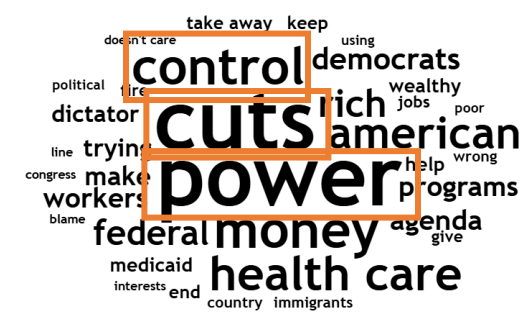
Democrats in Congress (Negative, 39%)



Republicans in Congress (Negative, 43%)



Donald Trump (Negative, 49%)



Nationwide survey of 1,000 registered voters conducted October 9-October 13, 2025.
For more info, visit navigatortorresearch.org.

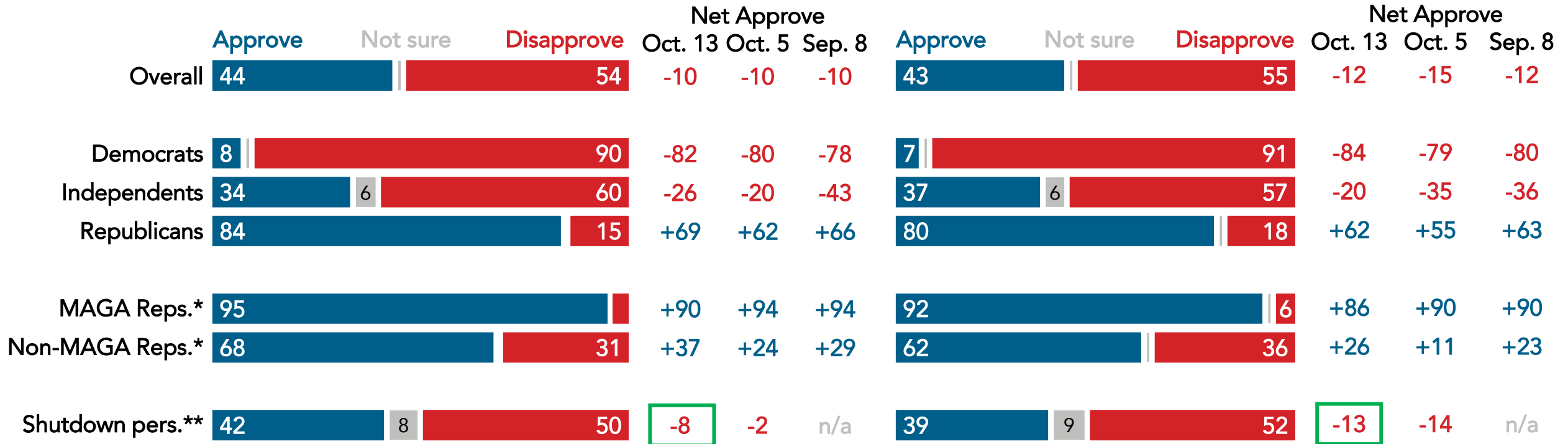
navigator.

Trump's Overall Approval Rating Remains Unchanged, and His Economic Approval Rating Is Also Still in the Red

Among shutdown persuadable Americans**, Trump's overall approval rating is at net -8 approve, while his economic rating is worse (net -13 approve).

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as president?

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling the economy?



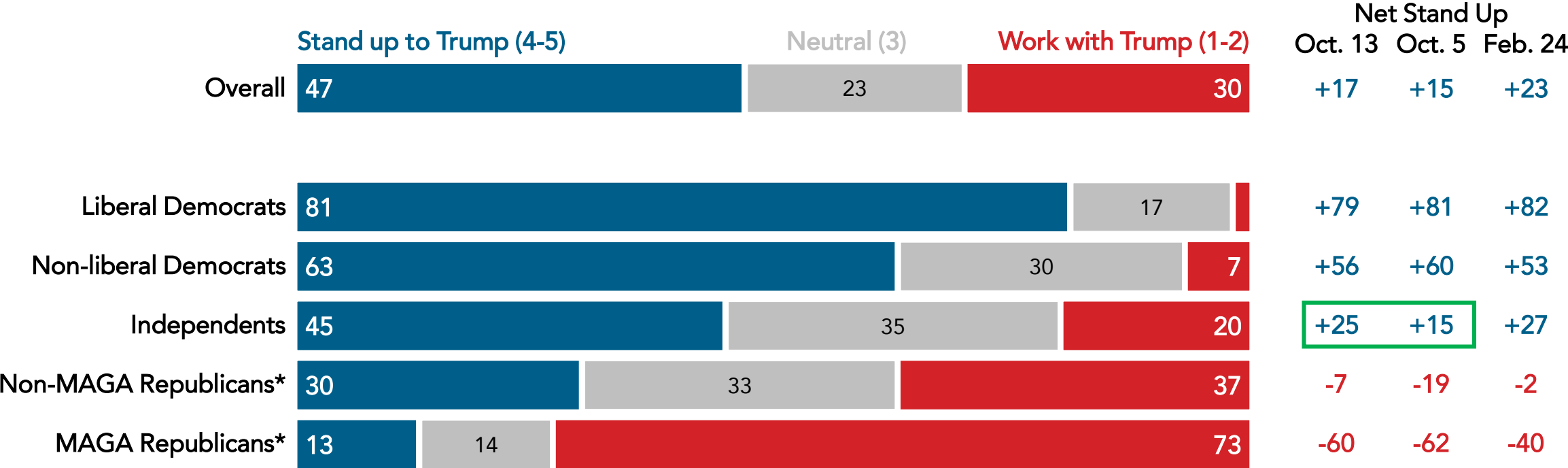
*"MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who identify as "a supporter of the MAGA movement" on a separate question, while "non-MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who do not consider themselves supporters of the MAGA movement or are not sure. **"Shutdown persuadables" are defined as those who say they do not blame the shutdown on either Democrats or Trump and Republicans, blame both of these equally, or don't know, and excludes leaners towards either group on a follow-up ask. Nationwide surveys of registered voters; Each wave represents approximately 1,000 interviews taken over the prior three-five days. Latest wave conducted October 9-October 13, 2025. For more info, visit navigatortresearch.org.

navigator*

A Consistent Plurality Still Wants Democrats to Stand Up to Trump

A growing share of independents want to see Democrats in Congress stand up to Trump (from net +15 stand up to Trump last week to net +25 this week). Nearly a third of non-MAGA Republicans* (30%) say the same.

On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means "work with President Trump all the time" and 5 means "stand up to President Trump all the time," what do you think Democrats in Congress should do?

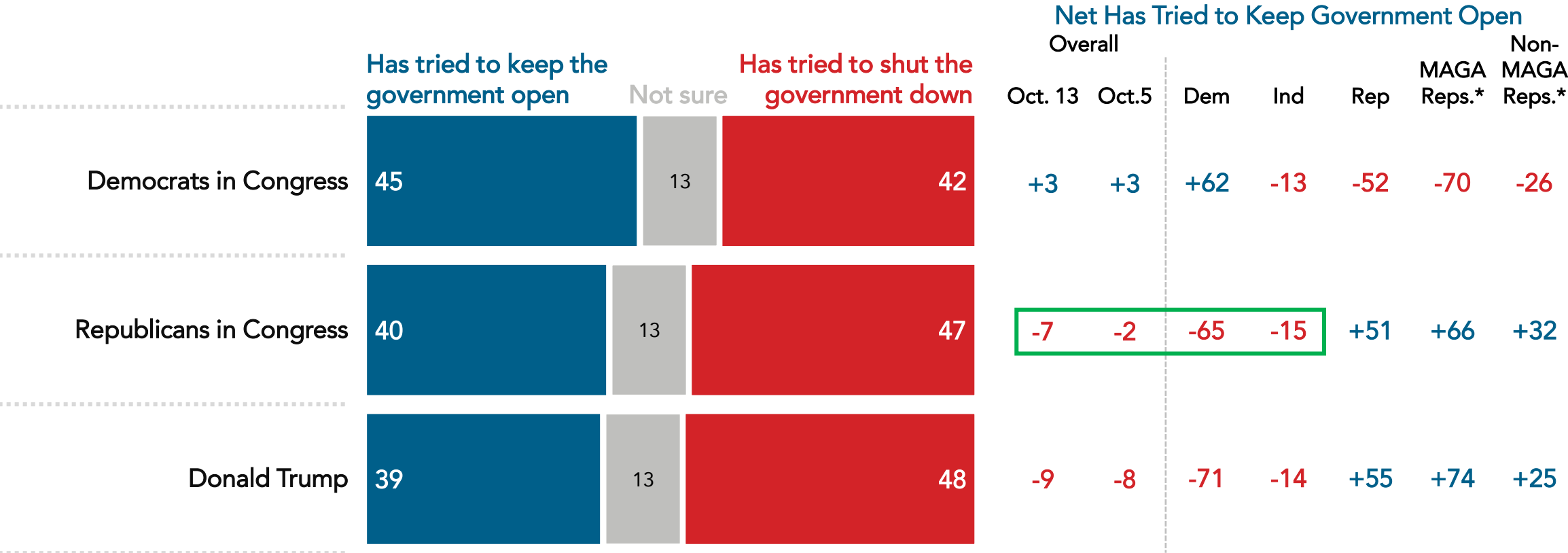


*"MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who identify as "a supporter of the MAGA movement" on a separate question, while "non-MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who do not consider themselves supporters of the MAGA movement or are not sure. Nationwide surveys of registered voters; Each wave represents approximately 1,000 interviews taken over the prior three-five days. Latest wave conducted October 9-October 13, 2025. For more info, visit navigatortresearch.org.

Fewer Now See Trump/GOP Trying to Keep Government Open; a Slim Plurality Says Democrats Are Trying to Keep It Open

Views of Republicans trying to keep the government open have shifted from net -2 trying to keep it open last week to net -7 this week.

Please indicate whether you think each has tried to keep the government open or has tried to shut the government down.



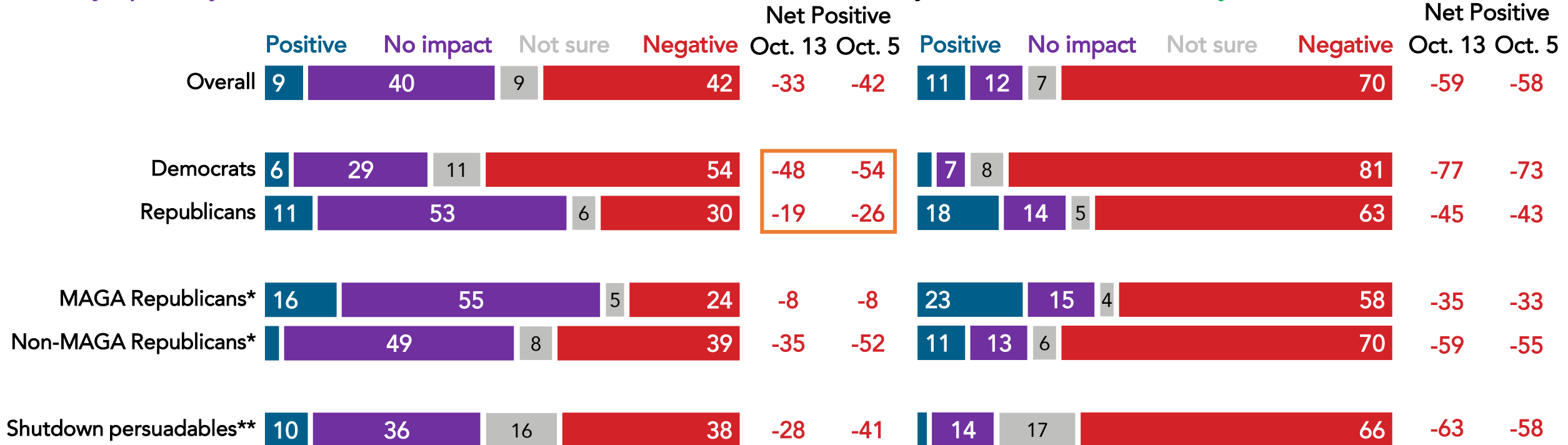
*"MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who identify as "a supporter of the MAGA movement" on a separate question, while "non-MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who do not consider themselves supporters of the MAGA movement or are not sure. Nationwide surveys of registered voters; Each wave represents approximately 1,000 interviews taken over the prior three-five days. Latest wave conducted October 9-October 13, 2025. For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

As the Shutdown Persists, a Majority Sees It Negatively Impacting the Country; Fewer Say the Same on Personal Impacts

Fewer Americans across party lines say they will be negatively impacted personally by the shutdown than said the same last week, with a 6-point net drop among Democrats (from net -54 positive to net -48) and a 7-point net drop among Republicans (from net -26 to net -19).

(Split Sample) Regardless of how much you have heard about the government shutdown, which of the following best describes the impact you think it will have on **you personally**?

(Split Sample) Regardless of how much you have heard about the government shutdown, which of the following best describes the impact you think it will have on **the country**?



*"MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who identify as "a supporter of the MAGA movement" on a separate question, while "non-MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who do not consider themselves supporters of the MAGA movement or are not sure. **"Shutdown persuadables" are defined as those who say they do not blame the shutdown on either Democrats or Trump and Republicans, blame both of these equally, or don't know, and excludes leaners towards either group on a follow-up ask. Nationwide surveys of registered voters; Each wave represents approximately 1,000 interviews taken over the prior three-five days. Latest wave conducted October 9-October 13, 2025. For more info, visit navigatortresearch.org.

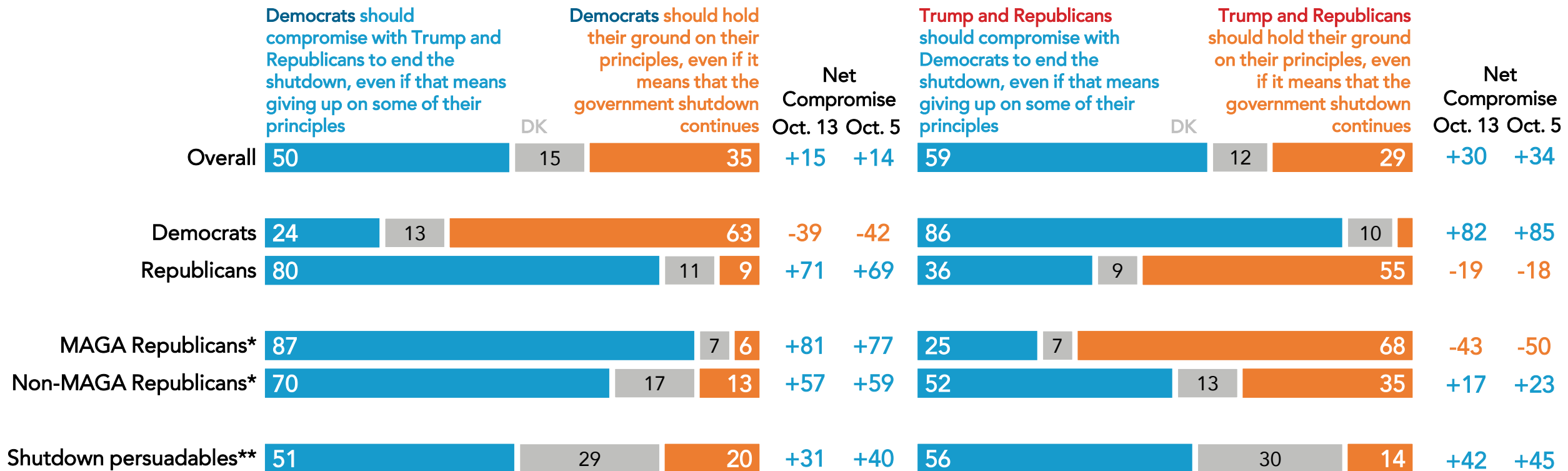
navigator*

Americans Want to See Compromise to End the Shutdown, Though More Want Republicans to Compromise than Democrats

This is driven by more Democrats wanting to see their party hold the line (63%) than Republicans who say the same of their party (55%).

(Split Sample) What do you think **Democrats in Congress** should do in relation to the government shutdown?

What do you think **President Trump and Republicans in Congress** should do in relation to the government shutdown?



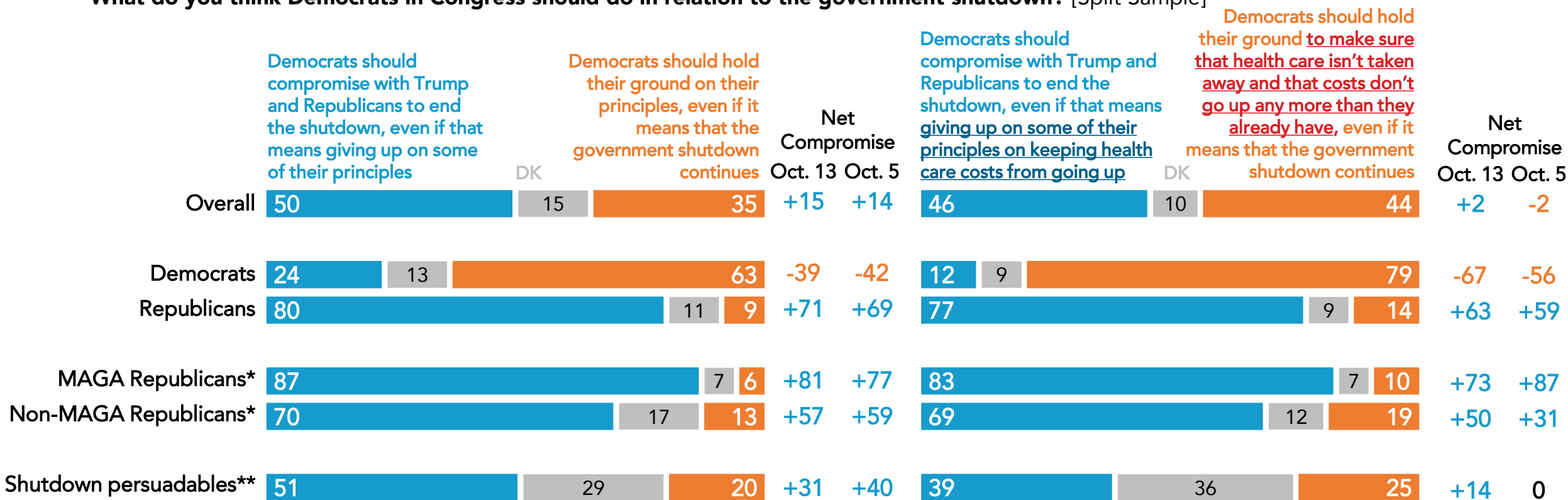
*"MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who identify as "a supporter of the MAGA movement" on a separate question, while "non-MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who do not consider themselves supporters of the MAGA movement or are not sure. **"Shutdown persuadables" are defined as those who say they do not blame the shutdown on either Democrats or Trump and Republicans, blame both of these equally, or don't know, and excludes leaners towards either group on a follow-up ask. Nationwide surveys of registered voters; Each wave represents approximately 1,000 interviews taken over the prior three-five days. Latest wave conducted October 9-October 13, 2025. For more info, visit navigatortresearch.org.

navigator*

Support for Democrats Holding Their Ground Over Compromising Is Still Bolstered By a Health Care Frame

Democrats are even more supportive of their party holding the line in the shutdown with health care as a frame (net -67 compromise) than without it (net -39).

What do you think Democrats in Congress should do in relation to the government shutdown? [Split Sample]

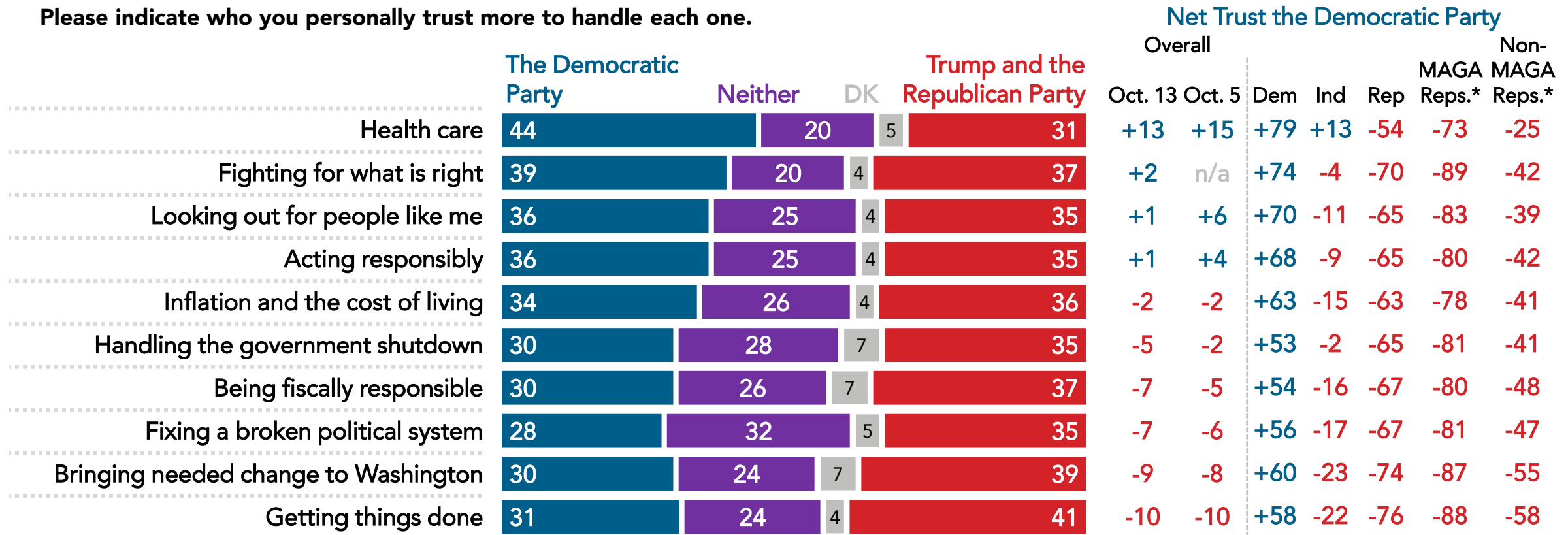


*"MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who identify as "a supporter of the MAGA movement" on a separate question, while "non-MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who do not consider themselves supporters of the MAGA movement or are not sure. **"Shutdown persuadables" are defined as those who say they do not blame the shutdown on either Democrats or Trump and Republicans, blame both of these equally, or don't know, and excludes leaners towards either group on a follow-up ask. Nationwide surveys of registered voters; Each wave represents approximately 1,000 interviews taken over the prior three-five days. Latest wave conducted October 9-October 13, 2025. For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

While Democrats Hold Their Advantage on Health Care, They Are Tied or at a Deficit to GOP on Other Shutdown Issues

Among independents, 46% say they trust neither party on the issue of health care – though among independents who trust one party more than the other, Democrats have a 13-point net advantage.

Please indicate who you personally trust more to handle each one.



*"MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who identify as "a supporter of the MAGA movement" on a separate question, while "non-MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who do not consider themselves supporters of the MAGA movement or are not sure.

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

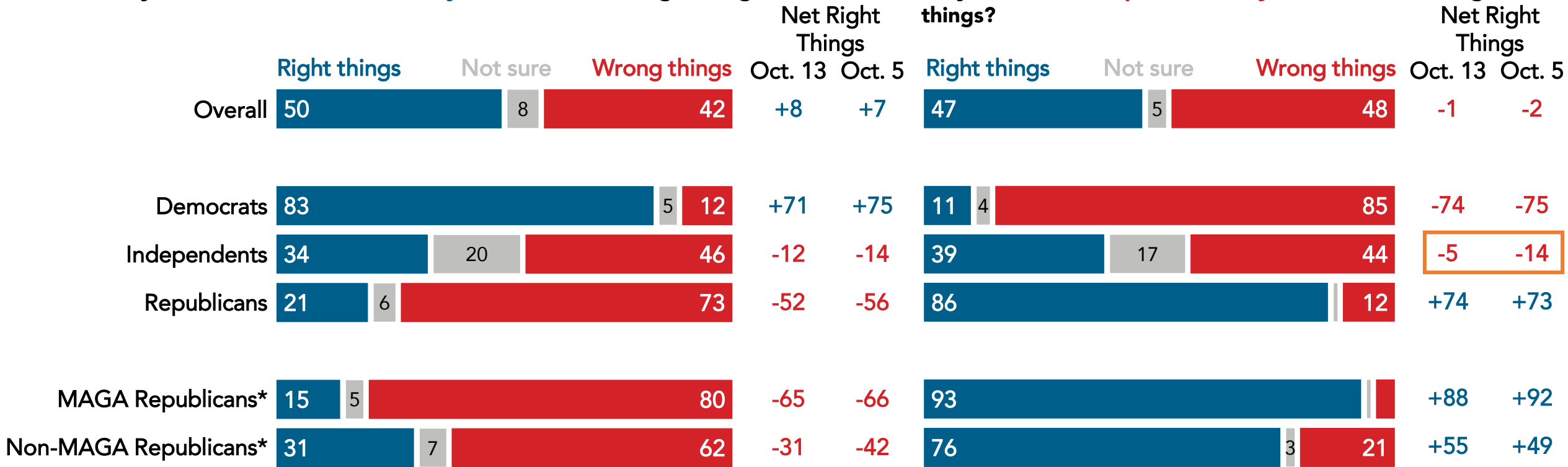
navigator*

Americans Continue to Say Democrats Are More Focused on the Right Things Than the GOP

Among non-MAGA Republicans*, nearly a third say the Democratic Party is focused on the right things (31%).

Do you think the **Democratic Party** is focused on the right things?

Do you think the **Republican Party** is focused on the right things?

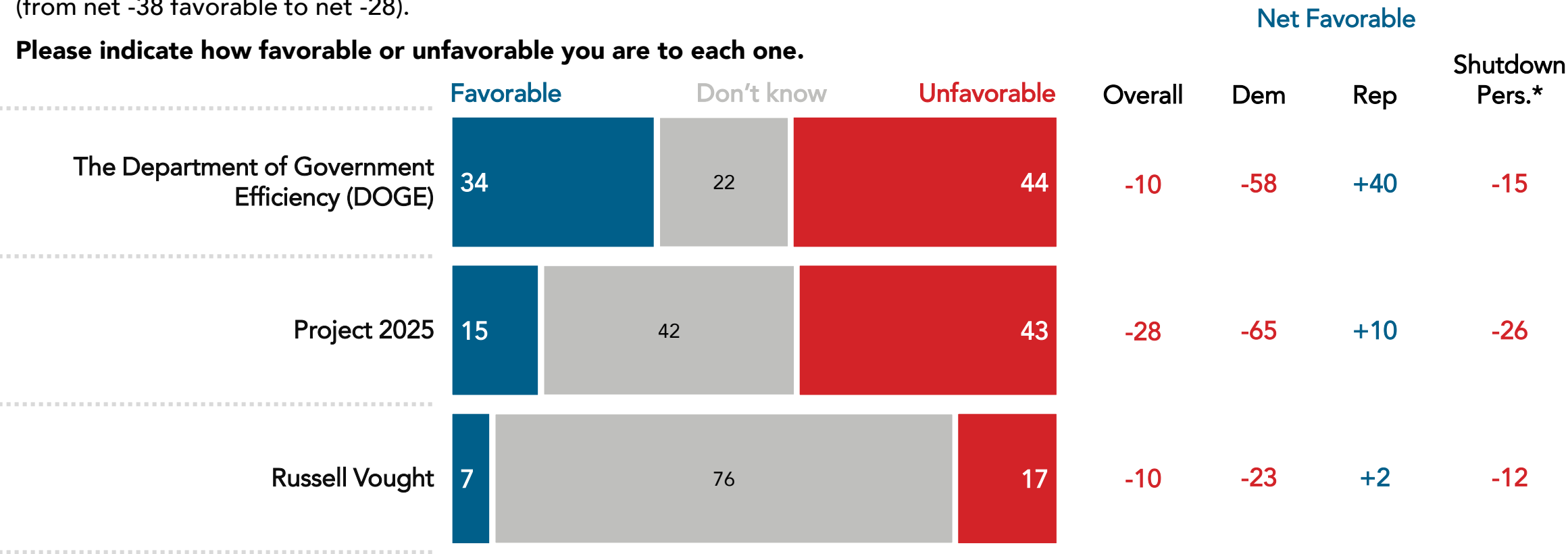


*"MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who identify as "a supporter of the MAGA movement" on a separate question, while "non-MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who do not consider themselves supporters of the MAGA movement or are not sure. Nationwide surveys of registered voters; Each wave represents approximately 1,000 interviews taken over the prior three-five days. Latest wave conducted October 9-October 13, 2025. For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

Views of Project 2025 and DOGE Are Net Negative; Vought a Near Total Unknown

Compared to when last asked in late February, views of DOGE have declined from net +4 favorable to net -10 favorable. Since April, views of Project 2025 have improved slightly, as fewer now report being familiar (58% familiar now, down from 63%) and unfavorable (from net -38 favorable to net -28).

Please indicate how favorable or unfavorable you are to each one.



*"Shutdown persuadables" are defined as those who say they do not blame the shutdown on either Democrats or Trump and Republicans, blame both of these equally, or don't know, and excludes leaners towards either group on a follow-up ask. Nationwide surveys of registered voters; Each wave represents approximately 1,000 interviews taken over the prior three-five days. Latest wave conducted October 9-October 13, 2025. For more info, visit navigatortorresearch.org.

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: Jessica Floyd, The Hub Project; Christina Reynolds; Mike Podhorzer; Jesse Ferguson, progressive strategist; Navin Nayak; 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 October 9-October 13, 2025. 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.

For Press inquiries contact:

press@navigatorresearch.org

To learn more about Navigator:

<http://navigatorresearch.org>

@NavigatorSurvey on Twitter