

navigator*

Thursday, December 11th

The Economy: A Guide
for Advocates



Credit: Shutterstock/Miha Creative

Key Takeaways:

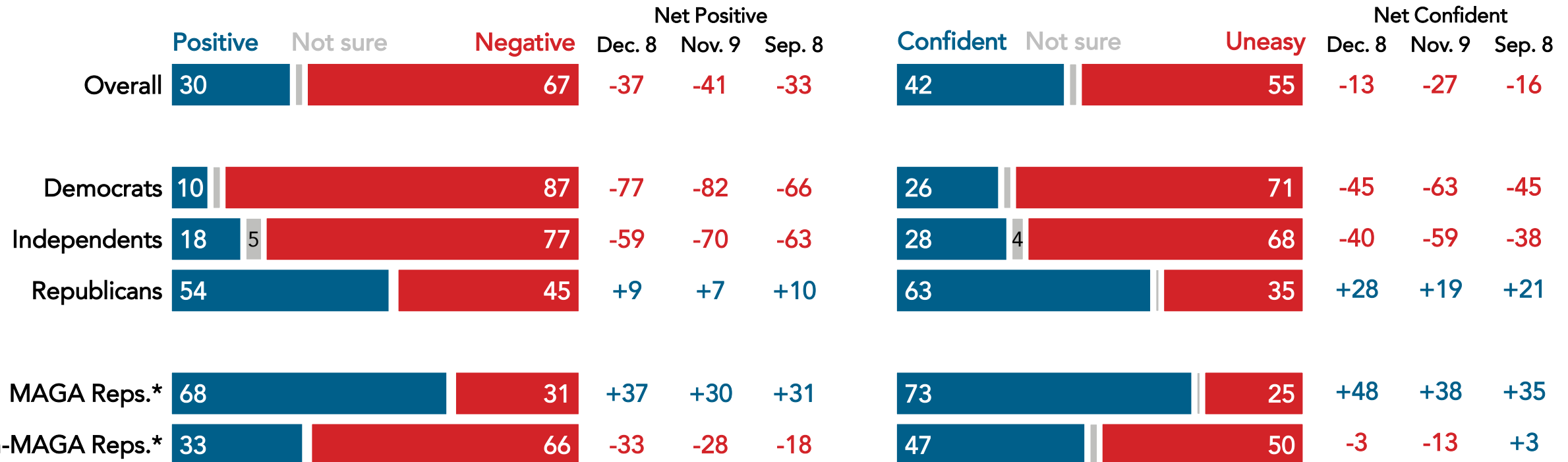
- Americans remain deeply pessimistic on the state of the current economy. Roughly three in four say the cost of housing, groceries, health care, and utilities are on the rise. Roughly half say they are unable to save up money, are not going out to restaurants or other recreational activities, and are cutting back on holiday spending.
- A plurality continue to blame Trump and Republicans in Congress for rising costs generally, higher health care premiums, and rising electricity costs.
- However, Americans are divided on who they trust more to handle inflation and the cost of living. After Democrats briefly gained a small advantage on this issue, Americans are back to being split – with an important group who trust neither party.
- Half say that their health care premiums are going up. Someone voting to raise health care costs is a dealbreaker for three in four Americans, and majorities would prefer to see an expansion of Affordable Care Act tax credits rather than a repealing of the ACA.

Americans Remain Pessimistic on the Economy Overall and Their Personal Finances, Landing Back at Pre-Shutdown Levels

Americans are feeling more pessimistic about the economy overall than they were pre-shutdown in September (net -33 positive then, net -37 now), with a majority remaining uneasy in their personal finances (net -13 confident).

How would you rate the state of the U.S. economy today?

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

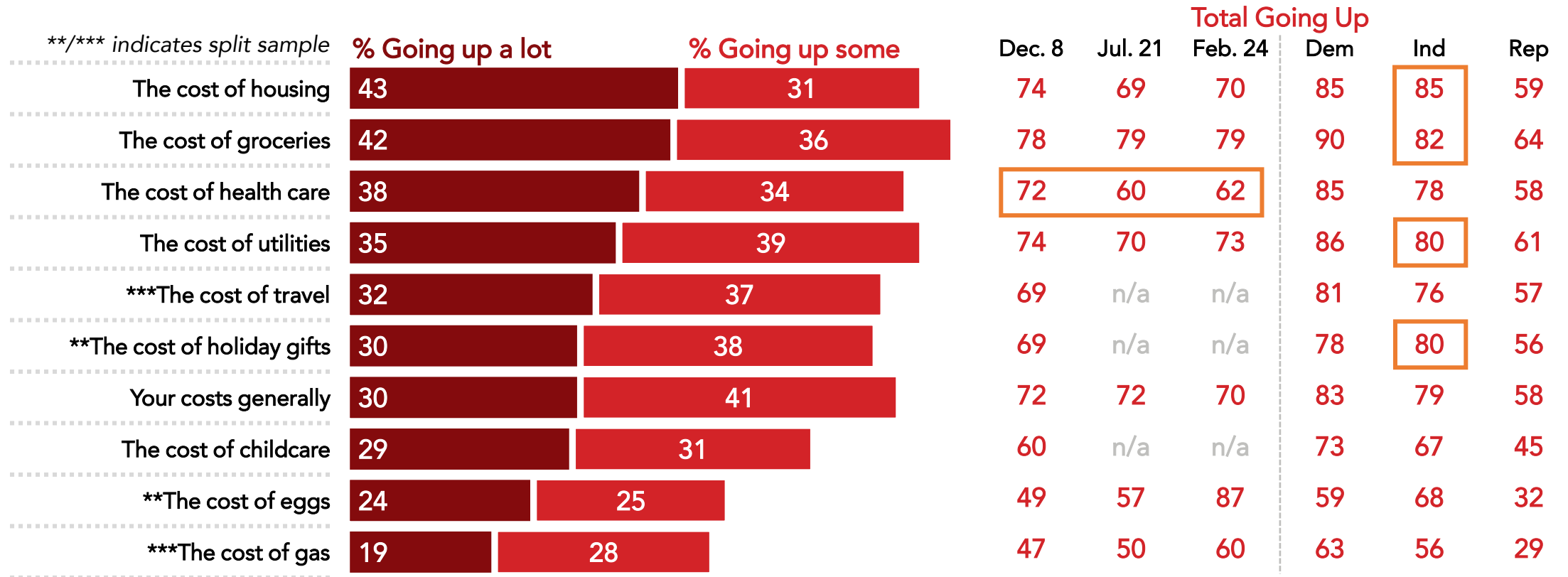


*"MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who identify as "a supporter of the MAGA movement" on a separate question, while "non-MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who do not consider themselves supporters of the MAGA movement or are not sure. Nationwide surveys of registered voters; Each wave represents approximately 1,000 interviews taken over the prior three-five days. Latest wave conducted December 4-December 8, 2025. For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

Housing, Groceries, Health Care, Utilities Biggest Pain Points on Costs; Health Care Perceptions Worsening

Independents most report feeling housing (85%), grocery (82%), holiday gift (80%), and utility costs (80%) rising.

Please indicate, for each one, whether you feel like those costs are going up, going down, or staying the same.

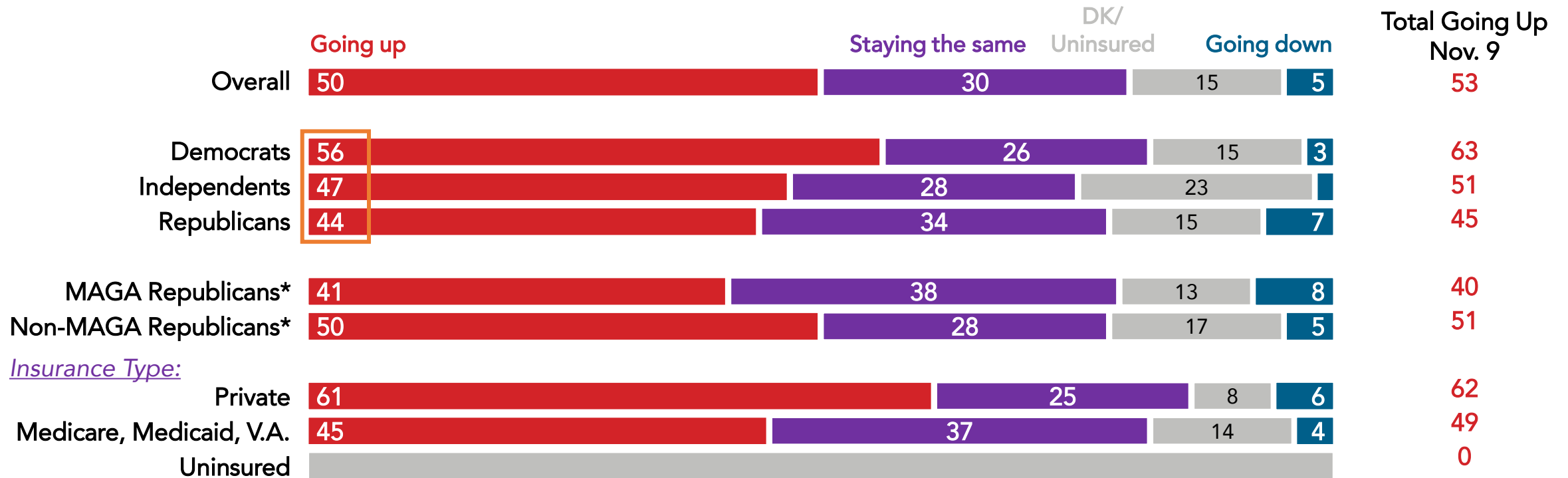


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Half Continue to Say Health Care Premium Costs Are on the Rise

Majorities of Democrats (56%) and pluralities of independents (47%) and Republicans (44%) say their health insurance premium costs are rising.

More specifically... Are your health care premiums, or the amount you pay each month for health insurance, going up, going down, or staying the same?



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The Main Pain Points for Americans: Not Saving Money, Not Going Out, Cutting Back on Holiday Spending

More than half of those with household incomes of \$50,000 or lower say they are unable to save up as much money as they would like (57%), are not going out to restaurants or other recreational activities (56%), and are cutting back on holiday spending (54%).

Thinking more about the economy, have you experienced or done any of the following over the last month? Select all that apply.

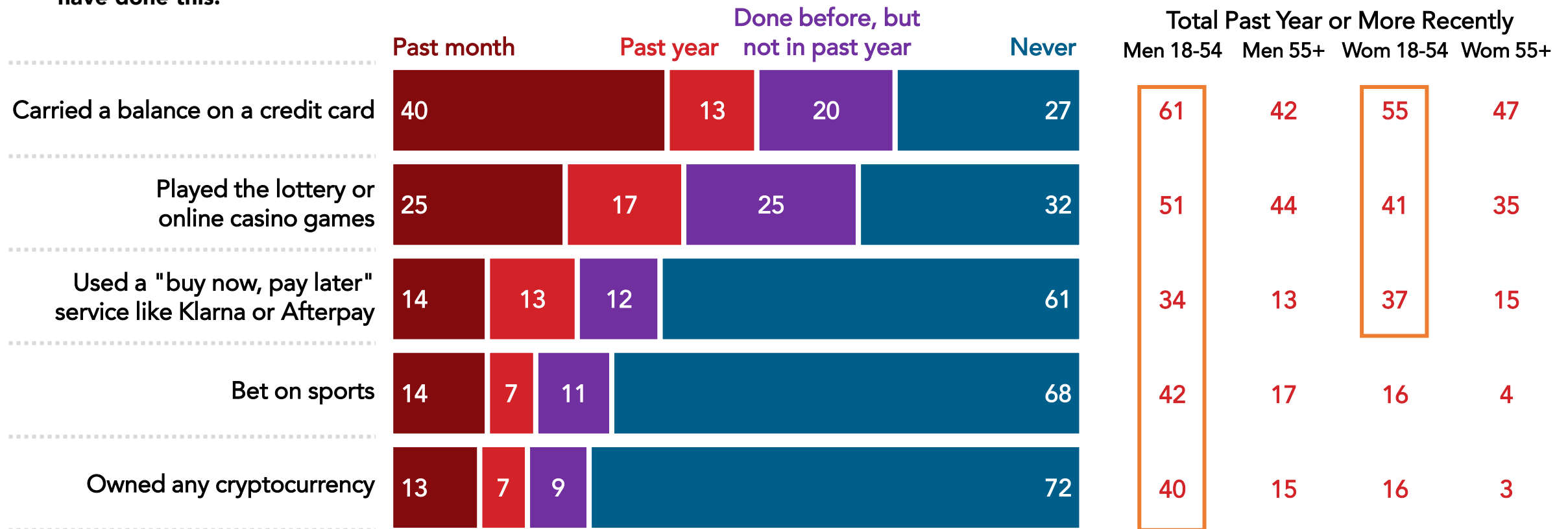
	% have experienced/done	Household Income:					
		Dem	Ind	Rep	<\$50K	\$50K- \$100K	\$100K+
Being unable to save up as much money as you would like	51%	56	49	46	57	48	38
Not going out to restaurants, movies, and other recreational activities	49	52	53	45	56	48	34
Cutting back on the purchasing of holiday items, including gifts, because of higher prices	47	52	49	41	54	44	34
Cutting back on the purchasing of daily goods like groceries	41	46	48	34	48	38	28
Traveling less because money is tight	39	41	37	37	41	40	31
Putting off larger purchases like cars, appliances, and phones	36	40	40	32	40	34	32
Taking on more debt or skipping the payment of a bill	26	30	30	19	30	24	16
Stocking up on items in anticipation of higher prices or shortages	25	30	21	23	26	25	25
Putting off going to the doctor because of costs	19	21	23	16	21	19	16

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Americans Are Making Tough Financial Decisions, While Many – Especially Young Men – Are Gambling on Sports/Online Casinos

Young men are especially likely to bet on sports (42% in past year) or own cryptocurrency (40%).

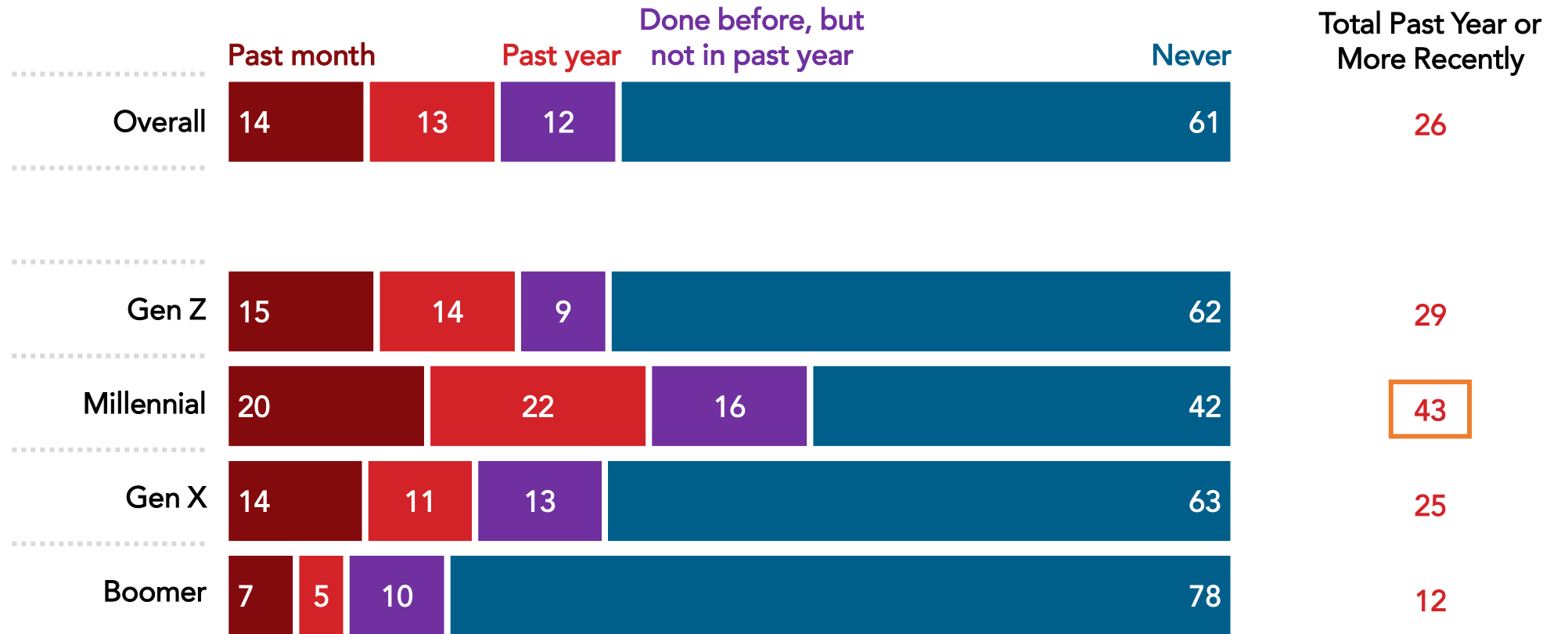
Below is a list of activities people may do related to money, finance, or personal spending. For each one, please indicate how recently you have done this.



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Millennials Are Especially Likely to Use Buy Now, Pay Later Services

Below is a list of activities people may do related to money, finance, or personal spending. For each one, please indicate how recently you have: Used a "buy now, pay later" service like Klarna or Afterpay.

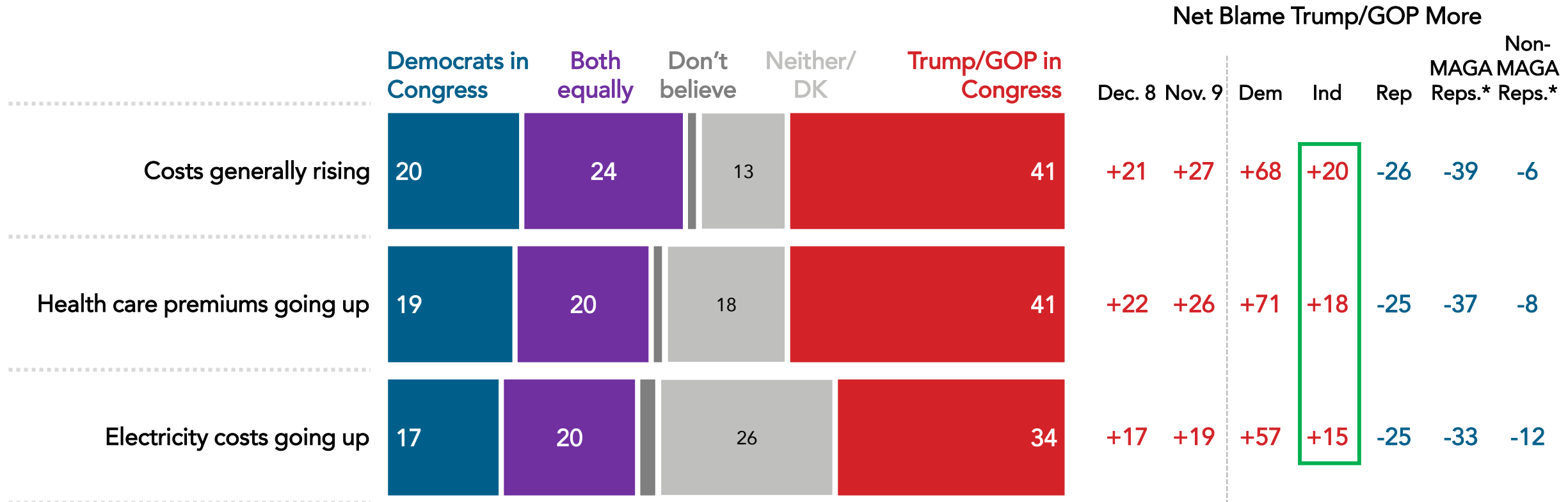


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Pluralities Continue to Blame Trump & GOP for Health Care/ Electricity Costs Rising, Costs Generally Rising

When Democrats were driving costs messaging in the shutdown, blame for Trump and Republicans was even higher (though pluralities continue to say responsibility lies with Trump and Republicans and not Democrats across each of the cost areas tested).

Below is a list of things some say are happening right now. Please indicate who you blame more for each one.

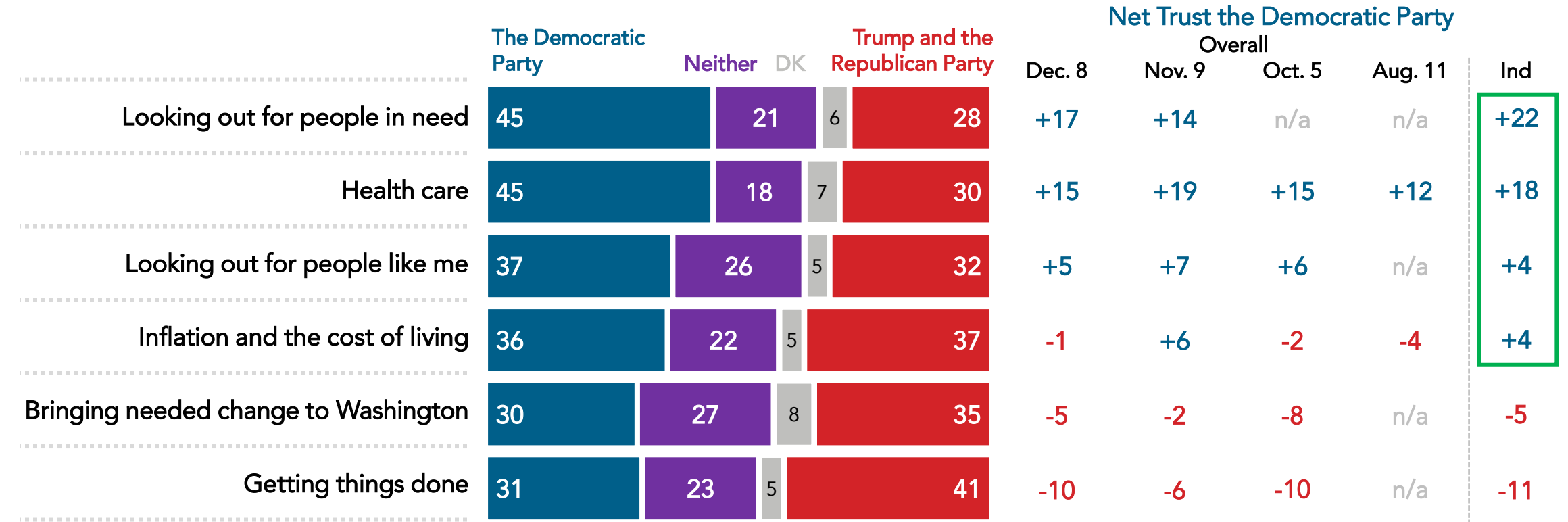


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Democrats Remain More Trusted to Look Out for People & on Health Care; Parties Again Tied on Inflation

Democrats remain more trusted to look out for people and handle health care, though they have lost the trust advantage they recently gained on inflation and the cost of living and are now tied (from net +6 trust Democrats in November to net -1 now).

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



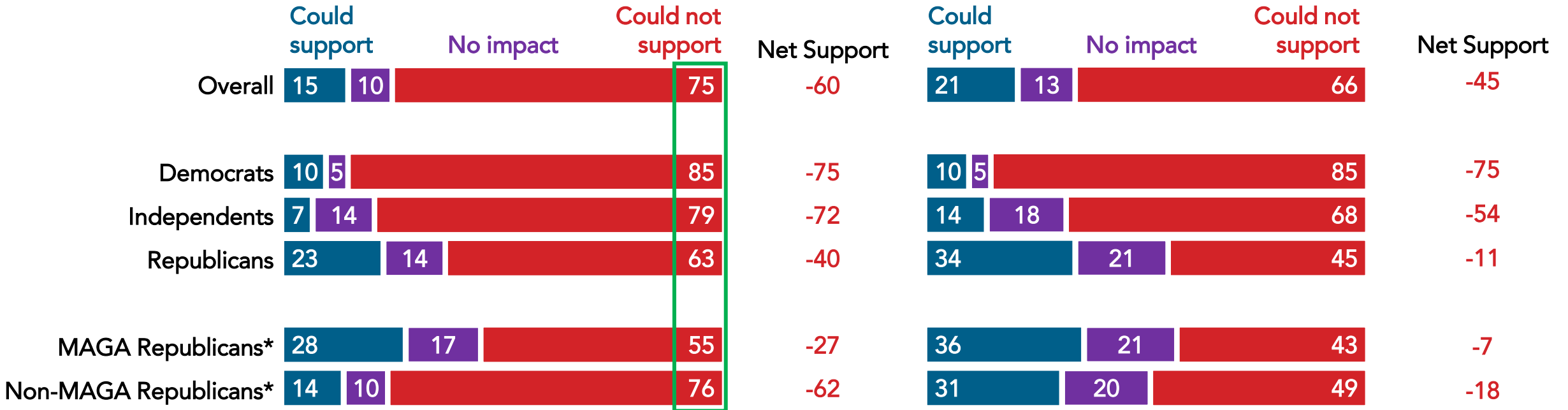
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Someone Who Voted to “Raise Health Care Costs” Is an Especially Potent Dealbreaker for Americans

Majorities of Americans – from 85% of Democrats to 55% of MAGA Republicans* – say they could not support someone who voted to raise health care costs for millions of Americans.

Please indicate whether or not you could support an elected official with the following position, as long as you agreed with the elected official on most other things: Someone who voted to **raise health care costs for millions of Americans**.

Please indicate whether or not you could support an elected official with the following position, as long as you agreed with the elected official on most other things: Someone who voted to **take away tax credits millions of Americans rely on to afford health care**.

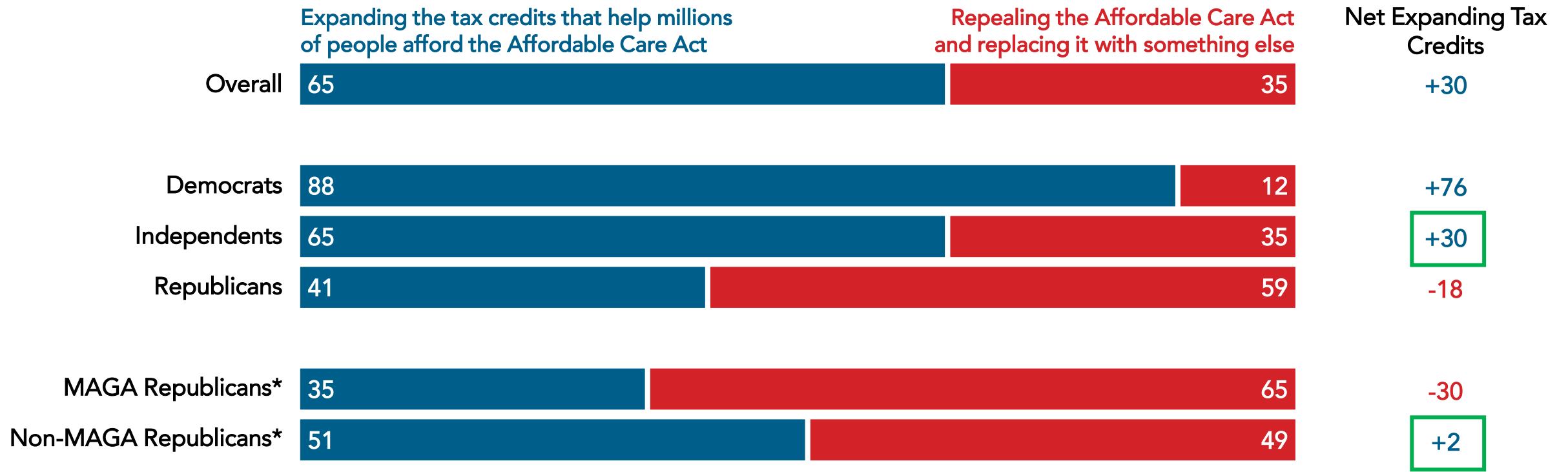


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Expanding ACA Tax Credits Is More Popular By a 2:1 Margin Than Repealing the ACA and Replacing It With Something Else

Two in three Americans would rather see the Affordable Care Act tax credits expanded (65% expanding the tax credits), including a majority of non-MAGA Republicans* (51%) and independents (65%).

Which would you prefer when it comes to health care costs?



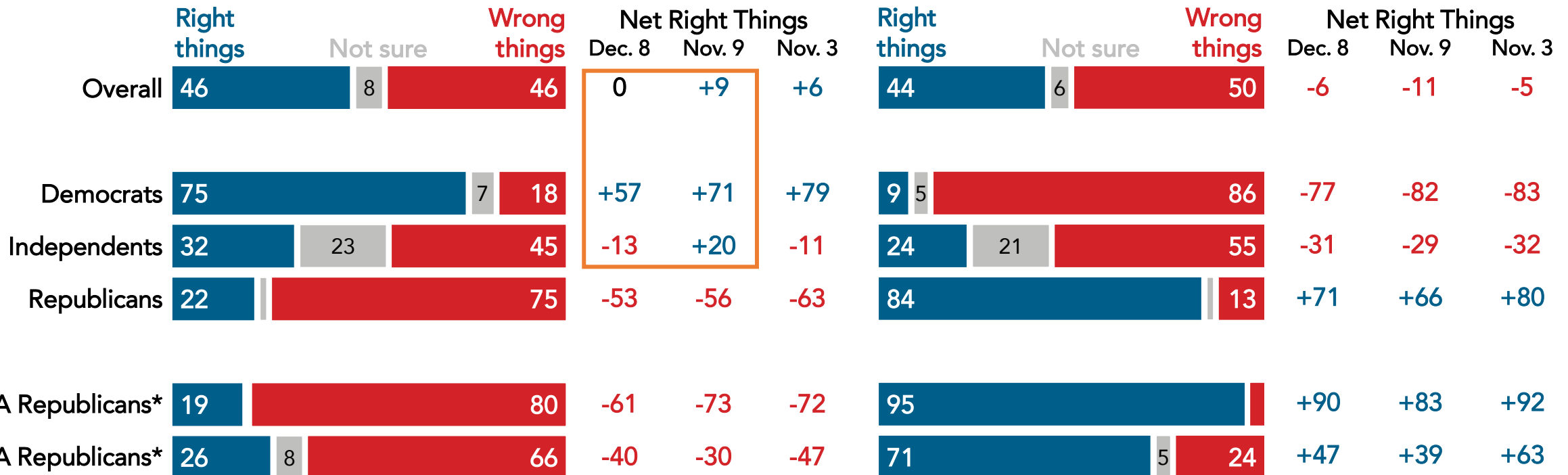
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Democrats Have Lost Some Recent Ground on Focusing on the Right Things, Returned to Parity; Still Better Than Republicans

Americans are divided on whether Democrats are focused on the right things, while they say Republicans are focused on the wrong things by 6 points. Democrats have lost ground among their own party (from net +71 right things to net +57).

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

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



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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; 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 December 4-December 8, 2025. 100 additional interviews were conducted among Hispanic voters. 102 additional interviews were conducted among African American voters. 78 additional interviews were conducted among Asian American and Pacific Islander 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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To learn more about Navigator:

<http://navigatorresearch.org>

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