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Wednesday, March 11th

Immigration and ICE

GSG GLOBAL STRATEGY GROUP

GBAO

Key Takeaways:

- ICE remains unpopular, and a majority continue to say it has been too aggressive in its approach. Three in five want to see funds withheld from ICE until there's change, even if it means shutting down DHS.

- Trump's immigration approval rating has soured, though he and Republicans are still slightly more trusted than Democrats on the issue. Many Americans are unsure of who to trust more or don't trust either party on the issue.

- Democrats can most effectively win the immigration policy debate against Trump and Republicans by presenting a contrast that both highlights ICE's wrongdoing and provides an alternative approach on immigration.

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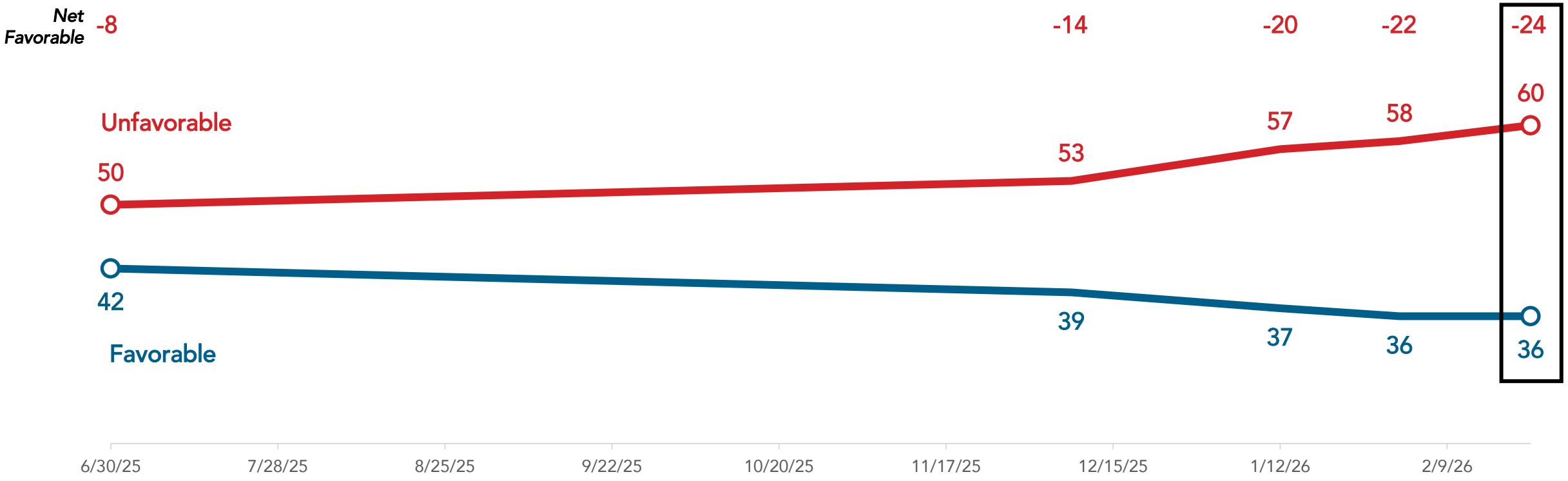
Negativity Toward ICE Continues to Grow

Three in five Americans feel unfavorably toward ICE (60%), up from half of Americans who said the same in late June of 2025 (50%).

Please indicate how favorable or unfavorable you are to: ICE, also known as Immigration and Customs Enforcement.



Nationwide surveys of registered voters; Each wave represents approximately 1,000 interviews taken over the prior three-five days.
Latest wave conducted February 19-February 23, 2026. For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

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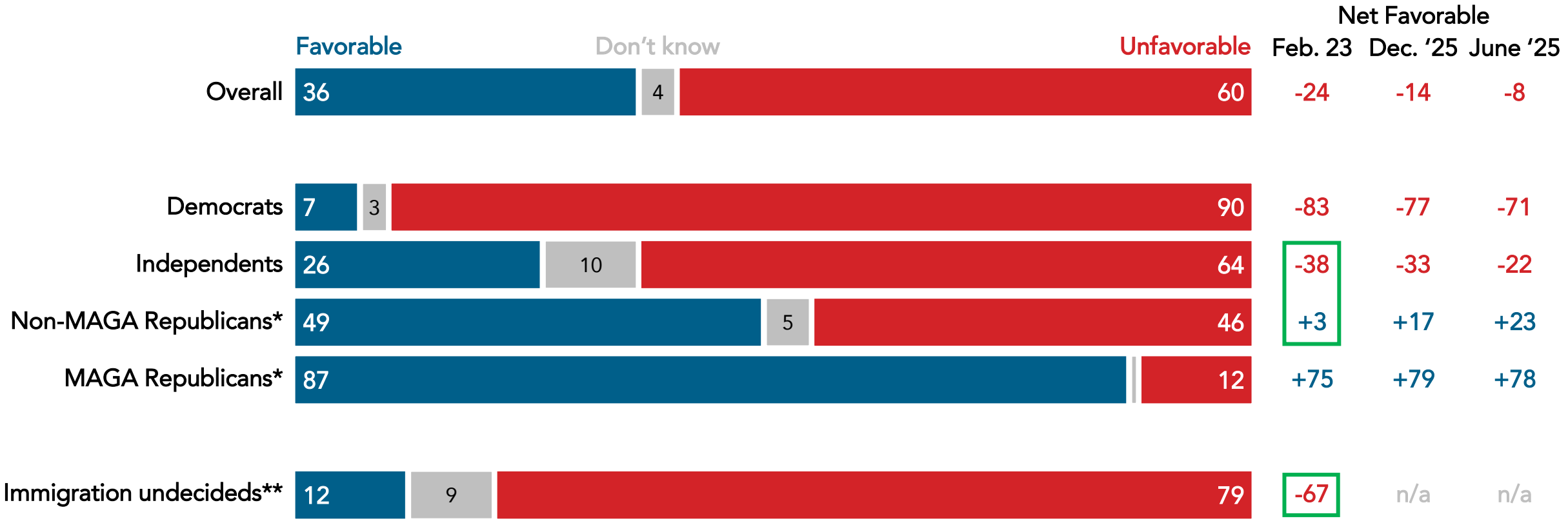
Americans Are Deeply Negative on ICE, Including Independents

Nearly two in three independents are unfavorable toward ICE (64%). Almost four in five "immigration undecideds"** – who do not trust either party on immigration or are unsure which party to trust – view ICE unfavorably, too (79%).

Please indicate how favorable or unfavorable you are to: ICE, also known as Immigration and Customs Enforcement.



*"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. **"Immigration undecideds" are Americans who do not trust either party to handle immigration or don't know who to trust. Nationwide surveys of registered voters; Each wave represents approximately 1,000 interviews taken over the prior three-five days. Latest wave conducted February 19-February 23, 2026. For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

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Younger Women and Americans of Color Feel Most Unfavorably Toward ICE

Women ages 18-54 (net -47 favorable), Black Americans (net -58), and Hispanic Americans (net -45) are among the most unfavorable toward ICE.

Please indicate how favorable or unfavorable you are to: ICE, also known as Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

	Favorable	Don't know	Unfavorable	Net Favorable Feb. 23	Dec. '25	June '25
Overall	36	4	60	-24	-14	-8
Men 18-54	41	3	56	-15	-15	-5
Men 55+	47		52	-5	+16	+18
Women 18-54	23	7	70	-47	-32	-32
Women 55+	37	3	60	-23	-17	-3
POC 18-44	23	7	70	-47	-41	-36
POC 45+	25	4	71	-46	-31	-23
Black	18	6	76	-58	-43	-37
Hispanic	26	3	71	-45	-30	-23
White	41	4	55	-14	-4	+2
AAPI	29	4	67	-38	-38	-37

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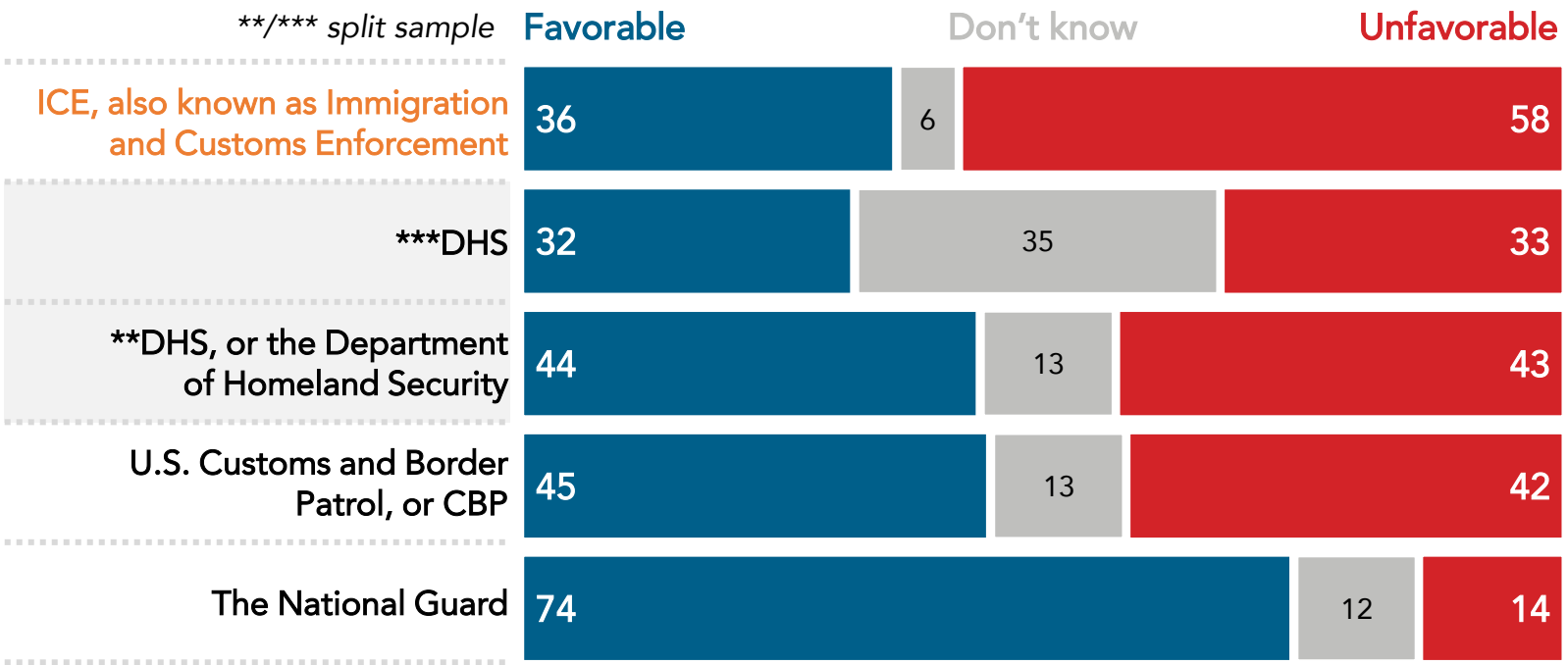
(From Early February) ICE Is Significantly More Unpopular Than Other Groups Involved in Immigration Enforcement

Majorities of Americans felt favorably toward the National Guard (net +60 favorable), while views were split on CBP (net +3) and DHS with (net +1) or without definition (net -1), while ICE was in the negative by 22 points.

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



	Net Favorable					
	Overall	Dem	Ind	Rep	MAGA Reps.*	Non-MAGA Reps.*
ICE, also known as Immigration and Customs Enforcement	-22	-83	-37	+43	+69	+19
***DHS	-1	-32	-15	+34	+56	+12
**DHS, or the Department of Homeland Security	+1	-52	+2	+53	+74	+33
U.S. Customs and Border Patrol, or CBP	+3	-56	-5	+66	+77	+54
The National Guard	+60	+37	+47	+88	+95	+82

*"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 survey of 1,000 registered voters conducted January 29-February 1, 2026.
For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

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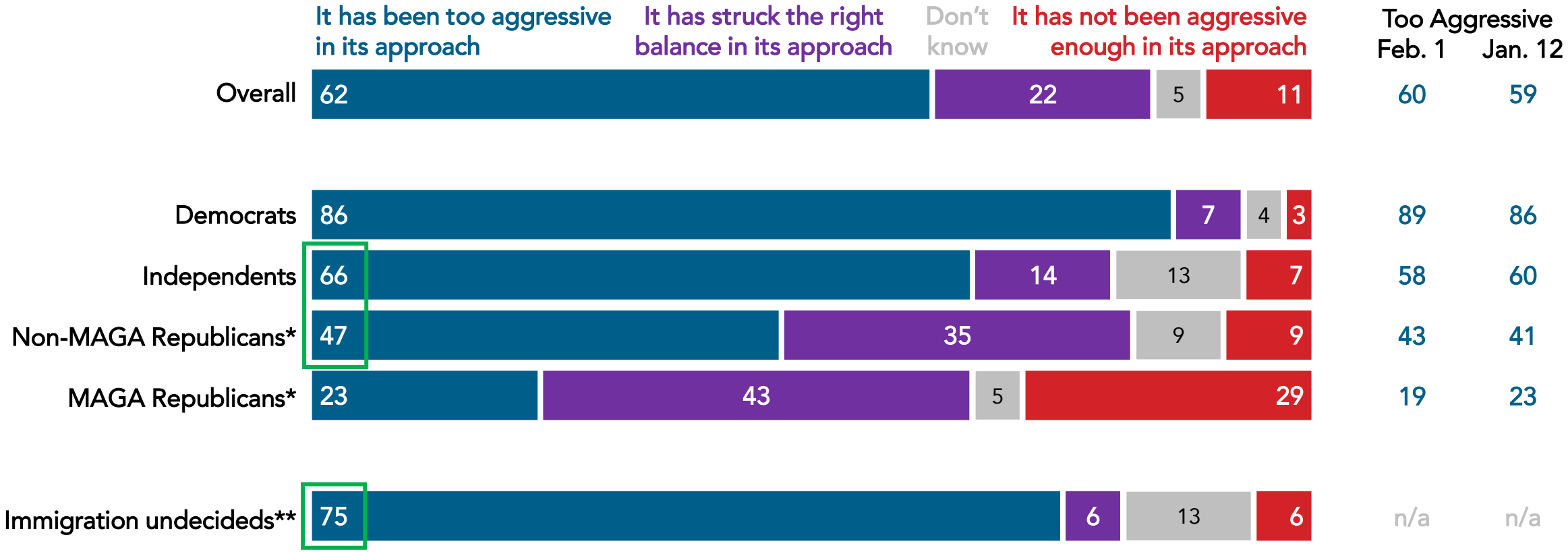
Three in Five Continue to Say ICE Has Been Too Aggressive

A majority of Americans continue to say ICE has been too aggressive (62%), including two in three independents (66%), three in four "immigration undecideds"** (75%), and a plurality of non-MAGA Republicans* (47%).

In thinking about how ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) is conducting itself, which do you agree with most?



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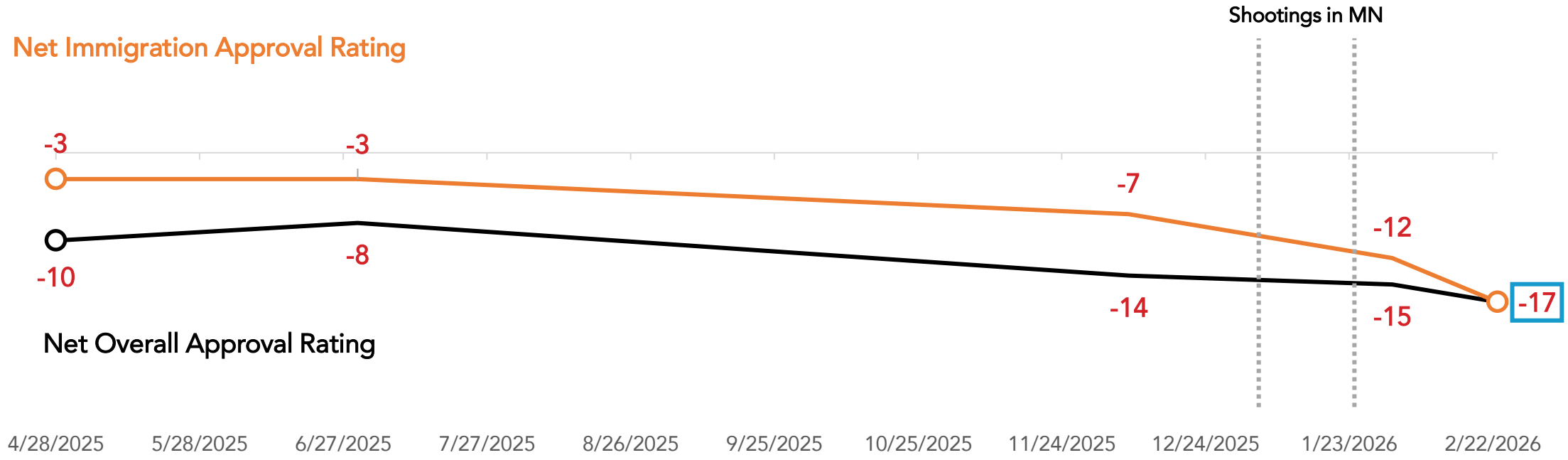
Trump's Immigration Approval Ratings Have Gotten Worse Over Time, Now Converging With His Low Overall Approval

Since last April, Trump's immigration approval rating has declined by a net 14 points (from net -3 approve in April 2025 to net -17 now). While he previously fared better on his handling of immigration, his immigration approval now matches his low job approval overall.

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



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Trump's Approval Ratings on Immigration Sour But GOP Retains Slight Edge, As Many Still Do Not Trust Either Party on the Issue

While a majority disapprove of Trump's handling of immigration (from net -3 approve in June 2025 to net -17 now), Trump and Republicans retain a slight edge on the issue (net -5 trust Democrats more) – though many are unsure or do not trust either party (21%).

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

Please indicate who you personally trust more to handle: Immigration.

	Approve	Not sure	Disapprove	Net Approve Feb. 23	Net Approve Feb. 1	Net Approve Jun. '25	Democratic Party	Neither	DK	Trump and the GOP	Net Trust Democrats Feb. 23	Net Trust Democrats Feb. 1	Net Trust Democrats Jan. 12
Overall	40		57	-17	-12	-3	37	17	4	42	-5	-7	-12
Democrats	8		90	-82	-83	-72	72	15		10	+62	+62	+58
Independents	28	5	67	-39	-27	-4	22	41	12	25	-3	-14	-18
Non-MAGA Republicans*	60	5	35	+25	+35	+26	11	20		67	-56	-57	-58
MAGA Republicans*	94		5	+89	+91	+88		4		90	-87	-91	-94

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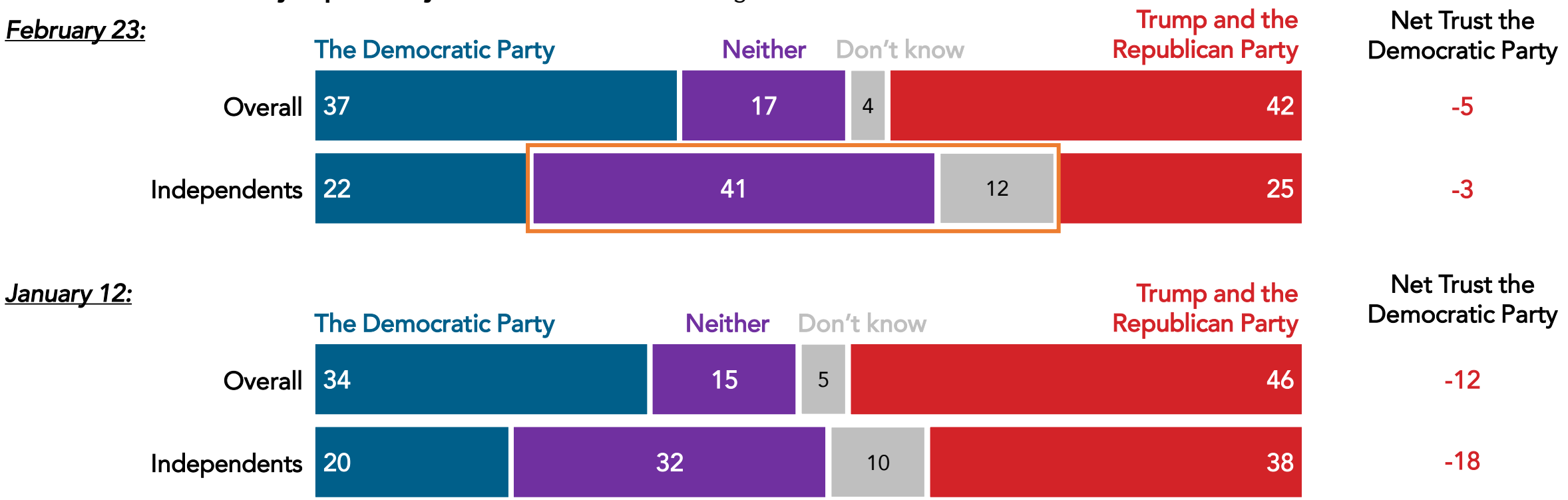
Though Trump and GOP Are Seeing Lower Trust Numbers on Immigration, Many Still Do Not Trust Either Party/Are Unsure

"Immigration undecideds" are the 21% of Americans who either are unsure of who to trust on immigration or do not trust either party: they are disproportionately likely to be independents (53% are "immigration undecideds"), moderates (34%), Gen Z (31%), women 18-54 (29%), non-liberal Democrats (27%), and Hispanic Americans (26%).

Please indicate who you personally trust more to handle: Immigration.



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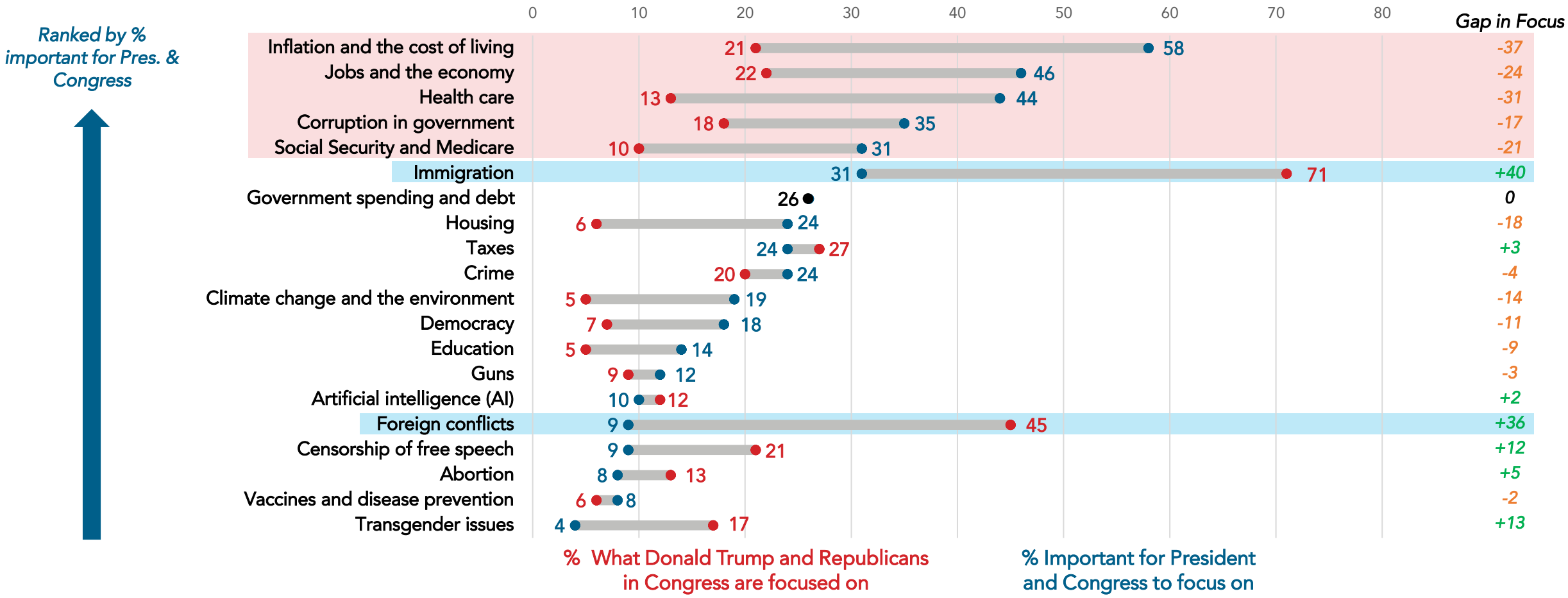
Trump/GOP Continue to Be Seen As Too Focused on Immigration, Not Enough on the Economy



Fielding note: this survey fielded in full prior to the start of the U.S. war with Iran.
Nationwide survey of 1,000 registered voters conducted February 19-February 23, 2026.
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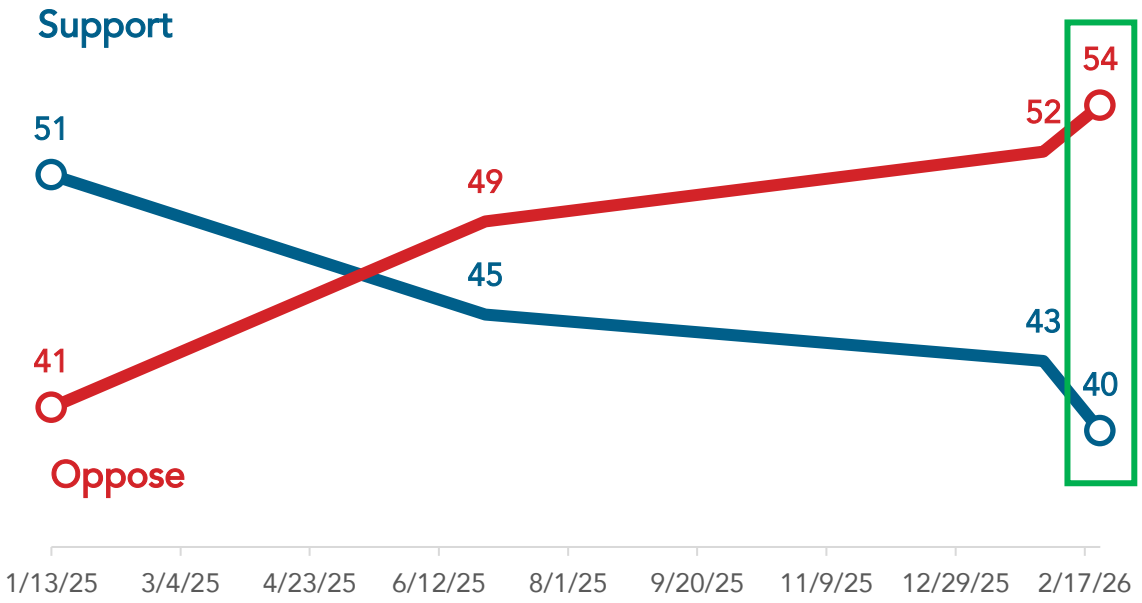
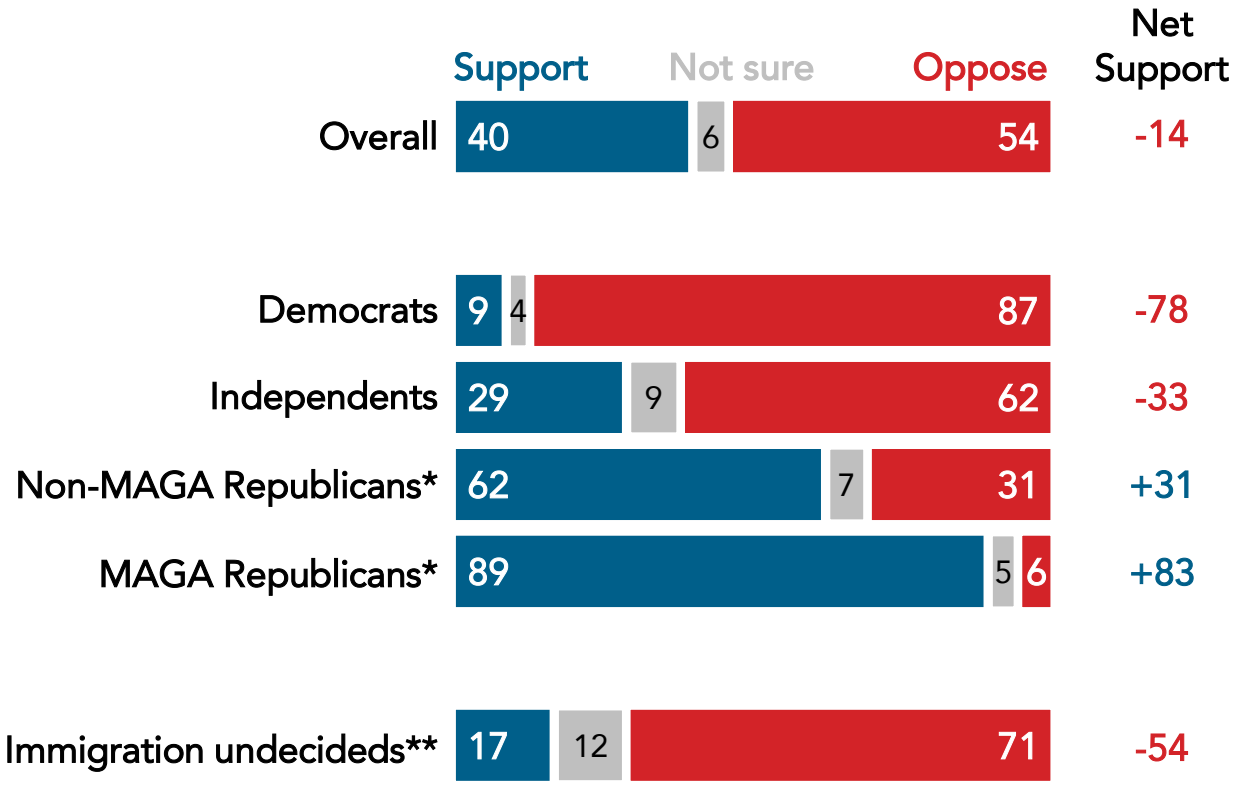
Trump's Mass Deportation Plan Grows More Unpopular

Since January of 2025, support for Trump's mass deportation plan has flipped (from net +10 support then to net -14 support now). Three in five independents (62%) oppose the plan.

Do you support or oppose Trump's mass deportation plan?





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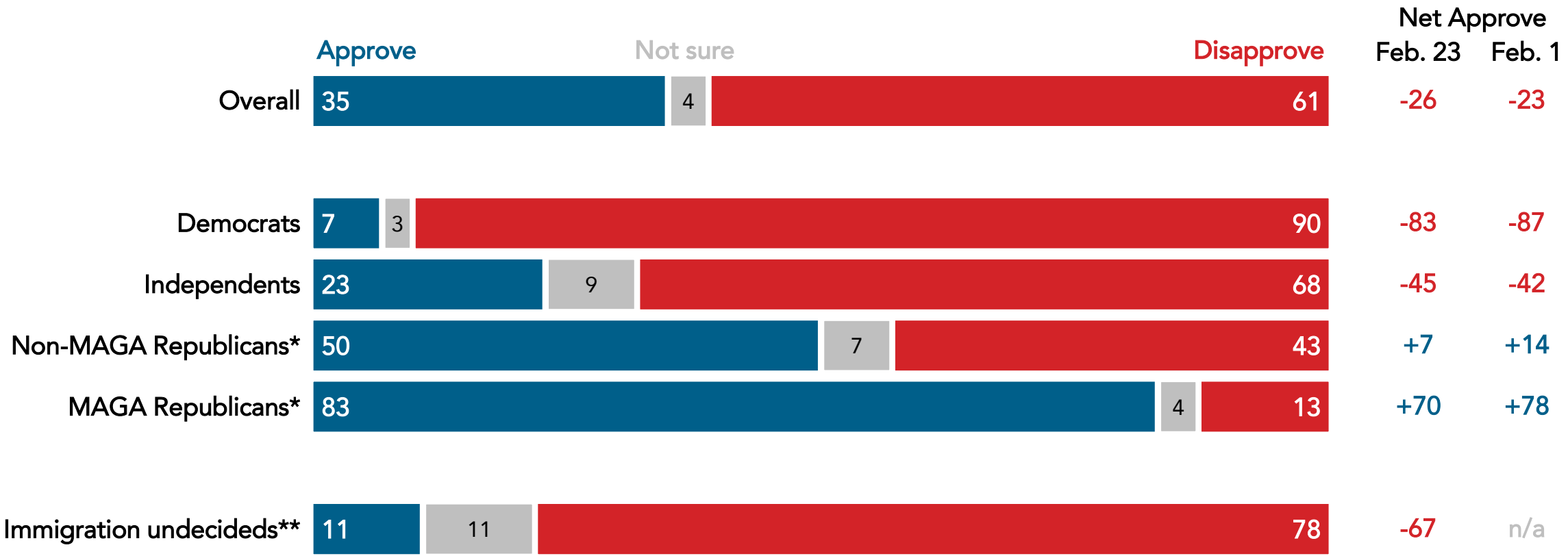
Opposition to ICE Deployment in Minneapolis Remains High

A majority of Americans still disapprove of Trump's deployment of ICE to Minneapolis (61% disapprove).

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Trump deployed ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) to Minneapolis?



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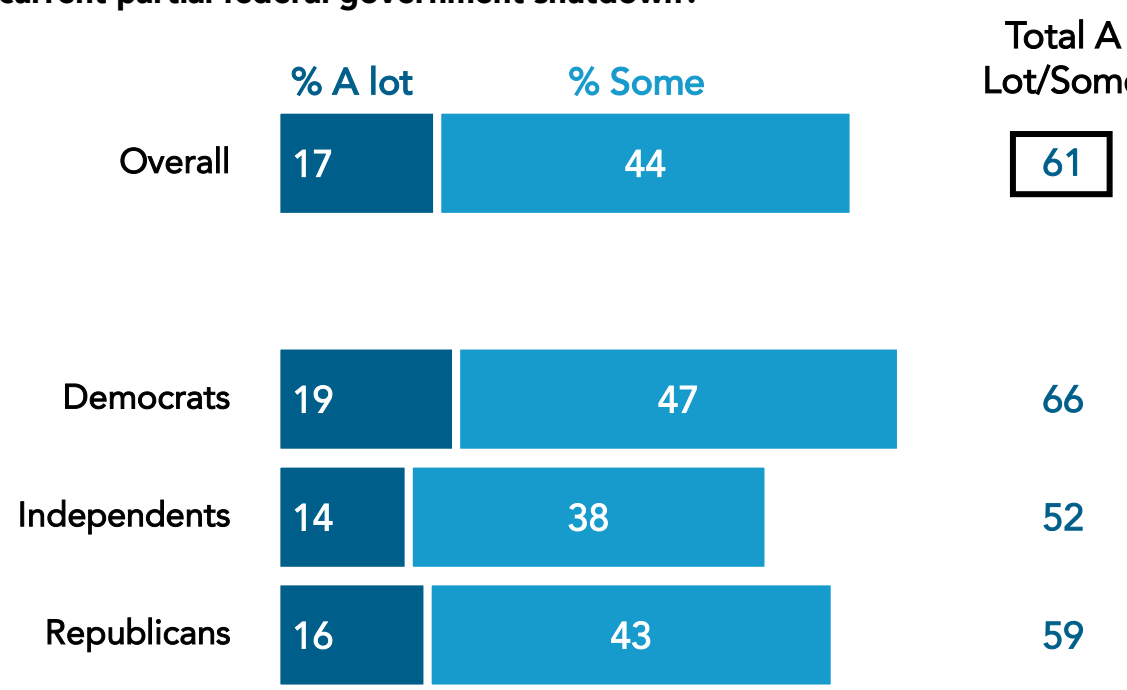
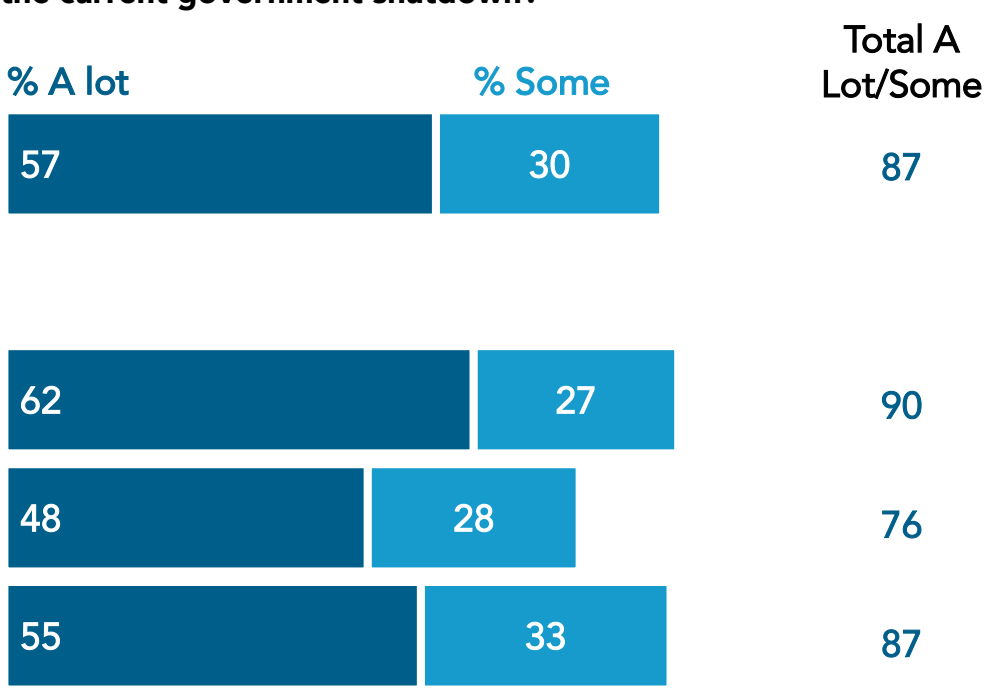
Relative to the Full Shutdown in November, the Partial One of DHS Is Breaking Through Far Less

Only 17% are hearing "a lot" about the current partial federal government shutdown, whereas 57% had heard "a lot" about the full government shutdown in November of last year.

(Feb. 23) How much have you seen, read, or heard about the current partial federal government shutdown?



(Nov. 9) How much have you seen, read, or heard about the current government shutdown?



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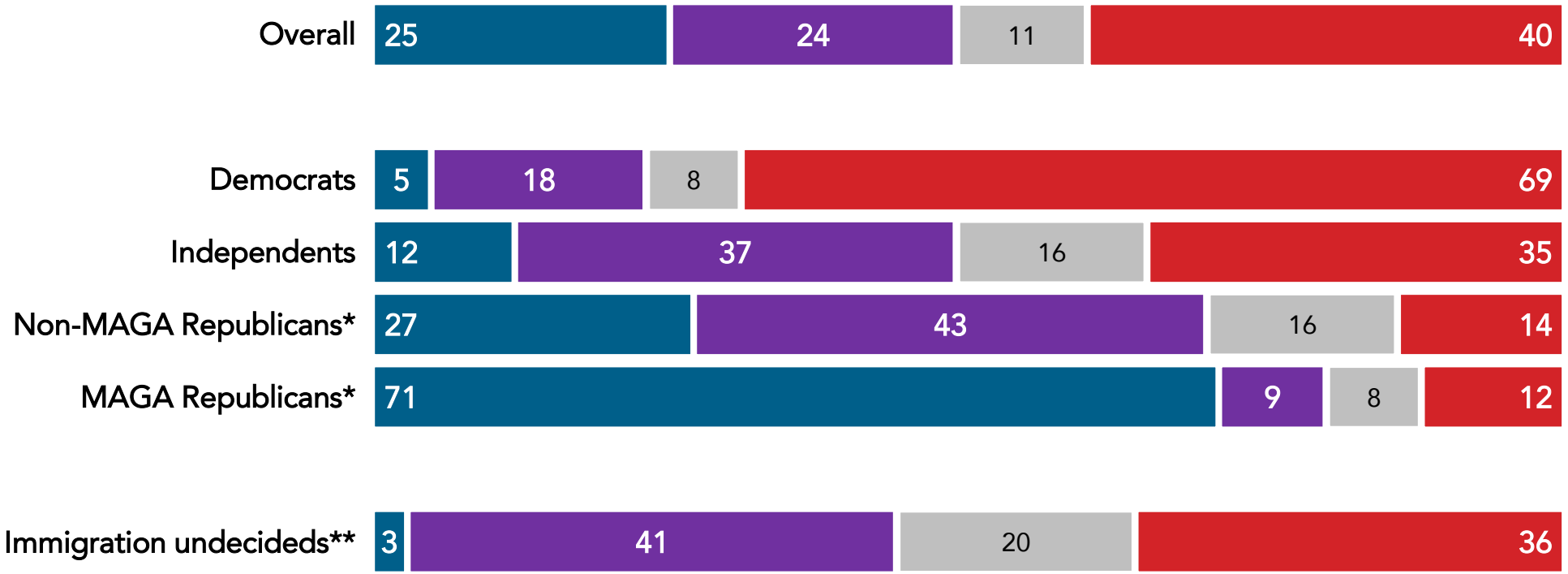
Trump and Republicans Are More Blamed for the Current Partial Federal Government Shutdown Than Democrats

Who do you blame most for the current partial federal government shutdown?



	Total Blame (w/ Leaners)		Net Blame Trump/GOP	
	Dems	Trump/ GOP	Feb. 23	Nov. '25
Overall	29	48	+19	+14
Democrats	6	79	+73	+82
Independents	15	43	+28	+22
Non-MAGA Republicans*	36	20	-16	-28
MAGA Republicans*	76	14	-62	-75
Immigration undecideds**	6	47	+41	n/a

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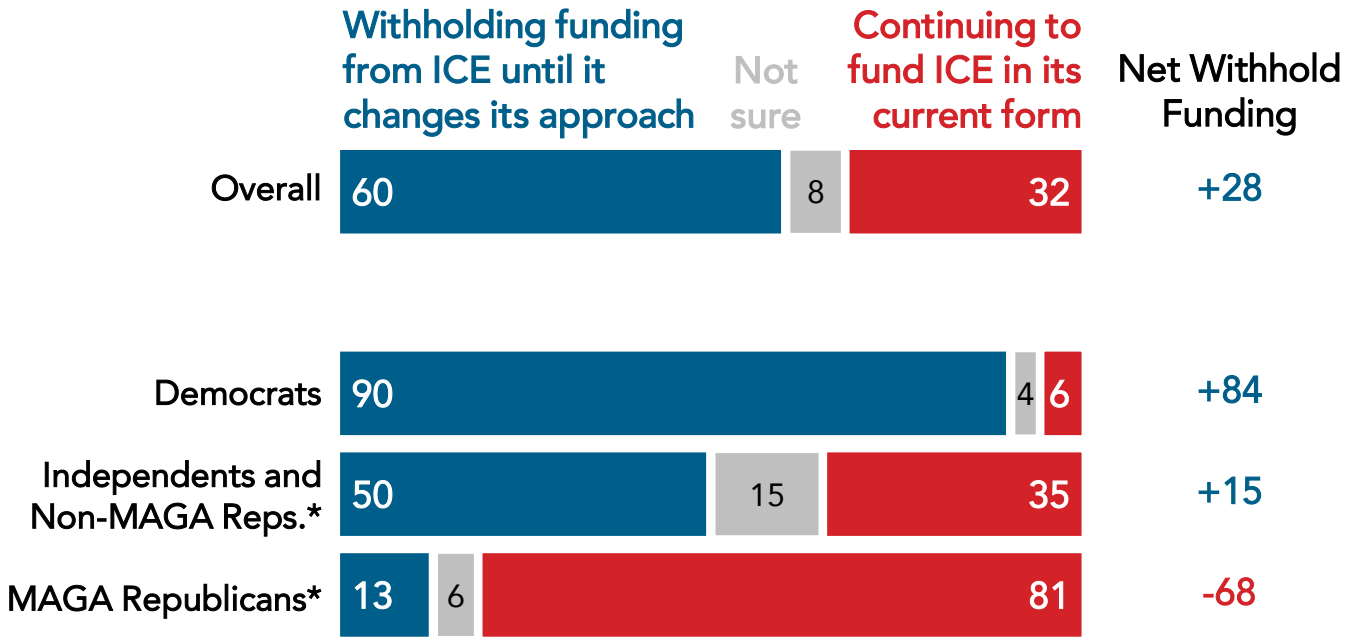
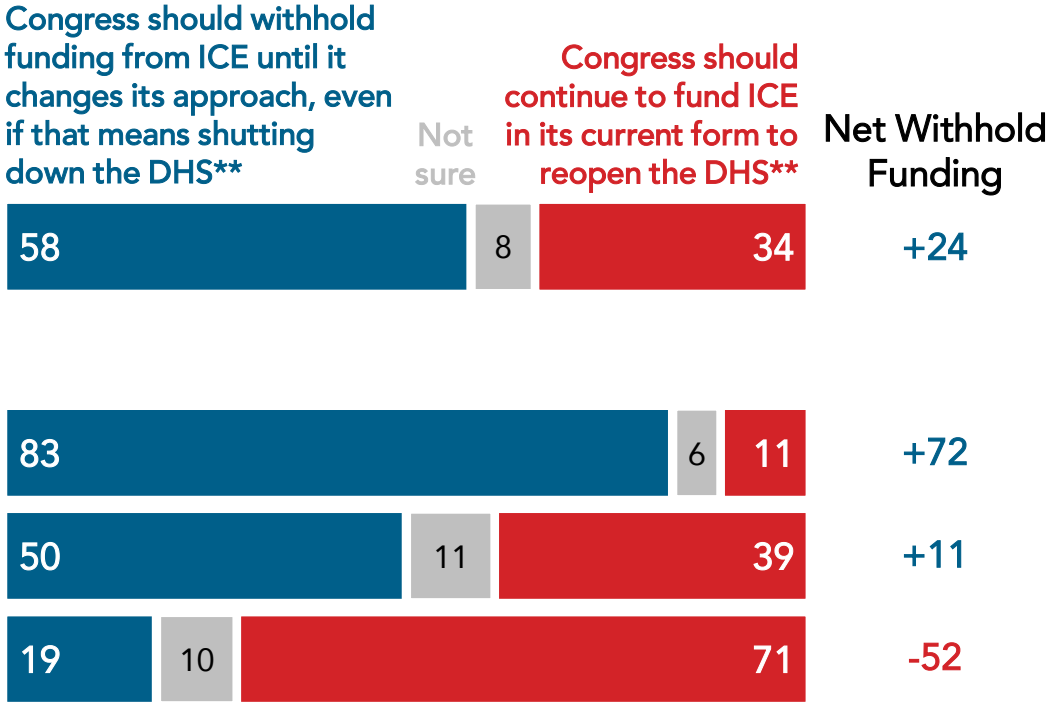
Americans Want a Withholding of Funding from ICE Until They See Changes, Even If It Means a DHS Shutdown

Half of independents and non-MAGA Republicans* want to see funds withheld from ICE, with or without a DHS shutdown (50% each).

(Split Sample) Which approach to ICE would you prefer?



(Split Sample) As you may know, there is a debate going on in Washington about ICE's funding, and because of this debate, the Department of Homeland Security is now shut down. Which approach to ICE would you prefer from Congress?



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Democrats Win Immigration Policy Debate When They Build a Case; More Persuasive to Present Future Alternative

Which side do you agree with more?

NEW APPROACH ON IMMIGRATION: Democrats who say that we need to change ICE's approach, which is far too aggressive and violent and is wrongly targeting citizens, children, and people based on how they look. Democrats support a different approach that goes after criminals and secures the border, while still treating people humanely and allowing immigrants who have been working, paying taxes, and following the law to stay here legally.

Republicans who say **we must finally crack down on illegal immigration by giving ICE and Border Patrol what they need to secure our country.** That means deporting all immigrants who are here illegally, while investing in border security and increased enforcement to deter future illegal immigration.

NEGATIVE ONLY: Democrats who say that what ICE has been doing is unacceptable: ICE is being far too aggressive and broad in its approach. Unqualified immigration agents are acting violently towards people – even killing two citizens. And instead of going after criminals, they are targeting people based on their looks, targeting U.S. citizens without warrants, and targeting children and families. This all must stop.

Net Agree With Democratic Statement

	Overall	Ind. + Non-MAGA Reps.*	Immigration Undecideds**
NEW APPROACH ON IMMIGRATION	+24	+12	+72
NEGATIVE ONLY	+18	-8	+64

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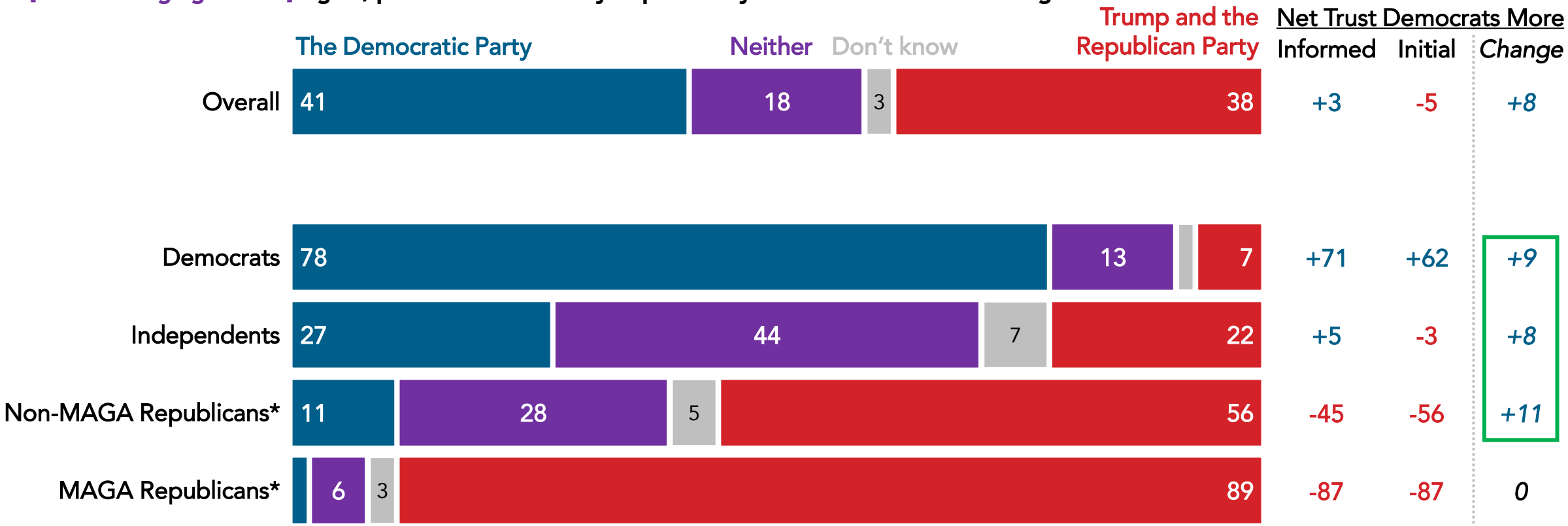
Democrats Communicating on Immigration Makes Inroads on Trust in the Party to Handle the Issue Over Trump/GOP

After Americans hear more information about Democrats' position, the party gains trust on handling immigration among Democrats (net +9 change from initial), independents (net +8 change), and non-MAGA Republicans* (net +11 change).

[Post-Messaging Re-Ask] Again, please indicate who you personally trust more to handle 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.

About the Study

Global Strategy Group conducted a public opinion survey among a sample of 1,000 registered voters from February 19-February 23, 2026. 101 additional interviews were conducted among Hispanic voters. 99 additional interviews were conducted among African American voters. 75 additional interviews were conducted among Asian American and Pacific Islander voters. 100 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.

For Press inquiries contact:

press@navigatorresearch.org

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