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Wednesday, June 10th

America at 250:
The State of Our Union



Credit: Shutterstock/Miha Creative

Key Takeaways:

- Americans are deeply proud of the freedoms this country provides, many cite they wouldn't be able to have all these freedoms elsewhere.
- National identity is a stronger unifying force than partisan identity: across the political spectrum, Americans place greater importance on being American than on politics and continue to find common ground in shared values, symbols, historical moments, and traditions.
- Freedom is one of the core tenets of the American identity and a source of both pride and current anxiety. Americans understand the national identity through a lens of rights and freedoms, while also expressing concern that those freedoms are increasingly under threat, particularly freedom of speech.
- Americans are most inspired by moments of progress and unity. Historic expansions of freedom and equality, as well as contemporary examples of people coming together in service of one another in moments of crisis and in celebration of our country's history, are among the strongest sources of national pride.
- The American Dream still defines the promise of America for many, but fewer believe the promise is being fulfilled and think it's achievable for themselves personally.

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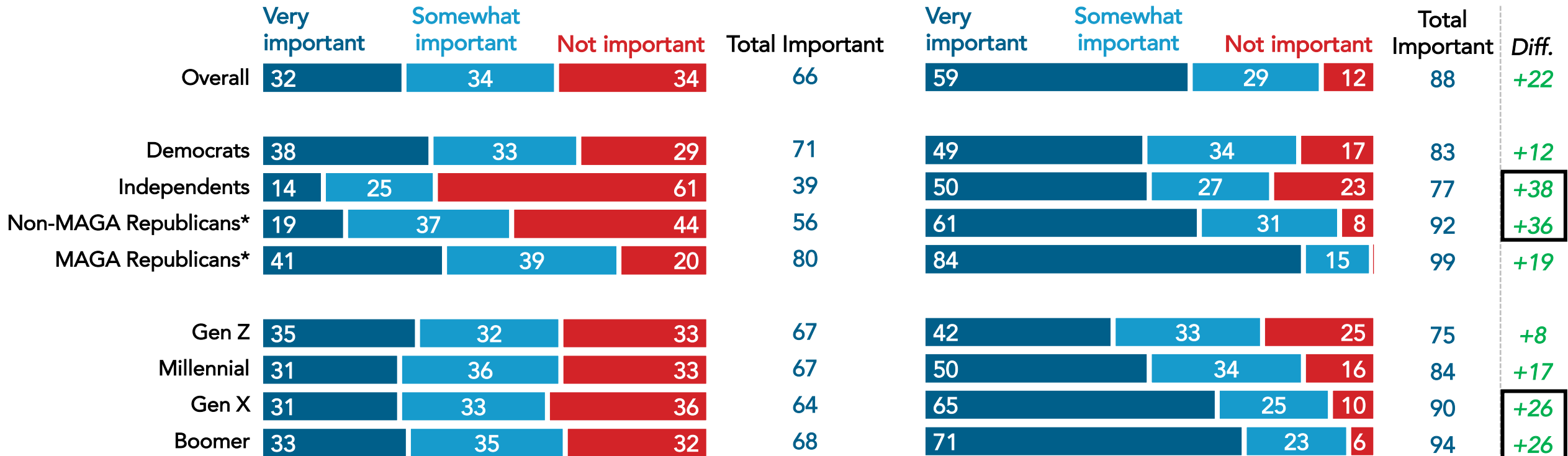
American Identity

Being American Prevails Over Politics When It Comes to Personal Identity, Especially for Weaker Partisans, Older Americans

Independents are 38-points more likely to say “being an American” is important to their personal identity than politics, and non-MAGA Republicans* are 36-points more likely to say it is important.

How important is **politics** to your personal identity?

How important is **being an American** to your personal identity?

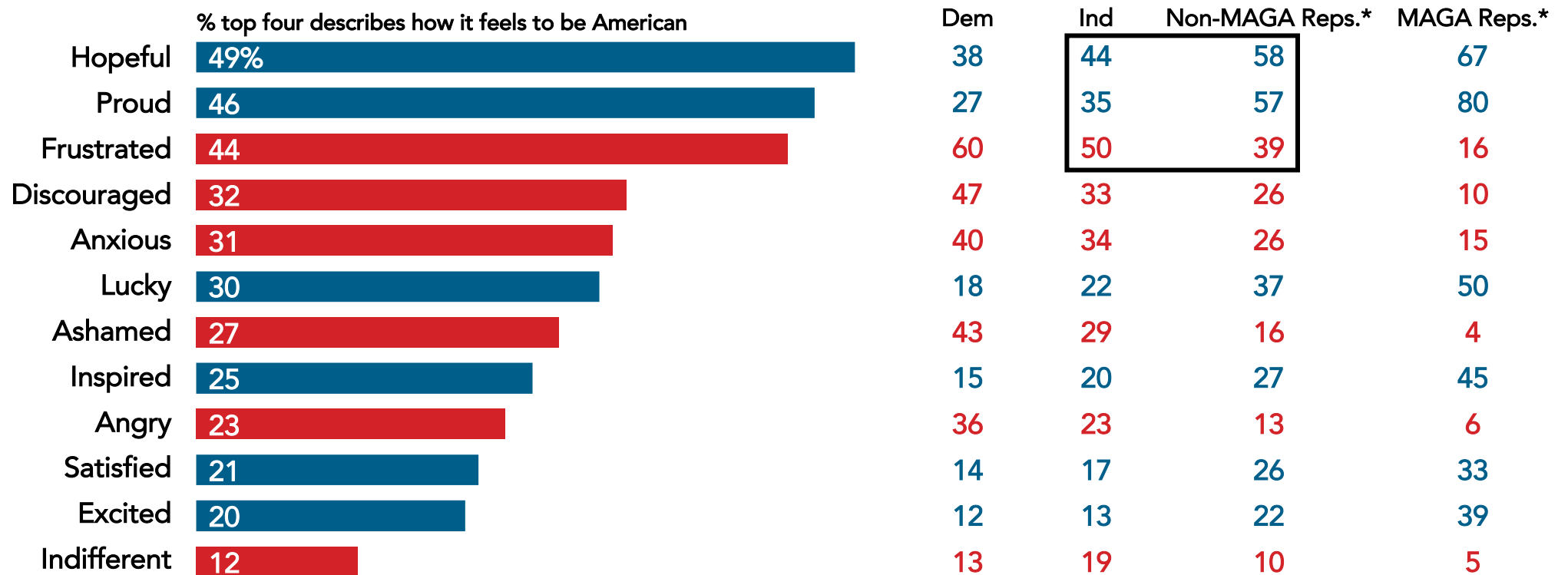


*“MAGA Republicans” are Republicans who identify as “a supporter of the MAGA movement” on a separate question, while “non-MAGA Republicans” are Republicans who do not consider themselves supporters of the MAGA movement or are not sure.
 Nationwide survey of 2,000 registered voters conducted May 27-June 1, 2026.
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Across Partisanship, Being an American Still Inspires Hope and Pride, But Also Brings Frustration, Discouragement, Anxiety

Independents say frustrated (50%), hopeful (44%), and proud (35%) best describe how they feel about being an American.

Below is a list of words. Please indicate which four best describe how you feel about being an American today.



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Americans Are Proud, But America's Potential Is At Risk

Moderator: Do you think of America as the greatest country on earth?

"I think **America still is the greatest country, but...it's definitely declining**, especially from an economic perspective....Starting off on your own, getting a house, starting a family, it's extremely hard nowadays." – PA man, 2nd generation weak Republican

"Not so much for me now because of the things that are going on now. **They're stripping away all our voting rights for the African Americans....Trump is...gerrymandering these maps, and these states taking away all the Black voting rights. They killed the 1965 Voting Rights Act.**" – GA man, Black strong Democrat

"At one point, I think **we were the greatest country because of the values that we had**, the freedoms that we had to be able to worship the way you wanted to....We were able to love the people we wanted to. It doesn't matter, trans, bi, straight, whatever. It wasn't ideal back then. Now it's like everything is under the microscope." – TX man, Hispanic veteran strong Democrat

"As a retired military member, I'm flushed with patriotism. **So when I hear being American, it's almost like I'm a part of the winning team.** I'm on the right side. I'm on the good side. I'm the good guys. To me, it's the greatest country in the world and I am so grateful to be a part of it." – TX man, white veteran strong Democrat

"**We're the greatest country in the world....We're not perfect, but I just think we're a melting pot for everybody. I think it's just a cool place to be no matter where you go**" – TX woman, white veteran weak Republican

"We're supposed to be the greatest country, **but we have people that die because they don't have access to medicine** and healthcare is unaffordable, unreachable. We have people that die because food and nutrition. Just there's lots of things I think that take away...that other countries don't have." – NC woman, white Christian independent

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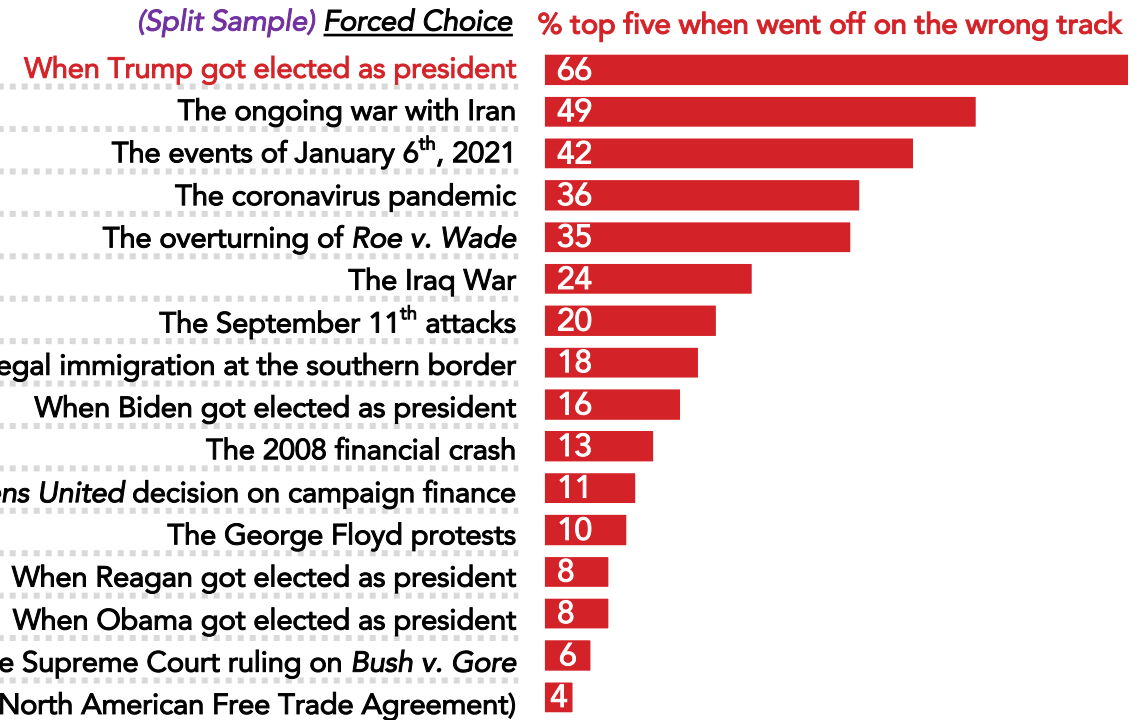
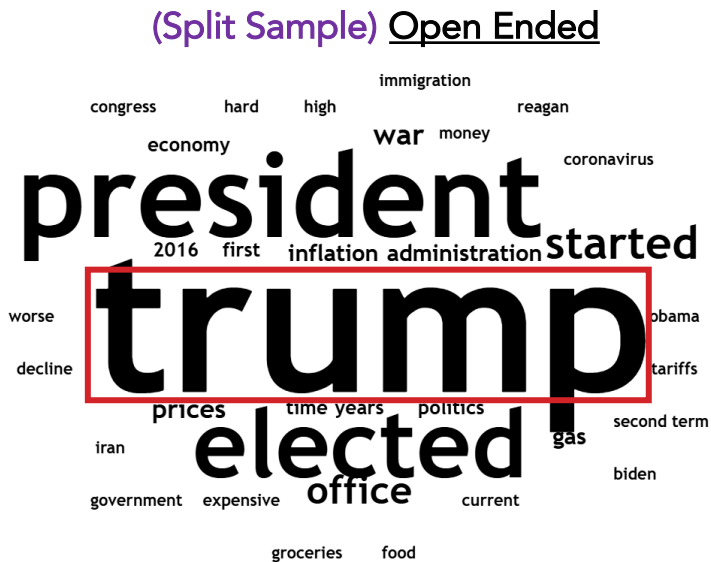
Where America is Headed

Majorities Say the U.S. Is Off on the Wrong Track, Cite Trump as the Turning Point for the Worse

Generally speaking, would you say the country today is...



[If wrong track] Earlier, you indicated you think things in the country are off on the wrong track. When do you think the country went off on the wrong track?

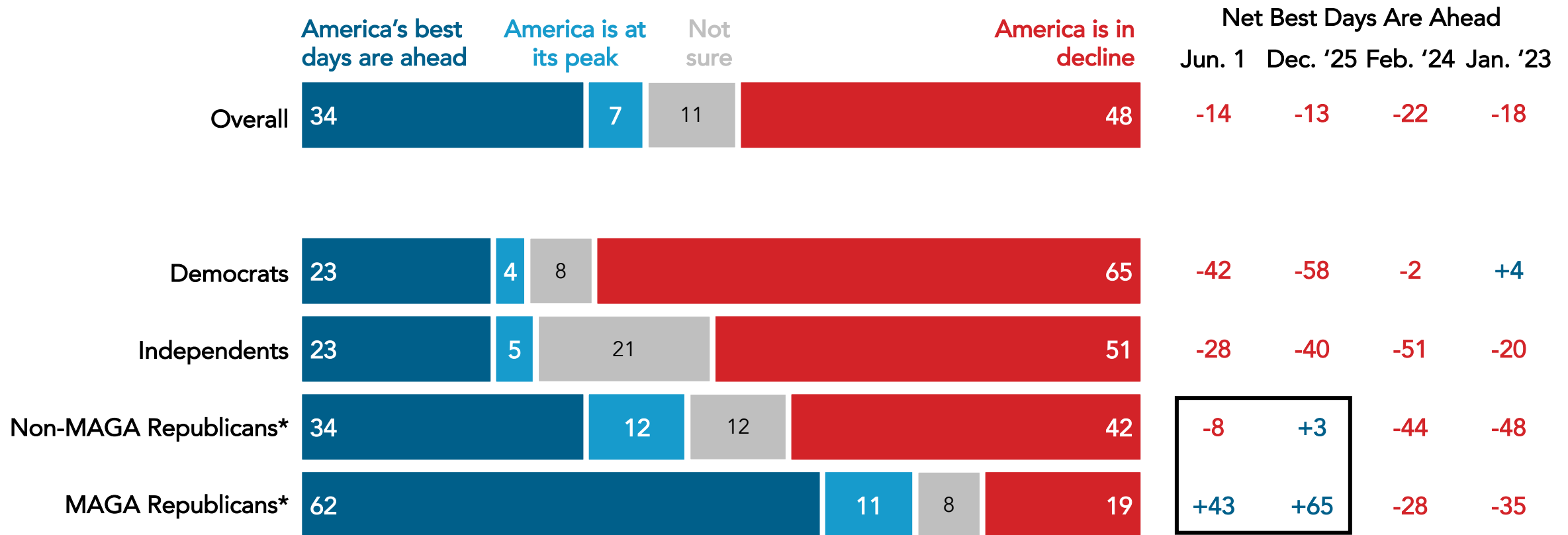


Nationwide survey of 2,000 registered voters conducted May 27-June 1, 2026. For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

Many Feel America is in Decline, But Many Still Are Optimistic

Non-MAGA Republicans* increasingly say America is in decline compared to December (from net +3 best days are ahead to net -8 now).

In general, do you think America's best days are ahead, America is at its peak, or America is in decline?

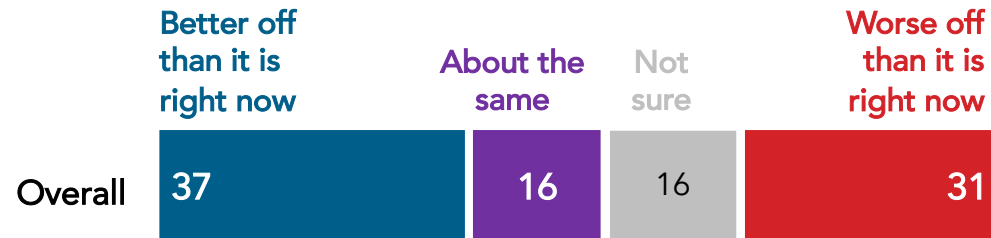


*"MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who identify as "a supporter of the MAGA movement" on a separate question, while "non-MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who do not consider themselves supporters of the MAGA movement or are not sure. Nationwide surveys of registered voters; Each wave represents approximately 1,000 interviews taken over the prior three-five days, though the latest wave represents approximately 2,000 interviews. Latest wave conducted May 27-June 1, 2026. For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

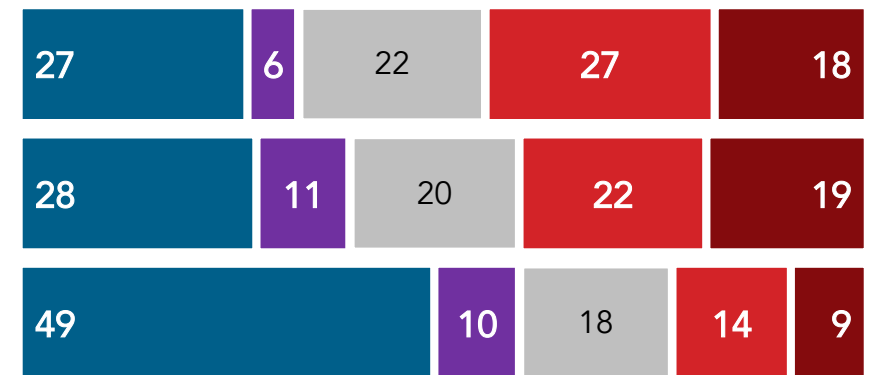
Americans Hold Mixed Views About Where the Country Will Be in the Future; One in Five Say America Won't Exist in 250 Years

A plurality of Americans (37%) say the country will be better off than it is right now in 20 years, although independents and non-MAGA Republicans* are more pessimistic (just 27% say the same).

(Split Sample) Thinking ahead to **20 years from now**, do you think the country will be...



(Split Sample) Thinking ahead to **250 years from now**, which do you think best describes what the country will be?



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Americans Are Divided on the Direction of Our Country

Moderator: Are America's best days ahead of us? Or behind us? Or happening now?

"I truly believe that because we're so young, again, we're babies in this world, in the United States, that we're judging things on a very small scale. Countries have had thousands of years of history. **We have a long way to go, but again, I think we're trending in the right direction.**" – PA man, Black veteran strong Democrat

"Everybody wanted to move here in the United States. So there was this big sense of pride....And I mean, they still do, people still come here, but I just feel like over time that sense of pride—or **people don't look at us or view us the same way they once used to.** And so that's why I feel like, as of now, the best days are behind, but hey, who knows?" – TX man, 1st generation weak Democrat

"I have faith and high hopes that America will be great again. **I think we have to hit rock bottom, pick ourselves up, and get better.** And I have hopes that better days are coming." – MS woman, white Christian weak Democrat

"I don't want to make it seem like it's necessarily so terrible right now either, but I feel like we kind of **peaked 30 years ago** maybe or something when I feel like...that American dream that we kind of talked about was a little bit more achievable, economically speaking. Racial tensions were very low compared to the past." – WI woman, Hispanic independent

"I think the **best days of America were back then.** It's hard to live the American dream—home, car, family. It just seems impossible these days." – TX man, 2nd generation independent lean Democrat

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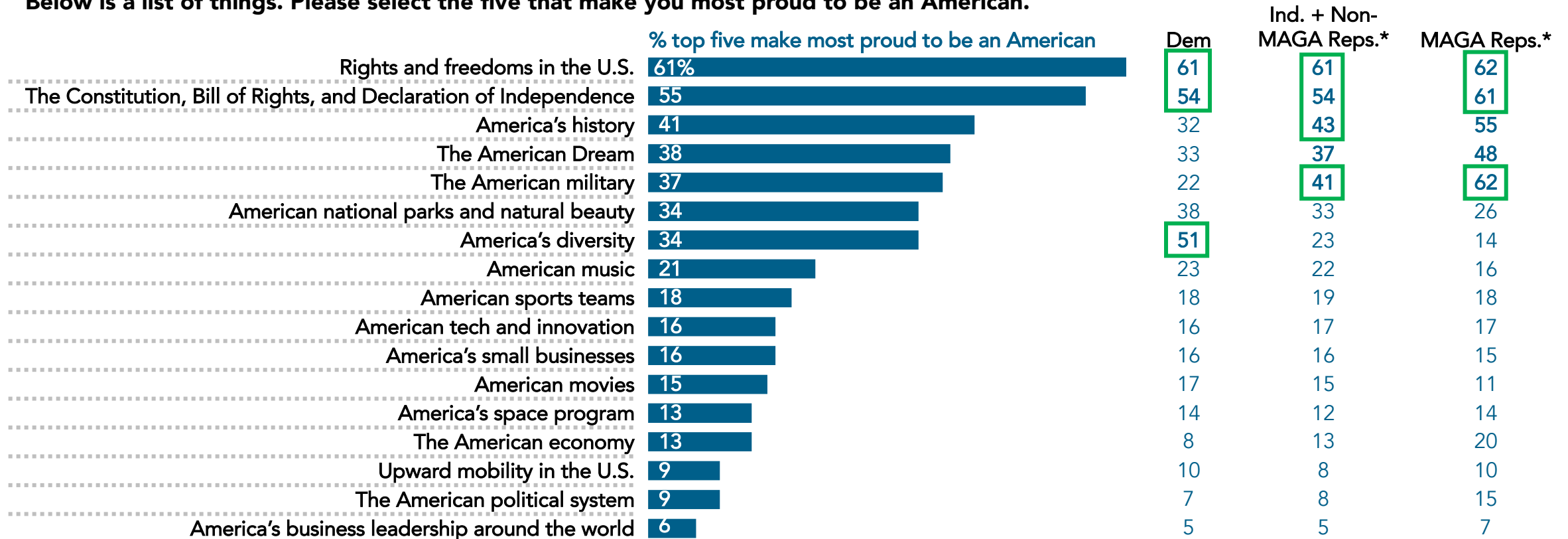
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American Pride

America's Rights and Freedoms – and Its History – Inspire Pride Across Partisanship; There Are Key Differences Across Party Lines

More than half of Democrats say America's diversity is one of the things that makes them most proud to be an American (51%), while 62% of MAGA Republicans* say the American military is one of the things that makes them most proud to be an American.

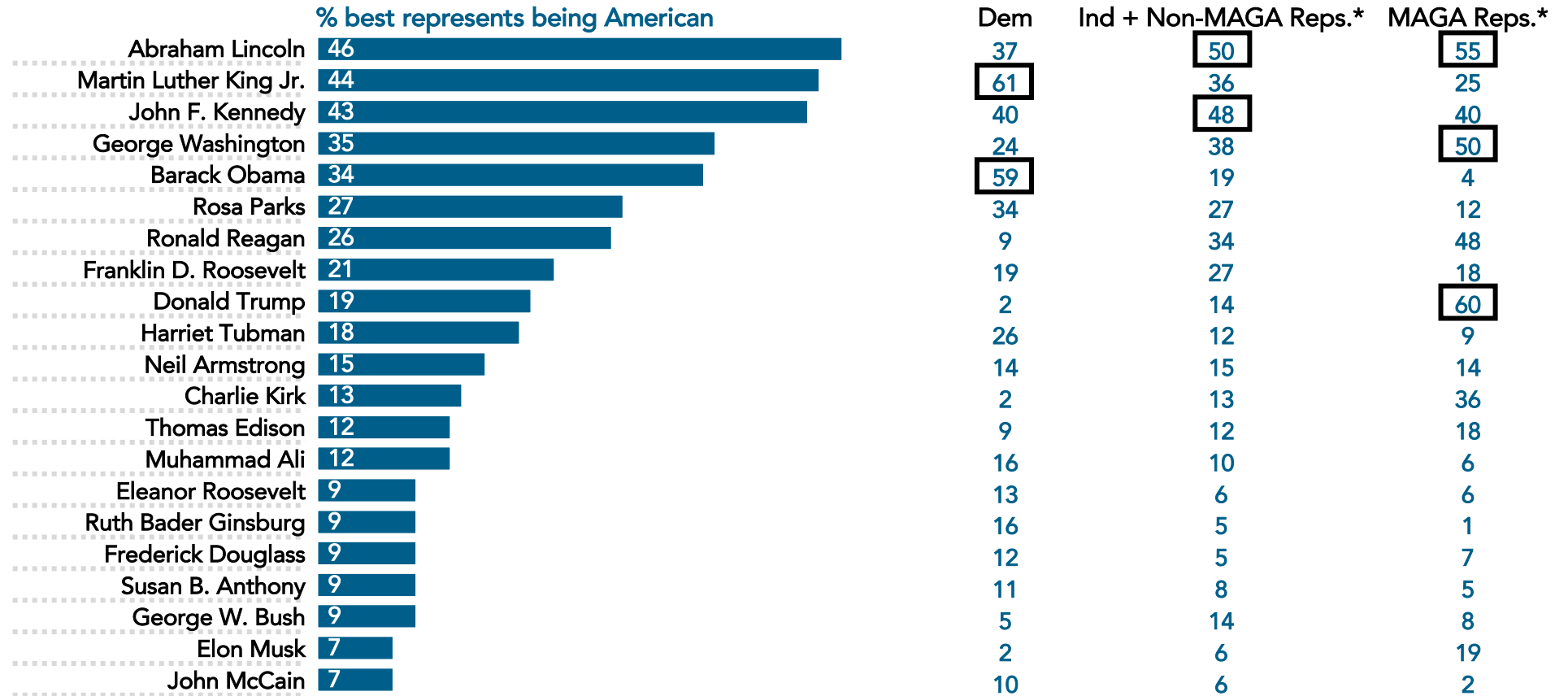
Below is a list of things. Please select the five that make you most proud to be an American.



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Americans Most Cited as Symbols of U.S. Are Lincoln, MLK, JFK, Washington, Obama, Trump

(Split Sample) Below is a list of people from American history, both past and present. Please select the ones you think best represent what it means to be an American.



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Moments of Unity – Abolishing Slavery, Signing Foundational Documents, Saving Americans on 9/11 – Most Pride-Inducing

More than half of Democrats (64%) and independents and non-MAGA Republicans* (52%) cite the abolition of slavery as one of the moments that makes them most proud to be an American, as do 49% of MAGA Republicans*.

Below is a list of events that have happened over the last 250 years of U.S. history. Please select the five that make you most proud to be an American.



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Holidays And Personal Milestones Bring Out Feelings Of Pride In America

Moderator: Tell me about times or a time you celebrated being American

"When I hear **Taps**, it still brings me to tears because it means so much those that gave their lives in combat to protect what we have today. That's what makes me feel American because I know people are willing to give their lives and fight for what we believe." – OH man, white Christian independent

"**Martin Luther King Day** just because I just found out a couple of years ago that Martin Luther King Day, you're supposed to volunteer on that day. So to me, when I found out like, "oh, I should definitely do that." So now I drag my son and we do stuff to volunteer." – PA man, white Christian weak Democrat

"**When I was able to marry**.....I felt that we were being seen as a person and not as a sin anymore. And so yeah, being given the right to marry made me celebrate being American." – TX man, Hispanic strong Democrat

"When I **first saw the Statue of Liberty in person**. That was kind of like, 'okay, I have arrived' kind of thing. So that was really the most American I felt, and it was really an overwhelming feeling of pride, of happiness, as well as, I don't know, a connection." – MI woman, 1st generation independent lean Republican

"When I came home for the **first time for my first deployment**, family got together, got to see friends that I hadn't seen for years. It was nice to be home, to not worry to be about being shot at. So yeah, that was when I felt happy, safe, and proud." – MI man, white veteran strong Democrat

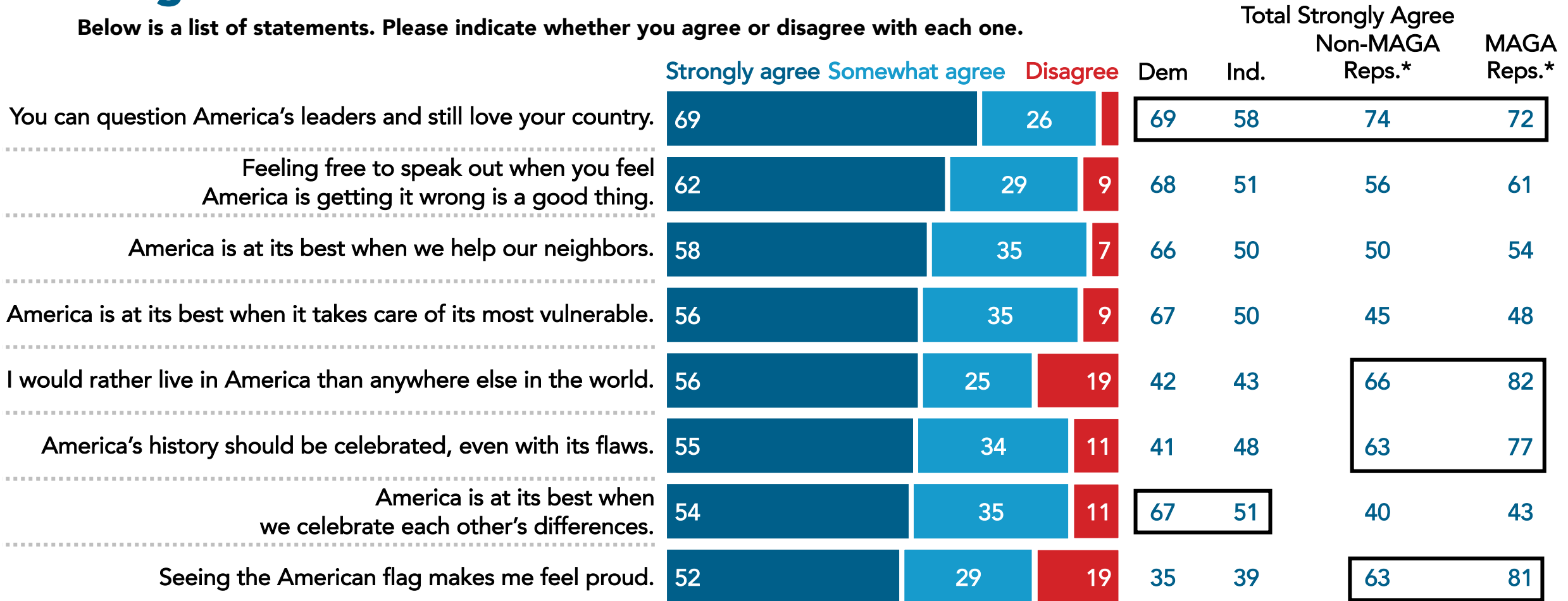
"The day that I was an American citizen, I **did my citizenship, I was very, really, really happy**, and that was a great day for me and my family." – GA woman, 1st generation independent

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American Values

Speaking Out Is Seen as Deeply American, as Is Helping Neighbors and the Most Vulnerable

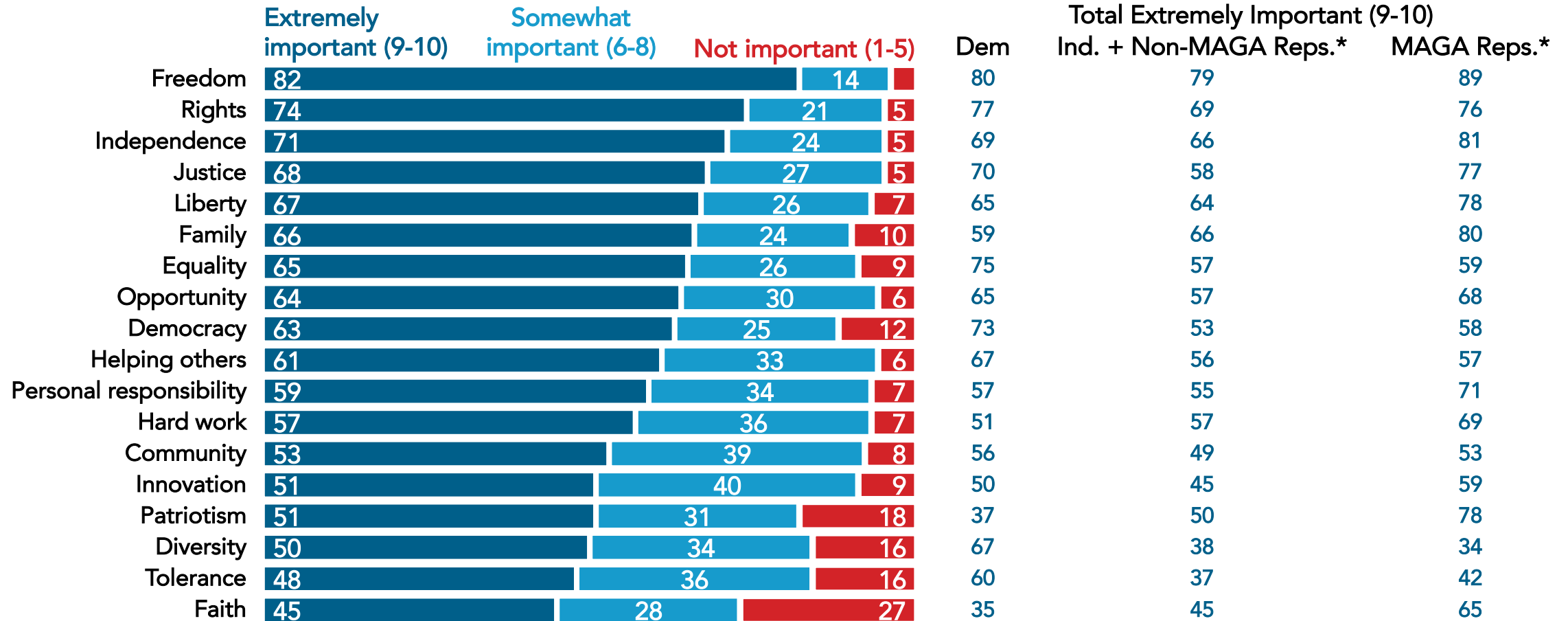
Below is a list of statements. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each one.



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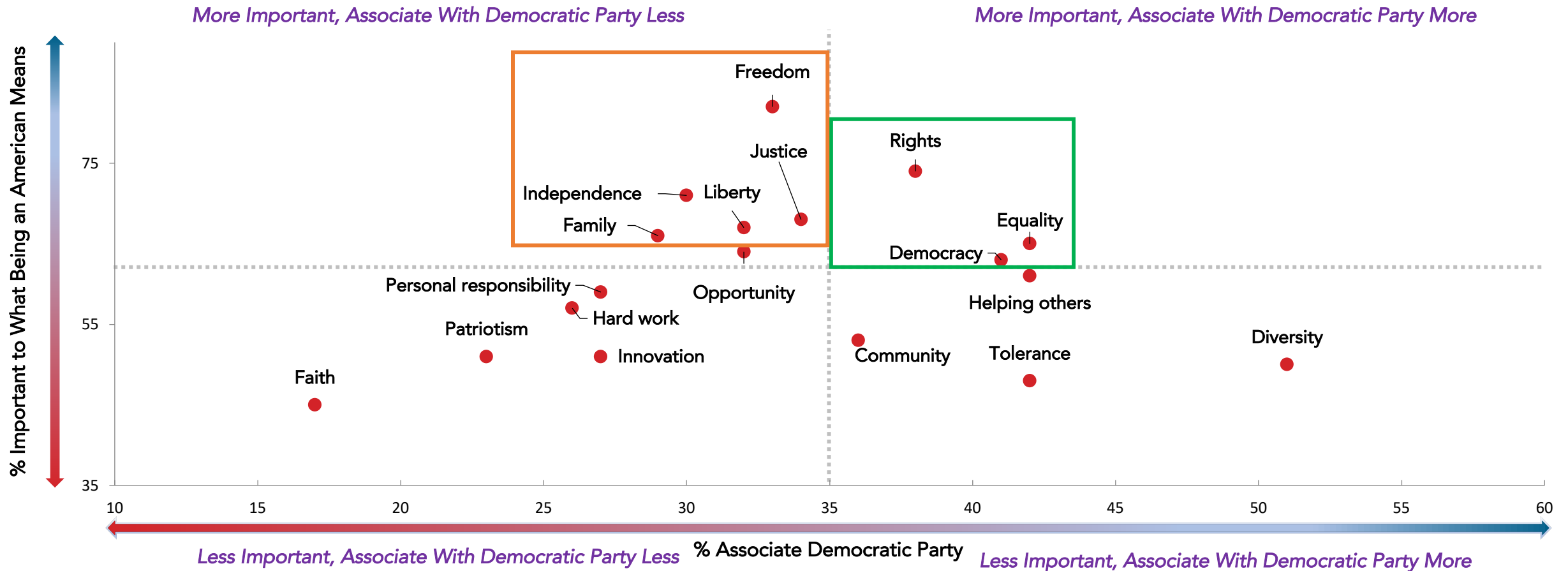
Freedom, Rights, and Independence Are Most Important Values to Americans

Below is a list of values. Please indicate how important each value is to what being an American means to you personally.



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Important/Associated With Dems: Rights, Equality, Democracy; Important/Associated With GOP: Freedom, Independence, Family



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Freedom of Speech Most Treasured and Most Endangered Right in the U.S. Today

(Split Sample) Below is a list of rights and freedoms in the U.S. Please select the five you think are **most important**.

(Split Sample) Below is a list of rights and freedoms. Please select the five you think are **most under threat in the U.S. today**, if any.

	% five most important	Dem	Ind. & Non-MAGA Reps.*	MAGA Reps.*	% five most under threat	Dem	Ind. & Non-MAGA Reps.*	MAGA Reps.*
Freedom of speech	65	64	69	63	51	51	47	55
Right to vote	53	58	45	57	35	48	23	24
Freedom of religion	44	35	47	58	27	16	30	46
Right to equal treatment under the law	39	39	40	35	37	43	34	29
Right to bear arms	34	13	42	66	33	15	40	58
Right to make your own decisions about your body	34	47	28	16	34	48	28	13
Innocence until proven guilty	33	28	40	33	22	18	27	21
Right to privacy	32	27	37	35	31	26	31	41
Freedom from discrimination	31	42	24	19	32	44	29	13
Right to due process	28	31	25	27	20	26	16	15
Freedom of the press	23	31	18	13	24	32	19	15
Freedom from government overreach	19	21	19	17	33	35	30	33
Freedom to gather and protest	18	24	13	13	20	29	16	9
Freedom from unlawful police searches	17	17	18	16	25	28	24	18
Right to a speedy, public trial	9	8	7	12	10	9	12	8

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Individual Freedoms And Helping Others Are Central To What It Means To Be An American

Moderator: What does it mean to be an American?

"The shared values would be the **freedom to express, whether it's religion, your speech**, anything of that sort....And also I would say the diversity. It's a country that is based on accepting people." – TX woman, Hispanic strong Republican

"The essence for me of America is **liberty**, is personal liberty, provided your liberty doesn't infringe upon the liberty of others, doesn't harm anybody." – TX man, white Christian independent lean Republican

"The freedom to disagree at work, **the freedom to disagree in a public setting**....[someone] said they watch a lot of the YouTube....There are some other countries that just they'll kill you and they don't have that luxury or that freedom." – AZ man, white Christian weak Republican

"**Freedom of choice, freedom of speech**, freedom of doing things that you would like to do. And obviously it means law-abiding freedom, in boundaries, but still there is freedom." – MI woman, 1st generation independent lean Republican

"Being in America, everybody has a **right to do what they want and say what they want as long as it's not infringing upon anybody else**. It would be boring if we were all the same, but one thing we need to do and we must do is respect each other's opinion." – PA man, Black veteran strong Democrat



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American Symbols & Flag

Veterans' Cemetery, Founding Documents, Veterans' Return Most Universally Patriotic Images

Below is a series of images. On a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 means very patriotic and 1 means not patriotic at all, please indicate how patriotic you think each one is. (Top 5 of 9)



Credit: Shutterstock/Orhan Cam



Credit: Shutterstock/Ungvar



Credit: Shutterstock/Monkey Business Images Credit: Shutterstock/Gorodenkoff



Credit: Shutterstock/Roberto Galan

Total Very Patriotic (9-10)

Overall	75	72	71	59	54
Democrats	68	67	67	50	60
Independents	66	65	60	51	46
Non-MAGA Reps.*	79	77	77	66	49
MAGA Reps.*	88	83	82	75	51

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Democrats See Protest as Patriotic; Republicans See the Bible on the Flag and a Pickup Truck With a Flag as Patriotic

Below is a series of images. On a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 means very patriotic and 1 means not patriotic at all, please indicate how patriotic you think each one is. (Bottom 4 of 9)



Credit: Shutterstock/Ungvar



Credit: Shutterstock/Charlotte Evelyn



Credit: Shutterstock/Ruben Juan Garcia



Credit: Shutterstock/Cheryl Casey

Total Very Patriotic (9-10)

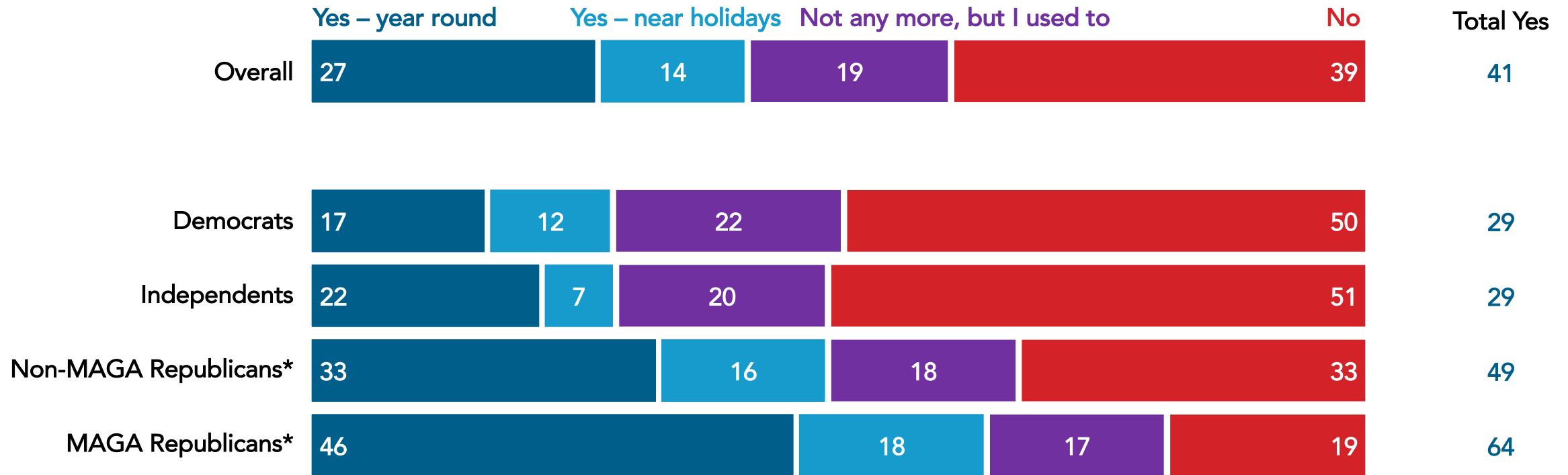
Overall	51	49	47	31
Democrats	34	36	64	35
Independents	46	45	41	33
Non-MAGA Reps.*	63	56	34	24
MAGA Reps.*	78	72	27	28

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Nearly Half Display an American Flag, Especially MAGA Republicans

Roughly two in three MAGA Republicans* display an American flag (64%), as do nearly half of non-MAGA Republicans* (49%).

Do you display an American flag outside your home, such as on your house, apartment, porch, yard, or vehicle?



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Americans Most Proud When Coming Together: After a Crisis, to Honor Veterans, to Celebrate the Fourth, to Recite the Pledge

Democrats report pride in scientific breakthroughs (40%), welcoming new citizens (48%), and Americans protesting (49%); Republicans cite the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance (47%) and when the U.S. military is successful (47%).

Below is a list of different types of moments in American life. Please select the four that make you most proud to be an American.

	% top four most proud to be an American	Dem	Ind. + Non-MAGA Reps.*	MAGA Reps.*
When Americans come together after a crisis or natural disaster	58%	58	58	57
When American service members, veterans, or first responders are honored	42	34	44	55
When Americans gather for Fourth of July celebrations, parades, or memorials, or for other national holidays	35	26	38	49
When Americans recite the Pledge of Allegiance or sing the national anthem	34	20	38	53
When the American military successfully protects the country or defeats its enemies	33	21	35	54
When American scientists, doctors, researchers, or inventors make major breakthroughs	33	40	29	24
When America welcomes people from around the world to become U.S. citizens	33	48	23	16
When Americans march, protest, or speak out for civil rights, women's rights, or equal rights	31	49	20	10
When NASA or American space exploration achieves something historic	19	19	18	21
When American athletes or sports teams represent the country on the world stage	19	19	20	17
When American movies, music, or culture become successful and influential	13	15	13	10
When my preferred candidate or party wins an election	13	14	8	17

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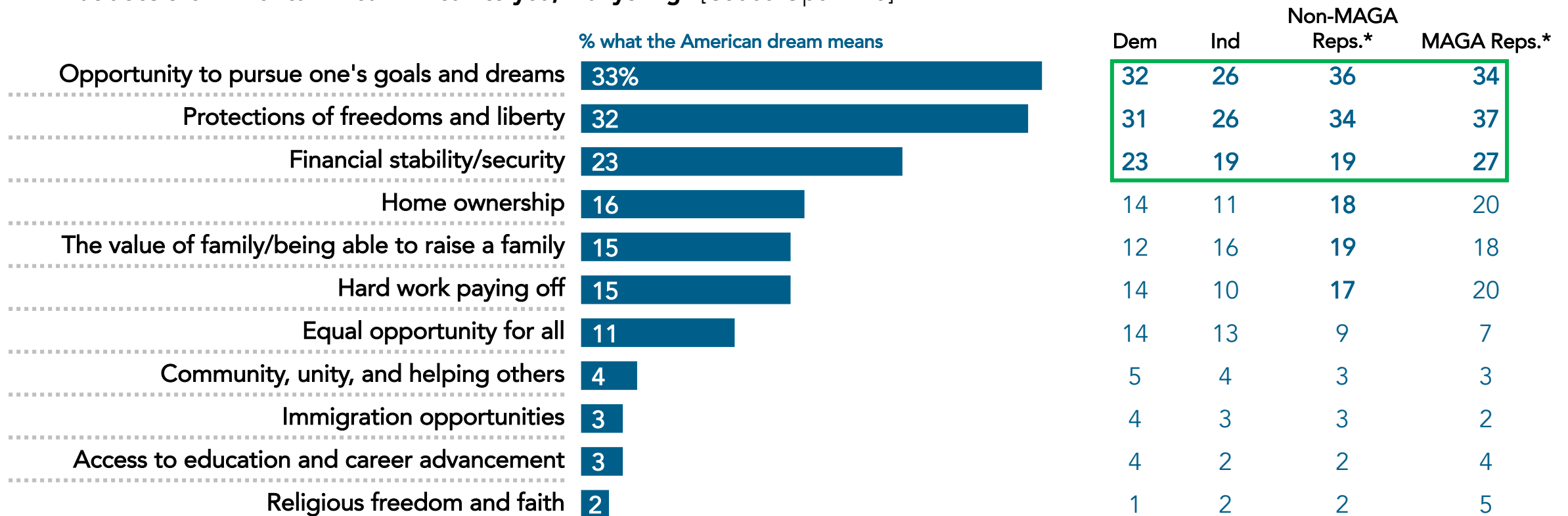
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American Dream

In Their Own Words, Americans Say the American Dream Means Opportunity, Freedom, Liberty, Financial Security

Roughly a third of Americans say the American Dream means the opportunity to pursue one’s goals and dreams (33%) and protections of freedoms and liberty (32%).

What does the “American Dream” mean to you, if anything? [Coded Open End]

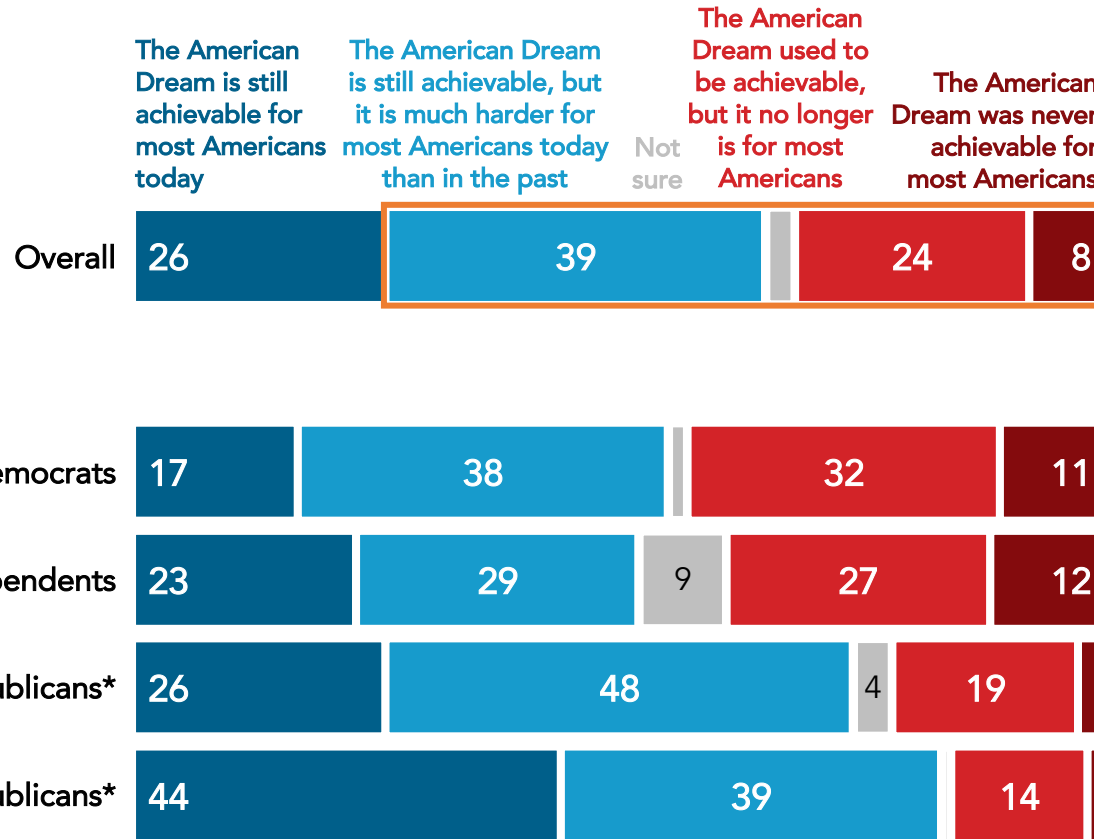


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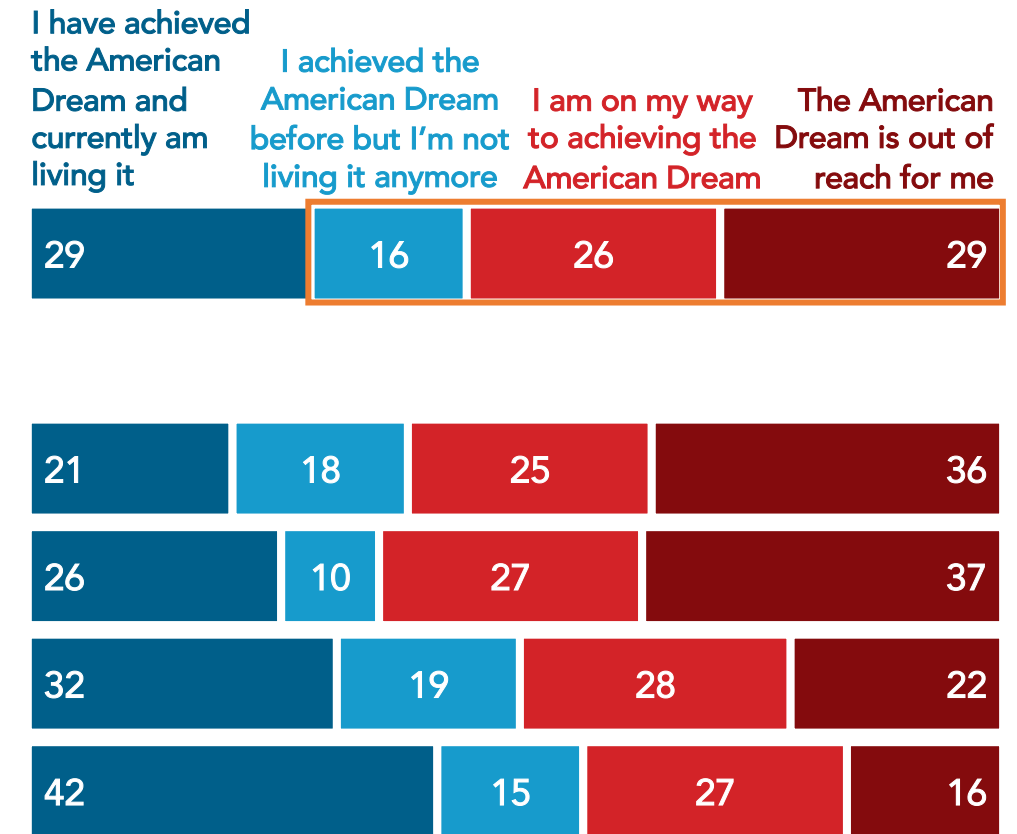
Most See the American Dream as Achievable, But Much Harder Today; Few Report Living the American Dream Today

Majorities say they are not living the American Dream right now (71%).

Which of the following best describes your view of the American Dream?



Which would you say best describes your situation?



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The American Dream Is Achievable, But Harder Today Than Ever

Moderator: What does the American Dream mean to you?

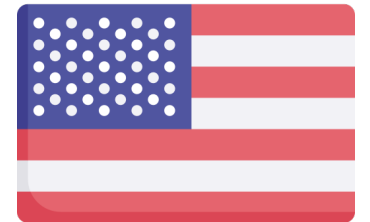
"For me, the American Dream is earning a **decent amount of income**, having a nice house, having a nice family, raising your family in a Christian-centered home." – MS man, Black strong Republican

"I think my parents are the epitome of the American Dream. **My dad and mom came with a suitcase and a couple hundred bucks, and then not even 10 years later, they owned their own house**, they had me, both got stable jobs, just working hard. And I feel like nowadays I don't think you can do that anymore." – PA man, 2nd generation weak Republican

"To me, the American Dream means being able to **make a decent living** and being able to have the rights, which everyone else has. And I mean, just to be free to do... and live in a democracy that's for everyone." – GA man, Black strong Democrat

"The American Dream is **having your own house**. Basically that's where it goes, having your own freedom when you have your own house." – TX man, 1st generation weak Democrat

"[The American Dream is] **to get money fast...** Everybody want money fast, fast, fast in America or something." – PA man, Black independent



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American Future

America at 250, A Work in Progress

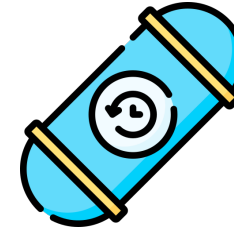
Moderator: If you had to put one thing in a time capsule for Americans to open in 50 years from now, what would you include?

"I would put a playlist of my **music**, because music brings me joy. It also brings people together in a way that has always been a great thing in our country." – NC woman, white Christian independent

"I would put a **Bible**... Right now, I guess we're in a period where we can openly open our Bible, but I feel like where the country's headed, we might not be able to do that in the future." – TX woman, Hispanic strong Republican

"I would put a book...**1984**....Even almost 100 years ago, 80 years ago, these ideas were espoused by a different country and a different political race and here we are 80 years later and we're repeating a certain history." – TX man, Hispanic strong Democrat

"The **Constitution**....'Boys and girls, just in case you forgot, this is where we came from and this is where we're supposed to stay with.'" – TX man, white veteran strong Democrat

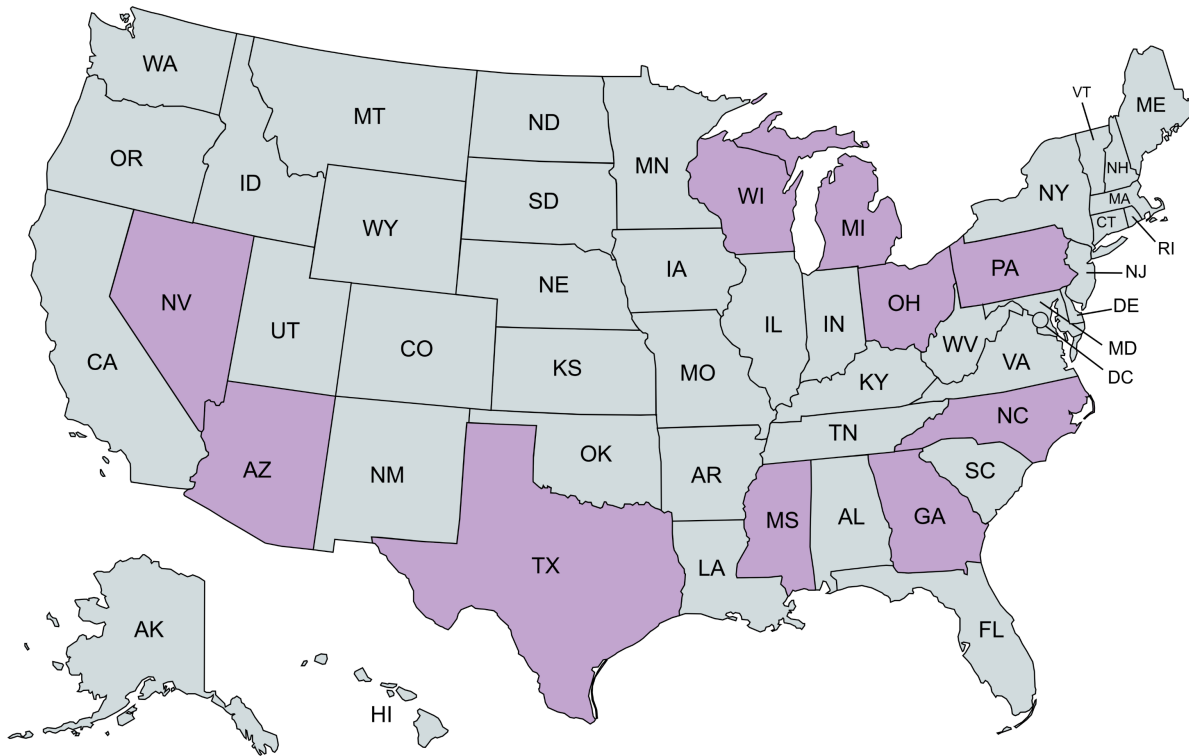


"A phone with **TikTok** on it... Everything's on TikTok now. The world's on TikTok and Instagram." – PA man, 2nd generation weak Republican

"Probably just a copy of the **Constitution and the Bill of Rights**. Man, those guys got it right. I don't know how they thought through so much of what they thought through that long ago." – TX man, white Christian independent lean Republican

Focus Group Methodology

On June 2-3, 2026, GBAO conducted four online focus groups in battleground Senate states* with white Christian swing voters to whom religion is an important part of their identity, Black and Hispanic voters, veterans, and 1st and 2nd generation American swing voters.



- ❖ Group 1: Christian white swing voters who say faith is important to their identity (mix of gender, age, education)
- ❖ Group 2: Black and Latino voters (mix of gender/age/education)
- ❖ Group 3: Veterans (mix of race/ethnicity/age/gender/ education)
- ❖ Group 4: 1st and 2nd generation American swing voters (mix of race/country of origin/education/gender)

/s.

*AZ, GA, MI, MS, NC, NV, OH, PA, TX, WI

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.

About the Study

Global Strategy Group conducted a public opinion survey among a sample of 2,000 registered voters from May 27-June 1, 2026. 242 interviews were conducted among Hispanic voters. 285 interviews were conducted among African American voters. 137 interviews were conducted among Asian American and Pacific Islander voters. 234 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 +/- 2.2 percentage points. The margin of error for subgroups varies and is higher.

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To learn more about Navigator:

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