

navigating *the* *battleground

Thursday, July 23, 2026

Perceptions of Costs and the
Economy in the
Congressional Battleground



IMPACT
RESEARCH

Methodology



Impact Research conducted a survey of N=1,500 likely 2026 general election constituents in 67 battleground congressional districts.



100% of interviews were conducted by text-to-web.



Interviews were conducted between June 23 – July 1, 2026.



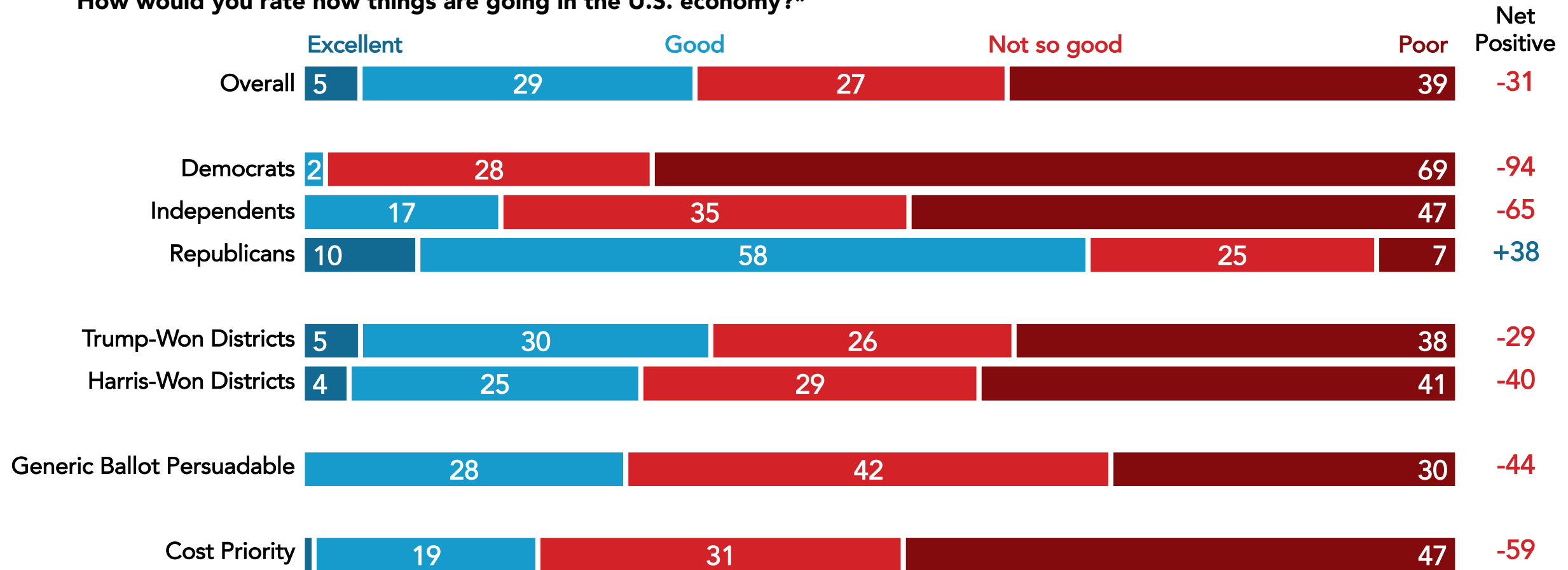
The margin of error for a sample of this size is +/- 2.5 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence. The margin of error for subgroups varies and is higher.

Key Takeaways

- A majority of battleground constituents rate the economy negatively. 65% give it a negative rating compared to just 34% who rate it positively.
- However, battleground constituents are more positive about their own finances. Over 60% of battleground constituents give their own personal financial rating a positive mark, while 36% view their finances negatively.
- A plurality think their financial situation is about the same as what was a few months ago, but more battleground constituents think it got worse than better in that timeframe.
- The costs that battleground constituents think are going up the most are gasoline, utilities, and groceries.
 - They point to the Iran War as the main culprit for rising gas prices followed by Trump and Republicans.
- A majority of battleground constituents think Republicans are focused on policies that are making life less affordable, while less than 20% say Republicans are doing things to make life more affordable.

Two-Thirds of Battleground Constituents Give the Economy a Negative Rating

How would you rate how things are going in the U.S. economy?*



*Split

"Generic ballot persuadable" are those who did not choose a Democratic or Republican candidate on who they would likely support for Congress in the 2026 election.

"Cost Priority" are those who chose a cost-related issue as the most important issue for Congress to address.

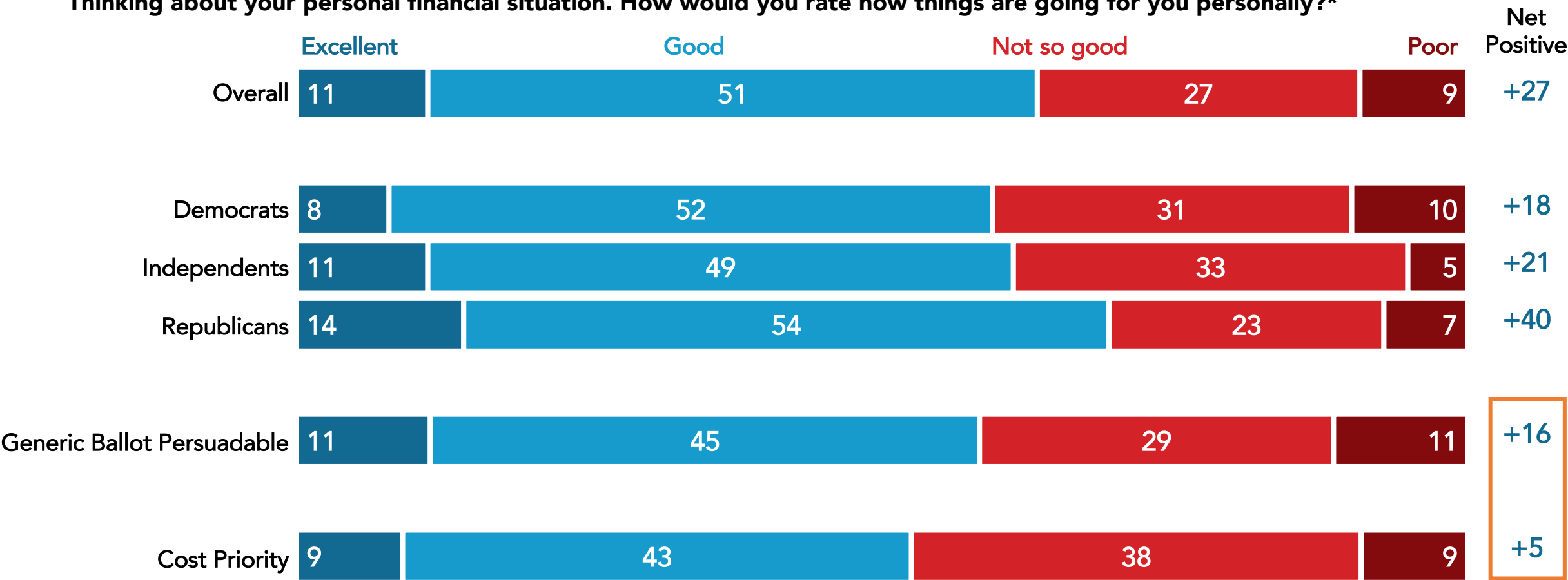
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Only 11% of Battleground Constituents Rate Their Own Finances as “Excellent”

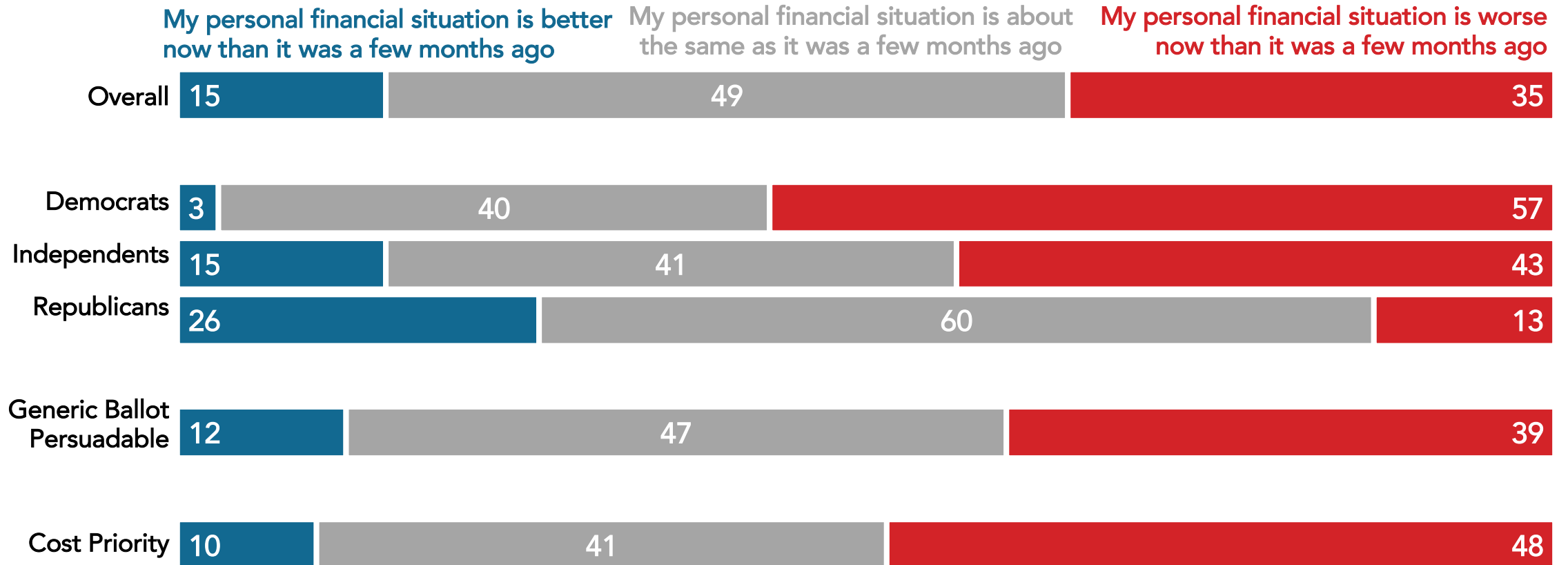
Thinking about your personal financial situation. How would you rate how things are going for you personally?*



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More Battleground Constituents Say Their Personal Finances Have Gotten Worse Than Better Over the Past Few Months

Thinking about the past few months. Which of the following comes closest to your view of your personal financial situation?



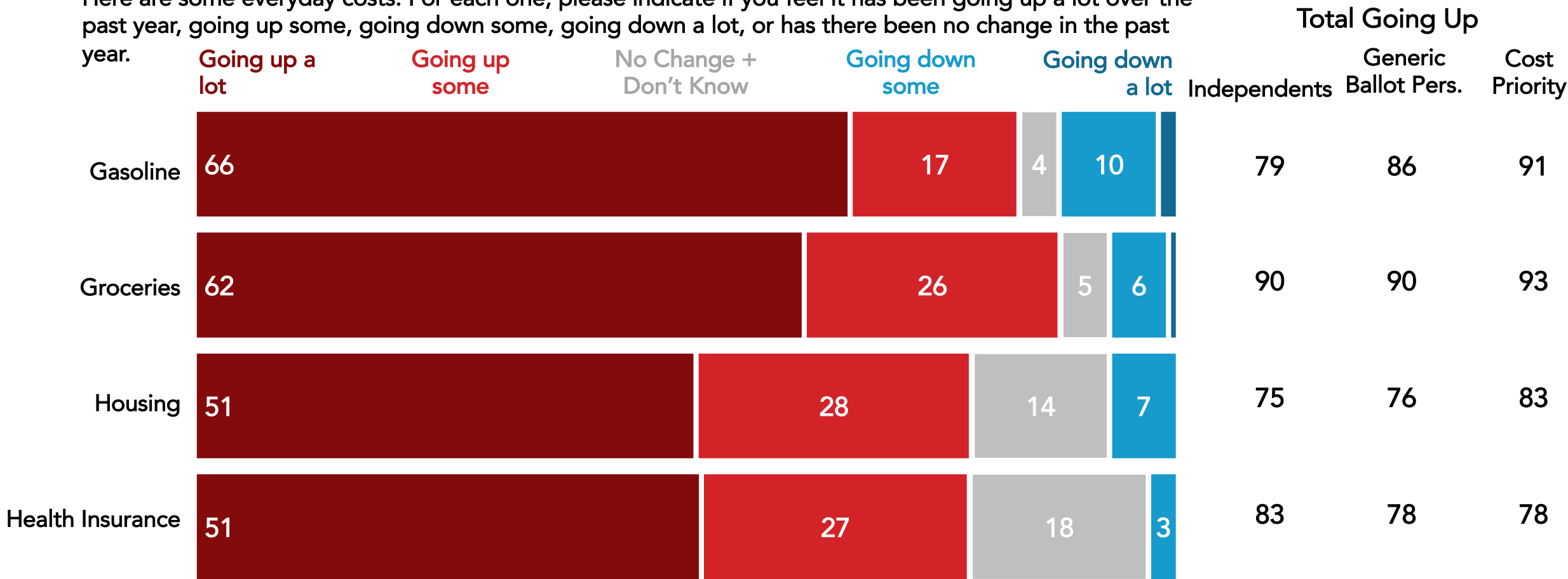
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Over 60% of Battleground Constituents Say the Cost of Gasoline and Groceries Have Gone Up A Lot Over the Past Year

Here are some everyday costs. For each one, please indicate if you feel it has been going up a lot over the past year, going up some, going down some, going down a lot, or has there been no change in the past year.



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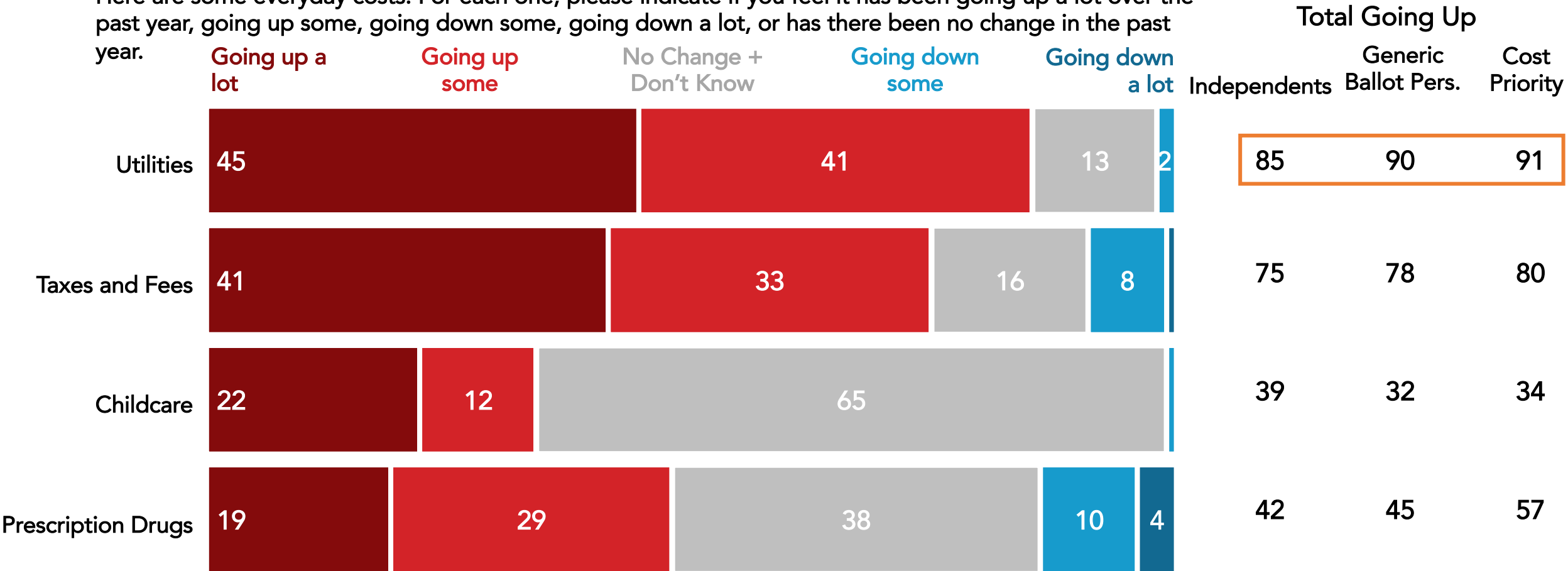
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Utility Costs are Also Increasing for the Majority, Second Only to Groceries Among Independent Voters

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Battleground Constituents Blame the Iran War for Rising Gas Prices Followed by Trump and Republicans and Corporate Greed

Over a quarter blame the GOP when Trump is included with Republicans in Congress (28%).

When it comes to gas prices, who or what do you believe is MOST to blame for rising costs?

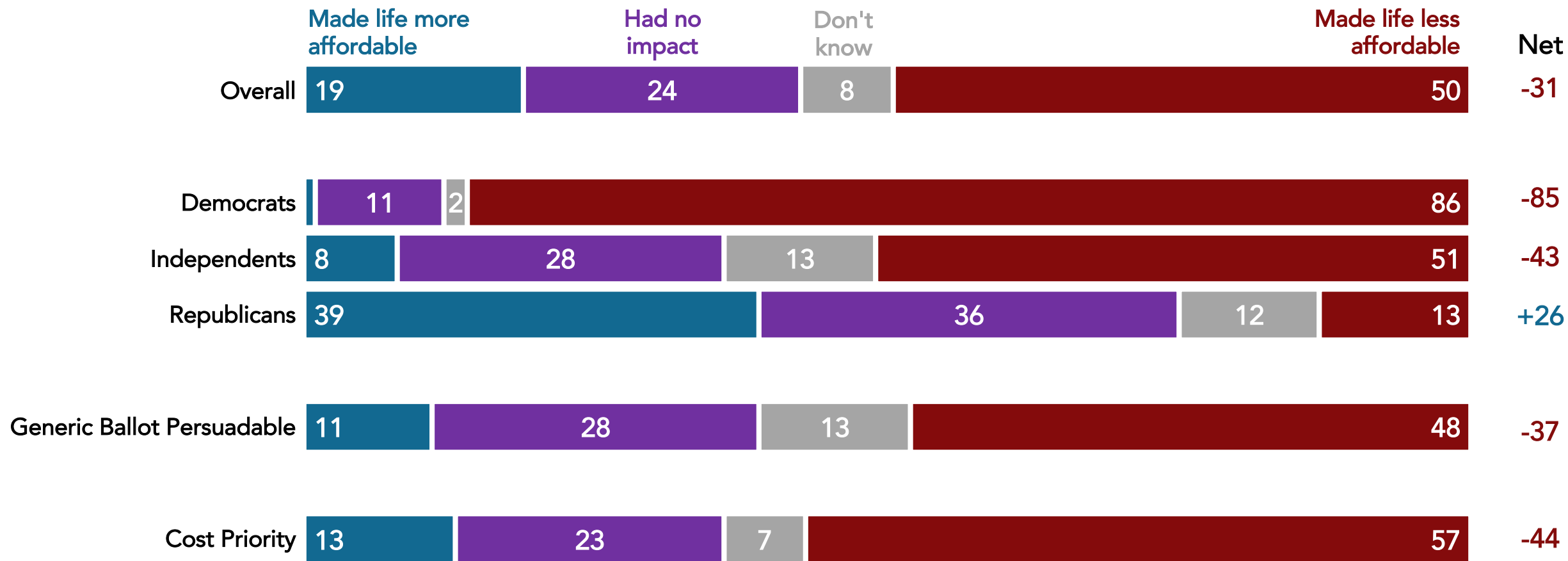
Difference
w/ Trump
Included

The Iran war	34	The Iran war	46	-12
Donald Trump and Republicans in Congress*	28	Republicans in Congress*	10	+18
Corporate greed and price gouging	15	Corporate greed and price gouging	16	-1
Democrats in Congress	9	Democrats in Congress	9	0
The global economy and market forces	6	The global economy and market forces	8	-2
Oil producing countries outside of the U.S.*	4	Oil and gas companies*	6	-2
Supply issues	2	Supply issues	3	-1

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Half of Battleground Constituents Say Republican Policies Have Made Life Less Affordable

From what you know, have Republicans in Congress focused on policies that have:



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Appendix: Congressional Districts Included In Sample

Dem Incumbent			Rep Incumbent - Harris	Rep Incumbent - Trump				Large 2024 Margin Trump Districts (10.5+)		Mid 2024 Margin Trump Districts (4.5-10.4)		Small 2024 Margin Trump Districts (<4.5)	
CA-13	NV-03	TX-34	CA-48	AK-01	IA-01	NC-11	VA-01	AK-01	OH-07	CO-05	PA-10	AZ-01	NY-03
CA-45	NV-04	TX-35	NE-02	AZ-01	IA-02	NJ-07	VA-02	AZ-02	OH-09	IA-01	TX-28	AZ-06	OH-01
CA-47	NY-03	VA-07	NY-17	AZ-02	IA-03	OH-07	WI-01	FL-07	SC-01	IA-02	TX-34	CA-13	PA-07
CT-05	NY-04	WA-03	PA-01	AZ-06	KY-06	OH-10	WI-03	FL-13	TN-05	ME-02	TX-35	CA-22	VA-02
IN-01	NY-19			CA-22	MI-04	OH-15		FL-15	TX-15	MI-04	VA-01	CO-08	WA-03
ME-02	NY-22			CO-05	MI-07	PA-07		FL-27		MI-10	WI-01	IA-03	
MI-08	OH-01			CO-08	MI-10	PA-08		KY-06		MO-02	WI-03	MI-07	
NC-01	OH-09			FL-07	MC-01	PA-10		MN-01		NC-11		MI-08	
NJ-09	OH-13			FL-13	MO-02	SC-01		MT-01		OH-01		NJ-07	
NM-02	OR-05			FL-15	MT-01	TN-05		NC-01		OH-15		NM-02	
NV-01	TX-28			FL-27	NC-03	TX-15		NC-03		PA-08		NV-03	

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About Navigator and Navigating the Battleground

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. **Navigating the Battleground** is a project designed to understand messaging nuances in different types of battleground geographies, led by pollsters from Impact Research.

About the Study

Impact Research conducted public opinion surveys among a sample of 1,500 likely 2026 general election voters from June 23- July 1, 2026. The survey was conducted by text-to-web (100 percent). Respondents were verified against a voter file and special care was taken to ensure the demographic composition of our sample matched that of the 67 congressional districts included in the sample across a variety of demographic variables. The margin of error for the full sample at the 95 percent level of confidence is +/- 2.5 percentage points. The margin for error for subgroups varies and is higher.

For Press inquiries contact:

press@navigatorresearch.org

To learn more about Navigator or
Navigating the Battleground:

<http://navigatorresearch.org>

@NavigatorSurvey on Twitter