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Tuesday, September 8th

Corruption: Political Landscape



Credit: Shutterstock/Wasana Kunpol

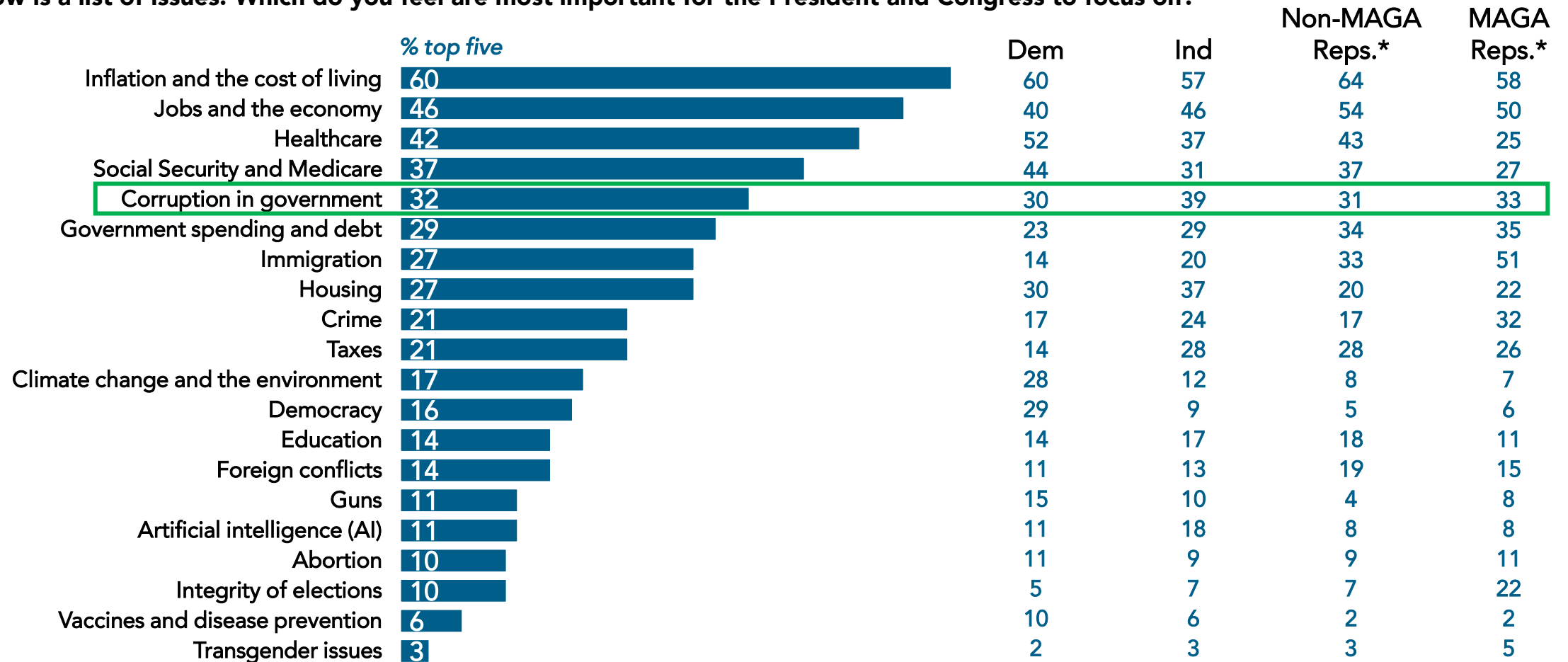
Key Takeaways:

- Corruption is a top five issue priority, secondary only to costs and healthcare-related issues. Those who prioritize it are most likely to say it means elected officials engaging in lies and crimes, elected officials getting rich in office, and Trump and Republicans' actions in particular.
- Views differ by party: Democrats see corruption more as special treatment for wealthy donors and large corporations, while Republicans say it is more waste, fraud, and abuse of taxpayer dollars.
- Trump and Republicans are seen as more corrupt than Democrats and engaging in more acts of corruption, as a growing majority of Americans say that Trump is bringing more corruption to Washington than fixing it.

Corruption Is a Top Five Issue Priority for Americans

That said, it still significantly lags inflation and the cost of living (60%) and jobs and the economy (46%).

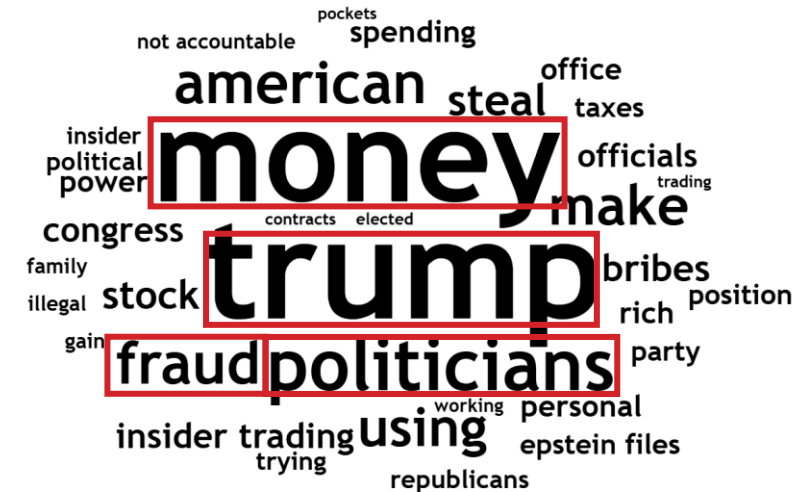
Below is a list of issues. Which do you feel are most important for the President and Congress to focus on?



*"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 August 21-August 24, 2026. For more info, visit navigatortresearch.org.

"Corruption" Means Elected Officials Lying, Committing Crimes, and Getting Rich in Office – Particularly, Trump and Republicans

[If select corruption as a top priority] What specifically do you mean by "corruption in government"? [OPEN ENDS; RECODED]



"They are just making money for themselves."

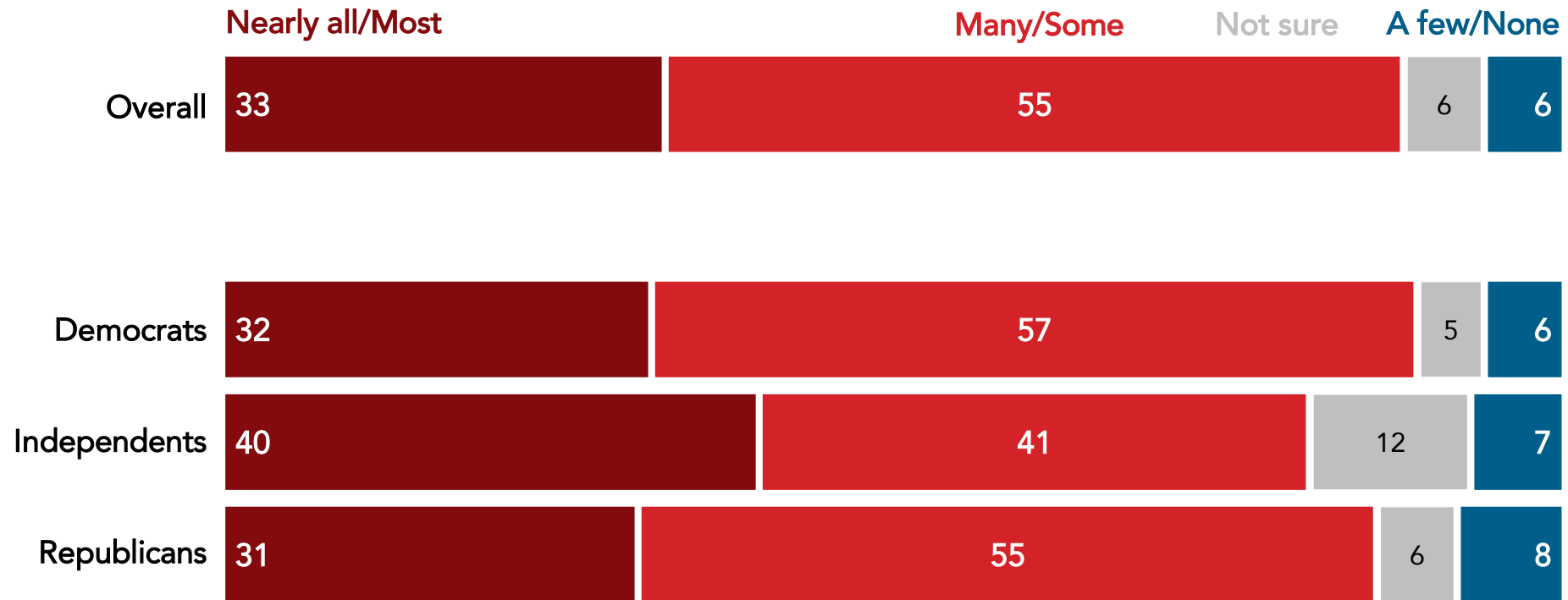
"The Republican Party letting Trump and his family make money from insider information."

"A wide range of politicians on both sides of the political spectrum have been exposed for their roles in the Epstein files. Government officials are not prosecuted for insider trading, conflicts of interest, and fraud."

Americans Say Many Elected Officials Are Corrupt

Independents are especially likely to say “nearly all” or “most” elected officials are corrupt (40%), compared to roughly three in ten Democrats (32%) and Republicans (31%).

In your view, how many elected officials in the U.S. today are corrupt?



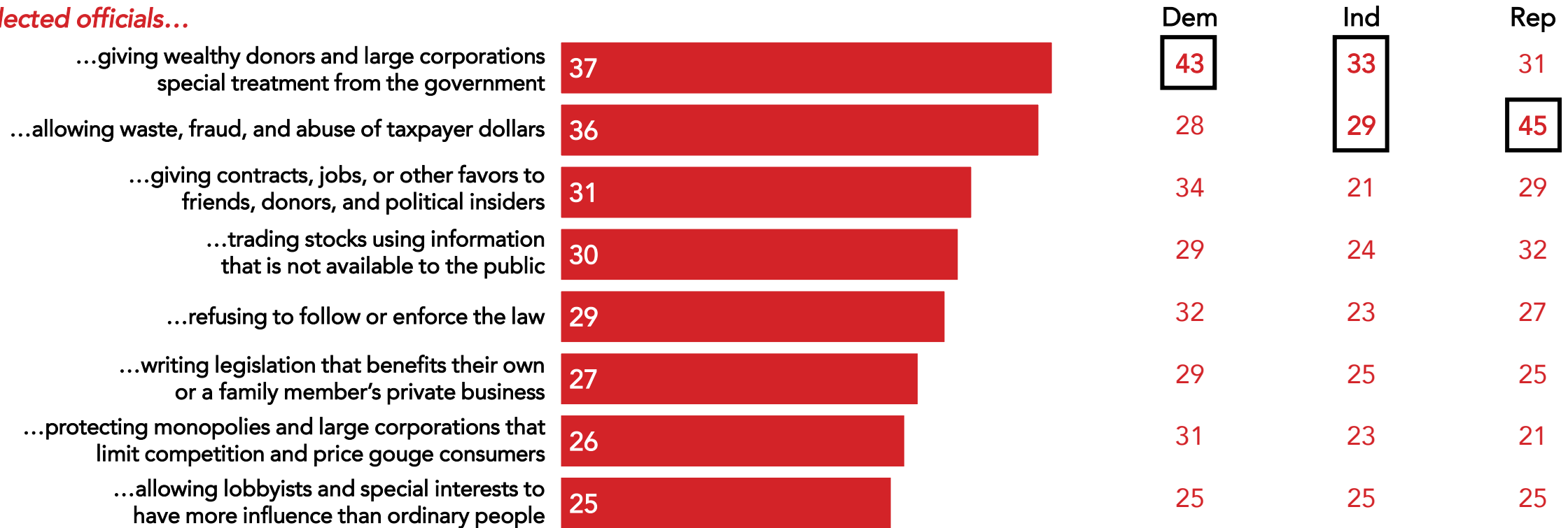
Nationwide survey of 1,000 registered voters conducted August 21-August 24, 2026.
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Views of Corruption Vary By Party – Democrats Say Special Treatment for the Rich, Republicans Say Waste & Fraud

Independents are nearly equally likely to say it's elected officials giving wealthy donors special treatment (33%) and elected officials allowing waste, fraud, and abuse (29%).

Which of the following comes closest to what the word "corruption" means to you?

Elected officials...



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Wasting Taxpayer Dollars & Protecting Monopolies Seen as Most Raising Costs; Secondly, Special Interest/Wealthy Favors

Please indicate, for each one, how much it raises costs for people like you.

<i>Elected officials...</i>	Total Raises Costs		Overall	Dem	Ind	Non-MAGA Reps.*	MAGA Reps.*
	Raises costs a lot	Raises costs somewhat					
...allowing waste, fraud, and abuse of taxpayer dollars	52	30	82	80	77	91	81
...protecting monopolies and large corporations that limit competition and price gouge consumers	49	32	82	85	75	84	78
...allowing lobbyists and special interests to have more influence than ordinary people	43	34	77	82	72	73	74
...giving wealthy donors and large corporations special treatment from the government	40	37	77	82	70	78	71
...writing legislation that benefits their own or a family member's private business	39	33	72	76	69	71	69
...giving contracts, jobs, or other favors to friends, donors, and political insiders	39	33	71	74	66	72	68
...refusing to follow or enforce the law	38	33	71	75	68	66	69
...trading stocks using information that is not available to the public	35	26	61	63	59	58	60

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Republicans Seen as Guiltier of a Range of Corruption – Especially Protecting Corporations, Benefiting Personal Businesses/Donors

Please indicate whether you think each one happens more often among Democrats, more often among Republicans, or about equally in both parties.

<i>Elected officials...</i>					Net More Often With Republicans				
	Democrats	Both equally	DK	Republicans	Overall	Dem	Ind	Non-MAGA Reps.*	MAGA Reps.*
...writing legislation that benefits their own or a family member's private business	23	25	7	45	+22	+64	+10	-7	-28
...protecting monopolies and large corporations that limit competition and price gouge consumers	22	24	10	44	+22	+63	+13	-5	-28
...giving wealthy donors and large corporations special treatment from the government	24	26	8	42	+18	+62	+9	-10	-35
...refusing to follow or enforce the law	26	26	8	40	+14	+59	+13	-19	-43
...giving contracts, jobs, or other favors to friends, donors, and political insiders	24	29	9	38	+14	+52	+5	-12	-30
...allowing lobbyists and special interests to have more influence than ordinary people	24	30	9	37	+13	+55	+3	-13	-39
...trading stocks using information that is not available to the public	26	27	9	38	+12	+54	+10	-16	-47
...allowing waste, fraud, and abuse of taxpayer dollars	28	25	8	39	+11	+56	+2	-22	-43

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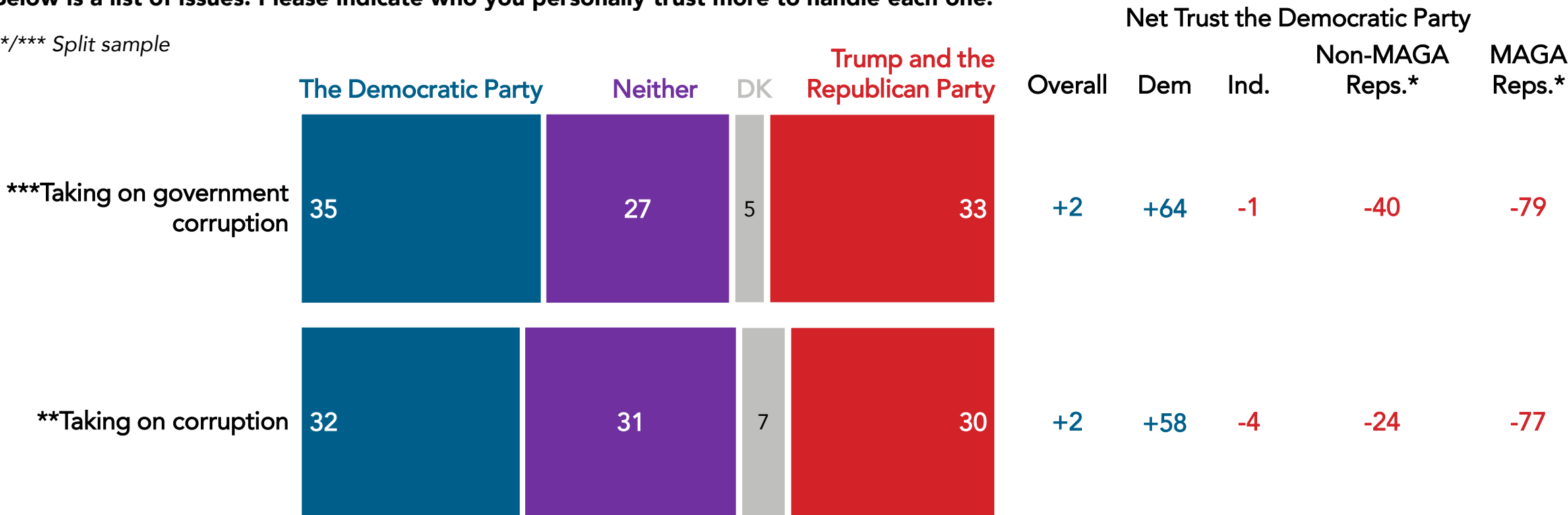
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Americans Are Split on Which Party They Trust to Take on Corruption, With Many Trusting Neither

Nearly two in five Americans say they do not trust either party or don't know who to trust to "take on corruption" (38%).

Below is a list of issues. Please indicate who you personally trust more to handle each one.

/ Split sample

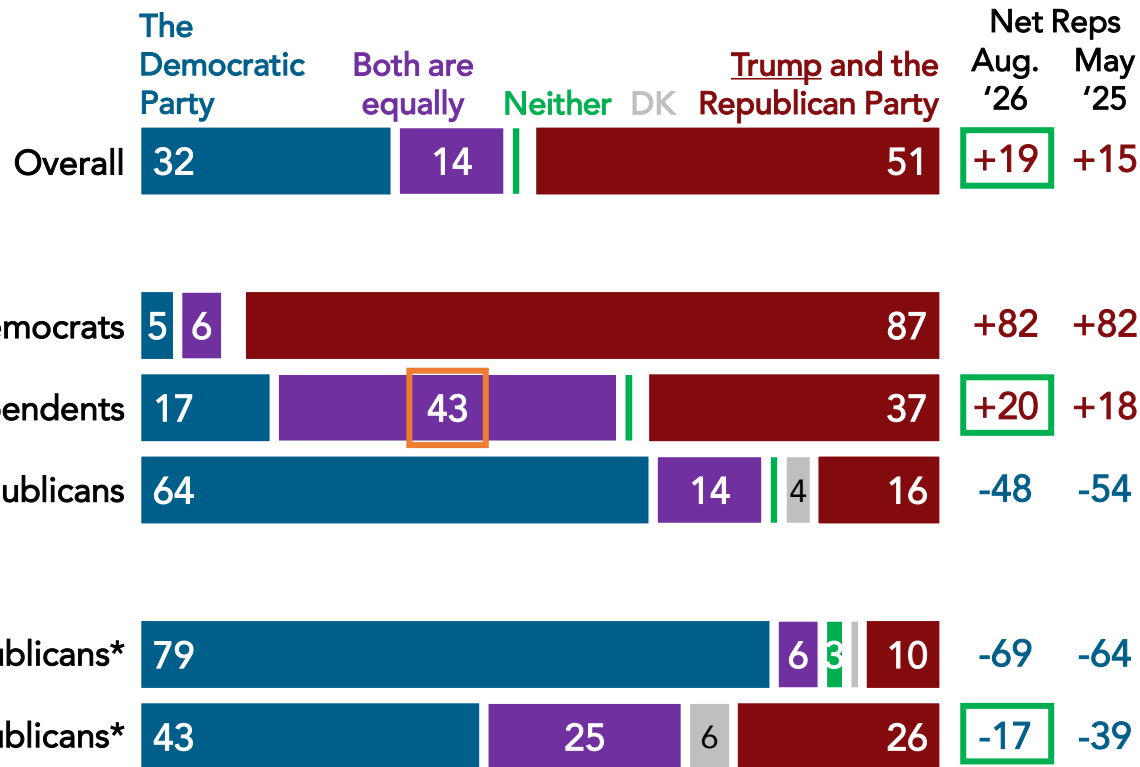


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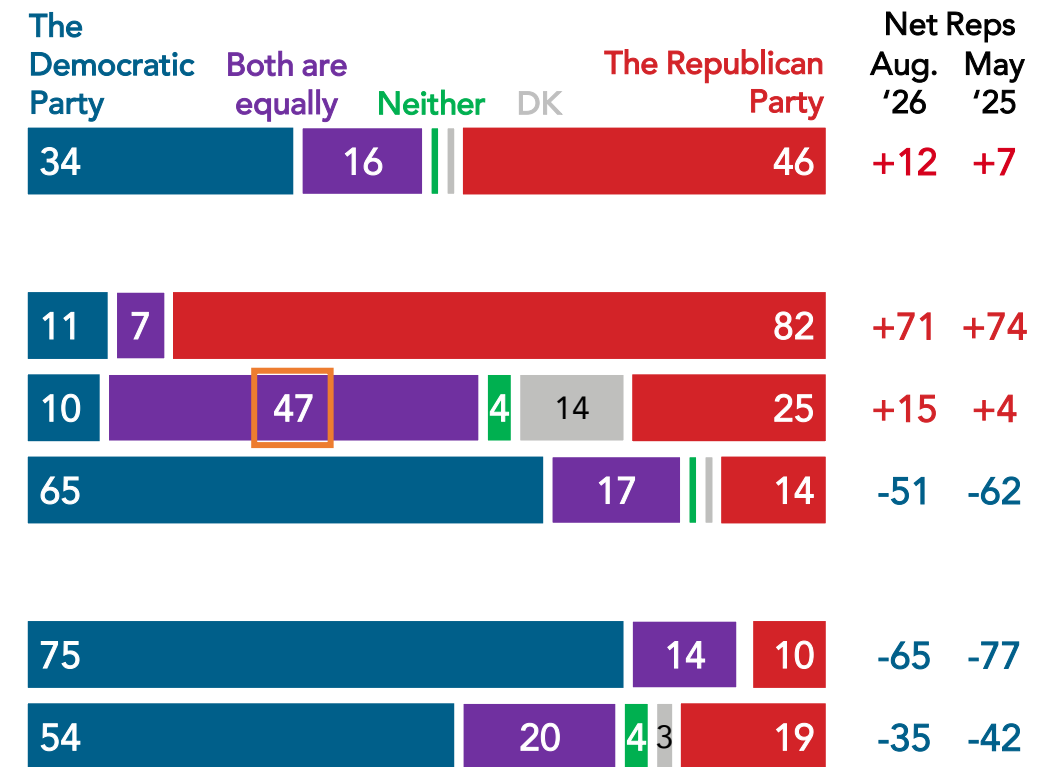
Growing Shares Say Trump & GOP Are More Corrupt Than Democrats; Even More Corrupt When Trump Is Included

Growing shares say both Trump and the Republican Party and the Republican Party without Trump are more corrupt than the Democratic Party, with notable movement among non-MAGA Republicans (from net -39 Trump and Republicans more corrupt last May to net -17 now).

(Split sample) Which do you think is more corrupt?



(Split sample) Which do you think is more corrupt?



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Increasingly, Americans Say Trump Is Bringing More Corruption to Washington Than Fixing It

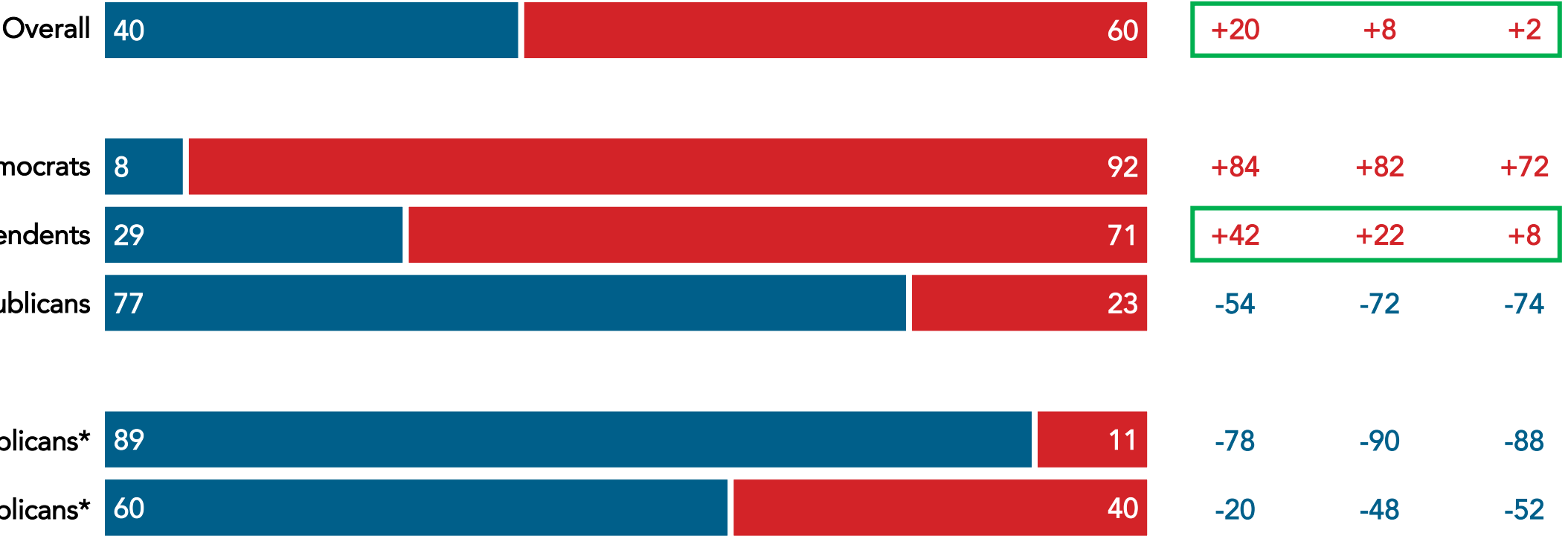
Since February 2025, independents have moved a net 34 points toward saying Trump is bringing more corruption to Washington rather than fixing it (from net +8 bringing more corruption at the beginning of his second term to net +42 now).

Which do you agree with more: **Donald Trump is...**

Fixing corruption in Washington

Bringing more corruption to Washington

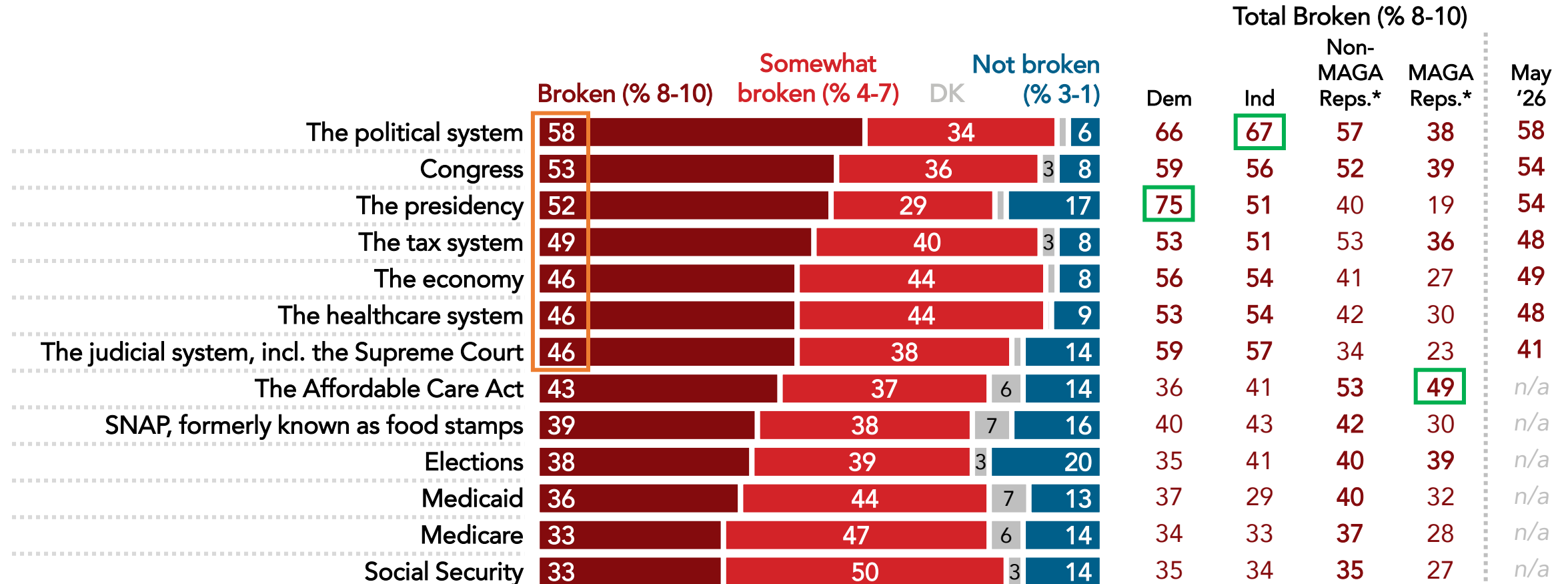
Net Bringing More Corruption
Aug. '26 May '25 Feb '25



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The Political System, Congress, the Presidency Seen as Especially Broken; Programs Like Medicaid, Less So

On a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 means “completely broken” and 1 means “not broken at all,” please indicate how broken you think each one is.

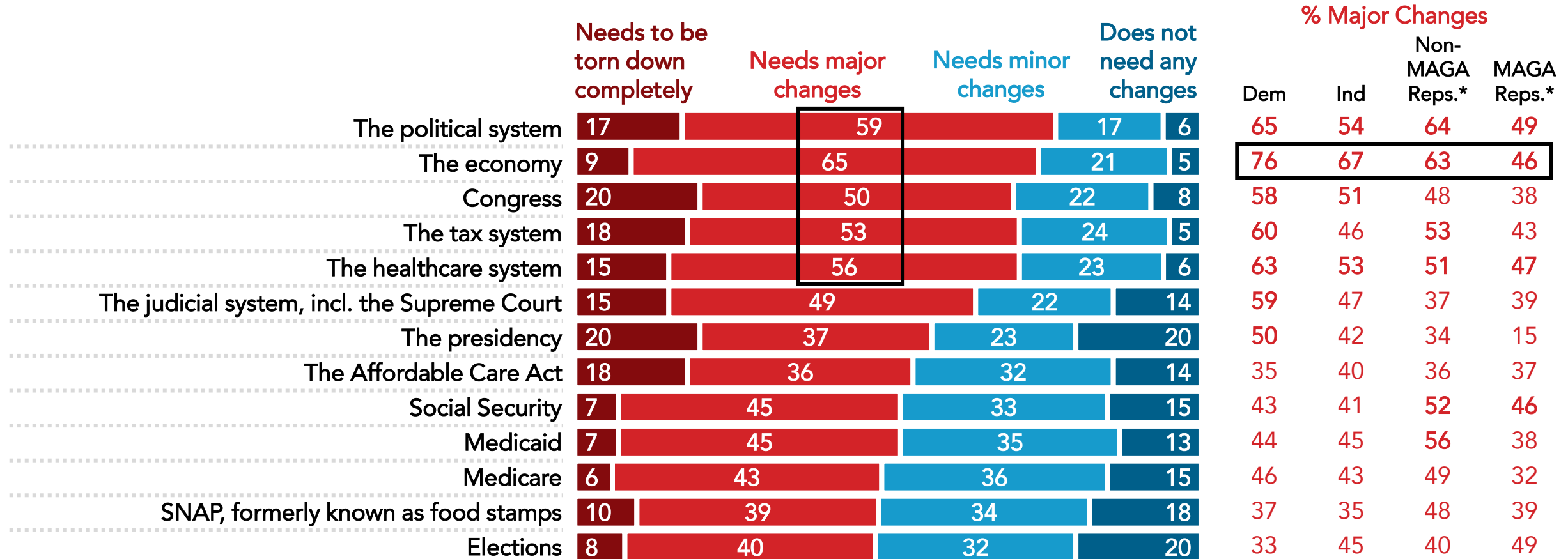


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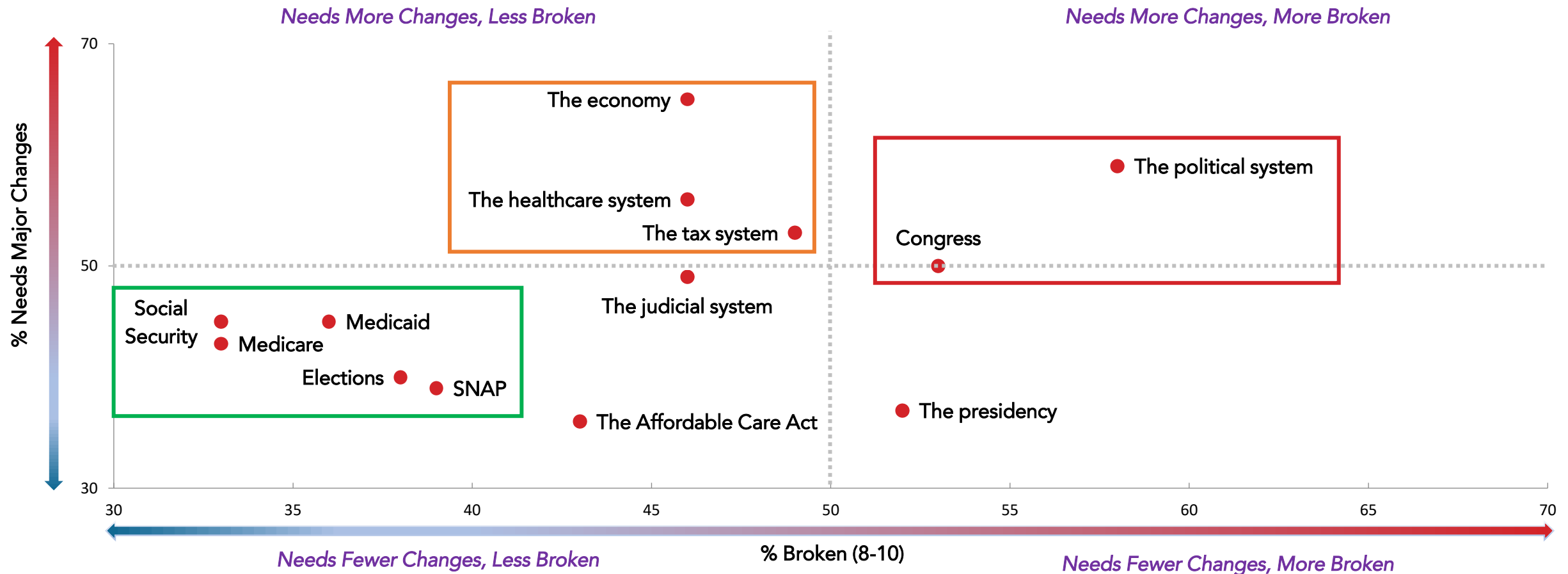
Americans Have an Appetite for “Major Changes,” Especially on Politics, the Economy, Congress, Taxes, Healthcare

Below is a list of systems, programs, and institutions in the U.S. Please indicate which comes closest to your view of each one.



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The Political System & Congress Are Most Broken/Need Major Changes; Programs Like Medicaid in Better Shape



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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 August 21-August 24, 2026. 100 additional interviews were conducted among Hispanic voters. 100 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. 230 additional interviews were conducted among regretful Trump 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:

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To learn more about Navigator:

<http://navigatorresearch.org>

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