



HARVARD UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF POLITICS

Executive Summary

Survey of Young Americans' Attitudes Toward
Politics and Public Service
29th Edition

Harvard Public Opinion Project

Presented by:

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INTRODUCTION

Conceived by two Harvard undergraduate students during the winter of 1999, Harvard University's Institute of Politics Survey of Young Americans' Attitudes toward Politics and Public Service began in 2000 as a national survey of 18-to 24- year old college undergraduates. Over the last 16 years, this research project has grown in scope and mission, as this report now includes an analysis of 18- to 29- year olds on a broad set of longitudinal and current events issues.

The first survey of N=800 college undergraduates was completed in the Spring of 2000 and all interviews were conducted over the telephone; since that time, 24 subsequent surveys have been released. Over this period, a number of modifications have been made to the scope and methodology in order to ensure that sampling methods most accurately capture the view of the population of young adults in a manner that will be useful to both the Institute of Politics and the broader research and political communities.

- In 2001, the survey was expanded from N=800 to N=1,200 college students in order to capture a more robust sample of the undergraduate population.
- In 2006, the survey expanded to N=2,400 interviews, as we began interviewing members of the 18- to 24- year-old cohort who were not currently attending a four-year college or university. In addition, because of changing uses of technology among younger Americans, in 2006 the survey moved from a telephone poll to a survey that was administered online.
- In 2009, we expanded our scope a third time to include the population of young adults aged 18 to 29. While we will continue to report on the attitudes and opinions of U.S. college students, this change in our research subject was made to allow for better and more direct comparisons to the broader set of election and general public opinion research tracking data, which tends to track the 18- to 29-year-old demographic group. Our fall political tracking surveys will include samples of N=2,000, while the spring semester's research will be more in-depth and include N=3,000 interviews. All of our interviews are conducted in English and Spanish. Using GfK (formerly Knowledge Networks) as our research partner, IOP surveys use RDD and Address-Based Sampling (ABS) frames and are administered online (see Appendix).

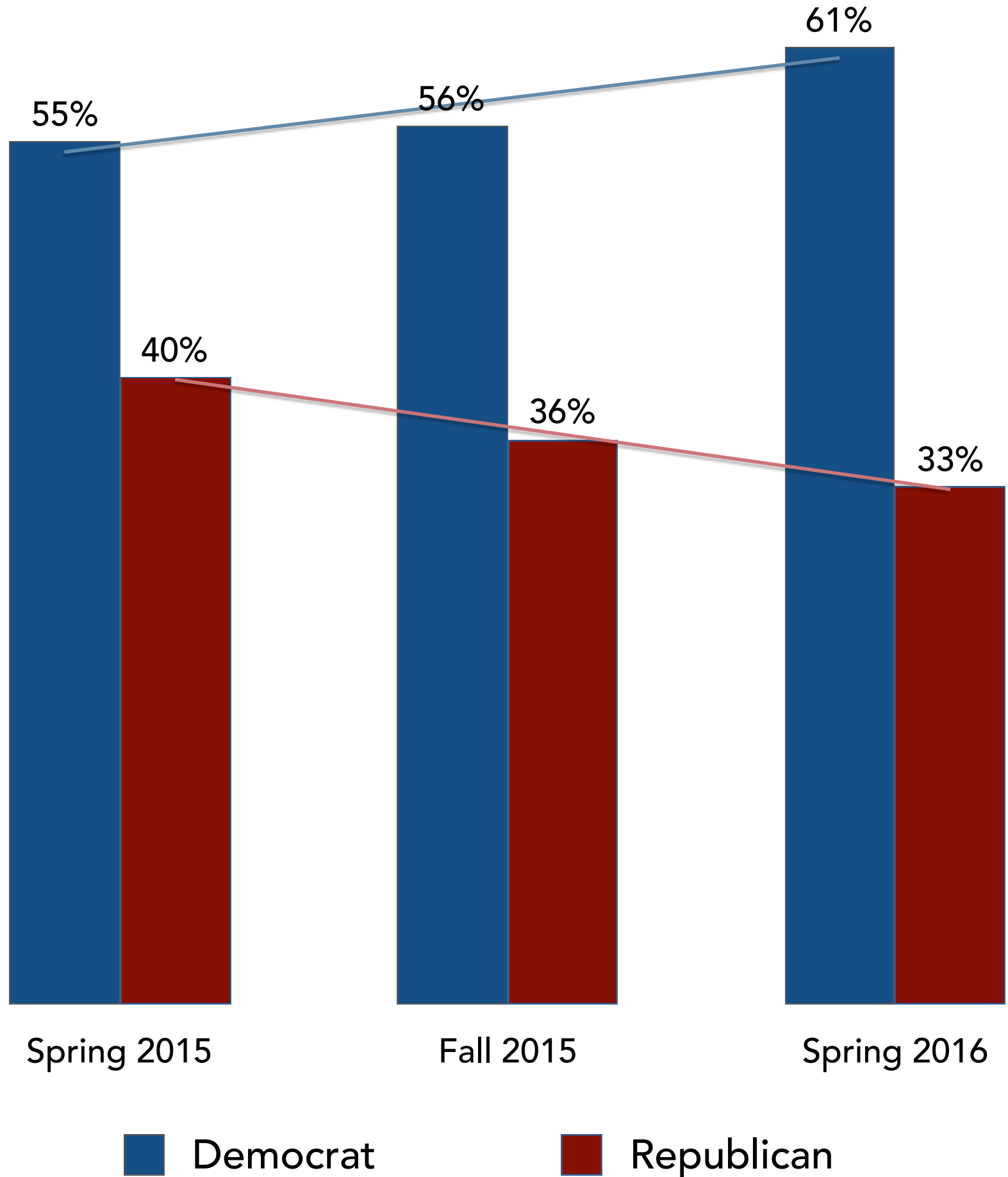
The interviewing period for this survey of N=3,183 18- to 29- year olds was March 18 to April 3, 2016. The margin of error for the poll is +/- 2.4 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level. During the interviewing period, major media stories included coverage of anti-Trump protestors at Donald Trump rallies, Donald Trump's unveiling of his foreign policy team at a Washington Post editorial board meeting, President Obama's speech in Cuba, Ted Cruz's call for patrols in Muslim neighborhoods, Jeb Bush's endorsement of Ted Cruz, North Carolina's overturning of LGBT-discrimination bans, bombings in Brussels, suicide bombings on Easter in Pakistan, U.S. government's unlocking of the San Bernardino terrorist's iPhone, the misdemeanor battery charges of Donald Trump's campaign manager, Donald Trump's comments about potentially punishing women who have abortions, and the release of the Panama Papers.

Harvard IOP Polling Director John Della Volpe supervised the survey group of undergraduates. As always, the IOP survey group would like to thank IOP Director Maggie Williams, Executive Director Catherine McLaughlin, Communications and Marketing Director Esten Perez and Mary Cappabianca, Digital Communications Specialist for their insight and support over the course of this and all IOP projects.

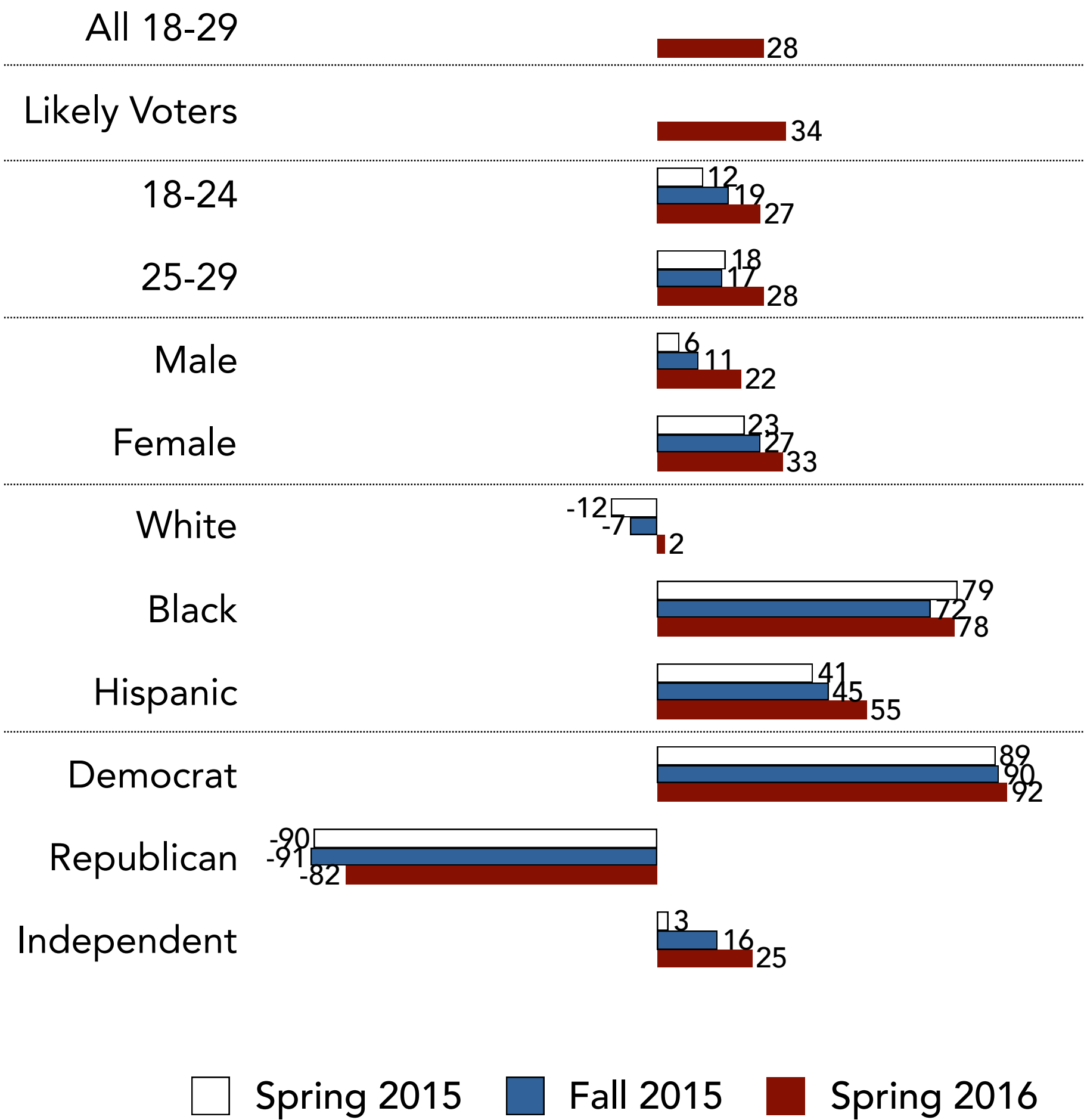
10 KEY FINDINGS

01: IN THE LAST YEAR, NET PREFERENCE FOR DEMOCRATIC CONTROL OF THE WHITE HOUSE NEARLY DOUBLED, INCREASING FROM +15 TO +28

Which party do you prefer win the 2016 campaign for president?

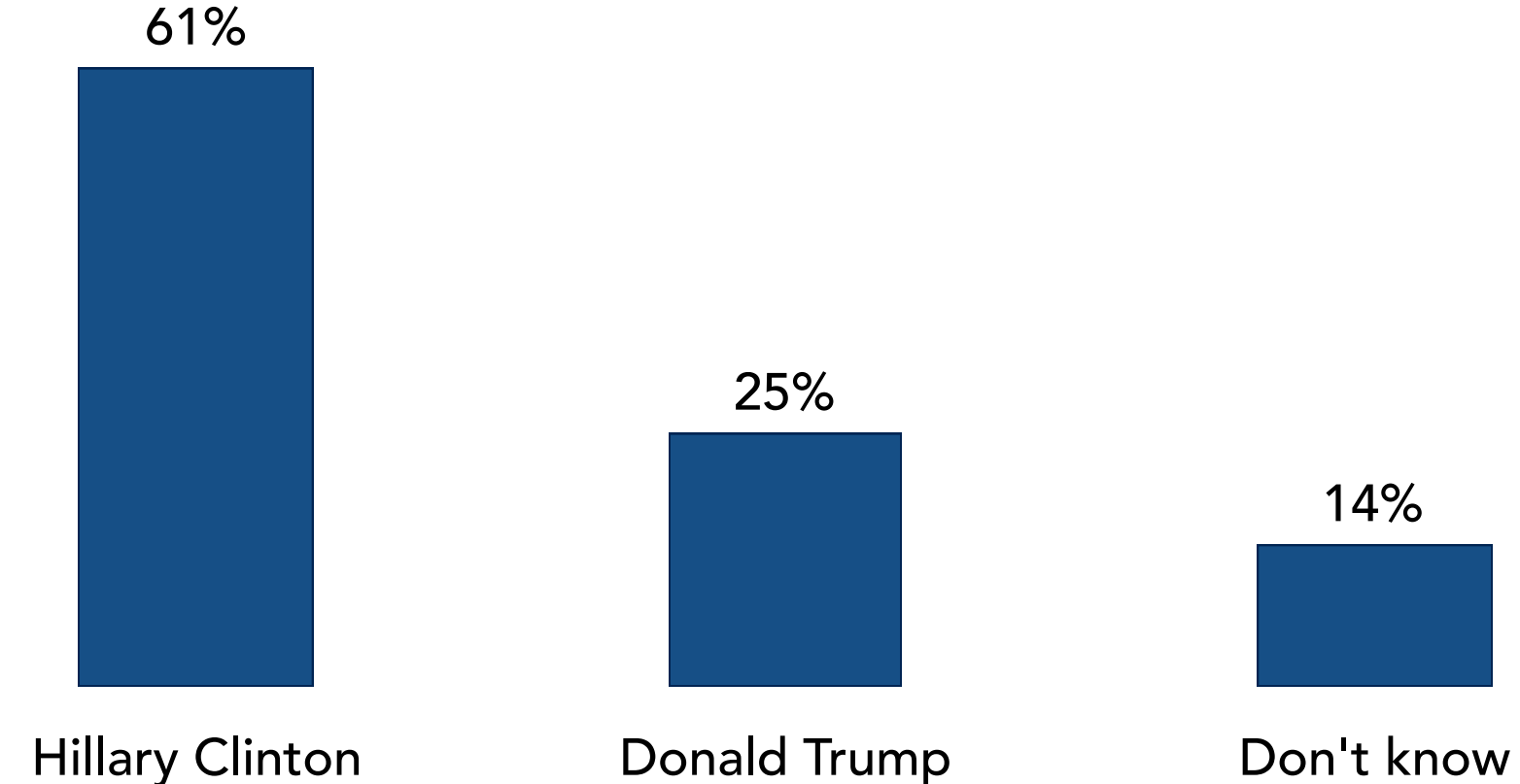


Which party do you prefer win the 2016 campaign for president? (Democrat-Republican Advantage by Subgroup)

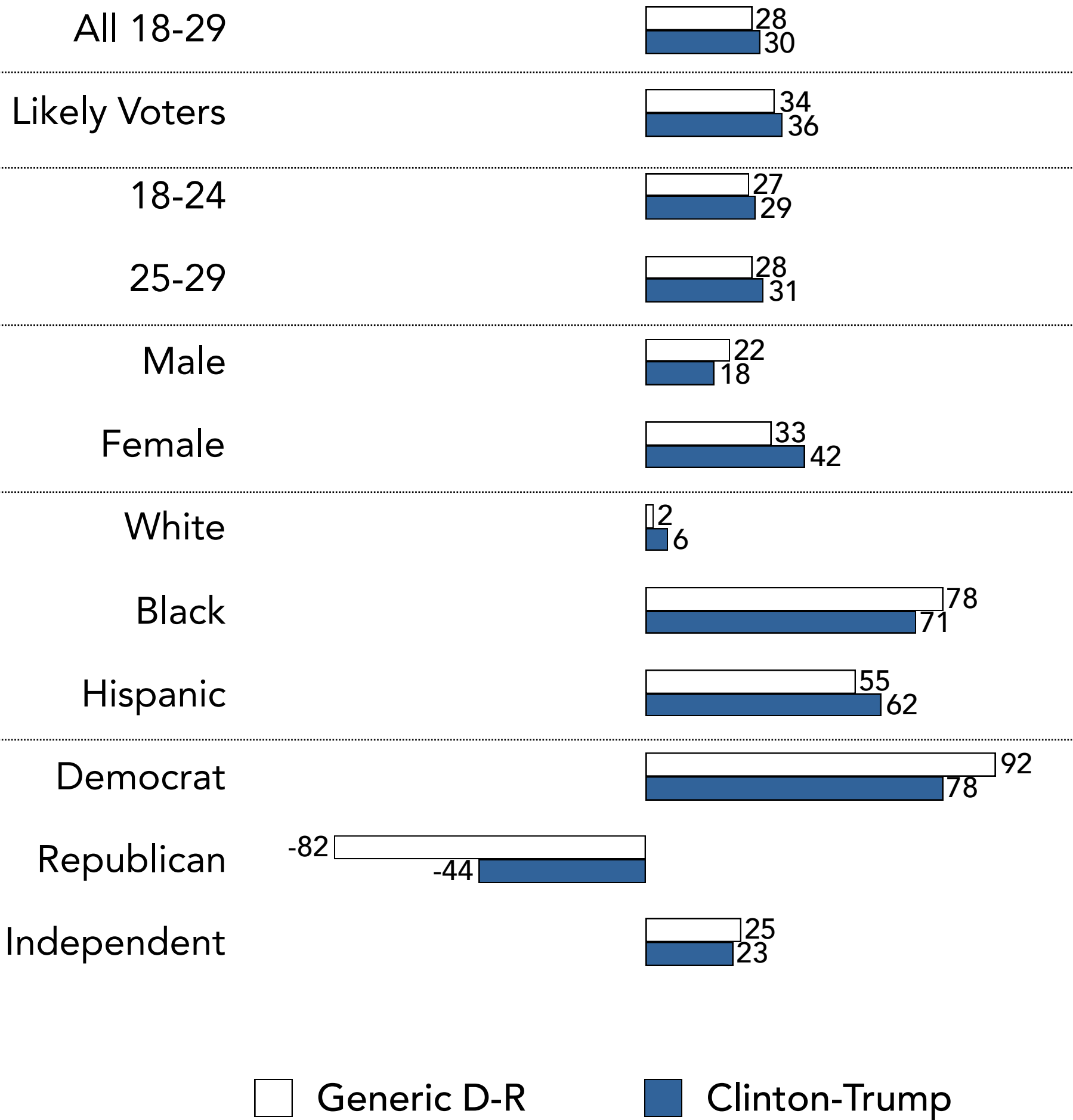


02: AMONG LIKELY VOTERS, CLINTON LEADS TRUMP BY 36 POINTS; TRUMP UNDER-PERFORMING AMONG YOUNG REPUBLICANS

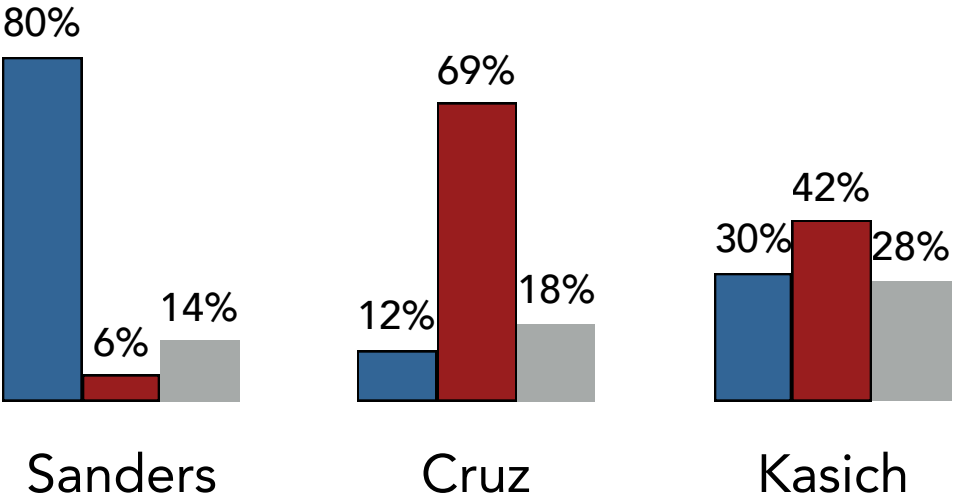
If the election for President were held today and the candidates were Hillary Clinton, the Democrat, and Donald Trump, the Republican, for whom would you vote?
(Among "Likely Voters Only")



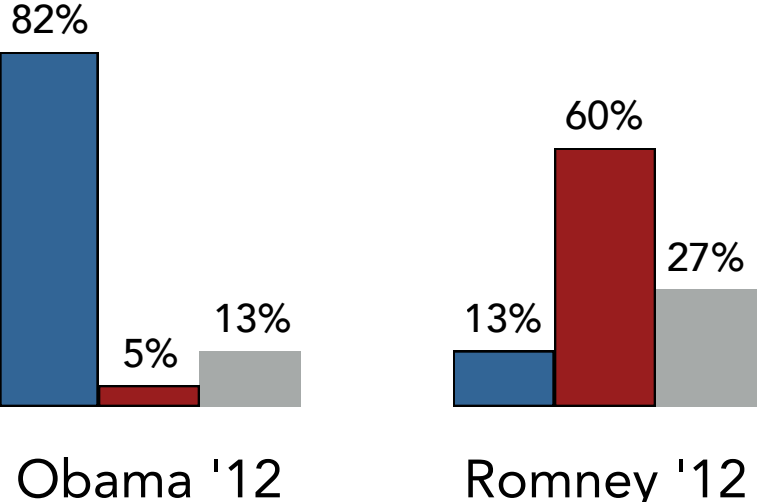
Preference for Democrats by Subgroup:
Generic Match-up vs. Clinton-Trump Match-up



Among Voters Who Rate the Following Candidates "Very Favorably"



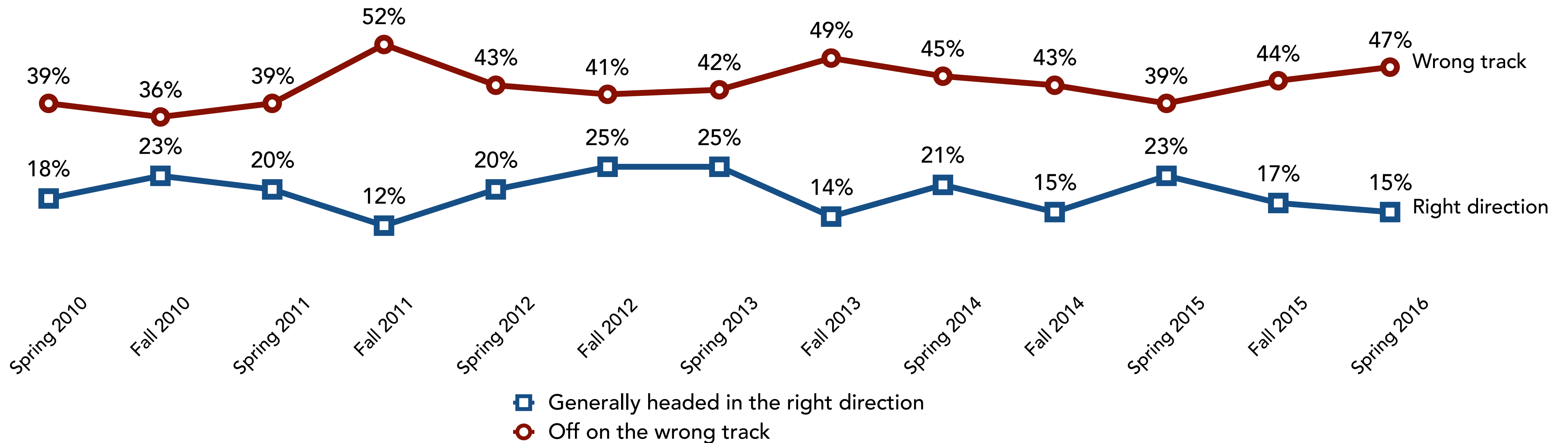
Among Voters Who Voted for Obama and Romney in 2012



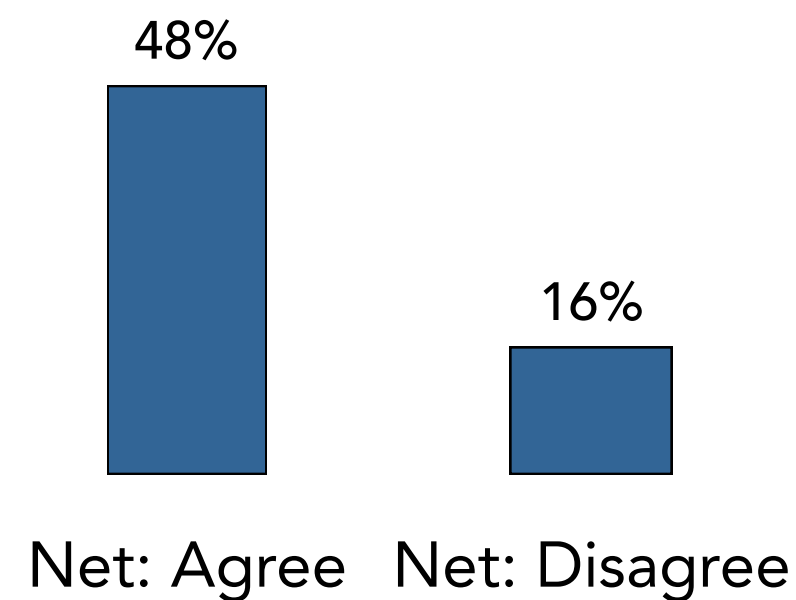
Clinton Trump Don't know

03: 15% BELIEVE U.S. HEADED IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION; NEARLY 1/2 SAY THE POLITICS OF TODAY ARE NOT ABLE TO MEET THE NATION'S CHALLENGES

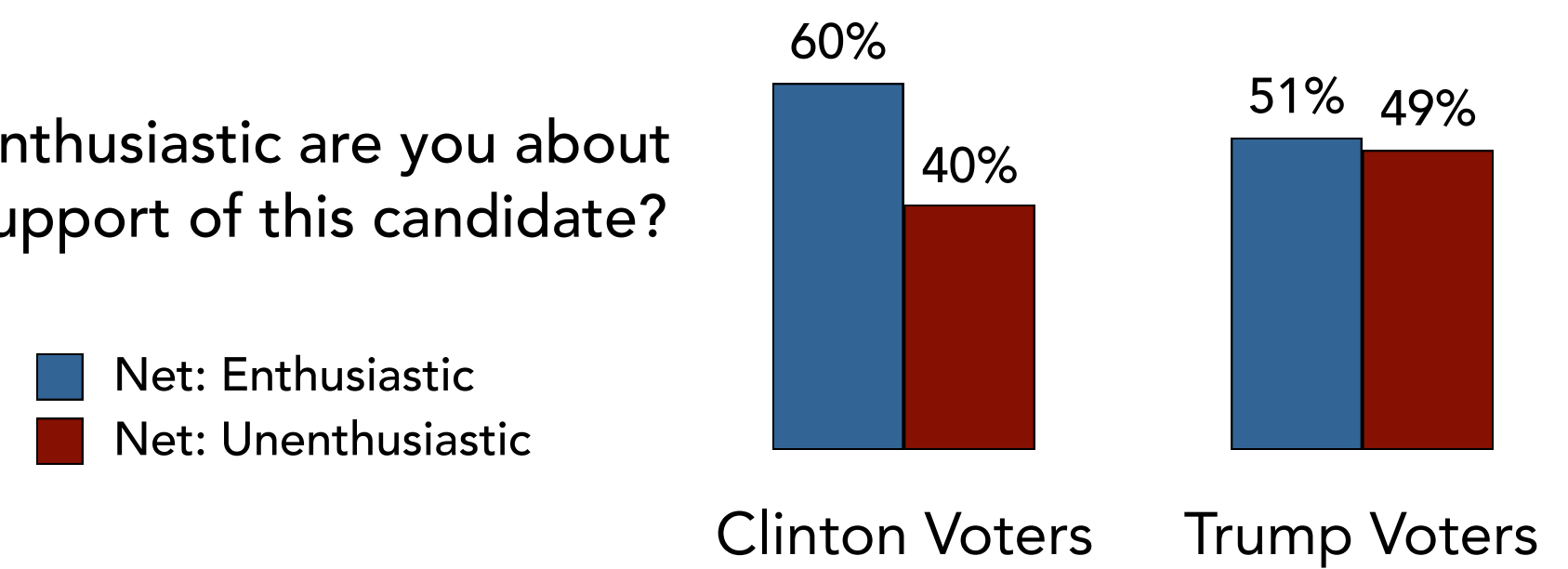
All in all, do you think things in the nation are...



Agree/Disagree: Politics today are no longer able to meet the challenges our country is facing.

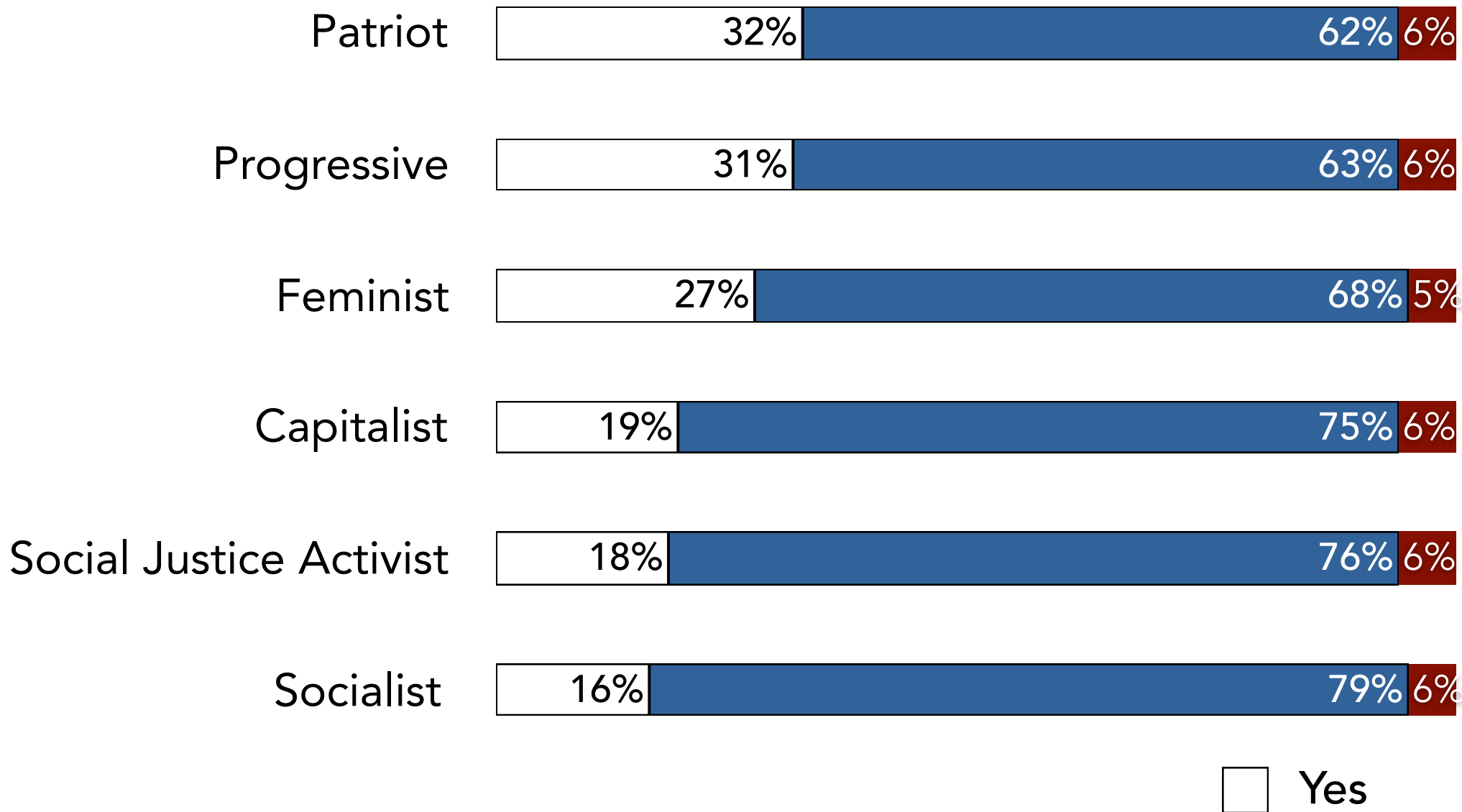


How enthusiastic are you about your support of this candidate?

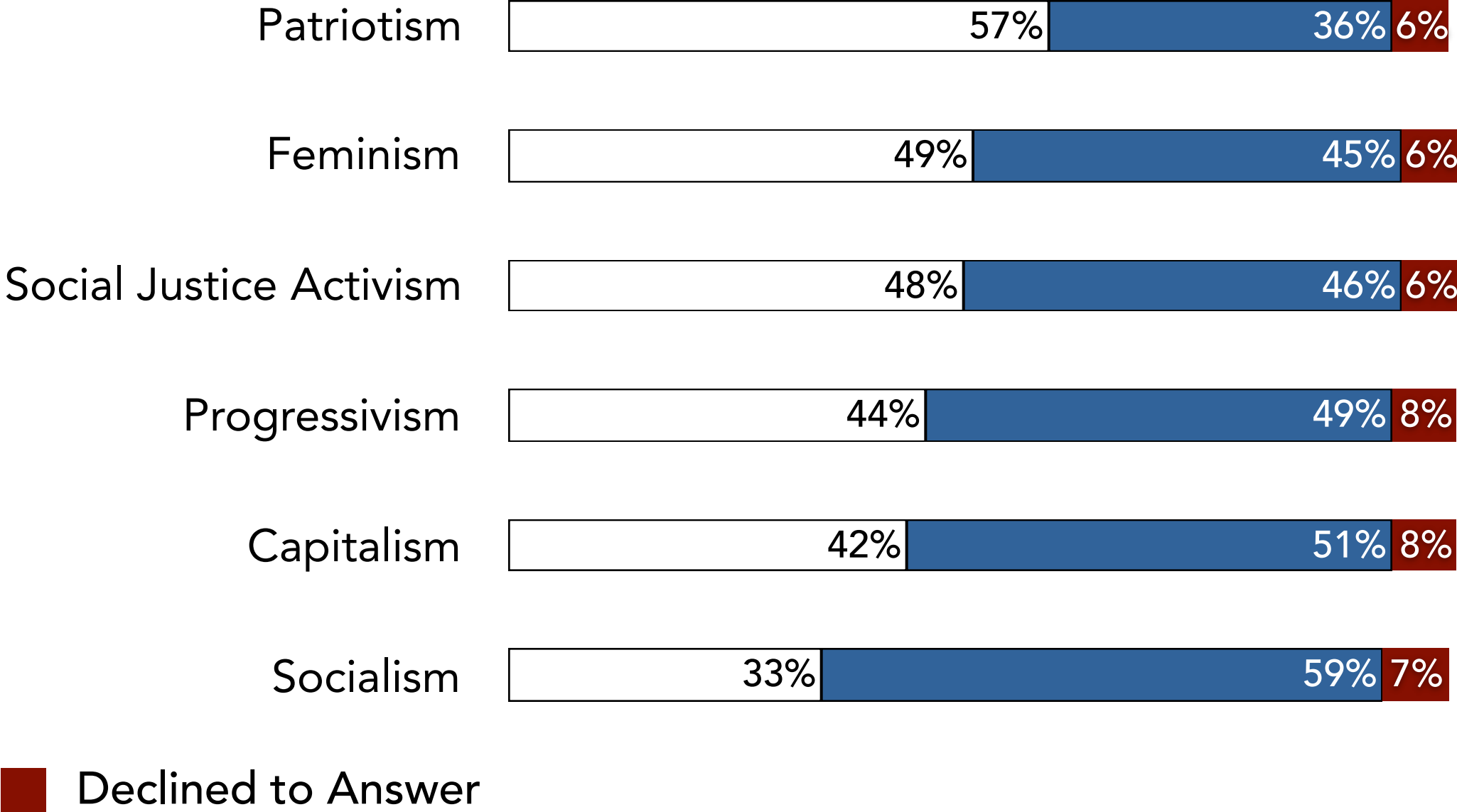


04: MAJORITY OF 18-29 YEAR OLDS REJECT BOTH SOCIALISM AND CAPITALISM; 16% IDENTIFY AS SOCIALISTS, 19% CAPITALISTS

Which of the following, if any, do you identify as?
(Split sample, n=1,563)

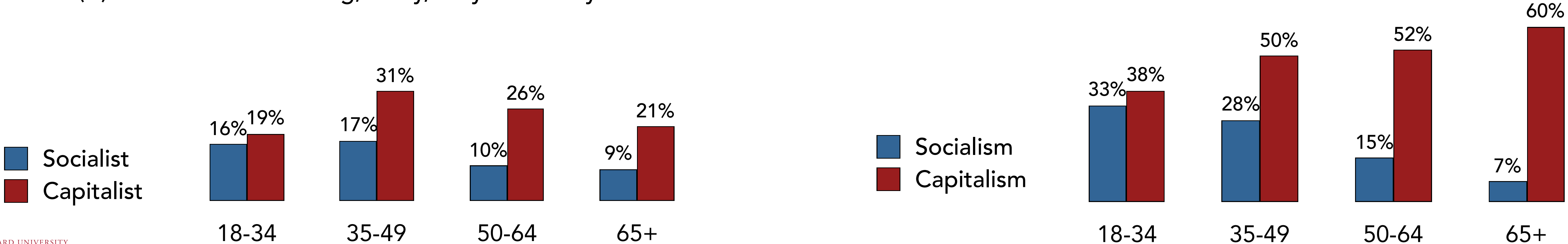


Which of the following, if any, do you support?
(Split sample, n=1,620)



□ Yes ■ No ■ Declined to Answer

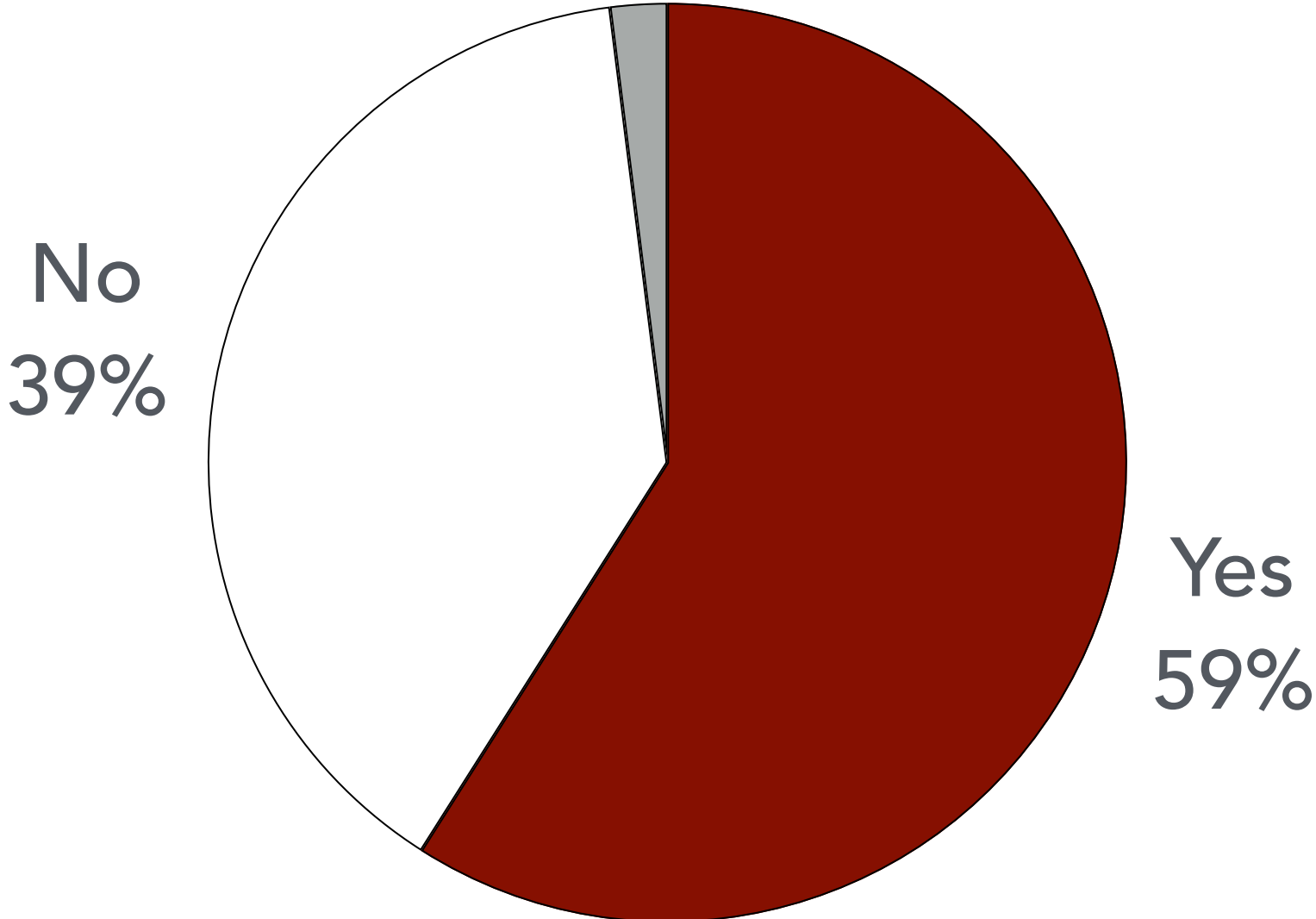
(A) Which of the following, if any, do you identify as?*



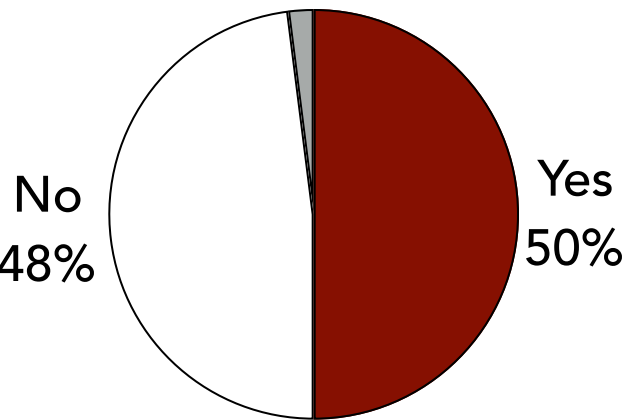
* Harvard IOP Survey of US 18+ via OmniWeb with Knowledge Panel, April 8-10, 2016; Sample A: N=501, Sample B=499.

05: NEARLY 3-IN-5 BELIEVE THERE'S A "GLASS CEILING" FACING WOMEN IN AMERICA TODAY; 64% SAY MEN HAVE MORE ADVANTAGES

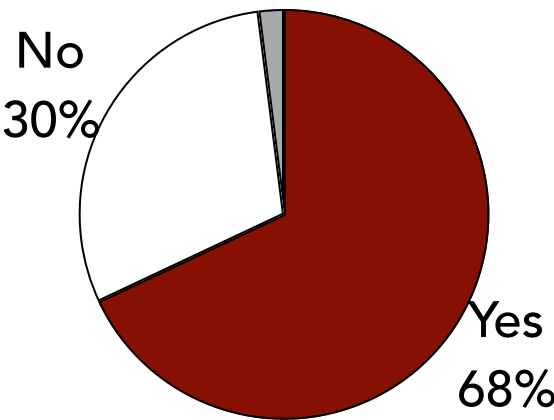
In your opinion, is there a glass ceiling (a barrier to advancement in a profession) facing women in America today?



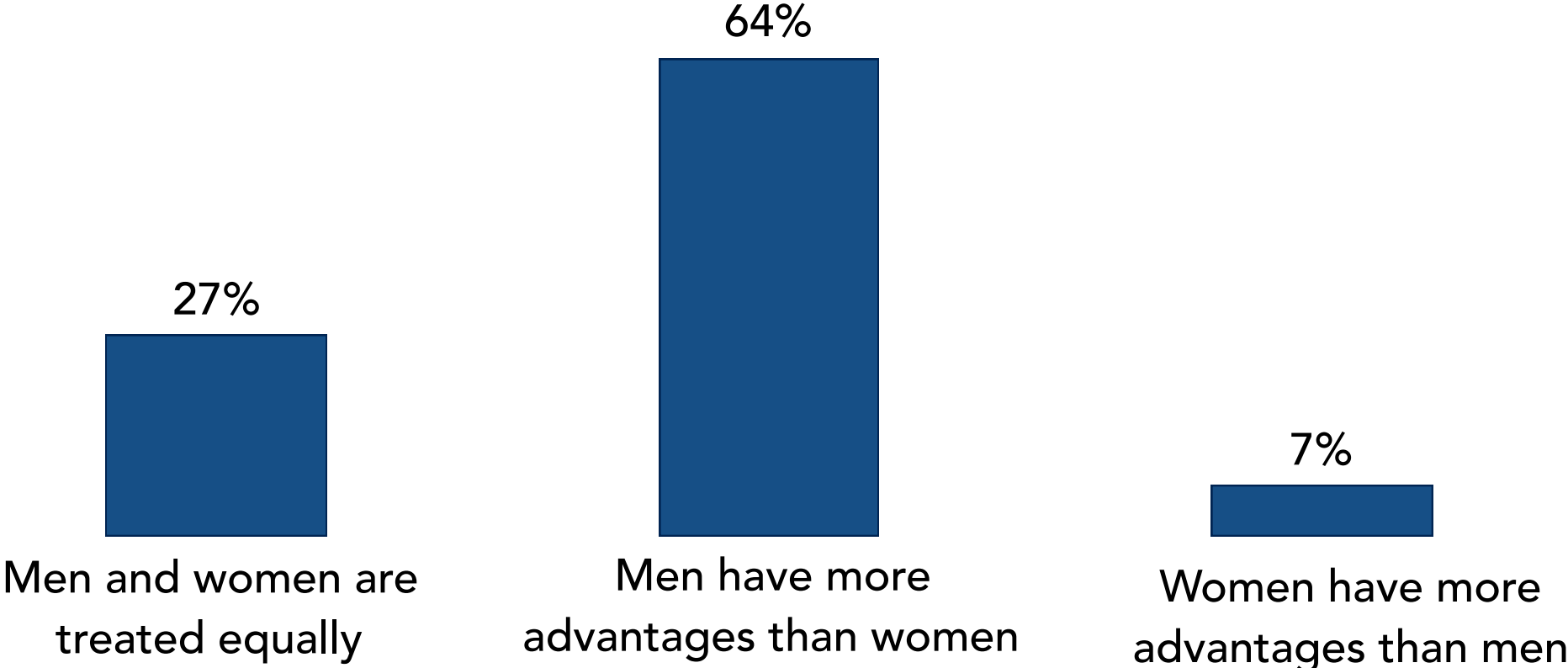
Men Only



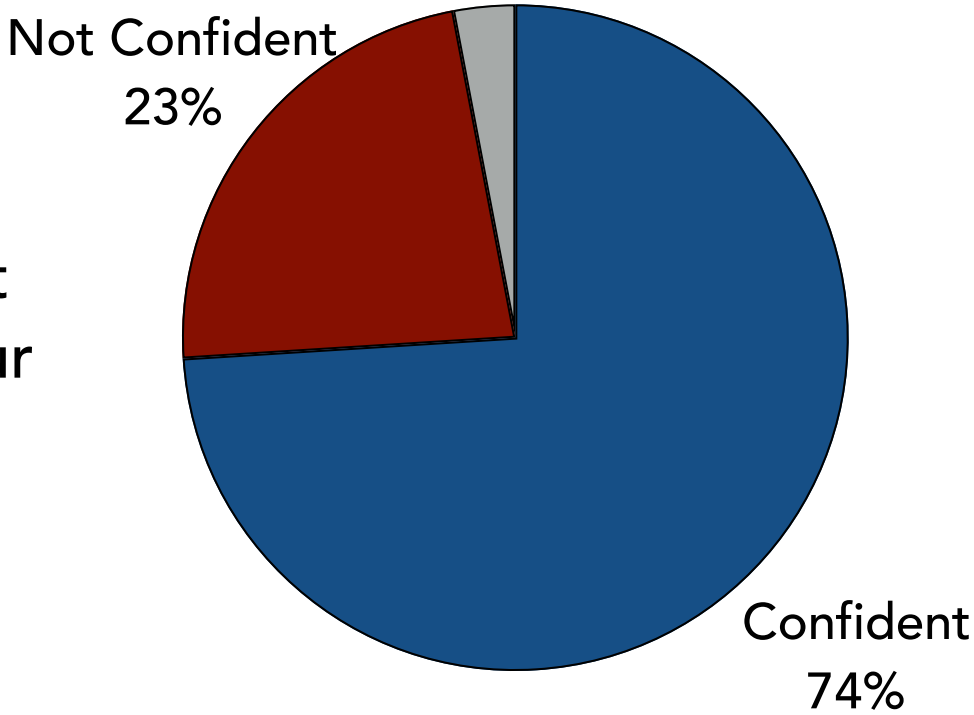
Women Only



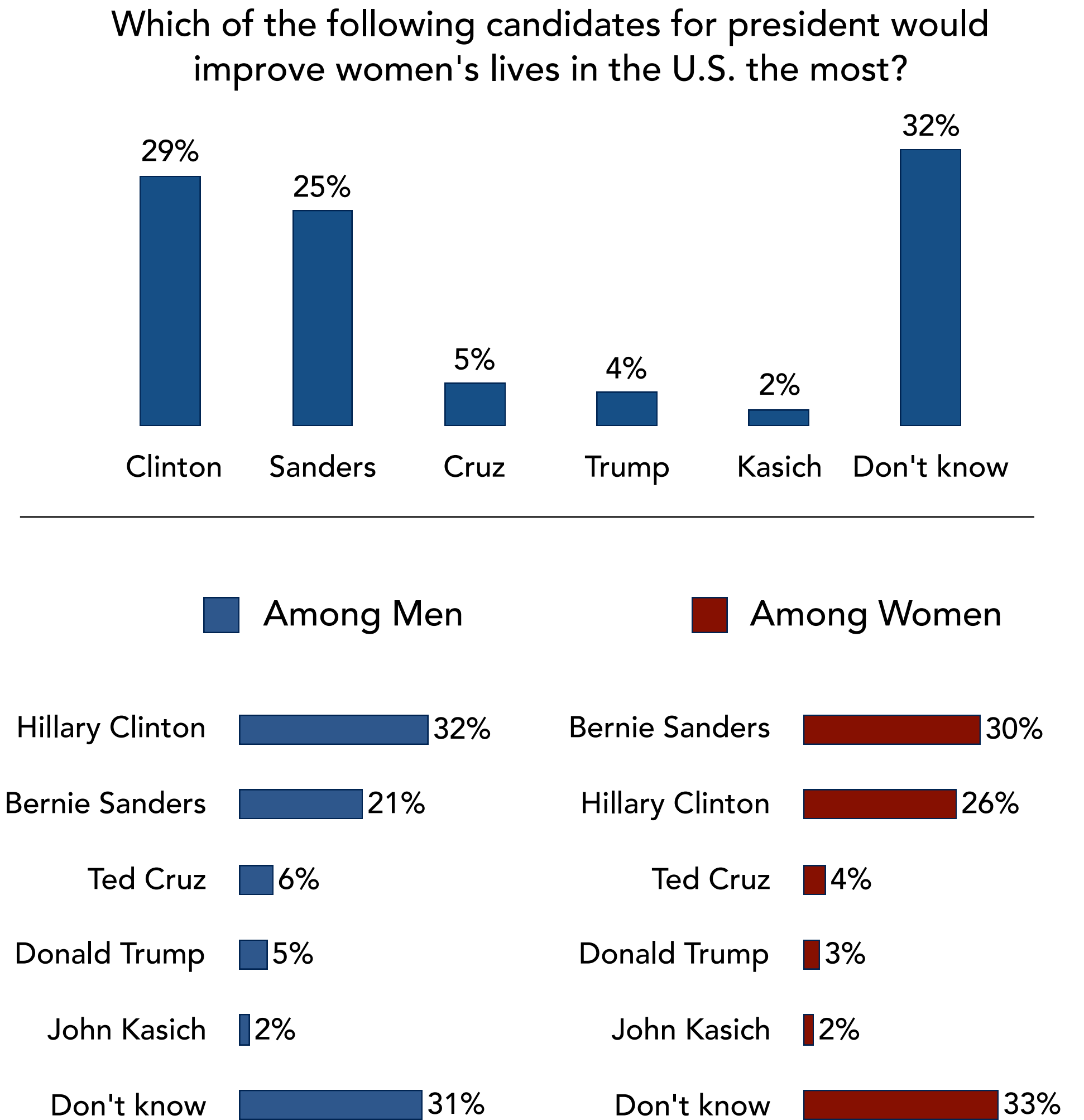
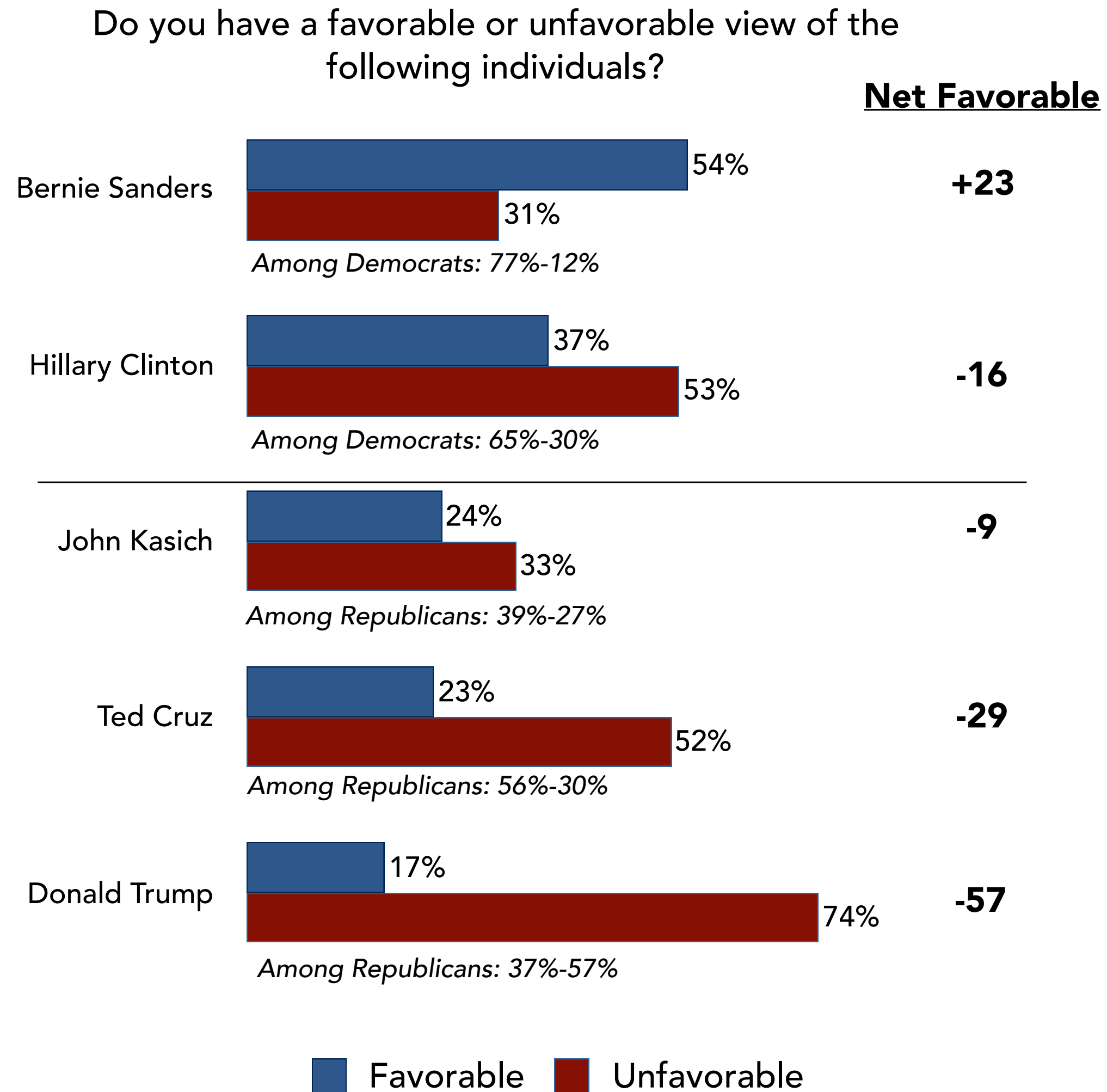
How would you describe how American society treats men and women today?



If Hillary Clinton does not win in November, how confident are you that there will be a woman president in your lifetime?

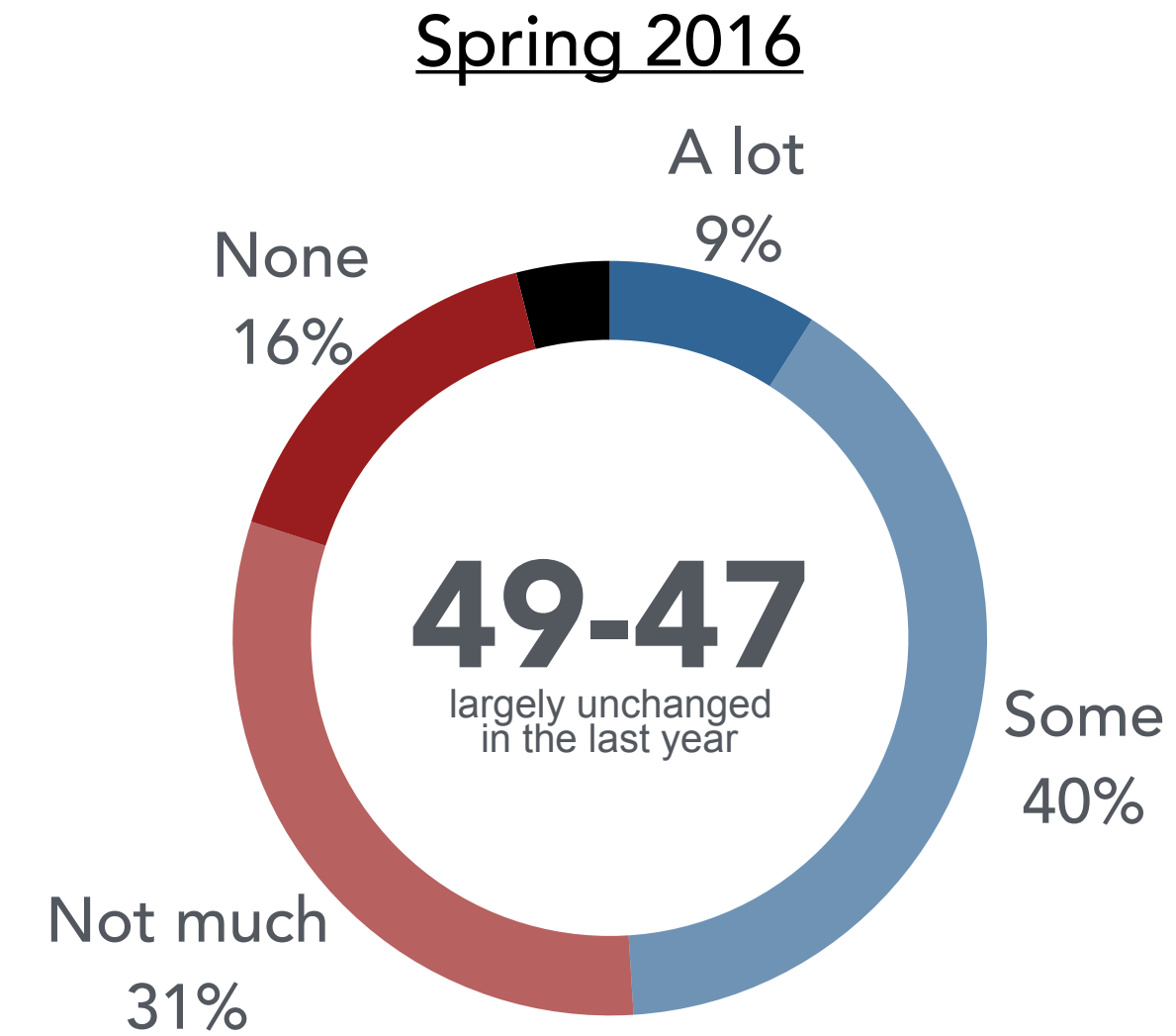
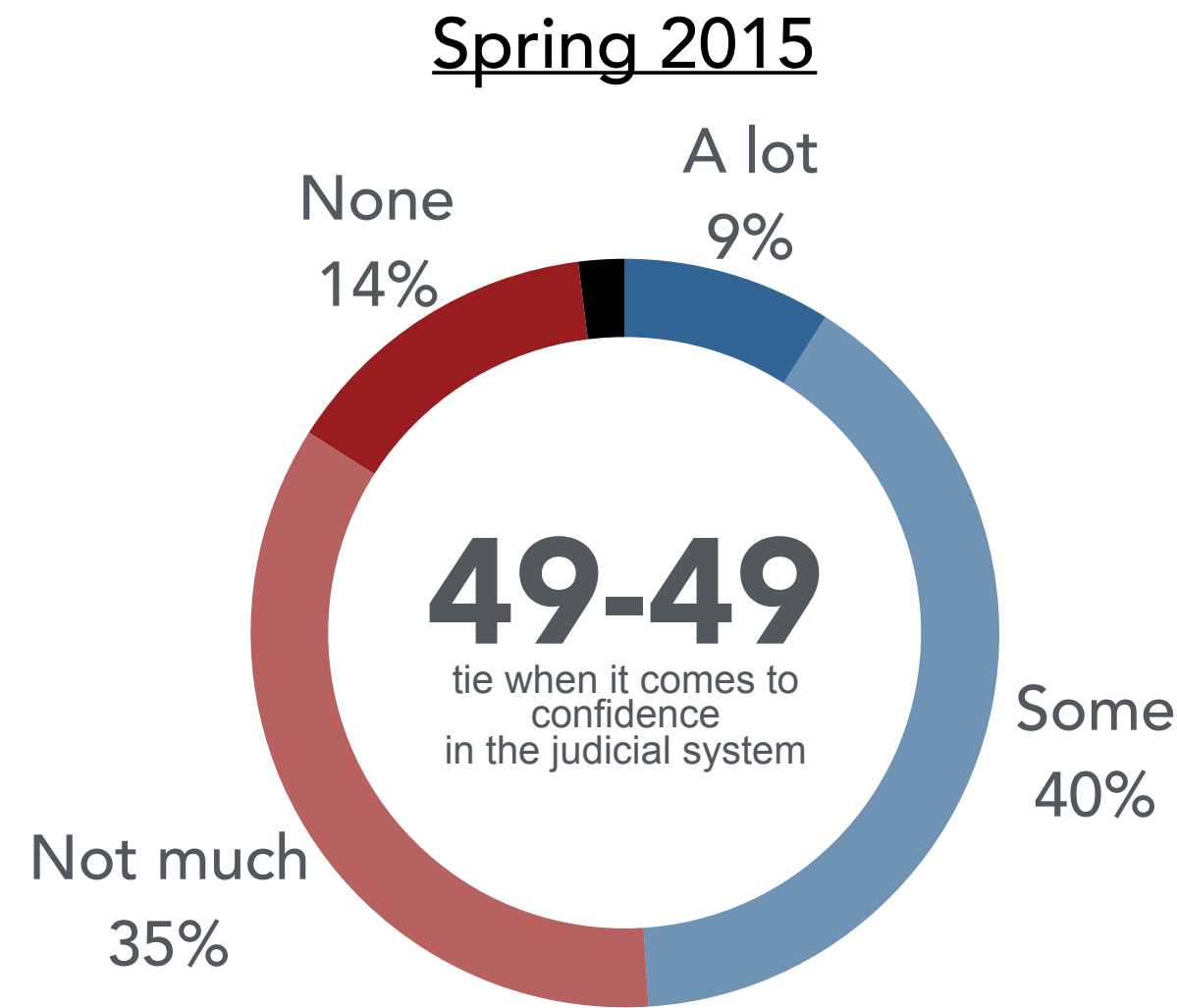


06: SANDERS ONLY ONE WITH NET POSITIVE RATING, TRUMP -20 WITH GOP; MEN & WOMEN DIFFER ON WHO WOULD MOST IMPROVE WOMEN'S LIVES

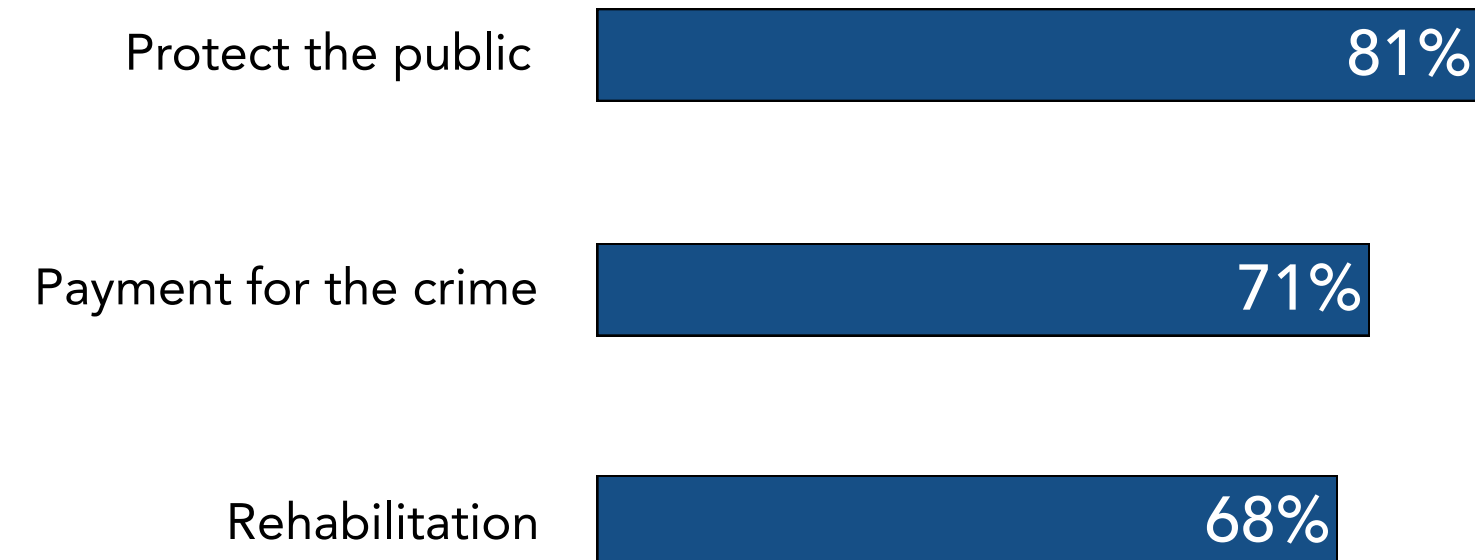


07: DIM VIEW OF U.S. JUSTICE SYSTEM LARGELY UNCHANGED IN LAST YEAR; LESS THAN 1/2 HAVE CONFIDENCE THAT PEOPLE JUDGED WITHOUT BIAS

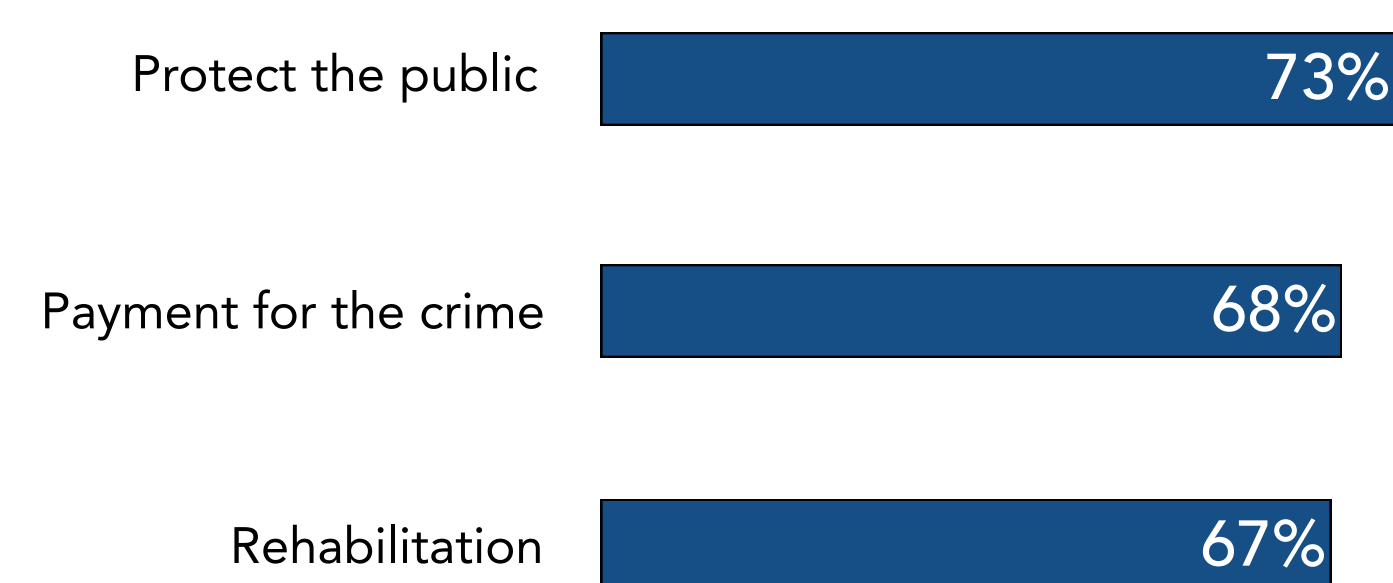
How confident are you in the US judicial system's ability to fairly judge people without bias for race and ethnicity?



Please indicate how important you consider the following three elements of the criminal justice system for dealing with **violent** offenders:



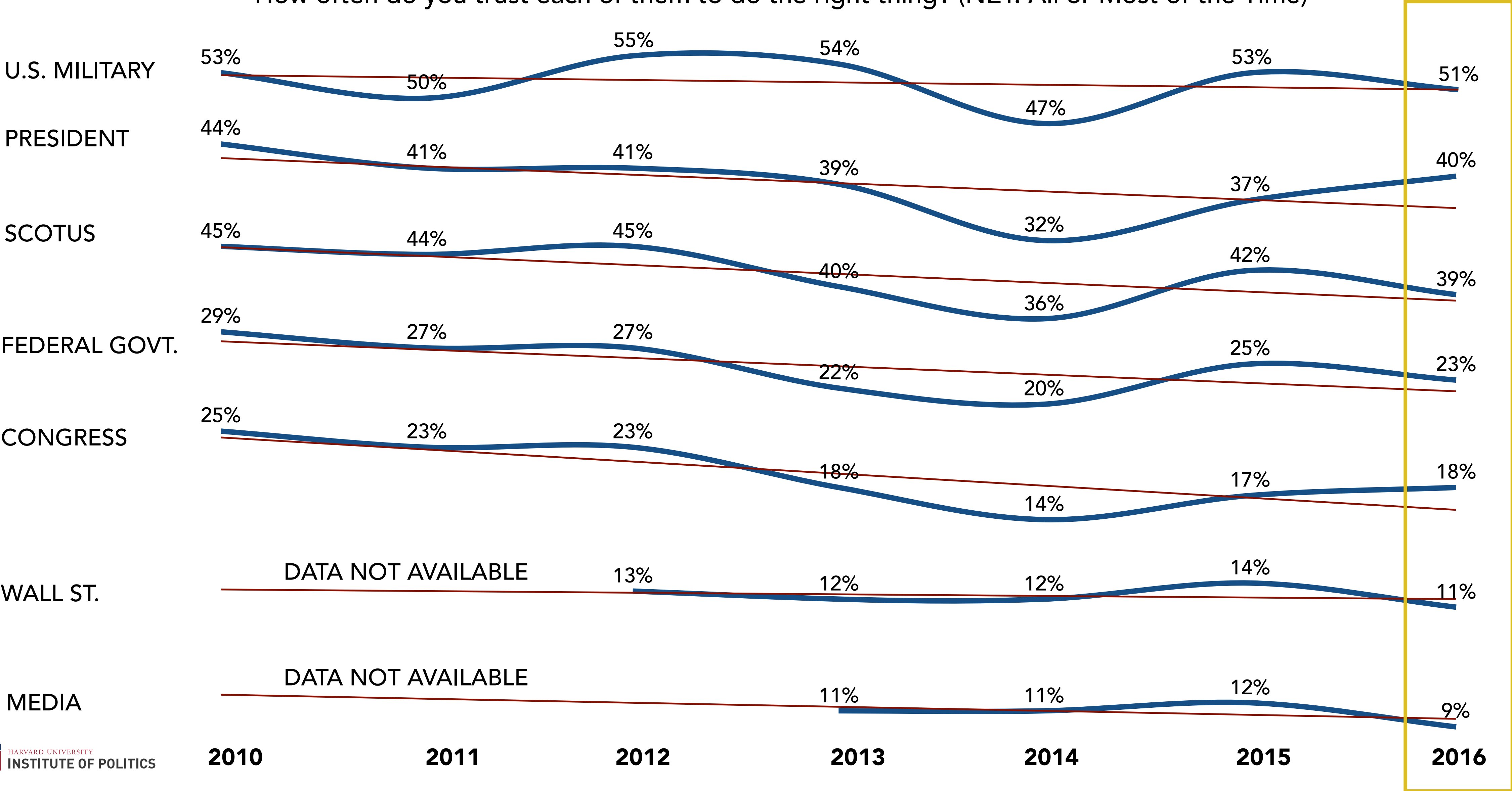
Please indicate how important you consider the following three elements of the criminal justice system for dealing with **non-violent** offenders:



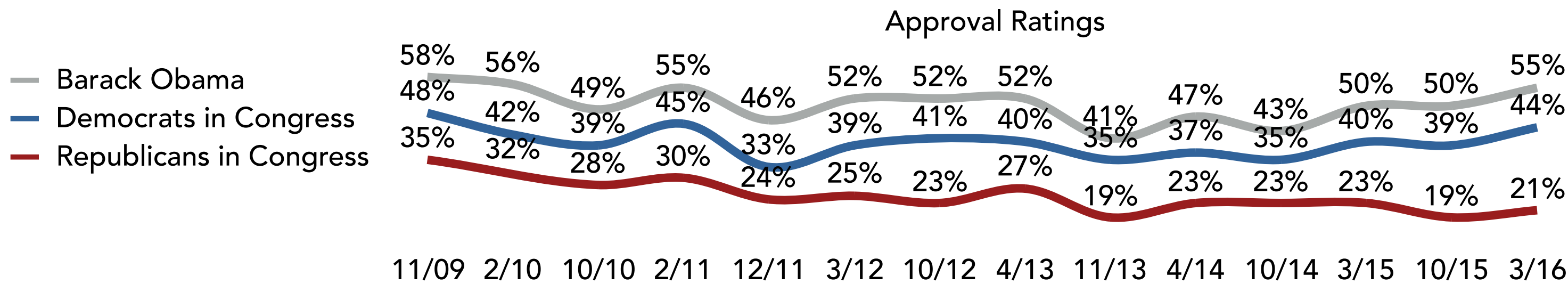
■ Net: Important

08: U.S. MILITARY ONLY INSTITUTION THAT MAJORITY TRUST AT LEAST MOST OF THE TIME; CONGRESS, WALL ST. & MEDIA LEVELS BELOW 20%

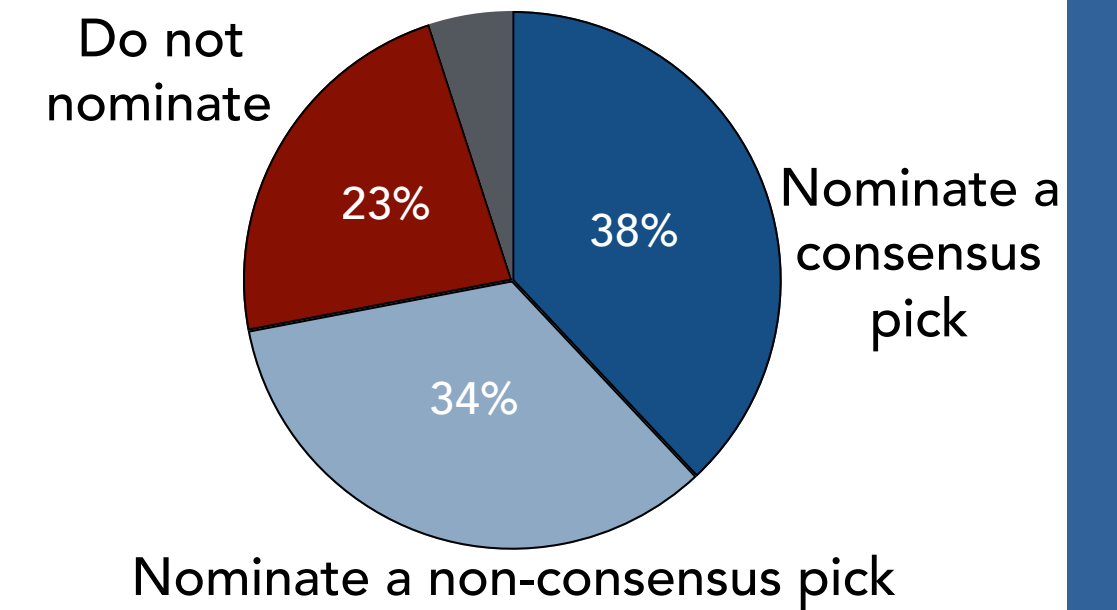
How often do you trust each of them to do the right thing? (NET: All or Most of the Time)



09: OBAMA & DEMOCRATS NET HIGHEST APPROVAL IN 5 YEARS; 72% BELIEVE PRESIDENT SHOULD FILL SCOTUS VACANCY



Which of the following statements comes closest to your own view regarding the current opening on the Supreme Court?

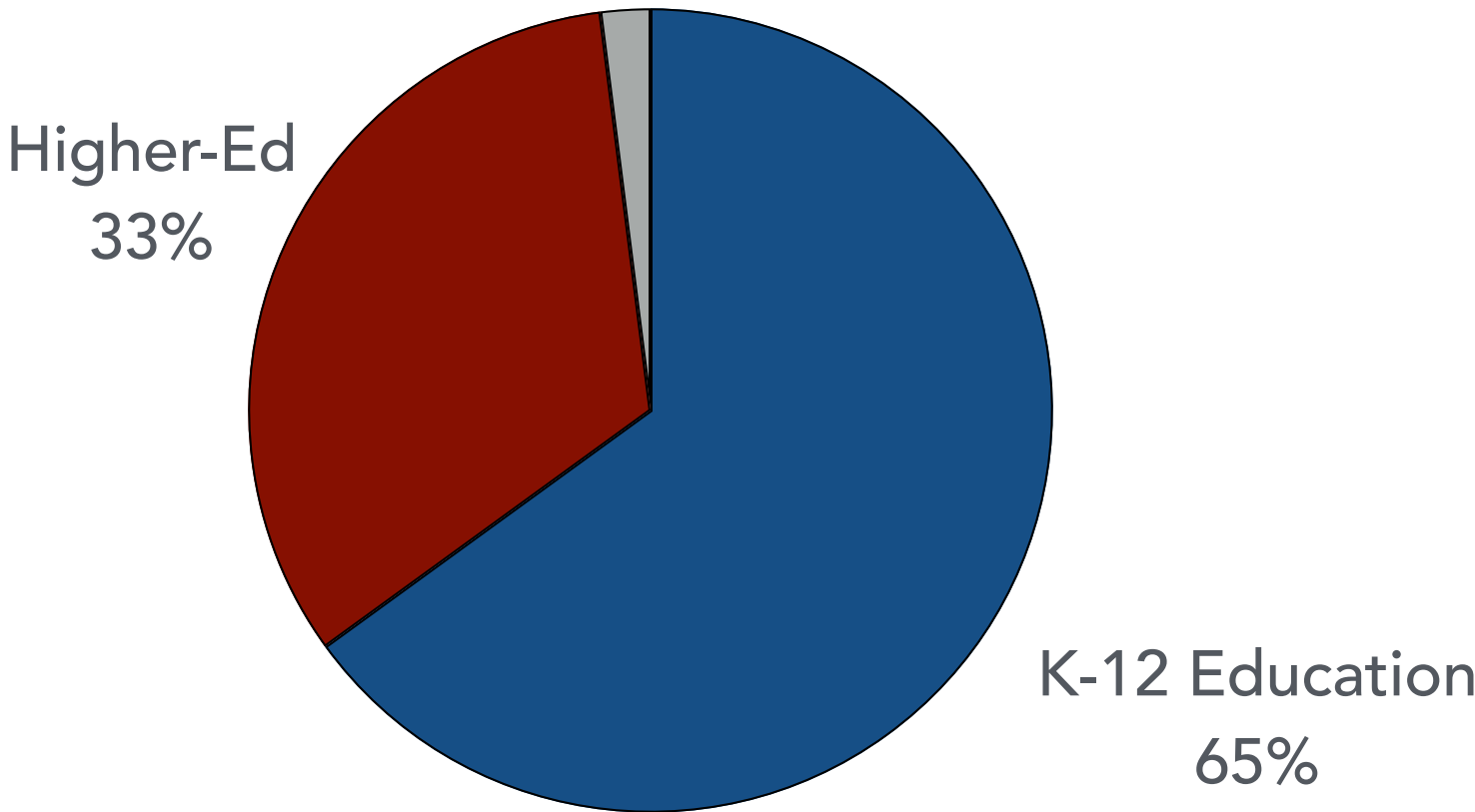


QUESTION: In general, do you approve or disapprove of the job performance of Barack Obama as president?

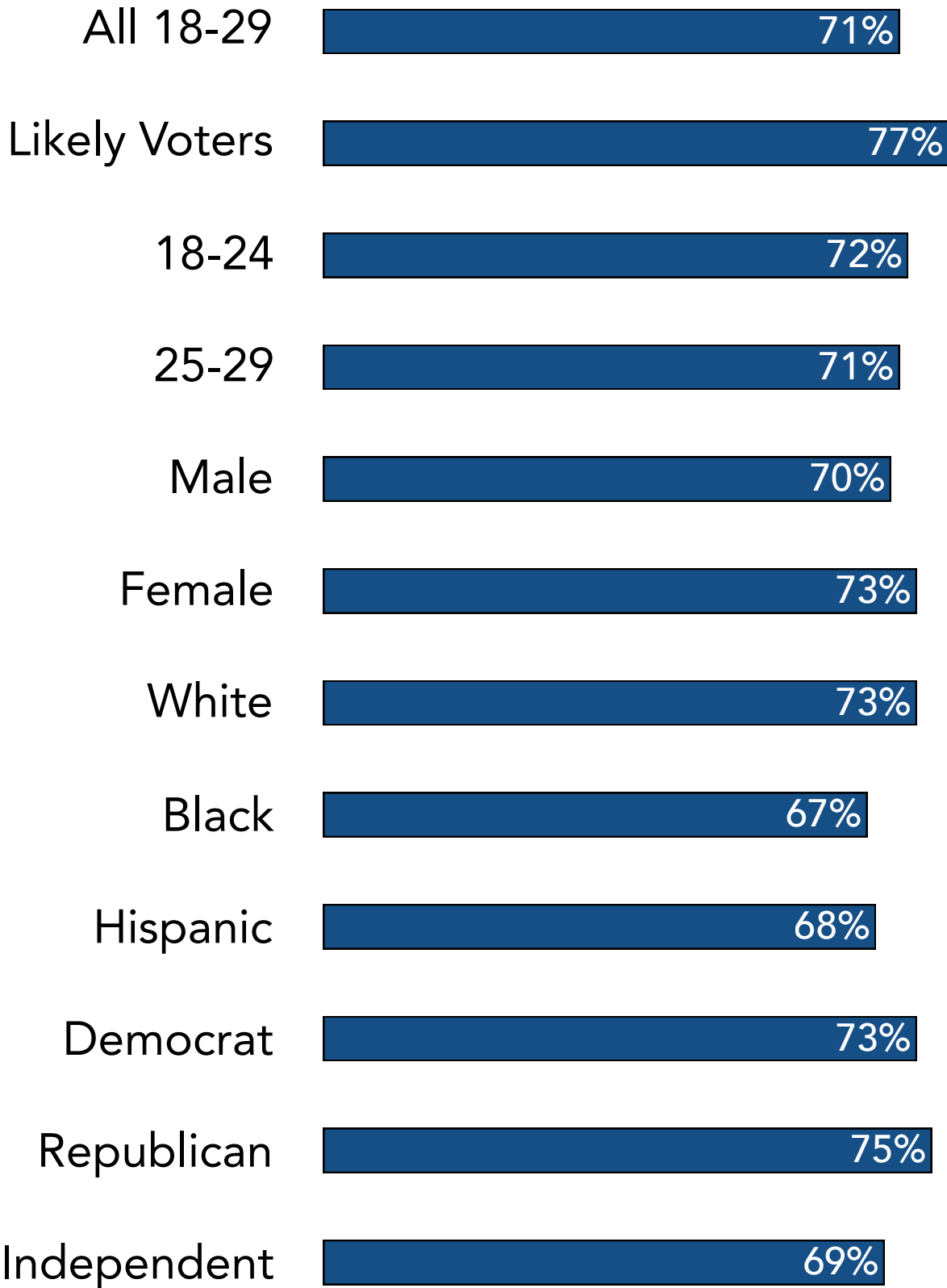
| | NOV 2009 | FEB 2010 | OCT 2010 | FEB 2011 | DEC 2011 | MAR 2012 | OCT 2012 | APR 2013 | NOV 2013 | APR 2014 | OCT 2014 | MAR 2015 | OCT 2015 | MAR 2016 | NET CHANGE |
|--------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|------------|
| ALL 18-29 | 58% | 56% | 49% | 55% | 46% | 52% | 52% | 52% | 41% | 47% | 43% | 50% | 50% | 55% | +5 |
| 18-24 | 60% | 55% | 48% | 55% | 44% | 50% | 50% | 51% | 39% | 45% | 42% | 50% | 52% | 56% | +4 |
| 25-29 | 56% | 57% | 52% | 55% | 47% | 55% | 55% | 54% | 43% | 48% | 44% | 50% | 46% | 53% | +7 |
| College | 57% | 60% | 51% | 60% | 48% | 52% | 49% | 50% | 39% | 47% | 42% | 50% | 53% | 61% | +8 |
| Democrat | 86% | 84% | 79% | 81% | 74% | 81% | 87% | 86% | 79% | 79% | 78% | 83% | 82% | 87% | +5 |
| Republican | 21% | 21% | 18% | 17% | 15% | 18% | 12% | 10% | 7% | 12% | 11% | 12% | 12% | 15% | +3 |
| Independent | 49% | 49% | 42% | 46% | 39% | 40% | 46% | 46% | 31% | 38% | 33% | 40% | 42% | 45% | +3 |
| White | 48% | 45% | 37% | 44% | 35% | 41% | 40% | 38% | 28% | 33% | 31% | 35% | 36% | 40% | +4 |
| Black | 84% | 83% | 83% | 83% | 83% | 82% | 86% | 84% | 75% | 83% | 78% | 87% | 78% | 86% | +8 |
| Hispanic | 81% | 69% | 62% | 68% | 52% | 66% | 70% | 71% | 53% | 60% | 49% | 65% | 63% | 69% | +6 |
| Male | 56% | 53% | 47% | 52% | 44% | 50% | 51% | 50% | 41% | 45% | 41% | 48% | 47% | 51% | +4 |
| Female | 60% | 59% | 52% | 57% | 48% | 54% | 53% | 55% | 40% | 48% | 45% | 52% | 52% | 58% | +6 |

10: 7-IN-10 BELIEVE THEY'VE RECEIVED A QUALITY EDUCATION; EMPHASIS ON STEM, SMALLER CLASS SIZES & INCREASE TEACHER PAY FAVORED

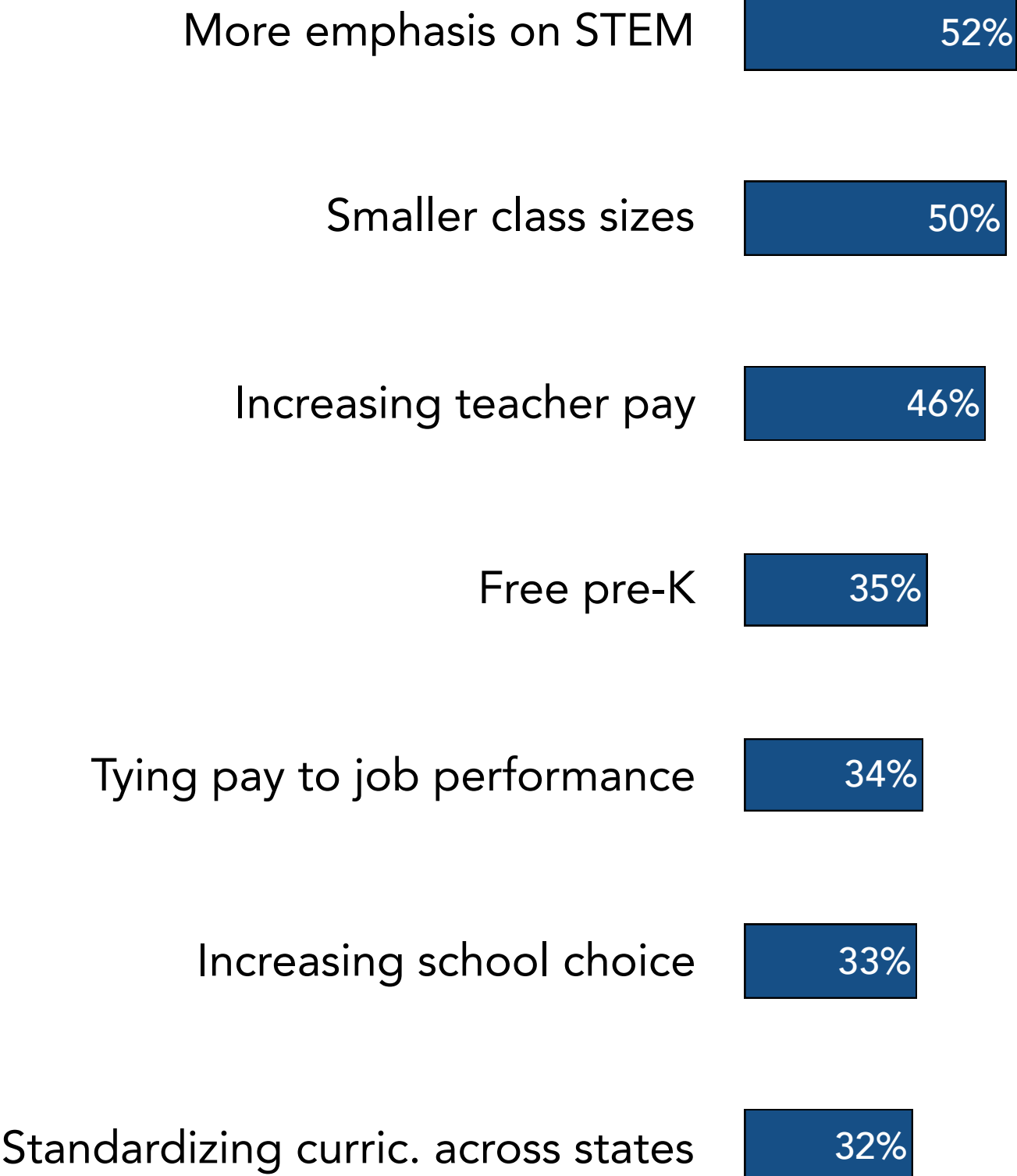
Which do you think is the more important educational priority in the U.S. today?



Do you believe you have received a quality education through high school? (% Yes Only)



Please indicate which three of the following proposals would be most effective at improving the K-12 public education system in the US:



ADDITIONAL FACTS, FIGURES & PERSPECTIVES FROM SURVEY:

- YOUNG VOTERS LEANING FURTHER LEFT**
- SOCIAL MEDIA PARTICIPATION KEY TO INCREASING INTEREST IN DEBATES**
- SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM USE BY DEMOGRAPHIC OUTLINED**

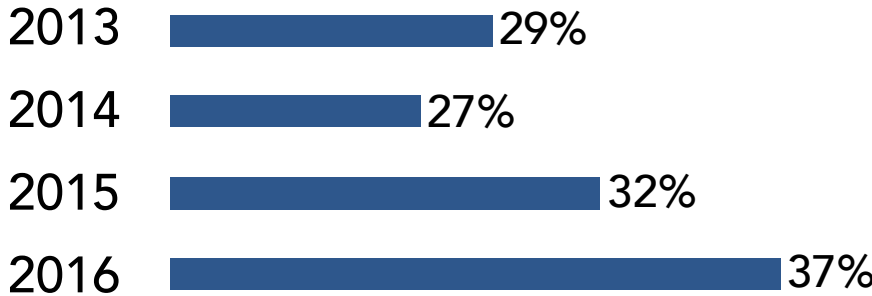
SELF-IDENTIFIED DEMOCRATS EXCEED INDEPENDENTS FOR FIRST TIME IN 5 YEARS; SUPPORT OF PROGRESSIVE IDEOLOGY INCREASED IN LAST YEAR

% who agree with statements

Basic health insurance is a right for all people, and if someone has no means for paying for it, the government should provide it.



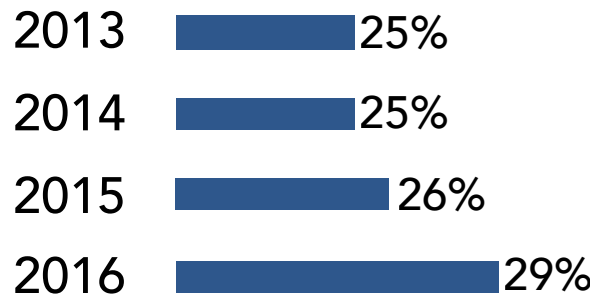
Government should do more to curb climate change, even at expense of jobs.



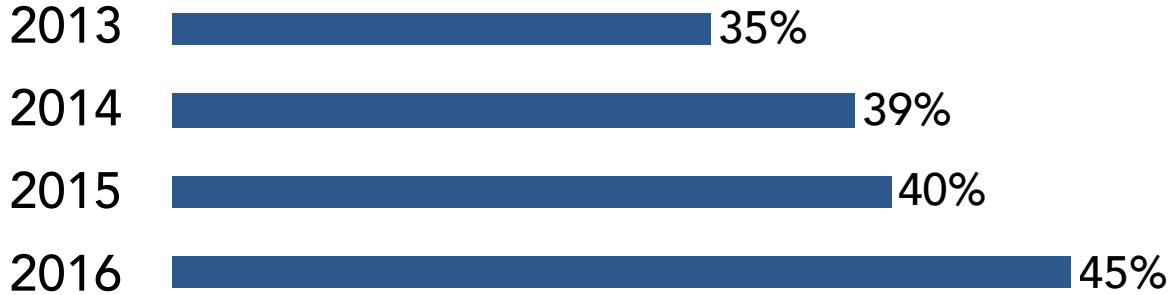
Basic necessities, such as food and shelter, are a right that government should provide to those unable to afford them.



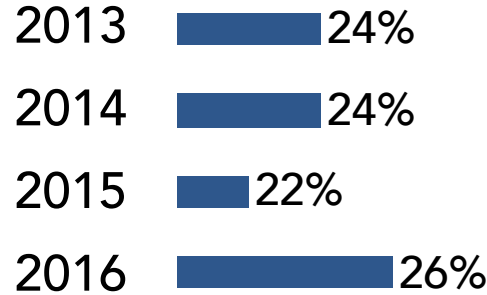
Recent immigration into this country has done more good than harm.



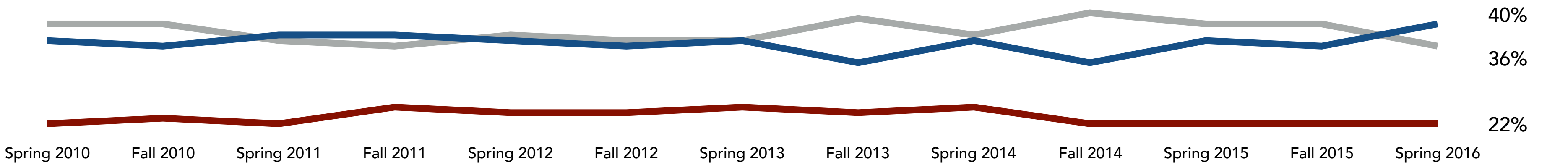
The government should spend more to reduce poverty.



Government spending is an effective way to increase economic growth.



% Party Identification

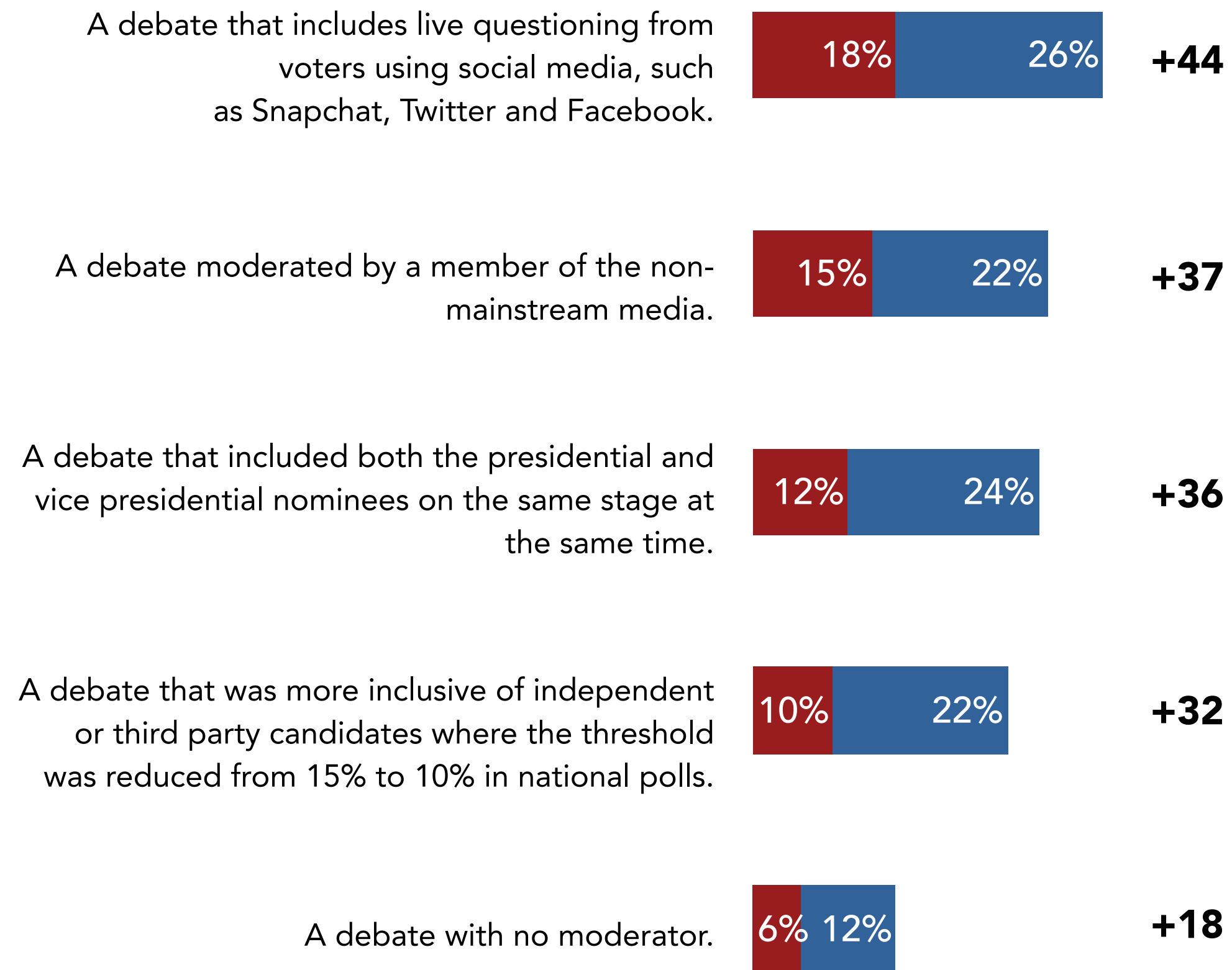


— Democrat — Republican — Independent

NEARLY 1/2 SAY A DEBATE THAT INCLUDED LIVE QUESTIONING VIA SOCIAL MEDIA WOULD MAKE THEM MORE LIKELY TO WATCH; COLBERT TOPS "LATE NIGHT/MODERATOR WISH LIST"

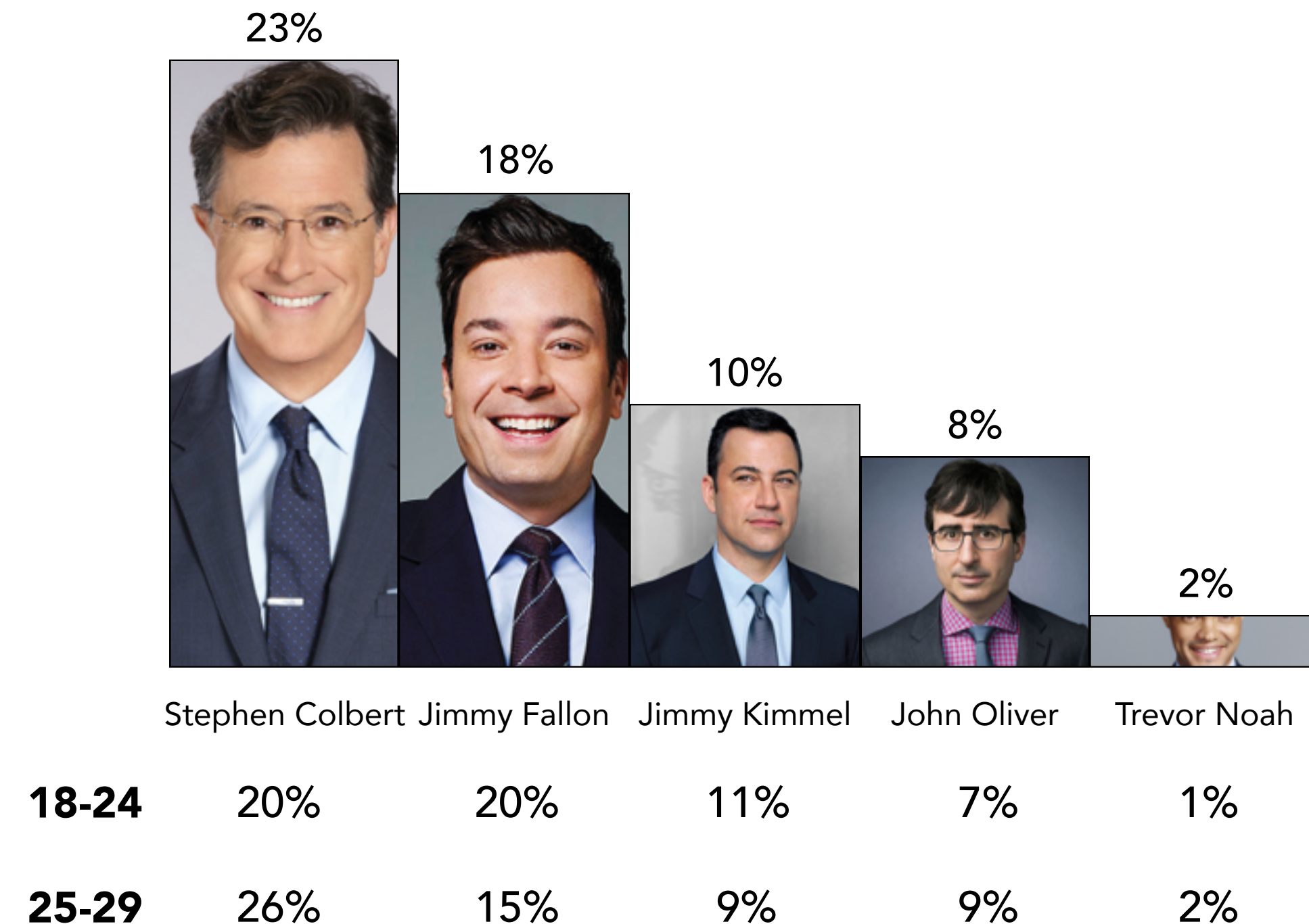
Please indicate your opinion about the following ideas that some people have recommended for increasing the number of young Americans who watch the presidential debates in the fall.

Net More Likely



■ Much more likely to watch
■ Somewhat more likely to watch

Which of the following late night hosts would you most like to see moderate a presidential debate?



WHILE FACEBOOK CONTINUES TO DOMINATE, SNAPCHAT IS NOW THE 2ND MOST POPULAR SOCIAL NETWORK ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

On which of the following platforms do you have an account?



| | Facebook | Instagram | Snapchat | Twitter | Pinterest | Tumblr |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|---------------|
| ALL 18-29 | 81% | 49% | 43% | 40% | 36% | 14% |
| Change Since Fall 2015 | 0 | +3 | +7 | +2 | +2 | 0 |
| 18-24 | 82% | 54% | 53% | 44% | 34% | 18% |
| 25-29 | 79% | 42% | 30% | 35% | 38% | 9% |
| College | 86% | 58% | 60% | 50% | 42% | 23% |
| Democrat | 86% | 56% | 46% | 45% | 37% | 17% |
| Republican | 83% | 50% | 43% | 39% | 38% | 10% |
| Independent | 77% | 42% | 40% | 36% | 34% | 15% |
| White | 84% | 48% | 46% | 39% | 40% | 14% |
| Black | 72% | 50% | 33% | 43% | 31% | 15% |
| Hispanic | 78% | 51% | 43% | 30% | 30% | 14% |
| Male | 76% | 38% | 35% | 38% | 13% | 9% |
| Female | 85% | 59% | 50% | 41% | 58% | 20% |
| | Facebook | Instagram | Snapchat | Twitter | Pinterest | Tumblr |

HARVARD PUBLIC OPINION PROJECT

Harvard's Institute of Politics (IOP) was established in 1966 as a memorial to President Kennedy and aims to inspire undergraduates to consider careers in politics and public service. The Institute oversees the John F. Kennedy Jr. Forum, one of the world's premier arenas for political speech, discussion, and debate, and runs a fellowship program offering a unique opportunity for political practitioners to spend semesters at Harvard and interact with students. The IOP also offers dozens of paid internships for eight to ten weeks during the summer; a nonpartisan, quarterly journal written and run entirely by undergraduates; and a unique, nationwide survey project of young adults' political views.

Students are offered wide-ranging opportunities, including internships and conferences intended to provide opportunities for interaction with the people who shape politics and public policy. The IOP does not offer formal courses or degree-granting programs; instead, it provides avenues for practical experience and encourages students to examine critically and think creatively about politics and public issues. For more information, including past results of these polls, please visit us online at www.iop.harvard.edu.

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Director, Institute of Politics

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Director of Polling, Institute of Politics

Catherine McLaughlin
Executive Director, Institute of Politics

Mary Cappabianca
Digital Communications Specialist

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Student members of the committee are: Tom Abel '19, Dustin Chiang '19, Ali Dastjerdi '19, Colin Diersing '16, Kate Donahue '16, Erik Fliegauf '19, Melissa Hammer '17, Michael Kassabian '19, Zachary Lustbader '16, Sally Marsh '18, Jeff Metzger '17, Margaret Panetta '17, Carlos Pena-Lobel '17, Sebastian Reyes '19, Ellen Robo '16, Andrew Rocca '18, Federico Roitman '18, Kevin Sani '17, Trey Sexton '19, Daniel Shen '19, Sofya Shchukina '19, Ryan Sim '19, Maximilian Ubinas '17, Miguel Undurraga '19, Sean Weller '18.



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