

Remembering the Post-9/11 America

American Identity Research Project
September 2022

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. For most Americans, “Never Forget” means remembering the victims of 9/11 and their families, along with the sacrifices of first responders.

Close to 7 in 10 Americans say “Never Forget” means we should remember the victims and their families and the sacrifices of first responders on and after 9/11.

Approximately 1 in 2 New Yorkers say that “Never Forget” also means we should remember the resilience of New York City and its residents (only 34 percent of Americans in general feel this way).

Younger Americans are much more likely to choose “I don’t know” when asked what “Never Forget” means – 15 percent of Generation Z, for example, compared with 4 percent of Baby Boomers, said “I don’t know”.

2. Feelings of fear and unity defined the period immediately after the 9/11 attacks, albeit with variation across generation.

More than 8 in 10 Americans thought that fear of terrorism and heightened security measures defined the period.

7 in 10 Americans associated the period with Americans being united.

Gen Z and Millennials are much less likely than Americans from older generations to describe the post-9/11 nation as patriotic and united.

A narrative of resilience of New York City and the country rings true with New Yorkers. New Yorkers are more likely to characterize the country immediately after the 9/11 attacks as “strong” and “resilient”.

3. Awareness of Islamophobia and mistreatment of minority groups varies across groups.

Muslim Americans (71%) and Democrats (73%) are more likely to say that mistreatment of Muslim Americans defined the period immediately after the 9/11 attacks.

Almost two-thirds of Muslim Americans (64%), compared to less than half of Americans overall (45%), believe that Muslim Americans feel a lot or a fair amount of prejudice in America today.

At the same time, similar to the national average, around 7 in 10 Muslim Americans feel accepted in US society and are proud to be American.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Quantitative National Surveys

Results are shown as “US Average”.

American Identity Survey 1

More in Common partnered with international polling company YouGov to conduct online survey interviews with N=2,500 adult US citizens from May 17 to June 3, 2022. The data was weighted to be representative of American citizens using propensity scores, with score functions including gender, age, race, education, and region. The weights were then post-stratified on 2020 Presidential vote choice, with a four-way stratification of gender, age (6-category), race (5-category), and education (4-category). The margin of error (adjusted for weighting) is +/- 1.96 for the US average, and is higher for subgroups.

Numbers in data visualizations are rounded to the nearest whole number.

September 11 Survey

More in Common partnered with international polling company YouGov to conduct online survey interviews with N=1,000 adult US citizens and additional oversamples of N=200 Muslim Americans and N=200 New York City residents from August 12 to August 24, 2022. The margin of error is +/- 3.1 for the US average and +/- 8.5 for the Muslim American data and +/- 7.0 for the New York City resident data.

Numbers in data visualizations are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Qualitative Research

Americans in Conversation

In 2022, More in Common stood up an online community representative of the American general population. From March 11 to March 21, we engaged these respondents in an activity similar to a focus group about their views on American history. A total of N=257 American respondents completed the activity. Quotes from the respondents are included in this report.

Where provided, names have been changed to protect the privacy of the respondent.

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Never Forget

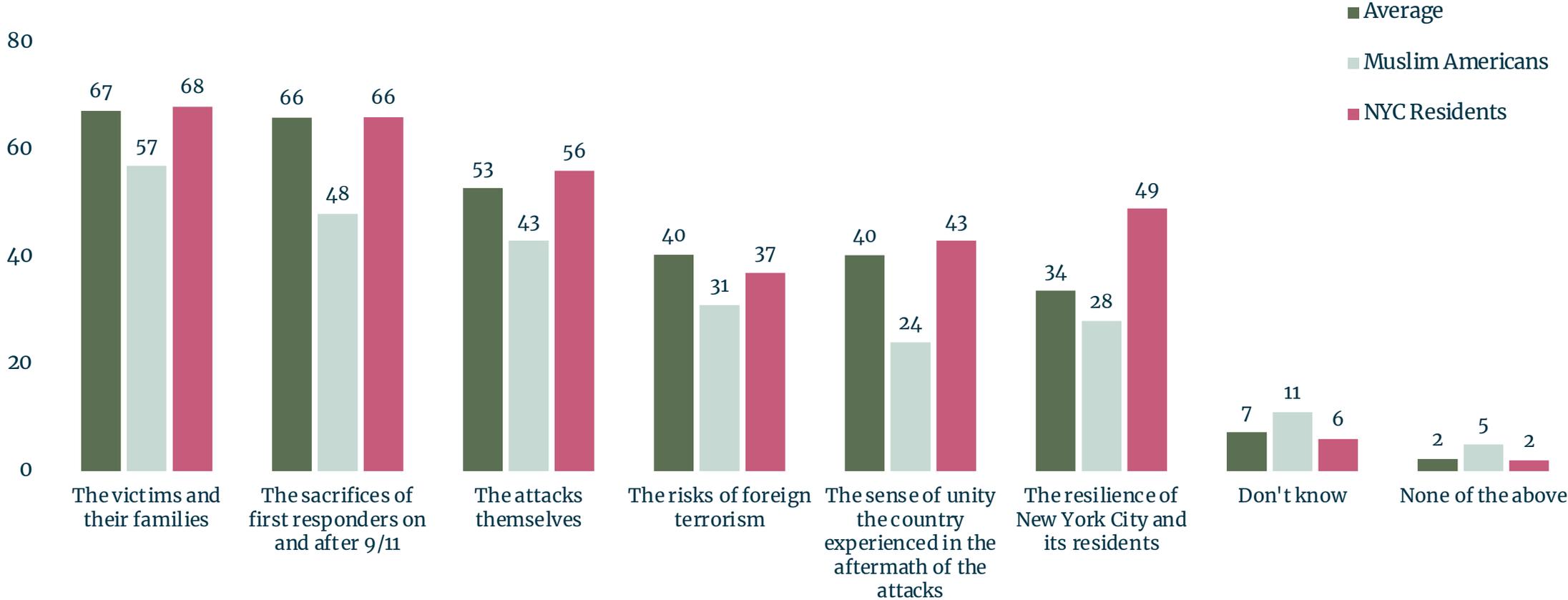
For most Americans, “Never Forget” means remembering the victims of 9/11 and their families, along with the sacrifices of first responders.

For New Yorkers, “Never Forget” also includes remembering the resilience of NYC and its residents.

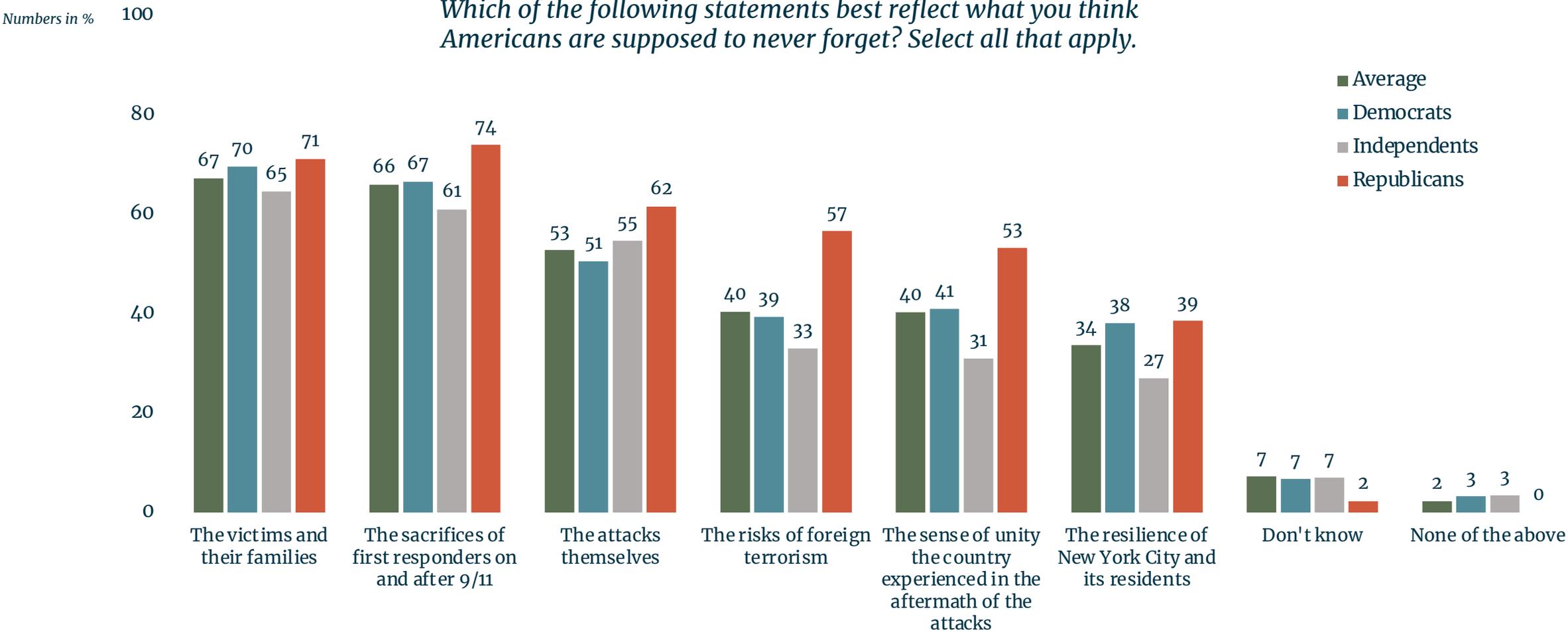
NYC residents are more likely to say that when it comes to the 9/11 attacks, Americans should never forget the resilience of New York City and its residents.

Numbers in %

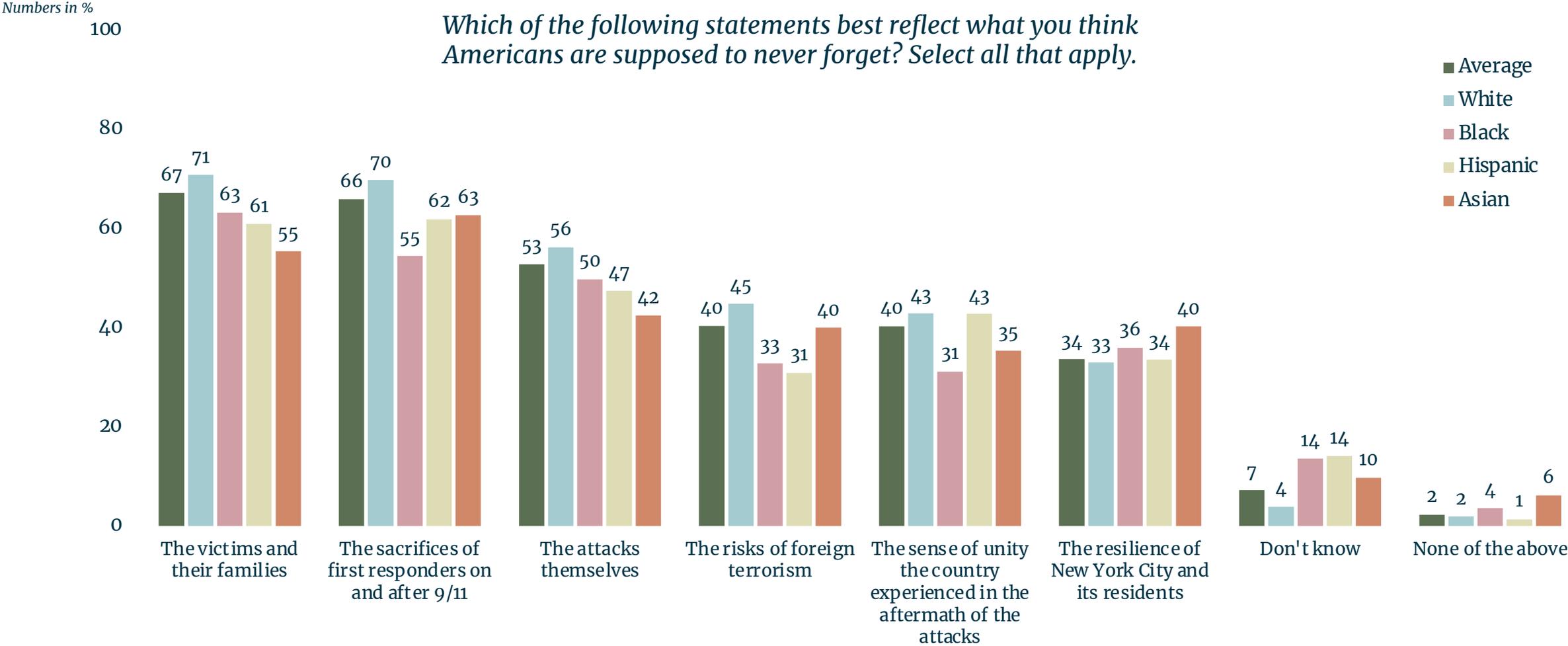
Which of the following statements best reflect what you think Americans are supposed to never forget? Select all that apply.



The majority of Americans, regardless of political affiliation, think that Americans are supposed to never forget the victims of the 9/11 attacks and the sacrifices of the first responders.

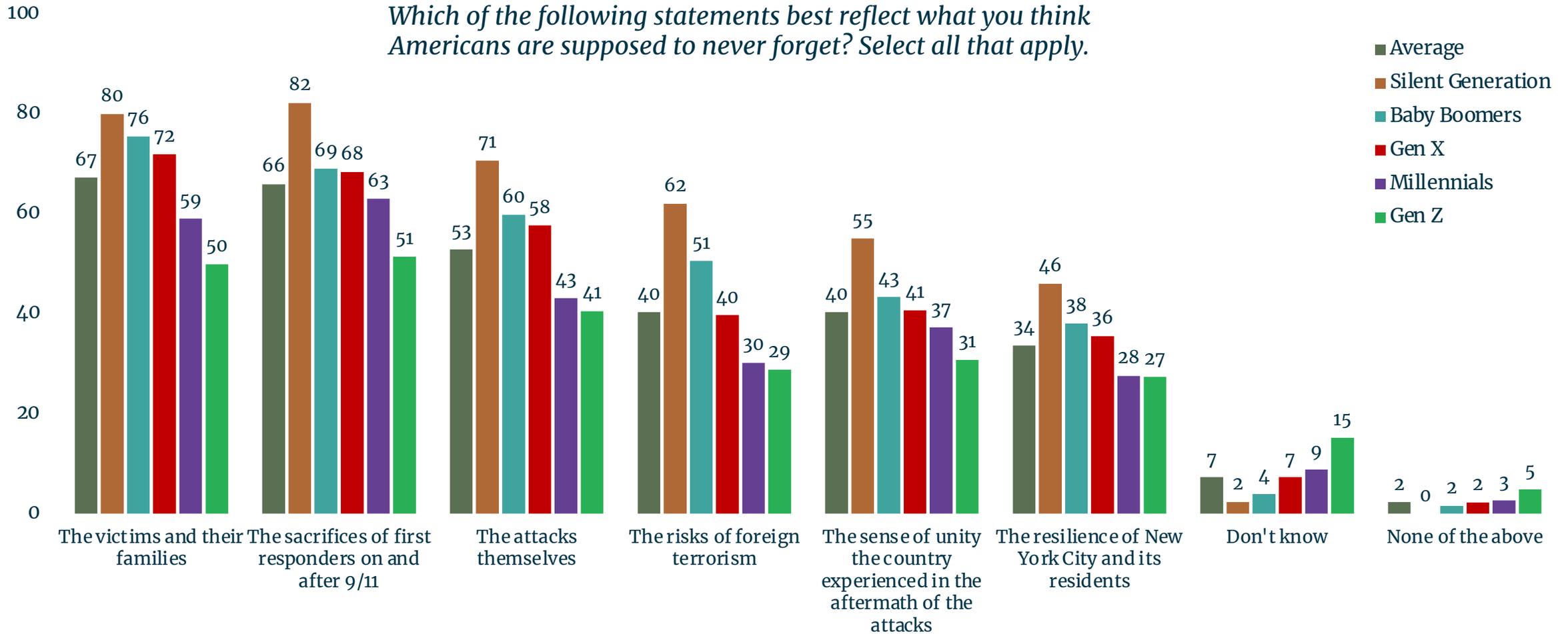


The majority of each racial group believes that Americans should never forget the victims and their families, as well as the first responders.



Americans from older generations are more confident in what “never forget” means to them.

Numbers in %



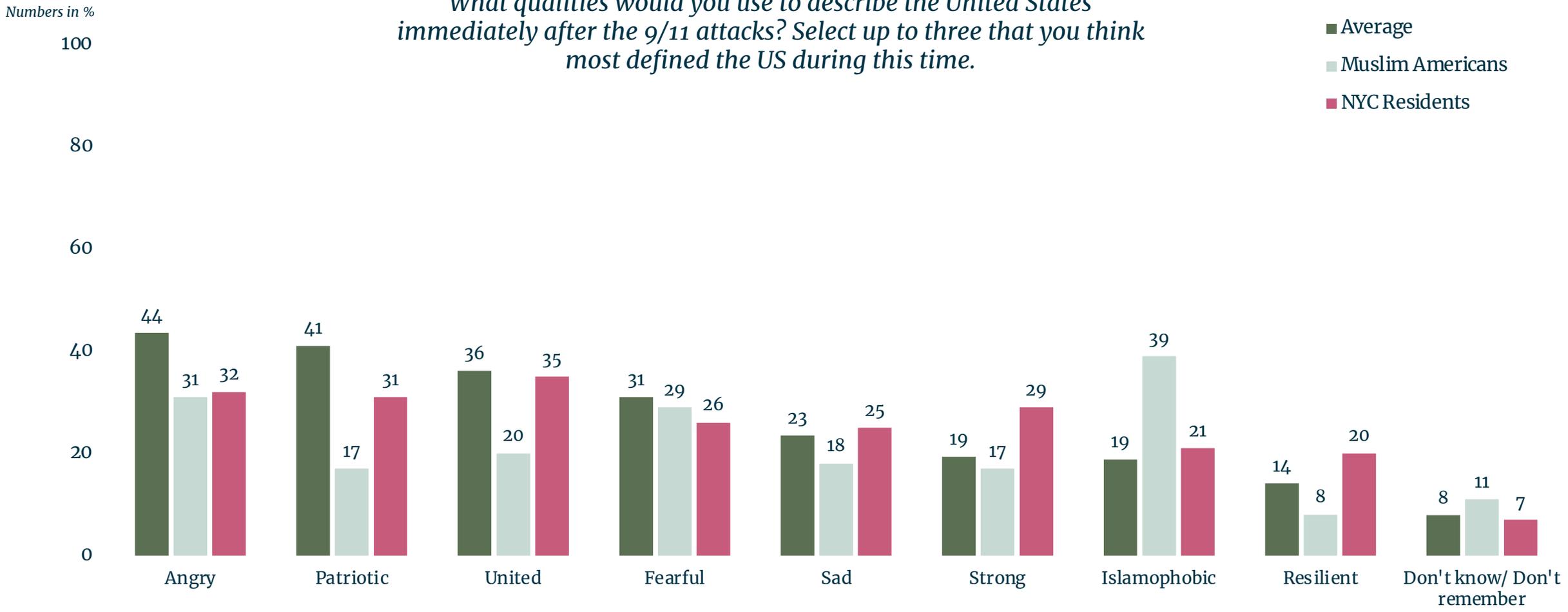
Memories of America Immediately After the 9/11 Attacks

Many Americans described the United States immediately after the 9/11 attacks as **angry** and **fearful**, as well as **patriotic** and **united**.

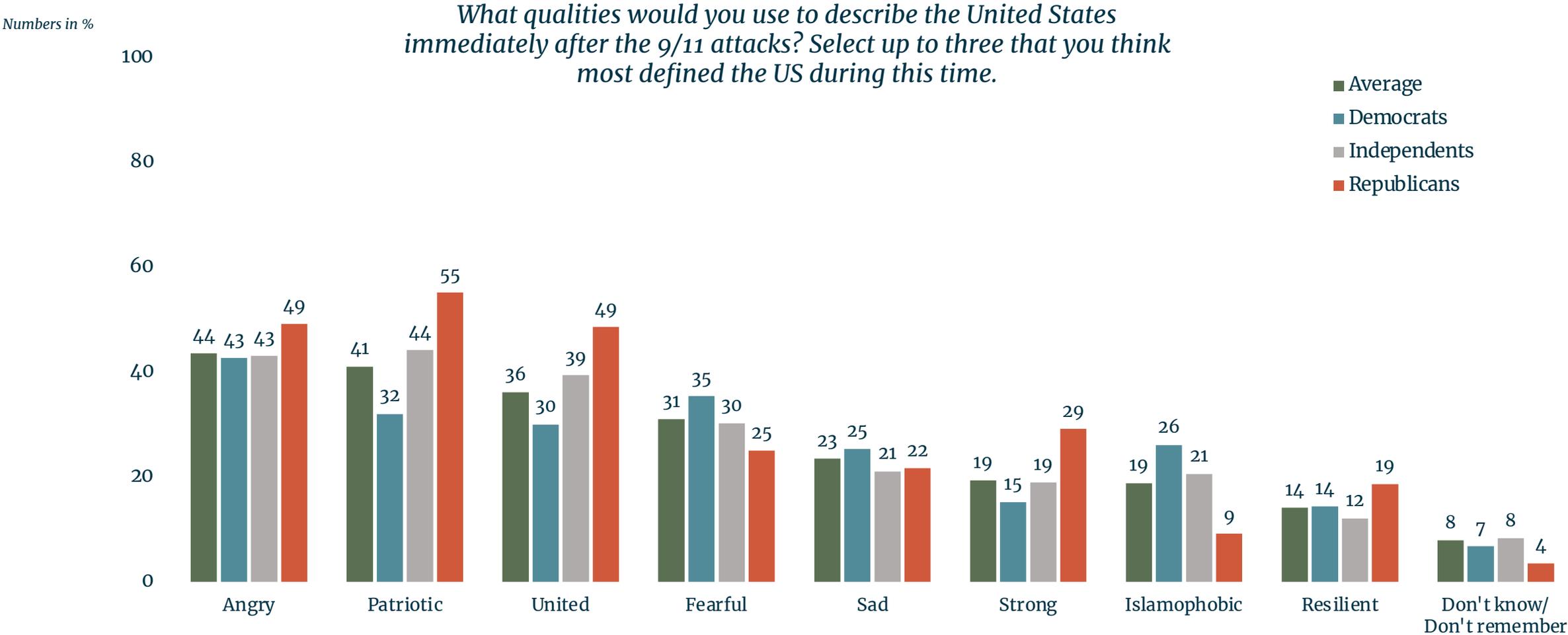
However, associations of patriotism and unity with 9/11 vary across political, racial, and generational lines.

Many Americans describe the US immediately after the 9/11 attacks as angry, patriotic, and united. Muslim Americans are more likely to see the post 9/11 nation as Islamophobic, whereas NYC residents are more likely than others to characterize the US in this period as strong and resilient.

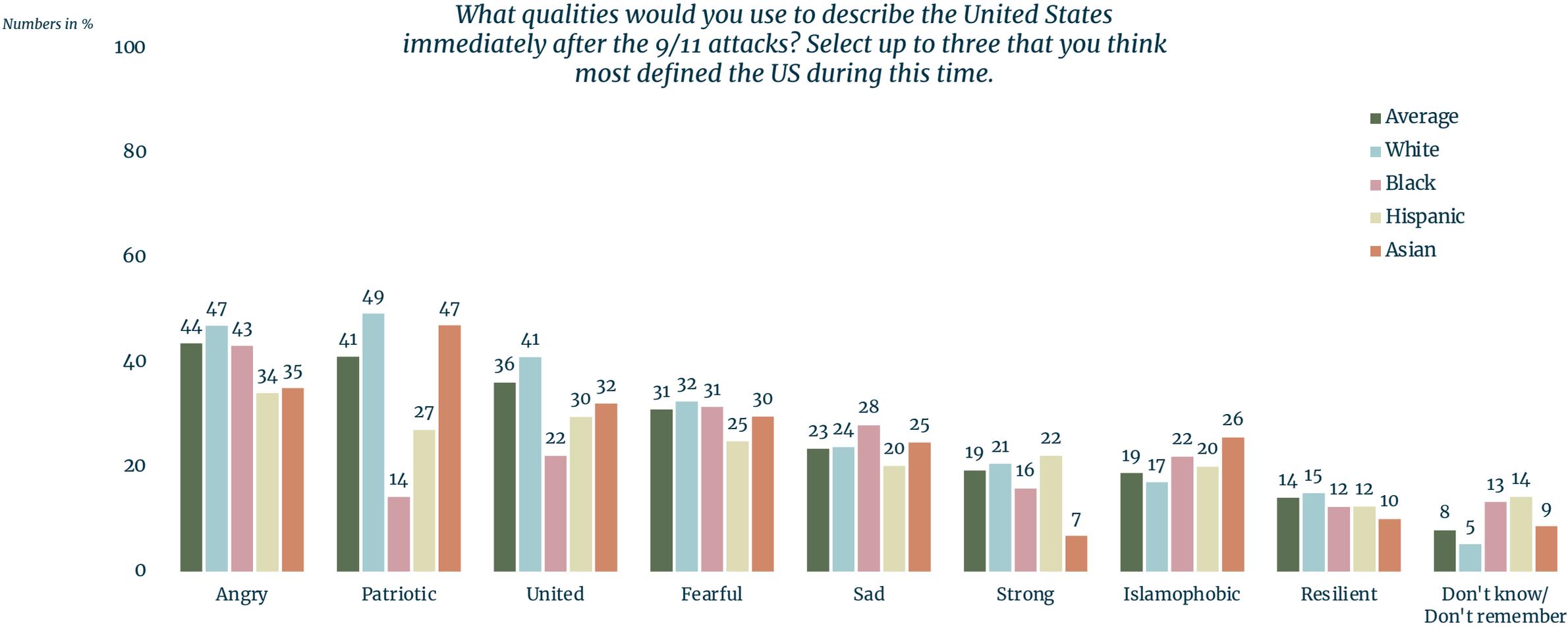
What qualities would you use to describe the United States immediately after the 9/11 attacks? Select up to three that you think most defined the US during this time.



Republicans are more likely than Democrats to describe the post-9/11 nation as patriotic and united.



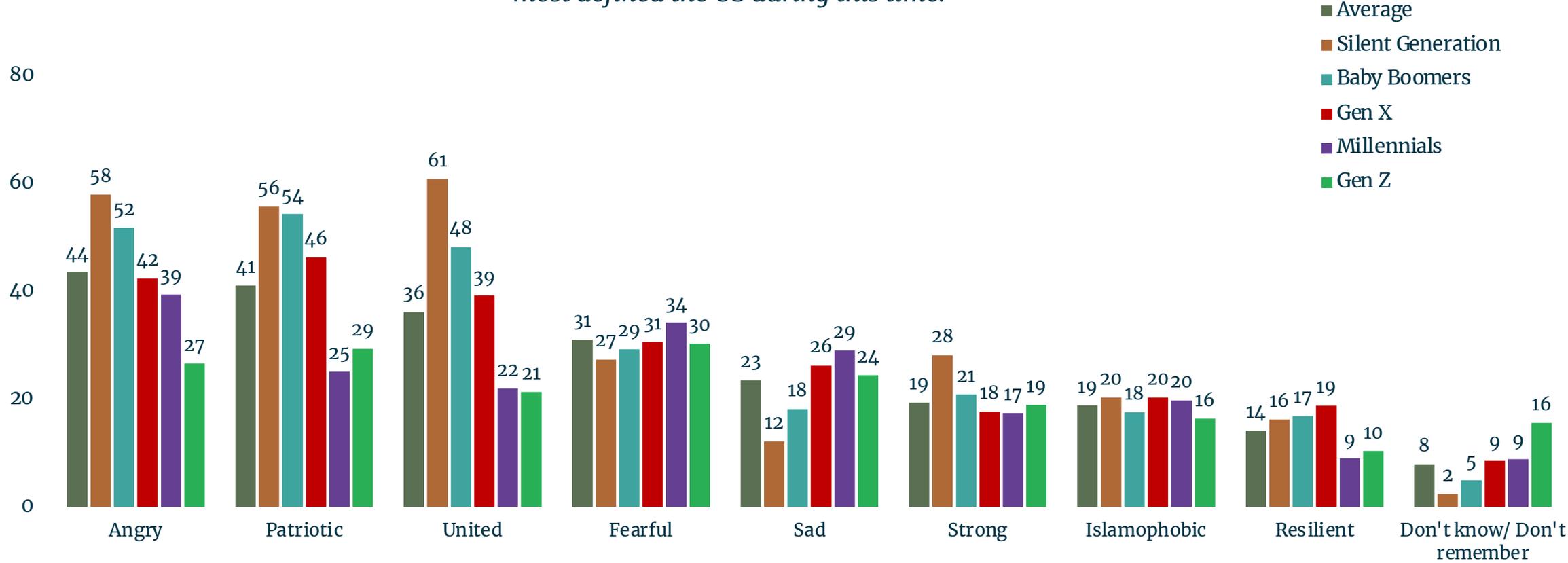
White and Asian Americans are more likely to describe the US after the 9/11 attacks as patriotic.



Gen Z and Millennials are much less likely than Americans from older generations to describe the post-9/11 nation as patriotic and united.

Numbers in %

What qualities would you use to describe the United States immediately after the 9/11 attacks? Select up to three that you think most defined the US during this time.



More than **7** in **10**

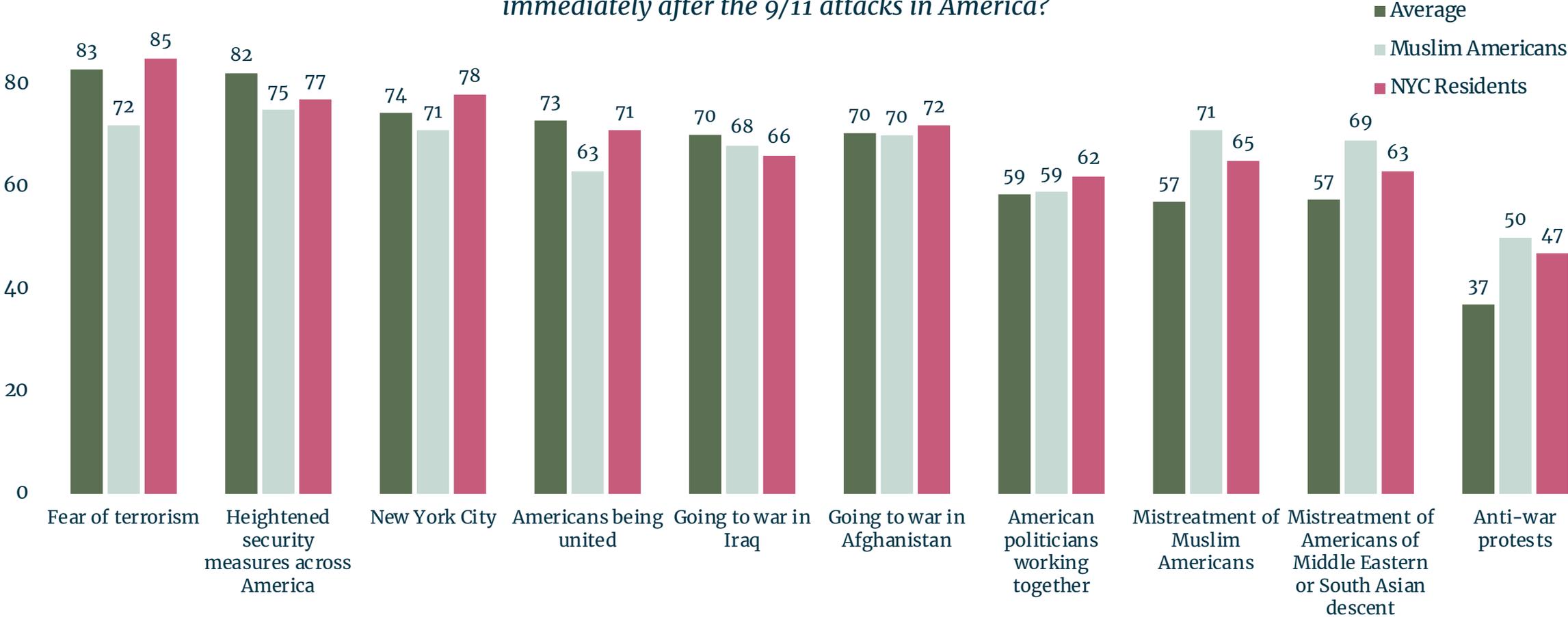
Americans believe that fear of terrorism, as well as Americans being united, defined the period immediately after the 9/11 attacks in America.

Muslim Americans, Democrats, and Asian Americans are more likely to say that mistreatment of minority groups also defined the period.

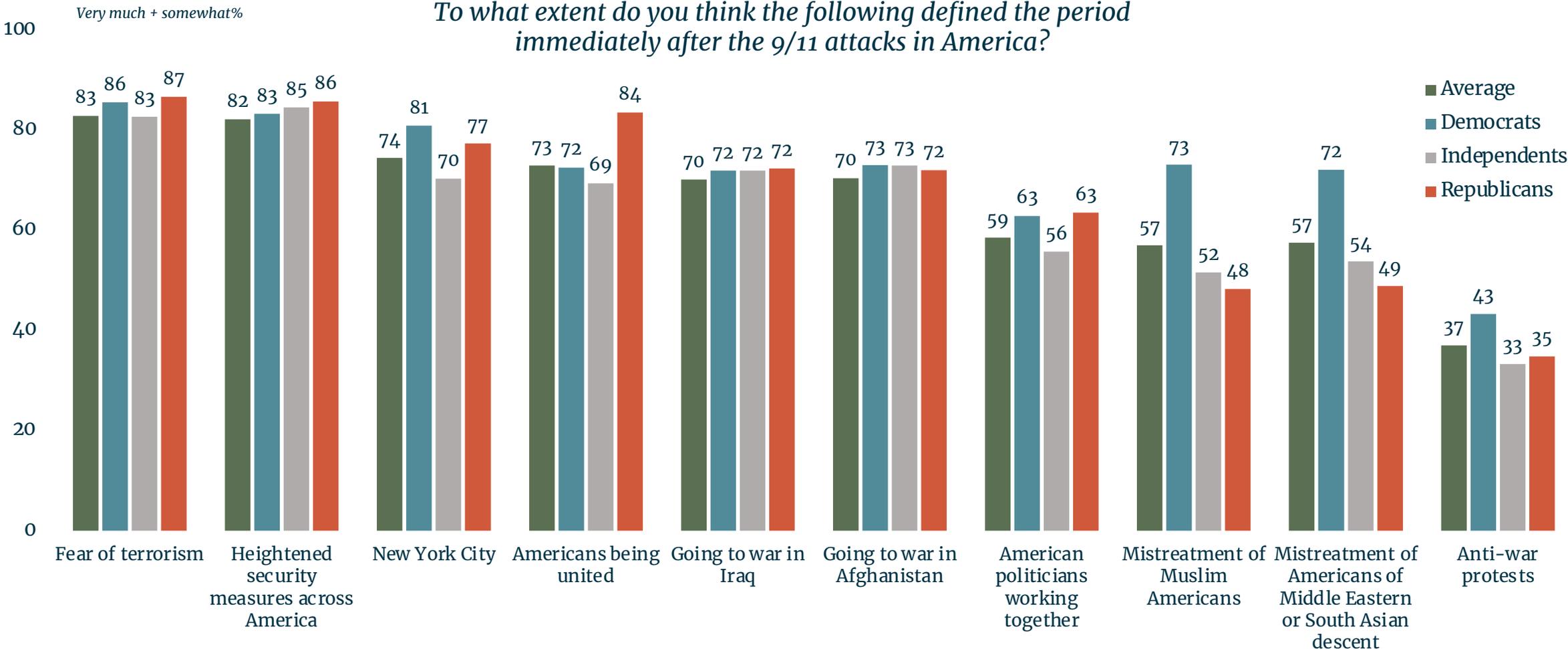
Most Americans think that fear of terrorism, heightened security measures, and Americans being united defined the period immediately after the 9/11 attacks in America. Muslim Americans are more likely to say that mistreatment of Muslim Americans defined the period.

100 Very much + somewhat%

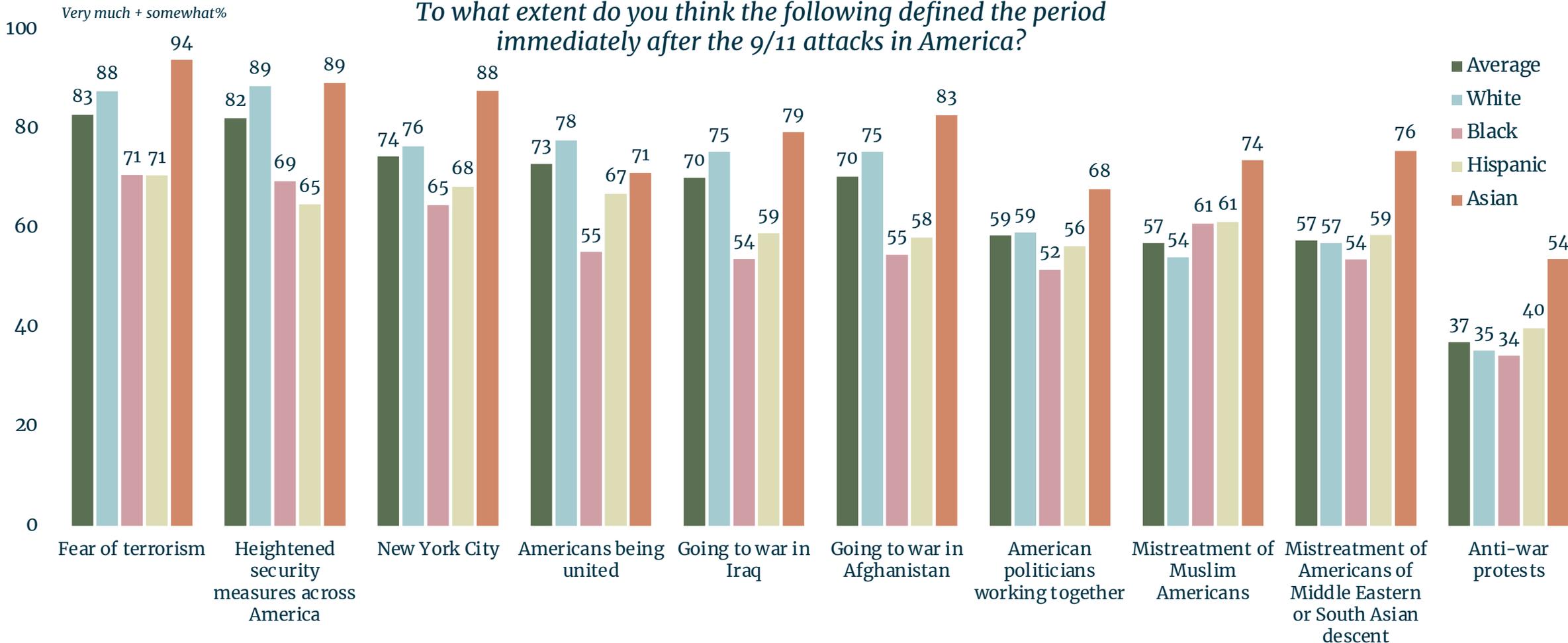
To what extent do you think the following defined the period immediately after the 9/11 attacks in America?



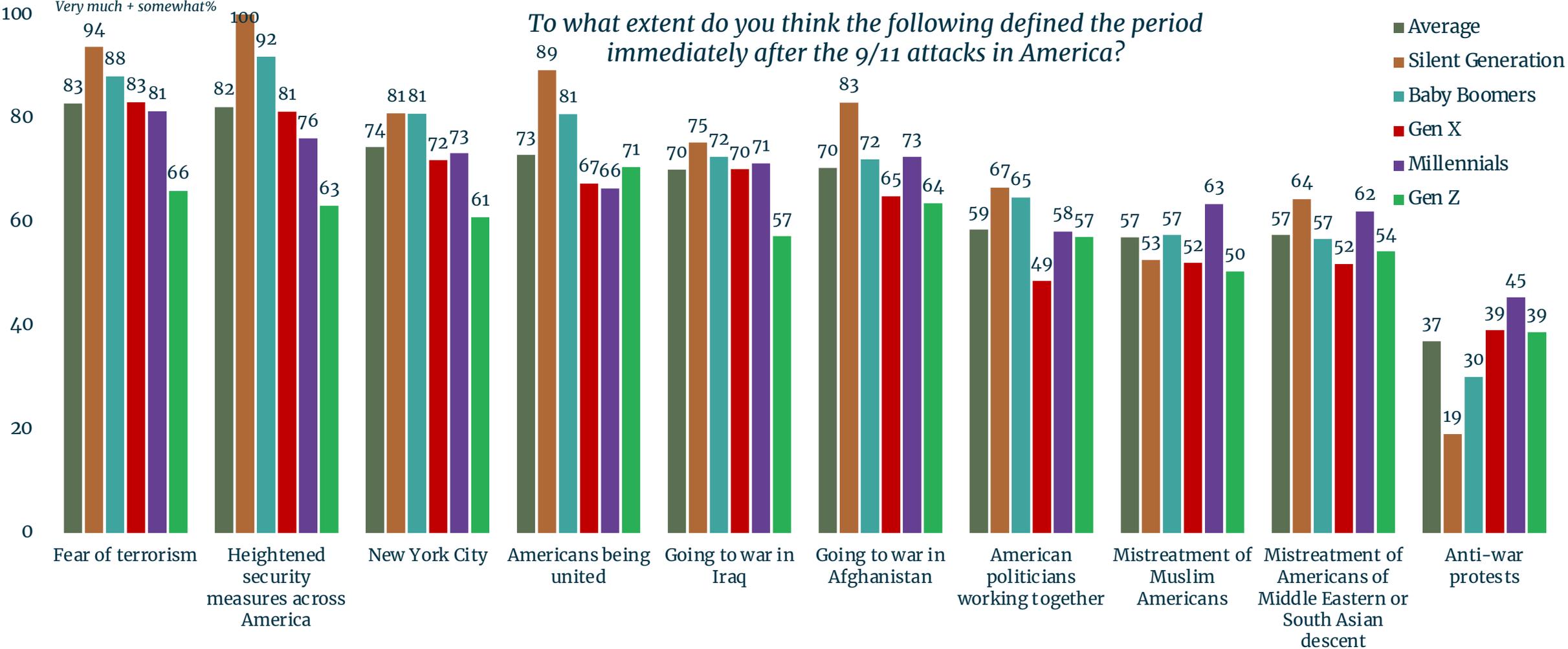
Republicans are slightly more likely to believe that unity of Americans defined the post-9/11 period. Democrats are much more likely than Independents and Republicans to say that mistreatment of minority groups defined the period.



Black and Hispanic Americans are more likely to say “don’t know” when it comes to the period immediately after the 9/11 attacks in America.



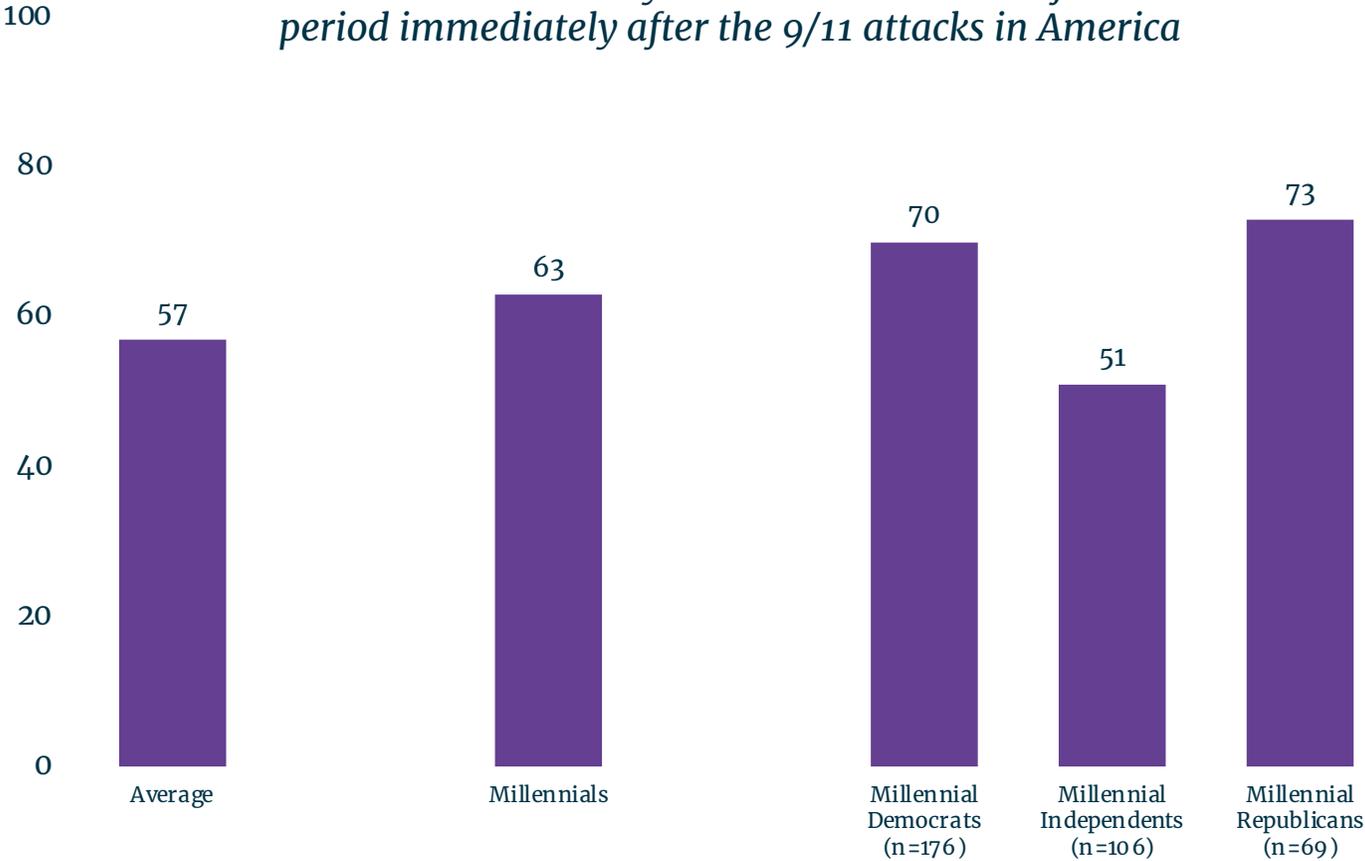
Americans from older generations are more likely to believe that the unity of Americans defined the period immediately after the 9/11 attacks. Compared to other generations, Millennials are more inclined to say mistreatment of Muslim Americans defined the period.



The majority of Millennial Americans across the political spectrum believe that the mistreatment of Muslim Americans defined the post-9/11 period in America.

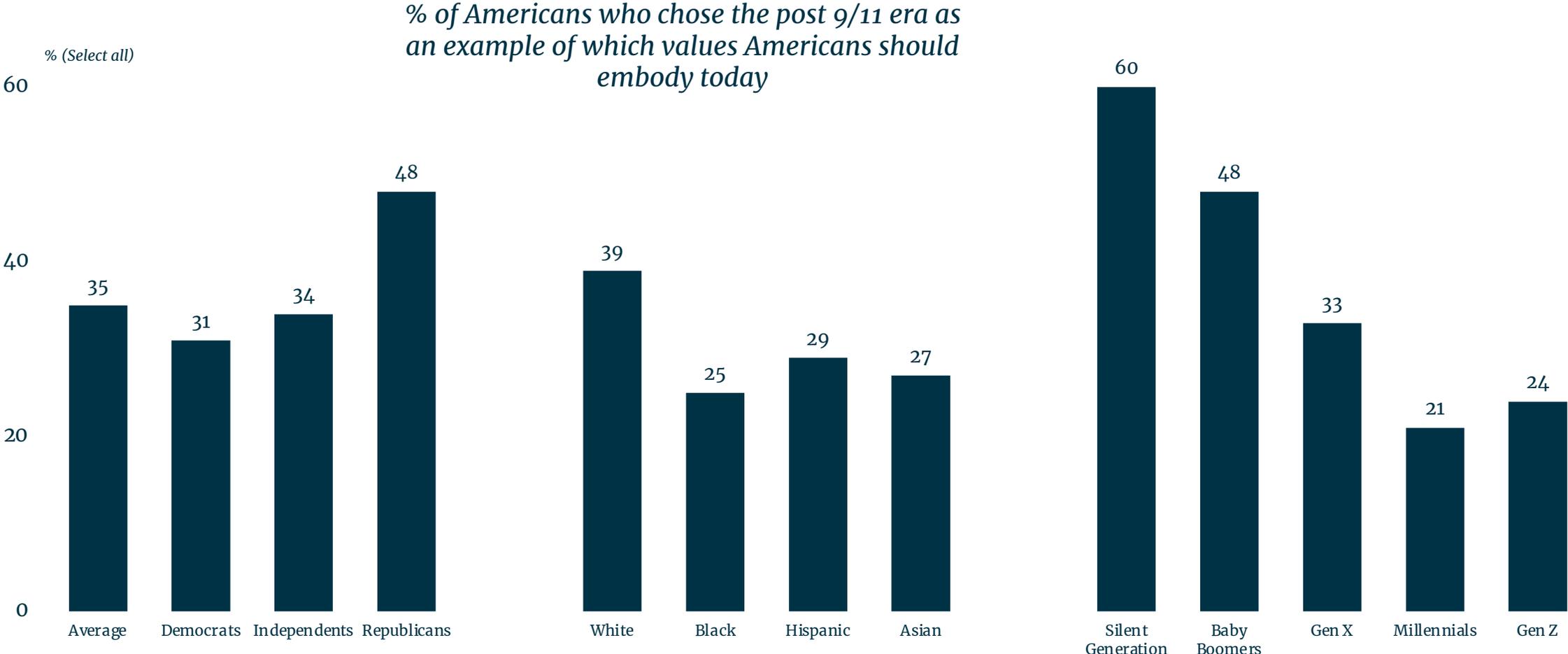
Numbers in %

% of Americans who believe that mistreatment of Muslim Americans very much or somewhat defined the period immediately after the 9/11 attacks in America



Significance

More than one-third of Americans feel that Americans today should embody the values from the era immediately after the 9/11 attacks. Almost half of Republicans feel this way.



Survey question: Which of the following eras provides an example of which values Americans should embody today, if any?

For many Americans, the period immediately after the 9/11 attacks exemplifies the sense of unity and mutual support that they wish to see in the country nowadays.

“Our response after 9/11 is the only time in history that the country stopped asking questions & arguing. Citizens came together to cry and console one another for the most part. However, this period also worsened how the ‘average’ American responded to individuals from the Middle East, Arabs, and anyone perceived to be a ‘terrorist’.”

– Roberta, age 25–34 Black, Progressive Activist, Michigan

“The immediate response after 9/11 was a coming together of our country to help everyone heal and grieve the loss of many Americans.”

– Marguerite, age 45–54 Hispanic female, Traditional Conservative, Texas

“This event was tragic but Americans banded together and supported one another. It was a great time of unity and support.”

– Nolan, age 25–34 White male, Moderate, Oklahoma

“America came together after 9/11. We should embrace that feeling and still come together today. The United States is so against each other.”

– Jeanette, age 45–54 White female, Disengaged, Indiana

Question: Which of the following eras provides an example of which values Americans should embody today, if any? Please explain your answer below.

Impact of the 9/11 Attacks

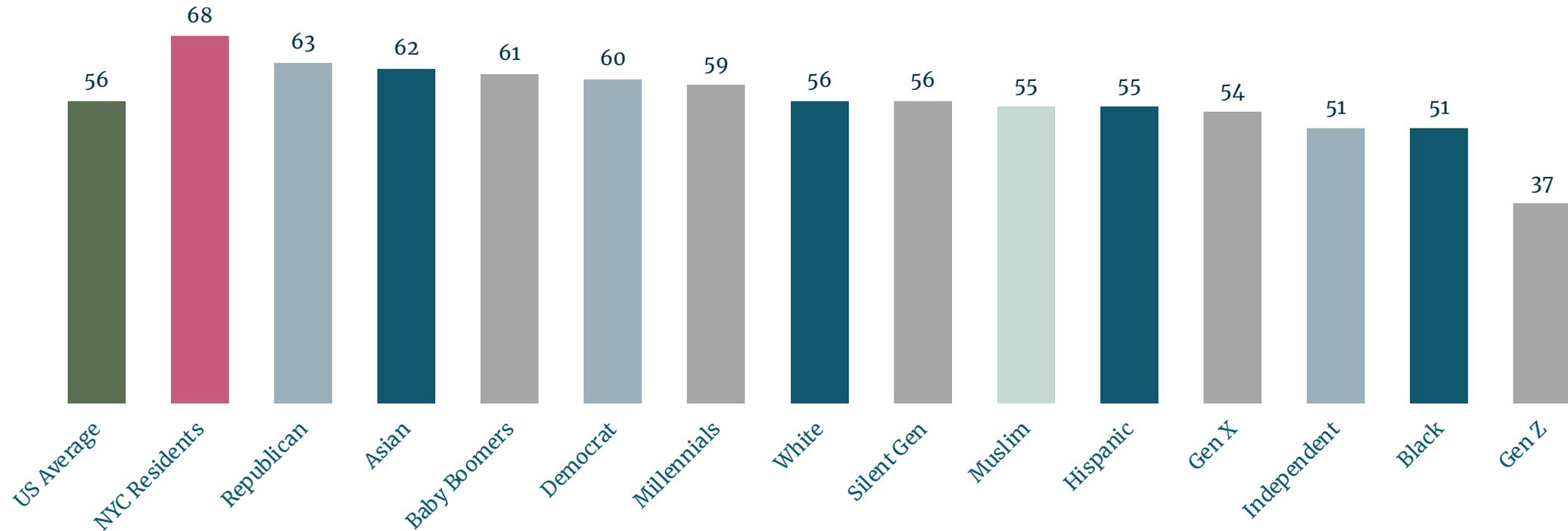
Over half of Americans feel that the 9/11 attacks changed their lives.

More than two-thirds of New Yorkers feel this way.

New Yorkers are most likely to agree that the 9/11 attacks changed their lives, whereas Gen Z are least likely to agree.

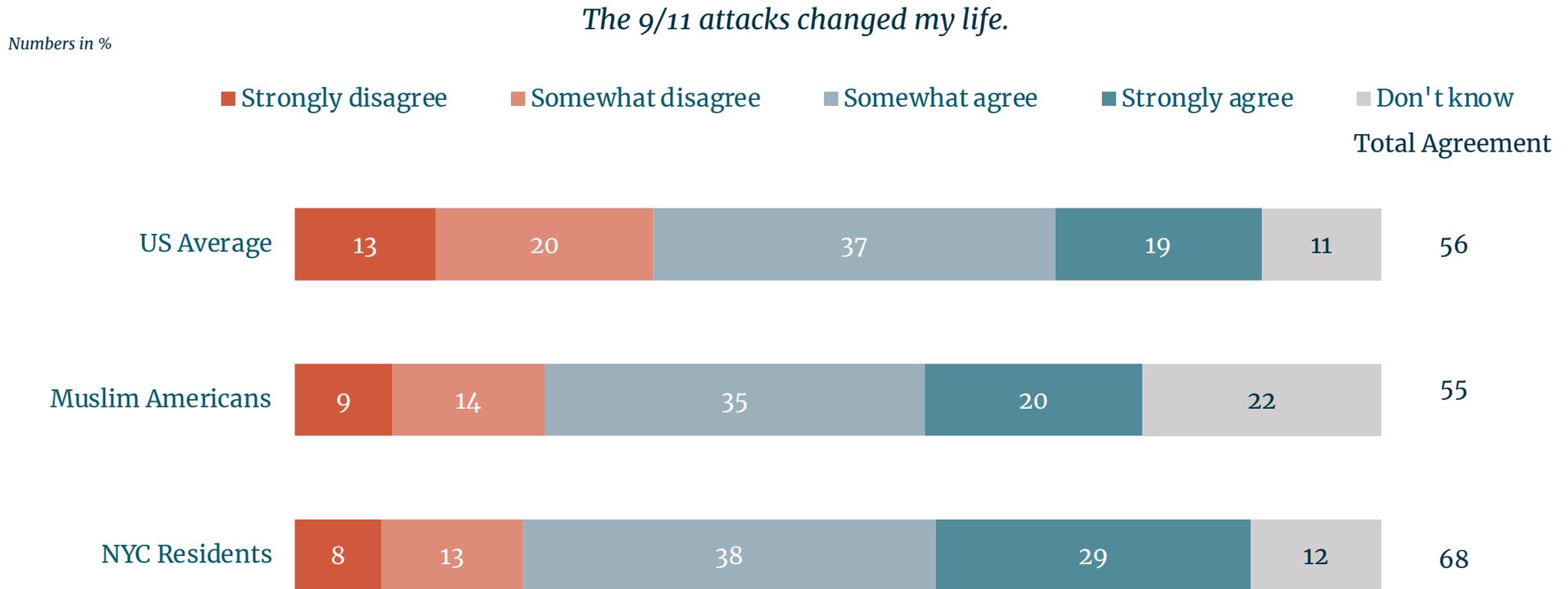
*Somewhat + Strongly
agree %*

The 9/11 attacks changed my life.



Survey question: Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Over half of Americans, including more than half Muslim Americans and more than two-thirds of New Yorkers, agree that the 9/11 attacks changed their lives.

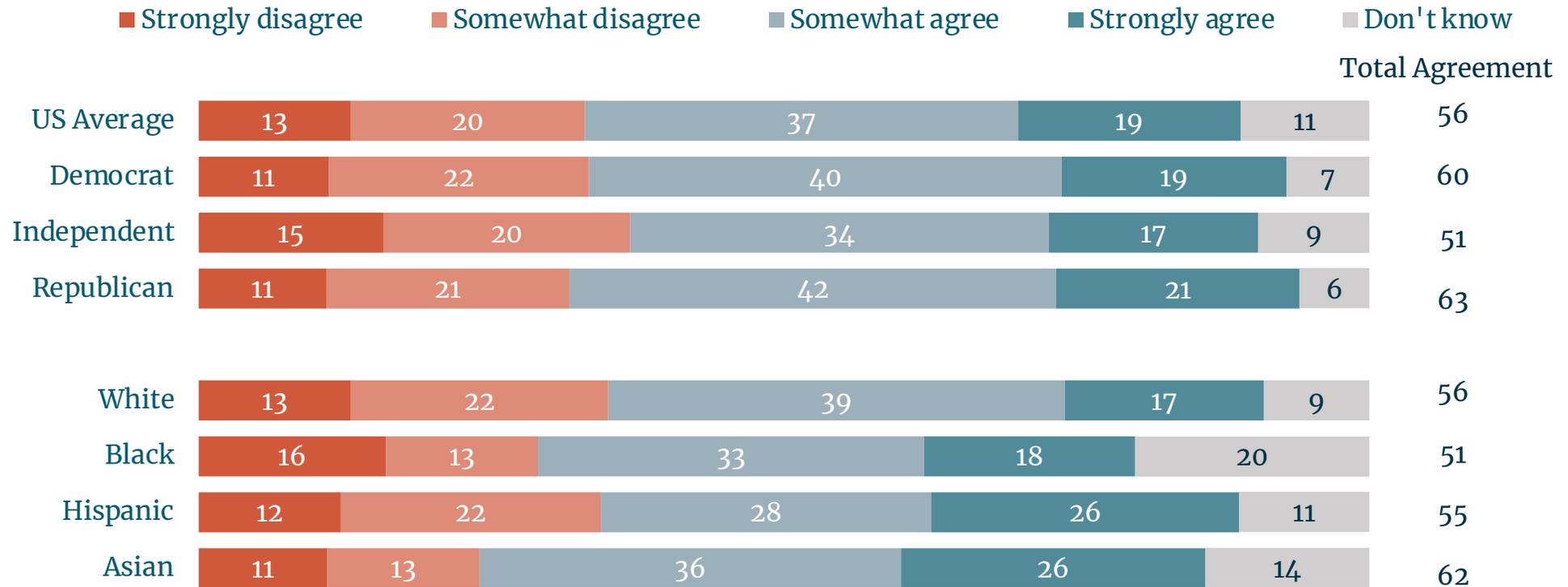


Survey question: Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.
 Note: Numbers in data visualizations are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Americans across political affiliations and race feel similarly.

The 9/11 attacks changed my life.

Numbers in %

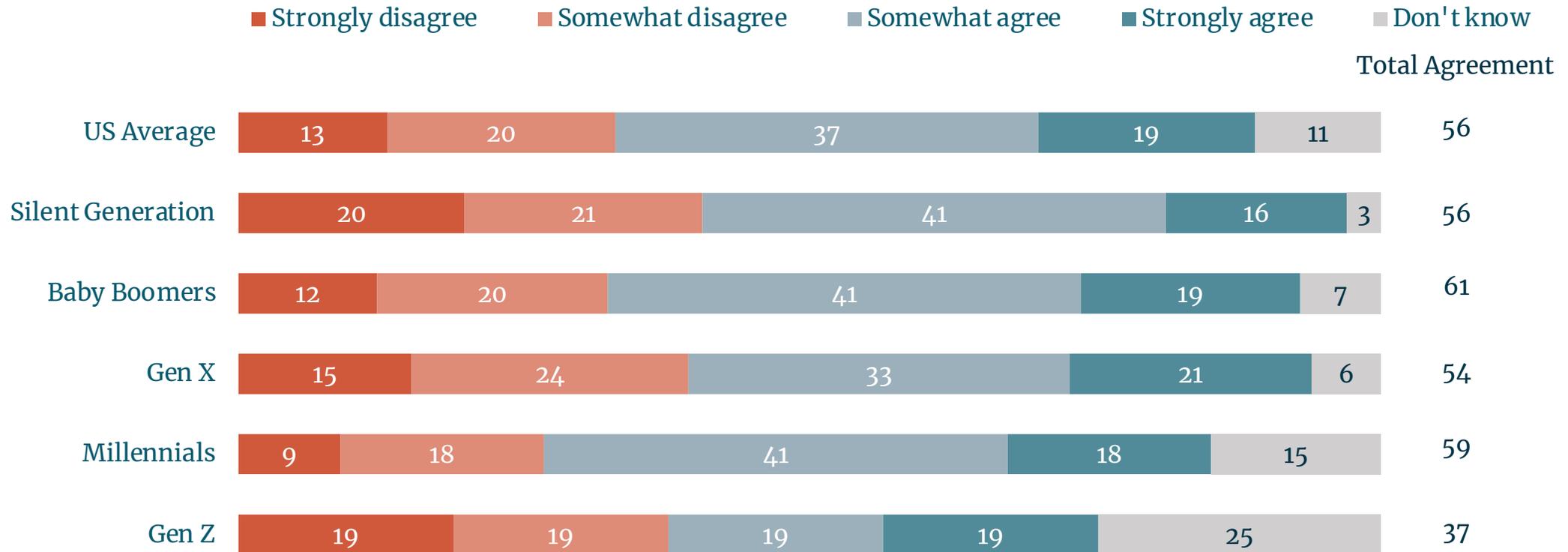


Survey question: Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Gen Z are less likely to say that the 9/11 attacks changed their lives. One-quarter feel unsure.

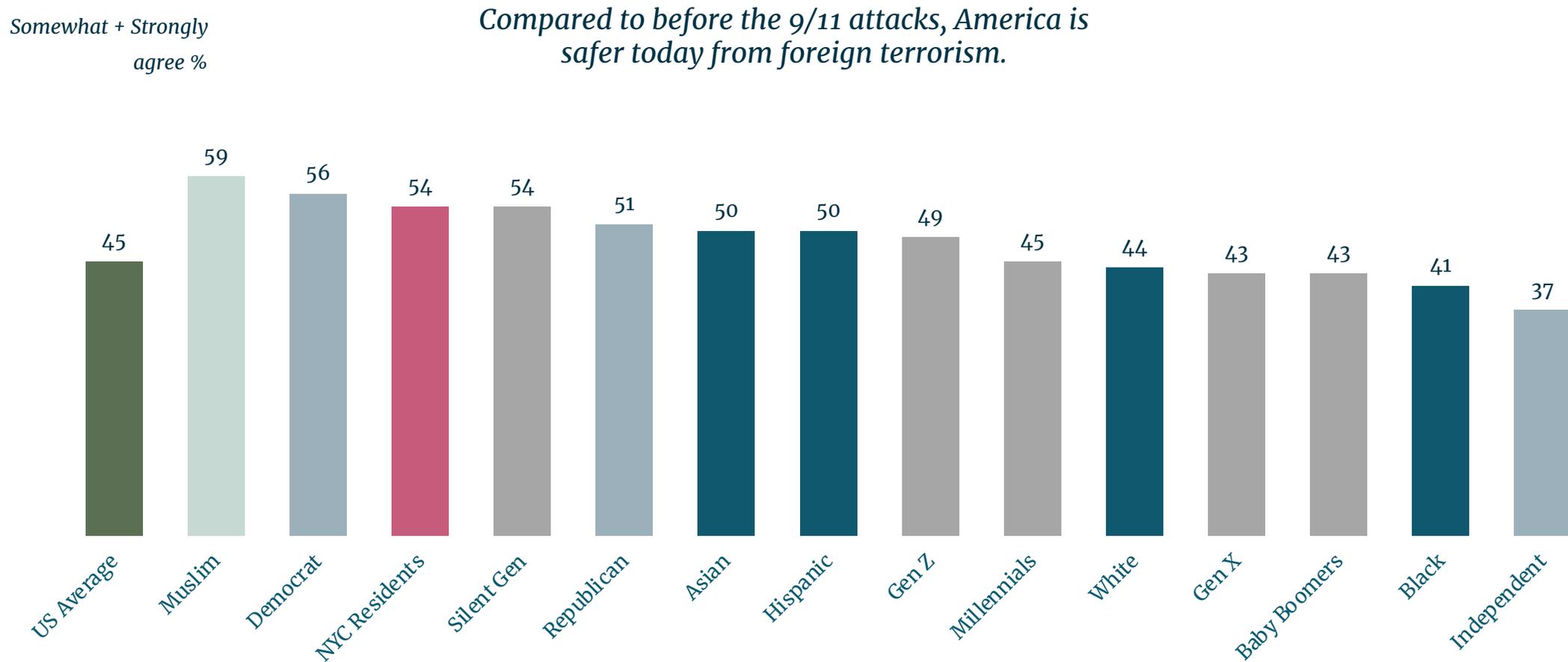
The 9/11 attacks changed my life.

Numbers in %



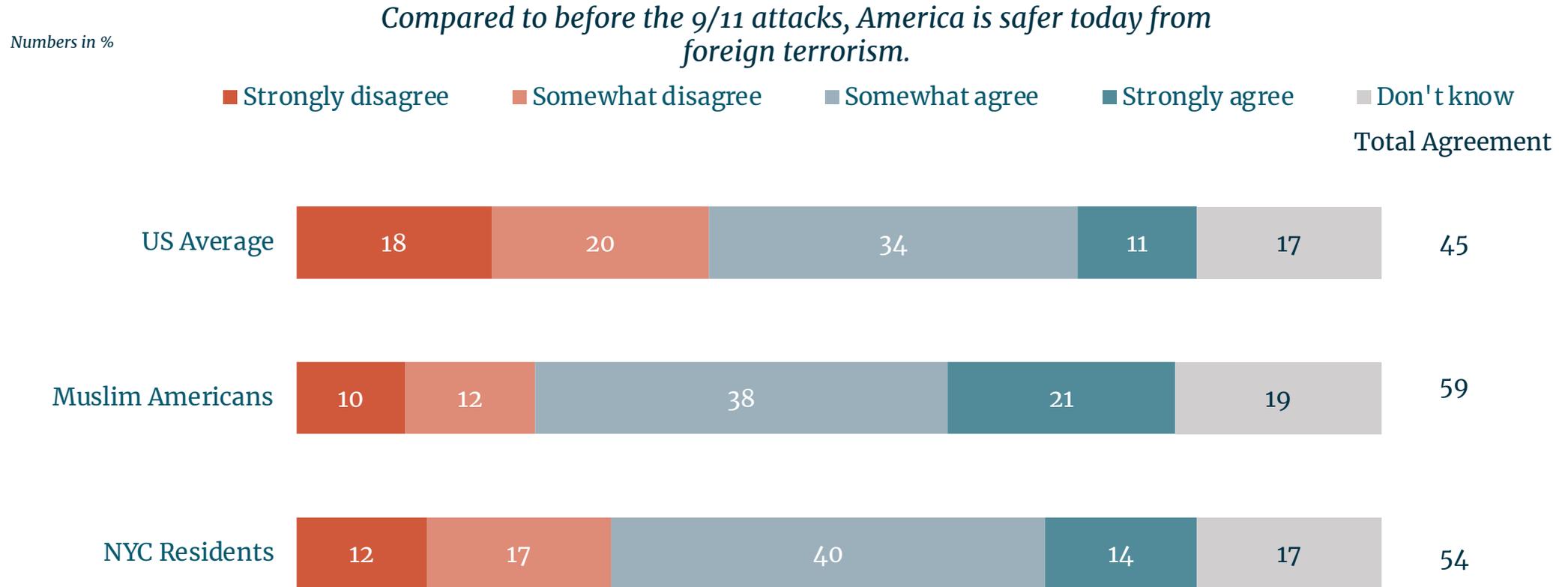
Survey question: Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Almost half of Americans agree that compared to before the 9/11 attacks, the country is safer today from foreign terrorism. Almost 4 in 10 disagree.



Survey question: Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Muslim Americans and New Yorkers are more likely to agree that America is safer today from foreign terrorism.

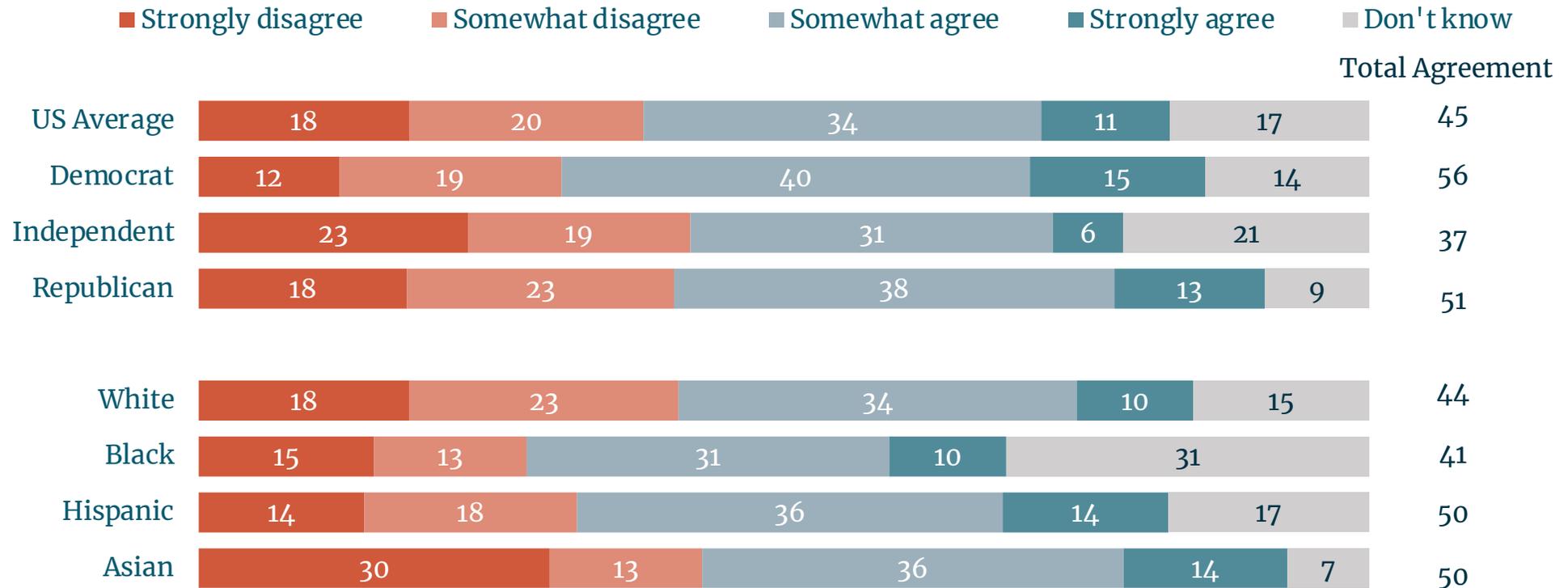


Survey question: Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Independents are less likely to agree that America is safer today from foreign terrorism.

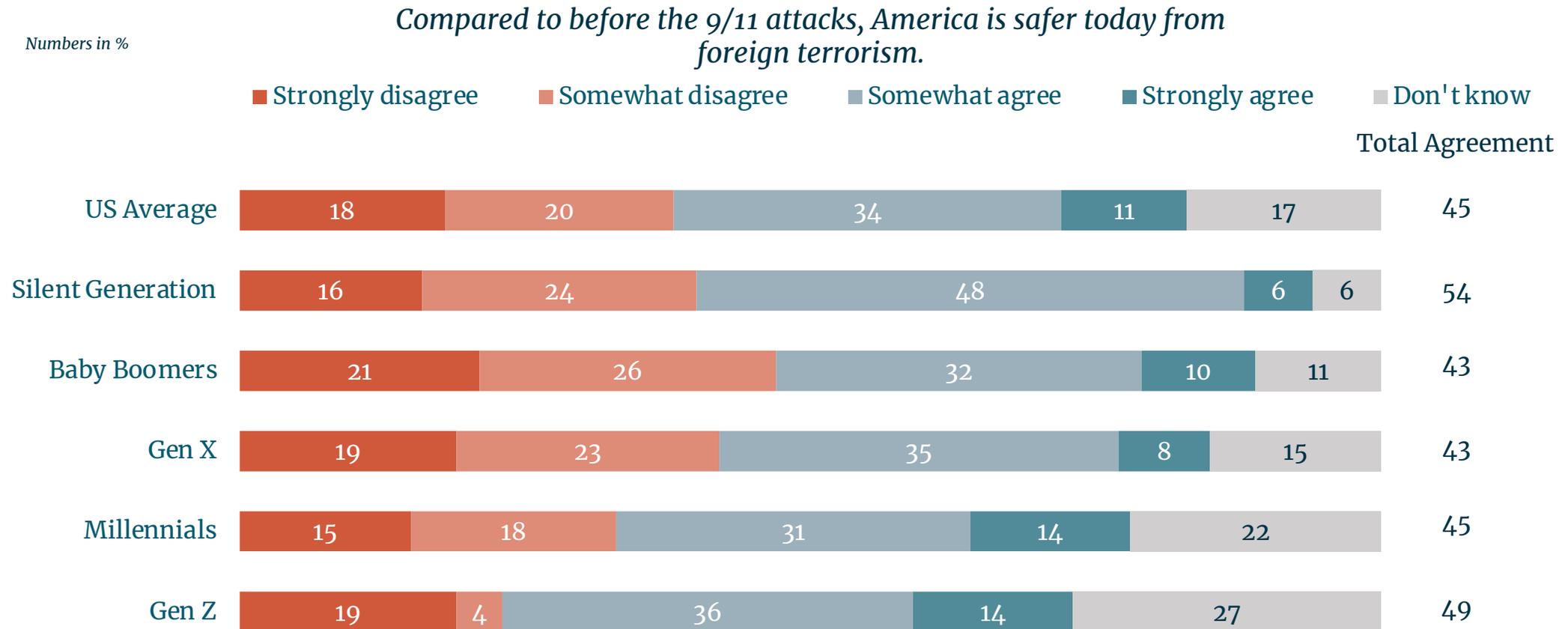
Numbers in %

Compared to before the 9/11 attacks, America is safer today from foreign terrorism.



Survey question: Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Baby Boomers and Gen X are split in their views on whether America is safer today from foreign terrorism. Gen Z and Millennials are more likely to feel unsure on this topic.



Survey question: Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

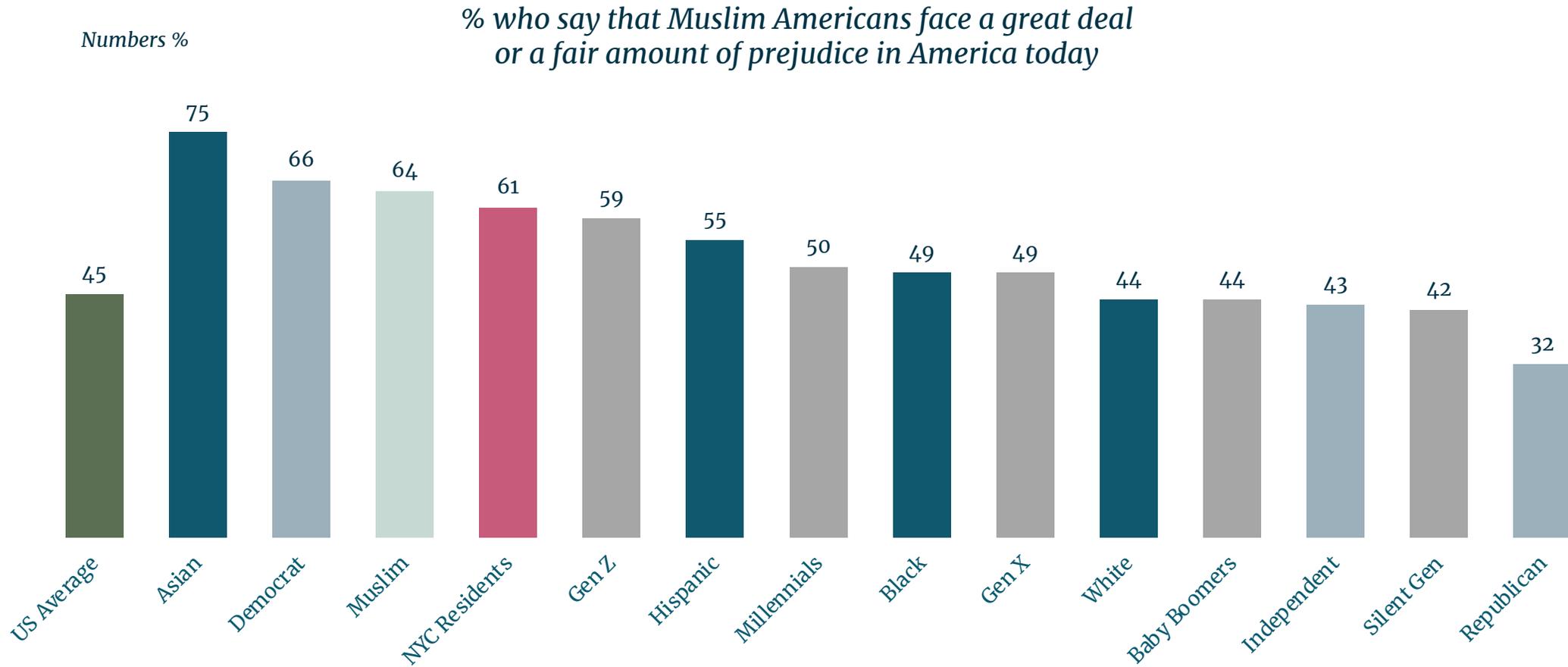
Prejudice, American Pride & Belonging

6 in 10

Muslim Americans believe that Muslims face a lot or a fair amount of prejudice in America today.

Less than half of Americans agree.

Asian Americans, Democrats and Muslim Americans are most likely to say that Muslim Americans face a great deal or a fair amount of prejudice in America today, while Republicans are least likely to say so.

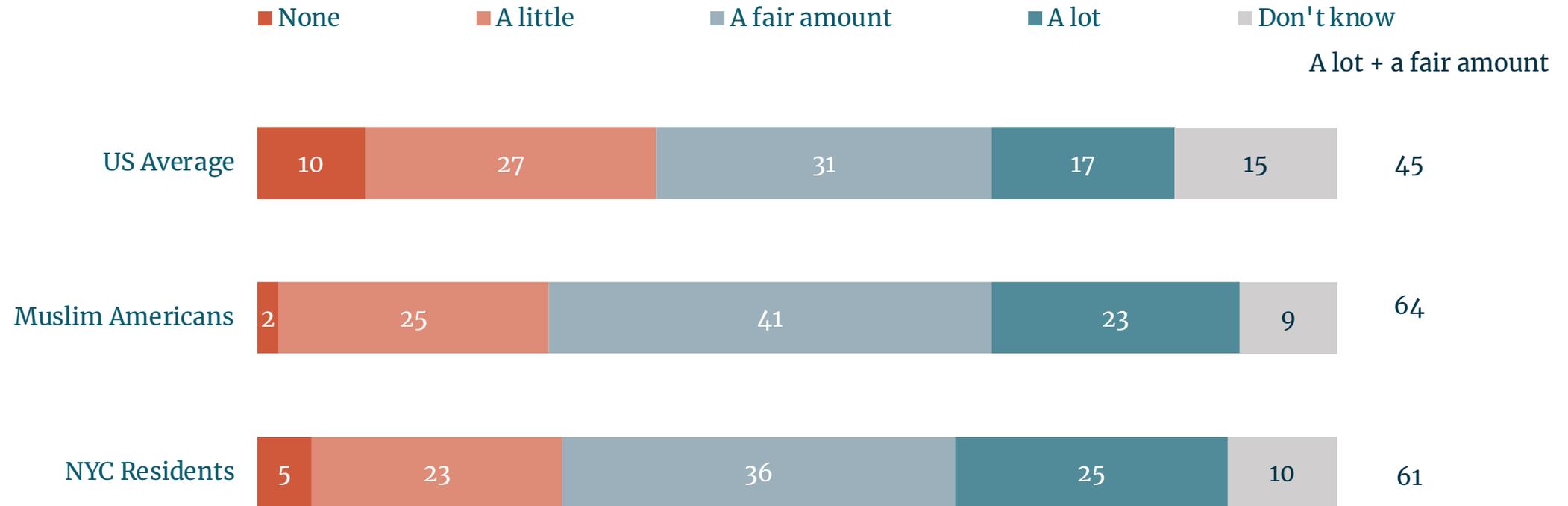


Survey question: How much prejudice do Muslim Americans face in America today?

Almost two-thirds of Muslim Americans and 6 in 10 NYC residents – compared to less than half of Americans overall – believe that Muslim Americans face a lot or a fair amount of prejudice in America today.

How much prejudice do Muslim Americans face in America today?

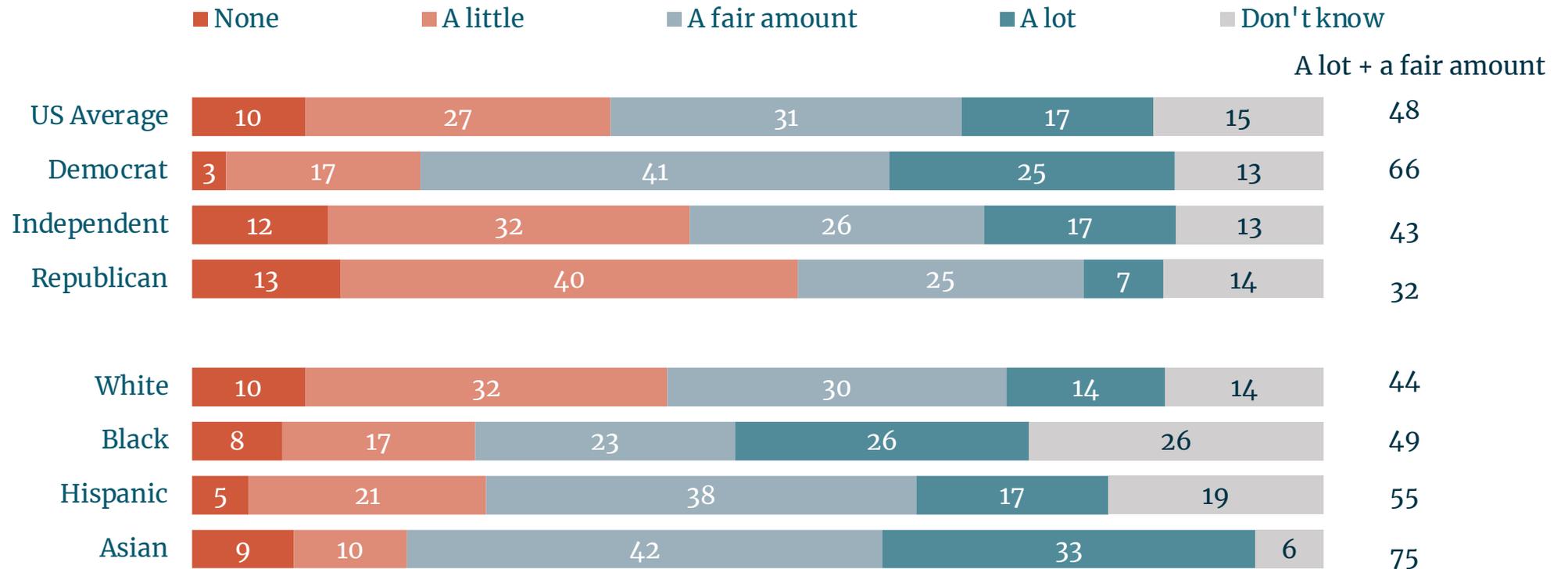
Numbers in %



Democrats and Asian Americans are much more likely to say that Muslim Americans face a lot or a fair amount of prejudice in America today.

How much prejudice do Muslim Americans face in America today?

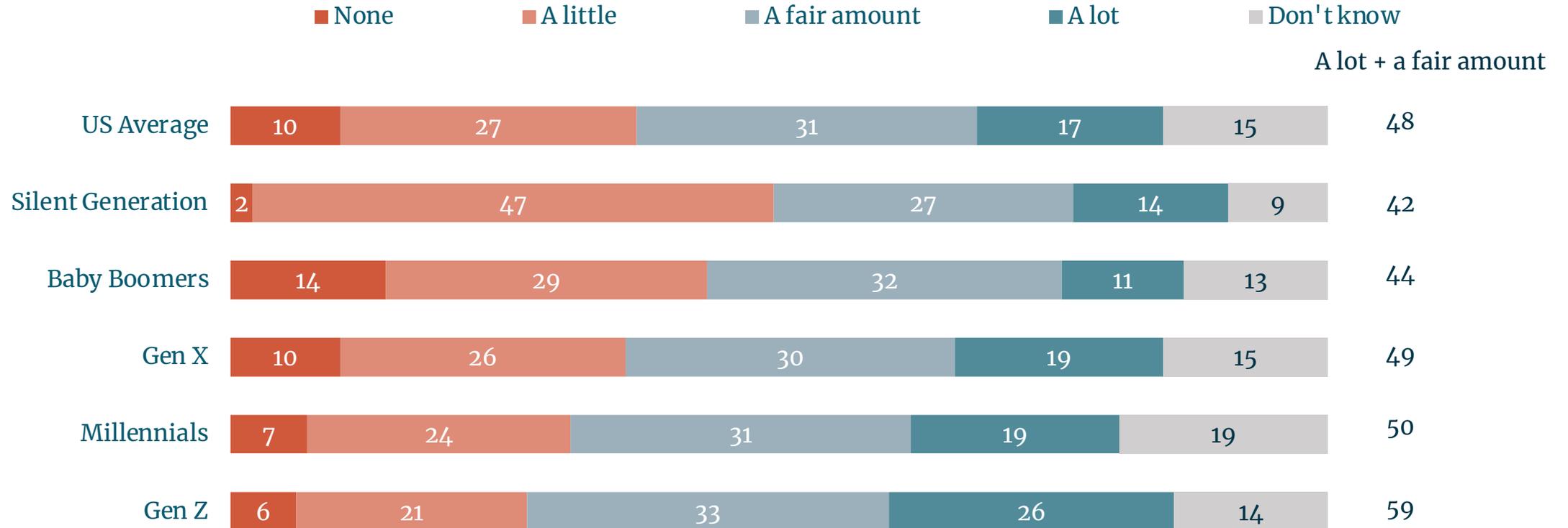
Numbers in %



Gen Z are more likely to say that Muslim Americans face a lot or a fair amount of prejudice in America today.

How much prejudice do Muslim Americans face in America today?

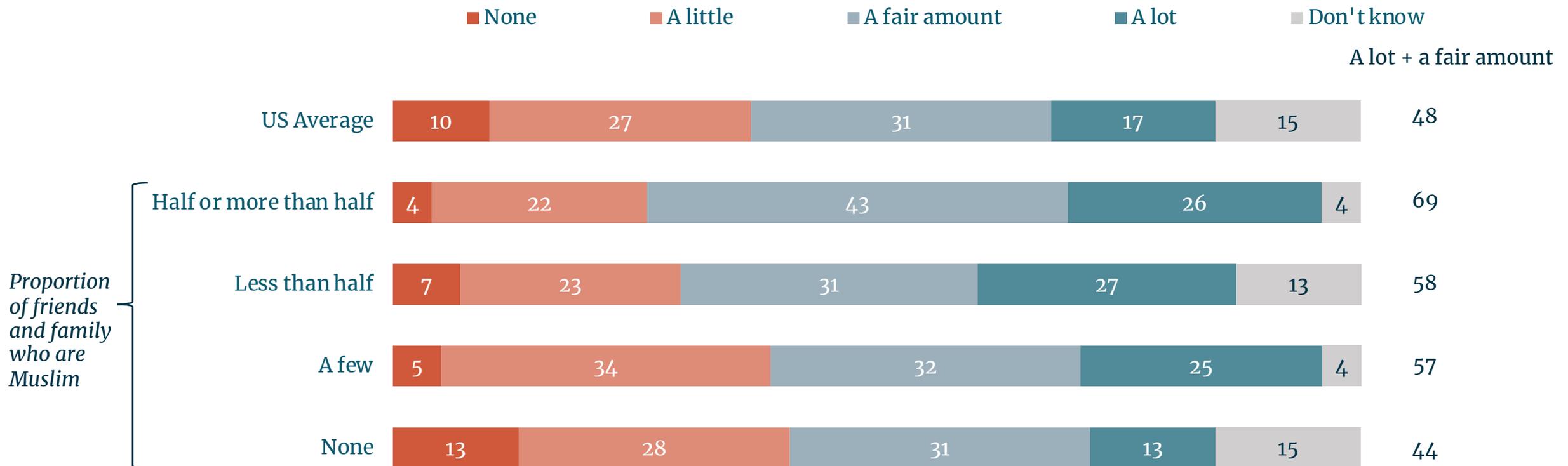
Numbers in %



Americans who have more Muslim friends or family are more likely to say that Muslim Americans face a lot or a fair amount of prejudice in the country today.

How much prejudice do Muslim Americans face in America today?

Numbers in %



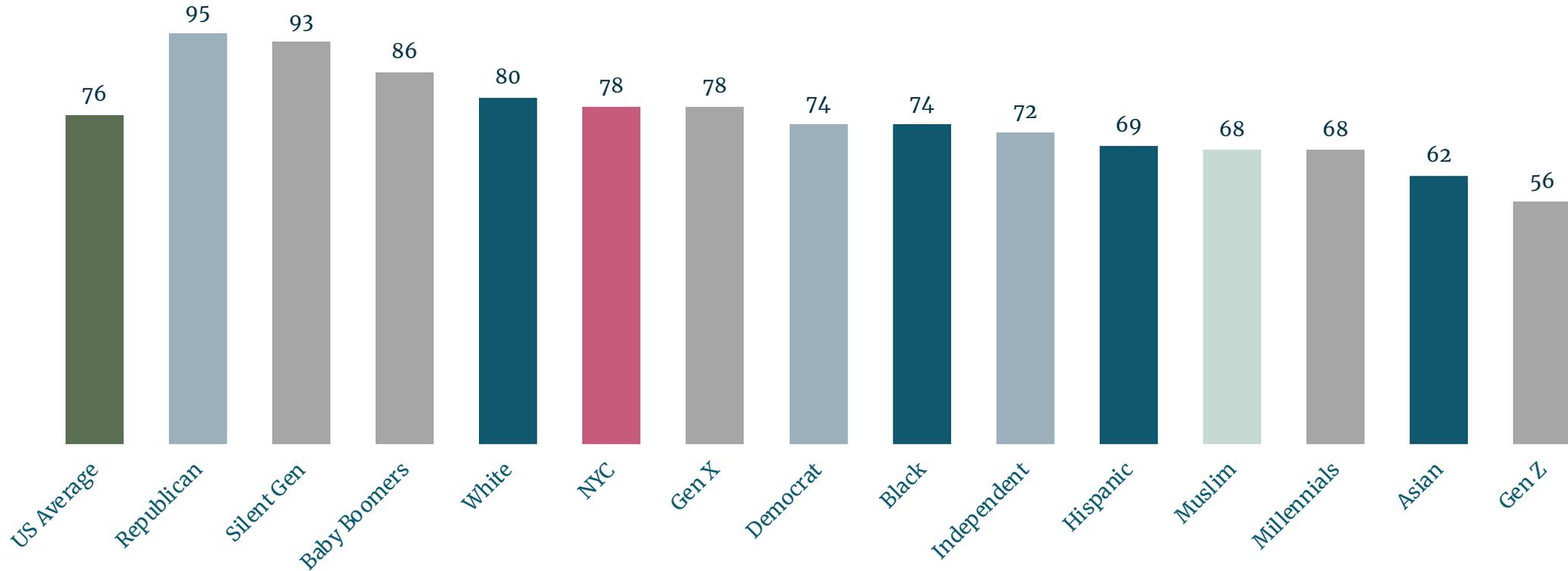
On the other hand, most Americans feel proud to be American and accepted in US society.

American pride in fact correlates with feelings of acceptance.

Most Americans feel proud to be American. Republicans and older Americans are most likely to say that they are proud, whereas Gen Z are least likely to feel proud to be American.

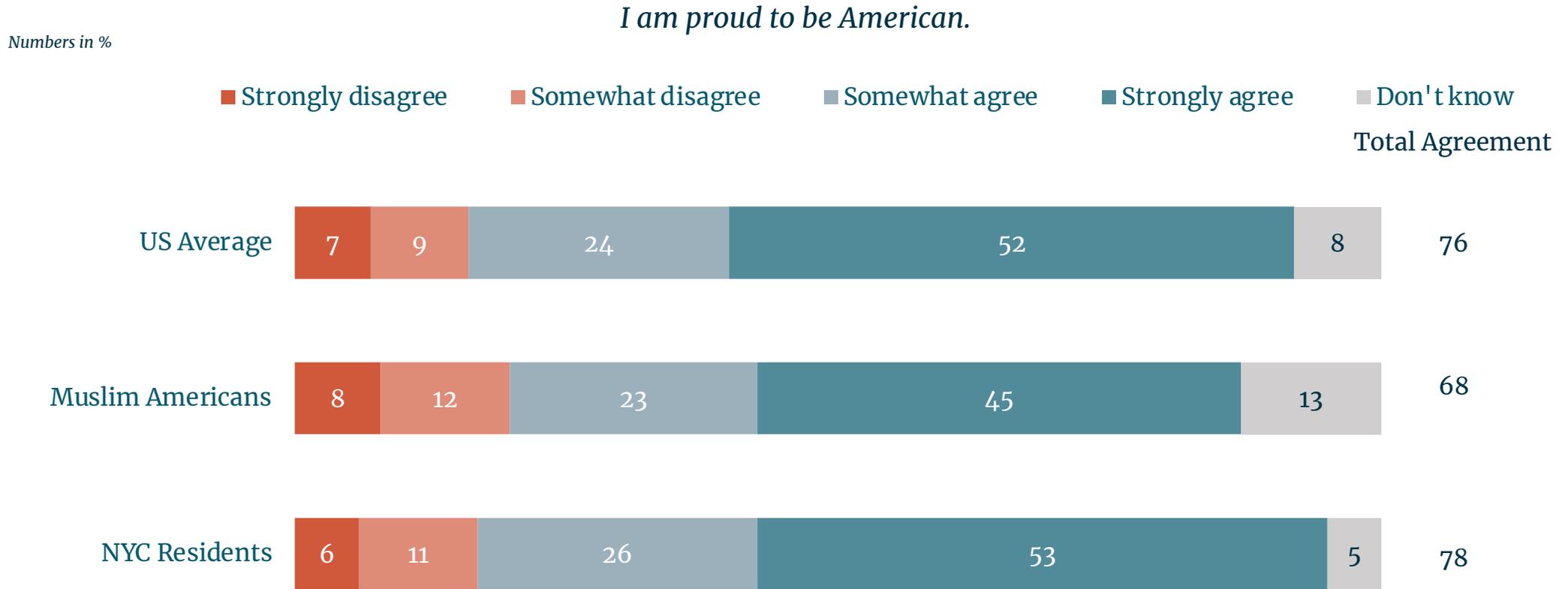
*Somewhat + Strongly
agree %*

I am proud to be American.



Survey question: Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Over two thirds of Muslim Americans and almost 8 in 10 New Yorkers are proud to be American.

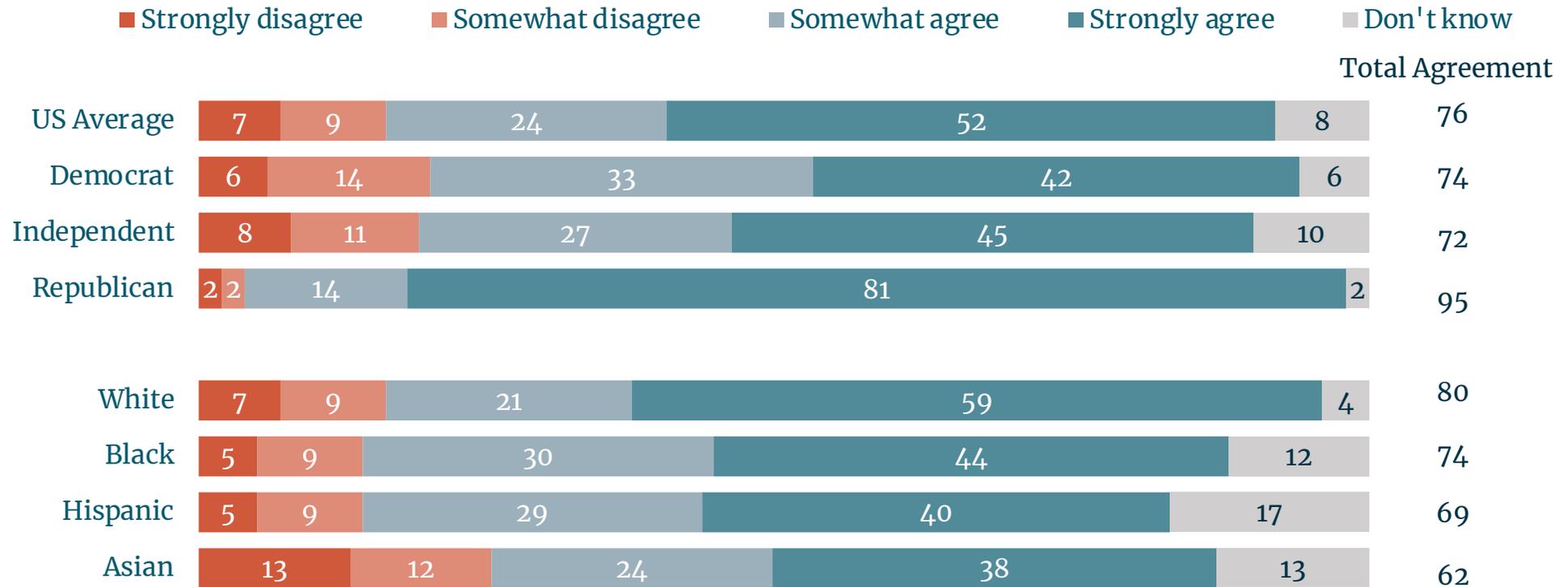


Survey question: Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Feelings of American pride persist across political affiliation and racial groups. 8 in 10 Republicans strongly agree that they feel proud to be American.

Numbers in %

I am proud to be American.

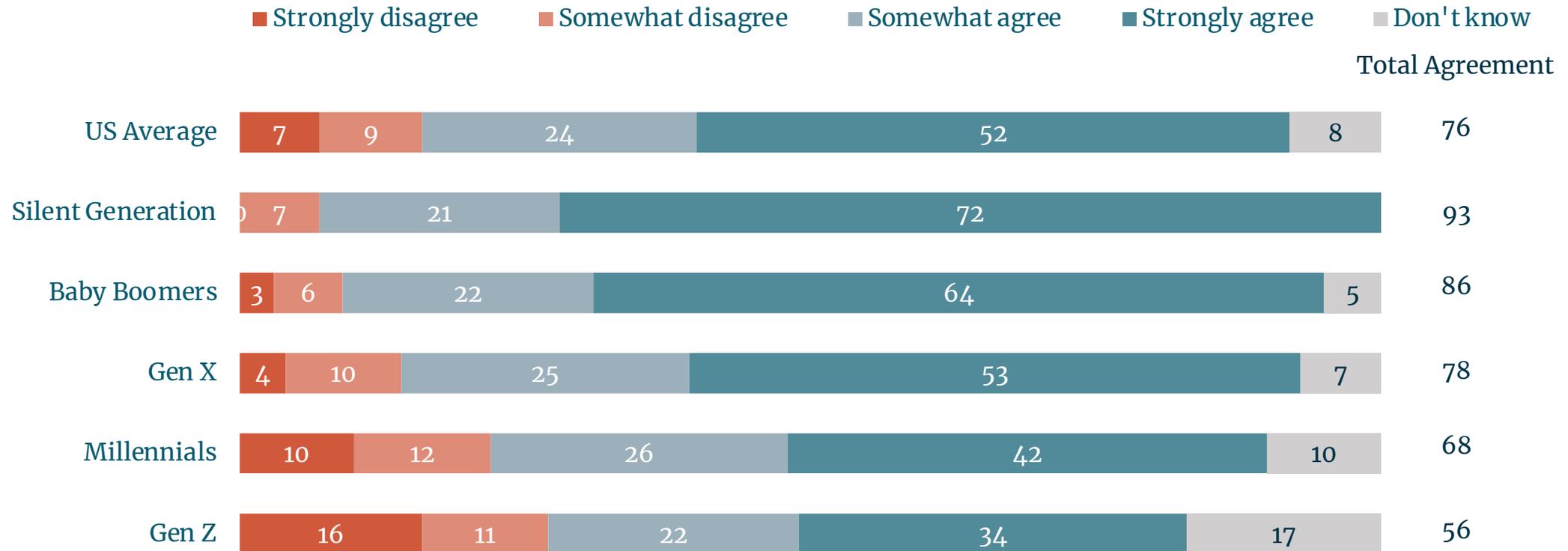


Survey question: Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Although the majority of Americans from each generation feels proud to be American, younger Americans are less likely to feel proud.

I am proud to be American.

Numbers in %

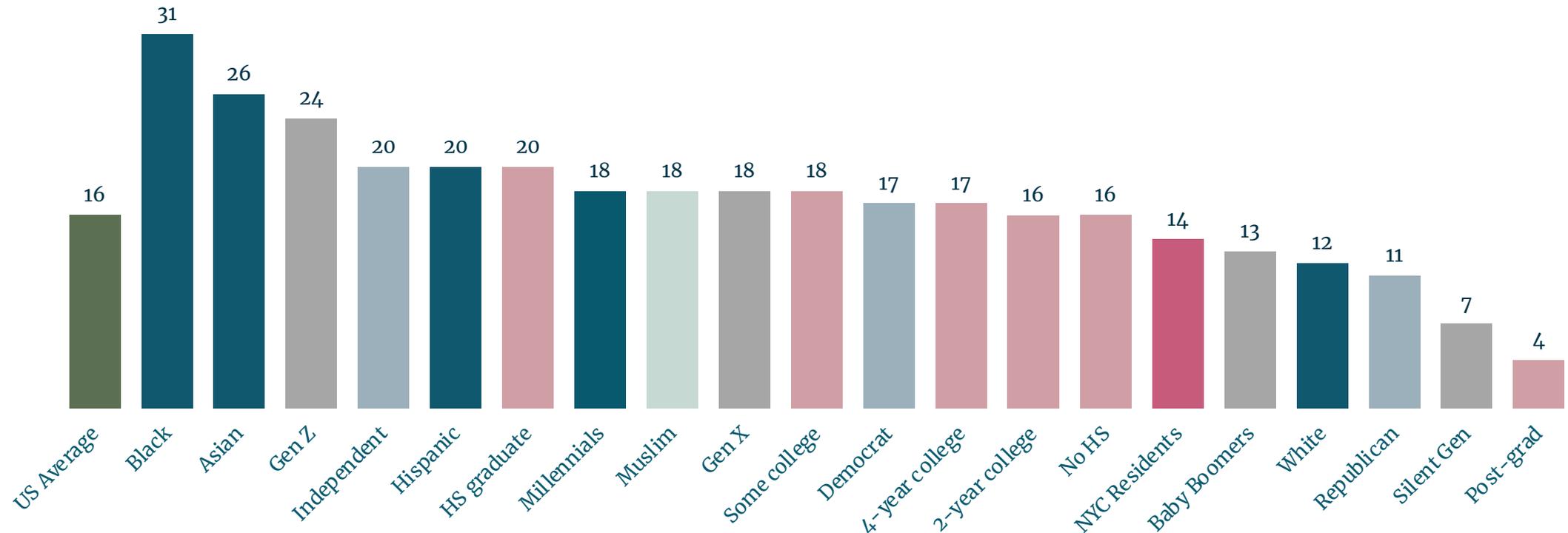


Survey question: Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Black Americans, Asian Americans, and Gen Z are most likely to feel that they are *not* accepted in US society.

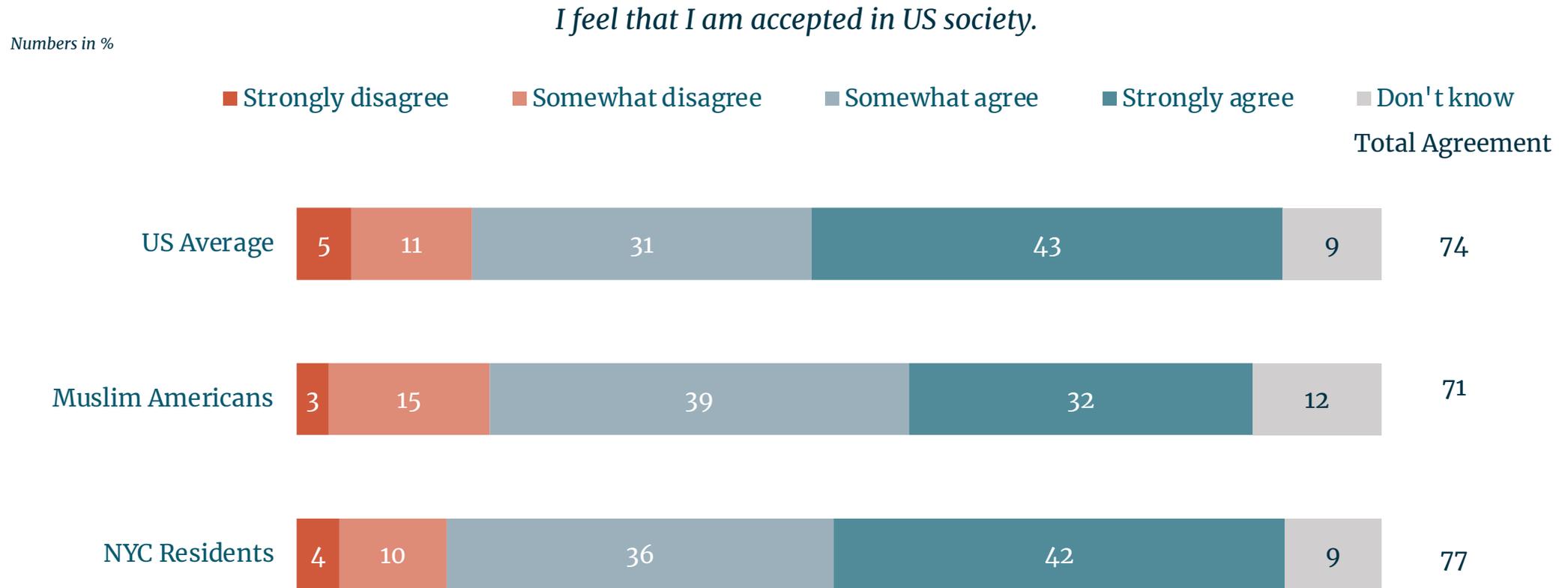
Somewhat + Strongly disagree %

I feel that I am accepted in US society.



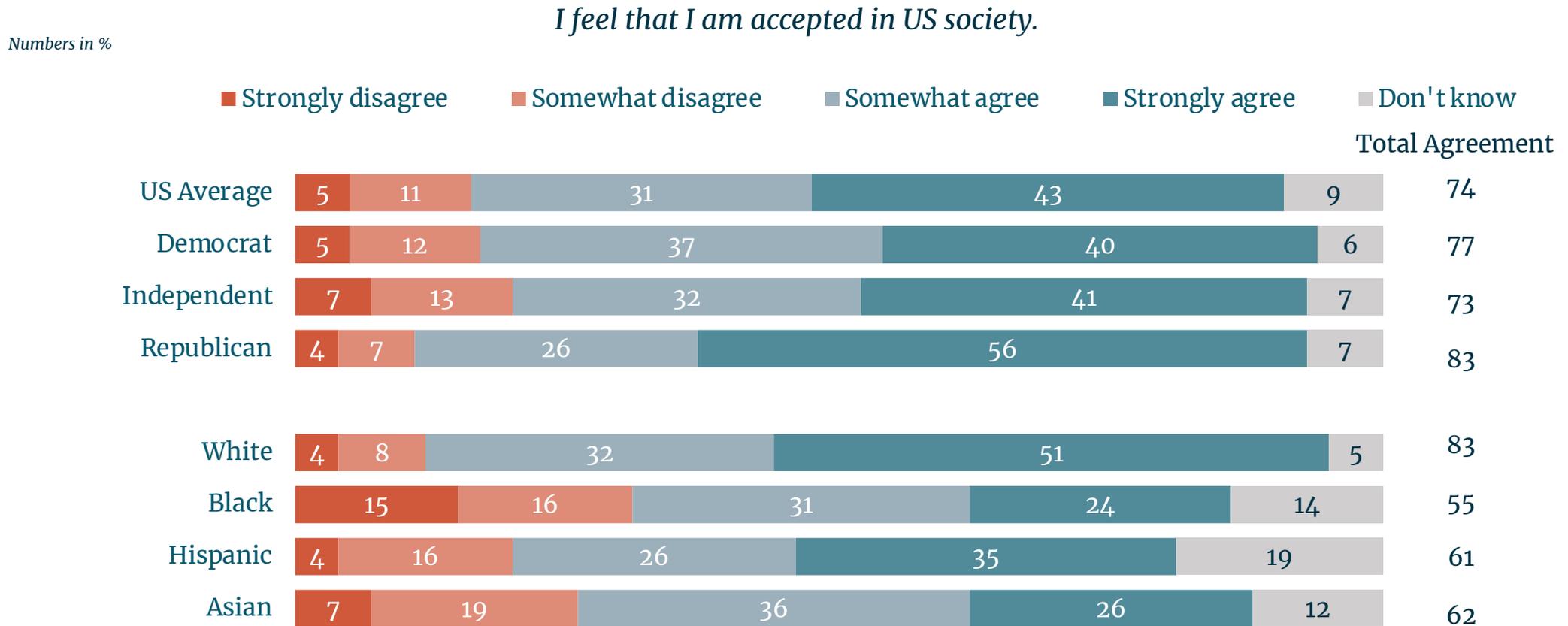
Survey question: Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Most Americans, including the majority of Muslim Americans, feel accepted in US society.



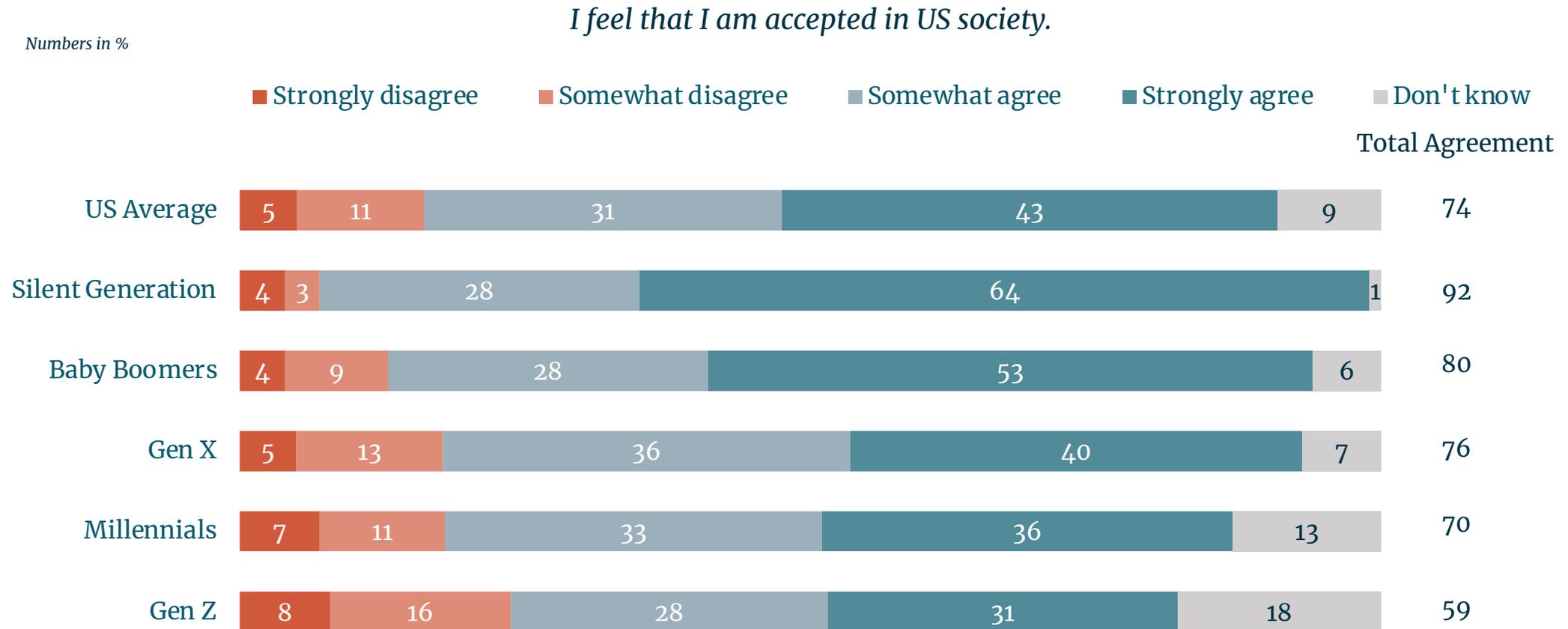
Survey question: Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

While the majority of each racial group feels accepted in US society, compared to white Americans, non-white Americans are less likely to feel accepted.



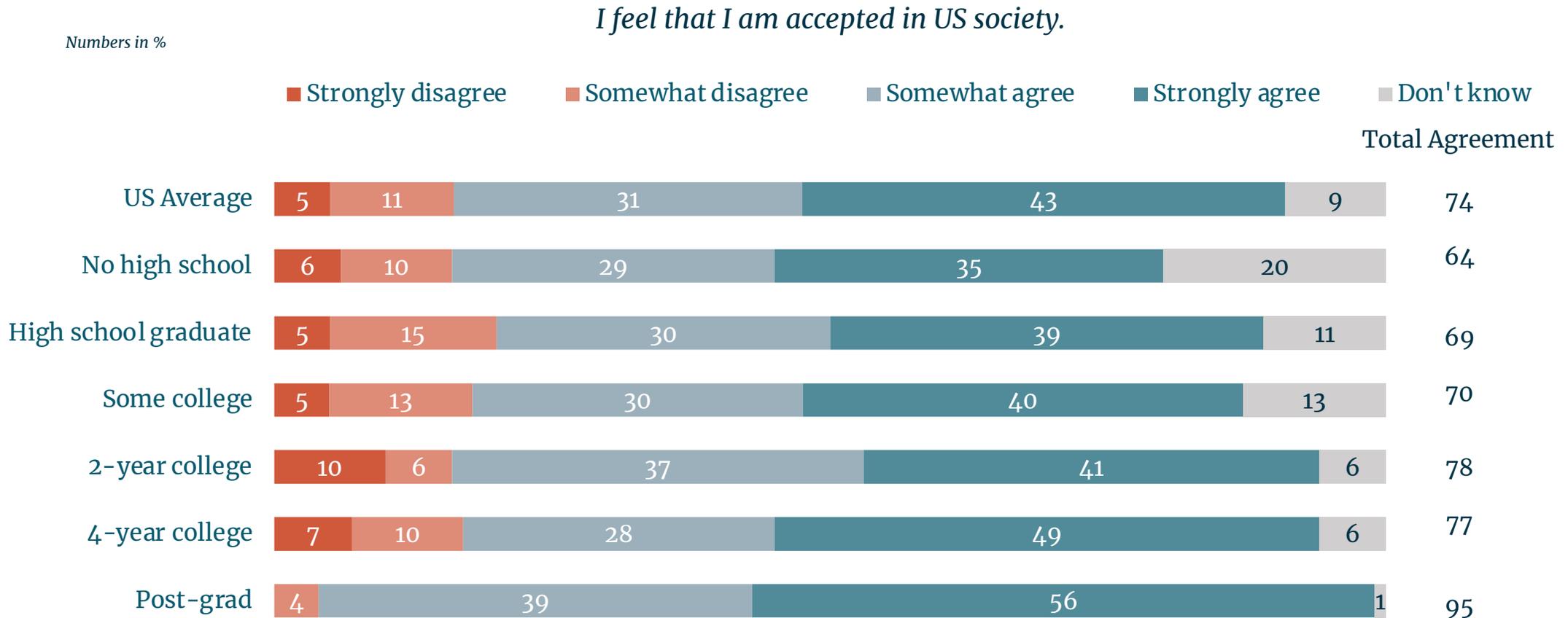
Survey question: Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Almost one fifth of Gen Z are not sure if they are accepted in US society.



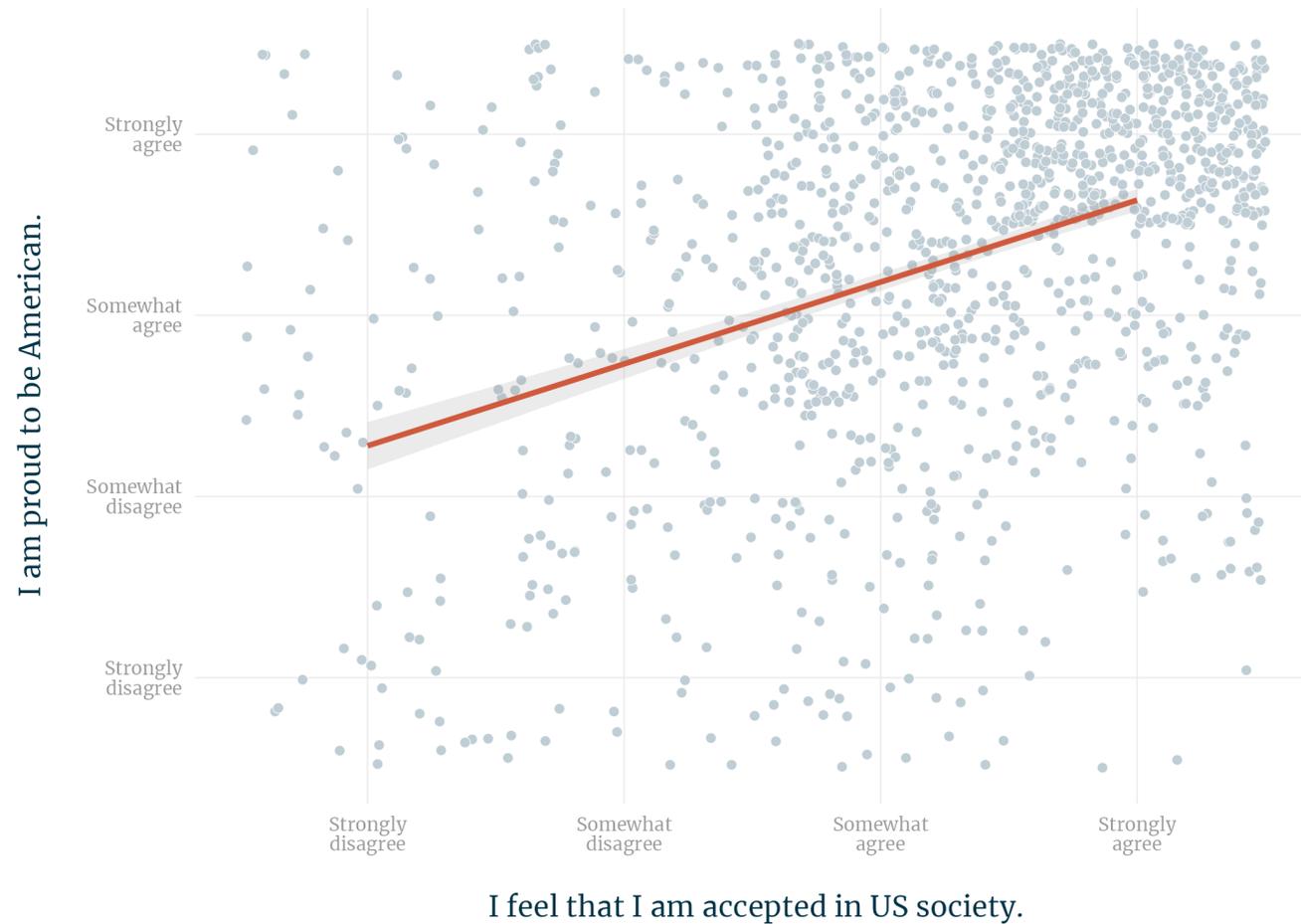
Survey question: Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Americans with higher levels of education are more likely to feel accepted in US society.



Survey question: Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Feeling proud to be American is strongly associated with feeling accepted in US society.



Survey question: Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

$r = .42, p < .001$. Shaded region indicates 95% confidence interval. Points indicate jittered individual data points.

Americans who strongly agree that they are accepted in US society are more assured in what Americans are supposed to never forget, when it comes to the 9/11 attacks.

Numbers in %

100

Which of the following statements best reflect what you think Americans are supposed to never forget? Select all that apply.

80

60

40

20

0

- Average
- Strongly agree on feeling accepted in US society
- Somewhat agree on feeling accepted in US society
- Somewhat disagree on feeling accepted in US society
- Strongly disagree on feeling accepted in US society



Thank you

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