

The Priority Gap

Insights on the 2024 Election Outcome



November 2024

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SECTION 1

Introduction



**More in
Common**

The research in this publication was conducted by More in Common US, a nonpartisan research nonprofit that works to understand the forces driving us apart, find common ground, and bring people together to address shared challenges.

Established in 2017, More in Common US is part of a nonpartisan, international initiative aimed at building societies and communities that are stronger, more united and more resilient to the increasing threats of polarization and social division.

We work with over 200 groups in civil society, business, faith, education, philanthropy to connect people across lines of division.

More in Common's work has been featured in hundreds of media articles in the US and Europe and we use our research to brief senior political leaders, governments and leaders in nonprofits, philanthropy, business and the community.

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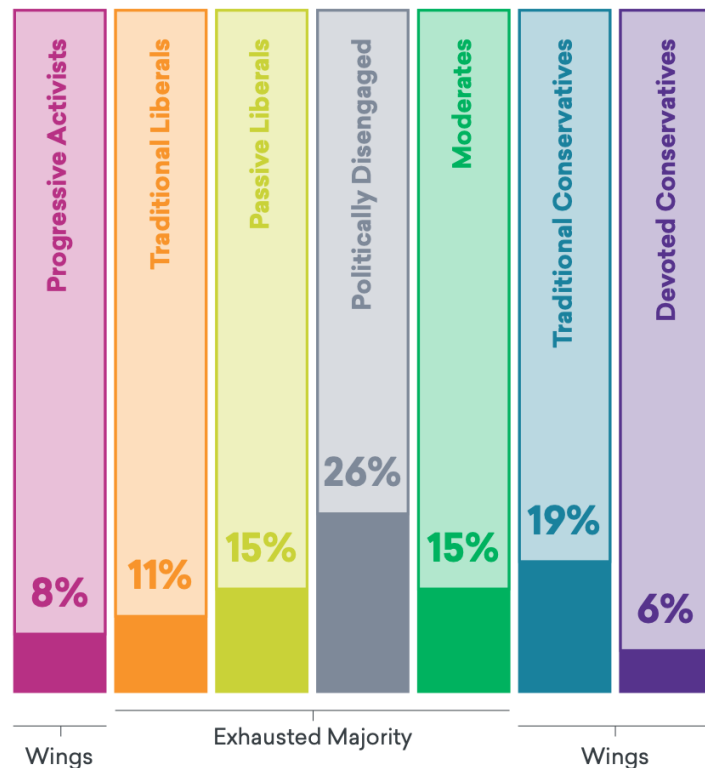
Methodology

More in Common conducted online survey interviews among a representative sample of 5,005 adults from November 7th to 13th, 2024. The data was weighted to be representative according to gender/age interlocked, ethnicity, education level, region, and 2024 Presidential vote and turnout. The margin of error (adjusted for weighting) is +/- 1.4 for the US average and is higher for subgroups.

Note: Numbers in data visualizations are rounded to the nearest whole number. Figures may total to larger or smaller than one-hundred percent due to rounding. Unless otherwise noted, all figures indicate %.

To make longitudinal comparisons, we reference More in Common's 2018 Hidden Tribes, 2019 Perception Gap, June 2024 Social Connection, and October 2024 Immigration surveys. For more information on the methodology of previous More in Common studies cited in this report, please visit www.moreincommonus.com.

More in Common's 'Hidden Tribes' segmentation of Americans



In 2018, More in Common surveyed 8,000 Americans and used a statistical process called hierarchical clustering to identify groups of people with similar core beliefs. This revealed seven groups of Americans—what we call Hidden Tribes—with distinctive views and values. Our breakdown of Americans into groups is tied to how they express their core beliefs, which isn't necessarily aligned with conventional demographic measures.

- **Progressive Activists:** younger, highly engaged, secular, cosmopolitan, angry.
- **Traditional Liberals:** older, retired, open to compromise, rational, cautious.
- **Passive Liberals:** unhappy, insecure, distrustful, disillusioned.
- **Politically Disengaged:** young, low income, distrustful, detached, patriotic, conspiratorial.
- **Moderates:** engaged, civic-minded, middle-of-the-road, pessimistic, Protestant.
- **Traditional Conservatives:** religious, middle class, patriotic.
- **Devoted Conservatives:** white, retired, highly engaged, uncompromising, patriotic.

Read more about this segmentation at hiddentribes.us.

About this study

In this survey of 5,005 Americans after the 2024 election, More in Common asked Americans about their vote choice, their top issues, their perceptions of the opposing political party, and other subjects related to the country and the American people.

As a nonpartisan nonprofit, More in Common's motivations for studying the 2024 election are:

- To capture how values and worldviews shape Americans' political beliefs and relate to division.
- To measure misperceptions between groups and explore how they explain decisions.
- To identify underappreciated commonalities – and opportunities – that allow us to build on common ground and strengthen American democracy.

Our post-election analysis suggests that misperceptions played a key role in voter behavior.

Key Findings

- 1. Inflation is the top concern for all types of Americans, and they believe it's a higher priority for Republicans than Democrats.**
 - Every major demographic group holds inflation as a top concern: men and women, Americans of all racial backgrounds, generations, geographic regions, classes and political parties. On average, the economy ranks second and immigration third.
 - When asked about Republicans' priorities, Americans perceive inflation and the economy as among their top three priorities.
 - However, when Americans are asked about Democrats' top priorities, inflation is only among the top six most selected issues, and the economy comes ninth.
- 2. Perceptions of parties' priorities appear to be influenced by the parties' ideological wings.***
 - Most groups, including Republicans themselves, slightly overestimate how much Republicans are focused on immigration. However, it is the most common priority for Devoted Conservatives (the most highly-engaged part of the Republican base), 65% of whom selected it.
 - Americans also appear to conflate Democrats' priorities with those of Progressive Activists, the left wing. While inflation is the most common priority for Democrats overall, among Progressive Activists the most common priorities are abortion (39%), climate change (39%), healthcare (32%), inequality (31%), inflation (26%), and LGBT/transgender policies (21%).
- 3. Across demographic groups, Americans misperceive transgender policy as a leading priority for Democrats.**
 - On average, Americans perceive LGBT/transgender policies as Democrats' second-highest priority (after abortion); in reality, LGBT/transgender policies are the 14th highest priority.
 - This misperception is held widely, including by key demographic groups such as Gen Z, Hispanics, and women.
 - Even the left-wing Progressive Activists rank LGBT/transgender policies as their sixth highest priority, suggesting that other causes explain its inflated prioritization, such as the Trump campaign attack ads on the subject.

*Defined in More in Common's *Hidden Tribes* segmentation of the US population as Progressive Activists and Devoted Conservatives: www.hiddentribes.us

Key Findings

4. Late deciders swung towards Trump.

- Voters who decided who to vote for in the final days before the election skewed towards Trump (57%) vs. Harris (39%).
- Representing 16% of all voters, 2024 late deciders were most common among the Politically Disengaged (23% decided in final days before the election), Millennials (25%), and Gen Z (25%), Hispanics (23%), and Black Americans (23%).
- Among Politically Disengaged voters, Trump's vote share remained steady with 2020 (24% in 2020; 25% in 2024); Democrat turnout from this group appears to have dropped (21% in 2020; 16% in 2024).
- Notably, many more of Donald Trump's voters are Politically Disengaged (22%) than right-wing Devoted Conservatives (7%).

5. Views on immigration, the leading non-economic issue for voters, are nuanced.

- 70% of Americans believe that the US-Mexico border is either an emergency (24%) or a major problem (46%).
- This reflects a concern about America being in control of immigration, rather than an anti-immigration sentiment. A clear majority of Americans (58%) support the US accepting refugees as well as orderly pathways for immigration into the US – including significant numbers of Republicans.
- Furthermore, 88% of Republicans believe that “properly controlled immigration can be good for America.”

6. Republicans' trust in elections doubled after Trump won the 2024 presidential election.

- After Trump won the 2024 presidential election, 50% of Republicans report trusting election officials, twice the trust level (24%) seen in June 2024.
- Trust also increased among Independents, growing from 34% to 42%.
- Democrats' trust levels remain similar from June 2024 to November 2024 post-election (63% vs 59%).

Key Findings

7. Americans of both parties underestimate how much common ground exists around American identity.

- Democrats estimate that just half (51%) of Republicans agree with the statement that “I’m proud to be American, though I acknowledge my country’s flaws.” In reality, Republicans overwhelmingly agree (94%).
- Similarly, Republicans estimate that half of Democrats agree with this statement, yet most Democrats agree (81%).
- Despite a harsh election and assassination attempts, Americans feel that we “need to heal as a nation” (67%) , rather than “to defeat the evil within our nation” (33%), an emphasis which has grown over recent years.

SECTION 2

Executive Summary

1. Inflation is the top concern for all types of Americans, and they believe it's a higher priority for Republicans than for Democrats.

Every major demographic group holds inflation as a top concern, followed by the economy and immigration. Americans perceive Republicans as sharing these top priorities, but not Democrats.

US avg. Actual priorities*	Republicans		Democrats	
	Actual priorities*	Perceived Priorities**	Actual Priorities*	Perceived Priorities**
Inflation (49%)	Inflation (57%)	Immigration (54%)	Inflation (40%)	Abortion (49%)
Economy (32%)	Immigration (47%)	Economy (33%)	Healthcare (29%)	LGBT/trans. policy (34%)
Immigration (27%)	Economy (41%)	Inflation (32%)	Abortion (29%)	Climate change (22%)

Note: Perceived priorities represent US average. Showing top 3 issues of 22 total.

*Question: Which of these issues are most important to you? Please select up to 3 issues.

**Question: Now we'd like you to say which issues you think are most important to [Democrats/ Republicans]. Please select the top 3 issues you think are most important to [Democrats/ Republicans].

2. Perceptions of parties' priorities are shaped by the parties' ideological wings.

Americans' estimates of Republicans' priorities more closely resemble those of the Republican right wing, Devoted Conservatives. Similarly, Americans also appear to conflate Democrats' priorities with those of Progressive Activists, the left wing of Democratic voters.

Republicans		Democrats	
Devoted Conservatives' Priorities*	US avg. Perceived Republican Priorities**	Progressive Activists' Priorities*	US avg. Perceived Democrat Priorities**
Immigration (65%)	Immigration (54%)	Climate change (39%)	Abortion (49%)
Inflation (47%)	Economy (33%)	Abortion (39%)	LGBT/trans. policy (34%)
Economy (46%)	Inflation (32%)	Healthcare (32%)	Climate change (22%)

Note: Perceived priorities represent US average. Showing top 3 issues of 22 total.

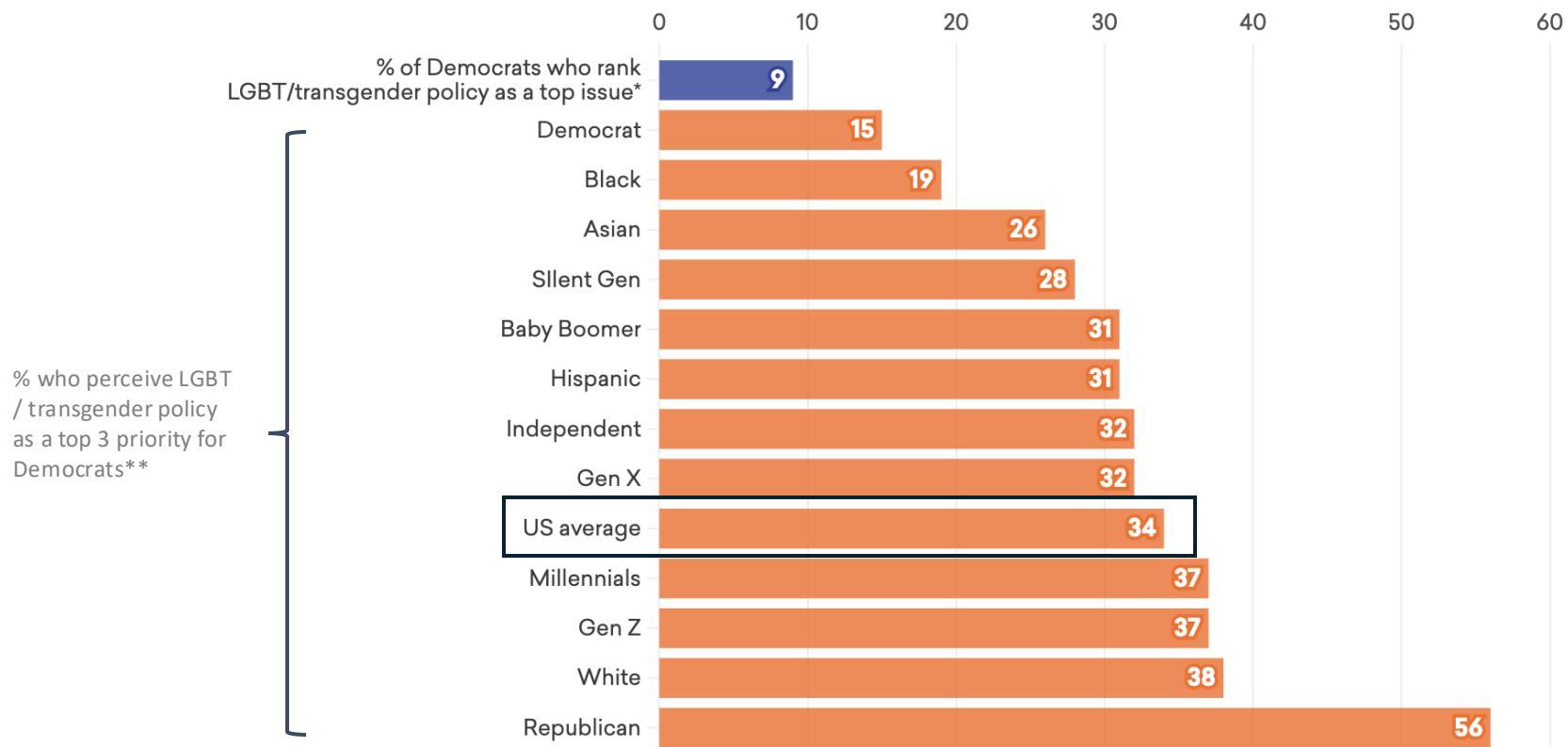
*Question: Which of these issues are most important to you? Please select up to 3 issues.

**Question: Now we'd like you to say which issues you think are most important to [Democrats/ Republicans]. Please select the top 3 issues you think are most important to [Democrats/ Republicans].

More in Common; N=5,005; November 7-13, 2024

3. Across demographic groups, Americans misperceive LGBT/transgender policy as a leading priority for Democrats.

On average, Americans perceive LGBT/transgender policies as Democrats' second-highest priority, when in fact it ranks 14th. This misperception is held widely but is especially large among Republicans.

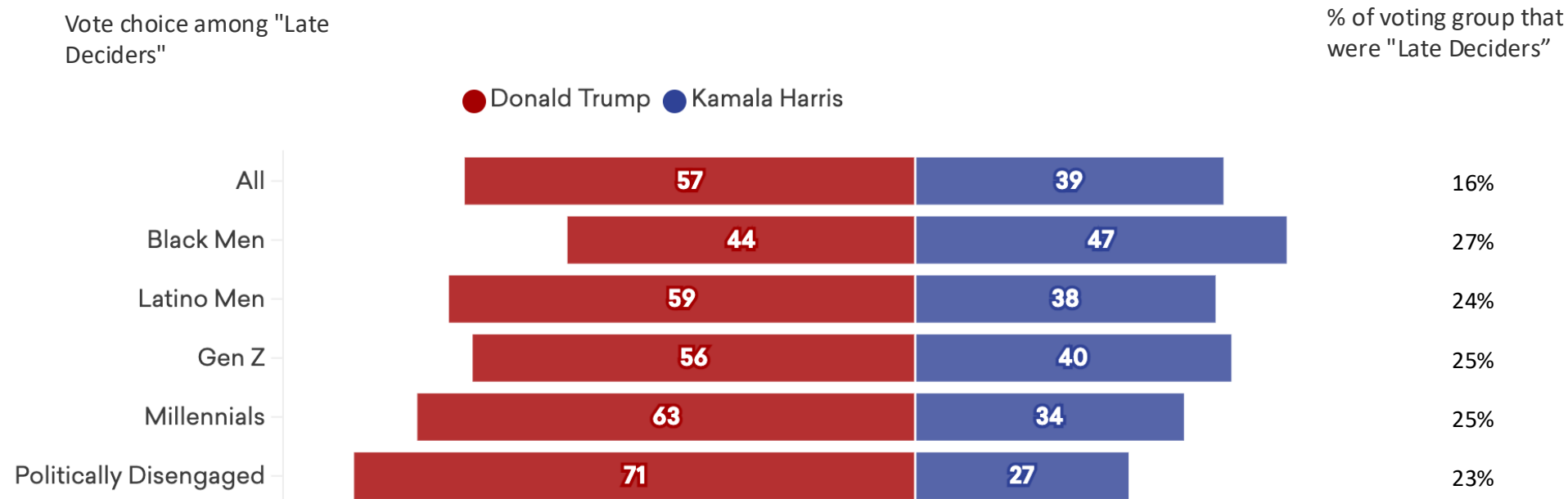


*Question: Which of these issues are most important to you? Please select up to 3 issues.

**Question: Now we'd like you to say which issues you think are most important to Democrats. Please select the top 3 issues you think are most important to Democrats.

4. Late deciders swung towards Trump.

Voters who decided who to vote for in the final days before the election skewed towards Trump vs. Harris almost 3 to 2. Representing 16% of all voters in 2024, these “late deciders” were most common among the Politically Disengaged, Gen Z, Millennials, Hispanic men and Black men.



Questions: When did you decide who to vote for in the 2024 presidential election? Who did you vote for in the election for President in 2024?

Note: "Late Decider" includes only 2024 voters who made their choice for president either "A few days before Election Day" or "On Election Day".

More in Common; N=5,005; November 7-13, 2024

5. Views on immigration, the leading non-economic issue for voters, are nuanced.

7 in 10 Americans believe that the US-Mexico border situation is either an emergency or a major problem. This reflects widely-shared concerns about control of the immigration system, rather than a widely-shared anti-immigrant sentiment. Indeed, 6 in 10 remain supportive of accepting refugees – including significant numbers of Republicans.

How do you personally think about the situation at the U.S. border with Mexico? Is it a(n)...

● Emergency ● Major problem ● Minor problem ● Not a problem



In general, do you support or oppose the United States accepting refugees?

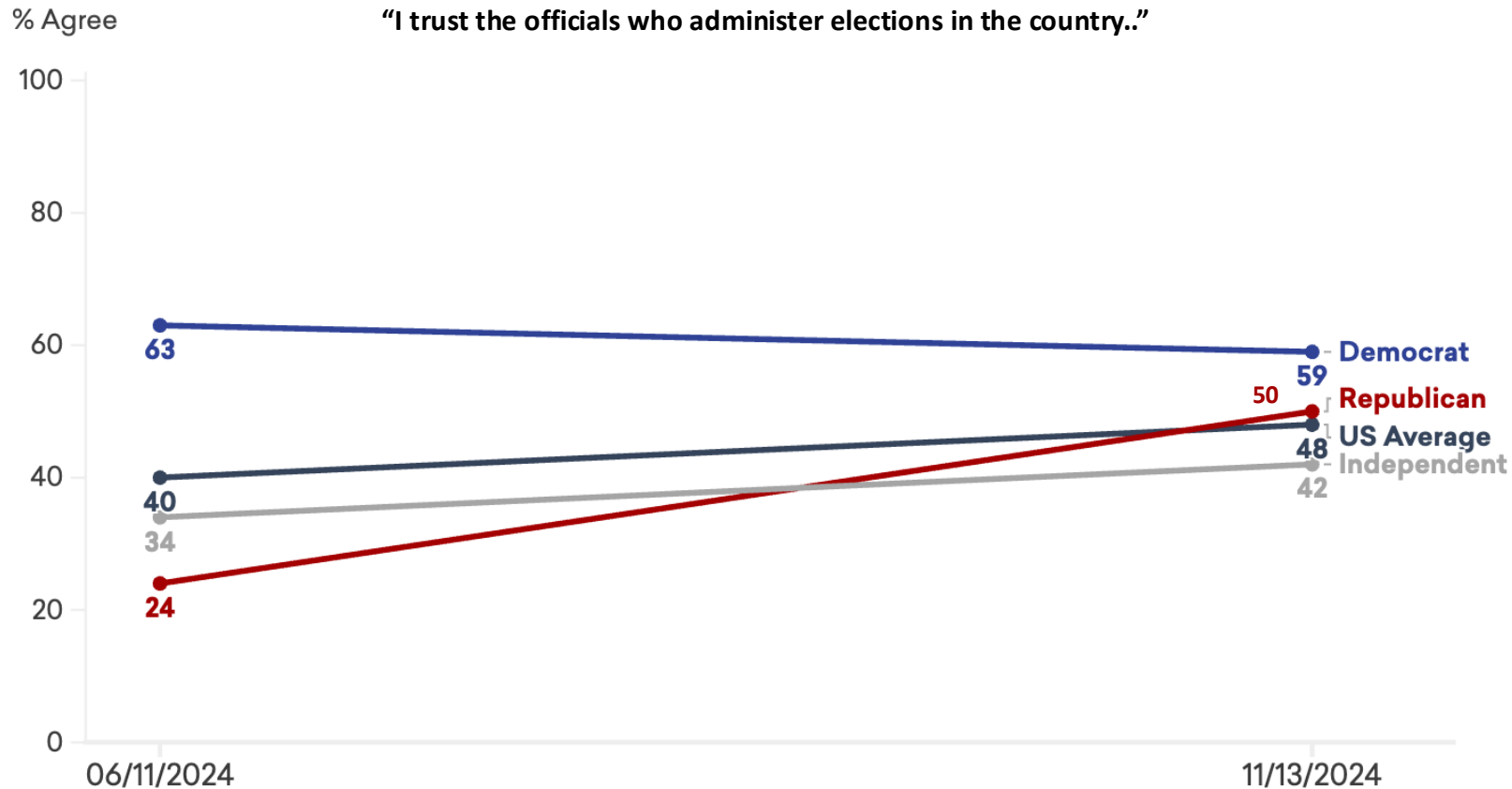
● Strongly support ● Somewhat support ● Somewhat oppose ● Strongly oppose



6. Republicans' trust in elections doubled after Trump won the 2024 presidential election.



After Trump won the 2024 election, 50% of Republicans report trusting election officials, twice the trust level seen in June 2024. Trust also increased among Independents, growing from 34% to 42%.

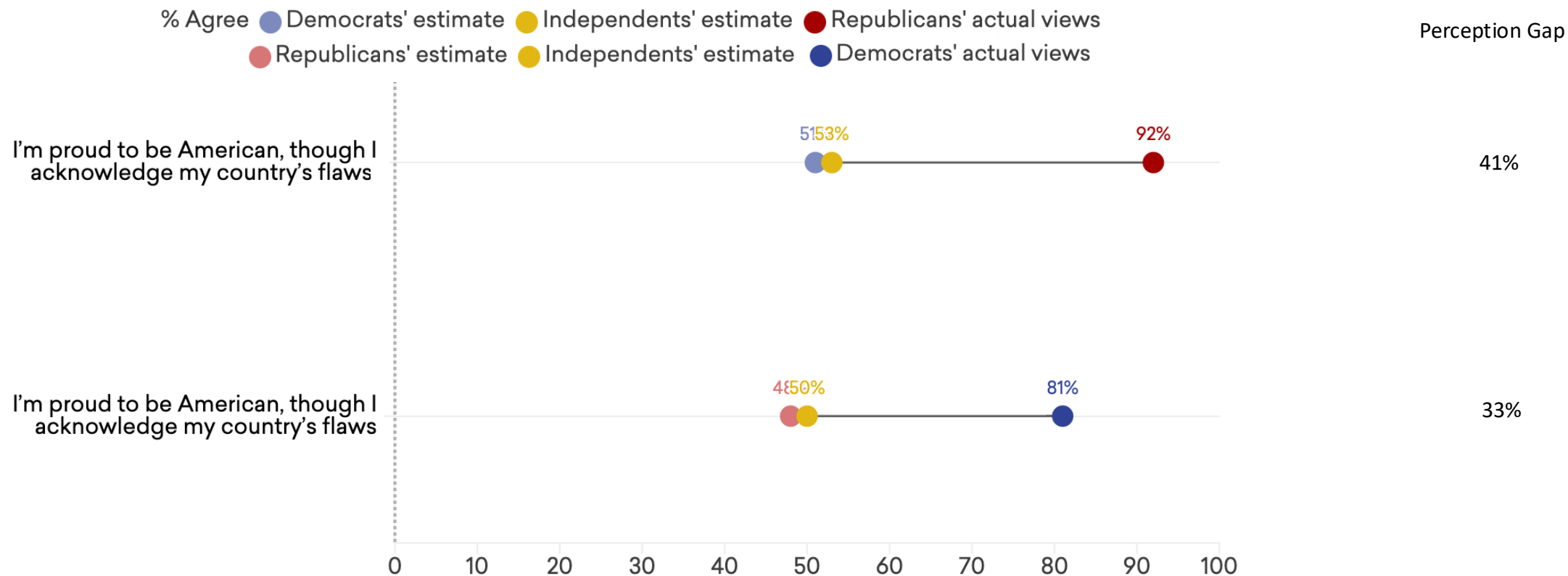


Question: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

More in Common; N=5,005; November 7-13, 2024

7. Americans of both parties underestimate how much common ground exists around American identity

Republicans massively underestimate Democrats' pride in being American, while Democrats greatly underestimate Republicans' willingness to recognize the country's weaknesses.



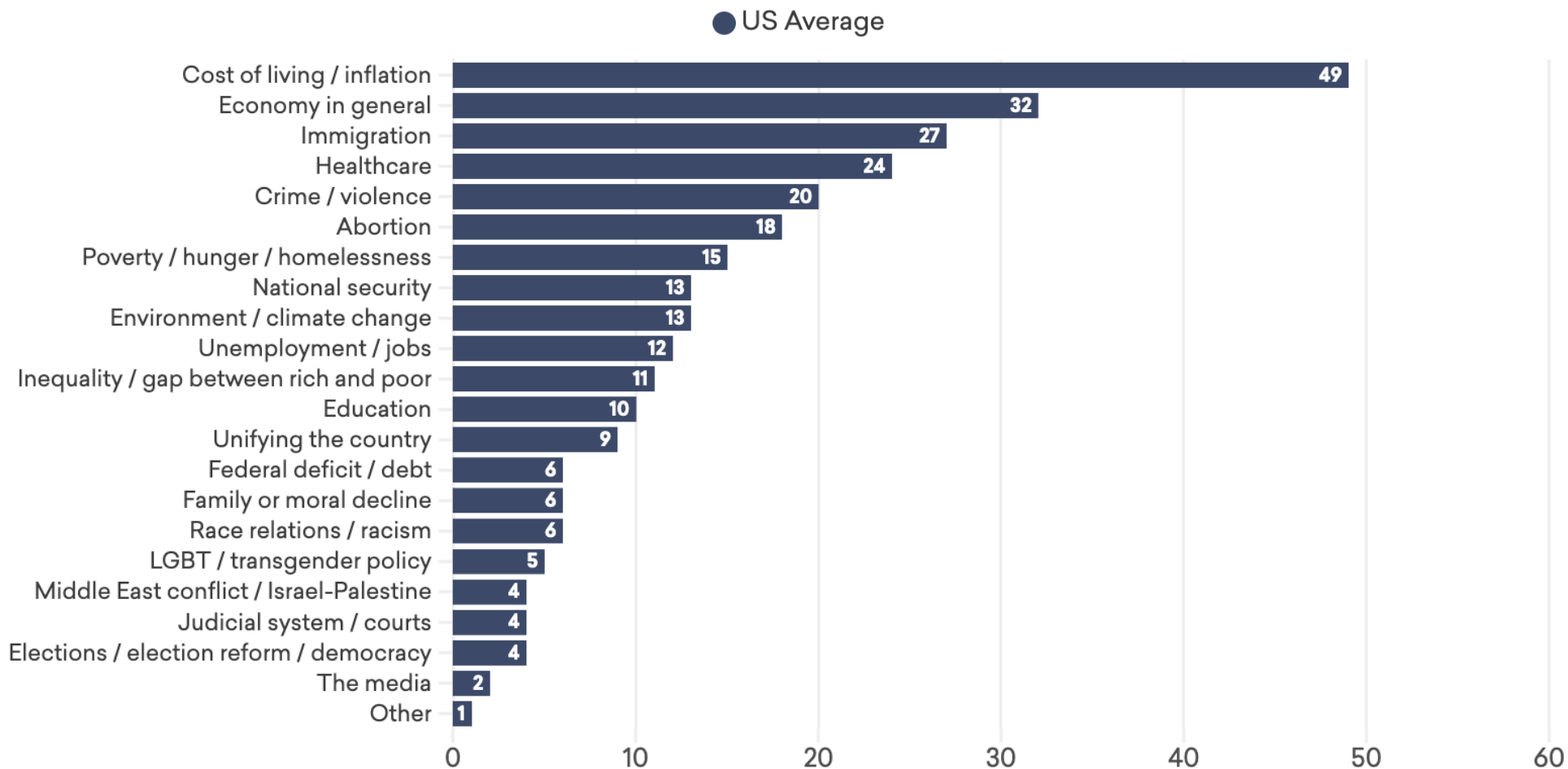
Note: Perception gaps are the disparities between what Democrats and Republicans imagine the other side to believe and what that side actually believes. Perception gaps are the absolute difference between Democrats' or Republicans' estimate of the views of the other party and their actual views.

SECTION 3

How Americans Misunderstand Party Priorities

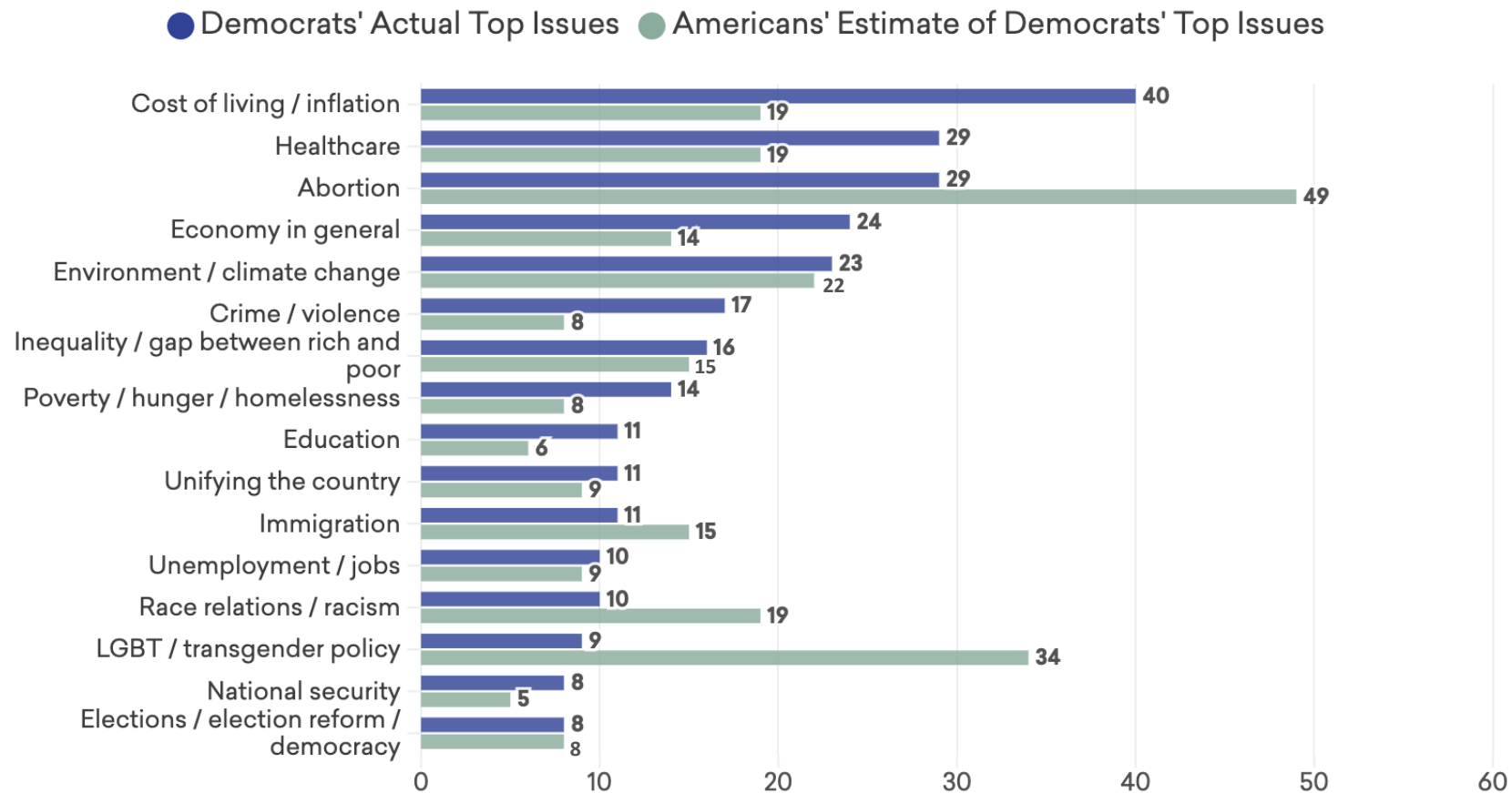
Americans care most about economic issues, immigration, and healthcare.

Question: Which of these issues are most important to you? Please select up to 3 issues.



Americans overestimate the importance that Democrats give to abortion, LGBT/transgender policy, and addressing racism.

Question: Which of these issues are most important to you? Please select up to 3 issues. Now we'd like you to say which issues you think are most important to Democrats. Please select the top 3 issues you think are most important to Democrats.

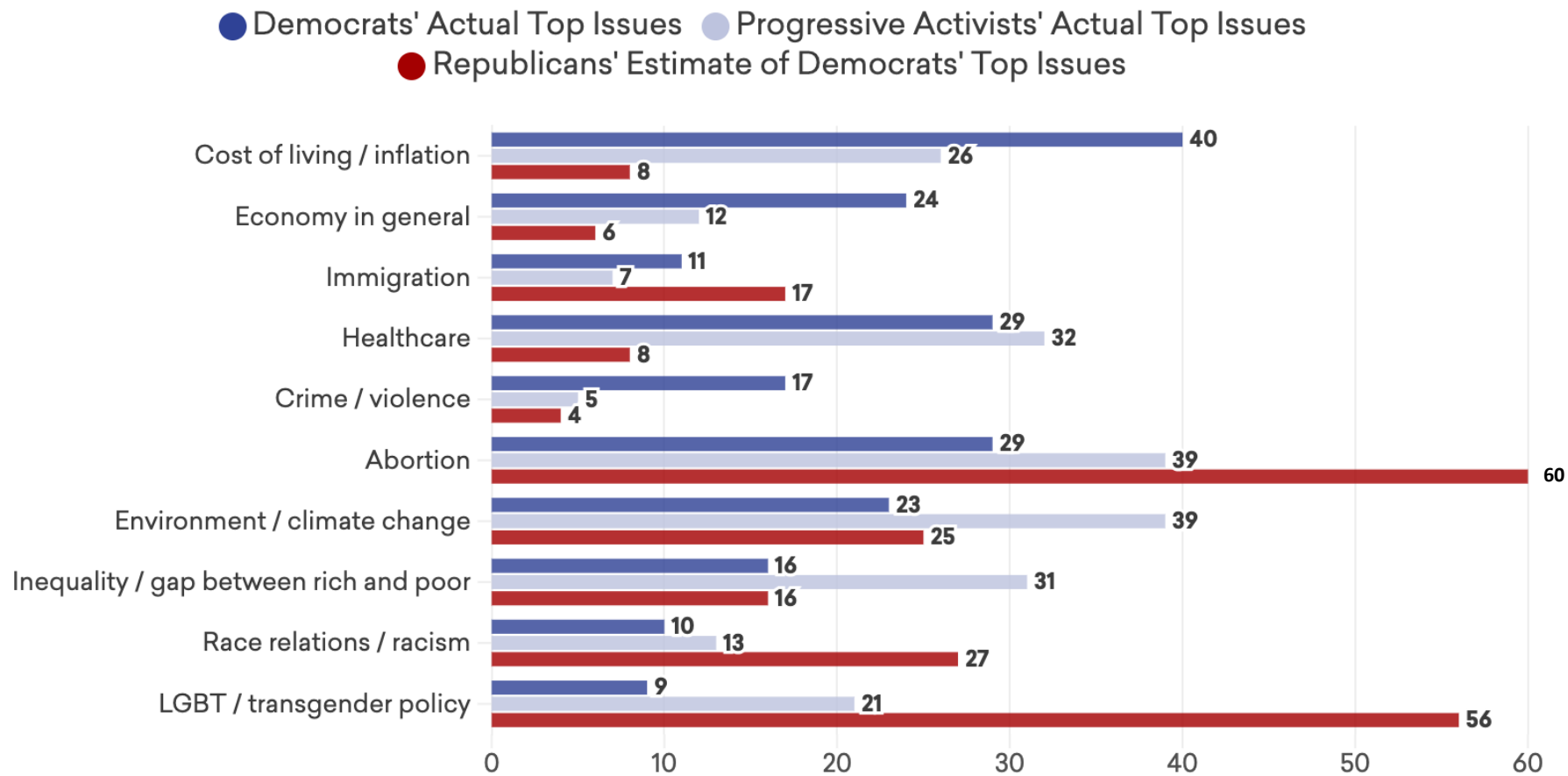


Note: Showing top 16 issues of 22 total.

More in Common; N=5,005; November 7-13, 2024

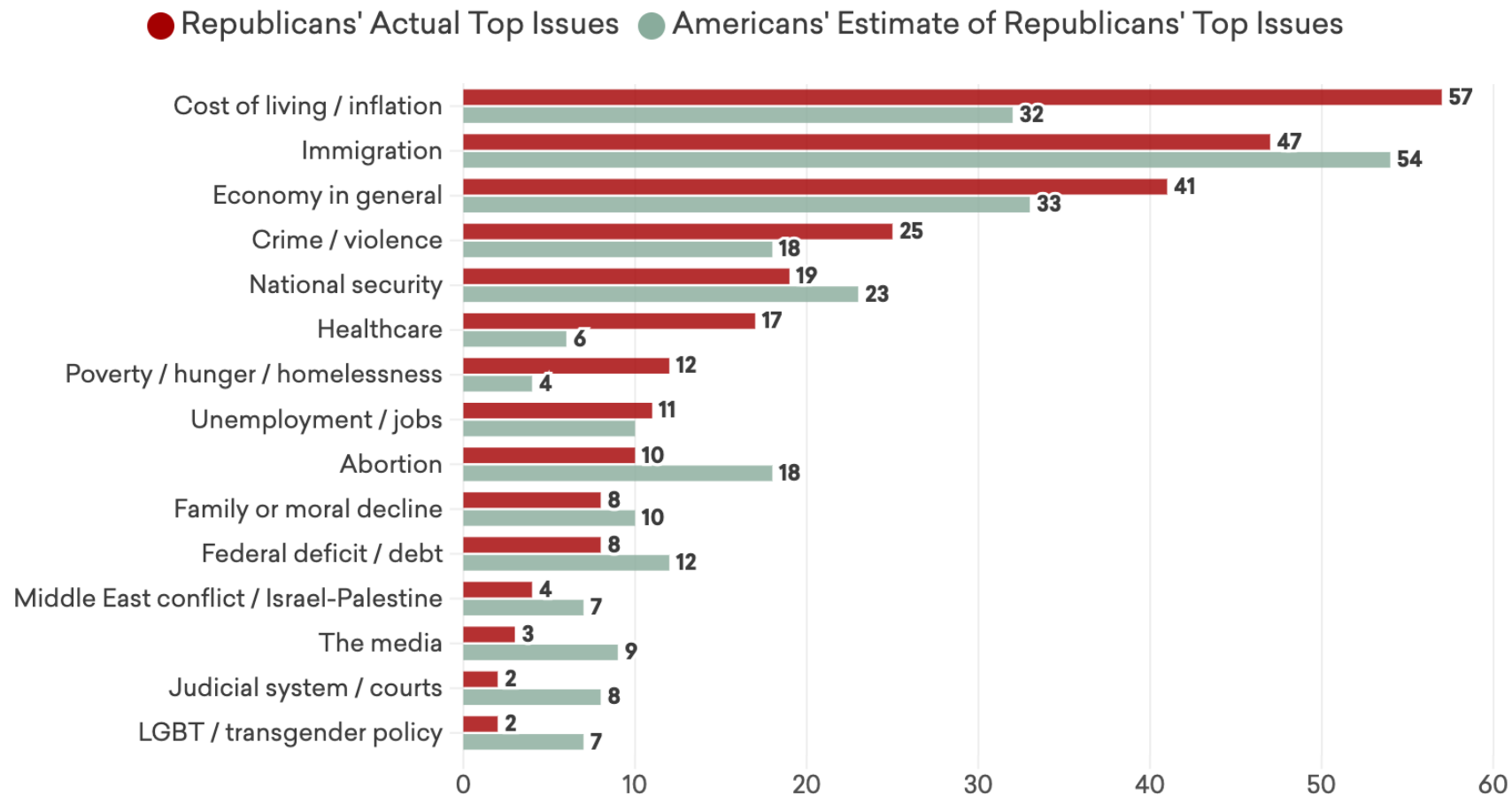
Republicans' perception of Democrats' priorities appears to be influenced by those of Progressive Activists.

Question: [Democratic respondents] Which of these issues are most important to you? Please select up to 3 issues. [Republican respondents] Now we'd like you to say which issues you think are most important to Democrats. Please select the top 3 issues you think are most important to Democrats.



Americans are more accurate about Republicans than Democrats, but wrongly estimate that Republicans' top issue is immigration.

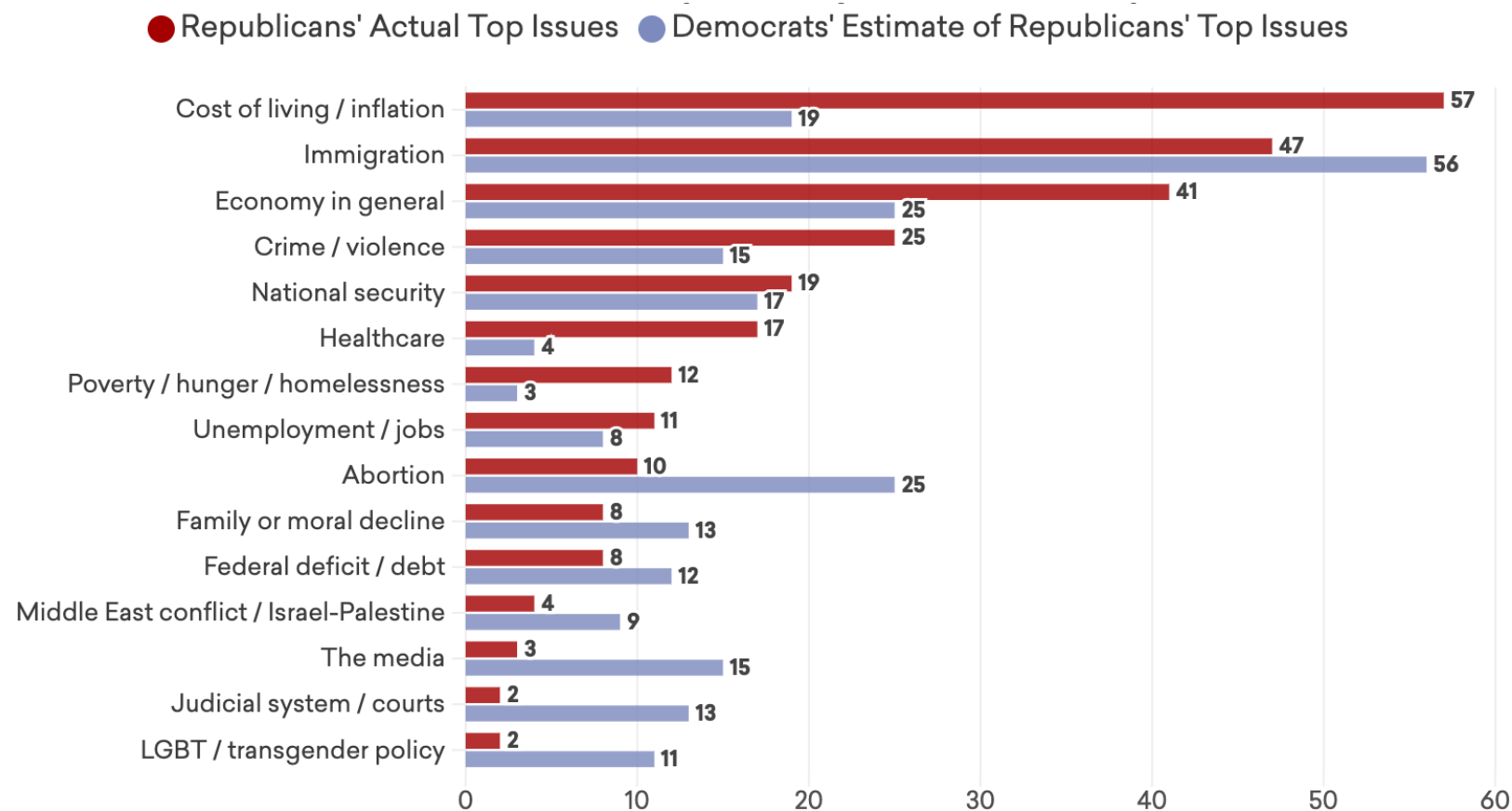
Question: Which of these issues are most important to you? Please select up to 3 issues. Now we'd like you to say which issues you think are most important to Republicans. Please select the top 3 issues you think are most important to Republicans.



Democrats underestimate Republicans' focus on economic issues and overestimate their prioritization of abortion and immigration.

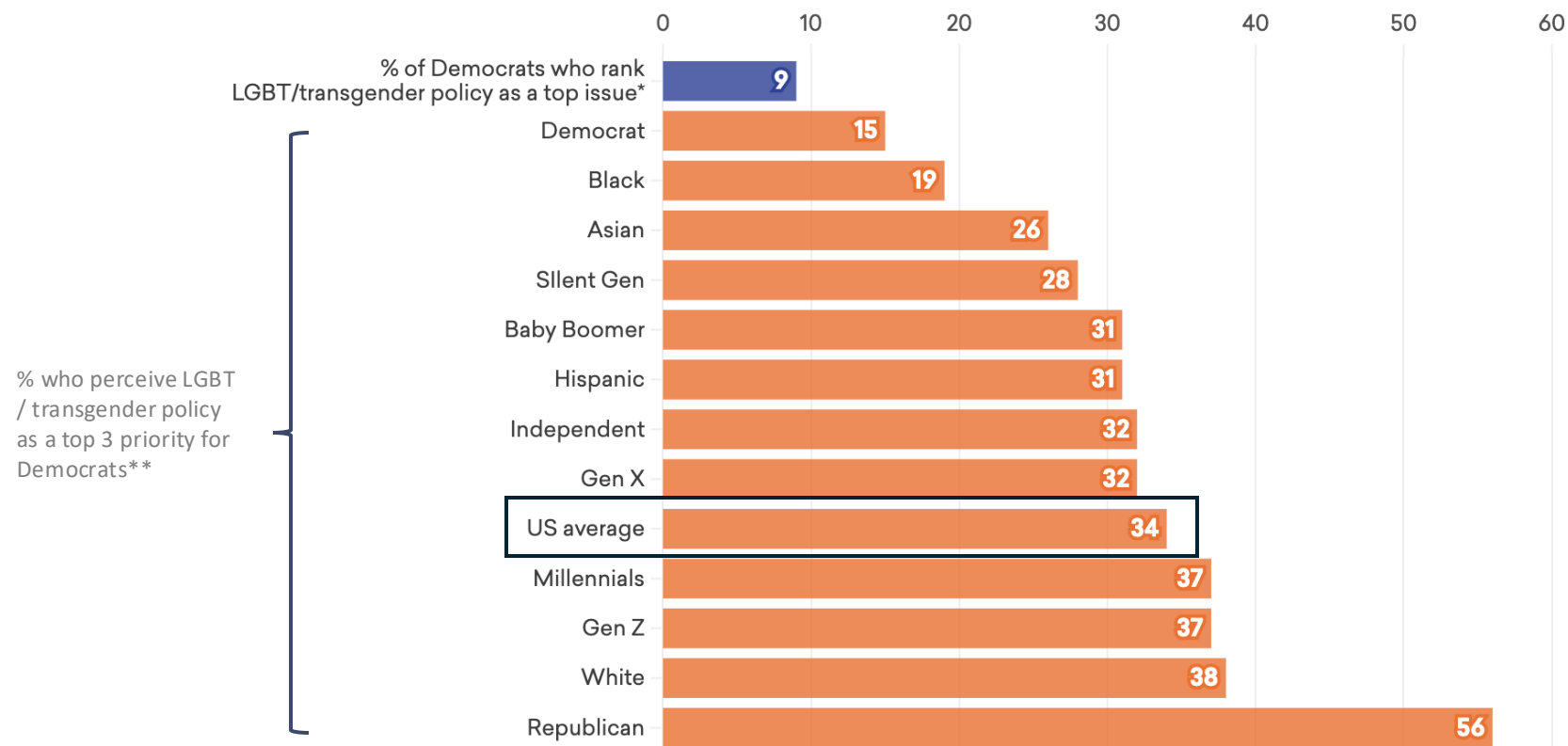
Question: [Republican respondents] Which of these issues are most important to you? Please select up to 3 issues.

[Democratic respondents] Now we'd like you to say which issues you think are most important to Republicans. Please select the top 3 issues you think are most important to Republicans.



Americans and especially Republicans overestimate how much Democrats prioritize LGBT/transgender issues.

Question: Which of these issues are most important to you? Please select up to 3 issues. Now we'd like you to say which issues you think are most important to Democrats. Please select the top 3 issues you think are most important to Democrats.



Note: Graph indicates how Democrats prioritize LGBT/transgender policy on a list of top issues, compared to how other groups believe Democrats prioritize this issue.

More in Common; N=5,005; November 7-13, 2024

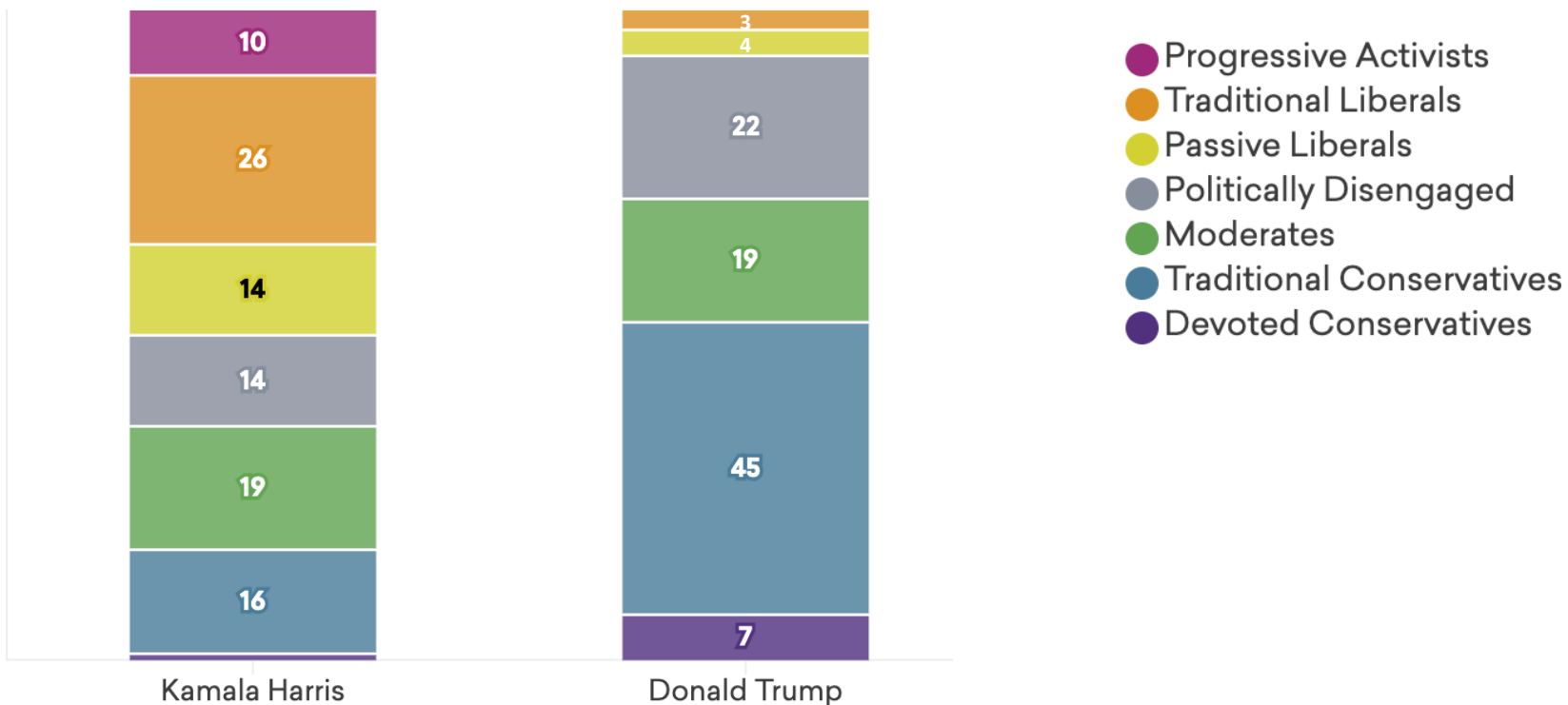
SECTION 4

Exploring Vote Choice in 2024

Among More in Common's Hidden Tribes segments, the Politically Disengaged play a larger role in Trump's voter base (22%) compared to Harris's (14%).

Question: Who did you vote for in the election for President in 2024?

Percentage (%)



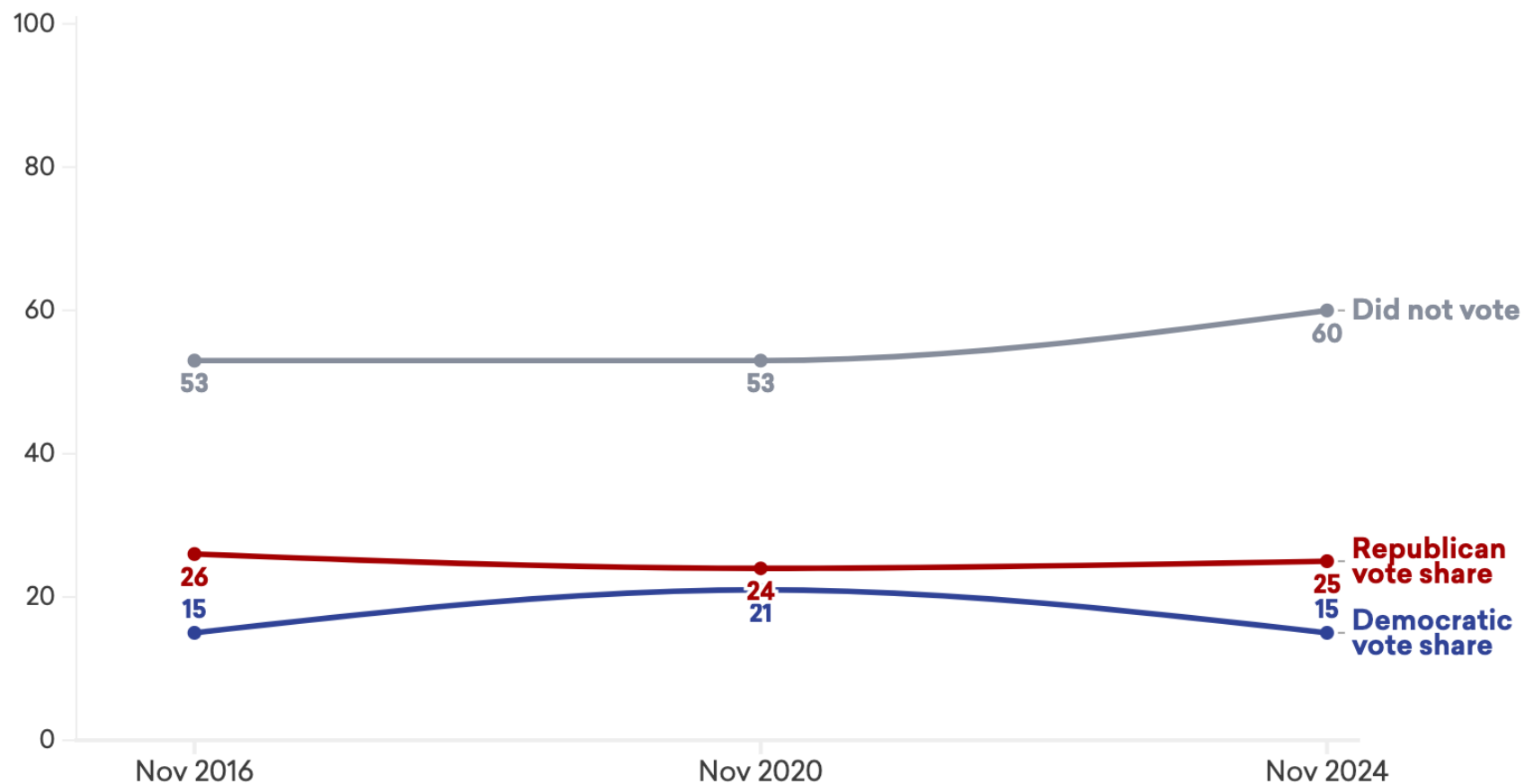
Note: This graph shows the Hidden Tribes composition of Harris and Trump voters in the 2024 Presidential election.

More in Common; N=5,005; November 7-13, 2024

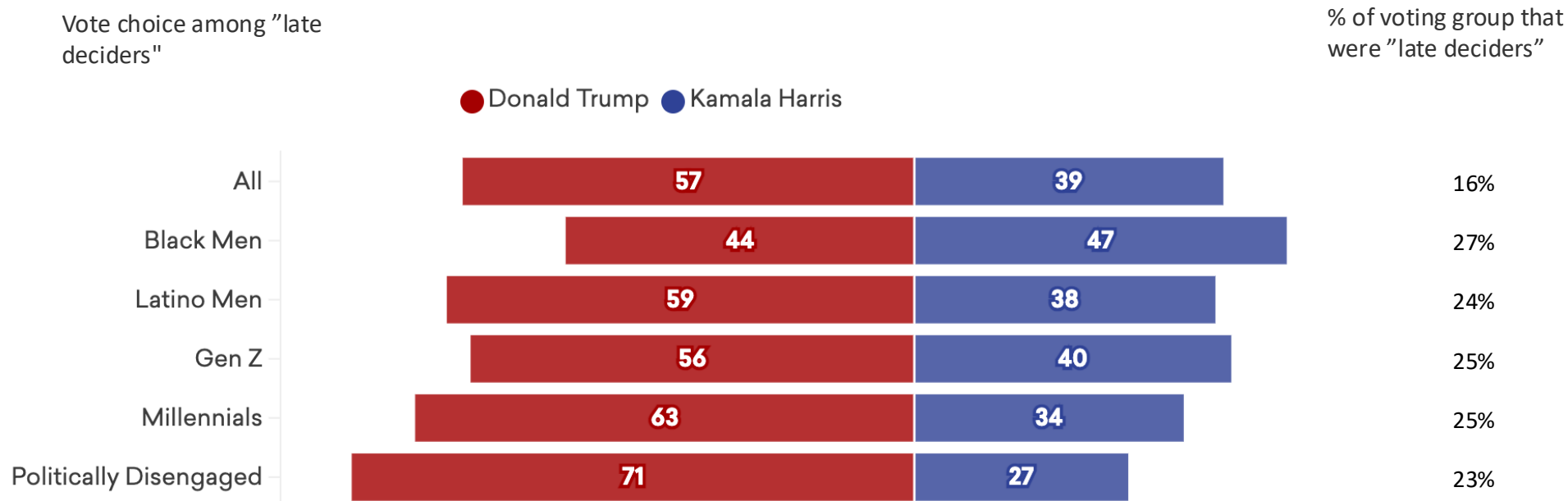
Republicans maintained turnout among the Politically Disengaged at 2020 levels, in contrast to the Democrats where it fell significantly.

Question: Who did you vote for in the election for President in [2016 / 2020 / 2024]?

% Vote share among the Politically Disengaged



Late deciders swung towards Trump, including among Latino men and younger voters.



Questions: When did you decide who to vote for in the 2024 presidential election? Who did you vote for in the election for President in 2024?

Note: "Late Decider" includes only 2024 voters who made their choice for president either "A few days before Election Day" or "On Election Day".

More in Common; N=5,005; November 7-13, 2024

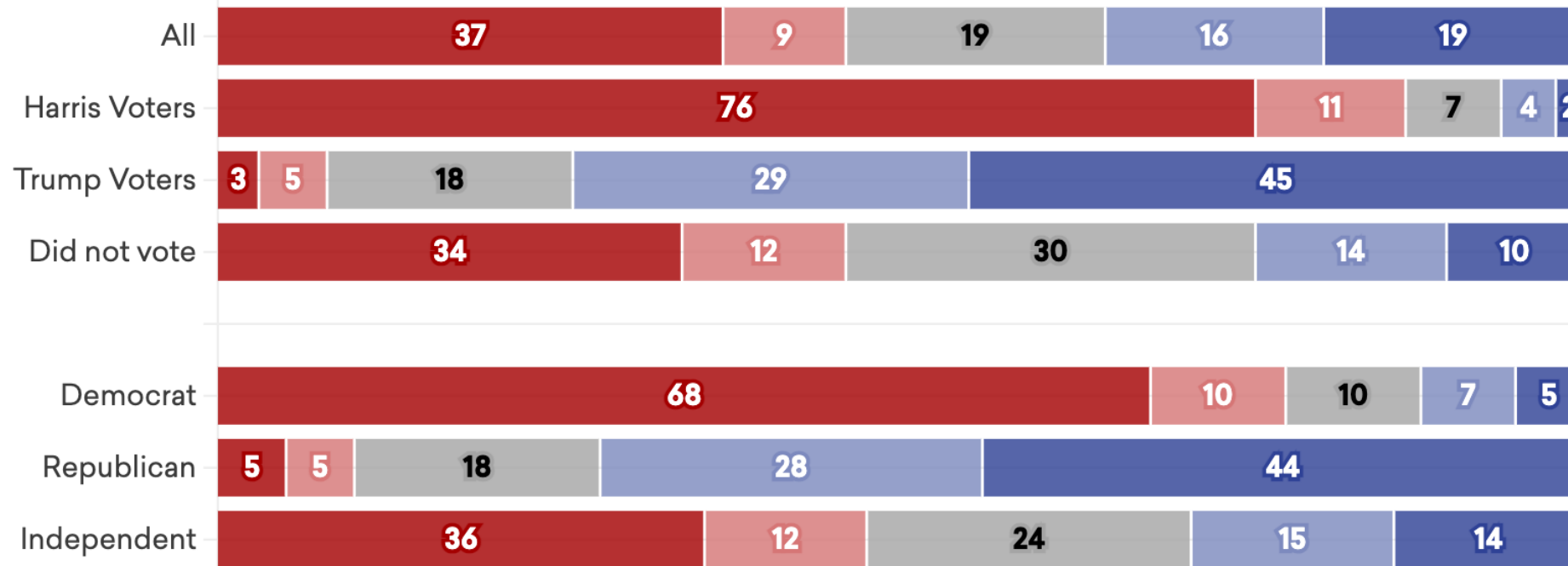
Donald Trump won the presidency despite only 35 percent of Americans feeling that he respects people like them.



Question: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

“Donald Trump respects people like me.”

● Strongly disagree ● Somewhat disagree ● Neither agree nor disagree ● Somewhat agree ● Strongly agree



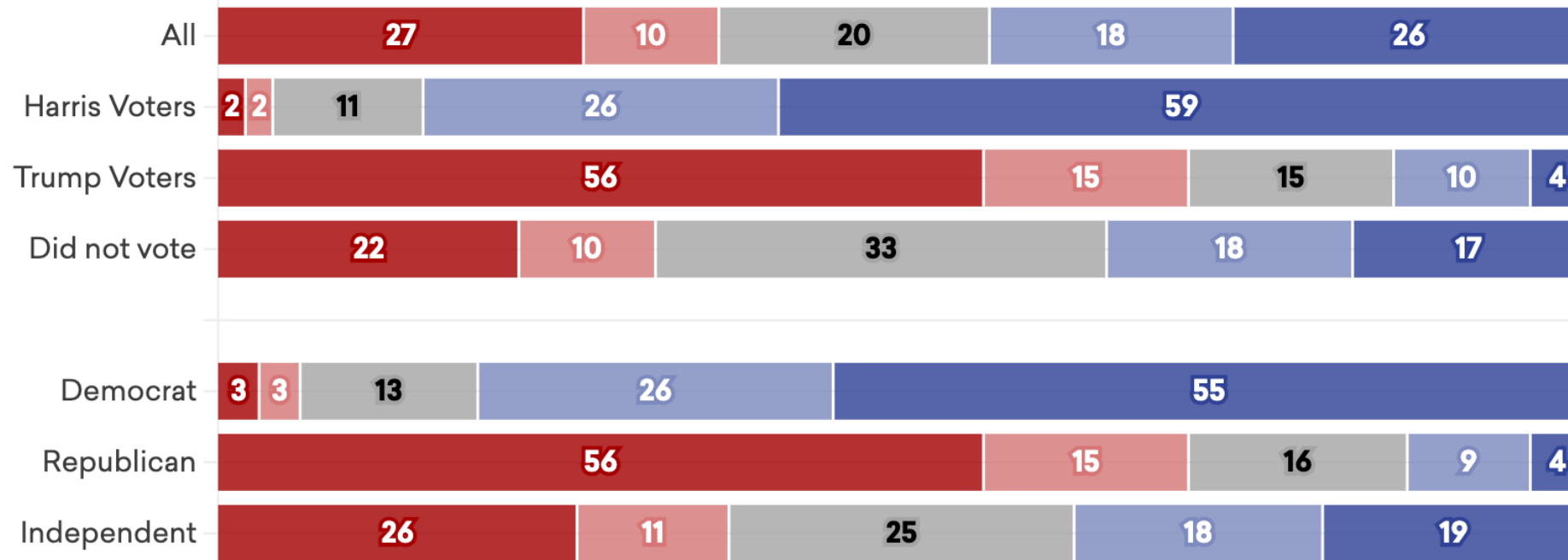
Similarly, only 34 percent of Americans feel that Kamala Harris respects people like them.



Question: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

“Kamala Harris respects people like me.”

● Strongly disagree ● Somewhat disagree ● Neither agree nor disagree ● Somewhat agree ● Strongly agree



Many Americans cannot understand why voters supported the other side's candidate, but Democrats feel this more strongly about Republicans than vice versa.

Question: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? [2024 Harris voters only]

"I simply cannot understand why Americans voted for Donald Trump."

● Strongly disagree ● Somewhat disagree ● Neither agree nor disagree ● Somewhat agree ● Strongly agree



Question: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? [2024 Trump voters only]

"I simply cannot understand why Americans voted for Kamala Harris."

● Strongly disagree ● Somewhat disagree ● Neither agree nor disagree ● Somewhat agree ● Strongly agree

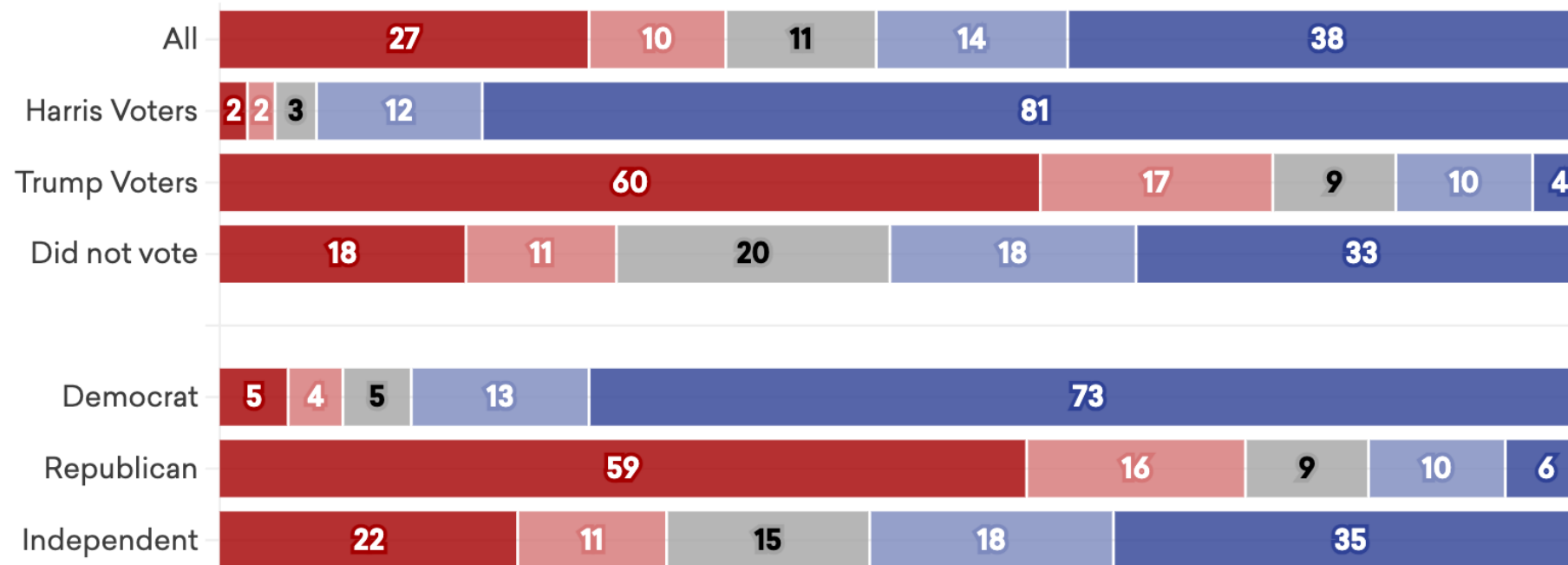


A majority of Americans are concerned Trump may abuse his power as president. This includes 16% of Republicans.

Question: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

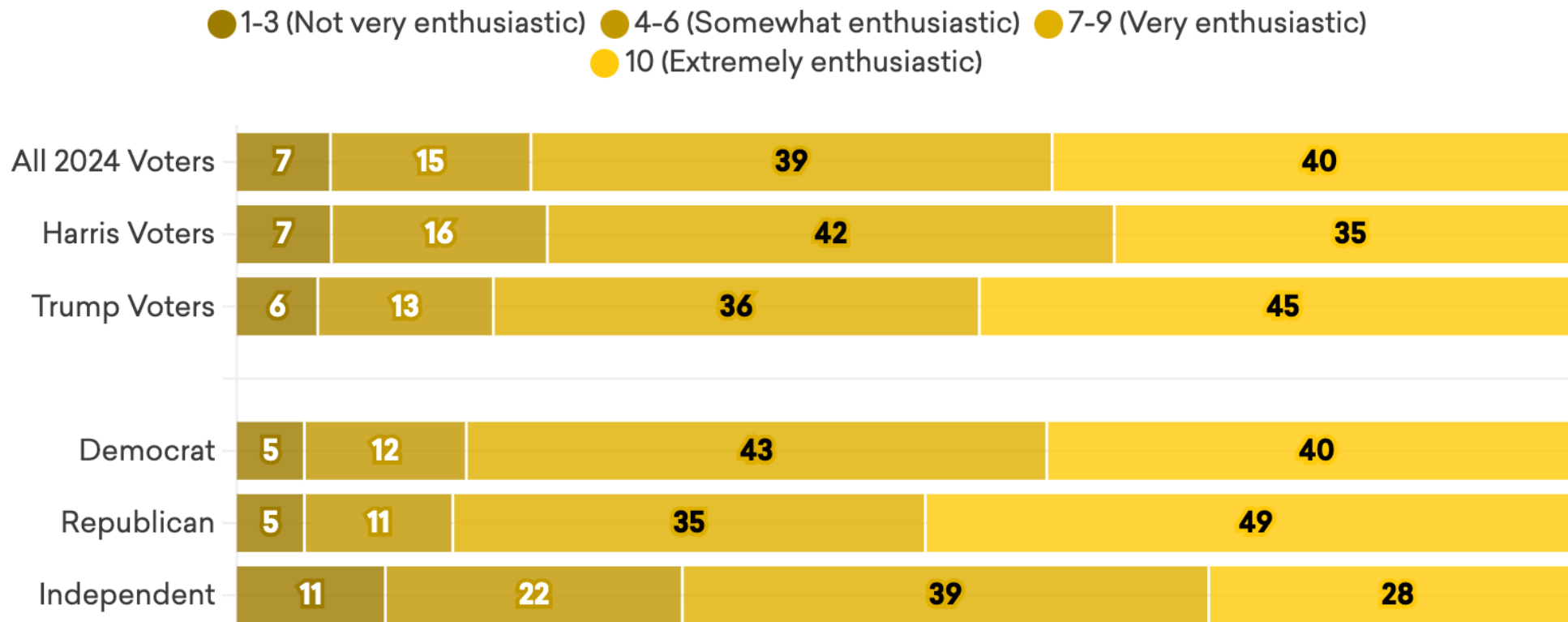
“I worry that Trump may abuse his power as President of the United States.”

● Strongly disagree ● Somewhat disagree ● Neither agree nor disagree ● Somewhat agree ● Strongly agree



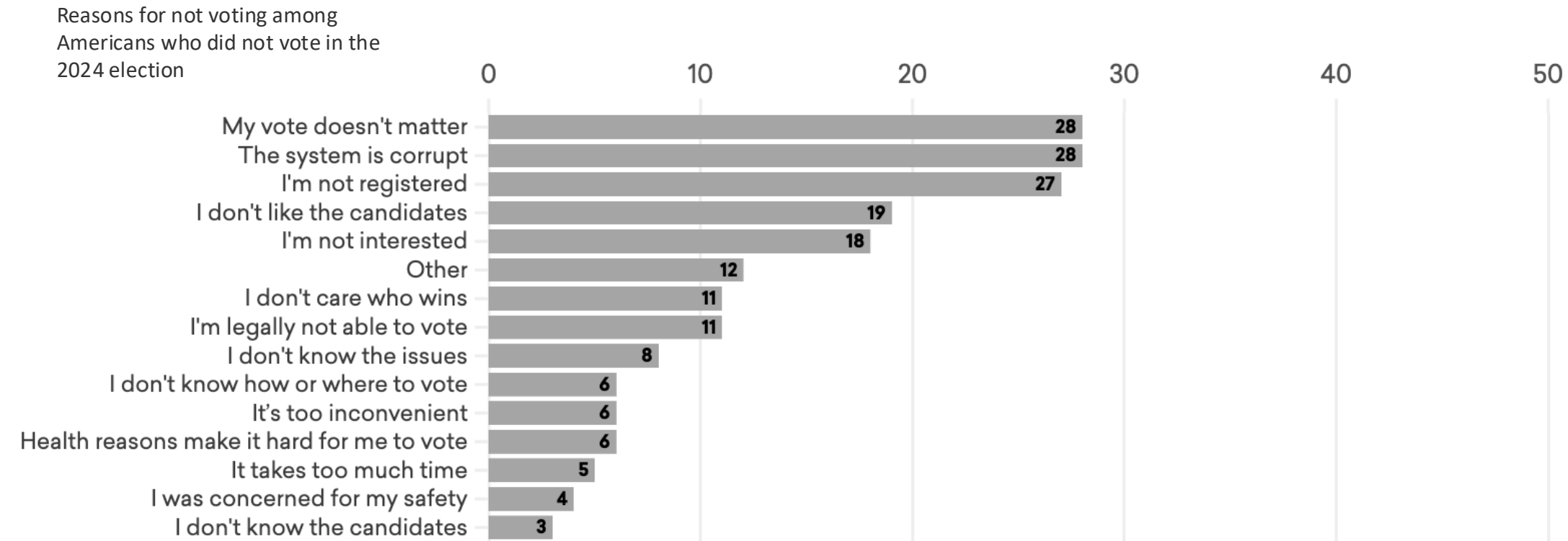
Trump voters expressed more enthusiasm about voting for him than Harris voters expressed about voting for her.

Question: On a scale from 1 to 10, how enthusiastic were you about the presidential candidate you voted for?



The top reasons Americans gave for not voting are that they believe their vote did not matter or that the system is corrupt, and that they had not registered.

Question: What are the main reasons you did not vote? Pick up to three.



Note: Only Americans who did not vote in the 2024 election were asked this question.

More in Common; N=5,005; November 7-13, 2024

SECTION 5

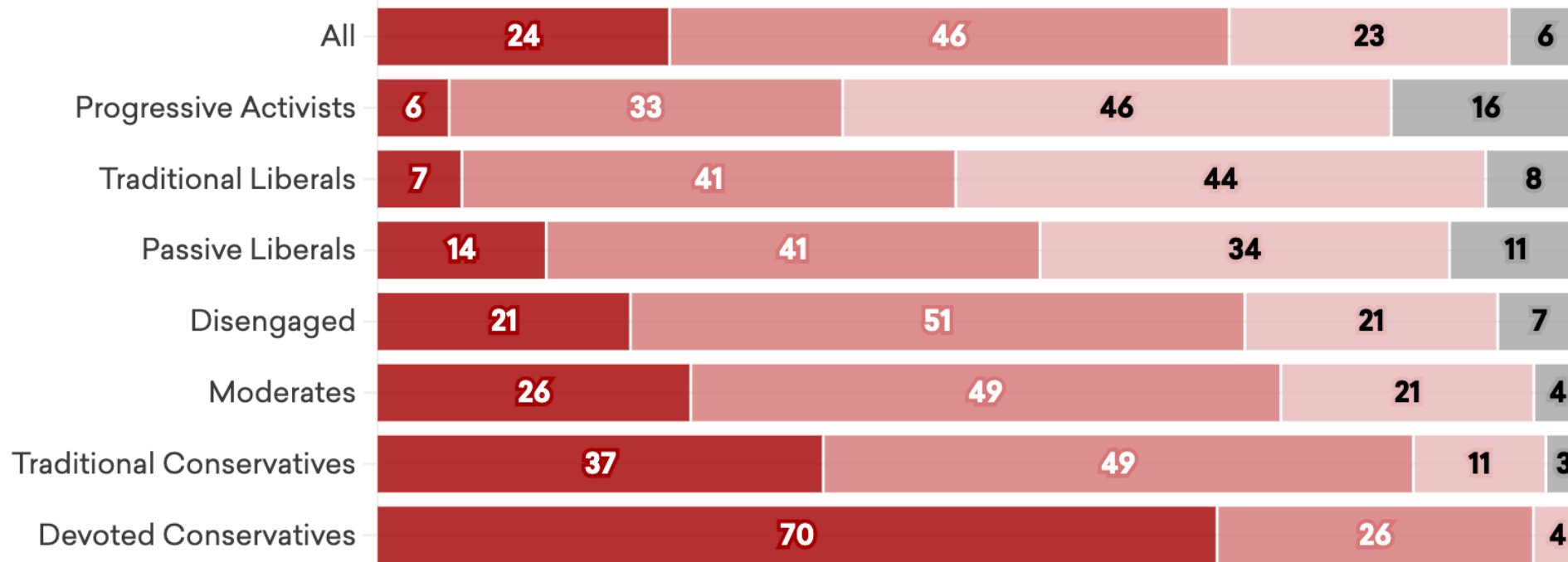
Views on Immigration

Seven in ten Americans see the U.S.-Mexican border as an emergency or major problem.



Question: How do you personally think about the situation at the U.S. border with Mexico? Is it a(n)...

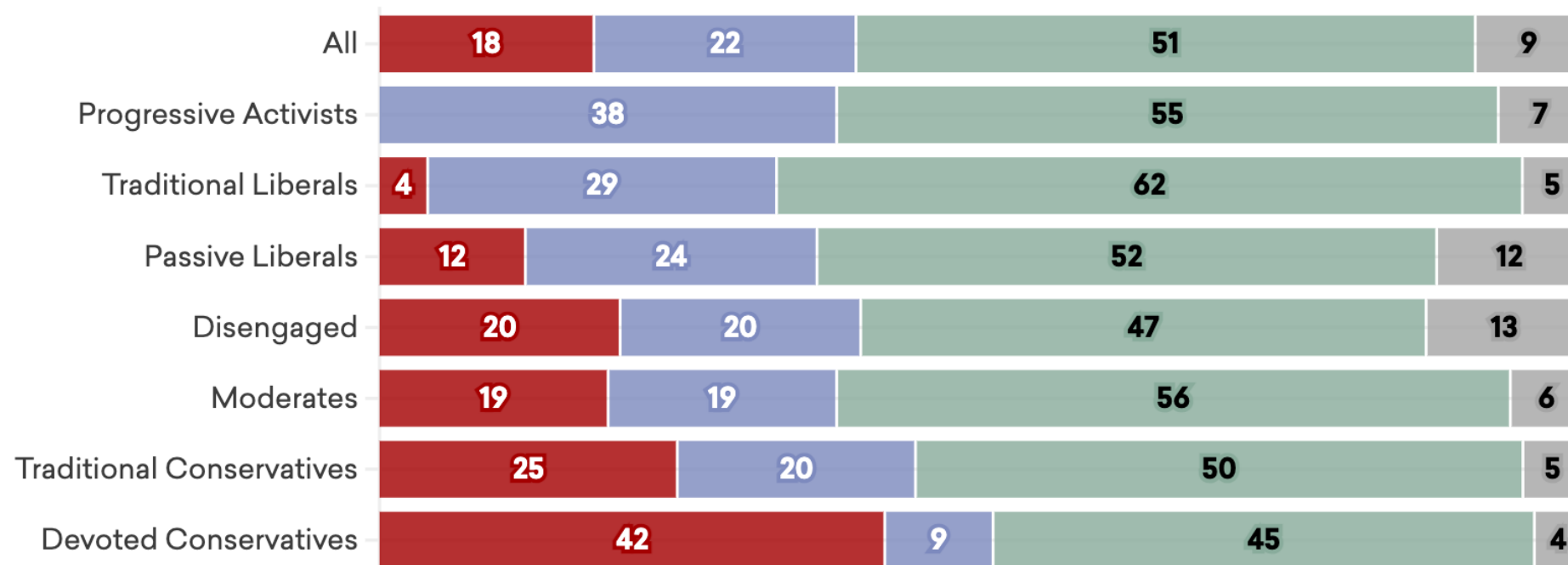
● Emergency ● Major problem ● Minor problem ● Not a problem



A majority of Americans prefer a combination of stronger borders and more legal pathways for immigration, rather than just one or the other.

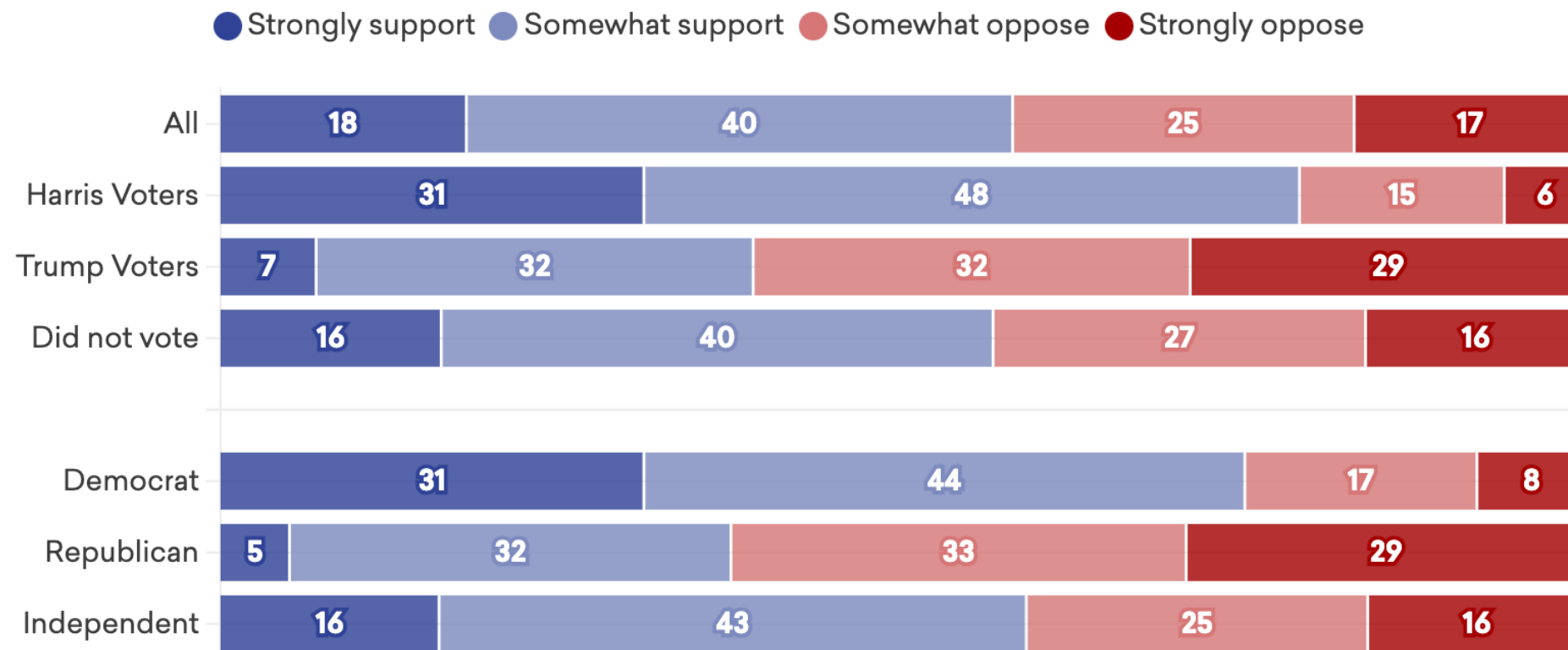
Question: When it comes to our immigration system, which of the following do you support?

- Increased border enforcement only
- Increased pathways for immigrants to enter legally only
- Increased border enforcement and increased legal pathways
- None of the above



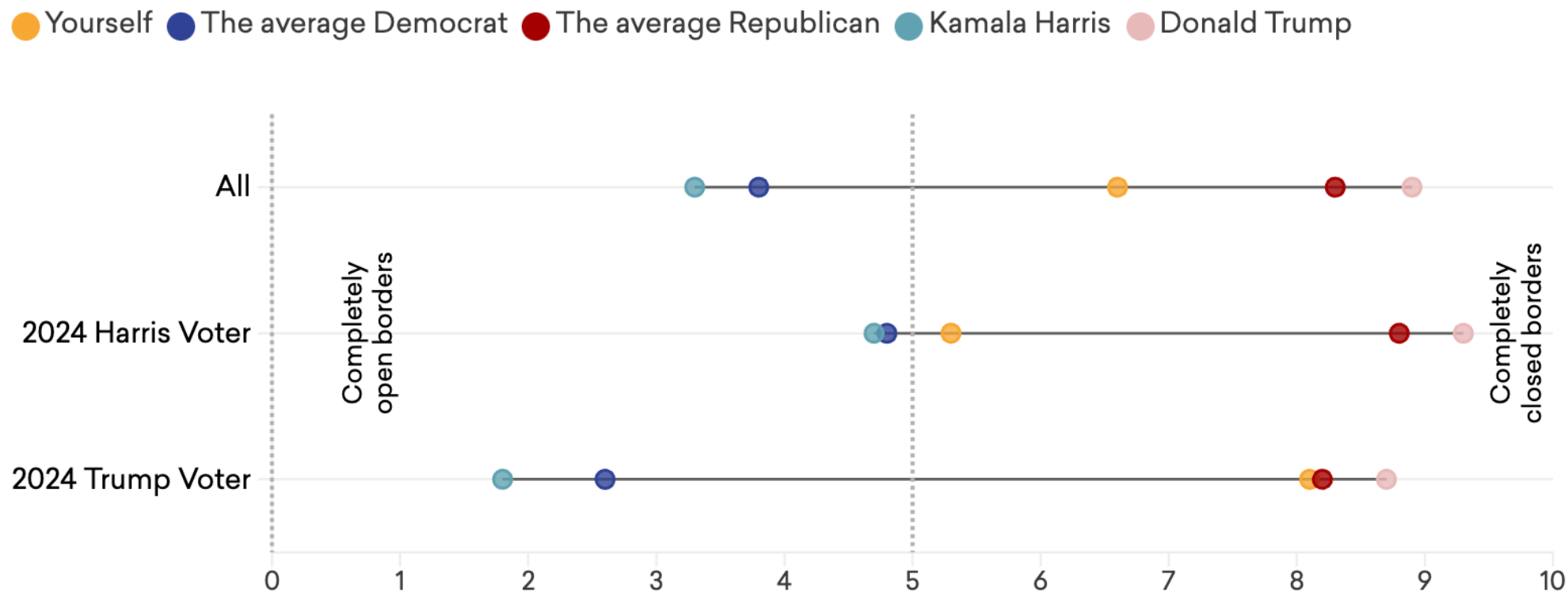
Three in five Americans believe the United States should accept refugees.

Question: In general, do you support or oppose the United States accepting refugees?



On a spectrum between 1 (open borders) and 10 (closed borders), the average American ranks themselves just below 7. Trump voters think Democrats support open borders more than they do.

Question: How would you rate the following people regarding their approach to immigration to the US? [1 - Completely open borders to 10 - Completely closed borders]

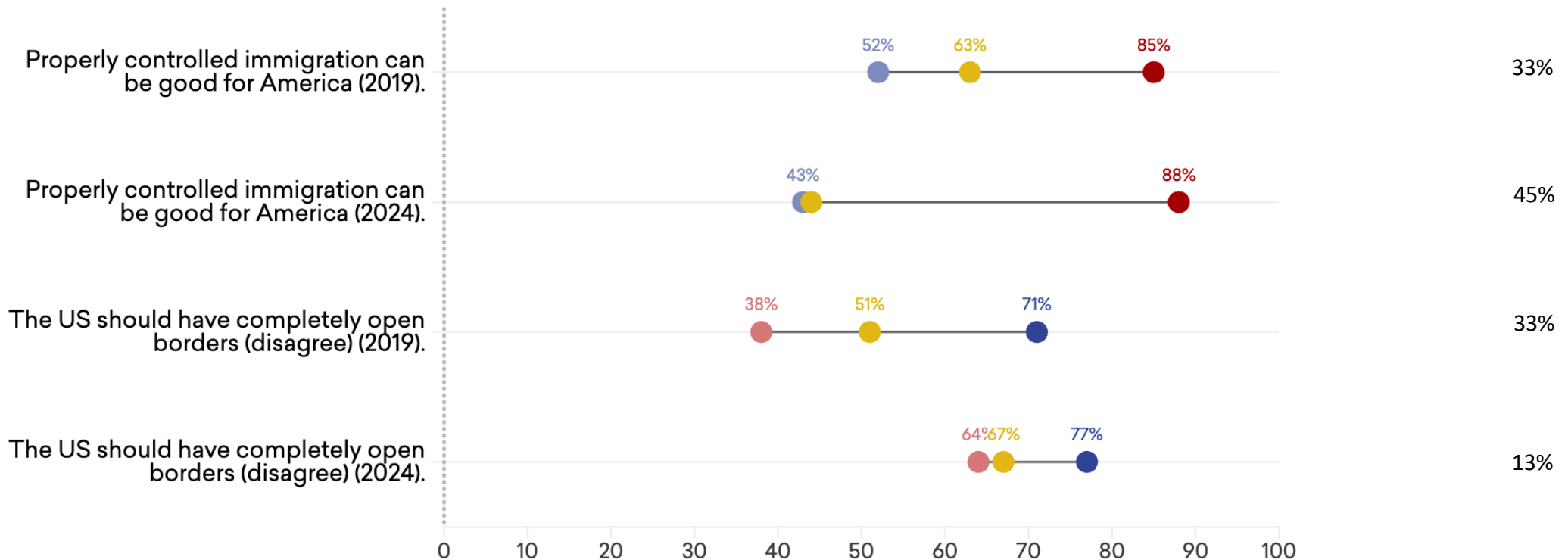


Since 2019, Democrats' perception gaps of Republicans' views have widened while Republicans' perception gaps of Democrats' views have narrowed.



% Agree ● Democrats' estimate ● Independents' estimate ● Republicans' actual views
 ● Republicans' estimate ● Democrats' actual views

Perception Gap
 (Democrat - Republican)



Note: Perception gaps are the disparities between what Democrats and Republicans imagine the other side to believe and what that side actually believes. Perception gaps are calculated by subtracting the absolute difference between Democrats' or Republicans' estimate of the views of the other party and the actual views of those in that political party.

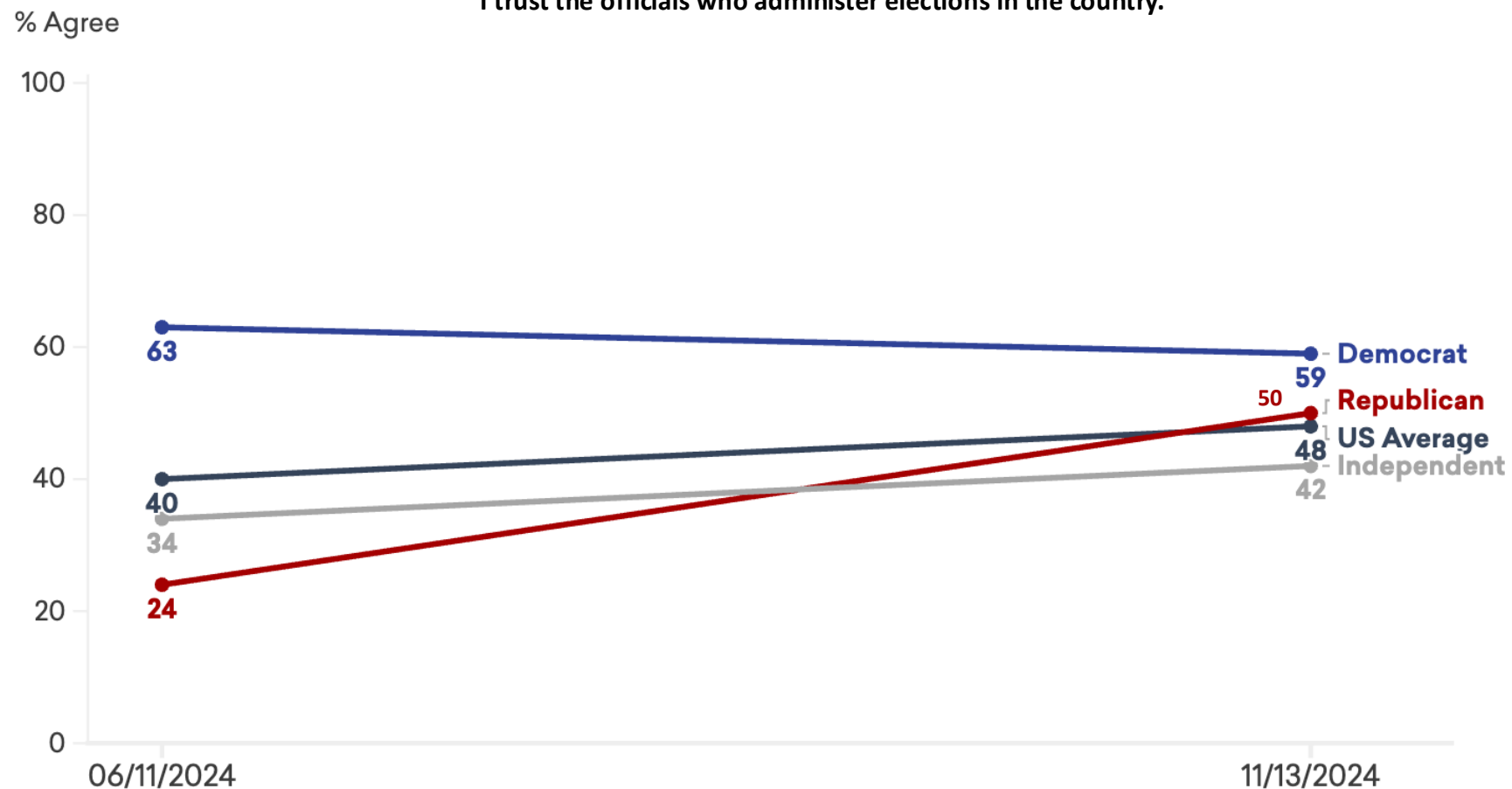
SECTION 6

Trust in Elections

Trust in election officials doubled post-election for Republicans (24% in June to 50% post-election).

Question: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

“I trust the officials who administer elections in the country.”

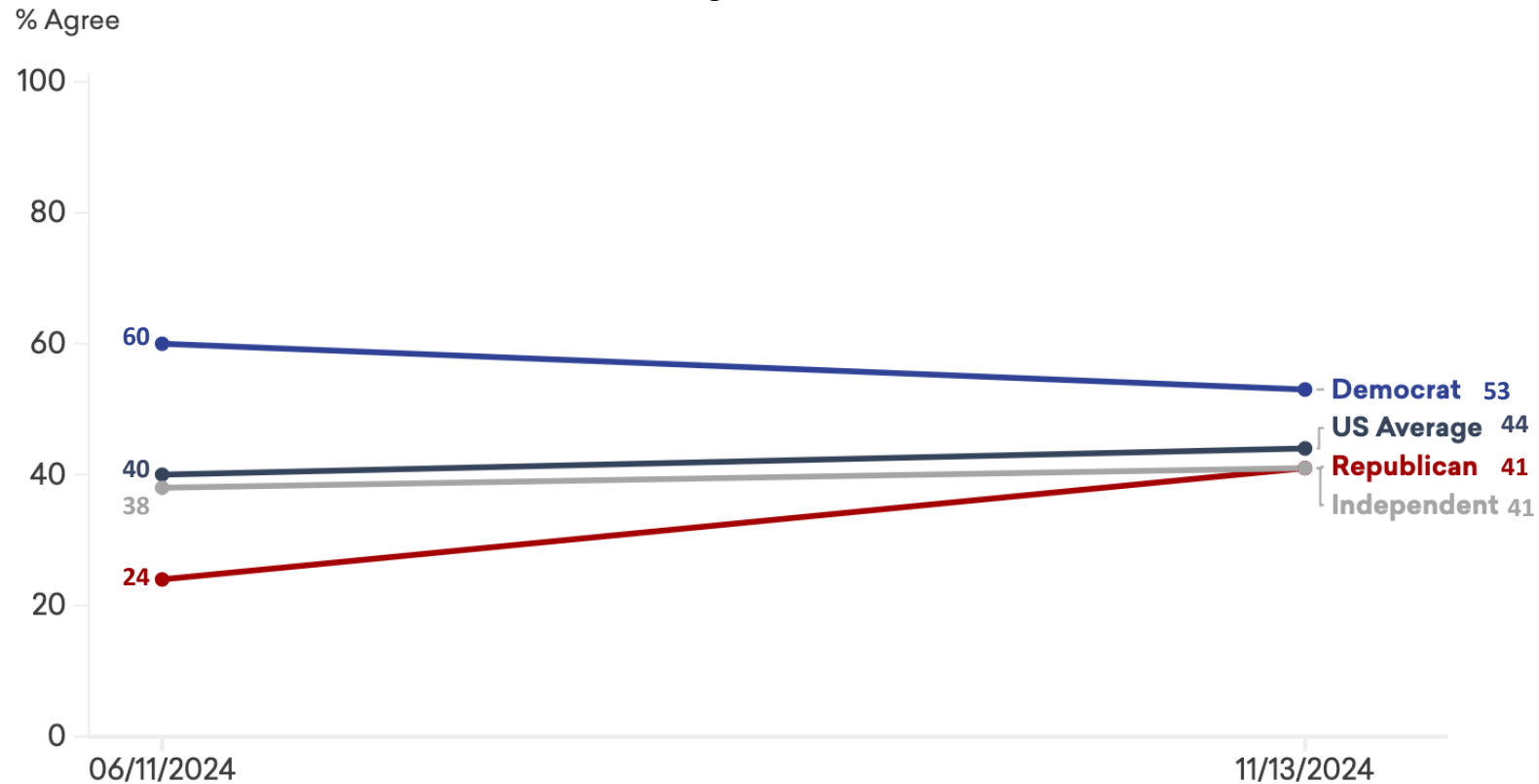


Republican agreement that fraud doesn't change election outcomes rose from 24% to 41%, while Democratic agreement fell from 60% to 53% after the 2024 election.



Question: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

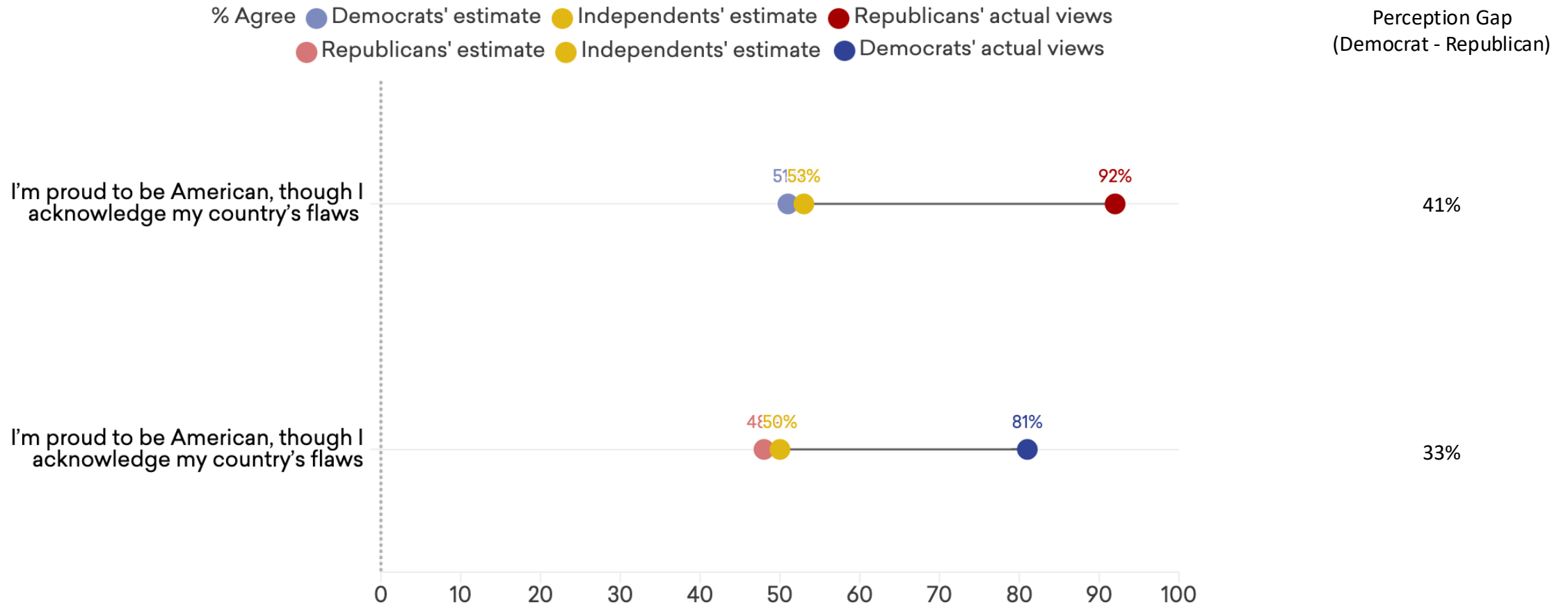
“I trust that any fraud that happens in our election system isn’t significant enough to change who wins or loses.”



SECTION 7

Looking Back, Looking Ahead

Both Democrats and Republicans underestimate the other side's ability to hold pride in being American while seeing the country's weaknesses.



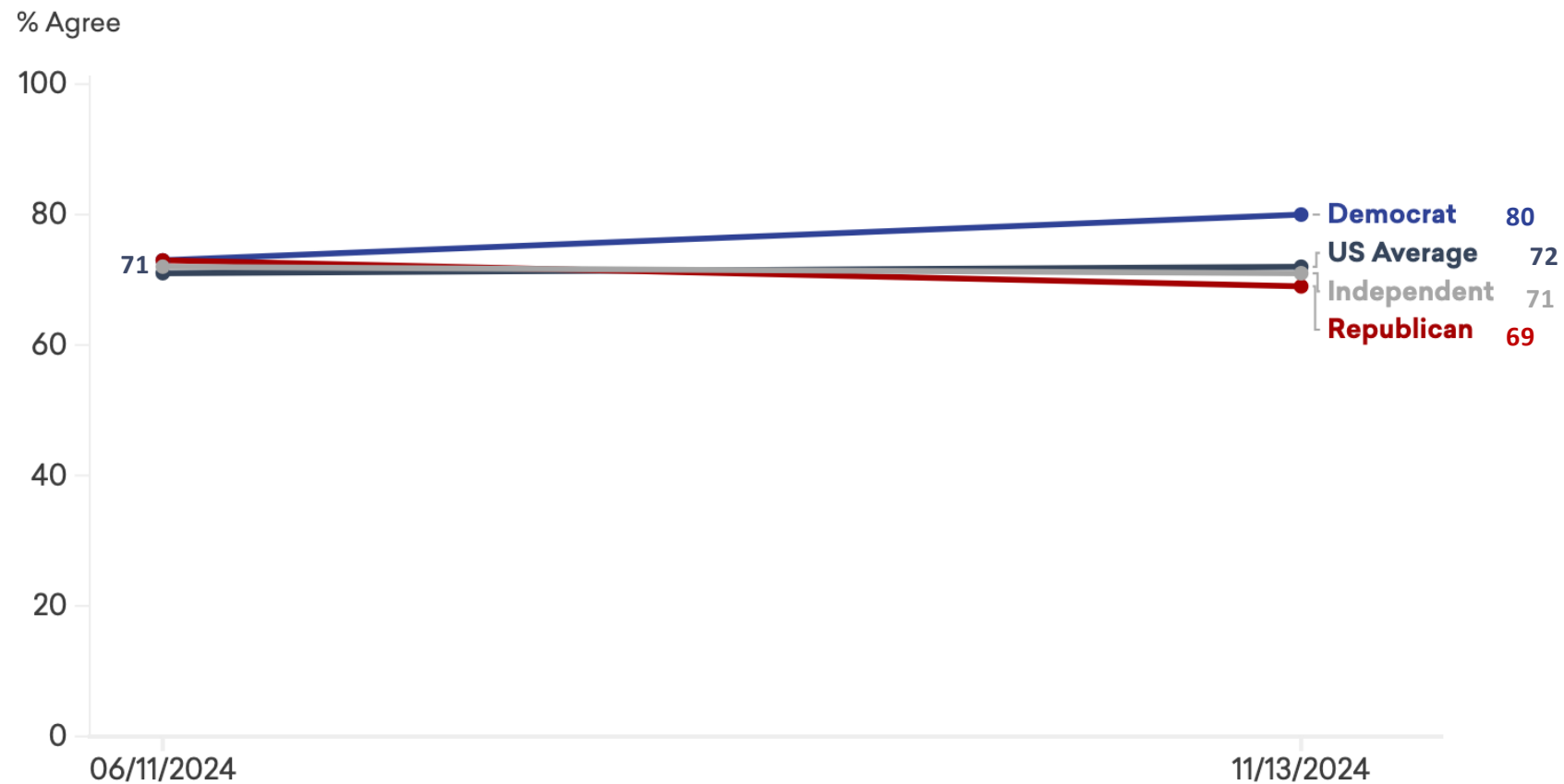
Note: Perception gaps are the disparities between what Democrats and Republicans imagine the other side to believe and what that side actually believes. Perception gaps are the absolute difference between Democrats' or Republicans' estimate of the views of the other party and their actual views.

More in Common; N=5,005; November 7-13, 2024

Democrats are more exhausted by division following the 2024 election.

Question: Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about politics in America today?

“I feel exhausted by the division in politics.”

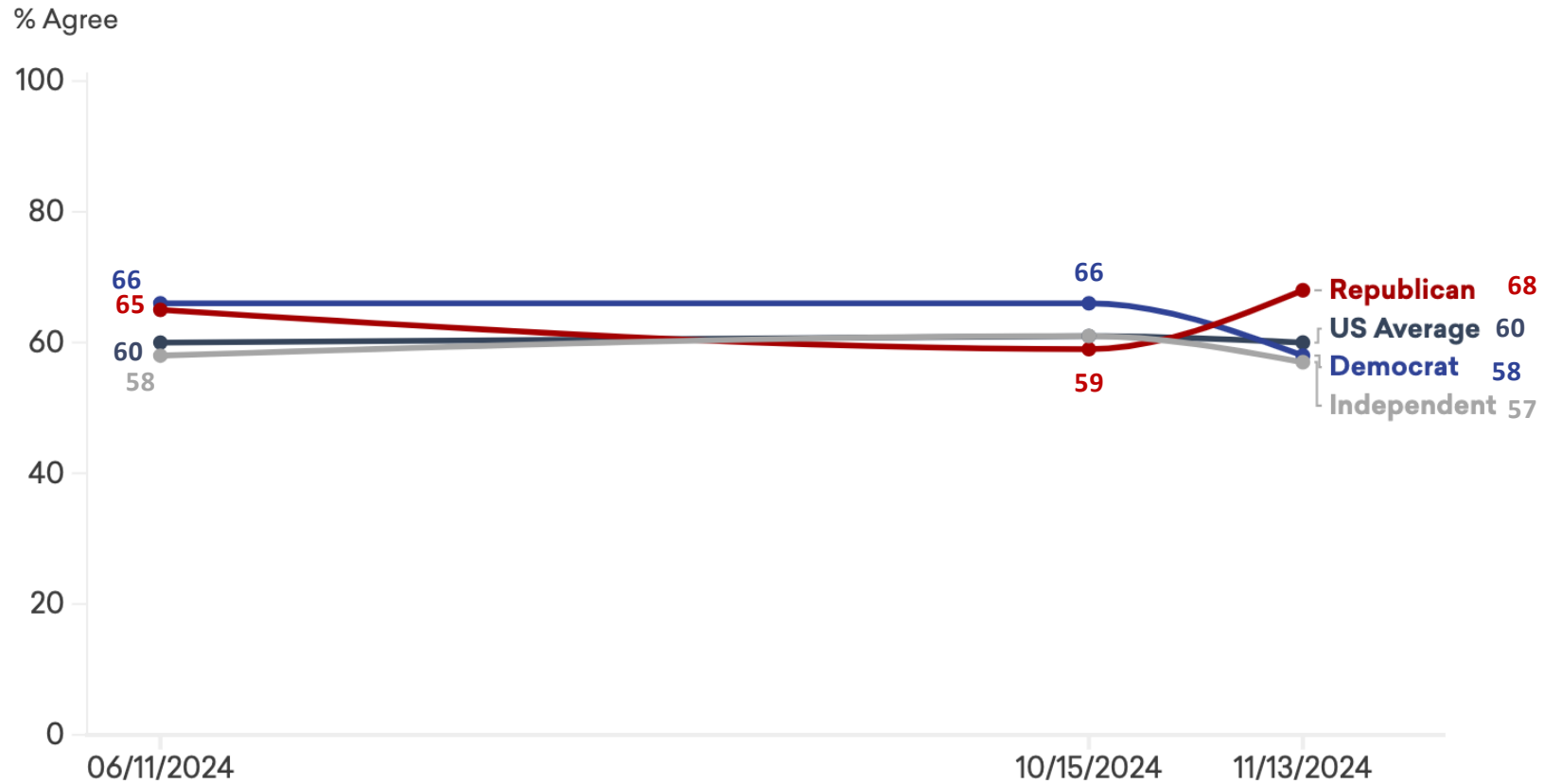


After the election, Republicans are more likely to say Americans have more in common than what divides us, while Democrats' belief in commonality has dipped.



Question: Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about politics in America today?

“Americans have more in common than what divides us.”

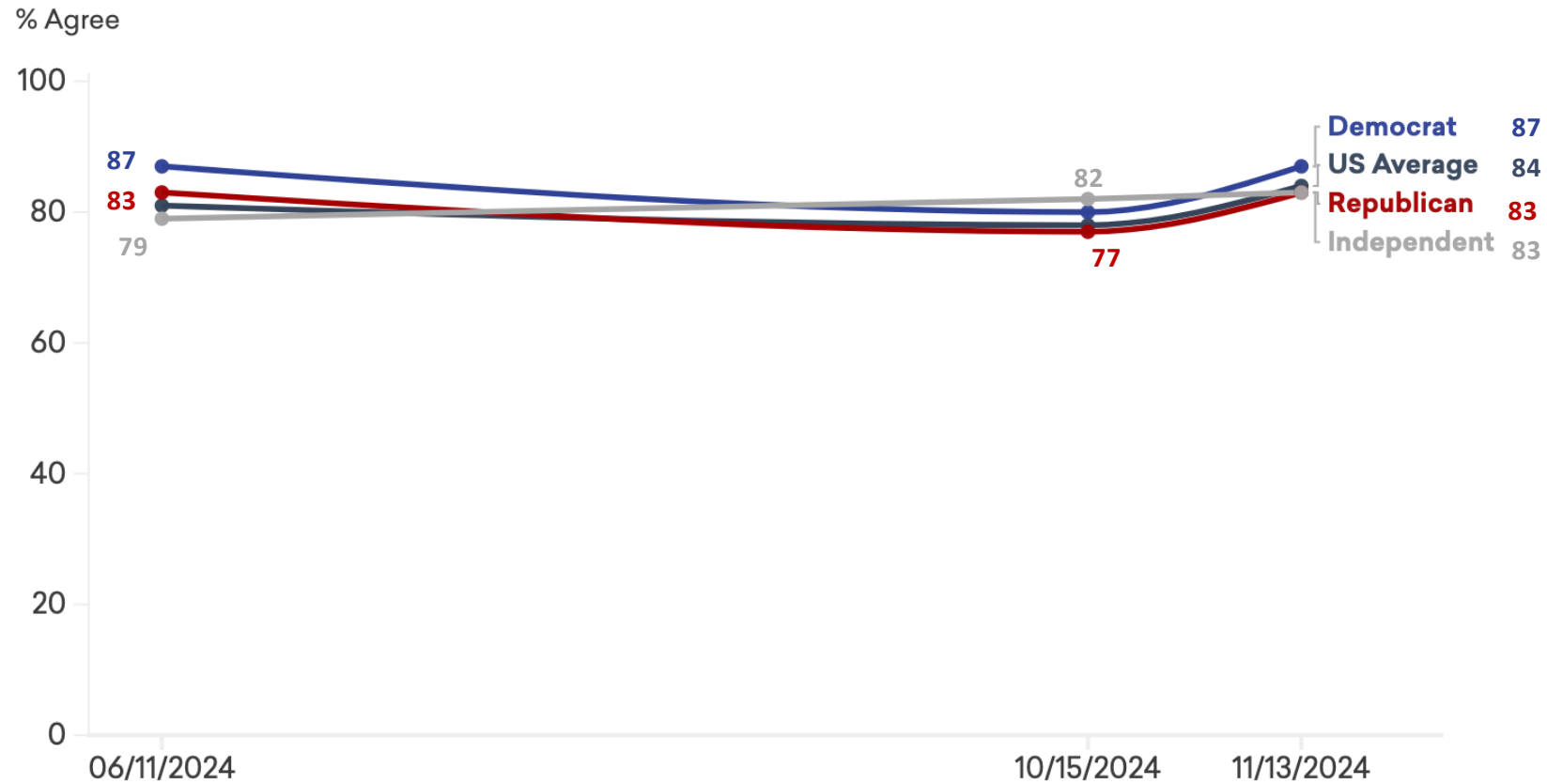


After the election, Americans remain committed to wanting both political parties to work together to solve our country's problems.



Question: Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about politics in America today?

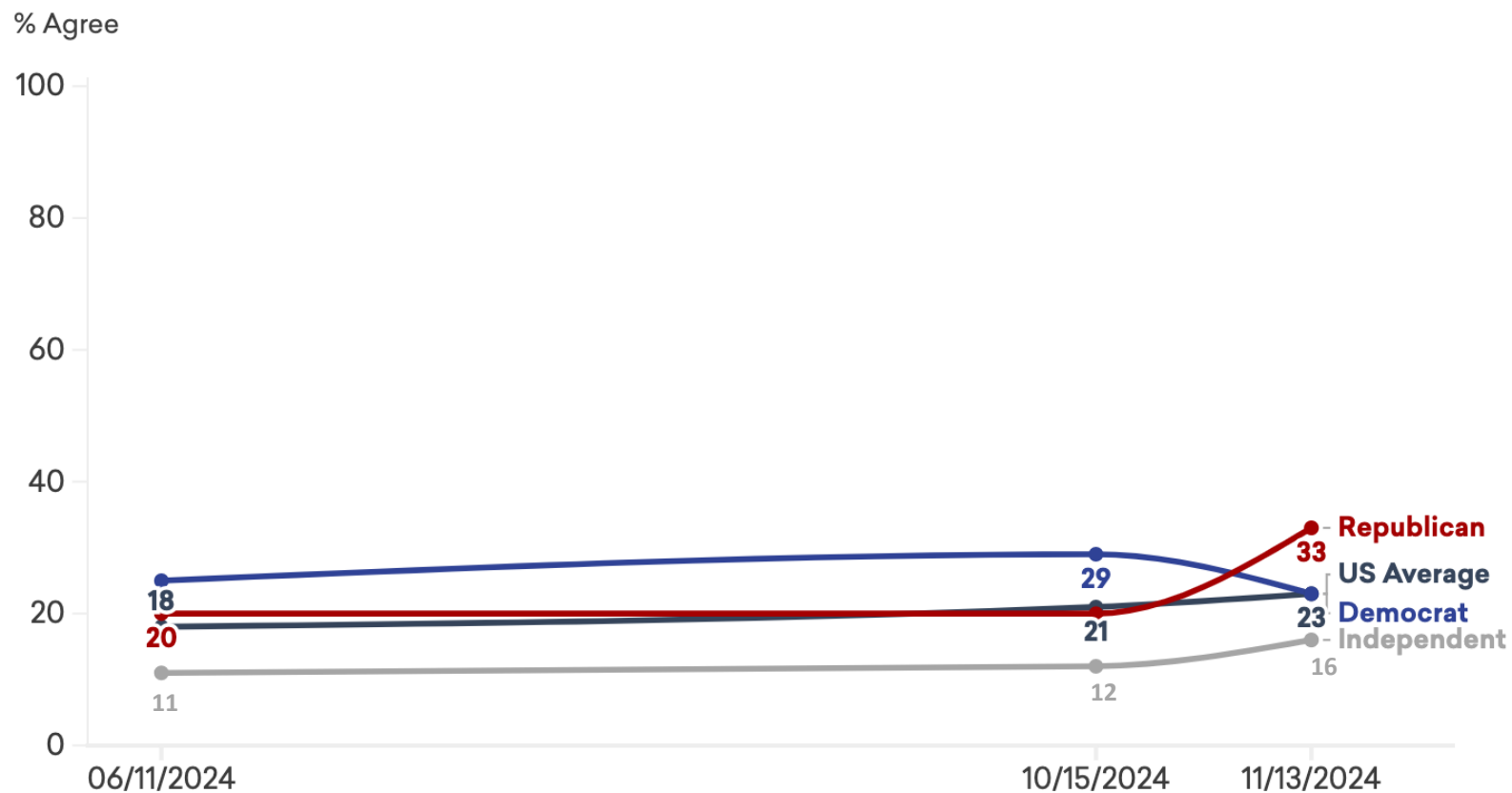
“I want both political parties to work together to solve problems for our country.”



While most still think politicians and leaders do not care about people like them, Republicans are less likely to say so after the election.

Question: Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about politics in America today?

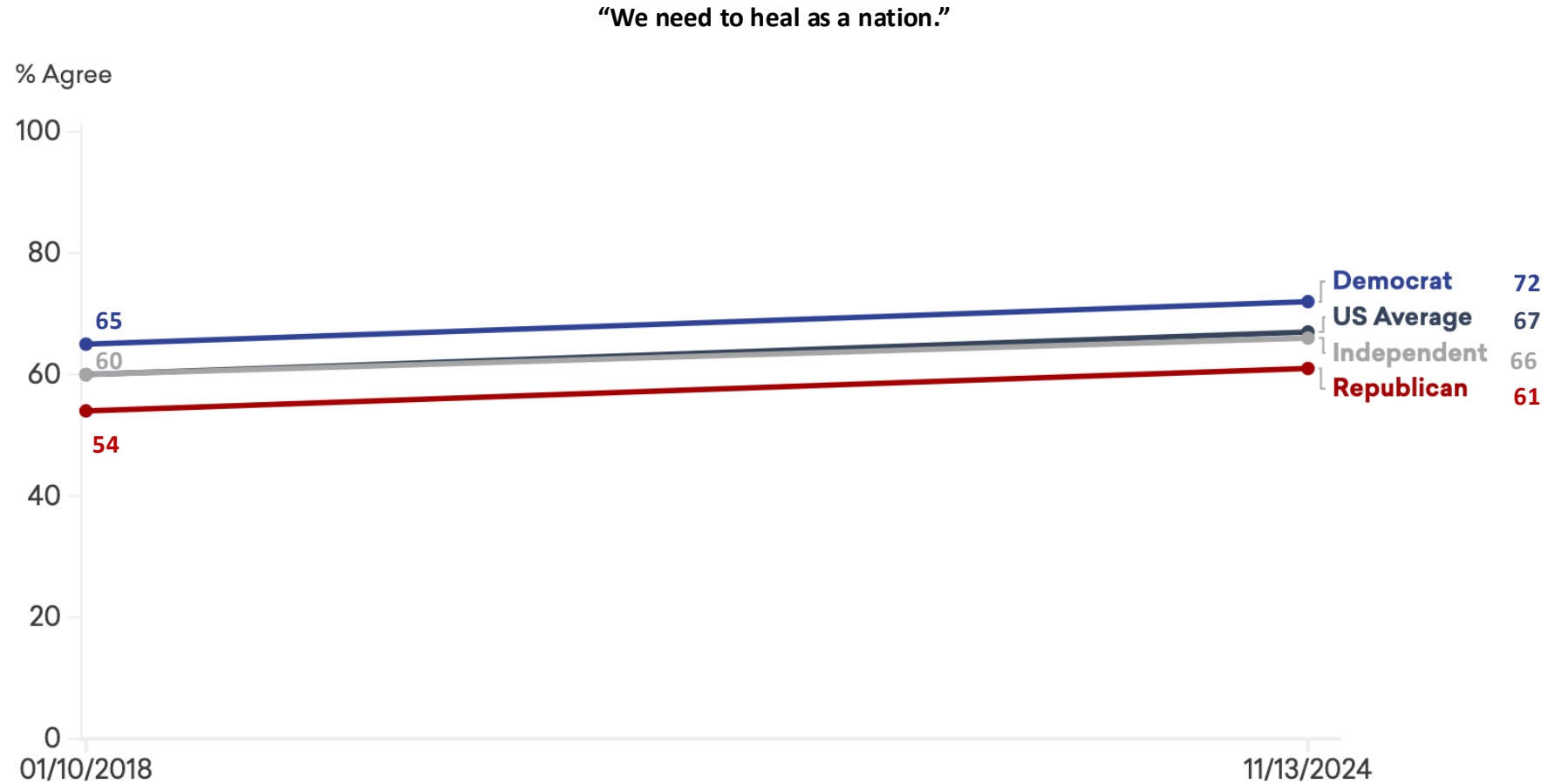
“Politicians and leaders care about the views of people like me.”



Despite perceptions of growing divisions, more Americans since 2018 now agree that we need to heal as a nation rather than defeat the evil within our nation.



Question: Which do you agree with more? We need to heal as a nation OR We need to defeat the evil within our nation.

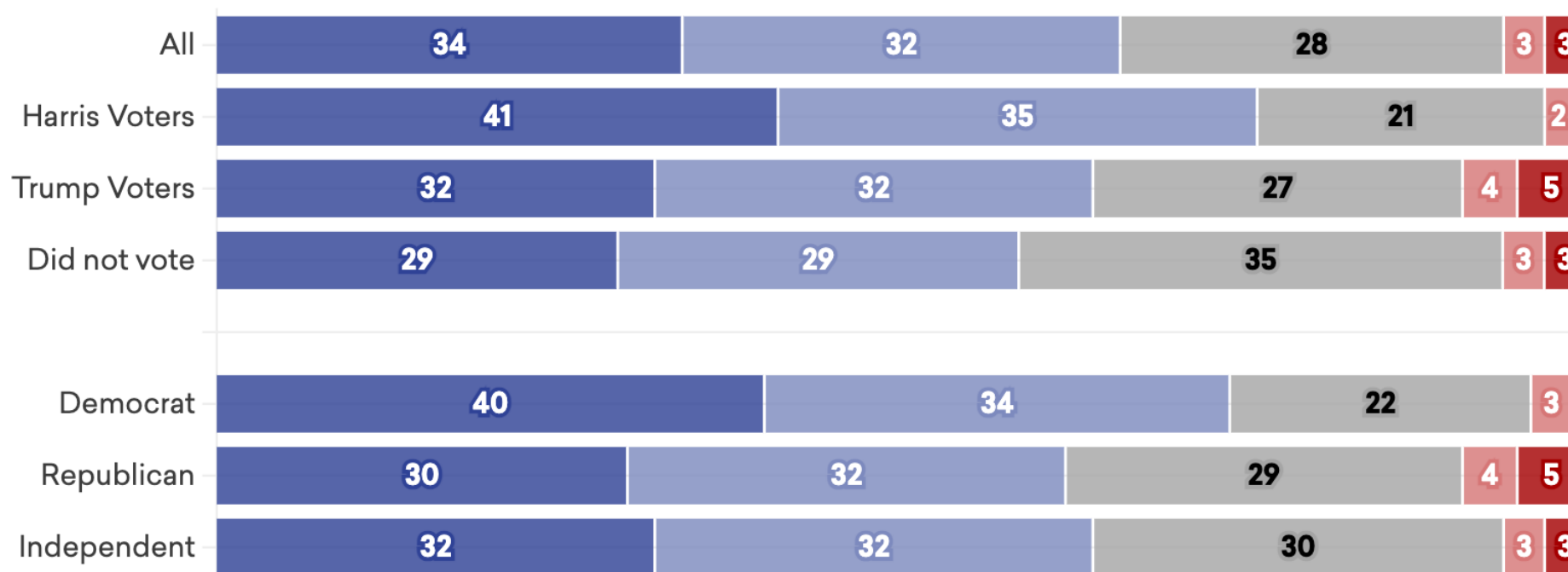


Two-thirds of Americans (66%) wish the media reported more about connecting across differences.

Question: Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about politics in America today?

“I wish the media reported more about Americans of different backgrounds and beliefs getting along.”

● Strongly agree ● Somewhat agree ● Neither agree nor disagree ● Somewhat disagree ● Strongly disagree



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Thank You



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