



Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation & Institute



2025 National Defense Survey *Executive Summary*



Prepared by Beacon Research and Shaw & Company Research, November 2025



About the Survey

Mode	Combined telephone (n=984) and online panel (n=1523) survey. Telephone interviews conducted by trained professionals calling landlines (49%) and cellphones (51%).
Sample	2,507 US Adults
Dates	October 23 – November 3, 2025
Weights	Slight weights were applied to ensure the sample accurately reflects the demographic profile of the U.S. population.
Margin of Error	$\pm 2\%$ at the 95% confidence level for the entire sample. Most questions were split sampled (n \approx 1250, $\pm 2.8\%$). The margin of error for subgroups is higher.
Research Partnership	 
Note	Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding or because of 'don't know' responses.

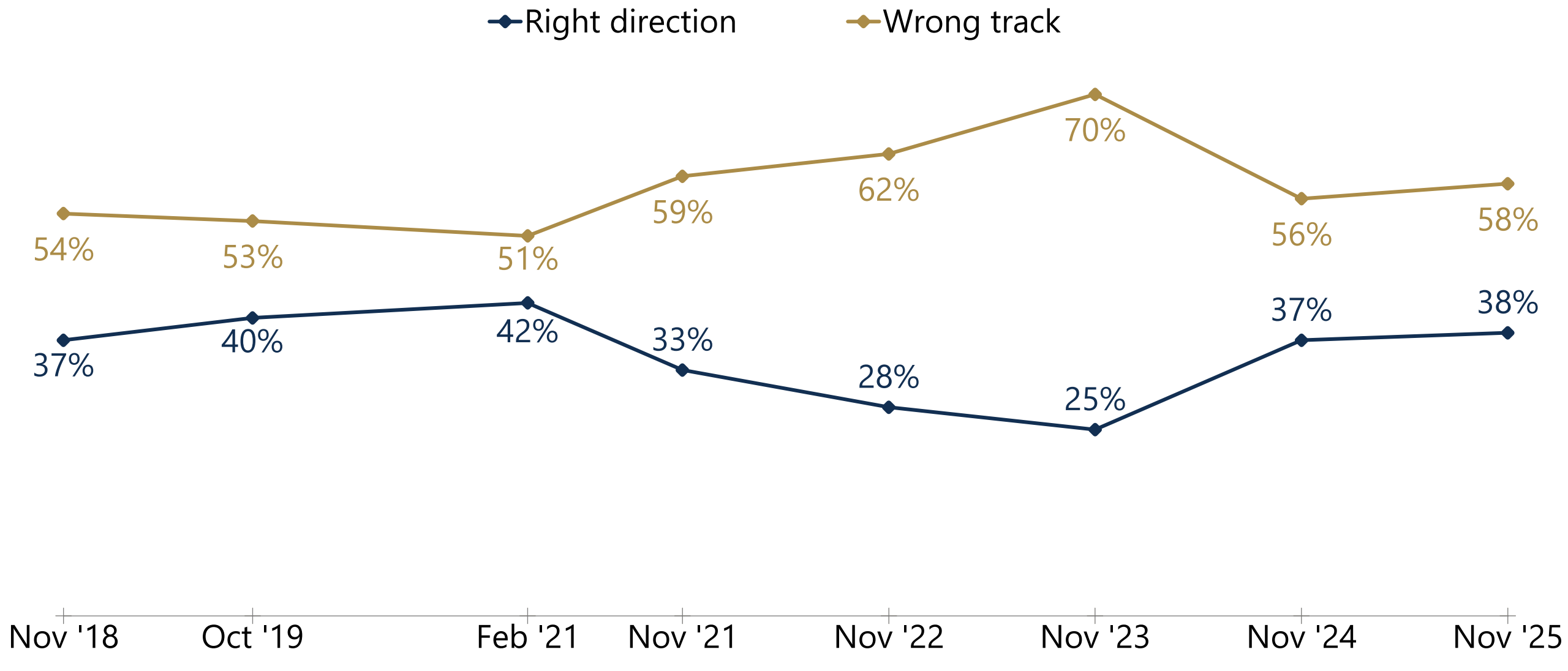


MOOD OF THE COUNTRY





National mood remains negative.

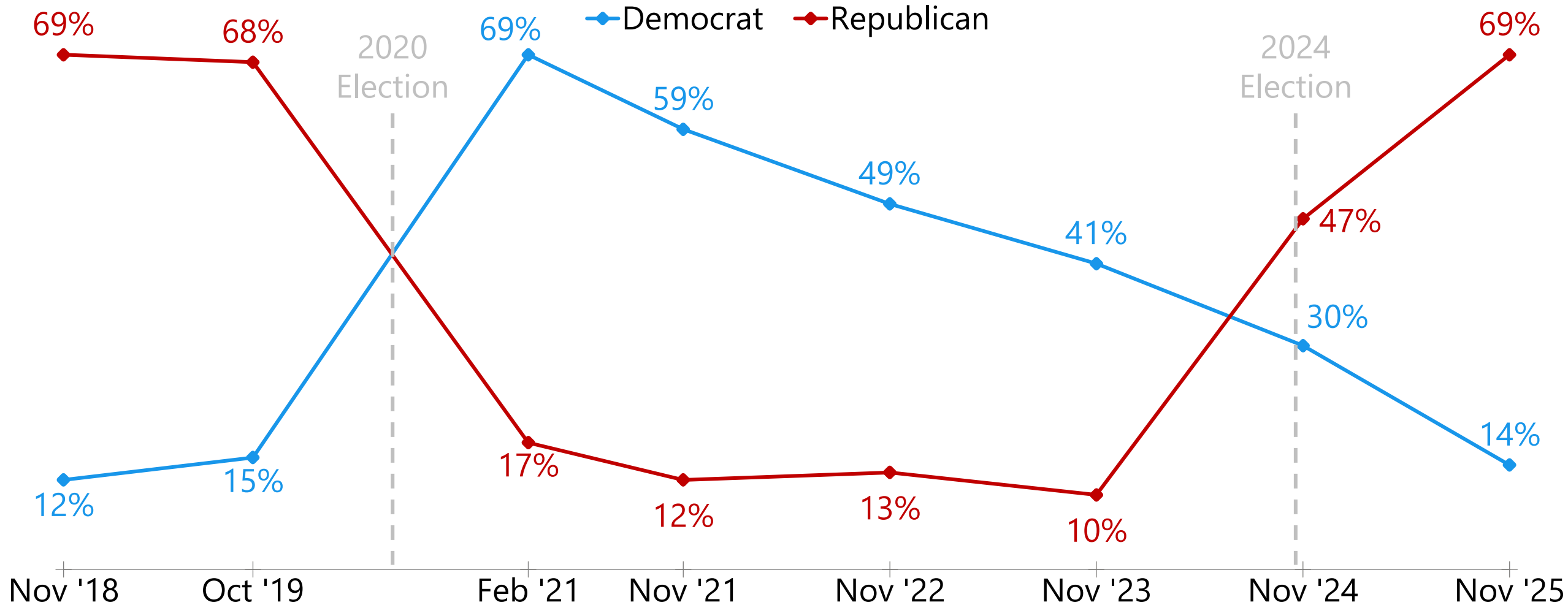


Q2. Would you say things in the United States today are:



Sharply different evaluations of the country by partisans.

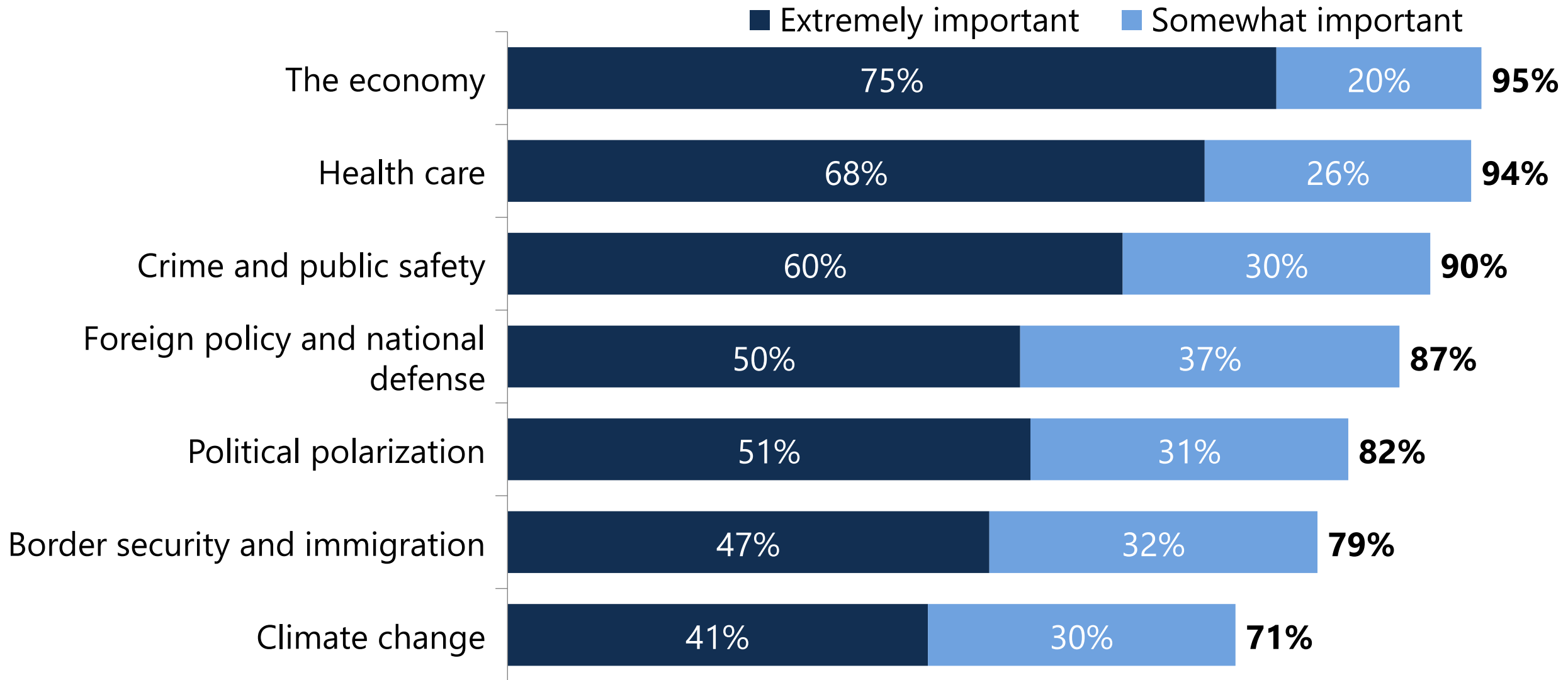
Right direction



Q2. Would you say things in the United States today are:



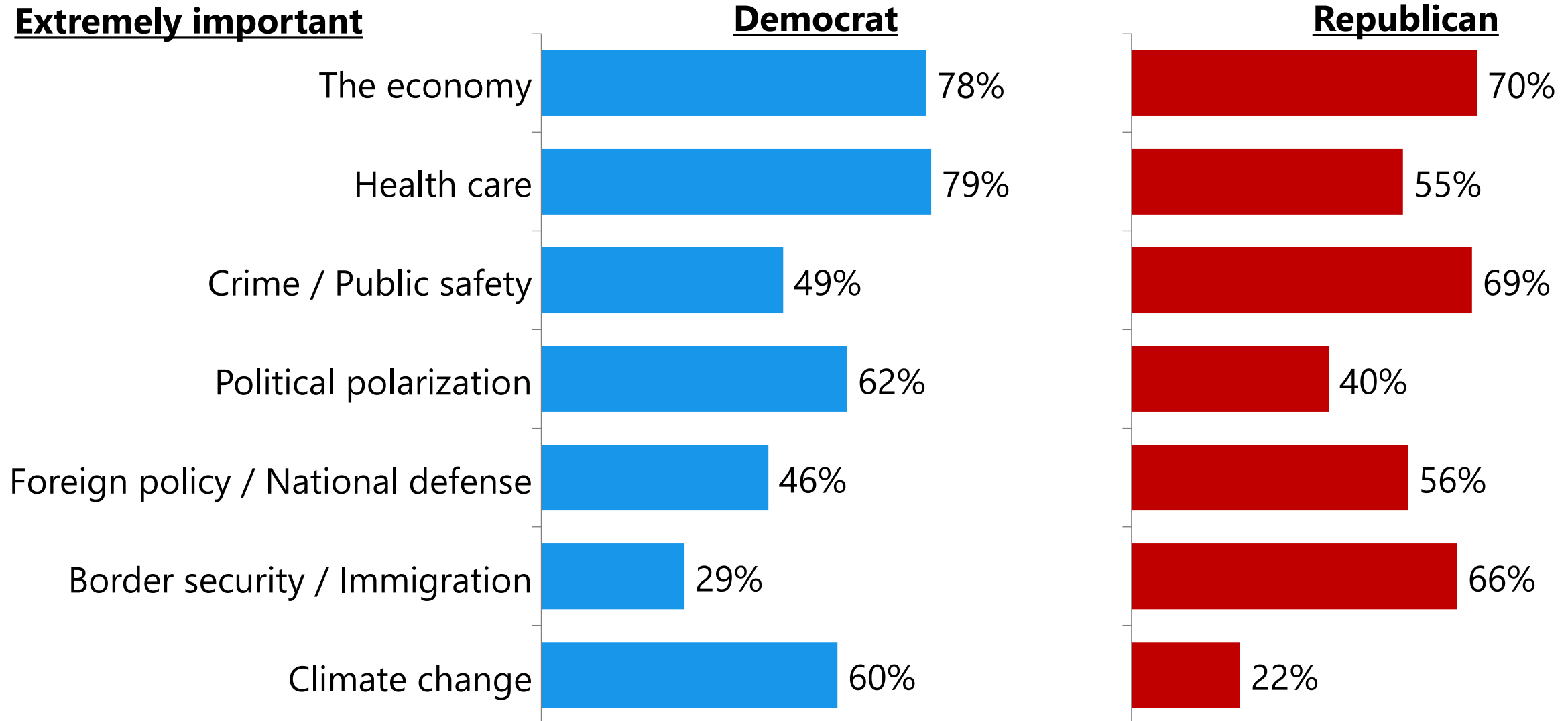
Ratings of top issues.



Q3-9. How important are each of the following issues facing the country today?



Beyond the economy, Republicans and Democrats see very different issue landscape.



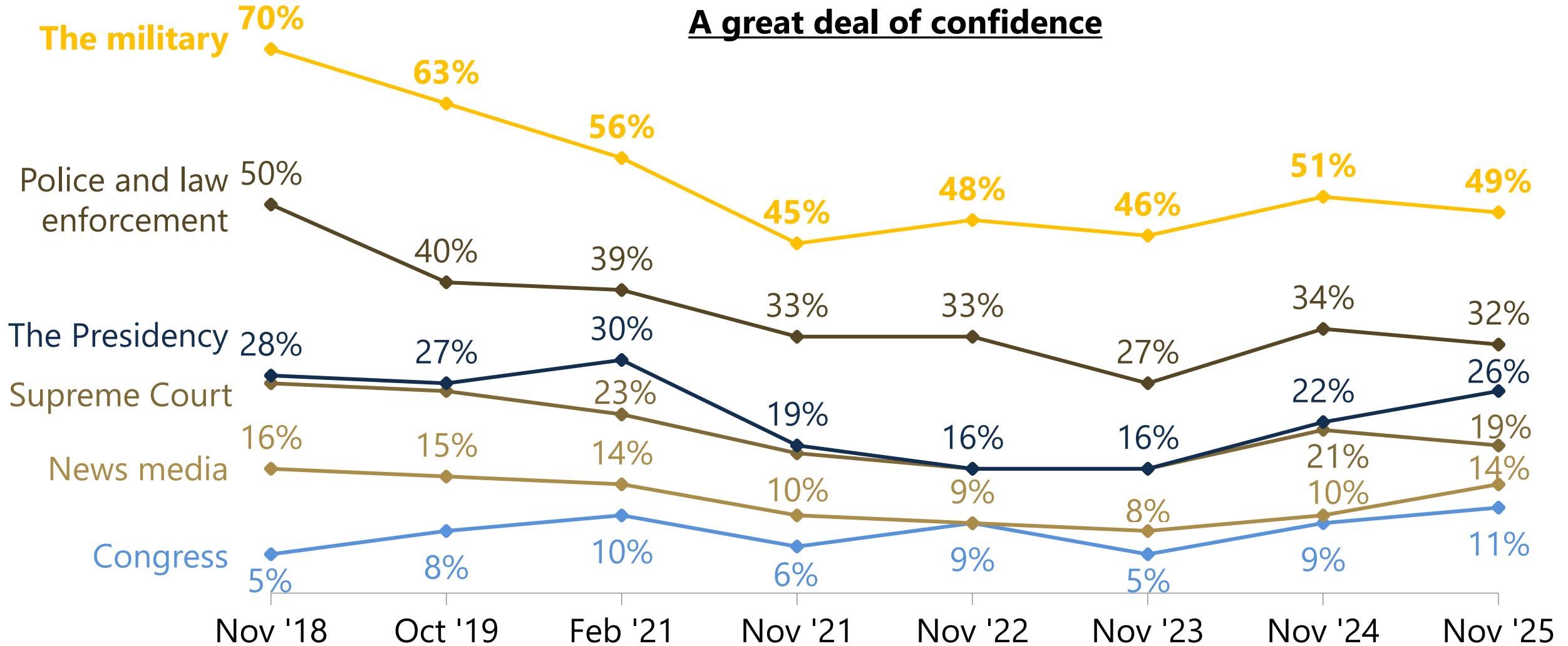
Q3-9 How important are each of the following issues facing the country today?



CONFIDENCE IN THE MILITARY

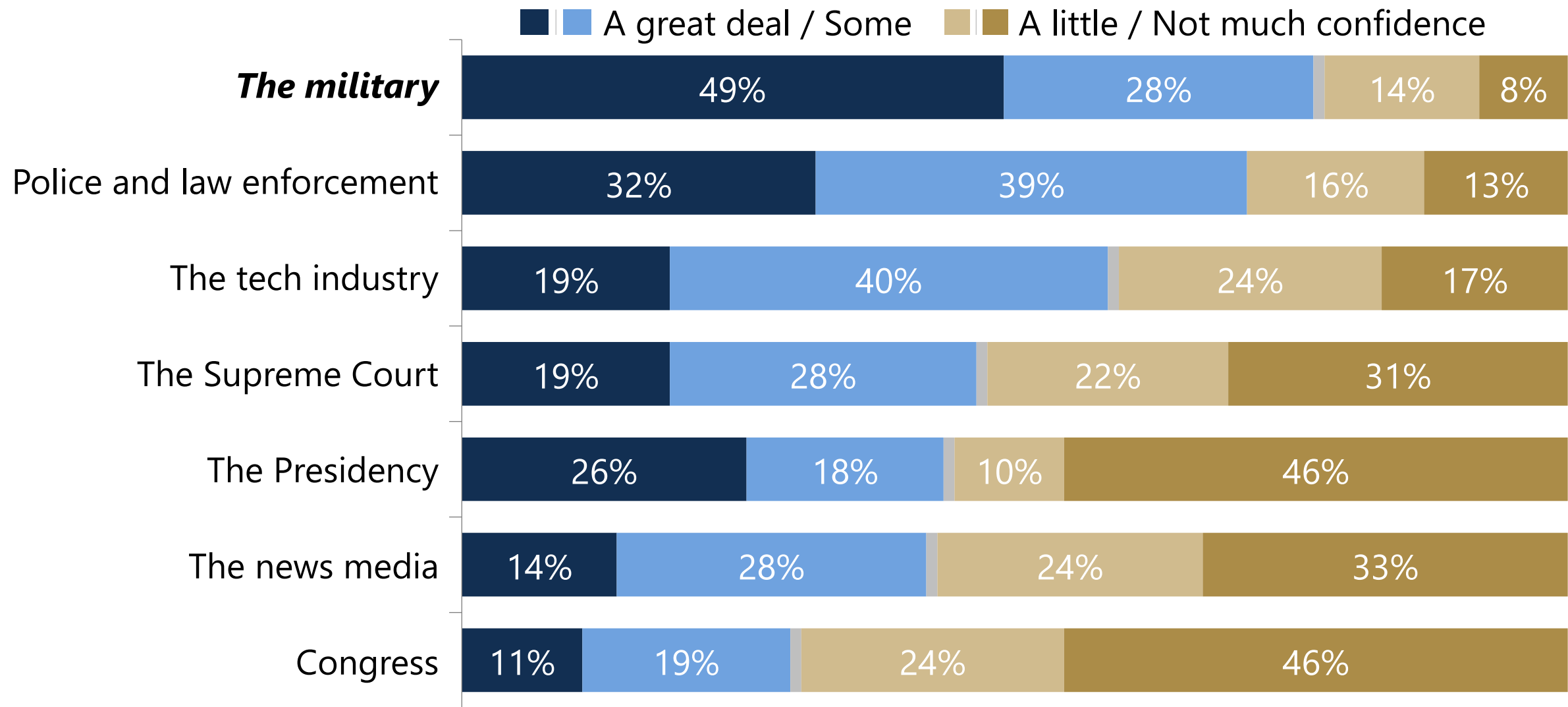


Confidence in US institutions over time.



Q10-15. For each of the following groups or institutions, please tell us how much trust and confidence you have in them.

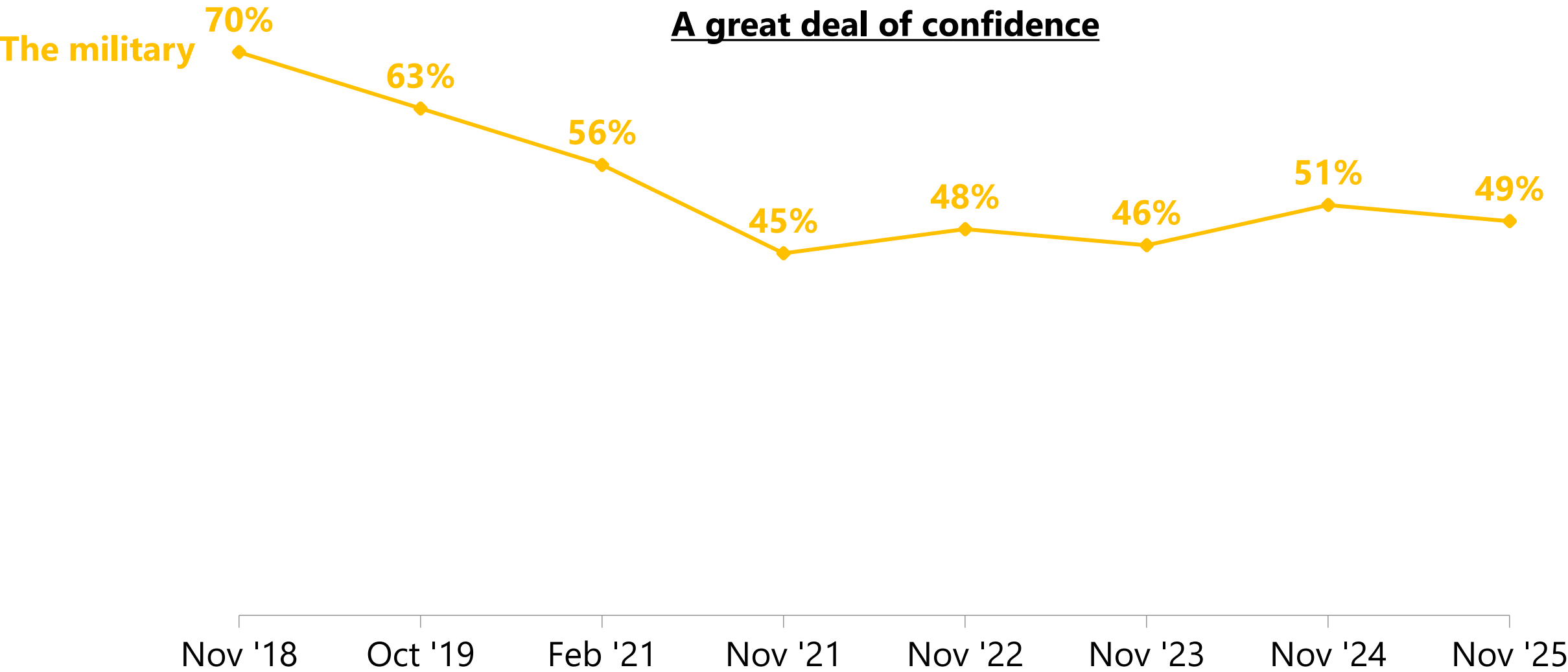
The military remains by far the most trusted US institution.



Q10-16. For each of the following groups or institutions, please tell us how much trust and confidence you have in them.



Confidence in military has been stable over recent years.

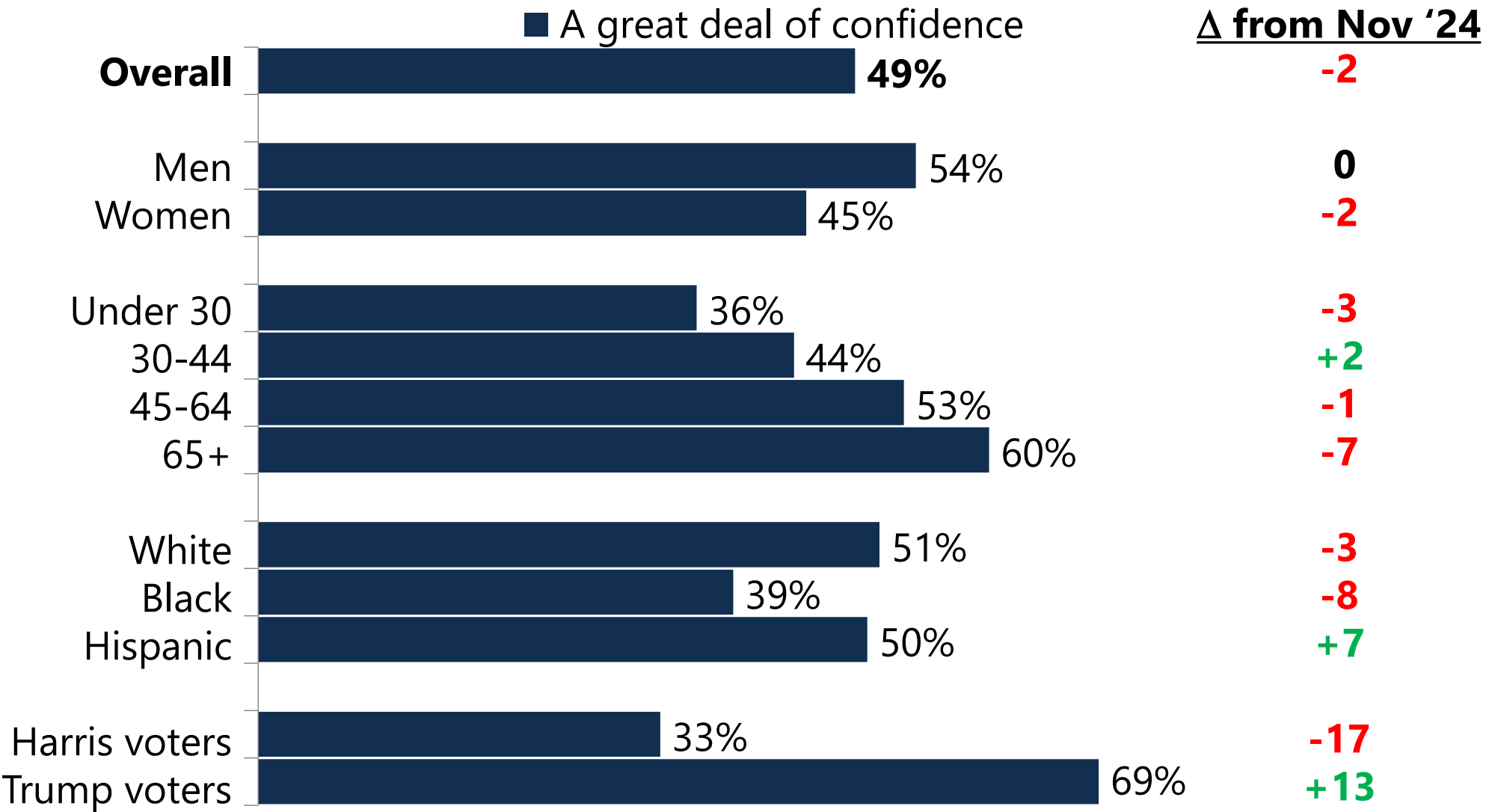


Q10. For each of the following groups or institutions, please tell us how much trust and confidence you have in them: The military



Confidence in military, by subgroups.

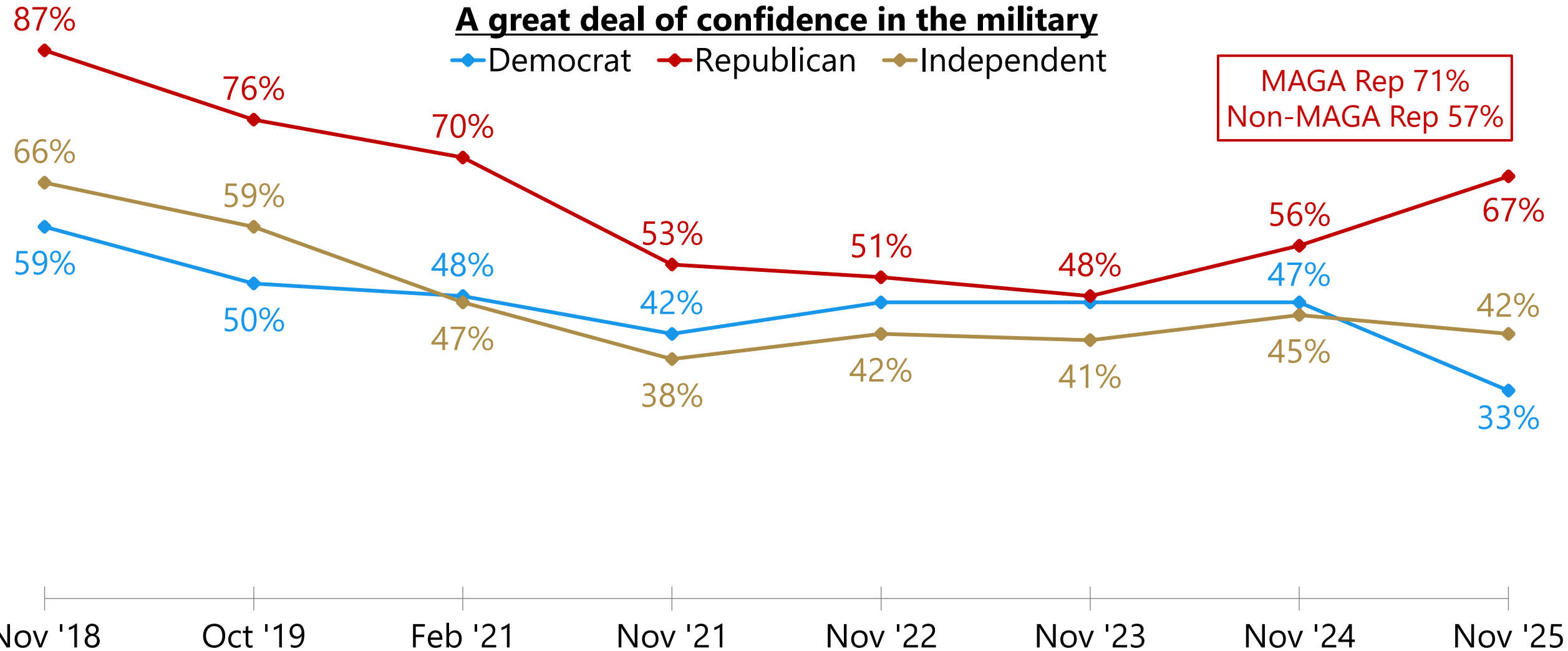
The military



Q10. For each of the following groups or institutions, please tell us how much trust and confidence you have in them: The military

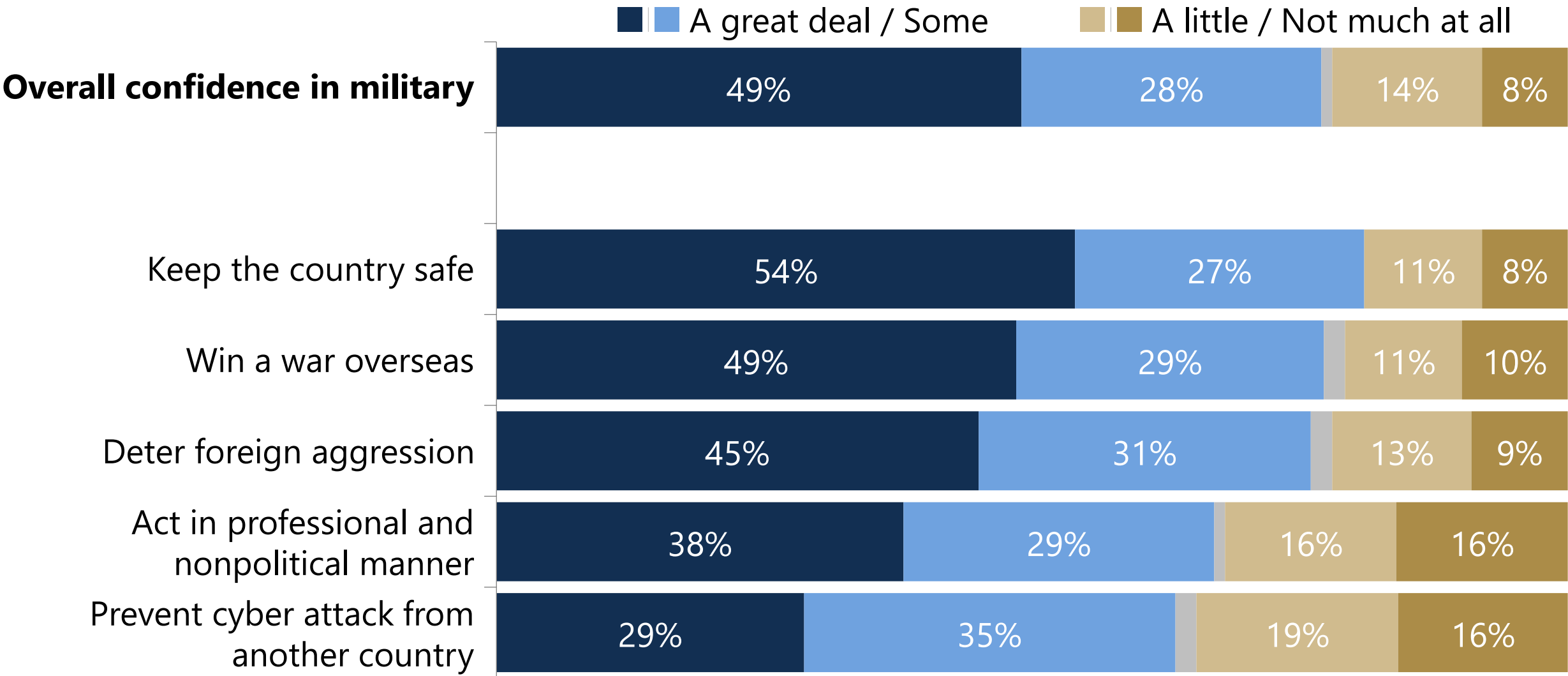


Confidence in military, by party identification.



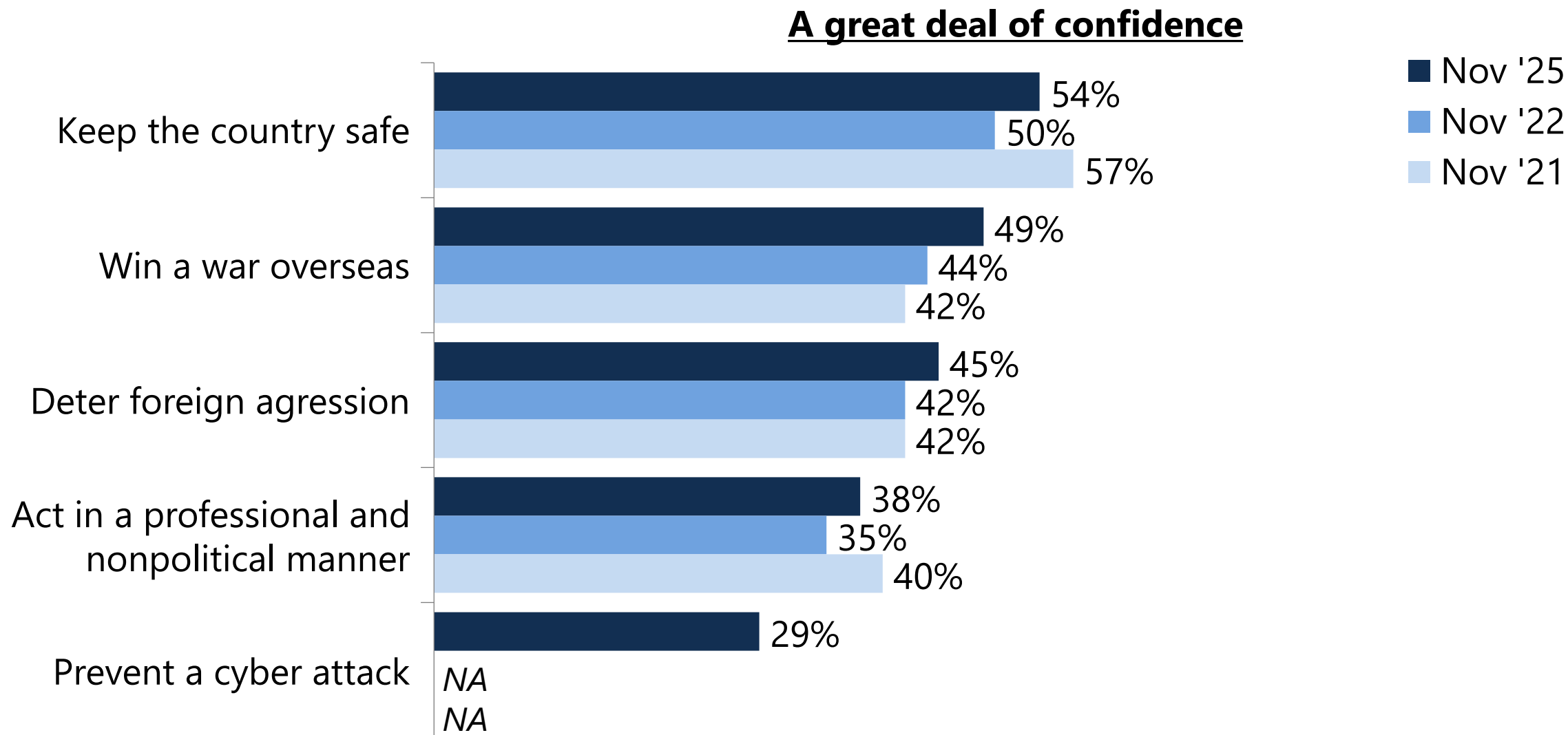
Q10. For each of the following groups or institutions, please tell us how much trust and confidence you have in them: The military

Most have confidence in the military's ability to keep the country safe.



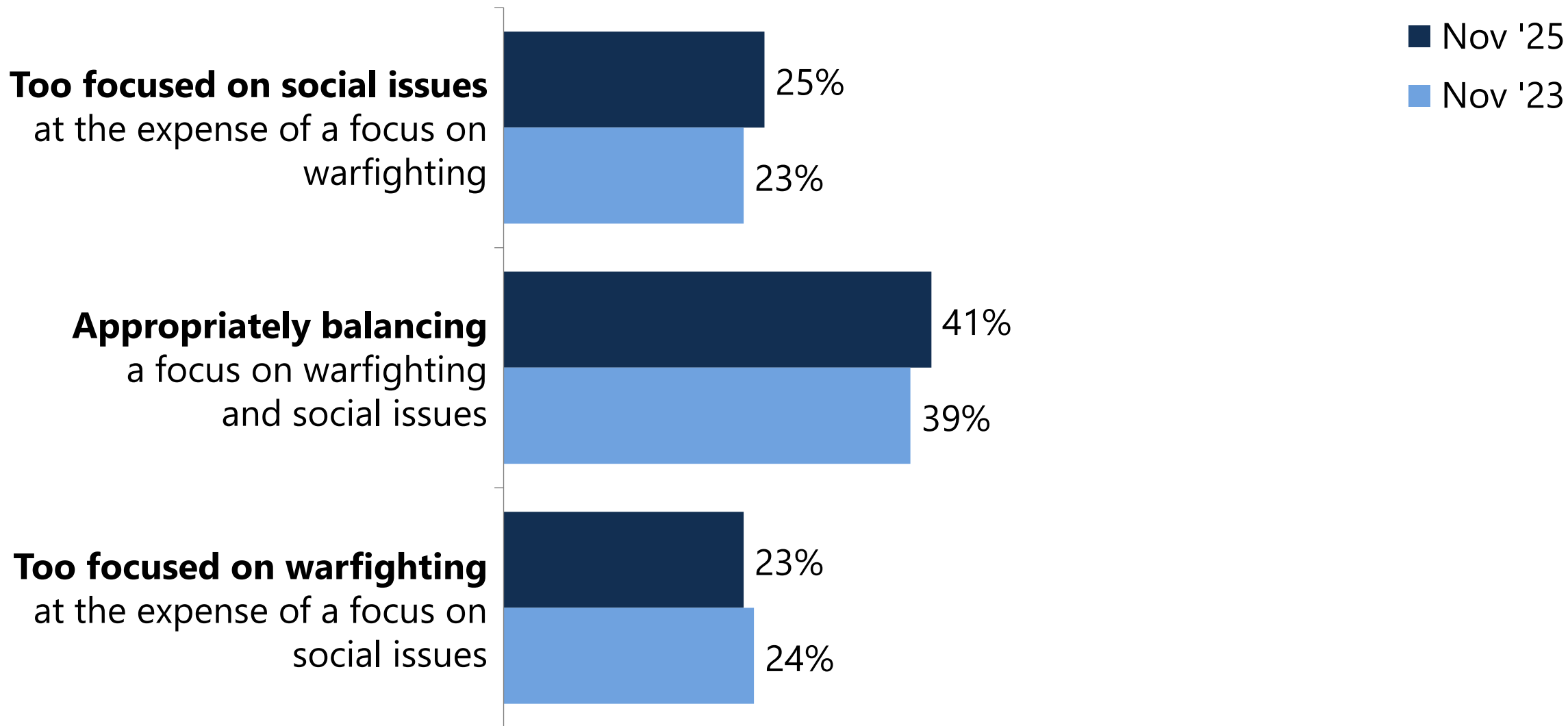
Q10. For each of the following groups or institutions, please tell us how much trust and confidence you have in them: The military
AND Q17-21. How much trust and confidence do you have in the US military's ability to...

Less confidence in the military's ability to prevent a cyber attack or act in a nonpolitical manner.



Q17-21. How much trust and confidence do you have in the US military's ability to...

Most see a challenge balancing social issues and warfighting.



Q22. Do you think the US military is:

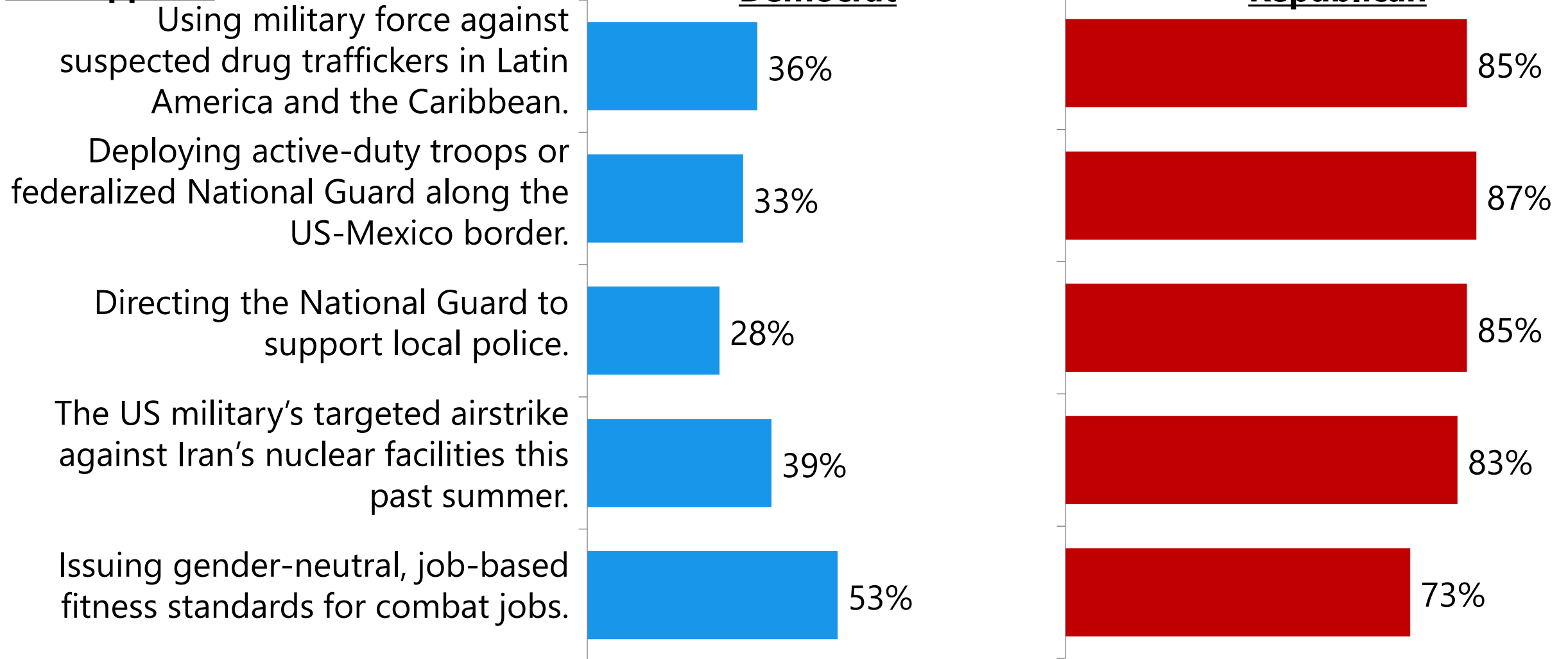


Approval of actions and policies by the Pentagon by party identification.

Total approve

Democrat

Republican



Q23-32. Do you approve or disapprove of each of the following actions or policies by the Pentagon?

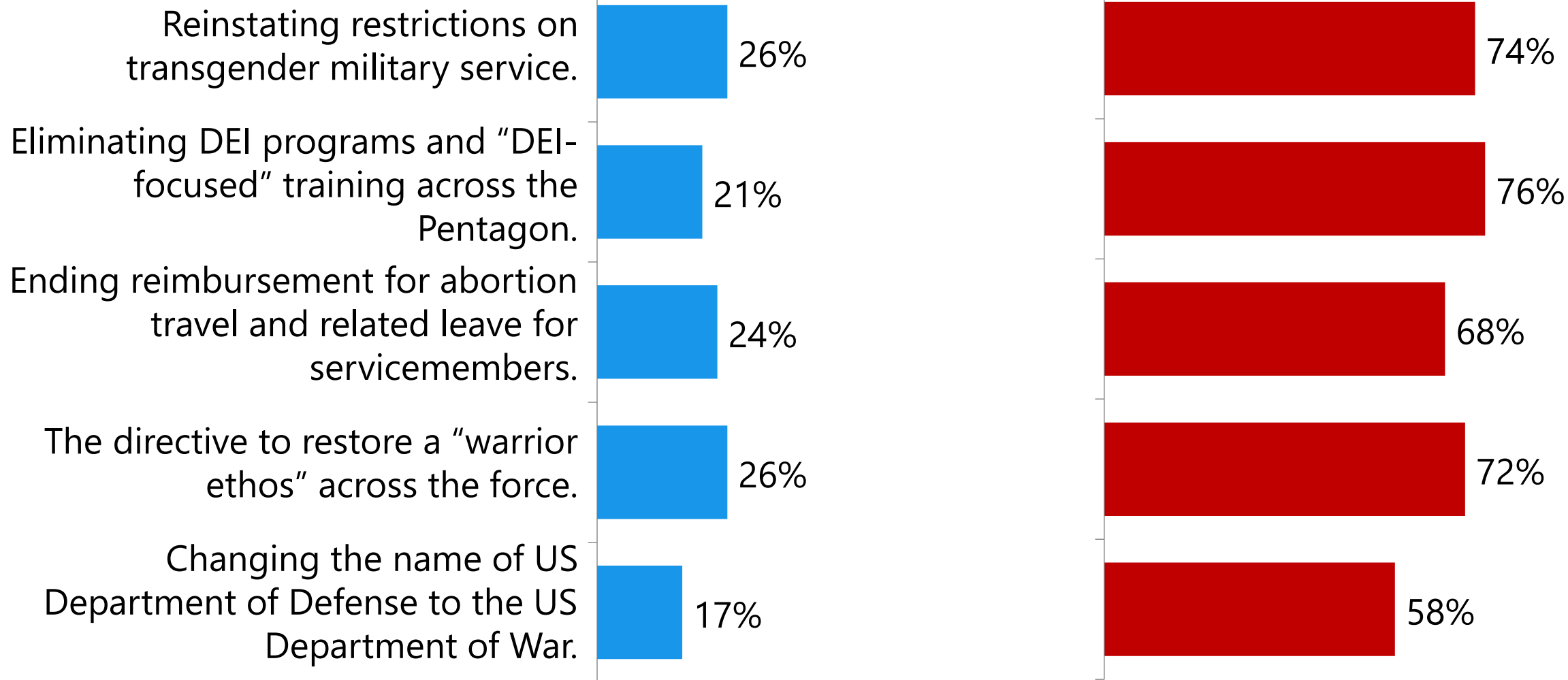
Approval of actions and policies by the Pentagon by party identification, cont.



Total approve

Democrat

Republican



Q23-32. Do you approve or disapprove of each of the following actions or policies by the Pentagon?



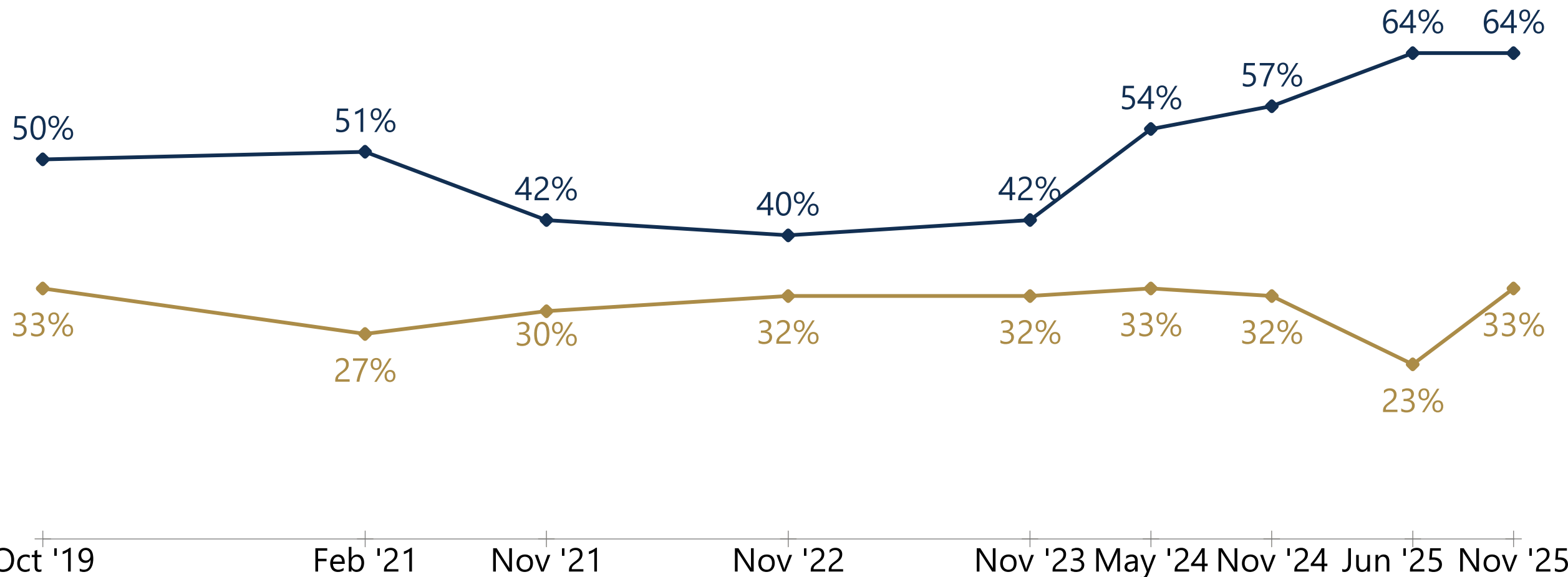
DEFENSE / FOREIGN POLICY POSTURE



Americans continue to favor US leadership and engagement on the world stage.



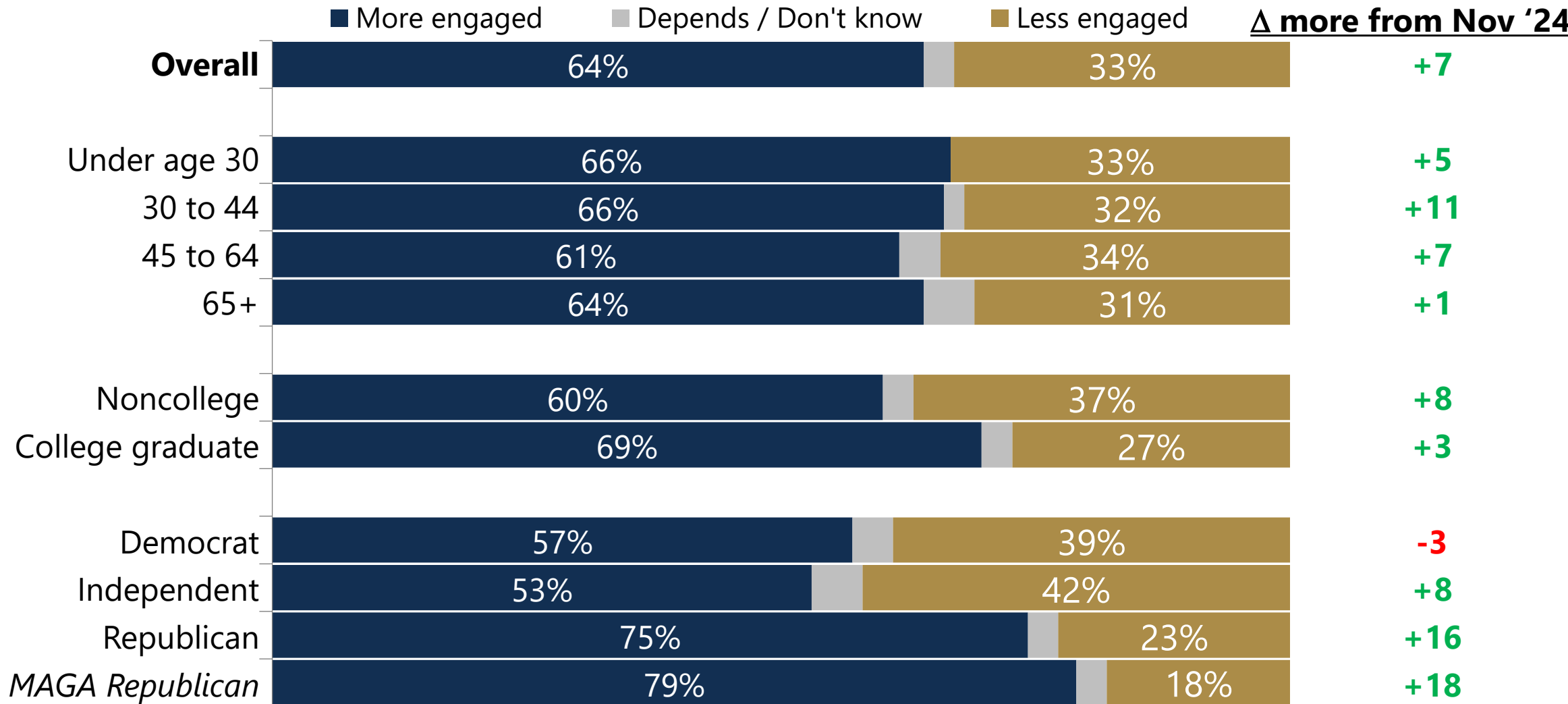
◆ More engaged and take the lead ◆ Less engaged and react to events



Q34. When it comes to international events, do you think it is better for the United States to be more engaged and take the lead, or to be less engaged and react to events?



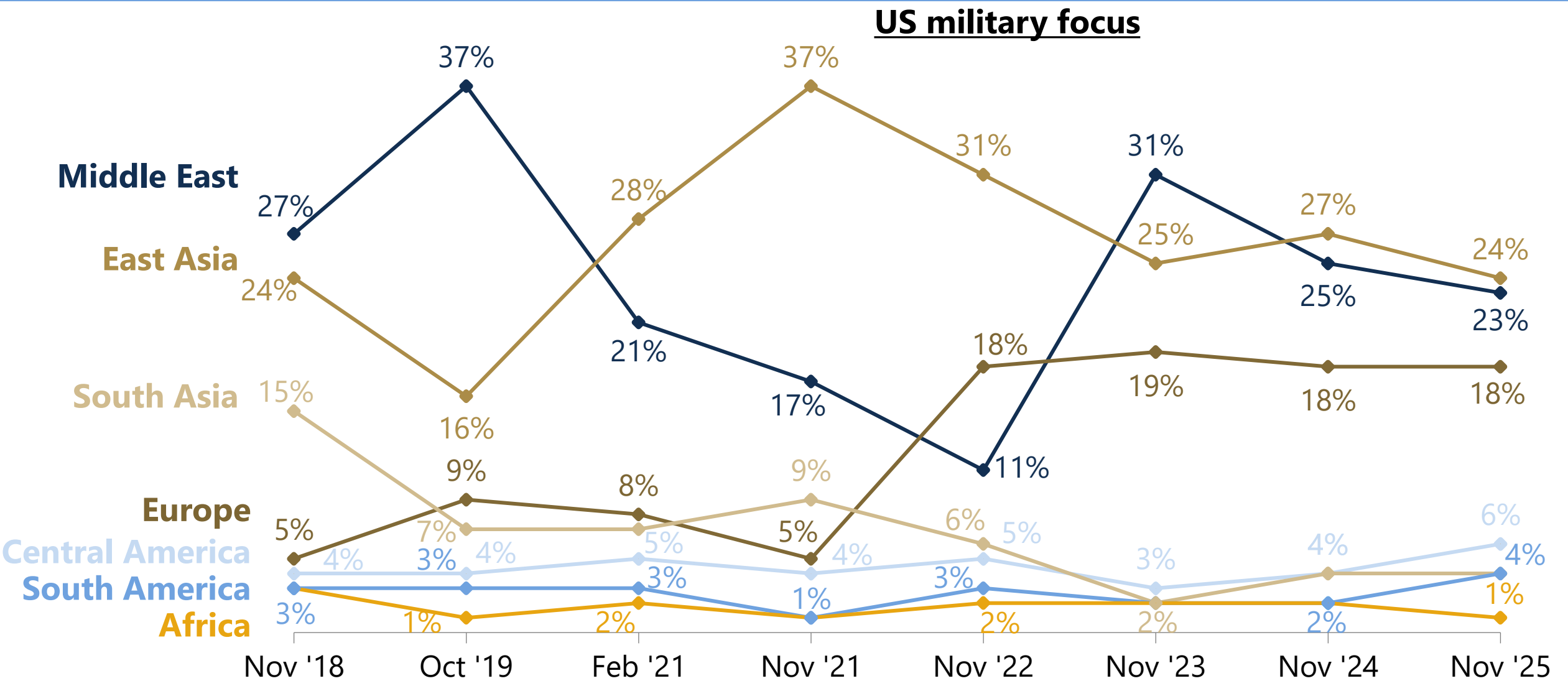
Preferred foreign policy posture, by subgroup.



Q34. When it comes to international events, do you think it is better for the United States to be more engaged and take the lead, or to be less engaged and react to events?

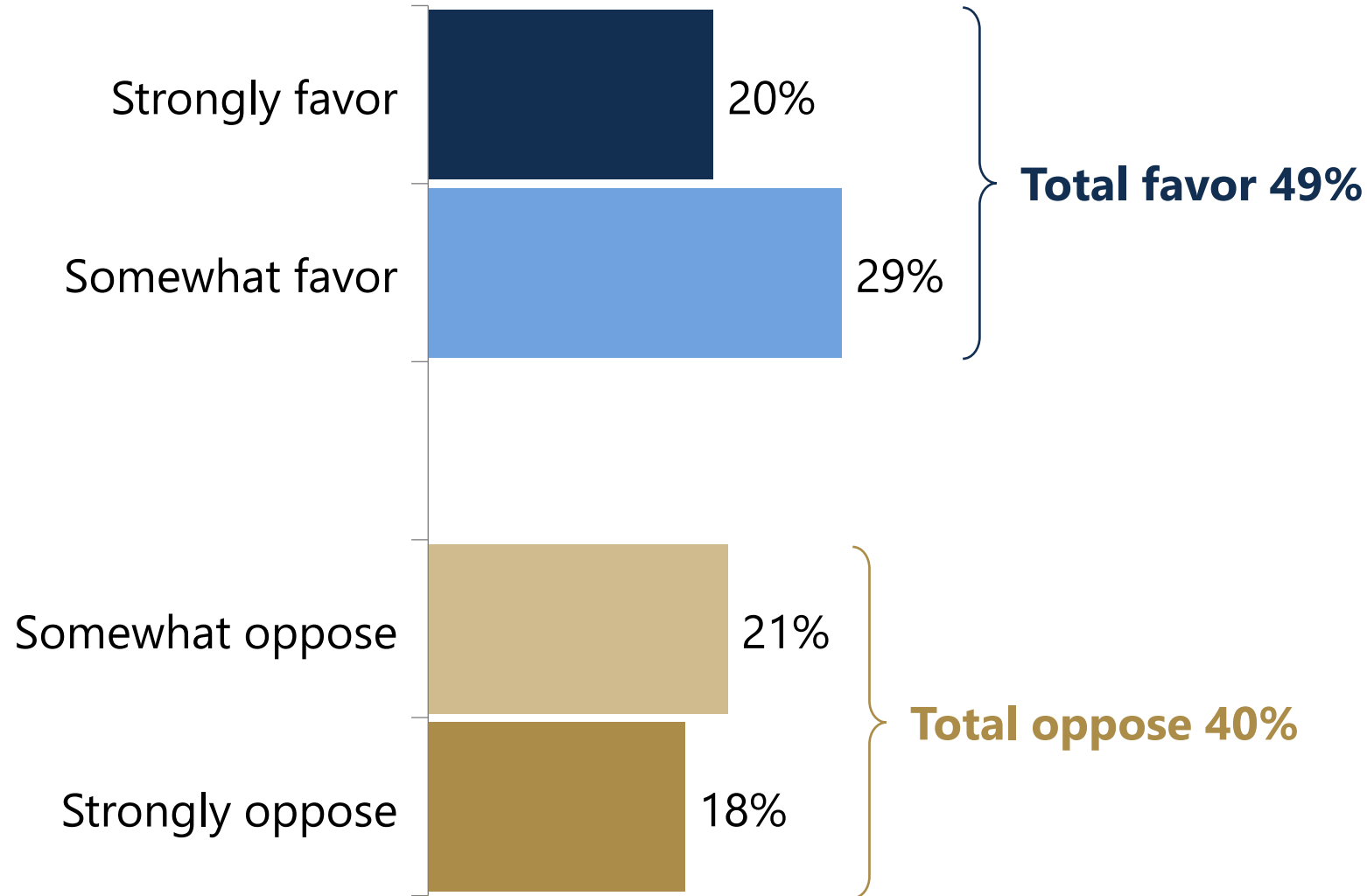


East Asia, Middle East seen as top theaters of focus.



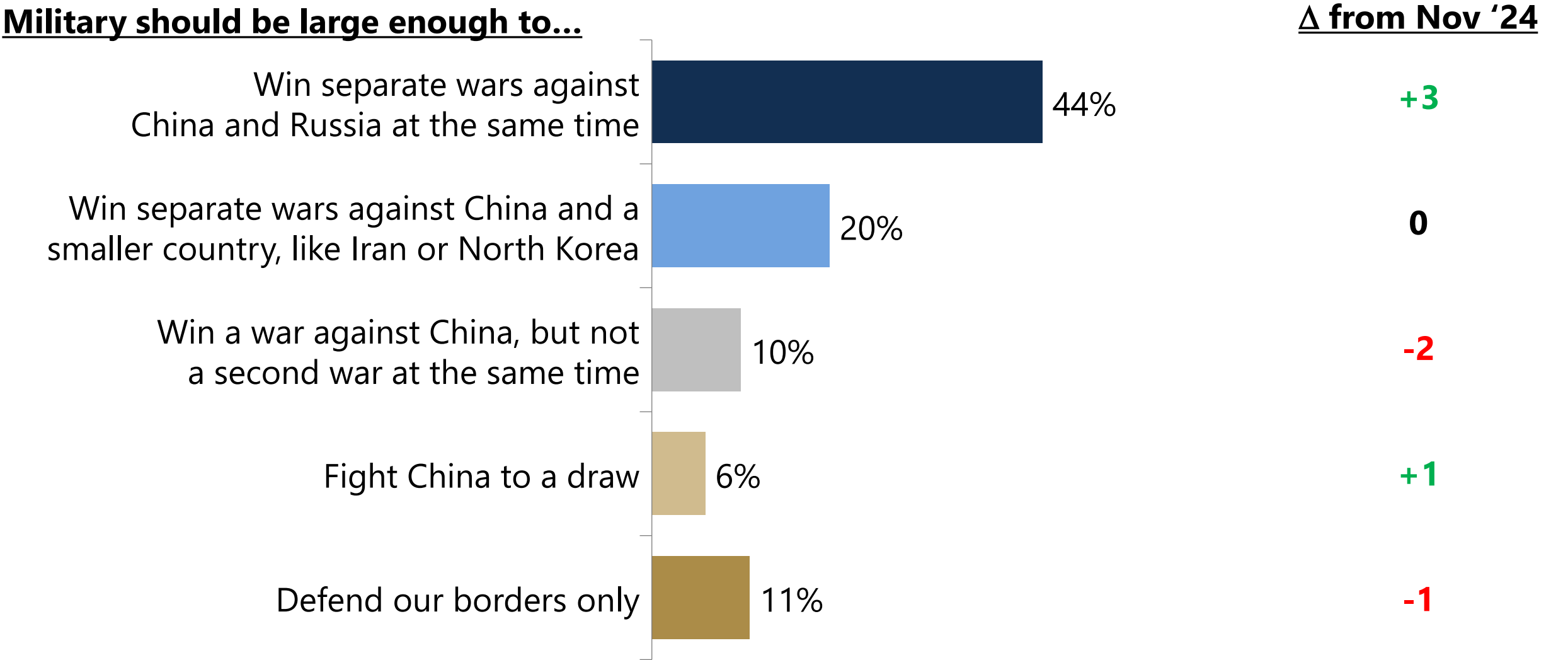
Q35. Thinking about American interests and the threats that exist in the world today, where do you think the US should focus its military forces?

Plurality favor shifting US military presence to Western Hemisphere.



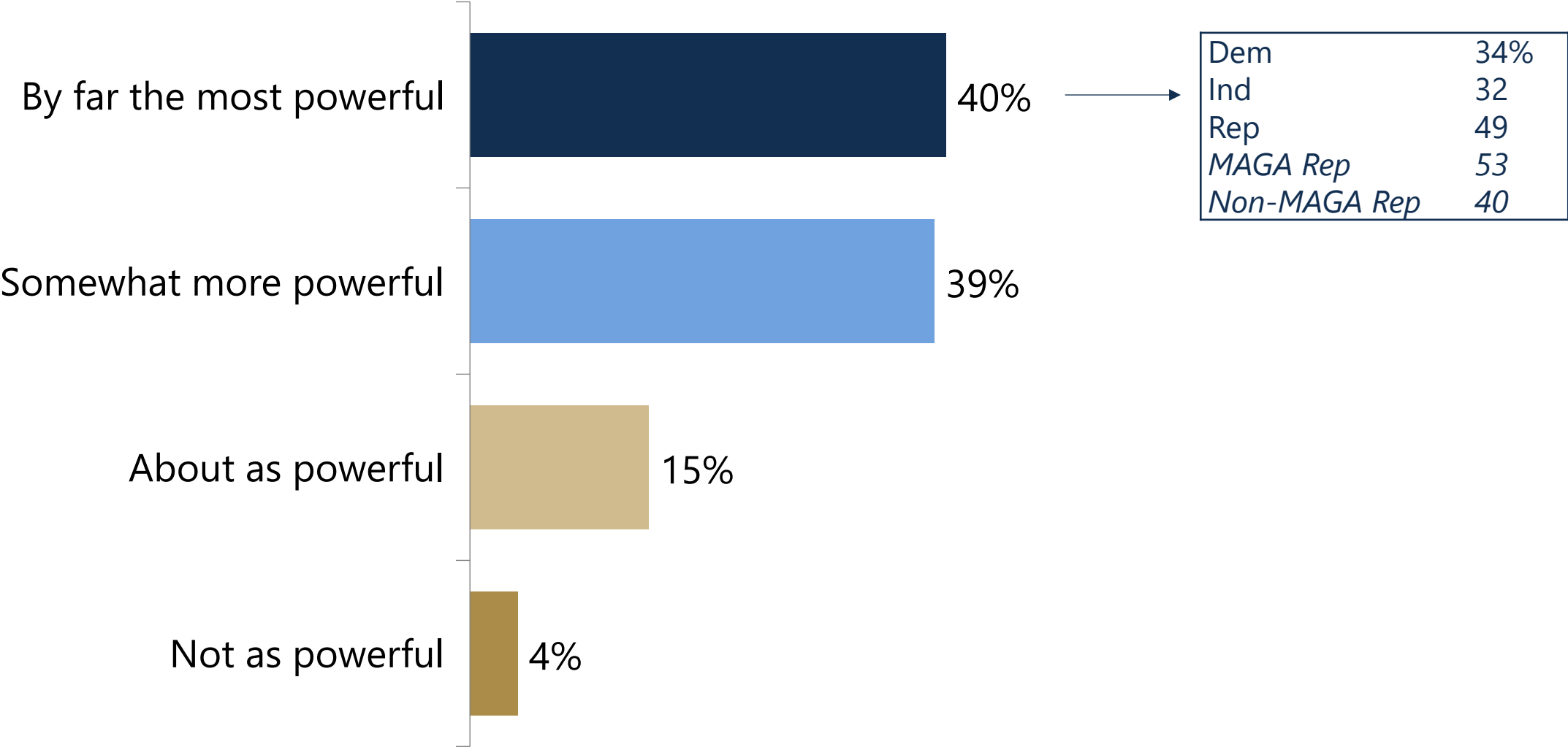
Q36. Do you favor or oppose the US government shifting a major portion of its global military presence and resources away from Europe, the Middle East, and Africa, and refocusing those resources on the Western Hemisphere, meaning North and South America?

Most want a military large enough to win a war on two fronts.



Q40. How large do you think the US military should be?

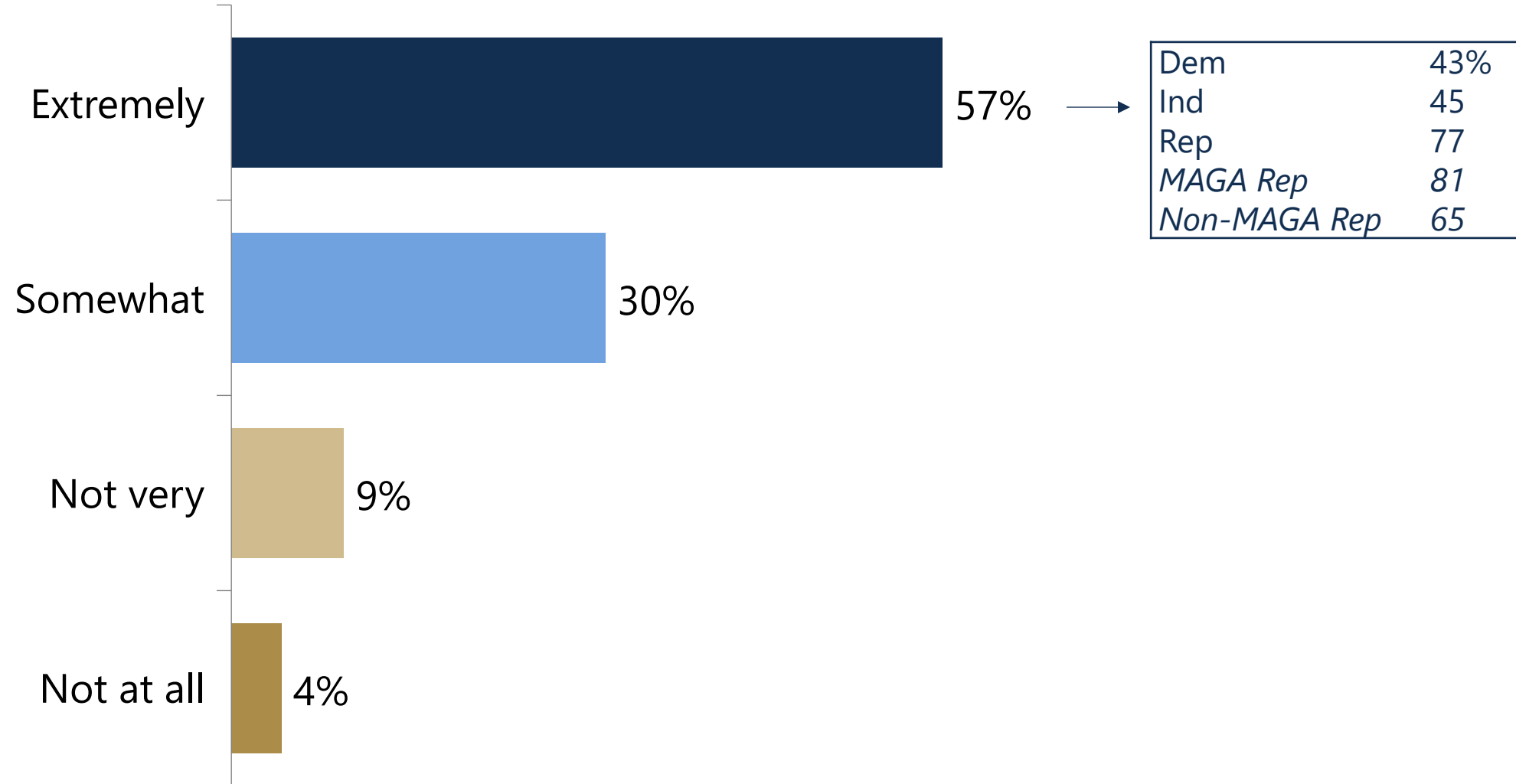
One-in-five do not think the US is more powerful than other major powers.



Q37. How powerful do you think the United States military is compared to other major powers?



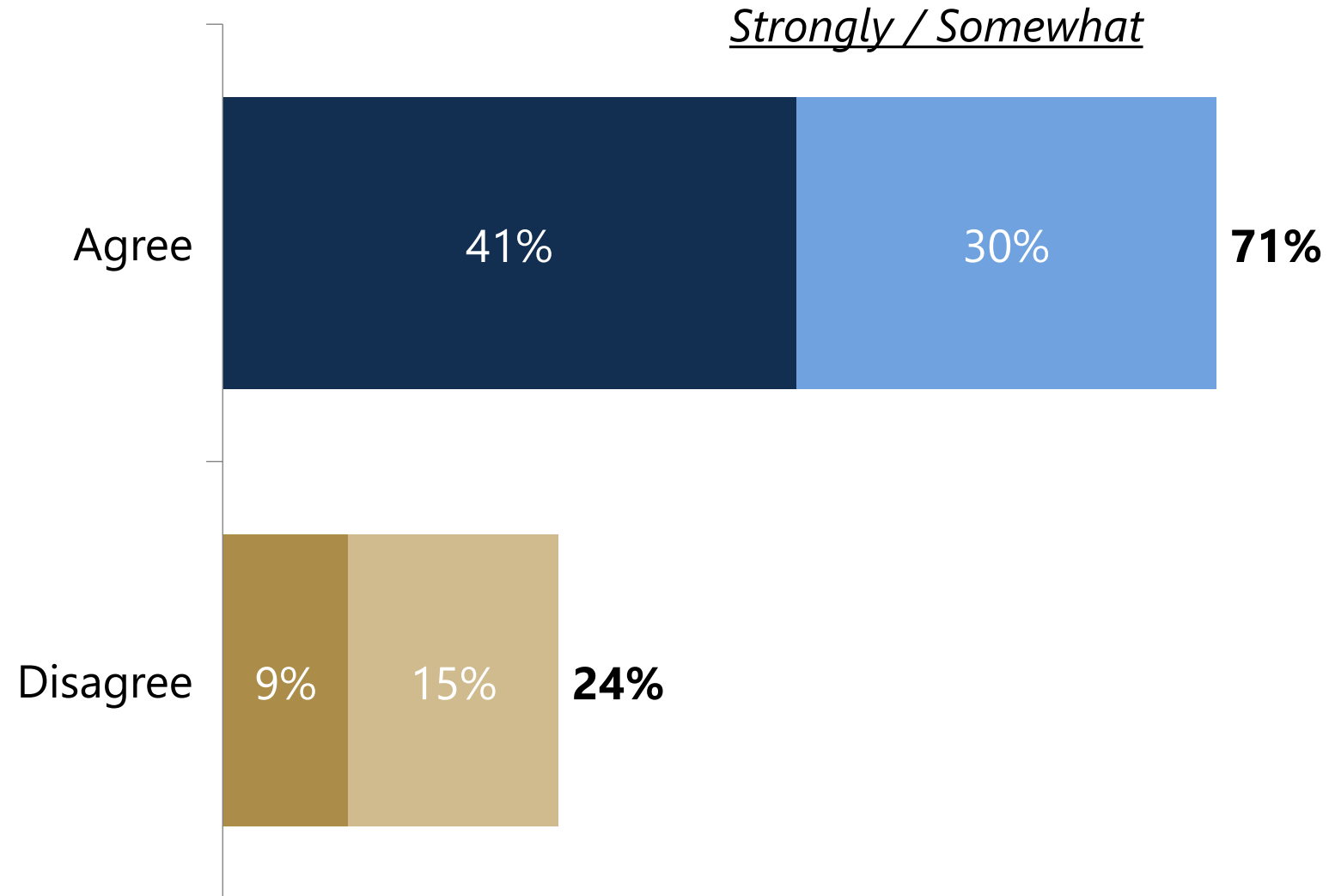
US military supremacy is highly valued.



Q38. How important is it to you that the United States has the most powerful military in the world?

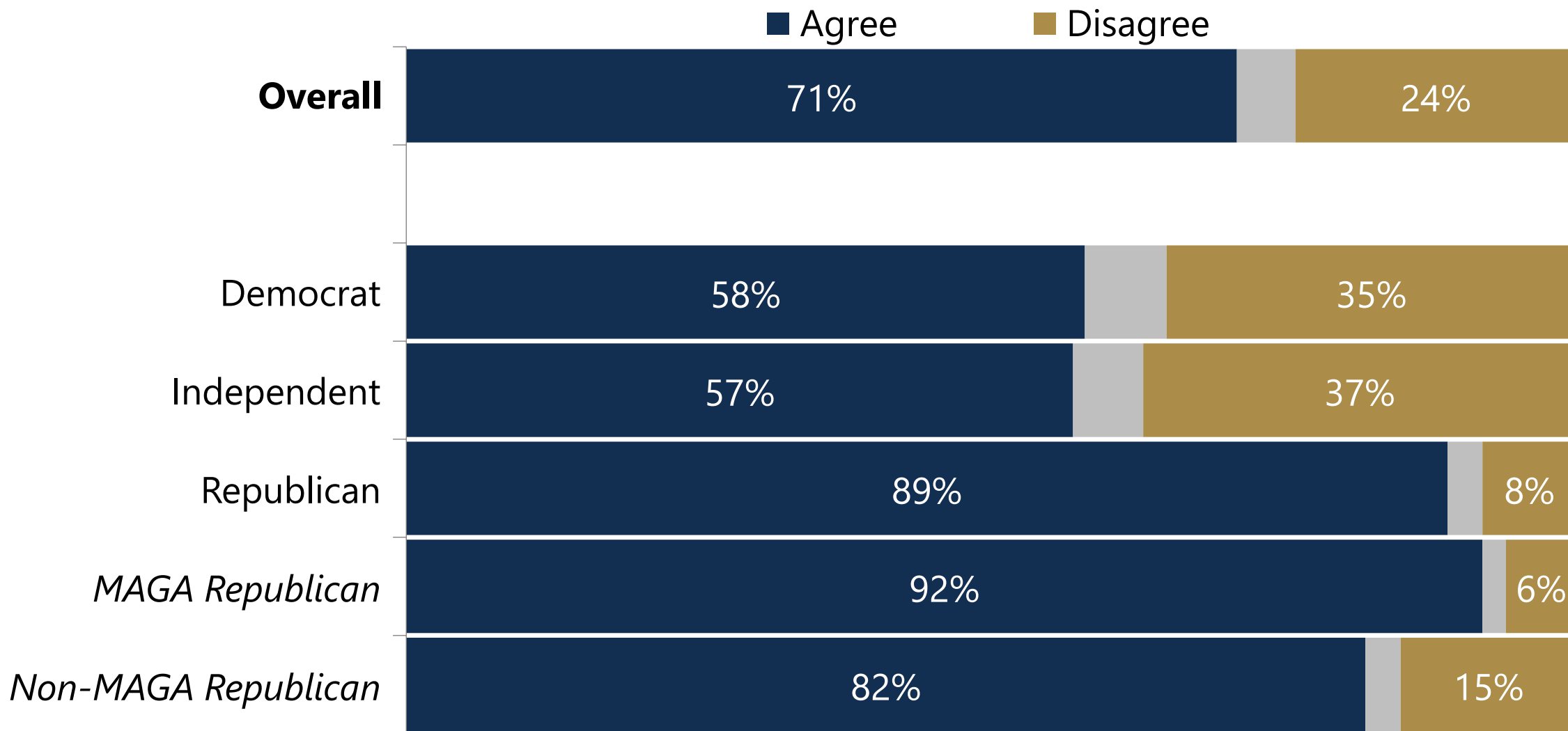


Broad agreement with peace through strength doctrine.



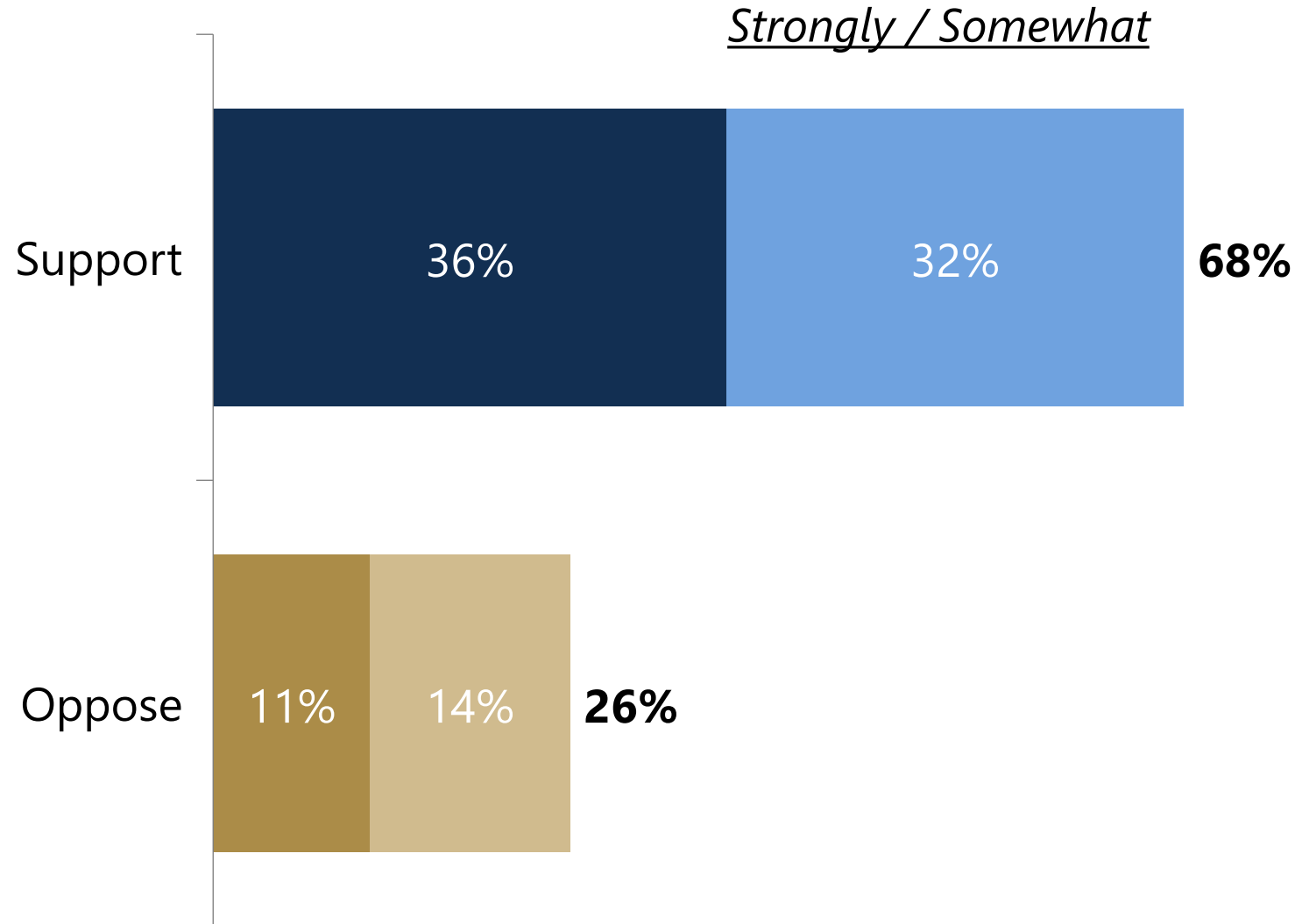
Q39. Do you agree or disagree that the world is more likely to achieve peace when the US has the world's strongest military?

Agreement with the doctrine of peace through strength, by party identification.



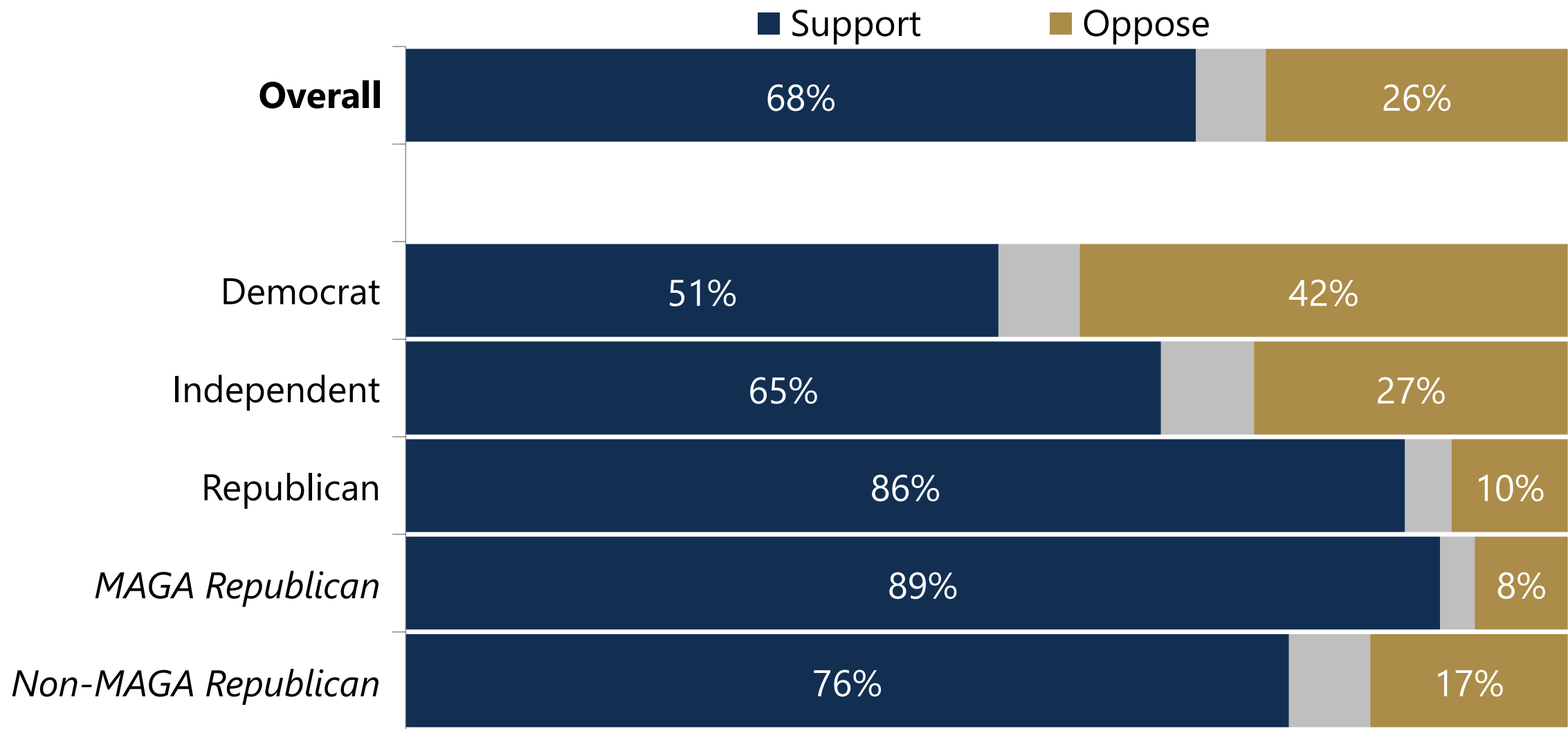
Q39. Do you agree or disagree that the world is more likely to achieve peace when the US has the world's strongest military?

Most support a major spending increase to develop the Golden Dome missile defense system.



Q41. Would you support or oppose a major increase in US government spending to develop the Golden Dome missile defense system that would be designed to protect the US homeland against long-range missiles?

Support for spending increase to develop the Golden Dome missile defense system, by party identification.



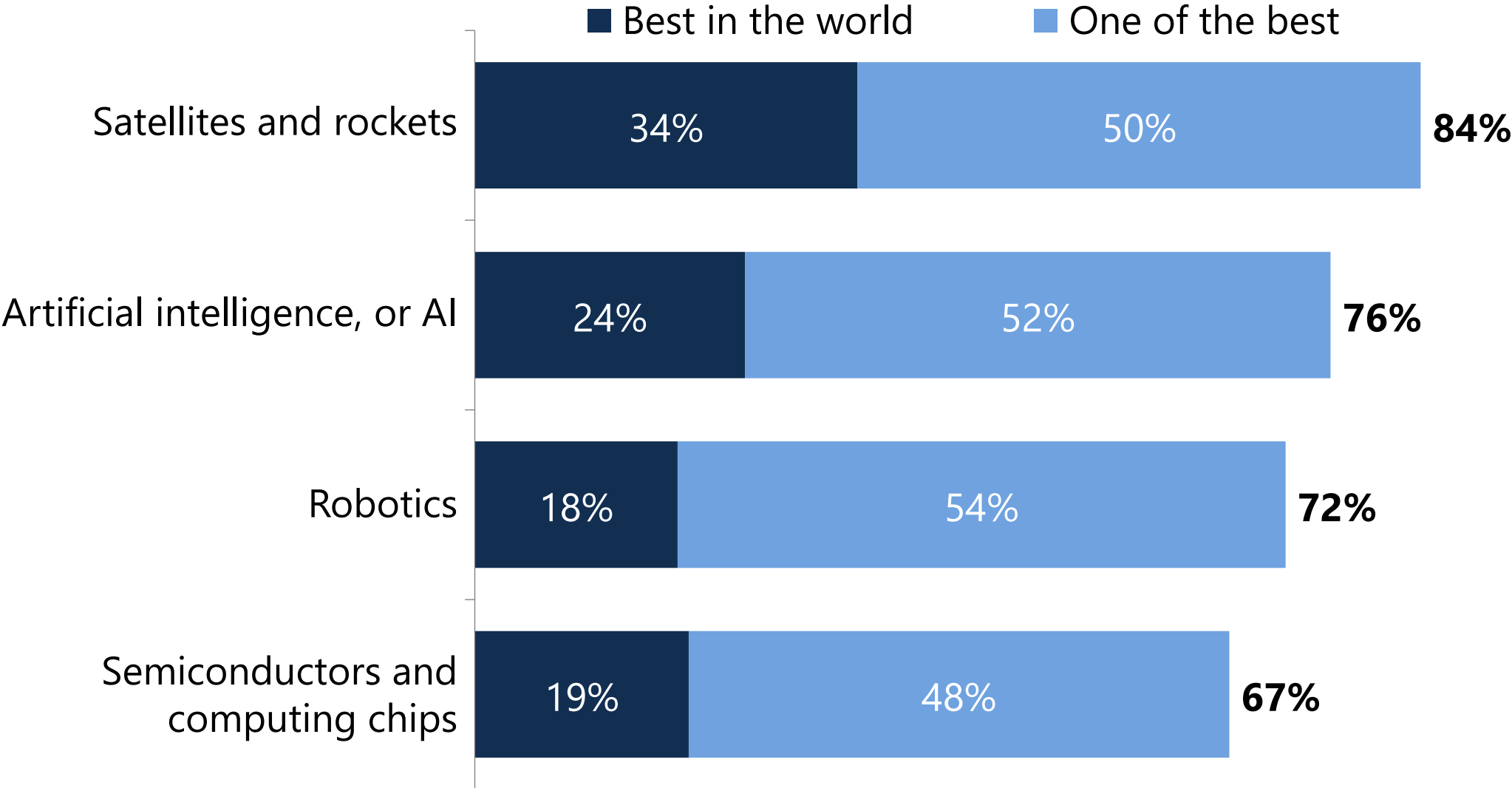
Q41. Would you support or oppose a major increase in US government spending to develop the Golden Dome missile defense system that would be designed to protect the US homeland against long-range missiles?



DEFENSE TECHNOLOGIES

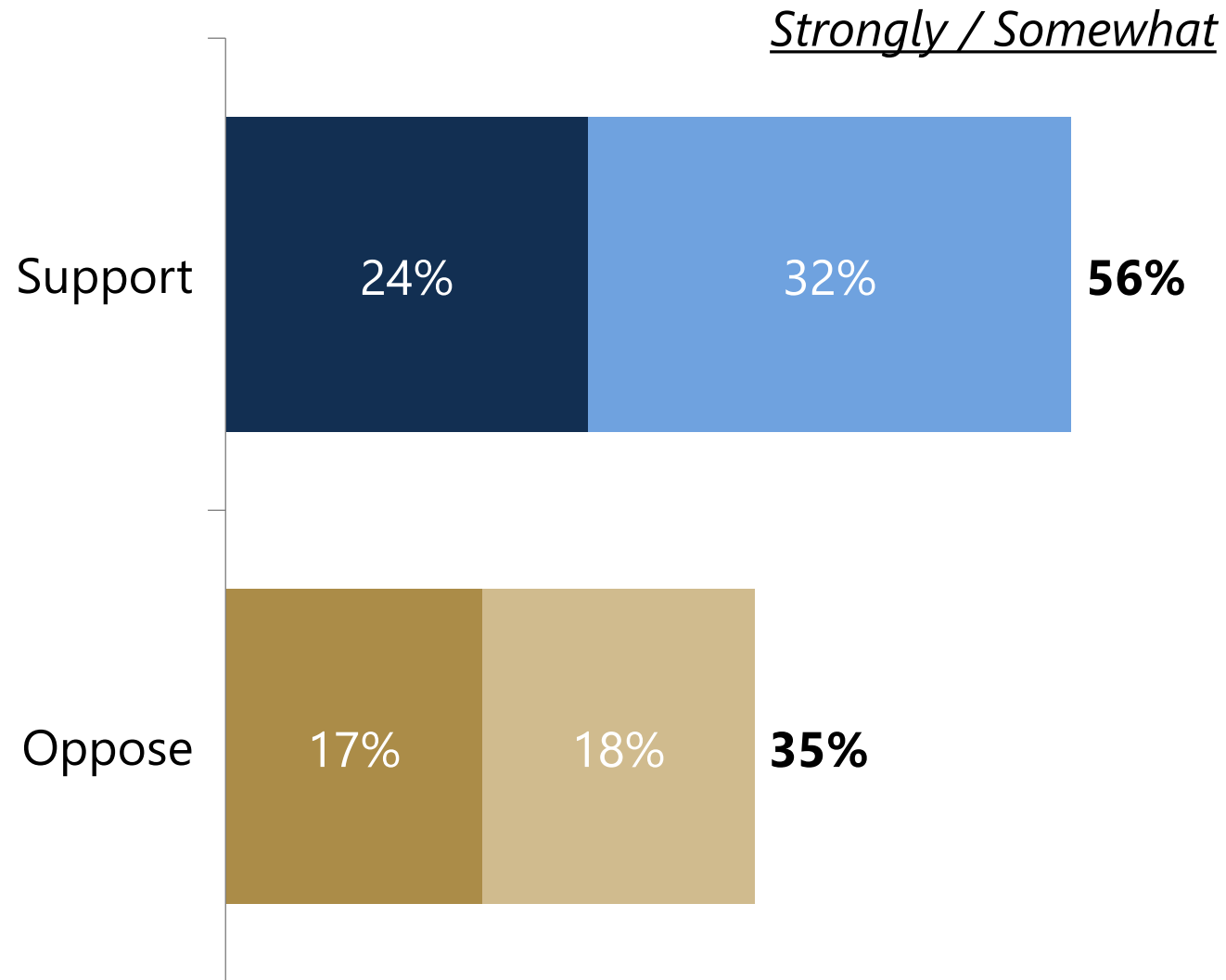


Most think US is *one of the best* at advanced defense technologies.



Q42-45. Thinking specifically about materials and technologies that are important for national security – how do you think the US is doing when it comes to developing and producing each of the following? Is the US the best in the world, one of the best, or not one of the best?

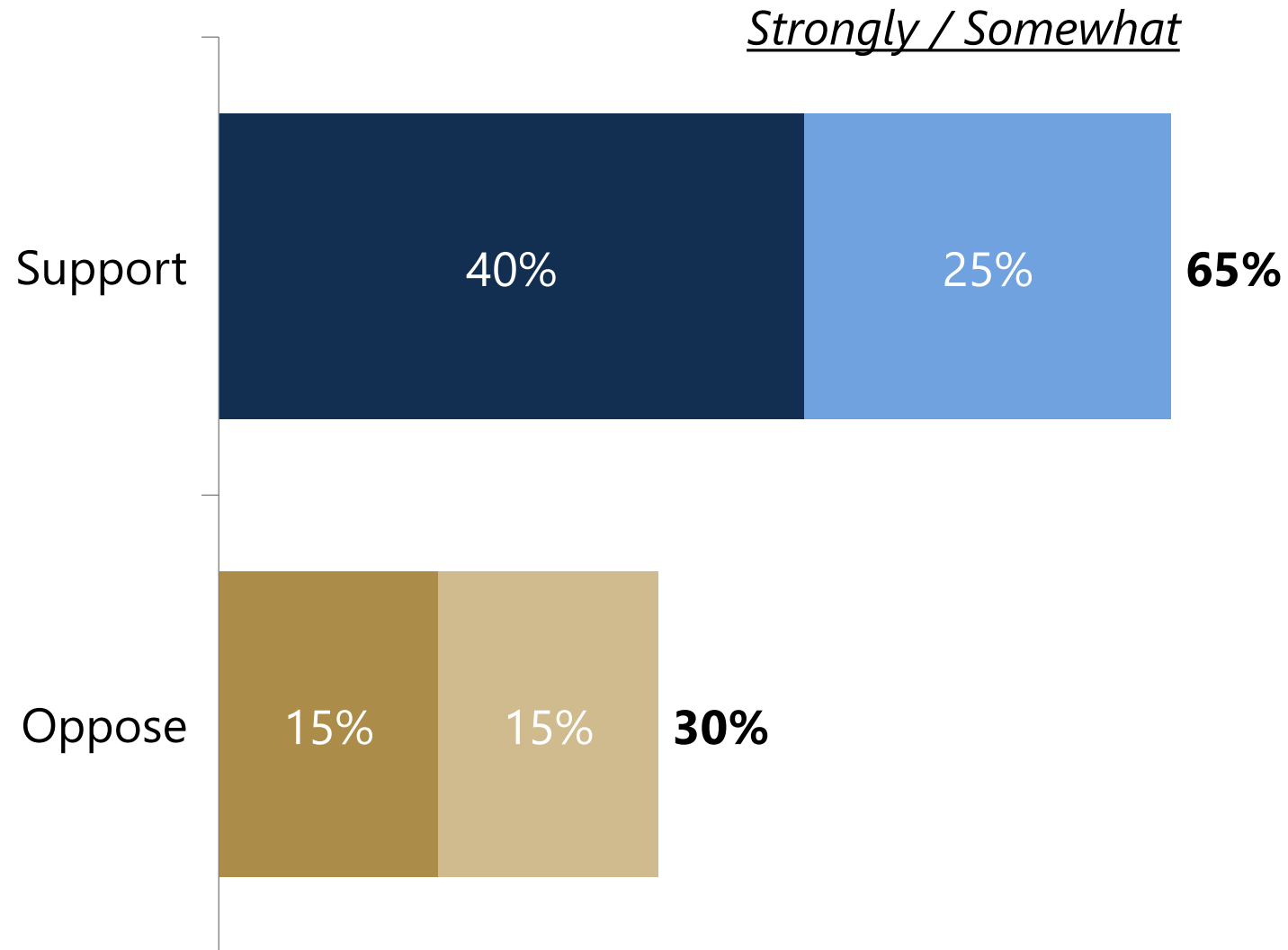
Majority support government acquiring equity stake in companies producing vital national security products.



Q46. Do you support or oppose the US government taking an ownership stake in companies that produce products deemed important to national security, like semiconductors?



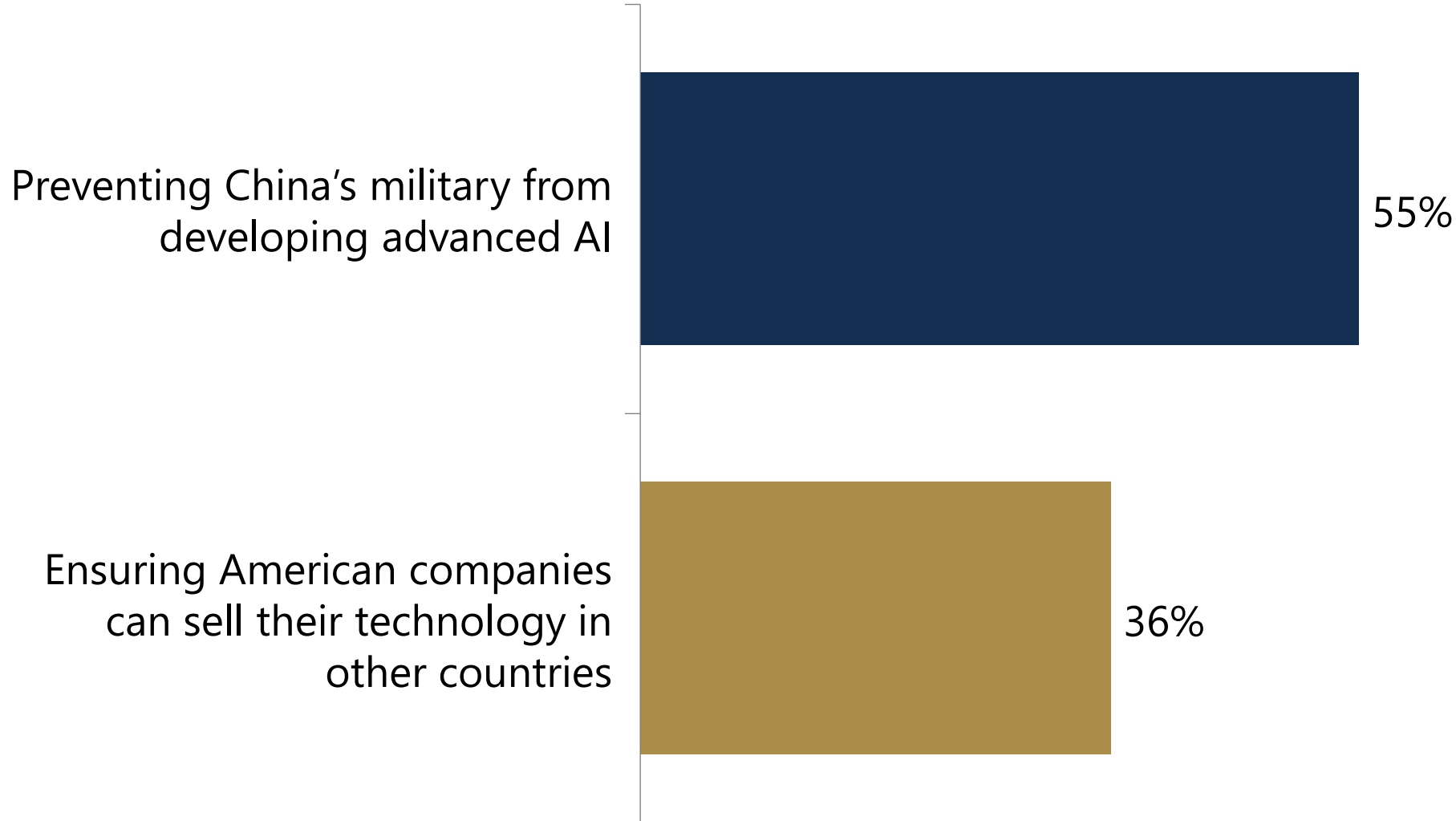
Two-thirds support limiting AI chip sales to China.



Q47. Do you support or oppose the US government strictly limiting American companies from selling the most advanced artificial intelligence (AI) computer chips to China?

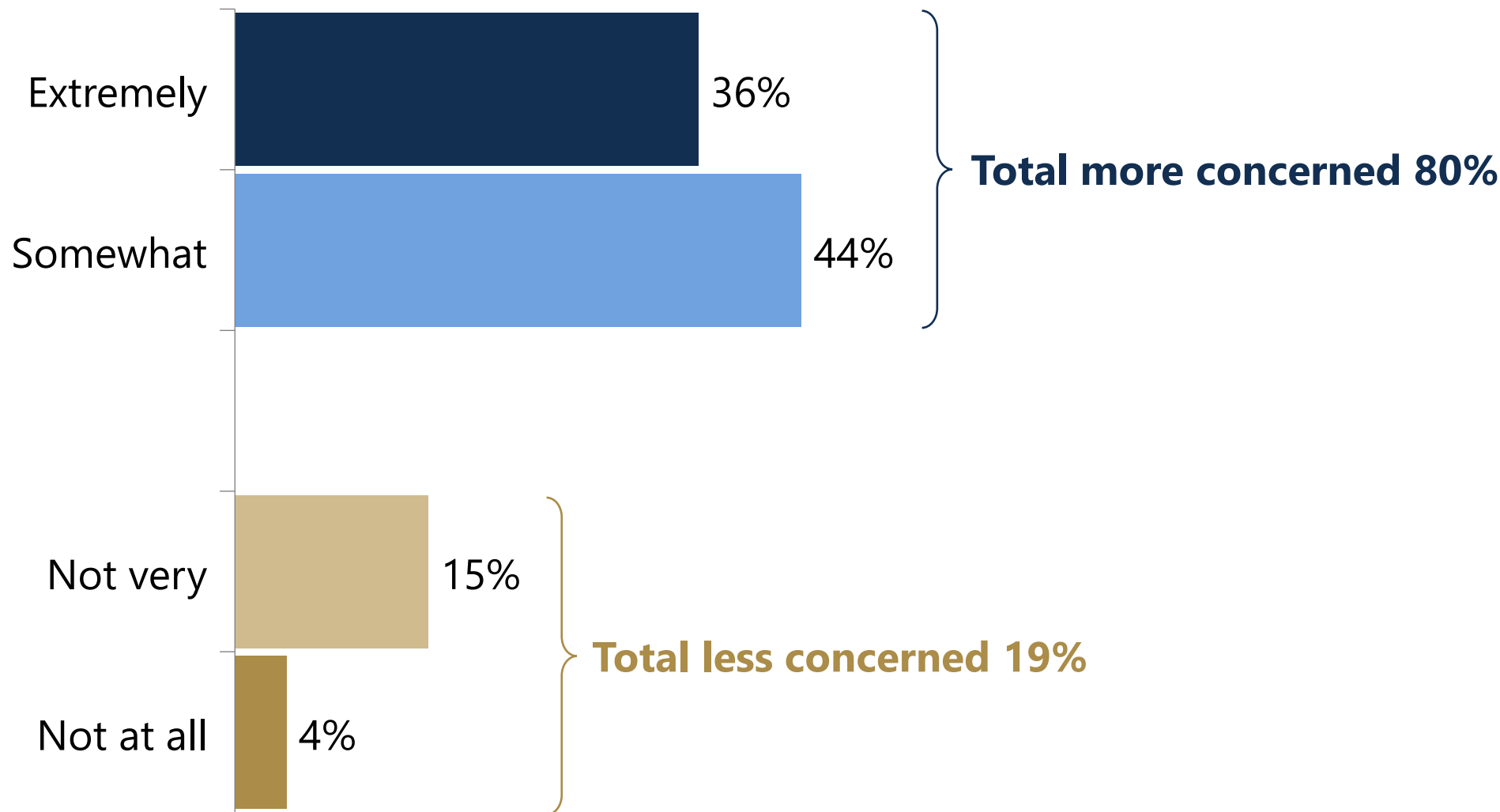


Limiting China's AI capabilities is a higher priority than protecting market access for American companies.



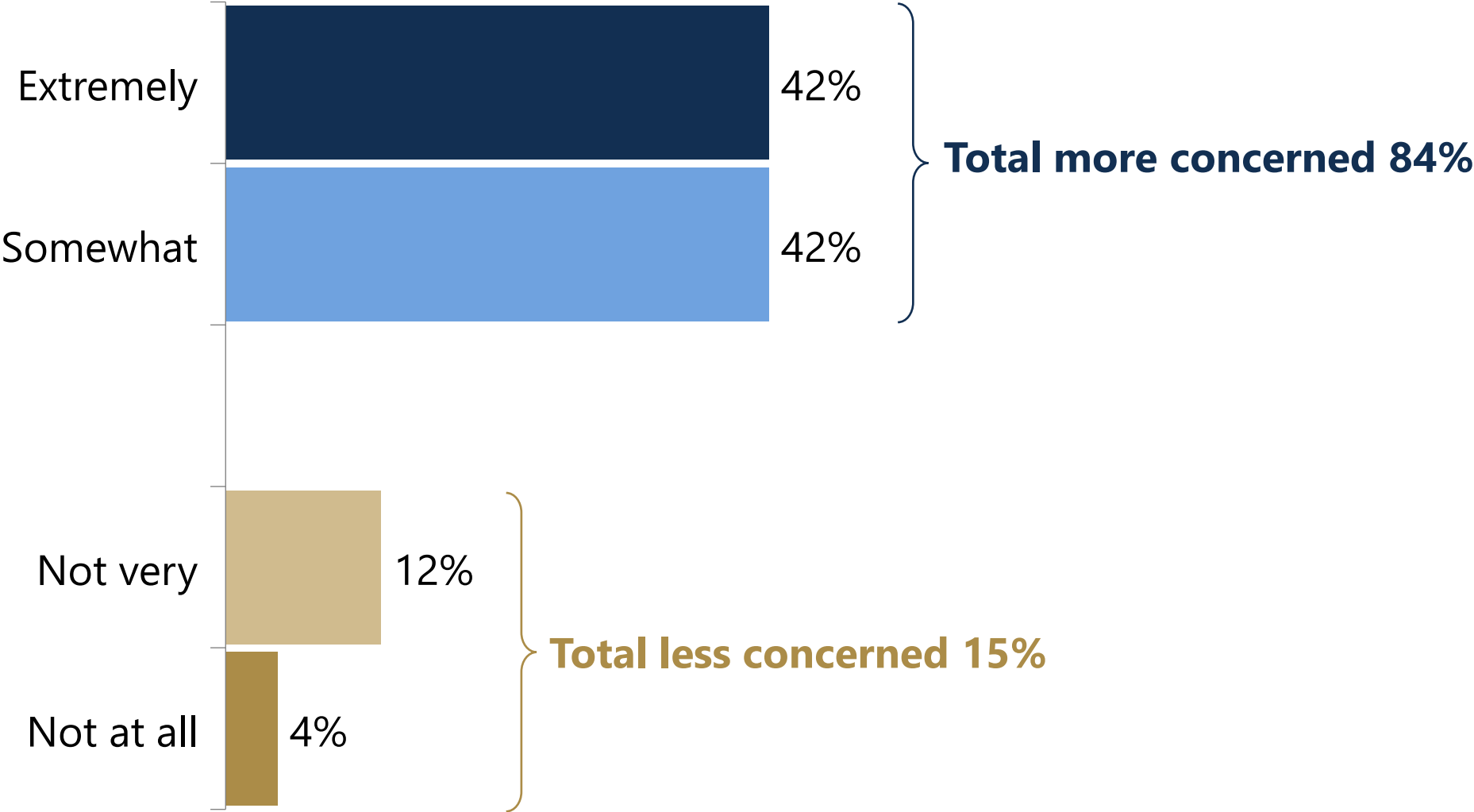
Q48. When it comes to US trade policy for semiconductors, which should be a higher priority for policymakers:

Nearly all Americans are concerned about our reliance on China for rare earth minerals.



Q49. How concerned are you about the US relying on China for rare earth minerals, which are used to produce batteries, semiconductor chips for electronics, and military hardware?

And educating Americans on the extent of that reliance elevates those concerns.

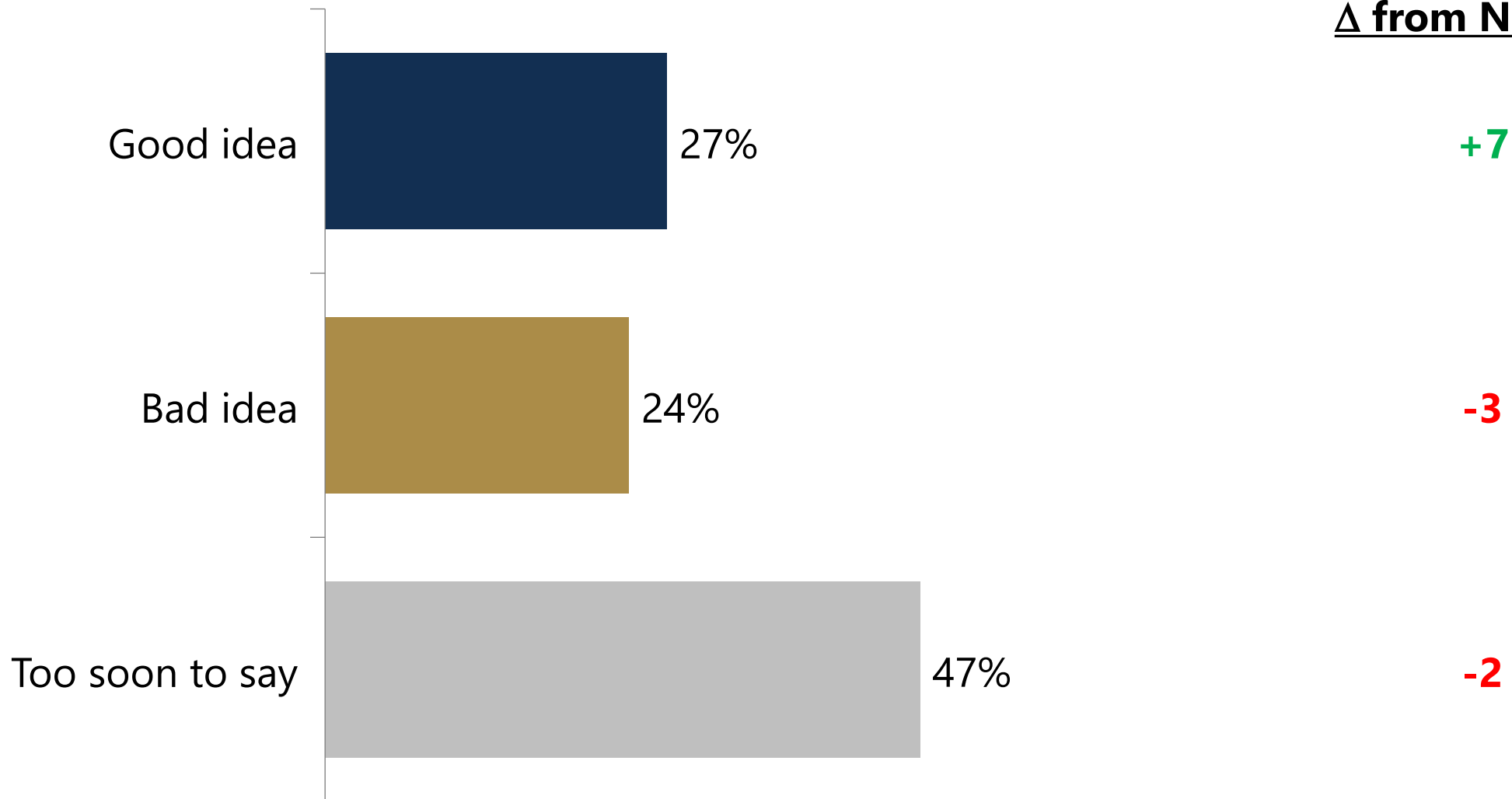


Q50. As you may know, nearly 70% of all rare earth minerals imported into the US came from China. Knowing this, how concerned are you about the US relying on China for rare earth minerals?

Plurality of Americans think it is too soon to say if US should integrate more AI into our military systems.



Δ from Nov '23



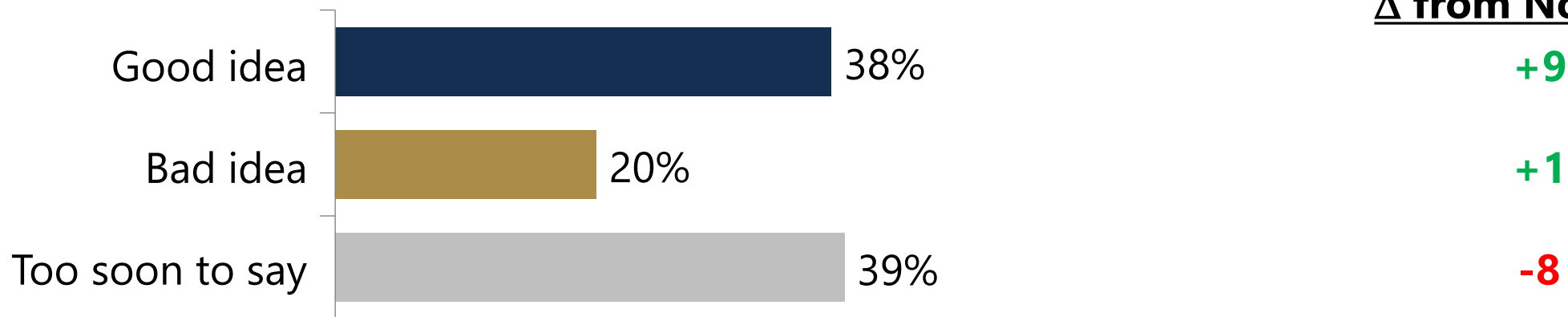
Q51. In general, do you think more integration of AI into our military systems is a good idea, a bad idea, or is it too soon to say?

Advantage over China and human safeguards increase Americans' support of military integration of AI.

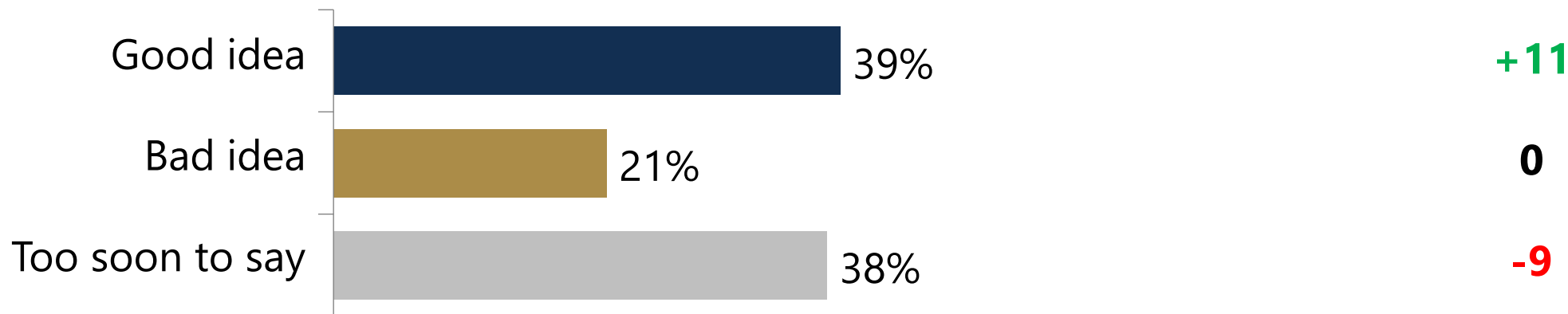


Military experts say incorporating AI into US military systems can provide a strategic advantage over China.

Δ from Nov '23



US military policy around AI often requires safeguards, such as ensuring that human decision-makers retain oversight over AI systems to prevent uncontrolled actions, especially in lethal situations.

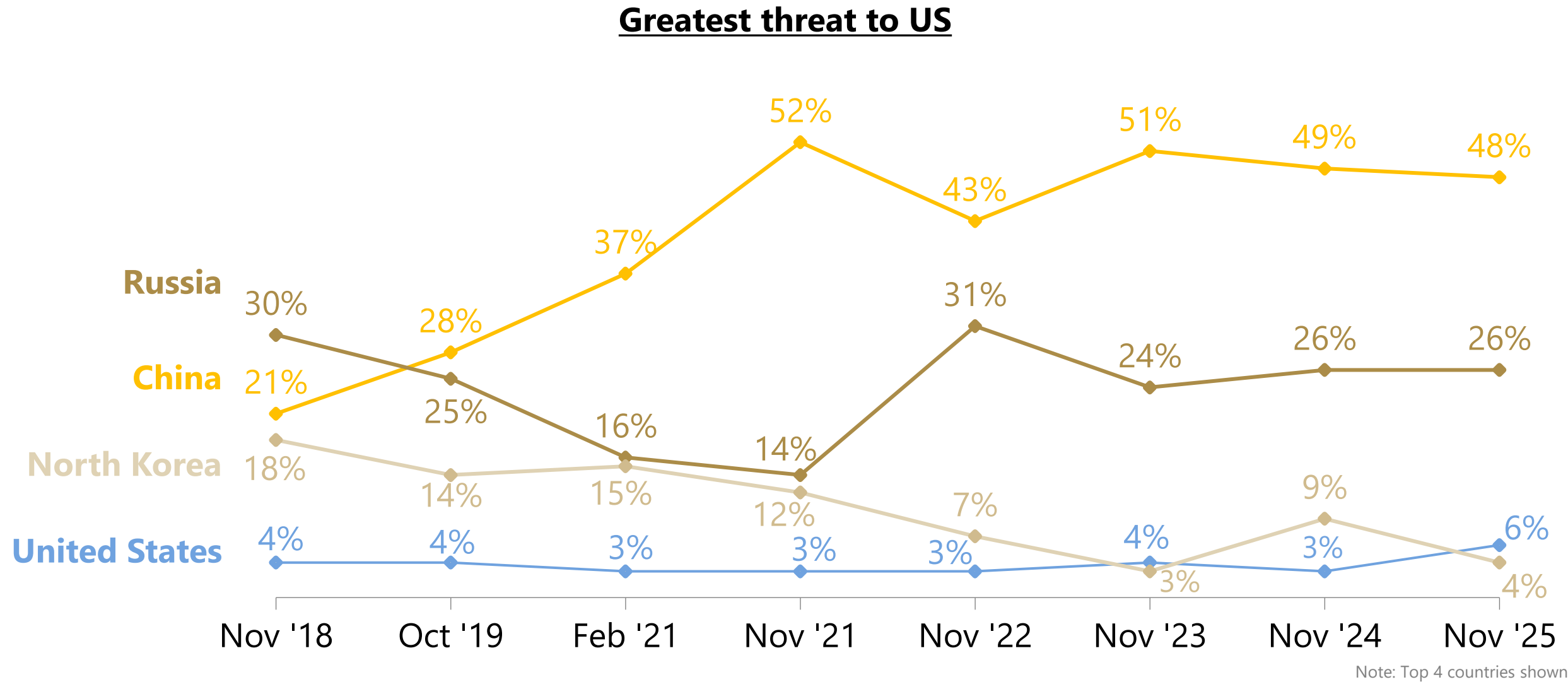




ASSESSMENTS OF ALLIES AND ENEMIES



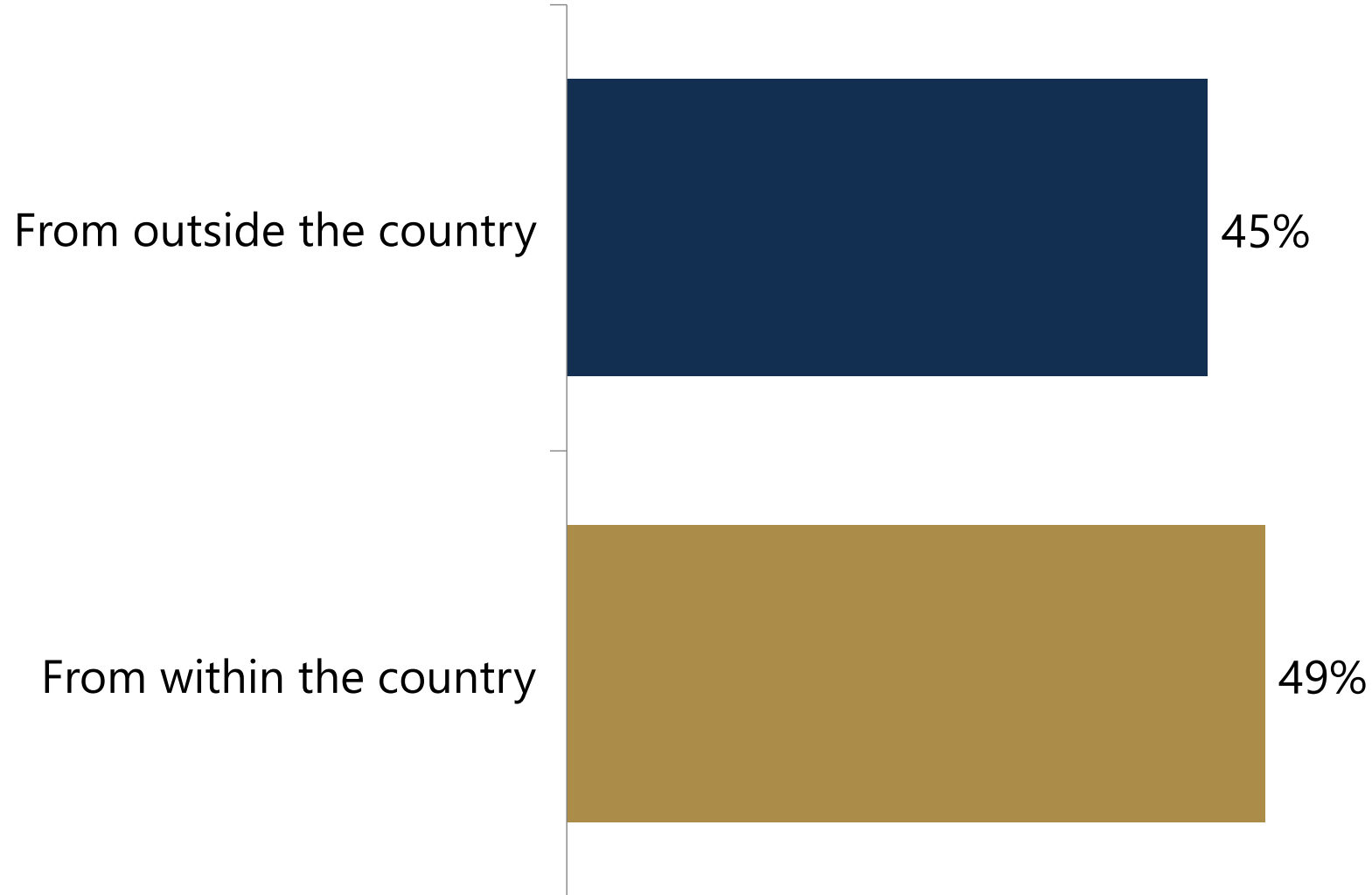
China is seen as the greatest threat by far, followed by Russia.



Note: Top 4 countries shown

Q54. Which country do you see as the greatest threat to the US? [OPEN END]

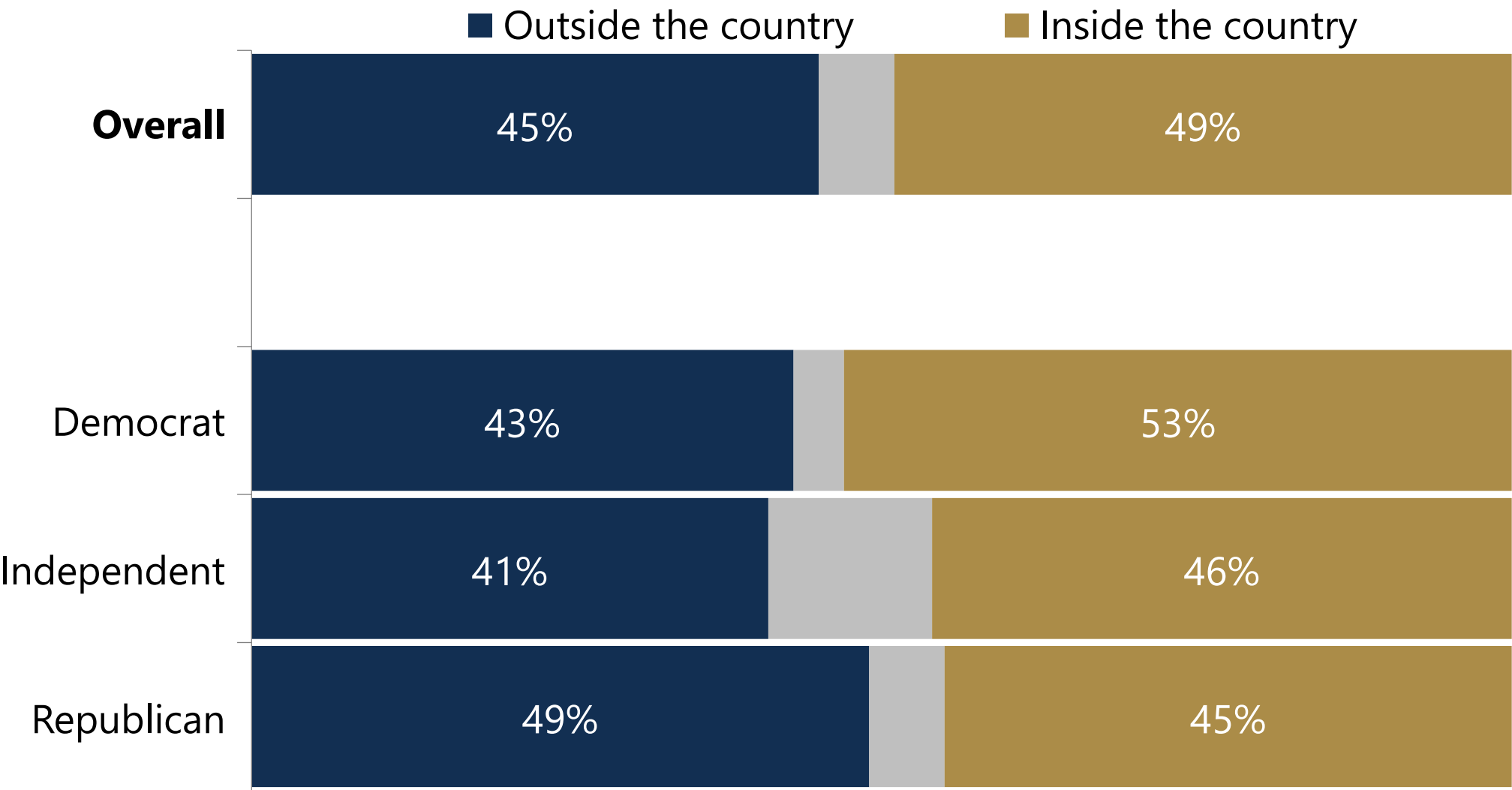
Americans split on if our greatest threats are internal or external.



Q55. Do you think the greatest threats to the US come from...



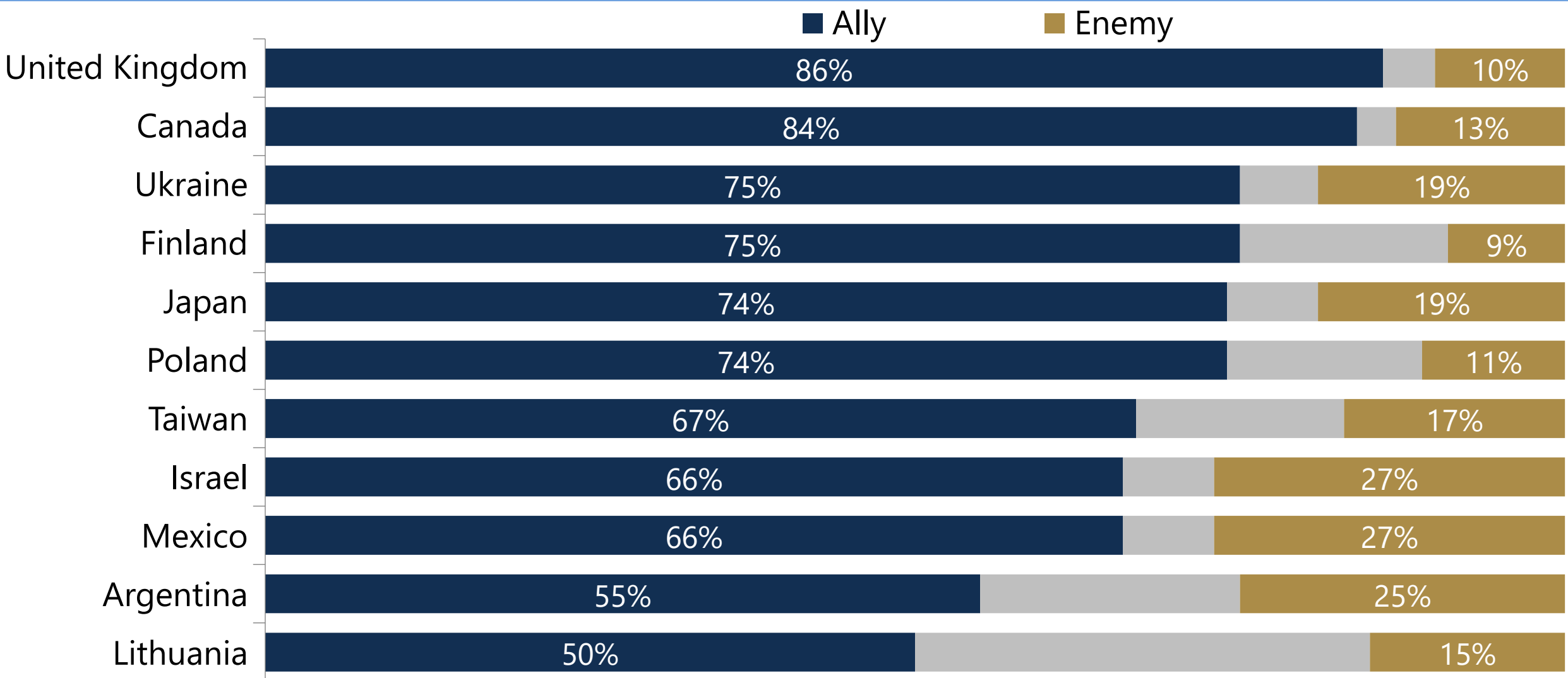
Internal vs. external threats, by party identification.



Q55. Do you think the greatest threats to the US come from...



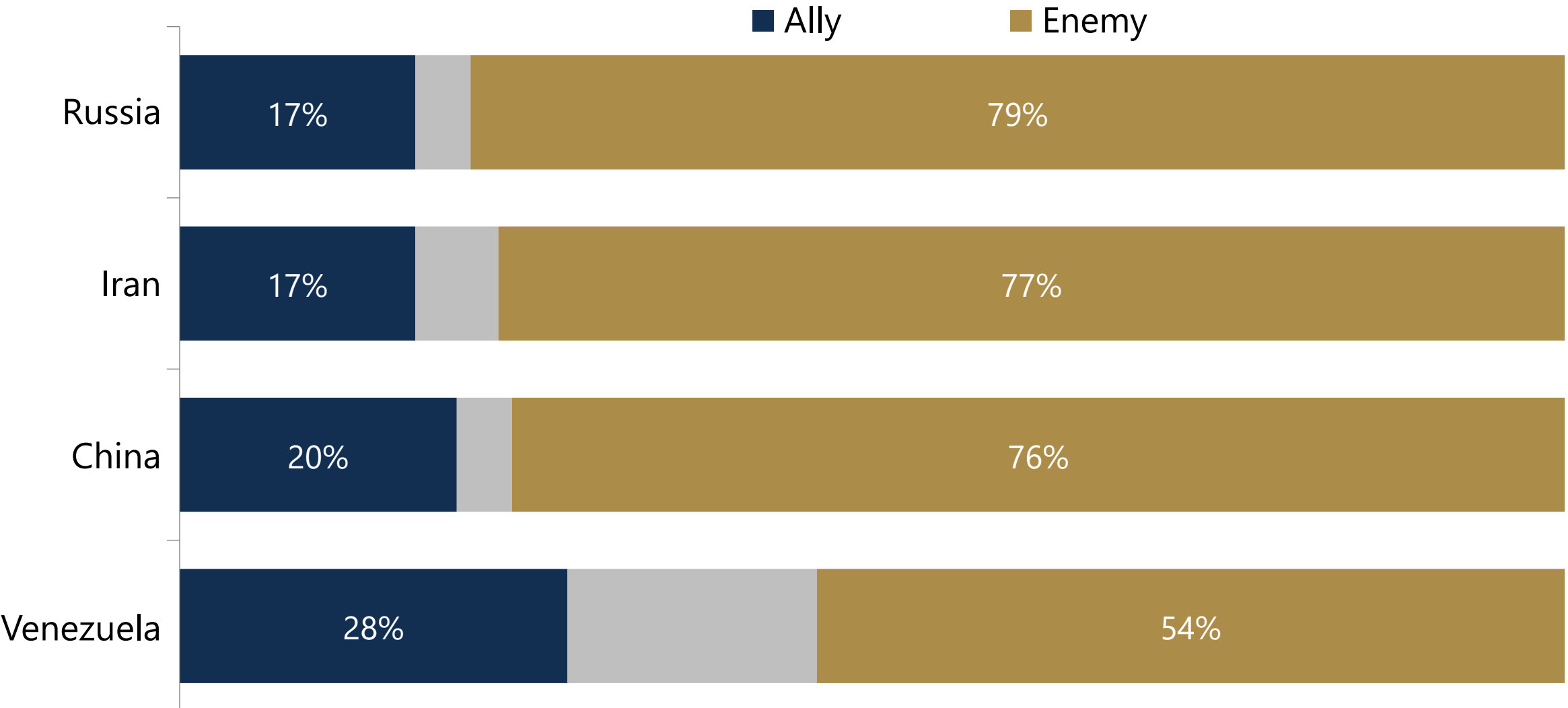
Evaluation of foreign countries: the allies.



Q56-70. Do you see each of the following countries as a strong ally, something of an ally, something of an enemy, or a strong enemy?



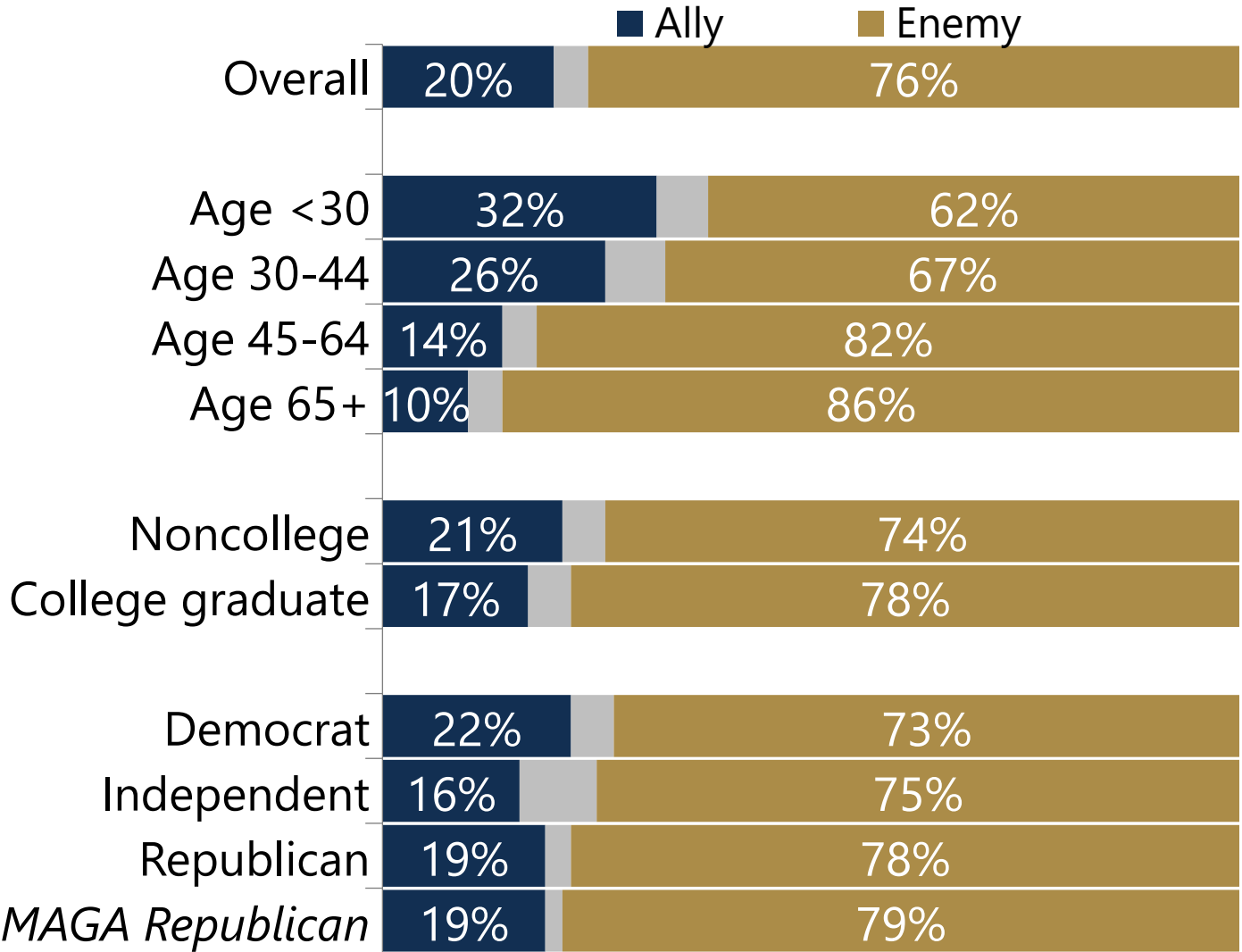
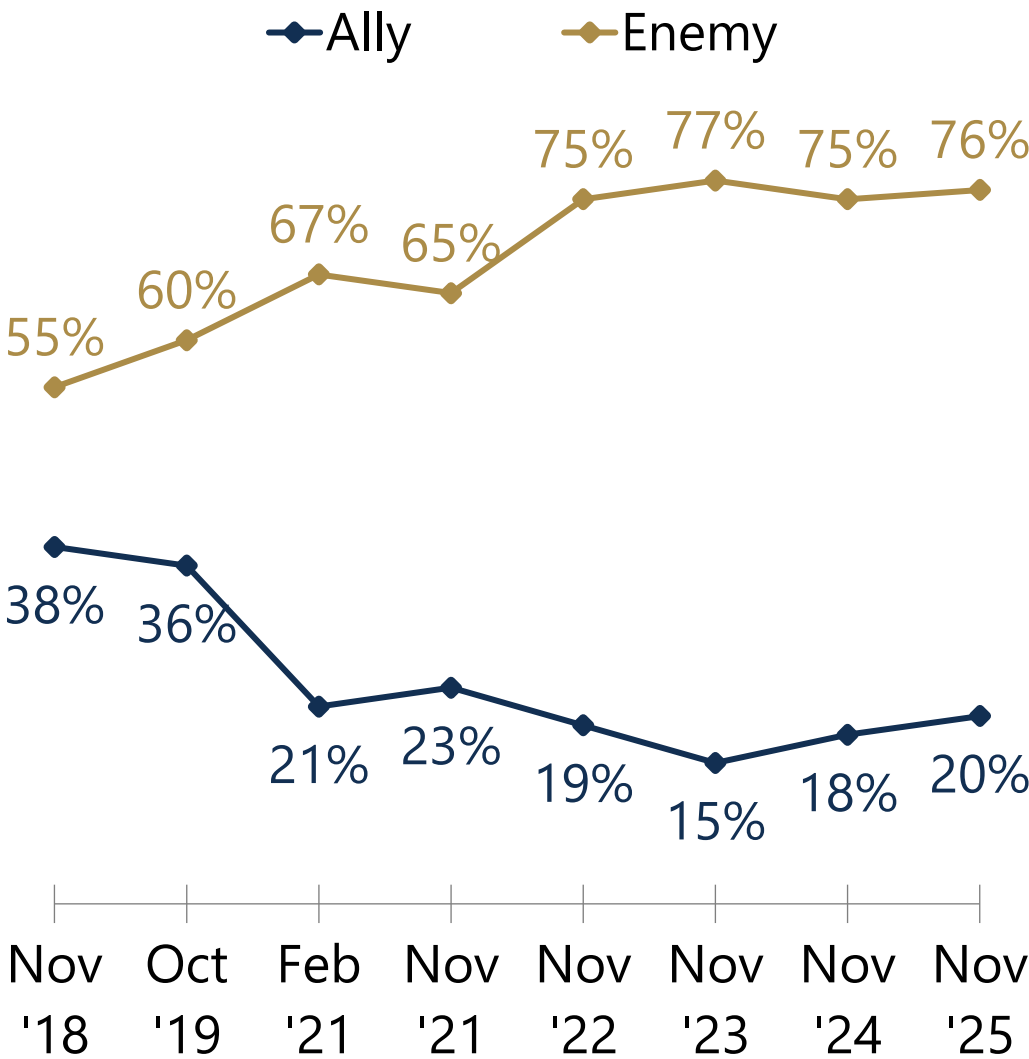
Evaluation of foreign countries: the enemies.



Q56-70. Do you see each of the following countries as a strong ally, something of an ally, something of an enemy, or a strong enemy?



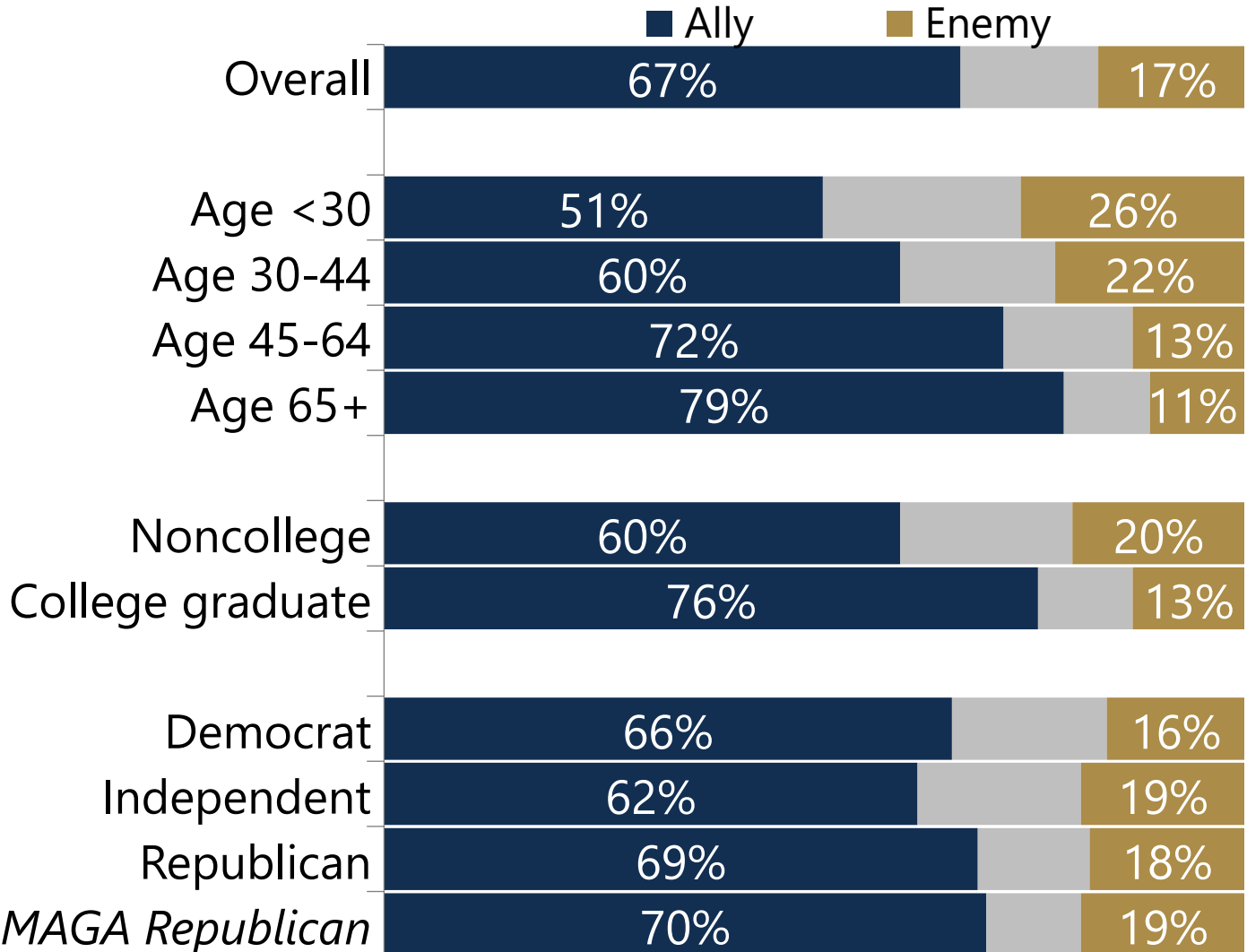
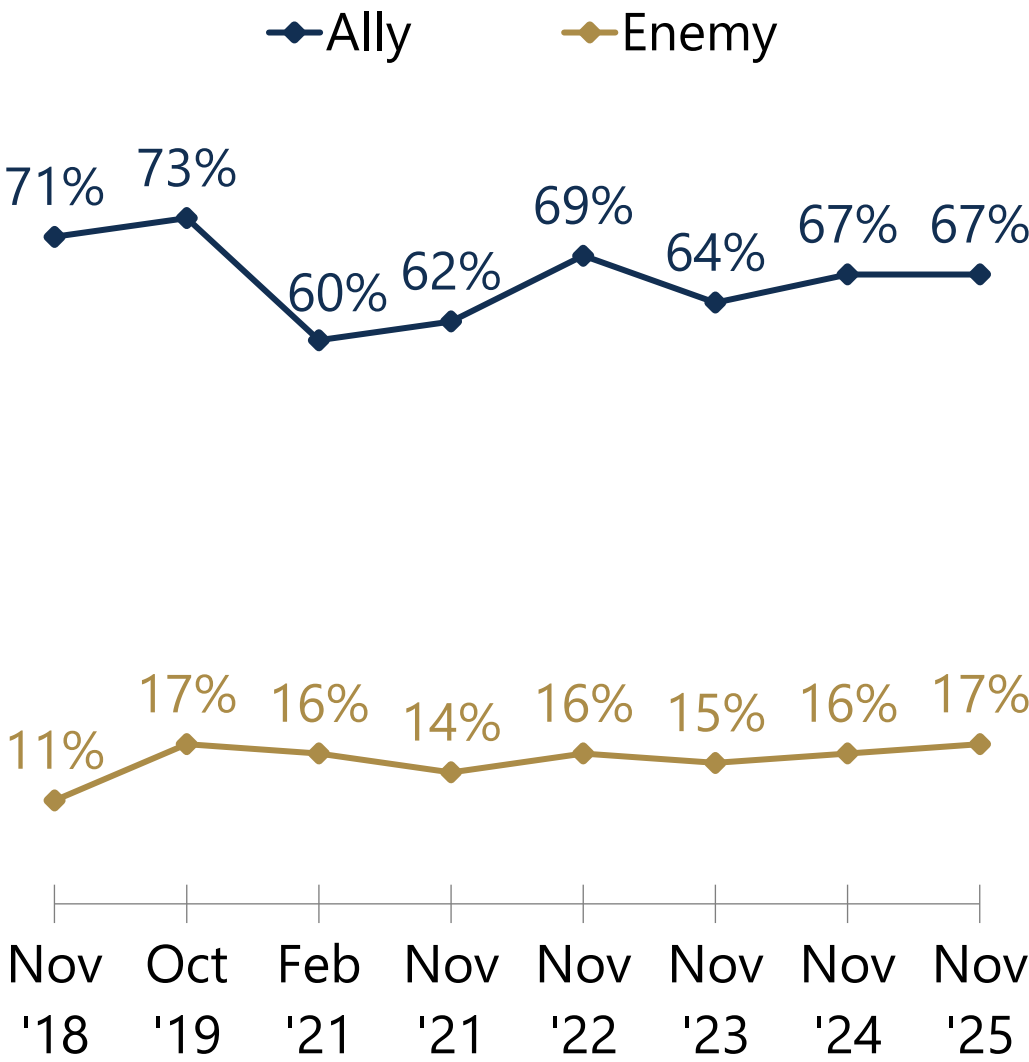
Ally/Enemy Profile: China.



Q56. Do you see each of the following countries as a strong ally, something of an ally, something of an enemy, or a strong enemy?



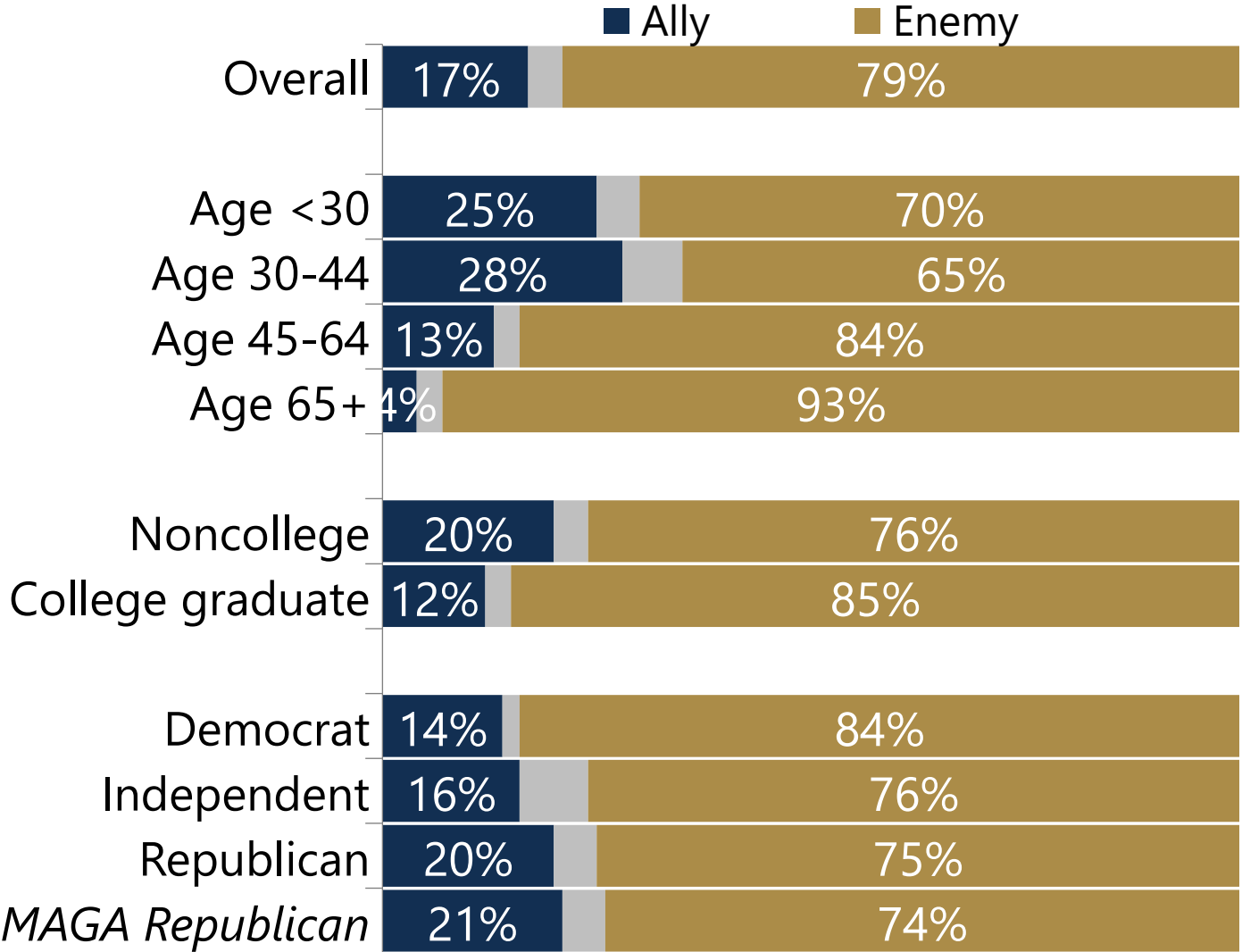
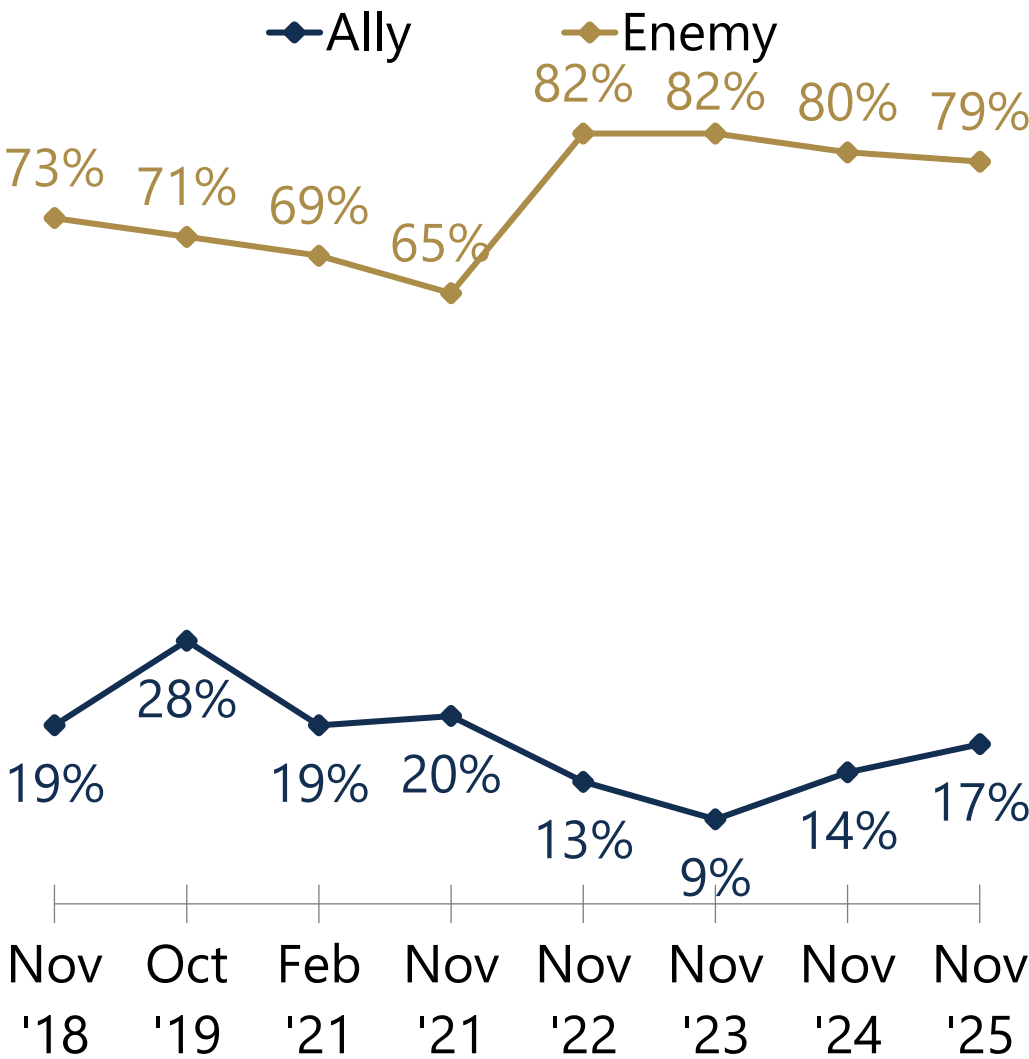
Ally/Enemy Profile: Taiwan.



Q57. Do you see each of the following countries as a strong ally, something of an ally, something of an enemy, or a strong enemy?

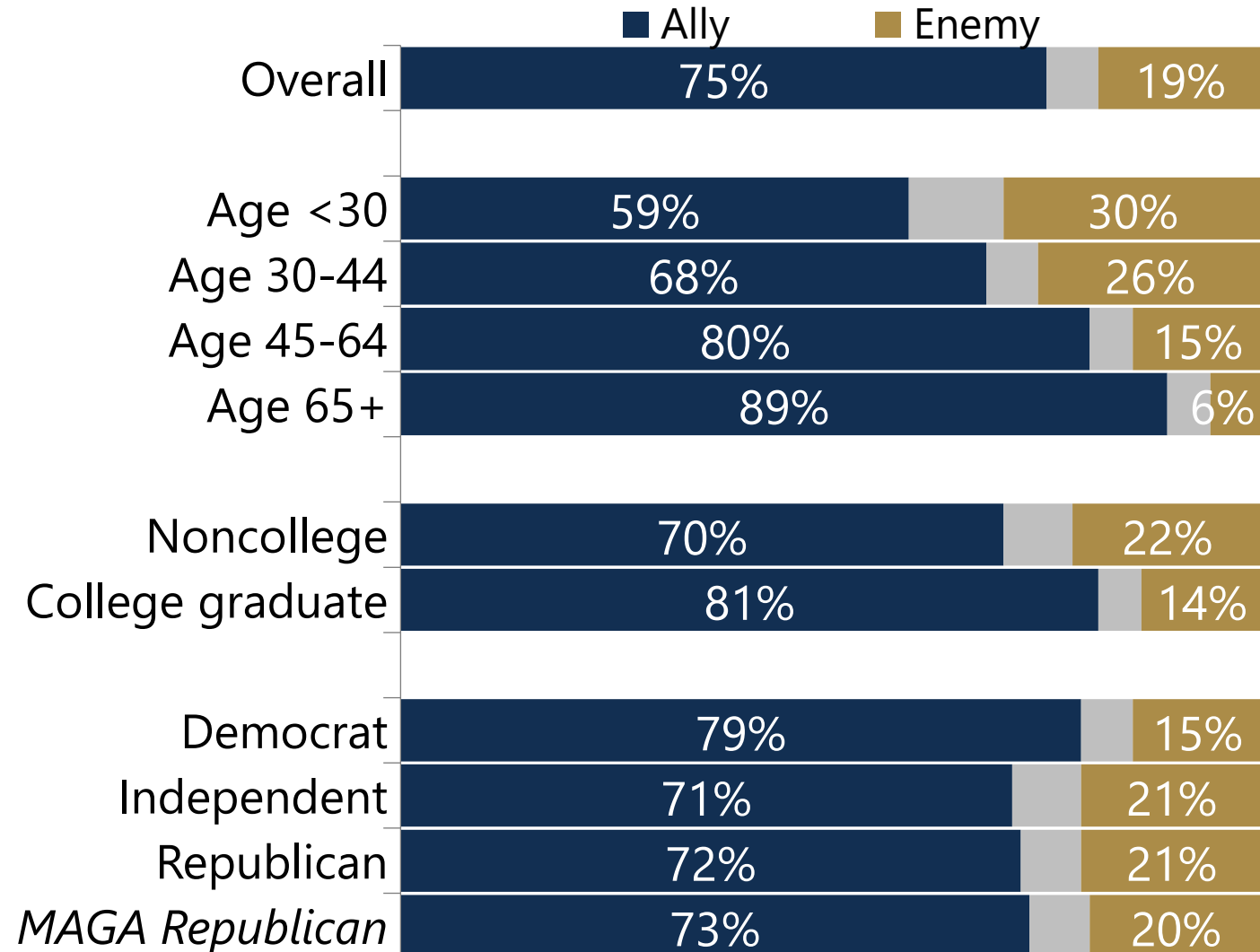
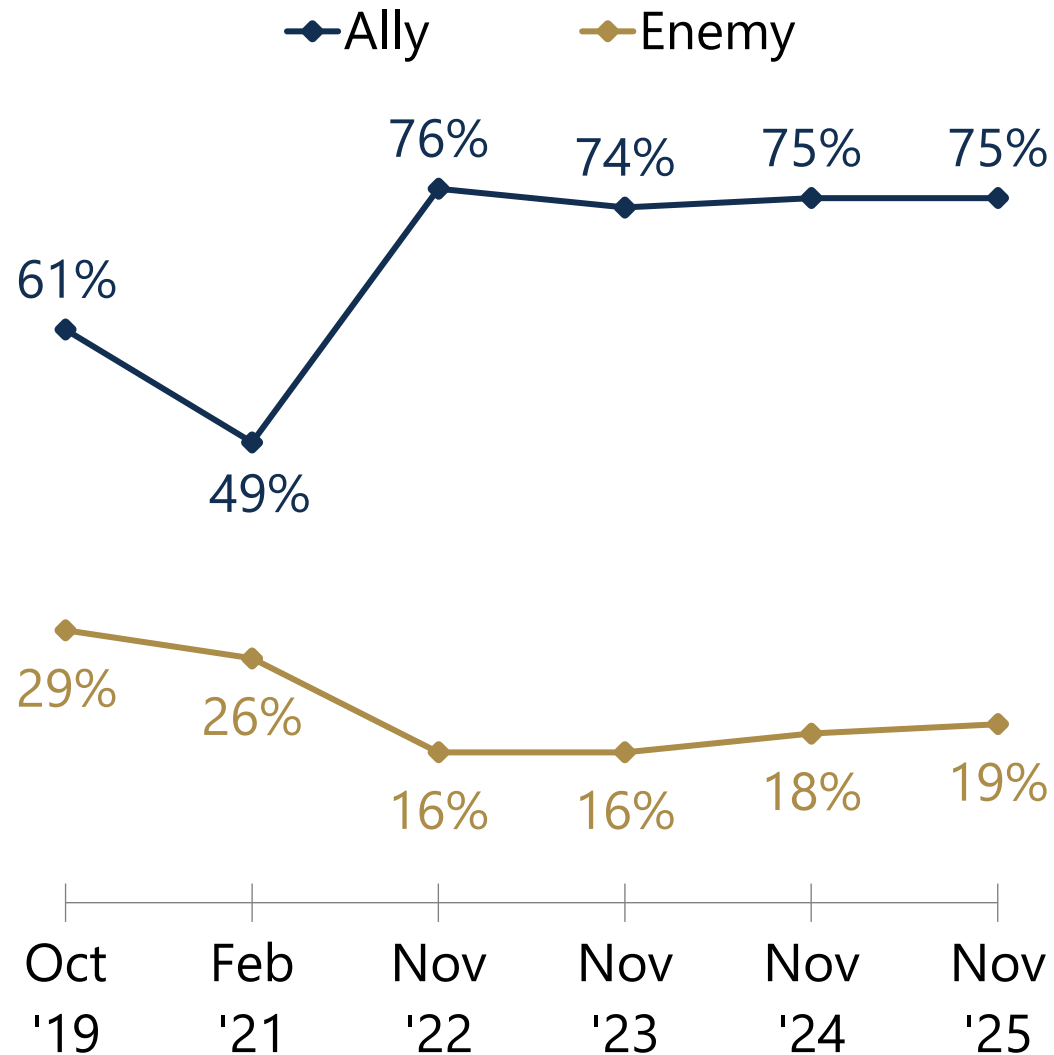


Ally/Enemy Profile: Russia.



Q65. Do you see each of the following countries as a strong ally, something of an ally, something of an enemy, or a strong enemy?

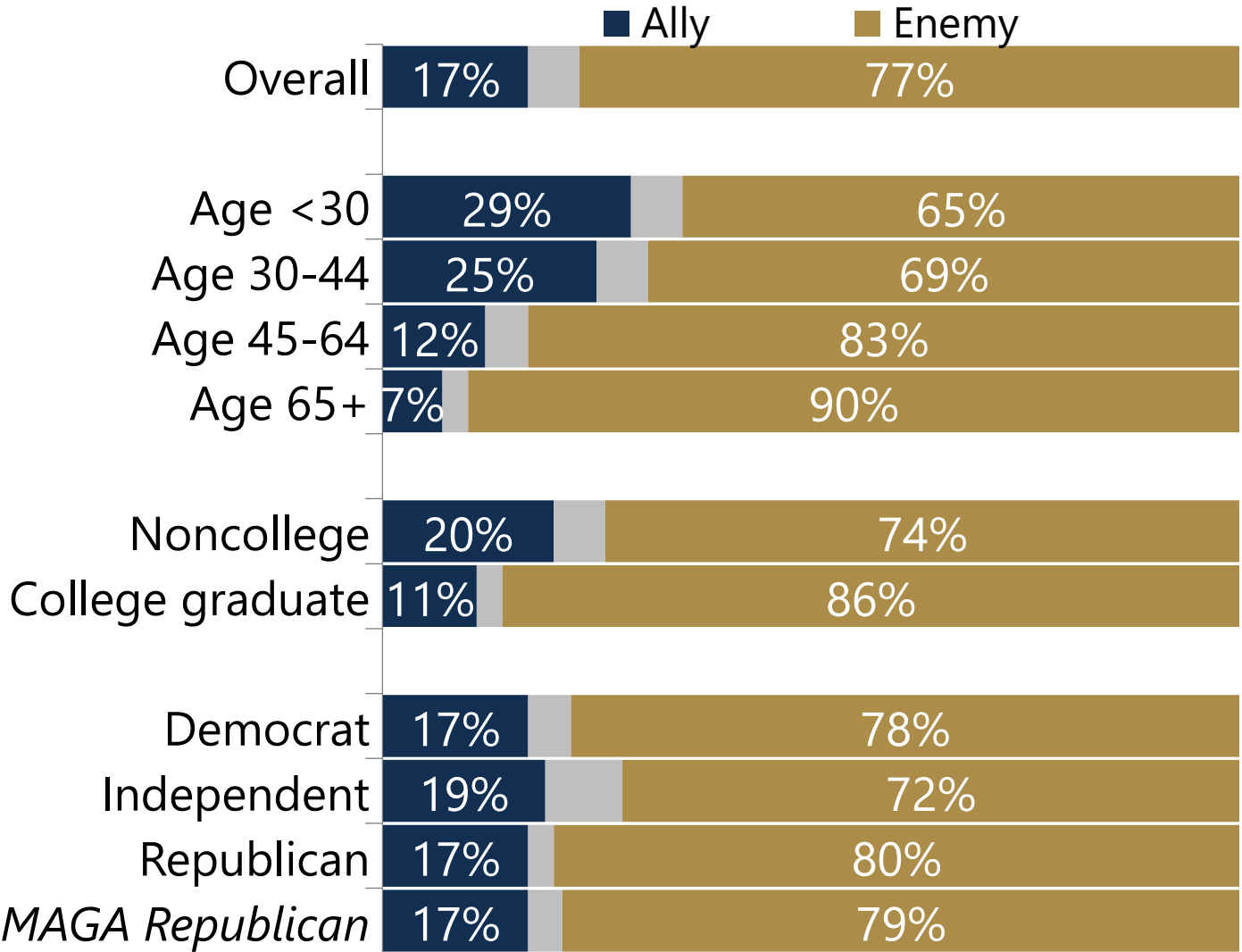
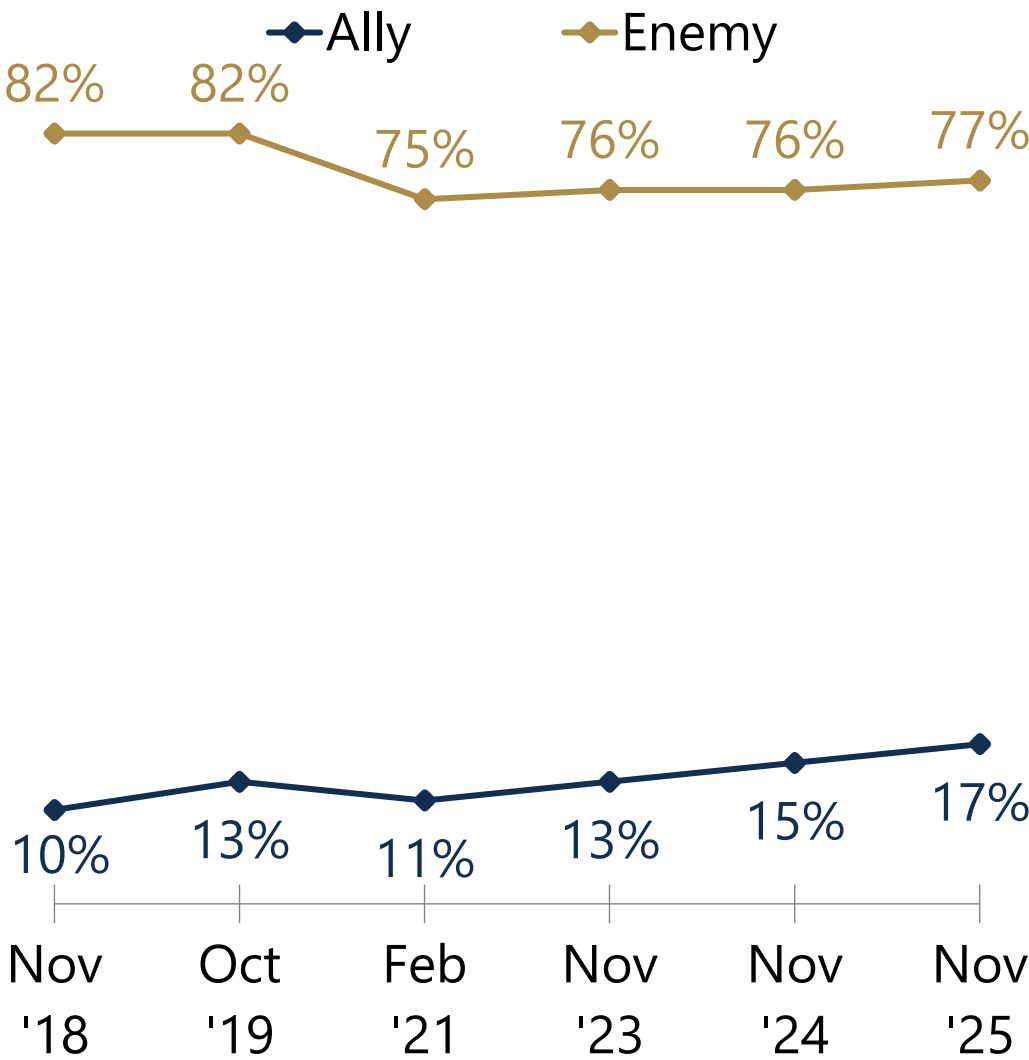
Ally/Enemy Profile: Ukraine.



Q66. Do you see each of the following countries as a strong ally, something of an ally, something of an enemy, or a strong enemy?



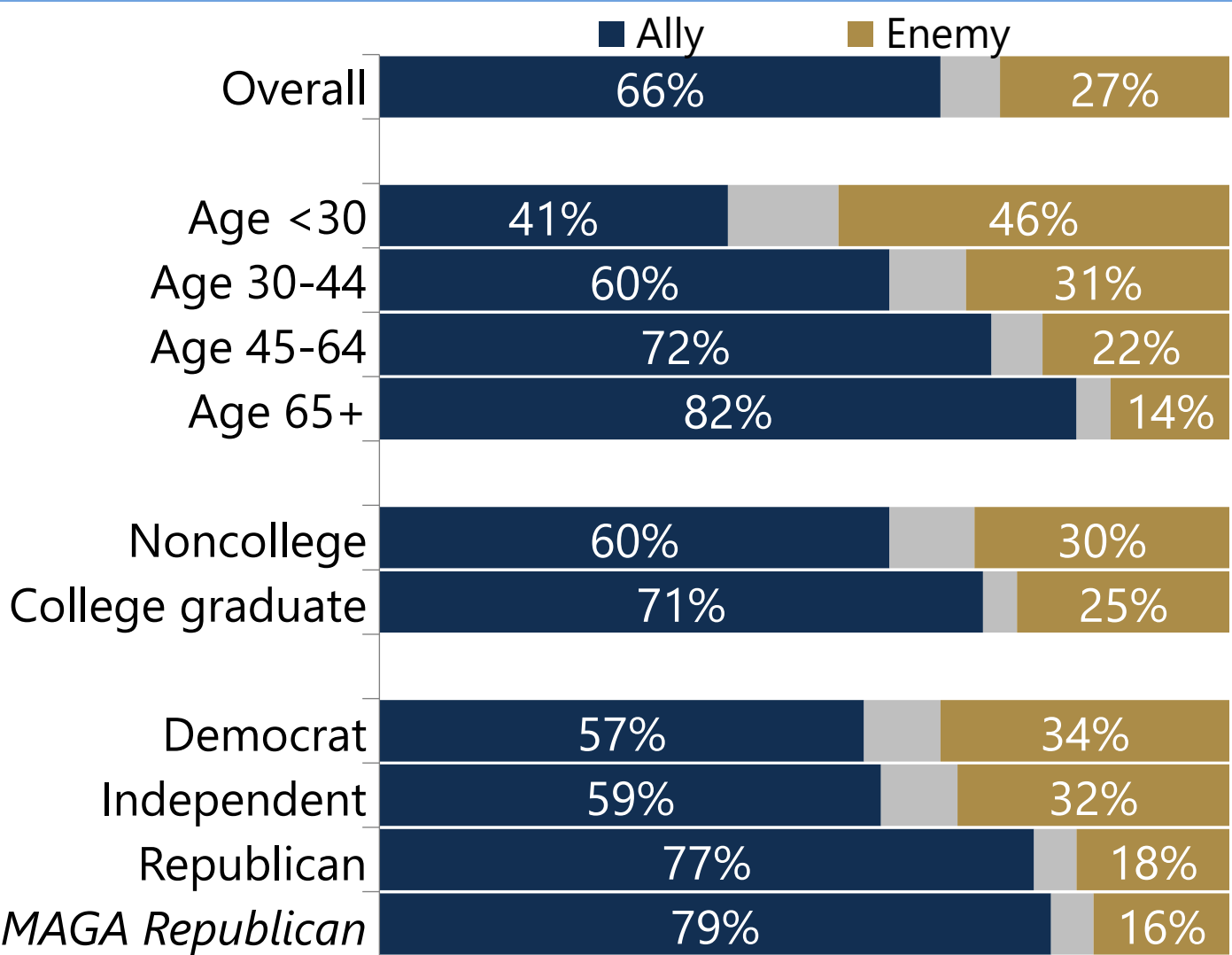
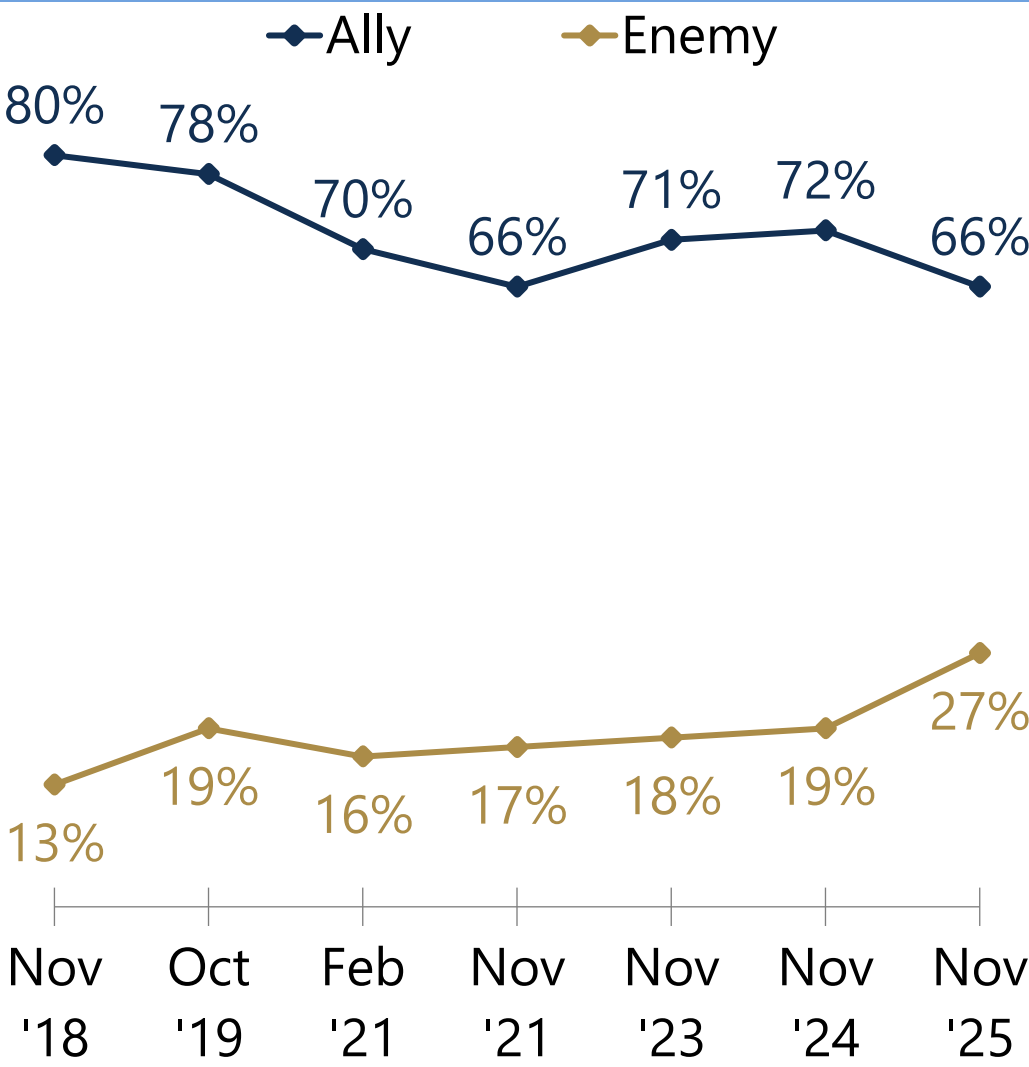
Ally/Enemy Profile: Iran.



Q67. Do you see each of the following countries as a strong ally, something of an ally, something of an enemy, or a strong enemy?

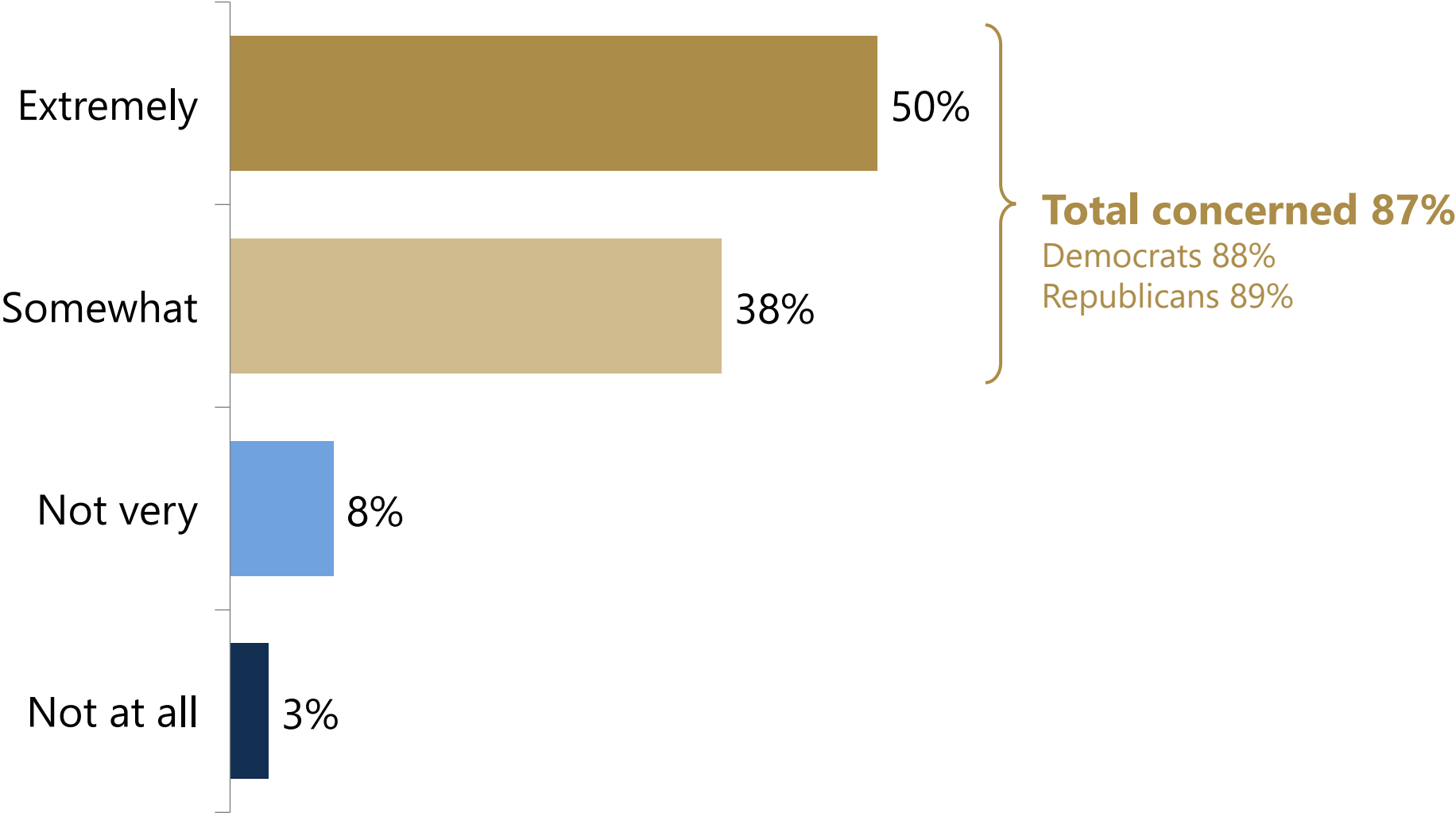


Ally/Enemy Profile: Israel.



Q59. Do you see each of the following countries as a strong ally, something of an ally, something of an enemy, or a strong enemy?

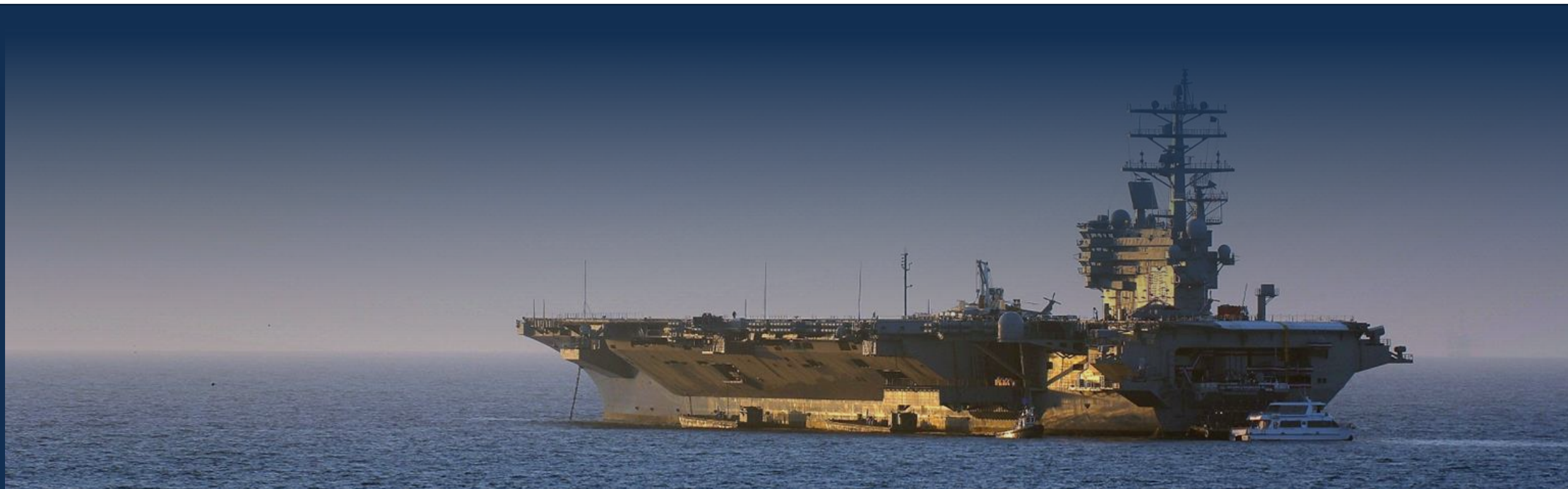
China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea cooperation is highly concerning to voters.



Q71. How concerned are you about increased cooperation between China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea?

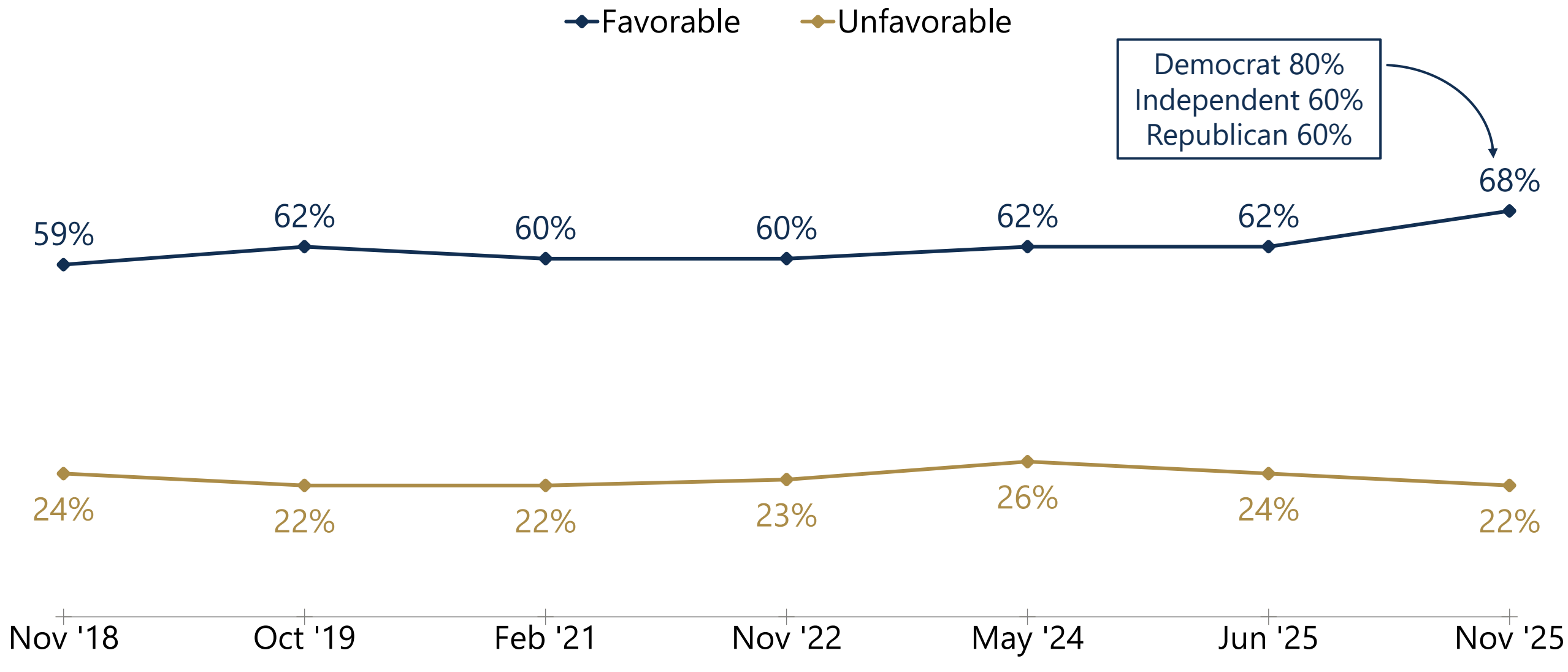


NATO





Attitudes toward NATO are at an all-time high.

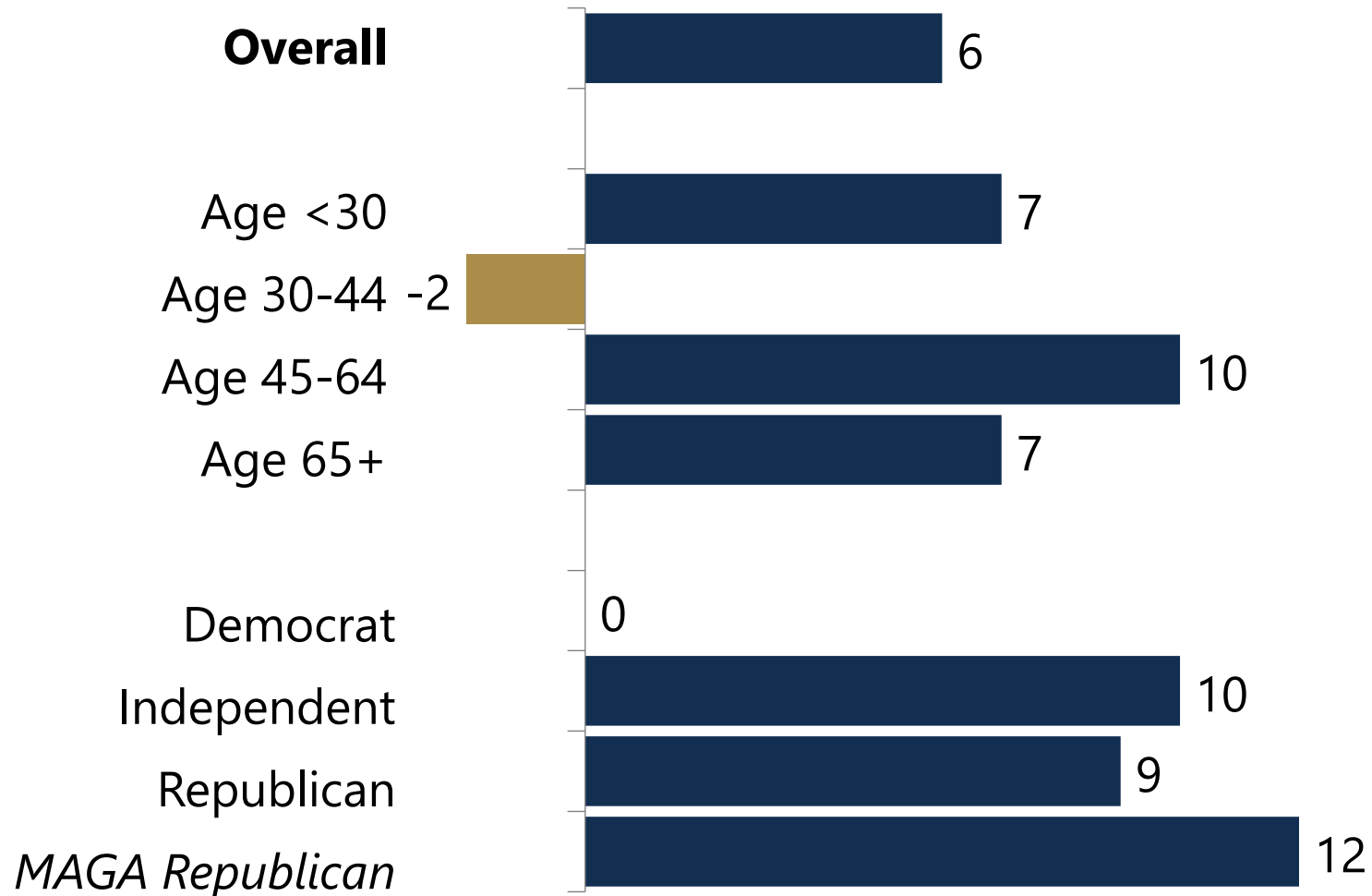


Q72. Do you have a favorable or an unfavorable view of NATO?



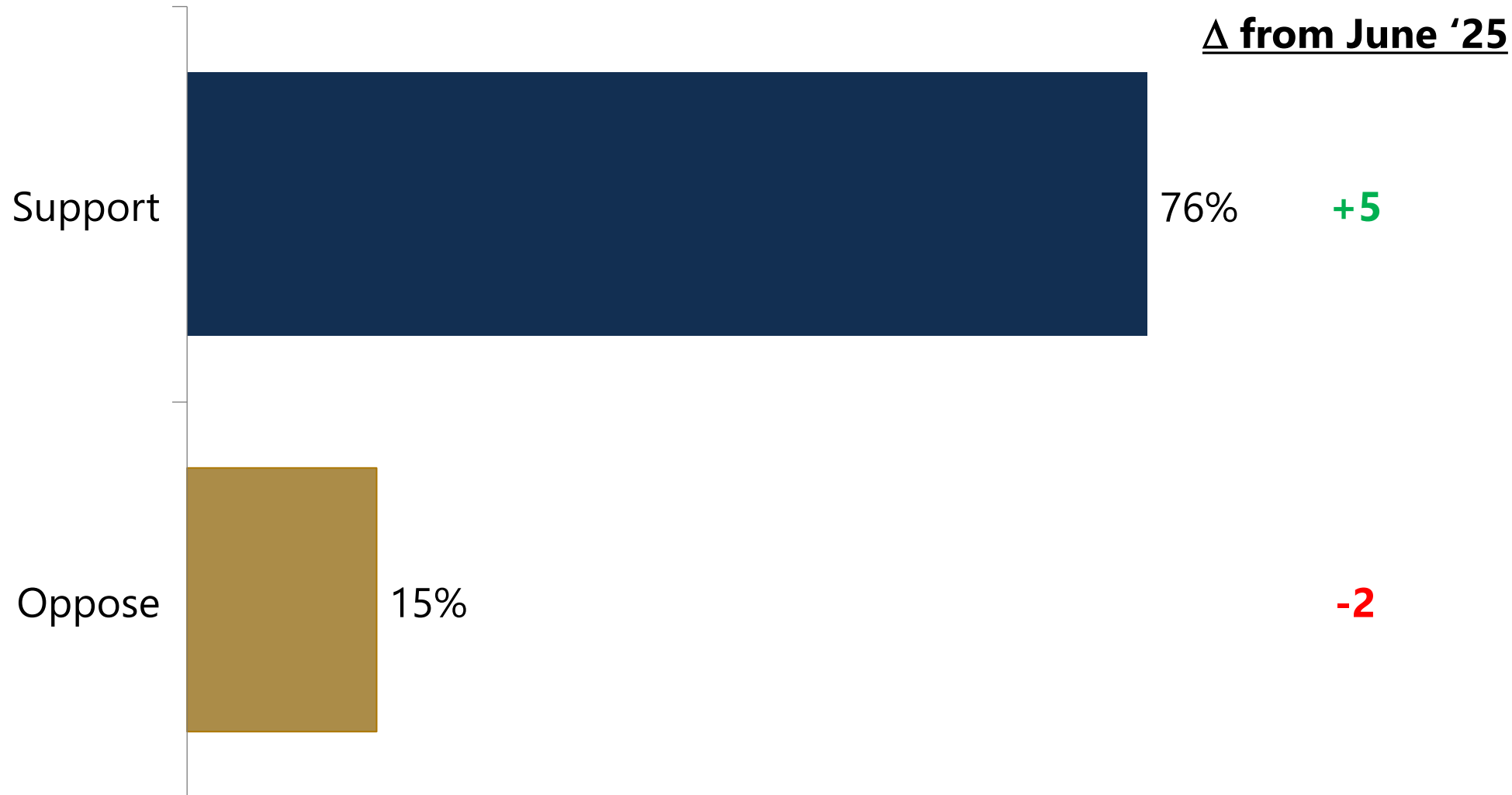
Americans' net favorability on NATO has increased.

Net change in favorable views since June '25



Q72. Do you have a favorable or an unfavorable view of NATO?

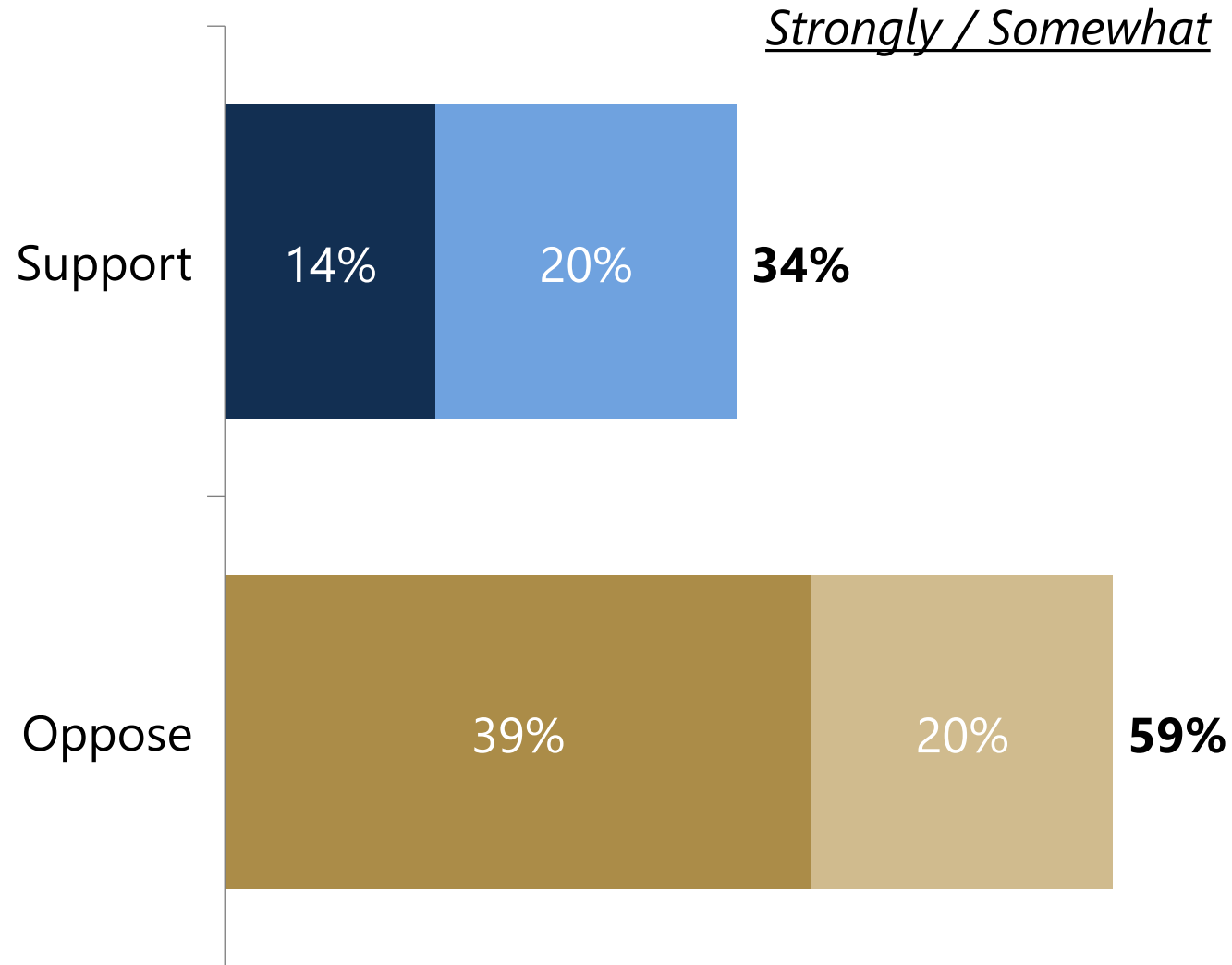
Three-quarters of Americans support our Article V commitments.



Q73. As you may know, all NATO members are required to respond if one country in the alliance is attacked. This is called the collective defense principle. Knowing this, would you support or oppose the US responding with military force if a NATO ally in Europe was attacked?



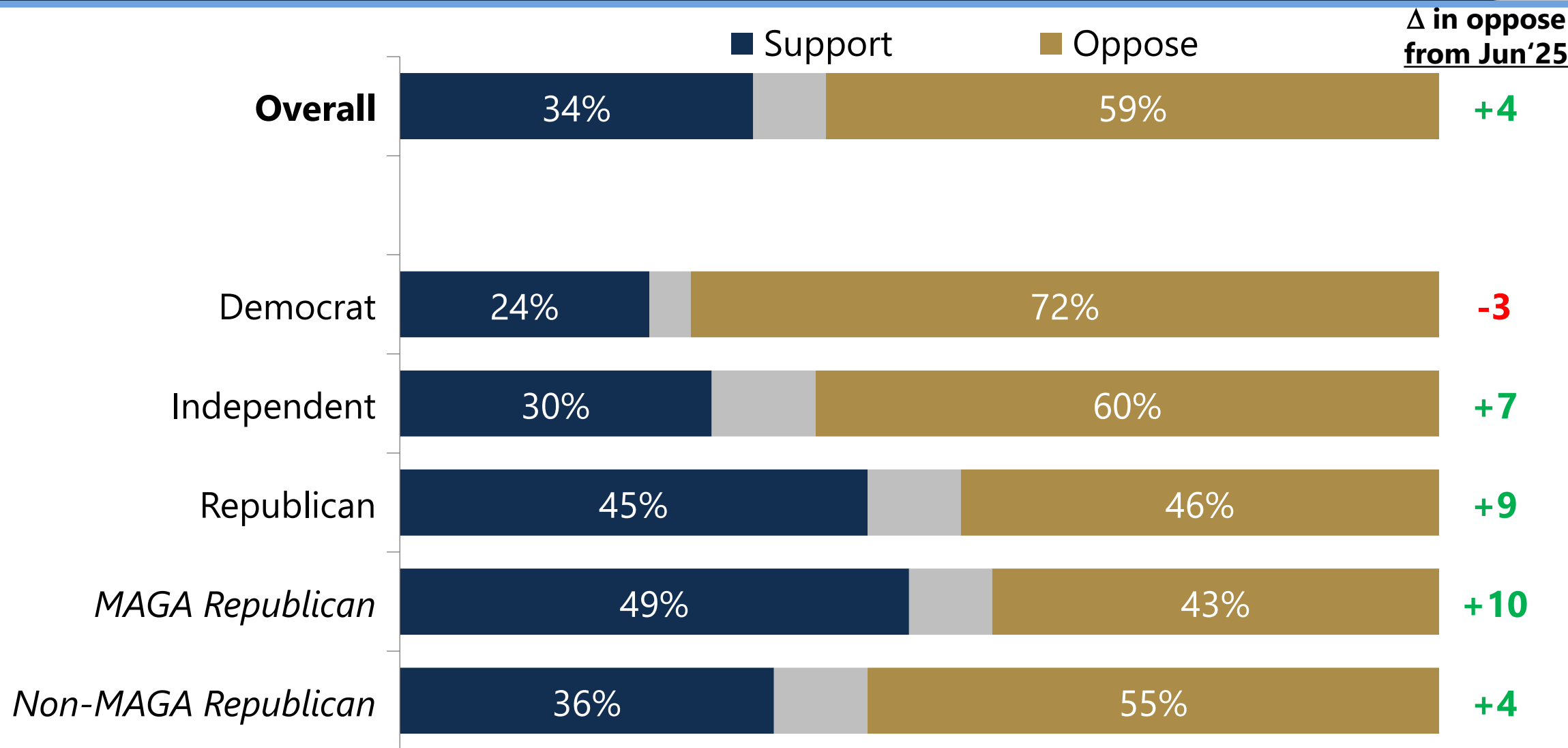
Majority oppose withdrawing US from NATO.



Q74. Would you support or oppose withdrawing the United States from NATO?



Views on NATO withdrawal, by party identification.

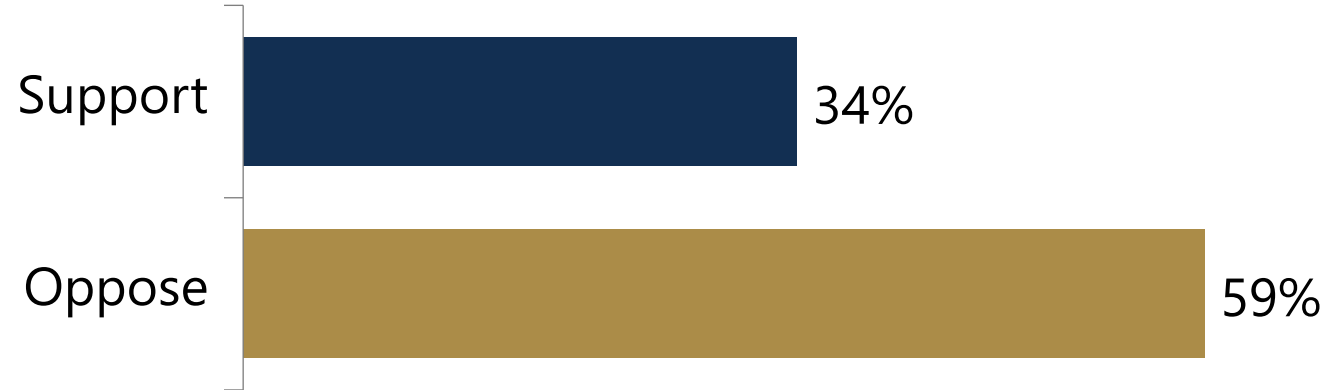


Q74. Would you support or oppose withdrawing the United States from NATO?



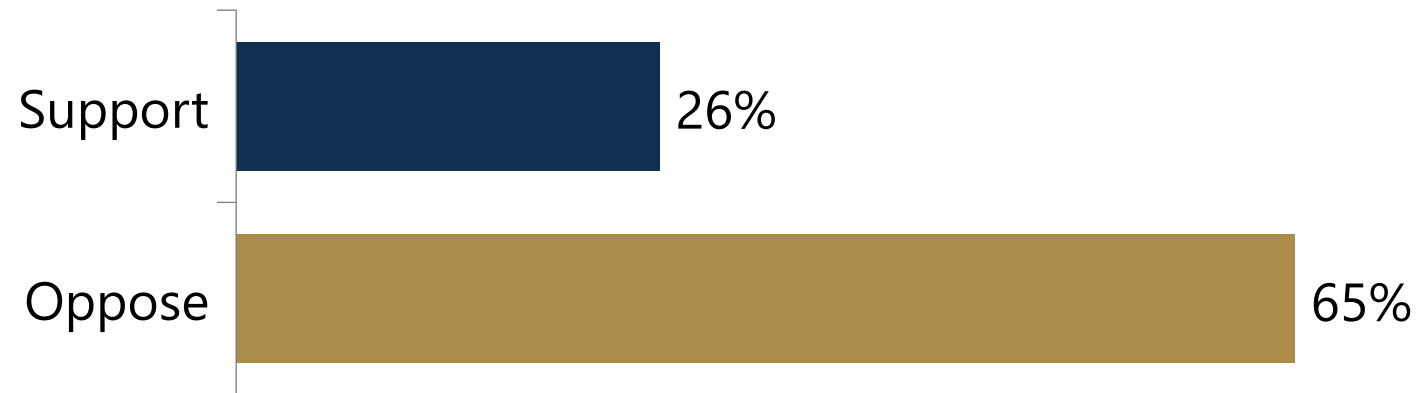
Opposition to NATO withdrawal increases with information about new defense spending commitments.

Initial stance



As you may know, NATO members recently committed to more than doubling their spending from 2% to 5% of their GDP on defense by 2030.

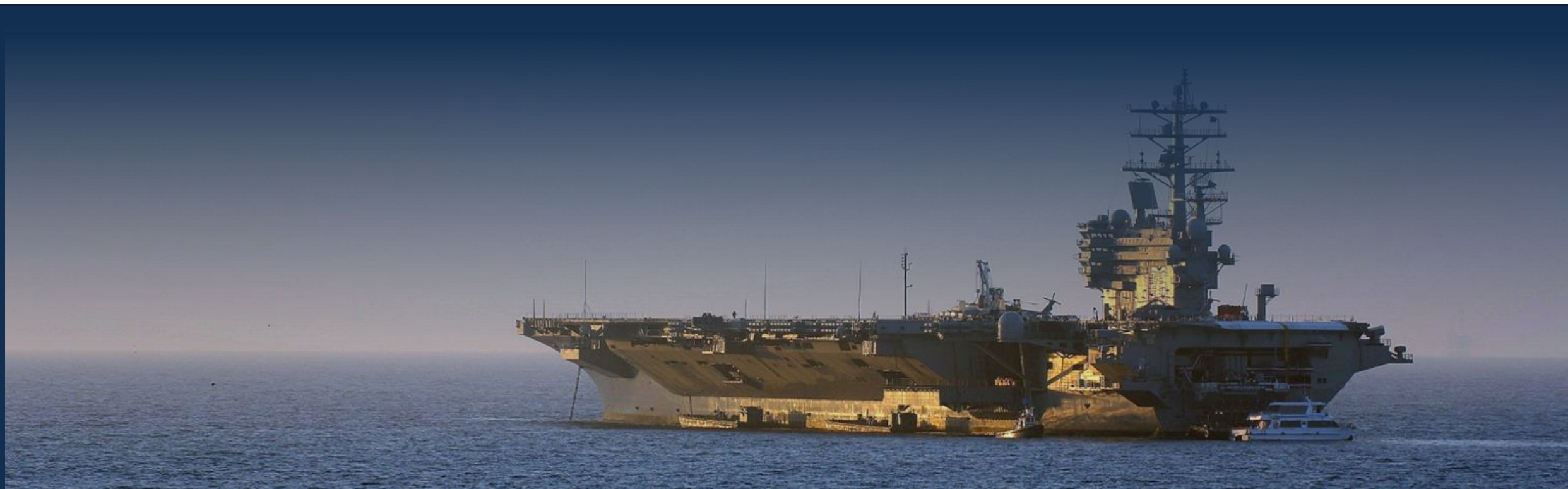
Informed stance



Q74. Would you support or oppose withdrawing the United States from NATO?
AND Q75... Knowing this, do you support or oppose the United States withdrawing from NATO?

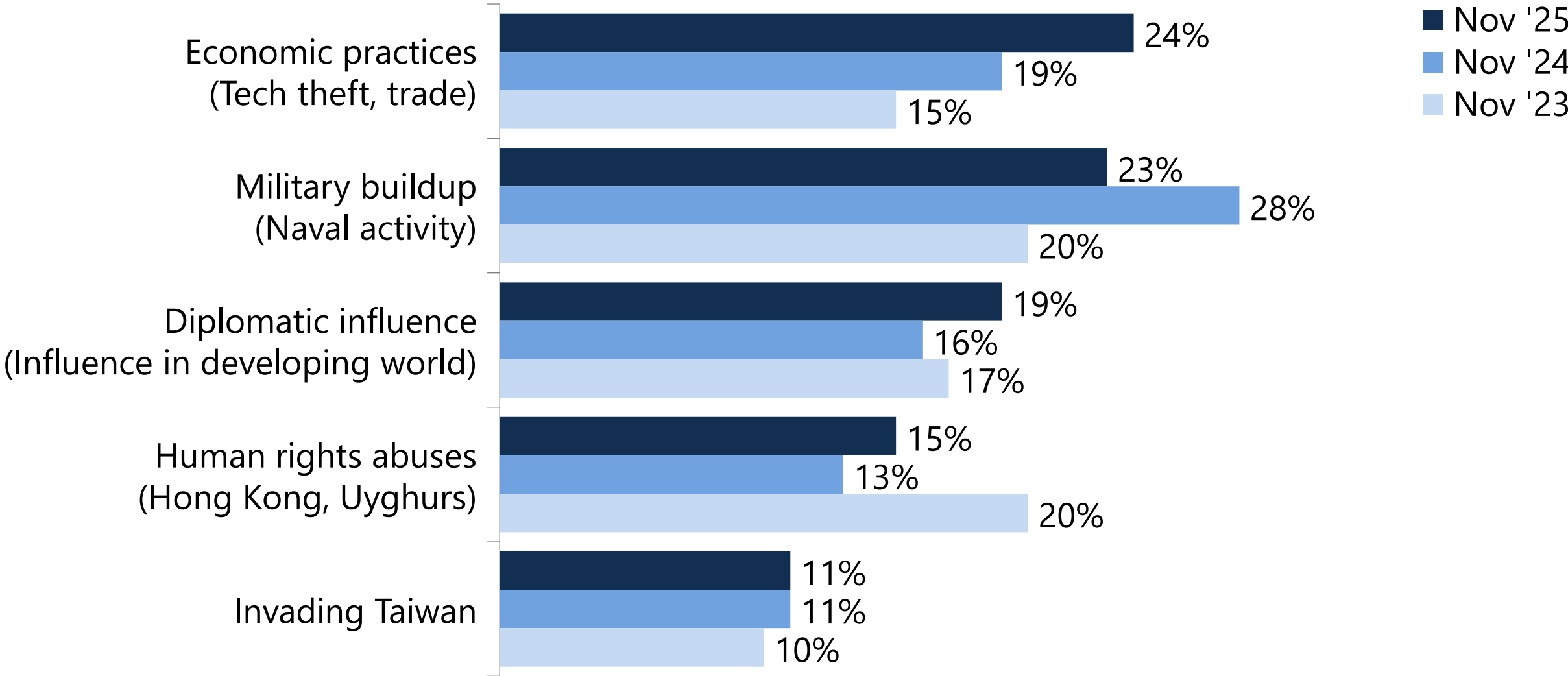


CHINA



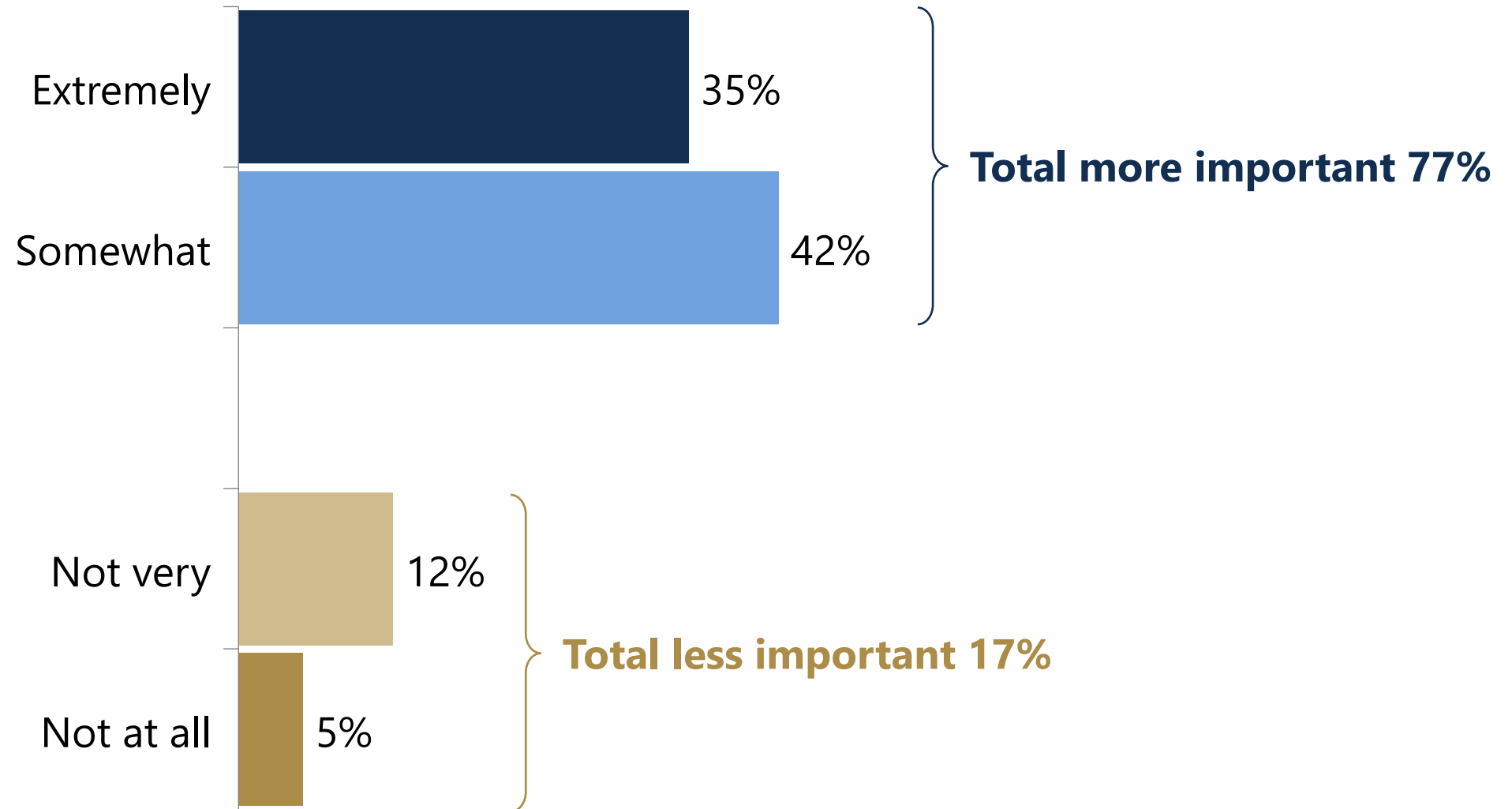


Increasing concern about Chinese economic practices.



Q76. Which of the following most concerns you about China?

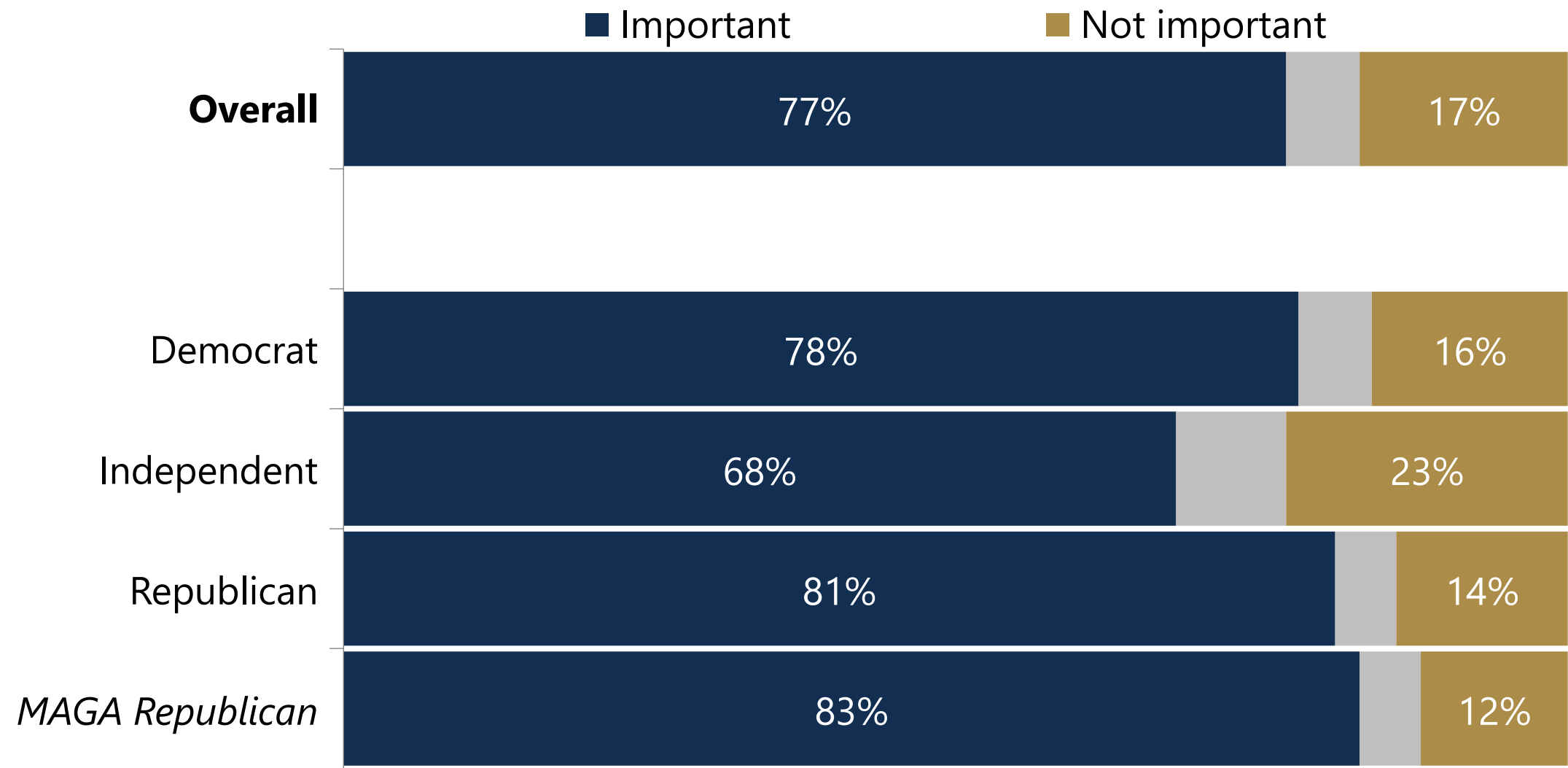
Widespread recognition of the importance of defending Taiwan against Chinese aggression.



Q77. How important is it for the US military to defend Taiwan against Chinese aggression?



Defending Taiwan is important across the political divide.



Q77. How important is it for the US military to defend Taiwan against Chinese aggression?



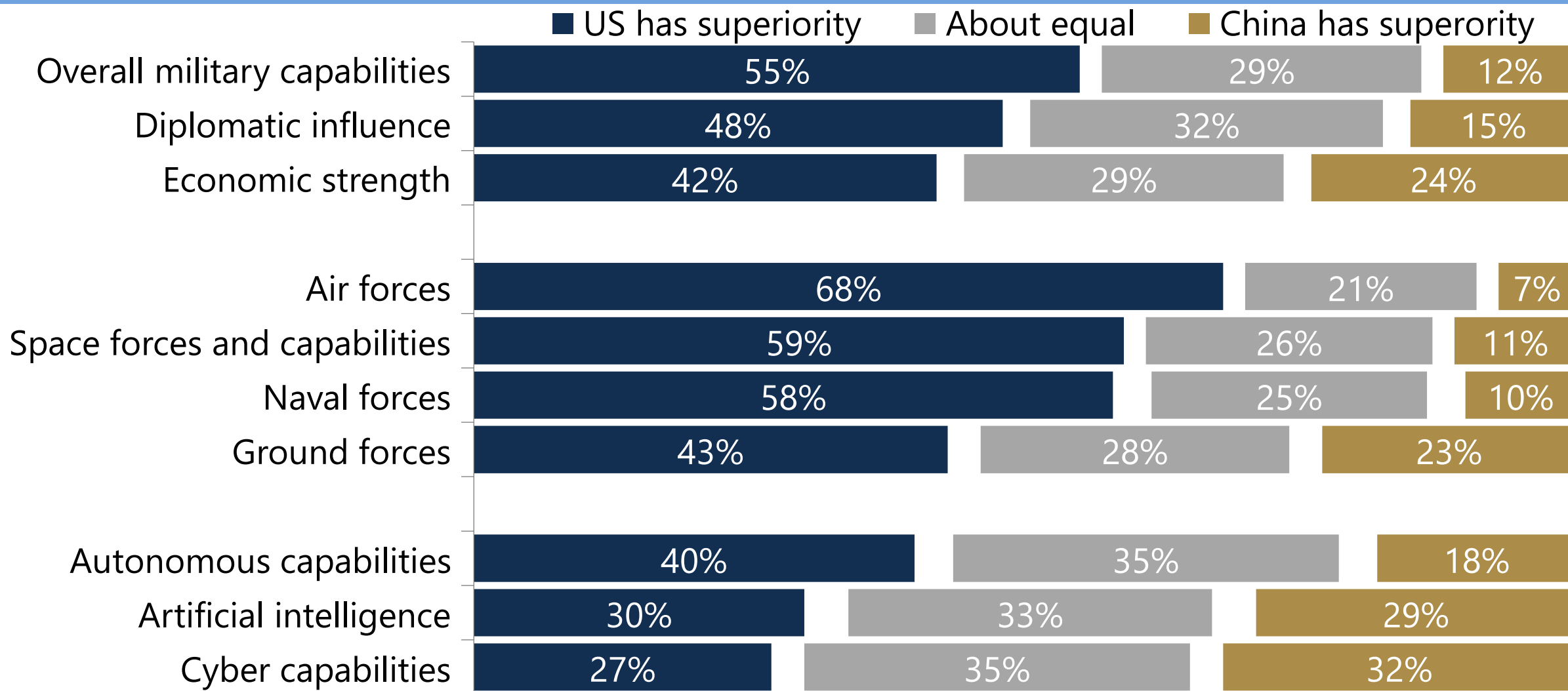
Reasons to defend Taiwan.

Volunteered Reasons to Defend Taiwan	
Taiwan is an ally / Commitment to allies / Key strategic partner	23%
Defending democracy / Sovereignty / Standing up to authoritarianism	16
Economic reasons / Global economy / Supply chains	14
Stopping Chinese Expansion / Check on China's power	14
Moral obligation / Ethical duty / Only the US can do it	14
Regional stability	3
Humanitarian concerns	3

Note: Responses under 3% not shown. Multiple responses accepted, may equal more than 100%.

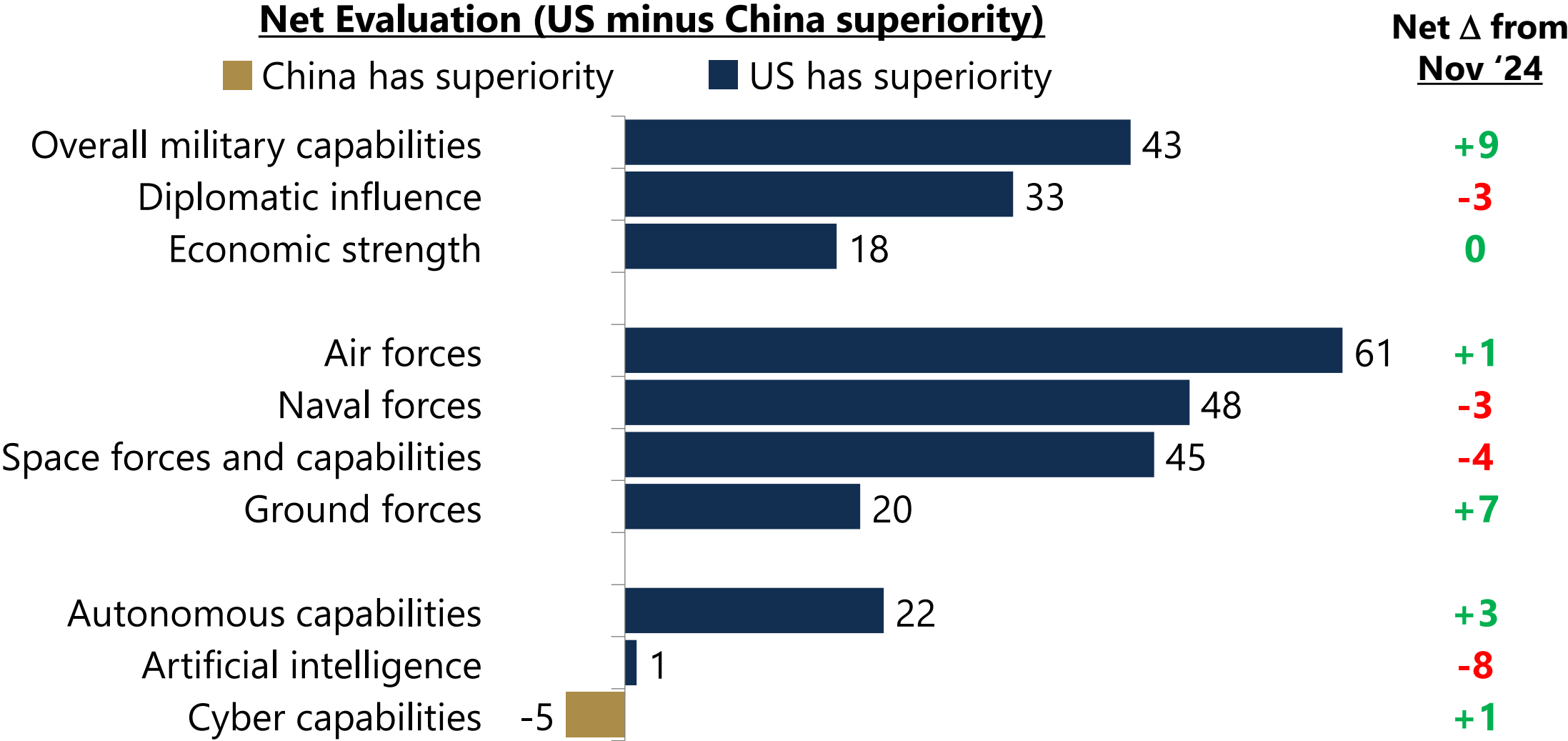
Q78. [IF IMPORTANT in Q77] Why do you think it is important to defend Taiwan? [OPEN END] [N=1,954]

US seen as superior to China on all measures except for cyber capabilities.



Q85-94. Do you think the US has superiority, are the two countries about equal, or does China have superiority?

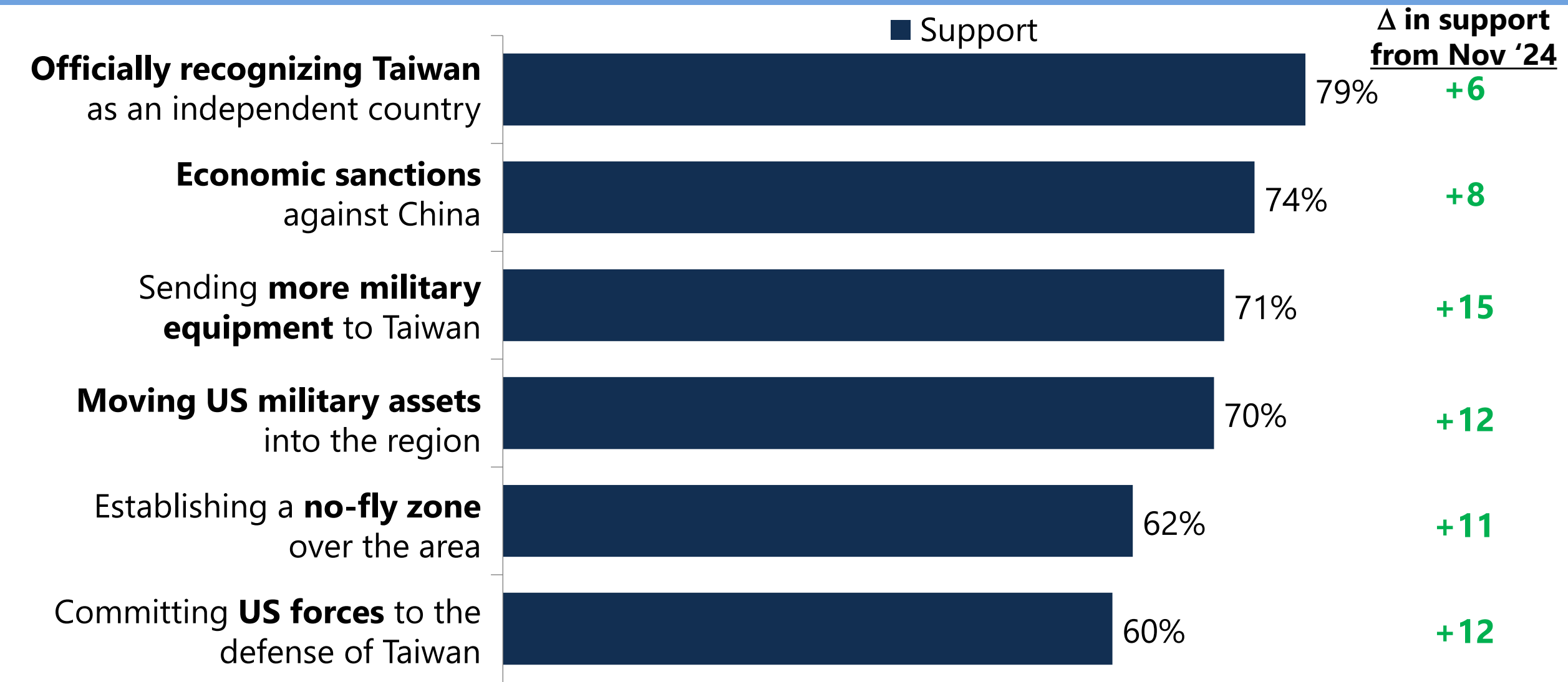
Americans think US has gained ground on most measures since last year.



Q85-94. Do you think the US has superiority, are the two countries about equal, or does China have superiority?



Increased support for a range of defense measures if China invades Taiwan.



Q79-84. Although official Chinese policy is that Taiwan is part of China, Taiwan has operated relatively independently for decades. If China invaded Taiwan, would you support or oppose the United States defending Taiwan by...

Democrats and Republicans are mostly aligned on response if China invades Taiwan.



Total support

Officially recognizing Taiwan
as an independent country

Democrat

78%

Republican

82%

Economic sanctions
against China

74%

81%

Sending **more military equipment** to Taiwan

74%

73%

Moving US military assets
into the region

69%

74%

Establishing a **no-fly zone**
over the area

58%

69%

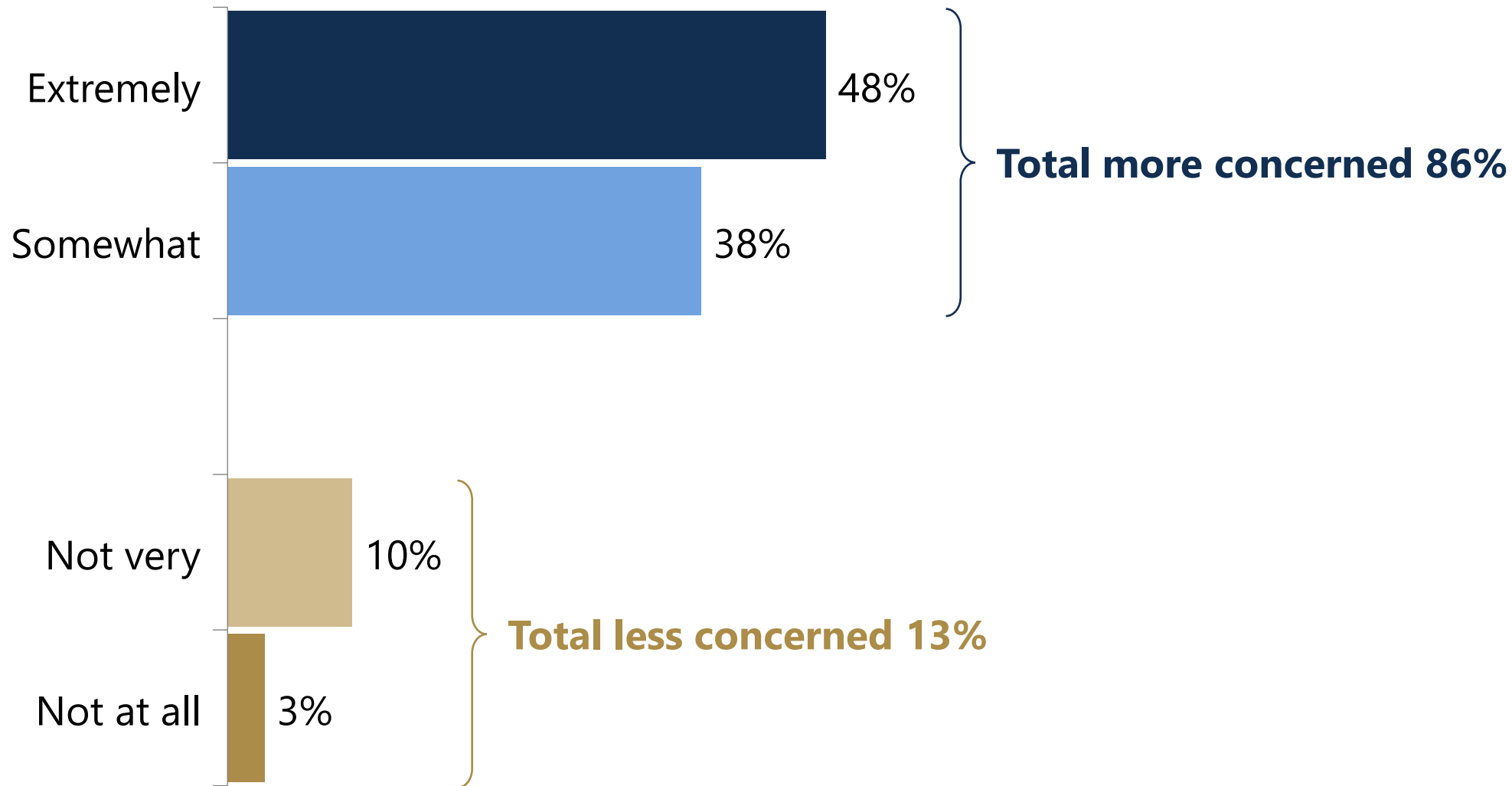
Committing **US ground troops**
to the defense of Taiwan

63%

60%

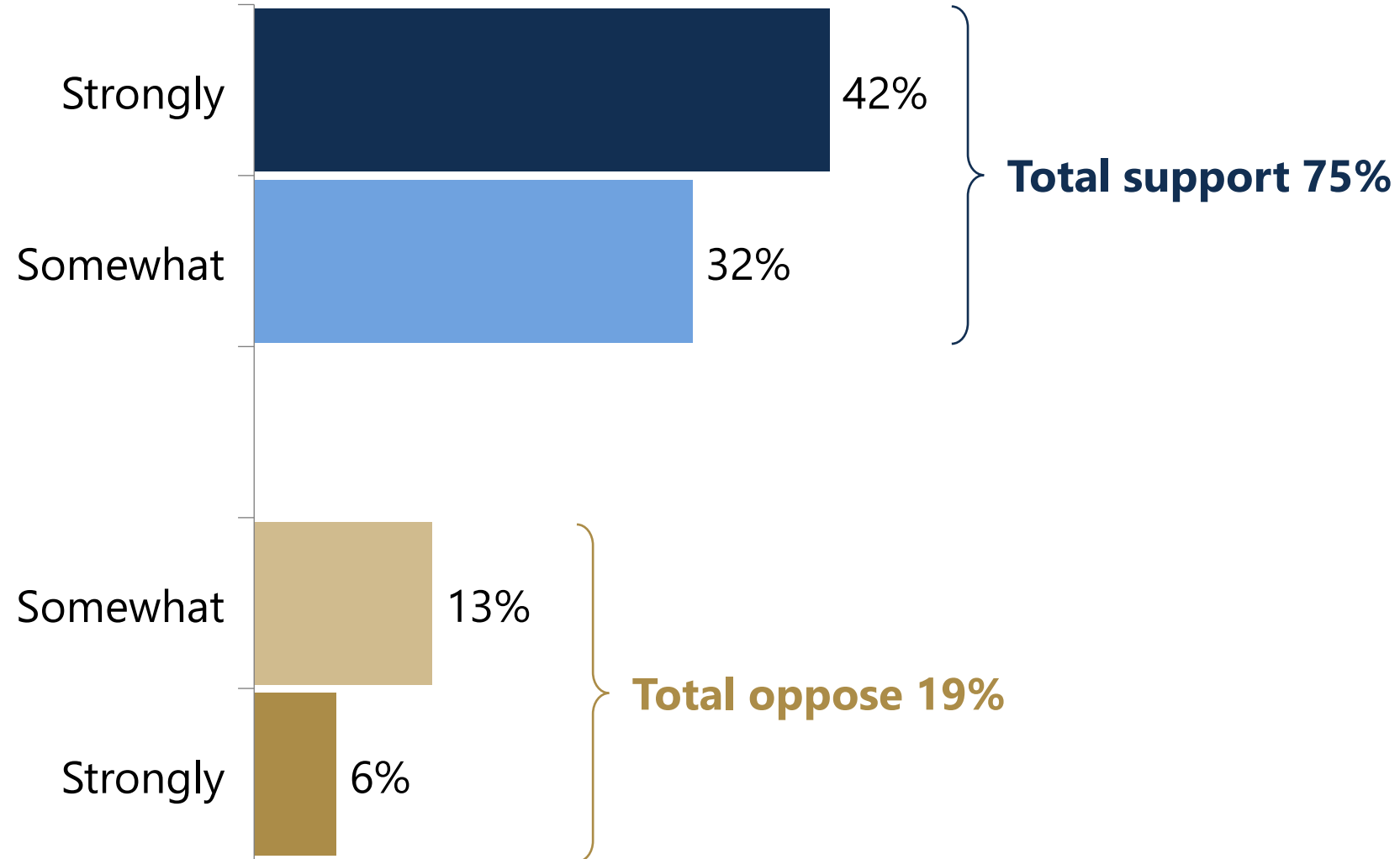
Q79-84. Although official Chinese policy is that Taiwan is part of China, Taiwan has operated relatively independently for decades. If China invaded Taiwan, would you support or oppose the United States defending Taiwan by...

High levels of concern for China pre-positioning cyber-attack capabilities in critical infrastructure.



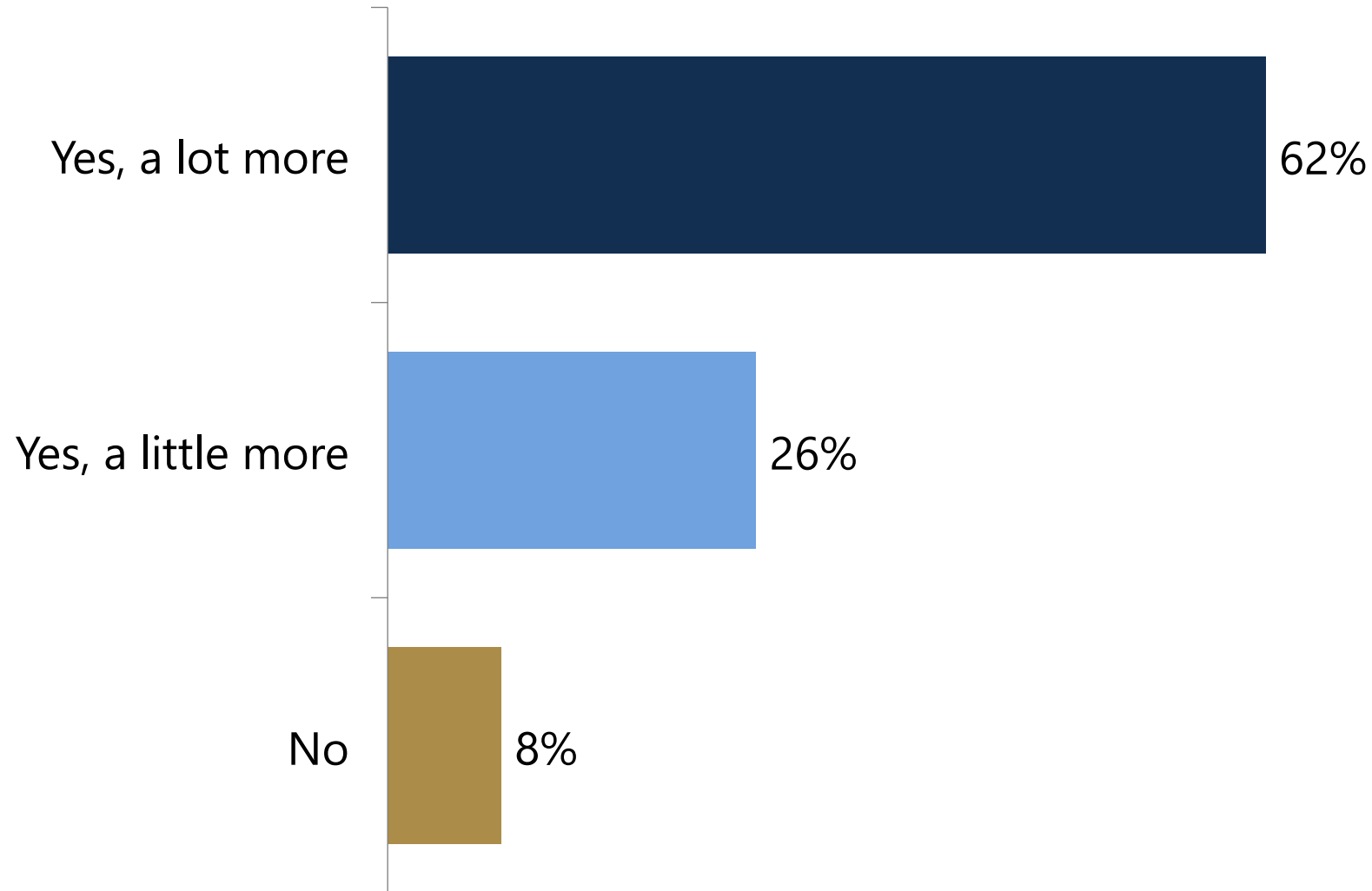
Q95. How concerned are you about China pre-positioning cyber-attack capabilities inside US critical infrastructure, such as power grids, water systems, and communication networks?

Three-quarters of Americans support removing Chinese technology from US infrastructure.



Q96. Do you support or oppose a federal program to remove and replace Chinese made networking technology from all US utilities and transportation systems, including water systems, ports, and trains?

When Americans know of China's shipbuilding, they think the US should increase its manufacturing capacity.



Q97. Navy analysts calculate China can provide over two hundred ships for every one ship that the US can produce. Knowing this, do you think the US needs more manufacturing capacity?

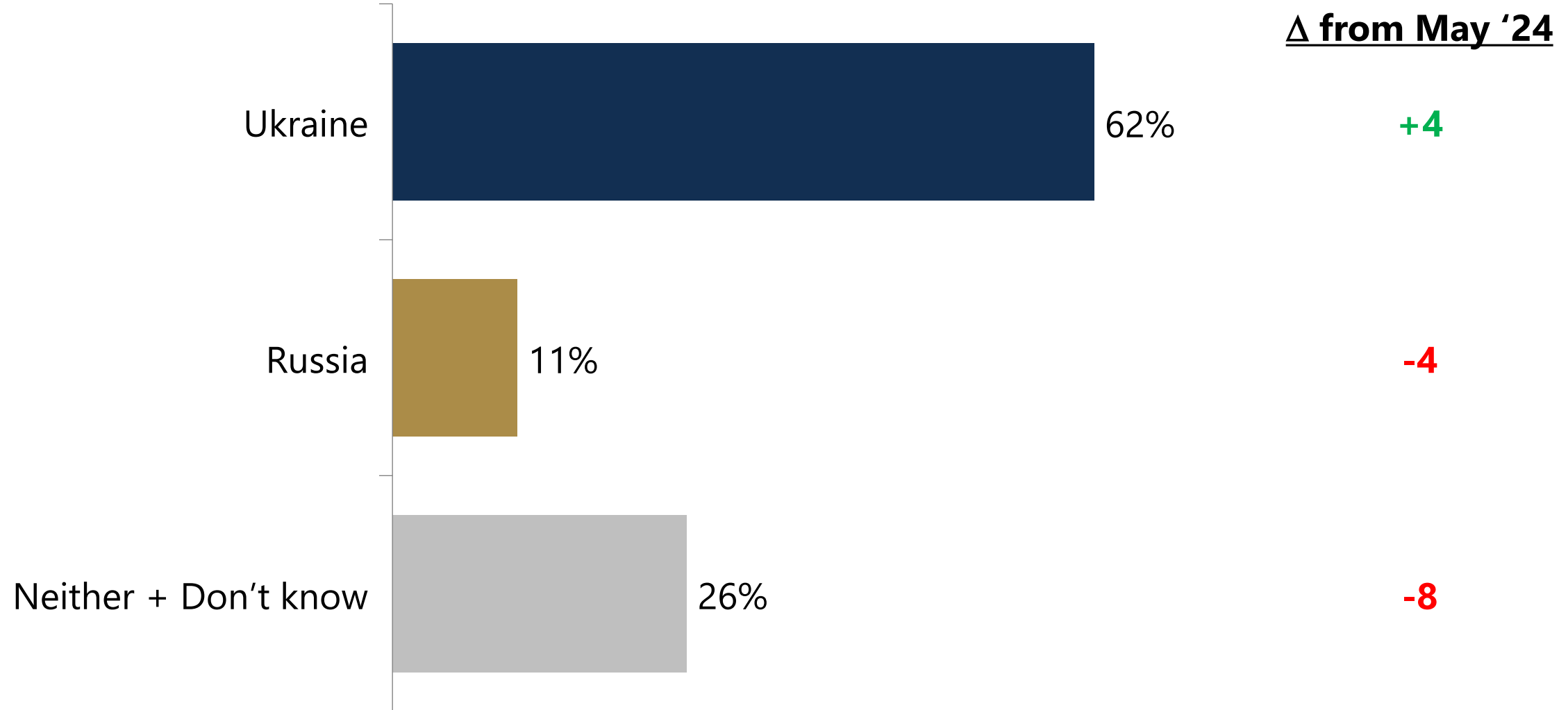


RUSSIA AND UKRAINE





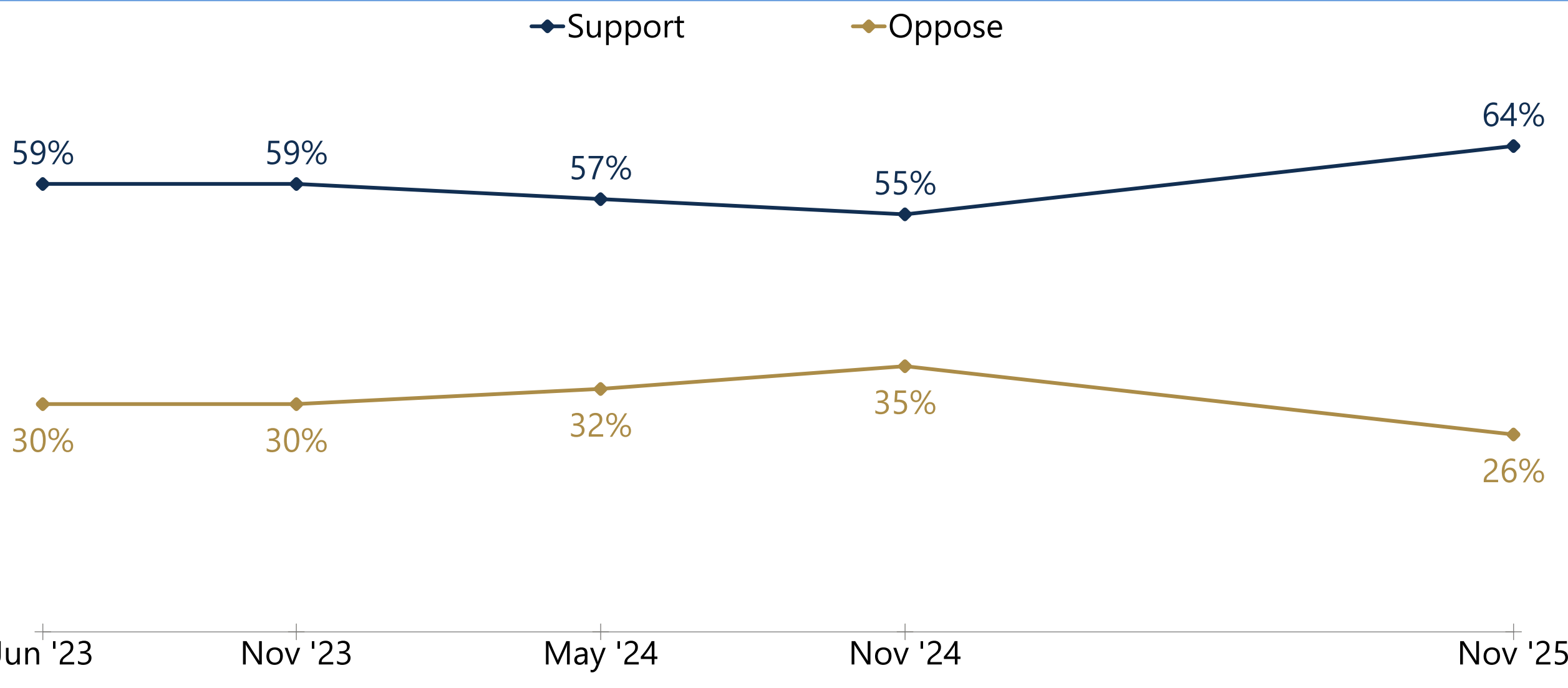
Majority of Americans want Ukraine to win the war.



Q98. Who do you want to win the war between Russia and Ukraine?



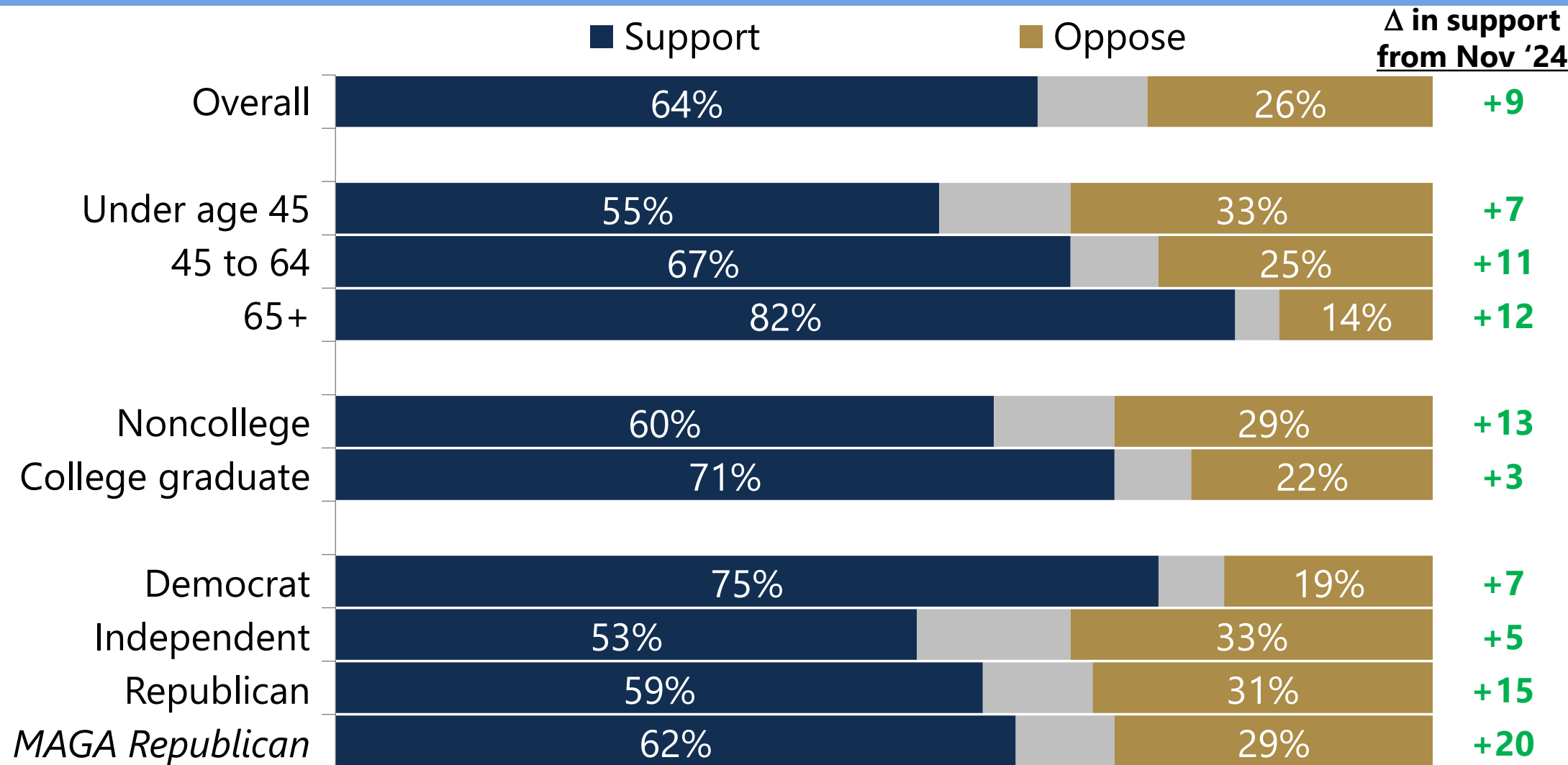
All-time high support for sending US weapons to Ukraine.



Q99. Overall, do you support or oppose sending US weapons to Ukraine?



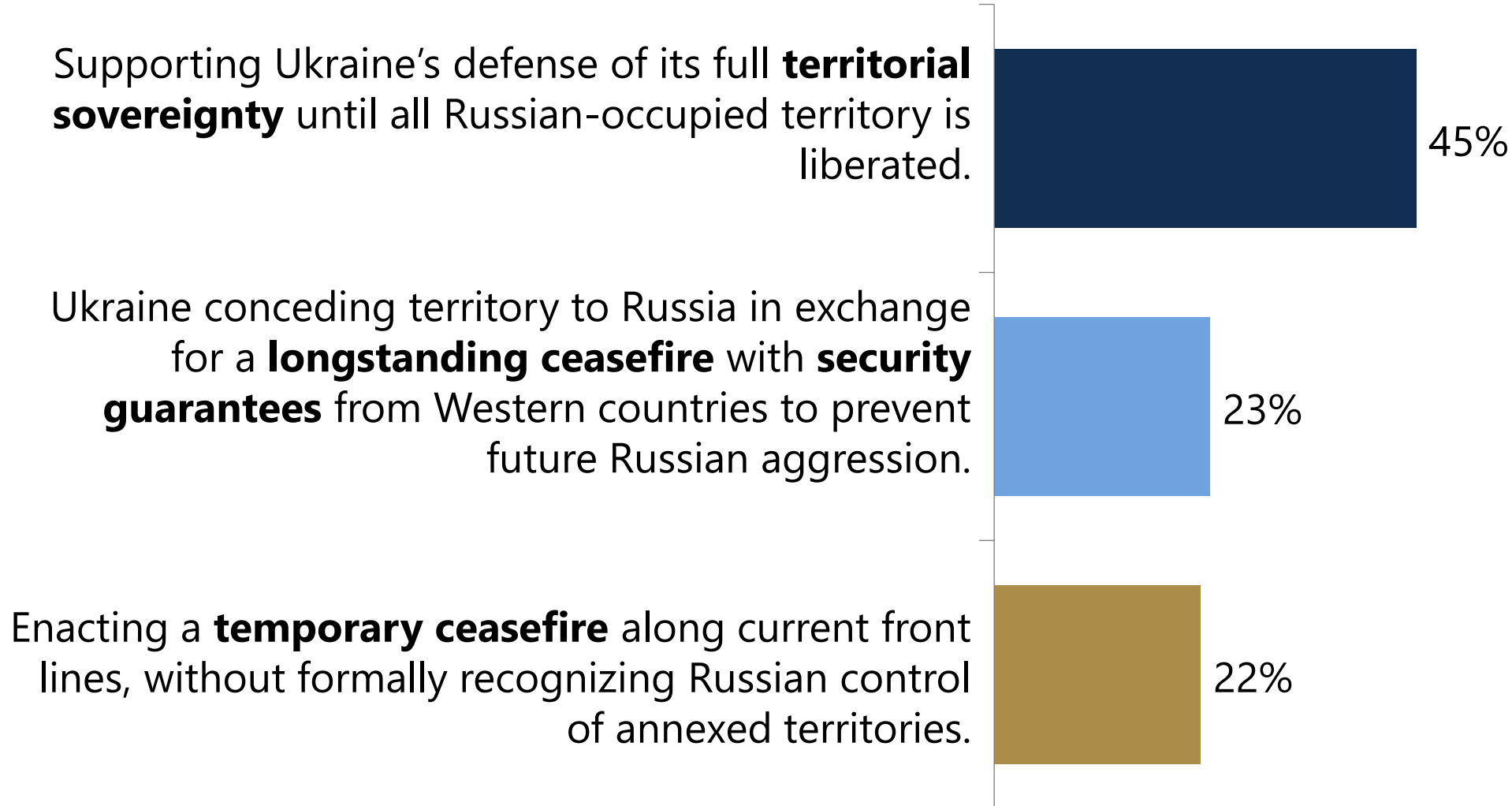
Support for aid to Ukraine, by subgroups.



Q99. Overall, do you support or oppose sending US weapons to Ukraine?

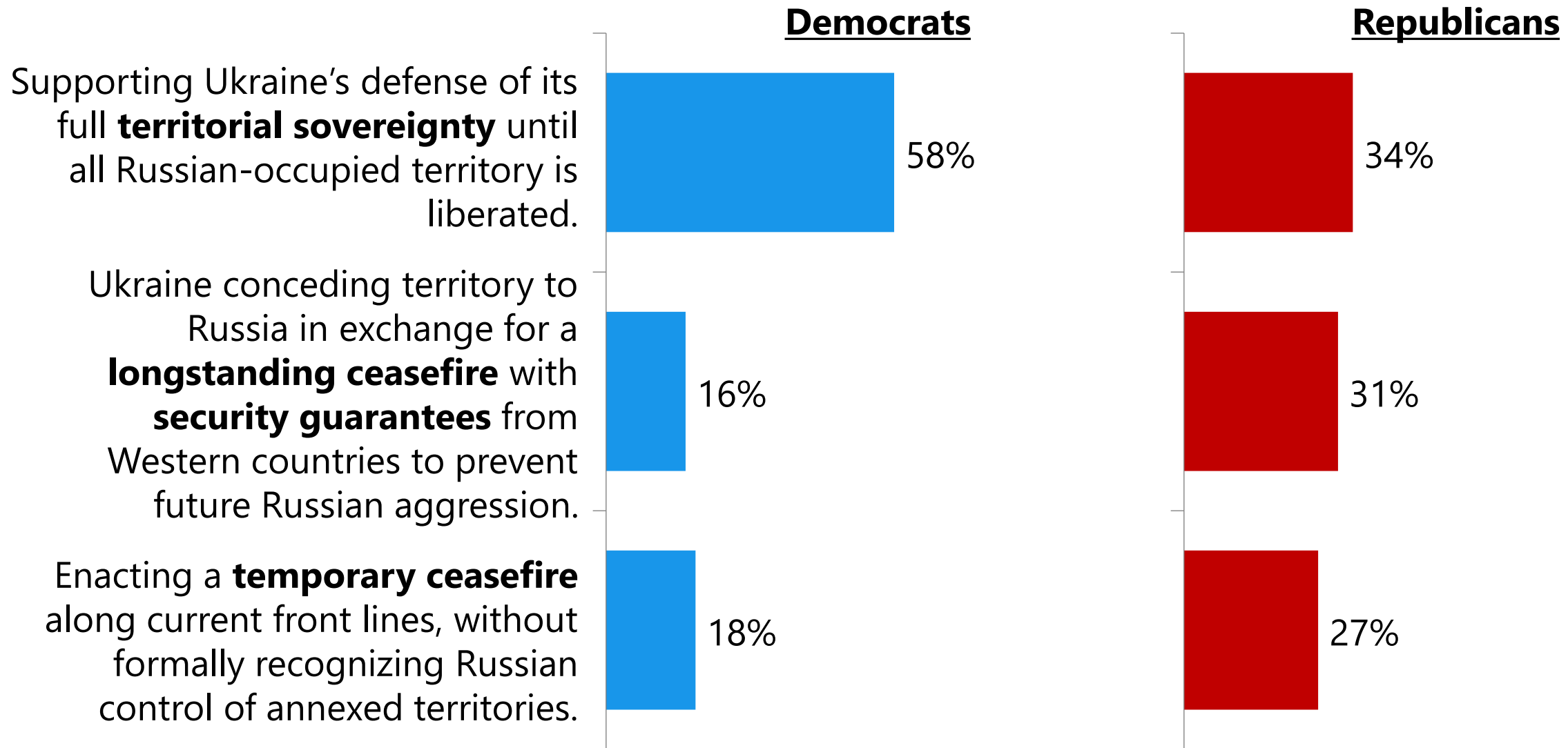


Plurality support full defense of Ukraine's territorial sovereignty.



Q100. Which approach to resolving the conflict between Russia and Ukraine do you think the US should push for?

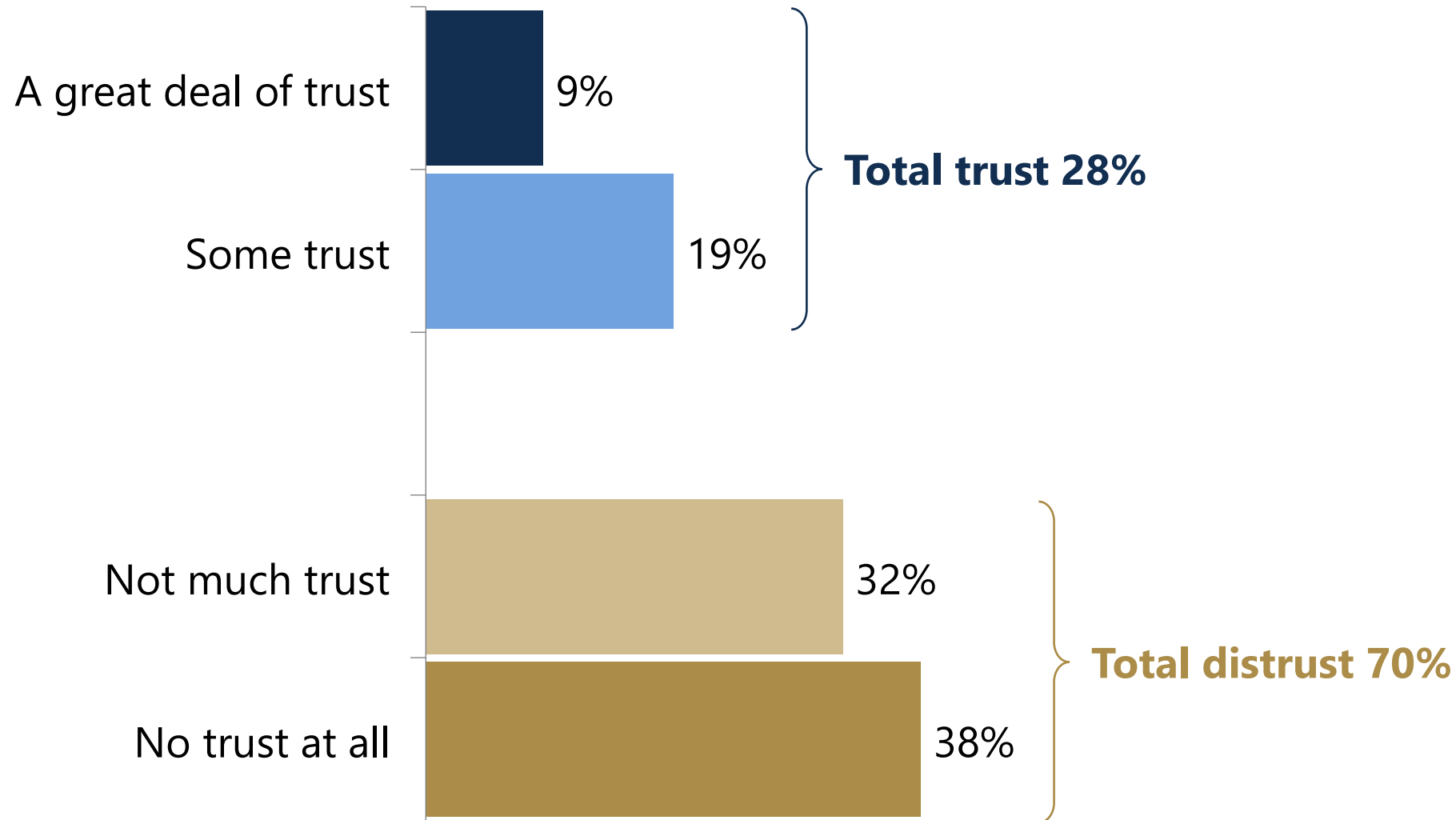
Republicans are divided on approach to resolving the conflict.



Q100. Which approach to resolving the conflict between Russia and Ukraine do you think the US should push for?



Few trust Russia to honor terms of Ukrainian peace deal.



Q101. How much trust do you have that Russia would honor the terms of any peace agreement with Ukraine?



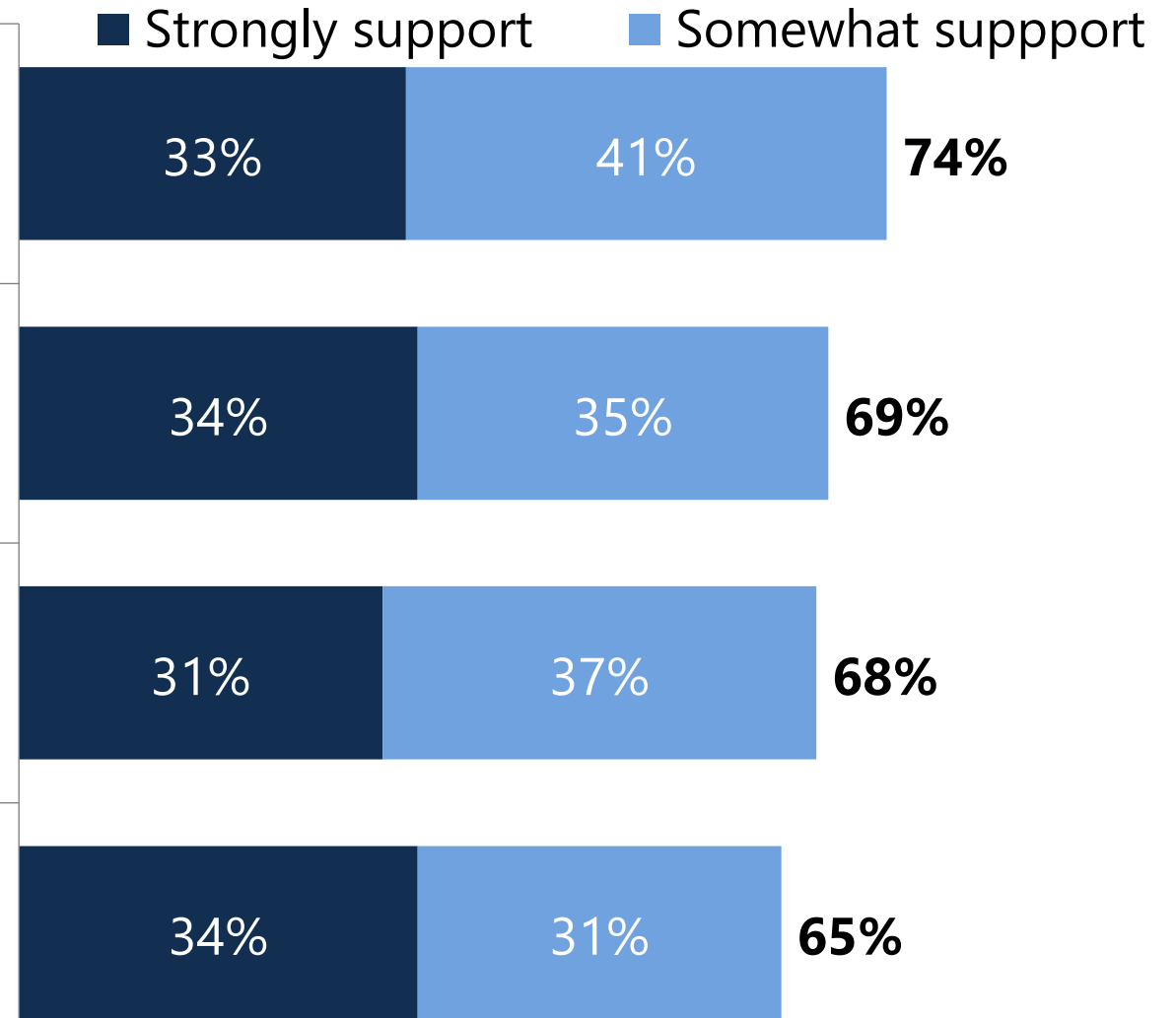
Support for Ukrainian policy proposals.

Supporting the creation of an **international force to police a demilitarized zone between Ukraine and Russia**, consisting of European ground troops, backed by US air power.

Providing Ukraine with a collective defense commitment, obligating the US and European allies to respond with force if Ukraine is attacked again, like the US commitment to NATO members.

Shifting the **financial burden of the war by selling American-made weapons to European allies**, who would then be providing those weapons to Ukraine.

Sending long-range cruise missiles, like Tomahawks, **to Ukraine**, giving them the ability to strike inside Russian territory.

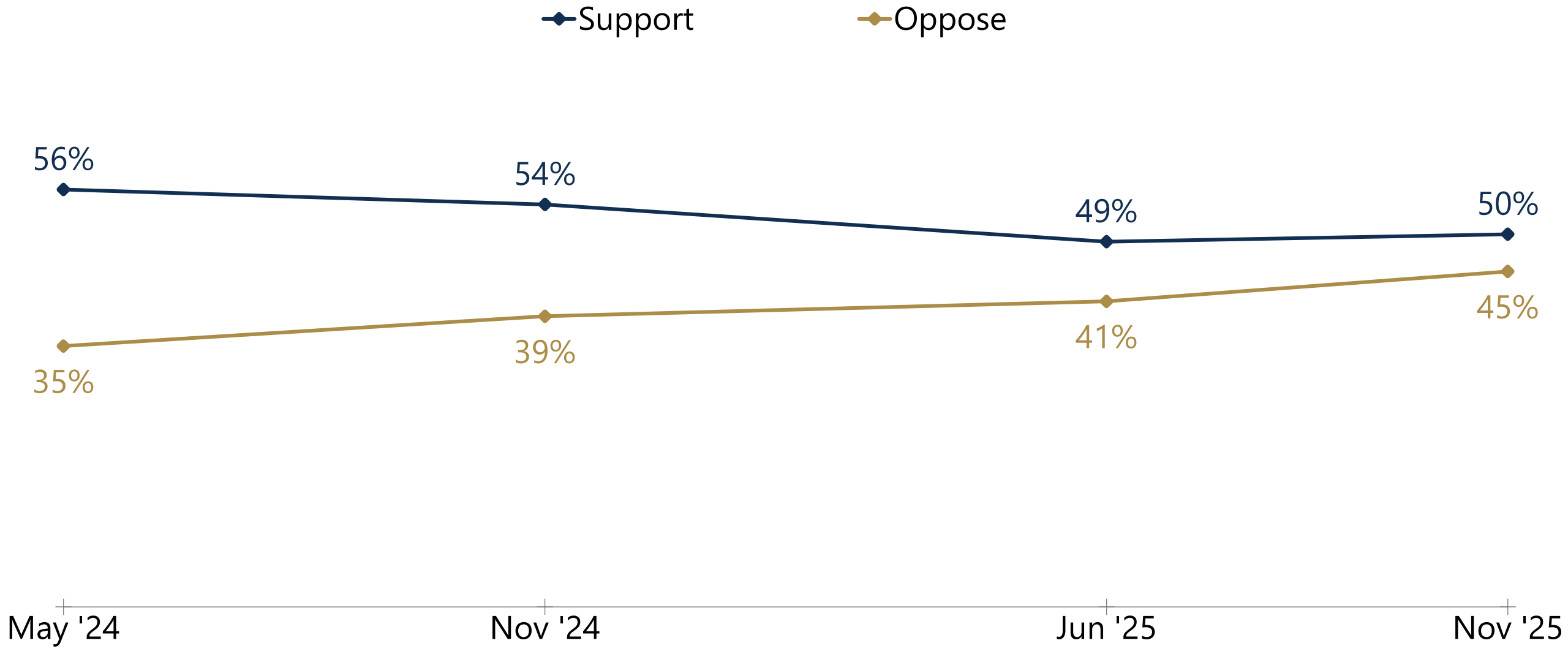




MIDDLE EAST / ISRAEL / IRAN

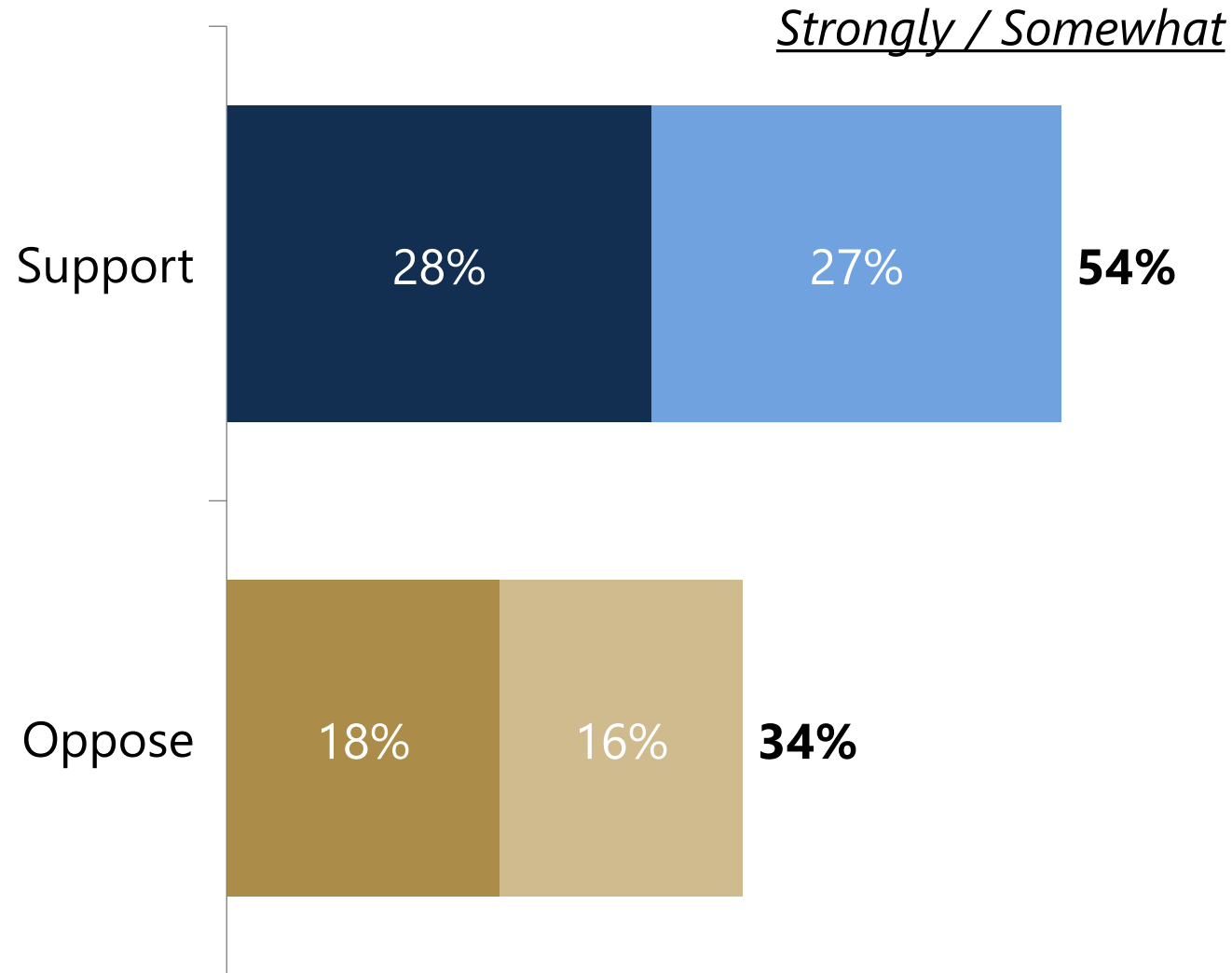


Half of Americans support sending weapons to Israel; opposition has steadily increased.



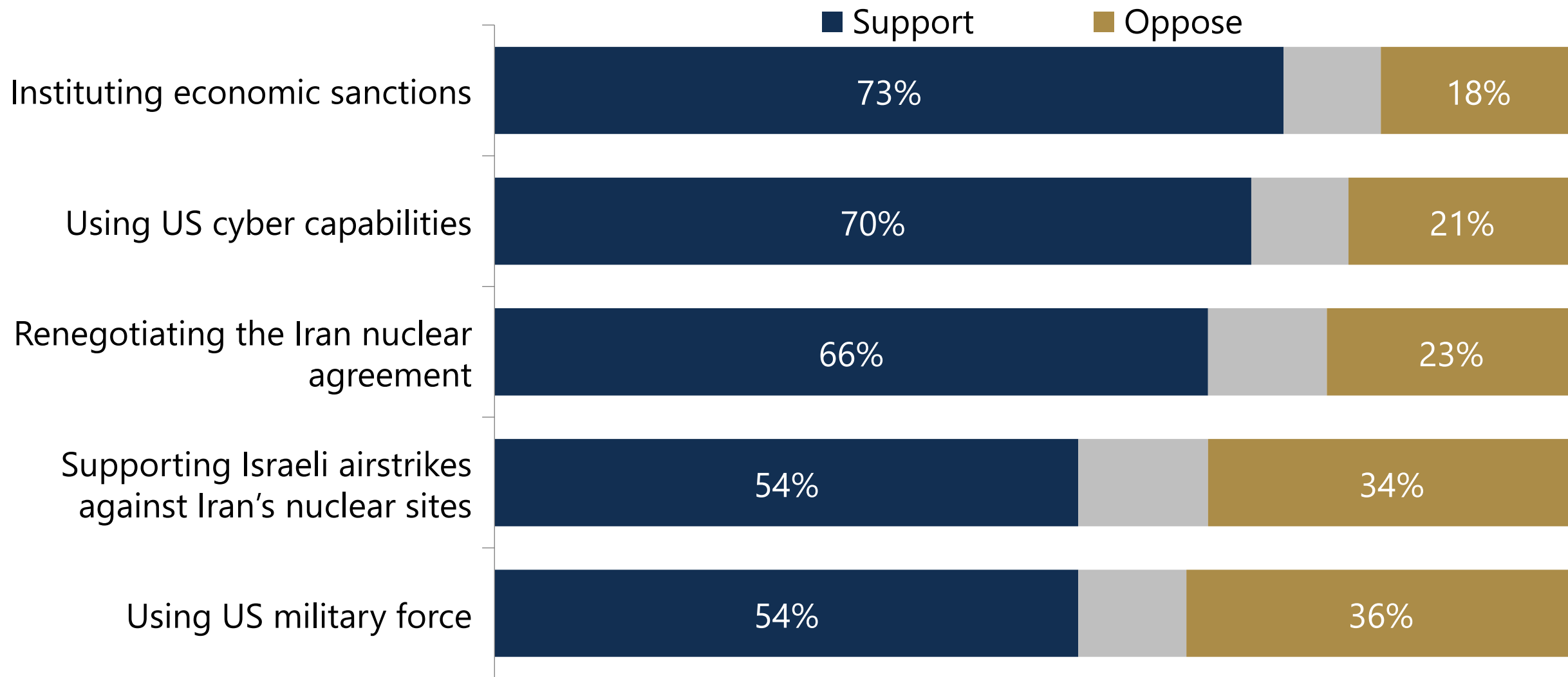
Q107. Do you support or oppose sending US weapons to Israel?

Majority support further Israeli military actions if Hamas does not demilitarize.



Q108. If Hamas does not give up their weapons and demilitarize the Gaza Strip, would you support or oppose further military actions by Israel against them?

Majority support for range of actions to prevent Iranian nuclear proliferation.



Q109-113. Do you support or oppose each of the following approaches to preventing Iran from developing nuclear weapons?

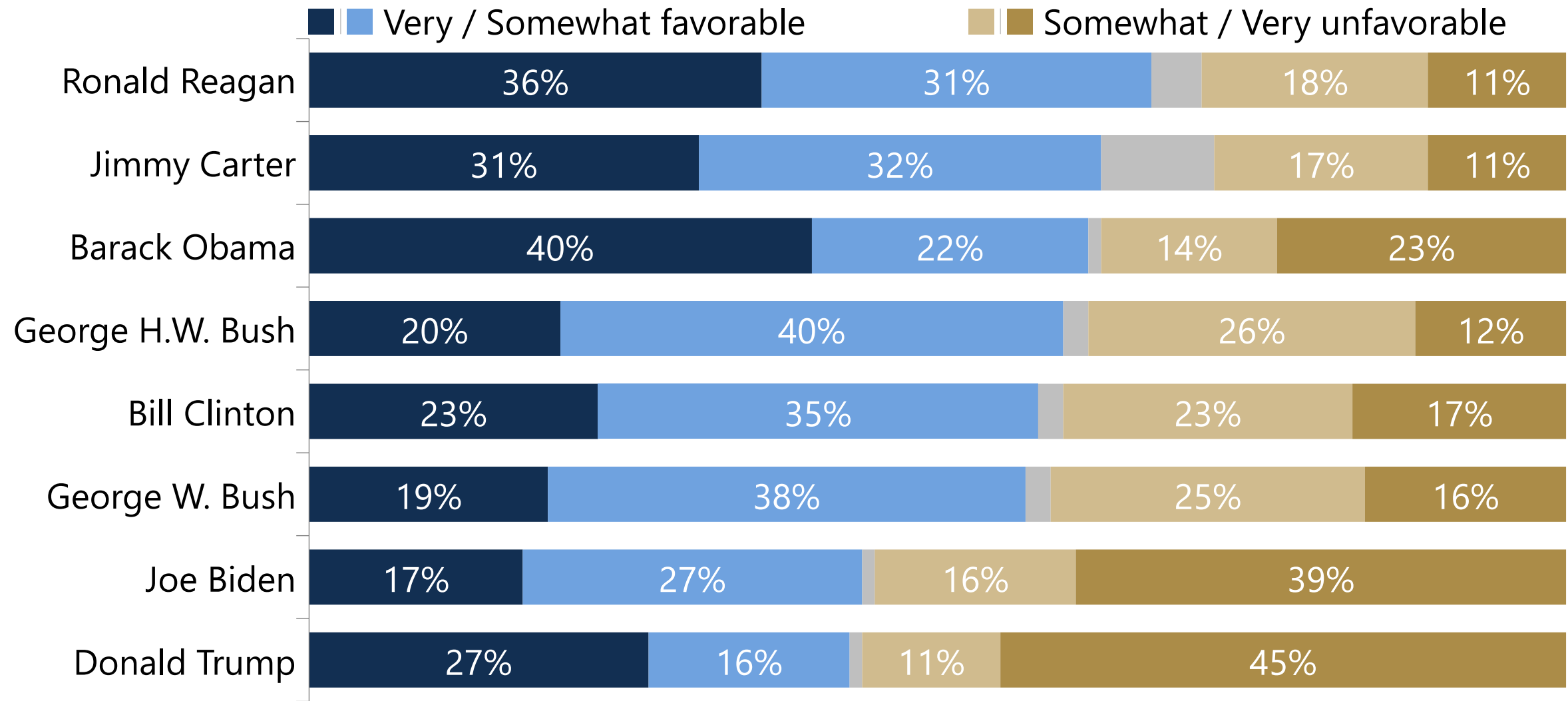


EVALUATIONS OF PRESIDENTS





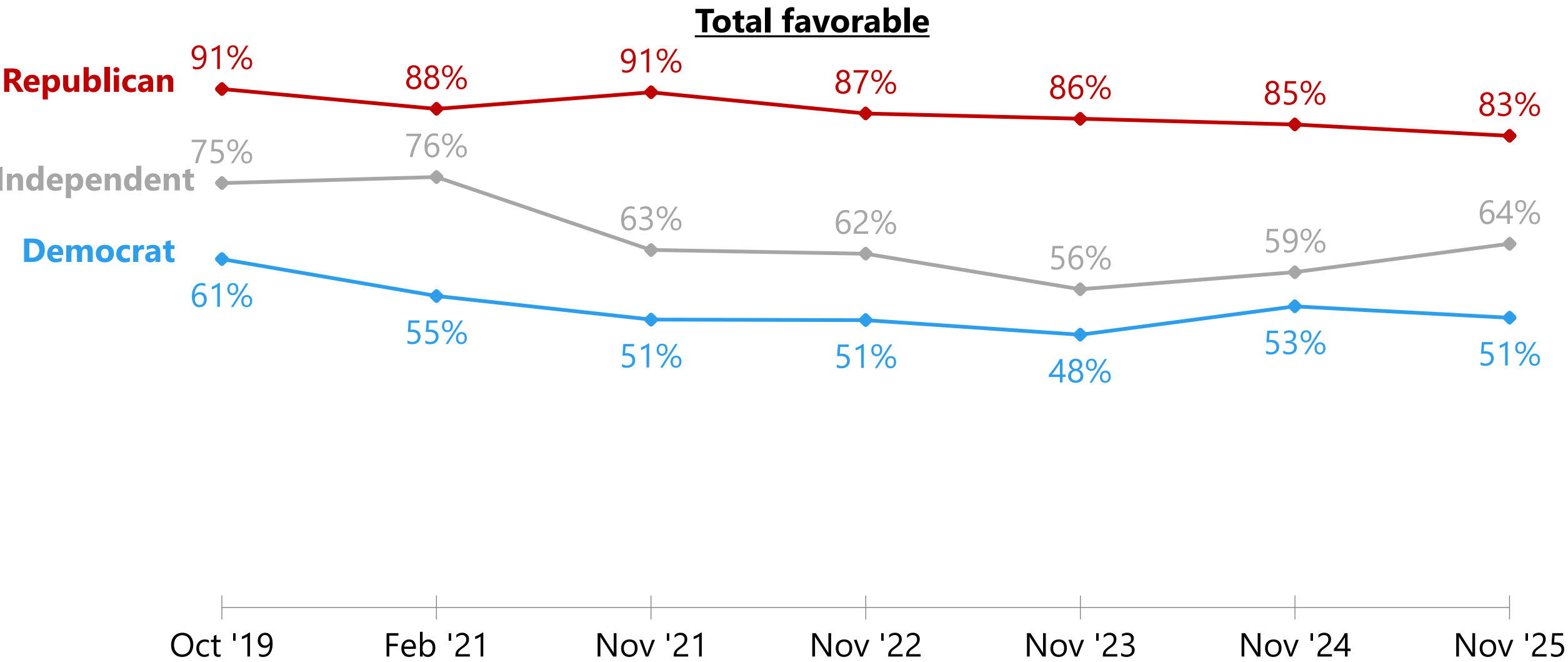
Favorability Ratings of Past Presidents.



Q114-Q121. Thinking now about recent presidents, please tell me if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable opinion of each one I mention.



Reagan favorability, by party identification.



Q115. Thinking now about recent presidents, please tell me if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable opinion of: Ronald Reagan.

**FOR MORE
INFORMATION,
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Profile of the Sample

Category	Group	% of Sample
Sex	Male	47%
	Female	53
Age	18-29	18
	30-44	25
	45-64	38
	65+	19
Race	White	71
	Black, African-American	13
	Hispanic or Latino	8
	Asian or Asian-American	3
Education	High school degree or less	26
	Some / 2-year college degree	34
	4-year college degree	25
	Postgraduate degree	15

Category	Group	% of Sample
Region	East	18%
	Midwest	21
	South	38
	West	24
Party	Democrat	41
	Independent	18
	Republican	35
Philosophy	Liberal	42
	Moderate	34
	Conservative	34
Service	Service member	4
	Veteran	7
2024 vote	Trump	41
	Harris	39