



**GREENBERG** RESEARCH

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**Duh, it's the economy stupid!**

**Election Day survey**

**November 6-8, 2022**

CAMPAIGNS

CORPORATIONS

ADVOCACY

WORLDWIDE

## METHODOLOGY

Democracy Corps conducted a national web survey with 2,520 voters from Nov. 6-8, 2022. The data include a base sample of 1,390 registered voters, with oversamples of 330 Black voters, 360 Hispanic voters, and 440 Asian American voters, for a total of 500 respondents in each group. The oversample data are statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional, age, and gender composition reflects that of 2022 midterm voters in the United States.

The total data set of 2,520 registered voters (1,390 base sample plus 1,130 oversample of voters of color) were weighted down to an effective sample size of 1,000, nationally representative of midterm voters. The sample used the Edison exit poll findings for proportions on race, age, and gender, but we maintained the unique methodology of this project by raising the non-college proportion by 6 percent (to reflect the accepted bias of prior exit polls). And it weighted the cultural thermometers (NRA and pro-life groups), to offset the bias of on-line panels. The vote result matched the actual vote in 2022 without have to weight the vote itself.

### **The total sample of 2,520 Registered Voters (1,000 Weighted) includes:**

- 788 Registered Voters in Battleground States (350 Weighted)
- 1000 White Voters (730 Weighted)
- 500 Black/African-American Voters (110 Weighted)
- 500 Hispanic/Latino Voters (110 Weighted)
- 500 Asian American (AAPI) Voters (20 Weighted)

## Key questions

- With so much discontent and despair on the state of the country and economy, why did Democrats not face historic losses in the House and Senate? How did voters manage to set aside the unpopularity of President Biden and the Democratic Congress and decide at the very end to turnout and vote for Democrats?
- Democrats lost the popular vote by 2.6 percent, as our polls predicted, and Republicans have a 3-point advantage in party identification. So, will Democrats be complacent and fail to bring the big changes needed to be competitive again? Unlike 2022, Senate Democrats will be defending in many Trump states.
- President Biden has already declared that Democrats surprised pundits and analysts because the economy, in reality, was very strong; voters endorsed his bipartisan efforts and welcomed the accomplishments of the Democrats. With the Republican control bound to be very close, DCCC leaders will be tempted to do the same. Will others embrace those self-serving conclusions completely contradicted by the data before and after the election?
- This will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> election in a row where the top problems of the country are economy and discontent driven by anger about the economy, yet those voting for the Democratic House candidates cite no economic reasons to support them. Will Democrats settle to be a party without any economic projects?
- Democrats face current and future problems with Asian and Hispanic voters. Will Democrats do what is necessary to have an inclusive, engaged base?
- Do analysts realize how close this election was to going badly wrong? An astonishing 1/4 of voters decided their vote a few days before or on Election Day. Twice as many Democratic voters considered voting for the Republicans, and they enjoyed double digit advantages on inflation, crime, and the border.

# What happened?

- The biggest factor was Democrats putting aside their doubts and becoming as unified as the Republicans — deciding in the end to support the Democrats because of abortion, threats to Social Security and democracy. All three were equally important in this poll, and national Democrats were right to add democracy in the closing week.
- Abortion was key to the Senate wins and state elections where Republican control would mean abortion becoming illegal.
- With election deniers prominent in the election, Donald Trump became a bigger factor in the election than Joe Biden, even though Biden was slightly less popular. GOP candidates wore a stamp that said, “I’m the Trump candidate.”
- The Democratic got respectable support with Hispanics, as well as young people, but women across the whole spectrum played the biggest role. Unmarried women, white college women, and under 50 white working class women all raised their vote since October, no doubt motivated by the abortion issue.
- Democrats had the advantage by a couple of points in every area of grassroots voter contact.
- Defying previous midterms, independents divided fairly equally, in fact, favoring the Senate candidates in this poll. And despite the intense partisan consolidation, our poll shows that some moderate Republicans and Cheney conservatives broke ranks. That was felt in specific House and Senate races.
- And in actual battleground contests, the individual campaigns prioritized their efforts to help families with the cost of living, reassured voters early on the opposition to defunding the police, and opposed the Biden administration on border policy. The top priorities of our voters were the cost of living and inflation by far, but then, “white extremists and the future of democratic elections,” then abortion and climate change.

## What happened?

- Inflation and cost of living were the top national issues, and they were national. Governors of both parties were popular and did well promoting their own economic progress and policies. But voters did expect candidates for the House and Senate to address the spiking inflation and cost of living. They left them feeling angry and dissatisfied.
- In our polls, Democrats trailed Republicans by only 3 points on who would do better with the cost of living - the top issue, along with inflation. But Democrats nationally went mute, fearing talking about inflation would help Republicans. Silence did and the Republicans' advantage grew to 6 points in this election poll. The cost of living was the very top priority for those who voted Democratic, and yet none cited any economic reason for voting Democratic this year. Again, it is hard not to say, "It's the economy, stupid" to Democratic strategists and leaders.
- Failure of national Democrats to address the economy meant rural areas and white working class communities were a political wasteland. But cost of living was also the top issue for Democrats, Black, Hispanic, and Asian voters. Turnout was down for Blacks and Hispanics and Democratic support for Asian American voters.
- Crime was a top issue for many Democratic base voters, and a quarter of Blacks and half of Hispanics and Asian voters trusted Republicans, more than Democrats to address the issue. That could have impacted turnout and Democrats' future prospects. With Democrats trailing Republicans by 10 points on crime and 16 points on who would be "much better," Democrats have a lot of work.
- This poll shows the continuing risk of a Republican challenge centered on borders and crime. Trump may have been weakened in this election, but another leader with that message poises an accelerated risk. Democrats have to address the border issue, too.

# What now?

- We tested the cost of living message that begins with people have “not seen a pay raise” in years and the contrast with what Republicans and Democrats are doing on the cost of living. It is even stronger in this Election Day poll. It speaks a top economic issue for all voters and top one for Democrats. It is also the top issue for Black, Hispanic, and Asian voters. It also wins over working class voters broadly and allows Democrats to make further electoral gains.
- Two-thirds rate the economy negatively and “no pay raise” is the top recall of our message, yet Democrats did not prioritize the economy in this election and the President is still trying to convince people this is a good economy. This may be the toughest to make progress on.
- This poll shows the power of a crime message that funds the police dramatically and distances the party from the extreme fringe who support defunding the police. This poll showed that even a simulated race with Trump’s save America candidate, we gain two points when speaking to both the cost of living AND crime.
- Democrats are at risk, this poll shows with Hispanics and Asian voters if they do not rethink what they prioritize, their policy offer, consciously battling for all in our coalition, and acknowledging past mistakes and having an inclusive vision where all make progress in America.
- That prioritizing helping families with the cost of living over all other issues because no pay raise forever and period of hyper-inflation, supporting families that helped families, like reducing health care costs and the Child Tax Credit, the last uniquely popular among Hispanics. Recognizing that all parts of the base want to see Democrats press for greater equality and offer a vision of America where all make progress.
- Democrats had the advantage in 2022 in every area of grassroots. This year showed the advantages of campaigning for every vote and community and showing Democrats win in rural areas too.
- Bottomline, American are facing hyper-inflation and a cost of living crisis, and they were looking for Democrats to provide help. As mad as it is that Democrats came to close to holding on to the House, our polling and others, showed them with a small lead. Our polling then and now, says, had Democrats taken on the biggest, historic problems, we could have had an even more historic election. Democrats and the country do not have to settle for the parties continuing to battle to a draw.

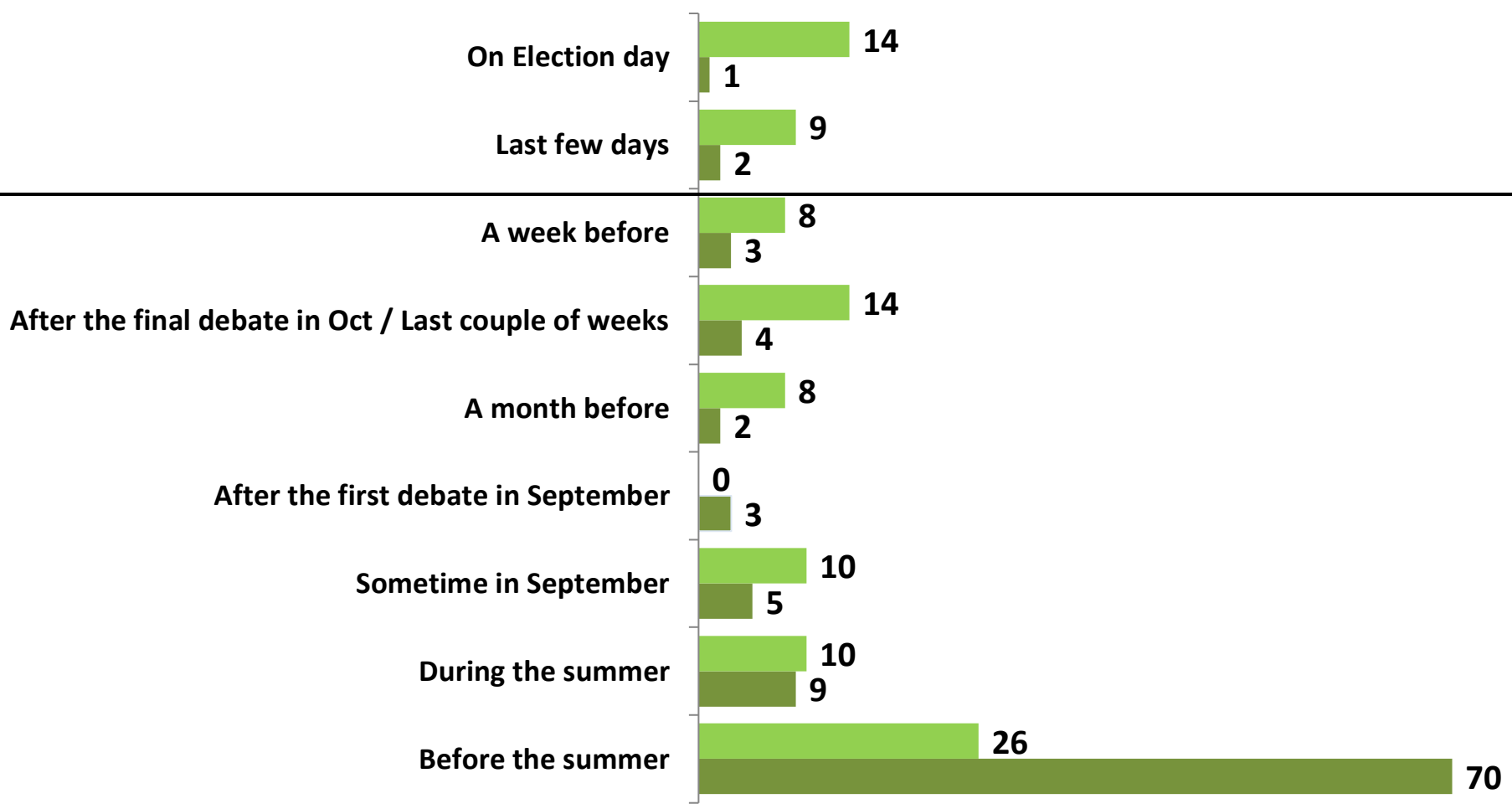
# What happened?



# An unprecedented 14 percent decided on Election Day, and a quarter in last few

*When did you finally decide how you would vote in the Presidential/Midterm election?)*

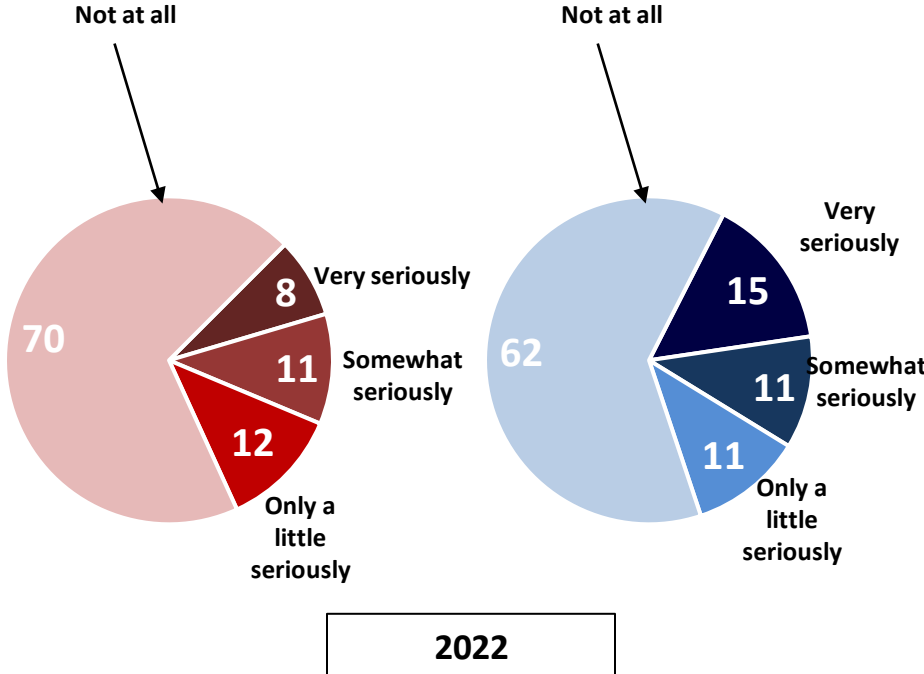
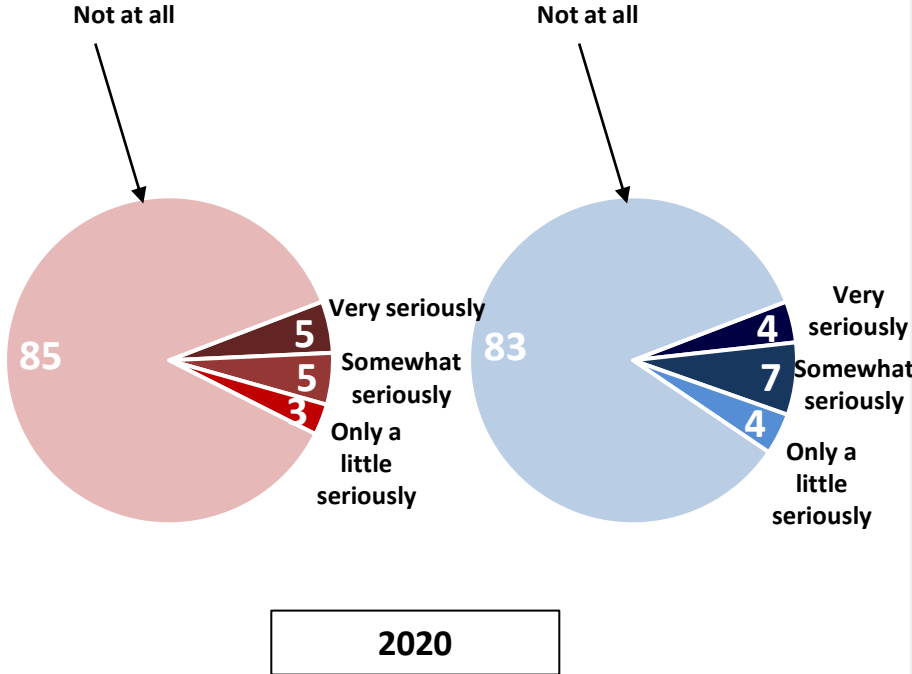
■ 2022 ■ 2020





# And compared to previous elections, many considered switching their vote: twice as many voting Democratic considered switching their vote

Considered voting for Biden/Considered voting for Trump/Considered voting Democrat/Considered voting Republican

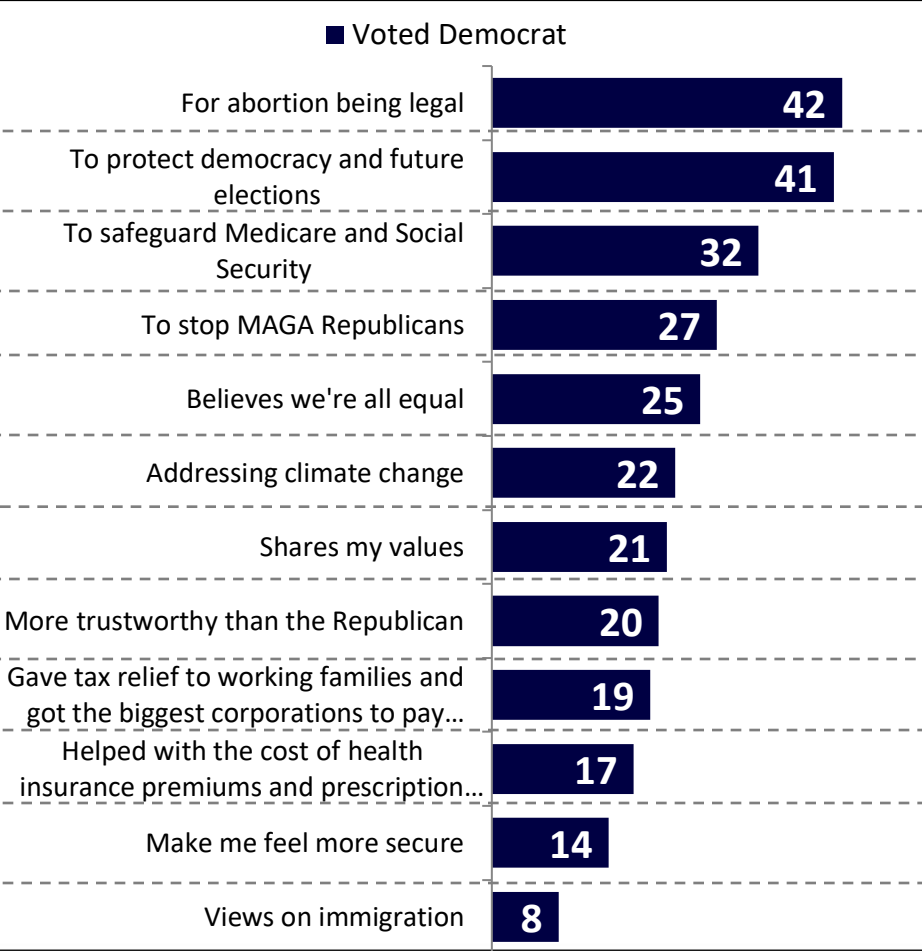


# The consolidation of Democrats happened because of abortion, protecting democratic elections and Medicare and social security; no economic issues a factor

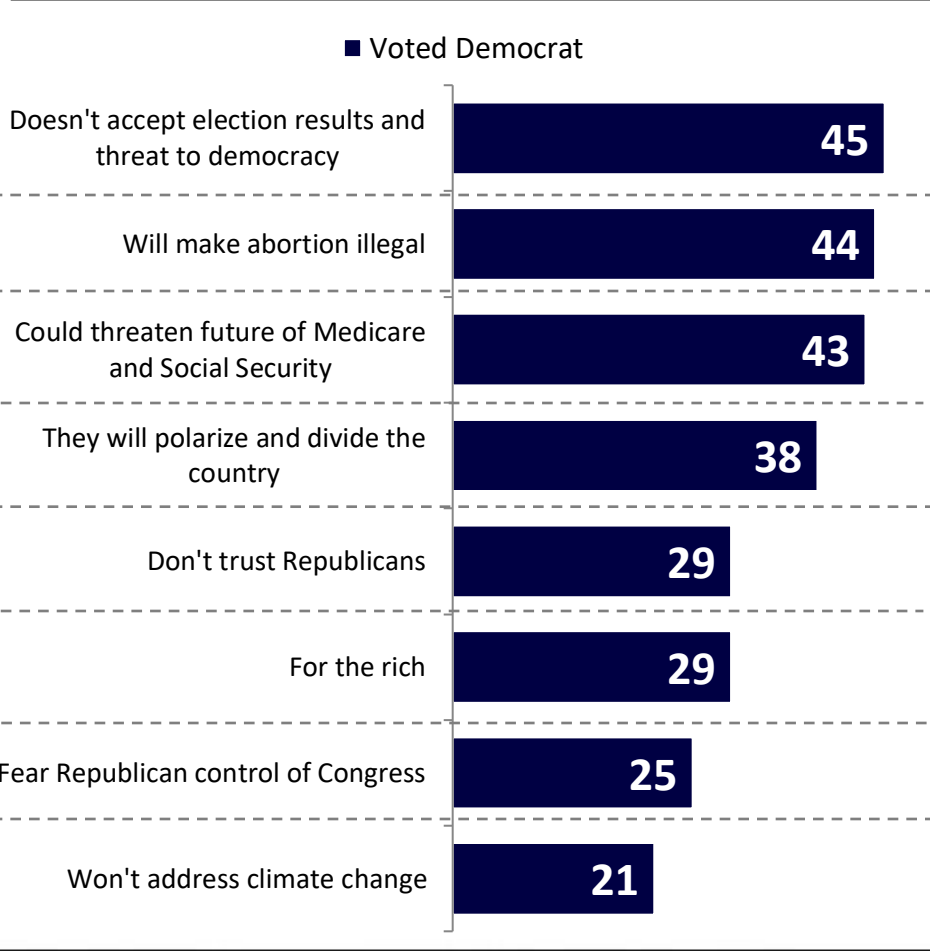
*Below is a list of reasons to vote for the Democrat for Congress. Which THREE are most important for you?*

*Below is a list of reasons to vote against the Republican for Congress. Which THREE are most important for you?*

## WHY DEMOCRAT FOR CONGRESS



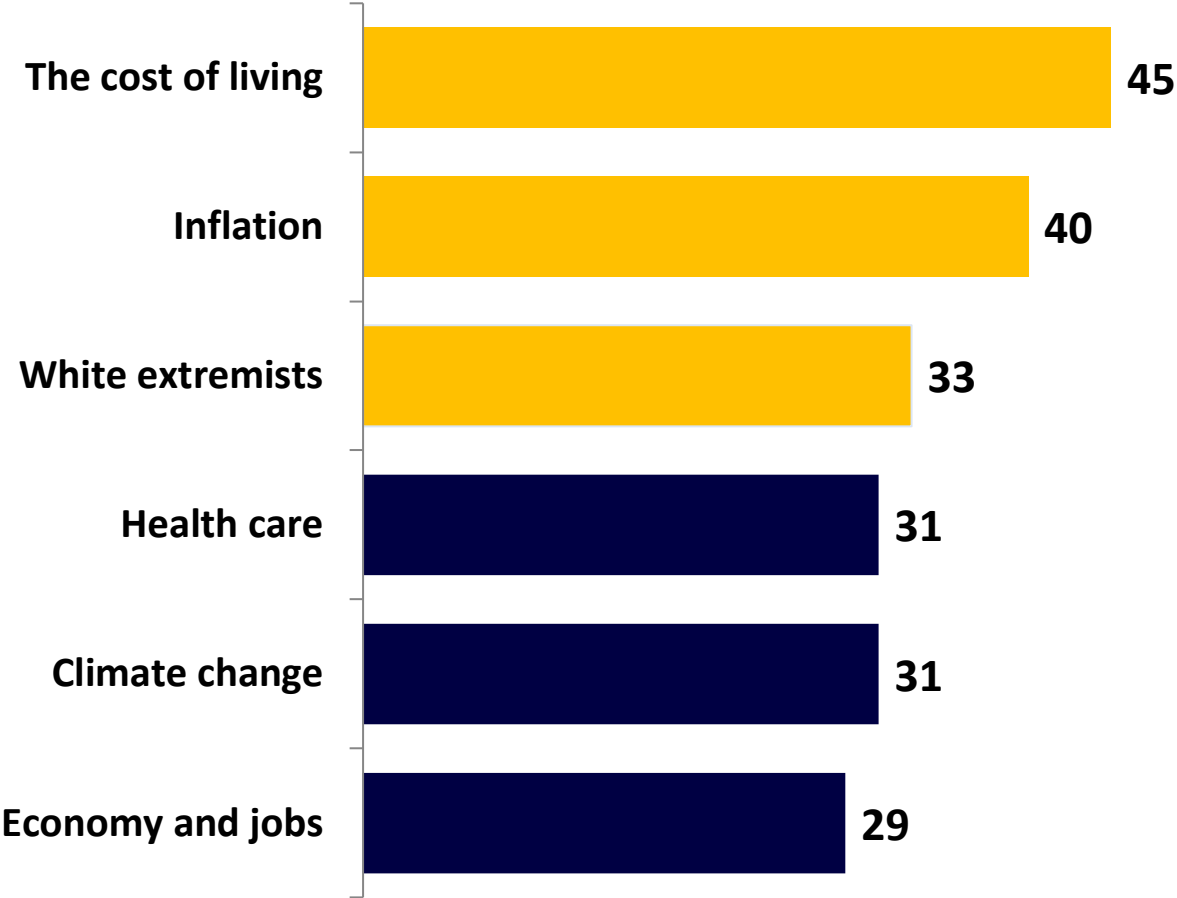
## WHY NOT REPUBLICAN FOR CONGRESS



# Democratic voters prioritized cost of living and inflation, but then white extremism, followed by climate change and health care

Please select the *THREE* issues you think are most pressing for the United States.

## Voted Democrat for Congress

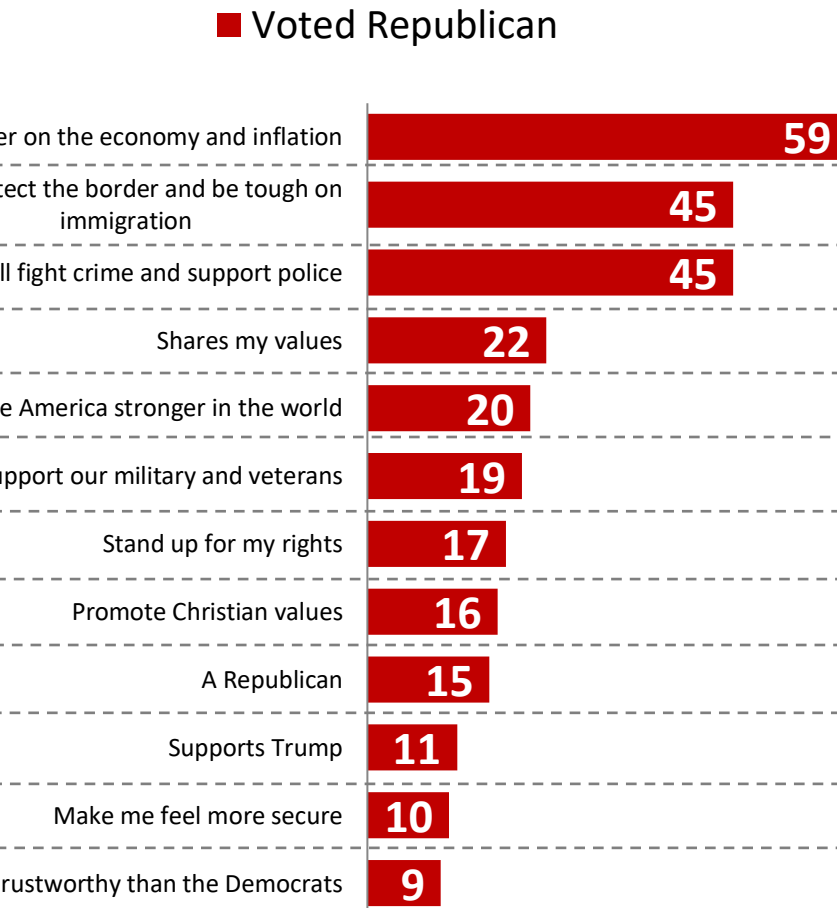


# GOP vote driven by inflation & prices, & then, borders, crime & defund police

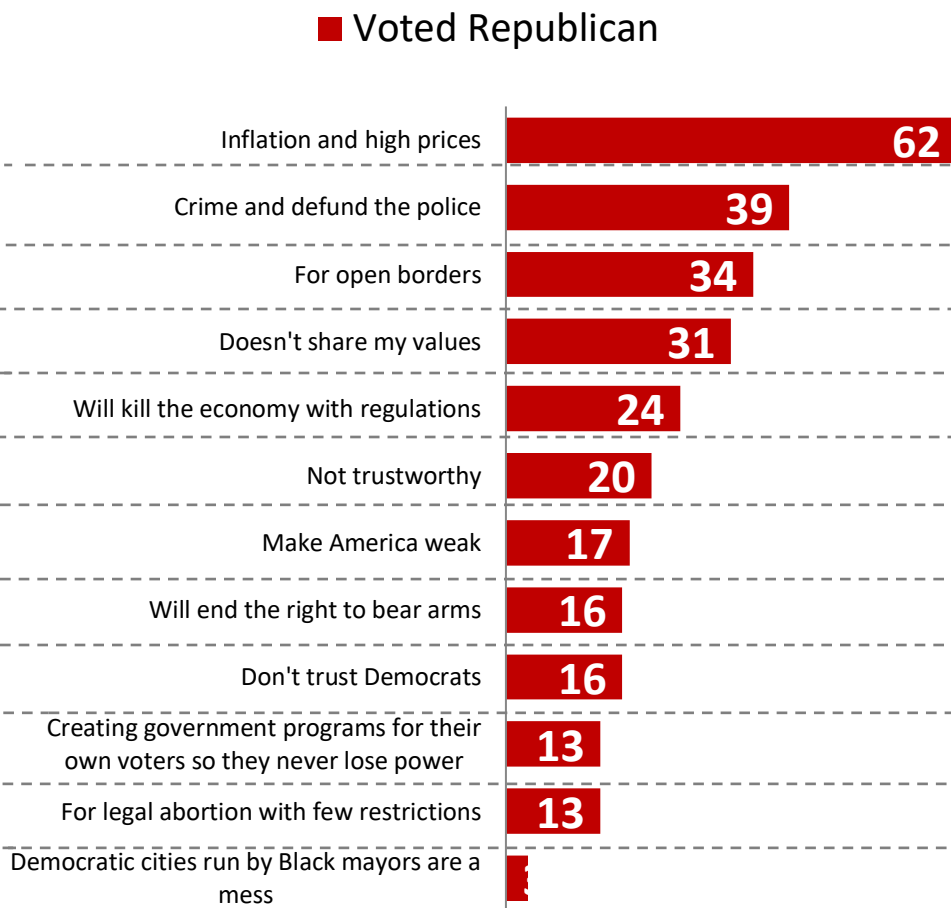
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## WHY REPUBLICAN FOR CONGRESS



## WHY NOT DEMOCRAT FOR CONGRESS

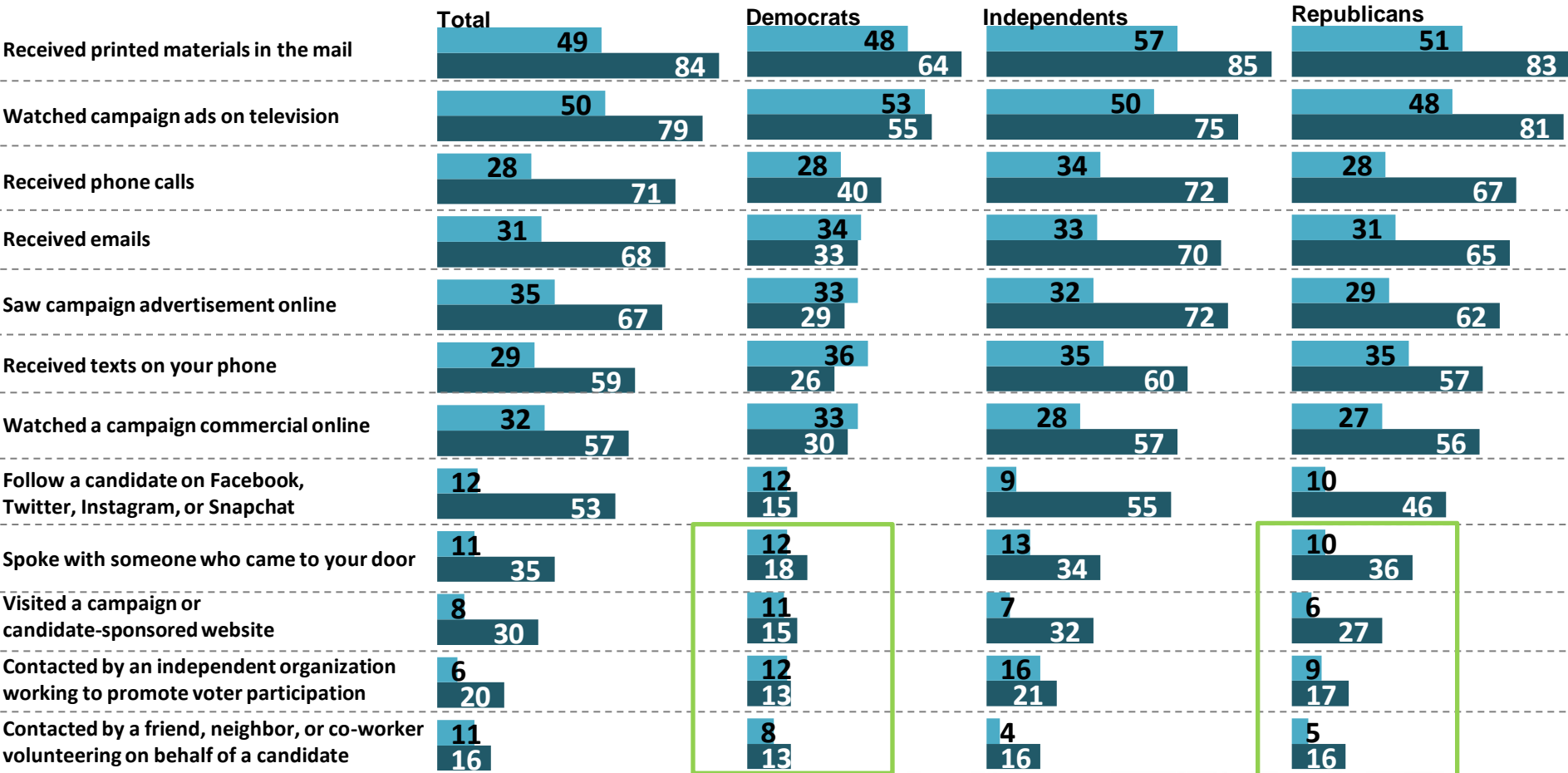


# Democrats seem to have the edge on grass root contact

*These are some ways that candidates, campaigns, and other organizations try to reach people before elections. Please select all of the ways that you were contacted or received information before the election.*

## 2018 vs. 2022 GOTV CONTACT METHODS

■ 2022 Voters ■ 2020 Voters



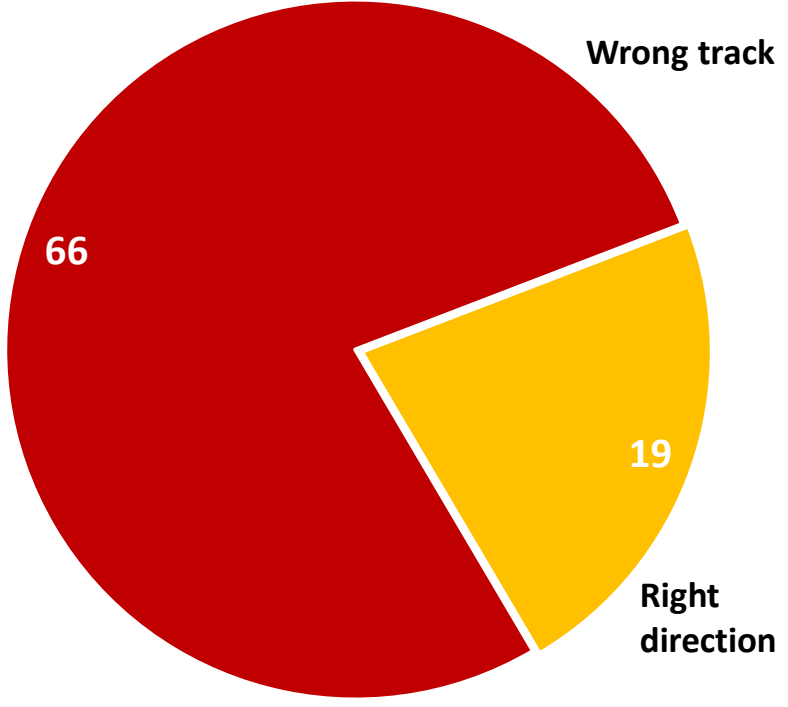
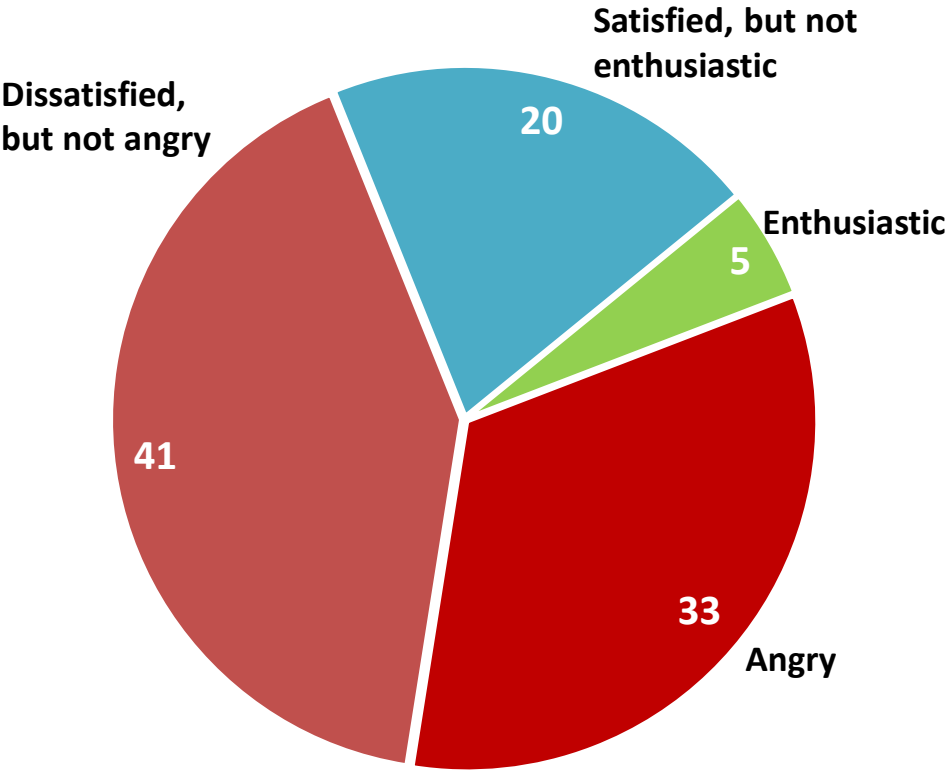
# The discontented country



# Don't lose track: this is an angry and dissatisfied country

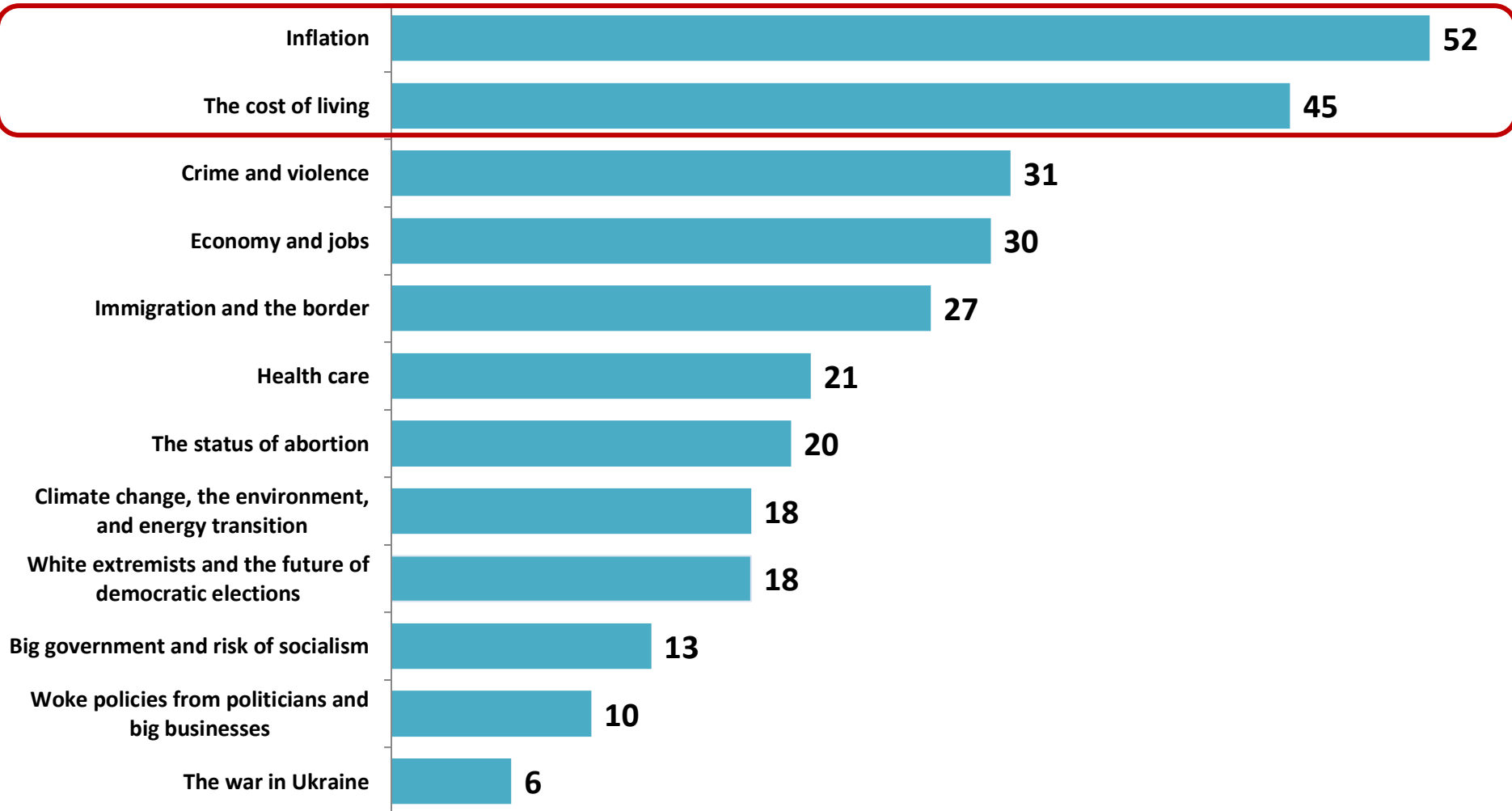
How do you feel about the way things are going in the country today?

Generally speaking, would you say things in this country are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?



# Most pressing: inflation & cost of living, along with crime, economy, & border

Please select the *THREE* issues you think are most pressing for the United States.



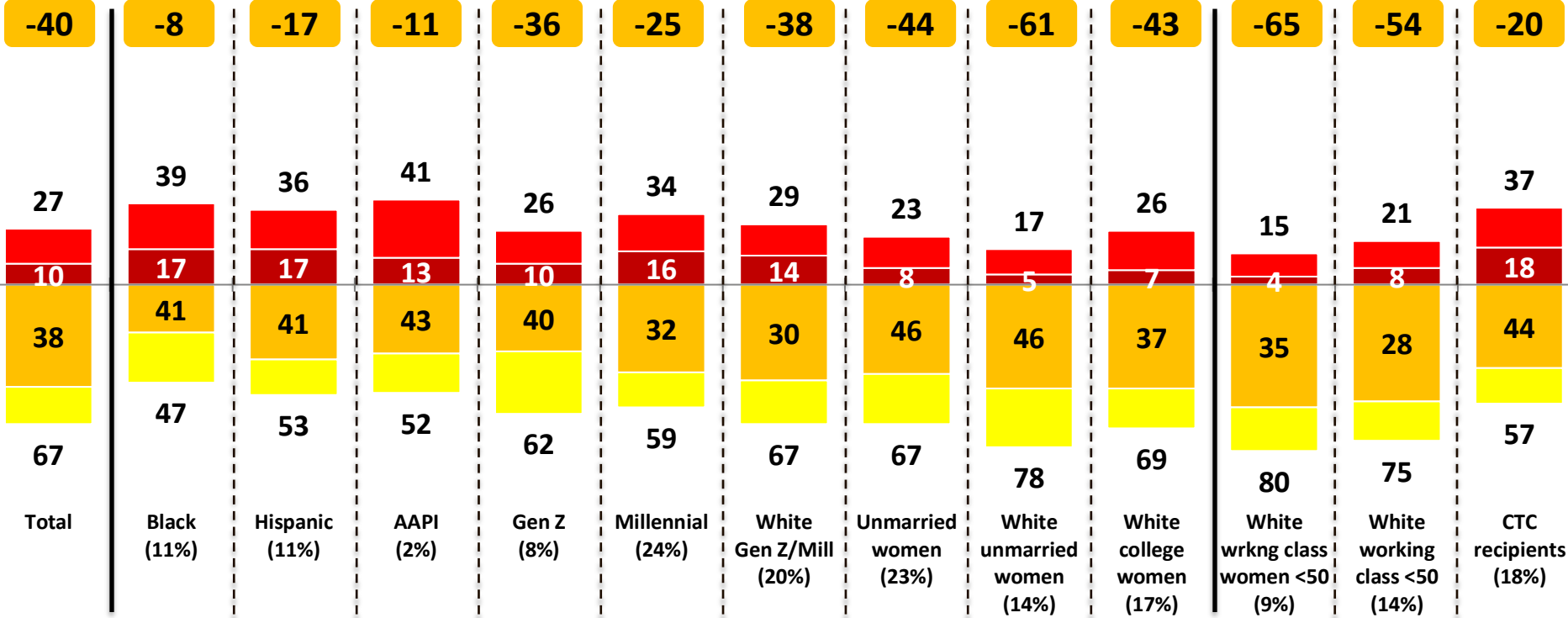


# Two-thirds viewed “the state of the economy” negatively – including our diverse, working class base, Gen Z, millennials, unmarried women, & under 50 white wc

Please rate your feelings toward some people, organizations, and ideas, with 100 meaning a very warm FAVORABLE feeling; 0 meaning a very cold, UNFAVORABLE feeling; and 50 meaning not particularly warm or cold.

**The state of the U.S. economy**

■ Very Warm (76-100) ■ Somewhat Warm (51-74) ■ Very Cool (0-24) ■ Somewhat Cool (26-59)



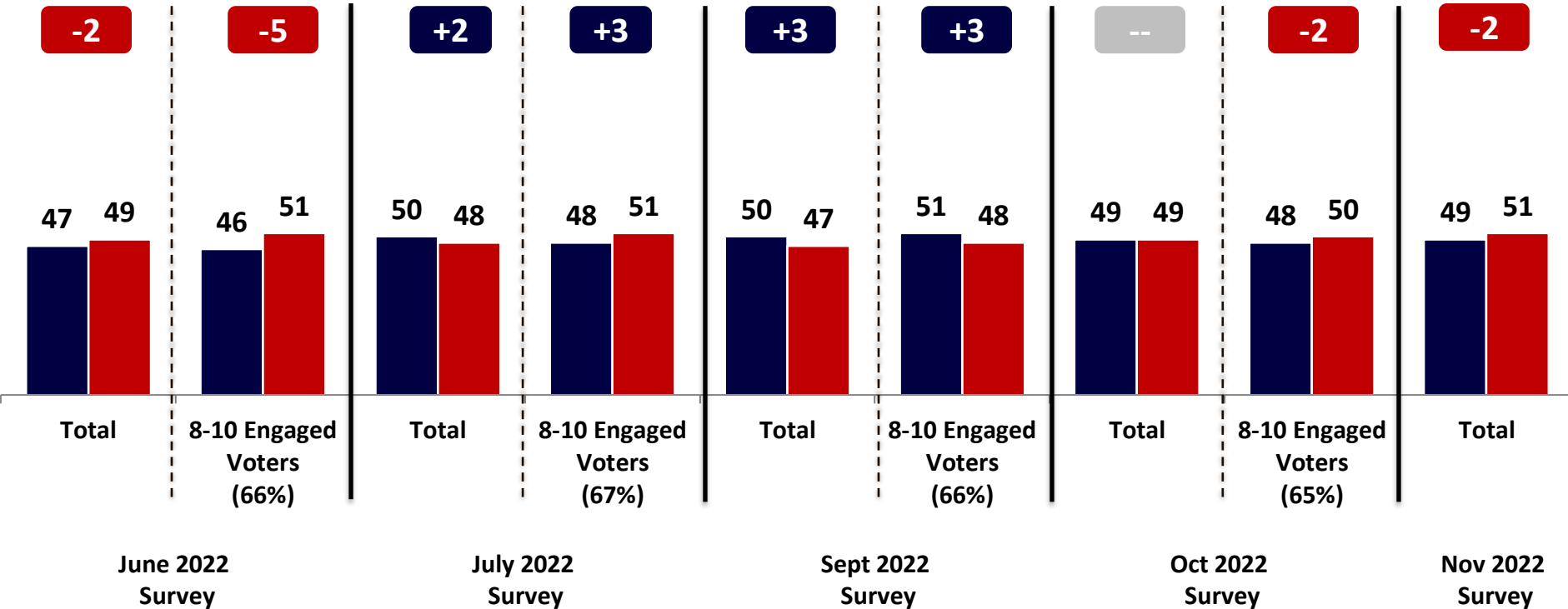
# The surprise, close 2022 contest



# Democrats dug out of the hole in the Spring, moved to 3-point lead at end of Congress, and ended just short of parity

Thinking about the election for Congress in your district in November 2022, will you vote for -- the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate?

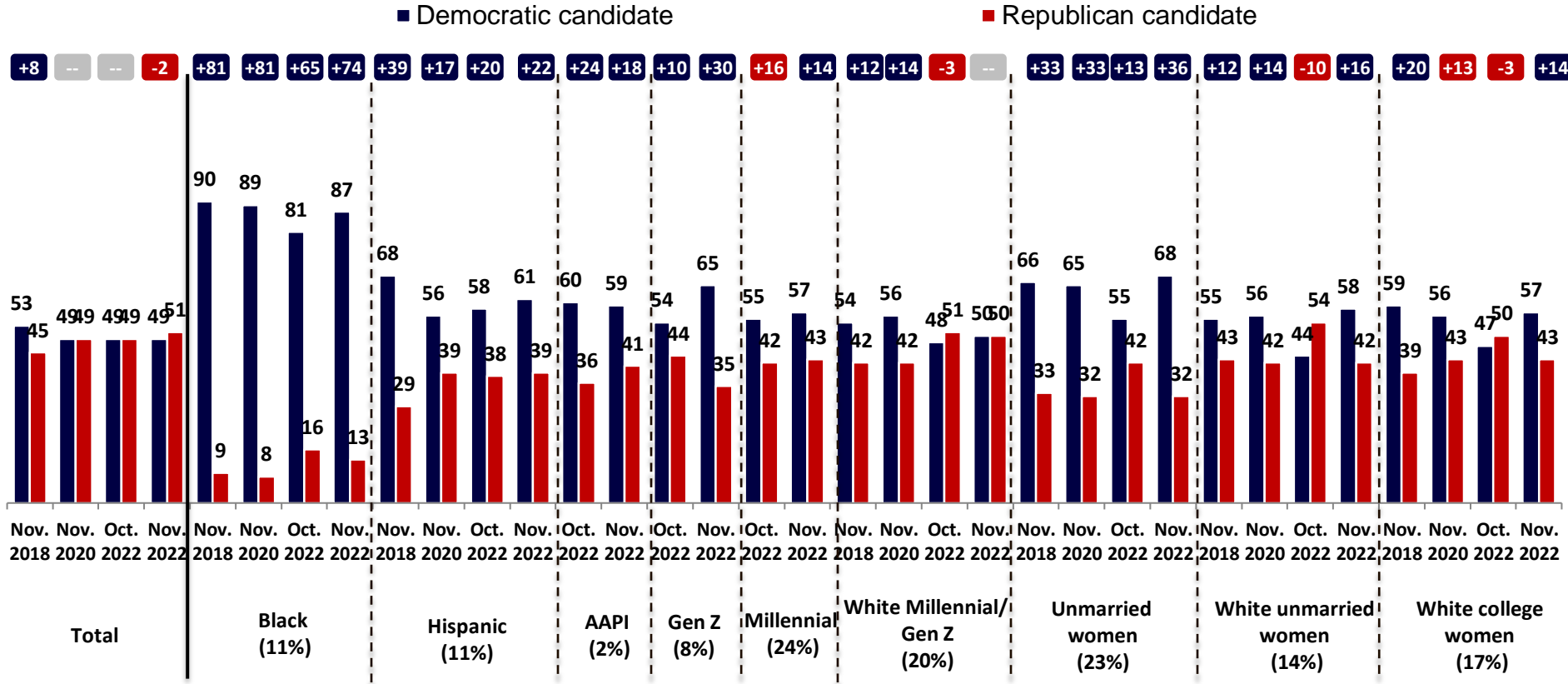
**2020 vs. 2022 CONGRESSIONAL VOTE**  
■ Democratic candidate ■ Republican candidate



# GOP narrowly won House vote by 2 points. Democrats aided by ok result for Blacks & Hispanics, and strong vote gains with Gen Z, unmarried & white college women

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## 2018 vs. 2020 vs. 2022 CONGRESSIONAL VOTE



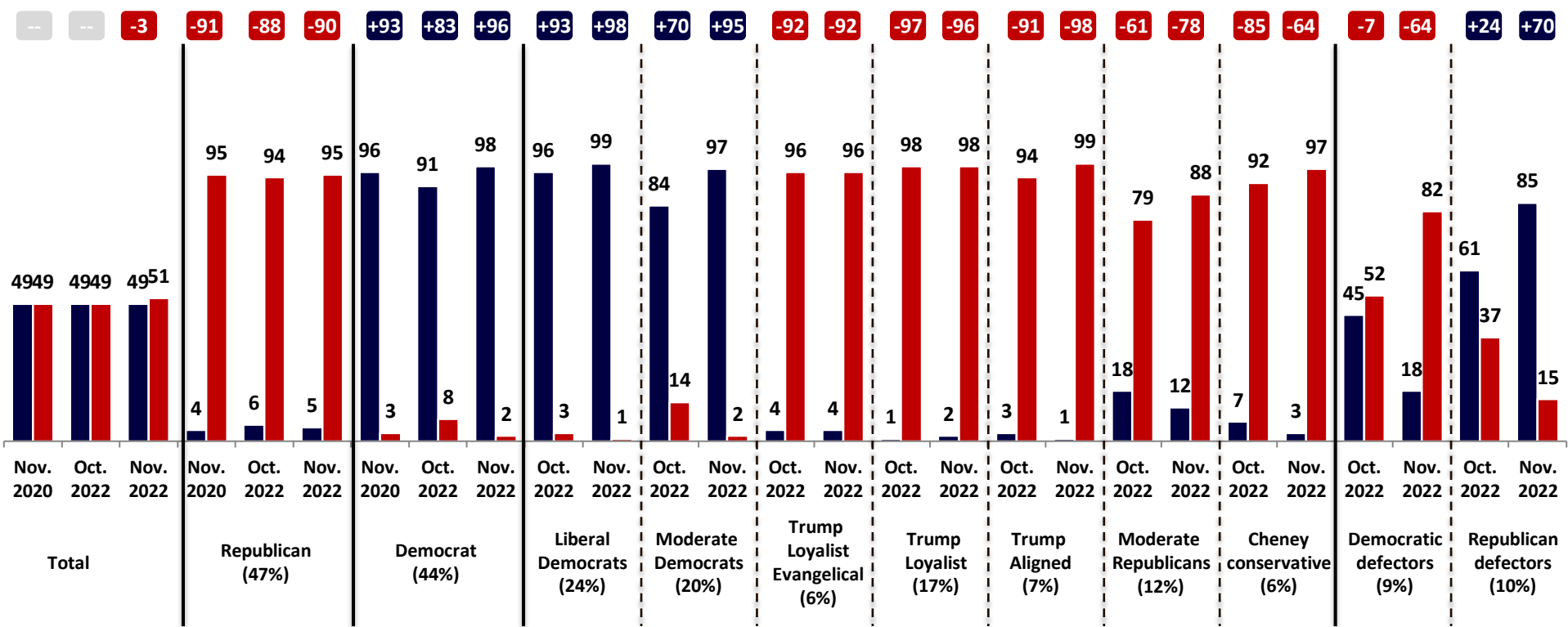
# A polarized partisan fight at end consolidated both parties and both party defectors; moderates Dems came home, and some moderate & Cheney Rs voted D

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## 2020 vs. 2022 CONGRESSIONAL VOTE

■ Democratic candidate

■ Republican candidate



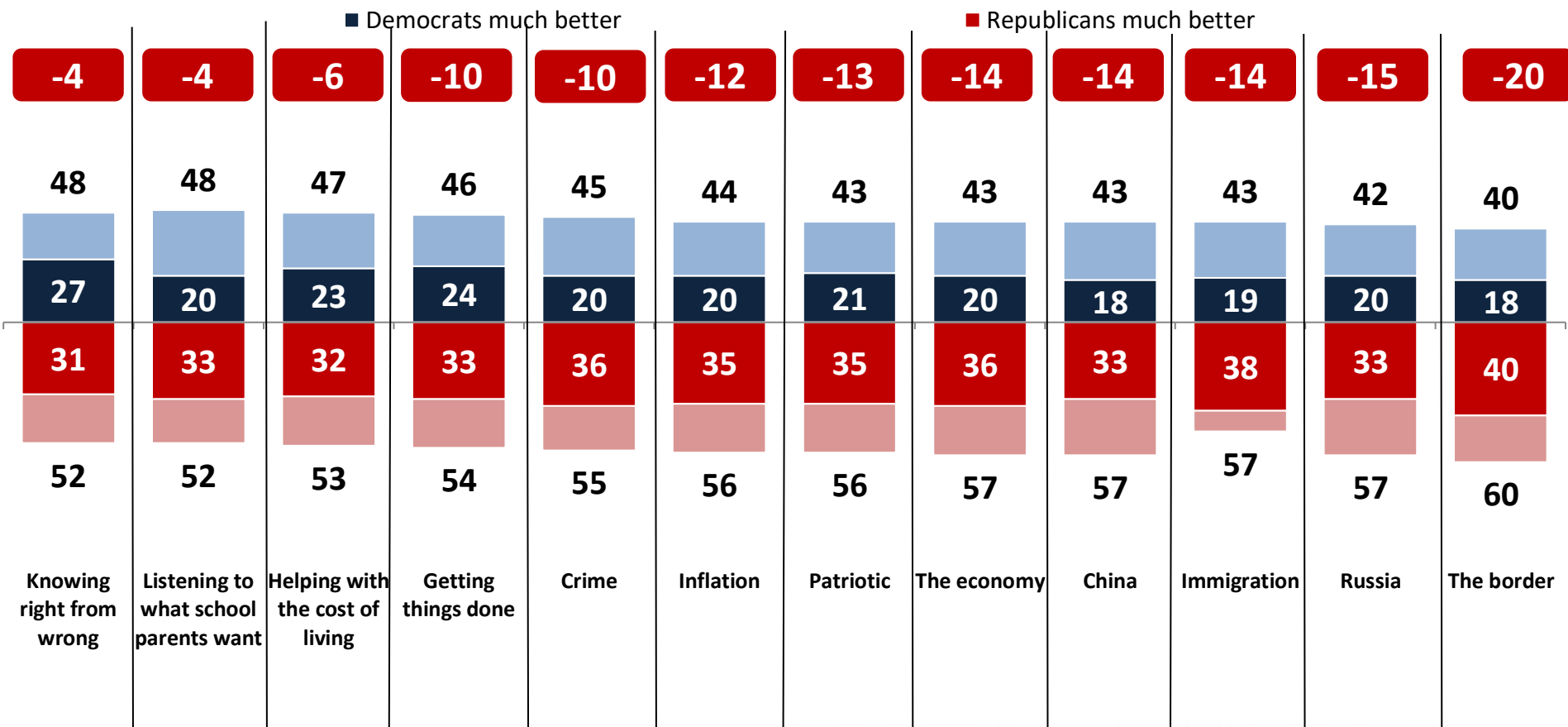
# **The Democrats: what a brand problem**



# Their double-digit deficit starts at -10 points with crime, reaches -12 with inflation and patriotism, -14 with the economy, China & immigration, & -20 with the border

Now I am going to read you some issues. For each issue, please say whether you think Joe Biden or Donald Trump would do a better job with handling that issue.

## PARTY COMPARISON



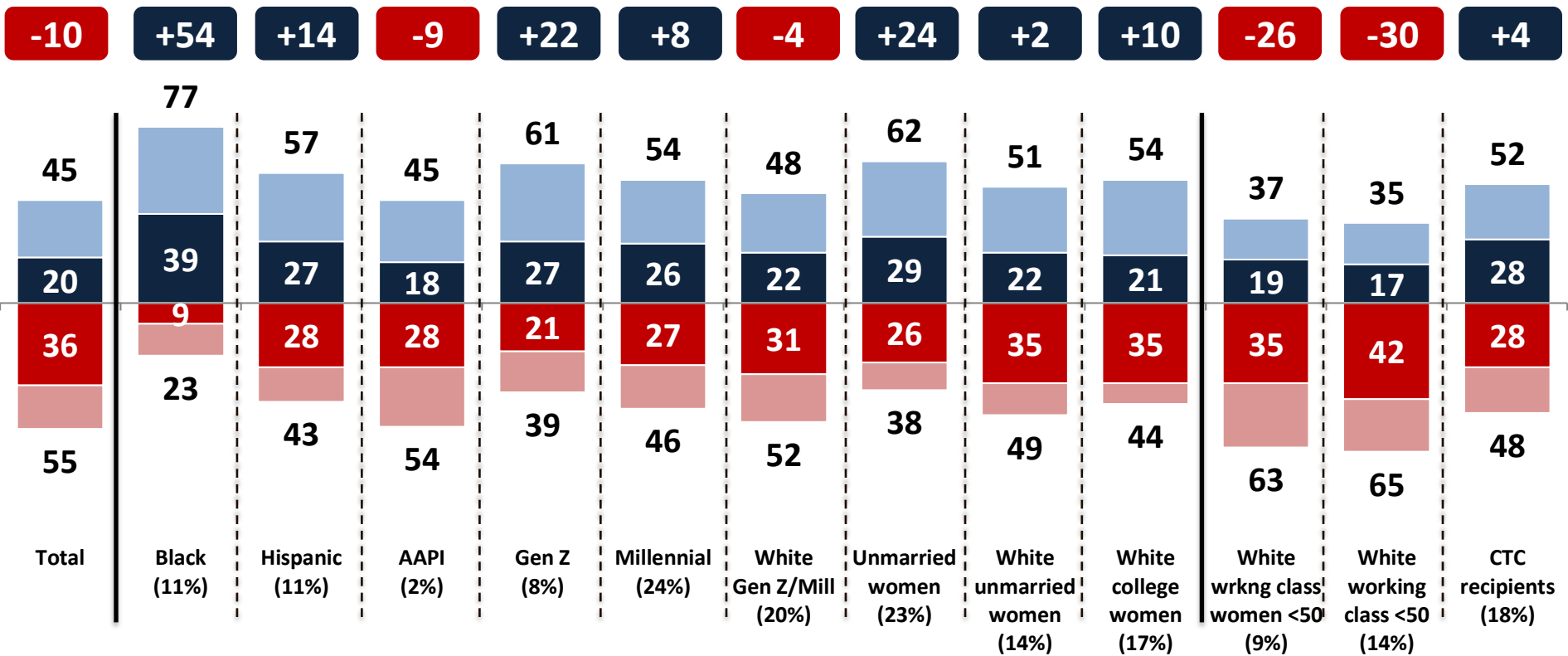
# And GOP advantage on crime took big toll in diverse base, among white millennials, unmarried women and under 50 white working class women

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## Crime

■ Democrats much better

■ Republicans much better



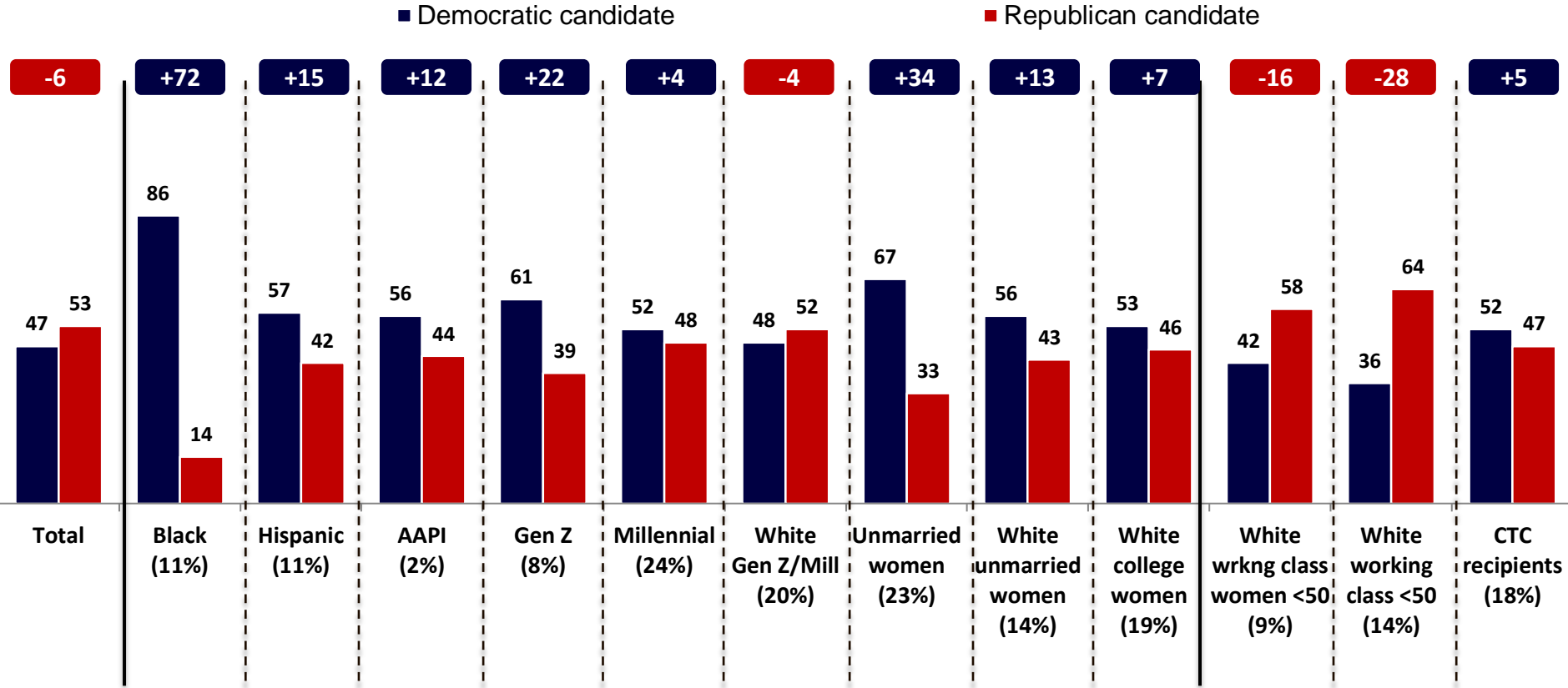


**2024**

# The 22024 presidential begins tougher, with Democrats trailing by 6 points: see emerging problems with Blacks, Hispanic, & under 50 white working class

Now, thinking far ahead to the election for President in November 2024. Will you vote for the Democratic candidate for President or the Republican candidate for President?

## 2024 PRESIDENTIAL VOTE



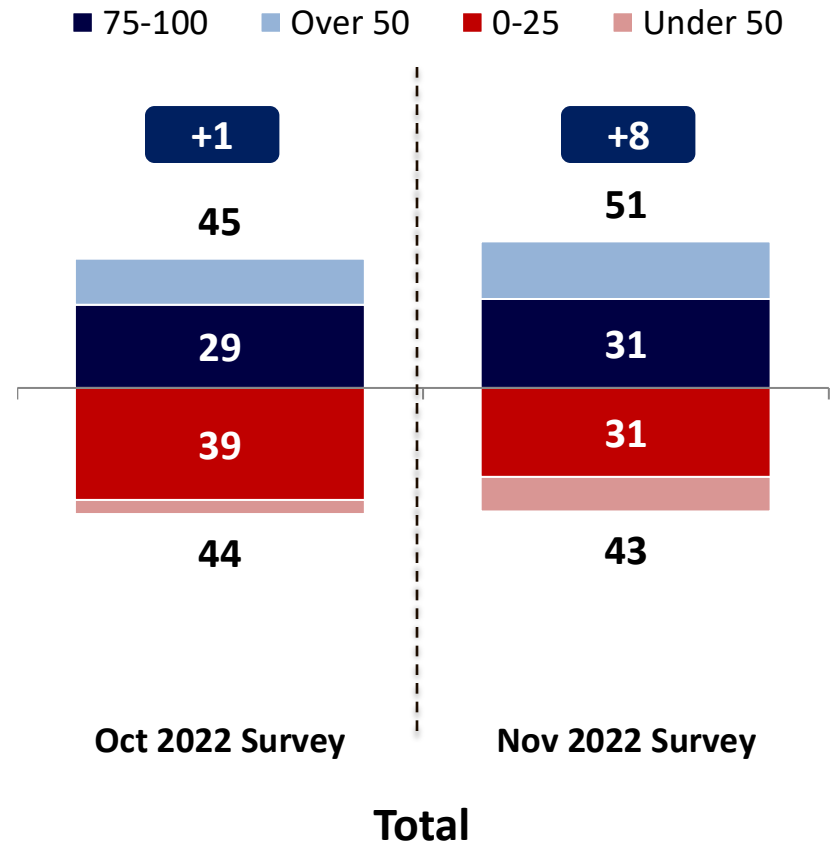
# **What if Democrats engaged on cost of living?**



# Cost of living message even more powerful with those who voted, yet it was not heard by voters

Below is a statement by the Democrats about what's happening with working people. Based on this statement, please rate your feelings toward the DEMOCRATS with 100 meaning a very warm FAVORABLE feeling; 0 meaning a very cold, UNFAVORABLE feeling; and 50 meaning not particularly warm or cold. You can use any number from 0 to 100.

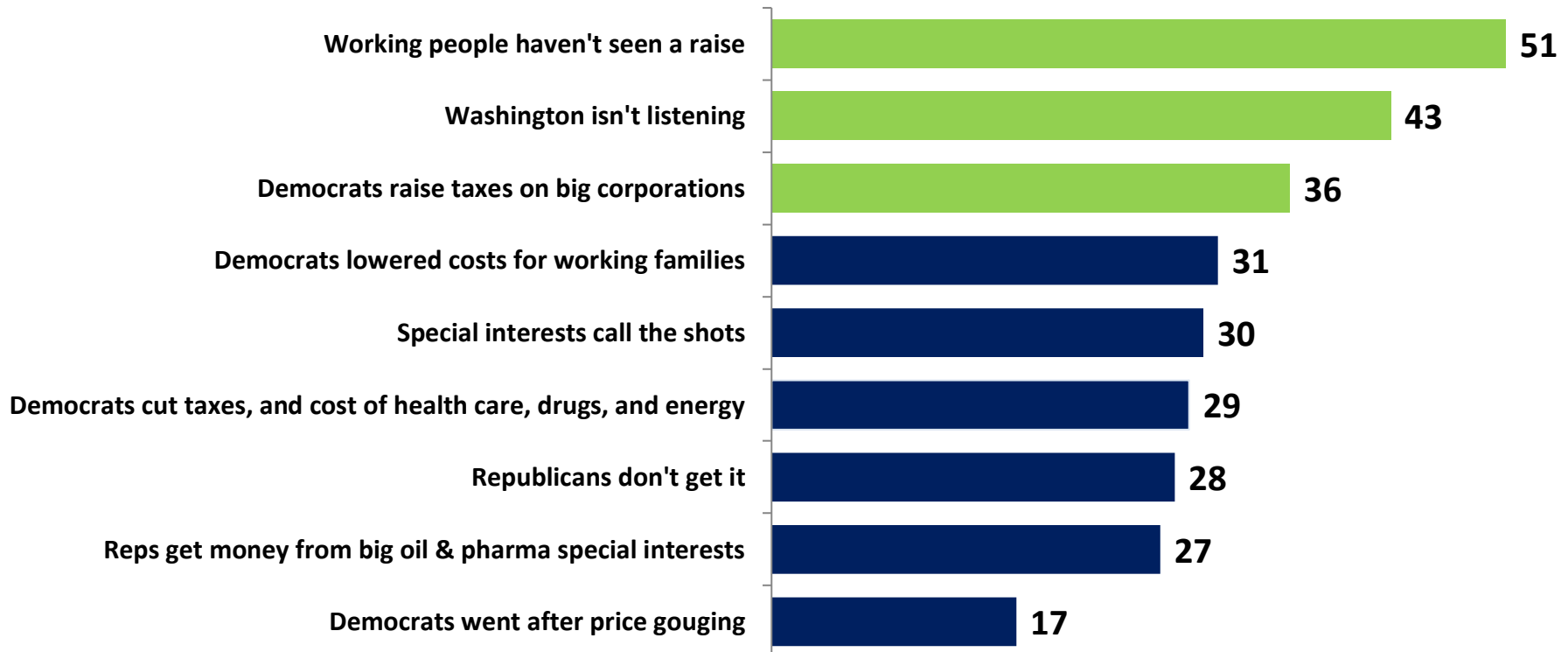
**(COST OF LIVING) Working people haven't seen a real pay increase in years. And Washington doesn't get it. The special interests call the shots. But finally, Democrats raised taxes on the big corporations and lowered costs for working families by cutting their taxes, reducing health care, prescription drug, and energy costs, and went after price gouging. Republicans get their money from big oil and big pharmaceutical special interests. Republicans don't get it.**



# Working people not seeing a raise most powerful, showing understand they really only see pay cuts over two decades

What *THREE* things stood out in that statement you just read?

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# Taking on the crime problem



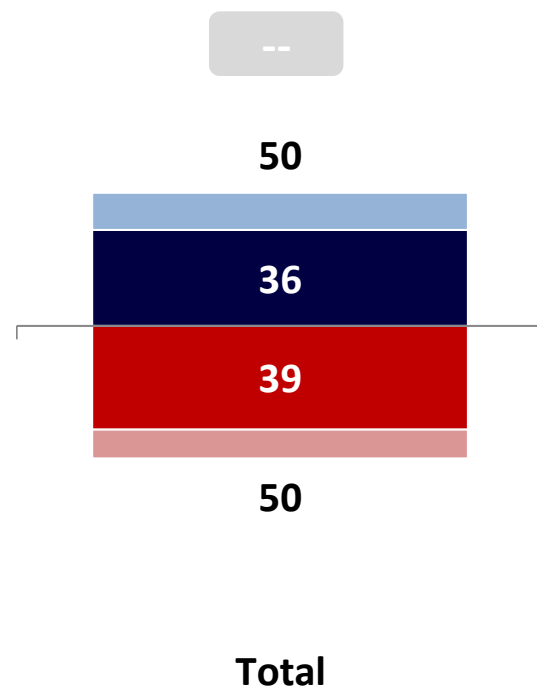
# Democrats' proposed crime message equal to GOP anti-city message, despite trailing by 10 points on who is better on crime

Now you will see some things that leaders of the Democrats and Republicans are saying about the country. Which one do you find yourself agreeing with more?

**(POLICE/CRIME)** Democrats say the rise in crime is unacceptable and people need to live in safe communities. That starts with having more police who are respected. It is a tough job, and we should fund, not defund the police. Our plan adds 100,000 more police. At the same time, it includes urgent reforms, including better training and accountability to prevent excessive use of force and racial profiling that singles out Blacks or Latinos. Those very communities want us to get behind law enforcement and fighting violent crime as a top priority with all the resources at our disposal.

**(CRIME/DEFUND)** Republicans say Joe Biden and Democrats' soft-on-crime policies have destroyed American cities, emboldened criminals, and put Americans in harm's way. Democrats' attacks on the 2nd Amendment will not combat the crime wave they created. Violent crime has spiked across the country, with fourteen major Democrat-run cities setting all-time high homicide records. Biden has not stood with law enforcement, but rather surrounded himself with radical defund the police supporters.

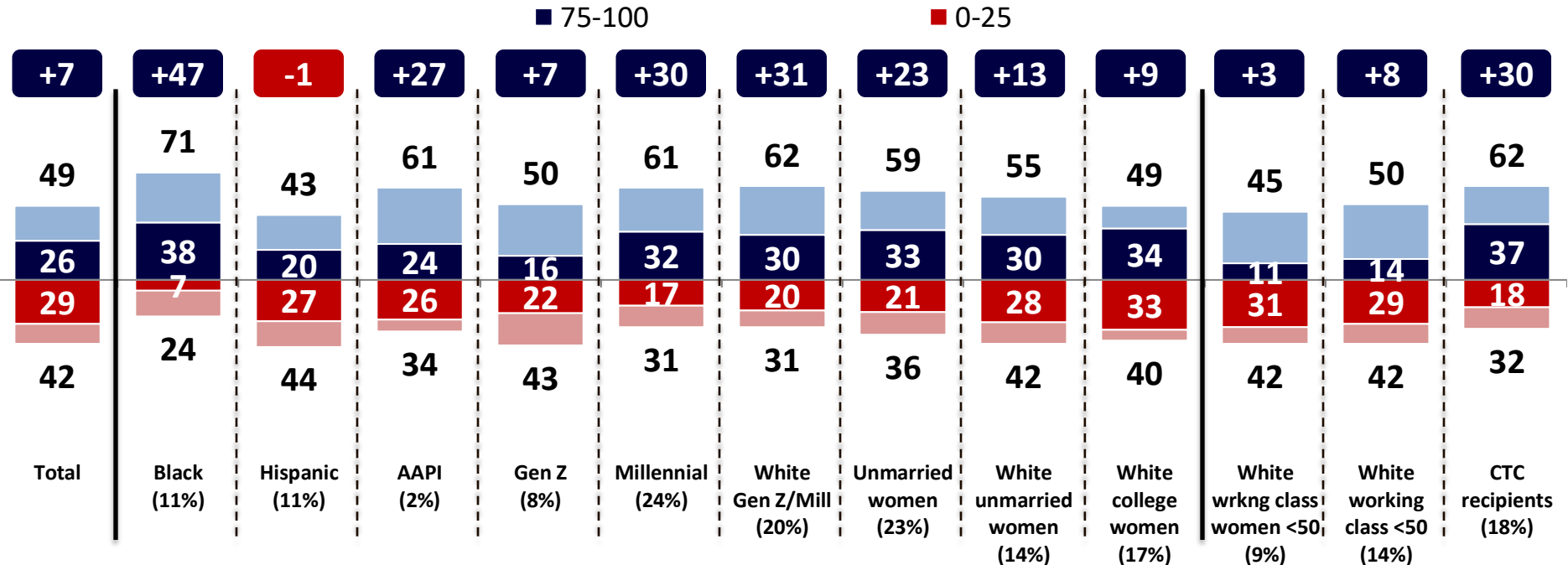
- Republican statement, not strongly
- Republican statement, strongly
- Total Democratic statement
- Democratic statement, not strongly



# Taking on your own party gets a +7 response among voters that gave GOP 2-point edge

Below is a statement by the DEMOCRATS on crime. Based on this statement, please rate your feelings toward the Democrats with 100 meaning a very warm FAVORABLE feeling; 0 meaning a very cold, UNFAVORABLE feeling; and 50 meaning not particularly warm or cold. You can use any number from 0 to 100. The higher the number the more favorable your feelings are toward the DEMOCRATS.

Too many in my party thought it was not okay to talk about the growing violent crime problem in our community. They focused only on the police. From day one, we needed to rush more police, not defund in any way. Get criminals into jail. They weren't listening to you. There are less than 5 members in the House who are for defunding. Five. They are extreme and don't speak for the Democratic Party. The Democrats in the Congress are mainstream, and they voted to fund the Capitol police, ICE, and to increase the number of first responders in your communities.



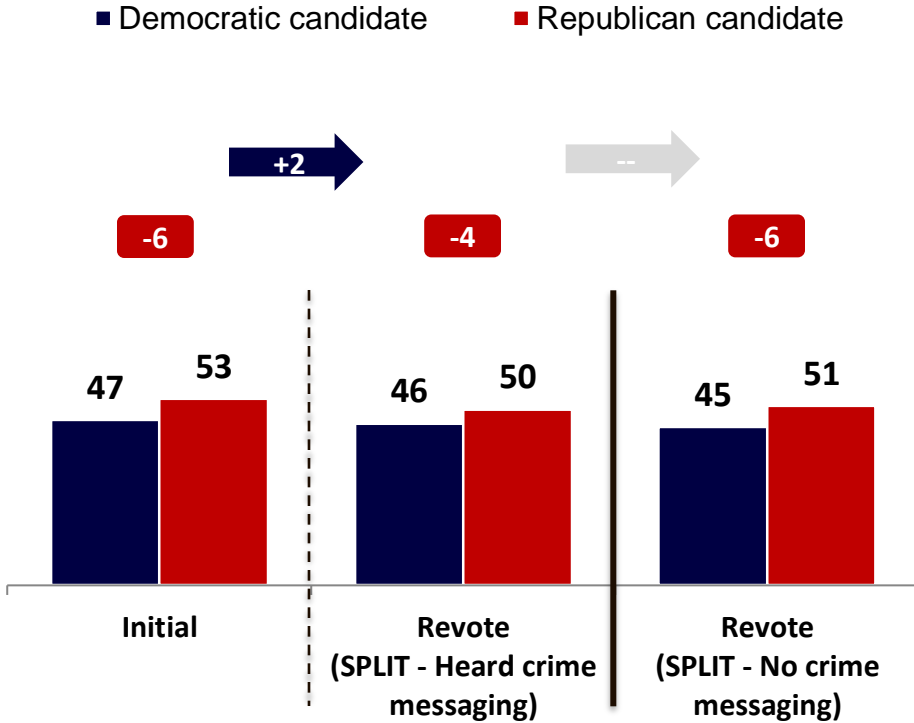


# The vote shifted 2 points to the Democrats among those who heard the crime message

(SPLIT E – 1/2 sample) Thinking about the election for Congress in your district in November 2022, will you vote for -- the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate?

## 2022 PRESIDENTIAL VOTE

**(CRIME MESSAGE)** Democrats say the rise in crime is unacceptable and people need to live in safe communities. That starts with having more police who are respected. It is a tough job, and we should fund, not defund the police. Our plan adds 100,000 more police. At the same time, it includes urgent reforms, including better training and accountability to prevent excessive use of force and racial profiling that singles out Blacks or Latinos. Those very communities want us to get behind law enforcement and fighting violent crime as a top priority with all the resources at our disposal.



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