



Protests, Racism, and Policing by Party Identification

August 2020

Interviews:

7/24 – 08/06/2020

Total N: 3,115 adults

Age Range: 18-36

Survey Overview

The GenForward Survey, founded by Dr. Cathy Cohen at the University of Chicago, is the first of its kind—a nationally representative survey of over 3,100 young adults ages 18-36 conducted bimonthly that pays special attention to the ways race and ethnicity influence how young adults, both Millennials and Gen-Zers, experience and think about the world.

Given the importance of race and ethnicity in shaping the diverse perspectives and lived experiences of young people, we believe researchers make a mistake when they present data on young adults in a manner that assumes a monolithic Millennial generation and young adult vote.

In this slide deck, we present an empirical overview of young adults' views on the recent protests over racism and policing in the United States. A total of 3,115 interviews were conducted between July 24th and August 6th, 2020 with adults ages 18-36, including completed interviews with 807 African American young adults, 448 Asian American young adults, 789 Latinx young adults, 1018 White young adults, and 53 young adults with other racial and ethnic backgrounds.



Key Findings: Economy and Most Important Issues

- Pluralities of Democrat (29%), Independent (20%), and Republican (21%) young adults said the coronavirus pandemic is the most important problem facing the country.
 - Racism was the second most chosen answer among Democrats (16%) and Independents, and third most selected response among Republicans (8% - tied with economic growth).
 - Health care was the second most chosen answer among Republicans (9%), and third most selected response among Democrats (10%) and Independents (9%).
- Thinking about the state of the country, 81% of Democrats, 63% of Independents, and 57% of Republicans say the country is off on the wrong track.
- A majority of Democrats (50%) and near majority of Republicans (48%) say the United States is headed to or already in a **recession**.
 - A near majority of Independents (49%) say the country is headed to or already in a **depression**.
 - While 8% of Democrats say the United States is in neither a recession or depression, 21% of both Republicans and Independents say the same.
- When asked about optimism for their personal economic future, 65% of Republicans, 35% of Independents, and 48% of Democrats say they are somewhat or very optimistic.



Key Findings: Politics and the 2020 Election

- A majority of Democrat (61%) and Republican (52%) young adults say they have a great deal or quite a bit of interest in following news about the 2020 presidential election, compared to 32% of Independent young adults who say the same.
 - While 4% of Democrats and 6% of Republicans say they have no interest at all, 27% of Independents say they have no interest at all in following news about the 2020 presidential election.
- Majorities of Democrat (66%) and Republican (56%) young adults, compared to 28% of Independents, say they definitely will vote in the presidential election being held in November 2020.
- A large majority of Republican (75%) young adults say they think Donald Trump will win re-election in 2020, compared to 40% of Independents and 22% of Democrats.
- In terms of partisan presidential support, 79% of Democrat young adults say they will vote for Joe Biden, while 16% of Republicans and 23% of Independents say the same.
- In terms of support for Donald Trump, 65% of Republican, 4% of Democrat and 11% of Independent young adults say they will vote for Donald Trump in the upcoming election.
 - Among Independents, a plurality (34%) say they will not vote, and 30% say they will vote for someone else.



Key Findings: Politics and the 2020 Election

- Net favorability of the presidential nominees among young adults, unsurprisingly shows warm support within-party for the major party candidates:
 - Net favorability = Joe Biden very or somewhat favorable – Donald Trump very or somewhat favorable: +56 among Democrats; +6 among Independents, -42 among Republicans.
- When asked about who young adults trust more to handle some current crises facing the United States, we find partisan gaps of confidence in the major party candidates:
 - A majority of Democrats (78%) say they trust Joe Biden to handle **the coronavirus pandemic**, compared to 59% Republicans saying Donald Trump. A majority of Independents (58%) say they don't know.
 - A majority of Democrats (82%) say they trust Joe Biden to handle **protests over racism**, compared to 56% of Republicans naming Donald Trump. A majority of Independents (54%) say they don't know.
 - A majority of Democrats (69%) say they trust Joe Biden to handle **the recovery of the economy**, compared to 73% of Republicans saying Donald Trump. A majority of Independents (55%) say they don't know.
 - A majority of Democrats (73%) say they trust Joe Biden to handle **providing law and order throughout the country**, compared to 67% of Republicans naming Donald Trump. A majority of Independents (56%) say they don't know.



Key Findings: Racial Progress and Protests

- Young adults differ on the best way to make racial progress in the United States.
 - Pluralities of Democrats (18%) suggest voting in state and local elections is the best strategy, followed by non-violent protests and demonstrations (17%), and revolution (17%).
 - The answer most often chosen among Independents (17%) and Republicans (16%) was racial progress is not needed, compared to 3% of Democrats who said the same.
 - The second most chosen response among Independents (16%) and Republicans (15%) was non-violent protests and demonstrations (tied with community service and volunteering among Republicans).
- Twice as many Democrat (22%) young adults say they have been involved in the recent and ongoing protests and demonstrations in cities across the country, compared to 11% of Republican and Independent young adults.
- A majority of Democrat (56%) young adults say most of the protesters are peaceful, while a plurality of Independent (34%) and Republican (48%) young adults say many of the protesters are peaceful, but significant numbers want to incite violence or destroy property.
- Majorities of young adults across party identification say the recent protests are strongly or somewhat justified (84% Democrat, 60% Independent, 52% Republican).



Key Findings: Racial Progress and Protests

- A majority of Democrats (68%) and pluralities of Independents (43%) and Republicans (45%) say the movement sparked by the killing of George Floyd will have a long-term impact.
- Majorities of Democrats (79%) and Independents (64%) say **racism remains a major problem** in our society, while a near majority of Republicans (49%) say racism exists today but it **is not a major problem**.
- A majority of Democrats (77%) and a plurality of Independents (46%) say recent killings of Black Americans by police are part of a larger pattern, while a majority of Republicans (56%) say the killings of Black Americans by police are isolated incidents.
- A majority of Democrats (81%) and Independent (55%) young adults say the killing of Black people by the police is extremely or very serious problem, compared to only 17% of Republicans who think it is an extremely serious problem.
- Large majorities of Democrats (90%) and Independents (69%) say they strongly or somewhat support the Black Lives Matter movement, compared to 47% of Republicans.
 - A plurality of Republicans (33%) say they strongly oppose the Black Lives Matter movement.



Key Findings: Racial Progress and Protests

- A majority of Democrats (66%) say the United States should provide reparations to African Americans. In contrast, a majority of Republicans (70%) say the United States should not provide reparations.
 - Independents are split between providing reparations (49%) and not providing reparations (47%).
- Majorities of Democrats (81%) and Independents (62%) say the Confederate flag is more a symbol of racism, compared to a majority of Republicans (61%) who say the Confederate flag is more a symbol of southern pride.
- Majorities of Democrats (80%) and Independents (54%) say they strongly or somewhat support removing Confederate statues and symbols from public places, while a majority of Republicans (58%) strongly or somewhat oppose removal.
- Majorities of Republican (64%) and Independent (52%) young adults say the Pentagon should leave the names of military bases named after Confederate leaders as is, while a majority of Democrats (76%) say the Pentagon should rename military bases that are named after Confederate leaders.



Key Findings: Policing and Safety

- Majorities of young adults across partisan identification say police are necessary for safe communities (76% Democrat, 68% Independent, and 93% Republican).
- A plurality of Independent (46%) young adults, and majorities of Republican (60%) and Democrat (54%) young adults say their community has the right number of police officers.
- When asked about funding for their **“local police department”**, pluralities of Republicans (46%) and Independents (48%) say funding should be kept the same. A plurality of Democrats (46%) say funding for their “local police department” should be decreased.
- However, when asked about funding for **“the police”**, a majority of Democrat (58%) young adults say funding should be decreased. Pluralities of Independent (46%) and Republican (42%) young adults say funding for “the police” should be kept the same.
- Large majorities of young adults across party identification support creating a new agency of first responders that specialize in de-escalation of violence, providing mental health support, and other social services that would take over these responsibilities from the police (88% Democrat, 67% Independent, and 67% Republican).



Key Findings: Policing and Safety

- Majorities of Democrat (64%) young adults support the idea of **divesting from the police** and putting the **entire budget** of the police department toward investment in areas such as healthcare, education and housing. In contrast, majorities of Republican (63%) young adults oppose such an idea.
 - Independent young adults are split on the idea of entire budget divestment from the police, with 46% supporting such a strategy and 45% opposing such a move.
- Majorities of Democrat (75%) and Independent (53%) young adults support the idea of **divesting from the police** and putting **part of the budget** of the police department toward investment in areas such as healthcare, education and housing. In contrast, majorities of Republican (61%) young adults oppose such an idea.
- When asked if police departments in the United States should be “**defunded**,” a near majority of Democrat (49%) young adults say **yes, defund**. In comparison, a majority of Republican (76%) and plurality of Independent (43%) young adults say **do not defund**.
- When asked if police departments in the United States should be “**abolished**,” majorities of young adults across partisanship say **no, do not abolish the police** (Democrats 60%, Independents 58% and Republicans 79%).



Key Findings: Policing and Safety

- Majorities of Democrat (62%) support **high schools** cutting ties with the police. In contrast, a majority of Republican (68%) and Independent (54%) young adults oppose such a move.
- Majorities of Democrat (64%) support **universities** cutting ties with the police. In contrast, a majority of Republican (68%) and Independent (61%) young adults oppose such a move.
- When asked about experiences with the police, 53% of Democrats, 50% of Independents, and 33% of Republicans say they themselves or someone they know has experienced harassment or violence at the hands of the police.

Key Findings: Coronavirus

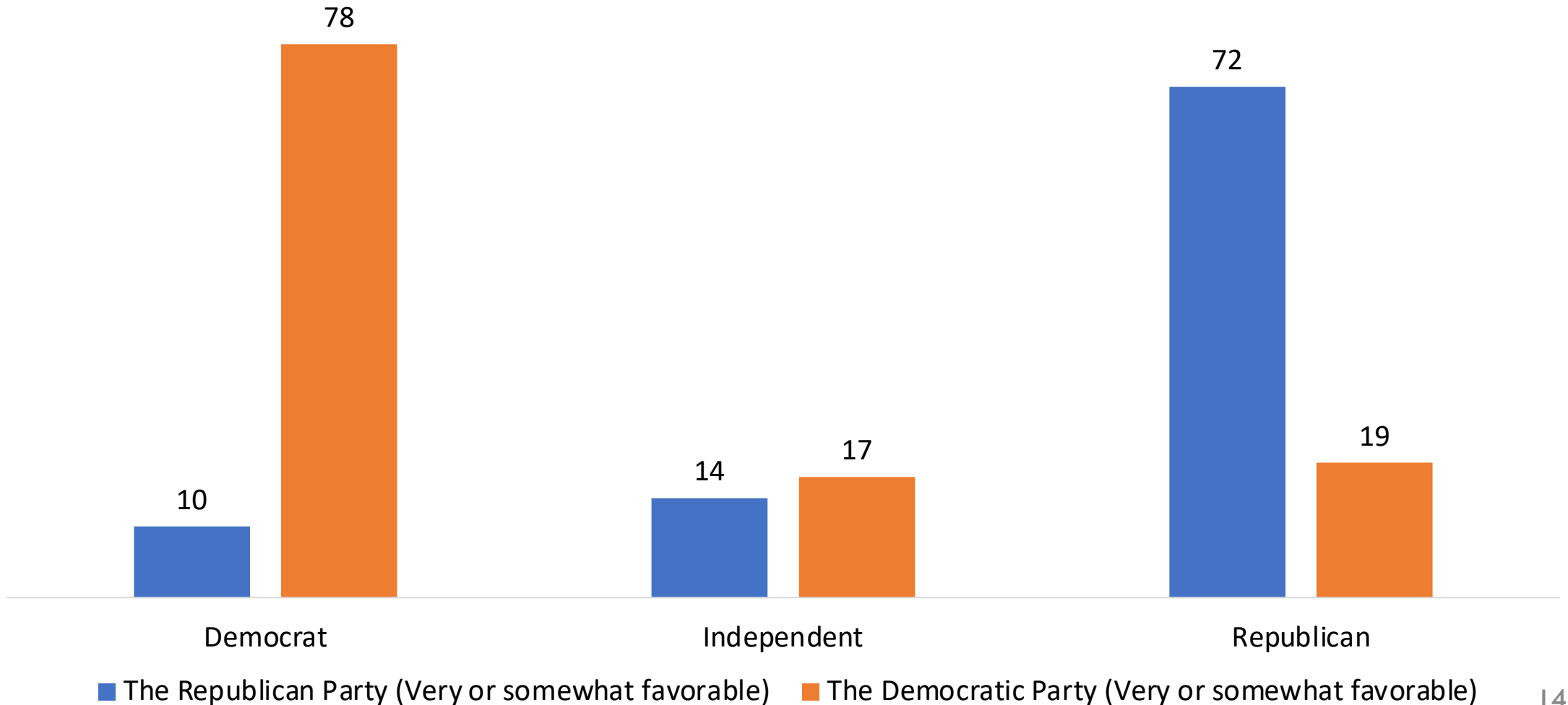
- Majorities across party identification say they are worried or very worried about the spread of the coronavirus (87% Democrat, 68% Independent, 57% Republican).
 - Only a majority of Democrat (54%) young adults say they are *very* worried, compared to 30% of Independent and 21% of Republican young adults.
- Majorities of Democrat (74%) and Independent (56%) young adults and 45% of Republican young adults say they are concerned or very concerned about **personally** getting seriously sick due to the coronavirus.
 - When asked about concern over **their family** getting seriously sick due to the coronavirus, response percentages increased among young adults across party identification (84% Democrat, 67% Independent, 58% Republican).
- Majorities of young adults across party identification strongly or somewhat agree with the statement “the current surge in cases of the coronavirus is the result of opening up those states too soon” (91% Democrat, 74% Independent, and 62% Republican).
 - There are wide gaps based on party identification among those who strongly agree with the statement above (67% Democrat, 39% Independent, 27% Republican).

Key Findings: Coronavirus

- Majorities of Democrats (74%) and Independents (56%) and a plurality of Republicans (41%) say it is a bad idea to have students return to school in person in the fall.
 - While 35% of Republicans say it is a good idea to have students return to school in person in the fall, only 12% of Independents and 9% of Democrats agree.
- A majority of Republican (55%) young adults say President Trump has done an excellent or good job in responding to the coronavirus pandemic in their community, compared to 19% of Independents and 12% of Democrats.
 - There is a wide partisan gap among young adults who believe Donald Trump has done a poor job in responding to the coronavirus pandemic in their community (75% Democrat, 52% Independent, 14% Republican).



For both parties, please select if you have a favorable or unfavorable impression of that party. If you don't know enough about the party to have an opinion, you can say that too.



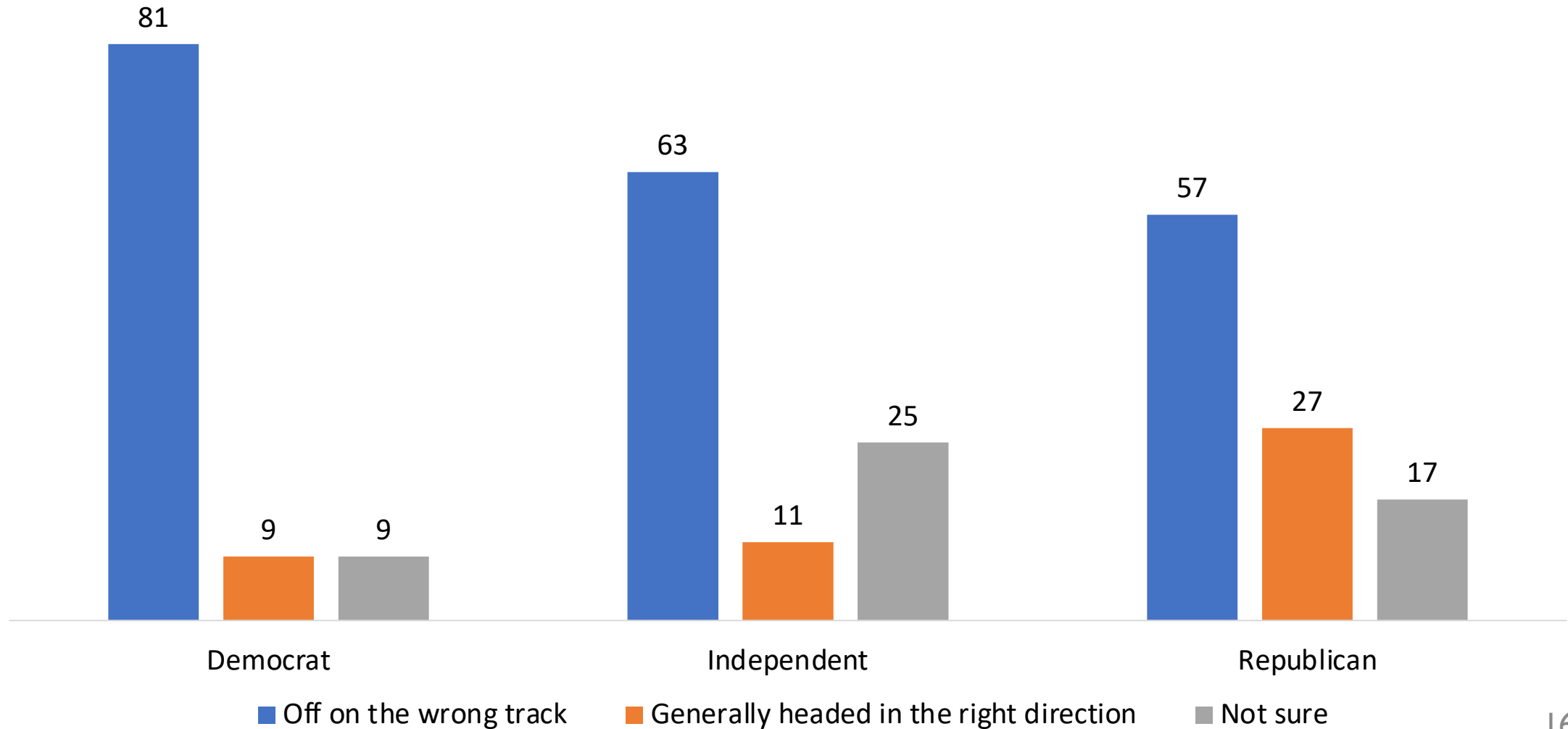


What do you think is the most important problem facing this country today? Please select which one of these is the most important. (*Top 3 Choices*)

	Democrat	Independent	Republican
1 st	The coronavirus pandemic (29%)	The coronavirus pandemic (20%)	The coronavirus pandemic (21%)
2 nd	Racism (16%)	Racism (12%)	Health care (9%)
3 rd	Health care (10%)	Health care (9%)	Racism / Economic growth (8%)

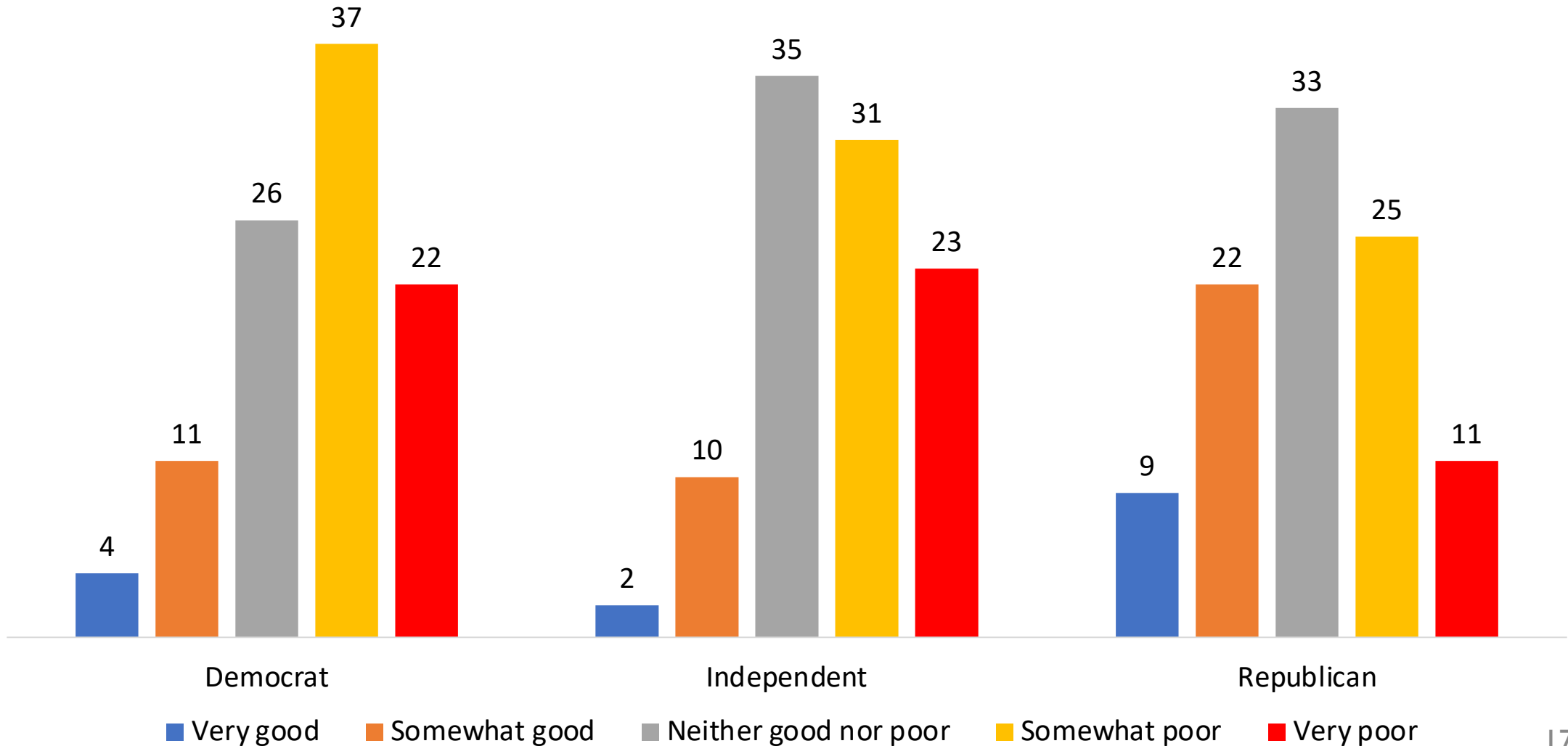


Would you say things in this country today are...?



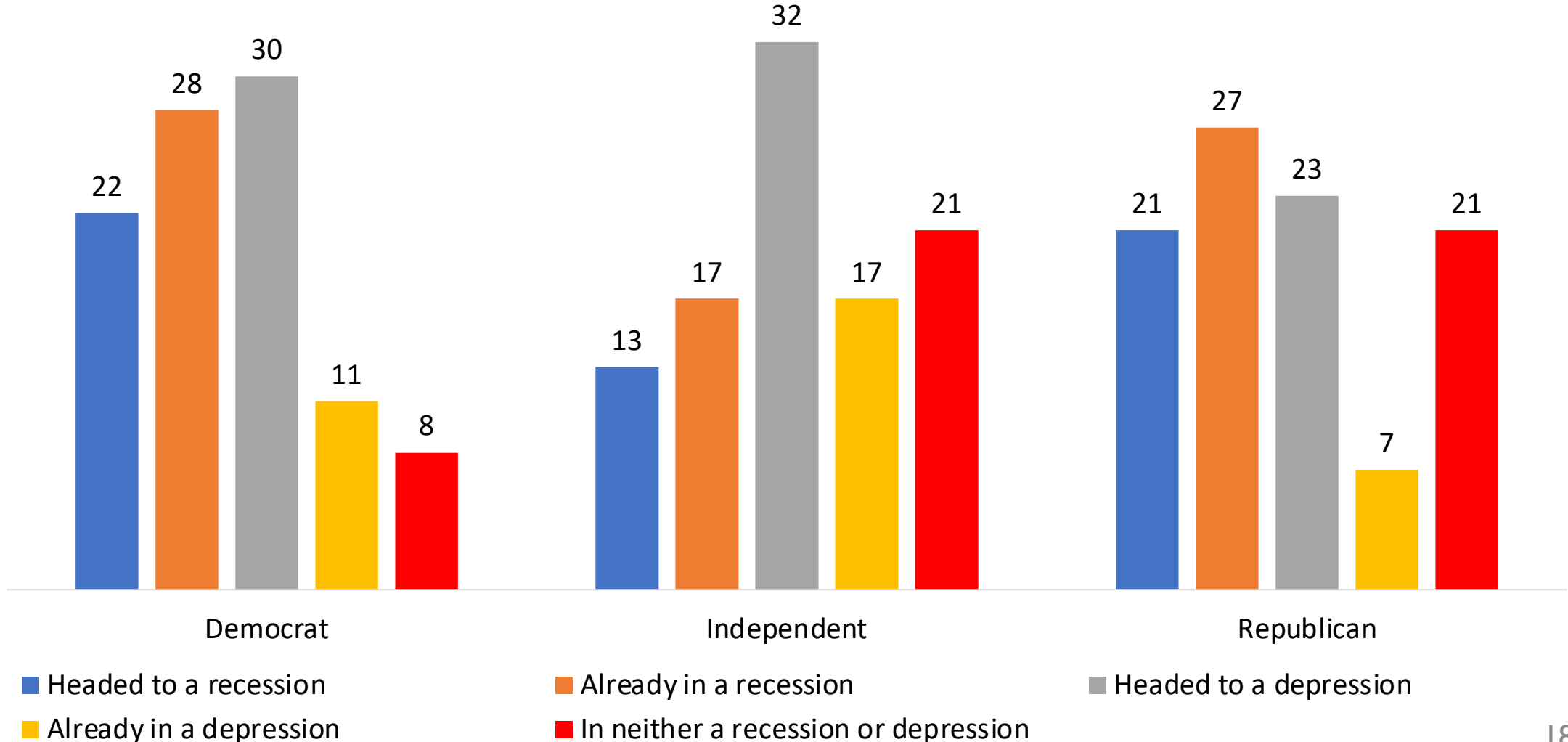


How would you describe the nation's economy these days?



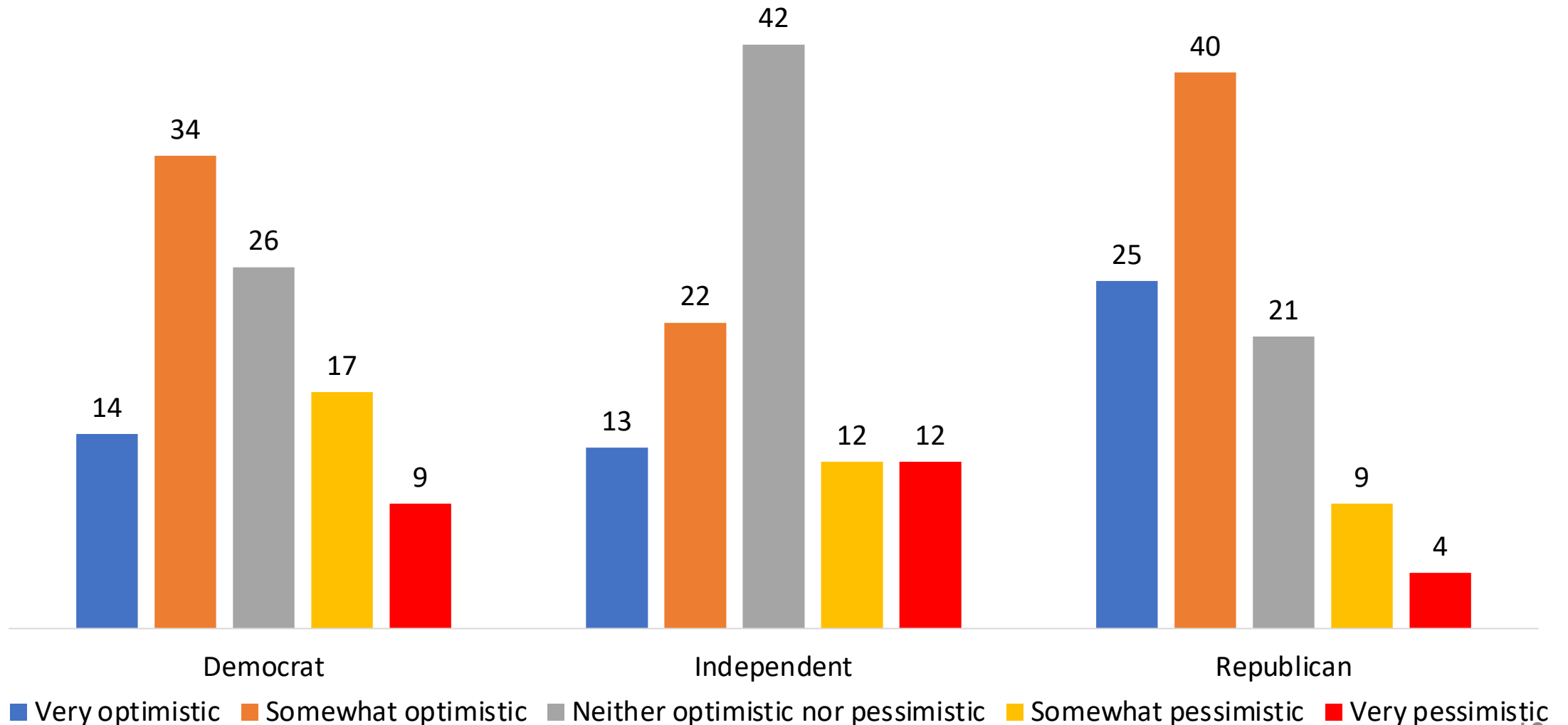


Do you believe the United States is currently in or headed to an economic recession, depression, or not?



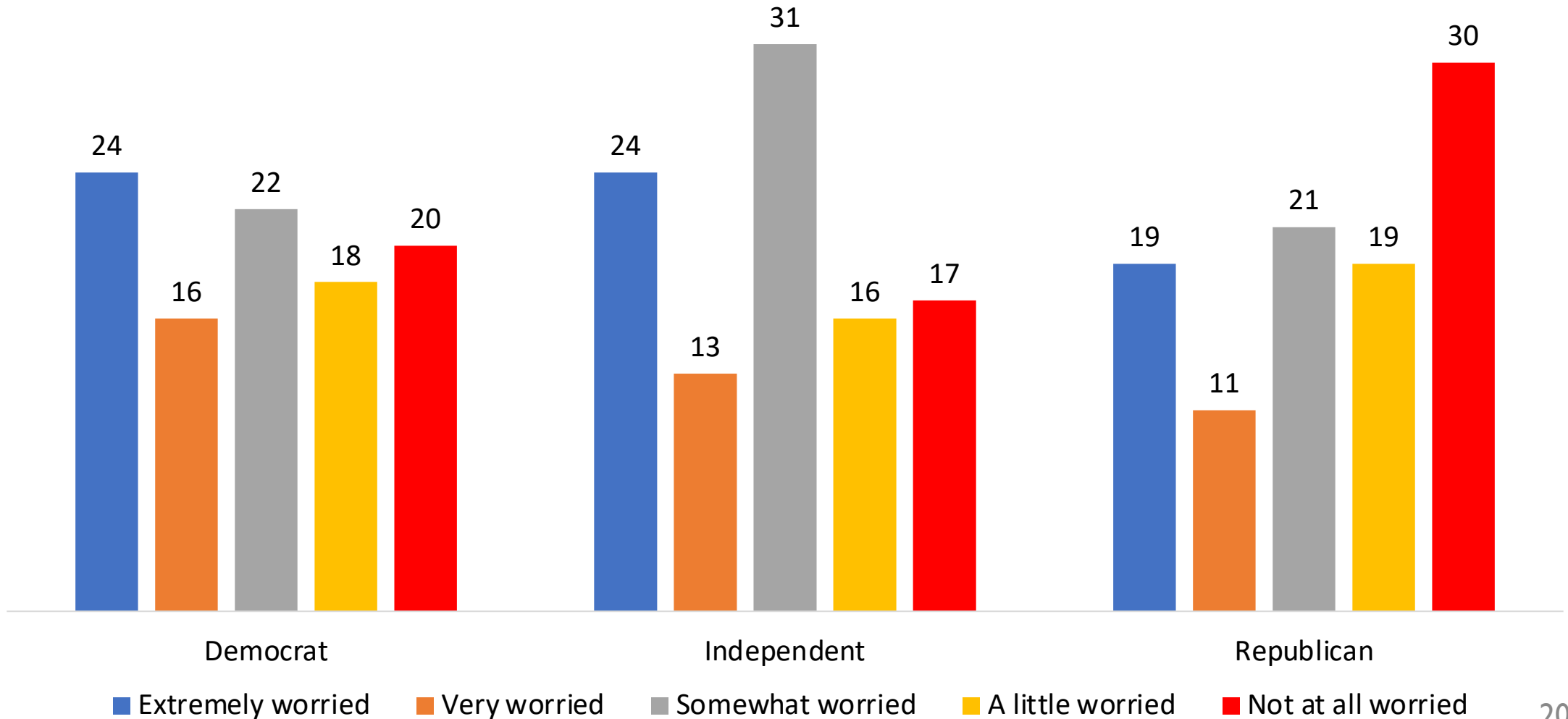


Generally speaking, how optimistic are you about your personal future—think about things like finding and keeping a good job, paying off your student loan debt, and being able to afford the lifestyle you want?



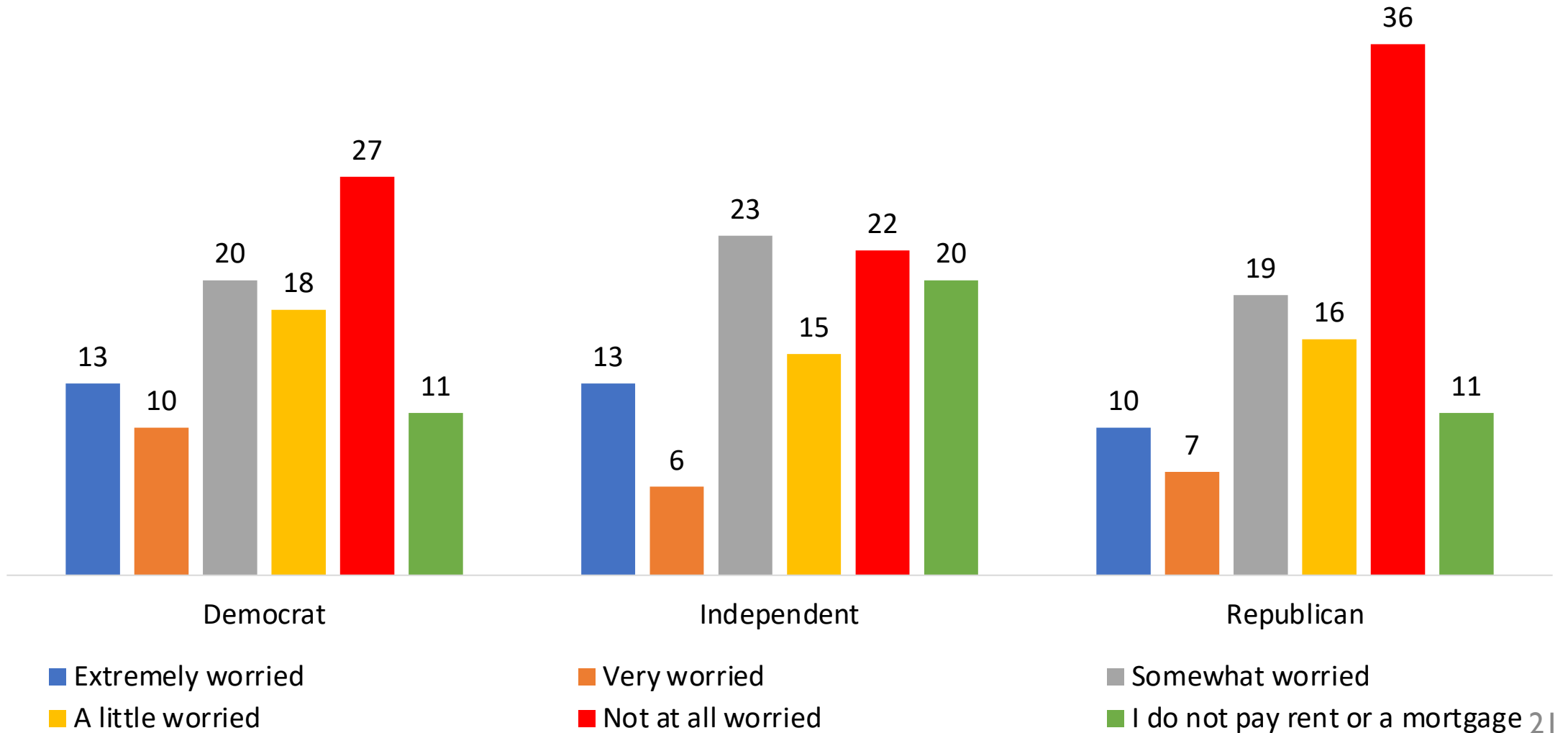


How worried are you about being able to pay an unexpected bill of \$1,000 right away?



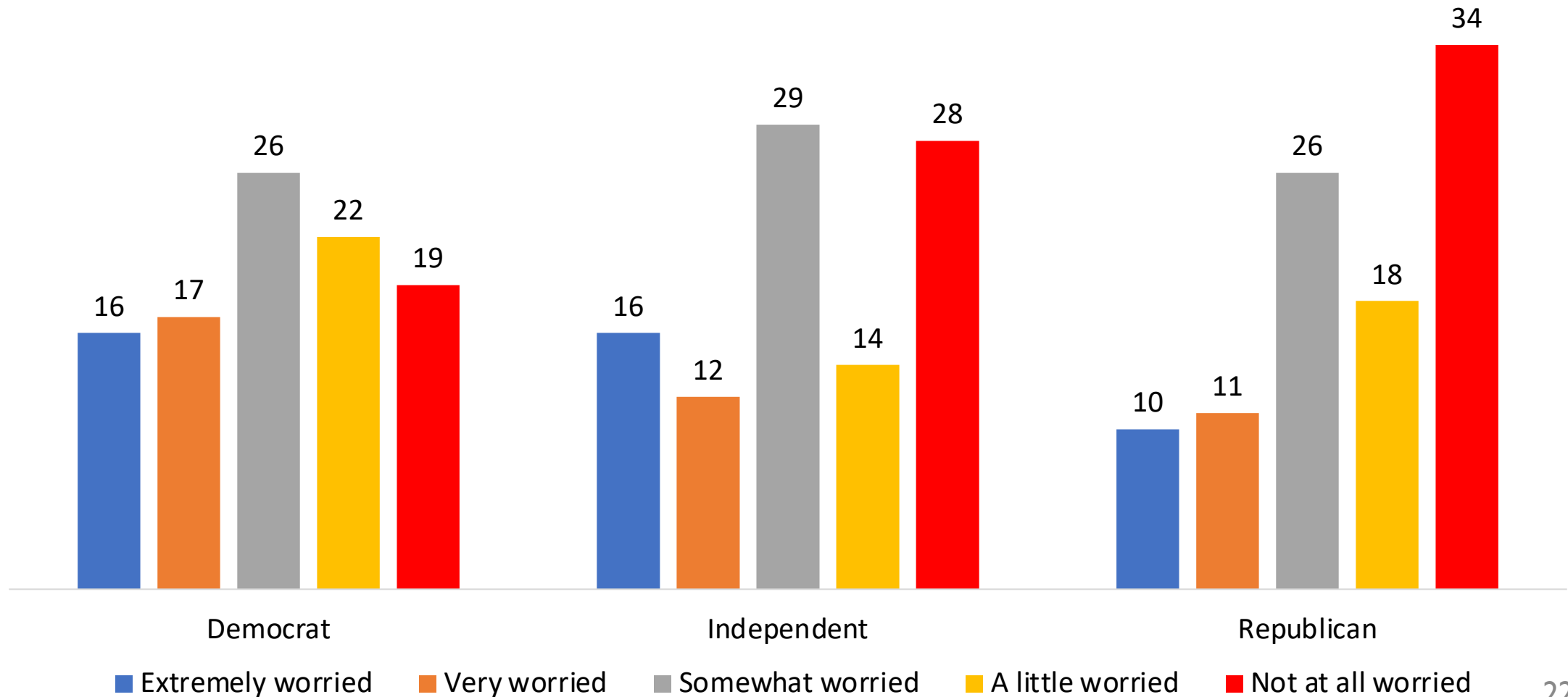


How worried are you about being able to pay your rent or mortgage?



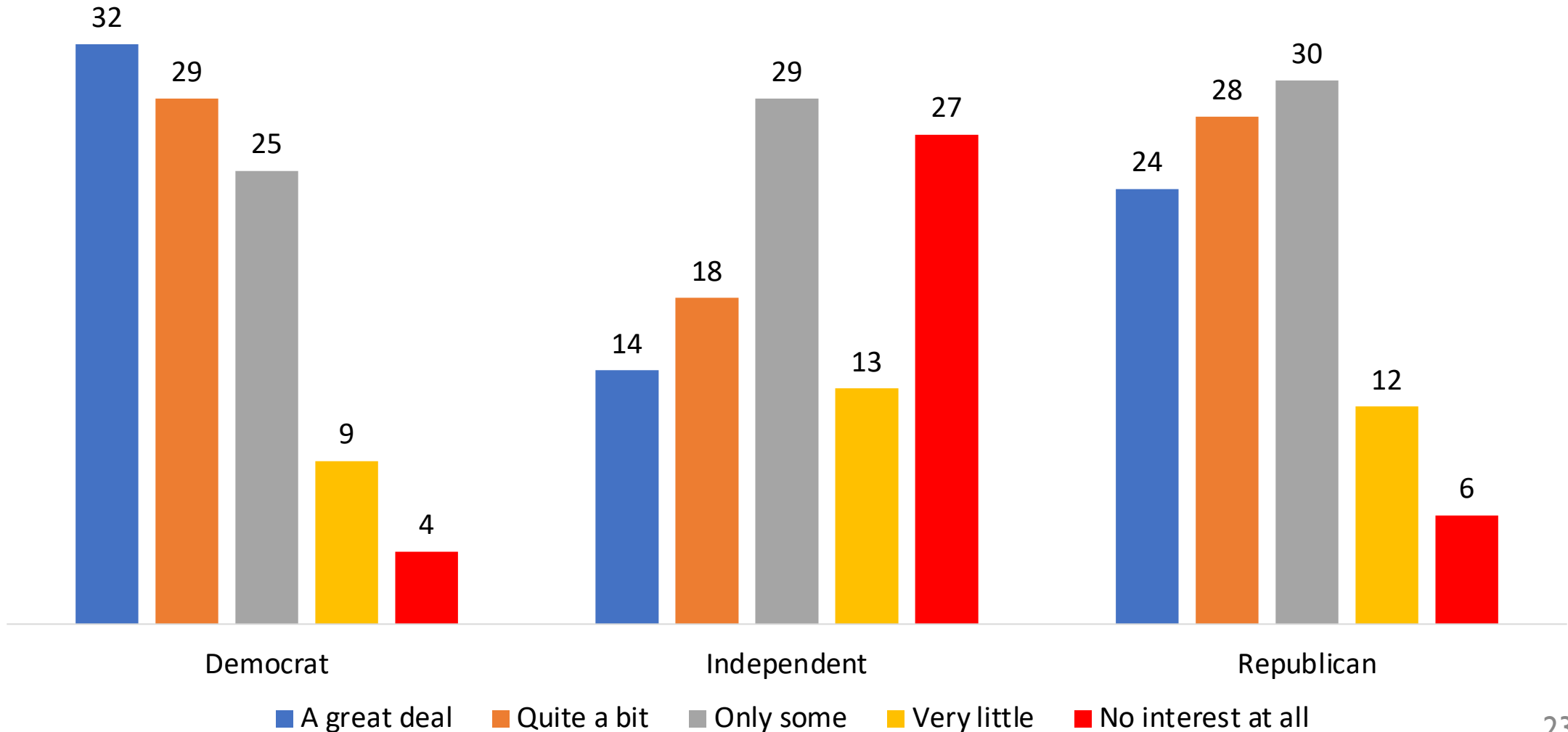


How worried are you about keeping your current job or finding a good job in the future?



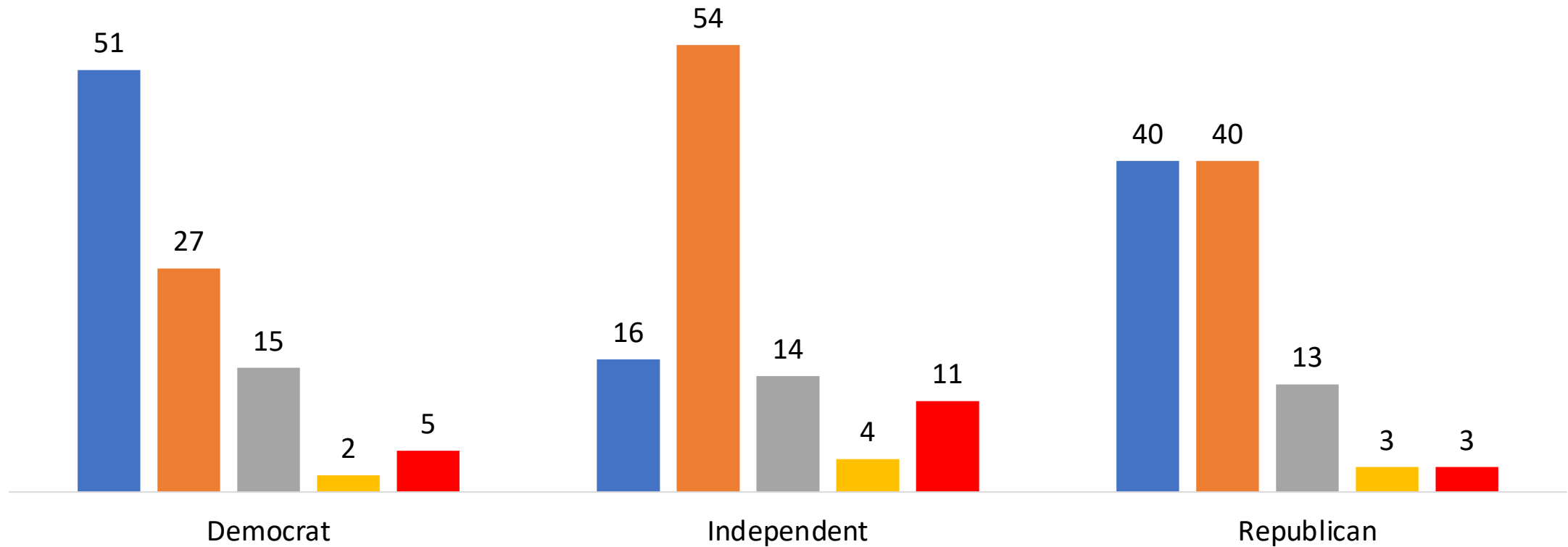


Interest in Following News about 2020 Presidential Election





Vote in 2020 Primaries and Caucuses



■ Yes, voted

■ Did not vote

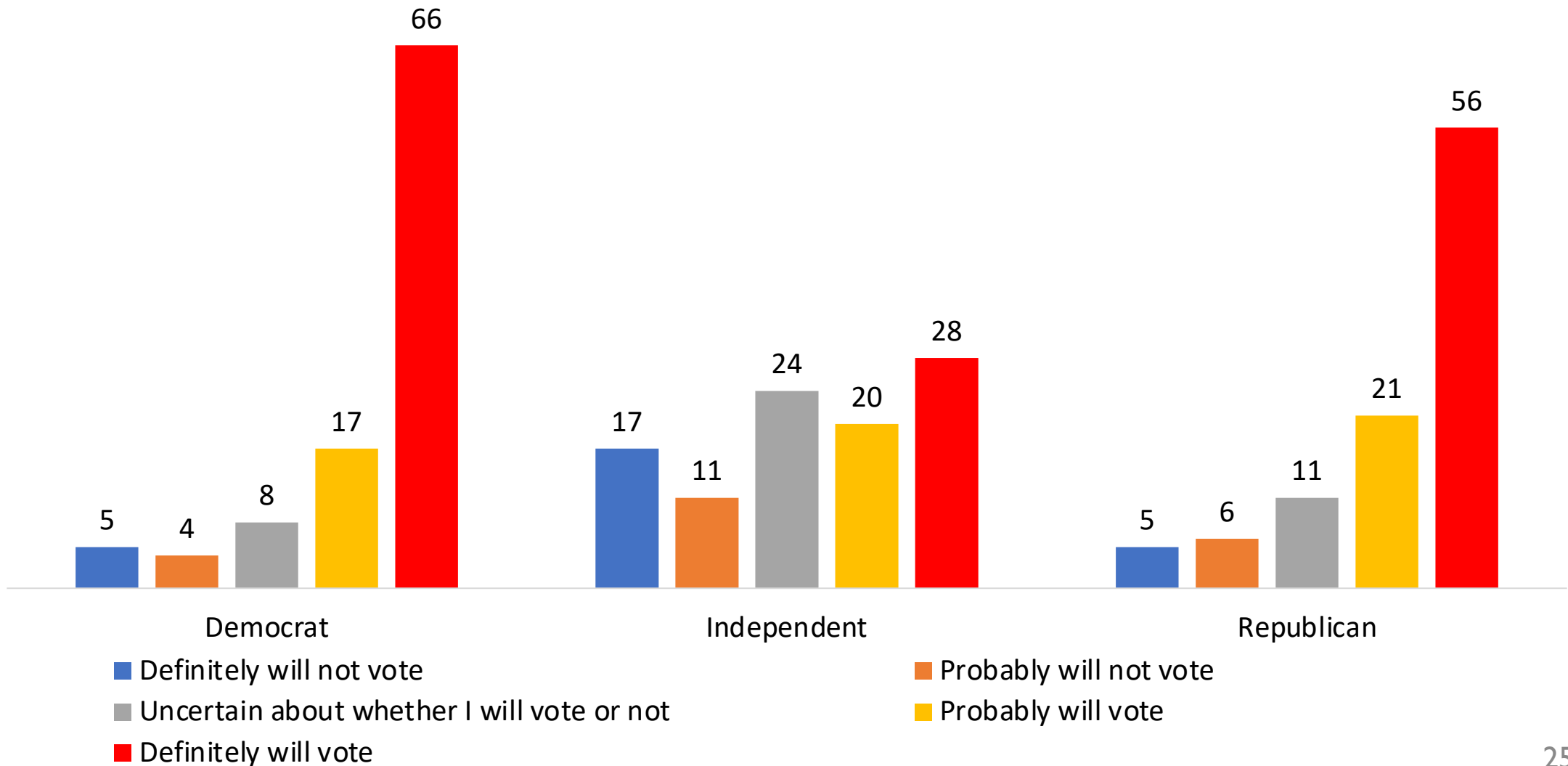
■ My state's primary or caucus has not happened yet, and I plan to vote

■ My state's primary or caucus has not happened yet, and I do not plan to vote

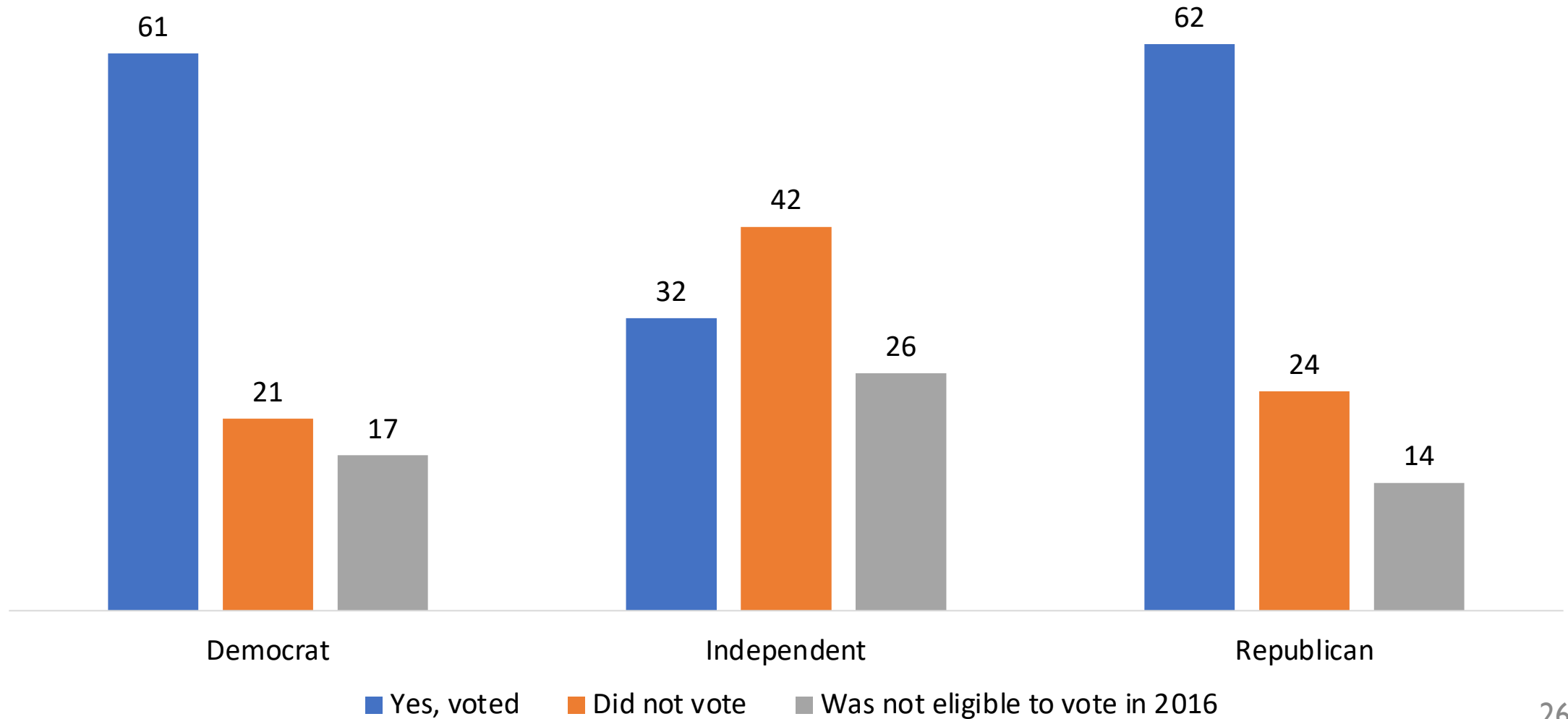
■ Was not eligible to vote in 2020



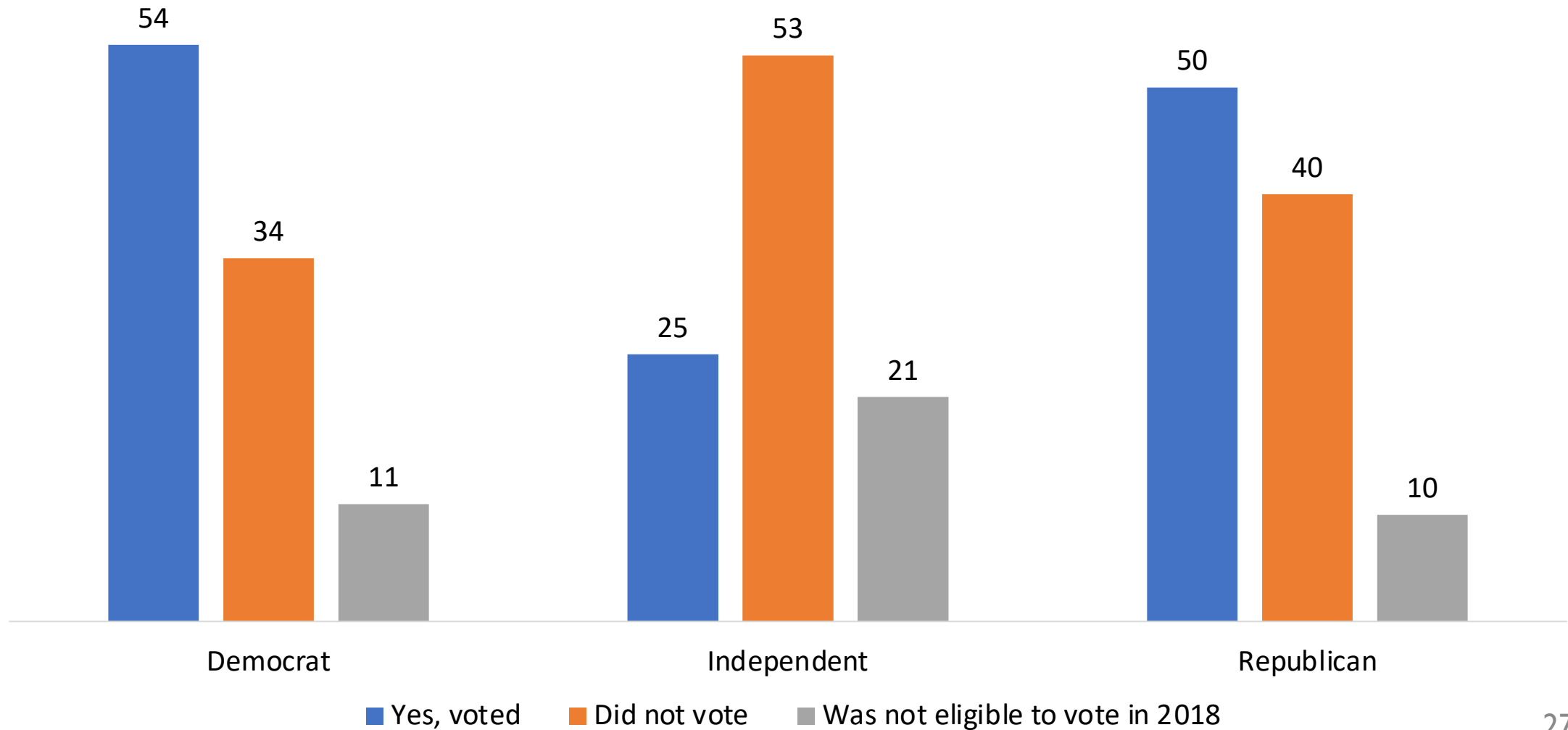
Voting Participation Intention in 2020 Presidential General Election



g> Vote History (2016)

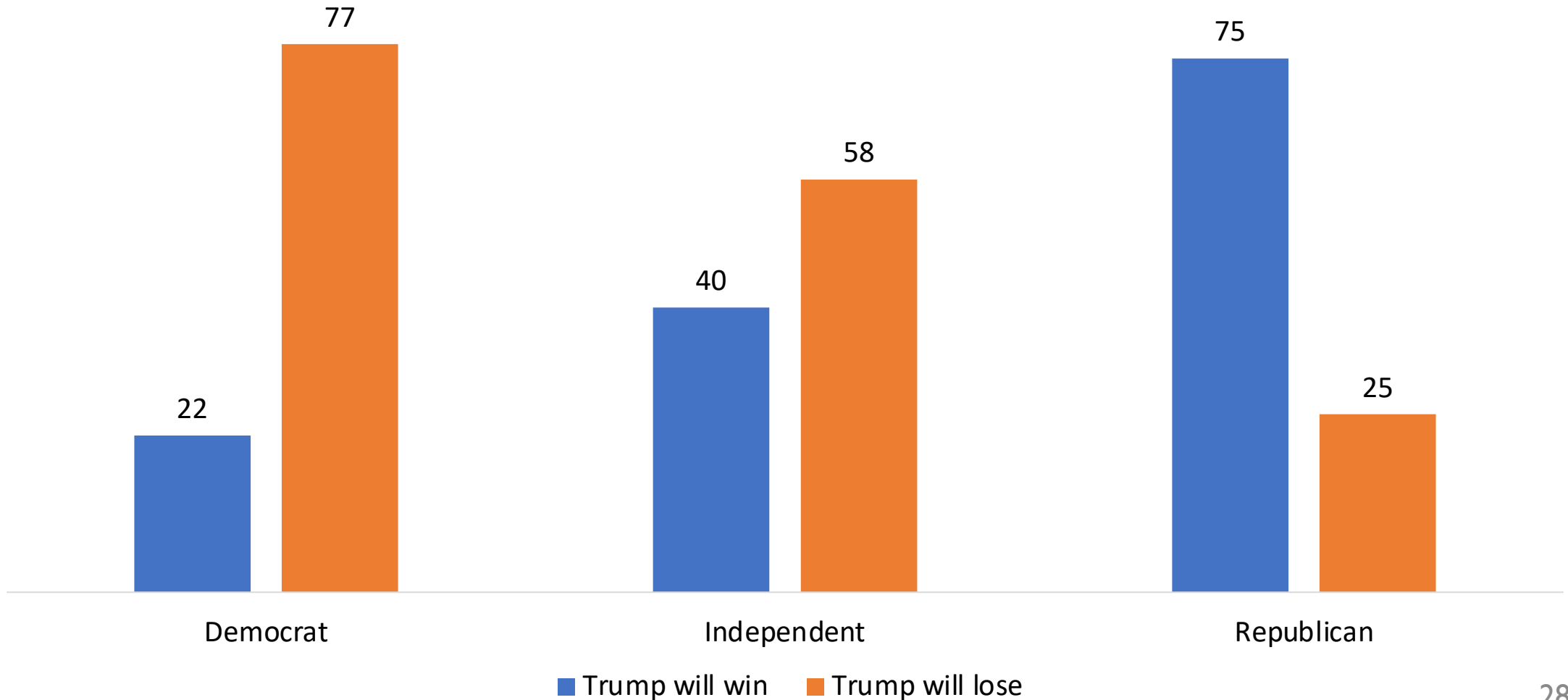


g> Vote History (2018)



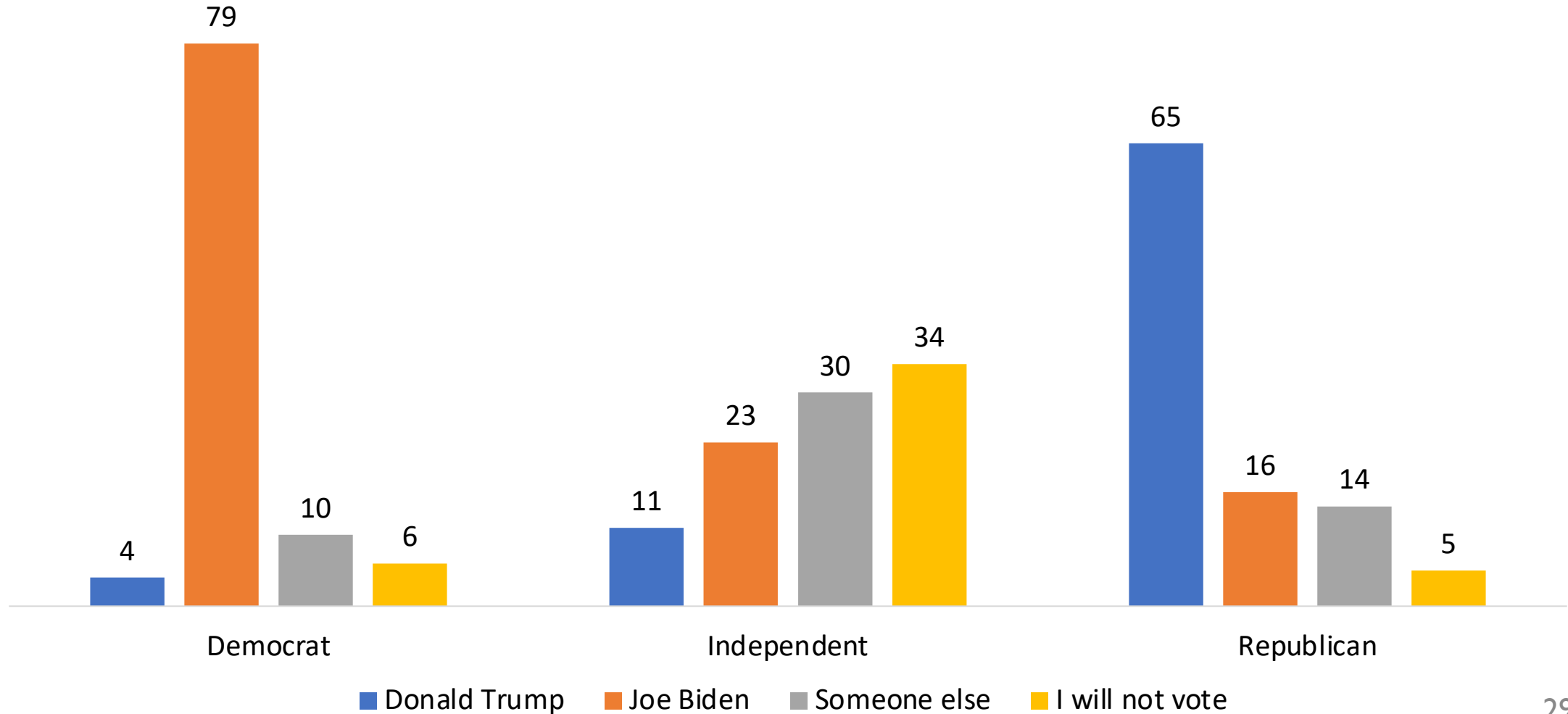


Trump Win Perceptions for 2020 General Election



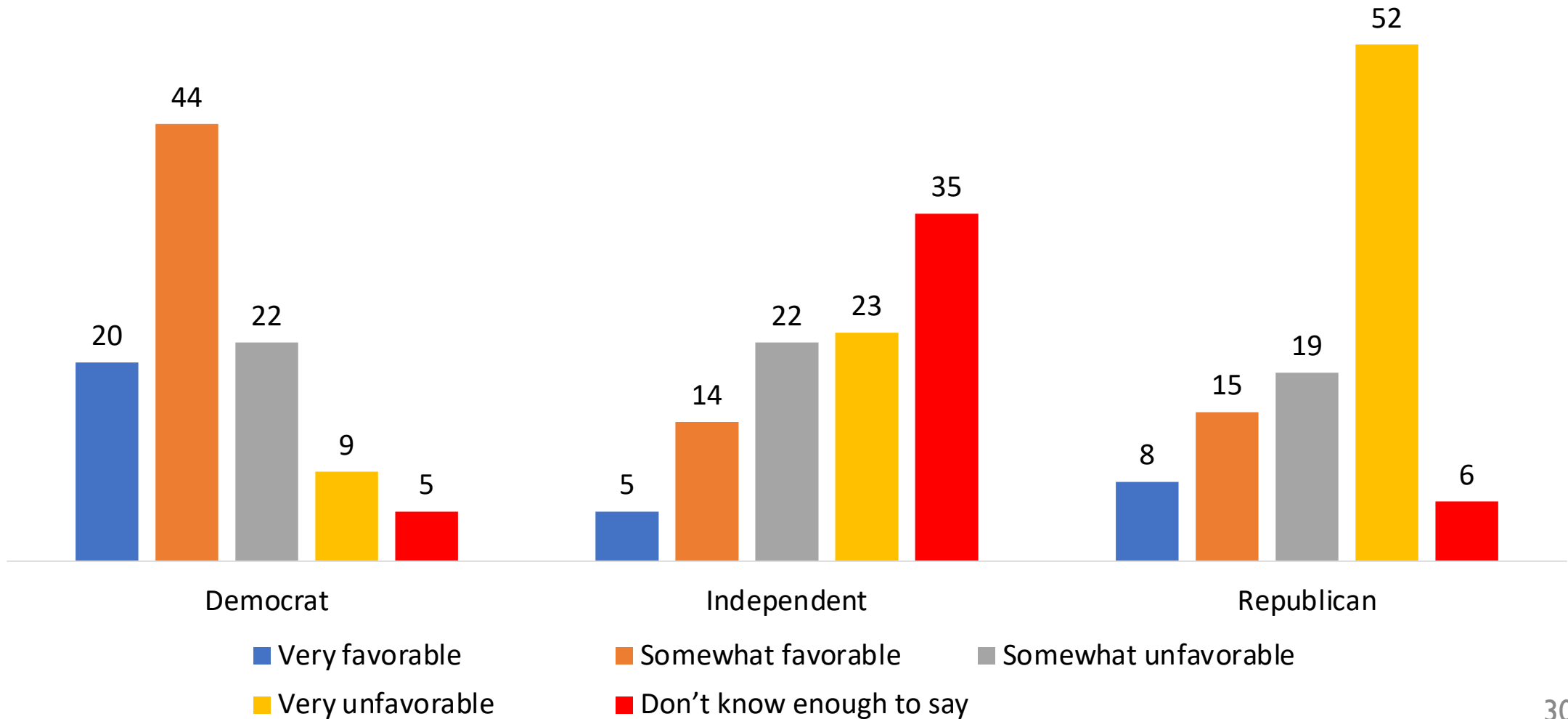


Vote Choice for 2020 Presidential General Election

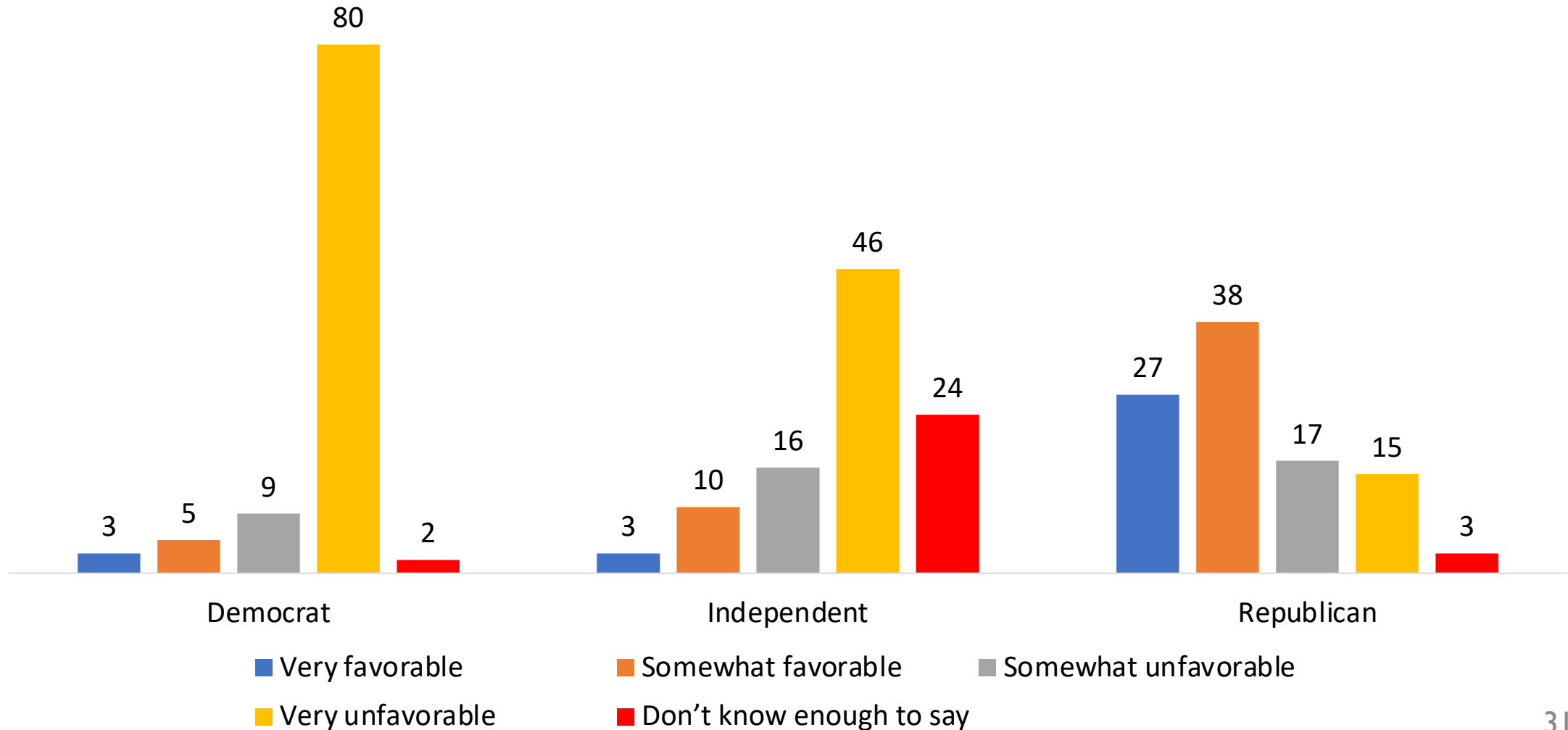




Biden Favorability

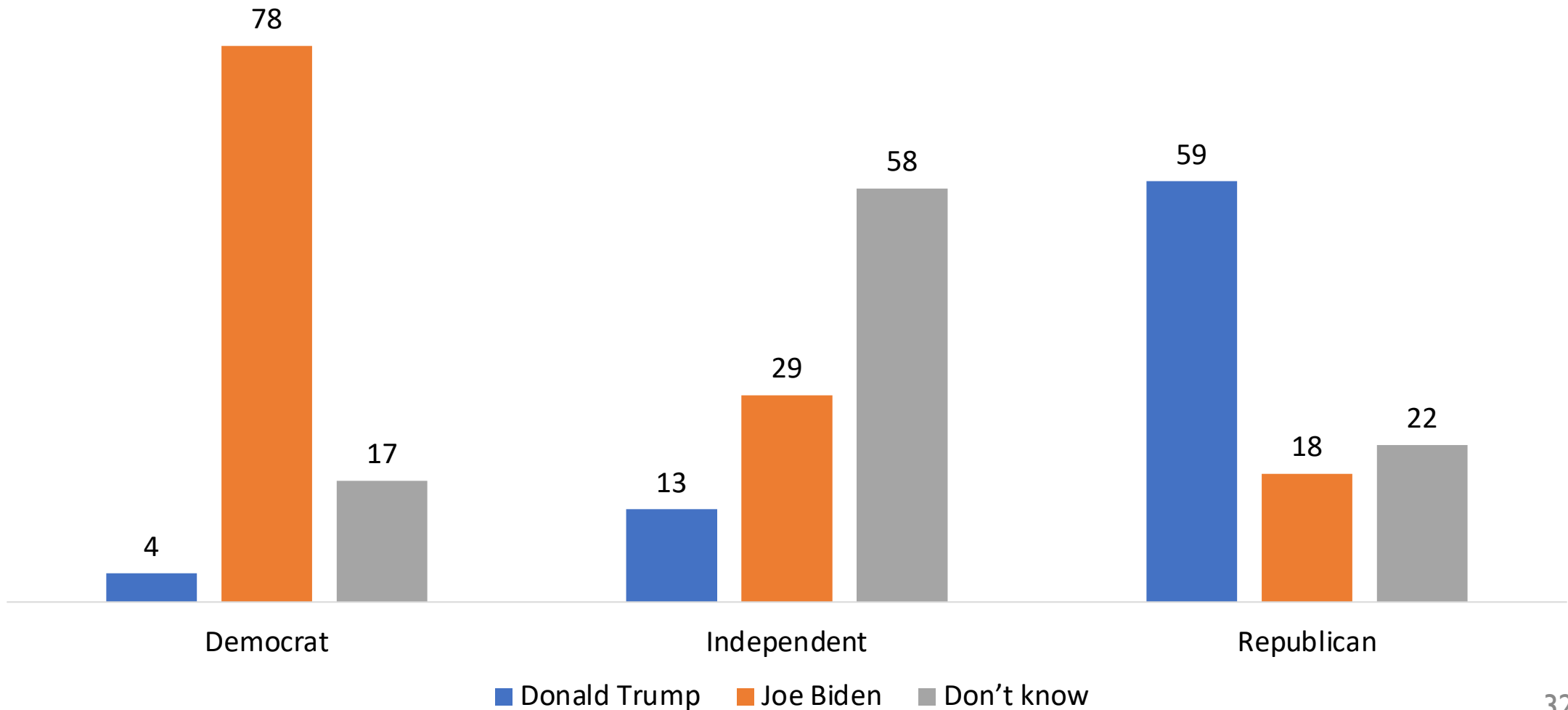


g> Trump Favorability



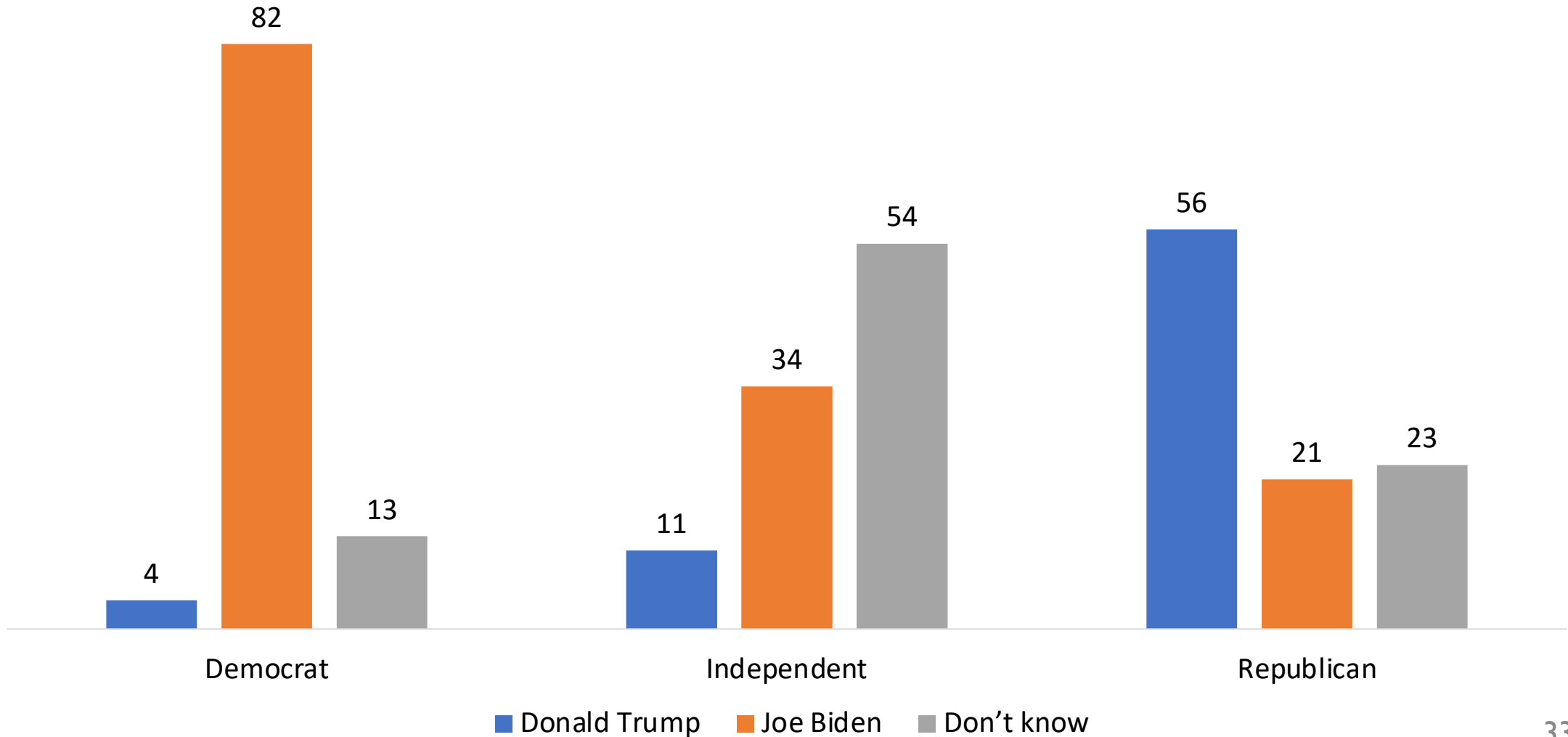


Who do you trust more to handle the coronavirus pandemic--Donald Trump or Joe Biden?



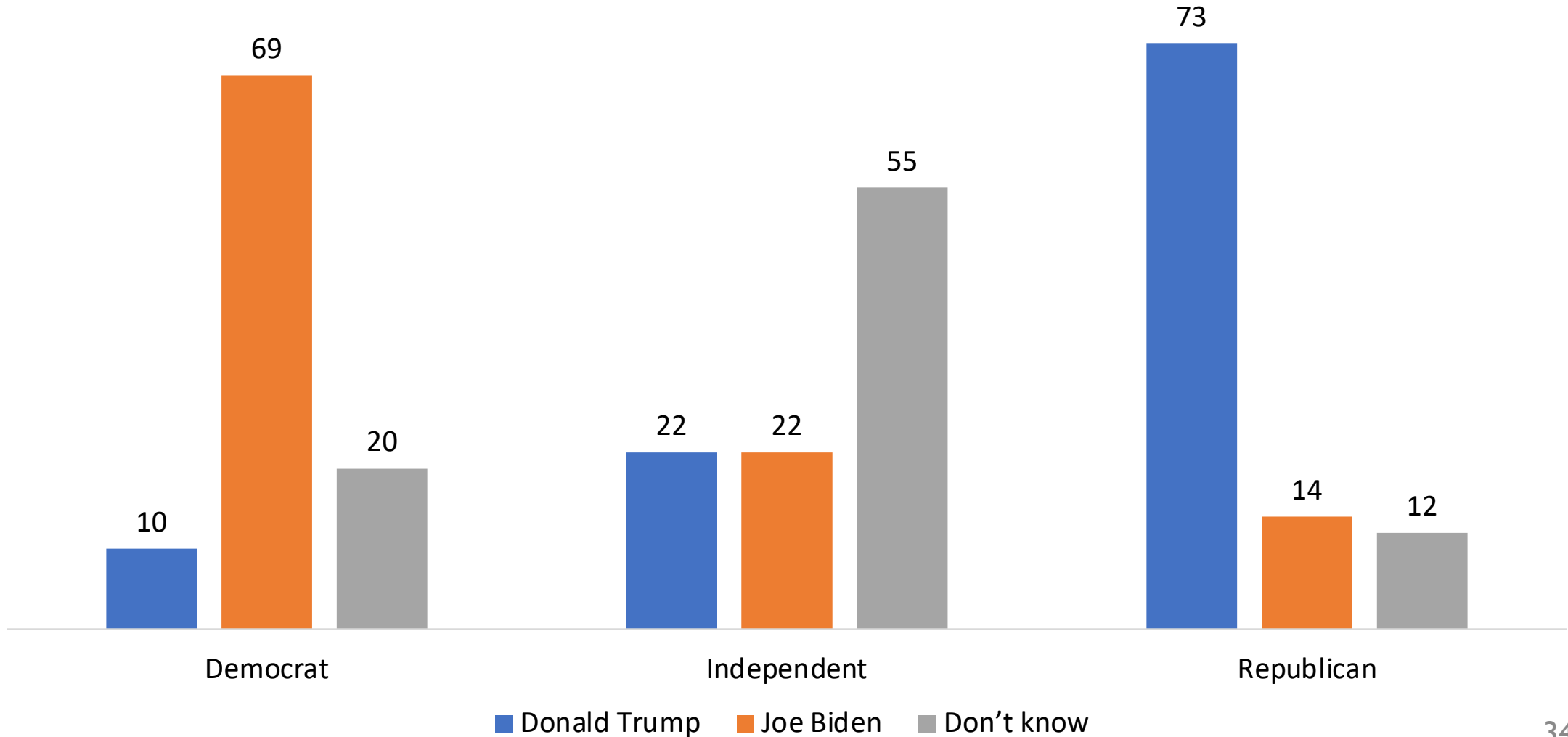


Who do you trust more to handle protests over racism-- Donald Trump or Joe Biden?



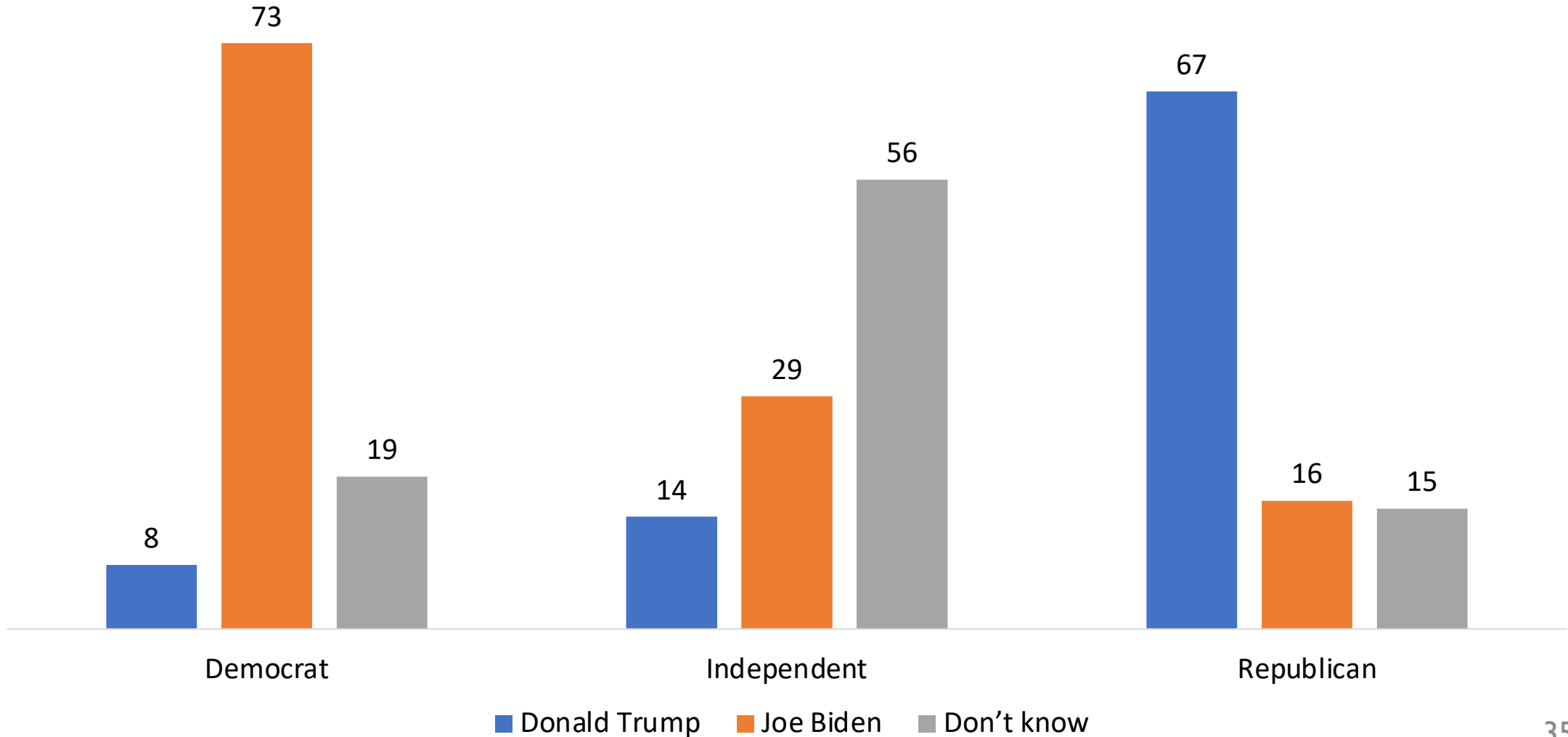


Who do you trust more to handle the recovery of the economy--Donald Trump or Joe Biden?





Who do you trust more to handle providing law and order throughout the country--Donald Trump or Joe Biden?





Preferred Biden Vice Presidential Running Mate (*Top 3 Choices*)

	Democrat	Independent	Republican
1 st	Elizabeth Warren (23%)	Someone else (58%)	Someone else (40%)
2 nd	Someone else (19%)	Elizabeth Warren (8%)	Elizabeth Warren (12%)
3 rd	Kamala Harris (18%)	Kamala Harris / Susan Rice (6%)	Kamala Harris (9%)

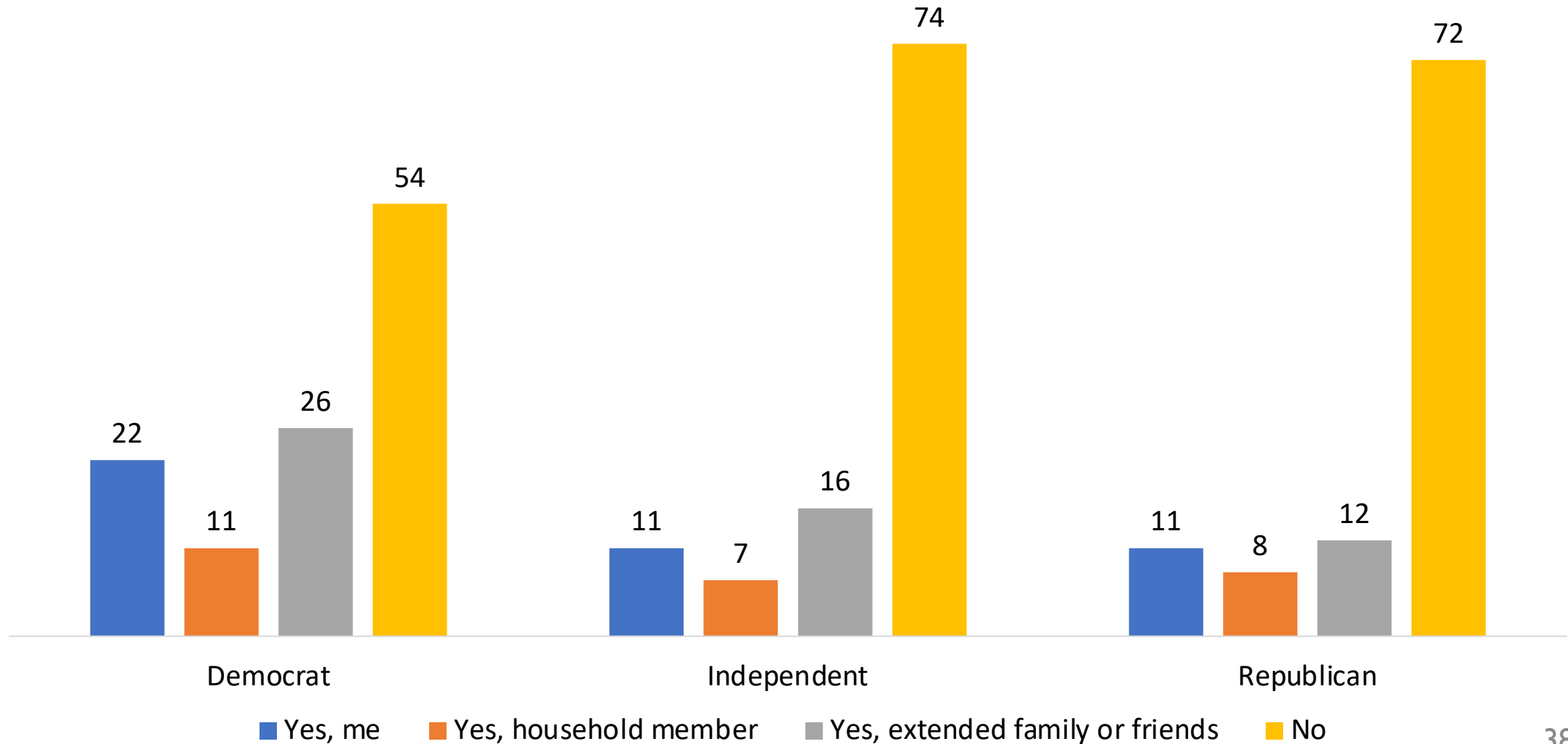


In your opinion, what is the best way to make racial progress in the United States? (*Top 3 Choices*)

	Democrat	Independent	Republican
1 st	Voting in state and local elections (18%)	Racial progress is not needed (17%)	Racial progress is not needed (16%)
2 nd	Revolution / Non-violent protests and demonstrations (17%)	Non-violent protests and demonstrations (16%)	Community service and volunteering / Non-violent protests and demonstrations (15%)
3 rd	Organizing in communities (14%)	Not participating in politics in any way (14%)	Organizing in communities (11%)

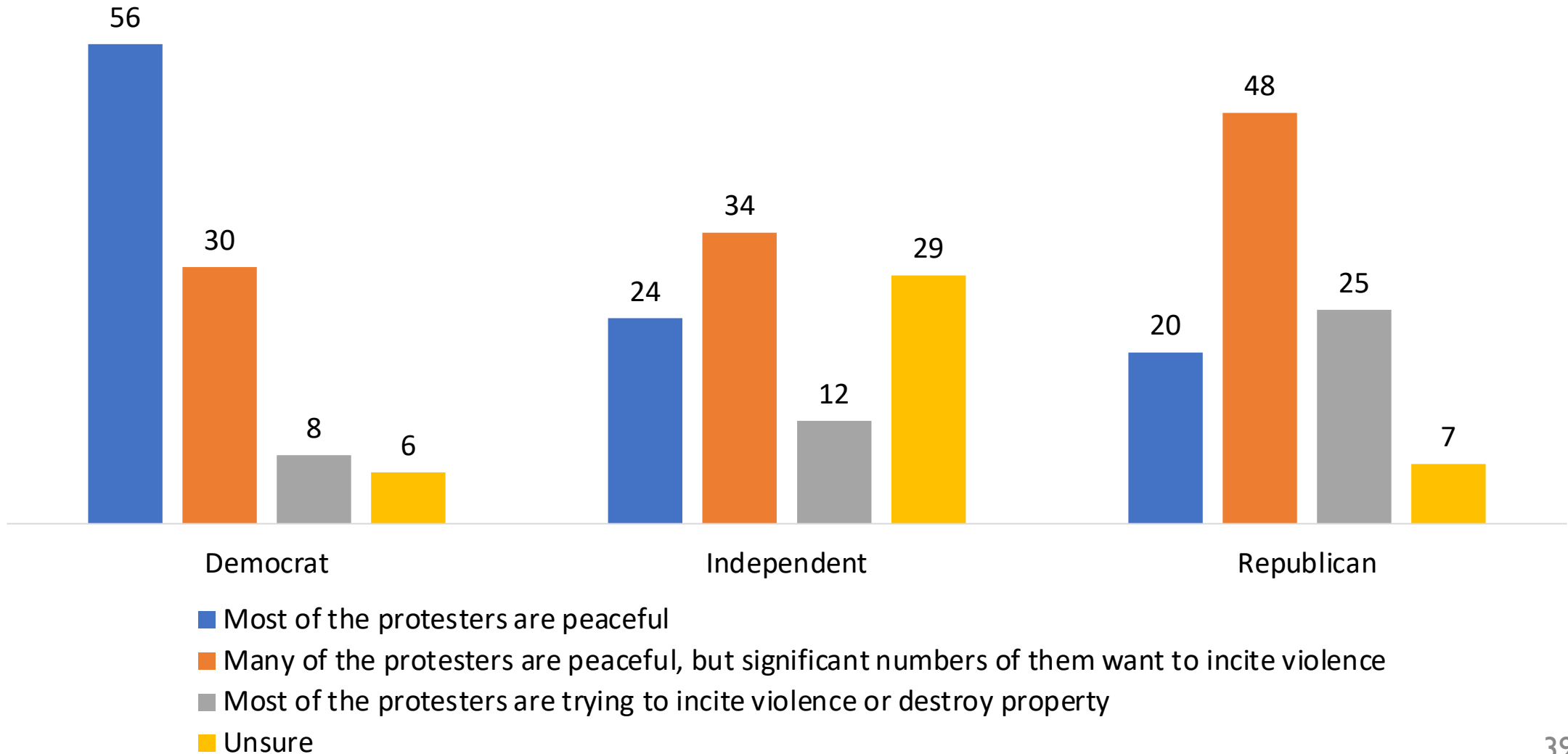


Have you, a member of your household, or a member of your extended family or friends been involved in recent and ongoing protests and demonstrations in cities across the country? *(Select all that apply)*



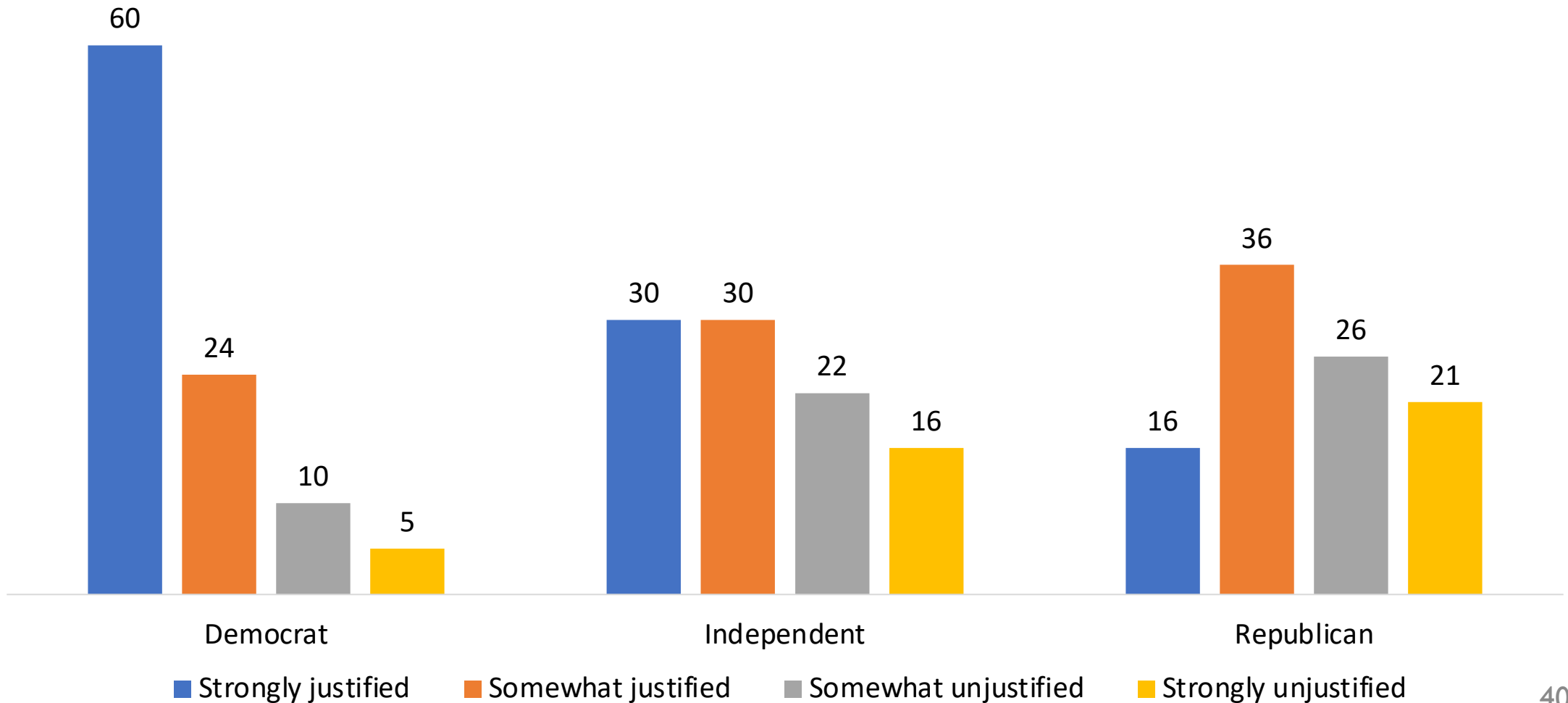


Which of the following comes closest to your view of the protesters?



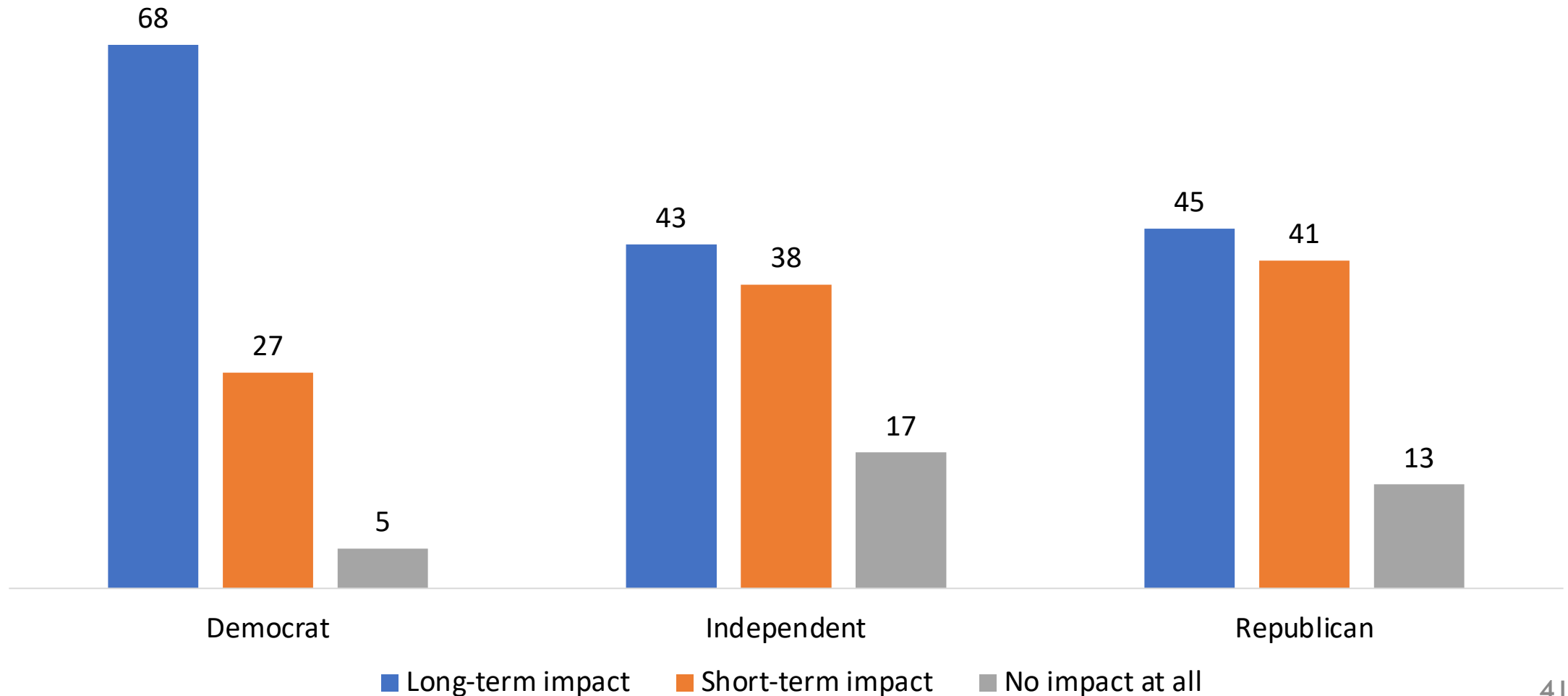


Do you think the recent protests across the country are justified?



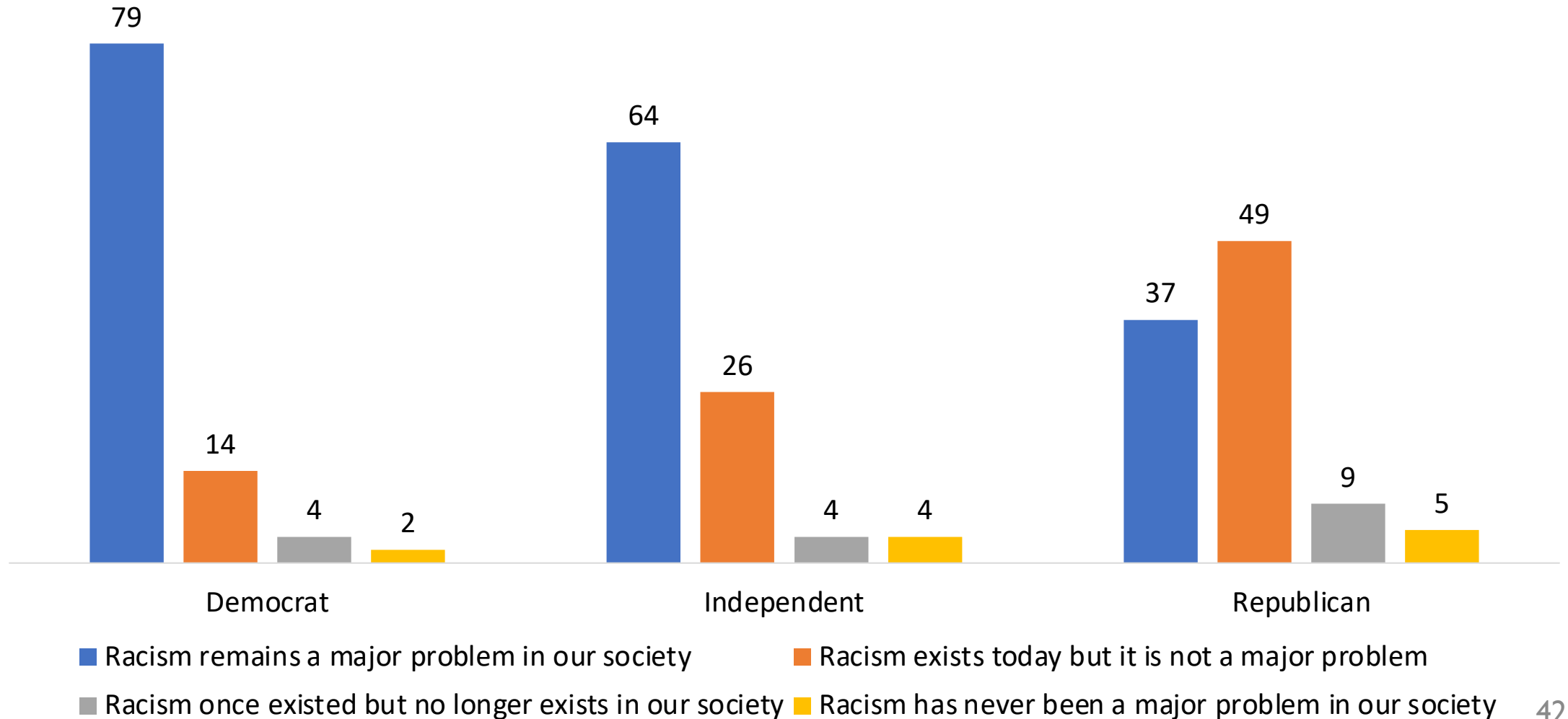


Do you think the movement sparked by the killing of George Floyd will have a long-term impact on race relations in the United States, a short-term impact, or no impact at all?



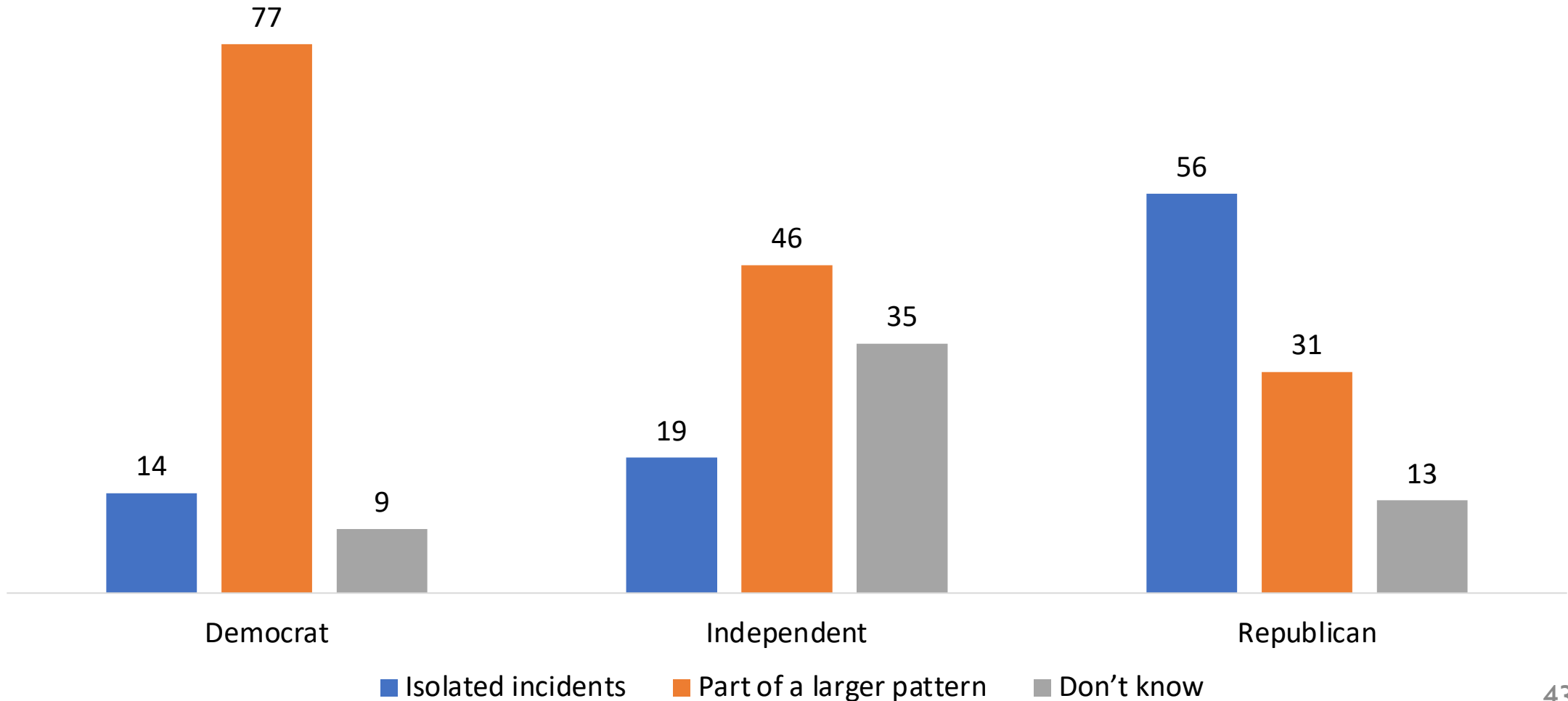


Some people say that racism no longer exists in American society and politics. Would you say that...?



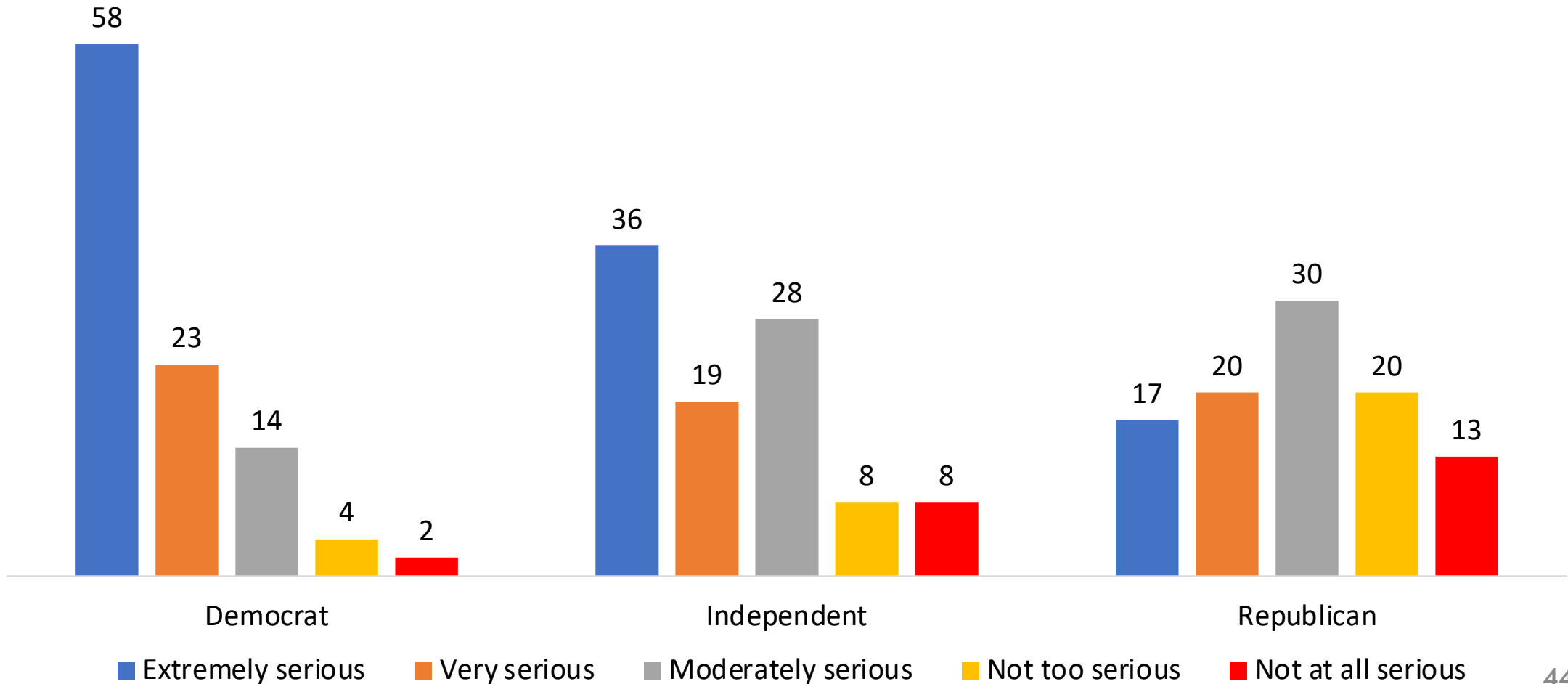


Do you think recent killings of Black Americans by police are isolated incidents or part of a larger pattern in the police's treatment of Black Americans?



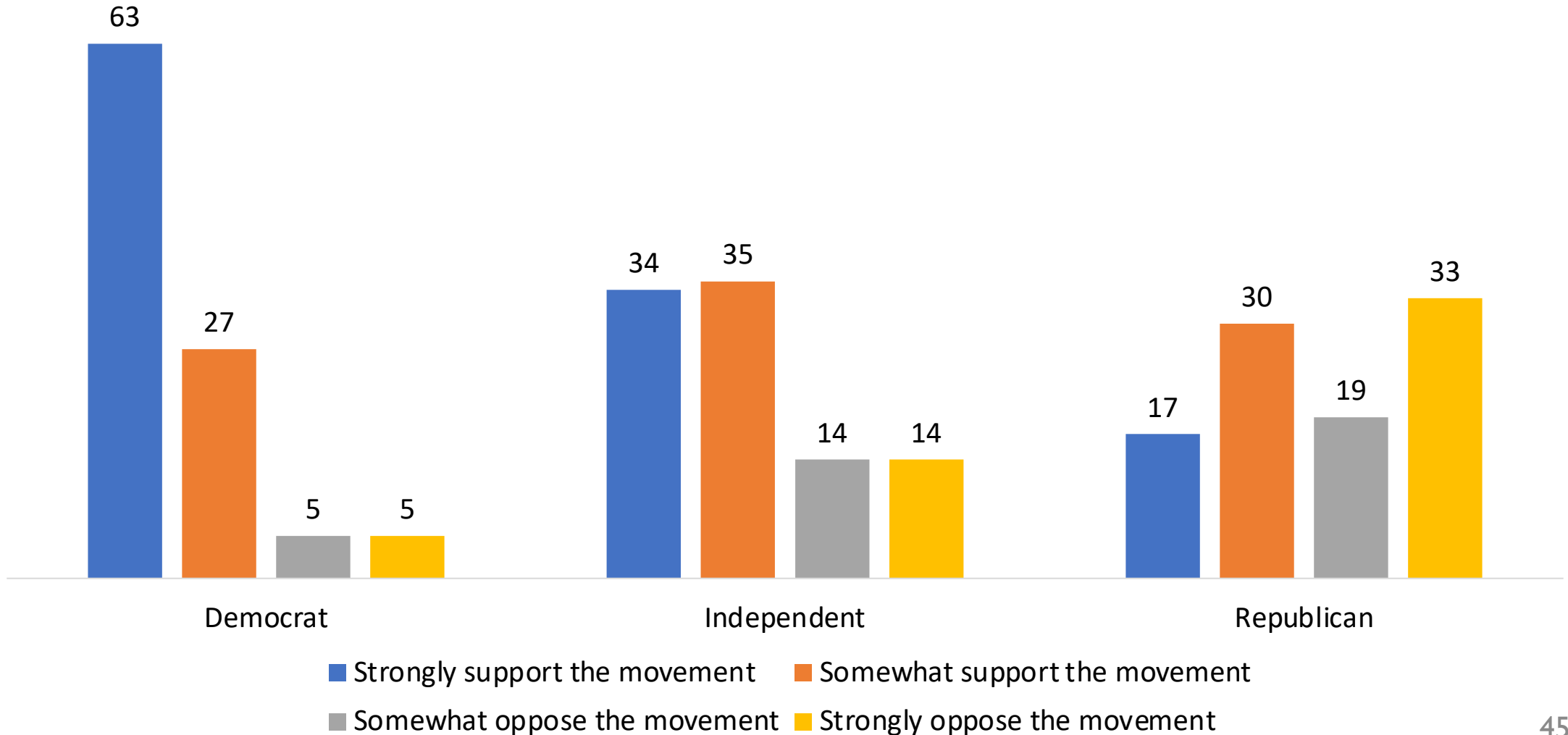


How serious a problem do you think the killing of Black people by the police is in the United States?



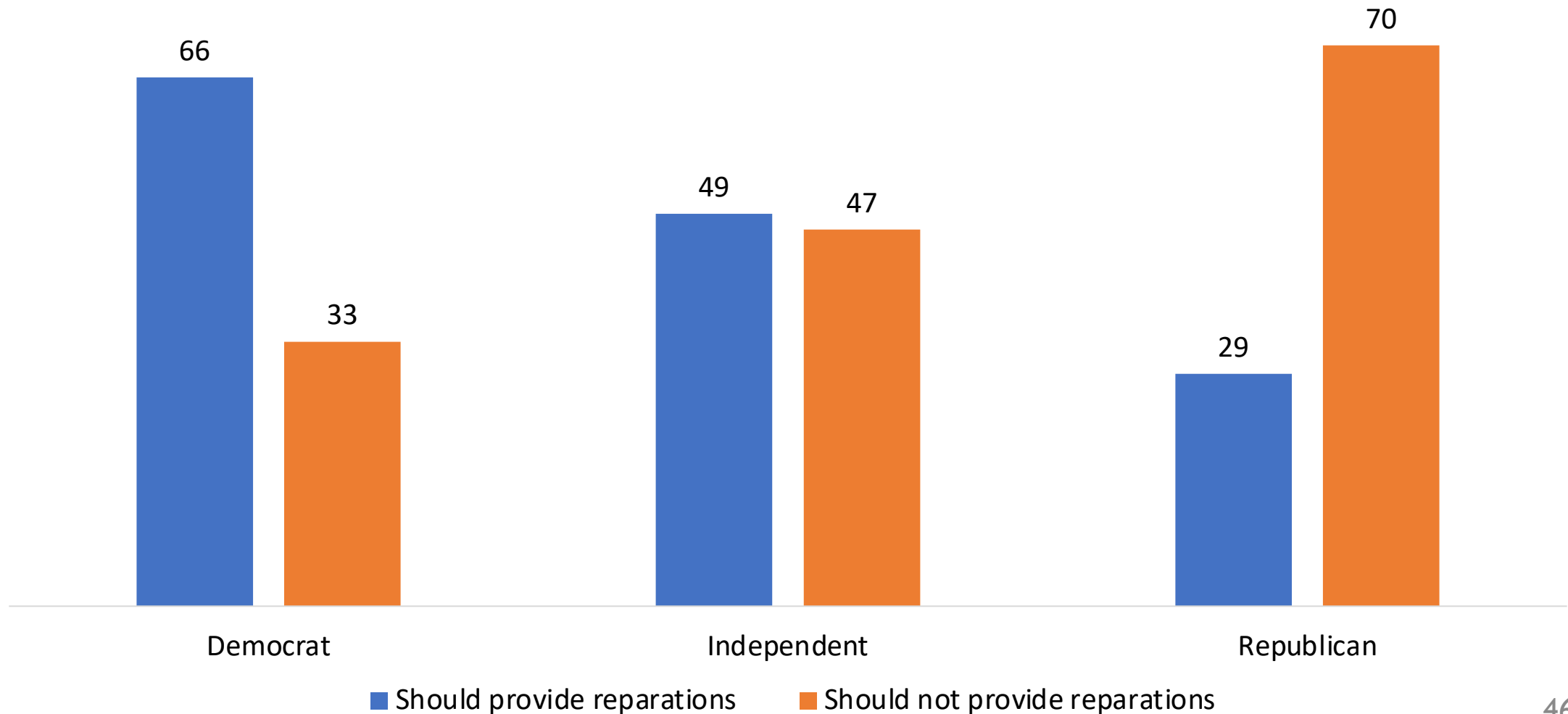


From what you have heard or read about the movement called #BlackLivesMatter, do you...



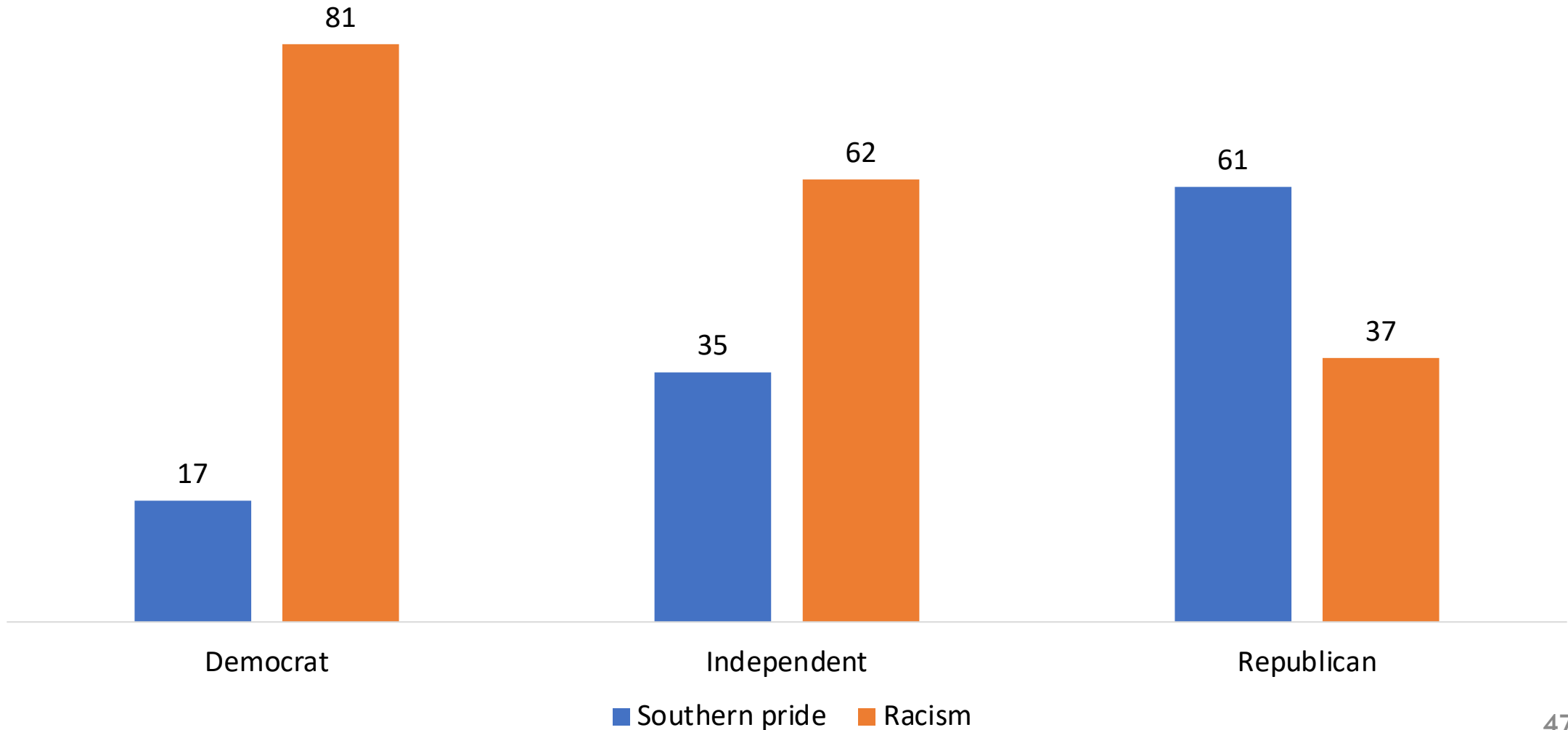


As a way to make up for the harm caused by slavery and other forms of racial discrimination, do you think the United States should or should not provide reparations to African Americans?



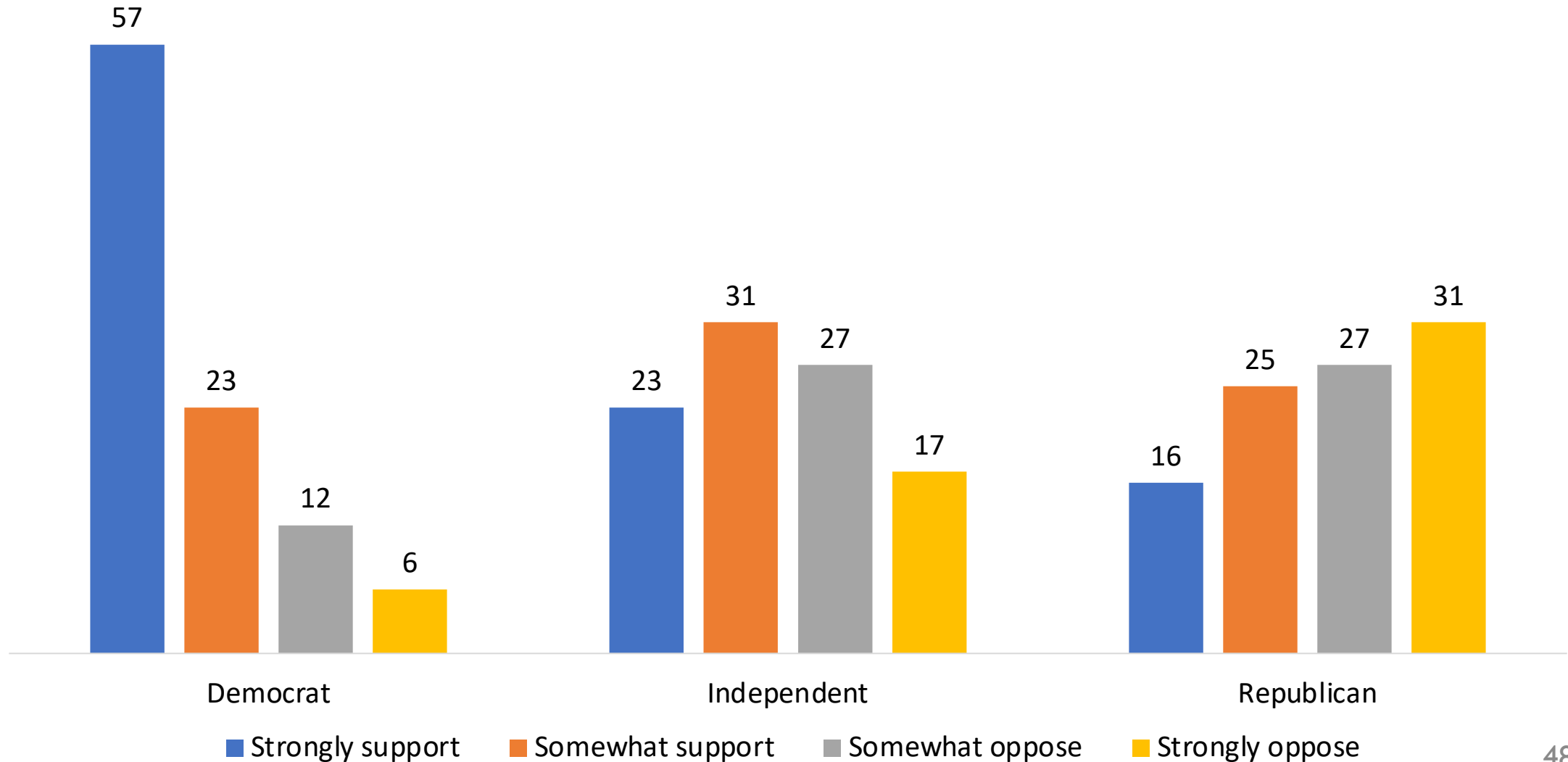


Do you personally see the Confederate flag more as a symbol of Southern pride or more as a symbol of racism?



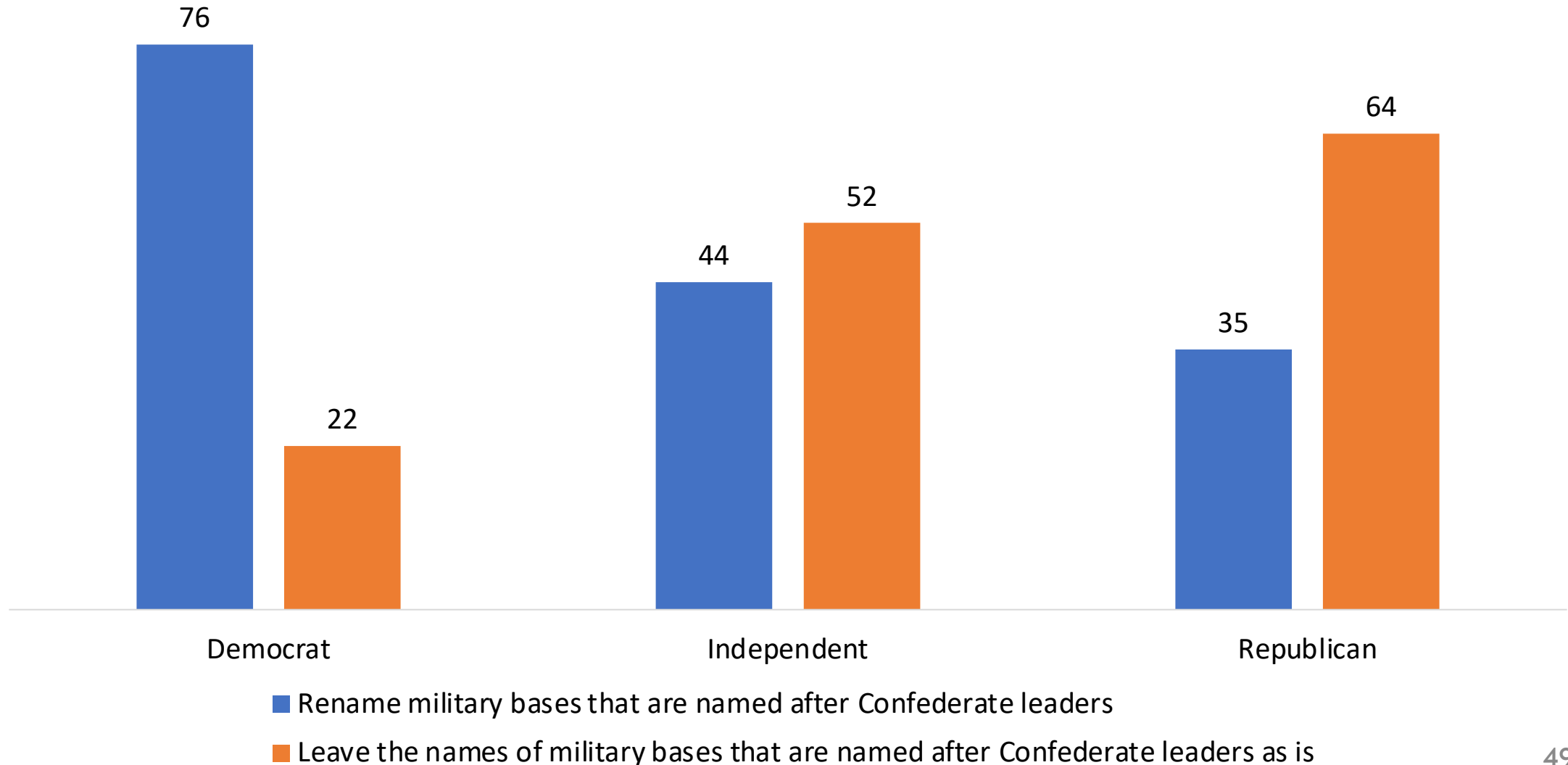


Do you support or oppose efforts to remove Confederate statues and symbols from public places such as government buildings and parks?



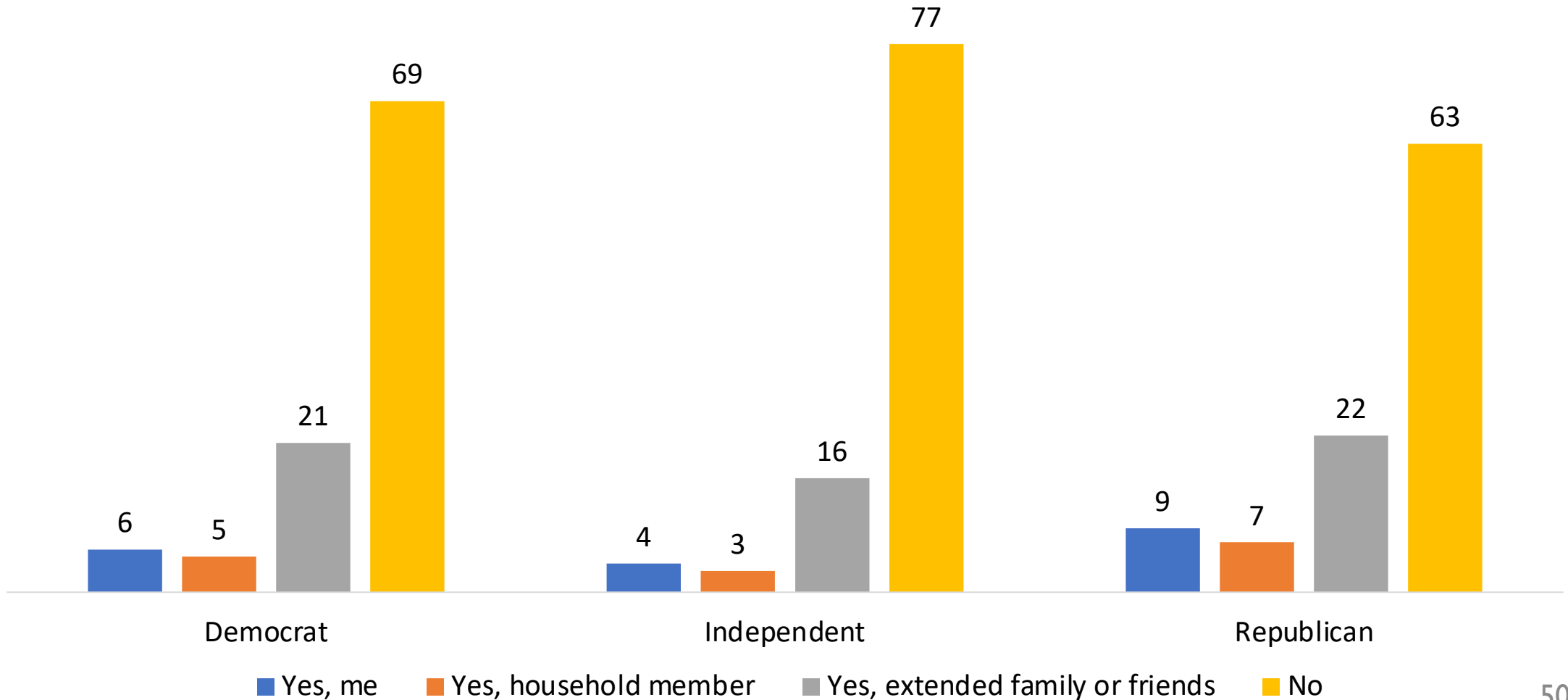


As you may know, the Senate has added an amendment to the defense policy bill that would require the Pentagon to rename military bases that are named after Confederate leaders. In your opinion, should the Pentagon...?



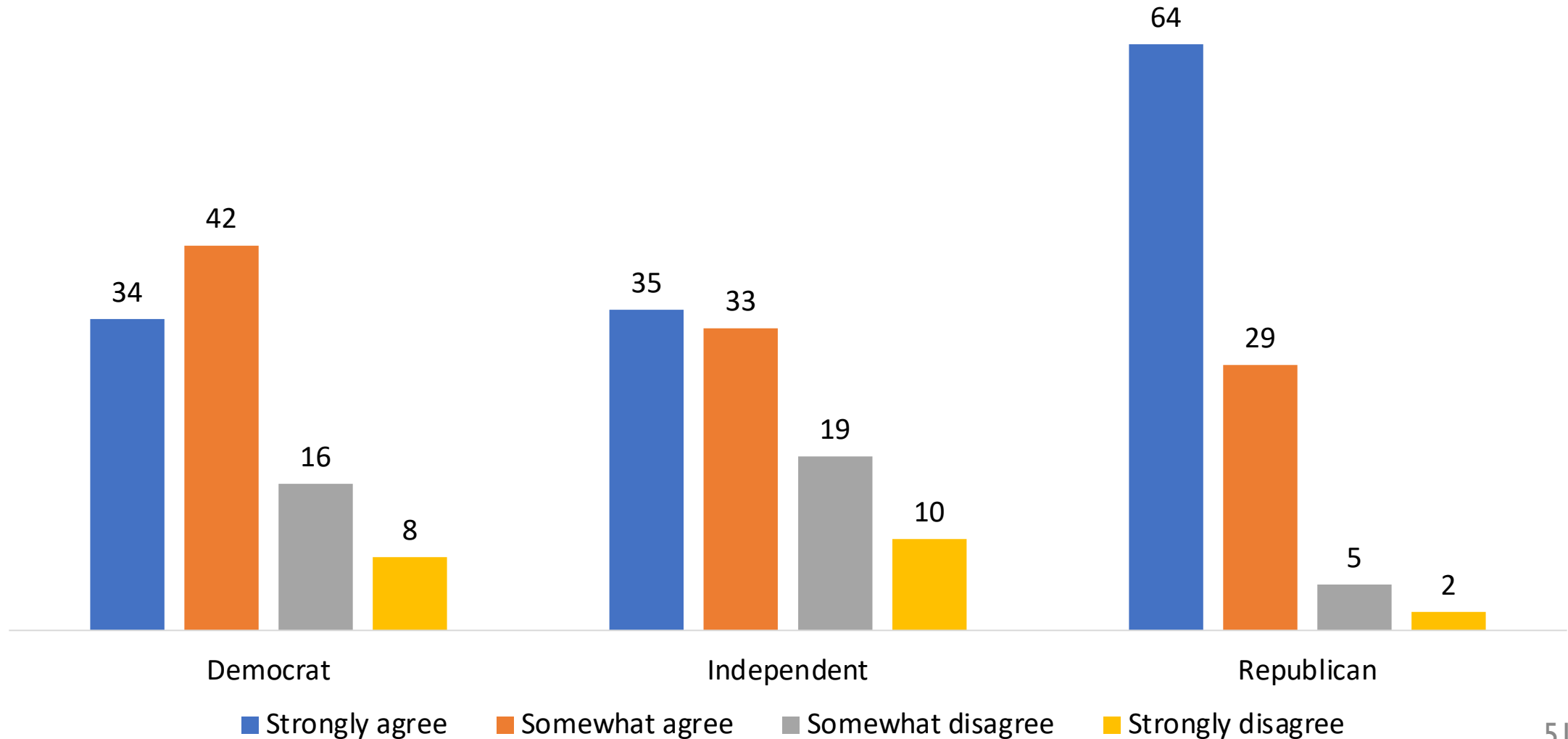


Are you, or is a member of your household, or a member of your extended family or friends a member of any local, state, or federal police force? *(Select all that apply)*



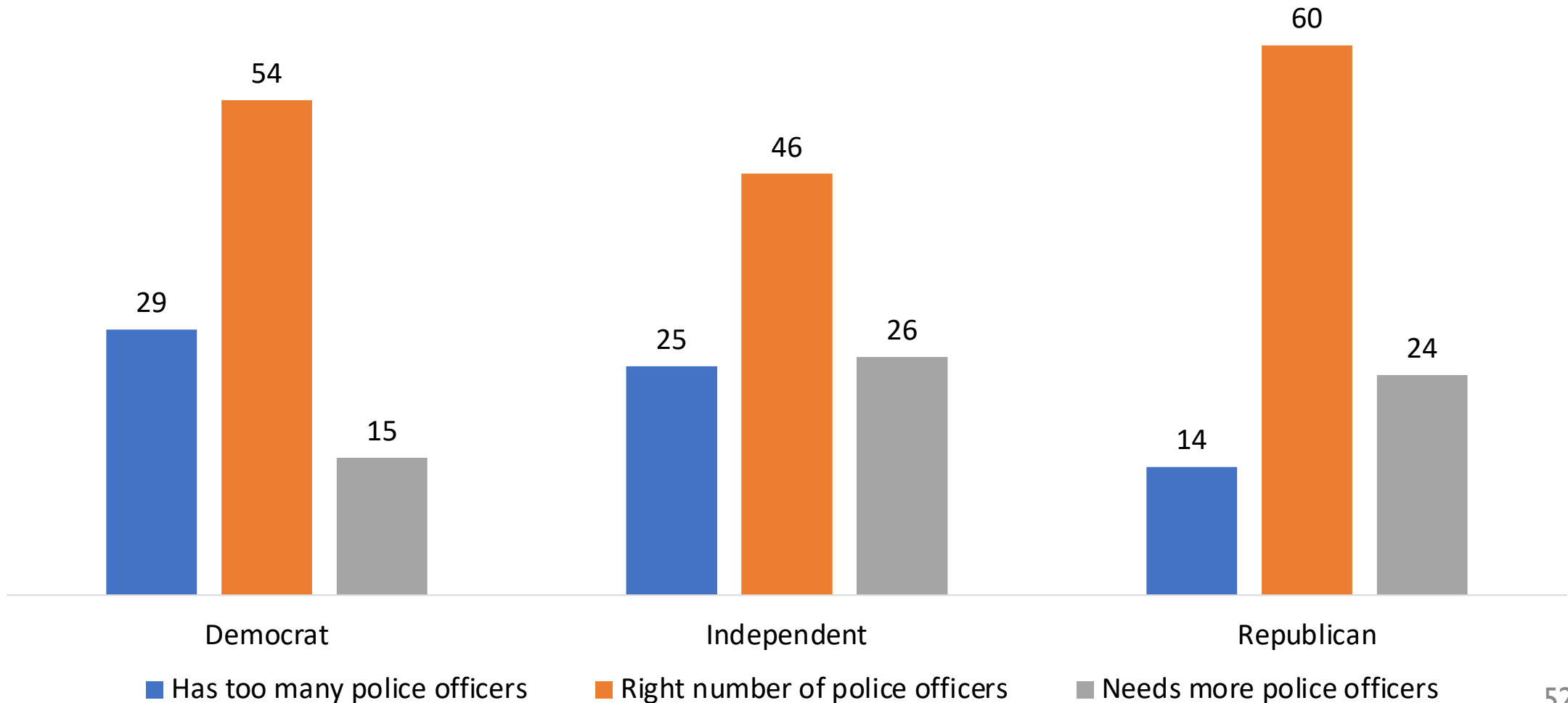


To what degree do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Police are necessary for safe communities.



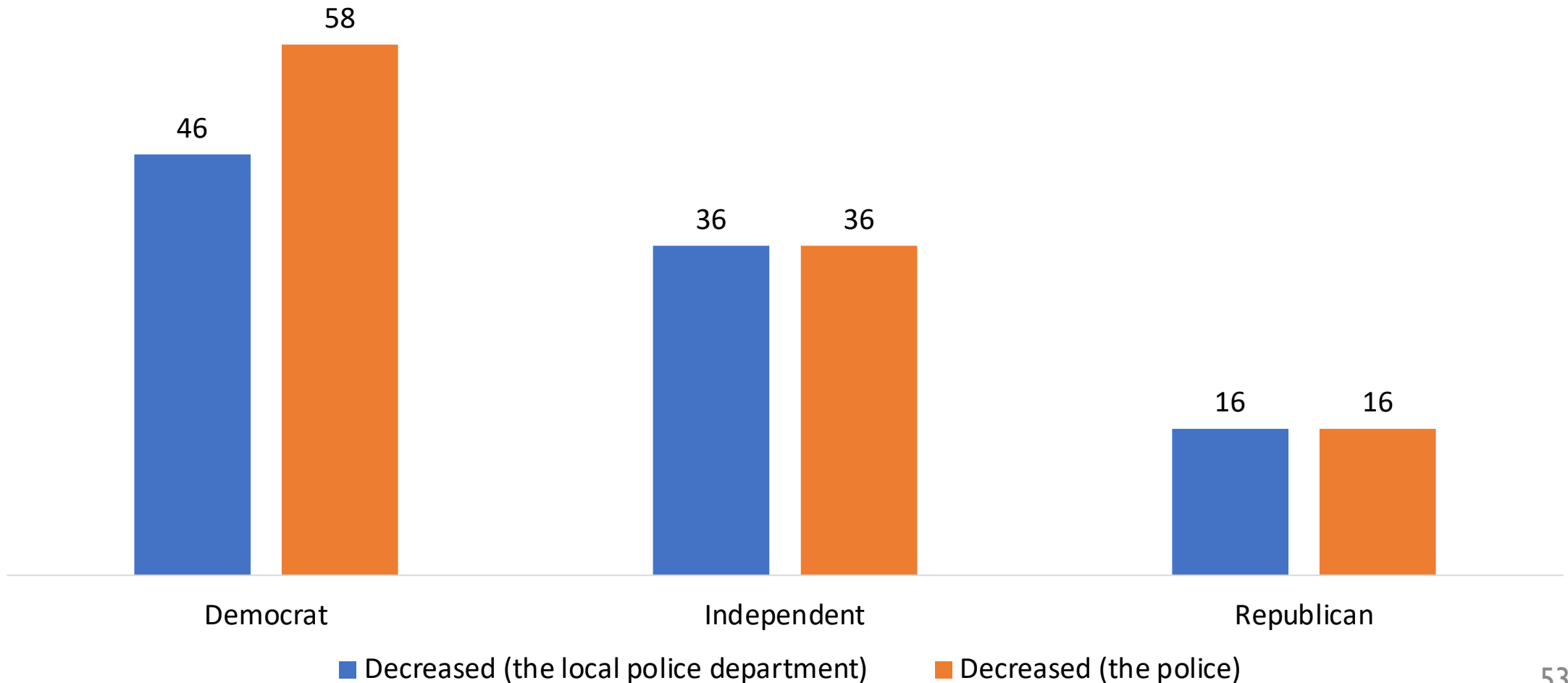


Do you think your community has the right number of police officers, needs more police officers, or has too many police officers?



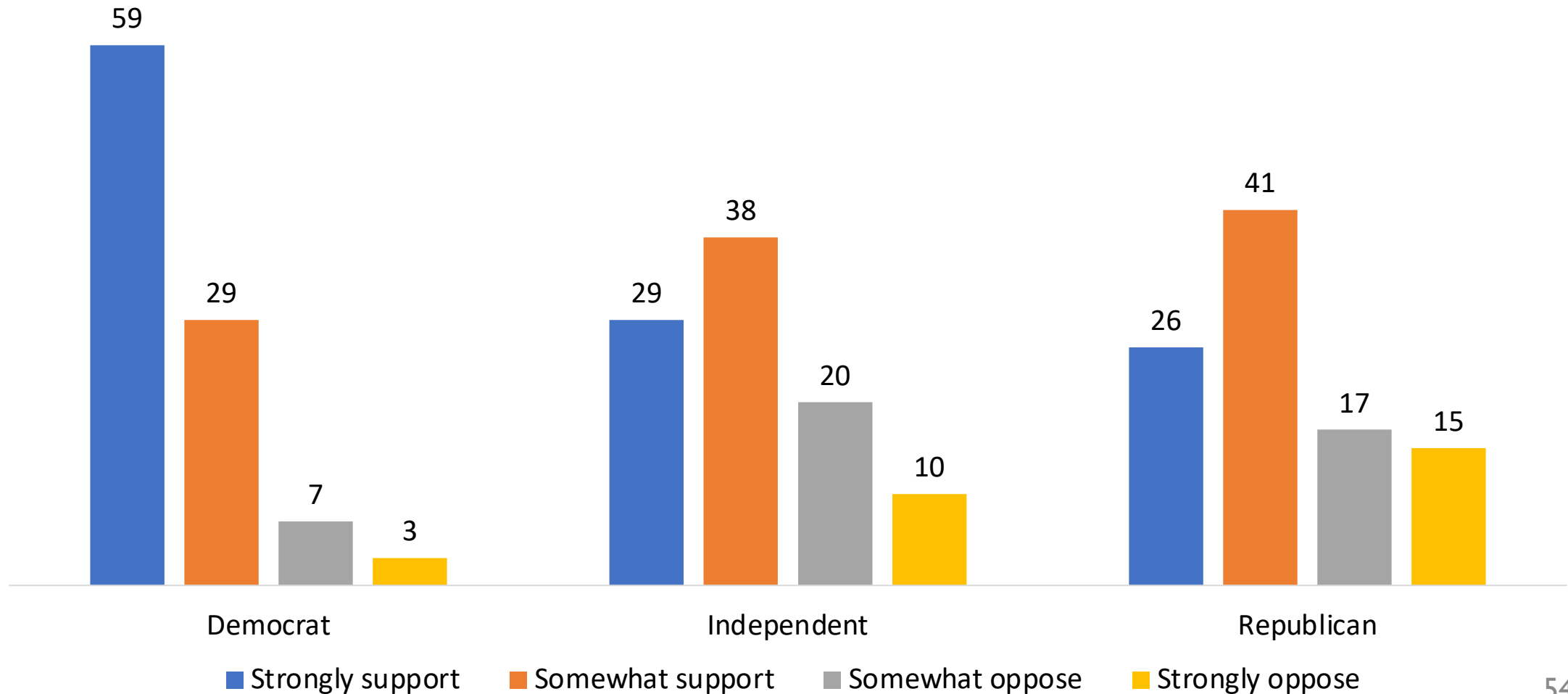


Do you believe the funding for [your local police department / the police] should be increased, decreased, or kept the same?



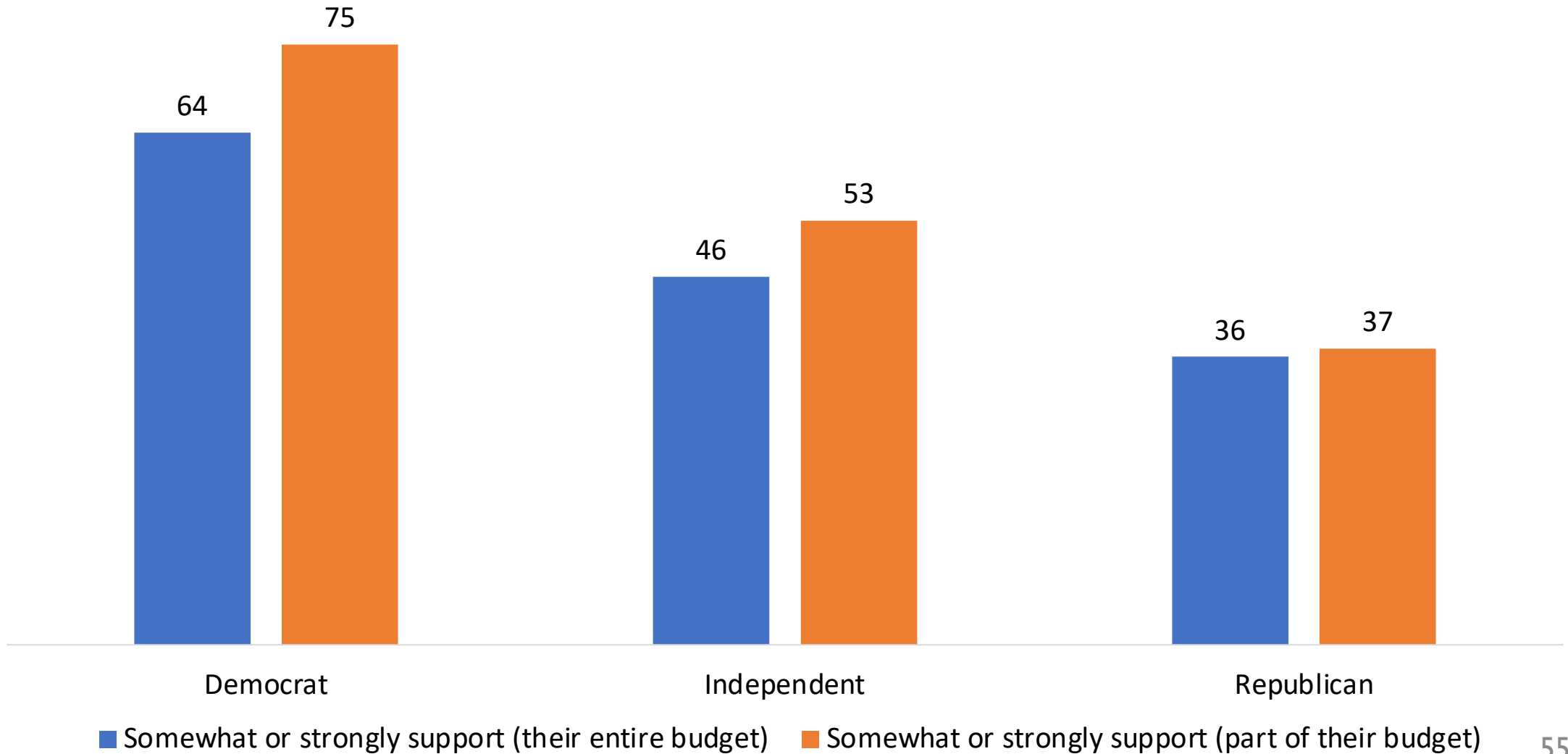


Would you support or oppose creating a new agency of first responders that specialize in de-escalation of violence, providing mental health support, and other social services that would take over these responsibilities from the police?



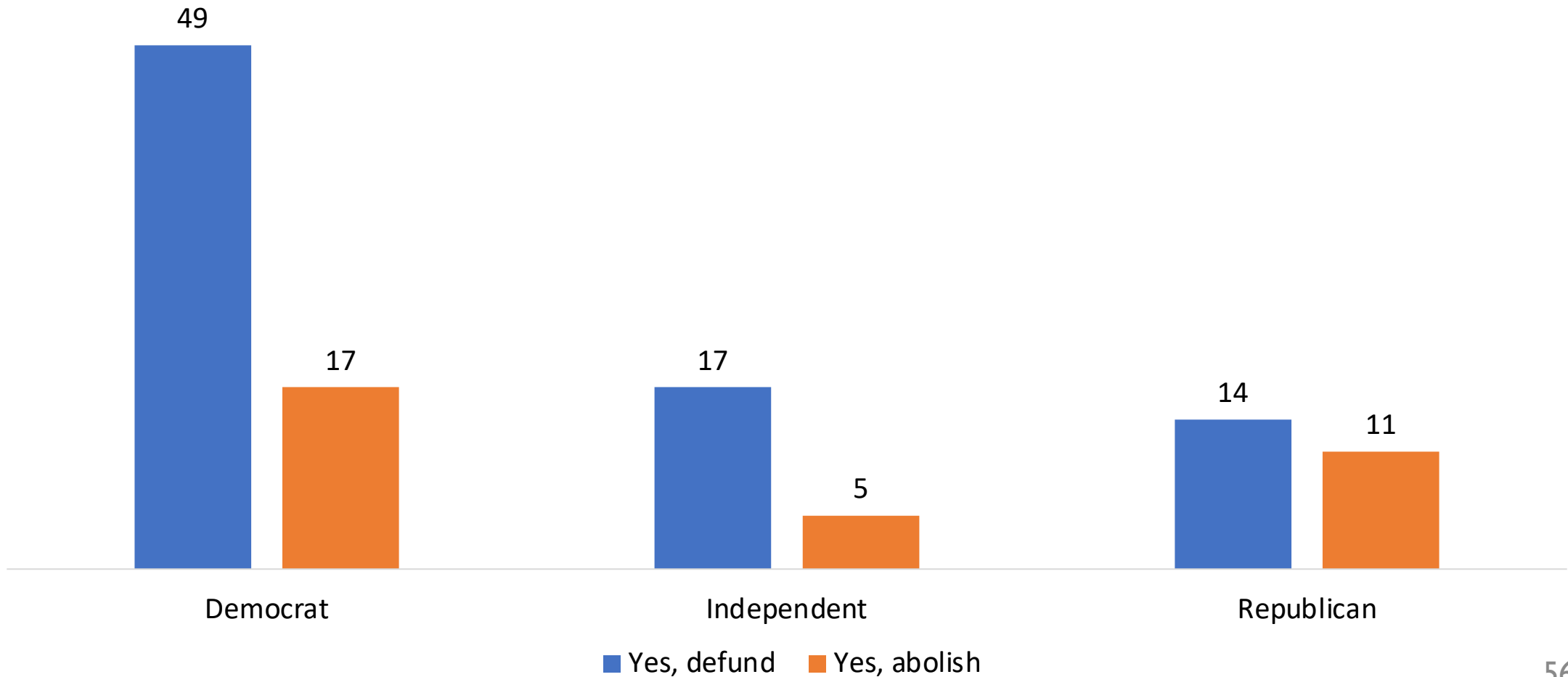


Would you support or oppose divesting from police departments and putting [their entire / part of their] budgets toward investments into other areas such as healthcare, education and housing?



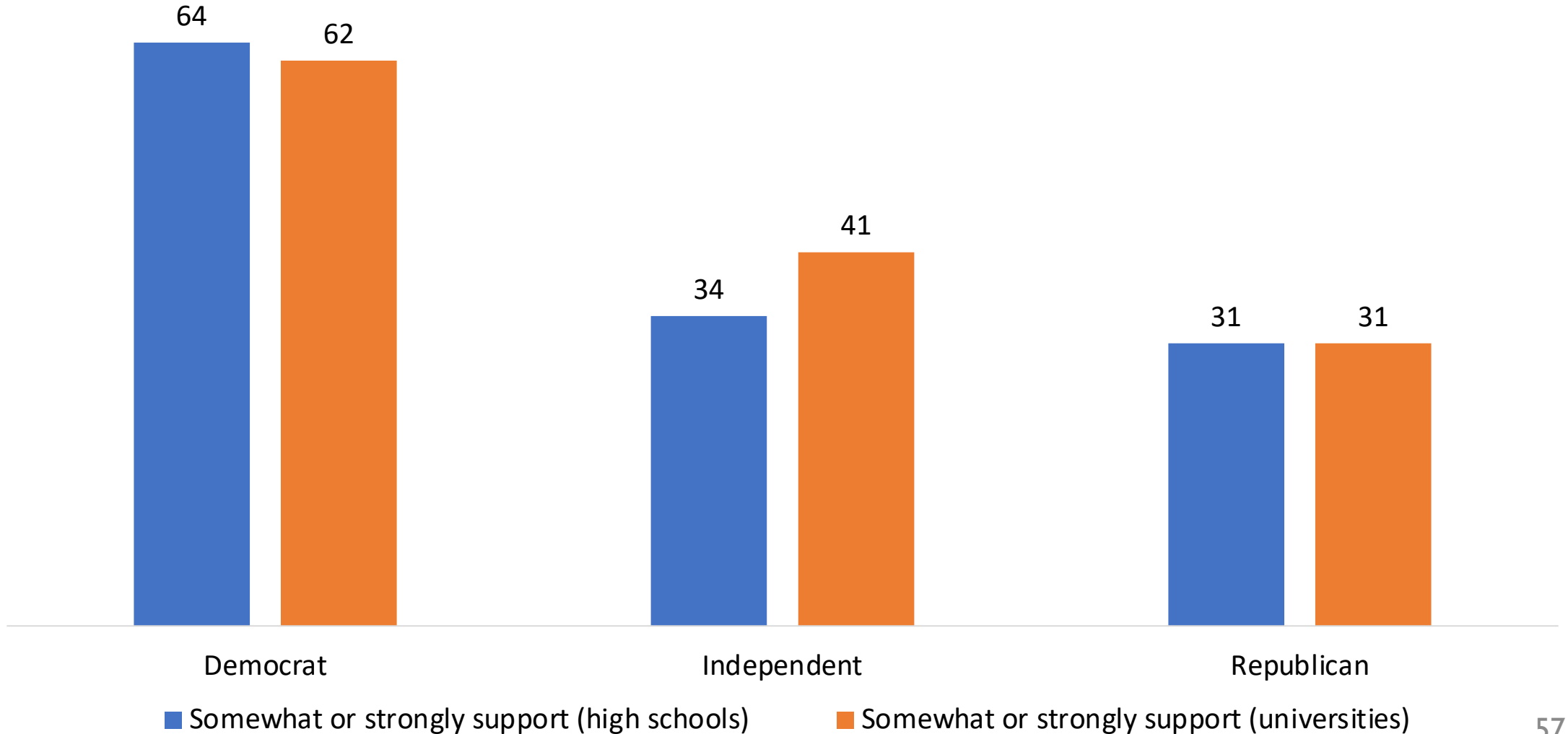


Do you think police departments in the United States should be [defunded / abolished]?



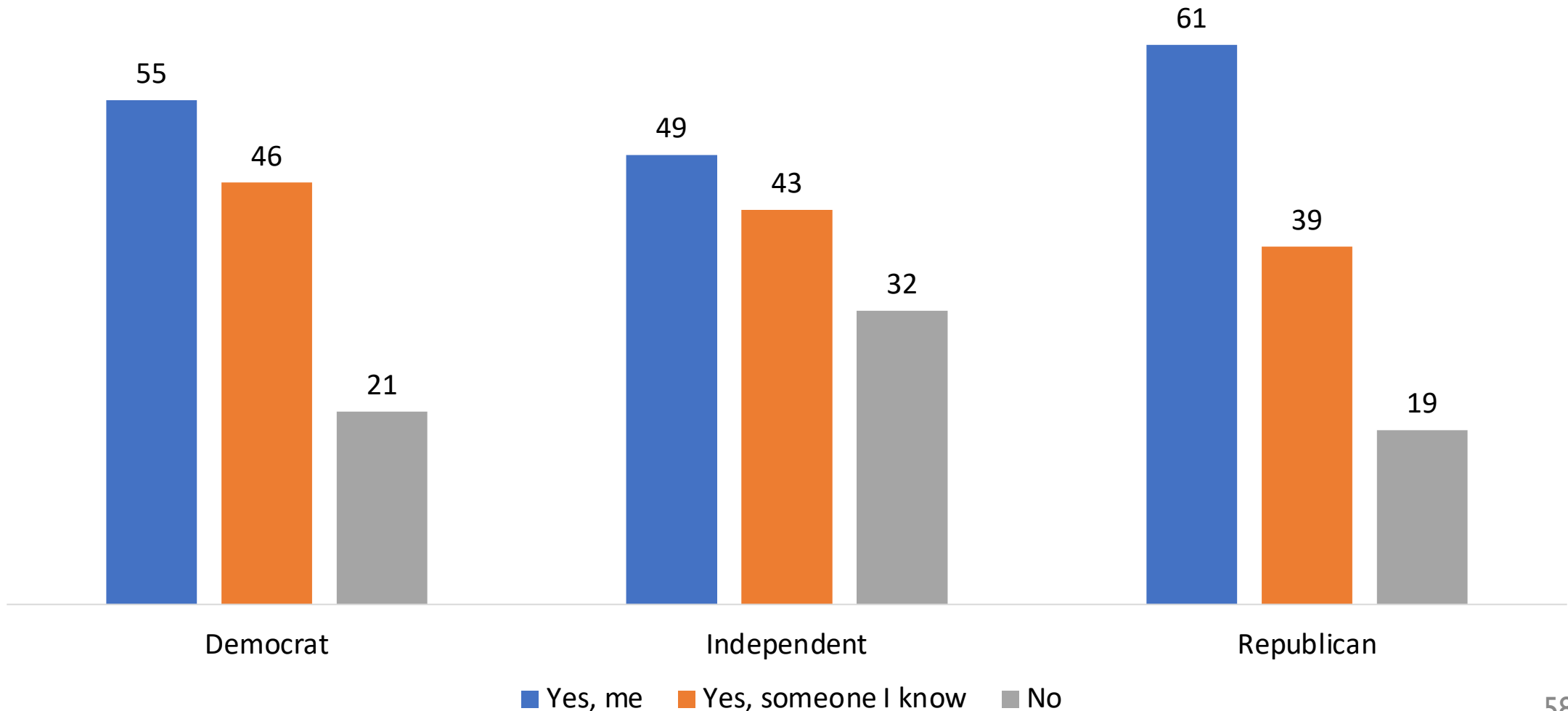


Do you support or oppose [high schools / universities] cutting ties with the police?



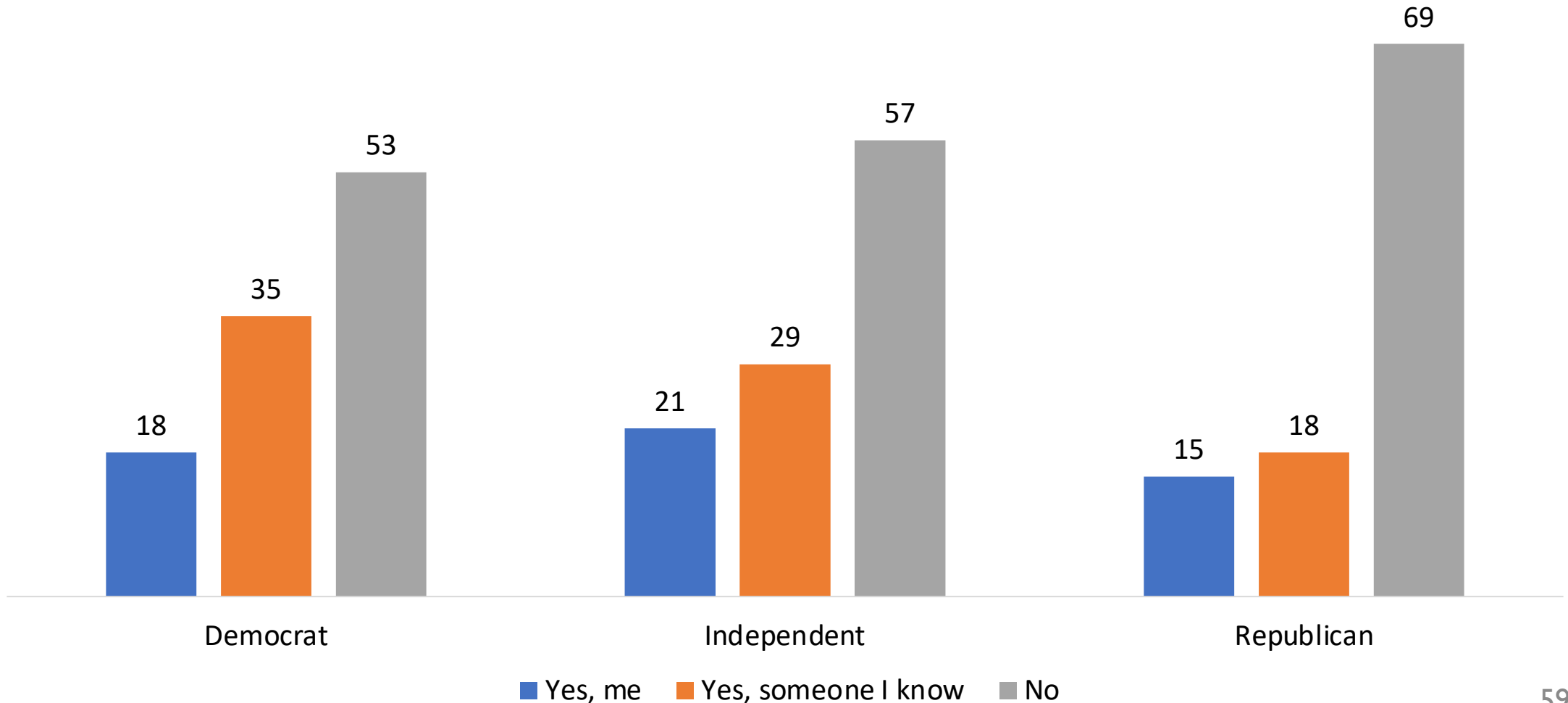


Have you or someone you know ever been stopped by the police? *(Select all that apply)*



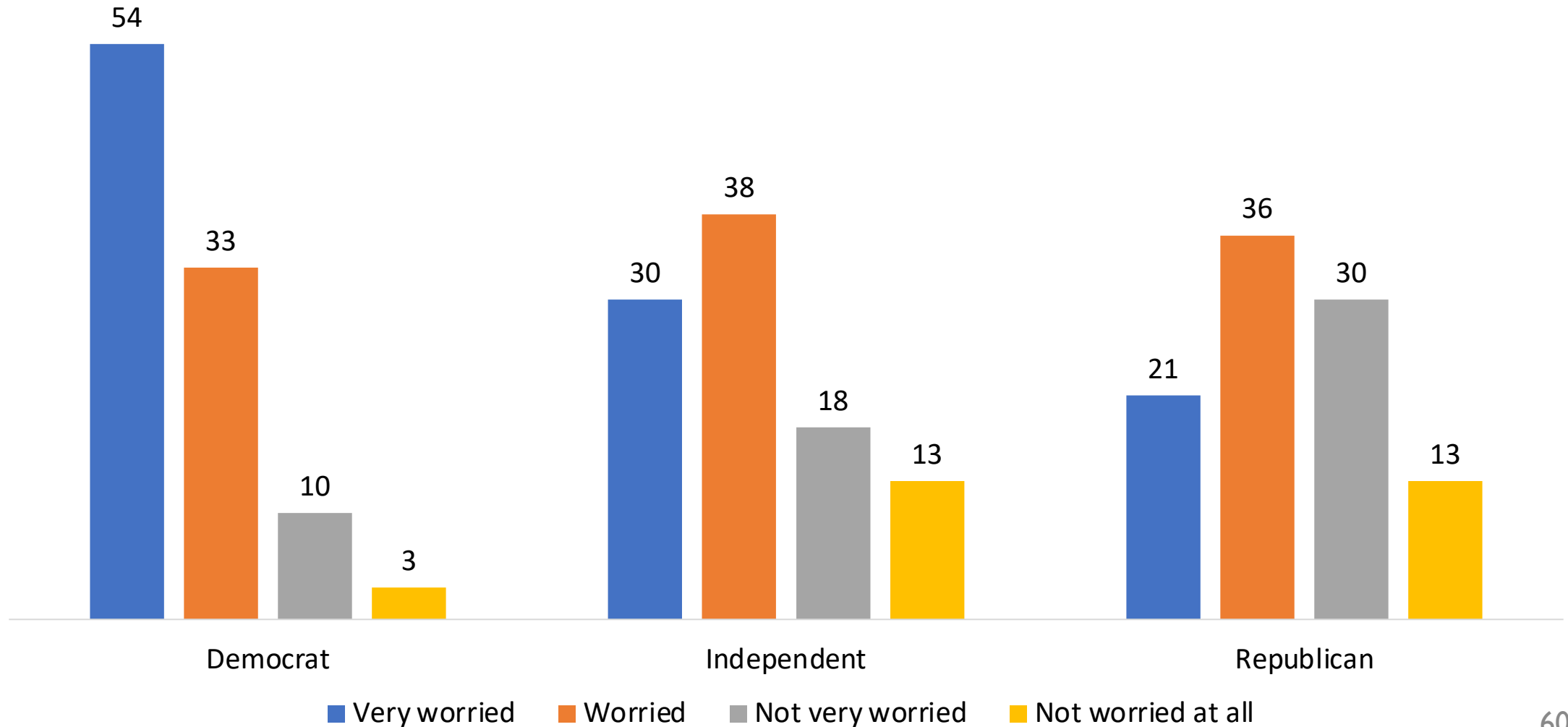


Have you or someone you know experienced harassment or violence at the hands of the police? *(Select all that apply)*



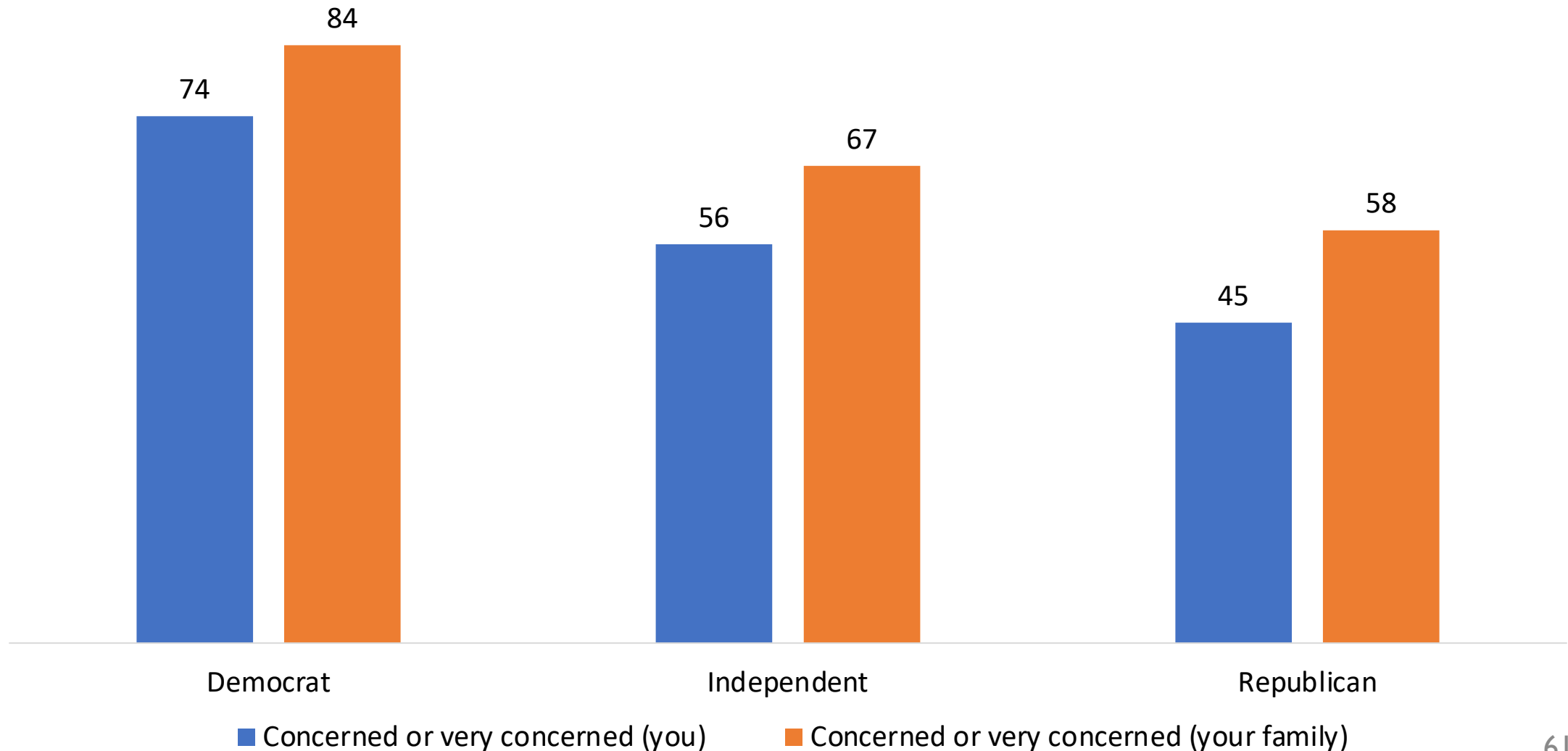


How worried are you about the spread of the coronavirus?



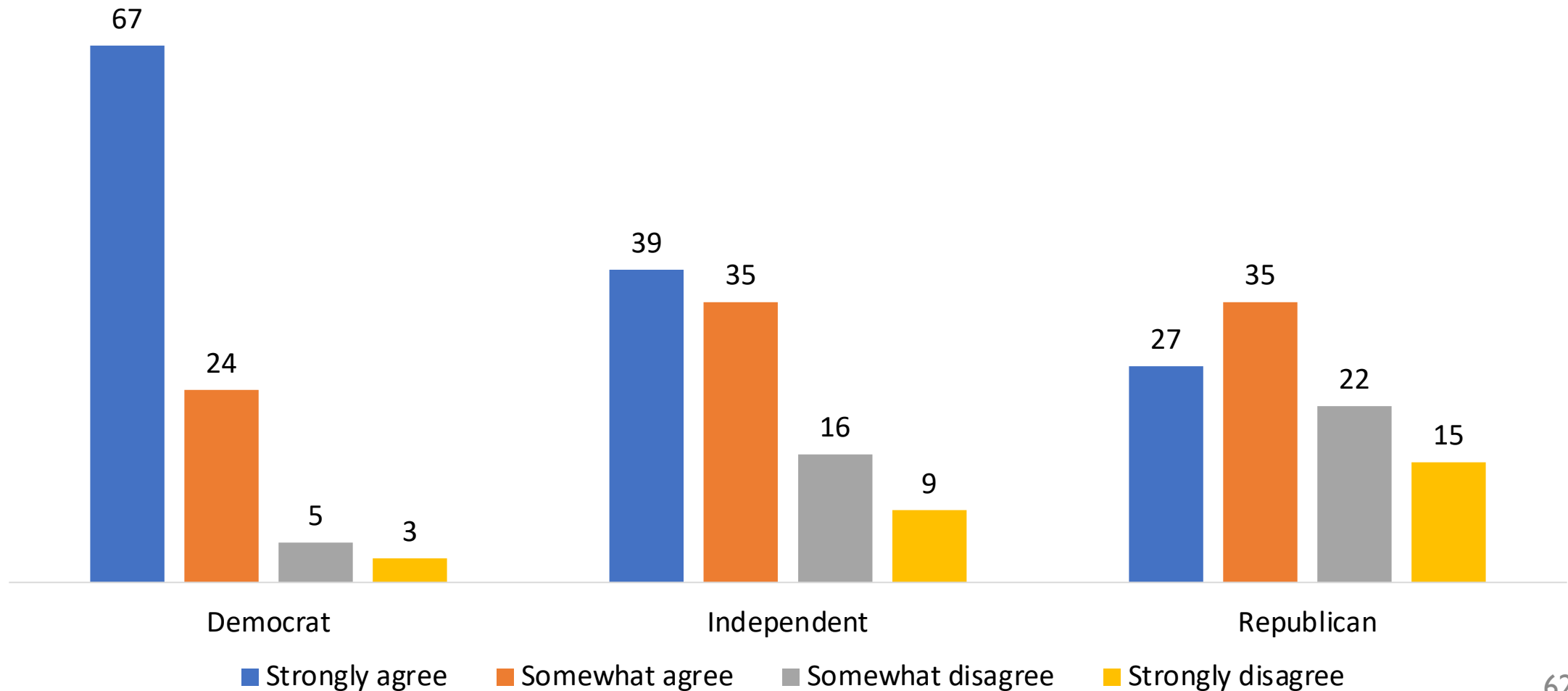


How concerned are you about [you / your family] getting seriously sick due to the coronavirus?



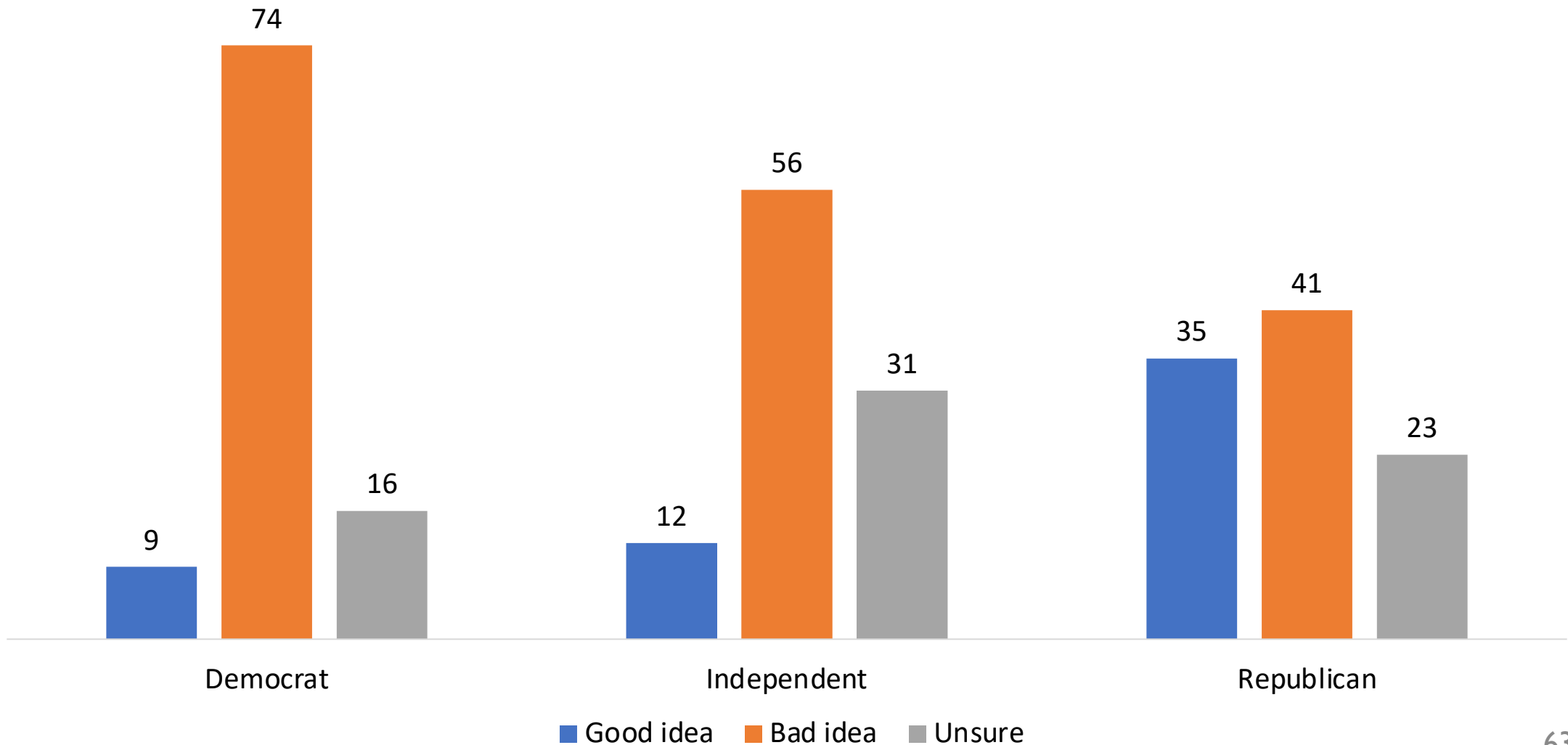


The current surge in cases of the coronavirus being experienced in many states is the result of opening up those states too soon.



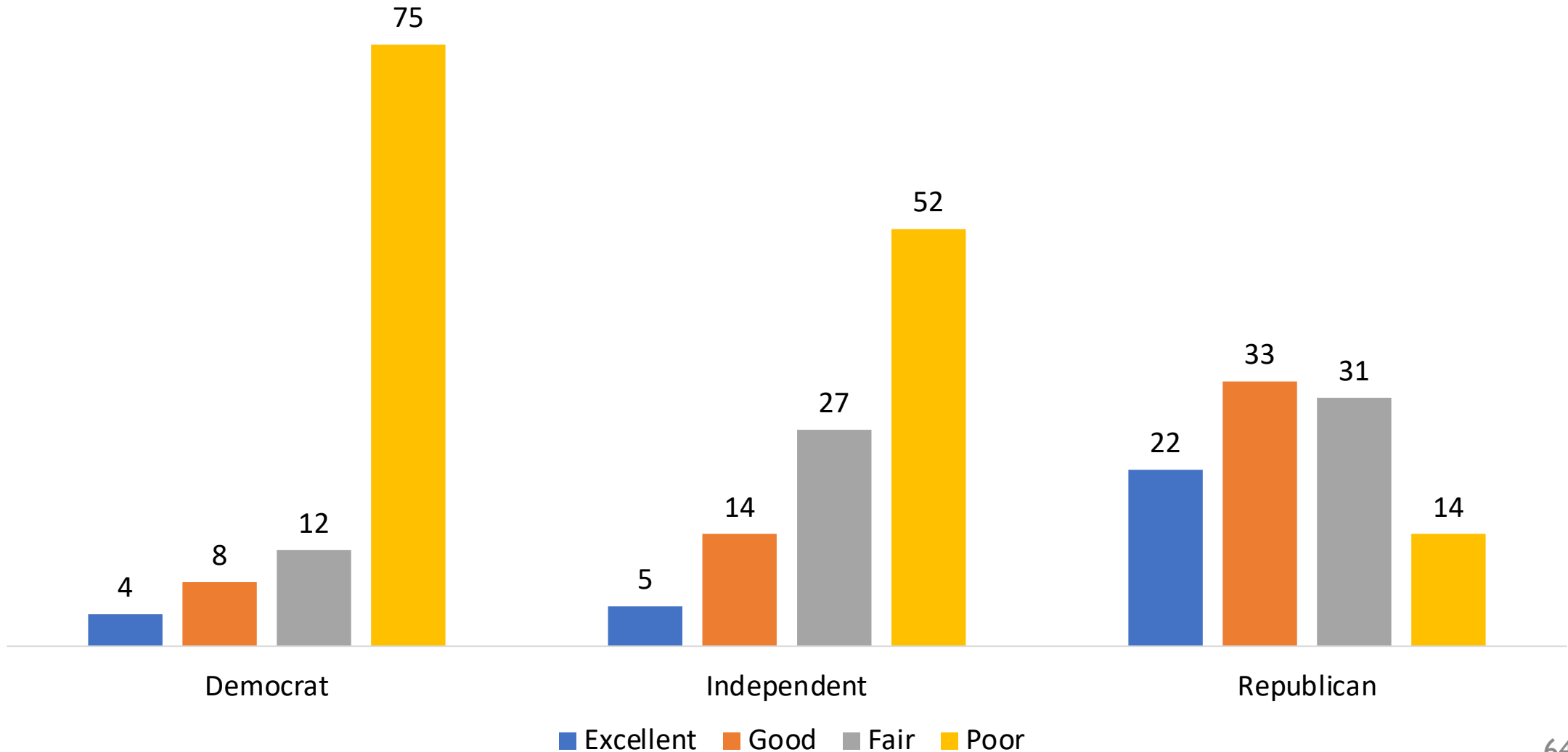


Given what you know about the spread of the coronavirus currently, do you think it is a good or bad idea to have students return to school in person in the fall?



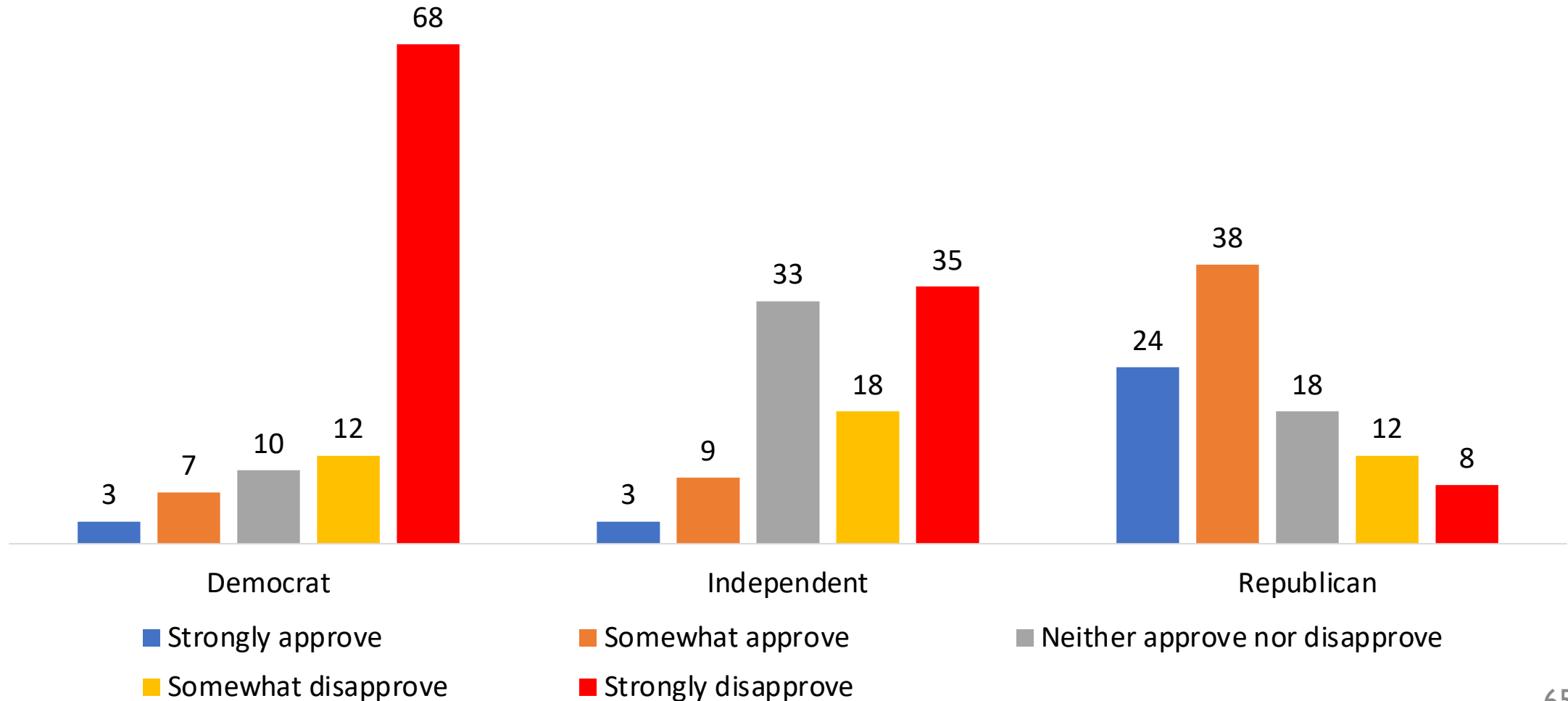


How well do you think President Donald Trump is doing in responding to the coronavirus pandemic in your community?





Trump Presidential Approval





Survey Methodology (1 of 3)

The GenForward August survey is a project of Professor Cathy J. Cohen at the University of Chicago. Interviews were conducted with a representative sample from GenForwardSM, a nationally representative survey panel of adults ages 18-36 recruited and administered by NORC at the University of Chicago.

A total of 3,115 interviews were conducted between July 24th and August 6th, 2020 with adults ages 18-36, including completed interviews with 807 African American young adults, 448 Asian American young adults, 789 Latinx young adults, 1018 White young adults, and 53 young adults with other racial and ethnic backgrounds. The survey was offered in English and Spanish and via telephone and web modes.

The GenForward survey was built from two sample sources:

Fifty-five percent of the completed interviews are sourced from NORC's AmeriSpeak® Panel and from the Black Youth Project (BYP) panel of young adults recruited by NORC. AmeriSpeak is a probability-based panel that also uses address-based sample but sourced from the NORC National Frame with enhanced sample coverage. During the initial recruitment phase of the AmeriSpeak panel, randomly selected U.S. households were sampled with a known, non-zero probability of selection and then contacted by U.S. mail, email, telephone, and field interviewers (face-to-face). The BYP sample is from a probability-based household panel that uses an address-based sample from a registered voter database of the entire U.S. Households were selected using stratified random sampling to support over-sampling of households with African Americans, Latinxs, and Asian Americans ages 18-36. NORC contacted sampled households by U.S. mail and by telephone, inviting them to register and participate in public opinion surveys twice a month.



Survey Methodology (2 of 3)

The AmeriSpeak panel sample was supplemented with respondents from the Dynata nonprobability online opt-in panel. Forty-five percent of the completed interviews are sourced from the Dynata panel. To help to reduce potential bias in the nonprobability sample, Dynata attempted to balance the nonprobability respondent sample by age, race and ethnicity, gender, and partisanship. In order to incorporate the nonprobability sample, NORC used TrueNorth calibration services, an innovative hybrid calibration approach developed at NORC based on small area estimation methods in order to explicitly account for potential bias associated with the nonprobability sample. The purpose of TrueNorth calibration is to adjust the weights for the nonprobability sample so as to bring weighted distributions of the nonprobability sample in line with the population distribution for characteristics correlated with the survey variables. Such calibration adjustments help to reduce potential bias, yielding more accurate population estimates.

Panelists on both the BYP and AmeriSpeak panels are invited to register for the panel via the web or by telephone to participate in public opinion surveys.

Of the 3,115 completed interviews in the GenForward August survey, 95 percent were completed by web and 5 percent by telephone. The survey completion rate is 18.0 percent. The weighted AAPOR RR3 panel recruitment rate is 11.2 percent and the weighted household panel retention rate is 88.3 percent, for a cumulative AAPOR Response Rate 3 of 1.8 percent. The overall margin of sampling error is +/- 2.54 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level, including the design effect. Among subgroups, the margin of sampling error at the 95 percent confidence level is +/- 4.50 percentage points for African Americans, +/- 5.66 percentage points for Asian Americans, +/- 5.27 percentage points for Latinxs, and +/- 3.85 percentage points for Whites. The margin of sampling error at the 95 percent confidence level is +/- 3.40 percentage points for Democrats, +/- 5.02 percentage points for Republicans, +/- 5.71 percentage points for Independents.

To encourage cooperation, respondents were offered incentives for completing the survey that ranged from the cash-equivalent of \$3 to the cash-equivalent of \$10.



Survey Methodology (3 of 3)

The interviews from the two probability-based sample sources were combined for statistical weighting and analysis. The combined panel samples provide sample coverage of approximately 97% of the U.S. household population. Those excluded from the sample include people with P.O. Box only addresses, some addresses not listed in the USPS Delivery Sequence File, and some newly constructed dwellings. The statistical weights incorporate the appropriate probability of selection for the BYP and AmeriSpeak samples, nonresponse adjustments, and also, raking ratio adjustments to population benchmarks for 18-64-year-old adults. A poststratification process is used to adjust for any survey nonresponse as well as any non-coverage or under- and over-sampling resulting from the study-specific sample design. The poststratification process was done separately for each racial/ethnic group and involved the following variables: age, gender, education, and census region. The weighted data, which reflect the U.S. population of adults ages 18-36, and the 18-36-year-old populations for African Americans, Latinxs, Asian Americans, and non-Latinx whites, were used for all analyses.