



STRONGER COMMUNITIES. STRONGER AMERICA.

# LATINOS ON THE MOVE? PARTISAN CHURN AND CHANGING VOTER INTENT ACROSS COHORTS

# Emerging Questions in Latino Political Identity:

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- There is some evidence of an apparent shift in sentiments among Latino voters, as reflected in our polling and others, and in estimates of 2-party vote in 2020.
- Some of those reports and polls deserve closer examination. Nevertheless, there is certainly a decline in Latino Democratic enthusiasm from the soaring heights of the Obama/HRC era. Why?
- There are two potential answers and both may be true to varying degrees:
  - Extant voters may be changing their intended behavior versus the past
  - New voters may be entering the electorate holding views that differ from more established voters.

# Key Findings

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- The information environment is rife with cherry-picked evidence, bad polling, and over-interpretation of one-off events.
- Nevertheless, there is “churn” across the electorate, with self-reports of shifting sentiment at both ends of the spectrum, and a growth of skepticism about the parties;
- Rooted in historical context, the effect in terms of support share is neither unprecedented nor surprising;
- There is greater evidence for cohort effects than for actual vote (or intended vote) change—voters newer to the electorate are clearly distinct, while longer-term voters look more or less the same;
- This shift appears to be more toward independence and indecision—certainly bad for Democrats—rather than to the Republicans outright;
- The net, in terms of sentiments and openness to GOP candidates: the effect is modest but real;
- The net, in terms of partisan identification: there is significant growth in independence;
- The net, in terms of 2024 intended vote: To be determined as to date it’s overwhelmingly toward indecision;
- **In many respects, whether this shift endures will depend on the evolving issue agenda, the outcome of this and other near-term elections, and the changing demography of the Latino population.**

# SUMMARY

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- There is a significant difference between long-term registrants and voters new since 2016.
  - They are less Democratic than more established voters and less supportive of the president;
  - However, they remain largely suspicious of the GOP.
- Most of these new voters are young voters:
  - Their issue agenda does not vary appreciably from that of older voters except on healthcare;
  - This suggests their potential drift is not issue-based but rather based on their views of the parties as institutions;
- Trends in partisanship appear confined to a Democratic bleed into independence and non-partisanship, a long-standing if growing feature among younger and Latino voters;
  - Younger voters are SIGNIFICANTLY more independent than older voters, and less D and Rs;
- In NET, Trump is doing not much better than he did in 2020 among Latino registered voters. But President Biden is doing worse, with Democratic erosion moving to “Undecided.”

# HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND OTHER RECENT DATA



# The Latino Vote Will Be Decisive

Latino Vote Share & Key Stats Ahead of 2024	US	AZ	CA	FL	GA	PA	NV	NC	TX	MI	WI
Presidential margin of victory 2020	4.40%	0.40%	29.20%	3.30%	0.30%	1.80%	2.40%	1.30%	5.60%	2.80%	0.06%
Latino share of votes cast, 2020	10.64%	22.31%	26.87%	18.41%	3.64%	4.00%	17.69%	5.02%	25.03%	3.30%	3.10%
Latinos eligible but unregistered (Nov 2022)	13.2M	521K	3M	1.5M	195K	267K	218K	198K	2.4M	123K	101K
Expected Latino 1st time presidential voters in 2024	22.00%	19%	23%	19%	23%	21%	19%	24%	25%	n/a	n/a
New Latino voters since Trump/Clinton election	38.00%	33%	41%	35%	41%	35%	36%	39%	38%	n/a	n/a
<p>Source for 2020 Presidential Margin of Victory: <a href="https://edition.cnn.com/election/2020/results/president">https://edition.cnn.com/election/2020/results/president</a></p> <p>Source for Latino share: US Census Voting &amp; Registration Reports, UUS calculations</p> <p>Source for 2024 1st time/new voters: UUS 2023 Poll of Hispanic Electorate</p>											



➤ Both parties have reason to invest...

- Latino voters provided Biden margins greater than the victory margins in AZ, NV, PA, WI and GA in 2020. Failure to maintain or grow those margins could be sufficient to cost Democrats the election.
- Likewise, effective Democratic persuasion, or lack of it on the Republican side, could imperil GOP hopes and cost them NC. For now, FL and TX remain out of reach.

And voter registration remains a largely untapped opportunity

# Historical Trends in Latino Voting

Estimated Latino Vote in Presidential Elections, 1988 to 2020

Estimates vary by polling strategy and method...

UnidosUS chart, based on multiple exit poll data. See: <https://unidosus.org/blog/2024/05/06/latino-voters-will-play-decisive-role-in-2024/>

Hispanic Presidential Preference (1988-2020)				
Year	Source	% Rep	% Dem	% Other
1988		<b>Bush</b>	<b>Dukakis</b>	
	Voter News Service (VNS)	30%	69%	
	Los Angeles Times (LAT)	34%	65%	
	Tomas Rivera Policy Institute (TRPI)	34%	65%	
1992		<b>Bush</b>	<b>Clinton</b>	<b>Perot/Other</b>
	VNS	25%	61%	14%
	LAT	27%	51%	21%
	TRPI*	23%	65%	12%
1996		<b>Dole</b>	<b>Clinton</b>	<b>Perot/Other</b>
	VNS	21%	72%	6%
	LAT	21%	71%	7%
	TRPI*	22%	70%	7%
2000		<b>Bush</b>	<b>Gore</b>	<b>Nader/Other</b>
	VNS	35%	62%	3%
	LAT	38%	61%	1%
	New York Times (NYT)	31%	67%	2%
2004		<b>Bush</b>	<b>Kerry</b>	<b>Nader/Other</b>
	National Election Pool (NEP)**	44%	53%	2%
	LAT	45%	53%	1%
	NYT	43%	56%	
	William C. Velasquez Institute/SW Voter Registration Ed.	31%	68%	1%
2008		<b>McCain</b>	<b>Obama</b>	<b>Other</b>
	NEP***	31%	67%	2%
	NALEO/ImpreMedia	25%	72%	3%
2012		<b>Romney</b>	<b>Obama</b>	<b>Other</b>
	NEP	27%	71%	2%
	Latino Election Eve Poll****	23%	75%	2%
2016		<b>Trump</b>	<b>Clinton</b>	<b>Other</b>
	NEP	28%	66%	6%
	Latino Election Eve Poll	18%	79%	3%
2020		<b>Trump</b>	<b>Biden</b>	
	NEP	32%	65%	3%
	Latino Election Eve Poll	27%	70%	3%

# Latino Political History

## Past History of Latino Vote

- Prior to Prop 187 (1994), the vote was regularly 2/3 D, 1/3 R.
- Latinos have a history of oscillation;
  - Pro-Republican Drift in the 1980s and early 1990s reversed in aftermath of Prop. 187.
  - Pro-Republican drift under George W. Bush reversed in the aftermath of Sensenbrenner Bill (2005) and SB 1070 (2010)

## Recent Democratic Surge & Decline

- Beginning in 1996 and excepting 2000-2004, Democrats substantially increased their share to 70%+/-:
- Drift to the GOP, then, could be:
  - Regression to the Mean
  - Candidate-Specific Preferences
  - Long-term Partisan Change

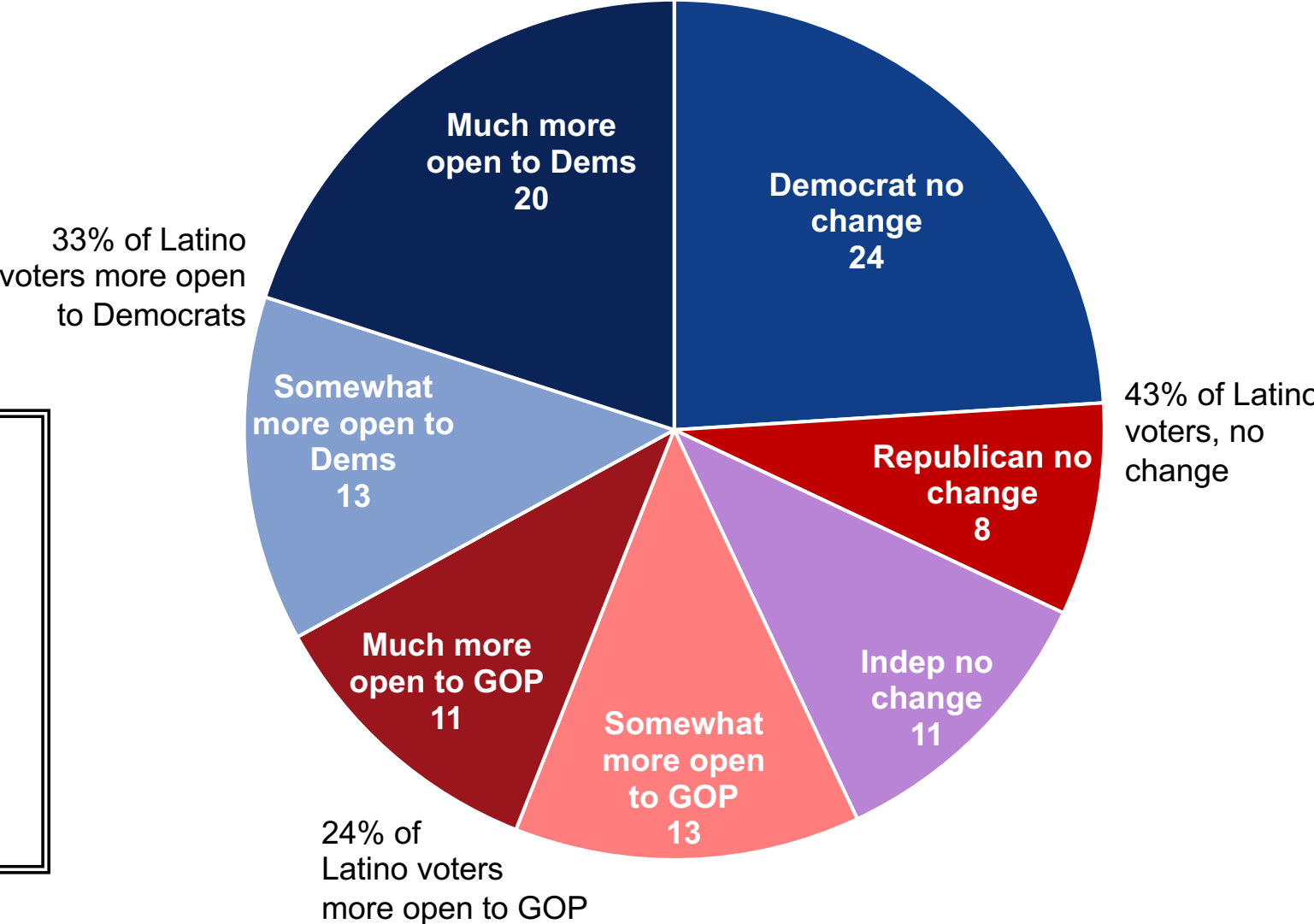


## DETAILED ANALYSIS



Using data from Unidos US 2023 Poll of the Hispanic Electorate  
Total N=2,707 Latino registered voters  
Margin of error +/- 1.9%  
Field Dates: Nov 2 - 13, 2023  
English or Spanish, according to preference  
Mixed mode: 75% online, 25% live telephone interviews

Thinking about your feelings toward both political parties over the past few years, which of the following best describes you? Would you say that you have become [somewhat/much] more open to supporting [Republicans/Democrats] than you have in the past, or that your views have not really changed much?



SUMMARY	
Democrats no change +More open to Dems	57%
Republicans no change +More open to GOP	32%
<b>Net Advantage</b>	<b>Dem +25</b>

**In your opinion, what are the most important issues that elected officials should address?  
Rank your top three issues. (Total ranked 1, 2, or 3 reported)**

	Total	Dem More Dem	Dem No Change	Dem More GOP	Ind More Dem	Ind No Change	Ind More GOP	GOP More Dem	GOP No Change	GOP More GOP
Inflation / rising cost of living	55	50	54	42	64	57	54	50	62	65
Jobs and the economy	43	39	41	51	48	46	38	45	47	45
Health care	31	36	33	37	27	36	29	38	21	18
Crime / gun violence	29	39	28	31	30	27	25	37	19	18
Lack of affordable housing/high rent	24	24	28	18	21	26	29	15	20	24
Immigration and Border	21	17	15	30	13	12	33	13	41	32

Numbers in each cell represent the share of all respondents in this sentiment-category identifying each issue in their top—3.

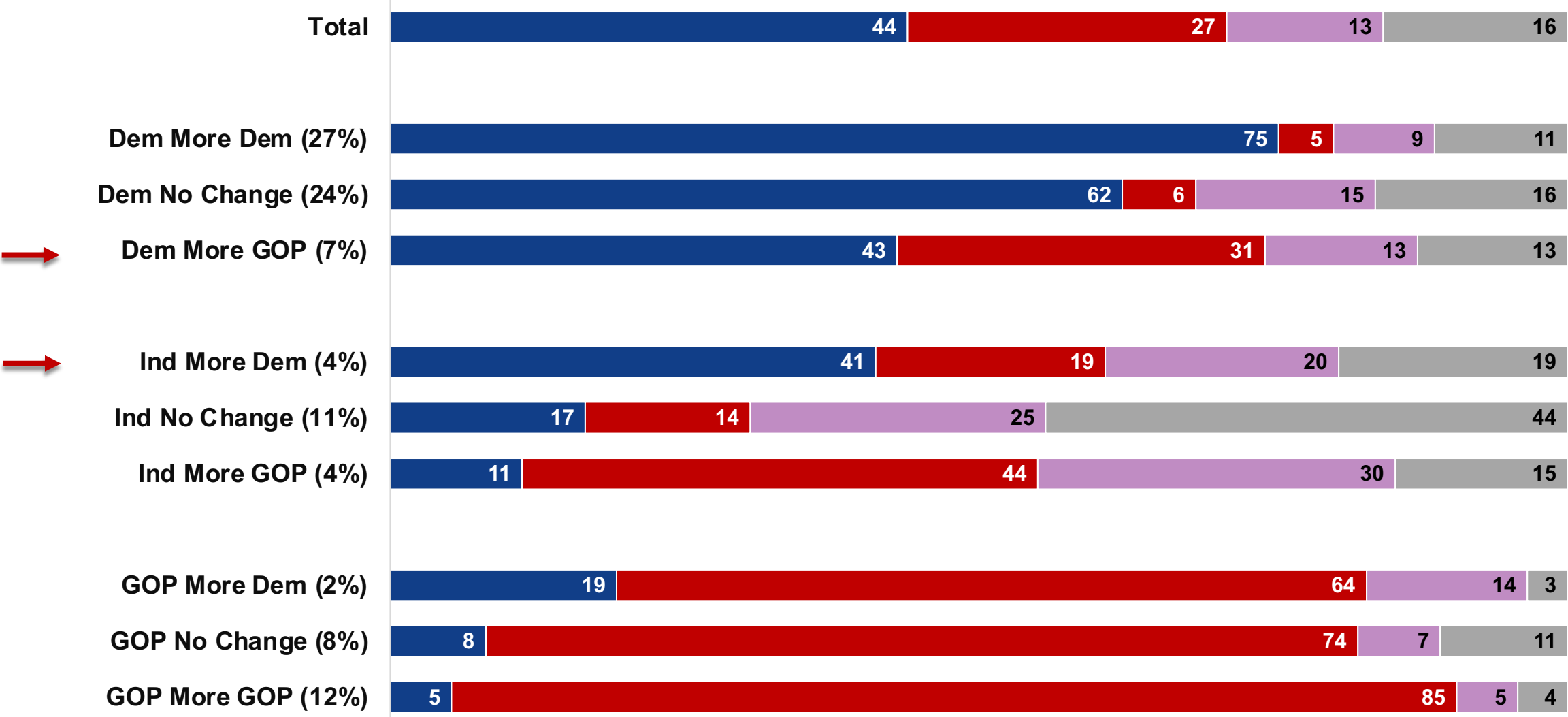
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	Total	Dem More Dem	Dem No Change	Dem More GOP	Ind More Dem	Ind No Change	Ind More GOP	GOP More Dem	GOP No Change	GOP More GOP
Inflation / rising cost of living	21	20	<b>24</b>	18	21	<b>24</b>	<b>18</b>	15	<b>24</b>	20
Jobs and the economy	19	15	22	<b>20</b>	<b>25</b>	18	16	11	23	<b>23</b>
Health care	16	<b>22</b>	14	19	13	20	14	<b>27</b>	9	9

Numbers in each cell represent the share of all respondents in this sentiment-category identifying each issue as their #1 concern.

# Thinking about the presidential election coming up next year, which party do you think would do a better job handling the following issue: Immigration

■ Democrats better 
 ■ Republicans better 
 ■ Both parties would do a fairly good job 
 ■ Neither party would be effective



# Thinking about the US immigration system, which of the following do you think are the most important issues that elected officials should address? Select all that apply.

(Sorted highest to lowest)

## Top immigration priority issues

Dem more Dem:

67% path to citizenship for Dreamers  
60% path to citizenship for immigrants

Dem no change

61% path to citizenship for Dreamers  
57% path to citizenship for immigrants

Dem more GOP

**44% path to citizenship for immigrants**  
**42% path to citizenship for Dreamers**

Ind more Dem

**58% path to citizenship for Dreamers**  
**54% path to citizenship for immigrants**

Ind no change

47% path to citizenship for immigrants  
44% path to citizenship for Dreamers

Ind more GOP

**36% increase border security**  
**33% path to citizenship for immigrants**  
**33% deport undocumented immigrants**

GOP more Dem

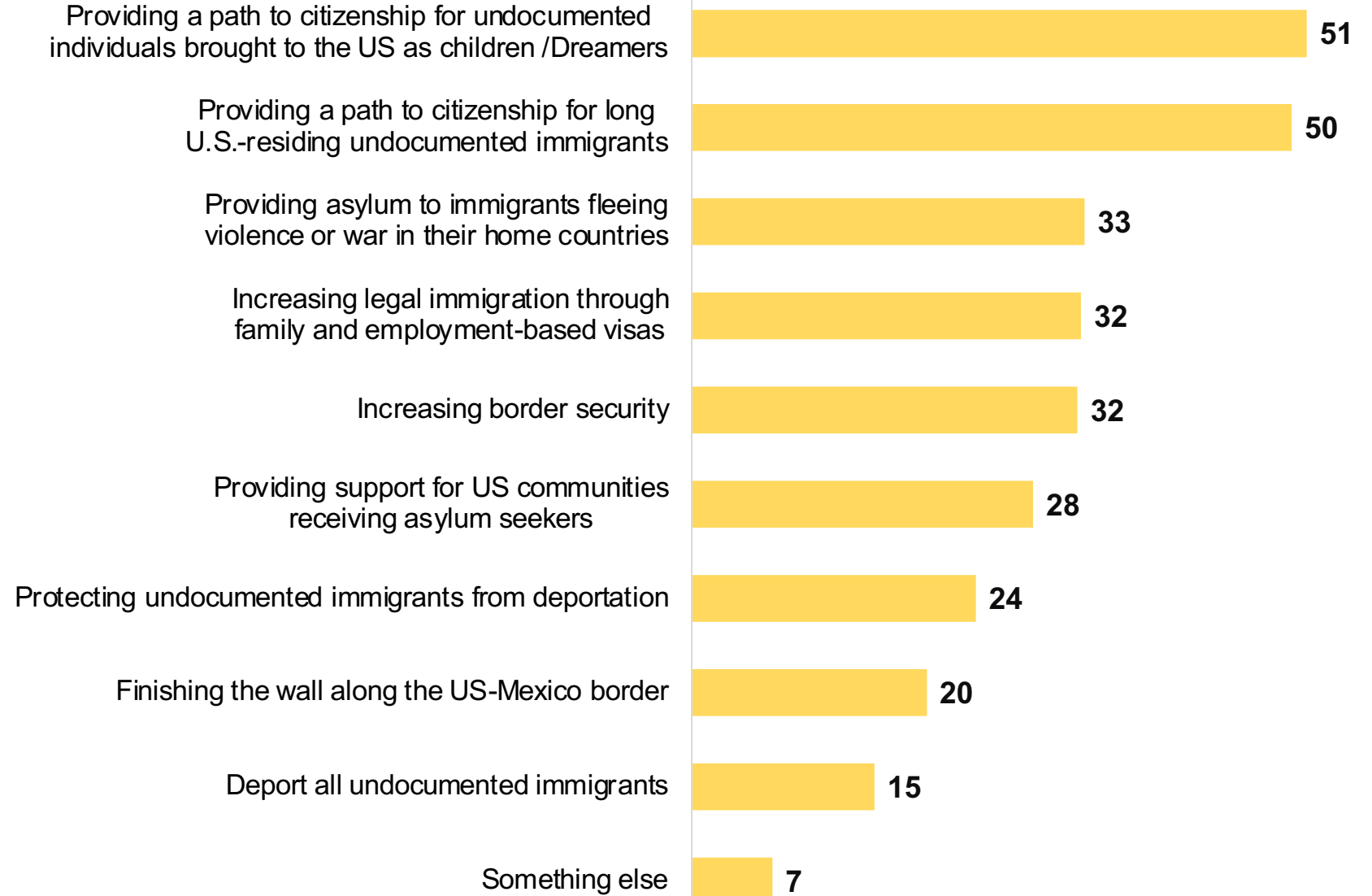
**43% increase border security**  
**39% path to citizenship for Dreamers**

GOP no change

59% increase border security  
44% finish wall along US-Mex border

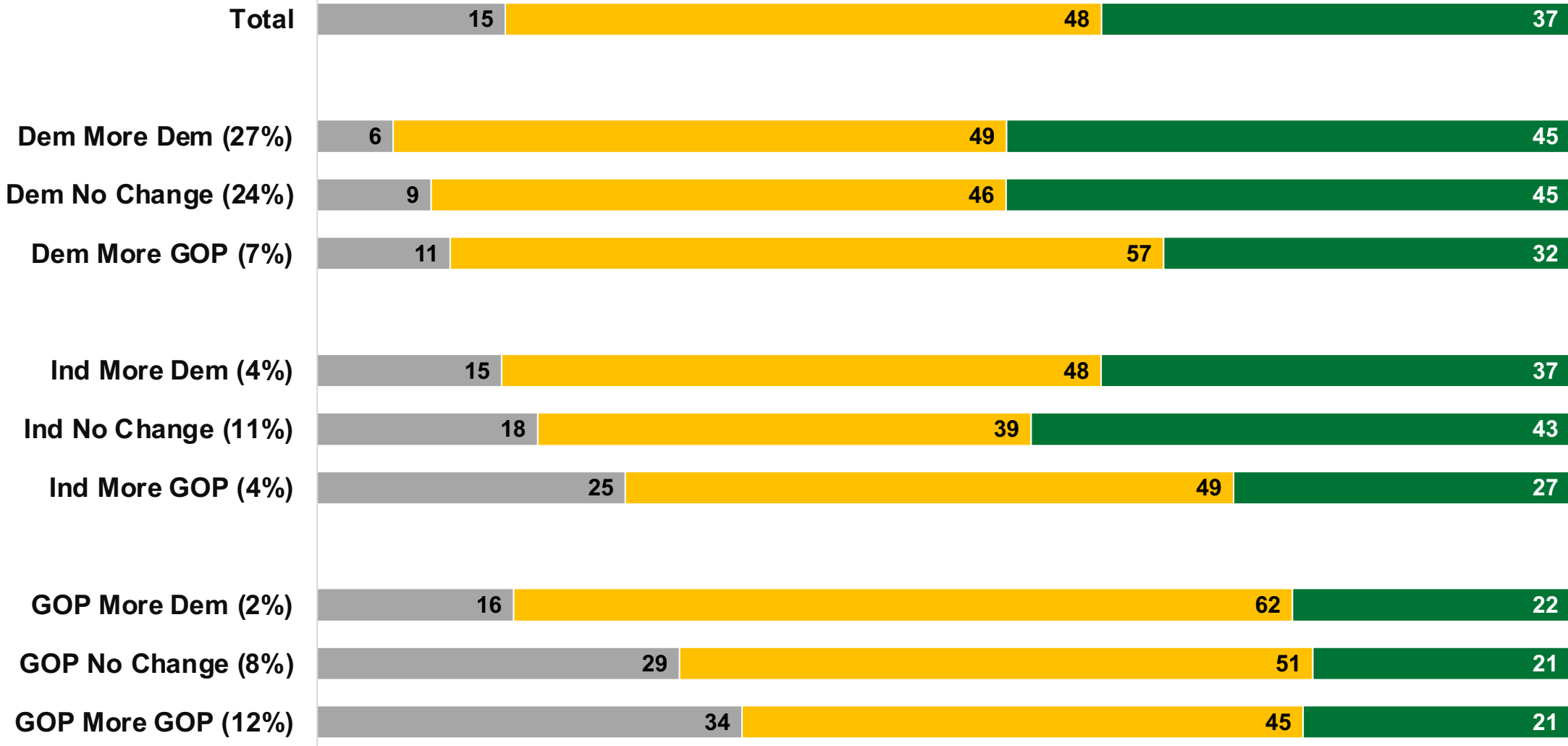
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57% increase border security  
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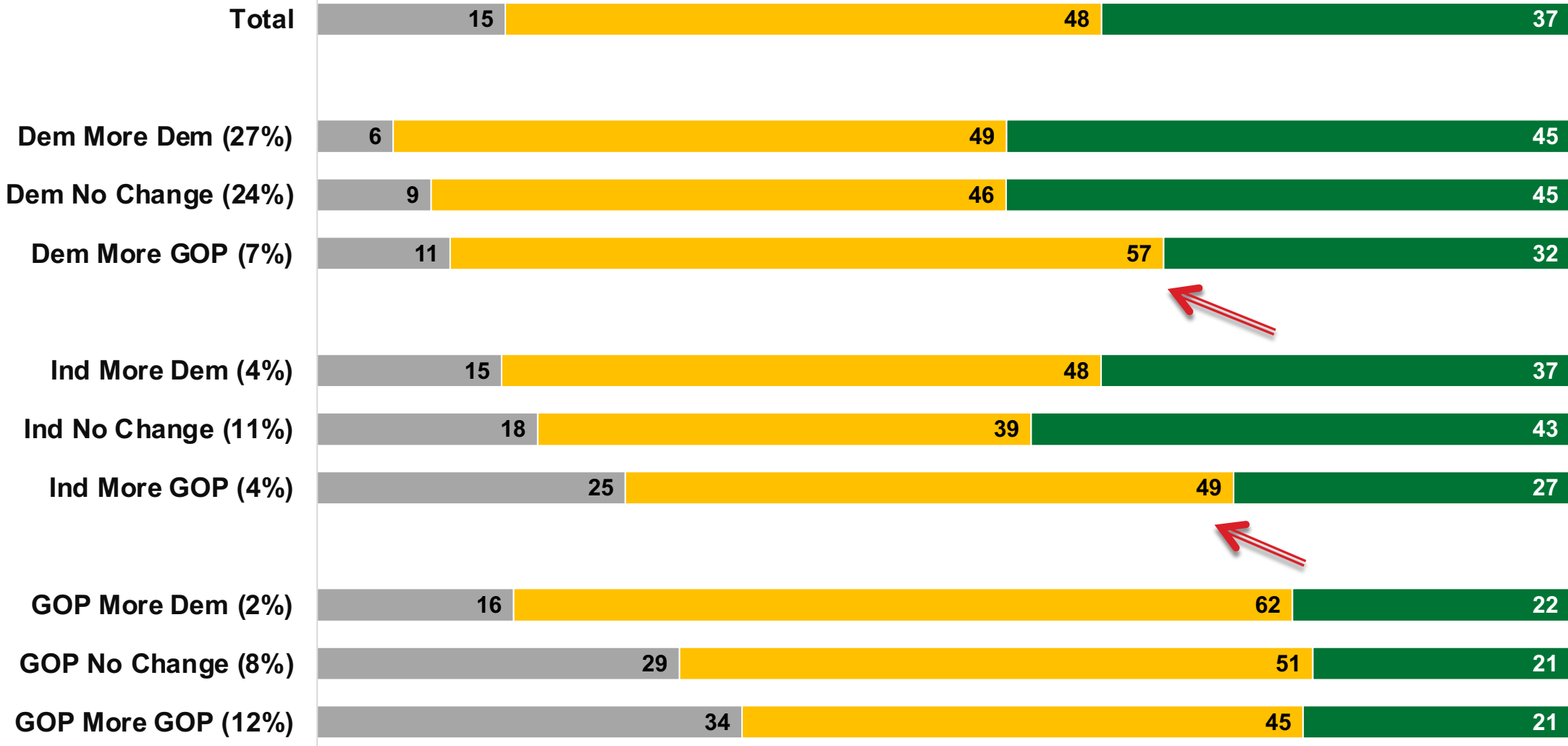
# When it comes to immigration, people have different opinions. Which of the following statements comes closest to your view?

- The government should focus on increasing border security
- The government should both increase border security AND provide a path to legal status for undocumented immigrants who have lived and worked in the U.S. for a very long time
- The government should focus on providing a path to legal status for undocumented immigrants who have lived and worked in the U.S. for a very long time



# When it comes to immigration, people have different opinions. Which of the following statements comes closest to your view?

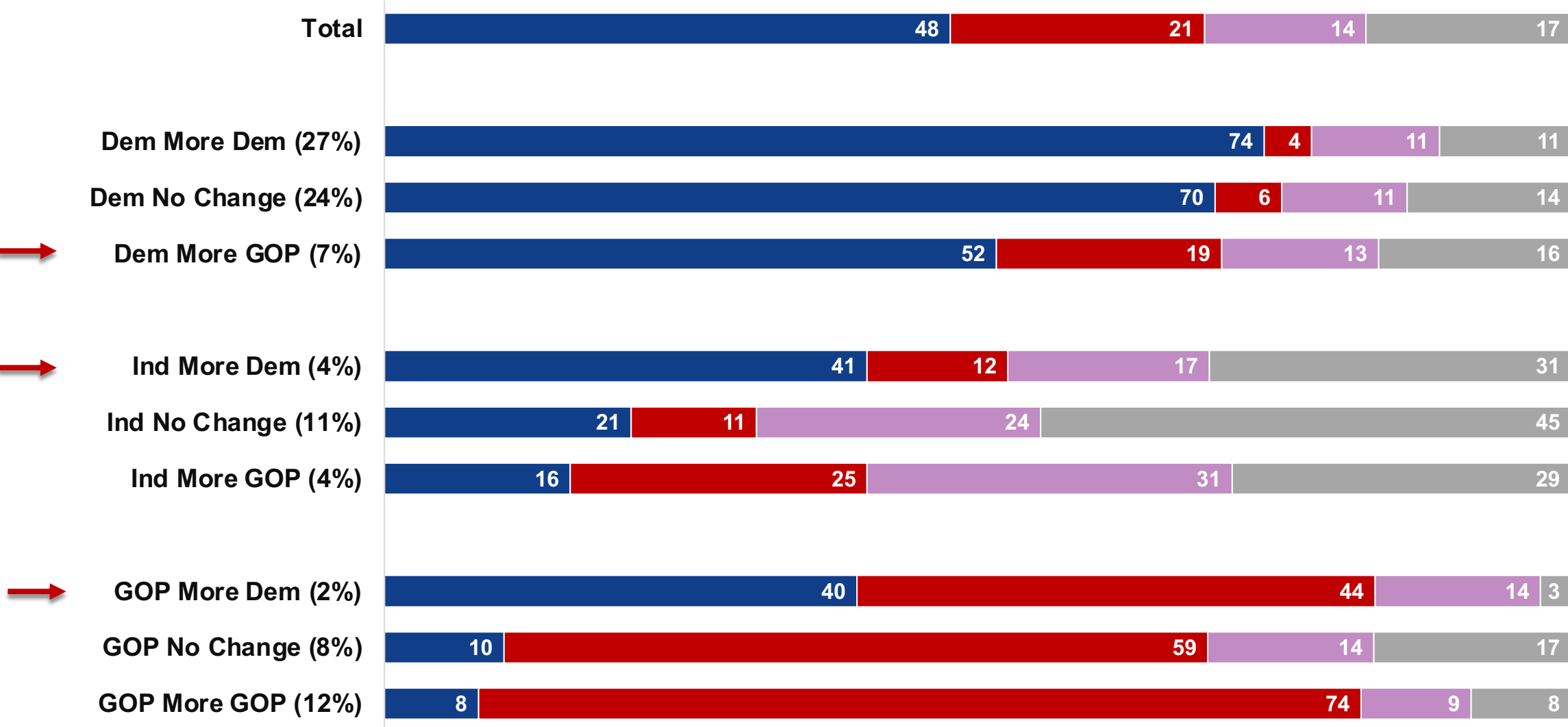
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- The government should focus on providing a path to legal status for undocumented immigrants who have lived and worked in the U.S. for a very long time





# Thinking about the presidential election coming up next year, which party do you think would do a better job handling the following issue: Abortion

■ Democrats better ■ Republicans better ■ Both parties would do a fairly good job ■ Neither party would be effective

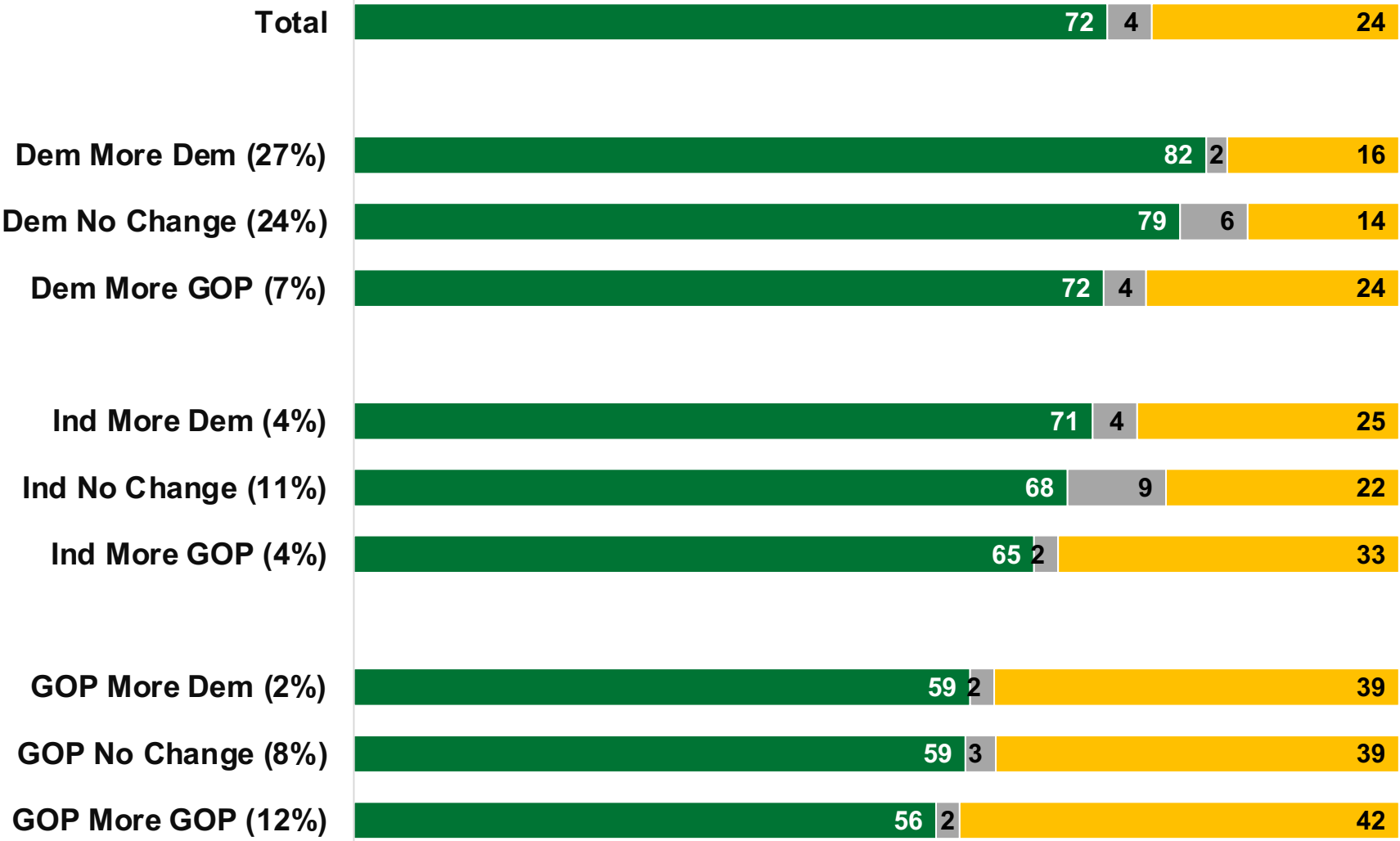


Abortion **not** a major factor in Democratic erosion, more meaningful on GOP side.

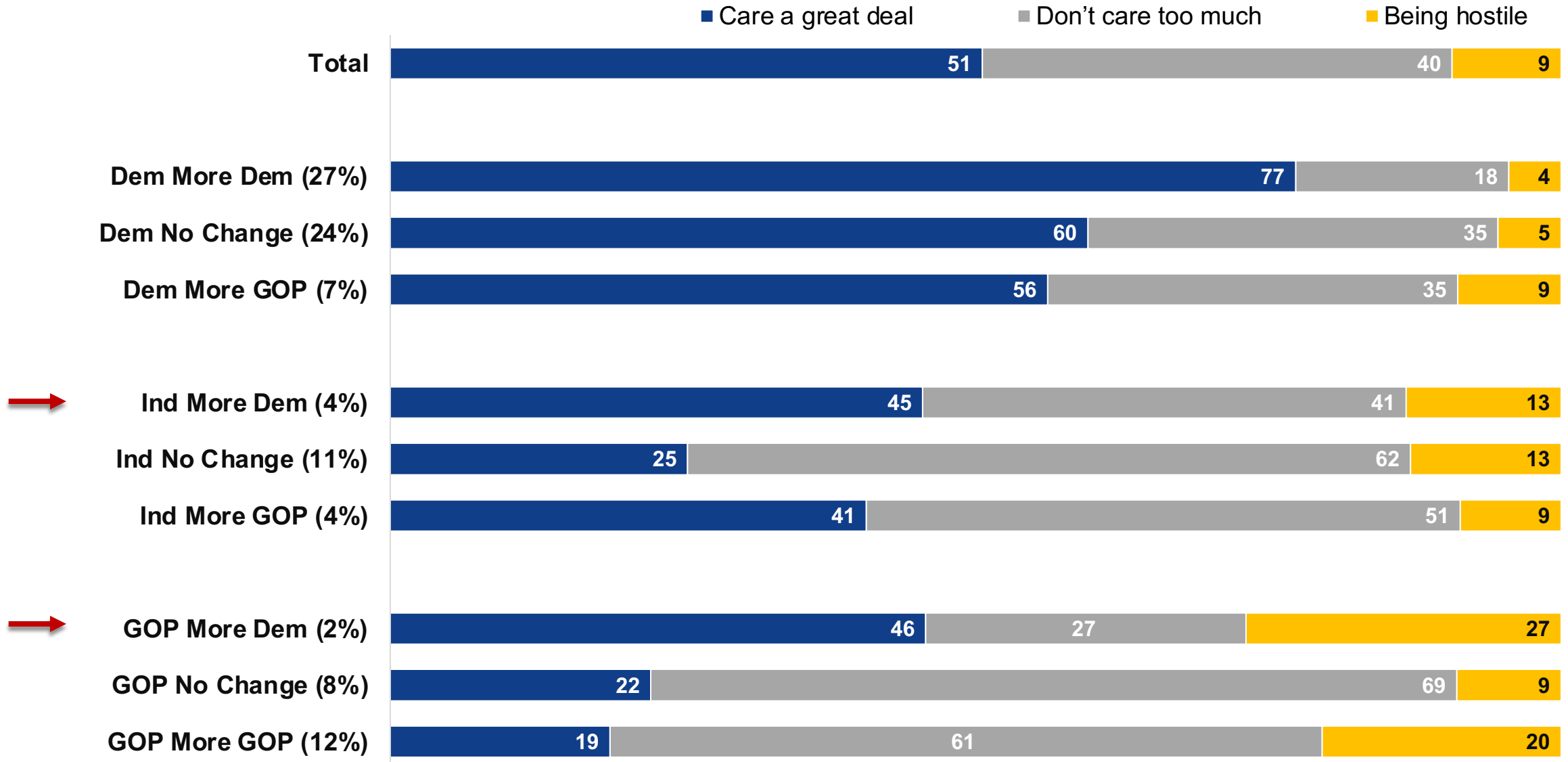
**Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? No matter what my personal beliefs about abortion are, I think it is wrong to make abortion illegal and take that choice away from everyone else.**

■ Agree      ■ Don't know      ■ Disagree

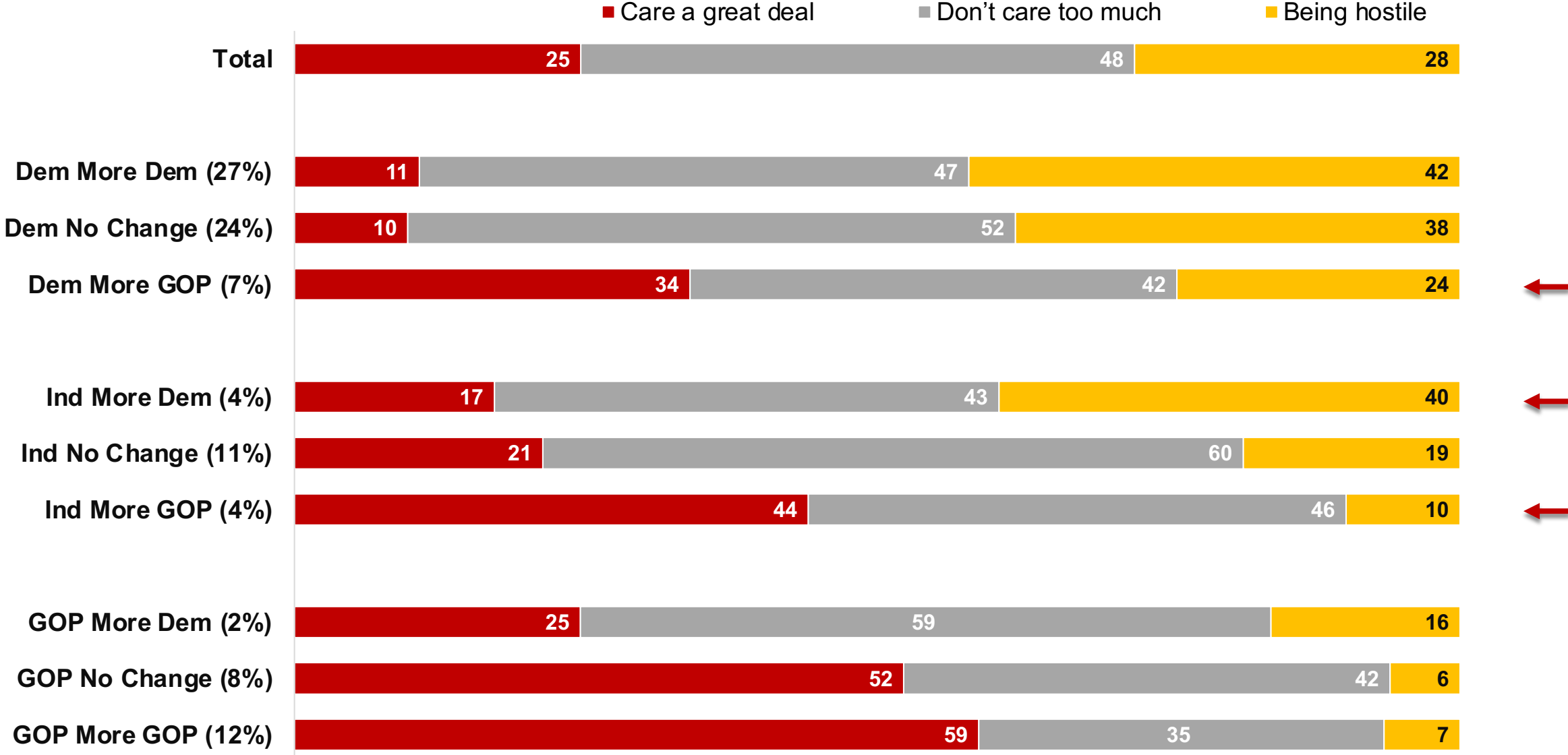
<b>Percent strongly agree</b>	
Dem more Dem:	54%
Dem no change	56%
Dem more GOP	38%
Ind more Dem	44%
Ind no change	43%
Ind more GOP	34%
GOP more Dem	33%
GOP no change	27%
GOP more GOP	32%



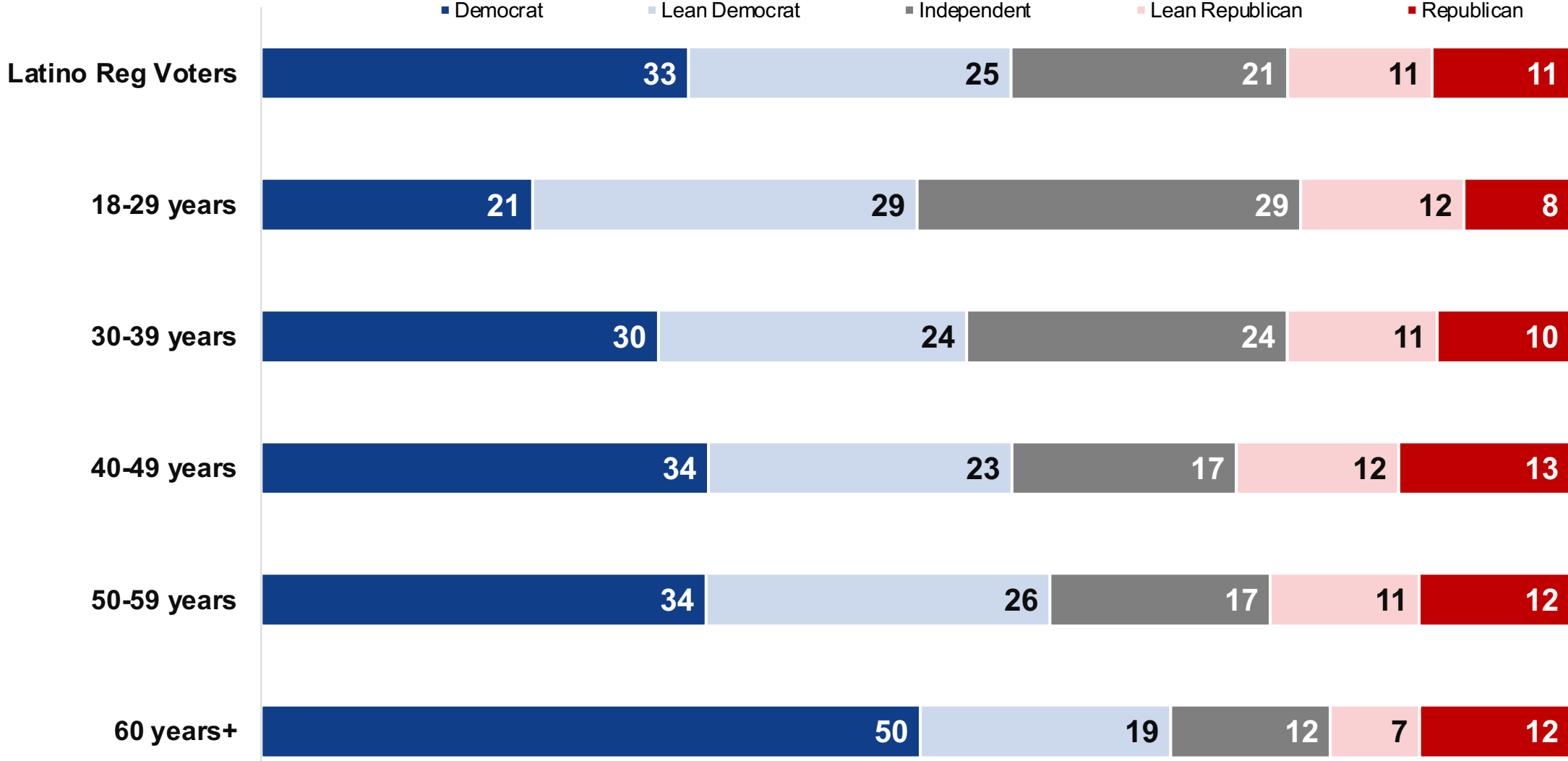
**Thinking about national politics, would you say that the Democratic Party cares a great deal about the Latino community, that they don't care too much about Latinos, or that Democrats are being hostile towards the Latino community?**



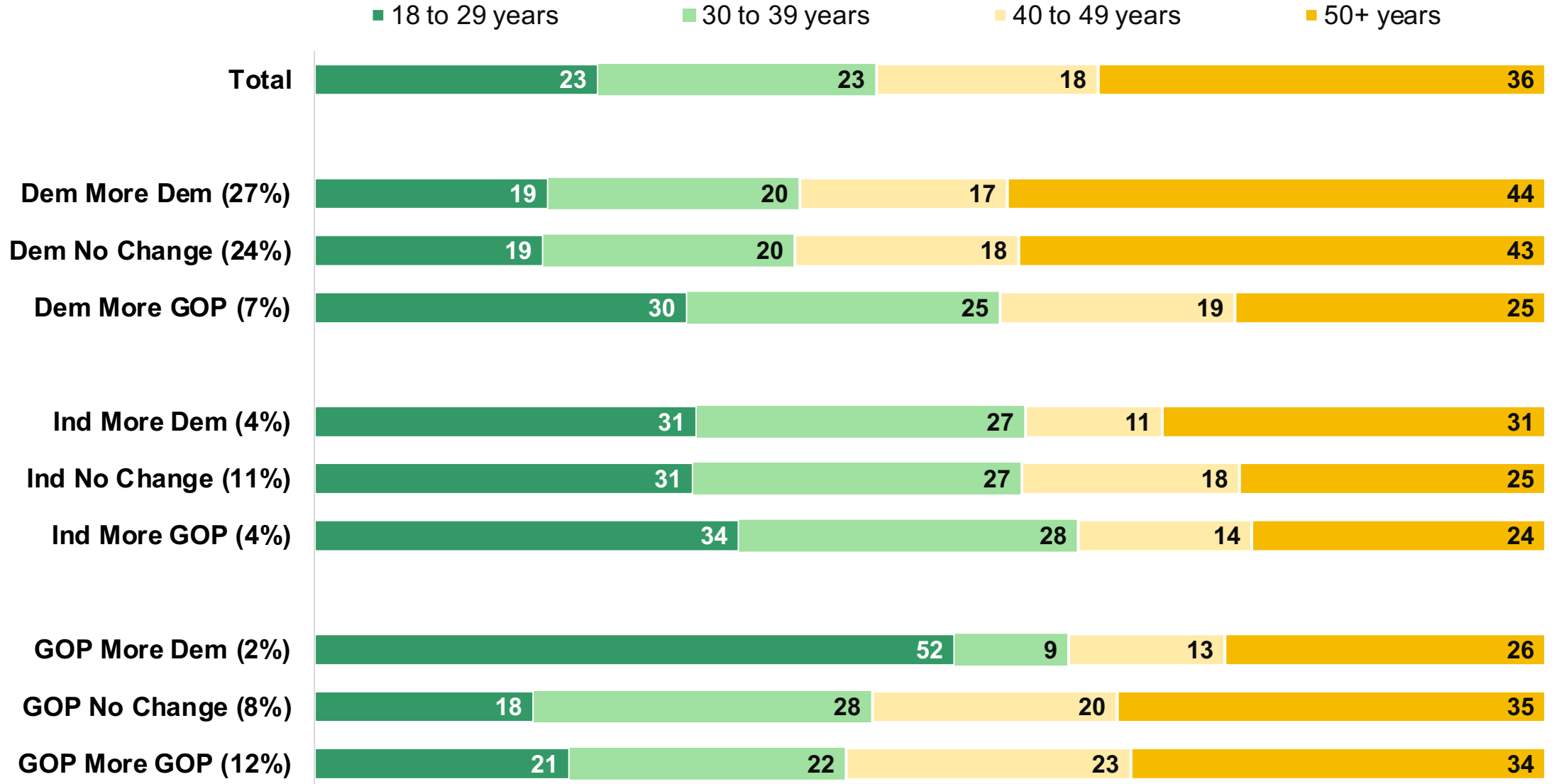
**Thinking about national politics, would you say that the Republican Party cares a great deal about the Latino community, that they don't care too much about Latinos, or that Republicans are being hostile towards the Latino community?**



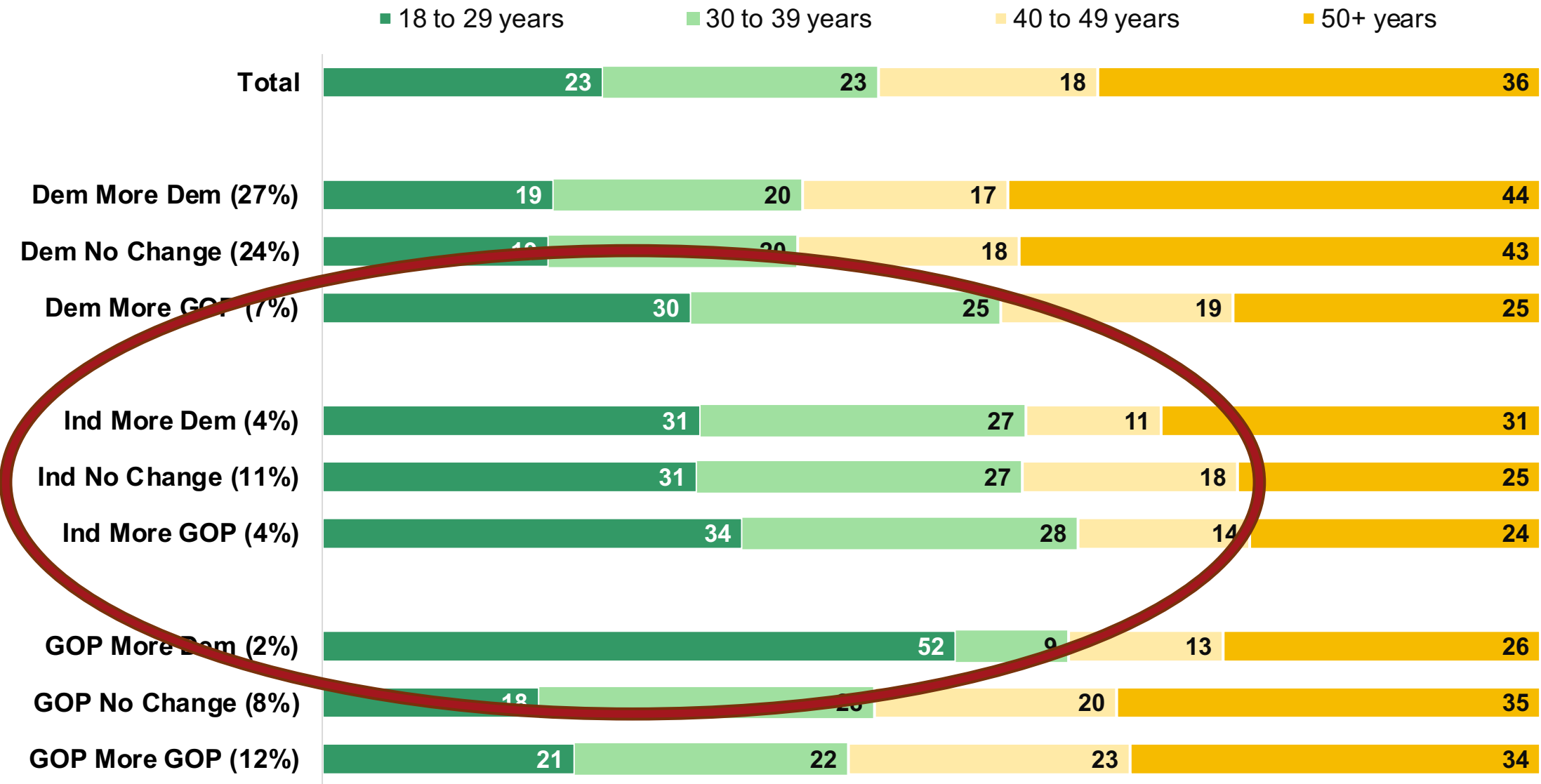
# Demographics: Party identification by age



# Demographics: More open to supporting other party by age

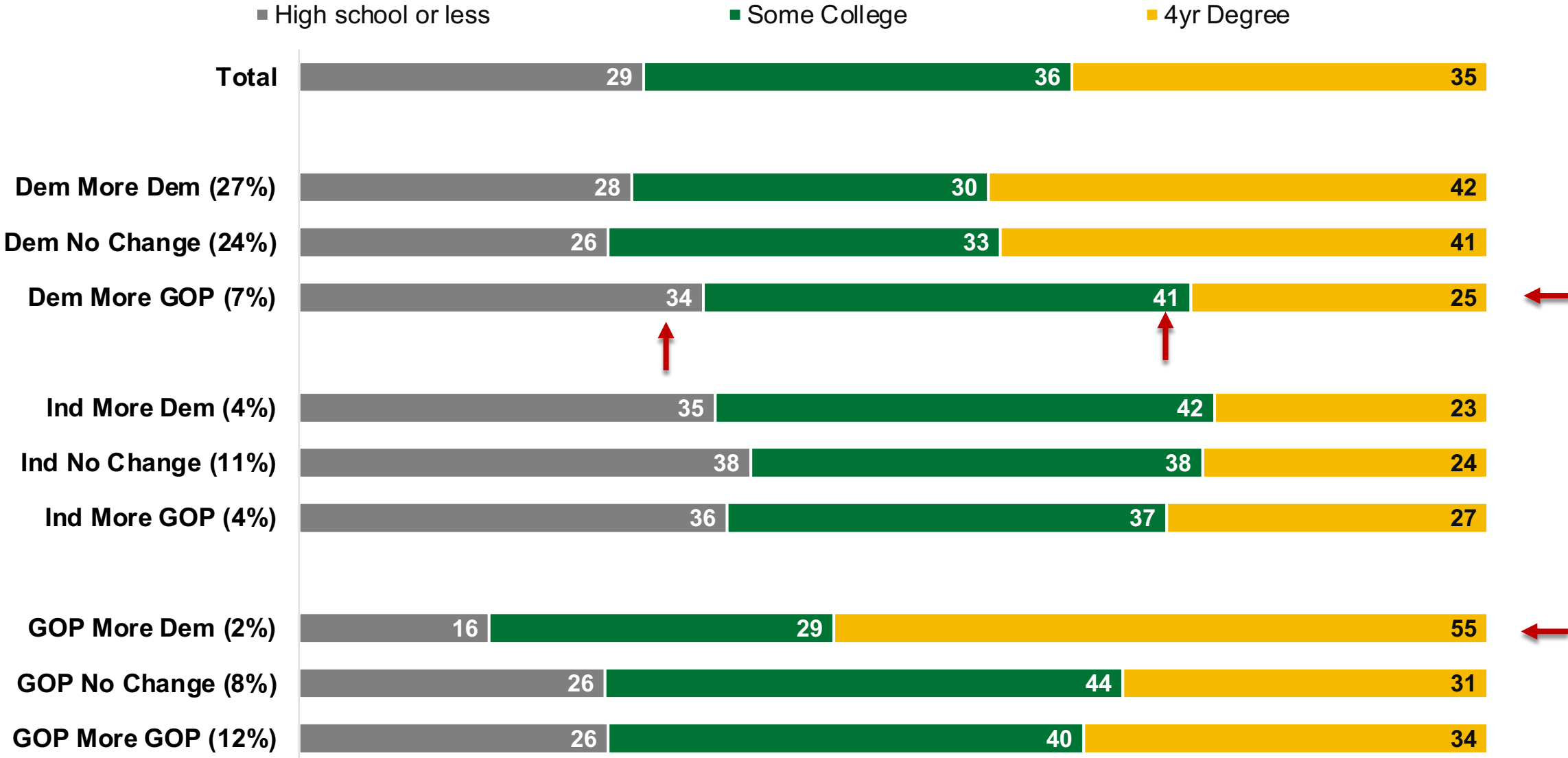


# Demographics: More open to supporting other party by age



Huge AGE Effect—Younger voters a far greater share of independents and over-represented in those whose sentiment may be shifting—IN BOTH DIRECTIONS.

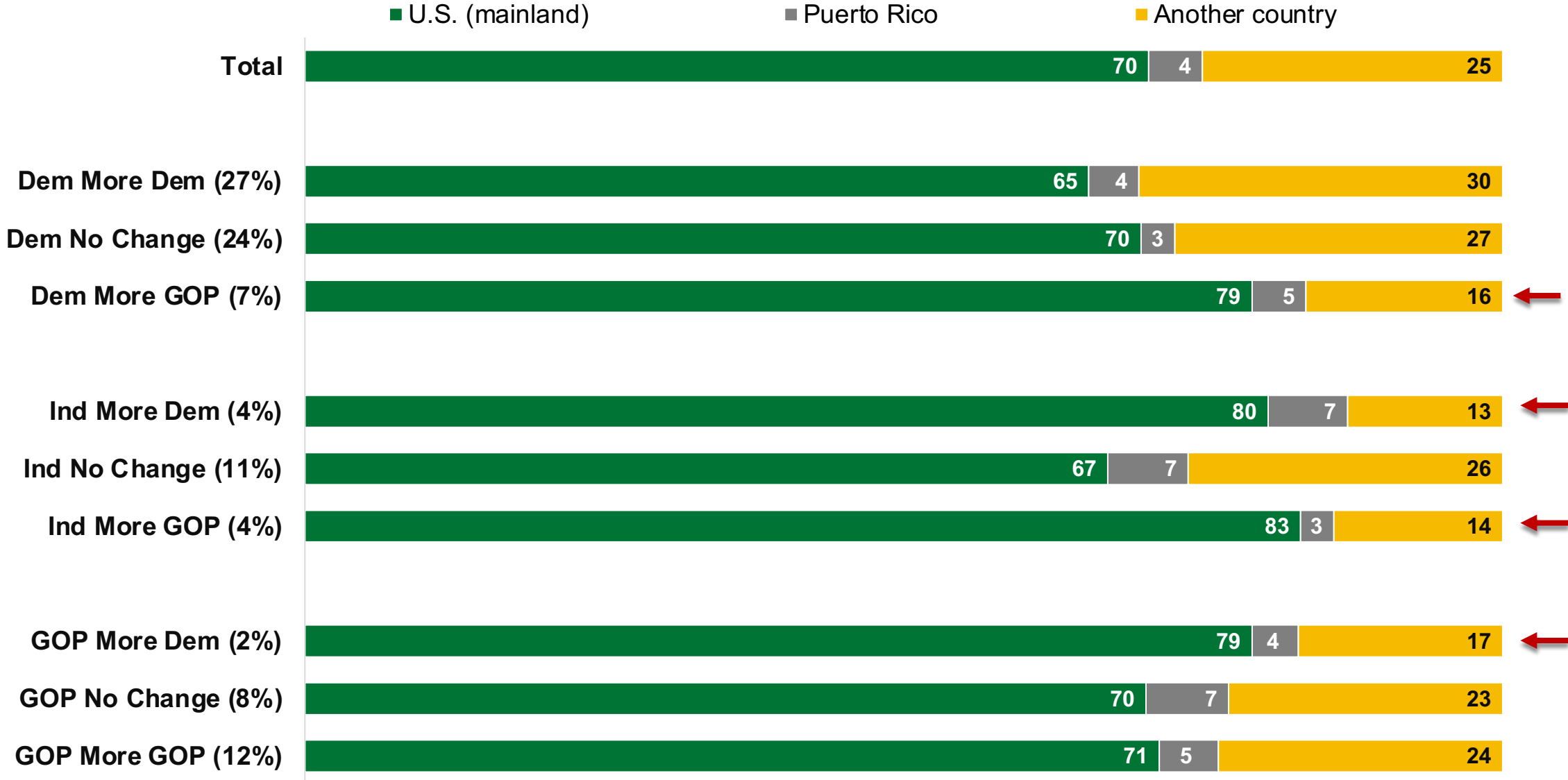
# Demographics: More open to supporting other party by educational attainment



College Education—Those with degrees are significantly less likely to be moving D->R, more likely to be moving R->D. Shift D->Ind or to GOP heavier among lesser educated voters.

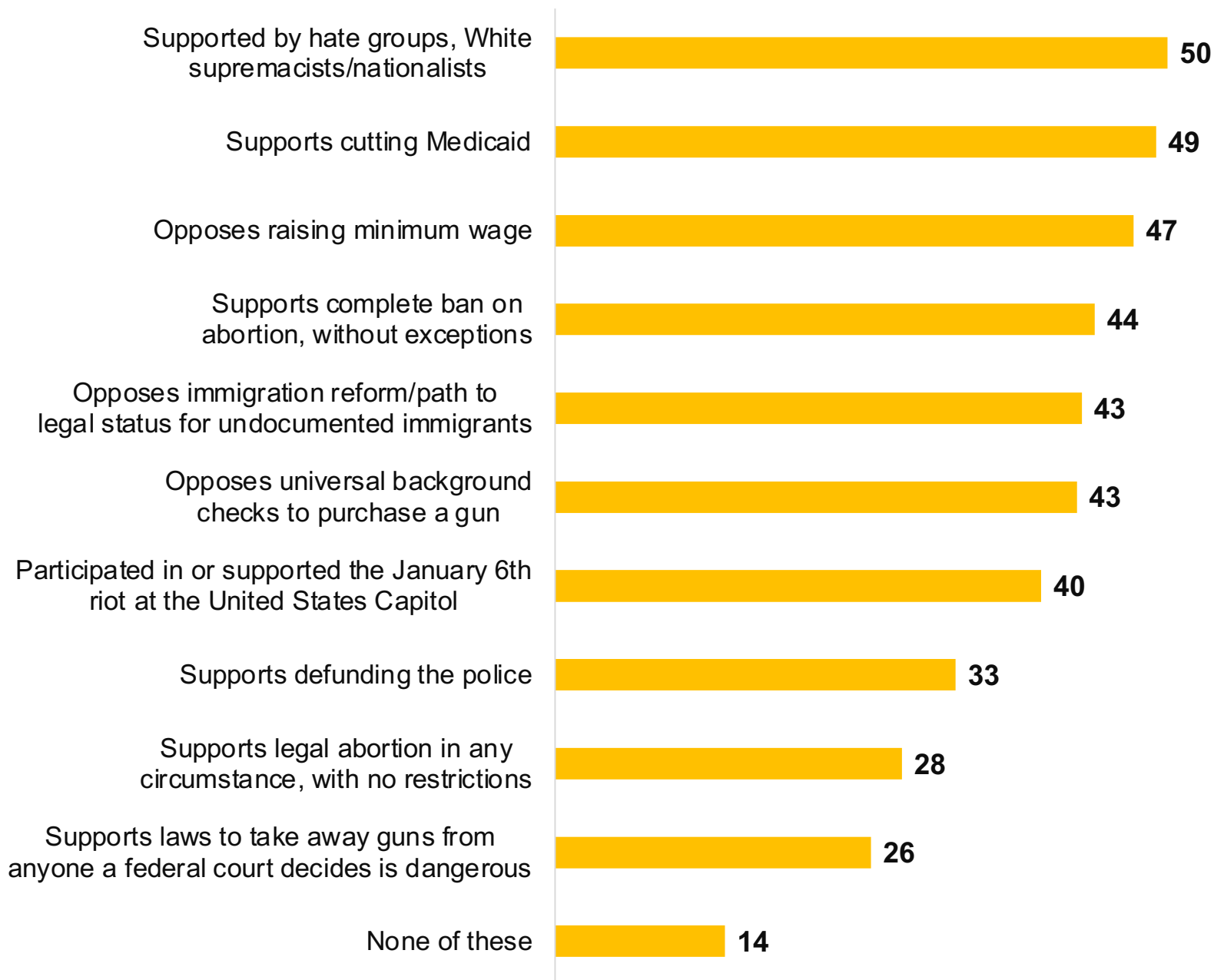


# Demographics: More open to supporting other party by nativity



Sentiment shifts more likely among US Born.

**When deciding who to vote for in an election, which of the following would be a "deal breaker" for you, meaning you could NOT support the candidate if you knew this fact about them. It would be a deal-breaker for me, I could not support a candidate who: (all that apply)**



**Top Deal-Breakers**

Dem more Dem  
 63% Supported by hate groups  
 60% Opposes raising minimum wage

Dem no change  
 56% Supported by hate groups  
 53% Supports abortion ban

Dem more GOP  
 48% Supports cutting Medicaid ?  
 45% Opposes raising minimum wage ?

Ind more Dem  
 72% Opposes path to citizenship  
 71% Supported by hate groups

Ind no change  
 52% Supported by hate groups  
 49% Supports cutting Medicaid

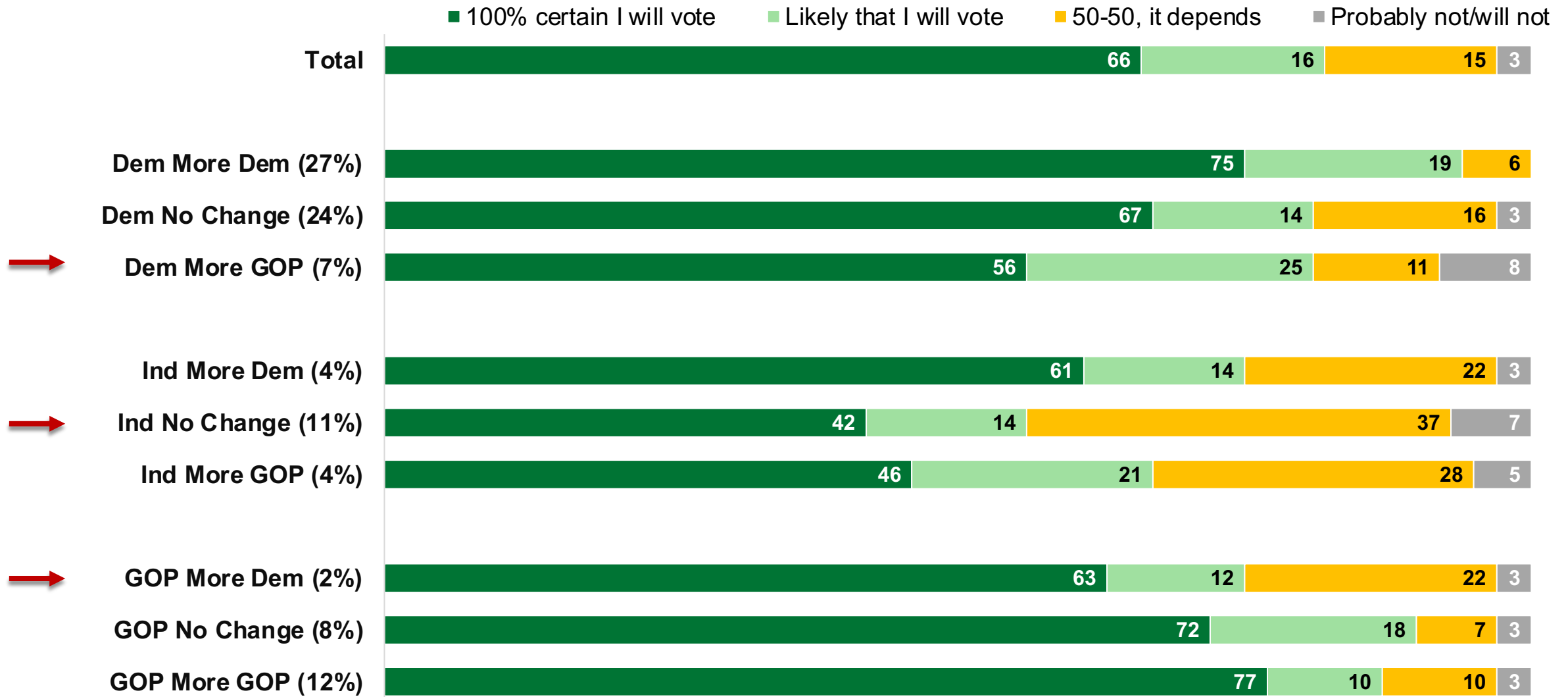
Ind more GOP  
 50% Supports defunding police  
 43% Supports legal abortion, no restrictions

GOP more Dem  
 64% Participated in January 6th riot  
 58% Supports abortion ban

GOP no change  
 39% Supports defunding police  
 39% Opposes raising minimum wage

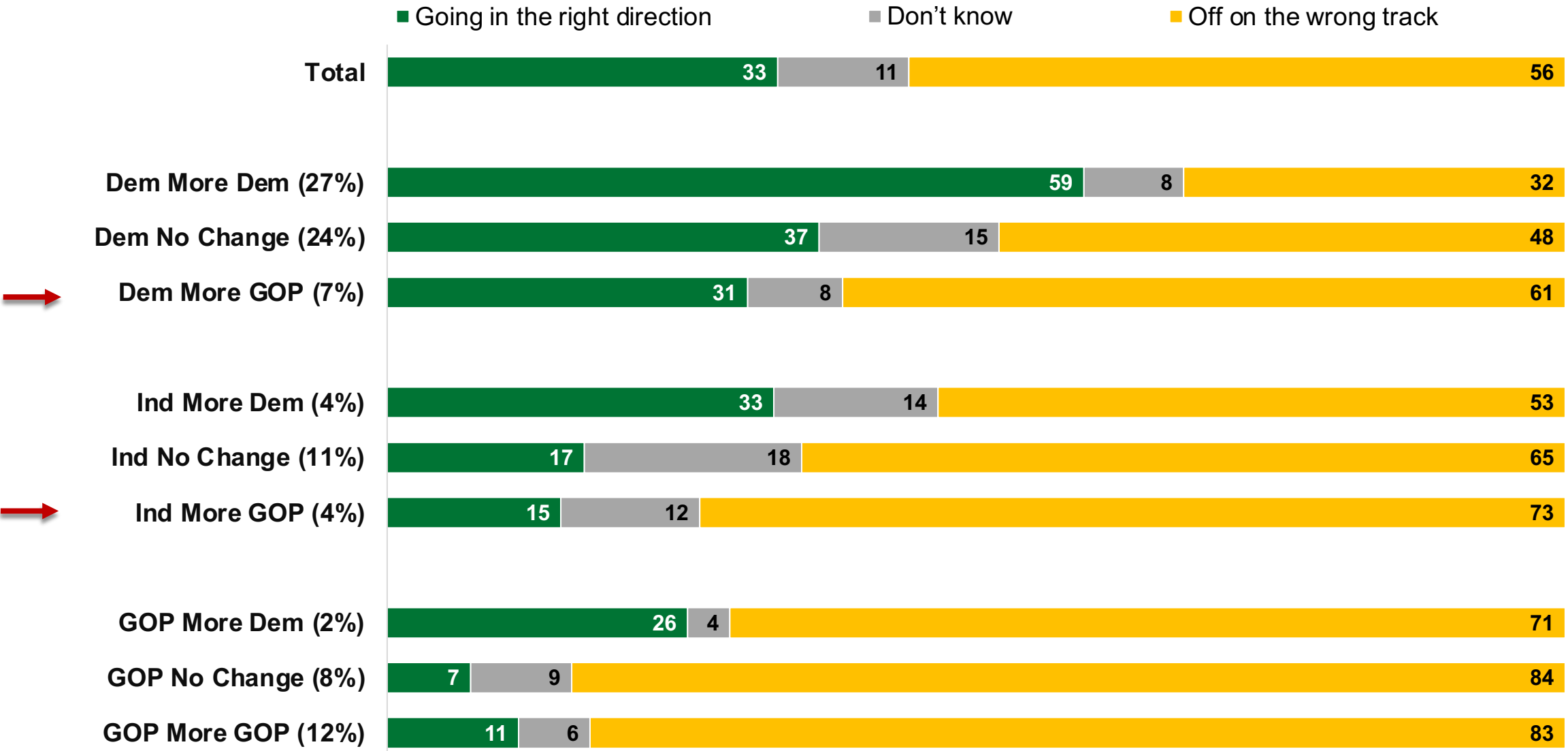
GOP more GOP  
 54% Supports defunding police  
 42% Supports cutting Medicaid

**As you may know, there will be an election next year for offices such as President, US Congress, and many state and local offices. How likely are you to vote in the November 2024 election?**

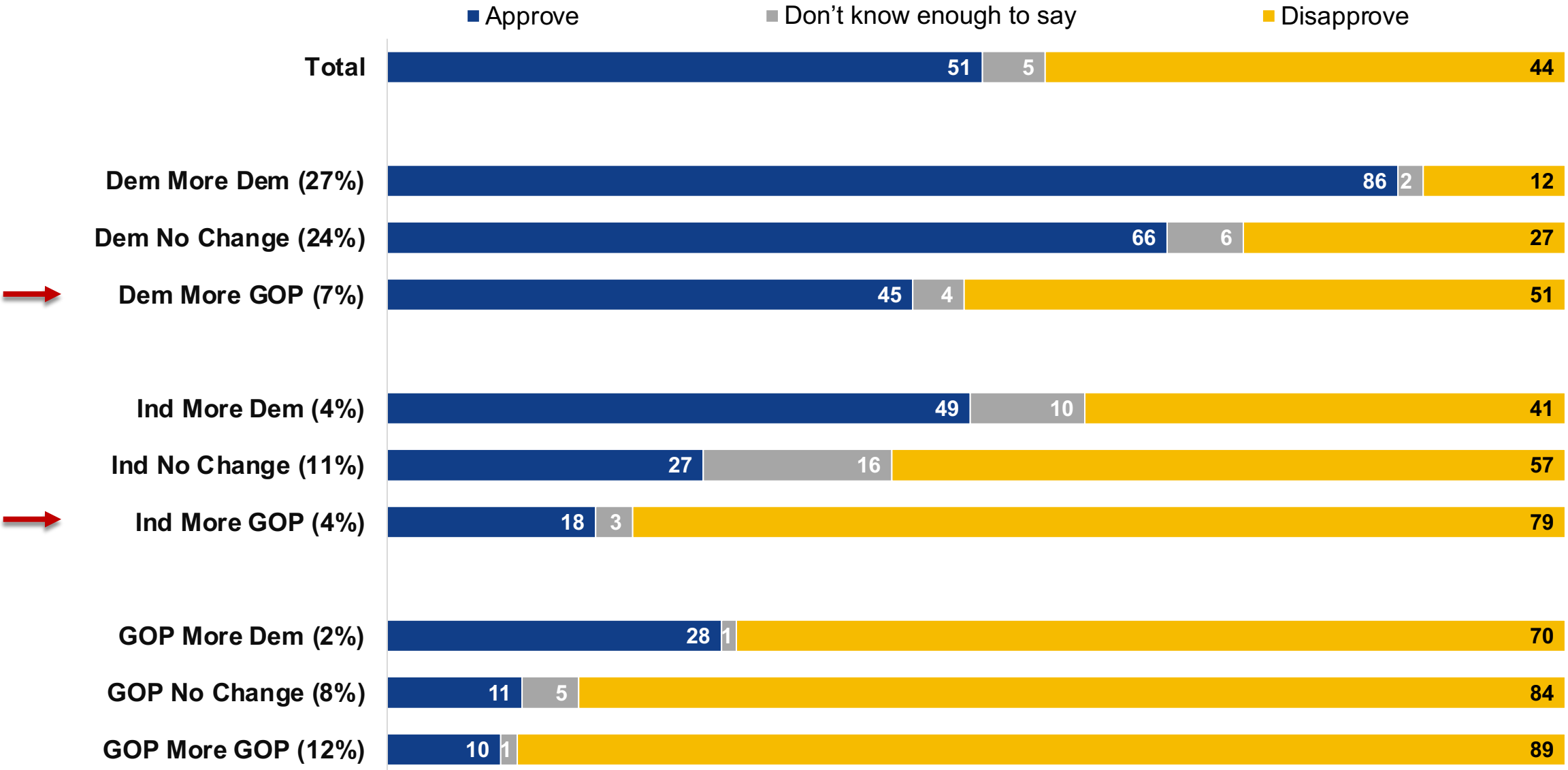


The “conflicted” have historically been somewhat demobilized. Desire and enthusiasm for voting diminished by cognitive dissonance and cross-cutting cleavages.

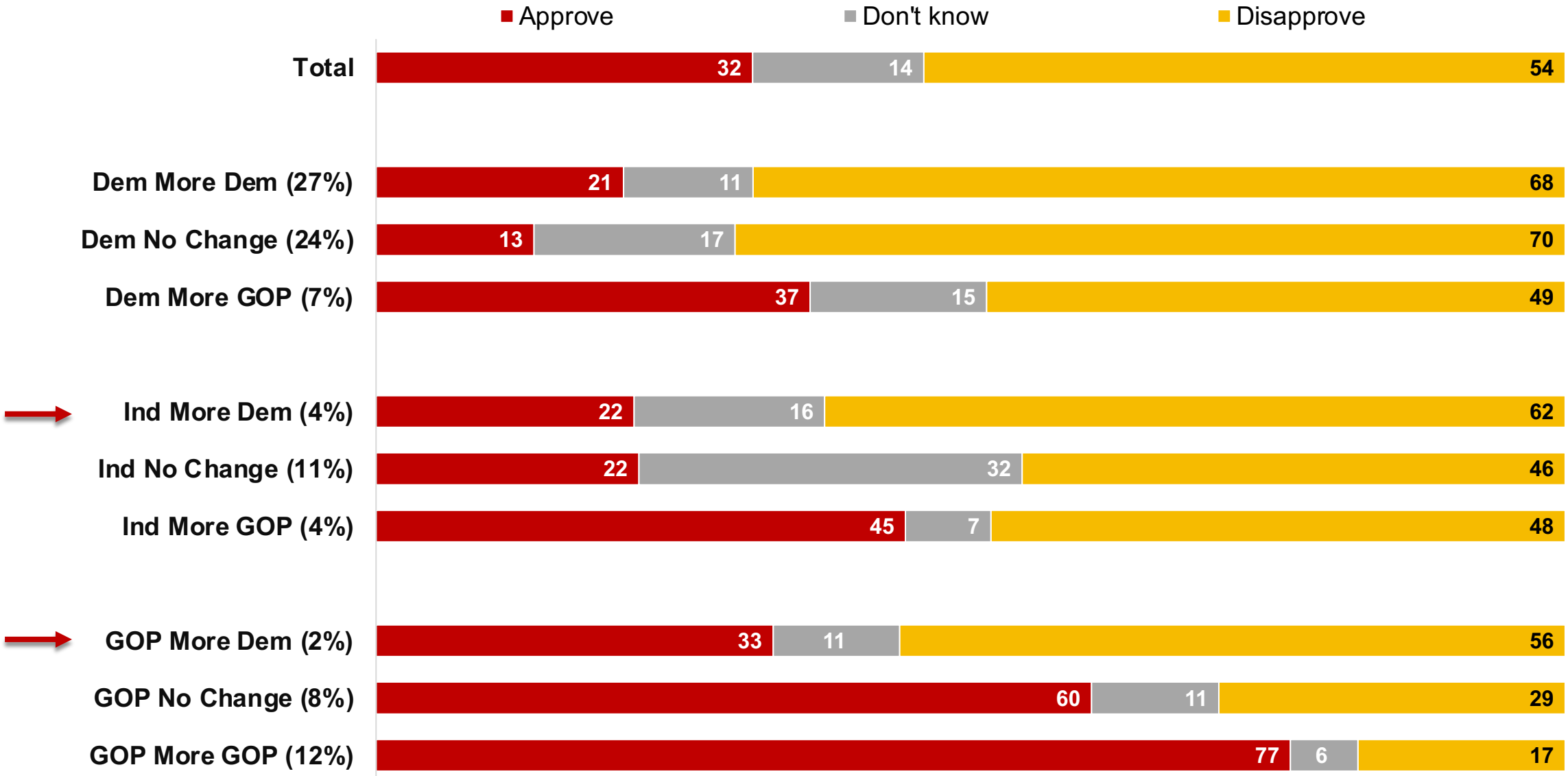
# Generally speaking, do you think things in the United States are going in the right direction, or off on the wrong track?



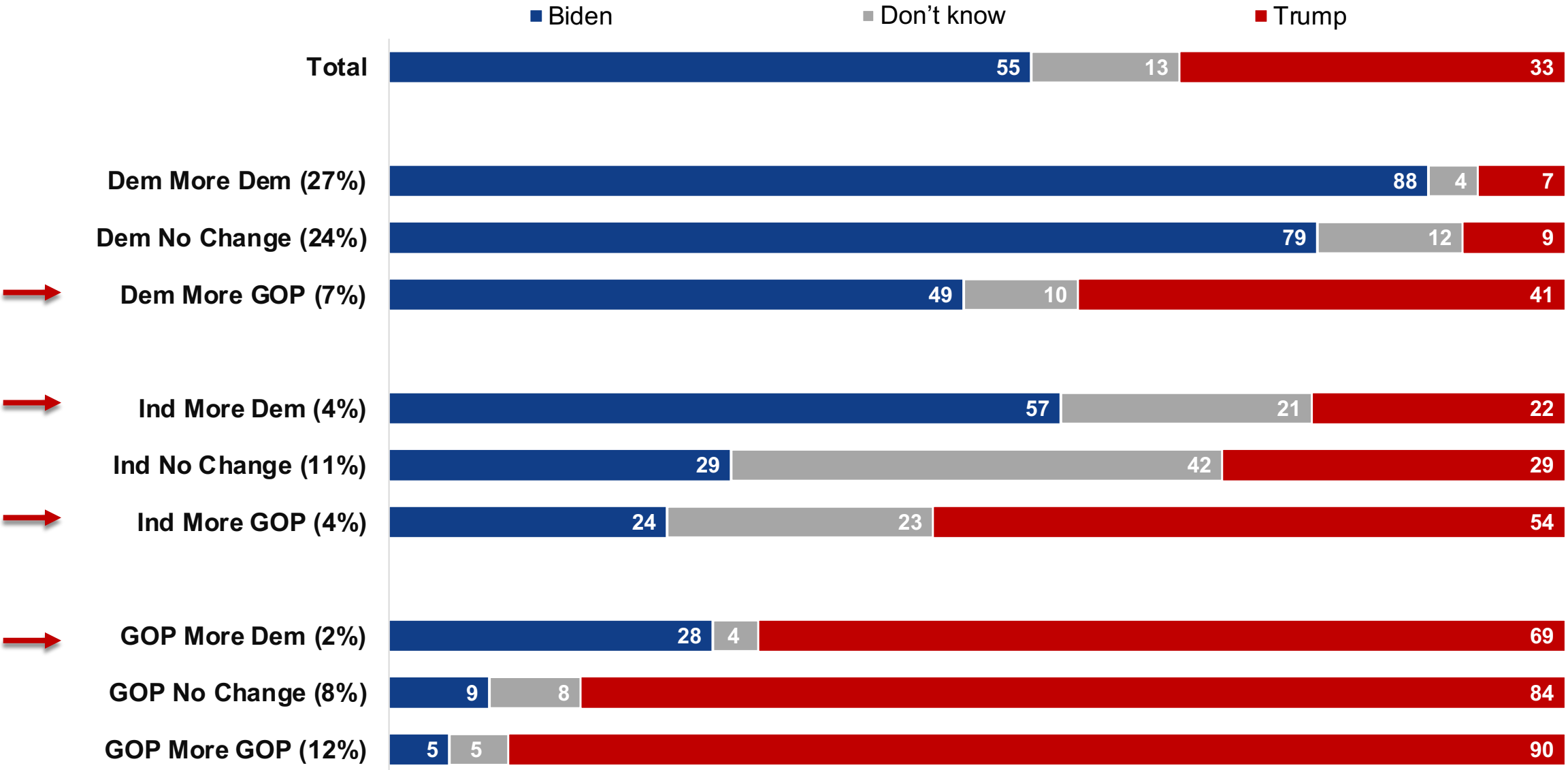
# Do you approve or disapprove of the way President Joe Biden is handling his job as President of the United States?



**The Republicans currently hold the majority in the US House of Representatives. Do you approve or disapprove of the way the Republican Party is handling their leadership of the House of Representatives**



# If the 2024 election for President was today, are you leaning towards voting for Democrat Joe Biden or Republican Donald Trump?



A POX ON BOTH HOUSES:

NEWER VOTERS AND THE EROSION  
OF DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT



# The underlying question:

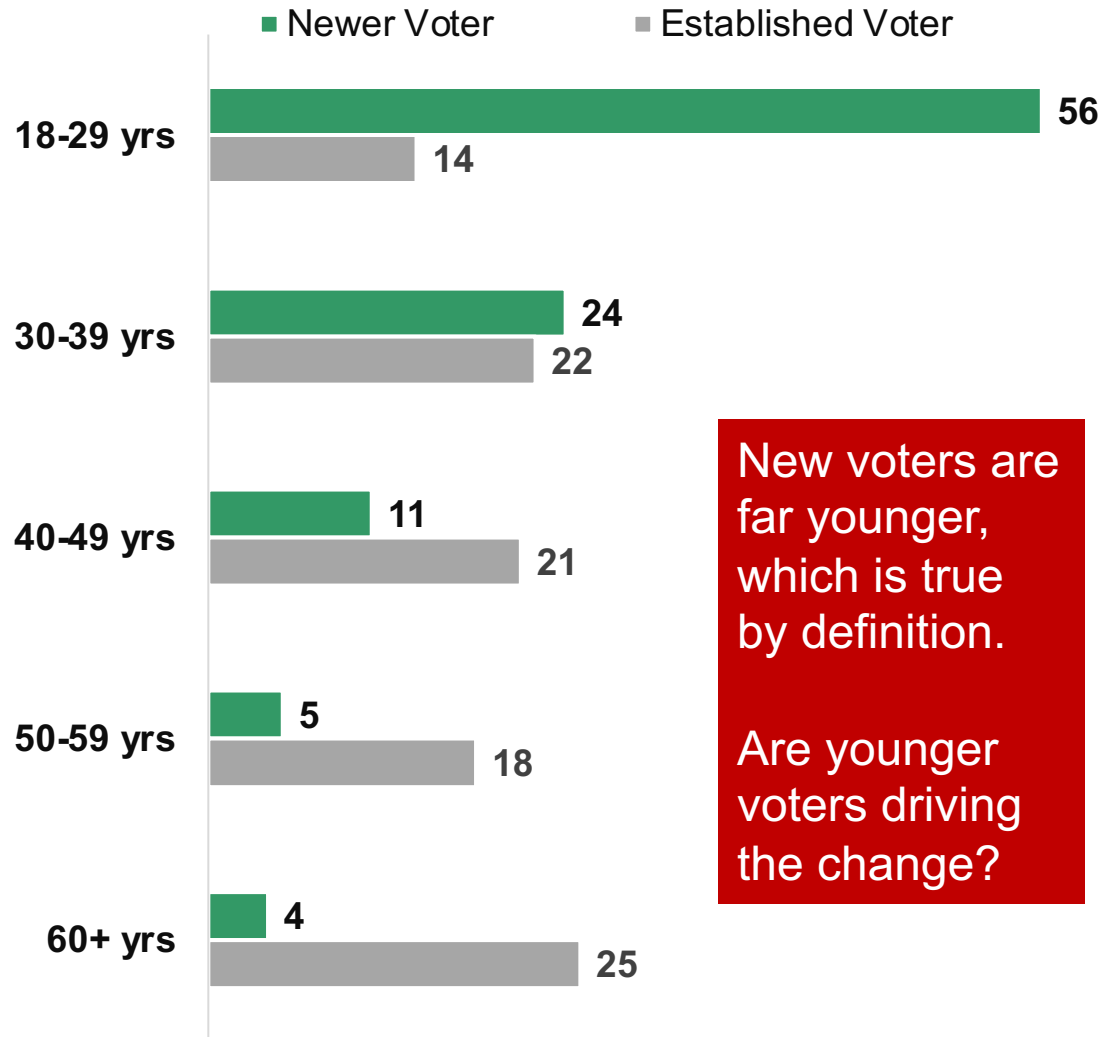
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- Are existing voters moving toward Trump and the GOP?

or

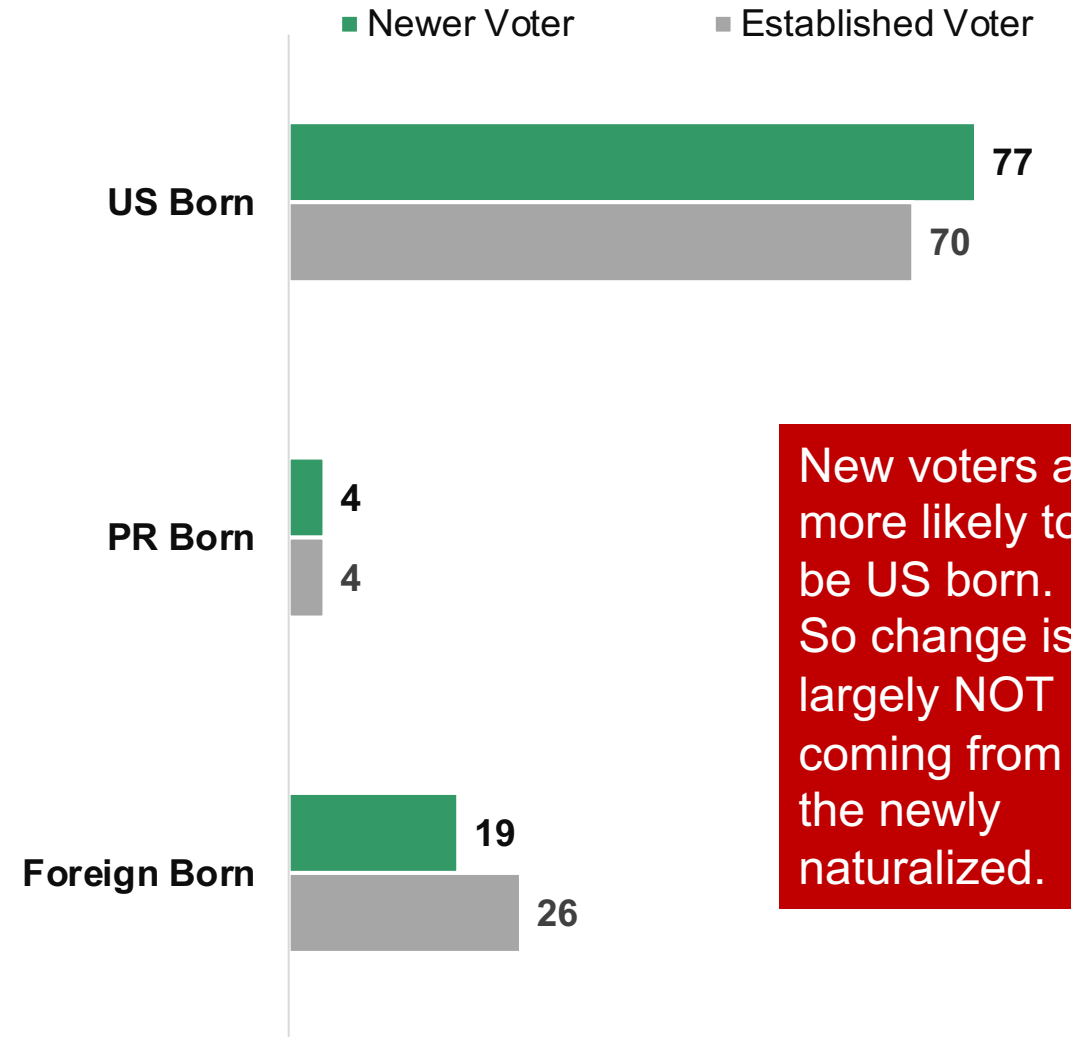
- Are the changes coming from new voters entering the system with different views from more established voters?

## New and Established Voter Demographics: Age and Nativity



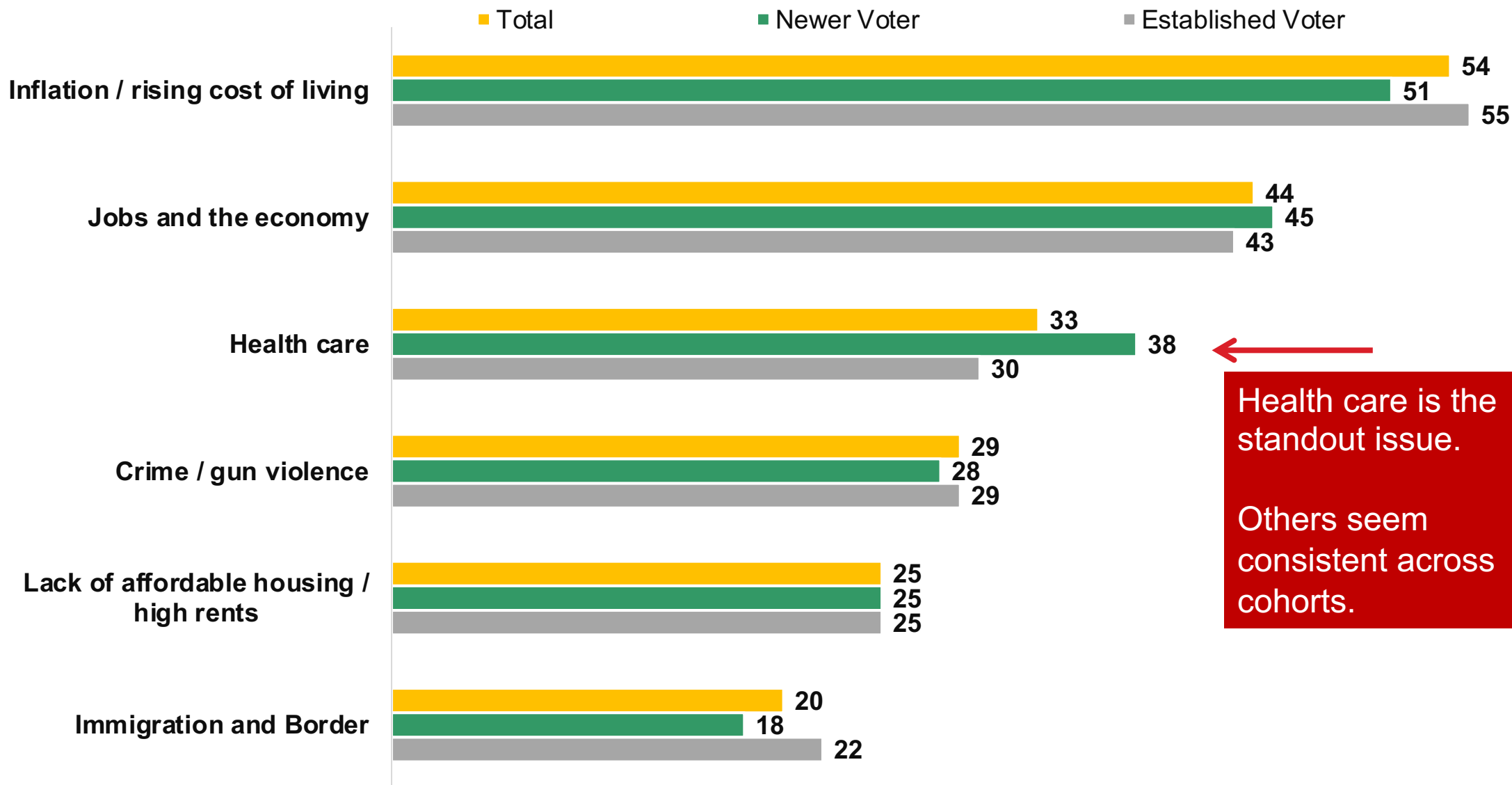
New voters are far younger, which is true by definition.

Are younger voters driving the change?



New voters are more likely to be US born. So change is largely NOT coming from the newly naturalized.

# New and Established Voters: In your opinion, what are the most important issues that elected officials should address? Rank your top three issues. (Total ranked 1, 2, or 3 reported)



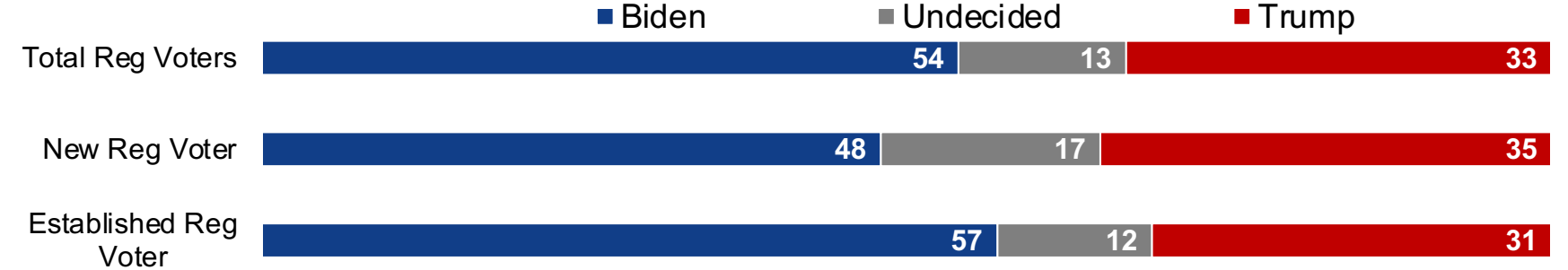
← Health care is the standout issue. Others seem consistent across cohorts.

Established voters +9 Biden compared to new voters. But, more of the difference is to be found in 'don't know' rather than Trump.

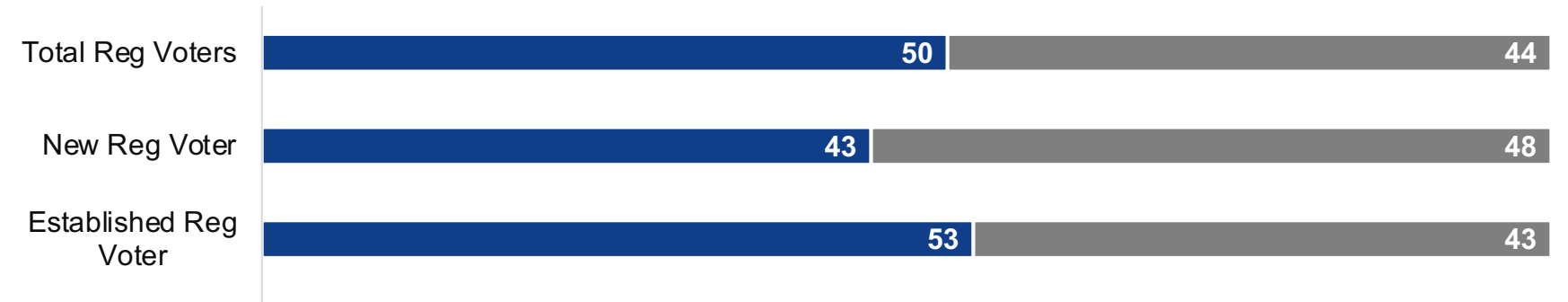
New voters demonstrate SIGNIFICANTLY lower presidential approval.

However, Republican Congressional approval higher.

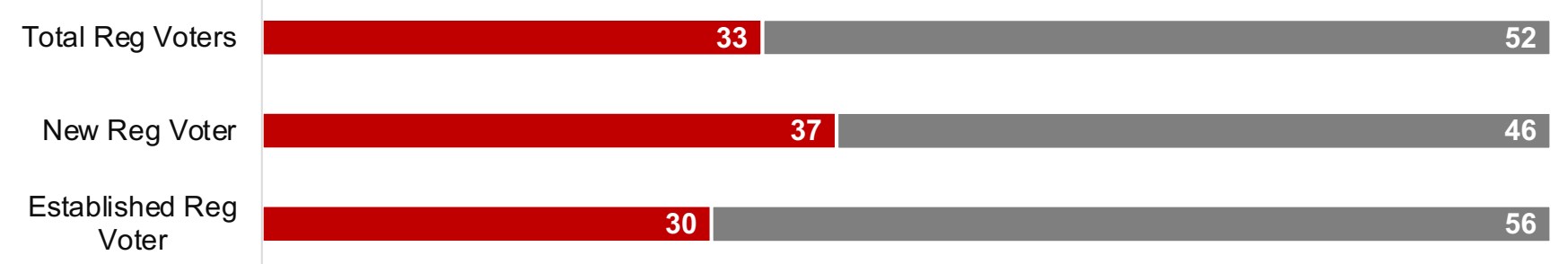
### Registered Voters: Presidential Vote 2024



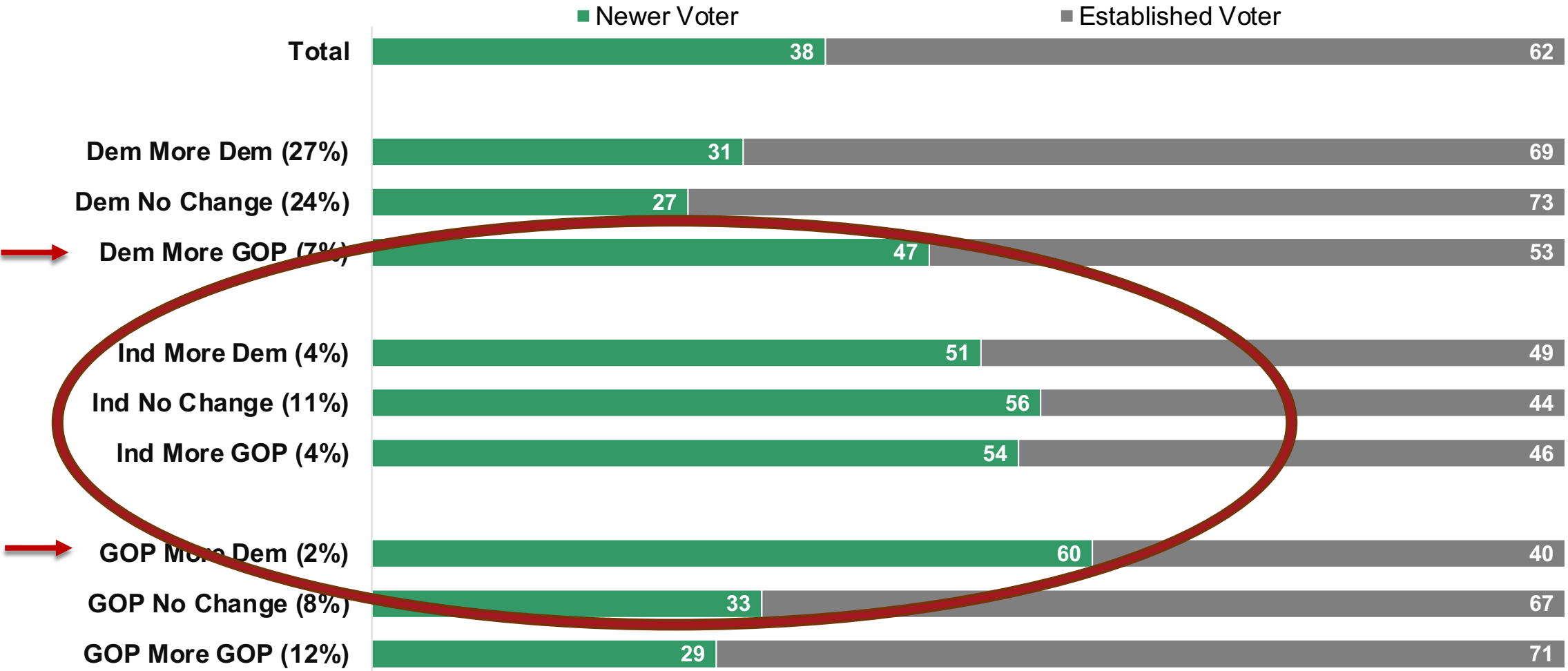
### Registered Voters: Presidential Approval



### Registered Voters: Congressional Approval



# Demographics: More open to supporting other party by voting experience



This is essentially identical to the age slide presented earlier—newer cohorts are mostly younger. And newer cohorts are where the churn is happening.

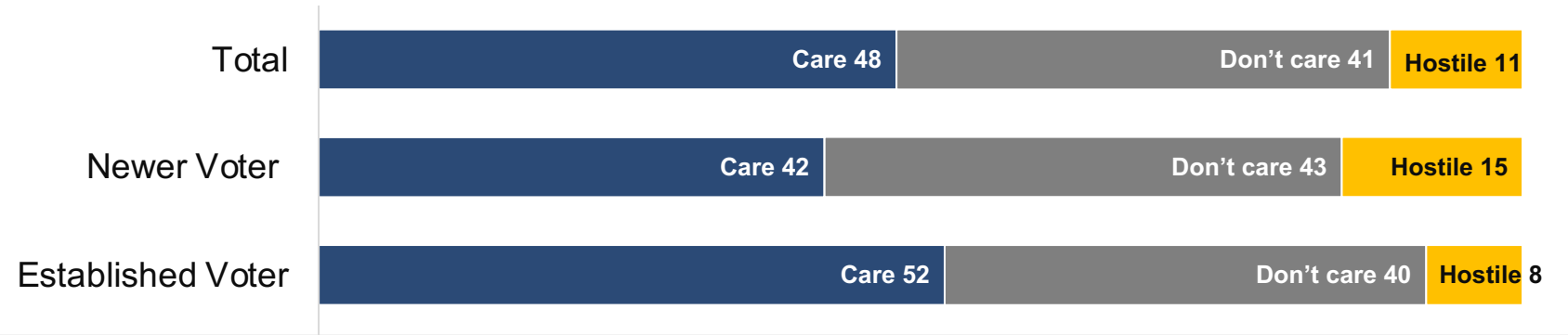
Patterns of party sentiment are roughly similar.

But newer voters DO see Democrats less warmly, -10 in “Care”, +7 in “Hostile.”

Views of the GOP are scantily better, “Care” is +9 while “Hostile” is only -1.

These changes are significant but small.

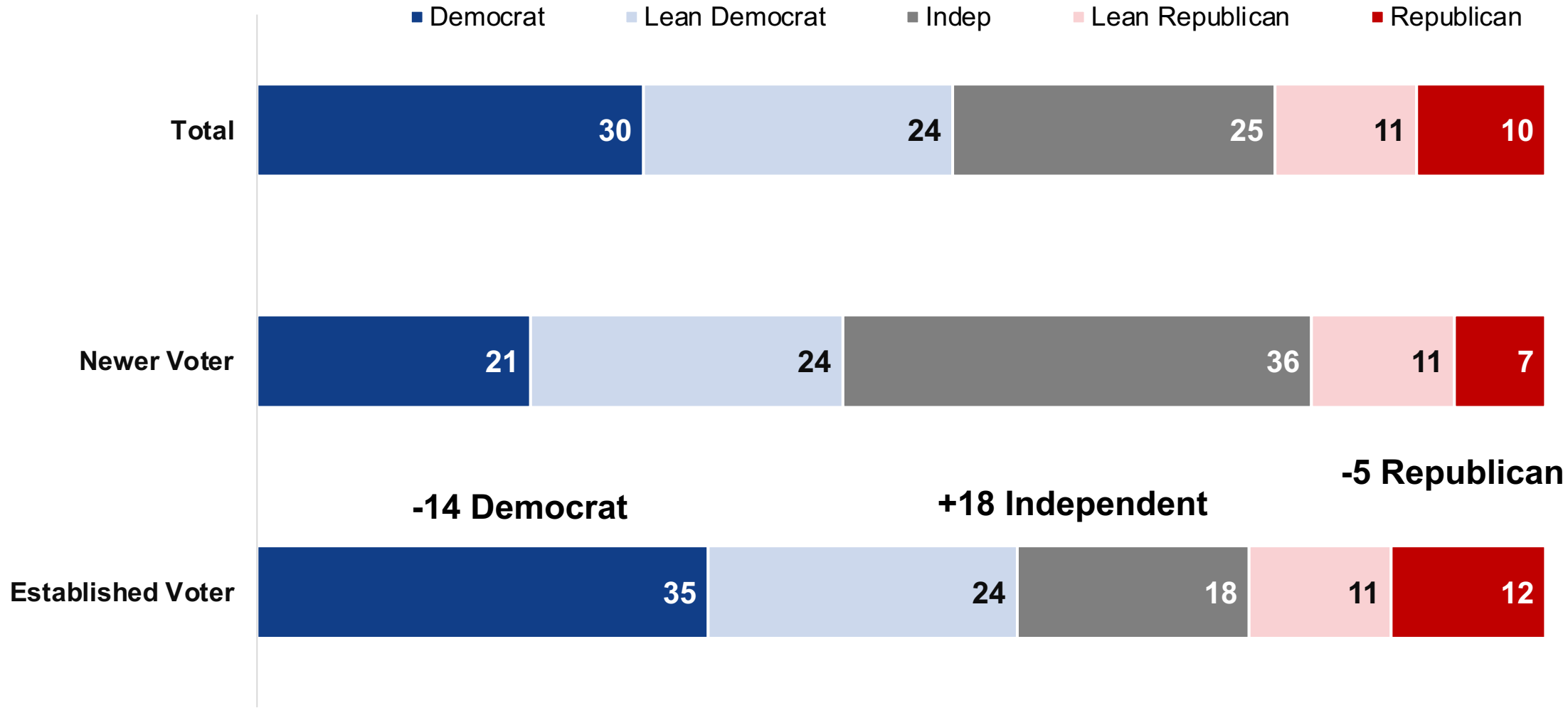
Thinking about national politics, would you say that the Democratic Party cares a great deal about the Latino/Hispanic community, that they don't care too much about Latinos/Hispanics, or that Democrats are being hostile towards the Latino/Hispanic community?



Thinking about national politics, would you say that the Republican Party cares a great deal about the Latino/Hispanic community, that they don't care too much about Latinos/Hispanics, or that Republicans are being hostile towards the Latinos/Hispanics community?



# Demographics: Party identification by voting experience



Newer voters Dem share is 14% lower than established voters—but the GOP is not the beneficiary. GOP share is also down. Independence is the big winner!

## Election 2020 to Vote Intention 2024: NET Potential Movement Among Registered Voters Who Voted in 2020

	Supported Biden 2020 (66%)*	Supported Trump 2020 (34%)*	TOTAL 2024	Did not vote 2020 (RVs)
Plan to vote for Biden 2024	81	9	57	27.6
Undecided	11	6	9	44.6
Plan to vote for Trump 2024	8	85	34	27.9

\* Percent 2020 support based on respondents in 2023 UnidosUS Poll of the Hispanic Electorate

- Similar to the partisanship measure, shifting sentiments have not yet landed these newer (younger) voters in the Trump camp.
- And the most recent registrants—since 2020—are nearly half independents