

B | Center for
Middle East Policy
at BROOKINGS

American attitudes on refugees from the Middle East

A PUBLIC OPINION POLL BY SHIBLEY TELHAMI

A survey sponsored by the
Center for Middle East Policy's
Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World at
The Brookings Institution
and
Sadat Chair
for Peace and Development
at the University of Maryland

fielded by
Nielsen Scarborough

Valuable assistance was provided by The Program for Public Consultation, especially its director Steven Kull, Evan Lewis, and Clay Ramsay. Neil Schwartz, Scott Willoth, and Jordan Evangelista from Nielsen Scarborough also provided assistance. Brittany Kyser, Shaqaiq Birashk, and Cameron Zotter were particularly helpful.

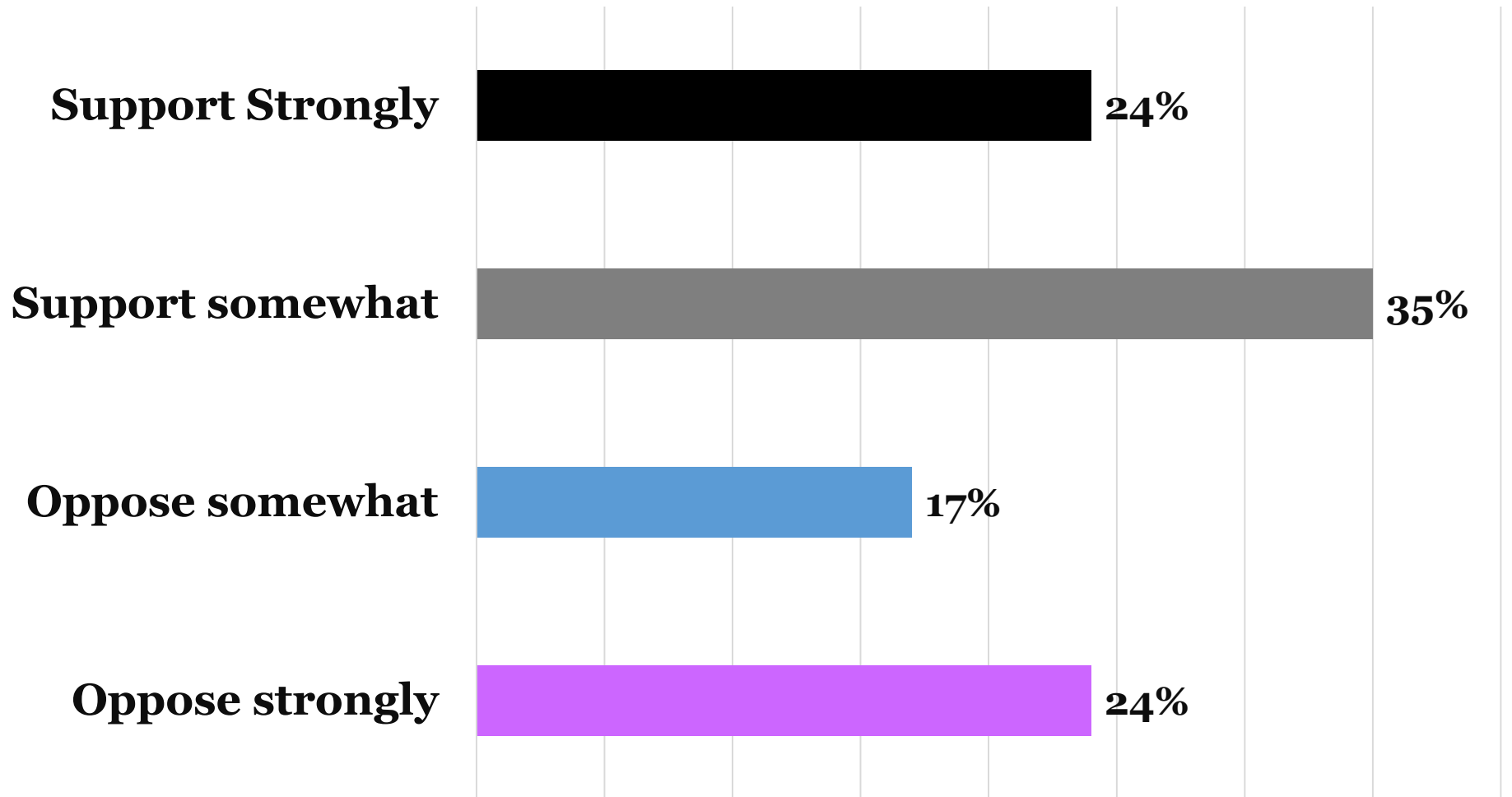
Survey Methodology

The survey was conducted May 20-31, 2016 with a panel consisting of a probability-based representative sample. The panel was recruited by Nielsen Scarborough from its larger probability-based national panel, which was recruited by mail and telephone using a random sample of households provided by Survey Sampling International. A total of 1580 panelists completed the survey including a national sample of 845 adults, plus an oversample of 735 millennials (18-34), making for a total sample of millennials of 863. Responses were weighted by age, gender, income, education, race, and geographic region using benchmarks from the US Census. The survey was also weighted by partisan identification and millennials were down-weighted consistent with these groups' incidence rate in the U.S. Census. The margins of error for the national sample and for each subgroup is: National – 845 respondents, MoE: 3.4% Millennials – 863, MoE: 3.3%

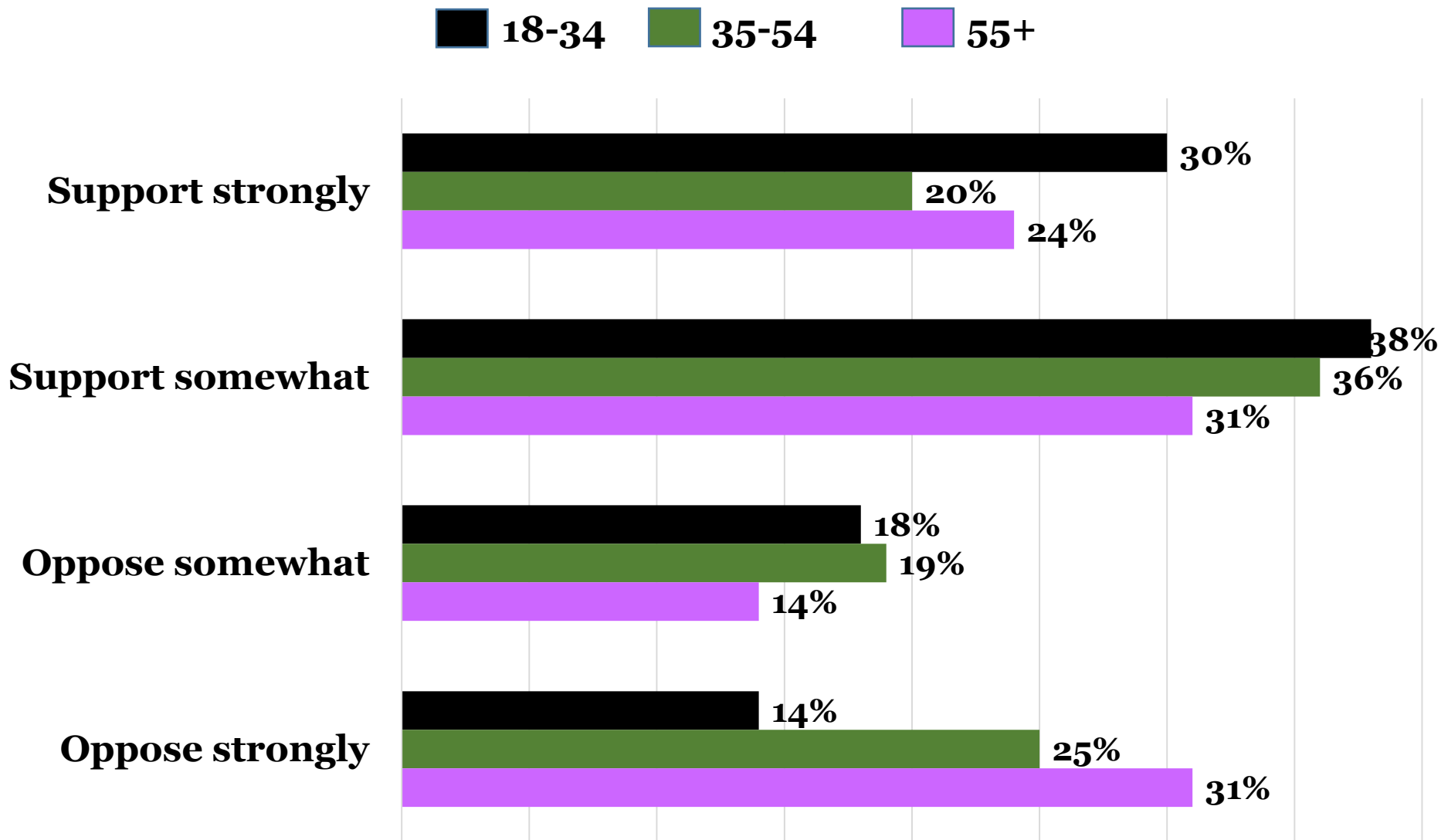
As you may know, since 2001 the United States has admitted about 800,000 persons with refugee status from around the world, or about 50,000 people a year on average. In U.S. law, a refugee is a person who is already living outside their own country because of a “well-founded fear of persecution.” This definition can include those fleeing civil war in their home country. It excludes those who “participated in the persecution of any person on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.” Those applying as refugees for asylum in the U.S. are investigated by various arms of the U.S. government. This process takes about two years.

In general, do you support or oppose the United States taking in refugees from the conflicts in Syria and other Middle Eastern countries after screening them for security risks?

In general, do you support or oppose the United States taking in refugees from the conflicts in Syria and other Middle Eastern countries after screening them for security risks?

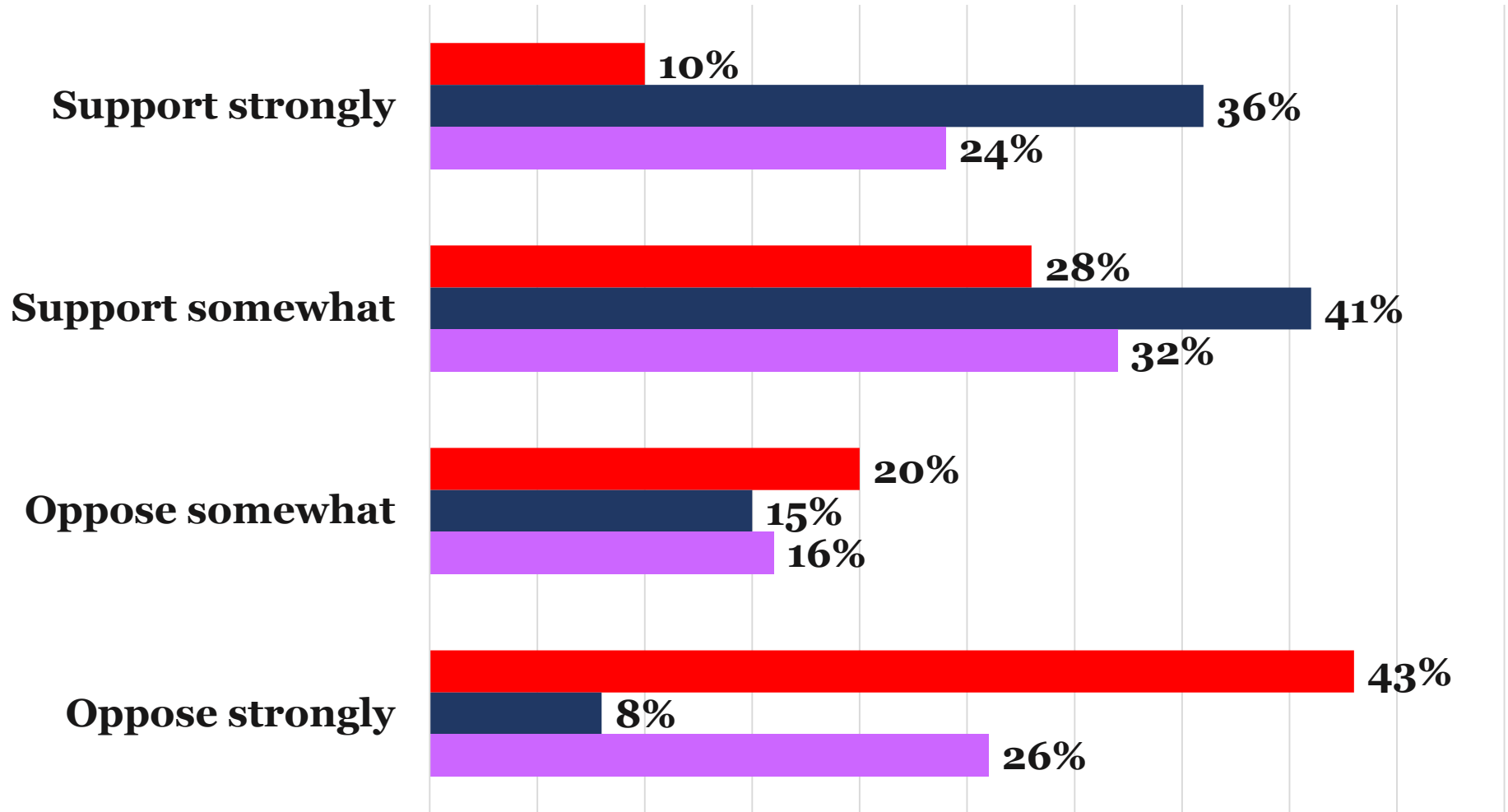


In general, do you support or oppose the United States taking in refugees from the conflicts in Syria and other Middle Eastern countries after screening them for security risks?



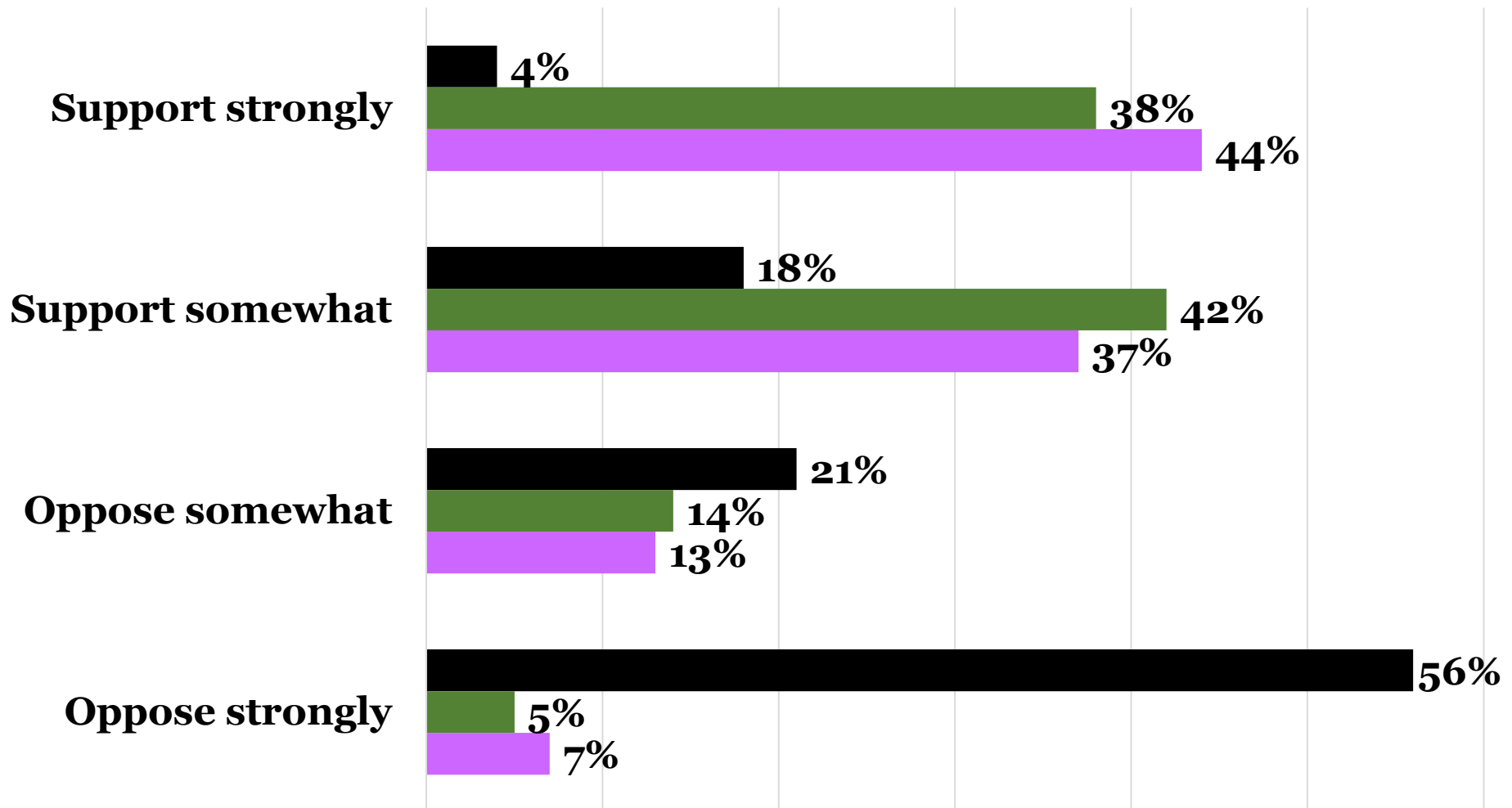
In general, do you support or oppose the United States taking in refugees from the conflicts in Syria and other Middle Eastern countries after screening them for security risks?

Republican Democrat Independent



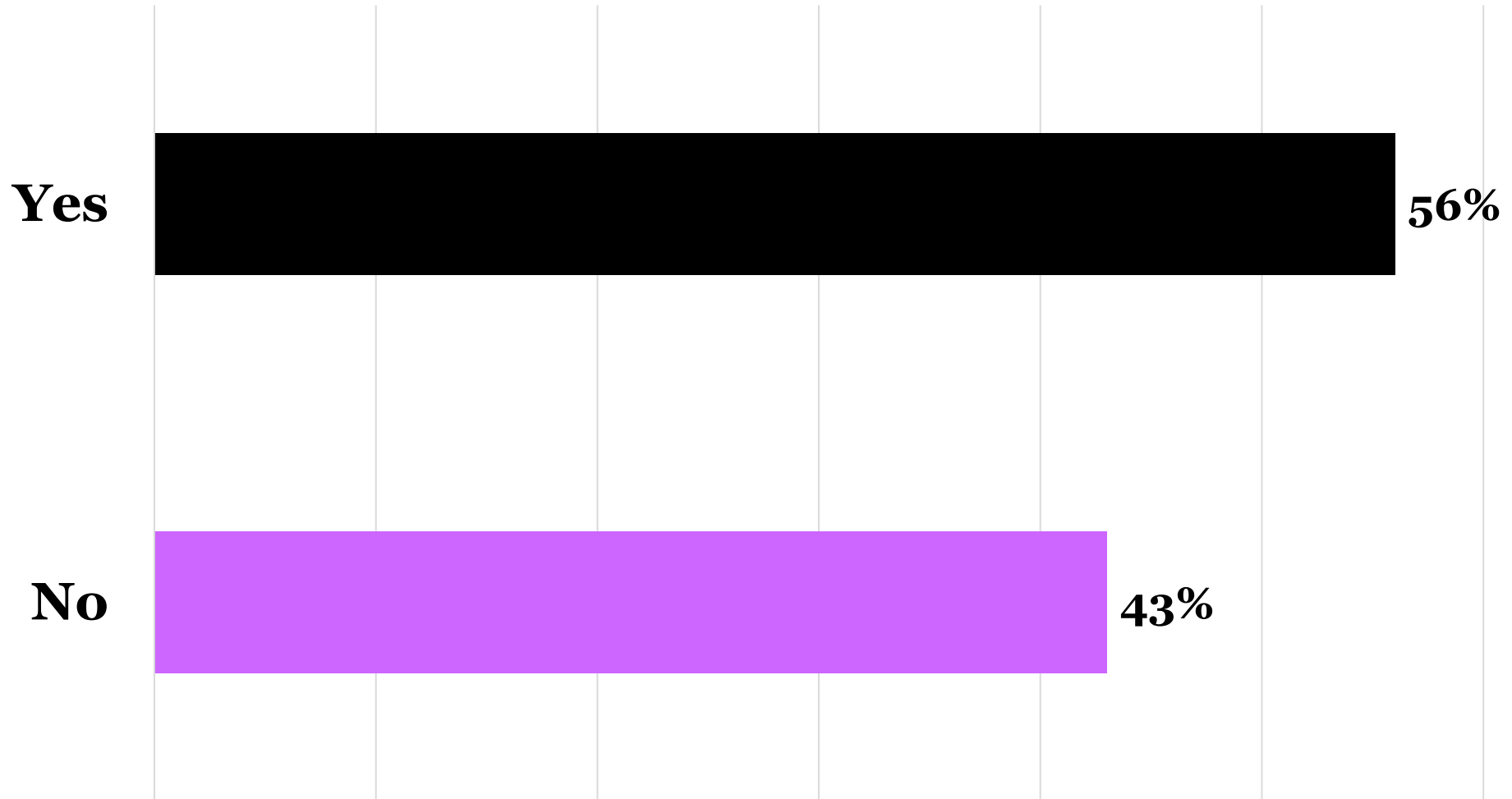
In general, do you support or oppose the United States taking in refugees from the conflicts in Syria and other Middle Eastern countries after screening them for security risks?

Those Favoring Donald Trump Those Favoring Hillary Clinton Those Favoring Bernie Sanders



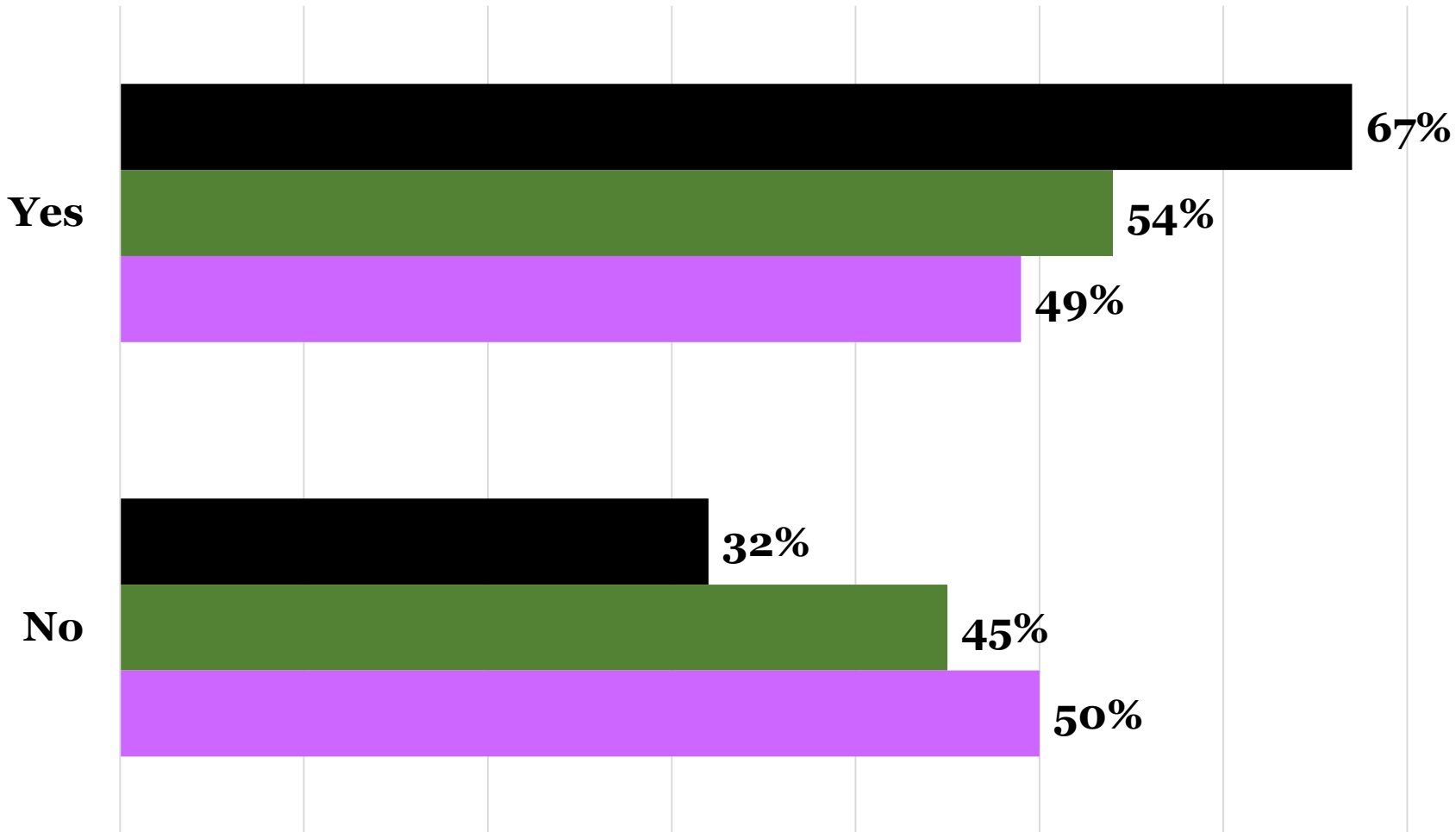
Assuming extensive background checks are in place to ensure there are not terrorist links, should the U.S. accept refugees from Syria specifically?

**Assuming extensive background checks
are in place to ensure there are not
terrorist links, should the U.S. accept
refugees from Syria specifically?**



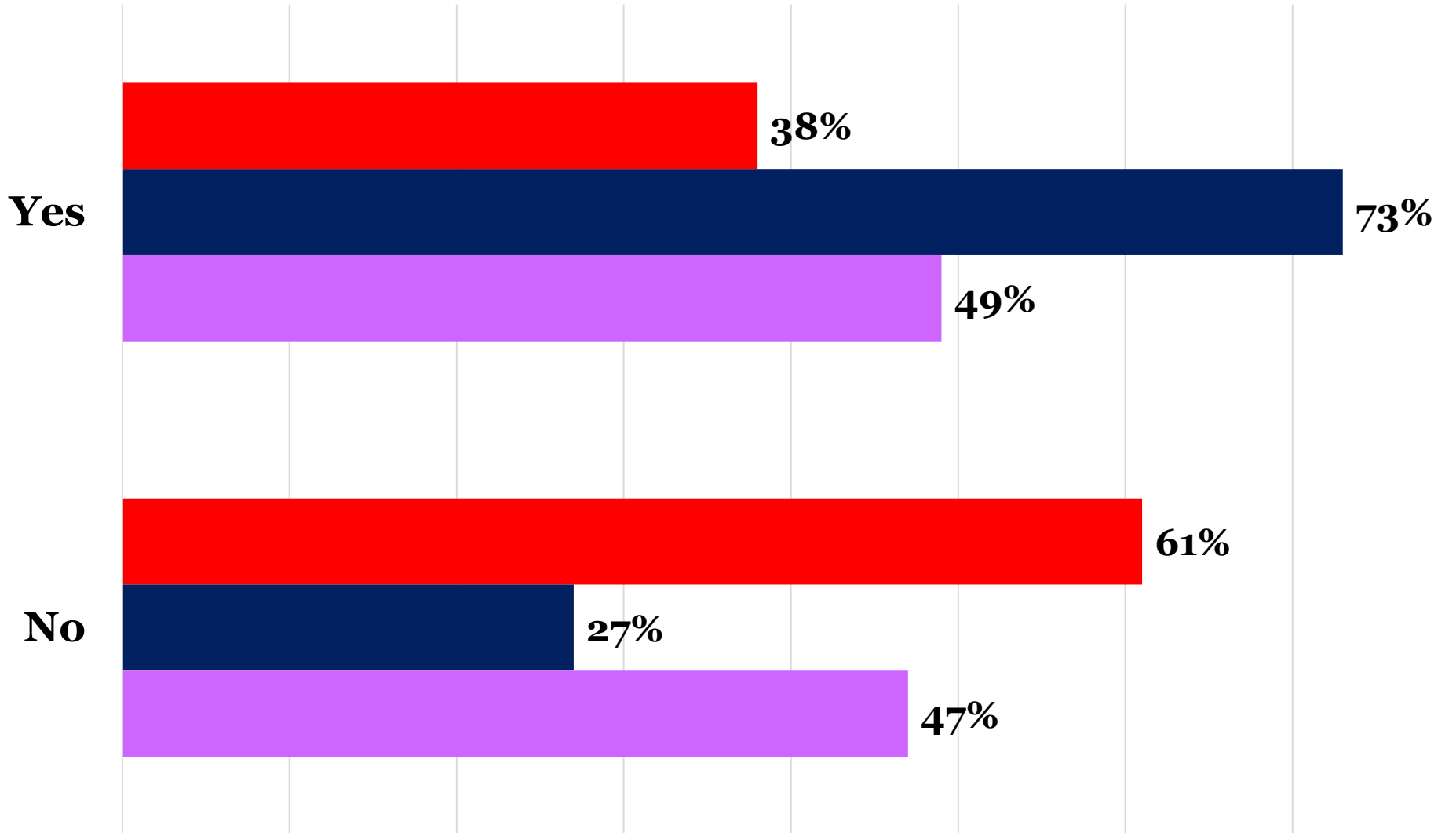
Assuming extensive background checks are in place to ensure there are not terrorist links, should the U.S. accept refugees from Syria specifically?

18-34 **35-54** **55+**



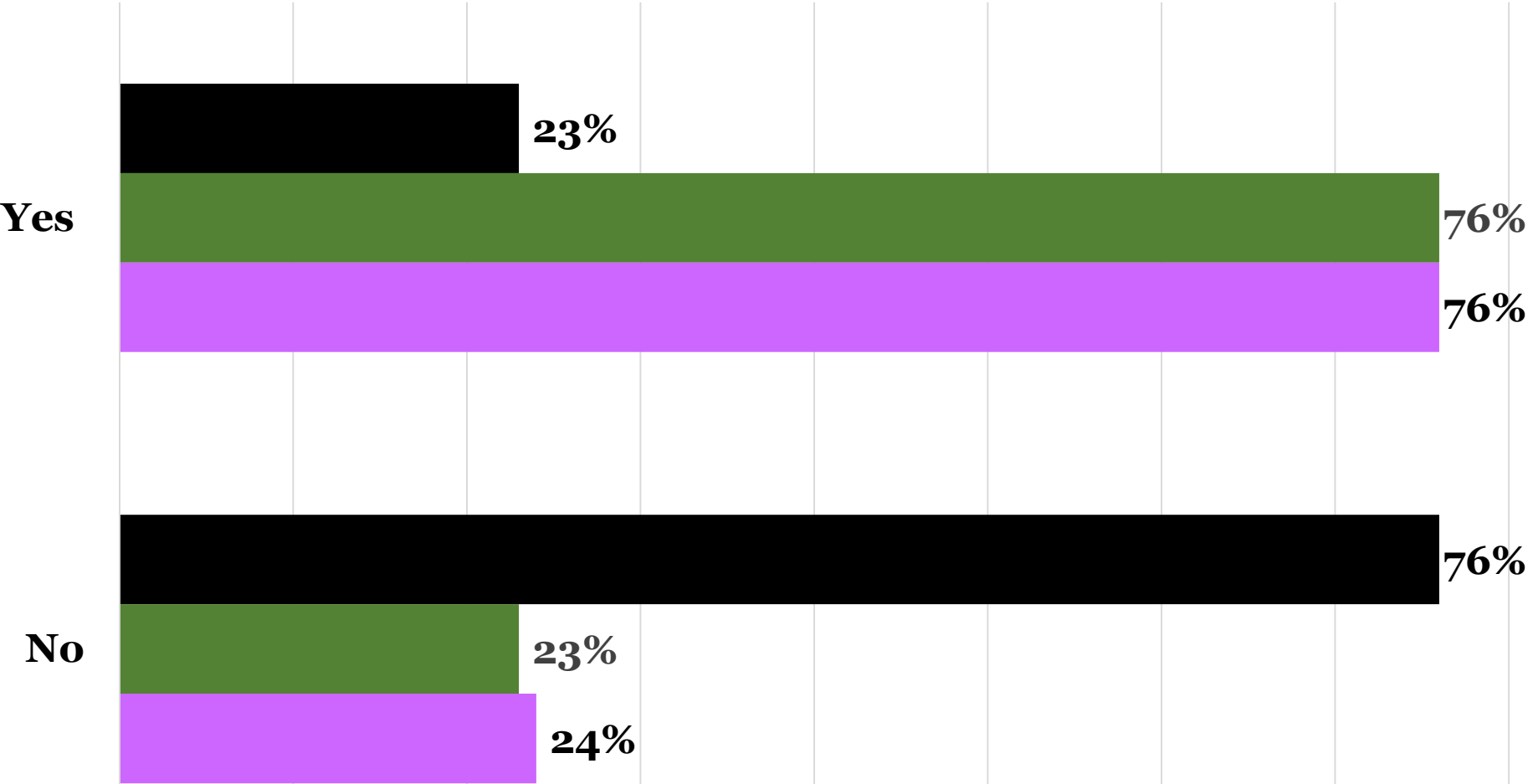
Assuming extensive background checks are in place to ensure there are not terrorist links, should the U.S. accept refugees from Syria specifically?

Republican Democrat Independent



Assuming extensive background checks are in place to ensure there are not terrorist links, should the U.S. accept refugees from Syria specifically?

Those Favoring Donald Trump Those Favoring Hillary Clinton Those Favoring Bernie Sanders

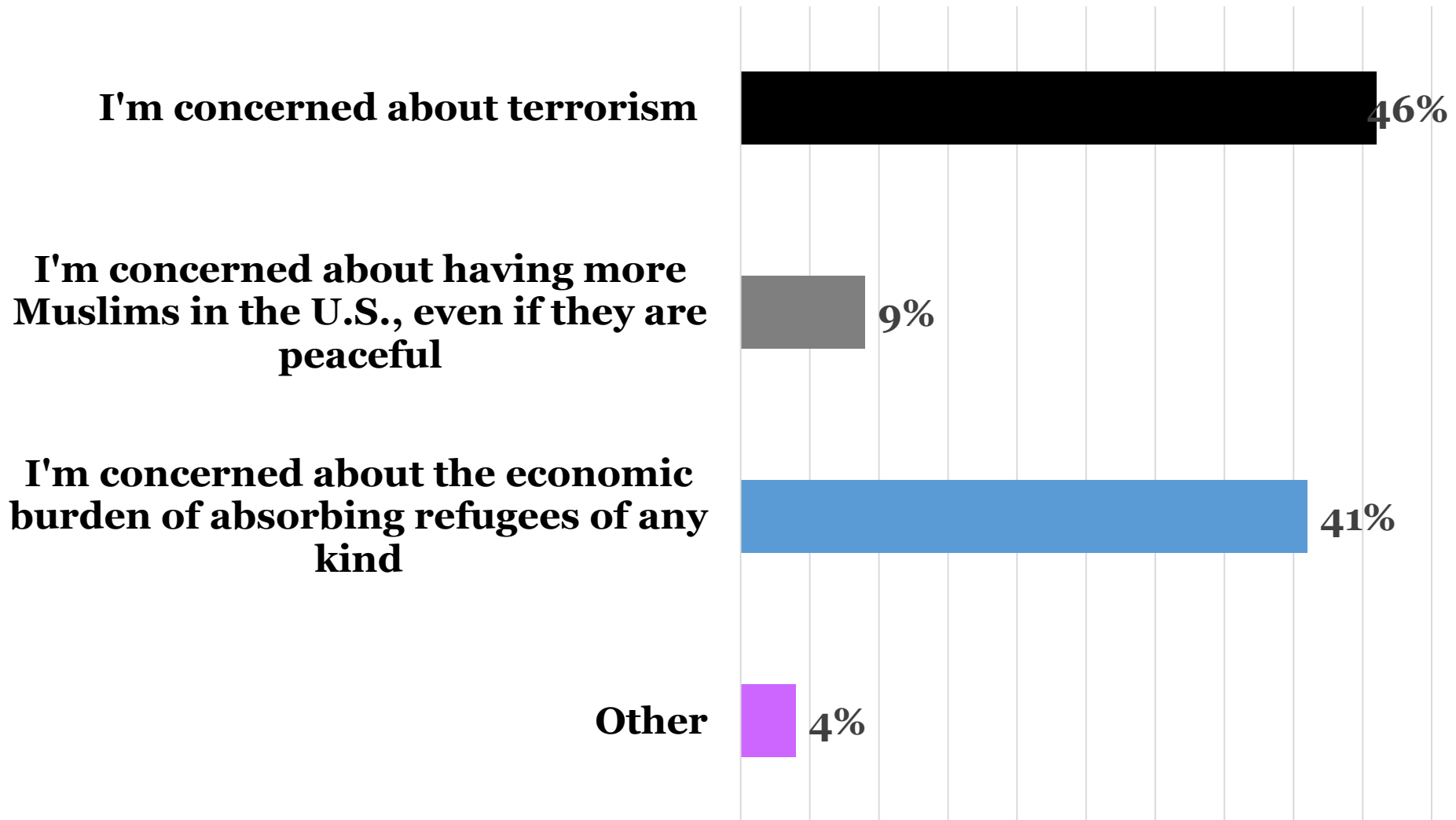


[Among those opposing absorbing refugees]

**Which of the following concerns
you most about absorbing
refugees?**

[Among those opposing absorbing refugees]

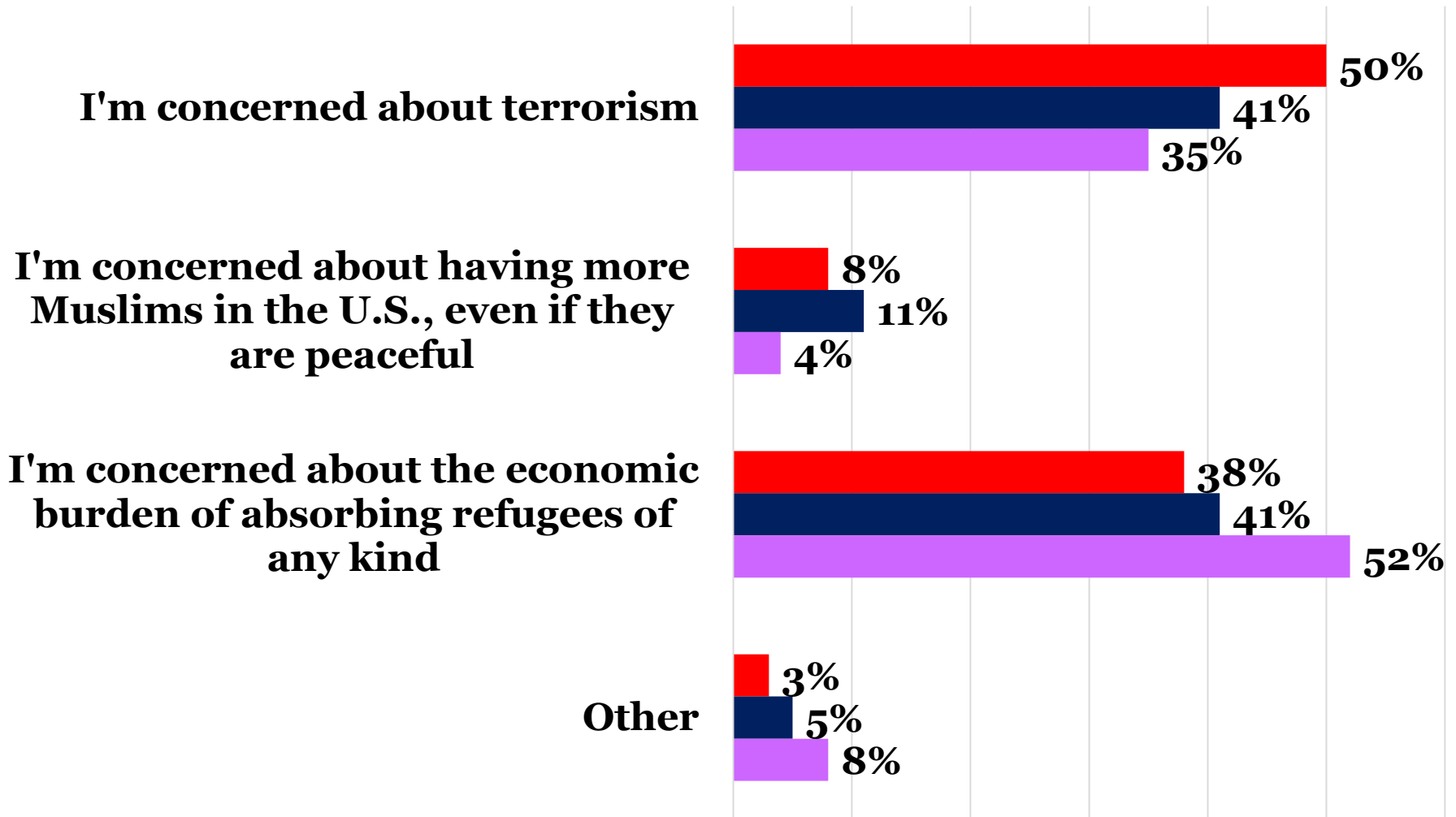
Which of the following concerns you most about absorbing refugees?



[Among those opposing absorbing refugees]

Which of the following concerns you most about absorbing refugees?

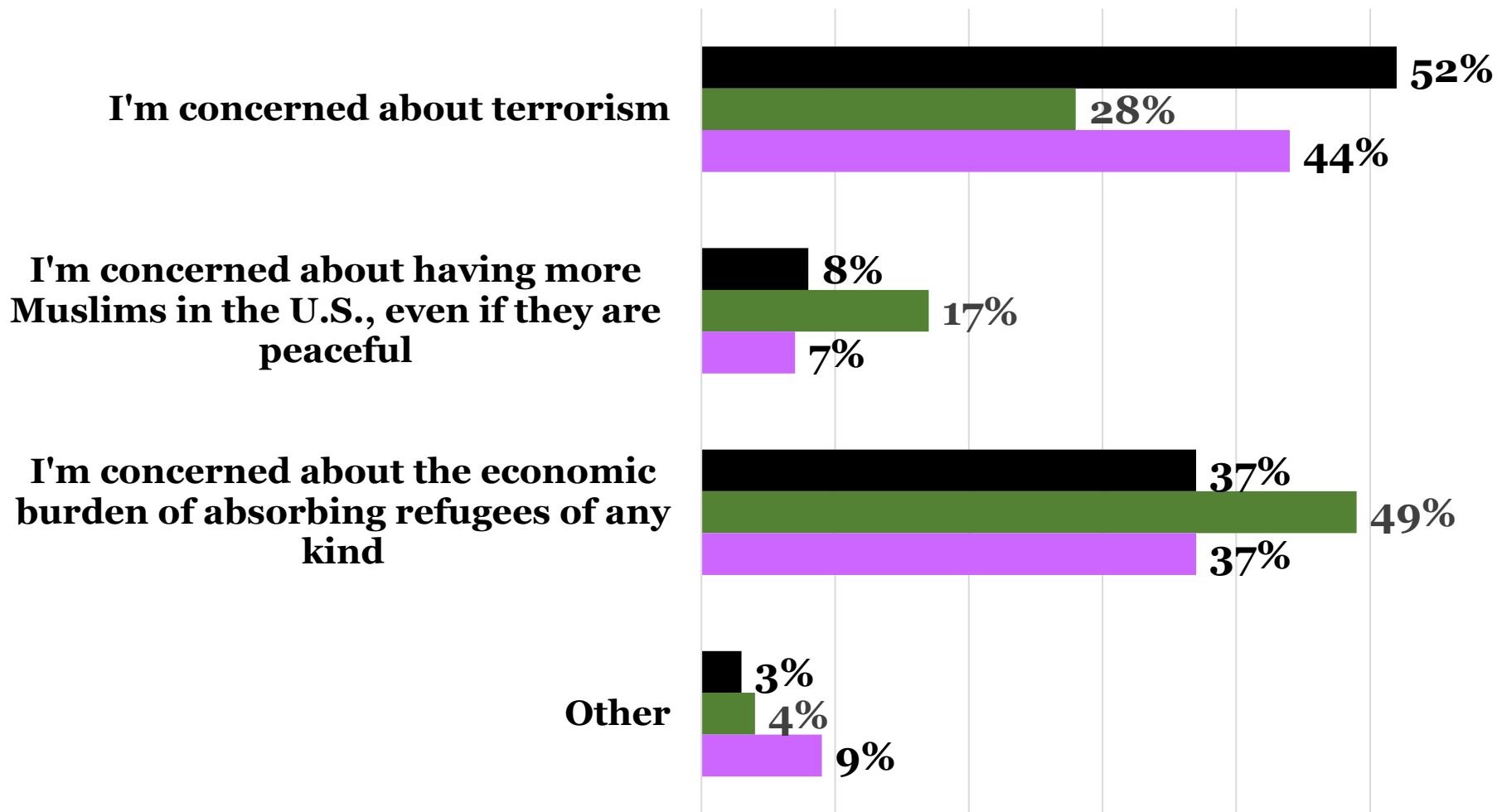
Republican Democrat Independent



[Among those opposing absorbing refugees]

Which of the following concerns you most about absorbing refugees?

Those Favoring Donald Trump Those Favoring Hillary Clinton Those Favoring Bernie Sanders



Apart from the question of whether U.S. should accept more refugees, does the U.S. have a moral obligation to help refugees from the following countries (Libya, Iraq, and Syria)?

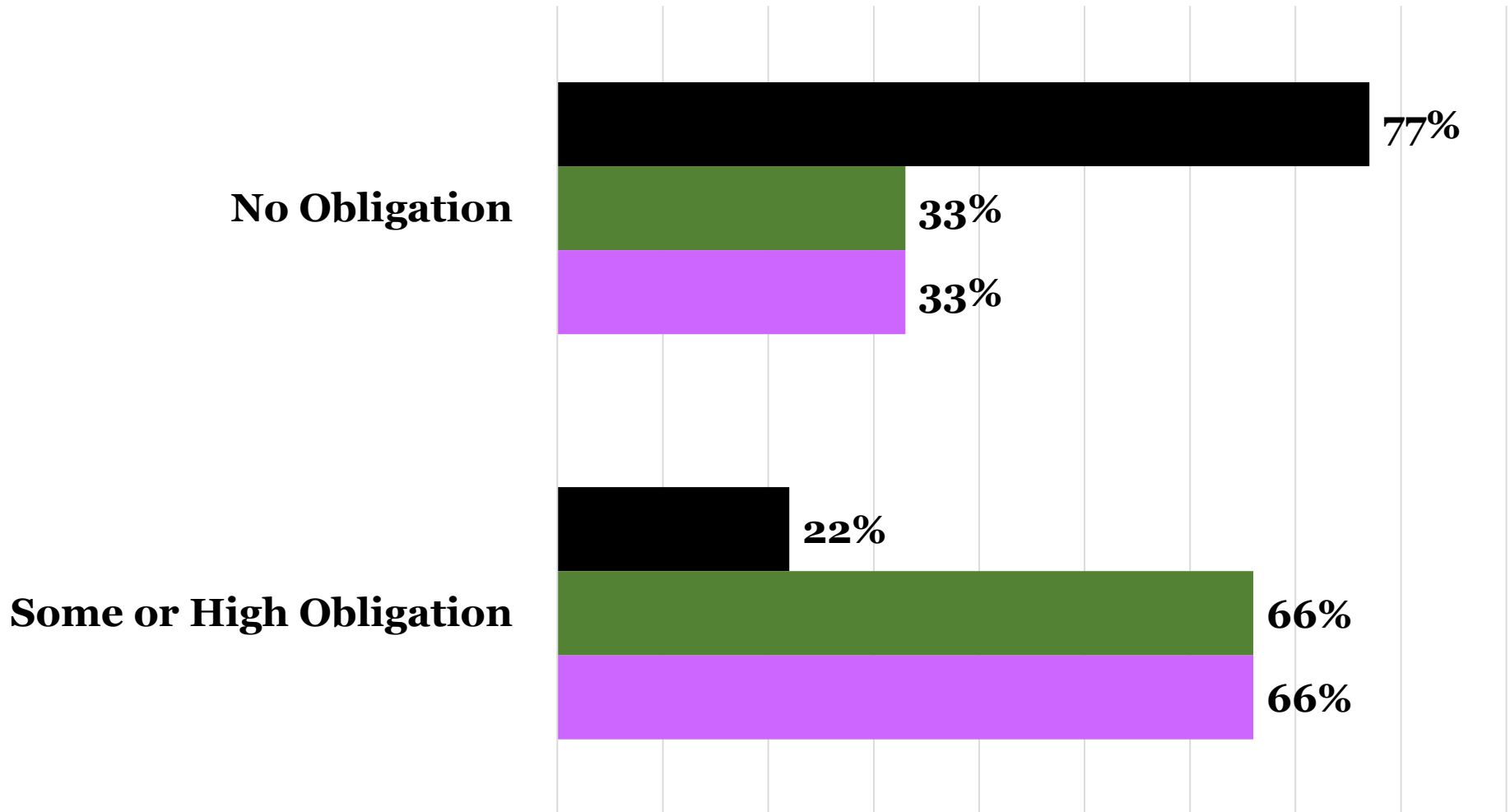
Apart from the question of whether U.S. should accept more refugees, does the U.S. have a moral obligation to help refugees from the following countries?

■ No Obligation ■ Some or High Obligation



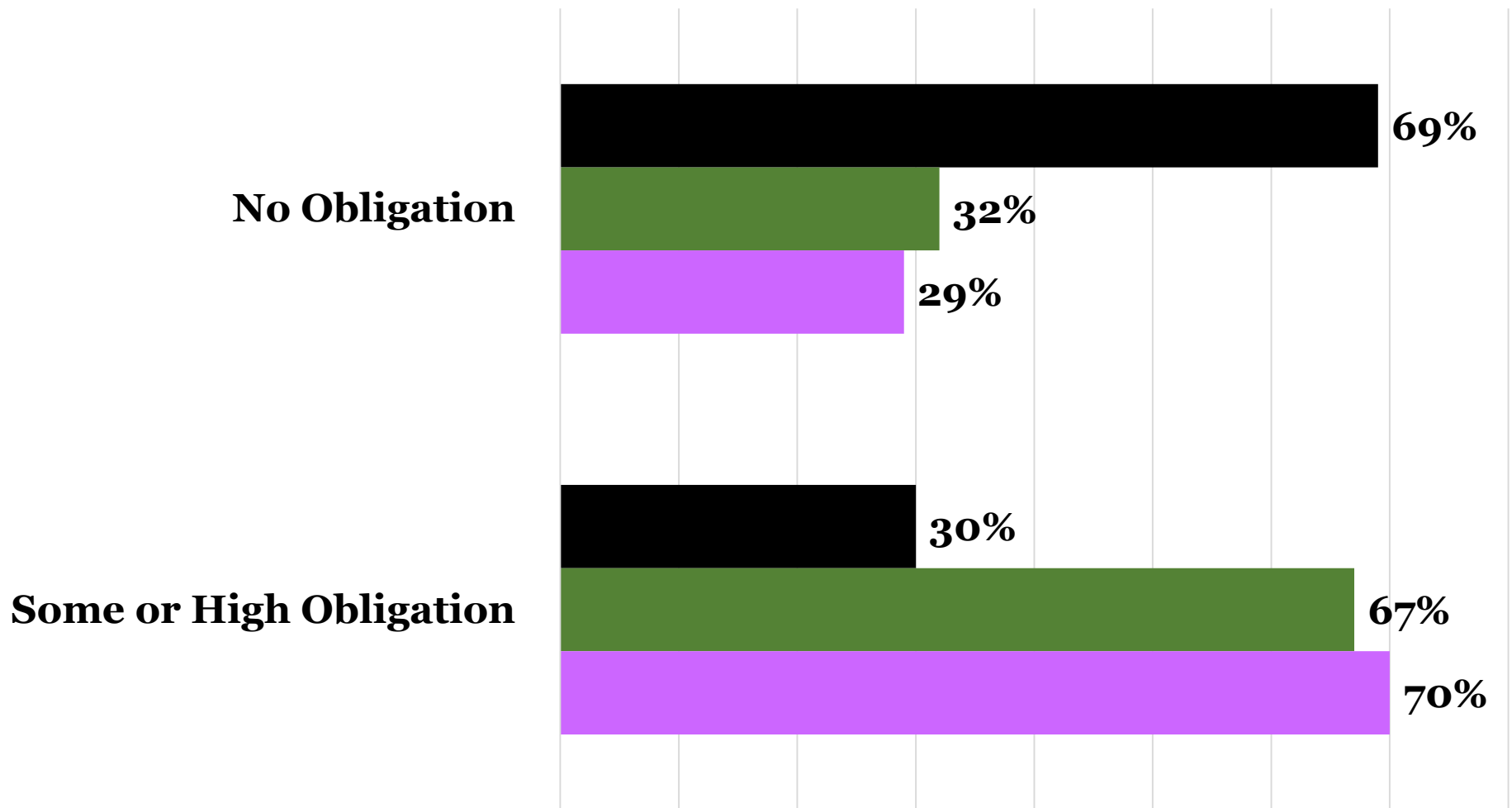
Apart from the question of whether U.S. should accept more refugees, does the U.S. have a moral obligation to help refugees from the following countries (Libya)?

Those Favoring Donald Trump Those Favoring Hillary Clinton Those Favoring Bernie Sanders



Apart from the question of whether U.S. should accept more refugees, does the U.S. have a moral obligation to help refugees from the following countries (Iraq)?

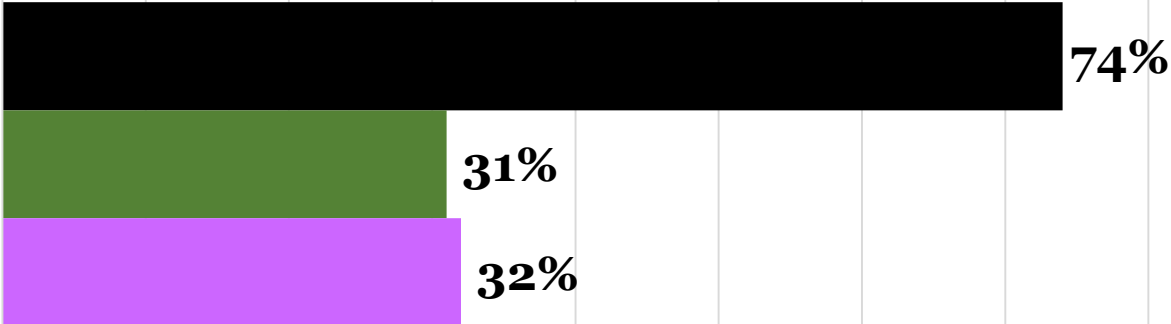
Those Favoring Donald Trump Those Favoring Hillary Clinton Those Favoring Bernie Sanders



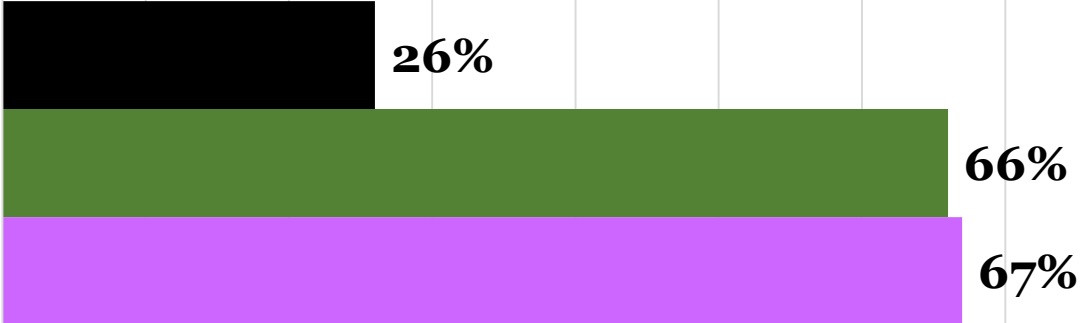
Apart from the question of whether U.S. should accept more refugees, does the U.S. have a moral obligation to help refugees from the following countries (Syria)?

Those Favoring Donald Trump Those Favoring Hillary Clinton Those Favoring Bernie Sanders

No Obligation

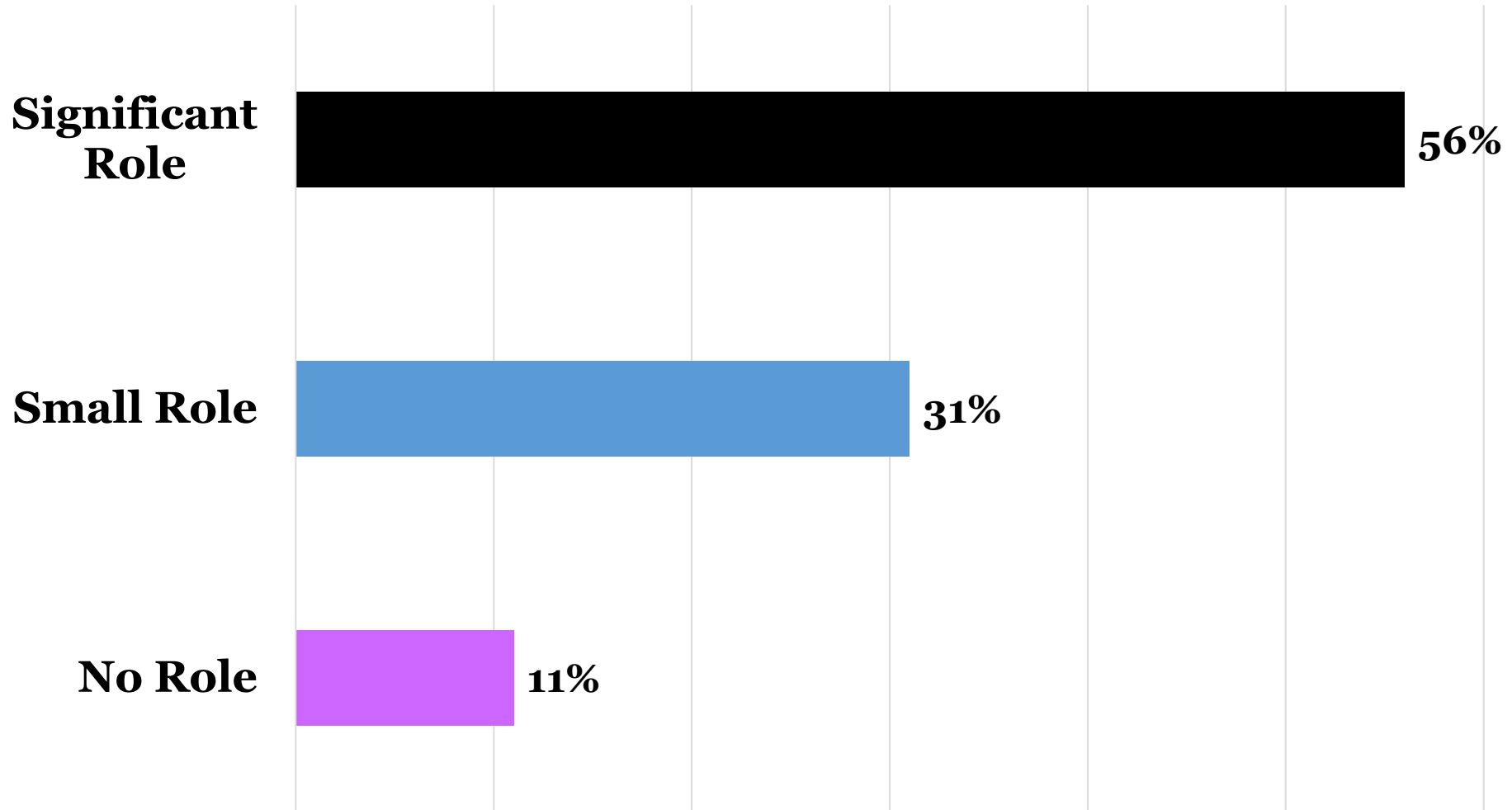


Some or High Obligation



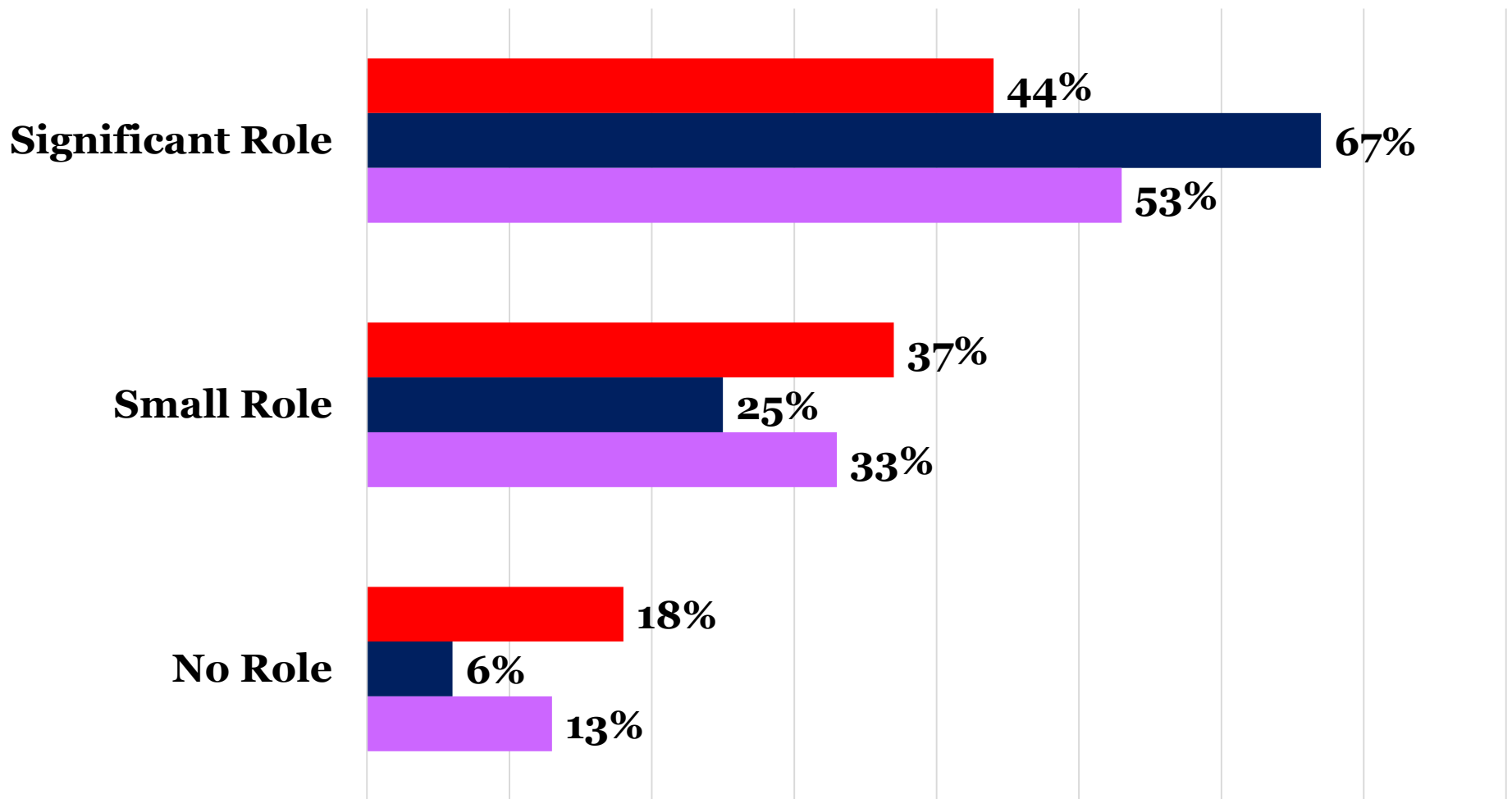
How much of a role do you believe the 2003 Iraq War has played in the events leading to the emergence of the refugee crisis in Syria?

How much of a role do you believe the 2003 Iraq War has played in the events leading to the emergence of the refugee crisis in Syria?



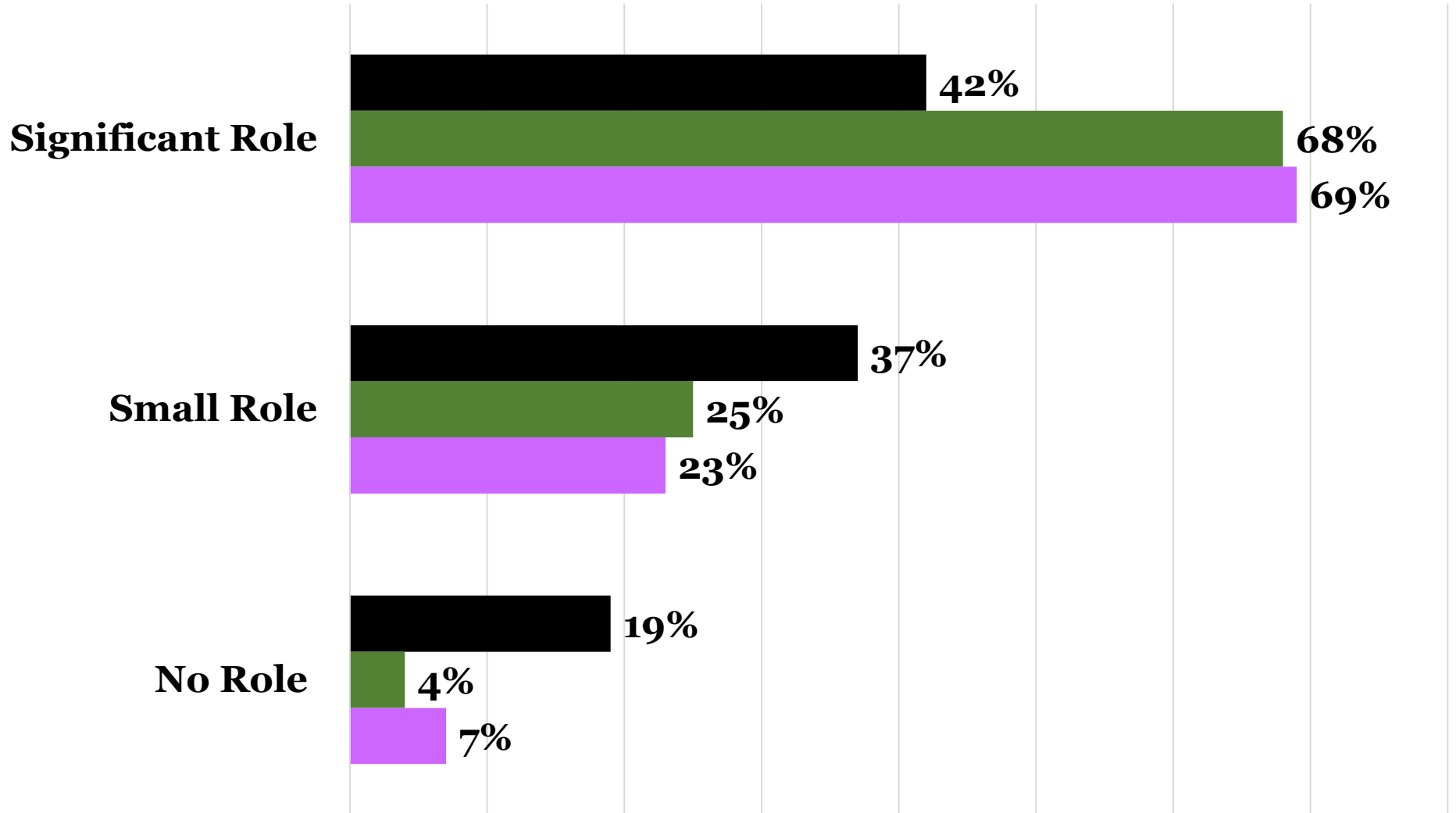
How much of a role do you believe the 2003 Iraq War has played in the events leading to the emergence of the refugee crisis in Syria?

Republican Democrat Independent



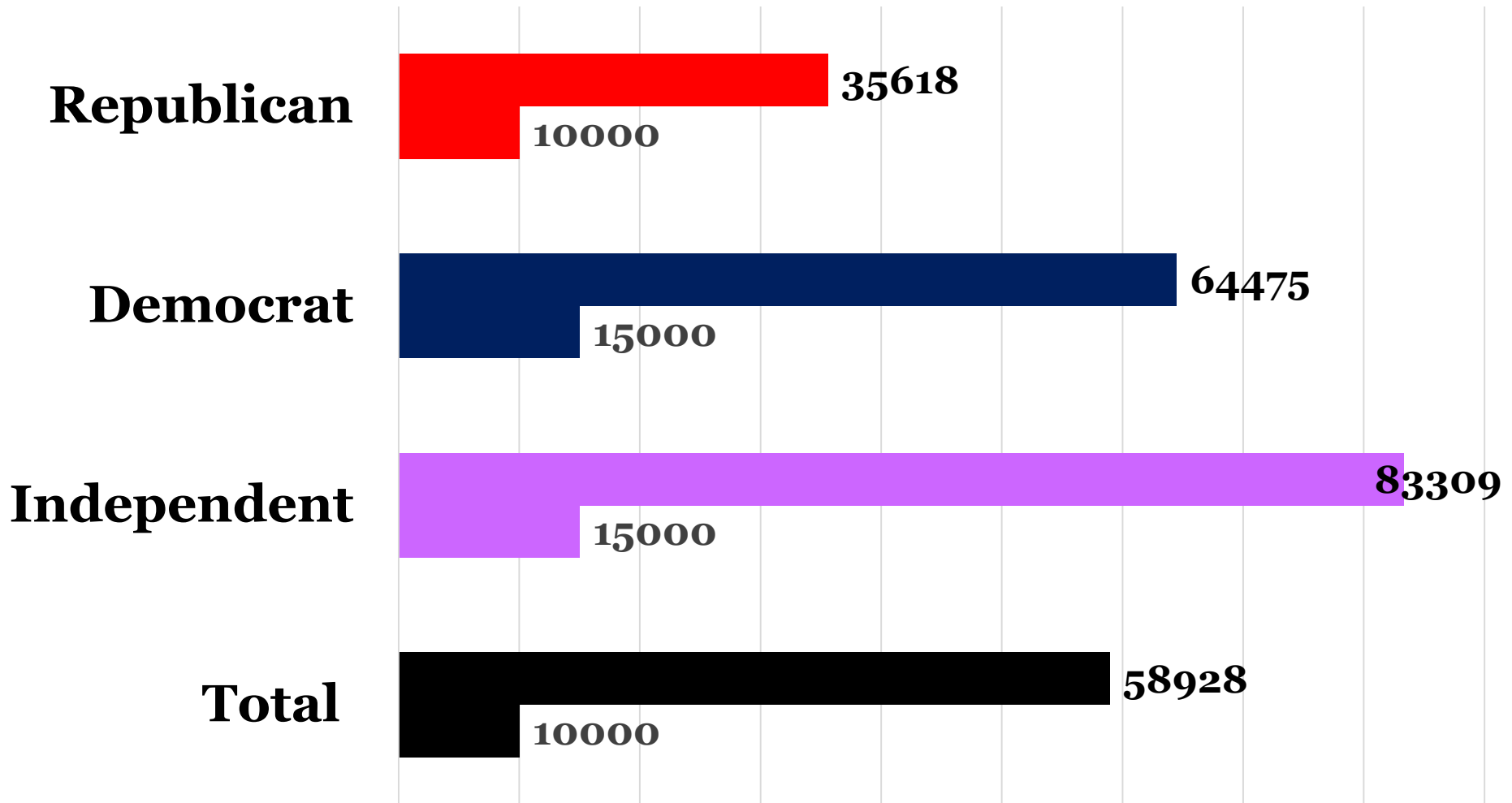
How much of a role do you believe the 2003 Iraq War has played in the events leading to the emergence of the refugee crisis in Syria?

Those Favoring Donald Trump Those Favoring Hillary Clinton Those Favoring Bernie Sanders



[Open Ended Question]
How many refugees should the
U.S. sponsor and resettle in
2017?

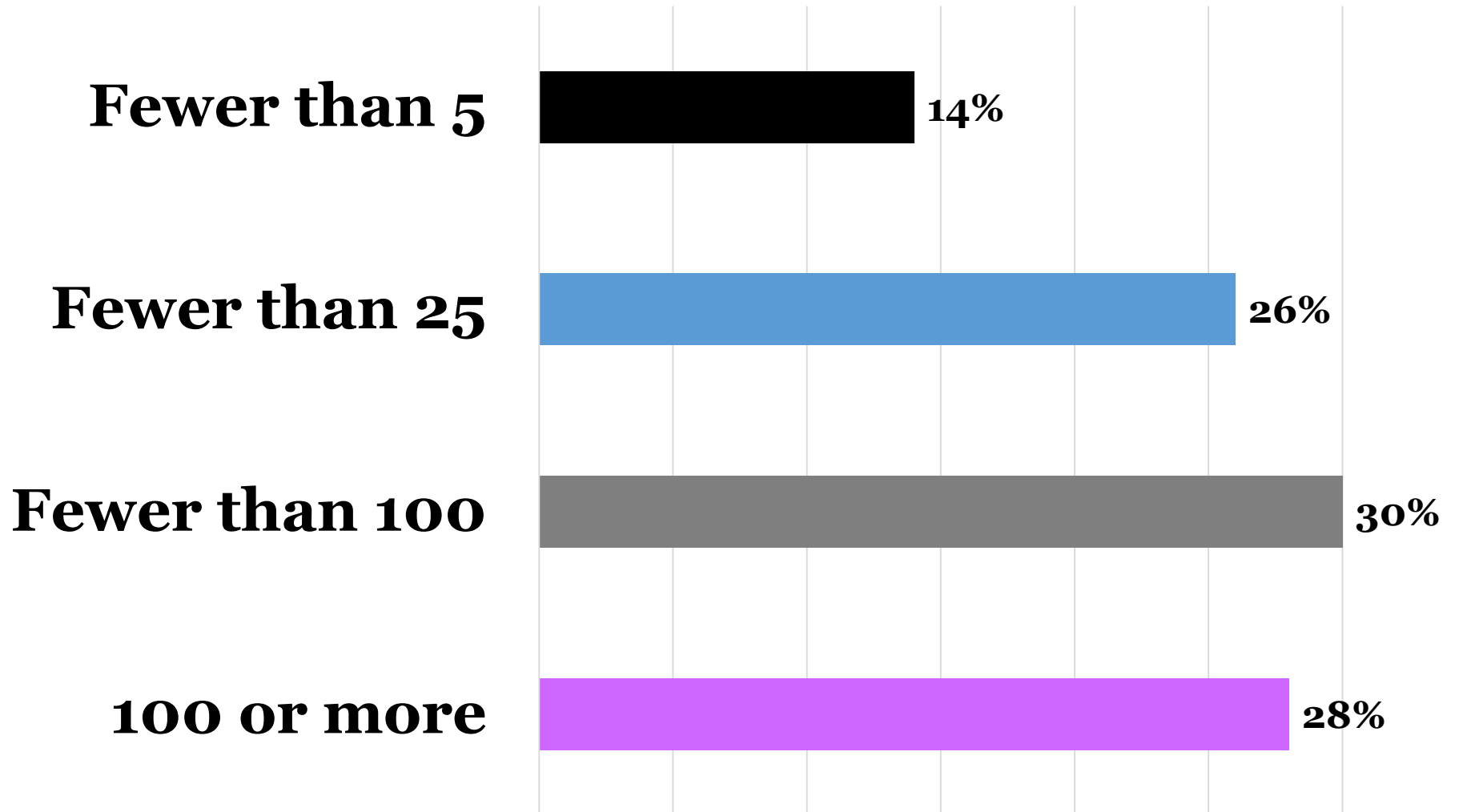
[Open Ended Question] How many refugees should the U.S. sponsor and resettle in 2017?



Mean (top number) Median (bottom number)

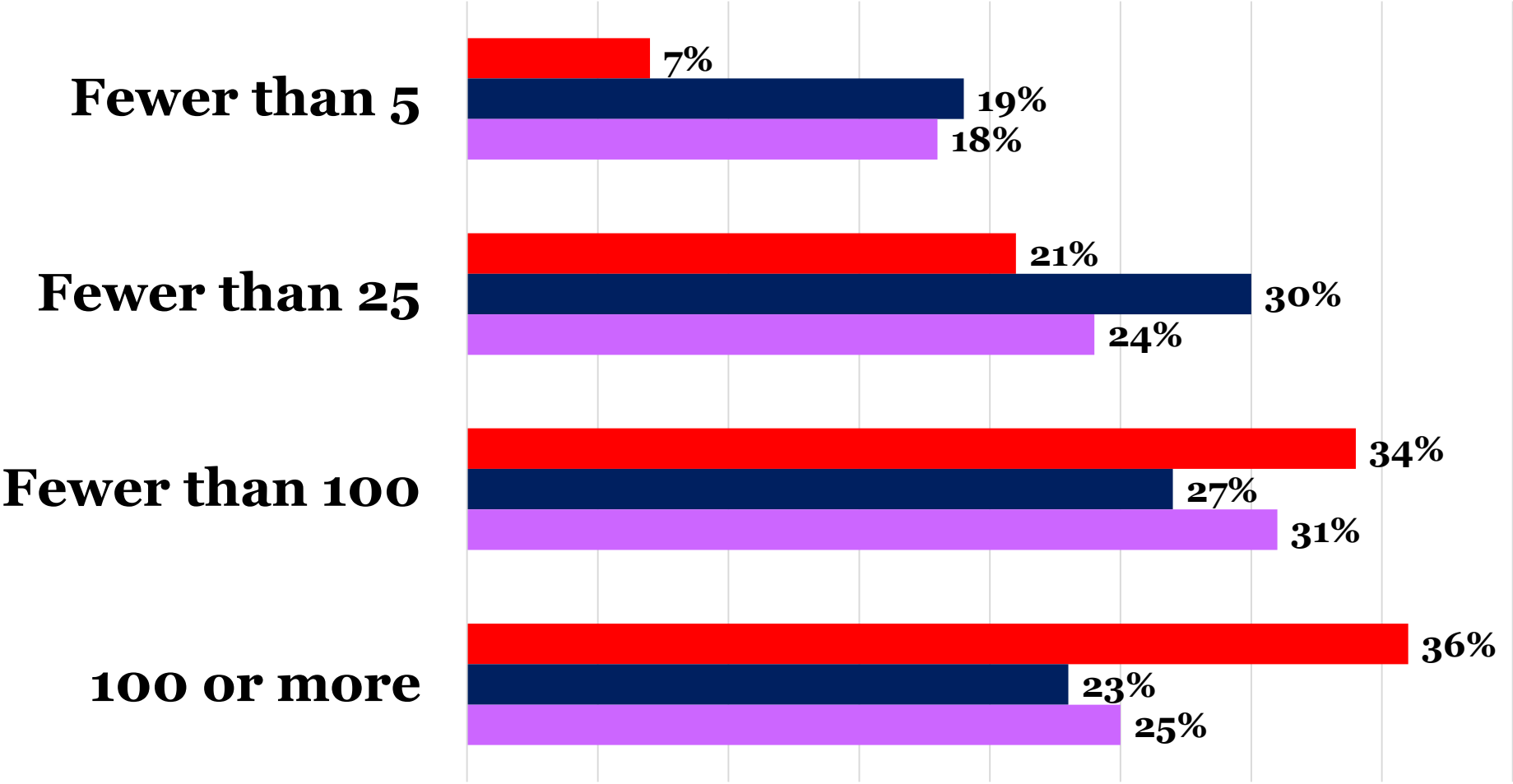
**In your estimation, how many
refugees have been arrested in the
United States since 9/11 over
terrorism charges?**

In your estimation, how many refugees have been arrested in the United States since 9/11 over terrorism charges?



In your estimation, how many refugees have been arrested in the United States since 9/11 over terrorism charges?

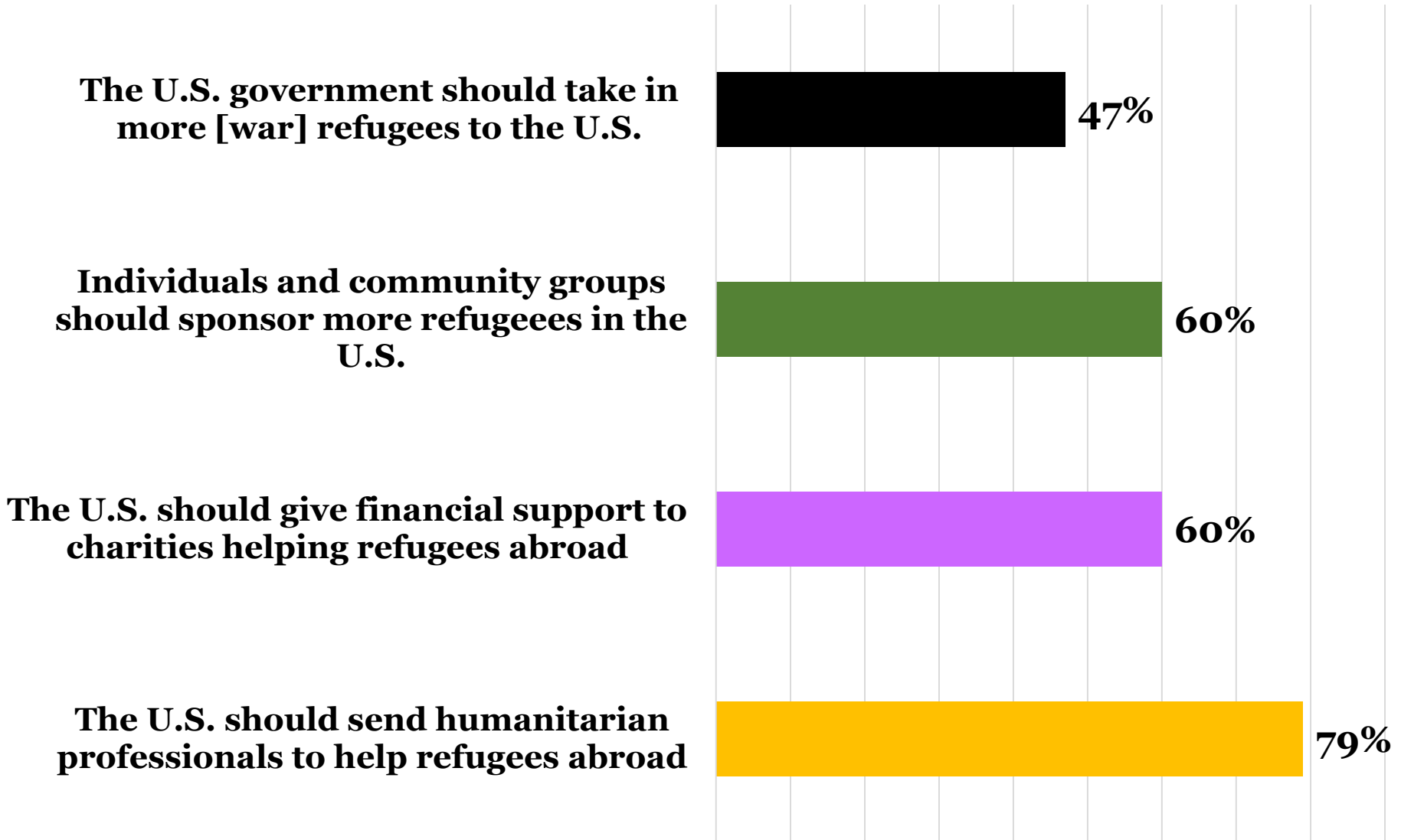
Republican Democrat Independent



Here are some ways the U.S. might respond. Please tell us whether you support or oppose the following measures:

The U.S. government should take in more [war] refugees, allowing them into the U.S.

Percentage of Americans who support each of the following responses to the refugee issue



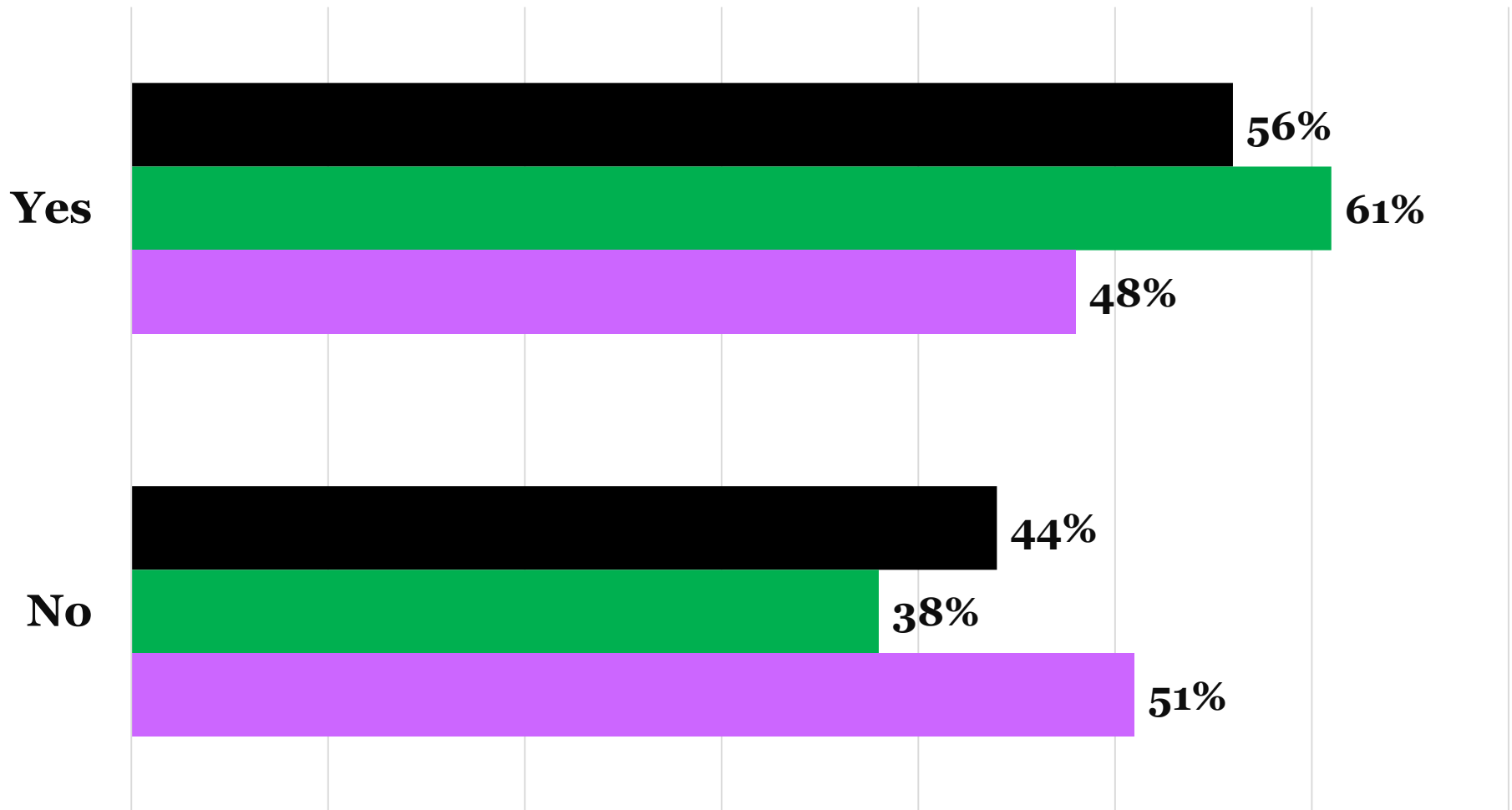
**If some of these Syrian refugees
came to live in your state or
community, do you think they
would be welcomed?**

If some of these Syrian refugees came to live in your state or community, do you think they would be welcomed?



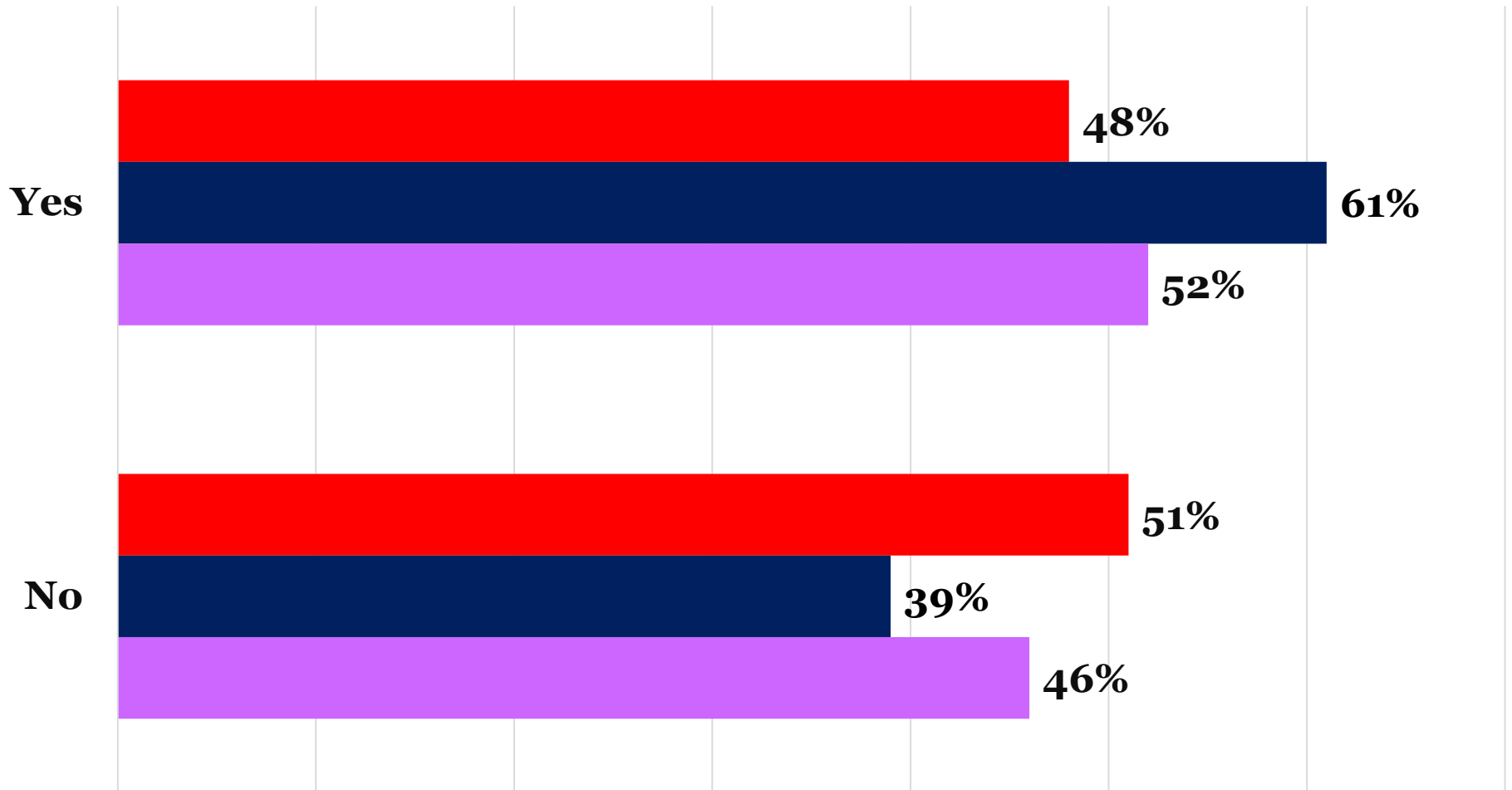
If some of these Syrian refugees came to live in your state or community, do you think they would be welcomed?

18-34 35-54 55+



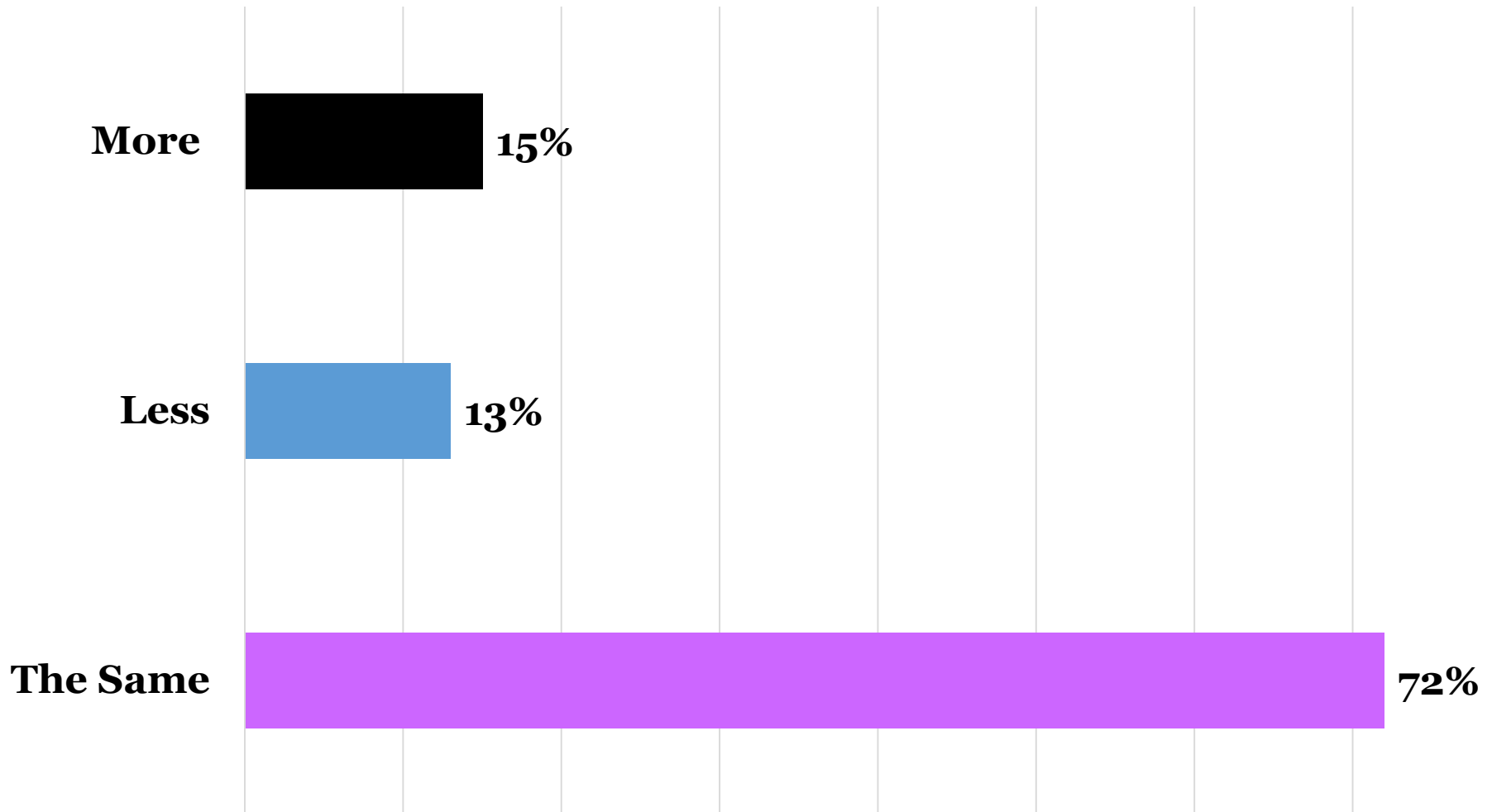
If some of these Syrian refugees came to live in your state or community, do you think they would be welcomed?

Republican **Democrat** **Independent**



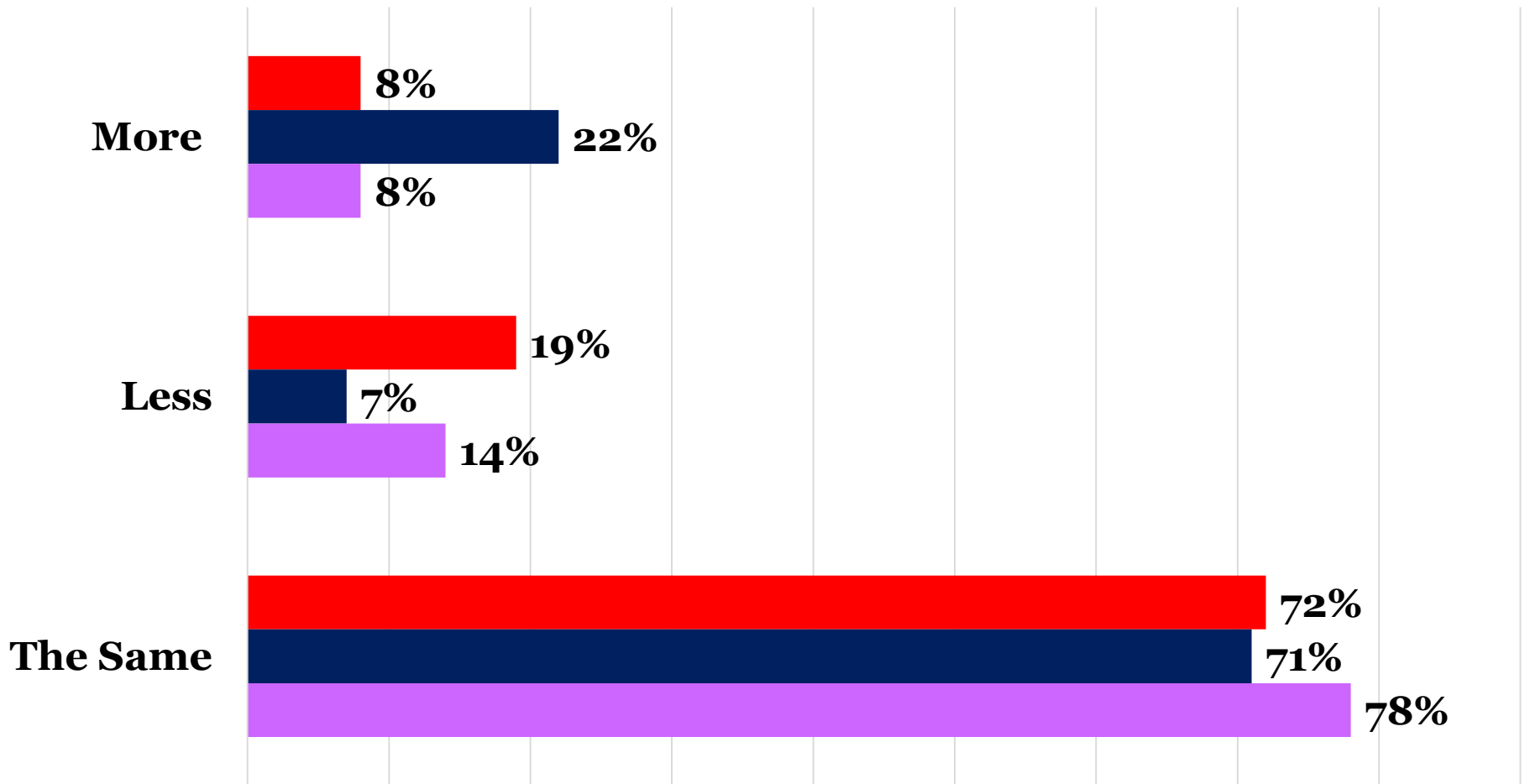
As you may know, American laws prohibit discriminating against people including refugees solely on the basis of their ethnic or religious background. Does this incline you to be more or less accepting of Syrian refugees in the U.S.?

As you may know, American laws prohibit discriminating against people including refugees solely on the basis of their ethnic or religious background. Does this incline you to be more or less accepting of Syrian refugees in the U.S.?



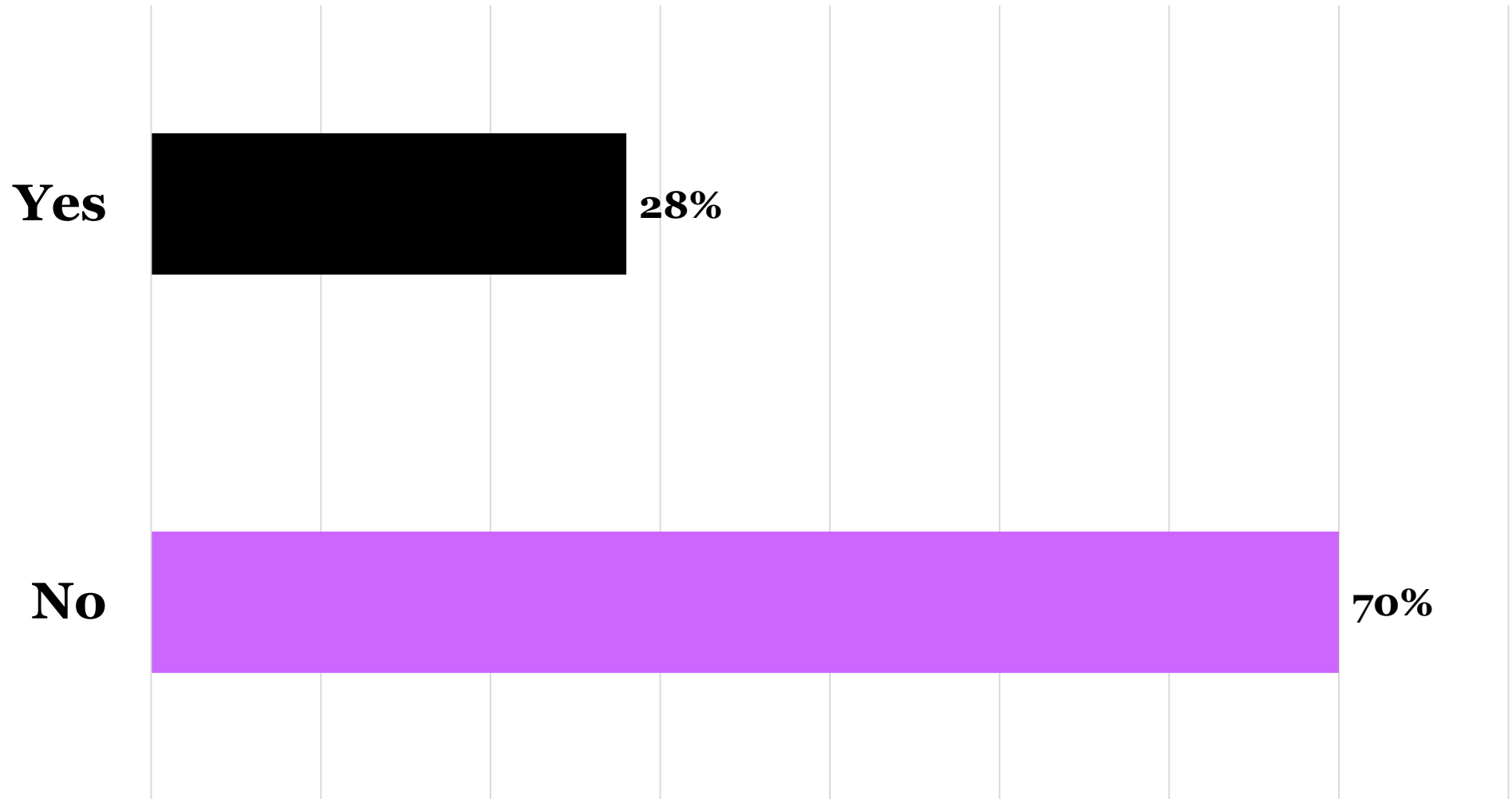
As you may know, American laws prohibit discriminating against people including refugees solely on the basis of their ethnic or religious background. Does this incline you to be more or less accepting of Syrian refugees in the U.S.?

Republican Democrat Independent



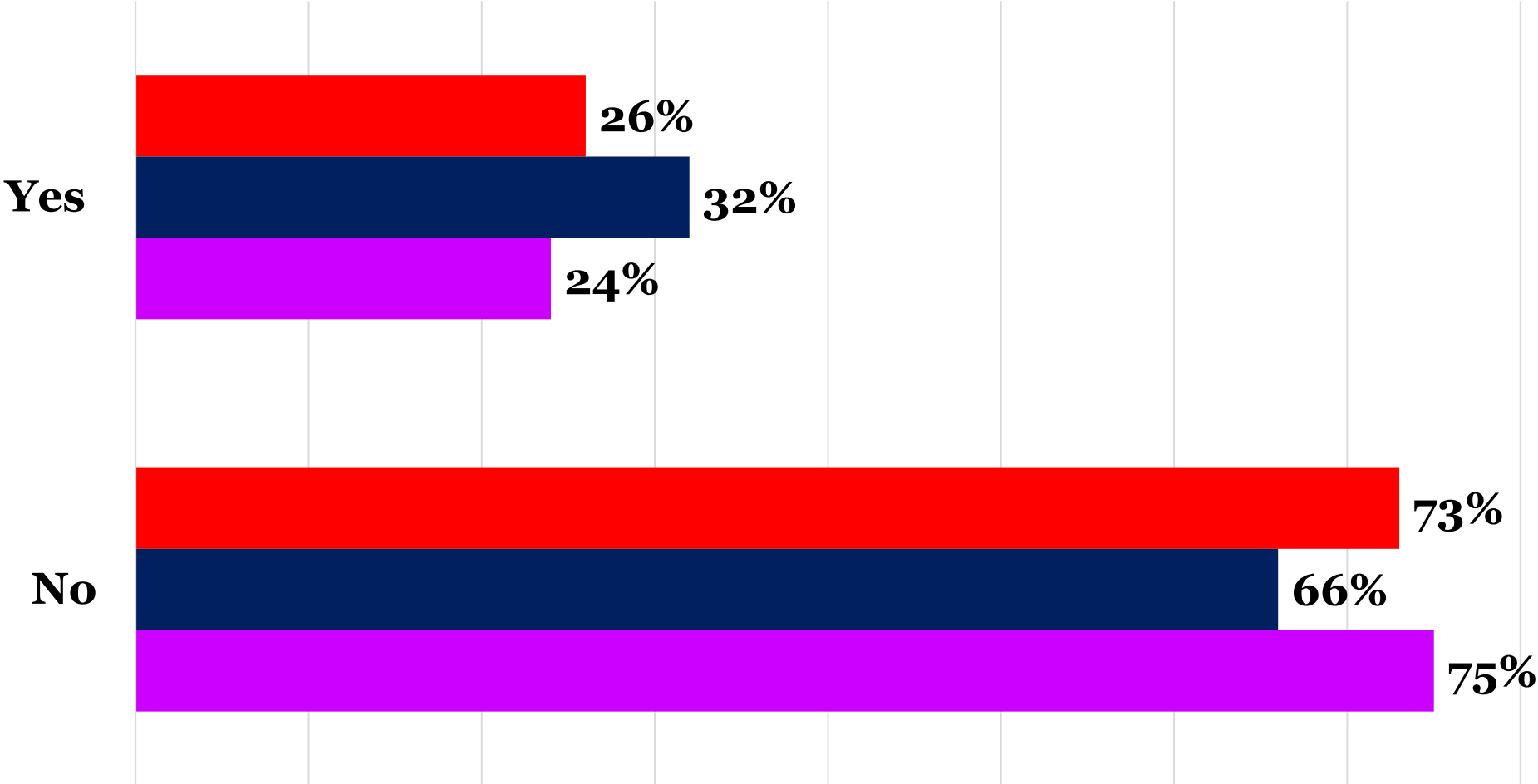
If the U.S. institutes a refugee policy excluding single men, would you support the U.S. accepting more refugees?

**If the U.S. institutes a refugee policy
excluding single men, would you support
the U.S. accepting more refugees?**



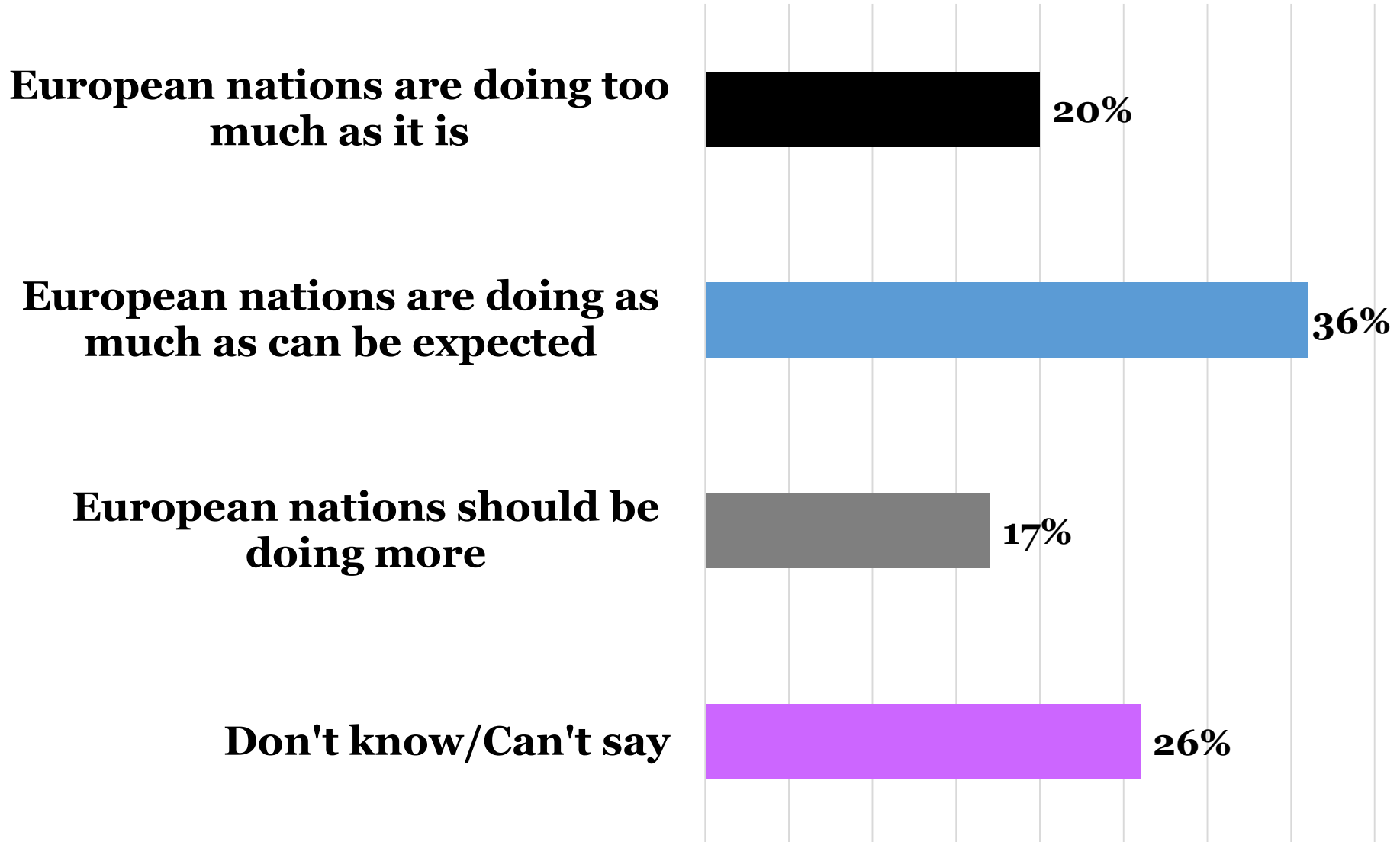
If the U.S. institutes a refugee policy excluding single men, would you support the U.S. accepting more refugees?

Republican **Democrat** **Independent**



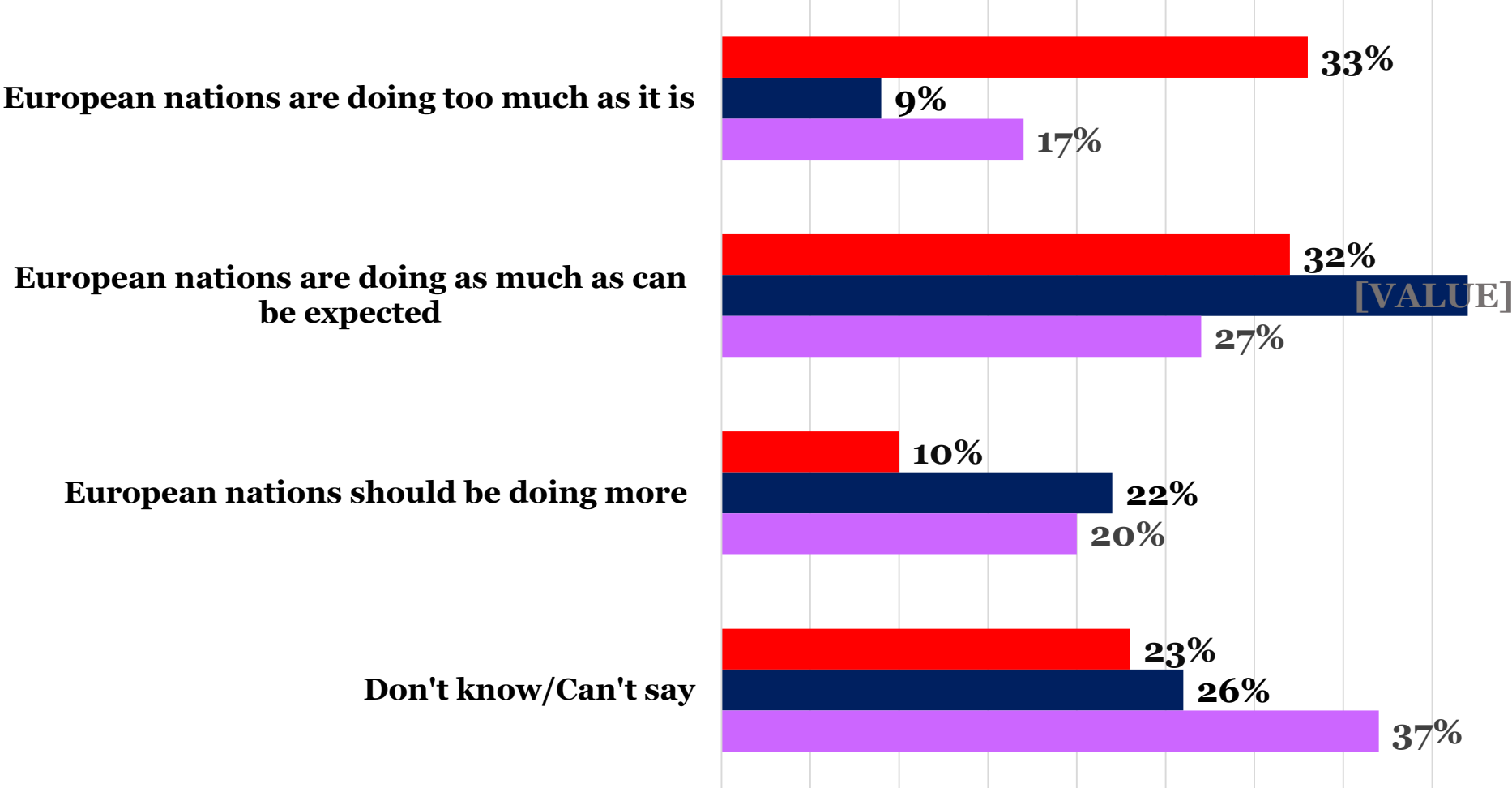
**Based on what you've seen,
heard or read, what do you
think about Europe's response
to the migrant crisis?**

**Based on what you've seen, heard or read,
what do you think about Europe's response
to the migrant crisis?**



Based on what you've seen, heard or read, what do you think about Europe's response to the migrant crisis?

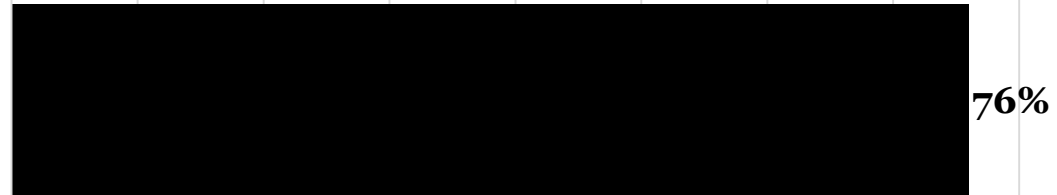
Republican Democrat Independent



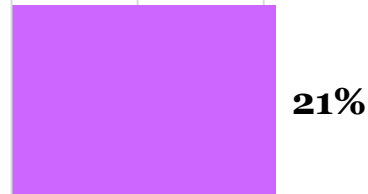
**How do you think the U.S.
should deal with the Syrian
refugees who are already in the
country?**

How do you think the U.S. should deal with the Syrian refugees who are already in the country?

Welcome them and help absorb them into American society



Expel them



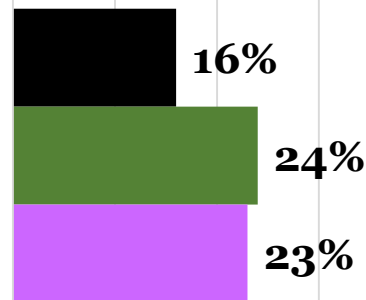
How do you think the U.S. should deal with the Syrian refugees who are already in the country?

18-34 35-54 55+

Welcome them and help absorb them into American society

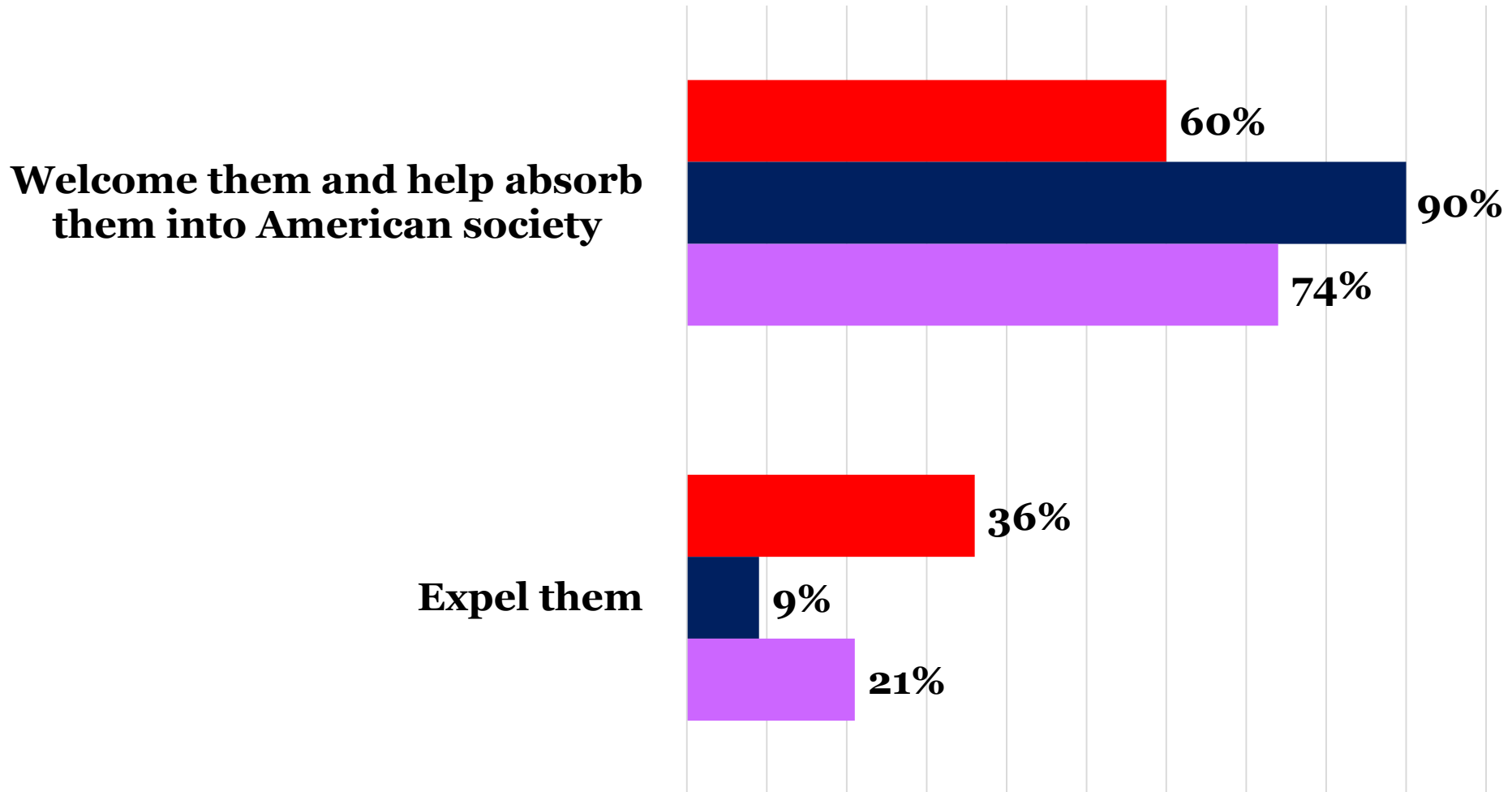


Expel them



How do you think the U.S. should deal with the Syrian refugees who are already in the country?

Republican Democrat Independent



How do you think the U.S. should deal with the Syrian refugees who are already in the country?



Those Favoring Donald Trump

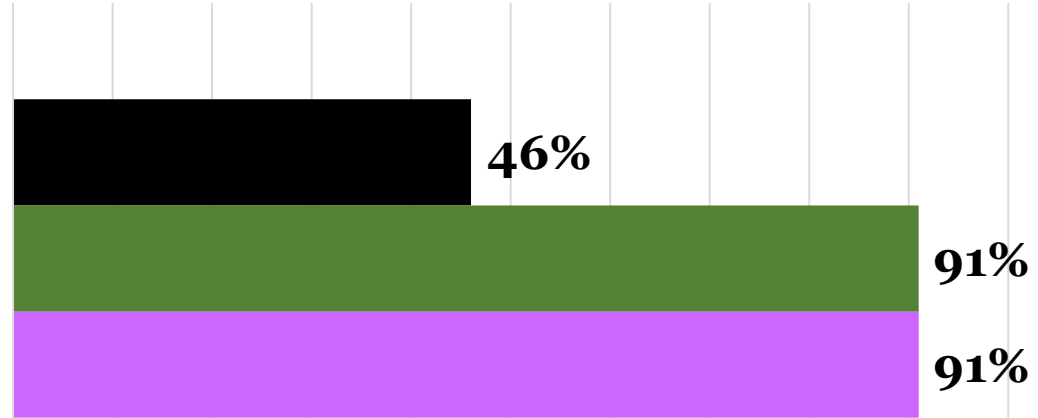


Those Favoring Hillary Clinton

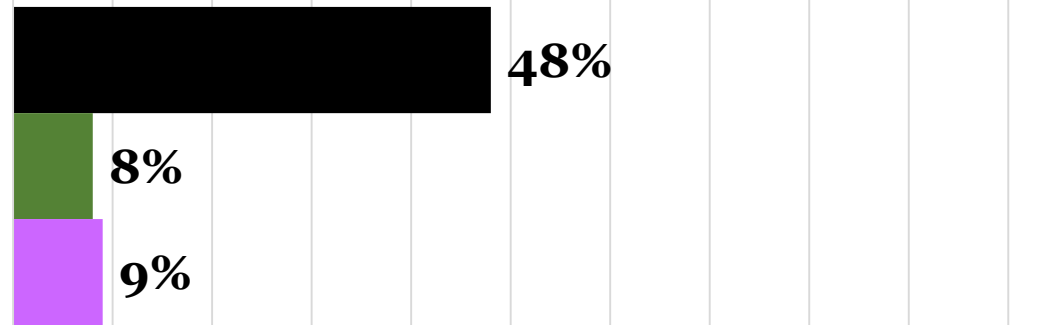


Those Favoring Bernie Sanders

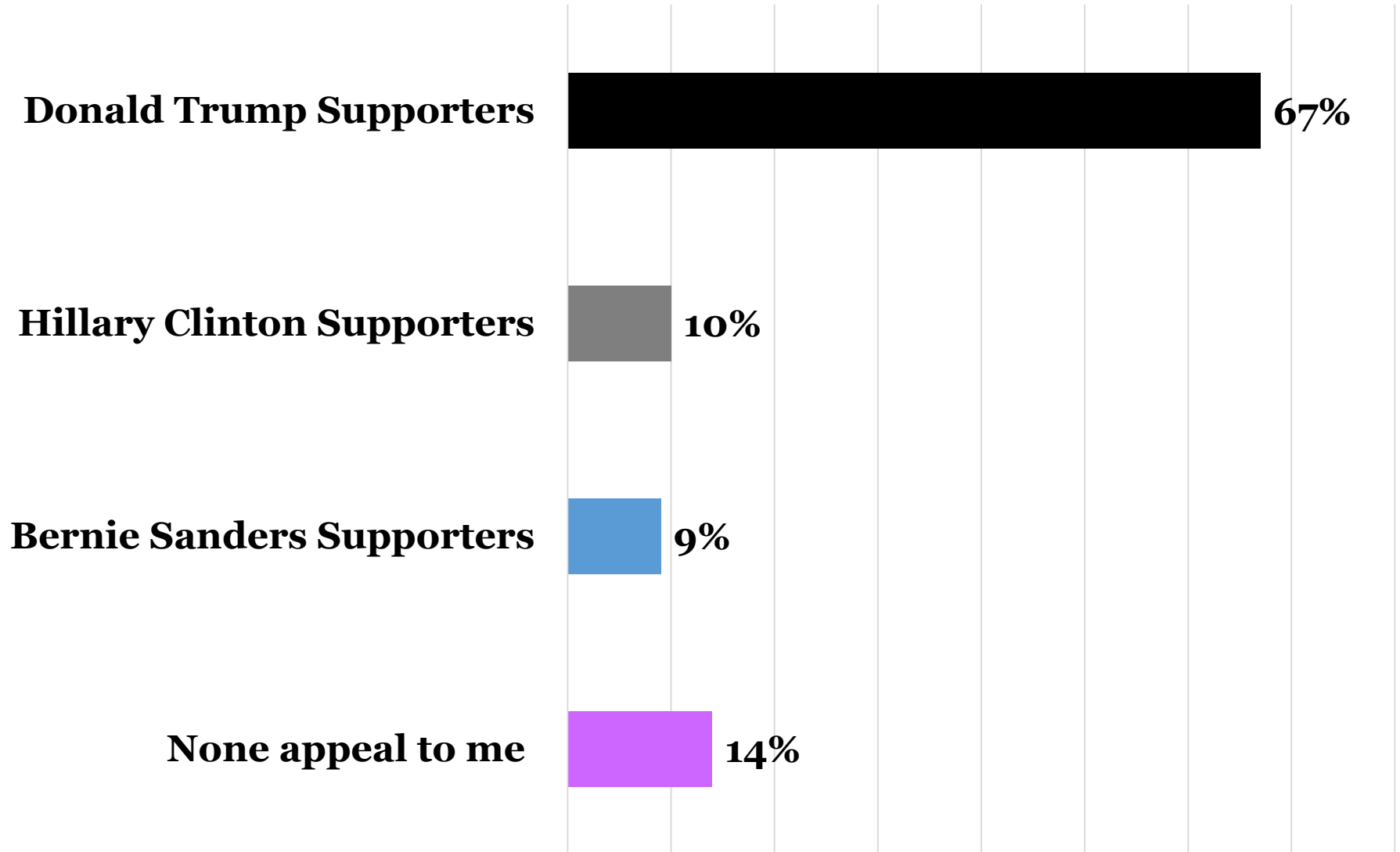
Welcome them and help absorb them into American society



Expel them

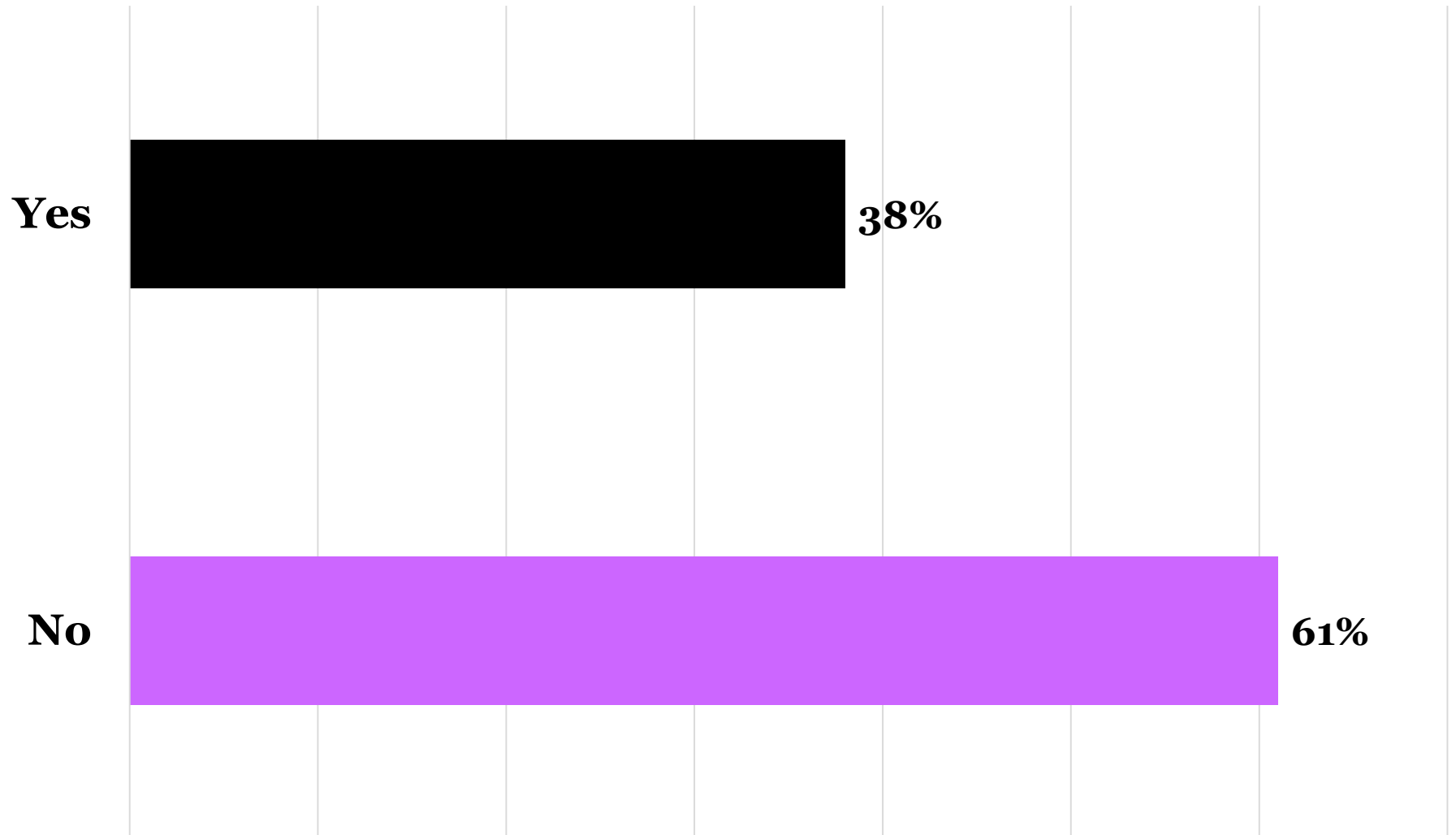


**[Among those who said “Expel them”]
How do you think the U.S. should deal with the Syrian
refugees who are already in the country?**



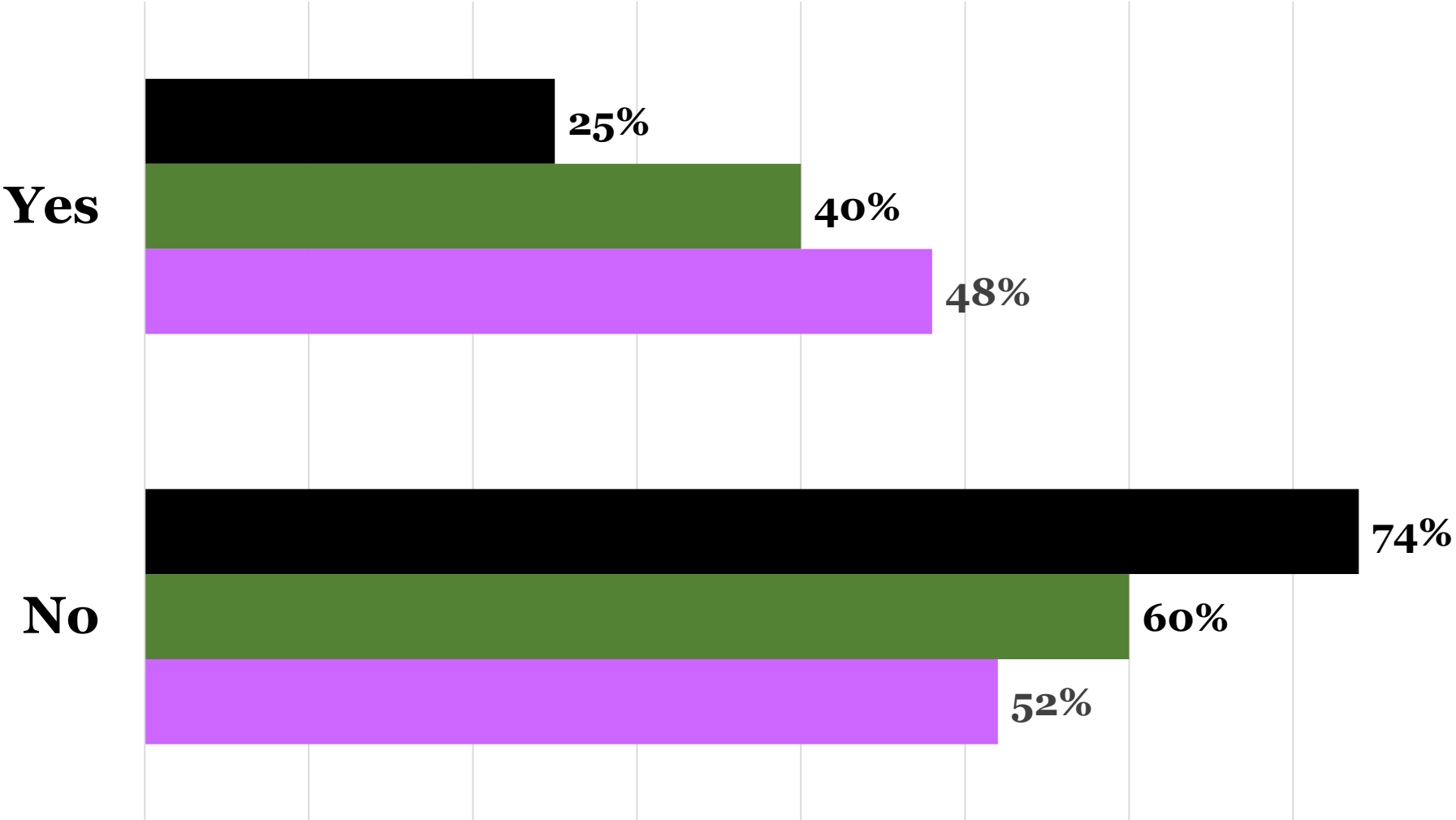
**Do you support the proposal
'for a total shutdown of Muslims
entering the United States until
our country's representatives
can figure out what is going on?'**

Do you support the proposal ‘for a total shutdown of Muslims entering the United States until our country’s representatives can figure out what is going on?’



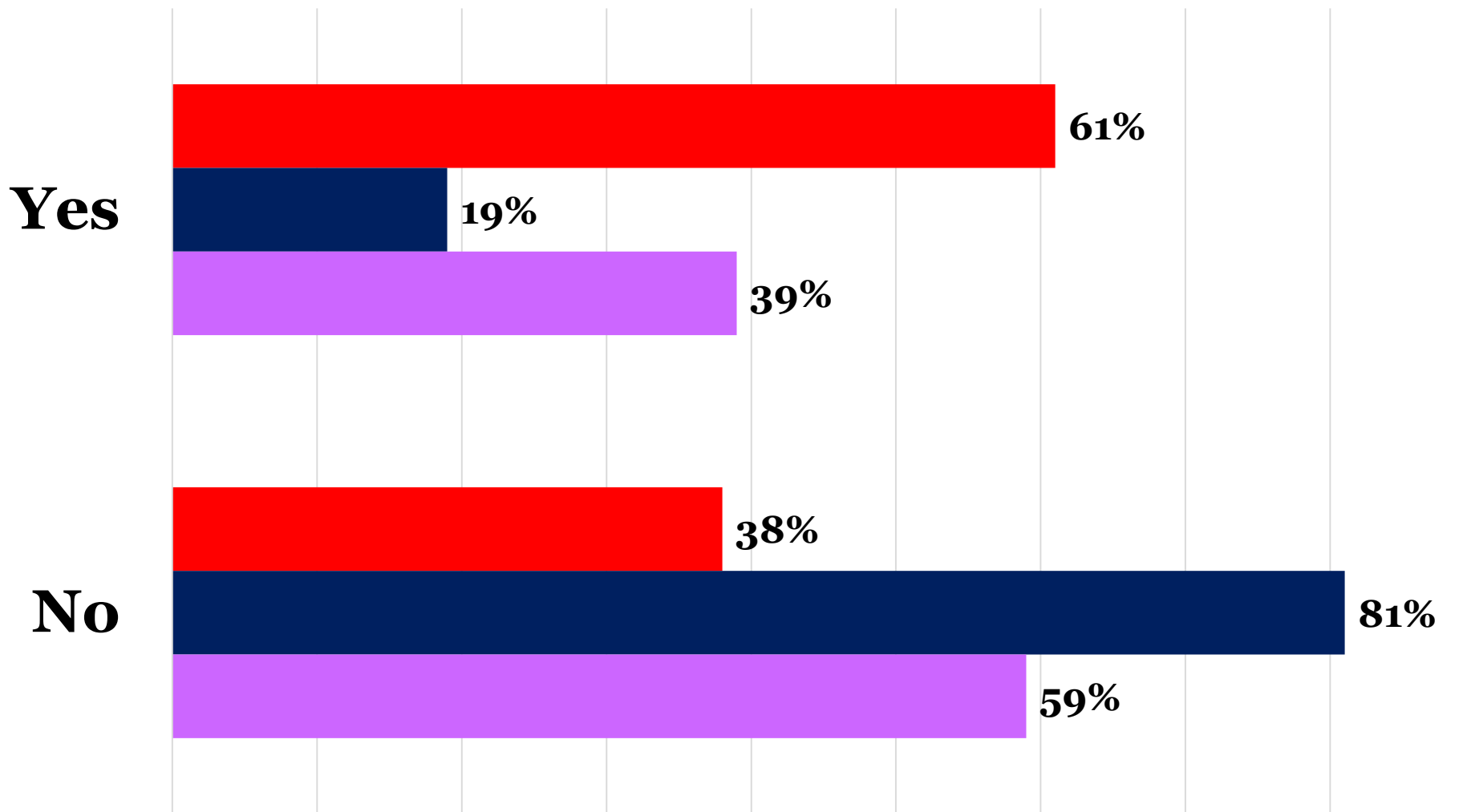
Do you support the proposal 'for a total shutdown of Muslims entering the United States until our country's representatives can figure out what is going on?'

18-34 35-54 55+



Do you support the proposal ‘for a total shutdown of Muslims entering the United States until our country’s representatives can figure out what is going on?’

Republican Democrat Independent



Do you support the proposal ‘for a total shutdown of Muslims entering the United States until our country’s representatives can figure out what is going on?’



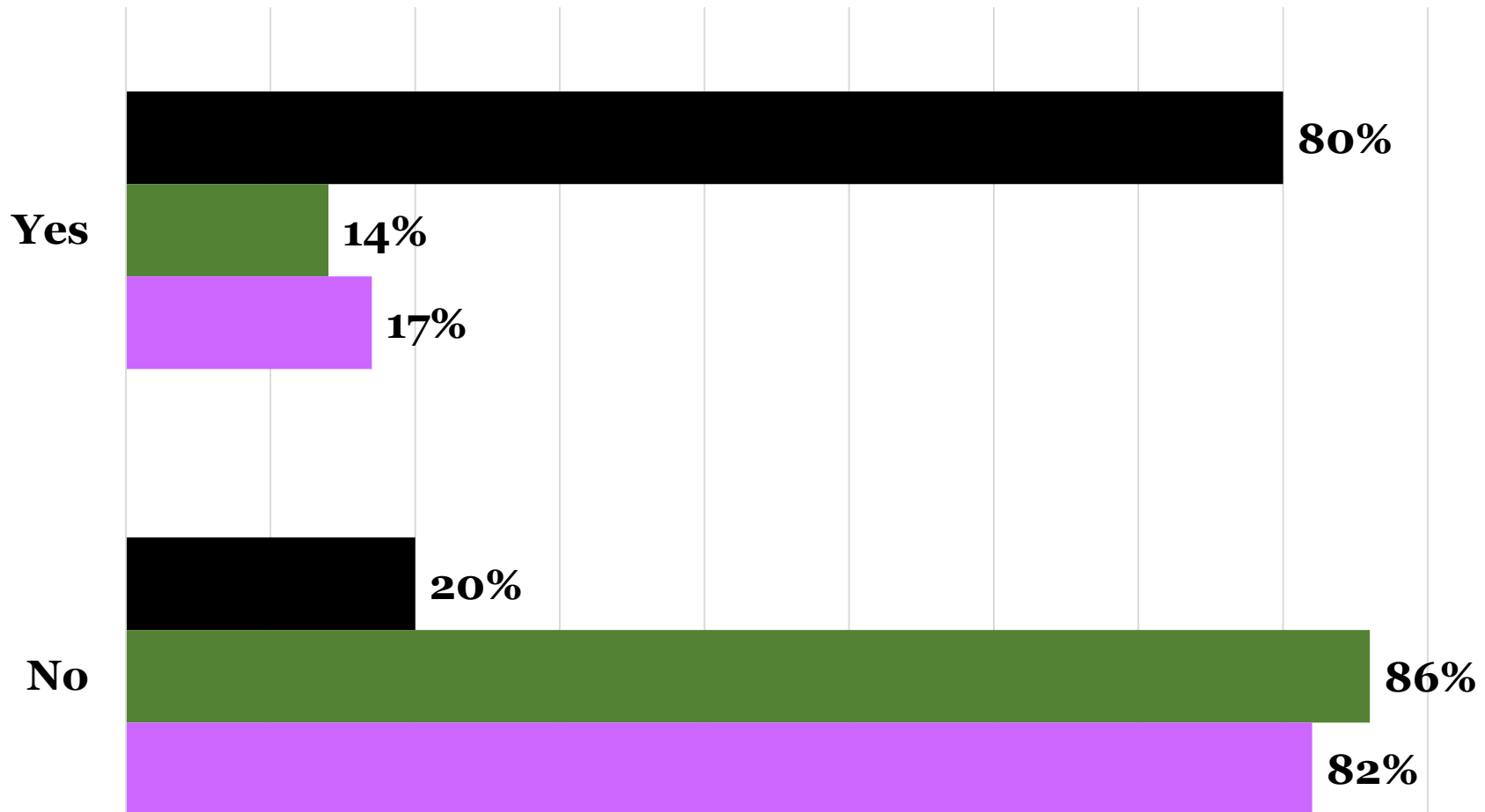
Those Favoring Donald Trump



Those Favoring Hillary Clinton

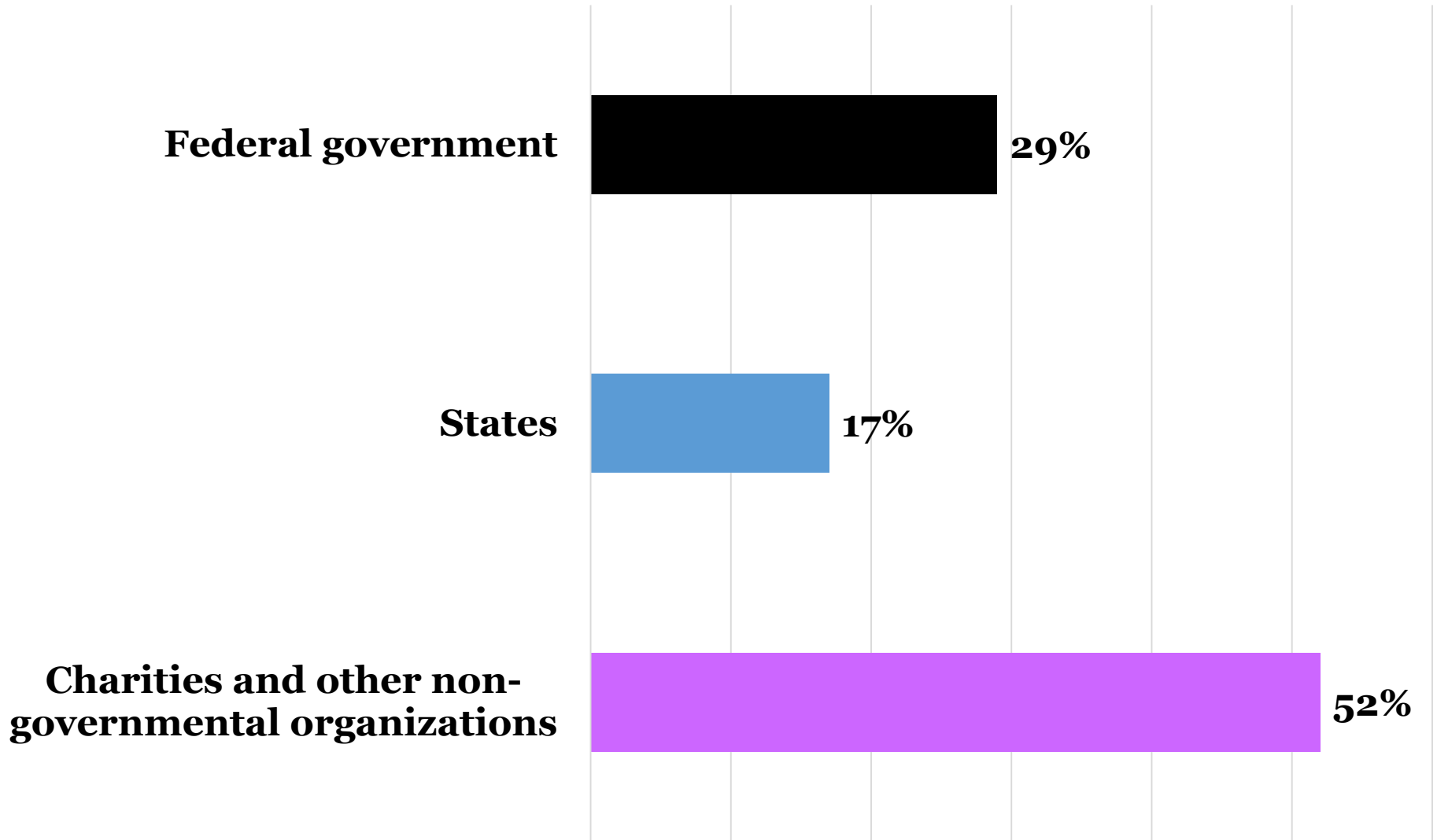


Those Favoring Bernie Sanders



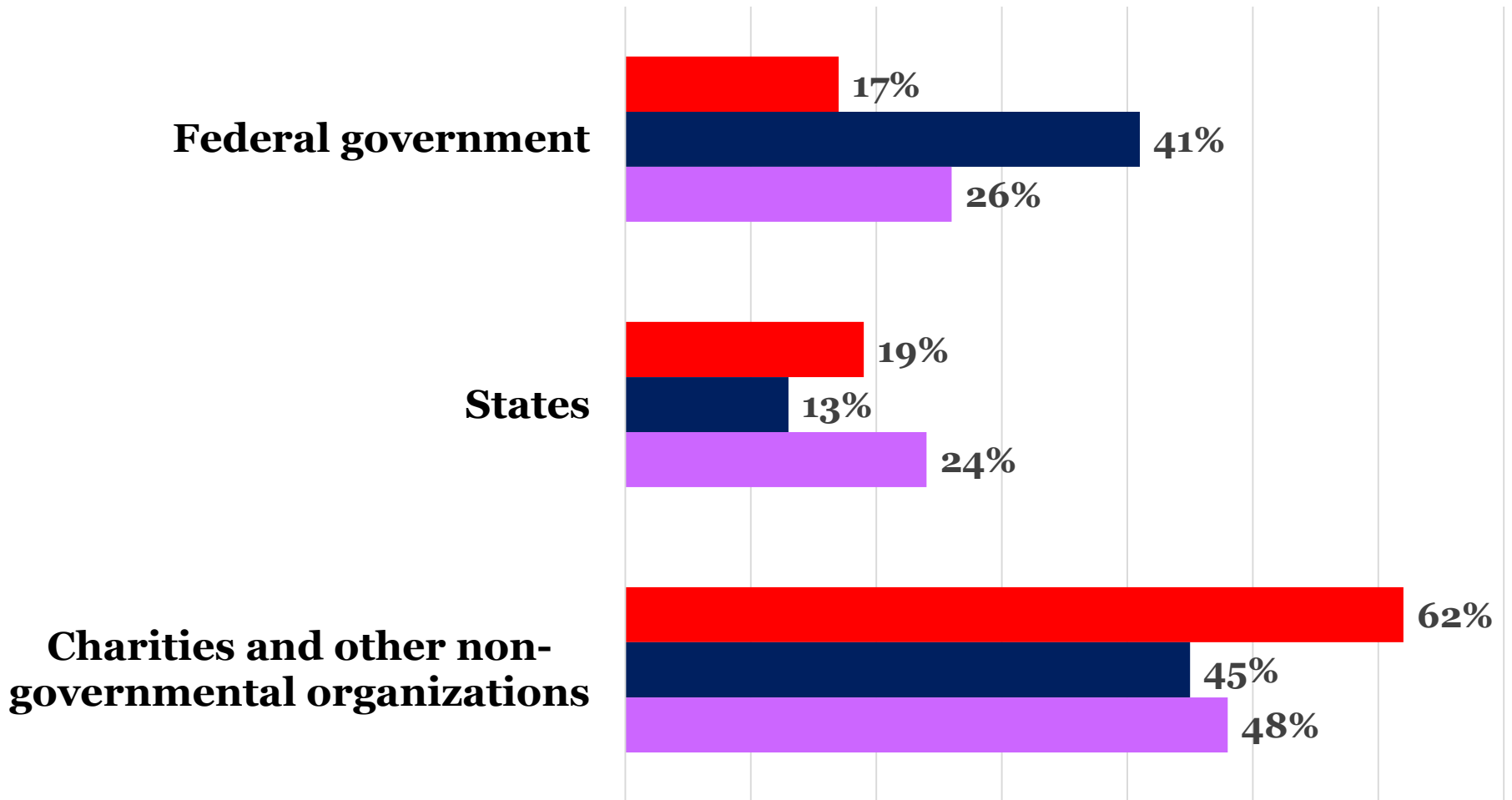
**Who would you like to see take
the lead in addressing the needs
of refugees once they are in the
United States?**

Who would you like to see take the lead in addressing the needs of refugees once they are in the United States?



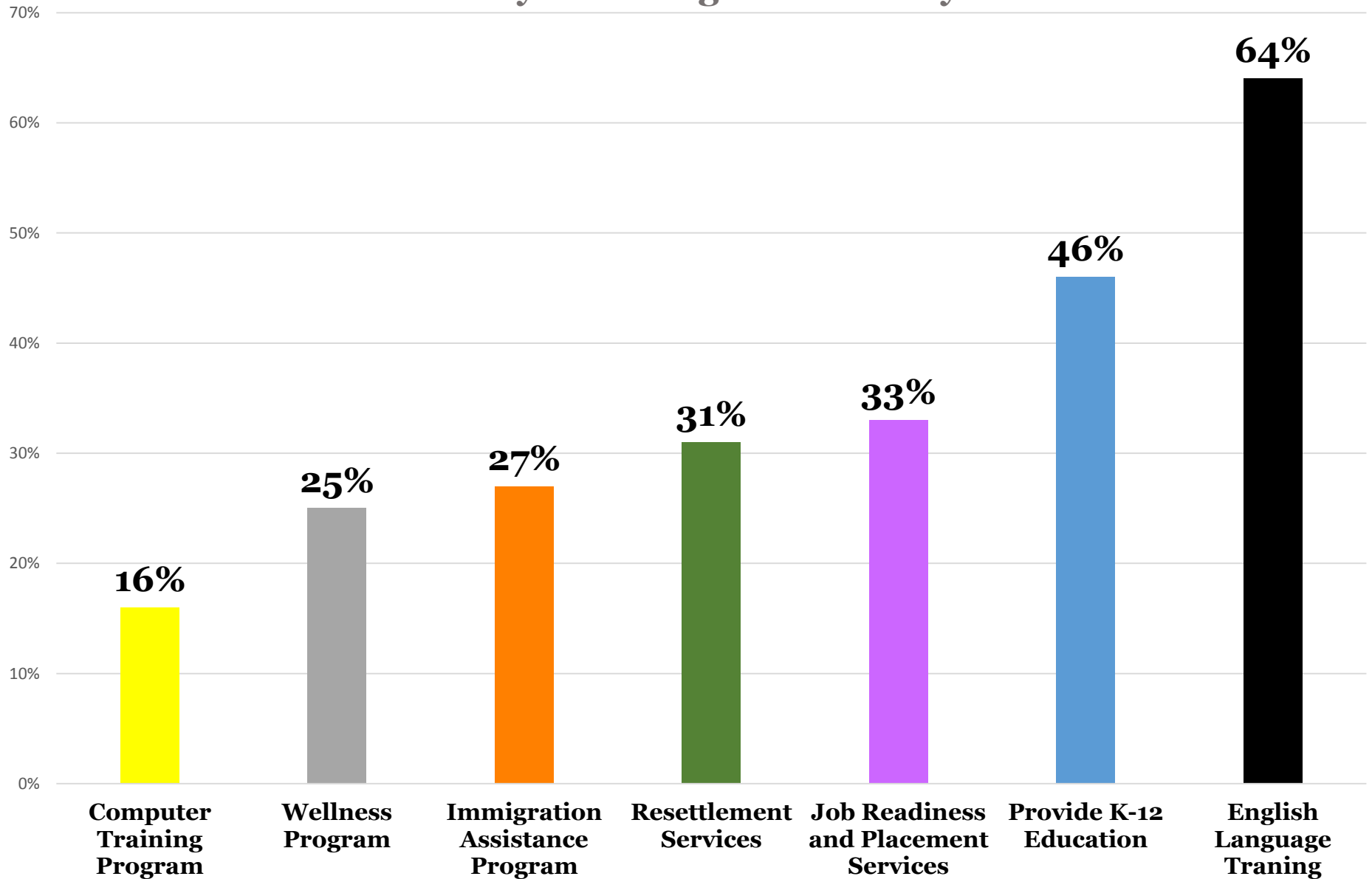
Who would you like to see take the lead in addressing the needs of refugees once they are in the United States?

Republican Democrat Independent



One a scale of 0-5, where 0 is “not important” and 5 is “very important,” how would you rate the following steps to deal with the Syrian refugees once they arrive?

Ranking of responses indicating “very important” when asked: How would you rate the following steps to deal with the Syrian refugees once they arrive?



**On a scale of 0-10, where 0 is
“not being open” and 10 is
“being very open,” rate your
degree of openness for refugees
from the following region
(South America, Central
America, Africa, The Middle
East, East Asia):**

On a scale of 0-10, where 0 is “not being open” and 10 is “being very open,” rate your degree of openness for refugees from the following region (mean):

