

Imagining
THE
**Digital
Future**
CENTER

National Public Opinion Poll

AI & POLITICS '24

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 ELON UNIVERSITY

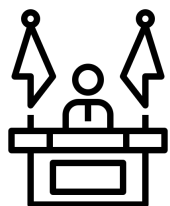
PRIME NUMBERS



78%

Believe it is likely that AI will be abused to affect the presidential election outcome

73%	Believe AI will be used to manipulate social media
70%	Believe AI will be used to generate fake information
62%	Believe AI will be used to convince people not to vote



46%

Say candidates who maliciously alter or fake photos, video or audio should be prevented from holding office

36%	Believe those candidates should face criminal charges
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39%

Believe the use of AI will mostly **HURT** the election process

5%

Believe the use of AI will mostly **HELP** the election process

37%	Say they are not sure what the impact will be
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69%

Say they are not confident that most voters can detect fake photos. Similar shares worry about others' ability to detect fake videos and audio

45%	Are not confident in their own ability to detect fake photos
47%	Are not confident in their own ability to detect fake video
52%	Are not confident in their own ability to detect fake audio

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A large majority of American adults expects abuses of artificial intelligence systems (AIs) that could affect the outcome of the 2024 presidential election, at least to some extent. A new national survey by the Elon Poll and the Imagining the Digital Future Center at Elon University finds:

- **73% of Americans believe it is “very” or “somewhat” likely AI will be used to manipulate social media to influence the outcome of the presidential election** – for example, by generating information from fake accounts or bots or distorting people’s impressions of the campaign.
- **70% say it is likely the election will be affected by the use of AI to generate fake information, video and audio material.**
- **62% say the election is likely to be affected by the targeted use of AI to convince some voters not to vote.**
- **In all, 78% say at least one of these abuses of AI will affect the election outcome.** More than half think all three abuses are at least somewhat likely to occur.

These concerns put Americans in a punishing frame of mind. **Fully 93% think some penalty should be applied to candidates who maliciously and intentionally alter or fake photos, videos or audio files.**

- **46% think the punishment should be removal from office.**
- **36% say offenders should face criminal prosecution.**
- **12% believe a serious fine should be levied.**
- Only 4% say no penalty should be applied.

By a nearly 8-1 margin, more Americans feel the use of AI will hurt the upcoming election than help it: 39% say it will hurt, 5% think it will help. Some 37% say they are not sure.

Americans’ concerns about the use and impact of AI systems occur in a challenging and confusing news and information environment. Fully **52% of Americans are not confident they can detect altered or faked audio material; 47% are not confident they can detect altered videos; and 45% say they are not confident they can detect faked photos.** They have far less faith in the capacity of others to detect fakes: **About 7-in-10 are not confident in most voters’ ability to detect photos, videos and audio that have been altered or faked.**

Americans also worry about the overall news and information environment of politics. Some 61% of adults say they are “very” or “somewhat” confident they will get accurate and trustworthy information during the election. **But a quarter (28%) are “not very” or “not at all” confident** that will be the case and 10% are not sure. Strikingly, **57% of Americans are not confident that other Americans will get accurate and trustworthy information** during the election. Just 28% of Americans are confident most voters will get accurate and trustworthy information during the election.

When it comes to their own information needs, about half (53%) feel it is “very” or “somewhat” easy to get the political news and information they want, while a fifth (19%) say it is very or somewhat difficult. Another 18% say they usually don’t seek out political news.

(continued on next page)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (continued)

At the same time, Americans are not especially sure that either Republican Donald Trump or Democrat Joe Biden can do a better job handling these tech-related issues: dealing with social media, dealing with AI, leading the military in adopting AI and competing with other countries in AI. **About a quarter or more of adults think neither Trump nor Biden would do a better job, and notable shares say they are not sure about how either is likely to perform.**

This survey finds that **23% of U.S. adults have used large language models (LLMs) or chatbots like ChatGPT, Gemini or Claude.**

The survey explores one of the main concerns related to these models: **Are they mostly fair or mostly biased when they answer users' questions related to politics and public policy-related issues?**

Majorities of Democrats, Republicans and independents say they are not sure if these systems are fair or biased to different groups. At the same time, there are some notable differences among partisans who do have views. **Republicans are generally more wary of AI models than Democrats are.**

For instance, **Republicans are more likely than Democrats to think these systems are mostly biased** against Republicans (the margin is 36%-15%). Interestingly, Republicans are more likely than Democrats to think the systems are mostly biased against Democrats. The gap is 23%-14%. Republicans are also more likely than Democrats to feel that AIs are mostly biased against men and White people.

LLM users themselves are more likely than non-users to express views on these issues and more likely to say the models are mostly fair to every group.

When it comes to broad questions about the nation's political climate and election process, key divisions arise:

- **52% of Americans think most voters do NOT cast well-informed votes**, compared with 33% who think they do.
- **43% say people usually agree on the facts even if they disagree politically, and the exact same share – 43% – think the opposite.** Partisans are equally divided on this question.
- **55% say the vote-counting process is free and fair, while 31% think that does not describe the country's situation well.** Fully 79% of Democrats think that describes the country "very" or "somewhat" well, while 56% of Republicans think that does not describe the country well.
- **65% think the voter registration process allows all interested citizens to register and cast votes, while 22% think the opposite.**

Asked about the administration of the voting process in this presidential election, **60% say they are "very" or "somewhat" confident people's votes will be accurately cast and counted.** On this question, 83% of Democrats are confident, while 60% of Republicans are not confident.

The survey reported here was conducted online from April 19-21, 2024, on the Ipsos KnowledgePanel®, among 1,020 U.S. adults. It has a margin of error of 3.2 percentage points.

OVERALL ELECTION IMPACT OF AI

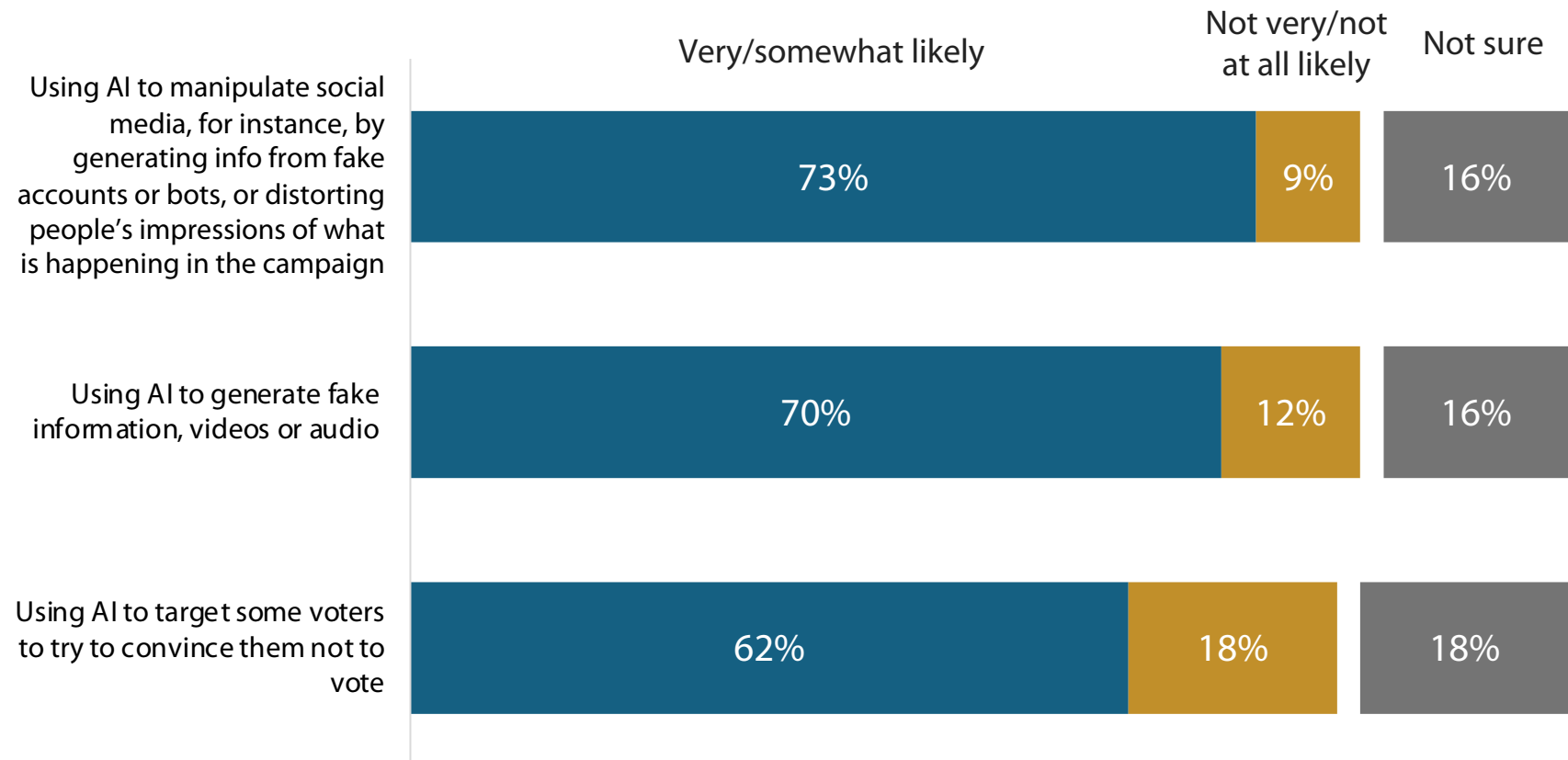
Fully 78% of Americans believe that at least one of these abuses of AI is “very” or “somewhat” likely to affect the outcome of the election.

There are no notable partisan differences here. Those aligned with each party are equally likely to be concerned.

Those most likely to express concerns include adults 65 and older, White people, those with at least some college education and those living in households earning more than \$100,000.

Those who say they are not sure of the impact of AI in these areas are more likely to be young adults ages 18-34, Black people and Hispanics, those in households earning under \$50,000 and those with a high school education or less.

How likely, if at all, do you think it is that the use of AI in these ways will affect the outcome of the presidential election in November?



PUNISHMENT FOR AI ABUSE BY CANDIDATES

Fully 93% of Americans want to punish candidates who are caught maliciously and intentionally altering or faking photos, videos or audio files during the election. Some of the patterns in the data:

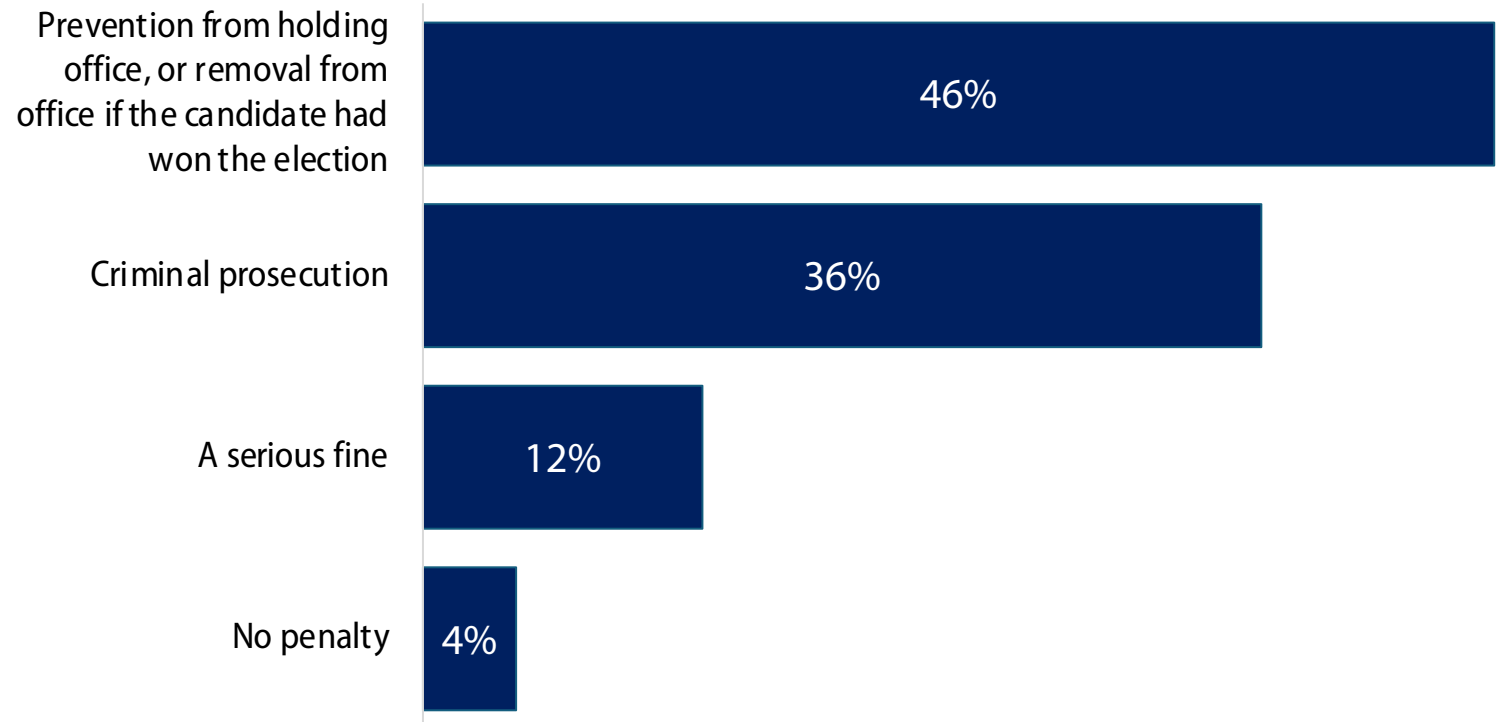
Prevention from holding office is particularly favored by women.

Prosecution is particularly favored by those in households earning more than \$100,000 and those with college educations.

A serious fine garners more Republican support than from Democrats (17% vs. 8%).

No penalty has only single-digit support across different groups.

If it were proven that a political candidate had maliciously and intentionally digitally altered or faked photos, videos or audio files, should one of the penalties be:



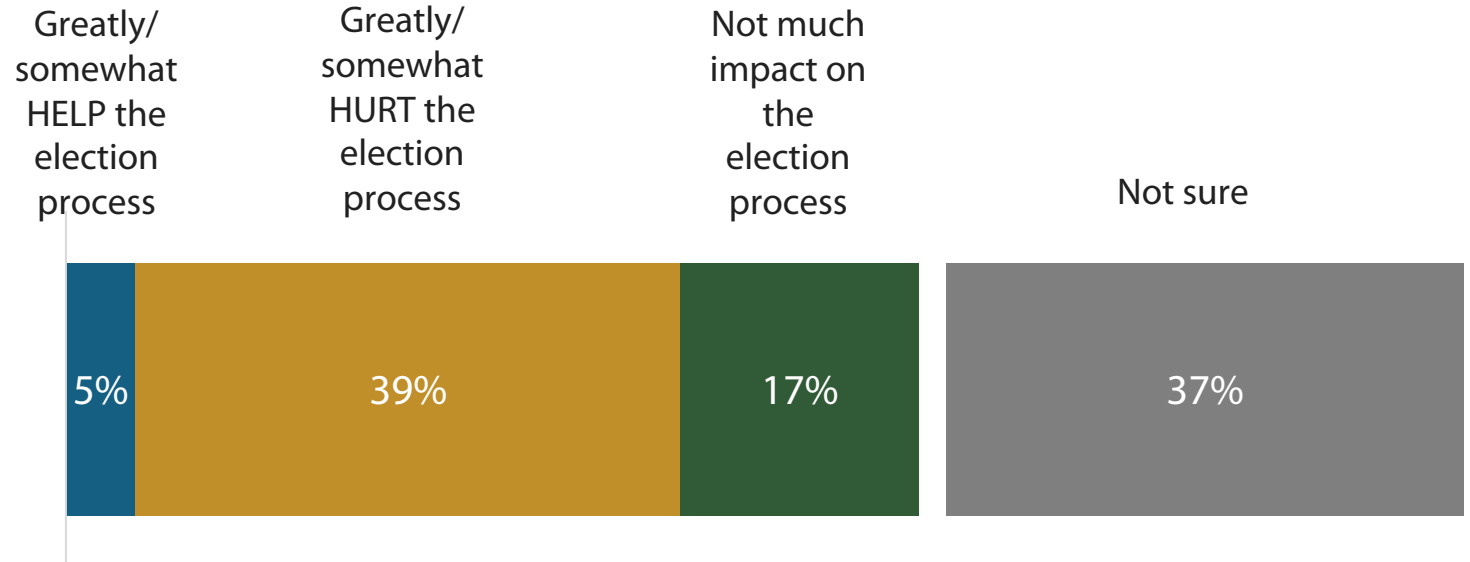
DOES AI HELP OR HURT THE ELECTION PROCESS?

By a nearly 8-1 margin, more Americans feel the use of AI will hurt the coming election than will help it. Still, there are notable shares of adults who are not sure what the impact might be or feel that the use of AI will not have much impact on the election process.

Republicans are more likely than Democrats to say that the use of AI will “greatly” or “somewhat” hurt the process (49% vs. 38%).

Those most likely to say they are not sure of the impact are those with high school educations and Black Americans.

As you think about the upcoming election, how do you think that the use of artificial intelligence will help or hurt the election process?



DETECTING AI FAKERY

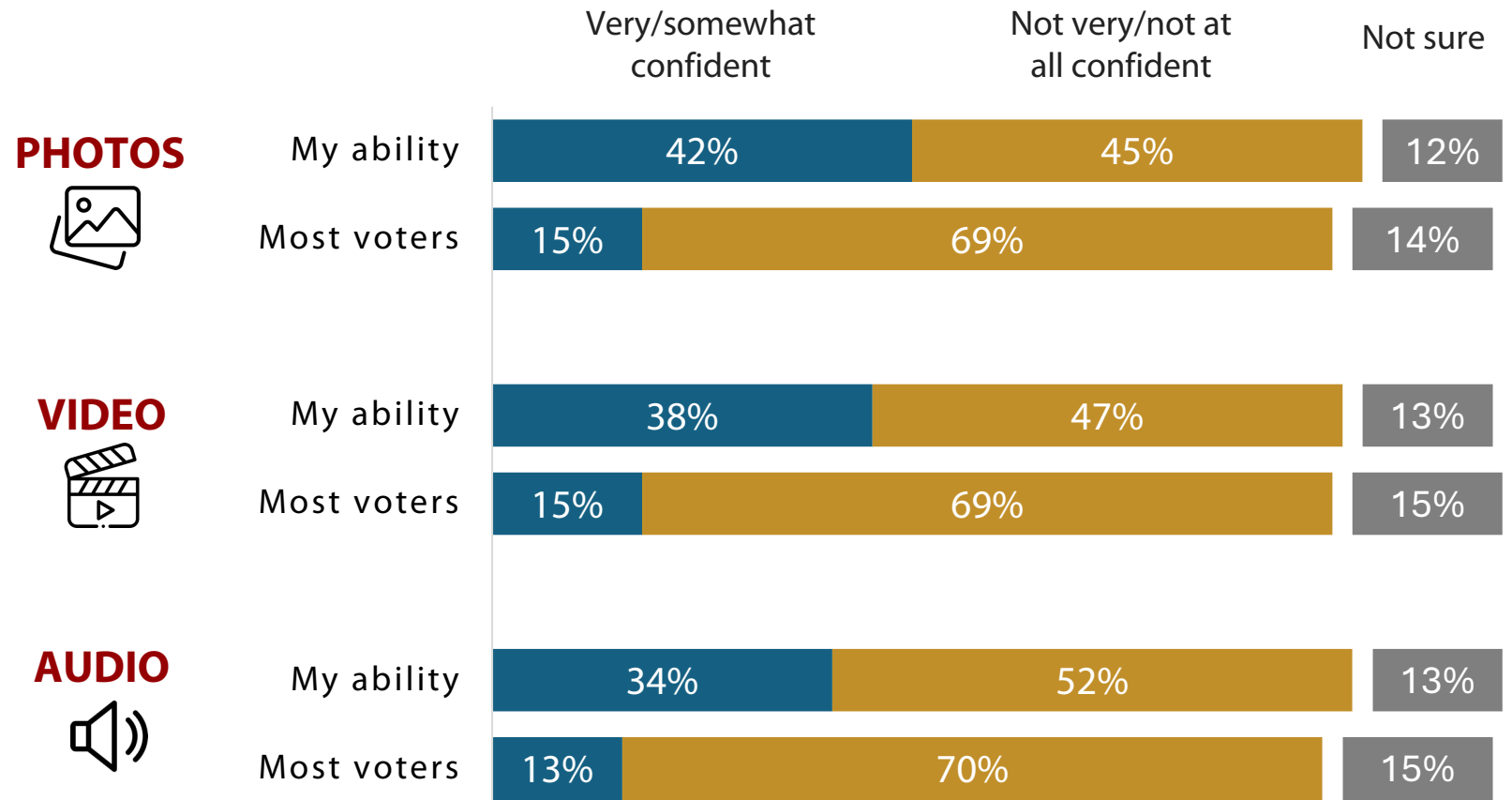
Americans are not particularly confident in their own abilities to detect altered or faked videos, photos and audio files. And they have much less confidence in others' abilities to discern fakery.

Democrats are more likely than Republicans to be confident in their own abilities to detect faked videos and audio files; men are more confident than women; and those ages 18-34 are more confident than older people.

People's skepticism of others' abilities to detect fakes runs especially high among those ages 35 and older, those in households earning \$50,000 or more, those with at least some college education and White people.

When it comes to adults' judgments about others' abilities to discern fake material, there are not any notable partisan differences. Members of both parties are equally likely to worry about others' capacities.

How confident are you in **your own** ability and the ability of **most voters** to detect whether the following have been digitally altered or faked?



GETTING POLITICAL INFORMATION

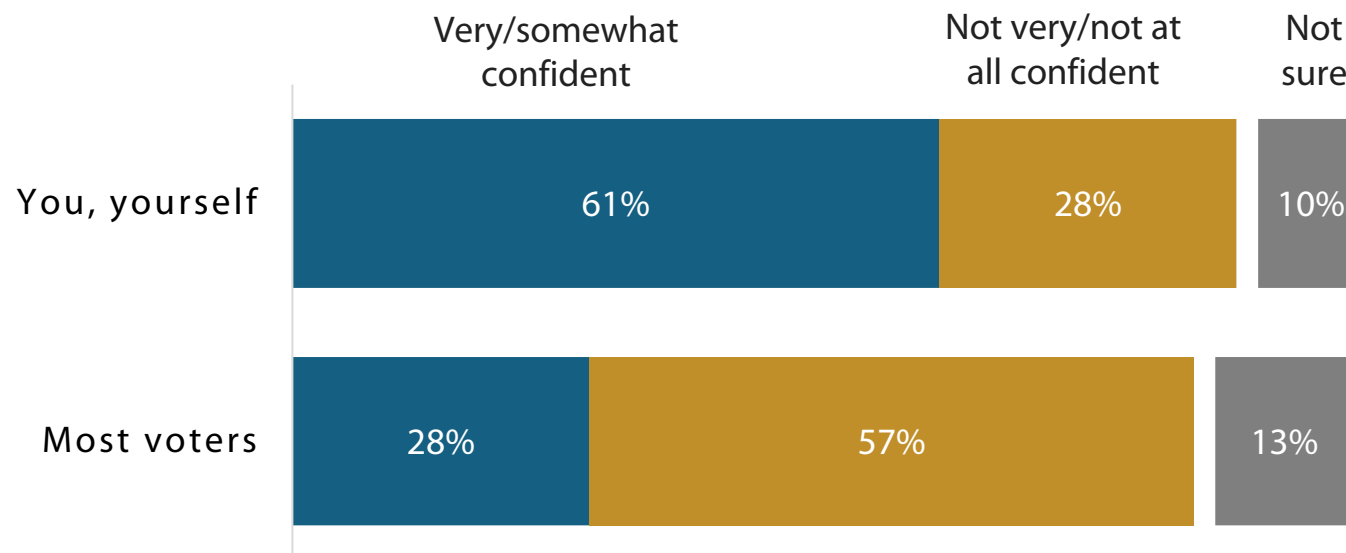
Republicans are more likely to worry about the current news and information environment. For instance, Republicans are much less confident than Democrats that they themselves will get accurate information during the election (39% vs. 17%).

Republicans are also less confident than Democrats that most voters will get trustworthy political information. The gap is 68%-50%.

Beyond partisan differences, men, those age 65 and older and those with college degrees are particularly likely to have confidence they can get accurate political news.

On the opposite side, those with lower confidence that most voters will get accurate information include the college-educated, those in high-income households and White people.

How confident, if at all, are you that _____ will get accurate and trustworthy news and information during the presidential election?



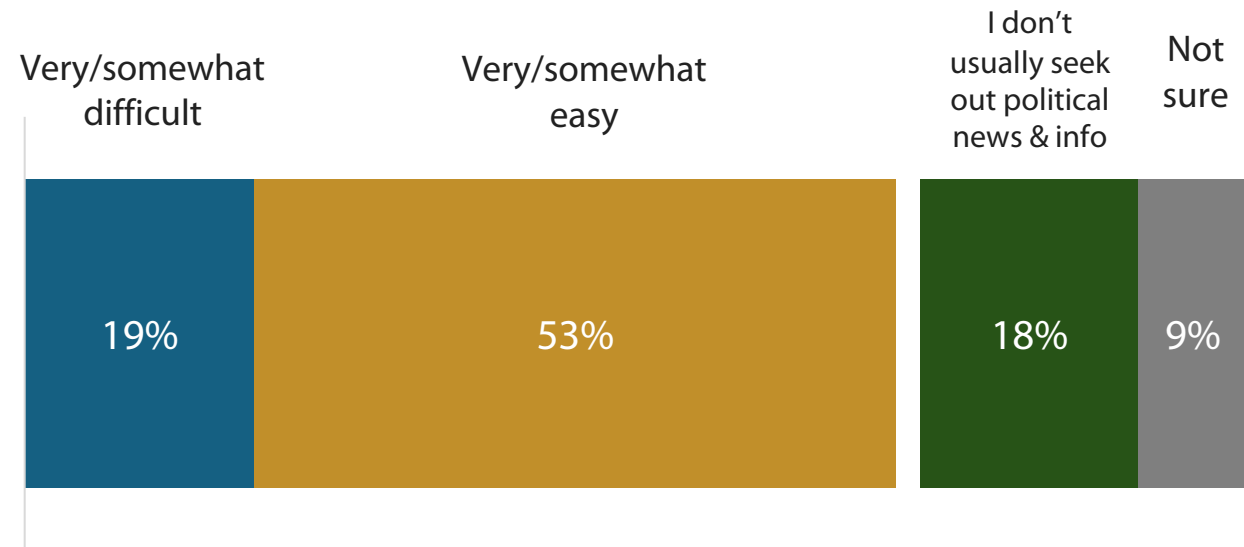
POLITICAL INFORMATION

Roughly half of Americans say they find it “very” or “somewhat” easy to get the political news and information they want. Still, it is noteworthy that about a fifth of Americans find it difficult.

Some 68% of Democrats say they find it easy, compared with 47% of Republicans. Meanwhile, 27% of Republicans say they find it hard, compared with just 12% of Democrats.

Others who say it is relatively easy for them include men, those ages 35 and older, and those with at least some college education.

These days, how difficult or easy do you find it to get the political news and information you want?



CANDIDATES HANDLING OF KEY ISSUES

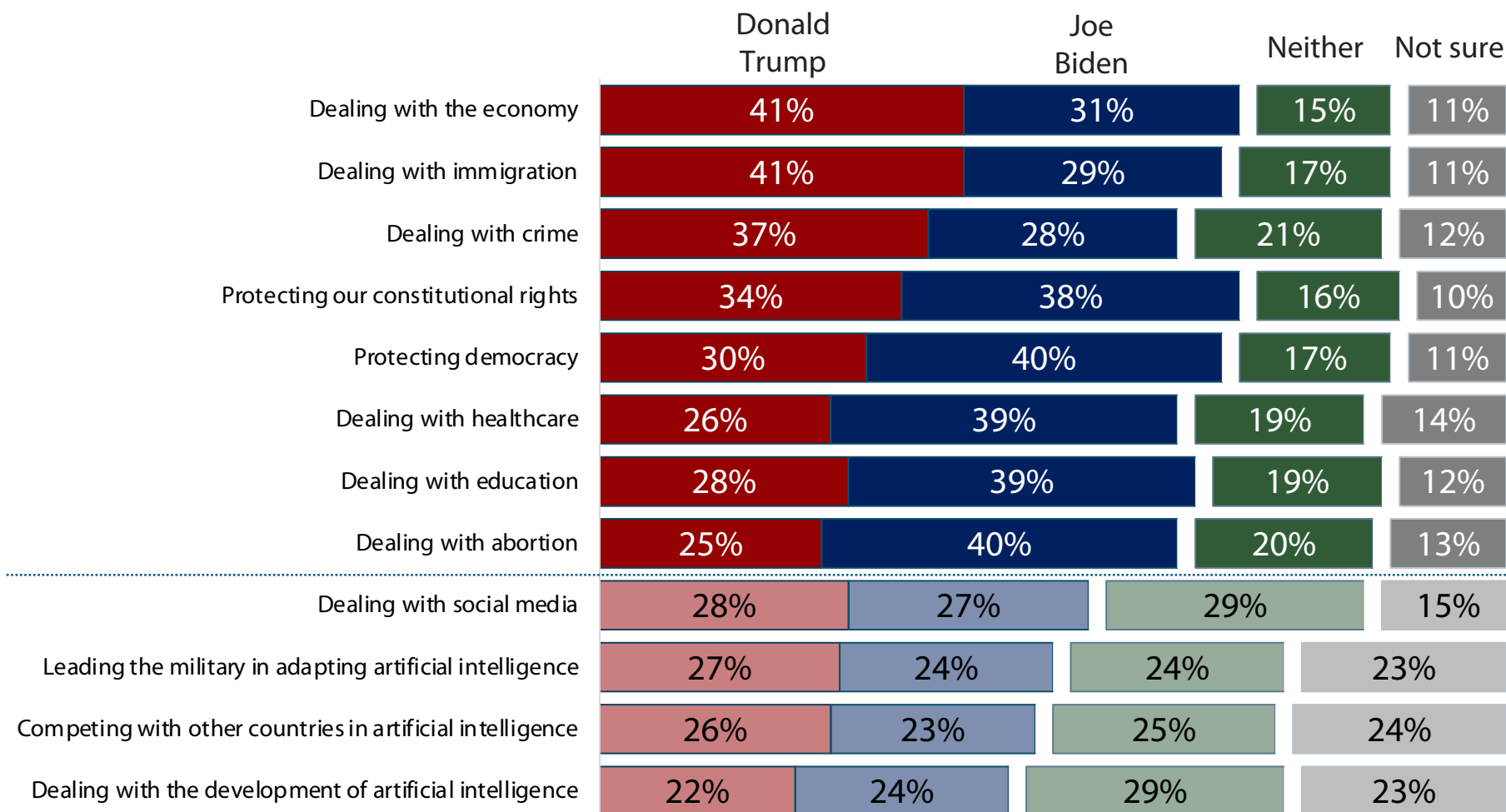
Predictable differences by partisanship show up in the survey data across these issues. Strong majorities of Republicans support Trump and strong majorities of Democrats support Biden.

Four questions on this survey are most relevant to AI and politics.

Again, partisanship dominates people's choices when it comes to their views about which candidate can do a better job dealing with AI, with social media, competing with other countries in AI, and leading the military in adopting AI.

For example: 53% of Republicans think Trump would do a better job dealing with the development of AI, while 3% think Biden. And 55% of Democrats back Biden here, compared with 4% who pick Trump.

When it comes to each of the following issues, which presidential candidate do you think would do a better job?



PARTISAN VIEWS ON AI FAIRNESS

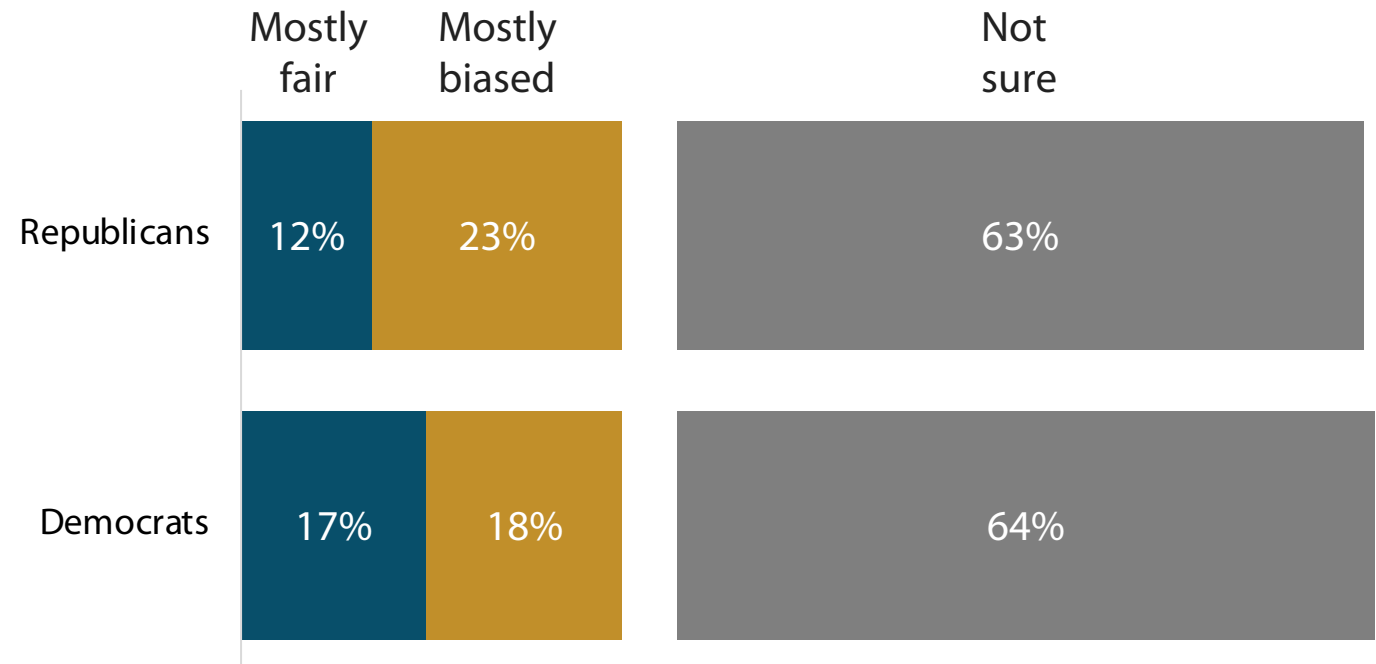
One major concern about bias in AI systems is whether large language models (LLMs) generate answers to user queries that are fair and unbiased against some groups and their points of view. In this survey, we were particularly interested in how people assessed the answers of LLMs about politics and policy issues.

AI systems are so new that it is not surprising that most partisans say they are not sure if there is bias in AI systems' answers.

Still, there are some notable differences among partisans who do express opinions on questions related to bias. Republicans are generally more wary of AI models than Democrats are. For instance, Republicans are more likely than Democrats to think these systems are biased against Republicans (the margin is 36%-15%).

At the same time, Republicans are also more likely than Democrats to think the systems are biased against Democrats. The gap is 23%-14%.

Based on what you know, do you think the answers about politics and public policy issues created by AI systems are mostly fair to or are mostly biased against the views and experiences of ...



AI FAIRNESS BY GENDER

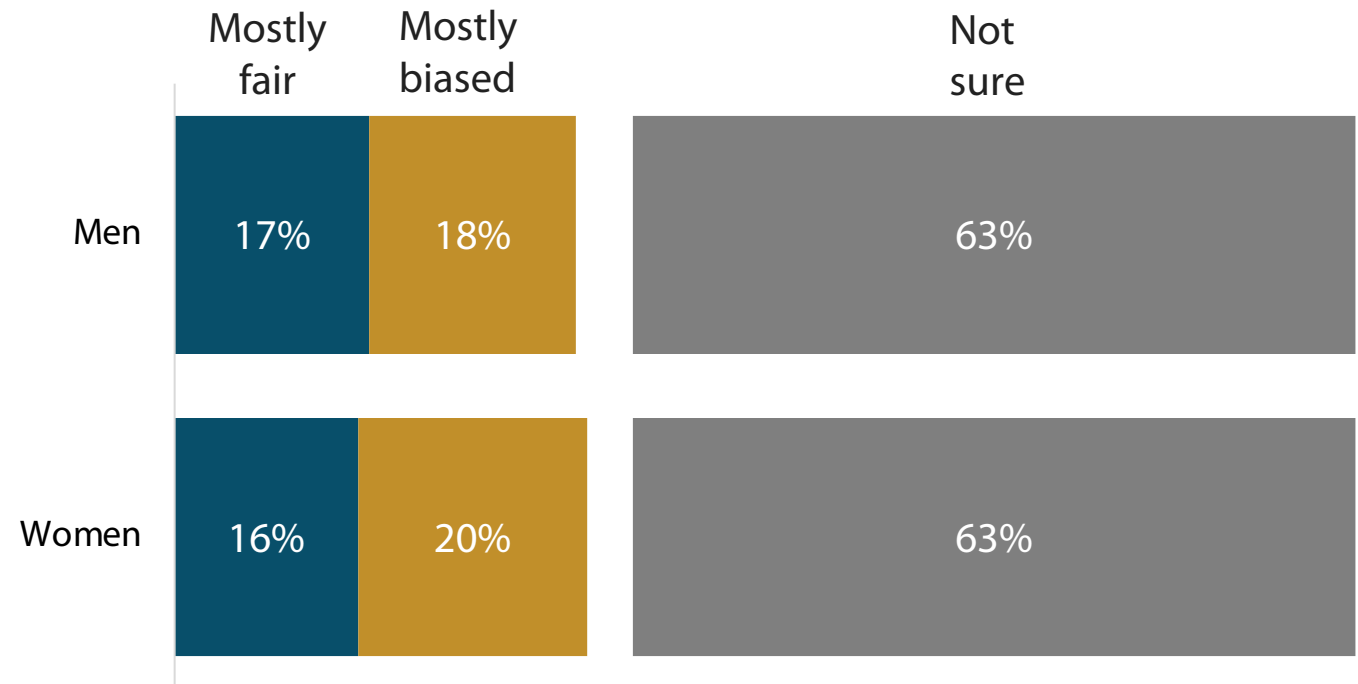
Again, the biggest insight among the findings on these questions is that most people are not sure if AI systems are mostly fair or mostly biased when it comes to the answers the systems generate about public policy questions.

Still, among those who are sure of their views, men and women somewhat diverge on the question of AI fairness when it comes to the answers given by AI systems about politics and public policy issues.

By a 20%-14% margin, men are more likely than women to think that AI systems' answers are mostly fair. Women are more likely than men to say they are not sure about that issue.

Men are also more likely than women (20% vs. 12%) to think AI systems' answers are mostly fair to women.

Based on what you know, do you think the answers about politics and public policy issues created by AI systems are mostly fair to or are mostly biased against the views and experiences of ...



AI FAIRNESS BY RACE & ETHNICITY

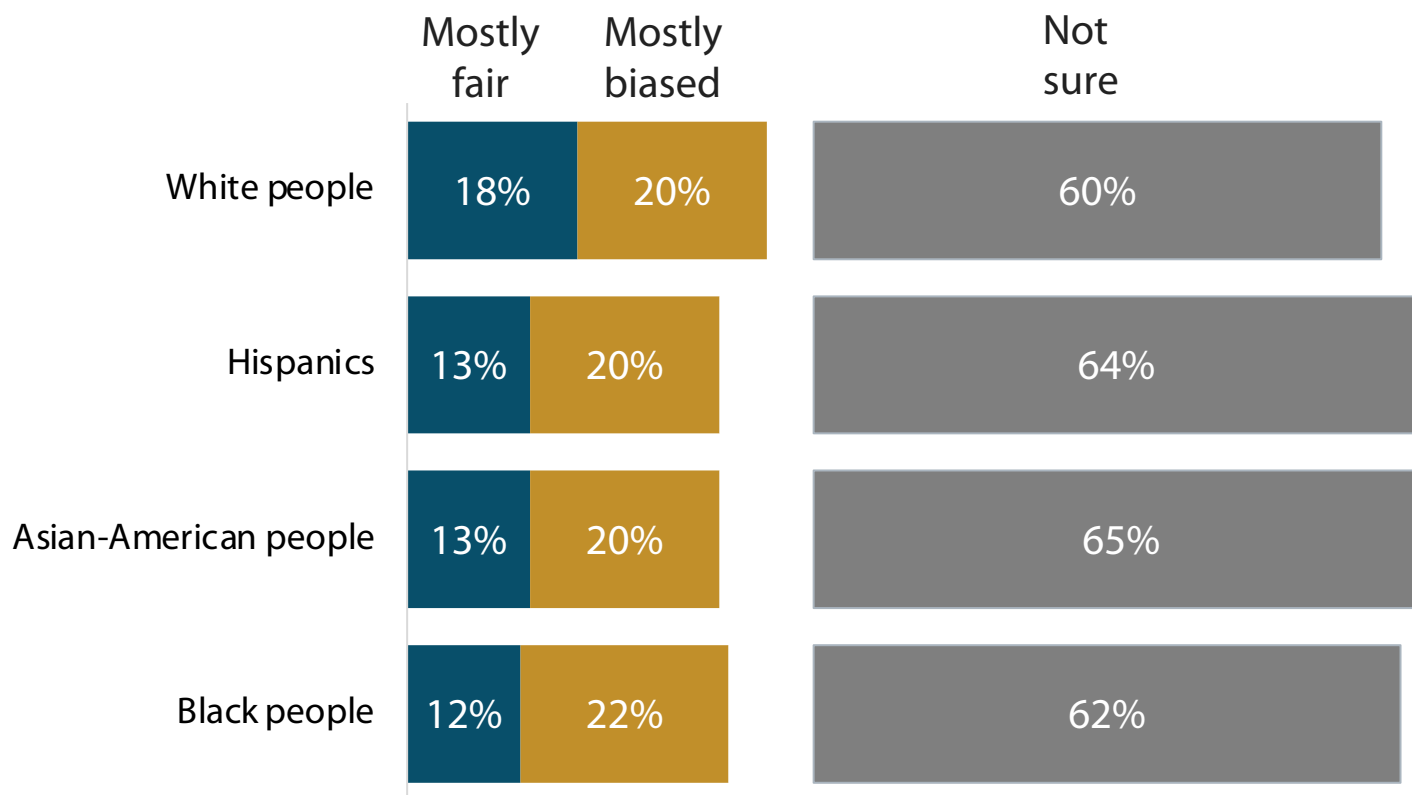
There are no clear, broad patterns in the answers to these questions about AI fairness and bias by different racial and ethnic groups.

Black people are more likely than others to believe that the answers of AI systems on political issues are mostly biased against Black people. Some 33% of Black Americans say that, compared with 21% of White Americans and 19% of Hispanics.

Black Americans are also more likely than other groups to believe AI systems are biased against Hispanics. Some 29% of Black adults say that, compared with 18% of Hispanic adults and 19% of White adults.

It is interesting to note that when LLM users (who make up 23% of adults) answer these questions about bias they are more likely than non-users to think the models are mostly fair.

Based on what you know, do you think the answers about politics and public policy issues created by AI systems are mostly fair to or are mostly biased against the views and experiences of ...



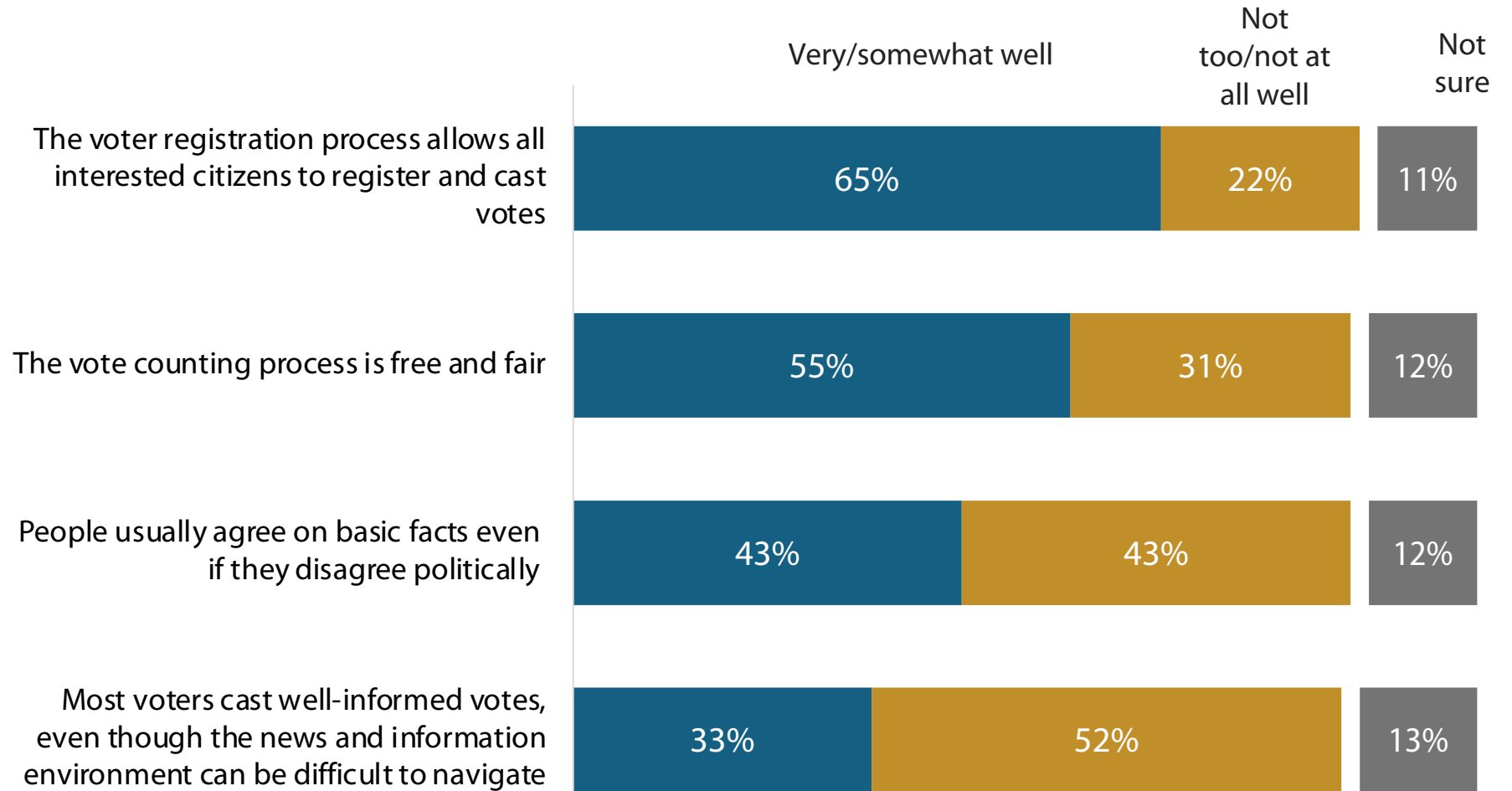
POLITICAL CLIMATE

On these questions, the sharpest partisan differences emerge on the issue of whether the vote-counting process is free and fair. Some 79% of Democrats think that describes the country “very” or “somewhat” well, while 56% of Republicans think it does not describe the country well.

On another issue, Democrats are more likely than Republicans to think most voters cast well-informed votes.

Both sides are evenly split on the question of whether people usually agree on basic facts. Partisans also share similar views when it comes to whether the registration process allows all interested citizens to register and vote.

How well, if at all, do these statements describe the country?

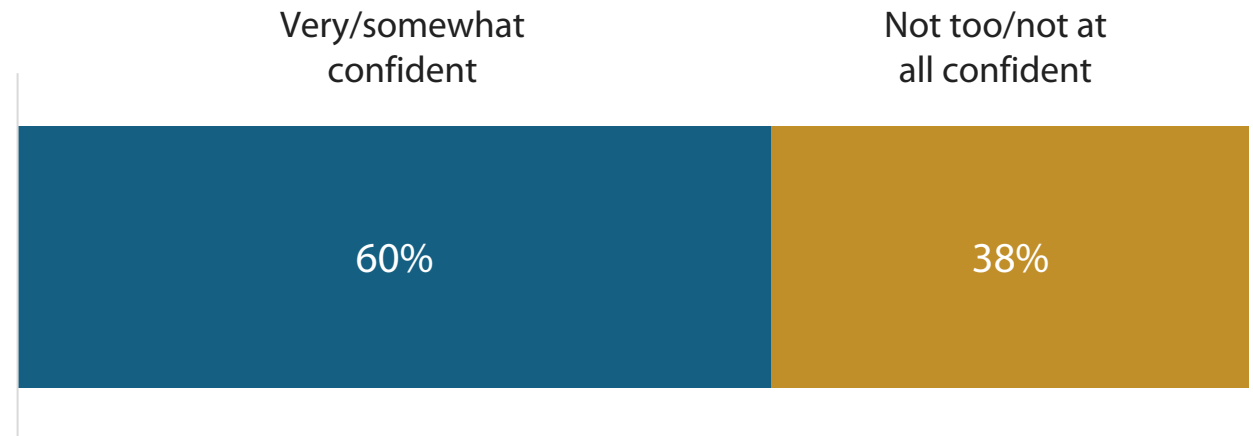


ELECTION CONFIDENCE

There are strong partisan differences on this question. Some 83% of Democrats are confident that people's votes will be accurately cast and counted in the election, while 60% of Republicans think the opposite – they are not confident this will be the case.

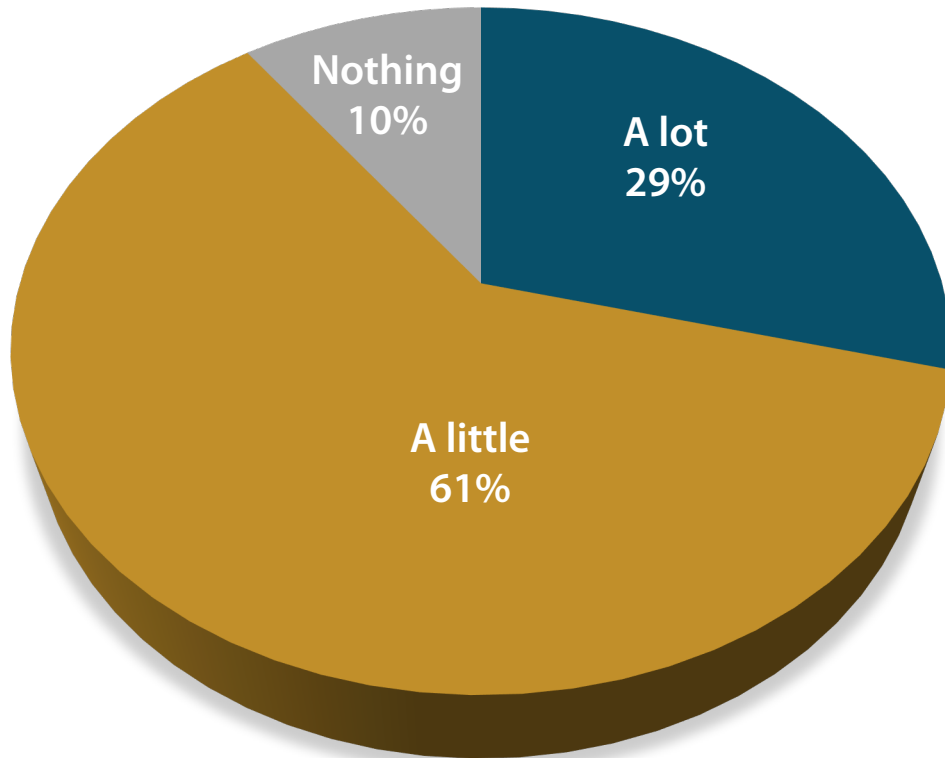
These figures are comparable to findings in Gallup polls on election integrity in [recent election cycles](#).

How confident, if at all, are you that, across the country, people's votes will be accurately cast and counted in this year's **presidential** election in November?

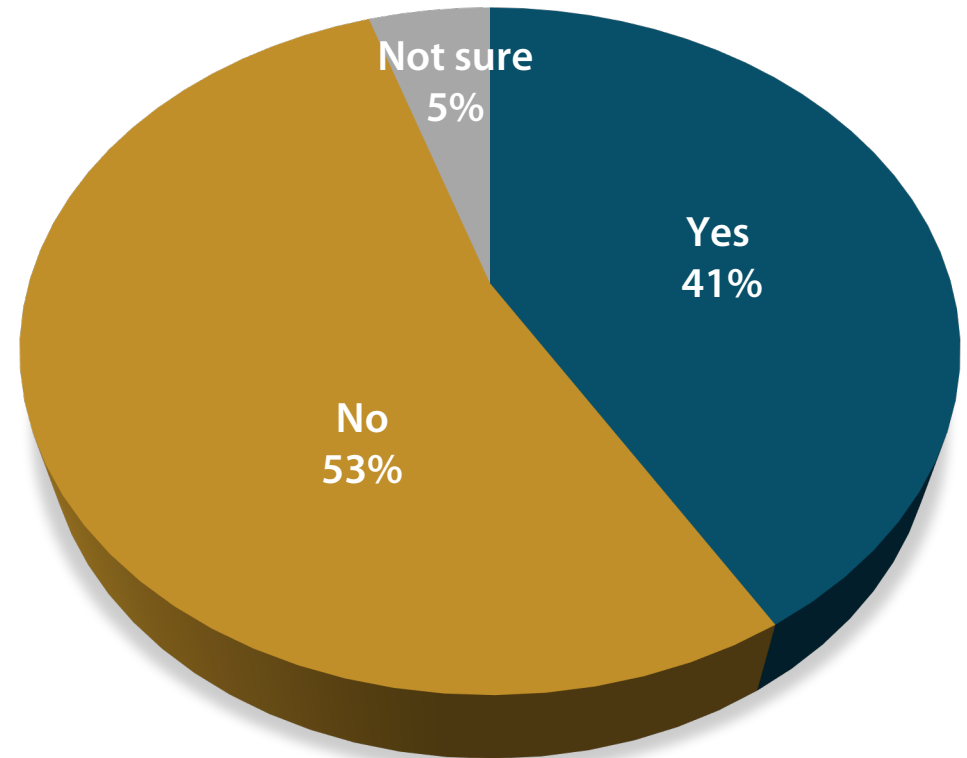


AI AWARENESS & USE

How much have you heard or read about artificial intelligence (AI)?

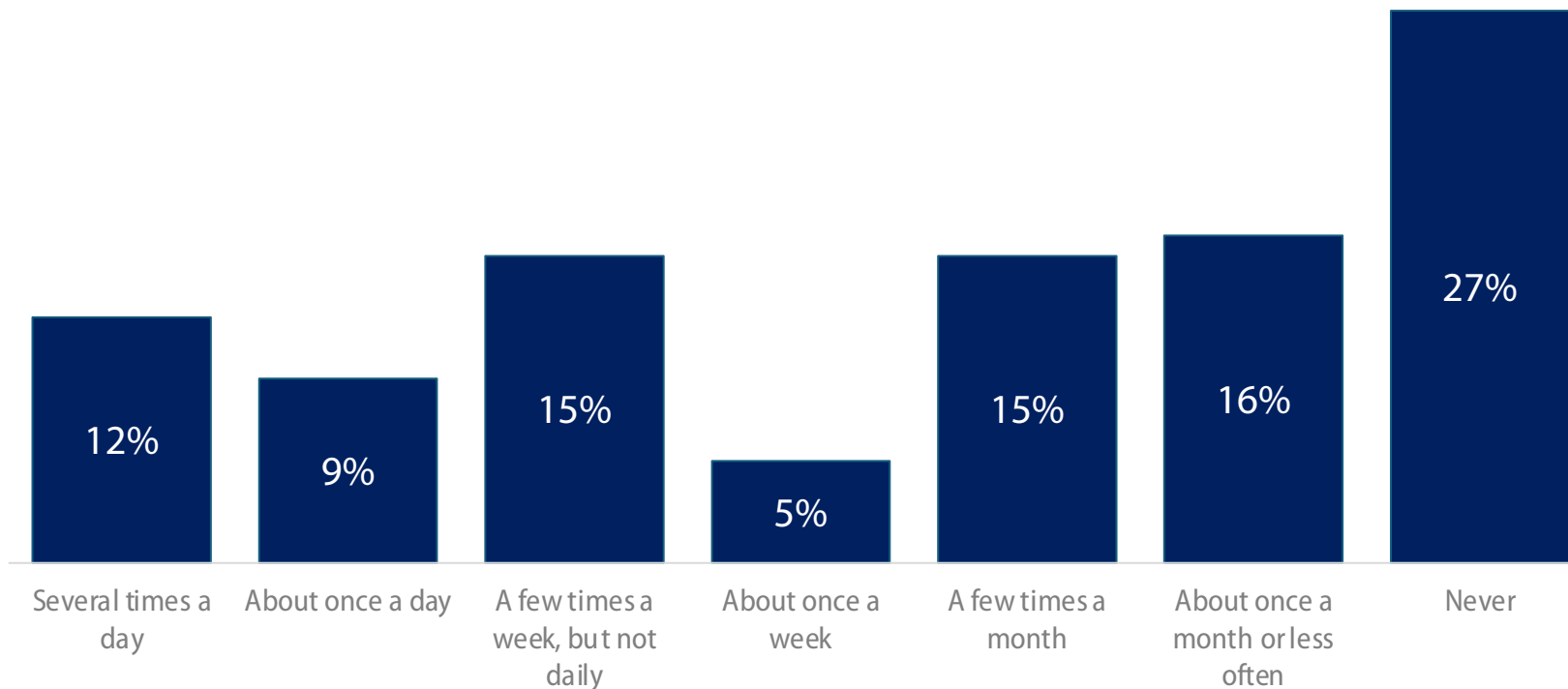


Have you ever used an AI language model or chatbot, such as ChatGPT, Gemini or Claude? (Asked of those who have heard at least a little about AI)



AI AWARENESS & USE

Just your impression, how often do you interact with artificial intelligence (AI)?



METHODOLOGY

Elon University's [Imagining the Digital Future Center](#) and the [Elon University Poll](#) collaborated to conduct a national opinion poll focused on the impact of artificial intelligence and politics leading up to the 2024 general election.

This poll was conducted by Ipsos from April 19 to April 21, 2024, using the probability-based KnowledgePanel®. This poll is based on a nationally representative probability sample of 1,020 adults ages 18 or older.

The Ipsos KnowledgePanel is the largest and most well-established online probability-based panel that is representative of the adult U.S. population. The recruitment process employs a scientifically developed addressed-based sampling methodology using the latest Delivery Sequence File of the USPS – a database with full coverage of all delivery points in the U.S. Households invited to join the panel are randomly selected from all available households in the U.S. Persons in the sampled households are invited to join and participate in the panel. Those selected who do not already have internet access are provided a tablet and internet connection at no cost to the panel member. Those who join the panel and who are selected to participate in a survey are sent a unique password-protected log-in used to complete surveys online. As a result of the recruitment and sampling methodologies, samples from KnowledgePanel cover all households regardless of their phone or internet status and findings can be reported with a margin of sampling error and projected to the general population.

The study was conducted in English. The data for the total sample were weighted to adjust for gender by age, race/ethnicity, education, Census region, metropolitan status, and household income. The demographic benchmarks came from the 2023 March Supplement of the Current Population Survey (CPS).

- Gender (Male, Female) by Age (18–29, 30–44, 45-59 and 60+)
- Race/Hispanic Ethnicity (White Non-Hispanic, Black Non-Hispanic, Other, Non-Hispanic, Hispanic, 2+ Races, Non-Hispanic)
- Education (Less than High School, High School, Some College, Bachelor or higher)
- Census Region (Northeast, Midwest, South, West)
- Metropolitan status (Metro, non-Metro)
- Household Income (Under \$25,000, \$25,000-\$49,999, \$50,000-\$74,999, \$75,000-\$99,999, \$100,000-\$149,999, \$150,000+)

The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 3.2 percentage points at the 95% confidence level, for results based on the entire sample of adults. The margin of sampling error takes into account the design effect, which was 1.08.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional methodology and poll topline information is available on both of these websites:

- imaginingthedigitalfuture.org/reports-and-publications/ai-politics-24/
- www.elon.edu/u/elon-poll/

CONTACT INFORMATION

Media contacts

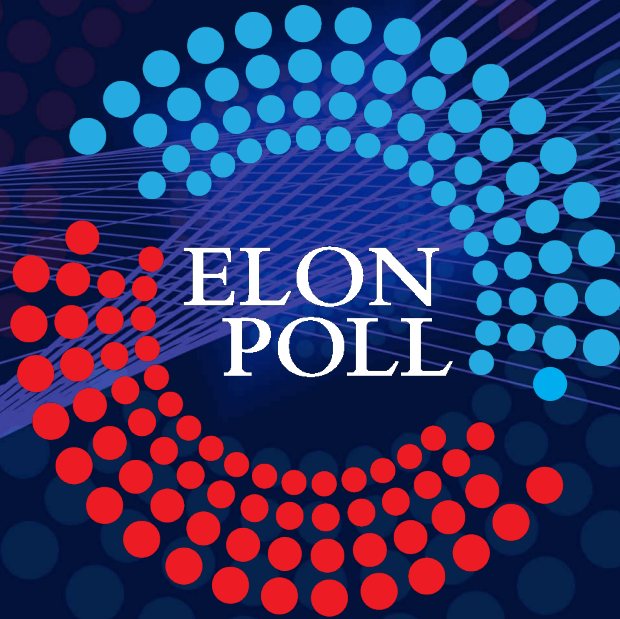
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