
The U.S. is broken. Can it be fixed?

September 21, 2023



56% of respondents feel the country is broken “much or all of the time”, a significant increase from the 50% that felt this way in March of this year.

At-A-Glance:

- 77% plan to vote in next year’s general election.
- 29% believe neither party can deliver a worthy presidential candidate, with females (35%) more discouraged.
- 23% would consider voting for a third-party candidate and another 38% are unsure.



The Outlook:

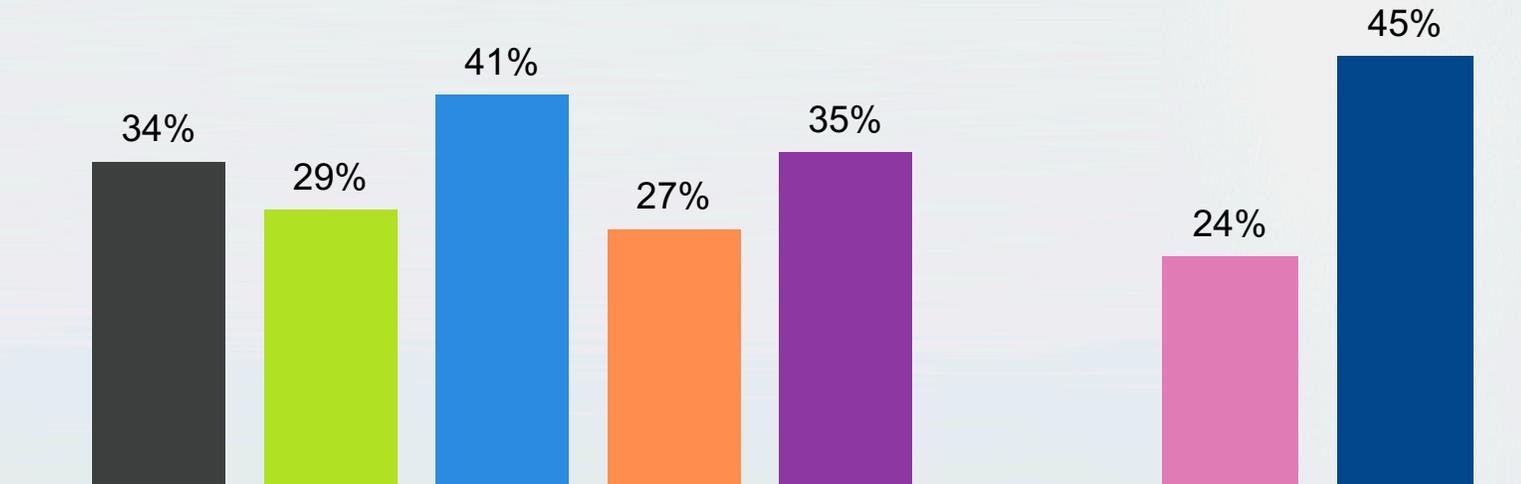
Respondents say inflation remains our biggest issue, with many needing to make tradeoffs as their budgets get squeezed by rising fuel prices and mortgage rates, as well as the return of student loan payments. In fact, the Wall Street Journal estimates that the restart of student loan payments could cost retailers up to \$100 billion over the coming year. Adding political fuel to this mix could make it a difficult holiday season for retailers, particularly those who are more reliant on discretionary spending.

34% of respondents of voting age report having watched at least a portion of the recent Republican debate.

At 45%, men showed nearly **twice** the interest in the debate than women (24%).

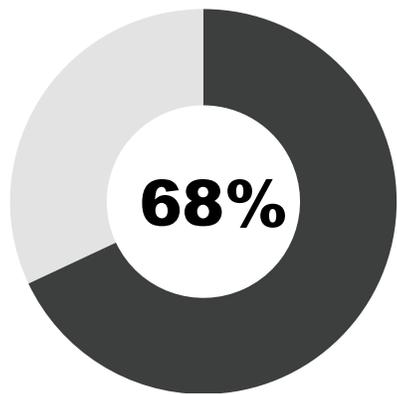
Watched most recent Republican presidential debate

■ All ■ Gen Z ■ Millennial ■ Gen X ■ Boomer ■ Female ■ Male

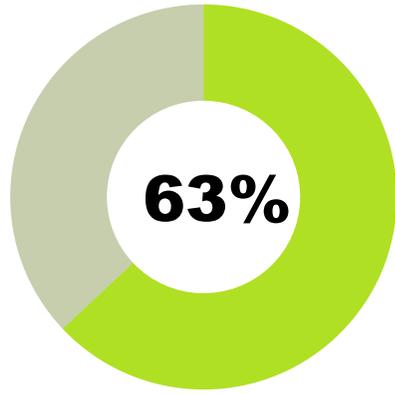


More than two-thirds (68%) of those of voting age report they will watch future debates.

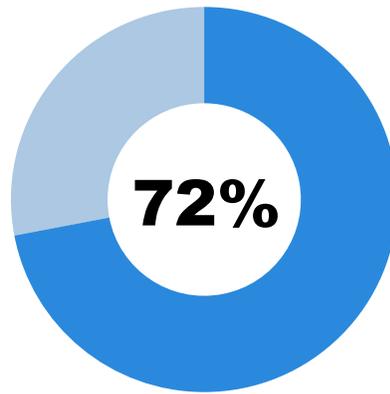
Will watch future debates



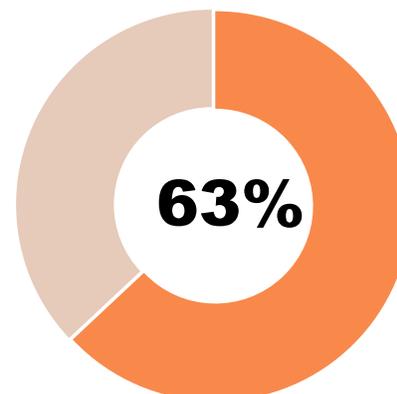
All



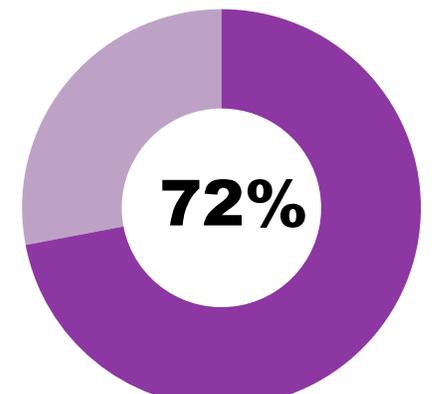
Gen Z



Millennial



Gen X



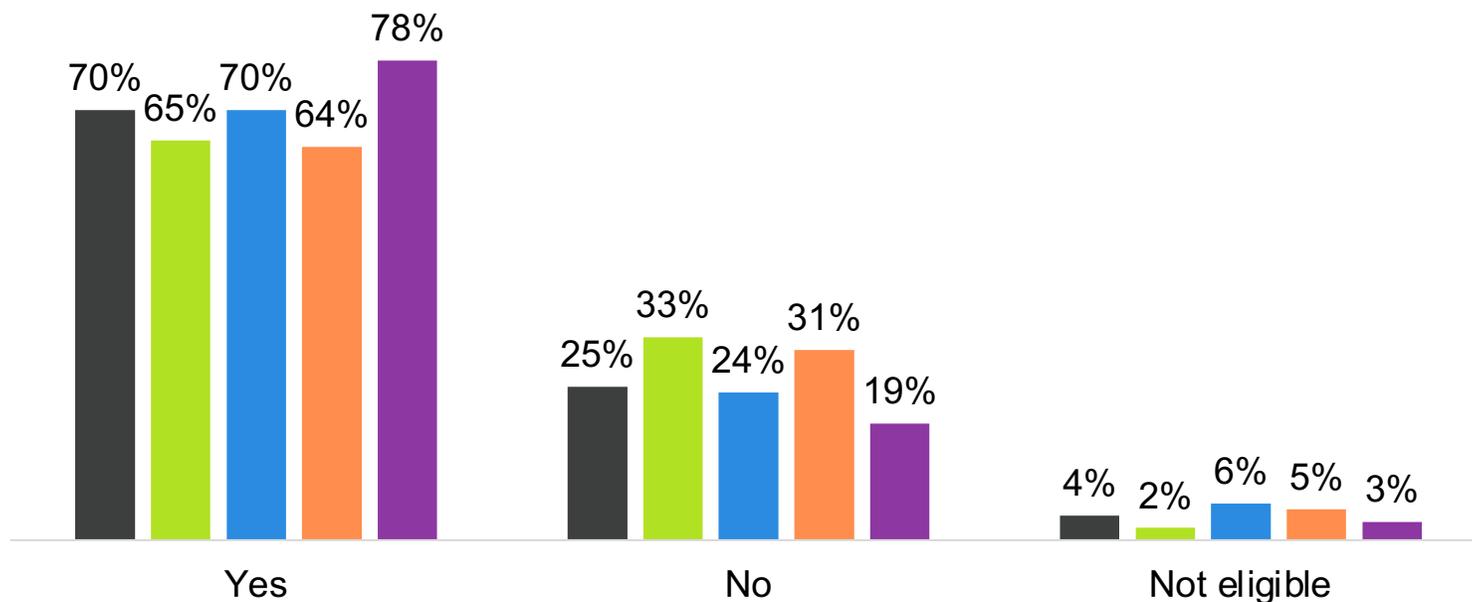
Boomer



70% of respondents plan to participate in their state's primary elections or caucuses. Not surprisingly, Boomers have the highest planned participation at 78%.

Plan to participate in state's primary elections or caucuses

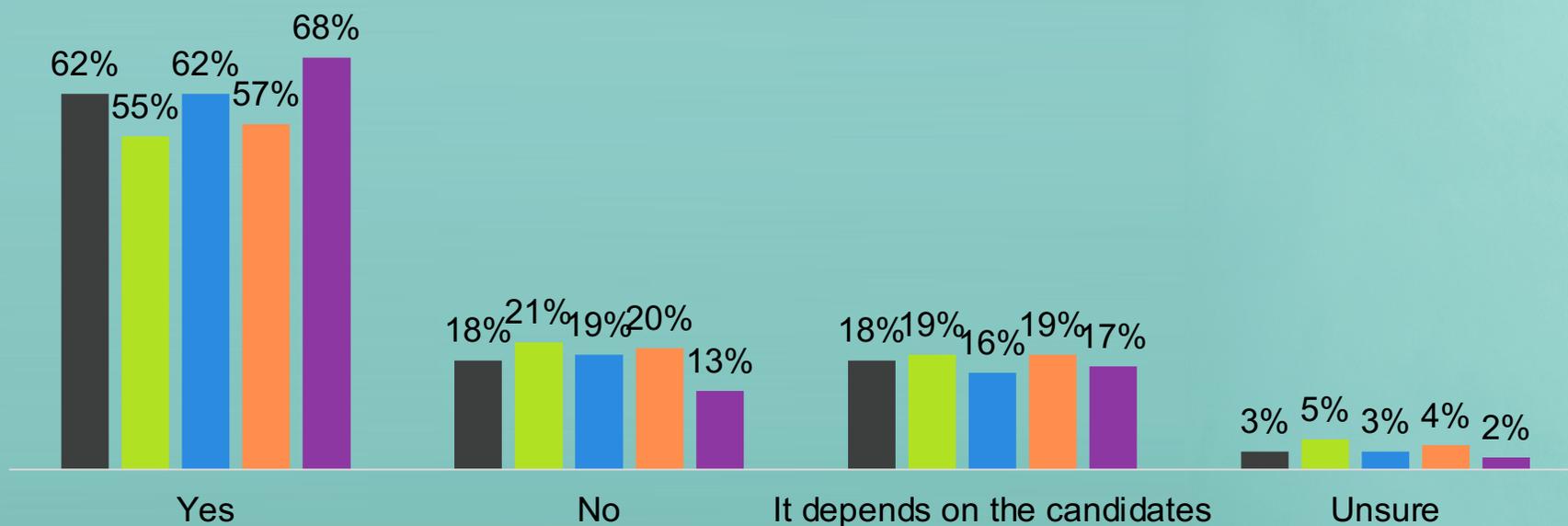
■ All ■ Gen Z ■ Millennial ■ Gen X ■ Boomer



62% expect to be watching debates once the two parties have selected their candidates. Nearly 1 in 5 respondents report that their viewership will depend on the candidates that the parties select.

Plan to watch debates once candidates are selected

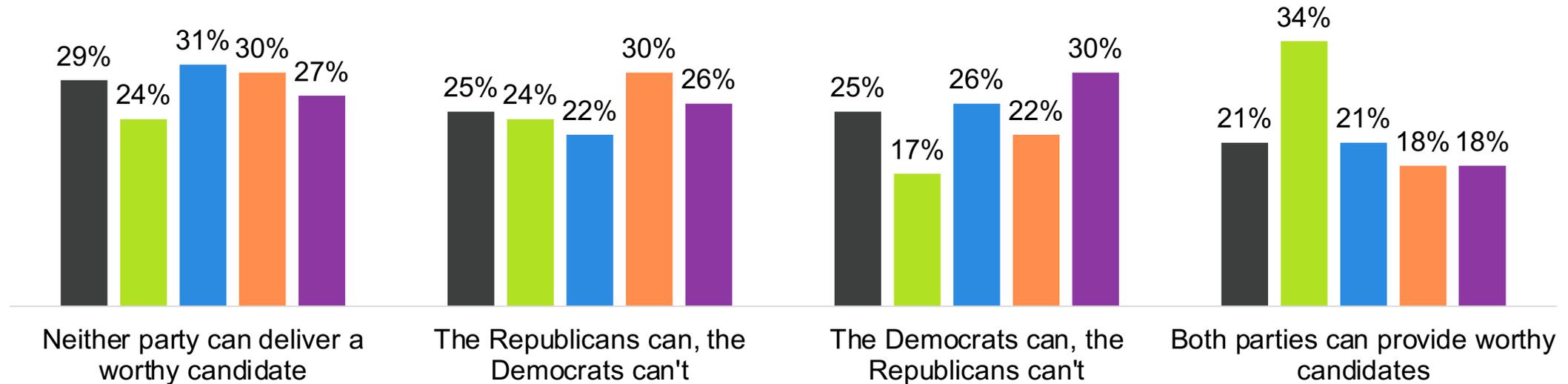
■ All ■ Gen Z ■ Millennial ■ Gen X ■ Boomer



Opinions on which party can put forth a worthy presidential option are fairly evenly distributed among the four options provided. It's noteworthy that the most popular option is that neither party can provide a candidate worthy of the position.

Confidence of each party providing worthy presidential candidates

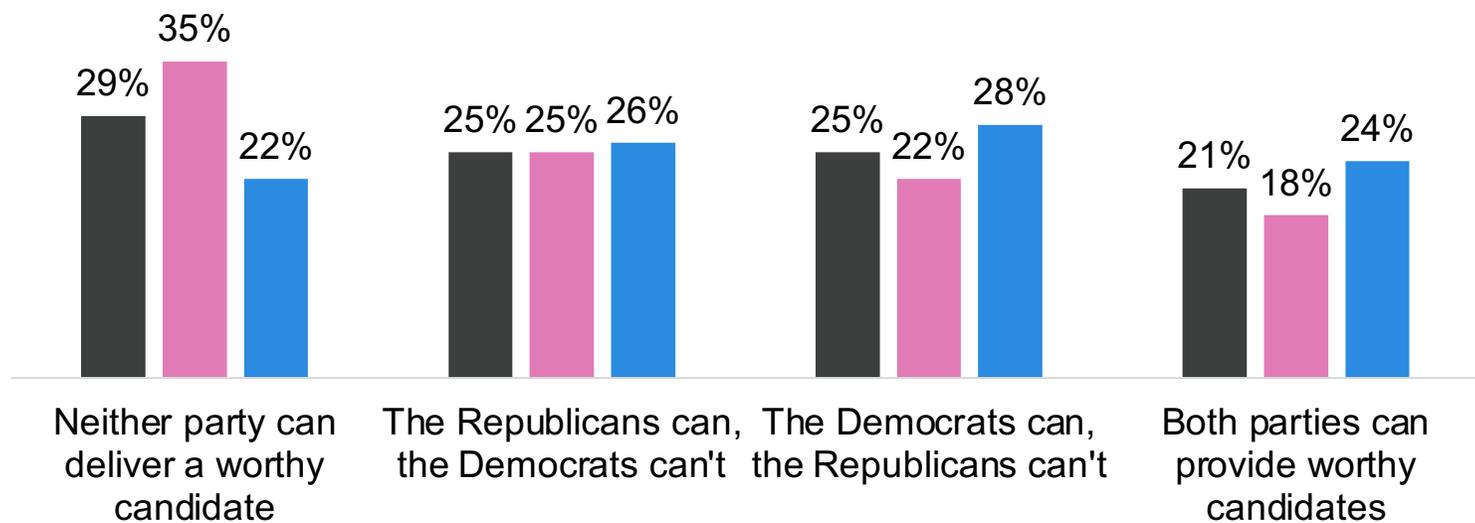
■ All ■ Gen Z ■ Millennial ■ Gen X ■ Boomer



Women (35%) are even more discouraged than their male counterparts (22%) when it comes to either party providing a worthy presidential candidate.

Confidence of each party providing worthy presidential candidates

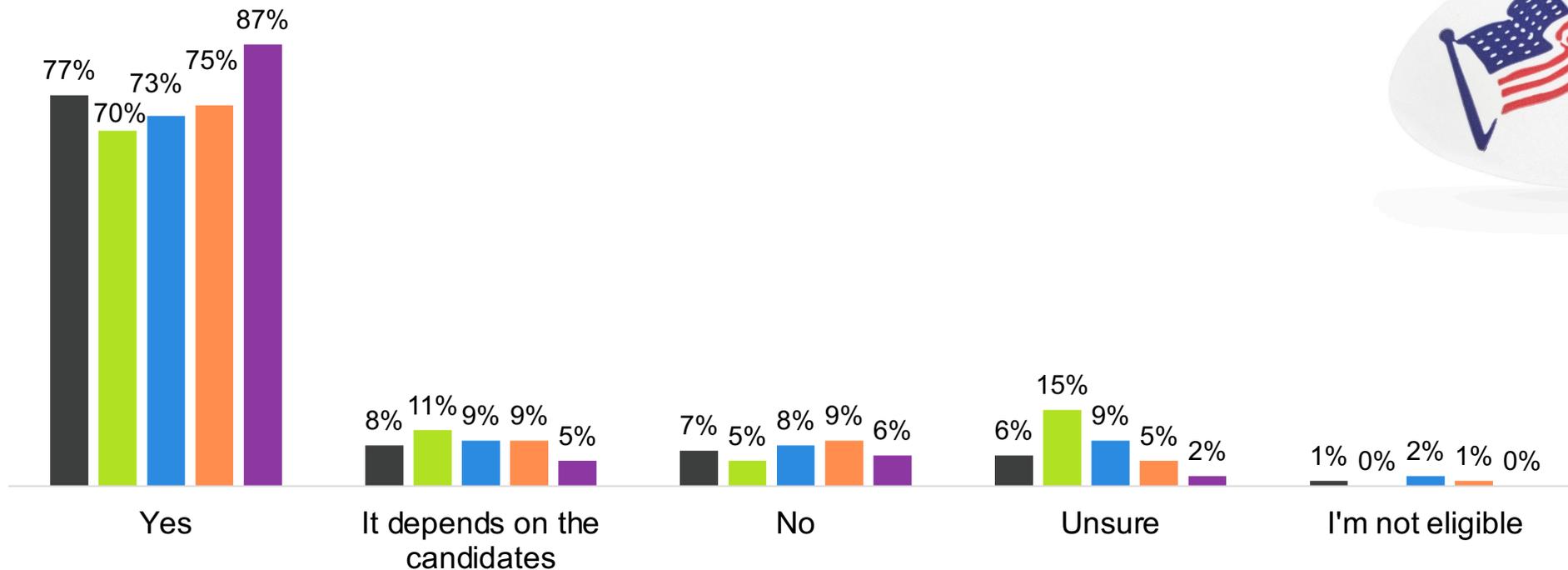
■ All ■ Female ■ Male



Slightly more than 3 in 4 respondents (77%) report that they plan to vote in the 2024 presidential election.

Will vote in next presidential election

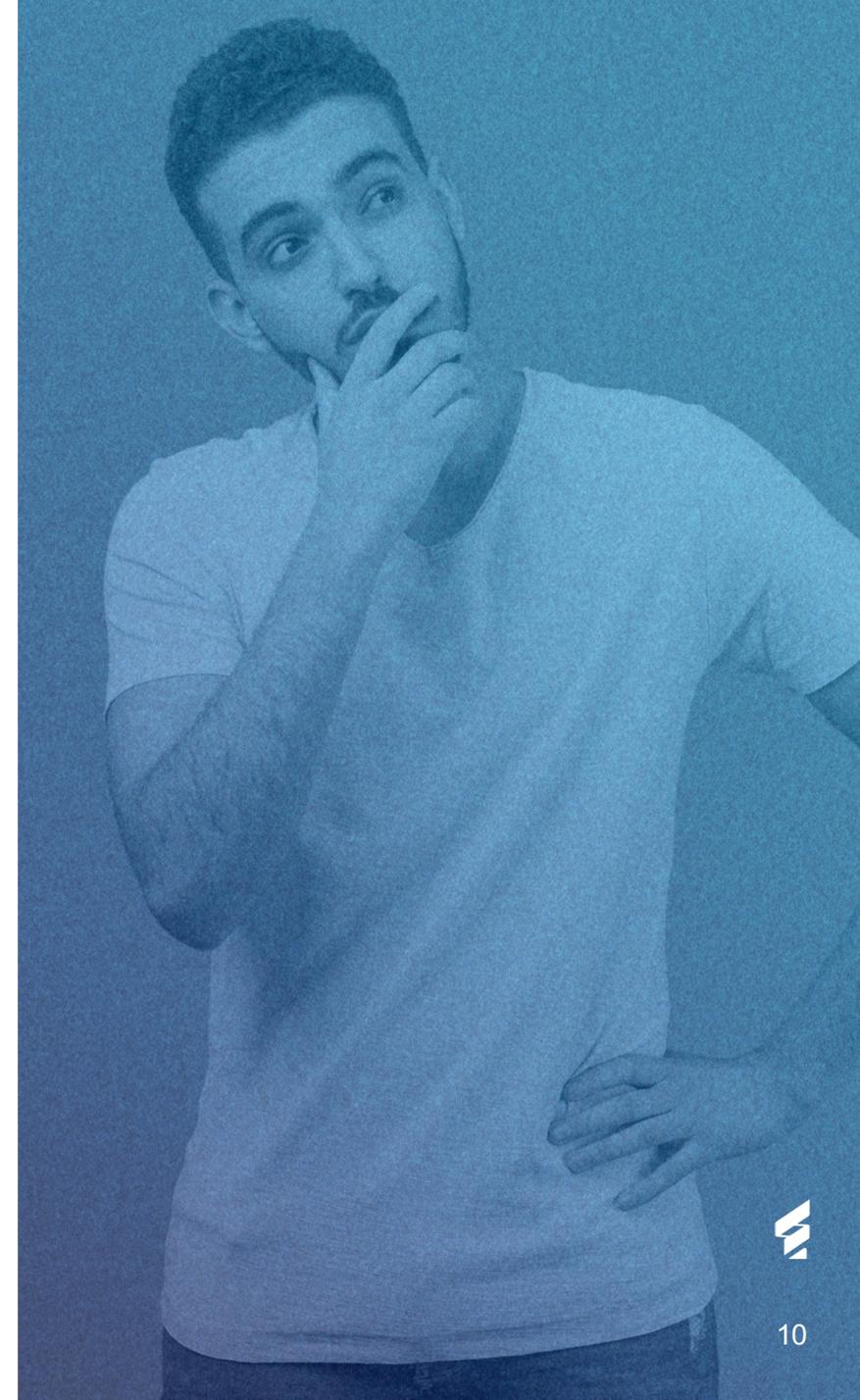
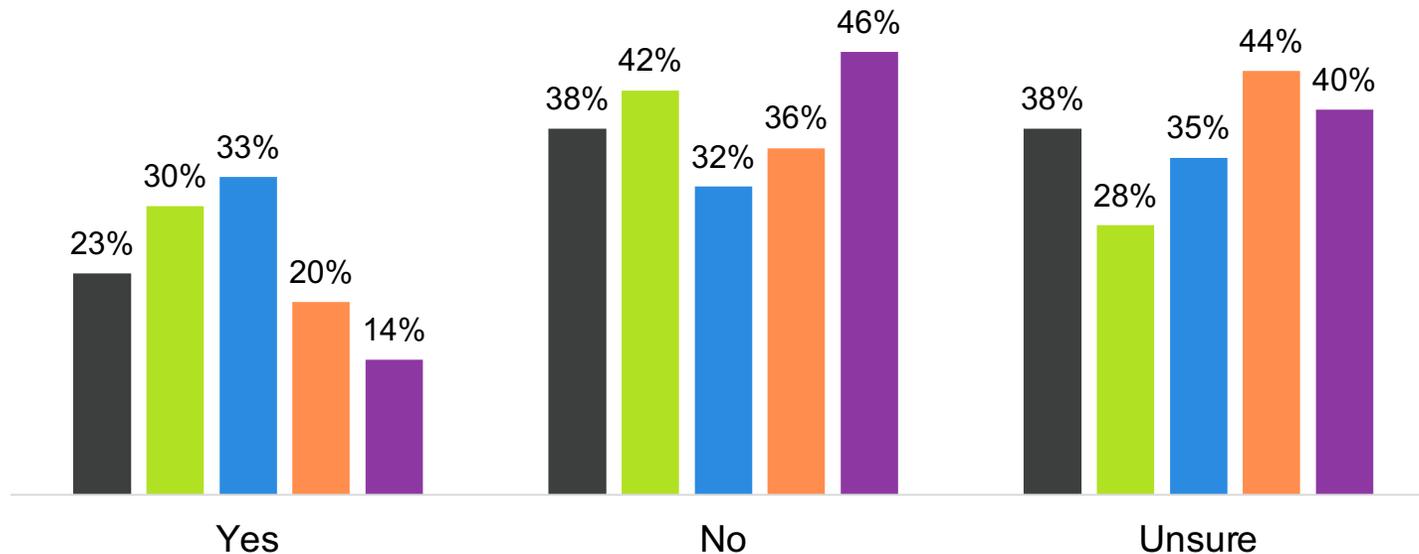
■ All ■ Gen Z ■ Millennial ■ Gen X ■ Boomer



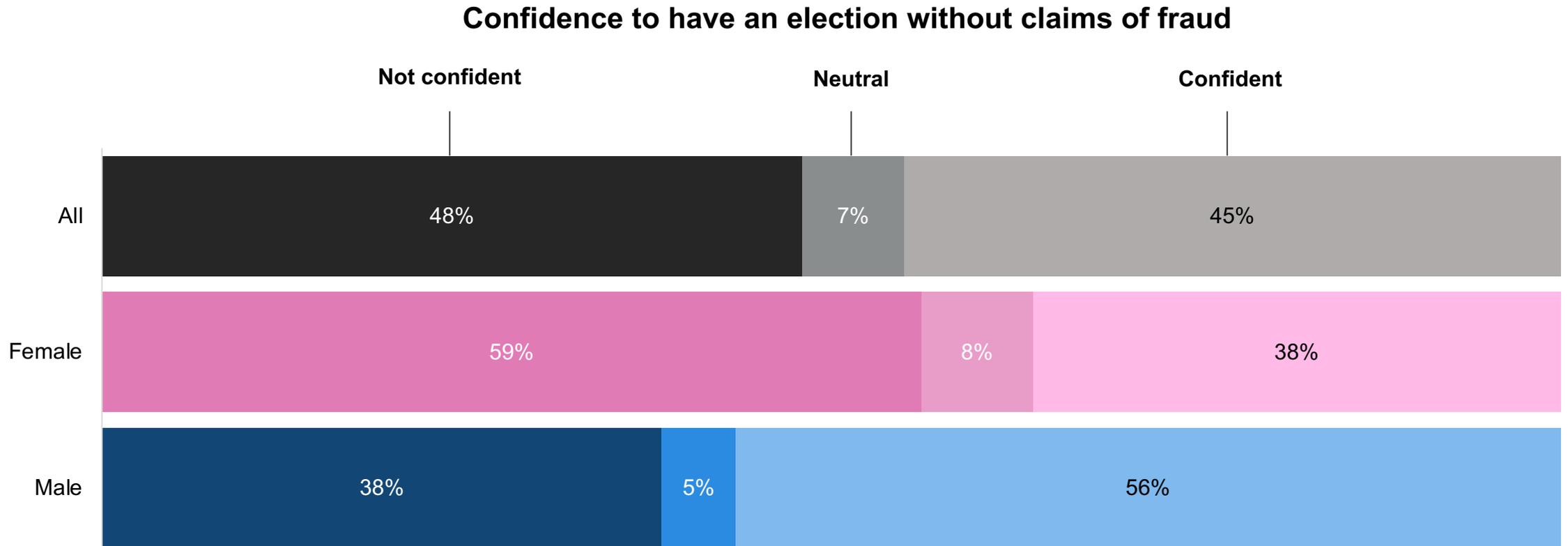
Given respondent attitudes about the ability of either party to provide viable candidates, it's not surprising that nearly one quarter (23%) would consider a third-party candidate and 38% are unsure.

Would vote for a third party

■ All ■ Gen Z ■ Millennial ■ Gen X ■ Boomer



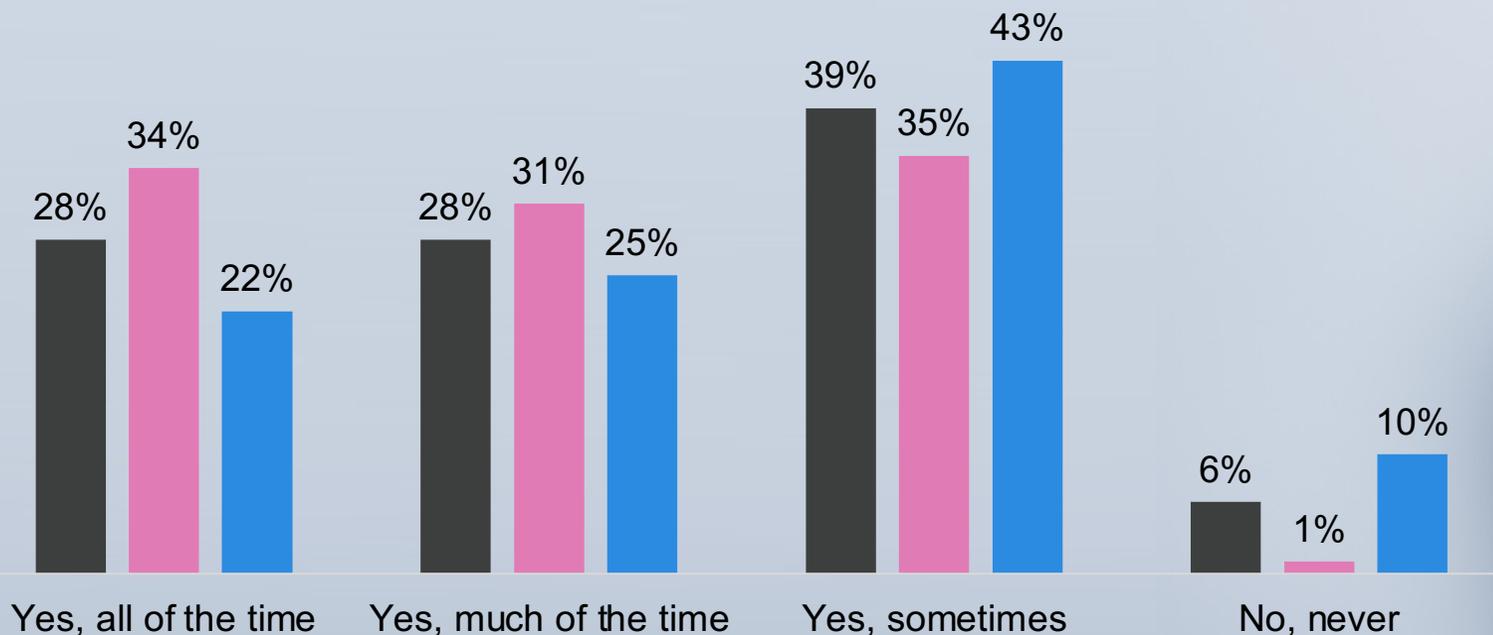
Nearly half of respondents (48%) and 59% of women don't believe that it is possible in this current climate to have a presidential election without some claims of fraud.



As we have seen in prior studies, the vast majority of Americans (94%) feel the country is “broken” at least a portion of the time.

Feel the country is broken

■ All ■ Female ■ Male

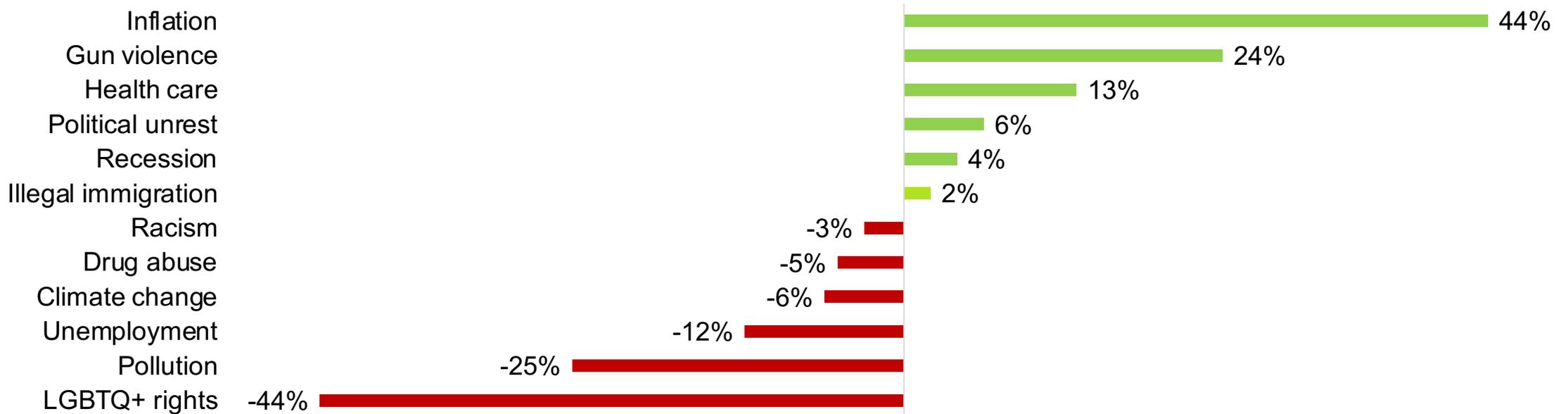


Women (65%) are much more likely than men (47%) to feel the country is broken much or all of the time.



Respondents feel the biggest net* issue facing the country is inflation (44%) followed by gun violence (24%) and health care (13%). The issues seen as the least important are LGBTQ+ rights (-44%), pollution (-25%), and unemployment (-12%).

Net importance of current issues in the U.S.



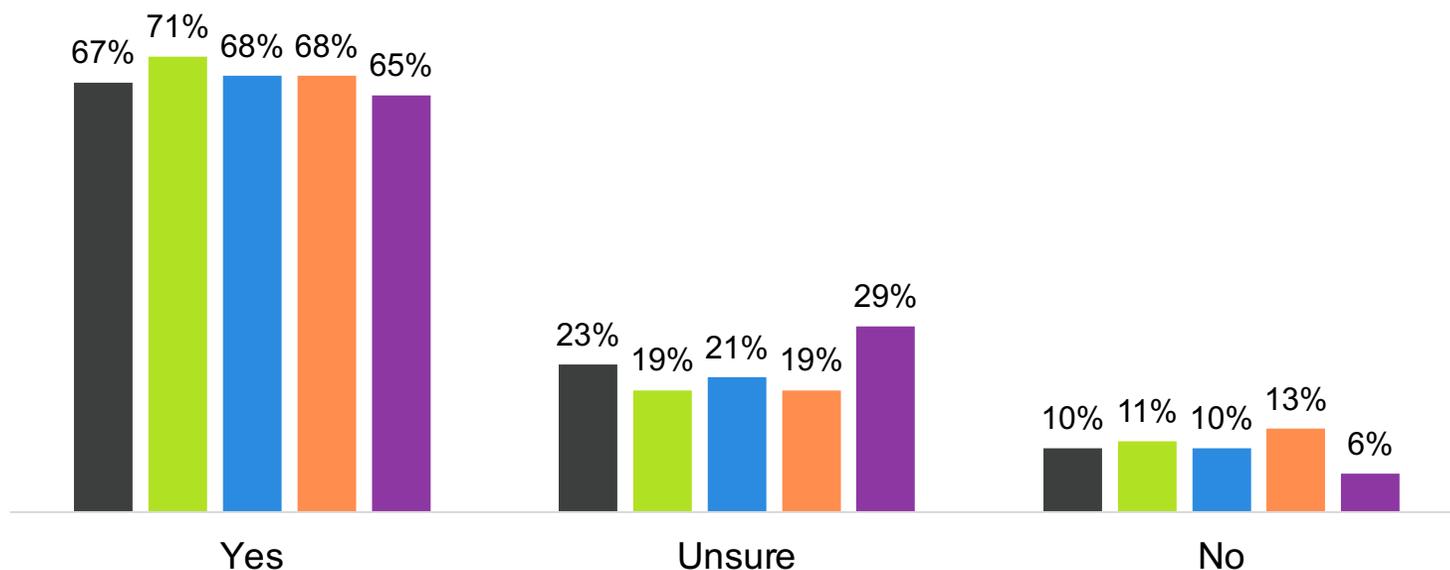
*Net Score is the percentage of respondents who chose that item as one of the most important issues minus the percentage of those who selected it as one of the least important issues.



While 94% of respondents see the country as “broken” at least some of the time, their view of the future is far from pessimistic. Only 10% of those who feel the U.S. is broken believe that it can’t be repaired.

Belief that it is possible to fix the country

■ All ■ Gen Z ■ Millennial ■ Gen X ■ Boomer

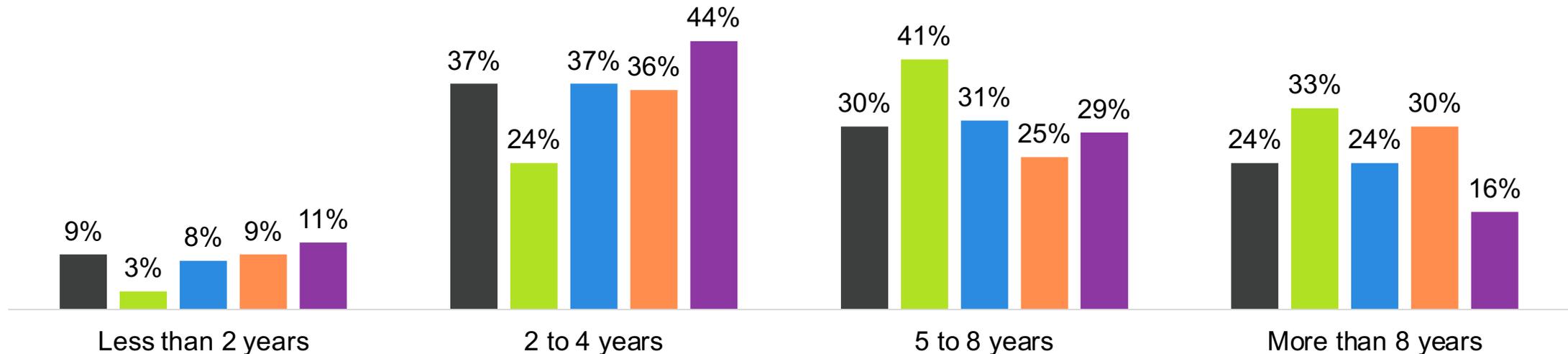


Few see the repair of the country as something that can be achieved in the short-term. Only 9% feel it can be accomplished in as little as two years, while nearly a quarter feel it will take more than eight years.

Boomers are the most optimistic with more than half (55%) feeling the fix can be accomplished in 4 years or less.

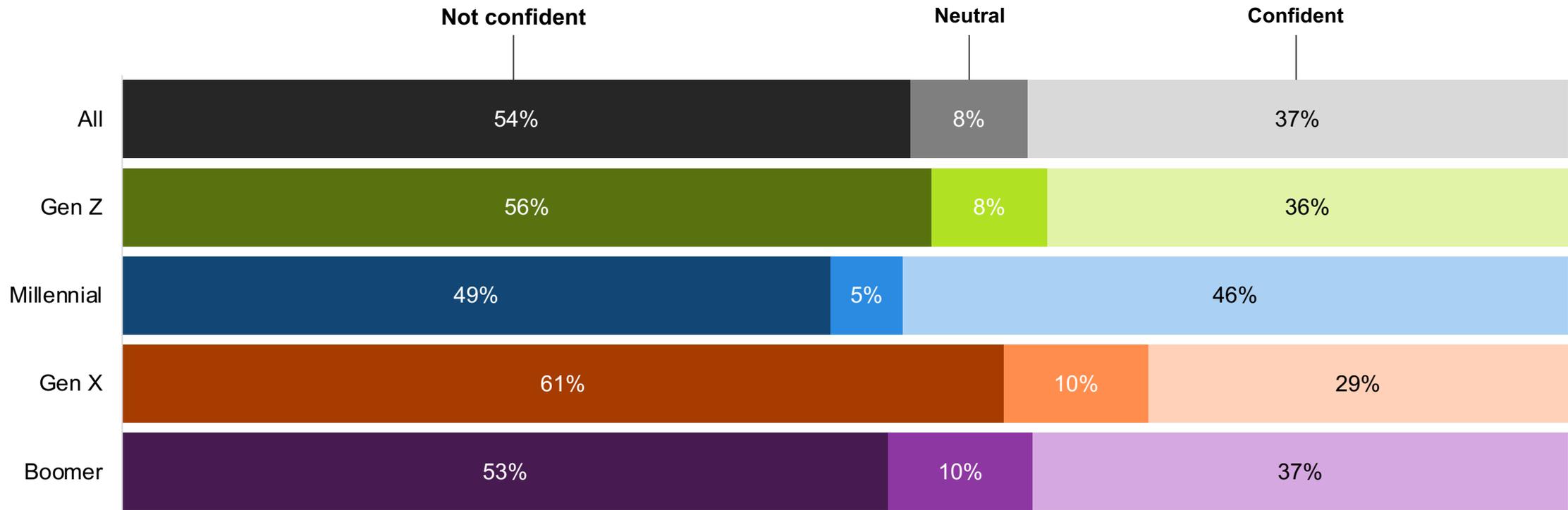
Anticipated time to fix the country

■ All ■ Gen Z ■ Millennial ■ Gen X ■ Boomer

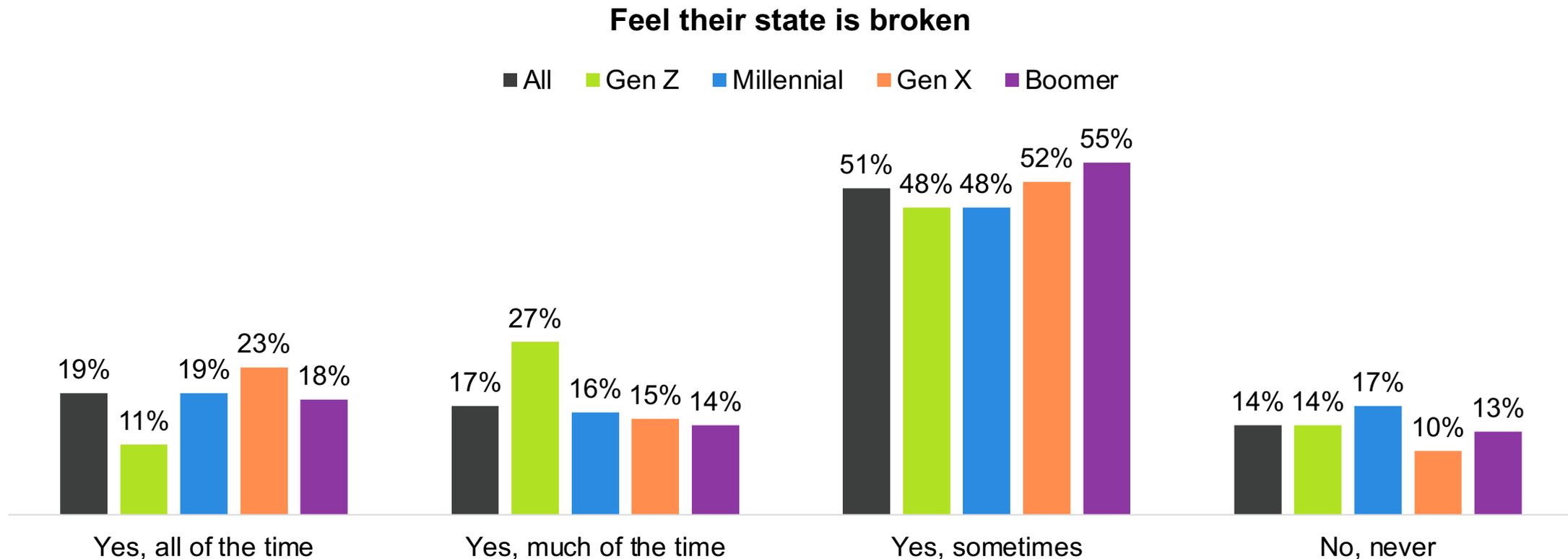


Confidence in our current government leaders to facilitate the fix is low. Only 37% have confidence in the current leadership to accomplish the goal while 54% don't believe they are up to the task.

Confidence in current leaders to fix the country



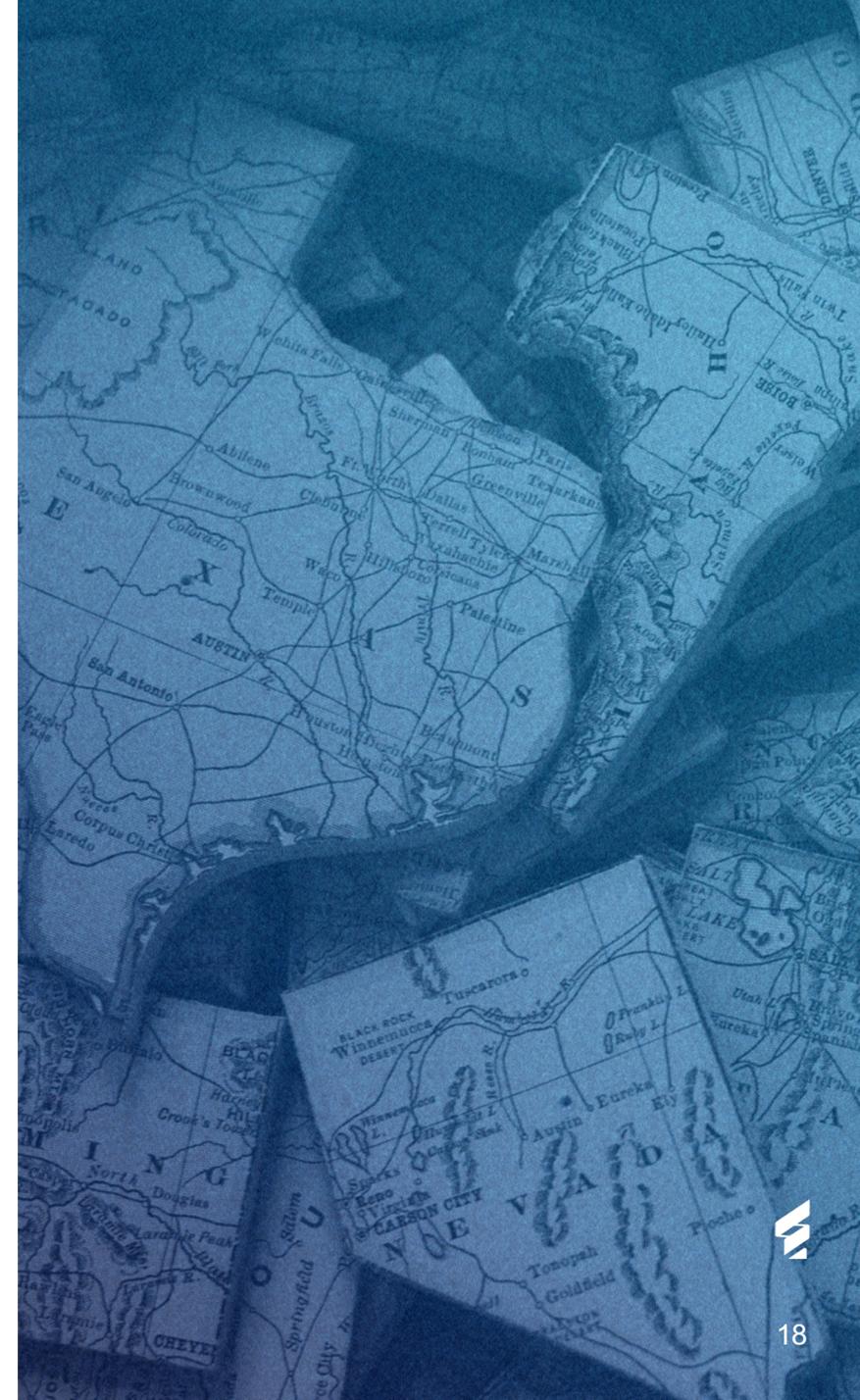
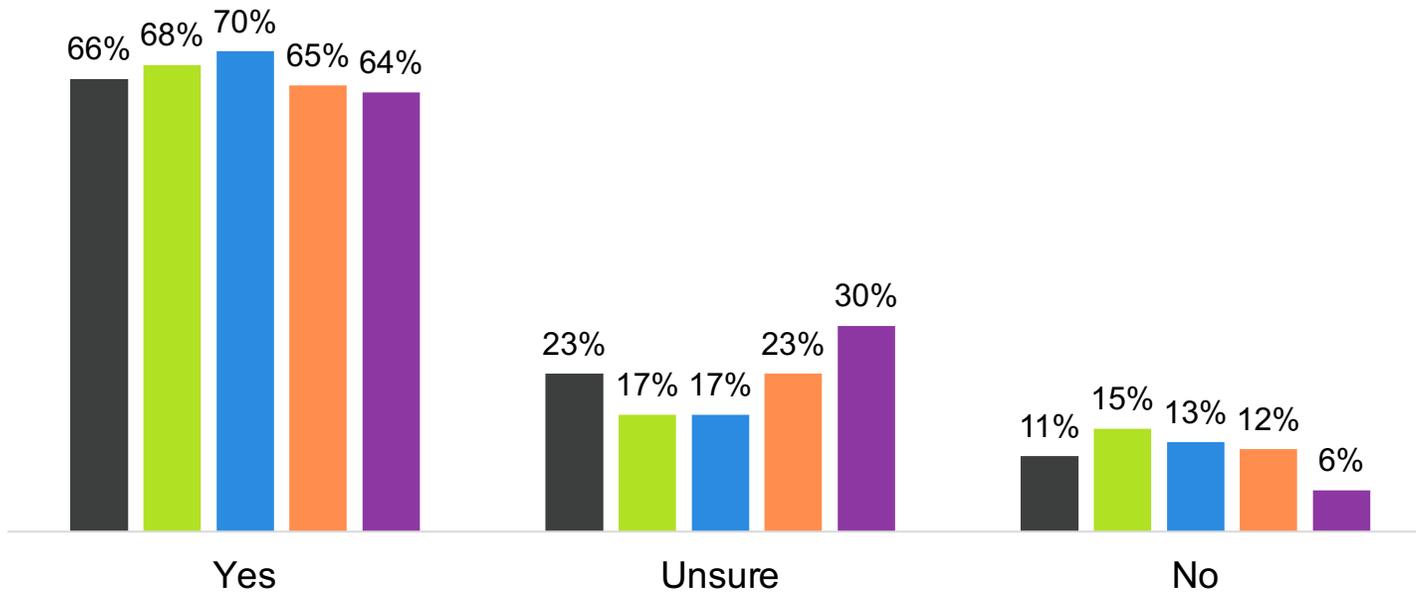
Respondent attitudes about the condition of their state are somewhat better than that of the condition of the nation. Only 36% feel their state is broken most or all of the time compared to the 54% who feel that way about the nation as a whole.



Similar to the national level, only a small percentage of those who feel their state is broken feel the damage is irreparable (11%).

Belief that it is possible to fix their state

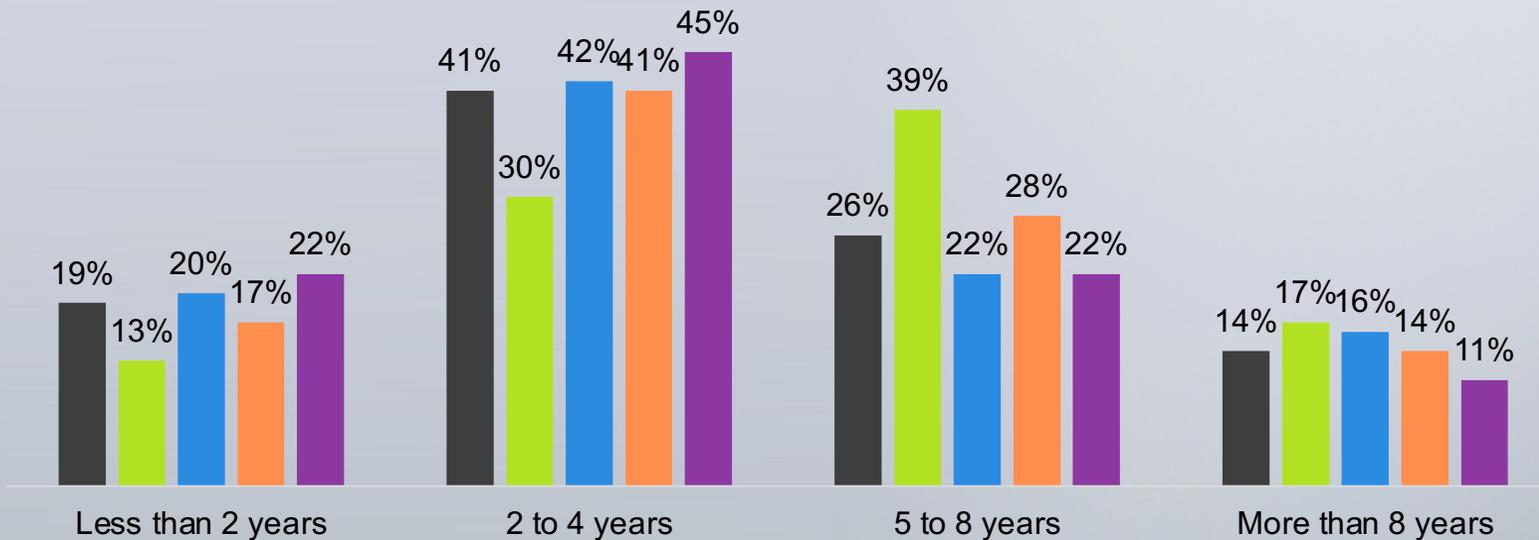
■ All ■ Gen Z ■ Millennial ■ Gen X ■ Boomer



Respondents also feel that the damage at the state level can be repaired more quickly than the issues faced nationally. 60% think the “fix” can be accomplished in 4 years or less.

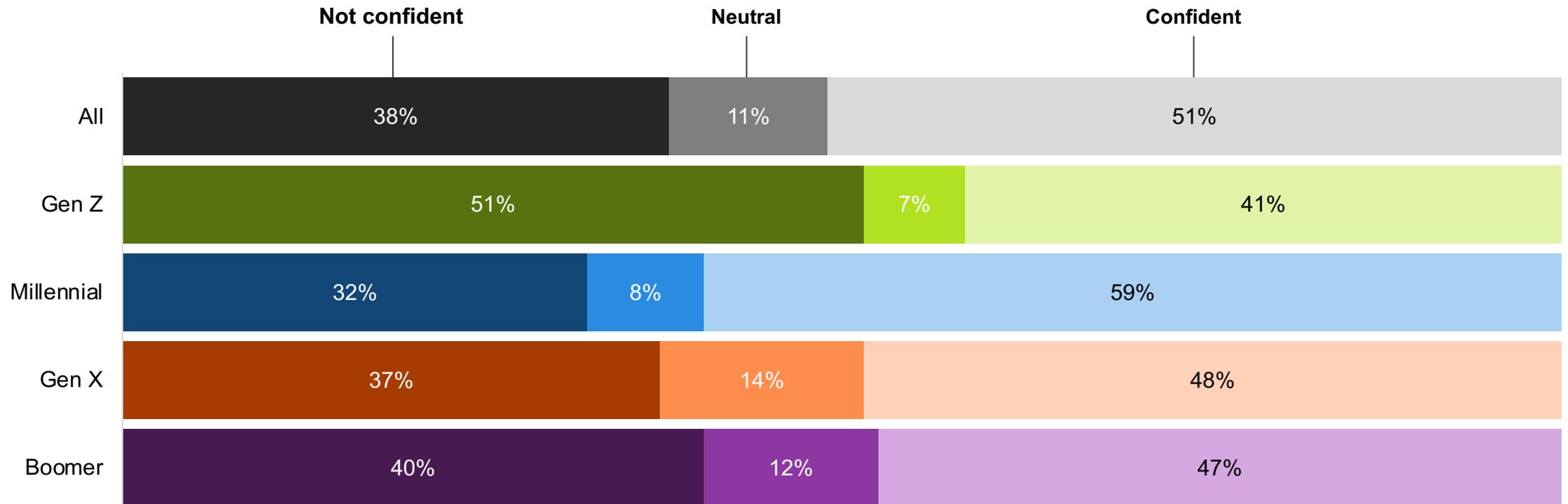
Anticipated time to fix their state

■ All ■ Gen Z ■ Millennial ■ Gen X ■ Boomer



Confidence in the current leadership's ability to make the required change is also higher at the state level (51%) than it is nationally (37%).

Confidence in current leaders to fix their state



The U.S. is broken. Can it be fixed?

N = 784
MOE ± 3.5%
Panel: General Population
Collected: 8/25/23



Gen Z
11%



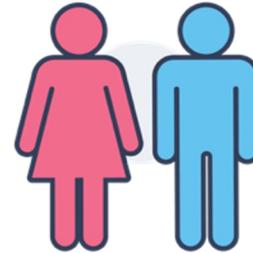
Millennial
32%



Gen X
27%



Baby Boomer
30%



Female
51%

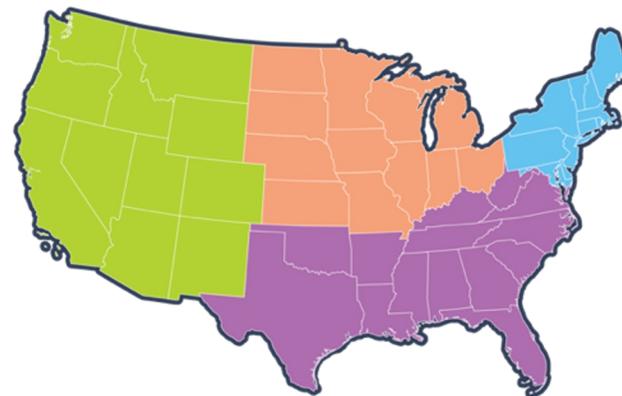
Male
49%



Urban
32%

Suburban
48%

Rural
20%



Northeast
17%

Midwest
21%

South
38%

West
24%



Do you want to take the Pulse of *your* consumers?

Our insights team will partner with you to design a study that will help you better understand your customers and their problems, and how your brand can win at retail.

To learn more about what our Four-Part Process and custom research studies can do for you, contact:

Jenni Becker SVP, Business Development
jenni.becker@salesfactory.com

The logo for Sales Factory Consumer Pulse is centered on the right side of the slide. It features the words "SALES FACTORY" in a small, white, sans-serif font above the word "Consumer" in a larger, white, sans-serif font. To the right of "Consumer" is the word "Pulse" in a bold, white, sans-serif font, with a stylized white lightning bolt symbol integrated into the letter 'e'. The background of the slide is a dark blue with a grid of white plus signs and various data visualization elements like line graphs and bar charts, all in a lighter blue tone.

SALES FACTORY
Consumer **Pulse**