



# CNBC + Generation Lab Youth Poll

## Youth & Money in the USA

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A study conducted from January 21-31, 2024 from a representative sample of 1013 people aged 18-34 nationwide.

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# INTRODUCTION

**The backdrop:** The current job market, political climate, and overall health of the economy can play an important role in the financial wellbeing of young people.

**The state of play:** During the past two years, the term “vibecession” has been often used- even though the economy has performed relatively well on paper, consumers have had a more pessimistic view. Do young people still have negative views on the economy and their own financial wellbeing, or is 2024 the start of new beginnings?

**So:** Generation Lab and CNBC asked hundreds of young people around the country to explain their views on the 2024 presidential election, the U.S. economy, inflation concerns, retirement plans, job status and more.

*Based on a survey of 1013 young people, conducted in January, 2024.*

# KEY INSIGHTS

## Overall Economy

- ❖ Approximately half of young people think the economy is in decent shape,
- ❖ Most don't expect improvement in the economy in 2024
- ❖ A majority feel somewhat secure in employment and the stock market

## Personal Finance

- ❖ Many believe the economy impacts timing of major life milestones like family planning
- ❖ Most respondents live with others (roommates, family, a partner) and are not in the market for home ownership
- ❖ Only 10% of respondents report tipping more than last year

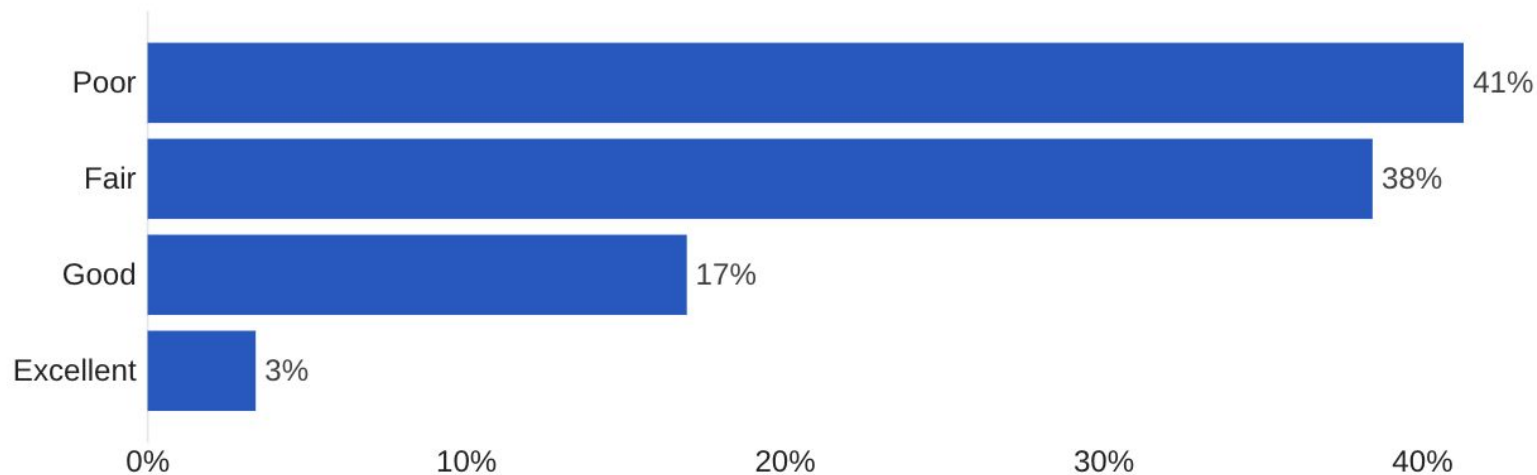
## Politics

- ❖ Biden leads Trump by a slim margin. Margin widens among likely voters.
- ❖ Cost of living and the job market are most salient issues.
- ❖ 2/3 of respondents say they are likely to vote in the 2024 election

# 1. About half of respondents think the economy is in decent shape

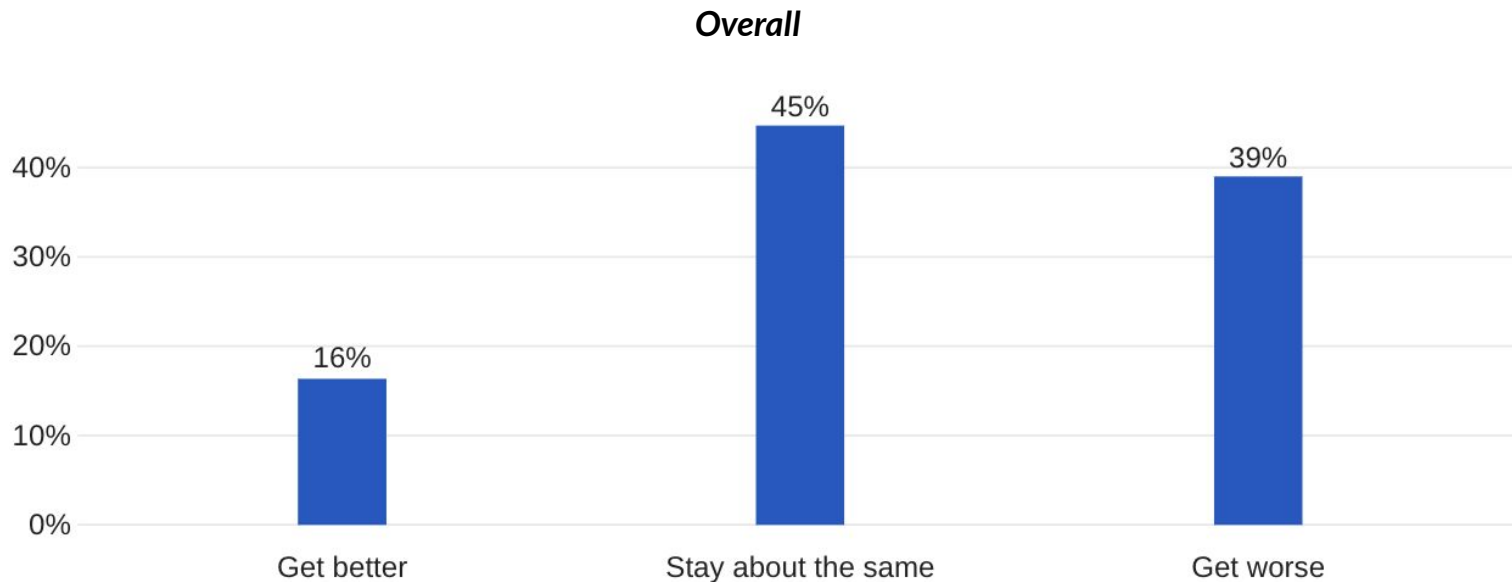
Q: "How would you rate the current state of the economy?"

## Overall



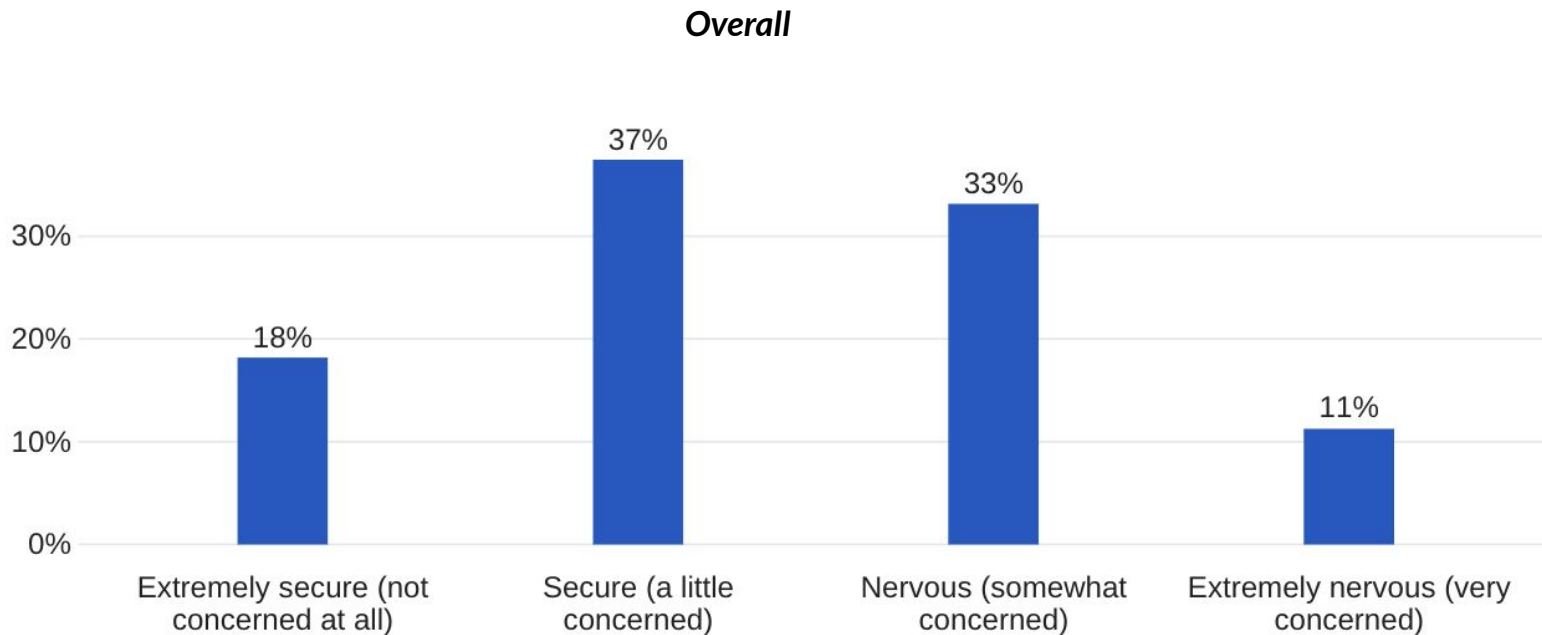
## 2. Most people do not expect improvement over the course of 2024

Q: “Over the course of this year, do you think the state of the economy will...”



### 3. A slight majority feel secure in their employment

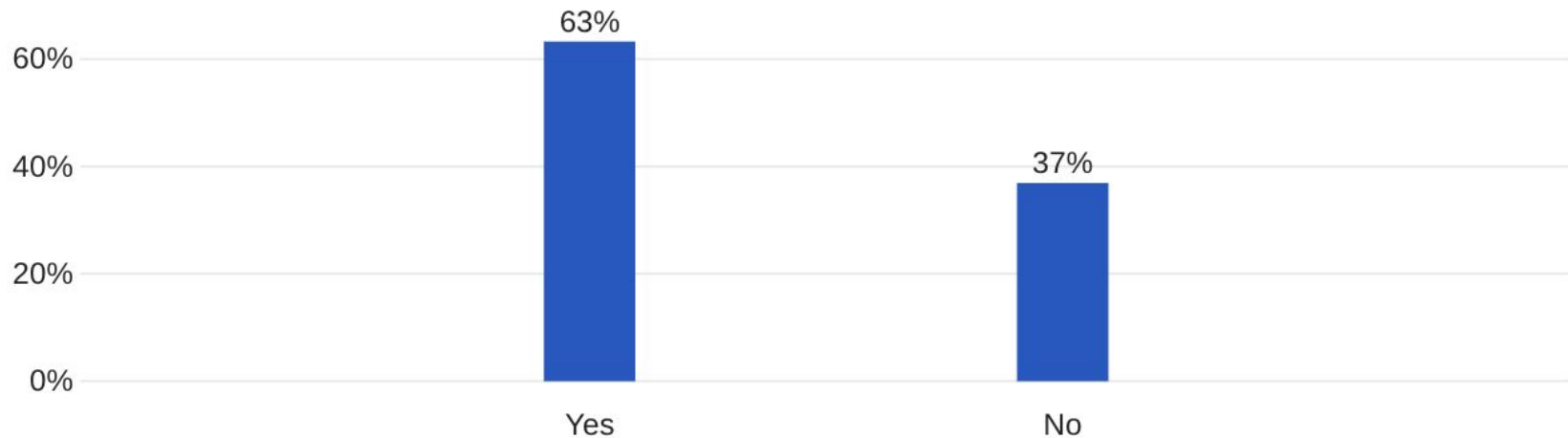
Q: “How secure do you feel about your employment status in 2024?”



## 4. Most respondents have trust in the stock market

Q: “Do you think the stock market is a good place to build wealth and invest?”

### Overall

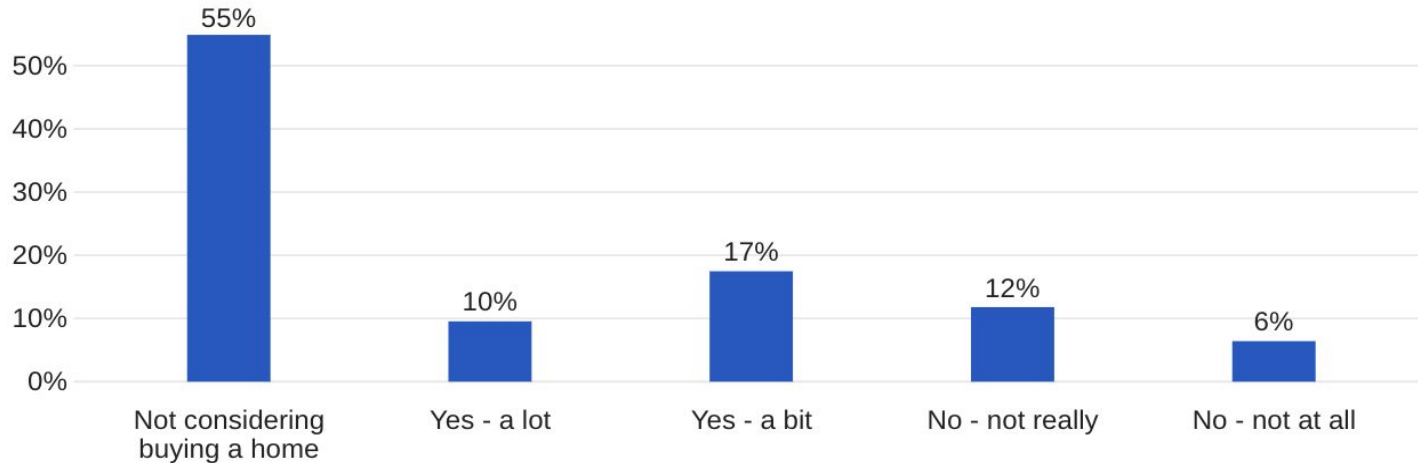




## 5. Although most are not in the market for a home, interest rate drops may affect the decision for some

Q: “If you are considering buying a home in 2024, does the recent drop in interest rates affect your decision?”

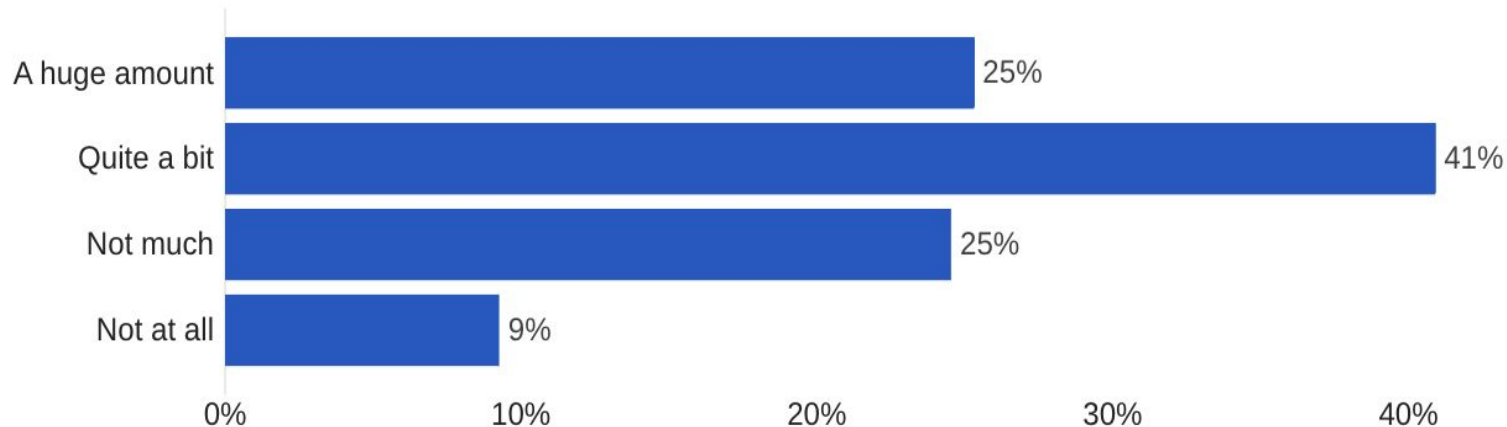
### Overall



## 6. For many, the economy impacts the course of major life milestones

Q: “To what extent does the economy affect your major life decisions like marriage or having a family?”

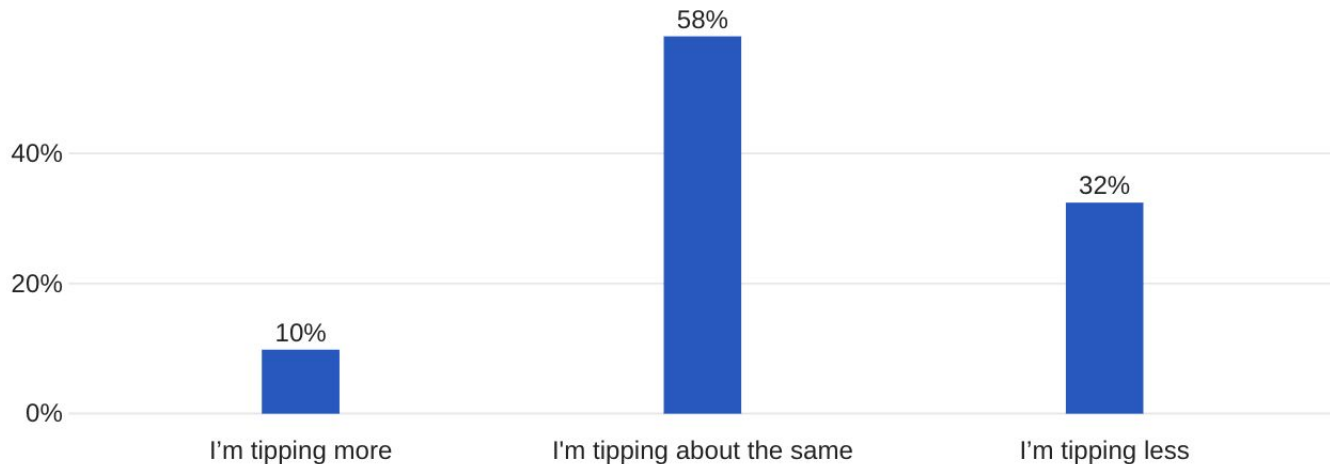
### Overall



## 7. We may have reached the peak of the tipping craze

Q: "Have your tipping habits changed since this time last year?"

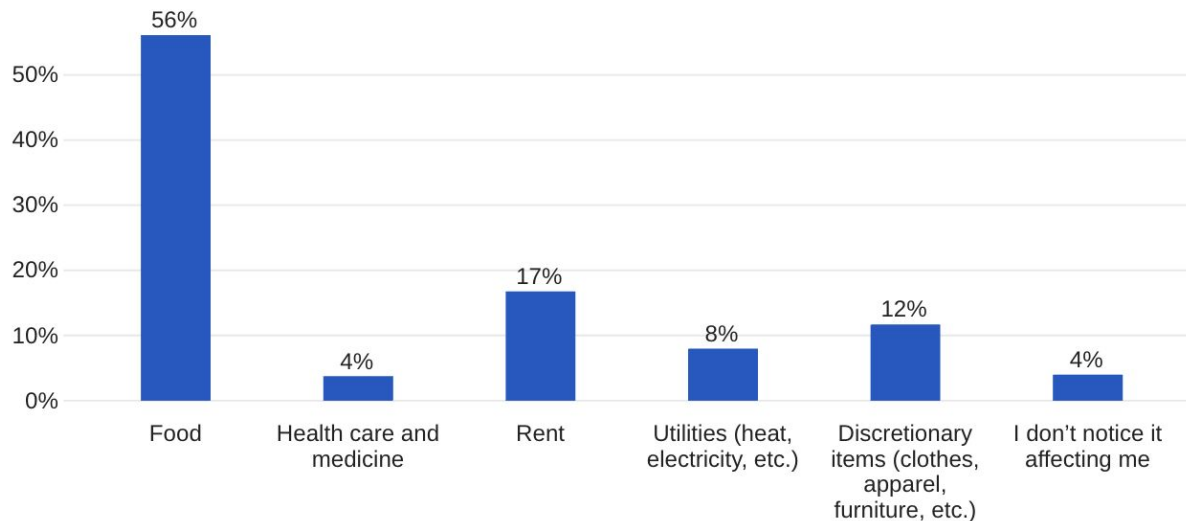
### Overall



## 8. People tend to notice an inflated grocery receipt

Q: "Where are you noticing inflation affecting you the most, if at all?"

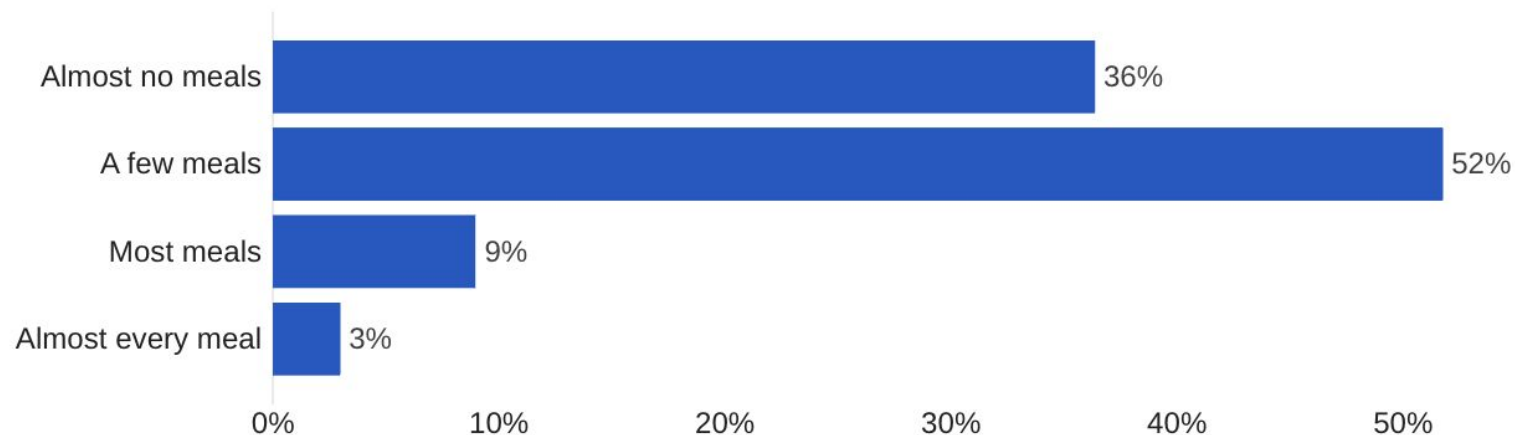
### Overall



## 9. For nearly 90% of young people, eating out is an occasional event

Q: “How much are you getting food from a restaurant each week (dining out, takeout and delivery)?”

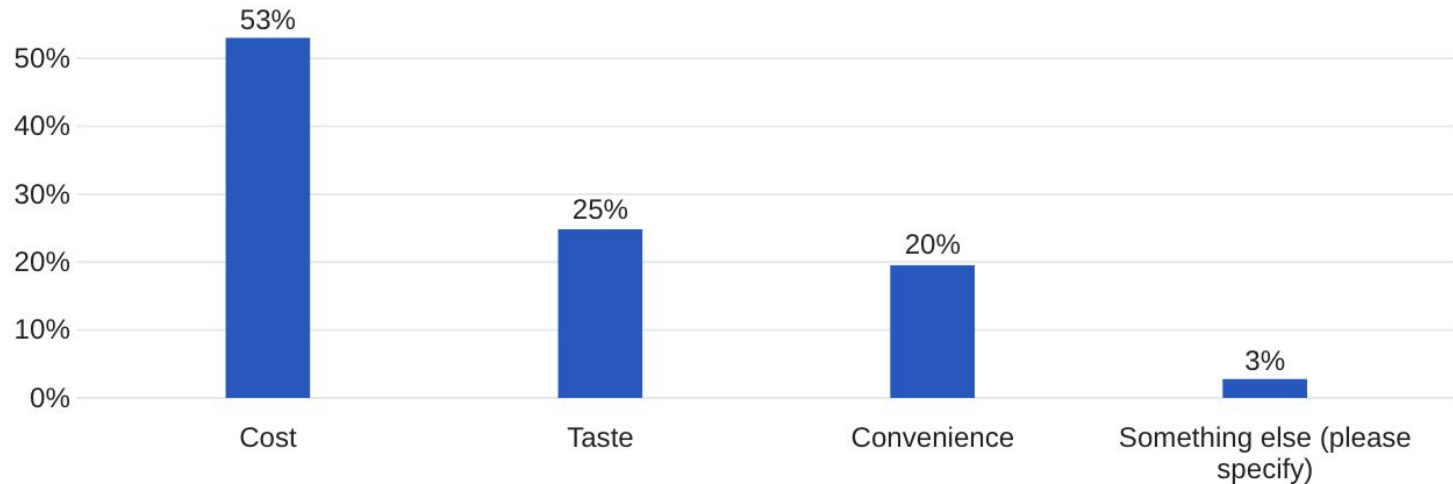
### Overall



## 10. Cost typically takes precedence over taste when it comes to meal decisions

Q: “What is the biggest factor when you choose a meal?”

### Overall



## 10. Focus on nutrition and health are top of mind

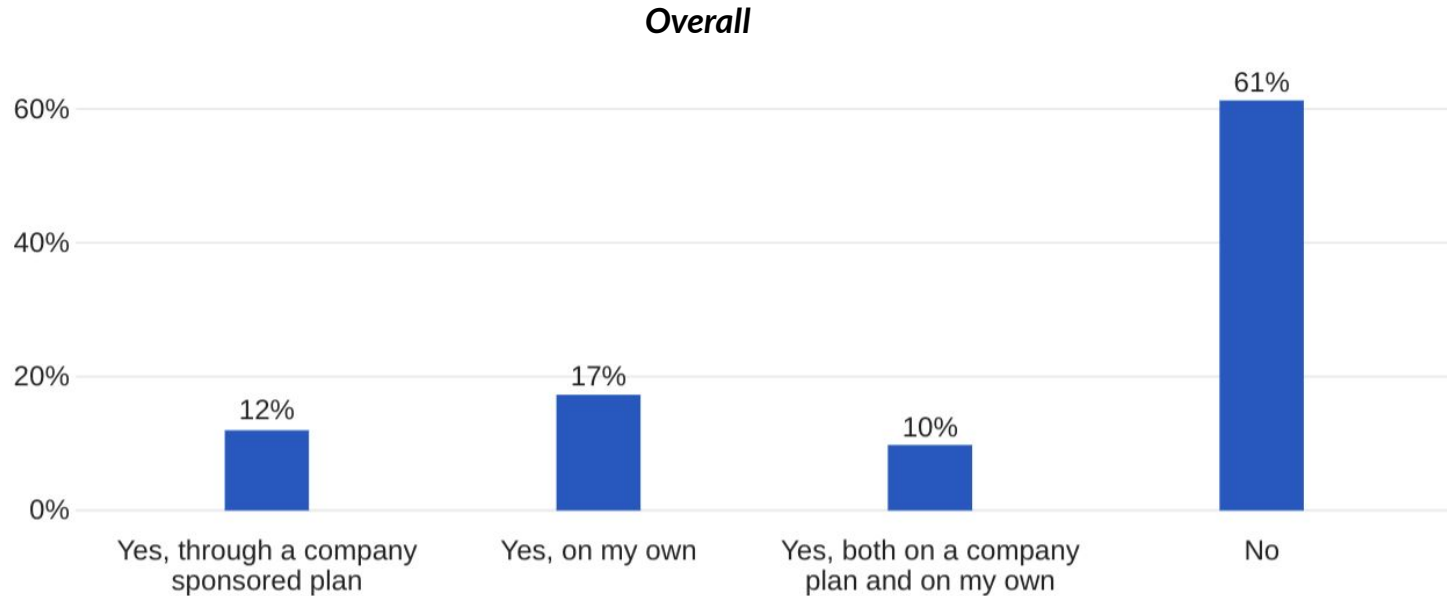
Q: “What is the biggest factor when you choose a meal?”  
Something else (please specify)

### Overall



## 11. A majority of respondents are not currently saving for retirement

Q: "Are you saving for retirement each month?"

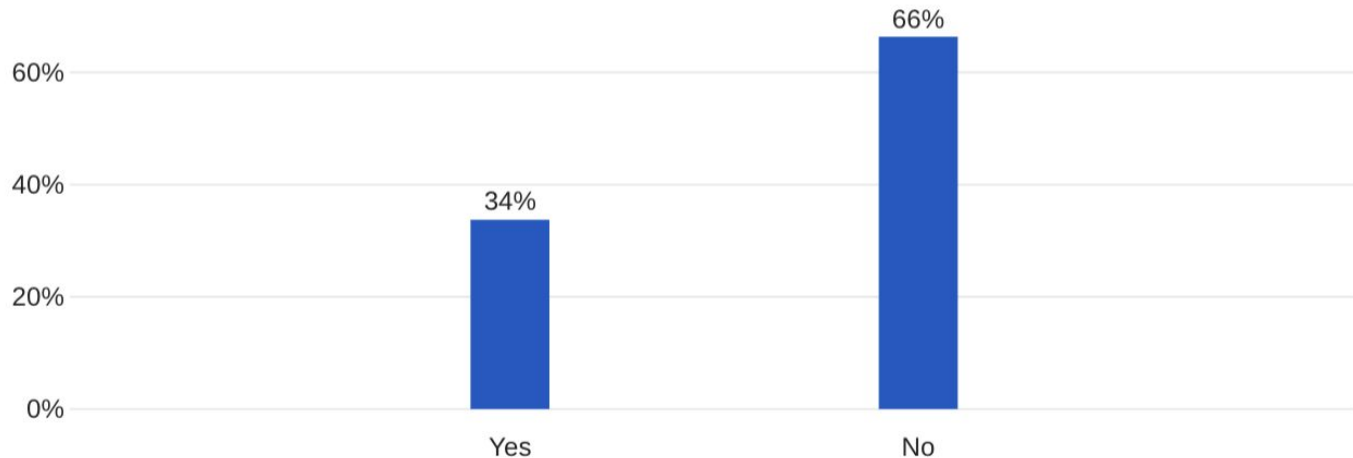




## 12. About a third of respondents have a side hustle

Q: “Do you have a side hustle that earns money, besides a traditional job (full-time or part-time)?”

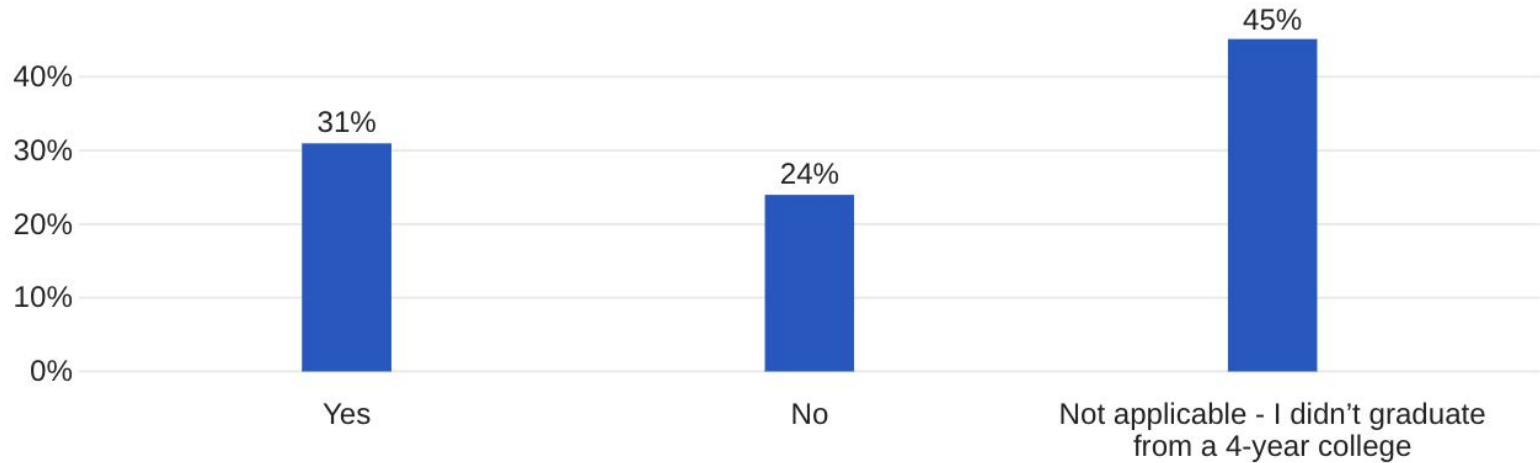
### Overall



## 13. Of those who hold a higher education diploma, most think the cost was worth it

Q: "If you graduated from a 4-year college or graduate school, do you think the cost has been worth it?"

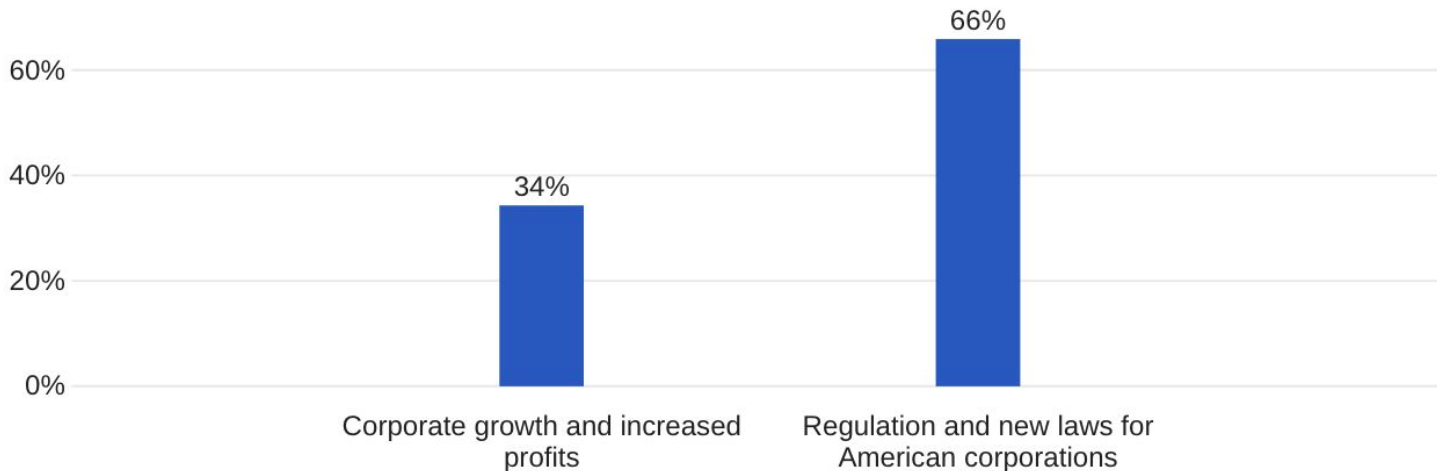
### Overall



## 14. Young people think business regulation should be prioritized over profits

Q: “American leaders in business & government in the US should be most focused on which of the following?”

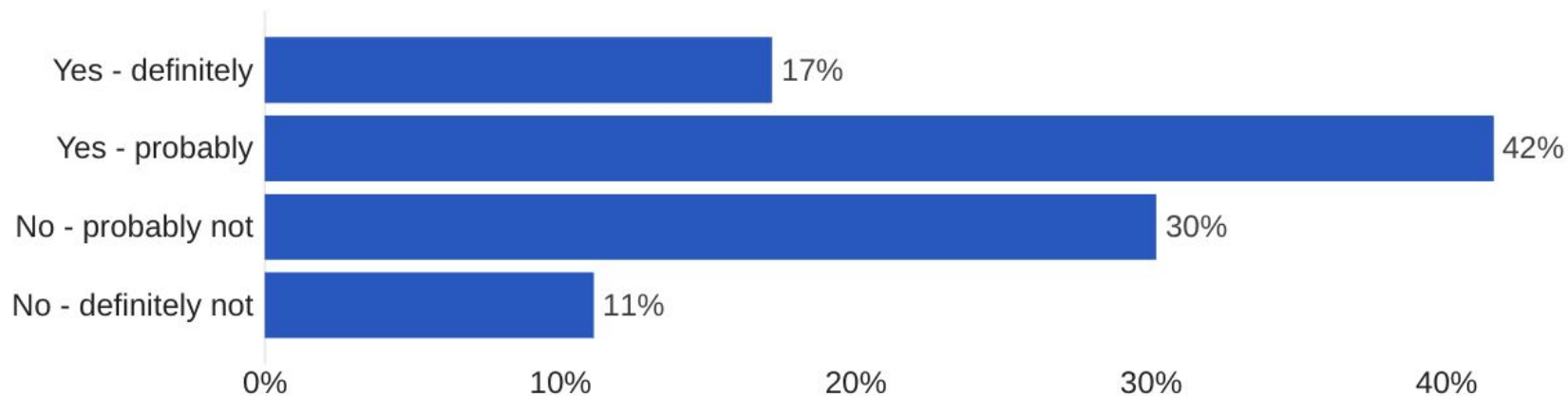
### Overall



## 15. A majority of respondents think exceptional work could lead to career advancement

Q: "Do you feel like going above and beyond at work advances your career?"

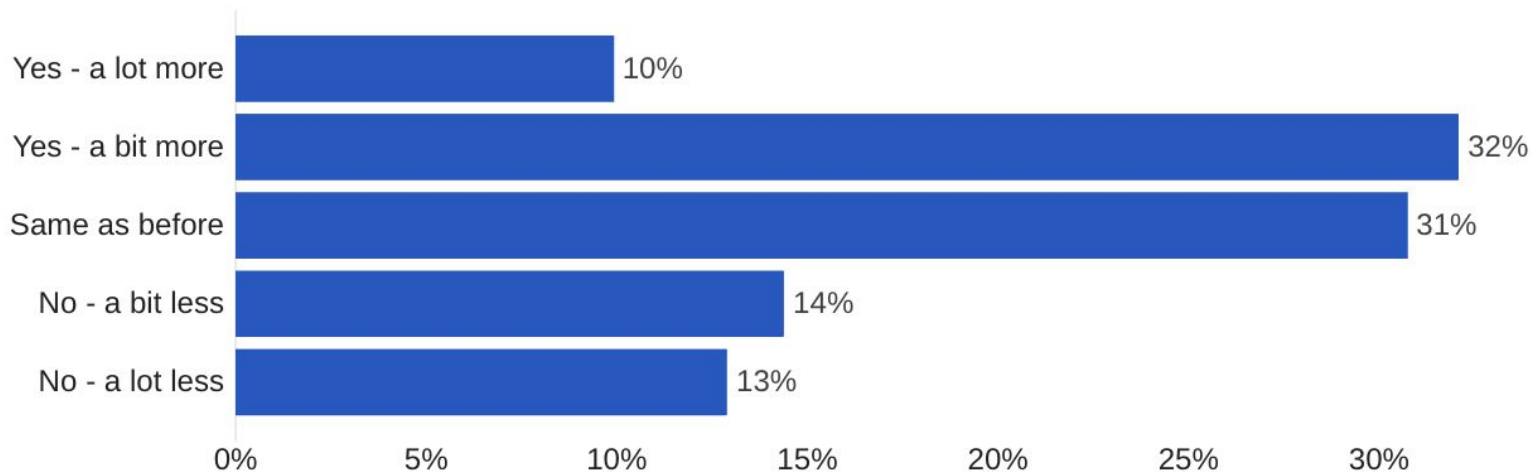
### Overall



## 16. Most salaries have remained consistent or increased slightly in the past year

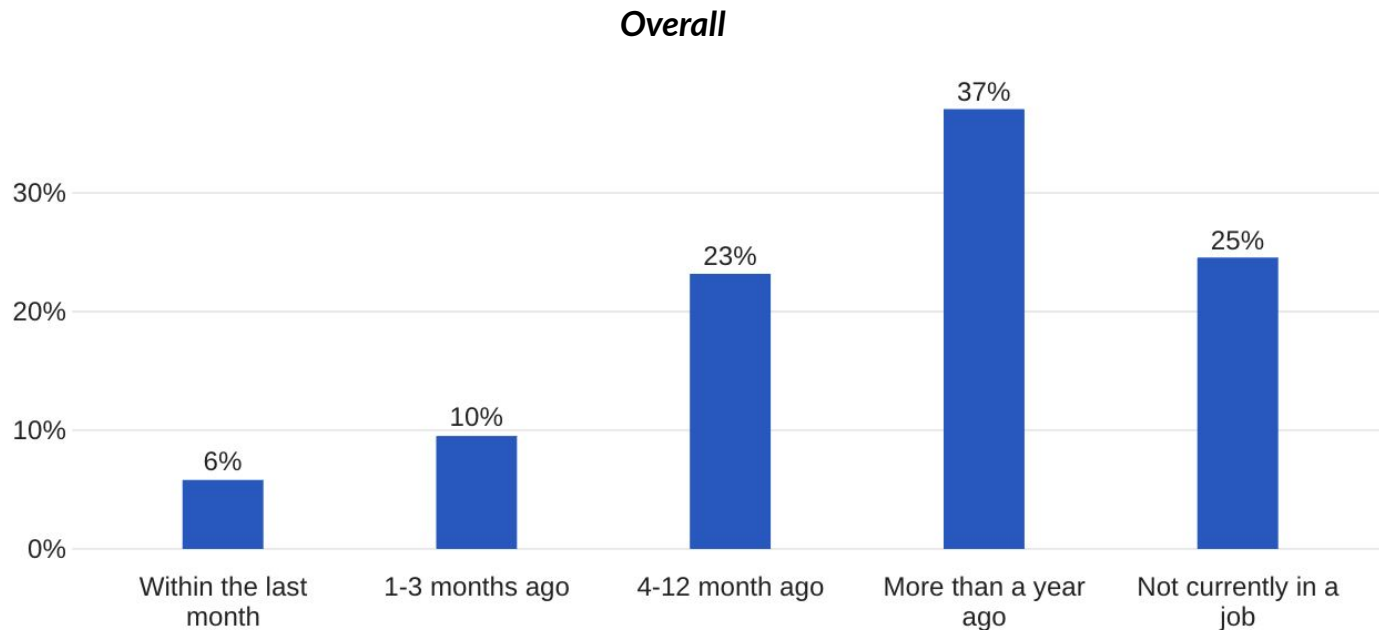
Q: "Are you making more money now than 12 months ago?"

### Overall



## 17. Over a third of respondents have held their current job for over a year

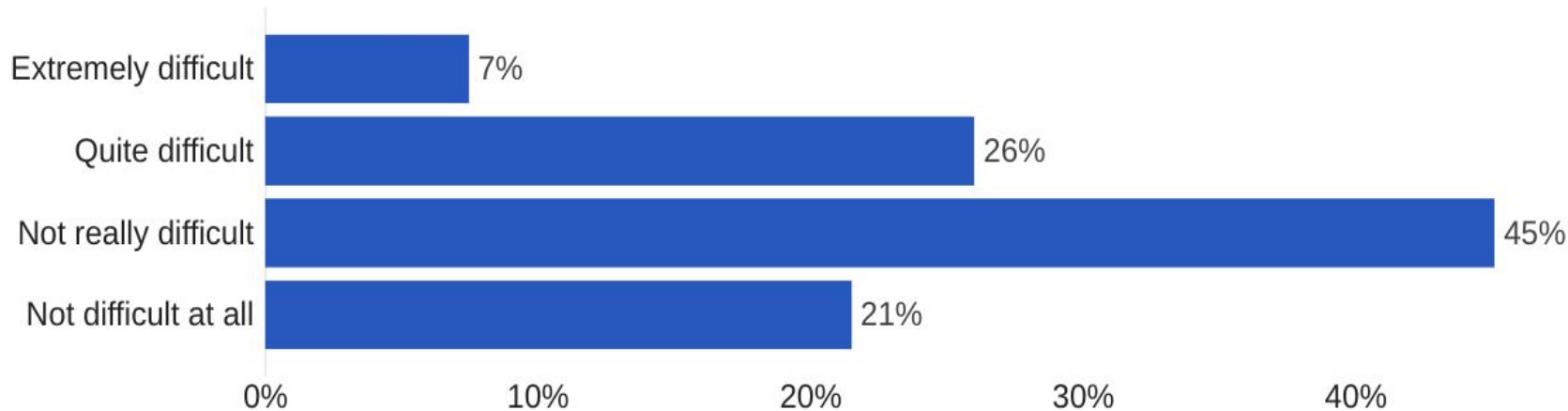
Q: "When did you start your current job?"



## 18. A majority of respondents did not find their job search very challenging

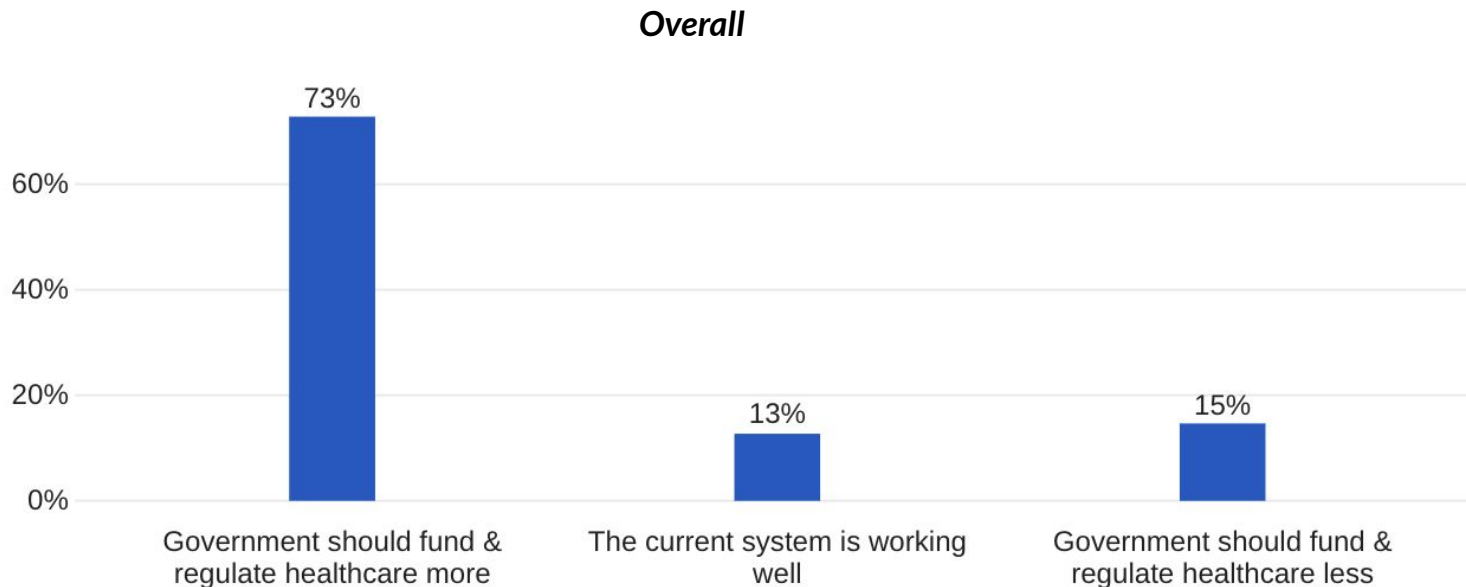
Q: "How difficult was that job to find?"

**753 Responses**



## 19. Most young people think government should play a larger role in healthcare

Q: “How do you feel about the current healthcare system?”

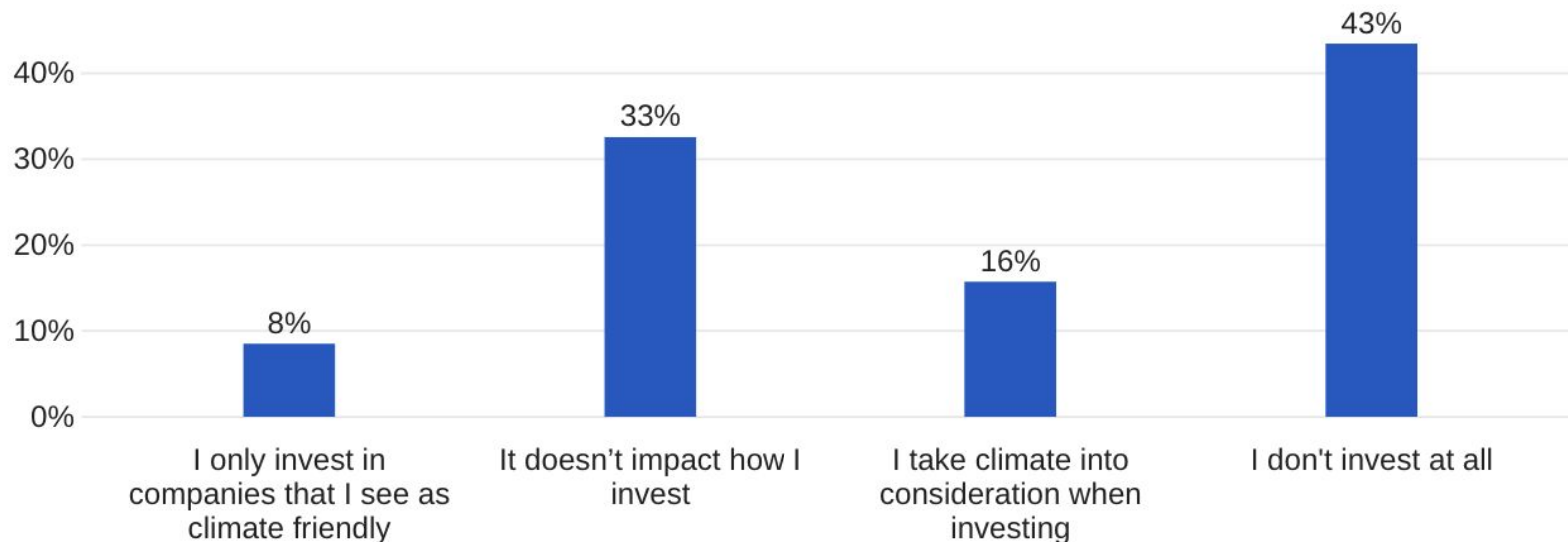




## 20. A majority of young investors don't consider climate impact to be a major player in their investment decisions

Q: "How does climate change impact your investing?"

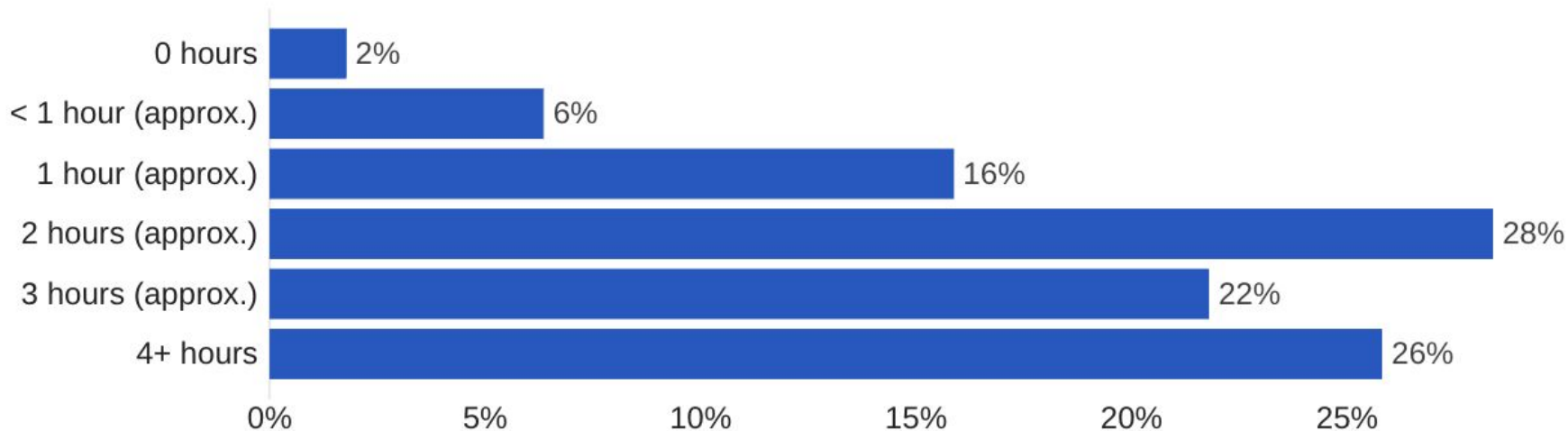
### Overall



## 21. Approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of young people spend at least 2 hours per day on social media

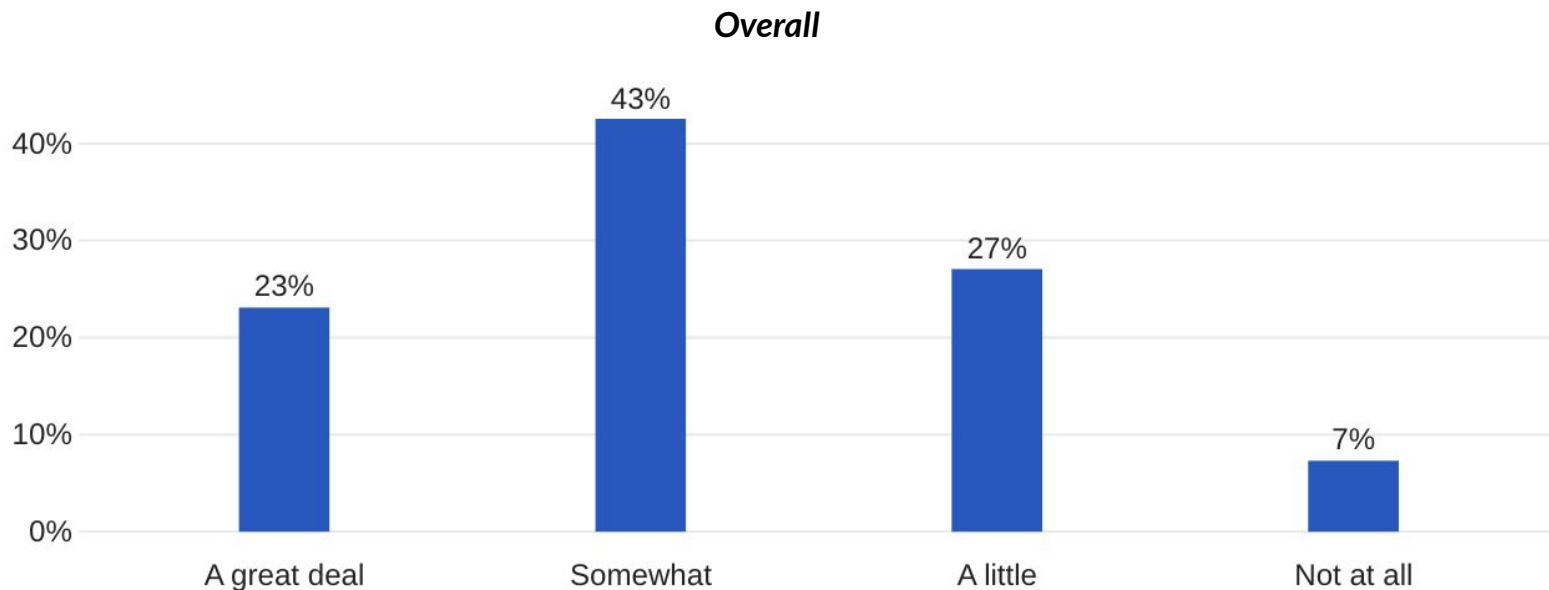
Q: "On average, how much time do you spend on social media per day?"

### Overall



## 22. A majority believe social media impacts their worldviews

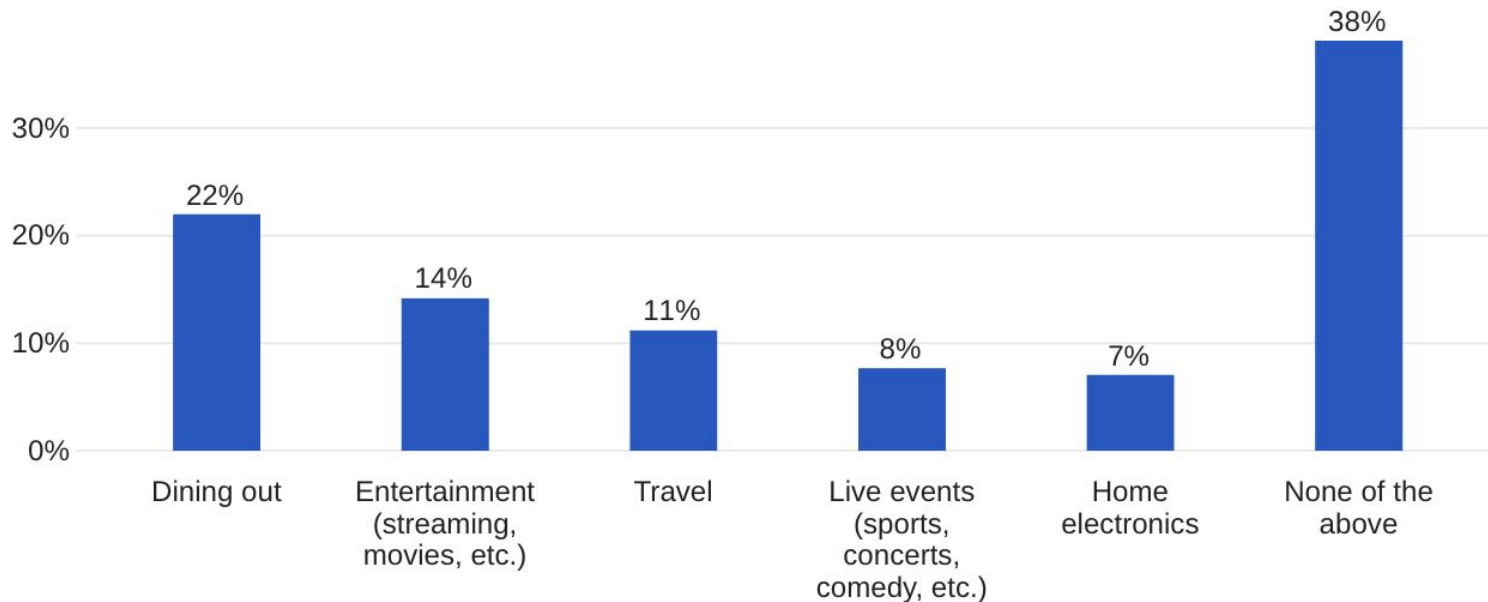
Q: “To what extent does social media content (posts, videos, photos) change how you look at the world around you (including health, politics, culture, etc.)?”



## 23. Rising costs of dining and entertainment may have caused an increase in spending

Q: “Did you increase your spending on any of the following in the last 6 months?”

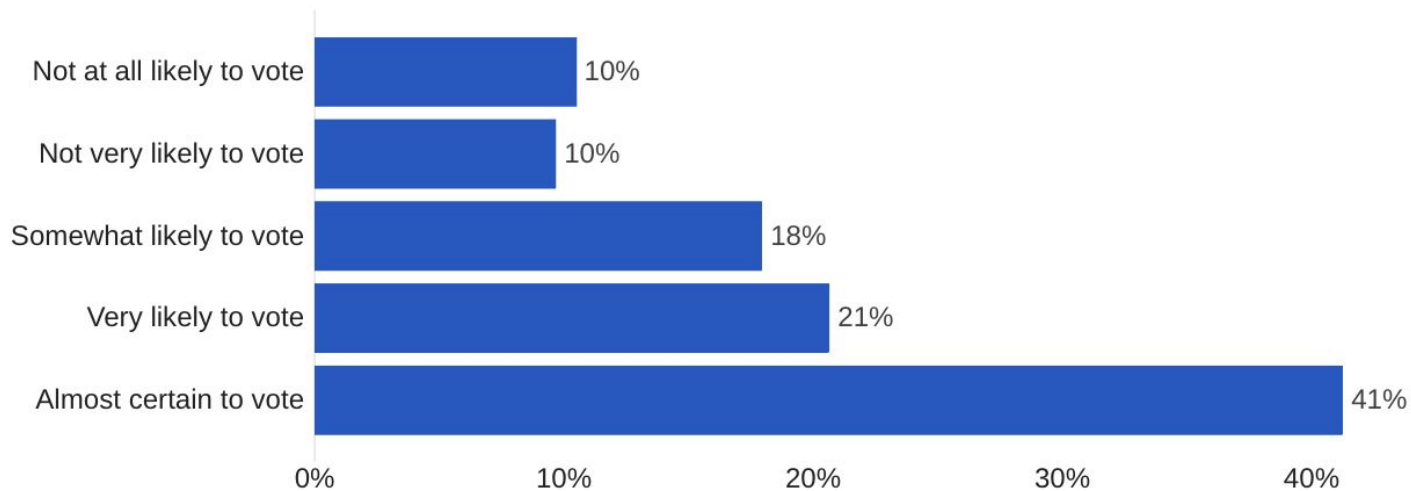
### Overall



## 24. About 2/3 are on track to be 2024 voters

Q: “Thinking ahead to next year’s presidential general election, are you...”

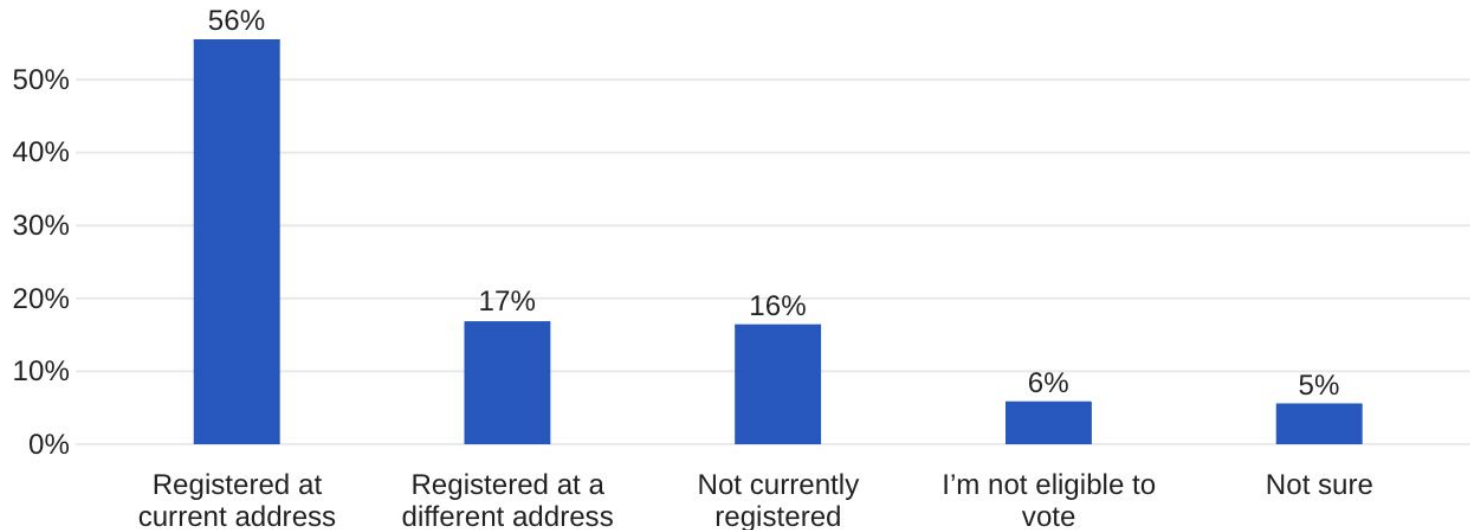
### Overall



## 25. Over 20% are not registered voters

Q: “Are you currently registered to vote at your current address, registered at a different address, or not currently registered?”

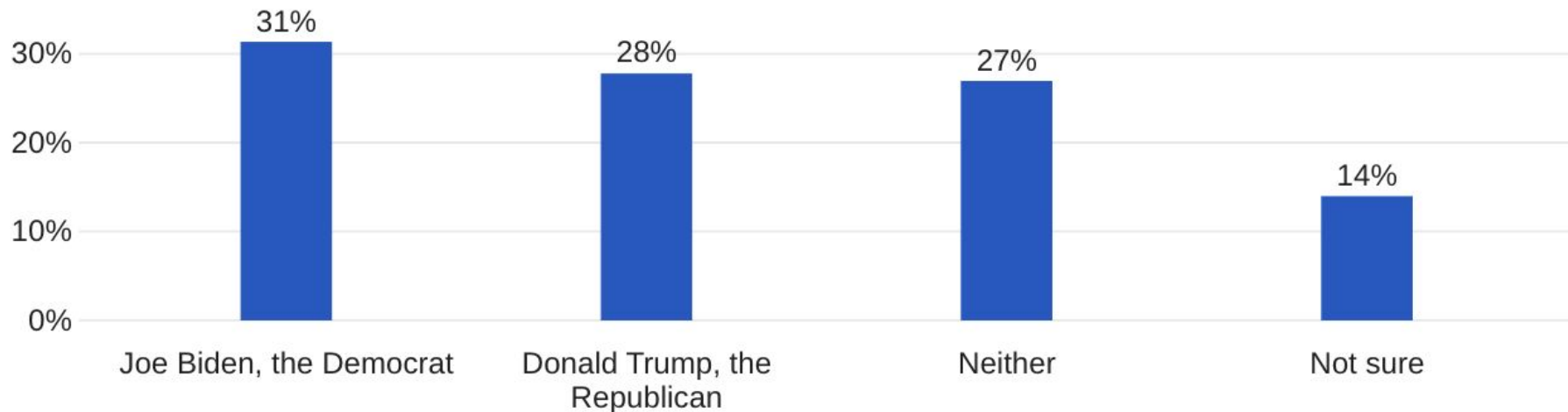
### Overall



## 26. Responses are relatively split when forced to choose between Biden and Trump

Q: "If the 2024 presidential election were held today, who would you vote for if the candidates were?"

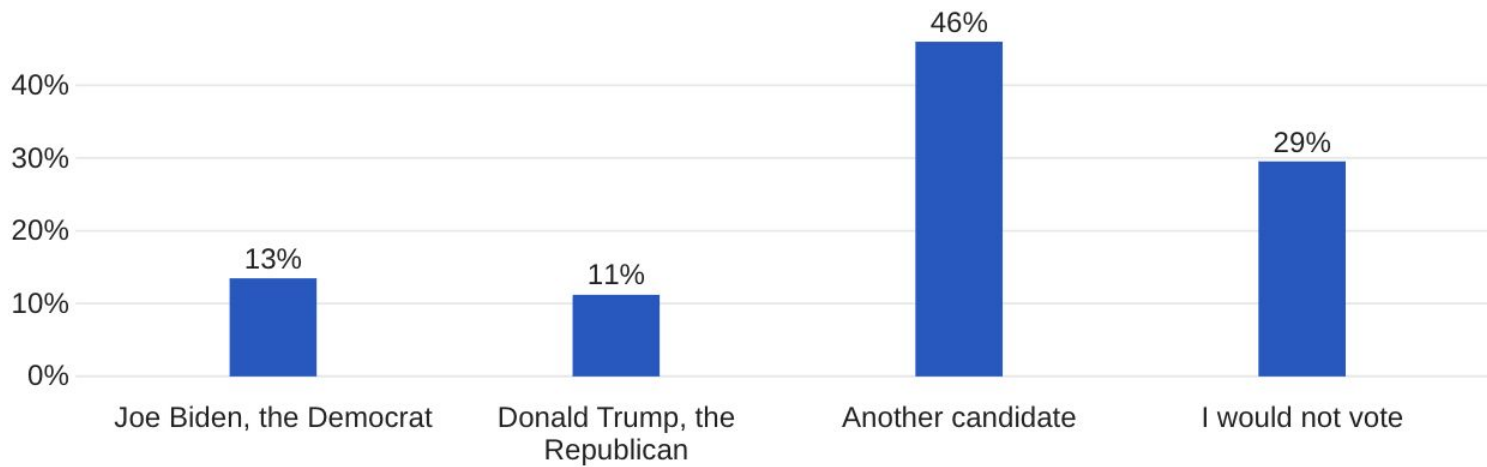
**959 Responses**



## 27. Among those who prefer not to choose between Biden and Trump, more would choose another candidate over not voting

Q: "Among those who answered "Neither" or "Not sure", if you had to decide today, are you leaning toward one candidate?"

**409 Responses**



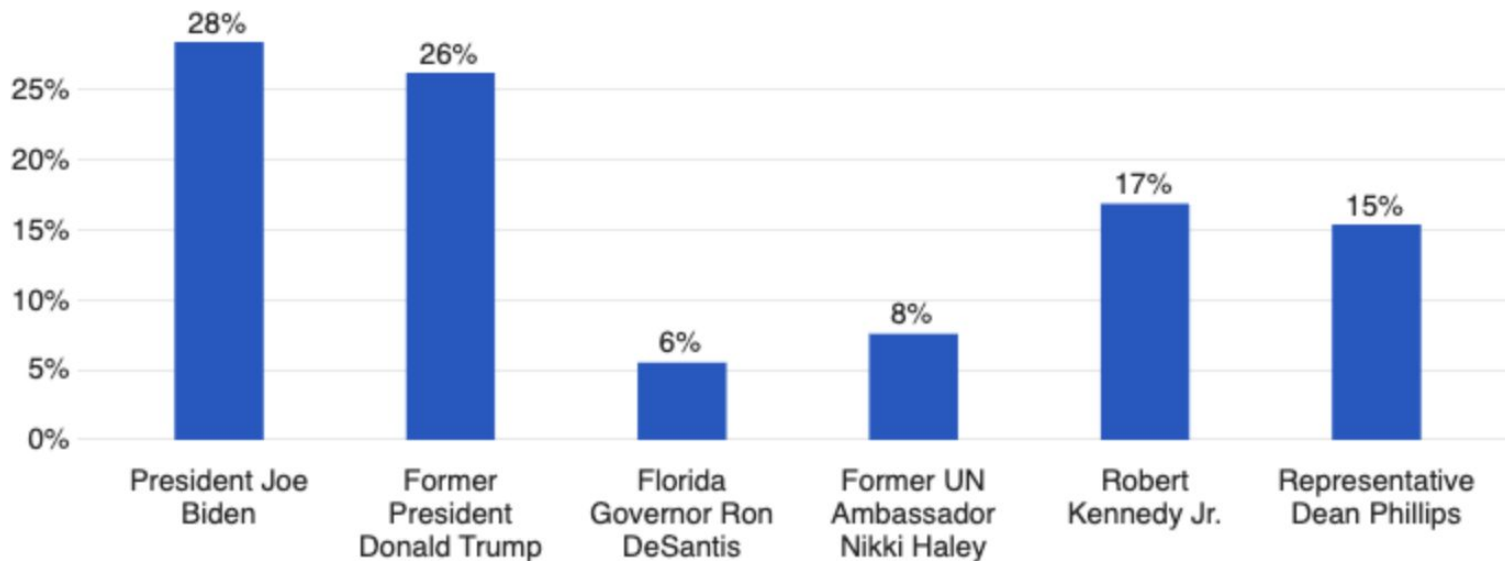




## 29. Biden and Trump remain frontrunners for 2024

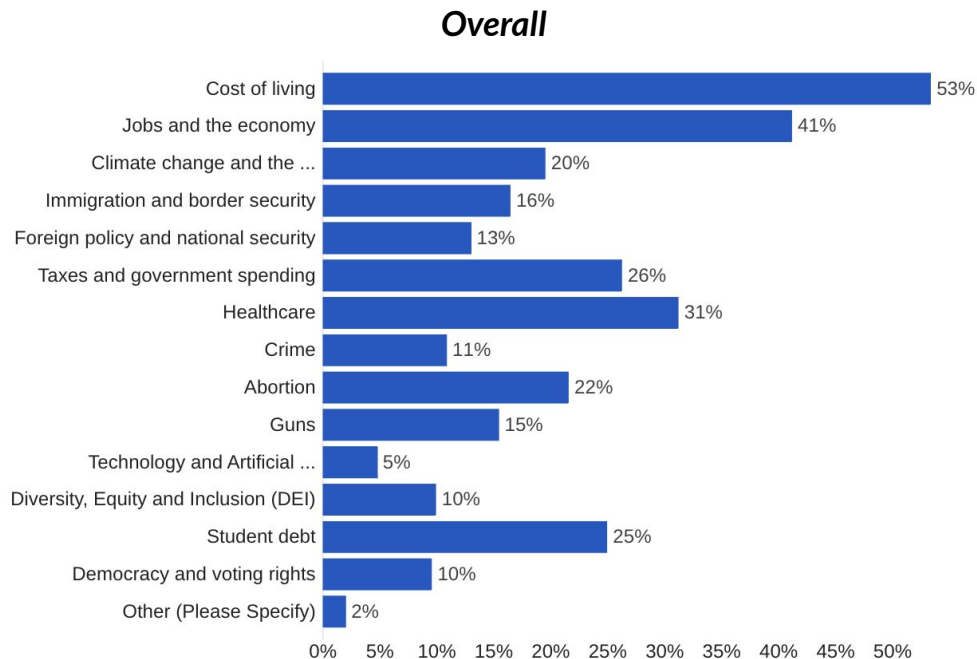
Q: “If the 2024 presidential election were held today, who would you vote for if the candidates were:”

### Overall



## 30. Cost of living and the economy are top of mind issues in 2024

Q: “When you think about the 2024 Presidential Election this fall, which issues will matter most to you?  
(Top 3 issues)”



## 30. Other issues of interest vary broadly

Q: “When you think about the 2024 Presidential Election this fall, which issues will matter most to you?  
(Other: Please Specify)?”

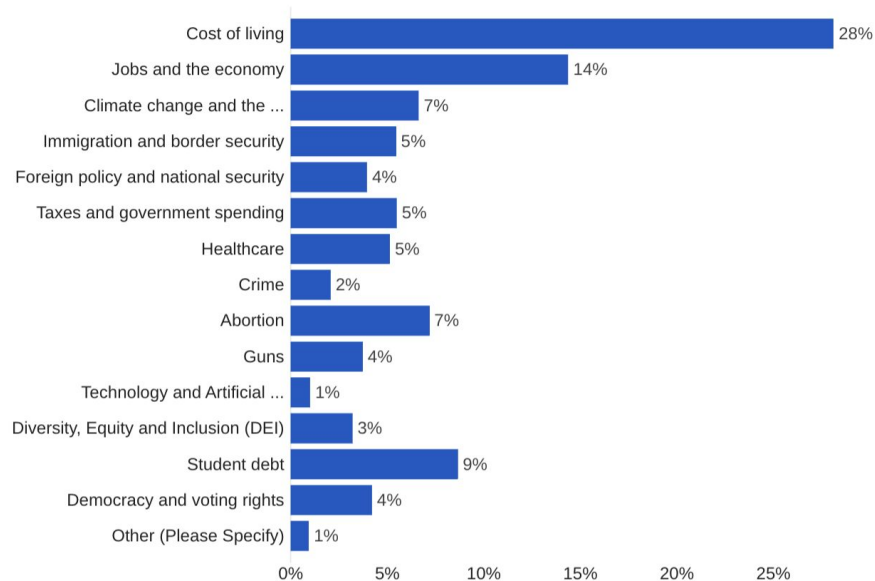
### Overall



## 31. Cost of living is a particularly relevant issue for young people

Q: “When you think about the 2024 Presidential Election this fall, which ONE issue will matter MOST to you?”

### Overall



## 31. Global Crises are also top of mind

Q: “When you think about the 2024 Presidential Election this fall, which ONE issue will matter MOST to you? (Other: please specify)”

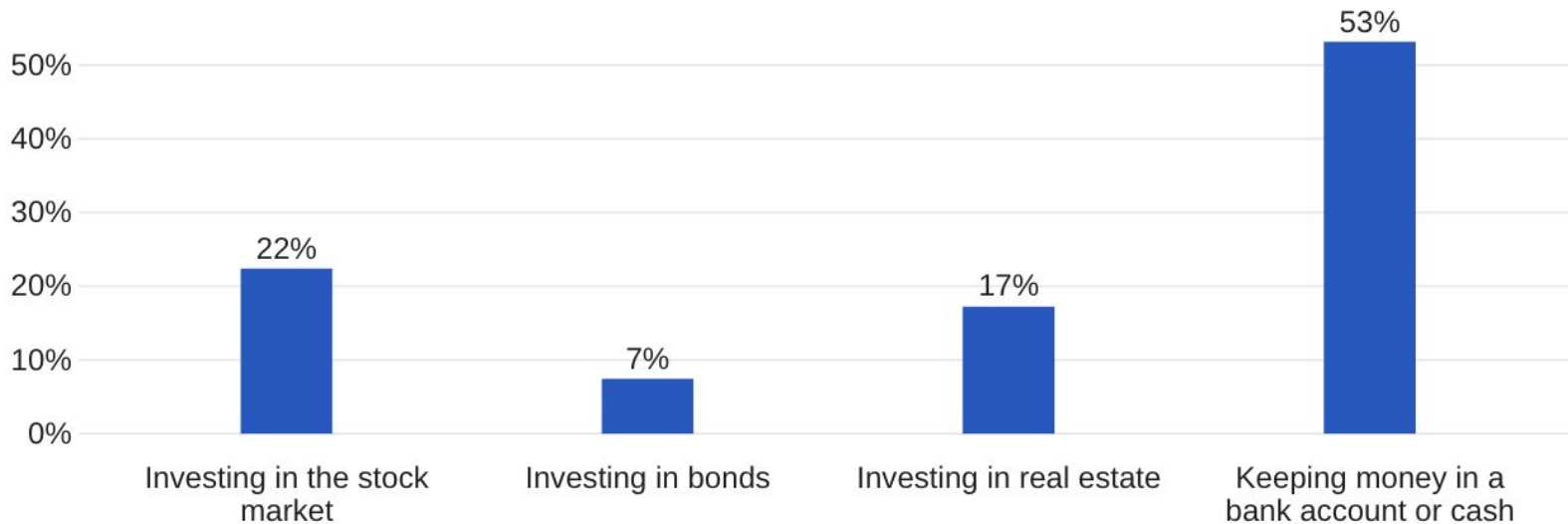
### Overall



## 32. Many believe banks/cash are safer than investing at the moment

Q: "As of right now do you think you're better off?"

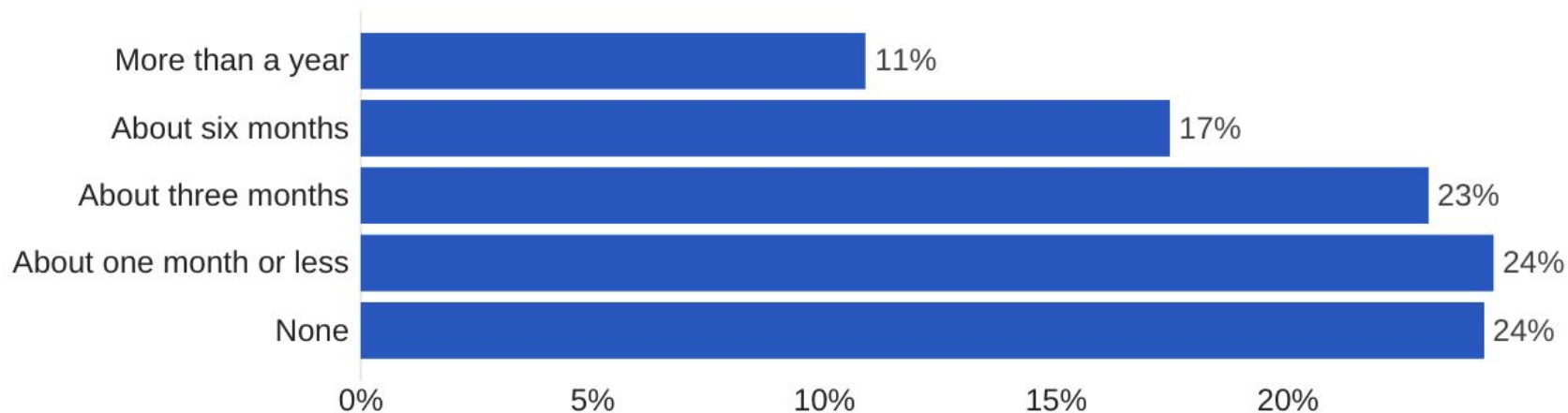
### Overall



### 33. Most young people could last less than 6 months on their savings

Q: “How long would your current savings cover your cost of living if you had no other income?”

#### Overall

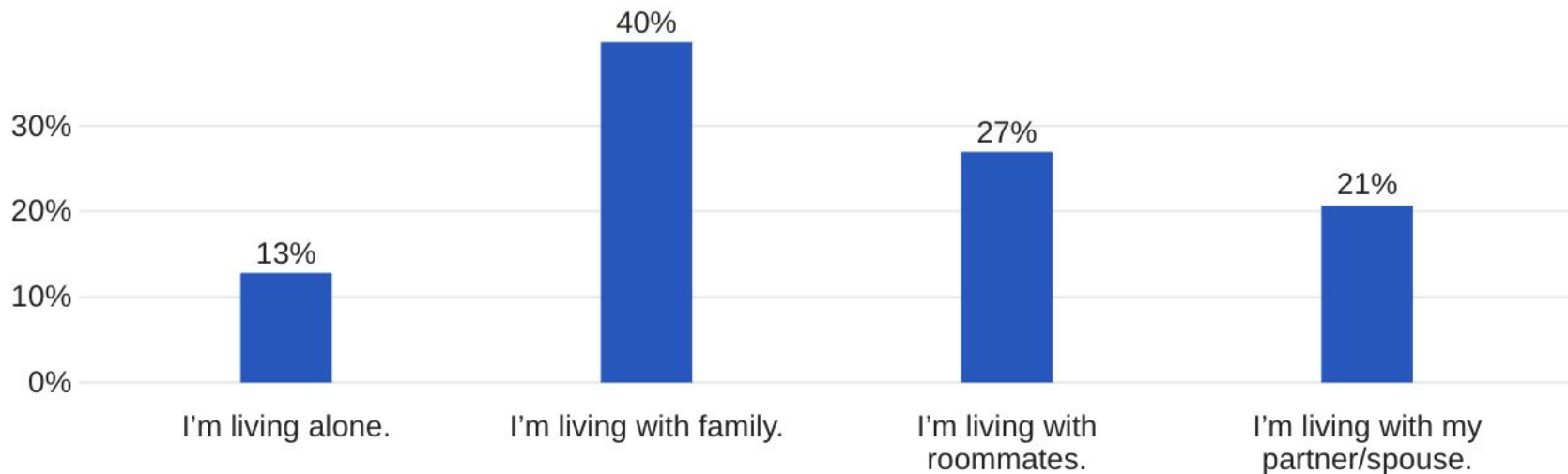




## 34. Most young people live with others- and many still live with family

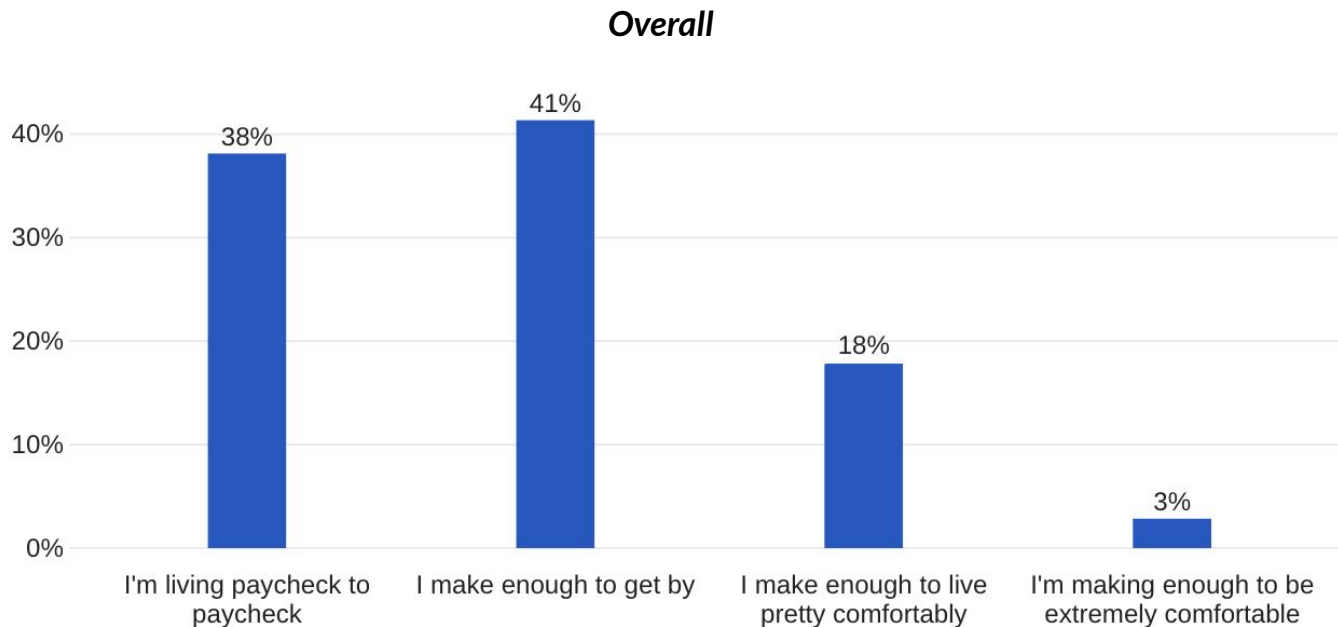
Q: "When it comes to your living arrangements, which best describes you?"

### Overall



## 35. Just over 20% of young people consider their income “comfortable”

Q: “How would you describe your income at the moment?”





# METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted January 21-31, 2024 from a representative sample of 1013 people aged 18-34 nationwide.

- The margin of error is +/- 3.1 percentage points. The Generation Lab conducts polling using a demographically representative sample frame of young people

## ABOUT GENERATION LAB

The Generation Lab is a polling and research firm studying young people and the trends that shape their world.

- We translate youth views and behavior for media, academia, businesses, government, and the American public. Whether through a one-day snapshot poll, or a multi-year longitudinal study, we pursue youth truth for our clients and the American public.



OUR **TOOLS**



LATEST **DATA**



GET **IN TOUCH**

