

B | Center for
Middle East Policy
at BROOKINGS

**Syria strikes, travel ban,
refugees, and Muslims:
American attitudes on
Trump's early policies**

A PUBLIC OPINION POLL BY SHIBLEY TELHAMI

A survey of the



CRITICAL ISSUES POLL

With Nielsen Scarborough

Shibley Telhami, Director
Stella Rouse, Associate Director

Valuable assistance was provided by Neil Schwartz, Scott Willoth, and Jordan Evangelista from Nielsen Scarborough. Brittany Kyser, Rachel Slattery, and Anne Peckham were particularly helpful.

*The University of Maryland Critical Issues Poll probes domestic and international issues that are central to our policy discourse and is led by Professors Shibley Telhami and Stella Rouse.

Survey Methodology

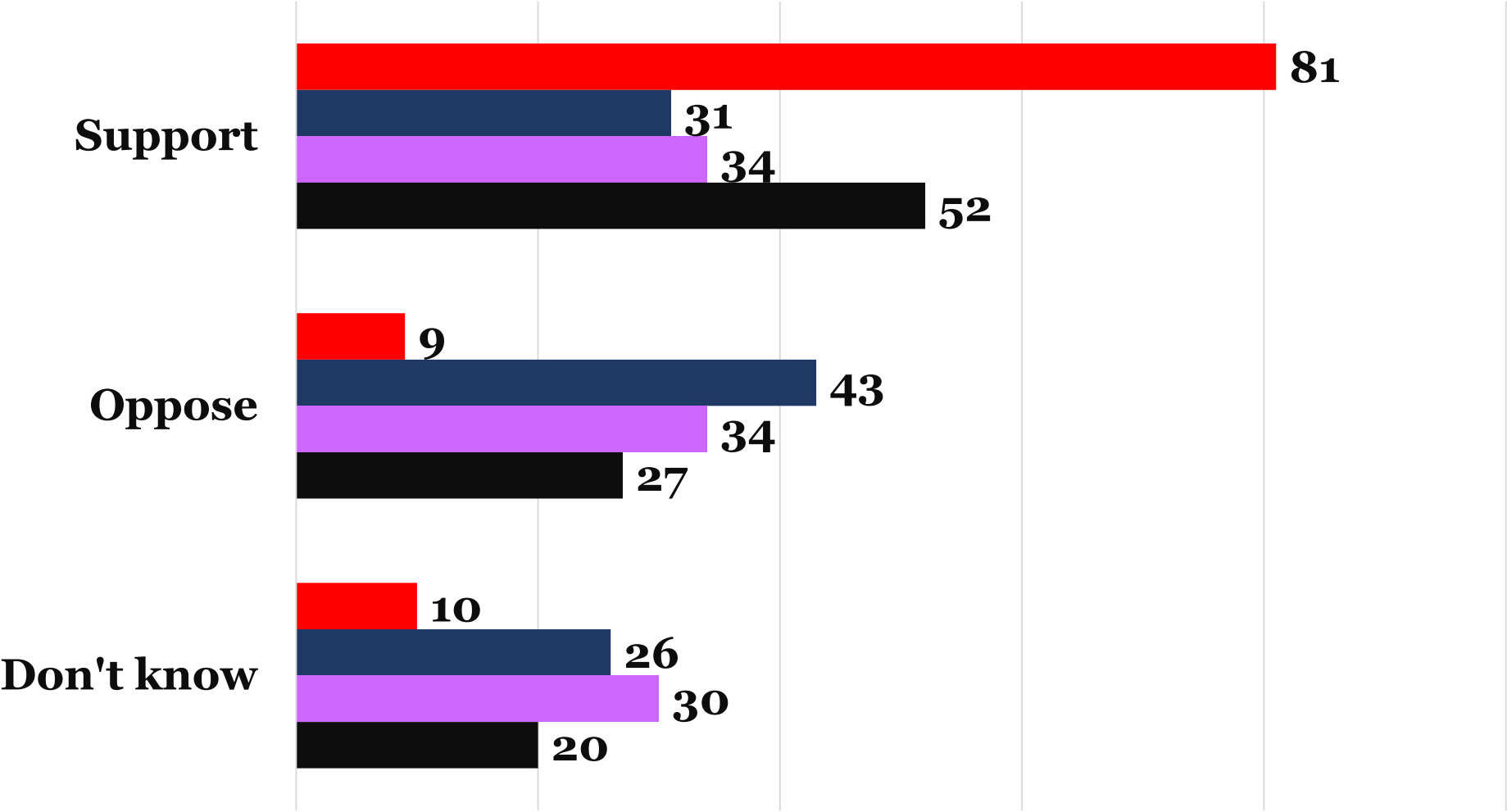
The survey was conducted April 12-17, 2017 with a panel consisting of a probability-based representative sample. The panel was recruited by Nielsen Scarborough from its larger probability-based national panel, which was recruited by mail and telephone using a random sample of households provided by Survey Sampling International. A national sample of 2,138 panelists completed the survey. Responses were weighted by age, gender, income, education, race, and geographic region using benchmarks from the U.S. Census. The survey was also weighted by partisan identification.
The margin of error is 2.12%

**American
Attitudes
toward Syria**

On April 6, 2017, President Trump ordered a missile strike against a Syrian air force base after reports that the regime of Bashar Assad used chemical weapons and wounded dozens of Syrians. How do you feel about these strikes?

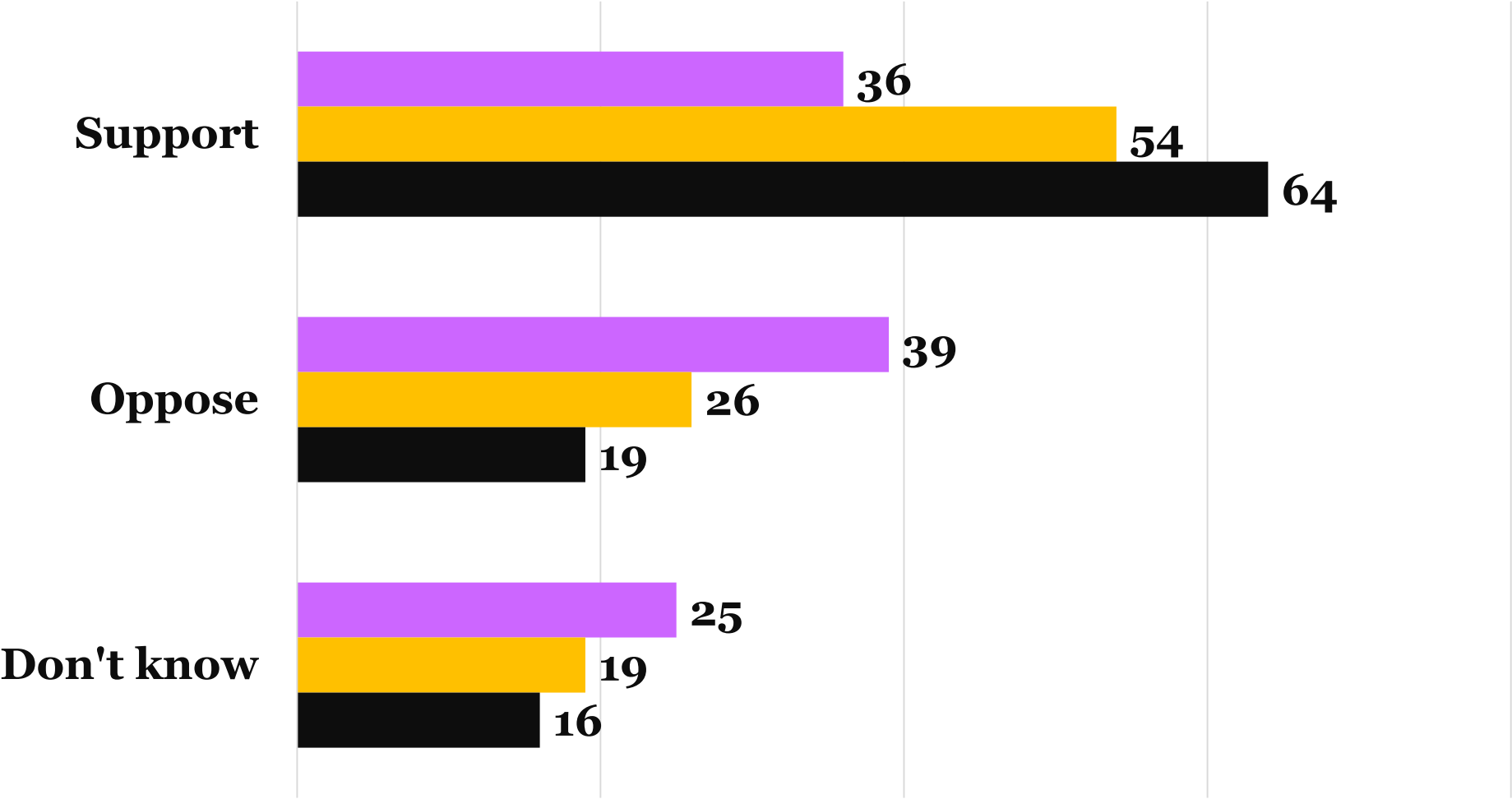
How do you feel about these strikes?

■ **Republicans** ■ **Democrats** ■ **Independents** ■ **Total**



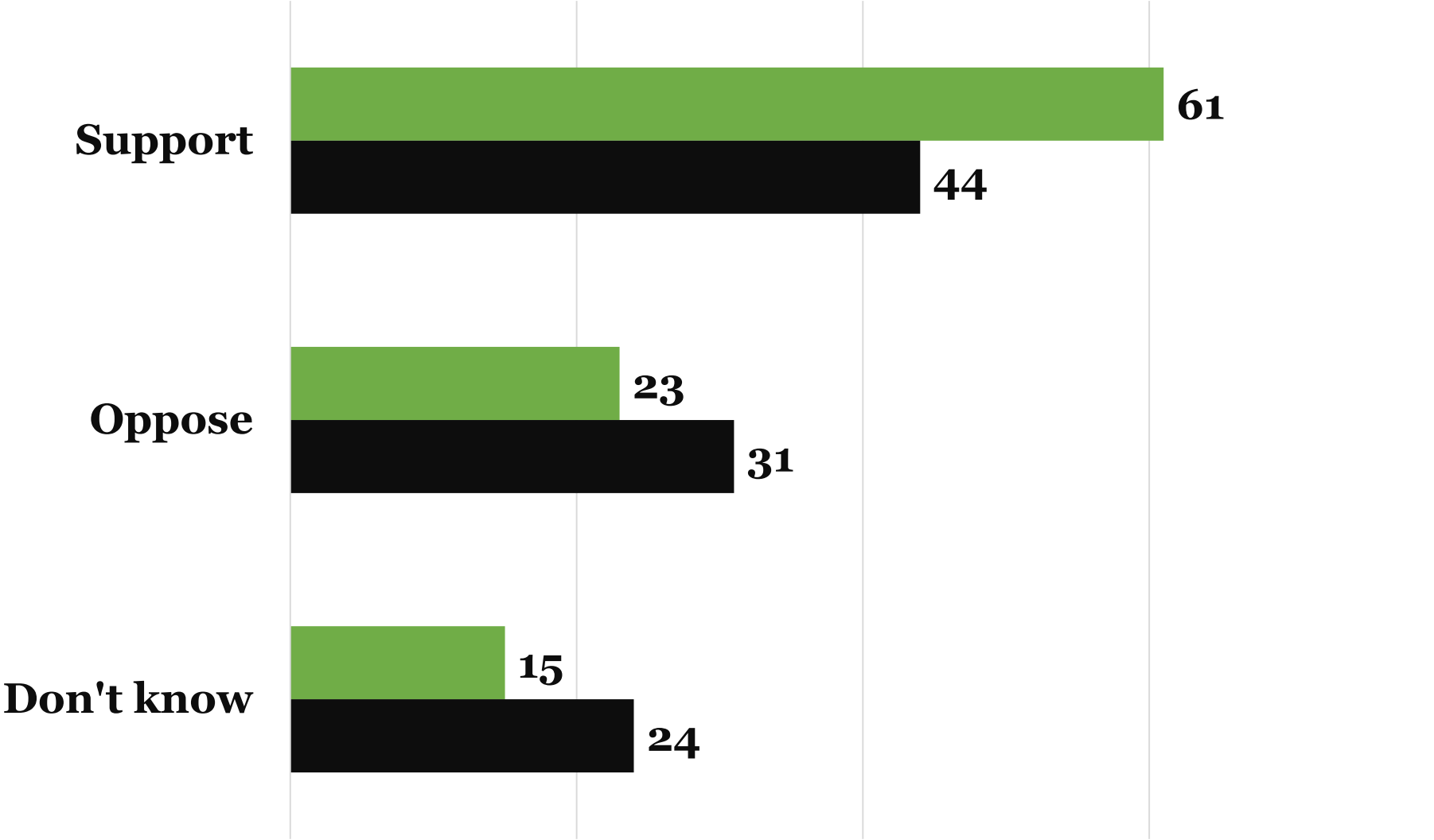
How do you feel about these strikes?

18-34 35-54 55+



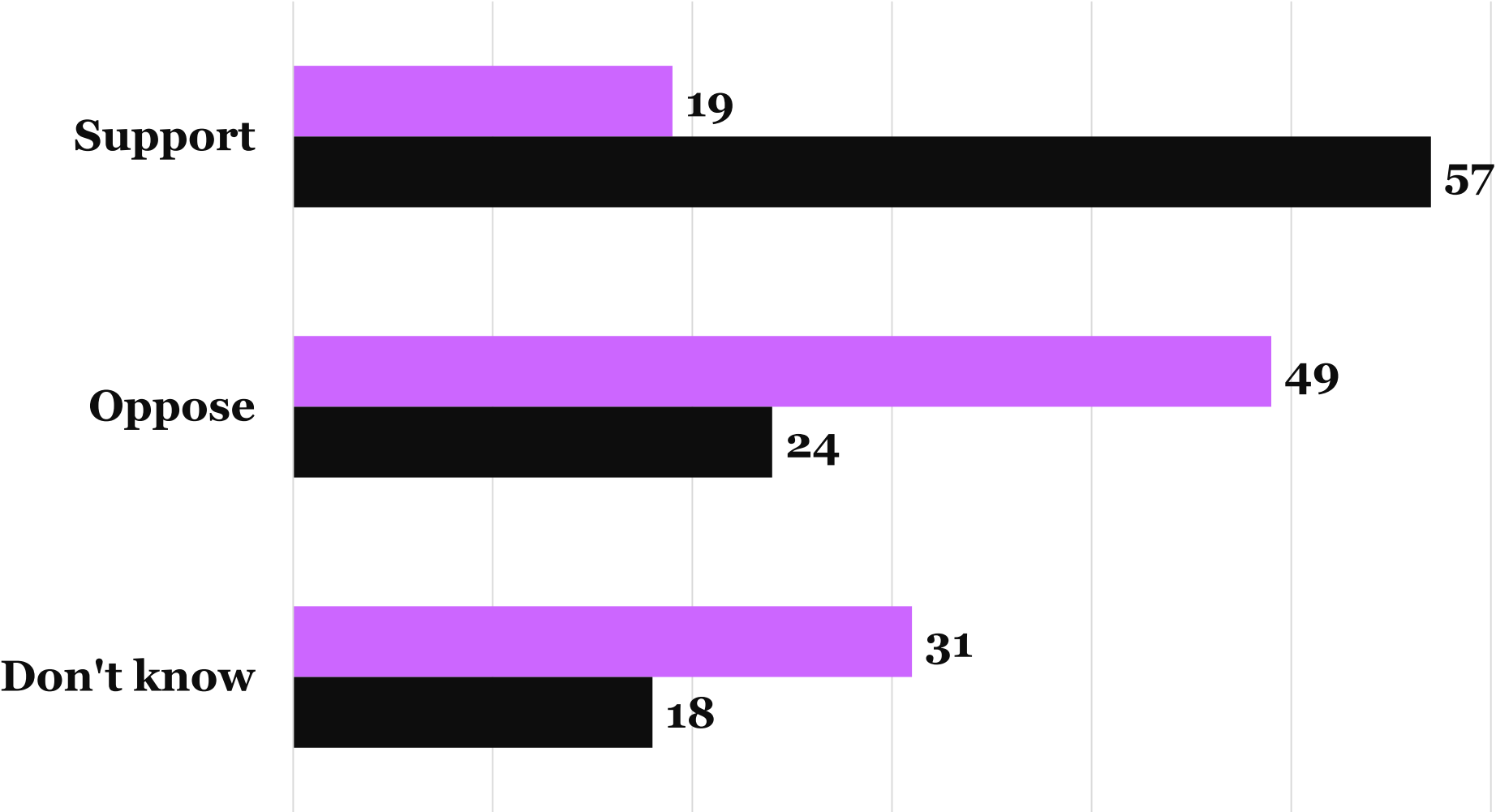
How do you feel about these strikes?

Men Women



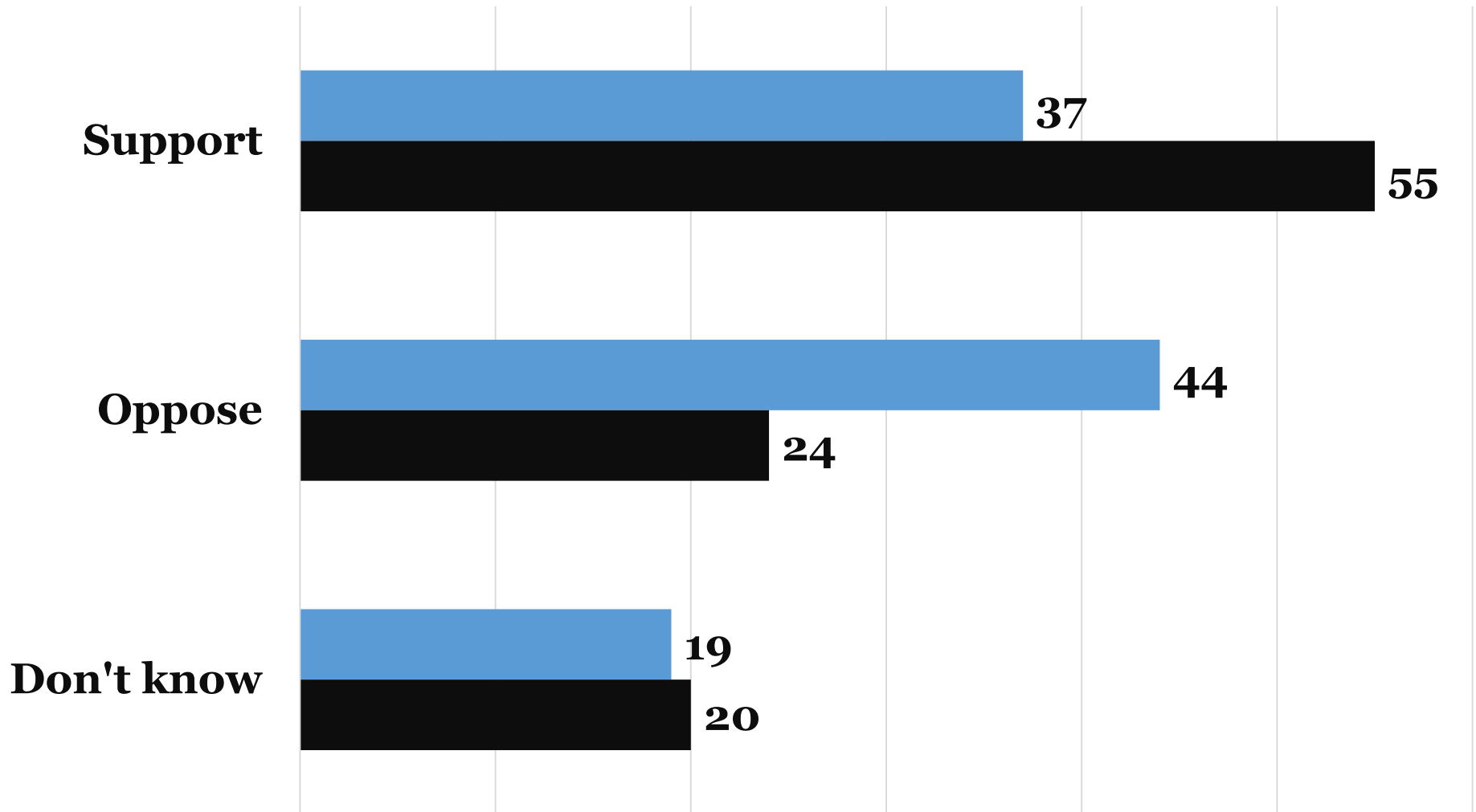
How do you feel about these strikes?

Black/African American **Not Black/African American**



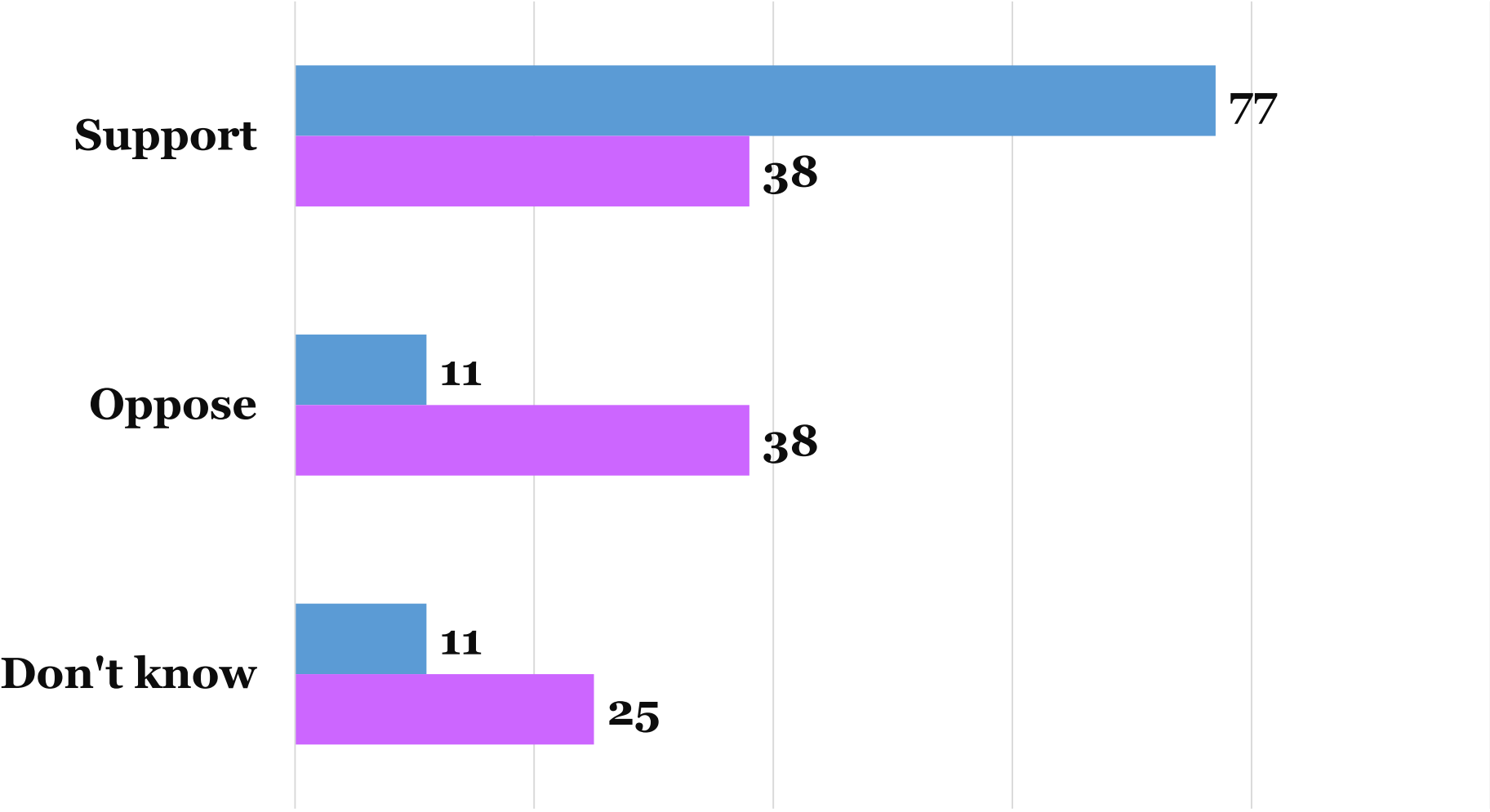
How do you feel about these strikes?

Spanish/Hispanic Origin **Not Spanish/Hispanic Origin**



How do you feel about these strikes?

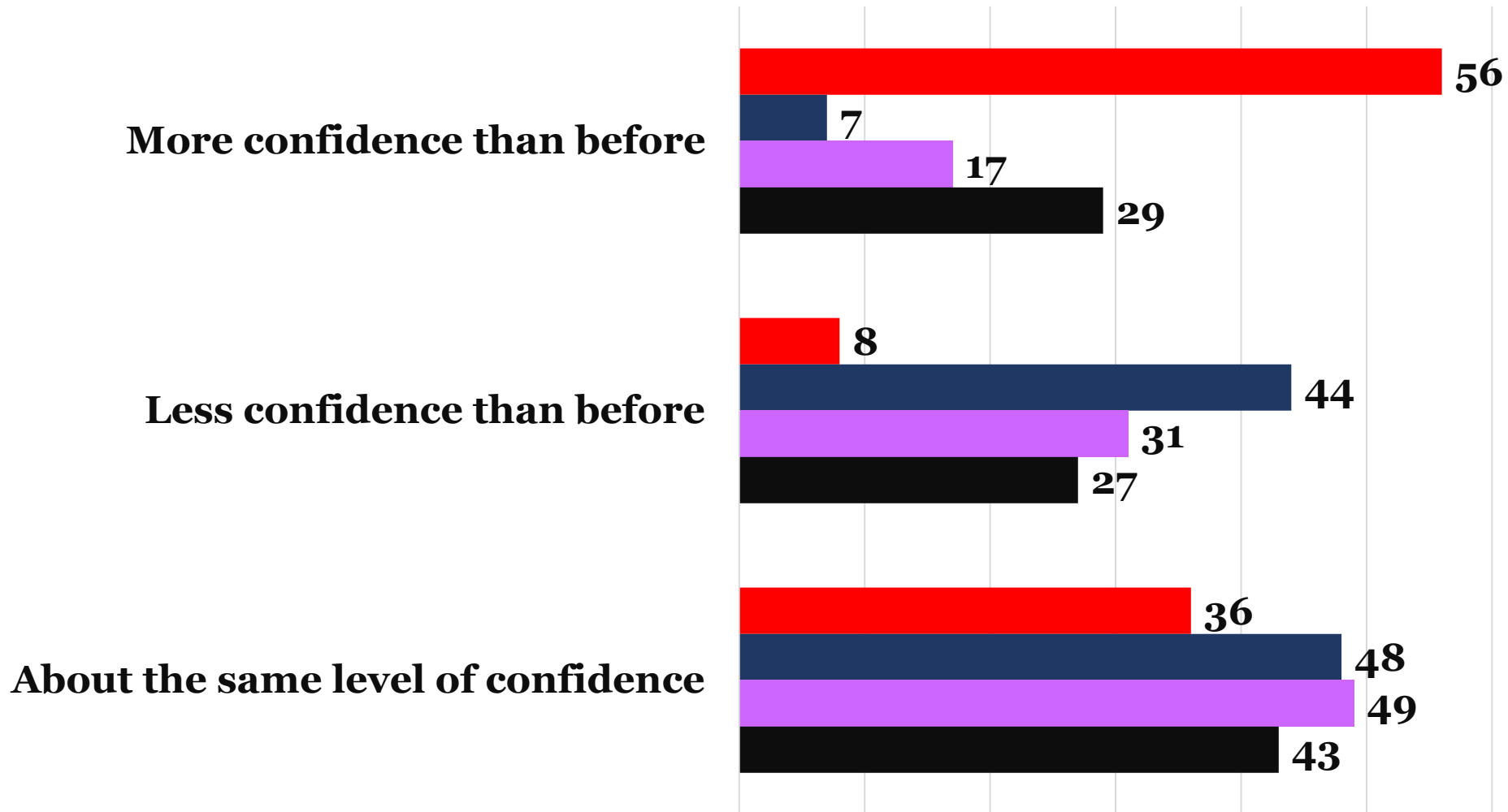
Lean toward Israel **Lean toward Palestinians/Neither Side**



**Thinking about how
President Trump made his
decision to launch a military
attack on Syria, how has this
affected your confidence in
the president's decision-
making?**

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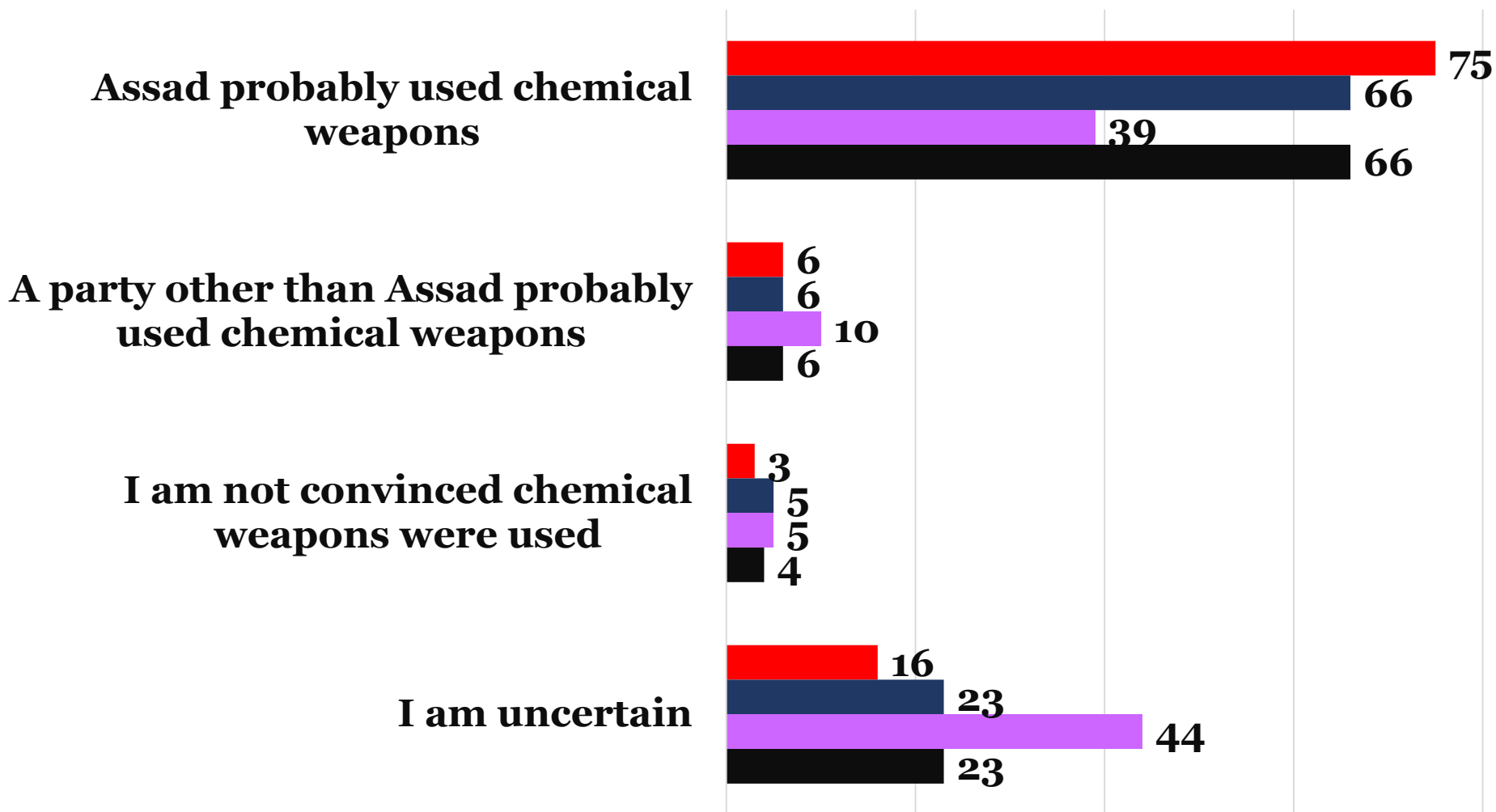
■ **Republicans** ■ **Democrats** ■ **Independents** ■ **Total**



Given what you may have read or heard about the use of chemical weapons in Syria this month, which of the following is closest to your view?

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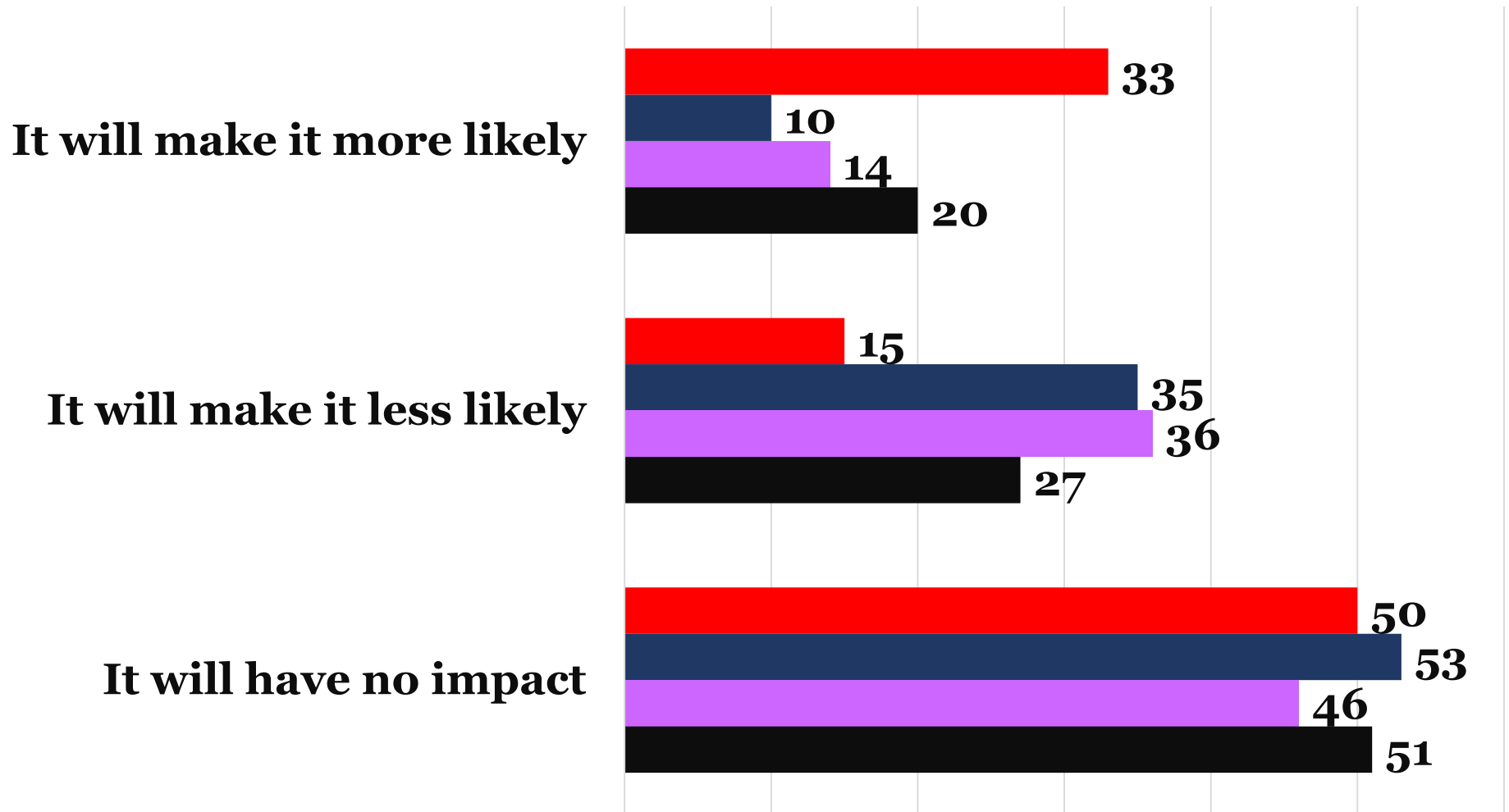
■ **Republicans** ■ **Democrats** ■ **Independents** ■ **Total**



**How do you think the strike
on Syria will affect the
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violence in Syria?**

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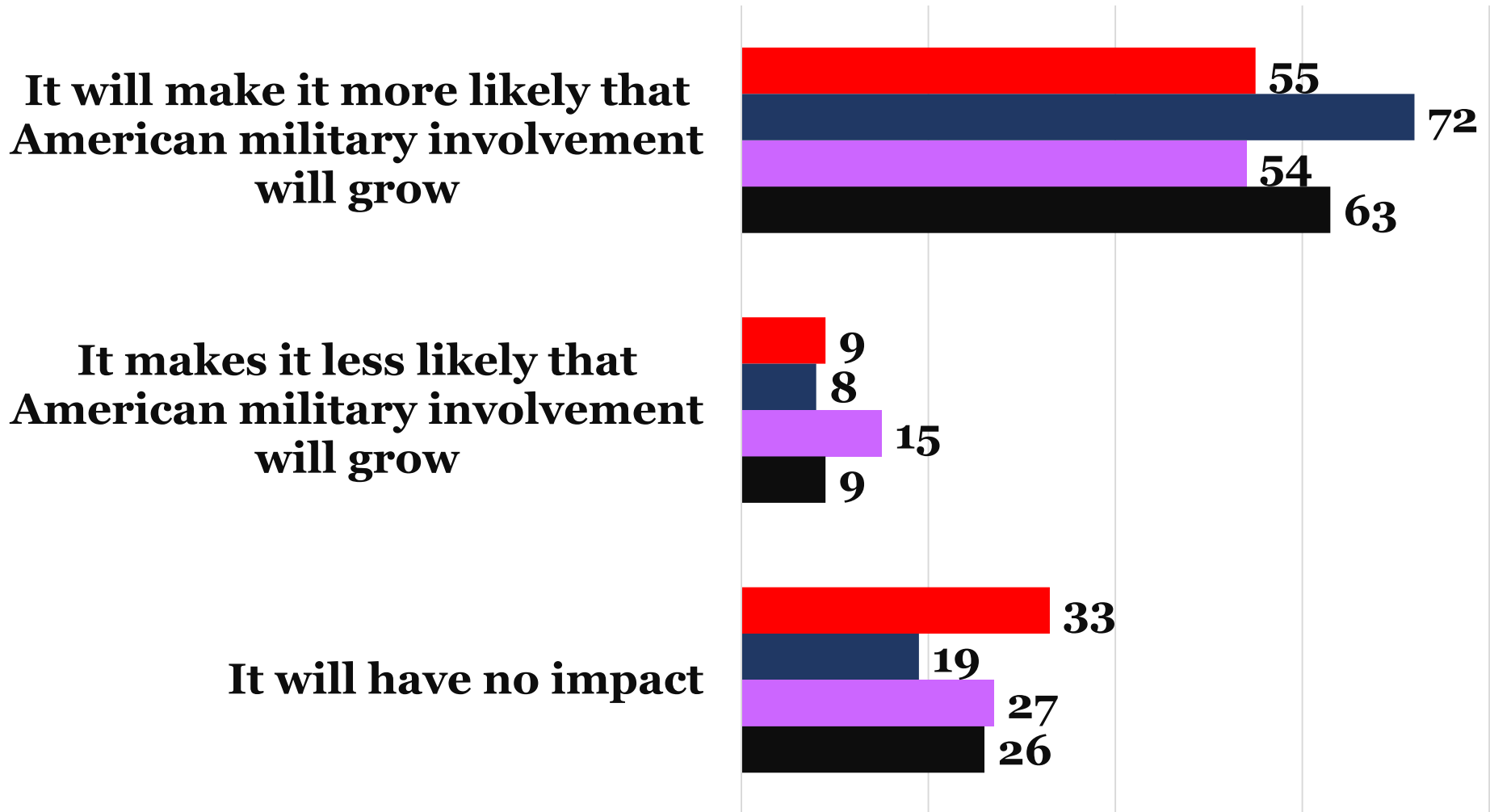
■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total



How do you believe the strikes on the Syrian air base will affect the level of American military involvement in Syria?

How do you believe the strikes on the Syrian air base will affect the level of American military involvement in Syria?

■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total

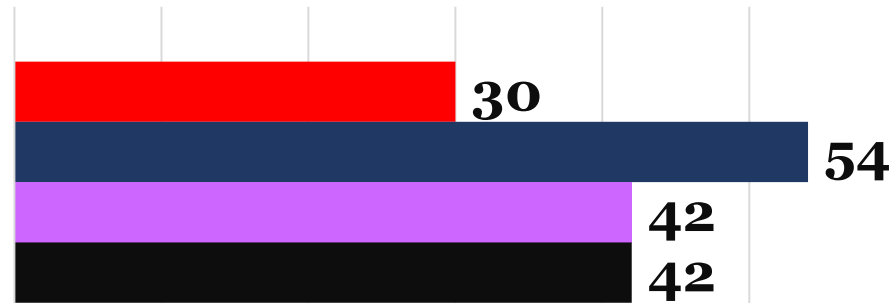


**In your opinion, how
will the strikes on
Syria affect Assad's
likely behavior?**

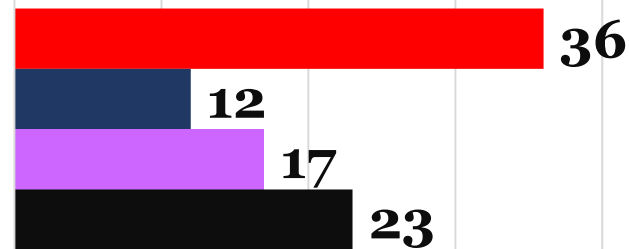
In your opinion, how will the strikes on Syria affect Assad's likely behavior?

■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total

It will make him more aggressive in attacking the Syrian opposition



It will likely make him less aggressive in attacking the Syrian opposition



It will have no impact



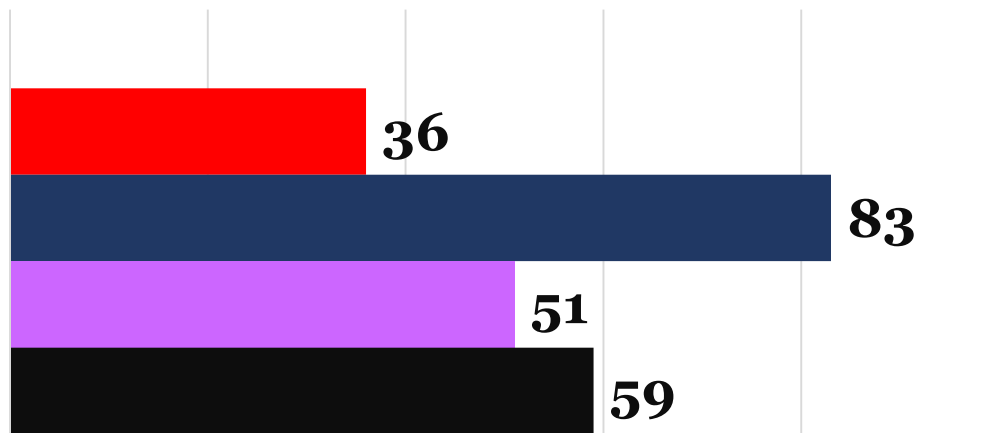
**American
Attitudes toward
Refugees**

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?

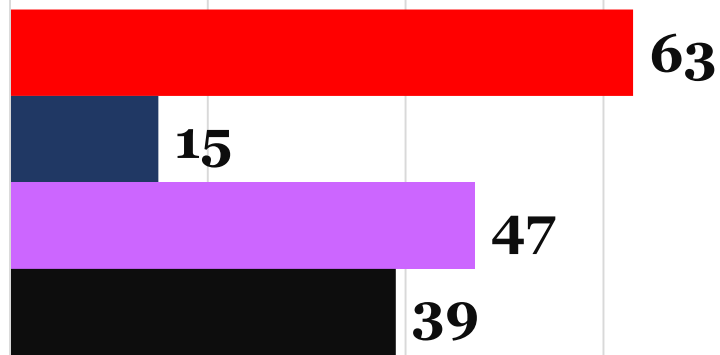
In general, do you support or oppose the United States taking in refugees from the conflicts in Syria and other Middle Eastern countries after screening them for security risks?

■ **Republicans** ■ **Democrats** ■ **Independents** ■ **Total**

Support strongly/somewhat



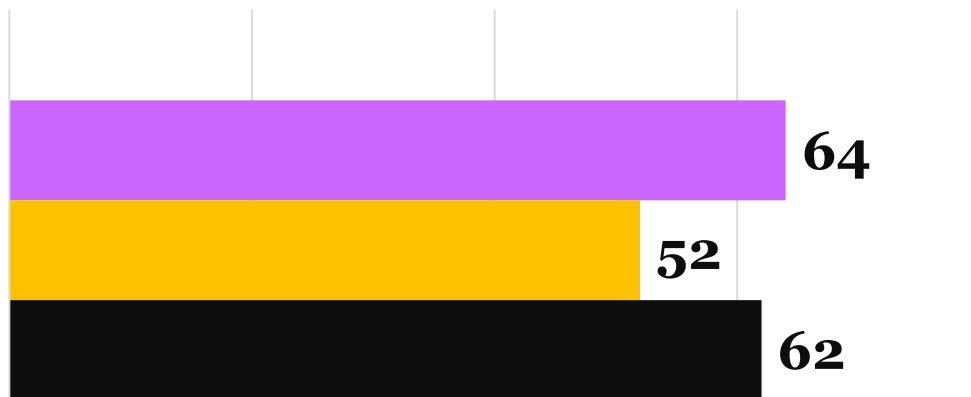
Oppose strongly/somewhat



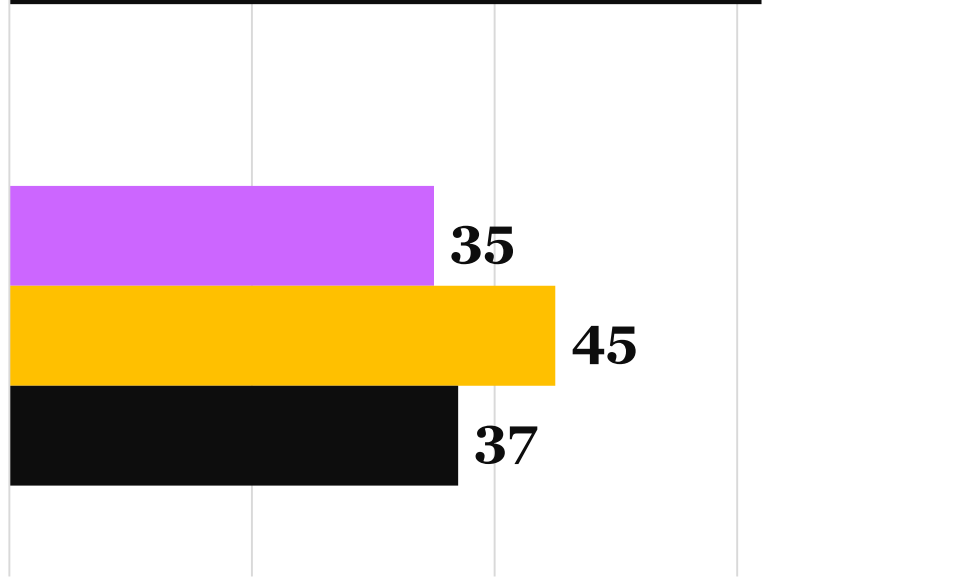
In general, do you support or oppose the United States taking in refugees from the conflicts in Syria and other Middle Eastern countries after screening them for security risks?

18-34 35-54 55+

Support strongly/somewhat



Oppose strongly/somewhat



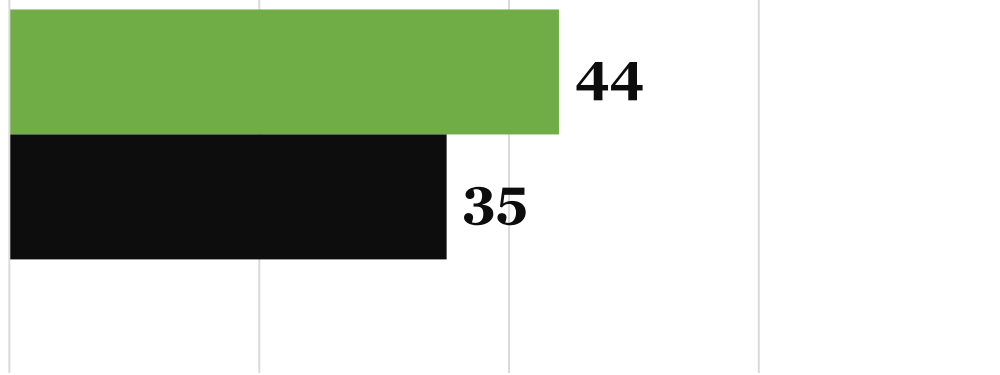
In general, do you support or oppose the United States taking in refugees from the conflicts in Syria and other Middle Eastern countries after screening them for security risks?

Men **Women**

Support strongly/somewhat



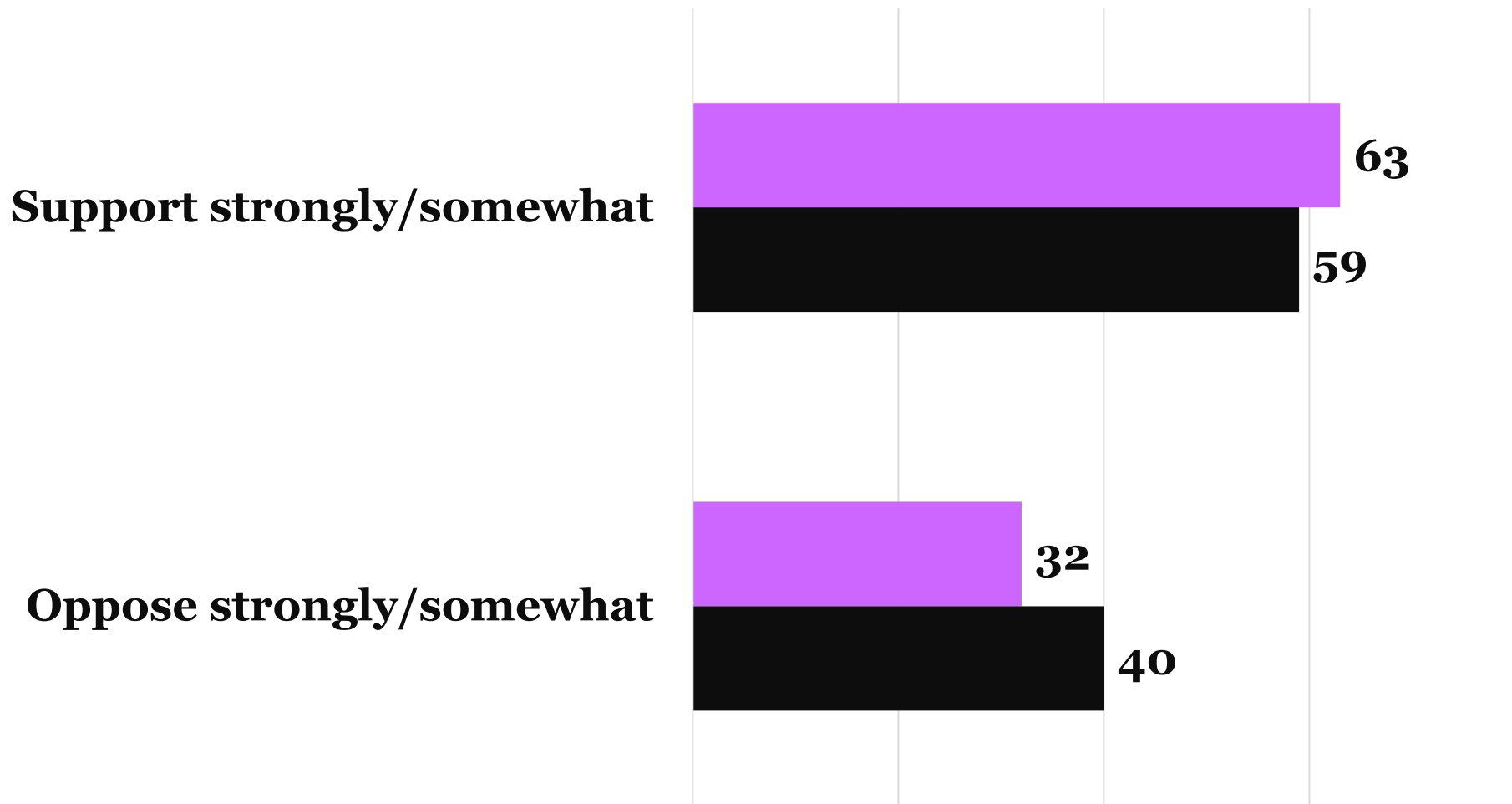
Oppose strongly/somewhat



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?

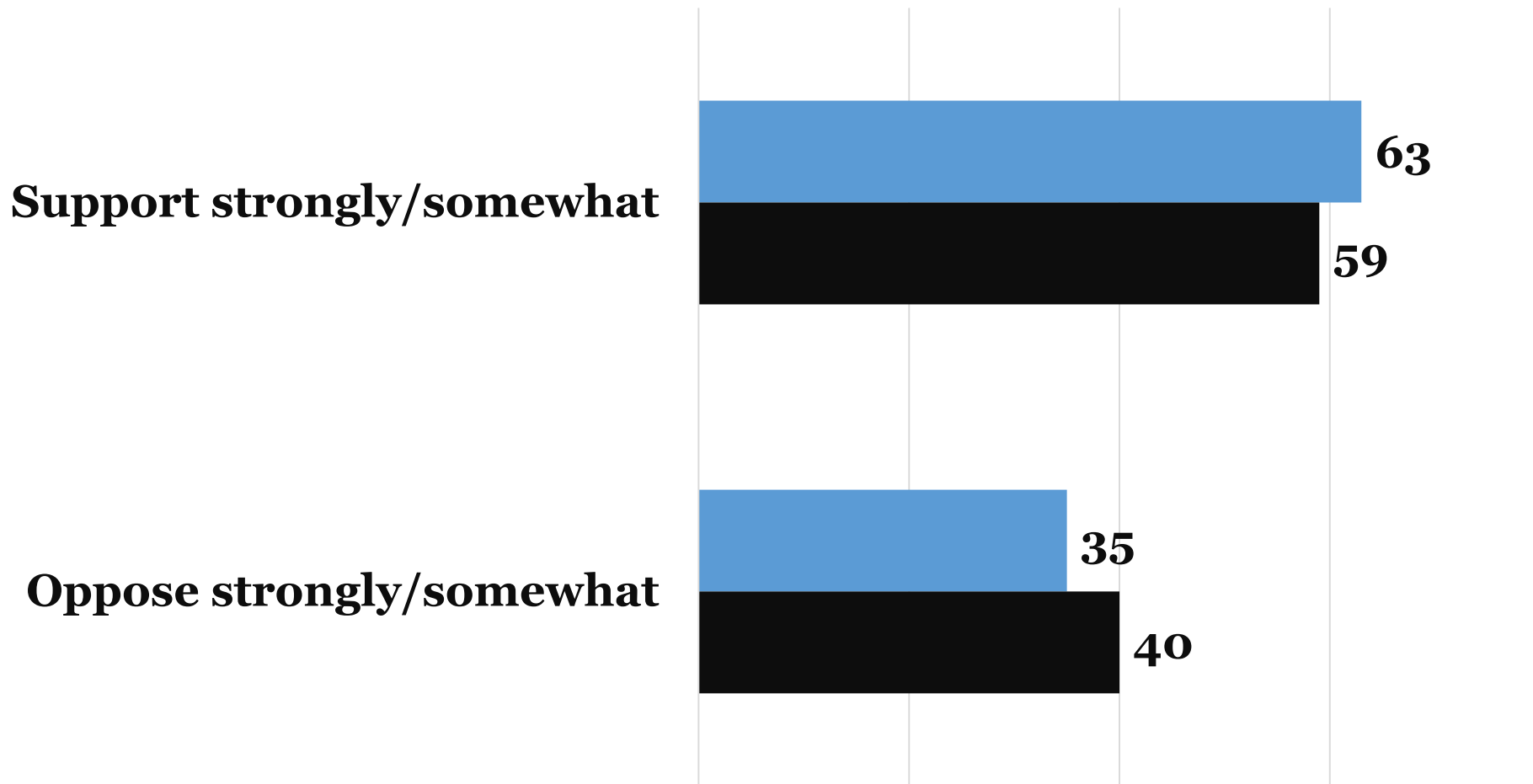
Black/African American

Not Black/African American



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?

Spanish/Hispanic Origin **Not Spanish/Hispanic Origin**



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?

May 2016

April 2017

Support strongly/somewhat

59

59

Oppose strongly/somewhat

41

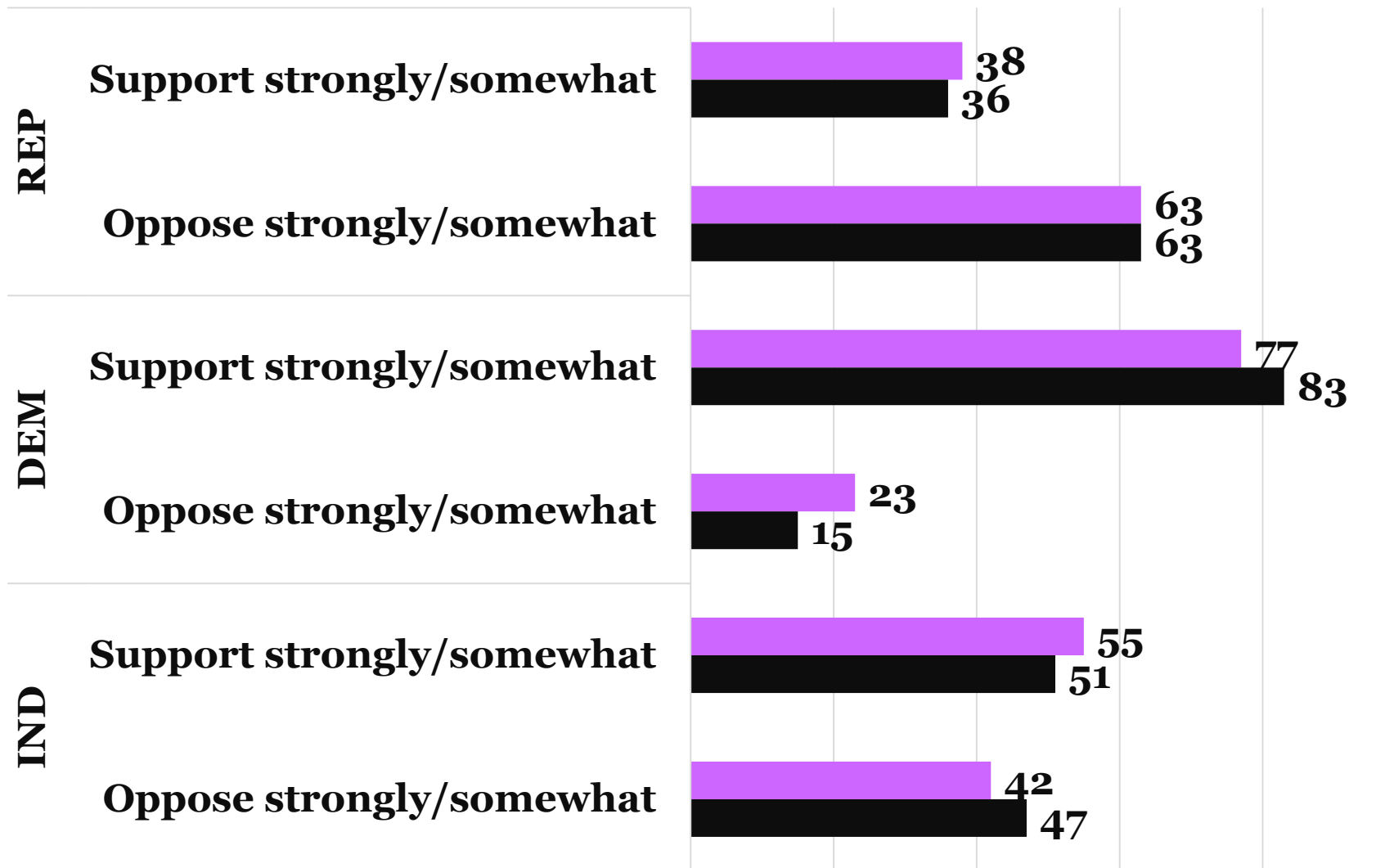
39



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?

■ May 2016

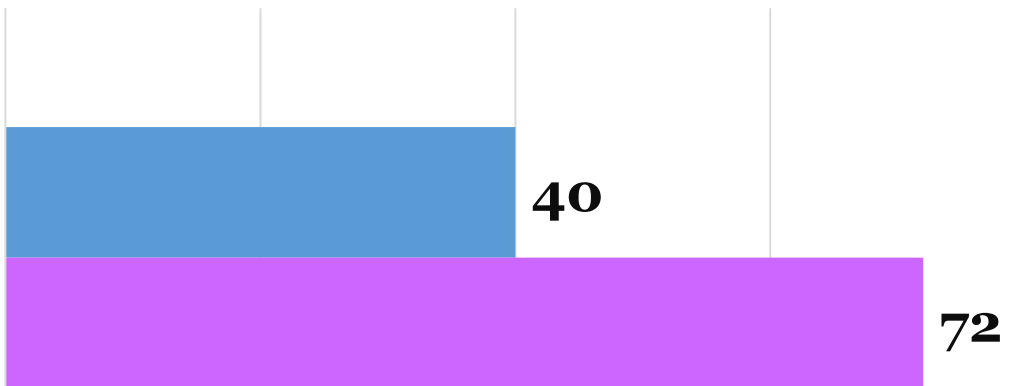
■ April 2017



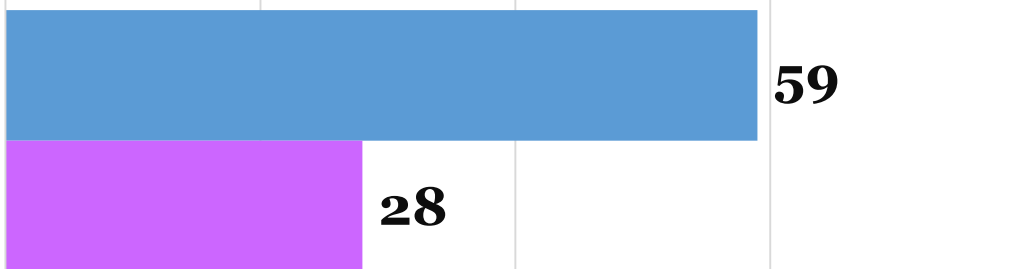
In general, do you support or oppose the United States taking in refugees from the conflicts in Syria and other Middle Eastern countries after screening them for security risks?

Lean toward Israel **Lean toward Palestinians/Neither Side**

Support strongly/somewhat



Oppose strongly/somewhat



**American Views
of Arguments for
and against the
travel ban**

This past March, the White House issued an executive order to limit travel to the United States from six Muslim-majority nations. The order also aimed to suspend the Refugee Admission Program (USRAP) for 120 days and impose a cap of 50,000 refugees in 2017. This order has been blocked by federal judges including in Hawaii and Maryland.

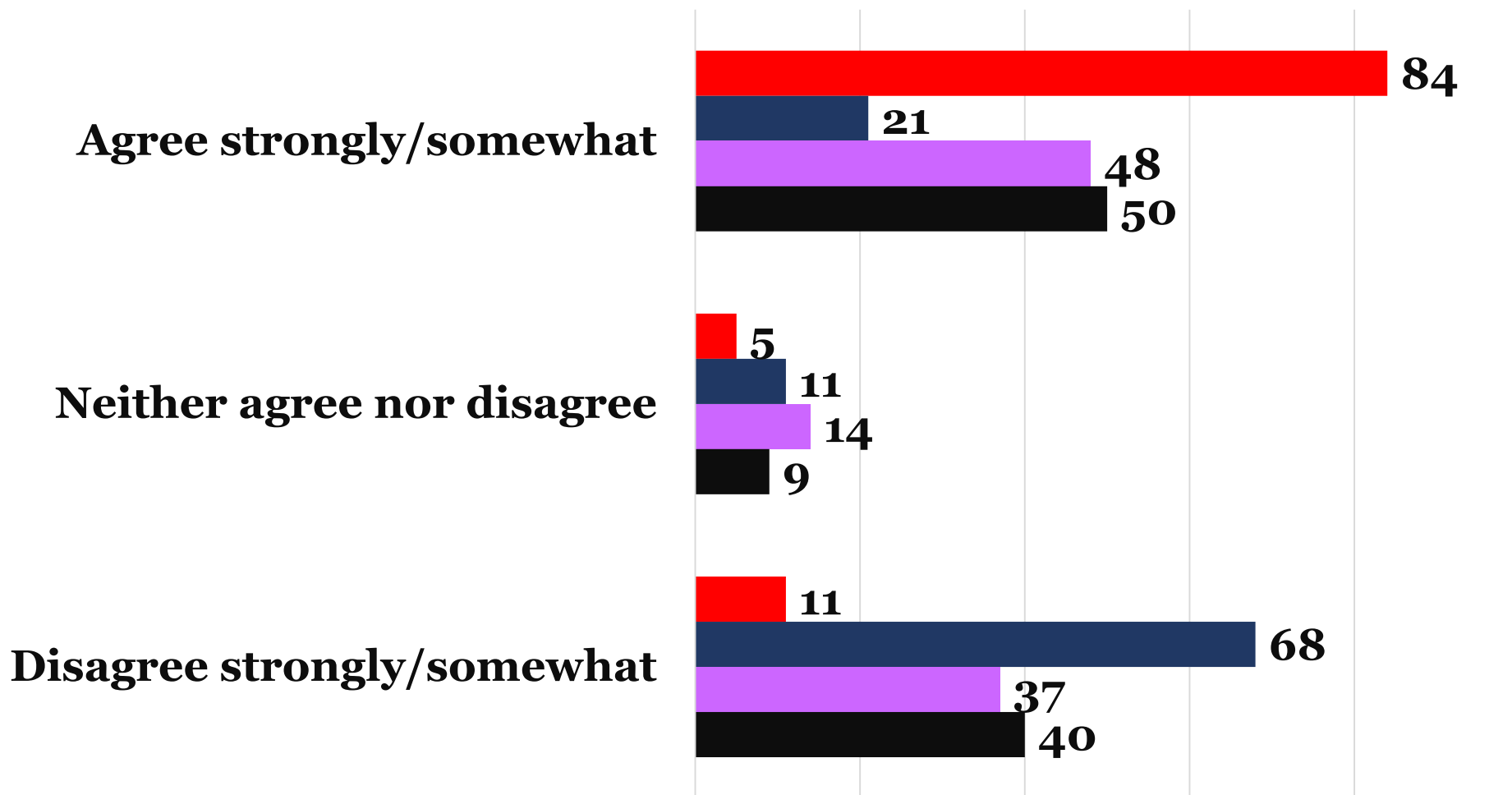
ARGUMENT FOR THE BAN

Now tell me how much you agree or disagree with each of the following.

The executive order is necessary to ensure the safety of all Americans. The government has a responsibility to ensure that nobody entering our country is coming here to do us harm. It is only reasonable to limit immigration from those six countries until we know that the people coming do not pose a threat. While it may be true that many who do not pose a threat will be kept out in the process, our top priority must be reducing the threat to American citizens by keeping potential terrorists out.

The executive order is necessary to ensure the safety of all Americans.

■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total



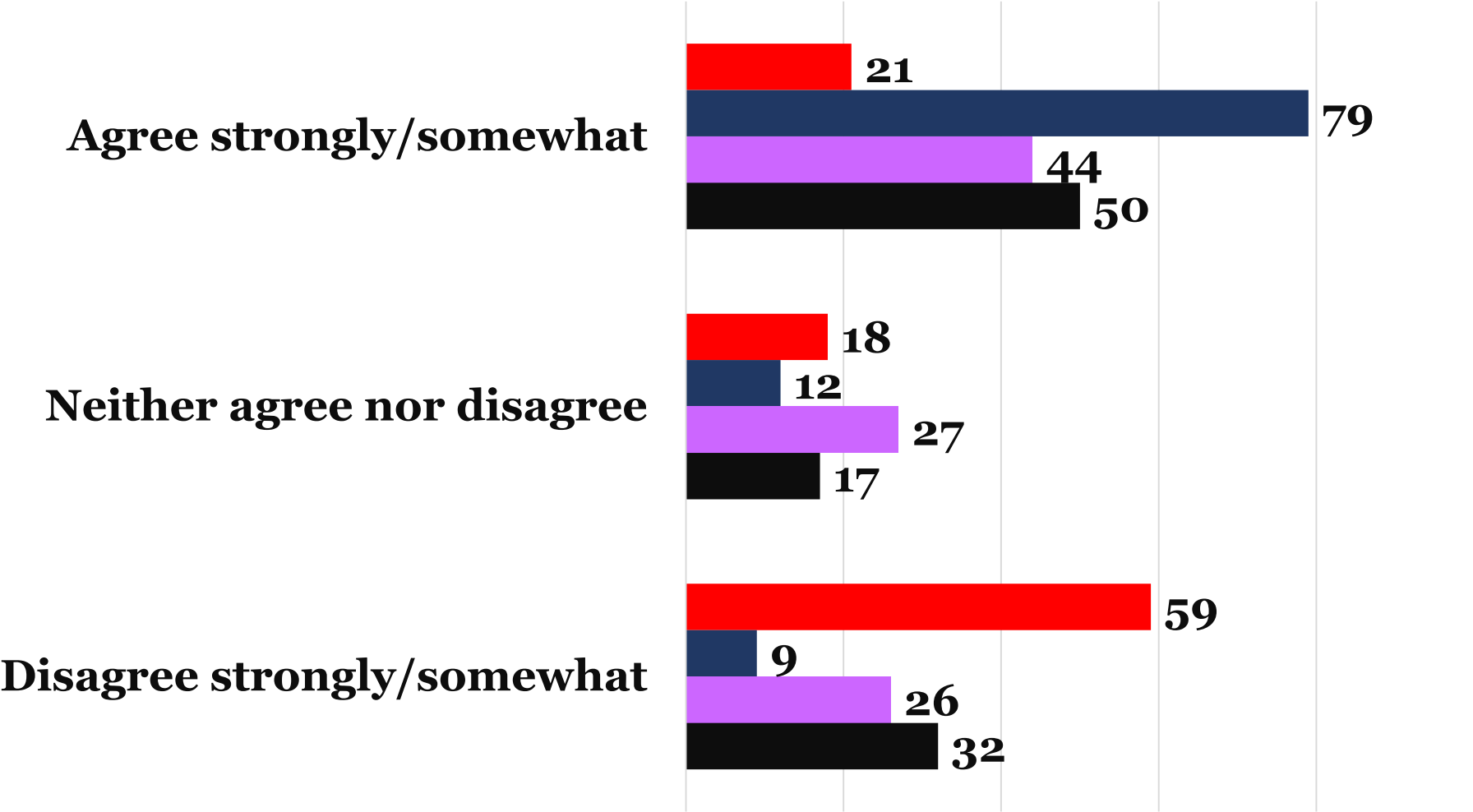
ARGUMENT AGAINST THE BAN

Now tell me how much you agree or disagree with each of the following.

The United States is a nation of immigrants, one with a long history of taking in those fleeing persecution in their home countries. Refugees have also contributed considerably to America. Data shows that only a handful of refugees have been charged with terrorist plotting among hundreds of thousands who arrived to the United States in the past decade and a half. The Constitution prohibits restricting immigration based on religion, which some courts have found this order to do.

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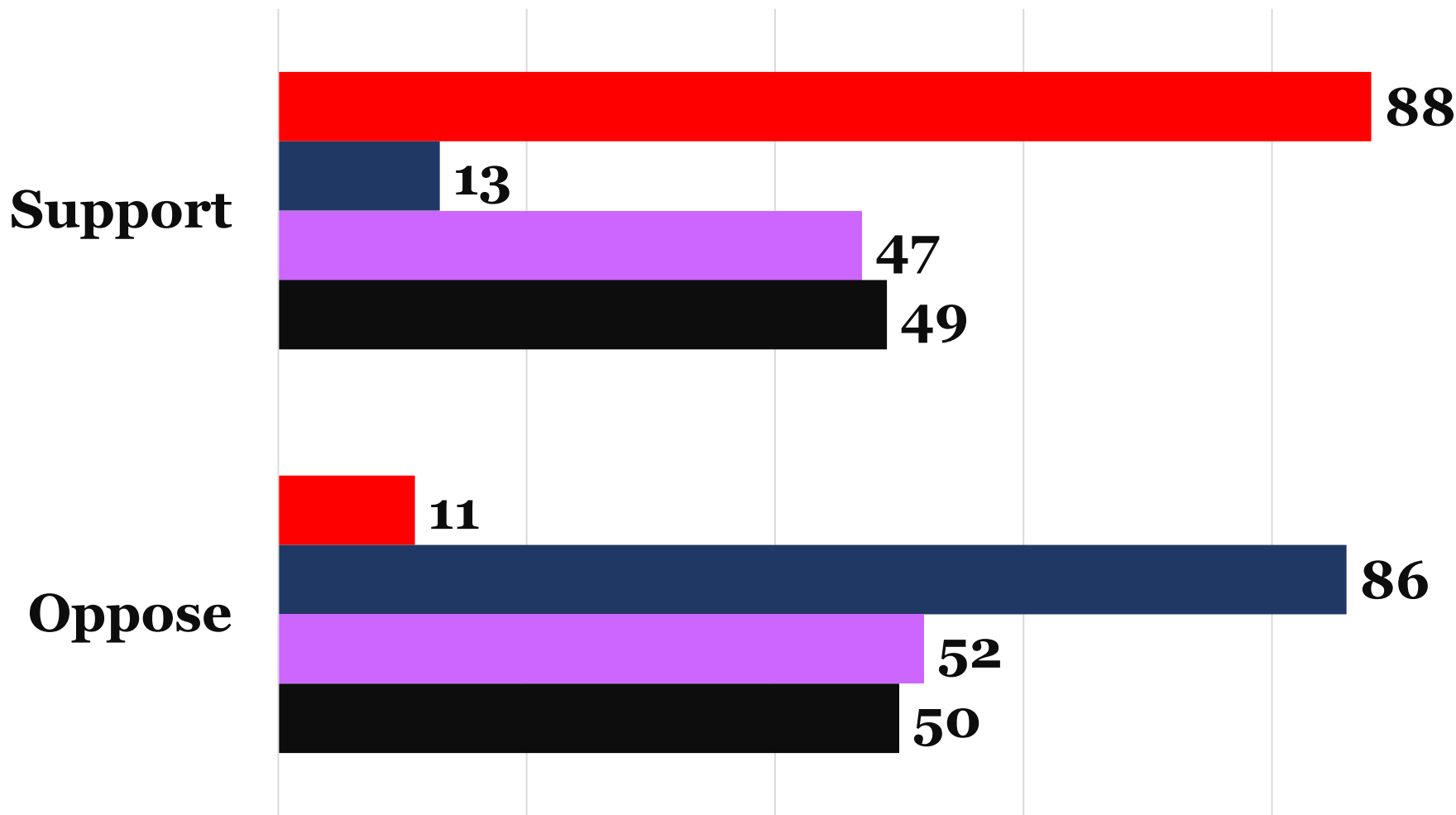
■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total



**Having thought about
it, do you support or
oppose the travel ban?**

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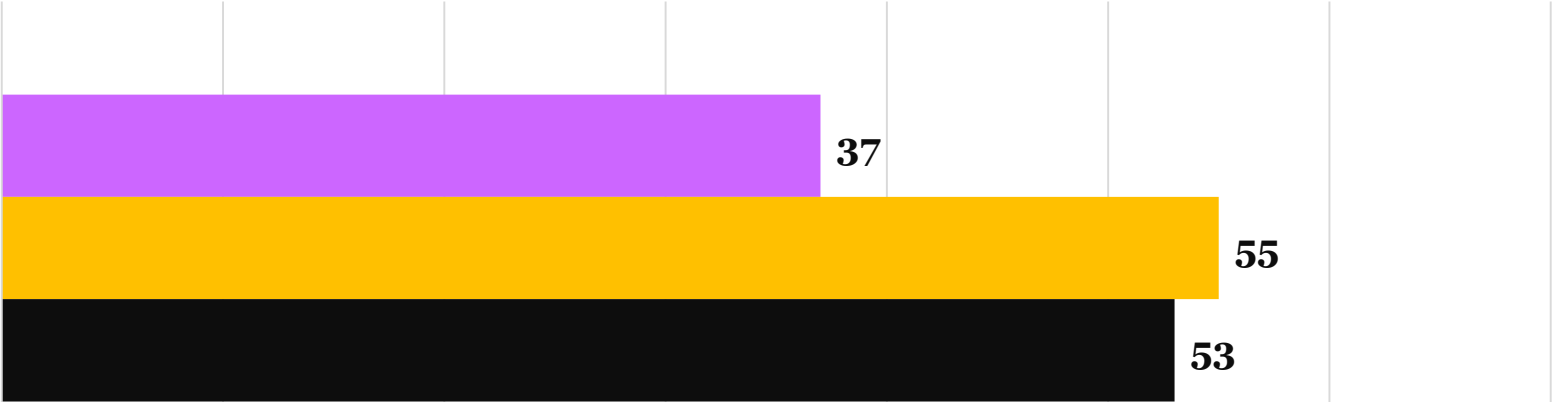
■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total



Having thought about it, do you support or oppose the travel ban?

18-34 35-54 55+

Support



Oppose



Having thought about it, do you support or oppose the travel ban?

Men Women

Support

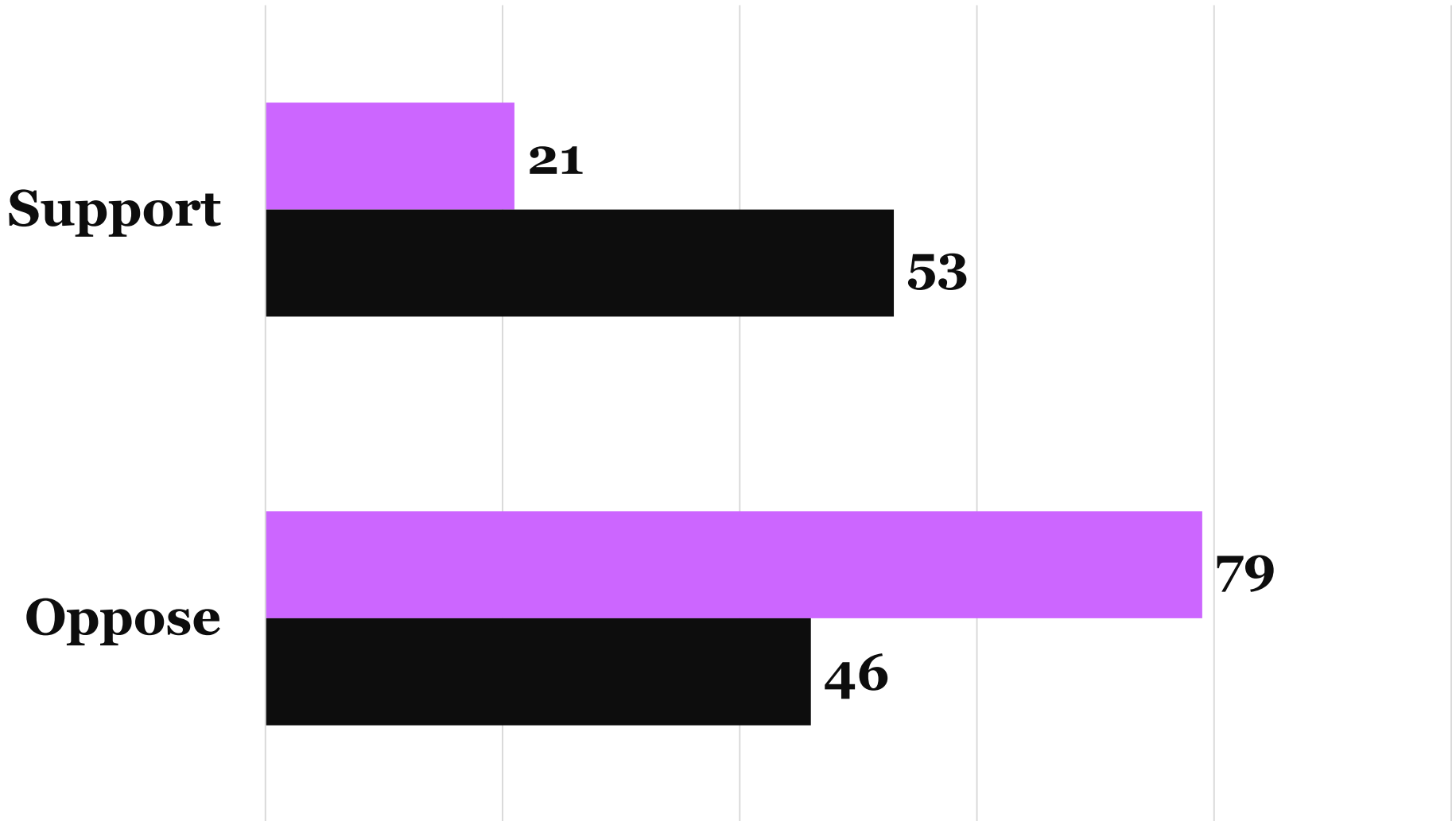


Oppose



Having thought about it, do you support or oppose the travel ban?

Black/African American **Not Black/African American**



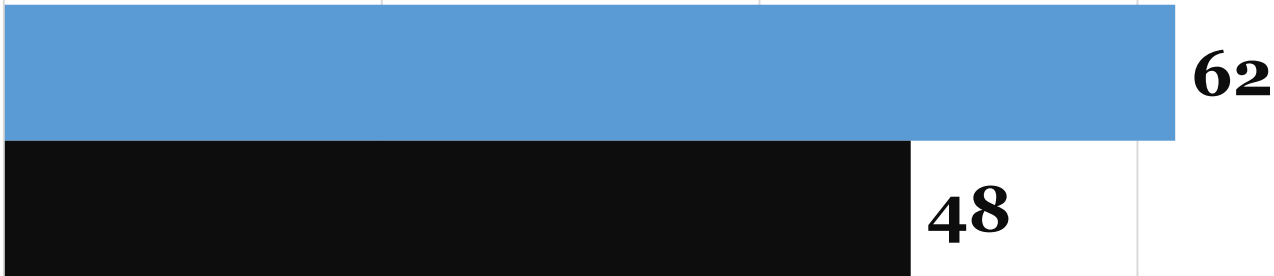
Having thought about it, do you support or oppose the travel ban?

Spanish/Hispanic Origin **Not Spanish/Hispanic Origin**

Support



Oppose



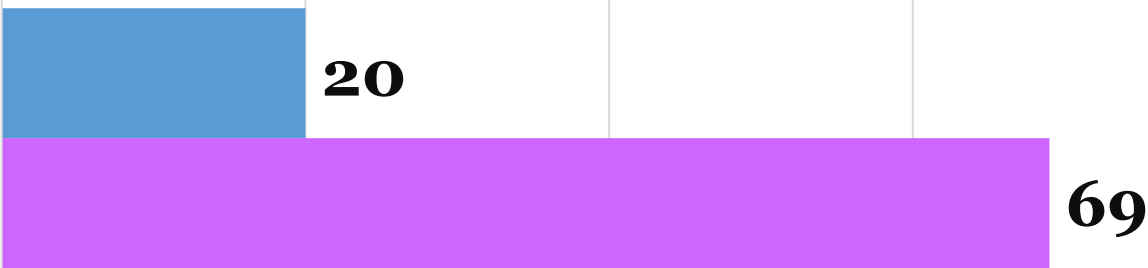
Having thought about it, do you support or oppose the travel ban?

Lean toward Israel **Lean toward Palestinians/Neither Side**

Support



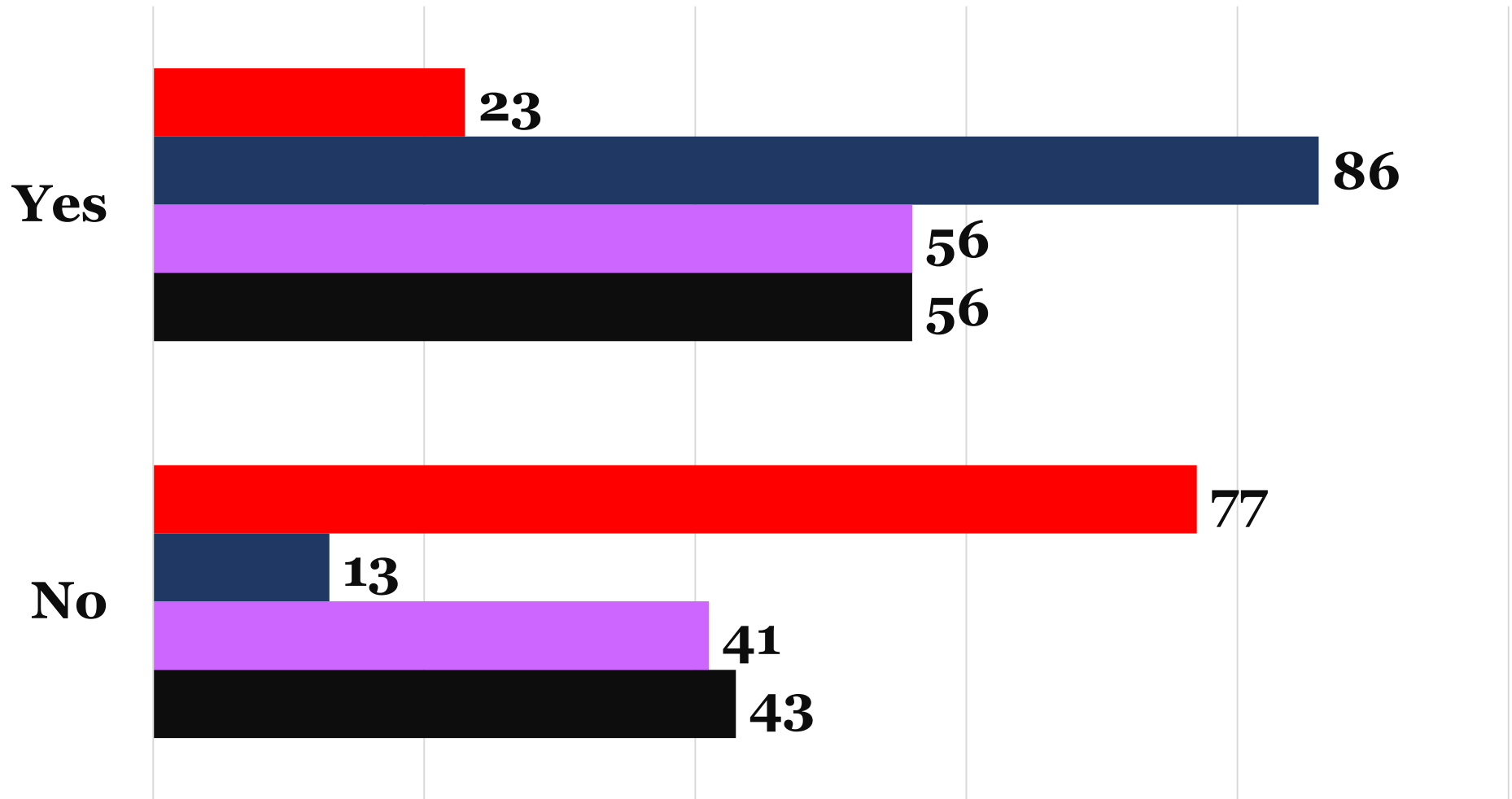
Oppose



**In your opinion, is this
ban principally
intended to keep
Muslims out of the
U.S.?**

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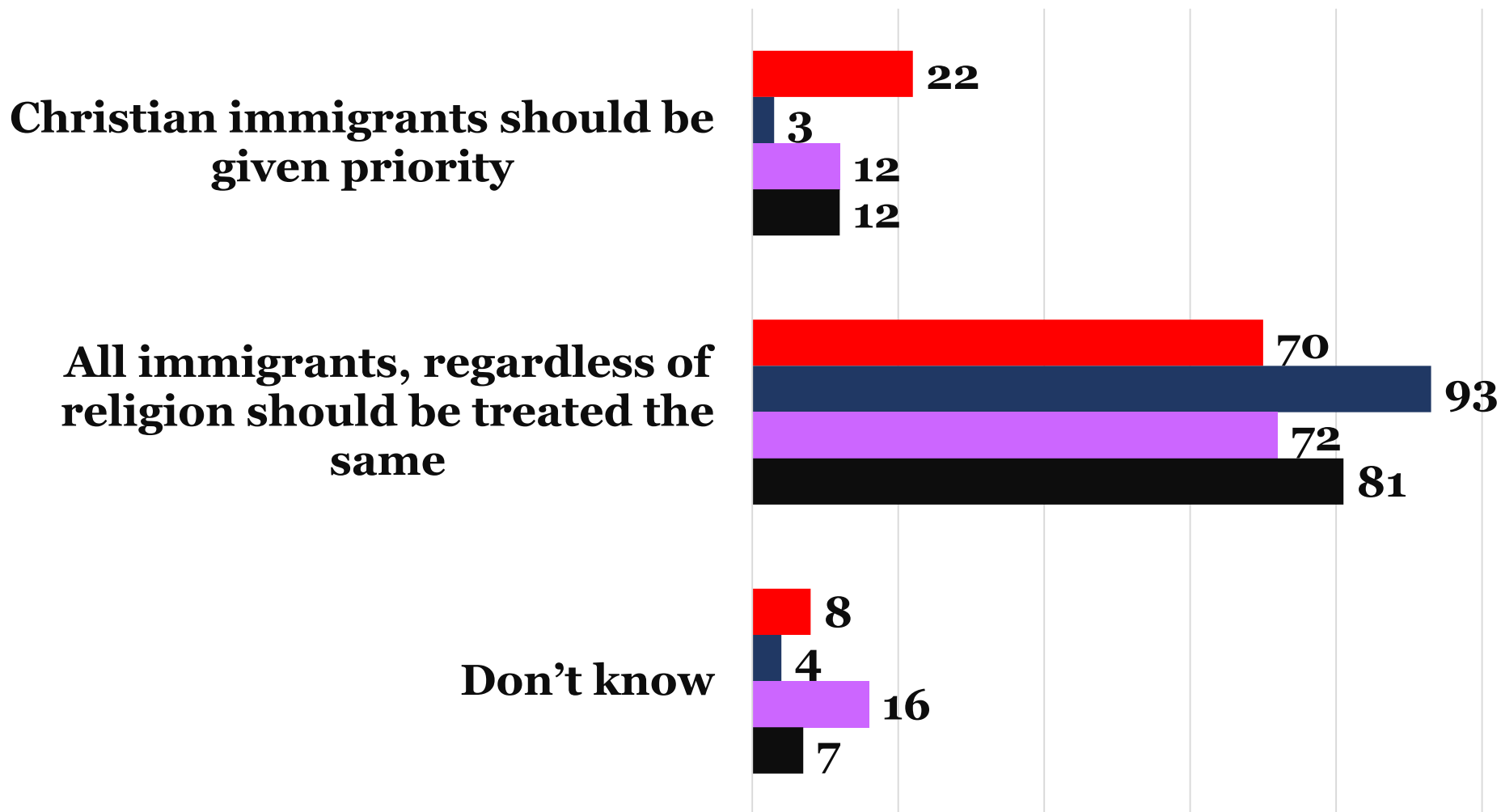
■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total



When deciding which immigrants should be allowed to enter the United States, should we give priority to people who are Christians or should we treat all immigrants the same regardless of religion?

When deciding which immigrants should be allowed to enter the United States, should we give priority to people who are Christians or should we treat all immigrants the same regardless of religion?

■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total



American Views of Muslims and Islam

**What is your attitude
about each of the
following?**

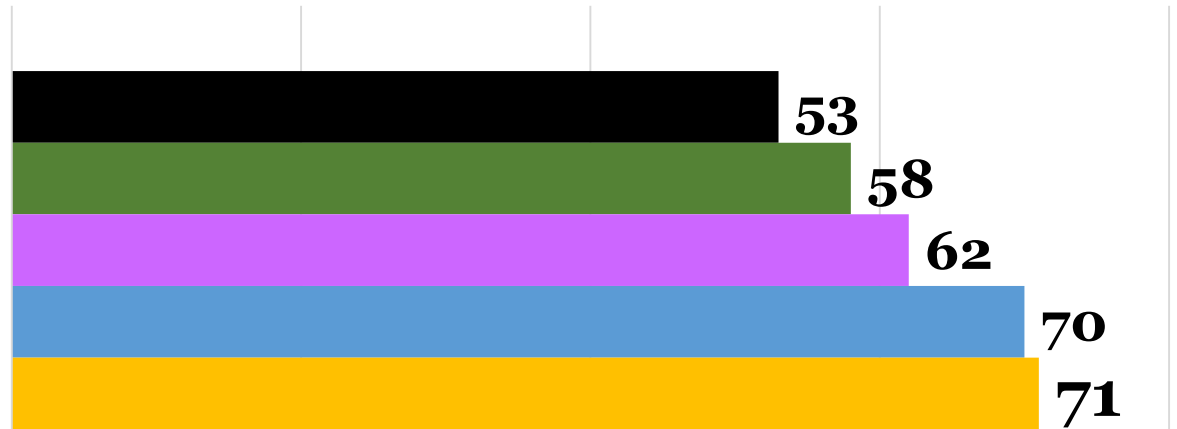
The Muslim People

What is your attitude about each of the following?

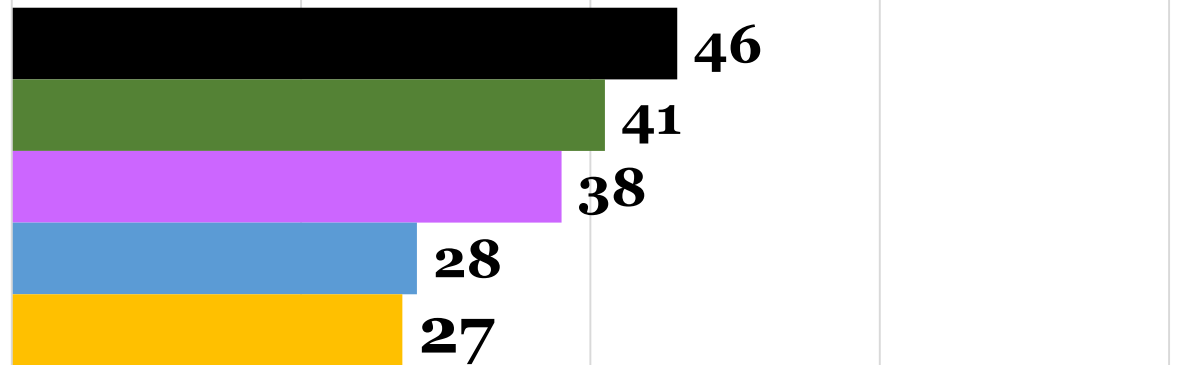
The Muslim People



Very/Somewhat Favorable



Very/Somewhat Unfavorable

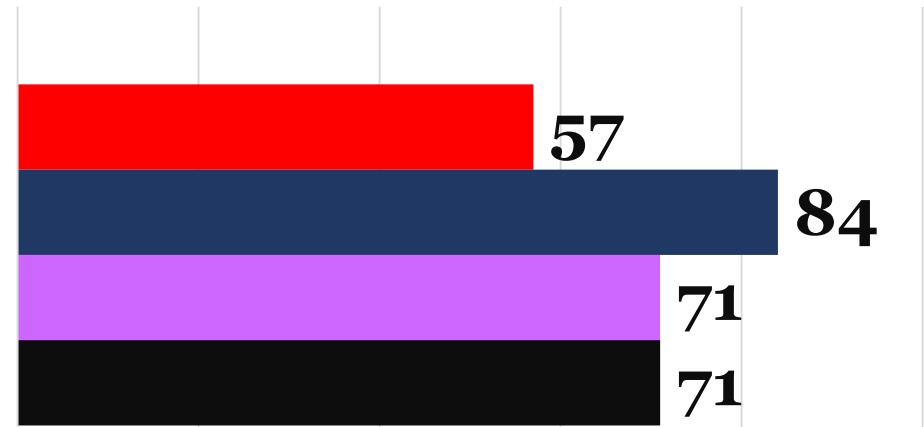


What is your attitude about each of the following?

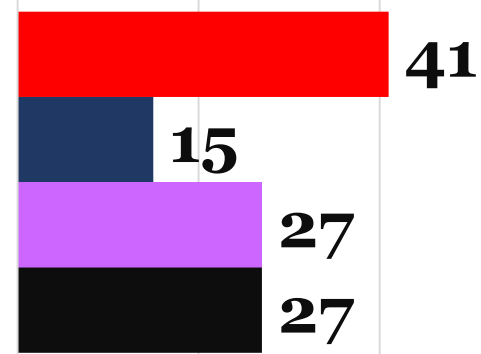
The Muslim People

■ **Republicans** ■ **Democrats** ■ **Independents** ■ **Total**

Very/Somewhat Favorable



Very/Somewhat Unfavorable



**What is your attitude
about each of the
following?**

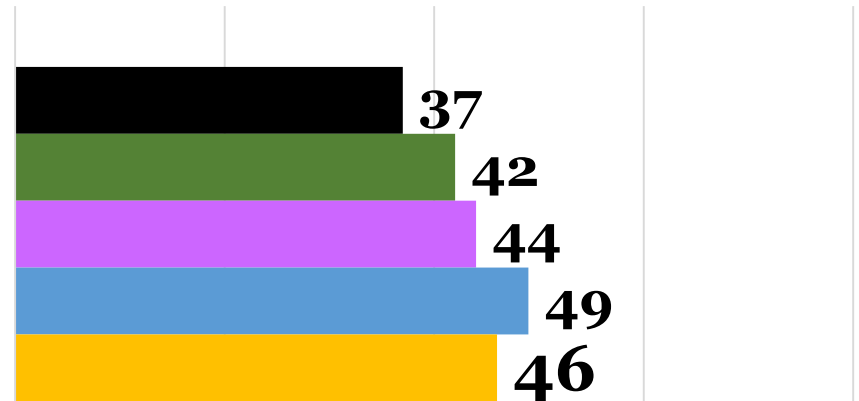
The Muslim Religion

What is your attitude about each of the following?

The Muslim Religion



Very/Somewhat Favorable



Very/Somewhat Unfavorable

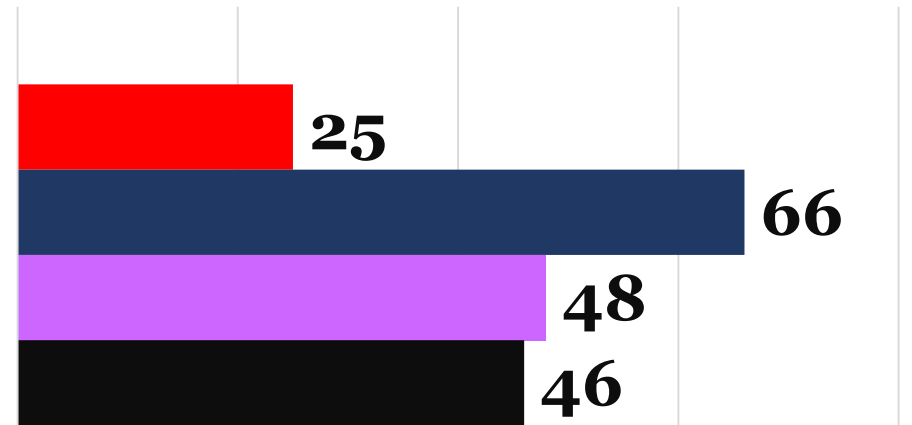


What is your attitude about each of the following?

The Muslim Religion

■ **Republicans** ■ **Democrats** ■ **Independents** ■ **Total**

Very/Somewhat Favorable



Very/Somewhat Unfavorable

