



# BUSINESS IMPLICATIONS OF STATE SOCIAL POLICIES: NAVIGATING TALENT & CONSUMER TRENDS ON SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES

— OCTOBER 2024

## METHODOLOGY

This poll was conducted by Morning Consult, on behalf of BSR, between August 2-4, 2024 among a sample of 2,204 adults.

The interviews were conducted online and the data were weighted to approximate a target sample of adults based on age, gender, race, educational attainment, region, gender by age, and race by educational attainment.

Results from the full survey have a margin of error of +/- 2 percentage points, unless otherwise specified.

# Key Takeaways

1

## State-level social policies are an important consideration in employment decisions.

Across generations, most adults say it is important their state has social policies that promote social justice—namely in the policy areas of gun violence (78%), voting rights (77%), racial inequality (72%), and caregiving and childcare support (69%). Additionally, by a 10:1 margin, adults would prefer to live in a state where paid family and medical leave is available; and by a 2:1 margin, adults would prefer to live in a state where abortion is legal and accessible. Notably, 54% of adults who were offered a professional opportunity in the past year that required relocating considered state social policies when deciding whether to accept or decline the offer. ***This highlights the growing need for employers to recognize state social policies as both risks and opportunities for their workforce.***

2

## Advancing social justice is key for companies to attract and retain talent.

By a 3:1 margin, employed adults are more likely to want to work for a company that promotes social justice internally through workplace policies and practices. Among employed adults who work for a company that responds to social issues, two-thirds (65%) say it has an impact on their decision to stay at the organization. And, if moving to a state with social policies that do not align with their personal values, two-thirds of employed adults say it would be important for their employer to increase paid time off (67%) and benefits (64%). With one-in-four (24%) workers disagreeing with the local and state policies where they live, ***employers have a significant opportunity to offset barriers resulting from state policies to address workforce concerns.***

3

## Consumers value companies that respond to social issues.

Adults are four times more likely to say companies need to do more to promote social justice. When a company publicly promotes social justice, consumers are four times more likely to feel increased loyalty toward that company or brand. In fact, two-thirds of adults say companies should address the lack of national paid family and medical leave (69%), racial inequality (65%), and misinformation (64%). In contrast, fewer than 20% of adults believe companies should not take action on these critical social issues. As a result, ***brands have an opportunity to lead on social issues to drive loyalty in a values-driven marketplace.***

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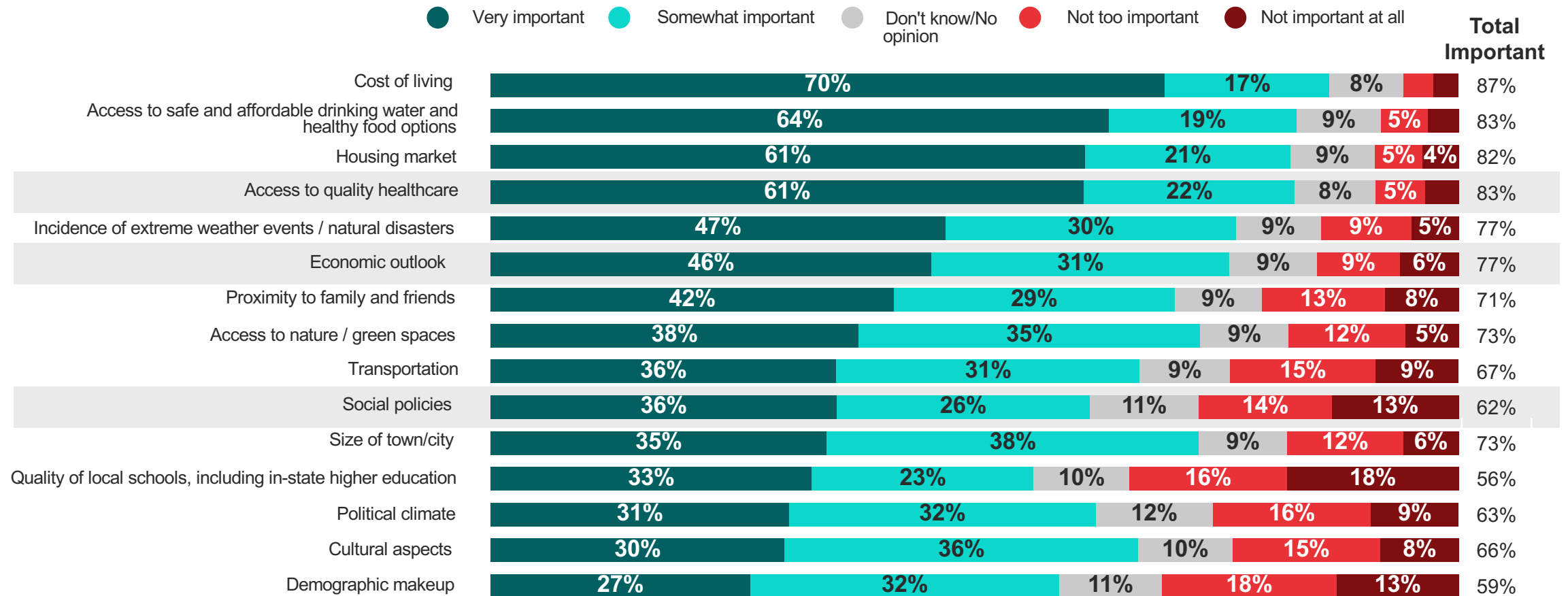
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## TALENT MOBILITY & SOCIAL POLICIES

The majority of adults say *access to quality healthcare* (83%), *economic outlook* (77%), and *social policies* (62%) are important to consider when thinking about moving to a different state.

In thinking about moving to a **different state**, how important, if at all, are each of the following considerations?



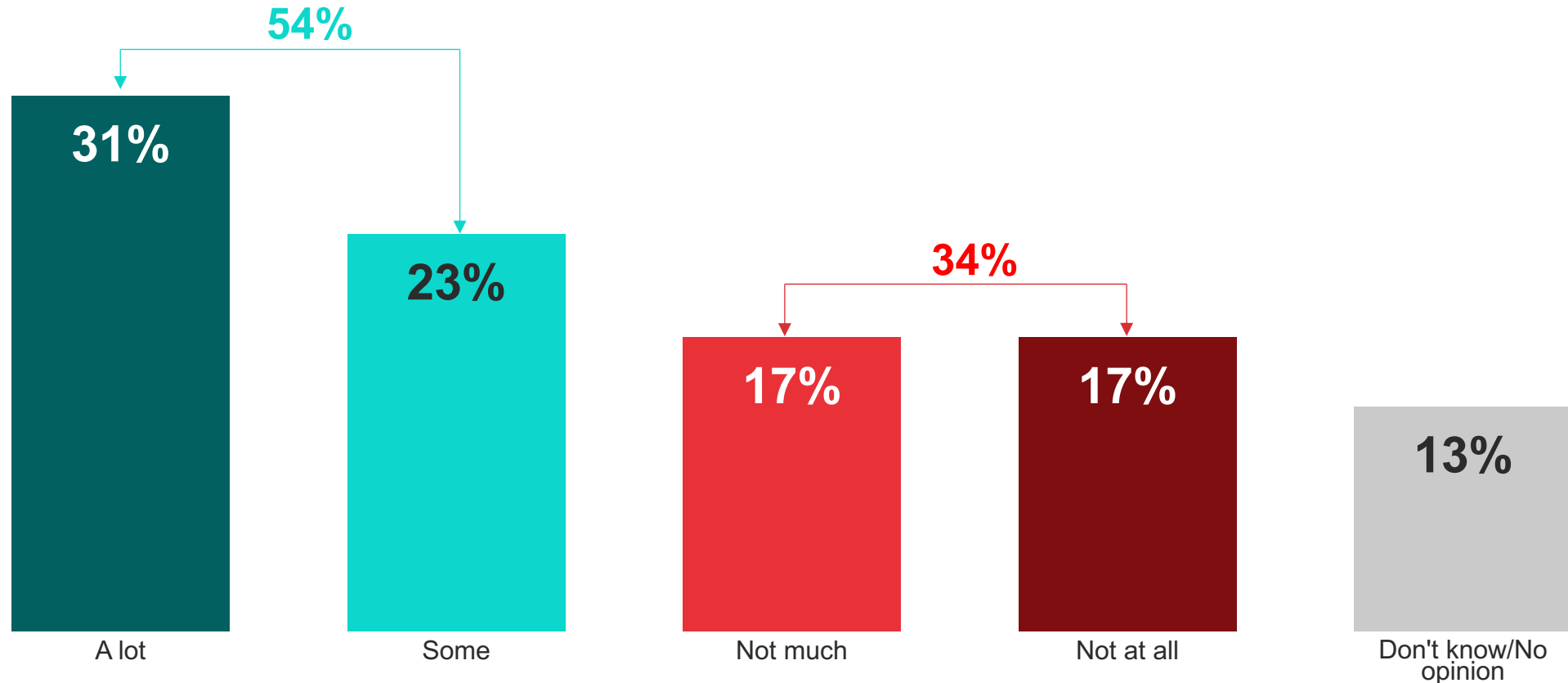
Descriptions not displayed for brevity.  
Total Important = Very important + Somewhat important

## TALENT MOBILITY & SOCIAL POLICIES

**Most adults (54%) who were offered a professional opportunity with state relocation in the past year say they considered social policies in their decision to accept or decline the role.**

In your decision to accept or decline this role, how much did you consider, if at all, **social policies** (e.g., reproductive health care access, voting rights, paid family and medical leave policies, LGBTIQ+ rights) in that state?

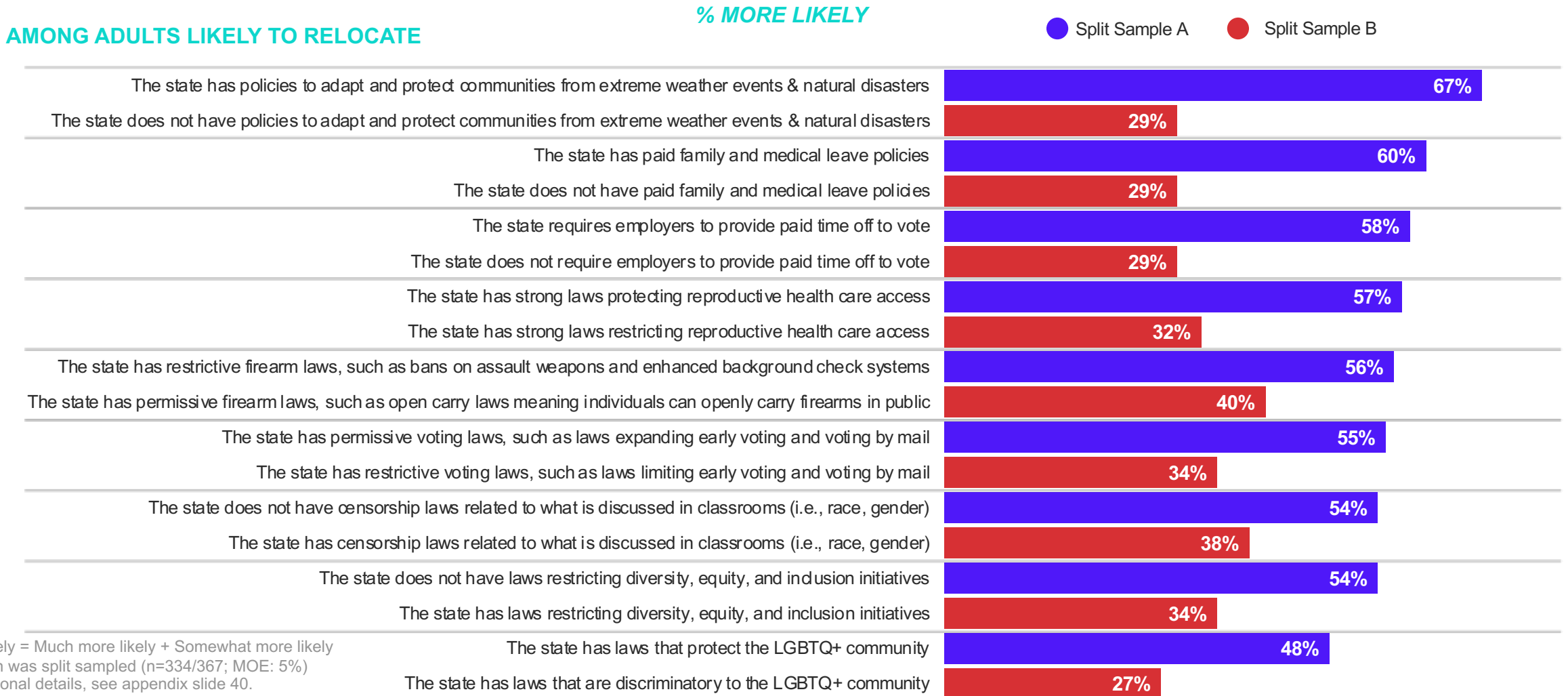
AMONG ADULTS OFFERED PROFESSIONAL OPPORTUNITY WITH RELOCATION (n=153; MOE 8%)



## TALENT MOBILITY & SOCIAL POLICIES

# Adults likely to relocate say they are more likely to move to states with social policies promoting social justice—a trend consistent across policy areas.

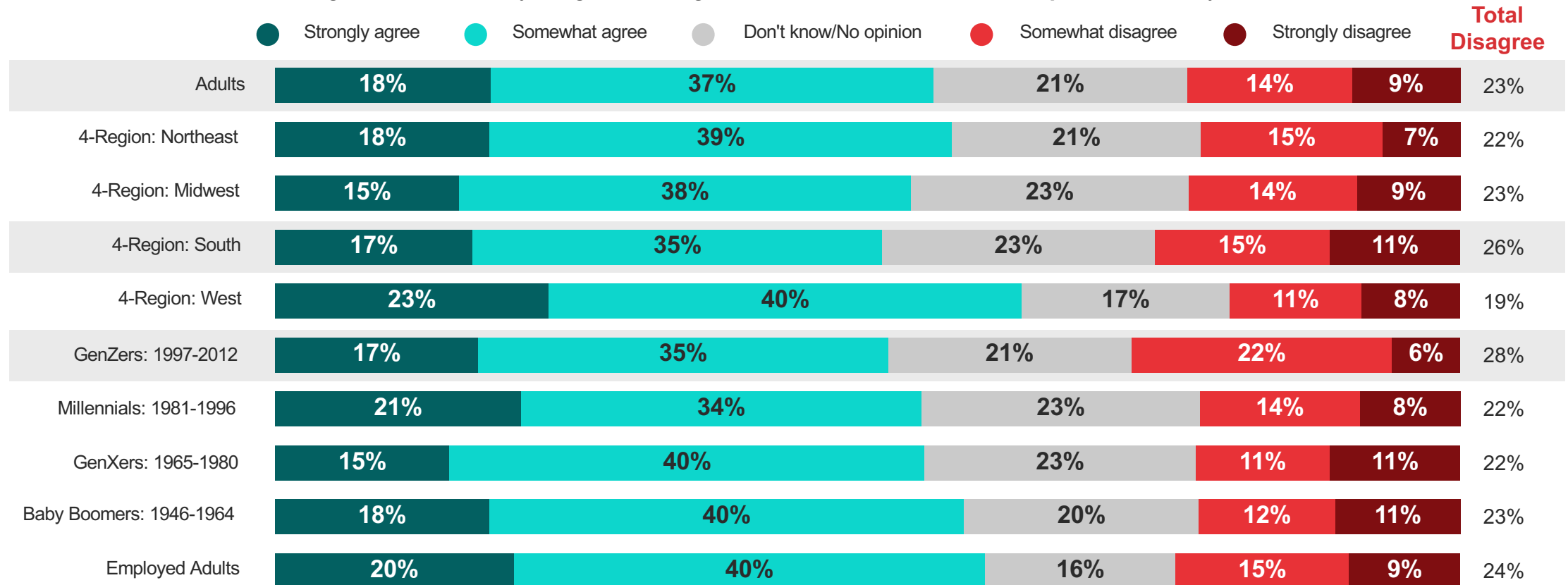
You indicated you are likely to relocate in the next two years. Would each of the following factors make you **more or less likely** to want to move to a given state?\*



## TALENT MOBILITY & SOCIAL POLICIES

However, in reality, one-fourth (23%) of adults disagree with the local and state policies where they currently live—especially those living in the South (26%) and GenZers (28%).

The term "social policies" refers to laws and norms on issues that impact people in schools, workplaces, and communities, such as reproductive health care access, voting rights, paid family and medical leave policies, LGBTIQ+ rights, diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) initiatives, and policies on what can or cannot be taught in schools. Do you agree or disagree with the local and state **social policies** where you live?

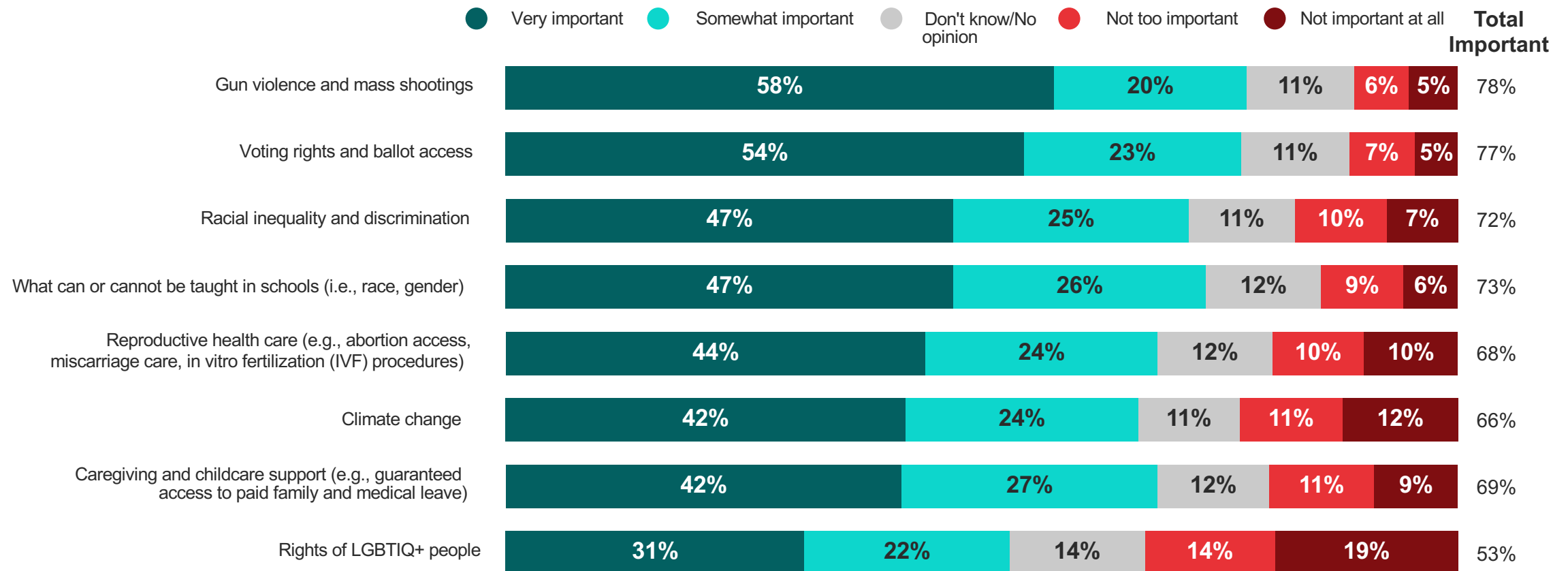




## TALENT MOBILITY & SOCIAL POLICIES

Beyond economic considerations, the top social issues of importance for adults focus on *gun violence (78%)*, *voting rights (77%)*, *school censorship (73%)*, and *racial inequality (72%)*.

How important is it to you, if at all, for your state to have social policies that promote social justice in the following areas?



## TALENT MOBILITY & SOCIAL POLICIES

**In fact, the majority of adults, regardless of age/generation, say it is important their state have social policies promoting social justice in each of the tested policy areas.**

How important is it to you, if at all, for your state to have social policies that promote social justice in the following areas?

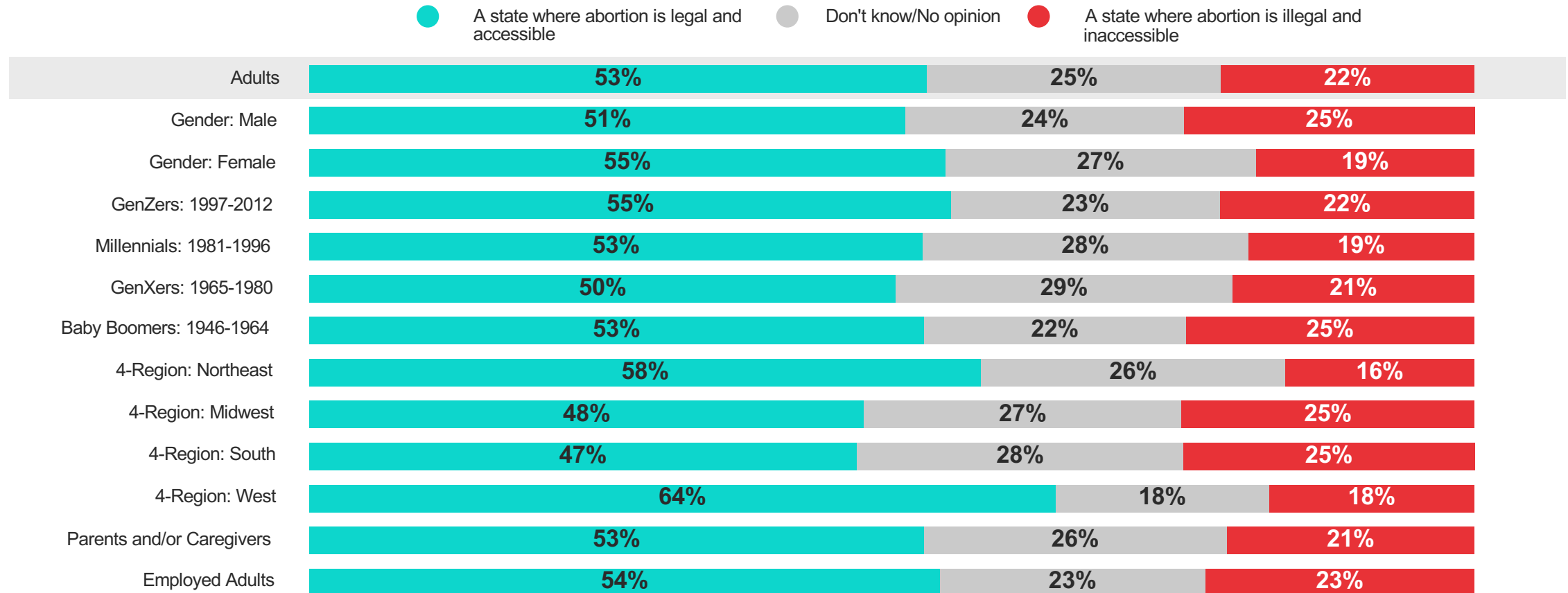
**% TOTAL IMPORTANT**

Demographic	Gun violence and mass shootings	Voting rights and ballot access	What can or cannot be taught in schools (i.e., race, gender)	Racial inequality and discrimination	Caregiving and childcare support (e.g., guaranteed access to paid family and medical leave)	Reproductive health care (e.g., abortion access, miscarriage care, in vitro fertilization (IVF) procedures)	Climate change	Rights of LGBTQ+ people
Adults	78%	77%	73%	72%	69%	68%	66%	53%
GenZers: 1997-2012	72%	68%	69%	70%	70%	72%	68%	56%
Millennials: 1981-1996	76%	72%	72%	73%	71%	73%	68%	52%
GenXers: 1965-1980	76%	76%	74%	70%	70%	67%	66%	52%
Baby Boomers: 1946-1964	84%	87%	77%	74%	65%	64%	64%	53%

## TALENT MOBILITY & SOCIAL POLICIES

# By a 2:1 margin, adults say they would prefer to live in a state where abortion is legal (53%) than where it is illegal (22%).

As you may know, the Supreme Court of the United States overturned *Roe v. Wade* about two years ago. This case established the constitutional right to abortion. Now that *Roe v. Wade* is overturned, abortion access and laws vary by state with many states outlawing it altogether in all or most circumstances. Which of the following, if any, would you prefer to live in?

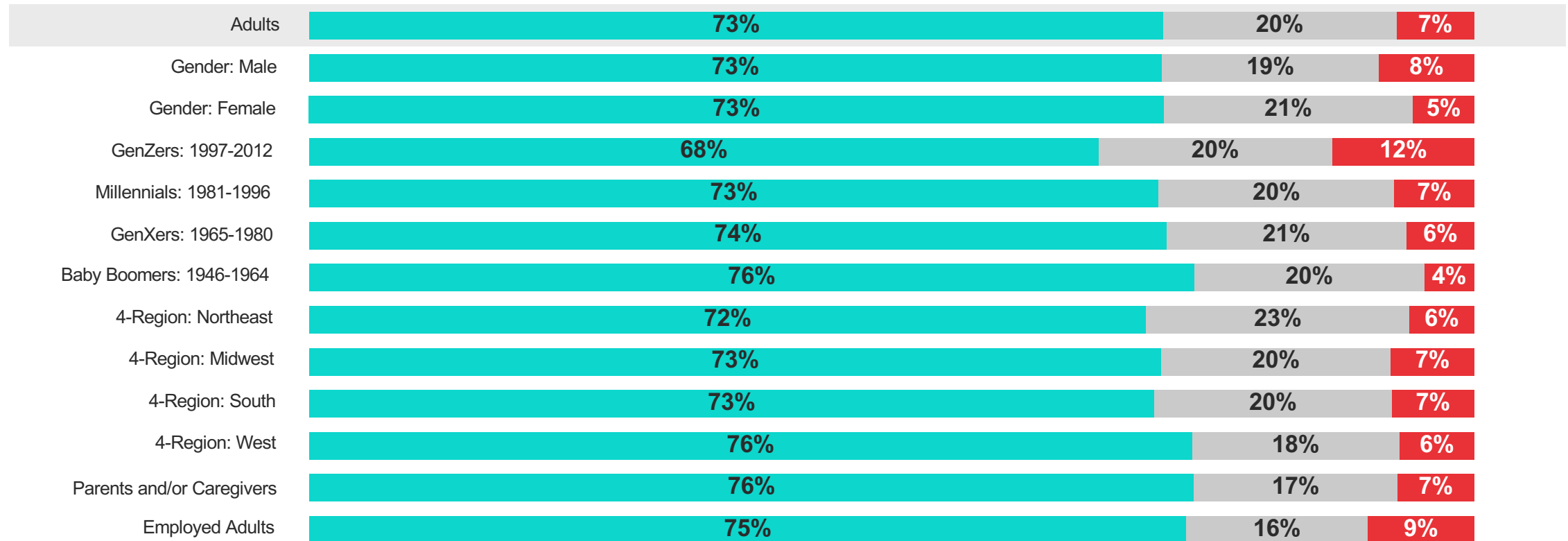


## TALENT MOBILITY & SOCIAL POLICIES

# By a 10:1 margin, adults say they would prefer to live in a state where paid family and medical leave is available (73%) than where it is unavailable (7%).

As you may know, there is currently no national paid family and medical leave policy in the U.S. However, **paid family and medical leave** is available in 14 states ensuring workers have access to paid leave to bond with a new child, recover from their own serious health condition, or care for a loved one with a serious health condition. Which of the following, if any, would you prefer to live in?

● A state where paid family and medical leave is available
 ● Don't know/No opinion
 ● A state where paid family and medical leave is unavailable



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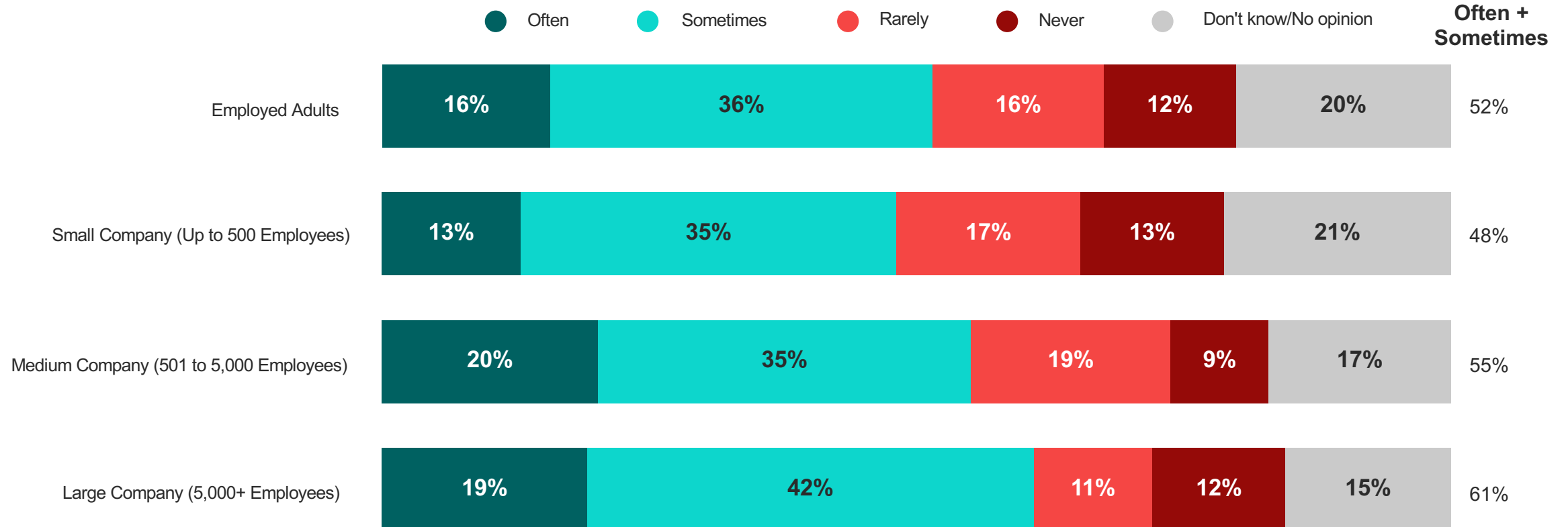


## EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS FOR COMPANIES

Half (52%) of employed adults say their employer responds to social issues *often* or *sometimes*. Those who work for large companies are especially likely to say their employer responds to social issues.

Regardless of if you believe companies should respond to social issues, how often, if at all, does your current employer respond to social issues?

AMONG EMPLOYED ADULTS\* (n=778; MOE 4%)



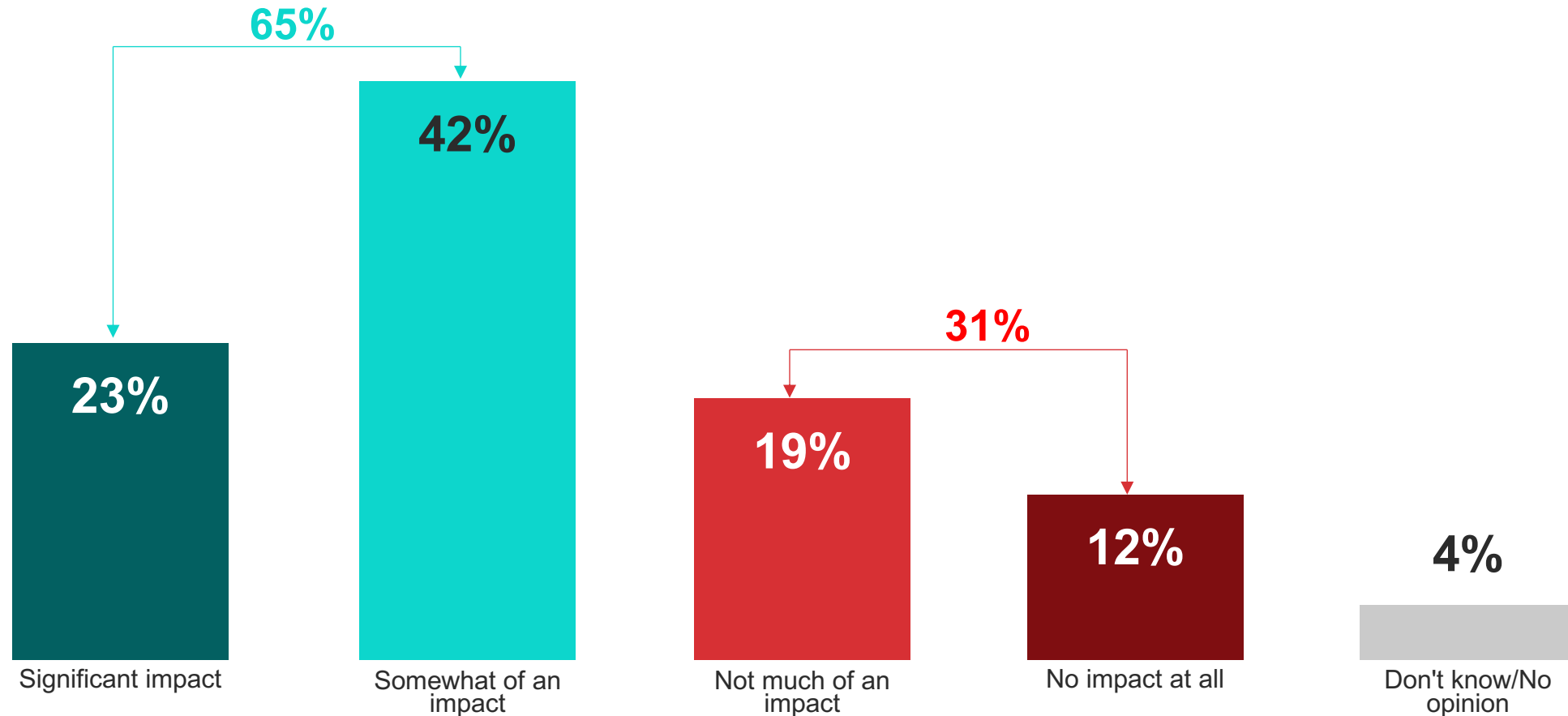
\*Excludes self-employed adults

## EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS FOR COMPANIES

**Among adults who work for a company that responds to social issues, two-thirds (65%) say it has an impact on their decision to stay at the organization.**

How much of an impact, if at all, does your company's response to social issues have on your decision to stay at the organization?

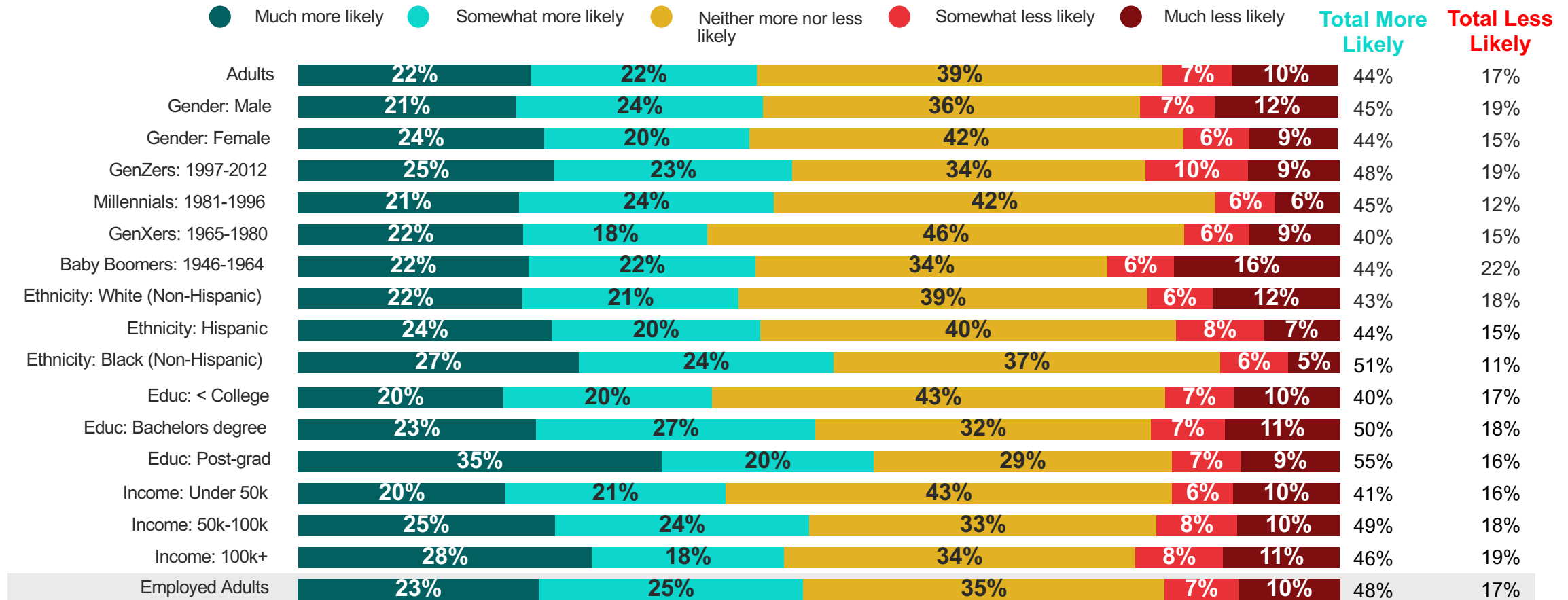
AMONG EMPLOYED ADULTS\* WHOSE EMPLOYERS RESPOND TO SOCIAL ISSUES (n=526; MOE 4%)



## EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS FOR COMPANIES

By a 3:1 margin, employed adults say they would be more likely to work for a company that promotes social justice internally through workplace policies and practices (48% vs. 17%).

Would you be more or less likely to work for a company that promotes social justice through workplace policies and practices, such as establishing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) leadership roles, closing pay gaps, ensuring pay transparency, ensuring diverse hiring committees, or providing DEI training?



Total More Likely = Much more likely + Somewhat more likely  
 Total Less Likely = Much less likely + Somewhat less likely

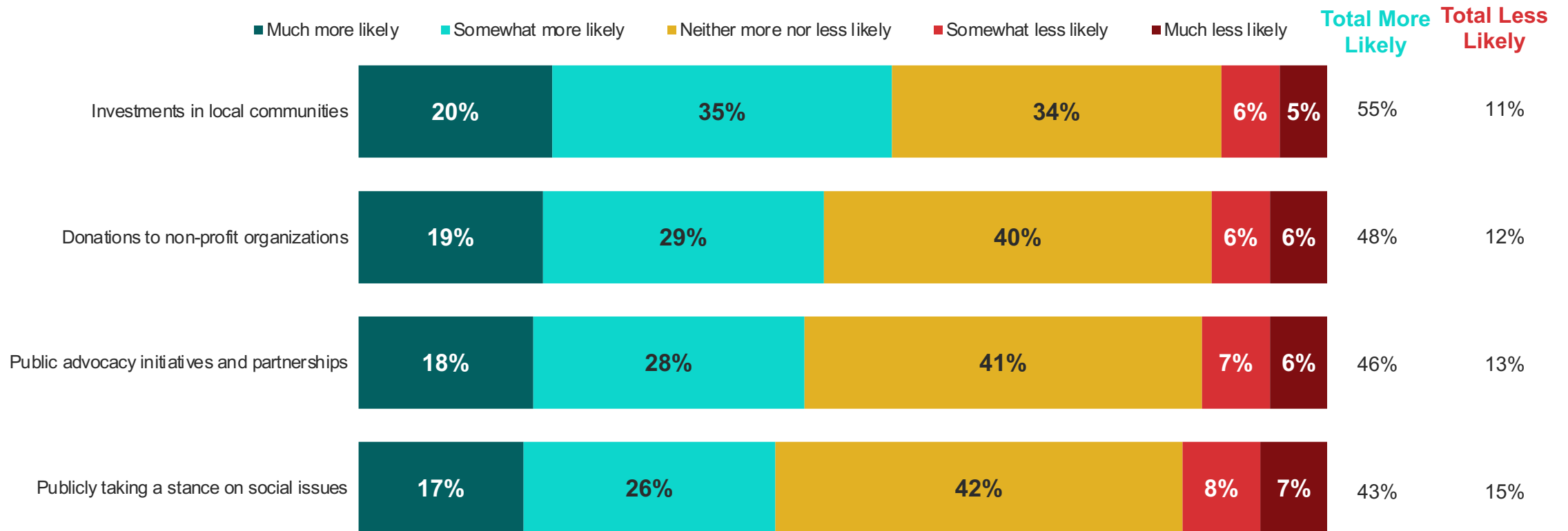


## EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS FOR COMPANIES

Similarly, by a 5:1 margin, employed adults say they would be more likely to work for a company that promotes social justice through *investments in local communities* (55% vs. 11%).

Would you be more or less likely to work for a company that promotes social justice through each of the following ways?

AMONG EMPLOYED ADULTS (n=949; MOE 3%)



**Two-in-five (43%)** employed adults say they would be more likely to work for a company that *publicly takes a stance on social issues*, while just 15% say this would make them less likely to do so.

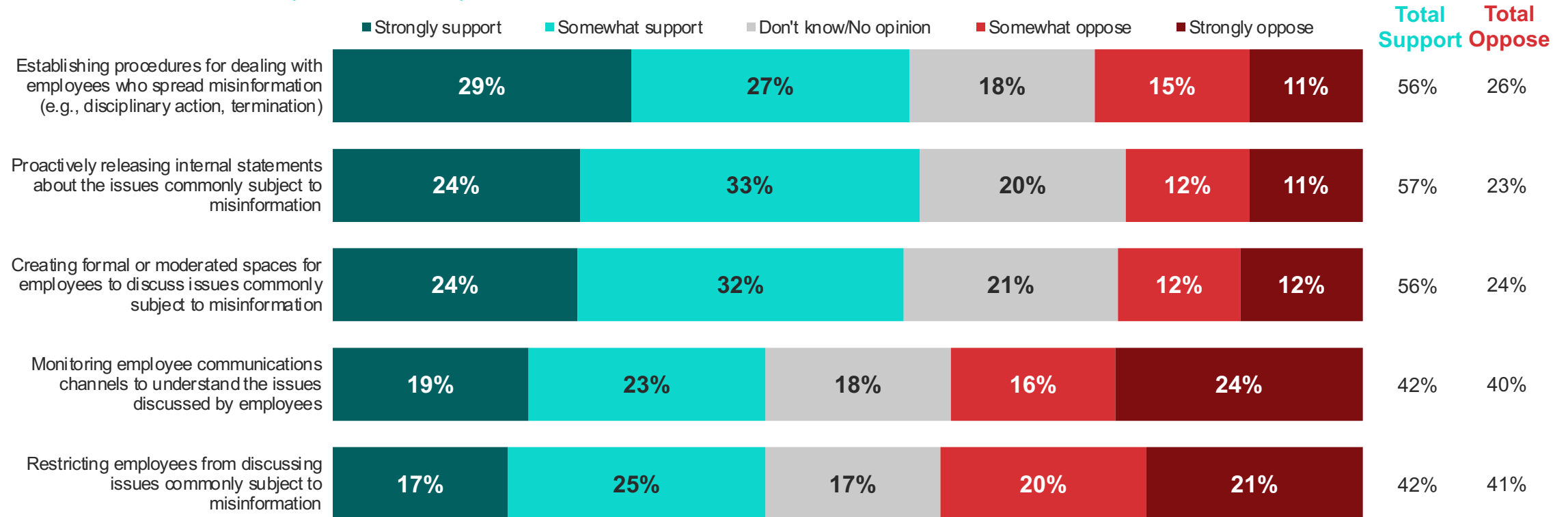
Total More Likely = Much more likely + Somewhat more likely  
Total Less Likely = Much less likely + Somewhat less likely

## EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS FOR COMPANIES

Employed adults are more than two times more likely to say they support than oppose employers combatting misinformation in the workplace by *releasing internal statements (57%)*, *establishing procedures (56%)*, and *creating spaces to discuss these issues (56%)*.

As you may know, **misinformation** is the spread of false information. Common issues subject to misinformation include elections, vaccines, climate change, and social justice. Thinking about the possibility of misinformation being shared by employees in the workplace, do you support or oppose each of the following approaches from employers?

### AMONG EMPLOYED ADULTS (n=949; MOE 3%)



Employees are split on whether they support or oppose employers *monitoring employee communications* and *restricting employees from discussing issues commonly subject to misinformation*.

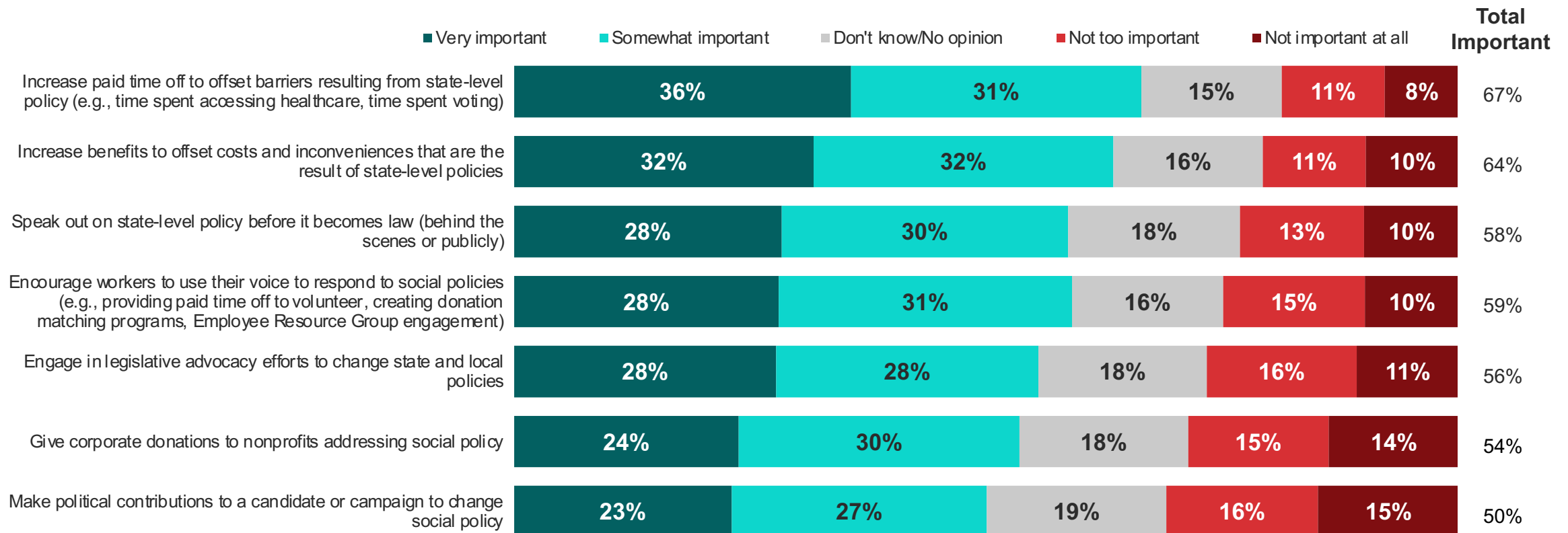
Total Support = Strongly support + Somewhat support  
Total Oppose = Strongly oppose + Somewhat oppose

## EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS FOR COMPANIES

If moving to a state with social policies that do not align with their personal values, two-thirds of employed adults say it would be important for their employer to *increase paid time off* (67%) and *benefits* (64%) to offset barriers resulting from state-level policies.

If you moved to a state with social policies that do not reflect your own personal values, how important would it be for your employer to respond in the following ways?

AMONG EMPLOYED ADULTS (n=949; MOE 3%)



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## CONSUMER EXPECTATIONS FOR COMPANIES

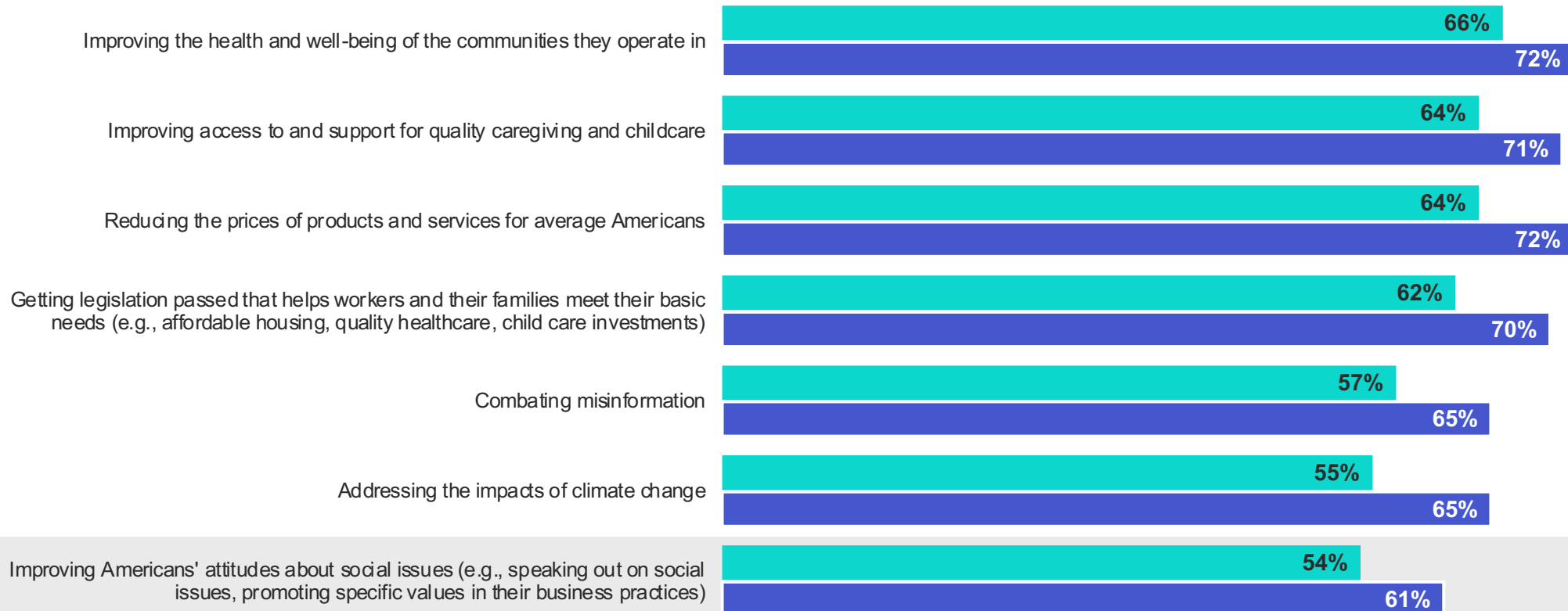
Most adults believe companies have a role in *improving Americans' attitudes about social issues* but should be having a greater impact in this area.

How much impact, if any, [do/should] companies have in the following areas?\*

% TOTAL IMPACT

■ Current Impact

■ Future Impact



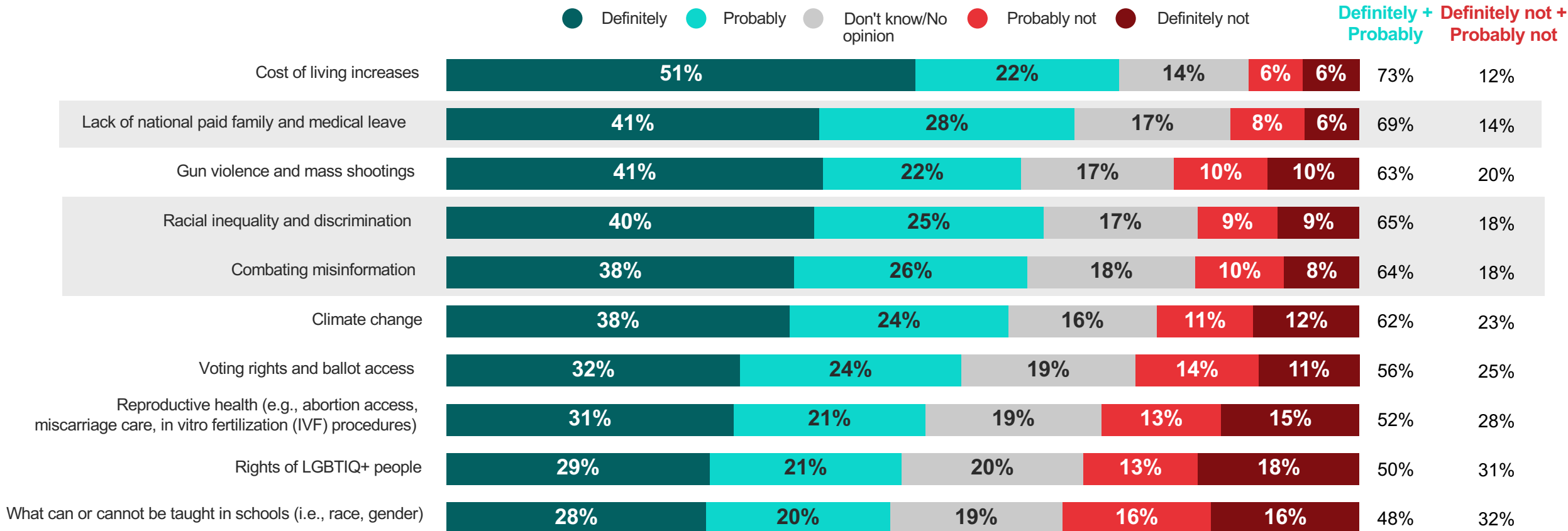
\*Questions were split sampled (n=1,110/1,094; MOE: 3%)  
Total Impact = Significant impact + Somewhat of an impact



## CONSUMER EXPECTATIONS FOR COMPANIES

Two-thirds of adults say companies should take action to address *paid family and medical leave* (69%), *racial inequality* (65%), and *misinformation* (64%), compared to fewer than 20% who say companies should not do this.

In your opinion, should companies take action to address the social issues below?



## CONSUMER EXPECTATIONS FOR COMPANIES

More specifically, younger generations are more likely than older generations to say companies should take action to address issues like *reproductive health, rights of LGBTIQ+ people, and censorship in schools.*

In your opinion, should companies take action to address the social issues below?

**% PROBABLY + DEFINITELY**

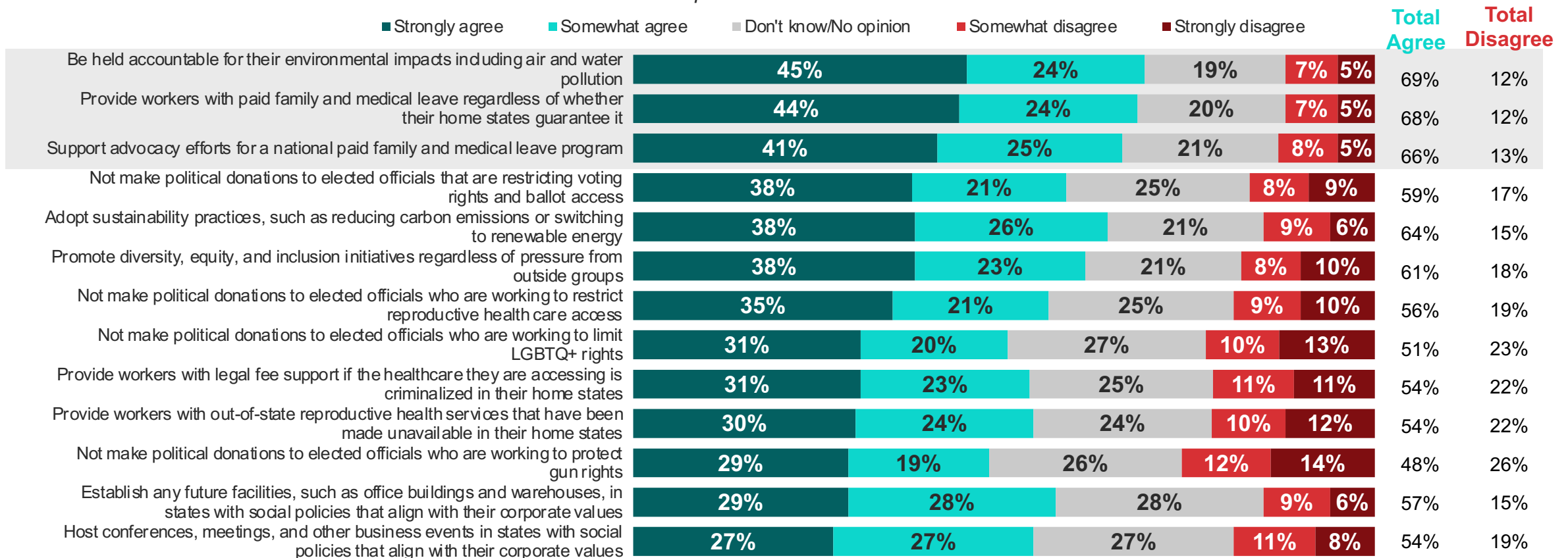
Demographic	Cost of living increases	Lack of national paid family and medical leave	Racial inequality and discrimination	Combating misinformation	Gun violence and mass shootings	Climate change	Voting rights and ballot access	Reproductive health (e.g., abortion access, miscarriage care, in vitro fertilization (IVF) procedures)	Rights of LGBTIQ+ people	What can or cannot be taught in schools (i.e., race, gender)
Adults	73%	69%	65%	64%	63%	62%	56%	52%	50%	49%
Gender: Male	75%	70%	64%	65%	63%	62%	58%	53%	50%	50%
Gender: Female	72%	68%	66%	62%	63%	61%	55%	52%	50%	47%
GenZers: 1997-2012	69%	70%	61%	63%	63%	66%	57%	62%	56%	55%
Millennials: 1981-1996	69%	69%	67%	61%	65%	62%	57%	56%	50%	52%
GenXers: 1965-1980	70%	65%	61%	58%	60%	57%	54%	49%	48%	50%
Baby Boomers: 1946-1964	82%	70%	68%	70%	63%	62%	57%	46%	47%	42%
Ethnicity: White (Non-Hispanic)	75%	67%	64%	64%	60%	58%	54%	47%	47%	44%
Ethnicity: Hispanic	69%	68%	65%	61%	66%	68%	59%	58%	57%	54%
Ethnicity: Black (Non-Hispanic)	72%	73%	73%	68%	70%	69%	63%	64%	57%	60%



## CONSUMER EXPECTATIONS FOR COMPANIES

Adults are more than five times more likely to agree companies should *provide workers with paid family and medical leave (68%)* and *support advocacy efforts for a national paid family and medical leave program (66%)*. The majority also agree companies should be held accountable for their environmental impacts.

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?  
Companies should...



Some descriptions not displayed for brevity.

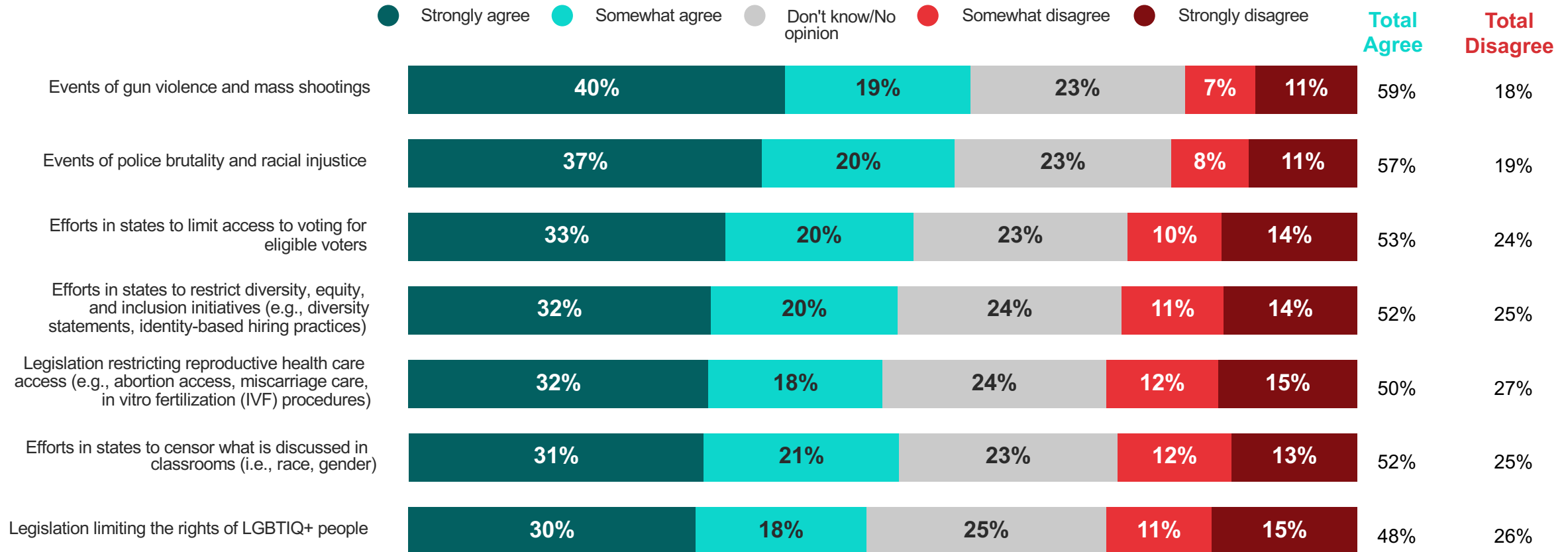
Total Agree = Strongly agree + Somewhat agree

Total Disagree = Strongly disagree + Somewhat disagree

## CONSUMER EXPECTATIONS FOR COMPANIES

By at least a 2:1 margin, adults agree companies should oppose each of the tested social justice issues—especially *events of gun violence (59%)* and *racial injustice (57%)*.

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?  
Companies should **oppose**...

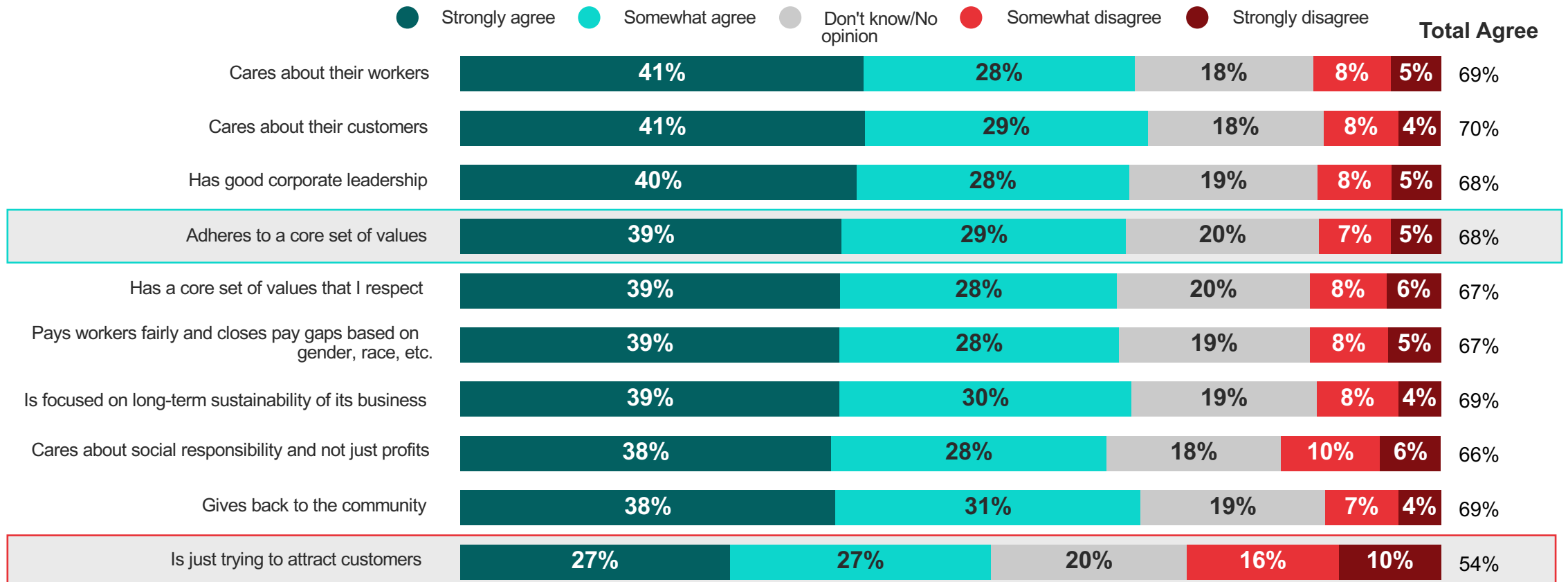


Total Agree = Strongly agree + Somewhat agree  
Total Disagree = Strongly disagree + Somewhat disagree

## CONSUMER EXPECTATIONS FOR COMPANIES

If a company publicly speaks out or takes actions to promote social justice, adults think the company *adheres to a core set of values* (68%). However, many also think the company is *just trying to attract customers* (54%).

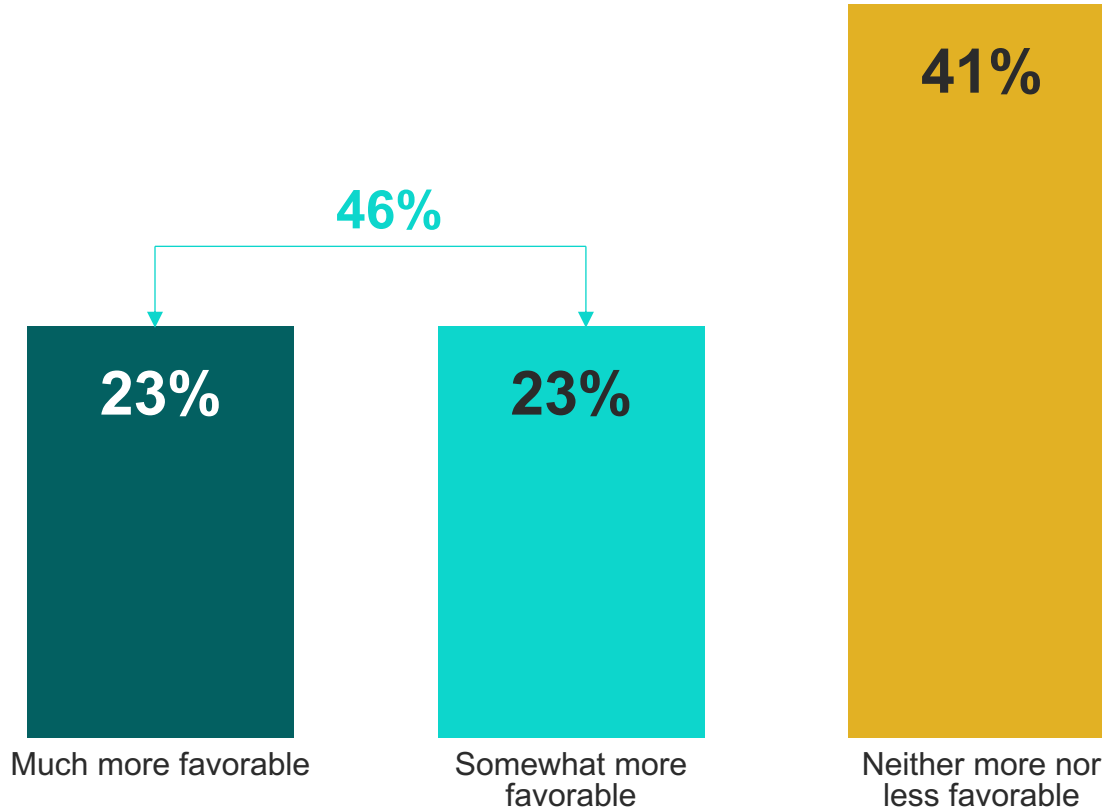
If a company publicly speaks out or takes actions to promote social justice, indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.  
I would think that the company...



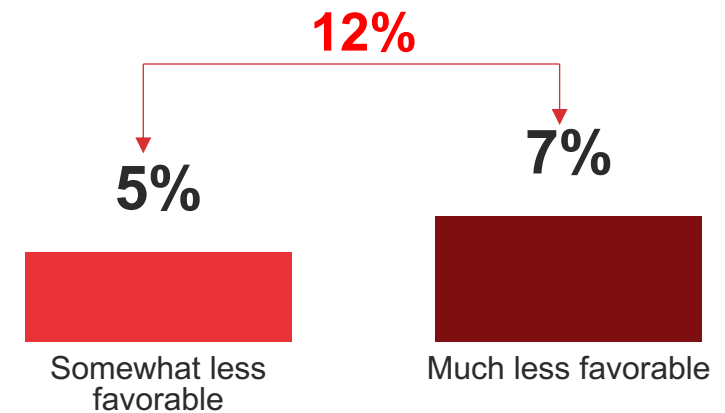
## CONSUMER EXPECTATIONS FOR COMPANIES

Nearly half (46%) of adults say knowing that a company publicly promotes social justice would make them more favorable towards that company, compared to just 12% who say it would make them feel less favorable.

Does knowing that a company or brand publicly promotes social justice make you more or less favorable towards that company?



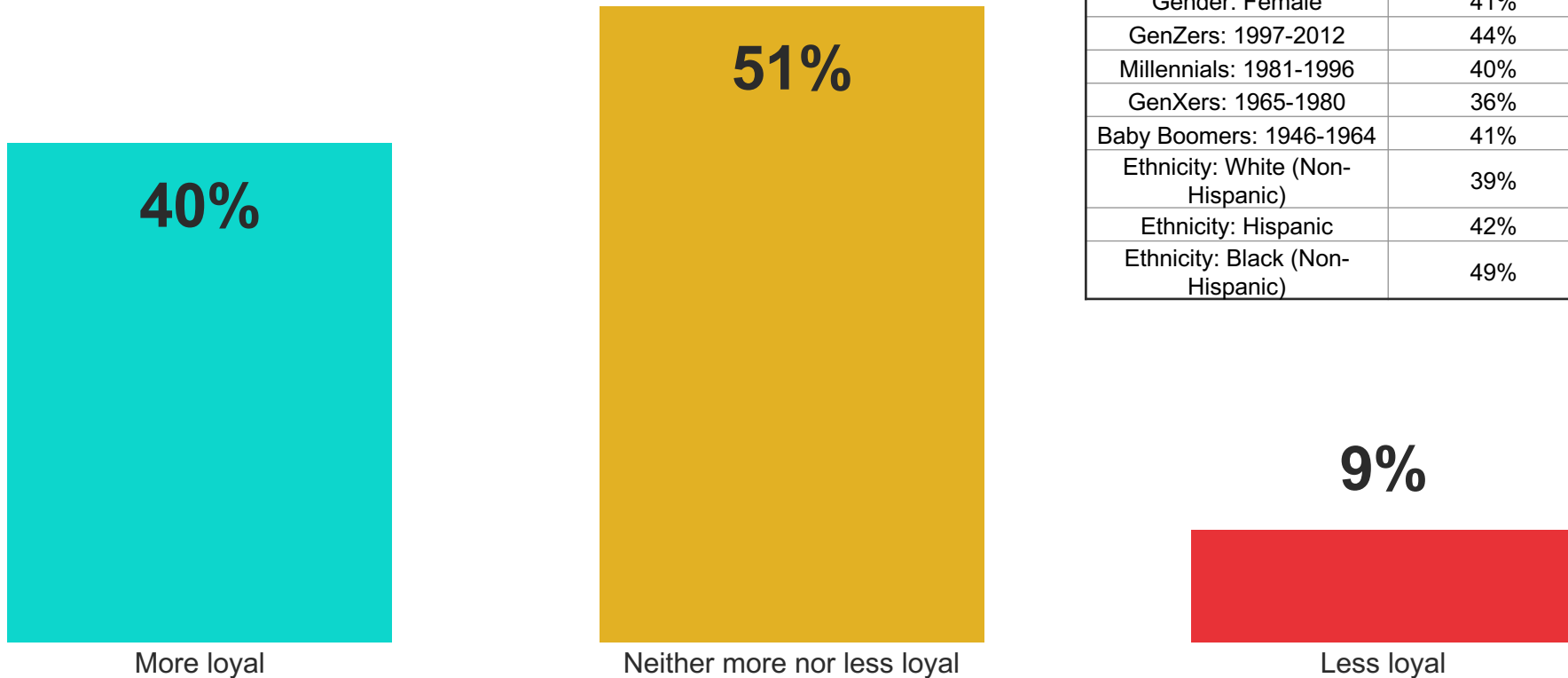
Demographic	% More Favorable
Gender: Male	48%
Gender: Female	45%
GenZers: 1997-2012	50%
Millennials: 1981-1996	48%
GenXers: 1965-1980	40%
Baby Boomers: 1946-1964	48%
Ethnicity: White (Non-Hispanic)	43%
Ethnicity: Hispanic	53%
Ethnicity: Black (Non-Hispanic)	49%



## CONSUMER EXPECTATIONS FOR COMPANIES

By a 4:1 margin, adults say they would feel more loyal (40%) towards a company that publicly promotes social justice than less loyal (9%).

Generally speaking, would you feel more or less loyal towards a company that publicly promotes social justice?



Demographic	% More Loyal	% Less Loyal
Gender: Male	39%	12%
Gender: Female	41%	6%
GenZers: 1997-2012	44%	9%
Millennials: 1981-1996	40%	5%
GenXers: 1965-1980	36%	10%
Baby Boomers: 1946-1964	41%	12%
Ethnicity: White (Non-Hispanic)	39%	10%
Ethnicity: Hispanic	42%	10%
Ethnicity: Black (Non-Hispanic)	49%	4%

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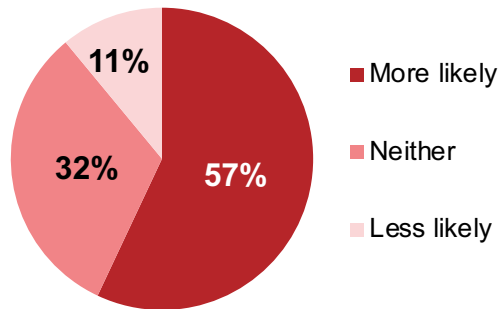




# REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CARE

**Two-thirds (68%)** of adults say it is **important** for their state to have social policies that promote social justice related to reproductive health care. Adults are more than **twice as likely** to say they would **prefer to live in a state where abortion is legal and accessible (53%)** than where it is illegal (22%).

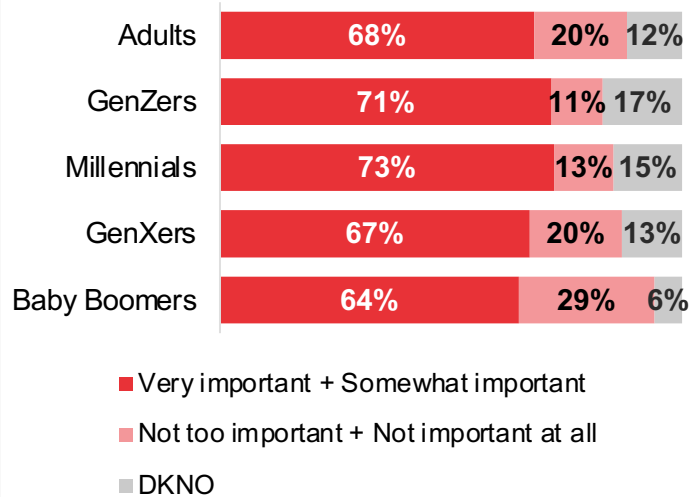
You indicated you are likely to relocate in the next two years. Would each of the following factors make you more or less likely to want to move to a given state?\*



*The state has strong laws **protecting reproductive health care access***

\*Among adults likely to relocate in the next two years

How important is it to you, if at all, for your state to have social policies that promote social justice related to reproductive health care?

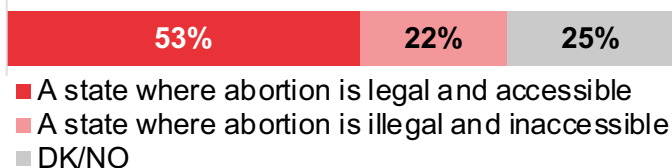


If you were to (or currently do) live in a state where abortion is illegal and inaccessible, how concerned would you be, or are you, if at all, about the following?

% CONCERNED	
Seeking urgent medical care if unexpected pregnancy complications arise that put my life or my partner's life at serious risk	68%
Me or my partner being criminally charged or going to prison for having an abortion in a state where it is illegal	65%
Having enough money for me or my partner to travel out of state for an abortion	63%
Being able to take time off work for me or my partner to travel out of state for an abortion	62%
Me or my partner being reported to authorities if suspected of having an abortion	62%
Me or my partner being forced to continue with an unintended pregnancy	62%

\*Among GenZers, n=397

Which of the following, if any, would you prefer to live in?



**60%**

Agree companies should **not make political donations to elected officials who are working to restrict reproductive health care access**

**60%**

Agree companies should **provide workers with out-of-state reproductive health services that have been made unavailable in their home states**

**60%**

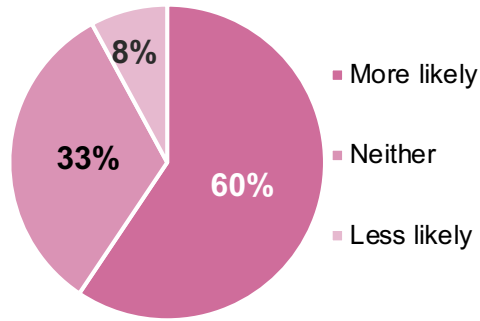
Agree companies should **provide workers with legal fee support if the healthcare they are accessing is criminalized in their home states**



# CAREGIVING & CHILDCARE SUPPORT

**Seven-in-ten (69%)** adults say it is **important** for their state to have social policies that promote social justice related to caregiving and childcare support. By a **10:1 margin**, adults say they would **prefer to live in a state where paid family and medical leave is available (73%)** than where it is unavailable (7%). **Seven-in-ten (69%)** adults say **companies should take action** to address the lack of national paid family and medical leave.

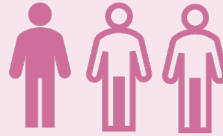
You indicated you are likely to relocate in the next two years. Would each of the following factors make you more or less likely to want to move to a given state?\*



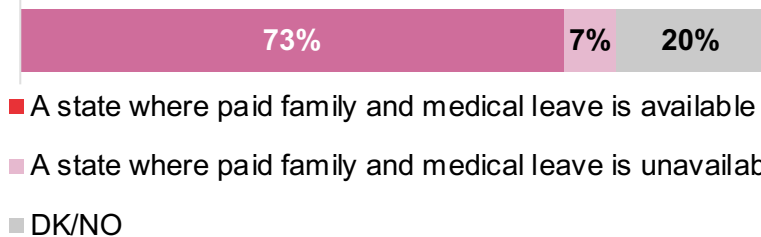
The state **has** paid family and medical leave policies

\*Among adults likely to relocate in the next two years

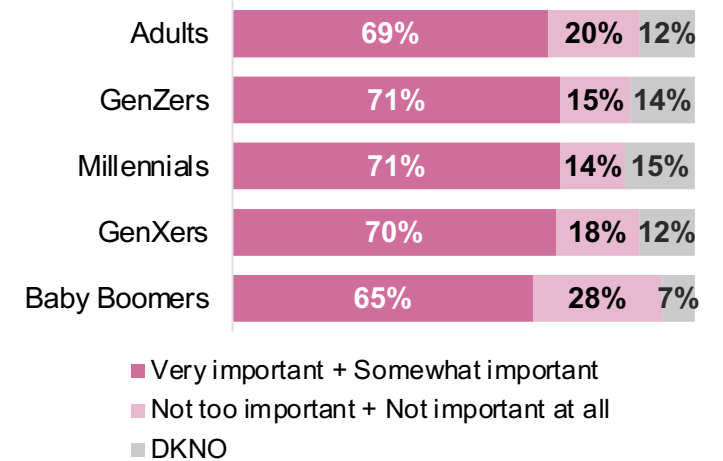
**One-in-three (35%)** adults are parents and/or caregivers to elderly or disabled family members



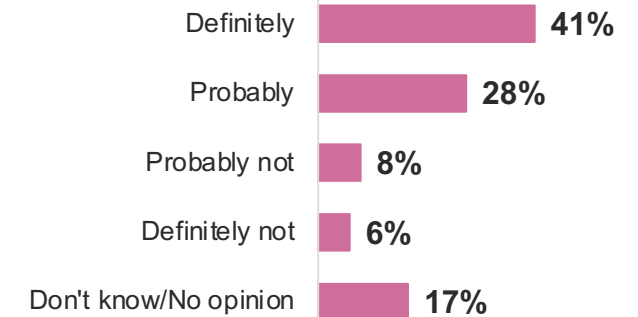
Which of the following, if any, would you prefer to live in?



How important is it to you, if at all, for your state to have social policies that promote social justice related to caregiving and childcare support?



In your opinion, should companies take action to address the lack of national paid family and medical leave?



**69%**

Agree companies should **provide workers with paid family and medical leave regardless of whether their home states guarantee it**

**67%**

Agree companies should **support advocacy efforts for a national paid family and medical leave program**

\*Among caregivers, n=782

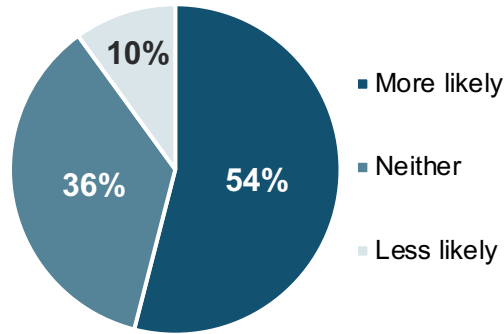




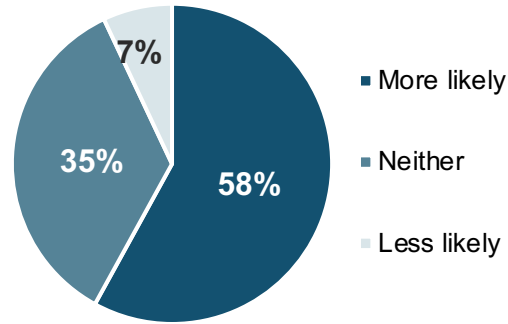
# VOTING RIGHTS & BALLOT ACCESS

**Three-fourths (77%)** of adults say it is **important** for their state to have social policies that promote social justice related to voting rights and ballot access. Nearly **three-in-five (56%)** adults say **companies should take action** to address voting rights and ballot access.

You indicated you are likely to relocate in the next two years. Would each of the following factors make you more or less likely to want to move to a given state?



The state has **permissive voting laws**, such as laws expanding early voting and voting by mail



The state **requires employers to provide paid time off to vote**

\*Among adults likely to relocate in the next two years

## 61%

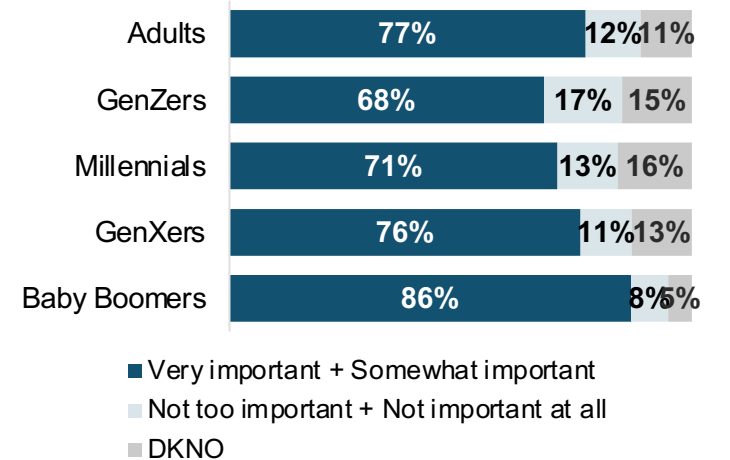
Agree companies should **not make political donations to elected officials that are restricting voting rights and ballot access**

## 56%

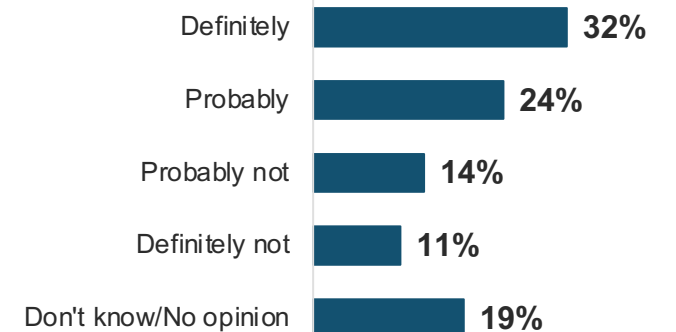
Agree companies should **oppose efforts in states to limit access to voting for eligible voters**

\*Among employed adults, n=949

How important is it to you, if at all, for your state to have social policies that promote social justice related to voting rights and ballot access?



In your opinion, should companies take action to address voting rights and ballot access?

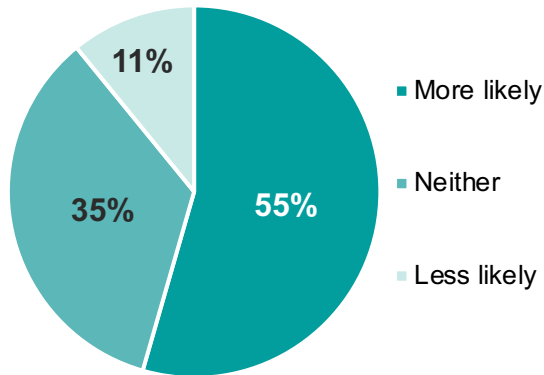




# RACIAL INEQUALITY & DISCRIMINATION

Nearly three-fourths (72%) of adults say it is **important** for their state to have social policies that promote social justice related to racial inequality and discrimination. **Two-thirds (65%)** of adults say **companies should take action** to address racial inequality and discrimination.

You indicated you are likely to relocate in the next two years. Would each of the following factors make you more or less likely to want to move to a given state?\*



The state **does not have laws restricting diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives** (e.g., diversity statements at public universities, identity-based hiring practices)

\*Among adults likely to relocate in the next two years Questions were split sampled (n=334/367)

60%

Agree companies should **oppose** events of police brutality and racial injustice

57%

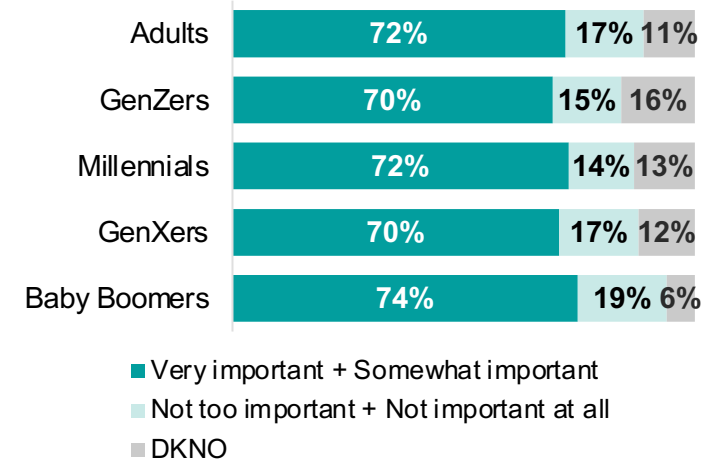
Agree companies should **oppose** efforts in states to restrict diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives (e.g., diversity statements, identity-based hiring practices)

63%

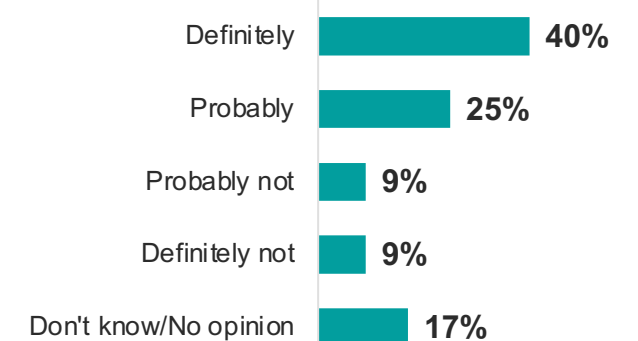
Agree companies should **promote** diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives (e.g., diversity statements, identity-based hiring practices) regardless of pressure from outside groups

\*Among employed adults, n=949

How important is it to you, if at all, for your state to have social policies that promote social justice related to racial inequality and discrimination?



In your opinion, should companies take action to address racial inequality and discrimination?



|  
**CONTENTS**

Talent Mobility & Social Policies

Employee Expectations for Companies

Consumer Expectations for Companies

Social Policies At-A-Glance

**Appendix**

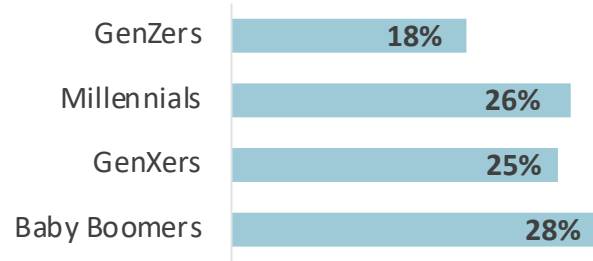


## APPENDIX

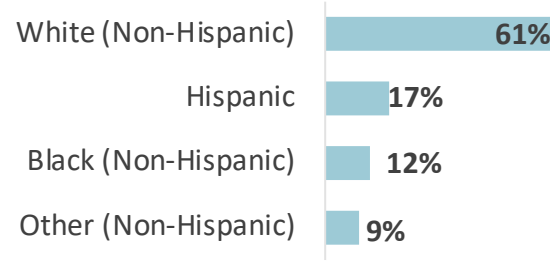
# Sample Distribution

AMONG ADULTS (n=2,204; MOE 2%)

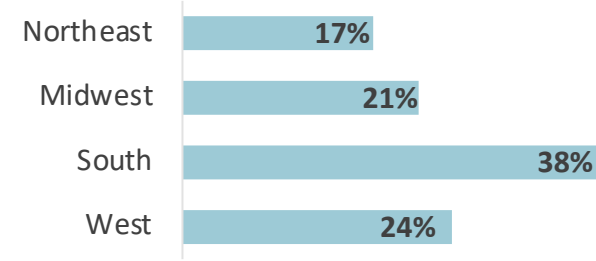
### AGE



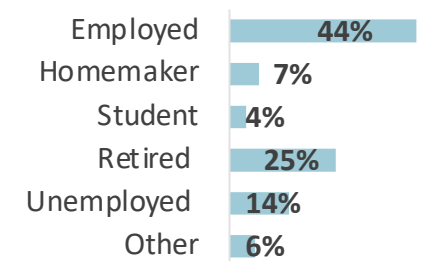
### RACE/ETHNICITY



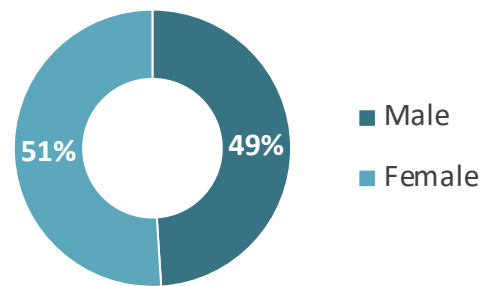
### REGION



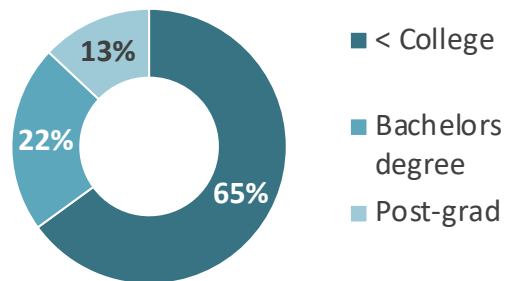
### EMPLOYMENT STATUS



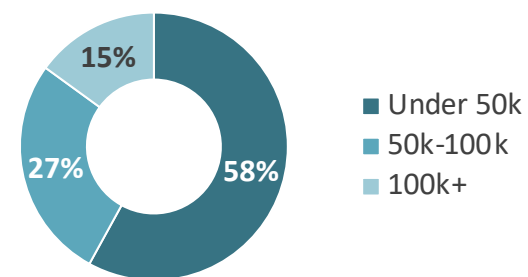
### GENDER



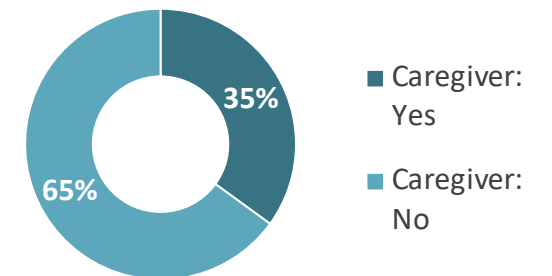
### EDUCATION



### INCOME



### CAREGIVER STATUS

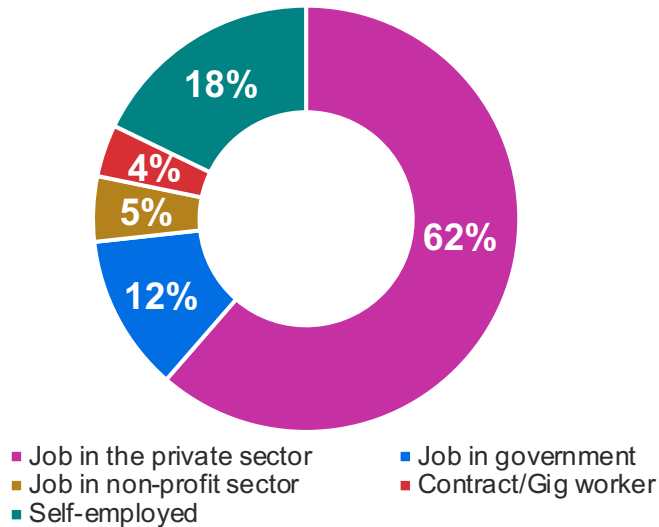


## APPENDIX

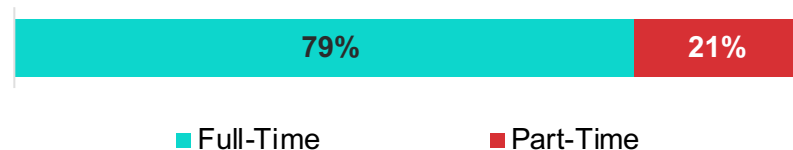
Employed adults tend to work in the private sector (62%), full-time (79%), in-person (58%), and at companies with 500 or fewer employees (52%).

AMONG EMPLOYED ADULTS (n=949; MOE 3%)

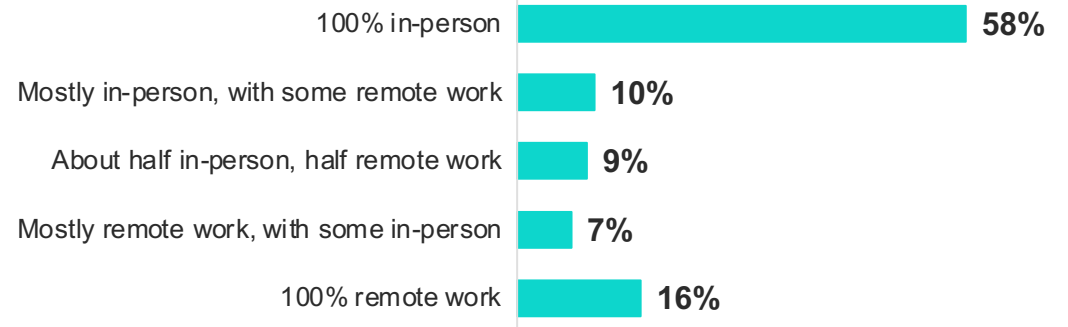
How would you describe your present employment situation?



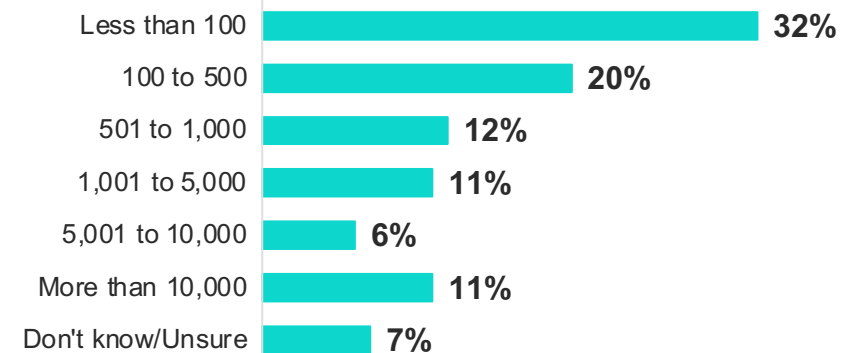
Would you consider your job full-time or part-time?



Which of the following best describes how you currently do your primary job?



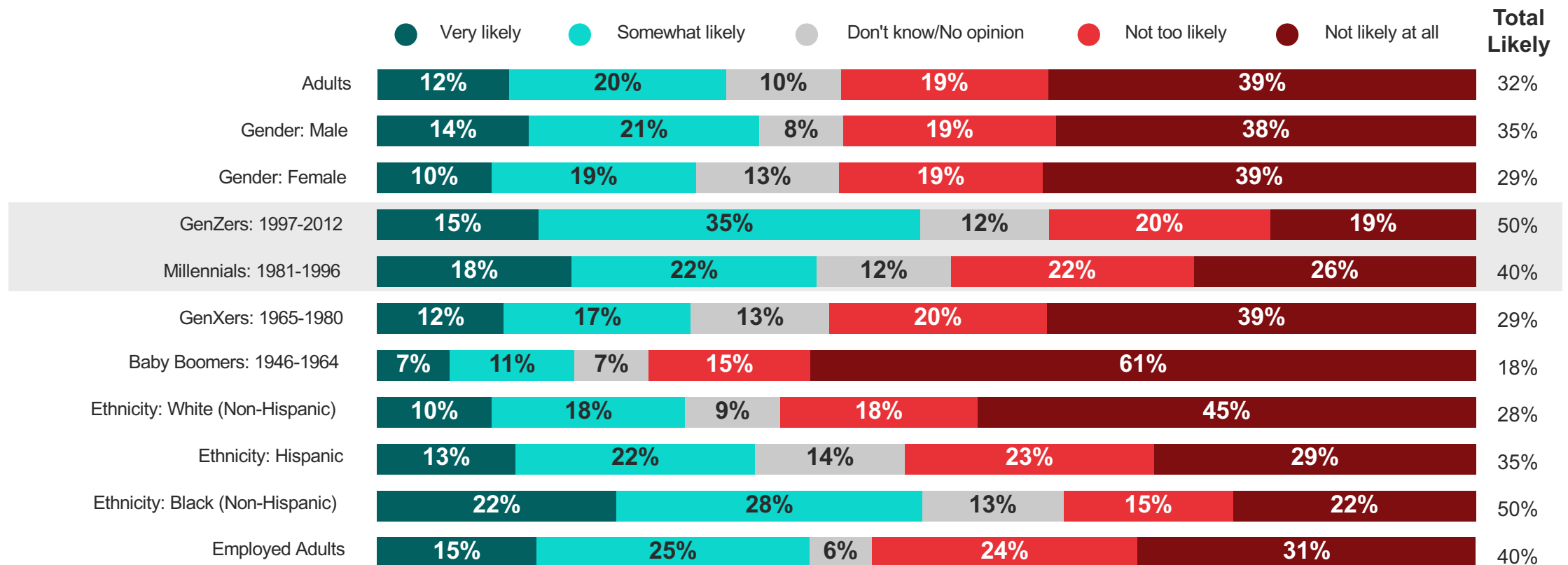
To the best of your knowledge, how many employees are currently employed by the business where you work? *Include the total number of employees at all locations and departments for your business.*



## APPENDIX

# Half (50%) of GenZers and 40% of Millennials say they are likely to relocate in the next two years.

How likely, if at all, are you to relocate in the next two years? *This can refer to any change of your residential address, even if the move is local.*

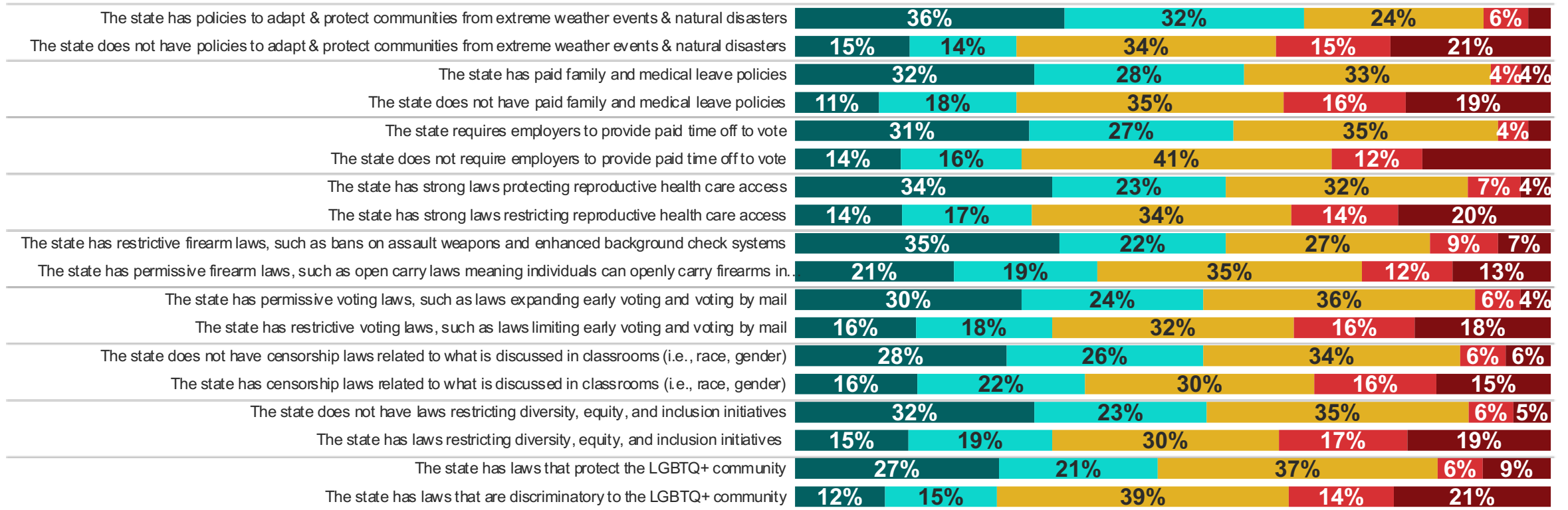


## APPENDIX

# You indicated you are likely to relocate in the next two years. Would each of the following factors make you more or less likely to want to move to a given state?\*

### AMONG ADULTS LIKELY TO RELOCATE

■ Much more likely    ■ Somewhat more likely    ■ Neither more nor less likely    ■ Somewhat less likely    ■ Much less likely

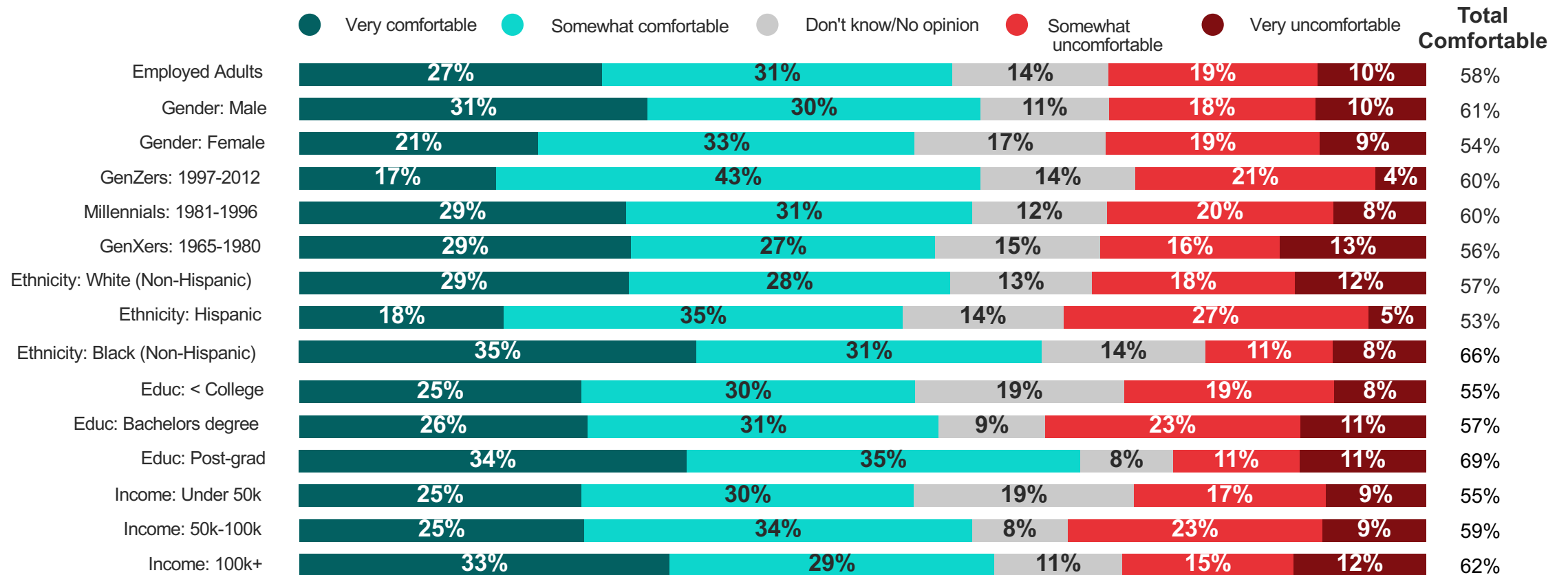


\*Question was split sampled (n=334/367; MOE: 5%)

## APPENDIX

# How comfortable or uncomfortable do you feel expressing your individual point of view on social issues in your workplace?

AMONG EMPLOYED ADULTS (n=949; MOE 3%)







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