



# Young LGBTQ Women's Participation in Democracy

Findings based on a national survey of LGBTQ women ages 18-35  
June 2023

# What We Did:

- **National online survey of 800 LGBTQ+ women ages 18-35 (Gen Z and younger Millennials)**
- Conducted May 15-29, 2023
- The margin of error for the LGBTQ+ women sample is +/- 3.5%
- Included samples of:
  - 50 transgender women ages 18-35
  - 400 adults ages 18-35 excluding LGBTQ women
  - 100 straight women of color ages 18-35
- Some questions include split sample language experiments, where half the respondents hear one version of a question and the other half hear another version—and we control for demographic, regional, and partisan variables. We can then see what words or concepts resonate more.

# Key Findings Among LGBTQ Women

- Younger LGBTQ women are a **growing share of the electorate** and **overwhelmingly favor Democratic candidates**. It is a huge mistake not to include them as part of a voter turnout plan.
- Younger LGBTQ women also are **strongly committed to progressive change on issues** like racism, abortion, and gun control.
- Younger LGBTQ women are **not being communicated with**. They believe that older generations don't prioritize the issues that matter to young generations.
- Younger LGBTQ women are **somewhat unmotivated to vote**.
- Despite this, they are **not cynical**. They **believe in change** and want to see it.
- **Issues matter immensely**. The top issues that young LGBTQ women want to see elected officials address are **gun violence, inflation and rising prices, abortion access, LGBTQ equality, racism, the environment and climate change, and health care access**.
- While issues matter, political personalities and process do not matter to this cohort.
- **Social media**, especially TikTok, is the **primary media source** that young LGBTQ women use most frequently for information.
- Generally, and in their own lives, they see **social media playing a big role in visibility of issues or events**. Social media plays less of a role in education.

# Comparing Young LGBTQ Women to Other Young Adults

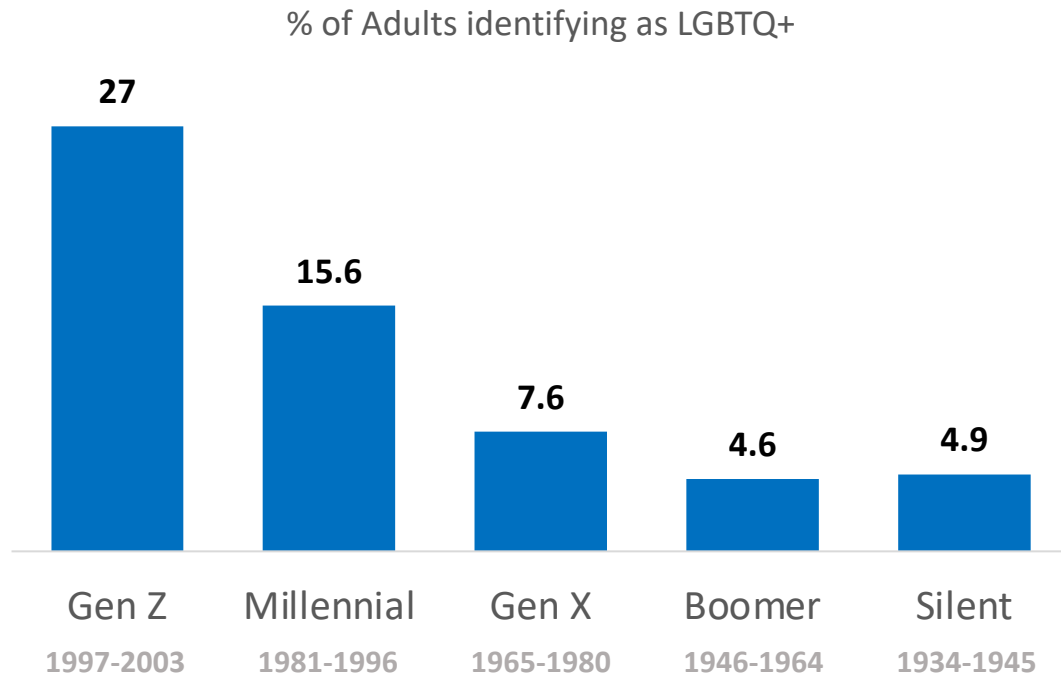
- Young adults excluding LGBTQ women are comprised of 49% straight and cisgender women, 41% straight and cisgender men, 6% LGBTQ men, 1% LGBTQ and nonbinary, and 2% other men.
- Young adults excluding LGBTQ women are **slightly less likely** than young LGBTQ women to report being **registered to vote** but are **similar** in their **likelihood to vote** and their **motivation to vote**.
- Young adults excluding LGBTQ women are **slightly more cynical about the status quo prevailing**.
- Young LGBTQ women are more intensely concerned than other young LGBTQ adults about policies related to abortion and reproductive health, LGBTQ rights, and gun safety.



# Part I: Younger LGBTQ Women are a Core Constituency

# Younger LGBTQ Voters in Elections

Nationally, Gen Z has the highest share of those who are LGBTQ followed by Millennials.<sup>1</sup>



Young voters comprise a growing share of the electorate.

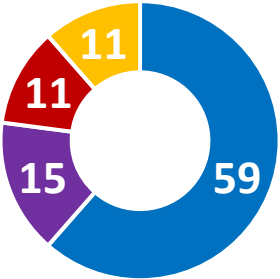
More than **16 million young people** have turned or will turn 18 between the previous general election in November 2020 and the 2024 election.<sup>2</sup> That's 4,320,000 newly eligible young LGBTQ voters.

<sup>1</sup>Source: Human Rights Campaign Foundation and Bowling Green State University analysis of Census Household Pulse Survey (Phases 3.2 – 3.5)

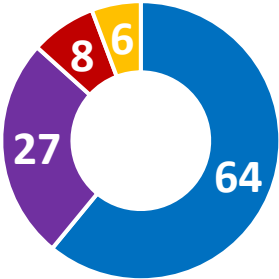
<sup>2</sup>Source: [Tufts University Tisch College · CIRCLE](#)

# Younger LGBTQ women are a very solid Democratic base, comparable to other universes that are often talked about and part of turnout models.

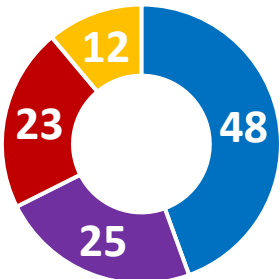
Young LGBTQ women



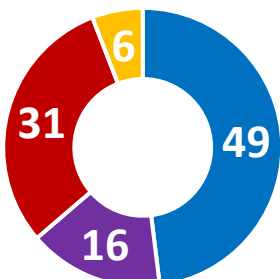
Young Black women



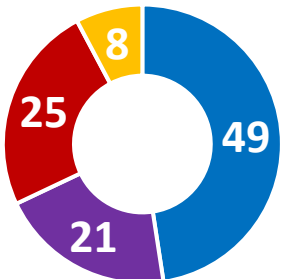
Young Latinas



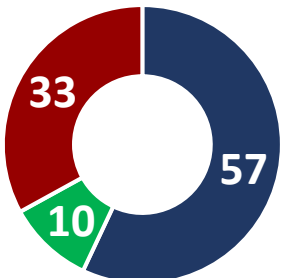
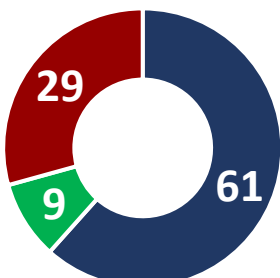
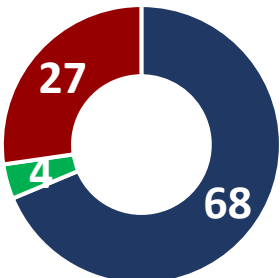
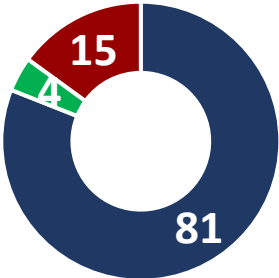
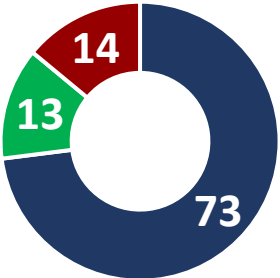
Young college-educated women



Young unmarried women



Party identification: Democrat (blue), Republican (red), Independent (purple), Not sure/refused (yellow)



2020 vote: Biden (dark blue), Trump (red), Someone else (green)

# Across racial groups, young LGBTQ women are overwhelmingly Biden voters and Democrats with left-leaning or independent ideologies. Young Black and Latina LGBTQ women are especially likely to self-identify as ideologically independent.

## Young LGBTQ women

Race/Ethnicity	
White	<b>55</b>
Black/African American	<b>20</b>
Hispanic/Latino/a	<b>17</b>
Asian American or Pacific Islander	<b>8</b>
Native or Indigenous American	<b>4</b>
Middle Eastern	<b>2</b>

73% voted for Biden

59% Democrat ID

43% liberal ID  
 31% progressive ID  
 17% leftist ID  
 14% left-wing ID  
 39% independent ID

## Young Black LGBTQ women

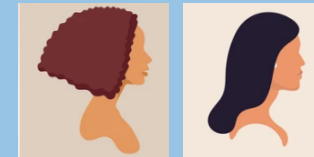


68% voted for Biden

54% Democrat ID

32% liberal ID  
 23% progressive ID  
 8% leftist ID  
 6% left-wing  
 47% independent ID

## Young Latinas LGBTQ women



77% voted for Biden

63% Democrat ID

40% liberal ID  
 31% progressive ID  
 17% leftist ID  
 10% left-wing  
 47% independent ID

## Young white LGBTQ women



72% voted for Biden

59% Democrat ID

46% liberal ID  
 34% progressive ID  
 19% leftist ID  
 16% left-wing  
 34% independent ID

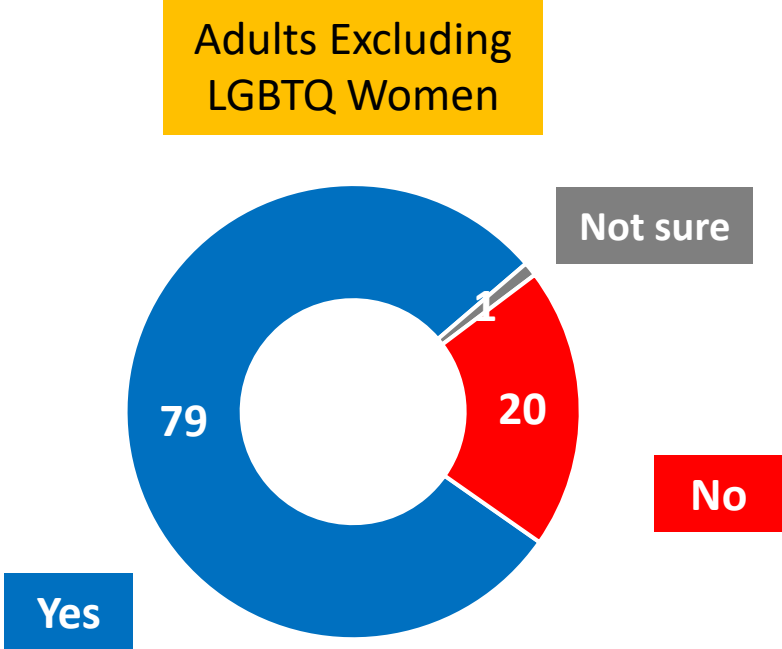
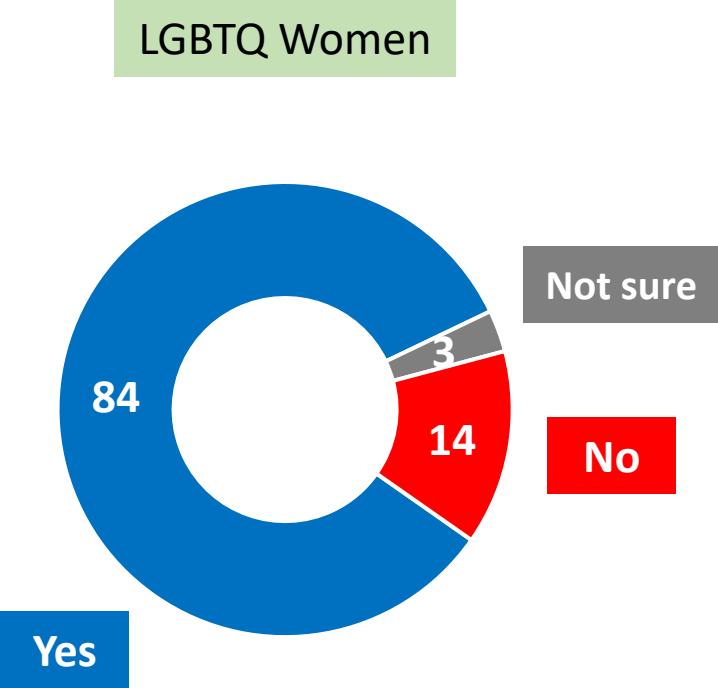




## **Part II: Gen Z and Millennial LGBTQ Women and opportunities for greater participation in Democracy**

# Over 8 in 10 young LGBTQ women report being registered to vote. Other young adults are slightly less likely to report being registered.

Are you registered to vote?

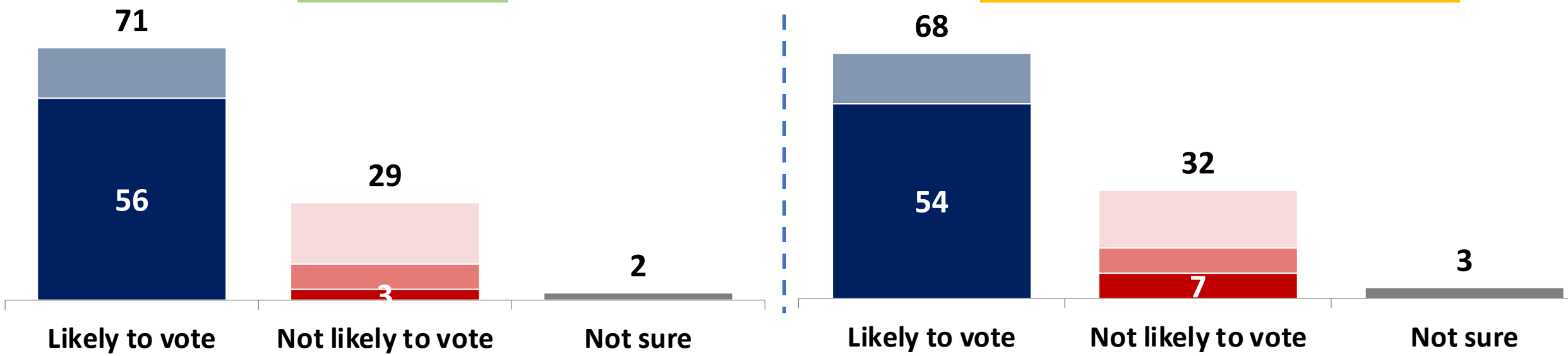


# Only slightly more than half of LGBTQ women say they are almost certain to vote in 2024. Young adults excluding LGBTQ women are similar in their likelihood to vote.

How likely are you to vote in the November 2024 election for President, Senate, Congress, and other offices?

LGBTQ women

All adults excluding LGBTQ women



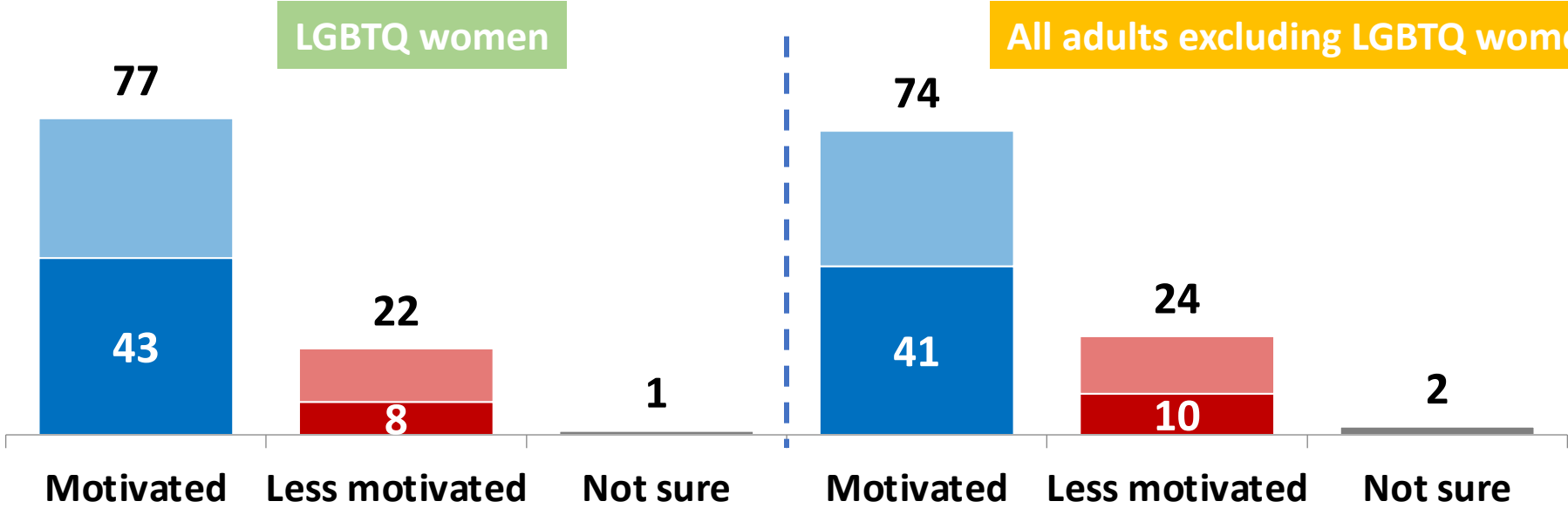
LGBTQ Women	Registered to vote	Not registered to vote
Almost Certain	65	9
Likely	80	21
Not Likely	20	79
Not sure	1	5



Adults	Registered to vote	Not registered to vote
Almost Certain	65	9
Likely	79	22
Not Likely	21	78
Not sure	1	10

# Younger LGBTQ women’s intense motivation to vote is low and similar to other young adults.

Some people feel very motivated to vote while others don't feel motivated at all, and many are in between. How about you -- how motivated are you to vote?



	Registered to vote	Not registered to vote
Very motivated	50	6
Motivated	85	33
Less Motivated	15	62
Not sure	0	5

- Not at all motivated
- A little motivated
- Somewhat motivated
- Very motivated

	Registered to vote	Not registered to vote
Very motivated	50	8
Motivated	84	34
Less Motivated	15	58
Not sure	0	8

# Gen Z and Millennial LGBTQ women are not cynical, they believe in change and want to see it. Other young adults have similar attitudes on using collective power and the possibility of change but are slightly more cynical about the status quo prevailing.

Which statement comes closer to your views, even if neither is exactly right?

Even when we come together and use our collective power, the powerful few do not listen, and we don't have any impact on our government.

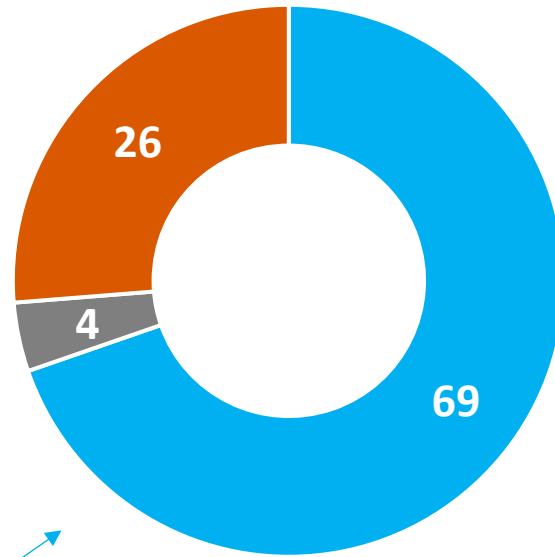
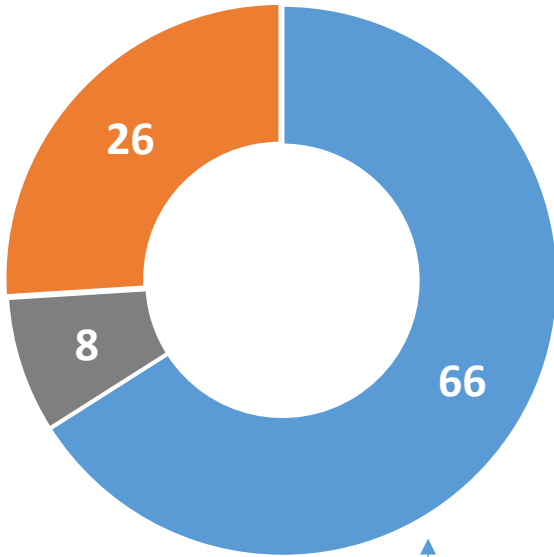
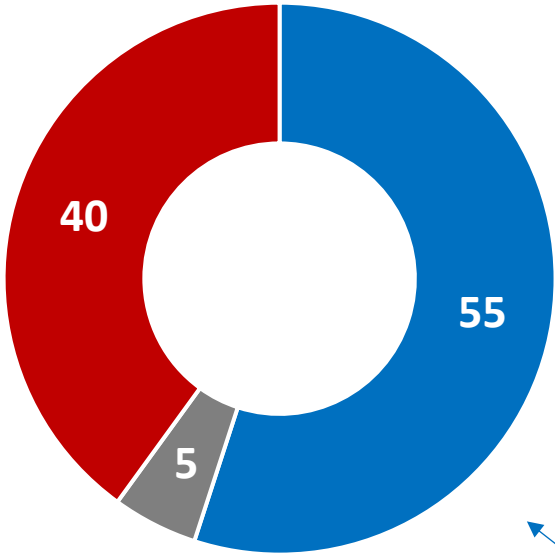
When we come together and use our collective power, we can make a real change within our country and our government.

The status quo always prevails, and nothing ever really changes that much.

We are in a period of change where old ways are being replaced and new ways are forming.

The forces in favor of keeping things the same are too powerful and strong.

Change is always possible.



All adults excluding LGBTQ women

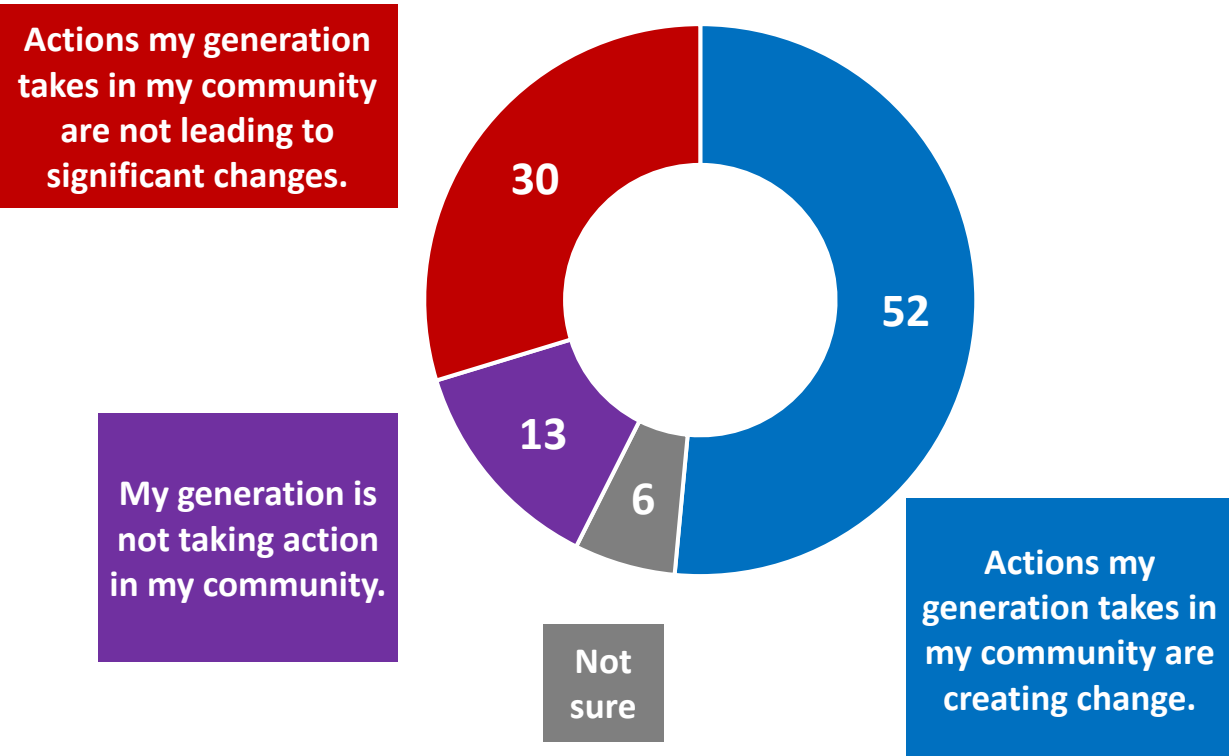
51% we can make real change

60% in a period of change

70% change always possible

# Over half believe their generation is creating change in their communities. Young LGBTQ women disagree by two to one that the window of opportunity for real change has closed.

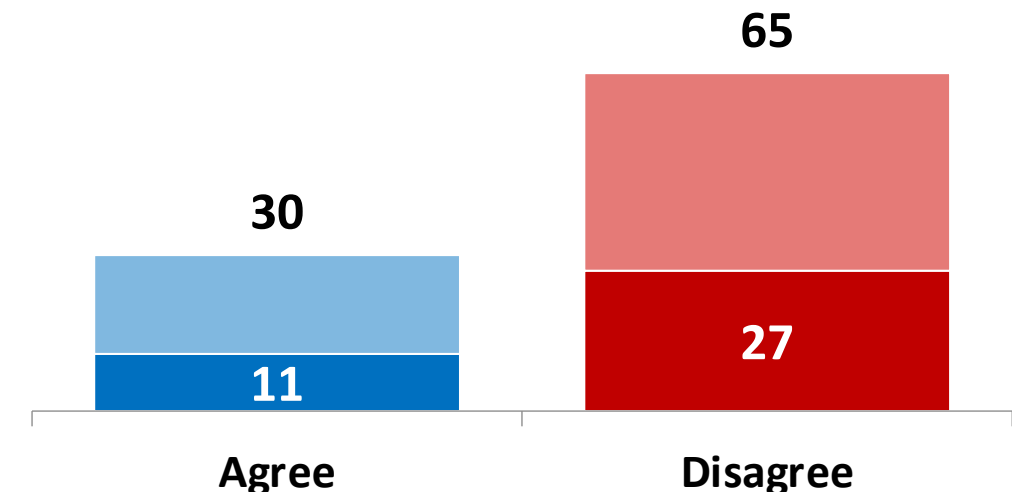
Which statement is closer to your opinion?



Thinking about your place in the world, how much do you agree or disagree with the following?\*

\*Split sample

Our window of opportunity for real change has closed.



■ Somewhat agree  
■ Strongly agree  
■ Somewhat disagree  
■ Strongly disagree

# Addressing a missed opportunity...

## Finding

Over 8 in 10 young LGBTQ women report being registered to vote, but just over half say they are almost certain to vote in 2024.



Younger LGBTQ women's intense motivation to vote is low.



Younger LGBTQ women are not cynical, they believe in change and are realistic that it takes time.



Over half believe that actions their generation takes are creating change in their communities.



## Recommendation/Strategy

**Include LGBTQ women ages 18-35 in mobilization programs.**

**Mobilization matters, but so do the methods for engaging and communicating with young LGBTQ women. Start now.**

**Tap into their desire for change and give them agency to create change as a generation.**

**Show how their generation can create change by turning out to vote and communicating with their elected officials about the issues that matter most.**

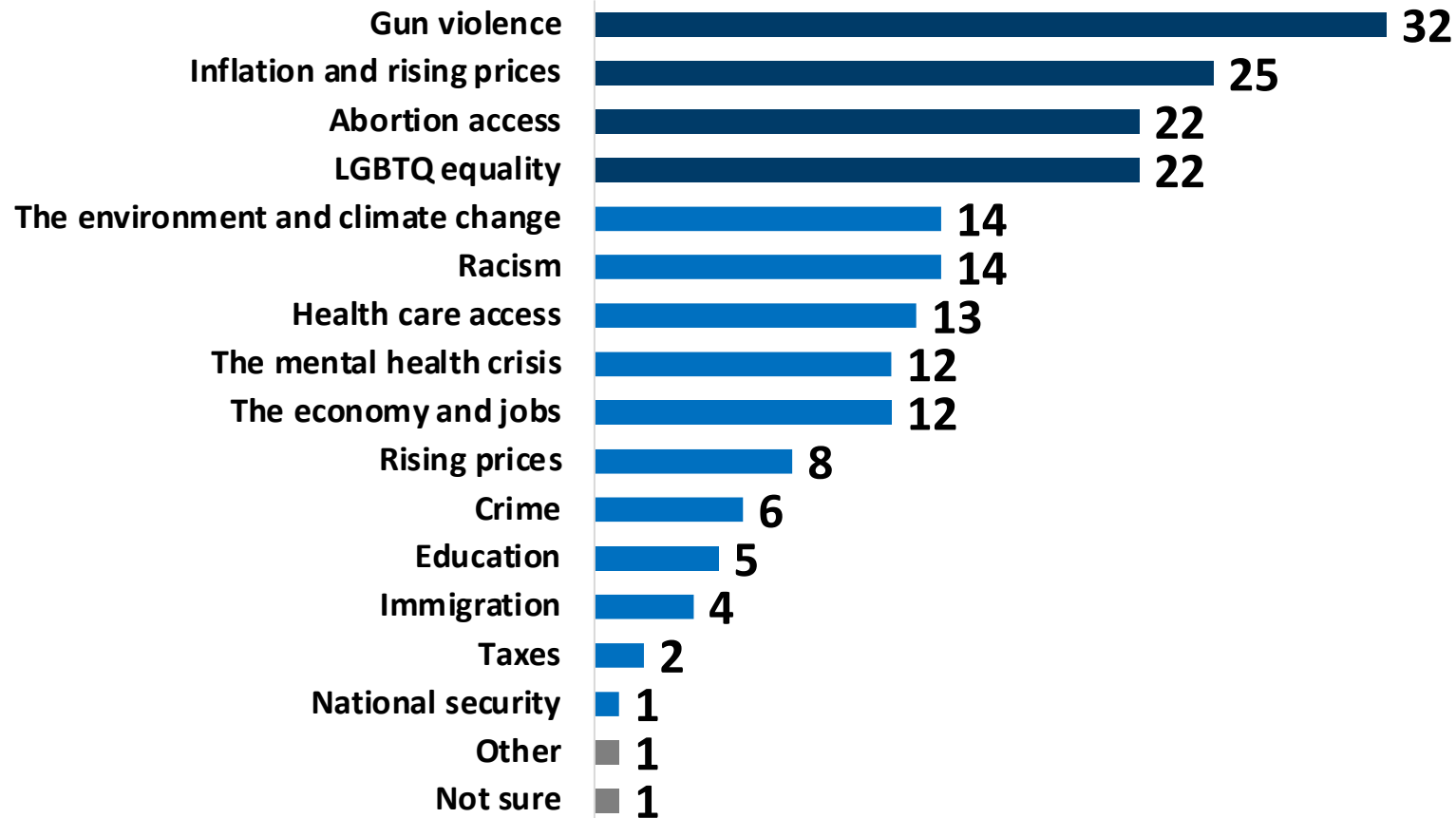


# Part III: How to Engage and Communicate with Younger LGBTQ Women



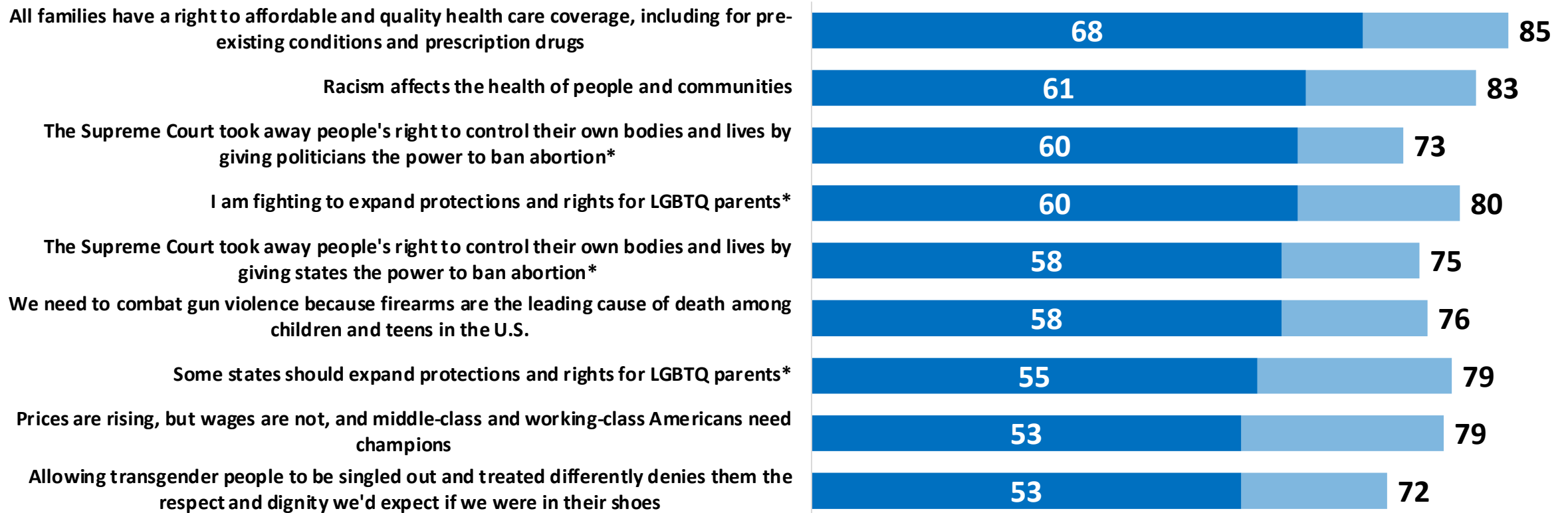
# Issues matter immensely to young LGBTQ women. They have a robust issue agenda that includes addressing gun violence, inflation and rising prices, abortion access, and LGBTQ equality.



Now, you will see a list of concerns that some people have mentioned. Please indicate which one or two you think are the most important issues for elected officials to address



# Gen Z and younger Millennial LGBTQ women are more likely to vote for a candidate who talks about and stands up for the issues they care about. This cohort cares about multiple issues at once.

For each of the following statements a candidate might make, please indicate whether it would make you more or less likely to vote for that candidate, or would it not make a difference?



 Somewhat more likely  
 Much more likely

\*Split sample

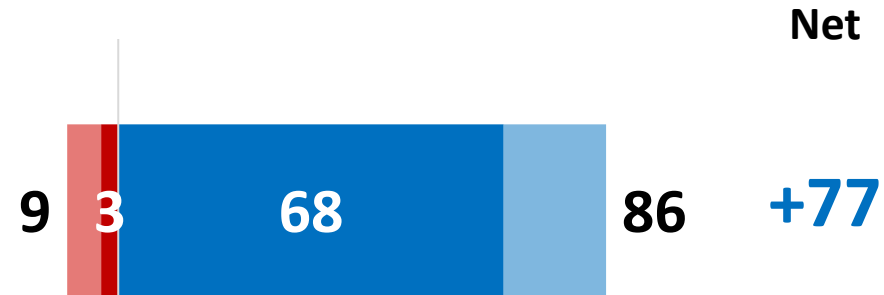
**LPAC**  
 Action Network

**LRP** LAKE RESEARCH PARTNERS  
 Strategy Precision Impact

They also strongly agree with the need for leaders and politicians who will address racism directly. White women are less likely to strongly agree to the first statement, while Black women are 10 points more likely to strongly agree. Young LGBTQ women across race are more united on the second statement.

Thinking about your place in the world, how much do you agree or disagree with the following?

People of color in America have to face many unfair challenges and often cruel realities. We need politicians to speak up about these issues, like police violence that makes Black and Brown communities unsafe\*



Strongly agree by race:  
 White – 63%  
 Black – 77%  
 Latina – 69%

Racism in America has gone on for too long in America, and it's time we have a leader who will create the systems of racial justice that are long overdue\*



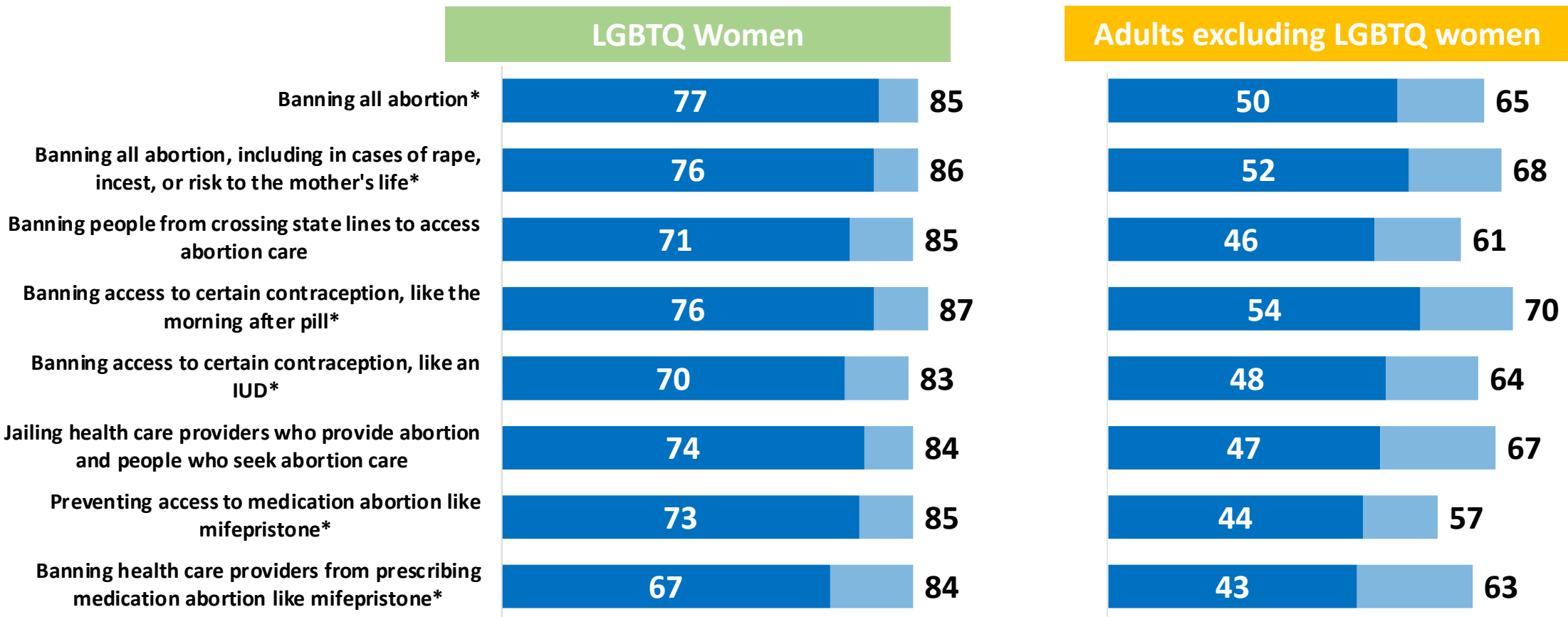
Strongly agree by race:  
 White – 68%  
 Black – 67%  
 Latina – 66%





\*Split sample

# Young LGBTQ women are intensely concerned about a range of policies to ban access and rights to abortion and birth control. They are more intensely concerned and concerned overall about these policies than all other young adults.

How concerned are you about the following policy changes that could happen in some states? [ABORTION POLICIES]



 Somewhat concerned  
 Very concerned

\*Split sample

**LPAC**  
 Action Network

**LRP** LAKE RESEARCH PARTNERS  
 Strategy Precision Impact

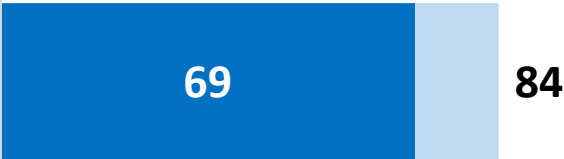
# Young LGBTQ women are also very concerned about policy changes related to transgender and LGBTQ people. They are more than twice as likely to be very concerned about overturning LGBTQ nondiscrimination protections than other young adults.

How concerned are you about the following policy changes that could happen in some states? [LGBTQ RIGHTS]

## LGBTQ Women

## Adults excluding LGBTQ women

Allowing health care providers to deny basic health care services to transgender people



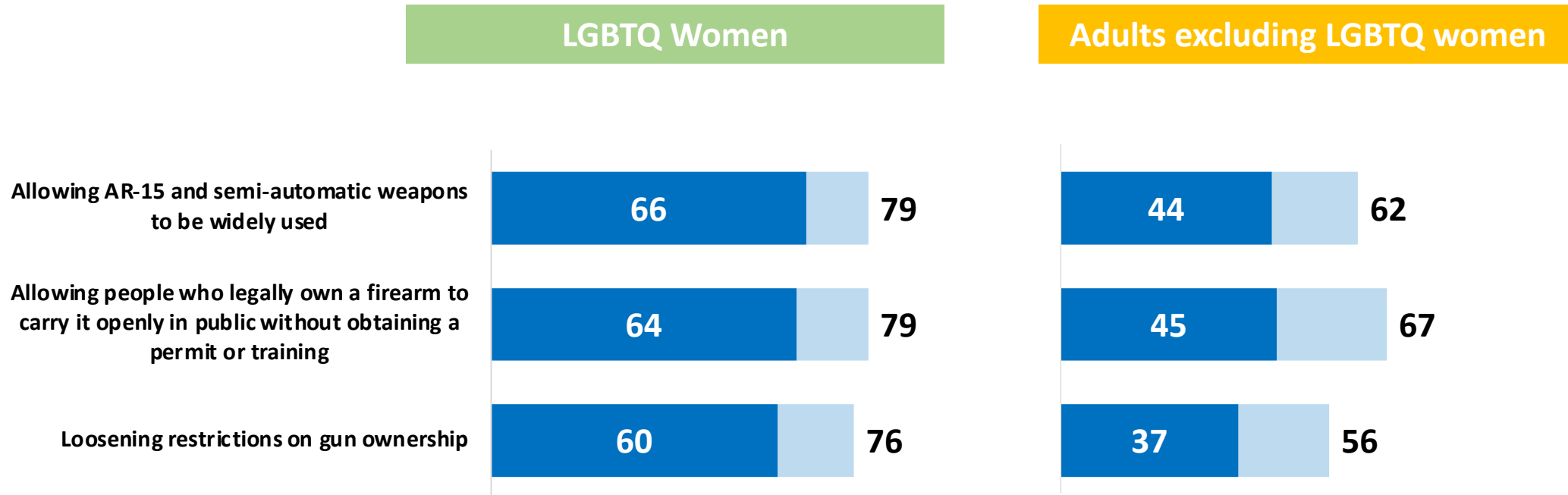
Overturning LGBTQ nondiscrimination protections in housing, employment, and public accommodations





Somewhat concerned  
 Very concerned

# At least six in ten young LGBTQ women are very concerned about policies related to firearms. Other young adults are less acutely concerned about gun policies than young LGBTQ women.

How concerned are you about the following policy changes that could happen in some states? [GUN SAFETY]



 Somewhat concerned  
 Very concerned

# Young LGBTQ women are less interested in hearing from candidates about the process or who gains control of Congress, and they are less concerned about censuring or expelling state legislators.

For each of the following statements a candidate might make, please indicate whether it would make you more or less likely to vote for that candidate, or would it not make a difference?

**It really matters who gains control of Congress in the elections next year**

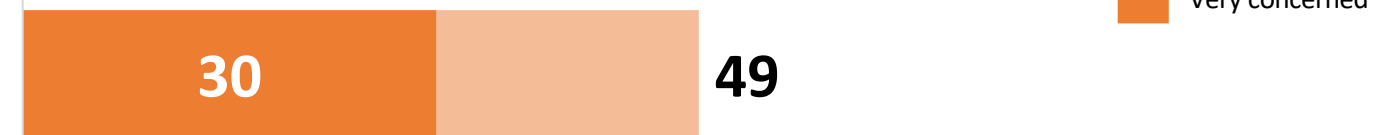


How concerned are you about the following policy changes that could happen in some states?

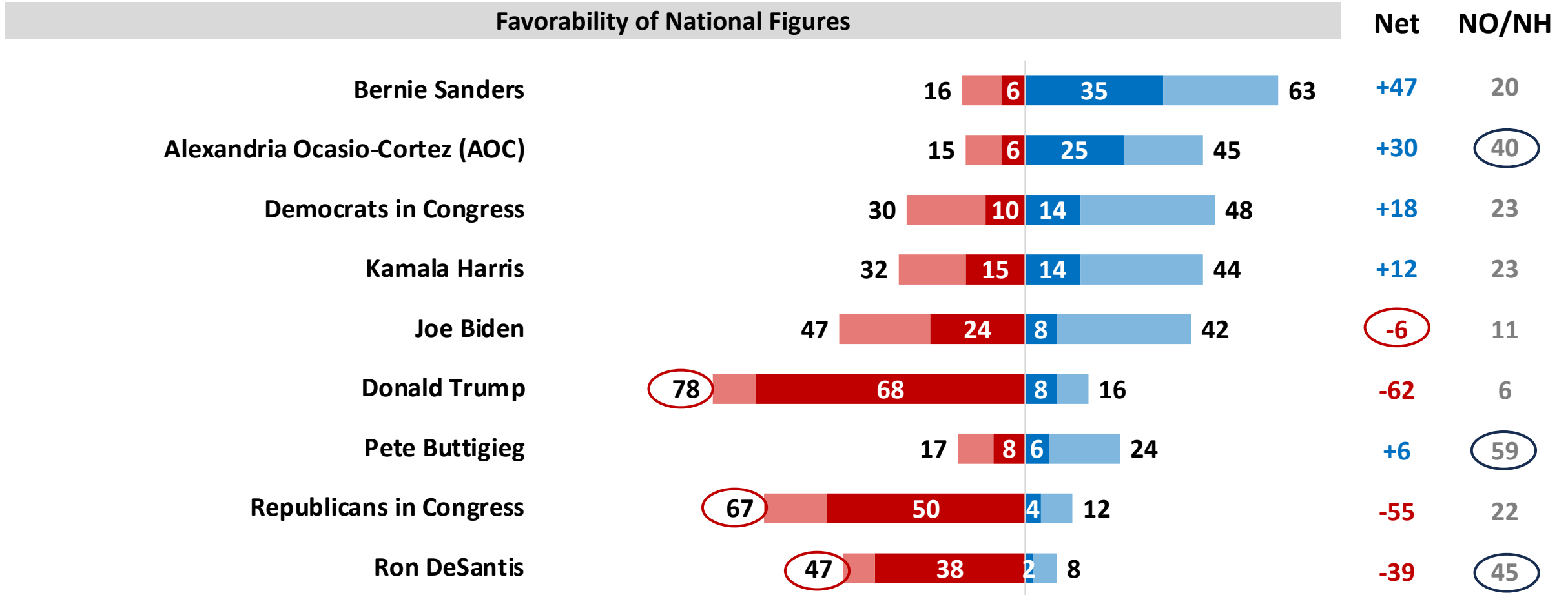
**Censuring state legislators\***



**Expelling state legislators from the legislature\***



Bernie Sanders is popular with Gen Z and younger Millennial women, however, no other national figure tested is. Biden is narrowly underwater. Harris and Democrats in Congress are above water, but many have no opinion. Trump and Republicans in Congress are very unfavorable. AOC, Pete Buttigieg, and Ron DeSantis are not as well known.



■ Somewhat favorable  
■ Very favorable  
■ Somewhat unfavorable  
■ Very unfavorable

NO/NH = No opinion/Never heard



# Young LGBTQ women primarily use social media as their media sources for information.

Which of the following media sources do you use most frequently for information?



26%

TikTok



15%

Facebook



14%

News site or app



11%

Instagram



9%

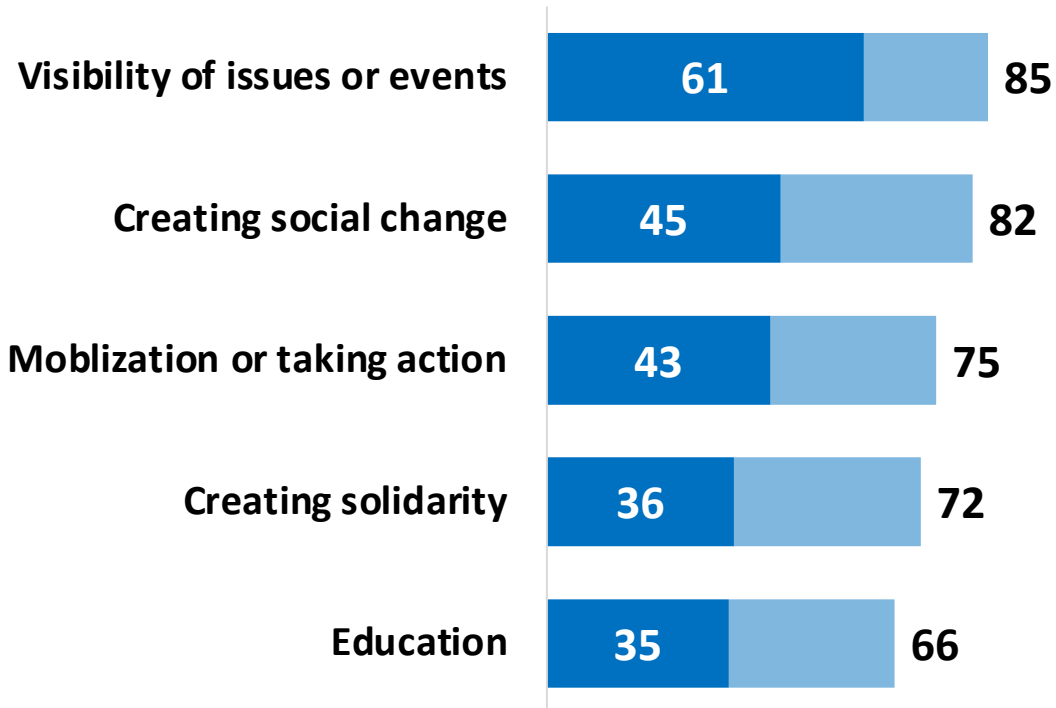
Twitter

Cable TV news, like CNN or MSNBC	4%	Local TV news outlet	4%	National newspapers	3%
Other social media	3%	Podcasts	2%	Cable TV news, like Fox News	2%
Talk radio	1%	Community newspapers	1%	Other	2%

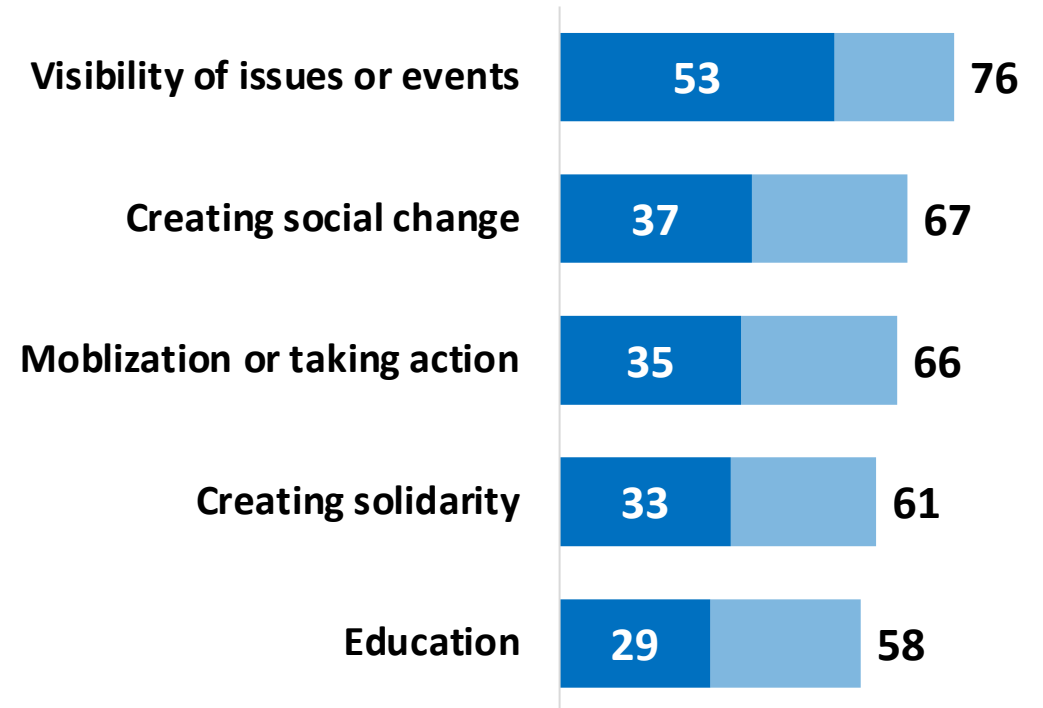
In their own lives and generally, young LGBTQ women say social media plays the biggest role in visibility of issues or events. They make a significant distinction between social media providing visibility versus education, they become aware of issues on social media but aren't necessary educated about those issues on those platforms.

What role does social media like Instagram or TikTok play in each of the following?

What role does social media play generally?\*



What role does social media play in your life specifically?\*



Somewhat of a role  
A big role

\*Split sample

# Dos and Don'ts for Engaging and Communicating with Gen Z and younger Millennial LGBTQ Women around Democracy

## Finding

The most important issues to young LGBTQ women and what they want to hear candidates talking about are gun violence, inflation and rising prices, abortion access, LGBTQ equality, racism, the environment and climate change, and health care access.

Political personalities and process do not matter as much to this cohort.

Social media is the primary source for information.

Social media has a big impact on issue and event visibility but not education.

## Recommendation/Strategy

**Issues matter and issues are not transactional. Prioritize the issues that matter to younger generations. Create coalitions with other groups that focus on the issues that matter to younger LGBTQ women.**

**Don't talk about the process, the importance of control, censoring or expelling legislators, personalities, or the horse race. It is all about the issues and elections are a means to create movement on issues.**

**Don't neglect TikTok as an avenue for reaching young LGBTQ women to get out the vote.**

**Move beyond just raising awareness with specific calls to action and highlight the difference we can all make together by registering to vote and voting.**




# Questions and Discussion

# Demographics of Young LGBTQ Women




## AGE

18-24	—	54%
25-29	—	19%
30-35	—	27%

## EDUCATION

High School or Less	—	33%	
Post-H.S. / Some College	—	35%	
College Graduate	—	21%	31% College Grad or Post Grad
Post-Graduate	—	10%	

## PARTY IDENTIFICATION

	Democrat	59%
	Republican	11%
	Independent	15%

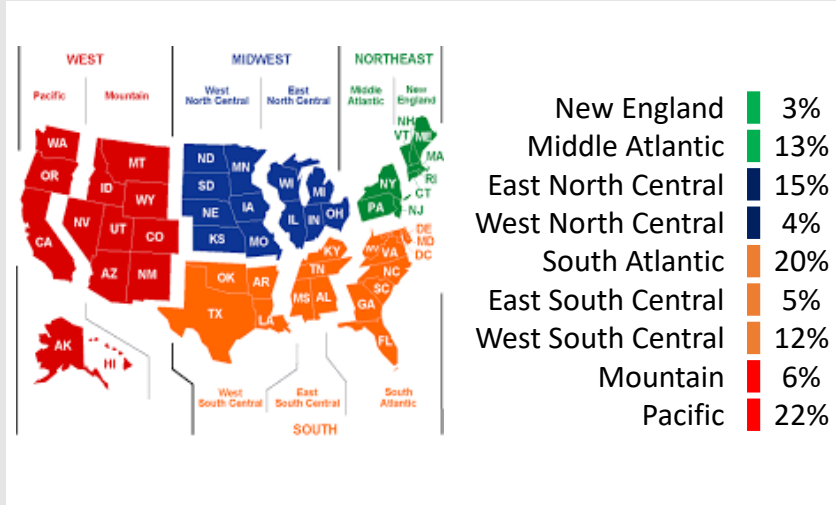
## LGBTQ IDENTITY

Bisexual	68%
Lesbian	20%
Pansexual	14%
Queer	7%
Questioning	4%
Asexual	4%
Gay	3%

## RACE

White/Caucasian	55%
Black/AA	20%
Hispanic/Latinx	17%
Asian/PI	8%
Native American	4%
Middle Eastern	2%

## REGION





## MARITAL STATUS

Married	16%
Unmarried	83%

## PARENTAL STATUS

Parent	29%
Non-parent	66%

## 2020 VOTE

	Trump	9%
	Biden	47%
	Third Party	8%
	Did Not Vote	31%

# Stay In Touch

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