



She's the Difference

Survey of Likely Voters Age 50+, October 2022

With just five weeks until Election Day, research looking at women voters age 50+ shows that half of this key voting bloc are still making up their minds about how they will vote. They are split about how well the economy is working for them personally and are worried about a broad range of issues, reflecting fears about economic instability and political discord. Inflation, threats to democracy, division in the country, immigration, gun violence, and abortion are all key issues for different subgroups of these women, while the stability of Social Security is a unifying concern and priority that is intense and broad.

The opinions of these women matter. They are the largest bloc of voters and swing voters heading into the midterms, and they reliably turn out to vote. In 2020, according to voter file and Census Bureau data, 83% of registered women voters in this age group cast ballots. And, while they are 25% of the voting age population, this cohort of women accounted for 30% of votes in the 2020 and 2018 elections.

KEY FINDINGS

Half of women voters 50+ have yet to make a decision about their congressional vote. Four in ten will decide in the last few weeks before the election. They evenly divide between Democrats and Republicans on the generic congressional ballot with a sizeable number still making up their minds.

Women voters 50+ are intensely concerned about a broad range of issues, but they are not a monolith. There are significant differences depending on party affiliation and race. The top issues for Republican women 50+ are inflation and rising prices, followed by crime, immigration, and election security. In contrast, Democratic women 50+ prioritize voting rights and threats to democracy, followed by gun violence and abortion. And, Independent women 50+ are focused on division in the country, voting rights, threats to democracy, and inflation and rising prices.

While women voters 50+ overall are split about how well the U.S. economy is working for them personally, two-thirds report dealing with rising costs of living by cutting down on non-essential purchases and four in ten have cut back on essentials or taken money out of savings. About a third are less financially secure than they expected to be at this point in their lives.

Women voters 50+ are much more unified about economic solutions, with three-quarters saying that protecting Social Security from cuts would personally help them a lot. This is followed by lowering the costs of food, gas, and health care, and expanding Medicare to cover dental and vision. Women voters 50+ see real value in Social Security and Medicare in making a positive impact in their lives.

DETAILED FINDINGS

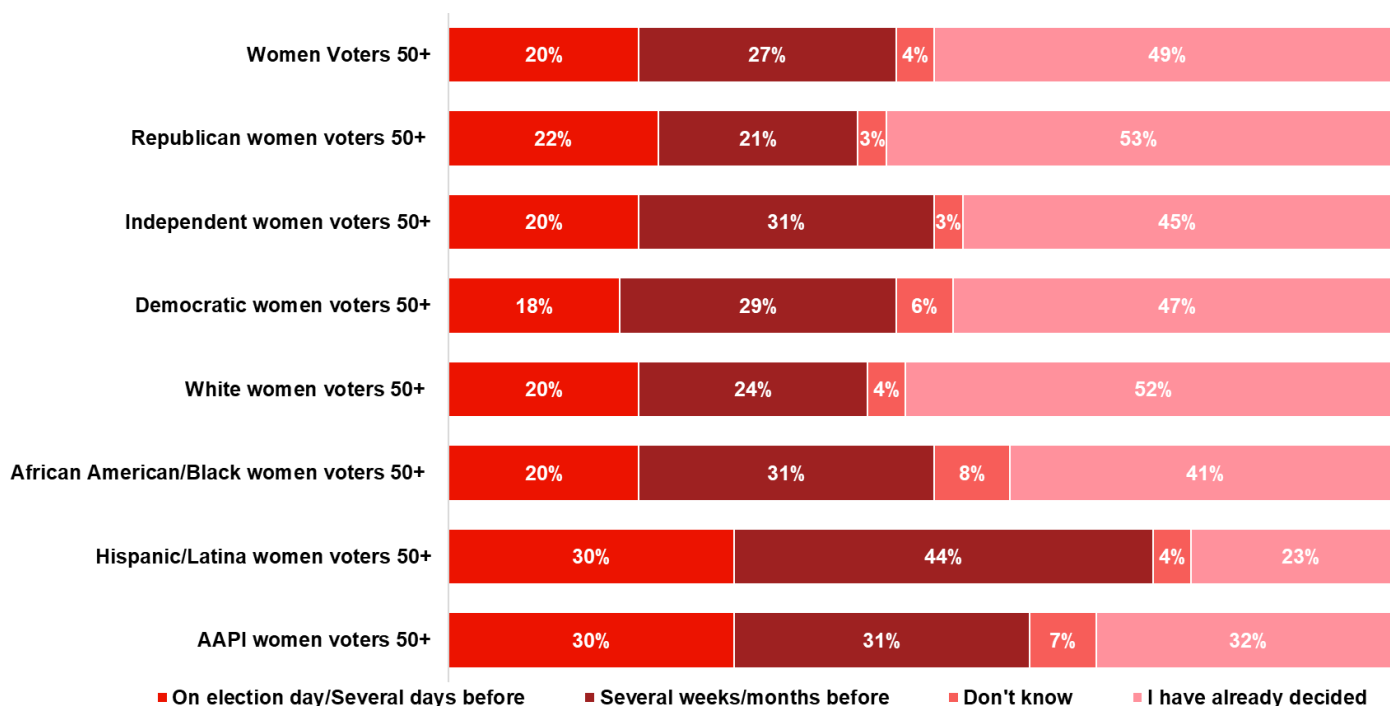
2022 ELECTIONS

Heading into the mid-term election, half of women voters 50+ say they haven't yet made up their minds about how they'll vote. Four in ten will decide in the last few weeks before the election.

Looking at party affiliation, a majority of Independent women 50+ (54%) have yet to decide how they will vote, while 53% of Democratic women 50+ and 46% of Republican women 50+ have yet to decide.

Hispanic/Latina women 50+ (78%) and AAPI women 50+ (68%) are more likely than white women 50+ (48%) and African American/Black women 50+ (59%) to still be weighing their options.

When Do You Think You Will Make the Decision of Who to Vote For?



A generic Republican is tied with a generic Democrat among women voters 50+.

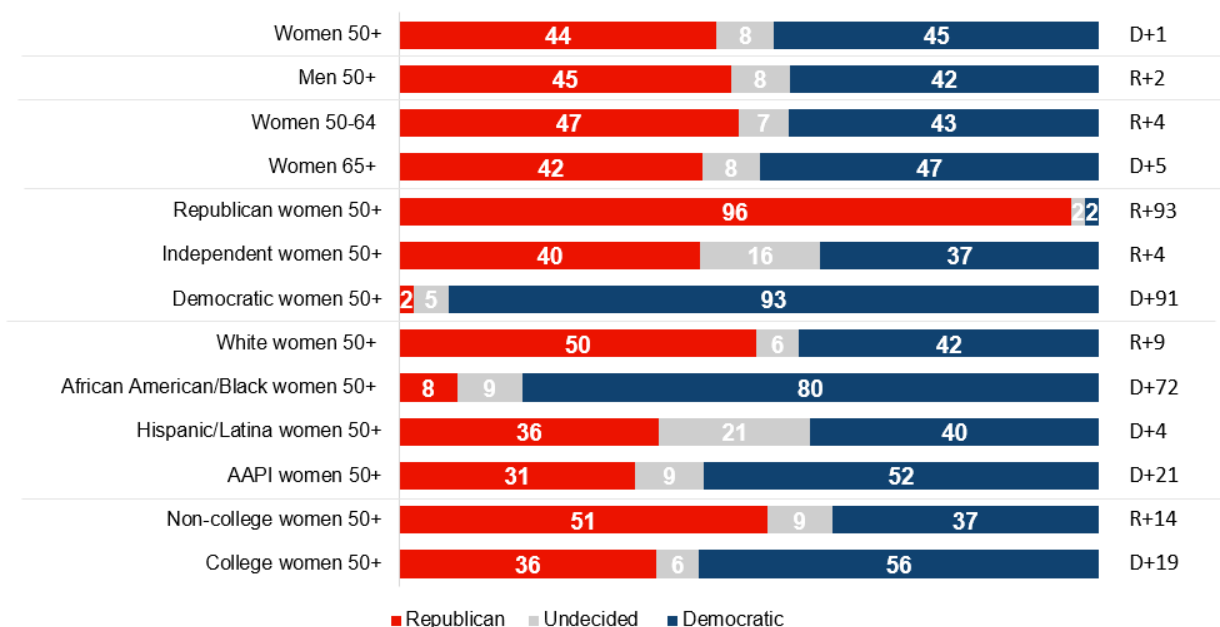
While, overall, women voters 50+ are split on a generic Congressional ballot, there are significant variations looking at subgroups by age, race, and education level.

There is an age gap, with women ages 50-64 leaning more Republican and women ages 65+ leaning more Democratic.

African American/Black, AAPI, and women 50+ with college degrees favor Democrats by double digits, while white and non-college women 50+ favor Republicans, by 9 and 14 points respectively.

And, while Hispanic/Latina women 50+ lean Democratic by 4 points, they are swing voters with about one in five undecided on the generic ballot.

If the Election for Congress Were Held Today, Which Candidate Would You Vote For?

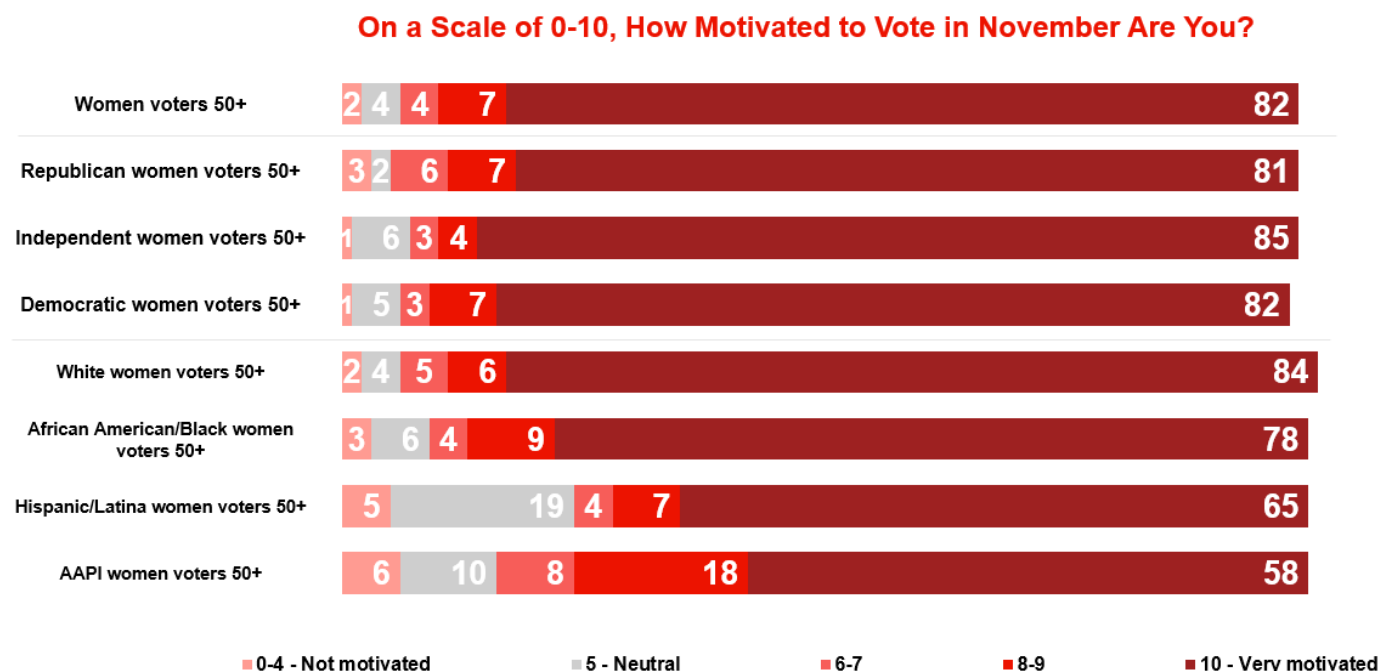


Most women voters 50+ are intensely motivated to vote.

On a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means not motivated at all and 10 means very motivated, 82% of women voters 50+ rate themselves a 10.

Democratic women voters 50+ are just as motivated to vote as Republican women voters 50+.

While the majority of women voters 50+ across racial and ethnic groups are motivated to vote in November, Hispanic/Latina and AAPI women 50+ are less motivated than white and African American/Black women 50+.



Dislike of a candidate is the top motivator across party lines.

More than a third (37%) of Republican women 50+ and more than one quarter (27%) of Democratic and Independent (30%) women 50+ say dislike of a candidate is the main reason they are motivated to vote in November. It is also the top response for Hispanic/Latina women 50+ and white women 50+, while more African American/Black women voters 50+ are voting to make their voices heard and AAPI women 50+ are more likely to say they are voting because they care about a particular issue or it is their civic duty.

Motivation to Vote in November (If Motivated)

Women voters 50+		Republican women voters 50+	Independent women voters 50+	Democratic women voters 50+	White women voters 50+	AA/Black women voters 50+	Hispanic/Latina women voters 50+	AAPI women voters 50+
Dislike a candidate	31%	37%	30%	27%	34%	12%	27%	17%
A lot on the line/important election	17%	17%	20%	15%	18%	13%	13%	15%
Cared about a particular issue	17%	15%	25%	16%	17%	20%	18%	23%
Civic duty	15%	11%	12%	19%	14%	22%	18%	21%
To make my voice heard	13%	13%	10%	14%	11%	28%	12%	14%
Like a candidate	5%	5%	2%	6%	5%	5%	9%	5%

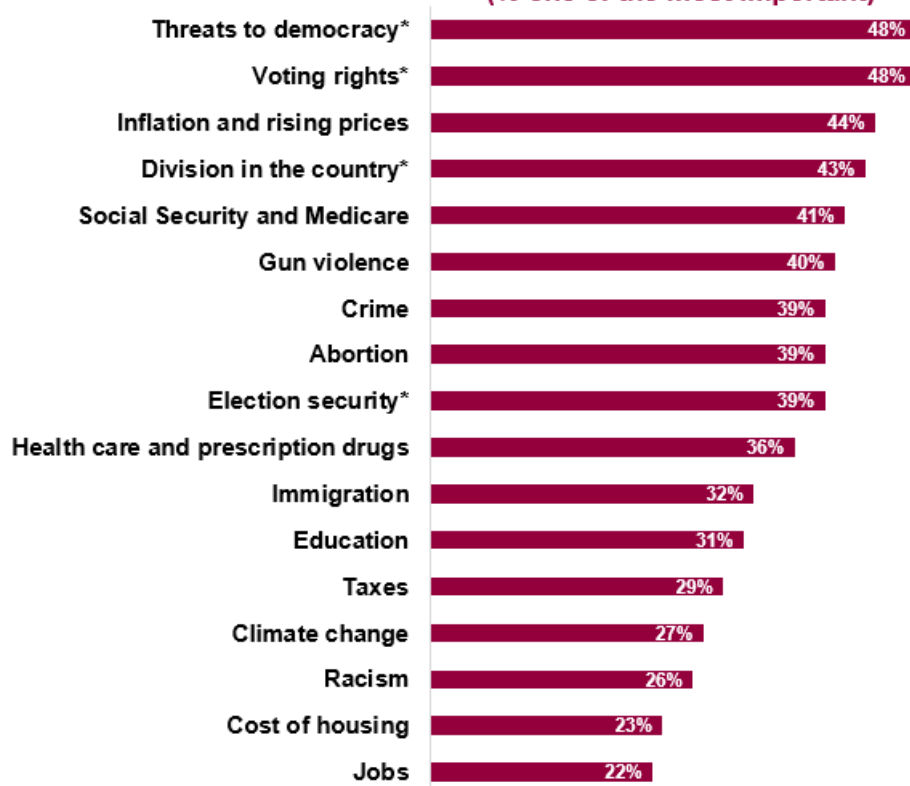
CONCERNS AND ISSUES IN THE MIDTERMS

Women voters 50+ are focusing on a range of issues headed into this election, reflecting serious concerns about economic stability and political discord.

Tied at the top of the most important issues determining their vote are threats to democracy and voting rights, followed by inflation and rising prices, division in the country, and Social Security and Medicare.

The issues most important to women voters 50+ are largely similar to those important to men 50+, who also prioritize threats to democracy, though with more intensity, followed by voting rights and inflation. Men 50+ are less focused than women on division in the country, gun violence, crime, and abortion. (See table on next page).

How important are the following issues in determining your vote in this year's elections for Senate, Congress, and other offices?
(% one of the most important)



*split sampled question

But, women 50+ are not a monolith. There are significant differences by age, party affiliation and race.

While threats to democracy are top-level concerns for both women age 50-64 and 65+, the younger cohort also prioritizes voting rights and division in the country with inflation and abortion slightly lower on the list.

Meanwhile, after threats to democracy, women voters 65+ are juggling multiple issues fairly equally: voting rights, Social Security and Medicare, inflation and rising prices, gun violence, and crime.

How important are the following issues in determining your vote in this year's elections for Senate, Congress, and other offices?

% One of the most important issues	Total women voters 50+	Men voters 50+	Women voters 50-64	Women voters 65+
Threats to democracy*	48%	57%	48%	49%
Voting rights*	48%	43%	51%	44%
Inflation and rising prices	44%	44%	46%	41%
Division in the country*	43%	37%	50%	36%
Social Security and Medicare	41%	36%	37%	44%
Gun violence	40%	27%	39%	41%
Crime	39%	34%	39%	40%
Abortion	39%	32%	42%	36%
Election security*	39%	42%	39%	39%
Health care and prescription drugs	36%	29%	38%	35%
Immigration	32%	37%	34%	30%
Education	31%	27%	33%	29%
Taxes	29%	30%	31%	28%
Climate change	27%	25%	27%	27%
Racism	26%	21%	30%	22%
Cost of housing	23%	19%	27%	20%
Jobs	22%	23%	24%	21%

*split sampled question

Looking at the five top issues, worries about inflation and voting rights break along party lines, while concerns about division and Social Security are more evenly distributed.

For Republican women 50+, inflation and rising prices is the top issue, followed by crime, immigration, and election security.

In contrast, the top issues for Democratic women 50+ are voting rights and threats to democracy, followed by gun violence and abortion.

Independent women 50+ rate division in the country, voting rights, threats to democracy, and inflation and rising prices as their top issues.

How important are the following issues in determining your vote in this year's elections for Senate, Congress, and other offices?

% One of the most important issues	Total women voters 50+	Republican women voters 50+	Independent women voters 50+	Democratic women voters 50+
Threats to democracy*	48%	37%	42%	62%
Voting rights*	48%	35%	43%	63%
Inflation and rising prices	44%	60%	41%	29%
Division in the country*	43%	36%	46%	48%
Social Security and Medicare	41%	39%	37%	45%
Gun violence	40%	29%	35%	54%
Crime	39%	51%	35%	30%
Abortion	39%	28%	34%	54%
Election security*	39%	49%	34%	32%
Health care and prescription drugs	36%	31%	33%	44%
Immigration	32%	49%	31%	16%
Education	31%	32%	26%	33%
Taxes	29%	39%	26%	22%
Climate change	27%	9%	24%	45%
Racism	26%	17%	21%	38%
Cost of housing	23%	24%	19%	25%
Jobs	22%	26%	18%	22%

*split sampled question

Looking at differences by race, White women 50+ say the most important issues are threats to democracy and voting rights, while African American/Black women 50+ prioritize division in the country, voting rights, and racism.

Six issues rank as one of the most important with at least 60% of Hispanic/Latina women 50+: inflation and rising prices, election security, crime, threats to democracy, voting rights and gun violence.

Among AAPI women 50+, more than half say that five issues are one of the most important: inflation and rising prices, voting rights, gun violence, division in the country, Social Security and Medicare, health care and prescription drugs, and education.

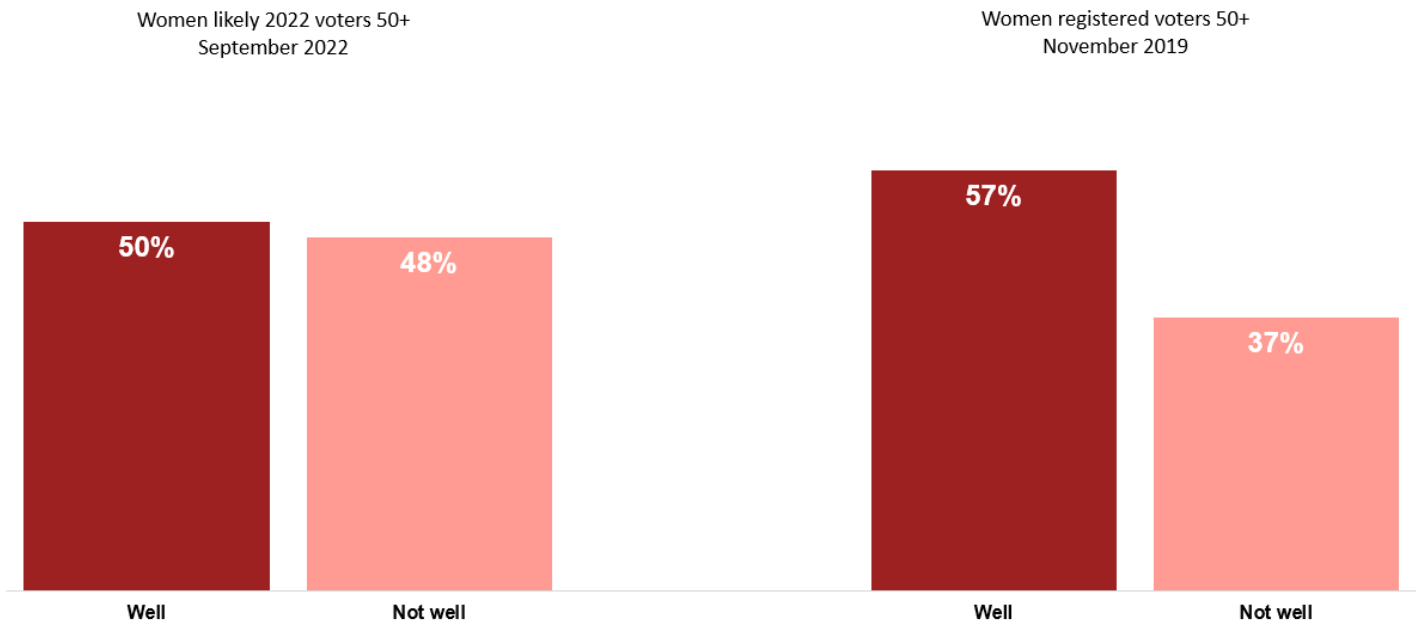
How important are the following issues in determining your vote in this year's elections for Senate, Congress, and other offices?

% One of the most important issues	Total women voters 50+	White women voters 50+	African American/Black women voters 50+	Hispanic/Latina women voters 50+	AAPI women voters 50+
Threats to democracy*	48%	50%	38%	63%	35%
Voting rights*	48%	46%	50%	61%	57%
Inflation and rising prices	44%	42%	41%	71%	62%
Division in the country*	43%	40%	53%	57%	54%
Social Security and Medicare	41%	38%	42%	59%	53%
Gun violence	40%	38%	45%	61%	56%
Crime	39%	37%	43%	63%	46%
Abortion	39%	39%	40%	27%	34%
Election security*	39%	38%	29%	66%	33%
Health care and prescription drugs	36%	33%	42%	57%	53%
Immigration	32%	32%	21%	30%	30%
Education	31%	27%	42%	54%	53%
Taxes	29%	26%	32%	56%	35%
Climate change	27%	26%	31%	29%	34%
Racism	26%	20%	49%	53%	45%
Cost of housing	23%	18%	40%	52%	38%
Jobs	22%	18%	32%	45%	36%

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK AND EXPERIENCES

Just under half of women voters 50+ say the economy is not working well for them personally compared to half who say it is working well. This is a significant shift from before the pandemic when an AARP survey found that a little more than a third (37%) of women 50+ thought that the economy was not working well for them while the majority (57%) said it was working well.

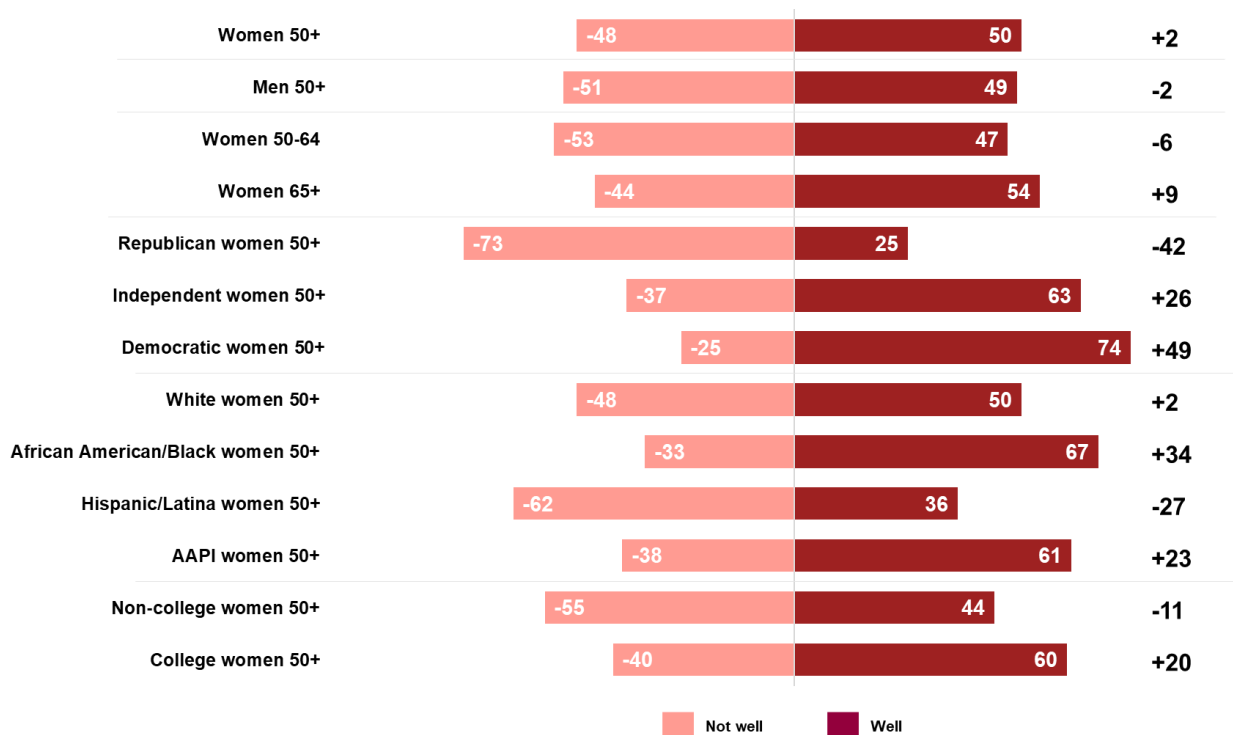
How well is the U.S. economy working for you personally?



Majorities of women voters 50-64, Hispanic/Latina women 50+, non-college educated women 50+, and Republican women 50+ say the economy is **not** working well for them personally.

African American/Black, AAPI, Democratic, Independent, and college-educated women along with women age 65+ are more likely to say the economy is working well for them personally.

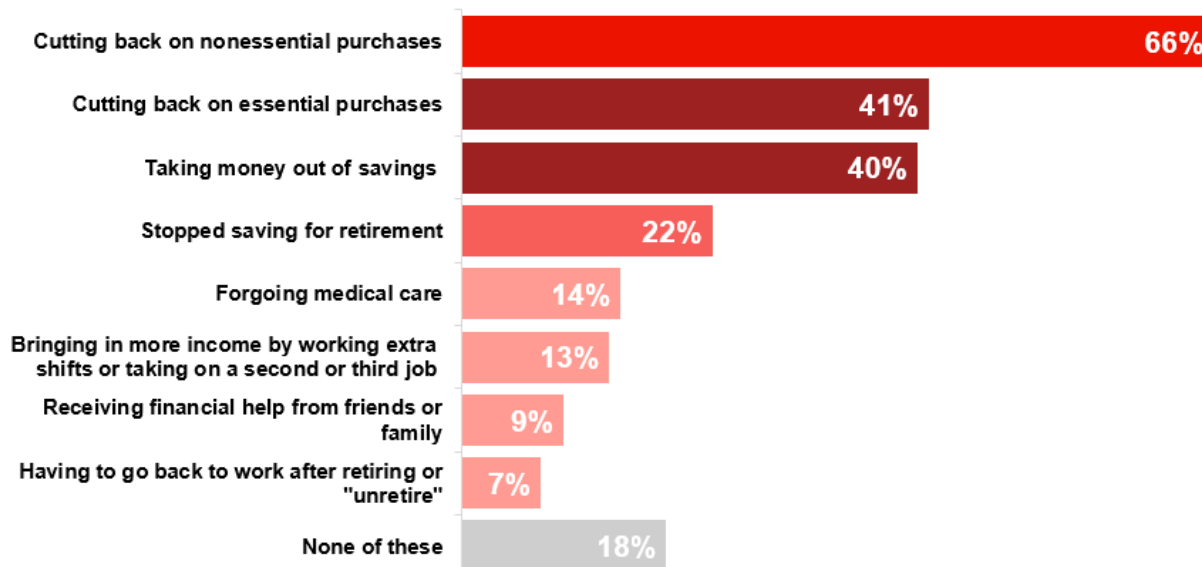
How well is the U.S. economy working for you personally?



Women voters 50+ are making changes to respond to higher costs of living.

Two-thirds of women voters 50+ have cut back on nonessential purchases due to the higher cost of living, 41% have cut back on essential purchases, and 40% have taken money out of savings. Seven percent have gone as far as returning to work post-retirement, also known as “unretiring.”

Which of the following actions have you taken this year due to higher costs of living?



Women voters 50+ are more likely than men voters 50+ to have cut back on purchases, taken money out of savings, and stopped saving for retirement.

Women voters 50-64 are more likely than their older counterparts to have taken every action, except unretiring.

Which of the following actions have you taken this year due to higher costs of living?

% Have Taken This Action This Year Due to Higher Costs of Living	Total women voters 50+	Men voters 50+	Women voters 50-64	Women voters 65+
Cutting back on nonessential purchases	66%	58%	72%	61%
Cutting back on essential purchases	41%	34%	47%	36%
Taking money out of savings	40%	34%	46%	35%
Stopped saving for retirement	22%	17%	31%	15%
Forgoing medical care	14%	13%	20%	9%
Bringing in more income by working extra shifts or taking on a second or third job	13%	13%	21%	6%
Receiving financial help from friends or family	9%	8%	13%	6%
Having to go back to work after retiring or "unretire"	7%	6%	6%	7%
None of these	18%	24%	12%	23%

Independent women 50+ are more likely than their counterparts to have cut back on nonessential purchases and halted retirement savings. A solid majority of Republican women 50+ have cut back on nonessential and essential purchases. And, Republican women voters 50+ are more likely than Independents or Democrats to have cut back on essentials.

Which of the following actions have you taken this year due to higher costs of living?

% Have Taken This Action This Year Due to Higher Costs of Living	Total women voters 50+	Republican women voters 50+	Independent women voters 50+	Democratic women voters 50+
Cutting back on nonessential purchases	66%	69%	74%	59%
Cutting back on essential purchases	41%	52%	43%	32%
Taking money out of savings	40%	44%	46%	31%
Stopped saving for retirement	22%	25%	30%	16%
Forgoing medical care	14%	16%	16%	11%
Bringing in more income by working extra shifts or taking on a second or third job	13%	13%	17%	12%
Receiving financial help from friends or family	9%	10%	9%	9%
Having to go back to work after retiring or "unretire"	7%	7%	9%	5%
None of these	18%	13%	15%	24%

Hispanic/Latina women 50+ are more likely to have cut back on nonessential and essential purchases compared to white, African American/Black, and AAPI women 50+.

AAPI women 50+ are more likely to have received financial help from family and friends.

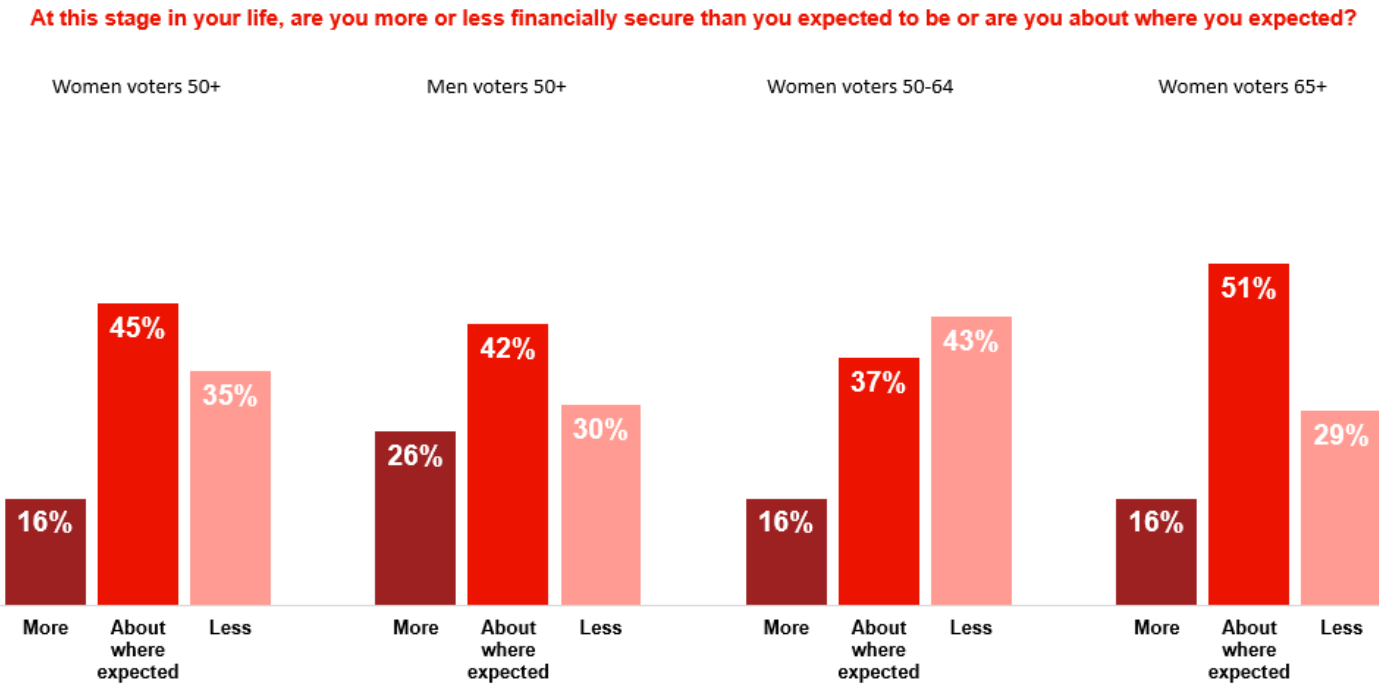
Which of the following actions have you taken this year due to higher costs of living?

% Have Taken This Action This Year Due to Higher Costs of Living	Total women voters 50+	White women voters 50+	African American/Black women voters 50+	Hispanic/Latina women voters 50+	AAPI women voters 50+
Cutting back on nonessential purchases	66%	67%	52%	74%	57%
Cutting back on essential purchases	41%	40%	43%	53%	34%
Taking money out of savings	40%	40%	32%	43%	38%
Stopped saving for retirement	22%	23%	19%	23%	16%
Forgoing medical care	14%	15%	14%	9%	14%
Bringing in more income by working extra shifts or taking on a second or third job	13%	11%	18%	18%	20%
Receiving financial help from friends or family	9%	8%	12%	14%	18%
Having to go back to work after retiring or "unretire"	7%	6%	8%	8%	4%
None of these	18%	19%	17%	9%	24%

More than one-third of women voters, including 43% of women age 50-64, say they are less financially secure than they expected they'd be at this stage of their lives.

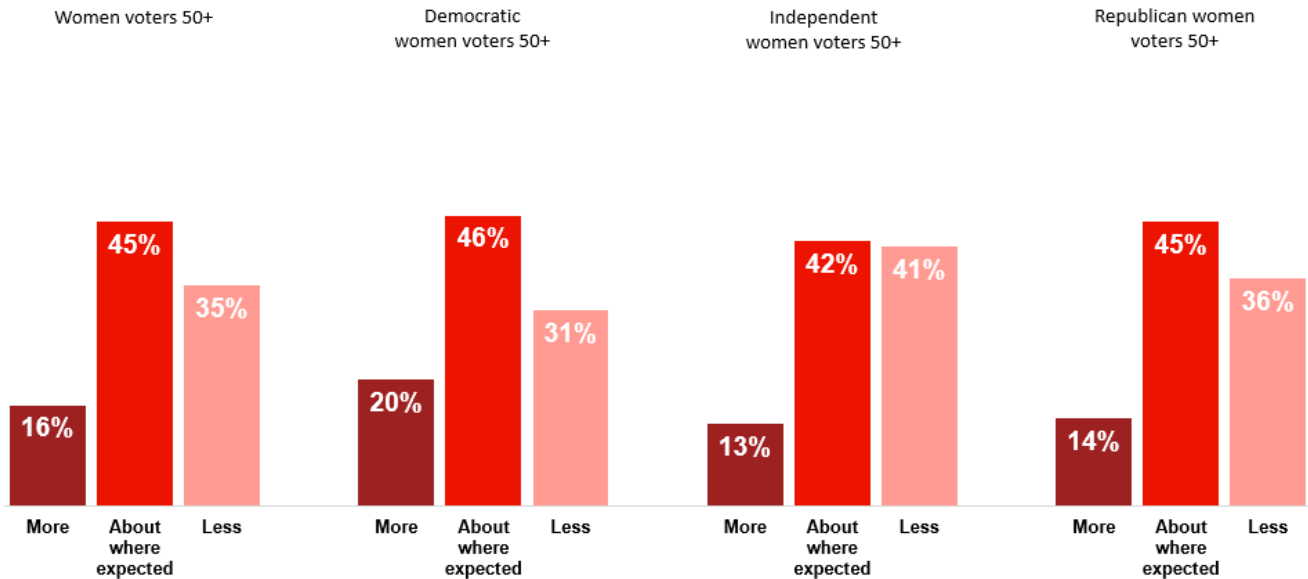
While a plurality of both women and men 50+ are about where they expected they'd be financially, only 16% of women say they are more financially secure compared to 26% of men, and a slightly larger percentage of women (35%) say they are less financially secure than expected compared to men (30%).

Women age 50-64 are the most likely to say they are less financially secure at this stage of their life.



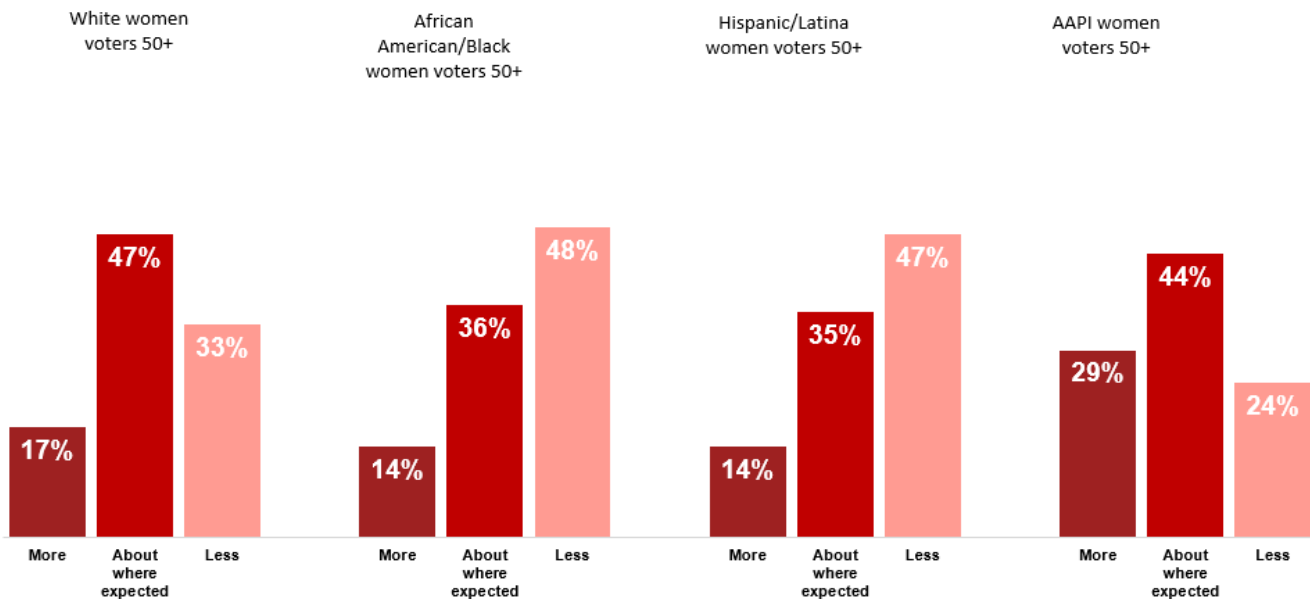
A plurality of Democratic women 50+ and Republican women 50+ are feeling about where they expected to be financially at this stage in life. However, Independent women 50+ split between feeling about where they expected to be and feeling less financially secure.

At this stage in your life, are you more or less financially secure than you expected to be or are you about where you expected?



African American/Black women 50+ and Hispanic/Latina women 50+ are particularly dissatisfied with their financial situations, with pluralities saying they feel less financially secure than they expected to be at this stage in their lives. In contrast, similar percentages of white and AAPI women 50+ say they are about where they expected to be. AAPI women 50+ are the most likely to feel more financially secure than expected, and throughout the survey are more positive about the economy.

At this stage in your life, are you more or less financially secure than you expected to be or are you about where you expected?

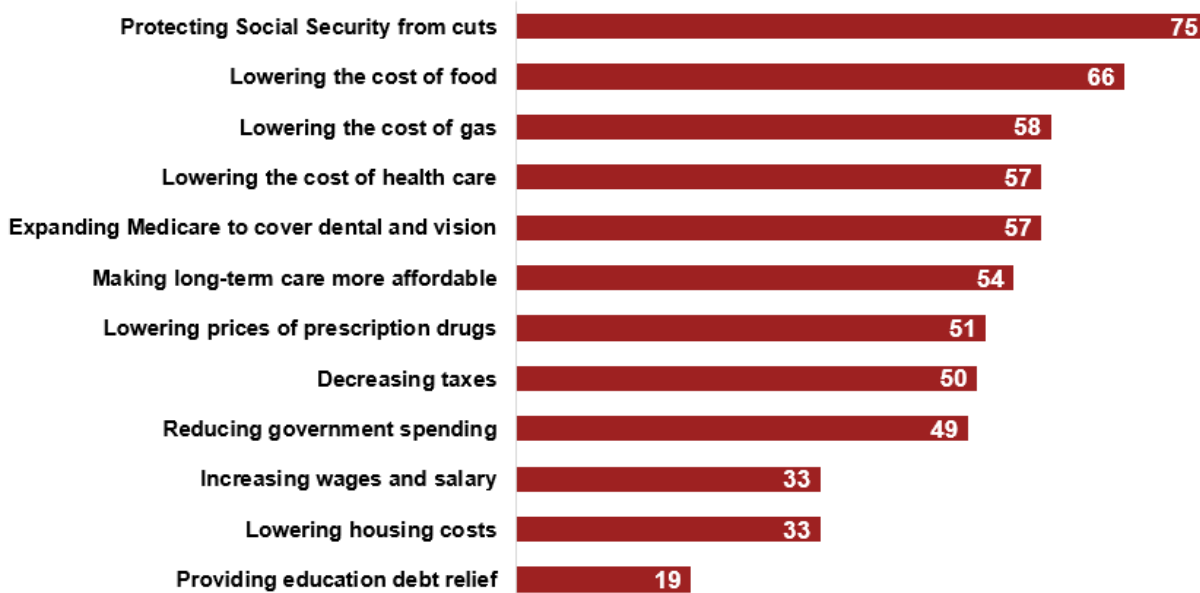


SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE ARE PRIORITIES ACROSS SUBGROUPS

Women voters 50+ are much more unified about solutions that would help them. Overall, three-quarters say that protecting Social Security from cuts would personally help them a lot. This is followed by lowering the cost of food, gas, and health care, and expanding Medicare to cover dental and vision. Women voters 50+ see real value in Social Security and Medicare in making a positive impact in their lives.

How much would each of the following help you personally?*

(% Help a lot)

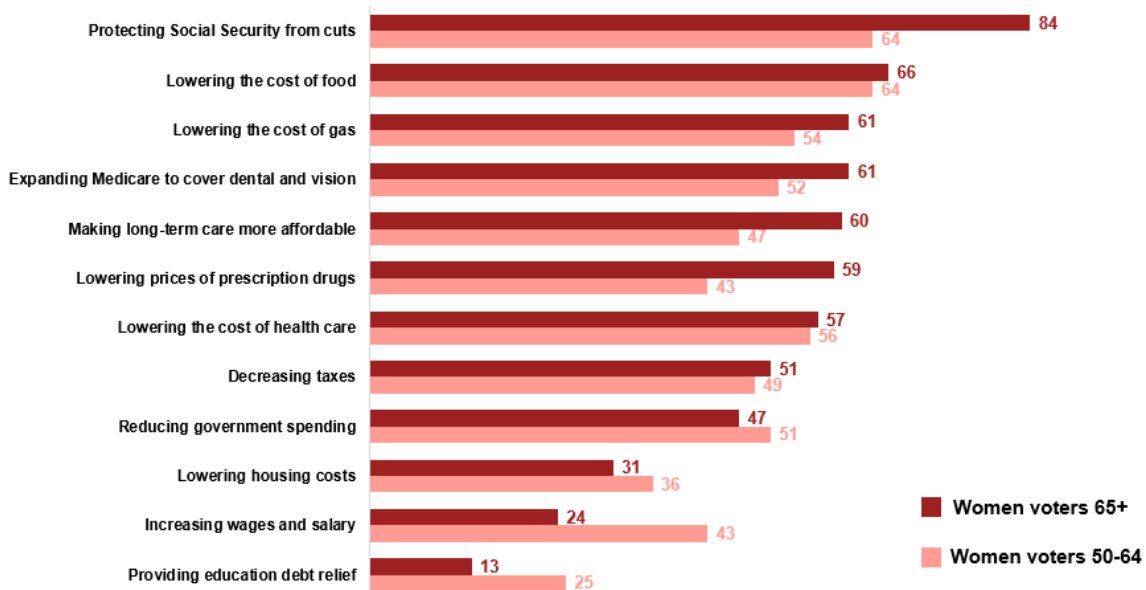


*split sampled question

Both women voters 50-64 and women voters 65+ put protecting Social Security from cuts at the top of the list of what would help them personally. Women voters 50-64 rate it on par with lowering the cost of food.

How much would each of the following help you personally?*

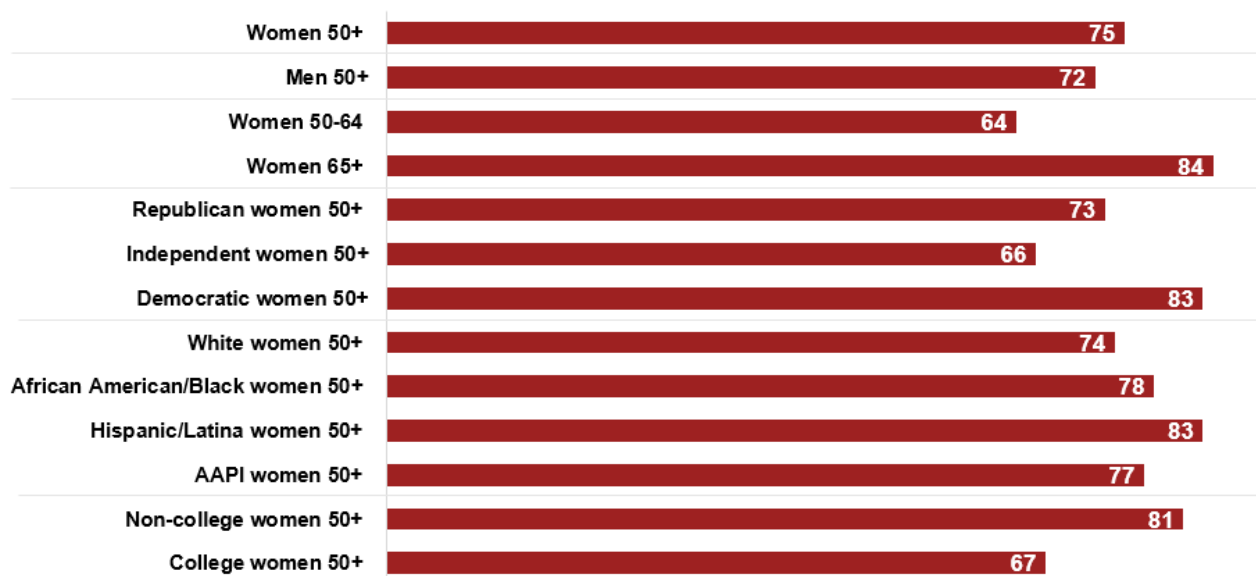
(% Help a lot)



*split sampled question

Across age, race, party identification, and education level, about two-thirds or more of women voters 50+ say protecting Social Security from cuts would help them a lot personally. Women voters 65+, Democratic, and Hispanic/Latina and non-college women 50+ are especially likely to say protecting Social Security would help a lot.

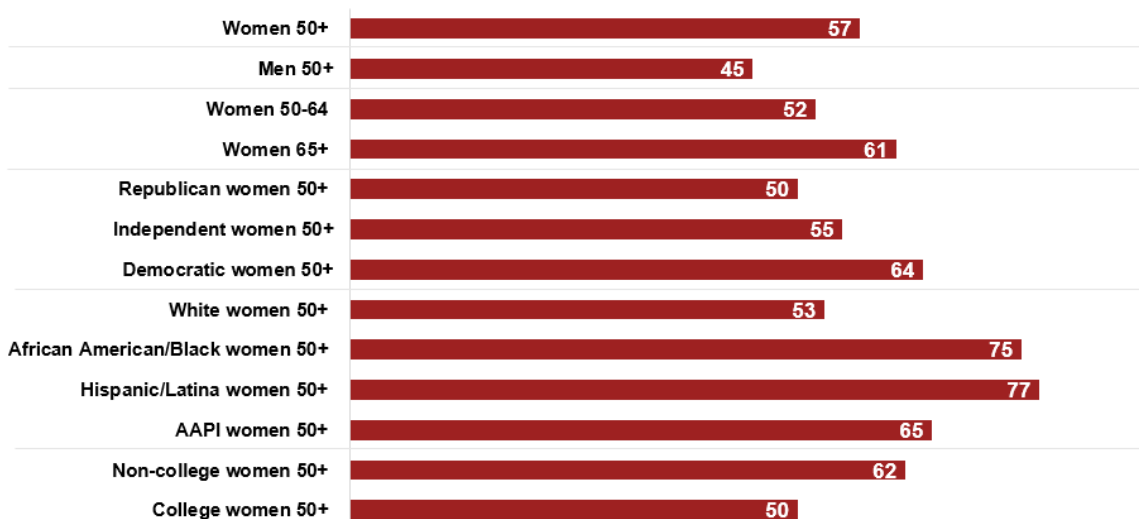
How much would each of the following help you personally? (% Help a lot)
Protecting Social Security from Cuts*



*split sampled question

Similarly, across age, race, party identification, and education level, about half or more of women voters 50+ say expanding Medicare to cover dental and vision would help them a lot personally. African American/Black women 50+ and Hispanic/Latina women 50+ are especially likely to say expanding Medicare coverage to include dental and vision would help a lot.

How much would each of the following help you personally? (% Help a lot)
Expanding Medicare to cover dental and vision*



*split sampled question

SURVEY RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

AARP commissioned the bipartisan polling team of Lake Research Partners, GBAO Strategies, Echelon Insights, and Bellwether Research & Consulting to conduct a national survey of voters age 50+.

n = 802 women likely voters 50+, 400 men likely voters 50+, with oversamples of 100 African American/Black women likely voters 50+, 100 English-speaking Latina/Hispanic women likely voters 50+, 100 Spanish-speaking Latina/Hispanic women likely voters 50+, and 100 Asian American and Pacific Islander women likely voters 50+

Demographic Variable	Weighted	Unweighted
Age		
Women 50 – 64	373	597
Women 65 or older	429	604
Race/Ethnicity		
Caucasian alone women	600	607
African American/Black women	79	187
Hispanic/Latina women	56	249
Asian American/Pacific Islander women	16	108
Education		
Non-college educated women	452	666
College-educated women	341	522
Party Identification		
Democratic women	303	567
Independent/DK/Lean women	181	283
Republican women	285	301
Gender		
Women	802	1201
Men	400	400

METHODOLOGY

This survey, conducted between September 6-13, 2022, includes a sample of 802 women likely voters 50+ and 400 men likely voters 50+, with oversamples of 100 African American/Black women likely voters 50+, 100 English-speaking Latina/Hispanic women likely voters 50+, 100 Spanish-speaking Latina/Hispanic women likely voters 50+, and 100 Asian American and Pacific Islander women likely voters 50+. All 50+ oversample completes were weighted down into the core 800 women voters 50+. The interviews were conducted via landline, cellphone, and SMS-to-web. The margin of sampling error for the effective sample of 802 women likely voters 50+ is +/-3.5%. The margin of error for the 400 men likely voters 50+ is +/-4.9%. Interviews were offered in English and Spanish. Due to rounding, answer choices may not always add up to 100%. Partisan crosstabs in this report represent how people identify themselves when asked, not how they are registered or modeled on the voter file.