

**B** | Center for  
**Middle East Policy**  
at BROOKINGS

**The Middle East and Russia:  
American attitudes on  
Trump's foreign policy**

**A PUBLIC OPINION POLL BY SHIBLEY TELHAMI**

*A survey of the*



# CRITICAL ISSUES POLL

*With Nielsen Scarborough*

Shibley Telhami, Director  
Stella Rouse, Associate Director

\*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.

Note: These questions were fielded as part of a larger poll on foreign and domestic issues. Participants in this study were provided by Nielsen from Nielsen's sample of respondents.

# Survey Methodology

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The survey was carried out November 1-6, 2017 online from a nationally representative sample of Nielsen Scarborough's probability-based panel, originally recruited by mail and telephone using a random sample of adults. The national sample was 2,000, including a down-weighted oversample of 1,042 among 18-34 year olds. Responses were weighted by age, gender, income, education, race, and geographic region using benchmarks from the US Census. The survey was also weighted by partisan identification. The margin of error is 2.19%

For more details on the methodology, please visit:

[https://criticalissues.umd.edu/sites/criticalissues.umd.edu/files/umcip\\_nov\\_2017\\_survey\\_methodology\\_final\\_version.pdf](https://criticalissues.umd.edu/sites/criticalissues.umd.edu/files/umcip_nov_2017_survey_methodology_final_version.pdf)

# **American Attitudes toward the Israeli- Palestinian Conflict**

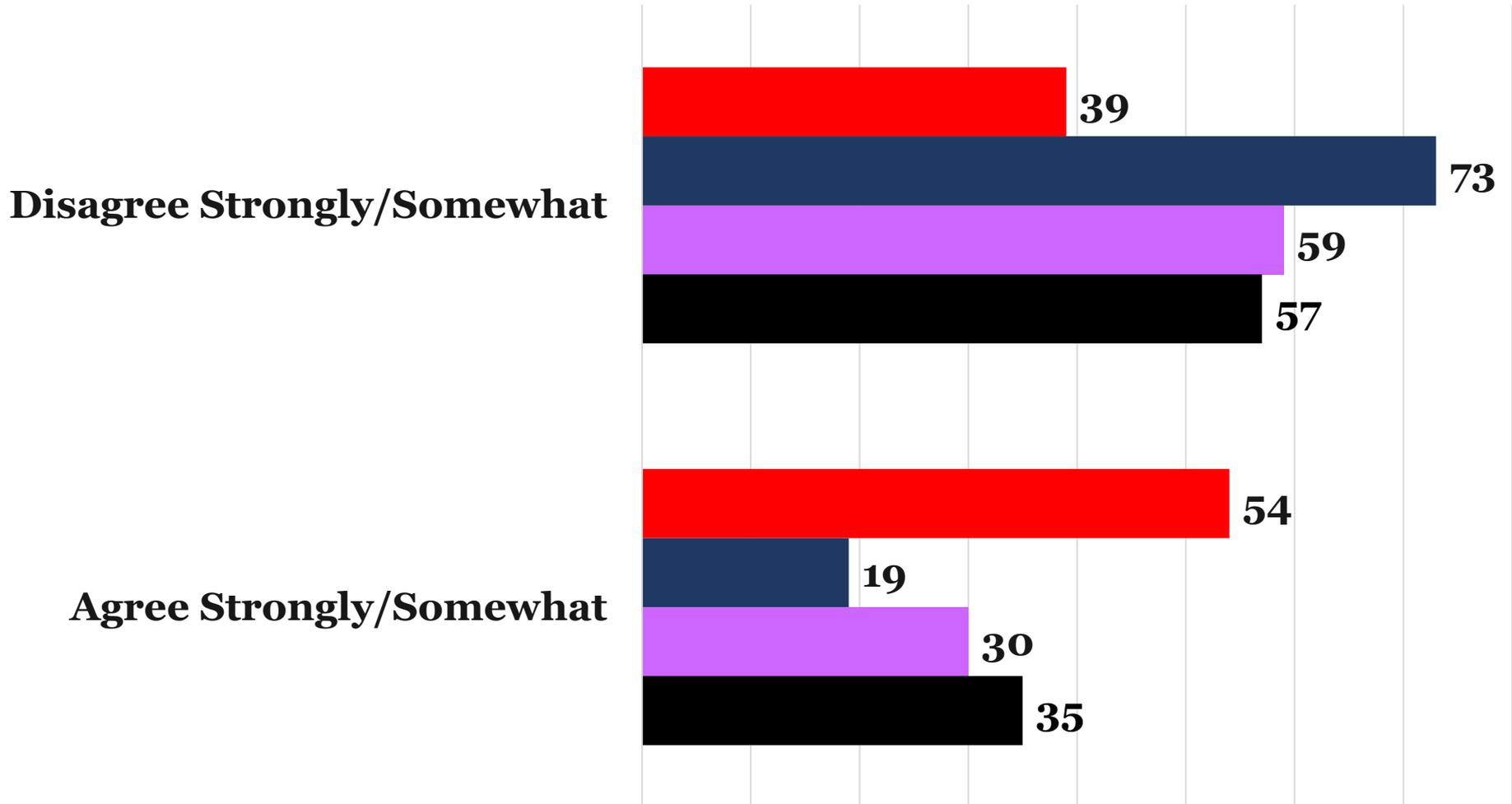
**President Trump pledged during his 2016 presidential campaign to move the U.S. Embassy in Israel from its current location in Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. But, like previous presidents since Congress passed the 1995 Jerusalem Embassy Act, he has renewed a waiver that will temporarily keep the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv, based on national security interests. Now tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.**

**[Options were randomized]**

**The U.S. should immediately move its embassy to Jerusalem. The Embassy should be located in Jerusalem to fulfill the president's pledge, and there is no national security reason to file an exception to the 1995 Jerusalem Embassy Act. Such an act would serve to demonstrate the commitment of the U.S. to the State of Israel and to its control over a unified Jerusalem as its capital.**

# The U.S. should immediately move its embassy to Jerusalem.

■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total



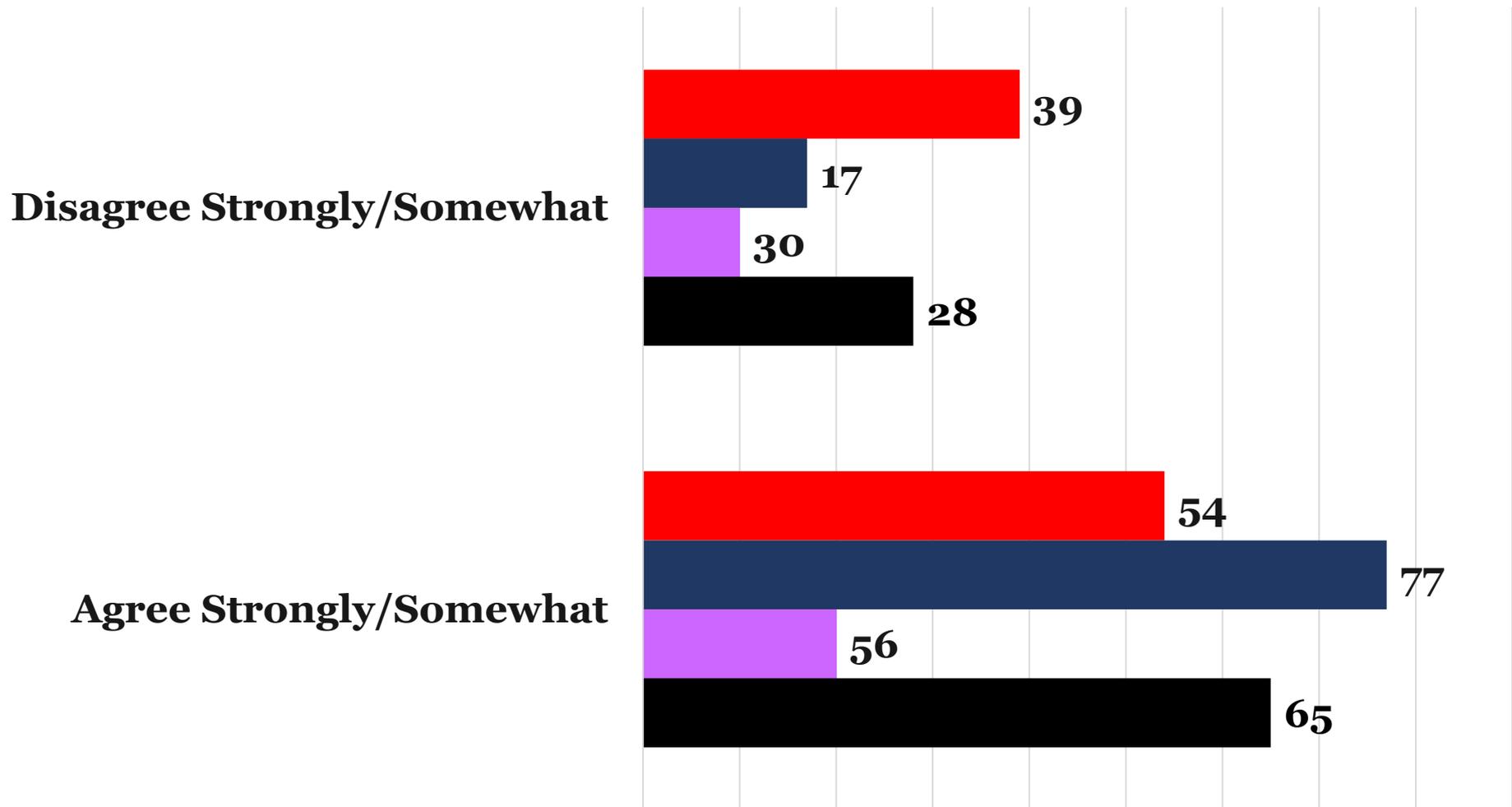
**President Trump pledged during his 2016 presidential campaign to move the U.S. Embassy in Israel from its current location in Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. But, like previous presidents since Congress passed the 1995 Jerusalem Embassy Act, he has renewed a waiver that will temporarily keep the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv, based on national security interests. Now tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.**

**[Options were randomized]**

**The U.S. should not immediately move the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem. The international community, including the UN and European allies have not accepted Israel's annexation of East Jerusalem, which was occupied in the 1967 War. The U.S. Government's position has been that the ultimate status of Jerusalem has to be agreed in negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians. If the U.S. were to move its embassy to Jerusalem, it would be violating international norms, harming important relationships worldwide, and generating anti-American sentiments among Arabs and Muslims globally.**

# The U.S. should not immediately move the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem.

■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total

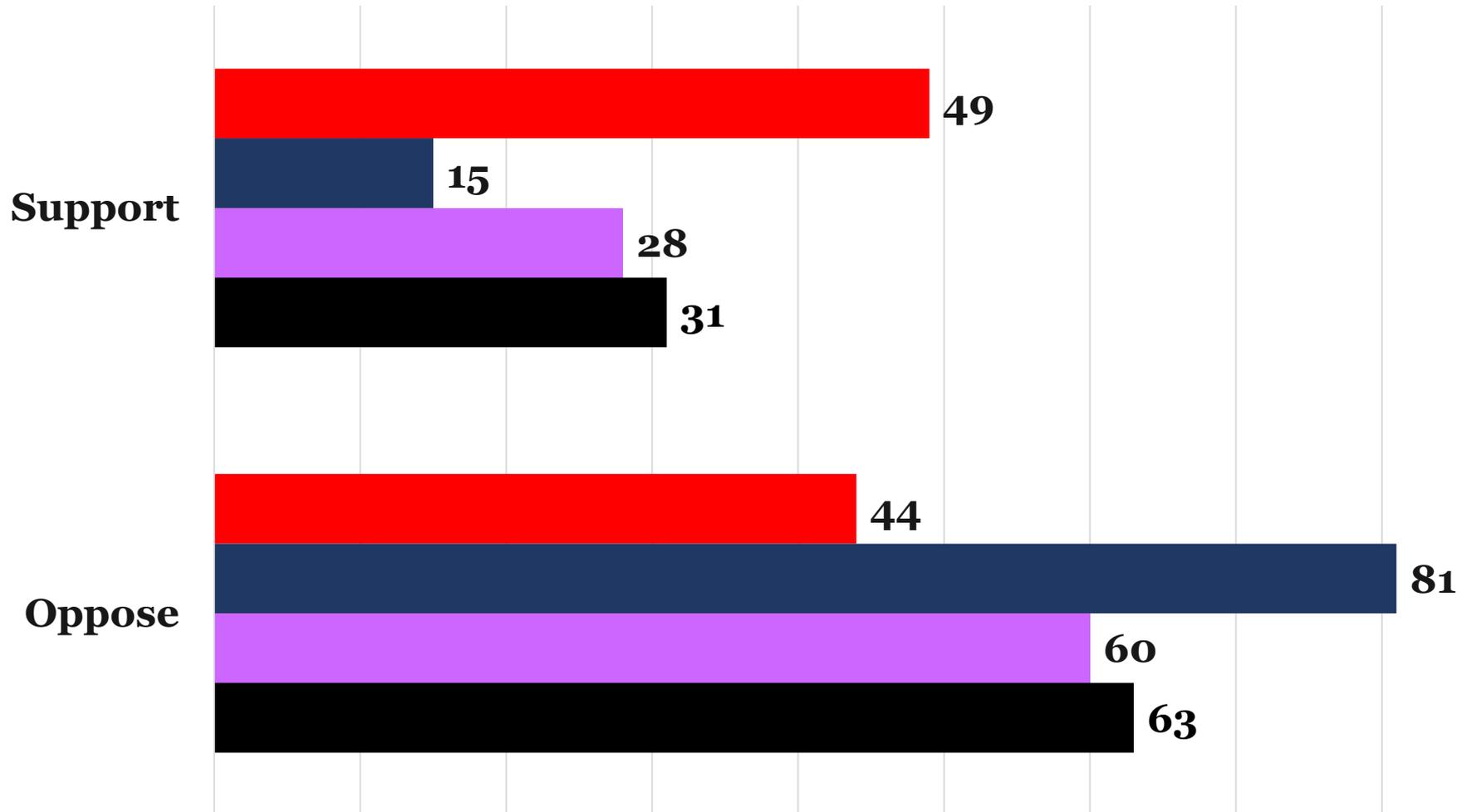


**Having thought about it, do you support or oppose the United States immediately moving its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem?**

**[Options were randomized]**

# Having thought about it, do you support or oppose the United States moving its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem?

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



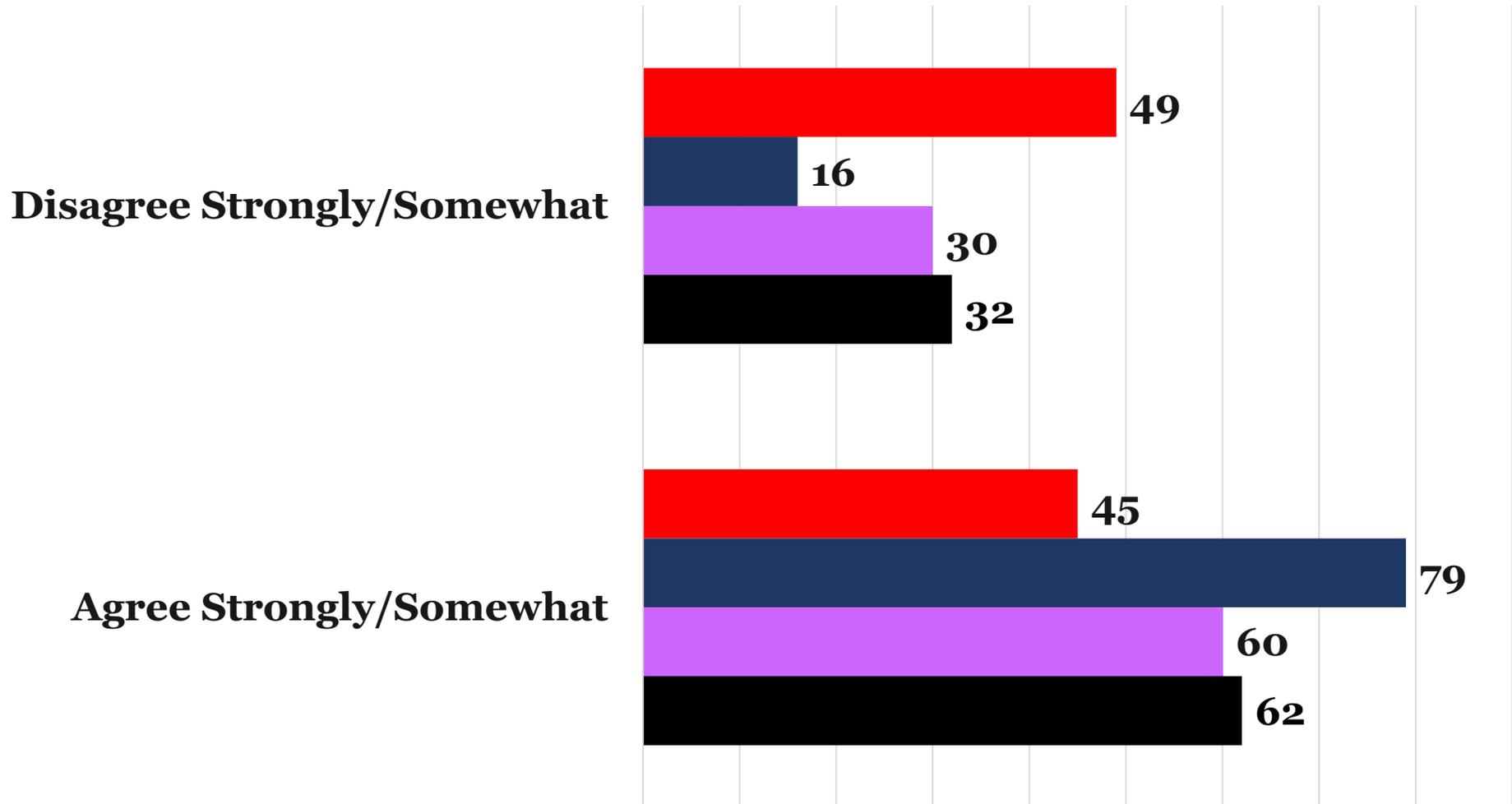
**The United States has recently withdrawn from the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) accusing the organization of an anti-Israeli bias in its policies. Please tell me on a scale of 1-4 how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.**

**[Options were randomized]**

**The U.S. participating in UNESCO is important even when the U.S. disagrees with some UNESCO policies. It demonstrates engagement in the international community and ensures the health of UNESCO's literacy and education programs that are so central to the UNESCO mission. It also provides the U.S. an important voice at the table.**

# The U.S. participating in UNESCO is important even when the U.S. disagrees with some UNESCO policies.

■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total



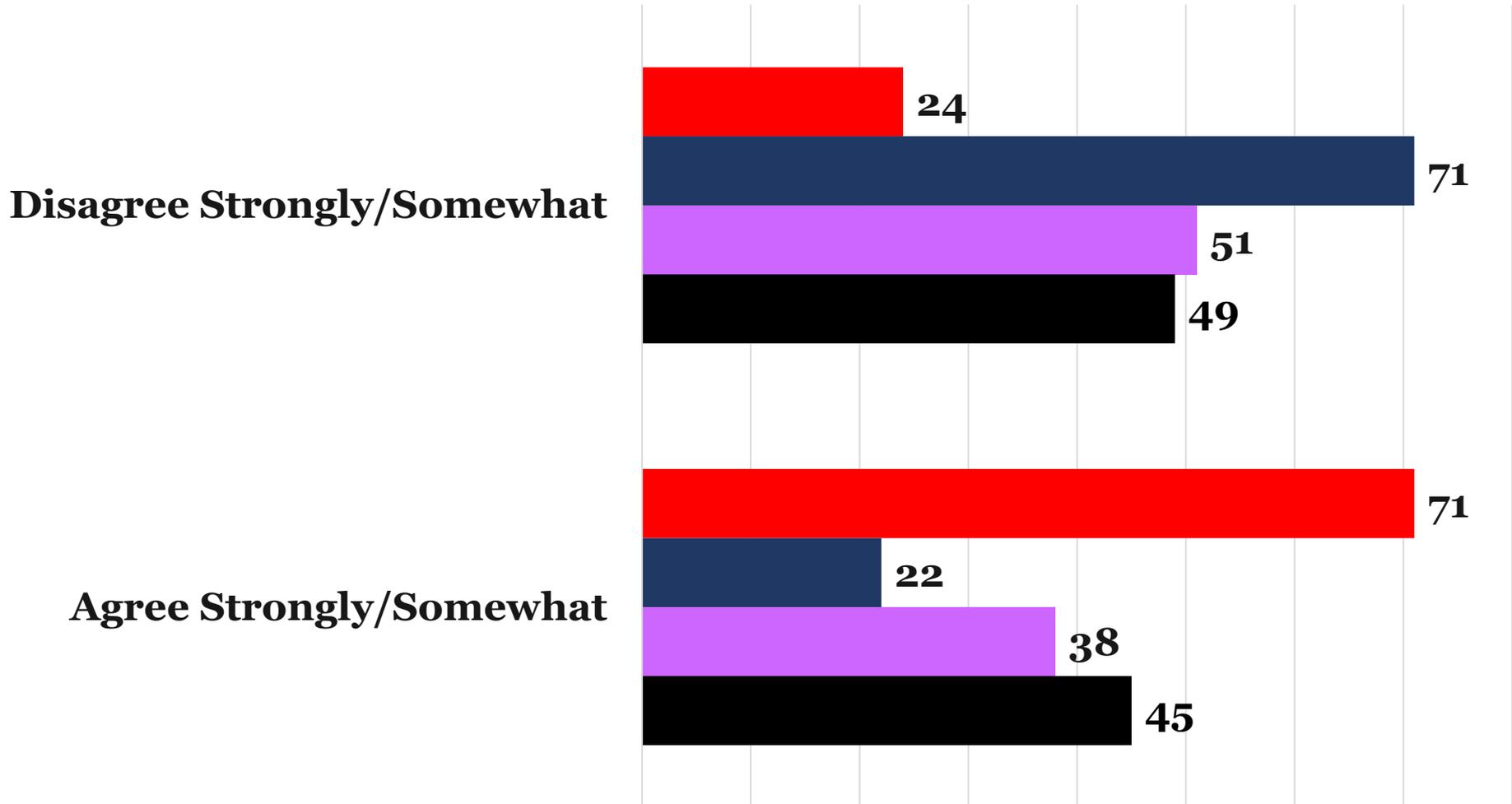
**The United States has recently withdrawn from the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) accusing the organization of an anti-Israeli bias in its policies. Please tell me on a scale of 1-4 how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.**

**[Options were randomized]**

**The U.S. cannot accept UNESCO's approach on Israel and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. UNESCO's disregard for Israeli positions justify U.S. withdrawal from membership in the organization.**

# The U.S. cannot accept UNESCO's approach on Israel and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total

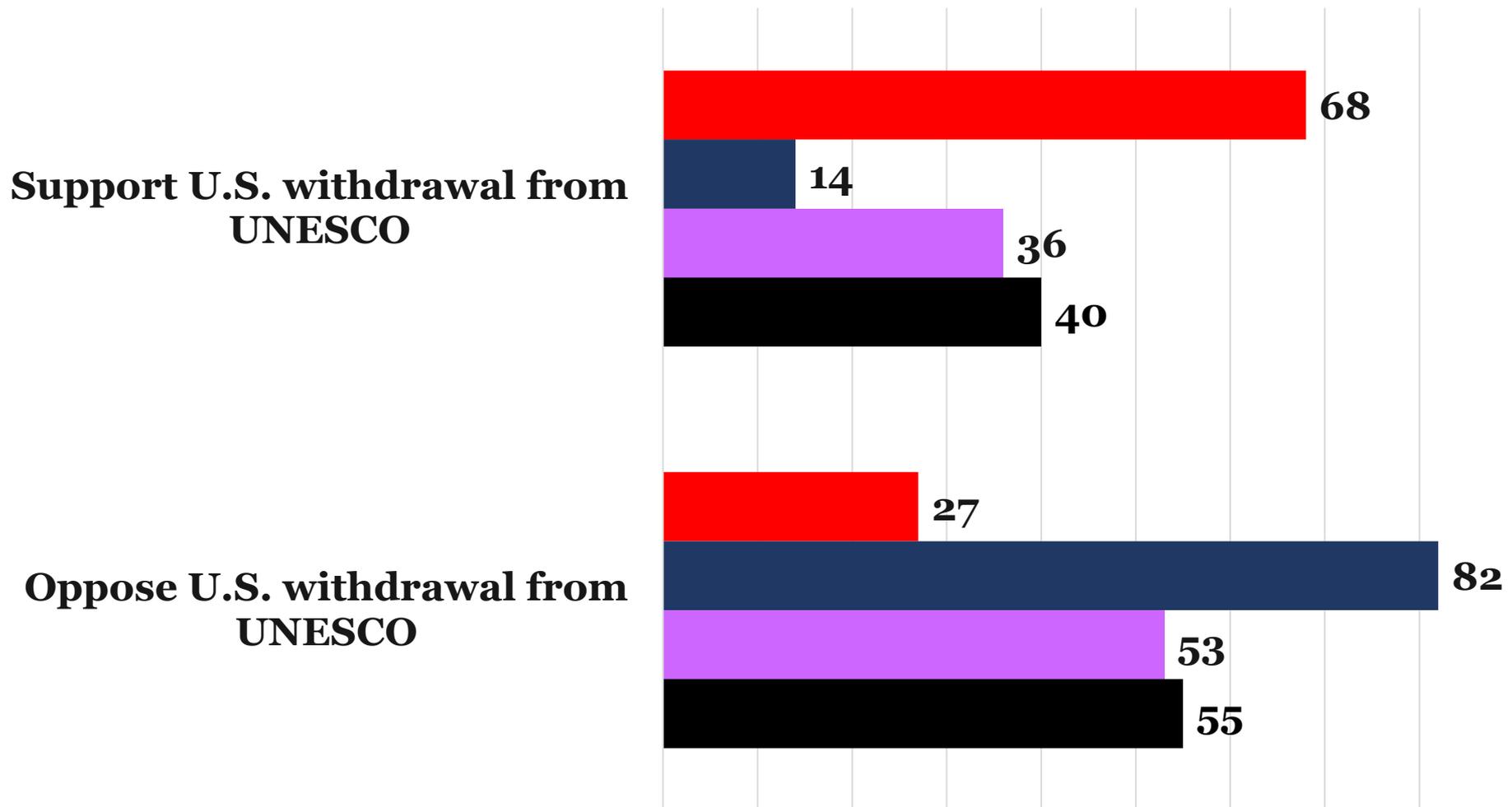


**Now tell me, do you  
support or oppose U.S.  
withdrawal from  
UNESCO?**

**[Options were randomized]**

# Now tell me, do you support or oppose U.S. withdrawal from UNESCO?

■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total



Nov. 2017

# Now tell me, do you support or oppose U.S. withdrawal from UNESCO?

18-34

35+

Support U.S. withdrawal from UNESCO

35

42

Oppose U.S. withdrawal from UNESCO

61

53

Nov. 2017

**President Trump has commenced efforts to mediate the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. His effort has relied on active personal diplomacy involving his top advisor and son-in-law, Jared Kushner, and his former lawyer, Jason Greenblatt. Tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.**

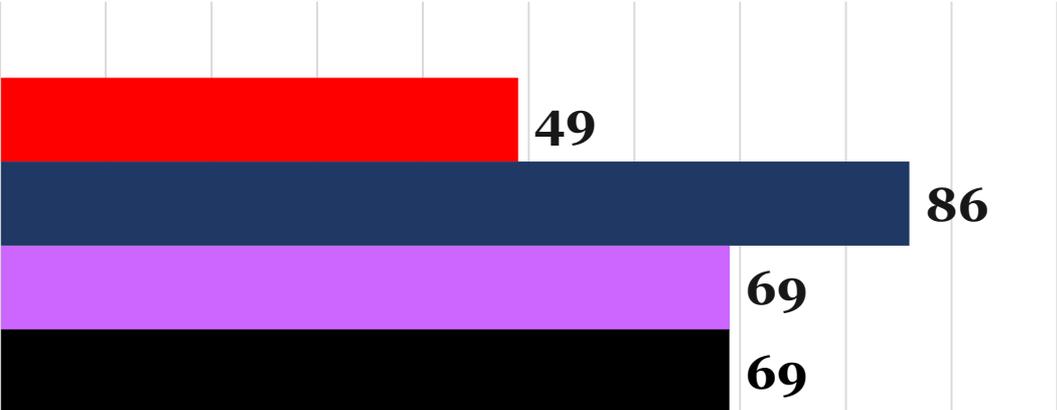
**[Options were randomized]**

**It is wise for presidents to rely on family members and people who are close to them in Middle East diplomacy as that increases the confidence of Middle East leaders in the President's efforts.**

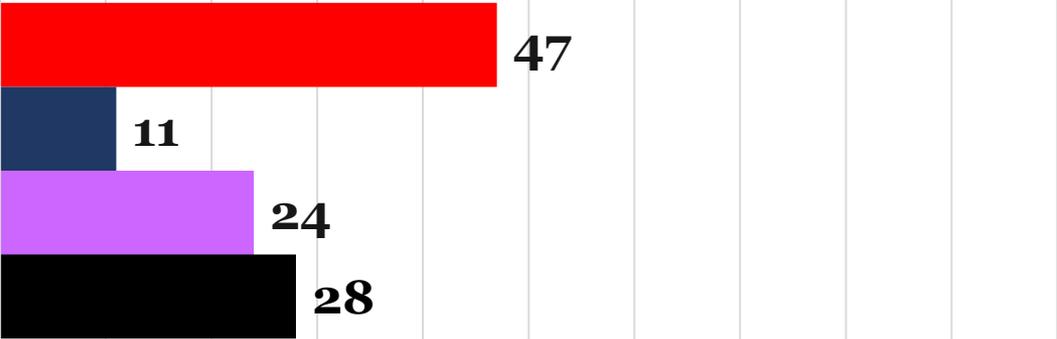
**It is wise for presidents to rely on family members and people who are close to them in Middle East diplomacy as that increases the confidence of Middle East leaders in the President's efforts.**

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

**Disagree Strongly/Somewhat**



**Agree Strongly/Somewhat**



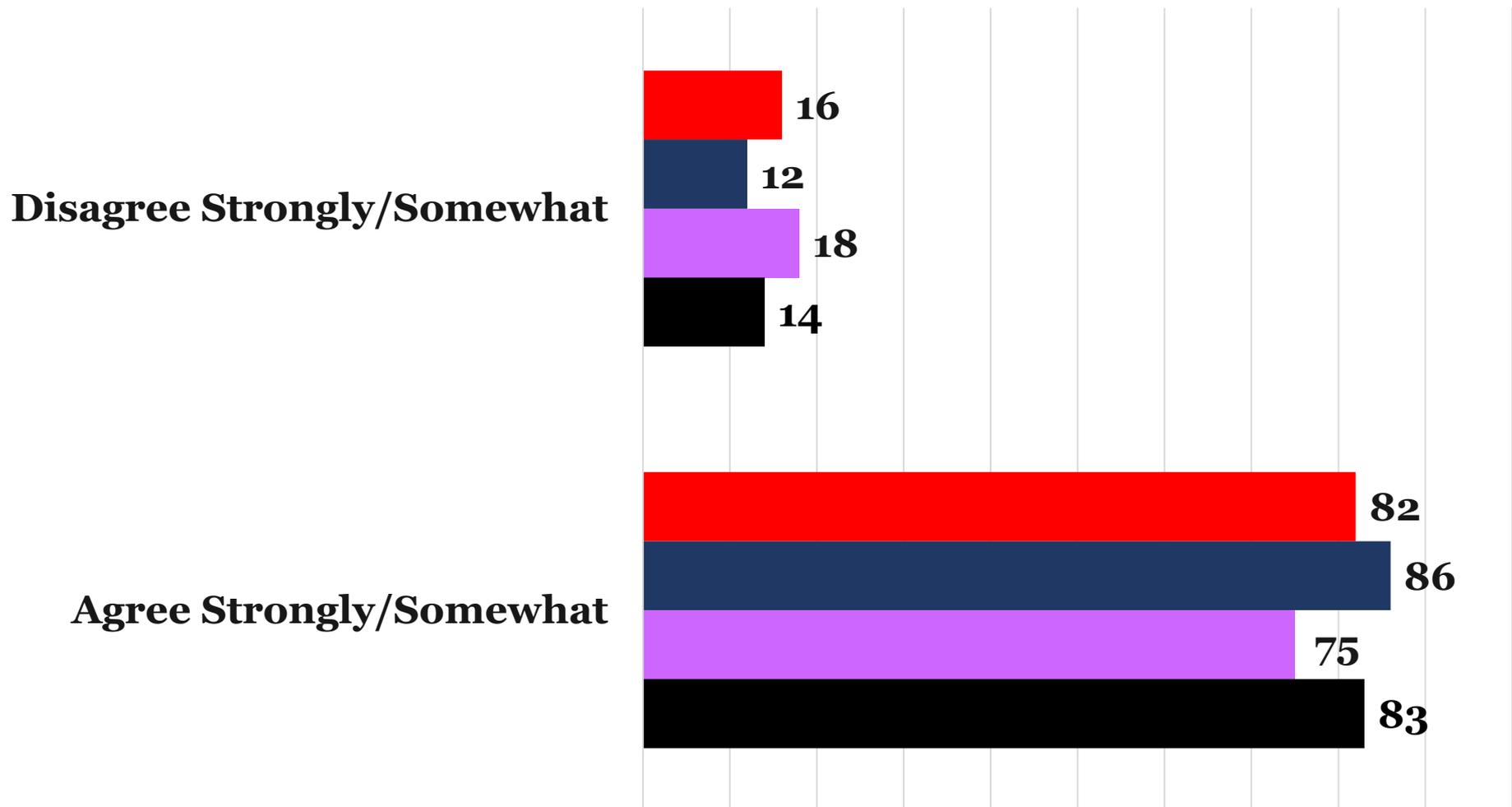
**President Trump has commenced efforts to mediate the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. His effort has relied on active personal diplomacy involving his top advisor and son-in-law, Jared Kushner, and his former lawyer, Jason Greenblatt. Tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.**

**[Options were randomized]**

**In complex diplomatic efforts, such as the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, it is best for presidents to rely principally on experts who have knowledge and experience of both parties in the conflict.**

In complex diplomatic efforts, such as the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, it is best for presidents to rely principally on experts who have knowledge and experience of both parties in the conflict.

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



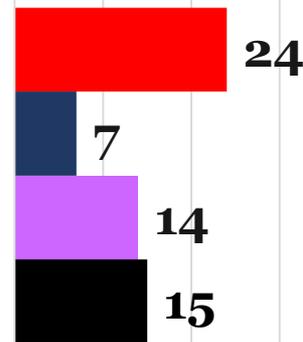
Nov. 2017

**Now tell me, which of  
the following do you  
agree with most?**

# Now tell me, which of the following do you agree with most?

■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total

**It is wise for presidents to rely on family members and people who are close to them in Middle East diplomacy as that increases the confidence of Middle East leaders in the president's efforts**



**In complex diplomatic efforts, such as the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, it is best for presidents to rely principally on experts who have knowledge and experience of both parties in the conflict**

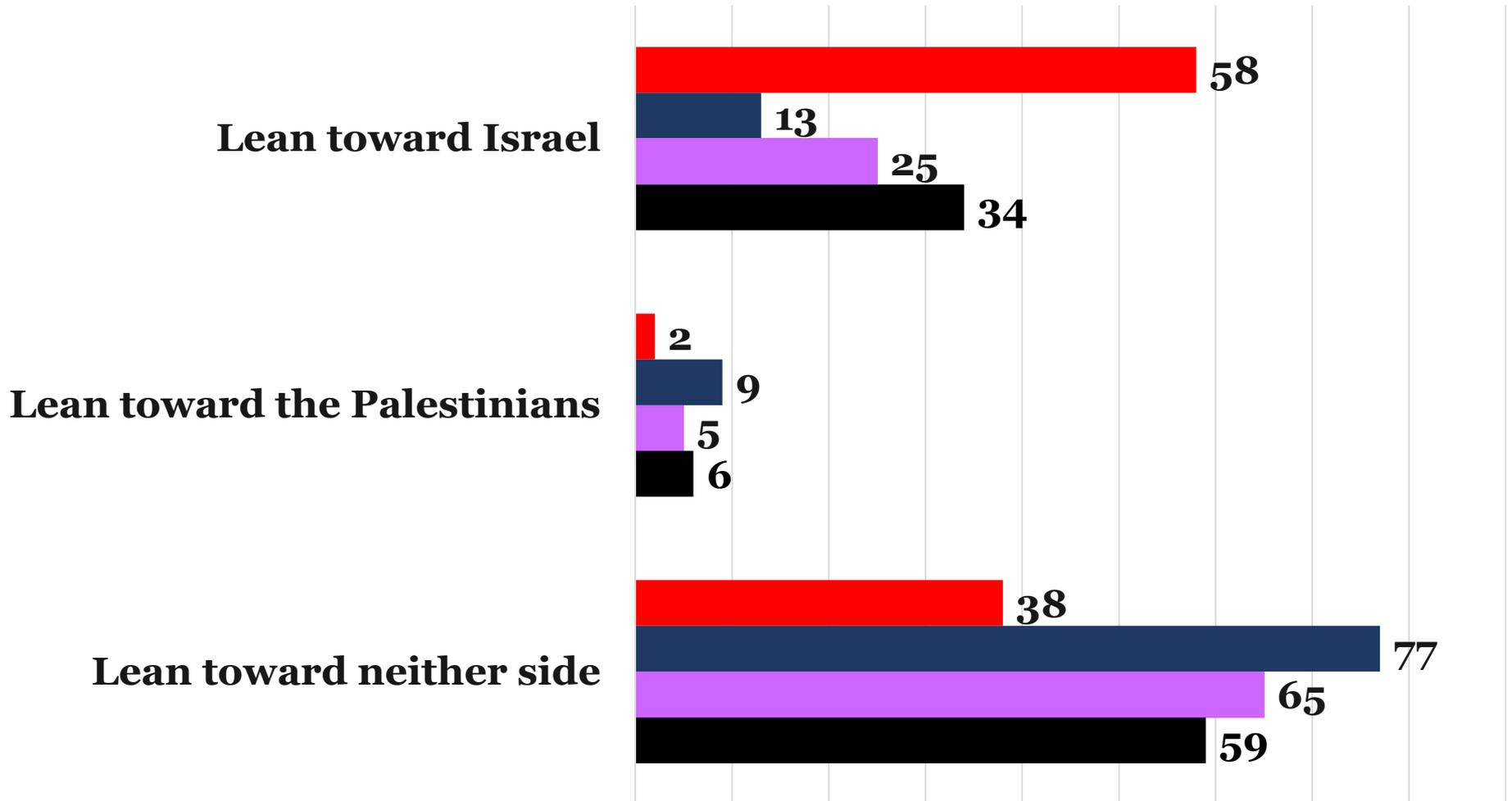


**In general, what role do you want the new Trump administration to play in mediating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?**

**[First two options were randomized]**

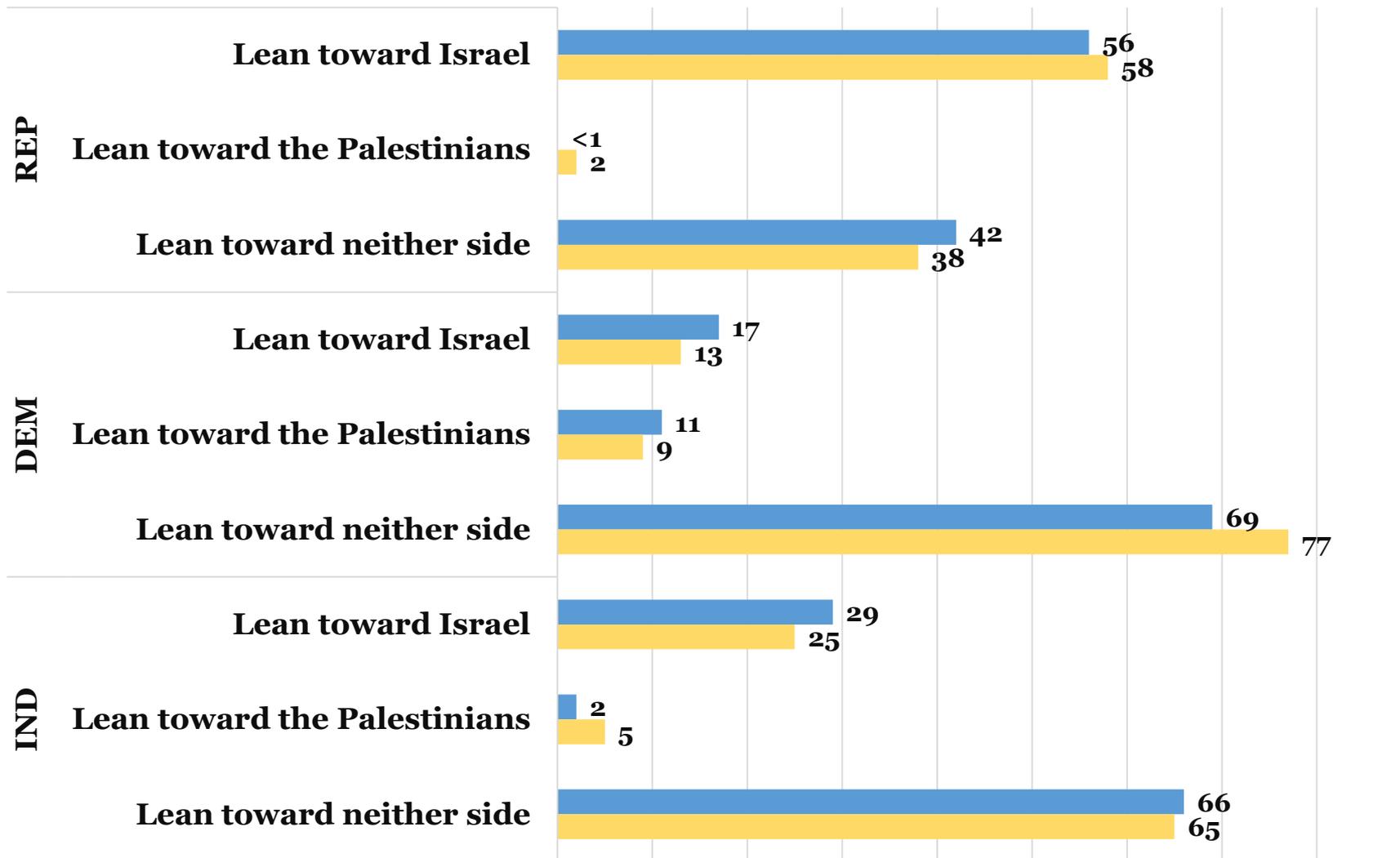
# In general, what role do you want the new Trump administration to play in mediating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?

■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total

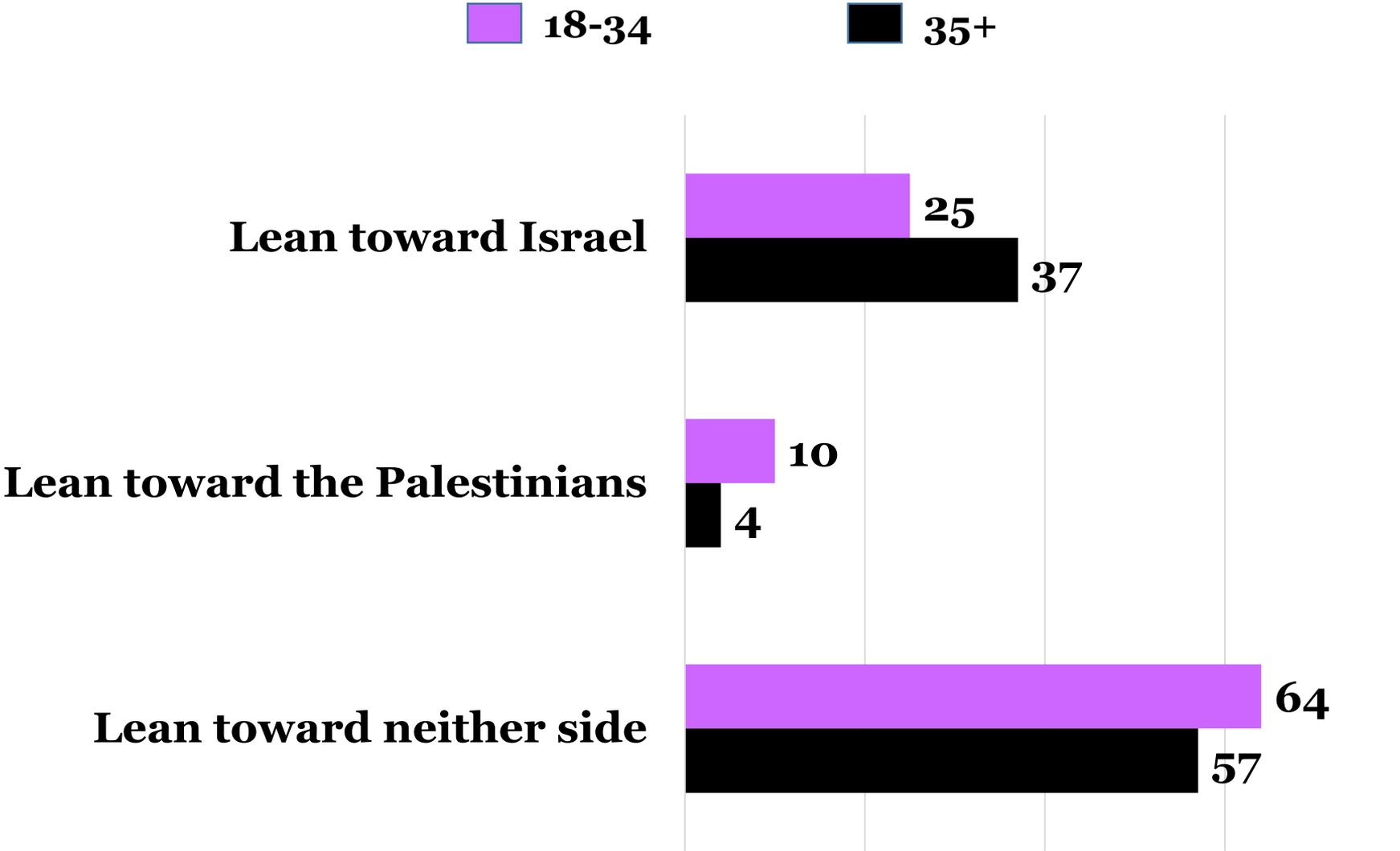


# In general, what role do you want the new Trump administration to play in mediating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?

■ Nov. 2016    ■ Nov. 2017

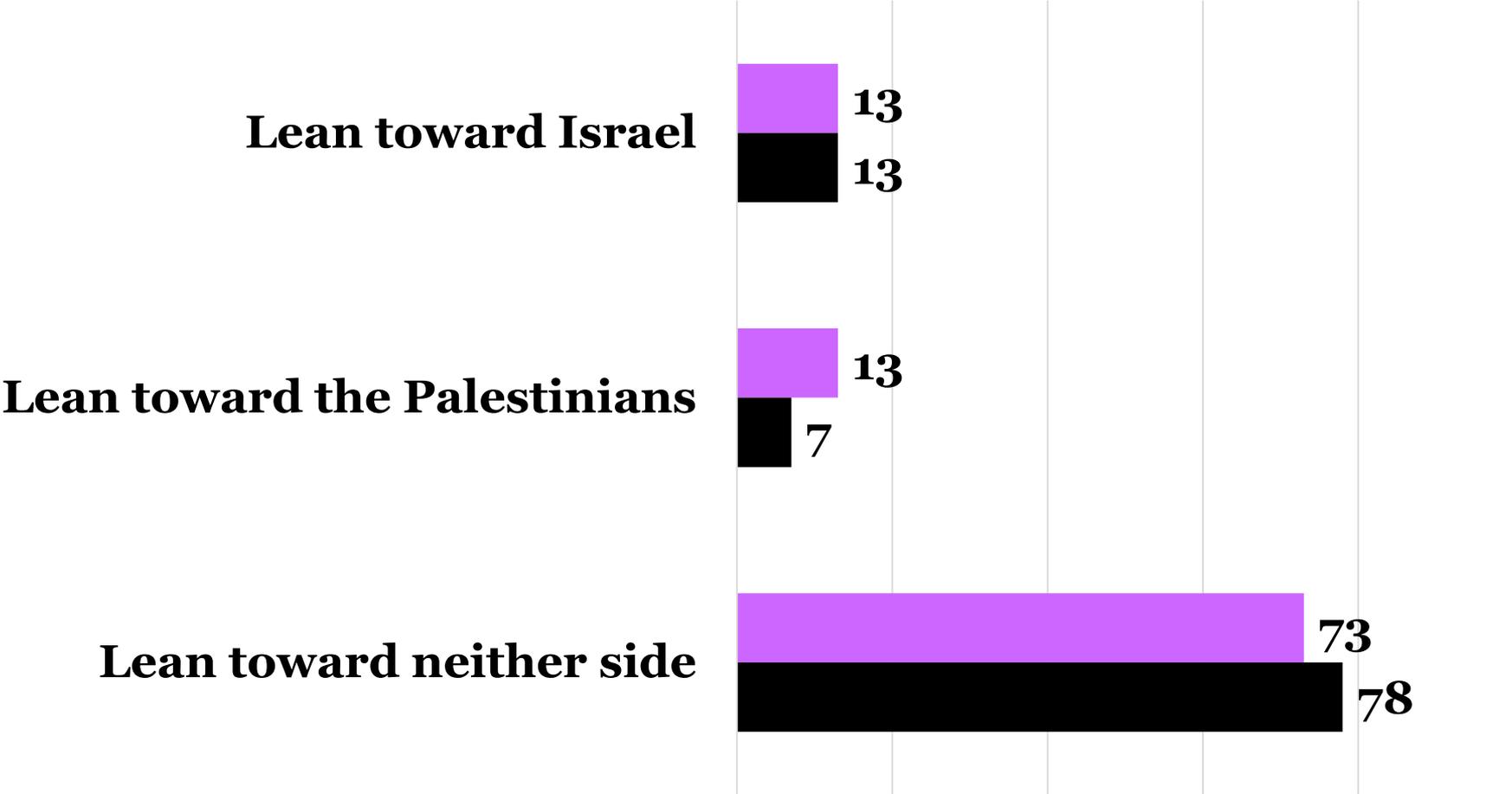


# In general, what role do you want the new Trump administration to play in mediating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?



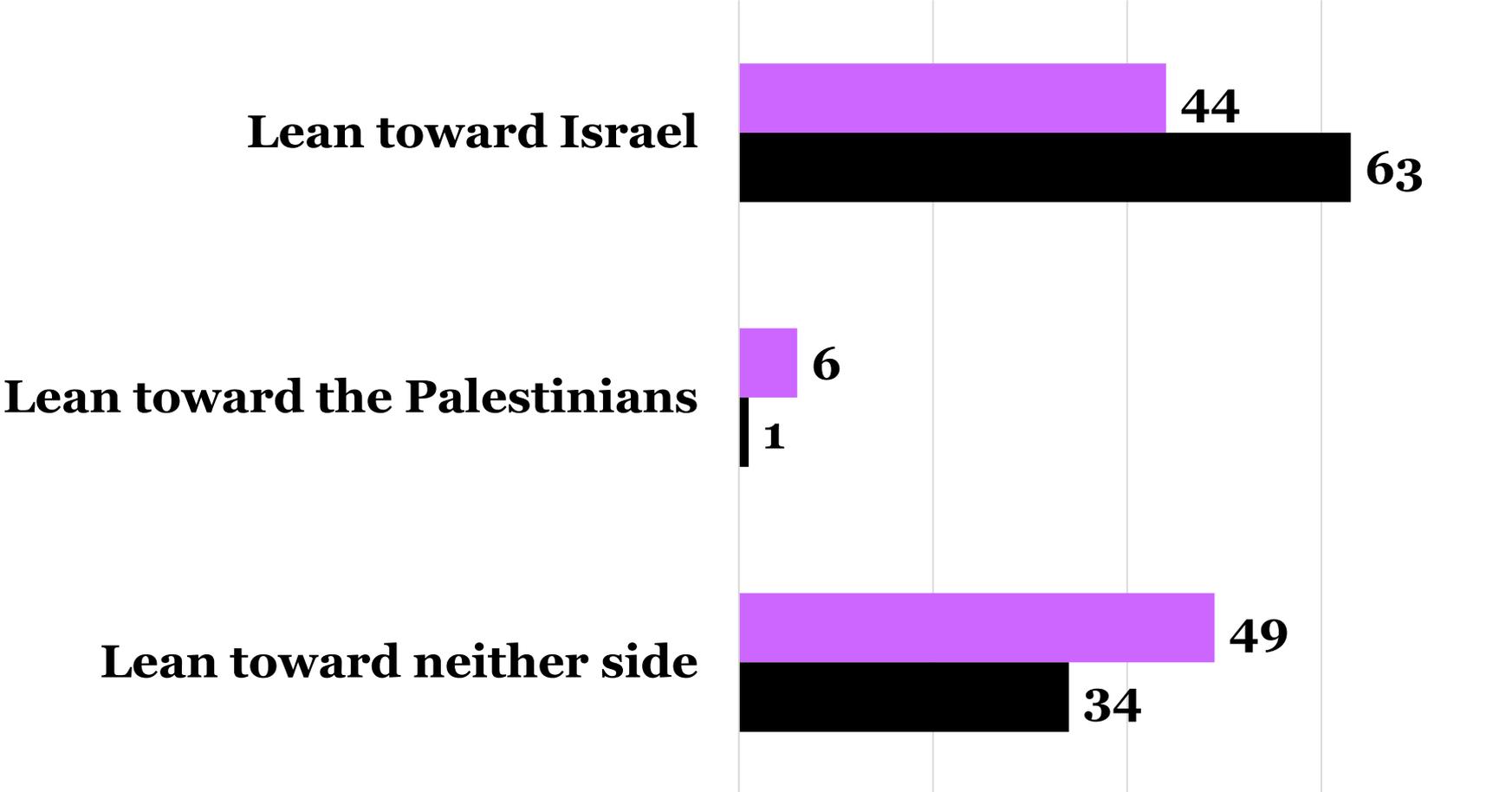
# In general, what role do you want the new Trump administration to play in mediating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? (Among Democrats)

18-34 35+



# In general, what role do you want the new Trump administration to play in mediating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? (Among Republicans)

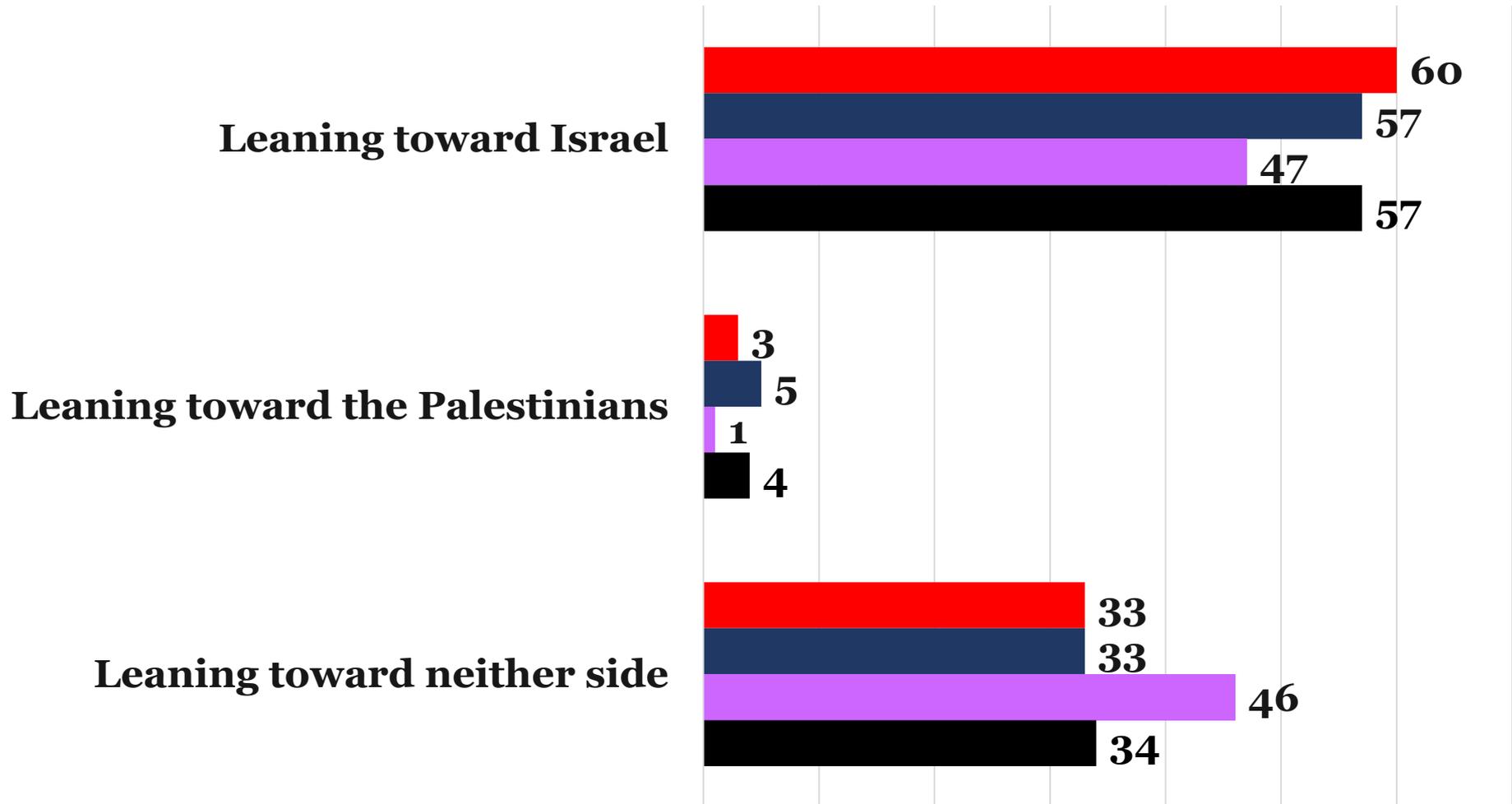
18-34      35+



**Assessing the Trump  
administration's  
diplomacy toward the  
Israeli-Palestinian  
conflict so far, what  
best describes it?**

# Assessing the Trump administration's diplomacy toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict so far, what best describes it?

■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total



**One of the issues of tension between the United States and Israel has been its construction of Israeli settlements in the territories occupied by Israel in the 1967 war. These settlements are considered illegal by most of the international community and have been opposed by every U.S. administration, both Republican and Democratic. The Israeli government has continued to build settlements arguing that they have the right to do so, or that these are not obstacles to peace.**

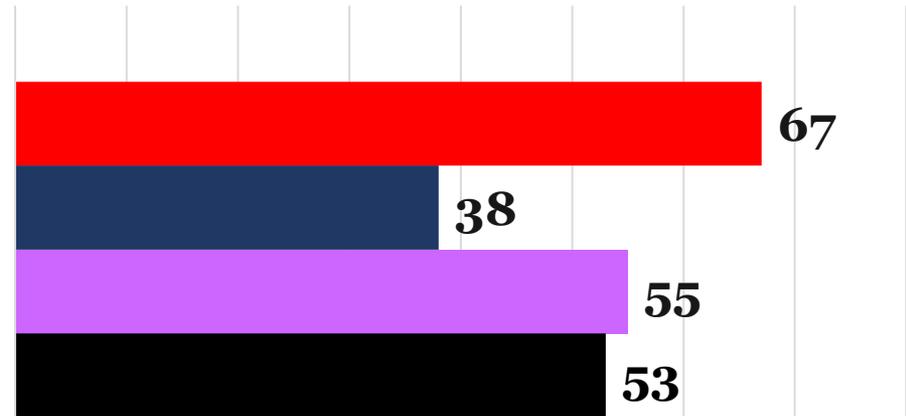
**How do you believe the U.S. should react to new settlements?**

**[Options were randomized]**

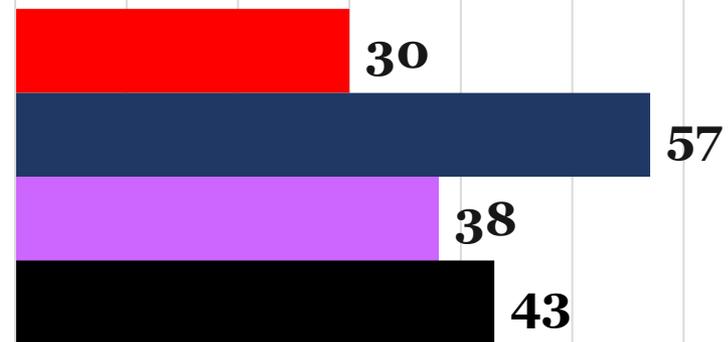
# How do you believe the U.S. should react to new settlements?

■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total

**Do nothing/Limit U.S. opposition to words, but take no other action**

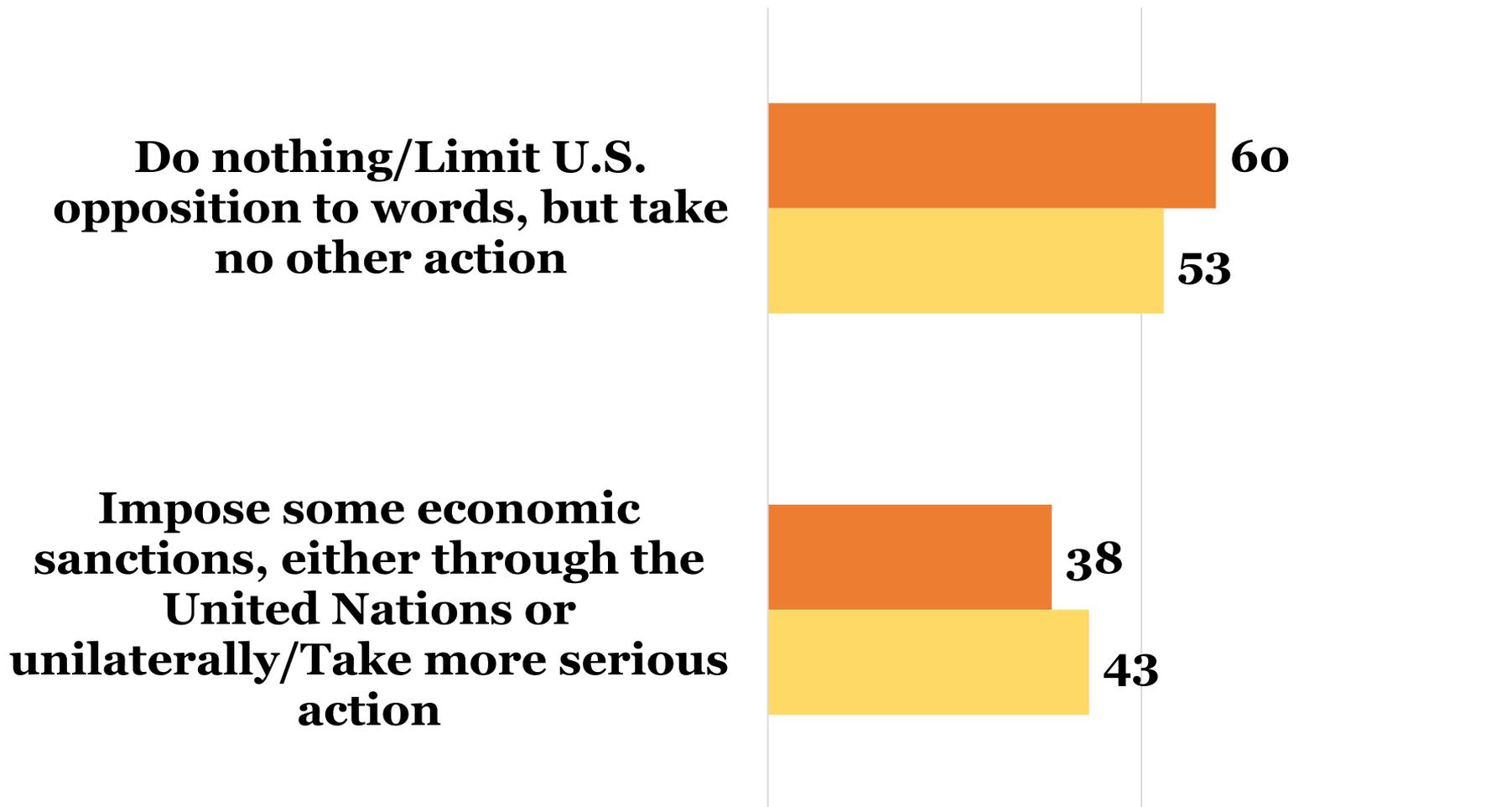


**Impose some economic sanctions, either through the United Nations or unilaterally/Take more serious action**



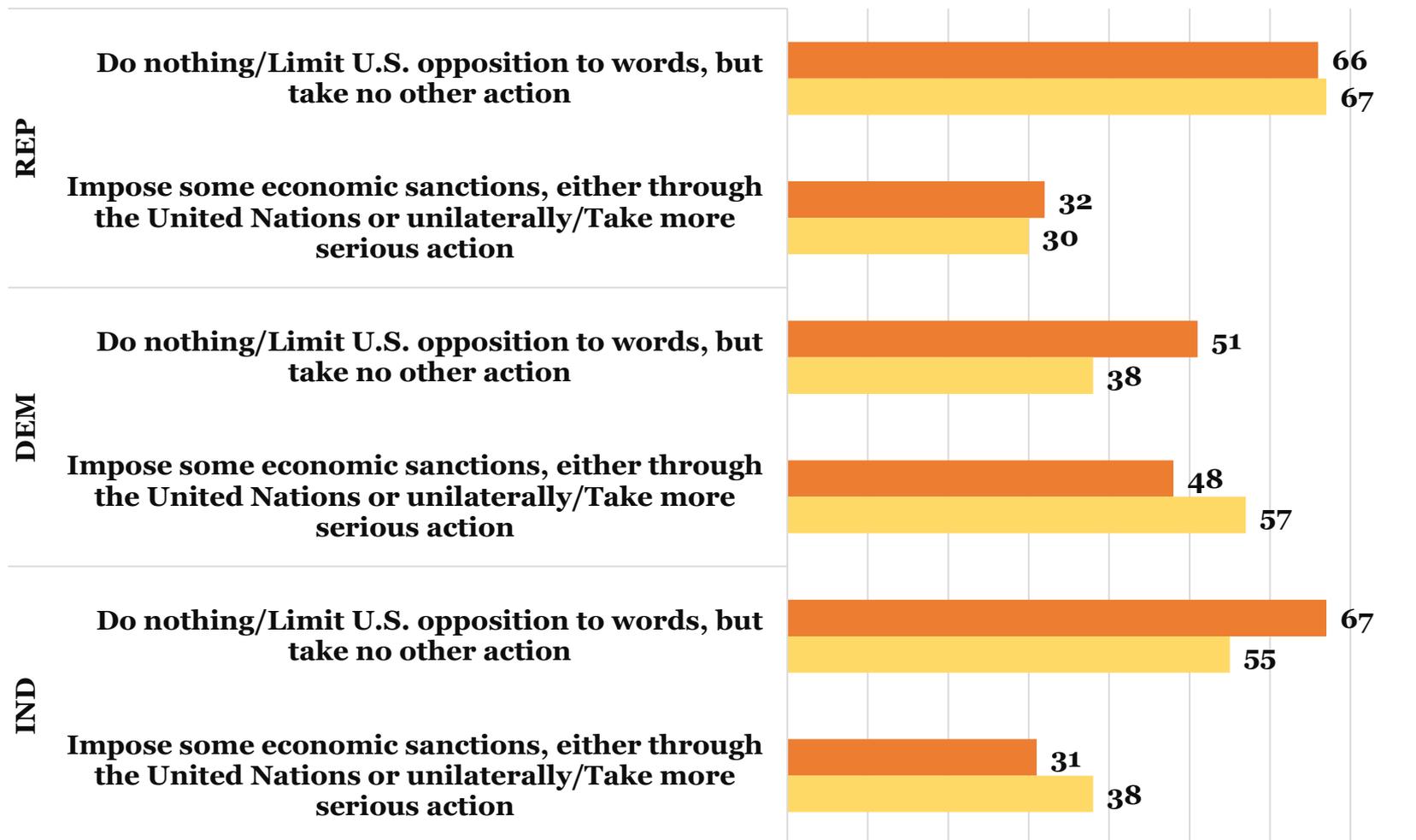
# How do you believe the U.S. should react to new settlements?

**Nov. 2014**      **Nov. 2017**



# How do you believe the U.S. should react to new settlements?

Nov. 2014      Nov. 2017



**American  
Attitudes  
toward Iran**

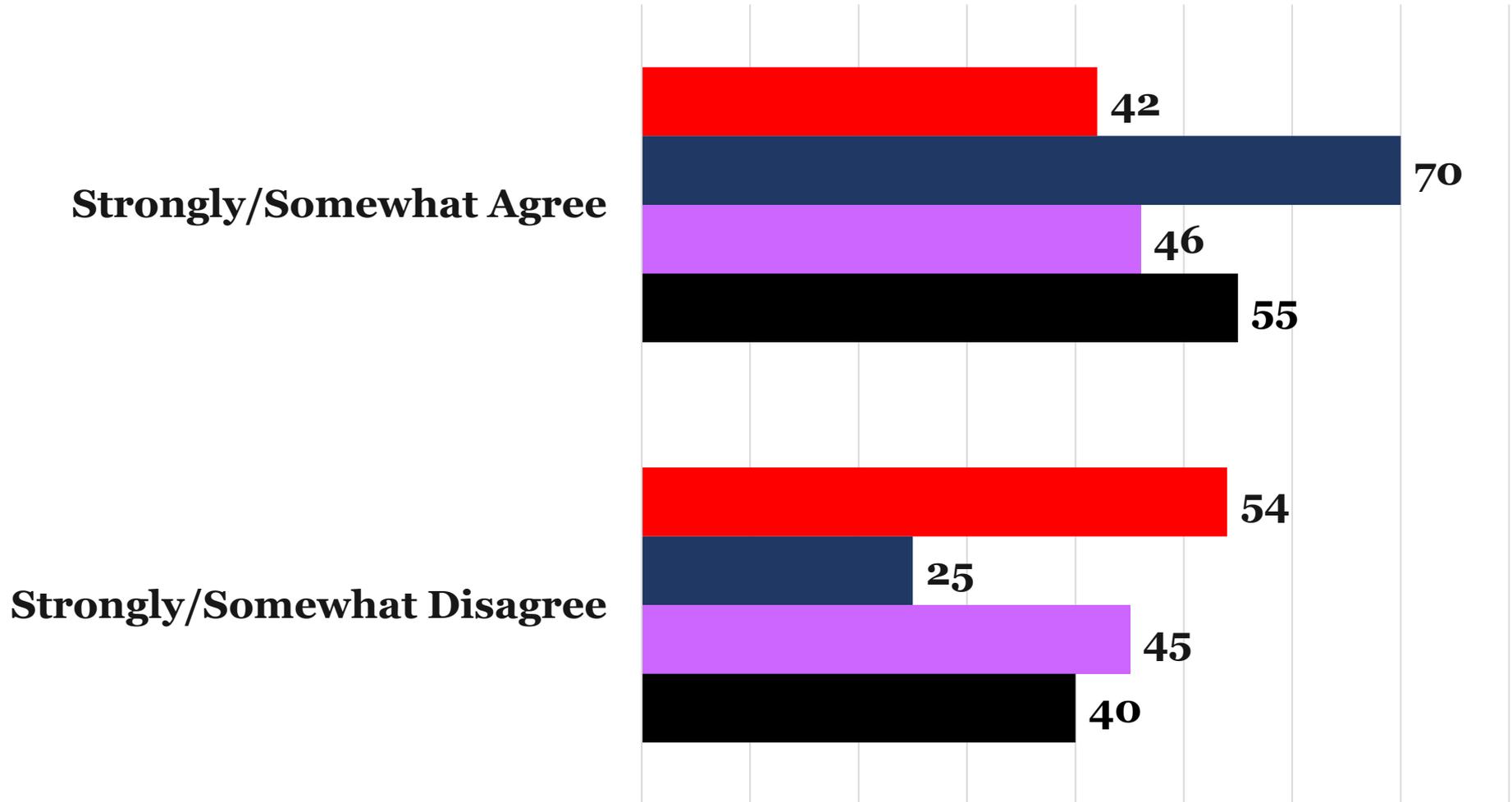
**Assuming both the United States and Iran fully comply with the Iran Nuclear Deal as it stands, tell me the extent to which you agree with the following about maintaining the nuclear deal:**

**[Options were randomized]**

**It reduces the chance that Iran will develop nuclear weapons**

# It reduces the chance that Iran will develop nuclear weapons

■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total



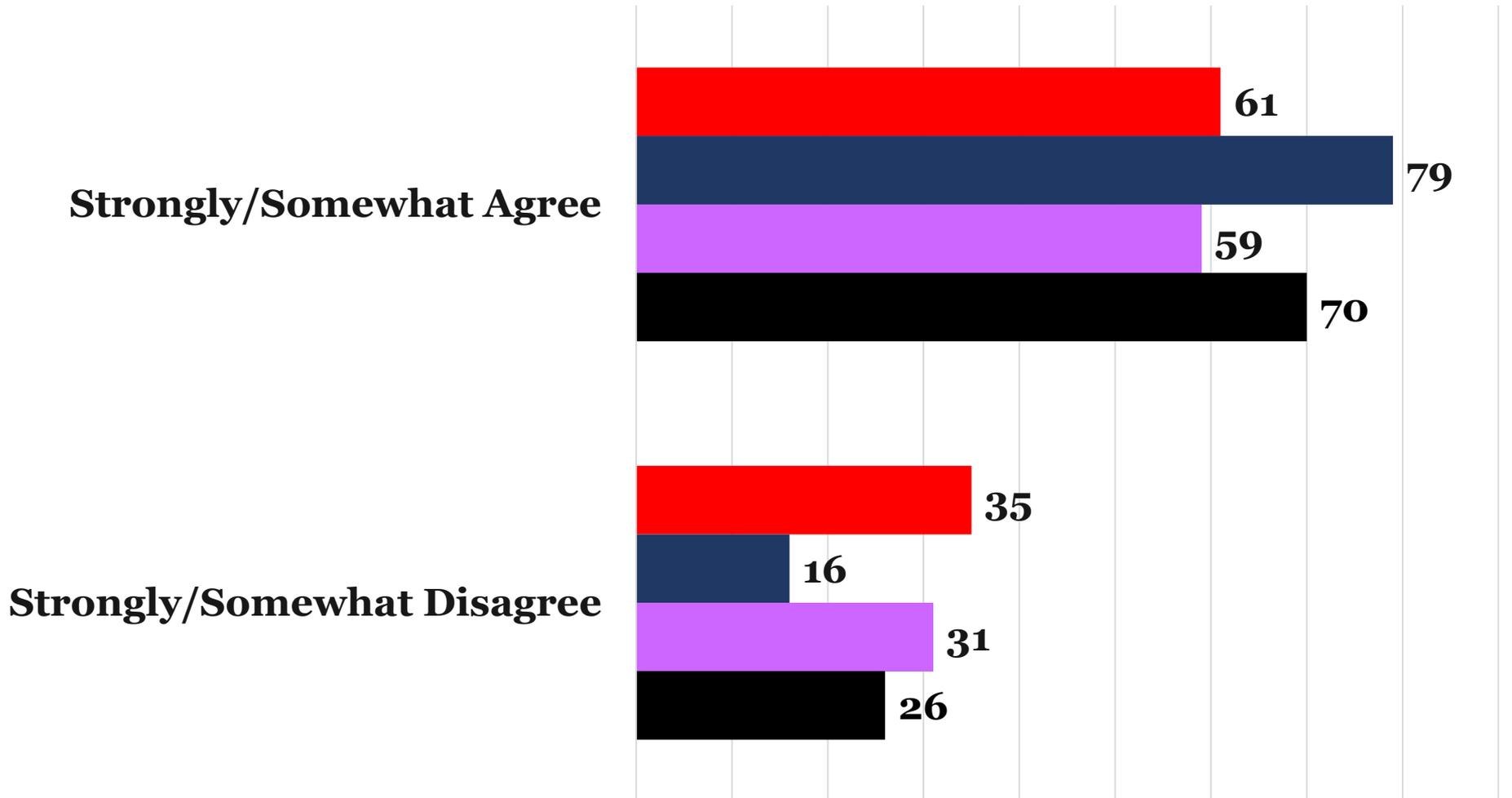
**Assuming both the United States and Iran fully comply with the Iran Nuclear Deal as it stands, tell me the extent to which you agree with the following about maintaining the nuclear deal:**

**[Options were randomized]**

**It serves the national security interests of the United States**

# It serves the national security interests of the United States

■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total



**On issues not related to the nuclear deal, such as Iran's conventional weapons and regional policies, Congress is not limited by the Iran Nuclear Deal from imposing Iran sanctions. In fact, such sanctions are already in place. However, Congress will likely consider in the coming weeks imposing nuclear-related sanctions that would violate the Iran nuclear deal.**

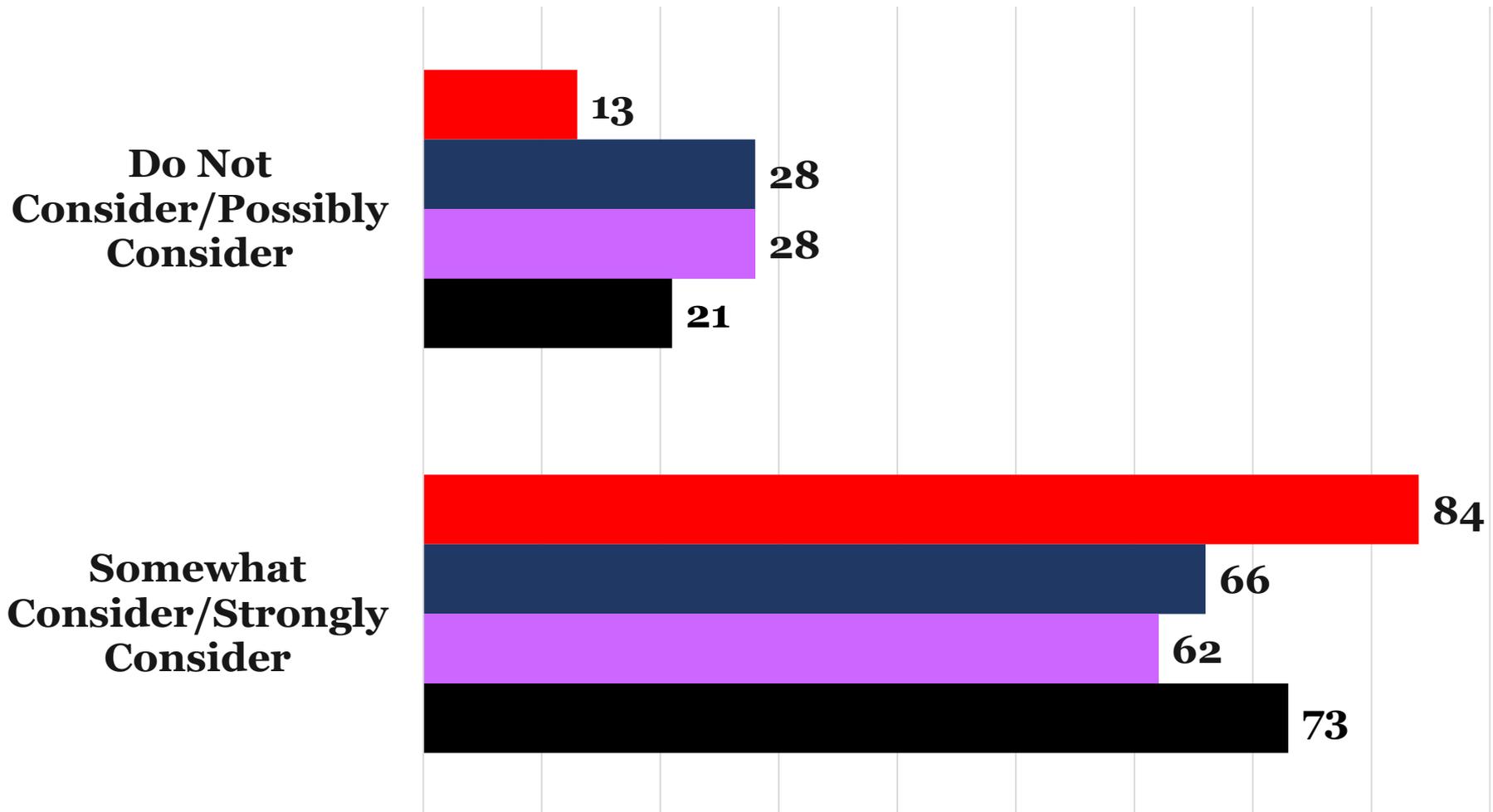
**On a scale of 1-4, which of the following should Congress consider the most when deciding whether or not to impose nuclear-related sanctions on Iran?**

**[Options were randomized]**

**If U.S. national security agencies (Pentagon, the CIA, State Department) find evidence that Iran is not complying with the nuclear deal.**

# If U.S. national security agencies (Pentagon, the CIA, State Department) find evidence that Iran is not complying with the nuclear deal

■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total



**On issues not related to the nuclear deal, such as Iran's conventional weapons and regional policies, Congress is not limited by the Iran Nuclear Deal from imposing Iran sanctions. In fact, such sanctions are already in place. However, Congress will likely consider in the coming weeks imposing nuclear-related sanctions that would violate the Iran nuclear deal.**

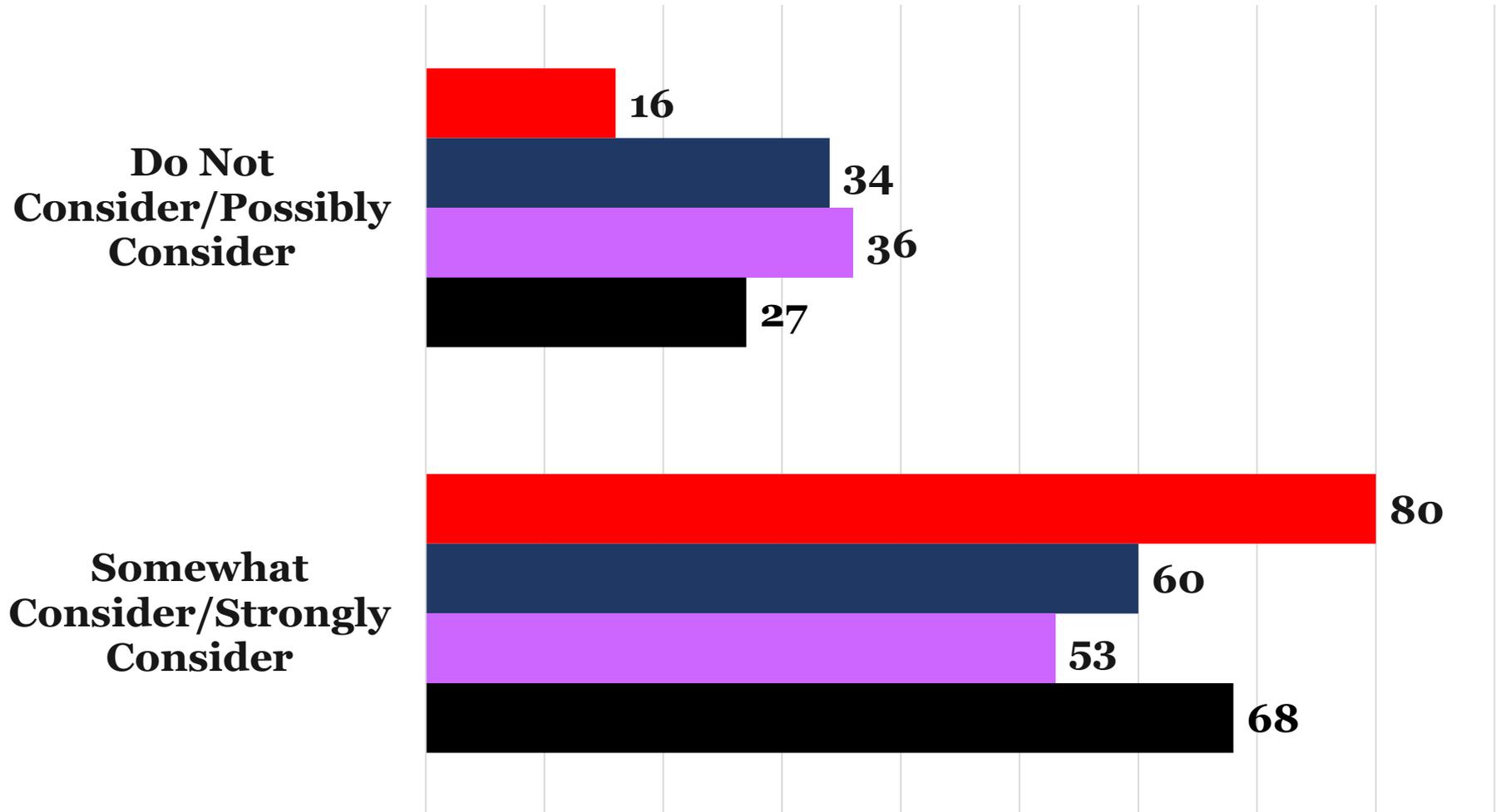
**On a scale of 1-4, which of the following should Congress consider the most when deciding whether or not to impose nuclear-related sanctions on Iran?**

**[Options were randomized]**

**If U.S. national security agencies (Pentagon, CIA, State Department) determine that imposing sanctions is in U.S. national security interests.**

# If U.S. national security agencies (Pentagon, CIA, State Department) determine that imposing sanctions is in U.S. national security interests

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



**On issues not related to the nuclear deal, such as Iran's conventional weapons and regional policies, Congress is not limited by the Iran Nuclear Deal from imposing Iran sanctions. In fact, such sanctions are already in place. However, Congress will likely consider in the coming weeks imposing nuclear-related sanctions that would violate the Iran nuclear deal.**

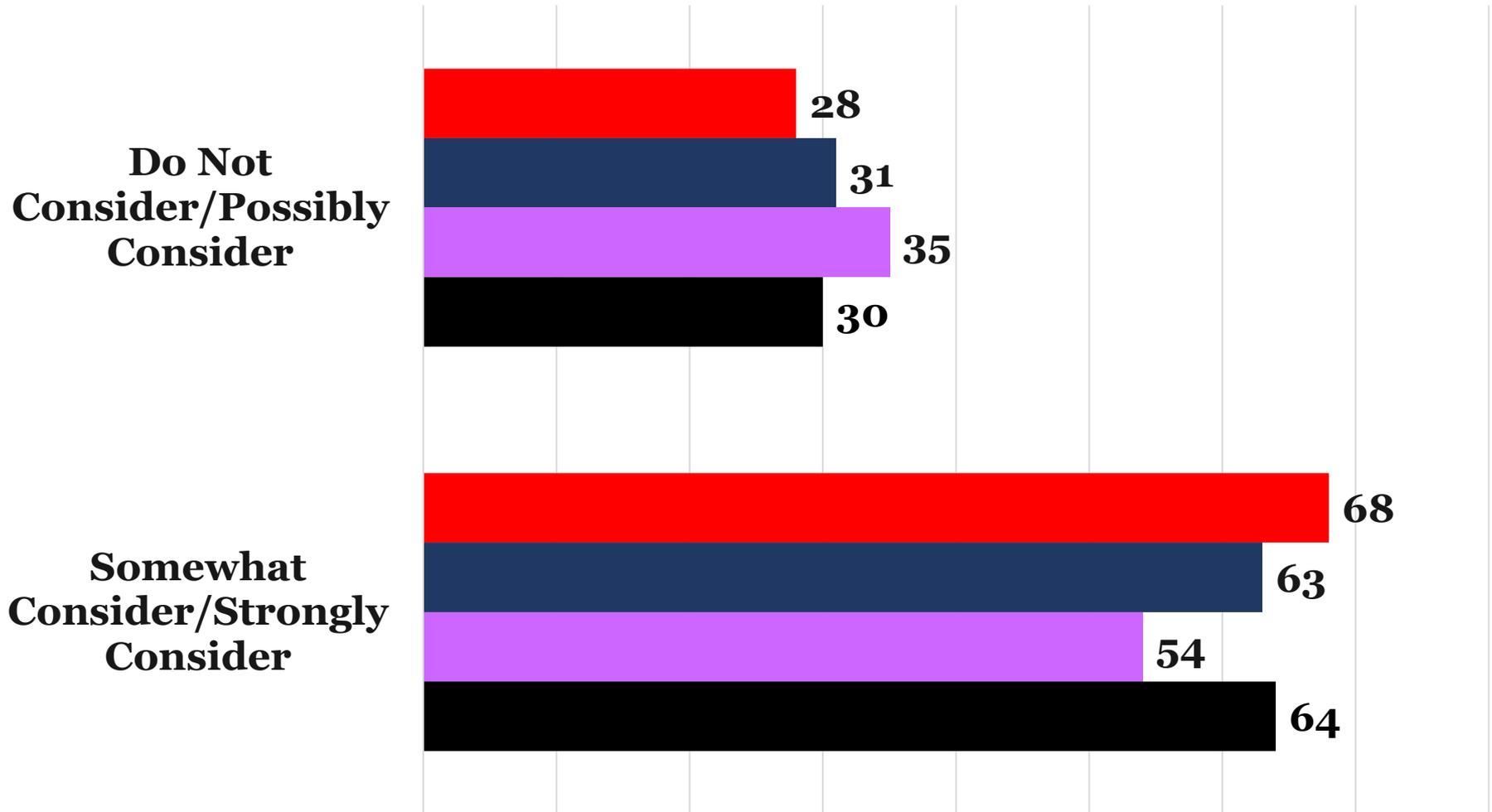
**On a scale of 1-4, which of the following should Congress consider the most when deciding whether or not to impose nuclear-related sanctions on Iran?**

**[Options were randomized]**

**If other deal signatories (the United Kingdom, Russia, France, China, and Germany) also agree with imposing sanctions.**

# If other deal signatories (the United Kingdom, Russia, France, China, and Germany) also agree with imposing sanctions

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



**On issues not related to the nuclear deal, such as Iran's conventional weapons and regional policies, Congress is not limited by the Iran Nuclear Deal from imposing Iran sanctions. In fact, such sanctions are already in place. However, Congress will likely consider in the coming weeks imposing nuclear-related sanctions that would violate the Iran nuclear deal.**

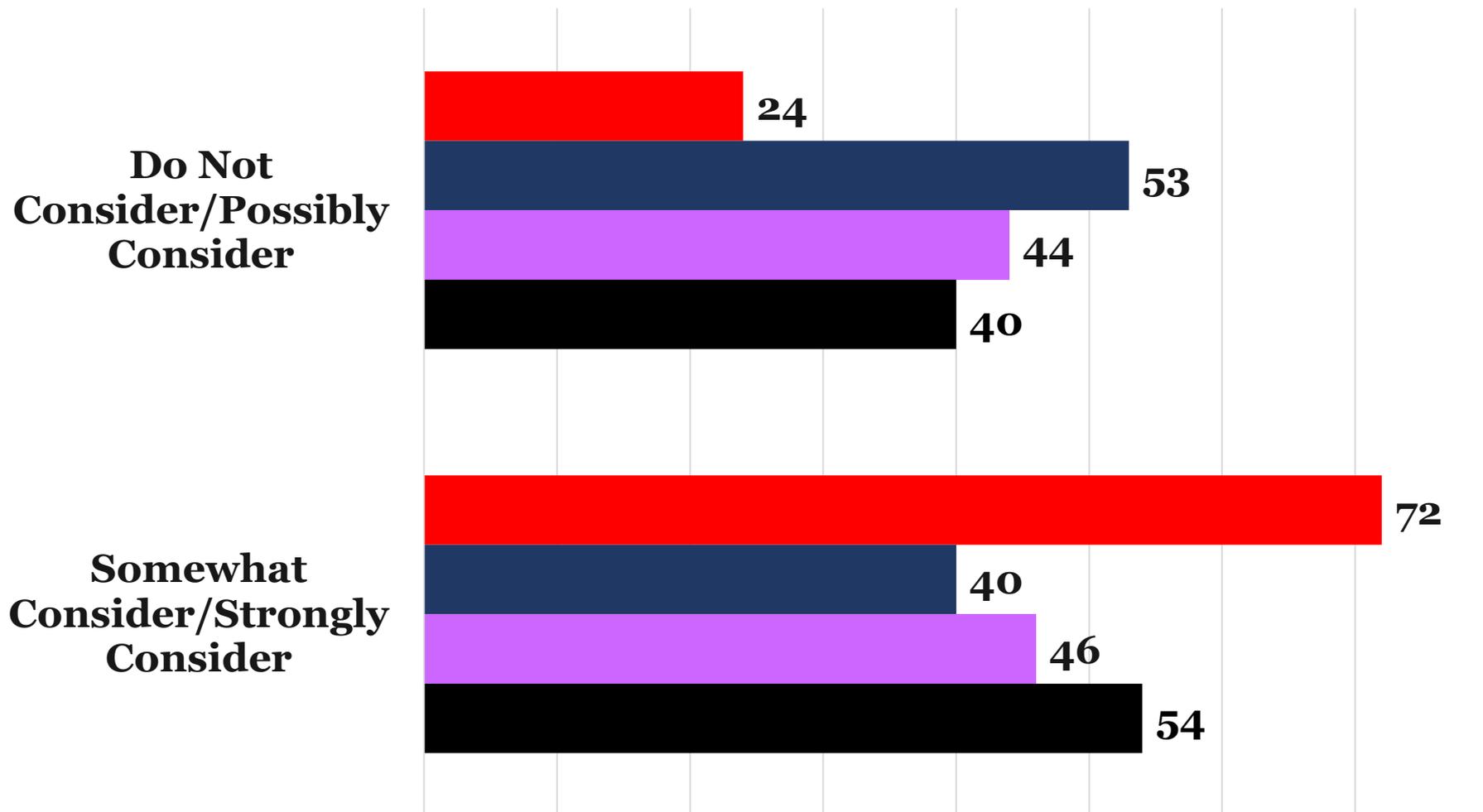
**On a scale of 1-4, which of the following should Congress consider the most when deciding whether or not to impose nuclear-related sanctions on Iran?**

**[Options were randomized]**

**If imposing such sanctions helps make Israel more secure.**

# If imposing such sanctions helps make Israel more secure

■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total



**On issues not related to the nuclear deal, such as Iran's conventional weapons and regional policies, Congress is not limited by the Iran Nuclear Deal from imposing Iran sanctions. In fact, such sanctions are already in place. However, Congress will likely consider in the coming weeks imposing nuclear-related sanctions that would violate the Iran nuclear deal.**

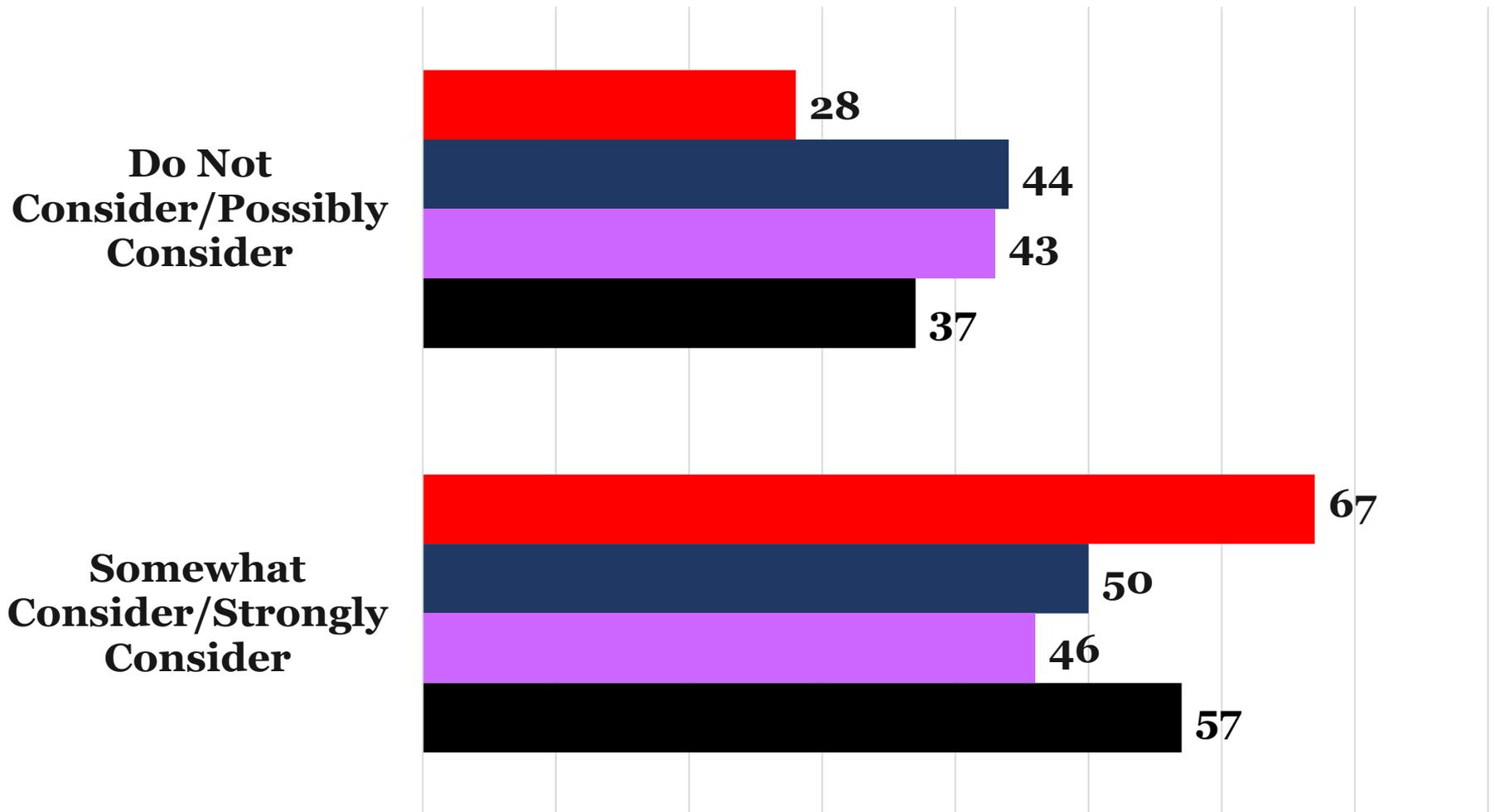
**On a scale of 1-4, which of the following should Congress consider the most when deciding whether or not to impose nuclear-related sanctions on Iran?**

**[Options were randomized]**

**If imposing such sanctions helps make Iran's Arab neighbors more secure.**

# If imposing such sanctions helps make Iran's Arab neighbors more secure

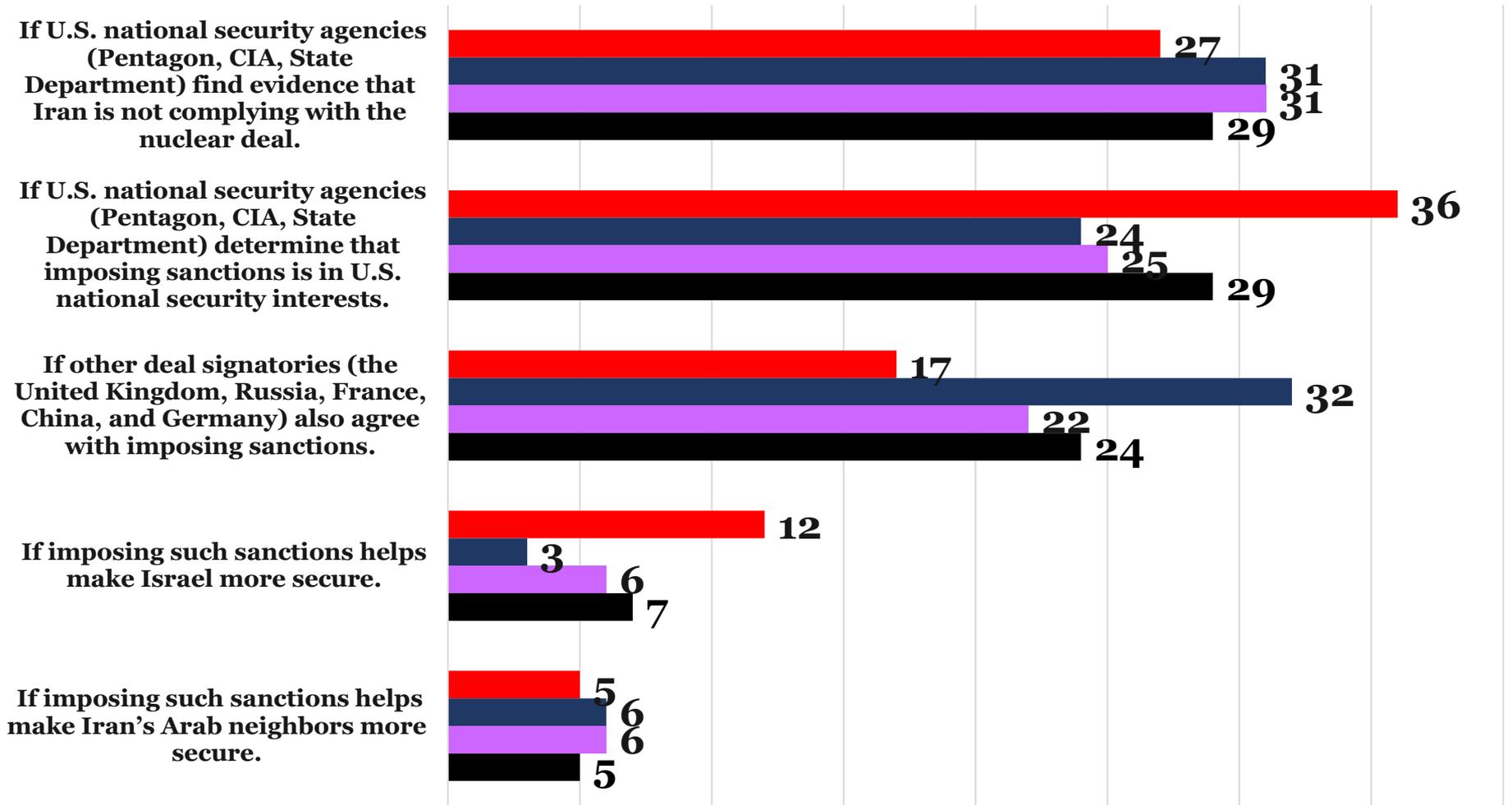
■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total



**Now tell me, which of these  
five is in your opinion most  
important?**

# Now tell me, which of these five is in your opinion most important?

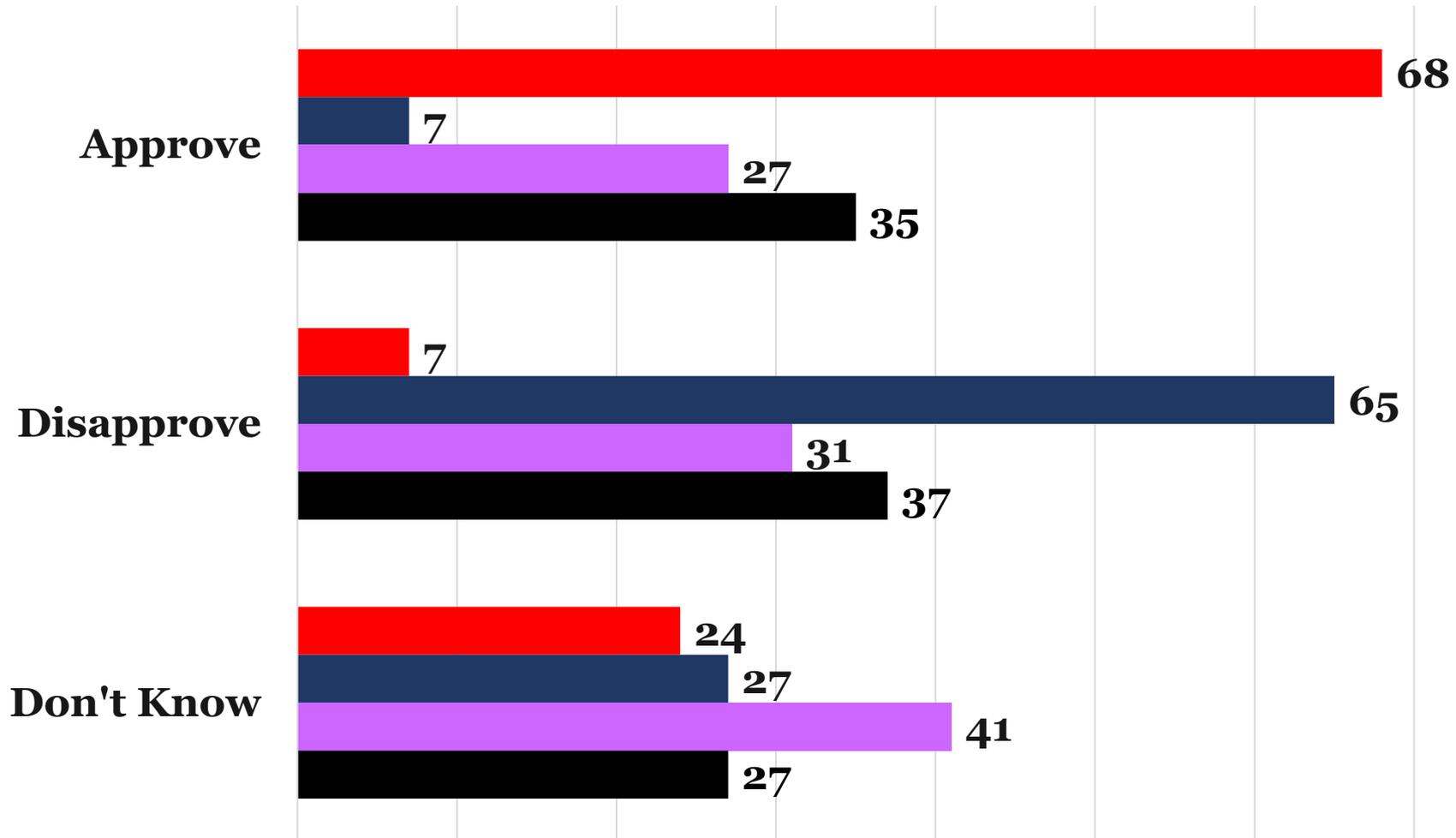
■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total



**President Obama certified, and President Trump also certified, the 2015 Iran Nuclear Deal (The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action or JCPOA) earlier this year. But on October 13, 2017, President Trump decided not to certify Iran's compliance with the JCPOA. In your opinion, do you approve or disapprove of President Trump's action to not certify Iran's compliance?**

# In your opinion, do you approve or disapprove of President Trump's action to not certify Iran's compliance?

■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total

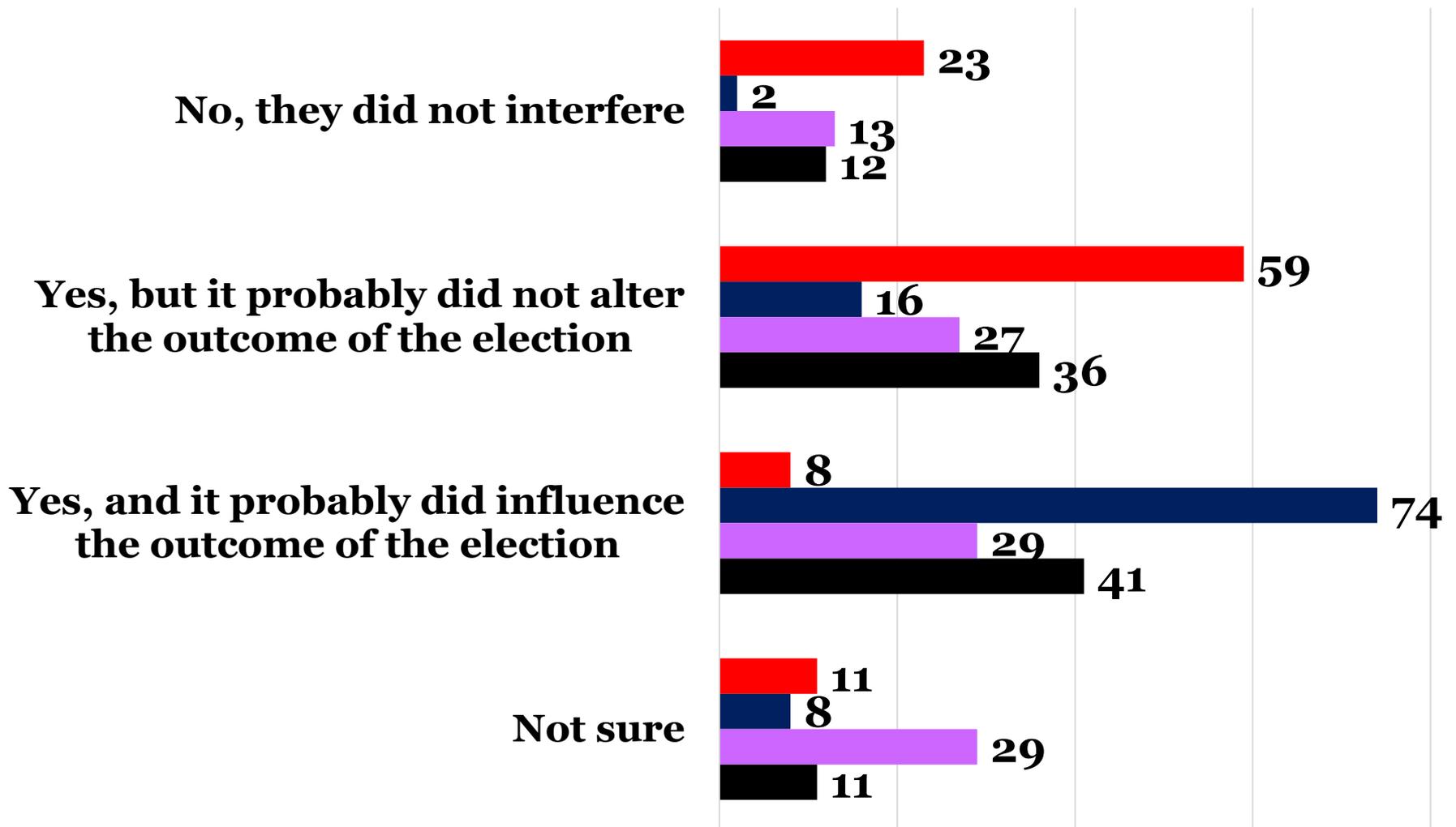


**American  
Attitudes  
toward Russia**

**Do you believe Russia  
interfered in the recent  
presidential election, and if  
so, did it influence the  
outcome?**

# Do you believe Russia interfered in the recent presidential election, and if so, did it influence the outcome?

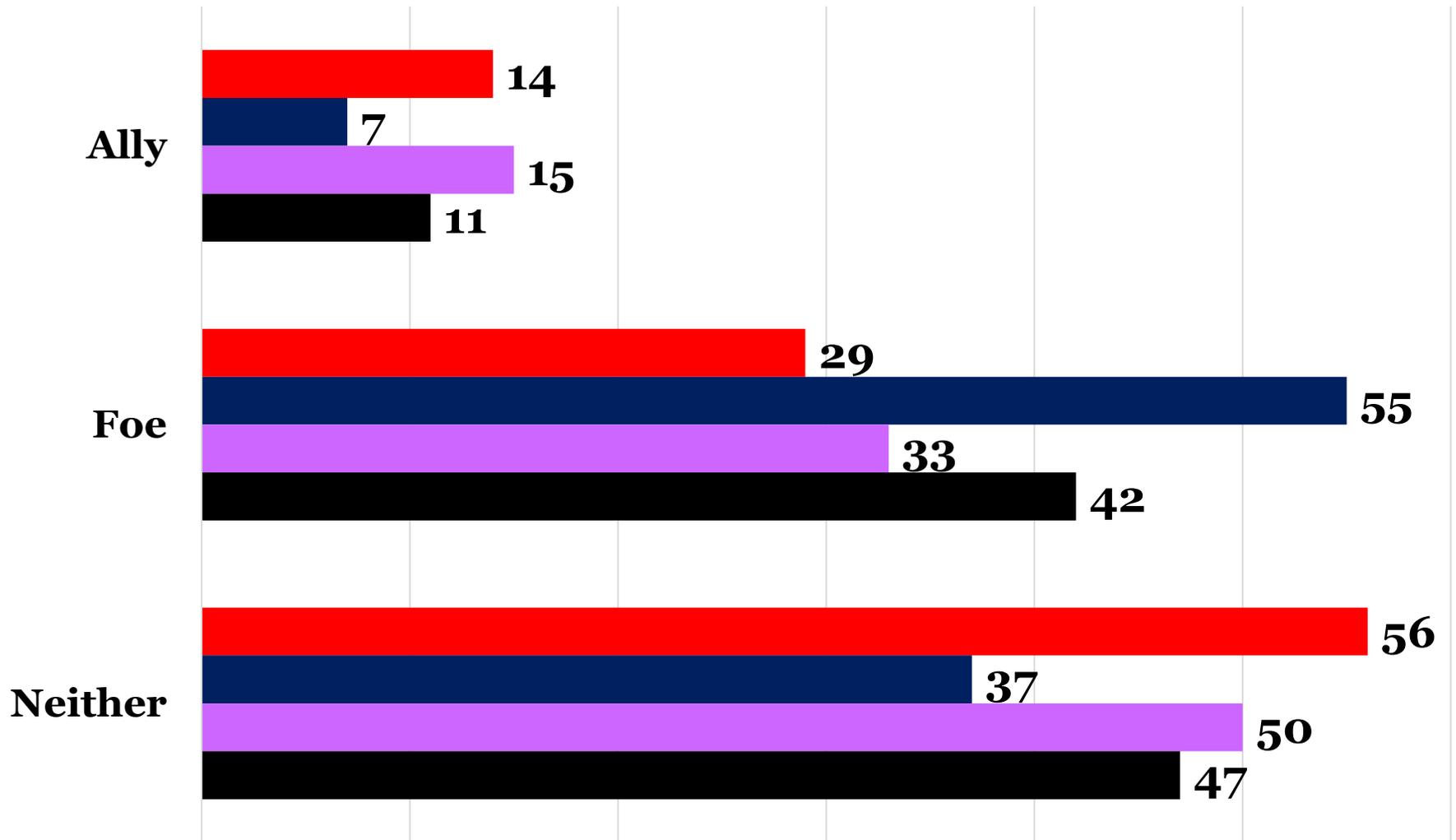
■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total



**Do you view Russia  
as an ally or foe?**

# Do you view Russia as an ally or foe?

■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total



Nov. 2017

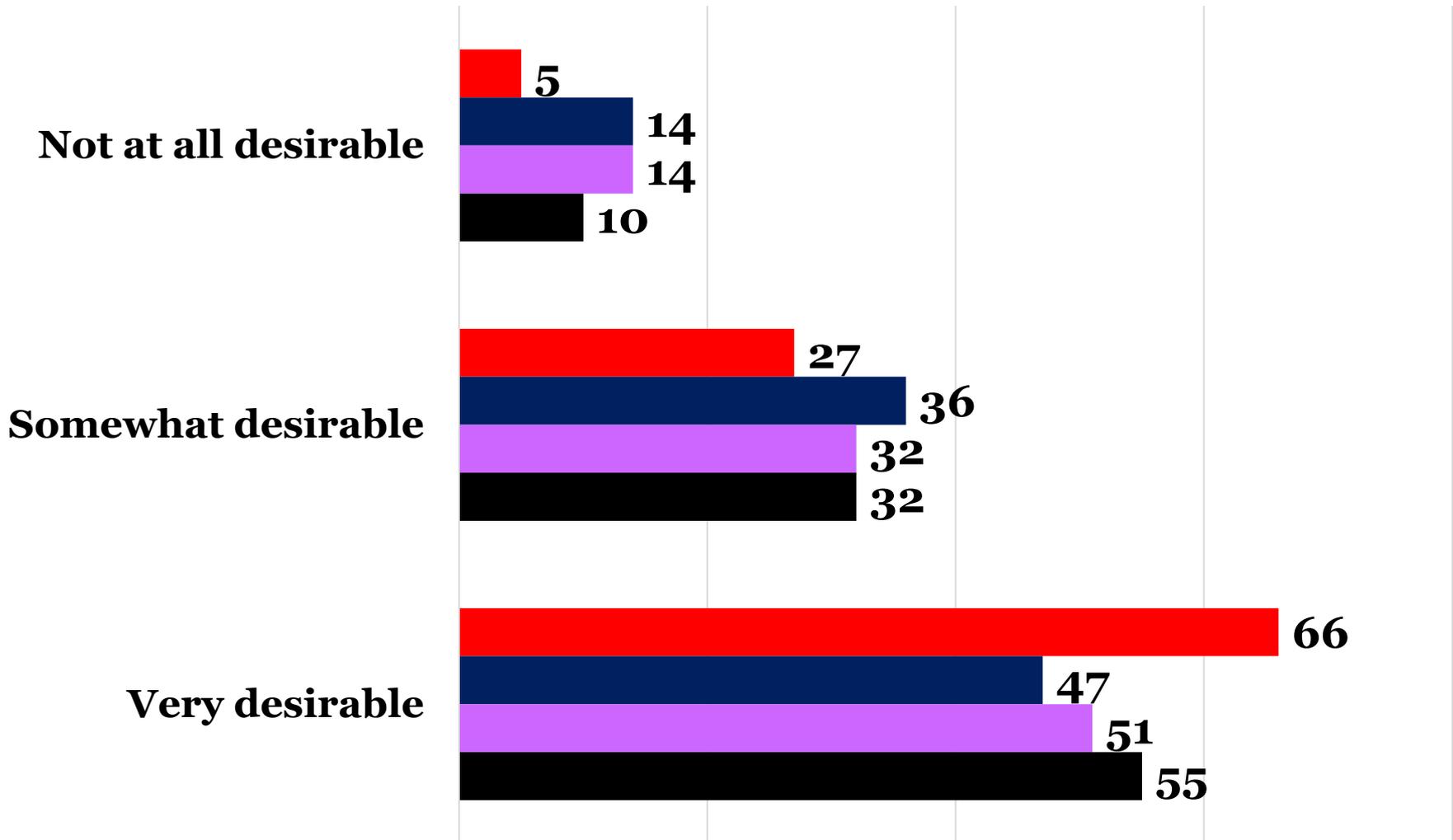
**Despite the tension between the U.S. and Russia, on what issues is cooperation between the U.S. and Russia desirable?**

**[Options were randomized]**

**The war on terrorism, especially on ISIS and Al Qaeda**

Despite the tension between the U.S. and Russia, on what issues is cooperation between the U.S. and Russia desirable?  
The war on terrorism, especially on ISIS and Al Qaeda

■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total



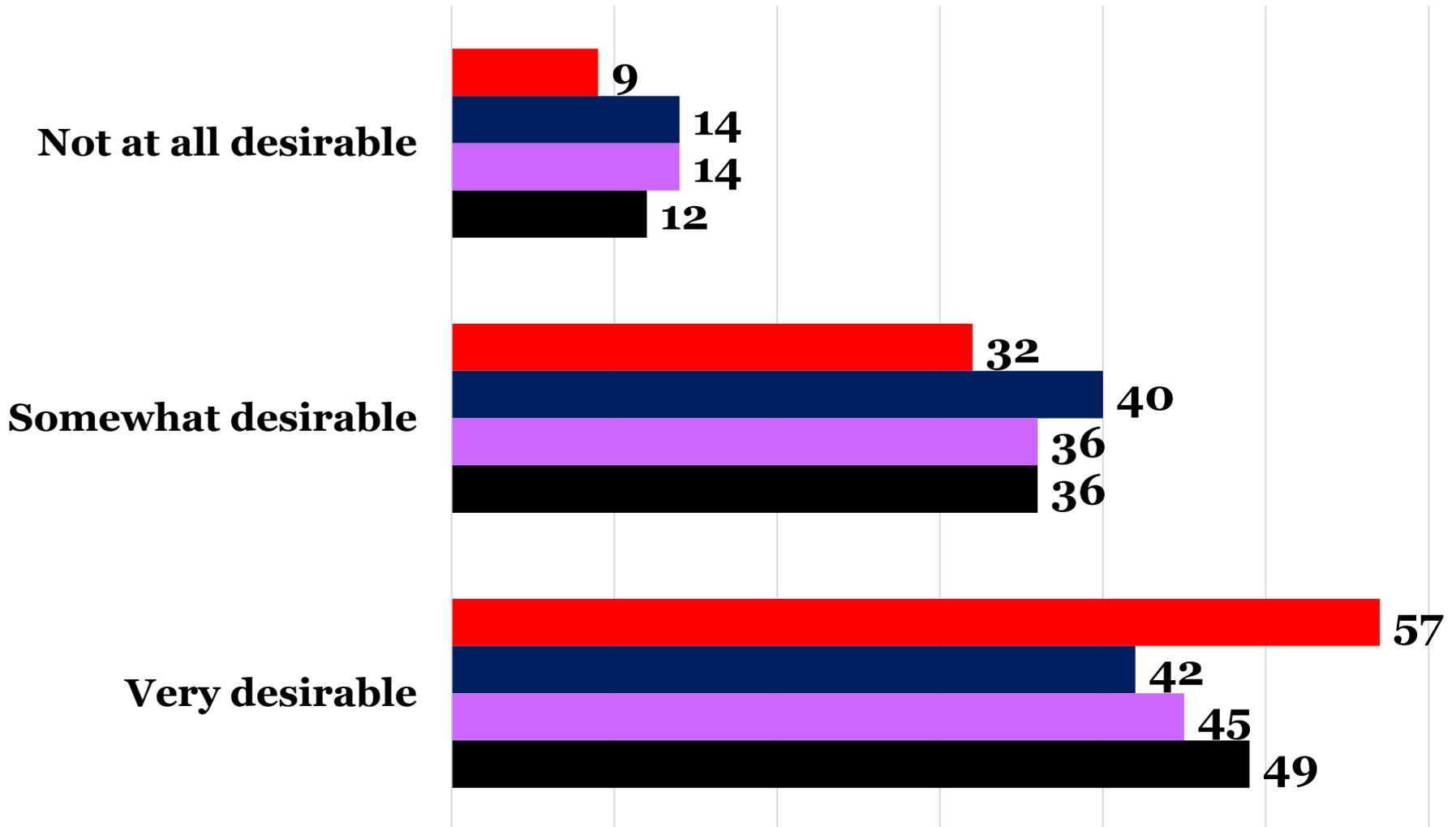
**Despite the tension between the U.S. and Russia, on what issues is cooperation between the U.S. and Russia desirable?**

**[Options were randomized]**

**Dealing with North Korea issues**

Despite the tension between the U.S. and Russia, on what issues is cooperation between the U.S. and Russia desirable?  
Dealing with North Korea issues

■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total



**Despite the tension between the U.S. and Russia, on what issues is cooperation between the U.S. and Russia desirable?**

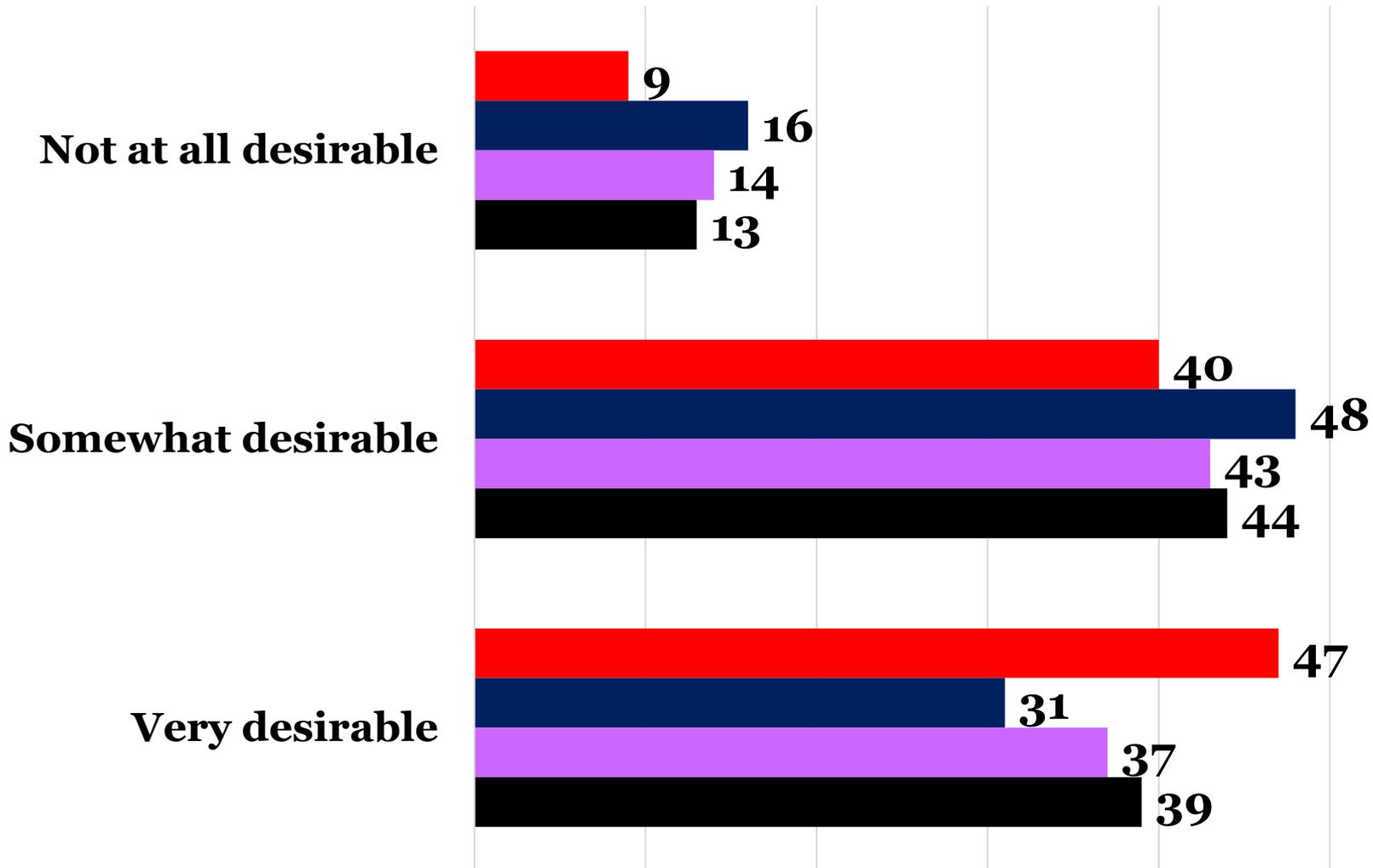
**[Options were randomized]**

**Dealing with Iran issues**

# Despite the tension between the U.S. and Russia, on what issues is cooperation between the U.S. and Russia desirable?

## Dealing with Iran issues

■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total



**Despite the tension between the U.S. and Russia, on what issues is cooperation between the U.S. and Russia desirable?**

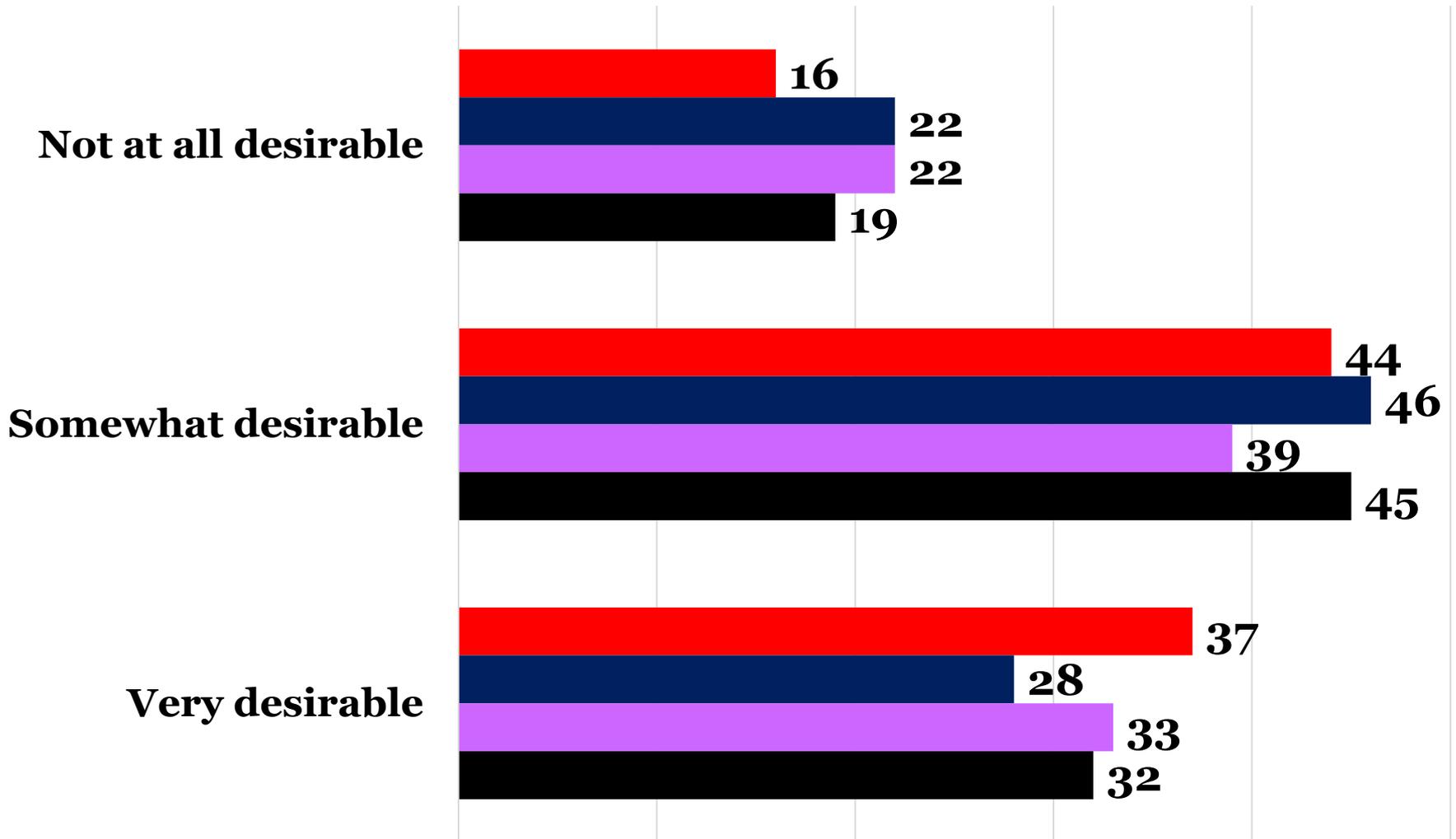
**[Options were randomized]**

**Pursuing Arab-Israeli peace**

# Despite the tension between the U.S. and Russia, on what issues is cooperation between the U.S. and Russia desirable?

## Pursuing Arab-Israeli peace

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



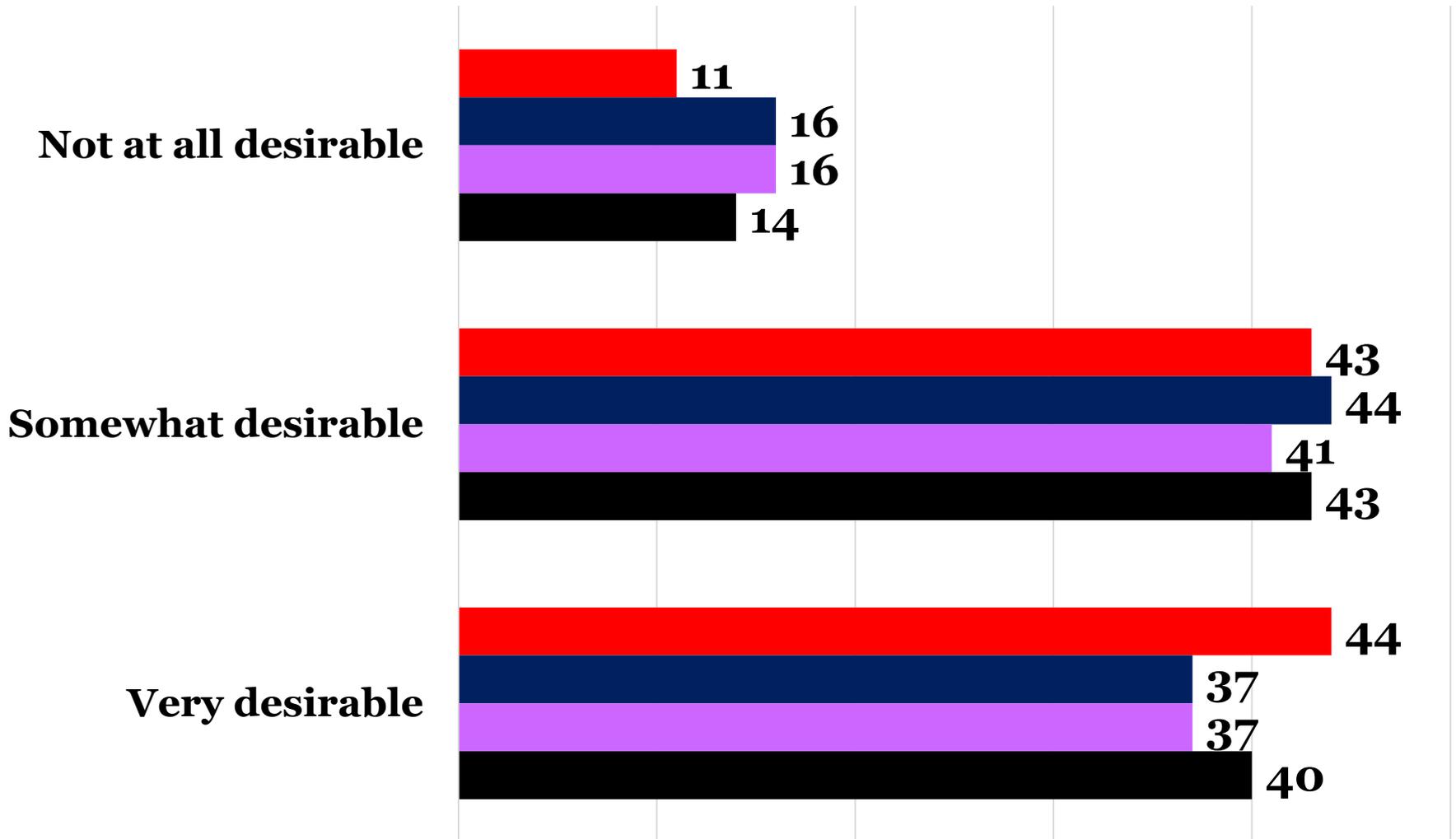
**Despite the tension between the U.S. and Russia, on what issues is cooperation between the U.S. and Russia desirable?**

**[Options were randomized]**

**Achieving stability in Syria**

Despite the tension between the U.S. and Russia, on what issues is cooperation between the U.S. and Russia desirable?  
Achieving stability in Syria

■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total



**Despite the tension between the U.S. and Russia, on what issues is cooperation between the U.S. and Russia desirable?**

**[Options were randomized]**

**Achieving stability in Libya**

Despite the tension between the U.S. and Russia, on what issues is cooperation between the U.S. and Russia desirable?  
Achieving stability in Libya

■ Republicans ■ Democrats ■ Independents ■ Total

