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10

TEN YEARS



The Associated Press-NORC
Center for Public Affairs Research

IMMIGRATION ATTITUDES AND CONSPIRATORIAL THINKERS:

A Study Issued on the 10th Anniversary of The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research

After years of heated rhetoric around immigration and its impacts, new data from an AP-NORC poll reveal that two-thirds of Americans feel the country's diverse population makes the United States stronger and less than 10% say diversity weakens the country.

Still, roughly one in three (32%) adults agree that a group of people is trying to replace native-born Americans with immigrants for electoral gains. A similar share (29%) also express concern that an increase in immigration is leading to native-born Americans losing economic, political, and cultural influence. These two key measures tap into the core arguments of Replacement Theory, a decades old idea, which posits that there is a group of powerful people in this country who are trying to permanently alter the culture and voting strength of native-born Americans by bringing in large groups of immigrants - the study indicates about one in five (17%) adults agree with both of these central tenants.

Most Americans cite a lack of economic opportunity (93%), poverty (92%), and violent crime (91%) as motivating factors for why immigrants leave their country, while just two-thirds cite the impacts of climate change.

Nearly a quarter of adults think changing the American way of life (24%) and influencing the outcome of elections (22%) are major reasons immigrants come to the U.S, while 44% say securing government assistance is a major factor.



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Overall, the public tends to think illegal immigrants introduce higher risks compared to legal immigrants, but fewer than half of Americans believe that either immigrant group poses major risks. Generally, the public perceives greater benefits from legal immigrants than from those who come illegally, although only about half the population acknowledges these contributions.

Across the survey, concerns about the potential impacts of immigration are felt acutely among Republicans, yet the strongest anxiety is captured by another element—an individual's propensity to believe in conspiracies.

DEFINING CONSPIRATORIAL THINKERS

Throughout this report, we refer to people who score in the top 25th percentile on a validated scale¹ of conspiratorial beliefs as “high conspiratorial thinkers”. These individuals are far more likely than others in the public to agree that events are the product of plots executed in secret (85% vs. 11%), are directed by a small group of powerful people (96% vs. 48%), who are unknown to voters (94% vs. 31%), and who control the outcome of big events like wars, recessions, and the outcome of elections (89% vs. 13%). Responses to these four questions were combined in a single measure: those who score in the top 25th percentile are referred to as high conspiratorial thinkers and those scoring in the bottom 75th percentile as low conspiratorial thinkers.

These individuals who are more likely to agree with some conspiratorial beliefs closely resemble the general population in terms of their race, income, and education. However, this group consistently reports feeling discriminated against, is less trusting of new people, and is more likely to be Evangelical and interpret the Bible literally. About a third (32%) of all Republicans register as high conspiratorial thinkers, compared to about a quarter of Democrats (24%) and independents (25%). White conspiratorial thinkers are also far more likely than other white Americans to believe they face discrimination in their daily lives because of their race.

Six Things You Should Know

About the AP-NORC Conspiracy and Immigration Poll
Among American Adults:

- 1) 32% are concerned that immigrants are being brought to the country by a group of people for political gains – one of the central arguments of so-called “Replacement Theory.”
- 2) People who tend to engage in conspiratorial thinking are about twice as likely as the general public to believe in that idea (64% vs 32%).
- 3) More than 90% say a lack of economic opportunity, poverty, and violent crime motivate immigrants to leave their countries, while just two-thirds cite climate change as a contributing factor.
- 4) 4 in 5 think getting welfare or government benefits is a major or minor factor for why immigrants come to the U.S.
- 5) 50% of high conspiratorial thinkers fear immigration will trigger economic and political losses – 36% of Republicans and 26% of Democrats share this view.
- 6) 36% of Americans are in favor of restricting the number of immigrants to the United States, including more than half (54%) of white high conspiratorial thinkers.

¹ Uscinski, J. E., Klostad, C., & Atkinson, M. D. (2016). What drives conspiratorial beliefs? The role of informational cues and predispositions. *Political Research Quarterly*, 69(1), 57-71.

Despite partisan concerns over immigration, high conspiratorial thinkers are generally more likely than Republicans to believe in both of the key arguments of Replacement Theory (42% vs. 26%) and express concern the election system discriminates against white Americans (38% vs. 25%).

On policy priorities and how immigrants should be treated, differences within the ranks of high conspiratorial thinkers emerge along racial lines. Here the views of white high conspiratorial thinkers are more restrictive. For instance, 76% of white high conspiratorial thinkers say border security should be a high federal priority, compared to 51% of non-white high conspiratorial thinkers, 51% of white low conspiratorial thinkers, and 37% of non-white low conspiratorial thinkers. Preferences for deporting unauthorized immigrants follow a similar pattern, with 68% of white high conspiratorial thinkers placing this as a high priority, compared to 41% of non-white high conspiratorial thinkers, 36% of white low conspiratorial thinkers, and 27% of non-white low conspiratorial thinkers.

Non-white high conspiratorial thinkers also emerge as the most willing to provide government assistance to migrants more generally. On the issue of dealing with refugees, 40% prioritize government assistance, compared to 25% of white high conspiratorial thinkers, 28% of non-white low conspiratorial thinkers, and 16% of white low conspiratorial thinkers. Similarly, 44% of non-white high conspiratorial thinkers support providing federal benefits to children brought to the U.S. illegally, while just 32% of non-white low conspiratorial thinkers, 30% white high conspiratorial thinkers, and 22% of white low conspiratorial thinkers support this policy.

The nationwide study was conducted by The AP-NORC Center from December 1–23, 2021, using TrueNorth®, which combines a sample from AmeriSpeak®, the probability-based panel of NORC at the University of Chicago, with a non-probability panel sample. Online and telephone interviews using landlines and cell phones were conducted with 4,173 people ages 18 and older living in the United States. The margin of sampling error is +/- 1.96 percentage points.

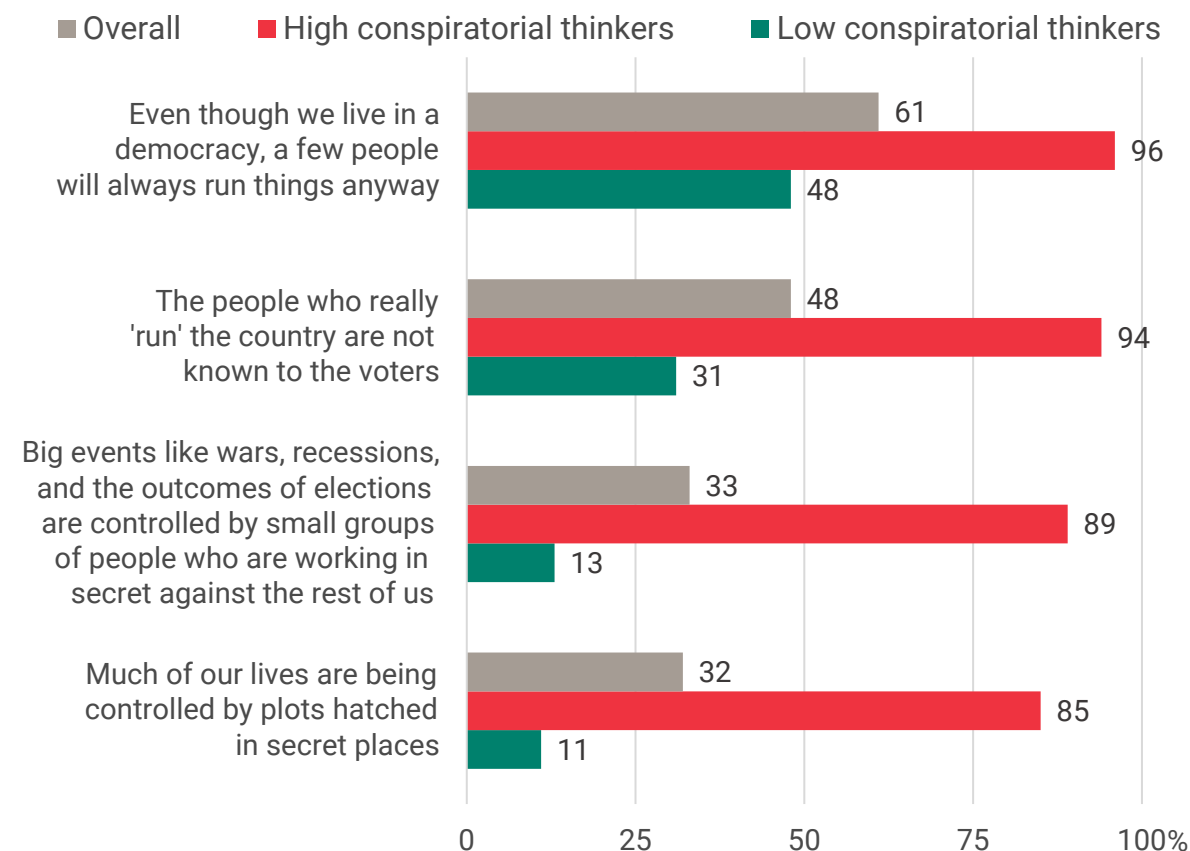
WHO ARE THE HIGH CONSPIRATORIAL THINKERS?

To capture belief in conspiracy theories, the study drew upon a validated scale asking Americans the extent to which they agree or disagree with four statements. Responses to the questions were combined in a single measure, and the high conspiratorial thinkers referred to in this report scored in the top 25th percentile.

Seven times as many high conspiratorial thinkers agree that our lives are being controlled by plots hatched in secret places (85% vs. 11%) and that big events like wars and the outcomes of elections are controlled by small groups of people working in secret (89% vs. 13%) than their low conspiratorial counterparts. High conspiratorial thinkers believe the people who run the country are not known to the voters at triple the rate of the rest of the general population (94% vs. 31%), and they are about twice as likely to agree that a few people will always run the country (96% vs. 48%).

More than 85% of high conspiratorial thinkers agree events are the product of plots executed in secret by a small group of powerful people who control the outcomes.

Percent of adults who somewhat/strongly agree



Question: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement(s):

Source: AP-NORC poll conducted December 1-23, 2021, with 4,173 respondents nationwide

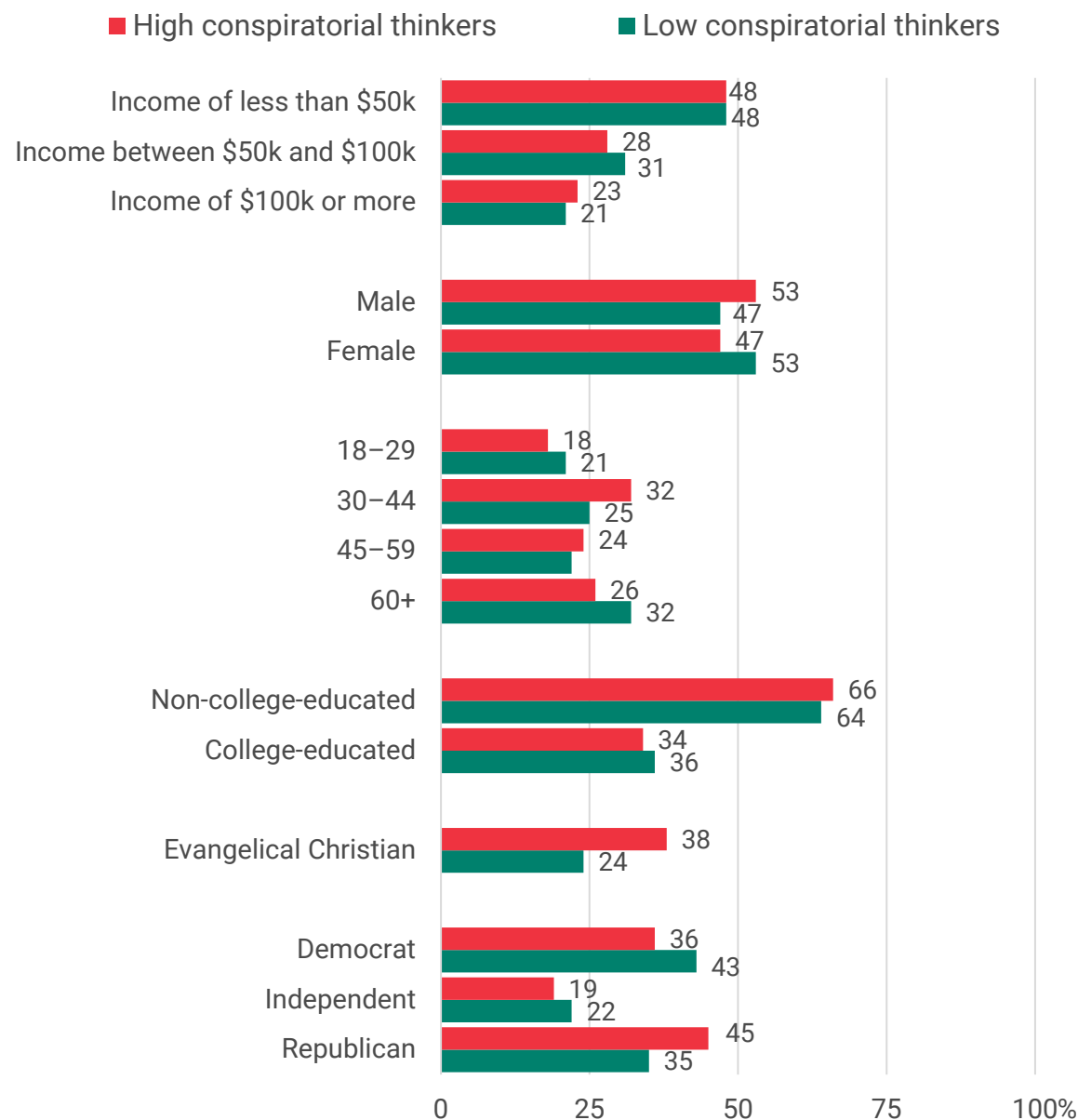


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High conspiratorial thinkers look fairly similar to the general population on most characteristics, including race and ethnicity, income, and educational background. However, this group is more likely to identify as Republican (45% vs. 38%), consider themselves born-again Christians (38% vs. 28%), and interpret the Bible literally (36% vs. 26%) than the general population. This group also expresses slightly more skepticism of people they don't know (69% vs. 62%).

High conspiratorial thinkers look similar to low conspiratorial thinkers on many attributes but are more likely to be Evangelical and Republican.

Percent of respondents



Source: AP-NORC poll conducted December 1-23, 2021, with 4,173 respondents nationwide



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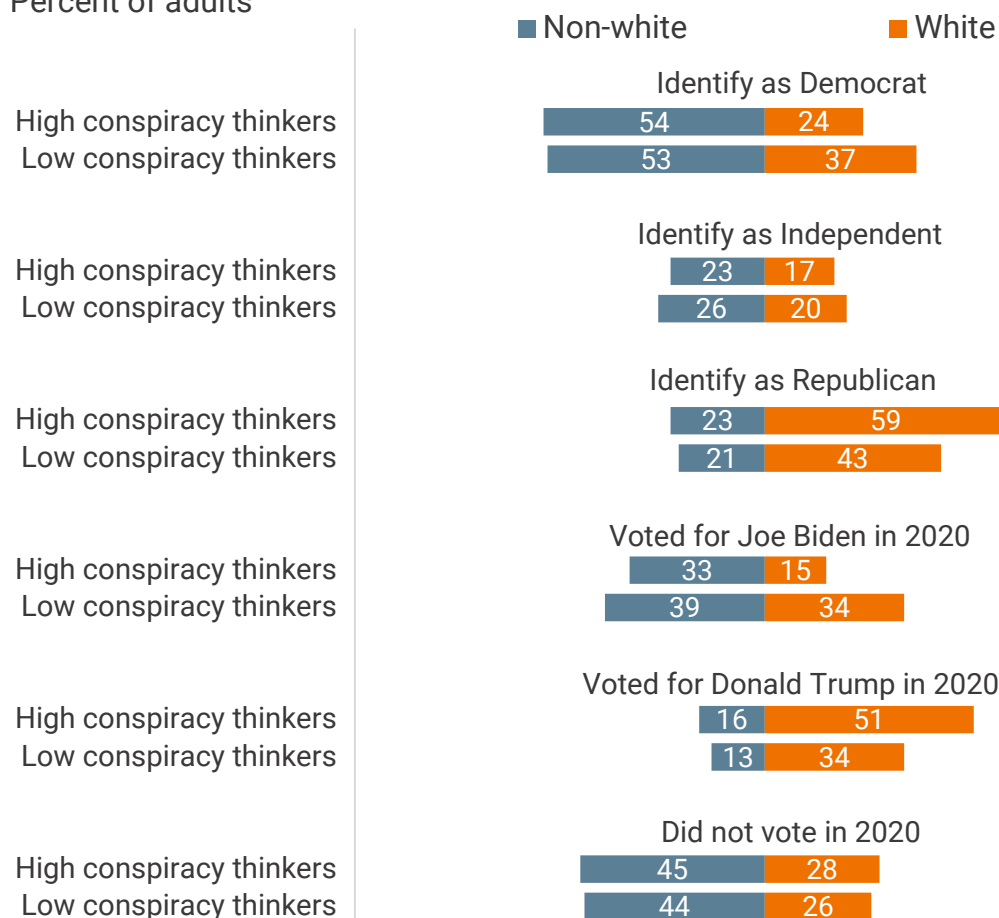
White high conspiratorial thinkers are more likely to identify as Republican and to have cast a vote for former President Donald Trump in 2020.

Nearly 6 in 10 (59%) white high conspiratorial thinkers identify as Republicans and more than half (51%) voted for Donald Trump in the 2020 presidential election, while white low conspiratorial thinkers were as likely to vote for Donald Trump as they were Joe Biden (34% each).

Non-white high conspiratorial thinkers resemble their low conspiratorial counterparts, with similar shares identifying as Democrat (54% vs. 53%), independent (23% vs. 26%), and Republican (23% vs. 21%) and with similar voting behaviors.

White high conspiratorial thinkers are more likely to be Republicans and Trump voters; non-white high conspiratorial thinkers are more likely to be Democrats, but are as likely to not vote as to have voted for Biden.

Percent of adults



Questions: Did you vote for Joe Biden and Kamala Harris with the Democrats or Donald Trump and Mike Pence with the Republicans? Do you consider yourself a Democrat, a Republican, an Independent, or none of these?

Source: AP-NORC poll conducted December 1–23, 2021, with 4,173 respondents nationwide



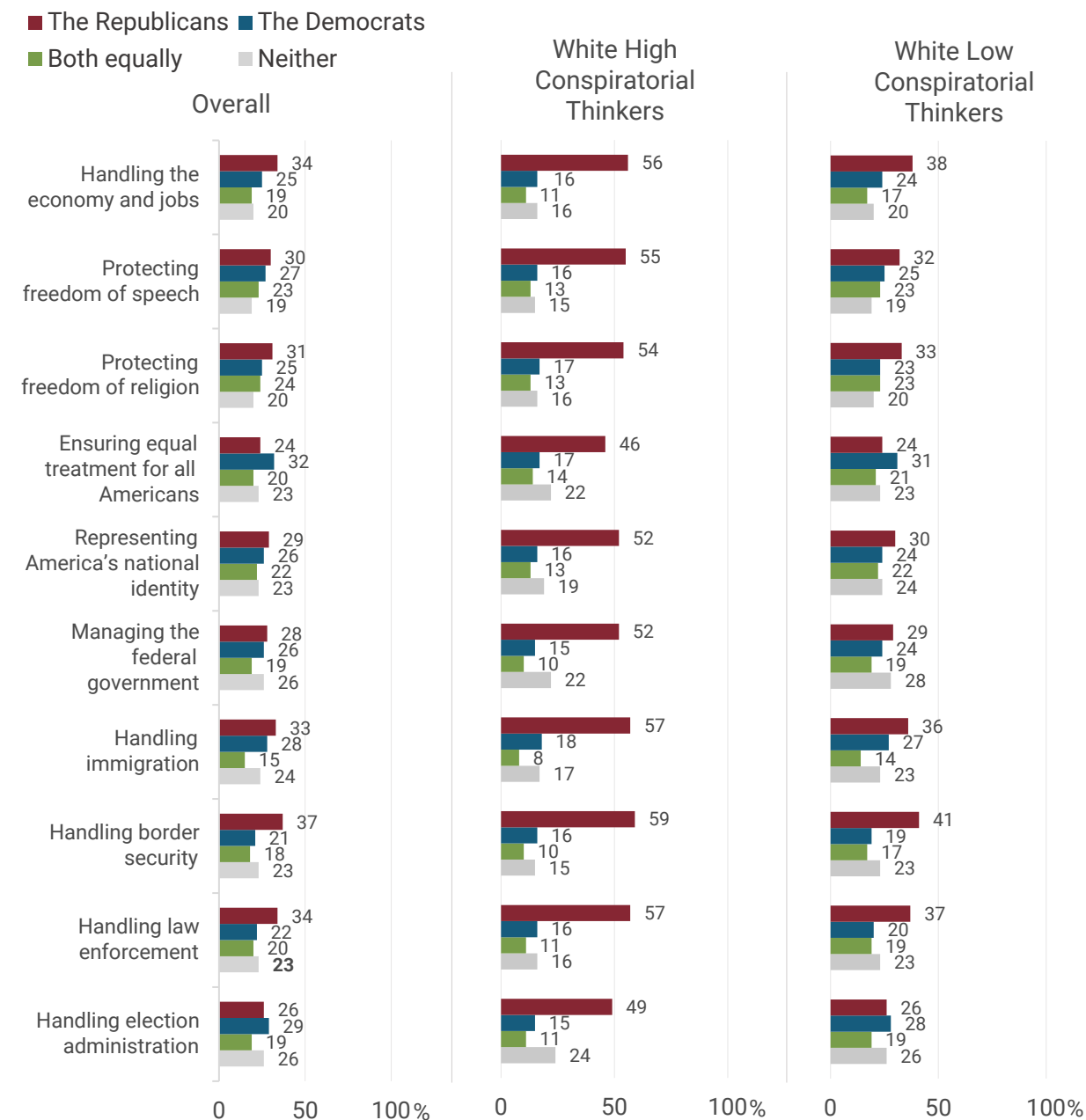
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Most white high conspiratorial thinkers consistently say the Republican Party is better equipped to handle a variety of policy concerns, with the only exception being ensuring equal treatment for all Americans. Fewer than 20% of white high conspiratorial thinkers believe Democrats are better prepared to handle any given issue.

While white low conspiratorial thinkers are also usually more likely to prefer the Republican approach on a variety of issues, they did so at a lower rate than white high conspiratorial thinkers. This group also says Democrats are better equipped to handle equal treatment than Republicans (31% to 25%).

White high conspiratorial thinkers are more likely to prefer the Republican Party's approach to issues compared to white low conspiratorial thinkers.

Percent of adults



Questions: Now, which party do you trust to do a better job:

Source: AP-NORC poll conducted December 1–23, 2021, with 4,173 respondents nationwide

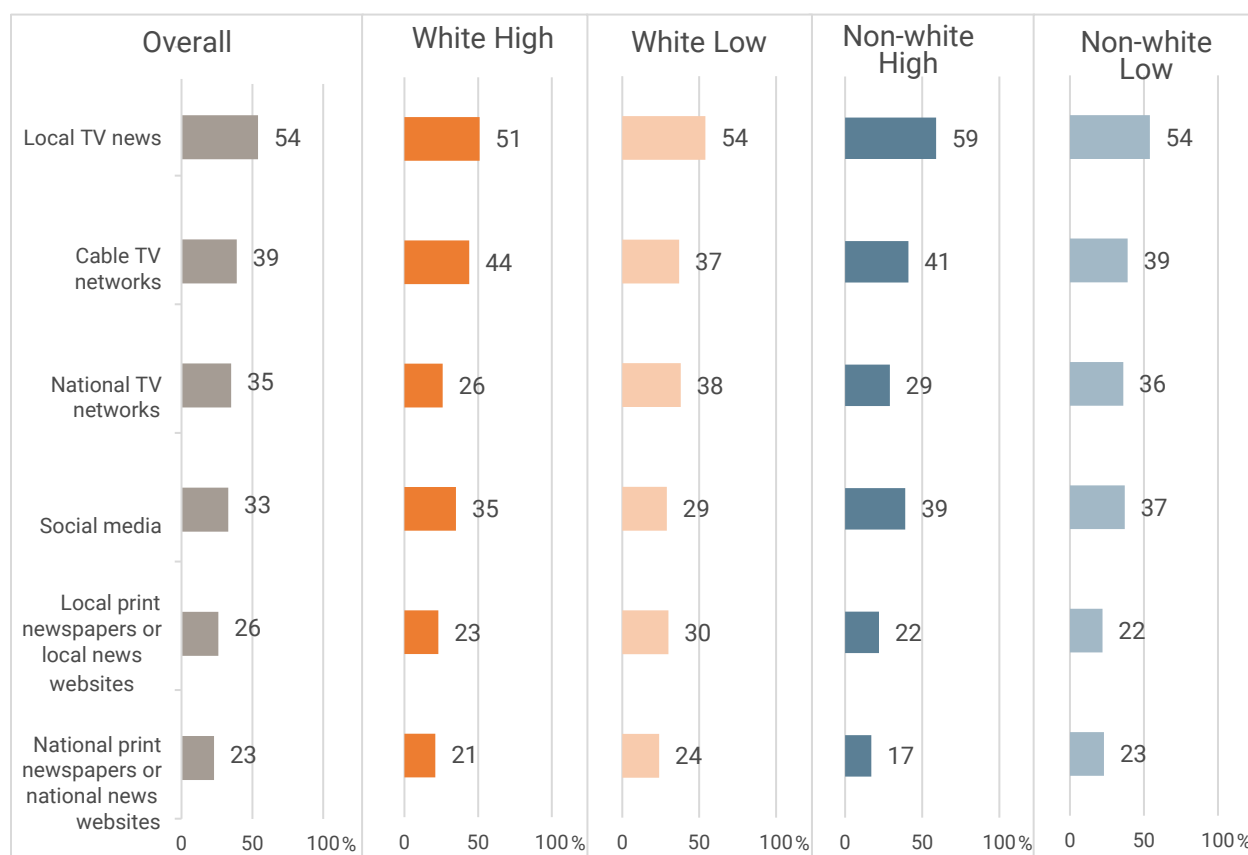
High conspiratorial thinkers' news habits are not drastically different from those of low conspiratorial thinkers.

High conspiratorial thinkers are less likely to watch national broadcast news such as ABC, NBC, or CBS and are more likely to follow current events on social media than the general population. Additionally, non-white conspiratorial thinkers read national newspapers at lower rates, but the rest of their media consumption habits tend to mirror low conspiratorial thinkers.

These white conspiracy thinkers are also more likely to get a large part of their news from social media than other white Americans (35% vs. 29%) and less likely to watch or read local news (59% vs. 64%). These splits are not seen among people of color, though non-white conspiratorial thinkers are more likely to get their news from social media than Americans overall.

White high conspiratorial thinkers are more likely to get most of their news from social media than other white Americans.

Percent of adults



Questions: Which of the following are sources where you get most of your news about what is happening? *If selected cable TV news:* Which cable news network do you watch most often, or do you not really watch cable news?

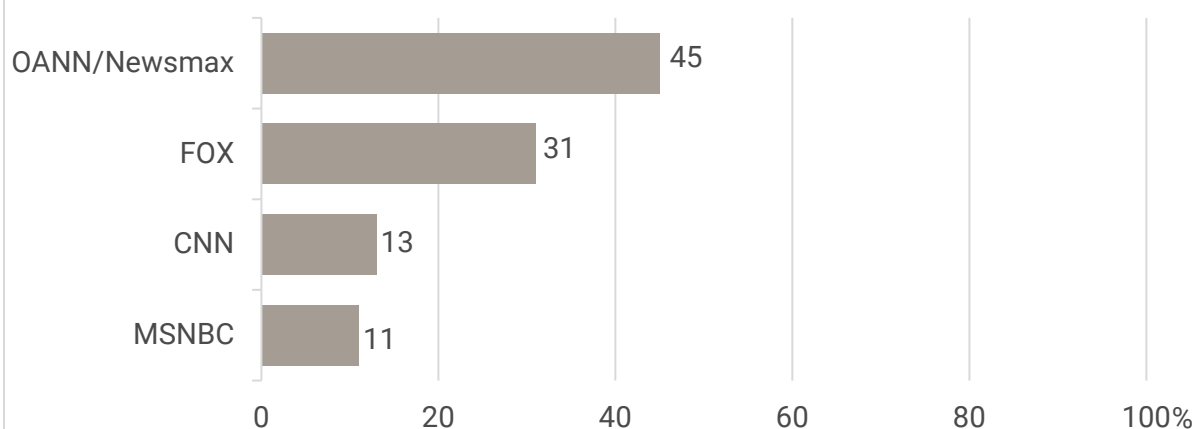
Source: AP-NORC poll conducted December 1–23, 2021, with 4,173 respondents nationwide

While their media consumption habits are largely similar to low conspiratorial thinkers, white high conspiratorial thinkers differ by cable news preferences. Overall, 13% of Americans say the cable news source they watch most often is FOX News. However, more than one in five white conspiracy thinkers (21%) call FOX their top choice for news, notably higher than white low-conspiracy thinkers (13%), non-white conspiracy thinkers (12%), and non-white low conspiracy thinkers (8%). While low conspiratorial thinkers are more likely than high conspiratorial thinkers to watch CNN or MSNBC, the difference is less pronounced, with 19% of low conspiratorial thinkers watching these channels compared to 15% of high conspiratorial thinkers.

However, key differences exist among the attitudes of cable news viewers when it comes to belief in Replacement Theory. While roughly a fifth of Americans (17%) believe in both the questions measuring Replacement Theory, this belief varies widely by cable news preference. Belief in Replacement Theory is much higher among OANN/Newsmax viewers (45%) and Fox News viewers (31%) than it is among CNN (13%) or MSNBC viewers (11%).

Belief in the tenets of Replacement Theory varies widely by cable news viewership.

Percent of adults who believe in both core arguments of Replacement Theory



Questions: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: There is a group of people in this country who are trying to replace native-born Americans with immigrants who agree with their political views.

How concerned are you that native-born Americans are losing their economic, political, and cultural influence in this country because of the growing population of immigrants?

Source: AP-NORC poll conducted December 1–23, 2021, with 4,173 respondents nationwide



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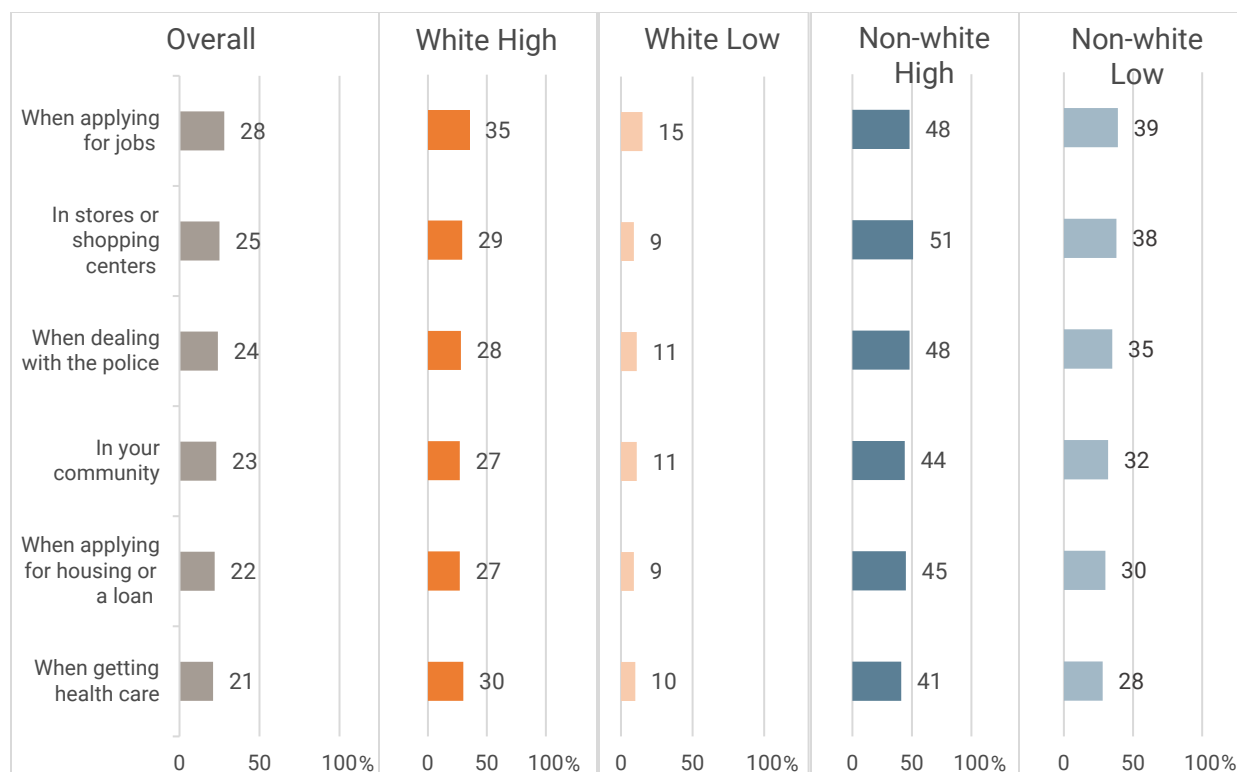
White conspiratorial thinkers are more than twice as likely to say they are discriminated against because of their race than white low conspiratorial thinkers.

When asked about their experiences with discrimination, both white and non-white high conspiratorial thinkers are more likely to say they experience discrimination in a variety of situations because of their race. While non-white Americans are more likely to say they have been discriminated against than white Americans overall, white high conspiratorial thinkers are far more likely to say they are discriminated against because of their race than white people low on the conspiracy thinking scale.

For example, 30% of white high conspiratorial thinkers say they face discrimination because of their race in the health care setting, but just 10% of white low conspiratorial thinkers say the same.

Regardless of race, conspiratorial thinkers are more likely to say they face discrimination in many daily interactions.

Percent of adults who say they often/sometimes face discrimination



Questions: In each of the following situations, how often would you say you personally have been discriminated against because of your race?

Source: AP-NORC poll conducted December 1–23, 2021, with 4,173 respondents nationwide

White high conspiratorial thinkers were also far more likely to score high on another validated scale of four questions assessing feelings of racial resentment.² These individuals were more likely than other Americans to strongly or somewhat agree with the statements: Irish, Italians, Jewish, and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up, and Black people should do the same without any special favors (75% vs. 38% among other Americans); white people through no fault of their own are economically losing ground today compared to other racial and ethnic groups (62% vs. 25%); and discrimination against white people has become as big a problem as discrimination against Black people and other minorities (69% vs. 30%). They are also more likely to strongly or somewhat disagree that generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for Black people to work their way out of the lower class (49% vs. 29%).

Using this scale, 55% of white high conspiratorial thinkers score in the top 25th percentile of racial resentment, compared to 21% of white low conspiratorial thinkers, 27% of non-white high conspiratorial thinkers, and 13% of non-white low conspiratorial thinkers.

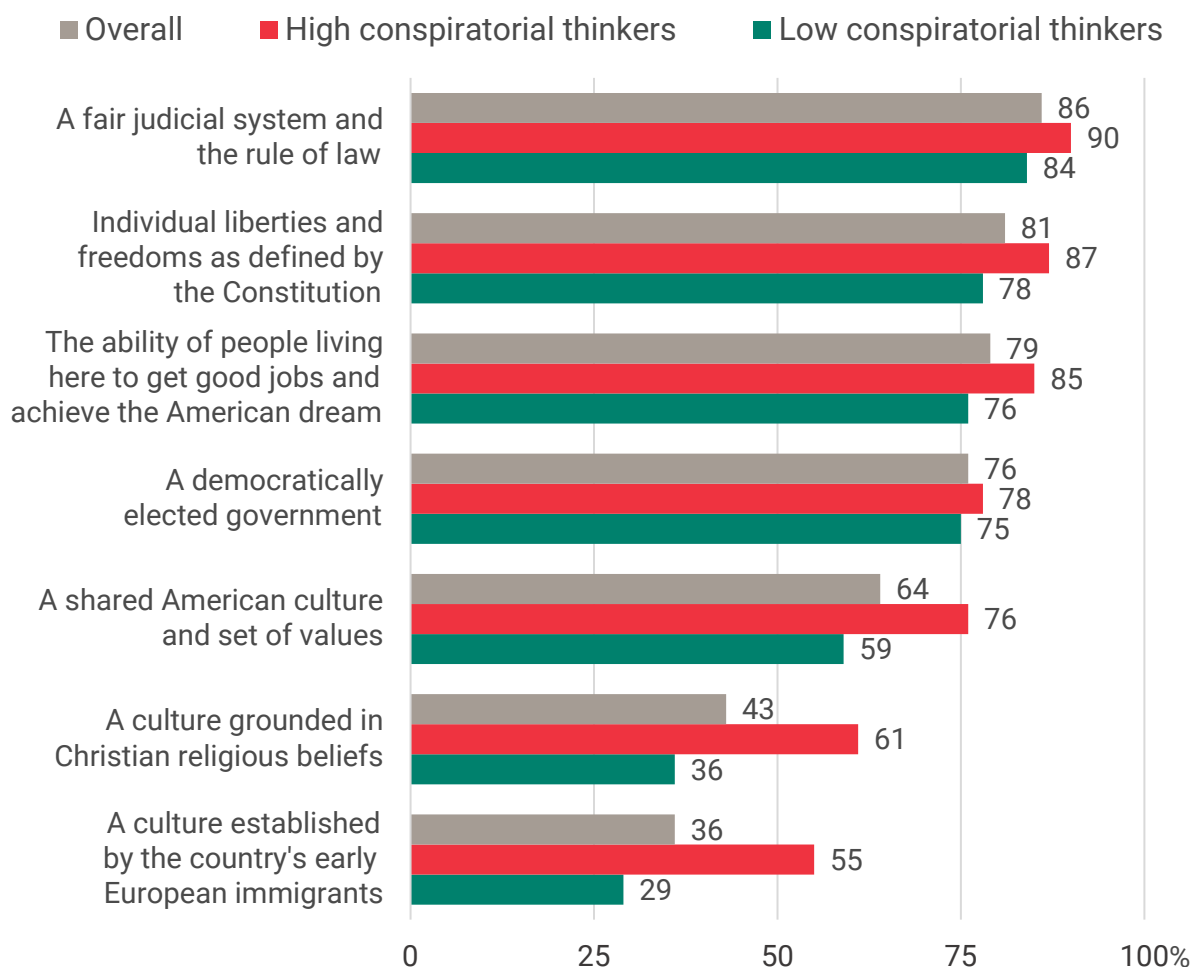
High conspiratorial thinkers are more likely to value certain aspects of U.S. national identity grounded in a shared culture.

High conspiratorial thinkers are more likely to consider a shared American culture and set of values, a culture rooted in Christianity, and a culture established by the country's early European immigrants as very important for the national identity compared to low conspiratorial thinkers. Other core principles, like a fair judiciary and a democratically elected government, are valued at similar rates by both groups.

² Kam, C. D., & Burge, C. D. (2018). Uncovering reactions to the racial resentment scale across the racial divide. *The Journal of Politics*, 80(1), 314-320.

High conspiratorial thinkers are more likely to emphasize aspects of national identity found in the traditional origin story of the United States.

Percent of adults who say each is extremely/very important



Question: How important is each of the following to the United States' identity as a nation?

Source: AP-NORC poll conducted December 1–23, 2021, with 4,173 respondents nationwide

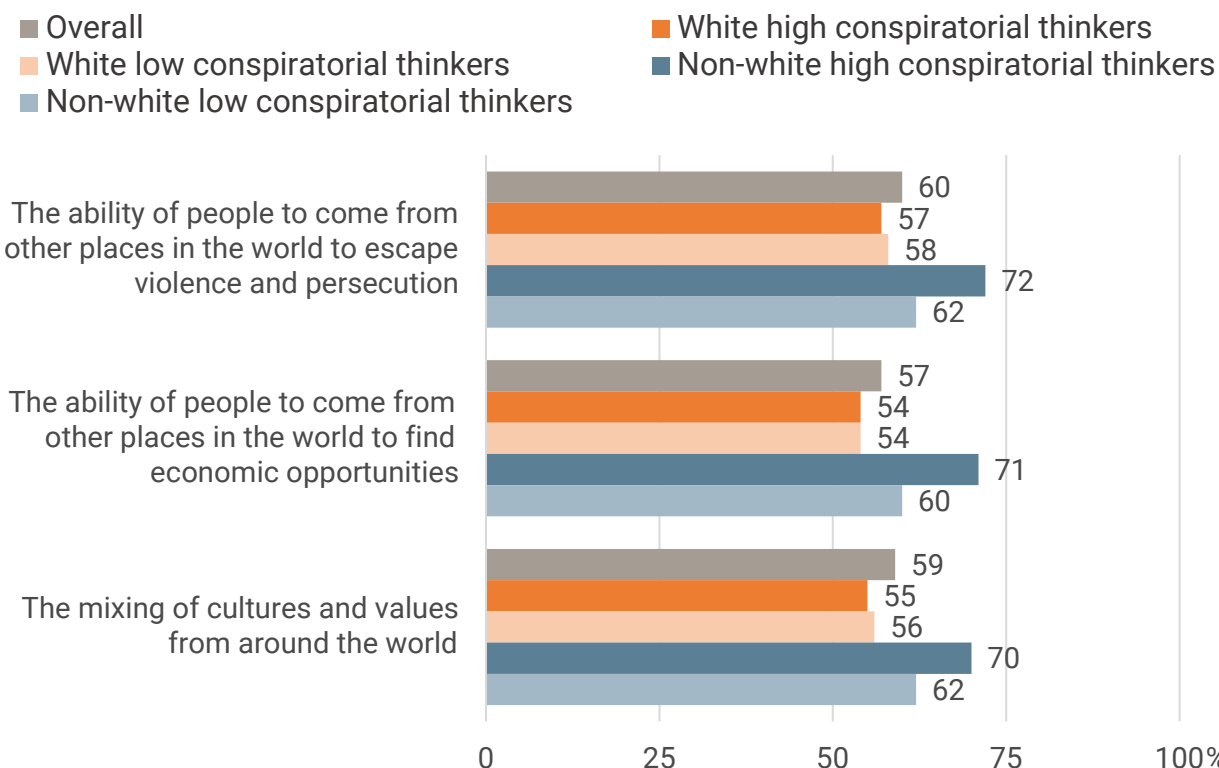


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Attributes that frame the United States as a place where people from other cultures can mix, find safety from violence and persecution, and access economic opportunities are valued most highly by non-white conspiratorial thinkers, though majorities across racial and ethnic groups and across conspiratorial thinkers value these attributes.

Non-white high conspiratorial thinkers see cultural exchange, economic opportunity, and the U.S. as a safe haven as a key part to national identity.

Percent of those who say extremely/very important



Question: How important is each of the following to the United States' identity as a nation?

Source: AP-NORC poll conducted December 1–23, 2021, with 4,173 respondents nationwide



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HOW DO CONSPIRATORIAL THINKERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD IMMIGRANTS AND IMMIGRATION POLICIES COMPARE TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC?

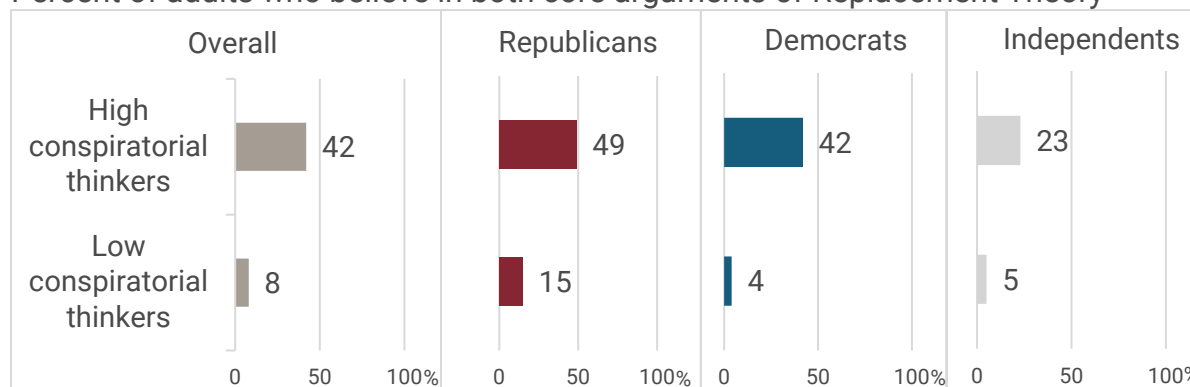
About a third of Americans agree that a group of people are trying to replace native-born Americans with immigrants for electoral gains; 29% also express concern that an increase in immigration corresponds with native-born Americans losing economic, political, and cultural influence. Nearly two in ten adults are concerned that the election system discriminates against white people.

Republicans are more likely than Democrats and independents to perceive a general loss of influence as a consequence of immigration (36% vs. 27% and 21%), and to believe that a group of people in this country are trying to replace native-born Americans with immigrants who agree with their political views (47% vs. 22% and 22%), two key measures of Replacement Theory. Further, nearly a quarter (24%) of Republicans fear discrimination against white Americans at the ballot box, compared to 17% of Democrats and 14% of Independents.

Partisan differences on Replacement Theory emerge within high conspiratorial thinkers. Only 23% of high conspiratorial independents agree with the core arguments of the theory, a significantly lower share than high conspiratorial Republicans (49%) or Democrats (42%).

While high conspiratorial thinkers are more likely to believe in the core arguments of Replacement Theory, partisanship continues to play a role.

Percent of adults who believe in both core arguments of Replacement Theory



Questions: Do you agree or disagree ... There is a group of people in this country who are trying to replace native-born Americans with immigrants who agree with their political views.

How concerned are you that native-born Americans are losing their economic, political, and cultural influence in this country because of the growing population of immigrants?

Source: AP-NORC poll conducted December 1–23, 2021, with 4,173 respondents nationwide



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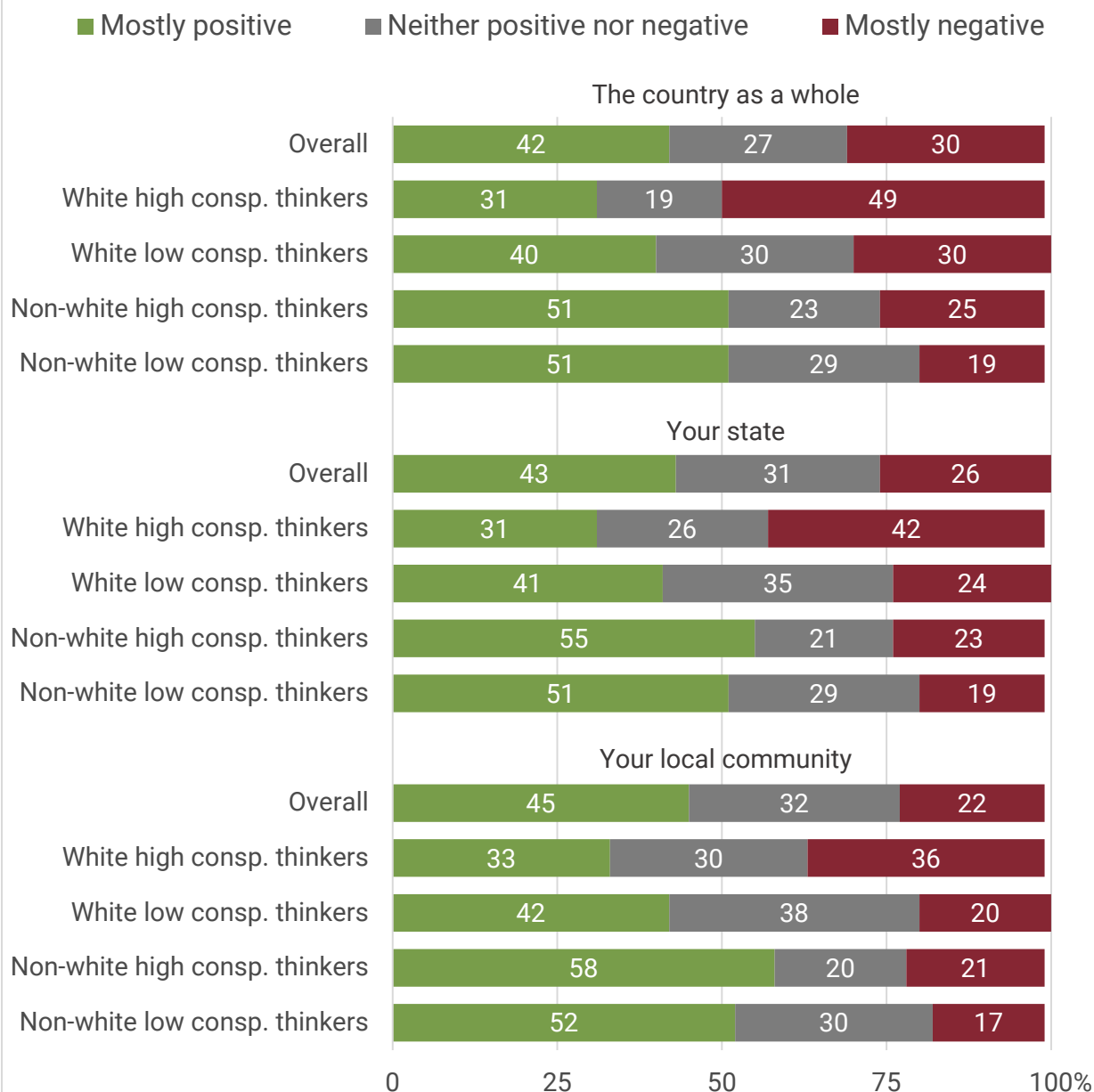
White high conspiratorial thinkers are the least likely to say that immigration has a positive impact at every level, but their non-white counterparts are more positive than the nation as a whole.

On the topic of diversity within the U.S., a majority of high conspiratorial thinkers (65%) say it makes the country stronger, which is similar to the rest of the country at 67%.

But when specifically focused on the impact of immigrants at the federal, state, and local levels, white high conspiratorial thinkers are more likely to see immigration's impact as mostly negative when compared to white low conspiracy thinkers. Even as the overall perception of the impact of immigrants remains fairly constant across the federal, state, and local levels, white high conspiratorial thinkers grow increasingly negative toward immigrants from the local to the state level and again from the state to the federal level. Non-white conspiracy thinkers feel similarly toward immigrants as non-white low conspiracy thinkers. Majorities of both non-white high and low conspiratorial thinkers see immigrants as having a positive impact at every level.

White high conspiratorial thinkers are less likely to think immigrants have a positive impact on local communities, states, or the nation as a whole.

Percent of adults who say immigrants have an impact at a given level



Question: Would you say the impact that immigrants have on each of the following is mostly positive, mostly negative, or neither positive nor negative?

Source: AP-NORC poll conducted December 1–23, 2021 with 4,173 respondents nationwide

MANY AMERICANS SAY IMMIGRANTS COME TO THE U.S. FOR GOVERNMENT BENEFITS AND POLITICAL INFLUENCE, BUT CONSPIRATORIAL THINKERS CITE THESE FACTORS AT HIGHER RATES

The vast majority of Americans agree that a wide variety of factors influence immigrants' decision to leave their country: about 90% think a lack of economic opportunities, government persecution, gang violence, poverty, and worries about being the victim of violent crime play a role, and about 80% say the same about religious persecution. By comparison, only two-thirds think that escaping the impacts of climate change, including natural disasters, influences immigrants' decisions to leave.

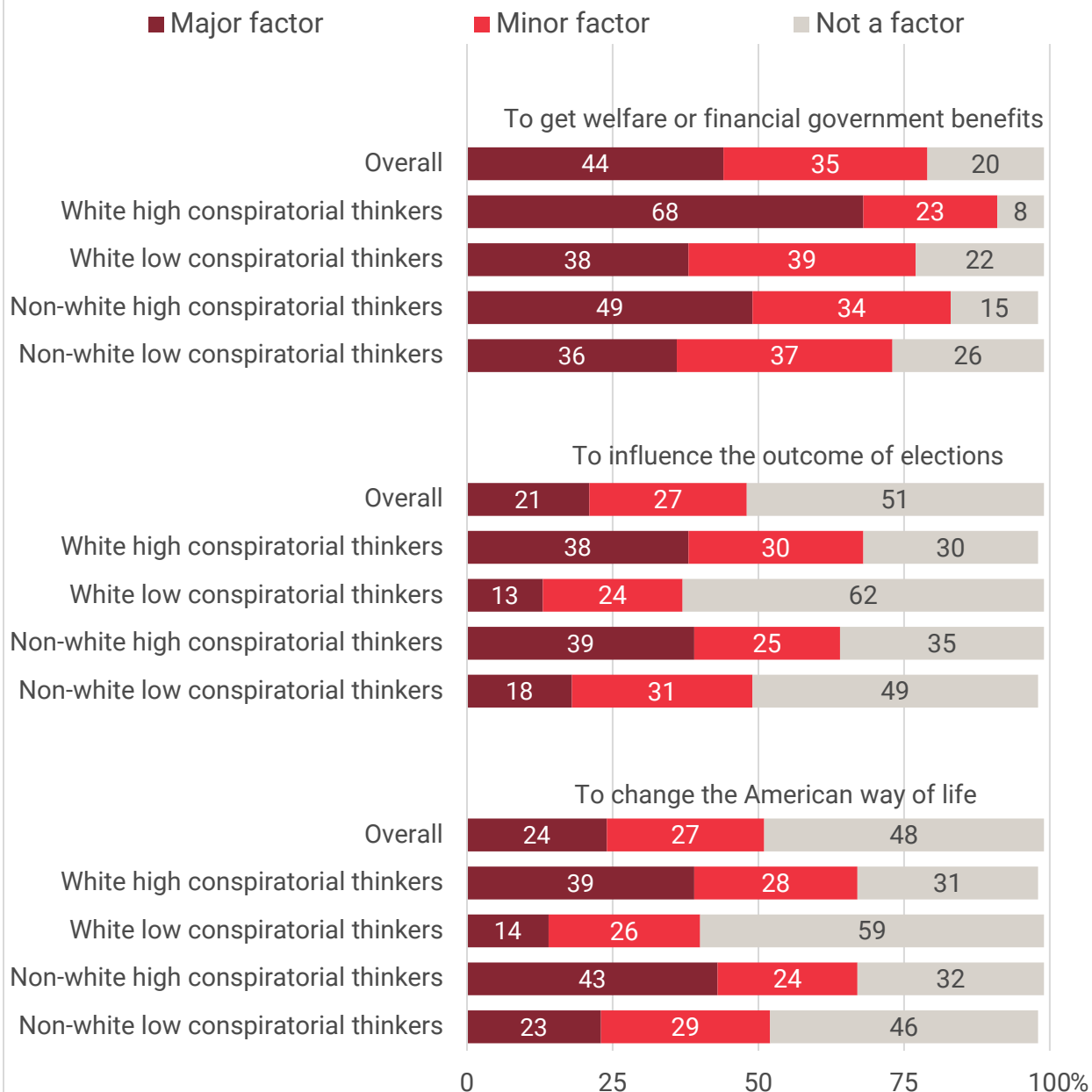
Regarding factors why immigrants come to the U.S., over four in five think that positive aspects of the country like economic and educational opportunities, political freedom, reuniting with loved ones, and higher quality of life play a role.

However, nearly four in five Americans (80%) think that obtaining welfare or other financial government benefits is a factor leading migrants to come to the United States, and about half think influencing the outcome of elections (49%) and changing the American way of life (52%) plays a role.

Both white and non-white high conspiratorial thinkers are more likely to think that migrants come to the United States to secure benefits, change the American way of life, and influence elections.

Many Americans think obtaining financial benefits, influencing the outcome of elections, and changing the American life are at least minor factors why migrants come to the United States.

Percent of adults



Question: Would you say each of the following is a major factor, a minor factor, or not a factor why immigrants come to the United States?

Source: AP-NORC poll conducted December 1–23, 2021 with 4,173 respondents nationwide

AMERICANS ARE GENERALLY MORE FAVORABLE TOWARD LEGAL VS. ILLEGAL MIGRANTS, BUT WHITE CONSPIRATORIAL THINKERS TYPICALLY SEE THE HIGHEST RISKS

Overall, Americans tend to think illegal immigrants pose higher risks compared to legal immigrants, though less than half believe that major risks are posed by either group. Still though, one in four (25%) believe that immigrants' population growth will pose a major risk in weakening American identity and that there is a major risk that they will influence the outcome of elections (25%).

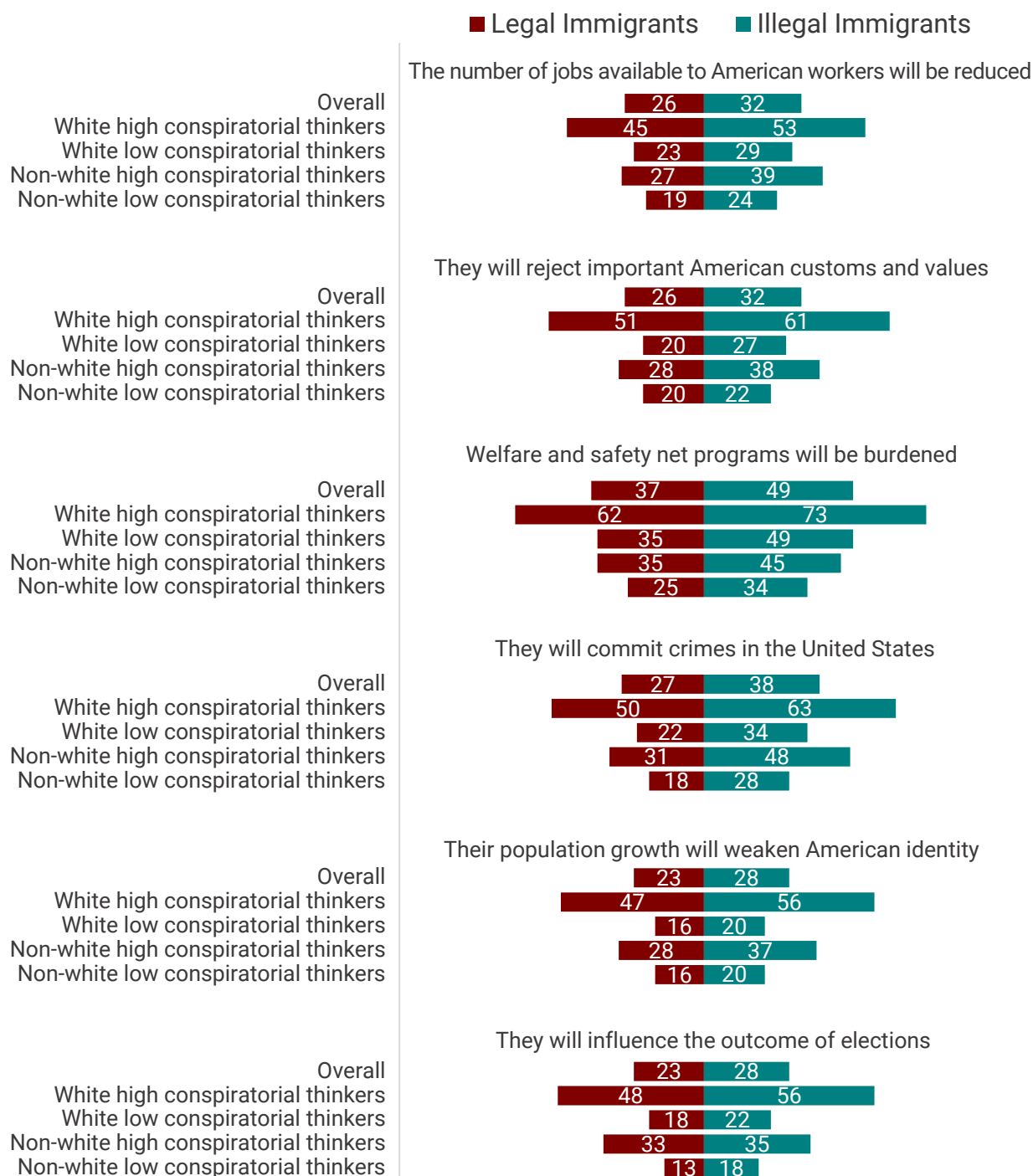
In most cases, Americans think that legal immigrants are more likely to create major benefits than illegal immigrants, although only about half say this is the case. Legal status makes no difference when it comes to perceptions about immigrants taking jobs Americans do not want.

High conspiratorial thinkers are more likely than other Americans to highlight the risks posed by legal and illegal immigrants; however, there are significant differences according to respondent race. While both non-white and white high conspiratorial thinkers are more likely to believe that illegal immigrants pose major risks than low conspiratorial thinkers, white high conspiratorial thinkers are more likely than their non-white counterparts to say that legal immigrants pose these same risks.

Among white high conspiratorial thinkers, the burden posed to welfare and safety net programs is the top concern regardless of immigrants' legal status. While non-white high conspiratorial thinkers also report this as their top concern for legal immigrants, slightly more say they are concerned about illegal immigrants committing crimes in the U.S.

High conspiratorial thinkers are more likely to say immigrants will burden welfare programs, commit crimes, weaken American identity, and influence elections.

Percent of adults that say each group of immigrants pose a major risk



Question: When immigrants come legally/illegally to the United States, how much of a risk is each of the following?

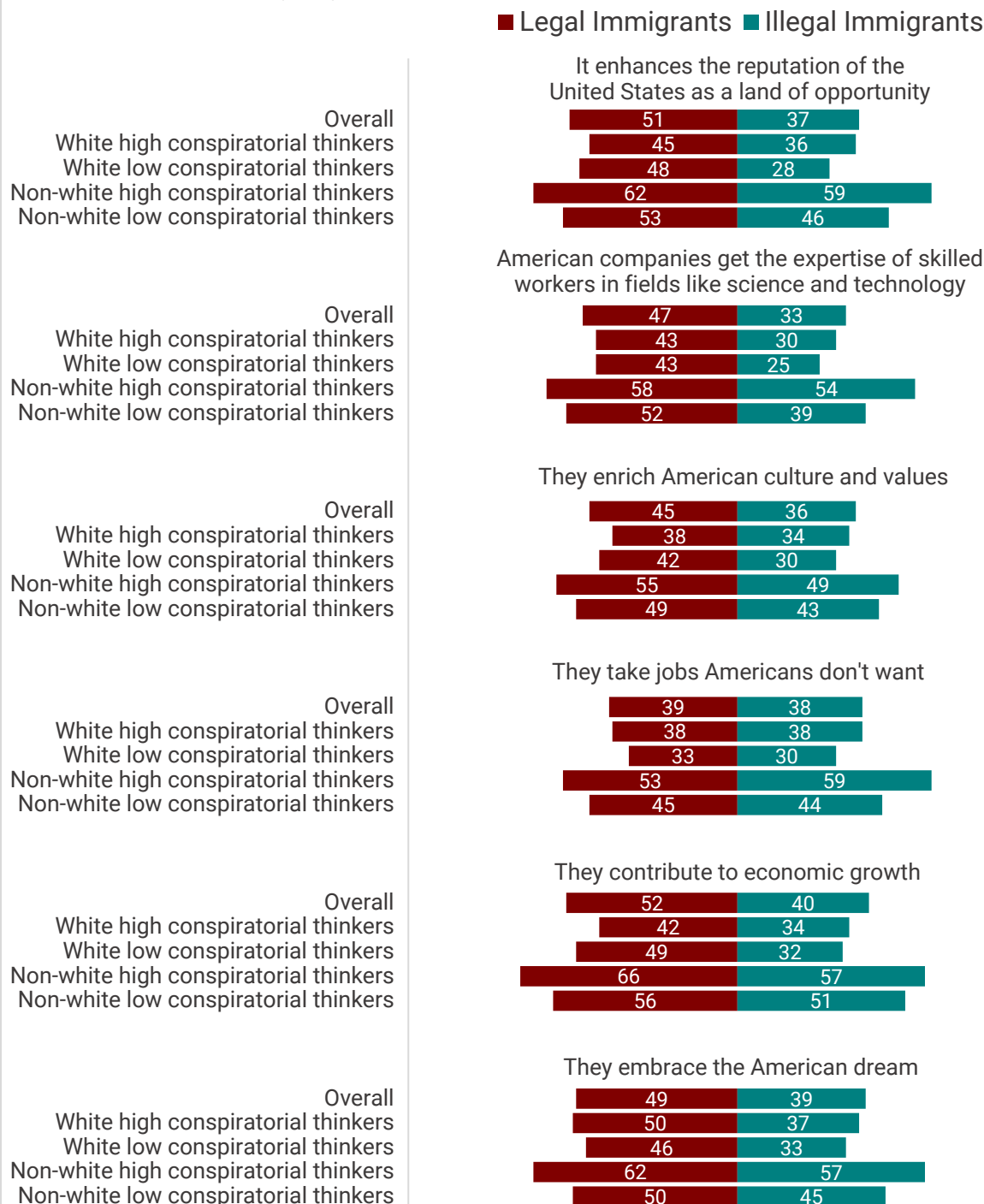
Source: AP-NORC poll conducted December 1–23, 2021 with 4,173 respondents nationwide

Like most Americans, high conspiratorial thinkers overall have more favorable views toward legal immigrants than illegal immigrants. However, on these issues, race matters more than conspiratorial thinking. White Americans are less likely to see the benefits from either legal or illegal immigration regardless of conspiratorial thinking. Among non-white Americans, high conspiratorial thinkers are more likely to see major benefits irrespective of legal status.

More than half of non-white high conspiratorial thinkers think that both illegal and legal immigrants create major benefits across all items asked about in the survey. By contrast, less than half of white high conspiratorial thinkers say that legal immigrants create benefits, and less than 40% say the same for illegal immigrants. Among white high conspiratorial thinkers, immigrants taking jobs that Americans don't want is the only benefit whose perception is unimpacted by legal status.

Non-white high conspiratorial thinkers are more likely to think that immigrants create a variety of benefits.

Percent of adults who say major benefit



Question: When immigrants come legally/illegally to the United States, how much of a benefit is each of the following?

Source: AP-NORC poll conducted December 1–23, 2021 with 4,173 respondents nationwide.

AMERICANS LACK CONSENSUS ON WHICH IMMIGRATION POLICIES TO PRIORITIZE, BUT WHITE CONSPIRATORIAL THINKERS GENERALLY SEEK STRICTER LAWS

Regarding federal immigration policy, most Americans do not consider either strict or favorable policies to be high priority except for increasing security at the U.S.-Mexico border (52%). Immigration policies aimed at enforcement, such as strengthening policies to prevent immigrants from overstaying their visas, tend to have higher levels of support overall compared to policies that provide benefits.

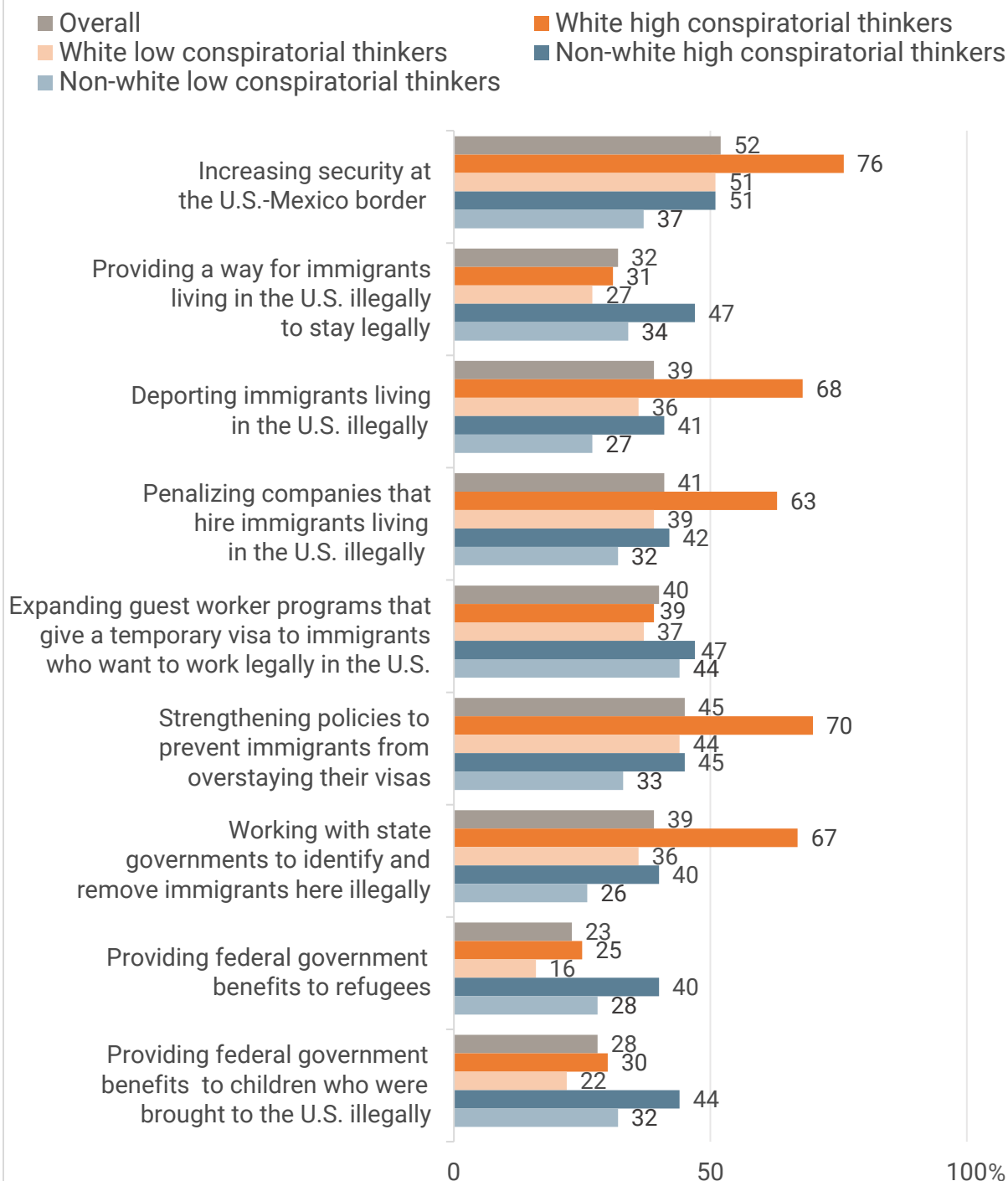
Similarly, when it comes to state policy, making sure that immigrants who are not U.S. citizens cannot vote in elections is the only policy considered a high priority by most Americans. Policies that provide state benefits garner the lowest levels of support.

At the federal level, white high conspiratorial thinkers are far more likely than other Americans, including non-white conspiratorial thinkers, to favor policies targeting immigrants living illegally in the U.S. More than two-thirds say that increasing security at the U.S.-Mexico border (77%), strengthening policies to prevent visas overstays (71%), penalizing companies that hire immigrants living in the U.S. illegally (63%), deporting immigrants living in the U.S. illegally (68%), and working with states to remove immigrants living in the country illegally (67%) should be high federal priorities compared to about half or less of all other groups.

By contrast, non-white high conspiratorial thinkers are more likely than both their white counterparts and low conspiratorial thinkers to support providing paths for immigrants living in the U.S. illegally to stay legally (47% vs. 31% and 27%), as well as federal government benefits to refugees (40% vs. 25% and 16%) and children brought to the U.S. illegally (45% vs. 30% and 22%).

White conspiratorial thinkers prioritize stricter federal immigration policies, while non-white conspiratorial thinkers prioritize federal assistance.

Percent of adults that say each of the following is a high priority



Question: How much of a priority should each of the following be for the federal government?

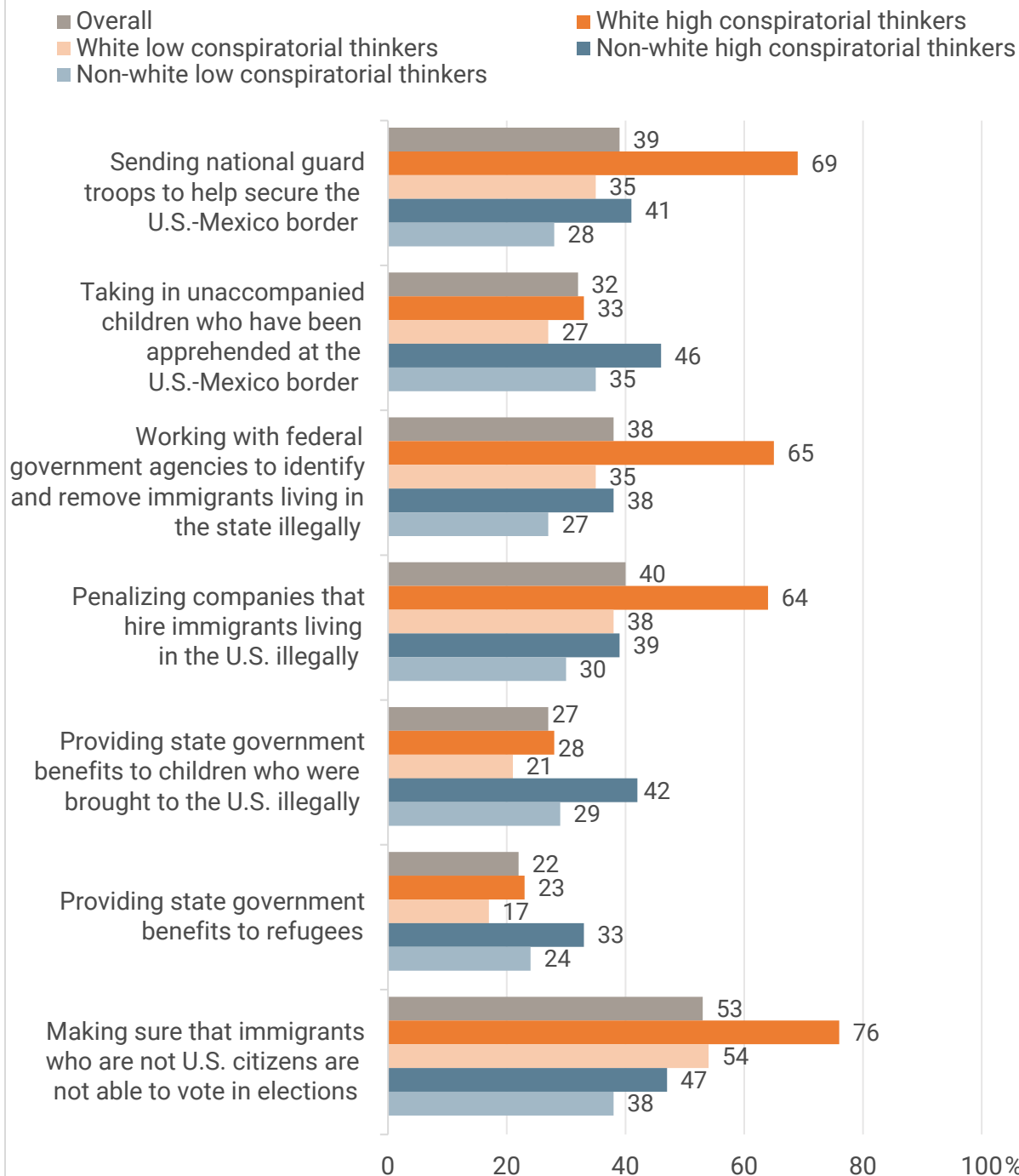
Source: AP-NORC poll conducted December 1–23, 2021 with 4,173 respondents nationwide

White high conspiratorial thinkers' views on their state governments' priorities largely resemble those on federal priorities, with about two-thirds saying it should be a high priority to send National Guard troops to secure the U.S. border (69%), work with federal governments to remove immigrants living in the state illegally (65%) and penalize companies that hire immigrants living in the country illegally (64%). This group remains more likely than other Americans to favor stricter immigration policies at the state level.

However, both white high and low conspiratorial thinkers are more likely than their non-white counterparts to say their state governments should prioritize ensuring that immigrants who are not U.S. citizens cannot vote in elections. Fifty-four percent of white low conspiratorial thinkers and 76% of white high conspiratorial thinkers say this should be a high priority, compared to 38% of non-white low conspiratorial thinkers and 47% of non-white high conspiratorial thinkers.

White high conspiratorial thinkers want their state government to prioritize border security, remove immigrants living in the U.S. illegally, and make sure non-citizens don't vote.

Percent of adults that say each of the following is a high priority



Question: How much of a priority should each of the following be for your state government?

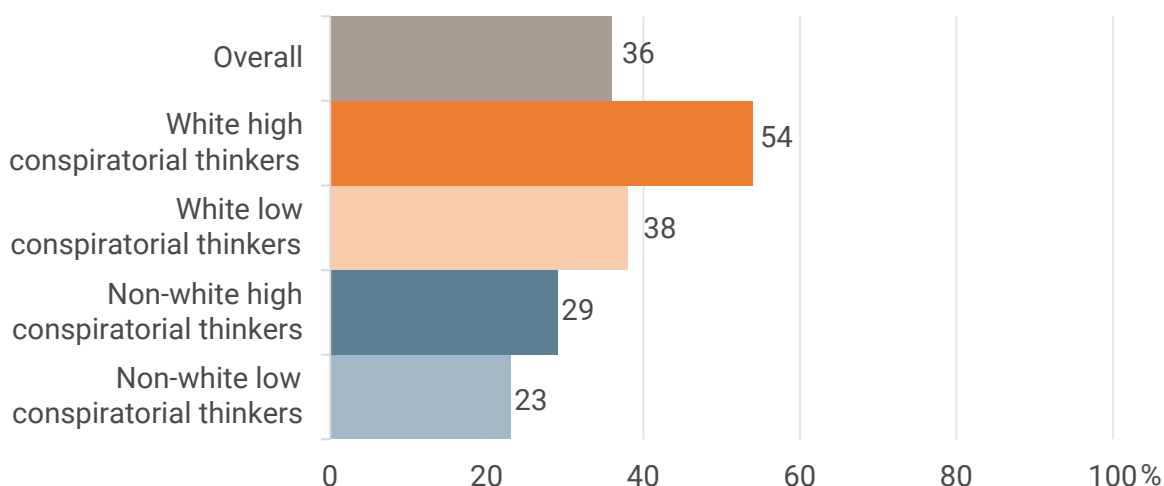
Source: AP-NORC poll conducted December 1–23, 2021, with 4,173 respondents nationwide

ABOUT A THIRD OF AMERICANS, AND MORE THAN HALF OF WHITE CONSPIRATORIAL THINKERS, WANT FEWER IMMIGRANTS

High conspiratorial thinkers overall are more likely than other Americans to strongly support stricter immigration policies. However, race is a stronger predictor of support for reducing the number of immigrants than conspiratorial thinking: both non-white high (29%) and low conspiratorial (23%) thinkers are less likely than white high (54%) and low conspiratorial (38%) thinkers to say that the number of immigrants to the U.S. should be reduced.

White Americans are more likely to be in favor of reducing the number of immigrants to the U.S., regardless of conspiratorial thinking.

Percent of adults that say to reduce a little/a lot



Question: Do you think the number of immigrants to the U.S. should be increased, remain the same, or reduced?

Source: AP-NORC poll conducted December 1–23, 2021 with 4,173 respondents nationwide

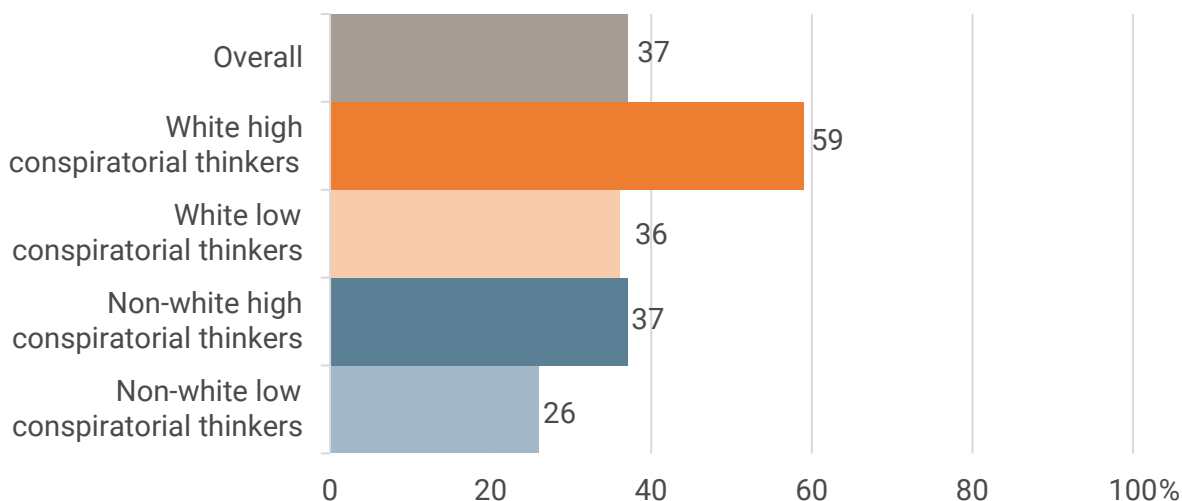


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White high conspiratorial thinkers are much more likely to say that they would favor rejecting immigrants who could not afford to live in the United States without receiving government assistance than other Americans, including white low conspiratorial thinkers and non-white high conspiratorial thinkers (59% vs. 36% and 37%). Just over a third of the public overall (37%) would support such a policy.

White high conspiratorial thinkers are much more likely to support rejecting immigrants who would require financial support.

Percent of adults that say strongly/somewhat favor



Question: Do you favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose a policy to reject immigration applications from people who do not have the financial resources to live in the country without receiving government benefits?

Source: AP-NORC poll conducted December 1–23, 2021 with 4,173 respondents nationwide



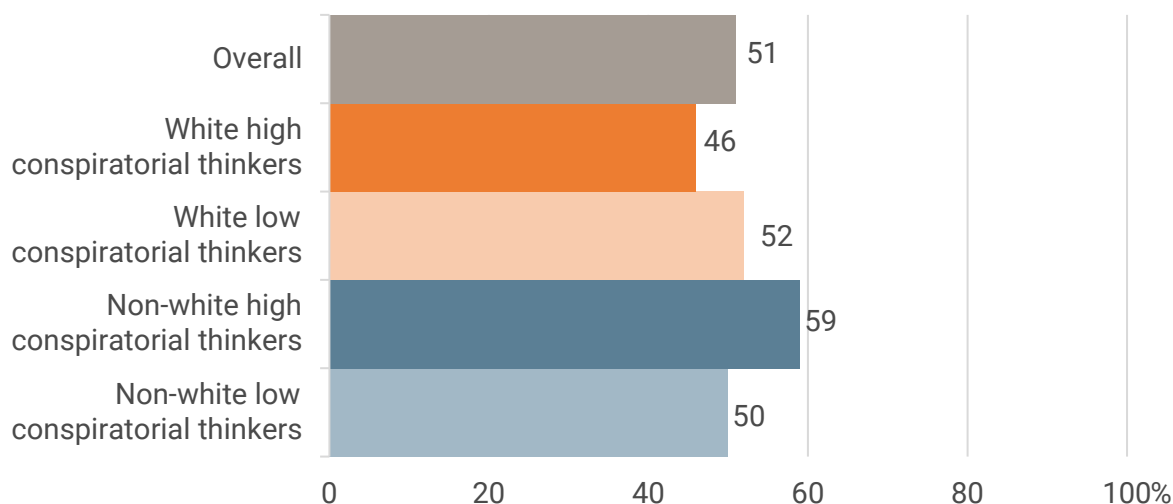
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ABOUT HALF OF ADULTS SUPPORT A LEGAL PATHWAY FOR CHILDREN BROUGHT TO THE U.S. ILLEGALLY, BUT SUPPORT VARIES BY RACE AND CONSPIRATORIAL THINKING

About half of Americans overall (51%) say they would favor providing a way for immigrants who were brought to the United States illegally as children to stay legally. There are no significant differences according to race or conspiratorial thinking.

Conspiratorial thinking does not impact opinions on allowing children brought to the U.S. illegally to stay legally.

Percent of adults that say strongly/somewhat favor



Question: Do you favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose providing a way for immigrants who were brought to the United States illegally as children to stay legally?

Source: AP-NORC poll conducted December 1–23, 2021 with 4,173 respondents nationwide

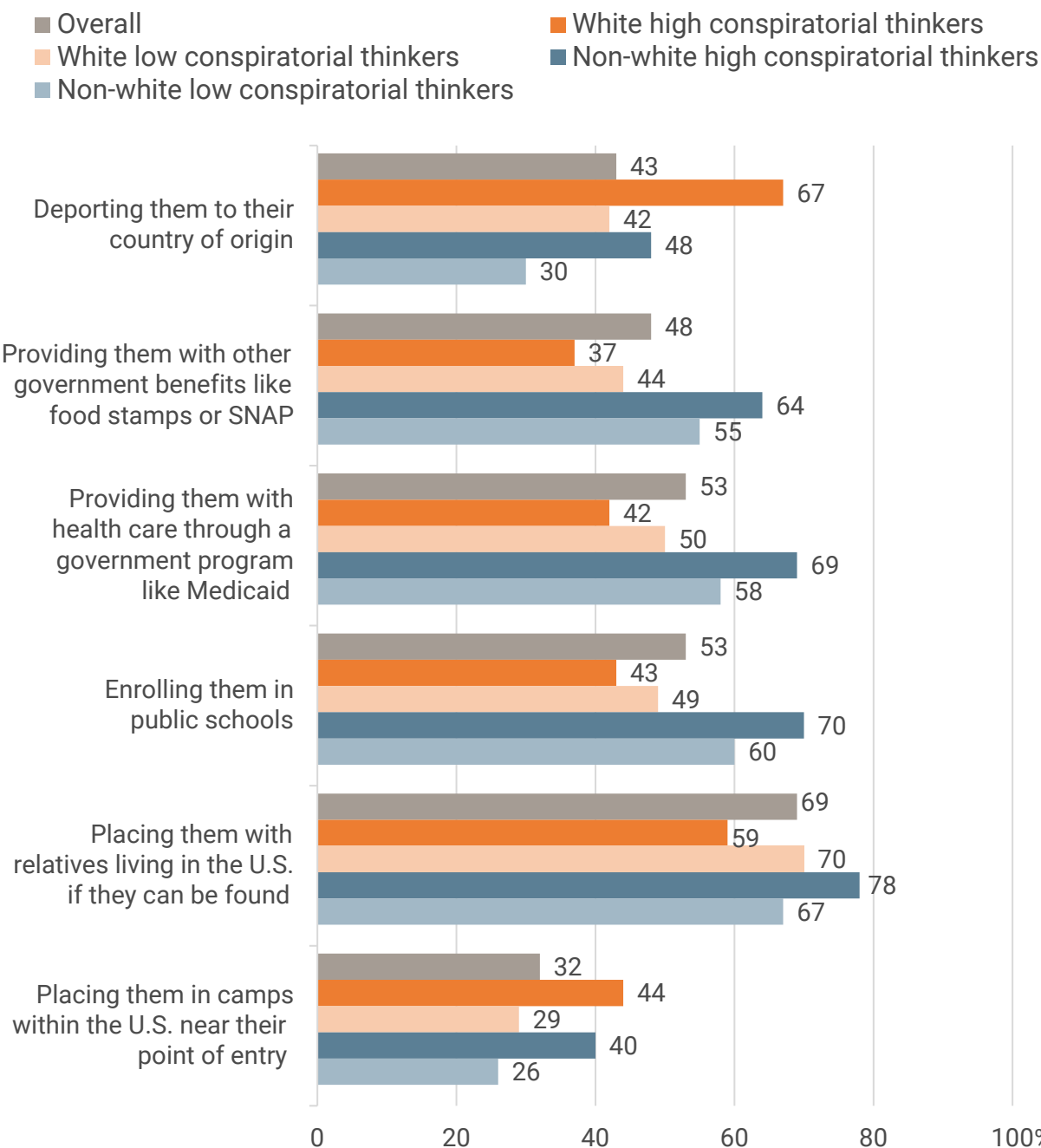


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However, when it comes to policies focused on unaccompanied children apprehended at the U.S. southern border, there are significant differences among high conspiratorial thinkers according to race. White high conspiratorial thinkers are more likely than non-white conspiratorial thinkers to say that deporting children to their country of origin is acceptable (67% vs. 48%), while non-white high conspiratorial thinkers are more likely than their white counterparts to find it acceptable to provide children access to government benefits (64% vs. 37%), health care (69% vs. 42%), public education (70% vs. 43%), and placement with relatives living in the U.S (78% vs. 59%).

White high conspiratorial thinkers are more likely to favor stricter immigration policies for children apprehended at the U.S.-Mexico border.

Percent of adults that say each of the following is acceptable



Question: Thinking about unaccompanied children apprehended at the U.S.-Mexico border who are waiting for an immigration hearing, would you say each of the following policies is acceptable, unacceptable, or neither acceptable nor unacceptable?

Source: AP-NORC poll conducted December 1–23, 2021 with 4,173 respondents nationwide



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STUDY METHODOLOGY

This survey was funded and conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago. Staff from The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research collaborated on all aspects of the study.

Data were collected using both probability and non-probability sample sources. 4,173 interviews for this survey were conducted between December 1 and December 23, 2021, with adults age 18 and over, representing the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

The probability sample source is AmeriSpeak®, NORC's probability-based panel designed to be representative of the U.S. household population. During the initial recruitment phase of the panel, randomly selected U.S. households were sampled with a known, non-zero probability of selection from the NORC National Sample Frame and then contacted by U.S. mail, email, telephone, and field interviewers (face to face). The panel provides sample coverage of approximately 97% of the U.S. household population. Those excluded from the sample include people with P.O. Box-only addresses, some addresses not listed in the USPS Delivery Sequence File, and some newly constructed dwellings.

Panel members were randomly drawn from AmeriSpeak, and 2,113 completed the survey: 2,057 via the web and 56 via telephone. Panel members were invited by email or by phone from an NORC telephone interviewer. Interviews were conducted in both English and Spanish, depending on respondent preference. Respondents were offered a small monetary incentive (\$3) for completing the survey. The final stage completion rate is 30.74 percent, the weighted household panel response rate is 19.1 percent, and the weighted household panel retention rate is 75.0 percent, for a cumulative response rate of 4.4 percent.

Dynata provided 2,060 non-probability interviews with adults age 18 and over. The non-probability sample was derived based on quotas related to age, race and ethnicity, and gender. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish via the web only. For panel recruitment, Dynata uses invitations of all types, including email invitations, phone alerts, banners, and messaging on panel community sites, to include people with a diversity of motivations to take part in research. Because non-probability panels do not start with a frame where there is known probability of selection, standard measures of sampling error and response rates cannot be calculated.

Quality assurance checks were conducted to ensure data quality. In total, 504 interviews were removed for nonresponse to at least 50% of the questions asked of them, for completing the survey in less than one-third the median interview time for the full sample, or for straight-lining all grid questions asked of them. These interviews were excluded from the data file prior to weighting.

Once the sample had been selected and fielded, and all the study data were collected and made final, a raking process was used to adjust for any survey nonresponse in the probability sample, as well as any noncoverage or under and oversampling in both probability and non-probability samples resulting from the study-specific sample design. Raking variables for both the probability and nonprobability samples included age, gender, census region, race/ethnicity, and education. Population control totals for the raking variables were obtained from the 2021 Current Population Survey. The weighted data reflect the U.S. population of people age 18 and over.

In order to incorporate the nonprobability sample, NORC used TrueNorth calibration, an innovative hybrid calibration approach developed at NORC based on small area estimation methods in order to explicitly account for potential bias associated with the nonprobability sample. The purpose of TrueNorth calibration is to adjust the weights for the nonprobability sample to bring weighted distributions of the nonprobability sample in line with the population distribution for characteristics correlated with the survey variables. Such calibration adjustments help to reduce potential bias, yielding more accurate population estimates.

The weighted AmeriSpeak sample and the calibrated nonprobability sample were used to develop a small area model to support domain-level estimates, where the domains were defined by race/ethnicity, age, and gender. The dependent variables for the models were:

- Trust: Believes most can be trusted; Can't be too careful in dealing with people; It depends.
- Bible: Bible is the actual word of God; Bible is the inspired word of God but not literal; Bible is an ancient book of fables, legends, history, and moral rules recorded by men.
- Resent1: Irish, Italians, Jewish, and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Black people should do the same without any special favors: Somewhat/strongly agree; Neither agree nor disagree; somewhat/strongly disagree.

These were found to be key survey variables, in terms of model fit. The model included covariates, domain-level random effects, and sampling errors. The covariates were external data available from other national surveys, such as health insurance, internet access, voting behavior, and housing type from the American Community Survey or the Current Population Survey.

Finally, the combined AmeriSpeak and nonprobability sample weights were derived such that for the combined sample, the weighted estimate reproduced the small domain estimates (derived using the small area model) for key survey variables.

The overall margin of error for the combined sample is +/- 1.96 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level, including the design effect. The margin of sampling error may be higher for subgroups.

Sampling error is only one of many potential sources of error, and there may be other unmeasured error in this or any other survey.

Complete questions and results are available at <https://apnorc.org/projects/immigration-attitudes-and-conspiratorial-thinkers>.

Additional information on the TrueNorth approach can be found here:
<https://amerispeak.norc.org/our-capabilities/Pages/TrueNorth.aspx>.

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ABOUT THE ASSOCIATED PRESS-NORC CENTER FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS RESEARCH

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