



Sacred Heart
UNIVERSITY

Institute for Public Policy
Statewide Poll - Q3 2020



Report of Findings

October 28, 2020

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Sacred Heart
UNIVERSITY



Our Story

Sacred Heart University's Institute for Public Policy and the *Hartford Courant* are collaborating in partnership with GreatBlue Research to analyze salient issues facing the State of Connecticut. This collaboration combines the academic excellence of a top-rated private University, the integrity and professionalism of a national newspaper, and the research design, analysis and reporting expertise of GreatBlue Research.

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Areas of Investigation

The Sacred Heart University Institute for Public Policy leveraged a dual-methodology quantitative research approach to address the following areas of investigation:

- Thoughts on the quality of life in Connecticut
- Governor Ned Lamont's job approval ratings
- President Donald Trump's job approval ratings
- Voting preference in the presidential election
- Thoughts on filling the supreme court vacancy
- The effect of COVID-19 on mental health and finances
- Plans to take the COVID-19 vaccine when available
- Demographic profiles of respondents

Research Methodology Snapshot

Methodology	No. of Completes	No. of Questions	Sample
Dual mode (phone and digital survey)**	1,000	39*	Procured by GreatBlue
Target	Margin of Error	Confidence Level	Research Dates
Connecticut residents	+/- 3.02%	95%	October 8 - 21, 2020

* This represents the total possible number of questions; not all respondents will answer all questions based on skip patterns and other instrument bias.

** Supervisory personnel, in addition to computer-aided interviewing platforms, ensure the integrity of the data is accurate.

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71.5%

would still purchase
at an increased
price point

8.9%

5.4%

2.8%

0.0%

Negative Impact

Boomers

No Impact

Positive Impact

SHU Institute for Public Policy - October 2020 Headlines

- ❖ In October 2020, 69.1% of surveyed Connecticut residents reported their quality of life in the State as being either “excellent” (19.2%) or “good” (49.9%), which marked an increase over the 64.2% who reported the same in April of 2020.
 - A decreased frequency of October 2020 respondents expressed the belief that the quality of life in Connecticut is “declining” (18.3%), compared to the rate of those who reported the same in April 2020 (22.9%).
- ❖ An increased rate of Connecticut residents surveyed in October 2020 (53.5%) reported to “approve” of how Ned Lamont is handling his job as governor, which is significantly higher than the 41.4% of respondents who reported the same in April 2020.
 - 37.3% approval among Republicans (15.3% unsure)
 - 46.3% approval among Unaffiliated voters (24.1% unsure)
 - 52.6% approval among Independent voters (15.1% unsure)
 - 70.6% approval among Democrats (16.6% unsure)
- ❖ During the COVID-19 pandemic, high frequencies of respondents reported to “approve” of the way Ned Lamont is handling “communication to the public” (71.2% over 67.2% in April 2020) and his “overall response and handling of the COVID-19 crisis” (67.0% over 65.0% in April 2020).
 - 58.3% reported they “approve” of the way Governor Lamont is “addressing a plan for Connecticut residents and families” (over 51.6% in April 2020).
 - 53.1% reported they “approve” of the way Governor Lamont is “addressing a plan for businesses in the state” (over 45.0% in April 2020).

SHU Institute for Public Policy - October 2020 Headlines

- ❖ 30.7% of Connecticut residents surveyed in October 2020 reported to “approve” of how Donald Trump is handling his job as President.
 - 72.0% approval among Republicans (5.5% unsure)
 - 30.6% approval among Independent voters (13.8% unsure)
 - 24.1% approval among Unaffiliated voters (15.7% unsure)
 - 8.7% approval among Democrats (3.5% unsure)
- ❖ Less than one-third of surveyed residents in October 2020 (28.8%) “approve” of President Trump’s “overall response and handling of the COVID-19 crisis” (from 39.9% in April 2020).
 - 32.5% reported they “approve” of the way President Trump is “addressing a plan for businesses in the U.S.”
 - 29.8% reported they “approve” of the way President Trump is “addressing a plan for U.S. residents and families.”
 - 26.5% reported they “approve” of President Trump’s “communication to the public” during the pandemic.
- ❖ The majority of respondents (51.4%) indicated they planned to vote for Joe Biden, while 26.4% indicated they plan to vote for Donald Trump and 20.0% reported they were “undecided” or “unsure.”
 - Among Republican voters, 70.3% would vote for Trump and 18.6% would vote for Biden (8.9% unsure).
 - Among Independent voters, 23.7% would vote for Trump and 44.0% would vote for Biden (29.7% unsure).
 - Among Unaffiliated voters, 20.4% would vote for Trump and 35.2% would vote for Biden (38.9% unsure).
 - Among Democrat voters, 4.4% would vote for Trump and 86.9% would vote for Biden (8.1% unsure).

SHU Institute for Public Policy - October 2020 Headlines

- ❖ The majority of surveyed Connecticut residents (51.0%) who watched the presidential debates indicated their perception of Donald Trump was “worsened” as a result, in comparison to 24.7% who indicated the same regarding Joe Biden.
- ❖ 49.8% of surveyed residents indicated the current Supreme Court vacancy “should be filled after the election,” while 35.1% indicated “the vacancy should be filled before the election” and 12.4% reported they have “no opinion.”
- ❖ 44.4% of respondents indicated they plan to take the COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available, while 21.1% do not plan to take the vaccine and 34.5% were unsure.
- ❖ 38.0% of surveyed Connecticut residents indicated they were working at their workplace at least part-time prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, in comparison to 32.2% since the pandemic began. Since the pandemic, rates of working from home increased to 13.4% (over 9.1%), as did the rate of unemployment (13.0% over 9.1%).
 - Income was directly correlated to current work from home rates, with respondents earning \$150,000 or more annually (31.3%) working from home full-time the most and those earning \$50,000 or less (8.3%) the least.
- ❖ The majority of respondents indicated “no change” to their current mental health (57.5%) and financial situation (53.5%) as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - 36.7% of respondents ages 35-44 indicated their mental health was “worse” in comparison to before the pandemic, and 25.1% of those ages 65 or older reported the same.
- ❖ Of the 34.4% of respondents who indicated at least one individual in their household was in school, 37.2% described the individuals’ educational environment as “in school part-time/hybrid,” while 32.0% indicated “in school full-time” and 30.5% indicated “at home full-time.”

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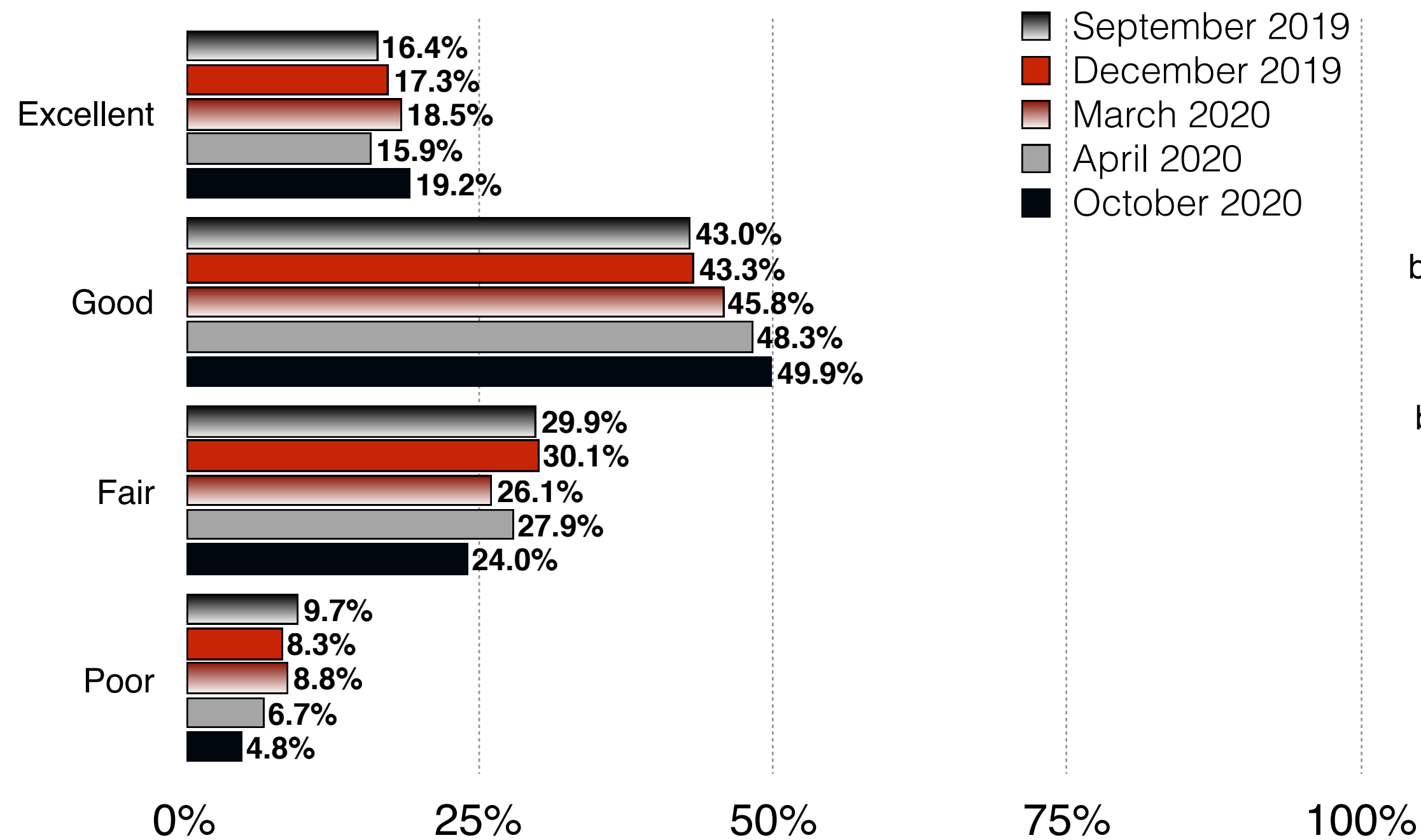
No Impact

Positive Impact

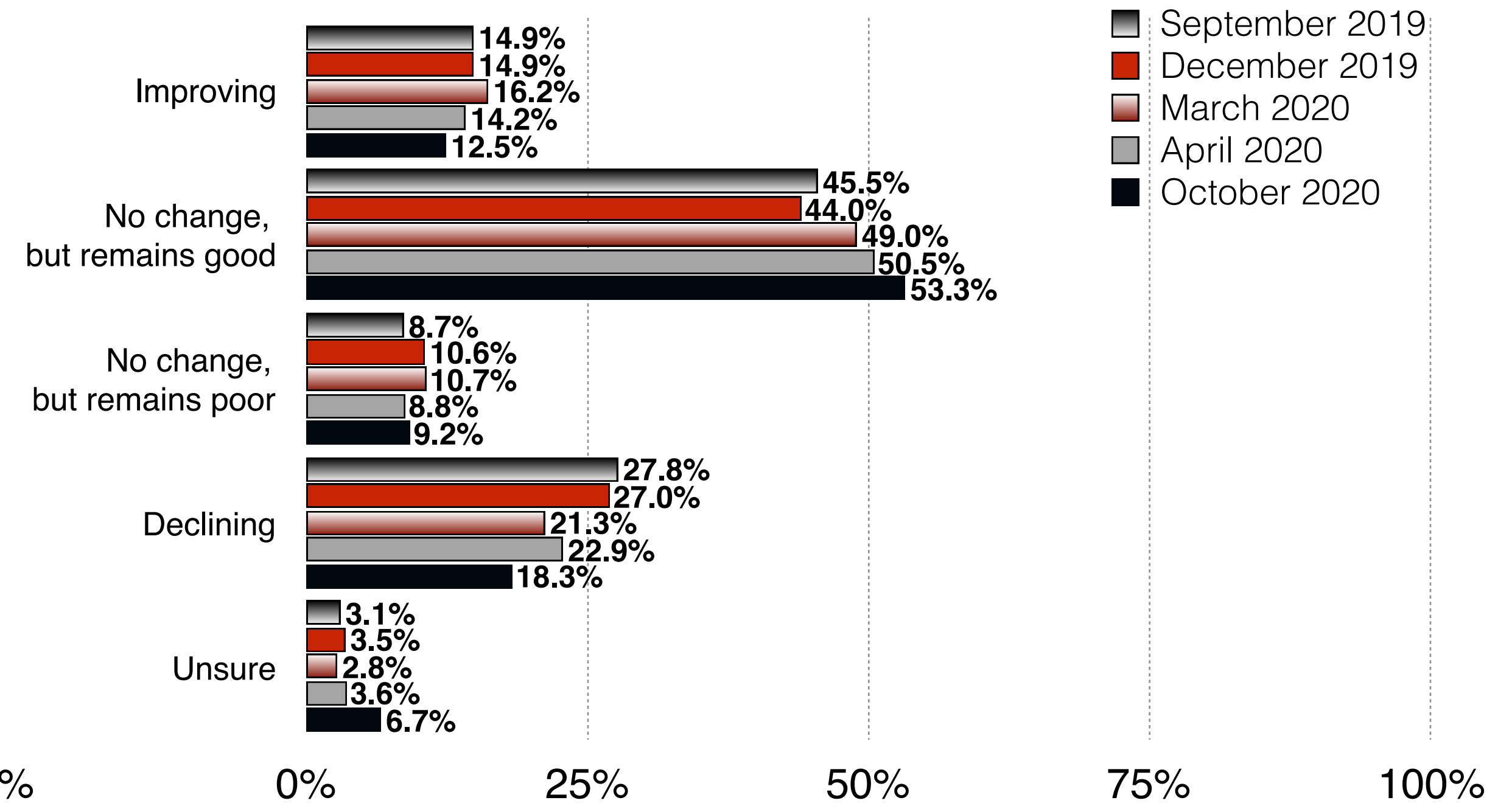
Quality of Life in Connecticut

The majority of Connecticut residents surveyed in October 2020, 69.1%, reported their quality of life in the State as being either “excellent” (19.2%) or “good” (49.9%), which marked an increase over the 64.2% who reported the same in April of 2020. Of note, a decreased frequency of October 2020 respondents expressed the belief that the quality of life in Connecticut is “declining” (18.3%), compared to the rate of those who reported the same in April 2020 (22.9%).

- ❖ A lower frequency of respondents earning less than \$50,000 annually, 57.2%, reported their quality of life as either “excellent” (15.8%) or “good” (41.4%) when compared to those earning \$150,000 or more per year (81.3%).
- ❖ Despite this finding, respondents earning less than \$50,000 annually reported their quality of life is “improving” at a 16.9% frequency, which is the highest rate among all income segments.



Q How would you rate your overall quality of life in Connecticut? Would you say...

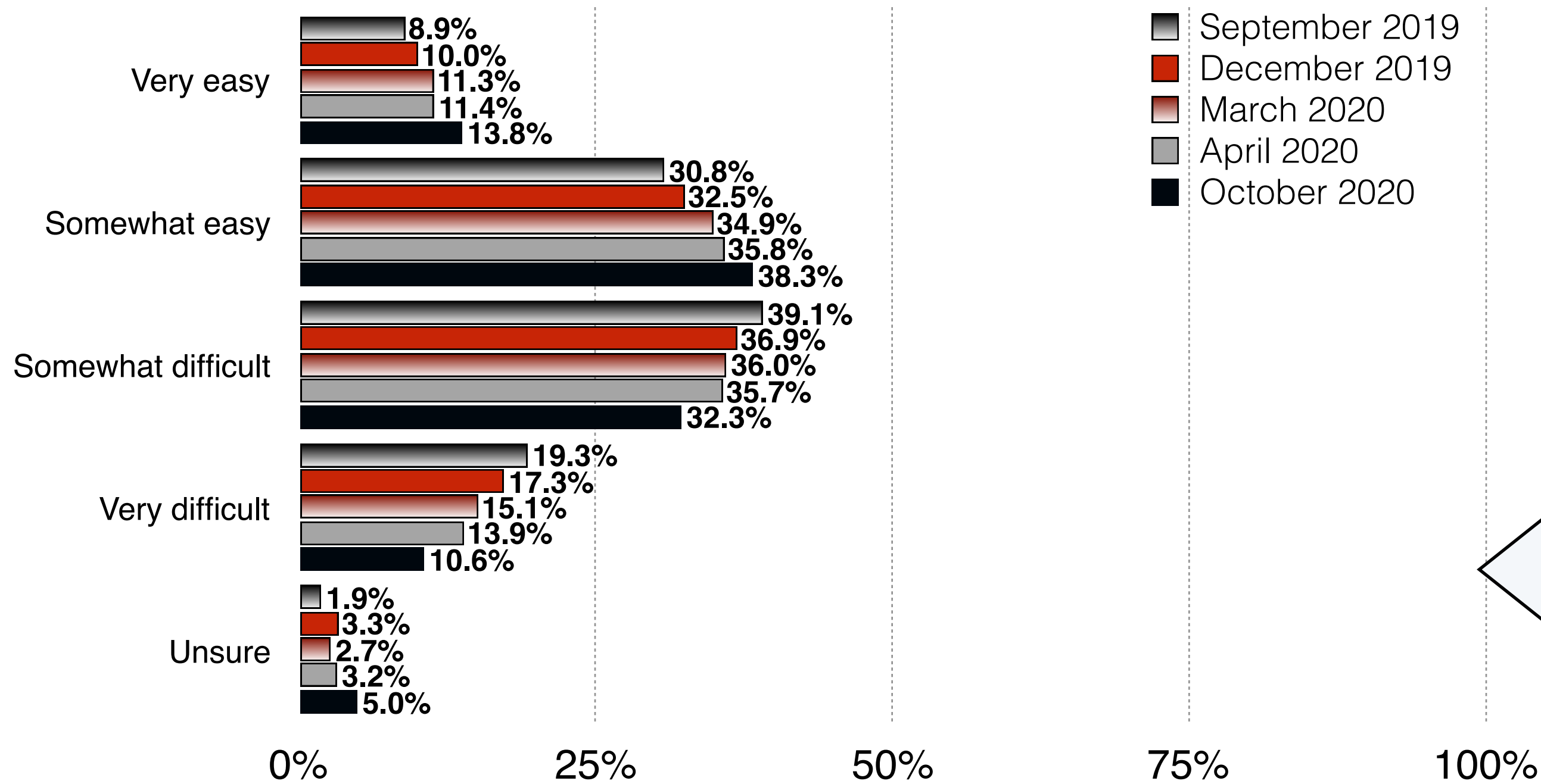


Q Would you say, overall, your quality of life in Connecticut is...

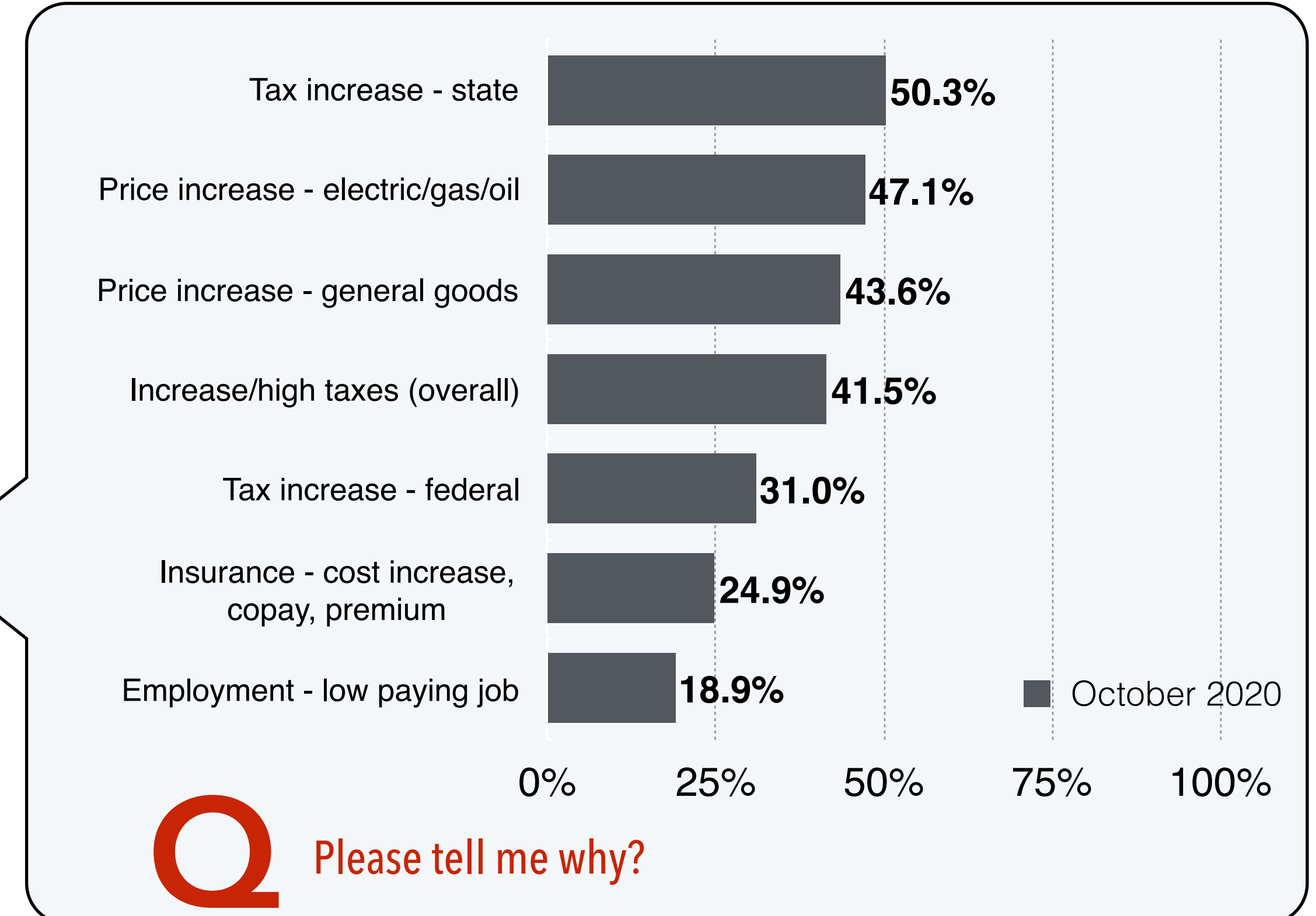
Quality of Life in Connecticut

In October 2020, 52.1% of surveyed residents (over 47.2% in April 2020) reported it being either “very easy” (13.8%) or “somewhat easy” (38.3%) to maintain their standard of living out of their household income today, while 42.9% (from 49.6% in April 2020) reported it being “difficult” to maintain their standard of living. The frequency of respondents who indicated it is “very easy” or “somewhat easy” has increased significantly over 39.7% in September 2019.

- ❖ 42.0% of respondents earning \$50,000 to less than \$100,000 per year (from 52.6% in April 2020) reported it being “difficult” to maintain their standard of living.
- ❖ Roughly one-half of respondents ages 45-64 (49.9%) reported it being “difficult” to maintain their standard of living (from 58.4% in April 2020).



Q Overall, how easy or difficult are you finding it to maintain your standard of living out of your total household income today. Would you say...

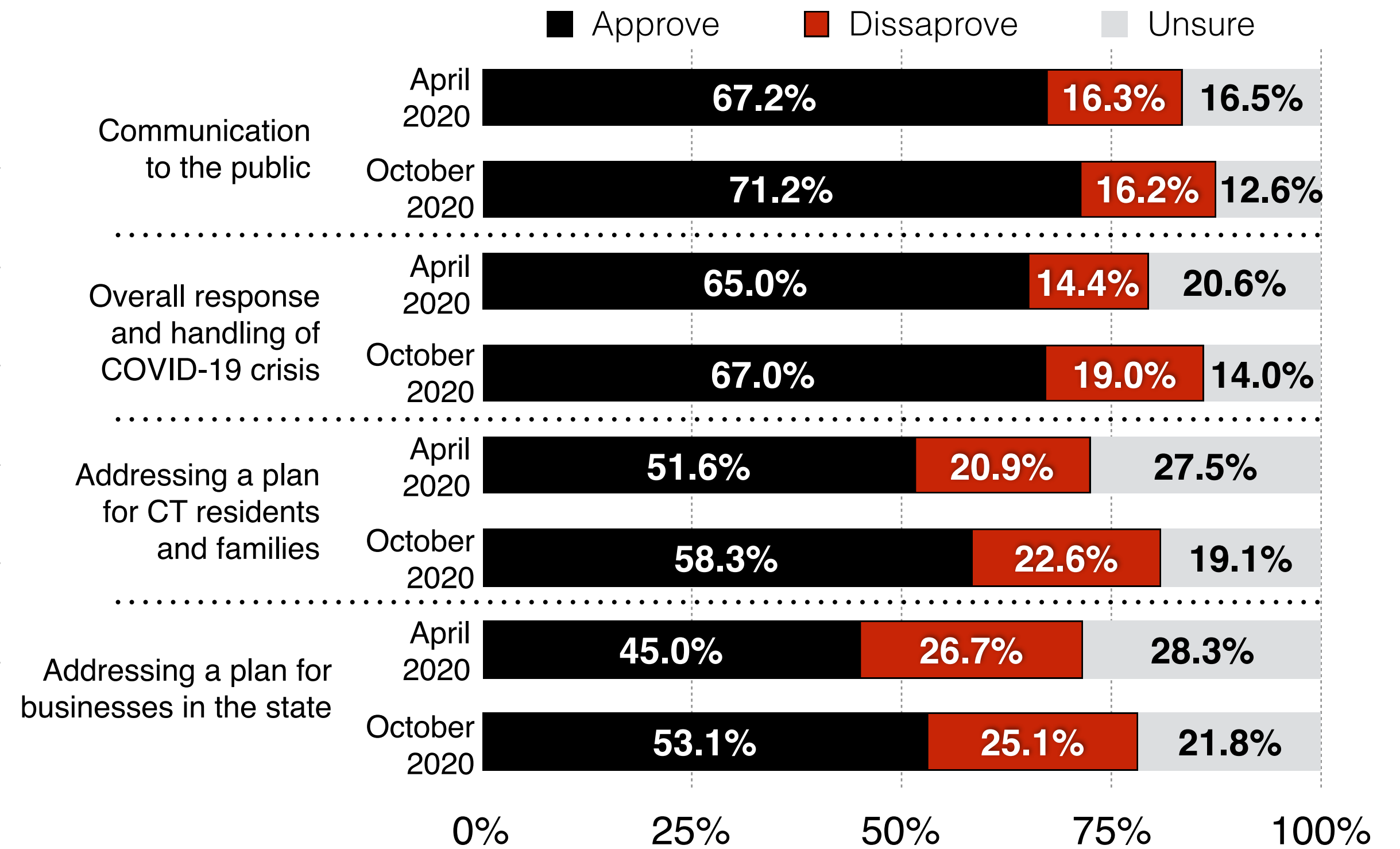
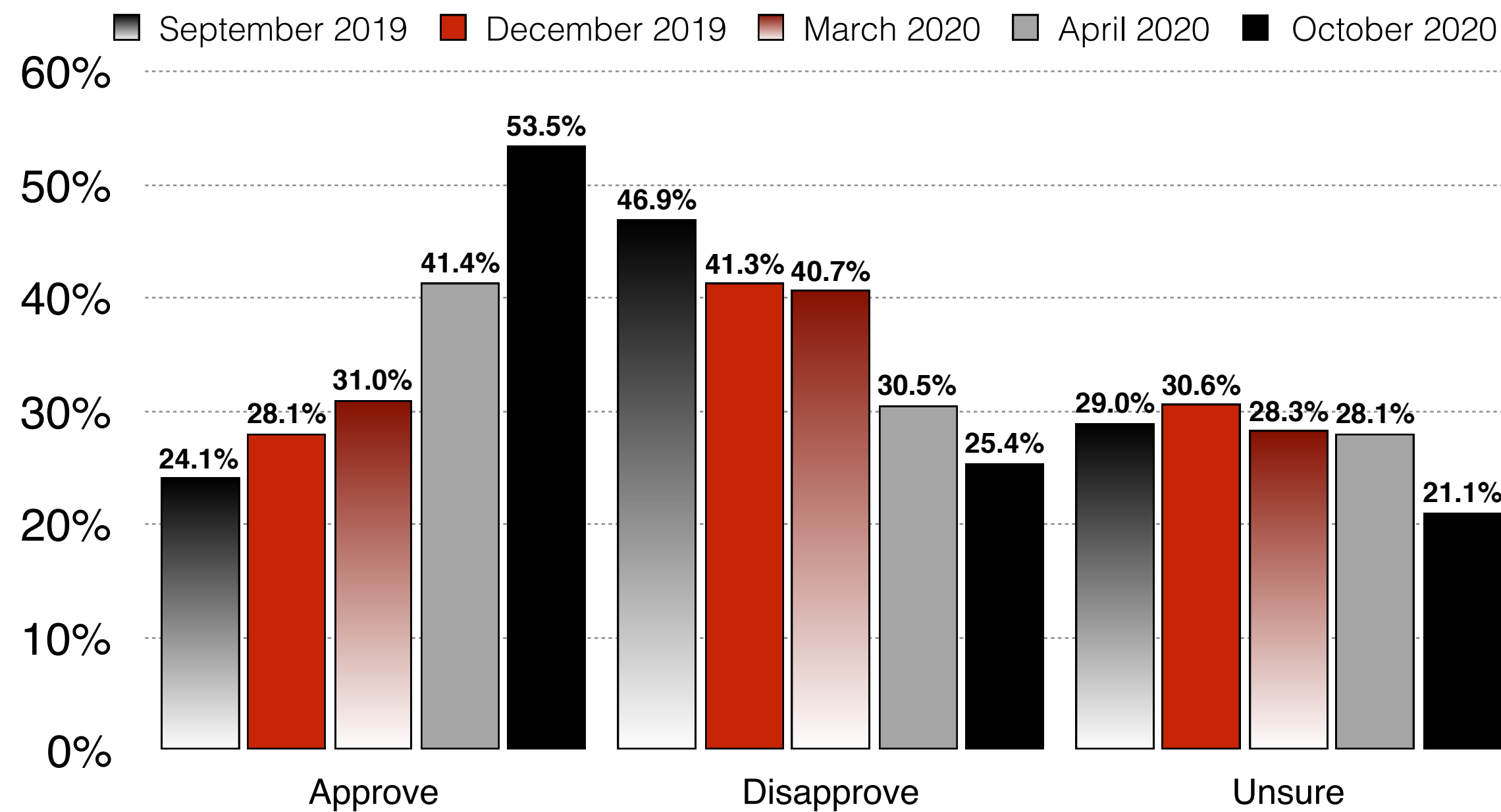


Q Please tell me why?

Governor's Approval Rating

53.5% of Connecticut residents surveyed in October 2020 reported they "approve" of how Ned Lamont is handling his job as governor, which is significantly higher than the 41.4% of respondents who reported the same in April 2020. Approval ratings have continually increased from 24.1% in September of 2019.

- ❖ Rates of approval regarding the way Ned Lamont is handling his job as governor increased for both Democrats (70.6% over 60.9% in April 2020) and Republicans (37.3% over 25.7% in April 2020).
- ❖ 55.8% of respondents ages 18-34 currently "approve" of Governor Lamont's overall response to COVID-19, compared to 76.0% of those ages 65 or older.
- ❖ 57.9% of respondents earning under \$50,000 per year currently "approve" of Governor Lamont's overall response to COVID-19, compared to 74.1% of those earning \$150,000 or more.



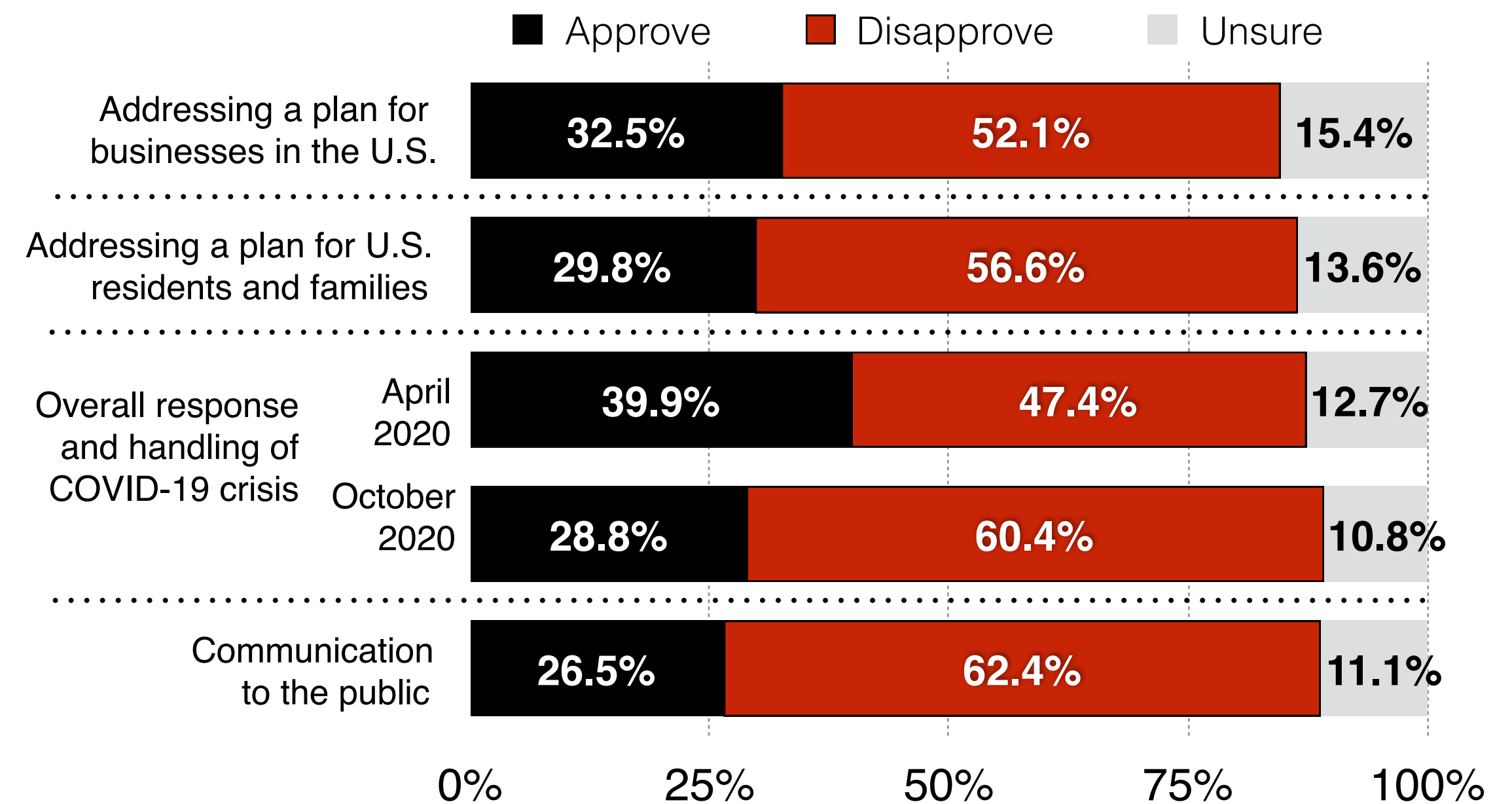
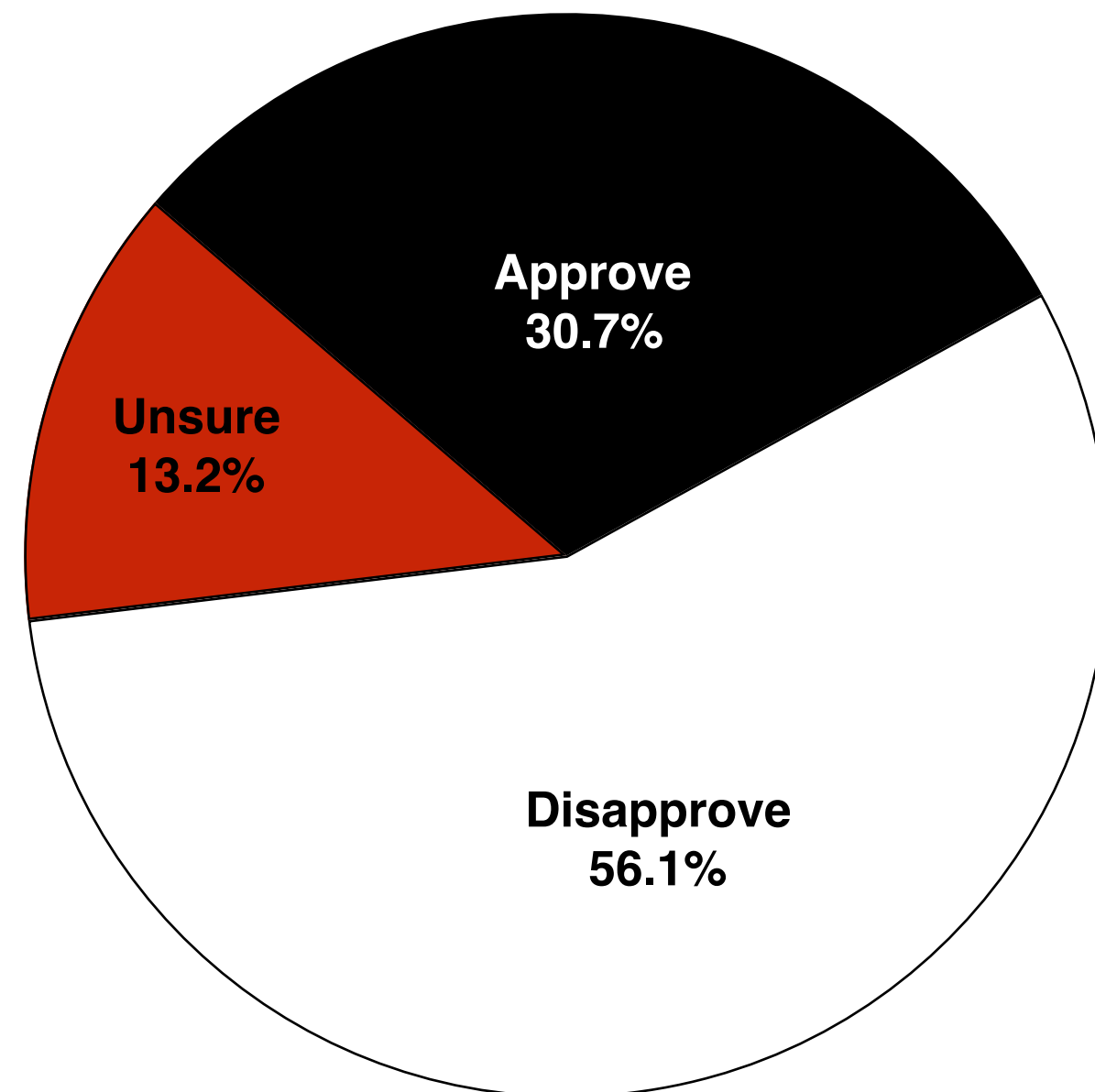
Q Since he took office in January, overall do you approve or disapprove of the way Ned Lamont is handling his job as governor?

Q Please indicate if you approve or disapprove of the way Ned Lamont has handled the following issues related to COVID-19...

President's Approval Rating

The majority of Connecticut residents surveyed in October 2020, 56.1%, reported they "disapprove" of how Donald Trump is handling his job as President while 30.7% indicated they "approve." 28.8% of respondents currently "approve" of President Trump's overall handling of COVID-19, compared to 39.9% in April 2020.

- ❖ While 72.0% of Republicans surveyed currently "approve" of the way President Trump is handling his job as President, only 30.6% of Independents, 24.1% of unaffiliated voters and 8.7% of Democrats reported the same.
- ❖ 61.9% of Republicans surveyed currently "approve" of President Trump's overall handling of COVID-19, compared to only 10.1% of Democrats.



Q Since he took office in January 2017, overall do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as president?

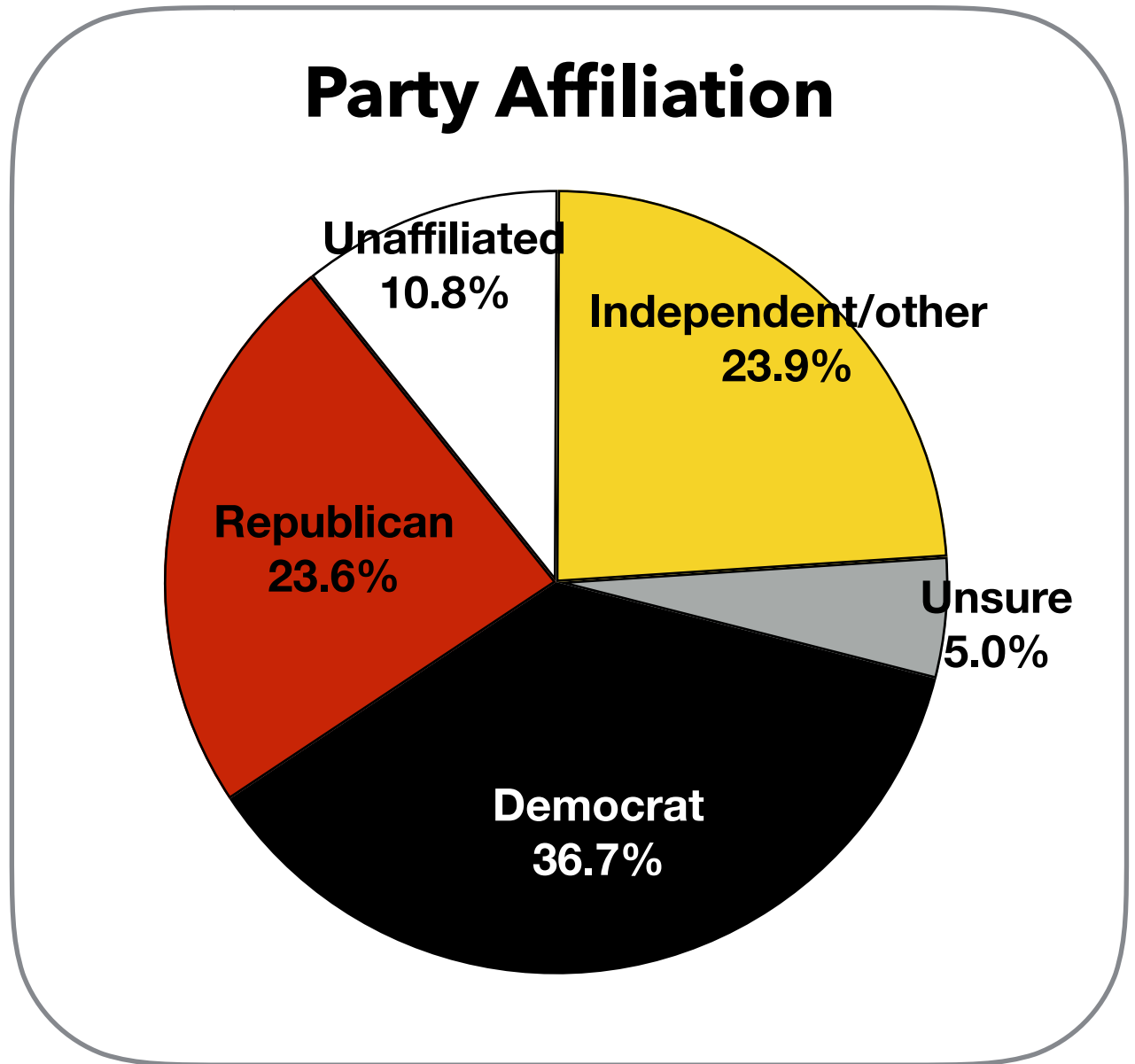
Q Please indicate if you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump has handled the following issues related to COVID-19.

Election 2020

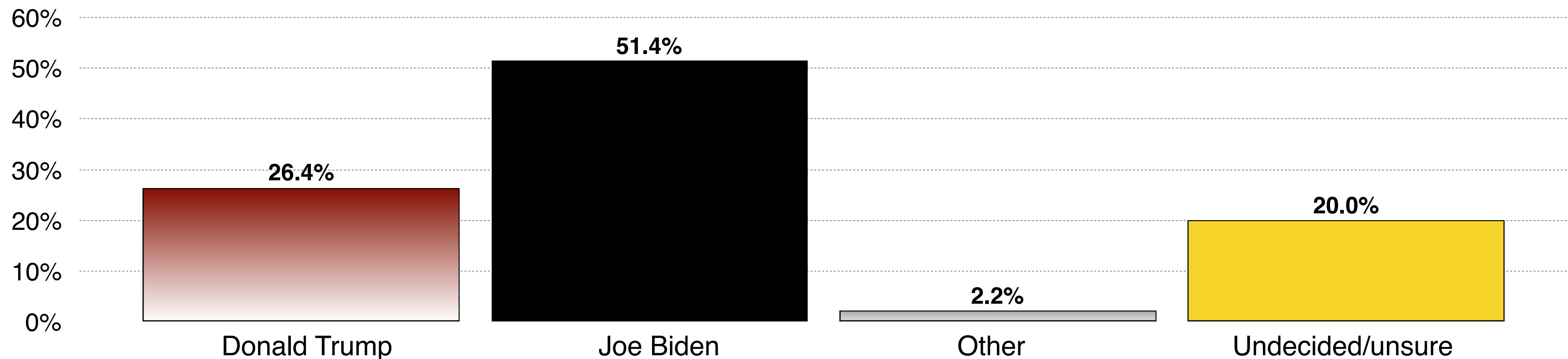


In October 2020, when all respondents were asked who they would vote for in the presidential race in 2020, more than one-half, 51.4%, indicated they planned to vote for Joe Biden, while 26.4% indicated they plan to vote for Donald Trump and 20.0% reported they were “undecided/unsure.” This marks a 4.1 point increase when compared to the 47.3% who indicated they would vote for Joe Biden over Donald Trump in April 2020.

- ❖ 57.1% of respondents earning \$150,000 or more indicated they planned to vote for Joe Biden, while those earning under \$50,000 annually reported they were “undecided” at a 27.1% frequency.
- ❖ When compared to female respondents, a higher frequency of male respondents reported they plan to vote for Donald Trump (32.9% over 20.5%), however the frequency of males has declined considerably from 42.8% who reported they would vote for Trump over Biden in April 2020.



Q Who are you planning to vote for in the upcoming presidential election?

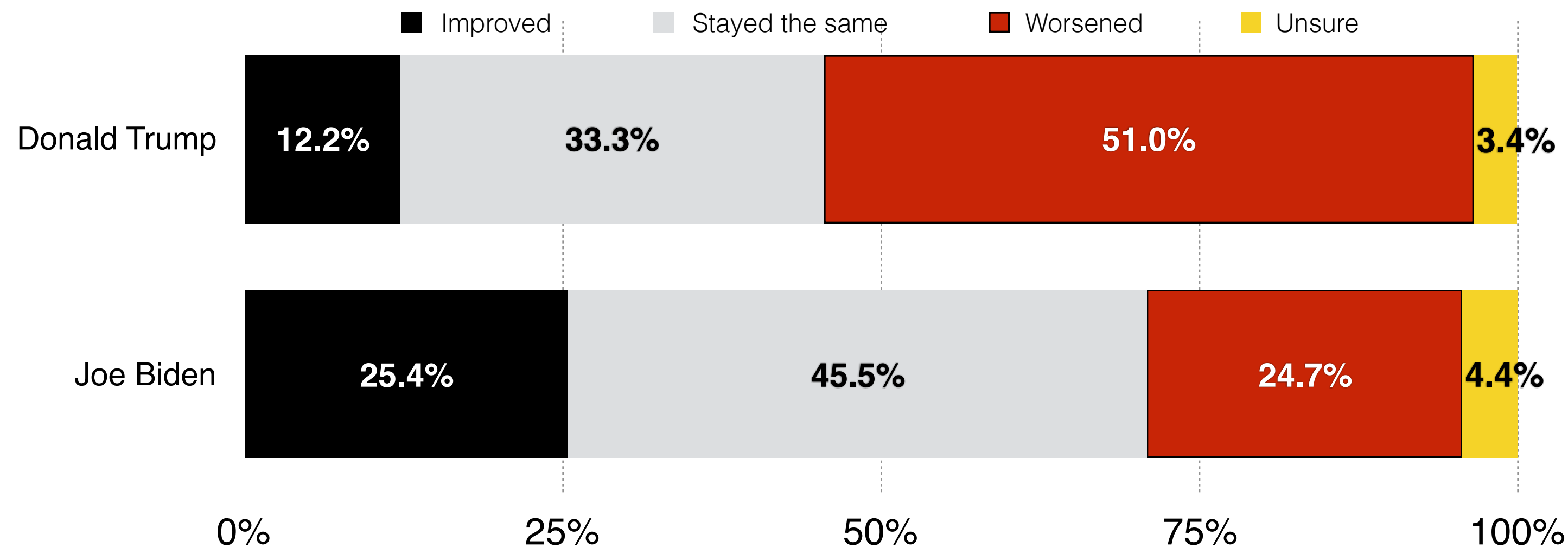


Election 2020 - Continued

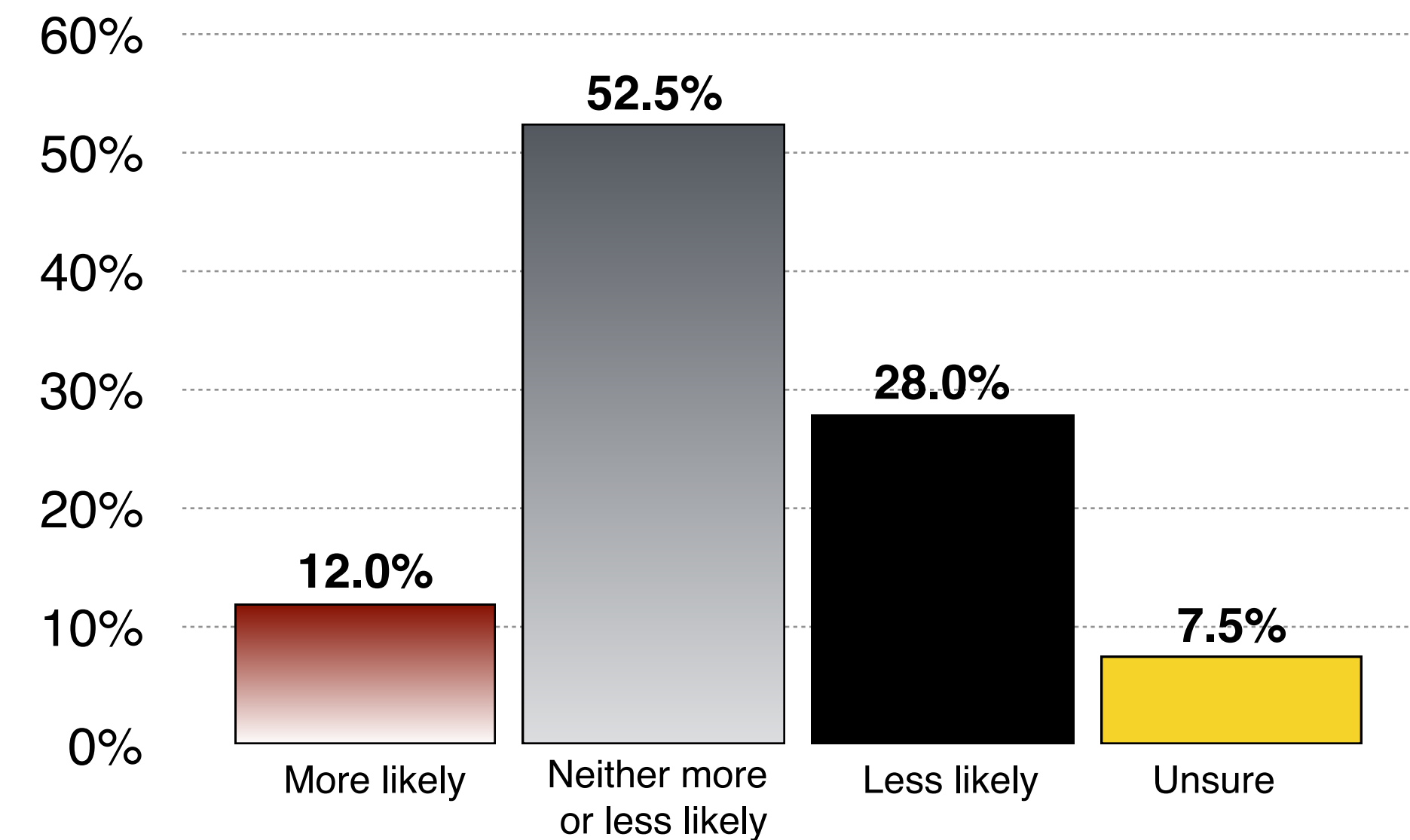
The majority of surveyed Connecticut residents, 51.0%, who watched the presidential debates between Donald Trump and Joe Biden on September 29th, 2020 indicated their perception of Donald Trump was “worsened” as a result, in comparison to 24.7% who indicated the same regarding Joe Biden. One-quarter of respondents, 25.4%, reported the debate “improved” their perception of Joe Biden. Also of note, although the majority of respondents, 52.5%, reported Trump contracting the COVID-19 virus had no effect on their voting decisions, 28.0% reported the news made them “less likely” to vote for the current president.

- ❖ 22.7% of Republicans who watched the debate reported it “worsened” their opinion of Donald Trump and 53.6% of Republicans reported the same regarding Joe Biden.
- ❖ 60.7% of respondents earning \$150,000 or more per year indicated the debate “worsened” their opinion of Donald Trump, in comparison to 47.9% earning under \$50,000.

Q Has your perception of (Donald Trump /Joe Biden) improved, stayed the same, or worsened as a result of the presidential debate?



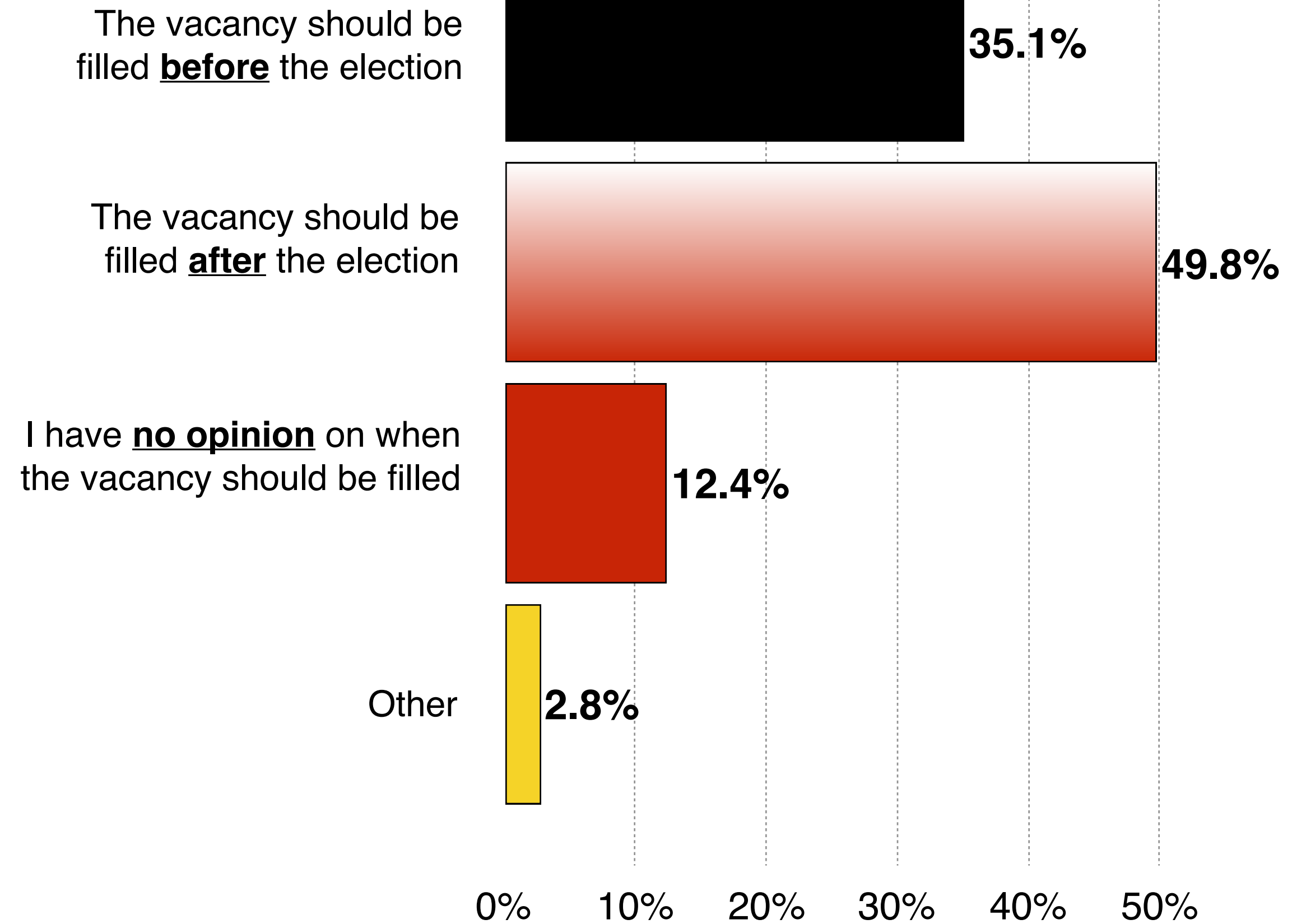
Q On October 2, 2020, it was revealed that President Trump contracted COVID-19. Does this news make you more or less likely to vote for him in the upcoming election?



Supreme Court Vacancy

In October 2020, surveyed Connecticut residents were prompted to indicate their opinions regarding the current Supreme Court vacancy. Roughly one-half reported “the vacancy should be filled after the election” (49.8%), while 35.1% indicated “the vacancy should be filled before the election and 12.4% reported they have “no opinion.”

- ❖ A higher frequency of Republican respondents (68.2%) reported “the vacancy should be filled before the election,” compared to Democrat respondents (12.5%).
- ❖ A higher frequency of male respondents (42.5%) reported “the vacancy should be filled before the election,” compared to 27.5% of female respondents.
- ❖ 25.8% of respondents ages 18-34 indicated they had “no opinion” on the subject, compared to those ages 65 and older (6.3%).



Under the US Constitution, the President has the power to nominate a Supreme Court justice subject to approval by the Senate. Historically in the United States, a supreme court vacancy has been filled immediately, however some believe that the current vacancy in the supreme court should be filled after the upcoming presidential election.

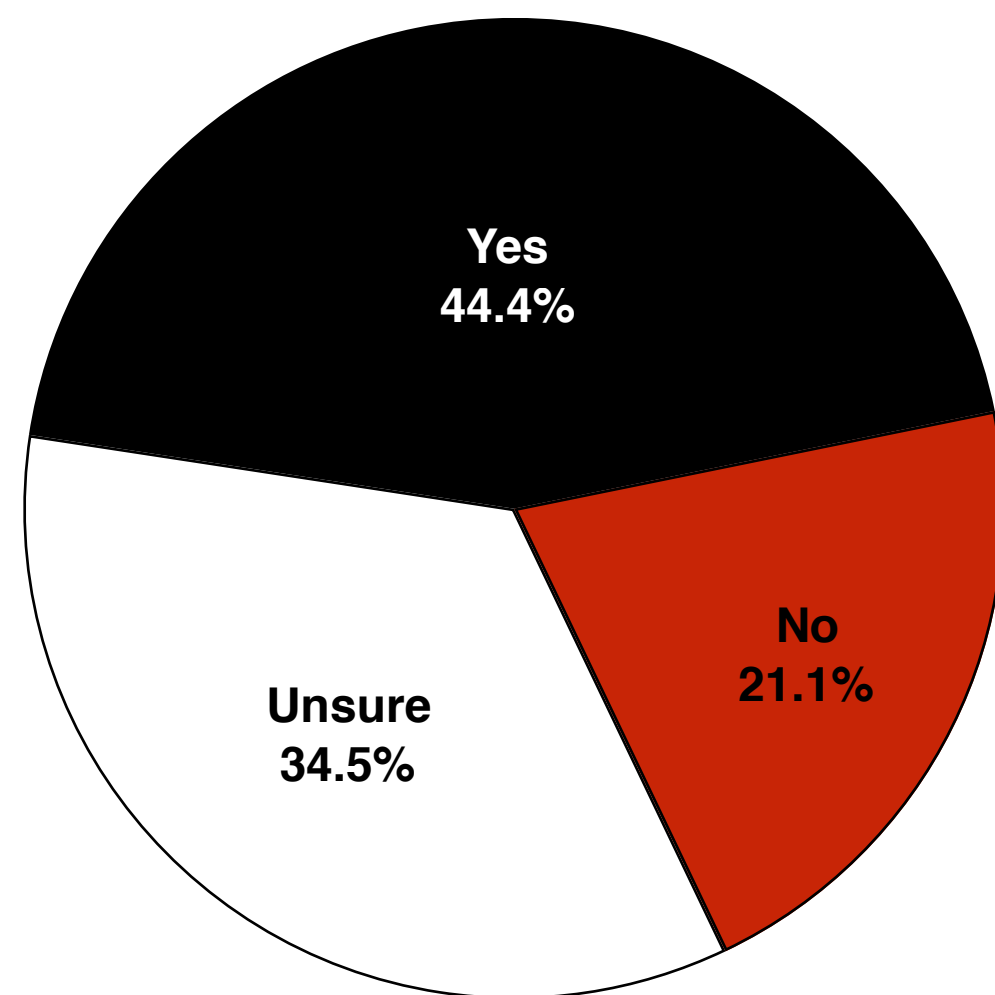
Q Which of the following would you say best describes your opinion on the current vacancy?*

*The Supreme Court vacancy was filled on October 27, 2020

Vaccine - Sentiment and Perception

In October 2020, more than four-out-of-ten respondents, 44.4%, reported they plan to take the COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available, while 21.1% do not plan to take it and 34.5% were unsure. Those who intend to take the vaccine reported “stops spread/protection from virus/prevention” (29.3%) most frequently. Those who do not intend to take the vaccine or are undecided reported “too new/need more time/more testing needed/more research & data” most frequently (20.4% and 17.7%, respectively).

- ❖ 54.8% of those ages 65 or older reported they plan to take the vaccine, compared to 40.3% of those ages 18-34.
- ❖ 62.5% of those earning \$150,000 or more per year reported they plan to take the vaccine when available, in comparison to 37.2% of those earning \$50,000 or less.
- ❖ Respondents who identified as White (48.3%) also reported they plan to take the vaccine more frequently than Hispanic (40.7%) or Black/African-American (28.4%) respondents.



Top responses why...	October 2020
Stops spread/protection from virus/prevention	29.3
Health/high risk category/pre-existing conditions	12.4
Approval by doctors/CDC/FDA	10.4
Right thing to do/no need to take it/helpful/important	8.6
Proven safe and effective	6.3
Feel safe/secure/life saving/beneficial	5.9
None/NA	6.3

Top responses why not...	October 2020
Too new/need more time/more testing needed/more research & data	20.4
Wouldn't take/don't trust	16.6
Proof that it's safe/effective	9.0
Side effects/allergic reactions	8.5
Don't take/believe in vaccines	7.1
Don't know/unsure	6.6
None/NA	10.4

Top responses why unsure...	October 2020
Too new/need more time/more testing needed/more research & data	17.7
Proof that it's safe/effective	17.7
Approval by doctors/scientists/CDC/FDA	5.5
Side effects/allergic reactions	4.3
Depends on the approval process and by whom	4.3
Don't know/unsure	13.6
None/NA	7.0

Q Do you plan to take the COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available?

Q Why?

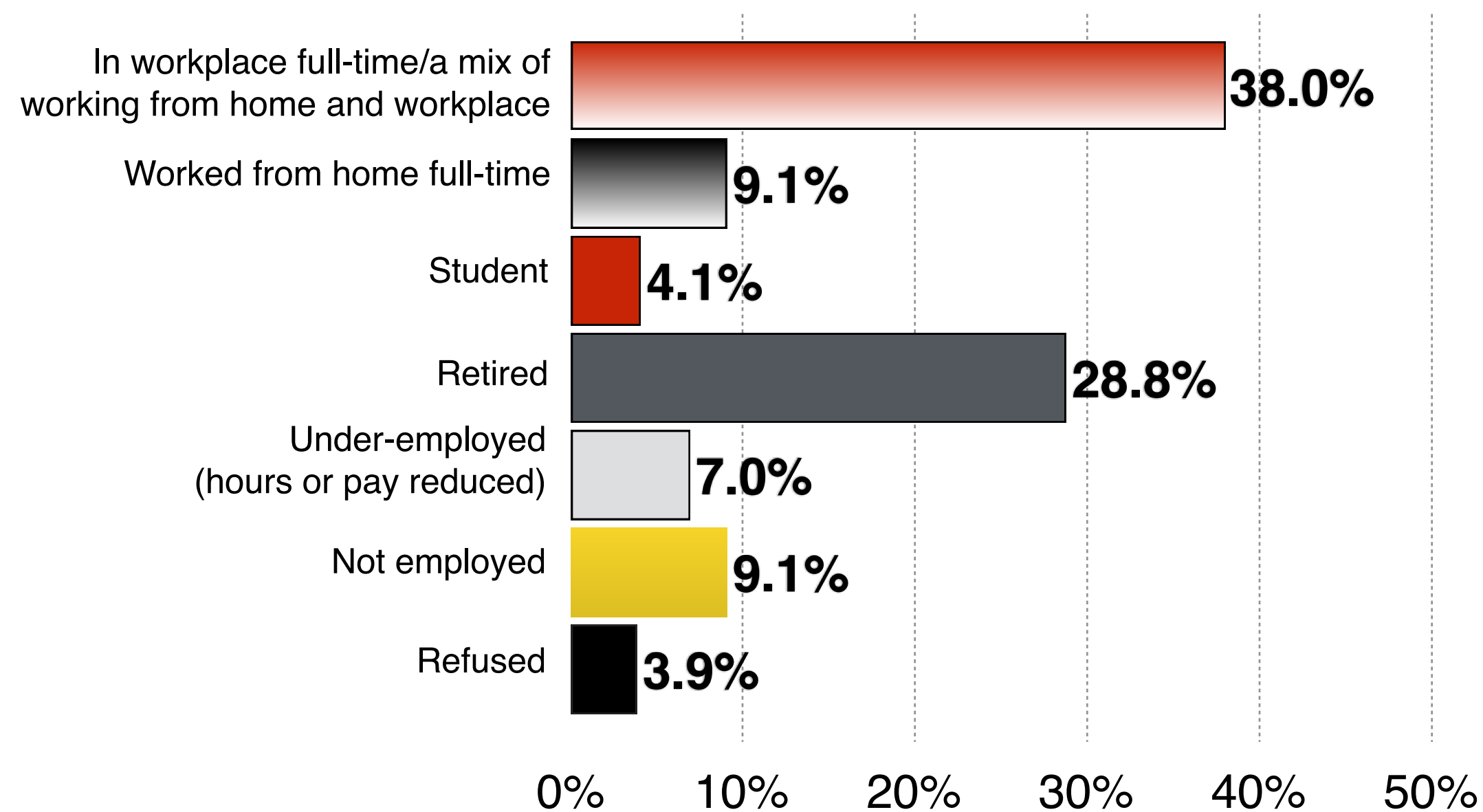
Q Why not?

Q Why are you unsure?

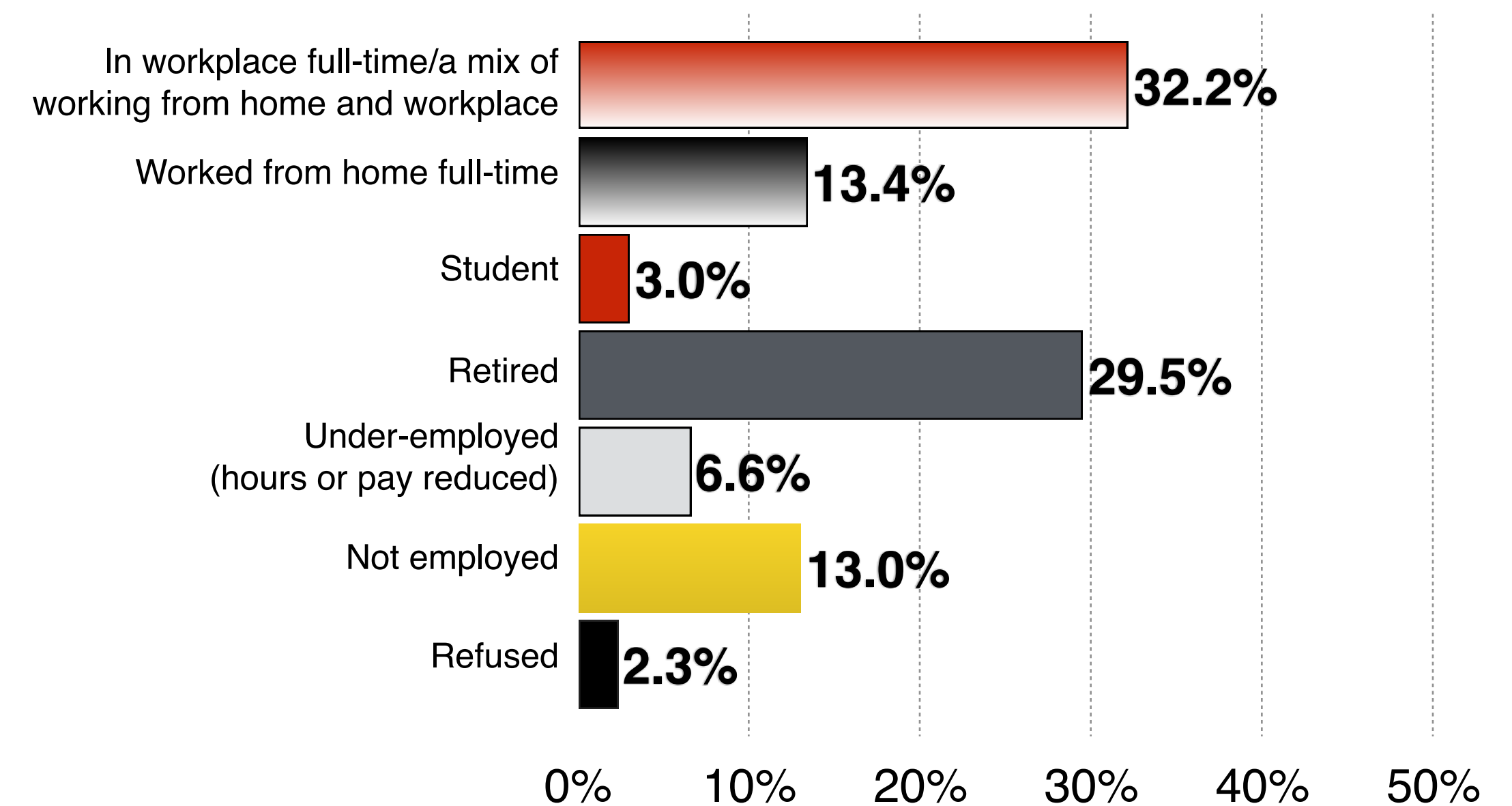
Work Situation

In October 2020, 38.0% of surveyed Connecticut residents indicated they worked at their workplace at least part-time prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, in comparison to 32.2% since the pandemic began. Since the pandemic, rates of working from home increased to 13.4% (over 9.1%), as did the rate of unemployment (13.0% over 9.1%).

- ❖ A higher frequency of female respondents (16.4%) reported they were unemployed, compared to male respondents (9.4%).
- ❖ 18.8% of respondents ages 18-34 indicated they are currently unemployed, compared to 15.4% of respondents ages 45-64.
- ❖ Income was directly correlated to current work from home rates, with respondents earning \$150,000 annually (31.3%) working from home full-time the most and those earning \$50,000 or less (8.3%) the least.



Q Which of the following best describes your employment prior to the COVID-19 pandemic?



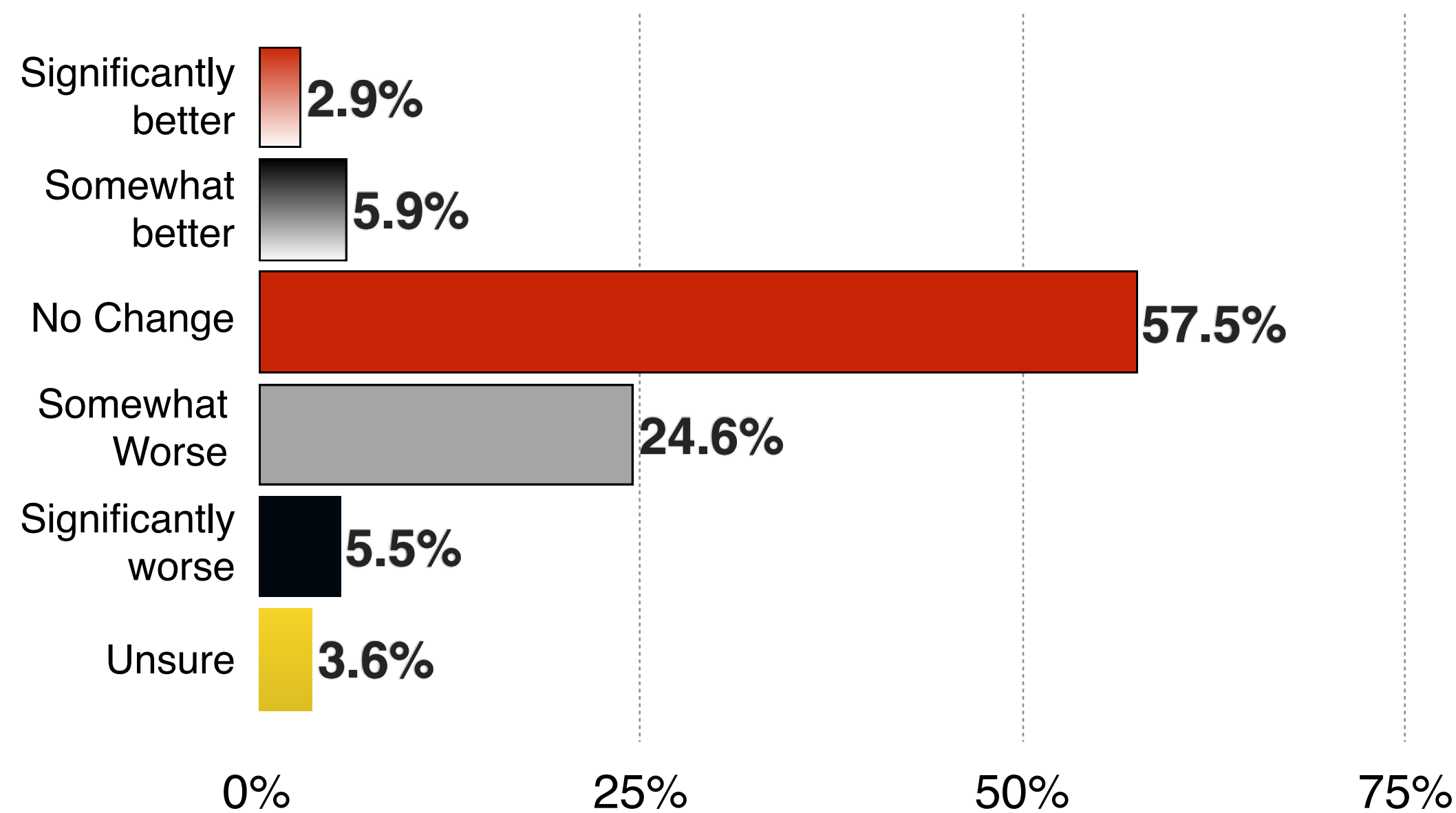
Q And, which of the following best describes your employment since the COVID-19 pandemic began?



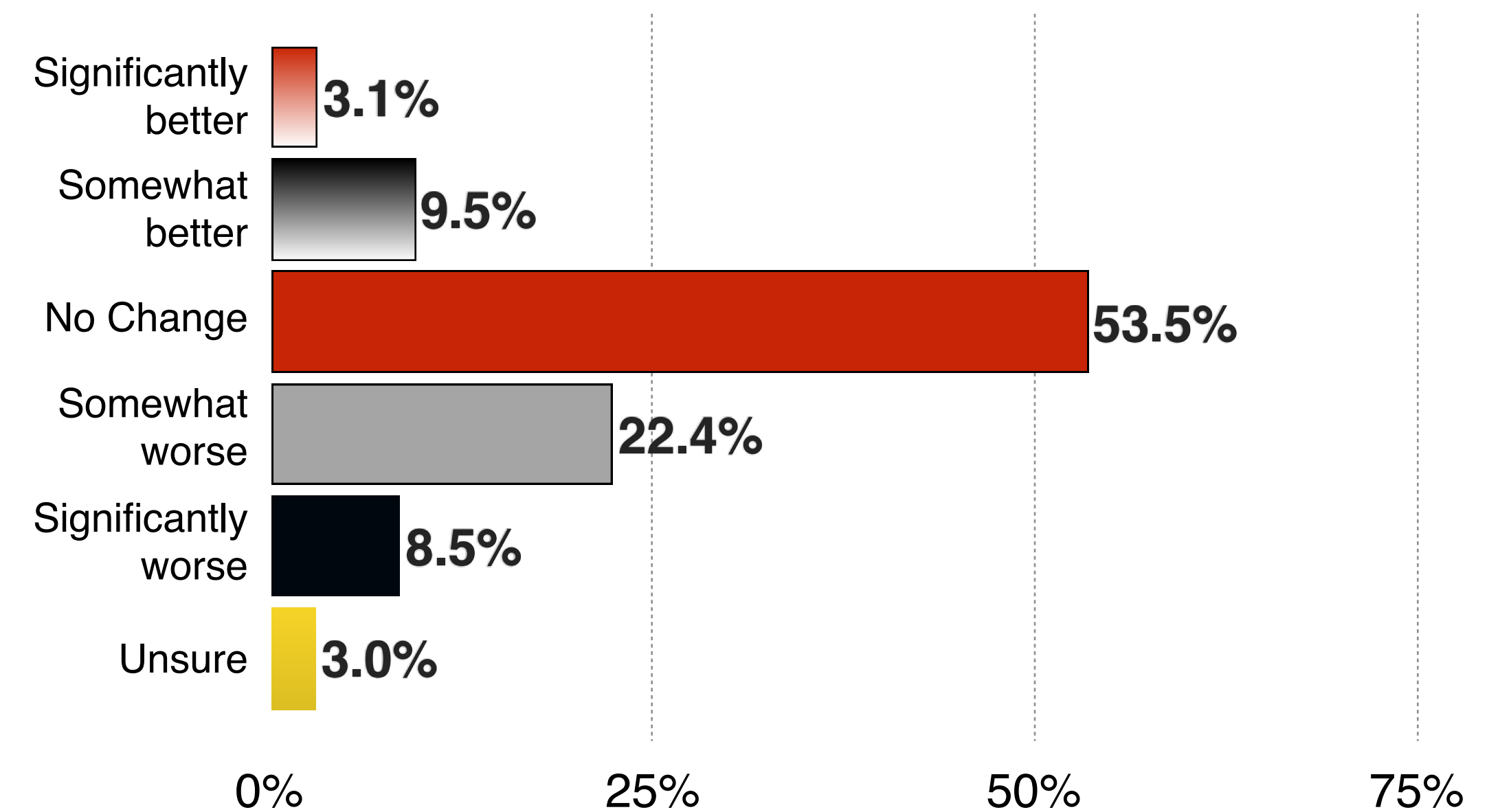
COVID-19 - Affect on Mental Health and Finances

The majority of Connecticut residents surveyed in October 2020 (57.5%) indicated "no change" to their current mental health in comparison to before the COVID-19 pandemic, while 30.1% reported it being either "somewhat worse" (24.6%) or "significantly worse" (5.5%). Similar frequencies were recorded for respondent's financial situation, with 53.5% reporting "no change" and 30.9% indicating their financial situation is either "somewhat worse" (22.4%) or "significantly worse" (8.5%) in comparison to before the pandemic.

- ❖ A higher frequency of female respondents (36.9%) reported their mental health in comparison to before the pandemic was "somewhat worse" (30.3%) or "significantly worse" (6.3%), compared to 23.4% of male respondents.
- ❖ 36.7% of respondents ages 35-44 indicated their mental health in comparison to before the pandemic was "somewhat worse" (32.4%) or "significantly worse" (4.3%) compared to 25.1% of those ages 65 or older.
- ❖ A higher frequency of respondents earning less than \$50,000 annually, 46.6%, reported their financial situation is "somewhat worse" (28.9%) or "significantly worse" (17.7%) in comparison to before the pandemic.



Q How would you describe your current mental health in comparison to before the COVID-19 pandemic?



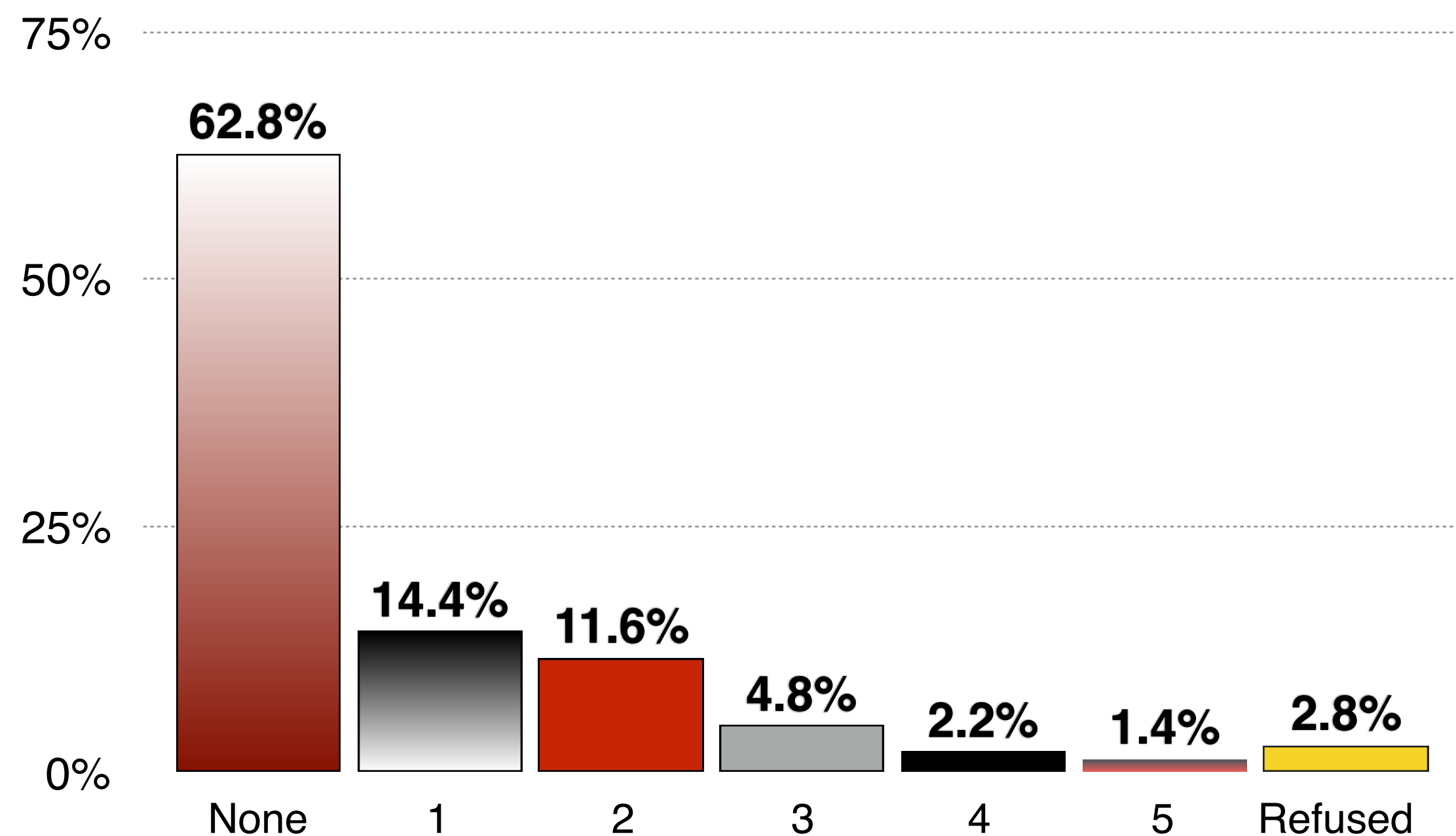
Q How would you describe your current financial situation in comparison to before the COVID-19 pandemic?



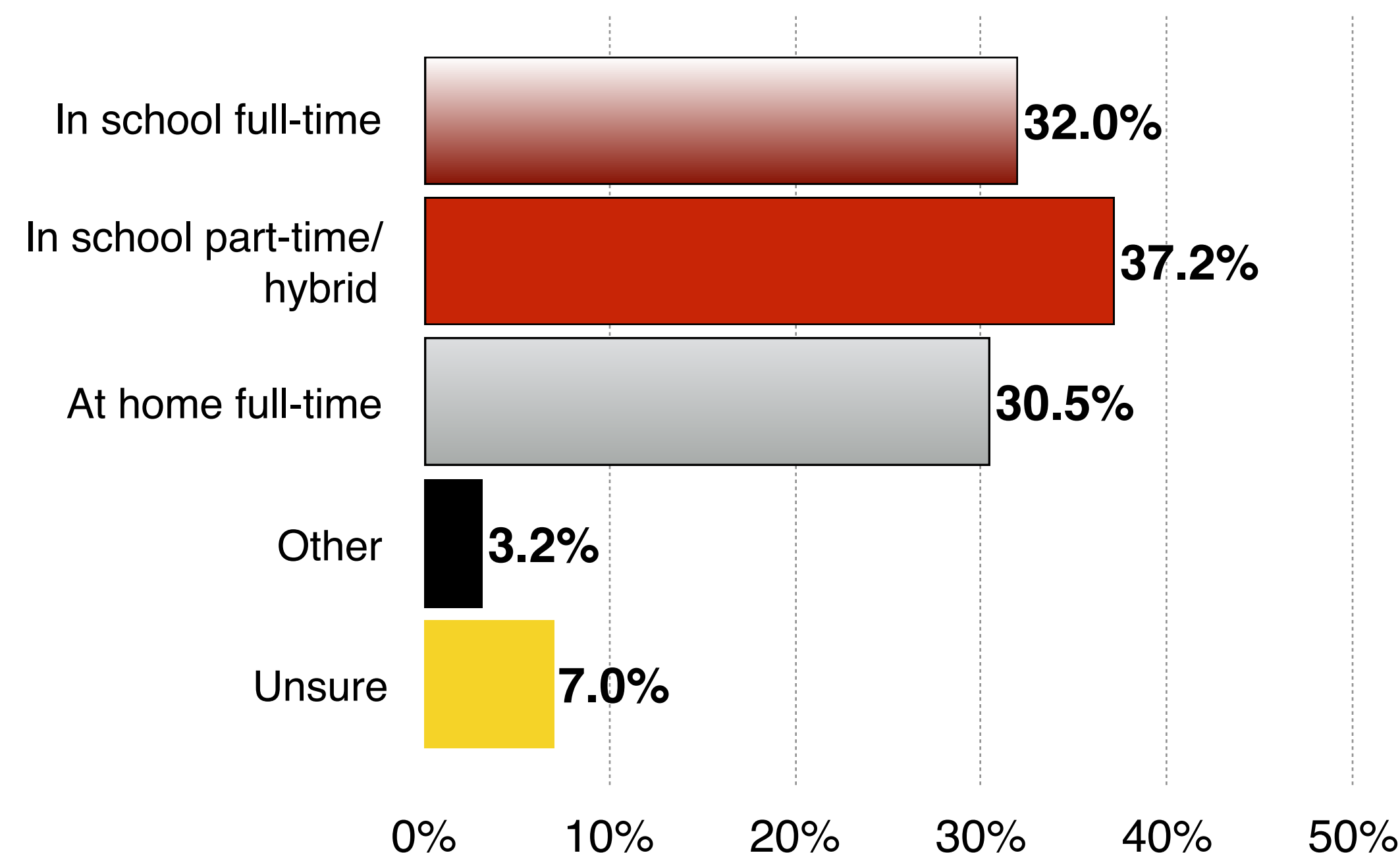
Educational Environment

In October 2020, more than three-fifths of surveyed Connecticut residents, 62.8%, reported no one in their household is currently in school. Of the 34.4% who indicated at least one individual in their household was in school, 37.2% described the individuals' educational environment as "in school part-time/hybrid," while 32.0% indicated "in school full-time" and 30.5% indicated "at home full-time."

- ❖ Respondents in Fairfield (25.0%) and Hartford (27.0%) counties were least likely to described the educational environment as "at home full-time."
- ❖ 23.5% of respondents earning under \$50,000 per year described the educational environment as "in school full-time," compared to 40.7% of those earning \$150,000 or more.



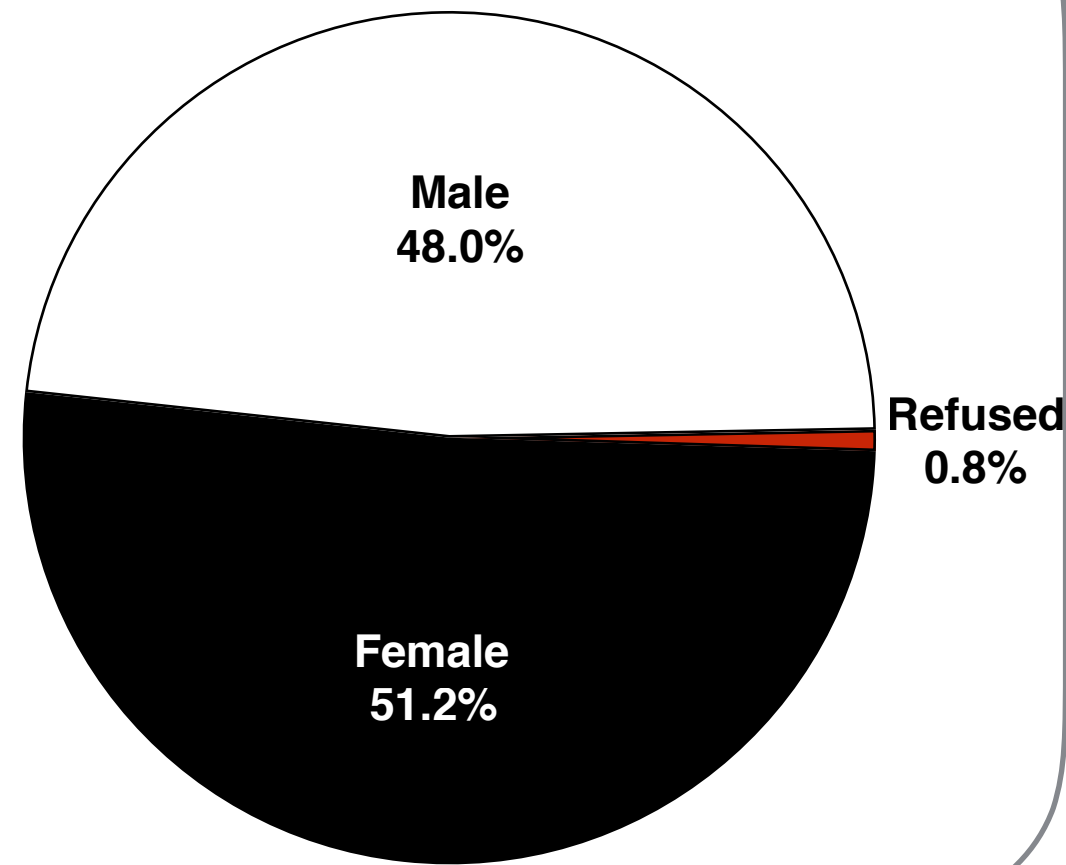
Q How many individuals in your household are currently in school?



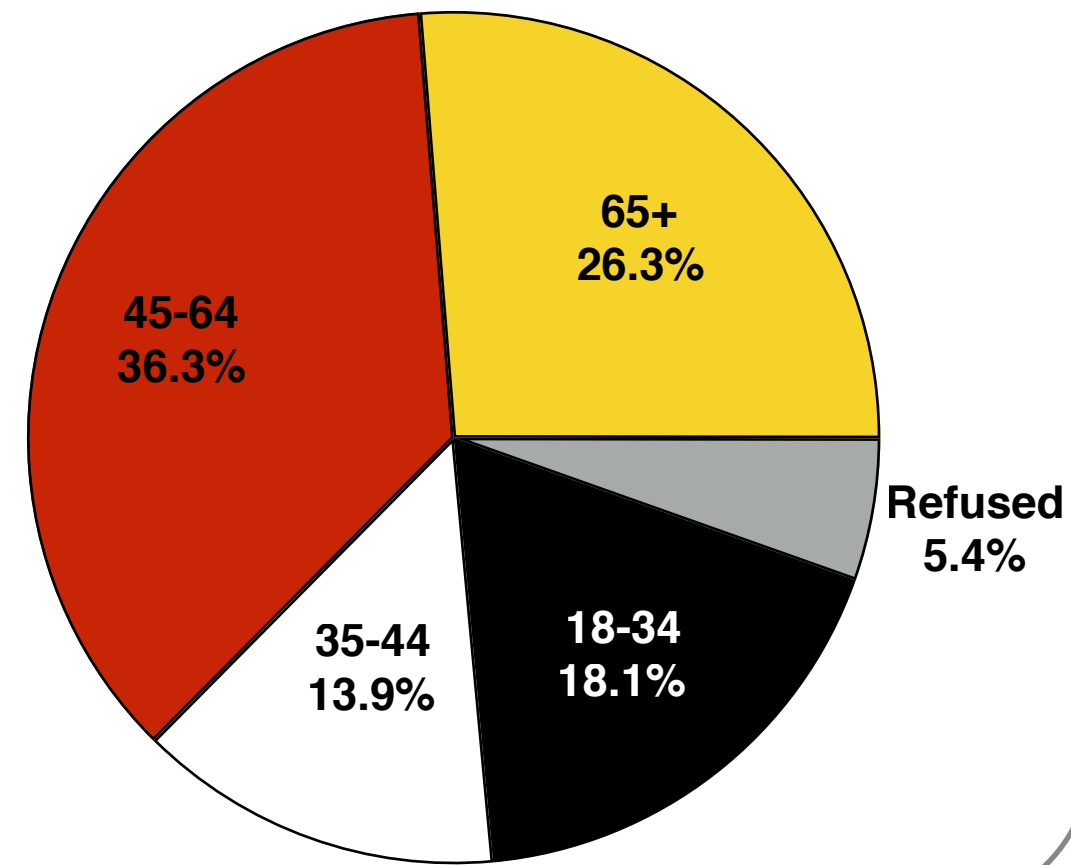
Q And which of the following best describes their current educational environment?

Demographic Profile - October 2020

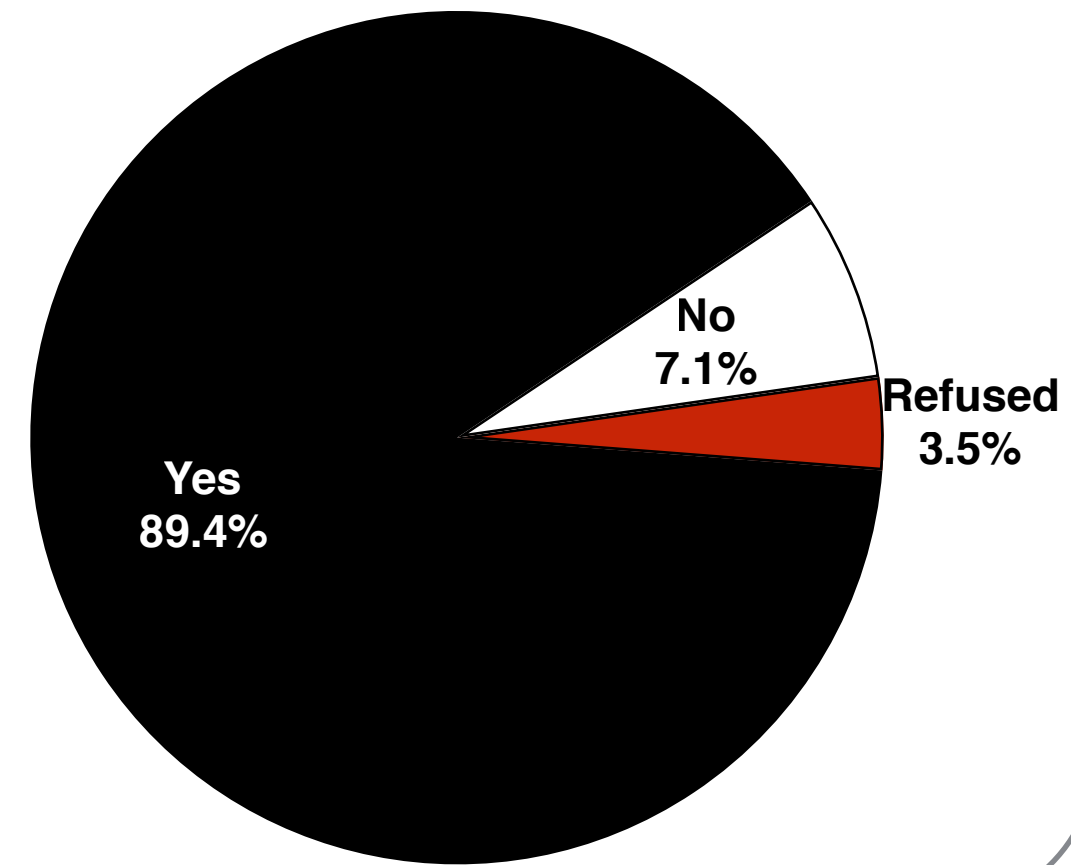
Gender



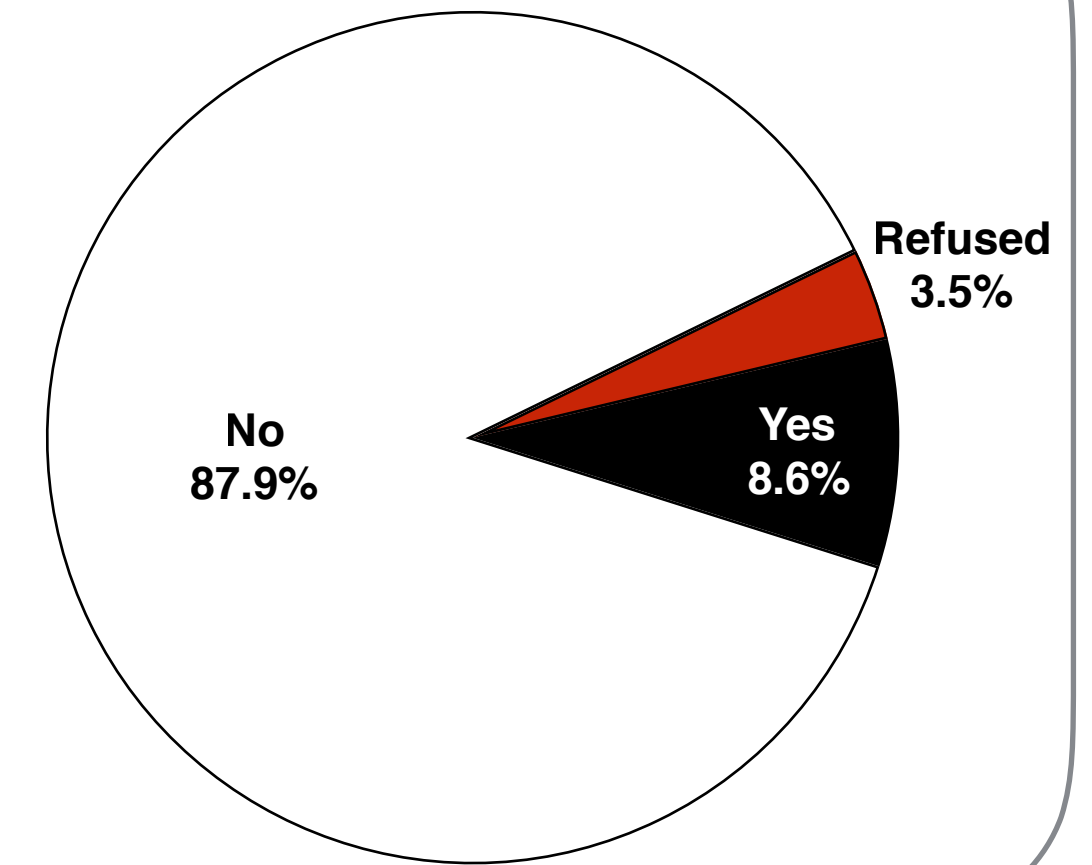
Age



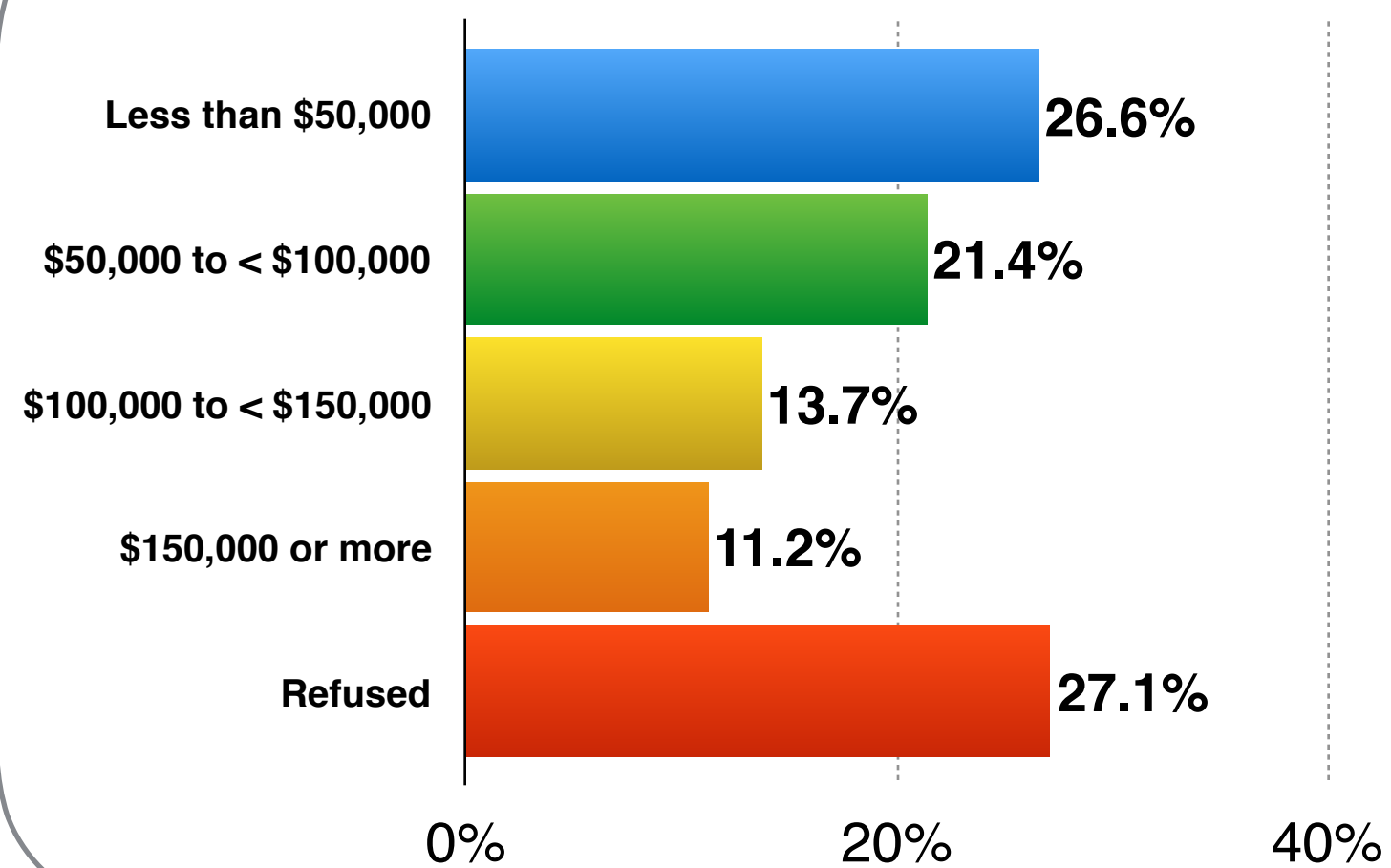
Registered to vote?



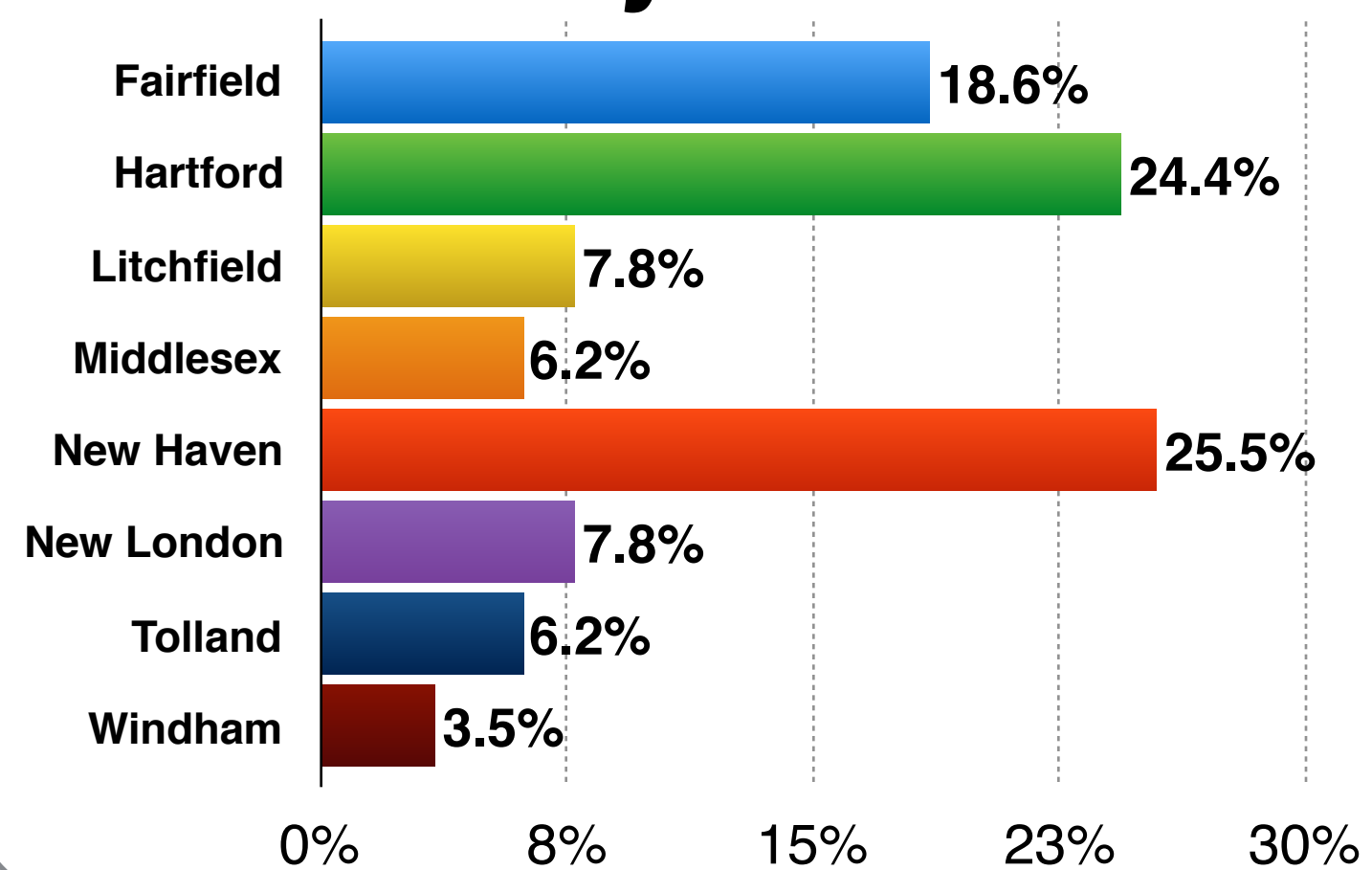
Hispanic/Latin Origin?



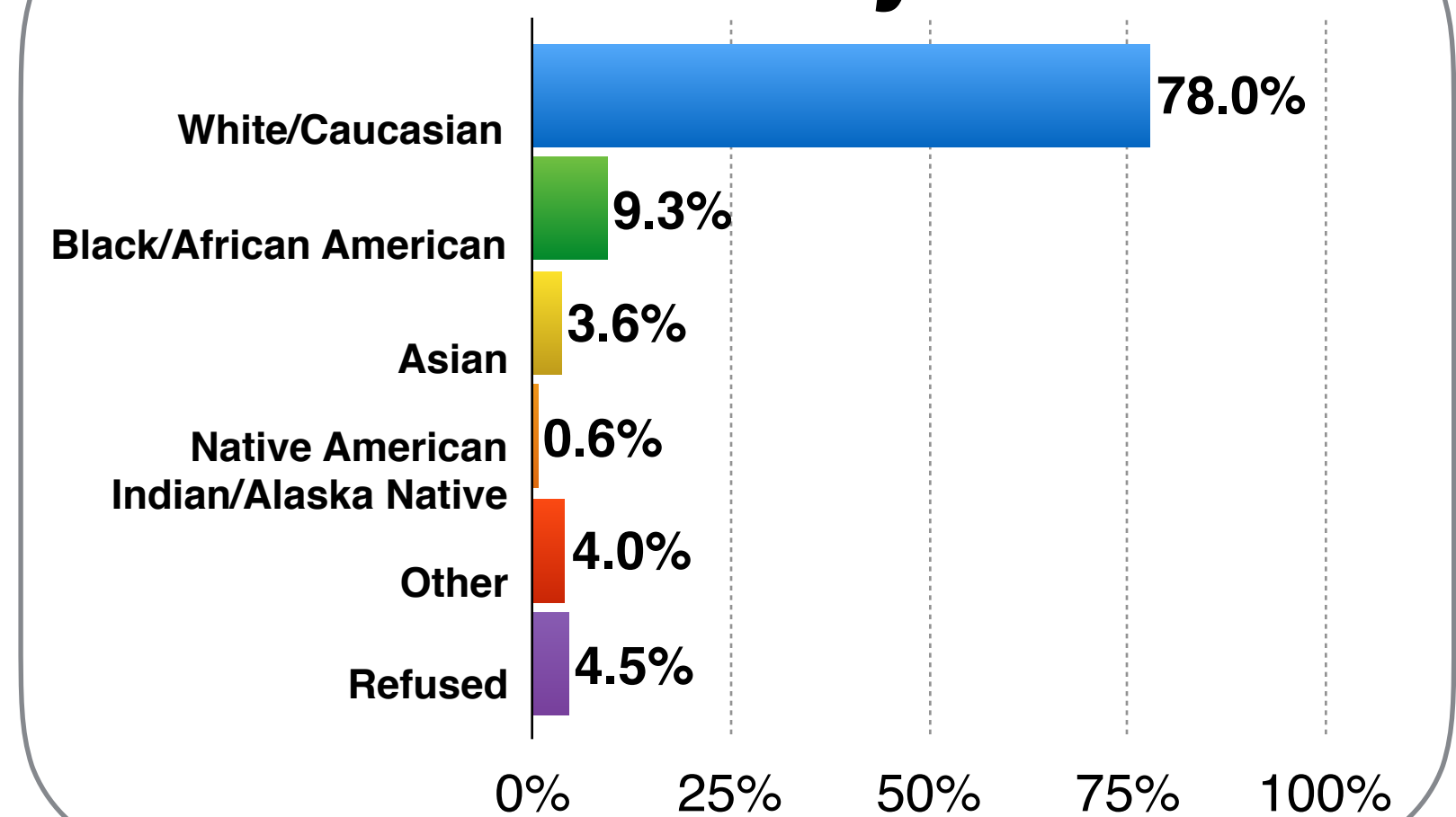
Income




County of Residence



Ethnicity





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