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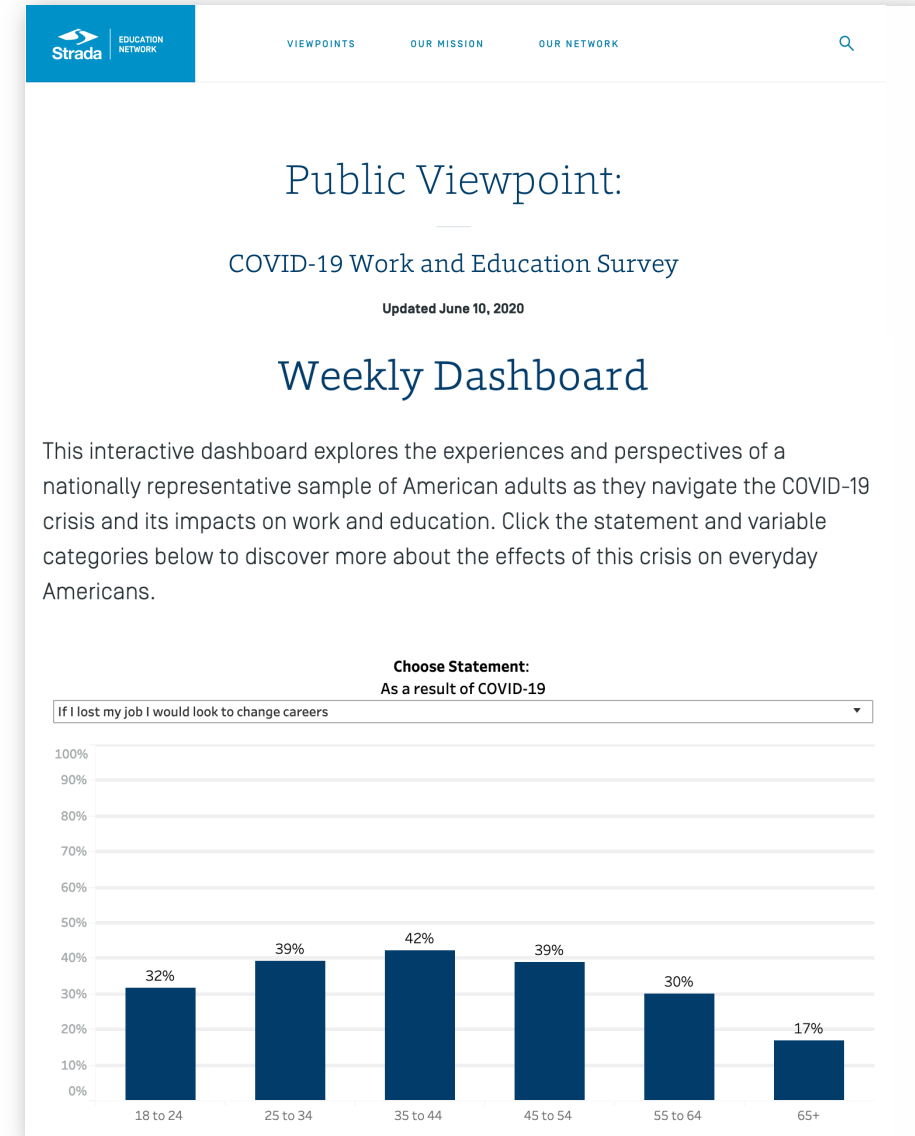
# Public Viewpoint: COVID-19 Work and Education Survey

Back to School: Perspectives From the American Public

Aug. 12, 2020

# Public Viewpoint

- A weekly survey of 1,000 American adults that is representative of the population by age, gender, educational attainment, race/ethnicity, and nine geographic census regions
- 15,000+ responses from March 25 to Aug. 6
- Weekly surveys, March 25-May 28
- Biweekly surveys, June-October



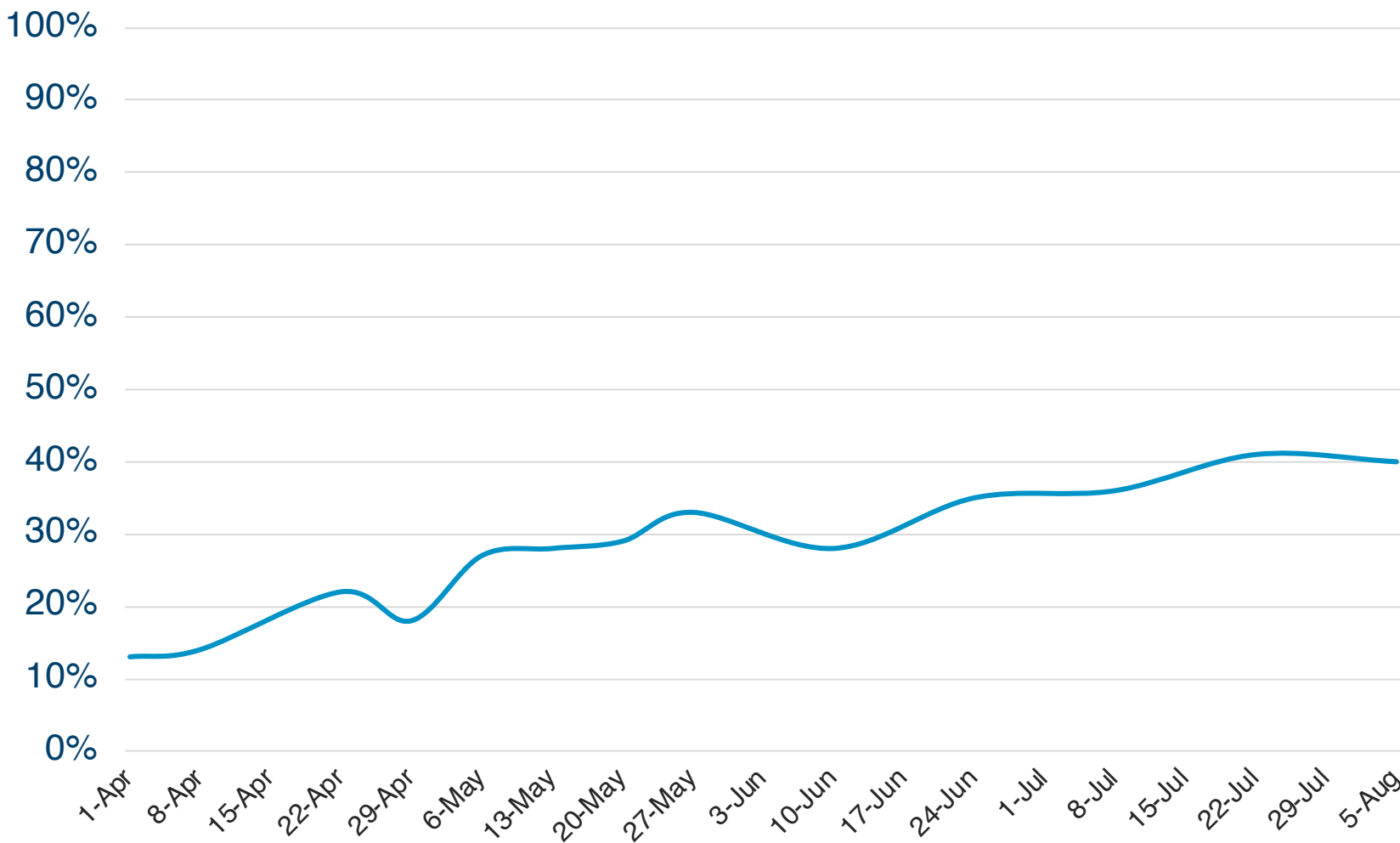
# Key questions

1. After five months, how is the American public weathering the storm?
2. What is the role and status of education at this back-to-school crossroads?
3. What do students and the public expect from education this fall?

# Tracking the pandemic's many curves

# Americans increasingly expect the impact of COVID-19 to be long-term

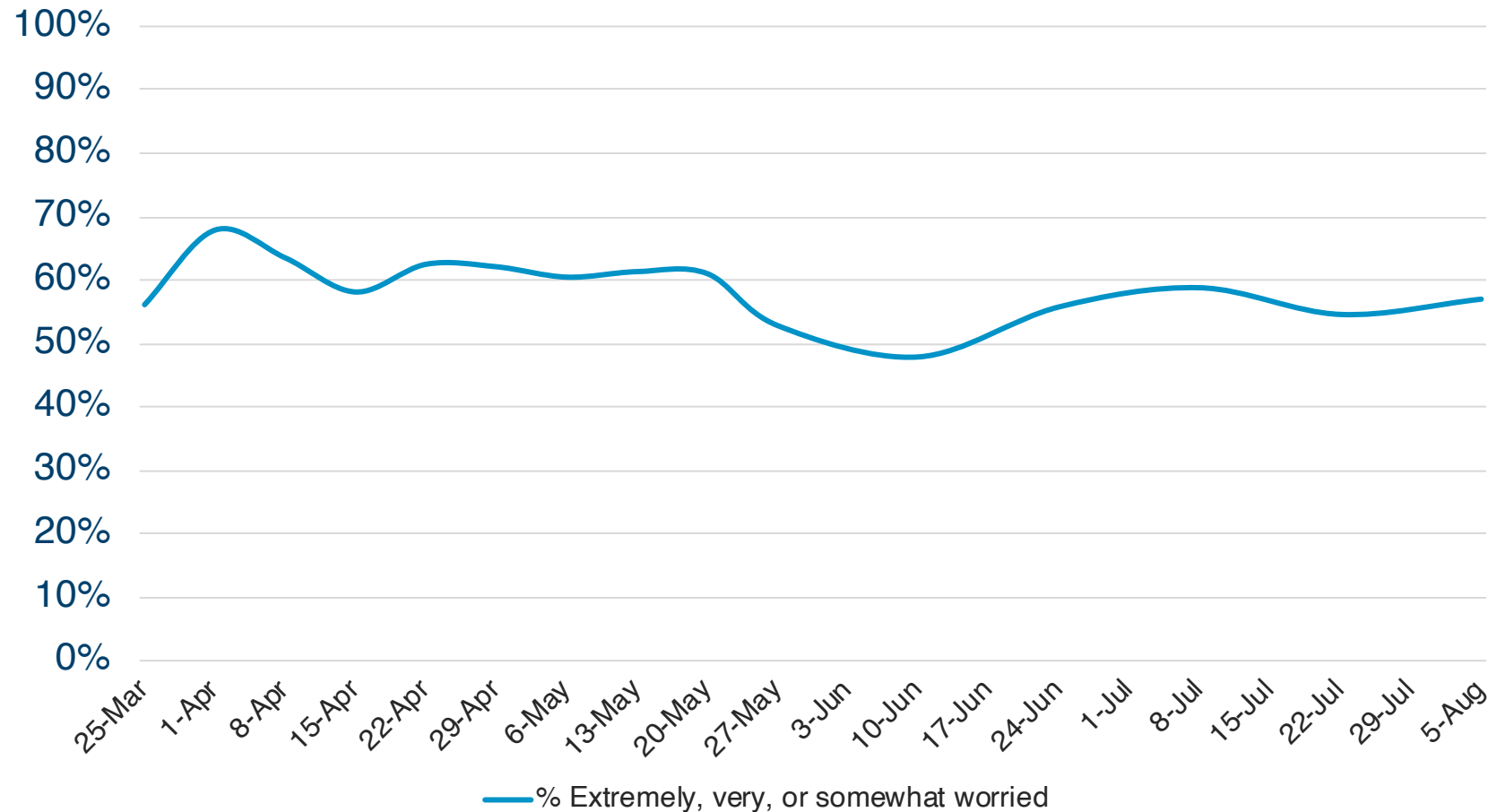
How long do you think the impact of coronavirus will be to you personally?  
(% More than 1 year)



Strada Center for Consumer Insights Public Viewpoint survey, March 25-August 5. Base: adults ages 18 and older, n=13,084.

# More than half of employed workers are still worried about losing their jobs

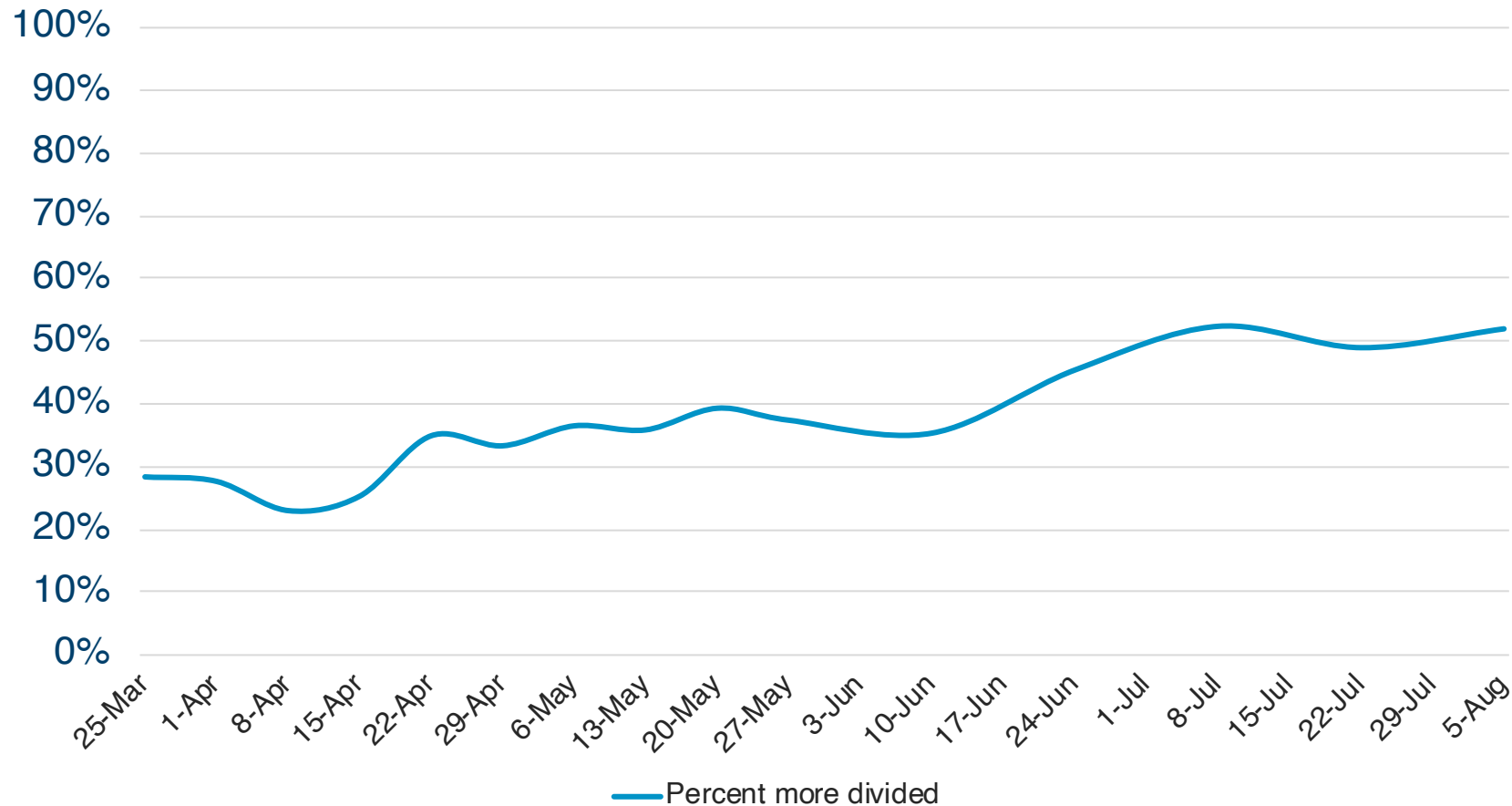
How worried are you that you may lose your job as a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19) events, or are you not at all worried?



Strada Center for Consumer Insights Public Viewpoint survey, March 25-August 5. Base: employed adults ages 18 and older, n=9,299.

# Americans increasingly believe the country is becoming more divided

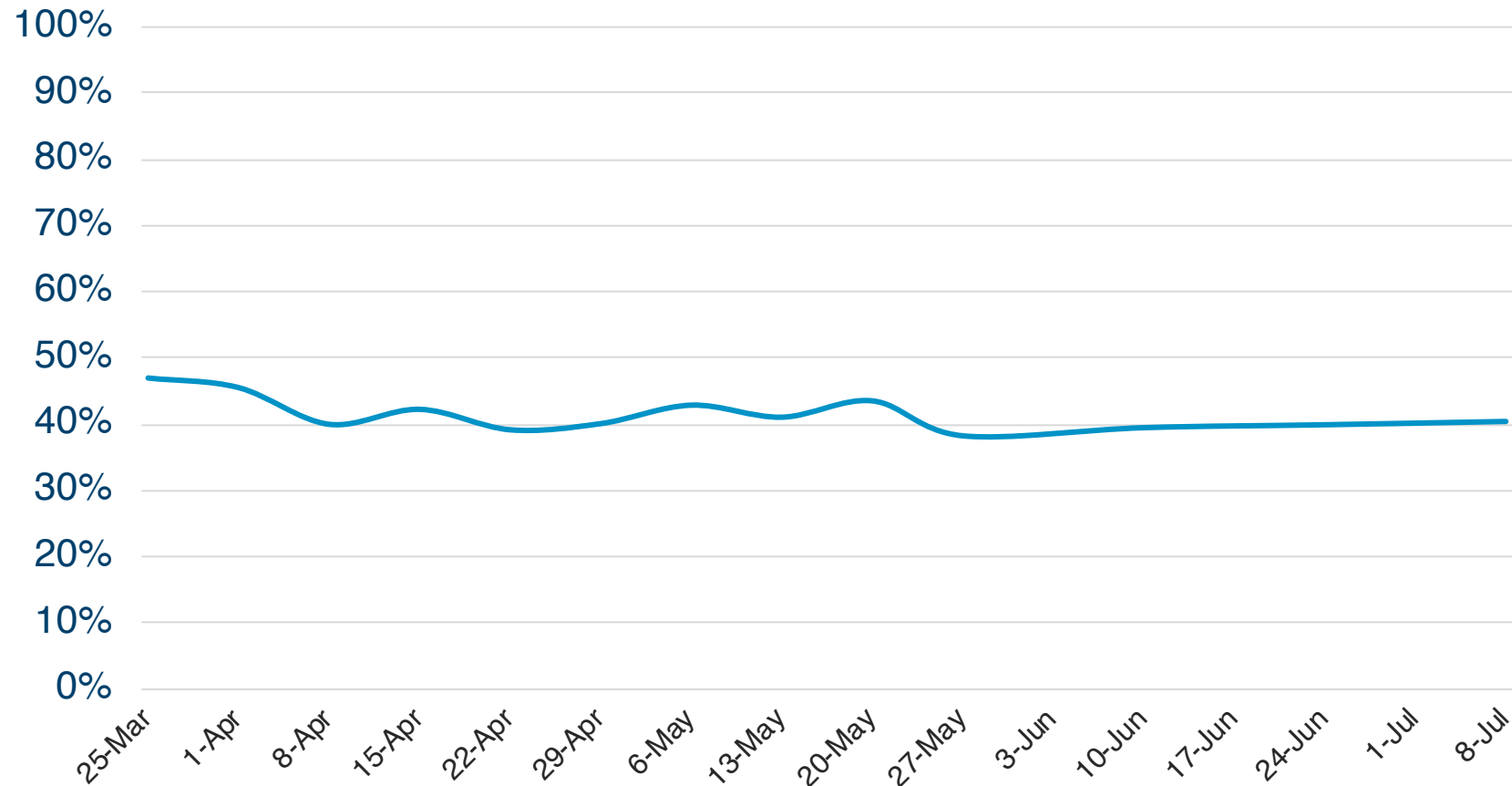
Overall, would you say the outbreak of the coronavirus is bringing our communities and the people in our country closer together and making us more unified, or is it driving us further apart and making us more divided?



Strada Center for Consumer Insights Public Viewpoint survey, March 25-August 5. Base: adults ages 18 and older, n=15,106.

# 4 in 10 Americans are concerned about the impact of the pandemic on their mental health

What effect do you think the coronavirus outbreak will have on the following parts of your life?  
Mental health. (% very negative or somewhat negative.)



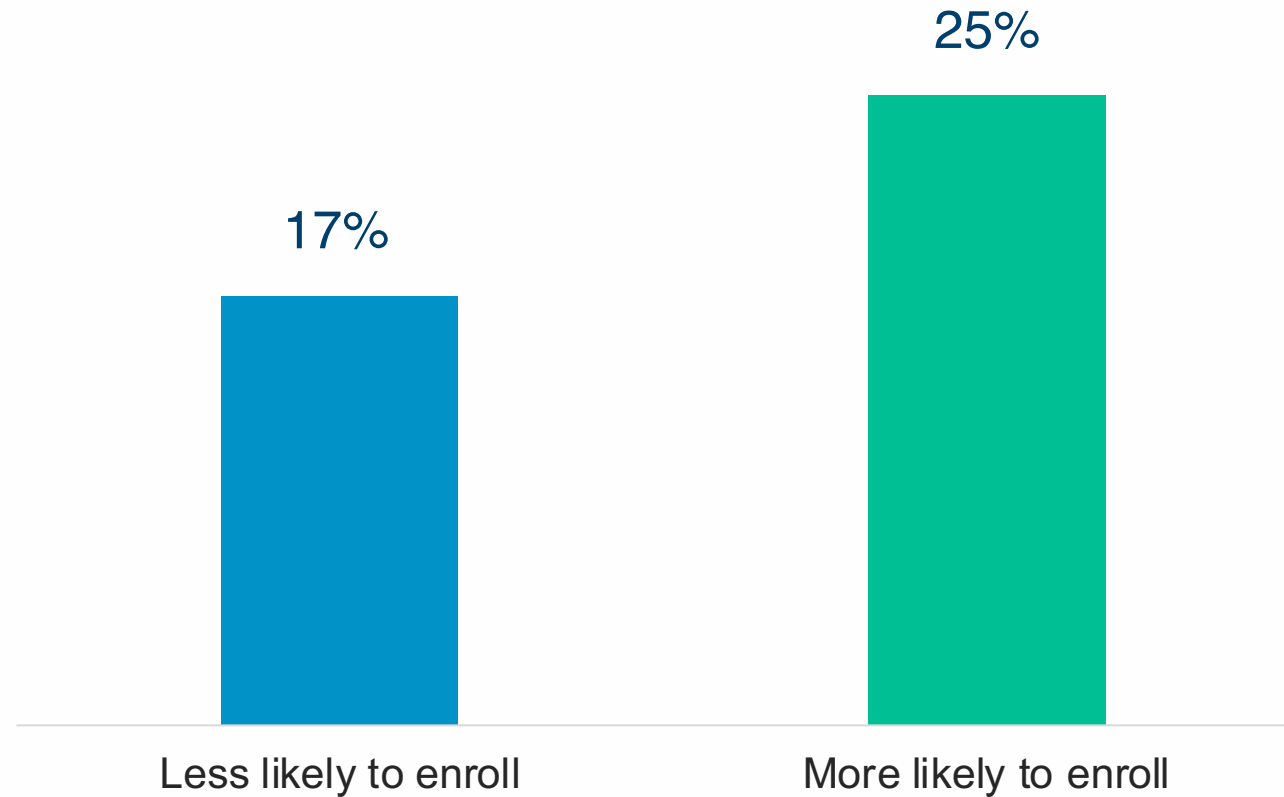
Strada Center for Consumer Insights Public Viewpoint survey, March 25-July 8. Base: adults ages 18 and older, n=13,082.



Education today

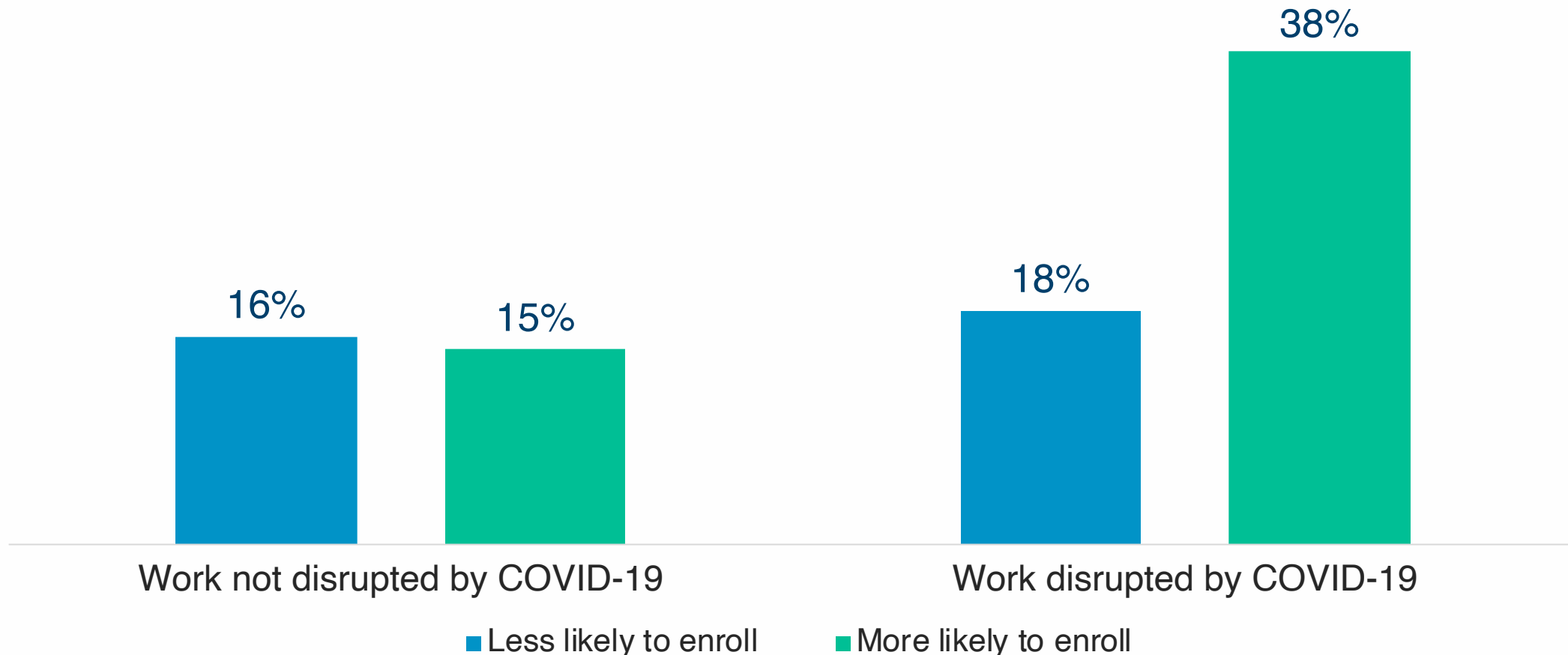
# COVID-19 has increased interest in education

How has the coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis affected your interest in enrolling in an education or training program? Would you say you are:



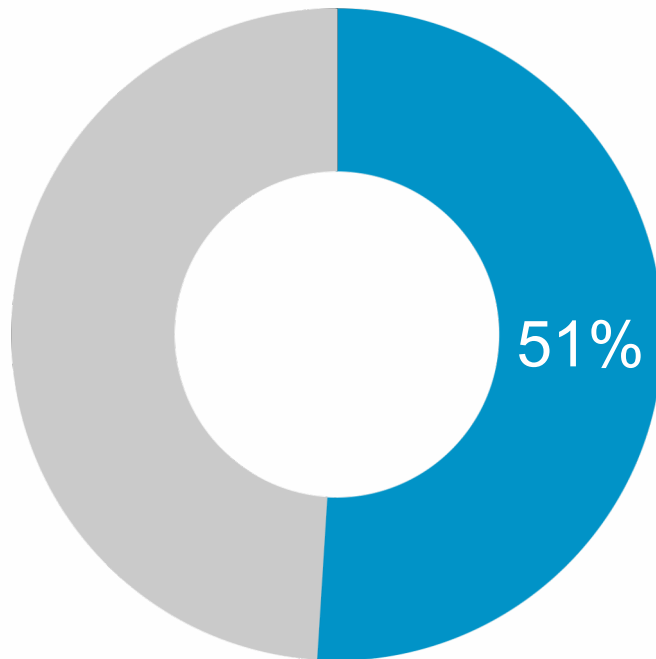
# Americans whose work income was disrupted by the pandemic express greater interest in education

How has the coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis affected your interest in enrolling in an education or training program? Would you say you are:

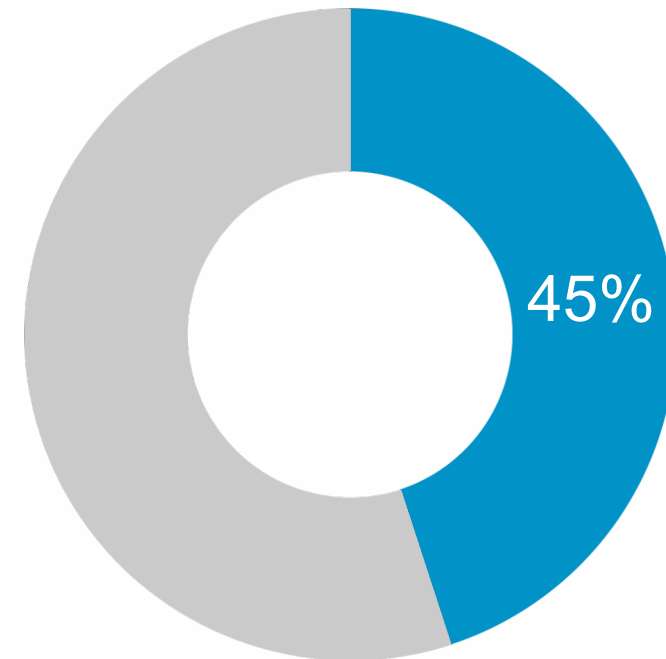


# Disrupted workers are split on the value of education and training

Pursuing more education or training  
would help me get a good job



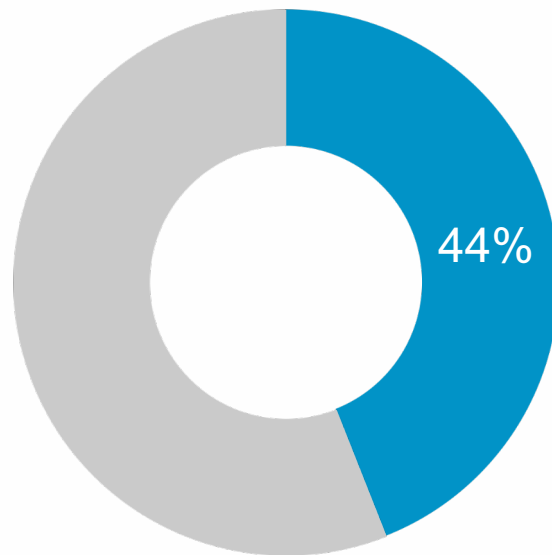
Getting more education or training  
would be worth the cost



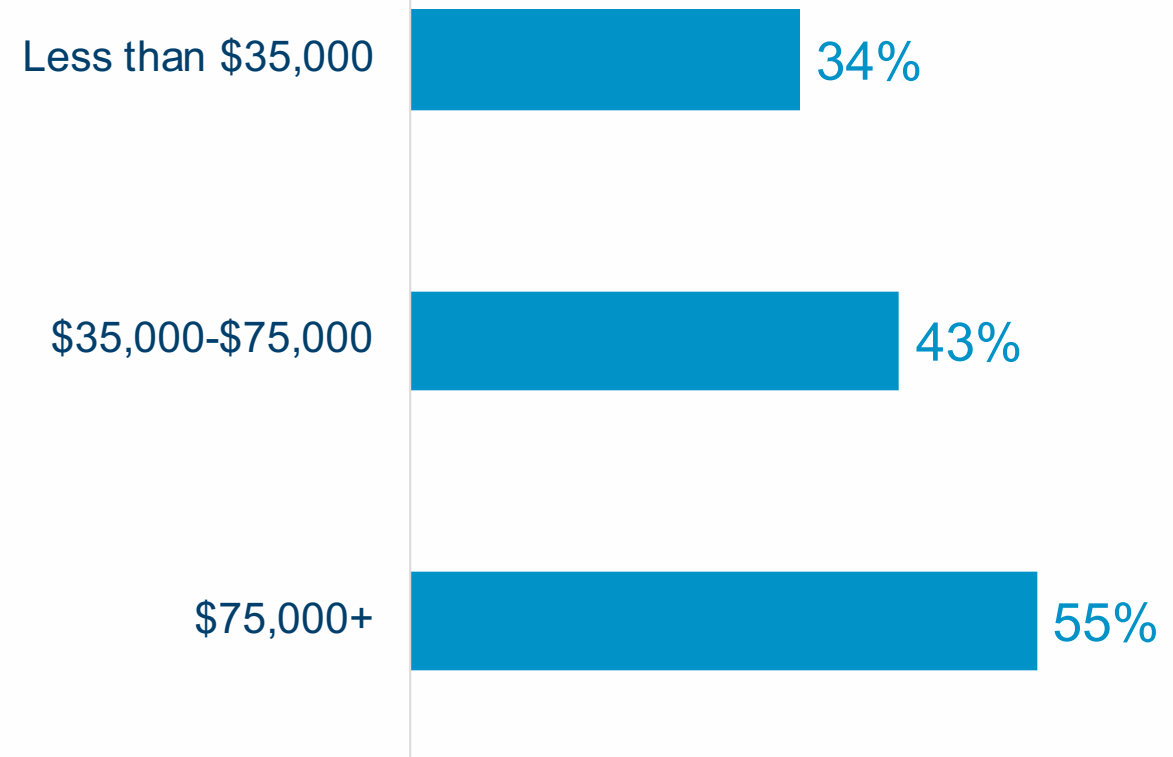
# Fewer than half of disrupted workers feel they can access desired education or training

I can access the education or training I want. (% strongly agree or agree.)

All disrupted workers



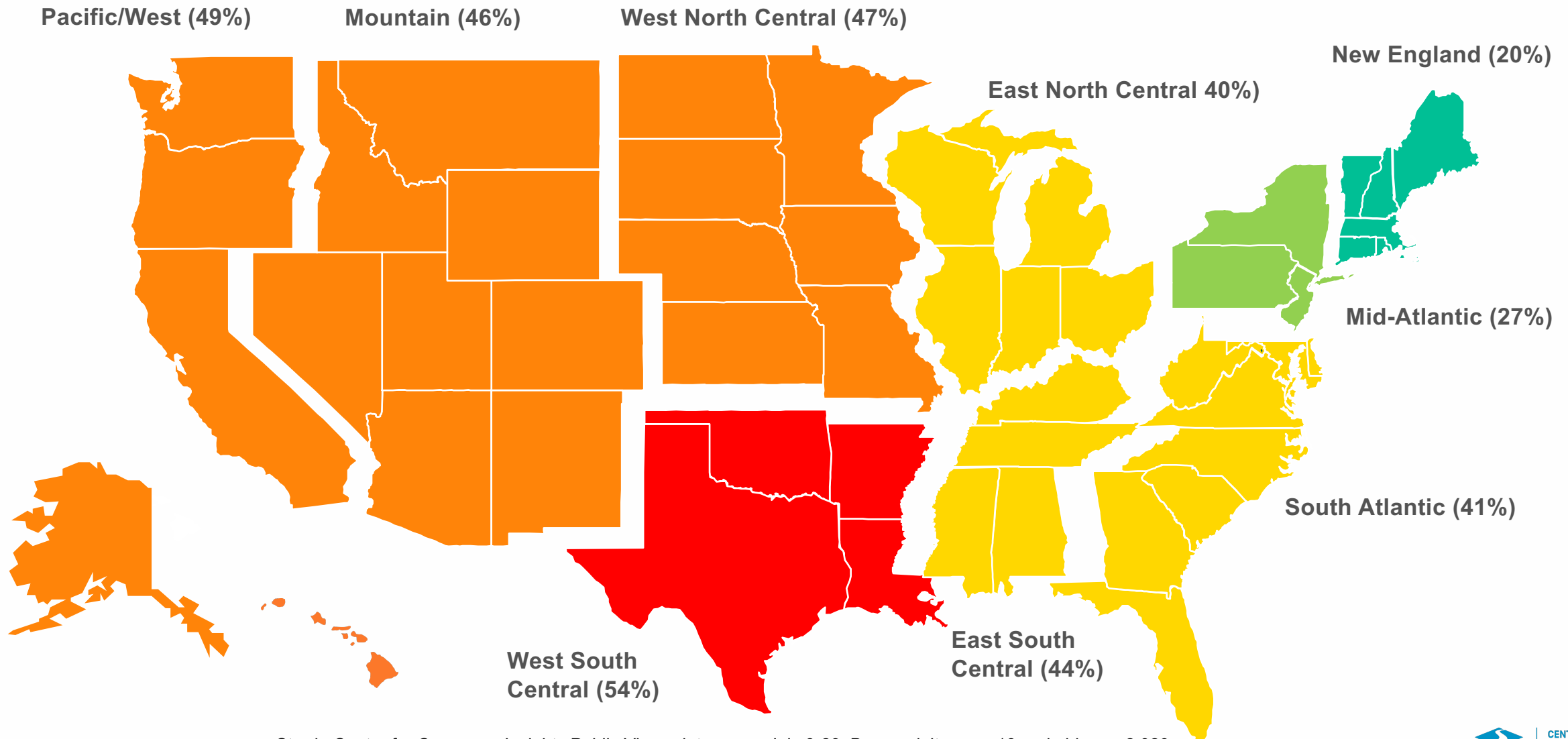
Disrupted workers by household income



Past as prologue?

# Americans in the South and West think a second shutdown is likely

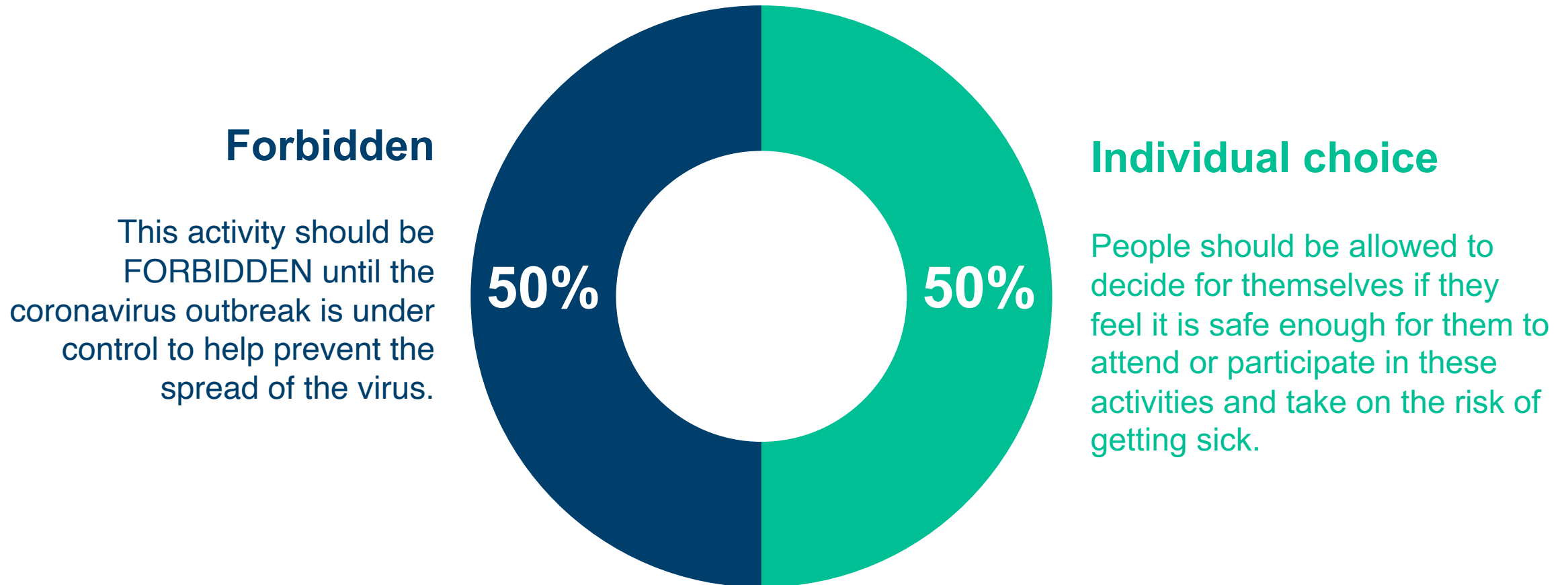
How likely do you think it is that your state will see a spike in coronavirus cases that leads to a second shelter-in-place or stay-at-home order? (% extremely or very likely)



Strada Center for Consumer Insights Public Viewpoint survey, July 8-23. Base: adults ages 18 and older, n=2,029.

# Americans are divided about whether people should be allowed to attend college classes in person

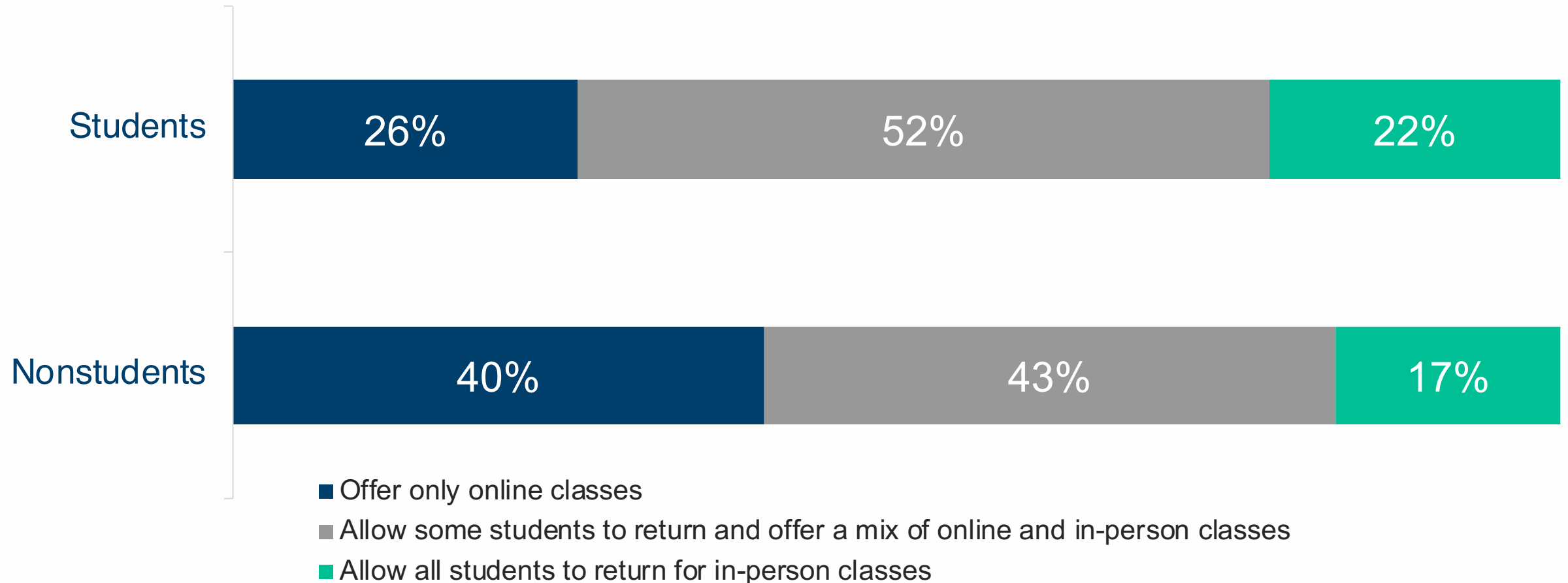
Should people be able to **attend college classes in person**?





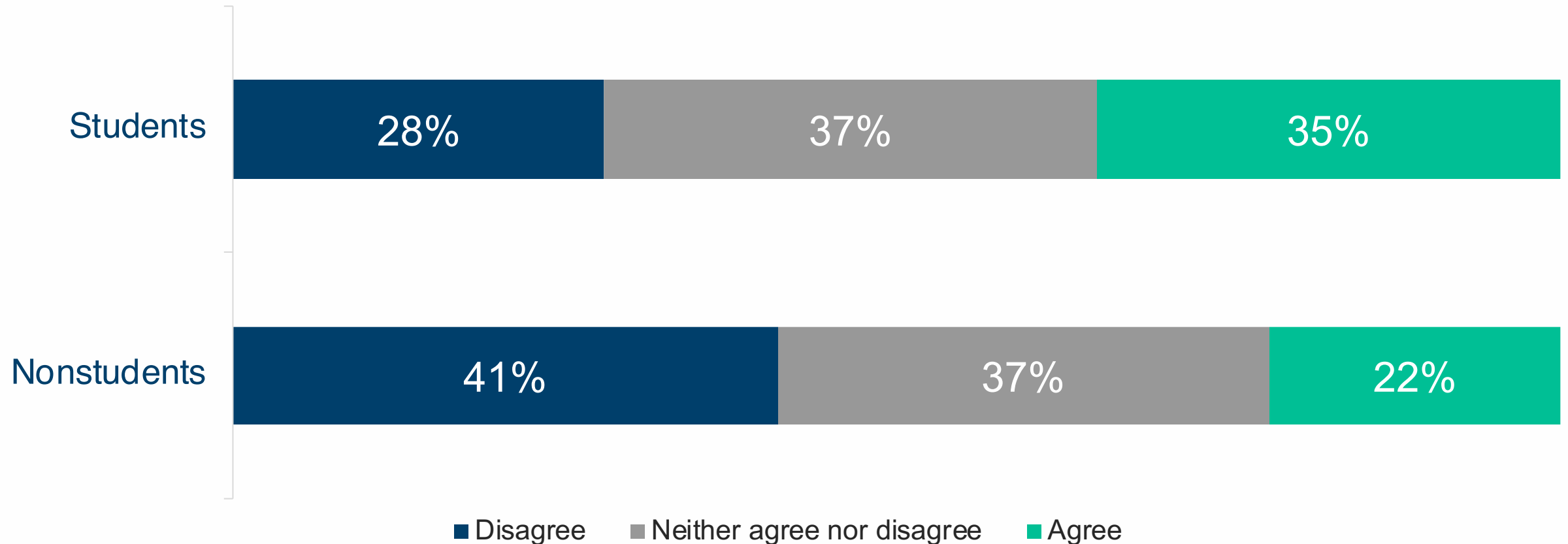
# The American public is more wary of in-person classes than students are

This fall, campuses should:



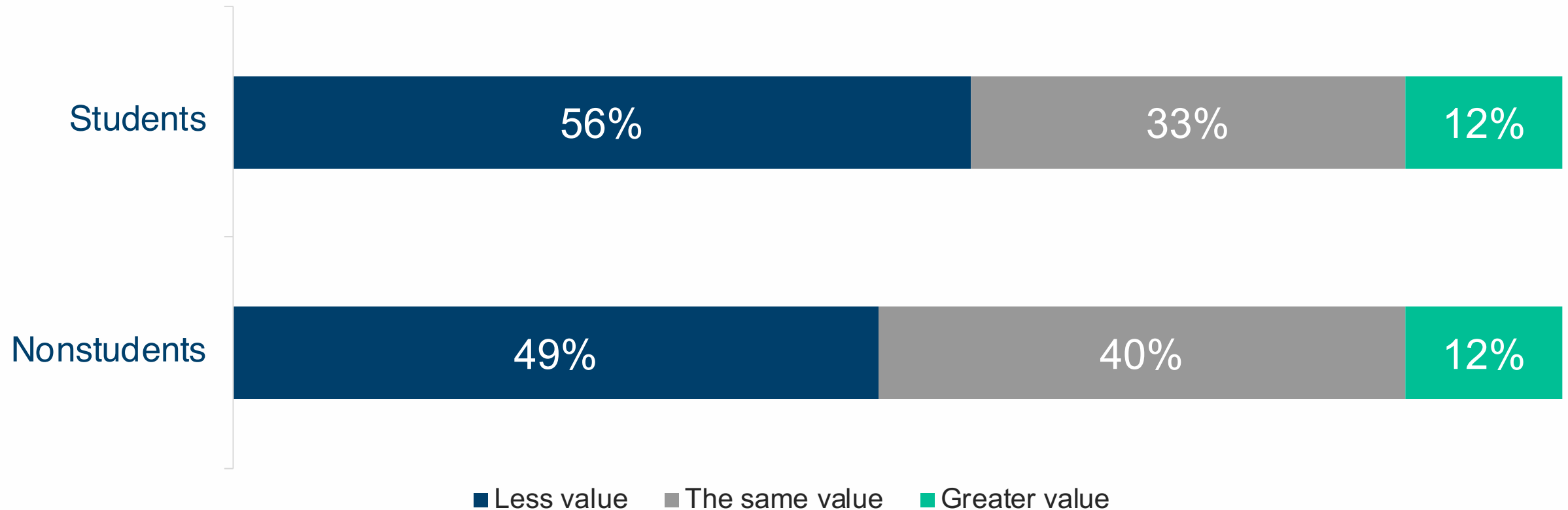
# The American public is more skeptical than students that universities will be able to keep campuses open this fall

Colleges and universities will be able to complete their fall 2020 courses without interruption or needing to shut down and evacuate campus.



# The majority of current students say the education provided in fall 2020 will be less valuable

Thinking about the education and training that will be provided by colleges and universities this fall 2020 semester compared to fall 2019, how would you rate the value of fall 2020?



# Key findings

- 1. The enduring nature of the COVID-19 crisis is weighing heavily on many dimensions of our lives.** Americans are now three times more likely to believe COVID-19's impact will last over a year than they were in April. The majority of employed workers remain worried they will lose their jobs. The sense of division in our nation has doubled, and concerns about personal mental health are widespread.
- 2. Workers who have lost a job or income because of the pandemic are driving an overall increase in Americans' interest in education.** Thirty-eight percent of these affected workers report they are more likely to enroll in additional education or training as a result of COVID-19, compared to 15 percent of those whose work has not been affected.
- 3. While interest in education is up, significant concerns about value and access remain.** Only about half of displaced workers are confident that education would lead to a good job or be worth the cost, and only one-third of low-income workers say they have access to the education and training they want.
- 4. The American public is divided about colleges offering in-person classes in the fall.** Half of the public believes people should be forbidden from attending college classes in person until the virus is under control, 4 in 10 adults not enrolled in education programs also believe that colleges should offer only online courses in the fall and that universities will not be able to complete fall semester without shutting down.
- 5. Over half of students feel the value of their education will be lower this fall than what was provided a year ago.** Students have stronger preferences for opportunities to learn in person than the nonstudent public and 56% of them believe the value of the education provided this fall will be reduced.

Learn more at  
[StradaEducation.org/PublicViewpoint](https://StradaEducation.org/PublicViewpoint)  
or email  
[consumervoice@stradaeducation.org](mailto:consumervoice@stradaeducation.org)

# Methodology

- Public Viewpoint is a regular tracking survey of education consumers' perceptions of COVID-19's impact on postsecondary education and work in the United States, completed by Heart+Mind Strategies on behalf of Strada Center for Consumer Insights.
  - Online survey of Americans ages 18 and above.
  - Representative of the general population in age, gender, geographic region, educational attainment, and race/ethnicity.
  - Current database size from March 25 to August 6: n = 15,106.
  - A theoretical margin of error based on a probability sample of size 1,000 would be +/- 3.1 percent at 95 percent confidence. This is not a probability-based sample, and a margin of error cannot be estimated. Based on experience, we believe the sampling error would be at least this number.
- Please contact Strada Center for Consumer Insights with questions or information requests at [consumervoice@stradaeducation.org](mailto:consumervoice@stradaeducation.org) or learn more at [StradaEducation.org/PublicViewpoint](https://StradaEducation.org/PublicViewpoint).