



CENTER FOR
CONSUMER
INSIGHTS

Public Viewpoint: COVID-19 Work and Education Survey

Enrolling in Education: Motivations, Barriers, and Expectations

July 15, 2020

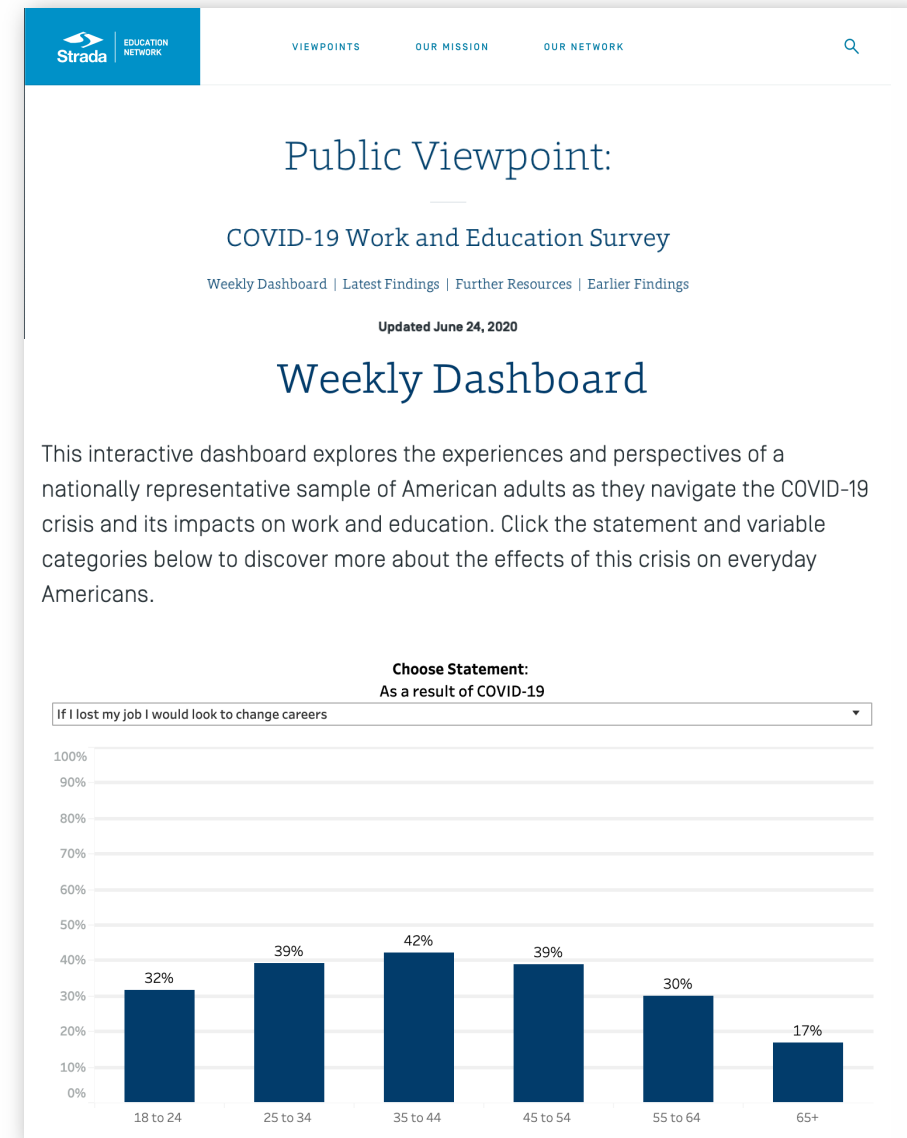
Public Viewpoint

A regular survey of 1,000 American adults that is representative of the population on the basis of:

- Age
- Gender
- Educational attainment
- Race/ethnicity
- Nine geographic census regions
- 13,000+ responses from March 25-July 9

Other survey research incorporated in findings:

- Strada-Gallup Education Consumer Survey
 - 10,000+ responses from March 30-May 28
- Aspiring Adult Learner Survey
 - 1,007 responses from August-September 2019



Key topics from prior weeks

Work Impact of COVID-19

Education Disruption

Disproportionate Impact on
Communities of Color

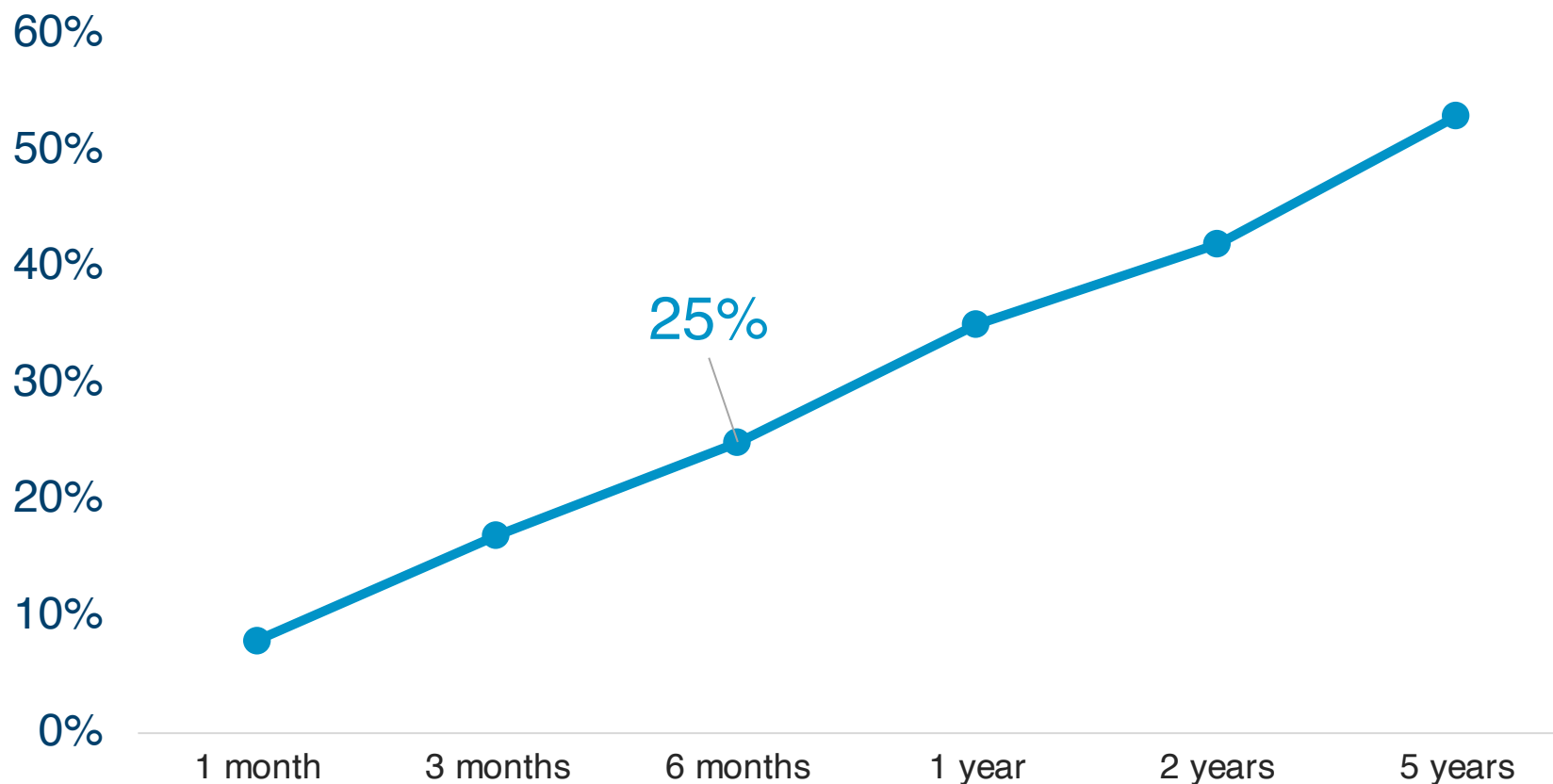
Differential Impact by
Generation

Future Education Plans

New Jobs

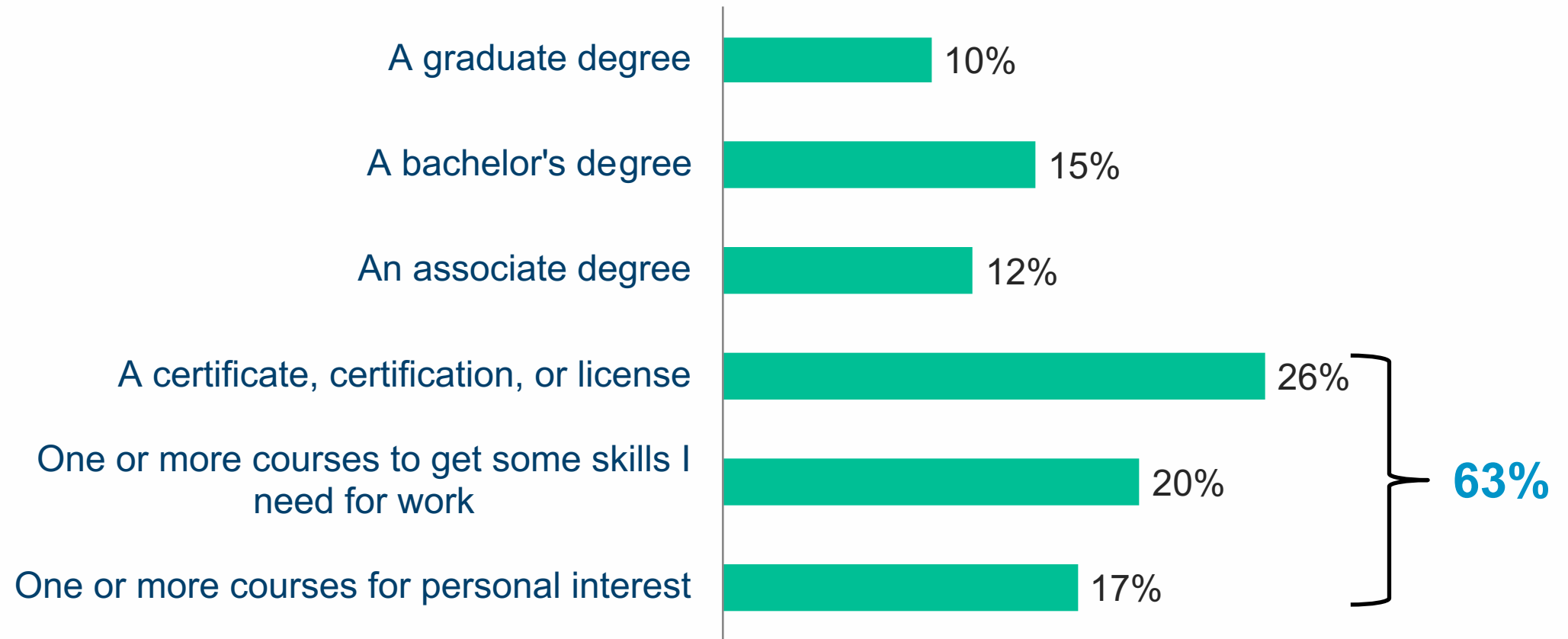
25% of adults say they plan to enroll in an education or training program within the next six months

Likelihood of enrolling in an education/training program by time horizon



Adults considering enrolling prefer nondegree programs

If you were to enroll in education or training in **the next six months**, what would be your goal?



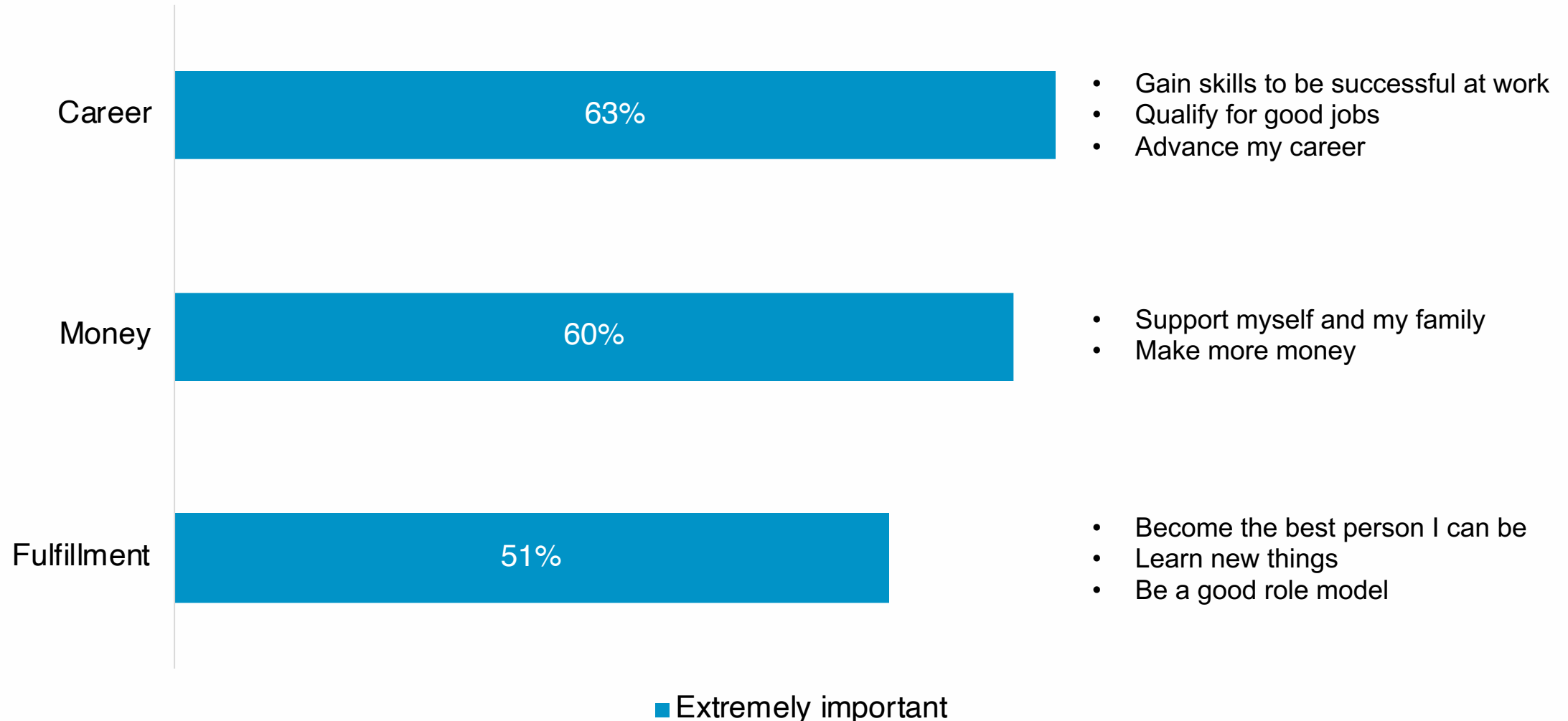
Key questions

1. What are Americans' motivations for pursuing education and training?
2. What are their perceived barriers to enrollment?
3. What are their expectations about the costs and benefits of education?

Motivations

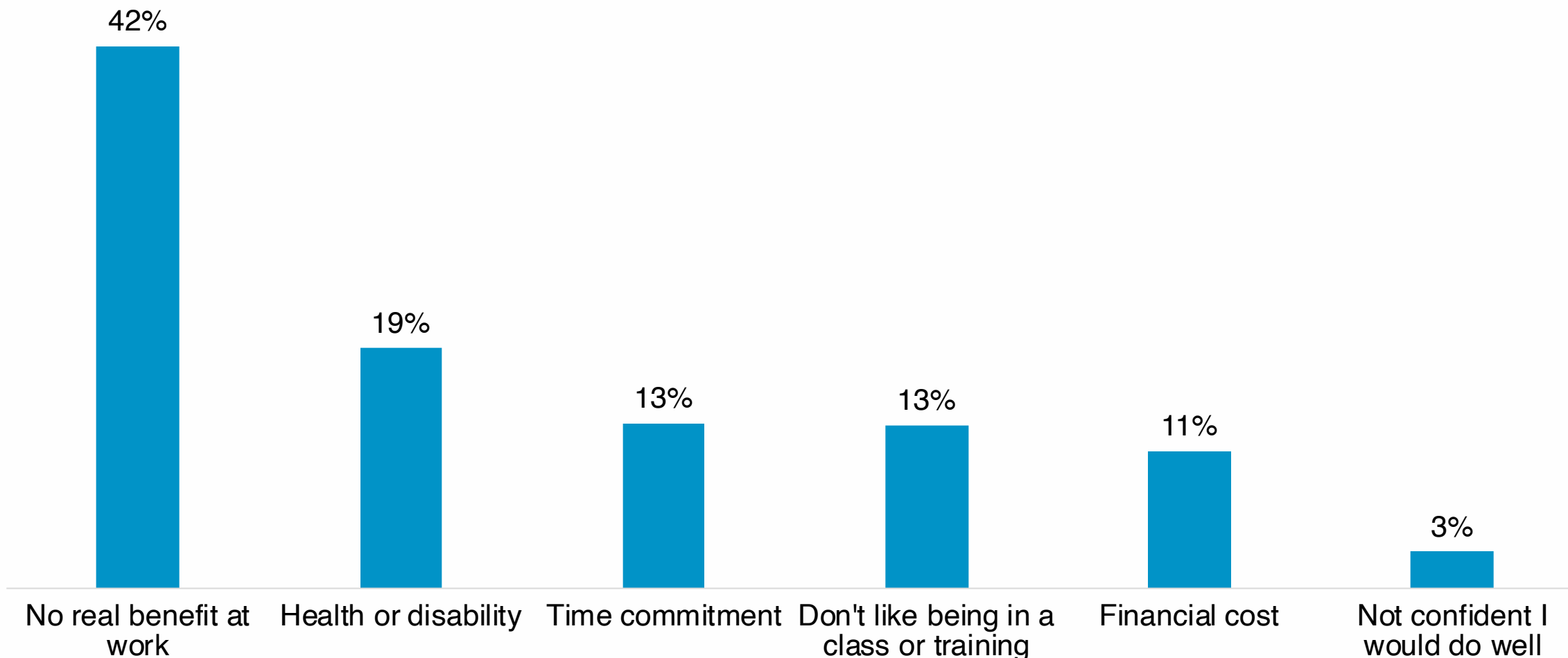
Career motivations are most important when making education decisions

How important were each of the following reasons for you personally in deciding whether to pursue your highest level of education?



Lack of perceived career benefit is the main reason people won't enroll

You indicated you are not likely to enroll in courses or training over the next five years. Which statement best describes the MAIN reason you don't expect to enroll?

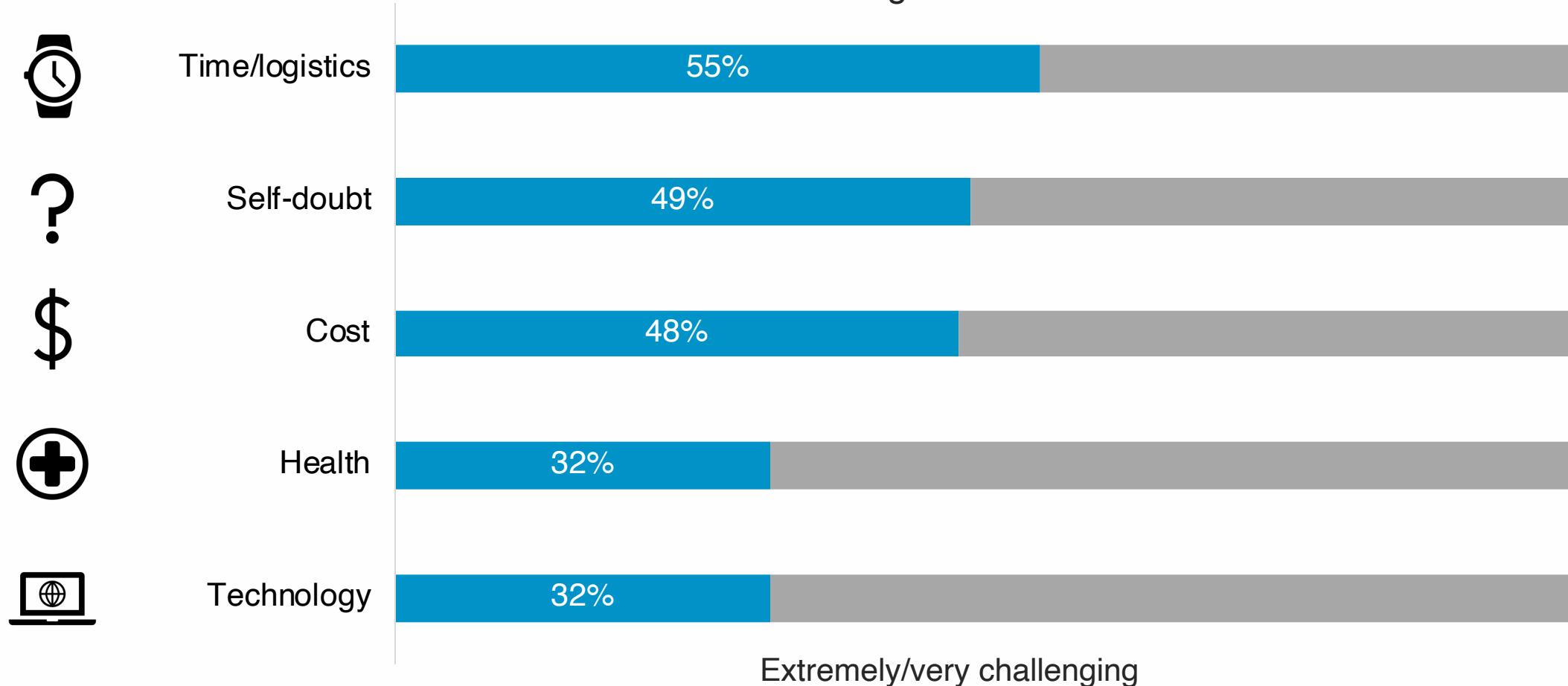


Strada-Gallup 2020 Education Consumer Survey. Base: Americans ages 18-64 who will not enroll in courses or training, n=1,831.

Barriers

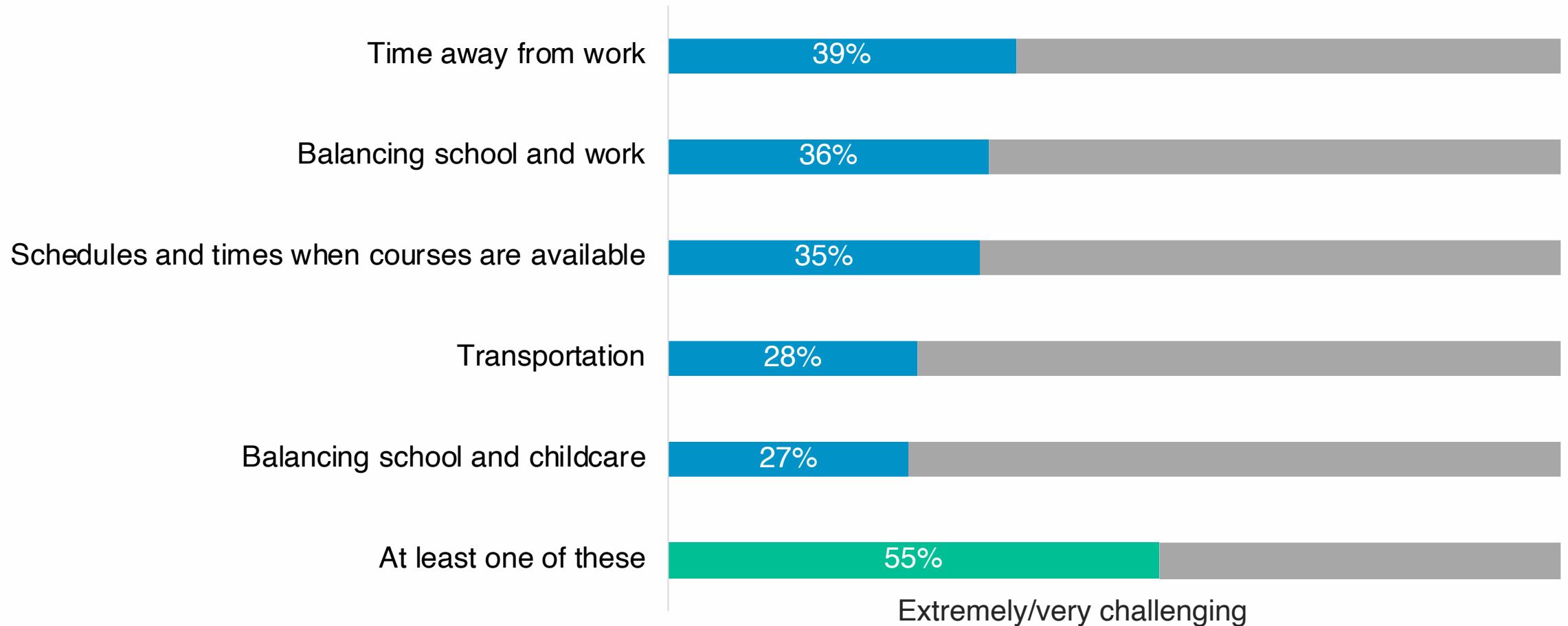
Top three challenges to education and training: time/logistics, self-doubt, and cost

How challenging would each of the following be for you personally in pursuing education and training?

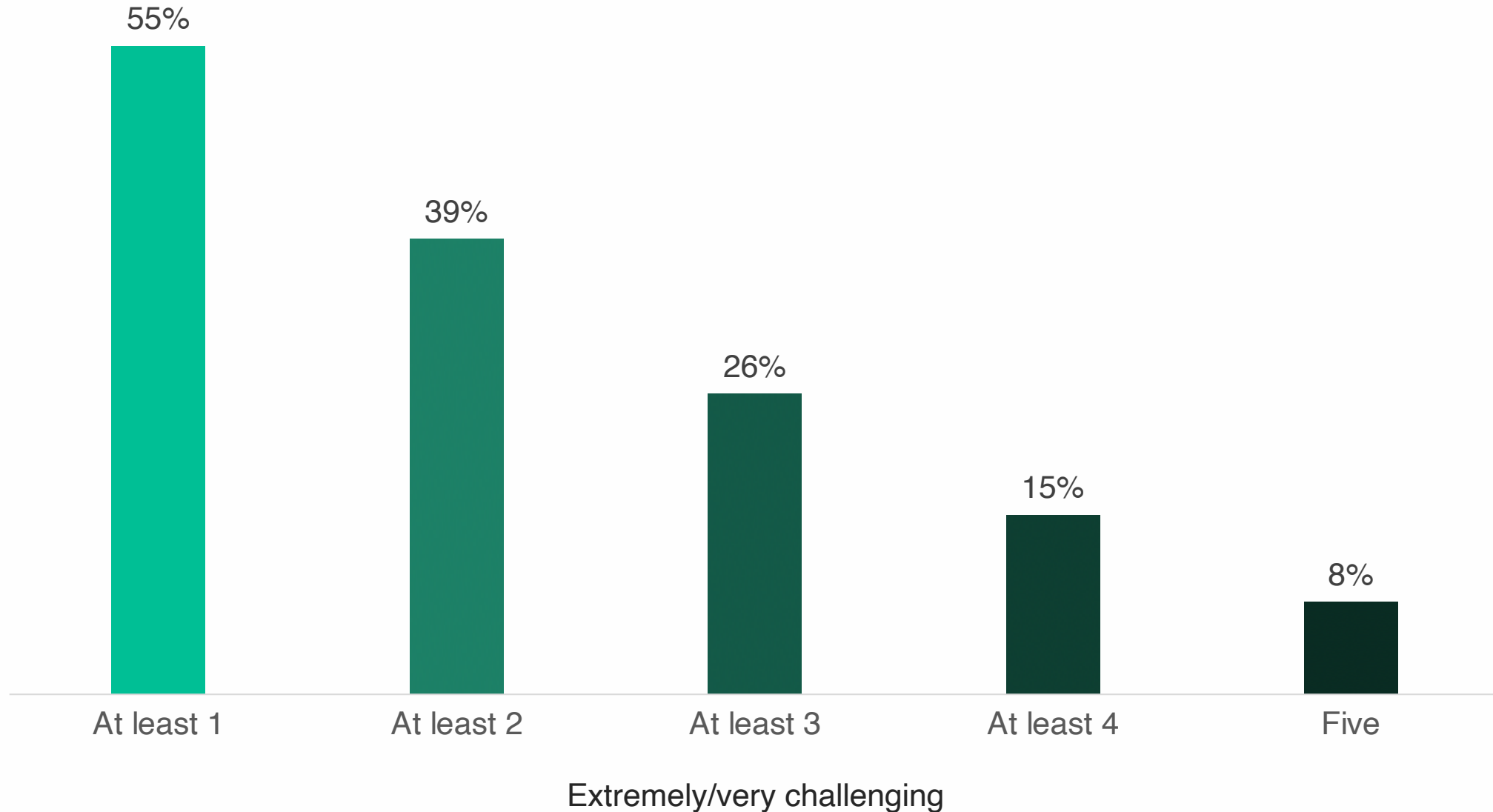


55% of adults see time and logistical barriers to education and training

How challenging would each of the following be for you personally in pursuing education and training?

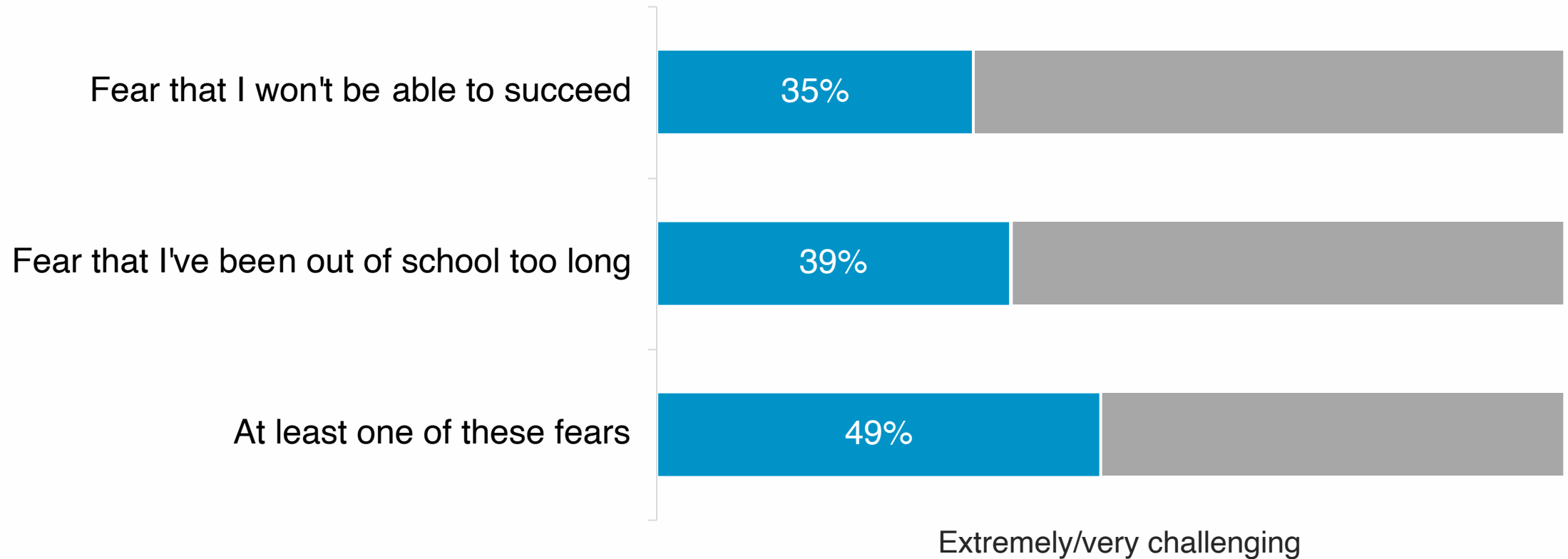


Many people face multiple time and logistical challenges



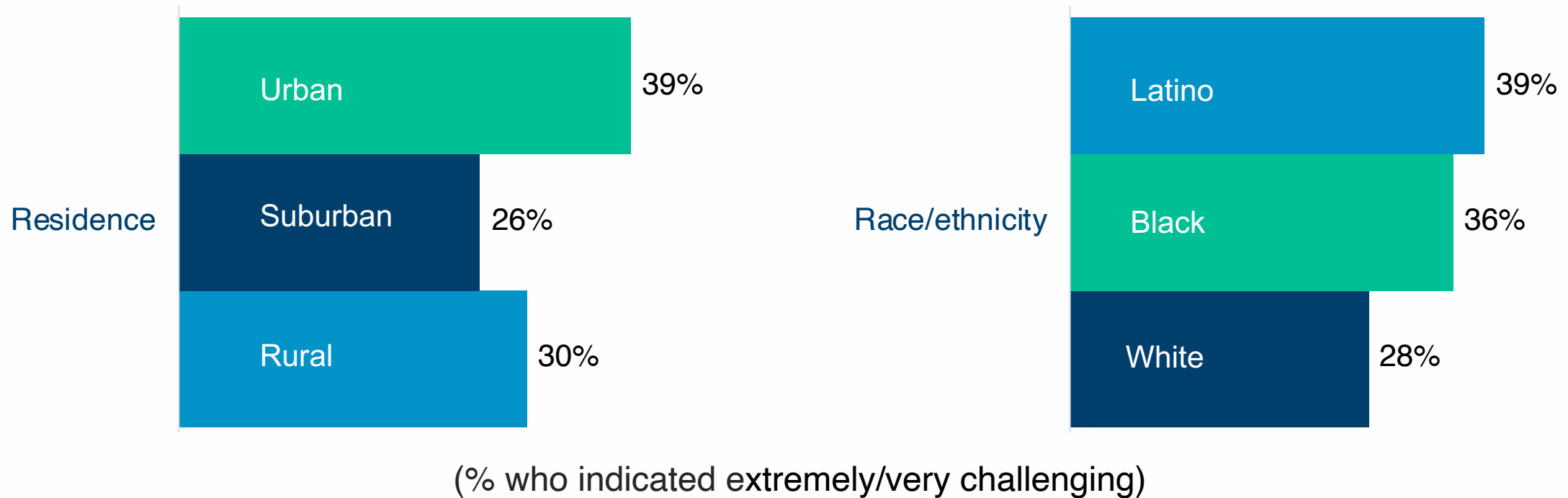
Self-doubt is a major barrier for half of Americans when it comes to pursuing education and training

How challenging would each of the following be for you personally in pursuing education and training?



Americans of color and urban residents are more likely to report that reliable internet and computer access is challenging

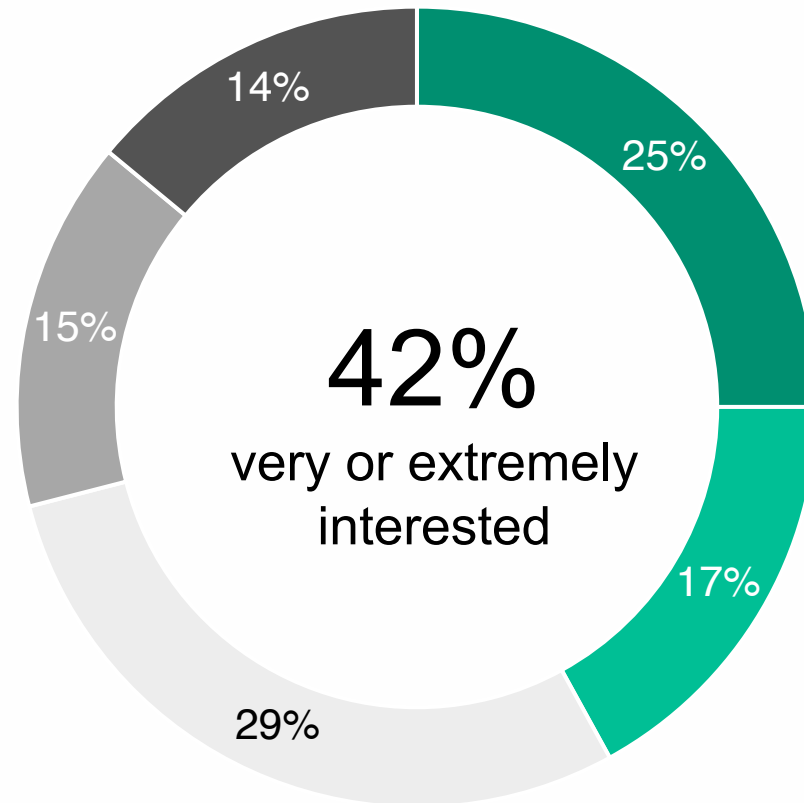
How challenging would [reliable access to internet or a computer] be for you personally in pursuing education and training?



Expectations

4 in 10 Americans *without* degrees or credentials were very or extremely interested in more education when they left high school

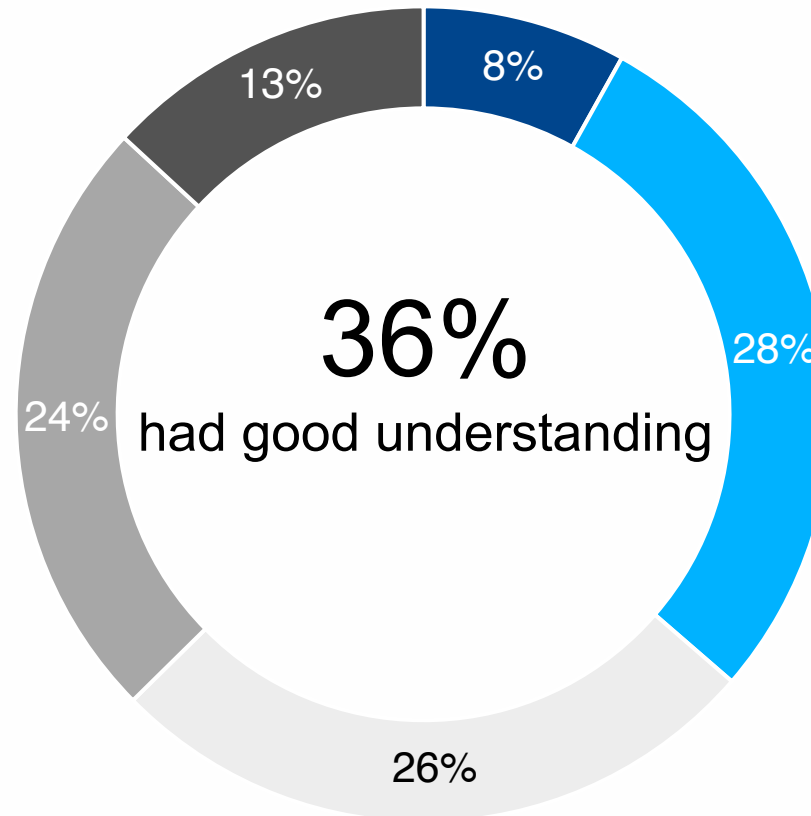
Immediately after high school, how interested were you in pursuing additional education?



- Extremely interested
- Very interested
- Somewhat interested
- Not very interested
- Not at all interested

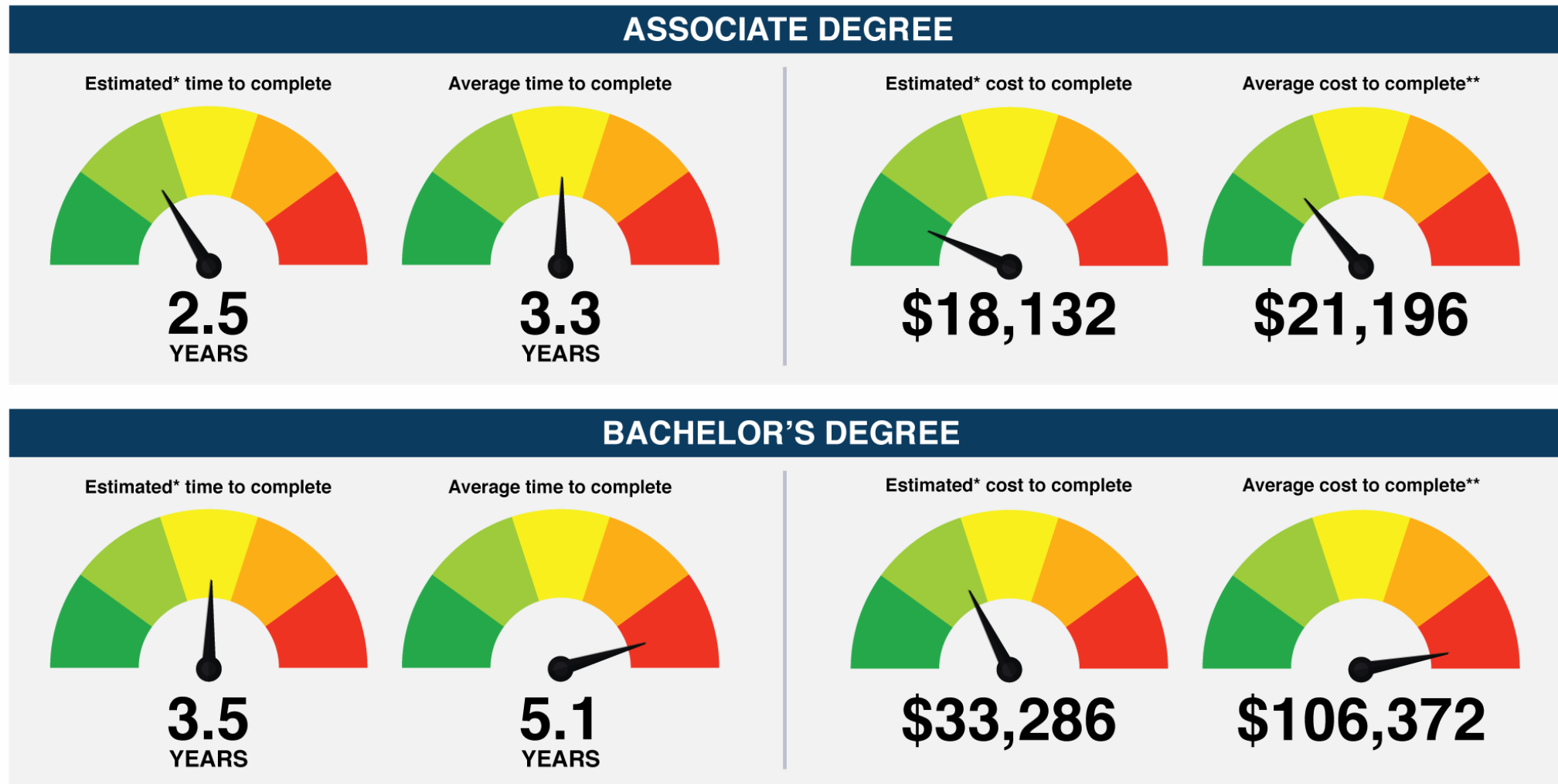
Only 36% of Americans without degrees or credentials felt they had a good understanding of their options for paying for education when they left high school

[After high school] I had a good understanding of my options for paying for my education



- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Adults without degrees who are now considering education underestimate time and costs to complete



* As estimated by American adults without degrees or credentials.

** Estimated total cost assuming national average enrollment time.

Adults without degrees or credentials are divided when it comes to the value of education

If I were to go on for additional education...

It would advance my career

62%

It would be worth the cost

52%

It would help me get a stable job
in times of economic uncertainty

50%

Strongly agree/agree

Key insights: motivations, barriers, expectations

1. **Americans who are not likely to enroll most often fail to see a clear career benefit.** Lack of career benefit is the No. 1 reason Americans do not enroll. Even among those considering enrolling, many are uncertain whether education will be worth the cost and would help them get a stable job in times of economic uncertainty.
2. **Americans identify three primary challenges to pursuing education and training:**
 - **Competing obligations and logistics.** Fifty-five percent identify commitments to work and family or the logistics of course schedules and transportation as major concerns. Many Americans face more than one of these barriers.
 - **Self-doubt.** Forty-nine percent fear they will not be successful as students or have been out of school for too long.
 - **Cost.** Forty-eight percent report that cost is an extremely or very challenging barrier.
3. **Many Americans considering enrolling do not have a good understanding of the time and costs involved.** Adults consistently underestimate the time and costs to complete a degree. The majority of adults who have not completed postsecondary degrees or credentials were interested in education and training after high school, but 64 percent reported that they didn't have a good understanding of how to pay for college.

Learn more at
StradaEducation.org/PublicViewpoint
or email
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 report for survey results from March 25–July 9: n = 13,073.
 - A theoretical margin of error based on a probability sample of size 1,000 would be +/- 3.1% at 95% 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.
- The 2020 wave of the Strada-Gallup Education Consumer Survey is a nationally representative survey using both mail and web data collection modes. The survey was conducted from March 30-May 28: n=10,361.
- The survey of Aspiring Adult Learners is a nationally representative online survey of adults ages 25-44. The survey was conducted by Heart + Mind Strategies on behalf of Strada Center for Consumer Insights from August-September 2019, n=1,007.
- Please contact Strada Center for Consumer Insights with questions or information requests at consumervoice@stradaeducation.org or learn more at StradaEducation.org/PublicViewpoint.