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2022 SURVEY: BLACK WORKING WOMEN VOTERS IN GEORGIA

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SUMMARY

While Black women transformed the political landscape of Georgia in 2020, many still feel that their core issues of concern—reproductive freedom and economic security—are shortchanged by their government officials. These findings highlight the gaps between the priorities of Georgia's Black women voters and elected officials, while also demonstrating that Black women voters and white voters are motivated by the same core issues.



OVERVIEW

Between an extremist Supreme Court and state politicians, Georgians are losing access to the rights and support they need to live in safety, dignity, and good health. Just this year alone, dangerous Georgia lawmakers enacted [further rollbacks on voting rights](#), [silenced communities](#) by [unfairly redrawing district lines](#), [banned books](#), [endangered LGBTQI+ students](#), [restricted access to critical care](#), and [dismissed the pressing concerns of parents afraid for their children's safety in the face of rising gun violence](#).

These draconian policy actions are directly opposed to the needs of Georgia's women and families, particularly Black women and their families. These are efforts to sideline, suppress, and disempower the state's women. Black women know this. And Black working women voters have been voting and organizing to fight back against these actions.

This report presents findings from a survey conducted to understand sentiments and perceptions of Black women voters in Georgia, as compared to white women and men voter counterparts, including an understanding of how Black women voters (1) perceive the impact of their vote, (2) are focused on key issues, and (3) perceive current government officials guiding policy in their state.

METHODOLOGY

These findings are part of additional data collection across key states. In collaboration with state-based partners, the National Women's Law Center commissioned an online survey to assess the policy needs of women of color voters in Michigan, Nevada, and Georgia.

In Georgia, the National Women's Law Center collaborated with 9to5 Georgia to commission this poll. The survey was administered by Vision Strategy and Insights during a three-week period, from August 4 through August 21, 2022. The survey encompassed a total of 505 online interviews, 300 among Black women voters and 205 among white voters (102 women and 103 men). The survey also included a readable sample of lower-income voters (defined as income less than \$60,000). Respondents were specifically targeted as likely to vote in the November 2022 midterm election (six or more on a 10-point scale) and represent a diverse spread across political ideologies.



KEY FINDINGS: IMPACT & MOBILIZING ISSUES

Georgia's Black women voters believe in their impact but are less likely to believe that their vote impacts how the country, their state, and their communities are governed compared to Georgia's white voters.

When asked on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), just over half of Black women reported that they agree that their vote impacts how the country, their state, and their local communities are run. Of Black women voter respondents, 55 percent said that they agree or strongly agree that their vote impacts how the country is governed, while 61 percent said they agree their vote impacts state governance and 60 percent reported they believe their vote impacts how their local communities are run. In contrast, 65 percent of white voters surveyed said they agree or strongly agree that their vote impacts how the country is run, and three quarters of white voters agreed that their vote impacts how their state (72 percent) and community (75 percent) are run.

And yet, Black voters persist. Black voters, especially Black women, transformed the Georgia electorate in 2020 and are part of the [historic early vote surge during this midterm election](#). Still, Black voter participation across genders remains lower than white voter participation in Georgia. As voting experts are careful to point out, [participation rates are hugely impacted by accessibility](#).

In fact, Black women voters said government officials fail to listen to their concerns and are not working to address the issues most important to them.

More than half of Black women voters report that federal (51 percent) and state (50 percent) officials do not listen to their concerns, while four in 10 (41 percent) report that local officials do not listen to their concerns. In contrast, only a little over one-third (34 percent) of white voters report that local officials do not listen to their concerns.

Black women voters and white voters both tend to agree that federal and state elected officials do not appear to work on their issues. Nearly half of Black women voters said they do not believe federal (44 percent) or state (46 percent) officials and candidates are working to address the issues most important to them. While 45 percent of white voters said they do not believe federal officials are working to address the issues most important to them, 38 percent said this of state officials. Over four in 10 (42 percent) Black women voters believe the same about their local officials, compared to one in three (31 percent) of white voters.

Despite these sentiments held by Black women voters, the issues mobilizing Black women voters—reproductive freedom and economic security—are fundamental to everyone's ability to live, work, and play to their fullest potential.

All respondents were asked to name the one issue that keeps them up at night by filling in a blank dialog box. A large sample of Black women voters said that they are preoccupied with concerns about abortion rights, affording and accessing basic needs, and inflation. Racism was also noted as a key issue among

this group. Associated issues included the rising costs of gas, food, and housing as well as the economy, jobs, and low wages.

White voters also listed inflation, the cost of living, and abortion rights as the top three issues mentioned on an open, unaided basis. Crime and climate change were other top priorities more often mentioned by white voters compared to Black women voters.

For many years, state lawmakers have relentlessly attacked economic security and reproductive freedom. As examples: an [abortion ban](#) that denies access to critical care and forces millions of pregnant Georgians to carry out pregnancies, [despite increasing maternal mortality rates in the state](#); [stalling on paid family and medical leave](#) for all Georgians; and state leaders [failed to equitably allocate COVID-19 recovery and relief funding](#), including prematurely ending unemployment insurance.

Black women voters are more likely than white voters to support reproductive freedom and the ability of all Georgians to meet their families' basic needs in the face of rising costs. However, the majority of both groups strongly support these measures. Where they significantly diverge is regarding gun violence, inclusive school environments, and policing.

Respondents across race and gender share concerns, despite differences in how intensely they perceive whether their issues and votes matter to elected officials.

HEALTH EQUITY INCLUDING ABORTION, AND OTHER PREGNANCY-RELATED SUPPORTS

- Three-quarters of Black women voters agree that government officials should ensure that people have access to abortion care, while six in 10 white voters agree that government officials should ensure that people have access to abortion care.
- Seventy-two percent of Black women voters and 58 percent of white voters in Georgia agree that government officials should protect access to legal abortion for all, regardless of their personally held beliefs.
- Both Black women voters and white voters in Georgia strongly agree with providing access to maternal health care, pregnancy-related services, and related supports. When asked whether government officials should ensure access to safe and supportive pregnancy-related services and supports, 76 percent of Black women voters and 72 percent of white voters said they agree. Seventy-six percent of Black women voters and 62 percent of white voters agree that government officials should ensure pregnancy-related services beyond health care include stable housing, food access, paid leave, and child care for other children during health care visits.
- When asked about the Supreme Court decision in *Dobbs vs. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, most voters, particularly women of color, agreed that because the Supreme Court took away the constitutional right to abortion it is more important than ever that elected officials create rights to abortion that stop abortion bans and guarantee that access to abortion does not depend on where a person lives. Three-quarters of Black women voters (74 percent) and 58 percent of white voters said they agree that a constitutional right to abortion was taken away and that elected officials need to create rights to abortion that stop bans and guarantee access for all in need, no matter where they live.

ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND AFFORDING THE RISING COST OF BASIC NEEDS

- Securing quality, affordable child care is a challenge for both Black moms and white parents. However, Black women reported greater difficulties in finding and affording child care than their white counterparts, particularly those in the younger age group of 18–34.
- Respondents were asked whether the government should provide funding to help make sure child care workers are paid fairly and to support access to high-quality care, and how likely they were to support legislation that would provide child care to all who needed it. Large majorities of both Black and white women voters support these policies, with Black women even more likely to support these measures compared to white voters. Eighty-three percent of Black women voters agreed that the government should help fund child care workers. Similarly, 84 percent of Black women voters said they support legislation to provide Georgians with universal high-quality and affordable child care. Meanwhile, 68 percent of white voters said they agree with government funding for child care workers, and 69 percent said they were likely to support universal child care legislation. It is important to note that Black women voters in this survey overindexed for work in the child care industry (5 percent of total compared to 0 percent for white voters).
- Three-fourths (73 percent) of Black women voters agreed that the wealthy should pay their fair share of taxes. In fact, 50 percent of Black women voters strongly agreed that the wealthy should be taxed to fund services like public infrastructure (roads and bridges), housing, education, and health care. White voters also expressed strong support for this idea, with 64 percent agreeing and four in 10 (41 percent) strongly agreeing with tax fairness.
- Seven in 10 (70 percent) Black women agreed and nearly half (46 percent) strongly agreed that the federal government should reinstate advance payments of the federal Child Tax Credit (CTC). This support was consistent across age and income groups, with Black women aged 35–49 expressing the strongest sentiment (50 percent strongly agreed). Many white voters were also in favor of this idea, with more than half (56 percent) agreeing and one-third (36 percent) strongly agreeing.
- Overall, significant majorities of Black women voters and white voters support key gender and economic justice policies that help working Georgians stay and thrive in the workforce. Black women voters expressed intensely positive agreement (4 and 5 on a scale of 1 to 5) with key gender economic justice policies, particularly: establishing protections against workplace harassment (90 percent), establishing paid family and medical leave for all workers (89 percent), raising the minimum wage to at least \$15/hour (88 percent), ensuring equal pay and establishing pay transparency measures for employers to practice with employees and applicants (87 percent), and providing reasonable accommodations for pregnant workers in the workplace (83 percent). Notably, these policies are popular among survey respondents. While white voters did not agree with these policies to the same intensity as Black women voters, they still responded with healthy support. Most of white voters agreed with: establishing protections against workplace harassment (80 percent), establishing paid family and medical leave for all workers (75 percent), raising the minimum wage (66 percent), ensuring equal pay and establishing pay transparency measures for employers to practice with employees and applicants (77 percent), and providing reasonable accommodations for pregnant workers in the workplace (84 percent).

OPPOSITION TO GUN VIOLENCE AND CENSORSHIP IN SCHOOLS

- When asked about government officials passing gun laws that increase public safety and decrease gun violence, 67 percent of Black women voters said they think it is extremely important. In contrast, only 42 percent of white voters said they think this is extremely important. In fact, white voters were more likely to say that increased investments in law enforcement and policing were extremely important, specifically 51 percent of survey white voters.
- Almost eight in 10 Black women voters agreed (76 percent), with more than half who strongly agreed (54 percent), that schools should be allowed to teach students that racial and gender inequality can exist in society and institutions. A similar majority of Black women voters reported agreeing (81 percent) or strongly agreeing (57 percent) with policies that enable all students to learn in environments that allow them to be who they are and that are free from harassment, discrimination, and violence. While three in four white voters said they strongly agree or somewhat agree with anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policies in schools (74 percent), they were much less likely than Black women to agree that schools should be allowed to teach racial and gender equality at only 52 percent.

KEY FINDINGS: VOTER PERCEPTIONS OF CURRENT GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

When asked to rate how much government officials at various levels prioritize certain issues, majorities of both Black women voters and white voters said that they perceive that local, state, and federal lawmakers were more likely to prioritize making child care accessible to all, creating safe schools, and increasing funding to law enforcement.

Survey respondents were asked to rank their perceptions of how government officials at the local, state (governor and state legislators), and congressional levels prioritized certain gender justice policy issues as well as “dog whistle” policy issues that do not necessarily support communities and women of color. Ranks were from a scale of 1 (not at all a high priority) to 5 (extremely high priority).



Increasing access to quality, affordable child care for all families

- Fifty-three percent of Black women voters and 64 percent of white voters said they believe their members of Congress are prioritizing this issue.
- Forty-nine percent of Black women voters and 64 percent of white voters said they believe their state legislators are prioritizing this issue.
- Forty-one percent of Black women voters and 56 percent of white voters said they believe their county commissions are prioritizing this issue.

Ensuring students can learn in a safe and culturally competent environment, free from violence and harassment

- Fifty-seven percent of Black women voters and 47 percent of white voters said they believe their members of Congress are prioritizing this issue.
- Sixty-six percent of Black women voters and 46 percent of white voters said they believe their state legislators are prioritizing this issue.
- Fifty-eight percent of Black women voters and 56 percent of white voters said they believe their county commissions are prioritizing this issue.

Increased investments in law enforcement and policing programs that seek to lower crime and create security for community members.

- Sixty-one percent of Black women voters and 32 percent of white voters said they believe their members of Congress are prioritizing this issue.
- Sixty percent of Black women voters and 45 percent of white voters said they believe their state legislators are prioritizing this issue.
- Fifty-three percent of Black women voters and 55 percent of white voters said they believe their county commissions are prioritizing this issue.

Notably, the core issues Black women voters and white voters said keep them up at night—economic security and reproductive freedom—were the ones respondents perceived as deprioritized by government officials at various levels of office. Black women voters and white voters ranked government officials' activity or prioritization of the following policy issues as broadly low or unclear:

- **securing education funding**
- **protecting and expanding the ability to choose, if, when, and how one starts a family**
- **working toward better wages and jobs for all**
- **passing commonsense gun safety regulations; expanding protections against discrimination and harassment for all**
- **enabling all Georgians to afford their basic needs;**
- **and expanding access to affordable, quality health care free from bias.**

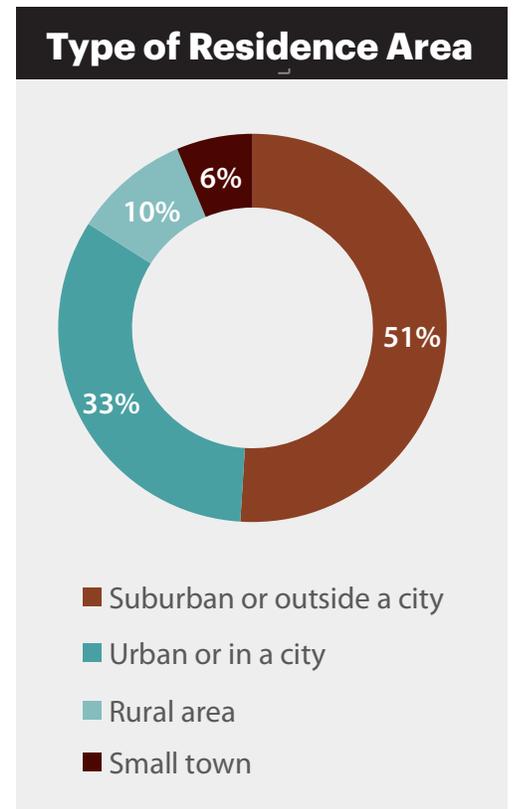
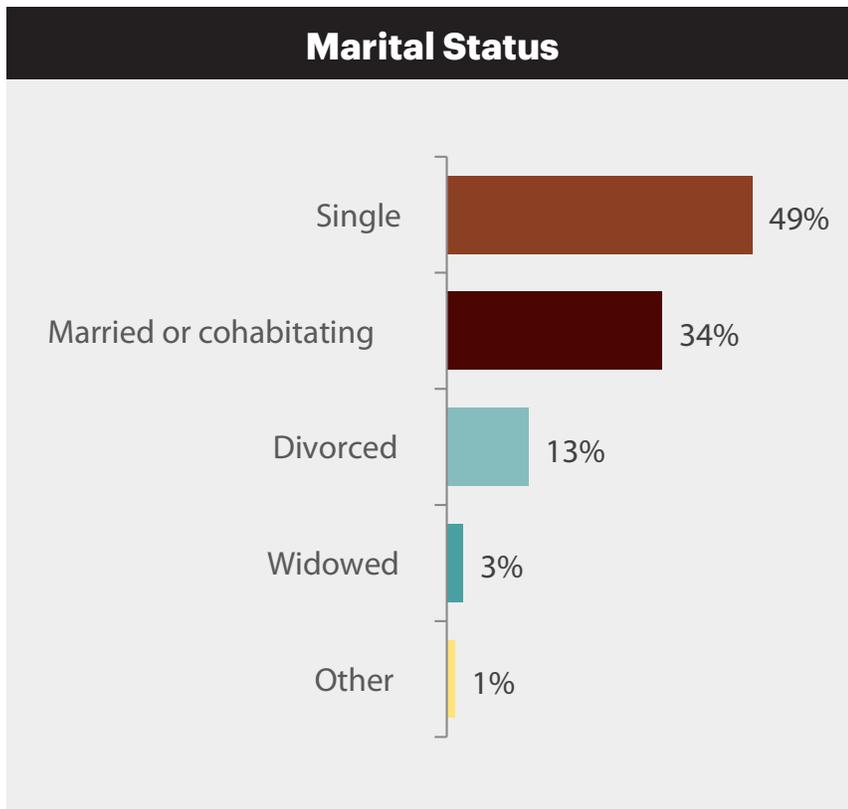
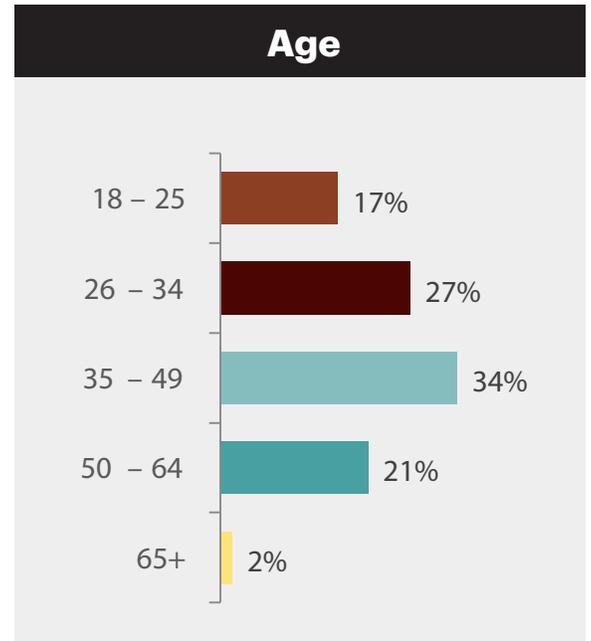
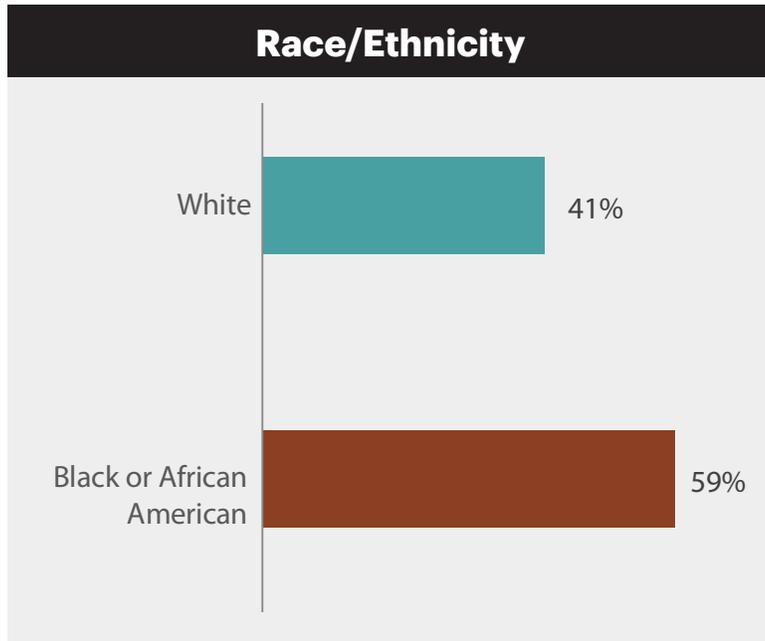
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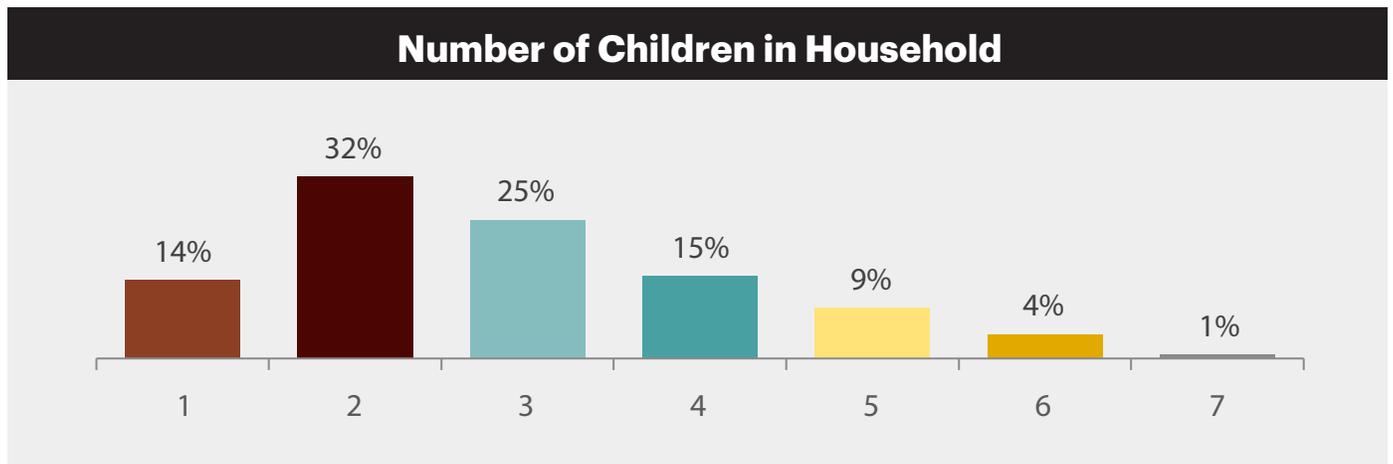
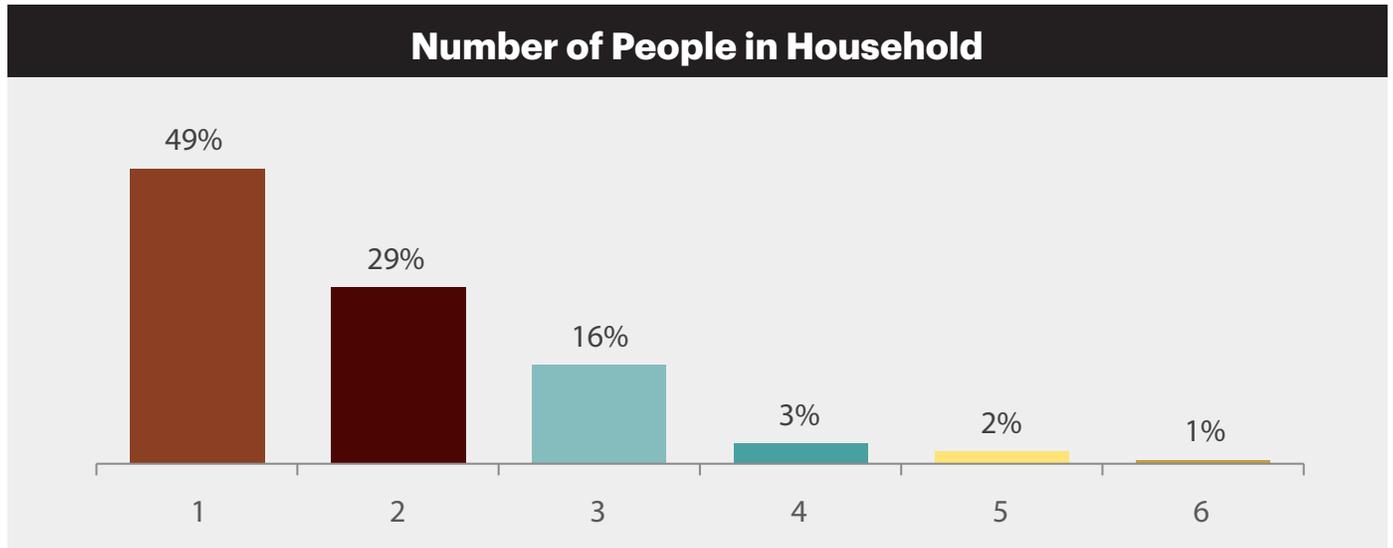
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Total Sample = 505



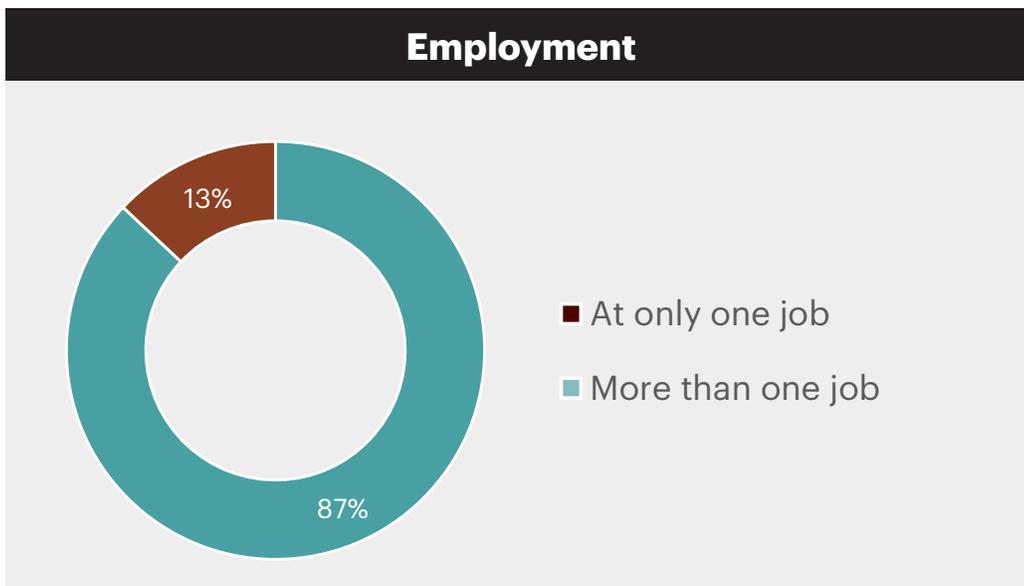
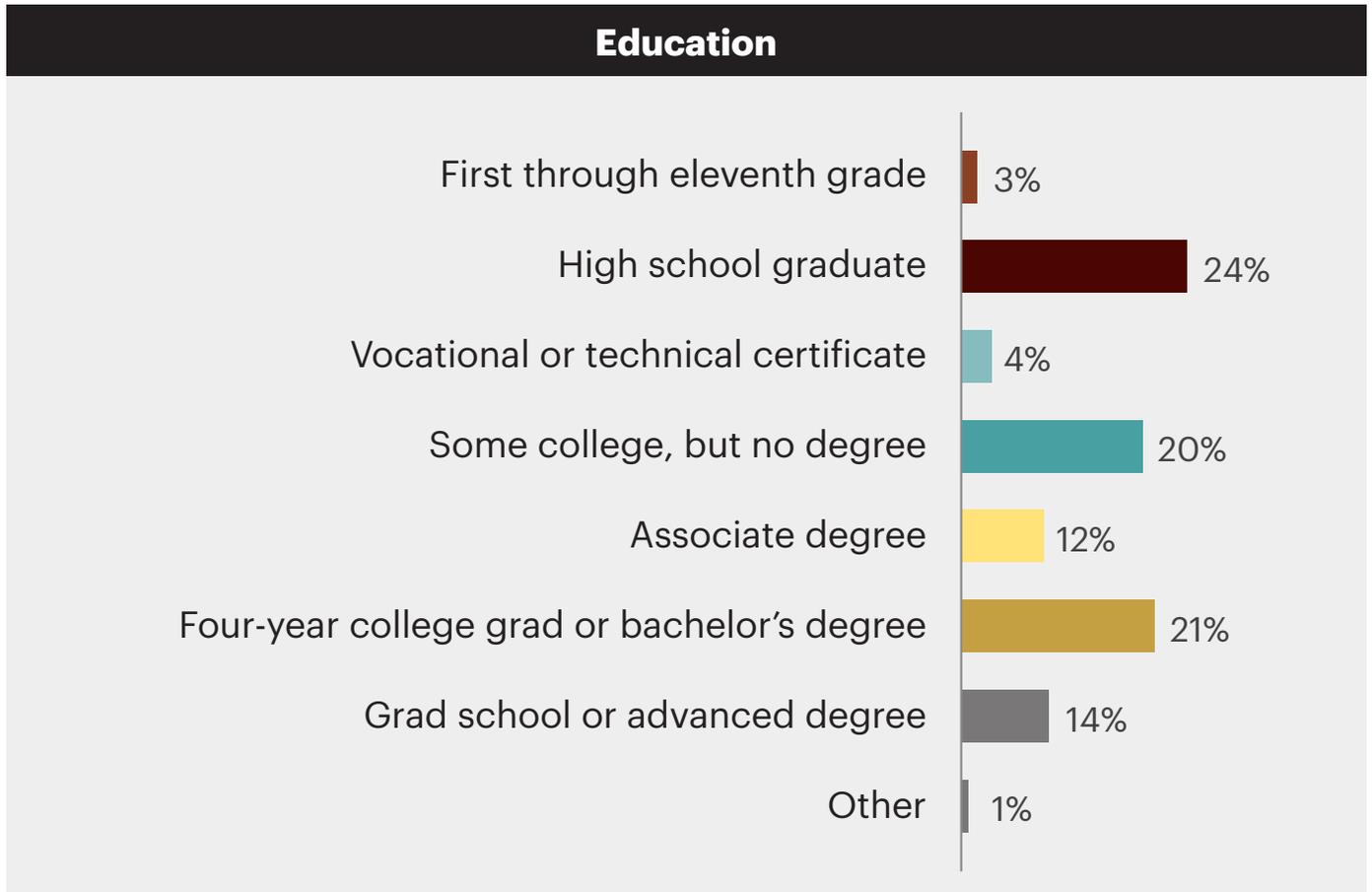
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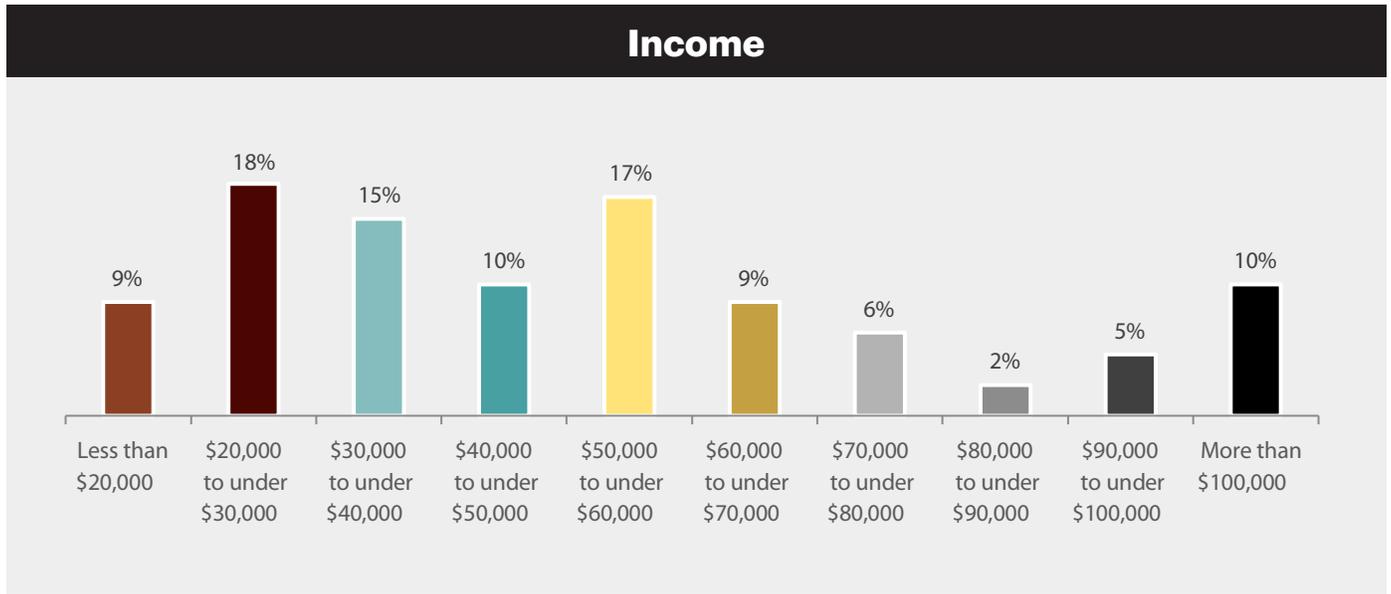
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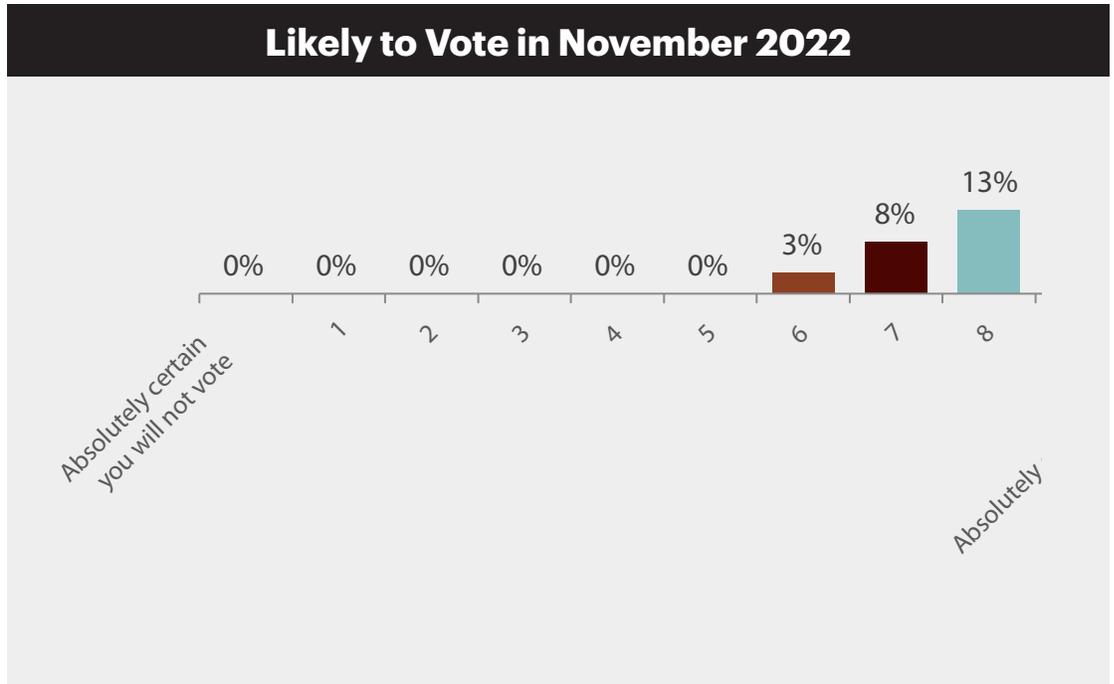
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Yes

100%

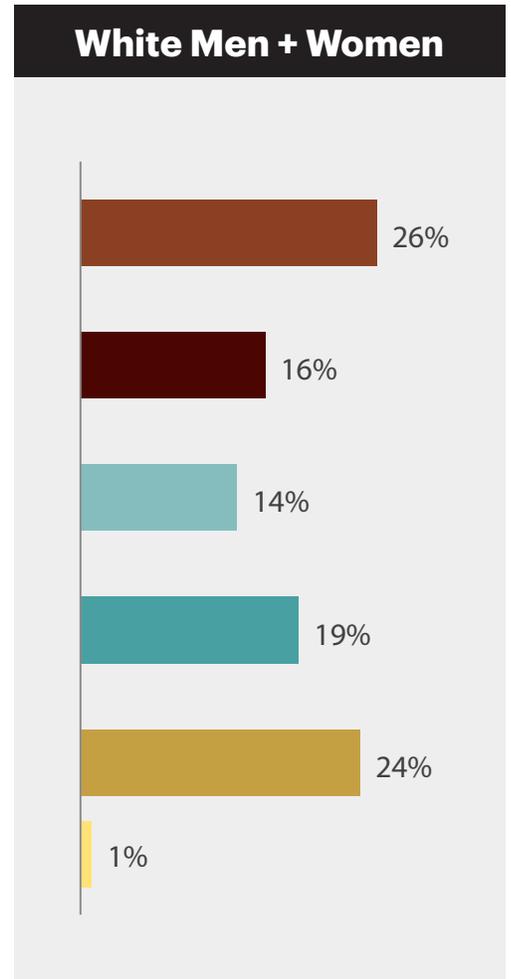
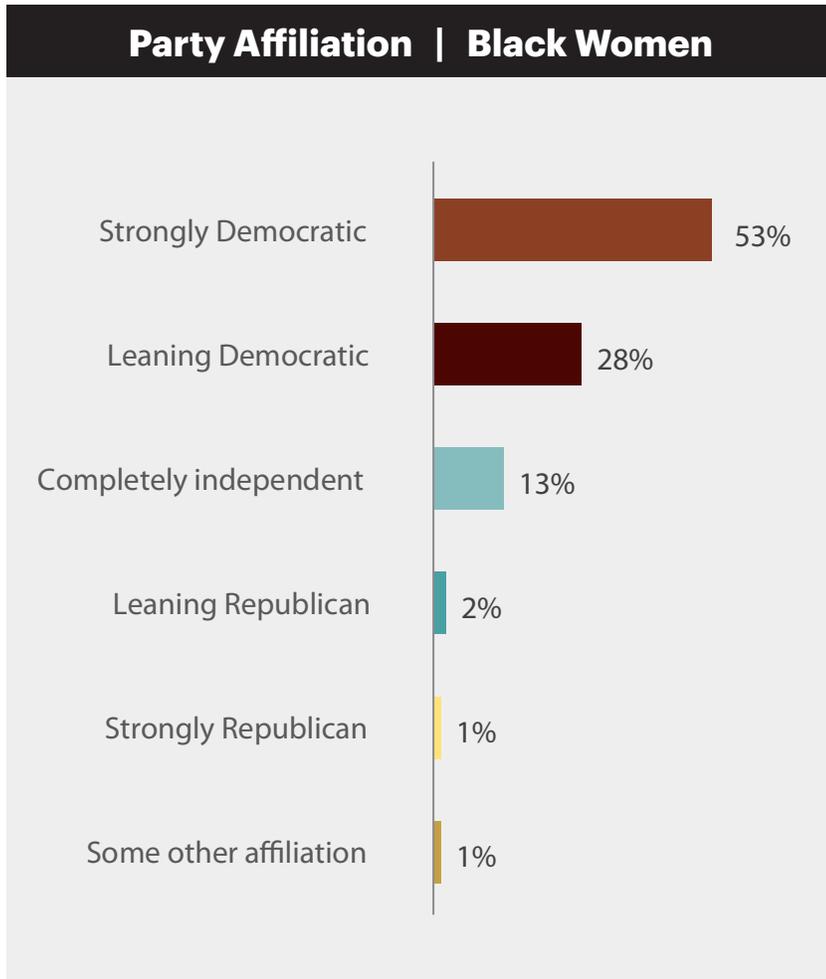
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