

Special Report:  
Workplace Trust and  
the Coronavirus

Edelman Trust  
Barometer 2020



## A NEED FOR BUSINESS AND EMPLOYERS TO STEP UP

Percent who say

78%

Businesses have a responsibility to **ensure their employees are protected** from the virus in the workplace *and* do not spread the virus into the community

63%

I would like my employer to **share information** about the coronavirus at least daily

2020 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: Trust and the Coronavirus. Q3. Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements below using a nine-point scale where one means "strongly disagree" and nine means "strongly agree". 9-point scale; top 4 box, agree. Data shown is a net of r5 and r6. Question shown to those who have heard of the virus (Q1/1). Q10. How often would you like to be updated on the information you just indicated your employer should be sharing? Question shown to those who are aware of the virus and are employees and listed information their employer should be sharing (Q1/1 AND Q43/1 AND Q9/1-14,16). 10-mkt avg. Data collected between March 6 and March 10, 2020.

2020 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: Brands and the Coronavirus. Q2. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about brands and how they are responding to the current coronavirus pandemic. 9-point scale; top 4 box, agree. Question shown to those who have heard of the virus (Q1/1). 12-mkt avg. Data collected between March 23 and March 26, 2020.

## BRANDS CRITICAL TO WINNING THE FIGHT

Percent who say

Our country will not make it through this crisis without **brands playing a critical role** in addressing the challenges we face

↓  
62%

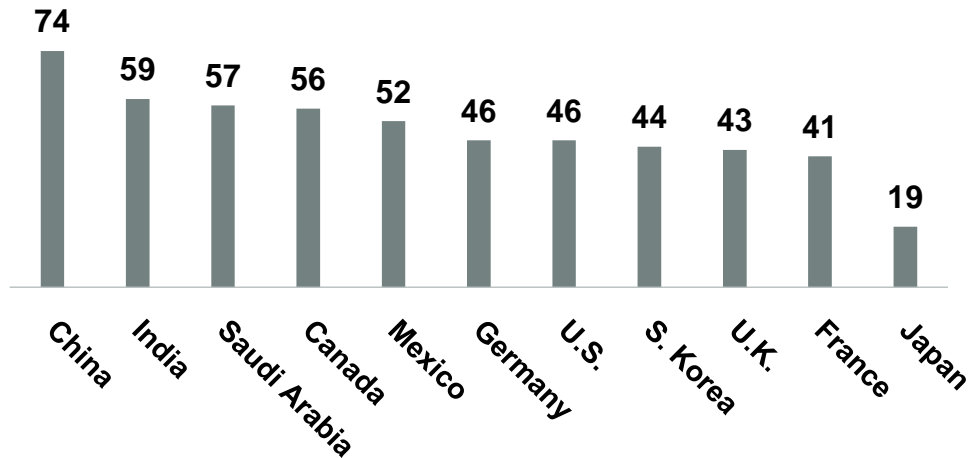
## BUSINESS NOT KEEPING US SAFE

### Business Performance

Implementing safety measures to **protect workers and customers**

Global 11

**49%** doing well or very well



2020 Edelman Trust Barometer Spring Update. NEW\_PER\_NATGOV. When it comes to how it has performed thus far during the COVID-19 pandemic, how well do you believe the national government of your country is currently doing each of the following? 5-point scale; top 2 box, doing well. General population, 10-mkt avg (excluding China). NEW\_PER\_BUS. When it comes to how it has performed thus far during the COVID-19 pandemic, how well do you believe business in general is currently doing each of the following? 5-point scale; top 2 box, doing well. General population, 11-mkt avg. \*Data on left excludes China from the results because we did not ask questions to respondents that were sensitive in nature. CEO\_AGR. Thinking about CEOs, how strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement? 9-point scale; top 4 box, agree. CRISIS\_LEAD. The current pandemic places many demands on our leaders. Which of the leaders listed below do you believe are doing an outstanding job meeting the demands being placed upon them by this crisis? Pick all that apply. General population, 11-mkt avg. "All of the above" responses were added to each item.

## CEOS FAILING TO DEMONSTRATE PUBLIC LEADERSHIP

Percent who say

CEOs are doing **an outstanding job** meeting the demands placed on them by the pandemic

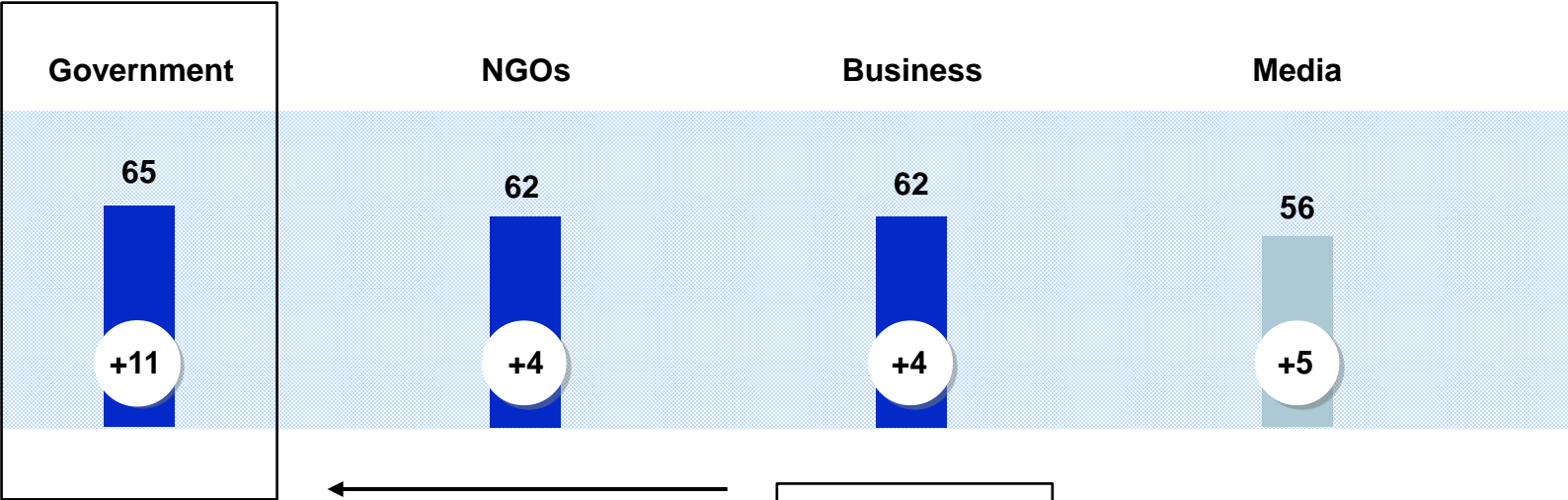
**29%**

# A RE-ORDERING OF TRUST: GOVERNMENT NOW MOST TRUSTED

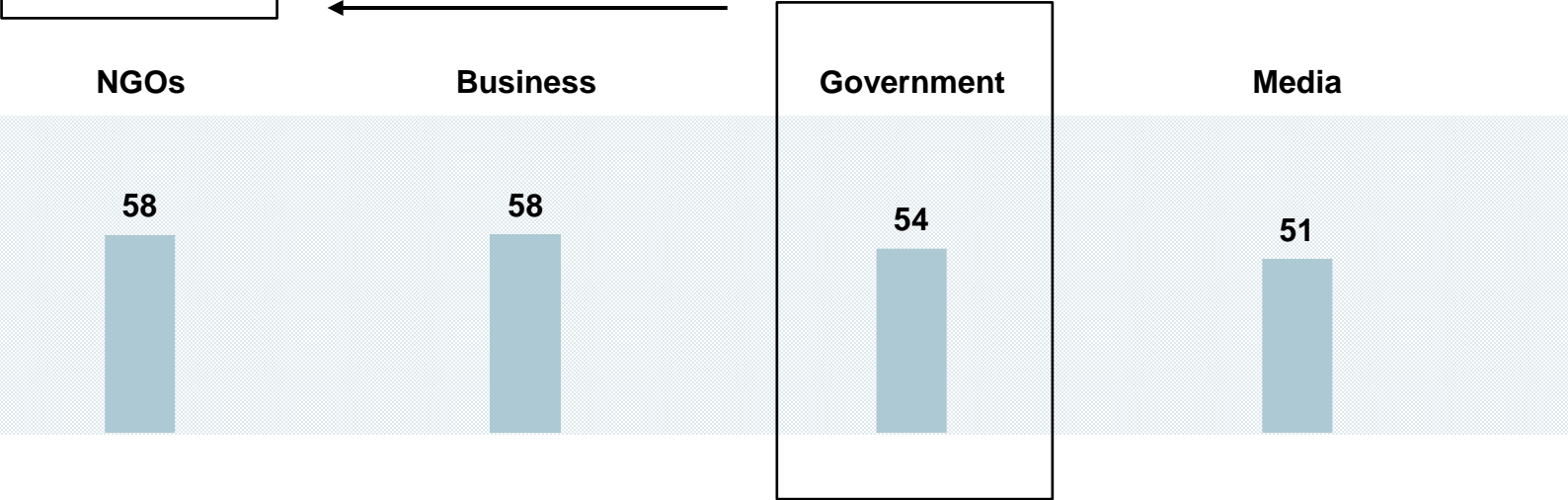
Percent trust



**May 2020  
Spring Update**  
Only media not trusted  
Government most trusted



**January 2020  
Trust Barometer**  
No institutions trusted  
NGOs and business most trusted



# Workplace Trust and the Coronavirus

## Margin of error

- 7-market global data margin of error: +/- 1.67% (N=3,449)
- Market-specific data margin of error: U.S. +/- 3.08% (N=1,010); U.K. +/- 4.35% (N=508); France +/- 4.37% (N=502), Germany +/- 4.36% (N=504); India +/- 4.34% (N=509), South Korea and Singapore. +/- 6.80% (N=208, each)

## 7-market online survey

- **U.S., U.K., France, Germany, India, South Korea and Singapore**
- All data is nationally representative based on age, region and gender
- 3,400+ respondents (1,000 U.S.; 500 U.K., France, Germany and India; 200 South Korea and Singapore)

**Timing of Fieldwork: August 23 - August 26, 2020.**

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# **UNCERTAINTY AND FEAR ABOUT RETURNING TO NORMAL LIFE**

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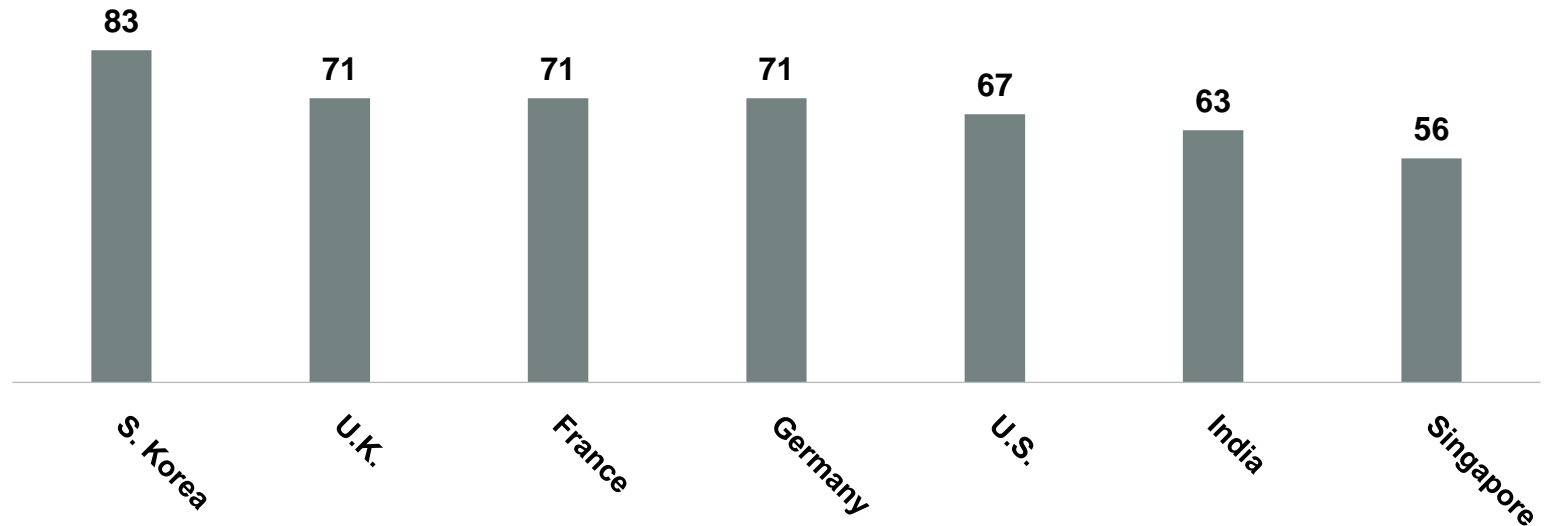
# SECOND WAVE EXPECTATIONS ARE HIGH

Percent who say yes

There will be a **second wave** of the  
coronavirus in my country

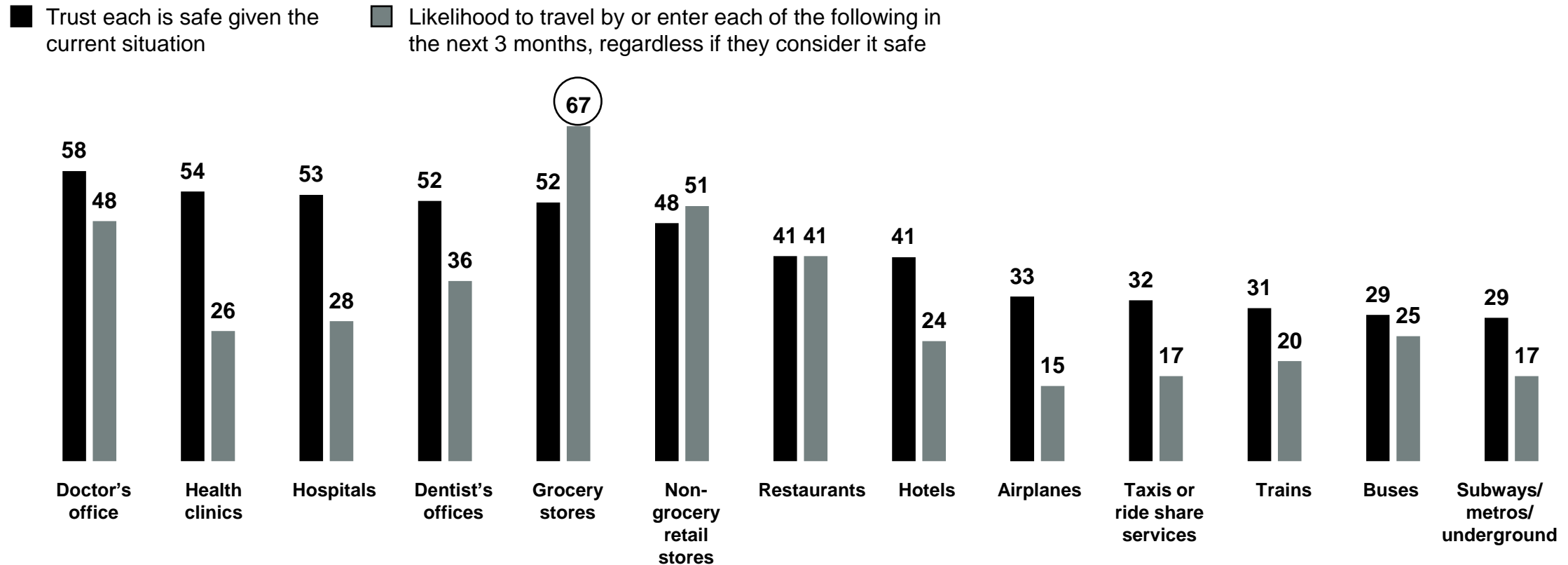
68%

Global 7



# PEOPLE ARE STILL SCARED AND DO NOT TRUST THAT IT'S TIME TO RESUME NORMAL ACTIVITIES

Percent who trust each is safe given the current situation



2020 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: Workplace Trust and the Coronavirus. Q3. Please indicate how much you trust that each of the following are safe right now given the current situation with the coronavirus in your country. Use a nine-point scale where one means that you “do not trust they are safe at all” and nine means that you “completely trust they are safe”. Please select one response for each. 9-point scale; top 4 box, trust. / Q4. Regardless of how safe you feel each of the following are, which of these would you be likely to do in the next 3 months? Please select all that apply. 7-mkt avg. Data collected between August 23 and August 26, 2020.



# **GLOBALLY, PEOPLE ARE SELF CONFINING TO THEIR IMMEDIATE SURROUNDINGS**

Percent who are likely to do the following in the next 3 months, regardless if they consider it safe

		Global 7	U.S.	U.K.	France	Germany	India	S. Korea	Singapore
Travel on a bus	<div></div> 25		11	26	24	30	25	50	57
Stay in a hotel	<div></div> 24		27	31	27	20	21	20	15
Travel on a train	<div></div> 20		7	27	24	24	20	24	44
Take a taxi or ride share service	<div></div> 17		10	17	8	8	31	32	38
Travel on a subway / metro / underground	<div></div> 17		7	13	18	18	16	37	43
Travel on an airplane	<div></div> 15		16	13	13	8	25	12	11

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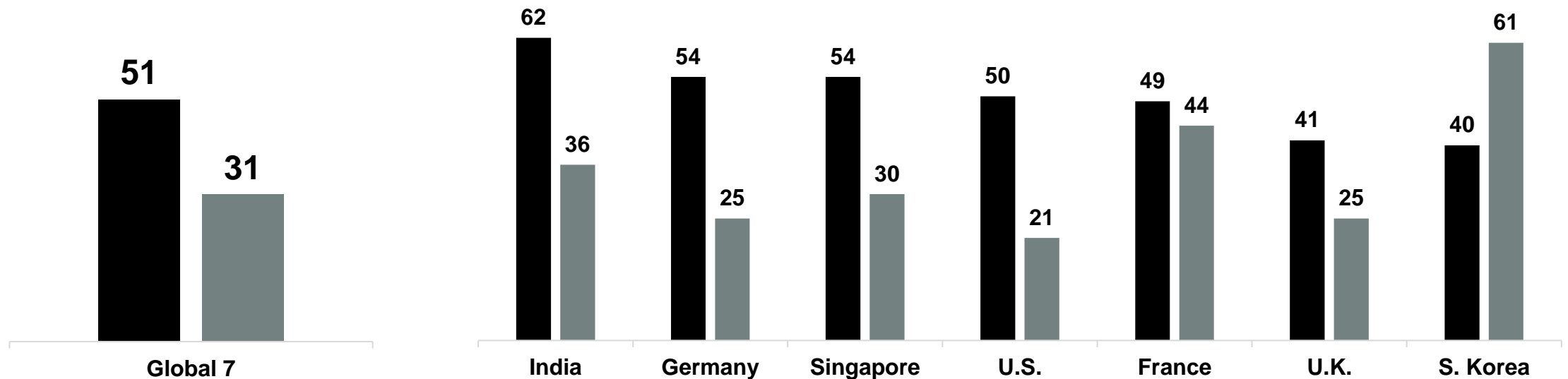
# RETURNING TO THE WORKPLACE

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# ONLY HALF OF EMPLOYEES DEEM OFFICE SPACES SAFE

Percent of employees that...

■ Trust corporate offices are safe given the current situation    ■ Are likely to enter a corporate office in the next three months



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# THERE IS NO CONSENSUS ON THE AUTHORITY FOR RETURN TO WORKPLACE DECISIONS

Percent of employees who say each should lead in making the return to work decision



# MULTIPLE PRECAUTIONS ARE NEEDED FOR EMPLOYEES TO FEEL PROTECTED

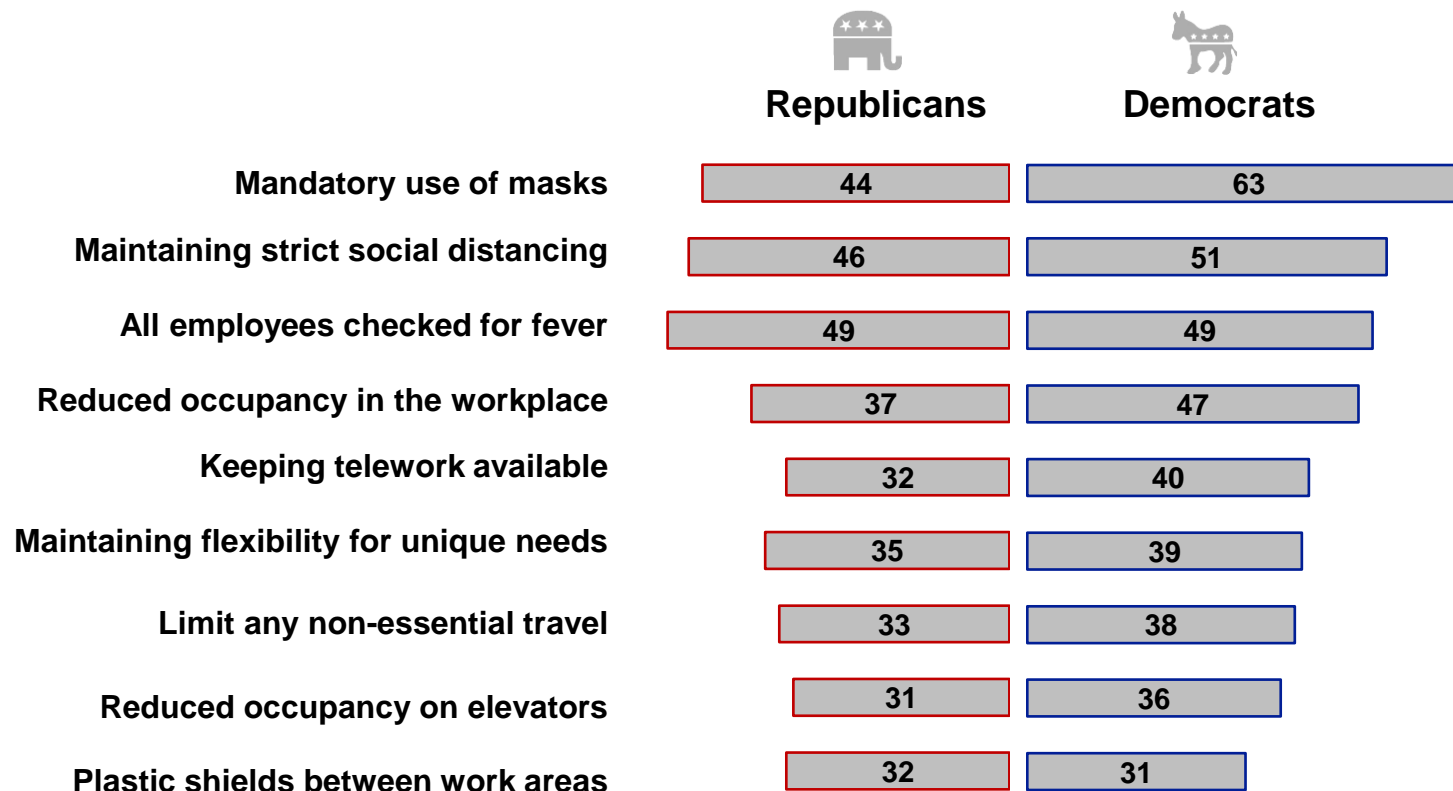
Percent of employees who feel each action is required to ensure the workplace is safe in terms of preventing the spread of the coronavirus

	Global 7	U.S.	U.K.	France	Germany	India	S. Korea	Singapore
Mandatory use of masks	<div><div></div></div> 59	53	43	65	50	71	80	72
Maintaining strict social distancing	<div><div></div></div> 57	47	57	56	51	69	65	67
Reduced occupancy in the workplace	<div><div></div></div> 45	42	51	42	41	53	33	53
All employees checked for fever	<div><div></div></div> 44	46	44	27	16	64	58	63
Limit any non-essential travel	<div><div></div></div> 40	33	36	44	37	48	51	45
Keeping telework available as an option	<div><div></div></div> 37	36	28	42	29	48	35	47
Maintaining flexibility for those with unique needs	<div><div></div></div> 35	35	43	21	29	48	29	41
Reduced occupancy on elevators	<div><div></div></div> 35	32	32	27	34	48	26	46
Plastic shields between work areas	<div><div></div></div> 34	30	46	28	27	49	24	29
Nothing will make my workplace safe	<div><div></div></div> 2	3	1	2	4	-	6	2
Average number of precautionary requirements employees want to see happen:	3.9	3.6	3.8	3.5	3.2	5.0	4.0	4.6



# IN THE U.S., WORKPLACE SAFETY PRECAUTIONS ARE POLITICIZED

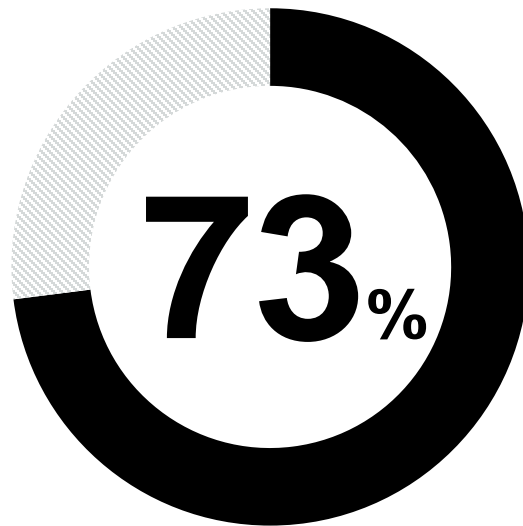
Percent of Democrat and Republican voters saying each precaution should be taken



# FOR NOW, EMPLOYEES FEEL CONFIDENT IN THEIR VIRTUAL WORKPLACE OPTIONS

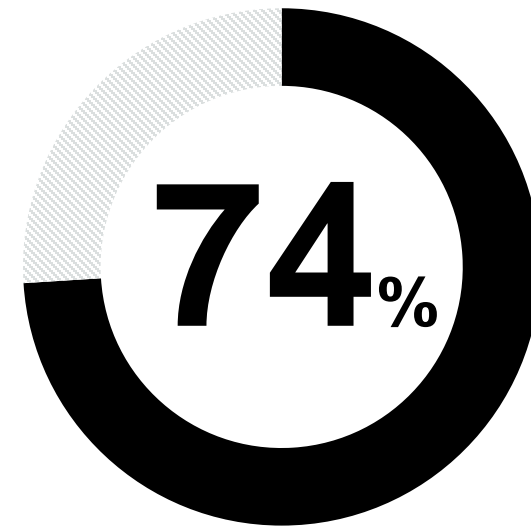
Percent of employees working from home who agree

I have the option to work remotely for the **foreseeable future**



Global 7

I trust that continuing to work remotely **will not hurt my career**



Global 7

80% higher income earners

# EMPLOYERS MUST CONTINUE TO COMMUNICATE AND SET EXPECTATIONS

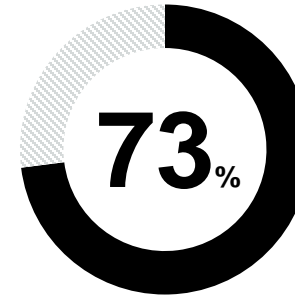
Percent of employees working from home who agree

My employer has effectively **communicated how we are approaching our return to the workplace**

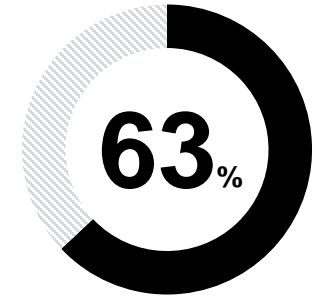
70%

Global 7

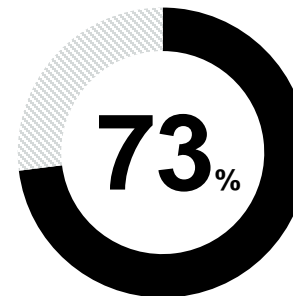
Multinational Organizations



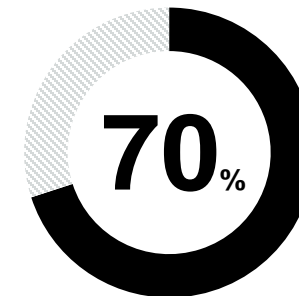
Domestic Organizations



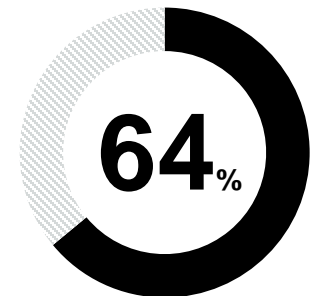
Upper-Level Management



Mid-Level Management



Non Management













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# INFORMATION GATHERING

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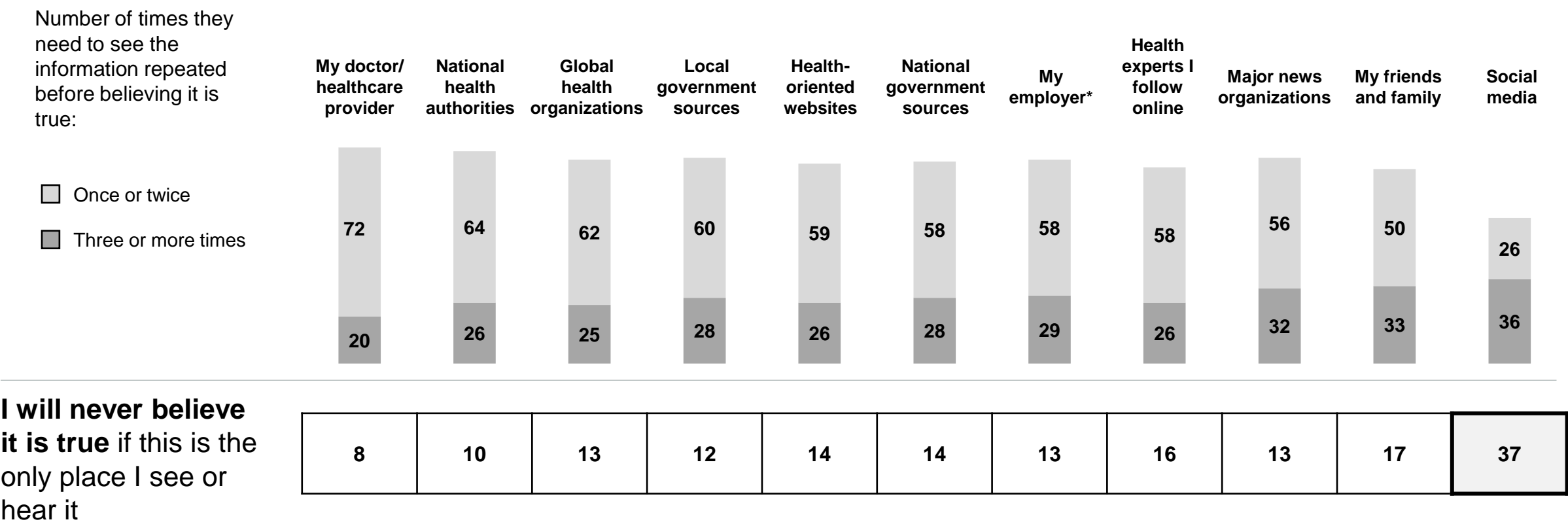
# MAJOR NEWS ORGANIZATIONS ARE THE MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Percent who are getting most of their information about the virus from each source

		Global 7	U.S.	U.K.	France	Germany	India	S. Korea	Singapore
Major news organizations		54	49	60	43	58	58	73	52
National government sources		40	22	46	42	40	56	43	54
National health authorities in your country		36	25	33	45	31	54	27	49
Social media		35	26	23	20	30	69	40	52
Local government sources		32	28	25	23	26	52	27	64
My friends and family		31	24	19	31	26	53	33	38
Global health organizations like the WHO		28	20	22	26	22	57	17	42
My doctor or healthcare provider		21	19	10	33	15	34	12	16

# YET HEALTH EXPERTS ARE TRUSTED MORE READILY

Percent who report they believe coronavirus information from each source



# SOCIAL MEDIA IS DISTRUSTED MOST

Percent who report they **will never believe** information about the coronavirus from each source if this is the only place they see or hear it

		Global 7	U.S.	U.K.	France	Germany	India	S. Korea	Singapore
Social media	<div></div> 37		46	54	47	38	11	17	28
My friends and family	<div></div> 17		22	22	15	17	7	6	19
Health experts I follow online	<div></div> 16		20	22	16	18	5	10	14
Health-oriented websites	<div></div> 14		15	17	28	15	4	7	10
National government sources	<div></div> 14		24	12	13	15	3	5	5
Global health organizations like the WHO	<div></div> 13		20	13	11	16	4	9	6
Major news organizations	<div></div> 13		17	16	15	14	4	3	8
My employer*	<div></div> 13		17	14	14	11	8	13	13
Local government sources	<div></div> 12		18	14	13	14	4	5	5
National health authorities in your country	<div></div> 10		15	8	10	14	3	4	4
My doctor or healthcare provider	<div></div> 8		11	8	5	10	4	3	8

2020 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: Workplace Trust and the Coronavirus. Q2. When you see or hear a new piece of information about the coronavirus from each of the following, how many times do you need to see it or hear it repeated before you believe it is really true? Please select one response for each. "My employer" was only asked of those who are employees. 7-mkt avg. Data collected between August 23 and August 26, 2020.

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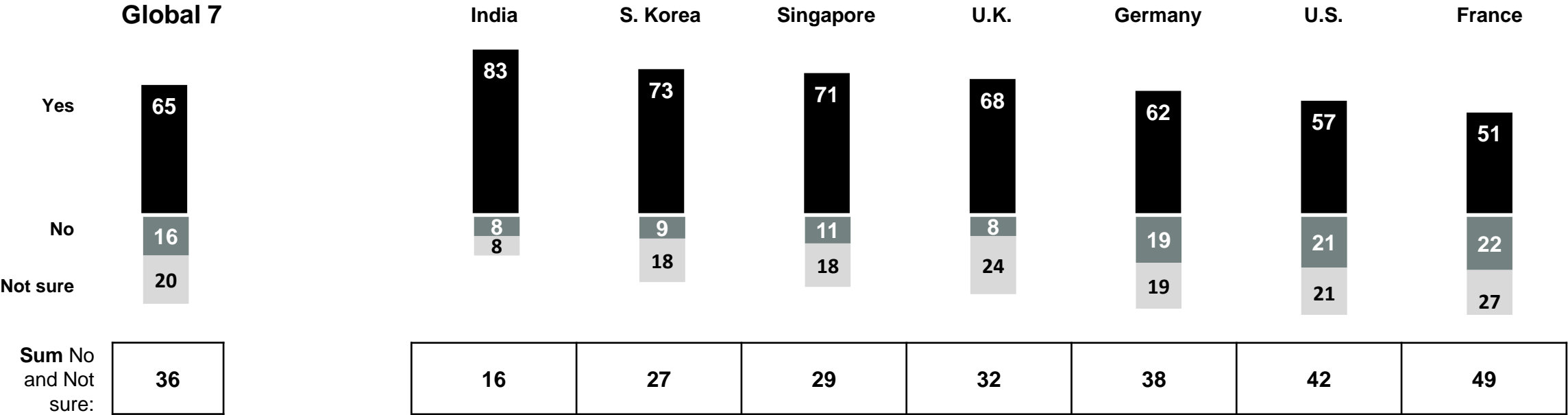
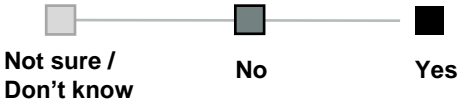
# VACCINE RECEPTIVITY

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# VACCINE RECEPTIVITY IS MIXED

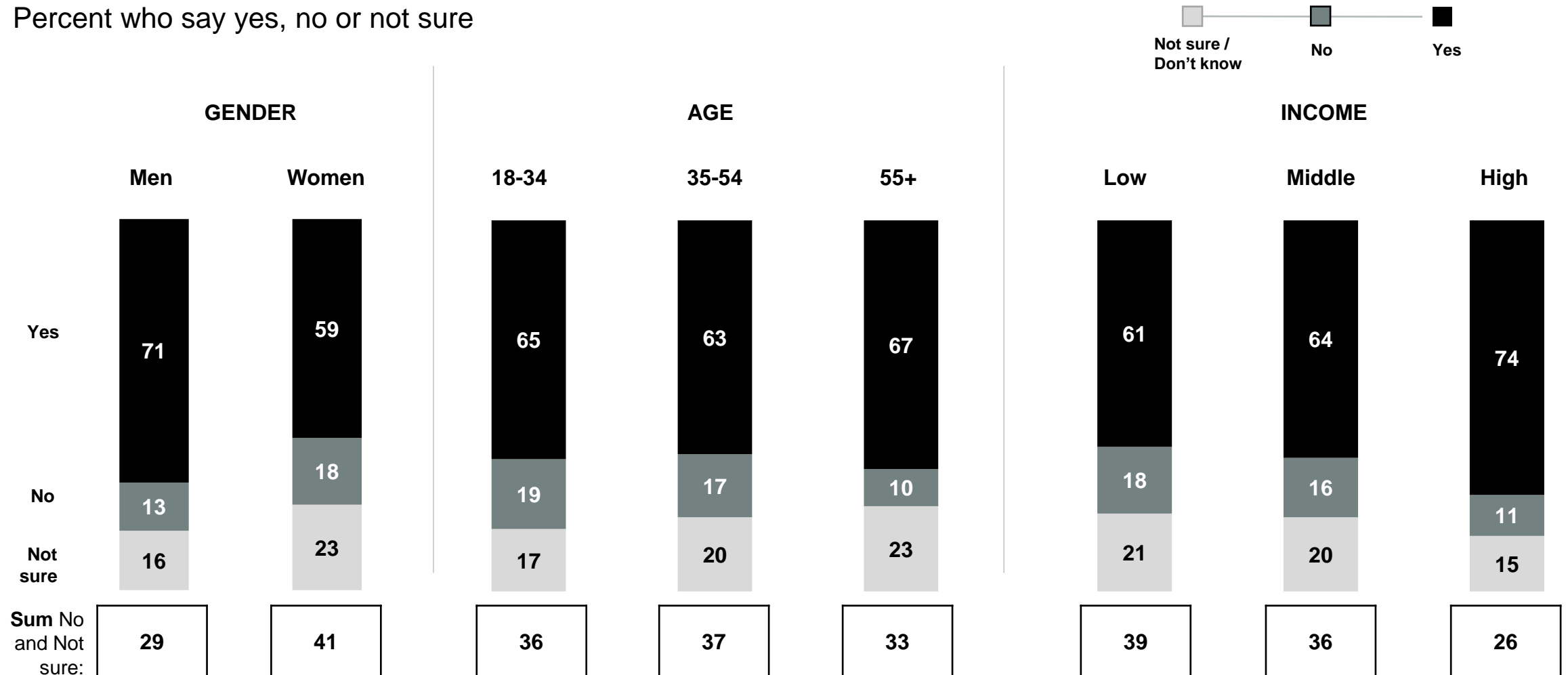
Percent who say yes, no or not sure

Would you **take a government approved, no cost vaccine** if it were available?



# WOMEN AND LOWER INCOME HOUSEHOLDS, GLOBALLY, ARE MOST HESITANT

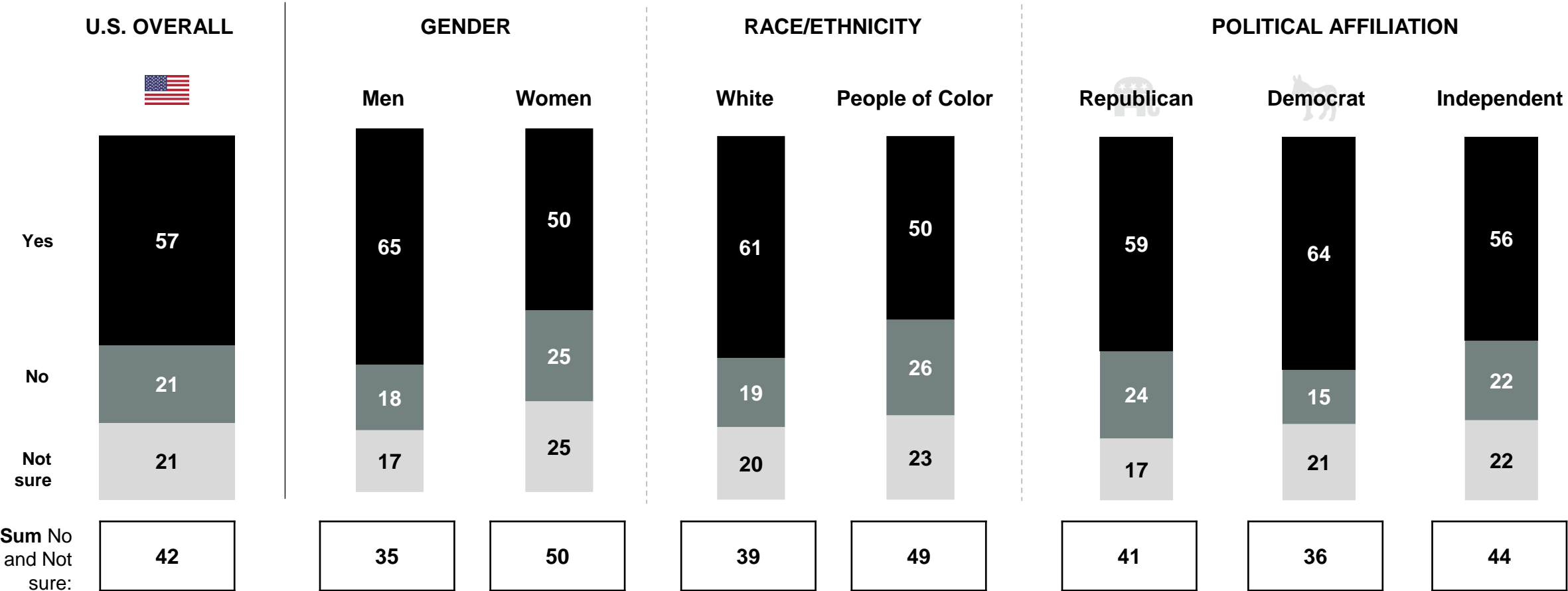
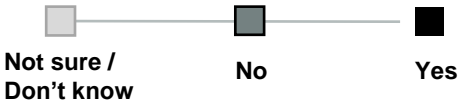
Percent who say yes, no or not sure





# IN THE U.S., WOMEN, PEOPLE OF COLOR, AND REPUBLICANS/INDEPENDENTS ARE UNCERTAIN

Percent who say yes, no or not sure

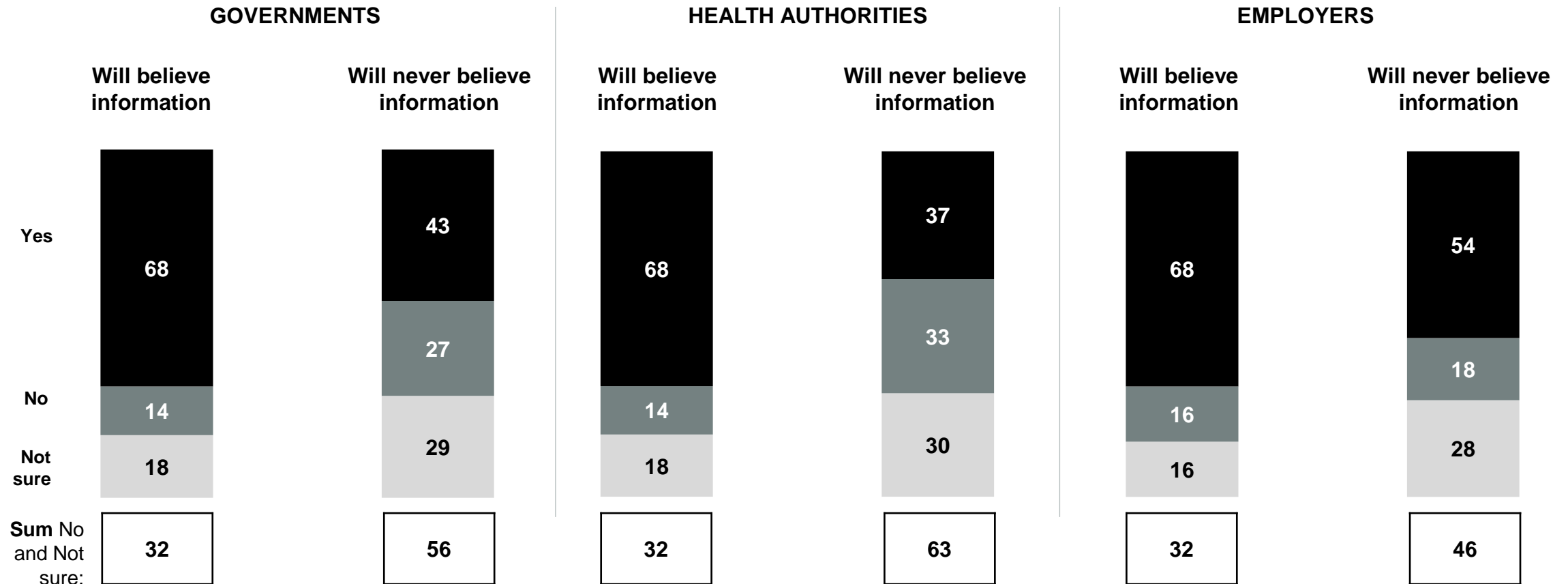
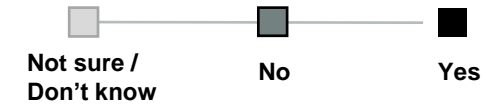


2020 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: Workplace Trust and the Coronavirus. Q11. Would you take a government approved, no cost vaccine if it were available? (Please select one response.) U.S. Data collected between August 23 and August 26, 2020.



# VACCINE RECEPTIVITY REQUIRES TRUST IN AN INFLUENTIAL SOURCE

Percent who say yes, no or not sure



# BUILDING TRUST DURING THE CORONAVIRUS

**1.**

Uncertainty and fear about COVID is creating “stay put” mindset globally

**2.**

There is a trust issue on return to the workplace – employees want multiple safety precautions and consistent communications

**3.**

An information mismatch exists between where people get information and trusted sources on the virus

**4.**

Strong science *and* trustworthy communications are required to build openness to a vaccine

# FIVE TANGIBLE STEPS FOR BUSINESS TO RETURN TO THE WORKPLACE

**1.**

**Partner with local officials to remove obstacles to confidently returning to work, including safer commuting options and more flexibility in the workday**

**2.**

**Disseminate high-quality, reliable information from expert sources and insist on wearing a mask and physically distancing**

**3.**

**Use data, insist on contact tracing and testing, even of asymptomatic people, and be as transparent as possible when an employee falls ill**

**4.**

**As business performance rebounds, reward and recognize employees**

**5.**

**Create a new position of Chief Public Health Officer aimed at the intersection of community wellness and business priorities**