

2025 Edelman Trust Barometer

Special Report:
The Unseen Impacts of COVID

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Methodology

Online survey

Fieldwork conducted: Feb 18 – Feb 24, 2025



Brazil **India** **UK** **U.S.**

Data collected is representative of the general population across age, gender, region and ethnicity (where applicable) within each country.

*The sample size varies by country, from 959 to 1,006.

Country-specific data margin of error: General population +/- 4.1 to 4.2 percentage points (varies by country based on sample size, n=959 to n=1,006).

Margin of error is calculated at the 99% confidence level.

Language and question text

The use of “COVID” throughout the report is meant to reflect the popular usage of the term as inclusive of the virus SARS-CoV-2, the disease COVID-19, and the era of societal dysregulation that the pandemic brought.

Throughout the report, question text has been edited for readability.

Demographic comparisons

Insights related to age, income, and political leaning are an aggregate[^] of the total sample collected within the four markets surveyed. They are meant to be compared to other segments within each demographic rather than generalized to a wider population. For example, young adults are more likely to have a given attitude than older adults. We do not claim an absolute percentage of young people around the world have the same attitude.

[^]When reported, the aggregate number for each demographic has been analyzed within country to ensure the pattern is true in at least three of the four countries. Any instance where a country's specific age, income, or political leaning demographic pattern doesn't hold true will be noted in the footer on the affected slide.

For more details on the margin of error, country-specific sample information, or to see the full text for any shortened statements, please see the Technical Appendix.

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COVID in Context

Grievance held against elites

6 in 10 worldwide hold a sense of grievance against business, government, and the wealthy. Most feel the system is stacked against them.

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Empowered attitudes go global

2 in 3 worldwide feel confident in making health decisions, speaking up to providers, and informing themselves on health.

2024 Special Report: Trust and Health

Authority spreads to peers

After primary care providers and pharmacists, my friends and family are the most trusted health voice.

2024 Special Report: Trust and Health

Trust in health journalism falls

From 2019 to 2024, trust in accuracy of media reporting on healthcare fell 14 pts, from 57 to 43 pts.

2024 Special Report: Trust and Health



COVID Failures Erode Trust

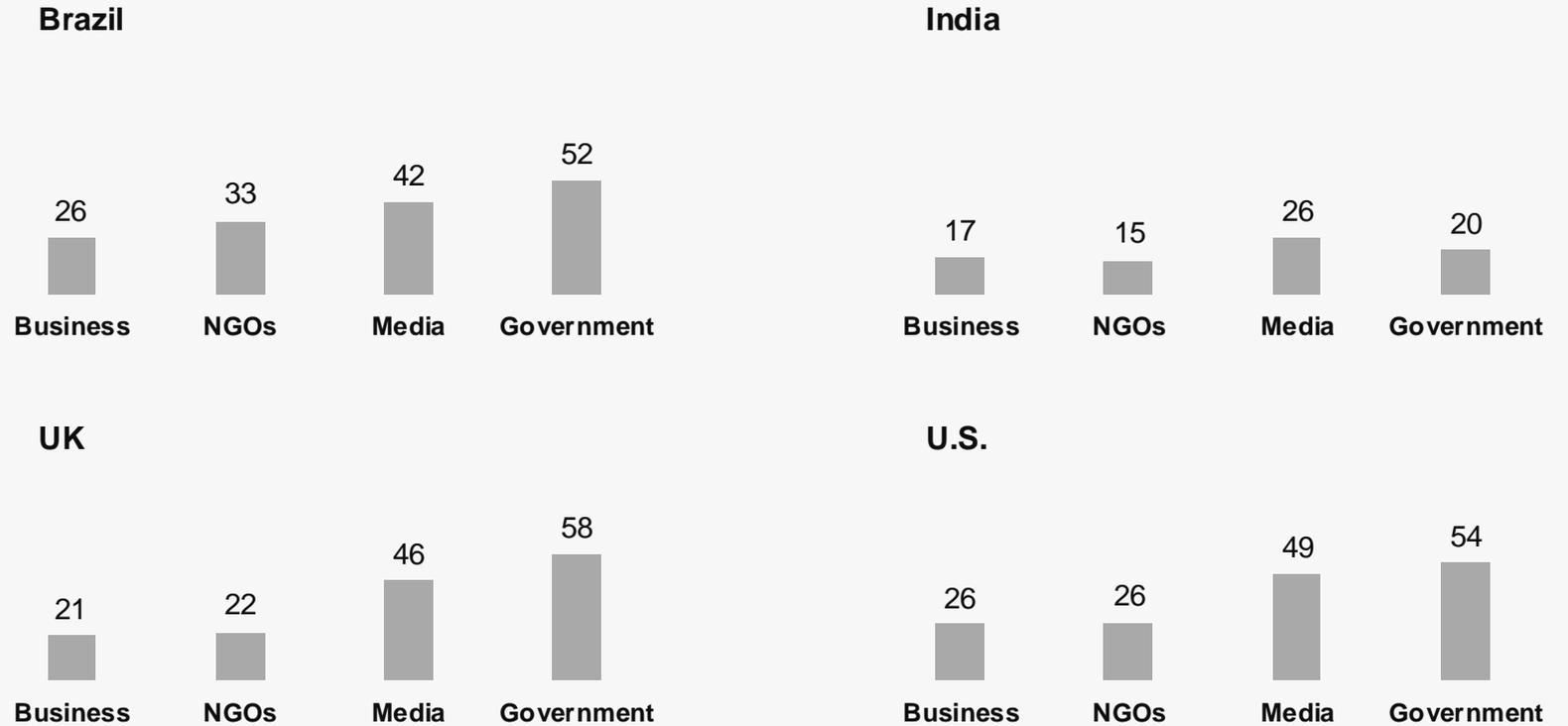


COVID Decreased Ability to Trust in Institutions

Percent who say

The COVID-19 pandemic decreased my ability to trust in each institution

Majority in Brazil, UK, U.S. lost trust in government due to COVID

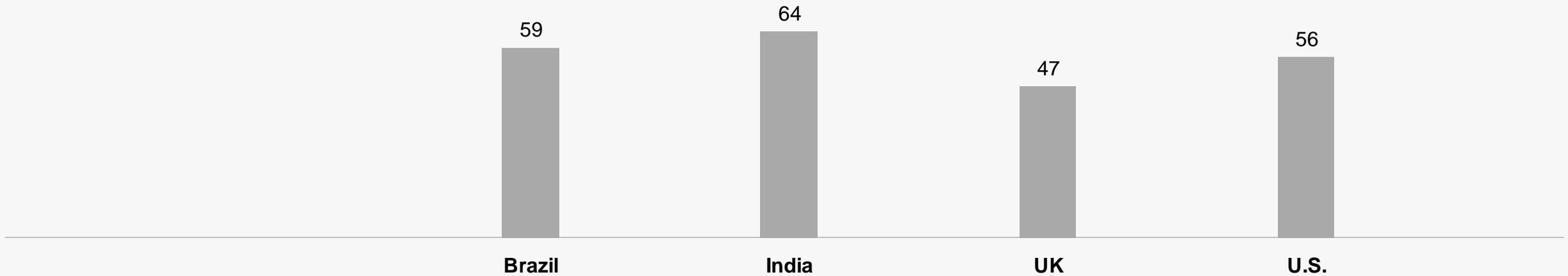


COVID Narrowed Which News Sources We Trust

Percent who say

As a result of living through the COVID-19 pandemic,

I can only trust a more curated group of sources for my news



COVID Intensified Grievance Against Business, Government, and the Wealthy

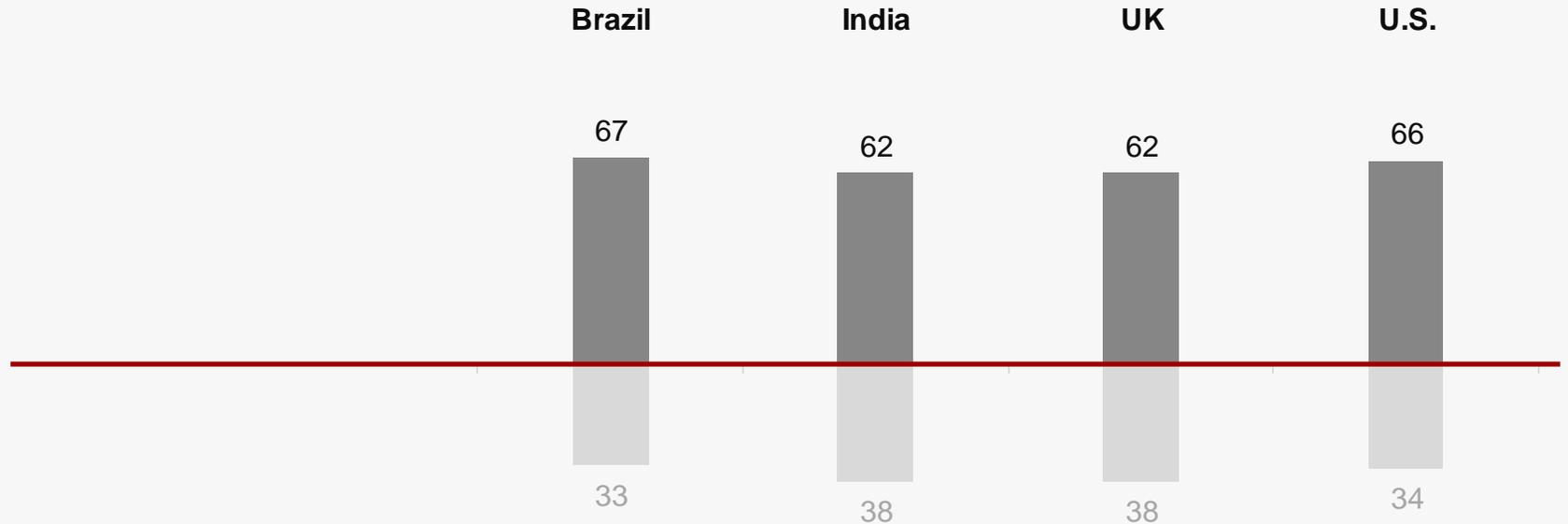
Which best describes your view?

The COVID-19 pandemic made me feel...

...**a greater sense of grievance** against business, government, and the rich

--- or ---

...**less of a sense of grievance** against business, government, and the rich

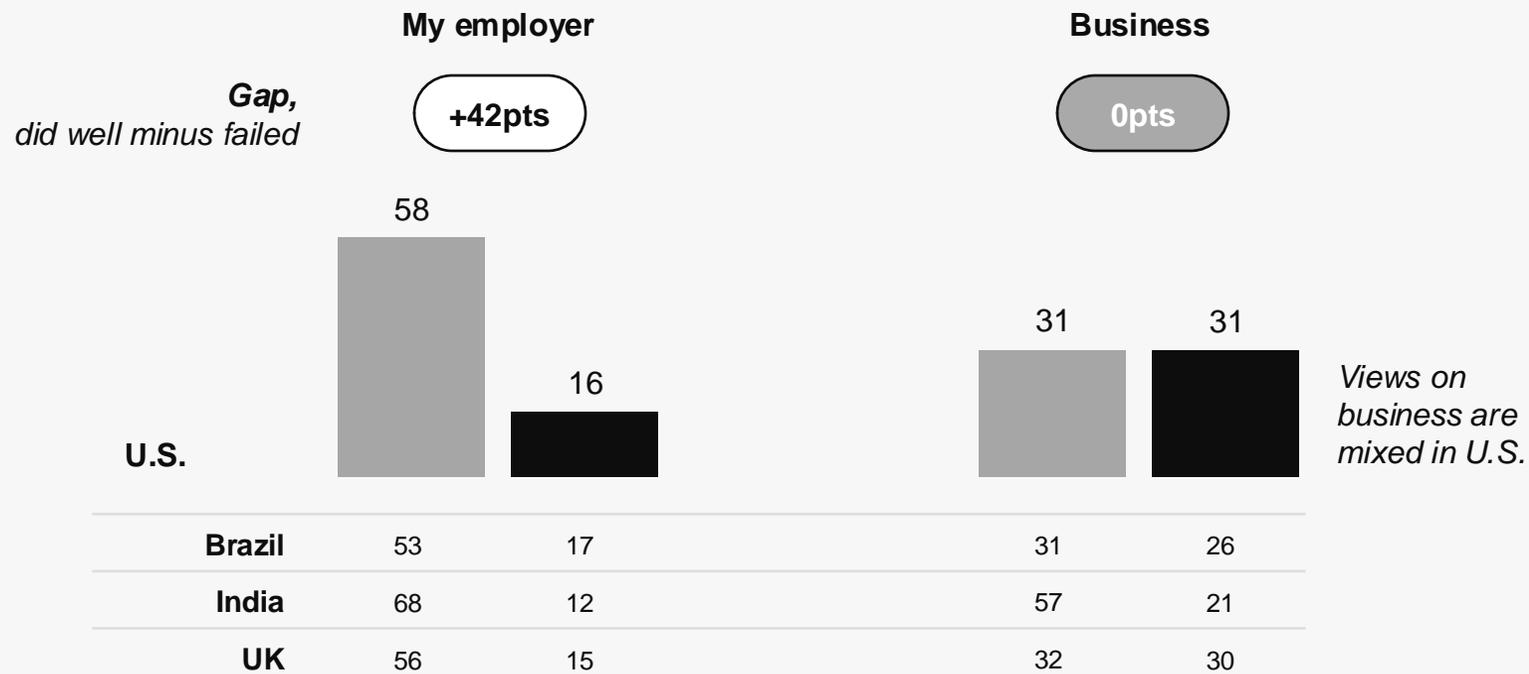


My Employer Successfully Met COVID Challenges, But Not Business Overall

Percent who say

On addressing COVID-19 pandemic challenges,

■ This institution did well ■ This institution failed



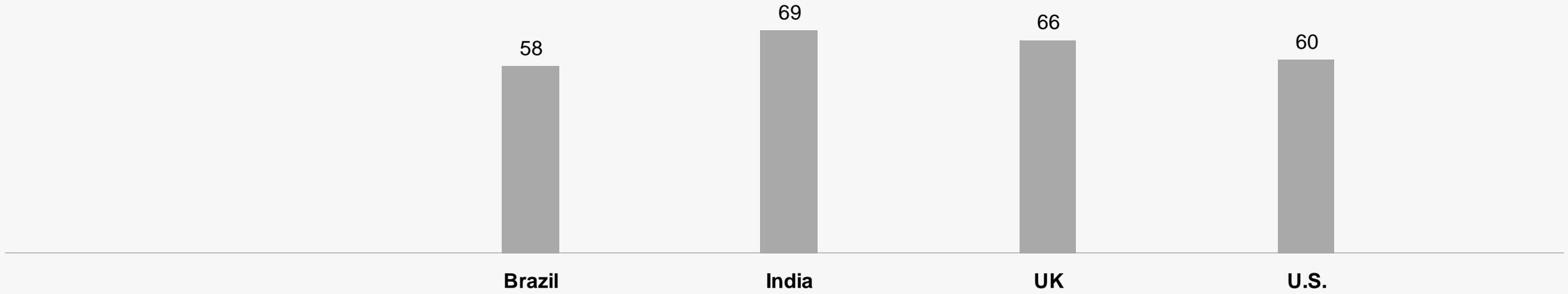
2025 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: The Unseen Impacts of COVID. COV_RSP_RATE. For each of the following institutions, please indicate how well you think they did in responding to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. 5-point scale; top 2 box, did well; bottom 2 box, failed. "My employer" only asked to those who are an employee of an organization (Q43/1). General population, by country.



COVID Gave Business an Excuse to Raise Prices

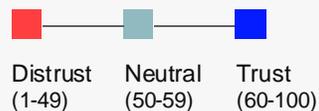
Percent who agree

Business used the pandemic as **an excuse to raise prices** as people struggled to afford everyday items



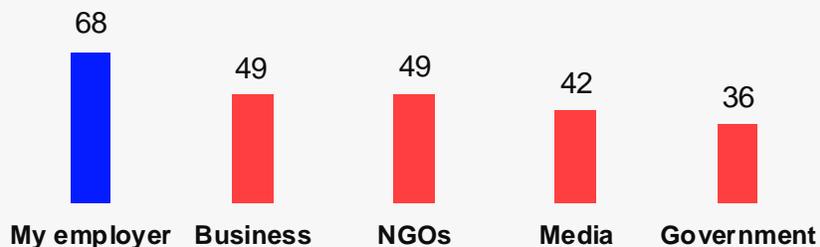
Future Pandemic Response: My Employer Trusted, Business Less So

Percent who say

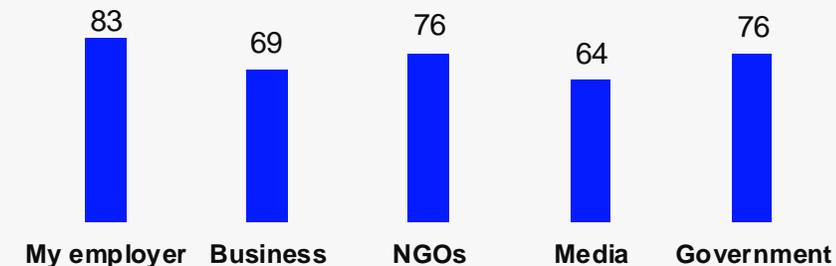


I trust this institution to do what is right in the event of another pandemic

Brazil

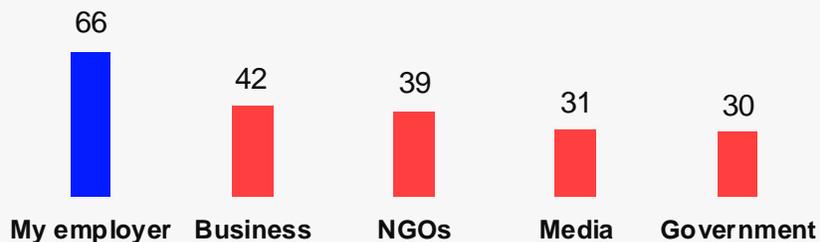


India



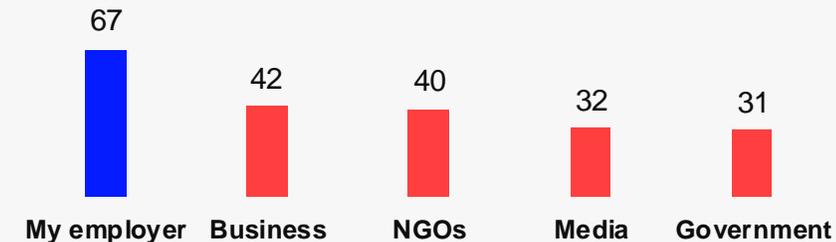
Higher trust across institutions in India

UK



Business distrusted in Brazil, UK, U.S.

U.S.



COVID Undermined Science in Society



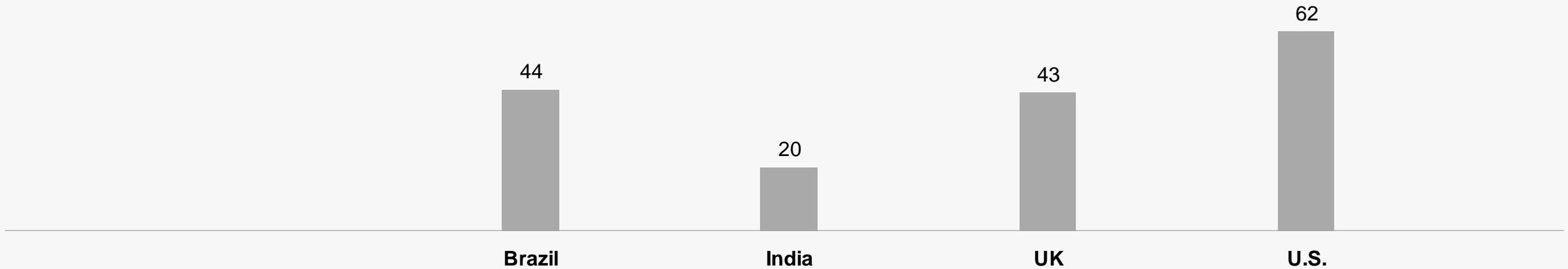
Since COVID, Science Less Respected by My Fellow Citizens

Percent who say

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic,

people in my country

are less likely to trust in and abide by science

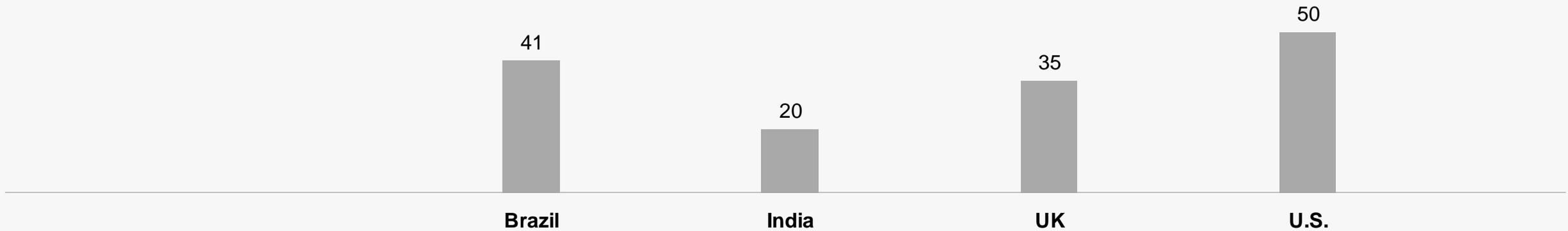


Since COVID, Science Less Respected by My Government

Percent who say

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic,

my government makes science less of a priority in its decision-making process

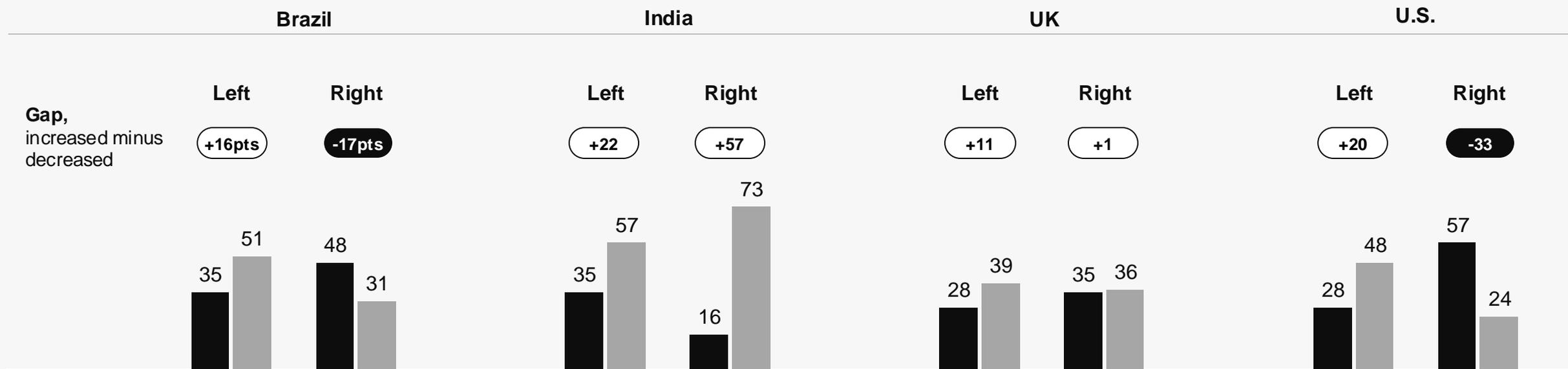


Since COVID, Ability to Trust in Health Authorities More Politically Polarized

Percent who say, by political leaning

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, my ability to trust in national health authorities

■ decreased ■ increased



2025 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: The Unseen Impacts of COVID. COV_TRU_CNG. Thinking about the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on your life and community, please indicate what kind of impact it has had on your ability to trust each of the following institutions and groups of people to do what is right. 5-point scale; bottom 2 box, decreased my trust; top 2 box, increased my trust. General population, by political leaning in each country.



Because of COVID, Many Pick Healthcare Providers Based On Politics

Percent who agree

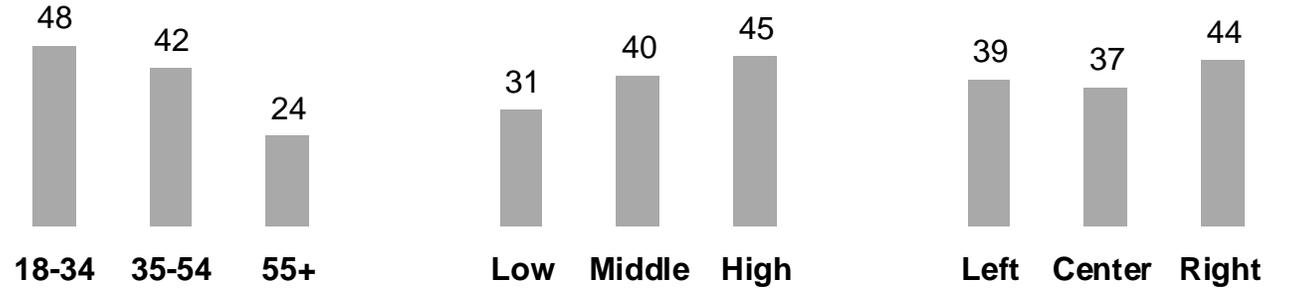
Due to the COVID-19 pandemic,

I seek out health care providers who share my political beliefs



Age | Income | Politics*

Young people most likely to choose health providers based on politics



2025 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: The Unseen Impacts of COVID. COV_AGR. Please read the following statements and indicate how much you agree or disagree with each. 9-point scale; top 4 box, agree. General population, by country; 4-mkt avg., by age, income, and political leaning. *The pattern shown in the 4-mkt avg. for political leaning is not true in Brazil.



Future Pandemic Response: Health Institutions Not Uniformly Trusted

Percent who say

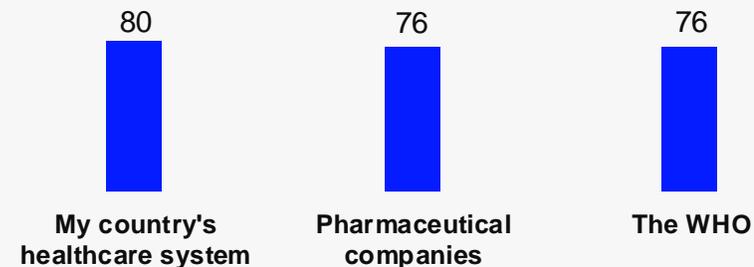


I trust this institution to do what is right in the event of another pandemic

Brazil



India



UK



U.S.



2025 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: The Unseen Impacts of COVID. TRU_PAN_PREP. For each of the below, please indicate how much you trust each of the following institutions to do what is right to keep you and your community safe in the event of another pandemic. 9-point scale; top 4 box, trust. General population, by country.



COVID Is Still Happening For Young Adults



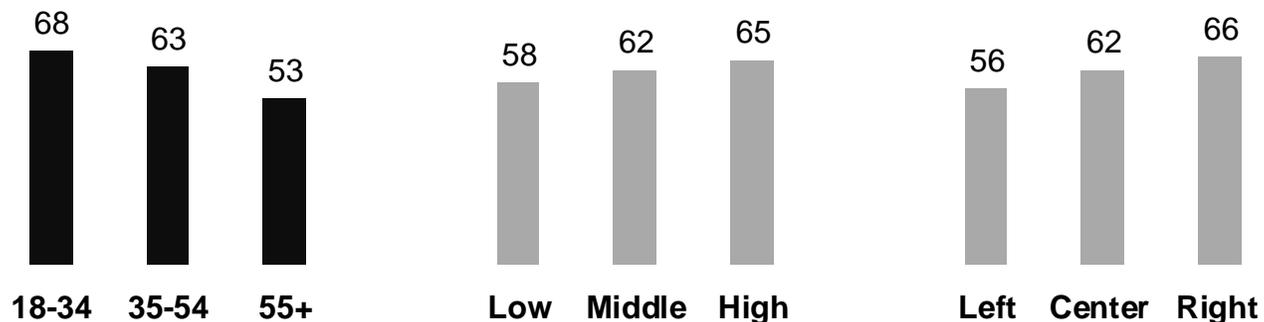
Young Adults Most Likely to Say COVID Upended Their Lives

Percent who say

The COVID-19 pandemic guidelines were **moderately or more disruptive to my lifestyle** at the time

Age | Income | Politics

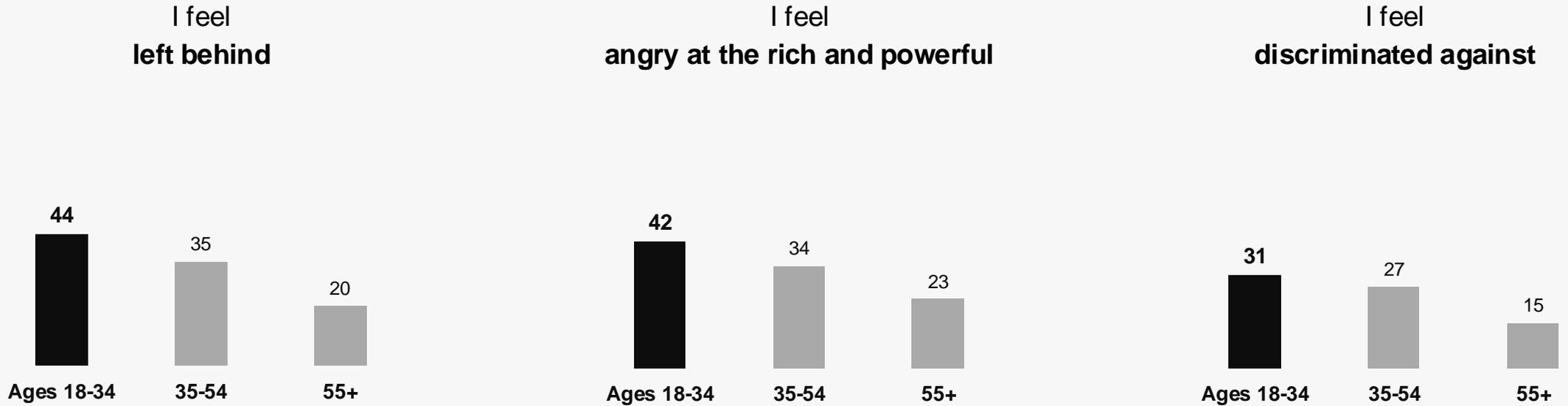
Nearly 7 in 10 young adults had their lives disrupted by pandemic guidelines



Young Adults Most Likely to Harbor a Sense of Grievance Due to COVID

Percent who say

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic,

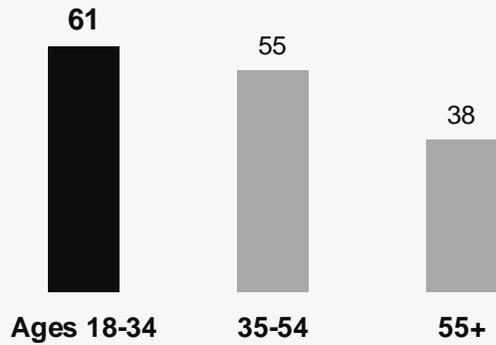


Young Adults Feel Most Vulnerable Due to COVID

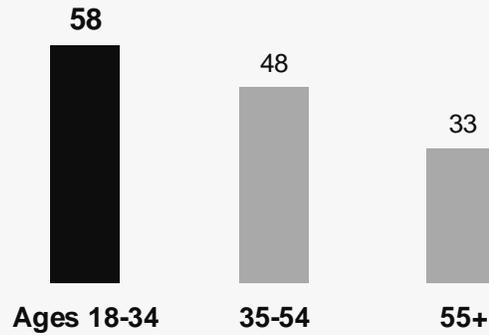
Percent who say

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic,

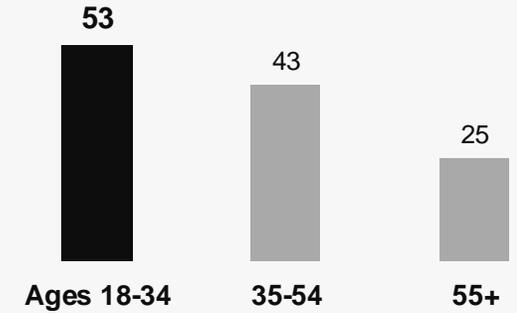
I feel increased financial anxieties



I feel lonely and isolated



I feel depressed and anxious

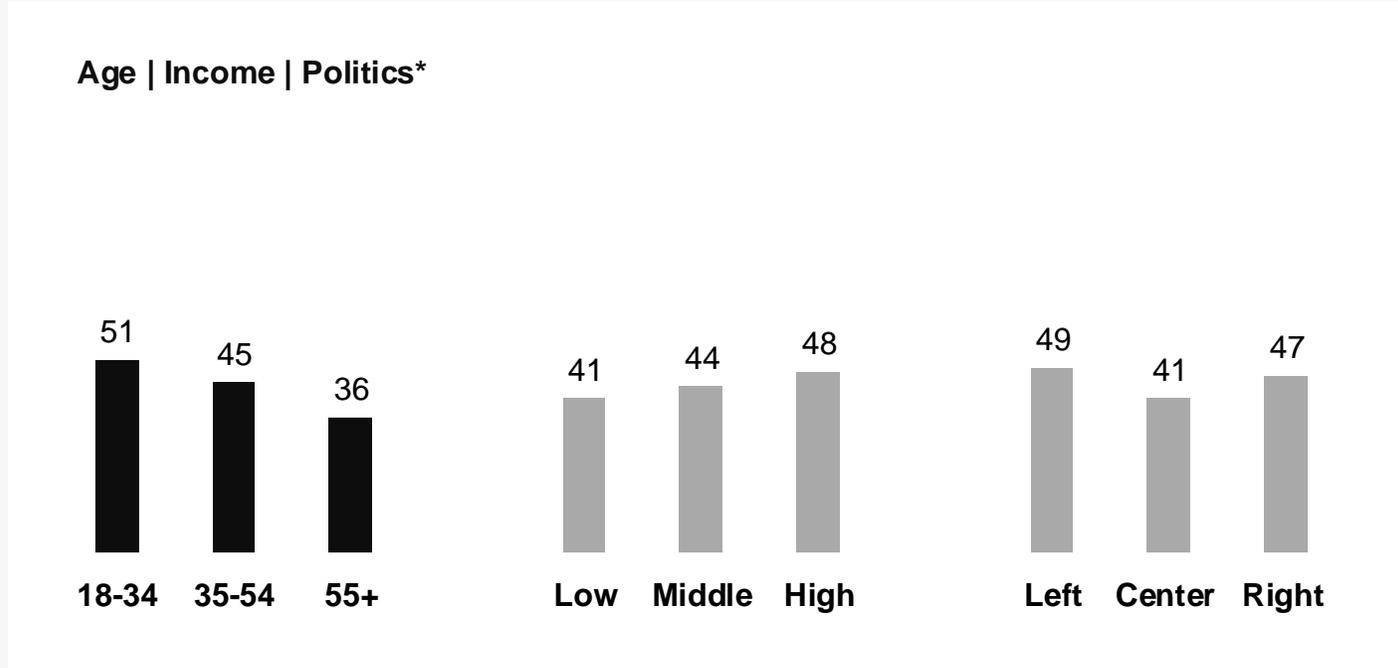


Young Adults Most Worried the Social Fabric Has Frayed

Percent who say

As a result of living through the COVID-19 pandemic,

I have lost faith that my country
will rally together in times of crisis



2025 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: The Unseen Impacts of COVID. COV_LEG_EFF. Do you experience any of the following as a direct or indirect result of living through the COVID-19 pandemic? Code 1, yes. General population, 4-mkt avg., by age, income, and political leaning. *The pattern shown in the 4-mkt avg. for political leaning is not true in UK.

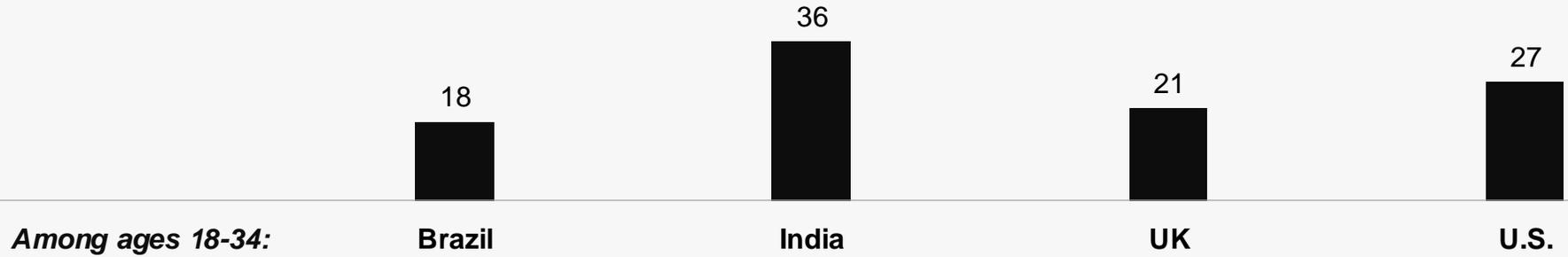


Due to COVID, Young Adults Opt Out of Parenthood

Percent who agree, among ages 18-34

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic,
I have decided not to have children

*Over 1 in 4 younger
Americans decided against
having kids due to COVID*



How to Prepare for the Next Pandemic



To Prepare For a Future Pandemic, Take Accountability for Failures and Make Plans Public

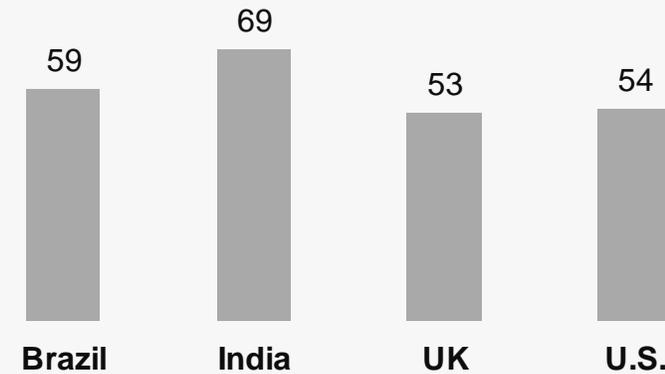
Percent who say

To prepare us for a future pandemic, it would be very or extremely helpful to...

analyze what went wrong
with the COVID-19 pandemic



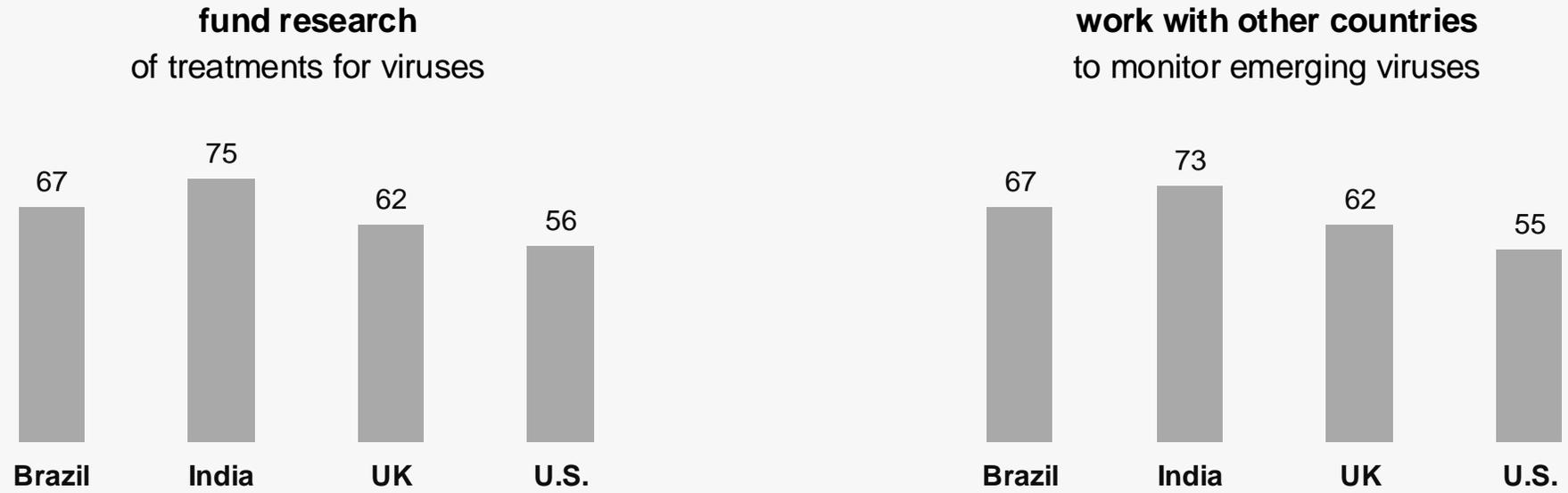
publish a plan for how the government would handle a pandemic



To Prepare For a Future Pandemic, Invest in Scientific Research and Global Cooperation

Percent who say

To prepare us for a future pandemic, it would be very or extremely helpful to...



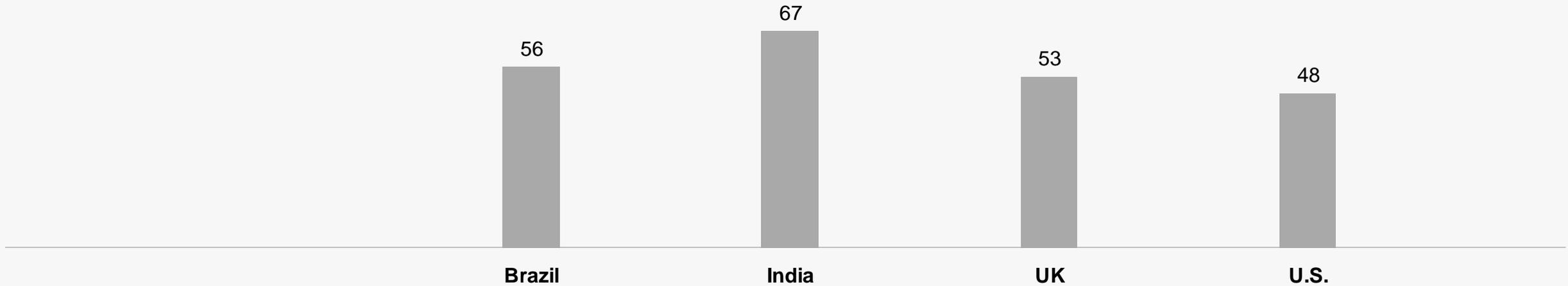
2025 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: The Unseen Impacts of COVID. PAN_FUT. How much would each of the following help to make you feel that your country is adequately prepared in the event of a potential future pandemic? 5-point scale; top 2 box, very or extremely helpful. General population, by country.



To Prepare For a Future Pandemic, Fight Misinformation

Percent who say

To prepare us for a future pandemic, it would be very or extremely helpful to **restrict pandemic misinformation on social media**



For A Future Pandemic, Communicate Through Experts and Care Providers

Percent who say, showing top 2 of 13 sources

In the event of a potential future pandemic,
I would trust each to provide accurate information
 about recommendations and updates

Top 2 of 13:

Brazil	%
Scientists and academics	58
My doctor	48

India	%
Scientists and academics	52
My country's government	52

UK	%
Scientists and academics	54
My doctor	44

U.S.	%
My doctor	55
Scientists and academics	51



Rebuild Trust After COVID

Reckon with COVID legacy

The pandemic continues to shape both society as a whole and individual everyday lives. It has intensified grievances against institutions and the wealthy. Institutions, brands, and societal leaders must reckon with its impact on trust.

Bolster business trust

Majorities across Brazil, India, UK, and U.S. think that business used the pandemic as an excuse to raise costs. To earn back trust, be transparent. Explain the source of price increases and work to make products more affordable.

Rejuvenate science in society

While scientists themselves are trusted, science as an entity has lost status in society. To be ready for the next crisis, scientific research must be seen as unbiased and done in the interest of all.

Connect the younger generation

People under 35 had their traditional opportunities to initiate their adulthood taken away from them by a global catastrophe. Institutions and leaders must invest in mental health and facilitate social connections.



Technical Appendix



2025 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: The Unseen Impacts of COVID: The Sample

Sample Size, Quotas and Margin of Error

Country	Weighted Sample Size ¹	Unweighted Sample Size	Margin of Error ²	Quotas Set On ³
Brazil	1,000	1,000	+/- 4.1 percentage points	Age, gender, region
India	1,000	959	+/- 4.2 pct. pts.	
UK	1,000	1,001	+/- 4.1 pct. pts.	
U.S.	1,000	1,006	+/- 4.1 pct. pts.	

1. Data reported on slides is weighted to the same total base size to ensure each country has an equal effect any aggregated totals. Please refer to the footnotes on each slide for details.

2. Margin of error is calculated on the unweighted sample sizes, utilizing a 99% confidence interval.

3. There were additional quotas on ethnicity in the UK and U.S.



2025 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: The Unseen Impacts of COVID: The Sample

Survey Languages Used and Internet Penetration by Country

	Languages	Internet Penetration*
Brazil	Portuguese	84%
India	Localized English	43%
UK	Localized English	95%
U.S.	English, Localized Spanish	97%

*Data source: [Individuals using the Internet \(% of population\) | Data \(worldbank.org\)](#) as of March 6, 2025.

Due to disproportionate access to internet in countries with lower internet penetration, the online sample in those countries tends to skew younger, urban, and more affluent.



2025 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: The Unseen Impacts of COVID: The Sample

Other Referenced Data

<i>Data label in this report:</i>		Grievance held against elites	Empowered attitudes go global	Authority spreads to peers	Trust in health journalism falls
Report title		2025 Edelman Trust Barometer	2024 Special Report: Trust and Health		
Release date		January 2025	April 2024		
Fielding dates		October 25 – November 16, 2024	March 4 – March 13, 2024		
Sample size (unweighted)	General population	n33,194	n11,951		



Full Text for Shortened Answer Choices



2025 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: The Unseen Impacts of COVID:
Full Text for Shortened Answer Choices

Since COVID, Science Less Respected by my Fellow Citizens

COV_SOC_CNG. For each of the following, please indicate whether you think it is better or worse in your country because of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Shortened text	Full text
People in my country are less likely to trust in and abide by science	The degree to which people in your country trust in and abide by science and scientific recommendations



2025 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: The Unseen Impacts of COVID:
Full Text for Shortened Answer Choices

Since COVID, Science Less Respected by my Government

COV_SOC_CNG. For each of the following, please indicate whether you think it is better or worse in your country because of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Shortened text	Full text
My government makes science less of a priority in its decision-making process	The extent to which the government prioritizes scientific facts in decision-making



2025 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: The Unseen Impacts of COVID:
Full Text for Shortened Answer Choices

Young Adults Most Worried the Social Fabric Has Frayed

COV_LEG_EFF. Do you experience any of the following as a direct or indirect result of living through the COVID-19 pandemic?

Shortened text

I have lost faith that my country
will rally together in times of crisis

Full text

Loss of faith in the belief that the people of this country rally together in times of crisis and take care of each other



2025 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: The Unseen Impacts of COVID:
Full Text for Shortened Answer Choices

To Prepare For a Future Pandemic, Take Accountability for Failures and Make Plans Public

PAN_FUT. How much would each of the following help to make you feel that your country is adequately prepared in the event of a potential future pandemic?

Shortened text

Publish a plan for how the government would handle a pandemic

Full text

Developing and publicizing an explicit plan or set of procedures for how the government would intend to handle a pandemic



2025 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: The Unseen Impacts of COVID:
Full Text for Shortened Answer Choices

To Prepare For a Future Pandemic, Invest in Scientific Research and Global Cooperation

PAN_FUT. How much would each of the following help to make you feel that your country is adequately prepared in the event of a potential future pandemic?

Shortened text

Fund research of treatments for viruses

Full text

The government providing funding to scientific research aimed at developing treatments for viruses



2025 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: The Unseen Impacts of COVID:
Full Text for Shortened Answer Choices

To Prepare For a Future Pandemic, Fight Misinformation

PAN_FUT. How much would each of the following help to make you feel that your country is adequately prepared in the event of a potential future pandemic?

Shortened text

Restrict pandemic misinformation
on social media

Full text

Restrictions on social media platforms about posting misinformation and lies about pandemic data, guidelines, and recommendations

