

Community Voices for the Economy: 2011

Ms. Foundation for Women

Building women's collective power to ignite change

Findings from a Survey of 1,515 adults, including oversamples of African American women, Latinas, Asian/Pacific Islander women, and men and women ages 18 to 29

**Commissioned by the Ms. Foundation for
Women**

April 2011

Lake Research Partners

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Survey Methodology

- Lake Research Partners conducted this survey from March 15-24, 2011. The survey reached a total of 1,515 adults nationwide, including oversamples of 100 African American women, 100 Latinas, 100 Asian/ Pacific Islander/ Native Hawaiian Women, and 100 men and women ages 18 to 29. Relevant cases from the base were folded into the oversamples.
- The national sample and interviewing were provided by Knowledge Networks using an address-based sampling methodology (ABS) and was administered online. ABS is a random-sampling technique that involves probability-based sampling of addresses from the U.S. Postal Service's Delivery Sequence File, designed to account for cell-phone only households who are excluded from a landline-RDD sampling frame. Knowledge Networks supplies netbook computers and free Internet service to non-Internet households.
- The oversamples have been weighted down to their accurate proportions for the U.S. general population. The data has been slightly weighted to reflect the attributes of the U.S. adult general population, based on U.S. Census data. The margin of sampling error for the overall sample is +/- 2.5 percentage points. The margin of error for the African American women oversample is +/- 8.0 percentage points, the margin of error for the Latina oversample is +/- 7.5 percentage points. The margin of error for the Asian/Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian women oversample is +/- 8.1 percentage points. The margin of error for the oversample of men and women ages 18 to 29 is +/- 5.2 percentage points.
- Many of the questions reported here are tracking questions from the 2010 Community Voices for the Economy survey, which was an RDD telephone survey LRP conducted from January 19 to February 3, 2010. The 2010 survey reached a total of 1,004 adults nationwide, with oversamples of 100 African American women, 100 Latinas, 100 single mothers, and 200 low income women.

Key Findings

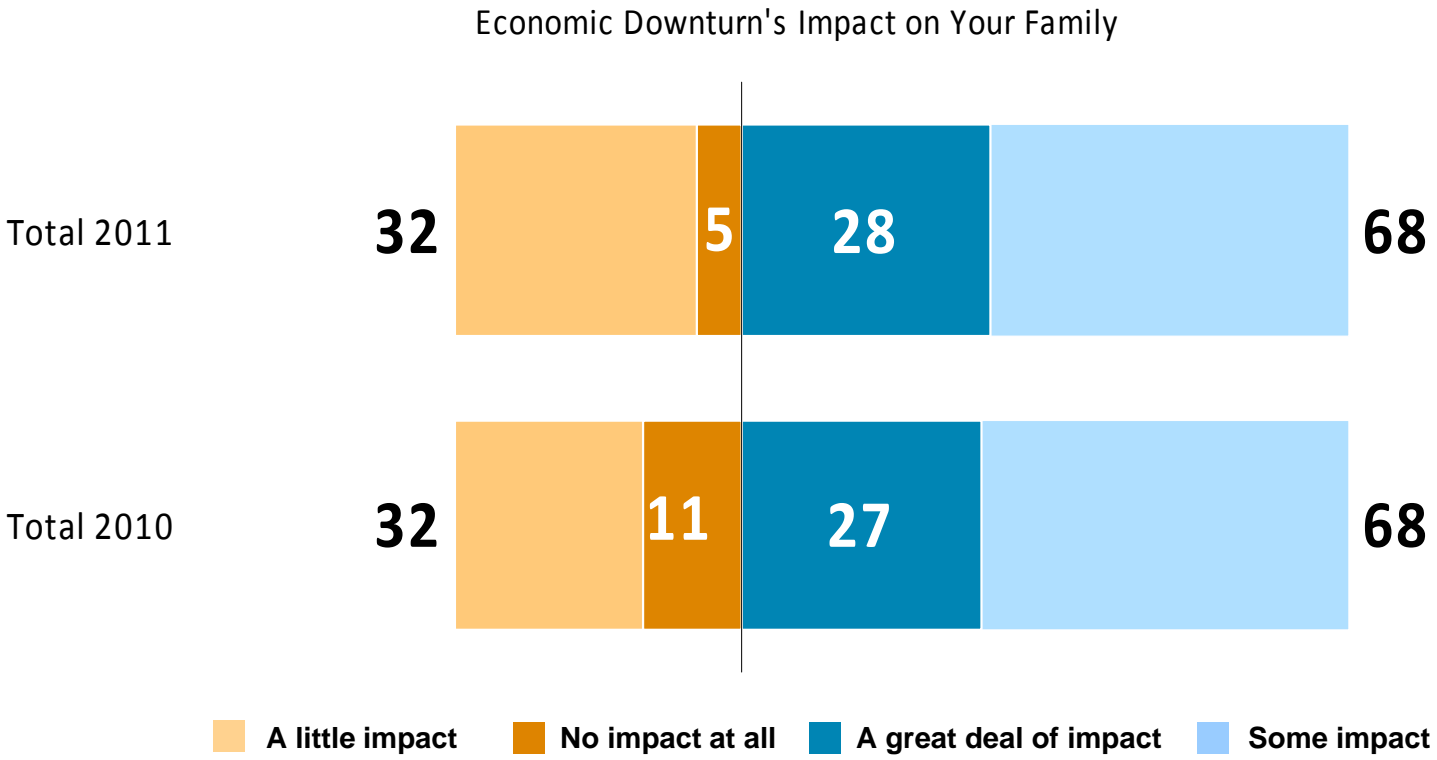
- Despite the so-called “recovery,” the economic downturn continues to have a real impact on two-thirds of Americans. This is similar to 2010, where two-thirds of Americans felt the downturn had some or a great deal of impact on them. Unmarried women, single-mothers, blue-collar women, low-income women, Latinas, and people ages 30-64 particularly feel hard hit.
- Almost half of Americans are living paycheck to paycheck all or most of the time. This has increased five points from 2010. This increase is seen across most demographic groups.
- A plurality (46 percent) worry that they or someone in their household could be out of a job in the next year. Blue-collar Americans, Latinas, and low-income women are most concerned.
- A solid majority of Americans (59 percent) feel economically worse off than they were four years ago. Just over four in ten (41 percent) feel better off than they were four years ago.
- Contrary to conventional wisdom, a majority of the American public wants the government to take a stronger economic role, especially in terms of job creation. By a nearly twenty-point margin, Americans see the need for a stronger role for government in helping the economy work better for the average American. This desire has strengthened over the past year across the country. Women especially see the need for a stronger government role, including women of color.
- Despite the deficit rhetoric, a robust majority of Americans (62 percent) want the government to focus on job creation and they support this even if job creation means increasing the deficit for the short-term. Agreement on this is broad across subgroups. Overall agreement on this job creation focus has increased from 2010.
- In the midst of the current deficit-reduction frenzy in Washington D.C, the public exhibits concern that belt-tightening could come at the expense of families and children. Women are particularly concerned, but nearly all demographic groups express concern over this possibility.



Economic Downturn & Its Impacts

The economic downturn continues to have a real impact on Americans. Nearly half of Americans report that they currently live paycheck to paycheck all or most of the time. Women, including Latinas and African-American women, have been hard hit.

Despite the so-called “recovery,” the economic downturn continues to have a real impact on Americans. Over two-thirds of the public says the downturn has impacted their families, including 28 percent who say it has had a great deal of impact. This is similar to 2010 levels.

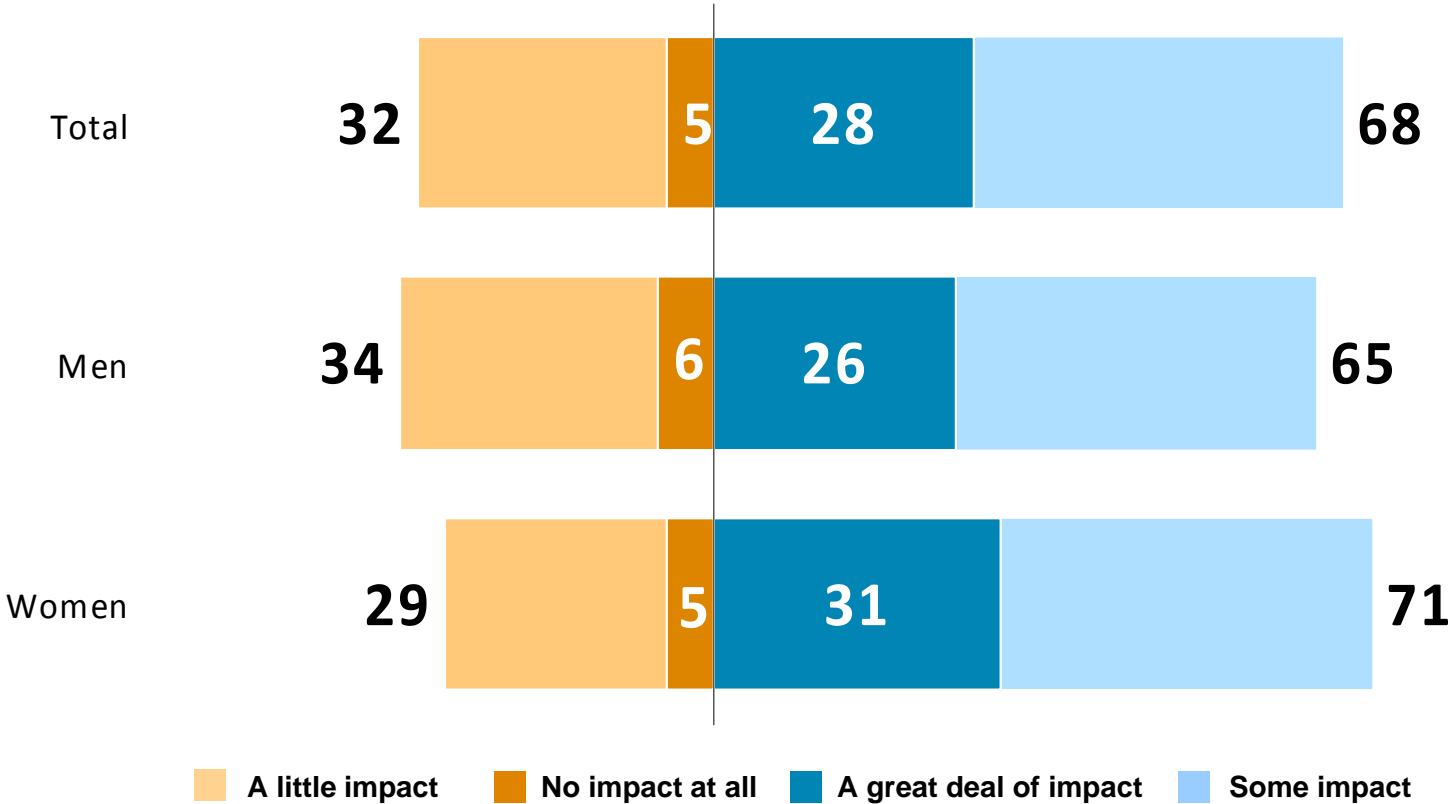


Has the economic downturn had a great deal of impact on your family, some impact, a little impact, or no impact at all?

Women report the economic downturn having had an even stronger impact on their families than do men. Over seven in ten women say they have been impacted, and three in ten have experienced a great deal of impact.



Economic Downturn's Impact on Your Family

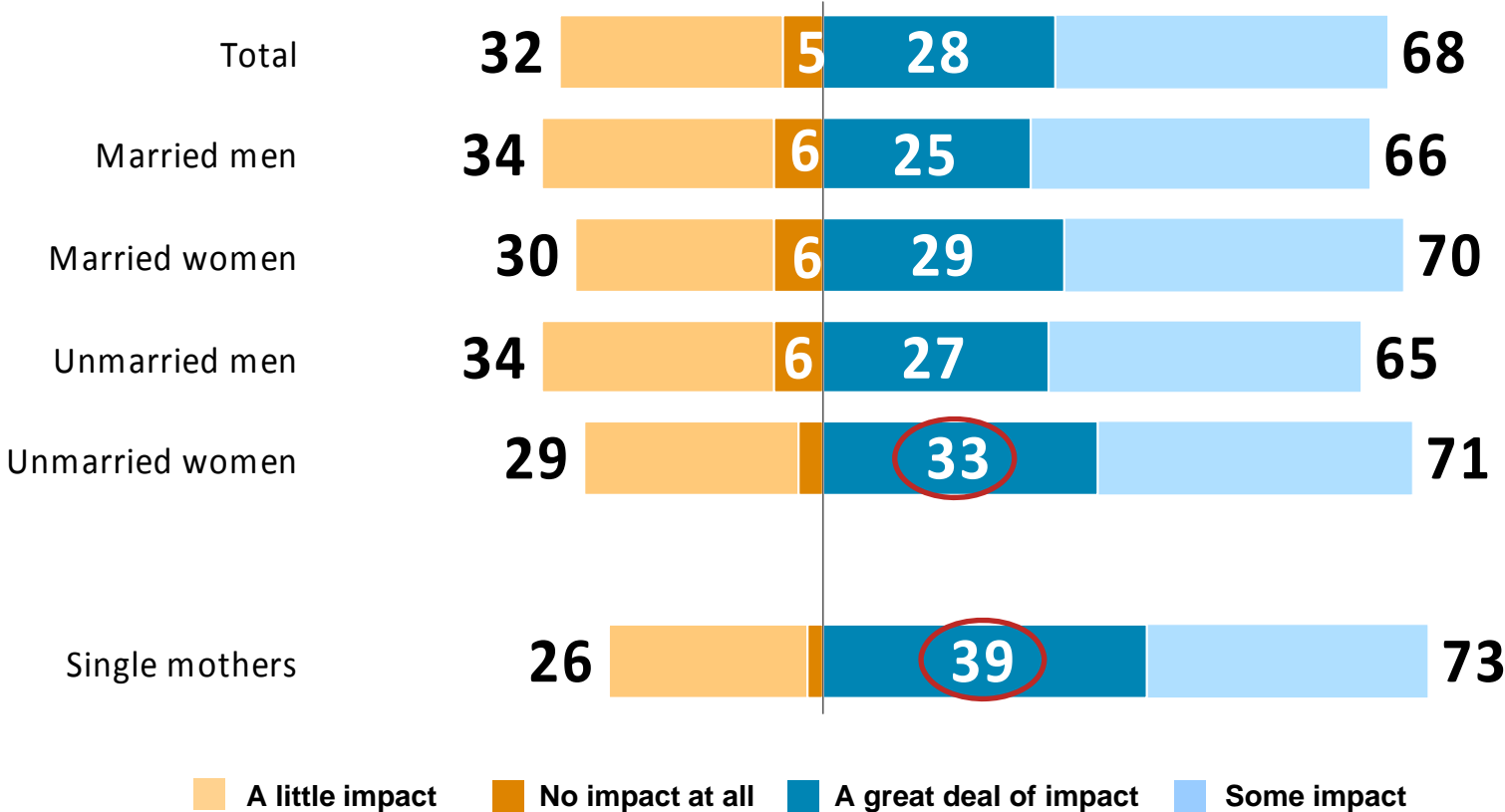


Has the economic downturn had a great deal of impact on your family, some impact, a little impact, or no impact at all?

The downturn has had a particularly strong impact on unmarried women and single moms. Nearly four in ten single moms, and one third of unmarried women report the downturn having a great deal of impact on their families.



Economic Downturn's Impact on Your Family

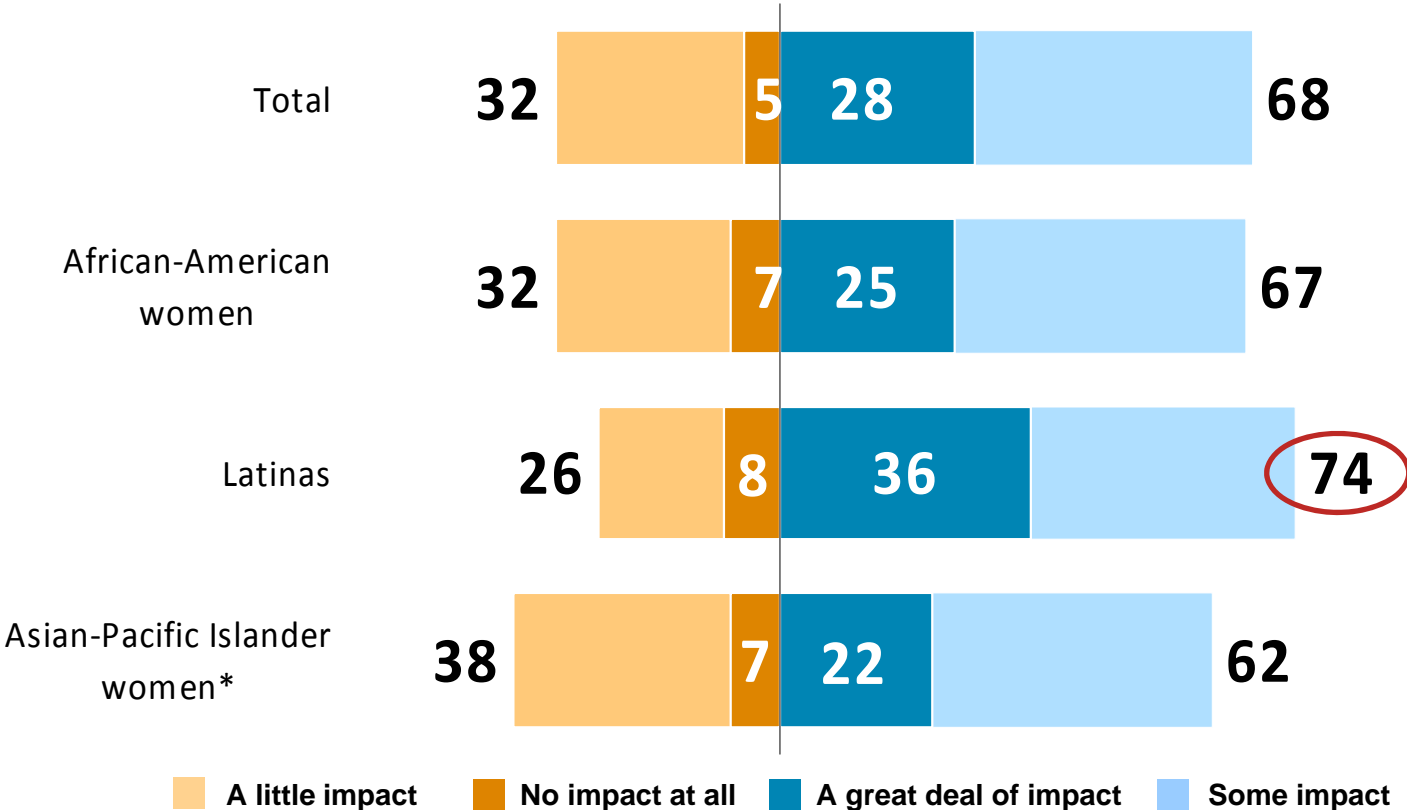


Has the economic downturn had a great deal of impact on your family, some impact, a little impact, or no impact at all?

Latinas are particularly hard hit. Three-quarters of Latinas report that the economic downturn has had a real impact on their family, and nearly four in ten say it has had a great deal of impact. Two-thirds of African-American women and over six in ten Asian-Pacific Islander women have been impacted.



Economic Downturn's Impact on Your Family



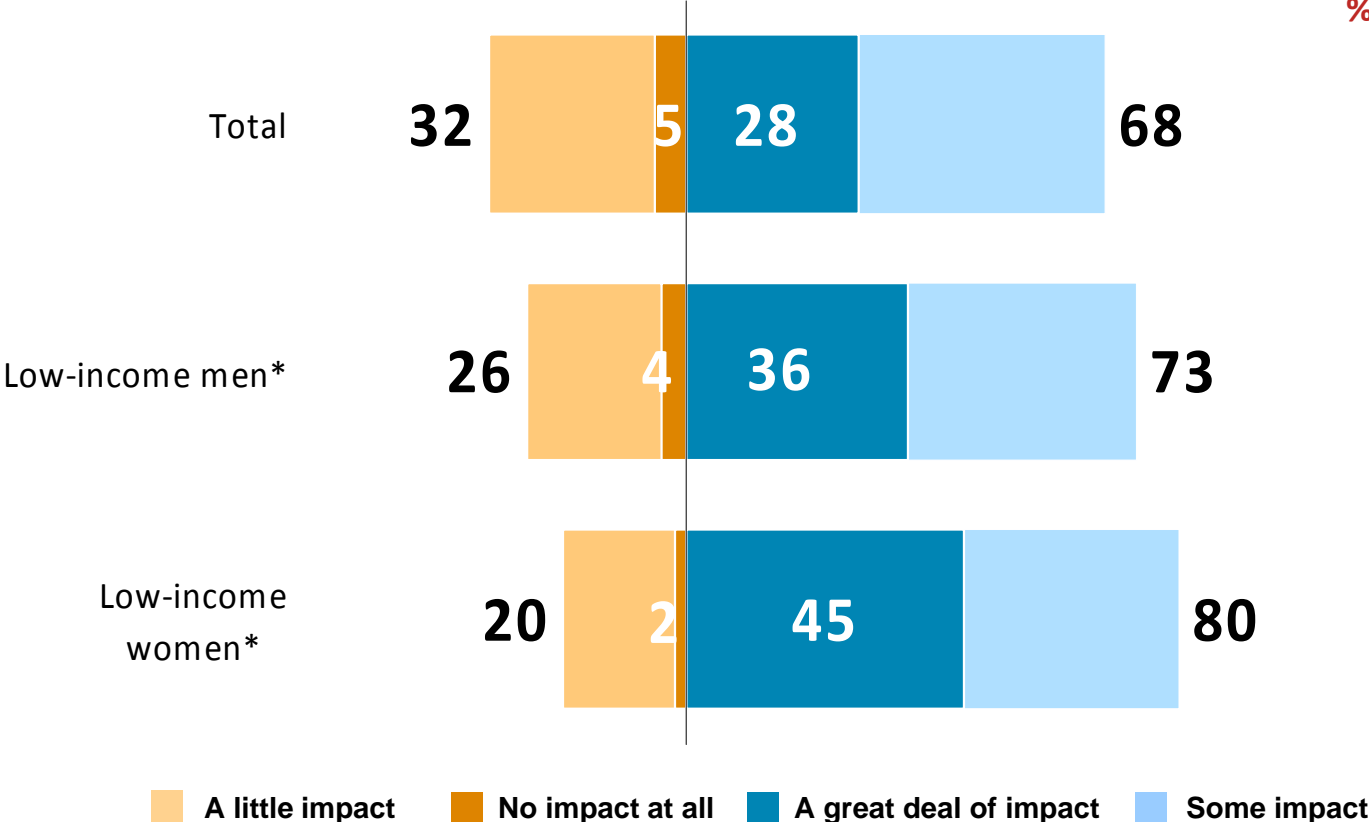
*Includes women who identify as Asian, Pacific Islander, or Native Hawaiian

Has the economic downturn had a great deal of impact on your family, some impact, a little impact, or no impact at all?

Low-income women continue to feel the impact of the economic downturn and report stronger impacts than their male counterparts. Over four in ten low-income women feel the downturn has greatly impacted their family. From 2010, this has increased eleven points for low-income women, while it has dropped two points among low-income men.



Economic Downturn's Impact on Your Family

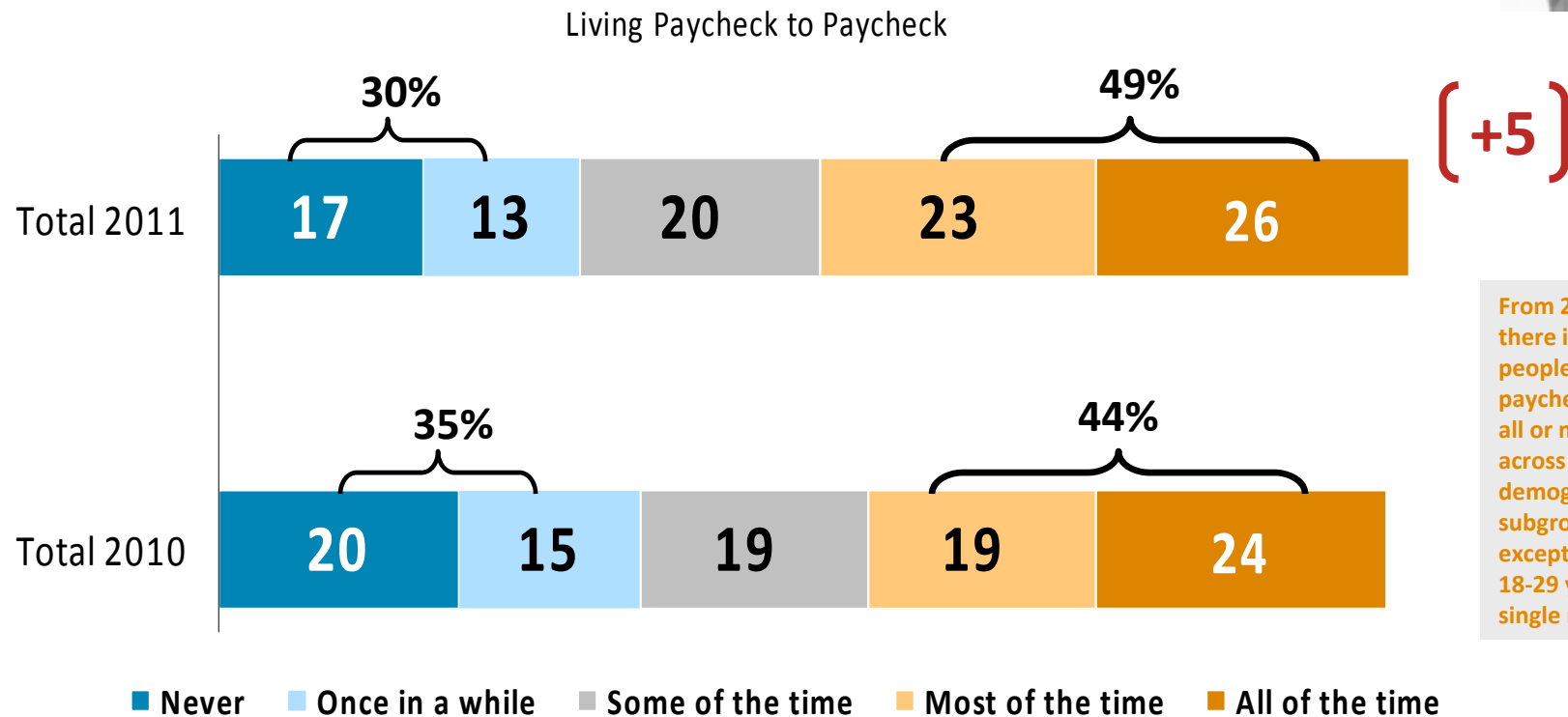


2010	
% saying "a great deal"	
	Change
27	+1
38	-2
34	+11

*Low-income women and men are at 200% FPL or below

Has the economic downturn had a great deal of impact on your family, some impact, a little impact, or no impact at all?

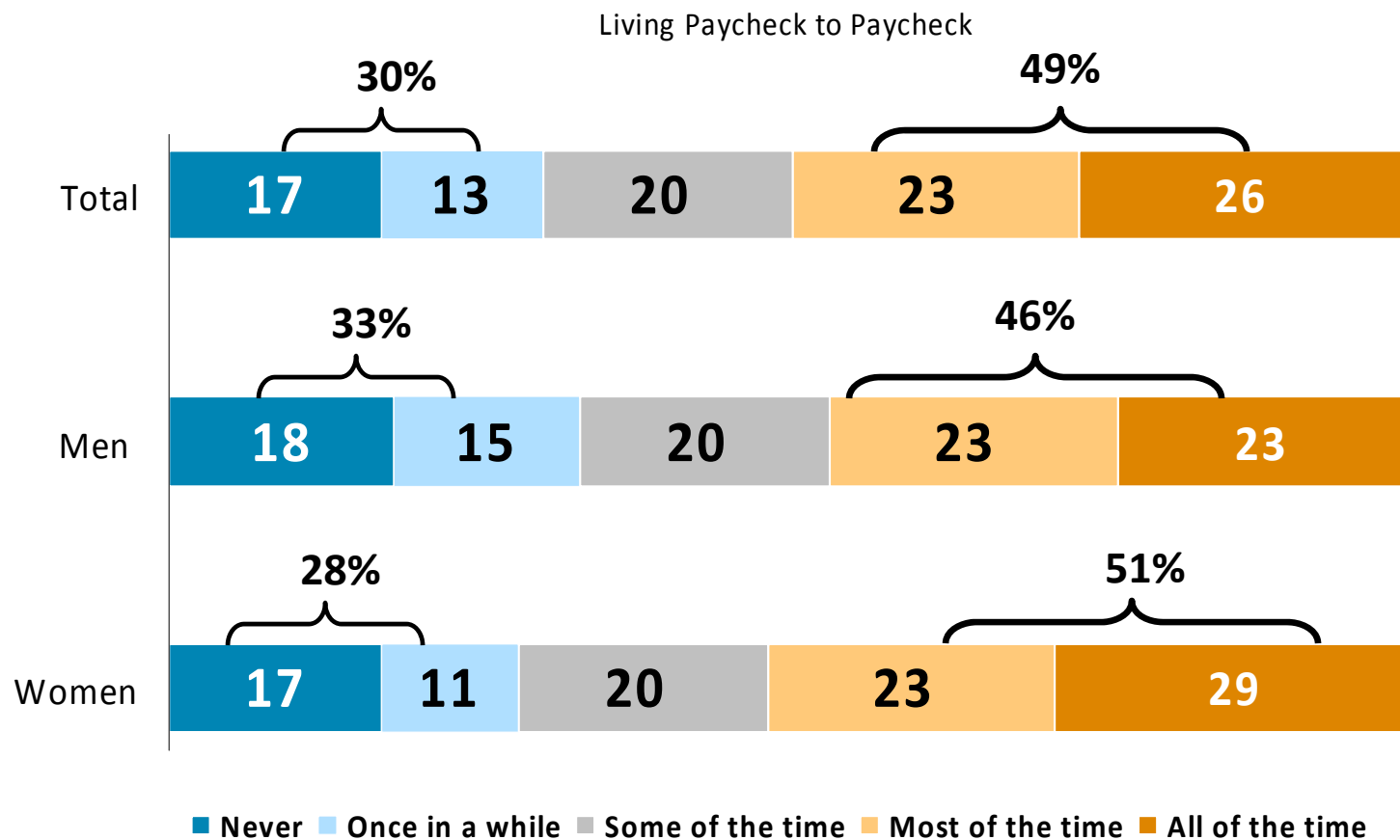
Nearly half of Americans report that they currently live from paycheck to paycheck all or most of the time. This has increased five points from 2010.



From 2010 to 2011, there is an increase in people reporting living paycheck to paycheck all or most of the time across most demographic subgroups—with the exception of seniors, 18-29 year-olds, and single mothers.

Thinking about your total family income and your monthly expenses and bills, would you say you live paycheck to paycheck all of the time, most of the time, some of the time, once in a while, or never?

Over half of women say they currently live paycheck to paycheck all or most of the time. Six in ten blue-collar women, unmarried women, single mothers report living paycheck to paycheck all or most of the time.

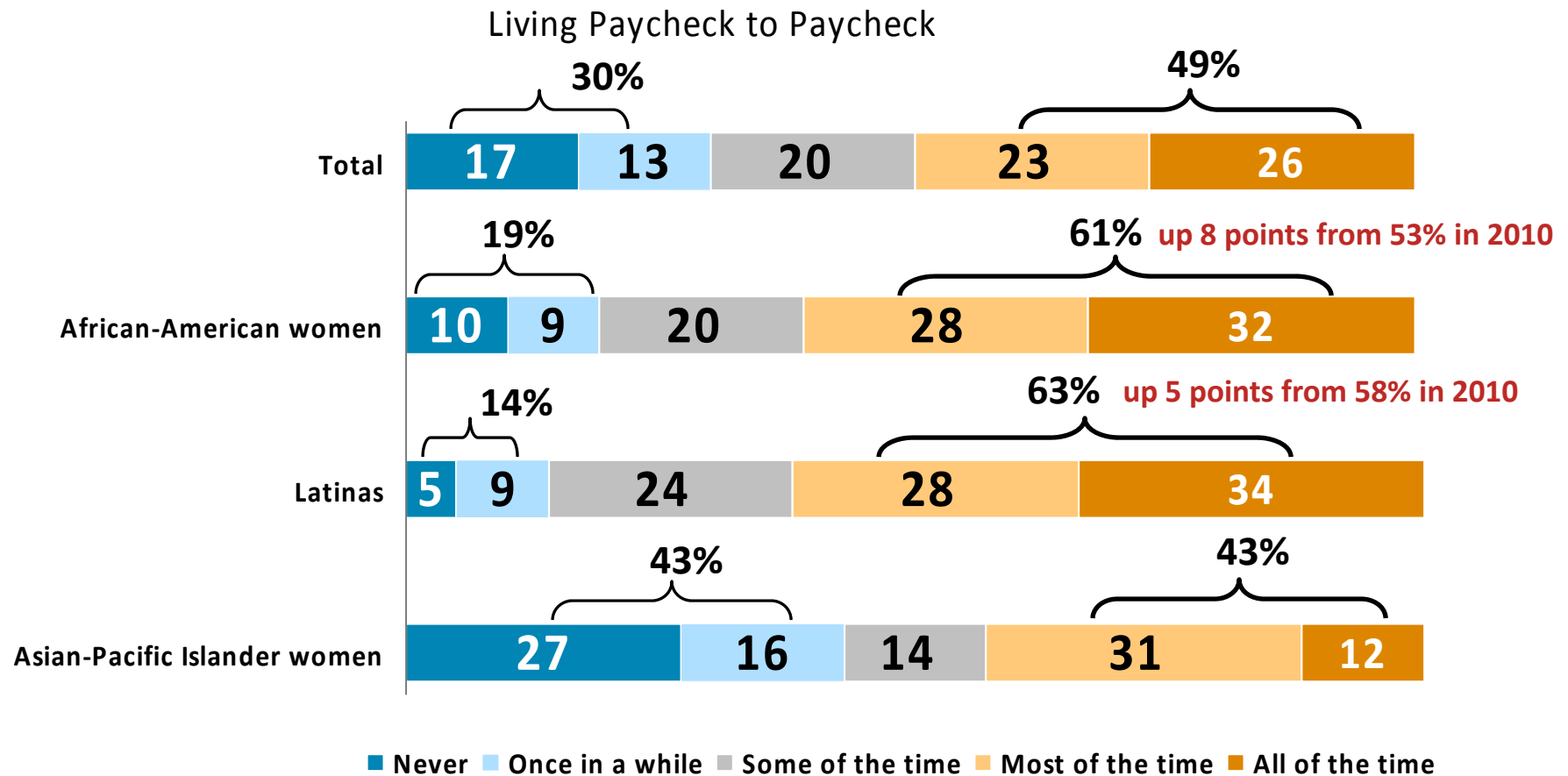


Women living paycheck to paycheck all or most of the time:

- 59% of blue-collar women (compared to 51% of blue-collar men)
- 58% of unmarried women (compared to 51% unmarried men)
- 62% of single mothers

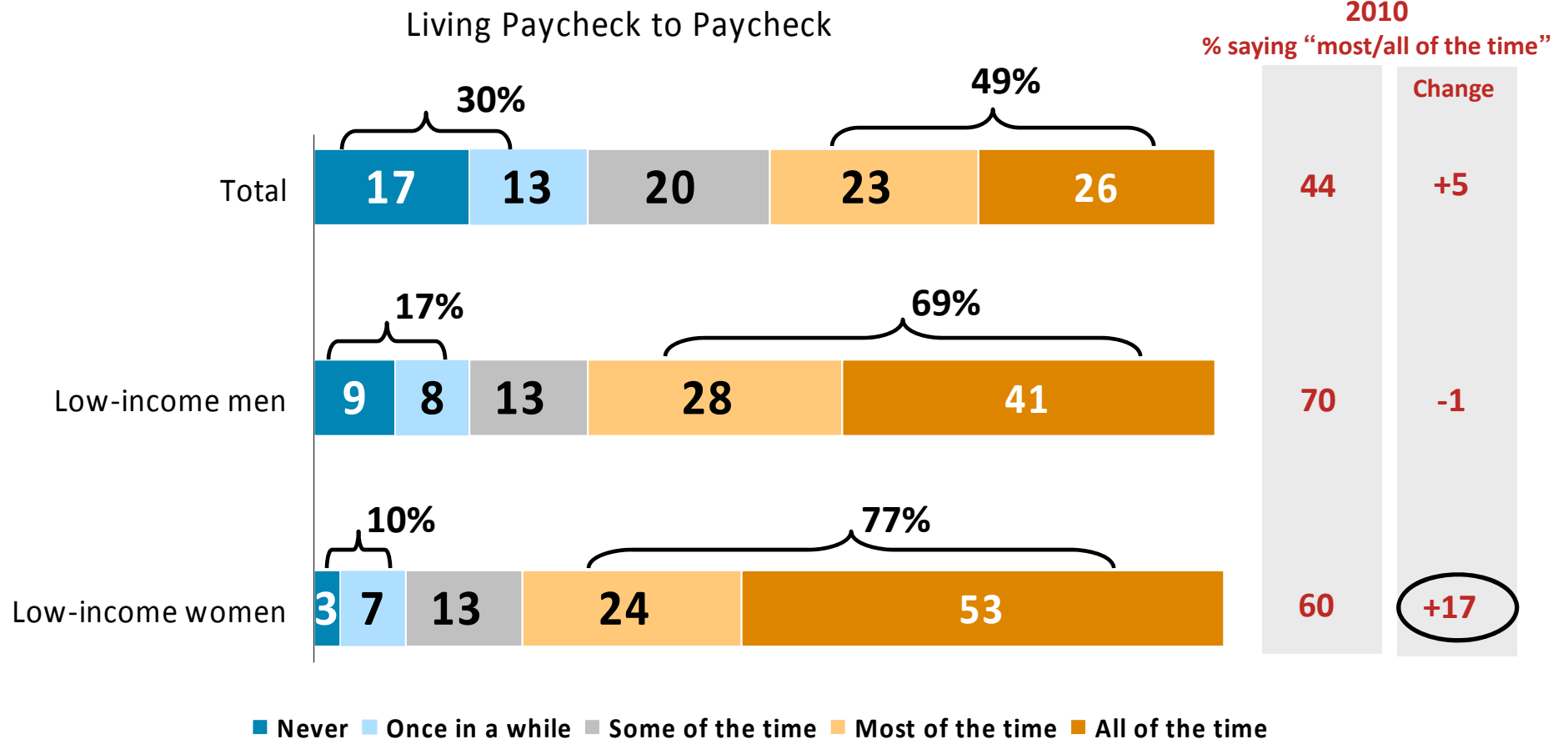
Thinking about your total family income and your monthly expenses and bills, would you say you live paycheck to paycheck all of the time, most of the time, some of the time, once in a while, or never?

African-American women and Latinas are more likely to report living paycheck to paycheck than are Asian-Pacific Islander women, but even here over four in ten say they do likewise.



Thinking about your total family income and your monthly expenses and bills, would you say you live paycheck to paycheck all of the time, most of the time, some of the time, once in a while, or never?

Over three-quarters of low-income women report living paycheck to paycheck, higher than their male counterparts. From 2010, this has increased by 17 points for low-income women, while this has remained relatively flat among low-income men.

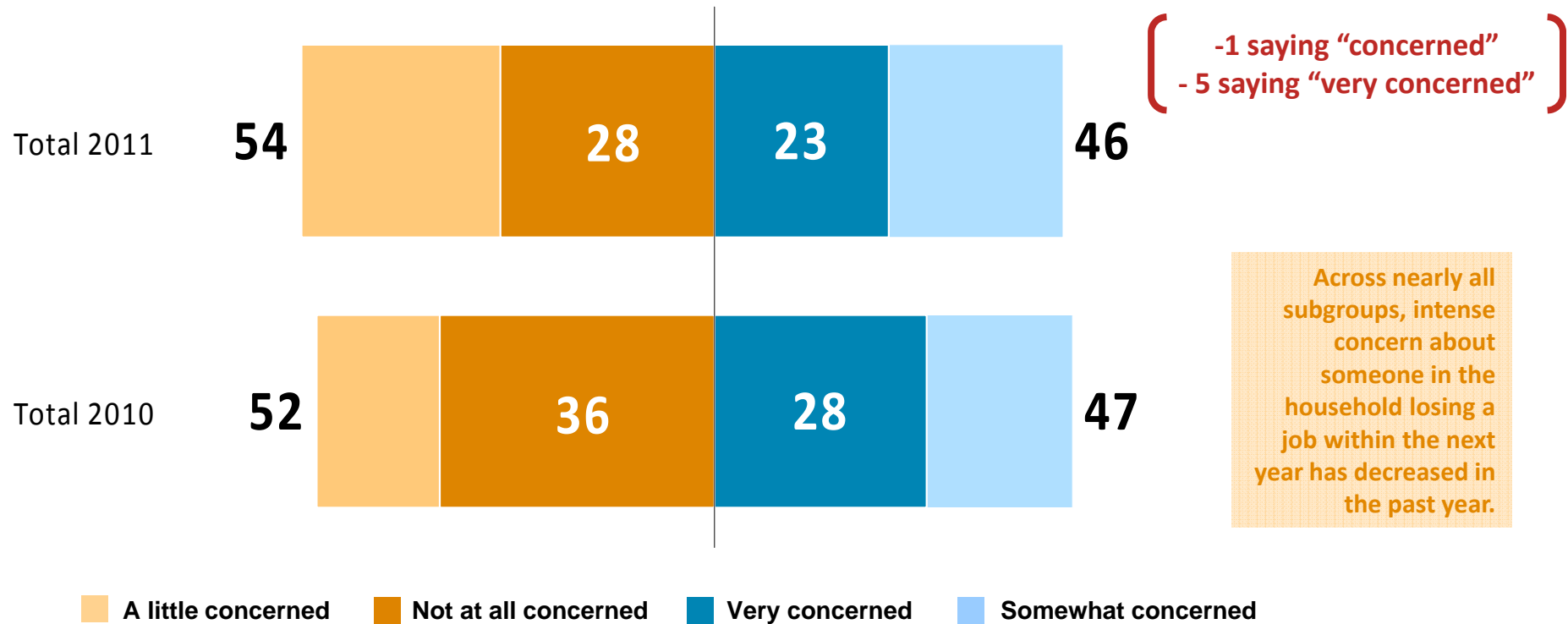


Thinking about your total family income and your monthly expenses and bills, would you say you live paycheck to paycheck all of the time, most of the time, some of the time, once in a while, or never?

A plurality of Americans remain concerned that they or someone in their household could be out of a job in the next 12 months. Although overall future job security concerns remain at similar levels from 2010, the intensity of this concern has decreased five points over the past year.



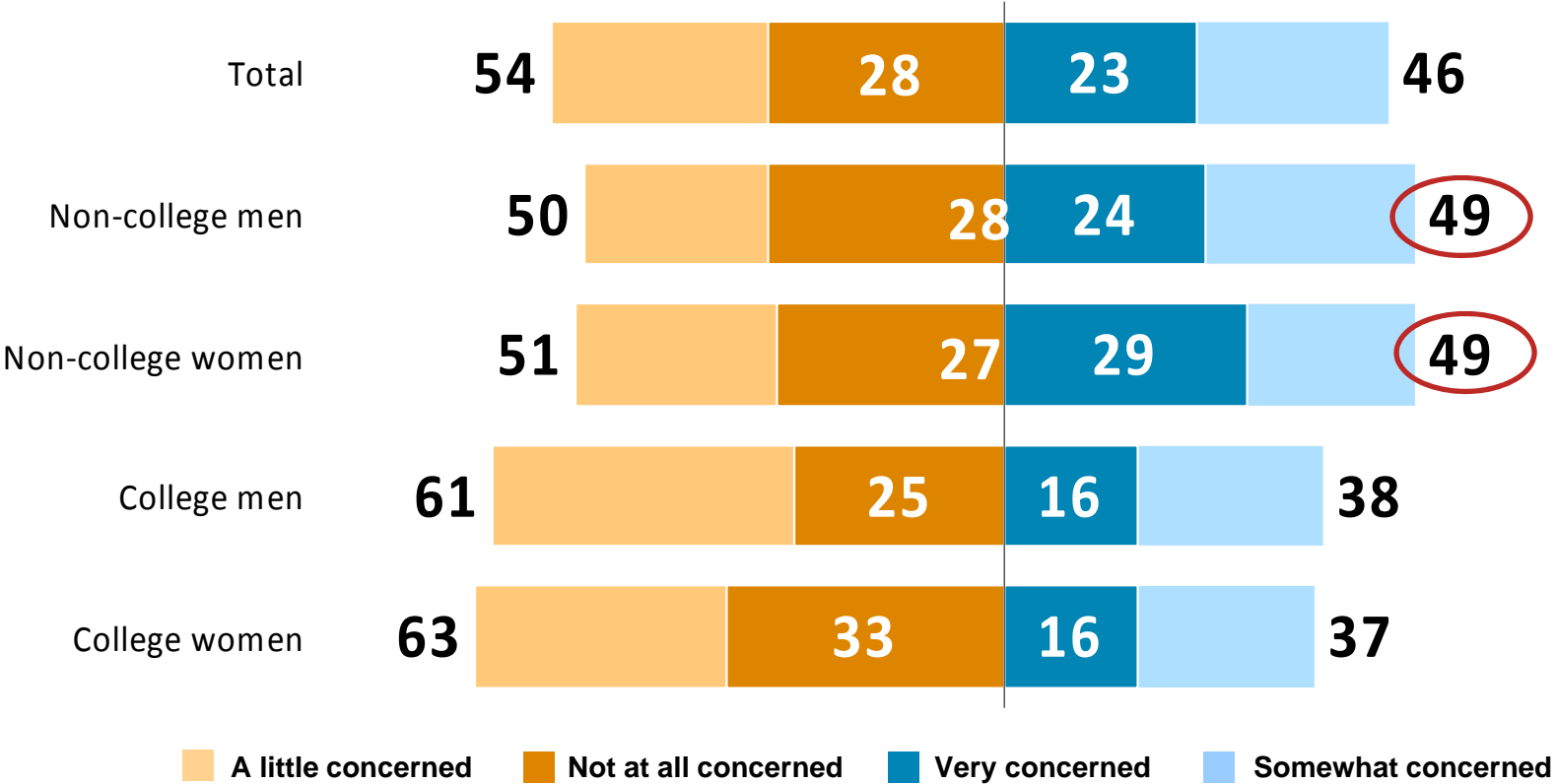
Concern You or Someone in Your Household Will Be Out of Job in Next Year



Thinking about the next 12 months, how concerned are you that you or someone in your household will be out of a job – are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, a little concerned, or not concerned at all?

Concerns about future job security are stronger among those without a college degree than those with a degree.

Concern You or Someone in Your Household Will Be Out of Job in Next Year



Thinking about the next 12 months, how concerned are you that you or someone in your household will be out of a job – are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, a little concerned, or not concerned at all?



Role for Government

The public sees the need for a stronger role for government in order to make the economy work better for the average American. especially in terms of job creation. Despite the rhetoric, desire for a stronger economic role for government has not eroded over the past year. Instead it has grown slightly. The public exhibits concern that deficit cutting will come at the expense of families and children.

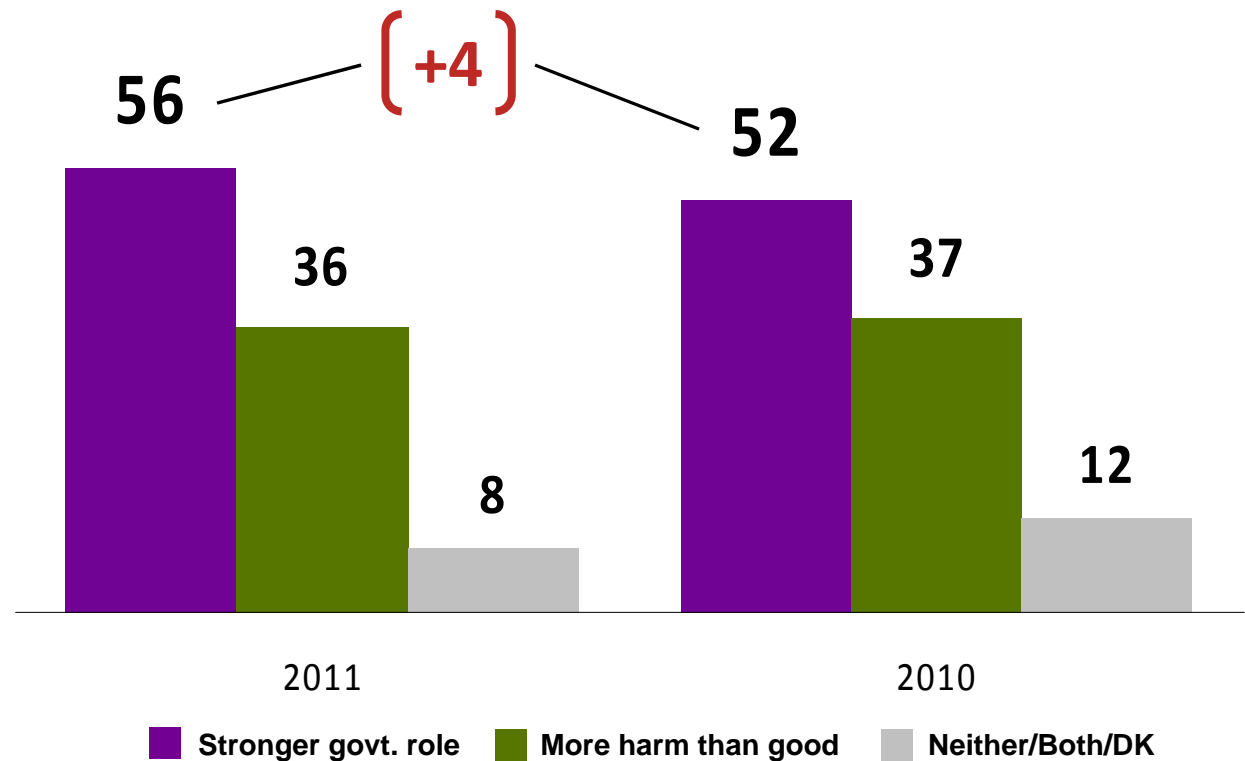
By a nearly 20-point margin, the public currently sees the need for a stronger government role in making the economy work for average Americans, over the view that turning to big government will do more harm than good. Despite the rhetoric, the desire for a stronger economic role for government has not eroded, but instead has increased slightly, up four points from 52 percent in 2010 to 56 percent in 2011.



Which of the following statements comes closer to your point of view?

-- It's time for government to take a larger and stronger role in making the economy work for the average American.

--Turning to big government to solve our economic problems will do more harm than good.



Across nearly all demographic subgroups, the desire for a larger government role is stronger now than it was in 2010. The only exceptions are seniors (-4 to 49%), those under age 30 (remaining at 55%), Midwesterners (-9 to 46%), and men (remaining at 49%), especially Northeastern men (-13 to 43%) and men without children (-4 to 45%).

Women, more than men, desire a stronger economic role for government. This is particularly strong among women without a college degree, unmarried women, and single mothers. While men are more closely divided on this issue, they still favor a stronger government role by a five-point margin.

Which of the following statements comes closer to your point of view?

-- It's time for government to take a larger and stronger role in making the economy work for the average American.

--Turning to big government to solve our economic problems will do more harm than good.

	Stronger Govt. Role	More Harm than Good	Stronger Govt. Role Advantage
Total	56%	36%	+19
Men	49%	44%	+5
Women	62%	29%	+33
Non-college men	52%	40%	+12
Non-college women	63%	28%	+35
College men	39%	54%	-15
College women	62%	33%	+28
Married men	46%	49%	-4
Married women	57%	37%	+19
Unmarried men	52%	37%	+14
Unmarried women	68%	21%	+47
Single moms	66%	22%	+44

Robust majorities of women of color want government to take a stronger role to make the economy work for the average American. This desire is strongest among African-American women, followed by Latinas and Asian-Pacific Islander women.

Which of the following statements comes closer to your point of view?

-- It's time for government to take a larger and stronger role in making the economy work for the average American.

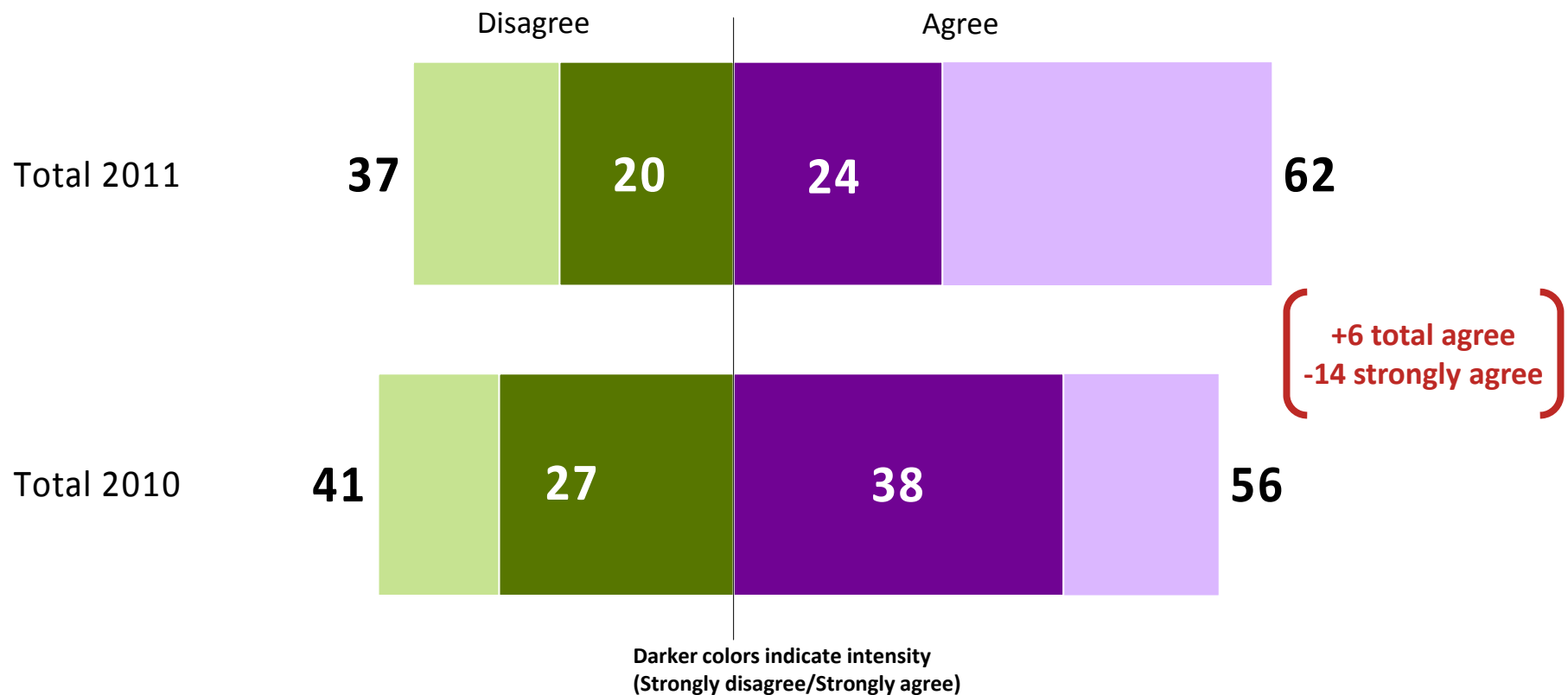
--Turning to big government to solve our economic problems will do more harm than good.

	Stronger Govt. Role	More Harm than Good	Stronger Govt. Role Advantage
Total	56%	36%	+19
African-American women	82%	10%	+72
Latinas	71%	13%	+58
Asian-Pacific Islander women	64%	30%	+34
Low-income men	63%	27%	+36
Low-income women	72%	19%	+53

A solid majority of the public agrees that the government should focus on creating jobs, even if this would mean increasing the deficit in the short-term. Overall agreement that the government should focus on creating jobs, even if this means short-term deficit increases, has increased by six points from 2010. Yet, at the same time, intense agreement has dropped 14 points from 38 percent in strong agreement in 2010 to 24 percent currently.



Government Should Focus on Creating Jobs, Even If Increases Deficit in Short-term

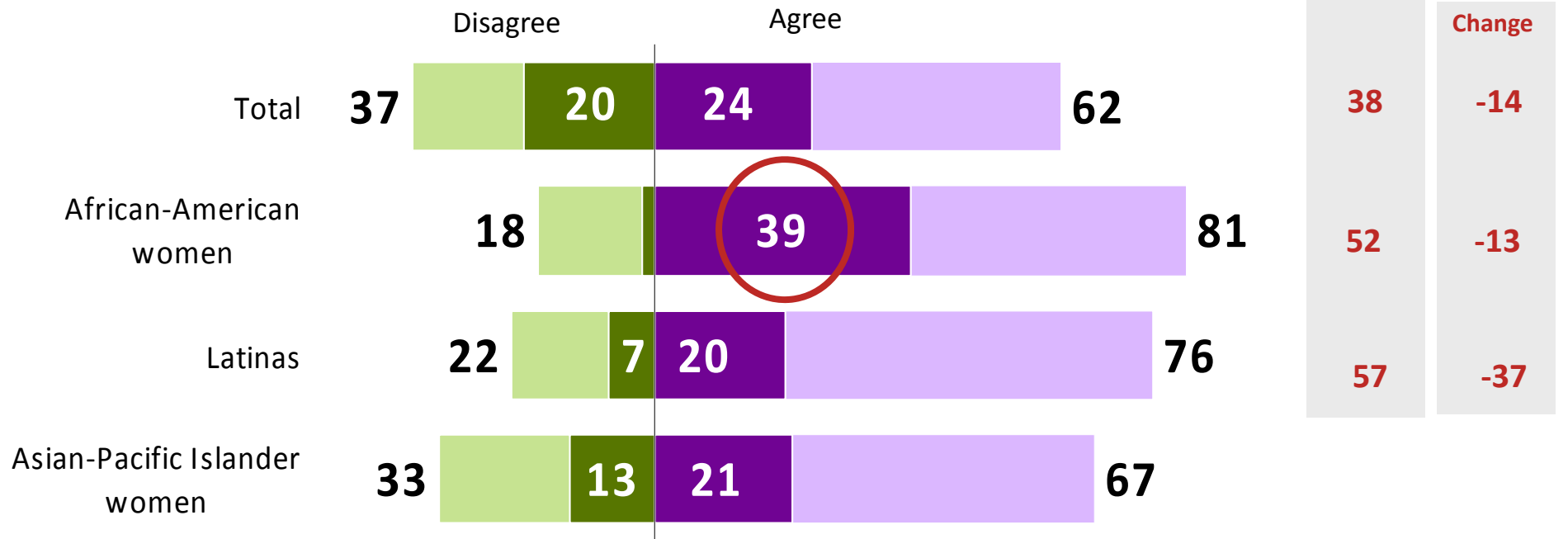


Now, here is a statement about the economy. Please mark whether you agree or disagree with the following statement:
 The government should focus on creating jobs even if it means increasing the deficit in the short-term.

Over three-quarters of African-American women and Latinas agree that the government should focus on job creation, even if this means a short-term deficit increase. Two-thirds of Asian-Pacific Islander women also agree. Since 2010, intense agreement with job creation has dropped 37 points among Latinas and 13 points among African-American women.



Government Should Focus on Creating Jobs, Even If Increases Deficit in Short-term



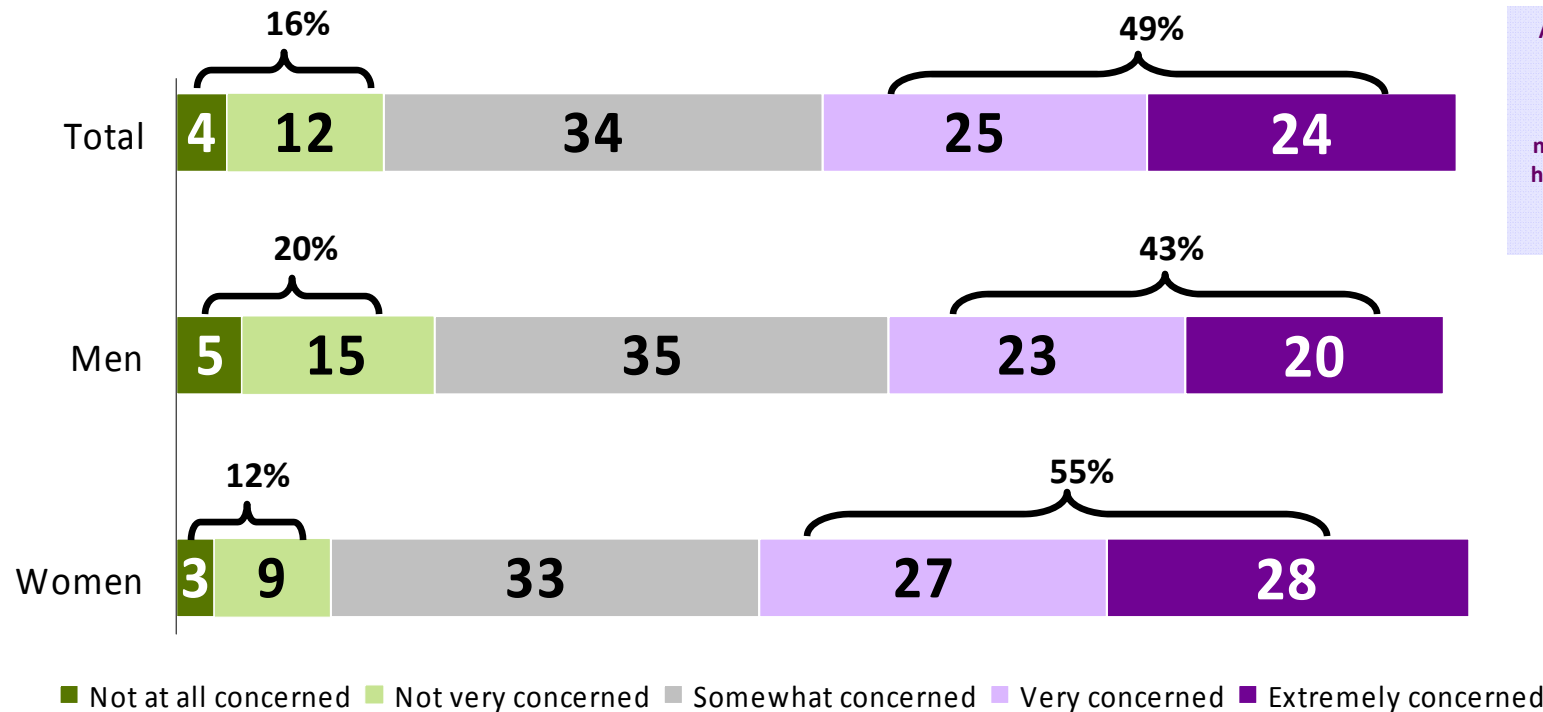
Darker colors indicate intensity
(Strongly disagree/Strongly agree)

Now, here is a statement about the economy. Please mark whether you agree or disagree with the following statement:
The government should focus on creating jobs even if it means increasing the deficit in the short-term.



Concerns about priorities weight on voters as they look at budget and spending decisions within the deficit-reducing environment in Congress. Nearly half of Americans say they would be extremely or very concerned if Congress, in its efforts to reduce the federal deficit, significantly cut domestic spending on programs that help children and families. Another third would be somewhat concerned. These concerns are particularly high among women. While there is a gender gap, men are still much more concerned than unconcerned.

Level of Concern if Congress Significantly Cuts Programs That Help Children & Families to Reduce Deficit



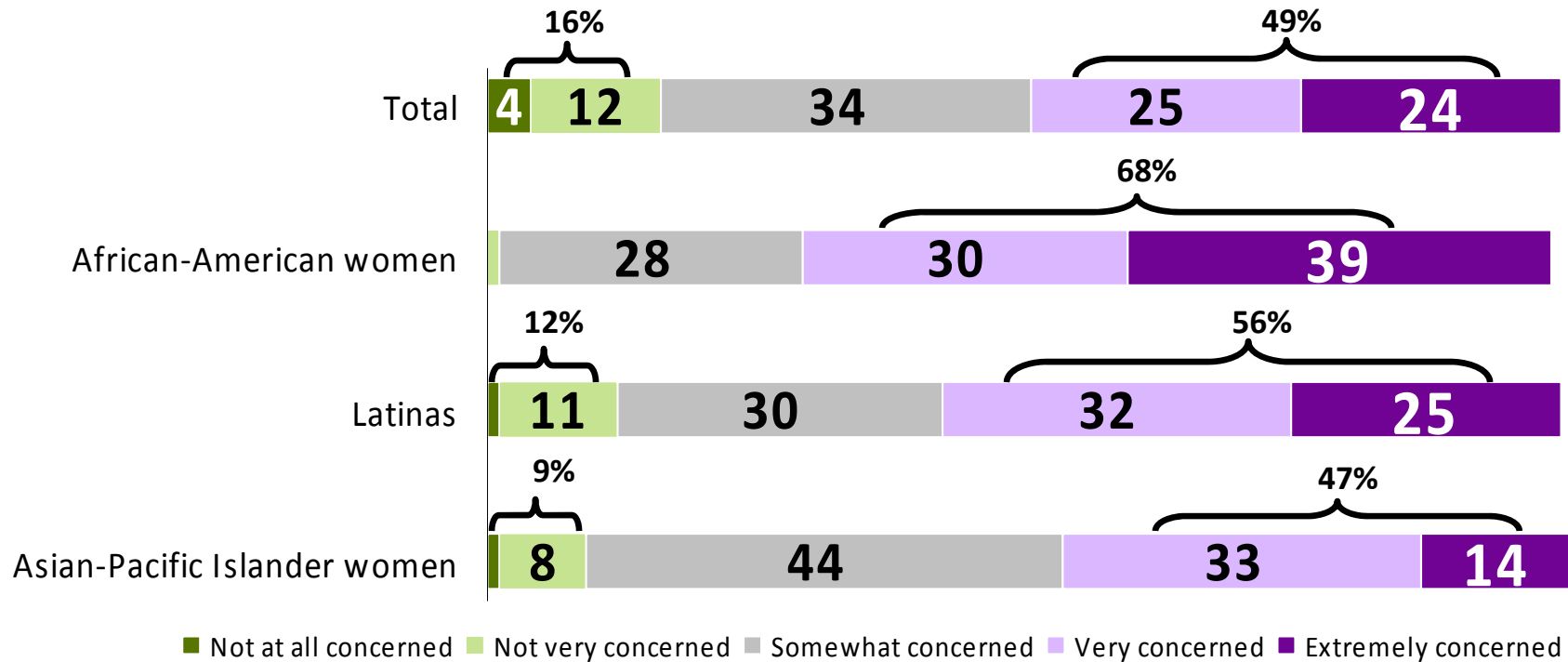
Across nearly all demographic subgroups, Americans are more likely to be highly concerned than unconcerned.

If Congress, in their efforts to reduce the federal budget deficit, decides to significantly cut domestic spending on government programs that help families and children, how concerned would you be that these changes might negatively impact families and communities: extremely concerned, very concerned, somewhat concerned, not very concerned, or not concerned at all?



Strong majorities of African-American women and Latinas would be highly concerned if Congress significantly cut spending on programs that help children and families in its efforts to reduce the deficit. A plurality of Asian-Pacific Islander women express concern.

Level of Concern if Congress Significantly Cuts Programs That Help Children & Families to Reduce Deficit



If Congress, in their efforts to reduce the federal budget deficit, decides to significantly cut domestic spending on government programs that help families and children, how concerned would you be that these changes might negatively impact families and communities: extremely concerned, very concerned, somewhat concerned, not very concerned, or not concerned at all?



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